The Collected Works of MAHATMA GANDHI

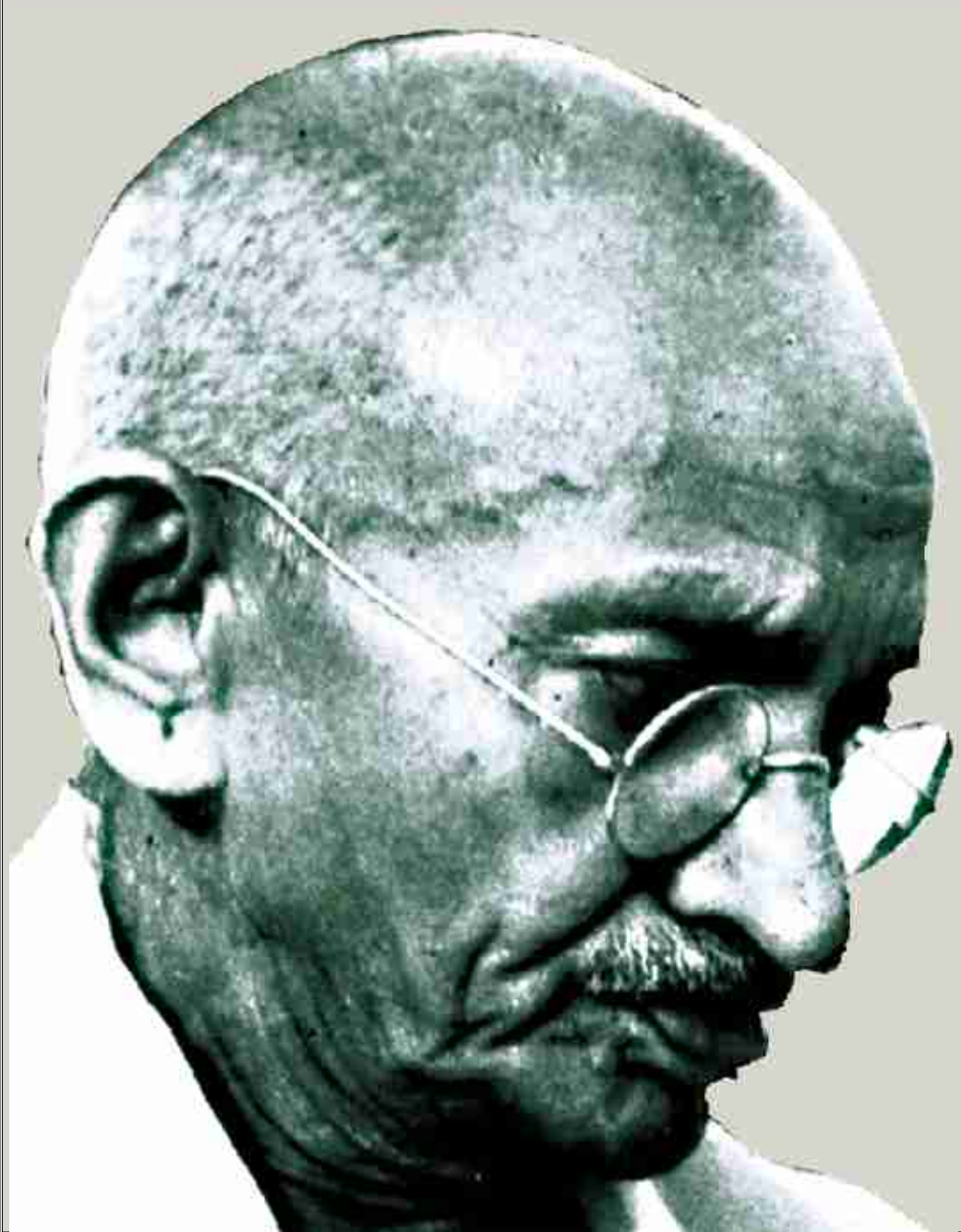

HOMAGE

Mahatma Gandhi did not set out to evolve a philosophy of life or formulate a system of beliefs or ideals. He had probably neither the inclination nor the time to do so. He had, however, firm faith in truth and ahimsa, and the practical application of these to problems which confronted him may be said to constitute his teachings and philosophy.

There was hardly any political, social, religious, agrarian, labour, industrial or other problem which did not come under his purview and with which he did not deal in his own way within the framework of the principles which he held to be basic and fundamental. There was hardly any aspect of life in India which he did not influence and fashion according to his own pattern, beginning with the small details of individual life regarding food, dress, daily occupation, right up to big social problems which had for centuries become a part of life—not only unbreakable but also sacrosanct—like the caste system and untouchability.

His views appeared to be startlingly fresh, unhampered by tradition or prevalent custom. So also, his methods of dealing with problems, big and small, were no less novel and apparently unconvincing, but ultimately successful. Evidently, by his very nature he could never be dogmatic. He could never shut himself out from new light born of experience resulting from new experiments. For the same reason, again, he was no stickler for superficial consistency. In fact, his opponents, and sometimes even his followers, saw apparent contradiction in some of Gandhiji's actions. He was so open to conviction and had such an extraordinary amount of moral courage that once he was convinced that any particular action of which he was the author was defective, he never hesitated to correct himself and declare publicly that he was in the5 wrong. We often find him subjecting his own decisions and actions to an objective and impartial criticism. Little wonder, therefore, that many of his actions sometimes appeared to mystify his admirers and to confound his critics.

For a proper appreciation of such a man it is essential to take a comprehensive and collective view of his teachings and the events of his life. Any sketchy or piecemeal study of his life's story might prove misleading, doing as little justice to this great man as to the reader. This is the primary reason why a compilation of Gandhiji's writings on such a vast scale had to be undertaken. This series, which, I

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am told, will consist of over fifty volumes, has its *raison d'etre* in this very trait of Mahatma Gandhi.

By undertaking to bring out this series, the Information and Broadcasting Ministry of the Government of India had provided the most essential basis for a study of Mahatma Gandhi, his teachings, his beliefs and his philosophy of life. It will be for students and thinkers to do what Mahatma Gandhi never attempted. With all the material thus made available, they will be able to formulate, as it were, in the form of a thesis his philosophy of life, his teachings, his ideas and programmes, and his views on the innumerable problems which arise in life, in a logical and philosophical manner and classified under different heads and categories. In his scheme of things, there was room for matters big and small, for problems of world-wide importance and of limited personal import. Though nearly all his life he had to grapple with large political issues, a very substantial part of his writings relates to social, religious, educational, economic and linguistic problems.

He was a very regular correspondent. There was hardly a letter calling for a considered reply which he did not answer himself. Letters from individuals, dealing with their personal and private problems, constituted a considerable portion of his correspondence and his replies are valuable as guidance to others with similar problems. For a great period of his life, he did not take the assistance of any stenographer or typist, and used to write whatever he required in his own hand, and even when such assistance became unavoidable, he continued writing a great deal in his own hand. There were occasions when he became physically unable to write with the fingers of his right hand and, at a late stage in his life, he learnt the art of writing with his left hand. Hedid the same thing with spinning. Private correspondence, which absorbed much of his writing in this way, constituted an important and significant part of his teachings, as applied to particular problems of the ordinary man in his everyday life.

If ever there was a man who took a total view of life and who devoted himself to the service of mankind, it was certainly Gandhiji. If his pattern of thinking was sustained by faith and the lofty ideals of service, his actions and actual teachings were always influenced by considerations at once moral and eminently practical. Throughout his career as a public leader extending over nearly sixty long years, he never allowed exigencies to shape his views. In other words, he never allowed himself to use wrong means to attain the right ends. His

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punctiliousness in the choice of means was so great, that even the achievement of the end was subordinated to the nature of the means used, because he believed that the right end could not be achieved by wrong means and what could be achieved by the use of wrong means would be only a distortion of the right end.

The undoubted and abiding worth of this collection of his writings and speeches is apparent. Here are the words of the Master covering some six decades of a superbly human and intensely active public life – words that shaped and nurtured a unique movement and led it to success; words that inspired countless individuals and showed them the light; words that explored and showed a new way of life; words that emphasized cultural values which are spiritual and eternal, transcending time and space and belonging to all humanity and all ages. It is well, therefore, that it is sought to preserve them.

His method constituted a soul-stirring assertion of man's abiding trust in man, of the belief that the sense of morality is inherent in the spiritual equipment of human beings. The freedom of his concept cannot be attained through mere legislation and decrees, nor can it be had through mere scientific and technological advance. A society, to be really free, has to be organized for freedom and that organization has to be started with the individual himself. To the extent that the Indian national life remains inspired by and patterned after his ideas, it will continue to be a source of inspiration. To the extent free India works his ideas and attains progressively higher integration, she will succeed in extending the frontiers of culture and blazing a new trail.

Many of his ideas, however, have yet to be fully imbibed. While it is agreed that the liberating role of any social order must be judged by the degree of actual freedom it allows to its members, there is not adequate appreciation of the fact that a centralized organization, industrial, social or political, implies a corresponding curtailment of freedom of the individual. The golden mean remains to be discovered and adopted. His economics is often confounded with austerity, if not scarcity. His discipline is confused with rigid morality, destitute of colour and beauty. With his few and limited needs, he lived a full and rich life, and in his own living, he demonstrated the truth of his beliefs, which in the background of eroded faith appeared too noble to be true. It is in this light that we have to understand the vows and observances of the inmates of his ashram, which used to be repeated morning and evening at prayer time, and comprised non-violence,

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truth, non-stealing, *brahmacharya* or chastity, non-possession, bread-labour, control of the palate, fearlessness, tolerance, i.e., equal respect for all religions, removal of untouchability and swadeshi in the performance of one's duties.

Let me close this with the assurance that no one who takes a dip into Gandhiji's stream of life as represented in this series will emerge disappointed, for there lies in it buried a hidden treasure out of which everyone can carry as much as he likes, according to his own capacity and faith.

RASHTRAPATI BHAVAN,
NEW DELHI,
January 16, 1958

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FOREWORD

In another month's time ten years will have passed since Gandhiji's life came to an end. He was of a ripe age, but he was still full of vitality and his capacity for work was prodigious. The end came suddenly by the hand of an assassin. India was shocked and the world grieved, and to those of us who were more intimately connected with him the shock and sorrow were hard to bear. And yet, perhaps, it was a fitting close to a magnificant career and in his death, as in his life, he served the cause to which he had devoted himself. None of us would have liked to see him gradually fade in body and mind with increasing years. And so he died, as he had lived, a bright star of hope and achievement, the Father of the Nation which had been shaped and trained by him for half a century.

To those who had the high privilege of being associated with him in some of his innumerable activities, he will ever remain the embodiment of youthful energy. We shall not think of him as an old man, but rather as one who represented with the vitality of Spring the birth of a new India. To a younger generation who did not come in personal contact with him, he is a tradition, and numerous stories are woven round his name and activities. He was great in his life, he is greater since he passed away.

I am glad that the Government of India are bringing out a complete edition of his writings and speeches. It is most necessary that a full and authentic record of what he has written and said should be prepared. Because of his innumerable activities and voluminous writings, the preparation of this record is itself a colossal undertaking and may take many years to complete. But this is a duty we owe to ourselves and to future generations.

In a collection like this there is bound to be a mixture of what might be called the important and the unimportant or the casual. Yet, sometimes it is the casual word that throws more light on a person's thinking than a more studied writing or utterance. In any event, who are we to pick and choose? Let him speak for himself. To him life was an integrated whole, a closely-woven garment of many colours. A word to a child, a touch of healing to a sufferer, was as important as a resolution of challenge to the British Empire.

In all reverence of spirit, let us undertake this task, so that succeeding generations may have some glimpses of this beloved

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leader of ours who illumined our generation with his light and not only brought national freedom to us but also gave us an insight into the deeper qualities which have ennobled man. In ages to come, people will wonder that such a man once trod on our Indian soil and poured out his love and service to our people, and indeed to humanity.

I write this in Darjeeling with the mighty Kanchenjunga looking down upon us. This morning I had a glimpse of Everest. It seemed to me that there was about Gandhiji something of the calm strength and the timelessness of Everest and Kanchenjunga.

DARJEELING,
December 27, 1957

Jawaharlal Nehru

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PUBLISHER' S NOTE

Publications Division brings to the user an electronic book based on Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi running into 100 volumes with about 50,000 pages. This e-book has Gandhiji's writings, speeches and letters covering the period 1884-1948 almost sixty years of his very active public life.

The arrangement of the material in the series is in chronological order. The writings are placed as per date of publication, except where the date of writing is there or is ascertainable. Where an item had no date in the source, the inferred date has been indicated in square brackets with reasons.

There is a comprehensive interative search facility based on personalities, contemporary events, Gandhian concepts, places and other key words used by Gandhiji in his writings. Appendices refer to background material relevant to the text. Al sources and help rendered has been gratefully acknowledged.

In the earlier series Gandhiji's works were divided in 90 volumes, while volumes 91-97, known as supplementary volumes, carried the matter received later. Volumes 98-100 were indices.

The objective of the series is to reproduce Gandhiji's actual words as far as possible; reports of his speeches, interviews, conversations which did not seem to be authentic have been avoided, as also reports of his statements in indirect form. In the case of speeches, however, reports in indirect narration of proven authenticity have been included as they give additional information not otherwise available.

Every endeavour has been made to adhere strictly to original. Variant spellings of names have, however, been retained as in the original. Words in square brackets in the text are explanatory in nature. Quoted passages are in small type and printed with an indent. Indirect reports of speeches and interviews have been set up in small type and slight changes have also been made where absolutely necessary.

Though the best efforts have been made to include all that Gandhiji wrote and spoke in these volumes, however, there may be some material that might have been left out. As and when new matter

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comes to the notice of Publications Division, it will be included in subsequent reprints.

Publications Division took up the project of Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi at the instance of the then Prime Minister, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, so that all available Gandhiji's writings and speeches are at one place for use of posterity.

Gandhiji was a prolific writer and had regular correspondence with people belonging to every walk of life. His writings and speeches were not only in a few books he wrote but also in Government records and in newspapers and journals. Gandhiji's utterances were not confined to one language. He wrote and spoke in English, Hindi and Gujarati. Care has been taken to ensure accurate translation from Gujarati and Hindi into English. His works were scattered in various parts of the world more so in India, England and South Africa. Efforts were made to collect all the matter and present in Collected Works.

There is no doubt that these hundred volumes echo the Mahatma's thoughts clearly revealing Gandhiji's abiding faith in the spirit of man and through it the eternal values of human existence. And what better manner in which to honour his memory than to let the rich legacy of his words enrich our lives and of generations to come.

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[1] This was issued jointly by C. R. Das and Motilal Nehru on behalf of the Swaraj party.

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AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OR

THE STORY OF MY EXPERIMENTS WITH TRUTH

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22	November 15, 1920	-	April 5, 1921
23	April 6, 1921	-	July 21, 1921
24	July 22, 1921	-	October 25, 1921
25	October 27, 1921	-	January 22, 1922
26	January 24, 1922	-	December 31, 1923
27	January 12, 1924	-	May 21, 1924
28	May 22, 1924	-	August 15, 1924
29	August 16, 1924	-	December 26, 1924
30	December 27, 1924	-	March 21, 1925
31	March 22, 1925	-	June 15, 1925
32	June 17, 1925	-	September 24, 1925
33	September 25, 1925	-	February 10, 1926
34	February 11, 1926	-	April 1, 1926 & Satyagraha in South Africa
35	April 2, 1926	-	July 7, 1926
36	July 8, 1926	-	November 10, 1926
37	November 11, 1926	-	January 1, 1927
38	January 2, 1927	-	June 3, 1927

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39	June 4, 1927	-	September 1, 1927
40	September 2, 1927	-	December 1, 1927
41	December 2, 1927	-	May 1, 1928
42	May 2, 1928	-	September 9, 1928
43	September 10, 1928	-	January 14, 1929
44	January 16, 1929	-	February 3, 1929 & My Experiments with Truth
45	February 4, 1929	-	May 11, 1929
46	May 12, 1929	-	August 31, 1929
47	September 1, 1929	-	November 20, 1929
48	November 21, 1929	-	April 2, 1930
49	April 3, 1930	-	August 22, 1930
50	August 23, 1930	-	January 5, 1931
51	January 6, 1931	-	April 28, 1931
52	April 29, 1931	-	July 1, 1931
53	July 2, 1931	-	October 12, 1931
54	October 13, 1931	-	February 8, 1932
55	February 10, 1932	-	June 15, 1932
56	June 16, 1932	-	September 4, 1932
57	September 5, 1932	-	November 15, 1932
58	November 16, 1932	-	January 12, 1933
59	January 13, 1933	-	March 9, 1933
60	March 10, 1933	-	April 26, 1933
61	April 27, 1933	-	October 7, 1933
62	October 8, 1933	-	January 17, 1934
63	January 18, 1934	-	May 19, 1934
64	May 20, 1934	-	September 15, 1934
65	September 16, 1934	-	December 15, 1934
66	December 16, 1934	-	April 24, 1935
67	April 25, 1935	-	September 22, 1935
68	September 23, 1935	-	May 15, 1936
69	May 16, 1936	-	October 19, 1936
70	October 21, 1936	-	February 24, 1937
71	February 25, 1937	-	July 5, 1937
72	July 6, 1937	-	February 20, 1938
73	February 21, 1938	-	September 8, 1938
74	September 9, 1938	-	January 29, 1939
75	January 30, 1939	-	May 30, 1939
76	May 31, 1939	-	October 15, 1939
77	October 16, 1939	-	February 22, 1940
78	February 23, 1940	-	July 15, 1940

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79	July 16, 1940	-	December 27, 1940
80	December 28, 1940	-	August 17, 1941
81	August 18, 1941	-	February 8, 1942
82	February 9, 1942	-	June 6, 1942
83	June 7, 1942	-	January 26, 1944
84	January 27, 1944	-	October 1, 1944
85	October 2, 1944	-	March 3, 1945
86	March 4, 1945	-	May 28, 1945
87	May 29, 1945	-	August 29, 1945
88	August 30, 1945	-	December 6, 1945
89	December 7, 1945	-	February 24, 1946
90	February 25, 1946	-	May 19, 1946
91	May 20, 1946	-	August 8, 1946
92	August 9, 1946	-	November 6, 1946
93	November 7, 1946	-	February 16, 1947
94	February 17, 1947	-	April 29, 1947
95	April 30, 1947	-	July 6, 1947
96	July 7, 1947	-	September 26, 1947
97	September 27, 1947	-	December 5, 1947
98	December 6, 1947	-	January 30, 1948

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1. *A CONFESSION*[1]

[*1884*]

I wrote it on a slip of paper and handed it to him myself. In this note not only did I confess my guilt, but I asked adequate punishment for it, and closed with a request to him not to punish himself for my offence. I also pledged myself never to steal in future.[2]

An Autobiography, Pt. I, Ch. VIII

2. *SPEECH AT ALFRED HIGH SCHOOL, RAJKOT*[3]

July 4, 1888

I hope that some of you will follow in my footsteps, and after you return from England you will work wholeheartedly for big reforms in India.

[From Gujarati]

Kethiawar Times, 12-7-1888

[1] When Gandhiji was 15, he had removed a bit of gold from his brother's armlet to clear a small debt of the latter. He felt so mortified about his act that he decided to make a confession to his father. Parental forgiveness was granted to him in the form of silent tears. The incident left a lasting mark on his mind. In his own words, it was an object-lesson to him in the power of ahimsa.

The original not being available; his own report of it, as found in *An Autobiography,* is reproduced here.

[2] According to *Mahatma Gandhi : The Early Phase,* p. 212, one of the sentences in the confession was : "So, father, your son is now, in your eyes, no better than a common thief."

[3] Gandhiji was given a send-off by his fellow-students of the Alfred High School, Rajkot, when he was leaving for England to study for the Bar. In *An Autobiography,* Pt. I, Ch. XI, he says : "I had written out a few words of thanks. But I could scarcely stammer them out. I remember how my head reeled and how my whole frame shook as I stood up to read them."

3. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS GANDHI

LONDON,
Friday, November 9, 1888

RESPECTED BROTHER,

I am sorry that there has been no letter from you for the last two or three weeks. Your silence is due perhaps to your not having heard from me. But it was impossible for me to post any letters before I reached London. That you should not have written to me on that account is indeed surprising. As I am far from home we can meet only through letters. And if I do not get letters I feel very much worried. Therefore please drop a postcard every week without fail. I would not have been anxious if you did not have my address. But I am sorry that you have stopped writing after having written to me twice. I joined the Inner Temple on Tuesday last. I will write in detail after I hear from you next week. The cold here is now bitter but such bad weather generally does not last long. In spite of the cold I have no need of meat or liquor. This fills my heart with joy and thankfulness. I am now keeping very good health. Please give my respects to mother and sister-in-law.

Mahatma, *Vol. I; also from a photostat of the Gujarati*

4. LONDON DIARY[1]

LONDON,
November, 12 1888

What led to the intention of proceeding to London? The scene opens about the end of April. Before the intention of coming to London for the sake of study was actually formed, I had a secret design in my mind of coming here to satisfy my curiosity of knowing what London was. While I was prosecuting my college studies in

[1] When his nephew and co-worker, Chhaganlal Gandhi, was proceeding for the first time to London in 1909, Gandhiji gave him his "London Diary" The diary filled about 120 pages. Chhaganlal Gandhi gave it to Mahadev Desai in 1920. But, before doing so, he copied out in a notebook about 20 pages of the original. The remaining 100 pages were not continuous writing, but merely a chronicle of incidents during his stay in London from 1888 to 1891. The original being untraceable, Chhaganlal's copy is reproduced here with minimum editing. Gandhiji wrote the diary in English when he was 19.

Bhavnagar[1], I had a chat with Jayshankar Buch. During the chat he advised me to apply to the Junagadh[2] State to give me a scholarship to proceed to London, I being an inhabitant of Sorath[3]. I do not perfectly remember the answer I made to him that day. I suppose I felt the impossibility of getting the scholarship. From that [time] I had in my mind the intention of visiting the land. I was finding the means to reach that end.

On 13th April, 1888, I left Bhavnagar to enjoy the vacation in Rajkot. After 15 days of vacation, my elder brother and I went to see Patwari. On our return my brother said : "We would go to see Mavji Joshi[4]", and so we went. Mavji Joshi asked me as usual how I did. Then put some questions about my study in Bhavnagar. I plainly told him that I had hardly any chance of passing my examination first year. I also added that I found the course very difficult. Hearing this, he advised my brother to send me as soon as possible to London for being called to the Bar. He said the expense will be only Rs. 5,000. "Let him take some *urad dal*. There he will cook some food for himself and thereby there will be no objection about religion. Don't reveal the matter to anybody. Try to get some scholarship. Apply to Junagadh and Porbandar States. See my son Kevalram[5], and if you fail in getting the pecuniary help and if you have no money, sell your furniture. But anyhow send Mohandas to London. I think that is the only means to keep the reputation of your deceased father." All of our family members have great faith in what Mavji Joshi says. And my brother who is naturally very credulous made a promise to Mavji Joshi to send me to London. Now was the time for my exertions.

On that very day my brother, notwithstanding his promise to keep the matter secret, told the thing to Khushalbhai[6]. He, of course, approved of it in case I could observe my religion. The very day it was told to Meghjibhai[7]. He quite agreed with the proposal and offered to give me Rs. 5,000. I had some faith in what he said. And when the matter was disclosed to my dear mother, she reproached me

[1] Former princely States in Gujarat

[2] *ibid*

[3] A district in Saurashtra

[4] Priest family friend and adviser of the Gandhi

[5] Leading lawyer of Kathiwan.

[6] Gandhiji's cousin and father of Chhaganlal and Maganlal both of whom worked 'with him in South Africa.

[7] Gandhiji's cousin

for being so credulous and she said I would never get any money from him when the time comes, which she thought never will come.

On that day I was to (go to) Kevalrambhai. I saw him accordingly. There I had not a satisfactory chat. He no doubt approved of my object but said: "You will have to spend there at least Rs. 10, 000." This was a great blow to me, and again he said: "You will have to set aside all your religious prejudices, if any. You will have to eat meat, you must drink. You cannot live without that. The more you spend, the cleverer you will be. It is a very important thing. I speak to you frankly. Don't be offended; but, look here, you are still very young. There are many temptations in London. You are apt to be entrapped by them." I was partially dejected by this talk. But I am not a man who would, after having formed any intention, leave it easily. He illustrated his statement by giving example of Mr. Gulam Mahomed Munshi. I asked him whether he could help me in any way in getting the scholarship. He answered in the negative. He said he would very gladly do anything except that. I told everything to my brother.

Then I was entrusted with the business of receiving the consent of my dear mother, which I thought was not an arduous task for me. After a day or two, my brother and I went to see Mr. Kevalram; there he saw us though he was very busy at that time. We had a talk of the similar kind that I had with him a day or two earlier. He advised my brother to send me to Porbandar. The proposal was agreed to. Then we returned. I began to introduce the subject to my mother in joke. The joke was turned to reality in no time. Then a day was fixed for my going to Porbandar.

Twice or thrice I prepared to go, but some difficulty came in my way. Once I was to go with Zaverchand, but an hour before the time of my departure a serious accident took place. I was always quarrelling with my friend Sheikh Mehtab[1]. On the day of departure I was quite engrossed in thinking about the quarrel. He had a musical party at night. I did not enjoy it very well. At about 10.30 p.m. the party ended and we all went to see Meghjibhai and Rami. On our way I was buried in the madcap thoughts of London on one side and the thoughts of Sheikh Mehtab on the other. Amidst thoughts, I came unconsciously in contact with a carriage. I received some injury. Yet I did not take the help of anybody in walking. I think I was quite dizzy. Then we entered the house of Meghjibhai. There I again came

[1] Boyhood friend of Gandhiji whom he tried for several years to reform, but without success

in contact with a stone unknowingly and received injury. I was quite senseless. From that [time] I did not know what took place, and after that, I am told by them, I fell flat on the ground after some steps. I was not myself for 5 minutes. They considered I was dead. But fortunately for myself the ground on which I fell was quite smooth. I came to my senses at last and all of them were quite joyful. The mother was sent for. She was very sorry for me, and this caused my delay though I told them that I was quite well. But none would allow me to go, though I afterwards came to know that my bold and dearest mother would have allowed me to go. But she feared the calumny of other people. At last with great difficulty I was allowed to leave Rajkot for Porbandar after some days. On my way too I had to encounter some difficulties.

At length I reached Porbandar to the joy of all. Lalbhai[1] and Karsondas[2] had come to the Khadi bridge to fetch me home. Now what had I to do in Porbandar [was to] exact consent from my uncle, and, secondly apply to Mr. Lely[3] to render me some pecuniary help, and last, in case of failure to get the State scholarship, to ask Parmanandbhai[4] to give me some money. The first thing I did was that I saw uncle and asked him whether he liked my going to London or not. Then, naturally, as I had expected, he asked me to enumerate the advantages of going to London. This I did according to my power. Then he said : "Of course, the people of this generation would like it very much, but, as for myself, I do not like it. Nevertheless we shall consider afterwards." I was not disappointed by such an answer. At least I had the satisfaction to know that at all events he liked it inwardly and his deed proved what I thought right.

Unfortunately for me, Mr. Lely was not in Porbandar. It is quite true that misfortunes never come single. After his return from the district where he had gone, he was to go at once on leave. My uncle advised me to wait for him till the next Sunday. And if he did not come up during that time, he said, he would send me where he should be. But it gives me much pleasure to write here that he returned from the district on Sunday. Then it was settled that I should see him on Monday. It was done accordingly. For the first time in my life I had an interview with an English gentleman. Formerly I never dared to front them. But thoughts of London made me bold. I had small

[1] Gandhi's cousin
[2] Gandhi's elder brother
[3] British Agent in Porbandhar State during the minority of the Prince
[4] Gandhiji's Cousin

talk with him in Gujarati. He was quite in a hurry. He saw me when he was ascending the ladder of the upper storey of his bungalow. He said the Porbandar State was very poor and could not give me any pecuniary help. However, he said, I should first graduate in India and then he would see if he could render me any help. Indeed such an answer from him quite disappointed me. I did not expect such a reply from him.

Now what I had to do was to ask Parmanandbhai to give me Rs. 5,000. He said he would very gladly give them if my uncle approved of my going to London. I thought this to be rather a difficult task, yet I was determined upon exacting his consent. I saw him when he was busy doing something, and addressed him thus : "Uncle, now tell me what you really think of my going. My chief aim in coming here is to exact your consent." Then he replied : "I cannot approve of it. Don't you know that I am going on a pilgrimage, and is it not disgraceful on my part to say that I like that people should go to London? However, if your mother and brother like it, I do not at all object to it." "But then," I said, "you don't know that you prevent Parmanandbhai from rendering me pecuniary help by refusing to allow my going to London." Just as I uttered these words, he said in an angry tone: "Is it so? My dear chap, you don't know why he says so. He knows that I will never approve of your going and so he brings forth this excuse. But the real thing is that he is never to render you any help of the kind. I do not prevent him from doing so." Thus ended our talk. Then I gaily ran off and saw Parmanandbhai and word by word related what took place between my uncle and myself. He too was quite angry when he heard this and at the same time made a promise to give me Rs. 5,000. I was quite overjoyed when he made a promise, and what pleased me more was that he swore by his son. Now from that day I began to think that I would surely go to London. Then I stayed some days in Porbandar and the more I stayed there the more I was assured of the promise.

Now here is what took place at Rajkot during my absence. My friend Sheikh Mehtab who, I should say, is very full of tricks, reminded Meghjibhai of his promise and forged a letter with my signature in which he wrote that I stood in need of Rs. 5,000 and so on. The letter was shown to him and it actually passed for a letter written by me. Then, of course, he was quite puffed up and made a solemn promise of giving me Rs. 5,000. I was not informed of this until I reached Rajkot.

Now to return again to Porbandar. At length a day was fixed for my departure and I bade farewell to my family members and was set off for Rajkot, with my brother Karsondas and Meghji's father, really an incarnation of miserliness. Before going to Rajkot, I went to Bhavnagar to sell off my furniture, and discontinue the rent of the house. I did it only in one day and was separated from the friends in the neighbourhood, not without tears from them and my kind landlady. I should never forget their kindness and that of Anopram and others. Having done this, I reached Rajkot.

But I was to see Colonel Watson[1] before my departure for three years. He was to come to Rajkot on the 19th June, 1888. Indeed it was a long time for me because I reached Rajkot in the beginning of May. But I could not help. My brother entertained very high hopes of Colonel Watson. These days were indeed hard days. I could not sleep well at night, was always attacked by dreams. Some persons dissuaded me from going to London and some advised me to do so. Sometimes my mother too asked me not to go, and what was very strange that not infrequently my brother also changed his mind. So I was held in suspense. But, as all of them knew that I should not leave off anything having first begun it, they were silent. During the time, I was asked by my brother to sound the mind of Meghjibhai about his promise. The result was quite disappointing, of course, and from that time he always acted the part of an enemy. He spoke ill of me before anybody and everybody. But I was quite able to disregard his taunts. My dearest mother was quite angry with him for this and sometimes uneasy. But I could easily console her, and I have the satisfaction to see that I have very often consoled her with success and have made her laugh heartily when she, my dear, dear mother, should be shedding tears on my account. At last Colonel Watson came. I saw him. He said: "I shall think about it", but I never got any help from him. I am sorry to say that it was with difficulty that I could take a trivial note of introduction which, he said in a peremptory voice, was worth one lac of rupees. Now really it makes me laugh.

Then a day was fixed for my departure. At first it was the fourth of August. The matter was now brought to a crisis. The fact I was to go to England went through the Press. My brother was always asked by some persons about my going. Now was the time when he told me to leave off the intention of going, but I would not do that. Then he

[1] Political Agent of Kathiawar, stationed at Rajkot

saw H. H. the Thakoresaheb[1] of Rajkot and requested him to render me some pecuniary help. But no help was obtained therefrom. Then for the last time I saw Thakoresaheb and Colonel Watson. I received a note of introduction from the latter and a photo from the former. Here I must write that the fulsome flattery which I had to practise about this time had quite made me angry. Had it not been for my credulous and dearest brother, I would never have resorted to such a piece of gross flattery. After all, the 10th August came and my brother, Sheikh Mehtab, Mr. Nathubhai, Khushalbhai and I started.

I left Rajkot for Bombay. It was Friday night. I was given an address by my school fellows. I was quite uneasy when I rose up to answer the address.[2] When I spoke half of what I had to speak, I began to shake. I hope I will not do it again when I return to India. Before proceeding further I must write. Many had come to bid me farewell on the night. Messrs Kevalram, Chhaganlal (Patwari), Vrajlal, Harishankar, Amolakh, Manekchand, Latib, Popat, Bhanji, Khimji, Ramji, Damodar, Meghji, Ramji Kalidas, Naranji, Ranchhoddas, Manilal were among those who came to did farewell. Jatashankar Vishvanath and others may be added. The first station was Gondal. There we saw Dr. Bhau and took Kapurbhai with us. Nathubhai came as far as Jetpur. At Dhola, Usmanbhai met us and he came as far as Wadhwan. At Dhola, Messrs Narandas, Pranshankar, Narbheram, Anandrai and Vrajlal had come to bid farewell.

Twenty-first was the day on which I was to leave Bombay. But the difficulties which I had to withstand in Bombay are indescribable. My caste fellows tried their best to prevent me from proceeding further. Almost all of them were in opposition. And at length my brother Khushalbhai and Patwari himself advised me not to go. But I wouldn't give heed to their advice. Then the sea weather was the excuse which delayed my proceeding. My brother and others then left me. But on a sudden I left Bombay on the 4th September 1888. At this time I was very much obliged to Messrs Jagmohandas, Damodardas and Bechardas. To Shamalji, of course, I owe immense obligation, and what I owe to Ranchhodlal[3] I don't know. It is something more than obligation. Messrs Jagmohandas, Manshankar,

[1] Ruler of the State

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Alfred High School, Rajkot", 4-7-1888.

[3] Ranchhodlal Patwari was very close to Gandhiji with whom he was in correspondence. Patwari's father helped him financially to go to England.

Bechardas, Narayandas Patwari, Dwarkadas, Popatlal, Kashidas, Ranchhodlal, Modi, Thakore, Ravi Shankar, Pherozeshah, Ratanshah, Shamalji and some others came to see me off on board the steamer, *Clyde*. Of these, Patwari gave me Rs. 5, Shamalji as many, Modi two, Kashidas one, Narandas two, and some others whom I forget. Mr. Manshankar gave me a silver chain, and then they all of them bade farewell for three years and departed. Before finishing this, I must write that had it been some other man in the same position which I was in, I dare say he would not have been able to see England. The difficulties which I had to withstand have made England dearer to me than she would have been.

SEPTEMBER 4, 1888

The sea voyage. It was about 5 p.m. when the ship weighed anchor. I was very anxious about the voyage but fortunately it agreed with me. Throughout the voyage I was not at all sea-sick and I had no vomiting. It was for the first time in my life that I sailed in a steamship. I enjoyed the voyage very much. At about 6 o'clock the dinner bell was rung. The steward asked me to go to the table. But I did not go and ate what I had brought with me. I was very much surprised at the liberty which Mr. Mazmudar took with me on the first night. He spoke to me in such a manner as if we were very old acquaintances. He had no black coat. So I gave him mine for dinner. He went to the table. From that night I liked him very much. He entrusted his keys to me, and I began to look upon him as my elder brother from that very night. There was one Maratha doctor with us as far as Aden. He, on the whole, looked like a good man. Thus for two days I lived upon the sweetmeat and fruits which I had on board with me. Then Mr. Mazmudar made an agreement with some boys on board to cook us food. I would never have been able to make such an agreement. There was one Abdul Majid who was a first-class passenger while we were saloon passengers. We enjoyed our dinner cooked by the boy.

Now something about the steamship. I liked the arrangements of the steamer very much. When we sit in the cabins or saloon, we forget that the cabins and the saloons are a part of the ship. We sometimes do not feel the motion at all. The dexterity of the workmen and the sailors was indeed admirable. There were musical instruments in the steamer. I every now and then played upon the piano. There were cards, chessboard and draughts on the board. The European passengers always played some games at night. The decks are a great relief to the passengers. You are generally tired of sitting in the

cabins. On the decks you get fresh air. You can mix with and talk with the fellow-passengers if you are bold and have got that stuff. The scene of the sea when the sky is clear is lovely. On one moonlight night I was watching the sea. I could see the moon reflected in the water. On account of the waves, the moon appeared as if she were moving here and there. One dark night when the sky was clear the stars were reflected in the water. The scene around us was very beautiful at that time. I could not at first imagine what that was. They appeared like so many diamonds. But I knew that a diamond could not float. Then I thought that they must be some insects which can only be seen at night. Amidst these reflections I looked at the sky and at once found that it was nothing but stars reflected in waters. I laughed at my folly. This reflection of the stars gives us the idea of fireworks. Fancy yourself to be standing on the storey of a bungalow watching the fireworks performed before you. I very often enjoyed this scene.

For some days I did not speak a word to the fellow-passengers. I always got up at 8 a.m. in the morning, washed my teeth, then went to the w.c. and took my bath. The arrangement of the English water closets astonished a native passenger. We do not get there water and are obliged to use pieces of paper.

After enjoying the sea voyage for about five days, we reached Aden. During these days not a single piece of land or a mountain was seen by us. All of us were tired of the monotony of the voyage and were eager to see land. At last on the morning of the 6th day we saw land. All looked gay and cheerful. At about 11 a.m. we anchored at Aden. Some boys came with small boats. They were great swimmers. Some Europeans threw some money in the waters. They went deep into the waters and found out the money. I wish I could do so. This was a pretty sight. We, after enjoying this sight for about half an hour, went to see Aden. I must say here that we simply saw the boys finding out the pieces. Ourselves did not throw a single pie. From this day we began to experience the idea of expenses of England. We were three persons and had to pay two rupees for boat hire. The coast was hardly at a mile's distance. We reached the coast in 15 minutes. Then we hired a carriage. We intended to go to see the waterworks which are the only object of interest in Aden. But, unfortunately, the time being up we could not go there. We saw the Camp of Aden. It was good; the buildings were good. They were generally shops. The construction of the buildings was most probably like that of the bungalows in Rajkot and especially the new bungalow of the Political Agent. I could not

see any well or any place of fresh water there. I am afraid that perhaps the tanks are the only place for fresh water. The heat of the sun was excessive. I was quite wet with perspiration. This was because we were not far from the Red Sea. What astonished me more was that I saw not a single tree or a green plant. Men rode on mules or asses. We could hire mules if we liked. The camp is situated on the hill. I heard from the boatman, when we returned, that the boys of whom I wrote above are sometimes injured. The legs of some and arms of others are cut off by sea animals. But still the boys, being very poor, sat each in their small boats in which we dare not sit. Each of us had to pay one rupee for the carriage fare. The anchor was weighed at 12 a.m. and we left Aden. But from this day we always saw some land.

In the evening we entered the Red Sea. We began to feel the heat. But I don't think it was so scorching, as is described by some in Bombay. Indeed it was unbearable in the cabins. You cannot expose yourself to the sun. You will not like to stay even for a few minutes in your cabin. But if you are on the deck you are sure to receive pleasant gales of fresh air. At least I did so. Almost all the passengers slept on the deck and so did I. The heat of the new morning sun, too, you cannot bear. You are always safe when you are on the deck. This heat we generally get for three days. Then we entered the Suez on the fourth night. We could see the lamps in the Suez from a great distance. The Red Sea was sometimes broad and sometimes quite narrow. So narrow that we can see the land on both the sides. Before entering the Suez Canal we passed the Hellsgate. Hellsgate is a strip of water very narrow, bound on both the sides by hills. It is so called because many ships are wrecked at that place. We saw the wreck of a ship in the Red Sea. We stayed at Suez for about half an hour. Now it was said that we shall receive cold. Some said that you will require liquor after leaving Aden. But it was false. Now I had begun to talk a little with the fellow-passengers. They said, after leaving Aden you will require meat: but it was not so. For the first time in my life I saw the electric light in the front of our ship. It appeared like moonlight. The front part of the ship appeared very beautiful. I think it must appear more beautiful to a man seeing it, placed on some other place, just as we cannot enjoy the beauty of our person as others, i.e., we cannot see it to advantage. The construction of the Suez Canal I am not able to understand. It is indeed marvellous. I cannot think of the genius of a man who invented it. I don't know how he would have done it. It is quite right to say that he has competed with nature. It is not an easy

task to join two seas. Only one ship can pass through the Canal at a time. It requires skilful pilotship. The ship sails at a very low motion. We cannot feel its motion. The water of the Canal is quite dirty. I forget its depth. It is as broad as the Aji[1] at Ramnath. You can see men passing by on both the sides. The part near the Canal is barren. The Canal belongs to the French. Another pilot comes from Ismailia to direct the ship. The French take a certain sum of money for every ship that passes through the Canal. The income must be very large. Besides the electric lamp in the ship, there are seen lights at a distance of some 20 feet on both sides. These are the lights of different colours. The ship has to pass these rows of lights. It takes about 24 hours to pass through the Canal. The beauty of the scene is beyond my power to describe. You cannot enjoy it unless you see it. Port Said is the terminus of the Canal. Port Said owes its existence to the Suez Canal. We anchored at Port Said in the evening. The ship was to stay there for an hour, but one hour was quite sufficient to see Port Said. Now the currency was English. Indian money is quite useless here. The boat-fare is six pence each. A penny is worth one anna. The construction of the Port Said building is French. Here we get an idea of the French life. There we saw some coffee restaurants. At the first I thought it was a theatre. But it was nothing but a coffee house. [On] one side we drink coffee or soda or tea or any drink, and on the other we hear music. Some women are playing fiddle bands. A bottle of lemonade in these cafes, as they are called, will cost you 12 pence, which we get for less than a penny in Bombay. Customers are said to hear music gratis. But really it is not so. As soon as the music is finished, a woman, with a plate covered with a handkerchief in her hand comes before every customer. That means that you give her something and we are obliged to give something. We visited the cafe and gave 6 pence to the woman. Port Said is nothing but a seat of luxury. There women and men are very cunning. The interpreter will follow to guide you. But you boldly tell him that you do not want him. Port Said is hardly as big as the proper *para*[2] of Rajkot. We left Port Said at 7 p.m.

Among our fellow-passengers one Mr. Jeffreys was very kind to me. He always told me to go to the table, and take something there, but I would not go. He said, after leaving Brindisi you will feel cold,

[1] River near Rajkot
[2] Locality

but it was not so. After 3 days we reached Brindisi at night. The harbour of Brindisi is beautiful. The steamer just touches the coast and you descend to the coast by means of a ladder provided there. It being [dark] I could not see Brindisi much. There everyone speaks Italian. Roads of Brindisi are paved with stones. The streets are sloping. They too are paved. Gas is used for lamps. We saw the station of Brindisi. It was not so beautiful as the stations of the B. B. & C. I. Rly. But the railway carriages were far bigger than ours. The traffic was good. When you land at Brindisi, a man would come and ask you, in case you are a black man: "Sir, there is a beautiful girl of 14, follow me, Sir, and I will take you there, the charge is not high, Sir." You are at once puzzled. But be calm and answer boldly that you don't want her and tell the man to go away and thereby you will be safe. If you are in any difficulty at once refer to a policeman just near you, or at once enter a large building which you will surely see. But before you enter it, read the name on the building and make sure that it is open to all. Thus you will be safe. This you will be able to make out at once. Tell the porter there that you are in a difficulty, and he will at once show you what you should do. If you are bold enough, ask the porter to take you to the Chief Officer and you will refer the matter to him. By a large building I mean that it must be belonging to Thomas Cook or Henry King or some such other agents. They will take care of you. Don't be miserly at that time. Pay the porter something. But this means is to be resorted to when you think yourself to be in any danger. But these buildings you will only see on the coasts. If you are far away from the coast you are to find out a policeman and in case of failure, your conscience is the best dictator. We left Brindisi early in the morning.

After about 3 days we reached Malta. The ship anchored at about 2 p.m. She was to stay there for nearly four hours. Mr. Abdul Majid was to come with us. But somehow or other he was very late. I was quite impatient to go. Mr. Mazmudar said: "Shall we go alone and not wait for Mr. Majid?" I said: "Just as you please. I have no objection." Then, of course, we went alone. On our return Abdul Majid saw us and said he was very sorry that we went away. Then Mr. Mazumdar said: "It was Gandhi who was impatient and told me not to wait for you." I was really very much offended by such behaviour of Mr. Mazmudar. I did not try to wash off the charge but silently accepted it. But I know that the charge would have been washed off, had I only hinted to Abdul Majid: "Had Mr. Mazmudar really wanted to wait for you, he had better not act according to what I said." And I

think this would have been quite sufficient to convince Mr. Abdul Majid of my having no hand in the doing. But at that time I did not mean to do anything of the kind. But from that day I began to entertain very low opinion about Mr. Mazmudar, and from that day I had no real respect for him. Besides there happened two or three things which made me like Mazmudar the less day by day.

Malta is an object of interest. There are many things to see. But the time at our disposal was not sufficient. As I said before, Mr. Mazmudar and myself went to the coast. Here we had received a great rogue. We had to suffer a great loss. We took the number of the boat, and to see the city we hired a carriage. The rogue was with us. After driving for about half an hour, we reached St. Juan Church. The church was beautifully built. There we saw some skeletons of eminent persons. They were very old. We gave a shilling to the friend who showed us over the church. Just opposite the church was a statue of St. Juan. Thence drove to the city. The roads were paved. On both sides of the pavement were paved walks for men. The island is very beautiful. There are many grand buildings. Went to see the Armoury Hall. This hall was beautifully decorated. There we saw very old paintings. They were not really paintings but embroidered in. But a stranger would not perceive that it was embroidered work unless told by somebody. In the hall were the arms of old warriors. All of them [were] worth seeing. Having no record, I do not remember them all. There was a helmet which was 30 lb. in weight. The carriage of Napoleon Bonaparte was very beautiful. Having given a tip of 6d. to the man who showed us over the hall we returned. We were obliged to take off our hats when we saw the church and the Armoury Hall, as a token of respect. Then we went to the shop of the rogue. He tried to force something upon us. But we wouldn't buy anything. At length Mr. Mazmudar bought the views of Malta for 2/6. Here the rogue gave us an interpreter and himself did not come with us. The interpreter was a very good man. He drove us to the orange gardens. We saw the gardens. I did not like the gardens at all. I like our public park of Rajkot better than the gardens. If there was anything worth seeing for me, it was the golden and red fishes in a small enclosure of water. Thence we returned to the town, went to a hotel. Mr. Mazmudar took some potatoes and tea. On our way we met an Indian. Mr. Mazmudar being a very bold man spoke to the Indian. On further talk with him it was understood that he was the brother of a man who had a shop in Malta. We at once went to the shop. Mr. Mazmudar had a

good chat with the shopkeeper. We made some purchases there and spent two hours in the shop. So we could not see much of Malta. We saw another church. That too was very beautiful and worth seeing. We had to see the opera house but we had no time to do that. We took leave of the gentleman who gave Mr. Mazmudar his card to his brother in London. On our return, the rogue again met us and came with us at 6 p.m. We reached the coast and paid the rogue, the good interpreter and the carriageman. We had a quarrel about the fare with the boat-man. The result was, of course, in favour of the boatman. Here we were cheated a good deal.

The steamer *Clyde* left at 7 p.m. After 3 days' voyage we reached Gibraltar at 12 p.m. The ship remained there the whole night. I had a good mind to see Gibraltar, so got up early in the morning and awakened Mazmudar and asked him whether he would come with me to the shore or not. He said he would. Then I went to Mr. Majid and awoke him. We three went to the shore. The time at our disposal was only $1^1/_2$ hours. It being the dawn of the day all the shops were shut. It is said that Gibraltar being a free port smoking is very cheap. Gibraltar is built upon a rock. On the top is the fortification which to our great sorrow we could not see. The houses are in rows. In order to go from the first row to the second, we are obliged to ascend certain steps. I liked it very much. The construction was beautiful. Roads were paved. Having no time we were soon obliged to return. The ship weighed anchor at 8.30 a.m.

In three days we reached Plymouth at 11 p.m. Now was the proper time for cold. Each and every passenger said that we would die without meat and drink but nothing of the kind happened to us. Indeed it was pretty well cold. We were also told about the storm but could not see the storm. Really I was very anxious to see it but could not. It being night we could see nothing of Plymouth. We had dense fog there. At length the ship left for London. In 24 hours we reached London; left the steamer and reached Victoria Hotel *via* Tilbury Station on the 27th[1] October, 1888, at 4 p.m.

27TH[2] OCTOBER, 1888, SATURDAY, TO 23RD NOVEMBER, FRIDAY

Mr. Mazmudar, Mr. Abdul Majid and I reached the Victoria Hotel. Mr. Abdul Majid told in a dignified air to the porter of the

[1] The source has "28th" which was a Sunday. Evidently this is a slip. In An Autobiography, Pt. I, Ch. XIII, Gandhiji says he arrived in London on a Saturday, which fell on October 27.

[2] *ibid*

Victoria Hotel to give our cabman the proper fare. Mr. Abdul Majid thought very highly of himself, but let me write here that the dress which he had put on was perhaps worse than that of the porter. He did not take care of the luggage too, and as if he had been in London for a long time, stepped into the hotel. I was quite dazzled by the splendour of the hotel. I had never in my life seen such pomp. My business was simply to follow the two friends in silence. There were electric lights all over. We were admitted into a room. There Mr. Majid at once went. The manager at once asked him whether he would choose second floor or not. Mr. Majid thinking it below his dignity to inquire about the daily rent said yes. The manager at once gave us a bill of 6s. each per day and a boy was sent with us. I was all the while smiling within myself. Then we were to go to the second floor by a lift. I did not know what it was. The boy at once touched something which I thought was lock of the door. But as I afterwards came to know it was the bell and he rang in order to tell the waiter to bring the lift. The doors were opened and I thought that was a room in which we were to sit for some time. But to my great surprise we were brought to the second floor.

[Incomplete]

5. DRAFT OF LETTER TO FREDERICK LELY[1]

LONDON,
December, 1888

DEAR SIR,

You will know me by looking at the note which, you said, when I had the opportunity of seeing you, you would preserve.

At that time I had requested you to render to me some pecuniary aid as a means to enable me to proceed to England; but unfortunately you were in a hurry to leave; so I had not the sufficient time to say all that I had to say.

I was at that time very impatient to proceed to England. So I left India on the 4th of September, 1888, with what little money I had at that time. What my father left for us three brothers was indeed very little. However, trusting that nearly £666, which was all my brother could with great difficulty spare for me, would be sufficient for my three years' stay in London. I left India for receiving legal education in England. I knew while in India that education and living in London were very expensive. But now from two months' experience in

[1] Gandhiji sent this to his elder brother, Lakshmidas Gandhi.

London, I find that they are more so than they appeared to be in India.

In order to live here comfortably and to receive good education, I shall require an extra help of £400. I am a native of Porbandar and as such that is the only place I can look up to for such help.

During the late rule of H. H. the Rana Saheb, very little encouragement was given to education. But we can naturally expect that education must be encouraged under the English Administration. I am one who can take advantage of such encouragement.

I hope, therefore, that you may please render me some pecuniary help and thereby confer great and much-needed obligation on me.

I have asked my brother Laxmidas Gandhi to receive [it] and am sending him a note to see you in person if necessary.

Trusting you will be induced to grant my request.

With best respects,

I beg to remain,
yours,
M. K. GANDHI

I prepared this draft of a letter three weeks ago and have been thinking over it ever since. Believing that a reply to this letter will come in the meantime I am sending you the draft. I have not asked for the whole amount, as it would be unreasonable. Again he may think that if I had been absolutely dependent upon his help, I would not have proceeded to England without making sure of it. But having found on arrival here that I shall need more funds, I have asked for only the additional amount. I have not offered to bind myself in any way, because I did not think it necessary. Nor did I feel that it was proper to bind myself for an amount which will cover only part of my expenses. Besides, if . . .[1]

[Incomplete]

Mahatma, Vol. I; also from a photostat

[1] This covering note, originally written in Gujarati, was addressed to Lakshmidas Gandhi while forwarding the draft to him.

6. LETTER TO COL. J. W. WATSON

[*December, 1888*]

COLONEL J. W. WATSON
POLITICAL AGENT
Kathiawa

DEAR SIR,

It is about six or seven weeks since I landed in this country. By this time, I am comfortably settled and have fairly begun my studies. I have joined the Inner Temple for my legal course.

You are well aware that English life is very expensive and, from what little experience I have had of it, I find that it is more so than I could persuade myself to believe while I was in India. My means as you know are very limited. I don't think I can go through a course of three years satisfactorily without some extraneous help. When I remember that you took a great deal of interest in my father and had extended your hand of friendship to him, I have very little doubt that you will take the same interest in what concerns him and I feel confident that you will try your best to procure me some substantial help which would facilitate my course of study in this country. You will thus confer a great and much-needed obligation upon me.

I saw Dr. Butler a few days ago. He is very kind to me and has promised to give me all assistance he can.

The weather so far has not been very severe. I am doing very well.

With best respects,

I beg to remain,
Dear Sir,
Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

Mahatma, Vol. I; also from a photostat

7. INDIAN VEGETARIANS-I

India is inhabited by twenty-five million[1] of people of various castes and creeds. The very common belief among the Englishmen who have not been to India, or who have taken very little interest in

[1] Obviously, a slip for crores

Indian matters, is that all the Indians are born vegetarians. Now this is true only in part. Indian people are divided into three main divisions, viz., the Hindus, the Mohammedans, and the Parsis.

The Hindus are again divided into four chief castes, viz., the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaisyas, and the Sudras, Of all these, in theory, only the Brahmins and the Vaisyas are pure vegetarians. But in practice almost all the Indians are vegetarians. Some are so voluntarily, and others compulsorily. The latter, though always willing to take, are yet too poor to buy meat. This statement will be borne out by the fact that there are thousands in India who have to live on one pice ($1^1/_3$d.) a day. These live on bread and salt, a heavily taxed article; for even in a poverty-stricken country like India, it will be very difficult,if not utterly impossible,to get eatable flesh-meat for $^{11}/_3$d.

The question who are vegetarians in India being disposed of, the natural question will be what is vegetarianism as practised by them? To begin with, Indian vegetarianism does not mean the V.E.M.[1] diet. The Indians, i.e., the Indian vegetarians, decline to take, besides fish, flesh and fowl, eggs, for they argue that to eat an egg is equivalent to killing life; since an egg, if left undisturbed would, *prima facie,* become a fowl. But, unlike some of the vegetarian extremists here, they not only do not abstain from milk and butter, but consider them sacred enough to be used on what are called "fruit-days", which occur every fortnight, and which are generally observed by the high-caste Hindus; because, as they put it, they do not kill the cow in taking milk from her. And certainly the milking of a cow, which, by the way, has been the subject of painting and poetry cannot shock the most delicate feelings as would the slaughtering of her. It may be worth mentioning *en passant* that the cow is an object of worship among the Hindus, and a movement set on foot to prevent the cows from being shipped off for the purposes of slaughter is progressing rapidly.

The Vegetarian, 7-2-1891

8. INDIAN VEGETARIANS-II

Indian vegetarians food generally varies with the parts they live in. Thus in Bengal the staple article of food is rice, while in the Bombay Presidency it is wheat.

[1] V.E.M. probably means vegetables, eggs, milk.

All the Indians generally—and the grown-up persons particularly, and among them the high-caste Hindus—take two meals a day with a glass or two of water between the meals whenever they feel thirsty. The first meal they take at about 10 a.m., which would correspond to the English dinner, and the second meal at about 8 p.m., which would correspond to supper so far as the name goes, though in reality, it is a substantial meal. From the above it will have been seen that there is no breakfast—which, seeing that the Indians generally rise at 6 o'clock, and even as early as four or five o'clock in the morning, they would seem to require—nor the ordinary midday meal. Some of the readers will no doubt wonder how the Indians go about without anything to eat for nine hours after their first meal. This may be explained in two ways, viz., first, the habit is second nature. Their religion commands some, and employment or custom compels others, to take not more than two meals in one day. Secondly, the climate of India, which except in some parts is very hot, will account for the habit. For even in England, it appears that the same quantity of food is not required in summer as in winter. Unlike the English, the Indians do not take each dish separately, but they mix many things together. Among some of the Hindus it is one of the requirements of their religion to mix all their food together. Moreover, every dish is elaborately prepared. In fact they don't believe in plain boiled vegetables, but must have them flavoured with plenty of condiments, e.g., pepper, salt, cloves, turmeric, mustard seed, and various other things for which it would be difficult to find English names unless they be those used in medicine.

The first meal consists generally of bread or rather cakes—of which more hereafter—some pulse, e.g., peas, haricot beans, etc., and two or three green vegetables cooked together, or separately, followed by rice and pulse cooked in water, and flavoured with various spices. After this, some take milk and rice, or simply milk, or curdled milk, or even whey, especially in summer.

The second meal, i.e., the supper, consists of much the same things as the first one, but the quantity is less and the vegetables fewer at this meal. Milk is more liberally used at this meal. The readershould be reminded that this is not the food that the Indians invariably use nor should he think that the above will be the typical dishes all over India and among all classes. Thus, for example, no sweets are mentioned in the specimen meals while they are sure to be used among the well-to-do classes at least once a week. Moreover, while, as

said above, wheat preponderates over rice in the Bombay Presidency, in Bengal rice gets the better of wheat. So also with regard to the third exception which must prove the rule, the food among the labouring class is different from what is given above. To mention all the varieties would be the fill up volumes and to do so would, it is to be feared, divest the article of all interest.

Butter, or if you please, clarified butter, is much more used for culinary purposes than in England or, it may be, even in Europe. And according to a doctor of some authority, if it would do no good, much use of better, in a hot climate like that of India would do no harm such as it might do in a cold climate like that of England.

It will perhaps strike the reader that the fruit, yes, the all-important fruit, is sadly conspicuous by its absence in the above-mentioned specimen dishes. Some, among many of the reasons, are that the Indians do not know the proper value of fruit, that the poor people cannot afford to buy good fruit, and that good fruit is not available all over India, except in large cities. Indeed, there are certain fruits, not to be found here, which are used by all classes in India; but alas, these are used as superficial things, not as food, and no one knows their value chemically, because no one takes the trouble to analyse them.

The Vegetarian, 14-2-1891

9. *INDIAN VEGETARIANS-III*

In the previous article "more hereafter" was promised about the cakes. These cakes are generally made of wheat-flour. Wheat is first ground in a handmill—a simple contrivance to reduce the wheat to powder-not a mill requiring machinery. This powdered wheat is passed through a sieve with large holes, so that the coarsest bran is left out. Indeed, among the poor classes it is not passed through the sieve at all. Thus the flour, though not the same as that used by the vegetarians here, is far superior to the ordinary flour that is used here for the much-abused white bread. Some clarified butter, i.e., butter boiled and passed through a sieve-sometimes a useless process when the butter is quite pure-and then allowed to become cool-say a tea-spoonful to a pound of flour—is mixed with the flour, a sufficient quantity of water is poured on it, and then it is kneaded with the hands until it forms itself into one homogeneous mass. This lump is divided into small equal parts, each as big as a tangerine. These are rolled into thin circular pieces about six inches in diameter with a wooden stick made specially for the purpose. Each piece is separately and

thoroughly baked in a flat dish. It takes from five to seven minutes to bake one cake. This cake is eaten while hot with butter, and has a very nice flavour. It may be, and is, eaten even quite cold. What meat is to the ordinary Englishman, the cake is to the Indian, be he a vegetarian or a meat-eater, for in India a meat-eater does not, in the writer's opinion, regard his meat as an absolute necessity, but takes it rather as a side dish to help him, so to speak, in eating the cakes.

Such in outline, and only in outline, is the ordinary food of a well-to-do Indian vegetarian. Now a question may be asked, "Has not the British Rule effected any change in the habits of the Indian people?" So far as the food and drink are concerned "yes", and "no". No, because ordinary men and women have stuck to their original food and the number of meals. Yes, because those who have learnt a little bit of English have picked up English ideas here and there, but this change too—whether it is for the worse or for the better must be left to the reader to judge—is not very perceptible.

The last-mentioned class have begun to believe in breakfast, which usually consists of a cup or two of tea. Now this brings us to the question of drink. The drinking of tea and coffee by the so-called educated Indians, chiefly due to the British Rule, may be passed over with the briefest notice. The most that tea and coffee can do is to cause a little extra expense, and general debility of health when indulged in to excess, but one of the most greatly-felt evils of the British Rule is the importation of alcohol—that enemy of mankind, that curse of civilization—in some form or another. The measure of the evil wrought by this borrowed habit will be properly gauged by the reader when he is told that the enemy has spread throughout the length and breadth of India, in spite of the religious prohibition; for even the touch of a bottle containing alcohol pollutes the Mohammedan, according to his religion, and the religion of the Hindu strictly prohibits the use of alcohol in any form whatever, and yet, alas! the Government, it seems, instead of stopping, are aiding and abetting the spread of alcohol. The poor there, as everywhere, are the greatest sufferers. It is they who spend what little they earn in buying alcohol instead of buying food and other necessities. It is that wretched poor man who has to starve his family, who has to break the sacred trust of looking after his children, if any, in order to drink himself into misery and premature death. Here be it said to the credit of Mr. Caine1, the ex-Member for Barrow, that he, undaunted, is still carrying on his admirable crusade against the spread of the evil, but what can the energy of one man, however powerful, do against the inaction of an apathetic and dormant Government?

The Vegetarian, 21-2-1891

10. INDIAN VEGETARIANS-IV

After having known who are vegetarians in India, and what they generally eat, the reader will be able to judge from the following facts how hollow and baseless are the arguments advanced by some people regarding the weak constitutions of the vegetarian Hindus.

One thing often said about the Indian vegetarians is that they are physically very feeble, and that, therefore, vegetarianism is not compatible with bodily strength.

Now, if it can be proved that generally in India the vegetarians are as strong as, if not stronger than, the Indian meat-eaters, and for that matter even Englishmen, and moreover, that where weakness exists it can be ascribed to many other reasons than that of non-flesh diet, the whole structure on which the above argument is based falls to the ground.

It must at the outset be admitted that the Hindus as a rule are notoriously weak; but an unbiased person—a meat-eater—who knows India and her people even superficially will tell you that there are many other causes incessantly at work to account for the proverbial[1] weakness. One of the most important reasons, if not *the* most important one, is the wretched custom of infant marriages and its attendant evils. Generally, children when they reach the great age of nine are burdened with the fetters of married life. In many cases they are married at a still younger age and in some cases they are betrothed while yet unborn. Thus one woman would promise to marry her child, if male, to another's if female, and vice versa. Of course in the two latter cases consummation does not take place before they are ten or eleven years old. Cases are recorded in which a wife of twelve had a child by a husband of sixteen or seventeen. Will not these marriages tell upon the strongest constitutions?

Now fancy how weak the progeny of such marriages must be. Then look at the cares such a couple have to undergo. Suppose a boy of eleven is married to a girl of about the same age. Thus at a time when the boy should be, and is, ignorant of what it is to be a husband, he has a wife forced on him. He is, of course, attending his school. In

[1] William Sproston Caine (1842-1903); four times member of British Parliament; serve on the Indian Parliamentary sub-committee of the British Committee of the Congress; Supported self-government for India. Was kneely interested in South Indian's cause.

addition to the drudgery at school he has his child-wife to look after. He has not actually to maintain her, for in India a son when married does not necessarily separate from his parents unless he be at sixes and sevens[1] with them; but he has to do everything short of that. Then about six years after marriage he has a son, probably he has not yet finished his studies, and he has to think of earning money not only to maintain himself but his wife and child, for he cannot expect to pass his whole life with his father, and even granting that he may, he should certainly be expected to contribute something towards his wife's and his child's maintenance. Will not the mere knowledge of his duty prey upon his mind and thus undermine his health? Can anyone dare to say that this will not shatter the most robust constitution? But one may well argue that if that boy, in the above example, had eaten flesh-meat he would have kept stronger than he did. A reply to such an argument is to be found from those Kshatriya princes who in spite of their meat diet are very weak owing to debauchery.

Then the shepherds in India afford a good example of how strong an Indian vegetarian can be where other opposite agencies are not at work. An Indian shepherd is a finely built man of Herculean constitution. He, with his thick, strong cudgel, would be a match for any ordinary European with his sword. Cases are recorded of shepherds having killed or driven away tigers and lions with their cudgels. “But, “said a friend one day, “this is an example of men living in the rude and natural state. In the present highly artificial state of society you require something more than mere cabbage and peas. Your shepherd lacks intelligence, he reads no book, etc. etc”.The one and only answer to this was, and is, that the vegetarian shepherd would be equal to, if not more than a match for, a meat-eating shepherd. Thus there is a comparison between vegetarian of one class and a meat-eater of the same class. It is a comparison between strength and strength, and not between strength and strength plus intelligence, for my attempt for the moment is simply to disprove that Indian vegetarians are physically weak on account of their vegetarianism.

Eat what food you will, it is impossible, it seems, to make physical and mental strength go together except, perhaps, in rare cases. The law of compensation will require that what is gained in mental power must be lost in bodily power. A Samson cannot be a

[1] Gandhiji perhaps means ‘at variance’.

Gladstone. And granting the argument that a substitute is required for vegetables in the present state of society, is it conclusively proved that flesh or meat is that substitute?

Then take the case of the Kshatriyas, the so-called warlike race in India. They are, of course, meat-eaters and how few of them there are who have wielded a sword! Far be it from me to say that they as a race are very weak. So long as Pruthuraj[1] and Bhim[2] and all of their type—not to go to the older times—are remembered, he will be a fool who would have it believed that they are a weak race. But now it is a sad fact that they have degenerated. The truly warlike people, among others, are the people of the North-Western provinces, known as Bhayas[3]. They subsist on wheat, pulse, and greens. They are the guardians of peace, they are largely employed in the native armies.

From the above facts it is easy to see that vegetarianism is not only not injurious, but on the contrary is conducive to bodily strength and that attributing the Hindu weakness to vegetarianism is simply based on a fallacy.

The Vegetarian, 28-2-1891

11. INDIAN VEGETARIANS-V

We saw in the last article that the bodily weakness of the Hindu vegetarians was attributable to other causes than their diet, and also that the shepherds who were vegetarians were as strong as meat-eaters. This shepherd being a very good specimen of a vegetarian, we may with profit examine his way of living; but before proceeding further, the reader may be told that what follows does not apply to all the Indian shepherds. It applies to the shepherds of a certain part of India. Just as the habits of the people in Scotland would be different from those of the people in England, so also would the habits of the people living in one part of India be different from those of the people living in another part.

The Indian shepherd then gets up generally at five o'clock in the morning. The first thing he does, if he is a pious shepherd, is to offer

[1] Prithviraj Chauhan, 11th-century king claiming descent from the Sun; famed for his physical prowess

[2] Second of the Pandava Princes, in the *Mahabharata*, reputed for his great stature and strength.

[3] The reference is to the *Bhayyas* (literally, brothers), a name originally given to the peasantry of Uttar Pradesh

some prayers to his God. Then he does his toilet which consists of washing his mouth and face. I may be allowed here to digress for a while to acquaint the reader with the brush an Indian uses for his teeth. The brush is nothing more than a branch of a thorny tree called babul; one branch is cut up into pieces about a foot long. Of course, all the thorns are removed. The Indian crushes one end of the stick between his teeth till it is soft enough to brush his teeth. Thus he makes for himself every day a new and home-made brush. When he has well brushed his teeth and made them pearl white he splits the stick into two, and after bending one part into a curve scrapes his tongue. This process of brushing probably accounts for the strong and beautiful teeth of the average Indian. It is perhaps superfluous to add that he uses no tooth powder. Old persons when their teeth are not strong enough to crush the stick use a small hammer. The whole process does not take more than twenty or twenty-five minutes.

To return to the shepherd, he then takes his breakfast consisting of a thick cake made of millet—an Anglo-Indian name for bajari, a kind of corn much used in India instead of, or in addition to, wheat—clarified butter and molasses. At about eight or nine o'clock in the morning he goes to pasture the cattle placed under his superintendence. The place of pasture is generally two or three miles from his town. It is hilly tract of land studded with a green carpet of luxuriant foliage. Thus he has the unique advantage of enjoying the freshestm air with natural scenery thrown in. While the cattle are roaming about, he whiles away his time in singing or talking to his companion who may be his wife, brother or some other relation. At about twelve o' clock he takes his lunch, which he always carries with him. It consists of the ever-present cakes, clarified butter, one vegetable, or some pulse, or instead, or in addition, some pickle and fresh milk directly taken from the cow. Then at about two or three o'clock he not infrequently takes a nap for about half an hour under some shady tree. This short sleep gives him relief from the heat of the scorching sun. At six he returns home, at seven he has supper, for which he takes some hot cakes, pulse or vegetables, winds up with rice and milk, or rice and whey. After doing some household business, which often means a pleasant chat with the family members, he goes to bed at ten o'clock. He sleeps either in the open air, or in a hut which is sometimes overcrowded. He resorts to the hut in winter or in the rainy season. It may be worthy of remark that these huts, even though miserable in appearance and often without any windows, are not air

tight. Being constructed in a rude state, their doors are made, not as a protection against draughts of wind, but against burglars. It cannot, however, be denied that there is much room for improvement in the huts.

Such, then, is the living of a well-to-do shepherd. His, in many respects, is an ideal mode of life. He is perforce regular in his habits, is out of doors during the greater part of his time, while out he breathes the purest air, has his due amount of exercise, has good and nourishing food and last but not least, is free from many cares which are frequently productive of weak constitutions.

The Vegetarian, 7-3-1891

12. INDIAN VEGETARIANS-VI

The only flaw that can be found in his mode of living is the paucity of baths. In a hot climate baths are very useful. While a Brahmin would have his bath twice a day, and a Vaisya once a day, a shepherd would have only one bath a week. I shall here again digress to explain the manner in which the Indian takes his baths. Generally, he has his baths in the river flowing near his town, but if he is too idle to go to the river, or is afraid of being drowned, or if there is no river near his town, he has his baths at home. There is no bath into which he can plunge. He takes water from a large vessel, placed near him, with a goblet and pours it over his body, because he believes that the moment you plunge into stagnant water you render it impure and, therefore, unfit for further use. For the same reason he would not even wash his hands in a basin, but have someone to pour it over his hands or do it himself by holding the goblet between his arms.

But to return, the paucity of the baths does not, it seems, materially affect his health; while it is obvious that if the Brahmin were to go without his baths even for a day, he would feel very uncomfortable, and if he were to continue not taking them a little longer, he would very soon become ill.

This is, I suppose, an instance of many things which, otherwise inexplicable, can be accounted for by habit. Thus while a scavenger, in pursuing his employment keeps good health, any ordinary person trying to do the same will be face to face with death. Death would soon be knocking at the door of a delicately nurtured lord trying to

imitate an East End labourer.

I cannot help here giving a fable or anecdote which is exactly to the point. A king fell in love with a female tooth brush seller, who was a very Venus in beauty. As might naturally be expected she was ordered to be placed in the king's palace. She was, in fact, placed in the lap of luxury. She had the best food, the best clothes, in short, everything of the best. And lo! in proportion to the luxury, her health began to fall. Scores of physicians were in attendance, but all the drugs most regularly administered proved of no avail. Meanwhile a shrewd physician found out the real cause of all the illness. He said that she was possessed by evil spirits. Therefore, in order to satisfy them, he ordered some pieces of old cakes to be set, together with fruit in each of her many rooms. They were to disappear in as many days as there were rooms, and with them, he said, the illness would disappear. And it was so. Of course the cakes were consumed by the poor queen.

Now this shows the mastery that habit gets over men. So I think the paucity of baths does not greatly harm the shepherd.

The result of this mode of living was partially noticed in the last article, viz., the vegetarian shepherd is physically strong. He is also long-lived. I know a shepherdess who was more than one hundred yeas old in 1888. When I last saw her, her eyesight was very good. Her memory was fresh. She could recollect things that she had seen in her childhood. She could walk with a stick to support her. I hope she is still living. Besides, the shepherd's figure is symmetrical. It is very rare to see any deformity in him. Without being fierce like a tiger, he is yet strong and brave and as docile as a lamb. Without being awe-inspiring, his stature is commanding. Altogether, the Indian shepherd is a very fine specimen of a vegetarian, and will compare very favourably with any meat-eater so far as bodily strength goes.

The Vegetarian, 14-3-1891

13. SOME INDIAN FESTIVALS-I

At this Easter time I should have liked to write something on the holidays which correspond to the Easter in point of time; but these holidays with their painful associations not being the greatest Hindu festival may very properly give way to the *Diwali* holidays which are far superior in importance and grandeur to the former.

Diwali, which may be termed the Hindu Christmas, occurs at the end of the Hindu year, i.e., during the month of November. It is both a social and religious holiday. It spreads over nearly a month. The first day of the month of *Ashwin* (the twelfth month of the Hindu year) heralds the approach of the grand festival when the children let off their first fire-works. The first nine days are called *Nava Ratri* (nine nights). These days are chiefly marked by *garbis.* Some twenty or thirty, and even more people form themselves into a large circle, in the centre is placed a huge lamp-post tastefully constructed and illuminated all round, in the centre also sits a man with his tabors reciting some popular verses. The people forming the circle repeat the verses, keeping time to them with claps of hands. While repeating the verses, they move round the lamp-post, at the same time stooping down in a half-bending posture. It is very often a great treat to hear these *garbis.*

It may be remarked that girls—much less women—never take part in them. Of course they may have their own *garbis* where men would be excluded. In some families the custom of half-fasting prevails. It is sufficient if only one member of the family fasts. The fasting man has only one meal a day, and that, too, in the evening. Moreover, he is not allowed any corn or pulse, but is restricted to fruit, milk and root vegetables such as potatoes, etc.

The tenth day of the month is called *Dashara,* when friends meet and feast one another. It is also customary to make presents of sweets to one's friends and especially patrons or superiors. Except on the *Dashara* holiday all the amusements are carried on at night, while the ordinary daily pursuits are attended to in the daytime. After *Dashara* everything is comparatively quiet for about a fortnight, except that the ladies are making preparations for the approaching grand day, by cooking and baking sweets, cakes, etc., for, in India, women of the highest class would not mind cooking. In fact, it is an accomplishment which every lady is supposed to possess.

Thus, spending the evenings in feasting and singing, we reach the thirteenth day of the dark half of the month *Ashwin.* (In India every month is divided into two parts, the dark half and the bright half, the full-moon day and the new-moon day being starting points; thus, the day following the full-moon day is the first day of the dark half of a month, and so on). The thirteenth day and the three following days are wholly devoted to amusements and enjoyment.

The thirteenth day is called *Dhanteras*, i.e., the thirteenth day set apart for the worship of "Lakshmi", the goddess of wealth. Rich people collect different kinds of jewels, precious stones, coins, etc., and put them carefully into a box. These they never use for any other purpose than that of worship. Each year an addition is made to this collection. The worship, i.e., the external worship—for who, save a select few, is there who does not at heart covet, or in other words, worship money?—consists in washing the money with water and milk, and then decorating it with flowers and *kumkum*, i.e., red ochre.

The fourteenth day is called *Kali-Chaudash*; but this day people get up before the break of day, and even the laziest person is required to take a good bath; the mother even compels her little children to take a bath, though it is the winter season. On the night of *Kali-Chaudash*, cemeteries are supposed to be visited by a procession of ghosts. Persons affecting to believe in ghosts would go to these places to see their ghost friends. Timid ones would not stir out of their houses lest they should see a ghost.

The Vegetarian, 28-3-1891

14. SOME INDIAN FESTIVALS-II

But lo! now is the morning of the fifteenth day, *Divali* proper. The greatest fireworks are let off on the *Divali* day. No one is willing to part with his money on this day. He will neither borrow nor lend. All the purchases are supposed to have been finished the previous day.

You are standing near the corner of a public road. Mark the shepherd trotting onward in his milk-white suit, worn for the first time, with his long beard turned up beside his face and fastened under his turban, singing some broken verses. A herd of cows, with their horns painted red and green and mounted with silver, follows him. Soon after you see a crowd of little maids, with small earthen vessels resting on cushions placed on their heads. You wonder what those vessels contain. Your doubt is soon solved by that careless maid spilling some milk from her vessel. Then observe that big man with white whiskers and a big white turban, with a long reed pen thrust into his turban. He has a long scarf wound round his waist with a silver inkstand adjusted in the scarf. He, you must know, is a great banker. Thus you see different sorts of persons leisurely going along, full of joy and mirth.

The night comes. The streets are resplendent with dazzling illumination; dazzling indeed to a person who has never seen Regent Street or Oxford Street, but by no means to be compared with the scale on which illuminations are carried out at the Crystal Palace, except in large towns like Bombay. Men, women and children wear their best costumes, almost all of various colours, and so form a wonderfully bizarre effect, which harmonizes into kaleidoscopic beauty. This is also the night for worshipping Saraswati, the goddess of learning. Merchants start their new ledgers, by making the first entry. The officiating priest, the ubiquitous Brahmin, mutters some prayers and invokes the goddess. At the end of the worship, the children, who are only too impatient, set the fireworks ablaze; and as this worship generally takes place at a fixed time, the streets resound with the popping and fizzing and cracking of fireworks. Pious people then go to the temples, but here too there is nothing to be seen but mirth and glee, dazzling light and splendour.

The following day, i.e., the new year's day, is the day of paying and receiving visits. Kitchen fires are put out on this day, so that people eat the cold food which has been previously prepared. But the glutton by no means starves, for there is such profusion that though he eats and eats again there is yet plenty and to spare. Well-to-do classes buy and cook every sort of vegetables, corn and pulse, and taste them all on the new year's day.

The second day of the new year is comparatively a quiet day. Kitchen fires are now re-lighted. Light food is generally taken after the heavy meals of the previous days. There is no display of fireworks except by some mischievous children. Illumination, too, is on a smaller scale. With the second day the *Divali* holidays are practically over.

Let us see how these holidays affect society, and how many desirable things people do unwittingly. Generally, all the family members try to meet together for the holidays at their chief place of residence. The husband always tries to get home to his wife again, even though his business may have taken him away the whole of the previous year. The father travels a great distance to meet his children. The son, if abroad, comes back from his school and so a general reunion always takes place. Then all who can afford it have new sets of clothes. Among the richer classes ornaments, too, are ordered especially for the occasion. Even old family quarrels are patched up.

At any rate a serious attempt is made to do so. Houses are repaired and whitewashed. Old furniture, which was lying packed up in a wooden case, is taken out, cleaned, and used for decorating the rooms for the time being. Old debts, if any, are paid up wherever possible. Everyone is supposed to buy some new thing, which almost always takes the form of a metallic vessel, or some such thing, for the new year's day. Alms are freely given. Persons not very careful about offering prayers or visiting temples are now doing both.

On holidays no one is to quarrel with or swear at any other—a pernicious habit very much in vogue, particularly among the lower classes. In a word, everything is quiet and joyful. Life, instead of being burdensome, is perfectly enjoyable. It will be easily seen that good and far-reaching consequences cannot fail to flow from such holidays, which some cry down as a relic of superstition and tomfoolery, though in reality they are a boon to mankind, and tend to relieve a great deal the dull monotony of life among the toiling millions. Though the *Divali* holidays are common to the whole of India, the mode of observing them varies in point of details in different parts. Moreover, this is but an imperfect description of the greatest festival of the Hindus. And it must not be supposed that there is no abusing of the holidays. Like every other thing, this festival, too, may have, and probably has, its black side, but that had better be left alone. Certainly the good that it does far outweighs the evil.

The Vegetarian, 4-4-1891

15. SOME INDIAN FESTIVALS-III

Next in importance to the *Divali* holidays are the *Holi* holidays, which were alluded to in *The Vegetarian* of the 28th March.

Holi holidays, as will be remembered, correspond to Easter in point of time. *Holi* takes place on the full-moon day of the fifth month, *Falgun,* of the Hindu year. This is just the springtime. Trees are budding forth. Warm clothes are put off. Light clothes are the fashion. That the spring has come is even more manifest when we have a peep at one of the temples. The moment you enter a temple (and you must be a Hindu in order to gain admittance thereinto), you smell nothing but sweet flowers. Pious persons are sitting on the steps, making garlands for Thakorji (God). Among the flowers you see beautiful roses, *chameli, moghra,* etc. When the doors are flung open

for *darshan* (literally, seeing), you observe the fountains in full play. You enjoy soft and fragrant breezes. Thakorji has worn light costumes of delicate shades. Piles of flowers before him, and garlands round his neck, almost hide him from your view. He is swung to and fro. The swing, too, is covered with green leaves sprinkled with fragrant waters.

Outside the temple the sight is not edifying. You here meet with nothing but obscene language during the fortnight preceding the *Holi.* In small villages, it is difficult for ladies to appear without being bespattered with mud. They are the subject of obscene remarks. The same treatment is meted out to men without distinction. People form themselves into small parties. Then one party competes with another in using obscene language and singing obscene songs. All persons—men and children, but not women—take part in these revolting contests.

Indeed, it is not considered bad taste to use obscene words during this season. In places where people are steeped in ignorance they even pelt one another. They paint obscene words on your clothes, and if you wear a white garment and go out, you are sure to return home with plenty of mud about you. This reaches its climax on the *Holi* day. Whether you are in the house or out of it, obscene words are jarring on your ears. If you happen to visit a friend, you are sure to be bathed in foul water, or in fragrant water, as the case may be.

In the evening, a big pile of wood or dried cow-dung is made and set on fire. These piles are often as high as twenty feet or more. And the pieces of wood used are so thick that the fire is not extinguished for seven or eight days. On the day following, people heat water on these fires and bathe with it.

So far I have spoken of the way in which the *Holi* holidays are abused. It is a relief to be able to say that with the progress of education and civilization such scenes are slowly, though surely, dying out. But the richer and refined classes use these holidays in a very decent way. Coloured water and fragrant waters take the place of mud. Throwing pails of water is replaced here by a little sprinkling only. Orange coloured water is most used during these days. It is made by boiling dried flowers, called *kesuda*, which have the colour of an orange. Rose water, too, is used where people can afford it. Friends and relations meet and feast one another, and thus enjoy the spring in merriment.

In many respects, the *Divali* holidays present a beautiful contrast

to the, for the most part, unholy *Holi* holidays. *Divali* holidays begin soon after the monsoon season which is also the time of fasting. So the feasting during the *Divali* holidays is all the more enjoyable. While the *Holi* holiday follow the winter which is the time for taking concentrated foods of all sorts, such foods are left off during the *Holi* holidays. Obscene language of *Holi* follows the most sacred songs of the *Divali*. Then again people begin to wear winter clothes in the *Divali*, while they put these off in the *Holi*. The *Divali* proper takes place on the fifteenth day of the dark half of the month *Ashwin* and consequently there is much illumination; while on account of the *Holi* taking place on the full-moon day, illumination would be out of place.

The Vegetarian, 25-4-1891

16. THE FOODS OF INDIA[1]

Before I proceed to the subject of my address I should like to tell you what are my qualifications for undertaking the task. When Mill wrote the *History of India*, he, in his most interesting preface, pointed out how he was qualified to write the book, though he had never been to India, and was ignorant of the Indian languages. So I think that in following his example, I shall be doing just what I ought to do. Of course, the very idea of referring to one's qualifications for any task argues some sort of unfitness on the part of the speaker or writer, and I confess that I am not *the* person to speak upon the "Foods of India". I have undertaken the task not because I am thoroughly competent to speak on the subject but because I thought I would thereby be doing a service to the cause that both you and I have at heart. My remarks are chiefly derived from my experience of the Bombay Presidency. Now, as you know, India is a vast peninsula populated by two hundred and eighty-five million souls. It is as large as Europe less Russia. In such a country, the customs and manners in different parts must be necessarily different. So, if in future you hear anything different from what I am going to say, I request you to bear in mind the above fact. As a general rule, my remarks will apply to the whole of India.

I shall divide the subject into three parts. In the first place I shall say something, by way of preliminary, about the people who live upon the foods; secondly, I shall describe the foods; and thirdly, their uses, etc.

It is commonly believed that all the inhabitants of India are vegetarians, but this is not true; and for that matter even all the Hindus are not vegetarians. But it is quite true to say that the great majority of the inhabitants of India are vegetarians[1]. Some of them are so because of their religion, while others are compelled to live on vegetable foods because they cannot afford to pay for meat. This will be quite clear to you when I tell you that there are millions in India who live upon one pice-i.e., one-third of a penny-a day, and even in a poverty-stricken country like India you cannot get eatable meat for that sum. These poor people have only one meal per day, and that consists of stale bread and salt, a heavily taxed article. But Indian vegetarians and meat-eaters are quite different from English vegetarians and meat-eaters. Indian meat-eaters, unlike English meat-eaters, do not believe that they will die without meat. So far as my knowledge goes, they (the Indian meat-eaters) do not consider meat a necessity of life but a mere luxury. If they can get their *roti*, as bread is generally called there, they get on very well without their meat. But look at our English meat-eater; he thinks that he *must* have his meat. Bread simply helps him to eat meat, while the Indian meat-eater thinks that meat will help him to eat his bread.

I was talking the other day to an English lady on the ethics of diet, and she exclaimed, while I was telling her how even she could easily become a vegetarian, “Say what you will, I must have my meat, I am so fond of it, and am positively sure I cannot live without it.” “But, madam,” I said, “suppose that you were *compelled* to live on a strictly vegetable diet, how would you manage then?” “Oh,” she said, “don't talk of that. I know I could not be compelled to do so, and if I were I should feel very uncomfortable.” Of course, no one can blame the lady for so saying. Society is in such a position for the present that it is impossible for any meat-eater to leave off eating meat without much difficulty.

In the same manner, an Indian vegetarian is quite different from an English one. The former simply abstains from anything that

[1] *The Vegetarian*, 6-5-1891, reported : "Saturday May 2nd, Bloomsbury Hall, Hart Street, Bloomsbury. . . Mrs. Harrison was followed by Mr. M. K. Gandhi. . . After congratulating the previous speaker and apologizing for his paper, which was entitled 'The Foods on India', he began to read it. He was rather nervous in the beginning." The text given here is of the paper read at the Portsmouth meeting of the Vegetarian Society.

involves the destroying of a life, or a would-be life, and he goes no further. Therefore he does not take eggs, because he thinks that in taking an egg he would kill a would-be life. (I am sorry to say I have been taking eggs for about a month and half.) But he does not hesitate to use milk and butter. He even uses these animal products, as they are called here, on fruit days, which occur every fortnight. On these days he is forbidden wheat, rice, etc., but he can use as much butter and milk as he likes; while, as we know, some of the vegetarians here discard butter and milk, some do away with cooking, and some even try to live on fruits and nuts.

I will now pass to the description of our different foods. I must say that I shall not dwell upon the flesh foods at all, as these, even where they are used, do not form the staple article of food. India is preeminently an agricultural country, and a very large one. So itsproducts are numerous and varied. Though the foundation of the British rule in India dates from the year 1746 A.D., and though India was known to the English much earlier than 1746, it is a pity that so little should be known of the foods of India in England. We have not to go very far to seek the cause. Almost all Englishmen who go to India keep up their own way of living. They not only insist on having the things they had in England, but will also have them cooked in the same way. It is not for me here to go into the why and wherefore of all these incidents. One would have thought that they would look into the habits of the people, if only out of curiosity, but they have done nothing of the kind, and hence we see the result of their stolid indifference in the loss to many Anglo-Indians of the finest opportunities of studying the food question. To return to the foods, there are many kinds of corn produced in India which are absolutely unknown here.

Wheat, however, is, of course, of the greatest importance there as here. Then there are *bajara* (which is called millet by the Anglo-Indians), *joar*, rice, etc. These are what I should call bread foods, because they are chiefly used for bread-making. Wheat, of course, in greatly used, but it being comparatively dear, *bajara* and *joar* take its place among the poor classes. This is very much so in the southern and the northern provinces. Speaking of the southern provinces, in his Indian History, Sir W. W. Hunter[1] says: "The food of the common

[1] (1840-1900), served in India for 25 years; wrote a number of books including *Indian Empire*. Compiled *The Imperial Gazetteer of India* in 14 volumes. Member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council (1881-87). On retirement from India became member of the British Committee of the Congress, and from 1890 contributed to *The Times* on Indian affairs.

people consists chiefly of small grains, such as *joar, bajara, ragi.*" Of the north, he says: "The two last (i.e., *joar* and *bajara*) form the food of the masses, rice being only grown on irrigated lands and consumed by the rich." It is not at all unusual to find persons who have not tasted *joar. Joar* being the diet of the poor, it is held in reverence, as it were. Instead of good-bye as the parting salute, the poor in India say *'joar'*, which, when extended and translated, would, I think, mean: "May you never be without *'joar*'."[1] The rice, too, is used for bread-making, especially in Bengal. The Bengalees use rice more than wheat. In other parts, rice, as an article for bread-making, is rarely, if ever, used. *Chana,* or gram as it is called by the Anglo-Indians, is sometimes used for the same purpose, either in combination with or without wheat. It closely resembles peas in taste and shape. This brings me to the various kinds of pulses for soup-making, or dal. Gram, peas, lentils, haricot beans, *tuar, mug, muth, urad* are the chief pulses used for dal. Of these, I think, *tuar* heads the list in popularity. Both these kinds of foods are chiefly used when dried. Now I come to the green vegetables. It would be useless to give you names of all the vegetables. They are so numerous that I am sure there are many of them that I do not know. The soil of India is so rich that it can produce any vegetable you like. So we may safely say that with a proper knowledge of agriculture, the Indian soil may be made to produce any vegetable to be found on earth.

There now remains fruit and nuts. I am sorry to say that the proper value of fruits is not known in India. Though it is used in abundance, it is used rather as a luxury than anything else. It is used more for the sake of its palatable taste than of health. Therefore, we do not get such valuable fruits as oranges, apples, etc., in plenty; hence they are available only to the rich. But we get plenty of seasonal fruits and dried fruits. Summer in India, as everywhere, is the best season for the former. Of these, the mango is the most important. It is the most delicious fruit I have yet tasted. Some have placed the pineapple at the top of the list; but a great majority of those who have tasted the mango vote in its favour. It remains in season for three months, when it is very cheap, and consequently both the rich and the poor can enjoy it. I have heard that some even live on mangoes—of course, only while they are in season. But, unfortunately, the mango is a fruit that will not keep long in a good condition. It resembles the peach in

[1] Gandhiji appears to have confused between *'jowar'* (the foodgrain) and '*juhar*', a word of salutation in some Indian languages.

taste, and is a stone-fruit. It is often as big as a small melon. That brings us to the melons, which are also plentiful in summer. They are far superior to what we get here. However, I must not inflict any more names of fruits on you; suffice it to say that India produces innumerable varieties of seasonal fruits, which do not keep long. All these fruits are available to the poor; the pity is that they never make a meal of these fruits. Generally, we believe that fruit causes fever, diarrhoea, etc. In summer, when we always dread cholera, authorities prohibit—rightly, too, in many cases—the sale of melons and other such fruits. As for dried fruits, we get almost all the varieties that are to be had here. Of nuts we get some varieties which you do not get here; on the other hand, some that are to be had here are not seen in India. Nuts are never used as food in India; and so, properly speaking, they should not be included in the "Foods of India". Now, before I come to the last division of my subject, I should request you to bear in mind the following divisions that I have made: first, corn for bread-making, e.g., wheat, millet, etc.; second, pulse, for dal or soup-making; third, green vegetables; fourth, fruits; and, fifth and last, nuts.

Of course, I am not going to give you recipes for cooking these different kinds of foods. That is beyond my power. I shall tell you the general way in which they are cooked for their proper uses. Diet cure or hygiene is a comparatively recent discovery in England. In India we have been practising this from time out of mind. Native physicians no doubt, use drugs, too, but they depend more upon change of diet than upon the efficacy of the drugs they prescribe. They would ask you to take salt in certain cases; in many, they would ask you to abstain from acid foods, and so on, every food having its medical value. As for the corn for bread-making, it is the most important article of diet. For convenience, I have called the preparation made of flour bread, but cake would be a better name for it. I shall not relate the whole process of making it, but I may just say that we do not throw away the bran. These cakes are always fresh made, and generally eaten hot with clarified butter. They are to the Indians what meat is to the English. The quantity of food a person eats is measured according to the number of cakes he eats. Pulse and vegetables are left out of account. You may make a meal without pulse, without vegetables, but never without cakes. Different preparations, too are made of the various kinds of corns, but they are merely cakes in disguise.

Pulse for soup-making, e.g., peas, lentils, etc., is prepared by simply boiling it in water. But an addition of innumerable condiments makes it a most delicious dish. The art of cooking has full play in these foods. I have known peas spiced with salt, pepper, turmeric, cloves, cinnamon, and such like. The proper use of pulse is to help you to eat the cakes. Medically, it is not supposed good to take too much of the pulses. A remark on rice here would not be out of place. As I have already said, rice is used for bread-making, especially in Bengal. Some of the doctors trace the diabetes from which the Bengalees very often suffer to this source. No one in India would call rice a nourishing food. It is the food of the rich, i.e., of people who do not want to work. Labouring men very rarely use rice. Physicians put their feverish patients on rice. I have suffered from fever (no doubt by breaking hygienic rules, as Dr. Allinson would say), and was put upon a diet of rice and mug-water. Recovery was marvellous.

Next come green vegetables. These are prepared in much the same way as pulses. Oil and butter play an important part in the preparation of vegetables. Often gram flour is mixed with them. Simply boiled vegetables are never eaten. I never saw a boiled potato in India. Not infrequently they make a combination of many vegetables. It is needless to say that India would far outbid France in cooking vegetables nicely. Their proper use is much the same as that of pulse. In importance they stand next to it. They are more or less a luxury, and are generally supposed to be a source of disease. Poor people have hardly one vegetable once or twice a week. They would have cakes and dal. Some of the vegetables have an excellent medicinal value. There is one vegetable called *tandalja*. It very closely resembles spinach in taste. Physicians prescribe it to persons who have indulged in too much cayenne pepper and spoiled their eyesight thereby.

Then come fruits. They are used chiefly on “fruit days”, but are rarely, if ever, used at the end of ordinary meals. People generally take them now and then. Mango-juice is very greatly used in the mango-season. It is eaten with cakes or rice. We never cook or stew ripe fruits. We preserve unripe fruits, chiefly mangoes, while acid. Medicinally, fresh fruits, being generally acid, are supposed to have a tendency to give fever. Dried fruits are much used by children, and dried dates deserve some notice. We suppose them to be strength-

giving, and therefore in winter, when we take concentrated foods, we prepare them with milk and various other things too numerous to be mentioned, and eat an ounce every day.

Lastly, nuts take the place of English sweets. Children eat a great quantity of sugared nuts. They are also largely used on "fruit days". We fry them in butter, and even stew them in milk. Almonds are supposed to be very good for the brain. I will just point out one of the various ways in which we use the cocoanut. It is first ground and then mixed with clarified butter and sugar. It tastes very nice. I hope some of you will try at home those coconut sweet balls as they are called. This, ladies and gentlemen, is a sketch—a most imperfect sketch—of foods of India. I hope you will be induced to learn more about them, and I am sure you will profit by doing so. In conclusion, I further hope the time will come when the great difference now existing between the food habits of meat-eating in England and grain-eating in India will disappear, and with it some other differences which, in some quarters, mar the unity of sympathy that ought to exist between the two countries. In the future, I hope we shall tend towards unity of custom, and also unity of hearts.

*The Vegetarian Messenge*r, 1-6-1891

17. SPEECH TO THE BAND OF MERCY, LONDON

UPPER NORWOOD,
[Before *June 6, 1891*]

By previous arrangement . . . Mrs. McDouall . . . was to deliver a lecture to a meeting of the members of the Band of Mercy[1], by the courtesy of Miss Seecombe, but she being ill, Mr. Gandhi (a Hindu from India) was requested and kindly consented to take the meeting. Mr. Gandhi spoke for about a quarter of an hour on vegetarianism from a humanitarian standpoint, and insisted that the members of the Band of Mercy, in order to be logical, ought to be vegetarian. He wound up with a quotation from Shakespeare.

The Vegetarian, 6-6-1891

[1] For the prevention of cruelty to animals

18. SPEECH AT FAREWELL DINNER[1]

June 11, 1891

Although is was a sort of a farewell dinner, there was no sign of sorrow, because all felt that though Mr. Gandhi was going back to India, yet he was going to a still greater work for vegetarianism, and that upon the completion of his law career and his final success, congratulations to him should take the place of personal wailings. . .

At the close of the function, Mr. Gandhi, in a very graceful though somewhat nervous speech, welcomed all present, spoke of the pleasure it gave him to see the habit of abstinence from flesh progressing in England, related the manner in which his connection with the London Vegetarian Society arose, and in so doing took occasion to speak in a touching way of what he owed to Mr. Oldfield[2] . . . .

He also pointed to the hope that a future congress of the Federal Union would be held in India.

The Vegetarian, 11-6-1891

19. INTERVIEW TO "THE VEGETARIAN"[3]*-I*

Mr. Gandhi was first asked what was the reason which first induced him to think of coming over to England and adopting the legal profession.

In a word, ambition. I matriculated at the Bombay University in the year 1887. Then I joined the Bhavnagar College, for unless you graduate at the Bombay University you get no status in society. If you want any employment before that, you cannot secure unless, of course, you have a very good influence to back you up, a respectable post, giving a handsome salary. But I found that I would have to spend three years at the least before I could graduate. Moreover, I suffered from constant headaches and nose-bleeding, and this was supposed to be due to the hot climate. And, after all, I could not, even after graduating, expect any very great income. While I was incessantly brooding over these things, an old friend of my father saw

[1] Held at Holborn

[2] Dr. Josiah Oldfield, editor of *The Vegetarian*

[3] To enable Englishmen to appreciate the difficulties confronting Hindus intending to proceed to England for studies and to point out to such Hindus how the difficulties might be overcome, a representative of *The Vegetarian* put Gandhiji a number of questions.

and advised me to go to England and take the robe; he, as it were, fanned the fire that was burning within me. I thought to myself, "If I go to England not only shall I become a barrister (of whom I used to think a great deal), but I shall be able to see England, the land of philosophers and poets, the very centre of civilization." This gentleman had great influence with my elders, and so he succeeded in persuading them to send me to England.

This is a very brief statement of my reasons for coming to England, but they by no means represent my present views.

Of course, your friends were all delighted at your ambitious purpose?

Well, not all. There are friends and friends. Those who were my real friends, and of about my age, were very glad to hear that I was to go to England. Some were friends, or rather, well-wishers, old in years. These sincerely believed that I was going to ruin myself, and that I would be a disgrace to my family by going to England. Others, however, set up their opposition simply from malice. They had seen some of the barristers who derived fabulous incomes, and they were afraid that I might do the same. Some, again, there were, who thought that I was too young (I am now about twenty-two), or that I should not be able to bear the climate. To cut the matter short, no two persons supported or opposed my coming on the same grounds.

How did you set about carrying out your intention? Just tell me, if you please, what were your difficulties, and how you overcame them.

Even to try to tell you the story of my difficulties would fill up the whole of your valuable paper. It is a tale of misery and woe. The difficulties may well be likened to the heads of Ravana-the giant of the second[1] great Hindu epic *Ramayana*, whom Rama, the Hero, fought, and ultimately defeated—which were many, and which were no sooner chopped off than replaced. They may be divided chiefly under four heads, viz., money, consent of my elders, separation from relations, and caste restrictions.

First, then, as to money. Though my father was the prime minister of more than one native State, he never hoarded money. He spent all that he earned in charity and the education and marriages of his children, so we were practically left without much cash. He left some property, and that was all. When asked why he did not collect money and set it aside for his children, he used to say that his children

[1] The other great epic is the *Mahabharata*

represented his wealth, and if he hoarded much money he would spoil them. So, then, money was no small difficulty in my way. I tried for some State scholarship but failed. At one place, I was asked to prove my worth by graduating and then expect it. Experience teaches me that the gentleman who said so was right. Not daunted, I requested my eldest brother to devote all the money that was left to my education in England.

Here I cannot help digressing to explain the family system that prevails in India. There, unlike as in England, the children always, if male, and until marriage, if female, live with their parents. What they earn goes to the father, and so also what they lose is a loss to the father. Of course, even the male children do separate under exceptional circumstances, e.g., in the case of a great quarrel. But these are the exceptions. In the legal languages of Mayne: "Individual property is the rule in the West. Corporate property is the rule in the East." So then Everything was under the control of my brother, and we were all living together.

To return to the question of money. What little my father could leave for me was in the hands of my brother. It could only be set free subject to his consent. Moreover, that was not enough, so I proposed that the whole capital should be devoted to my education I ask you if any brother would do so here. There are very few such brothers in India. He was told that I might prove an unworthy brother after imbibing the Western ideas, and that the only chance of regaining the money would be in my returning alive to India, which was very doubtful. But he turned a deaf ear to all these reasonable and well-meant warnings. There was one, and only one condition attached to the consent to my proposal, viz., that I should get the permission of my mother and my uncle. May many persons have such brothers as mine! I then set about the allotted task, which I can assure you was uphill enough. Fortunately, I was the pet of my mother. She had much faith in me, and so I succeeded in getting over her superstition, but how was I to make her nod consent to a three years' separation? However, by showing the exaggerated advantages of coming to England, I got her to accede, with much reluctance, to my request. Now for the uncle. He was on the point of going to Benares and such other holy places. After three days' incessant persuasion and arguments I could get the following answer from him :

"I am going on a pilgrimage. What you say may be right, but

how could I willingly say ‘yes’ to your unholy proposal? The only thing I can say is that, if your mother does not mind your going, I have no right to interfere.”

This was easily interpreted into ‘yes’. Nor were these the only two whom I had to please. In India everyone, no matter how remotely connected, thinks that he has a right to poke his nose into another's affairs. But when I had exacted (for it was nothing else) acquiescence from the two, the pecuniary difficulties almost disappeared.

The difficulties under the second head are partially discussed above. You will, perhaps, be astonished to hear that I am married. (The marriage took place at the age of twelve.) Small blame then to my wife's parents if they thought that they had a right to interfere if only for the sake of their daughter. Who was to look after her? How was she to manage to spend the three years? Of course she was to be looked after by my brother. Poor brother! According to my ideas at that time, I should have taken little notice of their legitimate fears and growlings, had it not been that their displeasure would have been reflected on my mother and brother. It was no easy task to sit night after night with my father- in-law and to hear and successfully answer his objections. But then I was taught the old proverb, “Patience and perseverance overcome mountains”, too well to give way.

When I had the money and the requisite permission, I said to myself, “How am I to persuade myself to separate from all that is dear and near to me?” In India we fight shy of separation. Even when I had to go for a few days my mother would weep. How, then, was I to witness, without being affected, the heart-rending scene? It is impossible for me to describe the tortures that my mind had to suffer. As the day of leave-taking drew near I nearly broke down. But I was wise enough not to say this, even to my closest friends. I knew that my health was failing. Sleeping, waking, drinking, eating, walking, running, reading, I was dreaming and thinking of England and what I would do on that momentous day. At last the day came. On the one hand, my mother was hiding her eyes, full of tears, in her hands, but the sobbing was clearly heard. On the other, I was placed among a circle of some fifty friends. “If I wept they would think me too weak; perhaps they would not allow me to go to England,” soliloquized I; therefore I did not weep, even though my heart was breaking. Last, but not least, came the leave-taking with my wife. It would be contrary to custom for me to see or talk to her in the presence of friends. So I

had to see her in a separate room. She, of course, had begun sobbing long before. I went to her and stood like a dumb statue for a moment. I kissed her, and she said, “Don't go”. What followed I need not describe. This done, my anxieties were not over. It was but the beginning of the end. The leave-taking was only half done, for I parted with the mother and the wife in Rajkot—where I was educated—but my brother and friends came to see me off as far as Bombay. The scene that took place there was no less affecting.

The collisions with my caste fellows in Bombay defy description, for Bombay is the place where they chiefly live. In Rajkot I did not meet with any such opposition worthy of the name. It was my misfortune to live in the heart of the city of Bombay, where they most abound, so I was hemmed in on all sides. I could not go out without being pointed and stared at by someone or other. At one time, while I was walking near the Town Hall, I was surrounded and hooted by them, and my poor brother had to look at the scene in silence. The culminating point was reached when a huge meeting of the caste fellows was summoned by the chief representatives. Every member of the caste was called upon to attend the meeting, under pain of forfeiting a fine of five annas. I may here mention that, before this step was determined upon, I was pestered with many deputations from them without avail. At this great meeting, I was seated in the centre of the audience. The Patels, as the representatives are called, remonstrated with me very strongly and reminded me of their connection with my father. It may be mentioned that all this was quite a unique experience to me. They literally dragged me out of seclusion, for I was not accustomed to such things. Moreover, my position became more precarious on account of an extreme shyness. Seeing that remonstrance fell flat on me, the head Patel addressed me (in effect) in the following words: “We were your father's friends, and therefore we feel for you; as heads of the caste you know our power. We are positively informed that you will have to eat flesh and drink wine in England; moreover, you have to cross the waters; all this you must know is against our caste rules. Therefore we command you to reconsider your decision, or else the heaviest punishment will be meted out to you. What have you to say to this?”

I replied in the following words: “I thank you for your warnings. I am sorry that I cannot alter my decision. What I have heard about England is quite different from what you say; one need

not take meat and wine there. As for crossing the waters, if our brethren can go as far as Aden, why could not I go to England? I am deeply convinced that malice is at the root of all these objections."

"Very well, then," replied the worthy Patel in anger, "You are not the son of your father." Then, turning to the audience, he went on: "This boy has lost his sense, and we command everyone not to have anything to do with him. He who will support him in any way or go to see him off will be treated as an outcaste, and if the boy ever returns, let him know that he shall never be taken into the caste."

These words fell like a bombshell upon all. Even the chosen few who had supported me through thick and thin left me alone. I had a great mind to answer the childish taunt, but was prevented from so doing by my brother. Thus even though I got out of the ordeal safely, my position became worse than ever. Even my brother began to vacillate, though only for a moment. He was reminded of the threat that the pecuniary support from him would cost him not only the money, but his membership of the caste. So although he did not say anything to me in person, he asked some of his friends to persuade me either to reconsider my decision or to defer its execution till the fury had subsided. There could be but one answer from me, and ever since that he never flinched, and, in fact, he has not been excommunicated; but the end had not come yet. The intrigues of the caste fellows were always at work. They almost seemed to have scored this time, for they could put off my going for a fortnight. They carried it out thuswise. We went to see a captain of a steamship company, who was requested to say that it would be unwise for me to leave during that time—August—because of the rough weather in the sea. My brother would consent to anything but this. Unfortunately, this was the first voyage that I had undertaken, so no one knew whether I was a good sailor or not, so I was helpless, Much against my will I had to put off the departure. I thought the whole structure would fall to the ground. My brother, having left a note to a friend, requesting him to give me the passage money when the time came, took leave. The parting scene was similar to the one described above. Now I was left alone in Bombay without money to buy the passage. Every hour that I had to wait seemed a year. In the meanwhile I heard that another Indian gentleman[1] was about to leave for England; this

[1] Mazmudar; *vide* "London Diary", 12-11-1888.

news was godsend to me. I thought I would be allowed to go now. I made use of the note, and was refused the money. I had to make preparations within twenty-four hours; I was in a dreadful flutter. Without money I felt as if I was a bird without wings. A friend whom I shall always thank came to the rescue and advanced the passage money. I bought the ticket, telegraphed to my brother, and sailed for England on the 4th September, 1888. Such were my chief difficulties, which spread over nearly five months. It was a time of terrible anxiety and torture. Now hopeful, and now desponded, I dragged along always trying my best, and then depending upon God to show me the cherished goal.

The Vegetarian, 13-6-1891

20. INTERVIEW TO "THE VEGETARIAN"-II

On your arrival in England, of course, you were face to face with the flesh-eating problem; how did you solve it?

I was overwhelmed with gratuitous advice. Well-meaning yet ignorant friends thrust their opinions into unwilling ears. The majority of them said I could not do without meat in the cold climate. I would catch consumption. Mr. Z went to England and caught it on account of his foolhardiness. Others said I might do without flesh but without wine I could not move. I would be numbed with cold. One went so far as to advise me to take eight bottles of whisky, for I should want them after leaving Aden. Another wanted me to smoke, for his friend was obliged to smoke in England. Even medical men, those who had been to England, told the same tale. But as I wanted to come at any price, I replied that I would try my best to avoid all these things, but if they were found to be absolutely necessary I did not know what I should do. I may here mention that my aversion to meat was not so strong then as it is now. I was even betrayed into taking meat about six or seven times at the period when I allowed my friends to think for me. But in the steamer my ideas began to change. I thought I should not take meat on any account. My mother before consenting to my departure exacted a promise from me not to take meat. So I was bound not to take it, if only for the sake of the promise. The fellow-passengers in the steamer began to advise us (the friend who was with me and myself) to try it.

They said I would require it after leaving Aden. When this

turned out untrue, I was to require it after crossing the Red Sea. And on this proving false, a fellow-passenger said, “The weather has not been severe, but in the Bay of Biscay you will have to choose between death, and meat and wine “ That crisis too passed away safely. In London, too, I had to hear such remonstrances. For months I did not come across any vegetarian. I passed many anxious days arguing with a friend about the sufficiency of the vegetable diet; but at that time having but little knowledge of arguments other than humanitarian in favour of vegetarianism, I got the worst of it as the friend scouted the idea of humanity in such discussions. At last I sealed his tongue by telling him I would sooner die than break the promise to my mother. “Humph,” said he, “childishness, rank superstition; but since, even after coming here, you are superstitious enough to believe in such nonsense, I cannot help you any more, I only wish you had not come to England.”

He never afterwards pressed the point seriously, except perhaps once, though ever since that he took me for little more than a fool. In the meanwhile I remembered once to have passed by a vegetarian restaurant (it was the “Porridge Bowl”). I asked a gentleman to direct me there, but instead of reaching there I saw the “Central” restaurant, and went there and had some porridge for the first time. I did not at first enjoy it, but I liked the pie which I had for the second course. It was there that I first bought some vegetarian literature among which was a copy of A Plea for Vegetarianism by H. S. Salt, after reading which I adopted vegetarianism from principle.

Till then I considered flesh to be a superior diet from a scientific point of view. Moreover, it was there that I came to know the existence of the Vegetarian Society of Manchester. But I did not take any active interest in it. I did, now and then, read The Vegetarian Messenger and that was all. My knowledge of The Vegetarian dates from a year and a half. It was at the International Vegetarian Congress that I may be said to have known the L.V.S[1]. That the Congress was sitting I knew by the kind courtesy of Mr. Josiah Oldfield, who heard of me from a friend, and was good enough to ask me to attend it. In conclusion, I am bound to say that, during my nearly three years' stay in England, I have left many things undone, and have done many things which perhaps I might better have left undone, yet I carry one great

[1] London Vegetarian Society

consolation with me that I shall go back without having taken meat or wine, and that I know from personal experience that there are so many vegetarians in England.

The Vegetarian, 20-6-1891

21. APPLICATION FOR ENROLMENT AS ADVOCATE

BOMBAY,
November *16, 1891*

TO
THE PROTHONOTARY AND REGISTRAR
OF THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE
BOMBAY
SIR,

I am desirous of being admitted as an Advocate of the High Court. I was called to the Bar in England on the 10th June last. I have kept twelve terms in the Inner Temple and I intend to practise in the Bombay Presidency.

I produce the certificate of my being called to the Bar. As to the certificate of my character and abilities, I have not been able to obtain any certificate from a judge in England, for I was not aware of the rules in force in the Bombay High Court. I, however, produce a certificate from Mr. W. D. Edwards, a practising Barrister in the Supreme Court of Judicature in England. He is the author of the Compendium of the Law of Property in Land, one of the books prescribed for the Bar Final Examination

I beg to remain,
Sir;
Your most obedient servant
M. K. GANDHI

Mahatma, Vol. I; also from a photostat:

22. ON WAY HOME TO INDIA-I

It was on the 12th June, 1891, that I left for Bombay after three years' stay in England. A beautiful day it was: the sun shone brilliantly; no overcoat was needed to keep off the cold breezes.

It was at 11.45 that an express train carrying the passengers left the Liverpool Street Station for the docks.

I could not make myself believe that I was going to India until I stepped into the steamship Oceana, of the P. & O. Company. So much attached was I to London and its environments for who would not be? London with its teaching institutions, public galleries, museums, theatres, vast commerce, public parks and vegetarian restaurants, is a fit place for a student and a traveller, a trader and a "addist"—as a vegetarian would be called by his opponents. Thus, it was not without deep regret that I left dear London. At the same time I was glad because I was to see my friends and relations in India after such a long time.

Oceana is an Australian steamer, one of the largest boats of the Company. She weighs 6,188 tons and her horse-power is 1,200. When we stepped into this vast floating island, we were treated to a good refreshing tea, to which all (passengers and friends alike) did justice. I must not omit to say that the tea was served gratis. At this time, a stranger would have taken them all for passengers (and they were a goodly number), from the ease with which they were taking their tea; but, when the bell rang to inform the friends of the passengers that the ship was going to weigh anchor, the number appreciably melted away. There was much cheering and waving of handkerchiefs when the ship steamed off the harbour.

It may be well here to contrast the Oceana with the Assam into which the Bombay-bound passengers had to transship at Aden. There were English waiters on the Oceana, always neat, clean and obliging. On the other hand, there were Portuguese waiters on board the Assam, who murdered the Queen's English, and who were always the reverse of clean, and also sulky and slow.

There was, moreover, a difference of quality in the food supplied in the two steamers. This was evident from the way in which the passengers were grumbling in the Assam. Nor was this all. The accommodation in the Oceana far outdid that in the Assam; this, however, the company could not help; they could not throw away the latter because the former was better.

How did the vegetarians manage in the ship? This would be an apt question.

Well, there were only two vegetarians, including myself. Both of us were prepared, in case we did not get anything better, to manage with boiled potatoes, cabbage and butter. But we had no reason to go to that extreme. The obliging steward gave us some vegetable curry,

rice, stewed and fresh fruit from the first saloon, and last, but not least, brown bread; so we had all we wanted. Undoubtedly, they are very liberal in giving good and sufficient food to the passengers. Only, they go too far; so at least it seems to me.

It would not be amiss to describe what the second-saloon menus contained, and how many meals the passengers had.

To begin with, the first thing in the morning, an average passenger would have a cup or two of tea and a few biscuits. At 8.30 a.m. the breakfast bell would bring down the passengers to the dining-room. They were punctual to the minute, at their meals, at any rate. The breakfast menu generally contained oatmeal porridge, some fish, chop, curry, jam, bread and butter, tea or coffee, etc., everything ad libitum.

I have often seen passengers take porridge, fish and curry, bread and butter, and wash down with two or three cups of tea.

Hardly had we time to digest the breakfast, when, bang,-it was the dinner bell at 1.30 p.m. The dinner was as good as breakfast: plenty of mutton and vegetables, rice and curry, pastry, and what not. Two days of the week, all the second-saloon passengers were served with fruit and nuts in addition to the ordinary dinner. But this, too, was not sufficient. The dinner fare was so easily digestible that we wanted a “refreshing” cup of tea and biscuits at 4 p.m. Well, but the evening breezes seemed so soon to take away all the effect of “that little” cup of tea that we were served a “high tea” at 6.30 p.m.: bread and butter, jam or marmalade, or both, salad, chops, tea, coffee, etc. The sea-air seemed to be so very salubrious that the passengers could not retire to bed before taking a few, a very few—only eight or ten, fifteen at the most—biscuits, a little cheese and some wine or beer. In the light of the above, are not the following lines too true:

> Your belly is your God, your stomach is your temple, your paunch is your altar, your cook is your priest. . . . It is in the cooking-pots that your love is inflamed, it is in the kitchen that your faith grows fervid, it is in the flesh-dishes that all hope lies hid. . . . Who is held in so much esteem with you as the frequent giver of dinners, as the sumptuous entertainer, as the practised toaster of health?

The second saloon was pretty full of passengers of all sorts. There were soldiers, clergymen, barbers, sailors, students, officials and, maybe, adventurers. There were three or four ladies. We beguiled our time chiefly in eating and drinking. The rest of the time was either

dozed away or passed in chatting, at times in discussing, in playing games, etc. But after two or three days, the time between the meals seemed to hang heavy in spite of discussions and cards and scandals.

Some of us really warmed to the work and got up concerts, tugs-of-war, and running races for prizes. One evening was devoted to concerts and speeches.

Now, I thought it was time for me to poke my nose in. I requested the secretary of the committee, who managed those things, to give me a quarter of an hour for a short speech on vegetarianism. The secretary obligingly nodded consent to my request.

Well, I made grand preparations. I thought out and then wrote out and re-wrote the speech that was to be delivered. I well knew that I had to meet a hostile audience, and that I should take care that my speech did not send my audience to sleep. The secretary had asked me to be humorous. I told him that I might be nervous, but humorous I could not be.

Now, what do you think became of the speech? The second concert never came off, and so the speech was never delivered, to my great mortification. I fancy it was because no one seemed to enjoy the first evening, for we had no Pitts and Gladstones in the second saloon.

However, I succeeded in discussing vegetarianism with two or three passengers, who heard me calmly, and answered in effect, "We grant you the argument; but so long as we feel happy on our present diet (never mind about our being dyspeptic at times), we cannot give it a trial!"

One of them, seeing that my vegetarian friend and I got nice fruits every day, did give the V.E.M. diet a trial, but the chop was too great a temptation for him.

Poor man!

The Vegetarian, 9-4-1892

23. ON WAY HOME TO INDIA-II

Moreover, as an instance of affability between passengers and of politeness on the part of the first-saloon passengers, the second-saloon passengers were often invited to witness the theatricals and dances that they got up from time to time.

They had some very nice ladies and gentlemen in the first

saloon. But it would not do to have all play and no quarrel, so some of the passengers thought fit to get drunk (beg your pardon, Mr. Editor, they got drunk almost every evening, but this particular evening they got drunk and disorderly). They, it seems, were discussing with one another over a glass of whisky, when some of them used improper language. Then followed a fight of words culminating in a fight of blows. The matter was reported to the captain. He reproved these pugilistic gentlemen, and ever since then we had no more rows.

Thus, dividing our time between eating and amusements, we moved onward.

After two days' voyage, the steamer passed by, but did not touch, Gibraltar. This caused much disappointment, mostly among smokers, who wanted to get tobacco, duty-free in Gibraltar, as some of us had entertained a hope the steamer would cast anchor.

The next place reached was Malta. It being a coaling station, the steamer stops there for about nine hours. Almost all the passengers went ashore.

Malta is a beautiful island without the London smoke. The construction of houses is different. We had a look round the Governor's palace. The armoury is well worth a visit. Napoleon's carriage is on view there. You see there some beautiful paintings too. The market is not bad. The fruit is cheap. The cathedral is magnificent.

We had a nice drive of about six miles to the orange garden. There you see some thousands of orange trees and some ponds with gold fish. The drive was very cheap, only 2s. 6d.

What a wretched place Malta is for beggars! You cannot go along the road quietly without being pestered by a crowd of dirty-looking beggars. Some would offer to be your guides, others would offer to take you to shops where you could buy cigars or the famous Maltese sweet nougat.

From Malta we reached Brindisi. It is a good harbour and that is all. You cannot pass a single day in amusement. We had about nine hours or more at our disposal, but we could not utilize even four.

After Brindisi we reached Port Said. There we took final leave of Europe and the Mediterranean. Of course, there is nothing to be seen in Port Said, unless you want to see the dregs of society. It is full of rogues and rascals.

From Port Said the steamer moves along very slowly, for we enter the Suez Canal of M. de Lesseps. It is a distance of eighty-seven miles. The steamer took nearly twenty-four hours to travel that distance. We were close to the land on both sides. The strip of water is so narrow that two steamers cannot go abreast except at certain places. At night the sight is charming. All the ships are required to light electric lights in front and these are very powerful. The scene when two ships pass one another is very pleasant. The electric light you get from the opposite ship is simply dazzling.

We passed the Ganges. We raised three cheers for her, which were heartily returned by the passengers on board the Ganges. The town Suez is at the other end of the canal. The steamer hardly stops there for half an hour.

Now we entered the Red Sea. It was a three days' voyage but it was most trying. It was unbearably hot. Not only was it impossible to remain inside the steamer, but it was too hot even on the deck. Here, for the first time, we felt that we were going to India to face the hot climate.

We had some breeze when we reached Aden. Here, we (the passengers for Bombay) had to transship into the Assam.. It was like leaving London for a miserable village. The Assam is hardly half as big as the Oceana.

Misfortunes never come single; with the Assam we had a stormy ocean, because it was the monsoon season. The Indian Ocean is generally calm, so during monsoon it is stormy with a vengeance. We had to pass five days more on the waters before we reached Bombay. The second night brought the real storm. Many were sick. If I ventured out on the deck I was splashed with water. There goes a crash; something is broken. In the cabin you cannot sleep quietly. The door is banging. Your bags begin to dance. You roll in your bed. You sometimes feel as if the ship is sinking. At the dinner table you are no more comfortable. The steamer rolls on your side. Your forks and spoons are in your lap, even the cruet stand and the soup plate; your napkin is dyed yellow and so on.

One morning I asked the steward if that was what he would call a real storm, and he said: “No, sir, this is nothing.” and, waving his arm, showed me how the steamer would roll in a real storm.

Thus tossed up and down, we reached Bombay on July 5th. It was raining very hard and so it was difficult going ashore. However, we reached the shore safely, and bade good-bye to the Assam.

What a human cargo was on the Oceana, and the Assam! Some were going to make fortunes in Australia in high hopes; some, having finished their studies in England, were going to India in order to earn a decent living. Some were called away by a sense of duty, some were going to meet their husbands in Australia or India, as the case may be, and some were adventurers who, being disappointed at home, were going to pursue their adventures, God knows where.

Were the hopes of all realized? That is the question. How hopeful, yet how often disappointed, is the human mind! We live in hopes.

The Vegetarian, 16-4-1892

24. LETTER TO RANCHHODLAL PATWARI

BOMBAY,
September 5, 1892

MY DEAR PATWARI,

I thank you for your kind letter and the advice you have given me.

As I told you in my last p.c., I have to postpone going abroad for practice. My brother is very much against it. He thinks that I need not despair of getting a decent livelihood in Kathiawar[1] and that without directly taking part in the khutput[2]. However this may be, since he is so hopeful and is entitled to every consideration from me, I shall follow his advice. Here, too, I have been promised some work. So I intend to be here for about two months at least. I do not think my accepting a literary post will materially interfere with my legal studies. On the other hand, such a work will add to my knowledge that cannot but be indirectly useful in practice. Moreover, thereby I can work with a more concentrated mind free from worry, but where is the post? Not an easy thing to get one.

Of course, I asked for a loan on the strength of the promise you made me while at Rajkot. I entirely agree with you that your father should not know of it. Never mind about it now. I shall try somewhere else. I can easily understand that you cannot have a large surplus from one year's practice.

My brother has been retained in Sachin as Secretary to the Nawab of Sachin. He has gone to Rajkot and will return in a few days.

[1] Kathiawar, also known as Saurashtra, a collection of former princely States, or principalities in Gujarat

[2] Machinations, in Gujarati

I am glad to hear from Kashidas that he will settle in Dhandhuka.

The caste opposition is as great as ever. Everything depends upon one man who will try his best never to allow me to enter the caste. I am not so very sorry for myself as I am for the caste fellows who follow the authority of one man like sheep. They have been passing some meaningless resolutions and betraying their malice clerly in overdoing their part. Religion, of course, finds no place in their arguments. Is it not almost better not to have anything to do with such fellows than to fawn upon them and wheedle their fame so that I might be considered one of them? However, I have to move with the times.

I was very glad to hear of Vrajlalbhai becoming Karbhari[1] somewhere in Gujarat.

You write such a nice hand that I have been induced to imitate you though but imperfectly.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original

25. LETTER TO "THE NATAL ADVERTISER"

DURBAN,
May 26, 1893

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Advertiser

SIR,

I was startled to read a paragraph in your today's issue referring to myself, under the heading, "An Unwelcome Visitor".[2] I am very

[1] Administrator.

[2] The reference was as follows: "An Indian entered the Court House yesterday afternoon and took a seat at the horseshoe. He was well-dressed and it was understood that he was an English barrister, on his way to Pretoria, where he is reported to be engaged in an Indian case. He entered the Court without removing his head-covering or salaaming, and the Magistrate looked at him with disapproval. The new arrival was courteously asked his business, and he replied that he was an English barrister. He did not attempt to present his credentials, and, on returning to the horseshoe was quietly told that the proper course for him to pursue, before taking up his position at the Bar, was to gain admission to the Supreme Court." The incident was reported in *The Natal Mercury,* 26-5-1893.

sorry if His Worship the Magistrate looked at me with disapproval. It is true that on entering the Court I neither removed my head-dress nor salaamed, but in so doing I had not the slightest idea that I was offending His Worship, or meaning any disrespect to the Court. Just as it is a mark of respect amongst the Europeans to take off their hats, in like manner it is in Indians to retain one's head-dress. To appear uncovered before a gentleman is not to respect him. In England, on attending drawing-room meetings and evening parties, Indians always keep the head-dress, and the English ladies and gentlemen generally seem to appreciate the regard which we show thereby. In High Courts in India those Indian advocates who have not discarded their native head-dress invariably keep it on.

As to bowing, or salaaming as you would call it, I again followed the rule observed in the Bombay High Court. If an advocate enters the Court after the judge has taken his seat on the bench he does not bow, but all the advocates rise up when the judge enters the Court, and keep standing until the judge has taken his seat. Accordingly, yesterday when His Worship entered the Court I rose up, and took my seat only after His Worship had done so.

The paragraph seems to convey also that though I was told privately not to keep my seat at the horseshoe, I nevertheless "returned to the horseshoe". The truth is that I was taken by the chief clerk to the interpreters' room, and was asked not to take my seat at the horseshoe the next time I came unless I produced my credentials. To make assurance doubly sure I asked the chief clerk if I could retain my seat for the day, and he very kindly said "yes". I was therefore really surprised to be told again in open court that in order to be entitled to the seat I had to produce credentials, etc.

Lastly, I beg His Worship's pardon if he was offended at what he considered to be my rudeness, which was the result of ignorance and quite unintentional.

I hope, in fairness, you will extend me the favour of finding the above explanation a space in your paper, as the paragraph, if unexplained, would be likely to do me harm.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Advertiser, 29-5-1893

26. LETTER TO "THE NATAL ADVERTISER"

PRETORIA,
September 16, 1893

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Advertiser
SIR,

My attention has been drawn to the reproduction of Mr. Pillay's letter[1] to *The Transvaal Advertiser* in your paper with comments thereon. I am that unfortunate Indian barrister-at law who had arrived in Durban, and who is now in Pretoria[2]; but I am not Mr. Pillay, nor am I a Bachelor of Arts.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

*The Natal Advertise*r, 18-9-1893

27. LETTER TO "THE NATAL ADVERTISER"

PRETORIA,
September 19, 1893

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Advertiser

SIR,

I shall be very thankful to you if you would be good enough to find place for the following in your paper:

Mr. Pillay, who recently wrote to The Transvaal Advertiser, has been taken to pieces for being "nasty" by some gentlemen here and by the papers there. I wonder if your leader about "the wily wretched Asiatic traders", "the real canker that is eating into the very vitals of the community", "these parasites who live a semi-barbaric life" would not bear Mr. Pillay's letter out of the field in a hard-word competition. However, tastes differ as to style, and I have no right to sit in judgment upon anyone's style of writing.

But why all this outpouring of wrath on the poor Asiatic traders? It is difficult to see how the Colony is in danger of literal ruination.

[1] Pillay's complaint was that he was violently pushed off the footpath.

[2] Administrative capital of the Union; 511 miles from Durban

The reasons, so far as I can gather from your leading article of the 15th instant, can be summed up in the following words: “One Asiatic has gone into insolvency, and paid 5d. in the £. This is a fair sample of an Asiatic trader. He has driven out the small European trader.”

Now, granting that a majority of Asiatic traders do become insolvent, and pay very little to their creditors (which is not at all the case), is that a good reason for driving them out of the Colony or South Africa? Does it not rather show that there must be a defect in the Insolvency Law that they can thus ruin their creditors? If the law would give any latitude for such practices, people would take advantage of it. Do not the Europeans seek the protection of the Insolvency Court? I do not, of course, mean to defend the Indian traders by this *tu quoque* argument. I sincerely regret that the Indians should resort to such practices at all. It is a disgrace to their country,which one time had too great an idea of its honour to be associated with any dishonest dealing in trade. But it certainly seems to me that a case is not made out for expelling the Indian traders on the strength of the fact of their availing themselves of the law of bankruptcy. Not only can the law put a stop to the frequent occurrence of such cases, but the wholesale merchants, too, by being a little more careful, can do so. And, by the way, does not the very fact that these traders do get credit from the European merchants show that they are not, after all, so bad as they are portrayed by you?

If the small European trader has been driven out, is it to be laid at their door? This shows, it would appear, a grater competency on the part of the Indian trader in commerce, and this very superior competency is to be a reason for his expulsion! I ask you, sir, is this fair? If one editor edited his paper more ably than his rival, and consequently, drives the latter out of the field, how would the former like to be told that he should give place to his crestfallen rival because he (the successful one) was able? Should not the superior ability be a special reason for encouragement so that the rest may try to rise as high? Is it a sound policy to stifle healthy competition? Should not the European trader take a leaf out of the book of the Indian trader, if that be not below his dignity, and learn how to trade cheaply, how to live simply? “Do unto others as you would be done by.”

But you say these wretched Asiatics live a semi-barbaric life. It would be highly interesting to learn your views of a semi-barbaric life. I have some notion of the life they live. If a room without a nice, rich

carpet and ornamental hangings, a dinner table (perhaps unvarnished), without an expensive table-cloth, with no flowers to decorate it, with no wines spread, no pork or beef *ad lib*, be a semi-barbaric life; if a white comfortable dress, specially adapted to a warm climate, which, I am told, many Europeans envy them in the trying heat of summer, be a semi barbaric life: if no beer, no tobacco, no ornamental walking-stick, no golden watch chain, no luxuriously-fitted sitting-room, be a semi-barbaric life; if, in short, what one commonly understands by a simple frugal life be a semi-barbaric life, then, indeed, the Indian traders must plead guilty to the charge, and the sooner the semi-barbarity is wiped out from the highest Colonial civilization, the better.

The elements that generally constitute a reason for expulsion of a people from civilized States are entirely absent in the case of these people. You will agree when I say that they are not a political danger to the Government, since they meddle very little, if at all, in politics. They are not notorious robbers. I believe there is not a single case of an Indian trader having suffered imprisonment, or even been charged with theft, robbery, or any of the heinous crimes. (I speak under correction.) Their teetotal habits make them exceptionally peaceful citizens.

But they spend nothing, says the leading article under discussion. Don't they? I suppose they live on air or sentiments. We know that Becky lived on nothing for a year in *Vanity Fair*. And here a whole class seems to have been found out doing the same. It is to be presumed they have to pay nothing for shop-rents, taxes, butchers' bills, grocers' bills, clerks' salaries, etc. etc. One would, indeed, like to belong to such a blessed class of traders, especially in the present critical condition of the trade all the world over.

It seems, on the whole, that their simplicity, their total abstinence from intoxicants, their peaceful and, above all, their businesslike and frugal habits, which should serve as a recommendation, are really at the bottom of all this contempt and hatred of the poor Indian traders. And they are British subjects. Is this Christian-like, is this fair play, is this justice, is this civilization? I pause for a reply.

Thanking you in anticipation for inserting this.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

*The Natal Advertise*r, 23-9-1893

28. WELCOME ADDRESS TO NEW GOVERNOR

TOWN HALL,
DURBAN,
September 28, 1893

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY,

SIR WALTER HELY-HUTCHINSON, K.C.M.G., ETC.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

We the undersigned members of the Mahomedan and Indian community of the Colony of the Natal, beg most respectfully to welcome your Excellency on the occasion of Your Excellency's arrival here as the representative of Her Majesty the Queen, Empress of India.

We trust that your Excellency will find the Colony and its associations congenial, and that the task of introducing a new form of government into Natal will be as free from difficulty as it will be pregnant with interest.

The special affairs of the Indian community in Natal will, owing to the extending Indian influence here, constantly occupy your Excellency's attention; and we bespeak, with your Excellency's permission, that consideration towards our community, which, we are confident, Your Excellency, representing Her Most Gracious Majesty, will be pleased to grant to us.

We take leave to wish for your Excellency and Lady Hely-Hutchinson all prosperity during your stay in this country. And we are,

Your Excellency's most obedient servants,

DADA ABDULLA [1] DAWOD MAHOMED
M. C. CAMROODEEN [2] AMOD JEEWA
AMOD TILLY PARSEE RUSTOMJI

A. C. PILLAY

The Natal Mercury, 30-9-1893

[1] Proprietor of Dada Abdulla & Co., Durban, leading Indian firm, in connection with whose law-suit Gandhiji first went to South Africa

[2] Indian merchant of Johannesburg and active member of the Natal Indian Congress

29. LETTER TO "THE NATAL ADVERTISER"

PRETORIA,
September 29, 1893

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Advertiser

SIR,

I have to request your indulgence for inserting the following in your paper:

To make an exhaustive reply to the programme set forth by you for the would-be anti-Asiatic league in your issue of the 19th inst. is a Herculean task, and it cannot be undertaken in the compass of a letter to a newspaper. I would, however, with your permission, take up only two items. viz., the fears about "the coolie vote swamping the European vote", and the supposed unfitness of the Indians to vote.

At the outset, I would appeal to your good sense, and the love of fair play which is supposed to be a characteristic of the British nation. No amount of facts or arguments would convince you or your readers of the justness of my remarks if you or they are resolved upon looking at one side only of the question. Cool judgment and a dispassionate and impartial enquiry are essential to a right view of the whole matter.

Does it not appear a far-fetched view that the Indian vote can ever swamp the European vote? A mere superficial observer can see that such a thing can never happen. A sufficient number can never command the property qualifications to be able to outdo the European vote.

They are divided into two classes—the traders and the labourers. The latter are by far in the majority, and have no votes as a rule. Poverty-stricken, they come to Natal on starvation wages. Can they ever dream of having enough property to qualify themselves for voting? And these are they who live here with any degree of permanence. Some only of the former class have the property qualifications; but then they do not live permanently in Natal, and many of those who can legally vote would never care to do so. The Indians as a class never, even in their own country, avail themselves of all their political rights. They are too much taken up with their

spiritual well-being to think of taking an active part in politics. They have no great political aspirations. They come not to be politicians, but to earn an honest bread, and it is a matter for regret if some do not earn it strictly honestly. So, then, it seems that all the fears about the Indian vote assuming portentous proportions are ill-grounded.

And even the few votes that the Indians command cannot in any way affect Natal politics. All talk about an Indian party clamouring for Indian representation seems to be chimerical, for the selection would always be between two White men. Would it, then, matter much that there are some Indian votes? The most the few votes can do will be to secure them a perfectly White gentleman, who would, if he is faithful to his promise, do them good service in the Assembly. And fancy one or two such members making up an Indian party! Why, they, or rather he, would be a veritable John[1] crying in the wilderness without his electric, and perhaps I should say divine, power of converting. Even strong little parties representing diverse minor interests can effect very little in the Imperial Parliament. They can only heckle the First Lord with a few questions, and have the satisfaction of seeing their names appear in the next morning's papers.

Then, you think that they (the Indians) are not civilized enough to be fit for voting; that they may not be any better than the Natives; and that they are certainly not equal to the Europeans in the scale of civilization. Perhaps not. And all would depend upon the meaning of the word "civilization". It is impossible to enter into a full discussion of all the questions suggested by an enquiry into the matter. I may, however, be allowed to point out that they enjoy these privileges in India. The Queen's Proclamation of 1858—which is justly and rightly called the Magna Charta of the Indians—runs :

> We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, and these obligations by the blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil. It is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability, and integrity, duly to discharge.

I can produce other similar extracts relating to the Indians. But I

[1] The reference is to John the Baptist.

am afraid I have already trespassed too much upon your courtesy. I may add, however, that an Indian has been the acting Chief Justice of the High Court of Calcutta; an Indian is a judge of the High Courtat Allahabad, whose co-religionists the Indian traders as a rule are; and an Indian is a member of the British Parliament. Moreover, the British Government in many respects follow in the footsteps of Akbar the Great, who ruled and lived in the 16th century. He was an Indian. The present land system is a copy of the policy of Todurmull, the great financier and an Indian, with but few modifications. If all this is the outcome, not of civilization, but of semi-barbarity, I have yet to learn what civilization means.

If, in the face of all the above facts, you can foment dissensions, and set the European section of the community to work against the Indian section, you are great.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Advertiser, 3-10-1893

30. WORK FOR VEGETARIANISM

Mr. M. K. Gandhi, in a private letter from Pretoria, writes:

There is a very fine opportunity in South Africa for a vegetarian gardener. Cultivation is very much neglected though the soil is very fruitful.

I am glad to say I have been able to induce my landlady, who is an English woman, to become a vegetarian, and bring up her children on a vegetarian diet, but I am afraid she will slide down. Proper vegetables cannot be had here. Such as can be had are very dear. Fruit, too, is very dear; so is also milk. It therefore becomes very difficult to give her a sufficient variety. She would certainly leave it off if she finds it more expensive.

I was very much interested in Mr. Hills's article on vital food.[1] I intend giving it another trial very soon. You will recollect that I did

[1] The theory of vital food was originally propagated by Mr. A. F. Hills, Chairman of the Vegetarian Society, at its first quarterly meeting on February 4, 1889. In The First Diet of Paradise, he expounded, at some length, a somewhat remarkable theory of vitality, energy, rays of the sun, etc., which were to be found in the following foods: fruit, grain, nuts and pulse, all raw. Vide also "An Experiment in Vital Food", 24-3-1894.

give it a trial when in Bombay, but not for a time long enough to warrant any opinion about it.

Kindly remember me to all our friends.

The Vegetarian, 30-9-1893

31. GUIDE TO LONDON

[1893-94][1]

INTRODUCTION

In these days of cheap publication authors are constantly multiplying and have naturally lost a great deal of the respect they used to command before. Let me then at once inform the reader that, in issuing this little guide I am not aspiring to authorship, but simply supplying, as I believe, a long-felt want. Issuing guides does not make authors. They are made of 'sterner stuff'.

It will be readily admitted that, though Indians have been going to and returning from England for the last twenty years and more, no attempt has yet been made at writing a guide like this. Some of them have published books describing with much effect what is to be seen

[1] The exact date of writing is not available. Pyarelal says: "comparative leisure at Pretoria enabled Gandhiji to resume two little unfinished ventures which he had launched while he was in India. One was a little handbook or *Guide to London* that he had set about to prepare in answer to numerous inquiries on his return from London. . . . It bears the evidence of having been written, at least in part, between the second half of 1893 and the first half 1894. . . He never published it." (*The Early Phase*, p. 316).

In the introduction, Gandhiji writes: "And here the only topic of conversation with my visitors has been England till I have been sometimes literally bored (Vol 1: "Guide to London"; Introduction)." "Here" in this sentence appears to refer to Indian. It is not known whether the introduction was written before or after the text, but it may be presumed that the work was commenced before Gandhiji left for South Africa in 1893. Gandhiji mentions the "morning coat . . . now five years old", which he must have bought on reaching London in September 1888; *vide* Vol 1: "Guide to London", chapter II.

About the circumstances in which the MS was located, Pyarelal writes: "The existing copy was retrieved by me from a heap of papers littering the floor of the weaving shed in the Satyagraha Ashram at Sabarmati, shortly after my arrival there in 1920. It being shown to Gandhiji, he said that it had been made at his instance by one of his clerks in South Africa, who wrote a very bad hand, to improve his handwriting. Unfortunately some pages in the appendix are missing. The original could never be traced" (*E.P.*).

in England and elsewhere. But they have not gone further. They leave you in suspense, for they do create in you a desire for going to England, but how to do it they seem to have failed to tell. Scores of Indians have become barristers, yet no one has been bold to inform his countrymen how he managed to live in England. While there I received many from friends asking me to throw some light on one thing or another. And here the only topic of conversation with my visitors has been England till I have been sometimes literally bored. The avidity with which they have devoured the information must by itself justify the publication of this unpretentious guide.

No doubt there are many reasons why a book like this has not been before the public long ago. Any such book in order to be exhaustive must necessarily contain important revelations which I know painfully would perhaps stir up a useless controversy and wrangle and which some would always like not to be made at all. The movements alike of students and laymen in England are shrouded in mystery. No one for instance knows definitely what an Indian eats in England, where he lives; whether he cooks his food or not, etc., etc. now these are the very points which are of vital importance to those who intend to go to England. The writer, Therefore, of the following pages proposes to discover the mystery and lay bare the movements of Indians in England.

Such a course, I hope, would facilitate to some extent the way to England in addition to helping the people to understand the England-returned Indians, but I am afraid it will bring on me showers of reproaches and remonstrances from many persons. It may even cost me friendships. Some would call me rash, others would be content with saying that I lack tact[1], while yet others would fling youth into my face, but I have resolved upon bearing the storm for the sake of truth.

The next question is whether I am the person who should write such a book. I am inclined to leave it to the reader to a great extent to answer the question. I know there are persons who would tell the same story in a nobler language, who would tell it with a greater accuracy, who would tell with a greater fulness and I know also that probably no one can combine in himself all the qualities. The only reason why I write the book is that no one has as yet written it though badly wanted.

[1] The source has ‘tactics’.

As a rule the book will contain facts only and at times personal observations when absolutely necessary. If, at any time, anyone finds anything that he cannot understand or any error in the book, I shall thank him to correspond with me so that I may offer an explanation or correct the error.

Before concluding the introduction, I beg [all to] extend me their co-operation, i. e., help me by buying and, what is more necessary, reading the book so that they may help themselves.

Facts which can be determined easily from other sources will not generally find place in this guide, but the sources will be referred to. The province of the book is not to collect information from the existing books, but to attempt that which has not yet been attempted.

CHAPTER 1

WHO SHOULD GO TO ENGLAND?

It may be laid down broadly that all who can afford should go to England. Of course, here the meaning of the word 'afford' should be understood in its widest sense. Thus some cannot go to England because they cannot afford the money, some cannot afford through ill-health, others cannot owing to young age and various other objections. All these will be briefly discussed in the following paragraphs.

The first and the foremost question is the question of health. No one with a weak chest or a tendency to consumption should ever think of going to England. It will simply mean going to England in order to court death away from friends and relations. It is true that you can go to the south of Europe not only without injury to the constitution but with benefit to it; thus you can go to the Riviera and be cured of consumption. Thousands of consumptive persons annually flock there to be cured of the fell disease. It is supposed to be one of the finest places for persons with weak chests; but all this means a great outlay of money. And then again the book is not written for invalids so that they may get cured by following the instructions therein contained. It is written for those with a good health who want to learn and be useful. Moreover it is for those who would go to England. It is true also that a person with a generally weak health might take a trip to England during the summer season without coming to much or any harm. Still, if I can venture to give an opinion, I should say that those with any chest disease whatever should never think of going to

England except under special circumstances and conditions. On the other hand, persons suffering from any disease due to a warm climate can do worse than going to England. I used to suffer from headaches and nose-bleeding in India. I could not read for three or four hours at a stretch during the summer months without getting a headache. Now I am happy to say I am entirely free from both and this I ascribe mainly to the cold and invigorating climate of England. On there question of health if there be any doubt about it, it would be best always to consult some medical authority.

The next question is as to age. It is very difficult to lay down any hard and fast rules for that. All parents must generally know when they can part with their children. The solution of the question depends moreover on the character of the boy who wants to go. Then again it depends on what he wants to do there. If he wants to pass the Civil Service examination, the limit of age in now 23. For a person desiring to be a barrister, he must be twenty-one years before he is called. He who wants to matriculate must be at least sixteen years old. If you want to give your child a beginner's education, you can send it without a guardian to one of the many homes, where children only are educated and taken care of.

Having so far dealt with the negative side, I come to the positive. To lay down broadly that all those who have money, a good constitution and [are] of proper age should go to England seems very tempting, but it is not sufficient. All such persons may inquire "Why should we go to England?" And I venture to answer: for the purposes of trade, travel or education. Nowadays many go there for education, some go there for travelling, but very few for trade, though the last is the most important for the material well-being of the country. Everyone knows that India wants trade more than anything else and that England is the best place for getting an insight into different trades. I do not for a moment hold that a person can learn trading only in England. What he does learn is the trading habits of the people. If he wants to extend his commerce with England, the more he knows the land and their people the better for him, From this it follows that he should go to England specially for that. Those who go there for the sake of education or travel do not and cannot make it their object to study everything relating to trade. There one sees different branches of commerce in a most efficient state. He sees also how the large establishments are carried on. A fellow with a trading

knowledge can know what would be the best things to trade in. Then again, if we had a direct communication with English gentlemen, we can dispense with agency. I know there are some Indians who have established themselves in England and are trading there. This is very good so far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. I am sorry to say that the management of these houses is far from satisfactory and consequently they are not doing a swinging business. I should like educated traders who have a good knowledge of English to go there, mix with the people, see the secret of their success and then return to India, open up branches in England and India in an improved style. I have been told that we stand a fair chance of doing a good business in selling carved wood and stones and feathers in England. Everyone knows how many feathers are daily wasted away in almost every part of India. Since they are a saleable commodity in Europe, we are wasting away real wealth simply through sheer ignorance or indifference. These are mere instances. There must be various other things which would sell in England. It is exactly because we do not know these things that we should go to England to learn what they are. Will a time come when every trading firm will send their man to England?

Then as to travelling.

Both the traders and students can combine a little travelling with their profession. These are travellers of a low type. Those who want to become professional travellers, who want to write books on travels must go there for the special purpose of travelling. But I believe such persons had better see their own country first. I cannot do better than quote Mr. Malabari on the point:

> In study as in travel it is best to begin at the very beginning and to proceed by slow stages, gaining something at every stage and that something such as to be of immediate practical use at the next stage. When you travel or study by degrees, every fresh step or item of knowledge is a keen enjoyment. You are prepared to receive it, and, thus received, your knowledge will fructify. But when knowledge is thrust upon you without previous discipline, i.e., without your being fit for it, it will be inert and unleavened. What is the use of visiting foreign countries when you know nothing of your own? When you go to Europe ignorant of your own national life, you will miss those thousand points of comparison and contrast, those thousand shades of difference, those thousand beauties and blemishes that modern European civilization presents. At the best you will look at things, not see or see through them.

These are wise words worthy of serious consideration. The

outcome of it is that you should begin not at the wrong end.

Last of all comes education. It is with very much regret that I have to record here that almost all who go to England for the purpose of education go there in order to become barristers. Education does not mean becoming barristers. I shall have a good deal to say about barristers in a separate chapter, so here I shall just say what other things you can do there. Of course the most coveted examination is the Civil Service examination. But those only who are British-born subjects can go in for that examination. Engineering is another branch of education which you can learn at the Cooper's Hill College. You can get the highest medical degree at the London University. It has turned out most eminent doctors, but it is a long course and, though theoretically requiring only five years, requires practically seven years. Oxford and Cambridge Universities impart a very good education. They are meant for the richer classes, not the poor. The education received in these universities is quite different from that received in the Indian universities. They are not so exacting as our universities here. Again, in India generally it is all work which, as is said, "with no play makes Jack a dull boy". The Oxford and Cambridge education combines both work and play. That university life is not a drudgery as I suppose, unfortunately, it is here.

It would be impossible to give exhaustive information about the various centres of education. They can only be pointed out. The secretaries of all these institutions can be written to and will send prospectuses wherefrom every detailed information can be gathered. Edinburgh too is a place which has become a favourite place with the Indians, mostly medical students. The medical course there is far easier than the London course which, of course, is the hardest. The Durham University, too, gives a medical diploma.

It might be urged that all these things can be had here and at a less cost. I would admit the former though not the latter. However, the mere fact that the same thing can be had in India is not sufficient. The question is which is of superior quality. Is not education in any branch far superior in England to that in India? Cannot a man learn more during the same time in England than in India? The last proposition is self-evident. A student here is half student and half man. He may be married too. In that case, he has to think of his wife, perhaps children, in addition to house-hold cares which an Indian student is generally saddled with. While, in England, he is alone, no

wife to tease or flatter him, no parents to indulge, no children to look after, no company to disturb. He is the master of his time. So, if he has the will, he can do more. Moreover, the invigorating climate in England is by itself a stimulant to work, the enervating climate of India is a stimulant to idleness. Who has not passed idle hours in a summer noon? Who has not wished he had nothing to do in summer but to sleep? Of course, persons are there who never cease to work in India. In fact, hardest working students are found in India. But that work is against the will. In England, it does not do to be idle. You like the work for the sake of it. You cannot help working. I have heard it said of a very learned professor that he read as much in three years in England as he would have in nine years in India. That amount of work which tells upon one's health in India can be gone through with ease in England. An instance is at our very doors. Do we not work more in winter than in summer? So, then, it will not be doubted that a person willing to work will do more in England than in India. It is needless to mention the advantage that we have in England of talking in the English language the whole of our time. It is fervently to be hoped that examples of persons having cut a sorry figure will not be cited in refutation of the above proposition. For such fall under the category of those who are not willing to work, while we are here talking of persons who seek more opportunities for work in England than in India. It will be very uncharitable to expect drones to return types of learning from England. There are the better opportunities, it is for you to avail of them. If you do not, you are to blame, not England. And if superior education can be obtained in England, it follows that it is not more expensive than that to be obtained in India, if the ratio of superiority be the same as that of increased expenses.

CHAPTER II

PRELIMINARIES

Having in the previous chapter shown who should go to England, I now proceed to describe what preliminaries one has to make before starting. In so doing if I may at times enter into the most trifling details, I hope the reader will not take it as an insult. The standard by which I go is my intelligence and lower still if possible and I shall describe things which required an explanation in my case when I left for England.

The first consideration is that of money. The amount of money

the candidate has to take with him will be given later on, but whatever the amount, let him make absolutely sure of getting the full amount in England. In certain cases it may be advisable to take the whole amount with him. I know by personal experience how even persons who have promised on oath to give some pecuniary assistance, a loan mind you, not an absolute gift and whom you think [you] can safely depend upon prove false to their promises.[1] In London you do not often find persons who would give you a loan even. The loan too is generally big, for when you do not get the promised money, it is not a small sum, but a tolerably large one which you would not expect any friend to lend. I know by personal experience and that of friends what it is for an Indian to be without money even for a moment in England. It involves an extra expense of wiring home, not to speak of the anxieties one has to suffer under such circumstances, and wiring to India is very expensive. It is four shillings per word. Therefore be sure you will get a sufficient amount of money and that, too, at the proper time.

Then, if possible, it is always advisable to get some introduction notes to gentlemen in England. They are not absolutely necessary, but when you can get them, they are not useless. You know that you will have some friends when you reach there. They are a consolation and, at times, friendships built upon such introduction notes become lasting and genuine.[2]

Now you have to consider what things to take with you, where to buy the passage and where to put up on reaching London.

I shall first give a list of necessary things and then offer a few remarks thereon, when deemed necessary.

		Rs.	As.
1	Overcoat	30	0
1	Morning coat	20	0
1	Waistcoat	10	0
1	Jacket suit (vest jacket)	30	0
3	Pairs of trousers	27	0

[1] *Vide An Autobiography*, Pt. I, ch. XIII; also "Draft of Letter to Frederick Lely: December 1888.

[2] *Vide* An Autobiography, Pt. I, Ch. XIII.

3	” drawers (woollen)	15	0
3	” ” (cotton or merino)	6	0
3	Woollen vests	12	0
3	Cotton or merino vests	4	0
3	Woollen shirts without collars	16	0
6	Woollen shirts with collars	18	0
1	White shirt	2	0
1	Pair of braces	1	8
3	Standup collars	1	0
	Mother-of-pearl studs	0	8
	” links	0	4
12	Handkerchiefs	1	4
2	Sleeping suits (woollen)	15	0
1	Pair of gloves	2	0
1	Rug	10	0
6	Cotton or merino socks	3	0
3	Woollen socks	4	0
		228	8
		Rs.	As.
	B.F.	228	8
1	Rugstrap	1	8
1	Pair of slippers	1	4
1	Pair of shoes	4	0
1	“ boots	6	0
1	Turkish cap	1	4
1	Cloth brush	1	0
1	Hair brush	1	0
1	Tooth brush	0	4
1	Shaving brush	1	0
1	Razor	2	0
1	Razor strap	2	0
1	Comb	0	8
1	Shaving stick	1	0
Tongue scraper		0	4

Note paper		0	8
Envelopes to match		0	4
Travelling inkstand		0	8
Penholder and pocket pencil		0	8
Blotting		0	4
Pins and needles and thread		0	4
Penknife		1	8
Pens 0		8	
Money purse		0	8
Stick		1	0
Deck chair		5	0
Two trunks		16	0
Some books			
Umbrella		4	0
Total	Rs.	282	4

To buy the above things care must be taken that the best things are bought at the cheapest prices and that the things bought are suitable. . . There are many shops in Bombay. Some of the native shops are very good. The English shops would be found to be very expensive. Whenever practicable, it is always best to get some experienced person to buy the things for you.

It may not be useless here to make a few remarks on the above list. Two trunks have been mentioned in the list and the price for both has been put down at Rs. 16/-. Each trunk may be 26x12[1]. Generally they buy one steel trunk and a leather bag. And one of th0e best steel trunks would cost Rs. 25 and a leather bag—a gladstone bag—would cost much the same. This expense is not necessary. A good trunk can be bought for Rs. 12. In putting down the price at Rs. 16 I have in my mind native iron trunks which are as strong as, if not stronger than, the steel trunks. That would be an encouragement to native industry and a saving of a few rupees to the purchaser. If the native trunks do not suit or if they cannot be had, wooden boxes can be bought or imitation steel trunks which do not cost more than Rs. 5 each. The P. & O. rules say with regard to the size of the trunks:

[1] Obviously inches

The portmanteau for cabin use should not exceed 3 ft in length, 1 ft 9 inches in width and 1 ft and 3 inches in depth. No packages exceeding this limit are allowed in the saloons or cabins.

The prices for other articles are not by any means the lowest prices. For example, while I have put down $^1/_2$ rupee for a pair of socks, a good pair can be had for 5 or 6 annas. If good woollen socks cannot be had in Bombay, they may be bought in London. For six socks would answer the purpose in the boat. With the clothing mentioned in the above list one need not spend anything on dress for a year in England. A further list of clothing will be given later on. It may be bought in England if it is found necessary. And that would give one more than enough clothing for a 3 years' stay in England. Certain things that are generally included in such lists have been purposely left out, e.g., towels, soap, etc. These things can be had gratis on board. Foreign stamps can be bought on board.

As to what dress to wear on board, it is best to begin with the jacket suit. It is not at all necessary to wear the undervest or the drawers. They should be made use of only when the cold weather has begun. It is always advisable not to overload oneself with dress. I have come across many persons who have suffered from over-clothing. Of course, it is equally necessary not to underclothe. The undervest and drawers would not be required till the steamer reaches Port Said, for, the weather to be met with from Bombay to Port Said is not less warm than that we experience in India. If cold is felt after leaving Port Said, the cotton underclothing may be worn or, if necessary, the woollen underclothing. Till Brindisi is reached the overcoat may not be touched at all. It must be understood that this is not the condition in which all can live. No hard and fast rules can be laid down for clothing. The above remarks have been made simply to remove the generally prevalent idea that the under-clothing and the over coat are absolutely necessary as soon as the steamer leaves the harbour. The safest thing to do is to begin to wear more and warmer clothes according to necessity.

The white shirts have almost been left out. This may be considered a hardship not because they are a climatic necessity but because they are a fashion. Well, this is a book meant for those who want to live cheaply and yet respectably. One can safely break through fashion especially when it is expensive and injurious, but the process should not be gone through violently. The white shirts have

been left out because they swell up the weekly washing bill to a very great extent. A white shirt would cost 4d to wash while a flannel shirt would cost only 2d. Again, while one flannel shirt per week is sufficient, at least two white shirts would hardly answer the purpose. They spoil sooner than the flannel shirts. Indeed, some unconventional gentlemen in England who have ceased adoring the fashion as a goddess have discarded stiff clothing altogether. They have bidden goodbye to the stiff collars, cuffs and the shirts. Even medical opinion has begun to revolt against too much use of starch which is absolutely necessary for washing white shirts. The starch has been pronounced to be injurious to the body. Whatever it is, there is no denying the fact that flannel shirts are more comfortable and, in the end, less expensive than linen shirts.

However, if the fashion is to be adored as it ought to be more or less, if you are not to break through it violently, wear the flannel shirts without collars; use the white collars and cuffs and you would lead others to believe that you have white shirts on. This trick is resorted to by thousands in London and sometimes it is very convenient. And, if at times, you like to look a London swell, that too has been provided for. A white shirt would be found mentioned in the list and may be used occasionally.

As a token of respect to the fashion goddess, the neckties too have not been forgotten. They will find a place in the further list. They might be used or not according to one's fancies. They do not cost much if bought cheaply.

The morning coat is worn on visits. On board, too, if you are a first-saloon passenger, it is a necessity. As far as possible, you should wear the jacket suit so that the morning coat may not be spoiled. The writer of these pages had only one morning coat. It is now five years old and yet looks as new as if it were made yesterday. As soon as it is done with, brush it well, fold it and put it in your chest of drawers and it would never spoil.

Shaving materials are mentioned in the list. Do not be surprised. You shall not be a professional barber. But you will have to shave yourself if you have a beard. Even kings are not ashamed of so doing in Europe. If you have thick hair, you have to shave every day. It is a trouble to be at the mercy of a barber every day and incur an expense of at least 2d. To save that it is necessary to learn how to shave oneself. It does not take long. Only a few minutes spent for three or four days would be found sufficient.

For head-dress the turkish cap is mentioned. This is very handy. But, for one who feels uncomfortable in the cap and does not like to be noticed by people, a felt-hat is mentioned in the second list that is to follow.

For tooth powder the best (medically) and yet the cheapest powder is precipitated chalk. You can get 4 oz. for 6d. This will last for months.

Slippers are to be worn at home and on board only.

There is another item of dress that has been left out from the list. It is the dress suit. Now this is not at all necessary. Although many Indians buy it, it is not advisable to incur that expense. I bought it myself and am very sorry for it. I wore it but three or four times. I consider that to be the most foolish expense I incurred in England. They wear it for evening parties. We Indians can wear the morning coat or the Parsee coat or our own native dress whatever that may be. I have seen many Indians wearing the morning coat. There is nothing wrong in it. You have to look clean and tidy, nothing more.

A watch has not been mentioned in the list. For, it has become an article of everyday wear among the educated Indians.

The second list will be found in the 4th chapter. The articles contained in it are to be bought in England. No one should go beyond the list unless he uses his clothes very carelessly and, if one goes to England to become or remain careless, might it not be said, he had better not go at all. The two lists include more than ordinarily required clothing for an ordinarily careful man for three years.

The next thing that one has to do is to buy the passage. Three things are to be considered before buying it, viz. :

1. What month to start in.
2. Whether to go all the way by sea or *via* Brindisi.
3. Whether to go by the P. & O. boats or any other Company's.

As to the first question, while one can start in any month, all things considered the middle of March is the best season. Thereby one avoids immediate experience of English winter and, before he meets with the bitter cold, he will have six beautiful months, viz., from April to September. April is the depth of spring and September the beginning of autumn. Before he has the first experience of an English winter, he will have been acclimatized and accustomed to the English ways of living. He would thus be able to bear the winter with a greater equanimity. Moreover by starting in March, one gets the mildest

weather in the Red Sea. And even the mildest weather of the Red Sea is most trying. In summer, although only 3 days have to be spent on the Red Sea, it is unbearable. The heat is suffocating. No use of *punkhas* and ice is sufficient to allay the burning sensation. It is a time of perpetual perspiration. Moreover, in March the sea all the way is the calmest in the year.

The next best time is September or October. By leaving at that time, of course, you have to brave the winter as soon as you reach England, but if you want to become a Barrister, you have this consolation that you would be able to return home three months earlier than by starting in any other month. This will be treated more fully in the chapter for would-be Barristers.

Having selected the season, one has to consider what would be the best thing to do—whether to go all the way by sea or *via* Brindisi. It takes nearly 22 days by the P & O boats to reach London and 13 days to reach Brindisi, whence London is reached in 2 days by rail. It seems that it is much better to take the sea route throughout. Thereby all the inconveniences of removing luggage and having it examined, etc., are avoided and all the comforts to be found in P & O boats are enjoyed for a longer time. Moreover, a long voyage is very good for health. Some remain on the seas for months for the sake of health only. It is, therefore, advisable that one should take the sea voyage when especially it causes a saving of expense. The second-saloon fare to London by sea is Rs. 370, while *via* Brindisi it is more than Rs. 400. Those who get sea-sick very often need not be afraid of a sea voyage on that score. For during the 13 days for Brindisi one gets used to the sea and overcomes the sickness. It is to be hoped that no one would avoid the voyage from Brindisi for the reason that thereby he would be less open to the dangers of a wreck. This is an idea unworthy of one intending to go to England. It must be remembered that he would be one out of many in his steamer. There are dangers even on the railway. In fact, nowhere is life without dangers. It is a question merely of degree.

The next question to be decided is what Company's boat to go by. There is a very wide field for selection. There the City, Hall, Clan, etc., steamers. But by far the best and most popular are the Peninsular and Oriental Company's boats, which carry Her Majesty's mails to London. The other lines are a trifle cheaper than the last mentioned and, if anyone chooses to book his passage on any of the above lines,

he can see the manager and make arrangements. For there are no fixed rates for these lines. However, whenever practicable, P & O boats should be preferred. The passage can be booked through Messrs King and Co., or Messrs Thomas Cook & Sons at Bombay who are always obliging and ready to supply every information. They do not charge any commission.

Whether to take the 1st-saloon or the 2nd-saloon ticket, very much depends upon one's purse. As to comforts, there is not much difference. Of course, a 1st-saloon passenger gets better company and better food. The food, however, given in the 2nd-saloon is good enough. And, especially, a vegetarian should not incur the expenses of a 1st-saloon passage. The main difference is in food and, since a vegetarian would not take flesh meat, for him the 1st-saloon expense would be entirely unnecessary. The second saloon by sea costs Rs. 370, while the 1st saloon costs Rs. 680. A second-saloon passage *via* Brindisi including 2nd-class railway ticket costs Rs. 445 and a first-class railway ticket costs Rs. 500, while a first saloon with 1st-class railway ticket costs Rs. 810. First-saloon passengers are allowed on board 336 lb. of personal luggage free of freight and the second-saloon passengers 168 lb.

A few remarks about food, etc., on board would not be out of place here. For those who do not object to meat, nothing specially need be mentioned here except everything one can wish for can ordinarily be had on the steamer. The only complaint that can be urged against the Company in respect of food is that the passengers are over-fed. From morning till evening or, even as late as eleven o'clock, one can get something to eat at short intervals. As early as six or seven o'clock, you get biscuits and tea or coffee. At 8.30 a.m. you get breakfast consisting of oatmeal porridge, jam, marmalade, bread, butter, salad, meat and potatoes *ad libitum*. At 1 p.m. you get a good dinner consisting of meat, potatoes and cabbage, some sweet, bread, butter, etc., and twice in a week fruits and nuts. At 4 p.m. you can have a cup of tea and biscuits. Again at 6 p.m. a nice supper consisting of salad, cheese, bread, butter, jam, marmalade, tea, cocoa, etc., is provided and, as a finishing stroke, just at the time of going to bed, you can replenish the hungry stomach with biscuits and cheese. All this to an Indian would sound very strange and look like gluttony. A vegetarian must have found from the above that plenty of things can be had in the steamer that he can take. An Indian who has not

been used to English dishes would, it is very likely, not relish the above dishes for some time. Though, after some time, he would find that all the dishes are very nice and nutritious. As a precaution, it would be better to keep a stock of some fresh fruits and sweets, e.g., *jalebi, halva,* etc., and some salty things, e.g., *ganthia*[1], etc. These with English dishes now and then would quite suffice. Care should be taken that English dishes are increased and the quantity of native things taken decreased. Such a gradual change would be effected imperceptibly and without affecting the constitution. The things to be found on board for a vegetarian are bread, butter, milk, fruit, nuts, jam, marmalade, rice, cheese, potatoes, cabbage, salad, cakes, tea, coffee, biscuits and porridge. This is really a large variety out of which many meals containing quite distinct articles can be made. Nothing can be more nutritious than porridge, bread and butter and a cup of cocoa or if you like tea. For dinner you can have one course of bread, butter and vegetables, another course of rice, milk and jam (a sweet preparation) and a third course of some fruit or bread and cheese. You can make a very good supper of bread, butter and cocoa and jam and salad or cheese or both. If these be not sufficient, special arrangements are made for vegetarians. The chief steward should be informed and requested to prepare some vegetable dishes and he very obligingly gets for you vegetable curry, fresh fruit and stewed fruit and brown bread. And you cannot want anything more. Some interesting facts would be found from the appendix as to how the writer of these pages managed on board.[2] If a pious Indian does not want to eat food cooked by Europeans, he can cook his own food in the Indian quarters, where they would give a space for cooking. Whether this is advisable or not is quite another matter. This is mentioned just to remove the prevailing prejudice to the effect that on board one has no other course open but to take food cooked by the Europeans.

The much-vexed and important question whether it is possible to remain a vegetarian on board and in England will be discussed in another chapter. It is sufficient to mention for the present purposes that it is not at all necessary to take meat or wine and it is positively injurious to take the latter.

[1] The source has this in Devnagari script; reference to a preparation made of grame flour.

[2] *Vide* also *An Autobiography*, Pt. I, Ch. XIII

Having landed in London, where to go seems to present some difficulty. The editor of *The Vegetarian*, a newspaper published in London Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, has kindly consented to give the necessary directions and find them the proper lodgings where they can have everything cheap and nice. Here I may be allowed to say a word about *The Vegetarian.* It is a paper which I believe should be subscribed to by every Indian who would see Englishmen as vegetarians and who would sympathize with the movement now going on in London. It should be bought not especially as mental food, not for the sake of the information given by it, not for the high-class intellectual matter contained in it, though these are by no means of an inferior quality, but for encouraging a movement every Indian should have at heart. To return, however, to the main subject, the people of the London Vegetarian Society are always kind and hospitable towards Indians and a more genial man than the editor of *The Vegetarian* it would be difficult to find. It would, therefore, be a great gain for every Indian going to England to let the editor know of his so doing. I may perhaps suggest, though the suggestion has nothing whatever to do with the editor, that in common fairness every such person would subscribe himself as a member of the Society or subscribe to the paper.

But, if the above arrangement be not deemed feasible or advisable, the next best thing to do would be put up at the Vegetarian Hotel, Charing Cross, be he a vegetarian or meat-eater. A list[1] of houses would be found at the end of the book wherefrom to make a selection. The terms in the appendix places are very reasonable. Other hotels would be found very dear. On landing, a cab can always be had which would take you, on your giving the name, to the place named. These lodgings, it must be understood, are only temporary until a permanent one is found. So the next thing to do would be to search for a good and suitable room. This can be done in the company of some friend whom you may be knowing or to whom you have got an introduction note.

CHAPTER III

THE COST OF LIVING

This is the stumbling block. This is the question which is the

[1] This is not available in Appendix A as some pages are missing.

most inviting and yet most repulsive. To enter into that question seriously is to differ from everybody. Every man would furnish his own estimates, thinking at the same time that no other estimates could be true and, if true, possible for everyone. That again is the question which is the most important, especially, to a man of ordinary circumstances. And it is strange that, although the question is admittedly of such a vast importance, greater ignorance does not prevail with regard to any question ordinarily presenting itself to an Indian wishing to go to England than with regard to this. It is moreover true that the ordinary estimates quoted are from 10 to 20 pounds per month. Living on £10 per month was pronounced to be very economical. With such estimates to say that one can live comfortably on £4 a month or £1 a week could be a heresay: Nevertheless, it is a fact beyond doubt, as shall be proved just now, that it is possible to live on one pound a week and that many have lived on less. I may say that I have tried the experiment successfully and was never happier than under the £4 living. While I was living on £4 per month, I had to work the hardest. The reader will find from (App. A) how, from £12 per month, I gradually came down to £4 per month.

First of all, I shall consider the cost of lodgings. It is commonly supposed that a student should have two rooms, one bed-room and one sitting-room. Now this is quite useless except to show, that you are very rich and can afford to spend any amount of money. This guide is not written for those who would make a show very often false, of their riches. It is written for those who would live a regular student's life, as economical as possible. There are many professional gentlemen-bachelors living in one room only. Of course, there are many Indian students and thousands of English students living in one room only. Two rooms are more for families than for students. Then if you have one room only with the necessary furniture in a good quarter, it can be had for 7s per week and less. Of course, one room can be had for 2s per week. I give low estimates. Such rooms can be had in North London, West, Central, West Kensington, Westbourne Park, and many other respectable parts of London commonly favoured by Indian students. In such a room you would find a table, three or four chairs, an easy chair, a wash-stand with all the requisites, a hearth, a chest of drawers, probably a book-case, cupboard, a carpet, a bedstead with bed-sheets and blankets, a looking-glass, etc. Are Indian students used to better-furnished rooms? Indeed, a raw Indian not used to the two rooms would be quite enchanted with such a room

and would not wish for a better one. When I first saw my room in the Victoria Hotel, I thought I could pass a lifetime in that room. It is always best to find out a room in the neighbourhood of a place to be frequented most by you. Thereby a great deal of money required in travelling by bus or tram is saved.

Secondly, as to other expenses, e.g., washing, bathing, etc. Your washerman's bill need not amount to more than 11 pence per week, which is as follows:

		d
1	Flannel shirt	2
1	Drawers	2
1	Vest	2
2	Handkerchiefs	1
1	Sleeping suit	4
	Total	11 d

A saving can be effected in the above if you do not use the drawers which you need not, in summer especially. The sleeping suits may be changed fortnightly. Moreover, with a little care, a good washerman can be found who would wash the drawers and suits for $1^1/_2$d each and sleeping suits for 3 d. If and when you wear the white shirts regularly for a week, instead of the flannel shirt, the washerman's bill would be heavier by 6 or 8d. But under no circumstances should it amount to more than 11d per week on an average.

As to bathing, it is only in the newly-built houses that bathrooms are attached to them. In ordinary houses no bath-rooms can be found. In such cases very many visit the public baths weekly which cost 6d or 4d. But it is possible to have a daily bath without any expense wherever you go. You can take a sponge bath with two or three tumblers of hot water always to be supplied at your request by the landlady in the morning. You can pour water into your basin, dip a sponge in it and rub hard with the sponge twice or thrice and then rub the body with a dry towel, and you have taken a very nice bath which gives a glow to the body and keeps it clean. Even the sponge may be left out and the hands only used. To these daily baths may be added a fortnightly or monthly visit to the public baths. Your landlady supplies you with two towels every week. All these arrangements must be made with the landlady before engaging a room so that no misunderstanding may arise in future. Whenever you go to engage a

room, explain to the landlady what you want to have included in the weekly rent. Boot black, sheets, towels, service, hot-water in the morning, etc., are generally included.

It is not true to say, as is commonly supposed, that owing to the severe cold one cannot take baths daily. On the other hand, it is necessary that one should bathe daily in order to keep good health. A landlady, I know, drove away her boarder simply because he would not take his daily bath. She often used to quote: “Cleanliness is next to godliness”, and, no matter how cold it was, she used to see every morning that everyone in her house had a bath.

Next to bathing come travelling expenses, which should not amount to more than 6d per week. By having your room in the neighbourhood of the place to be most frequented by you, you avoid the daily expense of travelling to the place, but on Sundays you may visit friends and spend a few pence in travelling. Of course, one week you may spend a shilling if need be and not spend anything the next week. It is always best, whenever possible, to walk so that you may have exercise at the same time that you save the money. Nothing can be better. Many do this purposely in England, not so much for the sake of saving a few pence, as for the sake of exercise. Walking three or four miles is a pleasure in the cold climate of England. Indeed, whenever it is possible in the cold weather, a brisk walk should be preferred to a ride in a train or a bus. Very often the latter proves injurious. I was once literally stiff in a bus. Even the bus conductors recognize the danger. At intervals they run with the bus and get into it when they are warm.

Six pence per week on an average may be set apart for stamps, etc., though such sum is hardly necessary.

If you have your hair cut twice every month, it would cost you 8d, so that 2d per week may be put down for hair-cutting. Of course, you shave yourself.

One cake of Pear's soap would last a month. It costs $3^1/_2$ d. So then 1 d per week may be allowed for soap.

One penny per week may be set aside for tooth powder. This is rather extravagant. You can have a very fine and harmless tooth powder in precipitated chalk, four ounces of which can be had for 6 d. And an ounce would last you quite a month instead of a week.

There is one big item of expenditure that should not be lost sight of. In winter, fire is required in the room during the day time if

you use the room. For those who use the library in the case of stude nts, the expense does not amount to much. But for others, it amounts to nearly 2 shillings per week. For 2 shillings you can get 4 scuttles coal. But, as fire is not required generally from April to September, we may put down on an average one shilling per week for coals.

This ends the extra expenditure per week which may be thus summed up :

	d
Washerman's bill	11
Bathing	6
Travelling expenses	6
Stamps, etc.	6
Hair-cutting	2
Soap	1
Tooth powder	1
Coal	12
Margin	3
Total	4 s-0 d

With 7s for the room rent and 4s for extras we have 9s remaining for food. It may here be remarked that a saving can be effected even in the 11s, whenever required, so that it may be spent on food or buying books and many other useful things. Thus, for instance, out of 6d for stamps, etc., only a penny or two may be spent. One penny, I suppose, would be absolutely necessary for writing home a postcard. Fortnightly baths (in winter especially) may take the place of weekly baths when a sponge bath is taken daily. Similarly, at times, nothing may be spent in travelling. It is an expense to be counted, not necessary to be incurred. The aim ought to be not to spend more than one pound per week on an average and live comfortably.

Passing now from this comparatively incontestable part of the question of the cost of living, we reach the most important and contestable part of the question, viz., the cost of food.

There is so much to be said on this part of the subject, so much prejudice and misunderstanding to be removed that to treat the subject fully would require a separate and larger book.

How to get good, nutritious, healthy and palatable food for 9s per week is the question before us.

At the outset I may say that those only can live on that sum who "eat to live", not "live to eat". If you must have the luxuries, if you cannot sit at the table without company, if you must entertain friends pretty frequently to sumptuous dinners, if you must live like a gourmand, then for you ten times the sum may not be sufficient. But if you would live frugally and happily and *not* luxuriously, 9s per week would be more than sufficient.

I earnestly beseech the reader to dismiss from his mind all premeditated ideas, all prejudice, and he will, I am sure, see for himself that without entailing any loss of health, but rather keeping it up, he would find 9s sufficient for his food per week.

As nothing tells like illustrations, I would first cite illustrations in support of the contention that one pound a week is sufficient for a person of frugal habits and not born in the lap of luxury or rather not addicted to a luxurious mode of living. There are thousands of commercial gentlemen living on one pound a week in England. I had a chat with an Anglo-Indian here who said that he was living on one pound a week. There is a gentleman who is an M.A., B.E.L., Barrister-at-Law, who lived on 10s a week and has yet been living on less than one pound a week. He is the editor of a newspaper and I have seen him work at the rate of 16 hours or more per diem. He was, when I saw him last, living on bread, figs and water.

There are Irish M.P."s living on one pound per week. And some of them are the best debaters. The late Mr. Biggor, M.P., I believe, lived on one pound a week.

And what did Charles Bradlaugh do? Says Mrs. Annie Besant of him:

> He sold everything he possessed except his books. His home that he had got together by hard work, his furniture, even a diamond ring given to him by a grateful person whom he had helped. He sent his children to school. His wife, not physically able to bear the life he faced, went to live with her parents in the country and he took two small rooms in Turner Street, White Chapel, for which he paid 3s 6d a week and where he remained until he had cleared off most of his liabilities. He then moved to lodgings over a music shop in Circus Road, St. John's Wood, where he lived for the remainder of his life, his daughters joining him on the death of their mother in 1877. . . . He died poor indeed with no personal property save his library, his Indian gifts and his very modest wardrobe, but he left his name free, his honour unstained.

He began life on 10s a week. And we all know how clever intellectually and how strong in body he was. So far as food is concerned, his food did not cost Cardinal Manning more than nine shillings per week if what is written about him be true.

> There are, to take a noted and living example, few harder working men in England than Archbishop Manning, a man full of cares and labours, yet I am assured by those who have had the most intimate personal relations with him that Mr. Disraeli in 'Lothair' has not in the least exaggerated his habitual abstinence and that his ordinary meal, in public or private, is a biscuit or a bit of bread and a glass of water.

His strict abstinence from wines is notorious.

Dr. Nichols from whose work the above has been taken did not, and probably does not, spend more than 6d a day on food. (3s 6d per week). He has written a book *How to Live on Six Pence a Day*, a book everybody who would live frugally ought to read. In it he relates his experiment with the most gratifying results.

There are many other books written on the subject. There is a book entitled *How to Live on One Pound a Week.* This includes everything, lodging, food, clothes, etc.

Indeed, a gentleman has even tried to limit his food expenses to one shilling a week and written a book on the subject. We however allow nine times the sum for food.

All these instances must suffice to show that, not only is it possible to live on £1 a week, but many have done it.

Has any Indian done it, some may ask? Yes, a gentleman, a judge from the Punjab, while I was in England came there, for a Barrister's education on furlough. He was over 40 years of age and was with his son in England. He said his pay was Rs. 150. He gave, he said, Rs. 50 to his wife at home and spent Rs. 50 for himself and his boy in London. That amounted to £3-$^{1}/_{3}$ per month, i.e., less than £1 per week for two souls. This small sum was made to include many things besides those that we allow for one pound.

Another Indian gentleman from Gujarat was living on less than 10s per week and seemed to be quite happy. He shared a room for 4s with a friend and thus got his accommodation for 2s only. This gentleman has been receiving medical education in England. Sadhu Narayan Hemchandra has been living on one pound a week.[1] He has a

[1] *Vide* An Autobiography, Pt. I, Ch. XXII.

room for 6s a week. He spends 3 or 4d for washing and 7s for food per week. He works very hard. He says in his letter that he knows now German, English and French. In one pound per week he manages to buy his clothes and books of which I brought to India a boxful. He must have bought quite as many, if not more, by this time. A gentleman who has recently gone to England writes thus to me:

> From my last letter you might have thought very badly of me because I myself look upon my conduct at the time with little satisfaction. But, as you wanted to know how I was living, I had to give you my sincere views. Since that time a great change has been brought about by degrees. What I thought an impossibility at that time is now a practical possibility. Six pounds a month are a thing of the past, and you will wonder to hear that, even in London, I am able to limit my board and lodging expenses to three pounds per month.

With this array of facts before the reader, I hope he will have no difficulty in following and agreeing with me that, if one has the will, one can live on one pound a week and even less in England.

Now we come to the solution of the question how to live on 9s a week.

In the first place it may be mentioned that, to live so cheaply, all the luxuries ought to be avoided, viz., tea, coffee, tobacco and wines and, last but not least, flesh foods.

There are people to tell you that it is impossible to do without tea in England. Some say you cannot do without coffee, others say you would die without tobacco, wines or meat. All these gentlemen must be questioned as to the source of their information and the difficulty will be solved. It is all humbug and hearsay. There is difference of opinion as to flesh foods. As to the rest, every Indian who has gone to England would tell you that not one of them is necessary except for the sake of pleasure of luxury. However what do they think of tea and coffee in London? Says Dr. Nichols about tea and coffee:

> Even the milder stimulants such as tea and coffee have no appreciable nutritive value. If the leaves of tea or the berries of coffee had as much nutrition as the same weight of spinach, but an infinitesimal portion can be in the decoctions we drink. In the matter of food and as the materials of bone, muscle or nerve, an ounce of bread is worth gallons of tea or coffee. The sugar and milk drunk in them are food, all the rest is almost worthless. They soothe hunger as narcotics and sedatives, Some physiologists are of opinion that they prevent waste and so make less food necessary. If this were true, it would be injurious, for waste and the removal of waste matterare necessary to the

health of the system. Tea and coffee are stimulants only and their influence upon the body is either inappreciable or hurtful. Strong decoctions of either stimulate the brain and nerves, produce over-action and, by combating fatigue for a time, allows us to over-task our powers until we bring on dyspepsia, neuralgia, softening of the brain, paralysis, apoplexy.

A distinguished Indian doctor of considerable experience, while talking about tea, said that he refused to treat patients who would not leave off tea under his treatment. However, if tea and coffee are to be taken, they would not mean so much more expense as so much less nutritive food. For they will be substituted for milk which is far better than tea or coffee. From a pecuniary point of view, a cup of tea or coffee *made at home* would cost less than a glass of milk. If tea is to be taken, it would be better to use condensed milk as it would be difficult to buy milk sufficient only for one or two cups of tea, unless only milk is used for making tea.

As to tobacco, it is positively injurious to the system and an expensive luxury which does no good and a great deal of harm. Tobacco, it must be known, is very dear in England. If it is indulged in, six pence would be ordinarily required daily. It cost an Indian gentleman £30 during his three years' stay. A good cigar costs 4 to 6d and a cigarette 1d each. One can get 5 cigarettes for a penny, but this is the dirtiest stuff possible. It contains either ashes of tobacco or cabbage leaves. So in order to be able to live well on £1 a week, it is absolutely necessary to [abstain from][1] tobacco which "whether chewed or smoked or snuffed has no nutritive property but is an acrid poison, absorbed into the blood and resting upon the brain and nerves, first exciting and then dulling their sensibility and finally stupefying and paralysing."

Thus hatefully does Count Tolstoy, than whom "few men have been more given to wine and cigarettes", speak of both:

> People drink and smoke not merely for want of something better to do to while away the time or to raise their spirits, not because of the pleasure they receive, but simply and solely in order to drown the warning voice of conscience.

To illustrate the proposition he says :

> No one would take the liberty to flood with water a room in which people were sitting to scream and yell in it or to perform any other acts tending to disturb or injure others and yet out of a thousand smokers scarcely

[1] Source is damaged here.

> one will hesitate to fill with noxious fumes a room the atmosphere of which is being breathed by women and children who do not smoke.

Indeed, this nuisance is so much felt that, in railway carriages, special compartments for smoking are reserved. In orderly houses smoking rooms are set apart for young men who are never allowed to smoking in dining-rooms. A friend was taken to task for smoking in a shelter on the staircase of the house he was living in.

Says the Court further:

> For the more a man stupefies himself with these stimulants, narcotics, the more stolid, quiescent and stagnant he become intellectually and morally.

We all know what deeds are committed by men in a drunken state.

As to the wines, the above quotations are sufficient to show what a man who used to drink fearfully thinks of them. It is not necessary to quote extracts to prove that wines are injurious and that we are not required to drink wines in England. There are hundred of societies to convince you of the fact that wines are not necessary. There are many members of Parliament who do not drink at all. In fact, there in a teetotalers party in the Commons, with which are prominently associated the names W.S. Caine and Sir Wilfred Lawson. We have temperance societies in Bombay and many parts of India. There are even Anglo-Indians who are teetotalers. In spite of all this, persons there are, enlightened by then, who believe and refuse to disbelieve, even though convinced, that wines are absolutely necessary in England. A gentleman said: “After reaching England, you may not require them, but somewhere in the Mediterranean sea, I am told you die without them.” He was told, I may be allowed to tell him that if the wines were so very necessary, the P. & O. Company would provide wines together with the food for the fees they charge and not make the passengers pay separately for the wines they consume. If the wines were to be taken in England, and that regularly, 9s would be used up simply in drinking and it would be impossible to make the two ends meet for the estimate given by me.

So, then, it is absolutely necessary to exclude wines and tobacco from the estimate and advisable to exclude tea and coffee, as the latter can be used at a sacrifice of far more substantial drink: milk.

Now we come to the question of flesh foods which, I think, must be abandoned if 9s are to be sufficient so as not to injure health. How would the Mahommedans and Parsis do, it may be asked in that case. For them this guide is useless. Tarry a little. I would ask: Are there not

many Mahommedans and Parsis who, on account of their poverty, get flesh foods only on rare occasions and some on none? These surely can manage without flesh foods which they get but rarely in India, not for the sake of religion or principles, but for the sake of economy. They are free to take meat whenever they can get it, e.g., in their Inn if they have gone for a Barrister's education. If it be true that one can live on vegetable foods without injuring one's health, why should not all live on a vegetable diet because it is more economical than a meat diet? That vegetarianism exists in England there are living examples to prove.

There are vegetarian societies and any quantity of vegetarian literature to testify to the existence of vegetarianism in England. There are living notable Englishmen who are vegetarians.

Lord Hannen of the H.M.'s Privy Council, better known as Sir James Hannen, the President of the late Parnell Commission, is a vegetarian.

Mr. Gotling of Bombay is a vegetarian.

John Wesley was a vegetarian. So was Howard the philanthropist and a host of others all men of light and learning. The poet Shelley was a vegetarian. It is impossible in the compass of a small book to so much as do justice to such a vast subject. I must content myself with referring the inquisitive reader to *Perfect Way in Diet* by Dr. Anna Kingsford[1] who says of herself :

> I cured myself of tubercular consumption by living on vegetable food. A doctor told me I had not six months to live. What was I to do? I was to eat raw meat and drink port wine. Well, I went into the country and ate porridge and fruit and appear today on this platform.

There is another advisable book to which the reader might be referred. It is entitled *A Plea for Vegetarianism* by H. S. Salt.[2]

Dr. Benjamin Ward Richardson, M.B., L.R.C.S., etc., himself not a vegetarian, has come to the following conclusions in his *Food for Man.*

> 1. Man, although possessing the capacity of existing on an animal diet in whole or in part, is by original cast adapted to a diet of grain and fruit and, on a scientific adaptation of his natural supplies, might easily be provided with all he can require from that source of subsistence.

[1] *Vide* also *An Autobiography*, Pt. I, Ch. XV.

[2] *Vide An Autobiography*, Pt. I, Ch. XIV

2. The vegetable world is incomparable in its efficiency for supply of food for man when its resources are thoroughly understood and correctly applied.

3. The supplies of food for man are most economically and safely drawn direct from the vegetable world.

4. Diseases may be conveyed by both sources of supply, but need not be conveyed by either. Diseases may be generated by misuse of either source, of supply, but need not be, and under judicious management, would not be, generated by either.

Under a properly constituted fruit and vegetable diet, strength of mind and body may be as fully secured as under an animal or a mixed animal and vegetable system. He says also, "I admit that some of the best work has been done and is being done on a vegetarian regimen."

If so much is conceded by a thoughtful and cautious doctor not a vegetarian, the reader will easily guess how much must be claimed by vegetarians for their system. They claim that anatomically, physiologically, economically and morally vegetarianism is far superior to meat-eating.

From this it must be abundantly clear that vegetarianism is not only possible, but is really practised by hundreds of people in England.

If, then, vegetarianism be as shown above as good as flesh-eating in other respects, I hope no man, not determined upon setting his face against vegetarianism at any cost, would hesitate to adopt it if it is cheaper than flesh-eating.

While a vegetable soup costs 3 d per plate, a meat soup costs from 9 d to 1/3s and more. A mutton chop would cost at least three times as much as a vegetable chop, unless you go in for meat of the worst kind, and it must be borne in mind that there are more diseases lurking in cheap meat than in vegetables.

It would be futile for me to demonstrate an admitted fact, viz., that vegetarianism costs far less than meat-eating. If there be anyone who can contradict this, let him try to live on 9s per week and get flesh foods. I concede that, by a judicious management, it would be possible to have in that sum, if anyone thinks that he must have, not as a luxury but as a sheer medical necessity, meat once or twice a week.

Another fact is worth mentioning here. An ordinary vegetarian in England does not exclude eggs from his dietary, while an Indian vegetarian would. As a counterpart, there are vegetarians in England

who do not take even milk and butter, they being animal products.

Before describing the food that can be had for 9s per week, there are one or two points still remaining to be cleared.

Whether you would cook the food yourself or whether you would have it cooked by your landlady, from a religious point of view, if you are a strict Hindu, you would of course cook your own food. In this case, your expenses would be much cheaper.

Here let me remark, in spite of all that is said to the contrary, that given all the resources at your command, there is nothing to prevent you from leading a purely Hindu life. To say that there are no cooking arrangements to be had in London is humbug and a mere bagatelle. It would be true to say that there are very few who have the mind to do it. Again, to perform the everyday ceremonies, to dine bare-bodied, to sit in contemplation bare-bodied for hours together would be impossible for a poor man, but a rich man who is prepared to spend any amount of money can perform each and every religious ceremony that can be performed in India. If he does not want to cook his own food, he can even take a cook with him. But, then, an ordinary student would not be able to command money and time for such things. I should like to know how many students are there who find time or have the mind to perform all the ceremonies even in India. If they are not performed here, some of them may well be left out in London without shocking the pious and elderly persons, as even our scriptures make certain exemptions in favour of travellers and students. A distinguished yogi told me that he forwent most of the usual ceremonies while travelling.

For an ordinary Indian who is not overscrupulous in his religious views and who is not much of a believer in caste restrictions, it would be advisable to cook partly himself and get a part of his food ready made.

Of course, he can have all his things cooked by his landlady which, by a previous arrangement, she engages to do for 7s that are paid for the rent. But, this would be found to be inconvenient in certain cases. The landlady may not know the vegetarian cookery. She may not be honest; she may be very unclean. She may cook vegetables in utensils used for cooking meat without first cleaning them. The first two difficulties can be surmounted: she may be given a cookery book and she would cook the required food by the help of the book. By a strict watch, she may not be given an opportunity for

being dishonest, but if she is not clean, there is no help for the poor lodger if he has to be at her mercy. The last difficulty can be overcome or overlooked. So, then, on the whole, it would be better to cook one's food if the landlady is not clean. Cooking, as perhaps would be feared, is not at all a difficult or troublesome process. No smoke, no wood, no cowdung cakes and no blowing or fanning are associated with the idea of cooking as here advocated. A portable oil stove serves the purpose of the Indian chulas. On that stove one can cook almost everything that may be cooked on the Indian chulas for 5 or 6 persons. Moreover, the cooking does not take much time. Twenty minutes would be found quite sufficient. Ten minutes are required for boiling milk. During the interval, while milk in boiling, many find it convenient to read something, e.g., a newspaper. An enamelled pan, one or two plates, two spoons would be your cooking utensils. The whole would cost not more than 10s. Water-white kerosene oil is very good for cooking. It does not give any nasty smell and burns well. The utensils would be supplied by your landlady too. It is, however, advisable to buy your own pan.

Some meals may be prepared by the landlady and some taken outside, e.g., breakfast and supper may be prepared by the landlady and the midday meal taken outside.

Some meals may be cooked by yourself and others taken outside. It is not troublesome to prepare one's breakfast and supper which consist of simple things.

Under every one of these modes it is possible to live on 9s per week. And every one of the modes has been tried by me as well as many others.

The first mode is the cheapest, viz., to cook all your meals; but it would cost more time and may prove inconvenient for a student who may pass his day in his library.

However, let us see how under the first mode, 9s would give us sufficient food. As has been said above, the same food that we usually take in India is sufficient in England.

Then we may see what would be the cost of the Indian meals. For example, if you stick to the two meals per day, you have for dinner at 10 p.m. chapati, dal, vegetable, *bhat* and milk.

Such a dinner would cost as follows:

	oz	d
Wheat meal flour	8	3/4
Rice	4	1/2
Potatoes	8	3/4
Lentils	4	1/2
Butter	1	1
Salt & pepper		1/4
Oil for cooking		1/4
Milk	1/2 pint	1
		5 d

For the evening meal, *khichadi* and chapati may be had.

Rice and lentils	16	2
Butter	1/2	1
Milk	1/2 pint	1
Salt, pepper & oil	1/2	1/2
		4 d

Thus, two good meals can be had for 9 d And if it be found desirable that a third meal should be had, 3 d can be laid out in milk and bread or tea and bread. This for a week would amount to 7 s with a balance of 2s in our favour.

However, it would be found convenient and perhaps better for health to have English vegetable dishes. You have before you a wide range of selection.

In cereals you have wheat, oatmeal, maize, etc.

In pulses you have peas, haricots, lentils, rice [*sic*], etc. In vegetables you have potatoes, cabbage, spinach, celery, artichokes, haricot beans, green peas, tomatoes, cauliflower, parsnips, onions and leeks. In fruits there are fresh fruits and dry. Among the first class can be counted apples, oranges, grapes, bananas, apricots, pears, peaches, plums, strawberries, raspberries, cherries, etc. Among the second class are found figs, dates, currants, raisins, muscatel raisins and sultanas, etc.

In nuts we have hazel, brazil nuts, almonds, chestnuts, etc.

The above presents a variety sufficient to satisfy the most delicate tastes and all of these are within the reach of the 9-s man.

Fruits are supposed in England to be absolutely necessary. At any rate, the vegetarians think so. They are a sure safeguard against medicine. They purify the blood and keep the bowels regular; since constipation is the father of many diseases, one cannot do better than take the utmost precautions to prevent that fell disease. This can be best done by a liberal use of whole wheat meal and fruits. The fine wheat flour ordinarily to be had in England is to be discarded altogether. It is very innutritious and very often injurious when it is adulterated as it very often is. Moreover, it is insipid. On the other hand wheat meal flour is very sweet to the taste. So one should always make it a point to use brown bread made of whole wheat meal flour and discard the white bread altogether. It may be said that the above observations are unauthenticated and useless coming from a person who cannot pretend to any knowledge of chemistry or medicine. Well, they are not unauthentic. Only the authorities have not been quoted. That what has been written above is the general opinion of doctors can be seen by reading the many vegetarian pamphlets published by the Vegetarian Society. It must be repeated here that the aim of this guide is not to supersede other useful books and to give all the information, its aim is to supplement, to give information not hitherto given and to direct where the proper information can be had.

We assume then that food is to be selected for three meals from the vegetable kingdom. The meals consist of breakfast at 8.30 a.m., dinner at 1 p.m., and supper at 6.30 p.m.

A good breakfast may be made of oatmeal porridge—a splendid dish especially in winter. In almost every household, they have this porridge for breakfast in winter. Thousands of Scotch people live on oatmeal. It tastes like wheat and is sweeter. The preparation is very simple. You can stir one ounce of oatmeal into a sufficient quantity of water and put it on the oil stove. If it is fine oatmeal, the porridge would be ready in 20 minutes. If it is coarse, it would take 30 minutes. It can be eaten with sugar and milk or stewed fruit. Stewed fruit is fruit cooked in water with a little sugar. The porridge may be made entirely in milk or milk and water. Made in milk it tastes better. This breakfast would cost as follows :

	oz	d
Oatmeal	1	$^1/_4$
Milk	$^1/_2$ pint	1
Fruit (currants or raisins)	2	$^1/_2$
Bread		$^1/_2$
Butter		$^3/_4$
		3d.

Breakfast may consist of bread (1d), butter (1d) and cheese ($^1/_2$ d). It may consist of toast and milk (3d), toast, jam and tea (3d), bread and butter and fruit (3d), maize, musc and fruit (2d) bread and apples $^1/_2$lb (4d per 1b) (3d), bread, butter and cocoa (3d), bread, butter and marmalade (2$^1/_2$d), *et ad lib.*

Soup and bread and fresh fruit or rice and milk and sugar would make a good dinner. Soup made of potatoes, onion and haricots costs 1$^1/_2$d. Rice, milk and sugar would cost 2d or less and bread 1d. This dinner, then, can be had for 4$^1/_2$ d. And if you are very fond of butter, you can have a penny worth of butter in which case your dinner would be 5$^1/_2$d.

The following variety of dinners can be had for and under 5d:

Pea soup and bread and stewed fruit or fresh fruit, rice, milk and bread and radishes and cheese. Potato soup, bread and semolina with stewed fruit or milk.

Tapioca pudding bread with almonds and raisins, etc., etc.

Supper may consist of bread, butter and cocoa (3d), bread and butter and cheese (2$^1/_2$d), toast and milk and radishes (3d), porridge and fruit and bread (3d), bread, butter, celery and cheese, etc.

Thus, three meals can be had for 11d or say 1s. These meals are quite sufficient and nourishing and give as much nutrition as a sumptuous meat meal with no dyspepsia or other disease which is generally the consequence of the latter. Thousands subsist well on such meals.

The three meals or two of them may be cooked by you or by your landlady. When the cooking is entrusted to the landlady, all the things must be bought by you so that you may be sure that you get the right thing at the right price. It may be remarked here that only those fruits and vegetables must be bought which are in season, otherwise they are very expensive. Moreover, they must be bought at

the proper place. If you go to Regent Street and think of buying the hot-house grapes, they would cost 3s per pound. These, of course, you cannot buy; but you can easily buy the grapes at 4d per pound when they are in season.

Sometimes, I was going to say very often, it is found convenient to take the dinner outside. Whether you be a traveller or a student, you would go out after breakfast and return in the evening. In such a case, you would not care to return home for dinner. That entails a great loss of time and trouble and you would not care to go home from your library, especially if it be some distance from your house. There are vegetarian restaurants in all the busy quarters of London for such people. They have generally two divisions. One division provides six-penny dinners of 3 courses. You buy a ticket and, on presenting the ticket, you get a selection of 3 out of about 20 courses. The popularity of these dinners is immense. From 1 p.m. to 2 p.m., very often it becomes very difficult to find a place owing to the large number of customers.

In the other division, you can have any number of courses and you pay for what you eat. A list of items called the menu is shown to you in which the prices are marked against each item and you select your dinner according to your appetite and purse. Our 9-s man can patronize either division. Two courses would be found to be quite sufficient in the first division. And three courses of the first division are more than sufficient even for a gourmand. It may be remarked that there is no difference in the quality of food in both the divisions. In fact, there are the same dishes in both. In the first division, you have the satisfaction to know that you pay more and, if you are ashamed to sit side by side with a labourer, to know that there is no such person to shame you in the first division. There is again more room in the first division called the dining-saloon and the hall is better ornamented. I give a specimen menu showing the courses generally provided in the vegetarian restaurants of which Dr. Richardson says:

> I confess with perfect candour that, if I could on all occasions get for my meals the same foods as are to be obtained in the best vegetarian dining-rooms, I should not take willingly any other kind of food. In time, I doubt not that the present centres for good vegetarian diets will become schools for the nation and that every hotel in the kingdom and every private dwelling will have its cook or housewife.

Monday Oct. 22/88

SOUPS		PORRIDGES		
Green pea	3d	Oatmeal		
Scotch broth	3d	Wheaten	in sugar or syrup	3d
Florador and milk	3d	Maize musc		
Bread	1d	Anglo-Scotch		

SAVOURIES

Lentil Cutlets	Parsley se	& sprouts	4
"	"	Turnips	4
"	"	Tomatoes	4

VEGETARIAN PIES

Tomato & macaroni pudding	4
Yorkshire pudding se & haricot	4
Curried egg and rice	4
Sprout se & baked potatoes	4

EXTRA VEGETABLES

Macaroni	2	Turnips	2
Rice	2	Sprouts	2
Tomatoes	2	Baked potatoes	2
Haricots	2	Mashed "	2

SWEET PUDDINGS		PASTRY	
College pudding	3		
Tapioca and custard	3	Damsonpie	3
Blanc mango & jam	3	Apple tart	3
Maize and peaches	3	Plum	3
Wheat and jelly	3		

STEWED FRUITS		SUNDRIES	
Apples	3	Wheat cake	2
Raisins	3	Coffee chocolate	2
Plums	3	Cheddar	1
Damson	3	Gorgonzola	2
Peaches	3	Celery	2

No greater variety can be required for a good selection.

The vegetarian restaurants are closed on Sundays and bank holidays. On these days dinners must be taken at home.

In dealing with this subject of food, I have simply put down the result of my own experience and that of others. It may interest the reader to know that the meals above enumerated give all the elements

necessary to sustain life. It is outside the province of this work to show what they are and in what proportion they are required. That is a separate study. The enquiring reader can test the truth of my statement from *The Perfect Way in Diet, Fruits and Farinacea,* and such other works.

This closes the remarks on the most important subject. There should be no difficulty in carrying out the above plan and, if carried out, it will be found that it is far better even from the point of view of health. For, luxury and over-eating never lead to health. Wise frugality in diet is the surest mode of preserving or attaining health. Says Dr. A. Von During: "Wouldst thou enjoy life, renounce life's enjoyment."There is an Italian proverb which says: "He who eats more eats less (because he shortens his days by gluttony)." Again Seneca says: "*Multos morbos multa fercula fuerunt*" —"Many dishes many diseases."

Says Professor Meyor, that first Latin professor from whose *Why I Am a Vegetarian* the above quotations are taken, with regard to students' extravagance :

> Many we know who, for their own persons put up with plain fare, blush to set before guests what costs them little. They deem it penurious, shabby, churlish. This prejudice certainly affects students, at least in England, to no small extent. Even thrifty men may save three shillings a day, i.e., a guinea a week, by adopting Spartan self-control. In other words, they may win without contest a scholarship of £50 a year. tenable for life, purchasing into the bargain independence of character and health.

Sir Henry Thomson goes so far as to say that "our eating is more injurious than our drinking", and who does not know that we are more apt to over-eat than under-eat?

To carry out what has been mapped out above, nothing but a stern will is required. Given that one thing, the way is smooth. A little experience will accustom you to that mode of life. "Adopt that course of life which is best and custom will render it delightful."

I cannot do better than close this chapter with the following lines from Dr. Nichol's *How to Live on Six Pence a Day:*

> The case of Louis Cornaro so often quoted is a very remarkable instance of the effects of a very temperate and simple diet in producing health, cheerfulness and longevity. At the age of 40, his constitution seemed ruined by what is called free living. He changed all his habits and lived on 12 ounces of food a day and his health became so perfect that for half a century he was never ill. When past ninety, in deference to his friends, he increased his food

to 14 ounces a day instead of 12 and this trifling addition nearly cost him his life. He became sad and dispirited, everything vexed him and he was attacked with a pain in the stomach which compelled him to return to his former diet and even to diminish it. Writing at the age of ninety-five, he describes his life as one of great serenity and enjoyment. He wrote plays, he assisted in fortifying and embellishing Venice. He enjoyed what he called his beautiful life. He writes: "I have attained my ninety-fifth year and find myself as healthy, merry and happy as if I were but twenty-five." At this age, and even on to a hundred years, his senses, memory, heart, judgment and voice were perfect. He wrote seven or eight hours a day, walked, enjoyed society and music and sang and played delightfully. His grand-niece writes of him : "He continued healthy and even vigorous until he was a hundred years old. His mind did not at all decline. He never required spectacles. He did not become deaf. His voice remained so strong and harmonious that, at the close of his life, he sang with as much power and delight as he did at twenty."

The reader will find in the appendix how I lived on £4 per month during the last year of my stay in England.

In the above estimates no mention is made of expenses on account of newspapers which are found to be an absolute necessity, a daily food as it were. There are now in almost all the parts of London free public libraries, where are to be found all the leading daily and weekly papers. These institutions are visited by hundreds of people every day. So it is always preferable to visit the public libraries to buying a paper. However, if necessary, there is a sufficient margin left for spending 6d per week on newspapers. The London newspapers are very cheap. An evening newspaper can be had for one half penny.

CHAPTER IV

A CHAPTER FOR WOULD-BE BARRISTERS

Whether you will be a Barrister or receive some other education in England is a question that can be best determined by you or those who know you best. Each man's case must be peculiar. I can offer only general remarks.

For the present Barristers are at a discount. They are not so well thought of as they were before. This I suppose is an undisputed fact. It is, however, true that they have got a status from which it is not easy to oust them and it is true also that they have got the widest field for action. And it may be said also that, with a large amount of patience and close application, no Barrister need despair of earning a decent

livelihood from his own profession or by accepting some appointment.

But why are the Barristers at a disadvantage? The fault is partly their own and partly the people's. Again, there are natural causes.

The fault is their own because they do not come up to the expectations of the people. Of the people because they expect too much from them. The natural causes consist in the increase of their number. When there was only one newspaper, it was prized by all; now when there are many only few are held in estimation. A first matriculate was a sort of demi-god. Now when you stumble upon matriculates, they are sold at a nominal price. Again, when there was only one Barrister, he was incomparable, now there are many among whom to set up a comparison.

So, then, there is no need to be fear-stricken by a little dislodging of the position; only we must not lower our standard of work and a time may come when we may be yet too few. That time is distant though. And, during that time, we ought to be cautious so that it may not be extended any further.

In being over-hasty we may spoil matters; in not working as we ought to, we may do the same. We must, therefore, guard against both.

There is nowadays a tendency to do it easily, i.e., to work little and expect much. This ought to be avoided if we would not be thrown further downward. If our parents send us to England, or if we hold ascholarship, we have a sacred trust to perform. We have to account to our parents or patrons for the work we have done and for the moneywhich [we] have spent. We ought to do unto them as we would be done by. If we were to send some one to England at our expense to become a Barrister, I suppose we would expect him to utilize every moment of his stay there and give us an account of how he passed his time. Exactly the same would be expected of us. Consciousness of this and work according to it are all that is required of us. If we do that, we shall have done our duty and will have no occasion to be sorry for having gone to England. When we go there to be Barristers, we ought to do there everything that would make of us good Barristers and not indulge in luxuries or pleasures.

Let those who send their boys to England make sure that they would discharge their trust faithfully and they will have no occasion to regret having sent them. The best way to ensure this is to give your boy just enough money to make of him a Barrister and then tell him

plainly that he should expect no more. Make a certain provision for him on his return from England for a year or two and then let him know that he shall be left to himself to earn his living. This may seem a little hard, but once done it would be a source of the highest happiness, or else it will be a source of woe and misery both to the parents and the boy.

Are there already too many Barristers? Yes and no. Yes, if we take any one province into account, but, if India as a whole were taken into account, there are far too few. That Barristers have a field in any of Her Majesty's dominions seems to have either been forgotten or not cared for, because every Barrister goes to his native land to practise. Now, while in one's fatherland there is some chance of success owing to acquaintances and knowledge of the native country, there is much disadvantage if the profession is overcrowded. Why not then invade the regions not yet invaded?

Then, again, a field, I am told, is sure to be opened as well for Barristers as for all educated persons in the protected States. They are yet in a very backward state. They are expected to make reforms. When that time comes, the aid of the educated of the land is likely to be called in. Again, it is a notorious fact that so far education has been too much neglected by the agencies and back-door influence has prevailed. This too will be set right some day.

I must not, however, be misunderstood to advocate the Indians flocking to England to become Barristers. Whether it is good to be a Barrister or not is not the province of this guide to discuss. There are many other guides to throw light on that matter. Indeed, I must confess freely my incompetence to aid the discussion of that question. I am simply to guide those who have made up their minds to be Barristers as to what they would be required to spend, what examinations they have to pass, how they would gain admission, etc. It was not without many misgivings and hesitation that I was induced to insert even the above paragraphs.

Supposing, then, that you have made up your mind to become a Barrister, the first thing for you to do is to get a certificate of your having passed the matriculation examination. If you have not passed the matriculation examination, you will be required to pass an entrance examination before admission. They examine in History and Latin, but Indian students are by an application exempted from the Latin examination. The examination is rather easy.

This done you get the form of admission for one guinea; you pay the fees which amount to nearly £141.

Those who have joined some university are exempted from the payment of £100 in the beginning, though they have to pay the sum in the end. In Lincoln's Inn, those who have passed public examination only in the British Dominions are exempted from that payment. I am not sure whether this applies to Indian Universities. Such information can be had directly by writing to the treasurers of the respective Inns of which there are four, viz., Inner Temple, Middle Temple, Lincoln's Inn and Gray's Inn. Perhaps, from an economic point of view, Lincoln's Inn is the best Inn, which boasts also the best library. Middle Temple is the most patronized by the Indians. From the education point of view, all the Inns are equal because they have a common examination. Middle Temple pays the scholarships in cash, the Inner Temple makes you join chambers and pays for them.

One has to keep twelve terms before being called to the bar. There are four terms every year, the 1st in January, the 2nd in April, the 3rd in June and 4th in November. The shortest term lasts 20 days and the longest about 31 days.

Keeping terms means taking dinners in the respective Inns to which you belong; you have not necessarily to take your dinner but you must go to the dining-hall punctually at the appointed time and sit there for one hour. You are said to have kept one term when you have attended six dinners in the term. Those who belong to a university have to attend only three dinners. These dinners, whether partaken of or not, have to be paid for Inner Temple charges $3^1/_2$s per dinner, Middle Temple 2s. Thus you make a saving of $1^1/_2$s every dinner by joining the Middle Temple. And such dinners have to be taken 12 times in all. Lincoln's Inn and Gray's Inn, too, charge most probably 2s.

If you pay for the dinners and if you have no religious objection, why should you not take your dinner, one may pertinently ask? The answer is you ought to dine, but, then, a further question arises as to what a vegetarian should do. Well, you can have ordinarily bread and vegetables and cheese, but you can have a better vegetarian dinner specially prepared for you by applying to the chief steward of the Inn or, if need be, the sub-treasurer of your Inn. A Parsi friend who had turned a vegetarian and I used to get our vegetarian dinners specially prepared.

And it is better that every Indian should insist [on this] so that, in future, every Inn may make it a rule to prepare vegetarian dinners regularly.

To be fit for being called to the Bar at the end of 12 terms, two examinations must be passed, one in Roman Law and the other in the English Laws.

A student can appear in the Roman Law examination after—but not before—keeping four terms. Thus, after reaching England, the student has one year at least to prepare for the examination which is much more than what is required for the purposes of passing the examination; hence, the brilliant results of the examination. For Roman Law, Saunder's *Justinian* is the text-book. Many students, however, read Hunter's *Introduction to Roman Law*.

The other examination called the Bar Final a student can appear in it after—but not before—keeping nine terms, i.e., at the end of two years after admission. This time, too, is more than enough for the examination. The examination takes place in the Law of Property, Common Law including Criminal Law and Equity, and lasts for four days. It used to last only three days, but now there are two Equity papers instead of one.

For the Law of Property the prescribed books are:

William's *Real Property*

" *Personal Property*

Goodeve's *Real Property*

" *Personal Property*

Edward's *Compendium of the Law of Property in Land.*

Students, however, generally find it sufficient to read William's and Goodeve's *Real Property* and Goodeve's *Personal Property.* Very few read William's on personal property. They read besides, various guides to the examination. In Law the prescribed Common book is Broom's *Common Law.* Indermauer's *Common Law* is, however, read in addition to or instead of Broom by the students. For Equity the prescribed book is Snell's *Equity.*

The matter of the examination changes almost every year. Thus, while generally a competent knowledge of the English laws is required, special subjects are prescribed every year. For instance, for Equity they sometimes prescribe certain portions only (e.g., trusts, mortgages, etc.) from White and Tudor's *Leading Cases* in *Equity.*

Those, however, who are well grounded in the general principles of law do not find it difficult to pass.

The latest prospectus[1] of the Council of Legal Education is appended hereto.

A notion seems to prevail in many quarters that students are called to the bar without any examinations or that the examinations are a farce. Both these statements are entirely without foundation and inventions of fertile brains.

No doubt the examinations are easy or, rather, found to be easy. The results are generally good. There are two or three reasons for the examinations being found easy.

In the first place, they take place four times every year. So, then, if a student fails, the failure does not shock him so much as it does in India. In England he can re-appear in three months.

Secondly, the time at the student's disposal for preparation is ample. While both the examinations are a year's work at the rate of 6 hours per day, to ensure success there are clear two years at the student's disposal. So, then, the preparation can be made with a light heart and without having to work hard. Whether it is good that more than sufficient time should be given for preparation is another question altogether, but let there be only three months for preparing for the examinations and we shall have cutting [*sic*] results and a different verdict.

Thirdly, there are many facilities for study in the shape of tutors, etc. It is only in rare cases that tutors should be resorted to. It is a useless waste of money. And a tutored student never goes beyond what is required and forgets what he has learnt soon after the examination. Such is the experience of many. Nothing like self-preparation.

It is worthy of notice that the tendency nowadays is happily to raise the standard of the examinations. They have begun to prescribe more useful matter now. The latest prospectus is a substantial improvement on the prospectus of two years ago. For merely a knowledge of Evidence was not [then] necessary; now, however, it is.

Students generally study for themselves through lectures common to the four Inns. Special lectures, too, are organized by each

[1] This is not available.

Inn. These lectures are generally attended by those students only who want to compete for scholarship examinations. But attending the lectures has now been made indirectly compulsory as the examinations are held on the subject of lectures.

Call to the bar is a mere formal ceremony.

After you are called, a certificate is given to you and you have to apply for a special certificate if you want to practise in India or the Colonies.

Before leaving England, students, now Barristers, generally get their names enrolled in Her Majesty's High Court of Justice on a payment of 5 shillings.

It may be important here to discuss whether it is desirable that the student should try for scholarship examinations. It has been said above that, for the purposes of passing the examinations, the time at the student's disposal is more than enough. The question, therefore, is what shall he do with the rest of his time? It may be answered—he will devote it to private study. Now this is all very well to say. There are persons who do study as well for the sake of study as for an examination. But these are exceptions to prove the rule that, unless a person has a task imposed on him, he will not generally do it only because it is good. Private study very often gives place to other pursuits, not so study for an examination. It, therefore, seems better to impose some examination task upon oneself than to rely upon one's own will-power to take care of private study.

And, in that case, it is difficult to say whether it is better to compete for some scholarship or to join some University. In going in for some scholarships there is one drawback. The competition is unequal. There may be M.A.'s, B.A.'s and other University men against mere matriculates who would stand a very poor chance of winning scholarships. For those who have graduated in India nothing can be better than trying for the scholarship examinations. Indeed, there are students who do both—join a University and work for a scholarship. Matriculates and others, if they try for a scholarship, while they may not be successful in getting one, will have the satisfaction of knowing that they have added to the stock of their knowledge and done some useful work. It may, however, be thought more advisable for them to graduate in one of the Universities. Then comes the question of selection of a University. There are Cambridge and Oxford Universities on one side and London University on the

other. So far as substantial knowledge is concerned, London University is by far the best. And if a University is to be joined for enjoyment and pleasures, of course London University would lag far behind. Oxford and Cambridge would win the palm. There is no, what is called, University life in London of which there is plenty in Oxford and Cambridge. London University is an examining body merely and does not require candidates to have kept any terms. There is no doubt an opportunity of mixing with Professors in Oxford and Cambridge which is not to be found in London.

It is said that education in Oxford and Cambridge is very costly. To graduate and become a Barrister would cost at least Rs. 15,000. Though I have no personal experience of either, I can say that education in either should not cost anything more than Barrister's education except the actual expenses of fees and books. Of course, to live with such economy one will have to remain a non-collegiate student. No such charge, however, can be brought against the London University. And, on that account, it would be better to graduate from the London University. The great advantage of the London University is that it holds its examinations even in India. London University would be found better by vegetarians as there are more facilities for them in London than anywhere else.

Now, this University is so exacting that even an M.A. or B.A. of any other University has to matriculate in the London University before he can appear for any of its degree examinations. But, after passing the matriculation examination, one can appear in its Law examinations without having to pass the B.A. examination, as is the case in the Bombay University. The London LL.B. course nearly extends to three years after matriculation. So, in three years one can pass the matriculation and the intermediate LL.B. examination together with being called to the bar. Such a course of training would keep the student's hands pretty full and he will find no time to devote to idle amusements and this would not mean an extra outlay over and above the cost of a Barrister’s education of more than £20 to 25.

The cost of Barrister’s education:

In order to be called to the bar, it is necessary to leave for England so as to reach there in time for keeping the November term. If you start in October or September, you can return in the July of your third year's stay in England. By starting in any other month you can return in that month of your third year's stay in England, which is

previous to the month you started in for England. Except for the saving of two months by starting in October, it has been shown in a pervious chapter that March is the best month to start in for England.

For three years' stay in England we have, in the previous chapter, calculated the expenses of board and lodging in London, which amount to £4 per month. So £150 may be allowed for board and lodging in England during the three years' stay in England. A list of clothes, too has been given in previous chapter. The clothes contained [in the list] in that chapter would be quite sufficient at least for the first year, though by a judicious use no more may be required for two years. However, a further list of clothes is appended below. These may be bought as required. But more should in no case be required. According to one's fancy changes may be made. The sum to be expended in clothing should not be exceeded.

		£	s	d
3	pairs of trousers	1	16	0
1	jacket suit (vest & jacket)	2	0	0
3	white shirts	0	6	0
2	woollen shirts	0	16	0
2	woollen undervests or merino	0	11	0
4	cotton undervests	0	8	0
2	woollen drawers	0	13	0
6	pairs of woollen socks	0	12	0
		£ 7	2	0
12	pairs of merino or cotton socks	0	9	0
12	cotton handkerchiefs	0	2	0
2	felt hats	0	7	0
6	neckties	0	3	0
1	slippers	0	2	0
4	pairs of boots and shoes	1	12	0
1	pair of gloves	0	3	0
		£ 10	0	0
		£	s	d
	brought forward	10	0	0
3	tooth brushes	0	1	6
2	umbrellas	0	11	0
1	razor	0	3	0
1	evening suit on hire for one evening	0	5	0

1	gown	0	10	0
4	cotton or merino drawers	0	11	0
1	oil stove	0	5	6
1	enamelled pan	0	1	6
2	spoons	0	2	0
	plates	0	1	0
		£ 13	11	6

It must be understood that there is room for economy in the above list as well as the list given in the previous chapter, economy both as regards quantity and prices. When the lists were shown to a friend who is rather exacting than otherwise, he pronounced it to be extravagant. The evening dress mentioned at the bottom in the list is meant for the call night. It is compulsory to wear the dress on the call night, so they say. No one seems to have tried to appear in the ordinary dress. The experiment is worth trying. However, if one has to wear the evening dress, he can have it on hire for one evening for 5s at many shops in the Strand or Fleet Street. It may be borrowed from friends. It may not be superfluous to mention that expenses of mending shoes or clothes at times are included in the £1 per week. Shoes are the article requiring repair rather often. They can be mended for 1/6 per pair or less. In the list will be found mentioned the oil stove and pan, etc. They are meant for cooking. They will prove very useful at times if not always. When travelling, cheap food may not be procurable, the landlady being not a good cook or from various other causes. In such cases it will be best to cook one's food.

There remain now to be considered the expenses on account of fees and dues to be given to the Inns.

They are as follows in the Inner Temple:

	£	s	d
Admission form	1	1	0
Stamp dues and fees	35	6	5
Lecture fee	5	5	0
Commons & dues & dinners for 12 terms	15	13	0
Call certificate for the Colonies	0	12	0
Call fees	94	10	0
	£ 152	7	11
Enrolment in the High Court	0	5	0
	£ 152	12	11

These were the fees paid by me. Now, if the Middle Temple is joined and if there are no fees besides those charged in the Inner Temple, as there are probably not, 72 times $1^1/_2$s, i.e., £5-8-0 can be saved as the Middle Temple dinner costs only 2s [as compared] to the $3^1/_2$s of the Inner Temple. I know that in no case do the fees exceed £ 152-7-11. Hence £ 153 may be put down as the highest expense for fees.

Then we come to books. Before enumerating the books, it may be remarked that the libraries of the several Inns are meant for the use of their members and it will be their own fault if they do not make a liberal use of them. Thus, all of the big works on law which have to be read for the scholarship examination will be found in the library. All the works just to be mentioned will also be found in the library. However, they being books of daily reference may be bought. There are law lending libraries in London which entitle their members to issue books to be kept for a month, three months, etc., according to the subscription they pay. So then he who wants to practise further economy may make use of these libraries, too.

And, in passing, I may mention that such economy sometimes becomes very necessary. You may think of travelling and yet may not afford to spend more than a given sum which did not include travelling expenses. In that case you must save somewhere. An instance will be found of a saving thus effected in Appendix A. A few odd shillings or pence saved now and then and collected swell up the savings to a decent sum which may be spent in various other useful pursuits. A mention has nowhere been made of theatres which are a national institution in England and, as some suppose, a seat of education and amusement combined. They moreover portray the modern habits and customs of England. No one would return to India without visiting the theatres. Then, where is provision for that in the estimates provided in this guide, it may be asked. They are provided for generally in the one pound a week and also in the estimates provided for clothing where a margin has been left for cutting down. Theatres do not cost much. Gallery seats are one shilling each and pit 2 or $3^1/_2$d each. The last seats are used by respectable middle-class persons and frequently patronized by the Indians. Once a month on an average is more than sufficient and the reader will have remarked that an ample margin has been left for saving even 4 times 2s. The arrangements given in the guide will have to be disturbed only when

some big expense has to be incurred. Thus, if a travel has to be undertaken and if the average limit of £4 is not to be overstepped, a saving may be effected, e.g., by removing to a cheaper room. To return, however, to the libraries. It has been alluded to in the previous chapter that it will be convenient to pass most of your time in the library of your Inn. For even a luxuriously fitted room would not be so comfortable and suitable as the library hall which is always well-warmed and ventilated.

The books to be required are as follows. All the booksellers give a 25 per cent discount on books of general literature and 20% on law books. The prices in the second column are prices minus discount.

	£	s	d	£	s	d
Saunders' *Justinian*	0	18	0	0	15	0
Hunter's *Introduction to Roman Law*	0	7	6	0	6	0
William's *Real Property*	1	1	0	0	17	0
Goodeve's *Real Property*	1	1	0	0	17	0
Goodeve's *Personal Property*	1	1	0	0	17	0
Broom's *Common Law*	1	5	0	1	0	0
Indermauer's *Common Law*	1	0	0	0	16	0
Snell's *Equity*	1	0	0	1	0	0
Extra				3	12	0
	Total			£ 10	0	0

There is now only one item of expenditure to be considered, viz., the fare on returning, which is £35.

Thus the total expenses of a Barrister's education are:

	£
Dress in Bombay	18
Fare from Bombay to London	24
Dress in London	14
Fees, etc.	153
Board and lodging during three years in London	150
Books	10
Fare from London to Bombay	35
Emergencies, etc.	16
	£ 420

This brings down the expenses on a Barrister's education to

£420 which, as the reader must have seen is capable of being reduced to £400 quite easily. There are three items, viz., dress in Bombay, that in London and books, which evidently admit of a reduction of £4 and the emergency sum ought really to find no place in the estimate as that has been taken into account in the £150 for board and lodging.

Attention ought to be drawn to the first two items which have been estimated in rupees and then reduced to pounds sterling at the present rate of exchange which is nearly Rs. 16 for one pound. In rupees, as will have been noticed, it amounts to nearly Rs. 653; represented in pounds, it would fluctuate with the exchange.

The passage Rs. 370, too, is subject to variation. Already owing to the sinking down of the rupee, the passage has been raised some 20 p.c. If the rate goes higher, as it is expected to, [it] is likely that the fare would be brought down to its original value.

Now it has to be discussed how many pounds you will take with you. Of course, Rs. 653 or thereabouts will be spent in Bombay. On reaching London you will have to pay your fees amounting to nearly £141. Out of this £41 are taken as fee and £100 as deposit as security for further dues to your Inn. It has been said above that this deposit is excused in certain cases. If you are sure that you come under the excuse rules, you may take £100 less. But, in all other cases, take with you or be sure that you will get on your landing in England at least 175 pounds sterling. If you take money with you, of course, you would not take it in cash, but take a bill of exchange to some bank. Messrs Hutchinson & Co., are good bankers and cater for Indian customers. Mr. Wm. Digby is concerned with the business. They undertake to supply gratis the requisite information to Indians about lodging, etc. I do not suppose they would be able, however, to show them cheap lodgings. They have got a list of families who take Indians, as boarders, but these families charge nearly 30s per week for board and lodging. Some charge even 25s. But they may be told that you want to live cheaply and perhaps they would secure you good lodgings. On this point, however, the editor of *The Vegetarian* would be the best guide. He has promised to find suitable lodging for Indians asking for his advice. That is by the way. As bankers, Messrs Hutchinson & Co. would be quite good. Their address in London is :[1]

Messrs Thomas Cook & Sons, Hornby Road, Bombay, also are

[1] The source carries no address.

good and well-known bankers. Many Indians have their accounts with them. All these firms get their customer's letters free of charge. It is better, however, to get your letters at your Inn or at your lodging when you have fixed upon one.

It would be advisable to keep two or three pounds with you in cash in order to pay for your railway-ticket on landing in London and to pay a few shillings to the steward of your cabin or to pay for boat hires if you land at various stations touched by your boat.

Although the estimates supplied are not the lowest possible it is supposed that no one would venture to go to England who could not afford £420, i.e., at the present rate of exchange Rs. 6,720. I have, however, a word to say further. If you have got Rs. 10,000, do not spend all in London, thinking that you would be able to lead a happier life there.

I shall just diverge from my main subject. I am going immediately to point out that, from every point of view, the life you would have to lead on £420 would be happier than the life led by many a student in India. And mind, Rs. 10,000 would not supply you with luxuries. They would simply make you pine for more to vie with your luxurious brothers and thus, in fact, make you more miserable. Did you say one room in England would not be sufficient for you? I ask you, then, what have you been having here? Do you not sleep, even though you may be the son of a rich man, two or three in one room, a room without a carpet, without any furniture, surrounded by dirty ditches having hardly a window or two? Have you not in Bombay used the same room for kitchen, bed-room and sitting room? Why, I have seen very rich students spending money like water living in a dirty house not even swept daily. Did you say you could not live on the food provided in the book? Well, if so, you can only be pitied. I am sure that you are having no better food here. Do you always taste, much less eat[1], fruit in India? Do you not subsist on two meals only, in India, with milk only once in the day? Did you say you could not cook your food? Well, if so, it is not absolutely necessary that you should cook in London except for your religion. But, does not many a student, if not you, cook his food in India and in what? In the miserable fire-places, blowing the fire, now and then spoiling the clothes and having the eyes quite red with smoke after the dinner is

[1] The source has ‘cut’, obviously a slip.

cooked. In the place of all this, what do you have in England on one pound per week? A nice comfortable room all to yourself, a room with a nice carpet specklessly clean, a nice bedstead with a feather bed, two pillows, looking-glass, washing-stand, chairs, etc. (see the description *ante*). The maid of the house always makes the bedding for you, washes your basin and dances attendance on you whenever you want her and does all the household work for you. You have not to cry out aloud for her, but just touch the bell and she knocks at your door and enters only when you say, yes. That surely is not a miserable life and, if it be miserable, the Rs. 10,000 would not make it less so.

To return, then, to our subject from the digression: if you have Rs. 10,000, keep them. Only spend out of them Rs. 6,000 or the equivalent of £420. And the rest you will be able to command on your return to India. What a relief! Just ask a junior how he felt to be told that he would be able to command some Rs. 2,000 to go on with in India and you will gauge the measure of relief. But, if you spend the whole Rs. 10,000, why to find yourself without money on your return would cause far greater pain than the additional happiness, which you may expect but are sure not to get by spending more than £420 worth of rupees. It is absolutely necessary that you should have some money, [Rs.] 1,000, 2,000 or any such sum at your disposal. Then you would not regret having gone to England. On that you would be able to build your position, but, if you have not got the foundation money, any edifice you may hope to build without that foundation would crumble down to pieces and you would find yourself in the open air without an edifice. For there is no work awaiting you on your return. There may be empty honours and congratulations just to sting you. Even if there be work, perhaps, without a knowledge of practice you will not be able to accept it. Therefore, if you would take the advice of one who has undergone the bitter experience and would profit by it, if you have Rs. 10,000, only spend £420 worth and keep the rest to be spent in India and you would be happy and contented. No one would point his finger at you; your position you would not feel unstable. And, in two years or so, according to abilities and opportunities, you would be able to establish yourself as a respectable Barrister. Nay, more, the economical habits cultivated in England would stand you in good stead in India. You would then be able to "pull on" better and not feel the want of the luxurious way of living. Indeed, if you do not expect to command about Rs. 2,000 on your return, it were advisable not to go to England

at all for a Barrister's education unless, of course, you expect to get some suitable appointment. For, the Rs. 2,000 or some such sum are as indispensable for India as the £420 for England.

Too much stress cannot be laid, if you want to practise in India on your return, on the importance of studying the Indian Codes in England. These books will be available in your library. Whitley Stoke's *Anglo-Indian Codes* are very popular with Indian students in England.

There are books published for the information and guidance of those wishing to go to England for study. They invariably give much higher estimates than those given here. It will occupy a very large space to answer them here. I can only say that they may be read side by side with this and compared. There is, however, an association doing good work for Indians that deserves notice. It is the national Indian Association. So long as it can count upon the active services of that good and philanthropic lady, Miss E. A. Manning, 35 Bloomfield Road, Maiden Hill, the Association cannot fail to do good. She may, indeed, be consulted by every Indian whom she is always willing to help and give kind advice to. But the information given by the Association is, I am afraid, not trustworthy. The estimates furnished by it are too extravagant. I have talked to some of those who were put under the care of the Association, and they told me that the estimates given were extravagant. They are as follows in the *India Magazine and Review,* the organ of the Association:

> With regard to expenses it is estimated that the amount required will be:
>
> For an ordinary school education, from £150 to 200 a year according to the age of the pupil and the standing of the school.

For a student at the University	300 a year
For an Indian Civil Service student	300 " "
For a student of engineering	300 " "
For a law student at the Inns of Court	250 " "
For a medical student	250 " "
For an agricultural student	250 " "

> These sums include tuition, board and residence, dress, vacation expenses and cost of superintendence. Fees for entrance at one of the Inns of Court amounting to nearly £150 are not included in the above estimate. The sum of £30 is also required to meet the expenses of outfit on arrival.

So, according to the above, the expenses amount to £250 per year, i.e., £750 in three years. Add to that £150 for fees, not included in the above, as also £30 for dress, and I suppose about £18 in

Bombay and also the fares to and from London, about £60, and we get £1,008. These estimates include tuition and superintendence not calculated in the estimates given in the guide. And he must be in a sorry plight, indeed, who would require tuition for passing the Bar Final examination and superintendence so that he may not go astray. Will it not be better to keep your boy with you if he required a strict watch than trust him to the superintendence of a committee not one of whom you know personally? It must be by this time clear to those who know or must know that no amount of superintendence, especially of the above type, would set a student right if he is bent upon going astray. He must be trusted to take care of himself or not sent at all. Only, he must not be given a full command of the purse so that he may play fast and loose with it. It is the purse more than anything else that is the most powerful instrument in spoiling a student in England. Why, it would be quite safe to undertake to spoil two students on £250 a year. It is not, however, for a moment argued that a single penny more than £50 a year spent would be credited to extravagance. Far from it. Even £500 a year can be spent usefully in England. The aim of this guide is not, however, to show how £500 can be spent usefully per year in England, but to show that one can live happily on £50 per year and do all the things generally done by Indian students in England spending much more.

In Appendix A, it will be found how from £15 per month I came down to £4 per month and, in so doing, how I was not obliged to sacrifice any of the comforts I used to enjoy before.

APPENDIX A

It was on the 4th September 1888 that I left for England to receive a Barrister's education per s.s. *The Clyde*. I had two Indian companions with me whom I did not know before.[1] The mere fact that we were three Indians was a sufficient introduction to us.

How I managed on the steamer:[2] As I was not sure that I would be able to partake of the vegetable foods provided on the steamer, I was well provided with Indian sweets, *ganthias*, and plenty of Indian fruits. This was my first experience of a voyage on a steamer. I was, therefore, very modest and shy and would not go to the table to

[1] *Vide* "London Dairy", 12-11-1888.

[2] *Vide An Autobiography*, Pt. I, Ch. XIII.

partake even of tea.

I, therefore, began with the sweets. I lived upon them exclusively for about two or three days and could have done so for a long time, but one of the Indian friends mentioned above was very fond of his *roti* and rice and dal; so he arranged with one of the native sailors to cook us some Indian dishes. The flour and other articles were provided free of charge by the steamer authorities. So we lived on these Indian dishes. The sailors were very dirty and I generally preferred the English loaf to the *roti.* In spite of the persuasions of the brother passengers, I could not persuade myself to sit at the table with them to eat. I was so modest. During the return voyage, however, I naturally managed better. I was not ashamed to sit at the same table with other passengers. And it is very desirable that, if one has no religious objections, to do so even on going to England. There is sufficient vegetable food provided on the steamer. I, however, requested the chief steward to supply some vegetable foods and I had usually for breakfast oatmeal porridge, milk and stewed fruit and bread, butter and jam and marmalade and cocoa. For dinner I had rice, vegetable curry, milk and jam pastry, stewed fruit, bread and butter. For supper bread, butter, jam, cocoa, some lettuce with pepper and salt and cheese. I had only three meals per day. Two days in the week they provide fresh fruit and nuts on the steamer.

How I began on 12 pounds per month:

After staying with a friend for a month who treated me very kindly and taught me how to behave and how to use the fork and the spoon.[1] I moved to a family where I had to pay 30s per week for board and lodging. Thus, my board and lodging cost me only £6. I was told, however, that living on £12 per month would be considered very economical. I therefore managed somehow or other to spend £12

per month. I did not discard tea from the very beginning. Did I believe at first in taking only three meals per day? A suggestion was thrown out by somebody that I would be considered to be stingy if I took all meals every day in the family and tea very often. Following up this suggestion, I used to lunch outside at least once a week and take tea only thrice a week. Thus, I paid for all this in the family; I spent about 10s in the lunching and taking tea outside. I used to spend unnecessarily a great deal also in travelling. It need hardly be

[1] *Vide An Autobiography*, Pt. I, Ch. XIV.

said here that taking your meals or tea outside purposely to show that you are not stingy or that you are rolling in wealth is anything but gentlemanly and entirely unnecessary. Of course, it is another thing altogether when you have to dine or take tea outside because you have to go far for some business and it would be a waste of time to return home for tea. Again, while living in the family, you are supposed to be punctual. They have fixed times for all the meals and they do not or are not expected to wait for you. So, if you are outside and if you think that you would not reach in time for your meal, that would be a case of dining outside. These occasions are rare and do not at all prove costly, though one who would live on £4 per month cannot afford to do these things. He cannot even get into a good family for £1 per week.

The food they used to provide for dinner was third-rate; (no fault of the family. I was the first vegetarian boarder with them) : vegetable soups and a vegetable, mostly potatoes, and some fresh fruit. For breakfast they gave me bread and butter and jam and tea and I had porridge occasionally. For lunch they gave me bread and butter and cheese invariably. For tea, bread and butter and tea and cake sometimes. All this did not cost them more than 7s per week. Thus, it will be seen that I paid 30s not because the cost of giving board and lodging was so much or even half so much, but because of the privilege of being allowed to enjoy their company.

It is generally thought desirable to live in families in order to learn the English manners and customs. This may be good for a few months, but to pass three years in a family is not only unnecessary but often tiresome. And it would be impossible to lead a regular student's life in the family. This is the experience of many Indians. If you live in a family, you must—it is only fair—sacrifice some time for them if only. . .[1]. . . was to cook the morning and the evening meals and to have the midday meal outside. I was to spend at the most 8s for one room per week, 6d breakfast, supper and one shilling at the most, for dinner. I was told that there was a vegetarian restaurant in Brighton.[2]

On reaching Brighton, it was after some difficulty that I could get a good room. The landladies could not be persuaded to believe that the room would not be spoiled by my cooking in room. One of

[1] Pages 5, 6, 7 & 8 are missing.

[2] *Vide An Autobiography,* Pt. I, Ch. XIX.

them said: "No, I cannot give the room even for 20s. The whole carpet would be spoiled by stain of grease and no one else after you leave would take my room." I however assured her that she so spoke because her ideas were associated with mutton and that by allowing me to cook her room would not be spoiled as I simply wanted to prepare porridge or boil the milk and I told her also that, if her carpet was spoiled, I would pay for the spoiling. She after some hesitation accepted my proposal and I took her room for 8s per week. After leaving my luggage in the room, I went out in search of the vegetarian restaurant. I could not find it. And I thought my experiment would fail. This gloomy outlook was rendered gloomier still when I found that no restaurant-keeper would arrange to provide me a dinner consisting of vegetable soup, and bread and butter for one shilling. All thought they could not undergo the bother for one man. I thought the task was hopeless and that I would be obliged to pay 2s or 3s merely for a dinner. I was quite tired by this time and very hungry, but I did not give up. I knew that I was to take rest and was not to read much during my stay in Brighton. So I said to myself that if I should cook two meals, why not cook three? As soon as the idea flashed in my mind, I caught hold of it, went to a grocer and bought the necessary things and went to my place.

On reaching the house, I told the landlady that, although the arrangement was to allow me to cook only two meals, I would have to cook three. She was angry and would have driven me out of the house, had I not offered to raise the rent from 8 to 10s. I then set about to work. The first evening I prepared porridge and stewed fruit and I liked it very much. The next morning I had the same.

For dinner I had haricot soup which proved to be very nourishing and nice. I thus arranged my meals for the [four] weeks. For breakfast I had bread and milk and stewed fruit and bread and butter (3d), for dinner I had soup ($1^1/_2$), strawberries (2d) and bread (1d). For supper I had porridge ($1^1/_2$), bread and butter and fruit (2). Thus I spent only 11d or 1 shilling per day at the most for food in Brighton. With the 10s rent, 3 shillings for washing, the whole expenses for board and lodging for four weeks amounted to £3-10-0. And it cost me £4-8-5 for fares to and from Brighton. Thus I was able for four pounds to go to live for four weeks in and return from Brighton.

I found out during the last week of my stay in Brighton that

there was a vegetarian home where I could have got board and lodging for 14s per week. The house is situated near the Preston Park. The weekly rent was 5s, breakfast 4d, dinner 9d, and supper 4d. Had I found the house a little earlier, I could have lived in Brighton yet more cheaply and more comfortably; but I would not have learnt how to cook with facility. There is also another vegetarian house in Brighton where they charge 18s per week for board and lodging.

It may be said that the cooking did not take much time. The breakfast took only 10 minutes to be ready. For there was only milk to be made hot. The supper took nearly 20 minutes and the dinner 1 hour. Thus encouraged by success on reaching London, the first thing for me to do was to go on in search of a suitable bed-sitting room. I selected a room in Tavistock Street for 8s a week. Here I cooked my breakfast and supper and dined outside. The landlady supplied me with plates, spoons and knife, etc. The breakfast almost always consisted of porridge, stewed fruit and bread and butter (3d). I dined for 6d at one of the many vegetarian restaurants and for supper I had bread and milk and some stewed fruit or radishes or fresh fruit (3d); so then the expenses for board and lodging in England were, during the last 9 months of my stay, only 15s and even 14s latterly when, in the same house, I took up a 7-s room. During this time I enjoyed the best of health and had to work very hard, if not the hardest, as there were only 5 months left for the final examination.

I used to walk about 8 miles every day and in all I had three walks daily, one in the evening at 5.30 p.m. for an hour and the other always for 30 or 45 minutes before going to bed. I never suffered from ill health except once when I suffered from bronchitis owing to over-work and neglect of exercise. I got rid of it without having to take any medicine. The good health I enjoyed is attributable only to vegetable diet and exercise in the open air. Even the coldest weather or the densest fog did not prevent me from having my usual walks. And under the advice of Dr. Allinson, the champion of open air, I used to keep my bedroom windows open about 4 inches in all weathers. This is not generally done by people in winter, but it seems to be very desirable. At any rate it agreed with me very well.

From the typescript. Courtesy : Pyarelal Nayyar

32. FRAGMENT OF A PETITION

[*1894*][1]

An Indian member of the British House of Commons, should he come here, would not be fit for becoming a voter. We thank your Honour for receiving this deputation, and the patience and courtesy shown us, and implore you to use your Honour's powerful influence to see full justice is done to Indians.

It is justice we want, and that only.

From a photostat: S.N. 881

33. DIARY, 1894[2]

JUNE 22, FRIDAY

Wrote to Jayshanker and Brother[3]. Read [*Kavya*] *Dohan*.

Translated the judgment, etc.

JUNE 23, SATURDAY

Telegram from Tayob[4] saying he would leave Monday.

JUNE 24, SUNDAY

Went out for a picnic with Abdoolla[5]. There [was] some rowdyism there. Received a long letter from Brother discussing *Gita*. Paul came in the evening. Discussed the condition of the [Indians] with him. He said he would talk to Burn about partnership.

JUNE 25, MONDAY

Drafted a petition[6] regarding the Franchise Law Amendment

[1] 1894 a Franchise Law Amendment Bill, which deprived British Indians of any voting rights, had been introduced in the Natal Assembly (*vide* Vol. I). The petition of which this fragment formed part was presumably submitted in that year to someone in authority, who cannot be identified.

[2] The text, in Gandhiji's hand, is damaged in many places. Wherever possible words have been supplied in square brackets. In this diary Gandhiji has frequently used abbreviations, such as, 'fr' for 'from', 'w' for 'with', 'wd' for 'would', 'rd' for 'received', and so on. These have been spelt out.

[3] Lakshmidas Gandhi

[4] Mahomed Tayob

[5] Abdoolla Hajee Adam, President of the Natal Indian Congress

[6] *Vide* "Petition to Natal Assembly", 28-6-1894.

Bill. Read the *Gita*.

JUNE 26, TUESDAY

Received a letter from Tayob. Telegraphed to him "Your letter. Have. . . God fully. Start today. We shall talk over matter re. . . settlement document passed between Friggens & Dada. . . . Showed petition to Laughton[1].

JUNE 27, WEDNESDAY

Telegraphed to the Speaker asking whether the [petition was] received although the Bill [had] passed the committee [stage. He] replied it was too late as the [Bill] was to be read at third time. [Requested] the Legislative Assembly to [postpone] the third reading. Sent also telegrams to Escombe[2], Tatham & Hitchins[3] in Abdoolla's name. Sent copies [of] the petition to the editors of *Mercury*[4] & *Advertiser*[5].

JUNE 28, THURSDAY

Abdoolla, Rustomji[6], two coolies and myself went to Maritzburg. Saw there Labistour who congratulated me on the petition but could not help in any way although the [prayer] was very just. Saw Escombe & Hitchins who also admitted the justice but could not help. Attended the 3rd reading which was postponed. There were many Indians in the gallery. A man named Neal saw me. Saw Tatham who said he could not do [anyth]ing & that he was . . . Indians come voting.

JUNE 29, FRIDAY

Left for Durban. Escombe & Hitchins were in the same [compartment.] Escombe said the debate in the second reading [was] the real reason for passing the Bill. The object was to prevent Indians from coming any more. Saw Robinson[7] before leaving. [He admitted] the justice but said he did not make any definite promise. Saw. . . &

[1] F. A. Laughton

[2] Sir Harry Escombe; Attorney-General; Premier of Natal in 1897. He had pleaded for Gandhiji's admission to the Bar of the Natal Supreme Court.

[3] Charles T. Hitchins

[4] *The Natal Mercury*

[5] *The Natal Advertiser*

[6] Parsi Rustomji

[7] Sir John Robinson, Premier and Colonial Secretary, Natal (1893-7)

Archibald. They too fully admitted the justice but could do [nothing], the measure being a Government measure.

JUNE 30, SATURDAY

Paul came to see me being sent for. Told him to go to [England if] possible and in the meantime to work for the Indians & induce them [to give up the] habit of drinking. He seemed to like the proposal being printed in the papers & favourably [commented] upon. Saw Campbell[1]. He too admitted the justice of the [prayer. Saw] Escombe. He admitted his former promises but said he had. . . The utmost he would do would be to see that the firms that had [property] should have votes. Telegraphed to T. & received a reply.

JULY 1, SUNDAY

Wrote a long letter to Dr. Stroud; also to Barn De Matalha, [Jennings] & to Tayob. About 100 Indians met. Spoke to them for 45 [minutes]. Exhorted them to talk less & work more, to have [unanimity] & to subscribe. The speech seemed to have made a favourable impression. Paul came and said he was going to work seriously.

JULY 2, MONDAY

Bill was read a 3rd time. . . . Drafted . . . and sent a letter to [Tatham that] the Indians protested against his attitude towards the Indians. Saw Maydon Who . . . said he was quite willing that a commission should be moved for and that Indians should not be indiscriminately disqualified and also that some of his. . . Indian electors were six times better than his white electors. Letter from Brother.

JULY 3, TUESDAY

Drafted a petition to the Legislative Council.[2] Telegraphed to Governor [asking him to] appoint time to see. He was in Durban & therefore received the deputation here in Town Hall.[3] Drafted a letter [to] the members of both the houses.[4] It was printed. Sent the petition

[1] Henry Campbell, advocate and chief agent for the Transvaal British Indian merchants

[2] *Vide* "petition to Natal Legislative Council", 4-7-1894

[3] *Vide* "Deputation to Natal Governor", 3-7-1894

[4] *Vide* "A Circular Letter to Legislators", 1-7-1894. It is, however, dated July 1.

to Campbell. Received a letter from Bird[1]. Wrote to [him.]

JULY 4, WEDNESDAY

Received a letter from Bird also [regarding] deputation that waited upon Premier.[2] Received a letter from Tayob. Wrote to Bird, [also] to Tayob. Telegraphed to Campbell who [replied that the] petition was presented [but ruled] out of order. Telegraphed again . . . ered post all the lette[rs to the] members. Translated for Abdoolla.

JULY 5, THURSDAY

Received a letter from Campbell as to how petition was ruled out of order. Also a letter from Tatham. Drafted another long petition to Council.[3] Sent it with a letter to Campbell. Drafted a letter in reply to Tatham, and sent it.

JULY 6, FRIDAY

Received a letter from Bird saying petition to Home Government[4] may be printed and their original signatures need not be applied to the other two copies. [Wrote to Miabhai] a long letter and also to Brother. Received a letter from Ramsay & the book . . . .

JULY 7, SATURDAY

Wrote to The Mercury about the constitution of the Mysore Assembly.[5] Sent £ 10 to Dadabhai[6].

JULY 8, SUNDAY

A letter from Jayshanker and one from Ruffe. The educated youths (Indian) about. . . assembled. I spoke to them for _ hours on political activity, drunkenness and self-respect. They seemed to have been favourably impressed.

JULY 9, MONDAY

Began to draft the petition to the Home Government. Paul saw

[1] C. Bird, Principal Under-Secretary, Colonial Office, Pietermaritzburg

[2] *Vide* "Deputation to Natal Premier", 29-6-1894

[3] *Vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Council", 6-7-1894

[4] *Vide* "Petition to Lord Ripon", 14-7-1894

[5] *Vide* "The Natal Mercury", 7-7-1894

[6] Dadabhai Naoroji

it. Received *The Vegetarian* containing Mrs. Besant's[1] speech on vegetarianism. Wrote to Tayob in reply to his. . .

JULY 10, TUESDAY

Finished and sent the petition to the Press. Sent Mrs. Besant's speech to the editor, *Mercury* with a request to publish it. Sent a petition to the Governor[2] requesting him not to send his dispatch before the Indian petition was received.

JULY 11, WEDNESDAY

My letter appears in today's *Mercury*.

JULY 12, THURSDAY

Worked at the petition.

JULY 13, FRIDAY

Wrote to Dadabhai enclosing a copy of the petition to Home Government.

JULY 14, SATURDAY

Wrote to Jayshanker. Ramsay's son saw me on Thursday and said he would send 2,000 signatures from Verulam. An article signed Ramnath appeared in *The Advertiser* against the Indians.

JULY 15, SUNDAY

[Paul] sent about 11 Indians to make copies. He works very well and is very attached to me.

JULY 16, MONDAY

[Contrary] to my expectations Joosub[3] brought 1,500 signatures from Verulam. Letter from Brother and Oldfield[4].

Sent the petition to the P.O. but [it] was not accepted being above [weight]. Requested A. to let me go or give a definite reply. He said he would see that all the expenses were paid and also the furniture, expenses, etc. Paul was very anxious that I should stop.

JULY 17, TUESDAY

Sent the petition through the railway agency. Went with A. to see rooms. A spl. . . room was found for 2-15-0 and a house in Beach

[1] Annie Besant

[2] *Vide* "Petition to Natal Governor", 10-7-1894

[3] Joosub Abdul Karim

[4] Dr. Joshua Oldfield, editor of *The Vegetarian*

Grove for £ 8. A said it was decided to make me a written request to stop here and that he would make me a present of the furniture, fees for admission and books.

JULY 18, WEDNESDAY

Have not been doing anything in particular for the past few days.

JULY 19, THURSDAY

Looked for house A. says I should take his room in Grey Street for £ 4 per month.

JULY 20, FRIDAY

Wrote to Ramsay enclosing Mrs. Besant's lecture and letters for Baker & Dr. Stroud & also to Mrs. Hutchinson.

JULY 21, SATURDAY

Dr. B. refused to let the house in West St. Gave the account to Abdoolla yesterday. Made translation for Arthur. Went to Umgeni with A. Saw Escombe who said I should take out the licence as advocate. He said also that the Franchise petition having been signed by 8,000 Indians would serve the purpose of the Government. He said the argument about the unfitness of Indians was all twaddle. The only argument was that of policy. He admitted that the Bill was unjust in so [far] as it did not provide for the children of those who were already on the [list] and also for those who had property and whose representatives may come hereafter.

JULY 22, SUNDAY

Had been to see Paul. Talked again about England. Advised him to get rid of all useless expenditure. Had been for a walk with A. Received yesterday a letter for Mrs. Lewis[1].

JULY 23, MONDAY

Abdoolla received a letter from Baker who says he should be given 5 p.c. of the purchase price instead of 2_ p.c. I drafted a reply to this. Read *Nala Damayanti.*

JULY 24, TUESDAY

Read *Okha Haran*. Had a long walk with Dada Sheth[2].

[1] Mrs. A. M. Lewis

[2] Dada Abdulla of Dada Abdulla & Co., for whose law-suit Gandhiji had initially gone to South Africa

JULY 25, WEDNESDAY

Translated the Franchise petitions to Council and Home Government. Wrote a letter to Baker for Abdoolla. Paul came and asked if Iwould join Coakes and pay a premium. I said I would join but not pay a premium. I told him also that I was preparing to depart and told him that he should not show overanxiety to Coakes.

JULY 26, THURSDAY

Told A. that unless everything was settled by next [week] I would understand that I must go. Paul saw me and said Coakes would give a share and not require a premium. Wrote letters to Dadabhai, Sir William Wedderburn, Pincott[1], Caine[2], *Echo*, [*The*] *Star, Chronicle*, [*The*] *Times of India, Bombay Gazette, Amrita Bazar Patrika, Gujarati Kaisari Hind*, Digby, Chhaganlal[3] and *India* enclosing petitions. Wrote to Portuguese consul for A. Wrote two letters for Moosa Haji Adam. A. said the house in Beach Grove will be let for £ 6_. Wrote to the Registrar of the Supreme Court inquiring about time for licence.

JULY 27, FRIDAY

Read Samal Bhatt's poems. Paul came and said Coakes has appointed 10 to 1 to see me tomorrow. Paul wrote to me on behalf of the magistrate asking me to translate a document. I sent him the translation.

JULY 28, SATURDAY

Saw Coakes. He seemed to be anxious to enter into partnership. He said he would give 25p. c. for the first six months and 30% for the last six. He seemed to be quite sincere. A postcard from Brother asking me to return soon. Drafted a letter to Baker for A. and also to Sir Donald.

JULY 29, SUNDAY

Had a long walk to Umgeni. Read *Kavya Dohan*. Did not like to read *Ras*, etc., connected with Krishna. Received a letter from Registrar, Supreme Court, enclosing Supreme Court rules for admission of advocates and attorneys.

[1] F. Pincott
[2] William Sproston Caine
[3] Chhaganlal Gandhi

JULY 30, MONDAY

Saw Coakes. He was agreeable to paying a 1/3 rd share.

JULY 31, TUESDAY

Received the draft agreement from Coakes. The House in Beach Grove accepted at 6/10.

AUGUST 1, WEDNESDAY

Sent the draft agreement with alterations and additions.

Discussed with him the alterations. He said he was willing to give me credit for the cases entrusted to me but conducted by him but that it was not usual to put that in a deed of partnership. Wrote to Tayob.

AUGUST 2, THURSDAY

Saw Coakes, gave him a cheque for £ 30 for fees for advocate's licence and interpreter's.

AUGUST 3, FRIDAY

Wrote to Oldfield, Annie Besant, President, L.V.S.[1]; also to Kegan Paul, Brother, Mehta, Chhaganlal & Mrs. Lewis. Drafted a letter to Lord Reay for Abdoolla, etc., regarding petition.

AUGUST 4, SATURDAY

Signed the agreement of partnership. Signed the petition. Received a letter from P. Davis saying they would charge 10-10-0 for the Natal laws. Consequently sent them £ 10-10-0 cheque from A. by registered post.

AUGUST 5, SUNDAY

Received a letter from Baker enclosing 5 introduction letters. Wrote to Baker and to Purshottam Desai. Drafted for A. a letter to Baker. Began Urdu. Finished the alphabet.

AUGUST 6, MONDAY

Could not do much.

AUGUST 7, TUESDAY

Removed to the house in Beach Grove. The letter of request was presented this evening. Saw Laughton. Talked to him about Theosophy. He said he would give me all the help he could.

[1] London Vegetarian Society

AUGUST 8, WEDNESDAY

Many came with the notice of application that Hillier sent out.

AUGUST 9, THURSDAY

Wrote to Dr. Shroud yesterday asking him to send the books. Saw Askew, Voysey Dalton and John Cowey. All were nice, particularly Askew. Coakes has won the application case.

AUGUST 10, FRIDAY

Saw Mrs. Baker in the evening. She was cold. A waiter came to see me not by the front door. Wrote a letter for Narayanswami to the Post Master General. He gave 10/- today for making enquiries for him regarding a £ 5 money order. Heard yesterday from A. that Ruffe is going to oppose my application for interpretership in Hindustani. Drafted a letter from Rustomji to Marshall Campbell. Wrote to Brother, Vora and Juta in Capetown. Enclosed 2 £ 5 Bank of England notes to Vora for law books. Wrote to Livingston a note enclosing anti-vivisection pamphlet by Mehta.

AUGUST 11, SATURDAY

Rustomji & P. Dowjee[1] gave each £ 12. Ruffe dined with me. Attended the Blue Ribbon Meeting. It was a failure. There were recitations not. . . meeting where Jesus would preside. Ruffe talked about the Hindustani. Wrote to Byrne and Whitaker.

AUGUST 12, SUNDAY

Had a long sleep. Read law. The meeting that was to be held has been postponed.

AUGUST 13, MONDAY

Wrote to Trotter & Chire regarding vegetarianism. Voysey called with a Salvation Army captain. Had a short chat with him. Have invited him to dinner for Friday. Had tea with Askew. His wife seems to be well up in Christian teaching. Both were kind.

AUGUST 14, TUESDAY

Voysey saw me with a Salvation Army captain. Wrote to Brunton Thomas & Brown about vegetarianism. Had tea with Askew. Both he and his wife were very kind. Dissuaded a Bengalee man from following up another.

[1] P. Dowjee Mahomed

AUGUST 15, WEDNESDAY

Met D'hotman. He said he would give all the help he could. Ruffe came and asked for £ 5. I said that was left to Mr. Coakes & that I was not myself in a position to render any such aid. Received a reply from Trotter.

AUGUST 16, THURSDAY

A letter from Jayshankar from Zanzibar and one from Dr. Stroud. Wrote to Jayshanker. Settled with Yasinkhan. He paid 10/-. The man Ibrahim paid 7/6. Several [licensed] eating-house men came. I told them they will have to pay £ 50. Wrote a stiff letter to Dawd for not coming. Settled with Khajamiyan.

AUGUST 17, FRIDAY

Signed the deed of lease. Received a letter from Baker & from P. Davis & also from Jayshanker. Wrote to Jayshanker Pretoria, to Jayshanker Zanzibar, to Vora asking him to subscribe to the *Weekly Times*, to Trotter about vegetarianism, to Brother about Harakhchand. Sent tracts to Trotter and a copy of today's *Mercury* to Dadabhai. The Salvation Army captain dined with me. He had a long chat with me. He however could not persuade me that Christianity was the only true religion. I lent him *The New Gospel of Interpretation*. He gave me book called *All the World*.

AUGUST 18, SATURDAY

Received a letter [from] Miss Brunton regarding vegetarianism. Wrote to Mrs. Mary Alling Aber subscribing to a copy of *Spirit* and making a few remarks on 'Souls'. Saw J. A. Polkinghorne. It was a trouble for him to see me. He could not bear my company and wished every moment that I was gone. The situation was extremely embarrassing. I could not possibly leave the moment I met him. It was decided at Abdoolla's that a meeting should be held on Monday and Wednesday.

AUGUST 19, SUNDAY

Was unwell. Advised Abdoolla as to evidence in Ujamshi's case. Translated Abdoolla's affidavit statement and evidence.

AUGUST 20, MONDAY

Letter from Jayshanker. Wrote to him and to Miss Brunton as also to Mr. Spiprian. Sent a copy of *The Vegetarian* to Miss Brunton. Labistour wanted to see me with regard to my petition. Saw him andhe

said I should produce a certificate as to the character of my family. He also suggested that Baker should telegraph as to my fitness. I telegraphed to Baker. Got a certificate from Abdoolla, Haji Dada & Moosa Hajee Adam. Wrote to Labistour sending him certificate and wishing it to be understood that the certificate should not be treated as a precedent for other similar cases.

AUGUST 21, TUESDAY

A big meeting yesterday where about 100 attended. They accepted my proposals. Wrote to Ruffe and Baker enclosing a cutting from *The Vegetarian*.

AUGUST 22, WEDNESDAY

Coakes dined with me. Talked about the Congress[1]. He sympathized but said he would have to consider whether he would identify himself with the movement. There was a big meeting. The hall was well decorated. About 100 men attended. There was much enthusiasm. The meeting was closed at 11.45 p.m.

AUGUST 23, THURSDAY

People came in and paid subscriptions. Askew sent me an invitation to pass Sunday with him.

AUGUST 24, FRIDAY

Wrote some letters for Abdoolla. There was a question in the House of Commons with regard to the Franchise. A letter from Ruffe.

AUGUST 25, SATURDAY

Saw Askew yesterday. Paul dined with me last evening. Talked to him very seriously about life and its uses. Bought a suit at Harvey & Greenacre's. Wrote to Dr. Stroud on vegetarianism.

AUGUST 26, SUNDAY

Dada Sheth had breakfast with me. Passed the whole day with Askew. I was introduced to his father-in-law Mr. Watson who is a very kind gentleman. Attended the Wesleyan Church with him. Mrs. Askew is an extremely kind lady. Had a long chat on vegetarianism. In the evening Askew preached in one of the Wesleyan chapels in West St. Received a letter from Ramsay.

[1] The Natal Indian Congress, which was established on August 22, 1894, with Abdoolla Haji Adam as President and Gandhiji as Hon. Secretary

AUGUST 27, MONDAY

Drew up a deed of partnership for Pragji Bhimbhai. Read the rules of the Supreme Court. Also Dadasahib's essays. Coakes has invited me to dine with him tomorrow.

AUGUST 28, TUESDAY

Askew saw me. Had invited him to dine with me on Thursday. Wrote to Escombe asking him what day would suit him for taking up my application. Wrote to Hoosen Ibrahim.

AUGUST 29, WEDNESDAY

Drafted deed of partnership for K. S. Pillay. Finished the minutes of the last meeting. Dined last evening with Coakes. Was introduced to some of his friends.

AUGUST 30, THURSDAY

Received a letter from Hoosen Ibrahim enclosing a cheque for £ 10 for Dada Abdoolla & Co. A letter to Coakes from Pitcher saying he could not see Escombe and that the Natal Law Society was going to object. Wrote to Hoosen Ibrahim asking him to send £10 more and fees. Wrote to Ruffe. D'hotman saw me. There was a meeting of the Congress. Askew dined with me.

AUGUST 31, FRIDAY

Telegram from Escombe saying my application he will move on Monday. Telegraphed to manager Imperial Hotel to keep one room for me.

SEPTEMBER 1, SATURDAY

Left for and reached Maritzburg. M. H. Adam came with me. Later on came Peeran & Doroosamy and in the evening came Rustomjee & Dowd. Telegram from Dada & Coakes in reply to mine.

SEPTEMBER 2, SUNDAY

There was a large meeting. About 41 signed.

SEPTEMBER 3, MONDAY

Was admitted[1]. Had to put off the hat[2]. The application for admission as translator withdrawn. Received about 7 telegrams of congratulation.

[1] As advocate to practice in Natal courts

[2] To conform to the Court practice; *vide* Vol. I"Chronology", 1894

SEPTEMBER 4, TUESDAY

Letters from Dadabhai returning £ 10, Tayob, Jayshanker and Whitaker, a vegetarian. Wrote to Whitaker sending foods and *The Vegetarian*. A telegram from Baker.

SEPTEMBER 5, WEDNESDAY

Telegraphed to Baker.

SEPTEMBER 6, THURSDAY

Abdoolla came. A sympathetic notice of my admission appears in *The Witness* and *Mercury*.

SEPTEMBER 7, FRIDAY

There was a meeting yesterday. A European attended the meeting. There was some opposition to Paul being elected as President from Steven. It was afterwards withdrawn. Gopee Maharaj's case came up today. Coakes had charge of it. A letter of congratulation from Steven.

SEPTEMBER 8, SATURDAY

Called on Benningfield. He was not in the office. It rained heavily. It was settled that A. should telegraph from P. if I was required.

SEPTEMBER 9, SUNDAY

The committee meeting of the Congress was held. Dr. Prince came. Letter from Jayshanker.

SEPTEMBER 10, MONDAY

A letter from Mehta. Accepted Deloosea's case For £ 8-5-0 after telling her that she would lose whether she had an attorney or not. Colondo [*sic*] Veloo Pillay paid £ 12.

SEPTEMBER 11, TUESDAY

Coakes took Deloosea's case and won. She paid £ 2 more. Gopee Maharaj case was adjourned to Friday. Received a letter from Edward Baxter of Maritzburg asking if I would employ him as clerk for £ 200. Wrote declining the offer. Ward wrote for a loan of £ 2. Declined.

SEPTEMBER 12, WEDNESDAY

Saw Benningfield. Offered £ 11 for the law books. Received a

letter from Desai inviting me. Wrote declining. Letters from Amod Bhayat, Suleiman & Dawd Mahomed. Wrote to them acknowledging subscriptions sent. Drew up a deed. Received a note from Arthur begging for money. Gabriel came to ask for money too. Read yesterday Digby's *India for the Indians and for England*.

SEPTEMBER 13, THURSDAY

Drew out a power of attorney for Moosaji Amod.

SEPTEMBER 14, FRIDAY

Conducted Dada Abdoolla's case. Had a meeting of the educational association. Gave an address on plain living.

SEPTEMBER 15, SATURDAY

Coakes said the Manager of the A. B. Corporation would give 1_ p.c. on a fixed deposit for [a] year at least. That he would charge no ledger fees and would make no charge for opening account. Received a letter from Mahomed Essackji with a book for translation. Wrote to [him] saying he should send £ 1-1-0 for charges. Naran's services have been retained by me. Jeeva at £ 3 per month.

SEPTEMBER 16, SUNDAY

Saw Askews at their house. Mrs. A did not like me to chat on vegetarianism or Buddhism [for] fear that her children may become contaminated. She questioned my sincerity. said I should not go to their house if I was insincere and not seeking the truth. I said it was not within my power to make her believe that I was sincere and that I had [no] wish to trust myself on her as a companion. I told her also that I did not go to [her] place as a spy to convert her children. Dined with Rustomji in the evening. Mehta [told] the whole story of his wonderful vision. Wrote to Abdulla.

SEPTEMBER 17, MONDAY

Received a letter from Brother, one from Mehta, one from Dadabhai and one from Chhaganlal.

Wrote to Brother and Mehta. Wrote to Abdulla.

SEPTEMBER 18, TUESDAY

Had a very boisterous meeting of the Congress Committee, Ward came in. . . . to speak, was not allowed and so went away threatening to write in the papers.

SEPTEMBER 19, WEDNESDAY

Gopee Maharaj case came up today. Got judgment with costs. Sent Baker a clip[ping] from *The Advertiser* containing an account of McNeill's services. Wrote to Abdul Rahman at . . . .

From the original: S.N. 32320

34. AN EXPERIMENT IN VITAL FOOD

Before describing the experiment, if it may be called one, I would mention that I gave the vital food a trial in Bombay for a week; that I left it off only because at the time I had to entertain many friends, and because there were some other social considerations; that the vital food agreed with me very well than; and that, had I been able to continue it, very likely it would have suited me.

I give the notes as I took them while I was conducting the experiment.

August 22nd, 1893. Began the vital food experiment. I have been having a cold for the last two days, with a slight cold in the ears too. Had two tablespoonfuls of wheat, one of peas, one of rice, two of sultanas, about twenty small nuts, two oranges, and a cup of cocoa for breakfast. The pulses and cereals were soaked overnight. I finished the meal in 45 minutes. Was very bright in the morning, depression came on in the evening, with a slight headache. For dinner had the usual things —bread, vegetables, etc.

August 23rd. Feeling hungry, had some peas last evening. Owing to that I did not sleep well, and woke up with a bad taste in the mouth in the morning. Had the same breakfast and dinner as yesterday. Though the day was very dull and it rained a little, I had no headache or cold. Had tea with Baker[1]. This did not agree at all. Felt pains in the stomach.

August 24th. In the morning woke up uneasy, with a heavy stomach. Had the same breakfast, except that the one spoonful of peas was reduced to half. The usual dinner. Did not feel well. Had feeling of indigestion the whole day.

August 25th. Felt a heaviness in the stomach when I got up.

[1] A. W. Baker, attorney and preacher, who discussed Christianity with Gandhiji and introduced him to Christian friends in Pretoria

During the day, too, did not feel well. Had no appetite for dinner. Still I had it. There were undercooked peas for dinner yesterday. That may have to do with the heaviness. Got headache in the latter part of the day. Took some quinine after dinner. The same breakfast as yesterday.

August 26th. Rose up with a heavy stomach. For breakfast I had half a tablespoonful of peas, half of rice, half of wheat, two and a half of sultanas, ten walnuts, and one orange. The mouth did not taste well throughout the day. Did not feel well either. Had the usual dinner. At 7 p.m. had an orange and a cup of cocoa. I feel hungry (8 p.m.), and yet no desire to eat. The vital food does not seem to agree well.

August 27th. In the morning got up very hungry, but did not feel well. For breakfast had one-and-a-half tablespoonfuls of wheat, two of raisins, ten walnuts and an orange (mark, no peas and rice). Towards the latter part of the day felt better. The cause of yesterday's heaviness was perhaps peas and rice. At 1 p.m. had one teaspoonful of unsoaked wheat, one tablespoonful of raisins, and fourteen nuts (thus, the usual dinner was replaced by vital food). At Miss Harris's had tea (bread, butter, jam and cocoa). I enjoyed the tea very much and felt as if I was having bread and butter after a long fast. After tea felt very hungry and weak. Had, therefore, a cup of cocoa and an orange on returning home.

August 28th. In the morning the mouth did not taste well. Had one and a half tablespoonfuls of wheat, two of raisins, twenty nuts, one orange and a cup of cocoa; except that I felt weak and hungry I felt all right. The mouth, too, was all right.

August 29th. Woke up well in the morning. For breakfast had one-and-half tablespoonfuls of wheat, two of sultanas, one orange and twenty nuts. For dinner had three tablespoonfuls of wheat, two of currants and twenty nuts and two oranges. In the evening had rice, vermicelli and potatoes at Tyab's. Felt weak towards evening.

August 30th. For breakfast had two tablespoonfuls of wheat, two of raisins, twenty walnuts, and one orange. For dinner had the same things with an addition of one more orange. Felt very weak. Could not take the usual walks without fatigue.

August 31st. When I got up in the morning the mouth was very sweet. Felt very weak. Had the same quantity of food both for breakfast and dinner. Had a cup of cocoa and an orange in the evening. Felt extremely weak throughout the day. I can take the walks

with much difficulty. The teeth, too, are getting weaker, the mouth too sweet.

September 1st. Got up in the morning quite tired. Had the same breakfast as yesterday, the same dinner. Feel very weak; teeth are aching. The experiment must be left off. Had tea with Baker as it was his birthday. Felt better after the tea.

September 2nd. Woke up fresh in the morning (the effect of last evening's tea). Had the old food (porridge, bread, butter, jam and cocoa). Felt ever so much better.

Thus ended the vital food experiment.

Under more favourable circumstances it might not have failed. A boarding-house, where one cannot control everything, where it is not possible to make frequent changes in the diet, is hardly a place where food experiments can be conducted successfully. Again, it will have been noticed that the only fresh fruit that I could get was oranges. No other fruits were to be had in the Transvaal then.

It is a matter of great regret that, although the Transvaal soil is very fruitful, the fruit cultivation is very much neglected. Again, I could not get any milk, which is a very dear commodity here. People generally use condensed milk in South Africa. It must, therefore, be admitted that the experiment is entirely useless to prove the value of vital food. It were sheer audacity to venture any opinion on the vital food after an eleven days' trial under adverse circumstances. To expect the stomach, used for twenty years and upwards to cooked food, to assimilate, at a stroke, uncooked food, is too much, and yet I think the experiment has its value. It should serve as a guide to others, who would embark upon such experiments, attracted to them by some of their charms, but have not the ability, or the means, or the circumstances, or the patience, or the knowledge to carry them to a successful issue. I confess I had none of the above qualifications. Having no patience to watch the results slowly, I violently changed my diet. From the very start, the breakfast consisted of the vital food, while four or five days had hardly passed when the dinner, too, consisted of vital food. My acquaintance with the vital food theory was very superficial indeed. A little pamphlet by Mr. Hills, and one or two articles that recently appeared from his pen in *The Vegetarian* were all I knew about it. Anyone, therefore, not possessing the necessary qualifications, is, I believe, doomed to failure, and will hurt both himself and the cause he is trying to investigate into and

advance.

And after all, is it worth while for an ordinary vegetarian to devote his attention to such pursuits—a vegetarian who enjoys good health and is satisfied with his diet? Would it not be better to leave it to the adepts who devote their lives to such researches? These remarks apply especially to those vegetarians who base their creed on the grand basis of humanitarianism—who are vegetarians because they consider it wrong, nay, even sinful, to kill animals for their food. That the ordinary vegetarianism is possible, is conducive to health, he who runs may see. What more, then, do we want? Vital food may have its grand possibilities in store; but it will surely not make our perishable bodies immortal. That any considerable majority of human beings would ever do away with cooking does not seem feasible. The vital food will not, cannot, as such, minister to the wants of the soul. And if the highest aim, indeed, the only aim of this life, be to know the soul, then, it is humbly submitted, anything that takes away from our opportunities of knowing the soul, and therefore, also playing with the vital food and other such experiments, is playing away, to that extent, the only desirable aim in life.

If we are to eat that we may live to the glory of Him, of whom we are, then, is it not sufficient that we eat nothing that, to Nature, is repulsive, that requires the unnecessary spilling of blood? No more, however, of this while I am yet on the threshold of my studies in that direction. I simply throw out these thoughts, which were passing through the mind while I was conducting the experiment, so that some dear brother or sister may find, perchance, an echo of their own in this.

The reasons which led me to try the vital food were its extreme simplicity. That I could dispense with cooking, that I could carry about my own food wherever I went, that I should not have to put up with any uncleanness of the landlady or those who supplied me with food, that, in travelling in such countries as South Africa, the vital food would be an ideal food, were charms too irresistible for me. But what a sacrifice of time and trouble to achieve what is after all a selfish end, which falls short of the highest! Life seems too short for these things.

The Vegetarian, 24-3-1894

35. *LETTER TO "THE VEGETARIAN"*[1]

[PRETORIA]

TO
THE EDITOR
The Vegetarian

MY DEAR BROTHER,

If you are a vegetarian, I think it is your duty to join the London Vegetarian Society, and to subscribe to *The Vegetarian* if you have not done so already.

It is your duty because —

(1) You will thereby encourage and aid the creed you profess.

(2) That will be an expression of the bond of sympathy that should exist between a vegetarian and a vegetarian in a land where there are so few of them.

(3) The vegetarian movement will indirectly aid India politically also, inasmuch as the English vegetarians will more readily sympathize with the Indian aspirations (that is my personal experience).

(4) Looking at the question even from a purely selfish point of view, you will thereby be able to have a large circle of vegetarian friends who ought to be more acceptable than others.

(5) Your knowledge of the vegetarian literature will enable you to remain firm in your principles in a land where you are exposed to so many temptations, which have in very many cases proved irresistible, and you will, in case of illness, be able to get the aid of vegetarian doctors and drugs, whom and which you will know very easily, having joined the Society and subscribed to its paper.

(6) That will help your fellow-brothers in India a great deal, and be also a means of dispelling the doubt that still lingers in the minds of our parents as to the possibility of existence under a vegetarian diet,

[1] This was published along with the note reading: "Mr. M. K. Gandhi has sent round the following letter to the Indians in England and we reproduce it here to show what active work is still being done in our midst by Mr. Gandhi, in spite of the distance which separates him from us. And yet our opponents say that vegetarian Indians have no persistence of purpose like the sons of "Honest John Bull"! Ed., Veg."

and thus facilitate the way of other Indians to visit England a great deal.

(7) If there were a sufficient number of Indian subscribers, the Editor of *The Vegetarian* may be induced to devote a page or a column to India, which, you will admit, cannot but result in benefit to India.

Many more reasons can be given to show why you should join the Society and subscribe to *The Vegetarian*, but I hope these will be sufficient to induce you to view my proposal with favour.

Even if you are not a vegetarian, you will find that many of the above reasons will apply to you also, and you can subscribe to *The Vegetarian*, and who knows but you may, in the end, consider it a privilege to join the rank of those who never depend for their existence on the blood of their fellow-creatures.

Of course, there is also the Manchester Vegetarian Society and its organ *The Vegetarian Messenger*. I have pleaded for the L.V.S. and its organ simply because it is so very handy, being in London, and because its organ is weekly.

I do trust that you will not excuse yourself from joining and subscribing on the score of economy, for the subscription is so small, and it is sure to more than repay your money.

Hoping you will not consider this an impertinence on my part.

Yours in brotherly love,

M. K. GANDHI

The Vegetarian, 28-4-1894

36. VEGETARIANISM AND CHILDREN

Mr. M. K. Gandhi, in a private letter, writes:

Recently a grand convention of Keswick Christians was held in Wellington, under the presidency of Rev. Andrew Murray. I attended it in the company of some dear Christians; they have a boy six or seven years old. He came out with me for a walk one day during the time. I was simply talking to him about kindness to animals. During the talk we discussed vegetarianism. Ever since that time, I am told, the boy has not taken meat. He did watch me, before the above conversation, taking only vegetables at the dinner table, and questioned me why I would not take meat. His parents, though not

themselves vegetarians, are believers in the virtue of vegetarianism, and did not mind my talking to their boy about it.

I write this to show how easily you can convince children of the grand truth, and induce them to avoid meat if their parents are not against the change. The boy and I are thick friends now. He seems to like me very much.

Another boy, about 15, I was talking to, said he could not himself kill or see a fowl killed, but did not object to eating it.

The Vegetarian, 5-5-1894

37. QUESTION ON RELIGION[1]

[PRETORIA,
Before June, 1894]

What is the Soul? Does it perform actions? Do past actions impede its progress or not?

What is God? Is He the Creator of the universe?

What is *moksha*[2]?

Is it possible for a person to know for certain, while he is still living, whether or not he will attain *moksha*?

It is said that after his death, a man may, according to his actions, be reborn as an animal, a tree, or even a stone. Is that so?

What is *Arya Dharma*? Do all Indian religions originate from the Vedas?

Who composed the Vedas? Are they *anadi*[3]? If so, what does *anadi* mean?

Who is the author of the *Gita*? Is God its author? Is there any evidence that He is?

Does any merit accrue from the sacrifice of animals and other things?

[1] Gandhiji put Raychandbhai some questions in a letter written sometime before June 1894. The original being untraceable the questions have been extracted from Raychandbhai's reply. The source indicates that a few more questions asked were omitted and hence their text is not available. For Raychandbhai's answers, *vide* Vol. XXXII, Appendix I; also *An Autobiography*, Pt. II, Ch. I.

[2] The supreme goal of spiritual life, liberation from phenomenal existence

[3] Without origin or beginning

If a claim is put forward that a particular religion is the best, may we not ask the claimant for proof?

Do you know anything about Christianity? If so, what do you think of it?

The Christians hold that the Bible is divinely inspired and that Christ was an incarnation of God, being His son. Was He?

Were all the Old Testament prophecies fulfilled in Christ? Can anyone remember his past lives or have an idea of his future lives?

If yes, who can?

You have given the names of some who have attained *moksha*.

What is the authority for this statement?

What makes you say that even Buddha did not attain *moksha*?

What will finally happen to this world?

Will the world be morally better off in the future?

Is there anything like total destruction of the world?

Can an illiterate person attain *moksha* by *bhakti* alone?

Rama and Krishna are described as incarnations of God. What does that mean? Were they God Himself or only a part of Him? Can we attain salvation through faith in them?

Who were Brahma, Vishnu and Siva?

If a snake is about to bite me, should I allow myself to be bitten or should I kill it, supposing that that is the only way in which I can save myself?

[From Gujarati]

Shrimad Rajachandra, pp. 292 et seq.

38. PETITION TO NATAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY[1]

DURBAN,
June 28, 1894

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF
THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE COLONY OF NATAL
THE PETITION OF THE INDIANS RESIDENT IN
THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT :

1. Your Petitioners are British subjects, who have come from India and settled in the Colony.

2. Your Petitioners are many of them registered as electors duly qualified to vote at the election of members to your Honourable Council and Assembly.

3. Your Petitioners have read with feelings of unfeigned regret and alarm the debate as reported in the newspapers on the second reading of the Franchise Law Amendment Bill.

4. Your Petitioners, with the greatest deference to your Honourable House, beg to dissent entirely from the views of the various speakers, and feel constrained to say that the real facts fail to support the reasons adduced in justification of the passing of the unfortunate measure.

5. The reasons, as reported in the newspapers, brought forward in support of the measure, your Petitioners understand, are:

(a) that the Indians have never exercised the franchise in the land they come from;

(b) that they are not fit for the exercise of the franchise.

6. Your Petitioners respectfully beg to press on the notice of the Honourable Members that all the facts and history point the other way.

7. The Indian nation has known, and has exercised, the power of election from times far prior to the time when the Anglo-Saxon races first became acquainted with the principles of representation.

[1] First it was addressed to both the Council and the Assembly, Then it was amended and addressed only to the Assembly, and a separate petition was addressed to the Council; *vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Council", 4-7-1894.

8. In support of the above, your Petitioners beg to draw the attention of your Honourable Assembly to Sir Henry Sumner Maine's[1] *Village Communities*, where he has most clearly pointed out that the Indian races have been familiar with representative institutions almost from time immemorial. That eminent lawyer and writer has shown that the Teutonic Mark was hardly so well organized or so *essentially representative* as an Indian village community until the precise technical Roman form was engrafted upon it.

9. Mr. Chisolm Anstey[2], in a speech delivered before the East India Association in London, said:

> We are apt to forget in this country, when we talk of preparing people in the East by education and all that sort of thing for Municipal Government and Parliamentary Government, that the East is the parent of Municipalities. Local Self-government, in the widest acceptation of the term, is as old as the East itself. No matter what may be the religion of the people who inhabit what we call the East, there is not a portion of the country from East to West, from North to South, which is not swarming with municipalities; and not only so, but, like to our municipalities of old, they are all bound together as in a species of network, so that you have, ready-made to your hand, the framework of the great system of representation.

Every caste in every village or town has its own rules or regulations, and *elects* representatives, and furnishes an exact prototype of the Saxon Witans, from which have sprung the present Parliamentary institutions.

10. The word *Panchayat* is a household word throughout the length and breadth of India, and it means, as the Honourable Members may be well aware, a Council of Five elected by the class of the people to whom the five belong, for the purpose of managing and controlling the social affairs of the particular caste.

11. The State of Mysore has at the present moment a representative parliament, called the Mysore Assembly, on the exact model of the British Parliament.

12. The trading Indian community now residing in Durban have their *Panchayat*, or Council of Five, and in case of matters of pressing importance their deliberations are controlled by the community at large, who can, according to the constitution of the body, overrule

[1] 1822-88; eminent jurist whose works include *Ancient Law* and *Early History of Institutions*. He was a member of the Indian Council, 1862-69 and 1871.

[2] 1816-73; lawyer and politician; Member of Parliament, 1847-52

their decisions by a sufficient majority. Here is, your Memorialists submit, a proof of their capabilities as regards representation.

13. Indeed, so much has the Indians' ability to understand representative institutions been recognized by Her Majesty's Government that India enjoys municipal local self-government in the truest sense of the term.

14. There were, in 1891, 755 municipalities and 892 local boards in India, with 20,000 Indian members. This would give some idea of the magnitude of the municipalities and the electorate.

15. If further proof be needed on this head, your Petitioners draw the Honourable Members' attention to the recently passed India Councils Bill, whereby the system of representation has been introduced even into the Legislative Councils of the various Presidencies of India.

16. Your Honourable Assembly will, your Petitioners trust, see, therefore, that the exercise of the franchise by them is no extension of a new privilege they have never before known or enjoyed, but on the contrary, the disqualification to exercise it would be an unjust restric tion which, under similar circumstances, would never be put on them in the land of their birth.

17. Hence, also, your Petitioners submit that the fear that they may, if they were allowed to exercise the privilege of franchise, “become propagandists of agitation and instruments of sedition in that great country they come from”, is, to say the least of it, without ground.

18. Your Petitioners deem it unnecessary to dwell upon the minor points and the needlessly harsh remarks made in the course of the debate on the second reading. They would, however, crave leave to give some extracts which bear on the subject under consideration. Your Petitioners would rather have been judged by their works than have sought to justify themselves by quoting what others have thought of their race; but, under the present circumstances, they have no other course left open to them, since, owing to want of free intercourse, there seems to prevail much misunderstanding about their capabilities.

19. Speaking at a meeting at the Assembly Rooms, Kennington, Mr. F. Pincott said:

> We have heard a great deal in this country about the ignorance of the Indian people and their unfitness for appreciating the great advantages of representative government. All that is really very foolish, because

representative government has nothing to do with education. It has a great deal to do with common sense, and the people of India are gifted with as much common sense, as we have; we exercised the right of election and we had representative institutions many hundreds of years before we possessed any education whatever. Therefore, the educational test goes simply for naught. Those who know the history of our country know very well that two hundred years ago the grossest superstition and ignorance prevailed, and yet we had our representative institutions.

20. Sir George Birdwood[1], writing on the general character of the people of India, thus sums up:

> The people of India are in no intrinsic sense our inferiors, while in things measured by some of the false standards, false to ourselves, we pretend to believe in, they are our superiors.

21. Says Sir Thomas Munro, one of the Governors of Madras:

> I do not know what is meant by civilizing the people of India. In the theory and practice of good government they may be deficient; but if a good system of agriculture, if unrivalled manufacture . . . if the establishment of schools for reading and writing, if the general practice of kindness and hospitality . . . are amongst the points that denote a civilized people, then they are not inferior in civilization to the people of Europe.

22. Professor Max Muller thus speaks of the much abused and more misunderstood Indian :

> If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the greatest problem of life, and has found solutions of some of them which well deserve the attention even of those who have studied Plato and Kant, I should point to India.

23. To appeal to the finer feelings, your Petitioners respectfully venture to point out that the Franchise Law Amendment Bill, if passed, would have a tendency to retard, instead of hastening, the process of unification the flower of the British and the Indian nations are earnestly striving for.

24. Your petitioners have purposely let the English authorities speak on their behalf, without any comments to amplify the above extracts. It is yet possible to multiply such extracts, but your Petitioners confidently trust that the above will prove sufficient to convince your Honourable Assembly of the justice of their prayer, and they earnestly beseech your Honourable Assembly to reconsider

[1] 1832-1917; served in the Bombay Medical Service in 1854, and later for thirty years in the India Office, London, Author of *Report on the Miscellaneous Old Records of the India Office* and *The Industrial Arts of India.*

your decision; or to appoint a Commission to enquire into the question as to whether the Indians resident in the Colony are fit to exercise the privilege of franchise, before proceeding further with the Bill.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc., etc.

Colonial Office Records, No. 179, Vol. 189: Votes and Proceedings of Parliament, Natal, 1894

39. DEPUTATION TO NATAL PREMIER[1]

DURBAN,
June 29, 1894

TO
SIR JOHN ROBINSON, K.C.M.G.
PREMIER AND COLONIAL SECRETARY
COLONY OF NATAL

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOUR,

We have to thank Your Honour very much for sparing some of Your Honour's valuable time to receive this deputation.

We beg to present this petition of the Indians residing in the Colony to Your Honour and beg you to give it Your Honour's earnest attention.

We would not trespass longer on Your Honour's courtesy than is absolutely necessary. We, however, regret that we have not at our disposal time enough to lay our case as thoroughly as possible before Your Honour.

Sir, we have been taunted with having woken up almost too late. It is only necessary to put before you the peculiar circumstances to convince Your Honour that we could not possibly have approached the honourable Houses earlier. The two chief leading members of the community were away from the Colony on urgent business and were shut out from all communication with people in the Colony. Our very imperfect knowledge of the English language materially prevents us from keeping ourselves in touch with important matters as we should like to be.

[1] Enclosure No. 1 in Schedule of Correspondence published by order of the Legislative Assembly of Natal on April 21, 1896

With greatest respect to Your Honour, we beg to point out that both the Anglo-Saxon and the Indian races belong to the same stock. We read Your Honour's eloquent speech at the time of the second reading of the Bill with rapt attention and took great pains to ascertain if any writer of authority gave countenance to the view expressed by Your Honour about the difference of the stocks from which both the races have sprung up. Max Muller, Morris, Greene and a host of other writers with one voice seem to show very clearly that both the races have sprung from the same Aryan stock, or rather the Indo-European as many call it. We have no wish whatever to thrust ourselves as members of a brother nation on a nation that would be unwilling to receive us as such, but we may be pardoned if we state the real facts, the alleged absence of which has been put forward as an argument to pronounce us as unfit for the exercise of the franchise.

Your Honour has, moreover, been reported to have said that it would be cruel to expect Indians to exercise the privilege of franchise. We humbly submit that our petition is a sufficient answer to this.

It has given us no small satisfaction to know that, however unjust Your Honour's speech may have appeared to us from our point of view, it breathed truest sentiments of justice, morality and, what is more, Christianity. So long as such a spirit is noticeable among the chosen of the land, we would never despair of right being done in every case.

It is therefore that we have ventured to approach Your Honour, fully believing that, in the light of the new facts disclosed by our humble petition, a display of the same sentiments will result in substantial justice being done to the Indians in the Colony.

We believe that the prayer of the petitioners is very modest. If the newspaper reports are trustworthy, Your Honour was pleased to acknowledge that there were some respectable Indians who were intelligent enough to exercise the precious privilege. That alone, in our humble opinion, is a sufficient reason for granting a Commission of enquiry into the momentous question. We are willing to face, nay, we court such a Commission, and, will it be asking too much if we ask that the Indians should be allowed to exercise the privilege, if the impartial judgment of an impartial Commission pronounced the Indians fit for such an exercise? If we have understood the Bill rightly, the Indians would, in the event of its becoming law, rank lower than the lowest native. For, while the latter can educate himself into fitness

for the power of election, the former never can. The Bill seems to be so sweeping that even the Indian Member of the British House of Commons, did he come here, would not be fit for becoming a voter.

Did we not know that other matters of equal importance seriously engage Your Honour's attention, we could go on showing the injurious consequences that would flow from the interpretation of the Bill, consequences perhaps never contemplated by its illustrious authors. If we were given a week's time we could put our case more exhaustively before the House of Assembly. We would then leave our cause in Your Honour's hands, imploring Your Honour with all the earnestness at our command to use Your Honour's powerful influence and to see that full justice is done to the Indians. For it is justice we want and that only.

We thank your Honour for receiving this deputation and the patience and courtesy shown to us.

We beg to subscribe ourselves on behalf of the Indian community,

Your Honour's obedient servants,
M. K. GANDHI
AND THREE OTHERS

Colonial Office Records No. 181, Vol. 41

40. A CIRCULAR LETTER TO LEGISLATOR[1]

DURBAN,
July 1, 1894

TO

. . . .

SIR,

We, the undersigned, have sent copies of this letter under registered cover to the Honourable Members of both the Honourable the Legislative Council and the Honourable the Legislative Assembly, with a request to answer the questions asked in the enclosed. You will lay us under deep obligation, if you would be good enough to fill in the reply column of the enclosed memorandum, with any remarks that you may choose to make in the remarks column, and sign and send

[1] The letter and the questionnaire are referred to in paragraph 8 of "Petition to Lord Ripon", before 14-7-1894.

the same back to the first undersigned at the above address.

We beg to remain,
Sir,

. . . .

M. K. GANDHI
AND FOUR OTHERS

QUESTIONS	REPLY	REMARKS
	Yes or No	
1. Do you conscientiously say that the Franchise Law Amendment Bill is a strictly just measure without needing any modification or change?		
2. Do you think it just that those Indians, who have not been able, from some cause or other, to have their names on the Voters' List, should ever be debarred from voting in the Parliamentary Elections, no matter how capable they may be or what interests they may have in the Colony?		
3. Do you really believe that no Indian British subject can ever acquire sufficient attainments for the purpose of becoming a full citizen of the Colony or of voting?		
4. Do you think it just that a man should not become a voter simply because he is of Asiatic extraction?		
5. Do you wish the indentured Indian who comes and settles in the Colony to remain in the state of semi-slavery and ignorance for ever, unless he chooses to go back to India for ever?		

Colonial Office Records No. 179, Vol. 189

41. DEPUTATION TO NATAL GOVERNOR[1]

DURBAN,
July 3, 1894

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE SIR WALTER FRANCIS HELY-HUTCHINSON, K.C.M.G., GOVERNOR AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN AND OVER THE COLONY OF NATAL, VICE-ADMIRAL OF THE SAME, AN SUPREME CHIEF OVER THE NATIVE POPULATION

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

At a meeting held on the 1st July, 1894, of leading Indians in Durban, we were requested to await Your Excellency's pleasure with regard to the Franchise Law Amendment Bill, which was read a third time last evening in the Honourable the Legislative Assembly of the Colony of Natal.

The Bill as it stands, disqualifies every Indian, whether a British subject or not, not already on the Voters' List, from becoming a voter.

We venture to say that, without any further qualification, the Bill is manifestly unjust, and would work very harshly at any rate upon some Indians.

Even in England, any British subject having the proper qualifications is entitled to vote, irrespective of caste, colour, or creed.

We would not deal at length with the question here lest we should trespass too much upon Your Excellency's courtesy, but would beg leave to present Your Excellency with a printed copy of the petition addressed to the Honourable Assembly and request Your Excellency to persue it carefully.

To us our cause seems to be so just that it should not need any arguments to support it.

We trust that Your Excellency, representing Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen Empress, will not sanction a measure that would seem to lay down that an Indian British subject of Her Majesty can never become fit to exercise the franchise.

[1] Enclosure No. 2 in Despatch No. 62 of July 16, 1894 from the Governor of Natal, Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson, to Lord Ripon, Secretary of State for the Colonies

We hope to send a proper petition[1] to Your Excellency through the regular channels about the matter.

We thank Your Excellency very much for granting the deputation an interview in Durban and for Your Excellency's courtesy and patience.

We have, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI
AND SIX OTHERS

Colonial Office Records No. 179, Vol. 189

42. PETITION TO NATAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL[1,2]

DURBAN,
July 4, 1894

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS
RESIDENT IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT :

Your Petitioners have been appointed by the Indian community resident in this Colony to address this humble petition to your Honourable Council with regard to the Franchise Law Amendment Bill which was read a third time on the 2nd July in the Hon. the Legislative Assembly. Your Petitioners, instead of setting forth herein their grievances at length, respectfully beg to refer your Hon. Council to the petition made by the Indians to the Hon. the Legislative Assembly regarding the Bill, a printed copy of which is annexed hereto for ready reference by the Hon. Members. The petition has been signed by nearly 500 Indians. This was done in the short space of one day. Had the Petitioners been given more time, from all the reports received from the various districts, they fully believe that at least 10,000 Indians would have signed it. Your Petitioners were in

[1] No further petition to the Governor of Natal was, in fact, sent. Evidently Gandhiji and his associates intended to do this, but events over took them. Even this petition was rejected and the Bill was rushed through the House in all its stages, for submission to Lord Ripon, for the Queen's approval. A second petition had, therefore, to be submitted through Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson; *vide* "Petition to Lord Ripon", before 14-7-1894.

[2] This was presented to the President and members of the Legislative Council by Hon. Henry Campbell, advocate and chief agent for British Indian merchants in the Transvaal who drafted and presented petitions for them.

hopes that the Hon. the Legislative Assembly would see the justice of their prayer and grant it, but their hopes have been frustrated. Your Petitioners, therefore, have ventured to approach your Hon. Council with a view to inducing the Hon. Members to give close attention to the petition hereinbefore referred to, and to use your correctional power in consonance with justice and equity. Some of your Petitioners undersigned had the honour to see some of the Hon. Members of the Lower House in connection with the petition aforesaid, and they all seemed to admit the justice of the prayer contained in the said petition, but the general feeling seemed to be that it was addressed too late. Your Petitioners, without going into the question, would respectfully submit that, assuming that it was so, the consequences of the Bill becoming law would be so grave, and the prayer is so just and modest, that being too late should not have weighed with the Hon. Members at all in considering the petition. Instances of Bills being thrown out or modified, under less imperative circumstances, by the Parliaments of civilized countries, after they have passed through the committee stage, would not be difficult to find. Your Petitioners need hardly mention the instance of the House of Lords having thrown out the Irish Home Rule Bill[1], and the circumstances under which it was so treated. The Franchise Law Amendment Bill as it stands is, your Petitioners submit, so sweeping a measure, that no Indian who is not already on the Voters' List, no matter how capable he may be, can be come a voter if the Bill becomes law. Your Petitioners trust that your Hon. Council will not endorse such a view, and will, therefore, send the Bill back again to the Legislative Assembly for its reconsideration.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

*The Natal Advertise*r, 5-7-1894

[1] This was introduced by Gladstone in 1886 in the British Parliament. It sought to transfer Irish administration to an executive appointed by an Irish Parliament but left the power of taxation largely to the British Government. It met with furious opposition in the House of Commons. In 1893, Gladstone, again in office, introduced a Home Rule Bill which was passed in the Commons, but was rejected in the Lords by an overwhelming majority.

43. EXTRACT FORM LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI[1]

DURBAN,
July 5, 1894

The first Parliament of Natal under Responsible Government has been pre-eminently an Indian Parliament. It has for the most part occupied itself with legislation affecting Indians, by no means favourably. The Governor, in opening the Legislative Council and Assembly, remarked that his Ministers would deal with the Franchise which was exercised by Indians in Natal, although they never exercised it in India. The reasons given for the sweeping measure to disfranchise Indians were that they had never exercised the Franchise before, and that they were not fit for it.

The petition of the Indians seemed to prove a sufficient answer to this. Hence they have now turned round and given out the real object of the Bill, which is simply this: "We do not want the Indians any more here. We want the coolies, but they shall remain slaves here and go back to India as soon as they are free." I earnestly request your undivided attention to the cause and appeal to you to use your influence that always has been and is being used on behalf of the Indians, no matter where situated. The Indians look up to you as children to the father. Such is really the feeling here.

A word for myself and what I have done. I am yet inexperienced and young and, therefore, quite liable to make mistakes. The responsibility undertaken is quite out of proportion to my ability. I may mention that I am doing this without any remuneration. So you will see that I have not taken the matter up, which is beyond my ability, in order to enrich myself at the expense of the Indians. I am the only available person who can handle the question. You will, therefore, oblige me very greatly if you will kindly direct and guide me and make necessary suggestions which shall be received as from a father to his child.

Dadabhai Naoroji : *The Grand Old Man of India*, pp. 468-9

[1] Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917); statesman, often called. "the Grand Old Man of India". Thrice presided over the Congress session, in 1886, 1893 and 1906. Enuniciated, for the first time, Congress goal as one of swaraj or independence. Member of the British Committee of the Congress in London.

44. PETITION TO NATAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL[1]

DURBAN,
July 6, 1894

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF HONOURABLE THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF THE COLONY OF NATAL

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS RESIDENT IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT :

(1) Your Petitioners have been appointed by the Indian community resident in this Colony to approach your Honourable Council with regard to the "Franchise Law Amendment Bill".

(2) Your Petitioners regret sincerely that their petition presented on 4th July, 1894, through the Honourable Mr. Campbell, being notin order, they have again to trespass on your Honourable Council's valuable time.

(3) Your Petitioners, as trusted and responsible members of the Indian community, beg to draw your Honourable Council's attention to the fact that the Bill under discussion has created a widespread feeling of dissatisfaction and disappointment among the Indian community. The more the provisions of the Bill become known among the Indians, the more your Petitioners hear the following expressions of opinion : " *Sarkar Mabap*[2] is going to kill us, what shall we do?"

(4) With the greatest respect to your Honourable Council, your Petitioners submit that this is no mere idle expression of opinion, but a sincere one, which is worthy of the most serious consideration by the Honourable Council.

(5) It is not, your Petitioners venture respectfully to submit, a fact that the Indians do not know what voting means, as was attempted to be shown during the debate on the second reading of the Bill in your Honourable Council. They know very well what privilege a right

[1] This was presented by the Hon. Mr. Campbell to the Legislative Council of the Natal Parliament on July 6, 1894, on behalf of Hajee Mahomed Hajee Dada and seven other Indians.

[2] Government considered as "mother-father"

of voting confers, and feel also the responsibility such a privilege carries with it. Your Petitioners only wish that your Honourable Council could personally witness the excitement and the anxiety with which every stage in the progress of the Bill is watched by the Indian Community.

(6) Your Petitioners would not, for one moment, say that every member of the community has such a knowledge and, therefore such a feeling, but they may be permitted to say that it is general. Nor would your Petitioners hold that there are not Indians who should have no right to vote, but your Petitioners submit that that is no reason why the Indians should be excluded wholesale from the privilege.

(7) Your Petitioners venture to submit for your Honourable Council's consideration some of the anomalous results that would follow the operation of the Bill :

(a) The Bills arbitrarily keeps on the Voters' List those who are already there, while it forever shuts the door against any new addition of a person who has not chosen to exercise the privilege hitherto.

(b) While some Indian fathers will be able to vote, their children never can, although the latter may surpass the former in every respect.

(c) It practically puts the free and indentured Indians in the same scale.

(d) Taking out for a moment the question of policy as the principle of the Bill, which seems to have developed but lately, the Bill seems to lay down that India has not at the present moment any Indian who is fit to exercise the privilege of franchise and that there is such a wide difference between a European and an Indian that contact with the former, even for any length of time, does not fit him for the exercise of the precious privilege.

(8) Is it fair, your Petitioners humbly ask, that, while the father is a voter, he has to see his son, on whom he has lavished enormous sums of money to educate him so that he may become a public man, unable to possess a right that is now recognized as the birthright of all really educated persons born in civilized countries where representative institutions prevail?

(9) Your Petitioners would very much like to have dwelt upon the fear that the permission to allow the Asiatic to vote would ultimately result in a Government of Natives by coloured people, the Indians. But your Petitioners are afraid that this is not the occasion on

which your Petitioners may lay their humble views before your Honourable Council on the question. They would rest content with saying that, in their opinion, such a contingency can never happen, and certainly the time is not ripe to provide against it, were it even possible in the remote future.

(10) Your Petitioners beg respectfully to submit that the Bill makes an invidious distinction between one class of British subjects and another. But it has been said that, if Indian British subjects are to be treated equally with the Europeans, the same treatment should be accorded to other British subjects, e.g., the Natives of the Colony. Without entering into odious comparisons, your Petitioners would venture to quote from the Royal Proclamation of 1858, which would show on what principles the British Indian subjects have been and should be treated :

> We hold ourselves bound to the Natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, and those obligations, by the blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil. And it is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our services, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability and integrity, duly to discharge. In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security and in their gratitude our best reward.

(11) On the lines laid down in the above extract, and also the Charter of 1833[1], the Indians have been admitted to the most responsible posts in India, e.g., that of Chief Justice. And yet here, in a British Colony, an attempt is being made to deprive your Petitioners or their brethren or their children of the commonest right of an ordinary citizen.

(12) It has now been said that the Indians know the Municipal Self-government but not the Political. Your Petitioners submit that this, too, is not now strictly true. But granting that it is strictly so, should that be any reason for barring the door to Political Franchise to Indians in a country where a Parliamentary Government prevails?

[1] Based on the findings of a Parliamentary Commission of Enquiry, the Act abolished the East India Company's trading rights in India and confined its function to ruling its possessions. Reaffirmed in 1853, the Charter Act provided that no Indian shall be disabled from holding any place, office or employment under the East India Company by reason of his religion, place of birth, descent or colour.

Your Petitioners submit that the real and only test should be whether your Petitioners, and those on whose behalf they plead, are capable or not. A person coming from under Monarchical Government, e.g., Russian, may not have been able to show his capabilities to understand or appreciate Representative Government, and yet your Petitioners venture to believe your Honourable Council will not condemn such a one as unfit, if he is otherwise capable and fit.

(13) Before concluding, your Petitioners beg to draw your Honourable Council's attention to the following memorable words of Lord Macaulay : “Free and civilized as we are, it is to little purpose, if we grudge to any portion of the human race an equal portion of freedom and civilization.”

(14) Your Petitioners fervently trust that the above facts and arguments, if they prove nothing else, will prove to the satisfaction of your Honourable Council that a real necessity exists for a Commission of enquiry as to the fitness or the unfitness of the Indians to exercise the Franchise, as also to ascertain whether there is any ground for the fear that, in case of the Indian being allowed to exercise the privilege of Franchise as heretofore, their vote will swamp the European vote, and that they will have the reins of Government in their hands, and also to report upon such other important questions. Your Petitioners pray, therefore, that your Honourable Council will send the Bill back for reconsideration by the Honourable the Legislative Assembly, with such just andequitable recommendations as your Honourable Council may think fit.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc., etc.

Colonial Office Records No. 181, Vol. 38

45. LETTER TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"[1]

DURBAN,
July 7, 1894

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury

SIR,

It was a treat to read your learned and able leader in today's issue. It was not expected that there would be nothing to be said against the franchise petition. That would be a wondrous—I was almost going to say, superhuman—thing that would not have its two sides, in these modern times. On the same principle, Sir George Chesney is not the only writer who would serve your purpose. Sir Henry Sumner Maine was also, after all, a mortal. It is, therefore, only natural that his theories and conclusions should be contested. There seems to be no escape for a mortal from "the pairs of opposites". I would, however, without for the present presenting the other aspect of the case, beg leave to revert to the matter on some future occasion.

The object of writing this letter is to "surprise" you. The State of Mysore, I am glad to say, has given the political franchise rights to its subjects. I take the following from a newspaper report :

Under the system now expounded by the Dewan, all landholders paying a

[1] This was in reply to an article entitled "Indian Village Communities" in *The Natal Mercury*, 7-7-1894, commenting on the petition presented to the Natal Legislative Council by the Indian community in connection with the Franchise Law Amendment Bill. It was argued that Parliamentary Government was very different from any form of representation known to the village communities of India. The Bill excluded Indians from the franchise on the ground that they had not exercised the franchise in their own country. The Indians pleaded that they had done so from ancient times in their village communities. But *The Natal Mercury* contested this view, and that of Sir Henry Sumner Maine, in his *Village-Communities in the East and West*, that Indian had been familiar with representative institutions almost from time immemorial. It maintained that Indian village-communities had nothing to do with political representation but only with the legal question of land tenure. It argued that village-community life was common to all primitive peoples and, if anything, proved the backwardness of a people, and quoted General Sir George Chesney's views in *The Nineteenth Century* to the effect that Indians were still in their political infancy.

revenue of Rs. 100 or more, or *mohatarfa*[1] of Rs. 13 and upwards, are entitled to vote for members of the Representative Assembly, and are eligible to become members themselves. Besides, all non-official graduates of any Indian University, ordinarily residing in the taluk, have been given the privilege of electing, as well as of being elected. Thus property as well as intelligence will be represented in the Assembly. Further, it has also been specified that public associations, municipalities and the local boards may also elect members. The total number of members fixed is 347, and these members are elected by nearly 4,000 electors.

Sir, I appeal to your good sense, and ask you, will you not better serve humanity by collecting and pointing our points of resemblances between the two peoples than by holding out to the public gaze points of contrasts, often far-fetched or merely imaginary, that can but arouse the worst feeling of a man, while they can do nobody any real good? I hardly think it can be to your interest to sow the seeds of jealousy and animosity between the two nations. That, I doubt not, is in your power, as it is in anybody's, more or less. But a thing far higher and far nobler, too, lies within your reach—a thing that would bring you not only greatness, but goodness, and what is more, the gratitude of a nation that has not been crushed under 1,200 years' tyranny and oppression, a fact by itself a miracle,—and that thing is to educate rightly the Colony about India and its people.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 11-7-1894

[1] Trade-tax, a word of Persian origin

46. PETITION TO NATAL GOVERNOR[1]

DURBAN,
July 10, 1894

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE SIR WALTER FRANCIS HELY-HUTCHINSON, K.C.M.G., GOVERNOR AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN AND OVER THE COLONY OF NATAL, VICE-ADMIRAL OF THE SAME, AND SUPREME CHIEF OVER THE NATIVE POPULATION

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS

RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH THAT :

1. Your Excellency's Petitioners, representing the Indian community residing in the Colony of Natal, beg hereby to approach Your Excellency with regard to the Franchise Law Amendment Bill.

2. Your Excellency's Petitioners understand that Your Excellency will send the Bill, above referred to, to the Home Government for Royal assent.

3. Such being the case, a petition[2] is being prepared for the Home Government regarding the Bill.

4. Your petitioners will send the said petition to Your Excellency as soon as possible.

5. Your Petitioners respectfully request Your Excellency to postpone sending Your Excellency's Despatch to the Home Government with regard to the matter, till the petition hereinbefore mentioned is sent to Your Excellency to be forwarded to the Home Government.

And for this act of justice and mercy, Your Excellency's Petitioners shall for ever pray, etc., etc.

M. K. GANDHI
AND SEVEN OTHERS

Colonial Office Records, No. 179, Vol. 189

[1] Enclosure No. 6 in Despatch No. 62 of July 16, 1894 from the Governor of Natal, Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson, to Lord Ripon, Secretary of State for the Colonies

[2] *Vide* the succeeding item.

47. PETITION TO LORD RIPON[1]

[DURBAN,
Before *July 14, 1894*][2]

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE MARQUIS OF RIPON,
HER MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

THE PETITION OF THE UNDER SIGNED INDIANS
NOW RESIDING IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

MOST HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT :

1. Your Lordship's Petitioners are Indian British subjects, residing in the various districts of the Colony of Natal.

2. Some of Your Lordship's Petitioners are traders, who have come to the Colony and settled therein. Some again are those who, in the first instance, came from India under indenture, and have now, for some time (even thirty years), become free. Some are Indians under indenture, and some are born and educated in the Colony, and engaged in various pursuits of life as attorneys' clerks, compounders, compositors, photographers, schoolmasters, etc. Again, some of Your Lordship's Petitioners have considerable landed property in the Colony, and are duly qualified to vote at the election of Members for the Honourable the Legislative Assembly. And a few have got sufficient property qualifications, but have not been able to get their names on the Voters' Roll for some cause or other.

3. Your Lordship's Petitioners hereby approach Your Lordship with regard to the Franchise Law Amendment Bill, which was introduced last session by the Honourable Sir John Robinson, the Prime Minister of the Colony, and which has passed the third reading in the Honourable Legislative Council, and received the assent of His Excellency the Governor, subject to its being disallowed by Her Majesty.

[1] Enclosure No. 1 in Despatch No. 66 dated July 31, 1894, from Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson, Governor of Natal, to Lord Ripon, Secretary of State for the Colonies.

In *An Autobiography*, Pt. II, Ch. XVII, Gandhiji says he took great pains over this petition and obtained over 10, 000 signatures for it in the course of a fortnight. The Prime Minister of Natal in his forwarding letter to the Governor set out reasons for recommending rejection of the petition.

[2] *Vide* the succeeding item.

4. The Bill above referred to has for its object the disqualification of all the persons of Asiatic extraction, who have settled in the Colony, to vote at the Parliamentary elections. It, however, excepts those who are already rightly placed on the Voters' Lists.

5. Your Lordship's Petitioners crave leave to give a short history of the movement carried on to obtain redress through the constituted authorities in the Colony.

6. It was when the Franchise Law Amendment Bill had passed the second reading that Your Lordship's Petitioners first approached the Honourable the Legislative Assembly. When Your Lordship's Petitioners became aware that two days after the second reading, the Bill had passed the committee stage, and a day after, it would pass the third reading it was impossible to present a petition to the Hon. the Legislative Aeeembly unless the third reading was postponed. Your Lordship's Petitioners, therefore, sent a telegraphic petition[1] to the Honourable the Legislative Assembly, requesting that a postponement should be granted. The postponement was very graciously granted for one day. In that one day, about 500 Indians signed a petition which was next day presented to the Honourable the Legislative Assembly. In Maritzburg, a deputation waited upon some Honourable Members of the Honourable House, including the Premier and the Attorney-General. The deputation was very courteously received and given a patient hearing. Most of the Honourable Members waited upon more or less admitted the justice of the prayer contained in the said petition, though all said that it was presented too late. The Honourable Prime Minister, in order that it might be studied, asked leave to postpone the third reading for four days. It might be mentioned also that telegraphic petitions were sent to the Honourable the Legislative Council from Verulam, Richmond Road and other places, endorsing the said petition. But they were ruled out of order on the ground they were not presented through a Member of the House. Your Lordship's Petitioners have not annexed hereto the various petitions referred to, as these will no doubt be sent to Your Lordship by the Government.

7. Four days, after the presentation of the petition, i.e., on the 2nd July, 1894, Monday, the Bill was, contrary to your Petitioners' expectations and much to their regret, read a third time.

[1] This is not available.

8. On the Tuesday following, Your Lordship's Petitioners thereupon sent a petition to the Honourable the Legislative Council, which was presented through the Honourable Mr. Campbell, but the petition was ruled not in order, because it contained references to the Honourable the Legislative Assembly, and the Bill was read a second time. Your Lordship's Petitioners, as soon as they knew this, lost no time in addressing another petition to the Honourable Council, which was sent on the Thursday following, and was presented on Friday through the same Honourable Member. In the meanwhile, i.e., within one day after the second reading, the Bill had passed the committee stage. The Honourable Mr. Campbell moved the postponement of the third reading of the Bill, in order that the petition last mentioned might be considered. The motion, however, was not carried on the ground that the petition was presented *too late*. The Bill had been hardly four days before the Honourable Council, as Your Lordship will notice. Your Lordship's Petitioners may also mention that a deputation was appointed by the leading members of the Indian community to wait upon His Excellency the Honourable Sir Walter F. Hely-Hutchinson, who very kindly and courteously received the deputation. In order to know the individual opinions of the Honourable Members of the two Houses, a Committee of Indians sent a printed circular [1]to the Honourable Members requesting them to answer certain questions. Your Petitioners append hereto the Circular and the Memorandum containing the questions. So far, only one Honourable Member has been good enough to send a reply, but he, too, has not answered the questions.

9. Before proceeding to criticize the Franchise Bill, Your Lordship's Petitioners would beg to dispose of one point that has been used against Your Lordship's Petitioners, namely, that they approached the Honourable Assembly too late. As to this, your Petitioners would simply state that they were not technically too late, and that the issues involved were, and are, so important, and the Bill so vitally affected and affects Her Majesty's Indian subjects that the Government, or the Honourable the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly might well have reconsidered their decision and thoroughly investigated Your Lordship's Petitioners' case before allowing the Bill to pass the third reading.

[1]*Vide* "A Circular Letter to Legislators", 1-7-1894.

10. During the debate it was stated, as also it is stated in the preamble of the Bill, that the Asiatic communities have never exercised the privilege of Franchise, and it was stated further, during the debate, that the Asiatics were not fit to exercise the Franchise. These were, then, the two chief reasons alleged for the exclusion of the Indians from the privilege of the Franchise. Your Petitioners venture to believe that the petition to the Honourable Assembly sufficiently disposes of the two contentions above-mentioned.

11. Although it was not openly acknowledged that the two objections to the Asiatics exercising the Franchise privilege had fallen through, it seemed to be tacitly recognized that such was the case, for it was more openly declared in the third reading of the Bill in the Honourable Assembly, that the exclusion was to be justified, not on moral and equitable grounds, as was contended at the time of the second reading, but on purely political grounds. It was said that, if the Indians were allowed to vote, their vote would swamp the European vote, and that there would be a Government by the Asiatics instead of by the Europeans.

12. Your Lordship's Petitioners venture [to submit], with the greatest deference to both the Honourable Houses, that the above fears are entirely groundless. Even at the present moment there are very few Indian electors as compared with European electors. The Indians who come under indenture cannot possibly have the sufficient property qualifications to be qualified for voting during their term of indenture, and for many more years afterwards. It is, moreover, a notorious fact that those who come on their own means do not remain for good in the Colony, but after a certain number of years, return home and are replaced by other Indians. Thus, so far as the trading community is concerned, the number of votes would, as a rule, always remain unchanged. Another fact, too, cannot be lost sight of, viz., that the Indians do not take such an active interest in the political affairs of the Colony as the European section of the community. It seems that there are 45,000 Europeans, and the same number of Indians; that fact alone shows how material is the difference between the European and the Indian vote. And Your Lordship’s Petitioners submit that it is well nigh impossible that any Indian can hope to enter into the Natal Parliament for generations to come. This, Your Lordship's Petitioners humbly submit, hardly needs any proof to support it.

13. And if Your Lordship's Petitioners are not unfit to exercise

the privilege, should it matter that they have some voice in the government of the Colony, and more especially the government of themselves?

14. Your Lordship’s Petitioners venture to submit that the Bill is admittedly retrograde in character and that it is manifestly unjust.

15. The very fact that those who are rightly on the Voters' List are to be allowed to remain there, at once, in your Petitioners' humble opinion, recognizes the ability of your Petitioners to understand the privilege and the responsibility attached to the exercise of the Franchise. Your Lordship's Petitioners cannot believe that they are allowed to remain on the List even though they are not fit to vote, as was attempted to be shown in the course of the debate.

16. It has also been said that Clause II of the Bill fully meets the ends of justice. Your Petitioners submit that it does not. On the contrary, it injures the feelings of both those who are on the List and those who are not.

17. It is little comfort to those who are already on the List to know that they may vote, while their children never can, no matter how well educated and well qualified they may be. Indian parents who settle in the Colony will have, if the Bill becomes law, the best stimulus to give higher education to their children taken away from them. They would hardly like to see their sons pariahs of society, without a status or without any ambition in life. Even wealth becomes useless if it gives a man no place in society. The very aim with which men collect wealth is thus nipped in the bud.

18. And the Second Clause vexes those who have been in the Colony already to know that, while their brethren, who are in no way superior to them, by a chance retain the right to vote, they themselves cannot vote simply because, perhaps, owing to circumstances entirely beyond their control, they have not been able to get their names on the Voters' List. The Bill thus makes between Indian British subjects of the same class an invidious distinction based on accidental circumstances.

19. It has also been hinted that the justice done by the Second Clause is not gratefully acknowledged by your Petitioners. But, with the greatest respect to the just intentions of the Government in introducing the Second Clause, Your Lordship's Petitioners have failed to see the justice thereof. This was even admitted by some Honourable Members themselves, who did not care whether the Second Clause was

“in” or “out”, as those votes were bound to drop off before long. This seems to be self-evident.

20. Your Lordship's Petitioners have noticed with shame and sorrow the zealous attempt made to compare your Petitioners with the Natives of South Africa. Very often it was said the Natives had a better claim to vote, if the Indians had any, simply because they were British subjects. Your Lordship's Petitioners would not enter into a discussion of the comparison, but would draw Your Lordship's attention to the Royal Proclamation of 1858, as also to Your Lordship's own personal experience of the Indian nation. Your Petitioners need hardly point out the marked difference that exists between the Governments of Indian British subjects and Native British subjects.

21. There are, at the present moment, hundreds of educated Indians, signatures of some of whom appear in the petition, who would not be able to vote at the Parliamentary elections if the Bill became law. Your Petitioners fully trust that Your Lordship will never advise Her Most Gracious Majesty to sanction a Bill that would cause such a grave injustice to any section of British subjects.

22. In the Natal Government *Gazette* of March 27, 1894, Your Lordship's Petitioners find, from the Indian Immigrants School Board Report for 1893, that there were 26 schools and 2,589 scholars studying in the schools that year. Your Petitioners respectfully submit that these boys, who are many of them born in the Colony, are entirely brought up after the European style. They, in later life, come in contact chiefly with the European community, and therefore, in every respect, become as fit for the Franchise privilege as any European, unless there is something radically wanting in them to compete with the Europeans in educational ability. That they are not incompetent, Your Lordship's Petitioners submit, has been proved beyond doubt by the best authorities on such subjects. The results, alike in India as in England, of the competition between English and Indian students, furnish ample proof of the Indian's ability to successfully compete with the European. Your Lordship's Petitioners purposely refrain from quoting extracts from the evidence given before the Parliamentary committees, or from great writers on the above head, because that would almost look like carrying coals to Newcastle. If, then, your Petitioners humbly venture to claim a vote for these boys when they come of age, is it not merely asking what any person in a civilized country would consider as his birthright and

would very properly resent any interference with? Your Petitioners confidently trust that Your Lordship will not let these boys be subjected to the indignity of being deprived of the commonest right of a citizen in a country governed by Parliamentary institutions.

23. Your Lordship's Petitioners here have to note with gratitude that the Hon. Mr. Campbell and the Hon. Mr. Don saw and remarked about the injustice that would be done to those Indians who come to the Colony on their own means, but they, too, seem to think, with the other Honourable Members, that those who come under indenture should *never* get the vote. Your Lordship's Petitioners, while they admit (although they cannot help remarking that poverty should be no crime if a man is otherwise fit) that the indentured Indians, while under indenture, may not have the right to vote, they respectfully submit that even these men should not *for ever* be deprived from voting if they acquire the sufficient qualifications in later life. Such men who come here are, as a rule, ablebodied and young; they come under European influences, and while they are under indenture, and especially after they become free, rapidly begin to assimilate themselves to the European civilization, and develop into full Colonists. They are admitted to be very useful, in fact, invaluable people, who live quietly and peacefully. It may be remarked that most of the educated Indian youths, who are now in the Civil Service as clerks and interpreters, or outside it as schoolmasters, teachers or attorneys' clerks, have come to the Colony under indenture. It is submitted that it would be cruel *not* to allow them, or their children, to vote and to have a voice in their own government at any rate. Your Petitioners submit that the fact alone that a person is of Asiatic extraction or has once been under indenture, should not be a bar to political freedom and political privileges, if he is or becomes otherwise duly fit and qualified.

24. Your Lordship's Petitioners beg to draw Your Lordship's attention to the anomaly that the Bill would rank the Indian lower than the rawest Native. For while the rawest Native can become emancipated if he acquires the proper qualifications, the Indian British subject who is now entitled to vote would be so disenfranchised that he can never again become emancipated, no matter how capable he becomes in after life, or how capable he is at the time of disenfranchisement.

25. The measure is so sweeping and so drastic that, Your

Lordship's Petitioners humbly submit, it is an insult to the whole Indian nation, inasmuch as, if the most distinguished son of India came to Natal and settled, he would not be able to have the right to vote because, presumably, according to the Colonial view, he is unfit for the privilege. This hardship was recognized by the Honourable Members in both the Houses, and the Honourable the Treasurer went so far as to say that special cases of hardship may in future be dealt with by the Parliament.

26. To illustrate the above argument more fully, your Petitioners would draw Your Lordship's attention to the papers and Government *Gazettes* in connection with the Indian vote question that was raised and discussed in the late Honourable the Legislative Council of Natal. From a Blue-book containing the correspondence relating to the affairs of Natal (C-3796, 1883), your Petitioners take the following from Mr. Saunders's letter to the Colonial Office (page 3) :

> The mere definition that these signatures must be in full, and in the elector's own handwriting, and written in European characters, would go a long way to check the extreme risk of the Asiatic mind swamping the English.

Thus Mr. Saunders, zealous advocate as he was of anti-Asiatic policy, could not go further than this. In the same letter, the honourable gentleman says further:

> The better-class Indians feel and see there is a difference between the raw coolie and themselves.

Therefore, it seems that the Government of the day was quite willing to distinguish between Indians and Indians. Now, unfortunately, under free institutions, all Indians, indentured, and freed, and free, are attempted to be put in the same scale. Your Petitioners cannot help respectfully expressing that Mr. Saunder's measure was comparatively very mild compared to the Bill under discussion. But that measure, too, did not receive support from Her Majesty's benign Government; much less, therefore, your Petitioners submit, should the Franchise Law Amendment Bill. In the same book above referred to, the then Protector of Immigrants, Mr. Graves, says, at page 7 :

> I am of the opinion that only those Indians who have abandoned all claim for themselves and their families for a free return passage to India are *justly* entitled to the Franchise.

He very justly pointed out also, that the signature test suggested by Mr. Saunders was not applied in practice to the European electors.

At the same page, the then Attorney-General says in his report :

> It will be noticed that the measure drafted by me contains certain clauses which have been adopted from the recommendations of the Select Committee, providing for the carrying out of the alternative plan mentioned in Mr. Saunders's letter, while *the proposal for the specific disqualification of aliens has not been considered advisable of adoption.*

Your Lordship's Memorialists would beg to draw Your Lordship's attention to the same learned gentleman's report at page 91 of the same Blue-book. The temptation to quote again from another report by the same learned Attorney-General is irresistible. At page 14 (*ibid.*) he says:

> As regards the proposal to exclude from the exercise of the Franchise all persons of every nationality or race which is not in every respect under the common law of the Colony, this is a provision evidently aimed at the electoral rights at present enjoyed by the Indian and Creole population of this Colony. As I have already stated in my report on Bill No. 12, I cannot *recognize the justice or expediency of such a measure.*

27. Thus is happens that, under a freer constitution in the Colony, that should include Your Lordship's Petitioners also, the First Responsible Ministry, your Petitioners regret to say, have attempted to make your Petitioners less free, to disenfranchise them wholesale. In the face of the fact that, under the old *regime,* a far less bold attempt to restrict the rights of your Petitioners did not receive countenance from the Home Government, your Petitioners have every hope that the present attempt will meet with the same fate, and justice done to Your Lordship's Petitioners.

28. The other pernicious consequences indirectly connected with the Franchise Bill are too numerous to mention; your Petitioners would, however, crave leave to discuss a few.

29. It is a known fact that there is, in the Colony, a wide gulf between the European section of the community and the Indian. The Indian is hated and shunned by the European. He is often needlessly vexed and harassed. The Franchise Bill, your Petitioners submit, will only accentuate such a feeling. The signs have already begun to appear. To verify this, your Petitioners commend the newspapers of the current dates to Your Lordship's attention, and also the debates in both the Honourable Houses.

30. It was said, in the course of the debate on the second reading, that the disqualification put upon the Indians would put a

greater responsibility upon the legislators of the Colony and that the Indian interests would be better protected than if they were represented. This, Your Lordship's Petitioners beg to submit, is contrary to all experience up to the present time.

31. Some Honourable Members thought that the Indians should not be allowed to vote at the Municipal elections also. It was whispered, during the debate, among the responsible quarters, that that question would receive attention on a future, but early, date. The Franchise Bill is only the proverbial thin end of the wedge. Once driven a little, it would not be difficult to drive it through. That seemed to be the feeling.

32. Your Lordship is aware that it is intended to levy a residential tax on the Indians coming under indenture, should they choose to settle in the Colony. The tax, it was said, should be sufficiently heavy not to make it worth their while to stop in the Colony or to make it possible for them to compete with the Colonists. That is another indication of how your Petitioners' interests would be better protected if they were disenfranchised!

33. During the debate on the Civil Service Bill, it was contended by some Honourable Members that, since the Franchise was to be taken away from the Indians, it was as well that the Indians should be debarred from entering the Civil Service also. An amendment was moved to this effect, and was rejected only by the casting vote of the Honourable the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, thanks to the forethought and tact of the Government who requested that the House should be divided. Your Petitioners fully recognize that, in this case, the Government took up a very sympathetic attitude towards the Indians; but still, the tendency and portents of these events are unmistakable. The Franchise Bill gave the opportunity for the amendment.

34. Your Lordship's Petitioners understand that in the Cape Colony no such colour or race distinctions are made.

35. Your Lordship's Petitioners respectfully venture to point out that the effect of the Bill, if it became law, will be simply disastrous to the interests of the British Indian subjects in the other parts of South Africa. Down-trodden and hated as they already are in the Transvaal, things will be simply unbearable for them. If Indian British subjects in a British Colony are allowed to be treated at all on an unequal footing, your Petitioners humbly submit that a time will soon come when it will

be impossible for Indians, having any idea whatever of self-respect, to remain in the Colony and that such a thing would materially interfere with their business, and throw hundreds of Her Majesty's Indian subjects out of work.

36. In conclusion, your Petitioners hope that above facts and arguments will convince Your Lordship of the injustice of the Franchise Law Amendment Bill, and that Your Lordship will not allow an unwarranted interference with the rights of one section of Her Majesty's subjects by another.

And for this act of justice and mercy, Your Lordship's Petitioners, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc., etc.

HAJEE MOHAMED HAJEE DADA[1]
AND SIXTEEN OTHERS

Colonial Office Records No. 179, Vol. 189

48. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

C/O MESSRS DADA ABDOOLA & CO.,
DURBAN,
July 14, 1894

TO

THE HON. MR. DADABHAI NAOROJI M.P.

SIR,

In continuation of my letter[2] dated the 7th instant, I have to inform you of the progress of the movement against the Franchise Law Amendment Bill as follows :

The Bill passed the 3rd reading in the Legislative Council on the 7th instant. The other petition to the Council was accepted. One Hon. Member moved the postponement of the 3rd reading till the petition was considered by the House. The motion was rejected.

The Governor has given his assent to the Bill subject to its being disallowed by Her Majesty. The Bill has a proviso in it that it shall not become law until, by a proclamation or otherwise, the Governor signifies that it is not Her Majesty's wish to disallow the Bill.

[1] Vice-President of the Natal Indian Congress, 1894-99

[2] This letter is not available.

I send you herewith a copy of the petition[1] to the Home Government that will be sent to the Governor here probably on the 17th instant. It will be signed by nearly 10,000 Indians. Nearly 5,000 signatures have already been received.

I regret to say that I am unable to send you a copy of the petition[2] to the Council. I however beg to send a newspaper cutting which gives a fairly good report.

I do not think there remains anything more to be added. The situation is so critical that if the Franchise Bill becomes law, the position of the Indians 10 years hence will be simply intolerable in the Colony.

I remain,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original : S. N. 2251

49. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

P. O. B. 253,
DURBAN,
July 27, 1894

Confidential

TO

THE HON. MR. DADABHAI NAOROJI, M.P.

SIR,

In continuation of my letter of the 14th instant I have to inform you as follows :

The petition to the Home Government, a copy of which has already been sent to you, was sent, I hear, last week.

Mr. Escombe[3], the Attorney-General, has made a report to the effect—f the informant is right—that the only reason for passing the Bill is to prevent the Asiatics from controlling the government of the Natives. The real reason, however, is simply this. They want to put the Indians under such disabilities and subject them to such insults that it may not be worth their while to stop in the Colony. Yet, they do not

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Council", 6-7-1894.

[3] Sir Harry Escombe (1838-99); Premier of Natal in 1897. He pleaded for Gandhiji's admission to the Bar of the Natal Supreme Court.

want to dispense with the Indians altogether. They certainly do not want those Indians who come on their own means and they want the indentured Indians very badly; but they would require, if they could, the indentured Indian to return to India after his term of indenture. A perfect leonine partnership! They know very well that they cannot do this at once—so they have begun with the Franchise Bill. They want to feel the pulse of the Home Government on the question. One member of the Assembly writes to me that he does not believe that the HomeGovernment would sanction the Bill. I need hardly say how important it is for the Indian community that the Bill should not receive the sanction.

Natal is not a bad place for the Indians. Good many Indian traders earn a respectable living here. The Bill, if it became law, would be a very great blow to further Indian enterprise.

Of course, I may state again, as I have done once, that there is not the slightest probability of the government of the Natives passing from the Europeans to the Indians. This is simply meant to frighten the Home Government. Those who live here—including the Government—know very well that such a thing will never happen. They do not want the Indians to elect white members—2 or 3—who may look after their interests in the Parliament, so that the Government may work their way towards the destruction of the Indians without any opposition whatever.

I have sent copies of the petition to Sir W. Wedderburn[1] and others there and also some copies to Indian newspapers.

Please excuse the length of my letters. You will very much oblige me by giving hints as to the way of working.

I beg to remain,
Sir
Your faithful servant
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original : S.N. 2252

[1] Spent 25 years in India as member of the Bombay Civil Service; on his retirement, member of Parliament till 1900. Chairman of the British Committee of the Congress in 1893; president of the Congress in 1910.

50. LETTER TO MRS. A. M. LEWIS

P. O. B. 253,
DURBAN,
August 4, 1894

DEAR MRS. LEWIS[1],

I thank you for your kind letter of the 27th June.

After I wrote to you last,[2] I had occasion to come in contact with a doctor in Pretoria. He seemed to be the only gentleman in addition to another who took interest in theosophical subjects. I gave him *The Perfect Way* to read. He liked it so much that he wished me to get another copy for him. I made him a present of my copy. I would therefore thank you if you will kindly send me a copy of *The Perfect Way.* I would send you the money next time. I have no time to do so this time.

I have settled in Durban for practice as an advocate. More of this you will know from Mr. Oldfield.

During my stay here I intend to spread as much as possible information about theosophy. (To me there is little difference between Theosophy and Esoteric Christianity). I have therefore sent out letters[3] to the President of the Vegetarian Society and Mrs. Besant[4].

I propose that the E.C.U.[5] should send me a selection of books to be sold here. I would sell the books at cost price plus the postage and 5% commission to be kept by me. As to the price, however, I should be left free to use my discretion. I would send up the[6] sale proceeds of the books every three months. The advertisement charges will be borne by me. If at the end of one year nothing is sold, I would

[1] An admirer of Anna Kingsford, author of *The Perfect Way,* etc., and friend of Edward Maitland, President of the Esoteric Christian Union; she was a founder of the Union. Gandhiji appears to have come into close contact with her while studying for the Bar in England.

[2] The letter is not available.

[3] These are not available.

[4] Dr. Annie Besant, the theosophist leader

[5] Esoteric Christian Union.

[6] For an advertisement in Gandhiji's name, *vide* "Books for Sale", before 26-11-1894.

return the books at my cost. I give my personal guarantee for the safe keeping of the books and the sale proceeds. 5 copies of *The Perfect Way*, 5 of *Clothed with the Sun* and 10 of *The New Gospel of Interpretation* and other books may be sent to me. If sufficient interest is evoked, I would add on the advertising charges also to the cost price. The cost price of the books should be stated in each case in the letter of instruction.

If it is necessary to read this letter or a portion thereof to the Union, you can do so. I hope you will be able to persuade the Union or those in authority to accede to the above proposal.

If you do not think much of the *Souls*, what position is the book to occupy in respectable literature? If the author has written what is absolutely true from personal observation, the book cannot be lightly treated. If it is an attempt to delude the people into a belief in real truths by fascinating falsehoods, the book deserves the highest condemnation possible. For we will not learn truth by means of falsehoods. Of course I write this without meaning the slightest disrespect for the author of whom I know nothing. She may be a lady of the highest probity and truth. I only repeat that to appreciate the *Souls*, acquaintance with the author's character is absolutely necessary.

I could get many signatures to the petition you enclosed. But I am afraid the Natal signatures would be quite useless. Is it not a sad commentary on the morality of the age that a most important, and yet most harmless and elevating, movement should not receive good support? At times when I think of these things, I thoroughly despair of fruits of works. A verse from the *Bhagavad Gita* saves me from utter despair and consequent inaction—a verse which enjoins freedom from attachment to *fruits* of works.

With respects,

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Please note change of address

M. K. G.

From a photostat of the original : Courtesy: E. S. Hart

51. CONSTITUTION OF THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

(ESTABLISHED 22ND AUGUST, 1894)

PRESIDENT

Mr. Abdoola Hajee Adam

VICE-PRESIDENTS

Messrs Hajee Mahomed Hajee Dada, Abdool Kadir, Hajee Dada Hajee Habib, Moosa Hajee Adam, P. Dawjee Mahomed, Peeran Mahomed, Murugesa Pillay, Ramaswami Naidoo, Hoosen Miran, Adamjee Miankhan, K. R. Nayanah, Amod Bayat (P. M. Burg), Moosa Hajee Cassim, Mahomed Cassim Jeeva, Parsee Rustomjee, Dawad Mahomed, Hoosen Cassim Amod Tili, Doraiswamy Pillay, Omar Hajee Aba, Osmankhan Rahamatkhan, Rangaswami Padayachi, Hajee Mahomed (P. M. Burg), Camroodeen (P. M. Burg).

HON. SECRETARY

Mr. M. K. Gandhi

CONGRESS COMMITTEE

Chairman : Mr. Abdoola Hajee Adam; *Hon. Secretary :* Mr. M. K. Gandhi; *Members of the Committee* : The Vice-Presidents and Messrs M. D. Joshi, Narsiram, Manekji, Dowjee Mammuji Mutalah, Muthu Krishna, Bissessar, Goolam Hoosen Randeri, Shamshoodeen, G. A. Bassa, Sarabjit, L. Gabriel, James Christopher, Sooboo Naidu, John Gabriel, Suleiman Voraji, Cassimjee Amoojee, R. Kundaswamy Naidu, M. E. Kathrada, Ibrahim M. Khatri, Shaik Farid, Varind Ismail, Ranjit, Perumal Naidoo, Parsee Dhanjisha, Royappan, Joosub Abdool Carim, Arjun Singh, Ismail Kadir, Easop Kadua, Mahomed Esak, Mahomed Hafejee, A. M. Paruck, Suleiman Dawjee, V. Narayana Pather, Lutchman Panday, Osman Ahmed & Mahomed Tayub.

CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

Any person approving of the work of the Congress can become its member by paying the subscription and signing the membership form. The monthly subscription is 5/- minimum and yearly £3.

THE OBJECTS OF THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS[1]

1. To promote concord and harmony among the Indians and the Europeans residing in the Colony.

2. To inform the people in India by writing to the newspapers, publishing pamphlets, and delivering lectures.

3. To induce Hindustanis—particularly Colonial-born Indians—to study Indian history and literature relating to India.

4. To inquire into the conditions of the Indians and to take proper steps to remove their hardships.

5. To inquire into the conditions of the indentured Indians and to take proper steps to alleviate their sufferings.

6. To help the poor and helpless in every reasonable way.

7. To do such work as would tend to improve the moral, social and political conditions of the Indians.

RULES AMENDED OR CANCELLED BY THE COMMITTEE AND RATIFIED BY THE CONGRESS

1. Authority is given to rent a hall for meetings for a sum not exceeding £10 monthly.

2. The Committee shall meet at least once every month.

3. The General Meeting of the Congress shall be held at least once every year—not necessarily in Durban.

4. The Hon. Secretary shall invite members from other parts of the Colony.

5. The Committee shall have the power to frame and pass rules and shall have all other powers of ordinary transaction.

6. The Committee shall have the power to appoint a paid Secretary at a reasonable salary.

7. The Hon. Secretary shall, if he chooses, invite a European who takes interest in the welfare of the Congress to be a Vice-President.

8. The Hon. Secretary shall, if he chooses, subscribe for the newspapers and books for the Congress Library out of the Congress Fund.

[1]*Vide* also "Letter to *The Natal Advertiser"*, 23-9-1895 and "Memorial to J. Chamberlain", 22-5-1896.

9. The Hon. Secretary shall record in the Account Book whether a cheque is signed by himself or jointly with the signature of another.

RULES PASSED BY THE COMMITTEE

1. The Chairman shall preside at every meeting; in his absence, the first member of the Committee; if he too be absent, then the second member and so on.

2. The Hon. Secretary shall, at the commencement of a meeting, read out the minutes of the last meeting after which the President shall sign it.

3. The Committee may not recognize a proposal or a resolution for which no notice had been given in advance to the Secretary for its introduction.

4. The Hon. Secretary shall read out a detailed account of moneys received or spent by the Committee or the Congress.

5. The Committee may not attend to a proposal unless such is proposed by a Committee member and seconded by another.

6. The Chairman and the Secretary shall be counted by virtue of their offices as Committee members. In case of equal voting, the Chairman shall have a casting vote.

7. Every member shall face the Chairman when addressing a meeting.

8. Every member shall use the word *Mr.* in addressing another member at a Committee meeting.

9. The proceedings of a Committee meeting shall be carried on in one or all of the following languages: Gujarati, Tamil, Hindustani and English.

10. If it be deemed necessary, the Chairman shall order a member to translate the speech of another member.

11. Every proposal or resolution shall pass by a majority of votes.

12. When the Congress has £50 minimum in hand, the Hon. Secretary shall deposit such amount in any bank he chooses in the name of the Natal Indian Congress.

13. The Hon. Secretary shall be held responsible for any moneys he has not deposited in the Bank.

14. An authority shall be first obtained from the Committee for any irregular expenditure exceeding the sum of £5. If any expenses

are incurred exceeding the above sum by the Chairman or the Secretary without the sanction and approval of the Committee, it shall be held that he did it at his own responsibility. The Hon. Secretary shall sign cheques up to the sum of £5, and for any amount exceeding the said sum [they] shall be signed jointly with any of the following members : Messrs Abdoola Hajee Adam, Moosa Hajee Cassim, Abdool Kadar, Colundaveloo Pillay, P. Dawjee Mahomed, Hoosen Cassim.

15. A quorum shall be formed of ten members, in addition to the Chairman and the Secretary, to carry on the work of the meeting.

16. The Hon. Secretary shall issue notice of a proposed meeting not less than two days in advance.

17. It shall be held that the 16th rule was observed provided a written notification was given through the post or a messenger.

18. Any Committee member who is absent from six consecutive meetings shall be liable to have his name struck off the list (after having been notified by the Committee of such intention). A member who is absent from a meeting shall show the cause of his absence at the next meeting.

19. Any member who fails to pay his subscription for three consecutive months without showing any reasonable ground shall cease to be a member.

20. No smoking shall be allowed at any Committee meeting.

21. If two members get up simultaneously to speak, the chairman shall decide who is to speak first.

22. If a sufficient number of members is present the Committee meeting shall proceed at its appointed hour. However, if the sufficient number is deficient at the appointed time or half an hour after it, the meeting shall terminate without any transaction.

23. The Natal Indian Association may use the Hall and the Library free of charge, and they, in return, shall give their reasonable services such as doing writing work, etc.

24. All the members of the Congress shall be entitled to use the Congress Library.

25. The Committee members shall sit in an enclosure and the onlookers outside. The onlookers must not take any part in the proceedings. Should they create any disturbance by shouting, etc., they shall be liable to be expelled from the Hall.

26. The Committee shall have the power to amend these rules in future.[1]

From a photostat : S.N. 141

52. LETTER TO "THE TIMES OF NATAL"[2]

DURBAN,
October 25, 1894

TO
THE EDITOR
The Times of Natal

SIR,

I would, with your permission, venture to make a few remarks on your leader, entitled "Rammysammy", in your issue of the 22nd instant.

I have no wish to defend the article in *The Times of India* noticed by you; but is not your very leader its sufficient defence? Does not the very heading "Rammysammy" betray a studied contempt towards the poor Indian? Is not the whole article a needless insult to him? You are pleased to acknowledge that "India possesses men of high culture, etc." and yet you would not, if you could, give them equal political power with the white man. Do you not thus make the insult doubly insulting? If you had thought that the Indians were not cultured, but were barbarous brutes, and on that ground denied them political equality, there would be some excuse for your opinions. You, however, in order to enjoy the fullest pleasures derived from offering an insult to an inoffensive people, must needs show that you acknowledge them to be intelligent people and yet would keep them under foot.

Then you have said that the Indians in the Colony are not the same as those in India; but, Sir, you conveniently forget that they are the brothers or descendants of the same race whom you credit with intelligence, and have, therefore, given the opportunity, the potentiality of becoming as capable as their more fortunate brethren in India, just as a man sunk in the depth of ignorance and vice of the

[1] A copy of the Constitution in English in Gandhiji's hand and a Gujarati manuscript copy are also available.

[2] This was published under the title "Rammysammy".

East End of London has the potentiality of becoming Prime Minister in free England.

You put upon the franchise petition to Lord Ripon an interpretation it was never meant to convey. The Indians do not regret that capable Natives can exercise the franchise. They would regret if it were otherwise. They, however, assert that they too, if capable, should have the right. You, in your wisdom, would not allow the Indian or the Native the precious privilege under any circumstances, because they have a dark skin. You would look to the exterior only. So long as the skin is white it would not matter to you whether it conceals beneath it poison or nectar. To you the lip-prayer of the Pharisee, because he is one, is more acceptable than the sincere repentance of the publican, and this, I presume, you would call Christianity. You may; it is not Christ's.

And in spite of such opinions held by you, a respectable newspaper in the Colony, you impute falsehood to *The Times of India.* It is one thing to formulate a charge, it is another to prove it.

You end with saying that "Rammysammy" may have every right a citizen can desire, with one exception, viz., "political power". Are the heading of your leader and its tenor consistent with the above opinion? Or is it un-Christian, un-English to be consistent? "Suffer little children to come unto me," said the Master. His disciples (?) in the Colony would improve upon the saying by inserting "white" after "little". During the children's *fete,* organized by the Mayor of Durban, I am told there was not a single coloured child to be seen in the procession. Was this a punishment for the sin of being born of coloured parents? Is this an incident of the qualified citizenship you would accord to the hated "Rammysammy

If He came among us, will he not say to many of us, "I know you not"? Sir, may I venture to offer a suggestion? Will you reread your New Testament? Will you ponder over your attitude towards the coloured population of the Colony? Will you then say you can reconcile it with the Bible teaching or the best British traditions? If you have washed your hands clean of both Christ and British traditions, I can have nothing to say; I gladly withdraw what I have written. Only it will then be a sad day for Britain and for India if you have many followers.

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Times of Natal, 26-10-1894

53. *BOOKS FOR SALE*[1]

DURBAN,

[Before *November 26, 1894*]

The following books by the late Mrs. Anna Kingsford and Mr. Edward Maitland[2] are offered for sale at their published prices. They are introduced in South Africa for the first time :

The Perfect Way, 7/6

Clothed with the Sun, 7/6

The Story of the New Gospel of Interpretation, 2/6[3]

The New Gospel of Interpretation, 1/-

The Bible's Own Account of Itself, 1/-

The following are some of the opinions concerning the books:

A fountain of light (The Perfect Way) interpretative and reconciliatory. . . . No student of divine things can dispense with it.

—*Light, London*

Unequalled as a means of grace amongst all the English books of the century.

—*Occult World*

Some pamphlets bearing on the subject can be had free of charge at my office.

M. K. GANDHI

AGENT FOR THE ESOTERIC CHRISTIAN UNION AND

THE LONDON VEGETARIAN SOCIETY

The Natal Mercury, 28-11-1894

[1] This appeared as an advertisement; *vide* "Letter to Mrs. A. M. Lewis", 4-8-1894

[2] Edward Maitland (1824-97): Writer on mystical subjects and devoted to vegetarianism; established the Esoteric Christian Union in 1891. Gandhiji corresponded with him and was considerably influenced by his books.

[3] The price given in a subsequent advertisement is 3/6; *vide* "Books for Sale", 2-2-1895.

54. LETTER TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"

DURBAN,
November 26, 1894

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury

SIR,

You will greatly oblige me by allowing me to draw the attention of your readers to an advertisement that appears in your advertisement columns with regard to the Esoteric Christian Union. The system of thought expounded by the books advertised is not, by any means, a new system but a recovery of the old, presented in a form acceptable to the modern mind. It is, moreover, a system of religion which teaches universality, and is based on eternal verities and not on phenomena or historical facts merely. In that system, there is no reviling Mahomed or Buddha in order to prove the superiority of Jesus. On the other hand, it reconciles the other religions with Christianity which, in the opinion of the authors, is nothing but one mode (among many) of presentation of the same eternal truth. The many puzzles of the Old Testament find herein a solution at once complete and satisfactory.

If there is anyone of your readers who has found the presentday materialism and all its splendour to be insufficient for the needs of his soul, if he has a craving for a better life, and if, under the dazzling and bright surface of modern civilization, he finds that there is much that is contrary to what one would expect under such a surface, and above all, if the modern luxuries and the ceaseless feverish activity afford no relief, to such a one I beg to recommend the books referred to. And I promise that, after a perusal, he will find himself a better man, even though he may not thoroughly identify himself with the teaching.

If there is anyone who would like to have a chat on the subject, it would afford me the greatest pleasure to have a quiet interchange of views. In such a case, I would thank any such gentleman to correspond with me personally. I need hardly mention that the sale of the books is not a pecuniary concern. Could Mr. Maitland, the President of the Union, or its agent here, afford to give them away, they would gladly do so. In many cases, the books have been sold at

less than cost price. In a few, t hey have even been given away. A systematic distribution for nothing has been found impossible. The books will be gladly lent in some cases.

I would try to conclude with a quotation from a letter of the late Abbe Constant to the authors : "Humanity has always and everywhere asked itself these three supreme questions: Whence come we? What are we? Whither go we? Now these questions at length find an answer complete, satisfactory, and consolatory in *The Perfect Way.*"

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 3-12-1894

55. OPEN LETTER

DURBAN,
[Before *December 19, 1894*][1]

TO
THE HON. MEMBERS OF

THE HON. THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND
THE HON. THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SIRS,

Were it possible to write to you anonymously, nothing would have been more pleasing to me. But the statements I shall have to make in this letter will be so grave and important that it would be considered a sheer act of cowardice not to disclose my name. I beg, however, to assure you that I write not from selfish motives, nor yet from those of self-aggrandisement or of seeking notoriety. The one and only object is to serve India, which is by accident of birth called my native country, and to bring about better understanding between the European section of the community and the Indian in this Colony.

The only way this can be done is to appeal to those who represent and, at the same time, mould public opinion.

Hence, if the Europeans and the Indians live in a perpetual state of quarrel, the blame would lie on your shoulders. If both can walk together and live together quietly and without friction, you will receive

[1] This was circulated among Europeans in Natal on December 19, 1894; *vide* the following item.

all the credit.

It needs no proof that masses throughout the world follow, to a very great extent, the opinions of the leaders. Gladstone's opinions are the opinions of half England, and Salisbury's are those of the other half. Burns[1] thought for the strikers during the dock labourers' strike. Parnell thought for almost the whole of Ireland. The scriptures—I mean all the scriptures of the world—say so. Says *The Song Celestial*[2] by Edwin Arnold: "What the wise choose the unwise people take; what the best men do the multitude will follow."

This letter, therefore, needs no apology. It would hardly be called impertinent.

For, to whom else could such an appeal be more aptly made, or by whom else should it be considered more seriously than you?

To carry on an agitation in England is but a poor relief when it can only create a greater friction between the two peoples in the Colony. The relief, at best, could only be temporary. Unless the Europeans in the Colony can be induced to accord the Indians a better treatment, the Indians have a very bad time before them under the aegis of the Responsible Government, in spite of vigilance of the Home Government.

Without entering into details, I would deal with the Indian question as a whole.

I suppose there can be no doubt that the Indian is a despised being in the Colony, and that every opposition to him proceeds directly from that hatred.

If that hatred is simply based upon his colour, then, of course, he has no hope. The sooner he leaves the Colony the better. No matter what he does, he will never have the white skin. If, however, it is based upon something else, if it is based upon an ignorance of his general character and attainments, he may hope to receive his due at the hands of the Europeans in the Colony.

The question what use the Colony will make of the 40,000 Indians is, I submit, worthy of the most serious consideration by the Colonists, and especially those who have the reins of Government in

[1] John Burns (1858-1943) : Prominent labour representative in the British Parliament (1897-1918). Came into prominence as a friend of working men during the days of the London Dock Strike of 1889..

[2] An English rendering, in verse, of the *Bhagavad Gita*

their hands, who have been entrusted by the people with legislative powers. To root out the 40,000 Indians from the Colony seems, without doubt, an impossible task. Most of them have settled here with their families. No legislation that could be permissible in a British Colony would enable the legislators to drive these men out. It may be possible to devise a scheme to effectively check any further Indian immigration. But apart from that, the question suggested by me is, I submit, sufficiently serious to warrant my encroaching upon your attention and requesting you to persue this letter without any bias.

It is for you to say whether you will lower them or raise them in the scale of civilization, whether you will bring them down to a level lower than what they should occupy on account of heredity, whether you will alienate their hearts from you, or whether you will draw them closer to you—whether, in short, you would govern them despotically or sympathetically.

You can educate public opinion in such a way that the hatred will be increased day by day; and you can, if you chose so to do, educate it in such a way that the hatred would begin to subside.

I now propose to discuss the question under the following heads:

1. Are the Indians desirable as citizens in the Colony?

2. What are they?

3. Is their present treatment in accordance with the best British traditions, or with the principles of justice and morality, or with the principles of Christianity?

4. From a purely material and selfish point of view, will an abrupt or gradual withdrawal of them from the Colony result in substantial, lasting benefit to the Colony?

I

In discussing the first question, I will deal, first of all, with the Indians employed as labourers, most of whom have come to the Colony under indenture.

It seems to have been acknowledged by those who are supposed to know, that the indentured Indians are indispensable for the welfare of the Colony; whether as menials or waiters, whether as railway servants or gardeners, they are a useful addition to the Colony. The work that a Native cannot or would not do is cheerfully and well done by the indentured Indian. It would seem that the Indian has helped to

make this the Garden Colony of South Africa. Withdraw the Indian from the sugar estate, and where would the main industry of the Colony be? Nor can it be said that the work can be done by the Native in the near future. The South African Republic is an instance in point. In spite of its so-called vigorous Native policy, it remains practically a desert of dust, although the soil is very fruitful. The problem how to secure cheap labour for the mines there has been daily growing serious. The only garden worthy of the name is that on the Nelmapius Estate, and does it not owe its success entirely to the Indian labour? One of the election addresses says:

> . . . and at the last, as the only thing to be done, the immigration of Indians was entered upon, and the Legislature very wisely rendered their support and help in furthering this all-important scheme. At the time it was entered upon *the progress and almost the existence of the Colony hung in the balance.* And now what is the result of this scheme of immigration? Financially, £10,000 has been advanced yearly out of the Treasury of the Colony. With what result? Just this, that no vote ever made of money to develop the industries of the Colony, or to promote its interest in any way in this Colony, has yielded such a financially profitable return as that shown by the introduction of coolies as labourers into this Colony. . . . I believe the Durban population of Europeans, had no such labour been supplied as required for Colonial industries, would be less by at least half what it is today, and five workmen only would be required where twenty now have employment. Property in Durban generally would have remained at a value some 300 or 400 per cent below that which now obtains, and the lands in the Colony and other towns, in proportion according to the value of property in Durban and coast land, would never have realized what it now sells at.

This gentleman is no other than Mr. Garland. In spite of such invaluable help derived from "the coolie", as the poor Indian is contemptuously termed even by those who ought to know better, the honourable gentleman goes on, ungratefully, to regret the tendency of the Indian to settle in the Colony.

I take the following extract from Mr. Johnston's article in the *New Review*, quoted in *The Natal Mercury* of the 11th August, 1894:

> One seeks the solution in the introduction of a yellow race, able to stand a tropical climate and intelligent enough to undertake those special avocations which in temperate climates would be filled by Europeans. The yellow race, most successful hitherto in Eastern Africa, is the native of Hindostan—that race in diverse types and diverse religions which, under British or Portuguese aegis, has created and developed the commerce of the East African littoral. The immigration of the docile, kindly, thrifty,

> industrious, clever-fingered, sharp-witted Indian into Central Africa will furnish us with the solid core of our armed forces in that continent, and will supply us with thetelegraph clerks, the petty shopkeepers, the skilled artisans, the cooks, the minor employees, the clerks, and the railway officials needed in the civilized administration of tropical Africa. The Indian, liked by both black and white, will serve as a link between these two divergent races.

As to the Indian traders, who are miscalled Arabs, it would appear best to consider the objections raised to their coming to the Colony.

From the papers, especially *The Natal Mercury* of 6-7-'94, and *The Natal Advertiser* of 15-9-'93, the objections appear to be that they are successful traders, and that, their mode of living being very simple, they compete with the European trader in petty trades. I dismiss as unworthy of consideration the generalizations from rare particular instances that the Indians resort to sharp practices. As to the particular instances of insolvency, I would only say, without meaning in the least to defend them, "Let those that are without sin first cast a stone". Please examine the records of the Insolvency Court.

Coming to the serious objection as to successful competition, I believe it is true. But is that a reason for driving them out of the Colony? Will such a method commend itself to a body of civilized men? What is it that makes them so successful competitors? He who runs may see that it is nothing but their habits, which are extremely simple, though not barbarous, as *The Natal Advertiser* would have it. The chiefest element of their success, in my humble opinion, is their total abstinence from drink and its attendant evils. That habit at once causes an enormous saving of money. Moreover, their tastes are simple, and they are satisfied with comparatively small profits, because they do not keep uselessly large establishments. In short, they earn their bread by the sweat of their brow. It is difficult to see how these facts can be urged as an objection to their stopping in the Colony. Of course, they do not gamble, as a rule do not smoke, and can put up with little inconveniences; work more than eight hours a day. Should they be expected to, is it desirable that they should, abandon these virtues, and contract the terrible vices under which the Western nations are groaning, so that they may be permitted to live in the Colony without molestation?

It will be best, also, to consider the common objection to the Indian traders and labourers. It is their insanitary habits. I am afraid I must, to my great mortification, admit this charge partially. While

much that is said against their insanitary habits proceeds merely out of spite and hatred, there is no denying that in this respect they are not everything that could be desired. That, however, never can be a reason for their expulsion from the Colony. They are not hopelessly beyond reform in this branch. A strict, yet just and merciful, operation of the sanitary law can, I submit, effectually cope with the evil, and even eradicate it. Nor is the evil so great as to require any drastic measures. Their personal habits, it would appear, are not dirty, except in the case of the indentured Indians, who are too poor to attend to personal cleanliness. I may be allowed to say, from personal experience, that the trading community are compelled by their religion to bathe once a week at least, and have to perform ablutions, i.e., wash their faces and hands up to the elbows, and their feet, every time they offer prayers. They are supposed to offer prayers four times a day, and there are very few who fail to do so at least twice a day.

It will, I hope, be readily admitted that they are exceptionally free from those vices which render a community a danger to society. They yield to no one in their obedience to constitutional authority. They are never a political danger. And except the ruffians who are sometimes picked out, of course unknowingly, by the immigration agents at Calcutta and Madras, they seem to be free from the highly grievous offences. I regret that my inability to compare the Criminal Court statistics prevents me from making any further observations on this point. I will, however, beg leave to quote from the *Natal Almanac*: "It must be said for the Indian population that it is on the whole orderly and law-abiding."

I submit that the above facts show that the Indian labourers are not only desirable but useful citizens of the Colony, and also absolutely essential to its well-being, and that the traders have nothing in them that should render them undesirable in the Colony.

As to these latter, before quitting the subject, I would further add that they are a veritable blessing to the poor portion of the European community, in so far as by their keen competition they keep down the prices of necessities of life; and knowing their language and understanding their customs, are indispensable to the Indian labourers, whose wants they study and supply, and whom they can deal with on better terms than the Europeans.

II

The second head of the enquiry is the most important, viz., what

are they, and I request you to peruse it carefully. My purpose in writing on this subject will have been served if only it stimulates a study of India and its people; for, I thoroughly believe that one half, or even three-fourths, of the hardships entailed upon the Indians in South Africa result from want of information about India.

No one can be more conscious than myself of whom I am addressing this letter to. Some Honourable Members may resent this portion of my letter as an insult. To such I say with the greatest deference: "I am aware that you know a great deal about India. But is it not a cruel fact that the Colony is not the better for your knowledge? Certainly the Indians are not, unless the knowledge acquired by you is entirely different from and opposed to that acquired by others who have worked in the same field. Again, although this humble effort is directly addressed to you, it is supposed to reach many others, in fact all who have an interest in the future of the Colony with its present inhabitants."

In spite of the Premier's opinion to the contrary, as expressed in his speech at the second reading of the Franchise Bill, with the utmost deference to His Honour, I venture to point out that both the English and the Indians spring from a common stock, called the Indo-Aryan. I would not be able, in support of the above, to give extracts from many authors, as the books of reference at my disposal are unfortunately very few. I, however, quote as follows from Sir W. W. Hunter's *Indian Empire*:

> This nobler race (meaning the early Aryans) belonged to the Aryan or Indo-Germanic stock, from which the Brahman, the Rajput, and the Englishman alike descend. Its earliest home visible to history was in Central Asia. From that common camping ground certain branches of the race started for the East, others for the West. One of the Western offshoots founded the Persian Kingdom; another built Athens and Lacedaemon, and became the Hellenic nation; a third went on to Italy and reared the city on the seven hills, which grew into Imperial Rome. A distant colony of the same race excavated the silver ores of prehistoric Spain; and when we first catch a sight of ancient England, we see an Aryan settlement, fishing in wattle canoes and working the tin mines of Cornwall.
>
> The forefathers of the Greek and the Roman, of the Englishman and the Hindoo, dwelt together in Asia, spoke the same tongue and worshipped the same gods.
>
> The ancient religions of Europe and India had a similar origin.

Thus, it will be seen that the learned historian, who must be supposed to have consulted all the authorities, without a shadow of doubt makes the above unqualified assertion. If then I err, I err in good company. And the belief, whether mistaken or well-founded, serves as the basis of operations of those who are trying to unify the hearts of the two races, which are, legally and outwardly, bound together under a common flag.

A general belief seems to prevail in the Colony that the Indians are little better, if at all, than savages or the Natives of Africa. Even the children are taught to believe in that manner, with the result that the Indian is being dragged down to the position of a raw Kaffir[1].

Such a state of things, which the Christian legislators of the Colony would not, I firmly believe, wittingly allow to exist and remain, must be my excuse for the following copious extracts, which will show at once that the Indians were, and are, in no way inferior to their Anglo-Saxon brethren, if I may venture to use the word, in the various departments of life—industrial, intellectual, political, etc.

As to Indian philosophy and religion, the learned author of the *Indian Empire* thus sums up :

> The Brahmin solutions to the problems of practical religion were self-discipline, alms, sacrifice to and contemplation of the Deity. But, besides the practical questions of the spiritual life, religion has also intellectual problems, such as the compatibility of evil with the goodness of God, and the unequal distribution of happiness and misery in this life. Brahmin philosophy has exhausted the possible solutions of these difficulties, and of most of the other great problems which have since perplexed the Greek and Roman sage, mediaeval schoolman and *modern man of science* (the italics are mine). The various hypotheses of creation, arrangement and development were each elaborated and the *views of physiologists at the present day are a return with new lights to the evolution theory of Kapila*[2] (the italics are mine). The works on religion published in the native language in India in 1877 numbered 1192, besides 56 on mental and moral philosophy. In 1882 the total had risen to 1545 on religion and 153 on mental and moral philosophy.

Max Muller says with regard to Indian philosophy (the following, and a few more that will follow, have been partly or wholly

[1] Member of a South African race; loosely applied to Natives in South Africa

[2] Sage of ancient India, *circa* seventh century B.C., who founded the Sankhya system of philosophy

quoted in the Franchise petition) :

> If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the greatest problems of life, and has found solutions of some of them which well deserve the attention even of those who have studied Plato and Kant—I should point to India; and if I were to ask myself from what literature we have here in Europe,we who have been nurtured almost exclusively on the thoughts of Greeks and Romans, and of one Semitic race, the Jewish, may draw that corrective which is most wanted in order to make our inner life more perfect, more comprehensive, more universal, in fact, more truly human—a life not for this life only, but a transfigured and eternal life—again I should point to India.

The German philosopher, Schopenhauer, thus adds his testimony to the grandeur of Indian philosophy as contained in the Upanishads:

> From every sentence deep, original and sublime thoughts arise, and the whole is pervaded by a high and holy and earnest spirit. Indian air surrounds us, and original thoughts of kindred spirits ... In the whole world there is no study, except that of the originals, so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Oupnek'hat[1]. It has been the solace of my life; it will be the solace of my death.

Coming to science, Sir William says :

> The science of language, indeed, had been reduced in India to fundamental principles at a time when the grammarians of the West still treated it on the basis of accidental resemblances, and modern philosophy dates from the study of Sanskrit by European scholars. . . The grammar of Panini[2] stands supreme among the grammars of the world. . . It arranges in logical harmony the whole phenomena which the Sanskrit language presents, and stands forth as one of the most splendid achievements of human invention and industry.

Speaking on the same department of science, Sir H. S. Maine, in his Rede lecture, published in the latest edition of the *Village-Communities,* says :

> India has given to the world Comparative Philosophy and Comparative Mythology; it may yet give us a new science not less valuable than the sciences of language and of folklore. I hesitate to call it Comparative

[1] Collection of fifty Upanishads rendered originally into Persian from Sanskrit in the 17th century

[2] Celebrated Sanskrit grammarian, *circa* sixth century

Jurisprudence because, if it ever exists, its area will be so much wider than the field of law. For India not only contains (or to speak more accurately, did contain) an Aryan language older than any other descendant of the common mother tongue, and a variety of names of natural objects less perfectly crystallized than elsewhere into fabulous personages, but it includes a whole world of Aryan institutions, Aryan customs, Aryan laws Aryan ideas, Aryan, beliefs, in a far earlier stage of growth and development than any which survive beyond its borders.

Of Indian astronomy the same historian says:

The astronomy of the Brahmins has formed alternately the subject of excessive admiration and of misplaced contempt. . . In certain points the Brahmins advanced beyond Greek astronomy. Their fame spread throughout the West, and found entrance into the *Chronicon Paschale*[1]. In the 8th and 9th centuries the Arabs became their disciples.

I again quote Sir William :

In algebra and arithmetic the Brahmins attained a high degree of proficiency independent of Western aid. To them we owe the invention of the numerical symbols on the decimal system . . . The Arabs borrowed these figures from the Hindus, and transmitted them to Europe. . . The works on mathematics and mechanical science, published in the native languages in India in 1867, numbered 89, and in 1882, 166.

The medical science of the Brahmins (continues the eminent historian) was also an independent development. . . . The specific diseases whose names occur in Panini's grammar indicate that medical studies had made progress before his time (350 B.C..). . . . Arabic medicine was founded on the translations from the Sanskrit treatises. . . . European medicine down to the 17th century was based upon the Arabic. . . . . The number of medical works published in the native languages of India in 1877 amounted to 130, and in 1882 to 212, besides 87 on natural science.

Writing of the art of war, the writer proceeds :

The Brahmins regarded not only medicine but also the arts of war music, and architecture as supplementary parts of their divinely inspired knowledge. . . . The Sanskrit epics prove that strategy had attained to the position of a recognized science before the birth of Christ, and the later *Agni Purana*[2] devotes long sections to its systematic treatment.

[1] An outline of Chronology from Adam to 629 A.D., supposed to have been compiled in the seventh century

[2] One of the eighteen *puranas* or old sacred Hindu mythological works it is believed to have been expounded by Agni, the god of fire, and deals with, among other things, ritual worship, duties of kingship and the art of war.

The Indian art of music was destined to exercise a wider influence. . . . This notation passed from the Brahmins through the Persians to Arabia, and was thence introduced into European music by Guidood' Arezzo at the beginning of the 11th century.

On architecture the same author says :

The Buddhists were the great stone-builders of India. Their monasteries and shrines exhibit the history of the art during twenty-two centuries, from the earliest cave structures of the rock temples to the latest Jain erections dazzling in stucco, over-crowded with ornament. It seems not improbable that the churches of Europe owe their steeples to the Buddhist topes. . . . Hindu art has left memorials which extort the admiration and astonishment of our age.

The Hindu palace architecture of Gwalior, the Indian Mahommedan mosques, the mausoleums of Agra and Delhi, with several of the older Hindu temples of Southern India, stand unrivalled for grace of outline and elaborate wealth of ornament.

English decorative art in our day has borrowed largely from Indian forms and patterns. . . . Indian art works, when faithful to native designs, still obtain the highest honours at the international exhibitions of Europe.

Here is what Andrew Carnegie in his *Round the World* says about the Taj of Agra :

There are some subjects too sacred for analysis, or even for words. And I now know that there is a human structure so exquisitely fine or unearthly, as to lift it into this holy domain. . . . The Taj is built of a light creamy marble, so that it does not chill one as pure cold white marble does. It is warm and sympathetic as a woman. . . . One great critic has freely called the Taj a feminine structure. There is nothing masculine about it, says he; its charms are all feminine. This creamy marble is inlaid with fine black marble lines, the entire Koran, in Arabic letters, it is said, being thus interwoven. . . Till the day I die, amid mountain streams or moonlight strolls in the forest, wherever and whenever the moon comes, when all that is most sacred, most elevated and most pure recur to shed their radiance upon the tranquil mind, there will be found among my treasures the memory of that lovely charm—the Taj.

Nor has India been without its laws, codified or otherwise. The Institutes of Manu have always been noted for their justice and precision. So much does Sir H. S. Maine seem to have been struck with their equity that he calls them “an ideal picture of that which, in the view of the Brahmins, ought to be the law”. Mr. Pincott, writing in 1891 in *The National Review,* alludes to them as “the philosophical precepts of Manu”.

Nor have the Indians been deficient in the dramatic art. Goethe thus speaks of *Shakuntala,* the most famous Indian drama:

Wouldst thou the young year's blossoms, and the fruits of its decline,

And all by which the soul is charmed, enraptured, feasted, fed.

Wouldst thou the earth, and heaven itself in one sole name combine?

I name thee, O Shakuntala! and all at once is said.

Coming to the Indian character and social life, the evidence is voluminous. I can only give meagre extracts.

I take the following again from Hunter's *Indian Empire:*

The Greek ambassador (Megasthenes) observed with admiration the absence of slavery in India, and the chastity of the women and the courage of the men. In valour they excelled all other Asiatics; they required no locks to their doors; above all, no Indian was ever known to tell a lie. Sober and industrious, good farmers and skilful artisans, they scarcely ever had recourse to a lawsuit, and lived peaceably under their native chiefs. The kingly government is portrayed almost as described in Manu, with its hereditary castes of councillors and soldiers. . . The village system is well described, each little rural unit *seeming to the Greek an independent republic* (the italics are mine)

Bishop Heber says of the people of India :

So far as their natural character is concerned, I have been led to form on the whole a very favourable opinion. They are men of high and gallant courage, courteous, intelligent, and most eager after knowledge and improvement. . . . They are sober, industrious, dutiful to their parents, and affectionate to their children; of tempers almost uniformly gentle and patient, and more easily affected by kindness and attention to their wants and feelings than almost any men whom I have met with.

Sir Thomas Munro, sometime Governor of Madras, says :

I do not exactly know what is meant by civilizing the people of India. In the theory and practice of good government they may be deficient, but if a good system of agriculture, if unrivalled manufacturers, if a capacity to produce what convenience and luxury demand, if the establishment of schools for reading and writing, if the general practice of kindness and hospitality, and, above all, if a scrupulous respect and delicacy towards the female sex, are amongst the points that denote a civilized people, then the Hindus are not inferior in civilization to the people of Europe.

Sir George Birdwood gives the following opinion on the general

character of the Indians :

> They are long-suffering and patient, hardy and enduring, frugal and industrious, law-abiding and peace-seeking. . . . The educated and higher mercantile classes are honest and truthful, and loyal and trustful towards the Brittish Government,in the most absolute sense that I can use, and you understand the words. Moral truthfulness is as marked a characteristic of the Settia (upper) class of Bombay as of the Teutonic race itself. The people of India, in short, are in no intrinsic sense our inferiors, while in things measured by some of the false standards—false to our-selves—we pretend to believe in, they are our superiors.

Sri C. Trevelyan remarks that :

> They have very considerable administrative qualities, great patience, industry, and great acuteness and intelligence.

Of the family relations, thus speaks Sir W. W. Hunter :

> There is simply no comparison between Englishmen and Hindus with respect to the place occupied by family interests and family affections in their minds. The love of parents for children and of children for parents has scarcely any counterpart in England. Parental and filial affection occupies among our Eastern fellow-citizens the place which is taken in this country by the passion between the sexes

And Mr. Pincott thinks that :

> In all social matters the English are far more fitted to sit at the feet of Hindus and learn as disciples than to attempt to become masters.

Says M. Louis Jacolliot :

> Soil of ancient India, cradle of humanity, hail! Hail, venerable and efficient nurse, whom centuries of brutal invasions have not yet buried under the dust of oblivion. Hail, fatherland of faith, of love, of poetry, and of science! May we hail a revival of thy past in our Western future!

Says Victor Hugo :

> These nations have made Europe, France and Germany. Germany is for the Occident that which India is for the Orient.

Add to this the facts that India has produced a Buddha, whose life some consider the best and the holiest lived by a mortal, and some to be second only to that lived by Jesus; that India has produced an Akbar, whose policy the British Government have followed with but few modifications; that India lost, only a few years ago, a Parsee Baronet who astonished not India only, but England also, by his

munificent charities; that India has produced Christodas Paul, a journalist, whom Lord Elgin, the present Viceroy, compared with the best European journalists; that India has produced Justices Mahomed and Muthukrishna Aiyer[1], both Judges of High Courts in India, whose judgments have been pronounced to be the ablest delivered by the judges, both European and Indian, who adorn the Indian Bench; and, lastly, India has in Baddruddin[2], Banerji[3], and Mehta[4], orators who have on many an occasion held English audiences spellbound.

Such is India. If the picture appears to you to be somewhat overdrawn or fanciful, it is none the less faithful. There is the other side. Let him who takes delight in separating, rather than in uniting, the two nations give the other side. Then, please, examine both with the impartiality of a Daniel, and I promise that there will yet remain a considerable portion of what has been said above untouched, to induce you to believe that India is not Africa, and that it is a civilized country in the truest sense of the term *civilization*.

Before, however, I can quit this subject, I have to crave leave to be allowed to anticipate a possible objection. It will be said: "If what you say is true, the people whom you call Indians in the Colony are not Indians, because your remarks are not borne out by the practices prevailing among the people whom you call Indians. See how grossly untruthful they are." Everyone I have met with in the Colony has dwelt upon the untruthfulness of the Indians. To a limited extent I admit the charge. It will be very small satisfaction for me to show, in

[1] The reference is to Sir T. Muthuswami Aiyer.

[2] Badruddin Tyabji (1844-1906); actively associated with and *de facto* President of the Bombay Presidency Association; presided over Congress session at Madras (1887); Judge of Bombay High Court (1895) ; nominated to the Bombay Legislative Council in 1882.

[3] Surendranath Banerjea (1848-1925); Moderate politician, Member of the Indian National Congress deputation to Britain in 1890. Member of the Legislative Council of Bengal (1893-1901). Owned and edited the *Bengalee*. Under the Montford Reforms became member of the Bengal Executive Council. President of the Congress in 1895 and 1902.

[4] Pherozeshah Mehta (1845-1915); Indian leader, dominated the public life of Bombay for a long time; one of the founders of the Bombay Presidency Association and thrice Chairman of the Bombay Municipal Corporation. Member of the Bombay Legislative Council and later, of the Viceroy's Legislative Council. One of the pioneer founders of the Indian National Congress in 1885; was elected to its presidentship twice, in 1890 and 1909.

reply to the objection, that other classes do not fare much better in this respect, especially if and when they are placed in the position of the unfortunate Indians. And yet, I am afraid, I shall have to fall back upon argument of that sort. Much as I would wish them to be otherwise, I confess my utter inability to prove that they are more than human. They come to Natal on starvation wages (I mean here the indentured Indians).

They find themselves placed in a strange position and amid uncongenial surroundings. *The moment they leave India* they remain throughout life, if they settle in the Colony, without any moral education. Whether they are Hindus or Mahommedans, they are absolutely without any moral or religious instruction worthy of the name. They have not learned enough to educate themselves without any outside help. Placed thus, they are apt to yield to the slightest temptation to tell a lie. After some time, lying with them becomes a habit and a disease. They would lie without any reason, without any prospect of bettering themselves materially, indeed, without knowing what they are doing. They reach a stage in life when their moral faculties have completely collapsed owing to neglect. There is also a very sad form of lying. They cannot dare tell the truth, even for their wantonly ill-treated brother, for fear of receiving ill-treatment from their master. They are not philosophic enough to look with equanimity on the threatened reduction in their miserable rations and serve corporal punishment, did they dare to give evidence against their master. Are these men, then, more to be despised than pitied? Are they to be treated as scoundrels, deserving no mercy, or are they to be treated as helpless creatures, badly in need of sympathy? Is there any class of people who would not do as they are doing under similar circumstances?

But I will be asked what I can have to say in defence of the traders, who, too, are equally good liars. As to this, I beg to submit that the charge against them is without foundation, and that they do not lie more than the other classes do for the purposes of trade or law. They are very much misunderstood; in the first place, because they cannot speak the English language, and secondly, because the interpretation is very defective, through no fault of the interpreters. The interpreters are expected to perform the Herculean task of interpreting successfully in four languages, viz., Tamil, Telugu, Hindustani and Gujarati. The trading Indian invariably speaks Hindustani or Gujarati.

Those who speak Hindustani only, speak high Hindustani. The interpreters, with one exception, speak the local Hindustani, which is a grotesque mixture of Tamil, Gujarati and other Indian languages, clothed in extremely bad Hindustani grammar. Very naturally, the interpreter has to argue with the witness before he can get at his meaning. While the process is going on, the judge grows impatient, and thinks that the witness is prevaricating. The poor interpreter, if questioned, true to human nature, in order to conceal his defective knowledge ofthe language, says the witness does not give straight answers. The poor witness has no opportunity of setting himself right. In the case of the Gujarati speakers the matter is still more serious. There is not a single Gujarati interpreter in the Courts. The interpreter, after great difficulty, manages to get at the sense only of what the witness is speaking. I have myself seen a Gujarati-speaking witness struggling to make himself understood, and the interpreter struggling to understand the Gujarati-Hindustani. Indeed, it speaks volumes for the acuteness of the interpreters in extracting even the sense from a forest of strange words. but all the while the struggle is going on, the Judge makes up his mind not to believe a word of what the witness says, and puts him down for a liar.

III

In order to answer the third question, "Is their present treatment in accordance with the best British traditions, or with the principles of justice and morality, or with the principles of Christianity?" it will be necessary to enquire what their treatment is. I think it will be readily granted that the Indian is bitterly hated in the Colony. The man in the street hates him, curses him, spits upon him, and often pushes him off the footpath. The Press cannot find a sufficiently strong word in the best English dictionary to damn him with. Here are a few samples : "The real canker that is eating into the very vitals of the community"; "these parasites"; "Wily, wretched, semi-barbarous Asiatics"; "a thing black and lean and a long way from clean, which they call the accursed Hindoo"; "he is chock-full of vice, and he lives upon rice.... I heartily cuss the Hindoo"; "squalid coolies with truthless tongues and artful ways". The Press almost unanimously refuses to call the Indian by his proper name. He is "Ramsamy"; he is "Mr. Sammy"; he is "Mr. Coolie"; he is "he black man". And these offensive epithets have become so common that they (at any rate one of them, "coolie) are used even in the sacred precincts of the

Courts, as if "the coolie" were the legal and proper name to give to any and every Indian. The public men, too, seem to use the word freely. I have often heard the painful expressio "coolie clerk" from the mouths of men who ought to know better. The expression is a contradiction in terms and is extremely offensive to those to whom it is applied. But then, in this Colony the Indian is a creature without feelings!

The tramcars are not for the Indians. The railway officialsmay treat the Indians as beasts. No matter how clean, his very sight is such an offence to every white man in the Colony that he would object to sit, even for a short time, in the same compartment with the Indian. The hotels shut their doors against them. I know instances of respectable Indians having been denied a night's lodging in an hotel. Even the public baths are not for the Indians, no matter who they are.

If I am to depend upon one-tenth of the reports that I have received with regard to the treatment of the indentured Indians on the various estates, it would form a terrible indictment against the humanity of the masters on the estates and the care taken by the *Protector* of Indian immigrants. This, however, is a subject which my extremely limited experience of it precludes me from making further remarks upon.

The Vagrant Law is needlessly oppressive, and often puts respectable Indians in a very awkward position.

Add to this the rumours that are rife in the air, to the effect that they should be made, or induced, to live in Locations. It may be merely an intention; none the less, it is an index of the feeling of the European Colonists against the Indians. I beseech you to picture to yourself the state the Indian would be in in Natal if it were possible to carry out all suchintentions.

Now, is this treatment in consonance with the British traditions of justice, or morality, or Christianity?

I would, with your permission, quote an extract from Macaulay, and leave it to you to answer the question as to whether the present treatment would have met with his approval. Speaking on the subject of the treatment of the Indians, he expressed the following sentiments:

We shall never consent to administer the *pousta*[1] to a whole community, to stupefy and paralyse a great people whom God has committed to our charge, for the

[1] Seed of opium poppy

wretched purpose of rendering them more amenable to our control. What is that power worth which is founded on vice, on ignorance, and on misery, which we can hold by violating the most sacred duties which as governors we owe to the governed, which as a people blessed with far more than an ordinary measure of political liberty and of intellectual light we owe to a race debased by three thousand years of despotism and priestcraft? *We are free, we are civilized, to little purpose, if we grudge to any portion of the human race an equal measure of freedom and civilization.*

I have but to refer you to writers like Mill, Burke, Bright, and Fawcett[1], to further show that they, at any rate, would not give countence to the treatment accorded to the Indians in the Colony.

To bring a man here on starvation wages, to hold him under bondage, and when he shows the least signs of liberty, or, is in a position to live less miserably, to wish to send him back to his home where he would become comparatively a stranger and perhaps unable to earn a living, is hardly a mark of fair play or justice characteristic of the British nation.

That the treatment of the Indians is contrary to the teaching of Christianity needs hardly any argument. The Man, who taught us to love our enemies and to give our clock to the one who wanted the coat, and to hold out the right cheek when the left was smitten, and who swept away the distinction between the Jew and the Gentile, would never brook a disposition that causes a man to be so proud of himself as to consider himself polluted even by the touch of a fellow-being.

IV

The last head of the enquiry has, I believe, been sufficiently discussed in discussing the first. And I for one would not be much grieved in an experiment were tried to drive out each and every Indian from the Colony. In that case, I have not the slightest doubt that the Colonists would soon rue the day when they took the step and would wish they had not done it. The petty trades and the petty avocations of life would be left alone. The work for which they are specially suited would not be taken up by the Europeans, and the Colony would lose an immense amount of revenue now derived from the Indians. The climate of South Africa is not such as would enable the Europeans to do the work that they can easily do in Europe. What, however, I do submit with the greatest deference is this, that if the Indians must be kept in the Colony, then let them receive such treatment as by their

[1] Henry Fawcett (1833-84); statesman and professor of Political Economy at Cambridge

ability and integrity they may be fit to receive, that is to say, give them what is their due, and what is the least that a sense of justice, unalloyed by partiality or prejudice, should prompt you to give them.

It now remains for me only to implore you to give this matter your earnest consideration, and to remind you (here I mean especially the English) that Providence has put the English and the Indians together, and has placed in the hands of the former the destinies of the latter, and it will largely depend upon what every Englishman does with respect to the Indian and how he treats him, whether the putting together will result in an ever lasting union brought about by broad sympathy, love, free mutual intercourse, and also a right knowledge of the Indian character, or whether the putting together will simply last so long as the English have sufficient resources to keep the Indians under check, and the naturally mild Indians have not been vexed into active opposition to the foreign yoke. I have, further, to remind you that the English in England have shown by their writings, speeches and deeds that they mean to unify the hearts of the two peoples, that they do not believe in colour distinctions, and that they will raise India with them rather than rise upon its ruins. In support of this I beg to refer you to Bright, Fawcett, Bradlaugh, Gladstone, Wedderburn, Pincott, Ripon, Reay, Northbrooke, Dufferin, and a host of other eminent Englishmen who represent public opinion. The very fact of an English constituency returning an Indian to the British Ho[1]use of Commons, in spite of the expressed wish to the contrary of the then Prime Minister, and almost the whole British Press, both Conservative and Liberal, congratulating the Indian member on the success, and expressing its approval of the unique event, and the whole House again, both Conservative and Liberal, according him a warm welcome—this fact alone, I submit, supports my statement. Will you, then, follow them, or will you strike out a new path? Will you promote unity, "which is the condition of progress", or will you promote discord, "which is the condition of degradation"?

In conclusion, I beg of you to receive the above in the same spirit in which it has been written.

I have the honour to remain,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

From a pamphlet

[1] The reference is to Dadabhai Naoroji's election in 1893 from Central Finsbury.

56. LETTER TO EUROPEANS[1]

BEACH GROVE,
DURBAN,
December 19, 1894

SIR

I venture to send you the enclosed for perusal, and solicit your opinion on the subject matter of the Open Letter.

Whether you be a clergyman, editor, public man, merchant or lawyer, the subject cannot but demand your attention. If you are a clergyman, inasmuch as you represent the teaching of Jesus, it must be your duty to see that you are in no way, directly or indirectly, countenancing a treatment of your fellow-beings that would not be pleasing to Jesus. If you are an editor of a news-paper, the responsibility is equally great. Whether you are using your influence as a journalist to the evolution or degradation of humanity will depend upon whether you are encouraging division among class and class or striving after union. The same remarks will apply to you as a public man. If you are a merchant or lawyer, you have then too, a duty to discharge towards your customers and clients from whom you derive a considerable pecuniary advantage. It is for you to treat them as dogs or fellow-beings demanding your symapathy in the cruel persecution that they are put to owing to the prevalent ignorance about the Indians in the Colony. Coming as you do in comparatively close contact with them, you have, no doubt, the opportunity and incentive to study them. Looked at from a sympathetic standpoint, they would perhaps show themselves to you as they have been seen by scores and hundreds of Europeans who had the opportunity to study them, and who used it alright.

Your opinion is solicited with a view to ascertaining if there are many Europeans in the Colony who would actively sympathize with and feel for the Indians in the Colony, assuming that their treatment is not all that could be desired.

I am, Sir,
Your faithful servant,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : S.N. 201

[1] A printed circular letter sent by Gandhiji to Europeans in Natal

57. LETTER TO "THE NATAL ADVERTISER"

DURBAN,
January 21, 1895

TO
THE EDITOR

SIR

You will oblige me by letting me draw the attention of your readers to the notice that appears in your advertisement columns about the Esoteric Christian Union and the London Vegetarian Society.

The system represented by the Union establishes the unity and common source of all the great religions of the world, and points out, as the books advertised will amply show, the utter inadequacy of materialism which boasts of having given the world a civilization which was never witnessed before, and which is alleged to *The Natal Advertiser* have done the greatest good to humanity, all the while conveniently forgetting that its greatest achievenments are the invention of the most terrible weapons of destruction, the awful growth of anarchism, the frightful disputes between capital and labour and the wanton and diabolical cruelty inflicted on innocent, dumb, living animals in the name of science, "falsely so called".

There seem to be, however, signs of reaction setting in—the almost phenomenal success of the Theosophical Society, the gradual acceptance by the clergy of the doctrine of holiness, and what is more, the acceptance by Professor Max Muller of the doctrine of reincarnation so conclusively demonstrated in *The Perfect Way*, his statement that it was gaining ground among the thinking minds in England and elsewhere, and the publication of *The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ.* It is not possible to secure these works in S. Africa. My knowledge of them is, therefore, confined to their reviews. All these and many such facts are, I submit, unmistakable signs of a return from the materialistic tendencies, which have made us so cruelly selfish, to the unadulterated esoteric teachings of not only Jesus Christ, but also of Buddha, Zoroaster and Mahomed, who are no longer so generally denounced by the civilized world as false prophets, but whose and Jesus's teachings are beginning to be acknowledged to be complementary of one another.

I regret that I am unable yet to advertise books on vegetarianism, as they have, by mistake, been forwarded to India, and will,

therefore, take some time before they arrive in Durban. I may, however, state one valuable fact with regard to the efficacy of vegetarianism. There is no more potent instrument of evil than drunkenness, and I may be allowed to say that all those who suffer from the craving for drink, but would like really to be free from the curse, have only to give a trial for at least one month to a diet chiefly consisting of brown bread and oranges or grapes, to secure an entire freedom from the craving. I have myself carried on a series of experiments, and can testify that on a vegetarian diet, without any condiments, and consisting of a liberal supply of juicy fresh fruits, I have lived comfortably, without tea, coffee, or cocoa, and even water, for days together. Hundreds in England have become vegetarian for this reason, and having once been inveterate tipplers, have now reached a stage when the very smell of grog or whisky is an offence to their tastes. Dr. B. W. Richardson, in his *Food for Man,* recommends pure vegetarianism as a cure for drunkenness. In a comparatively hot country like Natal, where there is a plentiful supply of fruits and vegetables, a bloodless diet should prove very beneficial in every way, apart from its immeasurable superiority to flesh foods on grounds scientific, sanitary, economic, ethical and spiritual.

It is, perhaps, needless to mention that the sale of E.C.U. books is not at all a money-making concern. In certain cases the books have even been given away. They will be gladly lent in some cases. I shall be very happy to correspond with any of your readers who may want any further information, either about the E.C.U. or the L.V.S., or to have a quiet chat on these (to me at any rate) momentous questions.

I would conclude with what Rev. John Pulsford, D.D., has to say with regard to the teaching of the E.C.U.:

> It is impossible for a spiritually intelligent reader to doubt that these teachings were received from within the astral veil. They are full of the concentrated and compact wisdom of the Holy Heavens, and of God. If the Christians knew their own religion, they would find in these priceless records Lord Christ and His vital process abundantly illustrated and confirmed. That such communications are possible, and are permitted to be given to the world, is a sign, and a most promising sign, of our age.

I am, etc.

M. K. GANDHI

AGENT FOR

THE ESOTERIC CHRISTIAN UNION

&

THE LONDON VEGETARIAN SOCIETY

The Natal Advertiser, 1-2-1895

58. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

328 SMITH STREET,
DURBAN, NATAL,
January 25, 1895

TO
DADABHAI NAOROJI, ESQ., M.P.
LONDON
SIR

Though the Government is silent, the papers have been informing the public that the Franchise Bill has been disallowed by Her Majesty. Can you give us any information on the point?

The Indian settlers cannot thank you and the Congress Committee too much for the trouble taken on their behalf.

I remain,
Sir,
Your faithful servant,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I venture to send the enclosed for perusal.

M. K. G.

From a photostat of the original : S.N. 2253

59. BOOKS FOR SALE

The following books by the late Dr. Anna Kingsford and Mr. Edward Maitland, introduced for the first time in South Africa, are offered for sale at their published prices :

The Perfect Way, 7/6

Clothed with the Sun, 7/6

The Story of the New Gospel of Interpretation, 3/6

Bible's Own Account of Itself, 1/-

The New Gospal of Interpretation, 1/-

It is like listening to the utterances of God or arch-angel. I know of nothing in literature to equal it (*The Perfect Way*).

— The Late Sir F. H. Doyle

We regard *The Perfect Way* as the most illumined and useful book published in the nineteenth century.

—GNOSTIC (U.S.A.)

M. K. GANDHI

AGENT FOR THE ESOTERIC CHRISTIAN UNION AND

THE LONDON VEGETARIAN SOCIETY

The Natal Advertiser, 2-2-1895

60. LETTER TO "THE NATAL WITNESS"[1]

DURBAN,

March 23, 1895

TO

THE EDITOR

The Natal Witness

SIR

I trust, in the interests of justice, you will allow me to make a few remarks on your report of the conversation that took place between Sir Walter Wragg and Mr. Tatham with regard to a point of Mahommedan Law, in your issue of the 22nd instant.

[1] This was with reference to the following report in The Natal Witness, 22-3-1895 :

Mr. Tatham applied to the Supreme Court yesterday for confirmation of the Master's report in the intestate estate of Hassan Dawjee, and remarked that a plan of distribution, prepared by Mr. Gandhi, barrister, had been embodied in the report, and was framed according to Mahommedan Law.

SIR WALTHER WRAGG : The only thing about this is that Mr. Gandhi knows nothing of Mahommedan Law. He is as great a stranger to Mahommedan Law as a Frenchman. For what he has stated he would have to go to a book as you would; of his own knowledge he knows nothing.

Mr Tatham said that a plan of distribution had been obtained from the priests and from Mr. Gandhi. Where else they were to go he did not know. They had exhausted all the expert evidence available.

SIR WALTHER WRAGG : The portion which Mr. Gandhi states should go to the brother of the deceased, should, according to Mahommedan Law, go to the poor. Mr. Gandhi is a Hindu and knows his own faith, of course, but he knows nothing of Mahommedan Law.

MR. TATHAM : The question is whether we shall take Mr. Gandhi's view or the priests'.

SIR WALTHER WRAGG : You must take the priests'. When the brother can show that he represents the poor he will be entitled to 5/24ths, as stated by Mr. Gandhi.

I have ventured to trespass upon your courtesy, not because I want to defend myself, but because of the decision of the Supreme Court, which, I believe, with all due respect to Sir Walter Wragg, is based upon an erroneous view of the Mahommedan Law, and would vitally affect a large portion of the Indian Colonists.

Were I a Mahommedan, I should be very sorry to be judged bya Mahommedan whose sole qualification is that he is born a Mahommedan. It is a revelation that the Mahommedans know the law intuitively, and that a non-Mahommedan never dare give an opinion on a point of Mahommedan Law.

The decision (if your report is correct) that the brother will be entitled to his 5/24ths only after he "can show that he represents the poor", is, I am afraid, according to the Mahommedan Law administered in India and revealed in the Koran, subversive of that law. I have carefully gone through the chapters on "Inheritance" in Macnaughten's *Mahomedan Law* (which, by the way, is edited by a non-Mahommedan Indian and which Messrs Binns & Mason, in their report published after their return from India, say is the book considered to be one of the best on that law), and have also gone through that portion of the Koran which relates to the subject, and in them I find not one word with regard to the poor being entitled to any part of the inheritance of a deceased Moslem. If the Koran and the book above mentioned are any authority on that law, then not only is there no portion to which the poor are entitled in the case in question, but under no circumstances are the poor entitled to any part of an intestate estate. I hope to be able to show that the brother (it should really be the half-brother), when he takes anything under that law, takes it *in his own right*, and takes it *because* he is a *brother*.

It is likely that His Lordship, when he was talking about an inheritance, was actually but unconsciously thinking of almsgiving, which is incumbent upon every Mahommedan. It is one of their articles of faith. But the principle that guides almsgiving during life does not obtain in cases of distribution of inheritance. A Mahommedan, by giving alms during his lifetime, earns for himself heaven or a respectable place therein. Alms given out of his estate by the State after his death can surely do him no spiritual good, because it is not *his* act. After a Moslem's death it is the relatives who have a prior, nay exclusive, claim upon his estate.

Says the Koran :

> We have appointed unto everyone kindred to inherit part of what their parents and relations shall leave after their deaths.

The law says :

> There belong to the property of a person deceased four successive duties : first, his funeral ceremony and burial without superfluity of expense, yet without deficiency; next the discharge of his just debts from the whole of his remaining effects; then the payment of his legacies out of a third of what remains after his debts are paid; and lastly, the distribution of the residue among his successors.

The successors are thus described :

> 1. Legal sharers; 2. residuaries; 3. distant kindred; 4. successors by contract; 5. acknowledged kindred; 6. universal legatee; 7. Crown.

"Legal sharers" are defined as "all those persons for whom specific shares have been appointed or ordained in the sacred text, the traditions, or with general assent", and according to the table enumerating the 12 classes of sharers, include half-brothers also. "Residuaries" are "all persons for whom no share has been appointed, and who take the residue after the sharers have been satisfied, or the whole estate when there are no sharers". It should here be noted that some legal sharers are as such, under certain conditions, excluded, and then rank as residuaries. "Distant kindred" are "all relations who are neither sharers nor residuaries". "After the sharers are satisfied, if there remains a residue of the property left by the deceased, *it is to be divided among the first class of heirs called residuaries*. If there be no residuaries, the residue will revert to the sharers in proportion to their shares."

I would not occupy your valuable space by giving definitions of the other successors. Suffice it to say that they do not include the poor at all, and that they can "take" only after the first three classes are exhausted.

The residuaries in their own right include, among others, "the 'offspring' of the father of the deceased, i.e., brothers, consanguine brothers, and their sons, how low soever". Rule 12 of Section 1 says: "It is a general rule that a brother shall take double the share of a sister. The exception to it is in the case of brothers and sisters by the same mother only, but by different fathers." And Rule 25, Section 11, says: "Where there are daughters or son's daughters and no *brothers*,

the sisters take what remains after the daughters or son's daughters have realized their shares, such residue being half should there be only one daughter or son's daughter, and one third should there be two or more." The two rules read together help us materially to determine the share the brother gets in the case in point.

In the typical examples given in the book I have been quoting from, I find the following with its solution : "*Example* 7. Husband, daughter, brother and three sisters." The solution need not be given fully. The brother as a residuary *in his own right* gets 2/20ths.

It will then be seen from the above that brothers, and in their absence, half-brothers, rank either as sharers or residuaries in their own right, and, therefore, with the greatest deference to Sir Walter's opinion in the case in question, the brother "takes", if he does at all, *in his own right and not as representing the poor*, and if he does not "take" (a thing that cannot happen in such a case if the law is to be respected), the residue "reverts" to the sharers.

But the report says that the priest and I differ. If you eliminate the "I" and put "the law" instead (for I simply said what the law was), I would venture to say, the priest and the law should never differ, and if they do, it is the priest and not the law that goes to the wall. In this case, however, the priest and I do not differ if the distribution in the report sent to me by Mr. Tatham was the one approved by the priest, as it seems to have been, according to his letter of advice. The priest says not a word about the half-brother taking as representing the poor.

Lastly, after I saw the report, I saw purposely some Mahommedan gentlemen who ought to know the law according to Sir Walter, and they were surprised when I told them about the decision. They, without even taking time to consider—the thing appeared to them so plain and clear—said, "The poor never take anything from an intestate estate. The half-brother *as such* should have his share."

The decision then, I submit, is contrary to the Mahommedan Law, the priest's opinion, and other Mahommedan gentlemen. It will be a manifest hardship if the portions rightly belonging to the relations of a deceased Mahommedan are to be locked up until they can show that "they represent the poor"—a condition never contemplated by the law or sanctioned by Mahommedan usage.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Witness, 28-3-1895

61. MEMORIAL TO AGENT, PRETORIA[1]

PRETORIA,
April 16, 1895

TO

HIS HONOUR, SIR JACOBUS DE WET, K.C.M.G.,
HER MAJESTY'S AGENT, PRETORIA

THE MEMORIAL OF TAYOB KHAN AND ABDOOL GANI[2] OF PRETORIA AND HAJEE HABIB HAJEE DADA OF JOHANNESBURG WHO ACT AS A COMMITTEE ON BEHALF OF THE BRITISH INDIAN MERCHANTS IN THIS REPUBLIC

We respectfully request Your Honour to place yourself in communication with His Excellency the High Commissioner, in order to ascertain whether Her Majesty's Government will be satisfied with the Award given by the Arbitrator in the recent arbitration held at Bloemfontein in the Orange Free State, between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the South African Republic, on the Indian question. As Your Honour is aware, the Arbitrator has decided that Law 3 of 1885[3], as amended by Volksraad's besluit of 1886, must be enforced by this Government, and that in the event of any dispute or difference as to the interpretation of that law, the High Court of this Republic must decide such difference.

In one of the Green books, No. 21894, pages 31 and 35, put in

[1] This was enclosed with Despatch No. 204 of April 29, 1895 from the High Commissioner to the South African Republic to the Principal secretary of State for the Colonies.

[2] Partner and manager of the firm of Mahomed Cassim Camroodeen in Johannesburg

[3] A Transvaal law; this applied to "the so-called Coolies, Arab, Malay and Mahommedan subjecs of the Turkish Empire". It rendered them incapable of obtaining extended citizenship rights and of owning fixed property in the Republic. An exception was later made in the case of the "Coolies" who could, as sanctioned by Volksraad resolution of January 1887, own fixed property in specified streets, wards and Locations on grounds of sanitation. A further Volksraad resolution, in 1893, laid down that all Asiatics should be enforced to live and trade in the Locations. Trade could be carried on by registration and payment of a fee of £3. The law was considerd to be in contravention of the London Convention.

[4] Sometimes abbreviated to Raad, South African (Dutch) word for National Legislative Assembly in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State.

at the above-mentioned arbitration by the Government of this Republic, statements are made to the effect that His Honour the Chief Justice, in giving judgment in a certain application before the High Court by Ismael Suliman and Co.,[1] held that no difference could be made between places where business is carried on and where Indians reside. In view of these facts, we respectfully submit, without in any way impugning the High Cout, that it would be a goregone conclusion, if the statements referred to above as to the judgment of the Chief Justice be correct, that the judgment of the Court in any case submitted to it under the above quoted law would be against the Indian subjects of Her Majesty in this Republic. As, therefore, the Arbitrator did not decide the question submitted to him in terms of the Deed of Submission, but practically left it to the decision of the High Court of this Republic, we would respectfully submit that the Arbitrator did not decide the question in terms of the reference to him. We, therefore, respectfully request Your Honour to communicate with her Majesty's Government and ascertain whether they will be satisfied with the above Award and acquiesce therein.

TAYOB HAJEE KHAN MOHAMED
ABDOOL GANI
HAJEE HABIB HAJEE DADA

Colonial Office Records No. 417, Vol. 148

[1] In this case Ismail Suliman, an Arab trader, in August 1888, was denied a trading licence to carry on business except in a Location. Arbitration by the Chief Justice of Orange Free State recognized the right of the South African Republic to enforce Law 3 of 1885 subject to interpretation by the country's Tribunals. The Supreme Court of the Transvaal however reversed the judgment later, and held that the Government had no power under that law to withhold licences from Asiatics.

62. PETITION TO NATAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY[1]

[DURBAN,
Before May 5, 1895]

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE COLONY OF NATAL
THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS
RESIDING IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT :

Your Petitioners, as representing the Indians in this Colony, hereby respectfully approach your Honourable Assembly with regard to the Indian Immigration Law Amendment Bill now before you for consideration.

Your Petitioners respectfully submit that so much of the Bill which provides for re-indenture and imposition of a tax in default of re-indenture, is manifestly unjust, entirely uncalled for and in direct opposition to the fundamental principles upon which the British Constitution is based.

That the Bill is manifestly unjust, does not need, your Petitioners submit, many words to prove. To raise the Maximum term of indenture from five years to an indefinite period is in itself unjust, because it puts in the way of the masters of the indentured Indians greater temptations to oppression or harshness. No matter how humane the masters may be in the Colony, they will always remain human. And your Petitioners need hardly point out what human nature is when selfish considerations guide one's actions. Moreover, the Bill, your Petitioners venture to say, is an absolutely one-sided arrangement, for, while it shows every cosideration to the employer, it gives practically nothing in return to the employee.

The Bill is, your Petitioners submit, uncalled for because no reasons exist for its introduction. It is not meant to help the Colony out of a pecuniary crash or help forward any industry. On the other hand, it was because it was recognized that the industries, for which the Indian labour was specially required, no longer required any extraordinary aid that the £10,000 vote was abolished only last year. it

[1] The petition was published in *The Natal Advertiser*, 5-5-1895.

is then evident that there is no real need for such legislation.

To show that Bill is in direct opposition to the fundamental principles of the British Constitution, your Petitioners humbly refer your Honourable Assembly to the whole course of the great events during the last century in which Britain has played a prominent part. Forced labour, from the grossest form of slavery to the mildest form of *veth*[1], has always been repugnant to the British traditions, and has everywhere, so far as practical, been abolished. Indentured labour exists in Assam as it does in this Colony. It was only a short time ago when it was admitted by her Majesty's Government, in reference to such labour in that country, that the indentured labour was an evil to be countenanced only as long as it was absolutely necessary to support or promote an important industry, and to be removed at the first suitable opportunity. Your Petitioners respectfully submit that the Bill under consideration violates the above principle.

If the proposed extension of the term of indenture is thus (your Petitioners hope they have shown to your Honourable Assembly's satisfaction) unjust, uncalled for, and opposed to the fundamental principles of the British Constitution, the proposed imposition of a tax is more so. It has long been acknowledged as an axiomatic truth that taxation is meant only for the purposes of revenue. It will not for a moment be said, your Petitioners humbly think, that the proposed tax is meant for any such purpose. The proposed taxation is avowedly meant to drive the Indian out of the Colony after he has finished his indenture. It will, therefore, be a prohibitive tax, and conflict with the principles of Free Trade.

It will moreover inflict, your Petitioners fear, an unwarranted wrong on the indentured Indians, because for an indentured Indian, who has severed all connection with India and come down to the Colony with his family, to go back and hope to earn a livelihood is almost an utter impossibility. Your Petitioners crave leave to mention from their own experience that, as a rule, it is only those Indians who cannot find work to keep body and soul together in India who come to the Colony under indenture. The very fabric of the Indian society is such that the Indian, in the first place, does not leave his home, and when once he is driven to do so, it is hopeless for him to return to India and expect to earn bread, much less to make a fortune.

[1] Forced, unpaid labour

It is an admitted fact that the Indian labour is indispensable to the prosperity of the Colony.If so, your Petitioners submit that the indentured Indians, who so materially help forward the prosperity of the Colony, are entitled to better consideration.

It need hardly be mentioned that the Bill is a piece of class legislation and that it accentuates and encourages the prejudice that exists against Indians in the Colony, and thus would widen the gulf between one class of British subjects and another. Your Petitioners, therefore, humbly pray that your Honourable Assembly will come to the conclusion that that portion of the Bill which contemplates re-indenture and the imposition of a tax in default of re-indenture is not such as could be considered favourably by your Honourable Assembly, and for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners shall for ever pray, etc., etc.

ABDULLA HAJI ADAM
AND SEVERAL OTHERS

From a photostat : S.N. 434

63. PETITION TO LORD RIPON[1]

PRETORIA,
SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC,
[Before *May 5, 1895*][2]

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE MARQUIS OF RIPON, HER MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES, LONDON

THE PETITION OF THE BRITISH INDIANS RESIDING IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT :

Your Petitioners respectfully venture to approach Your Excellency in connection with their position in the S. A. R., especially as affected by the Award lately given by the Chief Justice of the Orange Free State in the Indian Arbitration Case.

2. Your Petitioners, whether as traders, shopkeepers' assistants,

[1] This was forwarded by Sir Jacobus de Wet to the High Commissioner at Cape Town on May 30, 1895.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to M. C. Camroodeen", 5-5-1895.

hawkers, cooks, waiters, or labourers, are scattered over the whole of the Transvaal, though the greatest number is settled in Johannesburg and Pretoria. Of traders there are nearly 200 whose liquidated assets would amount to nearly £100,000. Of these about three firms import goods directly from England, Durban, Port Elizabeth, India, and other places, and have thus branches in other parts of the world whose existence mainly depends upon their Transvaal businesses. The rest are small vendors having stores in different places. There are nearly 2,000 hawkers in the Republic who buy goods and hawk them about, while those of your petitioners who are labourers are employed as general servants in European houses or hotels. They number about 1,500 men, of whom about 1,000 live at Johannesburg.

3. Your Excellency's Petitioners, before entering into a discussion of their precarious position in the State, would with the greatest deference venture to point out that your Petitioners, whose interests were at stake, were never once consulted as to the arbitration, that the moment the question of arbitration was broached, your Petitioners protested both against the principle of arbitration and against the choice of the Arbitrator. Your Petitioners conveyed the protest verbally to His Honour the British Agent at Pretoria, who, your Petitioners here take the opportunity to say, has always been most courteous and attentive to those of your Petitioners who had occasion to wait upon him from time to time in connection with the grievances of the Indians in the Transvaal. Your Petitioners would also draw Your Excellency's attention to the fact that even a written protest was sent to Her Majesty's High Commissioner at Cape Town. However, your Petitioners by dwelling upon the matter do not at all wish to cast the slightest reflection on the high-mindedness or probity of the learned Chief Justice of the Orange Free State or to question the wisdom of Her Majesty's officers. Having known the bias of the learned Chief Justice against the Indians, your Petitioners thought, and still humbly venture to think, that he could not, in spite of his most strenuous efforts to do otherwise, bring to bear upon the question an equibalanced judgment which is so necessary to a right and proper perception of the facts of a case. Judges having a previous knowledge of case have been known to refrain from deciding them, lest they should unconsciously be led away by preconceived notions or prejudices.

4. The reference to the learned Arbitrator in the case submitted

on behalf of Her Majesty's Government runs thus :

The Arbitrator shall be free to decide either in favour of the claims put forward by Her Majesty's Government or by the South African Republic, or to lay down such interpretation of the said Ordinances, read together with the Despatches referring to the question, as shall appear to him to be correct.

5. The Award as published in the papers is as follows:

> (a) The claims of Her Majesty's Government and of the Government of the South African Republic respectively are disallowed, save and except to the extent and degree following, that is to say:
>
> (b) The South African Republic is bound and entitled in its treatment of Indian and other Asiatic traders, being British subjects, to give full force and effect to Law No. 3 of 1885, enacted, and in the year 1886 amended by the Volksraad of the South African Republic, subject (in case of objection being raised by or on behalf of any such persons to any such treatment as not being in accordance with the provisions of the said law as amended) to sole and exclusive interpretation in the ordinary course by the Tribunals of the country.

6. Now, your Petitioners humbly submit that the above Award not being in terms of the reference is void, and that Her Majesty's Government is not, therefore, bound by it. The very object with which the arbitration was decided upon is, it is respectfully pointed out, frustrated. The reference leaves it to the Arbitrator *either* to allow the claims of one of the two Governments or to lay down such interpretation of the Ordinances as may appear to him to be correct, regard being had to the Despatches referring to the question. Instead of interpreting, the learned Arbitrator has delegated the interpretation, and in delegating has, moreover, limited the delegation to such persons as, by the very nature of their position, cannot possibly avail themselves of the procedure and evidence that could be availed of, nay that was expressly stipulated to be availed of, by the Arbitrator, and that would tend to enable them to lay down such an interpretation as would be just and equitable, though, perhaps, not strictly legal.

7. The Award, your Petitioners submit, is invalid on two grounds. First, because the Arbitrator had delegated his function, which no arbitrator in the world can do. Secondly, the Arbitrator has failed to keep to the reference, inasmuch as he has left undecided the question that he was expressly called upon to decide.

8. The object, it would seem, was not to have the question of

interpretation decided in a law-court, but to terminate the question once for all. Had not such been the case, Her Majesty's Government would never have entered into the voluminous correspondence with regard to the question of interpretation as found in the Transvaal Green Books, Nos. 1 and 2, 1894. The question that was to be, and your Petitioners submit can only be,decided diplomatically and politically has been left, if the Award is to be valid, to be decided judicially only. And if it is true that the Chief Justice of the Transvaal has already expressed his opinion in the case presented on behalf of the Transvaal Government, the decision of the question is almost a foregone conclusion. To prove that this is so, your Petitioners refer Your Excellency to newspapers of current dates, especially *The Johannesburg Times* of 27th April 1895 (weekly edition).

9. But your Petitioners' appeal to Your Excellency is on higher and broader grounds; your Petitioners have every confidence that the question that affects thousands of Her Majesty's subjects, on a proper solution of which depend the bread and butter of hundreds of British subjects, and a technical solution of which may bring ruin to hundreds of homes and may leave them penniless, will not be left to be decided merely in a court of law where everybody's hands are tied down, and where such considerations find no place. So far as the traders are concerned, if the contention of the Transvaal Government is ultimately upheld, it means absolute ruin to them, and not only to them personally, but to their families and relations and servants, both in India and the Transvaal, who are dependent upon them. It is impossible for some of your Petitioners, who have been trading for a long time in the Transvaal, to seek "pastures new" and manage to keep body and soul together, if they are driven out of their present position through no fault of their own, but merely, as will be seen presently, because of the misrepresentation of a few interested persons.

10. The gravity of the question and the immense interests that are at stake are your Petitioners' excuse for the following some-what lengthy resume of their position, and for humbly soliciting Your Excellency's undivided attention to it.

11. The unfortunate departure from the 14th Clause of the Convention of 1881[1], which protects *equally* the interests of *all*

[1] This should be 1884; *vide* footnote on the following page.

persons *other* than *Natives*, has originated and been countenanced in and by the assumption that the Indian settlers in the Transvaal do not observe proper sanitation and is based on the misrepresentations of certain interested persons. It has been emphatically laid down by Her Majesty's Government throughout the correspondence about the Law 3 of 1885 that separate streets might be set apart for the Indians in the interests of pubic health, but that they cannot be compelled to trade in certain fixed parts only of the towns. After the Law 3 of 1885 was strenuously opposed for some time,the then High Commissioner,Sir H. Robinson, in withdrawing opposition to the amended Law of 1886, says in his letter (26th September, 1886, page 46, Green Book No. 1, 1894) : "Although the amended law is still a contravention of the 14th Article of the Convention of London[1] I shall not advise Her Majesty's Government to offer further opposition to it in view of Your Honour's opinion that it is necessary for the *protection of the public health*." Even the reference to the Arbitrator and the Law 3 of 1885 shows clearly that the departure from the Convention was to be assented to only for sanitary reasons.

12. Your Petitioners hereby enter their most respectful, but emphatic protest against the assumption that there exist sanitary reasons for such a departure; your Petitioners hope to be able to show that no such reasons exist.

13. Your Petitioners append hereto three certificates from doctors which would speak for themselves and which show that their dwellings are in no way inferior to those of the Europeans, from a sanitary point of view (App. A,B,C). Your Petitioners challenge comparison of their own dwellings with those of the Europeans who have theirs in their immediate neighbourhood. For, it so happens in Pretoria that, side by side with some of your Petitioners' houses and stores, are situated also the houses and stores of Europeans.

14. The following unsolicited testimonial will speak for itself. On the 16th October, 1885, Mr. Mitchell, the then Joint General Manager of the Standard Bank, writes thus to the High Commissioner, Sir H. Robinson:

[1] London Convention, signed on February 27, 1884, between the Boers and the British. Article XIV assured all persons, other than Natives, full liberty of entry, travel, residence, ownership of property and trade in the South African Republic (or the Transvaal). The Boer Government tried to interpret the word 'Natives' to include the Indians, but this view was rejected by the British Government.

> It may not be deemed out of place if I add that they (the Indian traders) are, within my knowledge, in all respects orderly, industrious and respectable people, and some among them are merchants of wealth and position, having establishments on a large scale in Mauritius, Bombay and elsewhere (Green Book No. 1, p. 37).
>
> 15. About 35 European firms of repute
>
> distinctly declare that the aforementioned Indian merchants, the majority of whom come from Bombay, keep their business places as well as their residences in a clean and proper sanitary state, in fact, just as good as the European (App. D).

16. It is true, however, that this does not appear in the newspapers. The public Press thinks that your Petitioners are "filthy vermin". The representations to the Volksraad say the same thing. The reasons are obvious. Your Petitioners, not knowing the English language so well as to be able to take part in such discussions, or even to keep themselves informed of all the misrepresentations about them, are not always in a position to refute such statements. It was only when they became aware that their very existence was at stake that they went to the European firms and doctors to give their opinion about their sanitary habits.

17. But your Petitioners claim also a right to speak for themselves, and they have no hesitation in stating deliberately that collectively, though their dwellings may appear uncouth and are certainly without much adornment, they are in no way inferior to the European dwellings from a sanitary point of view. And as to their personal habits, they confidently assert that they use more water and bathe much oftener than the Europeans residing in the Transvaal whom they come in frequent connection with. Nothing can be further from your Petitioners' wish than to set up comparisons, or to try to show themselves superior to their European brethren. Force of circumstances only has driven them to such a course.

18. The two elegant petitions at pp. 19-21 of the Green Book No. 2, which pray for an exclusion of all Asiatics, and contain wholesale denunciation of all the Asiatics, Chinamen, etc., render it absolutely necessary to state what has been stated above. The first petition enumerates terrible vices, peculiar, as alleged therein, to Chinamen, and the second, referring to the first, includes in the denunciation all the Asiatics. Speaking specifically of Chinese, Coolies and other Asiatics, the second petition refers to "the dangers to which the whole community is exposed by the spread of leprosy, syphilis,

and the like loathsome diseases engendered by the filthy habits and immoral practices of these people".

19. Without entering into further comparison, and without entering into the question as affecting the Chinamen, your Petitioners most emphatically state that the above charges are entirely without-grounds so far as your Petitioners are concerned.

20. To show how far the interested agitators have gone, your Petitioners quote below an excerpt from a memorial presented to the Volksraad of the Orange Free State, a copy of which was sent with approval by the Pretoria Chamber of Commerce to the Transvaal Government :

> As these men enter the State without wives or female relatives the result is obvious. Their religion teaches them to consider all women as soulless and Christians as natural prey (Green Book No. 1, 1894, p. 30).

21. Your Petitioners ask, can there be a grosser libel on the great faiths prevailing in India or a greater insult to the Indian nation?

22. Such are the statements which, it will be noticed from the Green Books referred to, have been used to make out a case against the Indians.

23. The real and the only reason has all along been suppressed. The only reason for compelling your Petitioners [to live in Location] or putting every obstacle in the way of your Petitioners earning a decent livelihood is the trade jealousy. Your Petitioners, i.e., those who are traders—and the whole crusade is practically against them—have, by their competition and owing to their temperate and thrifty habits, been able to reduce the prices of the necessaries of life. This does not suit the European traders who would make very large profits. It is a notorious fact that your Petitioners, who are traders, are almost without exception teetotallers. Their habits are simple, and thus they are content to make small profits. This and this only is the reason of the opposition against them, and this is well-known to everybody in South Africa. That this is so can be gathered from the public Press of South Africa, which sometimes becomes frank and shows the hatred in its true light. Thus, dealing with the "Coolie question", as it is contemptuously called, after showing that the real "Coolie" is indispensable to South Africa, *The Natal Advertiser* of the 15th September, 1893, thus delivers itself:

> The sooner the steps are taken to suppress, and if possible to expel, the Indian trader the better. These are the real canker that is eating into the very vitals of the community.

24. Again, the *Press*, the Government organ in the Transvaal, dealing with this question, says : "If the Asiatic invasion is not stopped in time, European shopkeepers must be driven to the wall, as they have been in Natal, and in many parts of the Cape Colony." The whole of the above article is interesting reading, and is a fair sample of the feeling of the Europeans towards colour in South Africa. Although the whole tenor of it betrays fear on the grounds of competition, there occurs this characteristic passage:

> If we are to be swamped by these people, trade by Europeans will be impossible, and we shall one and all become subjected to the horrible danger inseparable from close contact with a large body of uncleanly citizens, with whom syphilis and leprosy are common diseases, and hideous immorality a matter of course.

25. And yet Dr. Veale, in the certificate attached hereto, gives it as his deliberate opinion that "the lowest class Indian lives better and in better habitation, and with more regard to sanitary measures, than the lowest class White" (App. A).

26. Furthermore, the doctor puts on record that while "every nationality had one or more of its members at some time in the *lazaretto*, there was not a single Indian attacked". Added to this is the testimony of the two doctors from Johannesburg to the effect that "the Indians are in no way inferior to the Europeans of the same standing" (App. B and C).

27. In further proof of your Petitioners' contention, your Petitioners would take the liberty to quote from a leading article from *The Cape Times* of 13th April, 1889, which states the case for the Indians as fairly as could be wished:

> The outcry which was raised in the Capital of the Transvaal against the "Coolie trader" some little time ago is brought to the mind by occasional paragraphs in the morning papers, regarding the doings of the Indian and the Arab traders.

After quoting a flattering description of the Indian enterprise from another newspaper, the article goes on to say:

> In face of such reminders as these, one may reasonably expect to be pardoned for referring, for a few moments, to a body of respectable, hard-working men whose position is so misunderstood that their very nationality

is overlooked and a name labelled to them, which tends to place them in an exceedingly low level in the estimation of their fellow-creatures. In the face, too, of financial operations, the success of which many of their detractors would envy, one fails to understand the agitation which would place the operators in the same category as the half-heathen Native and confine him to Locations, and subject him to the harsher laws by which the Transvaal Kaffir is governed. The impression, which is but too prevalent both in the Transvaal and in this Colony, that the quiet and inoffensive Arab shopkeeper, and the equally harmless Indian, who carries his pack of dainty wares from house to house, is a Coolie, is due largely to an insolent ignorance as to the race whence they spring. When one reflects that the conception of Brahmanism, with its poetic and mysterious mythology, took its rise in the land of the "Coolie trader", that in that land 24 centuries ago, the almost divine Buddha taught and practised the glorious doctrine of self-sacrifice, and that it was from the plains and mountains of that weird old country that we have derived the fundamental truths of the very language we speak,one cannot but help regretting that the children of such a race should be treated as equals of the children of black heathendom and outer darkness. Those who, for a few moments, have stayed to converse with the Indian trader have been, perhaps, surprised to find they are speaking to a scholar and a gentleman. ... And it is the sons of this Land of light who are despised as Coolies, and treated as Kaffirs.

It is about time that those who cry out against the Indian merchant should have pointed out to them, who and what he is. Many of his worst detractors are British subjects enjoying all the privileges and rights of membership in a glorious community. To them the hatred of injustice, and the love of fair play is inherent, and when it affects themselves, they have a method of insisting upon their rights and liberties, whether under a foreign government or under their own. Possibly, it has never struck them that the Indian merchant is also a British subject, and claims the same liberties and rights with equal justice. To say the very least of it, if we may be permitted to employ a phrase of Palmerston's days, it is very un-English to claim rights one would not allow to others. The right of trade as an equal privilege has, since the abolition of the Elizabethan monopolies, become almost a part of the English Constitution, and were anyone to interfere with that right, the privilege of British citizenship would suddenly come to the front. That the Indian is more successful in competition and lives on less than the English merchant is the unfairest and weakest of arguments. The very foundation of English Commerce lies in the fact of our being able to compete more successfully with other nations. Surely, it is protection running to madness when English traders wish the State to intervene to protect them against the

more successful operations of their rivals. The injustice to the Indians is so glaring that one is almost ashamed of one's countrymen in wishing to have these men treated as Natives, simply because of their success in trade. The very reason that they have been so successful against the dominant race is sufficient to raise them above that degrading level. . . . Enough has been said to show that the Indian merchant is something more than the 'Coolie' of the newspaper, the Dutchman and the disappointed shopkeeper.

28. It will also be seen from the above quotation that the European feeling, when not blinded by selfishness, is not against the Indians. But since it has been insisted throughout the Green books, before alluded to, that both the Burghers of the State and the European residents objected to the Indians, your Petitioners are sending two petitions to His Honour the State President of the S.A. Republic, one showing that a very large number of the Burghers are not only not against the Indians freely residing and trading in the Transvaal, but they would also deem it a hardship, should the harassing measures ultimately result in their withdrawal (App. E); and the other signed by the European residents, showing that, in the opinion of the signatories, their sanitary habits are in no way inferior to those of the Europeans, and that the agitation against the Indians is due to the trade jealousy (App. F). But were it otherwise—were every European and every Burgher of the State dead against the Indian—even that, your Petitioners submit, cannot affect the main issue, unless the causes which render such a state of things possible were such as would discredit a community against whom such a feeling exists. At the time of going to press (14-5-95), the Dutch petition was already signed by 484 Burghers and the European by 1340 Europeans.

29. That the Award of the Chief Justice of the O. F. S.[1] does not at all simplify the question and bring its solution a step nearer will appear from the following :

The active exercise of Her Majesty's Government protection will be just as necessary as if the Award had never been given. For, assuming, for argument's sake and that only, that the Award is proper and final, and that the Chief Justice of the Transvaal has decided that the Indians must trade and reside in the places fixed by the Government, the question at once arises: where will they be put? May they be put in gullies—in places where sanitation is impossible, and which are so far away from towns as to render it absolutely impossible

[1] Orange Free State

for the Indians to trade or live decently? That this is quite likely would appear from the following strong protest addressed by His Honour the British Agent against the Transvaal Government assigning an uninhabitable place to the Malays in 1893, at p. 72, Green Book No. 2:

> To be forced into a small Location on a spot used as a place to deposit the refuse of the town, without any water except the polluted soakage in the gully between the Location and the town, must inevitably result in malignant fevers and other diseases breaking out amongst them, whereby their lives and the health of the community in town will be endangered. But, apart from these serious objections, some of these people have not the means of erecting dwellings for themselves on the land pointed out (or anywhere else) such as they have been accustomed to live in. The consequence of forcing them out of their present habitations will, therefore, result in all of them leaving Pretoria to the great inconvenience and loss of the White people who employ their labour, not even to speak of the hardship to themselves. . . .

30. At the last page of the same book, in his Despatch dated the 21st March, 1894, the High Commissioner says as follows:

> . . . Her Majesty's Government assume that the Arbitration will apply to any Aboriginal of Asia who may be a British subject.

31. If, in terms of that Despatch, the Arbitration is to apply to the Aboriginals of Asia, the question is, are there any Asiatic Aboriginals at all in the Transvaal, unless all the Asiatics are to be treated as such *ipso facto*—a contention, your Petitioners are confident, will not be held out for one moment. Your Petitioners, therefore, will not certainly rank as Aboriginals.

32. If the whole objection to the Indian proceeds from sanitary grounds, the following restrictions are entirely unintelligible:

1. The Indians, like the Kaffirs, cannot become owners of fixed property.

2. The Indians must be registered, the fee being £3-10s.

3. In passing through the Republic, like the Natives, they must be able to produce passes unless they have the registration ticket.

4. They cannot travel first or second class on the railways. They are huddled together in the same compartment with the Natives.

33. The sting of all these insults and indignities becomes more galling when it is borne in mind that many of your Petitioners are large holders of property in Delagoa Bay. There they are so much respected that they cannot take out a third-class railway ticket. They

are gladly received by the Europeans there. They are not required to have passes. Why, your Petitioners humbly ask, should they be differently treated in the Transvaal? Do their sanitary habits become filthy as soon as they enter the Transvaal territory? It often happens that the same Indian is differently treated by the same European in Delagoa Bay and the Transvaal.

34. To show how harassing the pass law is, your Petitioners have appended hereto an affidavit from Mr. Haji Mahomed Haji Dada, which will speak for itself (App. G). Who Mr. Haji Mahomed is, willbe gathered from the copy of a letter attached to the affidavit (App. H). He is one of the foremost Indians in South Africa. Your Petitioners have attached the affidavit by way of illustration only, and to show how hard must be the lot of the other Indians, when a foremost Indian cannot travel without suffering indignity and actual hardships. If it were necessary, hundreds of such cases of ill-treatment could be proved to the hilt.

35. It has been also mentioned that the Indians live as parasites, and spend nothing. So far as the Indian labourers and their children are concerned, the objection will not hold water at all, and they are not supposed to be parasites, even by the most prejudiced Europeans. Your Petitioners may be allowed to mention from personal experience that, so far as a majority of the labourers are concerned, they live above their means and have settled with their families. As to the trading Indians, who are the butt of all the prejudice, a little explanation may be necessary. Your Petitioners, who are traders, do not deny, they take pride in acknowledging, that they send remittances to India for those who are dependent upon them, but the remittances are entirely out of proportion to their expenditure. The only reason why they are successful competitors is because they spend less on luxuries than the European traders. But, all the same, they have to pay rents to the European landlords, wages to the Native servants, and to pay Dutch farmers for the animals for meat. The other provisions, such as tea, coffee, etc., are bought in the country.

36. The question, then, really is not whether the Indian is to live in this street or that, but what *status* he is to occupy throughout South Africa. For, what is done in the Transvaal will also affect the action of the two Colonies. There seems to be a general consensus of opinion that the question will have to be settled on a common basis, modified by local conditions.

37. So far as the feeling has been *expressed,* it is to degrade the Indian to the position of the Kaffir. But the general feeling, not so strongly expressed but here and there voiced in the newspapers, of the respectable portion of the European community is quite the reverse.

38. The Colony of Natal has been inviting the other South African States to a 'Coolie' Conference.The word 'Coolie' has been used officially and it shows how high the expressed feeling runs against the Indians and what the Conference would do, if it could, with regard to the question. In the case put by the Transvaal Government before the Arbitrator, it is stated that the word 'Coolie' applies to *any* person coming from Asia.

39. When the feeling runs so high in South Africa against the Indian, when such a feeling owes its origin to interested agitation (as it is hoped, has been sufficiently shown above), when it is known that that feeling is by no means shared by all Europeans, when there is a general scramble for wealth in South Africa, when the state of morality of the people is not particularly high, when there are gross misrepresentations about the habits of the Indians which have given rise to special legislation, it is not too much, your Petitioners submit, to request Your Excellency to receive with the utmost caution the statements received against your Petitioners, and the proffered solutions of the Indian question.

40. Your Petitioners would also urge upon Your Excellency's consideration that not only does the Proclamation of 1858 entitle your Petitioners to the same privileges and rights as enjoyed by Her Majesty's other subjects, but your Petitioners have been specially assured of such a treatment by Your Excellency's Despatch, which says:

> It is the desire of Her Majesty's Government that the Queen's Indian subjects should be treated upon a footing of equality with all Her Majesty's other subjects.

41. Nor is this a local question; but, your Petitioners submit, it is pre-eminently an Imperial question. The decision of the question cannot but affect and guide the policy of the other Colonies and countries, where by treaty Her Majesty's subjects enjoy freedom of commerce, etc., and where Her Majesty's Indian subjects also may emigrate. Again, the question affects a very large Indian population in South Africa. With those who have settled in South Africa, it is almost a question of life and death. By persistent ill-treatment they cannot but degenerate, so much so that from their civilized habits they would

be degraded to the habits of the aboriginal Natives, and a generation hence, between the progeny of the Indians thus in course of degeneration and the Natives, there will be very little difference in habits, and customs, and thought. The very object of immigration will be frustrated, and a large portion of Her Majesty's subjects, instead of being raised in the scale of civilization, will be actually lowered. The results of such a state of things cannot but be disastrous. No self-respecting Indian can dare even visit South Africa. All Indian enterprise will be stifled. Your Petitioners have no doubt that Your Excellency will never allow such a sad event to happen in a place where Her Majesty enjoys suzerain power, or where the Union Jack flies.

42. Your Petitioners beg respectfully to point out that, under the present state of feeling against the Indians in South Africa, for Her Majesty's Government to yield to the interested clamour against your Petitioners would be an act of grave injustice to your Petitioners.

43. If it is true that your Petitioners' sanitary habits are not such as to endanger the health of the European community, and if it be true also that the agitation against them is due to trade jealousy, your Petitioners submit that the Award of the Chief Justice of the Orange Free State cannot be binding, even though it be in strict accordance with the terms of the reference. For, the very reason which induced Her Majesty's Government to assent to a departure from the Convention does not then exist.

44. If, however, Your Excellency is disposed to doubt the statements made herein, as regards your Petitioners' sanitary habits, your Petitioners humbly urge that, in view of the fact that very large interests are at stake, and that there are conflicting statements with regard to your Petitioners' sanitary habits, and that the feeling is very high against the Indians in South Africa, before any departure from the Convention is finally assented to, some impartial inquiry should be made as to the truth of the conflicting statements, and that the whole question of the *status* of the Indian in South Africa should be sifted.

In conclusion, your Petitioners leave their case in Your Excellency's hands, earnestly praying and fully hoping that your Petitioners will not be allowed to become a prey to the colour prejudice, and that Her Majesty's Government will not consent to a treatment of the Indians in the South African Republic which would place them in a degraded and unnatural position and deprive them of

the means of earning an honest livelihood.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc.

APPENDIX A

PRETORIA, Z.A.R.[1]
April 27, 1895

I hereby certify that I have practised as a general medical practitioner in the town of Pretoria for the last five years.

During that period I have had a considerable practice amongst the Indians, especially about three years ago, when they were more numerous than at present.

I have generally found them cleanly in their person, and free from the personal diseases due to dirt or careless habits. Their dwellings are generally clean and sanitation is willingly attended to by them. Class considered, I should be of opinion that the lowest class Indian compares most favourably with the lowest class white, i.e. the lowest class Indian lives better and in better habitation, and with more regard to sanitary measures, than the lowest class white.

I have, further, found that, during the period that smallpox was epidemic in the town and district, and is still epidemic in the district, that although every nation nearly had one or more of its members at some time in the *lazaretto,* there was not a single Indian attacked.

Generally, in my opinion, it is impossible to object to the Indians on sanitary grounds, provided always the inspection of the sanitary authorities is made as strictly and regularly for the Indian as for the white.

H. PRIOR VEALE,
B.A., M.B.,B.S. (CANTAB)

APPENDIX B

JOHANNESBURG,
1895

This is to certify that I have examined the residences of the bearers of this note, and that they are in a sanitary and hygienic condition, and in fact such as any European might inhabit. I have resided in India. I can certify that their habitations here in the Z.A.R. are far superior to those of their native country.

C. P. SPINIK, M.R.C.P. & L.R.C.S.
(LONDON)

[1] This is Zuid-Afrikaansche Republick, Dutch for South African Republic.

APPENDIX C

JOHANNESBURG,
14th March, 1895

Having frequently occasion to visit the better class of the Indian population of Johannesburg (merchants, etc., coming from Bombay) in my professional capacity, I give as my opinion that they are as clean in their habits and domestic life as white people of the same standing.

DR. NAHMMACHER, M.D., ETC.

APPENDIX D

JOHANNESBURG,
14th March, 1895

The undersigned, having been informed that the Arbitration Commission in connection with the question regarding the Indian merchants in the South African Republic is now holding its meeting at Bloemfontein, and, also, having been made aware of the accusations against the said Indian merchants, to the effect that on account of their dirty habits they are a danger to reside amongst the European population, hereby wish to distinctly declare:

1st. That the aforementioned Indian merchants, the majority of whom come from Bombay, keep their business places, as well as their residences, in a clean and proper sanitary state—in fact, just as good as the Europeans.

2nd. That it is a distinct error in calling them "Coolies" or inhabitants of British India of a "lower caste", as they decidedly belong to the better and higher castes of India.

HEYMANN GORDON & CO.
BRANDE & MEIRKS
LINDSAY & INNES
GUSTAV SCHNEIDER
C. LIEBE
CHRISTOPHER P. SPNIK
A. WENTWORTH BALL
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JOHANNESBURG, Z.A.R.
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P.P., ISRAEL BROS.
H. CLAPHAM
ADAM ALEXANDER
B. ALEXANDER
A. BEHRENS
S. COLEMAN
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BELLISTEDT & CO.
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B. EMANUEL

GENERAL MERCHANTS AND
IMPORTERS, JOHANNESBERG
E. NEELL
J. KUSTING
N. W. LEWIS
SPENCE & HURRY
FREISMAN & SHAPISO
J. FOGELMAN
T. RATES & CO.
P.P., B. GUNDELFINGER
J. GUNDELFINGER

APPENDIX E

(*True Translation*)

TO

HIS HONOUR THE STATE PRESIDENT OF
THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC, PRETORIA

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOUR :

In view of the gross misrepresentation by certain interested Europeans residing in the Republic, to the effect that the burghers of this State are opposed to the Indians residing or trading in the State, and their agitation against these people, we, the undersigned burghers, beg respectfully to state that so far from the burghers being opposed to these people fully stopping and trading in the State, they recognize in them a peaceful and law-abiding, and therefore desirable, class of people. To the poor they are a veritable blessing inasmuch as by their keen competition they keep down the prices of necessaries of life which they can do owing to their thrifty and temperate habits.

We venture to submit that their withdrawal from the State will be a dire calamity to us, especially those of us who, living far away from centres of business, depend upon the Indians for the supply of our daily wants, and that therefore any measures restrictive of their freedom, and having for their object their ultimate removal, and especially that of those Indians who are traders and hawkers, will necessarily interfere with our enjoyment and comforts. We, therefore, humbly pray that the Government will not take any steps that may scare away the Indians from the Transvaal.[1]

[1] Signed by a number of Burghers

APPENDIX F

TO

HIS HONOUR THE STATE PRESIDENT OF
THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC, PRETORIA

We, the undersigned Europeans residing in this Republic, beg to protest against the agitation set up against the Indians, residing or trading freely in the country, by certain interested persons.

So far as our experience is concerned, we believe their sanitary habits to be in no way inferior to those of the Europeans, and the statements about prevalence of infectious diseases among them are certainly without ground, especially as regards the Indian traders.

We firmly believe that the agitation owes its origin not to their habits as regards sanitation, but to trade jealousy, because, owing to their frugal and temperate habits, they have been able to keep down the prices of necessaries of life and have therefore been an inestimable boon to the poor classes of the society in the State.

We do not believe any good cause exists for compelling them to reside or trade in separate quarters.

We would therefore humbly request Your Honour not to adopt or countenance any measure that would tend to restrict their freedom and ultimately result in their withdrawal from the Republic, a result that cannot but strike at the very means of their livelihood and cannot, therefore, we humbly submit, be contemplated with complacency in a Christian country.[1]

APPENDIX G

I, Haji Mahomed Haji Dada, managing and senior partner of Haji Mahomed Haji Dada & Co., of Durban, Pretoria, Delagoa Bay and elsewhere, merchants, do make oath and say that :

1. Some time in the year 1894, I was travelling from Johannesburg to Charlestown by coach.
2. As I reached the Transvaal border, a European with a uniform and another came up and asked me for a pass. I said I had no pass and was never before required to produce any pass.
3. The man thereupon roughly said to me that I would have to get one.
4. I asked him to get one and offered to pay.
5. He then very roughly asked me to go down with him to the pass officer, and threatened to pull me out if I did not do so.

[1] The petition is printed in Afrikaans and in English. The original signatures do not appear on the field copy.

6. In order to avoid further trouble I got down. I was made to walk about 2 miles, the man riding on a horse.

7. On my reaching the office I was required to take no pass but was only asked where I was going to. I was then asked to go away

8. The man who was on horseback, and who went with me, also left me and I had to walk back two miles to find the coach gone.

9. I was therefore obliged, although I had paid my fare as far as Charlestown, to walk there, a distance of over two miles.

10. I know from personal knowledge that many other Indians, similarly placed, have undergone such troubles and indignity.

11. About a few days ago, I had to travel to Pretoria from Delagoa Bay in the company of two friends.

12. We were all required to arm ourselves with passes, just as the Natives of South Africa are required to do, in order to be able to travel in the Transvaal.

HAJEE MAHOMED HAJEE DADA

Sworn before me at Pretoria, this the 24th day of April, 1895.
Envaralohery
V. Rrasak

APPENDIX H

TEL. & CABLE ADDRESS : "BOATING"

POINT, PORT NATAL,
March 2, 1895

FROM

THE AFRICA BOATING COMPANY, LTD.

TO

MR. HAJI MAHOMED HAJI DADA
(MESSRS HAJI MAHOMED HAJI DADA & CO.)

DEAR SIR,

Seeing you about to pay a visit to India, we take this opportunity of placing on recond our very high appreciation of your various business qualifications which you have proved during our business relations with you for the last fifteen years, and it gives us very great pleasure in stating that your integrity in business matters has never been questioned by any of the commercial community during your residence here, and we trust you will see your way to return to Natal, and we then hope that we shall renew our business relations with you once again. Hoping you will have a very pleasant voyage.

We are,
Yours faithfully,
For the African Boating Co.,
CHARLES T. HITCHINS

From a photostat: S.N. 417-424; also S.N. 451 (3-16)

64. PETITION TO LORD ELGIN[1]

[Before *May 5, 1895*]

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF ELGIN,
P.C., G.M.S.I., G.M.I.E., ETC., ETC.
VICEROY AND GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA
CALCUTTA

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS
RESIDING IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT :

Your Petitioners representing the Indian community in theSouth African Republic venture hereby to approach Your Excellency with regard to Her Majesty's Indian British subjects in the South African Republic.

Your Petitioners instead of reiterating the facts and arguments embodied in a similar petition[2], signed by over 10,000 British Indians, and sent to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, beg to append hereto a copy of the petition with its annexures, and commend it to Your Excellency's perusal.

Your Petitioners after mature deliberation have come to the conclusion that unless they sought the direct protection of Your Excellency as Her Majesty's representative and virtual Ruler of all India, and unless that protection was graciously accorded, the position of the Indians in the South African Republic, and indeed throughout the whole of South Africa, would be utterly helpless and the enterprising Indians in South Africa would be forcibly degraded to the position of the Natives of South Africa, and this through no fault of their own.

If an intelligent stranger were to visit the South African Republic, and were told that there was a class of people in South Africa who could not hold fixed property, who could not move about the State without passes, who alone had to pay a special registration

[1] This petition, along with the preceding item, was forwarded by Sir Jacobus de Wet on May 30, 1895, to the High Commissioner, Cape Town.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

fee of £3 10s as soon as they entered the country for purposes of trade, who could not get licences to trade, and who would shortly be ordered to remove to places far away from towns, where only they could reside and trade, and who could not stir out of their houses after 9 o'clock, and that stranger were asked to guess the reasons for such special disabilities, would he not conclude that these people must be veritable ruffians, anarchists, a political danger to the State and society? And yet your Petitioners beg to assure Your Excellency that the Indians who are labouring under all the above disabilities are neither ruffians nor anarchists, but one of the most peaceful and law-abiding communities in South Africa, and especially in the South African Republic.

For in Johannesburg, while there are people belonging to European nationalities who are a source of real danger to the State, and who have necessitated only lately an increase of the police force, and have thrown too much work on the detective department, the Indian community have not given the State any cause for anxiety on that score.

In support of the above, your Petitioners respectfully refer Your Excellency to the newspapers throughout South Africa.

Even the active agitation, that has brought about the present state of things with regard to the Indian community, has not desired to bring any such charges against the Indians.

The only charge brought forward is that the Indians do not observe proper sanitation. Your Petitioners trust that the charge has been conclusively shown to be groundless in the representation to His Excellency the Right Honourable the Marquis of Ripon. But assuming that the charge has some ground, it is clear that that could not be a reason for preventing the Indians from holding fixed property, or moving about the country freely and without restraint on their liberty. That could not be a reason for making the Indians liable for a special payment of £3 10s.

It might be said that the Government of the South African Republic has already passed certain laws, and that the Chief Justice of the Orange Free State has already given his Award which is binding on Her Majesty's Government.

These objections, your Petitioners humbly believe, have been answered in the accompanying petition. The London Convention specially protects the rights of all Her Majesty's British subjects. This

is a recognized fact. Her Majesty's Government assented to a departure from the Convention and also to arbitration on *sanitary grounds*. And such assent to a departure from the Convention, your Petitioners are informed, was given without consulting Your Excellency's predecessor in office. Thus, so far as the Indian Government is concerned, your Petitioners venture to urge that the assent is not binding. That the Indian Government should have been consulted is self-evident. And even if Your Excellency were ill-disposed to intervene on your Petitioners' behalf at this stage and on this ground alone, the fact that the reasons which induced the above assent did not and do not exist, that in fact Her Majesty's Government has been misled by misrepresentations is, your Petitioners submit, sufficient to justify them in praying for Your Excellency's intervention, and Your Excellency in granting the prayer.

And the issues involved are so tremendously important and Imperial, that in view of your Petitioners' emphatic but respectful protest against the allegation about sanitation, your Petitioners humbly urge that the question cannot be settled without a thorough inquiry, without injustice being done to Her Majesty's Indian British subjects in the South African Republic.

Without further encroaching upon Your Excellency's valuable time, your Petitioners would again request Your Excellency's undivided attention to the annexure and, in conclusion, earnestly hope that Your Excellency's protection will be liberally granted to the Indian British subjects residing in South Africa.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners shall for ever pray, etc.[1]

From a photostat of a printed copy : S.N. 451

65. LETTER TO M. C. CAMROODEEN

P. O. Box 66
DURBAN, NATAL
May 5, 1895

DEAR MR. MAHOMED CASSIM CAMROODEEN,

I have received from you the signatures of the Indians. I hope

[1] This petition, too, was ineffective. Dadabhai Naoroji led a deputation to Chemberlain at the Colonial Office on August 29. It presented the case of the Indians in the four States of South Africa.

you have obtained those of the Dutch and promptly sent them to Pretoria. There should be no delay in this, as the work is very urgent. I have wired to Pretoria also to send a copy of the Dutch petition there. All this should be completed by Wednesday. Please write to me in detail as to what you have done.

It is very necessary that every Indian should exert himself to the utmost in this work. Otherwise, we shall have to repent.[1]

Yours sincerely,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 317

66. A BAND OF VEGETARIAN MISSIONARIES

It was in England that I read in Mrs. Anna Kingsford's *Perfect Way in Diet* that there was a colony of Trappists[2] in South Africa who were vegetarians. Ever since that I had wished to see these vegetarians. The wish has at last been realized.

At the outset, I may remark that South Africa, and particularly Natal, is especially adapted for vegetarians. The Indians have made Natal the Garden Colony of South Africa. One can grow almost anything on the South African soil, and that in abundance. The supply of bananas, pineapples and oranges is almost inexhaustible, and far greater than the demand. There is no wonder that the vegetarians can thrive very well in Natal. The only wonder is, that in spite of such facilities and the warm climate, there should be so few vegetarians. The result is that large tracts of land still remain neglected and uncultivated. The staple articles of food are imported when it is perfectly possible to grow all of them in South Africa; and in a vast territory like Natal, there is much distress among a small population of 40,000 whites. All this, because they will not take to agricultural pursuits.

Another curious but painful result of the unnatural mode of living is that there is a very strong prejudice against the Indian population who also number 40,000. The Indians, being vegetarians, take to agriculture without any difficulty whatsoever. Naturally,

[1] On May 8, Camroodeen wrote back (S.N. 39) reporting that he had not been able to collect a single signature to the petition to be presented to Lord Ripon.

[2] Monks of the Cistercian order founded in 1140 a.d. at Soligny-la-Trappe and noted for silence and other austerities

therefore, all over the Colony, the small farms are owned by Indians, whose keen competition gives offence to the white population. They are following a dog-in-the-manager and suicidal policy in so behaving. They would rather leave the vast agricultural resources in the country undeveloped, than have the Indians to develop them. Owing to such stolidity and shortsightedness, a Colony that can easily support double, or even treble, the number of European and Indian inhabitants, with difficulty supports 80,000 Europeans and Indians. The Transvaal Government have gone so far in their prejudice, that the whole of the Republic, although the soil is very fruitful, remains a desert of dust. And if the gold mines could not be worked from any cause, thousands of men would be thrown out of employment and literally starved to death. Is there not here a great lesson to be learnt? The flesheating habits have really tended to retard the progress of the community, and, indirectly, to create division among the two great communities which ought to be united and work hand in hand. There is also this striking fact to be noticed that the Indians enjoy as good a health as the Europeans in the Colony, and I know that many doctors would be simply starving if there were no Europeans, or their flesh-pots, and that by their thrifty and temperate habits, both attributable to vegetarianism, Indians can successfully compete with Europeans. Of course, it should be understood that the Indians in the Colony are not pure vegetarians. They are practically so.

We shall see presently how the Trappists of Mariann Hill, near Pinetown, are a standing testimony to the truth of the above remarks.

Pinetown is a little village, situated at a distance of 16 miles by rail from Durban. It is about 1,100 feet above the sea leavel, and enjoys a beautiful climate.

The Trappist monastery is about three miles distant from Pinetown. My companion and I walked to Mariann Hill, as the hill, or rather the cluster of hills, on which the Abbey is situated, is called. It is a very pleasant walk through the little hills all covered with green grass.

On our reaching the settlement, we saw a gentleman with a pipe in his mouth, and we at once knew that he was not one of the brotherhood. He, however, took us to the visitors' room, where a visitors' book was kept. It appeared from the book that it commenced from 1894, and there were hardly twenty pages filled up. Indeed, the mission is not at all known as it ought to be.

One of the brotherhood came up and bowed very low. We were offered tamarind water and pineapples. After having refreshed ourselves, we accompanied the guide to the various places he took us to. The various buildings one saw were all substantial red-brick buildings. All was quiet; the silence was broken only by the noise of the instruments in the workshops or the native children.

The settlement is a quiet little model village, owned on the truest republican principles. The principle of liberty, equality and fraternity is carried out in its entirety. Every man is a brother, every woman a sister. The monks number about 120 on the settlement, and the nuns, or the sisters as they are called, number about 60. The sisters' cloister is about half a mile from the brothers'. Both the brothers and the sisters observe a strict vow of silence and of chastity. No brother or sister may speak except those who are allowed to by the Abbot, who is the head of the Trappists in Natal. And those are only allowed to speak who have to go to town to make purchases or to look after visitors.

The brothers are dressed in long robes with a black piece of cloth in front and on the back. The sisters wear red clothing of the simplest style. None seemed to wear socks.

A candidate for the brotherhood has to make a vow for two years and, till then, is called a novice. After two years, he may either leave the cloister or make a vow for life. A model Trappist gets up at 2 a.m. and devotes four hours to prayer and contemplation. At six, he has his breakfast, which consists of bread and coffee, or some such simple foods. He dines at twelve, and makes a meal of bread and soup, and fruits. He sups at six in the evening and goes to bed at 7 or 8 p.m. The brothers eat no fish, flesh or fowl. They discard even eggs. They take milk, but in Natal we were told they could not get it cheap. The sisters are allowed meat four days in the week. Asked why they put up with such an anomaly, the obliging guide said: “Because the sisters are more delicate than the brothers.” Neither my companion, who is almost a vegetarian, nor I could see the force or logic of the reasoning. Certainly, both of us were very much grieved to hear the news which was a surprise to us, for we expected both the brothers and the sister to be vegetarians.

They take no intoxicating liquors except under medical advice. None may keep money for private use. All are equally rich or poor.

We saw no wardrobes, chests of drawers, or portmanteaus,

although we were allowed to see every inch of the place. They may not leave the limits of the settlement, except those who are permitted to do so on business. They may not read newspapers and books that are not religious. They may not read any religious books but only those that are allowed. It is this hard austere life that caused our friend with the pipe in his mouth, whom we first met, to remark in reply to a question whether he was a Trappist—"No fear, I am anything but a Trappist." And yet the good brothers and sisters did not seem to consider their lives to have fallen on hard places.

A Protestant clergyman said to his audience that the Roman Catholics are weakly, sickly and sad. Well, if the Trappists are any criterion of what a Catholic is, they are, on the contrary, healthy and cheerful. Wherever we went, a beaming smile and a lowly bow greeted us, whether we saw a brother or a sister. Even while the guide was descanting on the system he prized so much, he did not at all seem to consider the self-chosen discipline a hard yoke to bear. A better instance of undying faith and perfect, implicit obedience could not well be found anywhere else.

If their repast is the simplest possible, their dining tables and bedrooms are no less so.

The former are made on the settlement, of wood, without any varnish. They use no tablecloths. The knives and spoons are the cheapest to be had in Durban. Instead of glass-ware they use enamelled things.

For bedrooms they have a large hall (but none too large for the inmates) which contains about 80 beds. Every available space is utilized for the beds.

In the Native quarters they seem to have overdone it in point of beds. As soon as we entered the sleeping hall for Natives, we noticed the closeness and the stuffy air. The beds are all joined together, separated by only single boards. There was hardly space enough to walk.

They believe in no colour distinctions. The Natives are accorded the same treatment as the whites. They are mostly children. They get the same food as the brothers, and are dressed as well as they themselves are. While it is generally said, not without some truth, that the Christian Kaffir is a failure, everyone, even the wildest sceptic, admit that the mission of the Trappists has proved the most successful in point of turning out really good, Christian Natives. While the mission schools of other denominations very often enable the Natives

to contract all the terrible vices of the Western civilization, and very rarely produce any moral effect on them, the Natives of the Trappist mission are patterns of simplicity, virtue and gentleness. It was a treat to see them saluting passers-by in a humble yet dignified manner.

There are about 1,200 Natives on the mission, including children and adults. They have all exchanged a life of sloth, indolence and superstition, for one of industry, usefulness and devotion to one Supreme God.

On the settlement there are various workshops—blacksmiths', tinsmith0s', carpenters', shoemakers', tanners', etc., where the Natives are taught all these useful industries, in addition to the English and the Zulu languages. Here it may be remarked that it speaks volumes for the highmindedness of the noble settlers that, although almost all of them are Germans, they never attempt to teach the Natives German; all these Natives work side by side with the whites.

At the sisters' cloisters, they have the ironing, sewing, strawhat manufacturing and knitting departments, where one can see the Native girls, dressed in clean costumes, working assiduously.

About two miles from the Abbey is situated the printing department, and the flour mill worked by a waterfall. It is a huge pile of building. There is also an oil machine, which is worked for pressing the oil from monkey nuts. It is needless to mention that the above mentioned workshops supply the settlers with most of their requirements.

They grow many kinds of tropical fruits on the farm and the settlement is almost self-supporting.

They love and respect, and are in turn loved and respected by, the Natives living in their neighbourhood who, as a rule, supply them with the converts.

The most prominent feature of the settlement is that you see religion everywhere. Every room has a Cross and, on the entrance, a small receptacle for holy water which every inmate reverently applies to his eyelids, the forehead and the chest. Even the quick walk to the flour mill is not without some reminder of the Cross. It is a lovely footpath. On one side, you have a magnificent valley through which runs a small rivulet which murmurs the sweetest music, and on the other, little rocks whereon are carved the various inscriptions reminding you of the scenes of the Calvary. The valley is wholly covered with a green carpet of vegetation, studded with beautiful trees

here and there. A lovelier walk, or a lovelier scenery, could not be well imagined. The inscriptions carved in such a place cannot fail to produce a grand effect upon the mind. They are carved at such regular intervals that no sooner has one completed one's thoughts on one inscription than another meets one's gaze.

The walk thus forms a continuous exercise for calm contemplation, unmarred by any other thoughts, or outside noise and bustle. Some of the inscriptions are: "Jesus falls a first time"; "Jesus falls a second time"; "Simon carries the Cross"; "Jesus is nailed to the Cross"; "Jesus is laid in his mother's lap", etc., etc..

Of course, the Natives, too, are chiefly vegetarians. Although they are not prohibited from taking flesh or meat, they are not supplied with any on the settlement.

There are about twelve such settlements in South Africa, most of which are in Natal. There are in all about 300 monks and about 120 nuns.

Such are our vegetarians in Natal. Though they do not make of vegetarianism a creed, though they base it simply on the ground that a vegetarian diet helps them to crucify the flesh better, and though, perhaps, they are not even aware of the existence of the vegetarian societies, and would not even care to read any vegetarian literature, where is the vegetarian who would not be proud of this noble band, even a casul intercourse with whom fills one with a spirit of love, charity and self-sacrifice, and who are a living testimony to the triumph of vegetarianism from a spiritual point of view? I know from personal experience that a visit to the farm is worth a voyage from London to Natal. It cannot but produce a lasting holy impression on the mind. No matter whether one is a Protestant, a Christian or a Buddhist or what not, one cannot help exclaiming, after a visit to the farm: "If this is Roman Catholicism, everything said against it is a lie." It proves conclusively, to my mind, that a religion appears divine or devilish, according as its professors choose to make it appear.

The Vegetarian, 18-5-1895

67. EXTRACTS FROM LETTER TO "THE NATAL ADVERTISER"[1]

[*Before May 22, 1895*]

The report states that the Indians were observed "with portions of sleepers on their heads".[2] The evidence was that. . . seven charged had on their heads portions of sleepers together with. . .[3] Although the sleepers were called for they were never produced. The report says, "On attempting to arrest them 71 of their number turned round with sticks, tins, pieces of iron and cooking utensils and plied them freely on the police making them fly for safety. P. C. Madden arrived on the scene with further assistance." The evidence went to show that the seven charged turned round with sticks, and two of them incited to oppose. There was only one policeman at first and that was the Native constable. Then P. C. Madden alone, not with any assistance, came on the scene. While the Native constable is alleged to have been resisted, P. C. Madden distinctly said he was not resisted at all. The report goes on: "The rest followed by a body. . . saying they would not leave until their colleagues were discharged." The uncontradicted evidence of Mr. Mason, who knew what he was talking about, went to show that "the rest" were under arrest and were, Mr. Mason was informed by Mr. Madden, going to be charged by the Railway Department with desertion. They have gone now for the second time to Mr. Mason to complain that they were starving. The report says, "Three or four constables appeared in the court with their faces bruised and their clothes torn." The facts are that there was only the Native constable who said he was beaten with sticks. When asked if he could show any marks, he said it was"somewhere" on his head that no one could see. He had no bruises. His clothes were neither torn, nor did he complain that they were. So far as my memory can be trusted, I believe there was not a single word about "utensils and irons". And if all had bundles of sticks on their heads it is not easy to understand how they

[1] Referring to a report in *The Natal Advertiser*, 20-5-1895, Gandhiji wrote "a long letter", pointing out its inaccuracies. The original not being available, the extracts as published in the *Advertiser*, 22-5-1895, are reproduced here.

[2] According to the report a large number of Indians, leaving the railway yard, were noticed in possession of portions of sleepers. Earlier the railway authorities had ordered that coal instead of firewood be supplied to them which they resented.

[3] Some words here are undecipherable.

could carry utensils, etc. P. C. Madden was the only other constable who gave evidence. But he was not interfered with and he could give no evidence of his own knowledge as to the Native constable having been beaten. . . .[1]

This is not the first occasion on which I have found the facts in your reports mis-stated or exaggerated, and I am sorry to say whenever this has happened, they have been mis-stated and exaggerated much to the disadvantage of the Indian community.[2]

The Natal Advertiser, 22-5-1895

68. PETITION TO NATAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL[3]

DURBAN,
[Before *June 26, 1895*]

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF
THE HONOURABLE THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS, RESIDING AS
TRADERS IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT:

Your Petitioners, as representing the Indian community in the Colony, venture hereby to petition Your Honourable Council with regard to the Indian Immigration Law Amendment Bill[4], so far as it affects the present term of indenture, and proposes a yearly licence of £3 to be taken out by every immigrant wishing to stop in the Colony as a free Indian, after finishing his term of indenture.

Your Petitioners respectfully submit that both the clauses

[1] The report here says that "some further evidence" recapitulated by Gandhiji has been omitted.

[2] The report concludes : Mr. Gandhi implies that any alleged "mis-statements" or "exaggerations" have been knowingly made with a view to prejudicing the Indian community in the eyes of our readers. Such however is not the case. If they have occurred it has been quite unwittingly. In reporting court cases the evidence has almost always to be condensed, and the summary may not satisfy certain of the interested parties. The reports, however, whether accurate or inaccurate are written without the slightest desire or intention to prejudicially affect one side or the other.

[3] The Petition was published in *The Natal Mercury,* 26-6-1895.

[4] The Bill which was introduced in the Natal Council on June 25 had its second reading the next day and was passed.

above referred to are entirely unjust and uncalled for.

Your Petitioners humbly draw the attention of this Honourable House to the following from the report of the delegates, Messrs Binns[1] and Mason, who were commissioned to go to India in connection with this matter:

> So far no second term of indenture has been agreed to in the case of any country to which Coolies emigrated, although the consent of the Government of India had frequently been asked for; and in no instance had the condition of compulsory return at the end of the indentures been sanctioned.

Thus the clauses in the Bill are a total departure, your Petitioners submit, for the worse, from the practice prevalent throughout the British Colonies.

Assuming that the average age of an indentured Indian at the time of his entering into the contract of indenture is 25, under the clause which expects the Indian to work for 10 years, the best part of the life of the indentured Indian would be simply spent away in a state of bondage.

For an Indian to return to India after continuous 10 years' stay in the Colony would be pure fatuity. All the old cords and ties will have been broken up. Such an Indian will be comparatively a stranger in his motherland. To find work in India would be almost impossible. The market is already overcrowded, and he will not have amassed sufficient fortune to enable him to live on the interest on his capital.

The total of the wages for 10 years would amount to £87. If the indentured Indian saves £50, allowing only £37 for clothing and other expenses during the whole 10 years, that capital will not give him interest sufficient to keep body and soul together, even in a poor country like India. Such an Indian, therefore, even if he ventured to return to India, would be compelled to return under indenture, and thus his whole life would be spent in bondage. Moreover, during the 10 years the indentured Indian would be entirely neglecting his family, should he have any. And a family man will not be able to save even £50. Your Petitioners know several instances of indentured Indians with families having saved nothing.

As to the 2nd Clause, about the £3 licence, your Petitioners

[1] Sir Henry Binns (1837-99); Premier of Natal 1897

submit that it is calculated to create wide discontent and oppression. Why one class of Her Majesty's subjects, and this the most useful to the Colony, should be singled out for such taxation, it is, in the humble opinion of your Petitioners, difficult to understand.

Your Petitioners most respectfully venture to submit that it is not in accordance with the principles of simple justice and equity to make a man pay heavily for being allowed to remain free in the Colony after he has already lived under bondage for 10 years.

The fact that the clauses will apply only to those Indians who would come to the Colony after the Bill has become law, and that they would know the terms under which they may come, does not free the clauses from the objections sought to be raised against them. For both the contracting parties, your Petitioners submit, will not have the same freedom of action. An Indian hard-pressed by pangs of poverty and finding it impossible to support his family can scarcely be called a free agent when he signs the contract of indenture. Men have been known to consent to do far worse things in order to be free from immediately pressing difficulties. Your Petitioners, therefore, humbly hope and pray that the clauses above referred to will not meet with the approval of this Honourable House, and for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners shall for ever pray, etc., etc.

ABDULLA HAJI ADAM
AND SEVERAL OTHER INDIANS

From a photostat of a printed copy : S.N. 435

69. LETTER TO PHEROZESHAH MEHTA

CENTRAL WEST STREET,
DURBAN,
August 9, 1895

THE HON'BLE PHEROZESHAH MEHTA
M.R.C. & C. & C.
BOMBAY
SIR,

By direction of the Indian community I beg to send by registered book [-post] four copies of the petitions to Home Government[1] and the Indian Government[2] regarding the Immigration

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to J. Chamberlan, 11-8-1895
[2] *Vide* "Memorial to Lord Elgin", 11-8-1895

Law Amendment Bill passed by the Natal Parliament. I have to request you to extend your active sympathy to the Indians in South Africa.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: Pherozeshah Mehta Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

70. MEMORIAL TO J. CHAMBERLAIN

[DURBAN,
August 11, 1895]

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN,
HER MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR THE COLONIES, LONDON

THE MEMORIAL OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS
RESIDING IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT:

Your Memorialists, representing the Indian community in the Colony of Natal, respectfully venture to approach you with respect tothe Indian Immigration Law Amendment Bill recently passed by the Hon. Legislative Assembly, and the Hon. Legislative Council of Natal, in so far as it affects the existing conditions of indenture and requires a special licence, costing £3 every year, to be taken out by the indentured Indians coming under that Law and wishing to remain in the Colony as free Indians.

2. Your Memorialists, with a view to have the Clauses dealing with the above matter left out, presented respectful memorials[1] to both the Honourable Houses, but, your Memorialists regret to mention, without avail. The copies of the memorials are annexed hereto, and marked A and B respectively.

3. The Clauses that deal with the matter are as follows:

> Clause 2. From and after the date when this Act shall take effect the indentures to be signed by Indian immigrants as provided by Schedules B and

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Assembly", before 5-5-1895, and the preceding item.

C of the Indian Immigration Law, 1891, referred to in Section 11 of the said Law, shall contain a Covenant by the Indian immigrants, in words as follows:

And we further agree that after the expiration or other determination we shall either return to India or remain in Natal under indentures to be from time to time entered into; provided that each term of new indentured service shall be for two years, and provided further, that the rate of wages for each year of indentured service after that provided by this Contract shall be 16/- per month for the first year, 17/- per month for the second year, 18/- per month forthe third year, 19/- per month for the fourth year, and 20/- per month for the fifth and each succeeding year.

Clause 6 runs as follows:

Every indentured Indian who shall have entered into the Covenant set out in Section 2 of this Act, and who shall fail, neglect, or refuse to return to India, or become re-indentured in Natal, shall take out year by year, a pass or licence to remain in the Colony to be issued by the Magistrate of his district, and shall pay for such pass or licence a yearly sum of £3 sterling, which may be recovered by summary process by any Clerk of the Peace or other officer appointed to get in such licence money.

The Schedule B referred to in Clause 2, quoted above, so far as it relates to the period of service is as follows:

We, the undersigned, emigrants from . . . . to Natal, hereby engage to serve the employer to whom we may respectively be allotted by the Protector of Indian Immigrants to Natal; provided that we shall receive monthly in money the wages stated hereunder opposite our respective names, and the allowances following.

4. From the above it will be seen, that if the Bill under discussion became law, an indentured Indian, in case he desires to settle in the Colony after the first five years of his indentured service, should either have to remain under perpetual indenture, or pay a yearly tax of £3; your Memorialists have used the word *tax* advisedly, because that was the word used in the original Bill before it passed the Committee stage. Your Memorialists submit that the mere change of name from tax to licence does not make it the less offensive but shows the knowledge on the part of the framers that a special poll-tax, on a special class of people in the Colony, is entirely repugnant to the British notions of justice.

5. Now, your Memorialists humbly, but emphatically, submit, that to raise the term of indenture from five years to a practically indefinite period is extremely unjust, especially because such a

measure is absolutely uncalled for so far as the industries protected, or affected by, the indentured Indians are concerned.

6. The clauses owe their origin to the Commission that was sent out to India in the year 1894 by the Natal Government, and the report made by the Delegates, Messrs Binns and Mason, who formed the Commission. The reasons given in that report for such legislation are given at pp. 20 and 21 of the *Annual Report of the Protector of Immigrants for 1894*. Your Memorialists venture to quote the following from the report of the Delegates:

> In a country where the Native population is in number so far in excess of the European, the unlimited settlement of Indians is not considered desirable, and there is a general wish that when they have completed their last period of indenture they should return to India. There are already about 25,000 free Indians settled in the Colony, many of whom have allowed their right to a return passage to lapse; this is exclusive of a very considerable Banya trading population!

7. Thus the reasons for the special arrangement are political merely. Properly speaking, there is no question of overcrowding at all. There can be none in a newly opened-up country where there are yet vast tracts of land entirely uninhabited and uncultivated.

8. Again, in the same report, the Delegates state as follows:

> There is a strong feeling amongst the merchants and shopkeepers with regard to the Arabs, who are all traders and not workers; but as they are mostly British subjects and do not go to the Colony under any form of agreement, it is recognized that they cannot be interfered with.
>
> * * *
>
> The Coolie does not come into competition to any considerable extent with the European. Field work for Europeans is impossible on the coast, where all the plantations are situated, and the number of servants other than Coolies and Natives has always been very small.
>
> * * *
>
> Althouth we are decidedly of opinion that up to the present the working Indians *who have settled down* (the italics are your Memorialists') have been of great benefit to the Colony, we cannot avoid, having regard to the future, and, in the face of the great Native problem yet to be solved in South Africa, sharing in the concern which is now felt. If a large proportion of

the Coolies had taken advantage of the return passage provided for them, there would have been less cause for alarm.

9. Your Memorialists most respectfully submit that the above extracts, which form part of the reasons given for measures restrictive of the settlement of *freed Indians* in the Colony, go to prove the exact opposite; for if the Indian traders, to which class most of your Memorialists belong, who "do not go to the Colony under any form of agreement", could not be interfered with, *much less* the indentured Indians, who are also equally British subjects and who are, so to speak, invited to go to the Colony, and whose *settlement* (in the Delegates' own words) "has been of great benefit to the Colony", and who have therefore a special claim on the goodwill and attention of the Colonists.

10. And, if the 'Coolie' "does not come into competition to any considerable extent with the Europeans", where is the justification, your Memorialists humbly ask, for adopting measures that would make it difficult for the indentured Indians to earn honest bread in peace and freedom? It does not certainly lie in any qualities special to the indentured Indians which render them dangerous members of society. The peace-loving disposition and the mildness of the Indian nation are proverbial. Their obedience to authorities over them is no less prominent a trait of their character, and it would not lie in the mouth of the Delegates to say otherwise; for the Protector, who was one of the Delegates, in his report, at p. 15 of the same book, says:

> Many persons, I am aware, condemn the Indians as a race, yet these persons cannot fail, if they look around them, to see hundreds of these Indians honestly and peaceably pursuing their several useful and desirable occupations.
>
> * * *
>
> I am pleased to be able to state that the Indians generally resident in the Colony continue to form a prosperous, enterprising and *law-abiding* section of the community.

11. The Hon. the Attorney-General, in moving the second reading of the Bill, is reported to have said that:

> There was no intention to interfere with the introduction of labour to the injury of any industry, but these Indians were brought here for the purpose

> of supplying labour for the development of local industries, and were not intended to form portion of the South African nation which was being built up in the various States.

12. With the greatest deference to the learned Attorney-General, your Memorialists humbly submit that the above remarks condemn entirely the clauses under discussion, and venture to believe that Her Majesty's Government will not endorse such remarks by sanctioning the Bill.

13.Your Memorialists venture to think that it is against the spirit of the British Constitution to countenance measures that tend to keep men under perpetual bondage. That the Bill, if passed, would do so, it is submitted, is self-evident.

14. *The Natal Mercury,* the Government organ, of the 11th May, 1895, thus justifies the measure:

> This much, however, the Government cannot accede to, that men who contract at fair wages to assist the Colonists, should be allowed to break their contract, and remain competitors against the Colonists, those whom, and for no other purpose and no other condition, they came to serve. To do otherwise would be to destroy all distinction between right and wrong and to give tacit disavowal of the existence of law and equity. There is no desire for, nor is there any, harshness of any kind, nor is there anything to which unbiased judgment can take exception.

15. Your Memorialists have quoted the above to show what feeling exists even amongst responsible quarters against the Indians only because *some very few* dare to trade in the Colony, after having served as labourers, not only under and during their term of indenture, but a long time after the completion of their term.

16. The statement requiring those who are admittedly indispensable to the welfare of the Colony to remain either under perpetual bondage or to "purchase freedom", as it is put by *The Natal Advertiser,* 9-5-95, by paying an annual tax of £3, "is neither harsh nor inequitable", will not, your Memorialists feel sure, be accepted by Her Majesty's Government.

17. The injustice of the clauses seems to be so evident and strong, that even *The Natal Advertiser,* a paper which is by no means favourable towards the Indian, felt it, and expressed it in the following terms on the 16th May, 1895:

> The penal clause of the Bill originally was to the effect that the Indians, failing to return to India, should pay "an annual tax to the Government". On Tuesday, the Attorney-General moved that this be altered to read: "should take out a pass or licence to remain in the Colony", for which £3 would be payable. This is decidedly an alteration for the better, and effects the same end under less disagreeable terms. A broad question, however, is raised by this proposal to establish a special tax on the Coolie settlers. If such a disability is to be placed on Coolies coming from another part of the Empire, surely its application should be extended to include members of other non-European races, who have no connection with the British Empire, such as Chinese, Arabs, Kaffirs from outside States, and all such visitors. To specially select the Coolies coming for attention in this way, and to allow all other *aliens* to settle with impunity, and without disability, is not an equitable arrangement. The practice of taxing *aliens*, if it is to be inaugurated at all, should surely commence with those races not under the British flag in their native land, and not with those who, whether we like the fact or not, are the subjects of the same Sovereign as ourselves. These should be the last, not the first, to be placed by us under exceptional disabilities.

18. Your Memorialists submit that the arrangement has not appealed to any fair-minded men at all. How the Indian Government could be persuaded by the Natal Delegates to make a promise to sanction an indefinite extension of the indentures, or compulsory return, no matter how reluctantly, your Memorialists do not profess to know. But your Memorialists venture to hope that the case, as put here, on behalf of the indentured Indians will receive full attention from both Her Majesty's Government and the Indian Government, and that any sanction given on the representation of an *ex parte* Commission will not be allowed to prejudice the case of the indentured Indians.

19. For the sake of ready reference your Memorialists beg leave to quote as follows from His Excellency the Viceroy's despatch to His Excellency the Governor of Natal, dated the 17th September, 1894:

> I should myself have preferred the continuance of the existing system under which it is open to an immigrant at the termination of his period of indenture to settle in the Colony on his own account, and I have little sympathy with the views that would prevent any subjects of the Crown from settling in any Colony under the British flag. But, in consideration of the feelings at present manifested in the Colony of Natal towards Indian settlers, I am prepared to accept the proposals (*a* to *f*) set forth by the Delegates in the memorandum of 20th January, 1894, referred to in the preceding paragraph, subject to the following provisions, viz.:

(a) That a Coolie when first recruited shall be required by the terms of his contract to return to India, within or immediately on the expiration of the period of his indenture, unless he may prefer to re-enter into a further indenture on the same conditions;

(b) that such Coolies as may refuse to return should in no case be made subject to penalties under criminal law, and

(c) That all renewals shall be for a period of two years, and that a free passage should be secured to the immigrant at the end of the first term for which his engagement is made as well as at the end of every subsequent renewal.

The alterations in the existing system which I am prepared to sanction with the approval of Her Majesty's Government may be summarized as follows.[1]

20. Your Memorialists notice with a feeling of relief that Her Majesty's Government have not yet approved of the suggestions of the Delegates.

21. To show yet further how grossly unjust the adoption of the compulsory return or re-indenture has seemed from the first time that the idea was started, your Memorialists crave leave to quote from the report of and evidence taken before the Immigration Commission that sat in Natal in the year 1885.

22. Mr. J. R. Saunders, one of the Commissioners, forcibly puts his views on the matter in his additional report in the following terms:

Though the Commission has made no recommendation on the subject of passing a law to force Indians back to India at the expiration of their term of service unless they renew their indentures, I wish to express my strong condemnation of any such idea, and I feel convinced that many who now adv ocate the plan, when they realize what it means, will reject it as energetically as I do. Stop Indian immigration and face results, but don't try to do what I can show is a great wrong.

What is it but taking the best out of servants (the good as well as the bad), and then refusing them the enjoyment of the reward! Forcing them back (if we could, but we cannot) when their best days have been spent for our benefit. Whereto? Why, back to face a prospect of starvation from which they sought to escape when they were young. Shylock-like, taking the pound of flesh, and Shylock-like we may rely on meeting—Shylock's reward.

[1] The original does not furnish the summary.

Stop Indian immigration if you will; if there are not enough unoccupied houses now, empty more by clearing out Arabs and Indians who live in them, and who add to the productive and consuming power of a less than half-peopled country. But let us trace results in this one branch of the enquiry, taking it as an example of others and trace out how untenanted houses depreciate the value of properties and securities—how, out of this must result stagnation in the building trade and those other trades and stores for supplies dependent on it—follow out how this leads to a reduced demand for white mechanics, and with the reduction in spending power of so many, how fall of revenue is to be expected next, need of retrenchment or taxation, or both. Let this result and others, far too numerous to be calculated in detail, be faced, and if blind race sentimentalism or jealousy is to prevail, so be it. The Colony can stop Indian immigration, and that perhaps far more easily and permanently than some 'popularity seekers' would desire. But force men off at the end of their service, this the Colony cannot do. And I urge on it not to discredit a fair name by trying.

23. The late member of the late Legislative Council and the present Attorney-General (the Hon. Mr. Escombe), giving his evidence before the Commission, said (p. 177):

With reference to time-expired Indians, I do not think that it ought to be compulsory on any man to go to any part of the world save for a crime for which he is transported; I hear a great deal of this question; I have been asked again and again to take a different view, but I have not been able to do it. A man is brought here, *in theory with his own consent, in practice very often without his consent,* (the italics are your Memorialists') he gives the best five years of his life, he forms new ties, forgets the old ones, perhaps establishes a home here, and he cannot, according to my view of right and wrong, be sent back. Better by far to stop the further introduction of Indians altogether than to take what work you can out of them and order them away. The Colony, or part of the Colony, seems to want Indians but also wishes to avoid the consequences of Indian immigration. The Indian people do no harm as far as I know; in certain respects they do a great deal of good. I have never heard a reason to justify the extradition of a man who has behaved well for five years. I do not think that the Indian, at the expiration of his five years' service, should be placed under police supervision unless he is a criminal. I know not why Arabs should be placed under police supervision more than Europeans. In cases of some Arabs the thing is simply ridiculous. They are men of large means, large connections, who are always used in trade if they can be dealt with more profitably than others.

24. Your Memorialists, while drawing your attention to the above, cannot help expressing their regret that the gentleman who

expressed the above views ten years ago should now be the member to introduce the Bill under discussion.

25. Mr. H. Binns, who went with Mr. Mason as a delegate to induce the Indian Government to sanction the compulsory return or re-indenture, expressed the following opinion in giving his evidence before the Commission :

> I think the idea which has been mooted, that all Indians should be compelled to return to India at the end of their term of indenture, is most unfair to the Indian population, and would never be sanctioned by the Indian Government. In my opinion the free Indian population is a most useful section of the community. A large proportion of them, considerably large than is generally supposed, are in service in the Colony, particularly employed as house servants in the towns and village. Before there was a free Indian population the towns of Pietermaritzburg and Durban had no supply of fruit, vegetables and fish. At present all these things are fully supplied. We have never had any immigrants from Europe who have shown any inclination to become market gardeners and fishermen, and I am of opinion that but for the free Indian population, the markets of Pietermaritzburg and Durban would be as badly supplied now as they were ten years ago (pp. 155-6).

26. The present Chief Justice and the then Attorney-General expressed the following opinion:

> I object to any alternation in the terms of the laws under which Indians are introduced into the Colony. In my opinion the numbers of the Indians who have been introduced have in a great measure provided on the coast for the failure of white immigrants, and have cultivated lands, which would otherwise remain uncultivated with the crops which are of real advantage to the inhabitants of the Colony. Many who have not availed themselves of the return passage to India have turned out to be trusty and useful domestic servants (p. 327).

27. It is yet possible to take out extracts from the same voluminous report and evidence to show what the most distinguished men in the Colony have thought about the arrangement.

28. Your Memorialists further beg to draw your attention to the following from Messrs Binns and Mason's Report:

> So far, no second term of indenture has been agreed to in the case of any country to which Coolies emigrated, although the consent of the Government of India has been frequently asked for, and in no case has the condition of compulsory return at the end of the indenture been sanctioned.

29. It has been said in the Colony, in defence of the measure, that there can be no injustice, where two parties voluntarily agree to do

a certain thing, and that the Indians before coming to Natal will know under what conditions they will go to Natal. This point has been dealt with in the petitions to the Hon. the Legislative Assembly, and the Hon. the Legislative Council, and your Memorialists venture to repeat that, when the contracting parties are not situated equally, the proposition is entirely inapplicable. An Indian who, in order "to escape from starvation", as Mr. Saunders has put it, seeks indenture can hardly be called a free agent.

30. So recently as 1894, the evidence as to the indispensableness of the Indian has been dwelt upon in the Protector's Report referred to above. At p. 15 he says:

> If it were possible even for a short space of time to withdraw the whole of the Indian population from this Colony, I am convinced that, with but very few exceptions, every industry in existence at the present time would collapse, solely for the want of reliable labour. There is no getting over the fact that the Native as a rule will not work, hence it is generally admitted throughout the Colony that without the Indian as a labourer, no industry, agricultural or otherwise, of any importance could possibly be carried on successfully, and not only this but almost every householder in Natal would be without domestic servants.

31. If almost the whole current of what may be called expert opinion, from beginning up to date, goes to show the usefulness of the Indians, then, your Memorialists submit, it is not too much to say that to keep such people under perpetual bondage, or to make them pay a yearly tax of £3 whether they can afford it or not, is, to say the very least, absolutely one-sided and selfish.

32. Your Memorialists beg respectfully to draw your attention to the fact that, were the Bill to become law, the very object of immigration will be frustrated in all its aspects. If it is to enable the Indians to improve their material condition ultimately, the object certainly will not be fulfilled by compelling them to remain under perpetual indenture. If it be to relieve the overcrowded parts of India, that object also will be frustrated. For, the object of the Bill is not to allow the number of Indians in the Colony to increase. The desire is to replace those who can no longer bear the yoke of indenture by fresh importation, and to force the former back to India. Thus your Memorialists humbly submit that the last state will be worse than the first. For, while the number of Indians in the overcrowded districts, so far as Natal as an outlet is concerned, will remain the same, those who would return against their will cannot but be a source of additional

anxiety and trouble, because they, being without any prospect of work or any capital to maintain them, may have to be maintained at the public expense. It may be said in reply to this objection that it presupposes a state of things which will never happen, that is to say, the Indians will gladly pay the annual tax. Your Memorialists, however, beg leave to point out that such an argument, if advanced, would really go to prove that the clauses about re-indenture and tax are absolutely useless, in so far as they will not produce the desired effect. It has never been contended that the object is to raise any revenue.

33. Your Memorialists, therefore, submit that, if the Colony cannot put up with the Indians, the only course, in your Memorialists' humble opinion, is to stop all future immigration to Natal, at any rate for the time being. Your Memorialists beg respectfully, but emphatically, to protest against an arrangement that gives all the benefit to one party only, and that, indeed, the least in need of it. Such stopping of immigration will not, your Memorialists submit, materially effect the congested parts of India.

34. Your Memorialists have so far discussed both the indenture and the licence clauses together. As to the latter, your Memorialists beg to draw your attention to the fact that even in the Transvaal—a foreign State—the Government have not ventured to levy an annual tax on the Indians who go there of their own accord and on their own means. There is only a licence of £3 10s to be taken out once for all. And this too has, your Memorialists understand, among other things, formed the subject of a memorial[1] to Her Majesty's Government. Moreover, the licence in this case is an annual tax in its most obnoxious form. This tax has to be paid whether the unfortunate victim has the means or not. When a member, during the discussion, asked how the tax will be collected if any Indian objected to or did not pay it, the Hon. Attorney-General remarked that there would always be found sufficient in the defaulting Indian's house to attach under a summary process!

Lastly, your Memorialists submit that the introduction of the licence clause goes beyond the limits laid down by the Viceroy's Despatch referred to above.

In conclusion, your Memorialists most earnestly pray and confidently hope that Her Majesty's Government will come to the conclusion that the clauses discussed herein are manifestly unjust, and

[1] The text of this is not available.

will, therefore, be pleased to disallow the Indian Immigration Amendment Bill referred to above, or grant such other relief as may meet the ends of justice.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Memorialists, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc., etc.

From a photostat of a printed copy: S.N. 433

71. MEMORIAL TO LORD ELGIN

[DURBAN,
August 11, 1895]

TO FR

HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD ELGIN,
VICEROY AND GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA IN COUNCIL,
CALCUTTA

THE MEMORIAL OF THE UNDERSIGNED
INDIANS IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT:

Your Memorialists, who are Her Majesty's Indian subjects, crave leave to draw Your Excellency's attention to the humble Memorial[1] addressed to Her Majesty's Government with regard to certain clauses of the Indian Immigration Law Amendment Bill which was recently passed by the Hon. the Legislative Assembly and the Hon. the Legislative Council of Natal, and which is partly based upon Your Excellency's Dispatch to His Excellency the Governor of Natal on the subject thereof, a copy of which is annexed hereto.

Besides drawing Your Excellency's attention to the above memorial, your Memorialists beg respectfully to state as follows with regard to the Bill:

Your Excellency's Memorialists have noticed with regret that Your Excellency is disposed to sanction the principle of compulsory re-indenture, or compulsory return.

Your Memorialists also regret that they did not send a representation at the time the Delegates set out for India.[1] It will be idle to discuss the causes that prevented such a course from being adopted. Your Memorialists, however, confidently hope that the wrong

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

inflicted would be so great, in case the Bill became law, that the above omission will not come in the way of its being averted.

Your Memorialists, with the greatest deference, venture to point out that, if the non-compliance with the condition as to compulsory return could not set the criminal law in motion, the insertion in the contracts of such a clause is absolutely useless, if not actually harmful, in as much as it might encourage the contracting party to break his contract, and the law would connive at such a breach. And since such extreme precaution pre-supposes the injustice of the contract, your Memorialists respectfully submit that the reasons adduced for inducing the sanction are absolutely insufficient, if any reasons could justify it.

As has been hinted at in the annexure, your Memorialists implore Your Excellency not to sanction any of the clauses objected to, but, in accordance with the emphatically expressed opinions of Mr. J. R. Saunders and the Hon. Mr. Escombe quoted in the annexure[1], to stop immigration to Natal.

Your Memorialists respectfully beg to protest against any section of Her Majesty's subjects, be they the poorest, being practically enslaved or subjected to a special, obnoxious poll-tax, in order that a body of Colonists, who already have been deriving the greatest benefits from such subjects, may be able to satisfy their whims or desire to exact more from the same men without any return whatsoever. In calling the idea of compulsory re-indenture, or in lieu thereof, of a poll-tax, a whim, your Memorialists believe they have used the right expression. For, your Memorialists firmly believe there would be no cause for alarm even if the Indian population were trebled in the Colony.

But, your Memorialists humbly submit that, in a matter like the above, the wish of the Colony cannot guide Your Excellency's decision, but that the interests of the Indians affected by the clauses should also be considered. And your Memorialists have no hesitation in submitting, with all due respect, that the clauses, if ever sanctioned, will be a grave injustice and wrong to the most helpless of Her Majesty's Indian subjects.

Five years' indenture, your Memorialists submit, is long enough to undergo. To raise it to an indefinite period would mean that an

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to J. Chamberlain", 11-8-1895

Indian who cannot pay a poll-tax of £3 or return to India must for ever remain without freedom, without any prospect of ever bettering his condition, without ever even thinking of changing his hut, his meagre allowance and ragged clothes, for a better house, enjoyable food and respectable clothing. He must not ever think of educating his children according to his own taste or comforting his wife with any pleasure of recreation. Your Memorialists submit that a life of semistarvation in India, but of freedom, and among friends and relations in the same state would certainly be better and more desirable than the above. In this case the Indian may expect and get the chance to better his lot, in that, never. That, your Memorialists submit and believe, never was the object of encouraging immigration.

In conclusion, therefore, your Memorialists earnestly pray and confidently hope that, if the Colony does not want the Indian immigration without the arrangement objected to being sanctioned, Your Excellency may be graciously pleased to stop future immigration to Natal, or grant such other relief as may seem just.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Memorialists, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc., etc.[1]

ABDUL KARIM HAJEE ADAM
AND OTHERS

From a photostat of a printed copy: S.N. 432

72. REPORT OF THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

August, 1895

ITS FOUNDATION

During the month of June in the year 1894 the Natal Government introduced a Bill called the Franchise Law Amendment Bill in the Legislative Assembly. It was recognized that it threatened the very existence of the Indians in the Colony. Meetings were held on the premises of Messrs Dada Abdulla & Co. to consider what steps should be taken to prevent the Bill from passing. Petitions were sent to both the Houses, Members of which were interviewed by a representative who went from Durban to P.M. Burg. The Bill, however,

[1] The appeal was infructuous. The Government of India's feeble protest about the authority and functions of the Protector of Immigrants as provided for in the new Immigration Amendment Bill was ignored. The Secretary of State sought the Viceroy's reconsideration of the Bill in the light of the Natal petitions pending Royal assent to it. Lord Elgin only reiterated his earlier view. (*Vide The Early Phase*, pp. 521-2). The Bill received Royal sanction and became Law on August 18, 1896.

passed both the Houses. The effect of the agitation was that all the Indians recognized the absolute necessity of establishing a permanent institution that would cope with the legislative activity, of a retrograde character, of the first Responsible Government of the Colony with regard to the Indians, and protect Indian interests.

After a few preliminary meetings had been held on Messrs Dada Abdulla's premises, the Natal Indian Congress was formally established on the 22nd August amidst great enthusiasm. All the leading members of the Indian community joined the Congress. Seventy-six members subscribed on the first evening. The list gradually rose to 228. Mr. Abdulla Haji Adam was elected president. Other prominent members were made vice-presidents. Mr. M. K. Gandhi was elected Hon. Secretary. A small committee, too, was formed. But, as the other members of the Congress expressed a wish to attend the committee meetings during the early days of the Congress, the committee was tacitly abolished and all the members were invited to the meetings.

The minimum monthly subscription was 5/-. There was no maximum limit. Two members subscribed £2 each monthly, one 25/-, ten 20/-, twenty-five 10/-, three 7/6, three 5/3, two 5/1, and one hundred and eighty-seven subscribed 5/- each, monthly. The following table shows the various classes of members with the subscriptions paid by them, the deficiency, etc.[1]

Class	No.	Yearly £ s d	Actual receipts	Deficiency
40/-	2	48- 0-0	£ 48- 0-0	Nil
25/-	1	15- 0-0	£ 15- 0-0	Nil
20/-	10	120- 0-0	£ 93- 0-0	£ 27- 0-0
10/-	22	132- 0-0	£ 88- 5-0	£ 43-15-0
7/6	3	13-10-0	£ 8-12-6	£ 4-17-6
5/3	2	6- 6-0	£ 3- 8-3	£ 2-17-9
5/1	2	6- 2-0	£ 5- 6-9	£ 0-15-3
5/-	187	559-10-0	£ 273-5-0	£ 286-15-0
	228	900 - 8-0	£ 535-17-6	£ 366- 0-6

[1] The table does not tally with the figures given above and the totals also are not all correct.

It will be seen from the above that, out of a possible income of £900-8-0, the Congress has been so far successful in collecting only £500-17-6 or nearly 50%. The 5/- subscribers have been the greatest defaulters. The causes are many. It should be borne in mind that some joined at a very late stage and, naturally, have not paid for the whole year. Many have left for India, a few are too poor to pay. The most potent cause, however, it is regrettable to mention, has been theunwillingness to pay. It is possible to collect over 30% of the remainder if some workers came forward and exerted themselves. The following is a list[1] of donations, general and special, for the Bennett case, as also the subscriptions from Newcastle and Charlestown.

The list has been given in full because these names do not appear on the printed lists. Thus the total receipts are:

Subscriptions	£535-17-6
Donations	£ 80-17-0
	£616-14-6

The above is worked on the basis of the printed list.

Now the deposits in the Bank amount to £598-19-11. In order to arrive at the above sum the cash expenses and the transfers have to be added.

The case expenses are £7-5-1. The transfers amount to £10-10-0, being £8, rent to Mr. Naidoo which was remitted in lieu of subscriptions, £2, rent not charged by Mr. Abdul Kadir and 10/-, rent not charged by Mr. Moosa H. Adam in lieu of his subscription. Thus

£598-19-11
£ 7- 5- 1
£ 10- 10- 0
£616- 15- 0

Thus, on comparing the deposits with the printed list, we have a difference of six pence which represent 6d received but not specified in the list. This happens because one member once paid 2/6 and another time 3/-. The 3/- could not be well represented on the list.

The expenses by cheque up to date amount to £151-11-1$^{1}/_{2}$. A full statement[2] is annexed hereto. This leaves a credit balance at the

[1] Not reproduced here
[2] Not reproduced here

Bank of £447-8-9$^{1}/_{2}$. The liabilities are not yet discharged and the expenses of the Immigration petition and the tickets referred to below.

The rules as to drawing cheques have been strictly adhered to. Although the Hon. Secy. has the power to sign cheques, alone, up to £5, the power has never been availed of. They are signed by him and Mr. Abdul Karim and, in his absence, by Mr. Dorasamy Pillay and Mr. P. Dowji and, in his absenceZKathrada, Mr. Randeri, Mr. Hoosen Cassim, Mr. Peerun Mahomed, Mr. G. H. Miankhan and Mr. Amod Jeewa have, at one time or another, striven to get in the subscriptions. All, or most of them, more than once went round for subscriptions. Mr. Abdul Kadir alone, at his own expense, went to P. M. Burg and collected nearly £50, but for which most of the sum might have been lost to the Congress. Mr. Abdul Karim at his expense went up to Verulam and collected nearly £25.

There was also a difference among the prominent members as to signing the cheques. The rule originally was to have them signed by the Hon. Secy. and countersigned by one of the following: Mr. Abdulla H. Adam, Mr. Moosa Haji Cassim, Mr. P. Dowji Mahomed, Mr. Hoosen Cassim, Mr. Abdul Kadir and Mr. Dorasamy Pillay. A suggestion was made that more should sign. At one time this difference threatened the very existence of the Congress, but the good sense of the members and their anxiety to prevent such a catastrophe ultimately dispelled the cloud. And the change above mentioned was agreed to unanimously.

As soon as the Congress was fairly started in Durban, Messrs Dowd Mahomed, Moosa Haji Adam, Mahomed Cassim Jeeva, Mr. Parsee Rustomjee, Mr. Peerun Mahomed and the Hon. Secy. went up, each at his own expense, to canvass for members in P. M. Burg. A meeting was held there and about 48 subscribed. A second similar meeting was held at Verulam where about 37 subscribed. Mr. Hoosen Cassim, Mr. Haji, Mr. Dowd, Mr. Moosa Haji Cassim, Mr. Parsee Rustomjee, and the Hon. Secy. went up there. Messrs Amod Bhayat, Haji Mahomed and Camroodeen rendered active help in P. M. Burg and Messrs Ebrahim Moosaji, Amod, Amod Meter and P. Naidoo, in Verulam.

Mr. Ameerodeen, although not a member of the Congress, did much needed work for the Congress. Mr. N. D. Joshi has been good enough to make a fair copy of the report in Gujarati.

Mr. Somasundram, in the earlier part of the Congress year, helped it by interpreting at the meetings and distributing circulars. Work has also been done in Newcastle and Charlestown. Members have subscribed for the second year.

Mr. Mahomed Sidat and Mr. Suliman Ebrahim and Mr. Mahomed Meer worked indefatigably in Newcastle. They and Mr. Dowd Amla went also to Charlestown at their expense. The Charlestown people responded splendidly. Within an hour all the available men subscribed. Mr. Dindar, Mr. Goolam Russul and Mr. Vanda rendered much help. Nearly 1,000 letters have been written to the friends of the Indians in England and India in connection with the Franchise petition, Transvaal petition and the Immigration petition to the Home Government.

The Immigration law, which contemplates imposition of a £3 tax in lieu of indenture, has been strenuously opposed. Petitions were presented to both the Houses.

The Transvaal petition, though not sent directly under the auspices of the Congress, cannot but be referred to in a review of the Congress work.

According to the spirit or the object of the Congress, an open letter was written to members of both the Houses and widely circulated in the Colony and South Africa. It was widely noticed by the papers and gave rise to much sympathetic private correspondence. Letters, too, occasionally appeared in the newspapers on the position of the Indians in Natal. A correspondence was carried on by the late President with the Government in connection with the separate entrances for the Europeans and Natives and Asiatics at the Post Office.

The result has not been altogether unsatisfactory. Separate entrances will now be provided for the three communities. Work has also been done among the indentured Indians. Balasundram, who was badly treated by his master, was transferred to Mr. Askew.

The Congress interfered on behalf of the indentured Indians in the Railway department, in connection with the Mohurrum festivals as well as supply of wood instead of coal. Much sympathy was shown by the Magistrate presiding.

The Tuohy case is also worthy of mention. Judgment was recorded for Ismail Amod whose hat was taken off forcibly in a public place and who was otherwise ill-treated.

The famous Bennett case cost the Congress a great deal, but it is believed that the money has not been thrown away. That we should not get judgment against the Magistrate was a foregone conclusion. We went to court in spite of Mr. Morecom's opinion to the contrary. It has, however, made the position much clearer and we know exactly what we should do should a similar case occur in future. While the Indian cause has not received much active support from the Europeans in the Colony, much sympathy has been evoked both in India and England. The London *Times* and *The Times of India* have actively supported the Indians in South Africa. The British Committee of the National Congress has been very vigilant. Letters of sympathy have been received from Sir W. W. Hunter, Mr. A. Webb[1], the Hon. Pherozeshah Mehta, the Hon. Fazalbhai Visram and others. Other Indian and English papers have also viewed our complaints favourably.

Mr. Askew was the only European who attended the Congress meetings. The Congress has not yet made itself officially known to the public because it was thought advisable not to do so unless it was assured of a permanent existence. It has worked very quietly.

This review of the work of the Congress may close fittingly with a mention of the address that was presented to Mr. Abdulla Haji Adam, the late President, on his departure for India.

GIFTS TO THE CONGRESS

These have been quite varied and numerous. Mr. Parsee Rustomjee stands foremost in this respect. He has supplied it with three lamps, tablecloth, a clock, a door-blind, inkstands, pens, blotting-paper, flower-pot and also oil throughout the year. He has sent his men to sweep and light the hall on every meeting day with extraordinary punctuality. He has also supplied the Congress with 4,000 circulars. Mr. Abdul Kadir had the list of members printed.

Mr. C. M. Jeewa had 2,000 circulars printed gratis, paper for which was supplied partly by Mr. Haji Mahomed and partly by Mr. Hoosen Cassim.

Mr. Abdulla Haji Adam has made a gift of a carpet. Mr. Manekji provided a table.

[1] Alfred Webb: Member of Parliament. Contributed frequently to *India* and other periodicals on South African Indian topics; was President of the Congress at its Madras session (1894) and a member of the British Committee.

Mr. Pragji Bhimbhai gave 1,000 envelopes.

The Hon. Secretary got the rules printed in India in Gujarati and English and supplied stamps, papers, etc., for the normal fortnightly circulars.

Mr. Lawrence, a non-member, has been doing the work of distributing circulars with quiet zeal.

MISCELLANEOUS

The attendance has been very poor and painfully unpunctual. The Tamil members have not shown much zeal in the Congress work. They might, at any rate, have made up for the laxity in paying by attending punctually and regularly. In order to facilitate canvassing for small donations, tickets for one shilling, two shillings and two shillings and six pence, initialled by Mr. A. H. Adam, Mr. Abdul Kadir, Mr. D. Pillay and the Hon. Secy., have been issued, but no forecast can yet be made as to the results of the plan.

A resolution has also been passed to the effect that medals should be awarded to active workers in order to encourage them. They have not yet been prepared.

DEATH AND DEPARTURE

It has to be noted with regret that Mr. Dinsha died a few months ago.

About 10 members have left for India, among whom may be mentioned, besides the late president, Mr. Haji Mahomed, Mr. Haji Suliman, Mr. Haji Dada, Mr. Manekji. Mr. Muthukrishna and Mr. Ranjitsingh have resigned.

About 20 members never paid any subscription at all, who also may be considered as having never joined the Congress.

SUGGESTIONS

The most important suggestion that has to be made is that, whatever the subscription, it must be made payable for the whole year in advance.

FURTHER REMARKS

It should be noted that some expenses though voted by the Congress have not been incurred. Economy has been strictly observed. At least £2,000 are needed to put the Congress on a sure foundation.

From a copy

73. LETTER TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"

DURBAN,
September 2, 1895

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury

SIR,

I would take the liberty to make a few remarks on your leader letters on the recent cables about the Indians in South Africa. It is not for the first time that you have said that the people in South Africa object to give the Indians equal political rights because they do not enjoy them in India, and that you would not object to give them the same rights as they enjoy in India. As I have said elsewhere, I repeat here that, in theory at any rate, the Indians do enjoy equal political rights with the Europeans in India. The Charter of 1833 and the Proclamation of 1858 guarantee the Indians the same rights and privileges as are enjoyed by Her Majesty's other subjects. And the Indians in this Colony, as well as in other parts of South Africa, would be quite satisfied if they could only enjoy the same rights that they would enjoy under similar circumstances.

In India, whenever the Europeans are allowed to vote, the Indians are not excluded. If the former have votes at the municipal elections, so have the latter. If the former can elect or become elected members of the Legislative Council, so can the latter. If the former can walk about freely after 9 p.m., so can the latter. The latter cannot possess themselves with arms as freely as the former. The Indians in South Africa also have no very great anxiety to arm themselves. There is no poll-tax in India. Will you be good enough to protest against the recent Immigration Act and earn the gratitude of the helpless indentured Indians? It is the same recognized principle of political equality that enabled Mr. Naoroji to enter the House of Commons. If you object to the Indian having the same rights because "British energy and money" have built up this Colony, you should clearly object to the Germans and the French also. On the same principle, the descendants of the pioneers who shed their blood may well object to even those coming from England and pushing them out. Is this not a narrow and selfish view of the matter? At times I read in your leaders expressions of very lofty and humanitarian sentiments. Unfortunately for the poor Indian, these sentiments are set aside when you deal with

the Indian question. And yet, whether you like it or not, he is your fellow-subject. England does not want to let go her hold of India, and at the same time she does not want to rule her with an iron rod. Her statesmen say that they want so much to endear the English rule to the Indians that they would not have any other. Would not views such as those expressed by you retard the fulfilment of those wishes?

I know very few Indians who, though they may be earning £1,000, live as if they were earning only £50. The fact is that, perhaps, there is no Indian in the Colony who alone earns £1,000 per year. There are some whose trade would lead others to believe that they must be "making a pile". The trade of some of them is certainly very large; not so the profit, because it is shared by many. The Indian loves trade, and so long as he can earn a decent living, he does not mind sharing his profit largely with others. He does not insist upon the lion's share. Just like the European, the Indian also loves spending his money, only not so recklessly. Every merchant who has amassed a fortune in Bombay has built for himself palatial buildings. The only palatial building in Mombassa has been built by an Indian. Indian merchants have earned much in Zanzibar, and consequently have built palaces, and, in some instances, pleasure houses also. If no Indian has done so in Durban of South Africa it is because he has not earned sufficient to enable him so to do. Sir, if you will only study the question a little more closely (pardon me for so saying), you will find that the Indians spend in this Colony quite as much as they can without coming to grief. To say that those earning well sleep on the floors of their shops is, I venture to say, rather incorrect. If you would undeceive yourself, and if you will leave your editorial chair for a few hours, I would escort you to some Indian stores. Then, perhaps, you would think much less harshly of them than now.

I humbly believe that the Indian question, at any rate for the British Colonies, has a local as well as Imperial significance, and I submit that to lose temper over it, or to shut one's eyes to actual facts, in order to form preconceived ideas, is not exactly the way to solve it satisfactorily. It behoves responsible persons in the Colony not to widen the gulf between the two communities, but, if possible, to bridge it. Having invited the Indians to the Colony, how can the responsible Colonists curse them? How can they escape the natural consequences of the introduction of the Indian labour?

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 5-9-1895

74. LETTER TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"[1]

DURBAN,
September 15, 1895

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury

SIR,

I would venture to make a few remarks in reply to Mr. T. Marston Francis's letter on the Indian question.

I believe your correspondent's description of the Indian municipalities, as also of the Legislative Councils, is not quite accurate. To mention only one instance, I do not think that the chairman of an Indian municipality must be a covenanted civilian. The present president of the Bombay Corporation is an Indian solicitor.

I have never contended—nor do I contend now—that the franchise is as extensive in India as it is here. It would also be idle for me to say that the Legislative Councils in India are as representative as the Legislative Assembly here. What I do contend, however, is that, whatever the limits of the franchise in India, it is extended to all without distinction of colour. The fact that the Indian's ability to understand representative government has been recognized cannot be gainsaid. What Mr. Francis says, viz., that the qualifications for the franchise are not the same in India as in Natal, has never been denied. Under such a test no one coming from even Europe would be entitled to the franchise, for the qualifications in the different European States are not surely the same as here.

This week's mail brings the latest proof that the Indians have never failed in the real and only test, viz., whether or not they understand the principle of representation. I quote from the article on "Indian Affairs" in *The Times:*

[1] Controverting Gandhiji's plea for granting the franchise to Indians in South Africa, Mr. Marston T. Francis, who had lived several years in India, wrote in *The Natal Mercury*, 6-9-1895, that though Indians in India could vote at municipal elections and become members of the Legislative Council, things were so constituted that they could never outvote the European members or arrogate to themselves supreme authority. The chairman of a municipality, he said, was always a covenanted officer of the Indian Civil Service, and the Commissioner of the Division, the Governor, the Viceroy, the Secretary of State for India, and ultimately the British Parliament could impose checks on the municipalities and legislative bodies of India.

But if the gallantry of the native soldiers who obtained recognition stirs within us a pride in having such fellow-subjects. . . . indeed, nothing could exceed their magnificent self-devotion to their comrades in that deadly pass. . . The truth is that the Indians are earning the right to be regarded as worthy fellow-subjects in more ways than one. The battle-field has always formed the short cut to an honourable equality among races. But the Indians are also proving their title to our respect by the slower and more difficult methods of civil life. There was a greater experiment made in the constitutional government of dependencies than the expansion of the Indian Legislative Council on a partially elective basis three years ago. . . Many of the discussions have been most helpful, and so far as Bengal is concerned—the province in which the elective system seemed fraught with the greatest difficulty—the experiment, after a severe trial, has proved a success.

This, as is well known, is from the pen of a historian[1] and Indian officer who has served in India for 30 years. Disfranchisement by itself may seem to some to be very insignificant. But its consequences to the Indian community are too dreadful to contemplate. Its corresponding advantages to the European Colonists, I am convinced, are *nil*, unless there be anything gratifying in degrading or keeping under degradation a race or nation. There is no question of "the white man or the yellow man ruling", and I hope to be able to show, on a future occasion, that the fears entertained on that score are entirely groundless.

There are passages in Mr. Francis's letter which would, perhaps, show that he must have left India very long ago. There are very few posts more responsible than that of a civil commissioner, and yet the Secretary of State for India only recently thought it prudent to appoint an Indian to that post. Mr. Francis knows what jurisdiction a Chief Justice in India enjoys, and an Indian has occupied that position both in Bengal and Madras. Those who wish to bind the two races—the British and the Indian—with "the silken cord of love" will not find it difficult to notice innumerable points of contact between the two. Even the three religions of the two, in spite of their apparent antagonism, have much in common, and would not form a bad unity in trinity.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 23-9-1895

[1] Sir. W. W. Hunter

75. LETTER TO "THE NATAL ADVERTISER"

DURBAN,
September 23, 1895

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Advertiser
SIR,

Your remarks in your Saturday's issue on the "Indian Congress", or more correctly, "The Natal Indian Congress". are premature, seeing that the case[1] in which the name has been used is not yet over. Were I not afraid of running the risk of committing contempt of court I would make a few remarks on the circumstances under which the Congress has been connected with the case. I am, therefore, obliged to postpone any remarks on the matter till the case is over.

In the meanwhile, in order to remove any misimpression your remarks may create, I would with your kind permission, set out the objects of the Congress. They are:

"(1) To bring about a better understanding, and to promote friendliness between the Europeans and the Indians residing in the Colony.

"(2) To spread information about India and the Indians by writing to newspapers, publishing pamphlets, lecturing, etc.

"(3) To educate the Indians, especially [those] born in the Colony, about Indian History, and induce them to study Indian subjects.

"(4) To ascertain the various grievances the Indians are labouring under, and to agitate by resorting to all constitutional methods for removing them.

[1] The Natal Indian Congress leaders were said to have had a hand in intimidating an Indian witness from giving evidence in a trial for assault. The charge was actually against Padayachi, a member of the Natal Indian Congress, and it was stated that he did so at the instigation of leaders of the Congress. It was further alleged that under Gandhiji's leadership the Congress was conspiring to fight the Government, that it set up Indian labourers to agitate against their grievances, that Gandhiji extracted money from them and from Indian traders promising to help them obtain relief and used the funds for his own purposes. *Vide* also"Letter to Colonial Secretary", 21-10-1895.

"(5) To enquire into the condition of the indentured Indians and to help them out of special hardships.

"(6) To help the poor and the needy in all reasonable ways.

"(7) And generally to do everything that would tend to put the Indians on a better footing morally, socially, intellectually, and politically."

The very constitution of the Congress prevented it from dealing with private grievances, unless they have a public significance.

To say that "it has been quite through accident that the existence of the 'Indian Congress' has been discovered" is hardly in accordance with known facts. While the Congress was yet in process of formation, *The Natal Witness* announced the fact, and, if I am not mistaken, the paragraph announcing it was copied by you. It is true that it has not been officially made known before. This was not done because its organizers were not, and are not yet, sure of its permanent existence. They thought it prudent to let time alone bring it to the public notice. No attempts have been made to keep it secret. On the other hand, its organizers even invited those Europeans who were considered to be sympathetic either to join it or attend its fortnightly meetings. It is only because it has begun to be misrepresented in private conversation, and has now been publicly misrepresented (no doubt, unconsciously) by you, that the above explanation has been deemed necessary.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI
HON. SEC.,
THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

PS.

For your information I enclose copies of the rules, the list of members during its first year, and the first annual report.

M. K. G.

The Natal Advertiser, 25-9-1895

76. LETTER TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"[1]

DURBAN,
September 25, 1895

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury

SIR,

Your correspondent "H" has evidently been misinformed as to the genesis of the Natal Indian Congress, as also with regard to other matters. The Congress was formed chiefly by the efforts of Mr. Abdulla Hajee Adam. I have been present at all the meetings of the Congress, and I know that no Civil Servant has taken part in any of the meetings. The responsibility for drafting the rules and the several memorials rests entirely on my shoulders. Not one Civil Servant ever saw the memorials before they were printed and ready for distribution among the Congress members and others.

M. K. GANDHI
HON. SEC., N.I.C.

The Natal Mercury, 27-9-1895

77. SPEECH AT NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS[2]

DURBAN,
September 29, 1895

Mr. Gandhi addressed the meeting at great length. He said now that the existence of the Natal Indian Congress had become fully known, it was necessary they should be punctual in paying their subscriptions. They had now £700 in hand, being about £100 more than the last time he met them. They wanted quite £4,000 to meet their requirements, and he said everyone should sign to promise a subscription in a given time; every merchant who sold £100 of goods should endeavour to give 5s to the Congress.

Mr. Gandhi said they had succeeded so far in England but they were now awaiting the good results which will come from India. It was very likely that he (Mr. Gandhi) would leave them in January to go to India, and he would then endeavour to persuade a number of good Indian barristers to come to Natal.

*The Natal Advertise*r, 2-10-1895

[1] A correspondent, "H", in *The Natal Mercury*, 21-9-1895, referred to a report that a member of the Civil Service, an Indian interpreter in a magistrate's court, was behind the Congress and its work and demanded that he should be prevented from doing such "mischief".

[2] Under the auspices of the Natal Indian Congress, Gandhiji addressed a large gathering of Indians, numbering between 800 and 1, 000, at Rustomjee's buildings.

78. LETTER TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"[1]

DURBAN,
September 30, 1895

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury

SIR,

Were the matter referred to in "H" 's letter in your Saturday issue concerning myself only, I would not have taken any notice, but as this letter affects Civil Servants I am obliged to trespass further upon your courtesy. I am not a paid Secretary of the Congress. On the other hand, in common with other members, I also contribute my humble share to its funds. No one pays me anything whatever on behalf of the Congress. Some Indians do pay me yearly retainers. They are paid to me directly. There is nothing that the Congress has to conceal; only it does not blow its own trumpet. Any enquiries about it, whether public or private, will be answered as promptly as possible. I beg to enclose herewith some papers in connection with the Congress which would throw some light on its working.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI
HON. SEC., N.I.C.

The Natal Mercury, 4-10-1895

[1] "H" had written again in *The Natal Mercury*, 28-9-1895, that it was the Indian interpreter that had framed the rules of the Congress, that he was mainly responsible for the submission of the Memorial to Her Majesty and also for Gandhiji's election as Congress Secretary on an annual salary of £300.

79. LETTER TO "THE NATAL ADVERTISER"

DURBAN,
October 9, 1895

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Advertiser
SIR,

No Indian can take exception to the general tenor of your leader in your yesterday's issue.[1]

If the Congress has attempted, even in an indirect manner, to tamper with a witness, it will certainly deserve suppression. I will, for the present, content myself with repeating the statement that it has not made any such attempt. As the judgment in which the Congress has been condemned is under appeal, I do not feel free to deal with the evidence at length. The only witness who was asked questions about the Congress denied that it had anything to do with the matter. If the doings of men in their private capacity were to be fathered upon the association they may belong to, then I venture to think that almost any charge could be proved against any association.

The Indians do not claim "one Indian one vote", nor is any vote claimed for the "Coolie" pure and simple. But then the "Coolie" pure and simple, so long as he remains one, cannot get it even under the existing law. The protest is only against colour or racial distinction. If the whole question were studied coolly there would be no occasion for any display of bad feeling or warmth by anybody.

The Indians have in no part of the world attempted to gain political supremacy. In Mauritius, where they are in such large numbers, they are said to have shown no political ambition. And they

[1] The paper had observed that if the Indian Congress could be proved to have resorted to "wrong and suspicious practices", then "swift and decisive action for its punishment would be justified". The judge in the Padayachi case had said that the Congress was "of the nature of an association of conspiracy, pernicious and fraught with danger to the whole community in this Colony of whatever race". Taking note of this adverse judgment, *The Natal Advertiser* had in an earlier issue observed that if that was really the case, the judge's censure "will not be regarded as a whit too severe".

are not likely to do so in Natal, even though they may number 4,00,00 instead of 40,000.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Advertiser, 10-10-1895

80. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY[1]

DURBAN,
October 21, 1895

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
P. M. BURG

SIR,

Certain remarks in the newspapers[2] and the judgment of the Durban Resident Magistrate in *Regina* v. *Rungasamy Padayachi* recently tried before him render it necessary for me to write to you, in my capacity as Honorary Secretary for the Congress, in connection with the remarks and the judgment referred to above.

The judgment lays down that the Congress summoned an Indian named Asgara before it on a certain day in August and attempted to intimidate him from giving evidence in a case, and that it is an association of conspiracy, etc.

I have to submit that not only has the Congress never summoned the above-named person or any other person before it with a view to prevent him from giving evidence, but that the presiding Magistrate had absolutely no grounds for making such remarks.

The judgment in which the remarks occur is under appeal. That has prevented me from dealing with the matter at any length in the Press. Unfortunately, the remarks being merely *obiter dicta* of the Magistrate, may not be fully dealt with by the judges. During the examination, cross-examination and re-examination of the witness Asgara, the Congress was not even so much as mentioned. After the re-examination was finished, the Magistrate asked the witness questions about the Congress. It was made clear from the questions

[1] This was Enclosure No. 1 in Despatch No. 128 of November 30, 1895, from the Governor of Natal to the Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies.

[2] *Vide The Early Phase*

and answers that there was no meeting of the Congress during the week during which the intimidation is supposed to have taken place. Two printed circulars were produced, one of which was dated the 14th August, the other the 12th September, inviting members of the Congress to attend the meetings on the Tuesdays following the prospective dates, i.e., on the 20th August and 17th September.

The intimidation was alleged to have happened on the 12th August. The witness is said to have been sent for by Mahomed Camroodeen to Moosa's office that day, where there were present M. C. Camroodeen, Dada Abdulla, Dowd Mahomed and two or three strangers. Here, it is alleged, he was asked certain questions about the case. And this the magistrate has connected with the Congress, in spite of the witness's evidence to the effect that the Congress meetings are not held in Moosa's office, that there was no circular inviting him to the meeting at Moosa's office, that he did not attend the meetings convened in terms of the circulars, that the Congress meetings are held in the Congress Hall, that the circulars had nothing to do with the case, and that he was not present at the actual Congress meetings.

The only point that could in any way be used to support the Magistrate's conclusion was the fact that three out of the six or seven men alleged to have been present at Moosa's office were members of the Congress.

I beg to enclose herewith the extracts from the evidence bearing on the matter.

I venture to submit that, in some way or other, the Magistrate was biased. In the case of Poonoosamy Pather and three others, without a particle of evidence, he has remarked in his reasons for judgment that the defendants are members of and have been backed up by the Congress. As a matter of fact, all of them are not members of the Congress and the Congress had nothing whatever to do with the matter. As a great deal has been made of my instructing Mr. Millar in the Rungasamy case, I may mention that I had no connection whatever with the case of Poonoosamy and others, nor did I know, till after the case had far advanced towards the final stage, that there was such a case at all. My intervention was sought when Rungasamy was charged for the same offence for the second time and then, too, not in my capacity as Hon. Secretary of the Congress but as a lawyer.

I beg to assure the Government that the intention of the organizers of the Congress is to make the Congress an institution

useful to both the communities in the Colony and a medium of interpretation of the feelings of the Indians on questions affecting them, and thus to help the existing Government and not to embarrass it, if it could embarrass it at all.

Holding such views, they naturally resent any remarks made about the Congress that may curtail its usefulness. Nothing, therefore, will be more welcome to the members of the Congress than a thorough enquiry as to its constitution and working, should the Government be inclined to attach any weight to the Magistrate's remarks.

I may state that the Congress has never yet interfered in any court matters between Indians and Indians and has refused to take up private grievances unless they have a public significance. No individual member or members can do anything on behalf of, or in the name of, the Congress without the sanction of a majority of the members of the Congress assembled in accordance with the rules of the Congress, which can only meet on a written notification from the Honorary Secretary.

If the Government are satisfied that the Congress had nothing to do with the case in question, I, on behalf of the Congress, humbly beg to ask for some public notification of the fact; if, on the other hand, there be any doubt as to the matter I venture to ask for an enquiry.

I beg to enclose herewith a copy each of Congress rules, the list of members for the year ending 22nd August, 1895, and the first Annual Report.

I shall be very happy to supply any further information that may be required.[1]

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI
HON. SEC., N.I.C.

Colonial Office Records No. 179, Vol. 192

[1] Soon after, the Supreme Court quashed the conviction in the case of *Regina* v. *Poonoosamy Pather and others* as it was based on untenable evidence. A month later, on November 27, the judgment in the Padayachi case also was set aside by the Supreme Court on the ground that there was "not a particle of evidence". *Vide The Early Phase,*

81. MEMORIAL TO J. CHAMBERLAIN[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
S.A.R.
November 26, 1895

TO
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN,
HER MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR THE COLONIES, LONDON

THE MEMORIAL OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIAN BRITISH SUBJECTS RESIDING IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT:

Your Memorialists, representing the Indian community in the South African Republic, hereby venture respectfully to approach Her Majesty's Government with regard to the resolution passed by the Honourable Volksraad of the South African Republic on 7th October, 1895, ratifying the treaty entered into between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the South African Republic exempting all British subjects residing in the Republic from personal military service with the reservation that by "British subjects" shall be understood "White persons".

Your Memorialists, on reading this resolution, ventured to telegraph to you on 22nd October, 1895, protesting against the distinction made between white and coloured British subjects.[2]

The reservation is evidently aimed at the Indian British subjects residing in the South African Republic.

Your Memorialists would draw your attention to the fact that the treaty itself does not qualify the words "British subjects" at all, and submit that the resolution, instead of accepting the treaty *in toto*, modifies it and on that ground alone your Memorialists feel sure the

[1] This was an enclosure in despatch No. 692 of December 10, 1895, from the High Commissioner to the South African Republic to the Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies. It was presented to the Home Government on May 14, 1896; *vide The Early Phase*.

[2] This telegram is not available. It stated that a Memorial would follow. The telegram was, however, acknowledged by H. O. Arnold Foster, M.P., who observed : ". . . I regard the action taken by Boers with regard to the British Indian subjects in the Transvaal, as not only gross indignity but likely if pressed in to raise very serious questions far outside the limits of the Boer State." *Vide The Early Phase,*

modified ratification will not be accepted by Her Majesty's Government.

Your Memorialists will not dwell upon the indignity to which the resolution unnecessarily subjects the Indians.

The reason put forward for exemption of British subjects from commando was chiefly that, as the British subjects were not entitled to full Burgher Right and were subjected to disabilities in the Republic, they should not be compelled to render military service with the Burghers. It was openly avowed at the time the commotion was going on that the Uitlander population of the Republic would gladly serve in the Malaboch campaign[1], if only they were treated as citizens and given the franchise.

If, therefore, the European or, as the resolution puts it, "White" British subjects should be exempt because of the political disabilities they labour under, much more, it is respectfully submitted, should the Indian British subjects, who not only do not enjoy any political rights in the South African Republic but are treated as little more than chattels, of which fact the resolution is another indication.

Your Memorialists, in conclusion, earnestly pray and confidently hope, that in view of the general persecution that is incessantly being meted out to the Indians throughout South Africa, whether in the Colonies or in Independent States (even in the newly opened-up territories of Bulawayo and other parts), and in view of the magnitude of the already exiting restrictions placed upon the Indians in South Africa generally and your Memorialists' and their fellow-brothers' attempts to get them removed by the intervention of Her Majesty's Government, this fresh attempt to yet further restrict the freedom of the Indians on the part of the Government of the South African Republic will not be countenanced by Her Majesty's Government.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Memorialists, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc.,

M. C. KAMROODEEN
ABDUL GANI
MAHOMED ISMAIL
ETC., ETC.

Colonial Office Records No. 417, Vol. 152

[1] War by the Dutch against the Malaboch tribe in Northern Transvaal, in 1894

82. THE INDIAN FRANCHISE[1]

BEECH GROVE, DURBAN,
December 16, 1895

AN APPEAL TO EVERY BRITON IN SOUTH AFRICA

The question of Indian franchise has convulsed the whole Colony, indeed the whole of South Africa, so far as the newspapers are concerned. This appeal, therefore needs no apology. It is an attempt to place before every Briton in South Africa, as shortly as possible, an Indian view of the Indian Franchise.

Some of the arguments in favour of the disfranchisement of the Indians are:

(1) The Indians do not enjoy the franchise in India.

(2) The Indian in South Africa represents the lowest-class Indian; in fact, he is the scum of India.

(3) The Indian does not understand what the franchise is.

(4) The Indian should not get the franchise because the Native, who is as much a British subject as the Indian, has none.

(5) The Indian should be disfranchised in the interests of the Native population.

(6) This Colony shall be and remain a white man's country, and not a black man's and the Indian franchise will simply swamp the European vote, and give the Indian political supremacy.

I shall take the objections *seriatim.*

I

It has been said over and over again that the Indian cannot and must not claim higher privileges than he enjoys in India, and that he has no franchise whatever in India.

Now, the Indian in the first place does not claim any higher privileges than he enjoys in India. It should be borne in mind that the Government in India is not of the same type as here. Therefore, it is obvious there cannot be any analogy between the two. It might be said in answer to this that the Indians should wait till they get the same kind of government in India. This answer, however, will not do. On the same principle, it can be argued that no man coming to Natal

[1] Gandhiji sent copies of this pamphlet to Indian leaders like Lokamanya Tilak.

could get the franchise unless he enjoyed the franchise in the country he came from in the same way and under the same circumstances, i.e., unless the Franchise Law of that country was the same as that of Natal. If such a doctrine were to be of universal application, it is easy to see that no one coming from England ever could get the franchise in Natal, for the Franchise Law there is not the same as in Natal; much less could a man coming from Germany or Russia, where a more autocratic Government prevails. The only and real test, therefore, is not whether the Indians have the franchise in India, but whether they understand the principle of representative government.

But they *have* the franchise in India, extremely limited it is true; nevertheless it is there. The Legislative Councils recognize the ability of the Indian to understand and appreciate representative government. They are a standing testimony to the Indian's fitness for representative institutions. Members of Indian Legislative Councils are partly elected and partly nominated. The position of the Legislative Councils in India is not very unlike that of the Legislative Council of Natal. And the Indians are not debarred from entering those Councils. They compete on the same terms with the Europeans.

At the last election of Members for the Legislative Council of Bombay, the candidates for one of the constituencies were a European and an Indian.

There are Indian Members in all the Legislative Councils of India. Indians vote at these elections as well as the Europeans. The franchise is certainly limited. It is also circuitous, as for example: the Corporation of Bombay elects one Member to the Legislative Council, and the Corporation consists of Members elected by the ratepayers, mostly Indian.

There are thousands of Indian voters for municipal elections in Bombay from which class, or a class similar to which, are drawn most of the Indian traders in the Colony.

Furthermore, posts of the utmost importance are thrown open to the Indians. Does that show as if they were considered unfit to understand representative government? An Indian has been a Chief Justice—an office that carries with it a salary of 60,000 rupees or £6,000 per year. Only recently an Indian, belonging to the class which most of the traders belong to here, has been appointed Puisne Judge in the High Court of Judicature at Bombay.

A Tamil gentleman, to whose caste belong some of the indentured Indians, is a Puisne Judge of the High Court at Madras. An Indian has been entrusted with the very responsible duties of a Civil Commissioner in Bengal.

Indians have occupied the Vice-Chancellor's chair at Calcutta and Bombay.

Indians compete for the Civil Service on the same terms as the Europeans.

The present President of the Bombay Corporation is an Indian elected by the Members of the Corporation.

The latest testimony to the Indian's fitness for an equality with the civilized races comes from the London *Times* of 23rd August, 1895.

The writer of "Indian Affairs" in *The Times* who, it is well known, is no other than Sir William Wilson Hunter, perhaps the most eminent Indian historian, says :

> Of the acts of daring and of the even more splendid examples of endurance by which those honours were won, it is difficult to read without a thrill of admiration. One Sepoy who received the Order of Merit has had no fewer than thirty-one wounds, "probably," says the *Indian Daily News*, "a record number". Another, shot in the defile where Ross's party was cut up, quietly felt out the bullet in his body and with both hands forced it, fearless of the agony, to the surface. When at last he could get it between his fingers he pulled it out, and then, streaming with blood, he shouldered his rifle again and did a march of twenty-one miles.
>
> But if the gallantry of the native soldiers who obtained recognition stirs within us a pride in having such fellow-subjects, the paltry rewards doled forth in cases of equal pluck and steadfastness awaken very different feelings. Two water carriers of the 4th Bengal Infantry were singled out in the dispatches 'for the gallantry and devotion exhibited by them during the action at Koragh'. Indeed, nothing could exceed their magnificent self-devotion to their comrades in that deadly pass. Another man of the same regiment was mentioned for 'the conspicuous gallantry and devotion exhibited' while with the party which brought the late Captain Baird into Chitral fort . . . . The truth is that the Indians are earning the right to be regarded as worthy fellow-subjects in more ways than one. The battlefield has always formed the short cut to an honourable equality among races. But the Indians are also proving their title to our respect by the slower and more difficult methods of civil life. *There never was a greater experiment made in the constitutional government of dependencies than the expansion of the Indian Legislative Councils on a partially elective basis three years ago* (the italics are mine). Nor in any part

of India did the issue of that experiment seem more doubtful than in Bengal. The Lieutenant-Governorship of Bengal contains a population numerically equal to that of the Madras and Bombay Presidencies put together, and from an administrative point of view much more difficult to manage.

Sir Charles Elliott bears generous testimony not only to the absence of factious opposition but to the valuable practical aid which he has obtained in maturing this necessarily complex measure (The Bengal Sanitary Drainage Act) from his Legislature as expanded by Lord Salisbury's Statute. Many of the discussions have been most helpful, and so far as Bengal is concerned—the province in which the elective system seemed fraught with the greatest difficulty—*the experiment, after a severe trial, has proved a success* (the italics are again mine).

II

The second objection is that the Indian in South Africa represents the lowest-class Indian. The statement is hardly correct. It will not, of course, be true as regards the trading community, nor will it be so as to all the indentured Indians, some of whom belong to the highest castes in Indian. They are certainly all very poor. Some of them were vagabonds in India. Many also belong to the lowest class. But I may be permitted to say without giving any offence that, if the Indian community in Natal is not, nor is the European community here, drawn from the highest class. But I venture to submit that undue importance is given to this fact. If the Indian is not a model Indian, it is the duty of the Government to help him to become one. And if the reader wishes to know what a model Indian is, I beg to refer him to my "Open Letter" where many authorities are collected to show that he is as much civilized as a "model" European. And just as it is competent for a lowest-class European to rise to the highest level in Europe, so is it for the lowest-class Indian in India. By persistent indifference, or retrogressive legislation, the Indian would be degraded lower still in the Colony, and thus may constitute a real danger which he was not before. Shunned, despised, cursed, he will only do and be what others in similar positions have done and been. Loved and well treated, he is capable of rising higher like any member of every other nationality. He cannot be said to be well treated so long as he is not even given those privileges which he enjoys or would enjoy in India under similar circumstances.

III

To say that the Indian does not understand the franchise is to ignore the whole history of India. Representation, in the truest sense of the term, the Indian has understood and appreciated from the earliest ages. That principle —the *Panchayat*—guides all the actions of an Indian. He considers himself a member of the *Panchayat*, which really is the whole body civic to which he belongs for the time being. That power to do so—that power to understand thoroughly the principle of popular government—has rendered him the most harmless and most docile man on earth. Centuries of foreign rule and oppression have failed to make him a dangerous member of society. Wherever he goes, and under whatever conditions he is placed, he bows to the decision of the majority represented by those in authority over him. For, he knows no one can be in authority over him, unless he is tolerated there by a majority of the body to which he belongs. This principle is so ingrained in the Indian heart that even the most despotic princes of the Indian States feel that they are to rule for the people. It is true that they do not all act up to that principle. The causes need not be discussed here. And the most astounding fact is that, even when nominally there is a monarchical government, the *Panchayat* is the supreme body. The actions of its members are regulated in accordance with the wish of the majority. For authorities to support my contention I must beg leave to refer the reader to the Franchise petition[1] to the Honourable the Legislative Assembly.

IV

"The Indian should not get the franchise because the Native, who is as much a British subject as the Indian, has none."

I have stated this objection as I find it in the papers. It is at variance with the fact that the Indian already enjoys the franchise in Natal. An attempt is now being made to disfranchise him.

Without entering into comparisons, I would beg to state what are hard facts. The Native franchise is governed by a special law which has been in force for some years. That law does not apply to the Indian. It has not been contended that it should apply to the Indian. The franchise (whatever it may be) of the Indian in India is not governed by a special law. It applies to all alike. The Indian has his Charter of Liberty, the Proclamation of 1858.

V

The latest argument advanced in favour of disfranchisement is that the Indian franchise would do harm to the Native population of the Colony. In what way this will happen is not stated at all. But, I presume, the objectors to the Indian franchise rely upon the stock objection to the Indian on the alleged ground that he supplies liquor to the Natives and this spoils them. Now I venture to submit that the Indian franchise cannot make any difference one way or the other. If the Indians supply liquor they would not do so to any greater extent because of their vote. The Indian vote can never become sufficiently strong to affect the Native policy of the Colony, which is not only jealously watched but to a very great extent controlled by the Downing Street authorities. In fact, even the European Colonists are powerless against Downing Street in this matter. But let us, for a moment, look at facts. The analytical table referred to below, showing the position of the Indian voters already on the List, shows that by far the largest number of them are traders who, it is well known, are not only teetotallers themselves, but would like to see liquor banished altogether from the land, and if the Voters' List continues to remain so, the effect of that vote, if any, on the Native policy will be for the better. But the following extracts from the Indian Immigration Commission, 1885-87, show that the Indians are not worse than the Europeans in this respect. In quoting them I disclaim any intention to make comparisons, which I have tried to avoid as much as possible. Nor do I wish thereby to excuse my countrymen. No one can regret more than myself to see any Indian found drunk or supplying liquor to Natives. I beg to assure the reader that my only wish is to show that the objection to the Indian vote on that particular ground is merely superficial and does not bear scrutiny.

The Commissioners, who were specially commissioned, among other things, to report upon the charge against the Indians of drunkenness and crimes resulting therefrom, at pp. 42 & 43, report thus:

> We have examined many witnesses on this subject. Their evidence and such criminal statistics as are forthcoming fail to convince us that drunkenness and crime statistics therefrom are prevalent amongst Indian immigrants in a greater ratio than amongst other sections of the community, against whom no such restrictive legislation is proposed.
>
> We do not doubt that there is much truth in the averment that natives readily obtain ardent liquors through the agency of Indians.... We, however,

doubt that they are more guilty in this matter than the white people who traffic in liquor.

It has been shrewdly observed that the people who make the loudest complaints against the Indian immigrants for selling or disposing of liquor to the Natives are the very persons who themselves sell the liquor to theNative. Their trade is interfered with and their profits are lessened by the competition of Indian traffickers.

What follows the above is instructive reading as showing that, in the opinion of the Commissioners, the Indians in India are free from the habit of drinking and that they learn it here. The question how and why they take to liquor in Natal I leave to the reader to answer.

The Commissioners at page 83 say as follows:

Although we are convinced that Indians, and especially free Indians in Natal, surrender themselves to the drinking of intoxicating liquor to a greater extent than in their own country, yet we are constrained to record that there is no satisfactory proof before us that the percentage of drunk and disorderly persons is greater amongst them than amongst other races dwelling within the Colony.

Superintendent Alexander says in his evidence before the Commission (p. 146):

The Indians are to be considered a necessary evil at present; we cannot do without them as labourers; we cannot do without them as storekeepers; they are as good as the Natives; they have very much improved, but the Natives have gone down very much; nearly all the thefts are now committed by Natives; as far as my experience goes, the Natives obtain drink from Indians and from everyone else who will supply them; I find some white people as bad as Indians in this way; these are men out of employ, vagrants, who, to gain a sixpence, will supply a Native with a bottle of liquor.

In the present condition of Natal I do not think it is possible to substitute a white for an Indian population. I do not think we can. I can deal with 3,000 Indians with the staff that I have, but if there were 3,000 corresponding white British workmen, I could not. . . .

At page 149 he says :

I find that people generally suspect Coolies of doing everything wrong stealing fowls, etc., but I find such is not the case. Out of the last nine cases of fowl-stealing, all of which were laid to my corporation night-soil Coolies, I find that two Natives and three white men have been convicted of stealing these fowls.

I would further draw the attention of the readers to the recently issued Native Blue-book, and there they will find that almost all the

Magistrates are of the opinion that European influences have brought about a change for the worse in the moral character of the Natives.

In the face of these incontrovertible facts, is it not rather unfair to impute the blame to the Indians entirely for the Native deterioration? In 1893, while there were 28 convictions against Europeans in the Borough for supplying liquor, there were only 3 against Indians.

VI

"This country shall be and remain a white man's country and not a black man's, and the Indian franchise will simply swamp the European vote and give the Indian political supremacy in Natal."

With the first part of the statement I do not propose to deal. I confess that I do not even understand it fully. I would, however, try to remove the misconception that underlies the latter part of the statement. I venture to say that the Indian vote can never swamp the European vote, and that the idea of the Indian trying to claim political supremacy is contrary to all past experience. I have had the honour to talk to many Europeans with reference to this question, and almost all have argued upon the assumption that there is "one man one vote" in the Colony. That there is a property qualification was an information to them. I must therefore, be pardoned for reproducing here the Section of the Franchise Law dealing with the qualification.

> Every man, except as hereafter excepted, above the age of twentyone years, who possesses an immovable property to the value of £50 or who rents any such property of the yearly value of £10 within any electoral district and who is duly registered in the manner hereinafter mentioned, shall be entitled to vote at the election of a member for such district. When any such property as aforesaid is occupied by more persons than one as proprietors or renters, each of such occupants, being duly registered, shall be entitled to vote in respect of such property, provided the value or, as the case may be, the rent thereof be such as would entitle each of such joint occupants to vote if equally divided among them.

From this it is clear that it is not every Indian who can get the franchise. And how many Indians are there in the Colony, compared with the Europeans, who have immovable property of the value of £50 or who rent such property of the yearly value of £10? This law has been in force for a long time, and the following table will give some idea of the relative strength of the European and the Indian franchise. I have compiled the table from the latest lists published in the *Gazette:*

VOTERS

NO.	ELECTORAL DIVISIONS	EUROPEANS	INDIANS
1	Pietermaritzburg	1,521	82
2	Umgeni	306	Nil
3	Lion's River	511	Nil
4	Ixopo	573	3
5	Durban.	2,100	143
6	County of Durban	779	20
7	Victoria	566	1
8	Umvoti.	438	1
9	Weenen	528	Nil
10	Klip River	591	1
11	Newcastle	917	Nil
12	Alexandra	201	‘‘
13	Alfred	278	‘‘
		9,309	251
	Grand Total		9,560

Thus, out of 9,560 registered voters only 251 are Indians. And only two divisions have Indian voters worth mentioning. The proportion of Indians voters to the European, roughly speaking, is 1:38, i.e., the European vote at present is 38 times as strong as the Indian vote. According to the *Report of the Protector of Indian Immigrants for 1895,* out of the total Indian population of 46,343 only 30,303 are free Indians. Adding to this the trading Indian population of, say, 5,000, we have, roughly, 35,000 freed and free Indians. At present, therefore, the Indian population that may compete with the European population as to voting is not so large as the European. But I believe I am not wide of the mark in saying that more than half of the 35,000 are only a stage higher than the indentured Indians in point of pecuniary circumstances. I have been travelling in the districts surrounding and within 50 miles of Durban, and I may safely venture to assert that most of the Indians who are free are living from hand to mouth and certainly have not immovable property worth £50. Free Indian adults in the Colony number only 12,360. Thus, I submit that the fears as to the Indian vote swamping the European in the near future are entirely groundless.

The following analysis of the Indian Voters' List further shows that most of the Indian voters are those Indians who have settled in the Colony for a very long time; that out of 205 whom I have been able to get identified, only 35 have been at one time indentured Indians, and that they have all been in the Colony for over 15 years.

TABLE SHOWING THE LENGTH OF RESIDENCE OF THE INDIAN VOTERS AND THE NUMBER OF INDIAN VOTERS WHO HAVE ONCE BEEN UNDER INDENTURE:

4 years' residence	13
5 to 9 "	50
10 to 13 "	35
14 to 15 "	59
Free Indians who have once been under indenture, but who have been in the Colony for over 15, and in many cases over 20 years	35
Colonial-born	9
Interpreters	4
Not classifie	46
	251

Of course, this table cannot by any means be said to be absolutely correct. I think, however, it is accurate enough for the present purpose. Thus, so far as these figures go, the Indians who come under indenture take 15 years or more to be able to have sufficient property qualifications to get on the Voters' Roll. And if the freed Indian population were excepted, no one can say that the trading population alone can ever swamp the Voters' Roll. Moreover, most of these 35 freed Indians have risen to the status of traders. Of those who have originally come on their own means, a large majority have taken a long time to be able to get on the Voters' Roll. Of the 46 whom I have not been able to get identified, a great many, by their names, appear to belong to the trading class. There are many Colonial-born Indians in the Colony. They are also educated, and yet on the Voters' Roll there are only 9. This would show that they are too poor to have the sufficient qualifications. On the whole, therefore, it would seem that taking the present List as a basis, the fears as to the Indian vote assuming threatening proportions are imaginary. Of the 205, over 40 are either dead or have left the Colony.

The following table is an analysis of the Indian Voters' List according to their occupation :

TRADING CLASS

Storekeepers	92
Merchants	32
Goldsmiths	4
Jewellers	3
Confectioner	1
Fruiterers	4
Tradesmen	11
Tinsmith	1
Tobacco Merchants	2
Eating-house Keeper	1
	151

CLERKS AND ASSISTANTS

Clerks	21
Accountants	6
Book-keeper	1
Salesmen	6
Schoolmaster	1
Photographer	1
Interpreters	4
Storemen	5
Barbers	2
Barman	1
Managers	2
	50

GARDENERS AND OTHERS

Vegetable Dealer	1
Farmers	4
Domestic Servants	5
Fisherman	1
Gardeners	26
Lamp-lighters	3
Cart Drivers	2
Constables	2
Labourers	2

Waiter	..	..	..	..	1
Cooks	..	..	..	..	3
					50
					251

This analysis also ought, I think, to assist unbiased men in removing their fears as to the Voters' List being swamped by undeserving or lowest-class Indians. For, by far the greatest number belongs to the trading or the so-called "Arab" class who, at any rate, are acknowledged to be not quite unfit to vote.

Those classified under the second heading either belong to the trader class or to that class of Indians who have received a tolerably good English education.

Those belonging to the third division may be termed labourers of a higher order—far above the average indentured Indian. They are those who have settled in the Colony for over 20 years with their families and either own property or pay good rents. I may say also that, if my information be correct, most of these voters can read and write their own mother tongue. Thus, if the present Indian Voters' List is to serve as a guide for the future and assuming that the franchise qualification remains as it is, the List is very satisfactory from a European standpoint. First, because numerically the voting strength of the Indians is very poor, and secondly, because most (more than $^{3}/_{4}$) of the Indian voters belong to the trading class. It should also be borne in mind that the number of the trading Indians in the Colony will remain almost the same for a long time. For, while many come every month, an equal number leaves for India. As a rule, the incoming ones take the place of the outgoing ones.

So far I have not imported the natural proclivities of the two communities into the argument at all but have merely dealt with the figures. Yet, the natural proclivities will have not a little to do with the political activity of the two. There cannot be two opinions about the fact that the Indians, as a rule, do not actively meddle in politics. They have never tried to usurp political power anywhere. Their religion (no matter whether it be Mohammedan or Hindu, the teaching of ages cannot be obliterated by a mere change of name) teaches them indifference to material pursuits. Naturally they are satisfied so long as they can earn a respectable living. I take the liberty to say that, had not an attempt been made to tread upon their commercial pursuits,

had not attempts been made and repeated to degrade them to the condition of pariahs of society, had not, in fact, an attempt been made to keep them for ever "hewers of wood and drawers of water", i.e., in a state of indenture or in one very much resembling it, there would have been no franchise agitation. I would go further. I have no hesitation in saying that even now there is no political agitation in the real sense of the term. But an attempt is, most unfortunately, being made by the Press to father, as it were, such an agitation upon the Indians. Leave them to follow their legitimate pursuits, do not attempt to degrade them, treat them with ordinary kindness and there would be no franchise question, simply because they would not even take the trouble to have their names on the Voters' Roll.

But it has been said, and that too by responsible persons, that a few Indians want political power and that these few are Mahomedan agitators and that the Hindus should learn from past experience that the Mahomedan rule will be ruinous for them. The first statement is without foundation and the last statement is most unfortunate and painful. To gain political power is entirely impossible, if gaining political power means entrance into the Legislative Assembly. Such a statement presupposes the presence in the Colony of very wealthy Indians having a competent knowledge of the English language. Now, there are very few wealthy, as distinguished from well-to-do, Indians in the Colony and there is perhaps none capable of discharging the duties of a legislator, not because there is none capable of understanding politics, but because there is none possessing such a knowledge of the English language as would be expected of a legislator.

The second statement is an attempt to set the Hindus against the Mahomedans in the Colony. How any responsible man in the Colony can wish for such a calamity is very wonderful. Such attempts have been attended by the most grievous results in India and have even threatened the permanence of British rule. To make them in this Colony where the two sects are living most amicably is, I venture to say, most mischievous.

It is a healthy sign that it is now recognized that to debar all Indians from the franchise would be a grievous injustice. Some think that the so-called Arabs should be allowed the franchise, some think there should be a selection made among them, and some think that the indentured Indians should never be able to get the franchise. The

latest suggestion comes from Stanger and is most humorous. If that suggestion were to be followed, those alone who could prove that they were voters in India would be entitled to it in Natal. Why such a rule for the poor Indians alone? I do not think they would object to such an arrangement if it were applicable to all. And I should not be surprised if the Europeans also were to find it difficult to get their names on the Voters' List in the Colony under such conditions. For how many Europeans are there in the Colony who were on the Voters' List in the States they have come from? If, however, the statement were made with regard to the Europeans, it would be received with the strongest indignation. It has been received seriously with regard to the Indians.

It has also been stated that the Indians agitate for "one Indian one vote". I submit that the statement is without the slightest foundation, and is calculated to create unnecessary prejudice against the Indian community. I believe that the present property qualification is sufficient, at any rate for the present if not for all time, to maintain the superior numerical strength of the European vote. If, however, the European Colonists think otherwise, no Indian, I think, will take exception to a reasonable and real educational qualification and a larger property qualification than at present. What the Indians do and would protest against is colour distinction—disqualification based on account of racial difference. The Indian subjects of Her Majesty have been most solemnly assured over and over again that no qualifications or restrictions will be placed upon them because of their nationality or religion. And this assurance was given and has been repeated upon no sentimental grounds but on proof of merit. The first note was struck after it was ascertained beyond doubt that the Indians could be safely treated on a footing of equality, that they were most loyal to the throne and law-abiding, and that the British hold of India could be permanently maintained only upon those terms and no other. That there have been serious departures from the above assurance could, I submit, be no answer to the solid fact of its existence. I think those departures would be exceptions to prove the rule, they would not override it. For, if I had time and space at my disposal, and if I were not afraid of tiring the readers' patience, I could quote innumerable instances in which the Proclamation of 1858 has been strictly acted upon, and is even at the present moment being acted upon in India and elsewhere. And, surely, this is not the occasion for a departure from it. I submit, therefore, that the Indians

are perfectly justified in protesting against racial disqualifications and expecting that their protest will be respected. Having said so much, I venture to say on behalf of my fellow-brothers that they would not thus of objecting to any measure, with regard to the franchise, which may be devised in order to keep the Voters' Roll clear of objection able men, or to provide against preponderance of the Indian vote in future. I am confident that the Indians have no wish to see ignorant Indians who cannot possibly be expected to understand the value of a vote being placed on the Voters' List. They submit that all are not such, and that such are to be found, more or less, in all communities. The object of every right-minded Indian is to fall in with the wishes of the European Colonists as far as possible. They would rather forgo a crumb from the loaf than have the whole in opposition to the European Colonists and from England. The object of this appeal is to beseech the legislators and the European Colonists to devise or countenance only such a measure, if one is necessary, that would be acceptable also to those affected by it. To make the position clearer, I would take the liberty to show by extracts from a Blue-book what the most eminent Colonists have thought about the question.

Mr. Saunders, a member of the late Honourable Legislative Council, could go only thus far:

> The mere definition that these signatures must be in full and in the elector's own handwriting and written in European characters would go a long way to check the extreme risk of the Asiatic mind swamping the English (*Affairs of Natal,* C. 3796-1883).

At page 7 of the same book Captain Graves, the late Protector of Immigrants, says:

> I am of opinion that only those Indians who have abandoned all claim for themselves and their families to a free return passage to India are justly entitled to the franchise.

It should be noticed that Captain Graves spoke of the Indians recognized by his department, i.e., the indentured Indians.

The then Attorney-General and present Chief Justice says:

> It will be noticed that the measure drafted by me contains clauses which have been adopted from the recommendations of the Select Committee providing for the carrying out of the alternative plan mentioned in Mr. Saunders's letter, while the proposal for the special disqualification of aliens has not been considered advisable of adoption.

At page 14 of the same book he says again:

> As regards the proposal to exclude from the exercise of the franchise all persons of every nationality or race which is not in every respect under the common law of the Colony, this is a provision evidently aimed at the electoral rights at present enjoyed by the Indian and Creole population of this Colony. As I have already stated in my report, Serial No. 12, I cannot recognize the justice or expediency of such a measure.

The Blue-book in question contains much interesting reading on the franchise question and shows clearly that the idea of special disqualification was repugnant to the Colonists at the time.

The reports of the various meetings held in connection with the franchise show that the speakers have invariably argued that the Indians shall not be allowed to occupy this country which has been won by European blood and which has been made what it is by European hands, and show that the Indians are treated as intruders in the Colony. As to the first statement, I can only say that, if the Indians are to be denied any privileges because they have not shed their blood for this land, the Europeans belonging to other States in Europe should not receive the same privileges. It could also be argued that the immigrants from England also have no business to trespass upon the special preserve of the first white settlers. And surely, if the shedding of blood is any criterion of merit, and if British Colonists consider the other British dominions as portions of the British Empire, the Indians have shed their blood for Britain on many an occasion. The Chitral campaign is the most recent instance.

As to the Colony having been made by European hands and the Indian being an intruder, I beg to submit that all the facts show quite the opposite.

Without any comments of my own I shall now venture to quote extracts from the *Report of the Indian Immigrants Commission* referred to above, for a loan of which I am indebted to the Protector of Immigrants.

Says Mr. Saunders, one of the Commissioners, at page 98:

Indian immigration brought prosperity, prices rose, people were no longer content to grow or sell produce for a song, they could do better; war, high prices for wool, sugar, etc., kept up prosperity and prices of local produce in which the Indians dealt.

On page 99 he says:

> I return to the consideration of the question as one of broad public interest. One thing is certain—white men will not settle in Natal or any other

part of South Africa to become mere hewers of wood and drawers of water; rather than that they will leave us either for the vast interior or by sea. While this is a fact, our records prove, as do those of other Colonies, that the introduction of coloured labour which develops and draws out the hidden capabilities of the soil and its unoccupied acres opens out at the same time numerous unforeseen fields for the profitable employment of white settlers.

Nothing more clearly proves this than our own experience. If we look to 1859, we shall find that the assured promise of Indian labour resulted in an immediate rise of revenue which increased fourfold within a few years. Mechanics who could not get work and were earning 5/- a day, and less, found their wages more than doubled, and progress gave encouragement to everyone from the Burg to the Sea. But a few years later, alarm (a well-founded alarm) arose, that it[1] would be suspended (the records are there to correct me if I am wrong) simultaneously, down went the revenue and wages, immigration was checked, confidence vanished and retrenchment and reductions of salaries was the main thing thought of; and yet another change some years later in 1873 (long after the discovery of diamonds in 1868), a fresh promise of renewed Indian immigration created its effect, and up again went the revenue, wages and salaries, and retrenchment was soon spoken of as a thing of the past (would that this was so now).

Records like these ought to tell their own tale and silence childish race sentimentalities and mean jealousies.

In further and collateral corroboration of the effect of introduction of coloured labour on the welfare of white settlers let me refer to a speech made by the Duke of Manchester who has so identified himself with colonial interests. He had just returned from Queensland and told his hearers that the result of an agitation there, hostile to the introduction of coloured labour, had proved most disastrous to those very white settlers who had hoped by checking the supply of imported coloured labourers to destroy competition which they wrongly imagined deprived the white settlers of work.

At page 100 the same gentleman continues:

So far as concerns free Indian traders, their competition and the consequent lowering of the prices of articles of consumption by which the public benefits (and yet strange to say, of which it complains) it is clearly shown that these Indian shops have been and are most exclusively supported by the larger firms of white merchants who thus practically employ these men to dispose of their goods.

Stop Indian immigration if you will; if there are not enough unoccupied houses now, empty more by clearing out Arabs or Indians, who add to the productive and consuming power of a less than half-peopled country, but let us

[1] Indian labour recruitment

trace results in this one branch of the enquiry taking it as an example of others, trace out how untenanted houses depreciate the value of property and securities, how after this must result stagnation in the building trade, and those other trades and stores for supplies dependent on it. Follow out how this leads to a reduced demand for white mechanics, and with the reduction in spending power of so many, how fall of revenue is to be expected next, need of retrenchment or taxation, or both. Let this result and others, far too numerous to be calculated on in detail, be faced, and if blind race sentimentalism or jealousy is to prevail, so be it.

Mr. Henry Binns gave his evidence to the following effect before the Commission (page 156):

In my opinion the free Indian population is a most useful section of the community. A large portion of them, considerably larger than is generally supposed, are in service in the Colony, particularly employed as house servants in the towns and villages. They are also considerable producers, and from information which I have taken some trouble to gather, I conclude that the free Indians have grown about 100,000 mounds of maize per annum for the last two or three years, besides considerable quantities of tobacco and other articles. Before there was a free Indian population, the towns of Pietermaritzburg and Durban had no supply of fruit, vegetables and fish; at present all these things are fully supplied.

We have never had any immigrants from Europe who have shown any inclination to become market gardeners and fishermen, and I am of opinion that but for the free Indian population the markets of Maritzburg and Durban would be as badly supplied now as they were years ago.

. . . Were Coolie immigration to be permanently stopped, the rate of wages payable to European mechanics would probably not be affected one way or the other, but in a very short time after such stoppage there would cease to be as much employment for them as there is now. Tropical cultivation never has been, and never will be, carried on without Indian labourers.

The then Attorney-General and present Chief Justice thus gave his evidence before the Commission (page 327):

. . . In my opinion numbers of the Indians who have been introduced have in a great measure provided on the Coast for the failure of white immigrants, and have cultivated lands which would otherwise remain uncultivated, with crops which are of real advantage to the inhabitants of the Colony. Many who have not availed themselves of the return passage to India have turned out to be trusty and useful domestic servants.

That both the freed and free Indians have been very useful to the Colony generally can be proved by still more overwhelming proofs. The Commissioners in their report at page 82 say:

19. They show commendable industry in fishing and fish-curing. The Indian fishing settlement on Salisbury Island, in Durban Bay, has been of manifest advantage not only to the Indian but also to the white inhabitants of the Colony.

20. . . . In numerous localities in the upland as well as in the Coast districts, they have converted waste and unproductive land into well-kept gardens, planted with vegetables, tobacco, maize and fruit trees. Those settled in the vicinity of Durban and Pietermaritzburg have succeeded in winning for themselves almost entirely the supplying of the local markets with vegetables. It must be this competition by free Indians which has worked to the prejudice of those white Colonists who once had the monopoly of the trade . . . In fairness to the free Indians we must observe that the competition is legitimate in its nature and that it certainly has been welcomed by the general community. From an early hour in the morning, Indian hawkers, male and female, adults and children, go busily with heavy baskets on their heads from house to house, and thus citizens can now daily, at their own doors, and at low rates, purchase wholesome vegetables and fruit, which, not many years ago, they could not with certainty procure even in the public markets, and at exorbitant prices.

As to the traders the Commissioners' report at page 74 says:

We are convinced that much of the irritation existing in the minds of European Colonists against the whole Indian population of the Colony has been excited by the undoubted ability of these Arab traders to compete with European merchants, and specially with those who have chiefly directed their attention to the supply of articles, notably rice, largely consumed by the Indian immigrant population. . . .

We are of opinion that these Arab traders have been drawn to Natal by the presence therein of those Indians who have been introduced under the Immigration Laws. Rice is the chief food of the 30,000 Indian immigrants now in the Colony, and these astute traders have so successfully devoted their tact and energy to the supply of that article that the price to all consumers fell from 21s per bag in former years to 14s in 1884. . . .

It is said that Kaffirs can buy from Arabs at from 25 to 30 per cent lower rates than those obtaining six or seven years ago.

It does not lie within the scope of our Commission to discuss at length the restrictive measure which some desire to impose upon Asiatics or "Arab" trader. *We are content to place on record our strong opinion, based on much observation, that the presence of these traders has been beneficial to the whole Colony, and that it would be unwise, if not unjust, to legislate to their prejudice* (the italics are mine).

* * *

> 8. . . . Nearly all of them are Mohammedans, either total abstainers from alcoholic liquors or drinking them in moderation. They are thrifty by nature and submissive to the law.
>
> Out of the 72 European witnesses who gave their evidence before the Commission, almost every one of those who spoke as to the presence of the Indian affecting the Colony has said that he is indispensable for its welfare.

I have quoted the extracts at some length not to argue therefrom that the Indians should have the franchise (they have it already), but to refute the charge that the Indian is an intruder and the statement that he has nothing to do with the prosperity of the Colony. "The proof of the pudding lies in the eating." The best proof is that, no matter what is being said against the Indians, they are yet wanted; the Protector's Department is unable to cope with the demand for Indian labour.

At page 5 of the Annual Report, 1895, the Protector says:

> At the close of last year there was an unsupplied balance of 1,330 men to complete the year's indent. In addition to this number, 2,760 men were applied for to arrive in 1895, making a total of 4,090. Of this number, 2,032 arrived during the year under report (1,049 from Madras and 983 from Calcutta), leaving a balance of 2,058 (less 12 men lapsed requisitions) to arrive during the present year to complete the last year's indent.

If the Indian is really harmful to the Colony, the best and justest method is to stop further immigration and, in due course, the present Indian population will cease to trouble the Colony much. To have them under conditions that mean slavery is hardly fair.

If then this appeal has at all satisfactorily answered the various objections raised to the Indian franchise; if the reader accepts the assertion that the franchise agitation on the part of the Indians is merely a protest against degradation, which the counteragitation contemplates, and not an attempt to gain political power or influence, I humbly think I am justified in asking the reader to pause and consider before he decides to oppose the Indian franchise tooth and nail. Although the "British subject" idea has been rejected by the Press as a craze and fad, I have to fall back upon that idea. Without it there would have been no franchise agitation whatever. Without it there would probably have been no State-aided immigration. Very probably the Indian would have been an impossibility in Natal if he were not a British subject. I, therefore, appeal to every Briton in South Africa not to lightly dismiss the "British subject" idea from his mind. The Proclamation of 1858 was Her Majesty's acts, presumably

approved of by her subjects. For, it was done, not arbitrarily, but according to the advice of her then advisers, in whom the voters, by their votes, had reposed their full trust. India belongs to England and England does not wish to lose her hold of India. Every act done by a Briton towards an Indian cannot but have some effect in moulding the final relations between Britons and Indians. It is, moreover, a fact that the Indian is in South Africa because he is a British subject; he has to be tolerated whether one likes it or not. Is it not then better that nothing should be done that would unnecessarily embitter the feelings between the two communities? By coming to a hasty conclusion, or by forming conclusions on groundless assumptions, it is not at all unlikely that injustice may unintentionally be done to the Indians.

The question in the minds of all reasonable men, I submit, should be not how to drive away the Indians from the Colony (for that is impossible), but how to bring about satisfactory relations between the two communities. Even from a most selfish point of view, I submit, no good can result from an attitude of unfriendliness and hatred towards the Indians, unless there is any pleasure in creating in one's mind an unfriendly feeling towards one's neighbour. Such a policy is repugnant to the British Constitution and the British sense of justice and fair play, and above all hateful to the spirit of Christianity which is professed by the objectors to the Indian franchise.

I appeal more particularly to the Press, the public men throughout South Africa and the Clergy: Public opinion is in your hands. You mould and guide it. It is for you to consider whether the policy hitherto pursued is the right and proper one to continue. Your duty as Britons and leaders of public opinion cannot be to divide the two communities but to weld them together.

The Indians have many blemishes and they are themselves, no doubt, to blame to some extent for the present unsatisfactory state of feelings between the two peoples. My object is to induce you to believe that the blame does not entirely lie on one side alone.

Often and often have I read in the papers and heard that the Indians have nothing to complain about. I submit that neither you nor the Indians here are capable of forming an impartial judgment. I, therefore, draw your attention entirely to the outside public opinion, to the Press, alike in England and India, which is practically unanimous in coming to the conclusion that the Indians have a reasonable ground for complaint. And, in this connection, I beg to

deny the statement that has been often made that the outside opinion is based on exaggerated reports sent from South Africa by the Indians. I venture to claim to know something about the reports sent to England and India, and I have no hesitation in saying that the reports sent almost invariably err on the side of underestimation. Not a single statement has been made which cannot be substantiated by unimpeachable evidence. But the most remarkable fact is that there is no dispute as to facts which are admitted. The outside opinion based on those admitted facts is that the Indians are not fairly treated in South Africa. I will quote only one extract taken from a Radical newspaper, *The Star*. The opinion of the soberest journal in the world, *The Times*, is known to everyone in South Africa.

The Star of 21st October, 1895, commenting upon the deputation that waited on Mr. Chamberlain, says:

> These particulars are enough to throw light upon the hateful persecution to which British Indian subjects are being subjected. The new Indian Immigration Law Amendment Bill, which virtually proposes to reduce Indians to a state of slavery, is another example. The thing is a monstrous wrong, an insult to British subjects, a disgrace to its authors, and a slight upon ourselves. Every Englishman is concerned to see that the commercial greed of the South African trader is not permitted to wreak such bitter injustice upon men who alike by Proclamation and by Statute are placed upon an equality with ourselves before the Law.

If I could but convince you that the 'greatest kindness' is not shown to the Indian in South Africa and that the Europeans are also to blame for the prevailing state of things, a way will have been paved for a dispassionate discussion of the whole Indian question, and perhaps it will be solved without any intervention from Downing Street to the satisfaction of both the parties concerned. Why should the Clergy remain silent on this momentous question, momentous because it affects the future of South Africa? They do take part in politics pure and simple. They do attend the meetings convened to urge the disfranchisement of the Indians. But this is not merely a political question. Will they see a race degraded and insulted because of the 'unreasoning' prejudice against it and sit still? Is such indifference sanctioned by Christ's Christianity?

I repeat again, it is not political power that the Indians want. It is degradation, it is many other consequences and measures that will flow from and will be based on the disfranchisement that they dread and resist.

In conclusion, I shall be deeply indebted to those who would read this and be kind enough to express their opinion about its subject-matter. Many Europeans have privately expressed their sympathy for the Indians and have strongly disapproved of the sweeping resolutions passed at the various meetings held in the Colony in connection with the Indian franchise and the bitter tone of the speeches made. If these gentlemen will come forward and have the courage of their convictions, I submit, they will have a fourfold reward. They will earn the gratitude of the 40,000 Indians in the Colony, indeed of the whole of India, and will render true service to the Colony by disabusing the minds of the Europeans of the notion that the Indian is a curse to the Colony; they will serve humanity by rescuing or assisting to rescue a portion of an ancient race from unwarranted persecution which they know exists in the whole of South Africa, and last but not least, in common with the noblest Britons, be the forgers of the links that will unite England and India in love and peace. I humbly submit that such an achievement is worth a little ridicule that the pioneers will be subjected to. To separate the two communities is easy enough, to unite them by the 'silken cord' of love is equally difficult. But then, everything that is worth having is also worth a great deal of trouble and anxiety.

The Natal Indian Congress has been mentioned in connection with this matter and has been much misrepresented. In a separate pamphlet[1] its objects and methods of working will be fully discussed.

While this was in course of preparation, Mr. Maydon made a speech at Bellair and a curious resolution was passed at the meeting. With the greatest deference to the honourable gentleman, I venture to take exception to his statement that the Indians have ever remained in a state of servitude and are, therefore, unfit for self-government. Although he invoked the aid of history in support of his statement, I venture to say that history fails to bear out the statement. In the first place Indian history does not date from the invasion of Alexander the Great. But I take the liberty to say that India of that date will compare very favourably with Europe of today. In support of that statement I beg to refer him to the Greek description of India at pp. 169-70 of Hunter's *Indian Empire*, partly quoted in my "Open Letter". What, however, of India of a period previous to that date? History says that

[1] This is not available.

the Aryans' home was not India but they came from Central Asia, and one family migrated to India and *colonized* it, the others to Europe. The government of that day was, so history says, a civilized government in the truest sense of the term. The whole Aryan literature grew up then. The India of Alexander's time was India on the decline. When other nations were hardly formed, India was at its zenith, and the Indians of this age are descendants of that race. To say, therefore, that the Indians have been ever under servitude is hardly correct. India certainly has not proved unconquerable. If that be reason for disfranchisement, I have nothing to say except this, that every nation will, unfortunately, be found wanting in this respect. It is true England "wafts her sceptre" over India. The Indians are not ashamed of that fact. They are proud to be under the British Crown, because they think that England will prove India's deliverer. The wonder of all wonders seems to be that the Indians, like the favoured nation of the Bible, are irrepressible in spite of centuries of oppression and bondage. And many British writers think that India is under England with her consent.

Professor Seeley says:

> The nation of India have been conquered by an army, of which, on the average, a fifth part was English. In the early battles of the Company, by which its power was decisively established, at the siege of Arcot, at Plassey, at Buxar, there seems always to have been more Sepoys than Europeans on the side of the Company. And, let us observe further, that we do not hear of the Sepoys fighting ill, of the English as bearing the whole brunt of the conflict . . . . But if once it is admitted that the Sepoys always outnumbered the English, and that they kept pace with the English in efficiency as soldiers, the whole theory, which attributes our success to an immeasurable natural superiority in valour, falls to the ground. —Digby's *India for the Indians and for England*

The honourable gentleman[1] is also reported to have said:

> We (the Colonists) were entrusted with responsible Government in Natal under certain circumstances. These have now become absolutely changed, brought about by your refusal to sanction our Bill. You have brought about a condition of things that is so fraught with danger that it is our clear duty to hand back to you the authority which you gave us.

How contrary to facts is all this! It assumes that the Home Government are now trying to thrust the Indian franchise on the

[1] The reference is to Maydon; "The Indian Franchise", 16-12-1895

Colony, while the fact is that the Responsible Government is trying to materially alter the circumstances which existed at the time it was granted. Would not Downing Street be justified in saying, "We entrusted you with Responsible Government under certain circumstances. These have now become absolutely changed, brought about by your Bill of last year. You have brought about a condition of things that is so fraught with danger to the whole British Constitution and British notion of Justice that it is our clear duty not to allow you to trifle with the fundamental principles on which the British Constitution is based."?

The time when the Responsible Government was accepted was, I submit, the time when Mr. Maydon's objection might have been valid. Whether Responsible Government would ever have been granted, hadthe European Colonists insisted upon disfranchisement of the Indians is another question.[1]

From a pamphlet printed by T. L. Cullingworth, Printer, 40 Field Street, Durban, 1895

83. VEGETARIANISM IN NATAL

It is an uphill battle to fight in Natal, and, indeed, in South Africa. Yet there are few places where vegetarianism would be more conducive to health, or more economical or practicable. Of course, at present, it is hardly economical and it certainly requires a great deal of self-denial to remain a vegetarian, To become one seems almost an impossibility. "It is all very well in London, where there are scores of vegetarian restaurants, but how can you become or remain a vegetarian in South Africa, where you find very little nourishing vegetarian food?" has been the invariable reply to my enquiries, in the course of conversation on the matter with scores of men. One would have thought such a reply would be impossible in South Africa, seeing that it enjoys a semi-tropical climate, and its vegetable resources are inexhaustible. Nevertheless, the reply is entirely justifiable. In the best of hotels you find, as a rule, potatoes the only vegetable at lunch-time, and that badly cooked. At dinner-time you find, perhaps, two vegetables, and the vegetable menu is hardly ever changed. It is little short of a scandal that in this Garden Colony of South Africa, where, at the proper time, you can get fruit for a song,

[1] For Press reactions to this pamphlet, *vide The Early Phase*, pp. 592-6.

you find very little fruit at the hotels. Pulses are conspicuous by their absence. A gentleman wrote to me to ask if it was possible to buy pulses in Durban; he could not procure them in Charlestown and the neighbouring townships. Nuts can only be bought at Christmas time. Such are the present circumstances. Vegetarian friends, therefore, need not wonder if I can report very little perceptible progress as a result of nearly nine months' advertising and quiet persuasion. Nor are the above the only difficulties in the way of vegetarian propaganda. People here think of very little else than gold. The gold fever is so infectious in these regions that it has smitten the highest and the lowest, the spiritual teachers included. They find no time for higher pursuits of life; they find no time to think of the beyond.

Copies of *The Vegetarian* are supplied regularly every week to most of the libraries. Occasional advertisements are inserted in the newspapers. Every opportunity is availed of to introduce the subject of vegetarianism. So far this has given rise to some sympathetic correspondence and enquiries. A few books have also been bought. Many more have been distributed. Correspondence and conversation have not been devoid of humour. A lady, who corresponded with me in connection with Esoteric Christianity, became angry on finding that Esoteric Christianity had anything to do with vegetarianism. She was so disgusted that she returned the books lent to her without reading them. One gentleman thought it disgraceful for a man to shoot or slaughter an animal. "He would not do it for the life of him." But he had no compunction in eating the meat prepared for him.

The possibilities of South Africa, and particularly of Natal, from a vegetarian standpoint, are too numerous to mention, only there are no vegetarian workers. The soil is so fertile that it would grow almost anything. Vast tracts of land await only a skilful hand to turn them into real mines of gold. If a few men could be induced to turn their attention from the Johannesburg gold to the quieter method of earning money by cultivation, and to get rid of their colour prejudice, there is no doubt that every variety of vegetable and fruit could be grown in Natal. The climate of South Africa is such that the Europeans alone will never be able to work the soil as much as is possible. They have got the Indians to help them, but they simply would not make use of them owing to the colour prejudice, which is so strong in South Africa. Even in Natal, where the prosperity of the Colony admittedly depends upon the Indian labour, the prejudice is

very strong. I have a letter from a gardener who, much as he would like to employ Indian labour, is handicapped owing to this prejudice. Vegetarians, therefore, have a scope for patriotic work. The line of marriage between white British subjects and Indians is getting thicker day by day in South Africa. The best English and Indian statesmen are of opinion that Britain and India can be indissolubly united by the chain of love. The spiritualists anticipate good results from such a union. The South African white British subjects are doing their utmost to retard, and, if possible, to prevent such a union. It may be that some vegetarians may come forward to arrest such a catastrophe.

I would venture to make one suggestion and then close this hurriedly written resume of the work in Natal. If some men of means, and well up in vegetarian literature, were to travel in different parts of the world, explore the resources of the different countries, report upon their possibilities from a vegetarian standpoint, and invite vegetarians to migrate to those countries which they may consider suitable for vegetarian propaganda, and, at the same time, worth settling in from a pecuniary point of view, much vegetarian work can be done, openings can be found for poor vegetarians, and real centres of vegetarianism can be established in various parts of the world.

But then vegetarianism, in order to do this, should be a religion, and not merely a hygienic convenience. The platform will have to be shifted much higher.

The Vegetarian, 21-12-1895.

84. LETTER TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"

DURBAN,
February 3, 1896

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury

SIR,

As one interested in food reform, permit me to congratulate you on your leader in Saturday's issue on "The New Science of Healing", which lays so much stress on the adoption of the natural food, i.e., vegetarianism, But for the unfortunate characteristic of this "self-indulgent" age, in which "nothing is more common than to hear men warmly supporting a theory in the abstract without any intention of submitting to it in practice", we should all be vegetarians.

For, why should it be otherwise when Sir Henry Thompson calls it "a vulgar error" to suppose that flesh foods are indispensable for our sustenance, and the most eminent physiologists declare that fruit is the natural food of man, and when we have the example of Buddha, Pythagoras, Plato, Porphyry, Ray, Daniel, Wesley, Howard, Shelley, Sir Isaac Pitman, Edison, Sir W. B. Richardson, and a host of other eminent men as vegetarians? The Christian vegetarian claim that Jesus was also a vegetarian, and there does not seem to be anything to oppose that view, except the reference to His having eaten broiled fish after the Resurrection. The most successful missionaries in South Africa (the Trappists) are vegetarians. Looked at from every point of view, vegetarianism has been demonstrated to be far superior to flesheating. The Spiritualists hold, and the practice of the religious teachers of all the religions, except, perhaps, the generality of Protestant teachers shows, that nothing is more detrimental to the spiritual faculty of man than the gross feeding on flesh. The most ardent vegetarians attribute the agnosticism, the materialism, and the religious indifference of the present age to too much flesheating and wine-drinking, and the consequent disappearance, partial or total, of the spiritual faculty in man. Vegetarian admirers of the intellectual in man point to the whole host of the most intellectual men of the world, who were invariably abstemious in their habits, especially at the time of writing their best works, to demonstrate the sufficiency, if not the superiority of the vegetarian diet from an intellectual standpoint. The columns of the vegetarian magazines and reviews afford a most decisive proof that where beef and its concoctions, with no end of physic thrown in, have lamentably failed, vegetarianism has triumphantly succeeded. Muscular vegetarians demonstrate the superiority of their diet by pointing out that the peasantry of the world are practically vegetarians, and that the strongest and most useful animal, the horse, is a vegetarian, while the most ferocious and practically useless animal, the lion, is a carnivore. Vegetarian moralists mourn over the fact that selfish men would—for the sake of gratifying their lustful and diseased appetite—force the butcher's trade on a portion of mankind, while they themselves would shrink with horror from such a calling. They moreover lovingly implore us to bear in mind that without the stimulants of flesh foods and wine it is difficult enough to restrain our passions and escape Satan's clutches, and not to add to those difficulties by resorting to meats and drinks which, as a rule, go hand in hand. For, it is claimed that vegetarianism, in which juicy fruits find the foremost place, is the safest and surest cure for drunkenness, while meat-eating induces or increases the habit. They also argue that since meat-eating is not only unnecessary but harmful

to the system, indulgence in it is immoral and sinful, because it involves the infliction of unnecessary pain on and cruelty towards harmless animals. Lastly, vegetarian economists, without fear of contradiction, assert that vegetarian foods are the cheapest diet, and their general adoption will go a long way towards mitigating, if not altogether suppressing, the rapidly growing pauperism side by side with the rapid march of the materialistic civilization and the accumulation of immense riches in the hands of a few. So far as I recollect, Dr. Louis Kuhne urges the necessity of vegetarianism on physiological grounds only, and does not give any hints for beginners, who always find it difficult to select the right kinds from a variety of vegetarian foods and to cook them properly. I have a selection of vegetarian cookery books (at from 1d to 1s), as also treatises on the subject dealing with its various aspects. The cheapest books are given away, and if any of your readers feel disposed, not merely to admire the new science of healing from a distance, but to put its tenets into practice, I shall be very glad to supply them with what pamphlets I possess on the subject, so far as it relates to vegetarianism. I submit the following for the consideration of those who believe in the Bible. Before the "Fall" we were vegetarians:

> And God said : behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in which is fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat; and it was so.

There may be some excuse for the unconverted partaking of meat, but for those who say they are "born again", vegetarian Christians claim, there can be none; because their state surely should be equal, if not superior, to that of the people before the "Fall". Again, in times of Restitution:

> The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. . . . And the lion shall eat straw like the ox. . . . They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountains; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

These times may be far off yet for the whole world. But why cannot those who know and can—the Christians—enact them for themselves at any rate? There can be no harm in anticipating them, and, may be, thereby their approach may be considerably hastened.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 4-2-1896

85. MEMORIAL TO NATAL GOVERNOR

DURBAN,
February 26, 1896

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE SIR WALTER FRANCIS HELY-HUTCHINSON, KNIGHT COMMANDER OF THE MOST DISTINGUISHED ORDER OF SAINT MICHAEL AND SAINT GEORGE, GOVERNOR AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN AN OVER THE COLONY OF NATAL, VICE-ADMIRAL OF THE SAME, AND SUPREME CHIEF OVER THE NATIVE POPULATION, GOVERNOR OF ZULULAND, ETC., ETC ETC.,
PIETERMARITZBURG, NATAL

THE MEMORIAL OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIAN BRITISH SUBJECTS RESIDING IN NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT:

Your Excellency's Memorialists, as representing the Indian community in Natal, hereby respectfully beg to approach Your Excellency with regard to the following portions of Rules and Regulations for the disposal of *erven*[1] in the Township of Nondweni, Zululand, published in the Natal Government *Gazette*, dated the 25th February 1896, viz.:

> Part of Section 4: Persons of European birth or descent intending to bid at any such sale must give notice in writing at least twenty days prior to the date fixed for the sale to the Secretary for Zululand, Pietermaritzburg, or to the Government Secretary at Eshowe, Zululand, describing as far as practicable by numbers or otherwise the *erven* they are desirous of acquiring.
>
> Part of Section 18: Only persons of European birth or descent shall be approved of as occupiers of *erven* or sites. On failure of compliance with the condition any such sites or *erven* shall revert to the Government as in the preceding section hereof.
>
> Rule 20: It shall be a distinct condition subject to which the *erven* or sites are sold, and which condition shall be inserted in every freehold title applied for and issued in terms of Sections 10, 11 and 13 of these Regulations, that at no time shall the owner of sites or *erven* in the Nondweni Township bought hereunder be at liberty either to sell or let such sites or *erven* or any portion thereof or to permit occupation of them or any portion thereof free of

[1] Plots for buildings in South African townships

rent to any other persons except those of European birth and descent, and in the event of the holder of such title-deed contravening such conditions and stipulations, any such sites or *erven* shall revert to the Government in terms and manner stated in Section 17 hereof.

Your Memorialists interpret the rules to mean exclusion of Her Majesty's Indian subjects from owning or acquiring property in the Nondweni Township.

Your Memorialists beg respectfully but emphatically to protest against the invidious distinction thus drawn between European and Indian British subjects.

Nor can your Memorialists find any reason for such exclusion, unless it be another point among many yielded to the colour prejudice in South Africa.

Your Memorialists humbly submit that such preference given to one portion of Her Majesty's subjects over another is not only contrary to the British policy and justice, but, in the case of the Indian community, violates the terms of the Proclamation of 1858 which entitles British Indians to equal treatment with the Europeans.

Your Memorialists venture further to submit that, in view of the efforts of Her Majesty's Government on behalf of the Indians residing in the Transvaal, the distinction drawn by the rules under discussion with regard to property rights is somewhat strange and inconsistent.

Your Memorialists would crave leave to mention that many Indians own freehold property in other parts of Zululand.

Your Memorialists, therefore, humbly pray that, by virtue of the power reserved by Section 23 of the Regulations, Your Excellency will be pleased to order such alteration or amendment thereof as to do away with the above-mentioned distinction.

And for this act of justice and mercy your Memorialists, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc., etc.[1]

ABDUL KARIM HAJEE
AND 39 OTHERS

From a photostat of a handwritten copy : S.N. 755

[1] The memorial was rejected on February 27, on the ground that the Regulations were identical with those of September 28, 1891, in operation in regard to the Eshowe township; *vide* "Letter to C. Walsh", 4-3-1896.

86. LETTER TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"

DURBAN,
March 2, 1896

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury

SIR,

In justice to the two defendants, Roberts and Richards, whom the worthy Superintendent of Police is pleased to call "upstarts" and other bad names, and in justice to the Indian community, I beg to encroach upon your space with reference to the partial report of the case in which the two defendants were charged under the Vagrancy Law and the Superintendent's views thereon that appeared in your issue of the 29th February. The report and the opinion would seem to show that Mr. Waller's decision[1] is a miscarriage of justice. To give colour to that view, the Superintendent has elected to give that portion of the evidence which I wished, and still wish, to use in order to win public sympathy for the two defendants, and what is more, for people placed in a similar position.

I humbly think that theirs was a very hard case, and that the police erred in arresting them, and, afterwards, in harassing them. I said in the Court, and I repeat, that the Vagrant Law would cease to be oppressive if the police showed some consideration for the Indians and used discretion in arresting them. The fact that both are sons of indentured Indians should not go against them, especially in an English community, where a man's worth, not birth, is taken into account in judging him. If that were not so, a butcher's son would not have been honoured as the greatest poet. The Superintendent, then, makes much of the fact that the second defendant changed his name about two years ago, and tries thereby to excuse the wanton insult[2] to which he was submitted by the constable who arrested him. It should

[1] Mr. Waller, Police magistrate, dismissed the case on the ground that so long as a coloured man, found out of doors after 9 p.m. without a pass, told the police he was going home, it was sufficient answer to clear himself, as the law stated that only a coloured person found wandering between the hours of 9 p.m. and 5 a.m. without a pass from his employer, or not giving a good account of himself, may be arrested.

[2] The constable laughed at him when the defendant gave his name as Samuel Richards.

be remembered that the constable in charge knew nothing whatever as to when the name was changed, and surely his very features were sufficient to betray his nationality had he attempted, as the Superintendent supposes he did, to cover his nationality in order to escape the operation of the Vagrant Law. Nor did he seem to be ashamed of his name or birth, for the answers came almost simultaneously with the questions as to birth and name, and seemed so much to please the amiable Superintendent as to extort the following expression from him: "Yes, my boy, if all were like you, the police would have no difficulty."

There can be nothing absolutely wrong in changing one's name unless it is wrong to change one's religion. To compare small things with great, Mr. Quilliam has become Haji Abdullah because he has become a Mahomedan. Mr. Webb, the late Consul-General of Manica, also adopted a Mahomedan name, on adopting the Mahomedan faith. Not only the Christian name but the Christian dress also is an offence for an Indian, according to the view of the constables. And now, according to the Superintendent's view, change of religion would render an Indian liable to suspicion. But why should this be so, assuming, of course, that the change is a result of honest belief and not a dodge to evade the law? In the present case I assume that both the defendants are honest Christians because I am told both are respected by Dr. Booth[1]. Of course, the Superintendent will report, "But how is a man to know whether a man is an honest Christian or a Satan in the Christian garb?" This is a difficult question to answer. I submitted to the Court that each case could be judged on its own merits, and that the benefit of the ordinary presumptions should be given to the Indians, as it is given to other classes.

I submitted that two men, wearing a respectable dress, walking quietly along the main street at 9.30 p.m., stopping when questioned, protesting that they were returning from the gardens and were on their way home, which was not seven minutes' walk from the place where they were stopped, that one of them was a clerk and the other a teacher (as was the case with the two unfortunate boys), may be given the benefit of the ordinary presumption. I submitted further that in cases like this the police might, if they suspected, see their charge

[1] Head of St. Aidan's Mission, Durban, he supervised a small charitable hospital founded by Indians. In 1899, during the Boer War, Dr. Booth helped to train the Indian Ambulance Corps.

safely home. But, even if that could not be done, they might be treated as respectable men under custody and not be prejudged to be thieves and robbers. The remarks about dress and religion and name might conveniently be postponed till they could be proved to be hypocrites.

About a year ago I was travelling from Standerton to Durban. Two of my fellow-passengers were suspected to be thieves. Their luggage, and with theirs mine also, because I was in the same compartment, was examined at Volksrust, and a detective was placed in the compartment. They could offer a glass of whisky to the Landdrost[1], who came to examine the luggage and talk to the detective as gentlemen and on equal terms, presumably because they were respectably dressed and were first-class passengers. The detective did not prejudge them. I must not omit to mention that they were Europeans. The detective all the way through was sorry that he had to perform the unpleasant duty. May I plead for the same treatment in cases like that of the unfortunate boys? Instead of the cell they might have been given some other place to lie in. They might have been given clean blankets to lie on if the cell could not be avoided. The constables might have spoken to them kindly. Had this been done the case would never have come before the Magistrate.

I venture to take exception to the Superintendent's statement that "these young upstarts elected to be locked up all night in preference to bail". The reverse is the truth. They offered bail and it was refused during the night. The Magistrate was not pleased with this treatment. They renewed their request to be bailed out in the morning. The request of the second defendant was granted. The constable refused to bail out the first. Against his name was marked: "not to be released". The book containing that remark was produced in the Court. Later, he was released at the instance of Inspector Benny, who promptly remedied the mistake as soon as he came to know of it.

With deference to the Superintendent, I beg to say that the first defendant did not defy the law. The Magistrate made no order; but he, in his fatherly and kind manner, suggested that I should advise him to get the Mayor's Pass[2]. I submitted that such was not necessary but said that in deference to his suggestion I would do so. The defendant has now received a reply from the Town Clerk that the pass will not be

[1] South African judge, also inspector or officer
[2] Of exemption

issued to him, a clerk and Sunday School teacher, having never been charged with any criminal offence. If he is not fit to be out after 9 p.m. he cannot be fit to be a Sunday School Teacher. One would think that it is less dangerous for him to be out after nine than for him to be a Sunday School teacher who would mould the character of tender children. The Superintendent says that his force "has never interfered with the Arab merchants or other respectable coloured men at night". Were not these two boys fit to be ranked among "other respectable coloured men"? I appeal to him, and entreat him to consider well whether he himself would have arrested these two boys. I say in his own words, "If his whole force were as considerate and amiable as himself there would be no difficulty."

I think, in dealing with my "Open Letter", you were kind enough to say that cases of real grievance will readily command your sympathy. Do you consider this case a real grievance? If you do, I ask your sympathy so that cases like the above may not occur again. I have found it difficult to ask respectable Indian youths who may care for my advice to take out passes from their masters. I have asked them to take out the Mayor's pass of exemption. But since the first application has been refused, it has dampened the zeal of the others. If the public approve of such arrests the police may be induced to repeat them in spite of the Magistrate's opinion to the contrary. The Press, therefore, by its opinion can either make it easier for apparently respectable Indians to take out the Mayor's pass of exemption, or else almost impossible for the police to repeat such arrests. There is the recourse to a suit against the Corporation. But that is a recourse to be had in the last resort.

I am, etc.,
M.K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 6-3-1896

87. LETTER TO C. WALSH

DURBAN,
March 4, 1896

C. WALSH, ESQ.
ACTING SECRETARY FOR ZULULAND
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I beg to acknowledge your letter dated 27th ultimo in reply to the Memorial[1] about the Nondweni Township Regulations, which I had the honour to forward to His Excellency the Governor of Zululand, conveying the information that the Regulations are a copy of the Eshowe Township Regulations which were published during His Excellency's predecessor's time.

Such being the case, I would, on behalf of the Memorialists, venture to request His Excellency to order the alteration or amendment to the Regulations with regard to both the Townships, so as to do away with the colour distinction. In any case I take the liberty to submit that the existence of similar Regulations for the Eshowe Township is, in my humble opinion, no justification for the Nondweni Township Regulations, regard being especially had to the events that are now happening concerning the position of the Indians as to property rights in other parts of South Africa.

I believe there are no such Regulations for the Melmoth Township.[2]

I beg, etc.,
M. K GANDHI

Colonial Office Records No. 427, Vol. 24

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Natal Governor", 26-2-1896.
[2] The request was turned down; *vide* "Letter to Dadabhai Naoroji", 7-3-1896.

88. LETTER TO SECRETARY FOR ZULULAND

CENTRAL WEST STREET
DURBAN, NATAL,
March 6, 1896

THE SECRETARY FOR ZULULAND
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

May I enquire what led to the colour distinction being introduced in the Eshowe Township Regulations, seeing that none such exists with regard to the Melmoth Township Regulations, and also the date when the Melmoth Township Regulations were published?

I remain, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records No. 427, Vol. 24

89. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

P.O. Box 66,
CENTRAL WEST STREET,
DURBAN, NATAL,
March 7, 1896

THE HON'BLE MR. DADABHAI NAOROJI
NATIONAL LIBERAL CLUB
LONDON

SIR,

I venture to enclose herewith a cutting containing the Franchise Bill that the Ministry propose to introduce next session and a Press copy of my letter to the Chairman of the British Committee.[1]

The Governor of Zululand has refused to grant the request of the Memorialists regarding Nondweni. I am now preparing a Memorial[2] for the Home Government on the subject.

I beg to thank you for your letter about the Commando Memorial.

I remain,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 2254

[1] *Vide* the following item.
[2] *Vide* "Memorial to J. Chamberlain", 11-3-1896.

90. LETTER TO W. WEDDERBURN

P. O. Box 66,
CENTRAL WEST STREET,
DURBAN, NATAL,
March 7, 1896

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN, BARONET, M. P., ETC.
CHAIRMAN OF THE BRITISH COMMITTEE OF
THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
LONDON

SIR,

I venture to enclose herewith a cutting containing the Franchise Bill that the Government proposes to introduce during the next session of the Legislative Assembly of Natal in April. This Bill replaces the Act of 1894 against which a Memorial[1] was sent to the Government. It is said that this Bill has been approved of by Mr. Chamberlain. If so it would place the Indian community in a very awkward position. The newspapers seem to think that India has representative institutions and that therefore the Bill will not affect the Indians. At the same time there can be no doubt that the Bill is meant to affect the Indian community. It is our intention to oppose the Bill. But in the meantime a question in the House of Commons, in my humble opinion, may be very useful and give an insight into Mr. Chamberlain's views. The Indian community will soon have to encroach upon your time and attention on other matters of pressing importance.

I beg to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 2280

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Assembly", 28-6-1894.

91. MEMORIAL TO J. CHAMBERLAIN

DURBAN, NATAL,
March 11, 1896

TO

THE RIGHT HON'BLE JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN,
HER MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,
LONDON

THE MEMORIAL OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS REPRESENTING THE INDIAN COMMUNITY IN NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT:

Your Memorialists hereby venture to approach Her Majesty's Government with regard to certain Rules and Regulations in connection with the Township of Nondweni, Zululand, published in the Natal Government *Gazette* dated the 25th February, 1896, in so far as the said Regulations affect the rights of Her Majesty's Indian subjects to own or acquire property in the Township of Nondweni, as also with regard to similar Regulations for the Township of Eshowe in Zululand.

The portion of the Regulations affecting the British Indians is as follows:

> Part of Section 4—Persons of European birth or descent intending to bid at any such sale (i.e., sale of *erven*) must give notice in writing at least twenty days prior to the date fixed for the sale to the Secretary for Zululand, etc.
>
> Part of Section 18—Only persons of European birth or descent shall be approved of as occupiers of *erven* or sites. On failure of compliance with this condition any such sites or *erven* shall revert to the Government as in the preceding section hereof.
>
> Part of Section 20—It shall be a distinct condition subject to which the *erven* or sites are sold, and which condition shall be inserted in every freehold title applied for and issued in terms of Sections 10, 11 and 13 of the Regulations, that at no time shall the owner of sites or *erven* in the Nondweni Township bought hereunder be at liberty either to sell or let such sites or *erven* or any portion thereof or to permit occupation of them or any portion thereof free of rent, to any other persons except those of European birth and descent, and in the event of the holder of such titledeed contravening such conditions and stipulations, any such sites or *erven* shall revert to the Government in terms and manner stated in Section 17 hereof.

The next day after the publication of the *Gazette* containing the Nondweni Regulations your Memorialists petitioned His Excellency the Governor of Zululand praying that the Regulations may be so altered or amended as to do away with the colour distinction therein.

In reply to the said Memorial[1] a copy whereof is annexed hereto, your Memorialists were informed that the Regulations were "the same as the Regulations in force for the Eshowe Township proclaimed by His Excellency's predecessor on 28th September 1891". Thereupon a request was made, on the 4th March, 1896, to the effect that both the Regulations should be altered or amended with regard to the British Indians.

A reply thereto was received on 5th March 1896, to the effect that the Governor did not feel justified in acting on the suggestion.

Your Memorialists confidently trust that the wrong inflicted upon the Indian community is so manifest that it has only to be brought to the notice of Her Majesty's Government to be remedied. If such an invidious and, your Memorialists respectfully submit, unnecessary distinction cannot be permitted in self-governing colonies, much less should it be permitted in a Crown Colony.

Many of your Memorialists own property in Zululand. In the year 1889, when the Township of Melmoth was sold, the Indian community laid out nearly £2,000 in the purchase of *erven* in that Township.

Your Memorialists respectfully submit, it is absolutely necessary that the Indian community should be allowed to purchase land in Zululand freely, if only for the reason that they may be able to make their outlay of the £2,000 profitable.

Even the Government organ[2] in Natal considered the wrong so serious that, though as a rule hostile to the Indian aspirations, it viewed the Memorial to the Government of Zululand very favourably. The remarks are so apt that your Memorialists crave leave to quote them below:

> Zululand is likely soon to have an Indian question all its own. The rules and regulations published in the Government *Gazette* last Tuesday for the disposal of *erven* in the newly-declared township of Nondwen include a

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Natal Governor", 26-2-1896.

[2] The reference is to *The Natal Mercury ; vide* "Memorial to J. Chamberlain" 11-8-1895.

number of sections which specially prevent all but persons of European birth or descent from purchasing property in the township, or even occupying any property in the township. The Indians, ever to the fore in such matters, have promptly sent a protest to the Governor against the promulgation of such rules and regulations, and seeing that Zululand is still a Crown Colony, and, therefore, more under the direct eyes of the Imperial authorities, we cannot very well see how such rules can be enforced when there is evidently so strong a disposition on the part of the Home Government to prevent the Franchise Law Amendment Bill passed in Natal from becoming law. From the protest presented by the Indians, we gather that some of them already own freehold property in Zululand, and, if this be the case, apart from any other reason, it seems to us the Memorialists have a cause for consideration. There may be some special provision as regards the occupation of land in the Zulu country which prohibits Indians from becoming property-holders, but still the fact remains that the territory is a Crown Colony, and this being so, it seems strange that rules and regulations can be made for that country which are not permitted in Natal, a responsibly-governed Colony.

So frequently do the colour distinctions creep in into the rules and regulations, laws and bye-laws published in various parts of South Africa, that it is impossible for the Indian community, consisting, as it does, chiefly of traders and artisans with a knowledge sufficient only for the requirements of trade and, in many cases, even without it, to keep itself informed of all the legislation affecting its rights and bring it to the notice of Her Majesty's Government.

And things have come to such a pass that your Memorialists cannot expect redress from the local authorities, even in cases where the wrong complained of is a result of an oversight of the fundamental principles of the British Constitution, as in the present instance.

Your Memorialists fear that, if a Crown Colony can refuse property rights to a portion of Her Majesty's subjects, the Governments of the South African Republic and the Orange Free State would in a greater measure be justified in doing likewise or even going further.

Your Memorialists submit that the existence of the colour distinction in the Regulations for Eshowe should not be a justification for similar Regulations for Nondweni. If those for Eshowe are bad, rather, your Memorialists submit, should both be altered and amended so as not to affect the just rights of the British Indian subjects.

Your Memorialists further venture to draw your attention to the fact that constant class legislation affecting Her Majesty's Indian subjects not only causes a great deal of anxiety to the Indian community in South Africa, but the petitions that have to be frequently made to have such legislation altered cause a great deal of expense which the Indian community, by no means in an over-prosperous condition can ill afford to incur, not to mention the fact that such a state of constant unrest and irritation seriously interferes with the business of the Indian community as a whole.

Nothing short of an enquiry into the position and status of the British Indians in South Africa, and a notification calling upon the authorities in South Africa to ensure the equality of treatment of Her Majesty's Indian subjects with all the other British subjects will, in your Memorialists' humble opinion, prevent the social and civil extinction of Her Majesty's loyal and law-abiding Indian subjects.

Your Memorialists, therefore, humbly pray that Her Majesty's Government will order alteration or amendment of the Eshowe and Nondweni Townships Regulations so as to remove the disabilities that they, in their present form, entail on Her Majesty's Indian subjects, and further humbly suggest that orders may be issued forbidding future class legislation affecting them.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Memorialists, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc., etc.[1]

(SD.) ABDUL KARIM HAJEE ADAM
AND OTHERS

From a photostat : S. N. 3620

92. LETTER TO "THE NATAL WITNESS"

DURBAN,
April 4, 1896

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Witness

SIR,

I would be much obliged if you could find space for the following by way of answer to "G.W.W.", who wrote to your under

[1] On April 10, in reply to a question by Mancherjee M. Bhawnaggree, in the House of Commons, Chamberlain promised to look into this memorial on receiving it. The Imperial Government ultimately removed the prohibition.

date 11th March last, and did me the honour to criticize my pamphlet[1] on the Indian franchise.

While I thank "G.W.W." for the personal fairness he has shown me in his treatment of the pamphlet, I wish he had treated the subject-matter of the "Appeal" as fairly. If he had read it with an unbiased mind, I think he would not have found any cause to differ from the views therein expressed. I have endeavoured to treat the subject from such a standpoint as would induce the European Colonists to extend ungrudgingly the hand of fellowship to the Indians without being elbowed out of their present position in so doing. I still maintain that there is no cause whatever for alarm, and if the European Colonists would only let the agitation die and consent to resume the *status quo*, they would find that their vote would not be swamped by the Indians. I further submit that, if ever such a contingency were to arise, it could be dealt with in anticipation, without the necessity of introducing colour distinction directly or indirectly. A real and reasonable educational test would perhaps for ever put a stop to the danger (if ever there be any) of the Indian vote swamping the European, and would, so far as possible, keep the Roll clear of the most objectionable European voters also, if any.

"G.W.W." takes exception to the arguments drawn from the relative strength of the true votes and "calls attention to what the next year's Roll may contain". I beg to call his attention to the fact that, although the Indians had every opportunity to "swamp" the List last year and the year before last, and every incentive to do so because of the fear as to the result of the Franchise Act, now about to be repealed, there were no additions to the number of Indian voters. It must have been either extraordinary apathy or want of qualifications that could account for such a result, But it could not have been any such apathy, for the "Agitation" has been on foot for the last two years.

I, however, do not propose to examine "G.W.W."'s letter in detail, for want of time and space, and will merely give the information he asks for, and apply it to the new Bill to be introduced during the forthcoming session.

Mr. Curzon, the then Under-Secretary of State for India, in moving the second reading of the India Councils Act (1861) Amendment Bill, said, among other things:

[1] *Vide* "The Indian Franchise", 16-12-1895.

> The object of the Bill, which it is my duty to expound to the House is to widen the basis and extend the function of the Government of India, to give further opportunity than at present exists to the non-official and the native element in Indian society to take part in the work of government and in this way to lend official recognition to that remarkable development, both in political industry and political capacity, which has been visible among the higher classes of Indian society since the Government of India was taken over by the Crown in 1858. This Bill is one to amend the Indian Councils Act of 1861. Legislative powers of some sort or other, but powers of a somewhat confused character and conflicting validity, have existed in India for a very long time. They existed with the rule of the old East India Company dating from the date of the Charters of the Tudor and Stuart Sovereigns; but the modern legislative system, under which India at present exists, owns its origin to the viceroyalty of Lord Canning and to the Secretaryship of State of Sir C. Wood, who was afterwards elevated to the peerage. Sir C. Wood, in 1861, carried through the House the India Councils Act of the year. . . . The Act of 1861 constituted three Legislative Councils in India—the Supreme Council of the Viceroy and the Provincial Councils of Madras and Bombay. The Supreme Legislative Council of the Viceroy consists of the Governor-General and his Executive Council, and is recruited by a minimum of six and a maximum of twelve additional members who are nominated by the Governor-General, of whom at least half must be non-official, whether they are drawn from the European or the native element. The Legislative Councils of Madras and Bombay are also recruited by a minimum of four and a maximum of eight additional members, who are nominated by the Provincial Governor, of whom at least half must be non-official. Since the passing of that Act, Legislative Councils have also been called into existence in Bengal and the North-West Provinces. In the case of Bengal, the Council consists of the Lieutenant-Governor and twelve nominated Councillors and, in the case of the North-West Provinces, of the Lieutenant-Governor and nine nominated councillors, of whom one-third in each case must be non-official. . . . A number of native gentlemen of intelligence and capacity and public spirit have been persuaded to come forward and to lend their services to the function of government, and undoubtedly the standard of merit of these Legislative Councils has stood high.

The Amending Act gives the right to *discuss* the Budget and the right of interpellation (rights hitherto not enjoyed). It also increases the number of members of the Council, and provides (vaguely) for a system of election. Of course, the Act is merely permissive.

According to the regulations issued under the above Act, out of eighteen seats for additional members for the Bombay Council, eight seats are filled by election. And the Corporation of Bombay (itself a

representative body), such Municipal Corporations, or group or groups thereof, other than the Bombay Corporation, as the Governor-in-Council may from time to time prescribe, District Local Boards, or groups as above prescribed, the Sardars of the Deccan, or such other class of large landholders as above prescribed, associations of merchants, tradesmen or manufacturers, prescribed as above, and the Senate of the University of Bombay, have the power to elect those members by a majority of votes. Similar rules are published for the election by or "nomination on the recommendation of" the various representative bodies of the various provinces which have Legislative Councils.

There is no class or colour distinction as to the franchisee or the representatives elected. The member (Indian) for the Bombay Council in the Supreme Legislative Council having resigned, the candidates are Indians and a European. The result should be known by the next week's mail.

I will only give one extract showing how this and municipal representation have been viewed by the most eminent men qualified to speak on such subjects with authority. Delivering a lecture before the Society of Arts, Sir William Wilson Hunter said on the 15th February, 1893.

> The Indian Municipalities, to which our Chairman, Lord Ripon, gave so memorable an impulse, had under their administration in 1891 a population of 15,000,000 and of the 10,585 members who sat on their Boards or Councils, more than one-half were elected by the ratepayers. The representative principle is now being cautiously extended under Lord Cross's Act of 1892 to the Legislative Councils both of the Supreme and Provincial Governments.

Portion of the Proclamation of 1858 runs:

> We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects,. . . .and it is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability, and integrity duly to discharge.

Looking at the new Franchise Bill in the light of these facts, it is very difficult to understand it. The question before the Colonists is very simple. Is it necessary to disfranchise the Indian community? If it is, I submit that the proof of the fact that they enjoy representative

institutions in India will not make it less so.[1] If it is not, why harass Indians by ambiguous legislation? If the answer to the question whether or not the Indians enjoy representative institutions in India is to decide the franchise question, I submit that the materials of knowledge about the subject are by no means so slender that the Colonists cannot decide the question now and for ever, without the necessity of an Act leaving it an open question to be decided hereafter in a Court of Law, involving a useless waste of money.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Witness, 17-4-1896

93. MEMORIAL TO NATAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

DURBAN,
April 27, 1896

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE HONOURABLE THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NATAL IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED, PIETERMARITZBURG

THE MEMORIAL OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS RESIDING IN THIS COLONY

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT:

Your Memorialists as representing and on behalf of the Indian community in Natal respectfully approach this Honourable House with regard to the Franchise Law Amendment Bill now before you for consideration.

Your Memorialists assume that the Bill is meant chiefly, if not solely, to affect the Indian community in that it repeals and replaces

[1] There was some discussion in the Natal Assembly on April 9 whether Indians had "representative institutions". The Prime Minister's observation that they were not possessed of representative institutions "founded on the franchise" was considered inadequate. In draft Bill, the words "Parliamentary institutions" were substituted by "elective representative institutions"-words used in the Governor's address to the Assembly. The second reading of the Bill, which was to have been on April 22, was postponed for a break in order that relevant correspondence between the Colonial and Home Governments could be made available and assessed by them; *vide The Early Phase,* pp. 605-6

the Act 25 of 1894 which was intended to disfranchise the Indians in the Colony.

In the Memorial[1] that was presented to this Honourable House on behalf of the Indian community on the same subject when the Act 25 of 1894 was under consideration, it was contended that the Indians did possess elective representative institutions in India.

The present Bill disfranchises natives of countries, not being of European origin, which have not possessed elective representative institutions in their own native land.

The position of your Memorialists, therefore, is painfully awkward in opposing the present Bill.

Yet, seeing that the Bill tacitly proposes to deal with the Indian franchise, your Memorialists consider it to be their duty respectfully to express their views about the Bill and also to show further on what grounds they believe that the Indians possess elective representative institutions in India.

In moving the second reading of the "India Councils Act (1861) Amendment Bill" in the House of Commons on the 28th day of March, 1892, the then Under-Secretary of State for India, said:[2]

The Amending Act, besides increasing the number of nominated members in each Council, gives the power of discussing the financial statement every year and the power of "interpellation". *It embodies the elective principle.* The Legislative Councils have from their inception enjoyed the representative character. The honourable mover of the second reading, with reference to the increase of nominated members, said:

> The object of this addition is very easily stated and will, I think, be very easily understood by the House. It is simply by expanding the area of selection, in which case you are adding to the strength of the representative character of the Councils.

But now these Councils, your Memorialists venture to submit, enjoy the representative character "founded on the franchise".

Speaking on an Amendment by Mr. Schwann, M.P., to the Bill to the effect that "no reform of Councils that does not embody the elective principle will be satisfactory", Mr. Curzon said:

[1] This was dated June 28, 1894.

[2] Not reproduced here. For the text of the speech, *vide* "Letter to "The Natal Witness", 4-4-1896

> I should like to point to him that our Bill does not necessarily exclude some such principle as the method of selection, election or delegation. With the permission of the House, I will read the words of the sub- section of Clause I. It runs as follows: The Governor-General-in-Council may from time to time on the approval of the Secretary of State-in-Council make regulations as to the conditions under which such nominations or any of them shall be made by the Governor-General, Governors and Lieutenant-Governors, respectively, and prescribe the manner in which such regulations shall be carried into effect. . . ."

Lord Kimberley[1] has expressed himself about that clause. He said:

> I am bound to say that I express my whole satisfaction with regard to this elective principle.

The opinions expressed by Lord Kimberley are shared by the Secretary of State under this Act:

> It would be in the power of the Viceroy to invite representative bodies in India to elect or select or delegate representatives of those bodies of their opinion to be nominated to these Councils and by elective measures

The Right Honourable Mr. Gladstone, speaking on the same subject, after explaining the speeches of the honourable mover of the Second Reading of the Bill and its amendment, said:

> I think I may fairly say that the speech of the Under-Secretary appears to me to embody the elective principle in the only sense in which we should expect it to be embodied. . . It is evident that the great question—and it is one of great and profound interest—before the House is that of the introduction of the elective element into the Government of India. What I wish is that their first steps shall be of a genuine nature and that whatever scope they give to the elective principle shall be real; there is no difference of principle. I think that the acceptance of the elective principle by the honourable gentleman (Mr. Curzon) though guarded was not otherwise than a frank acceptance.

Turning to the Regulations made and published in accordance with the above Act, your Memorialists submit that the remarks herebefore quoted are fully borne out. To take the Bombay Legislative Council, for instance, out of the eighteen nominated members, eight are elected by, or as it is put in the Regulations, "nominated on the recommendation of" the various representative bodies which are enfranchised for the purpose of Legislative Councils. The Corporation of Bombay (itself an elective body), Municipal Corporations other than the Bombay Corporation in the Bombay

[1] Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1894-5

Presidency prescribed by the Governor-in-Council, District Local Boards prescribed as above, the Sardars of the Deccan or other class of large landholders prescribed as above, associations of merchants, tradesmen, etc., prescribed as above, and the Senate of the University of Bombay recommend or elect these eight members by a majority of votes or in the case of associations not established by law in the manner laid down in their rules for carrying resolutions or recording decisions upon questions of business brought before such associations.

In the Sardars of the Deccan, this Honourable House will notice, there are even direct voters for the election of members of the Council.

The regulations for the other Councils are much the same.

Such is the character of the Legislative Councils in India and the political franchise. The difference, therefore, your Memorialists beg respectfully to point out, is not one of kind but of degree only. The reason is not because the Indians do not know or understand the representative principle. Your Memorialists cannot do better than quote again from the speech of the Right Honourable Mr. Gladstone, partly quoted above; he thus explained the reasons for the restrictive character of the elective principle:

> Her Majesty's Government ought to understand that it will be regarded as a most grave disappointment if, after all the assurances we have received that an attempt will be made to bring into operation this powerful engine of Government (i.e., the elective principle), there should not be some result such as we anticipate from their action. I do not speak of its amount, I speak more of its quality. In an Asiatic country like India, with its ancient civilization, with its institutions so peculiar, with such a diversity of races, religions and pursuits, with such an enormous extent of country, and such a multitude of human beings as probably except in China were never before under a single Government, I can understand that there should be difficulties in carrying out what we desire to see accomplished. But great as the difficulties are the task is a noble one, and will require the utmost prudence and care in conducting it to a successful consummation. All these things induce us to look forward cheerfully to a great future for India, and to expect that a real success will attend the genuine application, even though it may be a limited one, of the elective principle to the government of that vast and almost immeasurable country.

The opinion of those who are qualified to speak on Indian subjects seems to be unanimous as to the representative character of the Indian Councils.

Sir William Wilson Hunter, the greatest living authority on Indian subjects, says:

> The representative principle is now being cautiously extended, under Lord Cross's Act of 1892, to the Legislative Councils both of the Supreme and the Provincial Governments.

The Times, dealing with the Indian franchise in Natal, says:

> The argument that the Indian in Natal cannot claim higher privileges than he enjoys in India and that he has no franchise whatever in India is inconsistent with the facts. The Indian has precisely the same franchise in India which the Englishman enjoys.

After dealing with the Municipal franchise the article goes on to say:

> A similar principle applies, with the modification incidental to our system of government in India, to what may be called the Higher Electorate. The elected members of the Supreme and the Legislative Councils, which deal with 221 millions of British subjects are mainly elected by native bodies. Apart from the official representatives of Government in the Supreme and Provincial Legislatures about one-half the members are natives. It would be wrong to push this analogy too far. But it answers the argument against allowing British Indian subjects a vote in British Colonies on the ground that they have no vote in India. So far as government by voting exists in India, Englishmen and Indians stand on the same footing and, like in the Municipal, the Provincial and the Supreme Councils, the native interests are powerfully represented.

The Municipal franchise is very broad in India, and almost the whole of British India is studded by Municipal Corporations and Local Boards.

Speaking of the class of Indians already on the Voters' Rolls in Natal, *The Times* article, referred to above, says:

> It is precisely this class of men who form the most valued element in the municipal and other electorates in India. Throughout the 750 municipalities of India the British and the native voters have equal rights, and 9,790 Municipal Commissioners (Councillors) in 1891 were natives as against 839 Europeans. The European vote on the Indian Municipal Boards was therefore only one to 8 Indian votes, while in the Natal Electorate there are 37 European votes to one British Indian. . . . It must be remembered that Indian Municipalities administer a population of 15 millions and an expenditure of 50 million rupees.

As to the acquaintance of the Indian with the nature and responsibilities of representative institutions, the same article says:

> There is probably no other country in the world in which representative institutions have penetrated so deeply into the life of the people. Every caste, every trade, every village in India had for ages its council of five which practically legislated for and conducted the administration of the little community which it represented. Until the introduction of the Parish Councils' Act last year, there was no such rural system of self-administration even in England.

Mr. Schwann., M.P., on the same subject says:

> Do not suppose that the question of election is a new one in India. . . . There is no question which is more specially Indian than the question of election. Most of our civilization has come from India. And there is not the slightest doubt that we ourselves are practising a development of the Eastern principle of election.

Under such circumstances the Indian community whom the Bill is intended to affect find it most difficult to understand it.

Your Memorialists submit that the vagueness and ambiguity of the Bill are very undesirable and fair neither to the European community nor the Indian. They leave both in a state of suspense which is painful to the latter.

Your Memorialists respectfully draw the attention of this Honourable House to the fact that according to the present Voters' Roll, there is one Indian to every 38 Europeans, and that the Indian voters belong to the most respectable element in that community and are residents of long standing with large stakes in the Colony.

It is said, however, that the present List is no guide to what proportions the Indian vote may assume in future. But the fact that, during the two years that the disfranchisement of the Indian community has been threatened, no more Indians have had their names placed on the Voters' Roll, in your Memorialists' humble opinion, sufficiently disposes of the argument.

The truth is, and your Memorialists venture to speak from personal experience, there are not very many Indians in the Colony who have got the legal property qualification, low as it is.

Your Memorialists respectfully submit that the Bill under discussion is open to more objections than one. In your Memorialists' humble opinion, it introduces the colour distinction in a most invidious manner. For, while natives of other countries not enjoying elective representative institutions may not become voters, natives of the States of Europe, even though they may not enjoy such institutions in the countries they come from, may become voters under the General Franchise Law of the Colony.

It would make the sons of non-European women of questionable reputation eligible as voters so long as the father is a European, while it would prevent the son of a European lady of noble birth, should she choose to marry a nobleman belonging to a non-European race, from becoming a voter under the General Franchise Law of the Colony.

Assuming that the Indians come under the scope of the Bill, the method by which they may get themselves placed on the Voters' Roll will be a source of constant irritation to the Indian community, and may give rise to a system of favouritism and cause serious dissensions among the members of the Indian community.

The Bill is moreover calculated to involve the Indian community in endless litigation in order to enable them to vindicate their rights, which your Memorialists think, are capable of definition without any recourse to the law-courts of the Colony.

Above all, it will transfer the agitation from the hands of the Europeans, who now wish to see the Indians disfranchised, into those of the Indian community. And the agitation, your Memorialists fear, has to be perpetual.

It is most humbly submitted that such a state of things is very undesirable in the interests of all the communities inhabiting this Colony.

Your Memorialists, after a careful investigation for over a year, have ventured to come to the conclusion that the fear about the Indian vote swamping the European is absolutely imaginary, and, therefore, fervently pray and venture to hope that this Honourable House, before assenting to any Bill specially restrictive of the Indian vote or directly or indirectly introducing any colour distinction, would institute an inquiry into the real state of affairs which would show how many resident Indians there are in this Colony who possess the legal property qualification necessary for being placed on the Voters' Roll.And for this act of justice and mercy, your Memorialists, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc., etc.[1]

ABDUL CAREEM HAJEE ADAM
AND OTHERS

From a photostat of a printed copy : S. N. 980

[1] On the presentation of this petition the second reading of the Bill was put off by another week and completed only on May 6. On May 18, the Bill was committed to a joint committee of the Legislatures which then had its third reading. The Governor then forwarded the Bill to the Secretary of State for Colonies for securing the Royal assent. *Vide The Early Phase, pp.* 609-15.

94. CABLE TO J. CHAMBERLAIN[1]

DURBAN,
May 7, 1896

INDIAN COMMUNITY EARNESTLY REQUEST YOU NOT TO ACCEPT NATAL FRANCHISE BILL OR MINISTERIAL ALTERATION THEREOF PROPOSED LAST NIGHT. MEMORIAL PREPARING.[2]

Colonial Office Records No. 179, Vol. 196

95. LETTER TO PRIME MINISTER

DURBAN,
May 14, 1896

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE PRIME MINISTER
PIETERMARITZBURG
SIR,

You are reported to have said the following with reference to the Natal Indian Congress on the Second Reading of the Franchise Bill:

> Members might not be aware that there was in this country a body, a very powerful body in its way, a very united body, though practically a secret body—he meant the Indian Congress.

May I venture to enquire if that portion of your speech is correctly reported, and if so, whether there are any grounds for the belief that the Congress is "practically a secret body"? I may be

[1] Similar cables were sent to Wedderburn, Hunter and Dadabhai Naoroji. Writing on May 13, Hunter acknowledged the cable and promised "careful consideration on receipt of the Memorial". Hunter had interviewed Chamberlain a fortnight earlier and the latter had "expressed his sympathy but mentioned the difficulty of adding further elements of disturbance at the present moment to our complications in South Africa". "Justice will be done'" Hunter added, but "somewhat slowly", as it was "mixed up in English opinion with the monotone of complaint made by the Indian Congress party. . . . "Hunter concluded with the advice: "You have only to take up your position strongly in order to be successful" (S.N. 948). He wrote again on May 22 that the Secretary of State for the Colonies had assured that the Memorial of the Natal Indians would receive his full consideration (S.N. 985).

[2] Acknowledging this cable, Dadabhai Naoroji wrote on May 21 that Wedderburn had passed on the cable to him on behalf of the British Committee; referring to his correspondence with Chamberlain on the subject he observed, "I am glad that your Memorial will be considered and no action or decision will be taken before it is received or considered" (S.N. 973).

permitted to draw your attention to the fact that when the intention of forming such a body was made it was announced in the papers, that when it was actually formed its formation was noticed by the *Witness*, that the annual report and list of members and rules have been supplied to and commented upon by the Press, and that these papers have also been supplied to the Government by me in my capacity as Honorary Secretary to the Congress.[1]

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI
HONORARY SECRETARY
NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

From a copy : S. N. 981

96. LETTER TO C. BIRD

DURBAN,
May 18, 1896

C. BIRD, ESQ.
PRINCIPAL UNDER-SECRETARY
COLONIAL OFFICE
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter 2837/96, dated the 16th instant, in reply to my letter to the Honourable the Prime Minister with reference to the Natal Indian Congress.

I beg to state with regard to the matter that the Congress meetings are held always with open doors, and they are open to the Press and public. Certain European gentlemen who, the Congress members thought, might be interested in the meetings, were specially invited. One gentleman did accept the invitation and attended

[1] On May 16, C. Bird replied to this letter: In answer to your letter to the Prime Minister of the 14th instant, respecting certain words reported as having been made use of by him, on the Second Reading of the Franchise Bill, with reference to the Natal Indian Congress, I am desired by Sir John Robinson to state that speaking of that Congress as practically a secret body he did so under the belief that meetings of the Congress are not open to the public and the Press. If the Prime Minister has been misinformed on this point, I am to state that he will be glad to be corrected on the subject (S.N. 981).

Congress meetings. Uninvited European visitors also have attended the Congress meetings once or twice.

One of the Congress rules provides that Europeans may be invited to become Vice-Presidents. According thereto, two gentlemen were asked if they would accept the honour, but they were not disposed to do so. Minutes of the Congress proceedings are regularly kept.[1]

I beg to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI
HONORARY SECRETARY
NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

From a copy : S. N. 983

97. MEMORIAL TO J. CHAMBERLAIN

DURBAN,
May 22, 1896

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN,
HER MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES, LONDON

THE MEMORIAL OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIAN BRITISH SUBJECTS RESIDING IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT :

Your Memorialists hereby respectfully beg to lay before your Honour the following for your consideration with regard to the Franchise Law Amendment Bill introduced by the Natal Government in the Natal Legislative Assembly, which was read a third time on the 13th day of May, 1896, with certain amendments.

The following is the text of the Bill as it appeared in the Natal Government *Gazette* dated the 3rd March, 1896:

To amend the Law relating to the Franchise:

[1] Referring to this letter, Sir John Robinson said in Parliament that he had no explanation to offer and furnished a gist of the correspondence.

Whereas it is expedient to amend the law relating to the Franchise,

Be it therefore enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly of Natal, as follows:

1. Act No. 25, 1894, shall be and the same is hereby repealed.

2. Save those who come under the operation of Section 3 of this Act, no persons shall be qualified to have their names inserted in any List of Electors or in any Voters' Roll, or to vote as Electors within the meaning of Section 22 of the Constitution Act of 1893, or of any law relating to the election of members of the Legislative Assembly, who (not being of European origin) are Natives, or descendants in the male lines of Natives of countries which have not hitherto possessed *active representative* institutions, unless they shall first obtain an order from the Governor-in-Council exempting them from the operation of this Act.

3. The provisions of Section 2 of this Act shall not apply to persons of the class mentioned in that Section whose names are rightly contained in any Voters' Roll in force at the date of the promulgation of this Act, and who are otherwise competent and qualified as electors.

The Act repealed by Section I of the above Bill is as follows:

Be it therefore enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly of Natal, as follows:

1. Save as in Section 2 of this Act excepted, persons of Asiatic Extraction shall not be qualified to have their names inserted in any List of Electors or in any Voters' Roll or to vote as Electors within the meaning of Section 22 of the Constitution Act of 1893, or of any law relating to the election of members of the Legislative Assembly.

2. The provisions of Section I of this Act shall not apply to persons of the class mentioned in that Section whose names are rightly contained in any Voters' Roll in force at the date of the promulgation of this Act, and who are otherwise competent and qualified as electors.

3. This Act shall not come into operation unless and until the Governor notifies by Proclamation in the Natal Government *Gazette* that it is Her Majesty's pleasure not to disallow the same, and thereafter it shall come into operation upon such day as the Governor shall notify by the same or any other Proclamation.

A Memorial[1] setting forth the views of the Indian community in reference to the Bill under discussion was presented to the Legislative

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Natal Legislative Assembly", 27-4-1896

Assembly on the 28th day of April, 1896. A copy thereof is hereto annexed marked ‘A’.

On the 6th day of May, 1896, the Bill was read a second time. During the course of his speech, the Prime Minister, the Honourable Sir John Robinson, said that the Ministers had taken steps to ascertain whether you would be agreeable to an insertion in the aforesaid Bill of the words “founded on the franchise” after “Elective representative institutions” and that you were so agreeable.

Thereupon, on the 7th day of May, 1896, your Memorialists sent to Your Honour a cablegram to the following effect:

> The Indian community earnestly request you not to accept Natal Franchise Bill or Ministerial alteration thereof proposed last night; memorial preparing.

In Committee, however, the Honourable Sir John Robinson announced on the 11th day of May, 1896, that Your Honour had agreed to a further addition viz, ‘Parliamentary’ between ‘the’ and ‘franchise’.

The Bill, therefore, as to representative institutions would now read “elective representative institutions *founded on the Parliamentary franchise”*.

Your Memorialists humbly venture to think that the present Bill, so far as the Indian community and, indeed, all the communities are concerned, is worse than the Act it repeals.

Your Memorialists, therefore, feel aggrieved that you have been pleased to approve of the Bill, but they trust that the facts and arguments placed before you hereinbelow are such as would induce you to reconsider your views.

Your Memorialists have all along contended that the Indians did enjoy “elective representative institutions” in India. But the papers published in connection with the franchise question seem to show that you do not think that the Indians possess such institutions. With the greatest deference to Your Honour’s view, your Memorialists crave leave to draw your attention to the extracts quoted in the annexure ‘A’ upholding the opposite view.

Your approval of the present Bill, coupled with the view held by Your Honour regarding “elective representative institutions” in India, places the Indian community in Natal in a very painful and awkward position. Your Memorialists venture to submit:

1. That no legislation restrictive of the Indian franchise in Natal is necessary.

2. That, if there be any doubt with regard to this point, an enquiry should be first instituted as to whether such a necessity does exist.

3. That, assuming that the necessity exists, the present Bill is not calculated to meet the difficulty in a straightforward and open manner.

4. That, if her Majesty's Government are absolutely satisfied that the necessity exists and that no Bill could be conceived that would solve the difficulty without a resort to class legislation, it is better that in any Franchise Bill the Indians should be specially named.

5. That the present Bill is likely to give rise to endless litigation owing to its ambiguity and vagueness.

6. That it would involve the Indian community in expenses almost beyond their control.

7. That assuming the Bill affects the Indian community, the method provided in the Bill whereby any member thereof may be exempted from its operation is, your Memorialists respectfully submit,arbitrary, unfair, and likely to create dissensions among the members of the Indian community.

8. That the Bill, like the Act repealed, makes an invidious distinction between Europeans and others.

Your Memorialists humbly submit that the present condition of the Voters' List in Natal renders it absolutely unnecessary to embark on any legislation to restrict the Indian franchise. There seems to be needless hurry about passing a measure that affects a large portion of Her Majesty's subjects. It is admitted that as against 9,309 European voters there are only 251 Indian voters; 201 are either traders or clerks, assistants, schoolmasters, etc., and 50 are gardeners and others, and that most of these voters are settlers of long standing. These figures, your Memorialists submit, do not warrant any restrictive legislation. The Bill under discussion is intended to deal with a remote and probable and possible danger. A danger is really assumed which does not exist. His Honour, Sir John Robinson, in moving the second reading of the Bill, based his fears about the danger of the European vote being swamped by the Indian vote on three grounds, viz.:

1. The fact that the petition to Her Majesty's Government in connection with the Franchise Act, repealed by the present Bill, was signed by nearly 9,000 Indians.

2. The approaching general election in the Colony.

3. The existence of the Natal Indian Congress.

As to the first ground, even in the correspondence on the subject, the Natal Government have argued that the 9,000 signatories wanted to be placed on the Voters' Roll. The first paragraph of that petition is a sufficient answer to the argument. The Petitioners, your Memorialists humbly submit, never contended for any such thing. They certainly protested against the wholesale disfranchisement of the Indians. Your Memorialists humbly venture to think that every Indian, whether he had the property qualifications or not, was very materially affected by that Bill. Your Memorialists admit that the fact show a degree of organizing power among the Indians, alluded to by the Hon. mover, but your Memorialists respectfully contend that no matter how powerful the organizing power might be, it cannot overcome the natural barriers. Out of the 9,000 signatories, not a hundred, besides those who were already on the Voters' Roll, possessed the legal property qualifications.

With regard to the second ground, the Hon. mover said:

> He might remind members that before long there must be a general election, and they would have to consider upon what register that general election was to take place. It was not for him to say how many Indian electors might or might not be on the ensuing electoral roll, but the Government thought it was high time that no further delay should take place in seizing this question by the throat and *setting it once for all*, without further delay.

Your Memorialists submit, with all due respect to the Hon. mover, that all these fears have no foundation in fact. According to the *Report of the Protector of Immigrants for 1895*, out of 46,343 Indians in the Colony, only 30,303 are free Indians. To that may be added the trading Indian population of, say, 5,000. Thus there are only 35,000 Indians, as against over 45,000 Europeans, who can at all compete with the latter. The 16,000 indentured Indians, it is easy to see, never can vote, while they are under indenture. But a large majority of the 30,303 are only a stage higher than the indentured Indians. And your Memorialists venture to say from personal experience that there are in this Colony thousands of Indians who do not pay £10 per year in rents. In fact, there are thousands who have to

drag on their existence on that amount. Where then, your Memorialists ask, is the fear of the Indians swamping the Voters' List next year?

The disfranchisement has been threatened for the last two years. The Electoral Roll has twice undergone revision since. The Indians had every incentive to add to the Indian vote, lest many may be shut out. And yet there has been not a single addition to the Voters' List from the Indian community.

But the Hon. mover went on to say:

> Members might not be aware that there was in this country a body, a very powerful body in its way, a very united body, though practically a secret body—he meant the Indian Congress. That was a body which possessed large funds, it was a body presided over by very active and very able men, and it was a body the avowed object of which was to exercise strong political power in the affairs of the Colony.

Your Memorialists venture to say that this estimate of the Congress is not justified by facts. The charge of secrecy, as would appear from the correspondence between the Honourable the Prime Minister of Natal and the Honorary Secretary of the Congress, was made under an erroneous impression (Appendices B,C, D[1]). A statement with regard to the matter also was made by him in the Legislative Assembly on the 20th instant.

Nor has the Congress in any shape or form intended or attempted to "exercise strong political power". The following are the objects of the Congress, which were published in almost every paper in South Africa last year:

"1. To bring about a better understanding and promote friendliness between the Europeans and the Indians residing in the Colony.

"2. To spread information about India and the Indians by writing to newspapers, publishing pamphlets, lecturing, etc.

"3. To educate the Indians, especially [those] born in the Colony about Indian History, and induce them to study Indian subjects.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Prime Minister" 14-5-1896, and "Letter to C. Bird", 18-5-1896.

"4. To ascertain the various grievances the Indians are labouring under and to agitate by resorting to all constitutional methods for removing them.

"5. To enquire into the condition of the indentured Indians and to help them out of special hardships.

"6. To help the poor and the needy in all reasonable ways.

"7. And generally to do everything that would tend to put the Indians on a better footing morally, socially, intellectually, and politically."

It would thus appear that the object of the Congress is to resist degradation, not to gain political power. As to funds the Congress has a property worth £1,080 and a balance of £148-7s 8d in the Bank, at the time of writing this. These funds have to be used in charity, printing memorials and working expenses. In your Memorialists' humble opinion they are hardly sufficient to fulfil the objects of the Congress. The educational work is greatly hampered owing to want of funds. Your Memorialists, therefore, venture to submit that the danger which the present Bill is intended to guard against does not exist at all.

Your Memorialists, however, do not request Her Majesty's Government to accept the above facts as correct on their *ipse dixit.* If there is any doubt about any of them—and the most important fact is that there are thousands who do not possess the necessary property qualifications for becoming voters—then the proper course, your Memorialists submit, is to enquire about them, particularly to enquire how many Indians there are in the Colony who possess immovable property of the value of £50 or who pay a yearly rent of £10. To prepare such a return would neither cost much time nor much money, and would be a very material help towards a satisfactory solution of the franchise question. The hot haste to pass *some* measure is, in your Memorialists humble opinion, detrimental to the best interests of the Colony as a whole. Your Memorialists, so far as they, as representatives of the Indian community, are concerned and speaking authoritatively for the organization of which they have the honour to be members, hereby beg to assure Her Majesty's Government that they have no intention to endeavour to place a single Indian voter on the Voters' List for the general election next year.

The Government organ, dealing with the present Bill in a presumably inspired article, supports the view that the danger is "a chimerical one". It says:

Moreover, we feel sure that should the Asiatic vote ever endanger the stability of European rule in this Colony, the Imperial Government will find ways and means out of such a difficulty. The new Bill imposes certain limitations on the acquirement of the franchise by all who are not of European origin, and as now even with the franchise open to British subjects of all races and classes, except the Natives under Native law, there are only some 250 Indians on the Voters' Roll out of a total of 9,560 registered voters, or in the proportion of one Indian voter to every 38 Europeans in possession of the franchise, we think the new Bill will fully meet the requirements of the case for very many long years at all events, if not for all time. In South Carolina, for instance, the Negroes over 21 years old number 132,949, while the whites over 21 only number 102,567, yet the whites have retained the dominant power, although in the minority. The fact of the matter is that apart from numbers altogether the superior race will always hold the reins of Government. *We are inclined to the belief, therefore, that the danger of the Indian vote swamping the European is a chimerical one.* From what we know of the matter, we are inclined to think that it will be held that India is a country possessing "Elective representative institutions". In fact, the argument so often advanced that the Indian is unacquainted with their nature and responsibilities is really wide off the mark, as in India there are some 750 municipalities in which British and native voters have equal rights, and in 1891, there were 9,790 native municipal commissioners (councillors) as against 839 Europeans. . . .Even assuming, however, that natives of India will be held as coming from a country possessing "elective representative institutions", *we do not consider that the danger of being swamped is at all a likely one, as past experience has proved that the class of Indians coming here, as a rule, do not concern themselves about the franchise, and further, the majority of them do not even possess the small property qualification required.* In addition to all this, the obligations of the Empire of which we form a part do not permit of Indians as Indians being excluded from the exercise of such a privilege as the franchise. So far as we are concerned, therefore, such attitude is a *non possumus* and may, therefore, be dropped. Should the restrictions of the new law not prevent the introduction of an undesirable element onto the Voters' Roll, there is nothing at all to prevent us raising the franchise qualification. At present it is very low. The property qualification could, therefore, be easily increased, even doubled and an educational test imposed which, while it would not remove a single European from the Voters' Roll, would have a sweeping effect on Indian voters. The number of the later possessing immovable property of the value of say, £100 or paying a rent of £20 per annum and able to read and write English must be exceedingly small, and should this fail, there would be nothing to hinder us from adopting the Mississippi plan, or a modification of it to suit the circumstances (5th March, 1896).

It is clear, therefore, that according to the Government organ the present property qualifications are sufficiently high to prevent any undue influx of Indian voters on the Roll, and that the only object of th e present Bill is to harass the Indian community—to land them in expensive litigation.

According to the *Mauritius Almanac* for 1895, the population of that island in 1894 was 259,224 Indians as against 106,995 persons under the heading 'general population'. The franchise qualification there is as follows:

> Every male person shall be entitled to be registered in any year as a voter for any electoral district and, when, registered, to vote at the election of a member of the Council for such district who is qualified as follows, that is to say:
>
> 1. That he has attained the age of twenty-one years.
> 2. Is under no legal incapacity.
> 3. Is a British subject by birth or naturalization.
> 4. Has resided in the Colony for three years at least previous to the date of registration and possesses some one of the following qualifications:
>
> (a) Is on the 1st day of January in each year, and has, during the preceding six calendar months, been the owner of immovable property within such district of the annual value of Rs. 300 or the monthly value of Rs. 25 above all charges and encumbrances affecting the same.
>
> (b) Is at the date of registration paying, and has for the six calendar months previous to the 1st day of January in such year paid, rent in respect of immovable property situate within such district at the rate of at least Rs. 25 per month.
>
> (c) Has for three calendar months previous to the 1st of January in such year resided, or had his principal place of business or employment within such district, and is the owner of movable property within the Colony of the value of at least Rs. 3,000.
>
> (d) Is the husband of a wife, or the eldest son of a widow, possessing any one of the above qualifications.
>
> (c) Has for three calendar months previous to the 1st day of January in such year resided, or had his principal place of business or employment within such district, and is in receipt of a yearly salary of at least Rs. 600, or a monthly salary of at least Rs. 50.
>
> (f) Has for three calendar months previous to the 1st of January in such year resided, or has his principal place of business or employment within such district, and pays licence duty to the amount of at least Rs. 50 per annum.

Provided—

1. That no person shall be registered as a voter, or be entitled to vote for the election of a member of the Council who has been convicted of perjury in any Court in our Dominions or who has been sentenced by any such Court to death, or penal servitude, or imprisonment with hard labour, or for a term exceeding twelve months, and has not either suffered the punishment to which he was sentenced or such other punishment as by competent authority may have been substituted for the same or received a free pardon from us.

2. That no person shall be registered as a voter in any year who has, within twelve calendar months immediately preceding the first day of January in that year, received any relief from public or parochial funds.

3. That no person shall be registered as a voter in any year unless he shall, in the presence of the registering officer or of a magistrate, with his own hand subscribe his name to his claim to be registered and write thereon the date of such subscription and the qualification, in respect of which he claims to be registered.

4. That no person claiming to be registered in the district in which he resides in respect of any of the qualifications (c), (d), (e) and (f), shall be registered in respect of the same qualification in the district in which he has his principal place of business or employment or *vice versa*.

With these qualifications there is evidently no trouble in Mauritius, although the Indian population is twice as large as the general population, and the Indians in Mauritius belong to the same class as the Indians in Natal. Only, there they are far more prosperous than their Natal brethren.

Assuming, however, that the necessity to deal with the Indian franchise does exist, your Memorialists respectfully beg to say that the present Bill is not calculated to meet it in a straightforward and open manner. The Honourable and learned Attorney-General of Natal, referring to a suggestion to slightly alter the existing law in course of the debate on the Second Reading, is reported to have said:

> The reason why he refused to do this was because it was apparently doing it by a side-wind and quietly, and the Government intended to do it in the full light of day.

It is difficult to conceive a better mode of doing a thing by a "side-wind and quietly" than that of passing the present Bill, which leaves everybody in the dark. *The Natal Advertiser* of the 8th May, 1896, says:

> . . . What is the present Bill if not a side-wind? Its whole object is to endeavour quietly and by a side-wind to effect that which the measure of last session failed to accomplish. Mr. Escombe admitted that the measure was brutally blunt and to this he rightly ascribed its failure to obtain acceptance by the Imperial Government. He further admitted that the present Bill has precisely the same object in view as the "brutal" Bill, only it does not state its object honestly and straightforwardly; in other words, it seeks quietly and by a side-wind to reach the goal apparently unattainable by plain sailing.

If Her Majesty's Government are convinced that a real necessity exists for legislation restricting the Indian franchise in Natal, and if Her Majesty's Government are satisfied that the question cannot be dealt with but by class legislation, and if Her Majesty's Government further accept the Colonial view that Indian British subjects, in spite of the gracious Proclamation of 1858, may be treated on a different footing from that on which the European British subjects are treated, then, your Memorialists submit that it would be infinitely better and more satisfactory to exclude the Indians by name from any rights and privileges that they in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, should not be allowed to enjoy, than that by ambiguous legislation the door should be left open for litigation and trouble.

That the Bill, if assented to, would give rise to endless litigation owing to its ambiguity is an admitted fact. It is admittedly also of the first importance that the question of the Indian franchise should be "settled once for all". to quote the words of the Honourable the Prime Minister of Natal. And yet, in the opinion of the majority of the leaders of opinion in Natal, the Bill will not settle the question once for all.

Mr. Binns, the leader of the Opposition in the Natal Assembly, after quoting chapter and verse to show that the Indians in India did possess elective representative institutions, founded on the parliamentary franchise, is reported to have said this:

> He hoped he had shown clearly that on that ground this Bill was wrong. There were representative institutions and the elective principle was acknowledged in India. They had a Parliamentary franchise and there was an enormous municipal franchise which affected local government, and if this was the case, what was the use of their passing this Bill? The facts he had stated to the Assembly were taken from the best authorities he could find and they proved most conclusively that these institutions did exist. There was no doubt on one point, that if a Bill of this kind passed into law *it would lead them into endless litigation, difficulties, and trouble. The Bill was not*

sufficiently clear or definite. They wanted something more clear and definite. He wanted to see this question settled and he would do all he could to assist at a settlement. But he thought *this Bill was framed on wrong lines,* contained a fact *that was not correct, and it would lead them into endless litigation, difficulty, and trouble. It would be impossible for him to vote for the second reading of this Bill.*

Mr. Bale, a leading member of the Assembly and a leading lawyer in Natal, agreeing with Mr. Binns' views, opposed as he is to the Indians retaining the franchise rights under the general law of the Colony, thus feelingly appealed to the House, as well on behalf of the Indians as for the Colony generally, not to pass the Bill:

> *It would give rise to litigation and produce a feeling of hostility and create a ferment amongst the Indians themselves.* It would also have the further effect of inducing appeals to the Privy Council and would prejudice the election of members to this House. Having regard to the great issues involved in this measure he hoped the second reading of this Bill would not be carried.

The Natal Witness of the 8th May thus sums up the situation:

> Our warning that, if the Bill passes into law as it stands, the Colony will be involved in serious litigation, had the support of Mr. Binns and Mr. Bale, and Mr. Smythe's half loaf, which is better than, nothing, would be dearly purchased at that price. What leads us to think the Bill has not been considered by the legal advisers of the Crown are the exceedingly delicate questions which it raises and which will undoubtedly be fought out unless the wording be altered so as not to leave the possibility of a resort to law. Amongst these questions are the following: Can a Colony make laws which contravene the Naturalization Law of England? Are British Indians British subjects or not? In other words *the Bill raises the whole question of the position of the British Indians in the Empire.* Can special laws be passed in Natal, since the issue of the Proclamation of 1858, [to] take away any part of the privileges conferred by that document?

After deploring the ambiguity and vagueness of the Bill, *The Natal Advertiser,* in its leader of the 8th May, says:

> The truth of the position is [that] each line of the present Bill is an ambuscade of disputes, which will all come out in the open some day, to perpetuate for years, and probably with increased bitterness, the struggle between the Indians and the Europeans in this Colony with regard to the vote.

Your Memorialists appeal to Her Majesty's Government to save the Indian community, if not the whole Colony, from such a dismal

outlook—from perpetual agitation—and all this to avoid a danger that does not exist.

That the expenses of such a struggle to the Indian community must be beyond their control needs no argument to prove. The whole struggle is unequal.

Now, assuming further, that the highest legal tribunal has recorded its opinion that the Indians do not possess "elective representative institutions founded on the Parliamentary franchise", the method provided in the Bill whereby the Indians may be placed on the Voters' Roll is, in your Memorialists' humble opinion, in every way unsatisfactory.

The disapproval of that portion of the Bill which confers the power on the Governor is very emphatic on the part of the Europeans also. *The Natal Witness,* in dealing with that branch of the subject, says:

> It attacks great constitutional principles, and further introduces into the working of representative institutions in Natal what may be termed an unknown quantity—that is to say, the effect which the third clause, providing for an electorate of six to choose fit and proper Asiatics for the Voters' Roll, will have upon them. . . . The Ministry appeared to have caught on to the idea (i.e., of indirect election), but in making themselves and the Governor an indirect electorate, they are not only doing what is decidedly preposterous but highly improper.
>
> Reverting to the same question again, it says:
>
> The Assembly has not gained in public estimation by passing a Bill which most of the leading members are distrustful of, which they can see is a compromise and a compromise which may prove quite ineffectual and which, as we pointed out when it was first published, is a most dangerous invasion of the privileges of the Assembly as well as an attack upon constitutional principles which it might have been assumed that every member would have held himself to be under a solemn obligation to maintain unimpaired. There was no need to remind some of the members of the last objection. Mr. Bale said that the Franchise ought to be vested in the people alone, to be exercised of course by their representatives. . . . But what the press is concerned about is not the present Parliament but all future ones. . . .When a great constitutional principle is once broken through, however slightly it may be, there is the imminent risk of the breach being widened by a Government greedy of power.

That is the objection from the European point of view. Your Memorialists, while agreeing with that view, have a yet more

formidable objection to the principle of the clause. It is not so much the number of Indian voters that the Indian community wish to see on the Voters' Roll as the vindication of their rights and privileges as British subjects and the equal *status* with European British subjects that is assured to the British Indians by Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen Empress on more occasions than one, and that has been specially assured to the Indian community in Natal by Her Majesty's Government in a special despatch by the Right Honourable the late Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies. If other British subjects having certain qualifications can claim the franchise as of right, why, your Memorialists humbly ask, should not the Indian British subjects?

The method is cumbrous and will tend to keep up the franchise agitation for ever. It would, moreover, transfer the agitation from the Europeans to the Indians. The speeches in the Assembly on the second reading show that the power will be exercised very sparingly, if at all, by the Governor-in-Council.

It is calculated to create dissensions among the Indian community, for the applicant who is rejected may resent the favour granted to a brother applicant if the one considers himself as good as the other.

Education, intelligence, and stake, are mentioned in Your Honour's despatch relating to the franchise question as entitling the Indians to the franchise. Your Memorialists submit that if a certain amount of education, intelligence or stake is to be sufficient to qualify an Indian to become a voter in the Colony, then such a test could be introduced instead of leaving the power in the hands of the Governor-in-Council. Hereon, your Memorialists beg to draw your attention to a portion of the leading article in *The Natal Mercury* hereinbefore quoted. If the necessary qualifications for those coming under the operation of that Bill were stated, it would do away with the contentious character of that part of the Bill, and those coming under its operation will then know exactly what qualifications would entitle them to a vote. The position is well summed up in *The Natal Advertiser* of the 8th May.

> A still further proof of the duplicity of the present Bill lies in its provision that the Governor-in-Council shall have the power to place certain Indians on the Voters' Roll. This clause is obviously inserted with the idea of leading the Imperial Government to suppose that this power of exemption would

> occasionally be used—sparingly perhaps, but still used. Yet the Attorney-General declared that "the power of inclusion given in such circumstances under the present Bill could not, however, he wished to point out, be attained, except through the Governor-in-Council. Every section of the community had begun to realize what the true meaning was of the responsibility of Ministers and knew quite well that no Ministers could hold office for fourteen days if they took upon themselves the responsibility of watering the constituencies by the introduction of Indian electors." Further on he said, "There would be no other voice throughout South Africa than that the electoral rolls of the country should be absolutely confined to persons of the European race. That was the starting point from which they began and the goal they had in view all along." . . . if these ministerial declarations mean anything, it is that this Government have no intention to exercise their right of exemption. Then why is it placed on the Bill? Is there not at least an appearance of dissembling, or utilizing a side-wind, if the phrase is more expressive, in inserting a provision in a measure, which its framers declare in submitting it for adoption, they mean to treat as a dead letter?

It would be hardly pleasant for a wealthy Indian merchant to have to apply for a permit to be exempted from the operation of the Bill and also to risk the rejection of his application. It is difficult to understand why Europeans, not coming from countries which have not hitherto possessed elective representative institutions founded on the Parliamentary franchise, should exercise the right of voting, while the non-Europeans similarly placed cannot under the general law of the Colony.

The present Bill, according to the view of the Government, is an experimental measure,. "If", said the honourable and learned Attorney-General on the second reading, "contrary to their belief, and their firm belief, the Bill should fall short of what was intended, then there never would be rest in the Colony," etc. The Bill, therefore, is not finite. Under such circumstances, your Memorialists submit that unless all the resources, without resort to class legislation, are tried and have failed (i.e., assuming that there is a danger of the Indian vote swamping the European), a Bill like the present one should not be passed. Your Memorialists venture to submit that this is not a question that affects a mere handful of Her Majesty's subjects, but it affects 300,000,000 of Her Majesty's loyal subjects. The question is not how many or what Indians shall have the vote, but the question, your Memorialists humbly submit, is what *status* the British Indians shall occupy outside India and in the Colonies and allied States. May a respectable Indian venture out of India in pursuit of trade or other

enterprise and hope to have any *status?* The Indian community do not want to shape the political destiny of South Africa, but they may be allowed to carry on their peaceful avocations quietly without any degrading conditions being imposed upon them. Your Memorialists, therefore, submit that if there is the slightest danger of the Indian vote preponderating, a simple educational test may be imposed on all alike, either with or without an increase in property qualifications. That would, in the opinion of the Government organ also, effectually remove all fear and if such a test failed, a more severe test may be imposed, which would tell. Against the Indians without materially affecting the European vote. If nothing short of a total exclusion of the Indians from the franchise would be acceptable to the Natal Government, and if Her Majesty's Government are inclined to favour such a demand, then your Memorialists submit that nothing short of specific exclusion of the Indians by name would satisfactorily meet the difficulty.

Your Memorialists, however, beg to draw your attention to the fact that the European Colonists as a body make no such demand. They seem to be absolutely indifferent. *The Natal Advertiser* thus rebukes the indifference:

> Perhaps the manner in which this all-important subject has been treated by Parliament also brings out a fourth point—the indifference of the Colony to its own politics. It would be highly interesting to discover, if such could be done, how many of the Colonists have taken the trouble even to read the Bill in question. Perhaps the proportion who have not read it would be a striking one. The general unconcern of Colonists in this matter is demonstrated by the fact that meetings have not been held in every centre—not to say every nook and corner of the Colony for its ventilation, and to formulate a demand that Parliament should only pass such a Bill as would render abortive all further controversy over the subject. Had the Colony been fully alive to the real gravity of the issue, the columns of the newspaper would also have teemed with a serious and intelligent correspondence on the question. Neither of these things, however, has happened. As a consequence, the Government have been able to get through a measure supposed to effectually deal with the matter, but which in reality puts it in a far worse and dangerous position than ever it was before.

It would appear from the extracts quoted above that the present Bill satisfies neither party. With the utmost deference to the Natal Ministry and to both the Legislative bodies here, your Memorialists submit that the fact that the Bill has been accepted by them does not

signify much. The very members who refrained from any active opposition to the measure are, as *The Natal Witness* puts it, distrustful of it.

Your Memorialists hope that they have shown to your satisfaction that the danger referred to above is imaginary and that the present Bill is unsatisfactory from the point of view of those who wish to see the Indians disenfranchised as also from that of the Indians themselves. In any case, however, your Memorialists claim that sufficient facts and arguments have been brought out to show that the question should not be hastily disposed of, and that there is no necessity for so doing. *The Natal Witness* thinks that "no explanation, at least no satisfactory one, has been given for the anxiety to rush the Bill through." *The Natal Advertiser* opines that "this Indian franchise question is a most vital one and there should be no haste in settling it for ever. Indeed the best course would be to postpone the proposed Bill and have the whole matter for the consideration of the constituencies when they have accurate information before them" (28-3-1896)

The feelings of the Indian community may be well expressed in the words of the London *Times*. *The Times* (Weekly edition, 20th March, 1896) says:

> If the Indians are allowed to carry with them their *status* as British subjects to foreign countries and British Colonies whither they go in quest of work, the opening up of Africa holds out new possibilities to Indian labour. The Indian Government and the Indians themselves believe that it is in South Africa that this question of their *status* must be determined. If they secure the position of British subjects in South Africa, it will be almost impossible to deny it to them elsewhere. If they fail to secure that position in South Africa it will be extremely difficult for them to attain it elsewhere. They readily acknowledge that Indian labourers who accept a contract of service for a period of years, as the price of aided immigration, must fulfil the conditions of their contract, however it may curtail their rights. But they hold that after the period of contracted labour has expired, they are entitled to the *status* of British subjects in whatever Colony or country they have fixed their abodes.... The Indian Government may reasonably ask that after Indian labourers have given their best years to South Africa they should not be forced back upon India by denying to them the *status* of British subjects in their adopted homes. Whatever the decision may be, it will seriously affect the future development of emigration in India.

Dealing particularly with this question of franchise and the figures compiled from the Natal Government *Gazette* and now accepted as correct, the same paper says, under date 31st January, 1896 (Weekly edition):

> According to this return, there are in the Colony 9,309 European registered voters against 251 registered voters of British Indian origin. . . . Nor, if Mr. Gandhi's statements are correct, does it seem possible that the Indian vote can swamp the European at any period within the range of practical politics. . . . Not only are all Indian immigrants under labour contracts excluded but also all British Indians whatsoever, except an extremely small class, who, by intelligence and industry, have raised themselves to the position of well-to-do citizens. . . .
>
> The returns show that even under the existing law it takes a long time for a British Indian to attain the franchise in Natal. With the exception of 63 British Indians, many of whom started with capital, and whose residence in the Colony is under ten years, the rest of the 251 voters seem to have resided during more than 10 years and the majority over 14. An analysis of the British Indian Voters' List according to occupation yields equally encouraging results to those who wish to see this question settled. . . .
>
> It is precisely this class of men who form the most valued element in the municipal and other electorates in India. The argument that the Indian in Natal cannot claim higher privileges than he enjoys in India and that he has no franchise whatever in India is inconsistent with the facts. . . . So far as government by voting exists in India, Englishmen and Indians stand on the same footing, and alike in the Municipal, the Provincial, and the Supreme Councils the native interests are powerfully represented. Nor does the plea that the British Indian is unacquainted with the nature and responsibilities of representative government beat inspection. There is probably no other country in the world in which representative institutions have penetrated so deeply into the life of the people. . . .
>
> The question now before Mr. Chamberlain *is not an academic one. It is not a question of argument but of racefeeling. The Queen's Proclamation of 1858 gave the full rights of British subjects to the Indians and they vote in England and sit in the British Parliament on the same terms as Englishmen.* But these questions are inevitable in a vast Empire made up of many peoples and as the steamship brings the component population of Greater Britain into closer contact they will present themselves in more acute forms. Two things are clear. Such questions will not settle themselves by being ignored, and a strong Government at home affords the best Court of Appeal to adjudicate upon them. *We cannot afford a war of races among our own subjects.* It would be as wrong for the Government of India to suddenly arrest the development of Natal by shutting off the supply of immigrants as it would be for Natal to

denythe rights of citizenship to British Indian subjects, who, by years of thrift and good work in the Colony, have raised themselves to the actual *status* of citizens (the italics throughout are your Memorialists').

Your Memorialists now leave their case in your hands, and in so doing earnestly pray, and confidently hope, that the Royal assent to the Bill hereinbefore referred to will be withheld, and, if there be any fear as to the European vote being swamped by the Indian, an enquiry be ordered to ascertain whether there actually exists any such danger under the existing law, or such other relief will be granted as may meet the ends of justice.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Memorialists, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc., etc.[1]

ABDUL KAREEM HAJI ADAM
AND OTHERS

From a photostat of a printed copy: S. N. 979-83

98. SPEECH AT INDIANS' MEETING[2]

June 4, 1896

After the presentation of an address, Mr. Gandhi, in acknowledging the kindness, said the occasion showed that whatever castes the Indians in Natal represented they were all in favour of being cemented in closer union. With regard to the objects of the Congress, he did not think any differences existed, else they would not have met as they had done to make its secretary a presentation. If this surmise were correct, he would repeat the request he made the other evening[3] urging the attendance of the Madras Indians at the Congress. Up to the present that attendance had not been satisfactory, but he hoped that henceforth, they would rally in greater numbers. He regretted his inability to speak Tamil, but was sure that what he said with reference to Madras Indians keeping aloof would not be construed into any reflection upon them or any other portion of the Indian community. The objects of the

[1] On September 25, 1896, C. Bird communicated to the Memorialists Chamberlain's decision, that "Her Majesty's Government has carefully considered their representations, but has not felt justified in advising Her Majesty to disallow the Act" (S.N. 160)

[2] A day before Gandhiji sailed for India, the Tamil and Gujarati Indians of Durban along with other communities met at the Natal Indian Congress Hall for the purpose of recognizing his service and presented to him an address. The attendance was large and much enthusiasm prevailed. Dada Abdulla presided.

[3] This refers to an earlier meeting of June 2, where he was presented an address on behalf of the Natal Indian Congress. A report of this meeting or of his speech, however, is not available.

Congress they all knew. Those objects were not to be attained by mere talk, and he, therefore, asked them to show their interest in its common ends by deeds, not words. He would particularly impress upon the audience to send delegates to Maritzburg, Ladysmith and other centres, where Indians of every class resided, and who were not yet represented at the Congress, and endeavour to get them to become members.

The Natal Advertiser, 5-6-1896

99. INTERVIEW TO "THE NATAL ADVERTISER"[1]

[*June 4, 1896*]

In reply to various questions Mr. Gandhi said the present membership of the Congress was 300. The annual subscription was £3, payable in advance. The Congress aimed at enrolling members who were not only able to pay their subscriptions, but who would also work for the objects of the Congress. They wanted to collect a large fund which would be invested in property so that a permanent income might be available to carry on the objects of the Congress.

"What are these objects?" asked the interviewer.

They are of twofold character—political and educational. As to the educational part, we want to teach the Indians born in the Colony by inducing them with the offer of scholarships to study all subjects pertaining to their welfare as a community, including Indian and Colonial history, temperance, etc.

Is there any other qualification for membership in the Congress?

Yes, one is that members should be able to read, write and speak English, but this condition has not been strictly enforced of late.

Financially how does the Congress stand?

There is a balance in hand of £194, and it possesses, besides, a property in Umgeni Road. I want the members to raise this balance to £1,100, during my absence, and see no reason why it should not be done. This would do much to make it a permanent institution.

What is the attitude of the Congress politically?

It does not want to exercise any strong political influence, the present object being to ensure that the promises made in the

[1] On the eve of Gandhiji's departure for India a reporter of *The Natal Advertiser* called upon him to ascertain his view on the state of Indian affairs then prevailing in the Colony generally.

Proclamation of 1858 are fulfilled. When the Indians enjoy the same status in the Colony as they do in India, the Congress will have attained its end politically. It has no intention to become a political force to swamp any other party.

What is the number of Indian voters in the Colony?

There are only 251 on the Voters' Roll, as against 9,309 Europeans. Of the former 143 are in Durban, and the Congress could not put forward more than 200 more in its best efforts. The end of its ambition, as I said, is an equal status with the Europeans, and we don't object to any qualification that may be required. We are even willing that the property qualifications should be increased so long as it applies equally.

What will your future programme be?

What it has always been. The Congress will continue to ventilate the grievances of the Indian community by the publication of literature throughout the Colony, in India and England, and to write to the newspapers on any Indian questions as they come prominently before the public, and to collect funds for its propaganda. Hitherto the Congress has not invited the Press to any of its meetings, but it has now been decided to do this occasionally, and furnish it with information concerning its efforts. The Congress first wished to be assured of a permanent existence before it invited the Press to its meetings. There is one matter I would like to correct. The address presented to me stated that the various objects of the Congress had been fulfilled. That was not so. They were under consideration, and the Congress would continue to work for their attainment by every legitimate means, and it will resist any attempt to introduce colour distinctions in the legislation for the Indian community; for these, if introduced, might be used in other Colonies, and other parts of the world.

The Natal Advertiser, 5-6-1896

100. THE CREDENTIALS[1]

We, the undersigned, representing the Indian community in South Africa, hereby appoint M. K. Gandhi, Esq., of Durban, Advocate, to represent the grievances the Indians are labouring under in South Africa before the authorities and public men and public bodies in India.

Dated at Durban, Natal, this 26th day of May 1896.

ABDOOL CARIM HAJI ADAM
(DADA ABDOOLLA & CO.)
ABDUL CADER
(MAHOMED CASSIM CAMROODEEN)
P. DAWAJEE MAHOMED
HOOSEN CASSIM
A. C. PILLAY
PARSEE RUSTOMJI
A. M. TILLY
HAJEE MAHOMED H. DADA
AMOD MAHOMED PARUK
ADAMJI MIANKHAN
PEERUN MAHOMED
A. M. SALOOJEE
DOWD MAHOMED
AMOD JEEWA HOOSEN MEERUM
K. S. PILLAY & CO.
AHMEDJI DOWJI MOGRARIA[6]
MOOSA HAJEE CASSIM
G. A. BASSA
MANILAL CHATURBHAI
M. E. KATHRADA
D. M. TIMOL
DAVJEE M. SEEDAT[2]
ISMAIL TIMOL
SHAIK FAREED & CO.
SHAIKHJEE AMOD
MAHOMED CASSIM HAFFIJI[3]
AMOD HOOSEN
MAHOMED AMOD BASSA
V. A. ESSOP
MAHOMED SULEMAN[4]
DAWJEE MAMAD MUTALA
SULEMAN VORAJI
EBRAHIM NOOR MAHOMED
MAHOMED SULEMAN KHOTA[5]
CHOOHURMAL LUCHERAM
NARAYAN PATHER
VIJAYA RAGAVALOO
SULIMAN DAWJEE

The Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa

[1] This was presumably drafted by Gandhiji. Although it is dated May 26 it is nevertheless included in this volume as it forms part of the Green Pamphlet, having been reproduced on its last page. *Vide* the following item.

[2] These signatures are in Gujarati as well as in English.

[3] *ibid*

[4] *ibid*

[5] This signature is in Gujarati.

[6] These signatures are in Gujarati as well as in English.

101. THE GRIEVANCES OF THE BRITISH INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA : AN APPEAL TO THE INDIAN PUBLIC[1]

RAJKOT, KATHIAWAR,
August 14, 1896

This is an appeal to the Indian public on behalf of the 100,000 Indians in South Africa. I have been commissioned by the leading members representing that community in South Africa to lay before the public in India the grievances that her Majesty's Indian subjects are labouring under in that country.

South Africa is a continent by itself and is divided into many States of which the Colonies of Natal and the Cape of Good Hope, Zululand, a Crown Colony, the South African Republic of the Transvaal, Orange Free State and the Chartered Territories, are inhabited, more or less, by the Indians together with the Europeans and the natives of those countries. The Portuguese territories, viz., Delagoa Bay, Beira and Mozambique, have a large Indian population, but there the Indians have no grievances, apart from the general population.

NATAL

From an Indian standpoint, Natal is the most important portion of South Africa. It has a native population of about 400,000, a European population of nearly 50,000 and an Indian population of about 51,000, of whom about 16,000 are those at present serving their indenture, about 30,000 are those who, having once been under indenture, are freed therefrom and have settled in the Colony on their own account, and about 5,000 belong to the trading community. These latter, of course, came to the Colony on their own means and some of them brought capital also into the country. The indentured Indians are drawn from the labouring population of Madras and Calcutta and are nearly equally divided. Those from Madras speak, as a rule, the Tamil language, and those from Calcutta, the Hindi. Most of them are Hindus, a good few are Mahomedans. Strictly speaking, they do not observe caste restrictions. After becoming free, they either take to gardening or hawking vegetables and earn from 2 to 3 pounds

[1] This was brought out as a pamphlet which later became known as the Green Pamphlet on account of the colour of its cover.

sterling per month. A few become petty storekeepers. That business, however, is practically in the hands of the 5,000 Indians, who are drawn chiefly from the Mahomedan community in the Bombay Presidency. Some of these latter are doing well. Many are large landowners, two are now shipowners also. One of them has a small oil machine worked by steam. They come either from Surat, or districts surrounding Bombay, or Porbandar. Many merchants from Surat have settled in Durban with their families. Most of them, including the assisted immigrants, can read and write their own language to a greater extent than one would think they do.

I venture to quote the following from my 'Open Letter'[1] to the Members of the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council of Natal to show what treatment the Indian receives at the hands of the general run of Europeans in the Colony:

> The man in the street hates him, curses him, spits upon him, and often pushes him off the foot-path. The Press cannot find a sufficiently strong word in the best English dictionary to damn him with. Here are a few samples. "The real canker that is eating into the very vitals of the community", "these parasites", "wily, wretched semi-barbarous Asiatics", "A thing black and lean and a long way from clean, which they call the accursed Hindoo", "He is chock-full of vice and he lives upon rice. I heartily cuss the Hindoo", "Squalid coolies with truthless tongues and artful ways". The Press almost unanimously refuses to call the Indian by his proper name. He is "Ramysamy". He is "Mr. Samy".[2] He is "Mr. Coolie". He is "the black man". And these offensive epithets have become so common that they (at any rate, one of them, "Coolie") are used even in the sacred precincts of the courts, as if "the Coolie" were the legal and proper name to give to any and every Indian. The public men, too, seem to use the word freely. I have often heard the painful expression "coolie clerk" from the mouths of men who ought to know better.[3] The tramcars are not for the Indians. The railway officials may treat the Indians as beasts, No matter how clean, his very sight is such an offence to every White man in the Colony that he would object to sit, even for a short time, in the same compartment with the Indian. The hotels shut their doors against them.[4] Even the public baths are not for the Indians no matter who they are. . . . The vagrant law is needlessly oppressive and often puts respectable Indians in a very awkward position.

[1] For the full text of this, *vide*"Open Letter", 19-12-1894

[2] The original has "Ramsamy" and "Sammy".

[3] Two sentences following this, in the original, have been omitted in the Green Pamphlet. *Vide* "Open Letter", 19-12-1894

[4] A sentence following this has been omitted. *Vide* "Open Letter",19-12-1894

I have quoted this because the statement has been before the South African public for nearly one year and a half, has been commented upon freely by almost every newspaper in South Africa and remains practically uncontradicted (indeed, it has even been endorsed by one newspaper with approval) and because, during the interval that has elapsed, I have seen nothing to change that view. The Right Honourable Mr. Chamberlain[1], however, while in full sympathy with its object, in his reply to the deputation headed by the Hon'ble Mr. Dadabhai[2] is said to have stated that our grievances were more sentimental than material and real and that, if he could be shown any instances of real grievance, he should deal with them effectively. *The Times of India,* which has done us much service and has laid us under deep obligation to it by its persistent advocacy on our behalf, rebuked Mr. Chamberlain for calling our grievances sentimental. To give, however, proof of real grievances and to strengthen the position of the advocates of our cause in India, I shall beg leave to cite my own testimony and that of those who have undergone grievances personally. Every word of every statement to be made immediately can be established beyond the shadow of a doubt.

In Dundee last year, during the Christmas time, a gang of White men set fire to the Indian stores without the slightest provocation, in order to enjoy themselves. Mr. Abdulla Haji Adam, a shipowner and one of the leading members of the Indian community in South Africa, was travelling with me as far as Krantzkloof Station. He alighted there to go by postal cart to Natal. No one there would sell him even bread. The hotelkeeper would not allow him a room in his hotel and he had to sleep in the coach, shivering the whole night with cold. And the winter in that part of Africa is no joke. Mr. Haji Mohamed Haji Dada, another leading Indian gentleman, was travelling in a coach some time ago from Pretoria to Charlestown. He was forced out of the coach and had to walk a distance of three miles because he had not got a pass—whatever that may mean.[3]

A Parsee gentleman, Mr. Rustomjee, whose generosity goes much further than his purse would allow, has been unable to take a Turkish bath for the sake of his health in Durban, although the public

[1] Joseph Chamberlain (1836-1914); Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1895-1902

[2] Dadabhai Naoroji

[3] For a fuller account of the incident, *vide* "Petition to Lord Ripon", 5-5-1895

baths are the property of the Durban Corporation, to which Mr. Rustomjee pays his rates just as well as the other ratepayers. In Field Street, Durban, last year during Christmas time, some youths threw burning crackers in the Indian stores doing some damage. Three months ago, in the same street, some youths shot lead bullets into an Indian store with a sling, hurting a customer who nearly lost his eye. Both these matters were brought to the notice of the Superintendent of Police who promised to do all he could. Nothing more has been heard of the matter. Yet the Superintendent is an estimable gentleman, anxious to protect all the communities in Durban. But what could the poor man do against the tremendous odds? Will his subordinates take the trouble to find out the miscreants? When the aggrieved gentleman saw the constables at the police station, they first laughed and then asked him to get a warrant from the Magistrate for their arrest. No warrant is required in such cases when a constable wants to do his duty. Only the day before I left Natal, the son of an Indian gentleman, spotlessly dressed, was walking along the pavement in the principal street in Durban. Some Europeans pushed him off the pavement without any reason but to amuse themselves. Last year, the Magistrate at Estcourt, a village in Natal, had an Indian who was a prisoner in the dock forced out of it. His cap was forcibly removed and he was brought back bare-headed, in spite of the protest from the man that the removal of the cap was contrary to Indian custom and it offended his religious feeling also. A civil action was brought against the Magistrate. And the judges held that the Magistrate was not civilly liable for acts done by him in his capacity as such. When we went to law, we knew that such would be the decision. Our object was to have the matter thoroughly thrashed out. This question at one time was a very great question in the colony.

An Indian official, whenever he accompanies his superior during his periodical tours, is unable to secure accommodation in the hotels. He is obliged to sojourn in huts. The grievance had reached such a stage, when I left Natal, that he was seriously thinking of sending in his resignation.

A Eurasian gentleman, Mr. DeSilva by name, who was for some time employed in a responsible position in Fiji, happened to come to Natal to seek fortune. He is a certified chemist. He received an appointment as chemist by letter. When, however, his employer saw that he was not quite White, he dismissed him. I know other Eurasians

who, being fair enough to pass as “White men”, are not molested. This last instance I have quoted to show how unreasonable the prejudice is in Natal. I could go on relating such instances. But, I hope, I have adduced sufficient instances to show that our grievances are real and as one of our sympathizers in England says in a letter, “They have only to be known to be removed.”

Now, what is our mode of action in such cases? Are we to go to Mr. Chamberlain in every case and turn the Colonial Office into one for hearing petty complaints from Indians in South Africa? I have used the word “petty” advisedly, for I admit that most of these cases are cases of petty assault and inconvenience. But when they occur pretty regularly, they assume a sufficiently big shape to be a source of constant irritation to us. Just picture a country where you never know you are safe from such assaults, no matter who you are, where you have a nervous fear as to what would happen to you whenever you undertake a journey, where you cannot be accommodated in a hotel even for a night and you have a picture of the state we are living in Natal. I am sure I am not exaggerating when I say that, if any of the Indian High Court Judges came to South Africa, I doubt very much whether any hotel would admit him, unless he took extraordinary precautions, and I am almost positive that he will have to travel from Charlestown to Pretoria in a Kaffir compartment, unless he is dressed in European clothing from top to toe.

I am aware that in some of the instances cited above Mr. Chamberlain could not very well afford relief, as for example the case of Mr. DeSilva, but the fact is clear that such instances occur because of the rooted prejudice against the Indians in South Africa, which is due to the indifference of the Home and the Indian Governments to the complaints of the Indians. In all the cases of assault, our mode of action, as a rule, is not to take any notice of them. We follow the principle, so far as we can, of going two miles when we are asked to go one. Sufferance is, really and sincerely, the badge of the Indians in South Africa, especially in Natal. I may state, however, that we follow this policy not from philanthropic but from purely selfish motives. We have found by painful experiences that to bring the offenders to justice is a tedious and expensive process. The result is often contrary to our expectations. The offender would either be discharged with a caution or fined“five shillings or one day”. The very man, after getting out of the box, assumes a more threatening attitude and puts

the complainant in an awkward position. And the publication of such acts incites others to similar ones. We, therefore, do not, as a rule, even mention them before the public in Natal.

Such a feeling of deep-seated hatred towards the Indians is reproduced all over South Africa, in special legislation for Indians, which has for its object the degradation of the Indian community in that country. The Attorney-General of Natal wants to keep the Indians for ever "hewers of wood and drawers of water". We are classed with the natives of South Africa—Kaffir race. He defines the status of the Indians in the following words: "These Indians were brought here for the purpose of supplying labour for development of local industries and were not intended to form portion of the South African nation which was being built up in the various States." The policy of the Orange Free State, which, in the words of its leading organ, "has made the British Indian an impossibility by simply classifying him with the South African natives", is cherished by the other States as a model policy. What that State has completely accomplished, the other States would accomplish within a very short time but for the vigilance of the Indian public. We are passing through a crisis now. We are hemmed in on all sides by restrictions and high-handed measures.

I shall now show how the feeling of hatred above described has been crystallized into legislation. An Indian cannot leave his house after 9 o'clock at night unless he has a pass signed by someone showing that he is out under instructions or can give a good account of himself. This law applies to the natives and Indians only. The police use their discretion and do not, as a rule, trouble those who are dressed in the Memon costume, as that dress is supposed to be the Indian trader's dress. Mr. Aboobaker, now deceased, was the foremost Indian trader in Natal and much respected by the European community. He, with his friend, was once arrested by the police. When he was brought to the police station for being out after 9 p. m., the authorities knew at once that they had committed a mistake. They told Mr. Aboobaker that they did not want to arrest gentlemen like himself, and asked him if he could point out any distinguishing mark between a trader and a labourer. Mr. Aboobaker pointed to his robe, and, ever since, it has been a tacit understanding between the police and the public that those wearing the flowing robe should not be arrested, even though they may be out after 9 p.m. But there are Tamil and Bengali traders, equally respectable, who do not wear the

robes. There are, again, the Christian Indian educated youths—a most sensitive class—who do not wear robes. They are constantly molested. A young Indian, well educated and a Sunday school teacher, another a schoolmaster, were arrested only four months ago and locked up in a dungeon the whole night, in spite of their protestations that they were on their way home. They were discharged by the Magistrate but that was a poor consolation. An Indian lady, a teacher, the wife of the Indian Interpreter at Ladysmith, was a short time ago on her return from the church on a Sunday evening, arrested by two Kaffir policemen and roughly handled, so much so that her dress was soiled, not to speak of all sorts of bad names she was called. She was locked up in a cell. She was promptly released when the Superintendent of Police came to know who she was. She was carried home senseless. The bold lady sued the Corporation for damages for wrongful arrest and got £20 and costs from the Supreme Court. The Chief Justice remarked that her treatment was "unjust, harsh, arbitrary and tyrannical". The result, however, of these three cases is that the Corporations are now clamouring for more powers and an alteration of the law, in order that they may, to put it bluntly, subject all Indians, irrespective of their position, to restrictions so that, as a member of the Legislative Assembly said on the occasion of the passing of the Immigration Bill of 1894, "the intention of the Colony to make the Indian's life more comfortable in his native land than in the Colony of Natal" may be fulfilled. In any other country, such instances would have excited the sympathy of all right-minded people and the decision quoted above would have been hailed with joy.

Some eight months ago, about 20 Indians, pure labourers on their way to the Durban market with vegetable baskets on their heads, a sufficient indication that they were not vagrants, were arrested at 4 o'clock in the morning under the same law. The police prosecuted the case vigorously. After a two days' trial, the Magistrate discharged them, but at what cost to the poor people! They were carrying their day's earnings in prospect on their shoulders. These were gone. They were, I believe, detained for two days in gaol and had to pay their attorney's fees in the bargain, for having ventured to be up and doing in the early morning, a fitting reward for industry! And Mr. Chamberlain wants instances of real grievances!

There is a system of passes in Natal. Any Indian who, whether in the day-time or the night-time, does not show a pass as to who he is,

is liable to arrest. This is meant to prevent desertion by the indentured Indians and to facilitate identification and is thus far, I believe, necessary, but the working of the law is extremely irritating and a crying grievance. But for the cruel feeling, no injustice need occur under that law. Let the papers speak for themselves as to the working of the law. *The Natal Advertiser* of the 19th June, 1895, has the following on the subject:

> I wish to bring before your notice a few facts regarding the manner in which the Cato Manor[1] tenants are arrested under section 31, Law 25 of 1891. When they are walking on their grounds, the policemen come and arrest them and ask for their free passes. When they call out for their wives or relatives to produce the passes, before they can be produced the policemen begin to drag the Indians to the police-station. When the passes are produced on the road to the station, the policemen simply look at them and throw them to the ground. The Indians are taken to the police-station, detained for a night and made to wash the cell out in the morning and are then brought before the Magistrate. The Magistrate, without taking their pleas, fines them. When they reported this to the Protector[2], he told them to go to the Magistrate, yet (adds the correspondent) he is appointed to protect the Indian immigrants. If such things exist in the Colony (continues the writer), to whom are they to appeal?

The statement that the Magistrate does not take pleas must, I think, be a mistake.

The Natal Mercury, the Government organ in Natal, of 13th April, 1895, has the following from the Editor:

> A point of considerable importance to respectable Indians and which causes much heart-burning, is their liability to arrest. Let me give a case in point. A well-known Durban Indian who has property in various parts of the town, a well-educated and exceedingly intelligent man, was the other night, with his mother, visiting Sydenham, where also he has property. Met by two native constables, the young man and his mother were taken into custody and marched off to the police-station, though it is only fair to say the native police conducted themselves admirably. The young Indian referred to explained who he was and gave references and the trooper at length bade him begone, warning him, however, that if he did not have a pass next time he would be detained and prosecuted. Being a British subject in a British Colony, he objects to being treated in this way, though, of course, he recognizes the necessity of watchfulness in general. He makes a very strong point, however, and one which the authorities should certainly consider.

[1] A suburb of Durban

[2] Protector of Indian Immigrants

It will be only fair to state what the authorities have to say. They admit the grievance but ask how they are to distinguish between an indentured Indian and a free Indian. We, on the other hand, submit that nothing can be easier. The indentured Indian never is dressed in a fashionable dress. The presumption should be in favour of, not against, the Indian, especially an Indian of the type I am referring to. There is no more reason to presume a man to be a thief than to presume an Indian to be a deserter. Even if an Indian did desert and made preparations to look decent, it will be difficult for him to remain undetected for a long time. But, then, the Indian in South Africa is not credited with any feelings. He is a beast, "a thing black and lean", "the Asian dirt to be heartily cursed".

There is, again, a law which says that natives and Indians, when driving cattle, must be provided with certain passes; also a bye-law in Durban which provides for the registration of native servants and "others belonging to the uncivilized races of Asia". This presupposes that the Indian is a barbarian. There is a very good reason for requiring registration of a native in that he is yet being taught the dignity and necessity of labour. The Indian knows it and he is imported because he knows it. Yet, to have the pleasure of classifying him with the natives, he too is required to be registered. The Superintendent of the Borough Police has never, so far as I know, put the law in motion. Once I raised an objection, in defending an Indian servant, that he was not registered. The Superintendent resented the objection and said he never applied the law to Indians and asked me if I wanted to see them degraded. The law, however, being there, may at any time be used as an engine of oppression.

But we have not attempted to have any of these disabilities removed. We are doing what we can to have their rigour mitigated locally. For the present, our efforts are concentrated towards preventing and getting repealed fresh legislation. Before referring to that, I may further illustrate the proposition that the Indian is put on the same level with the native in many other ways also. Lavatories are marked "natives and Asiatics" at the railway stations. In the Durban Post and Telegraph Offices, there were separate entrances for natives and Asiatics and Europeans. We felt the indignity too much and many respectable Indians were insulted and called all sorts of names by the clerks at the counter. We petitioned the authorities to do away with the

invidious distinction and they have now provided three separate entrances for natives, Asiatics and Europeans.

The Indians have, up to now, enjoyed the franchise rights under the general franchise law of the colony, which requires ownership of immovable property worth £50 or payment of an annual rental of £10 to qualify an adult male to be placed on the Voters' Roll. There is a special franchise law for the natives. Under the former, in 1894, there were 9,309 European voters and 251 Indians, of whom only 203 were living at the time, the populations being equal. Thus the European vote in 1894 was 38 times as strong as the Indian vote. Yet, the Government thought or pretended to think that there was a real danger of the Asiatic vote swamping the Europeans. They, therefore, introduced into the Legislative Assembly of Natal a Bill disfranchising all Asiatics save those who were then rightly contained in any Voters' List, the preamble of the Bill stating that the Asiatics were not acquainted with elective representative institutions. Against this Bill we memorialized both the Legislative Assembly[1] and the Legislative Council[2] of Natal but to no purpose. We then memorialized Lord Ripon[3] and forwarded copies of the memorial to the Press and the public in India and England, with a view to enlist their sympathy and to secure their active support which, we are thankful to say, we received to some extent.

As a result, that Act has now been repealed and replaced by an Act which says "no persons shall be qualified to have their names inserted in any list of electors who (not being of European origin) are natives or descendants in the male line of natives of countries which have not hitherto possessed elective representative institutions founded on the parliamentary franchise unless they shall first obtain an order from the Governor-in-Council, exempting them from the operation of the Act." It also exempts from its operation those persons that are rightly contained in any Voters' List. This Bill was first submitted to Mr. Chamberlain who has practically approved of it. We, yet, thought it advisable to oppose it and, with a view to secure its disallowance,

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Assembly", 28-6-1894

[2] *Vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Council", 4-7-1894 and "Petition to Natal Legislative Council", 6-7-1894

[3] George Frederick Samuel Robinson (1827-1909), 1st Marquis of Ripon; Governor-General of India, 1880-84; Colonial Secretary, 1892-95. For the text of the petition, *vide* " Petition to Lord Ripon", 14-7-1894

have sent a memorial[1] to Mr. Chamberlain and hope to secure the same measure of support that has been extended to us hitherto. We believe that the real reason for all such legislation is to accord a different treatment to the Indian in South Africa, such that, under it, a respectable Indian in that country may become an impossibility. There is no real danger of the Asiatic vote swamping the European or the Asiatic ruling South Africa. Yet this was the main point urged in support of the Bill. The whole question has been well thrashed out in the Colony and Mr. Chamberlain has got all the materials before him to judge. Here are the Government giving their own view in their organ, *The Natal Mercury*, of the 5th March, 1896, dealing with the present Bill and supporting it. After quoting the figures from the Voters' List it says:

> The fact of the matter is that apart from numbers altogether the superior race will always hold the reins of Government. We are inclined to the belief therefore that the danger of the Indian vote swamping the European is a chimerical one. We do not consider that the danger of being swamped is at all a likely one, as past experience has proved that the class of Indians coming here, as a rule, do not concern themselves about the franchise and further that the majority of them do not even possess the small property qualification required.

This admission has been reluctantly made. The *Mercury* supposes, and we believe, that the Bill will fail in its purpose if it is to debar the Asiatic from the franchise and says that it would not matter if it does. What, then, is the object if it be not to harass the Indian community? The real reason why the Bill has been introduced is thus guardedly but frankly stated by the *Mercury* of the 23rd April, 1896:

> Rightly or wrongly, justly or unjustly, a strong feeling exists among the Europeans in South Africa, and especially in the two Republics, against Indians or any other Asiatics being allowed unrestricted right to the franchise. The Indian argument, or course, is that there is only one Indian to every 38 European voters on the Roll at present with the open franchise and that the danger anticipated is imaginary. Perhaps it is, but we have to deal with it as if it were a real danger, not altogether, as we have explained, because of our views, but because of the views we know to be strongly held by the rest of the Europeans in the country. We do not want isolation again under the far greater and more fatal ban of being a semi-Asiatic country out of touch and out of harmony with the other European Governments of the country.

[1] *Vide* " Memorial To J. Chamberlain", 22-5-1896

This, then, is the naked truth. In obedience to the popular outcry, justly or unjustly, the Asiatic must be put down. This Bill has been passed after a secret meeting was held by the Government at which they explained the real reasons for passing the Bill. It has been condemned by the Colonists' and the other newspapers as inadequate from their point of view and by the very members who voted for it. They hold that the Bill will not apply to the Indians because they possess in India "elective representative institutions founded on the Parliamentary franchise and that it will involve the Colony in endless litigation and agitation". We, too, have taken up the same ground. We have urged that the Legislative Councils in India are "elective representative institutions founded on the Parliamentary franchise". Of course, in the popular sense of the term, we have no such institutions, but in the opinion of the London *Times* and an able jurist in Durban our institutions can well be legally classified under those described in the Bill. *The Times* says "the argument that he (the Indian) has no franchise whatever in India in inconsistent with facts." Mr. Laughton, an eminent lawyer in Natal, writing to a newspaper on the subject, says:

> Is there, then, a Parliamentary (or legislative) franchise in India, and what is it? There is, and it was created by the Acts 24 and 25 Victoria, Chapter 67, and 55 and 56 Victoria, Chapter 140, by the regulations made under Section 4 of the latter Act. It may not be founded on what we call a liberal basis, it may indeed be founded on a very crude basis, but it is the Parliamentary franchise nevertheless and, under the Bill it is on it that elective representative institutions of India have to be founded.

This is also the opinion of other eminent men in Natal. Mr. Chamberlain, however, in his despatch[1] in connection with the matter says:

> I also recognize the fact that the natives of India do not possess representative institutions in their own country and that they themselves, in those periods of their history when they were exempt from European influence, have never set up any such system themselves.

The opinion, as will be noticed, is opposed to the view expressed by *The Times* partly quoted above and has naturally frightened us. We are anxious to know what the best legal opinion here is. We cannot, however, too often urge that it is not political power that we want but it is the degradation which these Franchise Bills involve that we resist. If

[1] Dated September 12, 1895

a Colony is allowed to treat the Indians on a different footing from the Europeans in one respect, there would be no difficulty in going further. Their goal is not merely disfranchisement. Their goal is total extinction of the Indian. He may be allowed to exist there as a pariah, as an indentured labourer, at the most a free labourer, but he must not aspire higher. At the time the first Franchise Bill was introduced, in response to the clamour for Municipal disfranchisement of the Indians, the Attorney-General said that would be dealt with in the near future. The Natal Government, about a year ago, wished to convene what was called a "Coolie Conference", so that there might be uniformity in Indian legislation throughout South Africa. At that time also, the Deputy Mayor of Durban moved a resolution that the Asiatics should be induced to live in separate locations. The Government are vexing themselves to find out how they can directly and effectively check the influx of the Indian traders, whom Mr. Chamberlain describes to be "peaceable, law-abiding, meritorious body of persons whose undoubted industry and intelligence and indomitable perseverance", he hopes, "will suffice to overcome any obstacles which may now face them in pursuit of their avocations". The present Bill, therefore, we humbly think, has to be taken in connection with these facts and treated accordingly. The London *Times* has put the franchise question in this form:

> The question now before Mr. Chamberlain is not an academic one. It is not a question of argument but of race feeling. We cannot afford a war of races among our own subjects. It would be as wrong for the Government of India to suddenly arrest the development of Natal by shutting off the supply of immigrants as it would be for Natal to deny the rights of citizenship to British Indian subjects who, by years of thrift and good work in the Colony, have raised themselves to the actual status of citizens.

The Second Bill that has been passed by the Natal Legislature proposes to keep the indentured Indians always under indenture, or if they do not relish it, to send them back to India at the end of the first indenture of five years, or if they would not go back, then to compel them to pay an annual tax of £ 3.[1] How, in a British Colony, such a measure could even be thought of passes our comprehension. Almost all the public men in Natal are agreed that the prosperity of the Colony depends upon the Indian labour. In the words of a present

[1] *Vide* "Petition To Natal Legislative Council" and "Memorial To J. Chamberlain"

member of the Legislative Assembly, "at the time the Indian immigration was decided upon the progress and almost the existence of the Colony hung in the balance!" But in the words of another eminent Natalian,

> Indian immigration brought prosperity, prices rose, people were no longer content to grow or sell produce for a song, they could do better. If we look to 1859, we shall find that the assured promise of Indian labour resulted in an immediate rise of revenue which increased fourfold within a few years. Mechanics who could not get a wage and were earning 5 shillings a day and less found their wages more than doubled and progress gave encouragement to everyone from the Burgh to the Sea.

Yet they want to tax these industrious and indispensable people who, in the words of the present Chief Justice of Natal, have turned out to be "trustworthy and useful domestic servants", after having taken the very life-blood out of them. The following opinion was held by the present Attorney-General ten years ago. He is now the framer of this Bill which a Radical newspaper in London says "is a monstrous wrong, an insult to British subjects, a disgrace to its authors and a slight upon ourselves".

> With reference to the time-expired Indians, I do not think that it ought to be compulsory on any man to go to any part of the world save for a crime for which he is transported. I hear a great deal of this question. I have been asked again and again to take a different view but I have not been able to do it. A man is brought here, in theory with his own consent, in practice very often without. He gives the best five years of his life, he forms new ties, forgets the old ones perhaps, establishes a home here and he cannot, according to my view of right and wrong, be sent back. Better by far to stop the further introduction of Indians altogether than to take what work you can out of them and order them away.

But now that which was meritorious 10 years ago in the Indian, namely, his service to the Colony for 5 years for a paltry wage, has become a crime for which he would deserve transportation to India, if the Natal Attorney-General be allowed to do so by the Indian and the Home Governments. I may mention that the Indian Government, on the representation of an *ex parte* Commission[1] that visited India from Natal in 1893, have accepted the principle of compulsory indenture. We, however, are hoping confidently that the facts brought out in the

[1] The Binns-Mason Commission; *vide* "Speech at Farewell Dinner", 11-6-1891

memorials to the Home and the Indian Governments[1] are sufficient to induce the latter to alter their views.

Although we have not moved in the matters specially affecting the Indians now serving their indenture, one may well presume that their lot will not be practically comfortable on the estates. We think that the alteration in the Colony's tone with regard to the general population will affect the masters also of the indentured Indians. One or two matters, however, I have been asked to especially bring to the notice of the public. A representation was made, even as far back as 1891, by an Indian Committee headed by Mr. Haji Mohamed Haji Dada, one of the prayers whereof being that the Protector of Immigrants should be a man knowing the Tamil and the Hindustani languages and should, if possible, be an Indian. We have not receded from that position, but the interval has merely confirmed that opinion. The present Protector is an estimable gentleman. His ignorance of the languages, however, cannot but be a serious drawback. We humbly consider also that the protector should be instructed to act as an advocate for the Indian more than as Judge between the employers and the immigrants. I shall illustrate what I say. An Indian named Balasundaram was, in 1894, so ill-treated by his master that two of his teeth were nearly knocked out; they came out through his upper lip causing an issue of blood sufficient to soak his long turban in it. His master admitted the fact but pleaded grave provocation, denied by the man. On receiving the punishment, he seems to have gone to the Protector's house which was close by his master's. The Protector sent word that he must go to his office the next day.

The man went, then, to the Magistrate who was much moved at the sight. The turban was kept in court and he was at once sent to the hospital for treatment. The man after having been kept in the hospital for a few days was discharged. He had heard about me and came to my office. He had not recovered sufficiently to be able to speak. I asked him, therefore, to write out his complaint in Tamil which he knew. He wanted to prosecute the master so that his contract of indenture might be cancelled. I asked him if he would be satisfied if his indenture was transferred. On his nodding consent to what I said, I wrote to his master asking if he would consent to transfer the services of the man. He was at first unwilling but subsequently consented. I

[1] For memorials to the Indian Government, *vide* "Memorial to Lord Elgin", 11-8-1895

sent the man also to the Protector's office with a Tamil clerk of mine who gave the man's version to the Protector. The Protector desired the man to be left in his office and sent word that he would do his best. The master, in the mean while, went to the Protector's office and changed his mind, saying his wife would not agree to the transfer because his services were invaluable. The man was then said to have compromised and to have given the Protector a written document to the effect that he had no complaint to make. He sent me a note to the effect that as the man had no complaint to make and his master did not consent to transfer the services he would not interfere in the matter. I ask if this was right. Was it right for the Protector to have taken such a document from the man? Did he want to protect himself against the man? To proceed, however, with the painful story, naturally the note sent a shock through my body. I had hardly recovered when the man came to my office crying and saying the Protector would not transfer him. I literally ran to the Protector's office and inquired what the matter was. He placed the written document before me and asked me how he could help the man. He said the man should not have signed the document. And this document was an affidavit attested by the Protector himself. I told the Protector that I should advise the man to go to the Magistrate and lodge a complaint. He said the document would be produced before the Magistrate and it would be useless. He advised me, therefore, to drop the matter. I returned to my office and wrote a letter to his master imploring him to consent to the transfer. The master would do nothing of the kind. The magistrate treated us quite differently. He had seen the man while the blood was yet dripping from his lips. The deposition was duly made. On the day of hearing, I explained the whole circumstances and again appealed to the master in open court and offered to withdraw the complaint if he consented to the transfer. The Magistrate then gave the master to understand that, unless he considered my offer more favourably than he seemed to do at the time, consequences might be serious for him. He went on to say that he thought the man was brutally treated. The master said he gave provocation. The Magistrate retorted: "You had no business to take the law in your own hands and beat the man as if he were a beast." He adjourned the case for one day in order to enable the master to consider the offer made by me. The master, of course, came down and consented. The Protector then wrote to me that he would not agree to transfer unless I submitted a European name he could approve of.

Happily, the Colony is not quite devoid of benevolent men. A Wesleyan local preacher and solicitor, out of charity, undertook to take over the man's services, and thus ended the last act of this painful drama. Comment is superfluous as to the procedure adopted by the Protector. This is only a typical instance showing how hard it is for the indentured men to get justice.

We submit that no matter who he is, his duties should be clearly defined as are those of judges, advocates, solicitors and others. Certain things, for the sake of avoiding temptations, he should not be able to do in spite of himself. Just fancy a judge being the guest of a criminal who is being tried before him. Yet, the Protector, when he goes to the estates to enquire about the condition of the men and to hear complaints, can and does often become the guest of the employers. We submit that this practice is wrong in principle, no matter how high-minded the Protector may be. As a Surgeon-Superintendent of Immigrants remarked the other day, the Protector should be easily approachable to the meanest coolie, but he should be unapproachable to the lordliest employer. He may not be a Natal man. It also looks a strange procedure to appoint as Protector a member of a Commission whose object is to induce the Indian Government to consent to pass harsher laws for the indentured Indians. When the Protector has to perform such a conflicting duty, who is to protect the indentured men?

It should be easy for the immigrant to have his services transferred. There are in the gaol some Indians who have been there for years because they refuse to go to their employers. They say they have complaints which, owing to the peculiar circumstances in which they are placed, they cannot substantiate. A Magistrate was so much disgusted with the business that he wished he had not to try such cases. *The Natal Mercury* of 13th June, 1895, thus comments on such a case:

> When a man, even a coolie immigrant, prefers to go to prison rather than work for the master to whom he has been indentured, the natural inference is that something is wrong somewhere, and we are not surprised at Mr. Dillon's remarks on Saturday, when he had three coolies before him, all charged with the same offence of refusing to work, all giving the same excuse, viz., that they were ill-treated by their masters. Of course, it is just possible that these particular coolies prefer gaol work to plantation work. On the other hand, it is just possible that the coolies have some ground for their complaint as to their treatment and the matter is one that ought to be investigated, and at

> least these men who complain in this way should be transferred to another master and, if they again refuse to work, it can be readily seen that they do not want to work. If a coolie is ill-treated it may be said that he can complain to the Magistrate, but it is not an easy matter for any coolie to prove such cases. It is a matter altogether for the Protector of Immigrants to inquire into and remedy, if possible.

There is an Immigration Trust Board that consists of employers of Indians. They have now received very wide powers. And seeing the position they occupy, their acts will have to be very jealously watched by the Indian Government. The punishment for desertion is heavy enough, and yet they are now seriously considering whether some stiffer mode of dealing with such cases could not be devised. It should be remembered, however, that, in at least 9 cases out of 10, the so-called deserters complain of ill-treatment, and such deserters are protected under the law from punishment, but as the poor fellows cannot establish their complaints, they are treated as real deserters and sent by the Protector to the Magistrate for punishment accordingly. Under such circumstances, any alteration for the worse in the law about desertion should, we submit, require careful consideration.

There is a sad mortality among these people from suicides. They are not satisfactorily accounted for. I cannot do better than quote the *Advertiser* of the 15th May, 1896:

> A feature of the annual report of the Protector of Immigrants, to which more public attention should be given than is the case, is that referring to the number of suicides which take place every year among the indentured coolies on the estates. This year the number recorded is six out of a total of 8,828. A large number occurred in 1894. It is, however, a very high percentage and raises the suspicion that on some estates a system of treatment exists towards the coolie labourers much akin to slave-driving. It is extremely significant that so many suicides should occur on certain estates. This is a point which calls for investigation. Apparently, no inquiry of any kind is held into the cases with a view to ascertain whether the treatment meted out to unfortunate wretches, who prefer death to life, is such as to render existence an intolerable misery. The matter is one which is apt to pass unnoticed. It, however, ought not to do so. In a recent case of desertion on the part of several coolies from an estate down South, the prisoners openly declared in Court that they would rather kill themselves than return to their employer. The Magistrate said he had no option but to order them back to serve out their indentures. It is time the Colony took steps to afford such complainants an opportunity of bringing the facts in connection with their complaints before some Court of Inquiry and the public. It is also desirable that a Secretary of Indian Affairs

should be added to the Ministry. As matters stand at present, the indentured Indian has no effectual mode of appeal against whatever brutality may be inflicted on him on the plantations.

We, however, wish to guard ourselves against being understood to say that the life of the indentured Indians in Natal is harder than in any other country, or that this is a part of the general grievances of the Indians in the Colony. On the other hand, we know that there are estates in Natal where the Indians are very well treated. At the same time, we do humbly submit that the lot of the indentured Indians is not all that it might be and that there are points which require attention.

When an indentured Indian loses his free pass, he is charged £3 for the duplicate. The reason for this is the alleged fraudulent sale by the Indians of their passes. But, surely, such fraudulent sale can be criminally punished. A man who has sold his pass should never be able to get a duplicate even on a payment of £30. On the other hand, it should be as easy for an ordinary Indian to get a duplicate as the original. They are supposed to carry their passes about their persons. No wonder if they are frequently lost. I know a man who could not get a duplicate because he had not £3 with him. He wanted to go to Johannesburg and he could not go. The practice in the Protector's department in such cases is to issue temporary passes so that the men may be able to make a present of their first £3 earned to the Protector's office. In the case I am referring to, the man had a temporary pass issued for six months. He could not earn £3 during that time. There are dozens of such cases. I have no hesitation in saying that this is nothing but a system of blackmail.

ZULULAND

In the Crown Colony of Zululand there are certain townships. There are regulations published with reference to the sale of land in these townships, and the regulations for the townships of Eshowe and Nondweni prevent the Indians from owning or acquiring land[1] although the Indians own land worth nearly £2,000 in the township of Melmoth in the same country. We have sent a memorial to Mr. Chamberlain[2] and it is now engaging his attention. The Colonists in Natal say that, if such disabilities can be placed on Indians in a Crown Colony, a responsibly governed Colony such as Natal should be

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Natal Governor", 26-2-1896
[2] *Vide* "Memorial to J. Chamberlain", 11-3-1896

allowed to do what it liked with regard to the Indians. Our position in Zululand is no better than in the Free State. It is so dangerous to go to Zululand that the one or two who ventured to go there had to return back. There is a good opening for the Indians there, but the ill-treatment comes in the way. This is a matter that we are earnestly hoping will be set right without much delay.

THE CAPE COLONY

In the Cape Colony, the Mayoral Congress has passed a resolution signifying its desire for legislation prohibiting the influx of Asiatics in that Colony and hoping that prompt action will be taken. The Cape Legislature has, lately, passed a measure which gives the East London Municipality in that Colony the power to make bye-laws compelling natives and Indians to remove to and reside in certain locations and prohibiting them from walking on foot-paths. It is difficult to conceive a better instance of cruel persecution. The following is the position of the Indians in East Griqualand under the Cape Government, according to the *Mercury* of 23rd March, 1896:

> An Arab, named Ismail Suliman, erected a store in East Griqualand, paid customs duty upon goods and applied for a licence, which the Magistrate refused. Mr. Attorney Francis, on the Arab's behalf, appealed to the Cape Government who upheld the Magistrate and have issued instructions that no coolies or Arabs are to have trading licences in East Griqualand and the one or two that have licences are to be closed up.

Thus, in some parts of Her Majesty's Dominions In South Africa, even the vested rights of her Indian subjects are not to be protected. What happened to the Indian in the end I was unable to ascertain. There are many cases where Indians have been unceremoniously refused licences to trade. There is a Bluebook on Native Affairs published in Natal. One of the Magistrates therein says he simply refuses to issue trading licences to Indians and thus prevents Indian encroachments.

CHARTERED TERRITORIES

In the Chartered Territories, the Indians are receiving the same kind of treatment. Only lately, an Indian was refused a licence to trade. He went to the Supreme Court who decided that the licence could not be refused to him. Now the Rhodesians have sent a petition to the Government requesting them to alter the law so as to prevent the Indians from getting licences under the request of the petitioners. This

is what the correspondent of the South African *Daily Telegraph* has to say about the meeting that sent the petition:

> It affords me pleasure to be able to say, and say truthfully, that the meeting was in no way a representative one. Had it been so, little credit would thereby have been reflected on the inhabitants of the town. Some half a dozen leading storekeepers, the editor of a paper, a sprinkling of minor Government officials and a fairly large collection of prospectors, mechanics and artisans made up the assembly which those under whose direction it was held would have us believe represented the voice of the police of Salisbury. The resolutions, which I have already wired you with the [names of] proposers and seconders, were nicely cut and dried before the meeting commenced and the figures were set in order and worked in their places when the time arrived. There were no Indians present and no one ventured a word on their behalf. Why, it is hard to say, for it is certain that the feeling of by far the majority in this town is altogether adverse to the one-sided, selfish and narrow-minded opinion expressed by those who essayed to speak on the question. . . . I cannot help thinking that little, if any, harm need be feared from the advent of a race who are industrious and steady and who, in higher sphere, have on occasion given evidences of their capabilities in upholding positions which they maintain ably and honourably side by side with their lighter-skinned brother.

THE TRANSVAAL

Coming now to the non-British States, i.e., the Transvaal and the Free State, there were in the Transvaal nearly two hundred traders in 1894 whose liquidated assets would amount to £100,000. Of these, about three firms imported goods directly from England, Durban, Port Elizabeth, India and other places, and had thus branches in the other parts of the world whose existence mainly depended upon their Transvaal business. The rest were small vendors having stores in different places. There were,then, nearly two thousand hawkers in the Republic who buy goods and hawk them about. Of the labouring Indian population, who are employed as general servants in European houses or hotels, there were about 1,500 men, of whom about 1,000 lived in Johannesburg. Such, roughly, was the position at the end of 1894 A.D. The numbers have now considerably increased. In the Transvaal, the Indians cannot own landed property; they can be ordered to reside in locations. No new licences to trade are issued to them. They are made to pay a special registration fee of £3. All these restrictions are unlawful, being in contravention of the London

Convention[1] which secures the rights of all Her Majesty's subjects. But the previous Secretary of State for the Colonies having consented to a departure from the Convention, the Transvaal has been able to impose the above restrictions. They were the subject of an arbitration in 1894-95 which has decided against the Indians, that is to say, which has declared that the Republic was entitled to pass those laws. A memorial against the award of the arbitrator was sent to the Home Government.[2] Mr. Chamberlain has now given his decision on the memorial and, while sympathizing with the prayer thereof, has accepted the award of the Arbitrator. He has, however, promised and retained the right to make friendly representations to the Transvaal Government from time to time. And, if the representations are emphatic enough, we have no doubt that we shall get justice in the end. We, therefore, implore the public bodies to exert their influence so that these representations may be such as to have their desired effect. I shall venture to quote an instance in point. When, during the Malaboch war,[3] the British subjects were being commandeered, many protested against it and asked for the interference of the Home Government. The reply first sent was to the effect that they could not interfere with the affairs of the Republic. The papers, however, were enraged and memorials strongly worded were repeated. At last came the request to the Transvaal Government not to commandeer British subjects. It was not an interference, yet the request had to be granted and the commandeering of British subjects was stopped. May we hope for such a request which carries with it its fulfilment? If we are not as important a community as that concerned with the commando movement our grievances, we submit, are much more so.

Whether such or any representations are made or not, there will arise questions out of the award that will engage Mr. Chamberlain's attention. What shall be done with the hundreds of Indian stores in the Transvaal? Will they all be closed up? Will they all be made to live in locations, and if so, what locations? The British Agent has thus described the Transvaal locations with reference to the removal of the Malays in Pretoria, the metropolis of the South African Republic:

[1] Signed on February 27, 1884, between the Boers and the British.

[2] For details of the award and the memorial, *vide* 'Petition to Lord Ripon", 5-5-1895

[3] Commando action carried out by the Transvaal Government in 1894 against a tribe in the north called Malaboch after its chief.

> To be forced into a small location on a spot used as a place to deposit the refuse of the town, without any water except the polluted soakage in the gully between the location and the town, must inevitably result in malignant fevers and other diseases breaking out amongst them whereby their lives and the health of the community in town will be endangered. (Green book No. 2, 1893, page 72)

Will they or will they not receive any compensation if they are made to sell off? Again, the very law is ambiguous. The Arbitrator was called upon to decide upon the interpretation which he has now left to the High Court of the Transvaal. We contend that by the law the State can only compel us to reside in locations. The State contends that residence includes trading stores also and that, therefore, we may not, under that law, even trade except in specified locations. The High court is said to favour the State interpretation.

Nor are these the only grievances in the Transvaal. These were the subject of the arbitration. But there is a law which prevents the railway authorities in the Transvaal from issuing first or second-class tickets on the railways. There is a tin compartment reserved for natives and other coloured people in which we are literally packed like sheep, without regard to our dress, our behaviour or our position. In Natal, there is no such law but the petty officials give trouble. The hardship is not insignificant. In Delagoa Bay, the authorities so respect the Indian that they would not allow him to travel 3rd class, so much so that, if a poor Indian could not afford the 2nd-class fare, he is allowed to travel 2nd class under a 3rd-class ticket. The same Indian, as soon as he reaches the Transvaal border, is compelled to put his dignity into his pocket, asked to produce a pass and then unceremoniously thrust into the third-class compartment, no matter whether he has a first-class or a second-class ticket. The journey is long enough to be felt like a month's journey in those uncomfortable quarters. The same thing happens on the Natal side. Four months ago, an Indian gentleman got a second-class ticket for Pretoria at Durban. He was assured that he would be all right, yet he was not only forcibly put out at Volksrust, a station on the Transvaal border, but could not proceed by that train because it did not carry any third-class compartment. These regulations seriously interfere with our carrying on our trade also. There are many who, owing to such inconveniences, would not move from place to place unless they could not possibly avoid it.

Then, in the Transvaal, an Indian, like the native of South Africa, has to carry a travelling pass which costs a shilling. This is the

Indian's permit to travel about. It is, I believe, available only for a single journey. Thus, Mr. Haji Mahomed Haji Dada was put out of his post-cart and had to walk a distance of three miles, at the point of the policeman's sjambok, which serves the purpose of the bayonet, in order to get the pass. The pass master, however, knew him and so would not issue any pass to him. All the same, he had to miss his coach and walk from Volksrust to Charlestown.

The Indians cannot, as of right, walk on the foot-path in Pretoria and Johannesburg. I use the word "as of right" advisedly, because the traders are, as a rule, not interfered with. In Johannesburg, there is a bye-law to that effect passed by the Sanitary Board. A gentleman, named Mr. Pillay, a graduate of the Madras University, was violently pushed off the foot-path in Pretoria. He wrote about it to the papers. The attention of the British Agent also was drawn to the matter. But, sympathetic as he was towards the Indians, he declined to interfere.

The gold-mining laws of Johannesburg prevent Indians from taking out mining licences and render it criminal for them to sell or possess native gold.

The treaty, exempting the British subjects from commando service, has been accepted by the Transvaal with the reservation that British subjects therein shall mean only "whites". That is now the subject of a memorial to Mr. Chamberlain.[1] Under it, apart from the serious disability it places upon the Indian subjects of Her Majesty, we might, as the London *Times* puts it, "now see a levy of British Indian subjects driven at the point of the Transvaal bayonets against the bayonets of British Troops".

THE ORANGE FREE STATE

The Orange Free State, as I have already quoted from a newspaper, has made the British Indian an impossibility. We are driven away from that State causing to us a loss of £9,000. Our stores were closed up and no compensation was given to us. Will Mr. Chamberlain consider this a real grievance and get us our £9,000 from the Orange Free State, not to speak of the future blighting of the prospects of the traders particularly concerned? I know them all, and most of them have not been able to regain their former position, although at the time they were thus driven out they were supposed to be the wealthiest

[1] For the text of this, *vide* "Memorial To J. Chamberlain", 26-11-1895

firms. The law, which is entitled "the law to prevent the inrush of Asiatic coloured persons", prevents any Indian from remaining in the Orange Free State for more than 2 months, unless he gets the permission from the President of the Republic who cannot consider the application to reside before thirty days have elapsed after the presentation of the petition and other ceremonies have been performed. He can, however, on no account, hold fixed property in the State or carry on any mercantile or farming business.

The President may or may not, "according to the state of things", grant such mutilated permission to reside. Any Indian resident, moreover, is subject to an annual poll-tax of £10. The first contravention of the section relating to mercantile and farming business renders the delinquent liable to a fine of £25 or three months' imprisonment, with or without hard labour. For all subsequent contraventions, the punishment is to be doubled.[1]

Such then is the position of the Indians in South Africa, except Delagoa Bay where the Indians are very much respected, labour under no special disability and are owners of nearly half the fixed property in the principal streets of that city. They are all of them mostly traders. Some of them are in Government employment also. There are two Parsee gentlemen who are Engineers. And there is another Parsee gentleman whom, perhaps, even a child in Delagoa Bay knows by the name of "Senhor Edul". The trading class, however, chiefly consists of Mahomedans and Banias, mostly from Portuguese India.

It yet remains for me to examine the cause of this deplorable state of things, as also the remedy. The Europeans say that the habits of the Indians are insanitary, they spend nothing and that they are untruthful and immoral. These are the objections according to the most moderate journals. Others, of course, simply abuse us. The charge as to insanitary habits and untruthfulness is partially true, that is to say, the sanitary habits of the Indian community as a whole, in South Africa, are not as good as they might be from the highest point of view. The charge as laid against us by the European community and used in the way it has been, we totally deny, and we have quoted the opinions of doctors in South Africa to show that "class

[1] In the second edition of the "Green Pamphlet", brought out in November, Gandhiji has inserted here an extract from his Madras speech delivered on October 26. This answered the Natal Agent-General's refutation of Gandhiji's charges. The extract from the speech begins "But, gentlemen, ..." and ends "in spite of the persecution".

considered, the lowest-class Indian lives better and in better habitation and with more regard to sanitary measures than the lowest-class white". Dr. Veale, B.A., M.B.B.S. (Cantab.), finds the Indians "to be cleanly in their persons and free from the personal diseases due to dirt or careless habits" and finds also that "their dwellings are generally clean and sanitation is willingly attended to by them."[1] But we do not say we are beyond improvement in this matter. We may not live quite satisfactorily if there were no sanitary laws. Both the communities err equally in this respect, as the newspaper records would show. That, however, cannot be a reason for all the serious disabilities that are imposed upon us. The cause lies elsewhere, as I shall presently show. Let them enforce the sanitary law very strictly, and we shall be all the better for that. Those of us who are lazy will be properly aroused from our lethargy. As to untruthfulness, the charge, to a certain extent, is true, with regard to the indentured Indians, utterly exaggerated with regard to the traders. But the indentured Indians, placed in the position they are, I venture to say, have done much better than any other community would do in a similar position. The very fact that they are liked as servants by the Colonists and called "useful and trusty", shows that they are not the incorrigible liars they are made out to be. However, the moment they leave India, they are free from the healthy checks that keep them on the narrow path. In South Africa, they are without any religious instruction, though they need it badly. They are called upon to give evidence against their masters for the sake of a fellow brother. This duty they often shirk. Gradually, therefore, their faculty for adhering to the truth, under all circumstances, becomes perverted and they become helpless afterwards.

I submit that they are more the objects of pity than of contempt. And this view I ventured to place before the public in South Africa two years ago, and they have not excepted to it. The fact that the European firms in South Africa give hundreds of Indians large credit practically on their word of honour, and have no cause to regret having done so, and that the banks give Indians almost unlimited credit, while the merchants and bankers would not trust Europeans to that extent, conclusively prove that the Indian traders cannot be so dishonest as they are made out to be. I do not, of course, mean to convey that the European firms believe the Indians to be more

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Lord Ripon", 5-5-1895

truthful than the Europeans. But I do humbly think that, while they would perhaps trust both equally, they rely upon the Indian's thrift, his determination not to ruin his creditor and his temperate habits. A bank has been giving credit to an Indian to a very large extent. A European gentleman, known to the bank and a friend of this Indian, wanted £300 credit for speculation. The bank refused to give him credit without guarantee. The Indian friend pledged his honour, and that was all he had to pledge, and the bank accepted that security, although at the time, too, he was heavily in debt to the bank. The result is the European friend has failed to refund the £300 to the bank, and the Indian friend, for the present, has lost the money. The European, of course, lives in a better style and requires some drink for his dinners, and our Indian friend drinks only water. The charges that we spend nothing and are immoral, i.e., more than those who bring the charges against us, we repudiate entirely. But the real cause is the trade jealousy, in the first instance, and want of knowledge about Indian and the Indians, in the second.

The hue and cry against the Indians was first raised by the traders and then taken up by the populace till, at last, the prejudice permeated the high and the low. This can be seen from the South African legislation affecting Indians. The Orange Free Staters have frankly stated that they hate the Asiatic because he is a successful trader. The Chambers of Commerce in the different States were the first movers. And they, of course, came out with the statements that we believed the Christians a natural prey, and that we believed our women to be soulless and were propagators of leprosy and syphilis and other diseases. The matters have now reached such a stage that for a good Christian gentleman it is as natural to see nothing unjust in the persecution of the Asiatic as it was in the olden days for the *bonafide* Christians to see nothing wrong or un-Christian in slavery. Mr. Henry Bale is a legislator in the Natal Assembly, a typical English gentleman, and is dubbed Bale the Conscientious because he is a converted Christian and takes a prominent part in religious movements and brings his conscience often into play on the floor of the Assembly House. Yet, this gentleman is one of the most powerful and uncompromising opponents of Indians, and gives his certificate that an annual poll-tax of £3 on a body of men who have been the mainstay of the Colony, and compulsory return of such men, are just and humane measures.

Our method in South Africa is to conquer this hatred by love. At any rate, that is our goal. We would often fall short of that ideal but we can adduce innumerable instances to show that we have acted in that spirit. We do not attempt to have individuals punished but as a rule, patiently suffer wrongs at their hands. Generally, our prayers are not to demand compensation for past injuries, but to render a repetition of those injuries impossible and to remove the causes. Our grievances have been laid before the Indian public in the same spirit. If we have quoted instances of personal injuries, that we have done not for the purpose of seeking compensation but for that of laying our position vividly before the public in India. We are trying to remove any causes that may be in us for such treatment. But we cannot succeed without the sympathy and support of the public men in India, and without strong representations from the Home and Indian Governments. The want of knowledge about India is so great in South Africa that the people would not even believe us if we said that India is not dotted by huts only. The work done on our behalf by the London *Times*, the British Committee[1] of the Congress and by Mr. Bhownaggree[2] and in India by *The Times of India*, has borne fruit already. Of course, the question of the position of the Indians has been treated as an Imperial question, and almost every statesman whom we have approached has expressed his full sympathy to us. We have letters of sympathy from both the Conservative and Liberal members of the House of Commons. The *Daily Telegraph* has also extended its support to us. When the Franchise Bill was first passed[3] and there was some talk of its disallowance, the public men and the newspapers in Natal said the Bill would be passed over and over again till Her Majesty's Government were tired. They rejected the British subject "humbug", and one paper went so far as to say that they would throw over their allegiance to the Queen if the Bill was disallowed. The Ministers openly declared that they would decline to

[1] Set up in London by the Indian National Congress in 1889, with Sir William Wedderburn as chairman. Dadabhai Naoroji was one of its members.

[2] Sir Mancherjee Merwanjee Bhownaggree (1851-1933), Indian Parsi barrister settled in England. Elected on the Unionist Party ticket, he was a member of Parliament for ten years. He was also a member of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress.

[3] This was on July 7, 1894. For Indian representations and petitions demanding withdrawal of the Bill, *vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Assembly", 28-6-1894

govern the Colony if the Bill was disallowed. This was the time when the writer of the "Colonial Affairs" in the London *Times* favoured the Natal Bill. But the *Thunderer,* when it dealt with the matter, specially changed its tone. The Colonial Secretary seemed to be decisive and the despatch with reference to the Transvaal Arbitration arrived in time. This changed the whole tone of the Press in Natal. They protested but they were a part and parcel of the British Empire. *The Natal Advertiser,* which at one time proposed the formation of an anti-Asiatic League, thus dealt with the Indian question in a leading article, dated the 28th February, 1895. After alluding to the then reported disallowance of the Franchise Bill and the resolution of the Mayoral Congress in the Cape Colony before referred to, the article goes on:

> The problem, therefore, when looked at as a whole from the imperial to the purely local standpoint, is a very large and complex one. But however prone localities may be to regard the subject simply from the local stanpoint, it should be apparent to all who wish to study the matter in all its bearings (the only way in which a sound and healthy judgment can be arrived at), that the wider or Imperial considerations must also be taken into account. And further, as regards the purely local aspect of the case, it is quite as necessary, and perhaps as difficult, to discover whether a comprehensive view of the position is being taken or whether imperfect opinions are being formed on one side or the other through the acceptance of only such data as prejudice or self-interest may find acceptable. The general opinion existing throughout South Africa, as regards Indian emigration, may be summed up in the words, "We don't want them".
>
> The first point to be weighed is this that, in belonging to the British Empire, we have to take whatever may be evil as well as whatever may be good as arising from that connection, provided, of course, it is inseparable therefrom. Now, as regards the destinies of India's population, it may be taken for granted that the Imperial Government will not readily permit of legislation in any British dependency which has for its avowed object the repulsion of India's surplus population from any part of the British dominions; or, to put it the other way, which embodies the principle, so far as the particular legislating State is concerned, that India's teeming and fast increasing millions must be confined, and ultimately smothered, within India itself. On the contrary, the desire of the British Government is to remove from India the possibilities of such congestion, and to thereby render it a prosperous and happy, instead of a dangerous and discontented, portion of the British Empire. If India is to be retained as an advantageous part of the Empire, then it is absolutely necessary that means shall be found for relieving it of much of its present population, and it may be taken to be a part of the

Imperial policy that India's surplus population is to be encouraged, rather than discouraged, to find fresh outlets in those other portions of the Empire which are in need of a labouring population. It will thus be seen that the question of coolie immigration into the British Colonies is one which reaches down to the deepest amelioration and salvation of India; it may even mean the inclusion or exclusion of that great possession in or from the British Empire. That is the Imperial aspect of the question, and is one which points directly to a desire on the part of the Imperial Government to do all in its power to prevent the raising, in other portions of the Empire, of barriers for the prevention of Indian immigration.

As regards the local aspect of Indian immigration, what has to be considered is whether and if so, how far, does this Imperial policy conflict with what is desirable for this particular locality? There are those who absolutely condemn Indian immigration into this Colony, but it is doubtful whether these have given full consideration on all the bearings of the case. In the first place, those who so oppose Indian immigration have to answer the question: What would this Colony have done without them in those departments of industry in which they have undoubtedly proved useful? There is unquestionably much that is undesirable about the coolie, but before his presence here is condemned as an unmixed evil, it has to be shown that the Colony would have been better without him. This, we think, would be somewhat difficult to prove. There can be no question that the coolie is the best fitted, under existing local conditions, for the field labour required in connection with the agriculture of the Colony. Such work can never be undertaken in this climate by white men; our natives show little disposition or aptitude for it. This being so, who is ousted by the presence of the coolie as an agricultural labourer? No one. The work had either to be done by him or left undone altogether. Again, the coolie is largely employed by Government especially on the railway. What is the objection to him there? It may be said he is taking the place of the white man there; but is he? There may be a few isolated cases in which this contention could afford to replace all the Indians employed in the Government service by white men. Further, the towns in Natal are almost entirely dependent for their supply of vegetables upon the coolies, who farm plots of ground in the vicinity. With whom does the coolie interfere in this direction? Certainly not with the white man. Our farmers, as a body, have not yet acquired a taste for kitchen gardening sufficient to keep the market fully supplied. Neither does he interfere with the native, who, being the incarnation of indolence, does not, as a rule, trouble about the cultivation of anything except mealies[1] for himself. Our own natives ought to have been our labouring class, but the fact has to be faced that, in this respect, they are almost a dead failure. Consequently, coloured labour of a more active and

[1] Maize or Indian corn

reliable kind had to be procured from some other source, and India has offered the necessary supply. The debt which the white man owes to these coloured labourers is this that they, by occupying the lowest stratum of society in those mixed communities of which they form a part, raise the white man one stratum higher right through the social scale than he otherwise would have occupied, had the menial offices been discharged by a European class. For instance, the white man, who is 'boss' over a gang of coolies, would have had himself to form one of the gang of labourers, had there been no black labourer. Again, the man who, in Europe, would have been that man's foreman, in this country develops into a master tradesman. And as in every other direction, by the presence of a black labouring class, the whites are set free to throw their efforts into higher planes than they could have done, had the majority of them had to devote their lives to the arduous labours of toilers of the lowest order. It will, therefore, probably yet be found that the removal of the drawbacks, at present incidental to the immigration of Indians into British Colonies, is not to be effected so much by the adoption of an obsolete policy of exclusion as by an enlightened and progressive application of ameliorating laws to those Indians who settle in them. One of the chief objections to Indians in that they do not live in accordance with European rules. The remedy for this is to gradually raise their mode of life by compelling them to live in better dwellings and by creating among them new wants, it will probably be found easier, because more in accord with the great onward movement of mankind, to demand to such settlers that they shall rise to their new conditions, than to endeavour to maintain the *status quo ante* by their entire exclusion.

Such articles (and they can be quoted by the dozen from the various newspapers) show that application of sufficient pressure from the Home Government can bring about a healthy change in the Indian policy of the Colonies, and that, even in the worst places, British love of justice and fair play can be roused. These two are the sheet-anchor of our hope. No amount of spreading information about India on our part can do any good without the much-needed application of the pressure.

The following article, from the pen of a veteran journalist in South Africa, shows also that there are men in South Africa who would rise above their surroundings and disclose the true British character:

It sometimes happens in life that men are called upon to decide decisively between the claims of justice and the claims of self. With men of honourable inclination, the task is, of course, a far heavier one than with men whose natures have long ago cast overboard any conscientious scruples with which they may have been endowed at the outset of their unlovely existence.

From men who will puff rotten companies at the very moment they are selling out and individuals of a like character, it is, of course, perfectly absurd to expect any other result than that self will predominate, but with the average commercial man, justice is more often the victor in the ethical conflict. Amongst the causes of these conflicts, as they affect South Africans generally and British Transvaalers in particular, is the question of the 'coolie traders', as our Indian and Arab fellow citizens are designated. It is the position of these merchants, for so they really are, which has aroused so much attention and which is still productive of no little interest and hostility to this day. And it is in considering their position that their rivals in trade have sought to inflict upon them, through the medium of the State, what looks, on the face of it, something very like an injustice for the benefit of self.

The outcry which was raised in the capital of the Transvaal against the coolie trader some little time ago is brought to the mind by occasional paragraphs in the morning papers regarding the doings of the Indian and Arab dealers.

In the face of such reminders as these, one may reasonably expect to be pardoned for referring, for a few moments, to a body of respectable, hard-working men, whose position is so misunderstood that their very nationality is overlooked, and a name labelled to them which tends to place them on an exceedingly low level in the estimation of their fellow creatures.

In the face, too, of financial operations, the success of which many of their detractors would envy one fails to understand the agitation which would place the operators in the same category as the half-heathen native and confine them to locations and subject them to the harsher laws by which the Transvaal Kaffir is governed. The impression, which is but too prevalent both in the Transvaal and this Colony, that the quiet and altogether inoffensive 'Arab' shopkeeper, and the equally harmless Indian, who carries his pack of dainty wares from house to house, is a 'coolie', is due largely to an indolent ignorance as to the race whence they sprang. When one reflects that the conception of Brahminism, with its poetic and mysterious mythology, took its rise in the land of the 'coolie trader', that in that land, twenty-four centuries ago, the almost divine Buddha taught and practised the glorious doctrine of self-sacrifice, and that it was from the plains and mountains of that weird old country that are derived the fundamental truths of the very language we speak, one cannot but help regretting that the children of such a race should be treated as the equals of the children of black heathendom and outer darkness. Those who, for a few moments, have stayed to converse with the Indian trader have been, perhaps, surprised to find they are speaking to a scholar and a gentleman. In the schools of Bombay, Madras, and even from under the very shadows of the Himalayas and from the plains of the Punjab, these unassuming individuals have drunk deep the springs of knowledge, it may be, unsuited to our requirements, foreign to our taste, and savouring too

much of the mythical to be of use in our practical lives, but, nevertheless, a knowledge the acquisition of which requires as much application, as much literary application, and a far more sensitive and poetic nature than is required in the highest schools of Oxford or Cambridge. The philosophy of India, obscured by the dust of ages and the traditions of generations, was taught with delight, when the ancestors of the Superior Boer and the Superior Englishman were content to find their highest pleasures in the pursuit of the bear and the wolf over the marshes and through the forests of their native lands. When these same ancestors has had no thought of a higher life, when self-preservation was their first law, and the destruction of their neighbour's village and the capture of his wife and infant their keenest enjoyment, the philosophers of India had grown weary with a thousand years' conflict with the problems of existence. And it is the sons of this land of light who are despised as coolies and treated as Kaffirs.

It is about time that those who cry out against the Indian merchant should have pointed out to them who and what he is. Many of his worst detractors are British subjects enjoying all the privileges and rights of membership in a glorious community. To them the hatred of injustice and the love of fair play is inherent, and when it affects themselves, they have a method of insisting upon their rights and liberties, whether under a foreign government or under their own. Possibly, it has never struck them that the Indian merchant is also a British subject and claims the same liberties and rights with equal justice. To say the very least of it, if we may be permitted to employ a phrase of Palmerston's days, it is very un-English to claim rights one would not allow to others. The right of trade as an equal privilege has, since the abolition of the Elizabethan monopolies, become almost a part of the English Constitution, and were anyone to interfere with that right, the privilege of British citizenship would very suddenly come to the front. Because the Indian is more successful in competition and lives on less than the English merchant, is the unfairest and weakest of arguments. The very foundation of English commerce lies in the fact of our being able to compete more successfully with other nations. Surely, it is Protection running to madness when English traders wish the State to intervene to protect them against the more successful operations of their rivals. The injustice to the Indians is so glaring that one is almost ashamed of one's countrymen in wishing to have these men treated as natives, simply because of their success in trade. The very reason that they have been so successful against the dominant race is sufficient to raise them above that degrading level. (*Cape Times*, 13-4-1889)

The question resolves itself into this: "May the British Indians when they leave India," in the words of the London *Times*, "have the same status before the law as other British subjects enjoy? May they or

may they not go freely from one British possession to another and claim the rights of British subjects in allied States?" Says the same journal again:

> The Indian Government and the Indians themselves believe that it is in Southern Africa that this question of their status must be determined. If they secure the position of British subjects in South Africa, it will be almost impossible to deny it to them elsewhere. If they fail to secure that position in South Africa, it will be extremely difficult for them to attain it elsewhere.

Thus, then, the decision of the question will affect not only the Indians at present settled in South Africa but the whole future emigration of Indians and, also, the position of Indian immigrants in other parts of Her Majesty's Dominions and allied States. In Australia they are endeavouring to pass laws to restrict , the influx of Indians in those parts. Temporary and local relief, while absolutely necessary for the cases now before the two Governments for consideration, will be of no avail, unless the whole question is decided once for all, for "the whole body is rotten and not parts only". Mr. Bhownaggree has questioned Mr. Chamberlain "whether he will take immediate steps to arrest legislation of this description by the Government of Natal and other parts of Her Majesty's Dominions in Africa". There may yet be laws and regulations besides what have been alluded to herein and which may not be known to us. Unless, therefore, all such past legislation is declared illegal and further legislation stopped, we have a very dismal outlook before us, for the struggle is unequal, and how long are we to go on troubling the Colonial Office and the Indian Government? *The Times of India* has been our advocate when we were almost without any. The British Committee of the Congress has always worked on our behalf. The powerful aid of the London *Times* has, by itself, raised us a step higher in the estimation of the South Africans. Mr. Bhownaggree has been incessant in his efforts on our behalf ever since he entered Parliament. We know we have the sympathy of the public bodies in India, but our object in laying our grievances specially before the Indian public is to enlist the very active sympathy of all the public bodies in India. That is my commission, and our cause is so great and just that I have no doubt I shall return to Natal with satisfactory result.

M. K. GANDHI

PS.

If any gentleman is anxious to study further the Indian question in South Africa and requires the various memorials referred to herein, an effort will be made to supply him with copies of the same.

M. K. GANDHI

The Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa : An Appeal to Indian Public

102. NOTES ON THE GRIEVANCES OF THE BRITISH INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

RAJKOT,
September 22, 1896

South Africa, for our purposes, consists of the two British Colonies of the Cape of Good Hope and Natal, the two Republics, viz., the South African Republic or the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, the Crown Colony of Zululand, the Chartered Territories and the Portuguese territories comprising Delagoa Bay or Lorenzo Marques and Beira.

NATAL

Natal is a British self-governing Colony enjoying Responsible Government since 1893 A.D. Before September of 1893, Natal was a Crown Colony having a Legislative Council of 12 elective and 4 executive members, with a Governor representing the Queen, a Constitution not very unlike the Indian Legislative Councils. In 1893, Responsible Government was granted, whereby an upper and a lower chamber were created. The upper chamber, called the Legislative Council, consists of 11 members nominated by His Excellency the Governor of the colony, and the lower chamber, styled the Legislative Assembly, consists of 37 members elected by the Colonists possessing the legal qualifications to be hereafter described. There is a movable ministry of five members based on the model of the British Cabinet. Sir John Robinson is the present Prime Minister and the Honourable Mr. Harry Escombe, Q.C., the present Attorney-General.

The Constitution Act provides that no Acts, which have for their object class legislation and which curtail the rights of non-European British subjects, shall have the force of law unless they are sanctioned

by Her Majesty. The Royal instructions to the Governor also include such prohibitory clauses.

Natal has an area of 20,851 square miles[1] and a European population of about 50,000, a native population of about 400,000, and an Indian population of about 51,000, according to the latest census. The 51,000 Indians include 30,000 free Indians, i.e., those that have finished their indentured service and are engaged in the Colony in various pursuits of life as household servants, petty farmers, vegetable hawkers, fruiterers, goldsmiths, artisans, petty storekeepers, schoolmasters, photographers, attorneys' clerks, etc., 16,000 who are at present serving their indenture, and 5,000 traders who came to the Colony on their own means and are either traders or shopkeepers' assistants, the trade consisting in soft goods suitable to the natives of South Africa, called Zulus or Kaffirs, hardware, soft goods and groceries suitable to the Indian population. The soft goods and groceries for the Indians are imported from Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. The free and indentured Indians come from Madras and Calcutta and are pretty equally divided. Indian emigration was resorted to when, as a member of the Legislative Assembly of Natal, Mr. Garland, says, "the existence of the Colony hung in the balance". The terms of the contract briefly are that the indentured man has to serve his employer for a period of 5 years, the monthly wages for the first year being £10[2] to be increased by £1[3] every succeeding year, with food, clothing and lodging during the period and the passage to Natal also paid by the employer. If, after the first five years, he serves in the Colony as a free labourer for another five years, he becomes entitled to a free passage back to India for himself, his wife and children, if any. The immigrants are imported to work on the sugar fields and tea estates and replace the Kaffirs who were found by the Colonists to be indifferent and unsteady. They are also largely employed by the Government on the railways and for the sanitation of the Colony. The Colonists at first assisted the sugar and tea industries of the Colony by granting Rs. [£?] 10,000 towards the cost of the importation of the Indian immigrants. Almost the first act of the

[1] The area of Natal in 1960 according to *Encyclopaedia Britannica* was 33, 578 sq. miles.

[2] 'Pounds' here is evidently a slip for 'shillings'.

[3] *ibid*

Responsible Government was to abolish this grant under the plea that the industries no longer required such support.

FIRST GRIEVANCE IN NATAL — FRANCHISE

The Royal Charter, dated the 15th July, 1850, provides that any adult male, not being a native of South Africa, possessing property to the value of £50 or who rents any such property of the yearly value of £10, shall be entitled to be placed on the Voters' Roll. There is a separate law governing the Native Franchise which requires, among other things, 12 years residence on the part of the native in a particular electoral district and exemption from the native law of the Colony.

Under the general franchise law of the Colony, i.e., the Royal Charter referred to above, the Indians as British subjects enjoyed full electoral rights till after 1893. In 1894, in the Second Parliament under the Responsible Government, an Act was passed, No. 25 of 1894, disqualifying persons of Asiatic extraction from having their names inserted in any Voters' List, exempting those whose names were then already rightly contained in any Voters' List. The preamble of the Act stated that such persons were not accustomed to the Franchise rights.

The real reason for passing such an Act was to lower the status of the Indian and gradually to bring him down to the level of the South African natives so that, in time to come, the respectable Indian may become an impossibility. A petition was presented to the Legislative Assembly combating the view that the Indians were not accustomed to representative institutions and asking for the withdrawal of the Bill, or an enquiry as to whether or not the Indians were fit to exercise the franchise. (Enclosure I, App. A)[1].

The petition was rejected. Another was sent to the Legislative Council when the Bill came before it. That too was rejected and the Bill was passed. (Enclosure I, App. B)[2].

It, however, required Her Majesty's sanction before it could come into force. The Indian community sent a memorial to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, protesting

[1] The enclosures mentioned in the text are not reproduced here. For petition to the Natal Assembly, *vide* "Petition to Natl Legislative Assembly", 28-6-1894

[2] *Vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Council", 4-7-1894 and "Petition to Natal Legislative Council", 6-7-1894

against the measure and requesting him either to disallow the measure or to institute an inquiry of the nature above indicated. The memorial was signed by nearly 9,000 Indians. (Enclosure I)[1].

A good deal of correspondence went on between Her Majesty's Government and the Natal Ministry. The result was that in the April of this year, the Franchise Act was withdrawn by the Natal Ministry and replaced by the following:

> No persons shall be qualified to have their names inserted in any list of electors who (not being of European origin) are natives or descendants in the male line of natives of countries which have not hitherto possessed elective representative institutions founded on the parliamentary franchise, unless they shall first obtain an order from the Governor-in-Council exempting them from the operation of this Act.

The measure also excepts those whose names are already rightly contained in any Voters' Lists.

A memorial[2] was presented to the Legislative Assembly, showing that India contained, in its Legislative Councils, "elective representative institutions founded on the parliamentary franchise" and that, therefore, the Bill was a harassing measure. (Enclosure II, App. A). Though our institutions cannot popularly be termed such as to satisfy the requirement of the above measure, it is respectfully submitted that legally they are so, and this is the opinion of the London *Times*, as also of an able jurist in Natal[3] (Enclosure III, p. 11). Mr. Chamberlain himself, in his despatch dated 12th September, 1895[4], signifying his inability to approve of the first Franchise Bill above referred to, in answer to the Natal Ministers' arguments, says, among other things:

> I also recognize the fact that the Natives of India do not possess representative institutions in their own country and that they themselves, in those periods of their history when they were exempt from European influence, have never set up any such system among them. (Enclosure IV)

A memorial[5] has been sent to Mr. Chamberlain (Enclosure II), and private advice from London states that the matter is engaging his attention. Mr. Chamberlain has already approved of the principle of

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Lord Ripon", 14-7-1894. where Gandhiji says he obtained over 10, 000 signatures for this petition.

[2] Dated April 27, 1896.

[3] *Vide* "London Diary", 12-11-1888

[4] The source has '1885', obviously a typographical mistake.

[5] Dated May 22, 1896, *vide* "Memorial to J. Chamberlain", 22-5-1896

this Bill which was submitted to him by the Ministers, before it was introduced into the Natal Parliament. (Enclosure IV). The Indians in South Africa, however, believe that the facts brought out in the memorial should induce Mr. Chamberlain to alter his views.

Too much stress cannot be laid on the fact that there can be no comparison between the condition of the Indians in India and that of those in South Africa. Here it is political persecution and very little class legislation. There it is class legislation pure and simple and degradation of the Indian to the level of a pariah.

The London *Times* has put the franchise question in this form, in dealing with the first bill above referred to:

> The question now put before Mr. Chamberlain is not an academic one. It is not a question of argument but of race feeling. We cannot afford a war of races among our own subjects. It would be as wrong for the Government of India to suddenly arrest the development of Natal by shutting all the supply of immigrants as it would be for Natal to deny the right of citizenship to British Indian subjects who, by years of thrift and good work in the Colony, have raised themselves to the actual status of citizens. (London *Times*, 27th June, 1896).

This article deals with the various arguments brought forward by the Colonists in support of disfranchisement of the Indians and shows that there is no question of swamping the European electors, because, out of nearly 10,000 electors, according to latest lists published, there are only 251 Indian electors and that there are very few Indians in the Colony who can command the necessary property qualifications (*see* Enclosure V[1]). The present Bill is meant merely to harass the Indian community and to involve them in endless litigation. (Enclosure II.)

SECOND GRIEVANCE — INDIAN IMMIGRATION

In the year 1893, a Commission consisting of Mr. Binns, a member of the Legislative Assembly of Natal, and Mr. Mason, the present Protector of Indian Immigrants in Natal, was sent by the Government of Natal to India in order to induce the Indian Government to consent to the following alterations in the terms of indenture entered into by the Indians at present and referred to above, that is to say:

[1] This enclosure contained the Viceroy's despatch referred to in the following pages.

(1) To raise the period of indenture from five years to an indefinite period, with a corresponding increase in wages up to twenty shillings per month.

(2) In the event of the Indian refusing to enter into such further indentures after the first five years' indenture, to compel him to return to India at the Colony's expense.

The present Viceroy, in his despatch to the Governor of Natal, says that, although personally he regrets that such a course should be desired by the Colonists, subject to the approval of the Home Government he would be prepared to consent to the alterations on the understanding that the breach of the clause about compulsory return should never become a criminal offence. (Enclosure V.)

On the lines of the report of the Commission that visited India, the Natal Government, in the year 1895, introduced the Indian Immigration Law Amendment Bill, which provides, amongst other things, for the indefinite period of indenture or the compulsory return of the immigrants, and further provides that any such immigrant failing to enter into the further terms of indenture or to return to India shall be liable to take out an annual licence costing £3 yearly. Thus it would appear that this Bill goes further than the terms laid down in the Viceroy's despatch above alluded to. Memorials[1] were presented to both the Houses in Natal taking exception to this Bill but to no purpose. (Enclosure V, App. A and B.) A memorial has also been addressed to Mr. Chamberlain as well as to the Indian Government praying either that the Bill should be disallowed or that further Indian immigration to Natal should be stopped. (Enclosure VI.)[2] These prayers have been strongly supported by the London *Times* in a leading article dated 3-5-95 [96?].

Over ten years ago, a Commission was appointed by the then Governor of Natal to report upon various matters connected with Indian immigration. Evidence has been cited from this report to show that, at that time, the Commissioners as well as the best men of the day, including the present Attorney-General, thought that any such measure would be a cruel wrong to the Indians and a disgrace to the British name.

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Assembly" and "Petition to Natal Legislative Council", 26-6-1895

[2] *Vide* "Memorial to J. Chamberlain", 11-8-1895

The memorial is still engaging Mr. Chamberlain's and the Indian Government's attention. (Enclosure VI.)

THIRD GRIEVANCE — THE CURFEW

There is a Law in Natal (No. 15 of 1869), which provides that, in the boroughs, no 'coloured person', unless he can give a good account of himself or unless he can produce a pass from his employer, shall be out at night after 9 o'clock. This Law is, perhaps, not absolutely unnecessary, but its working is often oppressive. Respectable Indians, such as schoolmasters and others, have often been locked up in horrible dungeons for having ventured out after 9 p.m., no matter on what business.

FOURTH GRIEVANCE — THE PASS LAW

The Law provides that every Indian can be asked to produce a pass. It is really meant to detect indentured Indians who have deserted their masters, but is also used as an engine of oppression towards the Indians generally. The Indian community in Natal have not yet moved with regard to the last two matters, but they may be brought under the general grievances and can be used to show the tendency of the Colonists to make it as uncomfortable as possible for the Indians in Natal. As for the working of these two Laws, see Enclosure III, pp. 6 and 7.[1]

ZULULAND

This country is a Crown Colony governed by the Governor of Natal in the Queen's name. The Natal ministry or the Governor of Natal as such has nothing to do with Zululand. There is a small European and a large native (Kaffir) population in it. There are townships established in Zululand. The township of Melmoth was the first to be established. In that township, in the year 1888, the Indians bought *erven*, i.e., specified pieces of land, worth about £2,000. The township of Eshowe was proclaimed in 1891 and that of Nondweni in 1896. The regulations for the purchase of *erven* in both these township are the same and they provide that only persons of European birth and descent shall be approved of as occupiers of *erven* or sites, (Enclosure VII.)[2]

[1] *Vide* "London Diary", 12-11-1888

[2] The enclosure is not available.

A memorial[1] protesting against these regulations was presented to the Governor of Zululand last February, who declined to interfere.

Thereupon a memorial[2] was sent to Mr. Chamberlain, and the question is now engaging his attention. These regulations, it will be noticed, go much further than what the Colonists in the self-governing Colonies have been allowed to do, and follow the policy of total exclusion adopted by the Orange Free State.

Zululand gold mining laws make it criminal for an Indian to buy or possess native gold.

CAPE COLONY

The Colony of the Cape of Good Hope is, like the Colony of Natal, a responsibly governed Colony with a Constitution similar to Natal's. Only, the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council contain a greater number of members, and the franchise qualifications are different, viz., the property qualification is occupation for 12 months of a building worth £75, the salary qualification is £50 per annum. The person claiming to be registered must be able to sign his name and write his address and occupation. This Act was passed in 1892 and was really passed to check the Indian and the Malay vote. There would be no objection on the part of the Indian community to such educational qualifications being imposed or property qualifications being increased in Natal. This Colony contains an area of 276,320 square miles and a total population of about 1,800,000 persons, of whom not more than 400,000 are Europeans. The Indian population of the Colony would be roughly 10,000, consisting of traders, hawkers and labourers. They are to be found chiefly in the ports, viz., Port Elizabeth, East London and Cape Town and also in the mines in Kimberley.

All the information relating to the disabilities placed on the Indians is not available. In 1894, the Parliament passed a Bill authorizing the East London Municipality to frame bye-laws prohibiting the Indians from walking on the foot-paths and compelling them to live in specified locations. No special representation on this head has been made to Mr. Chamberlain from South Africa. But the matter was touched upon by the Indian deputation that waited upon Mr. Chamberlain last year.

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Natal Governor", 26-2-1896
[2] *Vide* "Memorial to J. Chamberlain", 11-3-1896

In the various parts or districts of the Cape Colony, it is extremely difficult for an Indian to get trading licences. In many cases the magistrates simply refuse the licences, declining to give reasons for so doing. The Magistrates are within their rights in declining to give reasons, but it has been found almost invariably that the licences have been granted to Europeans when they have been withheld from the Indian. The following is the position of the Indians in East Griqualand, a district in the Cape Colony, according to *The Natal Mercury* dated 3rd March, 1896:

> An Arab named Ismail Suliman erected a store in East Griqualand, paid customs duty upon goods and applied for a licence which the magistrate refused. Mr. Attorney Francis on the Arab's behalf (as the Indians are sometimes called in South Africa) appealed to the Cape Government, who upheld the Magistrate and have issued instructions that no coolies or Arabs are to have trading licences in East Griqualand and one or two that have licences are to be closed up.

This is outdoing the Transvaal.

CHARTERED TERRITORIES

These territories include Mashonaland and Matabeleland. About 100 Indian waiters and labourers have settled there. A few traders have also gone, but they are refused licences to trade, in the first instance. The law being in favour of the Indians, one enterprising Indian last year succeeded in securing a trading licence through the Superior Court at Cape Town.

The Europeans in the Chartered Territories have now applied for an alteration of the law so that the Indians may, henceforth, be prevented from getting trading licences in those territories. The newspapers in South Africa say that the Cape Government favour such an alteration.

THE TRANSVAAL OR THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC

This is an independent republic governed by the Dutch or the Boers. There are two chambers called the Volksraad, with an executive Government with the President at the head. It contains an area of about 113,642 square miles and a white population of 119,228. Its black population is said to be 653,662. The chief industry of the Republic is gold mining in Johannesburg, the largest town in the Transvaal. The total Indian population may be roughly put down at 5,000. They are traders, shopkeepers' assistants, hawkers, cooks,

waiters or labourers, mostly settled in Johannesburg and Pretoria, the capital of the Republic. Of the traders, there are nearly 200, whose liquidated assets would amount to nearly £100,000. Some of these traders have branches in other parts of the world whose existence mainly depends upon their Transvaal businesses. There are nearly 2,000 hawkers in the Republic who buy goods and hawk them about. About 1,500 are employed as general servants in European hotels or houses. This estimate was formed in 1894. The numbers have since considerably increased in every department.

The Transvaal is subject to the Queen's suzerainty. There are two Conventions between the Governments of England and the Transvaal.

Article 14 of the London Convention of 1884 and Article 26 of the Pretoria Convention of 1881[1] provide as follows:

> All persons, other than natives of South Africa, conforming themselves to the laws of the Transvaal State will have full liberty with their families to enter, travel or reside in any part of the Transvaal State. They will be entitled to hire or possess houses, manufactories, warehouses, shops, premises. They may carry on their commerce either in person or by any agents they may think fit to employ. They will not be subject, in respect of their persons and property, in respect of their commerce and industry, to any taxes, whether general, or local, other than those which are or may be imposed upon the Transvaal citizens.

This Convention, thus, completely secures the trading and property rights of British Indian. In January 1885, the Transvaal Government wanted so to interpret the word "natives", occurring in the Art. 14 of the Convention, as to include Asiatics. Sir Hercules Robinson, the then High Commissioner for South Africa, after consultation with Sir Henry de Villiers, the Chief Justice of the Colony, considered that the interpretation put upon the word "native" by the Transvaal Government could not be sustained and "that Asiatics were persons other than natives".

Negotiations then went on between the Transvaal Government and the Home Government with a view to an alteration in the Convention so as to except the Indians from the privileges secured to

[1] Following the British defeat at Majuba this Convention gave the Transvaalers a qualified independence and was thus a prelude to the London Convention of 1884 which granted the Transvaal full internal autonomy except in its relations with foreign States.

"all persons other than natives". Sir Hercules Robinson was favourably disposed towards the Transvaal Government and, in response to his suggestion, received the following reply from Lord Derby[1] under date 19th March 1885:

> I have carefully considered your suggestion as to the amendment of the Convention, and if you are of opinion that it would be preferable and more satisfactory to the Government of the South African Republic to proceed as you propose, Her Majesty's Government will be willing to amend the Convention as suggested. It seems to deserve consideration, however, whether it would be more correct for the Volksraad to legislate in the proposed sense, having received an assurance that Her Majesty's Government will not desire to insist upon any such construction of the terms of the Convention as would interfere with reasonable legislation in the desired direction.

In accordance with Lord Derby's suggestion, the Transvaal Volksraad passed bye-law No. 3 of 1885, which applies to all Indians and other coloured people, and provides that none of them could obtain the franchise, that they could not be owners of fixed property, that such coloured people, who settle in the Republic for the purpose of trading, must be separately registered within 8 days after the day of their arrival and that they should pay a registration fee of £25. Any contravention of this law subjects the defaulter to a fine of from £30 to £100 or, in default, from 1 to 6 months' imprisonment. It also provides that the Government shall have the right to point out to such coloured people streets, wards and locations for habitation. In 1886, this law was amended so as to reduce the £25 fee to £3 and the other sections were kept as they were. That now is the law with regard to the Indians in the Transvaal. After the law was passed, the Indians sent representations, telegraphic and otherwise, to the Indian and the Home Governments protesting against the Law 3 of 1885 and its amendment and pointing out that they were in direct violation of the London Convention. This brought out some representations from Lord Knutsford[2] on behalf of the Indians. There has been voluminous correspondence between the two Governments with regard to the interpretation of the word 'habitation'. The Home Government insisted that the word 'habitation' meant residence only. The Transvaal Government insisted that it included not only residence but trading stores also. The ultimate result was that the whole became

[1] Edward Henry Smith Stanley (1826-93), 15th Earl of Derby; Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1882-85

[2] Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1887-92

"confusion worse confounded", and it was agreed between the two Governments that the question of the validity of the Law 3 of 1885 and its amendment, as also interpretation, should be submitted to arbitration. The Chief Justice of the Orange Free State was selected as the sole arbitrator who gave his award last year and decided that the Transvaal Government was justified in passing Law 3 of 1885 and its amendments, but he left undecided the question of interpretation and held that, if the parties could not agree to interpretation, the Courts of the Transvaal were the proper tribunals to decide that question. (Enclosure VIII.)

The Indians in the Transvaal sent memorials[1] to the Home and Indian Governments. Mr. Chamberlain has given his decision and has reluctantly accepted the award of the arbitrator, but sympathizes with the Indians and terms them "a peaceable, law-abiding, meritorious body of persons" whose undoubted industry, intelligence and indomitable perseverance perhaps will suffice to overcome any obstacles which may now face them in the pursuit of their avocations, and reserves to himself the liberty, later on, to make friendly representations to the Transvaal Government.

The question rests there at present. Although the award has been accepted, it will have been seen from what has preceded that there are many questions still undecided. Where will the Indians be now in the Transvaal? Will their stores be closed up? If so, what will 200 or 300 traders do to earn a living? Will they have to trade also in locations? This, however, does not complete the list of disabilities in the Transvaal.

Act 25 (10th January 1893), section 38, says:

> That it is not permitted to natives and other coloured people to travel in the carriage intended for the Whites, viz., the first and second class.

The most respectable Indian, spotlessly dressed, cannot, as of right, travel first or second class on the Transvaal Railways. He is huddled together with the natives of all sorts and conditions in a third-class compartment. This is a cause of very great inconvenience to the Indian community in the Transvaal.

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Lord Ripon", 5-5-1895 and "Petition to Lord Elgin", 5-5-1895

There is a system of passes in the Transvaal which requires that any Indian, like the native, should take a shilling travelling pass when he moves about from one place to another.

In 1895, the Commandos Treaty was entered into between Her Majesty's Government and the Transvaal Government, exempting the British subjects from compulsory military service. This treaty came up before the Transvaal Volksraad for ratification in the same year.

The Volksraad ratified the treaty with the modification or reservation that the words "British subjects" shall mean "Whites" only. The Indians promptly telegraphed to Mr. Chamberlain and a memorial was also sent. (Enclosure IX.)[1] The question in now engaging his attention.

The London *Times* gave a very sympathetic and strong leading article on the subject. (Weekly Edn. 10-1-'96.)

The Gold Mining laws of Johannesburg make it criminal for the Indians to possess native gold.

The curfew prevails also in the Transvaal, absolutely unnecessarily, so far as the Indians are concerned.

It may be as well to state here that those who wear the Memon costume are not, as a rule, molested under this Law, for certain reasons. (Enclosure III, p. 6.)

There is a footpath bye-law in Johannesburg and there are instructions issued to the police in Pretoria to the effect that the Indians should not be allowed to walk on the footpaths. A graduate of the Madras University was violently kicked off a footpath in 1894.

ORANGE FREE STATE

This is an independent Dutch Republic without any suzerain power to the Queen.

The Commission is very similar to that of the Transvaal. Mr. Steyn is the President of the Republic and Bloemfontein is the capital. Its area is 72,000 square miles[2] and the total population 207,503. Of these the Europeans number 77,716, and the coloured population 129,787. There are a few Indians employed there as general servants. In 1890, there were about 3 Indians stores in that Republic having liquidated assets over £9,000. These were driven out and their stores

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to J. Chamberlain", 26-11-1895

[2] The area of Orange Free State in 1960 according to *Encyclopaedia Britannica* was 49, 866 sq. miles.

were closed up without any compensation. They were given a year's notice to clear. Representations were made to the British Government without any avail.

The Law of 1890, Chapter XXXIII, which is entitled the Law to prevent the inrush of the Asiatic coloured persons, prevents any Indian from remaining in that country for more than 2 months, unless he gets the permission from the President of Republic, who cannot consider the application to reside before 30 days have elapsed after the presentation of the application and other ceremonies have been performed. The applicant can, however, on no account hold fixed property in the State or carry on any mercantile or farming business. The President may or may not, according to the state of things, grant such mutilated permission to reside. Any Indian resident moreover is subject to an annual poll-tax of £10. The first contravention of the section relating to mercantile or farming business renders the delinquent liable to a fine of £25 or 3 months' imprisonment with or without hard labour. For all subsequent contraventions, the penalty is to be each time doubled. (Enclosure X.)[1]

This practically finishes the list of grievances.

These notes are not intended to replace the various enclosures. It is respectfully submitted they are necessary for a proper study of the memorials and pamphlets which contain valuable information collected from various sources.

The whole question has been thus put by the London *Times*:

> May the British Indians, when they leave India, have the same status before the law as other British subjects enjoy? May they or may they not go freely from one British possession to another and claim the rights of British subjects in allied States?

Again:

> The Indian Government and the Indians themselves believe that it is in Southern Africa that this question of their status must be determined. If they secure the position of British subjects in South Africa, it would be almost impossible to deny it to them elsewhere. If they fail to secure that position in South Africa, it will be extremely difficult for them to attain it elsewhere.

The question has been treated as an Imperial question and all parties without distinction have supported the British Indians in South Africa.

[1] This probably was the text of the Law of 1890.

The following are the dates of the articles dealing with the question in the London *Times* :

28th June 1895	*Weekly*	*Edition*
3rd August 1895	”	”
13th September 1895	”	”
6th September 1895	”	”
10th January 1896	”	”
7th April 1896	*The Times*	
20th March 1896	*Weekly Edition*	
27th January 1896	*The Times*	

In the Portuguese territories of Delagoa Bay there are no grievances. They serve as a favourable contrast (Enclosure III).

GANDHI

From a photostat of a printed copy: S.N. 1145

103. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

September 26, 1896

I stand before you, today, as representing the signatories to this document[2], who pose as representative of the 100,000 British Indians at present residing in South Africa—a country which has sprung into sudden prominence owing to the vast gold fields of Johannesburg and the late Jameson Raid[3]. This is my sole qualification. I am a person of few words. The cause, however, for which I am to plead before you this evening is so great that I venture to think that you will overlook the faults of the speaker or, rather, the reader of this paper. The interests of 100,000 Indians are closely bound up with the interests of the 300 millions of India. The question of the grievances of the Indians in South Africa affects the future well-being and the future

[1] The meeting was held under the auspices of the Bombay Presidency Association at the Framji Cowasji Institute. Sir Pherozeshah Mehta presided. The printed text no longer being available, what follows has been collated from the reports of the speech published in *The Times of India* and *Bombay Gazette*.

[2] The reference is to “The Credentials”.

[3] So called after Leander Starr Jameson who led it, it was actually inspired by Rhodes, the Prime Minister of the Cape Colony, and had the tacit support, in the initial stages, of the British Government. Jameson led the raid into the Transvaal on December 29, 1895, and four days later surrendered. The Jameson raid was among the incidents that led to the Boer War.

immigration of Indians of India. I, therefore, humbly venture to think that this question should be, if it is not already, one of the questions of the day in India. With these preliminary remarks, I shall now place before you, as shortly as possible, the whole position of affairs in South Africa as affecting the British Indians in that country.

South Africa, for our present purposes, is divided into the following States: the British Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, the British Colony of Natal, the British Colony of Zululand, the Transvaal or the South African Republic, the Orange Free State, the Chartered Territories or Rhodesia, and the Portuguese Territories of Delagoa Bay and Beira.

In South Africa, apart from the Portuguese Territories, there are nearly 100,000 Indians, of whom the greater part belong to the labouring class, drawn from the labouring population of Madras and Bengal, speaking the Tamil or Telugu and the Hindi languages respectively. A small number belongs to the trading class, chiefly drawn from the Bombay Presidency. A general feeling throughout South Africa is that of hatred towards Indian, encouraged by the newspapers and connived at, even countenanced by, the legislators. Every Indian, without exception, is a coolie in the estimation of the general body of the Europeans. Storekeepers are "coolie store-keepers". Indian clerks and schoolmasters are "coolie clerks" and "coolie schoolmasters". Naturally, neither the traders nor the English-educated Indians are treated with any degree of respect. Wealth and abilities in an Indian count for naught in that country except to serve the interests of the European Colonists. We are the "Asian dirt to be heartily cursed". We are "squalid coolies with truthless tongues". We are "the real canker that is eating into the very vitals of the community". We are "parasites, semi-barbarous Asiatics". We "live upon rice and we are chock-full of vice". Statute-books describe the Indians as belonging to the "aboriginal or semi-barbarous races of Asia", while, as a matter of fact, there is hardly one Indian in South Africa belonging to the aboriginal stock. The Santhals of Assam will be as useless in South Africa as the natives of that country. The Pretoria Chamber of Commerce thinks that our religion teaches us to "consider all women as soulless and Christians a natural prey". According to the same authority, "the whole community in South Africa is exposed to the dangers engendered by the filthy habits and immoral practices of these people." Yet, as a

matter of fact, there has happened not a single case of leprosy amongst the Indians in South Africa. And Dr. Veale of Pretoria thinks that "the lowest class Indians live better and in better habitations and with more regard to sanitation than the lowest class Whites", and he, furthermore, puts on record that "while every nationality had one or more of its members at some time in the lazaretto, there was not a single Indian attacked."

In most parts of South Africa, we may not stir out of our houses after 9 p.m.— unless we are armed with passes from our employer. An exception, however, is made in favour of those Indians who wear the memon costume. Hotels shut their doors against us. We cannot make use of the tram-cars unmolested. The coaches are not for us. Between Barberton and Pretoria in the Transvaal, and Johannesburg and Charlestown, when the latter were not connected by railway, the Indians, as a rule, are and were not allowed to sit inside the coaches, but are and were compelled to take their seats by the side of the driver. This, on a frosty morning in the Transvaal, where winter is very severe, is a sore trial apart from the indignity which it involves. The coach-travelling involves long journeys and, at stated intervals, accommodation and food are provided for passengers. No Indian is allowed accommodation or a seat at the dining table in these places. At the most, he can purchase food from behind the kitchen-room and manage the best way he can. Instances of untold miseries suffered by the Indians can be quoted by hundreds. Public baths are not for the Indians. The high schools are not open to the Indians. A fortnight before I left Natal, an Indian student applied for admission to the Durban High School and his application was rejected. Even the primary schools are not quite open to the Indians. An Indian Missionary schoolmaster was driven out of an English Church in Verulam, a small village in Natal. The Government of Natal have been pining to hold a "coolie conference", as it has been officially called, in order to secure uniformity in Indian legislation throughout South Africa, and in order to present a united front against the blandishments of the Home Government on behalf of the Indian. Such is the general feeling against the Indian in South Africa, except the Portuguese Territories, where he is respected and has no grievance apart from the general population. You can easily imagine how difficult it must be for a respectable Indian to exist in such a country. I am sure, gentlemen, that if our President went to South Africa, he would find it, to use a colloquial phrase, "mighty hard" to secure

accommodation in a hotel, and he would not feel very comfortable in a first-class railway carriage in Natal, and, after reaching Volksrust, he would be put out unceremoniously from his first-class compartment and accommodated in a tin compartment where Kaffirs are packed like sheep. I may, however, assure him that if he ever came to South Africa, and we wish our great men did come to these uncomfortable quarters, if only to see and realize the plight in which their fellow-countrymen are, we shall more than make up for these inconveniences, which we cannot help, by according him a right royal welcome, so united, so enthusiastic we are, at any rate for the present. Ours is one continual struggle against a degradation sought to be inflicted upon us by the Europeans, who desire to degrade us to the level of the raw Kaffir whose occupation is hunting, and whose sole ambition is to collect a certain number of cattle to buy a wife with and, then, pass his life in indolence and nakedness. The aim of the Christian Governments, so we read, is to raise people whom they come in contact with or whom they control. It is otherwise in South Africa. There, the deliberately expressed object is not to allow the Indian to rise higher in the scale of civilization but to lower him to the position of the Kaffir; in the words of the Attorney-General of Natal, "to keep him for ever a hewer of wood and drawer of water", "not to let him form part of the future South African nation that is going to be built"; in the words of another legislator in Natal, "to make the Indian's life more comfortable in his native land than in the Colony of Natal". The struggle against such degradation is so severe that our whole energy is spent in resistance. Consequently, we have very little left in us to attempt to make any reforms from within.

I must now come to the particular States and show how the Governments in the different States have combined with the masses to persecute the Indians to make "the British Indian an impossibility". The Colony of Natal, which is a self-governing British Colony with a Legislative Assembly consisting of 37 members elected by the voters, and a Legislative Council consisting of twelve members nominated by the Governor, who comes from England as the Queen's representative, has a European population of 50,000, a native or Zulu population of 400,000, and an Indian population of 51,000. Assisted immigration of Indians was decided upon in 1860, when, in the words of a member of the Legislative Assembly of Natal, "the progress and almost the existence of the Colony hung in the balance", and when the Zulu was found to be too indolent to work. Now the chief industries and

sanitation of the whole Colony of Natal are entirely dependent upon the Indian labour. The Indians have made Natal "the garden of South Africa". In the words of another eminent Natalian, "Indian immigration brought prosperity, prices rose, people were no longer content to grow or sell produce for a song". Of the 51,000 Indians, 30,000 are those that have served out their indenture and are now variously engaged as free labourers, gardeners, hawkers, fruiterers, or petty traders. A few have, also, by their industry, educated themselves into fitness for the posts of schoolmasters, interpreters and general clerks in spite of adverse circumstances; 16,000 are at present serving their indenture, and about 5,000 are traders and merchants or their assistants who came first on their own means. These latter belong to the Bombay Presidency and most of them are Memon Mahomedans. A few are Parsees also, notable among whom is Mr. Rustomjee of Durban, who in his generosity would do credit to Sir Dinshaw[1]. No poor man goes to his doors without having his inner man satisfied. No Parsee lands on the Durban shores but is sumptuously treated by Mr. Rustomjee. And even he is not free from molestation. Even he is a coolie. Two gentlemen are ship-owners and large landed proprietors. But they are coolie ship-owners and their ships are called "coolie ships".

Apart from the common interest that every Indian feels in every other Indian, the three chief Presidencies are specially interested in this question. If the Bombay Presidency has not sent an equally large number of her sons to South Africa, she makes up for that by the greater influence and wealth of her sons who have really constituted themselves the guardians of the interests of their less fortunate brethren from the sister Presidencies. And it may be that in India also Bombay will lead in endeavouring to help the Indians in South Africa out of their hardships.[2]

The preamble of the Bill of 1894 stated that Asiatics were not accustomed to representative institutions. The real object of the Bill, however, was not to disfranchise Indian because they were not fit, but because the European Colonists wanted to degrade the Indians and to assert their right to enter into class legislation, to accord a treatment to

[1] The reference is to Sir Dinshaw M. Petit.

[2] The Bombay Presidency Association later forwarded a memorial to the Secretary of State for India, calling for redress of the grievances of the South African Indians.

the Indians different from that accorded to the Europeans. This was patent not only from the speeches made by the members on the second reading of the Bill but also from the newspapers. They also said it was expedient to disfranchise the Indian under the plea that the Indian vote might swamp the European. But even this plea is and was untenable. In 1891, there were only 251 Indian voters as against nearly 10,000 European voters. The majority of Indians are too poor to command property qualifications. And the Indians in Natal have never meddled in politics and do not want political power. All these facts are admitted by *The Natal Mercury,* which is the Government organ in Natal. I must refer you to my little pamphlet[1] published in India for corroborative extracts. We memorialized the local Parliament and showed that the Indians were not unacquainted with the representative institutions. We were, however, unsuccessful. We then memorialized Lord Ripon, the then Secretary of State of the Colonies. After two years' correspondence, the Bill of 1894 was withdrawn this year and has been replaced by another which, while not so bad as the once repealed, is bad enough. It provides that "the natives or descendants, in the male line, of natives of countries which have not hitherto possessed elective representative institutions founded on the parliamentary franchise, shall not be placed on any Voters' List unless they shall first obtain an order from the Governor-in-Council exempting them from the operation of the Act." It also exempts from its operation those persons that are rightly contained in any Voters' List. This Bill was submitted to Mr. Chamberlain for approval before being introduced in the Legislative Assembly. In the papers published, Mr. Chamberlain seems to be of opinion that India does not possess elective representative institutions founded on the parliamentary franchise. With the greatest deference to these views, we submitted to Mr. Chamberlain in a memorial, for we did not succeed before the Natal Parliament, that for the purposes of the Bill, that is, legally speaking, India did and does possess elective representative institutions founded on the parliamentary franchise. Such is the opinion expressed by the London *Times,* such is the opinion of the newspapers in Natal and such is also the opinion of the members who voted for the Bill, as also of an able jurist in Natal. We are very anxious to know the opinion of the legal luminaries here. The object in passing such a Bill is to play a game of 'Toss up' to harass the Indian community.

[1] The Green Pamphlet

Many members of the Natal Assembly, otherwise hostile to the Indian, thought that the Bill would involve the Indian community in endless litigation and cause a ferment among them.

The Government organ says in effect: "We can have this Bill and no other. If we succeed, that is, if India is declared a country not possessing the institutions referred to in the Bill, well and good. If not, then, too, we lose nothing. We shall try another, we shall raise the property qualification and impose an educational test. If such a Bill is objected to, even then we need not be afraid, for, where is the cause? We know that the Indians can never swamp us." If I had the time, I could give you the exact words which are much stronger. Those who take a special interest can look them up from the Green Pamphlet. Thus, then, we are a proper subject for vivisection under their Natal Pasteur's deadly scalpel and knife. The only difference is that the Paris Pasteur did it with a view to do good. Our Natal Pasteur does it for the sake of amusement to be derived from the operation out of sheer wantonness. This memorial is now under consideration by Mr. Chamberlain.

I cannot lay too much stress on the fact that the position in India is entirely different from the position in Natal. Eminent men in India have asked me the question, "Why do you want the franchise in Natal when you have only a visionary franchise in India, if, at all?" Our humble reply is that in Natal it is not we who want the franchise, it is the Europeans who want to deprive us of the right we have been enjoying in Natal. That makes all the difference. The deprivation will involve degradation. There is no such thing in India. The representative institutions in India are slowly, but surely, being liberalized. Such institutions are being gradually closed against us in Natal. Again, as the London *Times* puts it, "The Indian in India has precisely the same franchise as the Englishman enjoys." Not so in Natal. What is sauce for the European goose is not sauce for the Indian gander there. Moreover, the disfranchising in Natal is not a political move but a merely commercial policy—a policy adopted to check the immigration of the respectable Indian. Being a British subject, he should be able to claim the same privileges as the other British subjects enjoy in a certain British State or Colony, just as an Indian going to England would be able to avail himself of the institutions of England to as full an extent as any Englishman. The fact, however, is that there is no fear of the Indian vote swamping the

European; what they want is class legislation. The class legislation with regard to franchise is only the thin end of the wedge. They contemplate depriving the Indians of the Municipal franchise also. A statement to that effect was made by the Attorney-General, in reply to the suggestion made by a member that the Indians should be deprived of the municipal franchise, too, at the time the first Franchise Bill was introduced. Another member suggested that, while they were dealing with the Indian question, Civil Service in the Colony should be closed to the Indians.

In the Cape Colony also, which has a Government exactly similar to Natal's, the condition of the Indians is growing worse. Lately, the Cape Parliament has passed a Bill which authorizes the East London Municipality to frame bye-laws prohibiting Indians from walking on the footpaths and compelling them to live in specific locations which, as a rule, are unhealthy swamps unfit for human habitation and certainly useless for purposes of trade. In Zululand, a Crown Colony and, therefore, directly under the control of the Home Government, regulations have been passed with regard to the townships of Nondweni and Eshowe to the effect that the Indians cannot own or acquire land in those townships, although, in that of Melmoth in the same country, the Indians own property worth £2,000. In the Transvaal, which is a Dutch Republic, the seat of the Jameson Raid and the El Dorado of the gold-hunters of the Western World, there are over 5,000 Indians, many of whom are merchants and storekeepers. Others are hawkers, waiters and household servants. The Convention[1] between the Home Government and the Transvaal Government secures the trading and property rights of "all persons other than natives" and under it the Indians were trading freely up to 1885. In that year, however, after some correspondence with the Home Government, the Transvaal Volksraad passed a law which took away from the Indians the right of trading, except in specified locations, and owning landed property, and imposed a registration fee of £3 on every Indian intending to settle in that country. I must again beg to refer the curious to the Green Pamphlet for the whole history of the protracted negotiations which culminated in the matter being entrusted to an arbitrator. The decision of the arbitrator being virtually against the Indians, a memorial was addressed to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, with the result that

[1] The London Convention of 1884

the award of the arbitrator has been accepted, though the justice of the complaint of the Indians has been fully admitted. The system of passes prevails in the Transvaal in a very cruel form. While, in other parts of South Africa, it is the railway officials who make the lot of the 1st and 2nd class passengers on the railway intolerable, the Transvaal people have gone one better in that there the law prohibits the Indians from travelling 1st or 2nd class. They are, irrespective of position, huddled together in the same compartment with the natives of South Africa. The Gold Mining laws make it criminal for the Indians to buy native gold. And if the Transvaal Government are allowed to have their own way, they would, while treating them as mere chattels, compel the Indians to render military service. The thing is monstrous on the face of it, for, as the London *Times* puts it, "we might now see a levy of British Indian subjects driven at the point of the Transvaal bayonets against the bayonets of British troops." The Orange Free State, the other Dutch Republic in South Africa, beats the record in showing its hatred towards Indians. It has, to put it in the words of its chief organ, simply made the "British Indian an impossibility by classing him with the Kaffir". It denies the Indian the right not only to trade, farm or own landed property, but even to reside there, except under special, insulting circumstances.

Such, very shortly, is the position of the Indians in the various States in South Africa. The same Indian, who is so much hated in the various States above mentioned, is very much liked and respected only 300 miles from Natal, i.e., in Delagoa Bay. The real cause of all this prejudice may be expressed in the words of the leading organ in South Africa, namely, the *Cape Times*, when it was under the editorship of the prince of South African journalists, Mr. St. Leger:

> It is the position of these merchants which is productive of no little hostility to this day. And, it is in considering their position that their rivals in trade have sough to inflict upon them, through the medium of the State, what looks, on the face of it, something very like an injustice for the benefit of self.

Continues the same organ :

> The injustice to the Indians is so glaring that one is almost ashamed of one's countrymen in wishing to have these men treated as natives (i.e., of South Africa), simply because of their success in trade. The very reason that they have been so successful against the dominant race is sufficient to raise them above that degrading level.

If this was true in 1889, when the above was written, it is doubly so now, because the Legislatures of South Africa have shown phenomenal activity in passing measures restricting the liberty of the Queen's Indian subjects.

To stem the tide of this opposition against us, we have formed an organization[1] on an humble scale so that we may take the necessary steps to have our grievances removed. We believe that much of the ill-feeling is due to want of proper knowledge about the Indians in India. We, therefore, endeavour, so far as the populace is concerned, to educate public opinion by imparting the necessary information. With regard to the legal disabilities, we have tried to influence the English public opinion in England and the public opinion here by placing our position before it. As you know, both the Conservatives and the Liberals have supported us in England without distinction. The London *Times* has given eight leading articles to our cause in a very sympathetic spirit.[2] This alone has raised us a step higher in the estimation of the Europeans in South Africa, and has considerably affected for the better the tone of the newspapers there.

I may state our position a little more clearly as to our demands. We are aware that the insults and indignities, that we are subjected to at the hands of the populace, cannot be directly removed by the intervention of the Home Government. We do not appeal to it for any such intervention. We bring them to the notice of the public, so that the fair-minded of all communities and the Press may, by expressing their disapproval, materially reduce their rigour and, possibly, eradicate them ultimately. But we certainly do appeal, and we hope not vainly, to the Home Government for protection against reproduction of such ill-feeling in Colonial legislation. We certainly beseech the Home Government to disallow all the Acts of the Legislative bodies of the Colonies restricting our freedom in any shape or form.

And this brings me to the last question, namely, how far can the Home Government interfere with such action on the part of the Colonies and the allied States. As for Zululand, there can be no question, since it is a Crown Colony directly governed from Downing Street through a Governor. It is not a self-governing or responsibly-governed Colony as the Colonies of Natal and the Cape of Good Hope are. With regard to the latter, Clause 7 of the Constitution Act of Natal enacts that Her Majesty may disallow any Act of the local

[1] The Natal Indian Congress

[2] *Vide* "Application for Enrolment as Advocate", 16-11-1891

Parliament within two years, even after it has become law having received the Governor's assent. That is one safeguard against oppressive measures by the Colonies. The Royal instructions to the Governor enumerate certain Bills which cannot be assented to by the Governor without Her Majesty's previous sanction. Among such are Bills which have for their object class legislation. I shall venture to give an instance in point. The Immigration Law Amendment Bill referred to above has been assented to by the Governor, but it can come into force only after her Majesty has sanctioned it. It has not yet been sanctioned. Thus, then, it will be noticed that Her Majesty's intervention is direct and precise. While it is true that the Home Government is slow to interfere with the Acts of the Colonial Legislatures, there are instances where it has not hesitated to put its foot down on occasions less urgent then the present one. As you are aware, the repeal of the first Franchise Bill was due to such wholesome intervention. What is more, Colonists are ever afraid of it. And as a result of the sympathy expressed in England and the sympathetic answer given by Mr. Chamberlain to the deputation that waited on him some months ago, most of the papers in South Africa, at any rate in Natal, have veered round or think that the Immigration and other such Bills will not receive the Royal assent. As to the Transvaal there is the Convention. As to the Orange Free State, I can only say that it is an unfriendly act on the part of a friendly State to shut her doors against any portion of Her Majesty's subjects. And as such, I humbly think it can be effectively checked.

Gentlemen, the latest advice from South Africa show that the Europeans there are actively canvassing the ruin of the Indians. They are agitating against the introduction of Indian artisans and what not.[1] All this should serve as a warning and an impetus. We are hemmed in on all sides in South Africa. We are yet infants. We have a right to appeal to you for protection. We place our position before you, and now the responsibility will rest to a very great extent on your shoulders, if the yoke of oppression is not removed from our necks. Being under it we can only cry out in anguish. It is for you, our elder and freer brethren, to remove it. I am sure we shall not have cried out in vain.

*The Times of Indi*a, 27-9-1896, and *Bombay Gazette*, 27-9-1896

[1] The Europeans held mass meetings in Durban and protested against the Indian Immigration Trust Board's decision to permit the importation of Indian artisans to work on the Tongaat Sugar Estates in Natal. A 'European Protection Association' and a 'Colonial Patriotic Union' were set up to resist what was described as the 'Asiatic Invasion'.

104. LETTER TO F. S. TALEYARKHAN

C/O MESSRS REVASHANKER JAGJIVAN & CO.,
CHAMPAGALI,
BOMBAY,
October 10, 1896[1]

DEAR MR. TALEYARKHAN[2],

I am sure you would be good enough to excuse me for my inability to write to you earlier and send you the names of the chief men of South Africa. The reason is that I have been very busy with domestic business. I am writing this at midnight.

I leave for Madras by tomorrow evening's Mail (Sunday). I expect to stay there not more than a fortnight. If I am successful there I would thence proceed to Calcutta and return to Bombay within a month from today. I would then take the first boat to Natal.

The latest papers received from Natal show that there is still much fight ahead. And that alone is sufficient to absorb the attention of two men of your activity if full justice is to be done to the cause. I sincerely hope that you will be able to see your way clear to join me in Natal. I am sure it is a cause worth fighting for.

If you wish to write to me you may write to me at the above address and your letters will be redirected to me at Madras. I do not know at which hotel I shall put up there. The Natal hotels have made me quite nervous.

I remain,
Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original. Courtesy : R.F.S. Taleyarkhan

[1] The source has 10-8-1896, obviously a slip, for Gandhiji mentions his plan to leave for Madras "by tomorrow evening's mail (Sunday)". He left for Madras on October 11, which was a Sunday.

[2] A Bombay pleader who had been called to the bar in the same year as Gandhiji and had returned to India in the same steamer with him.

105. A LETTER

BUCKINGHAM HOTEL,
MADRAS,
October 16, 1896

DEAR SIR,

I beg to send per book-post the draft memorial with appendices. I am sorry I could not get it ready last Saturday. I am more sorry because it is not written in a nice hand. That I could not very well help.

Of course it will depend upon the Hon'ble Mr. Mehta whether the accompanying Memorial or rather letter or a simple covering letter is sent.

In any case I beg to draw your attention to the fact that the first Franchise memorial, the Immigration Law Amendment memorial and the Transvaal Arbitration memorial have been disposed of. The commandos, the Zululand and the 2nd Franchise memorials are still engaging Mr. Chamberlain's attention. The grievances in the Orange Free State and the Cape Colony as well as the 9 o'clock rules and the pass law in both the Transvaal and the colony of Natal and the railway law and the foot-path bye-law have not been yet made the subject of a memorial. And these are matters to which the attention of the Home Government in my humble opinion ought to be drawn.

I beg to thank you for the letters you sent me through the Editor of the *Madras Standard.*

I remain,
Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original : Pherozeshah Mehta Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

106. LETTER TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"

MADRAS,
October 17, 1896

THE EDITOR
The Times of India

SIR,

I shall be obliged to you if you will be good enough to find space for the following in your influential paper.

The Natal Agent-General has, it appears, told Reuter, with reference to my pamphlet on the grievances of the British Indians in South Africa, that it is not true to say that the railway and tramway officials treat the Indians as beasts, that the fact that the indentured Indians do not avail themselves of the return passage is the best answer to my pamphlet, and that the Indians are not denied justice in the law-courts. In the first place, the pamphlet deals with the grievances of the Indians in the whole of South Africa. In the second place, I adhere to the statement that the railway and tram-car official treat the Indians as beasts in Natal. If there are exceptions, they prove the rule. I have been witness myself to not a few such cases. What is it if it is not being treated as a beast, to be removed three times during a single night journey from one compartment to another, to suit European passengers? To see Indians, apparently respectable, kicked, pushed, and sworn at by the station-master is not an extraordinary sight on the railway stations. The Western station in Durban is the dread of the Indians, so over-polite is the station-master at that station, and this is not the only station where the Indians are kicked about like footballs. Here is an independent testimony from *The Natal Mercury* (24-11-'93) :

> On our railway, we have noticed on more than one occasion that coloured passengers are not by any means killed with civility; and, although it would be unreasonable to expect that the White employees of the N.G.R. should treat them with the same deference as is accorded to European passengers, still, we think it would be in no way derogatory to their dignity if the officials were a little more *suaviter in modo* when dealing with the coloured travellers.

On the tram-cars the Indians fare no better. Spotlessly dressed and well-behaved Indians have been pushed about from one place to

another to suit the fancy of European passengers. Indeed, as a rule, the tram-car officials compel "Sammy" to go "upstairs". Some would not allow them to take front seats. Respect is out of the question. An Indian official was compelled to stand on the tram-car board, although there was ample room to accommodate him. Of course, he was addressed as "Sammy" in the peculiarly offensive tone prevalent in Natal.

My statement has been before the public in Natal for the last two years, and the *first* contradiction comes *now* from the Agent-General! Why so late? As to the unwillingness of the Indians to avail themselves of the return passage, I beg to say, with due deference to the Agent-General, that the statement has been repeated *ad nauseam* in the Press, and the official dignity now given to it will not enable it to prove more than it actually can. At the most it can prove that the lot of the indentured Indian cannot be very unhappy; and that Natal is a very good place for such Indians to earn their livelihood. I am prepared to admit both. That does not, moreover, disprove the existence of the Colonial legislation restricting the freedom of the Indians in various ways. That does not disprove the existence of the terrible ill-feeling towards the Indians in the Colony. If the Indians remain in Natal, it is in spite of such treatment. It proves their marvellous forbearance, which has been so eloquently praised by Mr. Chamberlain in his despatch in connection with, to use a South African phrase, "the coolie arbitration".

The latest papers received from South Africa, unfortunately for the Natal Government, lend additional weight to my statement that the Indian is a cruelly persecuted being in South Africa. In August last, there was a meeting of European artisans, held to protest against the intended introduction of Indian artisans. The speeches made would form interesting reading for the Agent-General of Natal. The Indians were called "black vermin". A voice in the meeting said, "We will go to the Point[1] and stop them." A picnic party of European children used Indian and Kaffir boys as targets and shot bullets into their faces, hurting several inoffensive children. So deep-seated is the hatred that children have begun instinctively to look down upon Indians. Moreover, it should be remembered that the return passage story has nothing to do with the trading class, who go to Natal on their own account, and who feel the hardships the most. The thing is, one fact is stronger than a hundred statements of belief. And the pamphlet

contains very little of my own. It bristles with facts. Mainly taken from European sources, to prove my assertion as against the naked statement of Mr. Peace the Agent-General's opinion. If Mr. Peace's statement is all that is to be said in reply to the pamphlet, then there remains much to be done before Natal can become a tolerably comfortable place for Indians. As to the Indians receiving justice in the law-courts, I do not wish to say much. I have never stated that the Indians do not get justice in the law-courts, nor am I prepared to admit that they get it at all times and in all courts.

Sir, I am not given to exaggerate matters. You have asked for an official inquiry; we have done the same. And if the Natal Government are not afraid of unpleasant revelations, let there be such an inquiry as soon as possible. And I think I am safe in promising that much more will be proved than is mentioned in the pamphlet. I have given therein only those instances which can be proved most easily. Sir, our position is very precarious, and we will need your active support, which has been so liberally given to us till now, yet for a long time to come. The Immigration Law Amendment Bill, which you and your contemporaries condemned last year in such forcible language, has received the Royal assent, as appears from the papers received this week. To remind your readers, the Bill raises the period of indenture from the original period of five years to an indefinite period and, in default of re-indenture after the completion of the first five years, makes it compulsory for the Indian to return to India, of course, at the employer's expense, and, in case of non-compliance with that term of his contract, renders the defaulter liable to an annual poll-tax of £3, nearly half a year's earnings on the indenture scale. This Bill was, at the time it was passed, unanimously pronounced to be an iniquitous measure. Even the Natal papers were doubtful whether the Bill would receive the Royal sanction. Yet the Bill has been promulgated and it came into force on the 8th August.

Publicity is our best and perhaps the only weapon of defence. "Our grievances," says one of our sympathizers, "are so serious that they have only to be known in order to be removed." I have now to beseech you and your contemporaries to express your opinion with regard to this action on the part of the Colonial Secretary. The Colonial Office, we thought, was our safe resting-place. We may yet have to be undeceived. We have prayed for suspension of State-aided

immigration to Natal if the Bill could not be vetoed.[1] That prayer has been supported by the public. May we now rely upon the public to renew their support in our fresh efforts to have that prayer granted?

Yours, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Times of India, 20-10-1896

107. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

BUCKINGHAM HOTEL,
MADRAS,
October 18, 1896

PROFESSOR GOKHALE
POONA

SIR,

I promised to leave with Mr. Sohoni some further papers in connection with the Indian question in South Africa. I am sorry I forgot all about it. I beg now to send them per book post and hope they will be of some use.

We very badly need a committee of active, prominent workers in India for our cause. The question affects not only South African Indians but Indians in all parts of the world outside India. I have no doubt you have read the telegram about the Australian Colonies legislating to restrict the influx of Indian immigrants to that part of the world. It is quite possible that legislation might receive the Royal sanction. I submit that our great men should without delay take up this question. Otherwise within a very short time there will be an end to Indian enterprise outside India. In my humble opinion that telegram might be made the subject of a question in the Imperial Council[2] at Calcutta as well as in the House of Commons. In fact, some enquiry as to the intention of the Indian Government should be made immediately.

Seeing that you took very warm interest in my conversation I thought I would venture to write the above.

I remain,
Sir,
Yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original: S.N. 3716

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Council",26-6-1895
[2] The Viceroy's Legislative Council, of which Gokhale was a member

108. LETTER TO F. S. TALEYARKHAN

BUCKINGHAM HOTEL,
MADRAS,
October 18, 1896

DEAR MR. TALEYARKHAN,

I have your important letter for which I thank you.

Your inquiry is certainly very pertinent. And you may depend upon it that I shall answer it most frankly.

I start with the assumption that we work in partnership. Starting on your own account at once will be out of the question.

There are cheques lying in my safe at Durban for about £300, the retainer[1] for 1897, ending 31st July. These I propose to withdraw from the partnership to pay liabilities incurred here and if possible to pay the expenses that are now being incurred in connection with my office. I say if possible, because the balance may not cover the expenses at Durban.

If past experience is any guide for the purpose, then I think I am safe in saying that the joint earnings for the first six months will be at the rate of £70 per month. As against that I place the joint expenses at £50 per month, i.e., if we share the same house. That would leave a clear profit of £120 to be divided equally between us after six months. This is the lowest estimate. And I should expect to earn that amount single-handed doing the Indian work side by side. It would not surprise me however if we earned £150 per month.

This much I can promise. You should pay your own passage to Natal. Your expenses of admission will be paid out of the office. The expenses of your board and lodging also will be defrayed out of the office earnings. That is to say, if there is any loss during the six months' trial it shall be borne by me. On the other hand if there are any profits you share them.

Thus at the end of six months if you do not gain in money you will have gained considerably in experience of a different kind from that available in India. You will have realized the position of our countrymen in that part of the world and you will have seen a *new*

[1] The reference is to the professional fees Gandhiji received from Indian merchants in respect of their personal legal work.

country. I have no doubt that your connection in Bombay is such that a six months' absence from Bombay would not mar your future career there if you are disappointed in Natal. The six months' loss in Bombay will be requited by what I have stated above.

In any case, I cannot be too plain in saying that no one in our position should go to South Africa with a view to pile money. You should go there with a spirit of self-sacrifice. You should keep riches at an arm's length. They may then woo you. If you bestow your glances on them, they are such a coquette that you are sure to be slighted. That is my experience in South Africa.

As for work, apart from pecuniary considerations, I promise that there will be more than sufficient to feed your activity—that too legal work.

Boarding together might present a slight difficulty. If you could manage with vegetarian food, I could place on the table most palatable dishes cooked both in the English as well as the Indian style. If, however, that be not possible, we shall have to engage another cook. At any rate that cannot be an insurmountable difficulty. I trust I have stated the position clearly. If there are any points requiring elucidation you have only to mention them. I do hope you will not allow pecuniary considerations to come in your way. I am sure you will be able to do much in South Africa—more indeed than I may have been instrumental in doing.

I have been seeing here the great men. *The Madras Times* has given its full support and it came out with a rattling good leading article on Friday last. *The Mail* has promised it. The meeting[1] probably comes off on Friday. After the meeting I go to Calcutta and thence probably to Poona. Professor Bhandarkar has promised his full support and I think he can do some good. I halted for a day at Poona on my way here.

I think I wrote to you that the Immigration Bill has received the Royal assent. (Events follow in such quick succession that I forget them soon.) This is an unexpected and terrible blow. I am now renewing the prayer for suspension of State-aided immigration. The Natal Agent-General's diplomatic contradiction, about which you

[1] The meeting that Gandhiji addressed on October 29; *vide* "Letter to F. S. Taleyarkhan",10-10-1896

must have read in the papers, shows the necessity of the agitation in London also. There I am positive you can do much more than I can.

It will be a very good thing if you could accompany me to Natal. I may mention that if the s.s. *Courland* is available by that time I might secure you a free passage.

I remain,
yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]
I received your letter only today.

M. K. G.

From the original. Courtesy: R. F. S. Taleyarkhan

109. REMARKS IN VISITORS' BOOK

October 26, 1896

I had the honour to visit this excellent institution.[1] I was highly delighted with it. Being a Gujarati Hindu myself, I feel proud to know that this institution was started by Gujarati gentlemen. I wish the institution a brilliant future which I am sure it deserves. I only wish that such institutions will crop up all over India and be the means of preserving the Aryan religion in its purity.

The Hindu, 28-10-1896

110. SPEECH AT MEETING, MADRAS[2]

October 26, 1896

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,

I am to plead before you this evening for the 100,000 British Indians in South Africa, the land of gold and the seat of the late Jameson Raid. This document[3] will show you that I have been deputed to do so by the signatories to it, who profess to represent the 100,000 Indians. A large majority of this number are people from Madras and Bengal. Apart, therefore, from the interest that you would take in them as Indians, you are specially interested in the matter.

[1] The Hindu Theological High School

[2] The meeting, held in Pachaiyappa's Hall, was organized by the Mahajana Sabha.

[3] *Vide* "The Credentials", Vol1. "The Credentials"

South Africa may, for our purposes, be divided into the two self-governing British Colonies of Natal and the Cape of Good Hope, the Crown Colony of Zululand, the Transvaal or the South African Republic, the Orange Free State, the Chartered Territories and the Portuguese Territories comprising Delagoa Bay and Beira.

South Africa is indebted to the colony of Natal for the presence of the Indian population there. In the year 1860, when, in the words of a member of the Natal Parliament, "the existence of the Colony hung in the balance", the Colony of Natal introduced indentured Indians into the Colony. Such immigration is regulated by law, is permissible only to few favoured States, e.g., Mauritius, Fiji, Jamaica, Straits Settlements, Damarara and other States, and is allowed only from Madras and Calcutta. As a result of the immigration, in the words of another eminent Natalian, Mr. Saunders:

> Indian Immigration brought prosperity, prices rose, people were no longer content to grow or sell produce for a song, they could do better.

The sugar and tea industries, as well as sanitation and the vegetable and fish supply of the Colony, are absolutely dependent on the indentured Indians from Madras and Calcutta. The presence of the indentured Indians, about sixteen years ago, drew the free Indians in the shape of traders, who first went there with a view to supply the wants of their own kith and kin; but afterwards found a very valuable customer in the native of South Africa, called Zulu or Kaffir. These traders are chiefly drawn from the Bombay Memon Mahomedans and, owing to their less unfortunate position, have formed themselves into custodians of the interests of the whole Indian population there. Thus, adversity and identity of interests have united in compact body the Indians from the three Presidencies, and they take pride in calling themselves Indians rather than Madrasees or Bengalees or Gujaratees, except when it is necessary to do so. That, however, by the way.

These Indians have now spread all over South Africa. Natal, which is governed by a Legislative Assembly consisting of 37 members elected by the voters, a Legislative Council represents the 11 members, nominated by the governor who represents the Queen, and a movable Ministry consisting of 5 members, contains a European population of 50,000, a native population of 400,000 and an Indian population of 51,000. Of the 51,000 Indians, about 16,000 are at present serving their indenture, 30,000 are those that have completed their indenture and are now variously engaged as domestic servants,

gardeners, hawkers and petty traders, and about 5,000 are those who emigrated to the Colony of their own account and are either traders, shopkeepers, assistants or hawkers. A few are, also, schoolmasters, interpreters and clerks.

The self-governing Colony of the Cape of Good Hope has, I believe, an Indians population of about 10,000, consisting of traders, hawkers and labourers. Its total population is nearly 1,800,000, of whom not more than 400,000 are Europeans. The rest are natives of the country and Malaya.

The South African Republic of the Transvaal, which is governed by two elective Chambers called the Volksraad and an Executive with the President at its head, has an Indian population of 5,000, of whom about 200 are traders with liquidated assets amounting to nearly £100,000. The rest are hawkers and waiters or household servants, the latter being men from this Presidency. Its White population is estimated at roughly 120,000 and the Kaffir population at roughly 650,000. This Republic is subject to the Queen's suzerainty. And there is a Convention[1] between Great Britain and the Republic which secures the property, trading and farming rights of all persons other than natives of South Africa, in common with the citizens of the Republic.

The other States have no Indian population to speak of, because of the grievances and disabilities, except the Portuguese territories which contain a very large Indian population and which do not give any trouble to the Indians.

The grievances of the Indians in South Africa are twofold, i.e., those that are due to popular ill-feeling against the Indians and, secondly, the legal disabilities placed upon them. To deal with the first, the Indian is the most hated being in South Africa. Every Indian without distinction is contemptuously called a"coolie". He is also called"Sammy"," Ramasammy", anything but"Indian". Indian schoolmasters are called"coolie schoolmasters". Indian storekeepers are"coolie storekeepers". Two Indian gentlemen from Bombay, Messrs Dada Abdulla and Moosa Hajee Cassim, own steamers. Their steamers are "coolie ships".

There is a very respectable firm of Madras traders by name, A. Colandaveloo Pillay & Co. They have built a large block of buildings

[1] The reference is to the London Convention of 1884.

in Durban; these building are called “coolie stores”, and the owners are “coolie owners”. And I can assure you, gentlemen, that there is as much difference between the partners of that firm and a “coolie” as there is between anyone in this hall and a coolie. The railway and tram officials, in spite of the contradiction that has appeared in official quarters which I am going to deal with presently, I repeat, treat us as beasts. We cannot safely walk on the foot-paths. A Madrasi gentleman, spotlessly dressed, always avoids the foot-paths of prominent streets in Durban for fear he should be insulted or pushed off.

We are the“Asian dirt”to be“heartily cursed”, we are “chock-full of vice”and we “live upon rice”, we are “stinking coolie” living on“the smell of an oiled rag”, we are “ the black vermin”, we are described in the Statute books as“ semi-barbarous Asiatics, or persons belonging to the uncivilized races of Asia”. We “breed like rabbits” and a gentleman at a meeting lately held in Durban said he was sorry we could not be shot like them. There are coaches running between certain places in the Transvaal. We may not sit inside them. It is a sore trial, apart from the indignity it involves and contemplates, to have to sit outside them, either in deadly winter morning, for the winter is severe in the Transvaal, or under a burning sun, though we are Indians. The hotels refuse us admission. Indeed, there are cases in which respectable Indians have found it difficult even to procure refreshments at European places. It was only a short time ago, that a gang of Europeans set fire to an Indian store in a village called Dundee in Natal, doing some damage, and another gang threw burning crackers into the Indian stores in a business street in Durban.

This feeling of intense hatred has been reproduced into legislation in the various States of South Africa restricting the freedom of Indians in many ways. To begin with, Natal, which is the most important from an Indian point of view, has, of late, shown the greatest activity in passing Indian legislation. Till 1894, the Indians had been enjoying the franchise equally with the Europeans under the general franchise law of the Colony, which entitles any adult male, being a British subject, to be placed on the Voters’ List, who possesses immovable property worth £50 or pays an annual rent of £10. There is a separate franchise qualification for the Zulu. In 1894, the Natal Legislature passed a Bill disfranchising Asiatics by name. We resisted it in the local Parliament, but without any avail. We them memorialized the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and, as a result,

that Bill was, this year, withdrawn and replaced by another which, though not quite so bad as the first one, is bad enough. It says that no natives of countries (not being of European origin) which have not hitherto possessed elective representative institutions, founded on the parliamentary franchise, shall be placed on the Voters' Roll unless they shall first obtain an exemption from the Governor-in-Council. This Bill excepts from its operation those whose names are already rightly contained in any Voters' List. Before being introduced, it was submitted to Mr. Chamberlain, who has approved of it. We have opposed it on the ground that we have such institutions in India, and that, therefore, the Bill will fail in its objects if it is to disfranchise the Asiatics and that, therefore, also it is a harassing piece of legislation and is calculated to involve us in endless litigation and expense. This is admitted on all hands. The very members who voted for it thought likewise. The Natal Government organ[1] says in effect:

> We know India has such institutions and therefore the Bill will not apply to the Indian. But we can have that Bill or none. If it disfranchises Indians, nothing can be better. If it does not, then too we have nothing to fear! For the Indian can never gain political supremacy and, if necessary, we can soon impose an educational test or raise the property qualifications which, while disfranchising Indians wholesale, will not debar a single European from voting.

Thus, the Natal legislature is playing a game of "Toss up" at the Indians' expense. We are a fit subject for vivisection under the Natal Pasteur's deadly scalpel and knife, with this difference between the Paris Pasteur and the Natal Pasteur that, while the former indulged in vivisection with the object of benefiting humanity, the latter has been indulging in it for the sake of amusement out of sheer wantonness. The object of this measure is not political. It is purely and simply to degrade the Indians; in the words of a member of the Natal Parliament: "To make the Indian's life more comfortable in his native land than in Natal"; in the words of another eminent Natalian: "To keep him for ever a hewer of wood and drawer of water". The very fact that at present there are only 251 Indian, as against nearly 10,000 European, voters shows that there is no fear of the Indian vote swamping the European. For a fuller history of the question, I must refer you to the Green Pamphlet. The London *Times*, which has uniformly supported us in our troubles, dealing with the franchise

[1] The reference is to *The Natal Mercury*.

question in Natal, thus puts it, in its issue of the 27th day of June of this year:

> The question now put before Mr. Chamberlain is not an academic one. It is not a question of argument but of race feeling. We cannot afford a war of races among our own subjects. It would be as wrong for the Government of India to suddenly arrest the development of Natal by shutting all supply of immigrants, as it would be for Natal to deny the right of citizenship to British Indian subjects who, by years of thrift and good work in the Colony, have raised themselves to the actual status of citizens.

If there is any real danger of the Asiatic vote swamping the European, we should have no objection to an educational test being imposed or the property qualifications being raised. What we object to is class legislation and the degradation which it necessarily involves. We are fighting for no new privilege in opposing the Bill. We are resisting the deprivation of the one we have been enjoying.

In strict accordance with the policy of degrading the Indian to the level of a raw Kaffir and, in the words of the Attorney-General of Natal, "that of preventing him from forming part of the future South African nation that is going to be built", the Natal Government, last year, introduced their Bill to amend the Indian Immigration Act which I regret to inform you, has received the Royal sanction in spite of our hopes to the contrary. This news was received after the Bombay meeting[1], and it will, therefore, be necessary for me to deal with this question at some length, also because this question more immediately affects this Presidency and can be best studied here.

Up to the 18th day of August, 1894, the indentured immigrants went under a contract of service for five years in consideration for a free passage to Natal, free board and lodging for themselves and their families, and wages at the rate of ten shillings per month for the first year, to be increased by one shilling every following year. They were also entitled to a free passage back to India if they remained in the Colony another five years as free labourers. This is now changed and, in future, the immigrants will have either to remain in the Colony for ever under indenture, their wages increasing to 20 shillings at the end of the 9th year of indentured service, or to return to India or to pay an annual poll-tax of £ 3 sterling, equivalent to nearly half a years' earnings on the indentured scale. A Commission consisting of two

[1] Held on September 26; *vide* "Speech At Public Meeting, Bombay", 26-9-1896

members was sent to India in 1893 by the Natal Government to induce the Indian Government to agree to the above alterations with the exception of the imposition of the poll-tax. The present Viceroy, while expressing his reluctance, agreed to alteration subject to the sanction of the Home Government, refusing to allow the Natal Government to make the breach of the clause about compulsory return a criminal offence. The Natal Government have got over the difficulty by the poll-tax clause.

The Attorney-General, in discussing that clause, said that, while an Indian could not be sent to gaol for refusing to return to India or to pay the tax, so long as there was anything worth having in his hut it will be liable to seizure. We strongly opposed that Bill in the local Parliament and failing there, sent a memorial to Mr. Chamberlain, praying either that the Bill should be disallowed or emigration to Natal should be suspended.

The above proposal was mooted 10 years ago and it was vehemently opposed by the most eminent Colonists in Natal. A Commission was then appointed to inquire into various matters concerning Indians in Natal. One of the Commissioners, Mr. Saunders, says in his additional report:

> Though the Commission has made no recommendation on the subject of passing a law to force Indians back to India at the expiration of their term of service unless they renew their indentures, I wish to express my strong condemnation of any such idea, and I feel convinced that many who now advocate the plan, when they realize what it means, will reject it as energetically as I do. Stop Indian emigration and face results, but don't try to do what I can show is a great wrong.
>
> What is it but taking the best of our servants (the good as well as the bad) and then refusing them the enjoyment of the reward, forcing them back (if we could, but we cannot) when their best days have been spent for our benefit? Where to? Why, back to face prospect of starvation from which they sought to escape when they were young. Shylock-like, taking the pound of flesh, and Shylock-like we may rely on meeting Shylock's reward.
>
> The Colony can stop Indian immigration, and that, perhaps, far more easily and permanently than some 'popularity seekers' would desire. But force men off at the end of their service, this the Colony cannot do. And I urge on it not to discredit a fair name by trying.

The Attorney-General of Natal, who introduced the Bill under discussion, expressed the following views while giving his evidence before the Commission:

> With reference to time-expired Indians, I do not think that it ought to be compulsory on any man to go to any part of the world save for a crime for which he is transported. I hear a great deal of this question; I have been asked again and again to take a different view, but I have not been able to do it. A man is brought here, *in theory with his own consent, in practice very often without his consent,* he gives the best five years of his life, he forms new ties, forgets the old ones, perhaps establishes a home here, and he cannot, according to my view of right and wrong, be sent back. Better by far to stop the further introduction of Indians altogether than to take what work you can out of them and order them away. The Colony, or part of the Colony, seems to want Indians but also wishes to avoid the consequences of Indian immigration. The Indian people do no harm as far as I know: in certain respects they do a great deal of good. I have never heard a reason to justify the extradition of a man who has behaved well for five years.

And Mr. Binns, who came to India as one of the Natal Commissioners to induce the Indian Government to agree to the above-mentioned alterations, gave the following evidence before the Commission ten years ago:

> I think the idea which has been mooted, that all Indians should be compelled to return to India at the end of their term of indenture, is most unfair to the Indian population and would never be sanctioned by the Indian Government. In my opinion, the free Indian population is a most useful section of the community.

But, then, great men may change their views as often and as quickly as they may change their clothes, with impunity and even to advantage. In them, they say, such changes are a result of sincere conviction. It is a thousand pities, however, that, unfortunately for the poor indentured Indian, his fear or, rather, the expectation, that the Indian Government will never sanction the change was not realized.

The London *Star* thus gave vent to its feelings on reading the Bill:

> These particulars are enough to throw light upon the hateful persecution to which British Indian subjects are being subjected. The new Indian Immigration Law Amendment Bill, which virtually proposes to reduce Indians to a state of slavery, is another example. The thing is a monstrous wrong, an insult to British subjects, a disgrace to its authors, and a slight upon ourselves. Every Englishman is concerned to see that the commercial greed of the South African trader is not permitted to wreak such bitter injustice upon men who, alike by proclamation and by statute, are placed upon an equality with ourselves before the Law.

The London *Times*, also, in supporting our prayer, has compared the state of perpetual indenture to a "state perilously near to slavery". It also says:

> The Government of India has one simple remedy. It can suspend indentured immigration to South Africa as it has suspended such immigration to foreign possessions until it obtains the necessary guarantees for the present well-being and the future status of the immigrants. . . . It is eminently a case for sensible and conciliatory action on both sides. . . . But the Indian Government may be forced to adopt measures in connection with the wider claim now being urged by every section of the Indian community and which has been explicitly acknowledged by Her Majesty's Government at home, namely, the claim of the Indian races to trade and to labour with the full status of British subjects throughout the British Empire and in allied States.

The letters from Natal, informing me of the Royal sanction to this Bill, ask me to request the Indian public to help us to get emigration suspended. I am well aware that the idea of suspending emigration requires careful consideration. I humbly think that there is no other conclusion possible in the interests of the Indians at large. Emigration is supposed to relieve the congested districts and to benefit those who emigrate. If the Indian, instead of paying the poll-tax, return to India, the congestion cannot be affected at all. And the returned Indians will rather be a source of difficulty than anything else, as they must necessarily find it difficult to get work and cannot be expected to bring sufficient to live upon the interest of their capital. It certainly will not benefit the emigrants as they will never, if the Government can possibly help it, be allowed to rise higher than the status of labourers. The fact is that they are being helped on to degradation. Under such circumstances, I humbly ask you to support our prayer to suspend emigration to Natal unless the new law can be altered or repealed.

You will naturally be anxious to know the treatment of the Indians while under indenture. Of course, that life cannot be bright under any circumstances; but I do not think their lot is worse than the lot of the Indians similarly placed in other parts of the world. At the same time, they, too, certainly come in for a share of the tremendous colour prejudice. I can only briefly allude to the matter here and refer the curious to the Green Pamphlet, wherein it has been more fully discussed. There is a sad mortality from suicides on certain estates in Natal. It is very difficult for an indentured Indian to have his services transferred on the ground of ill-treatment. An indentured Indian, after

he becomes free, is given a free pass. This he has to show whenever asked to do so. It is meant to detect desertion by the indentured Indians. The working of this system is a source of much irritation to poor free Indians and often puts respectable Indians in a very unpleasant position. This law really would not give any trouble but for the unreasonable prejudice. A sympathetic Protector of Immigrants, preferably an Indian gentleman of high standing and knowing the Tamil, Telugu and Hindustani languages, would certainly mitigate the usual hardships of the indentured life. An Indian immigrant who loses his free pass is, as a rule, called upon to pay £3 sterling for a duplicate copy. This is nothing but a system of blackmail.

The 9 o'clock rule in Natal, which makes it necessary for every Indian to carry a pass, if he wants to be out after 9 p.m., at the pain of being locked up in a dungeon, causes much heart-burning, especially among the gentlemen from this Presidency. You will be pleased to hear that children of many indentured Indians receive a pretty good education and they wear, as a rule, the European dress. They are a most sensitive class and yet, unfortunately, most liable to arrest under the 9 o'clock rule. The European dress for an Indian is no recommendation in Natal. It is rather the reverse, for the flowing robe of a Memon free the wearer from such molestation. A happy incident, described in the Green Pamphlet, led the police in Durban, some years ago, to free Indians thus dressed from liability to arrest after 9 p.m. A Tamil schoolmistress, a Tamil schoolmaster and a Tamil Sunday school-teacher were, only a few months ago, arrested and locked up under this law. They all got justice in the law-courts, but that was a poor consolation. The result, however, was that the Corporations in Natal are clamouring for an alteration in the law so that it might be impossible for such Indians to get off scot-free in the law-courts.

There is a bye-law in Durban which requires registration of coloured servants. This rule may be, and perhaps is, necessary for the Kaffirs who would not work, but absolutely useless with regard to the Indians. But the policy is to class the Indian with the Kaffir whenever possible.

This does not complete the list of grievances in Natal. I must beg to refer the curious to the Green Pamphlet for further

information.[1]

But, gentlemen, you have been told lately by the Natal Agent-General that the Indians are nowhere better treated than in Natal; that the fact that a majority of the indentured labourers do not avail themselves of the return passage is the best answer to my pamphlet, and that the railway and tram-car officials do not treat the Indians as beasts nor do the law-courts deny them justice.

With the greatest deference to the Agent-General, all I can say as to the first statement is that he must have very queer notions of good treatment, if to be locked up for being out after 9 p.m. without a pass, to be denied the most elementary right of citizenship in a free country, to be denied a higher status than that of bondman and, at best, a free labourer, and to be subjected to other restrictions referred to above, are instances of good treatment. And if such treatment is the best the Indians receive throughout the world, then the lot of the Indians in other parts of the world and here must be very miserable indeed, according to the commonsense view. The thing is that Mr. Walter Peace, the Agent-General, is made to look through the official spectacles and to him everything official is bound to appear rosy. The legal disabilities are condemnatory of the action of the Natal Government, and how can the Agent-General be expected to condemn himself? If he, or the Government which he represents, only admitted that the legal disabilities mentioned above were against the fundamental principles of the British Constitution, I should not stand before you this evening. I respectfully submit that statements of opinions made by the Agent-General cannot be allowed to have greater weight than those of an accused person about his own guilt.

The fact that the indentured Indians, as a rule, do not avail themselves of the return passage we do not dispute, but we certainly dispute that it is the best answer to our complaints. How can that fact disprove the existence of the legal disabilities? It may prove that the Indians, who do not take advantage of the return passage, either do not mind the disabilities, or remain in the Colony in spite of such disabilities. If the former be the case, it is the duty of those who know better to make the Indians realize their situation and to enable them to see that submission to them means degradation. If the latter be the

[1] About 6 pages of text that follow (to end of para "Quoting statistics . . . in spite of the persecution", p. 85) later formed part of the second edition of the Green Pamphlet. *Vide* also footnote on p. 26.

case, it is one more instance of the patience and the forbearing spirit of the Indian Nation which was acknowledged by Mr. Chamberlain in his Despatch in connection with the Transvaal arbitration. Because they bear them is no reason why the disabilities should not be removed or why they should be interpreted into meaning the best treatment possible.

Moreover, who are these people who, instead of returning to India, settle in the Colony? They are the Indians drawn from the poorest classes and from the most thickly populated districts, possibly living in a state of semi-starvation in India. They migrated to Natal with their families, if any, with the intention of settling there, if possible. Is it any wonder, if these people, after the expiry of their indenture, instead of returning "to face semistarvation", as Mr. Saunders has put it, settle in a country where the climate is magnificent and where they may earn a decent living? A starving man, generally, would stand any amount of rough treatment to get a crumb of bread.

Do not the Uitlanders make out a terribly long list of grievances in the Transvaal? And yet, do they not flock to the Transvaal in thousands in spite of the ill-treatment they receive there, because they can earn their bread in the Transvaal more easily than in the old country?

This, too, should be borne in mind that, in making his statement, Mr. Peace has not taken into account the free Indian trader who goes to the Colony on his own account and who feels most the indignities and disabilities. If it does not do to tell the Uitlander that he may not go to the Transvaal if he cannot bear the ill-treatment, much less will it do to say so to the enterprising Indian. We belong to the Imperial family and are children, adopted it may be, of the same august mother, having the same rights and privileges guaranteed to us as to the European children. It was in that belief that we went to the Colony of Natal, and we trust that our belief was well founded.

The Agent-General has contradicted the statement made in the pamphlet that the railway and tram-car official treat the Indians as beasts. Even if the statements I have made were incorrect, that would not disprove the legal disabilities which, and which alone, have been made the subject of memorials and to remove which we invoke the direct intervention of the Home and the Indian Governments. But I venture to say that the Agent-General has been misinformed, and beg

to repeat that the Indians *are* treated as beasts by the railway and the tram-car officials. That statement was made now nearly two years ago in quarters where it would have been contradicted at once. I had the honour to address an 'Open Letter'[1] to the members of the local Parliament in Natal. It was widely circulated in the Colony and noticed by almost every leading newspaper in South Africa. No one contradicted it then. It was even admitted by some newspapers. Under such circumstances, I ventured to quote it in my pamphlet published here. I am not given to exaggerate matters, and it is very unpleasant to me to have to cite testimony in my own favour, but since an attempt has been made to discredit my statements and, thereby, the cause I am advocating, I feel it to be my duty, for the sake of the cause, to tell you what the papers in South Africa thought about the 'Open Letter', in which the statement was made.

The Star, the leading newspaper in Johannesburg, says:

> Mr. Gandhi writes forcibly, moderately and well. He has himself suffered some slight measure of injustice since he came into the Colony, but that fact does not seem to have coloured his sentiment, and it must be confessed that to the tone of the open letter no objection can reasonably be taken. Mr. Gandhi discusses the questions he has raised with conspicuous moderation.

The Natal Mercury, the Government organ in Natal, says:

> Mr. Gandhi writes with calmness and moderation. He is as impartial as anyone could expect him to be and probably a little more so than might have been expected, considering that he did not receive very just treatment at the hands of the Law Society when he first came to the Colony.

Had I made unfounded statements, the newspapers would not have given such a certificate to the 'Open Letter'.

An Indian, about two years ago, took out a second-class ticket on the Natal railway, In a single night journey he was thrice disturbed and was twice made to change compartments to please European passengers. The case came before the Court and the Indian got £10 damages. The following is the plaintiff's evidence in the case:

> Deponent got into a second-class carriage in the train, leaving Charlestown at 1.30 p.m. Three other Indians were in the same compartment, but they got out at Newcastle. A white man opened the door of the compartment and beckoned to witness, saying: "Come out, Sammy." Plaintiff asked: "Why", and the white man replied: "Never mind, come out, I want to

[1] *Vide* "Open Letter",19-12-1894

place someone here." Witness said: "Why should I come out from here when I have paid my fare?" ... The white man then left and brought an Indian who, witness believed, was in the employ of the railway. The Indian was told to tell plaintiff to get out of the carriage. Thereupon the Indian said: "The white man orders you to come out and you must come out." The Indian then left. Witness said to the white man: "What do you want to shift me about for? I have paid my fare and have a right to remain here." The white man became angry at this and said: "Well, if you don't come out, I will knock hell out of you." The white man got into the carriage and laid hold of witness by the arm and tried to pull him out. Plaintiff said: "Let me alone and I will come out." The witness left the carriage and the white man pointed out another second-class compartment and told him to go there. Plaintiff did as he was directed. The compartment he was shown into was empty. He believed some people who were playing a band were put into the carriage from which he was expelled. This white man was the District Superintendent of Railways at Newcastle. To proceed, witness travelled undisturbed to Maritzburg. He fell asleep, and when he awoke at Maritzburg he found a white man, a white woman and a child in the compartment with him. A white man came up to the carriage and said: "Is that your boy?" speaking to the white man in the compartment. Witness's fellow-traveller replied: "Yes", pointing to his little boy. The other white man then said: "No, I don't mean him. I mean the damned coolie in the corner." This gentleman with the choice language was a railway official, being a shunter. The white man in the compartment replied: "Oh, never mind him, leave him alone." Then the white man outside (the official) said : "I am not going to allow a coolie to be in the same compartment with white people." This man addressed plaintiff, saying: "Sammy, come out." Plaintiff said: "Why, I was removed at Newcastle to this compartment." The white man said: "Well, you must come out" and was about to enter the carriage. Witness, thinking he would be handled as at Newcastle, said he would go out and left the compartment. The white man pointed out another second-class compartment which witness entered. This was empty for a time but, before leaving, a white man entered. Another white man (the official) afterwards came up and said: "If you don't like to travel with that stinking coolie, I will find you another carriage" (*The Natal Advertiser*, 22nd November, 1893, Wednesday).

You will have noticed that the official at Maritzburg maltreated the Indian passenger although his white fellow-passenger did not mind him. If this is not bestial treatment, I should very much like to know what it is, and such occurrences take place often enough to be irritating.

It was found during the case that one of the witnesses for the defendant was coached. In answer to a question from the Bench whether the Indian passengers were treated with consideration, the

witness, who was one of the officials referred to, replied in the affirmative. Thereupon, the presiding magistrate who tried the case is reported to have said to the witness: "Then you have a different opinion to what I have and it is a curious thing that people who are not connected with railway observe more than you."

The Natal Advertiser, a European daily in Durban, made the following remarks on the case:

> It was indisputable from the evidence that the Arab had been badly treated and seeing that second-class tickets are issued to Indians of this description, the plaintiff ought not to have been subjected to unnecessary annoyance and indignity . . . . Some definite measures should be taken to minimize the danger of trouble arising between European and coloured passengers, without rendering the carrying out of such measures annoying to any person, whether black or white.

In the course of its remarks on the same case, *The Natal Mercury* observed:

> There is, throughout South Africa, a tendency to treat all Indians as coolies pure and simple, no matter whether they be educated and cleanly in their habits or not. On our railways we have noticed, on more than one occasion, that coloured passengers are not by any means treated with civility, and although it would be unreasonable to expect that the white employees of the N.G.R. should treat them with the same deference as is accorded to European passengers, still we think it would not be in any way derogatory to their dignity if the officials were a little more *suaviter in modo* when dealing with coloured travellers. (24-11-1893)

The *Cape Times*, a leading newspaper in South Africa, says:

> Natal presents the curious spectacle of a country entertaining a supreme contempt for the very class of people she can least do without. Imagination can only picture the commercial paralysis which would inevitably attend the withdrawal of the Indian population from that Colony. And yet the Indians is the most despised of creatures; he may not ride in the tram-cars, nor sit in the same compartments of a railway carriage with the Europeans, hotel-keepers refuse him food or shelter and he is denied the privilege of the public bath! (5-7-1891)

Here is the opinion of an Anglo-Indian, Mr. Drummond, who is intimately connected with the Indians in Natal. He says, writing to *The Natal Mercury:*

> The majority of the people here seem to forget that they are British subjects, that their Maharani is our Queen and, for that reason alone, one would think that they might be spared the opprobrious term of 'coolie' as it is here applied. In India, it is only the lower class of white men who calls native

> a 'nigger' and treats him as if he were unworthy of any consideration or respect. In their eyes, as in the eyes of many in this Colony, he is treated either as a heavy burden or a mechanical machine . . . . It is a common thing, and a lamentable thing, to hear the ignorant and the unenlightened speak of the Indians generally as the scum of the earth, etc. It is depreciation from the white man and not appreciation that they get.

I think I have adduced sufficient outside testimony to substantiate my statement that the railway officials treat the Indians as beasts. On the tram-cars, the Indians are often not allowed to sit inside but are sent 'upstairs', as the phrase goes. They are often made to remove from one seat to another or prevented from occupying front benches. I know an Indian officer, a Tamil gentleman, dressed in the latest European style who was made to stand on the tram-car board, although there was accommodation available for him.

As to the statement that the Indians get justice in the lawcourts, I beg to say that I have never said they do not, nor am I prepared to admit that they get it at all times and in all courts.

Quoting statistics to prove the prosperity of the Indian community is quite unnecessary. It is not denied that the Indians who go to Natal do earn a living and that in spite of the persecution.

In the Transvaal we cannot own landed property, we may not trade or reside except in specified locations which are described by the British Agent "as places to deposit the refuse of the town, without any water except the polluted soakage in the gully between the location and the town". We may not, as of right, walk on the foot-paths in Johannesburg and Pretoria, we may not be out after 9 p.m. We may not travel without passes. The law prevents us from travelling first or second class on the railways. We are required to pay a special registration fee of £3 to enable us to settle in the Transvaal, and though we are treated as mere "chattels" and have no privileges whatever, we may be called upon to render compulsory military service, if Mr. Chamberlain disregards the memorial which we have addressed to him on the subject. The history of the whole case, as it affects the Indians in the Transvaal, is very interesting, and I am only sorry that for want of time I cannot deal with it now. I must, however, beg you to study it from the Green Pamphlet. I must not omit to mention that it is criminal for an Indian to buy native gold.

The Orange Free State has made "the British Indian an impossibility by simply classifying him with the Kaffir", as its chief

organ puts it. It has passed a special law whereby we are prevented from trading, farming or owning property under any circumstances. If we submit to these degrading conditions, we may be allowed to reside after passing through certain humiliating ceremonies. We were driven out from the State and our stores were closed, causing to us a loss of £9,000. And this grievance remains absolutely without redress.

The Cape Parliament has passed a Bill granting the East London Municipality in that Colony the power to frame bye-laws prohibiting Indians from walking on the foot-paths and making them live in locations. It has issued instructions to the authorities of East Griqualand not to issue any trading licences to the Indians. The Cape Government are in communication with the Home Government with a view to induce them to sanction legislation restricting the influx of the Asiatics.

The people in the Chartered Territories are endeavouring to close the country against the Asiatic trader.

In Zululand, Crown Colony, we cannot own or acquire landed property in the townships of Eshowe and Nondweni. This question is now before Mr. Chamberlain for consideration. As in the Transvaal, there also it is criminal for an Indian to buy native gold.

Thus, we are hemmed in on all sides by restrictions. And, if nothing further were to be done here and in England on our behalf, it is merely a question of time when the respectable Indian in South Africa will be absolutely extinct.

Nor is this merely a local question. It is, as the London *Times* puts it, "that of the status of the British Indian outside India". "If", says the *Thunderer*, "they fail to secure that position (that is of equal status) in South Africa, it will be difficult for them to attain it elsewhere." I have no doubt you have read in the papers that Australian Colonies have passed legislation to prevent Indians from settling in that part of the world. It will be interesting to know how the Home Government deal with that question.

The real cause of all this prejudice may be expressed in the words of the leading organ in South Africa, namely, the *Cape Times*, when it was under the editorship of the prince of South African journalists, Mr. St. Leger:

> It is the position of these merchants which is productive of no little hostility to this day. And it is in considering their position that their rivals in trade have sought to inflict upon them through the medium of the State

> what looks on the face of it something very like an injustice for the benefit of self.

Continues the same organ :

> The injustice to the Indians is so glaring that one is almost ashamed of one's countrymen in wishing to have these men treated as natives (i.e., of South Africa), simply because of their success in trade. The very reason that they have been so successful against the dominant race is sufficient to raise them above that degrading level.

If this was true in 1889, when the above was written, it is doubly so now, because the legislatures of South Africa have shown phenomenal activity in passing measures restricting the liberty of the Queen's Indian subjects.

Other objections also have been raised to our presence there, but they will not bear scrutiny, and I have dealt with them in the Green Pamphlet. I venture, however, to quote from *The Natal Advertiser*, which states one of them and prescribes a statesman-like remedy also. And so far as the objection may be valid, we are in perfect accord with the *Advertiser's* suggestion. This paper, which is under European management, was at one time violently against us. Dealing with the whole question from an Imperial standpoint, it concludes:

> It will, therefore, probably yet be found that the removal of the drawbacks at present incidental to the immigration of Indians into British Colonies is not to be effected so much by the adoption of the obsolete policy of exclusion as by an enlightened and progressive application of ameliorating laws to those Indians who settle in them. One of the chief objection to Indians is that they do not live in accordance with European rules. The remedy for this is to gradually raise their mode of life by compelling them to live in better dwellings and by creating among them new wants. It will probably be found easier, because more in accord with the great onward movements of mankind, to demand of such settlers that they shall rise to their new conditions than to endeavour to maintain the *status quo ante* by their entire exclusion.

We believe, also, that much of the ill feeling is due to the want of proper knowledge in South Africa about the Indians in India. We are, therefore, endeavouring to educate public opinion in South Africa by imparting the necessary information. With regard to the legal disabilities we have tried to influence in our favour the public opinion both in England and here. As you know, both the Conservatives and Liberals have supported us in England without distinction. The London *Times* has given eight leading articles to our cause in a very

sympathetic spirit. This alone has raised us a step higher in the estimation of Europeans in South Africa and has considerably affected for the better the tone of newspapers there. The British Committee of the Congress has been working for us for a very long time. Ever since he entered Parliament, Mr. Bhownaggree has been pleading our cause in season and out of season. Says one of our best sympathizers in London:

> The wrong is so serious that it has only to be known in order, I hope, to be remedied. I feel it my duty on all occasions and in all suitable ways to insist that the Indian subjects of the Crown should enjoy the full status of British subjects throughout the whole British Empire and in allied States. This is the position which you and our Indian friends in South Africa should firmly take up. In such a question compromise is impossible. For any compromise would relinquish the fundamental right of the Indian races to the complete status of British subjects—a right which they have earned by their loyalty in peace and by their services in war, a right which was solemnly guaranteed to them by the Queen's Proclamation in 1858 and which has now been explicitly recognized by Her Majesty's Government.

Says the same gentleman in another letter:

> I have great hopes that justice will in the end be done. You have a good cause. . . . You have only to take up your position strongly in order to be successful. That position is that the British Indian subjects in South Africa are, alike in our own colonies and in independent friendly States, being deprived of their status as British subjects guaranteed to them by the Sovereign and the British Parliament.

An ex-Liberal member of the House of Commons says:

> You are infamously treated by the Colonial Government and you will be so treated by the Home Government if they do not compel the Colonies to alter their policy:

A Conservative member says:

> I am quite aware that the situation is surrounded with many difficulties, but some points stand out clear and, as far as I can make out, it is true to say that breaches of what in India is a civil contract are punishable in South Africa as though they were criminal offences. This is beyond doubt contrary to the principles of the Indian Code and seems to me an infringement of the privileges guaranteed to British subjects in India. Again, it is perfectly evident that in the Boer Republic and possibly in Natal, it is the direct obvious intention of the Government to "hunt" natives of India and to compel them to carry on their business under degrading conditions. The excuses which are put forward to defend the infringements of the liberties of British subjects in the Transvaal are too flimsy to be worth a moment's attention.

Yet another Conservative member says:

> Your activity is praiseworthy and demands just. I am, therefore, willing to help you as far as lies in my power.

Such is the sympathy evoked in England. Here, too, I know we have the same sympathy, but I humbly think that our cause may occupy our attention still more largely.

What is required in India has been well put by the *Moslem Chronicle* in a forcibly-written leader:

> What with a strong and intelligent public opinion here and a well meaning Government, the difficulties we have to contend with are not at all commensurate with those that retard the well-being of our countrymen in that country. It is, therefore, quite time that all public bodies should at once turn their attention to this important subject to create an intelligent public opinion with a view to organize an agitation for the removal of the grievances under which our brethren are labouring. Indeed, these grievances have become and are day by day becoming so unbearable and offensive that the requisite agitation cannot be taken up one day too soon.

I may state our position a little more clearly. We are aware that the insults and indignities that we are subjected to at the hands of the populace cannot be directly removed by the intervention of the Home Government. We do not appeal to it for any such intervention. We bring them to the notice of the public so that the fair-minded of all communities and the Press may, by expressing their disapproval, materially reduce their rigour and, possibly, eradicate them ultimately. But we certainly do appeal, and we hope not vainly, to the Home Government for protection against reproduction of such ill feeling in legislation. We certainly beseech the Home Government to disallow all the Acts of the Legislative bodies of the Colonies restricting our freedom in any shape or form. And this brings me to the last question, namely, how far can the Home Government interfere with such action on the part of the Colonies and the allied States. As for Zululand, there can be no question, since it is a Crown Colony directly governed from Downing Street through a Governor. It is not a self-governing or a responsibly-governed Colony, as the Colonies of Natal and the Cape of Good Hope are. With regard to the last two, their Constitution Act provides that Her Majesty may disallow any act of the local Parliament within two years, even after it has become law having received the Governor's assent. That is one safeguard against oppressive measures by the Colonies. The Royal instructions to the Government, as also the Constitution Act, enumerate certain Bills which cannot be assented to

by the Governor without Her Majesty's previous sanction. Among such are Bills which have, for their object, class legislation, such as the Franchise Bill or Immigration Bill. Her Majesty's intervention is, thus, direct and precise. While it is true that the Home Government is slow to interfere with the Acts of the Colonial legislatures, there are instances where it has not hesitated to put its foot down on occasions less urgent than the present one. As you are aware, the repeal of the first Franchise Bills was due to such wholesome intervention. What is more, the Colonists are ever afraid of it. And as a result of the sympathy expressed in England and the sympathetic answer given by Mr. Chamberlain to the Deputation that waited on him some months ago, most of the papers in South Africa, at any rate in Natal, have veered round considerably. As to the Transvaal, there is the Convention. As to the Orange Free State, I can only say that it is an unfriendly act on the part of a friendly State to shut her doors against any portion of Her Majesty's subjects. And as such, I humbly think it can be effectively checked.

It may not be amiss to quote a few passages from the London *Times* articles, bearing on the question of intervention as well as the whole question generally:

> The whole question resolves itself into this. Are Her Majesty's Indian subjects to be treated as a degraded and an outcaste race by a friendly Government or are they to have the same rights and status as other British subjects enjoy? Are leading Mohammedan merchants, who might sit in the Legislative Council at Bombay, to be liable to indignities and outrages in the South African Republic? We are continually telling our Indian subjects that the economic future of their country depends on their ability to spread themselves out and to develop their foreign trade. What answer can our Indian Government give them if it fails to secure to them the same protection abroad which is secured to the subjects of every other dependency of the Crown?
>
> It is a mockery to urge our Indian fellow-subjects to embark on external commerce if the moment they leave India they lose their rights as British subjects and can be treated by foreign governments as a degraded and an outcaste race.

In another article it says:

> The matter is eminently one for good offices and for influence for that "friendly negotiation" which Mr. Chamberlain promises, though he warns the deputation that it may be tedious and will certainly not be easy. As to the Cape Colony and Natal, the question is to a certain extent simplified since, of course, the Colonial office can speak to them with greater authority.

The incident is one of those which suggest wider questions than any that directly offer themselves for official replies. We are at the centre of a world-wide Empire at a period when locomotion is easy and is everyday becoming easier, both in time and cost. Some portions of the Empire are crowded, others are comparatively empty, and the flow from the congested to the under-peopled districts is continuous. What is to happen when subjects differing in colour, religion and habits from ourselves or from the natives of a particular spot emigrate to that spot for their living ? How are race prejudices and antipathies, the jealousies of trade, the fear of competition to be controlled? The answer, of course, must be by intelligent policy at the Colonial Office.

Small as are the requirements of the Indians, the steady growth of the population of India is such that certain outward movement is inevitable, and it is a movement that will increase. It is very desirable that our white fellow-subjects in Africa should understand that there will, in all probability, be this current flowing from India, that it is perfectly within the rights of the British Indian to seek his subsistence at the Cape, and that he ought, in the common interest of the Empire, to be well treated when he comes there. It is indeed to be feared that the ordinary Colonist, wherever settled, thinks much more of his immediate interests than of those of the great empire which protects him, and he has some difficulty in recognizing a fellow-subject in the Hindu or the Parsee. The duty of the Colonial office is to enlighten him and to see that fair treatment is extended to British subjects of whatever colour.

Again:

In India, the British, the Hindu and the Mussalman communities find themselves face to face with the question as to whether at the outset of the new industrial movements which have been so long and anxiously awaited, Indian traders and workers are or are not to have the same status before the law as all other British subjects enjoy. May they or may they not go freely from one British possession to another and claim the rights of British subjects in allied states? Or are they to be treated as outcaste races subjected to a system of permits and passes when travelling on their ordinary business avocations and relegated, as the Transvaal Government would relegate them, to a ghetto at the permanent centres of their trade? These are questions which apply to all Indians who seek to better their fortunes outside the limits of the Indian Empire. Mr. Chamberlain's words and the determined attitude taken up by every section of the Indian Press show that to such questions there can be but one answer.

I shall take the liberty to give one more quotation from the same journal:

The question with which Mr. Chamberlain was called upon to deal cannot be so easily reduced to concrete terms. On the one hand, he clearly laid

down the principle of the "equal rights" and equal privileges of all British subjects in regard to redress from foreign States. It would, indeed, have been impossible to deny that principle. Our Indian subjects have been fighting the battles of Great Britain over half the old world with a loyalty and courage which have won the admiration of all British men. The fighting reserve which Great Britain has in the Indian races adds greatly to her political influence and prestige, and it would be violation of the British sense of justice to use the blood and the valour of these races in war and yet to deny them the protection of the British name in the enterprise of peace. The Indian workers and traders are slowly spreading across the earth from Central Asia to the Australian Colonies and from the Straits Settlements to the Canary Islands. Wherever the Indian goes he is the same useful, well-doing man, law-abiding under whatever form of Government he may find himself, frugal in his wants and industrious in his habits. But these very virtues make him a formidable competitor in the labour markets to which he resorts. Although numbering in the aggregate some hundreds of thousands, the immigrant Indian labourers and small dealers have only recently appeared in the foreign countries or British Colonies in numbers sufficient to arouse jealousy and to expose them to political injustice. But the facts which we brought to notice in June, and which we urged on Mr. Chamberlain by a deputation of Indians last week, show that the necessity has now arisen for protecting the Indian labourer from such jealousy and for securing to him the same rights as other British subjects enjoy.

Gentlemen, Bombay has spoken in no uncertain terms. We are yet young and inexperienced, we have a right to appeal to you, our elder and freer brethren, for protection. Being under the yoke of oppression, we can merely cry out in anguish. You have heard our cry. The blame will now lie on your shoulders if the yoke is not removed from our necks.[1]

From a printed copy of the speech circulated at the meeting

[1] The meeting later adopted a resolution protesting against the ill-treatment of South African Indians and calling for relief.

111. LETTER TO "THE HINDU"

MADRAS,
October 27, 1896

THE EDITOR, *THE HINDU*
MADRAS

SIR,

It would be ungrateful on my part if I did not thank the Madras public for rallying round the cause of the British Indians in South Africa as they did so admirably last evening. Indeed, all seemed to have vied with one another in making the meeting a huge success which it evidently was. I beg to thank you for your cordial support to the movement. It, perhaps, shows the absolute righteousness of the cause and the reality of our grievances. My special thanks are due to the courteous Secretaries of the Madras Mahajana Sabha, who worked with unremitting zeal in organizing the meeting and made the cause their own. Ionly hope that the sympathy and support, thus far extended, will be continued and we shall not be long in securing justice. I beg to assure you and the public that the news of the last night's meeting, when it reaches South Africa, will fill the hearts of the Indians with gladness and joy and thankfulness. Such meetings will form a silver lining to the cloud of distress that is hanging over our heads. As it was very late last evening I was unable to give expression to the above sentiments. Hence this letter.

The scramble for the copies of the pamphlet was a scene I will not easily forget. I am issuing a second edition of the pamphlet, and as soon as the copies are ready, they can be had from the obliging Secretaries of the Sabha.

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 28-10-1896

112. PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION OF THE GREEN PAMPHLET

The rush for copies of this pamphlet at the Madras meeting[1] in Pachaiyappa's Hall has necessitated the issue of the second edition. It was a scene never to be forgotten.

The demand proved two things—the importance of the question of the grievances of the British Indians in South Africa, and the interest shown by the Indian public in the welfare of their countrymen beyond the waters.

It is to be hoped that the second edition will be disposed of as soon as the first, showing the continuance of the interest. Publicity is perhaps the chief remedy for the grievances and the pamphlet is one of the means to that end.

The appendix is an addition to the 1st edition and is a part of the address read before the Madras meeting, being a reply to the Natal Agent-General's statement to Reuter.

The Natal Immigration Law Amendment Act referred to in the pamphlet has, unfortunately for the poor Indians in South Africa, received the Royal assent. It is respectfully submitted that the question requires the closest study by our public men and there should be no rest till the Act is repealed or State-aided emigration to Natal suspended. The Madras meeting has passed a resolution requesting suspension of such emigration if the repeal of the Act cannot be brought about.

M. K. GANDHI

Calcutta, 1-11-1896

The Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa: An Appeal to the Indian Public

[1] *Vide* the preceding item

113. LETTER TO F. S. TALEYARKHAN

GREAT EASTERN HOTEL, CALCUTTA,
November 5, 1896

DEAR MR. TALEYARKHAN,

Your last letter was redirected to me here. I wrote[1] to you from Madras informing you of my address in Calcutta and wrote[2] to you after my arrival here. I hope you received both the letters.

It is quite true that you will be making a pecuniary sacrifice in going to Natal. But I am sure the cause is worth the sacrifice.

I shall endeavour to catch the *Courland* which is expected to leave before the 20th instant. I wish you could be ready by that time.

Will you consider the new Franchise Law of Natal and get the opinion of the eminent lawyers in Bombay if they would do so *gratis*? You will find the text of the Bill in the Franchise memorial and one legal opinion on it in the pamphlet. Any opinion obtained here will be very useful to us in Natal.

I believe the meeting here will come off Friday week. The matter will be finally decided tomorrow.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original. Courtesy: R. F. S. Taleyarkhan

114. INTERVIEW TO "THE STATESMAN"

CALCUTTA,
November 10, 1896

[REPORTER:] Will you please tell me, Mr. Gandhi, in a few words, something of the grievances of the Indians in South Africa?

[GANDHIJI:] There are Indians in many parts of South Africa—in the Colonies of Natal, the Cape of Good Hope, the South African Republic, the Orange Free State, and elsewhere, in all of which, more

[1] *Vide* Vol.I, " Letter to F. S. Taleyarkhan",18-10-1896
[2] The letter is not traceable.

or less, they are denied the ordinary rights of citizenship. But I more particularly represent the Indians in Natal, who number about fifty thousand. The first Indians were, of course, the coolies who were taken over under indentures from Madras and Bengal for the purpose of labouring in the various plantations. They were mostly Hindus, but a few of them were Mohammedans. They served their contract time, and on obtaining their freedom they elected to stay in the country, because they found that, as market gardeners or hawkers of vegetables, they could earn from three to four pounds sterling per month. In this way, there are, at present, about thirty thousand free Indians settled in the Colony, while some sixteen thousand others are serving their indentures. There is, however, another class of Indians, numbering about five thousand, Mohammedans from the Bombay side who have been attracted to the country by the prospects of trade. Some of the latter are doing well. Many are landowners in a large way, while two own ships. The Indians have been settled in the country for twenty years and more, and, being prosperous, were contented and happy.

[R.] What then, was the cause of all the present trouble, Mr. Gandhi?

[G.] Simply trade jealousy. The Colony was desirous of securing all possible benefit from the Indians as labourers, because the natives of the country do not work in the fields, and the Europeans cannot. But the moment the Indians entered into competition with the European as a trader, he found himself thwarted, obstructed, and insulted by a system of organized persecution. And gradually, this feeling of hatred and oppression has been imported into the laws of the Colony. The Indians had been quietly enjoying the franchise for years, subject to certain property qualifications, and, in 1894, there were 251 Indian voters on the register against 9,309 European voters. But the Government suddenly thought, or pretended to think, that there was danger of the Asiatic vote swamping the European, and they introduced into the Legislative Assembly a Bill disfranchising all Asiatics save those who were then rightly contained in any Voters' List. Against this Bill, the Indians memorialized both the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council; but to no purpose, and the Bill was passed into law. The Indians then memorialized Lord Ripon, who was in those days at the Colonial Office. As a result, that Act has now been repealed and replaced by an Act which says: 'The natives, or descendants in the male line of natives, of countries which have not

hitherto possessed elective representative institutions founded on the parliamentary franchise shall not be placed on any Voters' List unless they shall first obtain an order from the Governor-in-Council exempting them from the operation of the Act.' It also exempts from its operation those persons who are rightly contained in any Voters' List. This Bill was first submitted to Mr. Chamberlain who has practically approved of it. We have yet thought it advisable to oppose it, and with a view to secure its rejection, we have sent a memorial to Mr. Chamberlain, and hope to secure the same measure of support that has been extended to us hitherto.

[R.] Then are we to understand that the Indians in Natal—the great bulk of whom are coolies, who would never have aspired to free institutions in their own country—are desirous of wielding political power in Natal?

[G.] By no means. We are most careful to put out, in all our representations to the Government and the public, that the object of our agitation is merely the removal of vexatious disabilities devised, as we believe, to degrade us as compared to the European population. With the object of still further discouraging Indian colonization, the Natal Legislature has passed a Bill to keep indentured Indians under contract for the whole term of their stay in the Colony; and if they object to renew their contract at the end of their first term of five years, to send them back to India, or, if they decline to return, to compel them to pay an annual tax of £3 per head. Unfortunately for us, the Indian Government, on the *ex parte* representation of a Commission that visited India from Natal in 1893, have accepted the principle of compulsory indenture; but we are memorializing both the Home and the Indian Governments against it.

[R.] We have heard much, Mr. Gandhi, of daily annoyances to which Indians in Natal are said to be subjected at the hands of the white Colonists.

[G.] Oh, yes! And the law supports the Europeans in this system of persecution, either openly or covertly. The law says that an Indian must not walk on the foot-paths but pass along the middle of the road; that he must not travel either first or second class on the railways; that he must not be out of his house without a pass after 9 o'clock at night; that he must take out a pass if he wishes to drive cattle; and so on. Imagine the tyranny of these special laws! For the infraction of them, Indians—men of the highest respectability who might sit in your Legislative Councils—are daily insulted, assaulted, and taken up by the police. And in addition to these legal disabilities, there are

social disqualifications. No Indian is permitted in the tramcars, in the public hotels, in public baths.

[R.] Well, but, Mr. Gandhi, suppose you succeed in having the legal disabilities removed, what about the social disqualifications? Will they not pinch and gall and fret you a hundred times oftener than the thought that you cannot return a member to the Legislative Assembly?

[G.] We hope that when the legal disabilities are removed, the social persecution will gradually disappear.

The Statesman, 12-11-1896

115. LETTER TO "THE ENGLISHMAN"[1]

CALCUTTA,
November 13, 1896

THE EDITOR, *The Englishman*
CALCUTTA

SIR,

"Send Mohandas[2] (my Christian name) road enforcing Indians to locations." These are the words of a telegram received yesterday from Natal by the agents, at Bombay, of Messrs Dada Abdulla and Co., a leading Indian firm in South Africa. The Agents very kindly telegraphed the message to me. This renders it absolutely necessary for me to leave Calcutta abruptly.

"Road" is an error. I believe it means "Rhodes",[3] meaning the Cape Government. The message means, therefore, that the Cape Government are enforcing Indians to locations. And it is not unlikely, as the Cape Parliament has empowered the East London Municipality to remove the Indians to locations. Yet, seeing that the whole Indian question is now pending before Mr. Chamberlain, such active operations might have been suspended for a time.

The message shows the tremendous importance of the question as well as the feeling of the Indian community in South Africa about the matter. Had they not felt the indignity keenly they would not have

[1] This appeared under the title "The Indians in South Africa."

[2] The source has "Mohanlal", evidently a misprint.

[3] Later, Gandhiji discovered that the word used in the original telegram was 'Raad', the Dutch equivalent for the Legislative Assembly; *vide* "Letter to *The Englishman*",30-11-1896

sent an expensive message. The removal may even mean ruin to the Indian traders affected. But who cares for the welfare of the Indian in South Africa?

The London *Times* says as follows:

> In India the British, the Hindu and the Mussalman communities find themselves face to face with the question as to whether, at the outset of the new industrial movements which have been so long and anxiously awaited, Indian traders and workers are or are not to have the same status before the law as all other British subjects enjoy. May they or may they not go freely from one British possession to another and claim the rights of British subjects in allied States? Or are they to be treated as outcaste races, subjected to a system of permits and passes when travelling on their ordinary business avocations, and relegated, as the Transvaal Government would relegate them, to a ghetto at the permanent centres of their trade? These are questions which apply to all Indians who seek to better their fortunes outside the limits of the Indian Empire. Mr. Chamberlain's words and the determined attitude taken up by every section of the Indian Press show that to such questions there can be but one answer.

It is clear therefore, that the question affects not only the Indians at present residing in South Africa but all who may wish to seek fortunes outside India, and that there can be but one answer to the question. I hope there will be only one answer.

If all the Associations, Anglo-Indian and Indian, were to protest against the disabilities that are being heaped upon the Indians in that country, and if every important town in India were to hold meetings to express disapproval of the ill-treatment, I venture to think that it will not be doing too much.

It is necessary that the public here should know what activity the various Governments in South Africa are showing and what pressure is being placed upon the Colonial Office at home to bring the matter to a successful issue from their standpoint. Public meetings are being held all over the country asking the Governments to put a stop to the 'coolie' immigration. Mayors of the different towns have been meeting in congress and passing resolutions desiring the restriction of the Asiatic influx. Sir Gordon Sprigg, the Cape Premier, is in active communication with the Colonial Office about the matter and is hopeful of a satisfactory result. Mr. Maydon, a prominent politician in Natal, has been telling his audiences that the friends of the Colony in England are doing every thing to vigorously put forward the Colonial

view before Mr. Chamberlain. Sir John Robinson, the Natal Premier, has gone to England to recoup his health and to discuss important State matters with Mr. Chamberlain. Almost all the newspapers in South Africa have been discussing the matter from the Colonial point of view. These are only some of the forces that are at work against us. As an ex-member of Parliament says in a letter of sympathy: "The whole struggle is unequal," but, "justice is on our side." Were not the cause absolutely just and righteous it would have received its death-blow long ago.

One thing more. The matter demands immediate attention. The question is now pending. It cannot long remain undecided. And if it is decided unfavourably to the Indians it will be difficult to have it reopened. Now, therefore, is the time for the Anglo-Indian and the Indian public to work on our behalf. Or it will be never. "The wrong," says a distinguished Conservative[1], "is so serious that it has only to be known, I hope, to be remedied."

Yes, Sir, I implore the Anglo-Indian public also to help us actively. We have not restricted our advances to one body or only one section of the community. We have ventured to approach all and so far we have received sympathy from all. The London *Times* and *The Times of India* have been advocating our cause for a long time. All the newspapers in Madras have fully supported us. You have given us your ungrudging support and laid us under deep obligation. The British Committee of the Congress has rendered us invaluable help. Ever since he entered Parliament, Mr. Bhownaggree has been on the alert on our behalf. He has been ventilating our grievance in season and out of season. Many other Conservative members of the House of Commons have extended their support to us. It is not therefore simply a matter of form that we appeal to the Anglo-Indian public. I venture to ask all your contemporaries to copy this letter. Had I been able, I would have sent copies to all the papers.

M. K. GANDHI

The Englishman, 14-11-1896

[1] Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree

116. INTERVIEW TO "THE ENGLISHMAN"

[On or before *November 13, 1896*][1]

There has always been a dislike of the Indian from the first days of their migration to Africa, but it was only when our people began to trade that the antipathy became marked and took shape in the imposition of disabilities.[2]

[Q.] Then all these grievances you speak of are the outcome of commercial jealousy and prompted by self-interest?

[A.] Precisely. That is just the root of the whole matter. The Colonists want us cleared out because they do not like our traders competing with them.

[Q.] Is the competition a legitimate one? I mean, is it entered into and conducted on a fair and open basis?

[A.] The competition is an open one and conducted by the Indians in a perfectly fair and legitimate manner. Perhaps a word or two as to the general system of trading may make matters clear. The bulk of Indians engaged in trafficking are those who get their goods from the large European wholesal houses, and then go about the country hawking them. Why, I may say that the Colony of Natal, of which I speak particularly from knowledge and experience, is practically dependent for its supplies on these travelling traders. As you know, shops are scarce in those parts, at least away from the towns, and the Indian gets an honest livelihood by supplying the deficiency. It is said that the petty European trader has been displaced. This is true to a certain extent; but then it has been the fault of the European trader. He has been content to stop in his shop, and customers have been compelled to come to him. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that when the Indian, at no small trouble, takes the goods to the customers, he readily finds a sale. Moreover, the European trader, no matter in however small a way, will not hawk his goods about. Perhaps the strongest proof of the trading capabilities of the Indian and, generally speaking, of his integrity, is to be found in the fact that the great houses will give him credit, and, in fact, many of them do the bulk of their trade through his agency. It is no secret that

[1] Gandhiji left Calcutta for Bombay on this date.

[2] The question was when the antipathy of the South African whites to Indians first began to manifest itself

the opposition to the Indian in Natal is but partial, and by no means represents the real feelings of a good portion of the European community.

[Q.] What, briefly, are the legal and other disabilities placed upon the Indian residents in Natal?

[A.] Well, first there is the 'curfew' law which prohibits all 'coloured' persons being out after 9 o'clock at night without a permit from their master, if indentured servants, or unless they can give a good account of themselves. The great cause of complaint on this score is that this law may be used by the police as an engine of oppression. Respectable, well-dressed, educated Indians are sometimes subjected to the humiliation of arrest by a policeman, being marched to the lock-up, incarcerated for the night, brought before the magistrate next morning and dismissed without a word of apology when their *bona fides* have been established. Such occurrences are by no means rare. Then there is the deprivation of the franchise, which was brought out in the article you published. The fact is the Colonists do not want the Indian to form part of the South African nation—hence the taking away from him of franchise rights. As a menial he can be tolerated, as a citizen never.

[Q.] What has been the attitude of the Indians on this question of the exercise of political rights in an alien country?

[A.] Simply that of the person who claims to enjoy the same rights and privileges in a country as those who are not native to the country freely enjoy. Politically speaking, the Indian does not want the vote; it is only because he resents the indignity of being dispos sessed of it that he is agitating for its restitution. Moreover, the classifying of all Indians in one category and the non-recognition of the just place of the better class is felt to be a great injustice. We have even proposed the raising of the property qualifications and the introduction of the education test, which would surely give the hall-mark of fitness to every Indian voter, but this has been contemptuously rejected, proving that the sole object is that of discrediting the Indian and depriving him of all political power, so that he will be forever helpless. Then there is the crippling imposition of the £3 poll tax per annum on all who remain in the country after fulfilling their indenture. Again, the Indian has no social status; in fact, he is regarded as a social leper—a pariah. Indignities of all kinds are heaped upon him. No matter what his station may be, an Indian

throughout South Africa is a coolie, and as such he is treated. On the railway he is restricted to a certain class, and, although in Natal he is permitted to walk on the foot-path, this is refused to him in other States.

[Q.] Will you tell me something about the treatment of Indians in these States?

[A.] In Zululand no Indians can buy landed property in the townships of Nondweni and Eshowe.

[Q.] Why was the prohibition imposed?

[A.] Well, in the township of Melmoth, which was the first established in Zululand, there were no regulations and the Natal Indians availed themselves of the right to buy landed property, which they did to the extent of over £2,000 worth. Then the prohibition was passed and made to apply to townships subsequently founded. It was purely trade jealousy, the fear being that the Indians would enter Zululand for trade purposes as they had done in Natal.

In the Orange River Free State, the purchase of any property by an Indian has been made impossible by simply classifying him with the Kaffir. It is not permitted him to hold immovable property, and every Indian settler in the State has to pay an annual tax of ten shillings. The injustice of these arbitrary laws may be gauged from the fact that when they were promulgated the Indians, mostly traders, were compelled to leave the State without the slightest compensation, causing losses to the extent of £9,000. Matters in the Transvaal are hardly any better. Laws have been passed which prohibit the Indian from engaging in trade or residing otherwise than in specific localities. On the latter point, however, proceedings are pending in the law-courts. A special registration fee of £7 has to be paid, the 9 o'clock rule is operative, walking on the foot-path is forbidden (at least this is so in Johannesburg), and travelling first and second class on the railways is not permitted. So you will see that the Indian's life in the Transvaal is not altogether a pleasant one. And yet, in spite of all these disabilities, nay, unwarrantable indignities and insults, the Indian, unless Mr. Chamberlain interferes, will be liable to compulsory military service. According to the Commandeering Treaty, all British subjects were exempted from this service, but, when the Transvaal Volksraad was considering the point, they added a resolution to the effect that the British subjects means "whites" only. The Indians, however, memorialized the Home Government on this question. Cape

Colony, following on the same lines, has recently empowered the East London Municipality to prohibit trading by Indians, walking on the foot-paths and limiting them to residence in certain locations. So you see almost everywhere in South Africa there is a dead set against the Indians. Yet we ask no special privileges, we only claim our just rights. Political power is not our ambition, but to be let alone to carry on our trading, for which we are eminently suited as a nation, is all we ask. This is, we think, a reasonable demand.

[Q.] So much for these grievances, which seem to be general through out South Africa. Now tell me, Mr. Gandhi, how do Indian advocates fare in the law-courts?

[A.] Oh! there is no distinction between advocates and attorneys of whatever race; in the courts, it is only a question of ability. There are many lawyers in the Colony, but, on the whole, forensic talent cannot be said to be of a very high order. A good many European pleaders are to be found, and it goes without saying that those with English training and degrees monopolize the practice of the courts. But I suppose it is the English degree, for those of us who have taken it, which places us more on a level footing. Those with an Indian degree only would be out of place. There is scope, I believe, for Indian lawyers in South Africa, if at all sympathetically disposed to their fellow-countrymen.

As to the political aspect of affairs in South Africa, Mr. Gandhi preferred not to commit himself.

The Englishman, 14-11-1896

117. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, POONA[1]

November 16, 1896

The lecture consisted chiefly of extracts read from a pamphlet[2] on the subject, with here and there running comments thereon. This pamphlet contains an account of

[1] The meeting, organized by the Sarvajanik Sabha, was held at Joshi Hall. R. G. Bhandarkar presided. After Gandhiji had spoken, the meeting passed a resolution moved by Lokamanya B. G. Tilak, sympathizing with the Indians in South Africa and authorizing a committee, composed of Dr. Bhandarkar, Lokamanya Tilak, Professor G. K. Gokhale and six others to submit a memorial to the Government of India on the disabilities imposed on the Indians. The full text of the speech in not available.

[2] The Green Pamphlet

the various ways in which natives of India are treated in South Africa, and winds up with the names of people, said to represent the Indian community in South Africa, who have appointed Mr. Gandhi to represent their grievances to the authorities and the general public.

The lecturer asked his audience to do all they could to bring about an amelioration of the lot of the South African Indians by representations and applications to Government.

Bombay Police Abstracts, 1896, p. 405

118. STATEMENT OF EXPENSES[1]

Dr. to M. K. Gandhi

The Natal Indian Congress

Out-of-pocket expenses in connection with the movement in India with regard to the grievances of the British Indians in South Africa.

	[RS. A.P.]
5th July (1896)	
Carriage from morning to afternoon and previous evening at Allahabad ¾ visiting editors , etc.	6-0-0
Hotel bill	5-8-0
Papers	2-12-6
Gratuity	0-80
[?...*August*]	
Luggage containing pamphlets, etc.	4-8-0
Half-fare return ticket—Bombay to Rajkot	20-1-6
1st to 7th August	
Stamps for pamphlets	41-8-0
7th August	
Thacker's Directory	25-0-0

[1] Gandhiji had been given a draft for £75 to cover the travelling, printing and other expenses incurred by him in connection with his South African work in India. He submitted this statement of expenses to the Natal Indian Congress on his return to South Africa. The last entry being dated November 29, the item is placed under that date.

17th August	
Telegram Bombay	1-4-0
Thakersi: gratuity re. pamphlet work	13-0-0
Parcel and packing 500 books	3-10-0
Note paper	2-12-0
Pickwick pens	0-6-0
Pencils	0-3-0
One ream paper for pamphlet posting	2-0-0
Water at Wadhwan	0-2-0
Porter	0-4-0
Poor man	0-1-0
Telegraph boy	0-1-0
Station peon	0-4-0
19th August	
Carriage to G[rant] Road	0-5-0
G. Road to Bandra and back	0-12-0
G. Road to Pydhuni	0-4-0
20th August	
Carriage—house to Fort	0-5-0
Fort to G.B.K. Road	0-10-0
House to Apollo Bunder	0-12-0
Apollo Bunder to market	0-1-0
Market to house	0-2-0
21st August	
Carriage	0-5-0
Stamps	1-0-0
22nd August	
Carriage	1-7-0
Fruit	2-0-0
24th August	
Carriage	0-4-0
25th August	
Carriage	0-4-0
27th August	
Carriage	0-1-0
Lalu—gratuity	1-0-0
31st August	
Blacking Ink	0-1-0
1st September	
Tram fare	0-4-0

3rd September	
Ink	0-4-0
Washerman	0-8-0
Paper	0-2-0
4th September	
Stamps	1-0-0
11th September	
Cards	1-4-0
Carriage	0-12-0
Boy	0-2-0
Carriage to station	0-6-0
Congress report	1-0-0
Ticket to Rajkot and back	48-3-3
Passes	0-2-0
Gratuity to cook & servant	2-0-0
Pencil	0-3-0
Papers	1-0-0
Telegram	1-0-0
Fruit	0-10-6
Carriage	0-4-0
23rd September	
Porterage at Wadhwan	1-0-0
24th September	
Driver—gratuity	0-8-0
Stamps	1-0-0
Paper	0-14-0
Luggage	13-8-0
Porters	0-12-0
Water and peon	0-6-0
Stamps for pamphlets	30-0-0
Water	0-0-6
Telegram	1-0-0
25th September	
Carriage from station to house	1-4-0
Carriage and tram	0-9-0
26th September	
Carriage	0-4-0
27th September	
Carriage	0-8-0

28th September	
Papers	1-4-0
Platform pass	0-0-6
Carriage	0-5-0
30th September	
Carriage	0-10-0
9th October	
Carriage	0-4-0
Carriage and papers	0-8-6
Champion	0-4-0
Photograph	0-15-0
10th October	
Times	0-8-0
Tram	0-2-0
Soap	0-1-0
11th October	
Fare to Madras	49-11-0
Guide	0-1-0
Telegram to Mr. Sohoni[1]	2-0-0
Luggage	5-8-0
Soap	0-4-0
Carriage	0-4-0
Porter	0-4-0
Pass	0-2-0
12th October	
Carriage at Poona	1-0-0
Porter	0-4-0
Charity	0-8-0
Carriage (whole day)	4-8-0
Porters	1-0-0
Mr. Sohoni's son	1-0-0
Coffee	0-6-0
Paper	0-2-0
Boy	0-2-0
13th October	
Breakfast	0-14-0
Luncheon	1-14-0

[1] A colleague of Gokhale; *vide* "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", 18-10-1896

Dinner	2-2-0
Fruit	0-2-0
Water	0-1-0
14th October	
Railway station, Madras	0-4-0
Guide	0-4-0
Porter	0-2-0
Carriage (whole day)	4-2-3
Trickman	0-0-6
Papers and envelopes	2-10-0
Carriage for station	1-8-0
15th October	
Carriage	4-6-0
Letter carrier	0-10-0
Paper	0-4-0
Tram	0-1-0
16th October	
Stamps	1-0-0
Carriage	2-3-0
Paper	0-8-0
Dhobi	1-0-0
17th October	
Papers	0-14-0
Carriage (whole day)	4-3-0
18th October	
Carriage (half day)	2-3-0
Andrews donation	7-0-0
Sulphur ointment	0-2-0
19th October	
Tram fare	0-9-0
Telegram to Wacha[1]	1-6-0
Papers	1-0-0
20th October	
Dhobi	0-4-0
Papers	0-12-0
Punkah coolie	0-2-0

[1] Dinshaw Wacha, (1884-1936), A prominent Indian leader. He presided over the Indian National Congress session in 1901. The telegram is not traceable.

21st October	
Note paper	0-14-0
Ink and pins	0-3-0
Tape	0-1-0
Magician	0-8-0
Papers	0-10-0
Lace	0-1-0
22nd October	
Carriage	2-4-0
Sweets	0-5-3
Photograph	0-6-0
Papers	0-12-0
Tram	0-13-0
23rd October	
Carriage	5-0-0
Tram	0-10-0
Stamps	0-8-0
24th October	
Boys at school	0-13-0
Carriage	2-10-0
Andrews	0-8-0
Tram	0-1-0
Letter carrier	0-4-0
Papers	0-10-0
Dhobi	0-12-0
East Indian Assam coolies	1-0-0
L. Councils	0-6-0
Local Govt. returns	5-0-0
Councils Act	0-6-0
Foreign reports	2-0-0
S.A.R.[1] papers [re:] grievances	0-8-0
Statement moral & [material] progress[2]	1-12-0
Madras District [Municipal Act.]	1-0-0
Madras Local Boards [Act]	0-10-0
Tamil books	4-12-6
Andrews for books	1-9-0

[1] South African Republic, the Transvaal

[2] *Statement Exhibiting the Moral and Material Progress and Condition of India during the Year,* issued annually for presentation to Parliament by the then Government of India

26th October	
Tamil books assortment	7-0-7
Carriage	0-8-0
Tram fare	0-4-0
Papers	0-8-0
Carriage	2-4-0
27th October	
Carriage	3-4-0
Inland telegrams	18-12-0
Madras Standard a/c. telegrams & address	30-0-0
Butler's gratuity	9-0-0
Waiter	1-0-0
Bhangi	0-8-0
Cook	1-0-0
Gardener	0-2-0
Keeper	0-2-0
Luggage to Calcutta	3-0-0
Andrews	5-0-0
Hotel bill	74-4-0
Papers	0-10-0
Dhobi	0-12-0
Punkah coolies (14 days)	3-4-0
Fare to Calcutta	122-7-0
Guide	0-2-0
Stamps	0-4-0
Dinner at Arkonam	1-0-0
28th October	
Breakfast	1-6-0
Luncheon	1-13-0
Papers	0-10-0
Water	0-0-6
Guard	0-8-0
Dinner	2-8-6
Porter	0-2-0
29th October	
Breakfast	1-10-0
Coffee	0-4-0
Porter at Manmad	0-3-0
Porter at Bhusaval	0-3-0
Pioneer	0-4-0
Luncheon	0-11-0

Dinner	2-6-0
Porter at Nagpur	0-4-0
30th October	
Carriage at Nagpur	1-8-0
Hotel	3-4-0
Porter, waiter, etc.	1-15-0
Tiffin	0-6-0
Dinner	1-11-0
Paper	0-4-0
31st October	
Tea and bread on way to Calcutta	0-9-0
Breakfast	1-15-0
Tiffin	0-7-0
Paper	0-2-0
Porter at station	0-6-0
Porter at Asansol	0-2-0
Porter at hotel	0-4-0
Carriage to hotel	1-0-0
Carriage & theatre	4-12-0
1st November	
Dhobi	0-10-6
Blacking ink, brown leather paste, brushes	1-9-6
Carriage	3-0-0
Stamps, regd. letter	0-5-0
Standard telegram	0-8-0
2nd November	
Carriage	3-0-0
Stamps	0-4-0
Parcel—books for Bombay	4-12-0
Letter carrier	0-4-0
3rd November	
Carriage	3-8-0
Hair cutting & shaving	0-10-0
Stamps	0-8-0
Parcel men	0-2-0
Charity	0-0-6

4th November	
Dhobi	0-8-0
Grinding razor	0-8-0
Telegram *Standard*	0-8-0
Carriage	1-10-0
5th November	
Carriage	2-0-0
Dhobi	0-4-0
Butler	4-0-0
6th November	
Carriage	5-4-0
7th November	
Theatre	4-0-0
Carriage	1-4-6
8th November	
Dhobi	0-4-0
9th November	
Hindi & Urdu books	0-12-6
Urdu & Bengali books	4-8-0
Blue books	2-8-0
Carriage	1-2-0
Stamps	0-8-0
Telegram [to] P.N. Mukerjee	2-6-0
Dhobi	0-4-0
10th November	
Blue books Bengal Sectt.	11-12-0
Carriage	1-13-6
Telegram *Standard*, Abdulla Coy.	4-14-0
Dhobi	0-3-0
Letter carrier	0-4-0
Paper	0-1-0
Carriage	1-0-0
11th November	
Papers	0-5-0
Letter carrier	0-4-0
Municipal Laws	0-12-0
Porter	0-1-0
Carriage	1-0-0

13th November	
Ticket to Bombay	91-11-0
Telegram to Tilak[1]	2-0-0
Bengali	11-10-0
Carriage	2-2-0
Porters	0-10-0
Water pot, water	0-4-0
Butler	6-0-0
Cook—gratuity	1-0-0
Door-keepers	1-4-0
Sweeper	0-4-0
Bathman	0-12-0
Stamps	0-12-0
Abba Mian for parcel	3-0-0
Hotel bill	100-14-0
14th November	
Breakfast and gratuity	1-10-0
Luncheon	2-0-0
Coffee	0-5-0
Dinner	2-2-0
Thread	0-4-0
Apples	0-2-0
Coachman Moosa Hussein	1-0-0
Dhobi	0-8-0
Telegram—Tilak[2]	1-2-0
15th November	
Breakfast	1-10-0
Luncheon	1-2-0
Telegram—Abba Mian[3]	0-8-0
Telegraph boy	0-0-9
Dinner	2-6-0

[1] These telegrams are not traceable.
[2] These telegrams are not traceable.
[3] *ibid*

Stamps	0-2-0
16th November	
Bombay to Poona fare	14-14-0
Porter	0-4-0
Carriage	1-8-0
Carriage at Poona	1-10-0
Lemonade	0-6-0
Telegram to Poona	1-0-0
17th November	
Porter	0-3-0
Carriage	0-4-0
18th November	
Stamps	1-0-0
19th November	
Carriage	0-10-0
Barber	0-4-0
20th November	
Tram	0-1-0
21st November	
Carriage	0-9-0
27th November	
Stamps	0-2-0
Papers	1-8-0
28th November	
Carriage	0-1-6
Champion subs.	6-0-0
Bombay Gazette	1-0-0
Bombay Dist. Boards Act	2-0-0
Cart	0-8-0
Cook—gratuity	5-0-0
30th November	
Ghati gratuity	2-0-0
Servant Lalu	10-0-0
Stamps—posting & regd. 20 letters	2-0-0
Envelopes	0-4-0
Pens	0-3-0
Paper for pamphlet as per bill	84-0-0

23rd September	
Zululand Petition[1]	15-7-0
Immigration petition[2]	42-4-0
Notes on the grievances[3]	20-0-0
8th September	
Bombay address (120 copies)	50-0-0
Regd. for Rs. 300 to Madras	0-3-9
Package for sending books to Calcutta	0-4-0
Registration--Calcutta Rs. 200	0-3-3
17th September	
Printing 6000 copies pamphlet	110-0-0
September	
Times of India Directory	10-15-0
October	
Sending Rs. 100 by money order	2-1-0
Telegrams—Madras	2-0-0
November	
Note Paper	0-3-3
30th November	
Telegram to Secy. of Viceroy[4]	5-4-0
27th September	
Telegram to Durban[5]	99-6-0
21st September	
Telegram to Sir W. W. Hunter[6]	113-2-0
Bhimbhai for copying, assisting, etc., etc.	20-0-0
Fruit	2-6-0
Pens	0-4-0
Stamps	0-8-0

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Natal Governor",26-2-1896 and "Memorial to J. Chamberlain",11-3-1896

[2] *Vide* "Memorial to J. Chamberlain",11-8-1895

[3] *Vide* " Notes on the Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa", 22-9-1896

[4] This item is not traceable.

[5] These are not traceable.

[6] *ibid*

Porter for taking books to Institute	0-1-3
28th November	
Congress stamp	1-8-0
17th August	
Rajkot to Wadhwan	4-13-0
Telegram—Bombay	1-4-0
Total:	Rs. 1,666-6-1
29th November	
Paid *Madras Standard* on A/c Pamphlet	100-0-0
	1,766-6-1[1]
Paid customs for pamphlets	0-6-6

From a handwritten office copy: S.N. 1310

119. TELEGRAM TO THE VICEROY[2]

November 30, 1896

I RECEIVED WIRE FROM INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA SAYING THAT TRANSVAAL GOVERNMENT IS ENFORCING INDIANS TO LOCATIONS. THIS IS APPARENTLY DESPITE MR. CHAMBERLAIN'S REQUEST TO STAY ACTION UNTIL TEST CASE TRIED. I VENTURE TO THINK THAT THIS ACTION BY TRANSVAAL IS BREACH OF INTERNATIONAL COURTESY IF NOTHING MORE AND PRAY THAT IMMEDIATE ACTION WILL BE TAKEN TO STAY REMOVAL TO LOCATIONS. THE EXISTENCE OF HUNDREDS OF BRITISH INDIANS IS AT STAKE.

The Bengalee, 1-12-1896

[1] Totals carried forward from page to page in the source have been omitted.

[2] This was also published in *The Times of India*, 30-11-1896, with minor changes and without the last sentence.

120. LETTER TO "THE ENGLISHMAN"[1]

BOMBAY,
November 30, 1896

THE EDITOR, *The Englishman*
CALCUTTA

SIR,

With reference to my letter in connection with the grievances of the Indians in South Africa, dated the 13th instant,[2] I happened to read the original telegram received from South Africa. It reads "raad" and not "road" as in the message received by me in Calcutta. The meaning is now quite clear. It is that the Transvaal Government are enforcing Indians to locations. This makes the matter still more serious, if possible.

The High commissioner for South Africa, in accepting the award of the arbitrator in connection with the Indian question in that Republic, writes as follows in a telegram, dated the 24th June, 1895, A.D. :

> The Secretary of State has received a telegram from the Indians stating that they have received notice to remove and praying that action may be stayed. I therefore urge Your Honour's Government to stay action until the resolution and circular of 1893 have been cancelled and the law brought in harmony with the award when a test case can be tried in the courts of the South African Republic.

The resolution and the circular referred to have been cancelled, but so far as I know, and I have been receiving here the South African papers regularly, a test case has not been tried. Evidently, therefore, the action of the Transvaal Government is premature, and, I venture to think, constitutes a breach of international courtesy, if nothing more. I venture to remind you that the assets of the Indians in the Transvaal amount to over £100,000, and that removal to locations would practically mean ruin to the Indian traders. The question, therefore, in its immediate aspect involves the very existence of hundreds of Her

[1] This appeared under the title "The Indians in South Africa".
[2] *Vide* " Letter to "The Englishman",13-11-1896.

Majesty's subjects whose only fault is that they are "sober, thrifty and industrious".

I submit that the matter demands the most urgent and immediate attention of the whole public in India.

M. K. GANDHI

The Englishman, 8-12-1896

1. INTERVIEW TO "THE NATAL ADVERTISER"

[s.s. *Courland*],
January [*13,*][1] 1897

[REPORTER:] How do you view the proceedings of the demonstration committee[2]?

[GANDHIJI:] I certainly think the demonstration is most ill-advised, especially proceeding from a number of Colonists who say they are loyal to the British Crown, and I should never have expected that the thing would go so far. They are showing a most decided spirit of disloyalty by their demonstration, and the effects of it will be felt not only throughout the Colony, but throughout the British Empire, more especially the Indian Empire.

In what way?

Whatever affects the body of Indians who come over here will most decidedly affect the Indians in India.

You mean to say that it will prejudice the Indians against this country?

Yes, and it will give the Indians a sort of feeling that will not be got rid of easily, besides creating a mutual feeling between sister Colonies against India. I don't say that there is a great ill-feeling between Indians and the Colonists generally at the present moment. I certainly think that, from what the Colonists are doing here, people in India would infer that that would be the attitude of every other British Colony also and, so far as things have gone in that direction, they confirm that impression. So we find in South Africa, so far as we can read from the telegrams and the reports in the newspapers.

Of course, you firmly believe that Natal has no right to stop Indians coming here?

[1] Although the s.s. *Courland*, in which Gandhiji travelled, had reached the Durban harbour on December 18, 1896, the ship was placed under extended quarantine, along with another passenger ship the *Naderi*, ostensibly on the ground that Bombay was infested with plague. The interview took place, Gandhiji says "on the day of the landing, as soon as the yellow flag was lowered" (*vide* "An Autobiography- Part III, Chapter III".) and according to *The Natal Advertiser*, 14-1-1897, which said it took place "yesterday morning", it would be on 13-1-1897.

[2] Committee constituted by the Europeans to organize a demonstration at the harbour against the disembarkation of the Indian passengers

I certainly think so.

On what grounds?

On the ground that they are British subjects and, also, because the Colony of Natal has been importing one class of Indians and does not want to have another class.[1]

Yes.

It is very inconsistent. It seems to be a sort of leonine partnership. They want to get all the advantages that can possibly be gained from the Indians, but do not want the Indians to have any advantage whatever.

What attitude will the Indian Government take on this question?

That I am unable to say. So far I don't know what the feeling of the Indian Government is. The feeling cannot be apathetic towards the Indians. They are bound to sympathize, but what attitude they will take depends upon so many circumstances that it is very difficult to conjecture what it will be.

Is it probable that, if free Indians are stopped, the Indian Government will stop the indentured Indians?

I hope so;[2] but whether the Indian Government will do that is a different thing.

What I think most of is that the demonstrators have not taken any notice whatever of the Imperial aspect of the question. It is an admitted fact that the Indian Empire is the brightest jewel in the British Crown. Most of the trade of the United Kingdom is carried on with the Indian Empire, and it furnishes some of the bravest soldiers to fight the wars of Great Britain in almost all parts of the world.

"They have never been further than Egypt," interpolated the interviewer, and Mr. Gandhi tacitly admitted the correction.

The policy of the Imperial Government has throughout been a policy of conciliation — a policy of winning over the Indians by love and not by force. Every Britisher is agreed that the glory of the British Empire depends upon the retention of the Indian Empire and on the

[1] The reference is to free Indians—traders and artisans—as distinguished from indentured labourers whose immigration was permitted.

[2] South African Indians had, in fact, petitioned both the Imperial and the Indian Governments to disallow further emigration if certain restrictions imposed on indentured labourers on the expiry of their indenture were not removed. *Vide* "Memorial to J. Chamberlain", 11-8-1895 and "Memorial to Lord Elgin", 11-8-1895.

face of this, it looks very unpatriotic of the Colonists of Natal, whose prosperity depends not a little upon the introduction of the Indians, to so vigorously protest against the introduction of free Indians. The policy of exclusion is obsolete, and Colonists should admit Indians to the franchise and, at the same time, in points in which they are not fully civilized, Colonists should help them to become more civilized. That, I certainly think, should be the policy followed throughout the Colonies, if all the parts of the British Empire are to remain in harmony.

Are Indians admitted, at present, to all parts of the British Empire?

Australia has now been endeavouring to exclude them, but the Government Bill has been thrown out by the Legislative Council, and, even if the policy were adopted in Australia, it remains to be seen whether it will be sanctioned by the Home Government. Even if the Australians were successful, I should say it would not be good for Natal to follow a bad example and one which was bound to be suicidal in the end.

What was your main object in visiting India?

My main object in returning was to see my family, my wife and children, from whom I have been separated, almost continually, for the last seven years. I told the Indians here that I should have to go to India for a short time. They thought I might be able to do something for the cause of the Indians in Natal and I thought so also. And here I may state, parenthetically, that we have not been fighting, really speaking, with regard to the position of the Indians in the Colony, but we have been simply fighting for the principle. The object of our agitation is not to swamp the Colony with Indians or to have the status of the Indian in the Colony of Natal defined, but to have the Imperial question decided once for all, namely: 'What status will the Indians outside British India have?' That was the principle we have been striving to determine. The Indian gentlemen interested in the cause in Durban discussed the question with me as to what my plan of action should be in India, and the plan of action was that I should simply get my travelling expenses in India paid by the Natal Congress. As soon as I arrived in India I published that pamphlet.[1]

Where did you prepare the pamphlet?

[1] The Green Pamphlet

I did not prepare it in Natal. I prepared the whole of it while on the voyage home.

How did you secure the information it contains?

I was determined to make myself acquainted with all the facts about the Indians in South Africa, and with that object in view I had translations of the Transvaal laws supplied to me, and I asked friends in the Cape Colony and in other parts of South Africa to furnish me with any information they had on this question. So, I was fully acquainted with the facts before I decided to go to India. In the memorials which have been sent from the Indians of Natal to the Home Government, the Imperial view of the question has always been kept in the forefront.

Were the memorials bearing on the franchise question?

Not exclusively. They treated with the immigration and other laws the Colony has passed, as well as the Transvaal agitation.[1]

What was your object in publishing the pamphlet?

My object in publishing it was to place the entire facts regarding the position of the Indians in South Africa before the Indian public. The people here believe that India does not know exactly how many Indians were outside the country, and what their status was, and the object was to draw their attention to the subject, and it was with that view that the pamphlet was published.

But had you not an ulterior object?

The ulterior object was to have the status of the Indians decided to our satisfaction; that is to say, in terms with the Proclamation of 1858.

Do you hope to be successful?

I certainly hope that, with the help of the Indian public in India, we shall achieve the end very quickly.

What means do you propose adopting?

We desire them to go in for a constitutional agitation in India. At every meeting that has been held, resolutions have been passed authorizing the chairman to draw up memorials addressed to the Indian Government and the Home Government, drawing their

[1] The agitation against the legislation which sought to enforce the Indians to live and trade in specified locations; *vide*, "Petitition to Lord Ripon", Before 5-5-1895 and "Petition to Lord Elgin", Before 5-5-1895.

attention to the position of the Indians in South Africa. These meetings have been held throughout the presidencies of Bombay, Madras and Calcutta.[1]

Have you received any encouragement from the Indian Government on the subject?

No; I had to return before I received any reply.

Mr. Gandhi continued:

It has been said that I went to India to blacken the character of the Natal Colonists. This I must emphatically deny. It will be remembered that I addressed an 'Open Letter'[2] to the members of the Natal Parliament about two years ago, and there I gave my view of the treatment the Indians were receiving, and it was exactly that view that I placed before the Indian public.

In fact, I copied an extract from that 'Open Letter', word for word, into my pamphlet.[3] It gave my view of the treatment the Indians were receiving before, and no exception was taken to that portion of the 'Open Letter' when it was published here. No one then said that I was blackening the character of the Colonists, but only when that statement was repeated in India. How that can amount to blackening the character of the Colonists I fail to understand. At the time of discussing the 'Open Letter', almost all the papers said unanimously that I was absolutely impartial, and not a single statement I made was contradicted. Under these circumstances, I thought I was perfectly justified in making the extract from the 'Open Letter'. I am aware that Reuter cabled Home a summary[4] of the pamphlet that could not be borne out by the 'Open Letter', and as soon as you received the pamphlet, both the Durban papers said Reuter had exaggerated its statements.[5] I can hardly be held responsible for Reuter's statements and opinions, and I believe that the leaders of the demonstration party

[1] The Calcutta public meeting which Gandhiji was to have addressed (*vide* "Letter to F. S. Taleyarkhan", November 5, 1896.) had to be cancelled as he had to leave urgently for South Africa (*vide* "Letter to *The Englishman*", 13-1-1896). Perhaps, Gandhiji was alluding to a meeting of the Committee of the British India Association in Calcutta which he addressed and which decided to submit to the Secretary of State for India a memorial in regard to the position of the South African Indians.

[2] *Vide* "Open Letter", Before 19-12-1894.

[3] *Vide* "London Diary", 12-11-1888.

[4] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

[5] *ibid*

have not read the 'Open Letter' and the pamphlet; they have taken Reuter's telegram as an accurate summary of the pamphlet, and are, therefore, proceeding on these lines. If this belief is well founded, then I say that the leaders are doing an injustice to the Colonists as well as the Indians. I will say I have not gone beyond what I did here, and my stating the case in India has not prejudiced it in any way.

In your Indian campaign what attitude did you adopt towards the indentured Indian question?

I have said most emphatically, in the pamphlets and elsewhere, that the treatment of the indentured Indians is no worse or better in Natal than they receive in other parts of the world. I have never endeavoured to show that the indentured Indians have been receiving cruel treatment. The question, generally speaking, is not a question of the ill-treatment of Indians, but of the legal disabilities that are placed on them. I have even said in the pamphlet that instances I have quoted show that the treatment that the Indians receive was owing to the prejudice against them, and what I have endeavoured to show is the connection between the prejudice and the laws passed by the Colony to restrict the freedom of the Indian.

I have said that the Indians did not approach the Indian Government, the Indian public, or the Home Government, with the view to having any redress against the prejudices of these Colonists. I have said that Indians are the most hated beings in South Africa, and that they are being ill-treated; but, for all that we do not ask the Government for redress with regard to these things, but with regard to the legal disabilities that are placed upon the Indians. We protest against the legislation passed by prejudice, and redress has been asked for against them. This, then, is simply a question of toleration on the part of the Indian. The attitude taken up by the Colonists, especially by the demonstration committee, is an attitude of intolerance. It has been said in the papers that there is an organized attempt, under my leadership, to swamp the Colony with Indians.[1] This statement is absolutely false. I have as much to do with having induced these passengers to come here as I have with inducing passengers to come from Europe. No such attempt has ever been made.

I should think your agitation in India would have rather the opposite effect?

Certainly. I tried to induce some gentlemen to come who, I

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

thought, would be able to replace me, to work for the cause and I was absolutely unsuccessful.[1] They refused to come.

The number of passengers on board the *Courland* and *Naderi* has been exaggerated. There are not 800 passengers on the two ships, so far as my information goes. In all there are about 600. Of these, only 200 are for Natal, the rest are for Delagoa Bay, Mauritius, Bourbon, and the Transvaal. Now, out of these 200, about 100 are newcomers and of these new comers about 40 are ladies, and so it is a question of admitting about 60 newcomers. These 60 newcomers consist of storekeepers' assistants, traders on their own account, and hawkers. I have nothing whatever to do with bringing passengers to any of the other ports either. A statement has appeared to the effect that there is a printing plant, 50 blacksmiths, and 30 compositors on board—all absolutely false. Such a statement is calculated to inflame the passions of the European artisans and the working people in Durban, though it has no foundation in fact. The leader of the demonstration committee, and anybody in Natal, would be perfectly justified in getting up an agitation—a constitutional agitation, remember—if there was an organized attempt to swamp the Colony with Indians, and Indians of this stamp; but, as a matter of fact, there is not a single blacksmith or compositor on board.

The statement has been made that I have been advising people on board to institute legal proceedings against the Government for unlawful detention.[2] That is another statement that has no foundation in fact. My object throughout is not to sow dissension between the two communities, but to assist at creating harmony between the two, without the Indians having to accept any degradation of their status as conferred upon them by the Proclamation of 1858, when it was stated that all subjects of Her Majesty in India would be treated on a footing of equality without distinction of race, colour, or creed; and I submit, I am justified in requesting every Colonist to tolerate the attitude, however much they have differed from it. Really speaking, there can be no objection to the Indian. The Colonial Patriotic Union[3] have put

[1] *Vide* "Letter to F. S. Taleyarkhan", 10-10-1896, "Letter to F. S. Taleyarkhan", 18-10-1896, and "Letter to F. S. Taleyarkhan", 5-11-1896.

[2] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

[3] An association formed by Durban Europeans in November 1896 to resist immigration of free Indians; *vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

forward statements that the artisan class are concerned. I say there is no competition between Europeans and Indians.

It is true that few Indians do now and then come to Natal, but the number of those in the Colony is very greatly exaggerated, and certainly there are very few new comers. And how can there be any competition between a high-class European and an ordinary Indian artisan? I don't mean to say that Indian artisans cannot compete successfully with the European artisans, but here, again, the Indian artisans of a high order, and of the right stamp, do not come here, and if they did come, they would not find much employment, just as if other professional men came here they would not find much to do.

What is your object in coming back?

I do not return here with the intention of making money, but of acting as a humble interpreter between the two communities. There is a great misunderstanding between the communities, and I shall endeavour to fulfil the office of interpreter so long as both the communities do not object to my presence.

Had you the approval of the Indian Congress[1] to all the statements you made and the action you took in India?

I certainly think so. I spoke in the name of the people.

Are there not some indentured Indians on board these boats?

No. There are some who come under an ordinary contract to serve merchants here as shop assistants, but none indentured. An unauthorized agency for bringing Indians under contract to render domestic service is illegal, according to the Indian Immigration Law.

Have the Indian Congress no intention of starting a newspaper in Natal?

There was an intention, not by the Indian Congress, but by a body of workers who sympathize with the Congress, of starting a paper, but that idea has to be given up, simply because I could not see any way to devote my time to that and other work. I had instructions to bring material and Indian type, but as I found it would be impossible for me to work it, I did not bring anything. Had I been able to persuade the gentlemen with whom I was negotiating to come over here, I might have brought the material, but as that fell through, I did not do so.

What steps have the Indian Congress taken with regard to this Colonial

[1] The reference is to the Natal Indian Congress

agitation?

So far as I know, the Congress have taken no steps whatever.

What is your plan of campaign?

My plan of campaign now is, if I am allowed time, to show that there is no conflict of interest between the two countries; that the attitude taken up by the Colony at present is indefensible on every ground; and to justify what I have done in the eyes of the Colonists for the sake of the case in which I am interested. Of course, we should resist the passing of any laws to restrict the freedom of Indians entering the Colony. I would naturally expect to have the full support of the Indian Government on that. There is absolutely no danger of the Colony getting swamped. The *Courland*, on one of her voyages, took back as many as a hundred new arrivals, and I, therefore, submit that the leaders should make sure of their facts before they put a drastic policy before the Colony. The free Indian population really remains stationary. The law of supply and demand regulates the inflow and outflow of passengers.

Mr. Gandhi requested the reporter to convey to the editor of the *Advertiser* his best thanks for allowing him to ventilate his views.

In taking leave of Mr. Gandhi, the reporter laid stress on the very strong feeling against him at present in Durban, and advised him, for his own sake, to be exceedingly careful in regard to disembarking, since he was determined to land.

The Natal Advertiser, 14-1-1897

2. LETTER TO ATTORNEY-GENERAL

BEACH GROVE, DURBAN,
January 20, 1897

TO
THE HONOURABLE HARRY ESCOMBE
ATTORNEY-GENERAL
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I beg to thank you and the Government for the kind enquiries made about me and the kindness shown to me by the officials of

Durban after the incident that happened on Wednesday last.[1]

I beg to state that I do not wish that any notice should be taken of the behaviour of some people towards me last Wednesday, which, I have no doubt, was due to misapprehension on their part as to what I did in India with reference to the Asiatic question.[2]

It is due to the Government to state that, although, under instructions from you, the Superintendent of Water Police offered to take me to town quietly at night, I proceeded to the shore with Mr. Laughton[3] on my own responsibility without informing the Water Police of my departure.

I have, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure in Despatch No. 32 of 3rd March, 1897, from the Governor of Natal to the Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Colonial Office Records: Petition and Despatches, 1897

3. CABLE TO BRITISH COMMITTEE OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS, W. W. HUNTER AND BHOWNAGGREE

[*January 28, 1897*][4]

FROM

INDIANS

TO

(1) "INCAS"[5]
(2) SIR WILLIAM HUNTER CARE *Times*
(3) BHOWNAGGREE, LONDON

TWO INDIAN STEAMERS "COURLAND" "NADERI" LEFT BOMBAY 30[6] NOVEMBER. ARRIVED 18 DECEMBER. DESPITE CLEAN BILL HEALTH

[1] Shortly after he disembarked from the ship on January 13 Gandhiji had been besieged by demonstrators. He escaped being lynched by the intervention of Mrs. Alexander, the Police Superintendent's wife, and by that officer's resourcefulness when later the house where Gandhiji had taken shelter was also besieged. *Vide* "*Satyagraha in South Africa*" , Chapter VII and "*An Autobiography*- Part III, Chapter II & III".

[2] Chamberlain had cabled Natal Government to prosecute Gandhiji's assailants and Attorney-General Harry Escombe has sought Gandhiji's assistance in indicting them.

[3] A European advocate of Durban who was friendly with Gandhiji

[4] The cable is undated. *Vide* however the following item.

[5] Telegraphic address of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress in London

[6] The *Naderi* had actually sailed on November 28; *vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

THROUGHOUT VOYAGE FIVE DAYS' QUARANTINE. BOMBAY PROCLAIMED NEXT DAY INFECTED PORT. HEALTH OFFICER SUSPENDED. ANOTHER APPOINTED WHO ON 24 VISITED SHIPS ORDERED DISINFECTION AND BURNING OLD CLOTHES MATS ETC. IMPOSED 11 DAYS' QUARANTINE. BURNING ETC. DONE ON 25. ON 28 POLICE OFFICER BOARDED REDISINFECTED AND BURNT BEDDINGS BAGS CLOTHING ETC. HEALTH OFFICER ON 29 VISITED SHIPS SHOWED SATISFACTION AGAIN IMPOSED 12 DAYS' QUARANTINE. PRATIQUE DUE 10 JANUARY GIVEN ON 11. AFTER STEAMERS' ARRIVAL MEETINGS CALLED BY VOLUNTEER OFFICERS AND OTHERS TO FORCIBLY PREVENT LANDING PASSENGERS. TOWN HALL USED FOR MEETINGS. SPEAKER DECLARED GOVERNMENT SYMPATHY AND THAT DEFENCE MINISTER SAID GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT OPPOSE MOB. STATED THAT 800 PASSENGERS FOR NATAL ON TWO STEAMERS MOSTLY ARTISANS AND LABOURERS. SCHEME TO SWAMP COLONY WITH INDIANS. PRINTING PLANT ON BOARD ETC. SUCH STATEMENTS PROMOTED AGITATION INFLAMED PEOPLE. TRUTH IS ONLY 600 PASSENGERS NOT MORE THAN 200 FOR NATAL BEING TRADERS THEIR ASSISTANTS RELATIVES WIVES CHILDREN OF OLD RESIDENTS. NO SCHEME TO SWAMP COLONY. NO PRINTING PLANT. ONE OF QUARANTINE COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY GOVERNMENT HEADED SIXTH DIVISION OF MOB. ULTIMATUM ASKING PASSENGERS TO RETURN INDIA UNLESS THEY WOULD FACE OPPOSITION FROM THOUSANDS OF DURBAN PEOPLE. GANDHI ON "COURLAND" THREATENED WITH TARRING FEATHERING LYNCHING. STEAMERS' AGENTS SHOWING ILLEGALITY IN IMPOSING QUARANTINE URGED RELIEF AND PROTECTION FOR PASSENGERS FROM GOVERNMENT. AGENTS' LETTER IGNORED TILL AFTER DEMONSTRATION ON THIRTEENTH. THOUSANDS INCLUDING GOVERNMENT RAILWAYMEN VOLUNTEERS 300 KAFFIRS WITH STICKS MASSED AT WHARF "TO PREVENT LANDING OF PASSENGERS BY FORCE IF NECESSARY". DEFENCE MINISTER BROUGHT SHIPS IN ADDRESSED MOB AND IT DISPERSED. PASSENGERS' SAFETY ASSURED. SOME LANDED AFTERNOON OTHERS NEXT DAY. GOVERNMENT OFFERED GANDHI TO LAND QUIETLY AT NIGHT. HE LANDED LATE AFTERNOON ACCOMPANIED BY ADVOCATE LAUGHTON. ROUGHLY HANDLED. ASSAULTED BY CROWD. POLICE RESCUED. PAPERS CONDEMN DEMONSTRATION AND AGREE AGITATORS PROCEEDED ON FALSE STATEMENTS, JUSTIFY GANDHI. SOME JOURNALS SUSPECT COLLUSION BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND AGITATORS. PASSENGERS SUFFERED IMMENSELY. GOVERNMENT NOT HEEDING. INDIANS' QUARANTINE RELIEF FUND SUPPLIED BEDDINGS PROVISIONS ETC. DURING QUARANTINE. GOVERNMENT NEGOTIATING WITH HOME GOVERNMENT TO SECURE ANTI-INDIAN LEGISLATION. PLEASE WATCH.

From a photostat of the office copy: S.N. 1883

4. *LETTER TO SIR WILLIAM W. HUNTER*[1]

DURBAN,
January 29, 1897

SIR,

I reached Natal on the 18th December but could not land in Durban before the 13th January. The circumstances under which this delay occurred are very painful. The Indian community yesterday sent a very long telegram[2] to you narrating the events of the past 30 days. I venture to give below the circumstances that culminated in a demonstration by about 5,000 Durban men to oppose the landing of passengers on board two ships *Courland* and *Naderi,* the first named being owned by Messrs Dada Abdoolla and Co. of Durban and the second by the Persian Steam Navigation Co. (of Bombay).

About the beginning of August last,[3] the Tongaat Sugar Co. applied to the Immigration Trust Board for eleven Indian artisans to be brought under indenture.[4] This gave rise to an organized agitation by the European artisans against the Indians generally. Well-attended meetings of European artisans were held in Durban and Maritzburg and other towns to protest against the introduction of Indian artisans by the Sugar Co. who, yielding to the voice of the artisans, withdrew their application. But the agitation continued. The leaders assumed certain facts and allowed the agitation to develop into one against the Indians wholesale almost without discrimination. Angry correspondence condemning the Indians, mostly under *noms de plume,* went on. While this was going on, statements appeared in the Press to the effect that the Indians had organized an attempt to flood the Colony with free Indians. About this time appeared also Reuter's telegram[5] regarding my pamphlet which enraged the Colonists. The telegram said that I had stated that Indians were robbed, assaulted, etc.

[1] The source does not mention the addressee, but from Hunter's acknowledgment in his letter of February 22, 1897 (S.N. 2074), it is clear that he had received it. Presumably similar letters were sent to the British Committee of the Indian National Congress and Sir Mancherji Bhownaggree.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] Cf. however "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897, where the date given is April 7.

[4] *Vide* also "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

[5] For an extract from this, *vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

When, however, the papers received copies of the pamphlet, they acknowledged that I had stated nothing that was not stated in Natal before and that was not acknowledged to be correct. But the general populace, who formed their opinion of the pamphlet from Reuter's summary, continued to retain their bitter feelings. Then came the wires regarding the Bombay and Madras meetings. These, while not inaccurate, were read together with Reuter's summary and made the feelings more bitter.

In the mean while, steamers continued to bring a large number of Indians. The arrivals were prominently reported and exaggerated. The almost equal returns by the same steamers passed unnoticed. And the artisans were led to believe without any ground that these steamers brought mostly Indian artisans. This gave rise to the formation of anti-Indian associations[1] at whose meetings resolutions were passed asking the Natal Government to stop the influx of free Indians, to prevent Indians from owning landed property, etc. These associations are not much countenanced by the commercial people but are composed chiefly of artisans and a few professional men.

At the time this was going on, two ships *Courland* and *Naderi,* bound for Natal and containing Indian passengers, were reported to be on the water. I was a passenger on board the *Courland.* I was to have gone by one of the British Indian boats, but the telegram from Durban, asking me to return at once, necessitated my taking passage by the *Courland*. As soon as the news became public property, the papers and the Durban Town Council urged that Bombay should be declared an infected port. The steamers reached Natal on the 18th and were placed under quarantine for 23 days from the day of leaving Bombay. Proclamation declaring Bombay an infected port was dated the 18th December and published in a *Gazette Extraordinary* on the 19th, that is, one day after the steamers' arrival. The medical officer, who imposed five day, quarantine, making 23 days from the time of departure of the steamers from Bombay, was dismissed and another appointed in his stead. He boarded the steamers after the expiry of the first quarantine and imposed 12 days' quarantine from that day. The Government had appointed a Committee to report as to how the two ships were to be treated and the reports said that 12 days' quarantine

[1] The European Protection Association and the Colonial Patriotic Union; *vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

after fumigation, etc., would be necessary. The medical officer gave instructions with regard to fumigation and disinfection during the time. These were carried out. Six days after this, an officer was placed on each ship to watch fumigation, etc. And after that, the medical officer came again and imposed a quarantine of 12 days from that day. Thus, even if the Committee's report were justified, 11 clear days were wasted before the 12 days' quarantine began.

While the ships were thus lying in the outer anchorage, a local butcher, Mr. Harry Sparks, Captain, Natal Mounted Rifles of the Volunteer Force, published a notice under his signature calling "every man in Durban to attend a public meeting to be held on the 4th January for the purpose of arranging a demonstration to proceed to the Point, and protest against the landing of Asiatics."[1] This meeting was very largely attended and held in the Durban Town Hall. It was, however, a compliment that the more sober portion of the community held aloof from active participation in the movement. It is also worthy of notice that the associations before referred to did not take part in the movement. Dr. Mackenzie, one of the members of the Committee alluded to above, and Captain of the Naval Carbineers and Mr. J. S. Wylie, a local solicitor and Captain of the Durban Light Infantry, were the chief movers. Inflammatory speeches were made at the meeting. It was resolved that the Government should be called upon to return the passengers on the two ships to India at the Colony's expense and "that every man at this meeting agrees and binds himself, with a view to assisting the Government to carry out the foregoing resolution, to do all his country may require of him and with that view will, if necessary, attend at the Point at any time when required." The meeting also suggested that the quarantine should be further extended and that a special session be called, if necessary, to extend it, thus, in my humble opinion, showing clearly that the previous quarantine was meant to vex the Indians into returning to India.

The Government, in their telegraphic reply to the resolutions, said that they had no power "apart from such as may be conferred by the quarantine laws to prevent the landing in the Colony of any class of Her Majesty's subjects" and deprecated action suggested by the second resolution quoted above. There-upon another meeting was

[1] *Vide* also "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

held in the Town Hall. Mr. Wylie moved a resolution, which was carried, to the effect that a special session should be called to extend quarantine. The following are the significant passages of his speech:

> The Committee said if the Government did nothing, Durban would have to do it herself and go in force to the Point and see what could be done. They capped that by remarking "we presume that you, as representing the Government and good authority of this Colony, would have to bring force to oppose us." Mr. Escombe, the Attorney-General and Minister of Defence, said, "We will do nothing of the sort. We are with you and we are going to do nothing of the sort to oppose you. But, if you put us in such a position, we may have to go to the Governor of the Colony and ask him to take over the reins of this Colony as we can no longer conduct the Government. You will have to find some other persons.

The second resolution was that, "We proceed by demonstration to the Point on the arrival of the Indians but each man binds himself to conform to the orders of his leaders." The speakers inflamed the hearers particularly against me. A document that was issued for signatures was thus headed: "List of names of members (trade or profession mentioned) who are willing to proceed to the Point and resist by force, if necessary, the landing of Asiatics and to obey any orders which may be given by the leaders." The next stage in the movement was for the Demonstration Committee to send an ultimatum to the Captain of the *Courland*, saying that passengers should return to India at the Colony's expense and that, if they did not do so, their landing would be resisted by thousands of Durban men. This was practically ignored.

While the movement was thus progressing, the Agents communicated with the Government and asked for protection of passengers. No reply was vouchsafed until the day on which the ships were brought in, on the 13th instant. Not much remains to be added to the telegram, of which a copy is enclosed herewith. As to the assault on me, it was due to the misrepresentations that appeared about me in the papers. The assault itself was the work of irresponsible persons and by itself need not be noticed at all. Of course, I narrowly escaped being lynched. The papers agree in saying that I did nothing that another in my place would not have done. I may also state that, after the assault, I was treated kindly by the Government officials and afforded protection.

The Government now intend to introduce, in March next, laws restricting the influx of the Indians. Town Councils have been asking

the Government for widest powers to enable them to prevent Indians from taking out licences to trade, owning landed property, etc. What the outcome will be it is difficult to say. Our only hope lies in you and the gentlemen working in London in our behalf. In any case, it is time some declaration was made as to the policy of the Home Government with regard to the Indians going outside India. The continuation of assisted immigration to Natal under the circumstances seems to be a great anomaly. There is absolutely no danger of the Asiatics swamping the Colony. There is no competition between Indian and European artisans. It may almost be said that for every Indian coming to Natal one returns to India. The whole of this matter will be fully dealt with in a memorial to Mr. Chamberlain that is in course of preparation. This letter has been sent in the mean while to furnish you with a brief summary of the past events. We are aware that your time is otherwise well occupied. But, however reluctant we may be to trouble you with our sorrows, we find no escape from the course if we are to get justice.

Thanking you on behalf of the Indian community in Natal,

I remain,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the office copy: S.N. 1967

5. LETTER TO THE BRITISH AGENT

[DURBAN,]
NATAL,
January 29, 1897

HIS HONOUR THE BRITISH AGENT
PRETORIA

SIR,

Many Indians, intending to proceed to the Transvaal *via* Charlestown find difficulty in crossing the border. Some days ago, the official on the border allowed Indians possessing £25 to proceed to their destination in the Transvaal. Now it is said the official on the border would not allow the Indians to cross the border under any circumstances, though some may have been able to do so. May I venture to ask if you will be good enough to ascertain, on behalf of Her Majesty's Indian subjects, under what circumstances they will be

allowed to cross the border.

I have, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Pretoria Archives and the Colonial Office Records, South Africa, General, 1897

6. LETTER TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"[1]

DURBAN,
February 2, 1897

THE EDITOR, *The Natal Mercury*

SIR,

I venture to offer a few remarks on the Indian famine, regarding which appeal for funds has been made to the British Colonies. It is not perhaps generally known that India is the poorest country in the world, in spite of the fabulous accounts of the riches of her Rajas and Maharajas. The highest Indian authorities state that "the remaining fifth (i.e., of the population of British India), or 40,000,000, go through life on insufficient food". This is the normal condition of British India. Famines, as a rule, recur in India every four years. It must not be difficult to imagine what the condition of the people would be at such a time in that poverty-stricken country. Children are snatched from their mothers, wives from their husbands. Whole tracts are devastated, and this in spite of the precautions taken by a most benevolent Government. Of the famines of recent times, that of 1877-78 was the most severe. The famine commissioners thus report as to the death-rate:

> It has been estimated, and, in our opinion, on substantial grounds, that the mortality which occurred in the Provinces under British administration, during the period of famine and drought extending over the years 1877 and 1878, amounted, in a population of 197,000,000 to 52,50,000 in excess of the deaths that would have occurred had the seasons been ordinarily healthy.

The total expenditure during the crisis was over £11,000,000.

The present famine bids fair to beat the record in point of severity. The distress has already become acute. The worst time has yet to come, when summer sets in. This is the first time, I believe, that the British Colonies have been appealed to from India, and it is to be

[1] This appeared under the title "The Indian Famine",

hoped the response will be generous. The Central Famine Committee at Calcutta must have exhausted all the resources before deciding to appeal to the Colonies. And it will be a great pity if the response is not adequate to the urgency of the appeal.

It is true that the outlook is not particularly cheerful even in South Africa, but it will be admitted that there can be no comparison between the distress in India and that in South Africa. And even if there should be a call on the purse of the Natal magnates on behalf of the South African poor, I venture to trust that that would not deter them from dipping their hands deep into their purses on behalf of millions of their fellow-subjects in India, who are on the verge of starvation. Whether it be in the United Kingdom or in the Colonies, I am sure British philanthropy will assert itself, as it has on previous occasions, on behalf of suffering humanity, no matter where and how often.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 4-2-1897

7. APPEAL FOR FUNDS[1]

[*February 3, 1897*]

DEAR COUNTRYMEN,

While we are having our meals daily, hundreds of thousands are dying of hunger in India. The dark shadow of famine has caused a gloom over our dear country. The people of India have applied to all under the British flag to send help to the starving millions there. It is, perhaps, not known to all of us that, without famine, 40,000,000 in India do not know what it is to have their hunger satisfied from year's end to year's end. Imagine, then, what must be the condition of our brethren in India during these distressing times. Under such circumstances, it is the duty of every Indian, who is able to get sufficient to feed himself, to part with something for the sake of the dying. It will not do for us to say, 'I gave something only yesterday

[1] The appeal, which was published in the source under the title "The Black Famine in India", was issued by the Committee formed at a meeting of Indians on February 3, to make collections from various centres in Natal. It was translated into the several languages spoken by Indians in Natal as is shown by copies available at the Sabarmati Sangrahalaya.

towards this fund or that.' You would not say so if you saw a man dying at your door of hunger; you would give all you may have to satisfy the hunger of that dying man. In the present case, the only difference is that millions are dying of hunger far away from you in a place which is your Motherland, from which you derive your status whatever it may be, and with whose welfare yours is indissolubly bound up. It would not also do to say that what you may give will be of no use to the ocean of sufferers in India. This is a mistake. If all were to argue that way, there will be no help for them. It is the drops that make the ocean. It is, therefore, the duty of every one of us to give the utmost we can towards the Relief Fund.

If you are not in affluent circumstances, it should be a duty to deny yourself something—some luxury, some jewellery, anything that is not absolutely necessary for you.

The funds will be in the hands of a Committee. The names of all who give 10s. or more will be published in newspapers in India and everyone will get a receipt, signed by Mr. M. K. Gandhi for the Famine Relief Committee, countersigned by the person or persons receiving the contributions. The Committee consists of Messrs Dada Abdoolla and Co., Messrs Mahomed Cassim Camroodeen and Co., Messrs Azam Gulam Hussain and Co., Mr. Mohanlal Ray, Mr. Syed Mahomed, Rev. Simon Velaman, Mr. Adamji Miyakhan, Mr. Parsee Rustomji, Mr. Peermahomed Dawoodji, Mr. Moosa Hajee Cassim, Messrs Dawood Mahomed and Co., Mr. Dunn, Mr. Royappan, Mr Lawrence, Mr. Godfrey, Mr. Osman Ahmed, Mr. Joshua, Mr. Gabriel, Mr. Hajee Abdoola, Mr. Hasam Sumar, Mr. Peeran Mahomed, Mr. Mogararia, Mr. Gandhi and others.

It is expected that the Indians in the Colony will furnish at least £1,000 for the sufferers, though there is no reason why the funds should not amount to £2,000 and more. It will all depend upon your generosity and sympathy for your brethren in India.

No money should be given without a receipt in English and Tamil, signed by Mr. M. K. Gandhi and countersigned by the receiver.

The Natal Advertiser, 4-2-1897

8. LETTER TO J. B. ROBINSON[1]

WEST STREET, DURBAN,
February 4, 1897

J. B. ROBINSON, ESQ.
JOHANNESBURG
SIR,

We, as representing the Indian community in Natal, beg respectfully to approach you, as a Leader of the British community in Johannesburg, on a matter which, we are confident, has your entire sympathy and support.

The present famine in India beats all previous records, and the alarming condition to which people have been reduced by starvation and consequent evils is unparalleled in the annals of Indian famines. The acute suffering is so widespread the authorities as well as the public have called forth the utmost resources of Indian charity. Relief Fund Committees have been formed in all parts of India, but they are found to be entirely and absolutely inadequate to stem the rising tide of distress. The population is being rapidly decimated in spite of the efforts of those that are working heart and soul for the poor, suffering masses of humanity. The Government and the people of India cannot cope with the horrors of the calamity in an effective way, and no wonder the English public has stretched its ever-ready helping hand.

The Press in England has taken up the matter in right earnest, and as you are aware, a Mansion House[2] Fund has been opened. It is stated that even foreign powers have promised help.

Probably, this is the first time in the history of Indian famines that the Colonies have been asked to open relief funds, and we have no doubt every loyal British subject will gladly avail himself of the opportunity of offering what material assistance be can to lessen the horrible suffering of his tens of millions of starving fellow-subjects.

Realizing his responsibility and recognizing his duty, our Mayor has already started a fund in response to Calcutta cablegram from the Chief Justice of Bengal on behalf of Central Committee there.[3] Indians

[1] The signatories to this letter were the members of the Committee named in the foregoing appeal.

[2] The official residence of the Mayor of London. The fund in the end amounted to £550,000. — *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1965

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Francis W. Maclean", 7-5-1897.

in all parts of the world have been moving actively in the matter, and in Durban alone, by yesterday, they subscribed about £700, two firms contributing over £100 each and one £75 and there are good grounds for the hope that the collection might amount to about £1,500.

We have taken the liberty to approach you, Sir, because we are confident you will sympathize with our aims and objects; we, therefore, venture to request you to start a relief fund. There is no doubt, with your immense influence and energy, you are in position to help materially the public of India in their endeavours to relieve the suffering millions from the terrible consequences of the prevailing famine, and we feel sure that Johannesburg, with its immense riches, can do much more in this direction than all other parts of South Africa put together.

We may be permitted to state here that we have appealed to the Indians in different parts of South Africa to do all they can in this matter.

Hoping that this will receive your immediate attention and with apologies for encroaching upon your precious time,

We remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servants

From the office copy: S.N. 1996

9. TO THE CLERGYMEN OF DURBAN

BEACH GROVE, DURBAN,
February 6, 1897

TO. . .

I venture to write to you; about the Indian Famine Fund opened by the Mayor of Durban. I beg to draw your attention to the remark made by the Mayor in the Town Council yesterday to the effect that only one European had so far subscribed.

I need hardly describe the suffering of the millions in India who may have to die simply from want of sufficient nutriment.

I beg to refer you to my letter[1] in the *Mercury* of the 3rd instant which would give you some idea of the volume of distress that is threatening India at the present time.

[1] Gandhiji is evidently referring to his letter of February 2 which appeared in that newspaper on February 4; vide "Letter to *The Natal Mercury*", 2-2-1897.

I venture to think that references to the matter and appeals to the audiences for funds from the pulpit to[morrow?][1] will go a great way towards exciting the generous sympathy of the public on behalf of the suffering millions in India.

I beg to remain,

Your obedient servant,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the office copy: S.N. 3643

10. LETTER TO A. M. CAMERON[2]

BEACH GROVE, DURBAN,

February 15, 1897

A. M. CAMERON
POST OFFICE DARGLE ROAD[3]

DEAR SIR,

In thank you for your kind letter of the 10th instant and your valuable suggestion. I am very glad that you will be able to spare a few days for coming down to Durban. I enclose herewith a cheque for £3. If you wish to travel first class you may do so and your further expenses will be paid.

I am,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the office copy: S.N. 3645

[1] February 7 was a Sunday.

[2] The addressee was then the Natal correspondent of *The Times of India* (vide "Letter to F. S. Taleyarkhan", 17-12-1897) and Gandhiji had invited him over for consultations about a journal to be started to further the cause of the South African Indians. It was, however, only in 1903 that Indian Opinion came out.

[3] A community village about 20 miles from Pietermaritzburg

11. MEMORIAL TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES[1]

March 15, 1897

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN
HER MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR THE COLONIES
LONDON

THE MEMORIAL OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS
RESIDING IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH:

That your Memorialists, as representing the Indian community in Natal, hereby venture to approach you with reference to the Indian question in Natal, with special regard to the demonstration that took place in Durban on the 13th January, 1897, headed by Captain Sparks, a commissioned officer, to protest against the landing of Asiatics on board the s.s. *Courland* and s.s. *Naderi*, two Indian-owned ships which arrived in Durban on the 18th day of December, 1896 with about 600 passengers, which culminated in an assault on one of them who was saved from being lynched by the tact of the Durban Borough Police.[2]

The Indian community in Natal has been suffering from various legal disabilities for a very long time, some of which have been made the subject of memorials to Her Majesty's Government.[3] In those memorials, it has been pointed out that the ultimate extinction of the Indian as a free man is the goal of the Colonists, and that every disability placed on the Indian becomes the forerunner of many more, and that his position is to be so reduced that he cannot exist in the Colony, except as (to quote the Attorney-General of Natal) "a hewer of wood and drawer of water", till the end of his lifetime. On these and such grounds, it was urged that legislation restrictive of the freedom of the Indians in Natal should not be sanctioned by Her Majesty's Government. While, whoever, Her Majesty's Government sympathized with the object of the memorials, they were reluctant to

[1] This was printed and forwarded to the Natal Governor for transmission on April 6; *vide* "Petition to the Natal Governor", 6-4-1897.

[2] The reference is to the attack on Gandhiji.

[3] For the various previous Memorials to the addressee.

refuse the Royal sanction to some of the Bills objected to in the memorials. The encouragement, obtained from the more or less successful issue of their first and test experiments to carry out the final object, has resulted in the formation by the Europeans, during the last seven months, of anti-Indian associations, and the question has assumed a very acute phase. Under the circumstances, your Memorialists, in the interests of the Indian community in Natal, feel it to be their duty to place a review of the last seven months' anti-Indian agitation before Her Majesty's Government.

On the 7th April, 1896, the Tongaat Sugar Company applied to the Immigration Trust Board, indenting for the following Indian artisans—one each: brick-layer, plate-layer, plasterer, house-painter, carriage-builder, wheelwright, carpenter, blacksmith, fitter, turner, iron-moulder, and coppersmith. The Trust Board granted the application. As soon as this information was published in the newspapers, a storm of protest arose of the Colony. Meetings to protest against the action of the Trust Board were advertised for in the local papers, both in Pietermaritzburg and Durban. The first meeting was held in Durban, on the 11th day of August, and is reported to have been largely attended, where angry speeches were made. As a result of the agitation, the Tongaat Sugar Company withdrew their application in the following terms: "As our application for the above appears to have met with an opposition entirely unforeseen on our part, we have decided to withdraw it." The agitation, however, did not die with the withdrawal. Meetings continued to be held and the speakers went beyond the scope thereof. Your memorialists humbly think that the protest against the application was perfectly justified, in so far as the introduction of skilled labour under State protection was contemplated; and that, had the agitation remained within proper bounds, the events that followed might not have taken place. Some of the speakers at those meetings laid stress on the fact that the Indians could not fairly be blamed in the matter, and that it was the Sugar Company that was entirely to blame. The tone, however, of most of the speeches was such as to easily inflame the passions of the audience. The correspondence in the newspapers also was carried on much the same way. Facts were at a heavy discount; the whole Indian question was opened up; and Indians were condemned wholesale. The meetings, in your Memorialists' humble opinion, amply justified the contention of the Indian community that the Indians are the most hated and misunderstood community in the Colony. They were called

"black vermin". A speaker at one of the Maritzburg meetings said: "A coolie could live on the smell of an oily rag." One of the audience at that meeting said: "They breed like rabbits, those that are here", and another added: "The worst of it is we can't shoot them down." At one of the Durban meetings, a voice from the audience said, with reference to the application: "If the Indian artisans come, we will go to the Point and stop them." Another said at the same meeting: "A coolie is not a man." Thus, it will be seen that the material for the events of January last was being prepared in August, 1896. Another feature of this agitation was that the working classes were induced to take an active interest in the matter.

Hardly had the time for proper reflection over the action of the Trust Board come, when the following telegram appeared in the newspapers, on September 14th, 1896, through Reuter's agency:

> A pamphlet published in India declares that the Indians in Natal are robbed and assaulted and treated like beasts, and are unable to obtain redress. *The Times of India* advocates an inquiry into these allegation.

This telegram naturally roused the indignation of the Colony, and added fuel to the fire. The pamphlet referred to was a statement of the grievances of the British Indians in South Africa by Mr. M. K. Gandhi, who was appointed by the representatives of the Indian community in South Africa to "represent the grievances the Indians are labouring under in South Africa, before the authorities and public men and public bodies in India".[1]

It is necessary for your Memorialists to digress a little, and to clear up the position. Your Memorialists have no hesitation in saying that the contents of the telegram are not borne out by the pamphlet. This was admitted by all who read both. *The Natal Mercury,* on reading the pamphlet, changed the angry attitude it had taken up on seeing the telegram, in the following words:

> Mr. Gandhi, on his part and on behalf of his countrymen, has done nothing that he is not entitled to do, and from his point of view, the principle he is working for is an honourable and a legitimate one. He is within his rights, and so long as he acts honestly and in a straightforward manner, he cannot be blamed nor interfered with. So far as we know, he has always done so, and his latest pamphlet we cannot honestly say is an unfair statement of the case from his point of view. Reuter's cable is a gross exaggeration of Mr.

[1] *Vide* "The Credentials", p. 1.

Gandhi's statement. He enumerates only a number of grievances, but these by no means justify anyone in stating that his pamphlet declares that the Indians in Natal are robbed and assaulted and treated like beasts and are unable to obtain redress. (18th September, 1896)

The Natal Advertiser of the same date says:

A perusal of Mr. Gandhi's pamphlet, recently published in Bombay, leads to the conclusion that the telegraphic description of its objects and contents was considerably exaggerated. True, Mr. Gandhi complains of a certain amount of ill-treatment of indentured Indians, but there is nothing to warrant the statement that he alleges that the Indians in Natal are robbed, assaulted and treated like beasts. His is rather the old, familiar grievance that the Indian is regarded and treated by Europeans as belonging to a separate class and race, and not one of themselves. From Mr. Gandhi's point of view this is very deplorable and it is easy to sympathize with him and his compatriots.

To return, although a select few could treat the above telegram at its proper value, the generality kept up their idea of the pamphlet in India derived from the telegram. Correspondence went on in the newspapers, inflaming the Europeans against the Indians. An association, called the European Protection Association, was formed in Maritzburg on the 18th day of September, 1896, at a meeting, according to reports, attended by about 30 persons. Although this meeting was the direct outcome of the action of the Trust Board above referred to, the programme of the Association is very comprehensive.

The principal efforts of the Association, according to *The Natal Witness* of the 8th October, 1896, will be directed to the further reform of the laws regulating the introduction of Asiatics into the Colony, and special attention will be directed to (a) withdrawal of all State-aid, assistance or countenance from all bodies of persons connected with Indian or other Asiatic immigration; (b) press upon Parliament the necessity of enacting such rules and regulations as will really compel the Indian to leave the Colony at the expiration of his term of indenture; (c) take all steps that may be found advisable for limiting the number of Indians introduced into the Colony; and (d) to endeavour to have the Australian laws as to immigration made applicable to Natal.

Following upon that was established an association in Durban on the 26th day of November, 1896, called the Colonial Patriotic Union. The object of the Union is stated to be "to prevent the further influx

of free Asiatics into the country". The following passages occur in the statement published by the Union:

> By preventing the further immigration of Asiatic races into this Colony, the interests of Europeans, natives, and Asiatics now in the country will be protected. The Union will in no way interfere with the introduction of indentured labourers, provided such labourers, with their wives and children, if any, shall be returnable to India on completion of their indentures.

The Union have been canvassing signatures to the following petition addressed to the Government:

> We the undersigned inhabitants of the Colony of Natal do hereby most respectfully petition the Government to adopt measures which would prevent the influx of Asiatic races into this Colony: '(1) The older and richer British Colonies of Australia and New Zealand have found that this class of immigrant is detrimental to the best interests of inhabitants, and have passed laws having as their object the total exclusion of Asiatics. (2) The disproportion between white and black races is already so great in this Colony that it appears highly injudicious to further increase this disproportion. (3) The continued introduction of Asiatic races is in the highest sense detrimental to the natives of this Colony from the fact that so long as the cheaper Asiatic supply is available so long will the civilization of the natives be retarded, their civilization depending upon their intercourse with the white races. (4) The low moral tone and insanitary habits of Asiatics are a constant source of danger to the progress and health of the European population.'

The Government have declared themselves in entire sympathy with the Union programme. It will be seen that, as your Memorialists feared when the Immigration Law Amendment Bill was passed,[1] which has unfortunately received the sanction of the Home Government, it was simply a step towards further restriction. Whether the Government would bring in a Bill having for its object completion of the indentures in India is another matter. But, your Memorialists humbly submit, the fact remains that the yielding by Her Majesty's Government to the desire of the European Colonists to establish the principle of compulsory return of the indentured Indians after the completion of their contracts has encouraged them to ask for more. The Indian community is expected to join in a leonine partnership:

[1] This was on July 7, 1894; *vide* Letter to Dadabhai Naoroji", 14-7-1894.

the Indians are to give all but to receive nothing worth mentioning. Your Memorialists earnestly hope that, whatever be the ultimate outcome of the present position, Her Majesty's Government will never countenance so obviously iniquitous an arrangement and stop further State-aided emigration from India to Natal.

The petition of the Union discloses a sad want of knowledge and grave prejudice on the part of the promoters thereof. Your Memorialists need hardly say that the British Colonies alluded to have not yet been allowed to pass the class legislation of the nature indicated therein. As *The Natal Mercury,* in a leading article on November 28, reminded the Union, "the fact of the matter is that the Acts in operation in those Colonies are almost solely directed against Chinese." And, even if such Acts were to come into operation in future, there is hardly any analogy between this Colony and the others. Natal cannot do without the Indian labourers; it would shut the door against Indians above that level. This is hardly consistent. The Australian Colonies, on the other hand, would have this much in their favour that they would, if they could, exclude all Indians without distinction.

The disproportion between white and black races is certainly very great; but, even if the Indians were to be classed amongst black races, they are not responsible for it, for it is caused owing to there being over 400,000 natives of South Africa, as against 50,000 Europeans. The Indians, who number about 51,000, cannot materially affect the proportion even if their number were to increase to 100,000. The petition states that the introduction "of Asiatic races is in the highest sense detrimental to the natives of this Colony," because of the cheaper Asiatic supply. Now the natives can, if at all, only take the place of the indentured Indians; but the Union does not propose to do away with the indentured Indians. In fact, the highest authorities have stated it as their opinion that the natives cannot, and will not, do the work now being done by the indentured Indians; the very fact that, in spite of all this agitation, the demand for indentured Indians is greater than ever, as seen from the reports of the Immigration Department, proves this; and it is admitted that there is no competition whatever between the free Indians, who alone the Union objects to, and the natives. As to the allegation about the low moral tone and insanitary habits of Indians, your Memorialists need hardly say anything: it simply shows to what extent prejudice has

carried the promoters away. Your Memorialists would, however, crave leave to refer Her Majesty's Government to Dr. Veale's and other certificates of the same tenor, annexed to the petition with regard to the Transvaal Indian Arbitration, to the effect that class considered, the Indians live better and in better habitations than the Europeans.[1] If, however, the Indians do not attend to sanitation as well as the Europeans, the laws are there to see that they do not neglect the duty of observing the sanitary rules. Be that as it may, these meetings, the correspondence they gave rise to, and the statements made therein, without particular regard to accuracy, kept up and added to the excitement of the populace.

On the 18th of December came the two ill-fated steamers the *Courland* and the *Naderi*, the first named being owned by a local Indian firm and the second named by the Persian Steam Navigation Company of Bombay, which was under the agency of the owners of the *Courland*. In dealing with the events after the arrival of the two ships, your Memorialists disclaim any intention to ventilate a personal grievance. The question, as affecting Messrs Dada Abdulla & Company personally as owners and agents of the ships, your Memorialists would endeavour to avoid, except when it is necessary to refer to it in the interests of the Indian community as a whole. The bills of health received by the steamers at Bombay, at the time of departure, stated that there was a mild form of bubonic plague raging in certain districts of Bombay; the steamers, therefore, entered the bay flying the quarantine flag, although there was an absolutely clean bill of health during the voyage. (App. A and B.) The s.s. *Naderi* left the Prince's Dock, Bombay, on the 28th, and the s.s. *Courland* on the 30th of November, 1896. The steamers, on their arrival, were placed in quarantine by the Health Officer "until 23 days had elapsed since leaving Bombay". By a proclamation which appeared in a *Government Gazette Extraordinary*, on the 19th December, 1896, Bombay was declared to be an infected port. On the same day, the owners and agents wrote to the Health Officer, on the strength of a newspaper report, asking the cause of the ships being put in quarantine. (App. C.) No reply was sent to that communication. On the 21st of the same month, a telegram was sent by the owners' solicitors, Messrs Goodricke, Laughton and Cooke, to the Honourable the Colonial Secretary of Natal with reference to the matter, and

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Lord Rippon", before 5-5-1895, Appendix A.

asking if His Excellency the Governor would receive a deputation. (App. D.) Reply thereto was received from Maritzburg on the 22nd that there would be no need of a deputation, for reasons stated in Appendix E. But after their solicitors had despatched the telegram, they were informed that His Excellency was in Durban, whereupon they wrote a letter to the Honourable Harry Escombe to much the same effect (App. F), and a reply thereto was received, saying that, while the ministers would be referred to for advice in the matter, if it was so wished, a deputation would be received by His Excellency on the 23rd. (App. G.) On the 22nd the master of the *Courland* signalled as follows: "Our days have expired; are we out of quarantine? Please consult Quarantine Officer, report we all well. Thanks." (App. A.) To this a reply was signalled to the effect that the length of quarantine was not decided till then. A similar signal was sent from the *Naderi* with a similar result. Your Memorialists may here parenthetically remark that the owners and agents were kept absolutely in the dark as to what was going on between the masters of the vessels and the officers on shore. On the 23rd, a reply to signals from the *Naderi* said: "Quarantine Officer has no instructions yet." (App. B.) From the solicitors' letter (App. P), it appears that since the Health Officer had ordered that the ships were to remain in quarantine until 23 days had elapsed after the day of their departure from Bombay, he was suspended or dismissed, and Dr. Birtwell put in his place. On the 24th, Dr. Birtwell and the Superintendent of Water Police boarded the vessels and examined passengers and crew, gave instructions as to disinfection, fumigation and burning of soiled clothing, all mats, baskets and useless articles in the donkey furnace, and imposed 11 and 12 days' quarantine on the *Courland* and *Naderi* respectively. (App. A & B.) In accordance with the instructions, much of the old clothing, mats, etc., were burnt, and fumigation and disinfection carried on. On the 28th, a police officer boarded each vessel with instructions to superintend the use of disinfectants. The following signal was hoisted on the 29th, from the *Courland*: "Disinfection and fumigation carried out to satisfaction of officer on board." A similar signal was also sent from the *Naderi* on the same day. The *Courland* signalled again: "We are ready, waiting for the Quarantine Officer", and Dr. Birtwell went, inspected the ships, and declared himself satisfied with the manner in which his orders had been carried out; but placed both the ships under quarantine for a further period of 12 days from that day. Thereupon, the master of the *Courland* gave the signal

that:

> By order of the Government, all passengers' bed clothes having been burnt, request Government renew same at once, as passengers' lives are in danger without them. Want written instructions how long quarantine is to last, as verbal time changes with every visit of Quarantine Officer. No case of sickness occurring in the interval. Give notice to the Government our ship has been disinfected every day since leaving Bombay.

The following was signalled from the *Naderi* on the 30th:

> Ask Government to supply at once 250 blankets for passengers, instead of those destroyed by Government. Passengers are suffering greatly without them. Otherwise disembark them at once. Passengers suffering from cold and wet; fear sickness in consequence.

These signals were altogether disregarded by the Government. Happily, the Indian residents in Durban started a Quarantine Relief Fund, whereby blankets were supplied to all the passengers on both the ships, and also foodstuffs to the poor passengers, free of charge, involving an expense of not less than £125.

While this was going on board the ships, the owners and agents were busy protesting against the quarantine and the somewhat capricious, because uncertain, ways in which the same was being enforced. They forwarded a petition to His Excellency the Governor, praying that, for reasons stated therein, the Medical Officer of the Port "be directed to grant *pratique* to the said vessels". (App. H.) Certificates from medical gentlemen were attached to it showing that, in their opinion, the quarantine then intended and afterwards imposed on the ships was unnecessary. (Ann.[1] to App. H.) A telegram was sent by the owners' solicitors, asking for a reply to the petition (App. I), but none came. On the 24th December, the owners' solicitors wrote to the acting Health Officer, requesting him to grant *pratique* to the said vessels on the grounds stated therein. (App. J.) The officer in question the same day wrote in reply:

> I am endeavouring to do my duty as Health Officer with due regard to all interests. I am willing to authorize the placing in quarantine on the

[1] These are marked Ha and Hb.

Bluff[1] at the cost of the ships, all persons intended to be landed, and when this is arranged for, pratique may be given to the ships after my instructions have been carried out. (App. K.)

Your Memorialists respectfully draw your attention to the fact that the Medical Officer fails to state what his instructions are, even in that letter. On the 25th, the owners' solicitors wrote to the Acting Health Officer pressing for a reply to their question contained in their letter of the 24th. (App. L.) The Health Officer replied the same day that he did not consider it safe to grant *pratique* to the vessels except on the conditions stated by him. (App. M.) The owners' solicitors wrote the same day expressing surprise that it did not contain any answer to their question, and pressing for the same, also asking for the exact conditions under which he would grant *pratique*. (App. N.) On the 26th, the Health Officer replied in the following terms:

> If the passengers are not landed into quarantine quarters, 12 days must run after fumigation of ship and precautions as regards clothing, namely, by washing and disinfecting, and the burning of sundry old rags, mats, socks, etc., in accordance with instructions given by me to each Captain, before *pratique* can be given. If the owners agree to bear the expense of quarantine, then the landing must be preceded by fumigation and precautions as above, and after the landing is effected, the departure of the steamers will be facilitated; but there must be no contact with shore except under proper restrictions. If you want to get the steamers away, the simplest course will be to arrange for the owners to bear the expense of quarantining the passengers on the Bluff for twelve days after fumigation, etc., of the ship, or for any longer period, should such necessity arise. (App. O.)

The owners' solicitors wrote in reply the same day, drawing his attention to the certificates given by Drs. Prince and Harrison above referred to, and protesting against the conditions imposed by him. They also protested that, although upwards of eight days had elapsed since the arrival of the steamers, no steps had been taken to disinfect the vessels in the way he had proposed. They further said that their clients refused to be party to any proceedings with reference to placing the passengers in quarantine on shore, as they did not consider his refusal to grant *pratique* to be a legal action. They,

[1] This is the bush-clad hill-point of Durban harbour, commanding a vantage view of the bay, where passengers could be lodged in quarantine quarters. *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897, Appendix O.

moreover, recorded the facts that his predecessor had "stated as his opinion that *pratique* could be granted without danger, and that if he were permitted he would do so, but he was thereupon suspended," and "that Drs. MacKenzie and Dumat, having been privately interviewed by Mr. Escombe on the question, were, at his suggestion, called in by him to give their opinion as to the refusing of *pratique.*" (App,. P.)

While the correspondence was thus going on between the Government and the owners' solicitors with reference to the quarantine, and while the passengers on board the two vessels were being subjected to grave inconvenience and hardship, an agitation was being got up in Durban with a view to prevent the landing of the quarantined passengers. The following notice appeared in *The Natal Advertiser*, for the first time on the 30th December, above the signature of "Harry Sparks, chairman of preliminary meeting", one of Her Majesty's commissioned officers:

> Wanted every man in Durban to attend a meeting to be held in the large room at the Victoria Cafe, on Monday the 4th January at 8 o'clock for the purpose of arranging a demonstration to proceed to the Point and protest against the landing of Asiatics.

This meeting was ultimately held in the town hall of Durban. Inflammatory speeches were made, and some commissioned officers, besides Captain Sparks, also took part in the animated proceedings. The meeting is said to have been attended by about 2,000 persons, mostly of the artisan class. The following resolutions were passed at the meeting:

> That this meeting is strongly of opinion that the time has come to prevent the landing of any more free Indians or Asiatics in this Colony, and now calls upon the Government to take steps to have returned to India, at the Colony's expense, the Asiatics at present on board the *Naderi* and *Courland*, and to prevent any other free Indians or Asiatics being landed in Durban.
>
> Every man at this meeting agrees and binds himself, with a view to assisting the Government to carry out the foregoing resolution, to do all his country may require of him, and with that view, will, if necessary, attend at the Point any time when required.

The following are extracts from the speech of Dr. MacKenzie, the mover of the second resolution, and one of those who, as stated above, were called by Mr. Escombe to determine the period of quarantine:

Mr. Gandhi, (prolonged hissing and hooting) that gentleman came to Natal and settled in the borough of Durban. He was received here freely and openly; all the privileges and advantages which the Colony could afford him were at his disposal. No contracting or circumscribing influence was brought to play upon him any more than on the audience or himself (the speaker), and he had all the privileges of their hospitality. In return, Mr. Gandhi had accused the Colonists of Natal of having dealt unfairly with Indians, and of having abused and robbed and swindled them. (A voice, 'You can't swindle a coolie.') He (the doctor) quite agreed with that. Mr. Gandhi had returned to India and dragged them in the gutters, and painted them as black and filthy as his own skin. (Applause.) And this was what they might call, in Indian parlance, an honourable and manly return for the privileges which Natal had allowed him . . . . It was the intention of these facile and delicate creatures to make themselves proprietors of the only thing that the ruler of this country had withheld from them—the franchise. It was their intention to put themselves in Parliament and legislate for the Europeans; to take over the household management, and put the Europeans in the kitchen . . . . Their country had decided that they had enough Asiatics and Indians here, and they were going to treat them fairly and well, provided they behaved themselves; but, if they were going to associate themselves with such men as Gandhi, and abuse their hospitality, and act in the way he had done, they might expect the same kind of treatment that was to be meted out to him. (Applause.) However great a misfortune it might be for those people, he could not get over the distinction between black and white. — *The Natal Advertiser*, 5th January.

Comment is superfluous. That Mr. Gandhi has done nothing to justify the remarks about him will have been seen from what has preceded. That the Indians want legislative powers and that they want to put the Europeans in the kitchen, are but the products of the gallant doctor's fertile imagination. These and such utterances would not have been noticed here but for the hold they had on the popular mind. The Government wired the following reply to Capt. Sparks' telegraphic communication giving the text of the above resolutions:

In reply, I am to state that the Government has at present no power, apart from such as may be conferred by the Quarantine Laws, to prevent the landing in the Colony of any class of Her Majesty's subjects. I am to state, however, that the closest attention has been, is being, and will be given to this question, the extreme importance of which the Government most completely recognizes. Government is in full sympathy with the consensus of

public opinion in this Colony as regards the desirability of preventing the overrunning of the Colony by Asiatics. Government is carefully discussing and considering this question with a view to future legislation; but I am to point out that its action will be thwarted rather than helped by any action or demonstration of the character indicated in the second resolution.

Thus it would appear that the quarantine was meant more to harass the passengers into returning to India than to protect the Colony against the introduction of the bubonic plague. The chairman then telegraphed the Government as follows:

> I am instructed by the Committee to thank you for wire, and have now to ask Government to convey to the Asiatics on board the *Naderi* and *Courland* the strong popular feeling against their landing, and request them to return to India at the Colony's expense.

Another meeting, convened by Captain Sparks, was held on the 7th January, again in the Town Hall, when the following resolutions were passed:

> That this meeting requests the Government to call a special session of Parliament to take steps to temporarily stop the importation of free Indians, pending the passing of law giving Government these powers; (and) that we proceed by demonstration to the Point on the arrival of the Indians, but each man binds himself to conform to the orders of the leaders.

The speeches at the meeting clearly show that the Government were in full sympathy with its objects, that they would not oppose the mutinous tendency of the meeting, that the imposition of quarantine was nothing but a means to prevent, if possible, the landing of the passengers, and that a special session was to be called in order to pass a Bill indefinitely extending the quarantine. The following are the extracts from the speeches which would illustrate these remarks:

> If the Government could not possibly help them, then (a voice, "help ourselves") they must help themselves. (Loud applause.)

Capt. Wylie, in the course of his speech, is reported to have said:

> Now, they must be pleased to know this, that the action that they (the meeting) had taken had been characterized by the members of the Government as having done more for this cause than anything that had yet been done within the Colony. (Applause.)

Thus, perhaps inadvertently but surely inducing the promoters to further action.

But at the same time they have to bear in mind in carrying this thing through they must not do anything rash to frustrate the end they had in view. They must be careful not to blindly jump over the wharf and leave it clear for the others to land. (Laughter.)

Dr. MacKenzie said at the last meeting that:

The Indian Ocean was the proper place for those Indians (Laughter), let them have it. They were not going to dispute their right to the water there. But they must be careful not to give them the right to dispute the land adjoining that ocean. Mr. Escombe treated the Committee at an interview that morning, extending for about two hours, in a fair and reasonable manner. He said the Government were with them, and wished to help them and expedite the matter in every possible way. He said, however, that they must be careful not to do anything that would hamper the Government's hands. . . . In their argument to him, they replied: 'If you do nothing, we will have to act ourselves, and go in force to the Point to see what could be done.' (Applause.) They further capped that with the remark that the Government of the Colony would have to bring a force to oppose them. Mr. Escombe replied that they would do nothing of the sort (Applause); that the Government were with them, but, he continued, if they put the Government in such a position that they might have to go to the Governor and ask him to take over the reins of the Government, they would have to find some other person, (Interruption.)

(This statement, your Memorialists may remark, remains uncontradicted to the present day, and it can easily be imagined what impetus such a statement would give to the movement.)

Some gentleman said 'extend the quarantine', that was exactly what Parliament was going to do. (Applause, and cries of 'sink the ship'.) He heard a naval volunteer say last night that he would give a month's pay for a shot at the ship; was every man present prepared to pay down a month's pay to carry out the object of that meeting? (Applause, and cries of assent.) Then the Government would know what they had behind them. One of the objects of the meeting was to convey to the Government the wish that they wanted a special session of Parliament to extend the quarantine. (Applause.) They must bear in mind that hasty legislation seldom reached its end; but there might be such legislation that would give them time, and protect them while they were fighting for proper legislation. They suggested to Mr. Escombe, and it met with his approval, that as the quarantine laws did not give power to extend the quarantine for an unlimited period, they asked that Parliament be called together for one, two, or three days if need be, to pass a law which would enable them to say Bombay was an infected district. We declare it to be such,

and until that proclamation was taken off, no Indian could come from Bombay to this Colony.[1] (Loud applause.) He thought that the deputation were quite entitled to infer from the meeting they had with Mr. Escombe that morning, that if they went the right way to work, and did not do anything to hamper the Government, they would get that session of Parliament at the earliest possible date, and thereby prevent the landing of more coolies until they could get time to pass a law which would last for ever. (Applause.)

Dr. MacKenzie:

The men of Durban were unanimous on that point (early Parliament). He said "the men of Durban," because there were a few old women knocking about the place. (Laughter and cheers.) They had only to take the tone of some of the leaders in the papers, and some of the cautious and sage advice they had been meting out to them to get the type of the man who sticks behind the quill—the sort of man who urged that sort of thing—was the man who presumed to say that the burgesses did not know what was right. . . . All but one man on board these boats, lying outside, had no reason to suspect that they would not be agreeably received as emigrants to this Colony. One man might reasonably be supposed to have some suspicions upon that point. That gentleman (Gandhi) was on board one of the boats, and in what he now said, he did not refer to him. They had the right to shut the Port, and they intended to shut it. (Applause.) They would deal fairly by the people, and by the men on these boats, and to that extent, by that solitary individual. But he hoped there would be a marked difference between the character of the dealing. When they got to the Point they would put themselves under their leader, and do exactly what he told them, if he told them to do anything. (Laughter.)

A document headed as follows was circulated amongst the Durban employees by the Demonstration Committee:

List of names of members, trade or profession mentioned,[2] who are willing to proceed to the Point and resist, by force if necessary, the landing of Asiatics, and to obey any orders which may be given by the leaders.

The following passage from Captain Sparks' concluding speech, at the meeting of the 7th, gives an idea of the methods adopted by the committee to enlist men to join the Demonstration:

[1] A Bill was, in fact passed by the Natal Legislature a little later. *Vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Assembly", 26-3-1897 and Appendix A to "Petition to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897.

[2] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897, of Asiatics, and to obey any orders which may be given by the leaders.

> They intended to call upon the merchants of the town to close their places of business to allow the men who wished to take part in the Demonstration to do so. (Applause.) Then they would be able to see who was on their side. Several merchants had already promised to do all they could; others they wanted to show in their true colours. (Cries of "boycott them".)

At this stage it would be worth while to see what was happening between the owners and the Government to secure the peaceable landing of the passengers. Your Memorialists may here remark that the town, during the first week in January, was in a perfect state of excitement. It was a time of terror and anxiety for the Indian residents, and collision between the two communities was to be feared at any moment. On the 8th January, 1897, the owners and agents of the ships sent a petition to the Government drawing their attention to the state of public feeling that existed in Durban against the landing of Indians, and asking for "the protection of the Government for passengers and property against the lawless acts of any persons whoever they may be," and signifying their readiness "to co-operate with the Government in taking all the necessary steps for the landing of passengers quietly and unknown to the public in order to render unnecessary any act on the part of the Government which might tend to intensify the excitement" which then existed. (App. Q.) A letter was sent on the 9th January, further drawing the attention of the Government to the circulation of the document hereinbefore referred to for the forcible resistance against the landing of the passengers, as also to the fact that the railwaymen, being employees of the Government, were to take part in the Demonstration, and praying for assurance of the Government that "Government servants will be prohibited from taking any part in the Demonstration". (App. R.) On the 11th January, the Principal Under-Secretary thus wrote in reply:

> Your proposals for the landing of the passengers quietly and unknown to the public is impossible. The Government understand that you have requested the Port Captain not to bring the vessel inside without special instructions. This action on your part, and your letters now under reply, show that you are aware of the intense feeling throughout the Colony against the landing of the Indians, and they certainly should be informed of the existence and strength of that feeling. (App. S.)

Your Memorialists here cannot help regretting that the

Government should have made the concluding remarks in that letter. Instead of giving an assurance of protection when it is asked, the Government advise the owners, in so many words, to induce the passengers to return. This letter, more than anything else, in your Memorialists' humble opinion, shows that the Government indirectly countenanced the agitation, and betrayed their weakness, where a strong expression of opinion might have stifled it and produced a healthy confidence in their just intentions in the minds of the Indian community, apart from their policy with regard to the unrestricted immigration of Her Majesty's Indian subjects. On the 10th January, the Honourable Mr. Harry Escombe being in Durban, Mr. Laughton, of the firm of Messrs Goodricke, Laughton & Cooke, the owners' solicitors, took the opportunity to interview him, and wrote a letter to the honourable gentleman, embodying the substance of their conference. (App. T.) From that letter it would appear that Mr. Escombe repudiated the statement attributed to him by Mr. Wylie and referred to above. It would also appear that the following propositions were recognized by the Government:

> That upon the requirements of the quarantine being carried out, *pratique* must be granted to the steamers *Courland* and *Naderi*; that upon *pratique* being granted, the steamers were entitled to discharge their passengers and cargo at the wharf, either by the steamers being brought inside, or by means of tugs and lighters; that the Government is responsible for the protection of passengers and cargo from the violence of rioters.

The reply to the letter dated the 11th January (App. U) said that the interview referred to therein was, it was understood, to be regarded as a private meeting, and did not accept as correct Mr. Laughton's record of what was said by the Honourable Mr. Escombe and Mr. Laughton. On the 12th January, Messrs Goodricke, Laughton and Cooke wrote in reply, explaining how the interview came to be regarded as not private by Mr. Laughton, and in order to avoid misunderstanding, applied for the correction of the alleged inaccuracies committed by Mr. Laughton in recording the interview. (App. V.) So far as your Memorialists are aware, no reply was returned thereto. On the same day the owners wrote to Mr. Escombe in reply to the Principal Under-Secretary's letter, dated 11th January. (App. S.) Their letter expressed surprise at there being no reference in that communication to the various points brought to the notice of the

Government. It contained the following paragraph:

> The steamers have now been at the outer anchorage for 24 days, at a cost of £150 per diem to us; and this being so, we trust you will see the reasonableness of your giving us a full answer by noon tomorrow. And we think it right to inform you that failing a definite reply giving us an assurance that we shall be paid £150 per diem from Sunday last, and that you are taking steps to suppress the rioters so as to enable us to disembark the steamers, preparations will be at once commenced to steam into the harbour, relying on the protection which, we respectfully submit, Government is bound to give us. (App. W.)

Mr. Escombe wrote as follows in reply, from the Point, at 10.45 a.m., on the 13th:

> The Port Captain has instructed that the steamers shall be ready to cross the bar inwards at 12 o'clock today. The Government needs no reminder of its responsibility for the maintenance of order. (App. X.)

This was the first assurance that the owners received from the Government with regard to the safety of the passengers, and as will appear hereinafter, after all the resources, including threats of violence to induce the passengers to return to India, had been exhausted.

To turn now to the steamers. On the 9th January, the following signal was put up from the *Naderi:* " Quarantine finished. When shall I obtain *pratique*; please reply," and the *Courland* put up a similar signal on the 10th. But the *pratique* was not granted until after the noon of the 11th January, 1897. On the same day a letter was received by the master of the *Courland*, dated the 8th January, 1897, and signed "Harry Sparks, Chairman of Committee", which reads:

> Neither you nor your passengers may be aware that the feeling in the Colony against the inflow of Asiatics has been running very high lately, and has culminated on the arrival of your ship and the *Naderi.* Following on that, public meetings have been held in Durban, at which the enclosed resolutions were carried with acclamation. So largely attended were these meetings that all desiring it could not get into the Town Hall. Almost every man in Durban has signed signifying his intention to prevent those on board your ship and the *Naderi* landing in the Colony, and we are most desirous there should, if possible, be avoided a conflict between the men of Durban and your passengers which will most assuredly happen if they attempt to land. As your passengers are ignorant of the state of feeling, and have come here in ignorance, and we have it from the Attorney-General that if your people are

willing to return to India, the Colony will pay the expense. We shall, therefore, be glad to receive and answer from you before the ship comes alongside the wharf, whether the passengers elect to return to India at the Colony's expense, or to endeavour to force a landing against the thousands of men who are ready and waiting to oppose their landing. (App. Aa.)

The masters of both the vessels, on learning that there was an intense feeling against the landing of the passengers, that the Government were in sympathy with the agitation, and that they practically failed to assure protection to passengers, and that the Demonstration Committee practically represented the Government (as would appear from the Committee's letter to the master of the *Courland*, from their unrestricted interference with the passengers on board the s.s. *Greek*, of the Union Steam Ship Company's fleet, which arrived on 11th January from Delagoa Bay with some Indian passengers, from the acquiescence of the Port officials in their conduct, as also from the willingness of the Union Steam Ship Company's management to "obey the orders" of the Committee, etc.), naturally became anxious about the safety of their charge and were induced to parley with the Committee. Consequently, they went ashore on the evening of 11th January, and held consultations with the Demonstration Committee, in the course of which a document was drawn up by the Committee for signature of the captains (App. Wa), which, however, they could not sign, and the negotiations thus fell through.

It might be as well to examine the position of the committee at the time immediately preceding the Demonstration. One of the spokesmen of the Committee, Dr. Mackenzie, observed:

> "Their position was the same as at first, viz., that none of the Indians were to land" (Applause).

Another member of the Committee, Captain Wylie, in the course of a speech, in response to "Where is Gandhi?", said:

> "Where they hoped he would remain. 'Had they' (deputation sent by the Committee to the steamers) 'seen him?' No. The Captain of the *Courland* had treated Gandhi as he treated the other passengers. (Applause.) He knew their opinion regarding him. There was not much more he could tell them. 'Have you the tar ready for him? Is he going back?' It was their sincere hope that the Indians would be going back. If not, then the Committee would want the men of Durban.

The Natal Advertiser (16th January) says ":

> When the signal was received that the *Courland* and *Naderi* were daring to come into Port, and the trumpeters galloped through the streets and borough shortly after 10 o'clock on Wednesday morning, the general impression was that the poor Indians were in for a rough time if they attempted to land, and that even if they remained on board, afraid to disembark, they would be deafened and scared into hysterics by the hooting, groaning, and the jeering of the assembly. But the end was to be the same as originally intended—"no landing at any price".

Long before the owners were informed that the ships were to be brought in that day, the town knew it. The bugles to rally were sounded at 10.30 a.m., the shopkeepers put down their shutters, and people began to flock to the Point, The following is an account of the muster at the Point, taken from *The Natal Advertiser*:

> Shortly before 12 o'clock, the muster on Alexandra Square was completed, and as far as could be ascertained, the sections were as follows: Railwaymen, 900 To 1,000—Wylie, leader; assistants: G. Whelan, W. Coles, Grant, Erlsmont, Dick, Duke, Russell, Calder, Titheridge. Yacht Club, Point Club, and Rowing Club, 150—Mr. Dan Taylor, leader; assistants: Messrs Anderton, Goldsbury, Hutton, Harper, Murray Smith, Johnston, Wood, Peters, Anderson, Cross, Playfair, Seaward. Carpenters and Joiners, 450—Puntan, leader; assistants: H. W. Nichols, Jas. Hood, T. G. Harper. Printers, 80—Mr. R. D. Sykes, leader; assistants: W. P. Plowman, E. Edwards, J. Shackleton, E. Trolley, T. Armstrong. Shop Assistants, about. 400—Mr. A. A. Gibson, J. McIntosh, leaders; assistants: Messrs H. Pearson, W. H. Kinsman, J. Pardy, Dawson, S. Adams, A. Mummery, J. Tyzack, Johns, J. Rapson, Banfield, Etheridge, Austin. Tailors and Saddler, 70—J. C. Armitage, leader; assistants: H. Mulholland, G. Bull, R. Godfrey, E. Manderson, A. Rose, J. W. Dent, C. Dowse. Plasterers and Bricklayers, 200—Dr. MacKenzie, leader; assistants: Horner, Keal, Brown, Jenkinson. Point men, a small section—J. Dick, Leader; assistants: Gimber, Clackston, Poyson, Elliott, Parr. General public, about 1,000—T. Adams leader; P. F. Garbutt, Downard. Native section, 500—Mr. G. Spradbrow and Mr. R. C. Vincent organized the natives, and kept them in order on Alexandra Square, while the Demonstration was going on. They told the natives they had appointed a dwarf native as their leader. They were highly amused with this diminutive chap, who marched up and down in front of their ranks officering them, while they went through a number of exercises with their sticks, and danced and whooped. This proved an excellent diversion to

keep the natives out of trouble. Later on, Supt. Alexander appeared on horseback and moved them off the Square.

Your Memorialists cannot do better than quote again from the same paper of 14th a description as to how the steamers were brought in, and what happened then:

> Great uncertainty was felt on board the vessels as to what form the Demonstration would assume. Capt. Milne, of the *Courland*, who exhibited the bolder attitude of the two, was allowed to have his vessel taken in first, although she lay further up the coast than the *Naderi*. He decided that some efforts should be made to protect his passengers, as he had received no assurance from Government that any steps had been taken to do so. He, therefore, had the Union Jack run up at the forecastle head, the red ensign was placed above the ship's house flag at the main mast, and the red ensign was also exhibited at the stern. His instructions to his officers were to prevent any demonstrators from coming aboard, if possible, but that, if they did come aboard, to haul down the Union Jack and present it to the invaders, his idea being that no Englishman would seek to molest those on board after this surrender. Fortunately, as matters resulted, it was not necessary to have recourse to this action. As the *Courland* entered the bay, all eyes were on the look-out to see what form the demonstration was taking. A row of people, extending from the south end of the main wharf to some distance along the north pier, could be perceived, but they seemed to take matters very calmly. The Indians on board did not seem much scared, and Mr. Gandhi and a few others who were on deck, looked on with an unperturbed expression. The main body of the demonstrators, who had thronged the vessels at the main wharf, could not be seen from the incoming steamers. The surprise experienced by those on the embankment when they saw the *Courland* laid alongside the Bluff Channel moorings, was seen by their actions. They were seen to rush hither and thither, entirely at a loss how to proceed, and soon they all left to attend the meeting on Alexandra Square. This was the last that the vessels were to see of the much-talked-of Demonstration. Meanwhile, Mr. Escombe was pulled alongside the *Courland* in a rowing boat, which was also occupied by Captain Ballard, Port Captain, Mr. Reid, wharfmaster, and Mr. Simpkins, mooring master. The Attorney-General said: 'Captain Milne, I want you to inform your passengers that they are as safe under the Natal Government laws as if they were in their own native villages.' The captain asked if it was advisable for him to allow them to land. Mr. Escombe replied that he (the Captain) had better see him again first. Having made a similar communication to the *Naderi*, Mr. Escombe was pulled ashore to address the crowd. The *Naderi* and *Courland*

were laid side by side near to the Bluff passenger jetty, the *Courland* being nearest to land.

After the above assurance was given by Mr. Escombe, he went to Alexandra Square, Point, where the muster had taken place, and addressed the men who had assembled there, promising an early session of Parliament to deal with the question and requesting them to disperse. Speeches were also made by some members of the Committee, and the crowd ultimately melted away. It might be useful to note here some of the exclamations from the audience at the time these speeches were being made, as also a few passages from the speeches themselves:

> "Send them back." "Why don't you bring Gandhi ashore?" "Get the tar and feathers ready." "Send these Indians back." "The hold of the British on South Africa would not be maintained by slumming them with the miserable refuge of the social gutters of India." (Applause.) —Dr. MacKenzie. "He was just as game as anybody to take a coolie by the neck and throw him overboard. (Applause.)... Now about that man Gandhi. (Applause.) They might shout about him. He was a particular friend of his, they might depend upon it. (Laughter). Gandhi was on board one of the boats and the greatest service they could do him would be to do him an injury. He believed Gandhi was very anxious to become a hero and a martyr to his cause. The greatest punishment which could be inflicted upon him was to allow him to live amongst them. If he lived amongst them, they would have an opportunity of spitting on him (Laughter and applause), which they would not have if they wiped him out. He (the speaker) would rather hang himself than be spat upon by every man in the street." —Dan Taylor.

The passengers landed in small batches in ferry boats, about two hours after the crowd had dispersed. As for Mr. Gandhi, the Superintendent of Water Police was instructed by Mr. Escombe to offer to land him and his family quietly at night that day. Mr. Gandhi accepted the offer with thanks. Later on, the same day, Mr. Laughton paid him a friendly visit on board and suggested that they should land together. The suggestion was accepted,[1] and on his own responsibility, at his own risk, and without previously informing the Water Police, [he] landed near Addington with Mr. Laughton at about 5 o'clock. He was recognized by some boys, who followed him and his companion, and as they were proceeding along West Street, the main street of Durban, the crowd became large. Mr. Laughton was separated from him; Mr. Gandhi was kicked, whipped, stale fish and

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Attorney-General", 20-1-1897.

other missiles were thrown at him, which hurt his eye and cut his ear, and his hat was taken off his head. While this was going on, the wife of the Superintendent of Police, who happened to be passing by, bravely afforded protection with her umbrella, and the police, on hearing the yells and the cries, came to the rescue and escorted him safely to an Indian house. But the crowd which had, by this time, become very large, did not leave, and blockading the front of the house, demanded "Gandhi". As darkness deepened, the crowd continued to swell. The Superintendent of Police, fearing serious disturbance and forcible entry into the house, had Mr. Gandhi removed to the Police Station disguised as a police constable. Your Memorialists do not wish to take any advantage of this incident; it is mentioned here as a part of the events. They are prepared to admit that the assault was the work of irresponsible persons and as such unworthy of notice. But at the same time, they cannot help remarking that had not the responsible members of the Committee incited the populace against him, and had not the Government countenanced the proceedings of the Committee, the incident would never have occurred. This closes the Demonstration.

Your Memorialists now crave leave to examine the immediate causes of the Demonstration. Statements appeared in the newspapers to the effect that there were 800 passengers on board the two ships, all being for Natal; that there were 50 blacksmiths and 30 compositors, and that there was a printing plant on board the *Courland*, and that Mr. Gandhi —

> had made a big mistake in imagining that the Europeans of Natal would sit still while he organized an independent immigration agency in India to land his countrymen here at the rate of 1,000 to 2,000 per month. (*The Natal Mercury*, 9th January)

The leader of the Demonstration thus explained the cause at a meeting held after the Demonstration:

> At the latter end of December he noticed a paragraph in *The Natal Mercury* to the effect that Mr. Gandhi intended suing the Government on behalf of the passengers on the two ships, the *Courland* and the *Naderi*, for damages, by reason of their being placed in quarantine. This made his blood boil with indignation. He was then determined to take the matter up and, meeting Dr. MacKenzie, suggested that a demonstration would be promoted to protest against the landing of these men . . . He concluded: He had been a volunteer and had served for over 20 years . . . He was as loyal as any man there . . . but when they placed the Indian subjects on one side and his home and family on the other, the birthright of his children and the memory of his

dear parents and what they had done to make the Colony what it was, he would do the only thing he could, and the only thing they could expect of him. (Applause.) Rather than this evil, he would be content to hand matters over to the tender mercies of the Transvaal Government—that would be simply a drop in the ocean compared with this evil.— (*The Natal Mercury,* 18th February)

It was also stated that the Indian passengers, instigated by Mr. Gandhi, and possibly by other lawyers that he may have brought with him, were to sue the Government for damages for illegal detention in quarantine. *The Natal Mercury* made the following remarks in its issue of the 30th December:

> The report that the Indians on board the s.s. *Naderi* and *Courland* intend bringing an action against the Government for damages for alleged illegal detention in quarantine, almost confirms the rumour that Mr. Gandhi is on board. His keen legal instincts have scented a splendid brief to occupy him immediately on his release from the durance vile of the quarantine and purifying effects of the carbolic bath. The large sums of money said to have been subscribed for the purpose would naturally go to Mr. Gandhi, whether the case was lost or won, and nothing in fact could suit the gentleman better than such an interesting case to devote his attention to, immediately he got on shore. Probably he has some of the other Indian lawyers he said he intended bringing with him on board, and among them they have persuaded the other Indians on board to sue for damages.

The Natal Advertiser of the 29th December contained the information about the alleged legal proceedings, and it came out with the following, the next day:

> The feeling against the wholesale importation of free Indians has steadily increased in Durban, and the recent arrival of 700 more Indians of this class by the steamers *Courland* and *Naderi,* would seem to have aggravated the feeling. The announcement that an Indian clique intended to sue the Natal Government for heavy damages for the detention of the steamers in the anchorage, apparently brought the question into more painful prominence still, for yesterday afternoon rumours were quickly circulated in town to the effect that some protestation against the landing of any more free Indians should be made. Some suggestions were made in all seriousness that a mass of Europeans should proceed to the Point on the day fixed for the disembarkation of the Indians from the *Courland* and *Naderi,* to actually prevent passengers landing. The method mooted was for the Europeans to form human lines three or four deep, and with locked hands and arms, offer a complete bar to the

immigrants. Such, however, was probably merely general talk. The growth of the anti-Asiatic feeling is unquestionable, and is plainly evidenced by the following advertisement, which appears in another column at the head of the signature of Mr. Harry Sparks: 'Wanted every man in Durban to attend a meeting to be held in the large room at the Victoria Cafe, on Monday evening next, at 8 o'clock, for the purpose of a demonstration to proceed to the Point, and protest against the landing of Asiatics.'

Your Memorialists would beg to draw your attention to the distinction between the causes that led up to the Demonstration and that have been alluded to hereinbefore, and the immediate causes described above. It is quite possible that the Demonstration may not have taken place but for the above-mentioned statements which appeared in the Press. They were, however, absolutely without ground. Even if they were true, your Memorialists submit, the action of the Demonstration Committee could not be justified. As it was, the members of the Committee did an injustice to the European, native, and the Indian communities in the Colony as well as to themselves and Mr. Gandhi: to the European community, because their action created a lawless spirit amongst them; to the native, because the presence of that element at the Point, no matter by whom brought about, tended to excite their passions and warlike spirit, over which, when once aroused, they have little control; to the Indian, because they were subjected to a severe trial, and the bitterness of feeling against them was considerably accentuated owing to the action of the Committee; to themselves, because they took upon themselves the tremendous responsibility of defying law and order, without ascertaining the truth of their statements; and to Mr. Gandhi, because owing to gross misrepresentations, no doubt made unwittingly, about him and his doings, he very nearly lost his life. Instead of there being 800 passengers for Natal, there were only 600 in all, of whom about 200 were for Natal, the rest being for Delagoa Bay, Mauritius, and the Transvaal; and of these 200, over 100 were old residents of Natal who had gone to India and returned, and less than 100 were newcomers, including about 40 ladies, being wives and relations of the Indian residents of Natal; and the remaining 60 were either storekeepers, their assistants, or hawkers. There was not a single blacksmith or compositor on board, neither was there a printing plant. Mr. Gandhi publicly denied, through the interviewer of *The Natal Advertiser*, that he ever instigated anybody on board to bring an action against the

Government for illegal quarantine;[1] and this denial has not been contradicted. Moreover, it is easy to see how the rumour arose. As would appear from what has preceded, the owners and the agents threatened some action against the Government for what they considered to be illegal quarantine and detention. Rumour ascribed such an action to the passengers and *The Natal Mercury* erroneously inferred that Mr. Gandhi must have had a hand in the matter. He has, moreover, denied through the same channel that there is any organization led by him to swamp the Colony with Indians. And your Memorialists may here assure Her Majesty's Government that no such organization exists under Gandhi, who was a passenger on the *Courland*. That he was a passenger by that ship was mere accident. Your Memorialists telegraphed for him on November 13th,[2] and he booked his passage in the *Courland*, she being the earliest convenient boat for Natal after that date. These denials are easy of verification at any time, and if they are true, then, your Memorialists submit, it behaves the Government of Natal to allay popular feeling by publishing their opinion.

Some of the incidents of the quarantine are worthy of record, as showing that the quarantine was more a political move against the Indians than a safeguard against the introduction of the bubonic plague into the Colony. It was first imposed to complete 23 days from the day of departure of the ships from Bombay. The Committee's report above alluded to (App. Q) advised 12 days' quarantine after disinfection and fumigation. No steps were taken to disinfect and fumigate till after the expiry of 11 days after the arrival of the ships at Durban. In the mean while, the signals of distress for water and food were tardily attended to, doctors were said to have been privately interviewed by the Hon. the Attorney-General, and asked to give their opinion regarding the period of quarantine (App. P); passengers' clothing and beds were burnt, and, though they were to remain on board for 12 days after such destruction, the Government made no provision for the supply of bedding and clothing, in spite of the signals from the vessels. And but for the charity of a few well-disposed Indians in Durban,[3] the passengers would have been obliged

[1] *Vide* "Interview to *The Natal Advertiser*", 13-1-1897.

[2] Gandhiji received the telegram on November 13; *vide* "Letter to *The Englishman*" 13-11-1896.

[3] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

to remain, for that period, without proper clothing and any bedding, perhaps with grievous injury to their constitutions. With due deference to the authorities, your Memorialists cannot help observing further that so much was the disregard shown by them for the welfare of the Indian community that even the mails on board the ships were not taken away and delivered before ten days had elapsed after their arrival causing serious inconvenience to Indian merchants. To further emphasize the above contention, your Memorialists would draw your attention to the fact that, even after the *pratique* was given and the *Courland* was moored into the channel, she was not allowed a berth at the wharf for some days, while the steamers that arrived thereafter were provided with berths before she was, as will appear from the following:

> The Captain of the *Courland* calls our attention to the fact that although his vessel has been inside the Port since last Wednesday, he has been unable to secure a berth at the main wharf. Several vessels have arrived within the past few days, and although the *Courland* might have been expected to have prior claim for a berth, the later arrivals have already secured quay berths, while the *Courland* remains in the stream. The *Courland* has about 900 tons of cargo to discharge, and requires about 400 tons of coal. The expense of lighterage to and from the Bluff moorings will amount to a considerable sum.—*The Natal Advertiser*, 19th January, 1897.

Your Memorialists may be permitted to quote from the various newspapers to show how the Demonstration was viewed before and after it took place:

> Natal's present action in connection with the immigration of Indians is not well balanced. To the outside world, the fierceness of the agitation, which has suddenly risen at Durban against the landing of more Indians, is in strange contrast to the fact that Natal has all along been, practically, the one gateway through which these Asiatics have found admittance to South Africa. It was hardly to be expected that the country which had for so long openly encouraged Indian immigration should quite suddenly turn round upon two ship-loads of them awaiting disembarkation at Durban, and ostentatiously threaten to resort to violence to prevent their landing. By going to such an extreme, the people of Durban, who have identified themselves with the agitation, can hardly be congratulated on their attitude. It is altogether unfortunate that they have gone so far, because, whatever happens now, they are doomed to disappointment and humiliation. . . After all is said and done, a large number of the people of Natal know that they have derived very

considerable benefit from the presence of the Indian in their Colony. It is surely a fair inference that these continued arrivals of fresh batches of Indians in Natal are the result of the knowledge having reached them that their predecessors had fared well in their new conditions. Now, it may be asked, how could the earlier contingents of Indians have prospered in Natal had they not been, one way or another, assisted by the European settlers? And it may be taken for granted that the Europeans could not thus have assisted the Indian immigrants to prosper had they not, at the same time, been thereby helping on their own prosperity as well. The Indians who come to Natal are of two classes, the indentured and the free. Both these classes have found, despite their superficial antagonism, that the Europeans have been ready to employ or "support" them, and have thereby not merely made them satisfied with their own amelioration but have thus encouraged further arrivals. The indentured Indians are, for the most part, utilized by the European agriculturists; the free Indians who desire to engage in trade are supported by the European merchants, while the remainder are, in one way or another, encouraged to come and to remain in the country for domestic purposes. That the indentured Indian has proved to be an absolute necessity in Natal, owing to the indifferent and unreliable labour procurable from the Kaffir population, is evidenced by the fact that they are employed in thousands as farm and domestic servants, and that further indentures for hundreds more go to India by almost every mail. "But," it is often said, "the objection is not to the indentured, but to the free Indian." In the first place, however, the indentured coolie is destined ultimately to become free. So that, while importing them under indentures, the people of Natal are thus practically ensuring large and continuous contributions to the free Indian population. An attempt has been made, it is true, to compel the return of indentured Indians at the conclusion of their contract, but the law could not be made compulsory. Then, as regards the free Indians, these are engaged either in commerce, agriculture, or domestic service. In none of these directions could they possibly succeed except through the direct help of the Europeans. As regards the Indian trader, he receives his initial "support" from the European merchants. It would probably be difficult to find a single commercial house of any standing in Durban which has not scores of Indians as "clients". The coolie "farmer" is encouraged and maintained by the Europeans in two ways: he has to rent or buy his land from the original European possessor, and his products are, for the most part, consumed in the European households. If it were not for the coolie market-gardeners and hawkers, the people of Durban (and other parts of the Colony) would find themselves very badly off for many kitchen requisites. Then, with respect to the Indian domestic servants, the only remark necessary is that, as a

body, they have proved themselves to be much superior, in capacity, reliability and obedience, to the average Kaffir. It would probably be found, on close examination, that several of those who have associated themselves with the recent agitation have Indians in their employ. Indians are also largely engaged in Government service, while the Government also provides them with the means of education, and consequently of advancement. Seeing, then, that the Europeans are primarily responsible for the benefits that have accrued to those Indians already in the Colony, it has the appearance of unreasonableness on their part to suddenly oppose the landing of any more. But, in addition to all this, there is the Imperial aspect of the question. This is the most formidable of all. So long as Natal remains a part of the British Empire (a circumstance which depends on Britain and not Natal), so long will the Imperial Government insist that the laws of the Colony shall not be repugnant to the general welfare and development of the Empire. India is part of the Empire; and the Imperial and Indian Governments are imbued with a determination to prove to the civilized world that the retention of India by Britain is for the benefit of the Indians. This, however, would not be the case if something could not be done to relieve the congested districts of India of their surplus population. This can only be effected by encouraging the Indians in those parts to emigrate. Britain has not the power nor the wish to force the surplus Indian population upon any country. But she certainly has the power to decline to allow any portion of the British Empire, where her Indian subjects are sought for by one section of the community, to shut its gates against them at the behest of another section of the same community. And so far as Natal is concerned, judging from the number of requisitions that go to India for further supplies of Indian labour, were anything to take place by which that supply was stopped, Natal and not India would be the greater sufferer.—*Star,* Friday, 8th January, 1897.

We regard the proceedings as, to say the least, premature, and we cannot regard without apprehension a demonstration which is practically in the direction of mob law . . . The Colony must guard against putting itself in the wrong, which would be the effect of any outburst of violence, before it was definitely ascertained whether a constitutional agitation would be successful . . . Meanwhile, we would once more urge upon the leaders of the extreme party to weigh well the responsibilities they are incurring. —*The Natal Advertiser,* 5th January, 1897.

If the leaders of the extreme party decide that it is necessary, they must incur a heavy responsibility, and be prepared to face the consequences . . . It might emphasize the fact that Natal wants no more Asiatics, but would it not

also emphasize the allegations of injustice and unfair treatment which have been brought against the Colonists? —*The Natal Advertiser,* 7th January, 1897.

Of the two thousand people said to have been at the meeting, we imagine but a small proportion will be ready to do what is illegal. There exists no lawful power by which the quarantined Asiatics can be sent back, or by which others can be prevented coming in, and, further, the British House of Commons would never consent to any law preventing Indian subjects from migrating to any part of the Empire. Although annoying in the present instance, yet it should not be forgotten that recognition of individual liberty is the sheet-anchor of the Constitution. Great Britain herself is suffering acutely from black and yellow competition . . . Many, who are loudest in their condemnation of the Asiatic in the abstract, do not hesitate to support him concretely by buying from him goods they find he sells cheaper.—*The Times of Natal,* 8th January, 1897.

The leaders of the Demonstration movement assumed grave responsibilities at Thursday's meeting, and some of the speeches were not marked for mildness. Dr. MacKenzie, for instance, did not exercise as much discretion as he might have done, and his dark hints regarding the treatment of Mr. Gandhi were extremely incautious. The mobilization of people to the point of the disembarkation of the Indians from the *Courland* and *Naderi* is to be a "peaceable" one, it is said; but who is to guarantee that no personal harm will befall any of the Indian passengers, after the assembly was worked up? And who will be primarily and morally responsible if harm does attend the Demonstration? One leader, or a hundred leaders, may urge a few thousands of citizens to be calm; but what control would such leaders have over such an assembly, which naturally bears a bitter grudge against all free Indians, intensified against the new arrivals and Mr. Gandhi, by reason of the recent agitations? —*The Natal Advertiser,* 9th January, 1897.

The present agitation is, primarily, the outcome of the attempt to import Indian artisans by the Immigration Board, which the Press instantly and emphatically denounced . . . But because the Press will not go to extremes and support prematurely drastic measures, it is denounced in unmeasured terms . . . We must not blame the Imperial Government for hesitating to take drastic steps for the exclusion of Asiatics, when we recollect that, up to this moment, the Government machinery of Natal itself was utilized for the very purpose of importing these Asiatics to suit our own purposes. It may be argued that there is not the same objection to the indentured Indians as to the free Indians, which is quite true; but may it not appear to the Imperial Government, and to the Indian Government, too that distinction is made purely in our own interests, and that it is scarcely fair to encourage immigration of one class of Indians for our own benefit, and to clamour for the rigid exclusion of another

class, because we imagine they are likely to do us harm?—*The Natal Advertiser*, 11th January, 1897.

They have a rough and ready diplomacy at Durban. There is none of your concerts of the powers, or diplomatic exchanges. The whole town goes down to the jetty, and announces that if certain of their fellow-subjects exercise their undoubted right to land, their blood will be upon their own head. Individually, they would be glad to buy cheaply from the frugal Indian; but collectively, they distrust themselves and each other. It is a pity that the agitators should have based their objections upon fallacious premises. The real grievance is an economical one based upon experience of which the theory is not generally understood. The soundest and most peaceable way is to form trade protection societies which shall insist upon a minimum price and a maximum wage . . . Durban is not east of Suez, being situated on nearly the same great circle; but the Durbanites seem to enter into the category of those among whom 'there aint no ten commandments', to say nothing of the Imperial Statute-book. It is not a method of civilized men to bring about reform by shooting one another in the streets. If the principles of economy are too hard for them, let them at least sail inside the law, which will be found a better friend than rioting, and the 'thousand armed men', that one imaginative agitator conjured up. Britain cannot afford to insult the legions of her Indian Empire; nor does she wish to do so, for protection is classed in the Islands in the deadly sense, and free trade comes in somewhere between the first four and the last six clauses of the decalogue. If Durban wishes autonomy, Durban will get it for the asking; but its people cannot expect the British Isles to countenance illegal action, or encourage unconstitutional agitation. — *Digger's News*, 12th January, 1897.

The Natalians appear now to have lost their heads; and in their hysterical indignation have become desperate and contemplate violence against the much-maligned 'coolie'. A demonstration has been organized, headed by a local butcher, and the whole town and Colony has taken up the hue and cry. There is something pathetically quixotic about this demonstrative body, each member of which binds himself to proceed to the quay and resist 'by force, if necessary' the landing of the Asiatics. It is furthermore said that those participating in the Demonstration intend to prove that they are in earnest, and that the men of Durban can organize an orderly yet emphatic demonstration in contradistinction to a riotous mob. The opinion is that the Indians would not land, and if the ships do bring them inside, those on board will at once recognize the futility of attempting to land when they see the crowd in opposition. Be that as it may, the present Demonstration resembles more the Knight of La Mancha's mad tilt against the windmill than the action

of soberminded Englishmen. The Colonists have become crazy and fanatical, and have lost much of the sympathy which they otherwise would have enlisted. There is nothing more ludicrous, we are told, than a British community in a state of excitement. In the words of Thomas Hood: 'Evil is wrought by want of thought, as well as want of art,' and the Europeans are undoubtedly prejudicing their cause in the action they are now taking.—*The Johannesburg Times.*

The opposition to the immigration of Indians to Natal is by no means the least momentous incident of Mr. Chamberlain's term of office. The interests affected are so large, and so intimately concern Great Britain, that it is slight exaggeration to say the settlement of the difficulty is the most serious problem submitted to him during that time. The discarded immigrants are the representatives of a great population which has been taught to believe itself protected and nurtured by those who now refuse to grant a footing in a new land. India has been encouraged to look upon itself as a favoured daughter of the Empire, and, under the quixotic rule of various Viceroys, it has been taught to assert its independence in a way that is unhealthy for the uneducated Oriental to contemplate. Theory has broken down in practice. The frugal Indian, imported because of his power to assist the Colonist in working his country at a profit, has established himself as a dangerous trade competitor, has himself developed into a settler and a producer, and threatens to oust his old employer from the market. The problem which presents itself to Mr. Chamberlain is, therefore, by no means easy of solution. Morally, Mr. Chamberlain is bound to uphold the righteousness of the Indians' position; economically, he is forced to admit the justice of the Colonists' claim; politically, it passes the wit of man to decide which side to favour. —*Star,* Johannesburg, January 1897.

The mass meeting held in the Town Hall on Thursday afternoon, on account of the wet weather, instead of on the Market Square as previously arranged, lacked nothing either in number or enthusiasm. That hall, crowded with the manhood of Durban, the grimy son of toil sitting cheek by jowl with the professional man, showed unanimity among all classes of the population, and gave evidence of a stern determination to stop the organized attempt to flood the Colony with Asiatics Mr. Gandhi had made a big mistake in imagining that the Europeans of Natal would sit still while he organized an independent emigration agency in India to land his countrymen here at the rate of from 1,000 to 2,000 per month. He judged the European character badly in thinking that he would be allowed to work such a scheme with impunity. Despite all his cleverness, he has made a sorry mistake, and a mistake that will most certainly defeat absolutely the object he had in view. As the dominant and ruling race in this British Colony, he has forgotten that we have a trust

reposed in us. Our forefathers won this country at the point of the sword, and left us the country as our birthright and heritage. That birthright we have to hand down to our sons and daughters, as it was handed down to us. It was left to us an entailed estate for all of British and European blood, and we should be false to the trust we have received were we to allow this fair land to be overrun with a people alien to us in blood, in habits, in traditions, in religion, and in everything that goes to make up national life. We have also a very serious responsibility as guardians of the welfare of the aboriginal inhabitants of the land. In Natal there are half a million of natives who look to the white man as the child looks to his father, and as a matter of fair dealing, to put the matter in its mildest aspect, we must safeguard, as far as possible, the rights of the natives of Natal, as the legitimate labourers of the Colony. Then, there are Indians already in the Colony. We brought most of them here, and it is only our duty to see that they are not subjected to the disabilities and disadvantages that would follow on such an influx of their countrymen as would make it a difficult matter for them to make an honest living. We have at least 50,000 Indians in the Colony at present—a population in excess of the European—amply sufficient. As regards the attitude of the Government in the matter, that was very ably explained by Mr. Wylie on Thursday afternoon . . .

. . . Dr. MacKenzie said he was thoroughly satisfied with the action of the Government, and all the members of the Committee were with him in that feeling of satisfaction. All, therefore, being in accord on the subject, it is sincerely hoped that the Demonstration will be a peaceable demonstration in every sense of the word. It should be used as an object-lesson to the Indians that the long-open doors of the Colony are about to be shut and that they must not, as hitherto, try to induce their friends and relations in India to follow them. A demonstration in itself, if it is kept well in hand, and if the programme outlined by the leaders is faithfully carried out, can do no harm. Only, as we have already pointed out, crowds are not easily controlled, and therefore, special responsibility attaches to the leaders. The leaders, however, seem confident of their ability to exercise this control, and are determined to carry out their proceeding to the Point, and if all goes well, the Demonstration will be so much more moral backing to the Government. It will also be an illustration of the true earnestness of the movement. Mr. Wylie very truly said that, while they must show the force they possessed, it was the men who could use that force without abusing it who gained their ends. We cannot insist too strongly on the necessity for the most perfect preservation of law and order. Ultimate success depends upon this, perhaps, as much as upon anything else,

and we rely upon the good sense and sound judgment of those in charge of the Demonstration to see that the zeal of their followers does not overstep their discretion.—*The Natal Mercury,* 9th January, 1897.

After all that has been said and done in Durban during the past fortnight, with a view to intimidate the Indian passengers on board the steamships *Courland* and *Naderi* from landing, it must be candidly admitted that the Demonstration has come to an ignominious termination. Although the ringleaders of the Demonstration naturally seek to cover their defeat by claiming a victory, the whole affair has proved an utter fiasco so far as its original and avowed intention is concerned. This was nothing more nor less, than to compel the Indians on board the two steamers to return forthwith to India without touching Natal soil. That has not been accomplished . . . By no sudden and ill-considered action on their part, can the people of Natal interfere with the incursion, allowed by their existing laws, of immigrants from any country. It was, of course, possible that the recent Demonstration, got up against the latest arrivals from India, might have succeeded in scaring them away. But, after all, even supposing that had been the issue, it certainly would have brought the demonstrators little to be really proud of. It would have been a sorry victory had a small contingent of defenceless coolies been frightened away from the shores of Natal from fear of bodily maltreatment at the hands of the European settlers, assisted by a gang of whooping Kaffirs only too glad of an opportunity to demonstrate their dislike to their coolie competitors. It is far better that the Demonstration has "eventuated" as it has done. The only regrettable feature about Wednesday's proceedings at Durban is the assault committed on Mr. Gandhi. It is true that the folks of Natal are highly incensed at his having published a pamphlet, charging them with badly treating their indentured Indians. We have not seen the publication in question, and if its charges are directed against Natalians as a community, then they are unfounded. There can be no doubt, however, as a case recently tried in the Natal courts plainly showed, that cases of extreme ill-usage have occurred on at least one of the estates, and Mr. Gandhi, as an educated Indian, cannot be altogether blamed if he strongly resents such treatment of his fellow-countrymen, and seeks to effect a remedy. As regards the assault on Mr. Gandhi, it does not, however, appear to have been perpetrated by any of the more respectable portion of the crowd, although the youths who sought to do Mr. Gandhi bodily harm were, no doubt, incited to do so by the unguarded utterances of some of the responsible organizers of the Demonstration. It was owing only to the alertness of the police that Mr. Gandhi escaped without serious injury, and perhaps with his life. . . . But South Africa is evidently passing through a stage in its transition which evolves abortive demonstrations as one of its characteristics. The whole country is still in its boyhood, and there is nothing a boy loves more than to refer his disputes to the gory arbitrement of physical force. Looked at in that way, this week's doings at Durban may be excused

with an indulgent smile. But regarded from any other standpoint, it is open to severe condemnation, as tending to retard rather than to advance the ultimate solution of a most complex political and economic question, not merely of importance to Natal, but to England, India, and the whole of South Africa.—*Star*, Johannesburg, January 1897.

Of what avail, then, was it to forbid a landing to the few hundred immigrants on the *Naderi* and *Courland* while the system of trading with Indians is in full swing? Years ago, before the present Act of the Volksraad was in force in the Free State, Arab stores were opened in Harrismith, and at once began to undersell the old-established houses by about 30 per cent. The Boers, who of all men protest against colour, flocked to the Arabs, and, while condemning the principle, were not above pocketing the profit. It is much the same in Natal today. The mention of blacksmiths, carpenters, clerks, printers, etc., as being among the passengers, aroused the "working classes", and their cause was doubtlessly espoused by those who, in other ranks of life, were feeling the pressure of the ubiquitous Hindoo, and yet, probably, none of these men were mindful of the fact that they themselves are helping to make Natal a desirable objective point for the surplus labour of India. The vegetables, fruits, and fish that adorn a Natal dinner table are grown, caught, and hawked by coolies; the table linen is washed by another coolie, and, in all probability, the guests would be served by coolie waiters and partake of fare prepared by a coolie cook. Let the Natalians be consistent, and begin the work of ostracizing the Indian by dealing with their own poorer classes, in preference to coolies, and leave the question of restrictive legislation to their elected representatives. While Natal remains such a desirable abiding place for the Asiatic, and Natalians continue to profit largely by the cheap labour the dark man brings, the work of minimizing arrivals will certainly be difficult, if not hopelessly impossible, without legislation on the subject—*D. F. News*, January 1897.

It is fortunate for all concerned in Durban's demonstration against the landing of Indian immigrants that, beyond the effervescent effects of the stump oratory of Dr. MacKenzie, and the inciting diatribes of Mr. Sparks and his neophyte Dan Taylor, nothing very serious has happened to the fair Colony of Natal, its distracted inhabitants, or the much maligned "coolies". The pseudo-patriotic organizers of an ill-advised demonstration have attempted to play the Roman fool, and have died on their own swords, Luckily, we say, nothing more serious happened; but the folly of those who took upon themselves the hazardous task of calling the people together and suggesting

such unconstitutional conduct was never more apparent during the whole time the hubbub lasted, than in the concluding acts of the Durban mob. Unsuccessful in their attempts to prevent the landing of the coolie immigrants, and doubtless humiliated and smarting under the fact that their Demonstration had been somewhat of a fiasco, the mob, in an ill-temper, turned its attention to Mr. Gandhi, an Indian barrister, whose worst crime, in the eyes of Natalians appears to be that he has interested himself in the cause of his fellows, and gratuitously assumed the position of interpreter for the Indians in South Africa. Up to this point the Demonstration had proved quite a harmless one, and might have been likened unto a Christmas pantomime; but, when Mr. Gandhi unostentatiously landed, and was proceeding quietly into town, with Mr. Laughton, an English solicitor, matters took a barbarous turn. We do not presume to take up the cause of the Indian in South Africa, neither do we champion Mr. Gandhi's arguments, but the treatment to which that gentleman was subjected is scandalous and calls for censure. Mr. Gandhi was surrounded by a jeering crowd of hydrocephalous entities, and was made the vile object of kicks and cuffs, while mud and stale fish were thrown at him. One cad in the crowd struck him with a riding whip, while another plucked off his hat. As a result of the attack, we are told that 'he was very much bespattered, and blood was flowing from his neck'. Subsequently, under police protection, Mr. Gandhi was conveyed to the store of a Parsee[1], the building was guarded by the borough police, and, ultimately, the Indian barrister made his escape incognito. No doubt, all this proved grand fun for the *canaille, but* apart from the morals of law and order, the British love of fair play must be rapidly on the wane in Durban, when Englishmen resort to such ungentlemanly behaviour and brutality towards an unconvicted free man. Downing Street and the Indian Government cannot be apathetic towards the violent attitude which has been adopted by Natalians towards a lawful subject of Britain's "magnificent dependency"—India—a land which is spoken of as the brightest territorial jewel in the English diadem.—*The Johannesburg Times,* January 1897.

The illegal methods of intimidation, which the people of Durban have employed to raise their grievance into the magnitude they wish it to occupy, have been justified by the grave importance of the interests at stake and by the results so far achieved . . . Quietly, and without boast or bluster, they have all along had the movement under their aegis and control, although to some of the purblind people in the Colony it has seemed as if the administrative power had

[1] Rustomji, an Indian Parsi, better known as Parsi Rustomji

been transferred to the leaders of the Demonstration movement.—*The Natal mercury*, January 14th, 1897.

It would be a mere affectation to pretend that the Demonstration was a success from the party's point of view. All the oratory at the Point yesterday, which was couched in a very different key from that at the mass meetings, cannot obscure the fact that the primary object of the Demonstration, the prevention of the landing of the passengers on board the two steamers, has not been achieved. What has been gained could, as we have always maintained, have been equally attained by other means . . . What, we may ask, has been gained by yesterday's proceedings? If it be said that they have shown the imperative need of doing something to stop the Asiatic invasion, we reply that was shown with equal force by the mass meetings, and was, in fact common cause. If it be urged that the Demonstration showed that the people were in were in earnest, we fear we cannot assent to the proposition, because the assembly dispersed on receiving from the representative of Government exactly the same assurances as they received a week ago. The Government then promised to bring in legislation to deal with the question. Mr. Escombe yesterday repeated the assurance; but he gave no further pledges; he did not agree to a special session of Parliament, nor did he promise to send the Indians back. The Committee in fact, now declare their readiness to leave the whole matter in the hands of Government, without the slightest reason for doing so more than existed a week ago, and while the proclaimed object of the Demonstration is unfulfilled. We are not surprised that a good many persons regard the affair as a mere fiasco—a *brutum fulmen*—and express the belief that the Durban people will not be very anxious to figure in another such demonstration. . . . The practical abdication by Government of its functions during the week, in favour of the Committee, was so extraordinary as to irresistibly produce a suspicion that it was all prearranged. The self-elected committee virtually constituted themselves a sort of provisional Government as regards this particular question. They regulated the movements of the steamers, and assumed the right to grant or refuse "permission" to persons to land on our shores who had as much title to be here as they had; they even proposed a Danegeld policy, to carry out which the public funds would be requisitioned. All this time Government looked on, made no preparations for the protection of the passengers, and contented themselves with a perfunctory protest. We are not now arguing whether the Committee were justified in their course. They thought they were, but that does not annul the fact that they virtually and quite illegally superseded the Government. A long series of negotiations ensues, during which the public is kept in a constant ferment of excitement, until at last the bugle sounds and all Durban rushes to the Point, prepared to do or die. Then, quite casually of course, at the psychological moment, the Attorney-General "bobs up serenely", tells the people to be good boys and he will do all that is necessary—"fix your eyes upon your

Escombe and he will pull you through"—the Committee declare, they had the least idea of doing anything in opposition to the Government, and are quite willing to leave it in the hands of the Government—cheers for the Queen—blessings all round—everybody goes home happy—Demonstration melts away as quickly as it gathered—while the now forgotten Indians quietly come ashore, just as if there had never been any demonstration at all. Who can resist the suspicion that it was a prearranged and foregone conclusion? It has been asserted by the Captain of the *Courland* that the Committee led him to believe that they were acting on behalf of the Government; and it has also been stated that Government knew and approved of what the Committee were doing. These statements, if correct, imply a serious imputation of the *bona fides* either of the Committee or the Government. If the Committee had the sanction of the Government, the latter were playing a double game by countenancing in private proceedings which were disapproved in their published reply. If not, the charge of duplicity must be shifted to the shoulders of the Committee. We should be loth to believe these statements, because it is not by such methods that a great cause is conducted to a successful issue.—*The Natal Advertiser*, 14th January 1897.

The letter we published yesterday, from the Demonstration Committee to the Captain of the *Courland*, does not sustain the charge previously made, that the Committee falsely represented themselves as acting on behalf of the Government, although, from its tone, and the reference to the Attorney-General, the Captain may be excused for coming to that conclusion. But it does afford ground for the alternative suspicion that, despite their published warnings against illegal action, the Government were practically in collusion with the Committee. According to this document, the Attorney-General, who had previously admitted that there was no legal means of keeping the Indians out of the Colony, went so far as to pledge the public funds to buying-off policy, at the dictum of a body with no legal status and pursuing illegal methods of intimidation, as is clearly shown by the terms of the letter. When that failed, came the Demonstration, with the opportune appearance of the Attorney-General on the scene. To use the old tag, comment is unnecessary.—*The Natal Advertiser*, 20th January 1897.

After all the speechifying and the parading, and the bugle-blowing of the past week, the citizens of Durban have fallen short of making history—unless, indeed, the discharge of a rotten potato at the eye of the unspeakable Gandhi may be considered as an historical act. The heroics of mob are apt to sink from the sublime to the ridiculous, and indifferent arguments are often accompanied by equally indifferent eggs . . . For a week the Natal Ministry permitted the situation to develop, without pretence at the feeblest

intervention, their policy suggesting and unofficial sanction of the whole business. Then, when the *Naderi* and *Courland* are within a few hundred yards of the wharves, Mr. Escombe appears upon the scene, actively intervenes, and the people disperse, to vent their baffled feelings, a few hours later, by upsetting Gandhi's ricksha, blacking his eye, and savagely assaulting the house in which he is lodged.—*Cape Argus,* January 1897.

A little explanation is still wanting in regard of the presence of a force of several hundred Kaffirs in the Demonstration. Did it mean that the cause of the white man and the cause of the native are one and the same? Or, what else did it symbolize? There is one thing in regard of which public opinion is unanimous. It may be unjust in the conclusion it has drawn. But the fact remains that people will not believe that the whole business was not a plot between the Government and the leaders of the late remarkable movement, but one in which the self-appointed Committee failed to score. It was delightfully dramatic. The Ministry handed over their powers to a Committee claimed to represent the people. Whatever you do, they said, act constitutionally. The word was passed round and the magic of constitutional action took effect, though not a soul to this moment knows what it means. The Ministry acted constitutionally, and promised not to interpose if the peace were broken. They would only go to the Governor, and ask to be relieved of office. The Committee acted quite constitutionally in organizing a force, including natives, to oppose by force the landing of British subjects in a British Colony. The concluding act of this pretty drama was played at the Point, when the Committee handed back their powers to Mr. Escombe, reinstated the Government, and everyone went home satisfied. The Committee claimed a moral victory, though they had been beaten from pillar to post; the Ministry pirouetted on their "single plank"; and the Indians, who were never to be allowed to land, landed promiscuously as soon as the crowd had dispersed.—*The Natal Witness,* January 1897.

Nothing of what Mr. Wylie stated to the Durban meeting, as having been said by Mr. Escombe to the deputation, has even been traversed, much less denied. It stands on record, then, that the Ministry, on the slightest appearance of a riot at Durban, had resolved that mob law should be supreme. "We shall say to the Governor that he will have to take the reins of Government into his own hands." Everyone is aware that we are rapidly nearing another general election, but no one could possibly have thought that any Ministry would have played so low, to gain votes, as to give the population of a large town freedom to break the law.—*The Natal Witness,* January 1897.

They cannot go on importing indentured Indians by the hundreds and at the same time shut out free Indians; otherwise they will meet with disappointment. —*Pretoria Press*, January 1897.

According to Mr. Wylie's report of the interview between the promoters of the anti-Indian agitation and Mr. Escombe, the attitude of the Government in the matter appears to be open to grave animadversion. Plainly, though in covert wording, according to Mr. Wylie's version, the Committee proposed to do what was illegal, and added: "We presume that you, as representing the Government and good authority of this Colony, would have to bring force to oppose us?" To this Mr. Escombe is represented to have replied: "We will do nothing of the sort. We are with you, and we are going to do nothing of the sort to oppose you. But if you put us in such a position we may have to go to the Governor of the Colony and ask him to take over the reins of this Colony, as we can no longer conduct the Government—you will have to find some other persons." According to this account, the Government have made a confession of most deplorable weakness. A minister, on being informed that a body of people propose doing what is unlawful, should, without a moment's hesitation, inform his interviewers that the course of law will in no degree be interfered with, and if the occasion calls for it, that minister should say out bluntly that the law, at all costs, will be supported by all available resources. Mr. Escombe, on the other hand, said in effect that the Government would do nothing to oppose the unlawful action proposed. This playing into the hands of men who speak publicly of the Indian Ocean as being the proper place of the Indian immigrants, shows regrettable weakness in a member of the Government in office.—*The Times of Natal*, January 1897.

The above extracts speak for themselves. Almost every newspaper has condemned the Demonstration, and they further go to show that the Government countenanced the action of the Committee. Your Memorialists may here remark that the leaders of the Demonstration have since denied that there was any "collusion" between the Government and themselves. Nevertheless, the fact remains, and it is patent from the above extracts, that had the Government contradicted the statement made by Mr. Wylie as to the conversation between Mr. Escombe and himself, and publicly declared that the passengers were not only entitled to the protection of the Government, but that it would be given to them, the Demonstration would never have taken place. As the Government organ itself has said, the Government "had the movement under their aegis and control" while it was developing. Indeed, it seems from that article that they were rather anxious that such a Demonstration should take

place, if only the crowd could be managed properly and kept under sway, so that it may serve as an object-lesson to the passengers. To say the least, such a method of intimidation being sanctioned or countenanced by a Government in a British Colony is, with the greatest deference to the Natal Government, a new experience, opposed to the most cherished principles of the British Constitution. The after effects of the Demonstration, in your Memorialists' humble opinion, cannot but be disastrous to the welfare as well of the whole Colony as of the Indian community, who claim to be as much a part of the British Empire as the European British subjects. It has already intensified the estranged feelings between the two communities. It has lowered the status of the Indians. All this, your Memorialists humbly submit and hope, cannot and will not be viewed with unconcern by Her Majesty's Government. If those who are responsible for the upkeep of the harmony of the British Empire and justice between the various sections of the subjects assist in creating or encouraging division and ill feeling between them, the task of persuading those sessions to keep in harmony, in face of conflict of diverse interests, must be ever so much more difficult. And if Her Majesty's Government grant the principle that the Indian British subjects are to have freedom of intercourse with all Her Majesty's Dominions, then, your Memorialists venture to trust that there will be some pronouncement from the Imperial Government that would preclude the possibility of such deplorable partiality on the part of Colonial Governments.

The following remarks by *The Natal Advertiser* of January 16, about the behaviour of the Indian community during the crisis are worthy of record:

> The behaviour of the Indian population of Durban during the excitement of the week was all that could be desired. They must have felt sore at the attitude of the townspeople towards their fellow-countrymen. But there was no attempt at retaliation; and by their quiet, peaceable behaviour, and faith in Government, they certainly contributed to the preservation of public order.

Your Memorialists would have refrained from any further reference to the incident in connection with Mr. Gandhi, but for the fact that, since he acts as an interpreter between the two communities in Natal, any misapprehension with regard to his position may seriously damage the Indian cause. Sufficient has been said herein to justify what he did in India in the name of the Indians in South

Africa. But, for further explanations as to the matter, your Memorialists hereby refer Her Majesty's Government to Appendix Y, wherein are collected certain extracts from newspapers. Your Memorialists have been praying Her Majesty's Government, in the memorials that have preceded this, to define the status of Indian British subjects outside India, and humbly submitting that, in virtue of the gracious Proclamation of 1858, that status should be equal to that of Her Majesty's all other subjects. Indeed, it has already been defined by His Excellency the Marquis of Ripon, in a despatch with reference to the Colonies, to the effect that "it is the desire of Her Majesty's Government that the Queen's Indian subjects should be treated upon a footing of equality with all Her Majesty's other subjects", but so many changes have since taken place that a formal pronouncement has evidently become necessary, especially in view of the fact that laws have since been passed in the Colony which are in conflict with that policy.

Another incident of the Demonstration, your Memorialists submit, is worth noting, viz., the massing of natives at the Point. It has already been alluded to above; but the following letter from Mr. G. A. de Labistour, a leading burgess of the town to the Town Council, and the remarks thereon of *The Natal Mercury*, the Government organ, would give a better idea of the gravity of the situation:

> 'Gentlemen—I was one of many burgesses who viewed with concern the rowdy behaviour of the natives who took part in the Demonstration yesterday. Along the Point Road several parties of natives, brandishing sticks and shouting at the top of their voices, had taken possession of the pavement, and at the Point about 500 or 600 boys, mostly Togt boys, all armed with sticks and singing and shouting, congregated with, apparently, the avowed object of committing a breach of the peace. Particulars of this deplorable matter are easily available.
>
> The evil effect on the natives in general of yesterday's proceedings will be accentuated, and race hatred fostered, unless steps are at once taken to show that your honourable body, as custodians of law and order in this town, will not countenance conduct of this sort. It can easily be understood that the massing or congregating together of a body of natives, such as that at yesterday's Demonstration, is a source of great danger to the town, as, for instance, was the case on the occasion of the massing of natives on the racecourse in their feud with the police some time ago.
>
> I submit that the native element in yesterday's Demonstration has cast on the fair name of Durban a blot which it is your duty to at once wipe out, and

I venture to say that your taking up the matter with a vigorous hand will be viewed with satisfaction by the majority of your burgesses. I respectfully suggest that, as a first step, the Corporation should cause an enquiry to be made as to who is responsible for the massing of these natives, their behaviour and control on the occasion alluded to; and, further, that to prevent a repetition of such conduct, special bye-laws be passed, in case those at present in force are found insufficient to cope with the evil.

This is rendered all the more necessary as no reference was made by the Honourable the Attorney-General to the rowdy and dangerous element created by the facts referred to. I, however, feel confident that his regrettable omission to do so only arose from the fact that he did not witness what I and others saw. The Togt boys are easily traceable, I should think; others were servants of members of the Committee, one of them especially having taken advantage of the occurrence to advertise his firm by sending down his store boys, each armed with two or three sticks, with his firm's name appearing in glaring letters on their backs.

Mr. Labistour's letter to the Corporation, drawing attention to the danger incurred in the massing of a body of natives armed with sticks for the purposes of the Demonstration on Wednesday, and calling on the Town Council to enquire into the matter, should not be overlooked. We believe the Demonstration Committee were not in any way responsible for the native impi being at the Point; but the natives did not go down there of their own initiative, and it would be as well if the matter were fully investigated and the onus thrown upon the individuals who took upon themselves so grave a responsibility. As Mr. Labistour quite properly remarks, the native element at the Demonstration was a blot on the fair name of Durban, and might have been productive of the most dire results. There is no love lost between the Indian and the native as it is, and to bring together a band of natives and incite them against the Indians may even yet be productive of serious trouble. The native has no reasoning powers in a matter of the kind. His passions are like tinder and his instincts are warlike. The slightest provocation, and he is all aflame and ready for anything where there is shedding of blood. An even more disgraceful incident was inciting the natives to attack Indians after Mr. Gandhi landed and was lodged in Field Street. Had the police not been on the alert and succeeded in dispersing the natives, Wednesday night would have ended in one of the most disgraceful riots any British Colony ever witnessed, in so far that a savage warlike race had been set upon a more civilised, peaceful people by men of a higher race than either. The disgrace would have clung to the Colony for many a long day. Instead of arresting the four kaffirs who flourished their

sticks and whooped in Field Street on Wednesday evening, the white men who brought them there and encouraged them ought to have been brought up before the magistrate and fined as heavily in proportion as the Kaffirs were fined. It was rather hard on the kaffirs to make them scapegoats for really obeying the orders of men who ought to have known better. To call in the natives in a matter of the kind is to exhibit to them a weakness which, above all things, should be avoided, and we trust there will never be a repetition of so dangerous and disgraceful a practice as exciting the racial prejudices of so inflammatory an element as the natives.—*The Natal Mercury,* 16th January, 1897.

It would perhaps assist Her Majesty's Government in coming to a conclusion if certain facts were placed before them pertaining to the matter. The demand for restriction of free immigration of Indians has been based on the supposition that, of late, there has been a very large influx of Indians into the Colony, irrespective of any organization. Your Memorialists, however, have no hesitation in saying that the alarm is not justified by facts. It is not correct to say that more Indians have come to the Colony during the last year than during the last but one. Formerly, they came by the German boats as well as by those of the B.I.S.N. Co. Since the latter boats transshipped their passengers in other boats at Delagoa Bay, the Indians came in small batches and were, naturally, not much noticed. Two Indian merchants bought steamers last year and established a fairly regular and direct service between Bombay and Natal. Most of the Indians wishing to come to South Africa availed themselves of this service, and thus, instead of being divided into small batches, they came all at once, and thus drew attention. Moreover, no one seemed to take any notice of those that returned to India. From the following list it will be clear that there has not been a material addition to the free Indian population; certainly not in any way large enough to justify the alarm. It is also worthy of note that the European immigration is and has almost always been in excess of the free Indian immigration.

A return signed by Mr. G. O. Rutherford, Acting Protector of Immigrants, shows that from August last to January seven steamship firms deported 1,298 free Indians from the Colony; the same companies introduced 1,964 Indians in the same time, most of the immigrants coming from Bombay.—*The Natal Mercury,* 17th March, 1897.

There is no foundation for the statement that there is any competition between European and free Indian artisans. Your Memorialists can speak from their own knowledge that there are very few Indian mechanics and artisans in the Colony, such as blacksmiths,

carpenters, bricklayers, etc., and those that are, are inferior to the European. (The Indian artisans of high order do not come to Natal.) There are a few tailors and goldsmiths in the Colony, but they minister to the wants only of the Indian community. As to the competition between the Indian and European traders, it has been well said, in some of the extracts quoted above, that, if there is any competition, it is rendered possible by the large support given by the European merchants. But the very fact that the European merchants are willing, nay anxious, to support Indian traders, shows that they do not compete with them to any appreciable extent. They, really speaking, act as middlemen and begin where the Europeans leave. The Commissioners, who were specially appointed to report upon Indian matters nearly 10 years ago, thus report as to the Indian traders:

> We are convinced that much of the irritation existing in the minds of European Colonists against the whole Indian population of the Colony has been excited by the undoubted ability of these Arab traders to compete with European merchants, and specially with those who have chiefly directed their attention to the supply of articles, notably rice, largely consumed by the Indian immigrant population. . . .
>
> We are of opinion that these Arab traders have been drawn to Natal by the presence therein of those Indians who have been introduced under the immigration laws. Rice is the chief food of the 30,000 Indian immigrants now in the Colony; and these astute traders have so successfully devoted their tact and energy to the supply of that article that the price to all consumers fell from 21s. per bag in former years to 14s. in 1884 . . . It is said that kaffirs can buy from Arabs at from 25 to 30% lower rates than those obtaining six or seven years ago . . .
>
> It does not lie within the scope of our Commission to discuss at length the restrictive measures which some desire to impose upon Asiatics or "Arab" traders. *We are content to place on record our strong opinion, based on much observation, that the presence of these traders has been beneficial to the whole Colony, and that it would be unwise, if not unjust, to legislate to their prejudice.* (The italics are your Memorialists.) . . . Nearly all of them are Mahomedans, either total abstainers from alcoholic liquors or drinking them in moderation. They are thrifty by nature and submissive to the law.

Mr. Saunders, one of the Commissioners, says in his additional report:

> So far as concerns free Indian traders, their competition and the consequent lowering of the price of articles of consumption by which the

public benefits (and yet, strange to say, of which it complains), it is clearly shown that these Indian shops have been and are most exclusively supported by the larger firms of white merchants who thus, practically employ these men to dispose of their goods.

Stop Indian immigration if you will, if there are not enough unoccupied houses now, empty more by clearing out Arabs or Indians, who add to the productive and consuming power of a less than half-peopled country, but let us trace results in this one branch of the enquiry taking it as an example of others, trace out how untenanted houses depreciate the value of property and securities, how after this must result stagnation in the building trade, and those other trades and stores for supplies dependent on it. Follow out how this leads to a reduced demand for white mechanics, and with the reduction in spending power of so many, how fall of revenue is to be expected next, need of retrenchment, or taxation, or both. Let this result and others far too numerous to be calculated on in detail be faced, and if blind race sentimentalism or jealousy is to prevail, so be it.

At a meeting lately held in Stanger, one of the speakers (Mr. Clayton) said:

Not only the coolie labourer, he said, but the Arab storekeeper had been of benefit to the Colony. He knew it was an unpopular view to take, but he had looked at the question from every point of view. What did they find? The *erven* round the Market Square were bringing in a good percentage through the presence of Arab storekeepers. The owners of land had been benefited by the coolies taking up land that would never be taken up by anybody else. At the auction sale, the other day, *erven* abutting on the Market Square fetched a price that would have been out of the question years ago. The Indians had created a trade—a trade that would never have been brought here by the old system of storekeeping. He was quite willing to admit that here and there an European storekeeper had been ruined by the Indians, but their presence here was better than the old days when a few storekeepers had the monopoly. Wherever they met with an Arab, they always found him amenable to law. They had heard it said that the Colonists should not give away their birthright— that the Indians should not be allowed to enter upon the possession of their lands. He was pretty confident that his children, rather than have to work any land he might be able to leave them, would prefer to let it to Indians at reasonable rents. He did not think that that meeting was justified in coming to a wholesale condemnatory resolution of the Asiatics.

A regular correspondent of *The Natal Mercury* thus writes:

We brought the coolies here as a necessity, and, undoubtedly they have been a great help towards the progress of Natal. . . .

Twenty-five years ago, in the towns and townships, fruit, vegetables, and fish could hardly be bought. A cauliflower sold for half a crown. Why did not farmers go in for market gardening? There may have been some laziness, but on the other hand, to grow wholesale was useless. I have known the case of cart-loads of fruit, etc., sent a long way, but in good condition to the city, unsaleable. The party who would give half a crown for a stray cauliflower would naturally demur to give a shilling for one, when he saw a wagon-load of them. Here we needed an industrious class of hawkers who could live cheaply and find pleasure and profit in supplying these wants, and we got it in the time-expired indentured coolie. And for waiters and cooks, public or private, the coolie has supplied the want, for in these matters the mass of our natives are awkward, and when not, as soon as carefully taught, are off to their kraals.

The free coolie labourer, if an artisan, will work longer hours and take a lower wage cheerfully than the European mechanic, and the coolie trader will sell a cotton blanket three half-pence cheaper than the white storekeeper. That is all.

Surely the great economic cry of supply and demand, your patriotic league of British subjects, your glorious cry of Free Trade, which John Bull pays through the nose for to show his faith in, all forbid this outcry.

Australia has forbidden coloured immigration. The strikes and band smashes do not make that a grand example. Coolies wear lighter clothes and slippers than Europeans; anyway, that is an advance on our location native, and, many years ago, boots were rarely seen on white men or women on farms, or children even among the uppish classes of the city, except when they went to the park or meeting. Their feet seemed none the worse, though bad for shoemakers. Coolies don't eat meat or drink beer, etc. Again, I dare say, bad for butchers and licenced victuallers. Depend upon it, all these things will find their level, but to force by Act of Parliament (beyond what decency and sobriety call for the common weal) what people are to eat and drink and wear is tyranny, not beneficent legislation. Crowds of white immigrants are kept out. Are they? With our native population, unless you can shunt the whole lot, white men will not work for a mere living wage in this Colony. They would rather be loafers.

We cannot get out of it. Ours is a black Colony, and much as I like our natives in their proper place, and the coolies [*sic*], too, who is more willing to keep it [*sic*] in his, the While man's role is and must be to be boss. Stop at that, I do not want to talk of how poor farmers cannot afford to pay their fashionable friends, the town artisans, their price, and are very glad to put up with even indifferent work by an off-coloured mechanic; but I would appeal to

> the skilled workmen to be content to regulate their own tariffs, and not be afraid of indifferent opposition—a good man is always worth his full value—but avoid, because they are numerically strong in the towns, a class agitation, a race quarrel. It is the same with the good tradesmen, and though the owners of country stores may have to cut their prices finer, they won't be ruined. Four hundred gallons of treacle for cash per week isn't bad. Talk of the federation of the Empire, and we are tabooing our fellow-subjects of India, whose warriors have fought shoulder to shoulder with ours, whose armies have upheld the honour of the flag on many a gory field! There are plenty of European stores in India, and well patronized and flourishing, too.

It is, in your Memorialists' humble opinion, because the Indians sell the wares for the European merchants, that there are so many large European houses which afford employment to hundreds of European clerks and assistants. Your Memorialists submit that an industrious and frugal class of men, as the Indians are admitted to be even by their most virulent opponents, cannot but on the whole add to the general prosperity, wealth, and consequently material happiness of the place they go to. *The Star* sums up the situation with regard to the Uitlanders in the Transvaal—the class of people who so inconsistently object to the presence of the Indians in South Africa, in the following words:

> South Africa is a new country. It should therefore be open to all. Poverty should be no bar to admission. The vast majority of those now in affluence, came here originally with only the proverbial half-crown in their pockets. By all means let us keep the population reputable; *do so however, by the just and stringent enforcement of local laws against vagrancy and roguery, and not by the arbitrary exclusion of new arrivals before it is possible* to know whether under the better conditions of a new country they might not take their place amongst useful citizens of the land.

These remarks with the necessary changes are word for word applicable to the Indian community; and if the position there taken up is correct and acceptable with reference to the Uitlanders, much more, your Memorialists venture to submit, should it be in the present case.

The Natal Government, in virtue of their promise to the Demonstration Committee, propose to introduce the following three Bills into the Honourable Legislative Assembly, which sits on the 18th instant:

QUARANTINE[1]: (1) Whenever any place has been proclaimed, under Law 4, 1882, as an infected place; the Governor-in-Council may, by a further Proclamation, order that no person shall be landed from any ship coming from such place. (2) Any such order shall also extend to a ship having on board passengers who have come from a proclaimed place, notwithstanding that they may have embarked at some other place, or that the ship has not touched at the proclaimed place. (3) Any such order as aforesaid shall be in force until revoked by a further Proclamation. (4) Any person who shall land in contravention of this Act, shall, if practicable, be at once returned to the ship in which he came to Natal, and the master of such ship shall be bound to receive such person on board, and to convey him from the Colony at the expense of the owners of the ship. (5) The master and owners of any vessel from which any person shall be landed in contravention of this Act shall be liable to a penalty of not less than one hundred pounds sterling for each person so landed, and the vessel may be made executable by a decree of the Supreme Court in satisfaction of any penalty, and the vessel may be refused a clearance outwards until such penalty has been paid and until provision has been made by the master for the conveyance out of the Colony of each person who may have been so landed.

LICENCES[2]: (1) Any Town Council or Town Board may, from time to time, appoint an Officer to issue the annual licences (not being licences under Act 38, 1896) required in the Borough or Township by wholesale or retail dealers. (2) Any person appointed to issue licences for wholesale or retail dealers under Law 38, 1884, or any like Stamp Act, or under this Act, shall be deemed to be a "Licensing Officer" within the meaning of this Act. (3) A Licensing Officer shall have discretion to issue or refuse a wholesale or retail licence not being a licence under Act 38, 1896; and a decision come to by a Licensing Officer as to the issue or refusal of a licence shall not be liable to review, reversal, or alteration by any court of law or otherwise than is in the next section provided. (4) There shall be a right of appeal[3] from the decision of a Licensing Officer to the Colonial Secretary as regards licences issuable under Law 38, 1884, or other similar Act, and in other cases to the Town

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Assembly", 26-3-1897 and "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897, Appendix A.

[2] For the law in regard to licences as finally enacted, *vide* "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897, Appendix C.

[3] The final provision in the Act for appeal against the decision of the Licensing Officer differed slightly from that in the Bill given here; *vide* "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897, Appendix C.

Council or Town Board, according to the circumstances, and the Colonial Secretary, or, as the case may be, the Town Council or the Town Board, may direct that the licence, the subject of appeal, shall be issued or cancelled. (5) No licence shall be issued to any person who, when thereto required, fails to show to the satisfaction of the Licensing Officer that he is able to fulfil the conditions of the Insolvency Law 47, 1887, Section 180, sub-section (a), as regards the keeping of such books of account in the English language as are usual and proper in the business to be carried on. (6) No licence shall be issued in respect of premises which are unfit for the intended trade, or unprovided with proper and sufficient sanitary arrangements, or not affording sufficient and suitable accommodation for salesmen, clerks, and servants, apart from the stores or rooms in which goods and wares may be kept.[1] (7) Any person who shall carry on any wholesale or retail trade or business, or who shall allow licensed premises to be in a condition which could disentitle him to a licence, shall be deemed to have contravened this Act, and shall be liable to a penalty of £20 for each offence, to be recovered by any Licensing Officer in the Court of the Magistrate.

TO RESTRICT IMMIGRATION[2]: (1) This Act may be known as "The Immigration Restriction Act, 1897." (2) This Act shall not apply to: (a) Any person possessed of a certificate in the form set out in the Schedule A[3] to this Act annexed, and signed by the Colonial Secretary or the Agent-General of Natal or any officer appointed by the Natal Government for the purposes of this Act, whether in or out of Natal. (b) Any person of a class for whose immigration into Natal provision is made by law or by a scheme approved by Government. (c) Any person specially exempted from the operation of this Act by a writing under the hand of the Colonial Secretary. (d) Her Majesty's land and sea forces. (e) The officers and crew of any ship of war of any Government. (f) Any person duly accredited to Natal by or under the authority of the Imperial or any other Government. (3) The immigration into Natal, by land or sea, of any person of any of the classes defined in the following sub-sections, hereinafter called "prohibited immigrant", is prohibited, namely: (a) Any person who, when asked to do so by an officer appointed under this Act, shall fail to himself write out and sign, in the characters of any language of

[1] The corresponding clause 8 in the Act as passed on May 9, 1897, had the following words added: 'in cases where premises are used for both purposes'; *vide* "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897, Appendix C.

[2] For the Immigration Restriction Act, in the form in which it received the Governor's assent, *vide* "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897, Appendix B.

[3] *Vide* "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897, Appendix B.

Europe, an application to the Colonial Secretary in the form set out in Schedule B[1] of this Act. (b) Any person who is unable to satisfy an officer appointed under this Act that he is possessed of available means of subsistence of his own to the value of not less than twenty-five pounds.[2] (c) Any person who has been assisted in any way by any other person in respect of his passage to Natal.[3] (d) Any idiot or insane person. (e) Any person suffering from a loathsome or a dangerous, contagious disease. (f) Any person who, not having received a free pardon, had been convicted[4] of a felony or other infamous crime or misdemeanour involving moral turpitude, and not being a mere political offence. (g) Any prostitute, and any person living on the prostitution of others. (4) Any prohibited immigrant making his way into or being found within Natal, in disregard of the provisions of this Act, and shall be liable, in addition to any other penalty, to be removed from the Colony, and upon conviction may be sentenced to imprisonment not exceeding six months, without hard labour. Provided such imprisonment shall cease for the purpose of deportation of the offender, or if he shall find two approved sureties, each in the sum of £50, that he will leave the Colony within one month. (5) Any person appearing to be a prohibited immigrant within the meaning of Section 3 of this Act, and not coming within the meaning of any of the sub-sections (d), (e), (f), (g) of said Section 3 shall be allowed to enter Natal upon the following conditions: (a) He shall, before landing, deposit with an officer appointed under this Act the sum of £100. (b) if such person shall, within one week after entering Natal, obtain from the Colonial Secretary or a magistrate a certificate that he does not come within the prohibition of this Act, the deposit of £100 shall be returned. (c) If such person shall fail to obtain such certificate within one week, the deposit of £100 shall be forfeited, and he may be treated as a prohibited immigrant. Provided that, in the case of any person entering Natal under this section, no liability shall attach to the vessel or to the owners of the vessel in which he may have arrived at any port of the colony. (6) Any person who shall satisfy an officer appointed under this Act that he has been formerly domiciled in Natal, and that he does not come within the meaning of any of the sub-sections (d), (e), (f), (g) of Section 3 of this Act, shall not be regarded as a prohibited immigrant. (7) The wife and any minor child of a person not being

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897 and "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897, Appendix B.

[2] This was later amended to refer to "paupers"; *vide* "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897, Appendix B.

[3] This was subsequently deleted; *vide* "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897, Appendix B.

[4] The act qualified this by adding: 'within two years'; *vide* "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897, Appendix B.

a prohibited immigrant shall be free from any prohibition imposed by this Act. (8) The master and owners of any vessel from which any prohibited immigrant may be landed shall be jointly and severally liable to a penalty of not less than one hundred pounds sterling, and such penalty may be increased up to £5,000 by sums of £100 each for every five immigrants after the first five, and the vessel may be made executable by a decree of the Supreme Court in satisfaction of any such penalty, and the vessel may be refused a clearance outwards until such penalty has been paid, and until provision has been made by the master, to the satisfaction of an officer appointed under this Act, for the conveyance out of the Colony of each prohibited immigrant who may have been so landed. (9) A prohibited immigrant shall not be entitled to a licence to carry on any trade or calling, nor shall he be entitled to acquire land in leasehold, freehold, or otherwise, or to exercise the franchise, or to be enrolled as a burgess of any borough or on the roll of any township, and any licence or franchise right which may have been acquired in contravention of this Act shall be void. (10) Any officer thereto authorized by Government may make a contract with the master, owner, or agent of any vessel for the conveyance of any prohibited immigrant found in Natal to a port in or near to such immigrant's country of birth, and any such immigrant with his personal effects may be placed by a police officer on board such vessel, and shall in such case, if destitute, be supplied with a sufficient sum of money to enable him to live for one month according to his circumstances of life after disembarking from such vessel. (11) Any person who shall in any way assist any prohibited immigrant to contravene the provisions of this Act[1] shall be deemed to have contravened this Act. (12) Any person who shall assist the entry into Natal of any prohibited immigrant of the class (g) in Section 3 of this Act, shall be deemed to have contravened this Act, and shall, upon conviction, be liable to be imprisoned with hard labour for any period not exceeding twelve months. (13) Any person, who shall be instrumental in bringing into Natal an idiot or insane person without a written or printed authority, signed by the Colonial Secretary, shall be deemed to have contravened this Act, and, in addition to any other penalty, shall be liable for the cost of the maintenance of such idiot or insane person whilst in the Colony. (14) Any police officer or other officer appointed therefore under this Act may, subject to the provisions of Section 5, prevent any prohibited immigrant from entering Natal by land or sea. (15) The Governor may, from time to time, appoint and, at pleasure, remove officers, for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this Act, and may define the duties of such officers, and such officers shall carry out the instructions from time to time

[1] In Section 11,12 and 13 of the Act as passed, the reference to the offences was modified by adding the word; 'wilfully'; vide pp. "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897, Appendix B.

given to them by the Ministerial head of their department. (16) The Governor-in-Council may, from time to time, make, amend and repeal rules and regulations for the better carrying out of the provisions of this Act. (17) The penalty for any contravention of this Act, or of any rule or regulation passed thereunder, where no higher penalty is expressly imposed, shall not exceed a fine of £50, or imprisonment, with or without hard labour, until payment of such fine, or in addition to such fine, but not exceeding in any case, three months. (18) All contraventions of this Act or of rules or regulations thereunder, and suits for penalties or other moneys not exceeding £100, shall be cognizable by magistrates.

Schedule A[1] is a blank certificate that the person whose name is to be filled in "is a fit and proper person to be received as an immigrant in Natal". Schedule B[2] is a form of application to be filled in by a person claiming to be exempt from the operation of this Act.

They will, perhaps, soon be before Her Majesty's Government for consideration. In that case, your Memorialists may have to approach you regarding the measures.[3] For the present, they will content themselves with saying that, while none of the Bills openly show their object, they are all aimed at the Indian community. If, therefore, her Majesty's Government accept the principle that restrictions may be put upon the Indian community in the British Colonies, it will be infinitely better that it were done so openly. That seems to be the feeling in the Colony also, as will appear from the extracts quoted below.

Referring to the Immigration Restriction Bill, *The Natal Advertiser* of 12th March, 1897, says:

It is not an honest and straightforward measure for the reason that it attempts to disguise its real object, and, because it can only be acceptable if it is enforced in a partial manner. If its provisions are strictly enforced against European immigrants, it would be an injury to the Colony. If, on the other hand, it is enforced only against Asiatics it would be equally unjust and unfair in another direction. . . . If it is an anti-Asiatic Immigration Bill the Colony wants, let us have an anti-Asiatic Immigration Bill . . . So far we can approve of the position taken up by the Demonstration Committee; their tactics, however, were not particularly effective . . . It was also another mistake to

[1] *Vide* "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897, Appendix B.

[2] *Vide* "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897, Appendix B.

[3] When the three Bills were passed later, a petition was, in fact, presented to Mr. Chamberlain; *vide* "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897.

drift, as Dr. MacKenzie did, into tall talk about fighting for his rights, and "cocking the rifle at the British Government". We can assure the worthy doctor that expressions like these only disgust right-thinking Colonists.

The Natal Witness, of the 27th February, thus remarks:

> There is nothing more repugnant to an Englishman's feelings than to have recourse to stratagems and chicanery to gain an object, and this Bill to restrict immigration is a flagrant attempt to compass an end by subterfuges. The Colony loses its self-respect and the respect of others in resorting to such means.

Referring to the exemption of the indentured Indians from the operation of the Bill, *The Times of Natal* of 23rd February writes:

> The provision indicates the inconsistency of the Colony generally. All know that the indentured Indians settle in the Colony, and yet all, or, at any rate, a big majority of the electorate, are resolved to have indentured Indians. This inconsistency is remarkable and shows unmistakably how divided is public opinion on the whole subject. Indians are objected to on the score of their ignorance; also because they compete as clerks and artisans, and also because of their commercial rivalry. It may be remembered that, during the recent commotion at Durban, a section of the demonstration was about to proceed to a ship which had just arrived with some Indians from Delagoa Bay, for the purpose of preventing their landing, when some individual called out that the Indians were merchants, and this satisfied the mob. That incident in itself was sufficient to show how sectional is the antagonism to the immigration of the coolie.

The most fatal objection, however, against those Bills is that they are intended to check an evil which does not exist. Nor is this all. There will be no finality to the anti-Indian legislation, if Her Majesty's Government do not intervene on behalf of the Indian British subjects residing in the Colony. The Corporations have applied to the Government for powers to enable them to remove Indians to locations, to refuse to issue licences (this is practically covered by one of the Bills quoted above), and to refuse to sell or transfer immovable property to the Indians. It is believed that the Government have not returned an encouraging reply to the first and the last proposals; still, the proposals are there; and there is no guarantee that, because the Government feel disinclined to entertain the proposals at present, for reasons best known to them, they will remain in the same mood for ever.

In conclusion, your Memorialists pray that, in view of the events narrated and the restrictive legislation forecasted above, a timely pronouncement of the policy with reference to the status of the Indian British subjects, or a confirmation of the despatch referred to above, be made so as to remove and prevent restriction on Her Majesty's Indian subjects residing in the Colony of Natal, or grant such relief as may meet the ends of justice.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Memorialists shall, as in duty bound, ever pray.

ABDUL CARIM HAJEE ADAM
(DADA ABDULLA & CO.) AND
THIRTY-ONE OTHERS

(APPENDIX A)

Copy

[*January 25, 1897*]

By this public instrument of protest, be it hereby made known and made manifest unto all whom it may concern that on this the twenty-fifth day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and ninety-seven (1897), before me, John Moore Cooke, of Durban, in the Colony of Natal, Notary Public, and in the presence of the subscribed witnesses personally came and appeared, Alexander Milne, master Mariner and Commander of the steamship *Courland*, of the burthen of 760 tons or thereabouts and of 120 nominal horse-power, belonging to this Port, and now lying in the inner harbour of this said Port of Natal, who did solemnly declare and state as follows, that is to say:

That the said steamer, laden with a cargo of general merchandise and carrying 255 passengers, left the Port of Bombay on the 30th day of November last, and dropped anchor in the outer anchorage of this port, at 6.34 p.m., on the 18th day of December, 1896.

Before leaving Bombay the crew and passengers were inspected and counted, and a bill of health and port clearance was granted.

Throughout the voyage, the passengers and crew were absolutely free from sickness of any description whatsoever, and every day during the said voyage, the cleaning, ventilating, and disinfecting of the passengers' quarters was strictly attended to, and upon arrival here the said appearer handed to the Health Officer of this port the usual documents as to the health of all on board and in reply to the said appearer's enquiries, the Health Officer informed him that the said vessel would be placed in quarantine until 23 days had elapsed since leaving Bombay.

On the 19th December, the said appearer signalled the shore: "I am getting short of water and must endeavour to get some." Cleaning and disinfecting of ship strictly attended to.

On the 22nd December, the appearer again signalled the shore as follows: "Our days have expired, are we out of quarantine? Please consult Quarantine Officer, report we all well; thanks", to which the following reply was received: "Length of quarantine not decided yet." During each of these four days of quarantine, the said appearer's vessel was cleaned and disinfected and quarantine regulations were strictly adhered to.

On the 23rd December, the following was signalled by the said appearer: "Distressed for want of water, want grass for horses. Perfect health on board, inform owners, use every exertion to relieve us from quarantine", to which a reply was received as follows: "From owners: condense water, hope to hear relief from quarantine this afternoon; send hay off tomorrow morning; have you a mail?"

On the 24th December, the Health Officer boarded, and ordered that all old mats, dirty rags and old clothes be burnt; that the holds were to be fumigated and whitewashed, and all clothes to be hung up and disinfected; that food stuff was to be kept from coming in contact with passengers, and all the passengers' wearing apparel was to be dipped in carbolic acid, that the passengers themselves were to be washed in a weak solution of carbolic acid, and every effort was to be used to keep the vessel clear of sickness. He also said, the quarantine would be 11 days from this date.

On the 25th December, a large quantity of passengers' sleeping mats were burned; all passengers' quarters, water-closets and urinals whitewashed and disinfected.

On the 26th December, the passengers were washed and their clothing apparel dipped in diluted carbolic acid. The following was signalled to the shore: "Distressed for want of water send at once, also fresh provisions and stuff, according to order of Quarantine Officer. Is there anything to prevent landing horses, Quarantine Officer having visited us. Perfect health on board, and Quarantine Officer's orders being executed. Relieve us quickly, passengers much distressed at delay. Thanks."

On the 27th December, the appearer hoisted the signal: "Are you sending order of yesterday?", in reply to which the following signal was displayed at the signal station: "Have arranged to supply water 9 a.m. tomorrow." " Distressed for want of water" was then signalled by the said appearer and kept flying for 2 hours. As usual, cleaning and disinfecting of the ship throughout was strictly attended to.

On the 28th December, the following signal was made: "Send everything wanted in order of Saturday, also letters, likewise information respecting landing horses." At 11 a.m. the steam tender *Natal* came alongside, and put on board carbolic acid for disinfecting and sulphur for fumigating purposes. The police officer also boarded to superintend the use of the above-mentioned disinfectants. A quantity of fresh water was also put aboard. The ship was thoroughly fumigated with burning sulphur, the upper and lower decks thoroughly washed with carbolic acid, and the

same disinfectant was used throughout the ship. All bedding, mats, bags, baskets, and all other material likely to propagate disease was burned in ship's furnaces.

On the 29th December, the upper and lower decks were washed with carbolic acid, and the same disinfectant used freely throughout the ship. The following signal was hoisted by the said appearer: "Disinfection and fumigation carried out to satisfaction of officer on board. Please inform Quarantine Officer at once." At 10 a.m., four hours later, the said appearer signalled the shore: "We are ready, waiting for Quarantine Officer." At 2.30 p.m. the steam tender *Lion* came alongside and put the Quarantine Officer aboard, who, after inspecting the ship throughout, expressed himself as being perfectly satisfied with the manner in which his orders had been carried out, but said that the vessel should have to remain in quarantine for a further 12 days from this date. At 3 p.m. the following signal was hoisted: "By order of the Government, all passengers' bed-clothes having been burnt, request Government to renew same at once, as passengers' lives are in danger without them. Want written instructions how long quarantine is to last, as verbal time changes [with] every visit of Quarantine Officer. No case of sickness occurring in the interval. Give notice to Government our ship has been disinfected every day since leaving Bombay. Want 100 fowls and 12 sheep." Cleaning and disinfecting of the ship strictly attended to.

On the 30th December, the said appearer signalled as follows: "Reply to our signal of yesterday. Passengers wish to disembark, will pay their own expenses in quarantine."

On the 31st December, the said appearer again signalled the shore as follows: "Do you intend this year to answer my signals of Tuesday and yesterday?" Cleaning and disinfecting of ship strictly attended to as usual.

On the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th January, 1897, the ship was regularly every day ventilated, cleaned and disinfected throughout, and all quarantine regulations strictly observed.

On the 9th January, the cleaning and disinfecting was repeated. At 5.30 p.m. the said appearer received a letter per the *Natal* from the owners through Mr. Gandhi, advising not to remove the steamer without express instructions from them, as it was dangerous to the lives of the Indian passengers. Not even after receiving *pratique* was the steamer to be moved.

On the 10th January, the following signal was hoisted: "Quarantine having again expired, wish to disembark at once four European passengers. Also send water and fresh provisions. Want instructions as to landing horses. Send fodder. Report we all well." These signals were all understood at the Station on shore and the Answering Pennant hoisted in reply to each. Cleaning and disinfecting repeated as usual.

On the 11th January, the Health Officer visited the ship and granted *pratique.* At 1.30 the tender *Natal* put on board 4,800 gallons of water. Four European passengers landed per *Natal* after hoisting signal, "My European passengers refused a passage on shore by the *Natal.* Please give instructions." At 4 p.m. signals were hoisted on shore, but could not be made out owing to haziness. Cleaning and disinfecting as well as ventilating of holds strictly attended to. A letter was received, signed by Harry Sparks, "Chairman of Committee", and is hereto annexed and marked "A",[1] and copies of which are annexed to the duplicate original and protocol hereof. Certain enclosures were said to be made therewith, but were never received by the said appearer.

On the 12th January, cleaning and ventilating, etc., having been repeated at 4.30 p.m., "Captain will be off tomorrow" was signalled from the shore.

On the 13th January, at 7.10 a.m., the Government tug *Churchill* came alongside with Pilot Gordon, who ordered the said appearer to heave short the cable, and to be ready to go inside at 10.30 a.m., this being a distinct order from Government, through the Port Captain. The said appearer having received instructions from the owners of the said *Courland* not to move without orders from them, requested Pilot Gordon to notify the owners that he was entering the harbour on Government orders. At 11.50, the Pilot came off in the tug *Richard King,* the vessel was got under way and taken across the bar. At 12.45, the Port anchor was let go and the vessel moored head and stern to buoys. At 1.15, Mr. H. Escombe, the Attorney-General for the Colony, came alongside with the Port Captain, and requested the said appearer to inform the passengers that they were under the protection of the Natal Government, and that they were as safe here as they would be in their own Indian villages. At 3 p.m., orders were received from the Port Captain to inform passengers they were free to land.

And the said Alexander Milne did further declare that, since the arrival of his said vessel in the inner harbour of this Port, on the 13th January, till the afternoon of the 23rd instant, his said vessel has been obliged to continue moored in the stream, instead of obtaining a berth at the wharf, while other vessels have arrived, and accommodation has been found for them at the said wharf. And that the Port Captain has refused to explain to the said appearer the reason for such treatment.

On the 16th January, the said Alexander Milne appeared before the Notary, Frederic Augustus Laughton, at Durban, aforesaid, and cause his protest to be duly noted.

[1] *Vide* the following Appendix.

And the appearer protests, and I, the said Notary do also protest against the aforesaid acts of the Government, or Government officials, and all loss or damage occasioned thereby.

Thus done and passed in due form of law at Durban, Natal, the day, month and year first before written in the presence of the witnesses hereunto subscribing.

As Witnesses:
(Sd.) GODFREY MILLER
(Sd.) GEORGE GOODRICKE

(Sd.) ALEXANDER MILNE,
QUOD ATTESTOR
(Sd.) JOHN M. COOKE,
NOTARY PUBLIC

(APPENDIX Aa)

Copy

January 8, 1897

CAPTAIN MILNE
s. s. *Courland*
DEAR SIR,

Neither you nor your passengers may be aware that the feeling in the Colony against the inflow of Asiatics has been running very high lately, and has culminated on the arrival of your ship and the *Naderi.*

Following on that, public meetings have been held in Durban, at which the enclosed resolutions were carried with acclamation. So largely attended were these meetings that all desiring it could not get into the Town Hall.

Almost every man in Durban has signed signifying his intention to prevent those on board your ship and the *Naderi* landing in the Colony and we are most desirous there should, if possible, be avoided a conflict between the men of Durban and your passengers, which will most assuredly happen if they attempt to land.

As your passengers are ignorant of the state of feeling, and have come here in ignorance, and we have it from the Attorney-General that if your people are willing to return to India, the Colony will pay the expense.

We shall therefore be glad to receive an answer from you before the ship comes alongside the wharf, whether the passengers elect to return to India at the Colony's expense or to endeavour to force a landing against the thousands of men who are ready and waiting to oppose their landing.

Yours truly,
(Sd.) HARRY SPARKS
CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE

(APPENDIX B)

Copy

[*January 22, 1897*]

By this public instrument of protest, be it hereby made known and made manifest unto all whom it may concern that, on this the twenty-second day of January, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-seven, before me, John Moore Cooke, of Durban in the Colony of Natal, Notary Public, and in the presence of the subscribed witnesses, personally came and appeared Francis John Raffin, Master Mariner and Commander of the steamship *Naderi*, of the burthen of 1,168.92 tons or thereabouts, and of 160 nominal horse-power, belonging to the Port of Bombay and now lying in the inner harbour of this Port, who did solemnly declare and state as follows, that is to say:

That the said steamer, laden with a cargo of general merchandise and carrying 350 passengers, left the Port of Bombay on the 30th [28th?] day of November last and dropped anchor in the outer anchorage of this Port at noon on the 18th day of December, 1896.

Before leaving Bombay, the crew and passengers were inspected and counted and a bill of health and port clearance was granted.

Throughout the voyage, the passengers and crew were free from sickness save the saloon cook who suffered from swollen feet but who, on being examined on the 19th December by the doctor, was reported to be suffering from a complicated disease of the liver and kidneys of which he died on the 20th December, and upon arrival here, the said appearer handed to the Health Officer of this Port the usual documents as to the health of all on board, and in reply to the said appearer's enquiries, the Health Officer informed him that the said vessel would be placed in quarantine for five days in order to made 23 days from the time of leaving the Port of Bombay.

On the following day the decks, passengers' and crew's quarters were washed and disinfected.

On the 20th December, the decks, passengers' and crew's quarters and the ship were washed down and thoroughly disinfected fore and aft.

On the 21st December, the ship was washed down, and all the water-closets, latrines, etc., were thoroughly disinfected and quarantine rules strictly observed.

On the 22nd December, the decks were washed and the water-closets, latrines, etc., were disinfected.

The five days imposed upon the ship by the Health Officer having expired, during which time the ship was in quarantine, and the rule of quarantine having been strictly observed, the said appearer signalled the shore station as follows: "What was decided about quarantine, answer will oblige", to which the following reply was received, "Length quarantine not yet decided."

On the 23rd December, the decks were washed down and all water-closets and latrines disinfected, and the said appearer again signalled the shore as follows: "What about quarantine?", and received the following reply, "Quarantine Officer has no instructions yet."

On the 24th December, the decks were washed and the water-closets disinfected, and on that day, the Health Officer and Police Superintendent came on board, whereupon the crew and passengers were mustered and inspected, the ship thoroughly disinfected, in which carbolic acid and carbolic powder were liberally employed. The passengers' soiled clothing and all mats, baskets and useless articles were destroyed in the donkey furnace by the Health Officer's instructions and a further term of twelve days' quarantine imposed. The quarantine regulations have been strictly observed up to this date.

On the 25th December, the decks and between decks were washed down with a solution of carbolic and water, in the proportion of 1 to 20, as recommended by the Health Officer.

On the 26th December, the decks were washed and the water-closets disinfected, and quarantine rules strictly observed.

On the 27th December, main deck and between decks were washed and disinfected with a solution of carbolic and water in the proportion of 1 to 20.

On the 28th December, the decks and between decks washed with carbolic solution and the water-closets whitewashed and, up till this date, day by day, quarantine rules were strictly observed. Passengers' beds, bedding, and all soiled clothing destroyed in ship's furnaces, and all the passengers' clothing hung on lines on main and between decks, and nine sulphur fires placed, all hatches closed and fires kept burning till 6.30 p.m. Forecastle, saloon, and second-class cabins, water-closets and alleyways treated in a similar manner. Passengers and crew were washed in the solution, decks washed down, and all passengers' accommodation washed with carbolic and water, and clothing placed in the solution.

On the 29th December, the following was signalled to the shore: "Disinfection completed to the Officer's satisfaction." The Health Officer inspected the ship and declared himself satisfied with the disinfection carried out, and imposed twelve days' quarantine on the ship and crew from this date.

On the 30th December, the following was signalled to the shore: "Ask Government to supply at once 250 blankets for passengers instead of those destroyed by Government; passengers are suffering greatly without them, other wise disembark them at once. Passengers suffering from cold and wet, fear sickness in consequence."

On the 9th January, the following was signalled to the shore by the said appearer: "Quarantine finished. When shall I obtain *pratique*? Please reply."

On the 11th January, the Health Officer boarded and granted *pratique*, the Quarantine flag was hauled down, and the appearer asked permission to land, and was

told that he was not allowed to do so, in the presence of the Police Officer and Pilot. The *Natal* came along with the Pilot who boarded and filled in the papers and port documents, and left orders for the said Francis John Raffin to be ready to enter the harbour, if signalled from shore.

On the 12th January, there were no signals from the shore.

On the 13th January, the *Churchill* came alongside with Government order to be ready to go inside at 10-30 a.m. At half past twelve, the appearer's vessel dropped anchor and moored alongside the steamship *Courland.* At 2.30, orders were received from the Port Captain to inform passengers that they were free to land.

And the appearer protests, and I the said Notary do also protest against the aforesaid acts of the Government or Government officials, and all loss or damage occasioned thereby.

Thus done and passed in due form of law at Durban, Natal, the day, month and year first before written in the presence of the witnesses hereunto subscribing.

As Witnesses:
(Sd.) GEORGE GOODRICKE
(Sd.) GODFREY WELLER [MILLER?]

(Sd.) F. J. RAFFIN
QUOD ATTESTOR
(Sd.) JOHN M. COOKE
NOTARY PUBLIC

(APPENDIX C)

Copy

DURBAN,
December 19, 1896

TO
THE HEALTH OFFICER
PORT NATAL

S. S. "NADERI"

DEAR SIR,

Have read in this morning's *Mercury* that the above vessel had no sickness on board, and hence we are very much surprised to find her put in quarantine station.

We shall be much pleased to know the cause of her being put in quarantine.

Will esteem it as a great favour for an early reply.

Yours truly,
(Sd.) Dada Abdoolla & Co.

(APPENDIX D)

Copy

December 21, 1896

(TELEGRAM)

FROM
LAUGHTON

TO
COLONIAL SECRETARY
MARITZBURG

The two steamers *Courland* and *Naderi* left Bombay twenty-eighth and thirtieth ultimo,[1] and arrived here Friday last. No sickness on board, but each put in quarantine under proclamation signed same day, and printed day after. Am preparing petition to His Excellency on behalf of owners and wish to introduce deputation and appear as Counsel to urge exceptional nature case under the laws, and seeking exemption from quarantine. Loss to owners combined, by detention, one hundred and fifty pounds per day, and the *Naderi* under charter party for freight Mauritius to Bombay. Will His Excellency receive deputation Wednesday next?

GOODRICKE, LAUGHTON & COOKE

(APPENDIX E)

Copy

(TELEGRAM)

FROM
PRINCIPAL UNDER-SECRETARY

TO
F. A. LAUGHTON, ESQ.
DURBAN

22nd.—Yours of yesterday.—I am directed to reply that the petition in question will be referred by the Governor for advice of ministers, and there will, therefore, be no need of deputation to and argument before His Excellency.

[1] This should be the other way round. The Courland left on the 30th and the Naderi on the 2th November.

(APPENDIX F)

Copy

DURBAN,

December 21, 1896

TO

THE HONOURABLE HARRY ESCOMBE

SIR,

I have the honour to enclose a copy of a telegram which I today despatched to you at Pietermaritzburg, not knowing that His Excellency the Governor was at Durban.

The *Courland*, s.s., and *Naderi*, s.s., left Bombay on the 28th and 30th ultimo,[1] and on their arrival here on Friday last, were placed in quarantine under a proclamation dated the same day and published in a *Gazette Extraordinary* dated the day after, although there had been no sickness of any sort on board the respective steamers during their respective voyages.

Under the Law 4 of 1882, it is enacted that it shall be lawful for His Excellency, with the advice of his Executive Council, from time to time, to make such orders and rules as may be deemed necessary to meet exceptional cases, and to determine whether, and under what circumstances, any ship or vessel may be partially or wholly, exempted from the operation of law, and a petition is being prepared to His Excellency with the object of showing that such exceptional circumstances exist, and I am desirous of introducing a deputation to His Excellency to present the petition, and of myself appearing before His Excellency as Counsel for the shipowners in support of their petition.

The vessels are being detained at an expense to the respective owners of one hundred and fifty pounds per diem, and they are, therefore, anxious to appear before His Excellency on as early a day as he will be pleased to appoint.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Sd.) F. A. LAUGHTON

[1] This should be the other way round. The Courland left on the 30th and the Naderi on the 2th November.

(APPENDIX G)

Copy

DURBAN,

December 22, 1896

DEAR MR. LAUGHTON,

The Governor desires me to say that, although in such a matter of administration as quarantine, he will, of course, refer to ministers for advice, he will, if it is still wished, receive a deputation tomorrow in Pietermaritzburg, of gentlemen interested in the Subject.

Yours faithfully,

F. A. LAUGHTON, ESQ. (Sd.) HARRY ESCOMBE

(APPENDIX H)

Copy

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE SIR WALTER FRANCIS HELY-HUTCHINSON, KNIGHT COMMANDER OF THE MOST DISTINGUISHED ORDER OF SAINT MICHAEL AND SAINT GEORGE, GOVERNOR AND COMMANDER-IN CHIEF IN AND OVER THE COLONY OF NATAL; VICE-ADMIRAL OF THE SAME, AND SUPREME CHIEF OVER THE NATIVE POPULATION:

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF DADA ABDOOLLA & CO., OF THE TOWN OF DURBAN, OWNERS OF THE "COURLAND" (S.S.) AND REPRESENTING THE OWNER OF "NADERI" (S.S.) FOR A RELEASE OF THE SAID STEAMERS FROM QUARANTINE

SHEWETH,

That the said *Naderi* and *Courland* respectively left Bombay on the 28th and 30th ultimo, with 356 and 255 passengers respectively, of all classes, on board, and bound respectively for this port, where they arrived respectively, on the 18th instant, at 2 o'clock p.m., and 5.30 o'clock p.m.

That the respective Medical Officers, on board the said respective vessels, reported to the Government Health Officer, on their arrival here, that there was then, and during the respective voyages from Bombay there had been, no sickness whatever on board the said vessels, yet the said Government Health Officer of the Port refused *pratique,* alleging as a ground therefor a Proclamation of Your Excellency.

That the Proclamation referred [to] is dated the 18th instant, and was published in a *Gazette Extraordinary*, dated the 19th instant.

That your Petitioners submit as follows:

(a) That a proclamation is a "publication by authority, or notice public," and that the said Proclamation not being published until the 19th instant, could not apply to said steamers which had actually arrived on the 18th instant.

(b) That by a strict construction of the words contained in Section 1 of Law 4, of 1882, the Proclamation could only apply to steamers which, after the notification of the said Proclamation both left and arrived here from the infected Port.

(c) That the crowding of large numbers of passengers on steamers of the description of those aforesaid is conducive to illness and epidemic.

(d) That from the certificates of medical men hereto annexed, it will appear that the passengers could be landed without any danger to the community.

(e) That in consequence of the acts aforesaid your Petitioners are sustaining damage averaging one hundred and fifty pounds per diem.

Wherefore, your Petitioners pray that the Medical Officer of the Port may be directed to grant *pratique* to the said vessels, or that such relief may be granted in the premises as is meet. And your Petitioners will ever pray, etc.

(Signed) DADA ABDOOLLA & CO.

(APPENDIX Ha)

Copy

DURBAN,
December 22, 1896

MESSRS GOODRICKE, LAUGHTON & COOKE

GENTLEMEN,

Please find replies to your interrogations:

1st. How long after contraction would the symptoms of bubonic fever or plague be manifest?

The period of incubation varies from a few hours to a week (*Crook-shank's*, 4th Edition, 1896). I have killed guinea pigs in 24 hours by inoculating with the cultivation.

2nd. Would you expect the disease to exist on a ship 18 days after leaving the infected port, meanwhile no sickness on board?—No.

3rd. What would be the effect of keeping 350 Indians cooped up in a small steamer at the outer anchorage for a considerable time during this hot weather?—Most disastrous to the Indians.

Your sincerely,

(Signed) J. PERROTT PRINCE, M.D.

(APPENDIX Hb)

Copy

December 22, 1896

DEAR SIR,

For your information regarding the plague now prevalent in Bombay, I will answer your questions seriatim.

Firstly, the incubation period is generally considered to be from 2 to 8 days, though Sir Walter Broadbent considers the period from a few hours to 21 days. Twenty-one days appears to be the outside limit the disease can require to make itself manifest after contraction.

Secondly, in my opinion, if there was beyond doubt a clean bill of health during a 21 days' voyage, there would be no danger of the disease in that boat.

Thirdly, the keeping closely packed of a large number of persons in a confined space is always liable to lead to ill health, and therefore to be avoided if possible.

I am,
Faithfully yours,
(Signed) N. S. HARRISON,
M.D., B.A., CANTAB.

(APPENDIX I)

Copy

(TELEGRAM)

FROM
LAUGHTON

TO
COLONIAL SECRETARY
MARITZBURG

Anxiously awaiting reply re. quarantine. Both steamers are signalling for water forage and provisions.

(Signed) GOODRICKE, LAUGHTON & COOKE

(APPENDIX J)

Copy

DURBAN,
December 24, 1896

TO
DANIEL BIRTWELL, ESQ., M.D.,
ACTING HEALTH OFFICER
PORT OF NATAL

SIR,

We are instructed by Messrs Dada Abdoola & Co., of this town, owners of the *Courland*, s.s., and representing the owners of the *Naderi*, s.s., to bring to your notice that these vessels with 255 and 356 passengers on board respectively, have been lying in the outer anchorage, bound from Bombay to this Port, since Friday last, the 18th instant, without *pratique* being granted to them by you, although the respective masters have been ready and willing, and still are, to sign a declaration in terms of Law 3, 1858, testifying to the perfect state of health of all on board the said respective vessels throughout the voyage, and to do all things necessary to meet the requirement of the law.

We are instructed to request you immediately to grant *pratique* to the said vessels to enable them to enter the harbour and discharge their passengers and cargo.

In case you should refuse to grant our request, we shall be glad if you will inform us of the grounds of your refusal; and as this is a matter of the utmost urgency, we shall feel obliged by giving us [*sic*] your reply at your earliest convenience.

We are,
Sir,
Your obedient servants,
(Signed) GOODRICKE, LAUGHTON & COOKE

(APPENDIX K)

Copy

DURBAN,
December 24, 1896

TO
GOODRICKE, LAUGHTON & COOKE

GENTLEMEN,

Your letter of today to hand. I am endeavouring to do my duty as Health Officer with due regard to all interests.

I am willing to authorize the placing in quarantine on the Bluff, at the cost of the ships, all persons intended to be landed. And when this is arranged for, *pratique* may be given to the ships after my instructions have been carried out.

Yours obediently,

(Signed) D. BIRTWELL

AG. MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

(APPENDIX L)

Copy

Durban,

December 25, 1896

TO

DR. BIRTWELL, ESQ., M.D.

ACTING HEALTH OFFICER

SIR,

We have your letter of yesterday, but before replying thereto, we would draw your attention to the fact that you have given us no reply to the question contained in our letter of yesterday. On receipt of an answer thereto, we shall be in a position to answer your letter of the 24th inst.

In view of the fact that each day's detention of the vessels represents a loss of £150, and great risk to the health, if not the lives, of passengers, we trust we shall receive your reply during the morning, and you shall have ours immediately thereafter.

We are,

Dear Sir,

Your obedient servants,

(Signed) GOODRICKE, LAUGHTON & COOKE

(APPENDIX M)

Copy

DURBAN,

December 25, 1896

TO

GOODRICKE, LAUGHTON & COOKE

GENTLEMEN,

In reply to your of December 25th to hand, in which you state that I have given no reply to the question contained in your previous letter in reference to my

refusal to grant *pratique*, etc., I beg to state that I do not consider it safe to grant *pratique* to the vessels except on the conditions stated by me.

Yours obediently,
(Signed) D. BIRTWELL,
ACTING MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH,
DURBAN PORT

(APPENDIX N)

Copy

DURBAN,
December 25, 1896

TO

D. BIRTWELL, ESQ., M.D.

ACTING HEALTH OFFICER

DEAR SIR,

We have your letter of today wherein you state, with reference to your refusal to grant *pratique*, that you do not do so because you do not consider it safe to do so except on the conditions stated by you.

In reply, we beg to draw your attention to the fact that you still give us no reply to the question contained in our letter to you, of yesterday .

In order that there may be no mistake between us, we beg to draw your attention to the Law, by which you will see that *pratique* can be refused on certain grounds, and we ask you to state your grounds in this case.

We venture to express surprise at your evident reluctance in answering a question which our clients are so clearly entitled to put.

We are,
Dear Sir,
Your obedient servants,
(Signed) GOODRICKE, LAUGHTON & COOKS

[PS.]

We also ask for the exact conditions which you make for the granting of *pratique*, as, if you have given them to us, it must be very imperfectly so.

(APPENDIX O)

Copy

DURBAN,
December 26, 1896

TO
GOODRICKE, LAUGHTON & COOKE

GENTLEMEN,

I have your letter of December 25th, 1896. I cannot let any risk to the Colony be run by giving *pratique* to the steamers without proper precautions.

If the passengers are not landed into quarantine quarters, 12 days must run after fumigation of the ship and precautions as regards clothing, namely, by washing and disinfecting, and the burning of sundry old rags, mats, sacks, etc., in accordance with instructions given by me to each Captain, before *pratique* can be given. If the owners agree to bear the expense of quarantine, then the landing must be preceded by fumigation and precautions as above, and after the landing is effected, the departure of the steamers will be facilitated; but there must be no contact with shore except under proper restrictions. If you want to get the steamers away, the simplest course will be to arrange for the owners to bear the expense of quarantining the passengers on the Bluff for twelve days after fumigation, etc., of the ship, or for any longer period, should such necessity arise.

As regards any legal points connected with the matter, please write to the Clerk of the Peace, as I have nothing to do with them.

Yours obediently,
(Signed) D. Birtwell

(APPENDIX P)

Copy

DURBAN,
December 26, 1896

TO
D. BIRTWELL, ESQ., M.D.

DEAR SIR,

We have your letter of today, We have three times asked you for your reasons for refusing *pratique* to the steamers *Courland* and *Naderi* and each time you have evaded the question. We must, therefore, take it that you refuse to give them.

We have been informed by the Principal Under-Secretary that you have informed the Government that you base your refusal on the fact that the bubonic plague is prevalent at Bombay, and that there is danger of infection if *pratique* is granted to these steamers, and unless we hear from you to the contrary, we shall take

it that this is your reason. Presuming this to be a good ground in law, it would certainly have to be based on reasonable grounds.

Dr. Crookshank, in his recent edition on bacteriology, says "that the period of incubation varies from a few hours to a week." Drs. Prince and Harrison, in their respective reports which we annexed to our clients' petition to the Government, say much the same, and you, we are informed, give the period of twelve days. It is now 26 and 28 days respectively since the vessels left Bombay, and they have now, and have had, ever since the commencement of their respective voyages, an absolute clean bill of health; and yet, despite these facts, you declare it as your intention to refuse *pratique* until a period of twelve days have [*sic*] elapsed after you have disinfected the passengers and ships. Our clients instruct us to protest against such a course, and to inform you that you will be held responsible for all loss caused to them by reason of your refused *pratique,* and also for the injury to the health of the passengers, which is likely to ensue from being confined to the steamers for a lengthened period.

We are, likewise, instructed to draw your attention to the fact that the steamers have now been at the outer anchorage for upwards of eight days, and that it would appear from your letter of today that no steps have been taken to disinfect them, although on Thursday morning last you informed the writer that you would probably do it that afternoon; for this delay you will also be held responsible.

With regard to placing the passengers in quarantine on shore at the expense of the owners of the vessels, we have to inform you that our clients regard your refusal of *pratique* as an illegal action, and they will, therefore, be no party to your proceedings, further than to request you, without one hour's unnecessary delay, to take such steps as you may think proper for what you are pleased to call disinfecting the vessels. Moreover, the course you suggest would not decrease the damage to our clients because they would be unable to land the ships' cargo.

We beg to record the fact that the Health Officer, on the arrival of the steamers, stated it as his opinion that *pratique* could be granted without any danger, and that, if he were permitted, he would do so, but he was thereupon, suspended by the Government, and you appointed in his place.

Also that Drs. MacKenzie and Dumat, having been privately interviewed by Mr. Escombe on the question, were at his suggestion (as he informed the writer) called in by you to give their opinion as to refusing the *pratique.*

We are,

Sir,

Your obedient servants,

(Signed) GOODRICKE, LAUGHTON & COOKE

(APPENDIX Q)

Copy

DURBAN,

January 8, 1897

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
MARITZBURG

SIR,

We have the honour to bring the following facts to your notice.

We are the owners of the *Courland* s.s., and we represent the owners of the *Naderi* s.s., which steamers left Bombay for this port on the 30th November last,[1] and arrived here, respectively, on the 18th ultimo at 5.30 p.m. and 2 p.m., having on board, respectively, 255 and 356 of Her Majesty's Indian subjects.

On the following morning, a *Gazette Extraordinary* was issued by the Government, containing a Proclamation of the Governor, proclaiming Bombay an infected port.

The above steamers had absolutely clean bills of health on arrival, and during the whole of their respective voyages, but they were refused *pratique* on grounds which the Acting Health Officer of the Port refused to give, but which, we presume, were given to us by telegram from the Principal Under-Secretary, dated the 24th ultimo, as follows: "That the Medical Committee has advised Government that the period of incubation of the bubonic plague being sometimes as much as twelve days, the quarantine should be of that period after all chances of disinfection [*sic*] have been destroyed, and Committee has also recommended the thorough disinfection of immigrants and their clothing, and the burning of all old rags and dirty clothing. Government has approved the Committee's Report, and has instructed the Health Officer to act upon it, and not to grant *pratique* to the ships until he is satisfied that the conditions of the Report have been fulfilled."

The steamers lay at anchor in the outer anchorage from the 18th ultimo, until the 28th ultimo, without any steps whatever being taken to disinfect them, but on the 29th ultimo, we believe, disinfection was completed, in terms of the above mentioned report of the Medical Committee.

This delay in disinfection cost the owners of the steamers one hundred and fifty pounds per diem, or a sum of £1,650.

Relying on the assurance contained in the Principal Under-Secretary's telegram of the 24th, that *pratique* with all its privileges would be granted to the steamers if they were placed in the hands of the Health Officer, for the purpose of undergoing the requirements of the Medical Committee's Report, steamers were so

[1] This should be the other way round. The Courland left on the 30th and the Naderi on the 2th November.

placed in his hands to great injury (1) to the passengers, as all their beds bedding and much of their clothing was burned, and for several nights, many of them were left to sleep on the boards; (2) to us as owners, inasmuch as our steamers have been detained during the days of quarantine at an expense of £150 per diem; and (3) to the friends and countrymen of the passengers, who have supplied their wants by furnishing beds, bedding, clothing and food during the detention.

During the last few days, two meetings of excited European townspeople have been held at Durban, called together under the following notice which appeared in several issues of *The Natal Advertiser*:

"Wanted every man in Durban, to attend a meeting to be held in the large room at the Victoria Cafe, on Monday evening next, the 4th January, at 8 o'clock, for the purpose of arranging a demonstration to proceed to the Point and protest against the landing of Asiatics, Harry Sparks, Chairman of Preliminary Meeting."

The two meetings were largely attended, and in spite of the unlawful objects of such meetings clearly indicated in the above notice, the Town Hall of Durban was opened for such meetings.

We quite recognize the right of Her Majesty's subjects to ventilate their grievances in public meetings, provided the objects of such meetings are legal, and as regards the first of the said two meetings held on the 4th instant, we would draw your attention to the report of it which appeared in *the Mercury* and *The Natal Advertiser* of the 5th instant, by which you will see that, in spite of declaration by certain speakers to the contrary, violence to the passengers or to some of them was contemplated in the event of the Government not granting their request, and in the event of the passengers being landed.

But as regards Dr. Mackenzie, who formed one of the Medical Committee upon whose report the steamers were placed in quarantine, and who, as on of such Committee, is supposed to have given his opinion with impartiality and fairness, we would venture to bring to your notice extracts of a speech which he delivered to such meeting in proposing the following resolution, that is to say:

"Every man at this meeting agrees and binds himself, with a view to assisting the Government to carry out the foregoing resolution, to do all his country may require of him, and with that view will, if necessary, attend at the Point at any time when required."

The following are extracts of Dr. MacKenzie's speech taken from the report of a gentleman employed by us:

"Mr. Gandhi had dragged their reputation about in the gutters of India, and painted them as black and filthy as his own skin. (Laughter and applause.)"

"They would teach Mr. Gandhi to come to the Colony of Natal, to take everything that was fair and good in it, and then to go out of it and blackguard them whose hospitality he had been enjoying. They would teach Mr. Gandhi that they read from his action that the coolies were not satisfied with what they (Colonists) had given him, and that he intended to get something more, and gentlemen, he would get something more. (Laughter and applause.)"

"As the United States sent back some Chinamen to China, and even some people back to Glasgow, because the Yankees did not think them good enough, and they were going to send back a lot of unhealthy bubonic individuals to the place from whence they came."

In speaking immediately to the resolution which he proposed, Dr. MacKenzie said:

"Well, they saw that that brought them to the Point, (Loud applause.) He hoped they would be all there when required. There was nothing in that that any of them need be ashamed of. Every man, who had any manliness about him, should be prepared to do something for his country when their country required it."

"But, if the glimmering outlook that they could gather was going to indicate that the Indians were going to place themselves on the same platform as the whites, that could only be done in one way, and it could only be done at the end of the bayonet. (Applause.)"

"They there that night were prepared to go to any extreme in defending their own honour, and in securing to their children places in the Colony, which even now they had given away to the heirs and offspring of Gandhiites. (Applause.)"

"He had come to the meeting in a bit of a hurry, but he thought he had placed before them the leading points, and it meant this, that they were going to back the Government up in this matter, that they believed the Government would co-operate with them, and that not a soul would be allowed to land from those two ships in the harbour of Durban. (Loud applause.)"

We extract the following from the report of the proceedings at the second meeting held on the 7th instant contained in *The Mercury* of today:

MR. J. S. WYLIE: "Somebody said 'sink the ships,' and he had heard a naval man say he would give a month's pay for one shot at the ships." (Cheers and laughter.) "Was every man prepared to put down a month's pay in this matter? (Cries of 'Yes,' and 'Unanimous'.)"

MR. SYKES: "They must make up their minds to lose both time and money; they must be prepared to leave their work and proceed to Demonstration. It must be done on an organized system—they must obey their leader. It was no good for everyone to throw one another overboard. (Laughter.) They must strictly obey orders. At the word of command, 'fall in', and do what they were commanded." (Cheers, laughter and encores). He moved: "That we proceed by demonstration to the Point on the arrival of the Indians, but each man binds himself to conform to the orders of his leaders. (Cheers)."

DR. MACKENZIE: "Since they last met, the position had become less acute. They had advanced the line laid down, and they knew exactly the position of the Government, the willingness of the Government to assist them by all the power they had at their disposal. As far as the Government was concerned, he was thoroughly satisfied. The Government on this point were absolutely at one with the burgesses of

Durban, and therefore, they had to set aside any question as to difficulty of conflict with the gentlemen whom the electors had placed, for the time being, in the position of the Government. They were in accord with the Colony, and that was a matter for congratulation. Unfortunately, the Government was so placed that they could not insist on the Indians not landing here, and being sent back in the ships in which they came. That was practically impossible; and the Committee pointed out to Mr. Escombe that this condition of things was an anomaly. There must be some short-fall in the Constitution of the Colony when the best interests and absolute desires of the Colonists could not be achieved and met by the machinery of Government. (Cheers.) They pointed out that the Colonists would insist that that condition of things should cease, and that the Government should be placed in the position of being able to meet the wishes and necessities of the country. Mr. Escombe agreed with them, and they had heard what steps had been taken to meet the urgency of the case. Government was taking all the steps it could, and, within a day or two, he hoped that every meeting held throughout the Colony would show one unanimous desire for and immediate summoning of Parliament. The men of Durban were unanimous. He said the men of Durban-there were a few old women knocking about the place. ('Hear, hear', and laughter.) They had only to take the tone of some of the leaders of the newspapers to see the type of men who stuck behind the quill. Men who wrote that sort of thing presumed that the burgesses did not know what was right, and had not got the pluck that was absolutely necessary to do what was right, because a little bit risk attached to it. (Cheers.) If there were any of those old ladies there, they would, doubtless, have stepped up when the Chairman asked for hands against the resolution. They must presume none were there, and they wanted no connection with that class of persons.

"The resolution had relation to the fair dealing of the Colony of Natal. All but one man on board those boats left India without any reason to suspect that they would not the agreeably received as residents in the colony. One passenger might be reasonably expected to have had some suspicion of that point. (Cries of 'Gandhi', laughter and uproar.)"

"Anything he said regarding the Indians did not refer to that gentleman. ('no gentleman'.) They laid down the rule, and no more Indians should come in.

"They had a right to shut the door, and they intended to shut the door. They would deal fairly also with these people now in quarantine—they would even be fair in dealing with respect to that solitary individual, but he hoped there would be a marked distinction between the dealing. (Laughter.) They were prepared to leave the matter in the hands of the Government so far as constitutional and international relations were concerned, but there was a private relation he did not intend to lay down-personal duty to themselves and the rest of the Colony. They did not intend to lay down the agitation until they achieved something. With that object in view, he wished the

burgesses of Durban to be ready at any time, as they had been in the past, to go down to the Point when called upon to make a demonstration, and they would show the people who came by these boats what the Colonists of Natal meant, and they would also have a further object, which would be gained from instructions of the leaders when they were there. (Cheers and laughter.) Everyone could associate himself with a certain leader, and through him gain information as to a notice they would get, and that notice meant that they got to the Point, they would get, and that notice meant that they had to throw down their tools and go straight to the Point. (Cheers.) When they got to the Point, they would be under orders—each would know if he took the trouble to find out. Then they would do exactly what their leader told them, if he told them to do anything. (Laughter.) In the course of a day or two, some fresh development would take place, and it would again be necessary to refer to them in another public meeting, because they did not wish to have their individual views or styles, but absolutely be the representatives of the people. (Cheers.)"

"The Chairman hoped they would all stick to their 'guns'. Let them not be unanimous then, and when deeds were wanted find only one third of their number. The Demonstration would be a peaceable demonstration as regards the Indians on board—as regards one man it would be left to the leaders and them to deal with him down there. (Loud cheers and laughter.) They now wanted organization to carry out the object in view. Some men had said they would be able to bring fifty or one hundred men who were in their service, and they wanted volunteers of that kind who would lead so many men and be responsible for them. (A voice, 'Have a review on Saturday.')"

"Mr. Wylie said it would assist in the organization, and in the regulation of the Demonstration, if men gave in their names with a list of men who were willing to act with each, and would follow his lead. The Chairman would then know the Section Leaders, to whom to send word, and they in turn would inform their Company. There was, of course, only one leader, Mr. Sparks, but he could not speak to 5,000 men, and this means of communication was necessary. (A voice—It looks more like business now.)"

The meeting appears to have been greatly encouraged, in the carrying out of their demonstration, by the report made to the meeting of a Committee which had waited on Mr. Escombe, Her Majesty's Minister of Defence in this Colony. The Committee reported as follows:

"Mr. Escombe treated the Committee at an interview that morning, extending over two hours, in a fair and reasonable manner. He said: 'The Government is with you to a man, and wish to expedite this in every possible way. But you must be careful not to do anything which will hamper our hands. Spurring an unwilling horse to death

is a very different thing to spurring a willing horse to death.' Then the Committee said: 'If the Government did nothing, Durban would have to do it herself, and go in force to the Point, and see what could be done.' They capped that by remarking: 'We presume that you, as representing the Government and good authority of the Colony would bring force to oppose us?" Mr. Escombe said: 'We will do nothing of the sort; we are with you and we are going to do nothing of the sort to oppose you. But, if you put us in such a position, we may have to go to the Governor of the Colony and ask him to take over the reins of this Colony as we can no longer conduct the Government. You will have to find some other persons.' (Uproar.)"

It is not for us to express our opinion regarding such words as these, if they were actually uttered by the Minister of Defence, but we would most respectfully draw your attention to the extreme danger of allowing a large body of excited men to proceed to the point, however peaceful their original intentions may have been, and more especially, when from the utterances of the speakers and the comments thereon of the meeting, the gravest cause of anxiety must be aroused regarding the objects of the Demonstration, and the safety of the passengers on the two steamers.

We would respectfully submit that as law-abiding inhabitants of this Colony, we have endeavoured cheerfully to submit to the requirements of the Government, despite serious loss to us, and that having so complied, we are entitled, on obtaining *pratique*, to discharge our steamers' passengers at the wharf, and that in so doing, we are entitled to the protection of the Government for passengers and property against the lawless acts of any persons, whoever they may be. But, in order to render unnecessary any act on the part of the Government which might tend to intensify the excitement which exists, we are ready to co-operate with the Government in taking all necessary steps for the landing of passengers quietly and unknown to the public. We shall be glad to hear if this suggestion meets with your approval, and if so, what is required of us in carrying it out.

We have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servants,
(Signed) DADA ABDOOLLA & CO.

(APPENDIX R)

Copy

DURBAN,
January 9, 1897

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY

MARITZBURG

SIR

In supplement of our letter to you of yesterday, wherein we placed before you our reasons for entertaining grave apprehensions regarding the legality of the Demonstration and the safety, on landing, of the passengers on board the *Courland,* s.s., and *Naderi,* s.s. we have the honour to submit the following paragraph which appears in this morning's issue of *The Mercury* newspaper: "The declaration—the document which has been extensively signed by employers in Durban, is headed as follows: List of names of members, trade or profession mentioned, who are willing to proceed to the Point and resist by force, if necessary, the landing of Asiatics, and to obey any orders which may be given by the leaders."

We have, also, the honour to draw your attention to the same issue of *The Mercury* newspaper, and under the heading of "The Leaders", you will see it reported that the railwaymen have banded themselves together under the command of Mr. Sparks, and under the captainship of Messrs Wylie and Abrahams, in order to take part in the Demonstration; also that Dr. MacKenzie, member of the Medical Committee, on whose report steamers were quarantined, is in command of the Plasterers and Bricklayers division of the Demonstration.

We shall be glad to receive the assurance of the Government that Government servants will be prohibited from taking any part whatever in the Demonstration.

We have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servants,
DADA ABDOOLLA & CO.

(APPENDIX S)

Copy

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
NATAL, PIETERMARITZBURG,
January 11, 1897

C O $\frac{257}{1897}$

GENTLEMEN,

I am instructed to reply to your two letters of the 8th and 9th instant.

Your proposal for the landing of the passengers quietly and unknown to the public is impossible. The Government understand that you have requested the Port Captain not to bring the vessels inside without special instructions. This action on your part, and your letters now under reply, show that you are aware of the intense feeling throughout the Colony against the landing of the Indians, and they certainly should be informed of the existence and strength of that feeling.

I am,
Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,
(Signed) C. BIRD,
PRINCIPAL UNDER-SECRETARY

MESSRS DADA ABDOOLLA & CO.
DURBAN

(APPENDIX T)

Copy

DURBAN,
January 10, 1897

TO
THE HONOURABLE HARRY ESCOMBE

DEAR SIR,

We have duly advised our clients, Messrs Dada Abdoolla and Co., of the result of Mr. Laughton's conference with you of yesterday, whereat you repudiated Mr. Wylie's public statement of what had fallen from you at your conference with the Committee of the Demonstration, and said that your statement to such Committee was to this effect: That, if the Ministers were unable to cope with a Durban riot, they would be unfitted to hold office, and would resign.

At your conference with Mr. Laughton, you also laid down the following propositions as recognized by the Government:

1. That upon the requirements of the quarantine being carried out, *pratique* must be granted to the steamers *Courland* and *Naderi,*
2. That upon *pratique* being granted, the steamers were entitled to discharge their passengers and cargo at the wharf, either by the steamers themselves being brought inside or by means of tugs and lighters.
3. That the Government is responsible for the protection of passengers and cargo from the violence of rioters.

On the other hand, you were informed by Mr. Laughton that, inasmuch as Indians had to dwell in this Colony with Europeans, our clients recognized it as desirable that, in the landing of passengers, as little as possible should be done which would tend to intensify a feeling, which at present apparently exists amongst a certain class of Europeans against the Indians; and, therefore, that he felt sure, that our clients would co-operate with the Government to the extent of postponing the disembarkation for a reasonable time to enable the Government to make proper arrangements.

We are instructed to inform you that the time of quarantine expires today, and that, under ordinary circumstances, our clients would have proceeded with disembarkation today, but that they are willing to postpone it for a reasonable time to suit the convenience of the Government, provided the loss sustained by them in so doing, that is to say £150 per dies, is borne by the Government.

We trust you will see the reasonableness of this proposal, and that it will be adopted by the Government.

We draw your attention to the fact that several gentlemen holding Her Majesty's commission in Volunteer Forces are organizing the intended riot, called by them a "Demonstration", and have allowed themselves to be advertised in the newspapers and by placards, as being in command of sections of the intending rioters; also, that Captain Sparks has taken the same means of advertising himself as the Chief in command of the proposed riot.

We would most respectfully and reluctantly give it as our opinion that, if the organization had at an earlier stage been proclaimed as illegal, instead of being allowed to swell itself under false hopes, the same excitement would not now exist, and there would have been little difficulty in landing the passengers in due course; and that the organization, or the objects of it, having been publicly declared to have the sympathy of the Government, which declaration was apparently confirmed by Government officers being in command, and by Government employees being in the ranks, it has obtained a hold on the public mind which otherwise it could not have done.

We have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servants,

(Signed) GOODRICKE, LAUGHTON & COOKE

(APPENDIX U)

Copy

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE,
PIETERMARITZBURG, NATAL,
January 11, 1897

DEAR SIRS,

I have received your letter dated 'Durban Club, 10th January, 1897.'

I understood that the interview between Mr. Laughton and myself was to be regarded as a "private meeting", the words used by him in his note of the 9th instant.

I do not accept as correct your record of what was said by Mr. Laughton and myself.

Yours truly,
(Signed) HARRY ESCOMBE

MESSRS GOODRICKE, LAUGHTON & CO.
DURBAN

(APPENDIX V)

Copy

DURBAN,
January 12, 1897

TO
THE HONOURABLE HARRY ESCOMBE

DEAR SIR,

We have received your letter of the 11th inst., wherein, in answer to our letter of the 10th instant, you state as follows:

"I understand that the interview between Mr. Laughton and myself was to be regarded as a 'private meeting', the words used by him in his note of the 9th instant.

"I do not accept as correct your record of what was said by Mr. Laughton and myself."

In reply, we beg to state that it is quite true that Mr. Laughton, in his note of the 9th inst., asked for a private meeting with you, but we would draw your attention to the fact that, before that interview had continued many minutes, you told Mr. Laughton that he was to recollect that every word which he uttered would be reported by you the following morning to your colleagues in the ministry; and also that you gave him your permission to repeat everything that had taken place between us to our clients.

We beg, on Mr. Laughton's assurance, to assert what was said at the meeting was in effect accurately recorded in our letter to you of the 10th instant, but in order that there may be no misunderstanding, we shall be glad if you will point out the inaccuracies to which you refer.

We have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servants,
(Signed) GOODRICKE, LAUGHTON & COOKE

(APPENDIX W)

Copy

DURBAN,
January 12, 1897

TO

THE HONOURABLE HARRY ESCOMBE

SIR,

We have the honour to acknowledge a letter, signed by the Principal Under-Secretary, of yesterday's date, wherein he informs us that he is instructed to reply to our two letters to the Colonial Secretary of the 8th and 9th instant, as follows:

"Your proposal for the landing of the passengers quietly and unknown to the public is impossible. The Government understand that you have requested the Port Captain not to bring the vessels inside without special instructions. This action on your part, and your letters now under reply, show that you are aware of the intense feeling throughout the Colony against the landing of the Indians, and they certainly should be informed of the existence and strength of that feeling."

We cannot but acknowledge the feeling, which at present exists among a certain class in Durban, against the landing of the Indians. But, at the same time, we must most respectfully inform you that this feeling has been fostered by the Government, rather than discouraged, in the manner pointed out to you in our letters of the 8th and 9th instant.

We beg to express our surprise at your making no reference to the following facts brought to your notice in our above-mentioned letters:

1. That meetings with illegal objects have been held and are being held by certain persons in Durban, without any attempt on the part of the Government to inhibit them. 2. That Dr. MacKenzie, one of the Medical Board, has been one of the most energetic instigators of the objects of these meetings. 3. That it had been stated at some of those meetings that the Government was in sympathy with the objects of the meetings. 4. That the Minister of Defence had stated to the Committee of the organization, practically, that the Government would take no steps to hinder the

rioters in attaining their illegal objects. 5. That we claimed the protection of the Government for passengers and property against the lawless acts of persons, whoever they may be. 6. To the "Declaration" of the rioters, set out in our letter of the 9th instant. 7. To railway employees of the Government taking part with the rioters. 8. To the leadership of the riot being under Captain Sparks and others of Her Majesty's commissioned officers taking subordinate positions under him. 9. To our request that we should receive an assurance of the Government that Government servants will be prohibited from taking any part in the demonstration. 10. To our proposal to postpone the disembarkation for a reasonable time to suit the convenience of the Government, provided the loss sustained by us in so doing, that is to say £150 per diem, is borne by the Government.

We now beg for a reply to each of these allegations and questions, and to request that you will inform us what steps, if any, have been taken to protect the disembarkation of the steamers.

The steamers have now been at the outer anchorage for 24 days, at a cost of £150 per diem to us; and this being so, we trust you will see the reasonableness of your giving us a full answer by noon tomorrow. And we think it right to inform you that, failing a definite reply giving us an assurance that we shall be paid £150 per diem from Sunday last and that you are taking steps to suppress the rioters, so as to enable us to disembark the steamers, preparations will be at once commenced to steam into the harbour, relying on the protection which, we respectfully submit, Government is bound to give us.

In order that there may be no mistake in the minds of the Government as to the objects of the rioters, we beg to enclose the copy of a notice signed by Captain Sparks, and served yesterday by his deputies, Captain Wylie and others, on the Captain of the *Courland*, s.s. (This letter appears elsewhere.[1])

The effect of this notice signed by Captain Sparks has been to make many passengers afraid of their lives in the event of landing at this port.

We, likewise, beg to enclose a copy of a memorandum written by Captain Wylie and served upon the Captains of each of the steamers for their signatures, and represented by him as embodying the only terms upon which the ships will be allowed to disembark. (App. Wa.)

We beg most respectfully to ask, in conclusion, if the Government will allow such flagrant acts to proceed which can only end in injury, if not death, to many of Her Majesty's subjects.

We have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servants,
(Signed) Dada Abdoolla & Co.

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897, Appendix Aa

(APPENDIX Wa)

Copy

THE CENTRAL HOTEL,
DURBAN, NATAL,
[*January 11, 1897*]

Terms agreed between the Captain of the s.s. *Naderi* and the Committee of the Point Demonstration: 1. The *Naderi* shall not leave the outer anchorage to come into the port of Durban. 2. All wives and children of Natal Indians to be allowed to land. 3. All old Natal Indians to be allowed to land, on the Committee being satisfied that they are returning here. 4. All others to be transferred to the s.s. *Courland* and so many as the *Courland* cannot take, to be taken back by the *Naderi* to Bombay. 4a. the Committee pay the ship the exact amount of passage money required to send back to India the Indians the *Courland* cannot take. 5. The Committee pay to the Indians the exact value, and no more, of the clothing and effects destroyed at this port. 6. The Committee pay to the *Naderi* the extra expense she may be put to in having to coal and take provisions at the outer anchorage instead of in the harbour, and such additional expense as the ship may be put to through the Committee not allowing the *Naderi* to leave the anchorage.

(APPENDIX X)

Copy

POINT,
10.45 a.m., January 13, 1897

MESSRS DADA ABDOOLA & CO.

SIRS,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated yesterday.

The Port Captain has instructed that the steamers shall be ready to cross the bar inwards at 12 o'clock today.

The Government needs no reminder of its responsibility for the maintenance of order.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
(Sd.) HARRY ESCOMBE

(APPENDIX Y)

SIR,

I observe, in your leader in this morning's issue of *The Mercury*, you give it as your opinion that Mr. Gandhi was ill advised in landing and coming through Durban on Wednesday last; and, as I was certainly a party to his coming ashore as he did, I shall feel obliged by your giving me an opportunity of answering your remark. Hitherto it has been useless to speak unless you were prepared to adopt the programme of the Demonstration party and its particular mode of attaining its ends; but, now that the Committee is dissolved, and the minds of men are no longer being inflamed, I trust that my letter will receive calm and thoughtful consideration. Let me commence by saying that, while the agitation was proceeding, I obtained a copy of Mr. Gandhi's pamphlet published in India, and concerning which we received Reuter's cable some months ago, and I can assure your readers that Reuter not only misrepresented the pamphlet, but misrepresented it so much that, on reading the two, I cannot but come to the conclusion that the writer of the cable had not read the pamphlet. I can say, further, that there is nothing in the pamphlet which anyone could take exception to on the ground of untruthfulness. Anyone can obtain a copy and read it if he chooses. Let your readers do so and answer honestly: Is there anything in it untrue? Is there anything in it which a political opponent was not justified in saying in support of his cause? Unfortunately, the mind of the public was inflamed by Reuter's version of it,[1] and throughout the recent disturbances, there was not a man to point out to the public the difference between the true and the untrue. I don't wish to hurt any man's feelings by repeating the words which he uttered in the hour of excitement and which, I know, in his calmer moments he will deeply regret, but, in order that the position may be understood, I must place before your readers, shortly, what Mr. Gandhi's position was before he took the step of landing and coming into town. I shall, therefore, without mentioning names, give the effect of just a few of the public statements made concerning him: (1) That he had dragged our reputations through the gutters of India, and had painted them as black and filthy as his own face. (2) That he might be allowed to come ashore that we might have the opportunity of spitting at him. (3) That some special treatment, at the word of command, should be meted out to him and that he should never be allowed to land in Natal. (4) That he was engaging himself, on board the quarantined ship, in getting briefs from passengers against the Government. (5) That when three gentlemen, representing the Committee of the Demonstration, went on board the *Courland*, he was in such a 'funk' that he was stowed away in the lowest hold; and, on another occasion, that he was seen sitting on the deck of the *Courland* in a most dejected mood. These are only a few of the things stated against him, but I take them as sufficient for my purpose.

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

If the above charges wee true, if, in other words, he was a cowardly calumniator, stabbing us when at a safe distance, and if he had acted so that he was a fit object to be spat at, and afraid to return and face the consequences, then he was unfitted to be a member of an honourable profession, or to hold the position of leader in a great political question in which his countrymen take as much interest as we do and are as much entitled to ventilate their political views as we are. Before he went to India, I had met him in business matters on several occasions, and was struck with the anxiety shown by him to avoid litigation and to put matters in dispute on a fair basis, and with the honourable manner in which he dealt with business matters, so much so that I formed a very high opinion concerning him. I say this advisedly and I have no doubt my words will be approved by the members of the profession who know Mr. Gandhi. It was once said by an eminent judge that success at the Bar was not attained by endeavouring to injure opponents at the Bar, but only by so qualifying one's self as to be equal or superior to such opponents. So, in political matters, we must give fair play to an opponent, and answer his argument by counter argument, and not by heaving half a brick at his head. I have found Mr. Gandhi, both in legal matters and on the Asiatic question, a fair and honourable opponent, obnoxious to us as his contentions may be, who would scorn to hit below the belt. To vindicate himself before the public then, it was decided that he should not give his enemies an opportunity of saying that he was 'funking it' on board the *Courland*, where he could have stayed for a week, if he had chosen; that he should not sneak into Durban like a thief in the night, but that he should face the music like man and like a political leader, and—give me leave to say—right nobly did he do it. I accompanied him simply as a member of the Bar, to testify, by so doing, that Mr. Gandhi was an honourable member of an honourable profession, in order that I might raise my voice in protest against the way in which he had been treated, and in the hope that my presence might save him from insult. Your readers have now the whole matter before them, and the reasons which induced Mr. Gandhi, to land as he did. He Might have kept to the boat at Cato's Creek, when he saw the crowd collecting to receive him; he might have taken refuge in the police-station; but he did not, he said he was quite ready to face the men of Durban and to trust them as Englishmen. Throughout the trying procession, his manliness and pluck could not have been surpassed, and I can assure Natal that he is a man who must be treated as a man. Intimidation is out of the question, because, if the knew the Town Hall were going to be thrown at him, I believe, from what I saw, that he would not quail. Now, you have the tale impartially told, I hope, Durban has grossly insulted this man. I don't describe the scene; I prefer not [to]. I say Durban, because Durban raised the storm, and is answerable for the

result. We are all humiliated at the treatment. Our tradition concerning fair play appears to be in the dust. Let us act like gentlemen, and, however much against the grain it may be, let us express regret handsomely and generously,—I am, etc., F. A. LAUGHTON.—*The Natal Mercury,* 16th January, 1897.

There has been a good deal said about Reuter's cabled summary of Mr. Gandhi's Indian pamphlet, within the last day or two . . . The general impression that is conveyed by these summaries is unquestionably different to the impression created in the minds of those who read the pamphlet . . . Frankly, it may be admitted that Mr. Gandhi's pamphlet is not an unfair statement of the position of the Indian in South Africa from an Indian's point of view. The European refuses to recognize the Indian as an equal' and the Indian, as a British subject, considers he has a right to all the privileges of the British subjects of European birth in the Colony, and under the Proclamation of 1858, he is legally entitled to that claim. That there is a prejudice in South Africa against the Indian, it would be folly to deny, but at the same time, Mr. Gandhi, we think, might make greater allowance for the fact that, as whole, his countrymen in South Africa are not of a class that, even in India, would be allowed to ride in first-class railway carriages or admitted into the best hotels . . . Coming back to the pamphlet and the cabled summaries, these latter might have been as correctly written of some pamphlet describing the treatment of the Armenians by the Turks, and, in fact, Reuter's cable read by itself gives some such impression. When the pamphlet written by Mr. Gandhi, however, is read in its entirety, the context reveals the fact that, while there are instances of real hardship given, the bulk of it is made up of political grievances in many cases similar to those the Uitlanders complain of in the Transvaal. The pamphlet, in short, contains practically nothing that Mr. Gandhi did not publish previously in Natal, and nothing that is not generally known. On the other hand, it is useless for Mr. Gandhi, or anyone else, to endeavour to have the Indian accepted in South Africa at his own estimate. There is no use being hypocritical in the matter. There is strong and deeply-rooted prejudice against Indians flocking into the country, and against their customs and mode of life. They may be British subjects by law, but they are aliens by what is stronger than law. viz., racial traditions and instincts.—*The Natal Mercury,* 18th January, 1897.

It is now beginning to be admitted that the outcry against Mr. Gandhi was much more bitter and violent than warranted by the facts and that his statement, although perhaps exaggerated, did not amount to such a wilful and deliberate attempt to blacken the character of the Colonists as to justify the vindictive attitude assumed, doubtless, under a misconception, by some extremists. Mr. Gandhi is endeavouring to perform for his compatriots similar services to those which Englishmen have

always been ready to perform, and, when time has been afforded for cool reflection, it will be recognized that, however mistaken his methods, or however untenable his theses, it is the worst possible policy to treat him as an outcast and a pariah, because he is striving to secure what he considers to be the rights of his fellow-countrymen. It has always been the boast of Englishmen that they can take up a side without abandoning all fair play to their opponents. Colonists know that it would be dangerous to the well-being of the Colony to grant what Mr. Gandhi demands; they know that the fundamental and abiding racial distinctions between the Asiatic and European for ever preclude anything like social equality, and that no argument will ever bridge the gulf; they know that, even though abstract justice may apparently be against them, the instinct of self-preservation warns them that theirs is the only safe position; in short, they know that the Colony cannot remain a white Colony if no limit is put to Asiatic immigration. All this, however, may be admitted, without spoiling our case by unfair and unnecessary harshness towards those who quite naturally, take other views. Harm has been done already by the accentuation of the personal element, and it is to be hoped that Colonists will, in future, exhibit that dignity and self-restraint in the conduct of the campaign, without which we cannot expect the approval of disinterested observers.—*The Natal Mercury*, 19th January, 1897.

Mr. Gandhi's statements to the *Advertiser* interviewer[1] have been read with considerable interest, and show that he has a good deal to say for himself. If his assertions are correct, there seems to have been a good deal of exaggeration in the statements made about him and his proposed scheme to swamp the Colony with Indians, which have had much to do with the irritation of the public mind against him. In the interests of justice it is to be hoped this matter will be cleared up. It has been asserted that the Government have information in their possession to prove the existence of this scheme. If so, the evidence ought to be brought forward, because this really constitutes the gravamen of the charges against Gandhi. Mr. Gandhi admits that "the leaders of the Demonstration Committee, and anybody in Natal, would be perfectly justified in getting up a constitutional agitation if there was an organized attempt to swamp the Colony with Indians." So that, if the scheme can be proved, as some people state, Mr. Gandhi's mouth will be closed . . . Then, again, he totally denies the assertion that he was instigating legal proceeding against the Government for unlawful detention. If there is any proof for that charge, it, too, should be produced. He denies, further, that a printing-press and compositors were brought ever by him, or that the number of passengers for Natal is anything like so great as alleged. These matters are surely capable of direct proof or disproof, and it would be well if they were settled, because, if what Mr. Gandhi says is true, it would

[1] *Vide* "Interview to *The Natal Advertiser*", 13-1-1897.

seem that the recent agitation was started on insufficient grounds, and incorrect information . . . It will be necessary, if the aid of the Imperial Government is to be obtained, to have hard facts to go upon. It will not advance our cause to raise an outcry that the country is being swamped, and to talk about thousands of Indians coming across in one or two vessels, and then, when it is all boiled down, find there are only one or two hundred. No good will be gained by exaggeration . . . There is no getting away from the fact that this brutal outrage was committed on the very day of the Demonstration, under the influence of feelings excited by the Demonstration, and what led up to it, and also in defiance of the assurance of the representative of Government that the passengers were absolutely safe. The incident shows what might have happened on a larger scale if the Demonstration had been carried to the lengths which were at first intended. — *The Natal Advertiser,* 16th January, 1897.

Enclosure in Despatch No.62 from the Governor of Natal to H. M.'s Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, London, dated 10th April, 1897.

Colonial Office Records: Petitions and Despatches, 1897

12 . LETTER TO R. C. ALEXANDER

DURBAN,
March 24, 1897

R. C. ALEXANDER, ESQ.
SUPERINTENDENT, BOROUGH POLICE
DURBAN

SIR,

We, the undersigned, representing the Indian community in the Colony, herewith beg to present a gold watch with a suitable inscription in grateful recognition of the excellent manner in which you and your police preserved order on the 13th day of January, 1897, and were instrumental in saving the life of one whom we delight to love.

We are aware that what you did was, in your opinion, nothing more than your duty; but we believe that it would be very ungrateful on our part if we did not, in some way, humbly record our appreciation of your valuable work during that exceptional time.

Moreover, for the same reason, we send herewith the sum of £10 for distribution among those of your Force who assisted on the occasion.[1]

We remain, etc.

From a photostat of a copy: S.N. 2149

13. LETTER TO MRS. ALEXANDER

DURBAN,
March 24, 1897

MRS. ALEXANDER
DURBAN

MADAM,

We, the undersigned, representing the Indian community in this Colony, herewith send you an humble present in the shape of a gold watch, chain and locket with a suitable inscription, as a token of our appreciation of the way in which you defended one whom we delight to love, on the 13th day of January, 1897, during the anti-Indian Demonstration crisis at no small personal risk to yourself.

We are sure that nothing that we can offer will be an adequate return for your act which will ever be a pattern of true womanhood.

We remain, etc.

From a photostat of a copy: S.N. 2150

[1] From the letters of acknowledgment from the addressee and his wife (S.N. 1938 and 1939) it seems Gandhiji had himself written to thank them for their intervention on his behalf. However, these letters are not available.

14. PETITION TO NATAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY[1]

DURBAN,
March 26, 1897

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE HONOURABLE THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE COLONY OF NATAL IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED,

PIETERMARITZBURG

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED REPRESENTING THE INDIAN COMMUNITY IN THIS COLONY

HUMBLY SHEWETH:

That your Petitioners hereby venture to lay before this Honourable House the feeling of the Indian community with reference to the Quarantine, Trade Licences, Immigration and Uncovenanted Indians Protection Bills[2] that are now, or soon will be, before this Honourable House for consideration.

Your Petitioners understand that the first three Bills hereinabove referred to are meant, directly or indirectly, to restrict the immigration of Her Majesty's Indian subjects into the Colony. Strange as it may appear there is no mention of the persons whom they are meant to affect.[3] With the greatest deference, your Petitioners venture to submit that such a mode of procedure is un-British and, therefore, it should not receive countenance in a Colony which is supposed to be the most British in South Africa. If it is proved to the satisfaction of this Honourable House that the presence of the Indian in the Colony is an evil and there is an alarming influx of Indians into the Colony, your Petitioners submit that it will be better in the interests of all parties concerned that a Bill directly aiming at the evil be passed.

[1] *The Natal Mercury*, 29-3-1897, published the text of the petition with a few introductory lines and some minor verbal alterations.

[2] For provisions of these enactments, *vide* "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897, Appendix A- D.

[3] Indians were not specifically mentioned in three of the four measures despite the fact that they were implicitly meant to affect the Indians; only the Uncovenanted Indians Protection Bill referred to the Indians by name.

But your Petitioners respectfully submit that it can be easily shown that the presence of the Indian in the Colony, instead of being an evil, is of benefit to it and that there is no alarming influx of Indians into the Colony.

In is an admitted fact that the Indians, whom the Bills are calculated to keep away from the Colony, are"sober and industrious". Such is the opinion pronounced by the highest authorities in the land as well as by those who are their bitterest opponents. And your Petitioners submit that such a class of people cannot but be an economical benefit wherever they may go, more especially in newly-opened-up countries like Natal.

Your Petitioners further urge that the returns published by the Acting Protector of Immigrants[1] show that while 1,964 Indians arrived in the Colony between August and January last, 1,298 left it during the same period. Your Petitioners feel sure that this Honourable House would not consider this increase to be such as to justify the introduction of the Bills under discussion. Nor will this Honourable House, your Petitioners trust, ignore the fact that most, if not all, of the 666 Indians must have proceeded to the Transvaal.

Your Petitioners, however, do not wish to say that the statements made above should be accepted without verification. But your Petitioners submit that the statements furnish a *prima facie* case for enquiry.

Your Petitioners fear that the Bills are a present to the popular prejudice. It is, therefore, respectfully submitted that before considering the Bills this Honourable House should ascertain beyond doubt whether the evil does or does not exist.

Your Petitioners humbly suggest that a census of the free Indian population, and a searching enquiry in the question of the presence of the Indian being an evil, are absolutely essential to enable this Honourable House to arrive at a right conclusion with regard to the Bills. Nor is this a matter that would take so long a time as to render any legislation after the enquiry ineffectual.

An examination of the Bills without reference to their veiled object and premature character, your Petitioners submit, shows that they are unjust and arbitrary measures.

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

As to the Quarantine Bill, your Petitioners assure this Honourable House that in criticizing it they have no wish to oppose anything, no matter how hard it may be, that may be necessary in the interestsof the health of the community. Your Petitioners would welcome and, so far as it may be in their power, cooperate with the authorities in carrying out, any measures of quarantine adopted to guard the Colony against the introduction of infectious disease into it. Your Petitioners, however, venture to submit that the present Bill is simply a part of the anti-Indian policy, and against it as such your Petitioners feel it their duty to enter their respectful protest. Your Petitioners venture to think that such a measure in a British Colony would give an opportunity to those Powers, which are jealous of the British power and trade, to justify the vexatious quarantine rules that they are adopting.

As to the Trading Licences Bill, your Petitioners welcome it so far as it is meant to teach the communities residing in the Colony to keep their premises in a good sanitary condition and to provide proper accommodation for their clerks and servants.

But your Petitioners most earnestly though respectfully protest against the discretion being given to the Licensing Officer to refuse or grant a licence "at his own will" and, more especially, against the clause which gives the final power to the Colonial Secretary or the Town Councils or Town Boards, as the case may be. These clauses, your Petitioners are afraid, show most clearly that the Bill is to operate against the Indian community alone. To deny a subject the right to appeal to the highest tribunal of justice against the decisions of persons or bodies who are not unoften guided and carried away by popular feelings or prejudice would be deemed to be an arbitrary measure in any part of the civilized world; in the British Dominions, an insult to the British name and its Constitution which is rightly termed the purest in the world. Nothing, your Petitioners submit, can be more disastrous to the stability of British Rule and the feeling of security that the meanest of Her Majesty's subjects enjoy, than anything that takes away the right of the subject to ventilate his grievance, supposed or real, before the highest tribunals of justice in the British Dominions, which have, under the severest trials, vindicated their fame for absolute impartiality. Your Petitioners, therefore, humbly submit that, no matter what this Honourable House decides with regard to the Bills, it will unanimously reject the clause under consideration.

The clause[1] in the Immigration Restriction Bill, with regard to the form to be filled in European characters makes it a class Bill and the requirement is, in your Petitioners' humble opinion, unjust to the Indian community. In the interests of the present Indian population, your Petitioners submit that the clause requires amending. For most of the well-to-do Indians draw upon India for domestic servants who retire at the end of a certain number of years and are replaced by others. That process does not add to the number of Indians in the Colony and yet is beneficial to the Indians. Such servants could not possibly know English or any other European language. They do not come into competition with the Europeans in any way whatever. Your Petitioners, therefore, submit that for this, if for no other reason, the clause should be altered so as not to affect the Indians of that class. The £25 clause is also objectionable on the same principle.[2] Your Petitioners submit that the interests of the present Indian population of the Colony should, in such matters at any rate, be sympathetically considered.

As to the Bill for the protection of Uncovenanted Indians,[3] your Petitioners are deeply thankful to the Government for their good intentions, especially because the bill owes its origin to a certain correspondence between the Government and certain members of the Indian community with reference to the matter. But the effect of the favour done by the Government will be absolutely neutralized by the 5th clause[4] which exempts those who may arrest free Indians, not having the pass mentioned in the 2nd clause, from liability to action for damages for wrongful arrest. It was only when an officer showed

[1] Section 3(a);vide "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897, Appendix B; and for the from, Schedule B, "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897, Appendix B.

[2] The financial qualification in Section 3(b) was later substituted by a clause concerning "paupers"; *vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897 and "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897, Appendix B.

[3] *Vide* Petition to Natal Legislative Council" 26-3-1897 and "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897; and for the text of the Bill as adopted *vide* "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897, Appendix-D.

[4] The provisions referred to are contained in clause 4 of the Act; *vide* "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897, Appendix-D.

over-zeal in making arrests that the trouble arose.[1] Your Petitioners think that simple instructions to officials to carry out the clause 31 of Law 25 of 1891 would have been sufficient. The Bill, on the other hand, gives a license to the police to arrest Indians being without passes with impunity. Your Petitioners may mention that the mere taking out of the pass does not render the holder free from vexation. To carry it on the person is not always possible. Instances are on record when Indians, having left their houses without passes for a short time, have been arrested through the over-zeal of officers. Your Petitioners submit that the Bill, therefore, instead of protecting the Indian community, will, because of the clause 5 thereof, render them liable to indignity oftener than usual. Your Petitioners therefore, trust that this Honourable House would so alter or amend the measure as to be a real benefit to the Indian community as it is no doubt intended to be.

In conclusion, your Petitioners may be allowed to repeat that their main objection to the first three Bills is that the evil which they are intended to check does not exist and, therefore, pray that before considering those Bills this Honourable House would order that a census may be taken of the free Indian population of the Colony, an estimate of the annual increase during a certain number of years be taken, and an enquiry be instituted to ascertain whether the presence of the Indian population is detrimental to the interests of the Colony at large.

And that the clause 5 of the Bill for the Protection of Uncovenanted Indians may be expunged therefrom or this House may grant such other relief as it may think fit.

And for this act of mercy and justice, your Petitioners, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc., etc., etc.

(Sd.) ABDUL KARIM DADA & CO.

Pietermaritzburg Archives, Reference NPP, Volume 656, Petition 6

[1] The reference is, evidently, to the case of the Indian lady who was awarded damages for wrongful arrest; *vide* "The Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa: An Appeal to the Indian Public", 14-8-1896.

15. LETTER TO NATAL COLONIAL SECRETARY

DURBAN,
March 26, 1897

THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
MARITZBURG

SIR,

I have the honour to draw your attention to a despatch of His Excellency the Governor, addressed to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies,[1] printed in today's *Mercury*, wherein he states as follows:

> I learn that Mr. Gandhi in coming ashore at so inopportune a moment, when ill-advised persons were angry at the peaceful issue of the demonstration and before passions had had time to cool, acted on advice which he now admits to have been bad.[2]

As I have always considered, and still consider, the advice upon which I acted was excellent, I would be glad if His Excellency would inform me upon what foundation he made the above statement.[3]

I have the honour to be, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 8-4-1897

[1] The despatch contained the following reference to the incident of January 13, 1897: "Mr. Gandhi, a Parsee [*sic*] lawyer, who has been prominent in the agitation which took place amongst the Indians against the recent franchise legislation, and is the author of a pamphlet on the subject of the Indians in South Africa, some statements in which have been much resented here, landed not at the regular landing place, but within the limits of the Borough of Durban, and was recognized by some disorderly persons who mobbed him and ill-treated him." Then followed the paragraph quoted by Gandhiji which concluded with the words: "and accepts the responsibility of his action in the matter." (*The Natal Mercury*, 26-3-1897)

[2] The actual advice tendered by Mr. Laughton, legal adviser to the shipping company, who later escorted Gandhiji to the shore, was that: "I do not think there is any fear of anyone hurting you. Everything is quiet now. The whites have all dispersed. But in any case I am convinced that you ought not to enter the city stealthily." *Vide* "*An Autobiography-Part III*", Chapter III.

[3] For the addressee's reply, *vide* "Letter to the Natal Governor", 6-4-1897.

16. PETITION TO NATAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL[1]

March 26, 1897[2]

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF THE HONOURABLE THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF THE COLONY OF NATAL, IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED,

PIETERMARITZBURG

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED, REPRESENTING THE INDIAN COMMUNITY IN THIS COLONY

HUMBLY SHEWETH,

That your Petitioners humbly venture to approach the Honourable House with regard to the Bill for Protection of Uncovenanted Indians now before you for consideration. Your Petitioners are deeply thankful for the good intentions of the Government in introducing the Bill, especially as it seems to be a result of certain correspondence that passed between the Government and certain members of the Indian community. But your memorialists are afraid that the good effect of the Bill will be absolutely neutralized by the clause thereof which renders any officer, who may arrest an Indian for being without a pass, exempt from any liability for an action for damages for wrongful arrest. It was only when an officer showed over-zeal in putting Section 31 of Law 25 of 1891 in operation that any trouble or inconvenience arose. Simple instructions, therefore, to the Police Officers to be considerate in enforcing the Law might, in your Petitioners' humble opinion, have minimized the inconvenience. Under the present Bill, the inconvenience will, it is feared, increase, because the mere taking out of the pass under it does not free the holder from liability to arrest. It has to be carried on the person, a thing that is not always easy to do. Instances are on record when Indians not far from their homes have been arrested for being without a pass and put to a great deal of annoyance. Such cases, if the fifth clause of the Bill is to remain, are

[1] As will be seen, the text of this petition is virtually identical with that portion of the petition to the Assembly dated March 26, which related to the Bill for the Protection of Uncovenanted Indians; *vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Assembly", 26-3-1897.

[2] This is the date the petition bore (S.N. 2364) though it was presented on March 30.

likely to happen oftener than before. And since the Bill has been introduced in the interests of the Indian community, your Petitioners submit that the feelings of that community should receive some consideration. Your Petitioners, therefore, humbly pray that the fifth clause of the Bill be expunged therefrom, or that this House may grant such other relief as may be considered fit and proper. And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray, etc., etc., etc.,

Colonial Office Records: No. 181, Vol. 42; also Archives at Pietermaritzburg, NPP Volume 656, Petition 6; also minutes of the proceedings of the Natal Legislative Council, 30th March, 1897

17. CIRCULAR LETTER[1]

WEST STREET,
DURBAN (NATAL),
March 27, 1897[2]

SIR,

We the undersigned, representing the Indian community in Natal, hereby request the favour of your giving attention to the memorial herewith enclosed, addressed to the Right Honourable Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, which deals with the now all-absorbing Indian question in Natal. It is our sincere hope that the importance of the subject will fully compensate for its length and that, therefore, it will not deter you from perusing the memorial.

The Indian question in this Colony has reached the critical point. It affects not only Her Majesty's Indian subjects residing in the Colony, but the whole population of India. It is preeminently Imperial in its aspect. "May they or may they not," as *The Times* puts it, "go freely from one British possession to another, and claim the rights of British subjects in allied States?" European Natal says they shall not, so far as she is concerned. The memorial discloses a sad tale of oppression because of this attitude of Natal.

[1] Printed copies of this, under the title "The Position of Indians in Natal" were evidently sent to a number of public men in England along with a copy of the Memorial to the Secretary of State for the Colonies on March 15.

[2] The letter was actually despatched after the Memorial it forwarded had been submitted to the Natal Governor on April 6.

There is shortly to be a Conference of Premiers of the British Colonies, in London, where the question how far, if at all, the Colonies will be allowed to legislate to the prejudice of the Indians without such legislation applying to the Europeans, is to be discussed by Mr. Chamberlain with the Premiers. It, therefore, becomes necessary for us to lay before you briefly our position in Natal.

The following are some of the legal disabilities the Indians at present labour under in the Colony:

1. The Indians, unlike Europeans, cannot be out after 9 p.m., unless, practically, they can produce a pass.

2. Any Indian is liable to arrest at any time of the day unless he can show a pass to the effect that he is a free Indian. (The complaint herein is particularly against the manner in which the law is applied.)

3. Indians, unlike Europeans, when driving cattle must be provided with certain passes.

4. A bye-law in Durban provides for the registration of native servants and Indian servants who are described as "others belonging to the uncivilized races of Asia".

5. An indentured Indian, when he becomes free, must either return to India, his passage being paid for him, or pay an annual poll-tax of £3 as the price of permission to live as a somewhat free man in the Colony. (The London *Times* describes this condition as one "perilously near to slavery".)

6. Indians, unlike Europeans, in order to be entitled to the Franchise must prove that they belong to a country "possessing elective representative institutions founded on the Parliamentary Franchise,"[1] or, must receive an order of exemption from the Governor-in-Council. (This law was passed last year after the Indians had been in possession of the Franchise right under the General Franchise law of the Colony till then, and that law requires that the candidate voter being an adult male, and not being a native of South Africa, must possess immovable property worth £50, or must be paying an annual rental of £10.)

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Natal Legislative Assembly", 27-4-1896 and Memorial to J. Chamberlain", 22-5-1896.

7. The Government High Schools are closed against Indian students, no matter what their abilities, character and standing.

The following is the statement of legislation to be passed during the present session of the local Parliament:

1. The Governor is to receive the power to refuse to allow any person coming from an infected port to land at all in the Colony, even though such person may have trans-shipped at some other port.[1] (The Premier, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said that it would enable the Natal Government to arrest the immigration of free Indians to the Colony.)

2. The Town Councils and the Town Boards are to be empowered to refuse or grant trading licences at their discretion,[2] their decisions not being subject to review by the highest tribunal of justice in the land. (The Premier, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said that such power was to be given so that the trading licences may be withheld from the Indians.)

3. Immigrants are to be required to fulfil certain conditions, e.g., to have property worth £25,[3] to be able to fill in a form in some European language, the unwritten understanding, according to the Premier, being that these conditions are not to be enforced against the Europeans. (The Government have stated that these measures would be temporary and that, after the Conference hereinbefore referred to, they may be able to bring in such Bills as would apply to Indians or Asiatics exclusively and thus admit of more drastic restrictions and dispense with mental reservations and partial operation.)

4. A pass system is to be established in order to protect free Indians from the unpleasantness of an arrest, and officers arresting Indians without passes are to be exempt from liability

[1] Quarantine Law; *vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

[2] *Vide* "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897, Appendix D.

[3] The provision regarding the property qualification was later replaced by a clause, Section 3(b), which disqualified "paupers"; *vide* "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897, Appendix B.

to answer any claim for wrongful arrest.[1] The following proposals for further anti-Indian legislation have been laid before the Natal Government:

1. The Indians should not own landed property.

2. Town Councils should be empowered to compel Indians to reside in prescribed locations.

According to the present Premier, Indians in Natal must for ever be and remain "hewers of wood and drawers of water" and that "they must not form part of the South African nation which is going to be built up". We may state that the prosperity of Natal is admitted to depend mainly upon indentured labour from India, and yet it is Natal which denies freedom to the Indian settler.

Such is, moreover, the position of the Indians, more or less, throughout South Africa. If the Indians are to be denied freedom of intercourse with the British Dominions and allied States, there will be an end to Indian enterprise. Just when, as *The Times* says, Indians, setting aside their long-cherished prejudices, are beginning to show an inclination to emigrate for purposes of trade, etc., the Colonies are endeavouring to shut them out. If this is allowed by the Home Government, and, therefore, by the Imperial Parliament, it will, in our humble opinion, be a grave infringement of the gracious Proclamation of 1858, and would deal a death-blow to Imperial federation, unless the Indian Empire is outside its pale.

We venture to think that the above facts by themselves are sufficient to induce you to extend your unreserved support to our cause.

We remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servants,

ABDUL CARIM HAJEE ADAM

(DADA ABDOOLLA & CO.) AND

FORTY OTHERS

From a photostat of the printed copy: S.N. 2159

[1] *Vide* "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897, Appendix D.

18. LETTER TO F. S. TALEYARKHAN

CENTRAL WEST STREET,
DURBAN (NATAL),
March 27, 1897

DEAR MR. TALEYARKHAN,

I thank you for your two letters, the last of which was received this week. I am sorry I am unable to write a long letter for want of time. The Indian question almost wholly occupies my attention. The memorial to Mr. Chamberlain on the recent events will be ready next week.[1] I shall then send you a few copies. It will give you all the necessary information.

The Natal Parliament is sitting now and has three anti-Indian Bills before it. As soon as the result is known, I shall write to you with reference to your kind proposal for the propaganda in London. It is a question whether it would be advisable, in the present state of public feeling, for you to land in Natal as a public man. Such a man's life in Natal is, at present, in danger. I am certainly glad that you did not accompany me. The quarantine regulations, too, have been specially framed to prevent any more Indians from coming.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original. Courtesy: R. F. S. Taleyarkhan

[1] This was forwarded to the Governor for onward transmission on April 6; *vide* "Petition to the Natal Governor", 6-4-1897.

19. LETTER TO SECRETARY FOR ZULULAND

BEACH GROVE, DURBAN,
April 1, 1897

THE SECRETARY TO HIS EXCELLENCY
THE GOVERNOR OF ZULULAND
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

May I ask whether the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies has sent any reply to the memorial with regard to the Nondweni and Eshowe Townships Regulations[1] .

I have, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

India Office Library: Judicial and Public files, 1897, Vol. 467, No. 2536/19177

20. CIRCULAR LETTER[2]

DURBAN (NATAL),
April 2, 1897

SIR,

I beg to send a copy of the memorial to Mr. Chamberlain with regard to the recent anti-Indian Demonstration. The approaching Conference of the Colonial Premiers in London, to discuss this among other questions, renders it absolutely necessary that the Indian side of the question should be represented as strongly as possible. I know that the famine and plague absorb the attention of public men in India. But, since this question is now awaiting final decision, I venture to think it should receive the fullest attention of the public men. Emigration is one of the antidotes against famine. And the Colonies are now endeavouring to stop it. Under the circumstances, I submit that the matter deserves the most earnest and immediate attention of the public men in India.

[1] Preventing Indians from owning or acquiring property in the Nondwani and Eshowe Townships; vide "Memorial to J. Chamberlain", 11-3-1896.

[2] The source has this under the title "To public Men in India." It is not ascertainable to which of the public men it was sent.

You will be pleased to learn that the Indian community have subscribed over £1,130 to the Indian Famine Fund.

I remain,

Yours obediently,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the cyclostyled original: S.N. 2210

21. LETTER TO F. S. TALEYARKHAN

DURBAN,

[On or after *April 2, 1897*][1]

DEAR MR. TALEYARKHAN,

I am sending you the petition today and other papers. There is hardly time to write more. The question has assumed such a serious phase that the whole of India should rise up against the disabilities that are being placed upon the Indians. *Now* is the time or it will be *never*. And the decision of the question with regard to Natal will be applicable to all the Colonies. Why could not the public associations inundate the India Office with memorials protesting against the ill-treatment? The opinion is unanimous. To secure justice action alone is necessary.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

State immigration, at any rate, may be stopped, if nothing more can be done.

M. K. G.

From the original. Courtesy: R.F.S. Taleyarkhan

[1] The letter was written on the reverse of the circular letter dated April 2, 1897; *vide* the preceding item.

22. PETITION TO NATAL GOVERNOR

DURBAN (NATAL),
April 6, 1897

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE SIR WALTER F. HELY-HUTCHINSON, K.C.M.G., GOVERNOR AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN AND OVER THE COLONY OF NATAL, VICE-ADMIRAL OF THE SAME, AND SUPREME CHIEF OVER THE NATIVE POPULATION

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

I beg most respectfully to forward herewith to your Excellency a memorial[1] regarding the recent Anti-Indian 'Demonstration' addressed to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, and signed by myself and others.

I humbly request Your Excellency to send it to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, with Your Excellency's favourable remarks.

I beg to enclose, herewith, also two copies of the original petition referred to above.

I have, etc.,
ABDOOL CARIM H. ADAM

Colonial Office Records: Petitions and Despatches, 1897

23. LETTER TO NATAL COLONIAL SECRETARY

DURBAN,
April 6, 1897

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
MARITZBURG

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of 31st ultimo,[2] wherein you inform me that information cannot be given to me as to the authority on which the paragraph in the Governor's despatch

[1] Dated March 15; *vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

[2] For Gandhiji's letter to which this was the reply, *vide* "Letter to Natal Colonial Secretary", 26-3-1897.

referred to by me was written, but that a copy of my letter and of your reply will be forwarded by His Excellency for the information of the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

In reply, I venture to think that, if the information has been derived from any statement made by me, I should be informed thereof. I cannot but most respectfully express my concern that His Excellency should have forwarded to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State such information with reference to me as to its accuracy.

I am sending a copy of this correspondence to the Press.

I have the honour, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 8-4-1897

24. LETTER TO SECRETARY FOR ZULULAND

DURBAN,

April 7, 1897

TO

W. E. PEACHEY, ESQ.

SECRETARY FOR ZULULAND

PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th instant, informing me that His Excellency the Governor has received instructions from the Secretary of State for the Colonies to issue certain amended Regulations with reference to the sale of *Erven* in Zululand.

I have, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

India Office Library: Judicial and Public Files, 1897, Vol. 467, No. 2536/19177

25. LETTER TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"[1]

DURBAN,
April 13, 1897

THE EDITOR, *The Natal Mercury*

SIR,

As this will be my first contribution after my return from India, on the Indian question, and a great deal has been said about me, much as I would like to avoid it, it seems to be necessary that I should say a few words on the matter. The following charges have been laid against me: (1) That I blackened the character of the Colonists in India, and made many mis-statements;[2] (2) that there is an organization under me to swamp the Colony with Indians;[3] (3) that I incited the passengers on board the *Courland* and *Naderi* to bring an action against the Government for damages for illegal detention;[4] (4) that I have political ambition, and the work I am doing is done in order to fill my pocket.

As for the first charge, I believe I need not say anything since you have absolved me from it.[5] I venture, however, to deny formally that I ever did anything to merit it. As to the second, I repeat what I have said elsewhere: that I have no connection with any organization, nor, so far as I know, is there any organization to swamp the Colony with Indians. As to the third, I have denied and again deny most emphatically that I incited a single passenger to bring an action for damages against the Government. As to the fourth, I may state that I have no political ambition whatever. Those who know me personally know well in what direction my ambition lies. I do not aspire to any Parliamentary honours whatever, and, though three opportunities passed by, I deliberately refrained from getting myself placed on the Voters' List. I receive no remuneration for the public work that I am doing. If the European Colonists can believe me, I beg to assure them

[1] This appeared under the title "The Indian Question".

[2] The reference is to alleged mis-statements in the Green Pamphlet.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to *The Natal Mercury*", 13-11-1897.

[4] *Vide* "Interview to *The Natal Advertiser*", 13-1-1897, and "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

[5] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897, Appendix-Y.

that I am here not to sow dissensions between the two communities, but to endeavour to bring about an honourable reconciliation between them. In my humble opinion, much of the ill feeling that exists between the two communities is due to misunderstanding of each other's feelings and actions. My office, therefore, is that of an humble interpreter between them. I have been taught to believe that Britain and India can remain together for any length of time only if there is a common fellow feeling between the two peoples. The greatest minds in the British Isles and India are striving to meet that ideal. I am but humbly following in their footsteps, and feel that the present action of the Europeans in Natal is calculated to retard, if not altogether to frustrate, its realization. I feel, further, that such action is not based on good grounds, but rests on popular prejudice and preconceived notions. Such being the case, I venture to trust that, however much the European Colonists may differ from the above opinion, they would be gracious enough to show a spirit of toleration thereof.

There are several Bills[1] before the Natal Parliament prejudicially affecting the interests of the Indians. They are not supposed to represent final legislation with regard to the Indians, but the Honourable the Prime Minister has stated that more stringent measures may be adopted after the forthcoming Conference of the Colonial Premiers has taken place. This is a gloomy outlook for the Indians, and if, in order to avert it, they put forth all the legitimate resources at their disposal, I venture to think that they should not be blamed. It seems that everything is being hurried on as if there was any danger of thousands of Indians of all sorts and conditions pouring into Natal.[2] I submit that there is no such danger and the late quarantine would serve as an effective check, if there was any. The suggestion that there should be an inquiry as to whether the Indian is an evil or a benefit to the Colony has been pooh-poohed and an opinion expressed that he who has eyes can see how the Indians are ousting the Europeans in every direction. With deference, I beg to differ. The thousands of free Indians, apart from the indentured, who have developed the large estates in Natal and given them a value, and turned them from jungles into productive soil, I am sure you will not

[1] The Quarantine, Dealers' Licences, Immigration Restriction and Protection of Uncovenanted Indians Bills

[2] Speaking in Parliament on March 27, the Natal Premier had referred to a systematic plan to overrun the country with free Indian immigrants.

call an evil to the Colony. They have not ousted any Europeans; on the contrary, they have brought them prosperity and considerably increased the general wealth of the Colony. Will the Europeans—can they? —perform the work done by those Indians? Have not the Indians very much helped to make this the Garden Colony of South Africa? When there were no free Indians, a cauliflower sold at half a crown; now, even the poorest can buy it. Is this a curse? Has the working man been injured in any way thereby? The Indian traders are said to "have eaten into the very vitals of the Colony". Is it so? They have made it possible for the European firms to extend their business in the way they have done. And these firms, because of this extension, can find employment for hundreds of European clerks and book keepers. The Indian traders act as middlemen. They begin where the Europeans leave. It is not to be denied that they can live cheaper than Europeans; but that is a benefit to the Colony. They buy wholesale from European stores, and can sell with a trifling addition to the wholesale prices, and are thus a benefit to the poor Europeans. It might be said in answer to this that the work now done by the Indian storekeepers could be done by Europeans. This is a fallacy. The very Europeans who are now wholesale dealers would be retail dealers but for the presence of the Indian storekeepers, except in isolated instances. The Indian storekeepers have, therefore, raised the Europeans a stage higher. It has, further, been said that, in time to come, Indians may usurp the wholesale trade also from the Europeans. This supposition is not borne out by facts, because the wholesale prices in Indian and European stores are, if not exactly, almost the same, thus showing the competition in the wholesale lines cannot by any means be said to be unfair. The cheaper living of the Indian is not an important factor in determining the wholesale price, because the cheaper living of the one is counterbalanced by the more methodical business habits and the mercantile "home connections" of the other. It is objected, on the one hand, that the Indians buy landed property in Natal and, on the other, that their money does not circulate in the Colony but goes to India, because "they wear no boots, no European-made clothing, and send their earnings to India", thus constituting a terrible drain on the Colony. These two objections completely answer each other. Assuming that the Indians wear no boots and European-made clothing, they do not send the money thus saved to India, but invest it in buying landed property. What, therefore, they earn with one hand in the Colony they spend with the

other. All, then, that the Indians send to India can only be a portion of the interest in the shape of rents received from such property. The purchase of landed property by the Indians is a double benefit. It increase the value of land, and gives work to the European builders, carpenters, and other artisans. It is a mere chimera to say that European workmen have anything whatever to fear from the Indian community. There is absolutely no competition between the European artisans and the Indian, of whom there are very few, and the few are indifferent workmen. A project to import Indian artisans to construct an Indian building in Durban failed. No good Indian artisans would come to the Colony. I do not know of many Indian buildings which have been constructed by Indian artisans. There is a natural division of work in the Colony, without any community encroaching upon the work of the other.

If there is any reason whatever in the views put forward above, I beg to submit that legislative interference is unjustifiable. The law of supply and demand will naturally regulate the supply of free Indians. After all, if the Indian is really a canker, the more dignified course, since it has been admitted that the Indians can thrive because of the European support, will be that such support should be withdrawn. The Indians, then, may fret awhile, but cannot legitimately complain. But it should appear unfair to anybody that legislation should interfere with the supported on the complaint of the supporters. All, however, I venture to claim on the strength of the above argument is that there is sufficient in it to justify the inquiry hereinbefore suggested. No doubt there would be the other side of the question. If there was an inquiry, both sides could thoroughly be thrashed out and an unbiased judgment obtained. Then there would be some good material for our legislators to go on with and for Mr. Chamberlain to guide him. The opinion pronounced 10 years ago by a Commission of Inquiry, consisting of Sir Walter Wragg and other Commissioners, is that the free Indian is a benefit to the Colony.[1] That is the only reliable material at present before the legislators, unless it is proved that the conditions during the last 10 years have so far changed as to prevent them from accepting that opinion. These, however, are local considerations. Why should not Imperial considerations also guide the

[1] For the findings of the Indian Immigrants Commission, vide "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897, also "The Indian Franchise", 16-12-1895, Part VI.

Colonist? And if they should, then, in the eye of the law, the Indian is to have the same rights as all other British subjects. India benefits hundreds of thousands of Europeans; India makes the British Empire; India gives an unrivalled prestige to England; India has often fought for England. Is it fair that European subjects of that Empire in this Colony, who themselves derive a considerable benefit from Indian labour, should object to the free Indians earning an honest livelihood in it? You have said that the Indians want social equality with the Europeans; I confess I do not quite understand the phrase; but I know that the Indians have never asked Mr. Chamberlain to regulate the social relations between the two communities; and so long as the manners, customs, habits, and religions of the two communities differ, there will, naturally, be a social distinction. What the Indians fail to understand is, why that difference should come in the way of the two living cordially and harmoniously in any part of the world without the Indians having to accept a degradation of their status in the eye of the law. If the sanitary habits of the Indian are not quite what they ought to be, the Sanitary Department can, by strict vigilance, effect the needed improvement. If Indians have not got decent-looking stores, licensing authorities can soon turn them into decent-looking ones. These things can only be done when European Colonist, as Christians, look upon the Indians as brethren, or, as British subjects, look upon them as fellow-subjects. Then, instead of cursing and swearing at the Indians as now, they would help them to remove any defects that there may be in them, and thus raise them and themselves also in the estimation of the world.

I appeal to the Demonstration Committee[1] , who are supposed more particularly to represent the working men. They now know that the *Courland* and *Naderi* did not bring 800 passengers for Natal, and that, in what they did bring, [there] was not a single Indian artisan.[2] there is no attempt on the part of the Indians "to put the Europeans in the kitchen, and to become masters themselves'.[3] The European working man can have no complaint against the Indian. Under the circumstances, in my humble opinion, it behoves them to reconsider their position and direct the energy at their disposal in such channels that all sections of Her Majesty's subjects in the Colony may live in

[1] *Vide* "Interview to *The Natal Advertiser*", 13-1-1897.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

harmony and peace, instead of under a state of excitement and friction. Information has appeared in the papers that a gentleman is shortly to proceed to England on behalf of the Indians and the evidence against the Colony is being collected. In order that there may be no misunderstanding about the matter, I may state that, in view of the approaching Conference, a gentleman is going to London on behalf of the Indian community in South Africa, to place the Indian side of the question before their sympathizers and the general public, as also, if necessary, Mr. Chamberlain.[1] He is to receive no remuneration for his services but passage and expenses. The statement that evidence is being collected against the Colony is very ugly and, unless it were true, could only be made by a person writing under an assumed name. The gentleman in question will certainly be put in possession of all the information about the Indian question in South Africa, but that appears in the papers already published. The Indians never have wished, and do not now wish, to make out a charge of brutality or general bodily ill-treatment by the Europeans towards them. Nor do they wish to make out that the treatment of the indentured Indians in Natal is worse than elsewhere. Therefore, if collecting evidence against the Colony is meant to convey some such impression, it is a groundless statement.

Your, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 16-4-1897

26. LETTER TO FRANCIS W. MACLEAN

WEST STREET, DURBAN,
May 7, 1897

TO

THE HONOURABLE SIR FRANCIS W. MACLEAN, KNT.
CHAIRMAN OF THE CENTRAL FAMINE RELIEF COMMITTEE
CALCUTTA

SIR,

As soon as your telegram addressed to the Mayor of Durban asking for subscriptions to Famine Fund was published in the papers

[1] The reference is to Mansukhlal Hiralal Nazar, who did valuable work in England to inform public opinion about the problem of the South African Indians.

the Indian Community in Durban deemed it their duty to open a Subscription List, and circulars in English, Gujarati, Hindi and Tamil were forthwith issued,[1] copies of which we venture to enclose herewith.

When, however, His lordship the Mayor of Durban opened the General Subscription, we decided to send the collections to the general list.

The collections have been made by special workers from all parts of the Colony of Natal and in some cases, even outside Natal.

The total collections up to date in the hands of the Mayor amount to £1,535-1-9, of which over £1,194 have been received from the Indians.

We herewith enclose a list of subscribers to the extent of 10/- upward and venture to suggest that the list should be published in the chief Indian dailies.

We are grateful for the telegram of thanks received through the Mayor of Durban. Our feeling is that we have done nothing more than our duty. We only feel that we could not do more.

We have the honour to remain,

DADA ABDOOLLA & CO.

ON BEHALF OF THE INDIAN COMMUNITY

From a photostat of a copy: S.N. 2317

27. LETTER TO A. M. CAMERON

53A FIELD STREET,

DURBAN, NATAL,

May 10, 1897

DEAR MR. CAMERON,

I had your two kind letters. Owing to my wife being in childbed and pressure of office work I regret to say I was unable to reply to your first letter earlier.

Yes, Mr. Ray has gone. When we heard that the conference of the Premiers was going to discuss this question in London we decided

[1] *Vide* "Appeal for Funds", 3-2-1897.

to send somebody. Mr. Ray volunteered. He gets no *fees.* His passage and expenses will be paid by the Congress.

After the recent work in India[1] it is difficult to induce the people to believe that much more can be done at present in India.

Much of what appears in the papers with regard to the proposed Indian Press[2] is true and I thought of you in connection therewith before the receipt of your kind letter. If it becomes an established fact I shall correspond with you further on the matter. Any hints you can offer will be valued.

I am,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

A copy of the memorial re Demonstration was forwarded to you on Saturday.

A. M. CAMERON, ESQ.
P. M. BURG

From a photostat of the original: C.W. 1080. Courtesy: Maharaja Prabirendra Mohan Tagore

28. LETTER TO THE BRITISH AGENT

PRETORIA,
May 18, 1897[3]

HIS HONOUR THE BRITISH AGENT
PRETORIA

SIR,

With reference to the interview you were good enough to grant with reference to the British Indians in this Republic, whereat I ventured to submit that, in the event of a test case being brought by

[1] Gandhiji was evidently referring to his own work there in 1896.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to A. M. Cameron", 15-2-1897
[3] There was a mistake in the year in the printed copy of the document available in the Colonial Office Records. Subsequently it was established that the letter belonged to 1897.

the Indian community here as to the interpretation of the Law No. 3 of 1885[1] , the expenses should be paid by Her Majesty's Government, I have to request you on behalf of the deputation to telegraph to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies as to whether Her Majesty's Government would defray the cost of the conduct of the case. The following are the grounds for such request:

1. The test case has been rendered necessary owing to the award of the Chief Justice of the Free State and the arbitration was agreed to by Her Majesty's Government without reference to the feeling on the matter of the Indian community in the Transvaal whose interests were at stake, and in spite of their respectful protest as well against the choice of the arbitrator. (Blue book C. 7911 of 1895, p. 35, paragraph 3.)

2. The Telegraphic despatches published in the above Blue book, pp. 34 (No. 9) and 46 (Enclosure in No. 12), show that Her Majesty's Government contemplated bringing a test case. While the case will be entered in the name of a member of the Indian community, it is, I submit, reasonable to infer that the cost will be defrayed by Her Majesty's Government.

3. The British Indians have already incurred heavy expenses in their struggle against degradation and disabilities sought to be placed upon them in the Transvaal in spite of the protection afforded to them against such degradation and disabilities by the 14th Article of the Convention of 1884, and, comparatively speaking, their pecuniary position is not such as to bear any strain put upon their purse. I venture to hope that in your telegram you would mention a summary of the grounds on which the request as to the costs is based.[2]

Personally and on behalf of the deputation you were kind enough to receive today, I beg once more to tender my thanks for the courteous manner in which you received us and the patient, sympathetic hearing you granted us.

On behalf of the deputation,

I have, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records: South Africa, General, 1897

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897, Appendix-A.

[2] The addressee had this forwarded to the Colonial Secretary on May 25. The Imperial Government, however, did not accede to the request.

29. ADDRESS TO QUEEN VICTORIA[1]

[Before *May 21, 1897*][2]

In token of our joy at the approaching completion of the 60th year of your glorious and beneficent reign, we are proud to think that we are your subjects, the more so as we know that the peace we enjoy in India, and the confidence of security of life and prosperity which enables us to venture abroad, are due to that position. We can but re-echo the sentiments of loyalty and devotion which are finding expression among all your subjects and in all parts of your vast dominions on which the sun never sets. That the God Almighty may spare you in health and vigour for a long time to come to reign over us, is our devout wish and prayer.

The Natal Mercury, 3-6-1897

30. LETTER TO ADAMJI MIYAKHAN

TRANSVAAL HOTEL, PRETORIA,
May 21, 1897

DEAR MR. ADAMJI MIYAKHAN[3] ,

I hope you have made the necessary arrangements for the address to Her Majesty the Queen.[4] If it has not been already printed or engraved, please put in the following superscription. Please attend to this immediately.

"To

Her Majesty Victoria by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the Faith, Empress of India, Most Gracious Sovereign and Empress

We. . . . . ."

Below this should also appear "Durban, May ..... 1897."

[1] The address, inscribed on a silver shield, and bearing 21 signatures including that of Gandhiji, who had drafted it was presented to the Natal Governor for being conveyed to Queen Victoria, whose Diamond Jubilee was being celebrated on June 22. A similar address was also sent to the Queen by the Indians of the Transvaal.

[2] *Vide* the following item, which would suggest that the address had already been drafted before May 21.

[3] Honorary Secrtary of the Natal Indian Congress from June 1896, when Gandhiji had to leave for India, to June 1897

[4] *Vide* the preceding item.

I do not understand why there are no letters at all from Messrs Joseph and Lawrence. I may leave this place on Wednesday.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 3677

31. LETTER TO NATAL COLONIAL SECRETARY

[DURBAN],
June 2, 1897

TO
THE HONOURABLE
THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

As it is the intention of the representatives of the Indian community in Natal to address a petition to the Rt. Honourable the Colonial Secretary with reference to the Indian Bills[1] of the last session, the last batch of which was published in yesterday's *Gazette,* I have to request you to hold over sending the Despatch[2] with reference to them to the Colonial Secretary till the receipt of the petition which now is in the course of preparation.

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: Ref. C.S.O. 3789/97

[1] The reference is to the Quarantine, Immigration Restriction, Dealers' Licences and Uncovenanted Indians Protection Bills.

[2] The Despatch had, however, already been sent; *vide* "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897.

32. CABLE TO CHAMBERLAIN, HUNTER AND OTHERS

DURBAN,
June 9, 1897

RIGHT HONOURABLE JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN
SIR WILLIAM HUNTER CARE "TIMES"
INCAS
BHOWNAGGREE
LONDON

INDIAN BILLS MENTIONED LAST MEMORIAL GAZETTED ACTS. WE HUMBLY REQUEST DEFERRING CONSIDERATION. MEMORIAL PREPARING.

INDIANS

From a photostat of an office copy: S.N. 2381

33. LETTER TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"[1]

DURBAN,
June 24, 1897

THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury

SIR,

I notice there are some inaccuracies and omissions in the report published in your today's issue with reference to the opening of the Diamond Jubilee Library in Grey Street.[2]

The report about the origin of the Diamond Jubilee Library was read not by me, but the honorary librarian, Mr. Bryan Gabriel, who played the principal part in bringing it about. Mr. J. S. Done, of the Railway Indian School, is the Chairman of the Library Committee. It would seem from the report that His Worship the Mayor attached the blame for the regrettable absence of Indians from the procession to

[1] This appeared in the source under the title "Indians and the Diamond Jubilee".

[2] The library, formally opened by resident magistrate J. P. Waller, represented the joint efforts of the Natal Indian Education Association and the Natal Indian Congress. Initially there were two hundred books, all gifts.

that community. I do not think he said or could mean anything of the kind. I happen to know that, no matter who is to blame for the omission, the Indian community is not.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 25-6-1897

34. LETTER TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"[1]

June 25, 1897

THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury

SIR,

Many sympathizers and friends of the Indian community in Durban have expressed their resentment to the heads of that community that they did not receive the invitation to attend the opening ceremony of the Diamond Jubilee Library. I beg to state that the responsibility for omissions rests with me, though, I trust, the circumstances under which the invitations were issued would be deemed sufficient excuse for any omissions. It was not before 5 o'clock in the evening on Monday last that the invitations could be issued. The list of names was hurriedly drawn up. There was no time to show it to all the leading members. The committee, however, feel deeply grateful to such gentlemen for their anxiety to grace the occasion by their presence. The committee have also directed me to thank those gentlemen who received the cards but were unable to attend the ceremony owing to previous engagements or having received the cards too late to be present. It seems that some invitation cards did not reach their destination.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 28-6-1897

[1] This appeared in the source under the title "Indian Jubilee Library".

35. PETITION TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

DURBAN,
July 2, 1897

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN
HER MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

LONDON

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED BRITISH INDIANS
REPRESENTING THE INDIAN COMMUNITY IN NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH:

That your Petitioners hereby respectfully venture to approach you with reference to four Indian Bills passed by the Honourable the Legislative Assembly and the Honourable the Legislative Council of the Colony of Natal and which, having received the Governor's assent, have been gazetted as Acts. These Bills were, in the order in which they were passed respectively: the Quarantine Bill, the Immigration Restriction Bill, the Trade Licences Bill, and the Bill to protect the Uncovenanted Indians from liability to arrest.

Your Petitioners alluded to the first three Bills[1] in their last memorial and said therein that, if these Bills passed the Natal Legislatures, they might have to approach you again with special reference thereto. It has now become your Petitioners' unfortunate duty so to do, and they confidently trust they would be excused for the trouble they have to give you, seeing that the question underlying these Bills touches the very existence of the Indian community in Natal.

As soon as the last two of these Bills were gazetted as Acts, your petitioners wrote to the Honourable the Colonial Secretary[2] praying that the despatch of the Bills to Her Majesty's Government should be postponed till the receipt hereof; a reply from the Honourable the Colonial Secretary was received to the effect that the Bills had already

[1] Of March 15; *vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Natal Colonial Secretary", 2-6-1897.

been forwarded. Thereupon, the following humble telegram[1] was sent to you:

> Indian Bills mentioned last memorial Gazetted Acts. We humbly request deferring consideration. Memorial preparing.

Copies of the four Bills mentioned are appended hereto, and marked A, B, C and D respectively.

Your petitioners ventured to approach both the Houses of the local Parliament with reference to these Bills,[2] without avail.

Copy of the petition to the Honourable the Legislative Assembly is annexed herewith and marked E[3]. It endeavours to show that restrictive legislation for Indians is not warranted by the circumstances and, therefore, that before embarking upon such legislation a census should be ordered to be taken of the total Indian population of the Colony and inquiry instituted as to whether the presence of the Indian in the Colony is a benefit or an evil to the Colony.

The Quarantine Bill gives the power to the Governor not only to return any ship coming from infected ports without allowing her to land her passengers and cargo, but also prevent any person coming, in the first instance, from an infected port from landing in Natal, even though such person may have transshipped into some other boat on his way to Natal. Your petitioners can have no objection against any Quarantine Law, no matter how severe, so long as it is meant as a protection against the introduction of infectious diseases. But the present Bill is merely a part of the anti-Indian policy of the Natal Government. As has been pointed out in the anti-Indian Demonstration Memorial, the Natal Government made a promise to the Demonstration Committee that a Bill to extend the Governor's powers of imposing quarantine was under consideration.[4] The present Bill has been looked upon as one of the Indian Bills of the session; thus, says *The Natal Mercury*, 24th February 1897, with reference to the Quarantine and other Indian Bills:

> The first three Bills published in the *Gazette* this week are in fulfilment of the promise of the Government that measures to deal with the question of Indian immigration would be introduced during the forthcoming session of

[1] *Vide* "Cable to Chamberlain, Hunter and Others", 9-6-1897.

[2] *ibid*.

[3] This is not reproduced as an appendix to the petition; for the text of the petition to the Natal Legislative Assembly, *vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Assembly", 26-3-1897.

[4] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

> Parliament. None of the Bills specifically relates to Asiatics and, therefore, [they] do not come under the suspensory conditions attached to such measures. They have been drafted to apply to all and sundry and certainly no fault can be found with their comprehensive character. It may be frankly admitted that the Bills are more or less of an objectionable character, but desperate diseases require desperate remedies. It is to be regretted that such measures are necessary, but that they are necessary is beyond dispute, and however disagreeable it may be to pass such legislation, it has been an imperative duty and must be undertaken. The Bill to amend the laws relating to quarantine may be fairly termed an extraordinary measure of precaution taken in the face of plague-stricken countries. Something more than the ordinary measures are necessary if we are to secure immunity from dread diseases.

The same paper, in answering the objections to the Immigration Restriction Bill, says again in a leading article dated 30th March, 1897:

> It has been urged by those people who consider the Bill (i.e., the Immigration Restriction Bill) objectionable because it is not straightforward, that a Bill should be passed against Asiatics in particular, that we should enter upon the "long constitutional fight", and, in the mean time, we should protect ourselves with the Quarantine Act; the inconsistency of such a course is very apparent. It would imply that we were much too high-minded to be dishonest with regard to the Immigration Bill, but we had not the slightest objection to take a mean advantage of the provisions of the Quarantine Bill. To prevent the landing of Indian immigrants in Natal, on the ground that they came from a country infected with dangerous infectious disease within a thousand miles of the district they come from, is just as disingenuous as the operations under the Immigration Restriction Bill.

It is, then, because the Quarantine Bill is intended indirectly to prevent Indian immigration to Natal that your Petitioners deem it necessary to enter their respectful protest against it. For, why should an Indian, trans-shipping into a German liner at Zanzibar bound for Natal, be prevented from landing there while other passengers may do so without difficulty? If an Indian is likely to bring an infectious disease into the Colony, so are the other passengers who have come into contact with him.

The Immigration Restriction Bill provides, among other things, that any person who is a pauper and is likely to become a public charge, and cannot write out an application to the Colonial Secretary according to the form given as a schedule to the Bill, shall be treated as a prohibited immigrant. Thus, an Indian, who is learned in any of

the Indian languages, but does not know any European language, cannot land in Natal even though it be temporarily. Such an Indian may go to the Transvaal, a foreign territory, but may not set his foot on the Natal soil, Even in the Orange Free State, any Indian may remain for two months without having to undergo any ceremony, but he may not do so in the British Colony of Natal. This is, therefore, going further than either of the above independent States. If an Indian Prince wanted to travel round the world and came upon Natal, he would not be allowed to land there unless special permission was accorded to him. Ships on their way to Mauritius, having Indian passengers, have been calling here after the Immigration Law came into operation, and the Indian passengers are not even allowed to land and have exercise or fresh air while the ships are at anchor. By order of the Immigration Department they are kept under strict supervision, and their luggage is stored away in the hold lest they should evade the supervision and land. In other words, British subjects, because they happen to be Indians, are practically treated as prisoners on the British soil.

It has been authoritatively stated that no Government would dream of applying the Law to the Europeans in the same manner as the Indians. In dealing with the clause 3, sub-clause (b) now modified, the Honourable the Prime Minister said as follows, on the second reading of the Bill:

> As to immigrants being in possession of twenty-five pounds, when those words were introduced it never occurred to him that it would be applied to the Europeans. It could be so applied if the Government were foolish enough. The object, however, was to deal with the Asiatics. Some people said they liked an honest straightforward course. When a ship was heading against a wind, she had to tack, and by and by she accomplished her goal. When a man met difficulties, he fought against them, and, if he could not knock them over, he went round them instead of breaking his head against a brick wall.

The want of straightforwardness about the Bill has appealed to almost everyone in the Colony. The Farmers' Conference at Maritzburg, the capital of the Colony, a meeting held in the Durban Town Hall for the purpose of giving the members of the Borough an opportunity to express their opinion on the Bills, and other meetings protested against it on the ground that it was un-British; several members of the Parliament also expressed themselves strongly against it. Mr. Binns, the leader of the unformed opposition in the House of Assembly, said:

> They ought to guard against taking a purely local view of so serious a question. The Bill was not straight. It did not go straight to the point, and nothing could be more appropriate than the remark that was made in the petition read that afternoon, that it was un-British. Nobody liked the Bill. There was not a man in all Natal that liked the Bill, and the Premier certainly did not like it. He might think that there was a necessity for it, and that the Bill should assume the form it has done. But if there was one thing clear in his speech, it was that he did not like the Bill.

Mr. Maydon, another member of the Assembly,

> ventured to strongly express the opinion, and he believed the majority of the Colonists of Natal agreed with him, that rather than accept this measure, they would continue to wallow in the mire of the Asiatic immersion.

Mr. Symons, another member, said:

> They could not remove the Indians in our midst, nor withdraw the privileges they possess as British subjects. Would any Englishman that called himself a statesman produce such a Bill, and expect it to pass? The Bill was a monstrous Bill. Such a Bill was a disgrace to a British Colony; why not call it an Asiatic Restriction Bill? They did not talk of tacking in these days of steamship, but went straight ahead.

Thus, seeing that there is no unanimity of opinion about the Bill, your Petitioners submit that their modest prayer that a census should be taken of the Indian population, and an enquiry made as to the allegation that the presence of Indians is an evil to the Colony, might have been complied with before passing such a drastic measure. Your Petitioners submit that there was absolutely no justification for the measure. It has not been proved that the number of the Indians is more rapidly increasing than the number of Europeans. On the other hand, the last report shows that, while there might have been an increase of 666 Indians during the last six months ending January,[1] the increase in the number of the Europeans was close upon 2,000. Further, the class of the Indians whom the Bill is intended to prevent from coming number about 5,000 in the Colony as against 50,000 Europeans. Also, the deliberate opinion of the Commission that sat ten years ago in Natal under the Chairmanship of Sir Walter Wragg, the first Puisne Judge, stands on record, namely:

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

We are content to place on record our strong opinion based on much observation that the presence of these traders has been beneficial to the whole Colony and it would be unwise if not unjust to legislate to their prejudice.

This is the only authoritative opinion that the local legislatures could be guided by. In the teeth of these facts, your petitioners yet venture to trust that Her Majesty's Government would order that the inquiry of the nature above indicated be instituted before arriving at a decision as to the necessity of legislation restrictive of the freedom of the British Indians in Natal; that is, if Her Majesty's Government decide that, in spite of the Proclamation of 1858, a British Colony can legislate to the prejudice of British Indians, and if Her Majesty's Government come to the conclusion that the Proclamation does not confer any such privileges as are contended for herein, and, if they are satisfied that the number of Indians in Natal is increasing at an alarming rate, and that the presence of the Indians is an evil to the Colony, it would be far more satisfactory that a Bill specially applicable to the Indians should be introduced.

With the greatest deference, it does seem strange that, while the Transvaal Government have been compelled to withdraw their Aliens Law[1] , the Natal Government have passed an Immigration Act which is far more severe than the Transvaal one.

Your Petitioners would now crave leave to give extracts from the Press, showing how the Immigration Restriction Act is viewed by the Press:

Section 4 defines the penalties to which any prohibited immigrant, making his way into the Colony in disregard of the Act, is liable, viz., deportation and (or) six months' imprisonment. Now, we think most people will agree with us that, however necessary it may be for the Colony, for its own benefit, to impose restrictions on immigration, it is not a crime for any person to endeavour to come into the country. It is morally certain, too, that the class of persons to whom the Bill applies will, as a rule, be totally ignorant of the fact that, by entering the Colony, they are breaking any of its laws. Such a law is in a different position from the ordinary laws of the country, since it applies to people who have no opportunity of making themselves acquainted with its laws. It is, moreover, the duty of the officials appointed, therefore, to see that no prohibited immigrants are landed, and under these circumstances we think deportation is sufficient, and penal laws should be eliminated. A similar criticism applies to Section 5, which provides

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dadabhai Naoroji and Others", Before 18-9-1897.

for a deposit of £100 as a sort of guarantee, to be forfeited should the immigrants eventually prove to come under the category of "prohibited immigrants". We see no justice whatever in annexing this deposit. If he is treated as a prohibited immigrant and compelled to leave the Colony, his money should be returned. The clause imposing heavy penalties on shipmasters is only sure to provoke criticism. It virtually imposes upon the captains of vessels the duty, before leaving the port of departure, of a minute examination into the circumstances and position of every one of their passengers. This may be necessary for the effectual operation of the law, but it nevertheless inflicts a great hardship upon the masters.

The Bill, it will be observed, applies to persons entering the Colony by land and sea. We are of opinion that it would be much less obnoxious and more easily enforced if it applied to immigrants by sea only. There is very little reason to fear any considerable influx of Asiatics by land, and the only other persons are travellers from one South African State to another, who should be as free from restriction as possible, and natives, the greater part of whom would be excluded by the educational tests, possibly to the detriment of our labour supply.—*The Natal Advertiser,* 24-2-'97.

Would it not be a reasonable position to take up to say "If you won't have the one class, you shan't have the other?" That this attitude is not an unlikely one is apparent from the tone of the Indian Press. We published, a few days ago, an article from *The Times of India* which practically calls upon Natal to choose between unrestricted immigration or none at all. That may be only a local view, but we think we are not far wrong in saying that it is just the sort of answer we should give if the cases were reversed. It is not an unfair argument to say that if the Colony finds it necessary for its own benefit to exclude a certain class of Indian immigrants it cannot complain if the Indian Government refuses to allow it to import, also for its own benefit, another class of Indian immigrants. —*The Natal Advertiser,* 5-4-'97.

We question whether any Act so drastic in its tendency, and so wide in its scope, has been adopted by any British Colony, and it is no honour to a Colony, which professes such devotion to progress and freedom as ours, to be the first to inscribe such a measure on its statute-book.—*The Natal Advertiser,* 26-2-'97.

It may be fairly argued that, having regard to its purpose, it is dishonest and hypocritical in principle, because its real object is not its ostensible object. It professes to be a measure to restrict immigration generally, when everybody knows that in reality it is intended to stop Asiatic immigration.—*The Natal Advertiser,* 26-2'97.

Let us try to get what we want by an honest, fair, and aboveboard measure, which does not seek to hide the real issues under a cloud of vague, unworkable and un-English restrictions. Until we can do this, there is ample scope for the energies of Government, and the Colonial municipalities in carrying out local regulations which will do a good deal towards minimizing the evil complained of.—*The Natal Advertiser,* 12-3-'97.

The Natal Immigration Law represents one of the most contemptible tricks to which a Government and legislature could be party.—*The Star,* 20-5-'97.

The session of 1897 will be known hereafter as having given birth to that most objectionable law, which in some respects is even worse than the enactment[1] passed by the Transvaal Volksraad last year with a similar object. It is within the knowledge of everyone that Mr. Chamberlain protested against the law, and that it was promptly repealed by the Volksraad. But it is certain that, if the law is good for Natal, it can scarcely be bad for the Transvaal.—*The Transvaal Advertiser, 22-5-'97.*

The new Natal law is more than a violation of this general principle. It is, in addition, a dishonest law, if the contention produced in favour of passing it is to be recognized. While its terms are of universal applicability, the Government openly admitted in the Legislature that it would only be applied to certain classes. Such a mode of securing class legislation is pernicious in the extreme. Class legislation is generally wrong or undesirable; but when a class law is passed in a shape that does not show it is meant for only one section of the community, its inherent faults become greatly intensified. It is further an act of cowardice on the part of any Parliament to shirk the consequences that may ensue from the candid adoption of a class measure by resorting to the pretence that a law is not meant to be a class one at all. The avowed object of this Natal Immigration Restriction law is to deal with the influx of free Indians; not, be it well marked, with all Indians. Indentured 'coolies' are to be included in the same category of persons exempt from the operations of this law as, say, the Prince of Wales. Yet, as a matter of fact, the indentured coolies brought to Natal largely consist of the very lowest class of natives to be picked out of the gutters of Calcutta and Bombay. Man for man, the free Indian coming to Natal at his own expense is likely to be of a better stamp than the destitute coolie shipped across at other people's expense. But this indentured fellow-countryman of the lowest caste is to be admitted because he is a bondsman. Yet, in five years' time, the semi-slave

[1] The Transvaal Aliens Act

thus allowed in can, if he chooses, demand his freedom and settle in Natal as a free Indian.—*The Star,* 10-5-'97.

The Natal Law cannot with any sense of fairness and justice be countenanced by Mr. Chamberlain after the attitude he has taken up towards a much less offensive enactment passed in his State, which is very much less within his 'sphere of influence' than Natal.—*The Star,* 7-5-'97

The Dealers' Licences Bill[1] is, if possible, the worst of all. It not only requires that traders should keep their books in English, but gives absolute power to the licensing authorities to refuse to issue or renew licence without the right to the aggrieved party to appeal to the highest tribunal of justice. It is thus subversive of one of the most cherished principles of the British Constitution. Your Petitioners cannot better express their objections to the Bill than in the words of Mr. Tatham, a member of the Legislative Assembly:

He had no hesitation in saying that this Bill would establish a monopoly in favour of existing traders. Members who had discussed the Bill discussed from the point of view of the trader apart from the point of view of the consumer. One of the most disastrous courses which legislation could take was a course which had for its object the restraint of trade, and so far was this principle recognized that, by the common law of England, a private contract entered into between two persons was invalid if that contract could be shown to be prejudicial to the community by placing restraint on trade. It was recognized as a principle of trade all the world over that there was nothing like competition, not only for those engaged in the competition but also for consumers. The effect of a Bill of this sort would simply enhance the profits of traders at the expense of the consumers. He dealt with this Bill not from the point of view of its effect as an Asiatic repression Bill, but from the point of view upon which it was presented to the House. The Bill included all sections of the community, whether Europeans or Asiatics, and it contained provisions of an alarming character. It was provided that licences would be issued by one individual, and licences already in existence were liable to be taken away by that individual. That applied to country districts. How did it apply in towns and municipalities? Let him take Durban as an example. The Town Council might consist of a majority of persons who studied their own interests before

[1] For the text of the Bill, *vide* "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897, Appendix-C.

the interests of the community, and might refuse licences to trade in that borough. The Premier would say that these people were subject to the control of the popular vote, but how was the popular vote to be brought into operation when it was a case of one individual against the whole body.

Even the Honourable the Prime Minister found it very difficult to justify the Bill, and was not eager that it should pass. He said:

> They asked that powers be given to each municipality, in excess of its present powers, to control the issuing of licences, and there need be no hesitation in saying what their object was. It was to prevent persons who competed with Europeans from getting licences to trade, as Europeans were required to do. This was the intention of the Bill, and, if that intention were accepted, then, of course, the second reading would pass, and then they would have to deal with details. It would not be possible to pass this Bill without appearing to take away a part of the liberty of the subject, because the subject now had a right to a licence as a matter of course, and if this Bill were passed into law, the subject would no longer have the right. He would only have that right if the licensing authority thought fit to grant it. This Bill interferes with the course of law, because the Bill would be defeated in its objects if the courts had jurisdiction. The Town Councils would be responsible to their constituents, and there would be no appeal from their decisions, as regards the granting of licences, to a court of law. The objection had been taken to this Bill that it would not allow the law to have its natural course. The answer was if they should be granted, then they would not pass this Bill; but under this measure the licensing authorities only would have this discretion. (Hear, hear.) He thought it right to emphasize the fact that the courts of law would have no jurisdiction over trade licences under this Bill. This jurisdiction would be exercised by the licensing authorities. If the Assembly thought that the Bill should go through the second reading then there would be a discussion on details in Committee. He submitted the Bill to the Assembly, and wished to point out that the main object of it was to affect those persons dealt with under the Immigration Bill. Ships would not bring these people if they knew they could not be landed, and the people would not come here to trade if they knew they could not get licences.

Mr. Symons "opposed this Bill. He looked upon the measure as most un-English and oppressive."

It would be noticed that even hawkers, who move about with a few pounds worth of goods from place to place, would be expected to keep their books in English. As a matter of fact, they do not keep any books at all. The objection to the aggrieved party going to the highest

tribunal of justice in the land seems to be based on the ground that the Licensing Officer will not be able to justify the use of his discretionary power in a court of law.

The question also arises as to what would be done with reference to renewals of licences. Are the merchants, with hundreds and thousands of pounds worth of goods, to be called upon to shut up their businesses if the Licensing Officer thought it fit to order so? It suggested itself to Mr. Smythe, a member of the Assembly, who moved that an year's time should be given to persons in possession of licences, and drew the House's attention to the fact that even the Free State gave the traders reasonable time before compelling them to close their businesses. But, unfortunately, the motion was lost.

The Natal Advertiser, 5-4-'97. thus expresses itself on the Bill:

> It is a matter for regret that so many members, who boldly protested against the violation of British traditions embodied in the Immigration Bill, should have swallowed, without a grimace, the much more serious infringement of the liberty of the subject involved in the Licences Bill. With the object of the Bill we are in thorough accord; and we do not either attach very much weight to the fears of some of the members as to the large powers granted to corporations. A very much graver danger is the negation of appeal to the courts of justice. It is only this, in fact, which could make the powers granted under the Bill dangerous. It would have been easy to frame a measure which would safeguard the interests to be protected quite as effectively as this one, without resorting to the crude and unstatesmanlike expedient of depriving persons of their right to appeal to a court of law. No urgency could justify such a provision. The Premier's argument that "there would be no discretion if the discretion was to be in the Supreme Court or any other court; they could not give discretion to a licensing authority and allow the discretion to be exercised by somebody else," is unworthy of himself and his audience. Licensing authorities under the existing law have discretion, but that does not exclude the ultimate jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. Moreover the argument is destroyed by the provision in the Bill itself which allows appeal to the Colonial Secretary. So that it actually does give discretion to a licensing authority, and then allow the discretion to be exercised by some-body else.

Your Petitioners have not attempted to discuss the details of the above Bills at length, since, in their humble opinion, the principle of the Bills is so utterly opposed to the spirit of the British Constitution, as also of the Proclamation of 1858, that it seems useless to discuss the details.

This is clear, however, that if the Bills are not disallowed, Natal would have gone much further than the Transvaal in oppressing the

Indians. The Indians in virtue of the Immigration Law cannot enter Natal, except a few who are able to read and write English, though they may go to the Transvaal without any hindrance. The hawkers may not get licences to hawk in Natal, though they can get them as of right in the Transvaal. Under such circumstances, your Petitioners venture to trust that, if nothing else is done, Indian immigration to Natal would be stopped, and a great anomaly, i.e., the fact that Natal gets all the advantage of the presence of the Indian in the Colony while she would give none, removed.

The Bill to protect Uncovenanted Indians from liability to arrest[1] is not in answer to the anti-Indian clamour in the Colony, but has its origin in a certain correspondence that passed between the Government and some Indians. Indians that are not under indenture are sometimes arrested under the indentured Indians Immigration Law, as being deserters from their estates. To avoid this inconvenience, some Indians approached the Government with a view to get it minimized. The Government were good enough to issue a Proclamation authorizing the Protector of Immigrants to issue certificates to free Indians, certifying that the bearers were not indentured Indians. It was, however, meant to be a temporary measure, and the present Bill is intended to replace it. Your Petitioners recognize the good intentions of the Government in introducing the Bill; but your Petitioners are afraid that, owing to the clause 3[2], rendering the Police, arresting any Indians for being without a pass, free from liability for wrongful arrest, takes away all the good that the Bill is no doubt intended to do, and makes it an engine of oppression. The taking out of passes is not compulsory, and it is admitted that only the poorer Indians would take advantage of the pass clause. Before; too, much trouble only arose through the overzeal of officers in making arrests. Now, the 3rd clause gives almost a license to arrest with impunity any Indian they choose. Your Petitioners further draw your attention to the argument against the Bill as set forth in the memorial to the Honourable the Legislative Assembly herein before referred to (Appendix E), and venture to hope that the Bill will be disallowed. Instructions to the Police to use caution when making

[1] For the text of this Bill, *vide* "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897, Appendix-D.

[2] This clause was put as clause 4 in the Act; *vide* "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897, Appendix-D.

arrests under the Indenture law would have met the difficulty.

In conclusion, your Petitioners pray that the above Bills be disallowed, in virtue of the power reserved to the Crown under the Constitution Act to disallow any Act within two years after its promulgation, or the enquiry of the nature above indicated be ordered before Her Majesty's Government refuse to disallow the above Acts or any part of them, that a definite pronouncement as to the status of the British Indians outside India be made, and that, should it not be deemed feasible to disallow the above Acts, the indentured immigration to Natal be stopped, or grant such other relief as Her Majesty's Government may think fit.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc., etc.

(Sd.) ABDUL CARIM HAJI ADAM
AND OTHERS

APPENDIX A

No. 1, 1897

ACT

"TO AMEND THE LAWS RELATING TO QUARANTINE"

BE IT ENACTED by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly of Natal, as follows:

1. Whenever any place has been proclaimed, under Law 4, 1882, as an infected place, the Governor-in-Council may, by a further Proclamation, order that no person shall be landed from any ship coming from such place.
2. Any such order shall also extend to a ship having on board passengers who have come from a proclaimed place, notwithstanding that they may have embarked at some other place, or that the ship has not touched at the proclaimed place.
3. Any such order as aforesaid shall be in force until revoked by a further Proclamation.
4. Any person who shall land in contravention of this Act, shall, if practicable, be at once returned to the ship in which he came to Natal, and the master of such ship shall be bound to receive such person on board, and to convey him from the Colony at the expense of the owners of the ship.

5. The master and owners of any vessel from which any persons shall be landed in contravention of this Act shall be liable to a penalty of not less than one hundred pounds sterling for each person so landed, and the vessel may be made executable by a decree of the Supreme Court in satisfaction of any such penalty, and the vessel may be refused a clearance outwards until such penalty has been paid and until provision has been made by the master for the conveyance out of the Colony of each person who may have been so landed.
6. This Act and Laws 3 of 1858 and 4 of 1882 shall be read together as one Act.

APPENDIX B

WALTER HELY-HUTCHINSON
GOVERNOR

No. 1, 1897

ACT

"TO PLACE CERTAIN RESTRICTIONS ON IMMIGRATION"

WHEREAS it is desirable to place certain restrictions on Immigration:

BE IT THEREFORE ENACTED by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly of Natal, as follows:

1. This Act may be known as "The Immigration Restriction Act, 1897".
2. This Act shall not apply to:

   (a) Any person possessed of a certificate in the form set out in the Schedule A to this Act annexed, and signed by the Colonial Secretary, or the Agent-General of Natal, or any officer appointed by the Natal Government for the purposes of this Act whether in or out of Natal.
   (b) Any person of a class for whose immigration into Natal provision is made by law or by a scheme approved by Government.
   (c) Any person specially exempted from the operation of this Act by a writing under the hand of the Colonial Secretary.
   (d) Her Majesty's land and sea forces.
   (e) The officers and crew of any ship of war of any Government.
   (f) Any person duly accredited to Natal by or under the authority of the Imperial or any other Government.

3. The immigration into Natal, by land or sea, of any person of any of the classes defined in the following sub-sections, hereafter called "prohibited immigrant", is prohibited, namely:

(a) Any person who, when asked to do so by an officer appointed under this Act, shall fail to himself write out and sign, in the character of any language of Europe, an application to the Colonial Secretary in the form set out in Schedule B of this Act.

(b) Any person being a pauper, or likely to become a public charge.

(c) Any idiot or insane person.

(d) Any person suffering from a loathsome or a dangerous contagious disease.

(e) Any person who, not having received a free pardon, has within two years been convicted of a felony or other infamous crimes or misdemeanour involving moral turpitude and not being a mere political offence.

(f) Any prostitute and any person living on the prostitution of others.

4. Any prohibited immigrant making his way into, or being found within Natal, in disregard of the provisions of this Act, shall be deemed to have contravened this Act and shall be liable, in addition to any other penalty, to be removed from the Colony, and upon conviction may be sentenced to imprisonment not exceeding six months without hard labour. Provided that such imprisonment shall cease for the purpose of deportation of the offender, or if he shall find two approved sureties each in the sum of fifty pounds sterling, that he will leave the Colony within one month.

5. Any person appearing to be a prohibited immigrant within the meaning of Section 3 of this Act and not coming within the meaning of any of the Sub-sections (c), (d), (e), (f) of the said Section 3 shall be allowed to enter Natal upon the following conditions:

(a) He shall, before landing, deposit with an officer appointed under this Act the sum of one hundred pounds sterling.

(b) If such person shall, within one week after entering Natal, obtain from the Colonial Secretary, or a Magistrate a certificate that he does not come within the prohibition of this Act, the deposit of one hundred pounds sterling shall be returned.

(c) If such person shall fail to obtain such certificate within one week, the deposit of one hundred pounds sterling may be forfeited, and he may be treated as a prohibited immigrant:

Provided that, in the case of any person entering Natal under this section, no liability shall attach to the vessel or to the owners of the vessel in which he may have arrived at any port of the Colony.

6. Any person who shall satisfy an officer appointed under this Act that he has been formerly domiciled in Natal, and that he does not come within the meaning of

any of the sub-sections (c), (d), (e), (f) of Section 3 of this Act, shall not be regarded as a prohibited immigrant.

7. The wife and any minor child of a person not being a prohibited immigrant shall be free from any prohibition imposed by this Act.

8. The master and owners of any vessel from which any prohibited immigrant may be landed shall be jointly and severally liable to a penalty of not less than one hundred pounds sterling, and such penalty may be increased up to five thousand pounds sterling by sums of one hundred pounds sterling each for every five prohibited immigrants after the first five, and the vessel may be made executable by a decree of the Supreme Court in satisfaction of any such penalty, and the vessel may be refused a clearance outwards until such penalty has been paid, and until provision has been made by the master to the satisfaction of an officer appointed under this Act for the conveyance out of the Colony of each prohibited immigrant who may have been so landed.

9. A prohibited immigrant shall not be entitled to a licence to carry on any trade or calling, nor shall he be entitled to acquire land in leasehold, freehold, or otherwise, or to exercise the franchise, or to be enrolled as a burgess of any borough or on the roll of any township; and any licence or franchise right which may have been acquired in contravention of this Act shall be void.

10. Any officer thereto authorized by Government may make a contract with the master, owner, or agent of any vessel for the conveyance of any prohibited immigrant found in Natal to a port in or near to such immigrant's country of birth, and any such immigrant with his personal effects may be placed by a police officer on board such vessel, and shall in such case, if destitute, be supplied with a sufficient sum of money to enable him to live for one month according to his circumstances in life after disembarking from such vessel.

11. Any person who shall in any way wilfully assist any prohibited immigrant to contravene the provisions of this Act shall be deemed to have contravened this Act.

12. Any person who shall wilfully assist the entry into Natal of any prohibited immigrant of the class (f) in Section 3 of this Act shall be deemed to have contravened this Act, and shall upon conviction be liable to be imprisoned with hard labour for any period not exceeding twelve months.

13. Any person who shall be wilfully instrumental in bringing into Natal an idiot or insane person without a written or printed authority, signed by the Colonial Secretary, shall be deemed to have contravened this Act, and in addition to any other penalty shall be liable for the cost of the maintenance of such idiot or insane person whilst in the Colony.

14. Any police officer or other officer appointed therefor under this Act, may, subject to the provisions of Section 5, prevent any prohibited immigrant from entering Natal by sea or land.

15. The Governor may from time to time appoint, and at pleasure remove, officers for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this Act, and may define the duties of such officers, and such officers shall carry out the instructions from time to time given to them by the Ministerial head of their department.

16. The Governor-in-Council may, from time to time make, amend, and repeal rules and regulations for the better carrying out of the provisions of this Act.

17. The penalty for any contravention of this Act, or of any rule or regulation passed thereunder, where no higher penalty is expressly imposed, shall not exceed a fine of fifty pounds sterling, or imprisonment, with or without hard labour, until payment of such fine or in addition to such fine, but not exceeding in any case three months.

18. All contraventions of this Act or of rules or regulations thereunder and suits for penalties or other moneys not exceeding one hundred pounds sterling shall be cognizable by Magistrates.

SCHEDULE A

Colony of Natal,

This is to certify that . . . . . of . . . . . aged . . . . . by trade or calling a. . . . . is a fit and proper person to be received as an Immigrant in Natal.

Dated at . . . . . this . . . . . day of . . . . . .

(Signature)

SCHEDULE B

TO

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY,

SIR,

I claim to be exempt from the operation of Act No. . . . . ., 1897. . . . . My full name is. . . . . My place of abode for the past twelve months has been. . . . . My business or calling is. . . . . I was born at . . . . . in the year . . . . . .

Yours, etc.,

Given at Government House, Natal, this Fifth day of May, 1897.

By command of His Excellency the Governor,

THOS. K. MURRAY,
COLONIAL SECRETARY

APPENDIX C

WALTER HELY-HUTCHINSON,
GOVERNOR

No. 18, 1897

ACT

"TO AMEND THE LAWS RELATING TO LICENCES TO WHOLESALE AND RETAIL DEALERS"

WHEREAS it is expedient to regulate and control the issue of Licences to wholesale and retail dealers not being Licences under Act No. 38 of 1896.

BE IT THEREFORE ENACTED by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly of Natal, as follows:

1. The Annual Licences mentioned in Sub-section (a) of Section 71 of Law No. 19, 1872, shall include Licences to wholesale dealers.

2. For the purposes of this Act the expression "retail dealers" and "retail Licences" shall be deemed to apply to retail dealers and retail Licences of every description, not being Licences under Act 38 of 1896, including hawkers and Licences to hawkers.

3. Any Town Council or Town Board may, from time to time, appoint an Officer to issue the Annual Licences (not being Licences under Act No. 38, 1896), required in the Borough or Township by wholesale or retail dealers.

4. Any person appointed to issue Licences for wholesale or retail dealers under Law No. 38, 1884, or any like Stamp Act, or under this Act, shall be deemed to be a "Licensing Officer" within the meaning of this Act.

5. A Licensing Officer shall have a discretion to issue or refuse a wholesale or retail Licence not being a licence under Act No. 38, 1896, and a decision come to by a Licensing Officer as to the issue or refusal of a Licence shall not be liable to review, reversal, or alteration, by any Court of Law or otherwise than is in the next section provided.

6. There shall be a right of appeal by the applicant, or any other person having an interest in the question, from the decision of the Licensing Officer to the Town Council or the Town Board, if the Licence is sought for in a Borough or Township or to the Licensing Board of the Division appointed under the Liquor Act, 1896, if the Licence is sought for elsewhere than in the Borough or Township; and the Town Council, Town Board, or Licensing Board, as the case may be, may direct that the Licence, the subject of appeal, shall be issued or cancelled.

7. No Licence shall be issued to any person who, when thereto required, fails to show to the satisfaction of the Licensing Officer to the Town council, Town Board,

or Licensing Board, as the case may be, that he is able to fulfil the conditions of the Insolvency Law 47, 1887, Section 180, Sub-section (a), as regards the keeping of such books of account in the English language as are usual and proper in the business to be carried on.

8. No Licence shall be issued in respect of premises which are unfit for the intended trade, or unprovided with proper and sufficient sanitary arrangements, or not affording sufficient and suitable accommodation for salesmen, clerks, and servants, apart from the stores or rooms in which goods and wares may be kept in cases where premises are used for both purposes.

9. Any person who shall carry on any wholesale or retail trade or business without a Licence, or who shall allow Licensed premises to be in a condition which would disentitle him to a Licence, shall be deemed to have contravened this Act, and shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding twenty pounds sterling for each offence, to be recovered in the Court of the Magistrate by the Clerk of the Peace, or if the contravention is within a Borough or Township, by an officer appointed by the Town Council or Town Board.

10. All penalties recovered under the foregoing section in respect of a business or premises within a statutory Borough or Township shall be paid to the funds of such Borough or Township.

11. Rules may be passed by the Governor-in-Council to regulate the mode of obtaining Licences and to regulate appeals from the Licensing Officer to the Board or Council having appellate jurisdiction.

Given at Government House, Natal, this Twenty-ninth day of May, 1897.

By command of His Excellency the Governor,

THOS. K. MURRAY,
COLONIAL SECRETARY

APPENDIX D

No. 28, 189 WALTER HELY-HUTCHINSON,

GOVERNOR

ACT

"TO PROTECT UNCOVENANTED INDIANS FROM ARREST IN MISTAKE FOR ABSCONDING INDENTURED INDIAN SERVANTS"

BE IT ENACTED by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly of Natal, as follows:

1. Any Indian who has not been liable to service under indenture in terms of Law No. 25, 1893, or any Act amending the same, may, on application through the Magistrate of his Division to the Protector of Indian Immigrants, or to the Protector of Indian Immigrants direct, obtain a pass in the form provided in the Schedule to this Act, on satisfying the Magistrate, or the Protector of Indian Immigrants, with the information required for the purposes of such pass, and upon providing a shilling stamp to be affixed to the pass.

2. The possession and production of a pass under this Act shall be *prima facie* evidence of the status of the bearer of such pass, and of his exemption from liability to arrest under Section No. 31 of Law No. 25, 1891.

3. No such pass shall be of force after the year in which it was issued, unless in each succeeding year it is endorsed by the Protector of Immigrants to whom it may be sent for that purpose through the Magistrate.

4. If the Protector of Indian Immigrants, or any Magistrate, or Justice of the Peace, or any Police Constable, shall stop or arrest any Indian not carrying a pass granted under this Act, the Indian so stopped or arrested shall not be entitled to make any claim for wrongful arrest or detention merely on the ground that he was not an indentured Indian.

5. Any person who obtains a pass by false representations, or who allows any fraudulent use to be made of his pass, shall be guilty of an offence against "The Fraudulent Passes Act, 1895".

SCHEDULE

PASS UNDER ACT NO. 28, 1897

Counterpart of Pass	Pass
	Magisterial Division of . . . . .
Name	Name of Indian holding this Pass. . . .
Sex	Sex . . . . .
Native of.	Native of (Country and Village) . . . . .
Father's Name	Father's Name . . . . .
Mother's Name	Mother's Name . . . . .
Caste.	Caste . . . . .
Age	Age . . . . .
Complexion	Complexion . . . . .
Marks	Marks . . . . .
If married, to whom	If married, to whom . . . . .
Status	Status . . . . .
Residence	Residence . . . . .
Employment	Employment or means of subsistence.
Date	Dated at . . . . . this . . . . . day
	of 189
	PROTECTOR OF INDIAN IMMIGRANTS

Given at Government House, Natal, this Twenty-ninth day of May, 1897.
By command of His Excellency the Governor,

THOS. K. MURRAY,
COLONIAL SECRETARY

From a photostat of the printed copy: S.N. 2430-35

36. PETITION TO THE NATAL GOVERNOR

DURBAN,
July 2, 1897

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE SIR WALTER FRANCIS HELY-HUTCHINSON, KNIGHT COMMANDER OF THE DISTINGUISHED ORDER OF SAINT MICHAEL AND SAINT GEORGE, GOVERNOR AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN AND OVER THE COLONY OF NATAL, VICE-ADMIRAL OF THE SAME AND SUPREME CHIEF OVER THE NATIVE POPULATION, ETC., ETC.

P. M. BURG, NATAL

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

I herewith beg to send the petition[1] to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, on behalf of the Indian community, with reference to the Immigration Restriction, Dealers' Licences, Quarantine and Indian Protection Acts, in triplicate, and humbly request Your Excellency to forward same with such remarks as Your Excellency may think fit to make.

(Sd.) ABDUL CARIM HAJI ADAM

From a photostat of a copy: S.N. 2429

37. CIRCULAR LETTER[2]

53A FIELD STREET,
DURBAN (NATAL),
July 10, 1897

SIR,

I beg to draw your attention to a copy sent to you of the Indian Petition to Mr. Chamberlain regarding the anti-Indian Bills of the last session of the Natal Parliament. The Bills have received the Governor's assent and are Acts in operation. The crown has the power to disallow any Acts of the Colonial Legislatures within two years after

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The source, which has given this the title "To Public Men in India and England", does not identify the addressees; *vide* however "Circular Letter", 27-3-1897.

their passage, and it is on the strength of this proviso that the petitioners rely for Mr. Chamberlain's intervention.

The Bills, in my humble opinion, have only to be read in order to be condemned. Comment thereon seems superfluous. Unless there is a powerful public opinion against the disabilities that are being heaped upon the Indians in Natal our days are numbered. Natal beats both the Republics[1] in its studied persecution of the Indians, and it is Natal that can least do without Indians. She *must have* them under indenture. She *won't have* them as free men. Would not the Home and the Indian Government stop this unfair arrangement and stop indentured emigration to Natal? We have but to request you to redouble your efforts on our behalf and we may yet hope to get justice!

I am,

Your obedient servant,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the office copy: S.N. 2448

38. LETTER TO TOWN CLERK[2]

53A FIELD STREET,
DURBAN,
September 3, 1897

WILLIAM COOLEY, ESQ.

(TOWN CLERK)

DURBAN

SIR,

Mr. V. Lawrence is a clerk in my office. He has often to go out in the evening either to attend meetings or to give Tamil lessons which do not terminate before 9 p.m. He was twice or thrice interfered with by the Police and asked to produce a pass. I brought the matter to the notice of the Superintendent of Police who advised that in order to save inconvenience I should apply for the mayor's pass of exemption for Mr. Lawrence. Being of opinion that the by-law No. 106 section P. does not apply to Mr. Lawrence I was loath to take that step. Mr.

[1] The boer Republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Fre State

[2] The original letter found in the official records carries a marginal note reading: Recommended¾Sgd. R. C. Alexander, Superintendent of Police.

Lawrence however was again asked to produce a pass three days ago, though after he had explained where he had gone to, he was allowed to go. In order to save such inconvenience though I still retain the opinion that the Law does not apply to Mr. Lawrence, I think a pass of exemption is necessary for Mr. Lawrence.

I therefore beg to apply for such a pass for him.

I remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Durban Town Council Records: Vol. 134, No. 23446

39. EXCEPTIONS IN "REGINA V. PETAMBAR AND OTHERS"[1]

September 13, 1897

Case resumed from 11th inst.

Messrs Anderson, Smith and Gandhi present for defendants.

Prosecution addresses the court.

Mr. Gandhi replies and takes following exceptions:

FIRST: summary trial without consent.

SECOND: no authority to prosecute from prosecutor produced.

THIRD: all accused tried together.

FOURTH: there is no proof that the accused are prohibited immigrants.

FIFTH: no allegation that they are paupers or that they do not know English.

SIXTH: no proof as to when they entered Natal.

Mr. Attorney Smith points out that the men were in Natal before passing of the Act.

I allow the first exception. Accused discharged.

(Sd.) ALEX D. GILSON
(RESIDENT MAGISTRATE)

Colonial Office Records: South Africa General, 1897

[1] Petambar and a number of other Natal Indians returning from temporary business visits to the Transvaal had been arrested under the Immigration Restriction Act. *Vide* also "Letter to *The Natal Mercury*", 13-11-1897. The trial, held at Dundee, lasted several days. This is an extract from the report by the Court clerk of the proceedings on September 13.

40. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI AND OTHERS[1]

[Before *September 18, 1897*][2]

SIR,

We are aware that the troubles in Poona as well as in parts of India[3] occupy very largely the attention of the public men interested in Indian affairs and, were it not for the gravity of the situation as regards Indians in Natal, we would not have trespassed upon your time and attention.

The Natal Government Gazette publishes this week the address of Mr. Chamberlain to the Colonial Premiers who had assembled in London during the Diamond Jubilee season. The following[4] appears in the address with reference to the legislation in regard to the immigration of Indians to this Colony and other parts of the British Empire.

In spite of Mr. Chamberlain's eloquent tribute to the loyalty of the Indians to the British Crown as well as their civilization, the conclusion is irresistible that the Right Hon'ble gentleman *has completely given up the India cause* and yielded to the anti-Asiatic clamour of the different Colonies. He has indeed granted that the traditions of the British Empire "make no distinction in favour of or against race or colour," but, in the same breath, he accepts the position taken up by the Colonies w ith regard to the Indians and almost unreservedly approves of the Natal Immigration Restriction Act, Petition regarding which, with copy of the Act, was forwarded to you some months ago.[5]

Mr. Chamberlain cannot be unaware of the fact that the Natal Act was passed with the deliberate intention of applying it *almost*

[1] This was printed under the title "Mr. Chamberlain's Address to Premiers" and sent to a number of public men, not identified in the source, in India and England besides Dadabhai Naoroji and William Wedderburn.

[2] The source gives no date. *Vide* however the following item where Gandhiji mentions this letter having been written.

[3] The troubles related to famine, the plague and plague administration.

[4] The copy available does not furnish the quotation referred to. For the relevant portion of Chamberlain's speech, *vide* "Letter to Dadabhai Naoroji and Others", before 18-9-1897, Appendix.

[5] *Vide* "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897 and however "Circular Letter", 27-3-1897.

exclusively to the Indians. The extracts quoted in the petition amply prove this. It was also stated by the Right Hon'ble Mr. Escombe, the Premier of the Colony of Natal, at the time of introducing the immigration Bill, that it was because the desired end, namely, the stopping of free Indian immigration, could not be obtained by direct means he had to resort to indirect means.

The measure was almost unanimously pronounced to be un-British and dishonest. It was in fact *a stab in the dark.* And Mr. Chamberlain, much to our disappointment, sets the seal of his approval on such a measure. We do not know now where we are and what we are to do. The Act has already begun to tell upon us. Only a few days ago, seventy-one Indians, who had their rooms in Natal but had gone over to the Transvaal to dispose of their goods and had returned to Natal, were arrested some time after their return and kept in prison for six days for being prohibited immigrants while their trial was going on.[1] They were discharged on technical exceptions but, had it been otherwise, the trial might have gone on for some days more and it might have cost them several hundreds of pounds before they could have got the right to remain on a British soil. As it was, it cost them not a little during the seven days' trial. Such cases are bound to happen from time to time. And then, only those who have been formerly domiciled in Natal could come.

Mr. Chamberlain says that a man may be an undesirable immigrant "because he is dirty or he is immoral or he is a pauper or he has some other objection which can be defined in an Act of Parliament." Indians whom the Natal Act debars from coming to Natal *are,* as Mr. Chamberlain has himself admitted in his despatch to the Transvaal Government, neither immoral nor dirty. They are certainly not paupers. The weakest point in the Natal Act is that it makes *special provision for the admission of those that are perhaps likely to be immoral or dirty* because they are drawn from the lowest strata of society, namely, the indentured Indians. Immediately after the Act was passed, the Indian Immigration Board sanctioned an indent for 4,000 indentured Indians—probably the largest indent yet on record on a single occasion. How could Mr. Chamberlain ignore these facts we do not know. We still venture to maintain, as we have maintained all along, that the agitation against the Indians is due *to colour and trade jealousy.* We have courted an impartial inquiry and,

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

if it is granted, we have no doubt the result will be that the presence of the Indian in Natal will be found to have been beneficial to the Colony. The commissioners, who sat in Natal about 12 years ago to enquire into certain Indian matters, have recorded that the presence of the Indian has been a blessing to the Colony.

Really speaking, Mr. Chamberlain has practically granted that an Indian so soon as he leaves India, ceases to be a British subject, with the awful result that we have to witness, from day to day, the painful spectacle of Indian British subjects deported from or debarred from entering Natal, a British soil, to or to be driven to the Transvaal or Delagoa Bay, both foreign territories.

The Transvaal Alien Act was, comparatively speaking, a boon. An Indian taking a passport from Natal, Delagoa Bay or India, or an Indian getting previous employment in the Transvaal, could enter it while the Alien Law was in force. Moreover, it was not specially applied to the Indians. Therefore, any Indian who was not absolutely a pauper could enter the Transvaal, yet the Transvaal Law, because it told severely upon the Uitlanders, was repealed owing to the pressure from Downing Street. The same pressure, unfortunately for us, though we are British subjects, is not available on the British soil. The Natal Act debars any Indian from entering Natal who cannot read and write any of the European languages, unless he has been formerly domiciled in the Colony. Therefore, the Mahomedan community would not be allowed to bring to Natal a Moulvi nor the Hindu community a *Shastri*, no matter how learned each may be in his own department, because, forsooth, he does not know English. An Indian merchant who has been domiciled in Natal may come back to the Colony, but he dare not bring any new servants with him. The inability to import new Indian servants and assistants is a very grave inconvenience to the Indian community.

Even if the Immigration Act is to remain on the statute-book of Natal for ever and Mr. Chamberlain refuses to disallow it, the clause with regard to the European languages needs to be modified so as to admit all those who can read and write their own language and are otherwise eligible as immigrants under the Act. We are sure that this is the least that might be granted to us. And we would beseech you to exert your influence in bringing about that change, if nothing else. Mr. Chamberlain's address portends, perhaps, that he would not disallow the other anti-Asiatic Acts also, to which the petition herein

mentioned refers. If that be so, it is practically a notice to the free Indians in Natal to quit the Colony, for that will be the effect of the Dealers' Licences Act, if it is enforced rigorously as it is likely to be now that the Colonists know that they would get almost anything from Mr. Chamberlain for the asking of it-only if what is required to be done is done by indirect, and, shall we say, unfair methods. It breaks our hearts to think that Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies should approve of any unfair method, but that is the unanimous opinion of the Europeans and the Indians. Even the Europeans who are the bitterest opponents of the free immigration of Indians, though they do not mind it, think and admit, that the above methods of restricting free Indian immigration are unfair.

We are powerless. We leave the case in your hands. Our only hope lies in your again bestirring yourself with redoubled vigour in our favour. And we feel sure that you would do it, for our cause is absolutely just.

(Sd.) CASSIM MAHOMED JEEWA
AND OTHERS

From a photostat of a handwritten draft bearing corrections in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 2509

APPENDIX

[EXTRACTS FROM CHAMBERLAIN'S ADDRESS]

One other question I have to mention, and only one; that is, I wish to direct your attention to certain legislation which is in process of consideration, or which has been passed by some of the Colonies, in regard to the immigration of aliens, and particularly of Asiatics.

I have seen these Bills, and they differ in some respects one from the other, but there is no one of them, except the Bill which comes to us from Natal, to which we can look with satisfaction. I wish to say that Her Majesty's Government thoroughly appreciate the objects and the needs of the Colonies in dealing with this matter. We quite sympathize with the determination of the white inhabitants of these Colonies which are in comparatively close proximity to millions and hundreds of millions of Asiatics that there shall not be an influx of people alien in civilization, alien in religion, alien in customs, whose influx, moreover, would most seriously interfere with the existing rights of the labour population. An immigration of that kind must, I quite understand, in the interest of the Colonies be prevented at all hazards, and we shall not offer any opposition to the proposals intended with that

object, but we ask you also to bear in mind the traditions of the Empire, which make no distinction in favour of, or against, race or colour; and to exclude, by reason of their colour, or by reason of their race, all Her Majesty's Indian subjects, or even all Asiatics, would be an act so offensive to those peoples that it would be most painful, I am quite certain, to Her Majesty to have to sanction it. Consider what has been brought to your notice during your visit to this country. The United Kingdom owns, as its greatest and brightest dependency, that enormous Empire of India, with 300,000,000 of subjects, who are as loyal to the Crown as you are yourselves, and among them there are hundreds and thousands of men who are every whit as civilized as we are ourselves, who are, if that is anything, better born in the sense that they have older traditions and older families, who are men of wealth, men of cultivation, men of distinguished valour, men who have brought whole armies and placed them at the service of the Queen, and have, in times of great difficulty and trouble, such, for instance, as on the occasion of the Indian Mutiny saved the Empire by their loyalty. I say, you, who have seen all this, cannot be willing to put upon these men a slight, which, I think, is absolutely unnecessary for your purpose, and which would be calculated to provoke ill-feeling, discontent, irritation, and would be most unpalatable to the feeling not only of Her Majesty the Queen but of all her people.

What I venture to think you have to deal with is the character of the immigration. It is not because a man is of a different colour from ourselves that he is necessarily an undesirable immigrant, but it is because he is dirty, or he is immoral, or he is a pauper or he has some other objection which can be defined in an Act of Parliament, and by which the exclusion can be managed with regard to all those whom you really desire to exclude. Well, gentlemen, this is a matter, I am sure, for friendly consultation between us. As I have said, the Colony of Natal has arrived at an arrangement which is absolutely satisfactory to them, I believe, and remember they have, if possible, an even greater interest than you, because they are closer to the immigration which has already begun there on a very large scale, and they have adopted legislation which they believe will give them all that they want, and to which the objection they have taken does not apply, which does not come in conflict with this objection which I am sure you share with us; and I hope, therefore, that during your visit, it may be possible for us to arrange a form of words which will avoid hurting the feelings of any of Her Majesty's subjects, while at the same time it would amply protect the Australian Colonies against any invasion of the class to which they would justly object.

Colonial Office Records: Parliamentary Papers, 1897, Vol. 2, No. 15

41. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

53A FIELD STREET,
DURBAN, NATAL,
September 18, 1897

HON'BLE DADABHAI NAOROJI
LONDON

SIR,

I have the honour to enclose herewith a letter[1] addressed to you by the representatives of the Indian community of Natal with reference to Mr. Chamberlain's address to the Colonial Premiers. The newspaper cutting enclosed[2] was seen after the letter was in print. It gives great force to the argument contained in the letter. Mr. Chamberlain's address has naturally created surprise amongst both the communities, European as well as Indian. I venture to trust that your powerful influence will be exerted in order to bring about the changes in the Immigration Act referred to in the letter if nothing more can be done. The kind of Indians referred to in the letter whom the Act at present debars from entering into Natal, while absolutely necessary for the regular conduct of Indian houses already established, cannot in any way interfere with Europeans if they were allowed to enter the Colony.

Copy of Immigration petition[3] is sent under separate cover.

I am,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the handwritten original: G.N. 2255

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Not available. Presumably this was a Press report of the Conference.
[3] *Vide* "Petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies", 2-7-1897.

42. LETTER TO WILLIAM WEDDERBURN

53A FIELD STREET,
DURBAN,
September 18, 1897

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN
LONDON

SIR,

I have the honour to enclose herewith a letter[1] addressed to you by the representatives of the Indian community of Natal and a newspaper cutting bearing on the point. I venture to trust that your powerful influence will be exerted in order to bring about the changes in the Natal Act referred to in the letter, if nothing more can be done.

Copy of Immigration petition is sent under separate cover.

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of an office copy: G.N. 2281

43. LETTER TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"[2]

DURBAN,
November 13, 1897

THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury

SIR,

It appears that some people are bent upon keeping up the ill feeling against the Indian community in Natal, and, unfortunately, the newspaper writers have allowed themselves to be duped. Some weeks ago, a correspondent of yours, evidently an irresponsible person, stated that the Indians who were tried in Dundee under the Immigration Act were new arrivals from India, and had surreptitiously entered the Colony. Then appeared the correspondence between the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dadabhai Naoroji and Others", before 18-9-1897.
[2] This appeared under the title "Indian Invasion".

Government and the Demonstration Committee on the subject,[1] leading the public to believe that there was an attempt on a large scale to evade the Immigration Act. You based a leader on these and other similar statements that appeared in the papers, accepting them as correct, and further informing the public that these men had secured certificates of domicile at Durban. A telegram was flashed from Delagoa Bay telling the public that 1,000 free Indians had landed at Delagoa Bay, and that they were on their way to Natal. A telegram appears in today's issue of the *Mercury* to the effect that the Government have issued instructions to the police to keep a look-out for Asiatics from the direction of Delagoa Bay. This is all dramatic, and would be highly amusing if it were not calculated to inflame the passion of the European community. The "Man in the Moon" puts the finishing touch to all this by giving a paragraph in his weekly columns. His is the unkindest cut of all, especially because his paragraphs are not only eagerly devoured by the public but they carry weight. So far as I know, this is the second time that he has lost his power of distinguishing between fact and fiction with respect to the Indian question. If it were allowed to the Indians to use strong language on sufficient provocation, there is more than enough of that in the "Man's" paragraph on the subject in question in today's columns to justify the use of such language. But it cannot be. I must simply content myself with placing the facts, as I know them at first-hand, before the public.

I had the privilege, with two brother lawyers, of defending the Dundee Indians, and I deny most emphatically that any of the Indians charged were new arrivals from India. Proofs to that effect are still in possession of the Immigration Officer at Dundee. It is possible to establish conclusively that all those Indians came to South Africa, or rather to Natal, before the passing of the Immigration Act. Their licences, other documents and records in the steamship offices, cannot lie. As soon as the correspondence between the Government and the Demonstration Committee appeared in the papers, I offered to bring most of the men before a competent Court and to prove their innocence; that is to say, to prove that they were all formerly domiciled in Natal, and that, therefore, they had a perfect right to enter the Colony. One of the men is at present in Durban, and he can be brought before the Magistrate at any time the Government likes.

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

It is not true to say that these men got their certificates at Durban. Some of them, after their discharge on technical grounds, applied to the Magistrate at Dundee for certificates of domicile. The application was refused. The papers were sent to me, and I went to the Government for the certificates, but failed. Most of the men have now gone to the Transvaal without such certificates. It is true that three Dundee men got their certificates at Durban. Proofs on which the certificates were granted consisted of affidavits which are filed on record. But there is a world of difference between Dundee men getting certificates at Durban, and those who get them contrary to the provisions of the law. A man from Umzimkulu, and men from other districts outside Durban, got such certificates at Durban. The question was fully argued before Mr. Walter before such certificates were ordered to be issued.

There is absolutely no foundation for the fear that the Indians who land at Delagoa Bay enter the Colony in defiance of the law. I will not take it upon myself to say that not one new arrival has attempted to cross the border at Charlestown, but, so far as I know, not one has yet successfully escaped the eagle eye of Sergt. Allan, at Charlestown. Before the Act came into operation, and at the time the Demonstration Committee came into being, it was publicly stated, on behalf of the Indian community, that most of the Indians who landed at Durban from month to month were passengers for the Transvaal. It was particularly stated—and the statement remains to this day without contradiction—that out of the 600 passengers on board the *Courland* and *Naderi*, less than 100 were new arrivals for Natal. The position is not changed now, and I venture to say that, out of the 1,000 passengers alleged to have landed at Delagoa Bay, most of them are passengers for the Transvaal. It is that country which has the capacity to absorb a large number of new-comers of various nationalities, and so long as the Transvaal continues to absorb Indians, and the Government is good enough to let them come, you will find Indians coming to Delagoa Bay in large numbers. I do not say that none of them want to come to Natal. Some of them have inquired about the conditions on which they could come, and, on being told that they could not satisfy them, have remained in the Transvaal. They are certainly not angels, and a few may try to evade the Act, and may enter the Colony if there is no supervision.

My point is that there is no wholesale attempt to defy the law. There is no organization, no advice to set the law at defiance and

come by the back door, such as the "Man in the Moon" conjures up in his fertile imagination. With due respect, his appeal to the Demonstration Committee, advice to the officers and insinuations are painful in the extreme, because unnecessary, and not warranted by facts. One would have thought that he, of all men, holding a very responsible position, would take the greatest care before giving currency to fiction as if it were fact. Mischief once started may not be averted.

The Indian shipowners in Durban, on the Act coming into operation, received a letter requesting them to co-operate with the Government in enforcing it, and I happen to know that they wrote in reply saying while they disapproved of the Act they would loyally abide by it and aid the Government, so far as it lay in their power, as long as the Act remained on the statute-book. And I am not aware that any responsible Indian has departed from the attitude taken up by the shipowners in question. Indeed, whenever occasion has arisen, whether in or out of the Congress Hall, the leaders of the Indian community have endeavoured to impress upon the Indians the necessity of not evading the Act. How could it be otherwise? If the Act is to be ever removed, it can only be by persuasion and by the Indian community showing a clean record. The policy of evasion is on the face of it suicidal, and the past record of the Indian community is not, I venture to submit, such as to justify the belief that the community is likely to commit a suicidal act. After this, is it necessary to assure the "Man in the Moon" that the Indians have no wish to play with the Colony, if only because they cannot afford to do it?

Let, there, however, be a full public inquiry, and if an organization to defy the law is proved to exist, smash it by all means. But, on the other hand, if there be no such organization or "wholesale invasion", let it be publicly acknowledged, so that causes of friction may be removed. The Government can do it, but you also can do likewise. Newspapers before this have sent special correspondents to make inquiries into public matters, and if you really believe that the Indians, as a community, are attempting to evade the Act, you will render a public service, and lay the Indian community under deep obligation, by instituting a preliminary inquiry, with a view to enable the Government to undertake a public inquiry, or to force their hands if they are unwilling to make any inquiry at all. At any rate the Indians court such an inquiry.

As the matter is very important, I venture to ask your contemporaries to copy this letter.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 15-11-1897

44. LETTER TO NATAL COLONIAL SECRETARY

DURBAN,
November 13, 1897

THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
MARITZBURG
SIR,

I venture to enclose herewith a cutting from the *Mercury*. Reports have for some time been appearing in the papers that the Indians are attempting to defy the Immigration Act by entering, or trying to enter, the Colony *via* Delagoa Bay and Charlestown. It was not, till today, thought necessary to take any notice of the reports; but the cutting puts the matter in a more serious light and is likely to inflame the passions of the European community. I therefore venture, on behalf of the leading Indians in Natal, to suggest that the Government be pleased to contradict the report. I am to say that there is no organization in Natal or elsewhere for the purpose of setting the Act at defiance, and that the responsible Indians in Natal have, ever since the passing of the Act, loyally abided by it, and have impressed upon others the necessity of so doing. If, however, the Government think otherwise, I am to ask for a public inquiry into the matter.

I have the honour, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 20-11-1897

45. LETTER TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"[1]

DURBAN,
November 15, 1897

THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury

SIR,

Perhaps in justice you will allow me to say a few words on your remarks in your today's issue on my letter[2] regarding the alleged organization to evade the Immigration Act. I am afraid my letter has been misread. I have not therein dealt with the treatment of the Indians in Natal. I have, in order to avoid the needless alarm, simply denied the statement that has appeared in the papers to the effect that the Indians who recently landed in Delagoa Bay were on their way to Natal, and such other statements. I do not dispute the right of the Europeans to be on the "*qui vive*, to see that the law of the last Session is not evaded".

On the contrary, I say that the responsible Indians intend to loyally abide by the Act so long as it remains on the statute-book, and to help the authorities so far as they can.

What I do respectfully object to is the circulation of false rumours and assumptions based thereon which are likely to create uneasiness, and disturb the equanimity of the European mind. The inquiry I have suggested, with due deference to your opinion, is clearly necessary. There are two contradictory statements before the public. The one is that there is an attempt at wholesale evasion of the Immigration Act, backed, in the opinion of the "Man in the Moon", by an organization; on the other hand, there is a total denial of the statement. Which story are the public to believe? Would it not be better in the interest of all concerned if there was an authoritative statement as to which story is worthy of credence?

As to what I said in India, you have justified me. You were good enough to say, when the matter was before the public, that from an Indian standpoint I had said nothing to which exception could be taken. And I am yet prepared to substantiate every statement I made there. If I had no faith in the strong sense of justice of the British

[1] This appeared under the title "Indian Invasion".
[2] *Vide* "Letter to *The Natal Mercury*", 13-11-1897.

Government[1] ; I would not be here. As I have said before elsewhere, I repeat here that British love of justice and fair play are the sheet-anchor of the Indians' hope.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 17-11-1897

46. LETTER TO NATAL COLONIAL SECRETARY

DURBAN,
November 18, 1897

THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
MARITZBURG

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the 16th inst., informing me that the Government has never stated, nor has it reason to believe, that there exists in Natal an organization for the purpose of setting the Immigration Restriction Act at defiance. I am to thank the Government for the letter, and to say that, if attempts to evade the Act are brought to the notice of the Indian community, everything that could be done will be done by the representatives of the Indian community in Natal to prevent their recurrence. I take the liberty to send copies of this correspondence to the Press for publication.

I have, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 20-11-1897

[1] The reference is to the Imperial and the Natal Governments.

47. LETTER TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"[1]

DURBAN,
November 19, 1897

THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury

SIR,

I beg to enclose herewith for publication copies of the correspondence[2] between the Government and myself with reference to the reports which have appeared in the papers regarding alleged attempts of Indians to come into the Colony by way of Delagoa Bay.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 20-11-1897

48. LETTER TO F. S. TALEYARKHAN

53A FIELD STREET,
DURBAN,
(NATAL),
December 17, 1897

DEAR MR. TALEYARKHAN,

This will introduce to you Mr. Alex Cameron[3] sometime correspondent of *The Times of India* in Natal. During the time he was here, he tried to do everything he could for the cause of the Indians in South Africa. He is now proceeding to India to take part in the attempts of the Indians to remove the misunderstanding created about them owing to the recent events and any assistance that may be rendered to him will be greatly valued.

I am,
Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

F. S. TALEYARKHAN ESQ.
BAR-AT-LAW, J. P., & C.
BOMBAY

From the original Courtesy: R. F. S. Taleyarkhan

[1] This appeared under the title "Indians and the Immigration Act".

[2] For Gandhiji's letters to the Natal Colonial Secretary, *vide* "Letter to Natal Colonial Secreatry", 13-11-1897 and 18-11-1897.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to A. M. Cameron".

49. LETTER TO THE BRITISH AGENT

The Law 3 of 1885, as amended in 1886, denied "the coolies, Arabs, Malays and Mahomedan subjects of the Turkish Empire" citizenship rights, including the right of owning immovable property. The Imperial and the Transvaal Governments differed as to the applicability of the law to Indians. The issue was referred for arbitration to the Chief Justice of the Orange Free State, who decided that the Transvaal Government was bound and entitled, in its treatment of Indian and other Asiatic traders, to enforce the law, subject to interpretation by the law courts if an objection was raised on behalf of such persons that the treatment was against its provisions. The following letter relates to the subsequent development.

PRETORIA,
February 28, 1898

TO
HER MAJESTY'S AGENT
PRETORIA

SIR,

We the undersigned British Indian subjects resident at Pretoria and at Johannesburg, as representing the British Indian community in the Transvaal, beg respectfully to bring to the notice of Her Majesty's Government, that, as suggested by Her Majesty's Government) we are about to take steps in the High Court of the South African Republic[1] to obtain an interpretation of Law No. 3 of 1885, as amended in 1886, according to the terms of the Award of Chief Justice de Villiers at Bloemfontein,[2] for the purpose of having a decision as to whether or not British Indian subjects are entitled to carry on business in the towns and villages of this State.

We cannot refrain, however, from expressing our regret that Her Majesty's Government has decided not to act on our behalf in this matter to its conclusion, for we had hoped that, inasmuch as Her Majesty's Government had submitted our case to Arbitration, the matter would be seen through to the end by Her Majesty's

[1] The Test Case, *Tayob Hajee Khan Mahomed* vs. *Dr. Willem Johannes Leyds*, Secretary of State, South African Republic, was filed on the same day. It was ultimately, on August 8, 1898, decided against the Indians.

[2] *Vide* "Open Letter", before 19-12-1894 and "Letter to Europeans", 19-12-1894

Government.[1]

We have, etc.,

(Signed) TAYOB HAJI KHAN MAHOMED
HAJI HABEEB HAJI DADA
MOHAMED CASSIM CAMROODIN & CO.
M. H. YOOSUB

Enclosure in Confidential Despatch dated 9.3.1898 from the Honourable High Commissioner to the Republic of South Africa to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, London.

Colonial Office Records. C. 0. 417, Vol. 243.

50. THE SOMNATH MAHARAJ CASE

Under the Dealers' Licenses Act, 1897, Town Councils and Town Boards in Natal were authorized to appoint "Licensing Officers" for issuing licences to traders and to hear appeals against their decisions and also against their own confirmation of such decisions. The report of the proceedings of the Durban Town Council in the Somnath Maharaj Case, in which Gandhiji appeared in the latter appeal, is given below. This report was incorporated by him as an appendix to the petition of December 31, 1898 to Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies. The adverse decision of the Town Council was set aside by the Supreme Court of Natal in Somnath vs. Durban Corporation, on March 30, 1898 on the grounds of improper procedure. In a further appeal, on June 6 (reported in The Natal Advertiser, 7-6-1898), the Town Council upheld the Licensing Officer's reason for refusal of a licence to Somnath Maharaj—"as the class of trade he was engaged in was sufficiently provided for in the town and borough".

THE INITIAL HEARING

Mr. C. A. de R. Labistour appeared for the applicant, and said his client had ample capital to start in a decent way of business in the premises, which had been most satisfactorily reported upon by the Sanitary Inspector. The applicant was a capable businessman.

Mr. Collins: Have we had the Licensing Officer's reasons?

The Mayor: No.

[1] In his interview, as well as letter, of May 18, 1897, Gandhiji represented that the British Government should bear the costs of the Test Case, but this request was turned down.

Mr. Taylor: I don't think the Licensing Officer need give reasons, unless requested to do so by a majority of the Council. All that we have to do is to decide whether or not we will confirm the Licensing Officer's decision. I move that we confirm it.

Mr. Henwood seconded the motion.

Mr. Collins moved, as an amendment, that the Licensing Officer be requested to give his reasons.

Mr. Ellis Brown seconded, remarking that it would be more satisfactory to have the reasonsThe amendment was rejected by four votes to three.

Mr. Collins pointed out that they were establishing a precedent, and he thought they were establishing an undesirable one. Of course, what was done in one case must be done in all, and under the circumstances, he would feel compelled to vote against the resolution.

The Mayor remarked that the Council had by a majority decided not to ask the Licensing Officer for his reasons.

The original motion was then put and carried, and the Licensing Officer's decision was accordingly confirmed.

[*March 2, 1898*][1]

THE SUBSEQUENT APPEAL

An Indian, named Somnath Maharaj, appealed against the refusal of a licence for premises belonging to the Natal Indian Congress, in Umgeni Road.

Mr. Gandhi, who appeared for the appellant and the owners of the premises, said he had written to the Town Clerk for the reasons of the Licensing Officer for refusing the licence, but had been told that the reasons could not be given.

In reply to a question from the Mayor, Mr. Gandhi said that the trustees of the Natal Indian Congress were the owners of the property.

Mr. Gandhi, resuming, said he also asked the Town Clerk for a copy of the record, and was told that he could not be furnished with it. He contended that he was entitled by law to have it, as the ordinary rules of procedure in appeal cases would apply before that tribunal, and he was also entitled to the reasons. There was nothing whatever in the Act to show that the ordinary rules of procedure were to be subverted. The 11th section of the Act provided for the rules, which had been framed thereunder, but he did not know that the rules were constitutional. He did not propose to read authorities, because it seemed to him that common sense would show that if a right of appeal were allowed, the

[1] The Natal Advertiser of March 3, 1898, states that the appeal was heard on the previous day.

ordinary procedure would guide the conduct of such appeals. If that were not so, it would appear that the law had given a right to the subject with the one hand and taken it away with the other, for if he appealed to the Town Council and did not know why his licence had been refused, and was not allowed to obtain a record of the application, then he had practically no right of appeal. If he was allowed to appeal, surely he was entitled to a complete record of the proceedings; and, if not, he was an outsider. Was the Council going to decide that he was an out sider, although he had large interests at stake? He was told "You may come, you may say anything you like, without knowing what the ins and outs of, the case are," and he had come before them; but, if there were any reasons, they would be surprised upon him, and if there was a report from the Sanitary Inspector, it would be surprised upon him also. He submitted that he was entitled to a copy of the record of the Council's proceedings, and to the reasons, and if not, then the right of appeal had been refused to him. His client was one of the burgesses, and as such was entitled to every consideration a burgess should receive at the hands of the Council; instead of which he was practically opposed by the whole municipal machinery, had to anticipate the reasons for which his licence was refused, and had had to come to the Council, and then, possibly, after spending a lot of money, would perhaps be told that the Licensing Officer's decision is upheld. Was this an appeal under the British Constitution?

Mr. Evans: Has the applicant had a licence before?

The Mayor: He has kept a store in another part of the Colony, but he has only been in Durban three months.

Mr. Collins said Mr. Gandhi asked their decision on a point of law. They were a lay court, but he did not know that they were competent to give an answer without reference to their legal adviser. Under the law, the Council could require the Licensing Officer to state his reasons in writing, but he was bound to admit that he did not like the law on this point, as it did not seem to him to reflect true justice However, the law must be abided by, but it also provided means by which the Council could rectify what appeared to him to be an injustice. It was competent for them to get the reasons of the Licensing Officer in writing, and then to adjourn that meeting so as to give the appellant an opportunity of answering them. He thought that line should be adopted and he accordingly moved that the Licensing Officer be asked to furnish his reasons.

Mr. Challinor seconded.

Mr. Evans said that as the reasons of the Licensing Officer were privileged to the Council, he thought they should have them in writing.

Mr. Ellis Brown: Yes; let them be handed round.

Mr. Clark moved that they retire to the Mayor's parlour for five minutes, in order to see the reasons.

Mr. Collins seconded, and remarked that he had often heard that justice was blind, but had never seen so forcible an illustration of it before. Some members of the Council were prepared to vote on the matter without knowing why the licence had been refused.

Mr. Taylor agreed with Mr. Collins that justice was blind, but said there were councillors who could see the Licensing Officer's reasons without looking at a bit of paper. He was sorry there were those present who were so ignorant that they could not see it.

The motion was carried, and the members of the Council then retired.

On returning to the Council Chamber,

Mr. Gandhi: I want a decision on the points I have raised.

The Mayor: The Council is against you.

Mr. Gandhi said that the only fault that could be found with his client was that he had a brown skin, and that he had never held a licence in Durban before. He was told that the Council would refuse any application for new licences, no matter whether the applicants had good business qualifications or not. If that was correct it was unjust, and if a man was not to have a licence because he had a brown skin, such a decision savoured of injustice, and was certainly un-English. There was nothing in the law to show that licences must be refused to persons because of their nationality. The tribunal should not beguided by what was said during the time of panic, but rather by the words of the late Premier, who said it should be borne in mind that the Town Council had been given a giant's strength, but they should take care that they did not use it in that fashion. The applicant had been a storekeeper at Mooi River for six years, and was a thoroughly respectable man, whose straightforwardness and business capacity had been vouched for by four Natal European firms. He hoped the Council would grant the licence.

Mr. Taylor moved that the decision of the Licensing Officer be confirmed.

Mr. Clark seconded the motion, which was carried *nem. con.*

The Natal Mercury, 3-3-1898

51. APPLICATION FOR REFUND OF FINE[1]

53A, FIELD STREET,
DURBAN,
March 9, 1898

THE TOWN CLERK
DURBAN

SIR,

Jusa Jana and others, who own a squatter's license from the Government, [and] have been selling bread &c. in open at the Point, were charged with keeping an eating house & were each fined £ l. According, however, to the case of Dyer v Musa, the judgment of the Magistrate in the above case would be incorrect. The appeal in Dyer v Musa was decided after the above cases were decided. Under the circumstances, will the Town Council be pleased to return the fines paid by the men?

Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

[P.S.]
May I also ask for a refund of the fine of 5/0 imposed upon Musa and paid by him, the judgment having been set aside by the Supreme Court.

M. K. G.

Durban Town Council Records: Letter No. 23596, Vol. 134.

52. ADDRESS TO G. V. GODFREY

The following congratulatory address, drafted by Gandhiji, was presented to Mr. G. V. Godfrey on March 18, 1898, at a meeting of Indians in Durban. Gandhiji was among the signatories.

[Prior to *March 18, 1898*]

GEO. VINCENT GODFREY, ESQ.
DURBAN

DEAR MR. GODFREY,

We, the undersigned Indians, hereby beg to congratulate you on your success at the recent Civil Services examination of the Colony. The event derives great importance among the Indian community, as you are the first Indian in the Colony to have gone up for and passed

[1] The letter is in Gandhiji's handwriting.

that examination. The fact that you have failed before, to our minds, speaks in your favour; it shows that you persevered in spite of difficulties and failures, which are but a stepping stone to success. We cannot omit to mention here that Mr. Subhan Godfrey deserves the thanks of the Indian community for having given you opportunity to prosecute your studies. He has indeed set an example to the other Indian parents in the Colony as to what a father should do to educate his children, as you have shown what an Indian youth in this Colony can do in the educational line if he has the opportunity. An even more striking instance of his liberality in educating his children is to be found in the fact of his having sent your eldest brother to Glasgow to pursue his medical studies. We are glad to know that your ambition does not end with the Civil Services examination, but that you still wish to continue your studies much further. We pray that God may grant you health and long life to enable you to fulfil your desires, and hope that your perseverance and industry will be copied by other young Indians in the Colony, and that your success will serve as an encouragement to them.

We remain,
your sincere well-wishers
and friends

The Natal Advertiser, 19-3-1898

53. LETTER TO G. V. GODFREY

[DURBAN,]
[Prior to *March 18, 1898*]

DEAR MR. GODFREY,

Several Indians—including your friends and well-wishers—have decided to present you with a congratulatory address on your having been the first Indian to have passed the Civil Services Examination of the Colony. I trust you will accept invitation hereby to receive the address at the Congress Hall in Grey Street at 7.45 p.m. on Friday next, the 18th instant.

I have much pleasure in enclosing herewith a proof copy of the address for your perusal.

I remain,
Dear Mr. Godfery,
Your truly,

From the photostat of the office copy in Gandhiji's handwriting: S. N. 2730.

54. *A STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT*

March 25, 1898

THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

Dr. to M. K. Gandhi as on the 31st December

25. 4. 97	To check for stamps on memorials registration	2-	2-	4
30.12. 97	To Pitcher's Bill pd. re. cancellation of Bond	0-	9-	6
2. 10. 97	To stamps on memorial	0-	14-	0
16.10. 97	To stamps letter to Nazar[1]	0-	0-	6½
6. 12. 97	To two chimney pieces	0-	2-	0
9. 12. 97	To check to Bank of Africa re. Fareed's ppty.	300-	0-	0
	Balance due	£ 303-	8-	4½

From the photostat of the office copy: S. N. 2723.

55. *NOTES ON THE TEST CASE*

This and the following item comprise legal "Notes" prepared by Gandhiji to assist the counsel who represented Tayob Hajee Khan Mahomed in the Test Case.

[Prior to *April 4, 1898*][2]

With deference to Counsel's opinion expressed when I was in Pretoria, I submit that according to Clause 1 in the Act,[3] the Indians to whom an attempt is being made to apply the Law do not come under it.

The Clause reads: "This Law is applicable to the persons belonging to one of the aboriginal races of Asia, among whom are comprehended the so-called Coolies, Arabs, Malays, and Mahomedan subjects of the Turkish Empire."

I take it that the meaning of the various expressions in the clause to be accepted by the Court will be the meaning which a standard

[1] Mansukhlal Hiralal Nazar (1862-1906), who assisted Gandhiji in his work in South Africa.

[2] *Vide* last para of the succeeding item.

[3] Law 3 of 1885, as amended in 1886.

work, as for instance, a Dictionary, would give them, and not the meaning given to them by the populace, either through ignorance or prejudice; I mean, in the absence of a definition of these expressions in the law itself.

If this be so, the meaning of the expression "aboriginal races of Asia" can only be found by a reference to an historical work. A reference to Hunter's[1] "Indian Empire", chapters 3 and 4, would shew at a glance who are the aborigines and who are not. The matter is put so plainly that there can be no mistake about the distinction between the two. It will be seen at once from the book that the Indians in South Africa belong to the Indo-Germanic stock or, more properly speaking, the Aryan stock. I do not know that there is any authority that has opposed this view. Works by Morris and Max Müller, easily obtainable in Pretoria, also support this view, and if this meaning of the expression is not accepted, I do not know what other meaning is to be attached to the expression.

A reference to the Green books[2] would shew that even Sir Hercules Robinson (I am not sure as to the name) excepts from the clause under discussion the Indian Traders under somewhat similar grounds, and if the Indians in the Republic are not included in the expression "aboriginal races of Asia", they are certainly not to be classed among Coolies, Arabs, Malays, and Mahomedan subjects of the Turkish Empire.

Are they Coolies or Arabs? If books and despatches are to berelied upon, they are not either. And it may be stated here parenthetically that, if it was really intended to apply the Law to the Indians, the Law should have stated so clearly by putting the very word in. And if the matter has been left in doubt, the interpretation must be in favour of the Indians, the Law being a restrictive law. To return, the word "coolie", according to Webster, means an East Indian porter or carrier, especially a labourer transported from India, China, etc., for service in some other country and that is exactly the meaning given to it by the Natal Laws as well as other authorities. Sir Walter Wragg, in his judgment in the case of *Vinden* versus *the Ladysmith Local Board*, deals with the question pretty fully. Copy of

[1] Sir William Wilson Hunter, 1840-1900; authority on Indian affairs and leading member of the British Committee.

[2] The following is a marginal note in Gandhiji's handwriting: "Green book No. 1, 1894, page 28, paras 7 & 8, also "Petition to Chamberlain", 31-12-1898"

the full report of the Case is hereto attached, *vide* pp. 10, 11 and 12.[1]

That the Indians in the Republic are not Arabs does not require any authority to support this contention. They never belonged to Arabia, and the Indian Mahomedans, whom the populace miscalls Arabs, are simply converts from Hinduism. That fact no more makes an Indian an Arab than conversion from Buddhism to Christianity would make a Chinese a European.

The word "so-called" appears before "coolies": I don't know that that would alter what has been stated above.

From the photostat of the office copy: S. N. 3705.

(*Appendix*)

SIR WALTER WRAGG'S JUDGMENT

Mr. Justice Wragg: It appears to me that the important question, directly put to the Court for decision, is whether or not Mrs. Vinden is a 'Coloured Person' within the meaning of Law 15, 1869.[2] I understand that my learned Brethren hesitate to decide this paint and therefore what I have to say must be taken as my opinion only. I hold strongly the view that the plaintiff is not a 'Coloured Person' within the meaning of that Law, on the following grounds.

Under Law 15, 1869, Sec. 2. any 'Coloured Person', who is found wandering abroad unable to give a good account of himself, is liable to punishment. In Section 5 the term 'Coloured Person' is defined as including, among others, 'Coolies'. Before that Law of 1869 was passed, there were in existence several Laws relating to Indian Immigrants. Looking at the preamble of that and the later Laws, we find that the term 'Coolie' means persons who, under these Laws, have been introduced from India into this Colony at the public expense, or by private individuals at their own expense, for a particular class of service. Then came the 'Coolie Consolidation Law' of 1870, in which the term 'Coolie' was again used and in the same sense. Lastly, we have the existing Law No. 25 of 1891, which was passed as the outcome, in many respects, of the labours of the Indian Immigration Commission of

[1] The enclosure referred to is not available, but the judgment of Sir Walter Wragg, taken from the Natal Law Reports, No. 17, dated March 23, 1896, is given as an appendix to the "Notes".

[2] This case was one of wrongful arrest in which the plaintiff, an Indian Christian woman, Mrs. Vinden, claimed £200 damages, as she was gaoled after being asked for her Pass one night by a Native constable. The question arose whether she was a 'Coloured Person' in terms of the Law. The Judge awarded Mrs. Vinden £20 as compensation for wrongful arrest.

1885-1887. In this Law the offensive word 'Coolie' does not appear, its place being taken by the term 'Indian Immigrant', which, in Section 118, is defined as meaning and including "all Indians introduced from India into Natal under the provision of the Laws regulating such introduction and those descendants of such Indians who may be resident in Natal." Persons usually described as Asiatics, Arabs, or Arab traders, who have been so introduced, are expressly excluded.

Now Mrs. Vinden came to this Colony at her own expense and she is wife of David Vinden, who was not brought here as an Indian Immigrant. How can either of them be considered a 'Coloured Person' within the meaning of Law 15, 1869? I say, most emphatically, that they are not 'Coloured Persons' within the meaning of that Law.

A 'free' Indian, that is to say, an indentured Indian who, having been introduced under the Immigration Laws, has completed his term of service, is, with his descendants, a 'Coloured Person' within the meaning of the Law, because he comes within the definition of Law 25, 1891, Sec. 118. But that is not the case of either David Vinden or his wife.

Vinden V. Ladysmith Local Board, 1896; Natal Law Reports

56. NOTES ON THE TEST CASE

DURBAN,
April 4, 1898

NOTES ON THE EVIDENCE REQUIRED IN TAYOB HAJEE KHAN MAHOMED *vs.* DR. LEYDS

Evidence is required to prove that

(a) Plaintiff is a subject of the Queen of Great Britain.
(b) He has been established and [has] carried on business as a merchant in Church Street, Pretoria, since 1893.
(c) He has during that time conformed to and has obeyed the laws of the land.
(d) He is not an Arab.
(e) He is not a Mahommedan subject of the Turkish Empire.
(f) He is not a Malay.
(g) He is not a coolie in any sense of the term.

As to (a):

Plaintiff is a native of Porbunder, a port in Kattywar,[1] a Province in the south-west of India. Porbunder is under British administration. Mr. H. O. Quin, styled the State Administrator, manages the States. A reference to any map of the world would show that the Province of Kattywar is included in British India and is marked red. In a separate map of British India, Kattywar and other portions would be found marked yellow. These are two divisions of British India, viz., that portion which is called *Khalsa*,[2] or British India proper, under the direct control of British political officers, and the other, Protected British India, where there is an intermediary between the people and a British Officer. Nevertheless, inhabitants of both parts of India are, for our purposes, equally British subjects and entitled to the same privileges outside India. This portion can be proved by putting in any map, a standard. Geography, or even by getting the evidence of' the British Agent. Further, Plaintiff has very often transacted business with the British Agents in his capacity as a British Indian trader and has been accepted as such.

The illuminated address that went to the Queen on behalf of the British Indians in the Transvaal bore his among the other signatures. This also the British Agent could prove. And if that course is thought advisable and adopted, it may lend a certain dignity to the case, if it does nothing else.

I am also told that Plaintiff was, at one time, required to fill in a form by one of the Landdrosts,[3] wherein he described himself as a British subject, and this was accepted by that officer.

As to (b):

It appears that, in 1882, he was a partner of Tayob Ismail; in 1883, joined the firm of Aboobaker Amod and Co., and was the resident partner and manager of the firm's business in Pretoria. Aboobaker Amod and Co. was transformed into Tayob Hajee Abdoolla & Co., in 1888 and, since 1892, he has been carrying on business as Tayob Hajee Khan Mahomed & Co., either with or without partners. He had and has other businesses also in the Transvaal. Many witnesses could prove this, or it might be possible to produce deeds of

[1] This is how Kathiawar was then spelt in documents and maps prepared by Europeans. The collection of former principalities is now merged in Bombay State and i known as Saurashtra.

[2] Territory under direct administration of Government.

[3] Magistrates or judicial officers.

partnership or even the licenses, if they were granted.

As to (c):

Plaintiff has regularly paid taxes for properties belonging to him or occupied by him. There are no convictions against him. Receipts for 'the taxes might be put in. He contributed his share, I believe, to the Commando levy.[1] He has kept his premises in good sanitary condition, as Dr. Veale can testify.

As to (d), (e), and (f):

If (a) is proved, i.e., if he is proved to be a British Indian, (d), (e), and (f) are proved *ipso facto*; for if he is an Indian he cannot be an Arab, or Malay [either], and if he is a British subject he cannot be a Turkish subject. It is not denied that he is a Mahomedan, and the confusion has arisen because of that fact. Somehow or other, peoplein South Africa have come to look. upon Indian Mahomedans as Arabs and Turkish subjects. Plaintiff is neither. He has never been to Arabia, even as a pilgrim, and he has never been to Turkey. An Indian Arab or an Indian Malay is an impossibility. Malays, I understand, are, or were formerly, natives of Java and were first brought to South Africa by the Dutch.

As to (g):

The expression "Coolie" was first officially used by the Natal Legislature when they introduced into the Colony the bona fide "Coolies", i.e., field labourers, for their estates. There were no other Indians in the Colony or South Africa at the time, and it was not before 1870 that the first Indian trader came to South Africa. By this time, there was a large population of Indian field labourers, and they were at the time, without meaning any offence to their feelings, called "coolies" by the white men. As the Indian traders came, white men, not having known any other Indians, called them also "coolies", forgetting the specific meaning of the expression as applied, not to a nation, but to a class of labourers. Gradually, trade jealousy grew up, and the expression degenerated into a term of contempt as applied to Indian traders and began to be freely and consciously used. Some Europeans, having some respect for the traders and in order to make a distinction, began to call the Indian traders "Arabs". The expression "coolie" then followed the Indians wherever they went in South

[1] A tax collected in the Transvaal at the time of the Boer Commando action against the Kaffir Chief, Malaboch, in 1894.

Africa, generally as a term of contempt; and remains so to the present day. For its legal or dictionary meaning, Webster might be taken as an authority. For its commercial and popular meaning as understood there, many merchants might be found willing to testify that they would never think of calling Plaintiff and Indians like himself "Coolies", except in order to insult them.

Attention is also drawn to my notes sent some time ago specially as to the expression "coolie" and generally as to the interpretation of the Law, as also to the case of *Vinden* v. *Ladysmith Corporation*, sent herewith, and containing Sir Walter Wragg's dissertation on the expression "Coolie".[1]

M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of a typed copy bearing Gandhiji's signature: S. N. 3704.

57. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

53C FIELD STREET,
DURBAN,
July 21, 1898

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
P.M. BURG[2]

SIR,

I applied to the Immigration Officer at Durban for temporary permits for certain four Indians. The officer is prepared to grant the permits on a deposit of £25 each. On my applying to him to take £10 each, he informs me he has no authority to accept such small deposits.

I beg to draw your attention to the fact that a deposit of £10 is accepted at Charlestown. The system of deposits is a source of very great annoyance, and I submit that £10 is ample for the purpose for which the deposit is intended.

If the holders of temporary permits forfeit the deposits, the law can still reach them and they could be deported from the Colony. Under the circumstances, I trust you will be pleased to authorise the Immigration Officer at Durban to accept a deposit of £10 for each

[1] *Vide* "Notes on the Test Case" given earlier.
[2] Pietermaritzburg

person requiring a temporary permit.

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original handwritten letter, signed by Gandhiji, available in the Pietermaritzburg Archives, No. C.S.O/4799/98.

58. TELEGRAM TO THE VICEROY OF INDIA

JOHANNESBURG, VIA ADEN
August 19, 1898

FROM
BRITISH INDIANS
JOHANNESBURG

TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY OF INDIA
SIMLA

WE BRITISH INDIANS TRADING AT JOHANNESBURG RESPECTFULLY DESIRE TO BRING TO YOUR EXCELLENCY'S NOTICE THAT HIGH COURT HERE HAS DECIDED[1] THAT ALL INDIANS MUST RESIDE AND TRADE IN LOCATIONS ONLY.

Foreign Department, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India: Pros. September 1898, Nos. 55-56.

[1] In the Test Case (*vide* "Letter to the British Agent", 28-2-1898, supra), the Court held that there was no distinction between places of business and residences, and that Asiatics must reside as well as transact their business m Locations set apart for them by Government.

59. PETITION TO INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS[1]

On the Transvaal High Court deciding that Indians must live and trade only in Locations, they made the following representation to the Indian National Congress.

JOHANNESBURG,
SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC,
August 22, 1898

TO
THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

GENTLEMEN,

We, the undersigned British subjects residing at Johannesburg, in the South African Republic, desire to respectfully draw the attention of your Congress to the following facts:

1. That we are British subjects, born in British India and trading at Johannesburg as merchants and shopkeepers.

2. That some of us have resided in this Republic for twelve years and upwards, and have valuable stocks of goods in our business premises at Johannesburg.

3. That we respectfully submit that as British subjects we are entitled to the full benefit of the Convention, known as the London Convention, entered into in the year 1884 between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the South African Republic, Article 14 whereof provides that all British subjects shall have the right to reside and carry on business in any part of the South African Republic.

4. That the High Court of this Republic has recently decided that all Indians and other Asiatics must reside and trade in certain Locations to be pointed-out by the Government of this Republic, and not elsewhere.

5. That the said decision of the High Court was based upon an enactment of the Volksraad[2] of this Republic, passed subsequent to the Convention aforesaid, to wit in the year 1885, being Law No. 3 of 1885, which said Law is in direct conflict with the express terms of the

[1] A similar petition was sent also to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Secretary of State for India, and a copy to the British Committee of the Indian National Congress.

[2] Legislative Assembly.

said Convention.

6. That, even assuming that we are bound by the provisions of the said Law No. 3 of 1885, which we deny, then we respectfully submit that the said decision of the High Court of this Republic is bad in law, and manifestly contrary to the true meaning and intent of the said Law, which provides that the Government of this Republic shall have the right to fix places of residence in Locations for Asiatics in this Republic, but in no way restrict the right of Asiatics to trade in any part of this Republic.

7. That the said decision of the High Court is final and no appeal lies therefrom.

8. That we cannot believe that it was or is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to consent to our being deprived of those rights expressly secured to all British subjects by the London Convention aforesaid and to consent to Indian British subjects being placed in a worse position, so far as treaty rights are concerned, than European British subjects.

9. That we have no doubt that the said decision of the High Court of this Republic will be enforced forthwith, and that we will be obliged to close our places of business in and about Johannesburg and to reside and trade in Locations to be fixed at the arbitrary choice of the Government of this Republic, which proposed Locations are situate about three miles from Johannesburg, and adjoining the Kaffir Location; the result of which measure will be that we will be ruined in our businesses, and be deprived of the means of earning a livelihood, and will be compelled to leave this State, as Johannesburg is the only important business centre in this Republic and the place where most of the Indians in this Republic reside and carry on business.

We, therefore, respectfully request your Congress to use its great influence on our behalf with a view to obtaining redress of our grievances.

We have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

your most obedient servants,

(Here follow various signatures.)

India, 11-11-1898

60. LETTER TO LORD HAMILTON

P. O. BOX 1302
JOHANNESBURG,
August 25, 1898

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
LORD GEORGE HAMILTON
PRIVY COUNSELLOR, ETC.
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA
LONDON, ENGLAND

RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR,

On behalf of ourselves and other Indian British subjects residing at Johannesburg in the South African Republic we beg herewith to hand you the enclosed petition.[1]

We have the honour to be,
Right Honourable Sir,
your most obedient servants,
A. CHETTY
A. APPASAMY

Colonial Office Records: Memorials and Petitions: 1898.

61. TELEGRAM TO M. BHOWNAGGREE[2]

JOHANNESBURG,
August 30, 1898

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE
LONDON

COURT DECIDED GOVERNMENT HAS POWER REMOVE INDIANS LOCATIONS FOR TRADE AND RESIDENCE JUDGE JORRISEN DISSENTING. GREAT CONSTERNATION. FEAR OF REMOVALS PARALYSING TRADE. LARGE ISSUES AT STAKE. RELYING MR. CHAMBERLAIN'S PROMISE MAKE REPRESENTATIONS AFTER TRIAL TEST CASE DEFINITE ISSUE NECESSARY. PLEASE HELP.

BRITISH INDIANS

Colonial Office Records: Memorials and Petitions, 1898.

[1] The forwarding despatch carried a Colonial Office minute reading: "The petition is word for word the same as that which has also been addressed to Mr. Chamberlain and the I. N. C." (*Vide* the preceding item.)

[2] Member of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress in London.

62. TELEGRAM TO "INDIA"[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
[*August 30, 1898*][2]

THE COURT HAS DECIDED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS POWER TO REMOVE INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL TO LOCATIONS FOR BOTH TRADE AND RESIDENCE. JUDGE JORRISEN DISSENTED FROM THE DECISION. GREAT CONSTERNATION PREVAILS. IT IS FEARED THAT THE REMOVAL TO LOCATIONS MAY PARALYSE TRADE. LARGE INTERESTS ARE AT STAKE. WE ARE RELYING UPON MR. CHAMBERLAIN'S PROMISE TO MARE REPRESENTATIONS TO THE TRANSVAAL GOVERNMENT AFTER THE TRIAL OF A TEST CASE, WHICH, HE SAID, WAS NECESSARY TO SECURE A DEFINITE ISSUE.

India, 9-9-1898

63. DADA OSMAN'S CASE

The following is a report of the proceedings of a case before the Durban Town Council, in the course of which Gandhiji, who appeared in appeal, addressed the Council and made a strong plea against the refusal of trade licences to Indians on racial grounds. The Council dismissed the appeal.

DURBAN,
September 14, 1898

A special meeting of the Town Council was held yesterday afternoon, to consider an appeal against the Licensing Officer's decision upon the application of Dada Osman for a wholesale and retail license for the premises No. 117, Grey Street. His Worship the Mayor (Mr. J. Nicol) presided and there were also present the Hon. Mr. Jameson, M.L.C., Messrs. M. S. Evans, M.L.A., Henwood, Collins, Challinor, Hitchins, Taylor, Labistour, Garlicke (town solicitor) and Dyer (Licensing Officer). Mr. Gandhi appeared for the applicant.

The Town Clerk (Mr. Cooley) read the Licensing Officer's reasons for his decision as follows:

"The Act 18 of 1897, as I understand, was passed with a view of

[1] The telegram was published by India as from its 'Johannesburg Correspondent'. Gandhiji was then acting as the Durban, Johannesburg and South African correspondent of India.

[2] This telegram, the text of which is practically identical to that of the preceding one, was dispatched on the same day. India, being a weekly, published it in the following issue.

placing some check on the issue of trading licenses to certain classes of people, generally regarded as undesirable, and, as I believe I am right in assuming that the applicant in question is one that would be included in that class, and, moreover, as he has never before had a license in Durban, I have felt it to be my duty to refuse the Iicense."

The report of the Sanitary Inspector on the premises was also read, and was to the effect that they had been previously licensed and were suitable.

Mr Alexander McWilliam, merchant, of West Street, called as a witness, said he had dealt largely with the applicant, who had owed him as much as £500 at a time. He had found him a good business man, and honest in his dealings. In fact, he was prepared to trust him to the extent of £500 again. Witness considered the premises suitable and respectable for such a business as it was sought to carry on.

By Mr. Collins: Is the applicant capable of keeping books?

Witness: I do not know, but from the way he expresses himself in his letters to me, I should imagine that he would be able to keep books.

Dada Osman, the applicant, also gave evidence, and said he had been in Natal about 18 years. He had been engaged in business the whole of that time. He had two stores in Umsinga. He wanted to open a store in Durban, because his family lived here. Witness's private expenses here were £20 per month, and his rent for his house and store amounted to £11 per month with taxes. His house and store were lighted by electricity, and his household furniture, of the value of over £100, was purchased in Durban. He had business dealings with a number of large firms in Durban, and could keep books in English, being acquainted with both single and double entry systems. Applicant's books had been inspected and passed by the Licensing Officer. A license was not absolutely necessary for the supply of his up-country stores but he desired a license so as to cover his living expenses in Durban, where he was obliged to keep a house, as his wife could not very well travel with him between Vryheid and Umsinga, to which places he had to go from time to time in connection with his businesses. He had 2 stores in Umsinga, and had never had a license in Durban. The Umsinga stores had been in his possession over 15 years, and, during that time, he had bought all his goods in Durban. If the Council refused his license, he would not have to shut up his up-country stores. His wife had been in Natal 5 months. He was married in India 8 years ago and had visited India since.

Abdul Cadir, managing partner of the firm Mahomed Cassim & Company, owners of the premises in respect of which the application was made, was called, and said the rent fixed was £10 and taxes. The store had been

licensed before. Witness owned 3 or 4 properties in Durban, amounting in value to between £18,000 and £20,000. Most of this property was let and if Osman did not obtain a license, witness would lose the rent of that particular store. He had known the applicant a long time, and knew that he would be a good tenant.

Further evidence as to applicant's respectability was given by another Indian merchant.

Mr. Gandhi stated that the last occasion on which he addressed the Council he, unfortunately, failed to convince them that the landlord's interests should be considered. The managing partner of the firm of Mahomed Cassim & Company told the Council that day that the present applicant was the best tenant he could get for the premises and that he owned property of the value of £18,000, most of which he hired to persons such as the applicant. He further said that if the license was withheld from the applicant, he would not be able to get a tenant for his premises. It was clear that the landlord's interests ought to be considered. Mr Abdul Cadir was a rate-payer just as good as any of the ratepayers of the Borough, and his voice should be heard by the Council. In the applicant, Abdul Cadir had a tenant whom he had known for a very long time and it would be a hardship to the landlord if the license was refused. The premises were suitable for a store, and it would not be possible for the landlord to hire them for any other purpose. Evidence had been led to the effect that the store had been previously licensed, and Mr. McWilliam, a perfectly disinterested witness, stated that the premises were decent and respectable. Under the circumstances, he hoped the Council would give due weight to the interests of the landlord. As to the applicant himself, testimony had been brought forward to show that his evidence was true, and he desired to do some business in Durban to meet the expenses entailed in maintaining a household here. They had in the applicant a man perfectly decent and respectable, straight in his dealings, who could speak English sufficiently to make himself understood, and kept books in English. Applicant's books had previously been passed, and he thought the Council would admit that the applicant had stood the test very well indeed. There could not be the slightest objection either to the premises or the applicant. There was nothing objectionable in the applicant except what the Licensing Officer had been pleased to state in his reasons, and, with all deference to the Council, he submitted that the Licensing Officer had nothing whatever to do with the speeches made in the Legislative Assembly at

the time the Act was passed. There was nothing in the preamble of the Act to show that this was the intention of the measure. It merely said that it was necessary to regulate the issue of licenses to wholesale and retail dealers, no distinction being made as to desirables or undesirables, and yet the Licensing Officer, who was supposed to have a judicial mind at the time of considering applications, had actually gone out of his way to refer to speeches made at the time the Act was passed. This was a most extraordinary course for a Licensing Officer to take, and he hoped that because the Licensing Officer had seen fit to refuse the license for the reasons given, they would upset the decision. The Licensing Officer stated that he believed he was right in assuming that the applicant would be included in the undesirable class, but what right had he to make such an assumption? He (Mr. Gandhi) would like to know who was an undesirable and how such a person would be described, and would venture to cite the opinion of the Secretary of State for the Colonies on the point. Mr. Gandhi read extracts from a speech delivered by Mr. Chamberlain at the conference with the Colonial Premiers, when the Right Hon. gentleman said they had to bear in mind the traditions of the Empire, which made no distinction in favour of or against a race on the grounds of colour, and referred to the wealth and civilization of Indians, and the services they had rendered the Empire in times of trouble. According to Mr. Chamberlain, it was the character of the immigrants they had to deal with, and it was not because a man was of a different colour to themselves that he was undesirable, but because he was dirty or immoral, or a pauper, or because he was in some other way objectionable. That was what an undesirable immigrant was in the opinion of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and no such objection could be brought against his client. The only objection that had been raised to the applicant, and that had been discounted by the Secretary of State, was that he was an Indian, and, therefore, came to be classed as an undesirable person. He hoped that that reason would not be accepted by the Council. The Licensing Officer had placed the Indian community under a deep debt of gratitude by giving the only reason for which these licenses were refused. It had been said in that Council Chamber that the objection to Indians was not their colour, or because they were Indians, but because they would not live in a decent manner. That objection could not be advanced against his client. He wished to point out that if the Council refused that license, they would place all Indians in the same scale, and would not encourage them to

live in premises that were decent and respectable and to live in every way like respectable citizens. Everything done with regard to these licenses became known outside, and if a license was refused to such a man as his client, Indians would say that the Town Council did not want them to live decently and honestly, but anyhow. The Council should not allow such a feeling to be created among the Indian population. It was said on a previous occasion that it was necessary that these licenses should not be increased, but that question did not arise in the present case, as the store for which a license was applied for, had been licensed that year. By granting the application the number of licenses would not be added to. If these stores were to be shut up, the Indian landlords would have to shut up their businesses, and he hoped the Council would give due consideration to the appeal, and order the issue of a license to his client.

Mr. Taylor said he was not convinced that the Licensing Officer was in error, and he, therefore, moved that the decision be confirmed.

Mr. Collins said that he was not at all surprised that there was a very great deal of reluctance on the part of the Council to refuse the license, but he believed the license was going to be refused, and he had no hesitation in saying that the reason was not that the applicant was not suitable except for the fact of his being an Indian. What Mr. Gandhi had said was perfectly true, and he (Mr. Collins) felt Some relief in saying that most of these licenses, if not all, had been refused mainly on that ground. The Council had been placed in a very unhappy position because it had to carry out a policy which, in the discretion of Parliament, had been considered necessary. Parliament, representing the community, had come to the conclusion that it was undesirable that Indians should increase their hold on the trade of Durban, and it was on that ground that the Council was practically called upon to refuse licenses which were not otherwise objectionable. He thought the applicant would have a grievance by the refusal of the license, but it had been found expedient, as a matter of Colonial policy, that these licenses should not be increased, and he, therefore, seconded Mr. Taylor's motion.

The Mayor said that Messrs. Evans, Labistour, and Hitchins would not be able to vote as they had come in late.

Mr. Labistour said that, with regard to his being late, he thought an apology was due from him to His Worship and the other members of the Council, but he would like to explain that he had studiously avoided attending these licensing meetings, as he thoroughly disagreed with the dirty work they were called upon to do. He had come into that meeting expecting that the licensing business would have been concluded earlier, and that the ordinary

business would be commenced by the time he arrived. The remarks made by Mr. Collins met with his approval, but any councillor could mark his dissent with what they were called upon to doby not taking part in it. He held that, sitting as a court of appeal, it was for them to hear the evidence, and, unless there was some good ground against an applicant, they ought to grant the license. If the burgesses of Durban, or the people of the Colony, wished these licenses to be stopped, they could go to the Legislature and put an end to applications for licenses by members of the Indian community.

On being put, Mr. Taylor's motion to uphold the Licensing Officer's decision was carried *em con*., and the appeal was consequently dismissed.

The Natal Mercury, 15-9-1898

64. NOTICE FOR A CONGRESS MEETING

[DURBAN,]
September 15, 1898,
Thursday

SIR,

A meeting of the Congress will be held tomorrow evening at 8 p.m. punctually to deal with the following matters:

Congress report—Accounts—Consideration of the debt—Sanction for £10 sent to Mr. Nazar[1]—Sanction for £10 sent to Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggaree[2]—Sanction for repayment of debt incurred by Mr. Nazar—Resignation of the Honorary Secretary and other business.

Mr. Nazar will not attend the meeting.

It is hoped that in view of the importance of the meeting, all the members will be present.

Meeting of the Congress will take place tomorrow evening at 8 p.m. punctually to consider report of the Hon. Sec. &c. &c.[3]

M. K. GANDHI

From the original office copy in Gujarati, in Gandhiji's own hand, in the National Archives, New Delhi: S. N. 2807.

[1] Mr. Nazar had been sent to London on the occasion of the Colonial Premiers' Conference held there in 1897.

[2] Gandhiji sometimes spelt it thus.

[3] This last paragraph is typed in English.

65. TELEGRAM TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

DURBAN,
November 3, 1898

FROM
MAHOMED CASSIM CAMROODEEN & CO.

TO
HON'BLE COLONIAL SECRETARY
P. M. BURG

RULES PUBLISHED GAZETTE RE VISITORS AND EMBARKATION PASSES[1] HAVE CREATED GREAT DISSATISFACTION AMONG INDIANS. MEMORIAL TO HIS EXCELLENCY BEING PREPARED.[2] HUMBLY REQUEST BEEHALE INDIAN COMMUNITY SUSPENSION RULES MEANWHILE.

From the photostat of a handwritten copy which carries Gandhiji's signature: S. N. 2845.

66. PETITION TO INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

JOHANNESBURG,
S. A. REPUBLIC
November 28, 1898

TO
THE CHAIRMAN OF
THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

DEAR SIR,

We, the undersigned British Indians, residing at Johannesburg in the South African Republic, beg respectfully to draw the attention of your Congress to the following facts:

1. That by Government Notice No. 621, published in the *Staats Courant* of this Republic, dated November 19, 1898, copy whereof is hereunto annexed, all Indians and other Asiatics are ordered) from and after the first day of January, 1899, to reside and trade only in Locations to be pointed out by the Government of this State.

2. We respectfully submit that the terms of the said Government Notice are in conflict with the provisions of the "London Convention", which provides that all British subjects, without any

[1] For the restrictions imposed, deposit taken and fee levied under the Immigration Act, 1897, *vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary' July 21, 1898, and "Petition to Chamberlain", 31-12-1898, infra.

[2] *Vide* "Petition to Chamberlain", 31-12-1898, infra

distinction, shall have the full right to reside and trade in any part of the South African Republic.

3. That should the provisions of the said Government Notice be carried into effect, we will suffer great-pecuniary loss, as many of us have established ourselves in business in Johannesburg and elsewhere in this Republic.

We, therefore, respectfully request your Congress to use its influence on our behalf, with a view to obviating the serious injury that will otherwise be inflicted upon us.

We have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servants,

V. A. CHETTY
A. PILLAY AND CO.
V.MOORROOSAMY MODELIAR
A. KESTNASAMY
A. APPASAMY

[*Annexure*]

GOVERNMENT NOTICE NO. 621[1]

For general information it is hereby notified that the Honourable Executive Council, by resolution of Art. 1101, dated November IS, 1898, has decided:

1. That the Coolies and other Asiatic Natives who do not at present reside and trade in the specified' locations, but in conflict with the law, live and trade in a town or village or other prohibited area, shall be ordered by the Landdrost or Mining Commissioner, or, acting on their instructions by the Field Cornet, to proceed to live and trade in the specified locations before January 1, 1899, in terms of Law 3 of 1885.

2. The Landdrosts and the Mining Commissioners shall, however, prepare two lists of names of those Coolies or other Asiatic Natives who, for a considerable period, have traded in places other than the specified locations, and for whom it would consequently be difficult to remove their businesses within such a short period. On the one list shall be placed the names of Coolies or other Asiatic Natives to whom, in the opinion of the Landdrost or Mining Commissioner, at the utmost three months' postponement may be given, and on the second the names of those who may receive six months', thus respectively to April 1 and July 1 of 1899, in- which to comply with the law. The Coolies or other Asiatic Natives must themselves ask for such postponement and give reasons therefor.

[1] The Notice appeared originally in Dutch.

3. That should application thereanent be made, in order to assist the Coolies and other Asiatic traders, the question of reserving a piece of ground in the location as a bazaar, or for a covered building with shops, will be favourably considered.

In connection with the above, it is further notified that those Asiatics who consider that they do not fall within the pale of Law 3, 1885, either by virtue of their having entered into an agreement before that date which has not yet expired, or through their having obtained transfer of their property, shall communicate with the Landdrost or Mining Commissioner before January I in order that their case may be laid before the Government.

India, 23-12-1898

67. TELEGRAM TO "INDIA"

Gandhiji, as its Johannesburg correspondent, sent the following telegram to India in connection with the question of Locations:

JOHANNESBURG,
December 5, 1898

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC HAS PUBLISHED AND GIVEN NOTICE REQUIRING INDIANS TO RESIDE AND TRADE IN CERTAIN LOCATIONS ON AND AFTER JANUARY 1 NEXT THEY EARNESTLY HOPE THAT ADVANTAGE WILL BE TAKEN OF THE VISIT OF THE CAPE HIGH COMMISSIONER TO ENGLAND TO ADVANCE THEIR CAUSE. THE PRESENT UNCERTAINTY IS CAUSING ANXIETY.

India, 9-12-1898

68. BRIEF FOR COUNSEL'S OPINION

Gandhiji's approach to the legal issues involved in the operation of the Dealers' Licenses Act is indicated by the following brief prepared by him.

DURBAN,
December 22, 1898

BRIEF FOR COUNSEL'S OPINION UNDER ACT 18 OF 1897 TO AMEND THE LAW RELATING TO LICENSES TO WHOLESALE AND RETAIL DEALERS.

A Town Council issues secret or public instructions to the Licensing Officer appointed by it under the Act:

1. Not to grant licenses to Asiatics.
2. Not to grant licenses to certain persons.

3. Not to grant licenses to most of the Asiatic traders.

Could the Supreme Court be moved by an intending applicant to direct the Town Council to appoint another officer and not in any way to interfere with such Officer's discretion?

A Town Council appoints one of its permanent officials, as for in stance, the Town Clerk, the Town Treasurer, the Chief Cashier.

Could an intending applicant move the Supreme Court to direct the Town Council to appoint an absolutely independent person on the ground that the permanent officer would be so much under the influence of the Town Council that he could not be expected to give an unbiassed decision uninfluenced by the views of the Town Council, and on the ground thatthe intending applicant would practically be denied the right of approaching two separate tribunals—one original and the other appellate?

A Licensing Officer, under the Act, refuses to issue a license to a person on the ground that he is an Indian. Could the Supreme Court be moved to tell the Officer that the fact of a person being an Indian is no reason for a refusal, and that he should reconsider his decision subject to that direction?

If a Licensing officer arbitrarily refuses to issue licenses to all the Indians or a majority of them, can he be said to have used a discretion in either or both the cases?

A person having applied for and been refused a license to trade carries on his trade without a license. He is tried for contravention of Section 9 of the Act, and convicted. He pays the penalty but continues to trade. Is the trading after the conviction, but during the statutory year, a fresh offence?

Does a person trading without a license for so many days commit so many offences under the Act?

What would be the procedure for collecting the fine?

If the person convicted is bonded to another person and if the bondholder takes possession, will the penalty be a preferent charge against the goods so bonded? (Note: All penalties recovered under the Act in respect of a business within a Township are payable to the funds of such Township.)

Will it be competent for the Governor-in-Council to pass, under the last section of the Act, such rules as would control the discretion of the Licensing Officer, and make it practically obligatory on the Licensing Officer to issue licenses under certain conditions?

M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the handwritten original: S. N. 2904.

69. PETITION TO CHAMBERLAIN

The manner in which the Dealers' Licenses Act was being operated in violation of the rights of Indians formed the subject of a representation to the Imperial Government which is given below. Gandhiji sent it with a covering letter addressed to the Natal Governor. Vide *p.* 50, infra.

DURBAN,
December 31, 1898

TO
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN
HER MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR THE COLONIES

LONDON

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED REPRESENTING THE BRITISH INDIANS RESIDING IN THE COLONY OF NATAL HUMBLY SHEWETH,

That your Petitioners hereby venture to approach Her Majesty's Government with reference to the Dealers' Licenses[1] Act, against which your Petitioners unsuccessfully protested last year.

Your Petitioners might have approached Her Majesty's Government earlier, but it was their intention, first, to watch the operation of the Act patiently for some time, and to see whether the fears anticipated in the memorial submitted to Her Majesty's Government embodying the above protest were well-founded or not; and, secondly, to exhaust all the resources available in the Colony, and to obtain a proper judicial interpretation of the Act.

It is with great regret that your Petitioners have to record that the fears expressed in the memorial above referred to have been more than realised, and that the judicial interpretation has been given against the British Indians in the Colony. In a case, herein below referred to,[2] Their Lordships of the Privy Council have decided that, from the decisions of the Town Councils or the Town Boards, there is no appeal to the Supreme Court of the Colony, under the above Act. This decision has paralysed the Indian traders. Consternation has seized hold of them, and there prevails amongst them a feeling of

[1] The word licence is being spelt as in the original printed copy, sometimes with 'c' and sometimes with 's'. Both the spellings were current at that time.

[2] *Vide* "Petition to Chamberlain", 31-12-1898, infra.

insecurity and a nervous fear as to what may happen during the ensuing year.

The troubles the Indian community is passing through are numerous. The working of the Immigration Restriction Act, against which also your Petitioners ineffectually protested, is causing much vexation. Lately, the Government have passed Rules under it whereby a fee of one pound is required from each person not being able to pass the tests imposed by the Act, and wishing to sojourn for from one day up to six weeks, or to pass through the Colony for the purposes of embarkation. While a memorial was being prepared in connection with these Rules and other matters arising out of the above Act, the decision of the Privy Council came upon the Indian community like a bomb-shell, and all the other troubles dwindled into comparative insignificance in the face of the awful future awaiting the Indian traders. It has, therefore, become absolutely necessary to give the first place to the Dealers' Licenses Act.

The only hope of the Indian traders in Natal now lies in the relief that might be granted through the intervention of Her Majesty's Government. Your Petitioners venture to claim in all parts of Her Majesty's dominions the same privileges and rights that are enjoyed by Her Majesty's other subjects, in virtue of the Proclamation of 1858, and more especially in the Colony of Natal, in virtue of the following statement in your predecessor's Despatch with reference to previous memorials, viz., "It is the desire of Her Majesty's Government that the Queen's Indian subjects should be treated upon a footing of equality with all Her Majesty's other subjects."[1] Moreover, your Petitioners trust that Her Majesty's Government would be pleased to secure from the Colony of Natal, which owes its present prosperity to the indentured Indians, a fair treatment for the free Indians in the Colony.

All over the world, whenever necessary, Indian soldiers have been fighting the battles of Great Britain, and Indian labourers have been opening up fresh fields for colonisation. Only the other day, a Reuter's cablegram stated that Indian soldiers would be requisitioned to train up the natives in Rhodesia. Can it be that the fellow-countrymen of these soldiers and labourers are not to be allowed to earn an honest living in a portion of Her Majesty's dominions?

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Lord Rippon", before 5-5-1895.

And yet, as will appear hereinbelow, there is an organised attempt being made in the Colony of Natal not only to *deny* to the Indian traders the right of earning an honest living, but also to *deprive* them of such right which they have been enjoying for years past in the Colony; and the instrument whereby the European Colonists in Natal hope to achieve their purpose is the above Act.

The Durban Town Council consists of eleven councillors, and is the premier Corporation in the Colony. Of these councillors, one is an avowed and out-and-out opponent of the Indians. He played a leading part in the Demonstration against the landing of the passengers on board the *Courland* and the *Naderi* early last year.[1] He was noted for his most violent speeches. He has carried his hatred of the Indians into the portals of the Town Council, and has so far invariably, and irrespective of persons, opposed the granting of trade licences to Indians. As there are only twoclasses of Europeans—the one violently against the Indians, and the other indifferent—this councillor, as a rule, carries the day before him whenever a matter concerning the Indians comes for disposal before the Council. The Licensing Officer appointed under the Act is a permanent officer of the Corporation, and is, therefore, in your Petitioners' humble opinion, more or less under the influence of the councillors. In a case presently to be referred to, Sir Walter Wragg, the first Puisne Judge, who was then acting for the Chief Justice, has thus observed about the danger of a permanent officer of a Town Council being appointed its Licensing Officer:

> It has been suggested to the Court that an officer so appointed must have a certain amount of bias in his mind, because he was an officer permanently under the Town Council, and must be in the Council's confidence. His lordship was not going to decide the matter on that point; but he could quite see that the Licensing Officer should be some person who was not in the Town Council service, and who was not in the confidence of the Council. (The Natal Witness, 31 March 1898.)

This Licensing Officer examines the pecuniary position of applicants for licences, asks them questions as to their stock, capital, and generally inquires into their private affairs. He has made it a rule not to grant a trading licence to any Indian who has not before held such a licence in Durban, whether the applicant has held a licence

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-5-1897, et seq.

elsewhere in the Colony or not, whether he is an old resident or a new arrival, whether he is an accomplished gentleman knowing English or an ordinary trader, and whether the premises in respect of which the licence is sought are suitable in every respect and have been before licensed or not.

Somnath Maharaj, an Indian, early this year, applied for a licence to carry on a retail trade in the borough. His application was taken in. He was examined at length as to his position by the Licensing Officer. Nothing could be found against him. The Sanitary Inspector made a favourable report regarding the premises in which he intended to carry on his trade. The premises had just been vacated by an Indian storekeeper who had left for Johannesburg. The Licensing Officer, however, after having failed to find fault either with the person or with the premises, refused a licence without giving any reason for his decision. The matter was heard in appeal before the Town Council.[1] It was proved that the applicant had served the Colony for five years under indenture, had been resident in the Colony for thirteen years as a free Indian, had by dint of perseverance raised himself to the position of a trader, had held a licence in Mooi River in the Colony over six years, had a cash capital of fifty pounds, held a piece of freehold land in the borough, had his dwelling house separate and some distance from the intended store, and had engaged the services of a European book-keeper to satisfy the requirements of the Law. Three well-known European merchants certified as to his respectability and honest dealings. He was to trade in a locality mostly inhabited by Indians, and his custom was to be entirely Indian. Counsel for the applicant asked for the Licensing-Officer's reasons for refusal, as well as a copy of the record of the application. Both these applications were rejected, and the Licensing Officer's decision was upheld by the Town Council. An appeal to the Supreme Court was noted against the decision —not on its merits, for, that Court had already by this time decided by a majority that, in virtue of the Dealers' Licenses Act, it had no jurisdiction to hear licence appeals on merits, but on grounds of irregularity: viz., that reasons were refused, that a copy of the record was withheld from applicant's counsel, and that the councillors with the Town Solicitor, the Town Clerk, and the Licensing Officer, while the appeal was being heard, retired for secret deliberation into a private room. The Supreme Court entertained the

[1] *Vide* "Somnath Maharaj Case", March 2, 1898.

appeal, quashed the proceedings of the Town Council, with costs, in favour of the appellant, and directed a re-hearing. In giving the Court's decision, the Acting Chief Justice remarked:

> What struck one as being wrong in this case was that the copy of the record should be withheld. The application was made to the Council by the appellant for a copy of the record and reasons why the licence had been refused. There was nothing wrong in the application. It was one which, in the interests of justice, should have been granted. But it was refused. And when the appellant's counsel came before the Council, he was in the dark as to the record, and he did not know what was operating in the mind of the Licensing Officer....It seemed to him that the action of the Town Council in this case had been oppressive.... It seemed to him that the refusal of both requests was unjudicial and an improper proceeding. (*The Times of Natal*, 30 March 1898.)

Mr. Justice Mason:

> Considered the proceedings under appeal were a disgrace to the Town Council, and he did not hesitate to use this strong language. He considered under the circumstances that it was an abuse of words to say there had been an appeal to the Town Council. (*The Times of Natal*, 30 March 1898.)

The appeal was reheard before the Town Council. This time a copy of the record was given; and when called upon to give further reasons for his refusal, the Licensing Officer stated: "that the applicant had no claim whatever upon Durban, as the class of trade he was engaged in was sufficiently provided for in the town and borough." The Officer's decision was however upheld, a councillor moving "that it was undesirable that the licence should be granted in view of the fact that the percentage of licences already granted was in excess of the requirements of the population." The Council took no notice of the facts that, only a few months before, there was a store-keeper in the premises sought to be licensed, that the store-keeper had left Durban, that, therefore, there was no question of increasing the number of licences, and that the landlords, who are Indians and were also represented, had, too, a claim for consideration at the hands of the Council. The premises in question, which are only suitable for a store, have to this day remained practically vacant, causing a loss to the owners of £35 to date. Your Petitioners venture to annex hereto a report of the proceedings of the first hearing of the above appeal before the Town Council, which clearly shows its spirit. (*Vide* Appendix A.)

Mahomed Majam & Co., applied to the Licensing Officer for a trade licence, with respect to premises belonging to an Indian gentleman who owns large pieces of freehold property in Durban, and whose principal source of income is renting of his properties to tradesmen. The Licensing Officer refused to grant the licence for reasons similar to those given in the case above referred to. The landlord appealed to the Town Council against the decision of the Licensing Officer. The Town Council dismissed the appeal. As a consequence, he, the landlord, was compelled to reduce the rent of his property, and Mahomed Majam & Co., are reduced to poverty, and have to live entirely on the work of one of their partners who is a tinsmith.

Hasam Mahomed is a hawker by profession. He has been a hawker before in Durban. He went to the Licensing Officer, and from him to the Town Council, but was denied the privilege of hawking. He told the Council that to deny him that privilege was equivalent to asking him to court starvation. He had tried to earn his bread otherwise, but had failed, and was without capital to undertake anything else. He submitted to the Council that he did not come in competition with any European, that hawking was practically a speciality of the Indians who raised no objection to his getting the licence; but all these representations were of no avail.

Mr. Dada Osman[1] has been in the Colony for over fifteen years, has received a fairly good English education, was connected with the then premier Indian firm in South Africa, and has now a business in Umsinga in this Colony, and another in Vryheid in the Transvaal. This year he sent for his wife and children from India. As he could not find suitable society for his wife in either of the above places, and in order to meet the extra expense required owing to the arrival of his family, he intended to settle in Durban, so that he could supply his businesses upcountry with goods himself, and also do some business in Durban. So sure did he feel of securing the licence that he rented a spacious building in a principal street in Durban from a firm of Indian merchants at £11 per month, bought over £100 worth furniture, and approached the Licensing Officer who, as usual, thoroughly went into his affairs, tested his knowledge of English as well as of book-keeping, and after having required Mr. Dada Osman to appear before him thrice, declined to entertain his application. Both the

[1] *Vide* "Dada Osman's Case", September 14, 1898.

landlord and he appealed against the decision. Required by the Town Council, the Licensing Officer gave the following reason:

> The Act 18 of 1897, as I understand, was passed with a view of placing some check on the issue of trading licences to certain classes of people, generally regarded as undesirables. And as I believe I am right in assuming that the applicant in question is one that would be included in that class, and moreover as he has never before had a licence in Durban, I have felt it my duty to refuse his licence.

It was thus, in this case, for the first time that the real reason for the refusal of so many licences was given in all its nakedness. A principal merchant of Durban, Mr. Alexander McWilliam, said in his evidence before the Council:

> I have known the applicant for a great number of years—12 or 14 years. I have dealt very largely with the applicant. He has owed me at times as much as £500. My dealings with him have been perfectly satisfactory. I found him to be a very good business man, and respectable. I have always been able to take his word for anything he says....As a rate-payer, I should have no objection to his getting a licence. I do not know whether he is capable of keeping books, but he can express himself well in English in writing. I should imagine from the way he writes here and the way he conducts his business he would be able to keep books. (handed in a letter written by applicant.)

In addition to the facts related above about the applicant's position, the following was brought out in his (applicant's) evidence given in English:

> My private family expenses are about £20 per month, apart from the store.... I have a house apart from the store....My house and store are lighted by electricity....I deal with S. Butcher & Sons, Randles Brother & Hudson, H. & T. Mc Cubbin, L. Kehrmann, A. Fass & Co., M. Laurie, and others. I can write simple letters in English. I know book-keeping. I have kept books in Vryheid. I keep ledger, journal, day, cash, stock, account, and invoice books. I know the single and double entry systems.

Mr. Abdool Kadir, the landlord, said:

> I am manager to the firm of M. C. Camroodeen & Co....The store (in question) was licensed before. I. Timol, had a licence there:...I own 3 or 4 properties in Durban, of the total value of about £18,000 to £20,000, on the valuation roll. Most of this property I hire out to tenants. If Dada Osman does not get his licence, I shall lose rent. He is a very good tenant.... I have known him a long time. He is living well. He has plenty of furniture in his house....I am not satisfied with the decision of the Licensing Officer.

The Council was reminded of the definition given by you to the Colonial Premiers, of "an undesirable person", viz., "It is not because a man is of a different colour from ourselves that he is necessarily an undesirable immigrant. But it is because he is dirty, or immoral, or a pauper, or has some other objection which could be defined by an Act of Parliament." But all this proved to be a mere cry in the wilderness. The Councillor, who had borne the Demonstration Committee's flag in 1897, and was ready to return "by force, if necessary" the Indian passengers on board the *Courland* and the *Naderi*, "failed to be convinced" that the action of the Licensing Officer was an error, and moved that his decision be confirmed. No one would rise to second the motion, and for a moment it seemed as if the Town Council was ready to do justice. But Mr. Collins, another Councillor, came to the rescue, and seconded the motion in the following speech:

> He was not surprised that there was a great deal of reluctance on the part of the Council to refuse the licence. But he believed that the licence would be refused, and the reason was not because the applicant or the premises were unsuitable but because the applicant was an Indian. What Mr. Gandhi had said was perfectly true, and he (Mr. Collins) felt some relief in saying that most of these licences had been refused principally on the ground of the applicants being Indians The Council was placed in a very unhappy position in having to carry out a policy which in the discretion of Parliament was considered necessary. Parliament, representing the community of Natal, had come to the conclusion that it was undesirable that the Indians should increase their hold on the trade of Durban. And it was on that account that they were practically called upon to refuse the licences which were not otherwise objectionable. Personally, he considered the refusal of the licence a grievance to the applicant who was a most suitable person to appear before the Council to ask for a licence. But it had been found expedient as a matter of Colonial policy, that these licences should not be increased. (*The Natal Advertiser*, 13 September, 1891.)[1]

It may be here remarked that Mr. Collins holds a prominent position among the public men of Natal. He has often occupied the position of the Deputy Mayor, and has more than once acted for the Mayor. Coming as it did from such a source, the pronouncement was most painful, if also equally important. It is respectfully submitted that

[1] The date appears to be a misprint in the original printed copy. *Vide* "Dada Osman's Case", September 14, 1898.

the Natal Legislature, if the then Prime Minister correctly voiced its feeling, never meant, as it would appear later, to go the length Mr. Collins did. The intention of the Legislature was to prevent *new comers*—by no means *all* new comers —being Indians, from obtaining licences; and your Petitioners venture to feel certain that, had the view taken by Mr. Collins of the Act been placed before Her Majesty's Government, it would never have received the Royal assent. Mr. Collins evidently seems to think that the Parliament represents only the European community of Natal. Your Petitioners can only say that it is lamentable, if it is true. The Indians were told differently when the attempt was made to disfranchise them entirely. Again, Mr. Collins thought the granting of the licence in question would mean an increase; as a matter of fact, the premises sought to be licensed had been licensed for the year; they had become vacant as the licence holder had suffered misfortune and stopped business. The present applicant, therefore, would not have added to the number of licence-holders in the borough.

Mr. Labistour, another Councillor, and a prominent local Advocate, was so disgusted with the whole procedure that he thus gave vent to his sentiments:

> He had purposely refrained from attending the meeting owing to the anomalous policy pursued in appeals of that kind. He disagreed with the dirty work they (councillors) were called upon to do. If the burgesses wished all such licences stopped, there was a clean way of going about the matter: viz., getting the Legislative Assembly to enact a measure against the granting of licences to the Indian community. But, sitting as a Court of Appeal, unless there were good grounds to the contrary, the licence should be granted. (ibid.)

Mr. Labistour having, as he said, come purposely late could not vote, and the motion was carried unanimously, and the appeal dismissed.

In your Petitioners' humble opinion, it is almost impossible to imagine a stronger case than the above, or greater injustice than that done by the Durban Town Council—a Town Council of a British Colony—sitting in appeal as a judicial body. It has put a premium upon insanitation and questionable trade practices. What incentives could your Petitioners hold out to the weaker members of the Indian community? They, the weaker members, might say: "You ask us to adopt the modern sanitary methods, and live better; and you promise that the Government should deal fairly by us: we don't believe this.

Does not your Dada Osman live as well as any European on the same platform? Has that meant anything to the Town Council? No; whether we live well or live ill, we would fare neither better nor worse." The European Colonists have been proclaiming that they would have no objection to respectable Indians living in the modern style. Your Petitioners have always contended that the objection on the ground of alleged insanitation is a fiction, and the Durban Town Council, it would appear, has proved the contention.

The Newcastle Town Council has, however, gone one better than the Durban body. Its Licensing Officer, apparently acting under orders, refused to grant the licences this year, under the Act, to each and every one of the eight Indian store-keepers that had held the licence last year. Such a wholesale refusal struck terror in the hearts of the Indian traders in the Colony. Suspension of the trade of these store-keepers would have not only ruined them and their dependants, but would also have resulted in the collapse of some houses in Durban which support them. The assets of these men were then estimated at over ten thousand pounds, and hands directly dependent on them were over forty. At great expense, therefore, Mr.Laughton, a leading Advocate, was engaged to carry the appeal to the Town Council; and, as a result, six licences out of nine (held by eight storekeepers) were granted. The remaining three, having been refused, the three holders thereof appealed to the Supreme Court which, by a majority, threw out the appeal on the ground that, in virtue of Section 5 of the Act, it had no jurisdiction to entertain it. As the matter was very important, and as the Chief Justice dissented from the other two Judges and favoured the contention of the appellants, the matter was taken to the Privy Council. A cablegram from the appellants' Solicitors in London states that the appeal has been lost. It must in justice be said that the Newcastle Town Council has been gracious enough to allow the three storekeepers, pending the appeal, to continue their trade. Its policy, however, is unmistakable. It would have wiped out the Indian from Newcastle if it could have done so with decency, and without stir, regardless of the consequence to the parties affected. The reasons given by the Licensing Officer for his refusal were the same with reference to all the above licences: viz., "The report framed by the Sanitary Inspector in terms of Sec. 4 of the' Rules under Act 18 of 1897, in connection with this application being of an unfavourable nature, and the premises not being fit for the intended trade, as required by Sec. 8 of the Act referred to, the application was refused by me." None of the

applicants knew anything about the Sanitary Inspector's report, or the Licensing Officer's reasons before their licences were refused; nor were they asked to make any improvements or alterations in their premises. The reasons were furnished by the Licensing Officer only after he was required so to do by the Town Council when the matter came before it in appeal. After the three applicants were refused their licences, and they came to know why the licences were refused, they offered at once to make such alterations in their premises as the Sanitary Inspector may suggest; but the Licensing Officer would not hear of it, and declined to entertain their applications on the ground that the Town Council had already decided to sustain his previous decision. (*Vide* Appendix B.) It may be here remarked that the applicants never admitted that their premises were in an insanitary condition, and had produced medical evidence to prove that the premises were in a satisfactory condition. Your Petitioners attach hereto (*vide* Appendix C) an extract from the Record of Proceedings before the Town Council, which would show more fully the case for the three applicants. The Newcastle Town Council consists of 8 councillors—a medical practitioner, a solicitor, a carpenter, a canteen keeper, a miner, a bookseller and two storekeepers. The Licensing Officer is also the Town Clerk who would be the Clerk of the Court when the Town Council sits in appeal against the decision of the Licensing Officer.

The Dundee Local Board, however, promises to outdo both the Durban and the Newcastle Town Councils. In November last, a trade licence was granted by the Licensing Officer to a Chinaman, and a majority of the rate-payers appealed against the decision of that officer. The Local Board, by a majority of 3 to 2, cancelled the licence solely on the ground that the applicant belonged to the Chinese nationality. The applicant's solicitor, in his notice to the Local Board of Appeal against its decision, recited the following grounds of appeal:

> (1) That your Board, by reason of certain of the members on it being merchants and storekeepers and holders of retail licences, was unable and could not possibly deal with the subject matter of appeal without prejudice to Hoi-Lee & Co.'s interests.
>
> (2) That the constitution of your Board was such that several of the members of it were personally and directly interested pecuniarily in the refusal of the retail licence to Hoi-Lee & Co., and should not therefore have sat on

your Board and voted on the question.

(3) That certain members of your Board who sat showed personal animus and bias against the firm of Hoi-Lee & Co., on account of the members being natives of China, and one in particular stated: "I would not even give a Chinaman the chance of a dog."

(4) That no evidence or legal proof was adduced by the appellant rate-payers that Hoi-Lee & Co. were undesirable persons to have in the community.

(5) That no evidence or legal proof was adduced by the appellant rate-payers that the premises that had been licensed by the Licensing Officer were totally unfit and unsuitable for business purposes, pending erection of the premises agreed to be erected by the landlord under his lease with the said Hoi-Lee & Co.

(6) That the decision and resolution of the Board was inequitable and unjust both in Equity and Law.

What happened to the Chinaman who appears, from the record of the case, to be a British subject, is not unlikely to happen in the case of the Indians. The Supreme Court refused to entertain the appeal in the above case in virtue of the decision in the Newcastle case referred to above.

In November last, a meeting was convened by the Chairman of the Dundee Local Board at the request of the rate-payers "to discuss the advisability of allowing Asiatics to trade in the township". There are at present about ten Indian stores in Dundee. The following extract from the proceedings of the meeting would show how the Local Board proposes to deal with them next year:

Mr. C. G. Wilson (the Chairman of the Local Board) made a very good impression with his remarks. He defended the action of the Board in all matters, and said it was their endeavour, if possible, to rid the town of the Asiatic curse. They were not only a curse here, but to the whole Colony of Natal. He assured the meeting that their actions in the case of the Chinaman were disinterested and unbiased, and they honestly did what they thought to be their duty to the towns, by cancelling the licence. He hoped they (the rate-payers) would show, by strongly expressing their opinions, that they meant to abolish this curse.

Mr. W. L. Oldacre (a member of the Board) said that he and other members of the Board did what they thought to be right; and assured the meeting that there was no bias attached to its proceedings, and they could depend upon him doing his duty as a member of the Board.

Mr. S. Jones then proposed that the Local Board do all in its power to prevent the granting of further licences to undesirables; *that the Licensing Officer also be instructed to this effect*; and that *steps be taken to cancel as many of these licences as possible*. This proposition was unanimously carried, amidst cheers.

Mr. C. G. Wilson wished to thank the meeting for the decision arrived at, as it had greatly strengthened the hands of the Board, who would act upon the decision of the meeting.

Several other gentlemen having spoken, Mr. Hastings proposed that the Town Clerk and Licensing Officer should be two separate persons.

Mr. Wilson said he was of opinion that it would be far better to have the of officers remain as at present; then if the Licensing Officer did not act as the Board did in matters such as these, they had their remedy. (*The Natal Witness*, 26 November 1898.)

The undesirables referred to in the preceding extract are, of course, the British Indian traders of Dundee. Here there is a frank avowal of the policy the Dundee Local Board, intend to pursue. The Licensing Officer has received, and is still further to receive, from the appellate body created by the Act, instructions as to what he is to do; and thus, the aggrieved parties are to be deprived of the right of placing their case before two tribunals contemplated by the Act: viz., the Licensing Officer and the Town Council or the Local Board, as the case may be. These are only some of the instances that have come under your Petitioners' notice which conclusively indicate the policy the various Town Councils and Local Boards would pursue if unchecked.

Your Petitioners are free to acknowledge that the other Town Councils and Local Boards do not appear as yet to have shown any desire to act in an oppressive manner; though there, too, it is practically impossible to obtain new licences even for old established Indians. The power, your Petitioners were almost going to say, the despotic power, given to them under the Act is there, and there is no guarantee that they will not copy the example set them by Durban, Newcastle, and Dundee.

In order to ascertain the views of the solicitors who have had anything to do with the working of the Act, a letter[1] was addressed to them asking them to be good enough to give their experience of its working. Three out of the four gentlemen to whom the

[1] This is not available.

communication was sent, have returned their replies which are hereto attached. (*Vide* App. D, E, F.) Mr. Laughton, who dealt with the Newcastle and the Chinaman's cases, as also with that of Somnath Maharaj referred to above, remarks:

> I regard the Dealers' Licenses Act a very discreditable and dishonest piece of legislation. Dishonest and discreditable, because no secret was made that it was intended to apply to Indians and to them alone. Indeed, it was passed at a session of Parliament called about a month earlier than otherwise it would have been, as a concession to an anti-Indian mob and yet, in order to gain the approval of the Secretary of State, the Act is made to apply to all.
>
> The effect of the Act is to place in the hands of the declared enemies of Indian traders the power to grant or refuse trade licences; the consequence is as might be expected, and we all feel humiliated at what we see, whether we admit it or not.

Mr. O'Hea, another gentleman, who is also the Honorary Secretary of the Colonial Patriotic Union, whose avowed object is to prevent the further influx of Asiatics, says:

> I do not think that this Law is being administered in accordance with the spirit of the Legislature. The then Prime Minister who introduced the Bill said its main object was to affect those persons dealt with under the Immigration Bill. Ships would not bring those persons if they knew they would not be landed; and the people would not come here to trade if they could not get licences.
>
> I had a case in point not long ago. A man of Chinese nationality, who had been thirteen years in the Colony, was refused a licence for no other reason, I am convinced, than because he was a Chinaman. The statistics of Durban show that the town has more than doubled in extent and population within the past ten years; and' yet, this man who had linked his fortunes with the Colony, a man of unblemished character—who arrived when there were only about 40 human beings for every 100 there are today—this man's character and long residence were ignored, and a means of earning an honest living in Durban was denied him. In like manner, I have seen that in Newcastle an Indian, who had been 15 years resident in Natal, was refused a licence which would have been granted to a European if he had been the applicant. This is not as it ought to be.

Messrs. Renaud & Robinson say, among other things:

> But to our mind the principal defect in the present Act is that, no appeal being allowed from the Town Council's decision, injustice has been done and is likely to be done to applicants for licences.

While this was in print, Mr. C. A. de R. Labistour's opinion was received, which is annexed hereto (*vide* Appendix G).[1]

"Consistency", a correspondent of The Times of Natal (believed to be the Government organ), who, it would appear from his letter (*vide* Appendix H), is a Colonist of over 20 years' standing, and a merchant, says:

> By all means make them (Indian traders) adhere to the strictest sanitary regulations, keep their books in English, and otherwise do as English traders do: but when they have met these demands, give them justice. No honest thinking man can say that the new Bill gives these people justice, or the community justice, be cause it puts into the hands of interested parties the power to push out competition which is beneficial to the multitude and enables these interested parties to fill their own pockets....I saw in one of your contemporaries, the other day, that the Dundee Local Board had resolved not to renew any Arab licences for the coming year, and had instructed the Licensing Officer accordingly. These men are the English merchants, and wish all the business to themselves, when the public will have to pay them any prices they ask. Surely it is time the Government gave these men the limit.

The Times of Natal, dated the 21st December, 1898, after dealing with the above letter, and justifying its opposition to the Indian traders on the ground of self-preservation, observes:

> At the same time, we are far from desiring that these Indian traders should be treated harshly....We do not believe, however, that any considerable number of Colonists wish to see the powers given under these laws used oppressively. If it be true, as reported, that the Dundee Local Board has resolved not to renew any Indian licences for the coming year, we would strongly urge upon the Board, in the interests of its own rate-payers and in the interests of the Colony generally, to rescind that resolution forthwith. The Board has power to refuse the renewal of these licenses, but it was never contemplated for a moment that this power would be exercised in this wholesale manner. Mr. Escombe was responsible for the Traders' Licenses Act, and he never dreamt that the power it confers would be used in this way. The Act was passed, not so much with a view to enabling the licensing bodies to deal with the Indians already trading in the Colony, as to prevent others coming here to trade. In moving the second reading of the measure, Mr. Escombe explained that it was introduced at the request of the Town Councils, and said:

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Chamberlain", 31-12-1898, Appendix-G, infra.

> "There is no hesitation on their part in saying what their object is, and there is no objection on the part of the Government in admitting their proposal, to prevent certain persons coming to this country to compete with Europeans on unequal terms, and getting the licences to trade which are required by the Europeans." Again, "No people will come here to trade if they think there is a doubt as to their having a license. So that, if the law is in the book, it will answer without much application." It will thus be seen that while the Act gives extensive powers, the Minister responsible for it relied on the moral effect its existence would have, rather than upon the application of its provisions, to effect his purpose. This purpose was not to deprive traders already here of their licenses, but to prevent others coming here and getting licences. It was not expected that the Boards and Councils, which were appointed courts of appeal under this Act, would misuse their powers as the Dundee Board threatens to do. Said Mr. Escombe, in replying to the debate on the second reading: "I have got no doubt that this Bill in principle can only be warranted by the serious danger threatening this land. But 1 have got that belief in the fairness of the municipal authorities and of the Colony that I believe this Bill will be administered with what I call justice and moderation." The Dundee Board will do well to note those words, for so sure as it exercises its powers in the wholesale manner now proposed, so sure will it defeat the end we all have in view. By all means let the undesirables be weeded out, bat the process must be very gradual, so as to accomplish what is desired without inflicting any great injustice. It may be said: "There is the Act, and we will enforce it." Yes, there is the Act, but how long will the Act be there if injustice is inflicted under it? The fact that a very large number of voters draw on India for their labour supply must not belost sight of, for in it the Indian Government have the means of screwing a good deal more out of this Colony than many realise. Suppose the Indian Government were to say, "You cannot have more labour until you repeal that Act under which our people have been grossly ill-treated," what would be the result? We do not care to speculate on this. If Local Boards, Town Councils and Licensing Boards are wise, they will never do anything to put the employers of Indian labour to such a trial.

Your Petitioners offer no apology for having given the long extract, as it is very important, not only because of its source, but also because of the manner in which the subject has been dealt with. The good intentions of the Legislature are not in the Act itself, though they might have been reproduced therein, which would have spared the Indian traders the anxiety as to their bread being suddenly snatched from their mouths. The Government organ has betrayed itself into an admission which is entirely inconsistent with its own

admonition to the Dundee Local Board, and seems to be an insidious hint to the Board as to how they can achieve their end without attracting notice; for it too would have the undesirables "weeded out" by a "very gradual process". How can this attitude be compatible with the desire not to touch those that are already established? What the Dundee Board may fail to accomplish owing, to use the expression of the then Prime Minister, to their "brutal frankness," *The Times* would have them accomplish indirectly and diplomatically so as to keep the real aim in the background.

A correspondent of *The Natal Mercury* (14 December, 1898) signing himself 'A Colonist of close upon 20 years', thus writes:

> Sir: I notice in your paper of today a letter from Newcastle, stating that the mighty Corporation of that town had won their case brought against them by one Vawda, to whom they had refused a licence, and giving the information that the result will be welcome throughout the Colony. Vawda is an Indian who has been trading in Newcastle for the past 15 years, during which time he has been a good citizen; but, unfortunately for him, he has also been a successful merchant, a fact which evidently the members of the Licensing Board in Newcastle, who are merchants themselves, don't like. That the Corporation can be congratulated upon such a miserable misconstruction of their powers, or that the decision of the Privy Council will be welcomed by fair-minded people in Natal, is questionable.
>
> —I am etc.
>
> A Colonial of close upon 20 years.

The Transvaal Government has been trying to remove the Indians to Locations; but even they are willing to give some time, however inadequate, to the Indians in order to enable them to remove their businesses without in their view incurring loss. Her Majesty's Government are naturally not satisfied with such a meagre concession, and it is within your Petitioners' knowledge that an attempt is being made to induce that Government not to interfere with those that are already established. The Government of the Orange Free State, though quite independent, gave a year's notice to the Indian traders to close their businesses. The Colony of Natal which boasts of its being the most British Colony in South Africa, has acquired the power to deprive the Indian traders abruptly of the right of trading, and has attempted and threatens to exercise that power. *The Natal Advertiser* (dated 13 December, 18983 thus notices the anomaly:

> ...We can only say that we deeply regret the decision (of the Privy

Council) ....It is an Act which might have been expected from the Transvaal Raad. That body, in the Aliens Expulsion Law, has ousted the jurisdiction of the High Court, and our readers will remember the outcry raised about it in the Colonies. But it is not one whit worse than this Act; indeed, if there is any difference, ours is the worse, because it is likely to be much more frequently enforced. It is absurd to say that the Act would not have been effective if right of appeal to the Supreme Court had been allowed; surely, that body could be trusted to exercise common sense....Far better, indeed, that in one or two cases the latter (the desire of the municipalities) should have been overruled than that the principle should be laid down in a self-governing community under representative institutions that, in any case affecting the rights of the citizen, recourse to the highest judicial body in the State should be deliberately barred.

Your Petitioners very much fear that the Government of the Colony are not likely to help your Petitioners. The Rules (*vide* Appendix I) that have been passed under the Act, regulating the mode of obtaining licences and appeals from the Licensing Officer have, in your Petitioners' humble opinion, been framed in a manner to strengthen the Licensing Officer and the appellate body in the arbitrary powers given to them. It is but fair to state here that they were passed in September 1897; your Petitioners, however, had hoped that the Colony having been invested with powers of exceptional severity, the Indian community could be allowed to have some rest, and that, in isolated cases of hardship, they would be able to obtain redress without the necessity of approaching Her Majesty's Government. That belief was strengthened by a speech made by the late Premier after his return from London, expressing the hope that those powers would be judiciously and moderately exercised. Unfortunately, this had not been the case. It is for that reason that your Petitioners raise objections to the Rules over a year after their publication. Be that, however, as it may, your Petitioners submit that the absence of any provision made in the Rules as to requiring the Licensing Officer to furnish reasons for his decision to the applicant, has worked much mischief. So it struck Mr. Collins also (Appendix A).

What your Petitioners fear most is the process of gradual weeding out referred to above. Those on the spot understand the process only too well. Many small storekeepers have been weeded out this year: some because they, having hardly a gross out-turn of ten pounds per month, buying cash and selling cash, could not afford to keep any books at all, as is not unoften done even among small

European storekeepers; and some because they could not afford to comply with the requirements of the Sanitary Inspector having connection, not with the cleanliness of the premises, but with their structural arrangements. If the Licensing autho- rities were, year by year, to wipe out some small Indian storekeepers, it would not require many years to bring down the larger houses without their having to refuse their licences. Messrs. Mahomed Cassim Camroodeen &c Co., the first signatories hereto for instance, have outstanding debts among nearly 400 Indian storekeepers and hawkers in Natal, to the extent of over£25,000; and own landed property in Durban tenanted by Indian storekeepers. If one-eighth of these storekeepers were to be refused their licences, the firm's position would be damaged. They have already felt the pinch. They had to suffer owing to the refusal of the licence to Mr. Dada Osman (above referred to). Mr. Amod Jeewa owns properties in Estcourt, Dundee, Newcastle and Durban, which are almost entirely tenanted by Indian storekeepers, and most of which can be used for no other purpose. The shutting up of only a few of the businesses would mean practical ruin. These are but typical instances which can be multiplied.

Your Petitioners have been taught to believe from their infancy that in all Her Majesty's dominions there is absolute security of life and property. So far as the latter is concerned, that belief has received a rude shaking in this Colony: for, to be deprived of the means of making the only use available of one's property is, your Petitioners humbly submit, little less than total deprivation thereof.

It has been suggested that in self-governing Colonies Her Majesty's power of interference is very limited. However limited it may be, your Petitioners venture to think that it is not less for the self-governing Colonies than for the Transvaal. Unfortunately, your Petitioners have to face an Act which has already been approved of by Her Majesty. But your Petitioners apprehend that, when Her Majesty was advised not to exercise the power of disallowing the Act, it was little thought that the powers given thereby would be so abused as, it is submitted, they have been.

Your Petitioners submit, with the greatest deference, that sufficient has been shown above to justify a strong remonstrance and advice to the Government of the Colony to so amend the Act as to render a recurrence of the injustice described above impossible, and thus to bring the Act in harmony with the noble British traditions.

But if this be not possible, your Petitioners humbly venture to submit that the Colony should no longer be allowed to enjoy the privilege of using Indian labour which is acknowledged to be indispensable for its advancement. *The Times of Natal*, in the extract quoted above, anticipates a withdrawal of the supply of the indentured labour from India in the event of injustice being done by Licensing authorities. *The Times* (London), the East India Association, Sir Lepel Griffin,[1] Dr. Gust, the prominent bodies in India, and the entire Anglo-Indian and Indian Press have already suggested that remedy; but so far Her Majesty's Government do not appear to have been pleased to accept it. Your Petitioners humbly submit that it is impossible to make out a stronger case than herein for such withdrawal, failing redress of acknowledged grievances.

How the next year will open for the Indian traders your Petitioners do not know. Every storekeeper is, however, in a state of feverish anxiety. The suspense is dreadful. The larger houses, fearing that their customers (small storekeepers) might be refused their licences, and having the only hope that they had of securing some check on the Licensing authorities taken away from them by their lordships of the Privy Council, have become despondent and hesitate to clear their goods.

Your Petitioners, therefore, respectfully venture to hope that your Petitioners' prayer will receive the early attention of Her Majesty's Government.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners, as in duty bound, shall ever pray, etc., etc., etc.

MOHAMMED CASSIM CAMROODEEN & CO.
AND OTHERS

APPENDIX A

This was a report of the proceedings of the Somnath Maharaj Case as published in *The Natal Mercury* of 3-3-1898, which has been given in its chronological sequence, at p. 2, supra.

[1] 1838-1908; Indian Civil servant and administrator; Chairman of the East India Association from 1891 till his death.

APPENDIX B

(*Copy*)

NEWCASTLE,
January 11th, 1898

THE TOWN CLERK
NEWCASTLE

DEAR SIR:

I am instructed to forward to you the enclosed Applications for Retail Shop Licenses on behalf of Suleiman Ebrahim, Sajad Meajan, and Abdool Rassool.

These Licenses were refused by you last month, on the ground, as I understand, that you did not consider the Report of the Sanitary Inspector to be sufficiently favourable, and I am now directed to inform you that, with the object of obtaining renewal of the Licenses, my Clients will use every endeavour to meet the objection by carrying out such alterations as may be recommended by the Sanitary Inspector.

In the case of Sajad Meajan, I understand that alterations have been made since the inspection by the Sanitary Inspector in December, and these alterations will, I believe, remove any objection which previously existed. In the other two cases, I desire, if it should meet with your approval, to accompany the Sanitary Inspector on his visit, and to take a note of any objections he may make, with the object of rectifying any deficiency.

I trust that my Clients will be able to satisfy you, as the refusal of Licenses is of very serious consequence to them.

I am,
Sir,
your obedient servant
(*Sd.*) W. A. VANDERPLANK,
ATTORNEY FOR SULEMAN EBRAHIM,
SAJAD MEAJAN, & ABDOOL RASSOOL.

A reply similar to the following was returned in each case.

The application of S. E. Vavda under date 15th December 1897, for a Retail shop License in name of Suleiman Ebrahim for premises at Erf 37, Murchison St. . . having been refused by me, and my decision thereon upheld by the Town Council on Appeal, on the 8th January 1898, the annexed application is refused.

(*SD.*) T. MACKILHCAN
LICENSING OFFICER
BOROUGH OF NEWCASTLE

APPENDIX C

Extract from a certified copy of the minutes of special meeting of the Town Council of the Borough of Newcastle held in the Council Chamber on Saturday, January [8], 1898, to hear the appeals against the decisions of the borough Licensing Officer appointed under Act No. 18 of 1897, with reference to the applications of S. E. Vavda (two licenses), Abdool Rassool and Sajad Meajan—license to Vavda with reference to Erf 37, Murchison Street, and the licenses to Abdool Rassool and Sajad Meajan refused both by the Licensing Officer and the Town Council on appeal:

At the outset Mr. Laughton desires that his protest should be recorded against any officer of the council being appointed to fill the position of Licensing Officer under Act 18 of 1897, and addresses the council in support thereof.

APPEALS

Suleiman Essop Vavda, Applications Nos. 20, 21—1898.

Mr. Laughton reads notice to applicant from Licensing Officer dated the 23rd December 1897, and Sanitary Inspector's report, viz.:

SANITARY REPORT

I inspected the premises at 37 Marchison Street sought to be licensed as a Retail Shop, and like all Arab's premises are badly ventilated, otherwise the building is in fairly good condition; found them busily fitting up bedroom but communication at present between store and bedroom direct. Great efforts have been made to make the building look clean and fit in view of anticipated inspection, one good resulting from the provisions of the Licensing Law.

(*Signed*) JAS MACDONALD

SANITARY INSPECTOR

and, Licensing Officer's decision, and reasons on application for license for premises at Erf 37, Murchison Street and contended that the Sanitary Inspector's report was satisfactory and that, if not, the license might be issued conditionally.

Mr. Laughton further read notice to applicant dated 23rd December, 1897, Sanitary Inspector's Report, viz.,:

SANITARY REPORT

SULEIMAN ESSOP VAVDA

The premises sought to be licensed in this case are situated at the corner of Scott and Allan Street, a conspicuous part of the town. The bedroom for assistants is the small store adjoining. The Applicant himself is living behind the large store. The store premises are commodious but like others badly ventilated. The yard premises are small and cramped where it is crowded by kitchen, bathroom and closet. Three of the assistants now sleep on the premises recently acquired by Applicant at 36 Scott Street. Otherwise, the

bedroom accommodation attached to the store would be insufficient and unsanitary.

(*Signed*) JAS MACDONALD

SANITARY INSPECTOR

December 15, 1897.

and Licensing Officer's reasons on the application for licence for premises at Erf 33, Scott Street, and called Suleiman Ebrahim Vavda, who, duly sworn, stated:

I am the applicant for licenses for premises at 37 Murchison Street, and 33 Scott Street, where I carry on business. I held three licenses last year, but only apply for two this year. I have been in Natal about 17 years and in Newcastle 10 years. I have held a license for 37 Murchison Street for seven years and for 33 Scott Street for about five years. The value of the stock in the two stores is about £4,500; the value of the outstanding liabilities due to the firm is about £700. I hold 37 Murchison Street on monthly tenancy and the lease of 33 Scott Street expires in six months' time

[Questioned] By the Mayor: I and Mahomed Essop Tomor are in partnership and have separately conducted the business in the same name.

APPEAL

Abdool Rassool. Application No. 9—1898.

Mr. Laughton read letter to applicant from Licensing Officer dated 23rd December 1897, Licensing Officer's decision and reasons and sanitary report, viz:

SANITARY REPORT

I examined the premises referred to in application which is a small store in decayed condition. No direct communication with bedroom, occupied solely by Applicant—and is kept fairly clean. Applicant is in the fruit trade which would probably form part of his business at this store—a feature that might have a different bearing on the sanitary condition of the premises under consideration a month hence. Formerly the Applicant occupied a small store next to Mahomed Saffee's as a fruit shop.

(*Signed*) JAS. MACDONALD

SANITARY INSPECTOR

and quoting section 8 of Act No. 18 of 1897, contended that the sanitary report did not show that the premises were unfit for the intended trade. He called Abdool Rassool who, being duly sworn, stated:

I am the applicant for the license. I have been in the Colony about ten years and in Newcastle about 8 years. I have held a license for three years, two years at the fruit shop, 42 Scott Street, and one year at the present store. Neither the inspecting officer nor any other officer of the borough has pointed out any objection to the premises to me. I do not know why my license was refused. The Licensing Officer has never been inside my premises. I have made no alterations since the inspecting officer visited my premises. The value of my stock is about £400.

[Questioned] By Councillor Hastie: I have occupied the present premises for about one year.

APPEAL

Sajad Meajan. Application No. 10—1898,

Mr. Laughton read Sanitary Inspector's report, viz.,:

SANITARY REPORT

I examined the premises sought to be licensed as a Retail Shop at 36 Murchison Street. The premises are in a most unsanitary and filthy condition and have direct communication with bedroom occupied by himself, wife, daughter, and assistant.

(*Signed*) JAS. MACDONALD
SANITARY INSPECTOR

and submits Licensing Officer's decision and reasons and letter from the Licensing Officer to the applicant dated 23rd December 1897. He further calls Sajad Meajan who, being duly sworn, stated:

I am the applicant for the license. I have been in Natal seven years and in Newcastle seven years. I have held a corporation license for five years for the same premises.

Since making the application for my license the sanitary inspector or other officer of the corporation has not pointed out to me why a license was refused to me. I do not know why the license was refused. Since making my application the Licensing Officer has not inspected my premises. The value of my stock is about £600. I, my wife, my daughter, and assistant do not occupy one bedroom as stated in the Sanitary Inspector's Report, nor did they at the date of the report. The assistant occupies a separate room. I have made alterations in the premises since the date of the report. The closet has been removed to the far corner of my plot of ground. I was not aware that the premises were in a filthy condition at the date of the report and was not informed so at the time by the inspector.

[Questioned] By Councillor Kemp: I made alterations myself without being told to do so.

Charles O'Grady Gubbins on further oath states: I inspected Sajad Meajan's premises today and found them in a satisfactory condition. There are two bedrooms very clean, and boarded, lined and ceiled.

From a sanitary point of view I do not think the license should be refused.

[Questioned] By Councillor Hastie: I do not know how many occupy the bedrooms. The measurements of the rooms are 17'X12' and the second 11'X12' and 10' high.

Note:—The reasons of the Licensing Officer appear in the body of the memorial. Sajad Meajan has since, the creditors having stopped custom, become insolvent.

APPENDIX D

DURBAN,
24 Dec. 1898

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
DEAR SIR,

I have your letter[1] of yesterday. I regard the "Dealers' Licenses Act" as a very discreditable and dishonest piece of legislation. Dishonest and discreditable because no secret was made that it was intended to apply to Indians and to them alone; indeed it was passed at a session of Parliament called about a month earlier than otherwise it would have been as a concession to an anti-Indian. mob, and yet, in order to gain the approval of the Secretary of State, the Act is made to apply to all.

The effect of the Act is to place in the hands of the declared enemies of Indian traders the power to grant or refuse trade licences; the consequence is as might be expected and we all feel humiliated at what we see, whether we admit it or not.

Yours very truly,
F. A. LAUGHTON

APPENDIX E

39 GARDINER STREET,
DURBAN,
December 23rd 1898

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
14 MERCURY LANE
DURBAN

DEAR SIR,

RE: DEALERS' LICENSES ACT

In reply to your letter of this day's date, I do not think that this Law is being administered in accordance with the spirit of the Legislature. The then Prime Minister who introduced the Bill said: "Its main object was to affect those persons dealt with under the Immigration Bill. Ships would not bring those persons if they knew they would not be landed; and the people would not come here to trade if they knew they could not get Licences."

I had a case in point not long ago. A man of Chinese nationality who had been thirteen years in the Colony was refused a Licence for no other reason, I am convinced, than because he was a Chinaman. The statistics of Durban show that the Town has more than doubled in extent and population within the past ten years; and yet this man who had linked his fortunes with the Colony—a man of unblemished character— who arrived when there were only about 40 human beings for every 100 there are today: this man's character and long residence were ignored, and a means of

[1] This letter is nor available.

earning an honest living in Durban denied him. In like manner, I have seen that in Newcastle an Indian, who had been 15 years resident in Natal, was refused a Licence which would have been granted to a European if he had been the applicant. This is not as it ought to be.

Yours faithfully,
P. O'HEA

APPENDIX F

3, 4, AND 5, POYNTON'S BUILDINGS,
GARDINER STREET,
DURBAN,
31st Dcc. 1898

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
ADVOCATE

DEAR SIR,

In reply to your letter of the 23rd inst. re. Dealers' Licenses Act.

We prefer to say nothing on the political aspect of the question.

We are of opinion that the Licensing Officer should be appointed from outside the permanent staff of the Town Councils or the Local Boards, as the case may be. There should be an Appeal from his decision to the Town Council and from theirs to the Supreme Court.

We think that compensation should be awarded to landlords who by reason of the operation of the Act have lost their tenants.

There are several matters of minor importance which we think might be improved, but to our mind the principal defect in the present Act is that, no appeal being allowed from the Town Council's decision, injustice has been done and is likely to be done to applicants for licences.

Yours faithfully,
RENAUD & ROBINSON

APPENDIX G

23 FIELD ST. BUILDINGS,
DURBAN, NATAL
4th Jany. 1899

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
DURBAN

DEAR SIR,

Referring to our interview of this date on the subject of the Licensing Act 18/97, I can only state that, from my experience, the same, although not so

expressed, is only intended to apply to Indians and Chinese—at any rate, it appears to me to be so.

I have made several applications to the Licensing Officer for new licences which have been rejected without reasons being given therefor, and on appeals to the Town Council I have invariably found that body uphold the Licensing Officer's decision, without previously calling upon him to furnish his reasons for such refusal.

I have not tried to ascertain the number of licenses refused to Europeans, but I am inclined to believe they were only refused to those whose character, &c. did not justify them holding one.

Yours faithfully,

C. A. DE R. LABISTOUR

P.S. The most inequitable part of the Act is that which precludes an appeal from the Town Council to the Supreme Court.

C.A.R.L.

APPENDIX H

TO
THE EDITOR
THE TIMES OF NATAL

SIR,

I have to thank you for your attention to my letter in *The Times of Natal* of the 16th instant under the heading "An Important Decision," and for your remarks in reply thereto. You say: "As to the butchers' ring, it is only necessary to point out that through it the cost of living has been very materially increased, and meat, we have been told, put beyond the means of the poorer classes of the community. It is, therefore, a menace to the welfare of the community."

I entirely agree with you. All combinations of this kind are morally wrong, and a menace, because the few benefit while the multitude suffer. Further on you say: "In the other case the Indian traders have also become a menace, in that, by reason of the fact that they can live so much cheaper than Europeans, they are driving the latter out of trade, and out of the Golony." It is one of our axioms that competition is the life of trade, and while admitting that all competition is a menace, I have to submit that the Indian traders are not a menace in the same way as the butchers' ring.

The Indian storekeepers, by causing strong competition among storekeepers, are reducing the cost of all necessaries of life. In other words, they are benefiting the many at the expense of the few, which is exactly the opposite of the butchers' ring.

I well remember, twenty years ago, when I came to the Colony, we got 20 per cent. more profit than we get now—then the few benefited and the many suffered; but competition, and principally Indian competition, has brought prices down all over the country; and now the many benefit while the few suffer, and this is how it should be.

You push these people out, and the multitude will again suffer by having to pay much larger prices for all they consume.

I remember, some sixteen years ago, falling out with an up-country townsman because I declined to join a ring of other storekeepers to charge 5s. a bag profit on flour. In those days such a combination, detrimental to the public, but beneficial to the pockets of the storekeepers, could have been carried out, but such a combination today would be utterly impossible, and if you could get such competition into the butchery business, you would shortly hear less about the price of meat.

You appear to complain that these people can live cheaply. Yes, they can live cheaply—don't drink, give the authorities little trouble, and are, in fact; law-abiding subjects, and if they can sell cheaply by living cheaply, the benefit is surely the public's. By all means make them adhere to the strictest sanitary regulations, keep their books in English, and otherwise do as English traders do; but when they have met these demands, give them justice. No honest thinking man can say that the new Bill gives these people justice, or the community justice, because it puts into the hands of interested parties the power to push out a competition, which is beneficial to the multitude, and enables these interested parties to fill their own pockets. We have now sufficient rings —insurance rings and butchers'—and goodness knows where we will stop if the diffusers of knowledge and learning, like the newspapers, are on the wrong side.

I saw in one of your contemporaries the other day that the Dundee Local Board had resolved not to renew any Arab licenses for the coming year, and had instructed the Licensing Officer accordingly.

These men are the English merchants, and wish all the business to themselves, when the public will have to pay them any prices they ask.

Surely it is time the Government gave these men the limit.

We have entrusted you with great powers, but if you are to use them unjustly, we will take them away from you.—Yours, &c.

CONSISTENCY

DURBAN
19th December

(This letter is dealt with in our leading article, Ed. T. of N.)

APPENDIX I

GOVERNMENT NOTICE NO. 517, 1897

The following Rules passed by His Excellency the Governor-in-Council, under Section 11 of Act No. 18, 1897, are published for general information.

C. BIRD,
PRINCIPAL UNDER SECRETARY,
COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE, NATAL,
16th September, 1897

Rules under Act 18, 1897, for regulating the mode of obtaining licenses, and for regulating appeals from the decisions of Licensing Officers.

1. In these Rules "Licenses", unless otherwise specified, means either a wholesale or a retail license. "New License" means a license in respect of premises for which there is not at the date of application an existing license similar to that applied for.

"Board or Council" means, as the case may be, the Licensing Board of the Division or the Town Council of a Borough, or the Local Board of a Township.

I. Applications for Licenses

2. Every person desiring to obtain a new license or a renewal of an existing license shall make application in writing to the Licensing Officer of the division, borough or township. The application shall contain the particulars set forth in Schedule A.

3. An applicant for a new license shall attach to his application a ground plan, drawn to scale, of the premises sought to be licensed.

4. Upon receipt of an application for a license, the Licensing Officer shall be at liberty to obtain from the sanitary or other officer of the division, borough or township, a report for his guidance in respect to the sanitary arrangements of the premises proposed to be licensed.

5. The applicant shall, if thereto required, appeal personally and produce to the Licensing Officer his books of account or such other documents or evidence as may be necessary to show to the satisfaction of that officer that he is able to fulfil the conditions laid down by section 7 of the Act, in regard to keeping his books of account in the English language.

6. The Licensing Officer shall endorse upon each application for a license his decision as regards the issue or refusal of a license.

7. The application, with the report of the sanitary or other officer and the remarks and decision of the Licensing Officer, shall form the complete record of proceedings in each case.

8. A license shall not be issued until the necessary stamps are tendered or the money paid.

II. Appeals

9. The applicant or any person interested may, within two weeks of the decision, give notices in the form of Schedule B, to the Clerk of the Board or Council of his intention to appeal against the decision of the Licensing Officer.

10. A notice of the day fixed for the hearing of appeals, together with a list of the appeals, in the form of Schedule C, shall be fixed to the door of the Court House or Town Office for at least five days before the appointed date.

11. The Clerk, immediately upon receiving notice of appeal, shall require the Licensing Officer to forward to him the minutes of proceedings, and documents, or copies thereof.

12. The proceedings of the Board or Council shall be open to the public.

13. The Clerk shall keep minutes of the proceedings.

14. The record of the application shall be read before the Board or Council.

15. The appellant and any person interested shall be entitled to be heard upon the appeal, by himself or by any person acting under his written authority.

16. The Board or Council may require the Licensing Officer to state in writing the reason of his decision upon any application. If in the opinion of the Board or Council further evidence is necessary, such evidence may be taken by the Board or Council on the same day or on any other day to which the hearing may be adjourned.

SCHEDULE A

To the Licensing Officer of the division of.....
(or borough or township of.....)

I (or we) hereby apply for a license as follows:

Name of person or firm to be inserted in the license.....

Nature of the license (whether wholesale or retail) .....

Period for which license is sought.....

Premises sought to be licensed.....

(If the application is for a new license, then add: I attach hereto a ground plan of the premises.)

(Date) .....189—

Signature .....

Applicant

SCHEDULE B

To the Clerk of the Licensing Board for the Division of.....
(or) to the Clerk to the Local Board of.....

(Date) .....189—

Sir,

I (or we) hereby give notice that it is my (our) intention to appeal against the decision of the Licensing Officer upon the application of ..... for a (wholesale or retail) ..... license for the premises known as.....

SCHEDULE C

Division (borough or township) of.....

Notice is given that an appeal has been lodged against the decision of the Licensing Officer upon the undermentioned applications for licenses.

The appeal will be heard by the Licensing Board (or Town Council or Town Board) at the .....on ..... the ..... day of..... 189—

Name of person appealing	Name of applicant for license	Nature of license applied for	Premises

Clerk to the Licensing Board (or) Town Clerk

From the photostat of an original printed copy, printed at the International Printing Press, Grey Street, Durban: S. N. 2894.2903.

70. COVERING LETTER TO PETITION

DURBAN,
January 11, 1899

TO
HIS EXCELLENCY SIR WALTER FRANCIS HELY-HUTCHINSON
KNIGHT COMMANDER OF THE MOST DISTINGUISHED ORDER OF ST.
MICHAEL AND ST. GEORGE, GOVERNOR AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
IN AND OVER THE COLONY OF NATAL VICE-ADMIRAL OF THE SAME,
AND SUPREME CHIEF OVER THE NATIVE POPULATION, PIETERMARITZBURG

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

I have the honour to send for transmission to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies a memorial in triplicate signed by Mr. Abdul Kadir of Messrs. Mahomed Cassim Camroodeen and Co., and others, with reference to the Dealers' Licenses Act No. 18 of 1897, with such remarks as Your Excellency may be pleased to make thereon.

I have, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure in Despatch No. 6 of 14th January 1899 from Governor of Natal to H.M's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, London.

Colonial Office Records: Memorials and Petitions, 1898-99.

71. LETTER TO D. B. SHUKLA[1]

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN, NATAL
January 17, 1899

D. B. SHUKLA, ESQ.

MY DEAR SHUKLA,

I have not heard from Kalabhai[2] for months. I am very anxious to know how he is getting on, what he is doing & what are his pecuniary prospects. Will you kindly inquire & let me know? I hear from Mehta[3] that you are doing very well there. I have no doubt he told you all about me.

As I could not improve my bad hand I have taken to typing for the last few days.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the original: S. N. 2327.

72. TO PRESS AND PUBLIC MEN IN INDIA

DURBAN,
January 21, 1899

SIR,

The memorial[4] sent herewith tells its own sorrowful tale. The grievance complained of is not sentimental but it is very serious and very real. Unless it is removed promptly, it bids fair to snatch the bread away from hundreds of mouths. The licensing authorities in Natal intend to deprive the respectable Indians of their acquired rights. The matter. demands *immediate, earnest* and *continuous* attention of the Press and our public men. Nothing short of prohibition of indentured immigration to Natal will meet the case, unless the Natal Government can be induced to amend the Licensing Law so as to bring it in harmony with the principles of justice as known to the British Constitution.

[1] A barrister of Rajkot.
[2] Lakshmidas Gandhi, elder brother of Gandhiji.
[3] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta, a friend of Gandhiji since his London sdays
[4] *Vide* "Petition to Chamberlain", December 31, 1898.

All the other grievances can wait for academic discussion. This brooks no delay.

Indians own land in the Borough of Durban worth over £l00,000 stg. Licenses have been refused with respect to some of the best premises, the property of Indians, in spite of excellent report by the Sanitary Inspector.

A merchant wants to dispose of his business. All his profits are in his stock. He cannot find a purchaser as there is no certainty that the purchaser can obtain a license.

I remain,
yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the office copy: S. N. 2949.

73. MEMORIAL TO LORD CURZON

DURBAN,
January 27, 1899

TO
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE GEORGE NATHANIEL
BARON CURZON OF KEDLESTON, VICEROY AND
GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA, CALCUTTA

THE MEMORIAL OF THE UNDERSIGNED, REPRESENTING THE BRITISH INDIANS, RESIDING IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH,

That your Memorialists venture to draw Your Excellency's attention to a copy of the memorial addressed to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies with reference to the Dealers' Licenses Act passed in the year 1897 by the Natal Legislature.

Your Excellency will notice therefrom that

(a) the Act complained of constitutes a present, real and tangible grievance, and, in the way it is being worked, is calculated to tell very seriously upon the acquired rights of the Indian traders residing in the Colony of Natal;

(b) that the interests at stake represent thousands of pounds;

(c) that the Natal Legislature has gone, as it is acknowledged by some of the Natal publicists, much further than even the

South African Republic has ventured to go;

(d) that the operation of the Act has turned out to be contrary to the assurance publicly given by the Right Honourable Harry Escombe, who carried the Act through, and was then the Prime Minister of the Colony, viz., that he had full confidence in the Town Councils and the Town Boards not disturbing the then existing trading licenses;

(e) that several Town Councils or Local Boards have already seriously interfered with the existing licenses, and threatened to do so yet more extensively.

Your Memorialists have, under such circumstances, prayed for either such an amendment of the Act as to bring it in harmony with British principles of justice, or suspension of the supply of indentured labour to the Colony.

Your Memorialists venture to think that the active and effective intervention of the Indian Government is necessary, if the rights of British Indians outside British India are to be rescued from extinction. Agreeably to the resolution of the Dundee Local Board to wipe out as many Asiaticsas possible, referred to in the Annexure, its Licensing Officer has, your Memorialists are informed, refused to renew the licenses of seven or eight Indian Storekeepers out of about sixteen. One of them, who has been refused the license, is the largest Indian Storekeeper in Dundee, having a stock of several thousands of pounds. The Licensing Officer at Newcastle has again refused to issue the three licenses—also referred to in the Annexure—that were withheld last year. The applicants are still doing all they can locally to secure their licenses. The result is not, therefore, yet final. It, however, sufficiently shows the seriousness of the position. Applications in many other places in the Colony are still under consideration.

Whatever the ultimate outcome this year, the possibility of mischief under the Act is, in your Memorialists' humble opinion, enormous, and your Memorialists earnestly hope and humbly pray that the prayer contained in the Annexure will receive Your Excellency's sympathetic and early consideration.

And for this act of justice and mercy your Memorialists, as in duty bound, shall ever pray, etc., etc.

(Sd.) MAHOMED CASSIM CAMROODEEN & CO.
AND OTHERS

From the photostat of an original printed copy: S. N. 2955.

74. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
February 20, 1899

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

Messrs. Amod Suliman, Ismail Mahomed Khota and Issa Hajee Soomar intend to visit the Transvaal. The first two hold return tickets, having come from the Transvaal on business. The last one has a large business in Standerton and he intends to go to that place to inspect his business. The first two are connected with a business in Heidelberg.

I shall be obliged if you will be good enough to secure for these gentlemen permits enabling them to go to the Transvaal.

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C. S. O. 1584/99.

75. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
February 28, 1899

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letters of the 25th and 27th inst. with reference to the permits for certain three Indians enabling them to visit the Transvaal.

I beg also to acknowledge your letter of the 25th inst., with reference to the permits for Indian gentlemen wishing to pay a visit to the Transvaal during the pendency of the proclamation of the Transvaal Government regarding the plague regulations, for which I

tender my humble thanks to the Government.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C. S. 0. 1584/99.

76. TELEGRAM TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

PIETERMARITZBURG,
February 28, 1899

HONOURABLE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SEVEN INDIANS BELONGING TO FIRM C LUCHERAM DURBAN AND CAPETOWN LEFT INDIA FOURTEENTH JANUARY. THEY ARE NOW AT DELAGOA BAY. FIVE OF THEM ARE MEANT FOR CAPETOWN AND TWO FOR DURBAN. ABLE TO UNDERGO TEST UNDER IMMIGRATION ACT. STEAMSHIP COMPANIES REFUSE TO TAKE THEM AS PASSENGERS FOR FEAR OF QUARANTINE. WILL GOVERNMENT BE PLEASED TO ASSURE COMPANIES THAT THEY NEED NOT FEAR QUARANTINE UNLESS DISEASE CROPS UP ON BOARD. FIVE WILL GO TO CAPETOWN AS SOON AS THEY CAN SECURE PASSAGE AND ALL SEVEN WILL SUBMIT TO ANY INLAND QUARANTINE GOVERNMENT MAY THINK FIT TO IMPOSE.

GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C. S. O. 1584/99.

77. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
March 1, 1899

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your telegrams of yesterday and today with reference to my application for certain seven Indians to be allowed to come from Delagoa Bay to the Colony.

In accordance with your instructions, I have communicated with

the Health Officer. In reply to your telegram of today, I beg to state that the men in question belong to Hyderabad, Sind, which place they left on the 4th January. They left Bombay on or about the 14th January by the S. S. *Safari* which, after calling at Lamu and Mombasa, went to Zanzibar. At Zanzibar they transshipped into the S.S. *General* on or about the 9th ult. They have now landed at Delagoa Bay. Two of them would remain in Natal and are not prohibited immigrants within the meaning of the Act. The other five want to come to the Colony as visitors. They would submit to any quarantine the Government may think fit to impose on land. The Companies would not issue a passage without an assurance from the Government that their ships would not, on account of the mere presence of Indians on board, be placed under quarantine.

Under the circumstances, I trust the Government would be pleased to make such orders as would enable the men to come to the Colony.

The usual deposits would be made for the five persons.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

M. K. GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C. S. O. Letter No. 1772/99.

78. LETTER TO THE TOWN COUNCIL

Gandhiji wrote the following letter to the Town Council of Pietermaritzburg when the entry of bubonic plague into Natal was apprehended in 1899.

DURBAN,
[Prior to *March 8, 1899*]

With reference to the sanitary precautions that are being taken to prevent the entry of bubonic plague into this Colony, may I suggest that a pamphlet giving detailed instructions as to sanitary rules, lime-washing, disinfecting, &c., might be of great use, and a useful supplement to the Corporation advertisement that appeared some time ago? If the suggestion is accepted, I shall be pleased to have the pamphlet translated in the Indian languages spoken in the Colony, and distributed free of charge, if necessary, the Corporation paying for the printing and postage.

The Natal Mercury, 8-3-1899

79. INDIAN TRADERS IN RHODESIA

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
March 11, 1899

TO
THE EDITOR
The Times of India
[BOMBAY]

SIR,

I venture to enclose herewith a copy of a letter received by the Indian community in Natal from the Indian traders in Umtali, Rhodesia.[1] The letter speaks for itself. The authorities seem to have rendered assistance to the Indians, but, in my humble opinion, nothing less than an emphatic declaration from the Colonial Office to the effect that the white settlers in British South Africa cannot with impunity interfere with the liberty of the British Indian settlers, in addition to adequate punishment to the wrong-doers, will meet the case. It will be noticed that Justices of the Peace and other prominent Europeans took part in the violence. The omission on the part of Mr. Chamberlain to take any notice of the unlawful proceedings of the Durban mob in 1897[2] has, I am afraid, led the white settlers to think that they can do anything they like with the Indians. In the Durban case there was no necessity to punish the mob. But we here feel that a despatch from Mr. Chamberlain strongly disapproving of the whole thing would have produced a salutary effect.

Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

(*Enclosure*)

UMTALI, RHODESIA,
January 22, [*1899*]

GENTLEMEN,

We beg to call your attention to the following circumstances.

We have been trading both at Beira and Macequece, and last March we applied

[1] *Vide* the enclosure.

[2] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897, Appendix-Y. Questioned by Wedderburn in Parliament on February 5, 1897, about the assault on Gandhiji on landing at Durban on January 13, the Secretary of State for the Colonies said that "the landing took place without opposition, except in the case of one person, who was assaulted but not Seriously hurt". (For Wedderburn).

for a licence to trade at Umtali in Rhodesia, which was granted in April. We then built a store, but found that the European traders were very indignant, and they held a meeting protesting against the issue of licences to British Indian subjects, as they considered them undesirable, but they were not supported by the High Commissioner.

We traded peacefully up to the 7th of last December, when a countryman of ours (a merchant of Beira) also applied for a trading licence, which he got. This again excited the traders of Umtali, and they laid the matter before the Chamber of Commerce, requesting that body to take the subject up and oppose the granting of licences to Asiatics. Their meetings were reported in the local papers, and had a serious effect upon the minds of the public. The Government, however, took little or no notice of the agitation. Later the European merchants of the town, headed by Justices of the Peace and officers of the local Volunteer force, in all a mob of about one hundred and fifty persons, attacked and broke into our store by violence about 9 p.m. on the 4th of January 1899. Seeing how violent the attitude of the mob was and how unlawful their action was, we were very frightened, but, fortunately before our persons or goods were removed over the Portuguese border, Inspector Birch, with some constables, came on the scene and informed the raiders that their action was grossly wrong and illegal, and that the ringleaders would be prosecuted.

The police only being ten in number, the raiders practically defied them. The Inspector fearing violence, which certainly would have been accompanied with loss of property, and possibly with loss of life, suggested that we should be allowed time to make arrangements about leaving. After a good deal of discussion, this was agreed to. Immediately the crowd had dispersed, the Inspector informed us that we were not even to think of going, but that he had merely suggested this allowance of time in order to summon assistance. All the available mounted police were then called in from old Umtali and guard placed over our store. The same evening about midnight fifteen Englishmen attacked the store of Allarakhia Hussein in this town. They broke the doors open, threw the goods about, assaulted the shop assistants and the policemen. The assistants, three in number, ran away, deserting the store, and leaving the goods to the mercy of thieves. Inspector Birch, acting on behalf of the Government, has rendered us all the protection in his power.

On the morning of the 5th January, the members of the Chamber of Commerce came over to our store, and reminded us that the time for packing up and going had already expired. We replied that matters were now altered. The promise to go was extracted from us by violence and not binding; further that there were sufficient police in the town to protect us from the mob. The members of the Chamber of Commerce then left in a dissatisfied humour. The ringleaders of this raiding had been bound over to keep the peace towards us for three months in sureties of one and two hundred pounds.

Two of them had been committed to the High Court for trial. We have resumed business as usual, but the Rhodesian merchants are now fighting the question of allowing Indian traders in Rhodesia.

Their first step will be to bring the matter before the new Legislative Council of Rhodesia praying them to grant power to local bodies to refuse licences to "undesirables" (which is the term they apply to us). They have been guided in this line of action by the decision recently upheld by the Privy Council regarding the refusal of the licensingsing board of Newcastle, Natal, to grant a licence to an Indian. We understand your Congress have taken this in hand.

In conclusion, we beg to inform you that, as the Europeans in South Africa in combination are fighting hard for our expulsion from this territory, we also desire to combine and fight for our rights as British subjects. We respectfully request you to give the matter your earnest consideration and take up our cause, and, in fact, that of the British Indian subjects in general.

As we are allowed to trade freely in some parts of South Africa both under the Portuguese, French, German, and Dutch Governments, we cannot understand why we should be opposed in British territory, seeing that we are by right under the protection of the British flag.

It appears also to us the Indian policy of Great Britain is directly opposed to the persecution of British Indian subjects.

We have communicated with our English agents about this matter, and also with Lord Curzon, Viceroy of India. We are determined to have the matter brought before the British parliament, and we would pray for your assistance in fighting out this great question upon constitutional lines.

p.p. NATHOO VALLEY & CO.,
B. R. NAIK
ALLARAKHIA HUSSEIN

The Times of India (Weakly edition), 15-4-1899

80. THE PLAGUE PANIC IN SOUTH AFRICA[1]

DURBAN,
March 20, [*1899*]

The cup of woe of the Indians in South Africa evidently does not appear to have as yet become full; and the bubonic plague promises to fill that cup well up to the brim. A rumour, now proved to

[1] This is one of a series of special articles on the treatment of Indians in South Africa contributed by Gandhiji to *The Times of India*. The other articles are dated May 17, July 12, October 27, November 18 and *post* March 14, 1900.

be false, that there was a plague case in Lourenco Marques, created quite a sensation in South Africa, and the various Governments of this continent began to adopt stringent measures applicable chiefly to the Indians. While this was going on, it was rumoured that an Indian who, after having been in Lourenco Marques for some time, had gone to a place called Middelburg in the Transvaal, had died of the bubonic plague. It was at once assumed that no period could be definitely assigned for incubation, and entire prohibition of Indian immigration was suggested. The Transvaal Government issued a proclamation prohibiting the entry of Indians into their country from even the neighbouring States, no matter whether the Indian desiring an entry was a very old resident of one of these States or whether he was a new arrival from India, unless he was armed with a permit from the State Secretary—a permit, it may be said, not easily obtainable by any and every Indian. Internal travelling, too, by the Indians was practically suspended. At the time of writing this, a telegram appearsin the newspapers, saying that the proclamation above referred to has been modified to the extent that the Indians would be allowed to enter the territory without a permit on their satisfying the officer at the border that they are not recent arrivals from Mauritius, Madagascar, or any of the infected districts of India.

The medical gentleman who conducted the *post mortem* examination in the case above referred to had reported that the case was not one of the bubonic plague. Mischief, however, has been done, and there is a hysterical scare throughout South Africa. In Lourenco Marques, a most malarial district noted for insanitation and without any sanitary service, the regulations regarding the plague, it would appear. from the meagre news telegraphed from that place, are not only most stringent and unreasonable but oppressive and unbusinesslike. In the Transvaal, business amongst the Indians is suffering seriously. Several unfortunate hawkers came to Natal to buy their stuff; they are now most of them shut out. They have left their goods and their book debts behind them. As may be imagined, they cannot afford to obtain the permit; nor could they, without much difficulty, pass through the examination by the Transvaal officials. It is said—that is to say, the hawkers themselves complain—that in the Transvaal itself they are not allowed to hawk their goods about. This reacts upon the Indian firms that are dependent on these hawkers.

The Cape Government do not appear to have lost their heads; but an agitation has been going on, calling upon the Government to

prohibit any Indian from landing at any of the Cape ports. A few days ago, a meeting was held in Port Elizabeth, when speeches of a more or less violent character were made, some of the speakers going so far as to say, if the Government would not conform to the wishes of the people of Port Elizabeth, they would have to take the law in their own hands. The Natal Government are evidently anxious not to be carried away by the scare; but, it is feared, that they will not long be able to retain their self-possession.

There are two conflicting interests at work in Natal. On the one hand, the farmers and the planters, who are, all over the Colony, entirely dependent on the indentured Indian labour, cannot afford to do without a continuous supply of such labour; on the other, the people in the towns and the cities, such as Durban and Maritzburg, having no such interests at stake, would gladly see the entire prohibition of Indian immigration, indentured or otherwise. It is interesting to note that, throughout the whole controversy, the people of South Africa have not once allowed themselves to think of Indian interests. It seems to have been tacitly assumed that the Indians who are at present resident in South Africa need not be taken into consideration at all. It does not appear to have struck them that these men, some of them very well-to-do and respectable, may have to bring their wives and children or servants from India. People in India would be surprised to learn that a suggestion has been seriously made that the Indians should be compelled to live on mealie (maize) meal, when the present stock of rice in the Colony is exhausted; and, as for other foodstuffs and the materials for dress imported from India, that, of course, is a mere detail. The Maritzburg Town Council has issued a circular addressed to the Indian storekeepers in that borough, informing them that they should begin to reduce their stock as they might, in view of the near approach of the plague, be called upon, each and all of them, to remove to a Location. Steamship companies, even the very best of them, entirely refuse to take Indian passengers for any of the South African ports. Several Indian merchants are suffering great inconvenience and undergoing terrible anxiety owing to members of their family or partners being in Lourenco Marques and yet not being allowed to come to Natal—not that Lourenco Marques has been declared to be an infected port, or that there is any plague there. Natal has used itself now to indirect and questionable methods of achieving its purpose, as witness its anti-Asiatic legislation, wherein an innocent person would fail to find

the slightest mention of Indians. The same course has been adopted, so it would seem, with reference to the plague. No ship that brings an Indian is allowed *pratique*—by the Health Officer without reference to the Government—a procedure which of itself necessitates the detention of such a ship; although, it must be remembered, there may be no sickness on board, and the ship may have come from a clear port. Naturally (that is to say, in South Africa, for one would have thought that first-class steamship companies would not, through fear of vexatious quarantine, abandon their function; *viz.*, the carrying of passengers from one place to another), therefore, the steamship companies refuse to take any Indian passengers. The Government have suspended indentured immigration for the time being, save as to those awaiting departure at Calcutta.

As if all this was not sufficient, the Maritzburg people met in the Town Hall of that place a few days ago, when the Borough medical officer delivered a violent harangue in support of a drastic resolution. Owing to an agitation advocating an entire stoppage of the import of rice and other foodstuffs from India, the Government here asked the Indian Government whether rice was considered to be susceptible to infection. The Indian Government have replied in the negative. Dr. Allen, the officer in question, thus impeaches your Government:

> He supposed that they had all read the telegram which had been despatched to the Indian Government and the reply which had been received and published. He would like to ask them if they thought it likely that, if the Attorney-General had a prisoner in one of the Government gaols suffering under an accusation of some offence, that, the Attorney-General would telegraph to him and say: 'Are you guilty or not?' He thought they would have no hesitation in saying what answer the gentleman in the gaol would telegraph back. He would say that the answer would be an emphatic 'no'....The Attorney-General would not apply the principle to his own trade....He dared to apply it in this stupendous question, and to bring it forward as evidence that they were free from danger. The evidence was as worthless as it was in the case of the prisoner.

The foregoing suggests many sad reflections. It is beyond question that all this agitation [and] all this panic, have their source not in anentirely bonafide fear of the bubonic plague, but in the anti-Indian prejudice which is due chiefly to trade jealousy. That spirit Pervades the proceedings of the plague meeting in Maritzburg, more particularly, Dr. Allen's speech. In his estimation, everything Indian is

bad. He did not hesitate to impute corrupt motives to what he calls the "low officials" of the Indian Government. He said:

> But a very strange thing occurred in Bombay which it was important for them to remember, and this was that the number of deaths from dysentery and diarrhoea rose above the normal by 50,000. The Government of Bombay were well aware that those cases, or the greater number of them, were cases of plague, and that influential Indians were able to get the deaths which took place in their family registered by native practitioners under other heads so as to escape the visit of the sanitary officers. That kind of thing pervaded the whole of India. . . . The Commission proved clearly that the same thing was going on in Calcutta . . . . That was known to the Government, but, chiefly because they feared a riot, they did not do it. . . The Indian Government absolutely could not depend upon its petty officers with regard to that plague. There was deceit right through the lower officers of the Indian Government as to where the plague was.

If it is an Indian ship it must have a secret manifest. Infection, unlike everywhere else, is in South Africa personal to the Indian. He and his goods only can bring the infection. No objection is taken to other passengers, even though they may come from infected districts. The steamship companies that touch Madagascar and Mauritius, which are declared to be infected ports, may bring European passengers but dare not bring Indians. It must be admitted that the Natal Government, as well as the Cape Government, are most anxious to avoid injustice being done during the panic. But they are so afraid of the voters, to whom the present members owe their position, that unconsciously but nonetheless surely, much needless inconvenience is caused to Indians. Heaven spare us from an actual visitation of the plague; if it does come, the condition in which the poor Indians will find themselves is too dreadful to contemplate. It is at times like this that the deplorable omission on the part of Mr. Chamberlain to take any notice of the illegal proceedings of the Durban mob[1] in the beginning of 1897, when for twelve days practically the Government abdicated their function in favour of a mob, is felt. In a continent like this, where there are diverse and conflicting interests belonging to the various races, the strong and powerful influence of the Home Government is ever necessary. Once give latitude to a particular section of the various peoples, and you never know when an ebullition will take place. Already, as stated before, the Port Elizabeth people have threatened to

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897, *et seq.*

take the law in their own hands should the Government refuse to bend their will to their own. Anonymous letters have been appearing in the newspapers in Durban advocating the same policy; and this bird's-eye view of the history of the plague panic, which has by no means yet died out, may fittingly close with the following extract from the correspondence to *The Natal Mercury* which is, perhaps, a fair sample of the feeling of the man in the street in this part of the world:

> . . .If Government are timid and irresolute in action, let the people act for themselves, and go en *masse* again to the Point, and camp out there this time to stop all Asiatics from landing. We do not want them here at any price. Let the objectionable Indian immigration stop once and for ever; and I, for one, would join a crusade to make it too hot for those that are here.

The Times of India (Weekly edition), 22-4-1899

81. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
March 22, 1899

THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

The Indian community have noticed with satisfaction the removal of the fee of £l for visitors on embarkation passes under the Immigration Restrictions Act.

I may state that before drafting the petition about this matter alluded to in the petition regarding the Dealers' Licenses Act,[1] I was asked to collect the opinions of the learned lawyers in the Colony and, in the event of a favourable opinion being received, to approach the Government again with a view to urging the removal of the rule in question and that the opinions so far received favour the view that the rule in question was illegal.

I am to request you to bring the contents of this letter to the notice of the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the. Colonies so as to inform him that the Government have graciously

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Chamberlain", 31-12-1898, *supra.*

removed the cause of complaint as to the £1 fee.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your most obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure No. I in Despatch 29 from Governor of Natal to H. M. Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies dated 25th March '99.

Colonial Office Records: Memorials and Petitions, 1899.

82. MEMORIAL TO CHAMBERLAIN

PRETORIA,
May 16, 1899[1]

TO
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN
HER MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR THE COLONIES

THE MEMORIAL OF THE UNDERSIGNED REPRESENTING THE BRITISH INDIANS RESIDING IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC

HUMBLY SHEWETH,

That your Memorialists regret that they have again to trouble Her Majesty's Government with reference to the unfortunate and embarrassing position in which the British Indians in the South African Republic are placed.

On seeing the correspondence between the Government and Sir William Wedderburn,[2] a short while ago, your Memorialists had hoped that the trouble of the British Indians in the Transvaal was practically over, but the Notice of the Government of the South African Republic,

[1] As per Colonial Office Records. The printed copy of the memorial bears only 'May 1899'. The reference in the dispatch to *The Times of India,* dated May 17, 1899, to this memorial implies that it is an earlier document. But it is evident from the letter of May 27, 1899, addressed to Wedderburn, that the memorial, which was submitted to the British Agent at Pretoria, was not dispatched to the Secretary of State for the Colonies till May 27.

[2] The reference is to Wedderburn's letter of January 13, 1899 in regard to the Locations Notice and Chamberlain's reply of February 15, in which it was stated that the British High Commissioner would try, in the course of his talks with President Kruger, to arrive at "some arrangement of a favourable character to the Indian traders". (*India,* 24-2-1899.) Milner's attempts in this direction, however, bore no fruit as his talks with Kruger at Bloemfontein broke down on the question of franchise.

published in the *Staats Courant* dated 26th April, 1899 (copy of translation whereof is hereto attached), and which necessitates a further representation, soon followed to undeceive the British Indians residing in the Republic; and it would appear that this time the Republican Government intend seriously to enforce the Law 3 of 1885, as amended in 1886. There is a reference to the matter in the Presidential speech, too, delivered on the opening of the Volksraad.

Your Memorialists venture to draw your attention to the fact that ever since the judgment in the matter of Tayob Haji Khan Mahomed *vs.* F. W. Reitz. N. O.,[1] the Indian community in the Republic has known no rest. Several Notices were published with reference to the summary removal of the Indians to Locations. This has naturally dislocated their trade, and given rise to much uneasiness.

Your Memorialists would sooner welcome a final settlement of what is to them a momentous issue than a painfully unsettled state. It is respectfully submitted that, apart from the question urged in the last memorial[2] as to the decision of the majority of the Court in the case above referred to, there are questions arising out of the Law and the Notice, the subject matter hereof, which would justify effective interference on the part of Her Majesty's Government.

Unlike, as in the previous Notices, the Transvaal Government have, in the present Notice, closely followed the Law 3 of 1885, with its amendment. The first part of the preamble of the Notice proceeds:

> Whereas Law 3 of 1885, Article 3 (d), gives the Government the right to point out for sanitary purposes certain streets, wards and Locations for habitation to persons belonging to one of the aboriginal races of Asia, including the so-called Coolies, Arabs, Malays, and Mahometan subjects of the Turkish Empire. . . .

Her Majesty's Government have accepted the Law. The Courts of the South African Republic have interpreted it to mean that the word habitation includes the dwelling place as well as the place of business. Thus far, therefore, your Memorialists have to submit to the inevitable. But they take the liberty to point out, as they have done before, that the Law gives the Government the power under certain conditions, and with respect to certain persons only. They should prove to the satisfaction of Her Majesty's Government that sanitary

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to the Viceroy of India" August 19, 1898.

[2] *Vide* 1st footnote of, "Petition to Indian National Congress", 22-8-1898, *supra.*

reasons exist for the removal of the persons affected by the Law, and that those reasons, and those alone, guide their action before they could summarily remove such persons to Locations. It is further submitted that they should prove that your Memorialists are the persons referred to in the Law.

Your Memorialists have endeavoured to show in the memorial[1] printed in the Blue Book C. 7911, of 1895, pp. 35-44, that there are no sanitary grounds for the removal of the Indians to the Locations, and that the reasons for such removal are to be sought for, not in the alleged insanitary habits of the Indians, but in trade jealousy. Your Memorialists make no apology for reproducing the testimony then produced to controvert the charge of insanitation brought against the Indian community in the Republic. Dr. Veale, of Pretoria, who has a considerable practice among the Indians, stated in 1895:

> I have generally found them cleanly in their persons, and free from the personal diseases due to dirt or careless habits. Their dwellings are generally clean, and sanitation is willingly attended to by them. Class considered, I should be of opinion that the lowest class Indian lives better, and in better habitation, and with more regard to sanitary measures than the lowest class white....Generally, in my opinion, it is impossible to object to the Indian on sanitary grounds, provided always the inspection of the sanitary authorities is made as strictly and as regularly for the Indian as for the white.

Dr. Spink, of Johannesburg, stated that the 'residences of the bearers of this note' were 'in a sanitary and hygienic condition, and in fact suchas any European might inhabit,. Dr. Nahmmacher, of the same place, said:

> Having frequently occasion to visit the better class of the Indian population of Johannesburg (merchants &c., coming from Bombay) in my professional quality, I give as my opinion that they are as clean in their habits and domestic life as white people of the same standing.

Over thirty European firms of Johannesburg said:

> The aforementioned Indian merchants, the majority of whom come from Bombay, keep their business places as well as their residences in a clean ant proper sanitary state—in fact, just as good as the Europeans. That it is a distinct error in calling them coolies, or inhabitants of British India of a lower caste, as they decidedly belong to the better and higher caste of India.

What was true in 1895 is none the less so in 1899. Even at the

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

time of the recent plague scare, so far as your Memorialists are aware, there was nothing of a serious nature to be found against them. It is not contended that there are, no Indians in the Transvaal over whom sanitary supervision is unnecessary; but your Memorialists do submit, without fear of contradiction, that a charge justifying the wholesale removal of Indians to a Location cannot be brought home to them. Your Memorialists submit that isolated cases of insanitation could be effectively dealt with under the sanitary regulations, and your Memorialists could have no objection to such regulations being made stricter, if necessary.

Your Memorialists have always respectfully insisted that the Law does not apply to the better-class Indians from which class the traders are drawn, and against whom alone the whole agitation is, in fact, directed. Can it be too much to request Her Majesty's Government to keep the Government of the South African Republic to the exact wording of the Law which applies to 'aboriginal races of Asia, among whom are comprehended the so-called coolies, Arabs, Malays, and Mahomedan subjects of the Turkish Empire'? Your Memorialists respectfully but emphatically protest against the term 'coolie' being applied to them. They are certainly not Arabs, neither Malays, nor Mahomedan subjects of the Turkish Empire. They claim to be loyal, peaceful and humble subjects of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen-Empress, whose protection they seek in their struggle against prejudice and trade jealousy, which protection, they feel confident, will be extended to them. In your address to the Colonial Premiers, on the occasion of their visit to London in the year of the Diamond Jubilee, you were graciously pleased to refer to the Indians in most flattering terms. May your Memorialists hope for the practical application of the ideas therein expressed to the British Indians in the South African Republic? It will be a great Birthday honour for the British Indians in South Africa to have the insult implied in the above terms removed, and their status well defined in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the Gracious Proclamation of 1857.[1]

The Government of the South African Republic have the 'power for sanitary purposes of showing them (Coolies, Arabs, &c.,) fixed streets, wards, and Locations for habitation', that is to say, in the respective townships, not the power to 'force' them, in the words of

[1] This is either a misprint in the printed copy or a slip in the original. The Proclamation was issued in 1858.

His Honour the late British Agent, 'into a small Location on a spot used as a place to deposit the refuse of the town without any water except polluted soakage in the gully between the Location and the town', which 'must inevitably result in malignant fevers and other diseases breaking out amongst them, whereby their lives and the health of the community in the town would be endangered.' Even if it were necessary to separate the Indian community from the European, it is difficult to understand why the former should be relegated to a place where they cannot trade, where there are no sanitary conveniences, and where there is no water supply. Your Memorialists respectfully submit that streets and wards could with equal facility be selected in a more convenient place in the townships themselves, if there were no other reasons than the sanitary.

In conclusion, your Memorialists venture to draw your attention to the comparatively enormous interests that are at stake, and the ruin that would be caused, by the contemplated removal, to the Indian traders, and to lay the matter in the hands of Her Majesty's Government in the full hope that some definite and satisfactory solution of the difficulty in which they are placed will be arrived at.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Memorialists, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, &c., &c.

(Sd.) TAYOB HAJEE KHAN MAHOMED
AND OTHERS

APPENDIX

THE NEW REGULATIONS

PUBLISHED IN *Staats Courant*, APRIL 26, 1899

Whereas Law 3 of 1885, Article 2 (d), gives the Government the right to point out, for sanitation purposes, certain streets, wards, and Locations for habitation ("ter bewoning") to persons belonging to one of the Aboriginal races of Asia, including the so-called Coolies, Arabs, Malays, and Mahomedan subjects of the Turkish Empire; whereas, according to the judgment of the High Court in the case of Tayob Hajee Khan Mahomed *vs*. F. W. Reitz, N. O., these places can be pointed out for business as well as residential purposes; whereas the Government has deemed fit to point out such streets, wards, and Locations for the said purposes, in, at, or adjoining the proclaimed established dorpen (villages) and standdorpen, and have the same surveyed and brought into order; whereas it is desirable for the proper control of the sanitary condition of the streets, wards, and Locations pointed out, as stated, that the same shall be placed under the local authority or board; so therefore I, Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger, State President of the South African Republic, with advice and consent of the Executive Council, by virtue of the Article 420 of its minutes of

24th April, 1899, proclaim and stipulate as follows:

The streets, wards, and Locations in, at, or adjoining the villages or standdorpen pointed out and surveyed as places of residence and business for the said persons, which do not form part of such villages or standdorpen, and which do not fall under the local authorities or board of management, shall, as from now, form part of such villages or standdorpen, and are placed under such authority or board, be it the local Landdrost, Mining Commissioner, Responsible Clerk, or any Town Council, or Town Board. God save "Land en Volk."

Given under my hand at the Government Office, Pretoria, this 25th April, 1899.

S.J.P. KRUGER,
STATE PRESIDENT

F. W. REITZ,
STATE SECRETARY

The following Government Notice is likewise published, viz., reference to the Government Notice of November 18, 1898, No. 621, published in the *Staats Courant,* No. 621, of November 23, 1898:

"The following is additionally made known for general information:

1. Coolies, Arabs, and other Asiatic coloured persons, who do not yet live and do business in the streets, wards, and Locations pointed out for that purpose, but live and do business, in conflict with the law, in a village or standdorp, outside the streets, wards, and Locations pointed out, or at any other place not pointed out for this purpose, outside a village or standdorp, shall go and live, and do business, before July 1, 1899, in the streets, wards, and Locations pointed out for that purpose, according to Law 3 of 1885, regarding Coolies, Arabs, and other Asiatics, and in particular Article 2, Section D, thereof, which, after amendment by the Volksraad besluit, Article 1, 419 of August 12, 1886, reads as follows, viz.: 'The Government shall-have the right, for sanitation purposes, to point out for habitation ('ter bewoning') by them (that is, Coolies, Arabs, and other Asiatic coloured persons), fixed streets, wards, and Locations.' This stipulation is not applicable to those who live on their masters' premises."

2. In terms of the above, Arabs and other Asiatics shall get a licence, after June 30, 1899, only for a business in the streets, wards, and Locations pointed out according to law.

3. Coolies, Arabs, and other Asiatics, who now still do business outside the streets, wards, and Locations pointed out for that purpose, shall have to take out a licence therefor until June 30, 1899, and after that date such licence will only be granted them for carrying on business in streets, wards, and Locations pointed out according to law.

4. Hawkers' licences can be issued to Coolies and other Asiatics and coloured persons who live in the streets, wards, and Locations pointed out for that purpose for

the quarter ending June 30, 1899.

5. Coolies, Arabs, and other Asiatics who live and do business at places outside a village or standdorp, are given time until July 1, 1899, to remove their dwelling and business to the streets, wards, and Locations pointed out, in terms of the law. They must, however, also take out a licence for their business until June 30, 1899.

6. After the above fixed date, June 30, 1899, the Coolies, Arabs, and other Asiatics concerned, shall be granted no licences for business or trading purposes outside the streets, wards, and Locations pointed out for that purpose, and those who trade or carry on business after the said date, without licence, outside the streets, wards, and Locations pointed out, shall be punished according to law.

7. Coolies, Arabs, and other Asiatics who consider that on the ground of contracts, closed or otherwise, they may claim longer time, must apply for such at least six weeks before July I, 1899, giving the reasons for so doing to the Landdrost or Mining Commissioner, who shall notify the Government, and give his explanations and advice

8. Likewise shall Coolies, Arabs, and other Asiatics, who consider they do not fall under the said amended Law 3 of 1885 (be it because they entered into a long lasting lease or contract before 1899, the time of which has not yet lapsed, or because they received transfer) at least six weeks before July I, 1899, give notice, together with reasons, to the Landdrost or Mining Commissioner, who shall notify the Government of it, and give his explanations and advice.

9. It shall be left to the discretion of Landdrosts and Mining Commissioners to exercise some consideration with reference to the said date, July 1, 1899, when it appears that Coolies, Arabs, etc., show their willingness to obey the law by building dwellings in the streets, wards, and Locations pointed out, but cannot finish these dwellings within the stipulated time.

10. The Government is willing, if such request is made, to meet the Coolies, Arabs, etc., who do business by favourably considering the granting of a piece of ground in the streets, wards, and Locations pointed out for the establishment of a bazaar or covered building with shops.

(Signed) F. W. REITZ,
STATE SECRETARY

Government Office, Pretoria,

April 25, 1899

From the photostat of an original printed copy: S. Nos. 3198, 3199 and 3200.

83. INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL[1]

DURBAN,
May 17, [*1899*]

I propose in this letter to give a bird's-eye view of the series of blunders committed by one Colonial Secretary after another in Her Majesty's name, whereby inch by inch they gave up the case of the British Indians in the South African Republic, and which have now culminated in a pompous notice issued by the Government of that Republic, calling upon the Indians, on pain of being deprived of their licenses, to remove to Locations which have been described by the eminent writer of the series of articles headed "Indian Affairs" in *The Times* (London) as "Jewish ghettoes", and by one of Her Majesty's British Agents in Pretoria as a spot used as a place to deposit the refuse of the town, without any water except the polluted soakage in the gully between the Location and the town." In the course of a single newspaper article I must be brief, and cannot afford, in a rapid survey of the situation, to give lengthy quotations. For the edification of. the curious and those who would care to learn the full history of the question, I must refer them to a Blue book, published in 1895, on the question (Papers relating to the Grievances of Her Majesty's Indian subjects in the South African Republic—C. 7911, 1895), and two Green Books of the Transvaal Government published in the year 1894, from which and other recent literature I have extracted the following summary:

As early as 1884, when the presence of a respectable number of Indian traders in the Republic attracted general notice, and their success the jealousy of their European rivals, the Transvaal Government, yielding to the outcry of a few interested merchants who thought nothing, in order to gain their end, of making what may fairly be called deliberate misrepresentations about the docile Indians' habits and morals (as witness the following quotations from a libellous petition presented by the Europeans to the Orange Free State Volksraad, and sent approvingly to the Transvaal Volksraad by the Pretoria Chamber of Commerce: "The dangers to which the whole community is exposed by the spread of leprosy, syphilis and the like loathsome diseases engendered by filthy habits and immoral practices of these people. . . . As these men enter the State without wives or female relatives, the result is obvious. Their religion teaches them to

[1] *Vide* footnote, "The Plague Panic in South Africa", 20-3-1899, *supra.*

consider all women as soul-less, and Christians as natural prey.") proposed to enact severe laws with a view to drive the Indians out of the Transvaal by imposing a poll-tax of £25 on each new arrival, and by compelling those that would live under such conditions and the old residents to reside and trade in Locations which, in plain terms would mean denying them the right of trading. The London Convention of 1884 which, owing to other causes, has now come into such prominence, however, stared the Government in the face. This Convention protects the rights as to trading, &c., of all other than natives of South Africa. Nothing daunted, by. a reasoning worthy of the Boer Government, they proposed to include the Indians in the term—Natives. This, however, was too much, even for the obliging

High Commissioner, Sir Hercules Robinson, who let them understand that the British Indians could not be included in the term "natives of South Africa". But (and here mark the first blunder) without going into the allegations against the Indians that were brought to his notice, he was prepared to advise Her Majesty's Government to agree to such an amendment of the Convention as would enable the Boer Government to pass anti-Indian legislation. Lord Derby, however, knew better, and instead of adopting that suggestion, he was prepared to let the Transvaal Government pass the laws in the interests of *public health*, provided that the £25 were reduced to £3, and that a clause was added stating that, for sanitary reasons, the Indians could be made to reside in Locations. Thus, he, too, instead of examining the allegations, took what the Transvaal authorities said for granted, and bartered away with a light heart the vested rights of the Indians, all the while remaining under the delusion created by one of the High Commissioner's. despatches, that the law, as it applied to the so-called coolies, &c., would leave the respectable Indian merchants untouched.

No sooner, however, was the law passed, than the Colonial Office was undeceived. The very persons who it was thought were left out, were called upon to remove to Locations, and found themselves deprived of their right to own landed property, travel first or second class on the railways, and generally classed among the raw Zulus. It did not strike either the High Commissioner or the authorities in Downing Street to secure a promise from the Transvaal Government to leave those people untouched. Their mental reservation at the time of assenting to the legislation could not, and that quite naturally, bind the Republican Government. A series of negotiations took place

between the Indians and the British Agent on the one hand, and the High Commissioner and the Transvaal Government on the other, the former trying, it must be said, though in a half-hearted manner, to regain the lost ground. All along, however, the Transvaal Government very naturally have scored heavily. Lord Ripon came to the helm when the thing was one mass of confusion, and he suggested arbitration as to the interpretation of the laws. Unfortunately, however, even then the real question was left untouched. The submission was, so those who are qualified to judge say, loosely drawn, and a gentleman, however estimable in other respects, but with a great bias against the Indians, was selected as the arbitrator, *viz.*, the Chief Justice of the Orange Free State. It may be here parenthetically remarked that this arbitration has been used by President Kruger as a precedent for having other questions of dispute between the two Governments referred to arbitration, and it must have caused Mr. Chamberlain many an anxious half-hour in order to get rid of the dilemma. The arbitrator sat, and he too would not discuss the question whether there were any grounds for the charge of wholesale insanitation against the Indians. Armed as he was with the widest powers, he made liberal use of them, and delivered an award[1] which left the Indians entirety where they were. He was asked, regard being had to the despatches that had passed between the two Governments—despatches which could not possibly be considered by a judicial tribunal, but which could very properly be considered by him—to interpret the laws, and to say to whom they applied and what was the meaning of the word "habitation". (If the last question put to the arbitrator excites a smile in Bombay, my answer is, South Africa is not Bombay.) The arbitrator, however, learned lawyer though he was, did nothing of the kind, but delegated his function to the Transvaal Courts, that is to say, he decided that the interpretation of the laws could only be given by those Courts.

As soon as the precious award was published, the Indians approached the Colonial Secretary, and besought him not to accept the award, and protested that they were allowed to have no voice in all these proceedings—not even as to the selection of an arbitrator. To a lay mind it would appear that there would have been absolutely nothing wrong in Mr. Chamberlain insisting upon the arbitrator giving his interpretations of the laws in view of the despatches. The

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

Indians produced voluminous evidence to prove that the assent to the laws was obtained under misrepresentations; that the charge of insanitation was groundless, three medical gentlemen of standing in the Transvaal certifying that the Indians lived as well as the Europeans and one of them going so far as to say that, class considered, they lived better and in better habitations than the Europeans, and that the real reason which was all along suppressed was trade jealousy. This resulted in extorting from Mr. Chamberlain the certificate that the Indians were a "peaceable", law-abiding, and meritorious body of persons, with their undoubted industry and intelligence, and their indomitable perseverance. But the certificate is one thing, and relief is quite another. The Test Case[1] that was tried last year is still fresh in the public mind. As will be recollected, it resulted in the interpretation of the laws which was forestalled by the memorial of the Indians above referred to, that is to say, in the opinion of the Judges of the High Court of Pretoria the phrase "for the purposes of habitation" means "for the purposes of dwelling and business". The last ray of hope, therefore, that was left for the unfortunate Indians in the Transvaal disappeared with this last act of the tragedy. Notices after notices have been issued by the Transvaal Government threatening to remove the Indians to Locations. This has disorganised their trade, unsettled their minds, and they are resting on the edge of a sword. The correspondence between the Colonial Secretary and Sir William Wedderburn, early this year, came as a bright spark in the darkness. But, alas! It was only a spark, for the pompous notice above referred to has again created a panic, and the poor people do not know where they are and what to do. The notice is supposed to be a final notice— it reads more like an old-fashioned legal document with many whereas-es and contains copious references to the anti-Indian laws passed, and calls upon "the aboriginal races of Asia, among whom are included the so-called coolies, Arabs, Malays, and Mahomedan subjects of the Turkish Empire", to remove to Locations on or before the 1st of July, provided, however, that the Government might — (observe the vagueness when it is a matter of granting a concession) — allow those holding long leases to live out the term of their leases in their present places of business.

Such is the awkward position that awaits Her Majesty's Indian subjects in the South African Republic, whose only fault is that they

[1] *Vide* "Letter to the British Agent", February 28, 1898.

are frugal, industrious, abstemious, and fond of earning a livelihood by honest means. They have made a desperate effort and sent again a representation to Mr. Chamberlain[1] asking him to present them with a Birthday honour in the shape of a clear definition of their status in that gold-producing country. We all await anxiously the result of the representation. In justice to the indefatigable Colonial Secretary, it must be confessed that he has only inherited the errors of his predecessors, and there is no doubt that he is doing what he considers to be his best to regain the lost ground. May he succeed in his efforts is the prayer of every Indian in South Africa.

The Times of India (Weekly edition), 17-6-1899

84. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14 MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
May 18, 1899

MR. C. BIRD
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

With some diffidence I venture to draw your attention hereby to some aspects of the Bill to amend Indian Immigration Law, now before the Legislative Assembly.

I understand the Bill has been drafted in reply to the complaint of the Indian Immigration Trust Board as to the alleged frequency of the complaints made by the indentured Indians, which are said to be used as a pretext by the complainants to leave their work.

The Bill proposes to remedy the alleged evil—

(1) by making it lawful for the Protector, the Assistant Protector or any Magistrate to cause any complainant to be sent back after he has lodged his complaint;

(2) by authorising the employer under certain circumstances to deduct the expenses of the safe return of the complainant;

(3) by making the complainant under those certain circumstances liable to be punished as if he was illegally absent.

With deference, it is submitted that this Bill would render more difficult the precarious position of men serving under indentured

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Chamberlain", May 16, 1899.

labour which has been acknowledged, by the Imperial Government, to be a necessary evil and, by those best acquainted with such form of labour, to be "semi-slavery" or "a state perilously near to slavery".

In my humble opinion, the existing law coupled with the decision of the Supreme Court in the matter of Ramsamy and the Protector of Indian Immigrants is sufficient to meet the requirements of the employers, if it does not, indeed, act as a deterrent even against bona fide complaints. No law will be, can be, sufficient for those who would not work and would rather 'rot' in the gaol than do honest work. If, however, the Government consider it necessary to conciliate the employers and make the existing law more explicit, I feel that nothing need be said from the Indian standpoint against the proposed amendment so far as the first two alterations are concerned. But I venture to submit that the last clause, viz., the power to charge a complainant with illegal absence when, rightly or wrongly, he fancies he can leave his work with immunity in order to make a complaint, is uncalled for and is calculated to interfere with the right, reserved under the Law 25 of 1891, to leave his work for the sake ofmaking his complaint. An Indian may fancy that he has a wrong to be redressed in that he does not get ghee instead of oil. The complaint would, in all probability, be treated as frivolous by a Magistrate or Protector; nonetheless, I hardly think the frivolity is so great as to turn him from complainant into defendant. I submit that every facility should be given to a man, who honestly believes that he has a complaint, to make it, and this the proposed amendment does not do, unless a legal and logical mind is to be attributed to an average indentured Indian.

The safeguards provided against frivolous complaints, it is submitted, are sufficiently severe without the addition of the penalty clause. The deduction of wages is perhaps more painful for an indentured Indian than imprisonment.

The fact that the Bill, if I read it rightly, is an enabling Bill, does not, in my humble opinion, in any way weaken the above argument. I have some little experience of the working of the present law. The manner in which these trials take place does not always favour the complainants and the Magistrates, being unable to wade through a maze of exaggeration, are often obliged to set down complaints as "vexatious and frivolous" though they may be perfectly true.

The remedy, if I may suggest one, and if, indeed, it is necessary, is to be found in a speedy settlement of such complaints. An Act to

give these complaints a preference to be heard before all others, and enabling the prosecutor to bring these cases up on the shortest notice, and perhaps compelling other work from such men, while away from their estates, so as to discourage idleness, would meet the evil if it does exist to any great extent, without curtailing the liberty of the persons affected, or without rendering it next to impossible for them to complain.

I beg to be excused for the lengthy argument; as I know the Government are anxious to do justice between man and man and to hear both sides of the case, I thought I would be failing in my duty if I did not place before the Government the view that the Indians have taken of it. The employers of labour from the very nature of their position can take only one view of the question. The free Indians, being the kith and kin of the indentured Indians and not being employers, may be allowed to take a dispassionate view.

Under the circumstances, may I venture to hope that the Government would be graciously pleased to take out the clause complained of or so alter it as not to deprive the indentured Indian practically of his right of complaint.[1]

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Ref. No. C.S.O. 1614, File No. 3842, Natal Archives, Pietermaritzburg.

85. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
May 19, 1899

TO
THE HONOURABLE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I have the honour to enclose herewith copy of the message which the representative Indians intend to send by cable to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies on the 24th

[1] The Colonial Secretary, replying on May 29, 1899, did not accept Gandhiji's proposal.

inst., tendering their humble and loyal congratulations to Her Majesty on her eightieth birthday, and, by their desire, to request you to forward same.

I am to add that on receipt of a memo of monies spent from you I am authorised to forward you a cheque.[1]

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient *servant*
M. K. GANDHI

l. Enclosure[2]

Pietermaritzburg Archives: G.C.O. 3903/99.

86. CABLE TO QUEEN ON HER BIRTHDAY

DURBAN,
May 19, 1899

NATAL INDIANS TENDER HUMBLE AND LOYAL CONGRATULATIONS TO HER MAJESTY ON HER EIGHTIETH BIRTHDAY. FERVENTLY PRAYING ALMIGHTY MAY SHOWER CHOICEST BLESSINGS ON HER.

From the photostat of the office copy: S. N. 3195.

87. PETITION TO CHAMBERLAIN

DURBAN,
[Prior to *May 27*,] *1899*

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN
HER MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF
STATE FOR THE COLONIES

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED JOHN FRAZER PARKER,
OF PRETORIA, IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC, GENTLEMAN

HUMBLY SHEWETH:

That your Petitioner is a natural-born British subject residing in Pretoria in the South African Republic.

Your Petitioner owns considerable freehold as well as leasehold property in the Transvaal.

Your Petitioner has carefully read the latest notice issued by the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 29-5-1899, *infra*.
[2] The succeeding item.

Transvaal Government requiring the Indians and other Coloured people to remove to Locations on or before the 1st of July, 1899. The notice, however, states that the Government might deal leniently with those who hold long leases.

Your Petitioner owns ten cottages built on his own freehold property in the town of Pretoria, which he has let to (ten) Cape Coloured persons, commonly known as "Cape boys", whereby your Petitioner receives per month a sum of twenty pounds (£20) as rent.

Your Petitioner has a lease of property in a street called Prinsloo Street in Pretoria the term whereof has yet to run for 8_ years. Your Petitioner has, as is common in the Transvaal, as well as in other parts of South Africa, built wood and galvanised iron buildings on the leasehold valued at over £4,500.

The above-mentioned leasehold is occupied entirely by British Indian tenants and the value of their tenancy to your Petitioner according to the present rental, apart from this freehold property, would amount to the sum of £19,380 during the unexpired period of the term.

Your Petitioner apprehends that, if the notice is allowed to affect the present Indian traders in the Transvaal or their successors in business, it would involve a great loss to your Petitioner, and is likely to deprive your Petitioner of the chief source of his income.

Your Petitioner, relying fully on the 14th article of the London Convention, always held the belief that the position of these British subjects was unassailable, and your Petitioner's sense of justice, seeing that the Indians were British subjects as much as any other persons, refused to believe that, in spite of the arbitration[1] and the recent Test Case[2] regarding the status of British Indians in the Transvaal, the position of the Indians already settled could or would be disturbed.

Your Petitioner's own experience of the Indians in the Transvaal is very happy. Your Petitioner believes them to be his best tenants, who have always paid the rents regularly and without demur. In your Petitioner's opinion, they are unobtrusive, docile and extremely well-behaved. They are law-abiding and always willing and ready to conform to the laws of the country which they may go to. Their habits are cleanly and they keep their stores and dwelling-places clean and

[1] *Vide* "Open Letter", 19-12-1894, Part I and "Petition to Lord Ripon", 5-5-1895.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to the British Agent", 28-2-1898, *supra.*

neat. Their courtyards will compare favourably with those of many Europeans. Their sobriety i.e., of the trading class, is proverbial. In your Petitioner's opinion, the charges of immorality and uncleanliness one so often notices in the papers made by ignorant and, for most part, anonymous, writers are grossly unfair to them. The patience with which they have put up with the constant "nagging" they have been subjected to for the last ten years is or would appear to a Britisher to be simply marvellous.

The Cape Coloured people who, too, are affected by the notice, are your Petitioner's equally valuable tenants. They are cabmen or cigar makers, &c., and have adopted the European habits and customs.

In your Petitioner's humble opinion, it is the fact of a person being a British subject that renders such a person liable to disabilities in the Transvaal which he could not otherwise be subjected to. The Indian subjects of the King of Portugal are free to hold licenses and to enjoy the rights commonly enjoyed by the other residents of the Transvaal.

Your Petitioner submits that, so far as Pretoria is concerned, as it is, the bulk of the Indians are already separated from the Europeans, only not so as to ruin their trade or to subject them to indignity, as is sure to happen if they are relegated to a Location. The business section of Prinsloo Street, which runs across the middle of Church Street, the principal street of Pretoria, is almost entirely inhabited by Indian traders. Here the Government could exercise any control they chose in the interests of sanitation, if it was merely a question of separating the Indians from the Europeans and bringing them together in one place with the object of more supervision. The few Indian merchants that are to be found in Church Street have such large businesses and keep their stores and courtyards in such good condition that, in your Petitioner's humble opinion, to disturb them would be wanton injustice as, indeed, it would be in all the other cases, only the effect would not be so disastrous as in the cases of the Church Street merchants, whose long-standing businesses have given the positions they occupy considerable trade value.

Your Petitioner has seen the Location intended to be used by the Indians. It would place them, who are undoubtedly infinitely superior to the Kaffirs, in close proximity to the latter. A sluit, which receives the filth and the dirt from the cantonment, which lies some distance

upwards, separates the Location from the Town. It is situated in an out-of-the-way corner relieved by nothing less than the refuse of the Town, which is deposited nearby and is absolutely unprotected against storms, which are by no means uncommon. As a man of business your Petitioner can say that the place is absolutely unfit for trade, it being frequented neither by Europeans nor the large stream of Kaffirs continually passing through Pretoria who form these unfortunate people's chief customers. It is needless to say there is no effective arrangement for the removal of nightsoil nor a water supply except the filthy and polluted water from the sluit.

Your Petitioner has thought it necessary to mention these facts in order to show that, in asking Her Majesty's Government to protect his interests, he asks for nothing that would be inimical to the interests of the general population of Pretoria. For, your Petitioner is free to admit that, if even a fourth of the charges brought against the unfortunate Indian traders were true, your Petitioner's interests would have to give way before those of the social body at large. Your Petitioner may incidentally mention that there are other natural-born British subjects placed more or less in the same position that he is placed in.

The fact that the Government have expressed their willingness to leniently consider the question of the Indians holding long leases, does not affect the position herein taken up by your Petitioner, who can ill-afford to give these merchants very long leases for the simple reason that they would mean a much lower rent than what your Petitioner is able to obtain for shorter terms.

Your Petitioner has had on several occasions an interview with His Honour the British Agent, who was gracious enough to give to your Petitioner such information and advice as he could give. A time, however, your Petitioner humbly submits, has now arrived for a more formal and fuller representation, and your Petitioner respectfully prays that the matter would receive the consideration it deserves and for this act of justice and mercy your Petitioner shall, as in duty bound, for ever pray, &c., &c.,

J. F. PARKER

Colonial Office Records: C. O. 417-1899: Volume XX, Parliament.

88. LETTER TO W. WEDDERBURN[1]

DURBAN,

14, MERCURY LANE,

May 27, 1899

SIR,

I venture to enclose herewith a copy of the Memorial of the British Indians in the Transvaal with reference to their position in virtue of the latest notice issued by the Transvaal Government, requiring the Indians in that country to remove to Locations on or before the 1st July this year.

It will be seen from the notice that the Government propose to remove the Indians to Locations for the purposes of sanitation. Would it, then, be unreasonable to ask the Colonial Secretary to see that the sanitary reasons do exist before the Indians are removed to Locations? The petition furnishes, in my humble opinion, ample proof to show that there can be no sanitary reasons for the measures proposed to be adopted by the Government.

The grievances of the Uitlanders which have attracted world-wide attention and which nowadays fill up columns of the leading newspapers are, it is submitted, insignificant compared tothose of the British Indians in the Transvaal as well as other parts of South Africa. Will it, then, be asking too much of the sympathisers in England and the Indian public to give this very important matter (important because it affects the future of the whole of India so far as emigration outside India is concerned) their best attention?

The petition referred to in this letter is in the hands of the British Agent in Pretoria, but pending the result of the Conference between the High Commissioner and the President of the Republic at which the Indian question will also be discussed, the despatch of the petition to Mr. Chamberlain has been delayed. It may not even be sent to him. But as time is of utmost importance in this matter, it was considered prudent to send the petition lest the negotiations referred to above might prove abortive.

A copy of the petition by Mr. Parker, of Pretoria, a natural-born British subject, with reference to the same matter, is also sent herewith.

[1] The letter was a printed one and evidently addressed to prominent public men in England and India.

It may throw a great deal of light on the question.

I remain,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records: C. O. 417-1899: Volume XX, Parliament.

89. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
May 29, 1899

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the 27th inst. with reference to the congratulatory cable to the Queen-Empress from the Natal Indians and beg herewith to enclose cheque for £4.15.0 as per advice.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: G.C.O. 3903-99.

90. TELEGRAM T0 COLONIAL SECRETARY

[DURBAN,]
June 30, 1899

TO
HON'BLE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SHALL BE OBLIGED IF YOU WILL INFORM WHETHER GOVERNMENT INTEND TAKING OUT FROM ABSENTEE LANDLORDS BILL CLAUSE AFFECTING INDIANS BY IMPLICATION AS OTHERWISE INDIANS INTEND PROMOTING PETITION.

GANDHI

From the photostat of the office copy: S. N. 3214.

91. ADDRESS TO RETIRING MAGISTRATE

The following is a press report of Gandhiji's speech and the address read by him on the occasion of the presentation of a souvenir to Mr. G. M. Rudolph, a retiring magistrate of Ladysmith, by the Indians of the town.

[*July 5, 1899*]

Mr. M. K. Gandhi said it gave him the greatest pleasure to be called upon by his countrymen in Ladysmith to take part in this function. It was a privilege and an honour. Since the presentation by the Court officials a healthy jealousy had arisen among Ladysmith Indians, who, through Mr. Vinden, instructed him to see that. the present address and souvenir were in no way inferior to those already presented. The execution of the address wax left in the hands of Mr. Singleton, who executed eight out of every twelve addresses in the Colony, and selection of the souvenir with Mr. Ferguson, who assured him that the centrepiece was a unique piece of good workmanship. He mentioned this to show the gratitude and affection of Ladysmith Indians towards His Worship. When he was lately there his countrymen vied with one another in telling him of His Worship's stern impartiality, loving kindness, and gentle disposition, and herein they now found expression to their sentiments on His Worship's retirement. The lamp of gratitude and affection in the Indian heart was ever ready to respond to the spark of sympathy, of which they had in abundance from His Worship, and it was a matter of pride that he was associated with that happy event. He then read the following address:

SIR,

We, the undersigned, representing the British Indian residents of Ladysmith, hereby venture to place on record our deep sense of gratitude, on this the eve of your retirement from active service in the Colony, for the impartiality with which you have administered justice during your tenure of office in Ladysmith. We have noticed with joy that the people of the Colony, through the local Parliament, have decided to recognise your long record of exceptionally useful service by granting you full pension. Whilst we rejoice that you are about to enjoy well-earned rest, we cannot cherish the prospect from a selfish point of view without sorrow. Your kindness towards the litigants, the patience with which Your Worship endeavoured to master the essence of cases that came before you, and the even-handed justice that was dealt to all, without fear, favour or prejudice, have endeared you to the

Indian community, and have added lustre to the British Constitution, so worthily represented by you for so long in Ladysmith. We beg that you would be pleased to accept the accompanying souvenir as a token of the esteem of the Indian community of this town for Your Worship. With respectful wishes for a long, happy and peaceful life, and with prayers to the Almighty that He may fulfil our wishes,

We are, &c.,
AMOD MOOSAJIE OMAR
AND OTHERS

The Natal Mercury, 7-7-1899

92. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN
July 6, 1899

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

With further reference to your letter dated the 13th ultimo, in view of the correspondence that is going on between the Imperial and the local Governments, it may not be amiss to show how far the fears expressed in the "Dealers' Licenses Memorial" have been realised. I have not been able to collect accurate information from all the places, but so far as the information has been received, it is of an extremelydiscouraging nature.

In Dundee, the licenses were first refused and on an appeal they were granted under certain qualifications endorsed on the back of the licenses, viz., "This license is granted upon the distinct understanding that it will not be renewed in the present buildings. By order of the Board. (Sd.) Fras. J. Birkett, Licensing Officer and Town Clerk". In answer to an enquiry, several of the license holders said that they thought the licenses were so granted because their stores were wood and iron buildings. It appears Messrs Handley & Sons and Harvey Greenacre & Co. in Dundee have a brick front but the rest of their stores is wood-and-iron. Messrs Taylor & Fowler, merchants of Dundee, have their store entirely of wood and iron. In Newcastle the licenses refused last year have been refused this year also. The Town

Council were good enough to give some time to two of the applicants in order to enable them to sell off their stock, but this could hardly act as a remedy against the loss occasioned to the parties concerned. One of them, Abdool Rassool, had a large business and owned a wood and iron store. It was pointed out to the Council that the building which represented to him a value of £150 would fetch practically nothing if it had to be sold.

In Verulam, I understand, two applicants who held a license last year have been refused their licenses this year and the men as well as their servants are now comparatively reduced to poverty.

In Ladysmith, one M. C. Amla, who has been trading there for several years, has been deprived of his license on the ground that the place where he was trading was situated in the chief street of the Township and that it was suitable only for a European trader. The owner applied for a license with reference to another building immediately near an Indian store and owned by the owner of that store. That application, too, has been refused on the same ground. I might be permitted to mention that there are other Indian stores in the same street.

In Port Shepstone, two large Indian merchants have lately sold their businesses to two other Indians. These applied for licenses and the Licensing Officer refused them. An appeal was taken to the Licensing Board with no better result, and the parties are now considering what to do.

It is humbly submitted that it is a serious matter when one man, because he is an Indian, cannot sell his business to another, also because that other is an Indian, for the refusal to grant the license in such cases is tantamount to forbidding a purchase and sale unless it were done in an underhand manner.

An Indian, who had sold out his premises to the Dundee Coal Co. and had therefore entirely wound up his business, came down to Durban and purchased a previously licensed store on the Umgeni Road and applied for a license for himself. The Licensing Officer, after the man had made several applications and after he had gone to the expense of engaging aneminent counsel in Durban at a heavy cost, granted the licenseand then only for a limited period in order to enable the applicant to sell out the goods he had already bought in anticipation of receiving a license.

These are some of the cases where vested interests have been

prejudicially affected. But cases where thoroughly good men with capital have been refused licenses because they were Indians who did not hold a license to trade the previous year are too numerous to mention.

The Indians have noticed with satisfaction and gratitude the fact that the Government are anxious to see that the vested Indian interests are not injured, in that they have addressed letters to the several Town Councils and Town Boards to the effect that unless they took care not to touch vested interests, legislation giving Indians right of appeal to the Supreme Court might become necessary. I am, however, to point out that such an appeal to the Boards may not have a permanent effect, if at all, and would still leave the Indian traders in a state of dreadful suspense. The alteration suggested by the letter above referred to would indeed, in my humble opinion, be only a small measure of justice, but extremely desirable in the interests of the Indian community, already settled in the Colony.

I am to request that the contents of this letter may be communicated to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

I have etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

Enclosures in Despatch No. 96 from the Governor of Natal to H. M's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, London, dated 14th July, 1899.

Colonial Office Records: Memorials and Petitions, 1899.

93. THE INDIAN QUESTION IN SOUTH AFRICA[1]

DURBAN,
July 12, [*1899*]

I dealt in my last letter[2] with the Indian question as it stands in the now greatly agitated South African Republic, which is the centre of attraction to the whole world. I dealt with the plague panic in South Africa in my first letter.[3] I propose now to discuss a phase of the Indian question in Natal, as affecting the education of the Indian children, which would show how far prejudice has been allowed to go.

At present there are about twenty-five schools expressly meant

[1] *Vide* footnote, "The Plague Panic in South Africa", 20-3-1899, *supra.*
[2] *Vide* "Indians in the Transvaal", May 17, 1899.
[3] *Vide* "The Plague Panic in South Africa", March 20, 1899.

for the education of the children of indentured Indians, attended by nearly 2,000 pupils. Most of these schools are managed by the missionaries, chiefly representing the Church of England Mission, superintended, as to its Indian section, by the Rev. Dr. Booth, a venerable gentleman very much loved by the Christian portion of the Indian community. These schools receive from the Government a grant by no means adequate for their support. The buildings, as a rule, are of the most primitive type—a few corrugated iron sheets and a few planks of wood composing the material. They are wretchedly constructed and, in country places, are devoid even of flooring, mother earth serving the purpose. In one instance, a stable has been turned into a school. The pupils, being drawn from the poorest Indians, are naturally not well clad. The tuition imparted is in keeping with the surroundings, the schoolmaster drawing from £2 to £4 a month—in some instances more. The cost of living—I mean decent living—for a person occupying such a position would be, in the case of a careful bachelor, not less than £8. Labour for an Indian affords a better opportunity than the vocation of a teacher; naturally, therefore, the teachers are of a very poor type, though under the circumstances they do their best. The respectable portion, then, of the Indian community, such as clerks, interpreters, storekeepers and others, do not care to send their children to these schools. Hitherto, such as would pay the high fees that are levied here have been able, though by no means without much difficulty, to enter the general public primary schools. An agitation was started some few years ago to prevent any Indian children from gaining entrance into public schools unless they had exhausted the resources of their own schools; and thus an attempt was made to foist the above described Indian schools for the poorest children on the respectable Indians. Since then the difficulties in the way of respectable Indian parents sending their children to the Government schools have been increasing. Now, it is the headmaster who would put difficulties in their way, and now it is the Government. Latterly, very few Indian children, hardly half a dozen, have been able to enter the public primary schools, and that after undergoing immense difficulties.

The present Government, however, have made a big bid for popularity, and have declared their intention of entirely shutting these schools against the Indian children. There is a humorous, if it were not painful, side to this eruption of racial feeling. If an Indian parent has six children, of whom five have received their education in the

primary schools, he cannot now give the same education to the last child. If there is a parent ready to disown his Indian nationality, he can send his child to the public schools, thus, unfortunately for the Government, crushing their argument to the effect that the admission of the Coloured children leads to ill-feeling and uproar. A child born of prostitution, where one parent is European, is admissible. It is the full-blooded Indian alone who has the ban of excommunication stamped upon him. The Government seem to have shrunk from their own unjust action, and as a sop to their conscience and in order to satisfy the claim of some of the Indian applicants for the admission of their children to the public primary schools, have opened what they are pleased to call a higher grade school for Indian children, which is supposed to be, in all respects, equal to the above schools. The applicants can hardly be said to have been satisfied; and while the higher grade school is undoubtedly far superior to the wretched tin shanties referred to Above, and is manned by a staff of European it can in no way be said to be equal to the other primary schools in every respect. This school by no means provides for all standards as yet, and the girls are entirely overlooked. Even if it were accepted as a compromise, it leaves many requirements yet unsatisfied. There is absolutely no provision for the Indians to go beyond the three R's! All attempts to gain admission into the high schools of the Colony have so far failed, the Government absolutely declining to entertain any such application.

The prospect is indeed very gloomy, unless aid comes in time from Downing Street or Fort William. It is impossible to withhold one's sympathy from parents who are ready to give their whole fortune for a thorough training to their children, and yet who are simply unable to do so owing to the Government restrictions. One Mr. Godfrey, a respected Indian Mission schoolmaster, is a case in point. Though his own education is not very liberal, he is most anxious to bring up his children in the best possible way. All his children but one have been educated in the Government schools. He sent his eldest son to Calcutta, gave him a University training there, and has now sent him to Glasgow to study medicine. His second son is the first Indian to have passed the competitive examination for the Civil Service of the Colony. He is unable to send his youngest daughter to the Government Primacy School and, in spite of his efforts, was prevented from getting his third son, a promising youth, admitted to the Durban High School. It may be stated that this family has been living in the

European style. All the children have been brought up from their infancy to speak English, and naturally they speak it very well. Why this child should be shut out when all is other children have been allowed to enter the Government School passes comprehension. This instance shows, more vividly than anything else could, how difficult the position of the Indians inferior to Mr. Godfrey must be.

The Natal Parliament, dubbed by Mr. Rhodes[1] "the parochial assembly" in South Africa, is now sitting, and the Attorney-General who is also Minister of Education and who is supposed to be a gentleman with a conscience, and who is undoubtedly an otherwise esteemed gentleman, has been telling the inquisitive members of the Natal Parliament that his Government have been the first to close the doors of the Government schools against the Indians. Therefore, a simple appeal to him to do justice by, at any rate, leaving the Government schools free to the children of those parents that have hitherto been allowed to educate their children there, has absolutely no effect, and all for the sake of a few miserable votes—for that is what is at the bottom of all this unrighteous and unreasoning opposition to the Indians. The ministers do not—dare not—do what is right, lest their doing so may jeopardise their position at the next general election. When responsible Government was granted to Natal, those who clamoured for it were loud in their protestations that full justice would be done to those who did not possess the franchise. After the Colony became a self-governing Colony, Sir John Robinson, the first Prime Minister under the new form of Government, in introducing the Indian Disfranchising Bill, said that the Colony—that is to say, in his estimation, the Europeans—were fully aware of the increased responsibilities that naturally went with the increased freedom they enjoyed, and their still further increased responsibilities in that they were depriving the Indians of the franchise they possessed. The unfortunate Indians, it would appear, almost prophetically said that talk of that description was meant for consumption in the Colonial Office in Downing Street, and that it deceived nobody in Natal. They said that the disfranchisement was merely the thin end of the wedge and that, if the Home Government yielded to the pressure from the Natal Government, it would practically mean ruin for the Indians. All this has come only too true. The poor Indians have known no rest since responsible Government

[1] The reference is to Cecil Rhodes, twice Premier of Cape Colony.

has been granted. One after another, the elementary rights of British citizenship have been snatched away from them; and, if Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Curzon are not wide awake, the British Indians in Natal will, one of these days, find themselves stripped of all that they have been taught to believe they possess as subjects of the Queen-Empress.

The dissatisfaction that the latest move on the part of the Natal Government in the matter of education has caused amongst the Indian to Christianity, of whom there is a large number, is indeed very intense. They, of all others, know fully, and have been taught to understand, the advantages of Western culture. They are taught by their religious teachers the doctrine of equality. They are told, Sunday after Sunday, that their Great Master knew no distinction between a Jew and a Gentile, a European or an Asiatic. Small wonder, then, if they feel keenly the disabilities that are sought to be imposed upon them in the educational line. It is difficult to say where the present agitation against the Indians will end. The wish of the white Colonists may perhaps fairly be said to be embodied in the following extracts from the speeches of well-known members of the Natal Parliament:

> Mr. Palmer thought it undesirable that so large an increase should be made in the money voted for the education of Indians, who were thus being fitted to supplant the children of white Colonists.

Mr. Payn moved that the item be struck out, remarking that:

> Indians who came here had the right of leaving the Colony. There were thirteen blacks (?) to every white in Natal, and yet Parliament was voting money to educate the blacks to oust Europeans. Some people were doing worse than that—selling land to blacks which would be foundation of the strength of the coloured people here in the future. (*Natal Mercury*, 8th June, 1899.)

It need not take a long time to know on which side justice lies. Sir Harry H. Johnston, whose name is well known to your readers, rightly says in his recent book on the "Colonization of Africa":

> On the other hand, from the Imperial point of view—from what I call the policy of the Black, White, and Yellow—it seems unjust that Her Majesty's Indian subjects should not be allowed to circulate as freely as those of her lieges who can claim European descent. (p. 177)

And, after all, is it not the Imperial point of view alone which is worth considering, and before which every other view must bend? It is to be hoped that the public in India will be sufficiently alive to the

importance of the question, which in its widest aspects affects not only the fifty thousand Indians in Natal, but each one of the three hundred millions who may care to go out of India in search of livelihood.

The Times of India (Weekly edition), 19-8-1899

94. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

DURBAN,
July 13, 1899

SIR,

With reference to my letter dated the 6th inst. regarding the Dealers' Licenses Act, I wish to correct an error that has crept therein.

I find that only one case of hardship of the description mentioned in my letter has happened in Port Shepstone. The other case never went to the Licensing Officer, as the Attorney who had charge of both cases, owing to the unfortunate result of the first case, advised his other client not to go on with his application. Steps are now being taken to make. the other application also.

I have etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records: Memorials and Petitions, 1899.

95. LETTER TO BRITISH AGENT

JOHANNESBURG,
July 21, 1899[1]

TO
HIS HONOUR THE BRITISH AGENT
PRETORIA

SIR,

On behalf of the Indian community in Johannesburg, I beg to lay the following before Your Honour:

1. At the interview you were graciously pleased to grant the deputation,. consisting of Mr. Hajee Habib Hajee Dada, Mr. H. O. Ally, Mr. Abdul Rahman, and myself on Thursday last (July 20, 1899), you informed the deputation that Her

[1] The letter was completed and despatched after July 22, 1899.

Majesty's Government would not at present interfere as regards the general question, viz., the whole status of the British Indians in the Transvaal; that the Indians must abide by Law 3 of 1885, as amended in 1886, but that Her Majesty's Government would be prepared to interfere at any time with reference to special cases, such as the sites of Locations, cases of long leases, etc.

2. I am to say that Her Majesty's Government having accepted the above law, there is no desire on the part of the Indian community not to abide by the law, so long as it remains on the Statute book of the Republic.

3. But I am to point out, as it was done at the above interview, with due deference, that as the Locations are to be pointed out, as the law states, for the purposes of sanitation, the necessity on that ground ought to be clearly established. And if in that case the question be that of each Indian having to prove that he has been living in accordance with the sanitary regulations, and that his presence in town is in no way a danger to the community generally from a sanitary point of view, the matter even then seems to be extremely simple. If Her Majesty's Government succeed in establishing the point that the Transvaal Government would not remove those Indians who produce satisfactory evidence as to their sanitary condition, I venture to submit that the rest of the burden could be discharged by parties affected, without having to trouble Her Majesty's Government.

4. In Johannesburg. and the suburbs, apart from the present Indian Location, there are, it appears, about 125 British Indian storekeepers and about 4,000 hawkers, the storekeepers possessing unliquidated assets collectively estimated at about £375,000, and the hawkers about £400,000.

5. Most of the storekeepers possess leases, with the exception of 3 or 4. However, none of them has availed of the Government Notice calling upon them to register their leases.

6. The people were and are in a state of terror; they do not know what to do. The cablegram appearing in the

newspapers to the effect that Her Majesty's Government were still in communication with the Transvaal Government, and that Her Majesty's High Commissioner. was instructed to take up the matter at the Bloemfontein Conference[1] served as an effective check against the storekeepers registering their leases.

7. The Indians residing in Johannesburg cannot, even if they wanted, remove to the Location situated in the Brickfields.

8. It contains, according to the report of the Inspector of Nativesand Traffic in Johannesburg, dated the 10th January, 1896, ninety-six stands, each 30 by 50 ft. The Location was even at that date, as the Inspector states, overcrowded, containing a population of 3,300. The state of the Location at present, from that point of view, is probably worse than it was in 1898.

9. The Government of the South African Republic, it is understood, intend to remove the Indians in town to a place called Waterval, 4_ miles distant from Johannesburg Market Square, the central part of Johannesburg. Surveyor's diagram and medical report thereon are hereto attached.[2] The diagram shows the distance also from the end of the inhabited portion of the town.

10. It is submitted that to ask the Indians to remove to that place would be practically asking them to leave the Transvaal. The storekeepers could never do any business there. The hawkers could not be expected to walk with their wares from and to that place every day.

11. The fact that there are no sanitary arrangements there, no water, no police protection and that the place is situated in the vicinity of the place where the refuse of the town and night-soil are deposited, are minor considerations in comparison with the fact that it is situated at such a great distance as 4-miles with no population of any kind within practically a two-mile radius.

[1] The High Commissioner had been asked to suggest to the South African Government the possibility of creating an Asiatic quarter within each town. *Vide* also footnote 2 on "Memorial to Chamberlain", 16-5-1898, *supra.*

[2] These documents are not available.

12. The Government appear to have entered into an agreement with Herman Tobiansky, of Johannesburg, in connection with this site, as will appear from copy thereof[1] hereto annexed.
13. The lease bristles with provisions extremely harmful to the persons that might be located on the ground leased, but it is unnecessary to dilate thereon as the site itself is so manifestly unsuitable for the purposes mentioned.
14. It appears that the Kaffirs too, who are most of them labourers and not affected from a commercial point of view, have lodged their protest against their removal to the above site.
15. It has often been submitted that the removal of the Indian storekeepers to Locations, wherever they may be, would mean almost certain ruin for them.
16. It is respectfully submitted that if Her Majesty's Government could not see their way to move in the direction humbly suggested in paragraph 3 hereof, the least that would prevent the entire ruin of the Indian storekeepers would be to leave the present storekeepers untouched. The hawkers could, if absolutely necessary, be removed to a Location if it is suitably situated and otherwise not objectionable. Exceptional sanitary provisions might, if necessary, be made regarding the storekeepers.
17. If, however, relief of the nature above indicated could not be secured, I am humbly to submit that a spot in the business portion of the town set apart for the Indian storekeepers for their business purposes, subject to such rent and other regulations that may be necessary, might enable a large number of the traders to earn their livelihood; but such an arrangement would not by any means afford relief to the few large Indian merchants.
18. While the matter is in course of settlement, the extension of time enabling the Indians to obtain temporary licences, or an understanding that they will not be interfered with in pursuit of their trade in the meantime, is very necessary by way of immediate temporary relief.

[1] This document is not available.

19. It may be stated that the Transvaal Government seem to have granted the above relief in Johannesburg. I am further to state that the Government of the Republic has served the following notice on the owners of the stands in the "Coolie Location", dated the 23rd May, 1899:

> You are hereby warned that, in accordance with the Government Notice No. 208, appearing in the *Staats Courant* of the 26th April, 1899, only you and your family will be allowed to reside on your Stand, after June 30th of the present year.

(Signed) A. SMITHERS

20. It appears that a protest with reference to this notice has already been lodged with His Honour the British Vice-Consul. The intention underlying the notice is obvious. It is submitted that in Law 3 of 1885 and its amendment, there is absolutely no sanction for any such restriction.
21. It is hoped that the Transvaal Government have no right and that they will not insist upon disturbing the rights of the present population in the Indian Location.
22. But if the town population must be partly or wholly removed to a Location, it is clear that another site will become necessary.
23. The Town Council, with the approval of the Transvaal Government, have adopted certain regulations regarding Locations, which go far beyond the scope of Law 3 of 1885, and its amendment. Copy of the regulations is hereto attached marked D.[1]
24. It is much feared that the Transvaal Government would apply these regulations to any new site they may select for the removal of the Indians residing in the town. Indeed, the Annexure C[2] shows this quite clearly.
25. Any scheme, therefore, for the removal of the Indians, whether hawkers or others, in order to be at all satisfactory, should give the Indians the same proprietary rights in the Locations as are granted to the other communities in town

[1] These documents are not available.
[2] *ibid*

generally.

26. There is no prohibition in the law above referred to against Indians owning land in Locations or dealing with it as they choose. Indeed, hawkers could not be expected to buy land and erect their own buildings in the Locations. And it is respectfully submitted it would be a great injustice if the land in Indian Locations or the right to build thereon is given to any but Indians.
27. In conclusion, it is to be hoped that before accepting any scheme for a Location or a general settlement, the responsible Indians will, if possible, be taken into confidence, so as to enable them to make suggestions if necessary.
28. Now that there is a prospect of Indians generally being shifted to Locations, will it be too much to expect a change of official name "Coolie Location" for "Indian Location"?
29. I may state that I had the honour to wait upon His Honour the State Secretary on Saturday morning[1] not in my representative capacity, but in my individual capacity, and while telling him that with regard to their grievances they must in future, as they had done in the past, lay them before their own Government, humbly pleaded for magnanimity in view of the fact that the Indians possessed great antecedents, were, no matter where they went, most law-abiding, and instead of being in any way a harm to the Burghers of the State, they were rendering a humble but useful service to them In their various pursuits. The State Secretary was good enough to extend to me the utmost courtesy, and granted me a long and patient hearing.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of an original printed copy: S. N. 3245.

[1] According to a report in *The Standard and Diggers' News* of 24-7-1899, this interview took place on the preceding Saturday, July 15.

96. INTERVIEW TO THE "STAR"

[Prior to *July 27, 1899*]

Questioned by the *Star*,[1] Mr. Gandhi stated that in Pretoria the Indians are permitted by the State Attorney to trade without licences until water is laid on. Now that this work has been completed, the authorities will insist on the Asiatics removing into the Location. In Johannesburg, the officials do not, for the present, intend to take active measures. The Waterval Location, from every point of view, is entirely unsuited. It was out of the question that hawkers should walk such a distance morning and night; and, as regards storekeepers, transfer of businesses meant that they might as well give up trading altogether, for, with the exception of other Coloured residents, there were no people within a radius of two miles. As yet there were no sanitary arrangements, while the place was in proximity to the depositing site for refuse. The Indians were prepared to show that on sanitary grounds there was no justification for their removal, and, if there were cases of insanitation, these could always be dealt with under regulations. It seems probable the main reason the authorities have postponed action is that not a few of the stands and buildings belong to Indians, and those men cannot be dispossessed. Mr. Gandhi saw no reason why a satisfactory arrangement could not be come to between the Imperial and the Transvaal Governments.

The Natal Mercury, 27-7-1899

97. PETITION TO NATAL GOVERNOR

DURBAN,
July 31, 1899

TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR OF NATAL

SIR,

We sent you last January a copy of the memorial respecting the Dealers' Licenses[2] Act of Natal addressed to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies. From the following it would appear that Mr. Chamberlain is in correspondence with the Natal Government regarding the measure:

[1] The original interview in the *Star* is not available.

[2] The spelling of this word at various places, in this and other documents, as given in the original is being retained.

PIETERMARITZBURG,
13th June, 1899

> With further reference to your letter of the 11th January last,[1] addressed to His Excellency the Governor, containing a Memorial signed by certain Indians on the subject of the Dealers' Licences Act No. 18, 1897, I have the honour to inform you that the Secretary of State for the Colonies is in communication with this Government with reference to the petitioners' complaint.

The following appears in *The Natal Witness*, dated 4th July, 1899, with reference to the letter addressed by the Government to the Ladysmith Local Board:

> A letter was read from the Principal Under Secretary advising the Board to exercise caution in refusing Indian licenses so as not to interfere with vested interests, as unless this was done the Government would be obliged to introduce legislation giving Indians right of appeal from the decisions of Local Boards to the Supreme Court. But if care was exercised in refusing Indian licenses, such legislation need not be introduced.
>
> It was decided to inform the Government that the matter should have full consideration and the Town Clerk was instructed to lay the matter before the Board.

It is presumed that a similar communication has been addressed to each of the Local Boards or Town Councils in the Colony.

It is gratifying to note that Mr. Chamberlain is alive to the danger that besets the Indians in the Colony If the strong arm of protection from the imperial Government is not stretched forth in their behalf, and that the Natal Government is evidently anxious in some way or other to meet Mr. Chamberlain. But at the same time it is extremely desirable that the real bearing of the above letter should be understood, and that the Colonial Office, or the sympathizers, should not be lulled into the belief that the letter in any way solves the difficulty or removes the anxiety that is preying upon the Indian mind in Natal. The Town Councils and the Local Boards have got certain powers under the Act, and they are entitled to use those powers in the way it pleases them without let or hindrance. Strictly speaking, the letter is unconstitutional, and at best a gratuitous piece of advice which the Local Boards or the Town Councils are in no way bound to follow. Indeed, there is no knowing that it will not be resented by some at least of the more forward municipalities as an unwarranted

[1] *Vide* "Covering Letter to Petition", January 11, 1899.

interference by the Natal Government. Be that however as it may, we are prepared to assume, for the sake of argument, that the municipalities concerned may, *for a time,* use their powers in such a manner as not to appear to be affecting "vested interests". they may take the hint given by *The Times of Natal* referred to in the memorial, and perform the process of "gradual weeding out" so as not to cause a commotion. Certain it is that the relief, if any is afforded by the letter, will be merely temporary, and may in the end aggravate the disease instead of removing it. What is needed, and what is also the least that ought to be given is, in our humble opinion, the alteration In the Act suggested by the Government, viz., the giving of the right of appeal to the Supreme Court against the decisions of the municipalities. For, it is the Act that is really bad and un-British. The powers given thereby are arbitrary, and a gross encroachment upon the elementary rights of citizens in the British territories. The municipalities, so far as we know, never asked for such powers; they certainly asked for discretionary powers, but the Act goes much further: it constitutes them their own Supreme Court.

With a view then to inform you as to what is going on here with reference to the Dealers' Licenses Act, and to show how far the fears expressed in the memorial referred to above have been realised, we have ventured to approach you in the matter. The following letters have been addressed to the Natal Government on our behalf which speak for themselves:

> With further reference to your letter dated 13th June in view of the correspondence that is going on between the Imperial and Local Governments, it may not be amiss to show how far the fears expressed in "the Dealers' Licenses Memorial" have been realised. I have not been able to collect accurate information from all the places, but so far as the information has been received it is of an extremely discouraging nature. In Dundee the licenses were first refused and on an appeal they were granted under certain qualifications endorsed on the back of the licenses, viz.,: 'This license is granted upon distinct understanding that it will not be renewed in the present buildings. By order of the Board, (Sd). Fras. I. Birkett, Licensing Officer andTown Clerk.' In answer to an enquiry, several of the license-holders said that they thought the licenses were so granted because their stores were wood and iron buildings. It appears Messrs. Handley & Sons and Harvey Greenacre & Co., in Dundee, have brick fronts but the rest of their stores is wood and iron. Messrs. Taylor & Fowler, Merchants of Dundee, have their stores entirely of wood and iron. In Newcastle the licenses refused last year have been refused this year also. The

Town Council were good enough to give some time to two of the applicants in order to enable them to sell off their stock, but this could hardly act as a remedy against the loss occasioned to the parties concerned. One of them, Abdool Rassool, had a large business and owned a wood and iron store. It was pointed out to the Council that the building which represented to him a value of £150 would fetch practically nothing, if it had to be sold.

In Verulam, I understand, two applicants who had a license last year have been refused their licenses this year, and the men as well as their servants are now comparatively reduced to poverty.

In Ladysmith, one M. C. Amla, who has been trading there for several years, has been deprived of his license on the ground that the place where he was trading was situated in the chief street of the township and that it was suitable only for a European trader. The owner applied for a license with reference to another building immediately near an Indian store and owned by the owner of that store. That application too has been refused on the same ground. I might be permitted to mention that there are other Indian stores in the same street.

In Port Shepstone, two large Indian Merchants have lately sold their businesses to two other Indians. These applied for licenses and the Licensing Officer refused them. An Appeal was taken to the Licensing Board with no better result, and the parties are now considering what to do.

It is humbly submitted that it is a serious matter when one man, because he is an Indian, cannot sell his business to another, also because that other is an Indian, for the refusal to grant the license in such cases is tantamount to forbidding a purchase and sale unless it were done in an underhand manner.

An Indian who had sold out his premises to Dundee Coal Co., and had therefore entirely wound up his business, came down to Durban, and purchased a previously licensed store on the Umgeni Road and applied for a license for himself. The Licensing Officer, after the man had made several applications and after he went to the expense of engaging an eminent counsel in Durban at a heavy cost, granted the license and then only for a limited period in order to enable the applicant to sell out the goods he had already bought in anticipation of receiving a license.

These are some of the cases where vested interests have been prejudicially affected. But, cases where thoroughly good men with capital have been refused licenses because they were Indians who did not hold a license to trade the previous year are too numerous to mention.

The Indians have noticed with satisfaction and gratitude the fact that the Government are anxious to see that the vested Indian interests are not injured,

in that they have addressed letters to the several Town Councils and Town Boards to the effect that unless they took care not to touch vested interests, legislation giving Indians right of appeal to the Supreme Court might become necessary. I am, however, to point out that such an appeal to the Boards may not have a permanent effect if at all, and would still leave the Indian traders in a state of dreadful suspense. The alternative suggested by the letter above referred to would indeed, in my humble opinion, be only a small measure of injustice but extremely desirable in the interests of the Indian community already settled in the Colony.

I am to request that the contents of this letter may be communicated to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Second letter:

With reference to my letter dated 6th instant regarding Dealers' Licenses Act, I wish to correct an error that has crept therein.

I find that only one case of the hardship of the description mentioned in my letter has happened in Port Shepstone. The other case never went to the Licensing Officer as the attorney who had charge of both the cases, owing to the unfortunate result of the first case, advised the other client not to go on with his application. Steps are now being taken to make the other application also.

With reference to Port Shepstone, it may be mentioned that the refusal to grant the licence has followed close upon a question asked by a member of the Natal Assembly from that district, as to whether in such districts licences to Indians were granted indiscriminately. The Government replied saying that they had informed the magistrates in such districts, who are also the Licensing Officers, to the effect that they have discretionary powers. The Magistrate at Port Shepstone evidently took the hint, and refused the licence. This happened some days before the letter addressed to the Ladysmith Local Board above referred to appeared in *The Natal Witness.*

It is hardly necessary to state that the cases that come before the authorities in some way or other are not the only cases of hardship.

The Act has a terribly deterrent effect and many poor traders simply from hopelessness refrain from applying for a renewal of their licences, and many more from taking their cases before the appellate body, viz., a municipality or a Licensing Board, in the event of being rejected by the Licensing Officer. The second case in Port Shepstone is an instance in point.

There is no grievance more keenly felt than the one under the

Act; for, it affects the bread and butter of hundreds of industrious and peaceful Indian traders from the lowest to the highest. There is no certainty that because the best of us have received a licence this year we would receive it the next also. In a state of such insecurity business naturally becomes paralysed and uneasiness takes hold of our minds. The sole hope lies in something being done by and through the Imperial Government.

We venture to draw your attention to the following leading articles on this matter in *The Times of India:*

> We have dealt with the question of the rights of Indians in British Africa so often that there is no need to repeat upon this occasion the arguments we have frequently adduced. . . . But while the Colonists gladly availed themselves of the services of Indians as hewers of wood and drawers of water, they have constantly attempted to deprive them of those rights of free competition in trade which should be their inalienable privilege as British subjects. They decline to compete with the Indian traders in the open market, and endeavour to foster Protection in its most contemptible form by hedging them round with vexatious restrictions. . . . It is in the highest degree humiliating to know that the traditions of British impartiality to men of all races and creeds have been so far departed from in South Africa that British subjects are being compelled to seek sanctuary upon Portuguese soil from the tyrannous oppression of men with whom they are supposed to enjoy common rights under the British Crown. The injustice suffered by Indian traders in Africa will never be removed until the Home Government decides to accord to them the protection they have a right to expect. (15th April 1899, Weekly edition.)
>
> To the Englishman in India the spectacle of Indian traders being denied entrance and domicile anywhere under the British flag is irritating and repugnant, inasmuch as it gives his fellow-subject unquestionable reason for asking what are the advantages of the citizenship that he enjoys. To the native the spectacle must be a temptation to think that the British flag is a meaningless symbol, for under it one British subject may vex and constrain another without leaving the latter any redress. We, who speak for Englishmen in India, would give much if home opinion could be aroused to that aspect of the case of the Indians in South Africa. The equities of the case leave no room for dispute even on a Durban platform. But there is a political and sentimental side to it, too, which could be made to seize the popular imagination in England if people could once be got to think of so many thousand honest and well-behaved subjects of the Queen on their removal from one part of the Empire to another, being denied the most ordinary rights of citizenship. . . . Is

there no one in the House of Commons who can tell this tale of shame and injustice with some hope of getting redress for the victims. . . . (22nd April 1899, Weekly edition.)

We hardly think we need add more. We trust that as in the past you will be pleased to exert yourself in our behalf, and bring the present painful position to speedy termination.

We remain,
Sir,
your obedient servants,
ABDUL CAADIR
(M. C. CAMROODEEN & CO.)
AND THIRTY OTHERS

From the photostat of an original printed copy: S. N. 3252.

98. WIRE TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

September 9, 1899

TO
HONOURABLE COLONIAL SECRETARY,
PIETERMARITZBURG

THANKS FOR LETTER[1]. ANXIOUS ENQUIRIES MADE DAILY. URGENT RELIEF NECESSARY.[2] HEAR BRITISH AGENT HAS ALSO APPROACHED GOVERNMENT. RESPECTFULLY SUBMIT THERE CAN BE NO HARM IN LETTING INDIANS IN AS SUGGESTED. RELAXATION AFTER HOSTILITIES[3] MAY BE TOO LATE. IMPOSSIBLE FOR INDIANS CALMLY WATCH EVENTS WHEN BEST MEN ARE LEAVING RAND. WORDS CANNOT DESCRIBE PAIN CAUSED BY FACT THAT BRITISH SUBJECTS CANNOT FLY FROM DANGER TO BRITISH SOIL.

GANDHI

From the photostat of the office copy: S. N. 3288.

[1] The communication from Gandhiji to which this was a reply is not available.

[2] Relaxation was sought in the administration of the Immigration Restrictions Act which regulated the entry of Indians from the Transvaal into Natal.

[3] The Boer War was then imminent.

99. A CIRCULAR LETTER

14 MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
September 16, 1899

SIR,

I enclose herewith copy of the communication sent to His Honour the British Agent at Pretoria on behalf of the British Indians in the Transvaal.[1] The tension is hourly increasing and by the time this is in your hands it is difficult to say what will happen. But lest the Indian question might be kept in the background in any compromise that may be arrived at between our Government and the Transvaal, it has been thought advisable to keep you informed of the position affecting the British Indians. The accompanying would show how the Transvaal Government have gone beyond the Law 3 of 1885 in sanctioning the regulations of the Johannesburg Town Council. There is absolutely no warrant for such regulations or for preventing the Indians from owning land in the Locations. The chief point, however, is that urged in paragraph 3 of the letter to the British Agent, namely, sanitary reasons must be established in terms of the law for removing, the Indians to Locations. Here there is ample ground for intervention.

I remain,
yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of a signed copy of the original: S. N. 3295a.

100. THE SECOND REPORT OF THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS[2]

[Post *October 11, 1899*]

The first report was published in August of 1895,[3] one year after the establishment of the Congress. Owing to various causes, it has not been possible to prepare another report during the interval that has

[1] *Vide* "Letter to the British Agent", July 21, 1899.

[2] This is a draft report containing several corrections in Gandhiji's handwriting. No other copy of the report is available. The report was written in instalments at different times and completed after October 11, 1899, the date of the outbreak of the Boer War, to which reference is made in "The second Report of the Natal Indian Congress", 11-10-1899, *infra*

[3] *Vide* "Memorial to J. Chamberlain", 11-8-1895.

elapsed.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

From the memo annexed hereto,[1] the members will be able to see at a glance what has been spent during the three years. It will be noticed that the chief items were incurred during the Demonstration crisis,[2] the memorial[3] alone costing close on £100. If the expenditure has, on an average, been larger during the years under review than during 1894-95, the income, too, has considerably increased. One good result, and perhaps the most important, of the publication of the first report was that the Congress at once decided to make the annual subscriptions payable for the whole year in advance and the cumbrous method of collecting the subscriptions every month was given up. As a result, the subscriptions for 1895-96 were collected at once, and the activity shown in the year 1896 by some of the workers was really marvellous. They not only gave their time, but those that were able came forward with their carriages to go about collecting. The visit to Stanger in this respect was the most memorable. The President, Mr. Abdul Karim Haji Adam, Mr. Abdul Kadir, Mr. Dowd Mahomed, Mr. Rustomji, Mr. Hassam Juma, Mr. Madanjit, Mr. Paruk, Mr. Hoosein Meeran and Mr. Kathrada, including the Hon. Secretary, went out to Verulam, Tongaat, Umhlali, Stanger and the district beyond, in the carriages placed at the disposal of the workers by the President, by Mr. Abdul Kadir and Mr. Dowd Mahomed. At Tongaat, the members stayed at the store of Mr. Kasim Bhan till midnight, not caring whether they had their food or not, in order to induce that gentleman to become a member, but he was obstinate and the workers had to retire. But they did so only to put forth redoubled efforts the next morning. One of them rose up very early and without having even a drop of tea invaded Mr. Bhan's store, and the members sat there without having anything to eat till noon and left the store only after Mr. Bhan became a member and gave his subscription. They then went to the next station On the way, Mr. Hassam Juma was thrown off his horse and was perfectly insensible for a few seconds. It was suggested that all should return as the road was bad and evening had

[1] This is not available.

[2] The reference is to the anti-Indian demonstration on the landing Of Gandhiji and his Indian follow-passengers in Durban on January 13, 1897. *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

[3] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897, *et seq.*

set in. But Mr. Hassam Juma would not listen and the journey was kept up. At Stanger all these efforts were crowned with success. Mr. Mohomed Essopji, now unfortunately deceased, saw the zeal of the workers at Tongaat and became himself enthused, so much so that, although he was on his way to Durban on an important business, [he] chose to accompany the workers to Stanger where he entertained them all and was instrumental in securing for the Congress, in Stanger alone, the sum of over £50.

Many such instances can be given of the splendid devotion of the members under the leadership of our late President, Mr. Abdul Karim Haji Adam. The visit to Newlands through an uphill tract without anywell laid-out roads, the journey to the Buttery place at night time through the fields without a guide, the journey to Isipingo, the pilgrimage to the store of Mr. Essopji Umar, where the members went at 5 o'clock in the evening and remained till 11 o'clock without food—all these deserve a chapter each. Suffice it, however, to say that the energy, devotion and single-mindedness shown for the cause by the workers during that time have seldom, if ever, been equalled. The same, however, unfortunately for us, cannot be said now. The fiery enthusiasm seems to have died out. Causes for such a state of things are many, some of which are such that they cannot be controlled by the members. But it is painful to have to record that much that might have been done has not been done by them; and the confident hope that was entertained now two years ago that we would by this time have a fund amounting to £5,000 has, for the present, become a dream. The Congress has to discharge a liability of £300, perhaps £400, and it is difficult to say how the monies are to be got in. The subscriptions at Maritzburg, Charlestown, Newcastle, Verulam, Tongaat, Stanger and the other places have become overdue, and nothing has yet been done to call them in. While, at one time, the number of members reached the respectable total of nearly 300, strictly speaking, the number now is only 37! That is to say, that there are only 37 who have paid up their subscriptions up to date. It is time the members woke up from their long sleep, or else it might be too late.

THE CONGRESS WORK IN THE MONTH OF OCTOBER 1895

The Transvaal Volksraad passed a resolution in October 1895 exempting British subjects from compulsory military service with the proviso that Indians were not included in the term "British

Subjects".[1] The Congress, although, strictly speaking, we are not supposed to actively interfere with the affairs of our fellow-brothers in the South African Republic, with their concurrence, took up the question. A cablegram was drafted and was forwarded from the Transvaal to our sympathisers in London,[2] and a memorial was also sent in due course,[3] with the result that the obnoxious resolution, so far as is known, has not yet been accepted by the British Government.

That month introduced us to Mr. Earnest Hatch, a Conservative member of the British Parliament. He was touring through South Africa. Some persons in Johannesburg took him to the Indian Locations, showed him the worst parts in the Indian quarters, and the papers said that Mr. Hatch was very much disgusted with what he had seen and that he was going to study the Indian question. From Johannesburg he came to Durban and some of the members of the Congress thought it advisable to meet Mr. Hatch and place before him the Indian view of the question. He met a deputation of about 50 representative Indians and returned a very sympathetic answer to what was said to him and promised to do what he could in England. He marked with approval the moderation with which, in his opinion, we carried on our work. Mr. Hatch was presented with some Indian curiosities.

The Franchise question had not yet been settled and during the latter part of the year 1895, it was very much discussed in the papers. Everybody seemed to think that the Indians were attempting to claim a new privilege which had been, hitherto, withheld from them, that they wanted a vote for each Indian, that they never possessed any franchise right in India and that if the Natives of South Africa could not possess it, much less could an Indian. It became very necessary to answer all these misrepresentations and to remove the misunderstanding. A pamphlet entitled *The Indian Franchise: An Appeal to Every Briton in South Africa*[4] was prepared. Seven thousand copies were printed, one thousand of which were paid for by Mr. Abdul Karim Haji Adam, and they were widely distributed, some in England also. It was largely noticed by the South African Press and it

[1] *Vide* "Letter to *The Natal Mercury*", 15-9-1895.

[2] *ibid*.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to James Godfrey", 3-6-1902 and Letter to Nazar and Khan", 3-6-1902.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to *The Natal Advertiser*", 23-9-1895 to "The Indian Franchise", 16-12-1895.

gave rise to some sympathetic and some bitter and much indifferent correspondence. A special article was devoted to it in the London *Times* and all the propositions advanced therein were accepted by the writer. This was in December 1895.

In the early part of 1896, as most of the questions placed by the Congress before the Secretary of State for the Colonies were yet unsettled, it was considered necessary to place a review of the whole situation before our friends in London and India. A general letter was, therefore, prepared and was sent to them under the signatures of the representative Indians in Natal.[1] It was about this time that the regulations with reference to the then newly established township of Nondweni in Zululand were published.[2] It was provided therein that the Indians could not buy or possess *erven*[3] in that township. As soon as they were published in the Government *Gazette,* a memorial[4] was drawn up protesting against the exception and submitted to H. E. the Governor. *The Natal Mercury* admitted the justice of our contention. His Excellency, however, could not see his way to remove the prohibition.

Thereupon, a petition was forwarded to Mr. Chamberlain,[5] and Sir M. M. Bhownaggree on receipt of the memorial put a question in the House of Commons. The London *Times* gave nearly two columns to the matter andthe Committee of the National Congress[6] also took it up. It might be noticed here, parenthetically, that the publication of the above regulationsbrought to light the fact that similar regulations were passed with reference to the earlier established townships of Melmoth and Eshowe. The above memorial included these two townships also. The prohibition has now been removed. Had it not been for the vigilance of Mr. Adamji Miankhan, this matter might have altogether escaped the notice of the Congress; for, he it was who first came to know about it, and brought it to the notice of the Honorary Secretary.

About May 1896, after inspection of many properties and after

[1] This is not available.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to *The Natal Mercury*", 3-2-1896.

[3] Land sites.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to *The Natal Mercury*", 3-2-1896.

[5] *Vide* "The British Indian Association and Lord Milner", 11-6-1903.

[6] The reference is to the British Committee of the Indian National Congress in London.

much consultation and deliberation, the property registered in the name of Niddha, a free Indian woman, with a brick house and store, was bought by the Congress for £71,080. It was unanimously resolved that it should be registered in the names of the seven persons who have the power of signing cheques on behalf of the Congress as trustees therefor. The property now brings a rental of about £l0 per month, its rateable value is £200 and the yearly rates payable to the Corporation this year have been £9-17-6. The buildings are insured for £800 by the Gardiner Fire Assurance Society. Most of the tenants are Tamil people. A bathroom was badly required by them and a temporary structure has been put up by volunteers, Mr. Amod Jeewa supplying the bricks free of charge. It is reckoned that this work has saved the Congress over £8. In April of 1896, as the funds of the Congress thus seemed to be in a prosperous condition and as it became necessary to remove from Mr. Moosa Hajee Adam's place, it was felt that the Congress might well take a step forward and be better housed. Accordingly, the spacious hall now occupied by the Congress was rented at a monthly rental of £5, being an increase of £3 per month over the rent previously paid.

During the first session of the Natal Parliament, 1896, it became known that Mr. Chamberlain had decided to advise the Natal ministers to amend the Franchise Act specially preventing persons of Asiatic extraction from being placed on the Voters' Roll from the statute book of the Colony by passing a general Act. A Bill repealing that Act and disqualifying persons and descendants of persons belonging to countries that have not hitherto possessed elective representative institutions founded on the parliamentary franchise from becoming voters at the parliamentary elections was thereupon brought in. The Congress felt that, although this Bill did not apply to the Indians,[1] as it was to be passed with a view to disfranchise them alone, it was necessary to oppose it and, therefore, a petition embodying the views of eminent persons as to the existence of representative institutions in India was submitted to the Legislative Assembly.[2] This evoked so much opposition to the Bill on the part of some of the members of the Legislative Assembly that, at one time, it seemed as if the Bill would be thrown out. Sir John Robinson cabled to Mr, Chamberlain and obtained his permission to add after 'institutions' the phrase

[1] It did not make a specific reference to the Indians.

[2] *Vide* "Memorial to Natal Legislative Assembly", 27-4-1896.

‘founded on the parliamentary franchise’.[1] This addition materially disarmed opposition to the Bill and it passed both the Houses in spite of our petition to the Legislative Council.[2] Mr. Laughton, at the time of the controversy, wrote a letter to *The Natal Advertiser* and gave it as his opinion that, in spite of the addition above referred to, the Bill would be inoperative so far as the Indians were concerned. The Bill reserves to the Governor the right to grant special exemption to those coming under it. A petition protesting against the Bill was sent to the Secretary of State for the Colonies,[3] but it has received the Royal assent and is now the law of the land. It is quite competent for us at any time to bring up a test case as to whether or not we have institutions in India such as are contemplated by the Act, or to apply to the Governor for special exemption. The necessity for either has not yet arisen. We have all along contended that it was not political power that we wanted, but that it was degradation which The first franchise Bill involved that we resented, and our protest has evidently been respected by Her Majesty’s Government.

The birth of a son to Mr. Abdul Kadir in the month of March, 1896, deserves a special paragraph. At the ceremony performed in the Congress Hall to commemorate the event, over 500 people gathered together. The Hall was brilliantly lit up, Mr. Abdul Kadir made a present to the Congress of £7. This was followed by others and the donations given on the occasion amounted to £58.

During the presidency of Mr. Abdulla Haji Adam, a resolution was passed to the effect that members who collected for the Congress £25 and upward should receive a silver medal. After the institution of the medals many members had, before the month of April 1896, qualified themselves for the honour. Mr. Dowd Mahomed was the most conspicuous in this respect, and it was the unanimous wish that the resolution should be put in force with respect to his work. Consequently, a special meeting was held and a silver medal with a suitable inscription, accompanied by a testimonial, was presented to him.

By this time it became necessary for the Honorary Secretary, owing to domestic reasons, to leave for India for a short visit. The Congress decided that he should take advantage of his visit home and lay before the Indian public the grievances of the British Indians

[1] *Vide* “Memorial to J. Chamberlain”, 22-5-1896.

[2] The petition was submitted to the Legislative Assembly. “Memorial to Natal Legislative Assembly”, 27-4-1896.

[3] *Vide* “Memorial to J. Chamberlain”, 22-5-1896.

residing in South Africa. A letter appointing him as delegate was consequently given to him[1] and a draft for £75 was also given to defray the expenses of travelling, printing and other out-of-pocket disbursements in connection with the work.[2] An Address was presented to him by the Congress and a gold medal. The Tamil members of the Congress held a special meeting and presented a further Address.[3] The Honorary Secretary in reply to all the Addresses said that the presentation was premature, the work was not yet finished. He, however, took theAddresses and the presents as tokens of love, and said that, if the sentiments expressed by the people were genuine, before his return the members would so work as to swell the Congress balance from £194 to £1,194 by the addition of £1,000 by subscriptions and donations. These presentations were widely noticed by the S. African Press, not altogether in an unfriendly spirit. He left for India by the Pongola on the 5th of June 1896.

During his absence, Mr. Adamji Miankhan was appointed acting Honorary Secretary. Soon after his reaching India, the Honorary Secretary published a pamphlet entitled Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa: An Appeal to the Indian Public.[4] Four thousand copies were printed and widely distributed. The Times of India was the first to notice it and, in the course of a sympathetic leading article, advocated a public inquiry. Almost every newspaper of note in India took up the question. The Pioneer, while admitting the grievances, thought that the question was. extremely complicated, that it was difficult to dictate a particular policy to the self governing Colonies, and that, under the circumstances, South Africa for better-class Indians was a country to keep away from. The Simla corres pondent of the London Times cabled a summary of the pamphlet, adding thereto the views expressed by The Times of India and The Piorteer. After the publication of the pamphlet, the leading men in Bombay were waited upon by the Honorary Secretary who was frequently accompanied by the late President, Mr. Abdulla Haji Adam, who happened at the time to be in Bombay.

At the suggestion of the Hon'ble Mr. P. M. Mehta, a public

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Bombay", 26-9-1896.

[2] *ibid*.

[3] *Vide* "The New Move", 25-6-1903.

[4] *Vide* "The Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa: An Appeal to the Indian Public", 14-8-1896, to "Speech at Public Meeting, Bombay", 26-9-1896.

meeting was held in the hall of the Framji Cowasji Institute on the 26th September, Mr. Mehta presiding. The hall was packed. After the Honorary Secretary had read his Address,[1] a resolution sympathising with the Indian's in South Africa and authorising the President to draw up and forward to H. M.'s Principal Secretary of State for India a memorial in connection with the matter was unanimously passed. The late Hon'ble Mr. Jhaverilal Yajnik, the Hon'ble Mr. Sayani and Mr. Chambers, the Editor of the *Champion*, spoke to the resolution. Full reports of the meeting appeared in the daily newspapers, and the Presidency Association forwarded by a cable a summary of the proceedings to London.

Madras was next visited, and the leading men were interviewed. Under the auspices of the Madras Mahajan Sabha a circular was drawn up calling a public meeting at Pachaiyappa's Hall. The circular was signed by about 40 representative members of the various communities in Madras, Raja Sir Ramsamy Mudliar being the first signatory. The Hon'ble Ananda Charlu presided. The hall was crowded and after the Address was read resolutions similar to those passed in Bombay were unanimously carried. A special resolution was also passed suggesting the stopping of indentured labour to Natal. Mr. Adams, Mr. Mr. Parameshvaram Pillay, Mr. Parthasarathy Naidu spoke to the resolution. All the leading dailies fully reported the proceedings. After the meeting was over, there was such a scramble for the above pamphlet that all the available copies were taken up and to meet the demand of the public 2,000 copies were printed in Madras. On the appearance of the cable of the Simla correspondent of the London Times in that paper, Sir (then Mr.) Walter Peace, the Agent-General for Natal, was interviewed and he stated in reply that there were no grievances and made many other statements. The special feature of the Madras Address was an exhaustive reply to Sir Walter Peace. This reply was printed as an appendix to the 2nd edition of the pamphlet.

After a fortnight's stay in Madras, the Honorary Secretary travelled to Calcutta. There he interviewed the leaders of public opinion. Sympathetic notices were taken by *The Englishman, The Indian Mirror, The* Statesman and other English and vernacular papers. The committee of the British Indian Association met to hear the Honorary Secretary, and decided to adopt a memorial to the

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Meeting, Madras", 26-10-1896.

Secretary of State for India. While arrangements were being made to hold a public meeting, a cable from Natal was received asking the Honorary Secretary to return at once. The meeting had, therefore, to be abandoned and he left Calcutta for Bombay. A meeting was however, held in Poona under the auspices of the Sarvajanik Sabha. Prof.. Bhandarkar presided. The meeting passed resolutions on the lines oft' those passed at Madras, to which Prof. Gokhale, the Hon'ble Mr. Tilak; and . . .[1] spoke.

The Honorary Secretary left India by the *Courland* on the 27th November, 1896.[2] A summary of the cablegram by the Simla correspondent of the *Times*, referred to above, was sent by Reuter to the South African press. This summary gave an impression of the pamphlet circulated in India that cannot be borne out by a perusal thereof. It, however, gave offence to the European Colonists. The newspapers published violent articles. This gave rise to an anti-Asiatic agitation on an organized scale and the Colonial Patriotic Union was established. It 'appears that, soon after the publication of the articles, copies of the above-mentioned pamphlet, which were forwarded here, were supplied to the Press which, thereupon, took the right view of the situation and admitted that there was nothing in it to justify the violence of the language used against it. The agitation, however, continued, and many exaggerated statements likely to inflame the public mind were made by the Union. Meanwhile, the *Courland* arrived, preceded by the *Naderi*, by a few hours, which also brought Indian passengers. The prolonged quarantine of 23 days, the formation of the Demonstration Committee, the marching of the Committee procession to the Point to prevent the Indians from landing, the landing of the passengers, the mobbing of the Honorary Secretary, his narrow escape in the guise of an Indian constable, the splendid help rendered by Supdt. Alexander and his force, the sudden change of the tone of the Press, the severe verdict passedby it on the action of the Demonstration Committee, the recognition of the services rendered by the Police on the part of the Indian community, the Demonstration memorial to Mr. Chamberlain containing . . . pages[3] giving the full history of the crisis are all fresh in the minds of

[1] The other speaker was Prof. A. S. Sathe.

[2] The ship sailed from Bombay on November 30. *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

[3] *Vide*"Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

the members of the Congress. Two traits of Indian character came out prominently during the critical) period. The establishment of the Quarantine fund for the relief of the sufferers on the two illfated vessels was a work which showed Indian liberality to the best advantage; and the peaceful behaviour and the quiet resignation during the most irritating times extorted the admiration even of those who were least likely to notice the good traits of our people.

During the session of Parliament that followed, the Government, according to their promise to the Demonstration Committee, introduced four anti-Asiatic Bills, viz., the Quarantine, Immigration Restrictions, Dealers' Licenses, and Uncovenanted Indians Protection Bills. Petitions were sent to both the Houses[1] but in vain; and the Bills were passed. A petition was therefore sent to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.[2] The reply is not altogether satisfactory. Mr. Chamberlain, however, sympathises with us and grants our request with reference to the Indians Protection Act. This legislation may fairly be said to have closed one part of the Asiatic question and that, it would appear, to an extent in our favour. Ever since the establishment of our institution, we have fought against colour legislation—against legislation imposing special disabilities on the Indians. That principle has evidently been admitted. Of course this does not mean that we have nothing further to do or that the Solution is satisfactory. On the contrary, we have now the fight against opposition much more subtle because indirect. The above legislation, although nominally directed against all persons, is in practice applied to the Indians alone. We have, therefore, to endeavour not only to get the legislation repealed or modified, but we have also to watch the operation of the various Acts and so far as possible to induce the authorities not to make it unduly severe and irksome. All that requires on our part constant efforts, unceasing watchfulness, un-breakable union amongst ourselves, a large measure of self-sacrifice and all those qualities that ennoble a nation. And then victory must be ours, for our cause has been universally regarded as just, our methods, moderate and without reproach.

In this connection it might be well to consider and dispose of one complaint that has been raised against the Congress and that is

[1] *Vide* "Indian Position in New Colonies", 16-3-1903 and "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 25-4-1903.

[2] *Vide* "Petition to Transvaal Governor", 8-6-1903.

due to ignorance of past events. It has been said that, if we had not started the movement to obtain redress, our position might not have been so bad as it now is. Little do those people who advance this argument know that the agitation against the Indians is as old as their advent to the Colony. What would have happened if we had not attempted to stem the tide of that agitation? The answer is simple—what has happened to the Indians in the Orange Free State. The Europeans there agitated against the Indians who sat silent until it was too late, and we have now no foothold in that State. In the Transvaal we awoke when half the ground was lost, and because we raised our voice against the European opposition we have yet hopes that, though we may not be able to recover the lost ground, we would at least be able to retain what little yet remains to us. Similarly, in Natal we woke just when the anti-Asiatic feeling was being crystallized into legislation and, therefore, our position is not what it might have been otherwise. If the above feeling had not been allowed to assume the proportions that it did in 1994, we might fairly infer, from the course events took in the other States of South Africa, that our position might have been much better than what it is. To prosecute the enquiry further, the repeal of the anti-Indian regulations for the township of Nondweni in Zululand, the repeal of the first Franchise Act which especially applied to the Indians, the non-acceptance of the anti-Asiatic clause in the Commando Treaty in the Transvaal, Mr. Chamberlain's famous dispatch in reply to the Transvaal Memorial entirely sympathising with us, the marked improvement in the tone of the Press in Natal and other matters which would readily occur to those who have cared to follow our proceedings, may be claimed as the direct and tangible results of our movement.

In the beginning of 1897, a cablegram was published in the papers from the Chief Justice of Bengal, in his capacity as the Chairman of the Indian Famine Charitable Relief Committee, appealing for help to the fund. As soon as the cablegram became known, it was realized that a special effort on the part of the Indians in Natal was necessary. A meeting of the Colonial-born Indians was held in St. Aidan's school room, and there all present promised not only themselves to give what they could but to work also in getting in donations. A meeting of the merchants took place on Mr. Peerun's premises and a fund was started; but that did not seem to satisfy the gentlemen present and they thought that something more was necessary. Another meeting, therefore, took place on the premises of

Messrs. Dada Abdulla & Co., and almost all those who had subscribed on Mr. Peerun's premises doubled or trebled the amounts first put by them, Mr. Abdul Karim rising from £35 to £101, Mr. Abdul Kadir from £36 to £102, Mr. Dawad Mahomed putting down £75. A strong committee representing all classes and creeds amongst the Indian community was formed. Circulars in English, Gujarati, Tamil, Urdu and Hindi were issued and widely distributed.[1] Workers went out all over the Colony collecting subscriptions from high and low and within a fortnight a sum of £1,150 was collected, the expenses for collection amounting to less than £20.

The N.I.E. Association[2] under the superintendence of Dr. and Mrs. Booth gave two benefit performances in the Congress Hall. An improvisedstage was erected and the members with some non-members played 'Ali Baba and Forty Thieves', the hall being packed full on both the occasions and the proceeds amounting to £40. Capt. Young-husband, the special correspondent of the London Times, who was for some time on duty in India, paid a visit to Durban. The Indian side of the Indian question in South Africa was placed before him and all the documents were supplied to him. Messrs Dada Abdulla & Co., entertained him to dinner at the Congress Hall and invited the leading Indians. He has devoted a special chapter to our question in his book on South Africa and, while favouring the attitude taken up by the Europeans, places the Indian side of the question pretty fairly.

Congress was not behind-hand in connection with the Diamond Jubilee festivities. An address carved on a silver plate in the shape of a heart mounted on a plush and framed in Natal yellow wood was presented to Her Majesty on behalf of the Indians in Natal. A deputation consisting of our leading members specially waited on His Excellency the Governor for the presentation of the Address. An Address similarly worded was sent from the Transvaal Indians also.

Under the auspices of the N.I.E. Association the Diamond Jubilee Library was opened on the Jubilee Day by Mr. Waller, the then Magistrate of Durban. The Mayor, Mr. Laughton, Mr. Osborn, the Librarian of the Durban Library, Dr. Booth and a few other Europeans attended the opening ceremony. Letters of sympathy were received from those who were unable to attend, among them being the

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

[2] The Natal Indian Educational ,Association formed in 1894.

Hon. Mr. Jameson and the Deputy Mayor, Mr. Collins. The Congress Hall was brilliantly lighted for the occasion. The credit for the success of the opening ceremony and the decorations is entirely due to the efforts of Mr. Bryan Gabriel, though it is but fair to mention that during the last portion of the decorations he was assisted by other workers also. It is painful to have to report that the library has not been as successful in its career as was its opening. The attendance has been nil. The expenses of the library were subscribed for by the members of the Educational Association and an equivalent amount had been voted by the Congress.

During all this time, between June of 1896 and that of 1897, as has been said above, Mr. Adamji Miankhan held the post of the Hon. Secretary. It was now time for him to go to India. He, therefore, handed over his charge to the Hon. Secretary. A special meeting of the Congress was held to consider the advisability of doing some honour to Mr. Adamji Miankhan to mark its appreciation of Mr. Adamji's services during the trying times. While all the members recognized the self-sacrifice, the zeal and the ability and tact with which Mr. Adamji worked for the Congress, opinion was divided as to whether or not an Address should be presented to Mr. Adamji. After some discussion the resolution to present him with an Address was carried by a narrow majority, but the opposition was so strong that the majority decided not to proceed with the Address as it was considered that in such matters unanimity of opinion was necessary. And Mr. Adamji Miankhan left for India unthanked and unhonoured.

This is one of the slips committed by the Congress and shows that we are but a human institution liable to err as any other. The Hon. Secretary as such held a party at his house in honour of Mr. Adamji. Printed invitations were issued and all leading Indians attended. Laudatory speeches were made to which Mr. Adamji gave a suitable reply. The President, the Hon. Secretary and other members saw Mr. Adamji off at the Point. Mr. Adamji Miankhan has proved worthy of the responsibility that was placed upon him by the Congress. During his tenure he convened the meetings regularly, collected the rents properly and kept a very accurate account of all that was spent. He undoubtedly seems to have cultivated good relations with members of the Congress generally. Above all, the one quality that is needed in the holder of that post more than any other, namely, calmness of mind under all the irritation from within and without and the ability to put up with the different dispositions of the members, he displayed in

abundance. The Jubilee Address might never have been sent but for the care and anxiety with which he worked in order to have it ready in time. Mr. Adamji has shown that the Congress can go on and its work can be properly done by local men.

When it was announced in the papers, two months prior to the day of celebration of the Diamond Jubilee, that Mr. Chamberlain would take advantage of the occasion to meet the Premiers of the different Colonies and discuss with them certain questions affecting the British Empire, among them being included the Indian question, it was thought advisable to send somebody to London with a view of watching the Indian interests. Mr. M. H. Nazar of the firm of Nazar Bros. of London, a member of the Stockholm Oriental Congress and nephew of the late Justice Nanabhai Haridas, who had come to Natal in the December of 1896 and who had rendered splendid help to the community during the Demonstration crisis, was unanimously selected as the delegate and he went duly authorized to England. Mr. Nazar went to England without any remuneration being paid for his services. The Congress was to pay his out-of-pocket expenses only. He remained in London in connection with the work beyond the expected time on the advice of the gentlemen whom he was specially requested to consult in everything he did and whose advice he was to be guided by. He received much support from our sympathizers in London. He was able to move the East India Association on our behalf and that influential body has forwarded a powerful memorial to Lord George Hamilton and has also sent a communication to the Indian Government directly. Mr. Nazar holds letters of sympathy for our cause from several distinguished Englishmen, and Sir M. M. Bhownaggree in a letter addressed to us speaks very highly of his work In this connection, the extraordinary self-sacrifice made by the Colonial-born Indians and the subscription raised at a single evening's sitting to the extent of over £35 amongst themselves, numbering about fifteen poorly paid youngmen who have never extended their horizon beyond South Africa, cannot but be mentioned. Mr. C. Stephen laid aside his silver watch and all he had in his pocket, and his example, to their credit, was followed by the others present at the meeting, and the Nazar Fund Committee were able next day to cable him £75.

About the end of last year, the Durban Town Council passed certain Ricksha regulations, one of which prevented Indians from

owning or holding licenses for rickshas. A protest[1] was at once drawn up, signed by the leading Indians and forwarded to the Governor. Copy of the protest was sent to the Town Council which at once decided to take off the prohibition. Soon after the Immigration Restriction Act came into operation, seventy-five Indians were arrested wholesale in Dundee on the alleged ground that they were prohibited immigrants. Ultimately they were discharged. Last January, the Licensing Officer appointed by the Newcastle Town Council, in virtue of the Dealers' Licenses At above referred to, declined to issue licenses to any of the Indians. On appeal, the Town Council granted six licenses and refused three. The matter was taken before the Supreme Court and Mr. Laughton, the appellant's counsel, ably argued that the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, even on the merits of the case, was not ousted by the Act. The court however, decided against the appellant, His Lordship, the Chief Justice, dissenting. The Congress has taken the matter up and an appeal has been lodged in the Privy Council— Mr. Asquith the leading counsel has been retained in the case. The result is likely to be known in November.[2] The question as to whether vendors without any shop are required to take it a retail licence was raised and the case was taken to the Supreme Court in the name of one Moosa, a vegetable dealer, and that court has decided that no licence is required to be taken out by such vendors. This matter was brought before the Congress by the vegetable vendors and it was taken up, a member promising to pay the out-of-pocket expenses. The case was won, but the disbursements have not yet been paid by him and they will be a charge on the Congress.

In the month of March, an illuminated address was presented to Mr. G. V. Godfrey for his being the first Indian to have passed the Civil Service examination of the Colony.[3] Special subscriptions were raised for the purpose and a special committee was formed. In this connection, it ought to be mentioned that Mr. Godfrey Senior has set an example which otherparents may follow with much profit. Himself by no means a particularly educated man, he had made it his sole aim to bring up his children in a suitable manner and to provide for them the best education. He sent his eldest son to Calcutta and gave him a

[1] This document is not available.

[2] The Privy Council decision was adverse. *Vide* "Indian Traders in Rhodesia", 11-3-1899, enclosure, *supra.*

[3] *Vide* "Address to G. V. Godfrey", dated prior to March 18, 1898.

University training there. He (the eldest son) is now gone to Glasgow and is studying for medicine.

About 20,000 pamphlets, copies of memorials and letters, have been written and have been distributed during the years under review.

Presidents

In the month of August 1898, Mr. Abdul Karim Hajee Adam Zaveri, having occupied the Congress chair ever since his brother's departure in 1896, with much credit to himself and to the universal satisfaction of the members, sent in his resignation. He was requested to reconsider his decision but he said he could not, and Mr. Cassim Jeewa was elected in his place. He occupied the chair till the March of this year and then resigned as he wanted to leave the Colony. Mr. Abdul Kadir was unanimously elected in his place and still holds the position of the head of the community. It is sad to record that Mr. Cassim Jeewa was drowned last May while on his way from Calcutta to Rangoon. Much sympathy was shown to his bereaved father, and the Congress authorised the President to send him a letter of condolence.

Visitors

Dr. Mehta, a graduate and gold medalist of the Grant Medical College[1] and Barrister-at-Law of the Middle Temple, London, and sometime Chief Medical Officer of the Idar State, paid a visit to Durban. He was well received by the community and feted by the prominent members.

Mr. Rustomjee's generosity has provided Congress with linoleum worth £22-10-1, a costly brass-plate Congress board, lamps and other knick-knacks.

MISCELLANEOUS

During the early part of Mr. Abdul Karim's tenure of office, the institution of fines for late attendance at the Congress meetings was founded. Many members paid five shillings for each late attendance. It has now fallen into/disuse, and so much have we fallen back from our first love that now it is difficult to form even a quorum at the Congress meetings before 9 p.m., that is, one and a half hours after the appointed time. It was due to the special exertions of Mr. Abdul Karim that it was decided that every merchant should pay a farthing on every packet he imported, four packets of salt being counted as

[1] This is one of the Medical Colleges of Bombay.

one. Nearly £195 have been thus received by theCongress, but the sum does not even represent one-tenth of what would be received if every merchant paid up the amount due by him to the Congress on his account.

It will be recollected that tickets were issued in order to enable the workers to collect small donations without the necessity of writing out receipts. The plan has proved almost a failure except that Mr. Madanjit brought from the Stanger district about £10.

INDIAN HOSPITAL

The Congress members raised a subscription in aid of the Indian hospital established in the year 1898 by the exertions of Dr. Lilian Robinson under the advice, help and control of Dr. Booth, and guaranteed to pay £160 or £6-13-4 per month for two years in lieu of rent. The hospital was formally opened on the 14th day of Sept. 1898.

The outlook at present is gloomy so far as the internal work of the Congress is concerned. Members do not possess half the enthusiasm that was displayed in 1895 and 1896. Subscriptions in all the outlying districts have become considerably overdue. It would, however, be hardly fair to attribute this apparent neglect of the Congress work to wilful apathy on the part of the members. The Indian community have passed and have been passing not only through serious political troubles but have also, with the other communities, severely suffered from those of the war.[1] These two combined have naturally given rise to despair but it is hoped that the despair is only temporary and that, after a calm survey of the situation, which is not without its bright spots, as will have appeared from the foregoing, the old enthusiasm will revive with redoubled force.

The Congress rules need to be recast and it appears necessary now to be strict in observing them. So far, those that have not paid up their subscriptions have been allowed to be considered as members and to have a say in Congress matters. This practice is very undesirable.

The Test Case as to the interpretation of the Transvaal Law with reference to the Asiatics has been tried.[2] Our fellow brothers in the

[1] The reference is to the Boer War.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to the British Agent", 28-2-1898 and "Telegram to the Viceroy of India", 19-8-1898, supra.

South African Republic engaged the services of the best counsel and spared no pains, but the judges, with Justice Jorrisen dissenting, have decided against us. It is too soon yet to forecast the result of the decision. Messrs. Jeremiah Lyon & Co., of London have taken up the cause of the Indians in Rhodesia. They are doing the work zealously and hope to be successful. They have distributed circular letters and papers amongst the leading merchants in Durban.

Sabarmati Sangrahalaya: S. N. 209

101. RELIEF TO INDIAN REFUGEES[1]

DURBAN,
October 14, 1899

SIR,

About a month ago, in forwarding a copy of the communication to His Honour the British Agent at Pretoria, on behalf of British Indians in the Transvaal, it was my painful duty to comment[2] somewhat bitterly on the refusal of the Natal Government to afford relief to the Indian refugees from Johannesburg. The Immigration Restriction Act prohibits the entry of those that have not been formerly domiciled in Natal and do not know any of the European languages. The Government have passed certain rules under the Act whereby temporary permission to Indian visitors may be given on a deposit by the applicants of Ten Pounds each. The Government were asked to suspend the deposit during the tension. Yielding to—there is reason to believe— pressure from the British Agent, they graciously suspended the deposit. Another difficulty cropped up in the meantime. Most of the refugees from Johannesburg availed themselves of the railway between that place and Durban, but during the past few days that communication has been cut off, and the refugees have to go to Delagoa Bay and thence to Durban. Europeans have been coming from Delagoa Bay in thousands but as the shipping companies, in response to circulars from the Government, have not been taking any Indian passengers, they would not in this instance also. The Government were, therefore, approached for relief in the

[1] This is a circular letter addressed to some select persons to whom had been sent earlier, a special letter (not now available) forwarding Gandhiji's "Letter to the British Agent", July 21, 1899, containing the bitter comments referred to. The general circular letter was of September 16, 1899.

[2] *Vide* the following page.

matter and they have been pleased to notify to the shipping companies that they may bring the Indian refugees from Delagoa Bay, on condition that they should take out temporary passes on their landing. It was considered that it was due to the Natal Government that this fact also should be as prominently brought to your notice as their refusal. We once again feel *that, though in Natal, yet we are British subjects, and that in time of danger the enchanting phrase has not after all lost any of its charm*. The attitude the Natal Government have now taken up during the crisis is the silver lining to the dark cloud that is hanging over our heads in Natal as well as other parts of South Africa. We only trust that the fellow-feeling that has guided the Natal Government in its treatment of the Indians during the crisis would be continued, even after it is over, and that British subjects of all nationalities will be allowed to remain, as they ought to be, in harmony and peace.

Though no native Indian troops have landed in Durban, the Indians attached to the troops from India have not failed to extort the suppressed admiration of the Europeans.

I remain,
yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI

The comments referred to were the following:

"The Transvaal is being cleared of its population as fast as possible, no less than 26,000 persons having left during the last few days. The prominent members of the Uitlander Council, the Editors of the English newspapers in Johannesburg have also left. The largest houses in Johannesburg have suspended their businesses and sent away their clerks and books beyond the border. If the Indians think of leaving the Transvaal at such a time, it cannot be wondered at. They naturally cannot go to Delagoa Bay, because of its malarial climate, nor could they go to the Cape in any large numbers because of the great distance and the consequent heavy charges and the small Indian population there. There are no public homes for them. They have to depend upon the help of private friends whom they can find only in Natal. They have approached the Natal Government with a view to obtain suspension of the Immigration Restriction Act during the crisis. The reply received during the week was that the Government had no power to do so under the Act. This is hardly correct, and in reply to a ther communication they say, "in the enforcement or fur-

non-enforcement of the Immigration Restriction Act, the Government will be influenced by considerations of humanity, and will not seek in the event of hostilities breaking out to exercise its powers unreasonably or oppressively." This is good so far as it goes, but it does not give the relief that is required. To leave after the actual hostilities commence may be impossible. The Government have been further approached, and it remains to be seen what they will do. I write this to show how awful our position is in South Africa. To find that British subjects cannot find shelter from danger on a British soil is truly heart-rending. The Natal Government would seem to have done their best, if they could, to shake the faith of the poor Indians in British justice, and in the enchanting power of the phrase "British subjects". Happily, they do not represent the whole of the British Empire. Strange as it may appear, a cablegram today announces that, in reply to repeated representations from Natal, the imperial Government have ordered the despatch of 10,000 troops from India for the protection of Natal which refuses to give temporary shelter to the Indians from the Transvaal, to guard against which, the above troops are intended. Comment is superfluous."

From the photostat of an original printed copy: S. N. 3299.

102. CONGRESS RESOLUTION ON REFUGEES[1]

DURBAN,
October 16, 1899

It is resolved that the Natal Indian Congress tenders its best thanks to the Government for having graciously afforded facilities to the British Indian refugees from the Transvaal, now in Delagoa Bay, for coming to Natal and remaining in the Colony during the present crisis.

That the President be requested to forward a copy of the above Resolution to the Natal Government for their information.

(Sd.) ABDUL CAADIR

Colonial Office Records: South Africa, General, 1899.

[1] This was forwarded to London by the Governor of Natal.

103. THE INDIAN OFFER

[DURBAN,]
October 19, 1899

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
MARITZBURG

SIR,

About 100 English-speaking Indians of Durban met together at a few hours' notice on the 17th inst. to consider the desirability of unreservedly and unconditionally offering their services to the Government or the Imperial authorities in connection with the hostilities now pending between the Imperial Government and the two Republics in South Africa.

As a result, I have the honour to enclose herewith a list containing the names of a portion of those that have offered their services unconditionally. These have been subjected by Dr. Prince to a rigorous examination.

He will examine the remaining volunteers tomorrow, when about ten are expected to pass the test. But, as time is of consequence, it was proposed to forward. the incomplete list.[1]

The services are offered by the applicants without pay. It is open to the authorities to accept the services of all, or so many as they may consider fit or necessary.

We do not know how to handle arms. It is not our fault; it is perhaps our misfortune that we cannot, but it may be there are other dutiesno less important to be performed on the battlefield and, no matter of what description they may be, we would consider it a privilege to be called upon to perform them and would be ready to respond to the call at any time appointed by the Government. If an unflinching devotion to duty and extreme eagerness to serve our Sovereign can make us of any use on the field of battle, we trust we would not fail. It may be that, if in no other direction, we might render some service in connection with the field hospitals or the commissariat.

The motive underlying this humble offer is to endeavour to prove that, in common with other subjects of the Queen-Empress in South Africa, the Indians, too, are ready to do duty for their Sovereign

[1] *Vide* the following page.

on the battlefield. The offer is meant to be an earnest of the Indian loyalty.

The number we are able to place at the disposal of the Authorities may appear to be small; but it probably represents twenty-five per cent of the adult Indian males in Durban that have received a tolerably good English education.

The mercantile portion of the Indian community, too, have loyally come forward, and if they cannot offer their services on the battlefield, they have contributed towards the maintenance of the dependants of those volunteers whose circumstances would render support necessary.

I venture to trust that our prayer would be granted, a favour for which the petitioners will be ever grateful and which would, in my humble opinion; be a link to bind closer still the different parts of the mighty empire of which we are so proud.[1]

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant
M. K. GANDHI

LIST OF NAMES OF INDIAN VOLUNTEERS WHO HAVE OFFERED THEIR SERVICES TO THE NATAL GOVERNMENT OR THE IMPERIAL AUTHORITIES.

Gandhi, M. K.; Paul, H. L.; Peters, A. H.; Khan, R. K.; Dhanjisha, P.; Cooper, P. C.; Godfrey, J. W.; Baghwan, R.; Peter, P.; Dhunde, N. P.; Lawrence, V.; Gabriel, L.; Harry, G. D.; Govindoo, R.; Shadrack, S.; Ramtahal; Home, J. D.; Nazar, M. H.; Naidoo, P. K.; Singh, K.; Richards, S. N.; Lutchman Panday, M. S.; Royeppen, J.; Christopher, J.; Stevens, C.; Roberts, J. L.; Jappie, H. J.; Done, J. S.; Gabriel, B.; Royeppen, M.; Lazarus, F.; Moodley, R.

From the photostats of a typed office copy, a rough pencil draft in Gandhiji's own hand, S. N. 3301-2, and The Natal Mercury, dated 25-10-1899.

[1] In the course of his reply, dated October 23, the Principal Under Secretary informed Gandhiji that "the Government is deeply impressed with the offer of Her Majesty's loyal Indian, subjects in Durban who have offered their service's ... and should the occasion arise; the Government will be glad to avail itself of those services. Will you be good enough to convey to the Indians in question an expression of the Government's appreciation of their loyal offer."

104. THE INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA[1]

DURBAN,
October 27, [*1899*]

I see that my last contribution in connection with the education of the Indians in Natal[2] has attracted some attention in India and England. I said in it that, unless the Home and the Indian Governments gave more attention than hitherto to the Indian question in South Africa, the effacement of the community in this country was a matter of time. The more I observe, the firmer I become in this conviction. It may not be inappropriate when the battle is raging fiercely between the British army and the Boers to review shortly the position—I was going to say, the most wretched position—the Indians in the Transvaal occupied during the exodus that took place some time ago from that country. During the first stages of the panic, the Uitlanders[3] left Johannesburg by thousands daily. The Indians, however, remained unmoved. Later, the prominent members of the Uitlander Council left. Mr. Moneypenny, the editor of the *Star* and correspondent of the *Times*, and Mr. Hull, a well-known solicitor and leading member of the Council, had to effect their escape in disguise. Mr. Pakeman of the *Leader* was arrested on a charge of high treason, and the atmosphere was thick with the rumour that leaders of the movement would be taken in custody as hostages by the Transvaal Government. Naturally, with the Europeans the poor Indians were also frightened, and they, too, were anxious to leave the Rand for a place of safety. Where could they go? Not to Cape Colony, which is far, and where there is a very sparse Indian population; not to Delagoa Bay, the hot-bed of malaria, devoid of sanitation and overcrowded. The only place they could go to was Natal. The Immigration Restriction Act of that Colony, which prohibits the immigration of lunatics, criminals, prostitutes, paupers, or those that do not know any of the European languages, unless the last have been formerly domiciled in Natal—whatever that phrase may mean—was, however, in the way. Mr. Chamberlain has said that the Act applies to all, irrespective of colour or race distinctions, and, therefore, it is not such as could be objected to. But it does not, therefore, at all follow that the European criminals, desperadoes and prostitutes, of whom Johannesburg may be said to

[1] *Vide* footnote in "The Plague Panic in South Africa", 20-3-1899, supra.
[2] *Vide* "The Indian Question in South Africa", July 12, 1899.
[3] White foreigners, generally British subjects, migrated to the Transvaal.

have a fair number, could not go to Natal. Not only was the Colony open to them, but special arrangements were made for their reception—relief committees were formed, and everything that could be done to make them comfortable in their distress was naturally and justly done by the people of this Colony.

The Indians alone could not and must not come. They appealed to the Government with a view to obtain some relief. They suggested suspension of a portion of the stringent rules passed under the above Act, and asked that they might be allowed to stop in Natal during the crisis. The Natal Government at first refused point-blank to grant relief. Then they said that, in the event of war breaking out, they would be guided by considerations of humanity. The Indians had approached the British Consul at Johannesburg also, who, it must be said, rose to the occasion, and very forcibly placed the Imperial view of the question before the proper authorities, which brought about the desired relief.

In order to understand thoroughly the ridiculous and un-British position taken up by Natal, it is necessary to know something of the rules referred to above. At the time of introducing the Immigration Bill, the Natal Ministers said that they did not in any way intend to inconvenience the Indians who had already settled in the Colony. As soon, however, as the Bill became law, the Government went out of their way to send notices to the various shipping companies, informing them of the punishment that awaited them if they brought Indian passengers. This was naturally taken by them to mean that they were not to bring any Indian passengers. In view of this, it was evidently necessary that those Indians who were entitled to enter the Colony under the Act should be given some relief. The Government, therefore, introduced what are called "certificates of domicile", which were granted to those on whose behalf proof could be produced that they were before domiciled in the Colony. It may be mentioned here that the interpretation of the term "domicile" has been narrowed down as much as possible; so that now, practically, an Indian who wants such a certificate must produce two affidavits to the effect that he was in the Colony doing some permanent business for a term of at least two years—a limitation for which there seems to be absolutely no warrant in the Act itself. These certificates are granted on a fee of half-a-crown to the Treasury; but the reader will easily imagine that the poor Indian, who has got to prove that he is exempt from the operation of the Act, has not only to pay the half-crown, but also the

lawyers who would draw up the affidavits, etc.

This facility, if it may be so called, enabled only previously-domiciled Indians to obtain a passage for Natal. What, however, were the friends, relations, or customers of the Indians in Natal to do who wanted to visit the Colony temporarily, and, therefore, not to immigrate? Such temporary permission was absolutely necessary for the convenience of the Indian settlers. A few applications were made to the Government on behalf of those who wanted to come to Natal on urgent business from other parts of South Africa, and permission was granted after some difficulty on security to the extent of £50 and upwards being lodged for the due return of the applicants. Complaints were frequent and loud about the harassing delay that took place in obtaining such permission, and the prohibitive security required. Applications were made for some systematic relief, and, over one year after the passing of the Act, rules were framed by the Government which, instead of giving the desired satisfaction, caused intense disappointment. A fee of £l was instituted for the first time, for each permit which was granted, on a deposit by the applicant of £25 if he wanted to pass through Durban, say from Johannesburg, on his way to India, and of £10 if he wanted to make a sojourn of a period not exceeding six weeks in Natal. Thus, a poor Indian from Johannesburg wishing to embark at Durban for India was obliged to find not only £25 for deposit, but to pay £l to the Government; whereas he would have to pay only at times two guineas, and at the most five guineas, for a deck passage. Petition after petition was made to the Government protesting against the imposition of the fee and the distinction between the deposits for embarkation-passes and visitors' passes. The Government, however, said that the fee of £l was necessary because the passes were a concession, and threw a lot of work on its hands, and that a higher deposit was insisted upon for embarkation-passes as the Government undertook to buy a passage out of the deposit for the holders—a favour which the holders never asked for, and never appreciated. The petitioners, on the other hand, contended that the granting of such passes was an absolute necessity, caused entirely through the strictness with which the Immigration Restriction Act was administered. They said that the Act prohibited the immigration—that is to say, the entry for permanent settlement, and not the entry for a temporary sojourn; and, therefore, respectfully declined to regard the institution of passes as a concession.

It was not, however, until such pressure was brought to bear on

the Government, and a petition to the Home authorities in the matter was threatened in their memorial with respect to the Dealers' Licenses Act, that the Government yielded and withdrew the imposition of the £1 fee and reduced the deposit of £25 for embarkation-passes to £10. So that, when the Indians in the Transvaal appealed for relief, the system of £10 deposit for *each* visitor or the embarkation-pass was in vogue. (Thus, a storekeeper who has, say, five assistants, would not only have to leave all his stock behind him, to make arrangements for maintenance during the prolonged struggle—without any prospects of business—and find sufficient money for travelling and sundry expenses, but also to have £60 to deposit before he could leave the Transvaal during the panic—a thing which may be practically impossible to do under the severe stress.) It is worthy of note that these passes—though they are, it must be admitted, granted on application without any difficulty—are issuable at the option of the officers appointed to issue them. The Indians in question merely asked for suspension of the £10 deposit, and to be allowed to enter and remain in Natal only during the crisis. The cold reply that the Government first returned came as a shock not only to the Indians but to many fair-minded Englishmen also, in Johannesburg. I know that the British Vice-Consul was very indignant. The *Standard and Diggers' News*, the Boer organ, in a scathing article, had a laugh at the expense of Natal in thisconnection and, not without some truth, pointed out the inconsistency of the imperial Government in coercing the Transvaal to do justice to the Uitlanders while allowing Natal to do as it liked to the British Indians. To the Indians, for the time being, "British subjects" became an empty phrase. That British Indians at such a time of peril could not find shelter on British soil passed their comprehension, and they did not know what to do and where to go. Recent events prove that the Indians' misgivings were perfectly correct, and those of your readers who have followed the stirring events in this Continent are by this time aware of the harrowing difficulties which those who put off to the last moment flying out of the Transvaal had to go through. The British Vice-Consul at Johannesburg came to the rescue. He sent a strong despatch to the British Agent at Pretoria, who, in turn, telegraphed to the High Commissioner, and a timely "recommendation" from him brought the Natal Government to their senses, and the deposit of £10 was suspended. It is to be hoped that the suspension will become permanent, and if the present war brings about, as seems not unlikely,

a better feeling on the part of the European British subjects towards their Indian fellow-subjects, it will have served one good purpose.

It is only due to the Natal Government to mention that they have, since the salutary recommendation from Sir Alfred Milner, been uniformly careful in not discriminating against the Indians. When the passenger traffic between Johannesburg and Durban stopped, the refugees had to come via Delagoa Bay. The Europeans came in without let or hindrance to Durban. These had to be housed, and fed by the Government or the Relief Committees; but the steamship companies, in view of the notice above referred to, would not venture to take Indian refugees, not one of whom has sought the Government's, or the Relief Committee's, aid. The Government were requested to supplement the suspension of the deposit by advising the steamship companies to take Indian passengers, which they did promptly enough. It may not be amiss to give a few instances of the hardships the notice to the companies and the institution of certificates of domicile have caused. As I said in a previous communication, the bubonic plague has come in very useful. The severe Quarantine Act of Natal renders it very risky for any steamer from India to take Indian passengers; consequently, for months past, the steamship companies in Bombay, so it appears, have been absolutely refusing to book passengers for Natal. The loss and inconvenience that have bee n. caused, particularly to Indian merchants, owing to the inability of their partners or servants to secure a passage for Natal, are serious. The Government have been often approached to grant relief, but they have sheltered themselves under the statement that they could not give any assurance to the steamship companies, but that they would treat every arrival from the Indian ports on its own merits. The Delagoa Bay authorities have unfortunately caught the bubonic fever craze, and, yielding to the hysterical cry in Natal, have of late returned steamers with Indian passengers back without landing even cargo. They have no prejudice; but because people in the neighbouring Colonies have been shouting that the sanitation there is rotten, and supervision of cases of infectious diseases more so, they have been managing things in a most high-handed manner. The s.s. *Kanzler* brought a large number of Indian passengers a fortnight ago from Bombay. She was ordered to return. In the meantime, an Indian gentleman, who had his clerk on board, approached Portuguese authorities and induced them to let his clerk land—to bring whom, it is said, the Government tug was specially sent! This is, indeed,

humorous—only, it is also very distressing. It shows the Portuguese freedom from bias against the Indians, and it also shows that in the presence of weakness they would commit an injustice.

Such is the unfortunate lot of the poor Indian in South Africa, mainly due to the anti-Indian policy of Natal. But for the Immigration Restriction Act and the Quarantine Act (which, also, in reality is an anti-Indian Act), the wholesale return of steamers bringing Indian passengers, without regard to what that may mean to the Indians, would have been an impossibility. It seems to me, however, that the situation is by no means hopeless. Natal, apart from the Indian question, has undoubtedly risen to the occasion during the present crisis; so much so that Mr. Chamberlain, in his great speech, lately, paid a well-deserved tribute to the Colony. The Volunteers have been fighting the Imperial cause unflinchingly. The Ministers have given their entire support to the Imperial Government. Newcastle, Charlestown and Dundee, principal towns in the Colony, had to be entirely evacuated on the shortest notice; and the British, including, of course, the British Indians, merchants and others, realised the position and, leaving all their belongings, vacated those places with quiet resignation. All this shows intense attachment to the Throne. If only, therefore, the European Colonists could be induced to see that their attachment would be incomplete unless justice was done to the Indians, they would not fail to respond. There is no mistaking the sign of the wave of Imperial unity. The present war is entirely in the interests of the Uitlanders, whose sufferings may be said to fade into insignificance when compared with those of the Indians. The Volunteers who have gone to the front to fight for the Queen's cause are mostly those who took the most prominent part in the now notorious anti-Indian demonstration of 1897 in Durban. Some local English-speaking Indians met together a few days ago, and decided that because they were British subjects, and as such demanded rights, they ought to forget their domestic differences, and irrespective of their opinion on the justice of the war, render some service, no matter how humble, on the battlefield during the crisis, even if it were to act as bearers of the wounded in the Volunteer camp. Most of these plucky youths are clerks, and well brought up, and by no means inured to a hard life. They have offered their services without pay, unconditionally, to the Government or the Imperial authorities, stating that they do not know how to handle arms, andthat they would consider it a privilege if they could perform some duty, even menial,

on the battlefield. The Indian merchants have come forward to support the families of those who may need help. The Government have returned a very courteous reply, saying that, should occasion arise, they would avail themselves of the services offered.

It strikes me that neither the Indian public nor the steamship companies have taken the trouble to study the Immigration Restriction Act; for, notwithstanding the Government notice above referred to, there is no reason for the companies to decline to take Indian passengers altogether. They can safely take such as can read and write English fairly well, and there should be no hesitation in taking any Indian passengers who would give them an undertaking, depositing money, if necessary, to the effect that, if they are not allowed to land in Natal, they would at their own expense return or disembark at the next port of call. . Our great companies should either themselves give such facilities as are in their power to poor Indian passengers, or should be made to do so by our public bodies, such as the Chambers of Commerce, within whose province such matters lie specially. I trust they will give sympathetic consideration to the suggestion offered.

The Times of India (Weekly edition), 9-12-1899

105 . LETTER TO W. PALMER

[DURBAN,
post *November 13, 1899*]

DEAR MR. PALMER,

I thank you very much for your kind note which is a surprise to me.[1] I would, if it is possible, like to know the names of the ladies who went to collect and of the 'Arabs' who declined to assist.

It is just possible the men did not know the ladies or the true aim of the fund.

Before the Indians offered their services to the Imperial authorities for active service on the battlefield, I went over to Mr. Jameson and asked him whether it was advisable to make the offer. He seemed disinclined to advise it owing to the inability of the volunteers to handle arms, but suggested a contribution to the fund referred to in

[1] Mr. William Palmer, Treasurer of the Durban Women's Patriotic League, had written to Gandhiji on November 13, 1899, complaining that while "Coolies" had contributed their three-penny pieces to the street collections, the "Arabs" (Asiatic merchants) had "declined to render any help".

your note. Ever since, I have been thinking of inducing the leading Indians to make a small collection. But, as you know, the offer has been made, one of the conditions of which is to support the families of the volunteers during active service. The fund started for this purpose and the terrible strain thousands of Indian refugees haveput upon the purse of the Indian merchants have rendered it necessary for the merchants to discriminate in subscribing to various funds.

However, I am awaiting an opportunity of drawing more generally the attention of the Indians to the fund in question.

Please assure the self-sacrificing ladies that no Indian could have declined to assist from want of sympathy. We are all fired by one spirit, viz., the imperial, and we all know what sacrifice volunteers and those they have left behind have committed. The existence-it be so—of a few selfish persons need not, in my humble opinion, cause us to think uncharitably of the whole class to which they may belong. And, after all, the Coolies are as much Indians as Arabs.

From the photostat of the office copy: S. N. 3323.

106. CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DURBAN FUND

Gandhiji circulated the following note, written in his own hand, inviting contributions:

DURBAN,
November 17, 1899

We the undersigned hereby subscribe as under to the Durban Women's Patriotic League Fund.

E. Aboobakar Amod & Bros.	5- 5-0
S. P. Mahomed & Co.	2- 2-0
Parsee Rustomjee	5-10-0
M. K. Gandhi	3- 3-0
[Here follow forty-two other signatures and subscriptions]	
Total	62- 7-3

From the photostat of the original subscription list: S. N. 3326.

107. INDIAN TRADERS IN NATAL[1]

DURBAN,
November 18, [*1899*]

Nothing of what I have so far written on the position of the British Indians in South Africa deserves that consideration which the matter I am about to deal with in this letter ought to do. One of the four Acts the Natal Legislature passed in 1897, in indecent hurry and at a time when the fury of the Durban mob had hardly subsided, was that known as the Dealers' Licenses Act. The Act gives absolute discretion to the Licensing Officers appointed under it to issue or refuse a wholesale or a retail license, whether to trade as a shopkeeper or as a hawker, his decision being subject to review by the Town Council or the Town Board, which have the power to appoint him. There is no right of appeal against a decision of these bodies, sitting as a Court of Appeal in such license cases. The penalty for carrying on a trade without a license is £20, in default of which the magistrates have the power to send the defaulter to gaol— not under the Act itself, but under the powers reserved to the magistrates under another law for cases where imprisonment is not specifically mentioned. It was hoped that the depriving the Supreme Court of the Colony of jurisdiction over all bodies exercising judicial functions would be found by the Privy Council to be illegal; but, as the reader may remember, that body has decided otherwise. The Supreme Court has also decided that licenses issued under the Act are personal only, and, therefore, although they may be held, say by a company, the sale of its goodwill would not carry with it the right to trade under the Company's license during the remainder of the license period. Thus, there is no loophole left under the Act, and the judicial interpretation has narrowed down the rights of the parties affected thereby to the smallest compass. The poor Indians have sent petitions—two to the Colonial Secretary and one to Lord Curzon, on whom they have built very large hopes. No reply has as yet been received from the Viceroy, and none from the Colonial Secretary to the last petition, except an intimation by the Natal Government to the effect that the Colonial Office was in correspondence with them in the matter.

It would be safe to say that there are over 300 Indian store or shopkeeper's licenses and about 500 Indian hawker's licenses in the

[1] *Vide* Footnote in "The Plague Panic in South Africa", 20-3-1899, *supra.*

Colony of Natal. The holders of these form the respectable portion of the Indian community, and represent the 4,000 free Indians in the Colony, as distinguished from about 50,000 Indians who were brought into Natal under indenture as labourers, and their descendants. In its operation the Act has ruined many Indian storekeepers, and unsettled the minds of all of them. In certain cases the Incensing Officers have taken the greatest liberties with the Act, and it would not at all be an exaggeration to say that they have used their power in an arbitrary and tyrannical manner, and that the Licensing Boards have connived at and, at times, encouraged and even dictated, their actions. Not only have new licenses been refused, transfers of old licenses prohibited and renewals of old licenses not allowed, but insult in some cases has been added to injury, while the injured parties have felt absolutely powerless. An old Indian settler, who had risen from the status of a labourer to that of a respectable trader, removed from an up-country district where he had been trading for several years, to Durban, bought a piece of property, and thought he would take out a license in Durban in the Indian portion of the town, where he was to cater principally for Indian customers. He applied for a license, showed he had engaged a European book-keeper to keep his books, and produced certificates as to respectability and honesty from three well-known European merchants who had dealt with him; but the Licensing Officer declined to grant the license. The matter was taken in appeal before the Durban Town Council, and the Licensing Officer was asked by the applicant's attorney to give reasons for his refusal. He declined to do so. The Town Council upheld the decision of the Licensing Officer, and would not even make him his reasons. While the case was being conducted, the Court (i.e., the Town Council), the Licensing Officer (who was the respondent) and the Town Solicitor retired to a private room for consultation, and on return, forgetting that the counsel s address was still to be heard, the Council announced their decision upholding their Officer's action. The applicant's counsel drew their attention to the irregularity, and the farce of addressing a Court that had made up its mind was allowed to be gone through— with no better result.

The persevering applicant took the case before the Supreme Court which, while it declined to interfere with the decision of the Town Council —having no power to do so under the Act—quashed the whole proceedings, and sent the case back for rehearing, with the

direction that the appellant was entitled to reasons for refusal. To the Acting Chief Justice:

> It seemed . . . that the action of the Town Council in this case had been oppressive.... It seemed to him that the refusal of both requests [for a copy of the record and reasons] was unjudicial and an improper proceeding. Justice Mason, the first Puisne Judge,
>
> considered the proceedings under appeal were a disgrace to the Town Council, and he did not hesitate to use this strong language. He considered under the circumstance that it was an abuse of words to say there had been an appeal to the Town Council.

So the Town Council reheard the appeal, and made the Licensing Officer give his reasons, which were that "the applicant had no claim whatever upon Durban, as the class of trade he was engaged in was sufficiently provided for in the town." The decision was the same as on the previous occasion, and the unfortunate man has to remain without his license. I understand that now he is a poor man, having been obliged to live on his capital. The reason was, in plain words, absolutely false, many licenses to Europeans having since been granted, and the application having been in respect of a place that was vacated by an Indian storekeeper who had left Durban. Another Indian who, it was proved, was a Colonist of fifteen years' standing, lived in a decent style, had large businesses in several parts of the Colony, and had good credit with a number of European firms, also applied for a license —with the same unsuccessful result. The real reason was forced out for the first time during the hearing of his appeal. The Licensing Officer said:

> The Act 18 of 1897 as I understand was passed with a view of placing some check on the issue of trading licenses to certain classes of people generally regarded as undesirables, and as I believe I am right in assuming that the applicant in question is one that would be included in that class, and, moreover, as he has never before had a license in Durban, I have felt it my duty to refuse his license.

One of the councillors, in approving of the decision of the Licensing Officer, said:

> The reason was not because the applicant or the premises were unsuitable, but because the applicant was an Indian. . . . Personally he considered the refusal of the license a grievance to the applicant, who was a most suitable person to appear before the Council to ask for a license.

Another councillor would not take part in the proceedings because he

disagreed with the dirty work they (councillors) were called upon to do. If the burgesses wished all such licenses stopped, there was a clean way of going about the

matter: viz., getting the Legislative Assembly to enact a measure against the granting of licenses to the Indian community. But sitting as a Court of Appeal, unless there were good grounds to the contrary, the license should be granted.

But, of course, it was not, as the anti-Indian element was too strong in the Council. The Newcastle Town Council took away at one stroke almost all the Indian licenses in 1898. It was then that the matter was taken to the Supreme Court, and thence to the Privy Council, which decided that there was no appeal from the Town Council's decisions under the Act. This year it has granted most of the Indian licenses, and it must also be said to its credit that, while the question was pending before the Privy Council, it allowed the Indians concerned to carry on their trade. The Chairman of the Dundee Local Board, in dealing with a similar appeal, said he would not give the applicant even "the chance of a dog". The same Board, moreover, passed a resolution last year instructing the Licensing Officer to cancel as many Indian licenses as possible. This was too much for even the public press of Natal, and a hint was given that the Board was going too far. The result was in a measure satisfactory, and licenses have been granted this year, though with the proviso that they would not be renewed next year in respect of the same building. In another respect, two Indian merchants sold their business to Indians and asked for a transfer of license, which was refused—the decision being upheld in appeal by the Local Board. In some parts of the Colony, licenses granted last year have been withheld this year. Such, in a brief outline, is the effect of the Act in question. As a result of the correspondence between the Colonial Office and the Natal Government, the latter have told the different local bodies that, unless they exercised their powers with better discretion so as not to affect vested interests, the right of appeal to the Supreme Court would be given to the aggrieved parties. This letter officially admits the grievance and also approves of the remedy suggested by the Indians. But the three Municipalities of Natal take the letter for what it is worth, and hardly listen to such a threat of the Natal Government. Neither the Licensing Officers nor the Town Councils are much to blame in the matter. They are merely victims. Any body of persons placed under similar circumstances would act in the same manner as the Natal Licensing Officers and Boards. The Officers are either Town Clerks or Town Treasurers and, therefore, as the Chief Justice remarked in the case referred to above, hardly independent of those bodies, the members of which, in their turn, depend for their offices on the

goodwill of the people that are directly opposed to the Indians. And to these bodies the Natal Legislative Assembly has said:

> We leave the Indian entirely at your mercy. You may, without your action being called in question by any body, either let them earn an honest living in your midst or deprive them of it without any compensation whatever.

So long, therefore, as the Act, which is admitted by all, including even the Natal politicians, to be opposed to free-trade and the cherished principles of the British Constitution, is allowed to blot the Statute-book of the Colony, so long will the grievances remain, the Government letters, like the one mentioned above, addressed to the Corporations notwithstanding. The Indians very reasonably say: "Impose what sanitary restrictions you like on us; let our books be kept in English, if you will; introduce, if so minded, other tests which we may reasonably be expected to fulfil; but, after we have complied with all the requirements, allow us to continue to earn our living and, if there be interference on the part of the Officers administering the law, give us the right of appeal to the highest judicial tribunal in the land." It is difficult, indeed, to find fault with such a position, and more so to understand the distrust of the Natal Legislature in the Supreme Court of the Colony. This licensing question is a festering sore which needs must be healed. It affects the present Indian population, and fairly promises to ruin it unless there is timely intervention. The petty Indian traders are surely, if slowly, being weeded out unnoticed. This tells very materially upon their feeders—the large Indian firms and their dependants. Indian landlords have an anxious time of it, as their premises, however well-constructed they may be, cannot be let, as no one would have them when the licenses cannot be got. The current year is fast approaching its end, and the Indians are all anxiously waiting to know how they will fare next year as to the renewal of their licenses, The war is depopulating Natal, and no one knows when business may be resumed and people may be able to return to their homes. Still, it might be as well for the Indian public to remain on the alert, and by well-sustained efforts to see that this evil, at any rate, is removed before it is too late, and before the Indians in Natal, through sheer suppression, are unable even to let their voice be heard in India.

The Times of India (Weekly edition), 6-1-1900

108. LETTER TO W. PALMER

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
November 24 1899

TO
WILLIAM PALMER, ESQ.
TREASURER
DURBAN WOMEN'S PATRIOTS LEAGUE
DURBAN

DEAR SIR,

We have been requested by the Indian subscribers to the Durban Women's Patriotic League Fund to forward to you the enclosed cheques which represent a special contribution to the fund by the Indian merchants and storekeepers of Durban.

We feel that we have not subscribed enough, but the subscription for the support of the families of the Indian volunteers in the event of their services being required, the heavy strain put upon our resources for feeding and housing thousands of Indian refugees, not only from the Transvaal, but also from our up-country Districts at present occupied by the enemy, and the enormous losses sustained owing to the virtual suspension of business, have crippled our pecuniary strength. We know, however, that the Volunteers who have dedicated their lives to the Colony and the Empire, as also those they have left behind, have performed an act of self-sacrifice before which anything we have done dwindles into insignificance. What little therefore, we are able to send herewith is merely as token of our heartfelt sympathy and admiration of our brave men who are fighting for us all.

Yours etc.

From the photostat of the office copy: S. N. 3325-6, and *India*, 26-1-1899

109. WIRE TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

December 2, 1899

TO
HONOURABLE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PETERMARITZBURG

PROTECTOR IMMIGRANTS SAW ME WITH REFERENCE TO INDIANS FOR HOSPITALS. MOST OF THOSE WHO HAVE OFFERED SERVICES WOULD I THINK BE PREPARED TO CO. IF GOVERNMENT WOULD

HAVE US KINDLY STATE NATURE OF WORK WHEN WE MUST START AND OTHER PARTICULARS THAT MAY BE NECESSARY.

GANDHI

From the photostat of the office copy: S. N. 3332.

110. WIRE TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

December 4, 1899

TO
HONOURABLE COLONIAL SECRETARY
MARITZBURG

WIRE RECEIVED. IMMEDIATELY AFTER INTERVIEW WITH PROTECTOR AND SEEING THAT GOVERNMENT HAD SENT HIM LIST OF INDIAN VOLUNTEERS FORWARDED TO YOU OCTOBER 19 I NOTIFIED THEM THAT GOVERNMENT SEEMED TO REQUIRE THEIR SERVICES AND TOLD THEM TO HOLD THEMSELVES IN READINESS PENDING YOUR FURTHERE INSTRUCTIONS. WE HAVE MADE ARRANGEMENTS TO START AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE. BEING EAGER TO RENDER WHAT SERVICE WE CAN WITHOUT PAY MAY MENTION SOME OF US HAVE BEEN TAKING LESSONS IN HOSPITAL WORK UNDER DR. BOOTH. FROM YOUR TELEGRAM TODAY IT APPEARS GOVERNMENT ONLY REQUIRE LABOURERS. IT WOULD BE A GREAT DISAPPOINTMENT IF AFTER ALL ARRANGEMENTS GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT ACCEPT US. BESIDES THE TWENTY FIVE NAMES SENT IN OCTOBER SOME TWENTY OTHERS HAVE VOLUNTEERED THEIR SERVICES WITHOUT PAY . ANXIOUSLY AWAITING EARLY AND F AVOURABLE REPLY.

GANDHI

From the photostat of the office copy: S. N. 3333.

111. LETTER TO BISHOP BAYNES OF NATAL

[DURBAN,
prior to *December 11, 1899*]

MY LORD,

Revd. Dr. Booth informs that in Your Lordship's opinion he ought not to join the Indian Ambulance Corps unless he feels strongly and there is real need for him. He says also that he will not accompany the Corps for the present but may do so if there is a real need for him.

In my humble opinion, Dr. Booth is indispensable for the Corps. His knowledge of medicine was of the greatest value to us, and if Dr. Booth did not accompany us, we, a Corps of nearly 1000 men,

would be without a medical adviser. I do not mention the great confidence he wouldinspire in the Ambulance leaders, whom he knows and has trained under him. In the treatment of the wounded that might be entrusted to the care of the leaders, Dr. Booth's services, Your Lordship will agree, will be inestimable. His place can be filled here, in the ambulance camp there would be a gap without him.

I understand Dr. Booth is not leaving the mission, at any rate, till June next and, seeing that he is not likely to be required at the front any great length of time, perhaps Your Lordship will be pleased to grant the necessary permission.

I remain,

Your L's obedient servant

From the photostat of a draft: S. N. 3372b.

112. WIRE TO PRAGJEE BHIMBHAI

[DURBAN,]
December 11, 1899

TO
PRAGJEE BHIMBHAI
BELLAIR

ASK VOLUNTEERS BE READY. START POSSIBLY TOMORROW.

GANDHI

From the photostat of the office copy: S. N. 3338.

113. WIRE TO COLONIAL SECRETARY[1]

TO
THE HONOURABLE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

[DURBAN]
December 11, 1899

I AND MR. GANDHI WILL WAIT UPON YOU TOMORROW MORNING NINE.

[BOOTH]

From the photostat of the office copy: S. N. 3339.

[1] The office copy shows that the telegram was drafted and despatched by Gandhiji.

114. INDIAN AMBULANCE CORPS

The Hon. Mr. Harry Escombe, Premier of Natal in 1897, invited at his residence in Johannesburg the leaders of the Indian Ambulance Corps proceeding that day to the front. The following is a brief press report of the speech Gandhiji made at Mr. Escombe's request.

[JOHANNESBURG,]
December 13, 1899

When the ultimatum was presented by the Transvaal, some of them thought it was a time when they should sink all differences, and, as they insisted upon rights and privileges as subjects of the Queen, do something to prove their loyalty. Very few of them could handle arms, although, if the Ghoorkas or the Sikhs had been there, they would have shown what they could do in the way of fighting. They—that is the English-speaking Indians—came to the conclusion that they would offer their services to the Colonial or Imperial Government, unconditionally and absolutely without payment, in any capacity in which they could be useful, in order to show the Colonists that they were worthy subjects of the Queen. They called a meeting, and at that time there was so much enthusiasm shown that almost everyone present put their names on the list as willing to serve, and from that list they had chosen suitable men. He asked Dr. Prince to examine them to know how many were fit to serve on the battlefield. Dr. Prince passed 25, and they sent the list of names to the Government, but got the reply that at that time their services could not be accepted. Shortly after this, ambulance classes were started by Dr. Booth and they had been attending his lectures almost every night. The Government had intimated that they required 50 to 60 Indians to go to the front, and on the Protector coming to him, he said that they were ready at a moment's notice to do whatever was needed of them, and that, without remuneration of any kind. The Colonial Secretary, however, did not think the work suitable for them, and on hearing this, Dr. Booth wrote to the Colonial Secretary and gave him an idea of the work they could do; Dr. Booth was then kind enough to go with him to Maritzburg, where they saw Bishop Baynes and, also, Colonel Johnston. The latter thought they would do admirably to act as leaders for the Indians engaged as bearers. Their dream had been realised, and although, unfortunately, they were not to be engaged in the fighting line, he hoped they would be able to discharge their duties well. To Dr. Booth they were very grateful for what he had done, and he also had offered

his services gratis to the Government, and was going with them that night.

The Natal Mercury, 14-12-1899

115. LETTER TO DONNOLLY

[Post *December 13, 1899*][1]

DONNOLLY, ESQ.
DISTRICT ENGINEER
DEAR SIR,

Of the tickets received by me by virtue of your order for 5 1st class tickets, 20 2nd class tickets and 20 3rd class tickets in connection with Indian Ambulance Corps, I return herewith I unused 1st class ticket and 10 unused 3rd class tickets.

Of the 10 3rd class tickets used, 3 were used as from P. M. Burg, as 3 bearers joined us at that station. The numbers of the 3 tickets were 9303, 9290, 9285. I duly reported this matter at P. M. Burg before taking in the 3 bearers.

[*Yours faithfully,*
M. K. GANDHI]

From the photostat of the office copy in Gandhiji's own hand: S.N. 3358.

116. LETTER TO P. F. CLARENCE

[DURBAN,
December 27, 1899]

MR. P. F. CLARENCE
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
PIETERMARITZBURG
DEAR SIR,

I enclose herewith accounts for £...[2] which please examine and for which let me have a cheque if correct.

I do not know if Mr. Bhayad of P. M. Burg has incurred any expenses for recruiting bearers. I am writing to him and will render further accounts in the event of there being anything due to Mr. Bhayad.

Yours faithfully,
[M. K. GANDHI]

[1] Gandhiji left for the front on December 14, at 2-10. a.m.
[2] *Vide* the next page.

[Enclosure]

MEMO OF EXPENSES

DURBAN,
December 27, 1899

MEMO OF EXPENSES AUTHORIZED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT,
INDIAN AMBULANCE CORPS

		[£	s	d]
12th Dec.	To cabman paid visiting Superintendent &c.	0	9	0
	„ telegrams to volunteers to be ready and collect carriers[1]			
	„ fare P. K. Naidoo to Durban 2nd class for recruiting. bearers	0	11	10
	To telegram Mr. Vinden to Col. Sec.	0	1	10
	To fare from Bellair to Durban 7 bearers	0	4	1
	To fare volunteer going to Bellair for the bearers	0	1	9
	To fare one volunteer fr Bellair	0	1	2
	To fare volunteer fr Tongaat	0	5	0
14th Dec.	To provisions as per Mr. Amod's Bill A[2]	1	16	0
18th Dec.	To provisions as per Bill B[3]	0	12	0
19th Dec.	To mugs &c. as per Stu[. . . .]k's[4] Bill C[5]	0	19	0
	To paid Durjan at Chieveley for Kaffir pot for cooking food for carriers. pot handed Super[6]	0	7	0
	To one week's wages for 9 bearers employed as police @ 25/- viz. (1) Goolabbhai (2) Desai Pragjee Dayaljee (3) Dahyabhai Dajee (4) Desai Govindjee Premjee (5) Nagar Ratanjee (6) Dahyabhai Morarjee (7) Deshabhai Prag jee (8) Perulamal[7] (9) Pernrail[8]	11	5	0

[1] No entry against this item.
[2] These are not available.
[3] *ibid*
[4] Not decipherable.
[5] This is not available.
[6] Superintendent.
[7] The correct spelling of these hurriedly written names is given as Perumal in Gandhiji's note at the end of the "Statement of Account"; vide the succeeding item.
[8] *ibid*

To wages for bearer Sukhraj	1	0	0
To fare one volunteer to Tongaat	0	5	0
	17	16	8[1]

From the photostats of the office copies: S. N. 3356 and 3357.

117. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT[2]

[Post *December 27, 1899*]

(Paid) Carriers brought up by Mr. Gandhi
Not Volunteers—free of charge.

No.	Rank	Name	Period	No. of days	Rate per week Amount	[£ s d]
1.	Night Guard	Goolabbhai	13 to 20	8	20/-	1- 5
2.	,,	Desai Pragjee Dayal	„	„	„	1- 5
4.[3]	,,	Dahyabhai M	„	„	„	1- 5
5.	,,	Govindjee Premjee	„	„	„	1- 5
6.	,,	Nagar Ratanjee	„	„	„	1- 5
7.	,,	Doolabhbhai Pragjee	„	„	„	1- 5
8.	,,	Dahyabhai Dajee	„	„	„	1- 5
9.	bearer	Perulamal	„	„	„	1- 2-10
10.	„	Lekraj	„	„	„	1- 2-10
11.	„	Permal	„	„	„	1- 2-10
						12-11- 2
		a/c attached Sundry disbursements	. .	. .	. .	5-13- 4

[1] The total is £17-18-8.

[2] This statement of account was originally prepared by one of Gandhiji's co-workers, who by mistake charged wages for 11 carriers at the common rate of £1-2-10 for each (vide the illustration). Including a sum of £5-13-4 for sundry disbursements, the total amount of £18-4-6 was claimed and received from the Government. Gandhiji discovered certain errors in the account and corrected them, showing that an amount of £2-13-4 was due to be returned to Government. The statement here given is the corrected one.

[3] This and the subsequent serial numbers were left uncorrected by oversight.

	£18- 4- 6
	17-16-10
Less money paid by you to the 2 Perumals	2- 5- 8
	15-11- 2
By your cheque	18- 4- 6
Balance due to you	2-13- 4
	[£] 18- 4- 6

From the photostat of the office copy: S. N. 3359.

118. TELEGRAM TO COL. GALLWEY

[DURBAN,
prior to *January 7, 1900*][1]

COLONEL GALLWEY
P. M. O. HEADQUARTERS
NATAL

500 FREE INDIANS ARE READY TO DO AMBULANCE WORK AS BEFORE UNTIL THE WAR IS OVER AND TO FOLLOW THE GENERAL. THEY HAVE REGISTERED THEIR NAMES AT MY OFFICE AND ARE READY TO START ON INSTANT NOTICE. MOST OF THE FORMER LEADERS ARE ALSO READY. DOCTOR BOOTH HAS OBTAINED LEAVE AND WILL ACT AS MEDICAL OFFICER AS BEFORE AND CONSENTS AT OUR REQUEST TO ACT AS SUPERINTENDENT IF CALLED UPON. OR IN ANY OTHER WAY YOU WISH. SO THAT OUR DURBAN CORPS IS NOW COMPLETE IN ITSELF AND ANXIOUS TO START WORK IF THERE IS ANY SCOPE.

GANDHI

From the photostat of the office copy in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 3372c (No. 2).

[1] On December 29, 1899, Gandhiji received. a letter (S. N. 3360) asking him how many Indians he could supply to work as stretcher-bearers. Gandhiji sent the above telegram some time ill the first week of January 1900. He had sent an interim reply by telegram (not available) in the preceding week, as stated in the first draft (*vide* S. N. 3372c) of the above (second) telegram. The Corps was re-formed at Estcourt on January 7, 1900.

119. THE AMBULANCE CORPS[1]

[DURBAN,]
January 30, 1900

DEAR SIR,

I received your letter asking [me] to contribute notes or the doings of the Indian Ambulance Corps at Spearman's Hill when we were all in the thickest of the work. Some of us had, besides taking charge of stretchers, to look after the provisioning, etc., of the Corps, getting hardly time to sleep or eat. Hence my inability to acknowledge your note which, I trust, you would excuse understandingly.

But even if time had permitted, I would have refrained from writing the notes on the strength of the advice of a valued English friend who, soon after he saw my notes[2] in the *Advertiser* on the doings of the Corpsin the Colenso tight, thought that there should be very little said by the Indians themselves of their work done in connection with the war and that their part was merely to do without speaking. Since then I have so far resisted all temptations to write anything about the work for publication. I remain,

yours truly,

From the photostat of a draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 3372.

120. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANE, DURBAN,
February 22, 1900

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I notice that the Queen's Chocolate for the soldiers and volunteers is being now distributed. I do not know whether this chocolate is to be distributed among the Ambulance Corps formed in the Colony. But whether it is or not, I have been asked by the Indian Volunteer Leaders (about 30), who joined the Indian Ambulance Corps without pay, to request you to obtain the gift for them, if possible. It will be greatly appreciated by them and prized as a

[1] This was a personal letter to the editor of *The Natal Advertiser* in reply to his letter of January 22, 1900.

[2] These are not available.

treasure if the terms under which the gift has been graciously made by Her Majesty would allow of its distribution among the Indian leaders.[1]

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C. S. O. 14621900.

121. TELEGRAM TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

[DURBAN,]
March 1, 1900

TO
HONOURABLE COLONIAL
SECRETARY
[PIETERMARITZBURG

INDIAN VOLUNTEER LEADERS BELONGING TO INDIAN AMBULANCE CORPS DESIRE YE TO CONVEY THEIR RESPECTFUL CONGRATULATIONS TO GENERAL BULLER ON HIS BRILLIANT VICTORY AND THE RELIEF OF LADYSMITH.

GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C. S. O. 160511900, and the photostat of the office copy: S. N. 3400.

122. ON THE DEATH OF W. W. HUNTER[2]

DURBAN,
March 8, 1900

Sir William Hunter is dead. This removes from the world our best champion. It is proposed to send the enclosed cable[3] of condolence to Lady Hunter on behalf of the Congress. Those who are in favour of incurring the expense, please sign.[4]

From the photostat of the original in English and Gujarati, in Gandhiji's handwriting: S. N. 3402.

[1] The request waJ not acceded to on the ground that the gift was confined to enlisted Noncommissioned Officers and men.

[2] A circular letter.

[3] The text of the cable is not available.

[4] Here follows a circular in Gujarati in practically the same terms. At the end of the document are the signatures of eight prominent members of the Congress who recorded their agreement with the proposal.

123. INVITATION TO PUBLIC MEETING[1]

DURBAN,
March 10, 1900

DEAR SIR,

The pleasure of your company is requested at a meeting of the Indians resident in the Colony, to be held in the Congress Hall, Grey St., on Wednesday the 14th. inst. at 8 p.m., to adopt congratulatory resolutions withreference to the recent brilliant successes of the British arms and the consequent relief of the beleaguered towns of Ladysmith and Kimberley.

The Honourable Sir John Robinson, K.C.M.G., M.L.A., has kindly consented to preside on the occasion.

I remain,
yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI
Hon. Sec., N.I.C.

R.S.V.P.

From the photostat of the original printed circular letter: S. N. 3404.

124. CONGRATULATION TO BRITISH GENERALS

At a large and representative meeting of Indians and Europeans held in response to the invitations issued by Gandhiji on March 10, a resolution congratulating the British Generals was adopted. Supporting the resolution, Gandhiji made a brief speech of which the following is a press report.

DURBAN,:
March 14, 1900

Mr. M. K. Gandhi, Secretary of the Indian Congress, in supporting the resolution[2] said that they were deeply grateful for the splendid response which had been made to the invitations issued to the European community in Durban. They had response also from Indians in Umzinto, Verulam and other centres. There was some talk of a special meeting being held by the Indians. He thought that the

[1] The letters of invitation bore the heading "Long Live Kaiser-i-Hind" and pictures of Queen Victoria and three prominent British Generals who had taken part in the Boer War.

[2] *Vide* Resolution No. 1 on "Congratulations to British Generals", Prior to 26-3-1900, infra. It was moved by Abdool Kadir, President of the Natal Indian Congress, and seconded by Louis Paul.

Indians could not be too joyful in connection with the British victories in South Africa, provided they did not become conceited. The Indians had a special interest in this affair. Lord Roberts, the hero of Kandahar,[1] who was at the head of the forces, and Sir George White, who had conducted the siege of Ladysmith with much gallantry, had been for some long time Commandersin-Chief in India. The Indians would have failed in their duty to themselves if they had not given expression to their feelings at the successes which had attended the feats of the two Generals. He hoped that they would believe him when he said that the want of the knowledge of English language did not prevent Indians from following the course of events with accuracy and interest. It was the Indians' proudest boast that they were British subjects. If they were not, they would not have had a footing in South Africa.

The Natal Mercury, 15-3-1900
The Natal A Advertiser, 15-3-1900

125. INDIAN AMBULANCE CORPS IN NATAL[2]

[DURBAN,
post *March 14, 1900*]

General Sir William Olpherts is reported to have said:

> While fully sharing the enthusiasm for the bravery of our troops fighting in South Africa, I think that sufficient attention has not been called to the devotion of the Indian dhoolie-bearers who do. their work of mercy on the battlefields. Under the heaviest fire they seek the wounded, fearing nothing, although without means of defence. These Indian fellow-subjects of ours are doing in Natal a work which requires even more courage than that of the soldier.

Since sending my last contribution,[3] I have been twice to the front; and though what General Olpherts said of the dhoolie-bearers could not be said of all the Indian Ambulance Corps, I have no doubt that the Corps has done a work that was absolutely necessary, and that would do credit to any Ambulance Corps in the world. I referred in my letter, dated October 27th, to the unconditional offer, without pay,

[1] In 1880 Lord Roberts made a historic march from Kabul to Kandahar, then capital of ,Afghanistan.

[2] *Vide* footnote in "The Plague Panic in South Africa", 20-3-1899, supra.

[3] *Vide* "Indian Traders in Natal", November 18, 1899.

of the English-speaking Indians of Durban to do service on the battlefield. Since then, events have happened which resulted in its acceptance. It was anticipated that the battle of Colenso would claim not a few lives, and that the safe carrying of the seriously wounded would be a grave problem, as the limited number of European ambulance bearers would not be equal to the required strain. General Buller, therefore, wrote to the Natal Government, asking them to raise an Indian Ambulance Corps, which would not be required to work within the range of fire. The managers of the various plantations (which control much Indian labour), as well as the leaders of the Indian community, were approached by the Government, and the response was prompt. A Corps of over 1,000 Indian stretcher-bearers was formed in less than three days, the bearers receiving 20s. per week as against 35s. per week received by the European bearers. It is worthy of mention that the sturdy band of leaders began their work under exceptionally happy auspices. the late Mr. Escombe, who was sometime Prime Minister of Natal and represented the Clolony at the Conference of Colonial Premiers at the time of the Diamond Jubilee, gave a reception in his house to the volunteers, where the Mayor of Durban, Mr. Pakeman of the Johannesburg Leader, and other ladies and gentlemen were invited, and in his address—which was his last public utterance— . spoke words of encouragement to them, and generously observed that Natal could not forget the loyal services that the Indian community in its own way was rendering to the Colony and to the Empire. The Mayor also spoke to the effect. Later, in the same evening, Mr. Rustomjee of Durban gave a dinner-party in honour of the leaders going to the front, when all the prominentIndians representing different divisions sat at the same table. The Corps reached Chieveley at about 3.30 p. m. on December 15, and as soon as they were detrained, the bearers were given their redcross badges and ordered to march to the field hospital—a distance of over 6 miles. The conditions under which this Corps worked were possibly somewhat more arduous than is usual. Wherever they went, they carried rations for a month or a fortnight, as; the case might be, including firewood, and, at first, without wagons or a water-cart. The Chieveley district is extremely dry, and there is hardly any water to be found within easy distances. The roads all over Natal are rugged and more or less hilly. On reaching the field hospital, we heard of the battle at Colenso. We saw the wounded being brought by the ambulance wagons and the European bearers from the base of

operations to the field hospital, and the men as well as the leaders fully realised the situation. Before the tents could be pitched (I mean the tents for the leaders and not for the bearers—the latter had to sleep as they could, in the open, in some cases even without blankets), or the men could have anything to eat or drink, the Medical Officer wanted over 50 wounded men carried to Chieveley station. By 11 o'clock at night, all the wounded the Medical Officer could get ready were taken as directed, and it was only after that time that the Corps could get a meal. After this, the Superintendent of the Corps went to the Medical Officer and offered to carry more stretchers, but he was thanked and told to keep the men in readiness at 6 o'clock next morning. Between that time and noon, over 100 stretcher cases were disposed of by the men. While they were returning from their work, orders were received to strike camp and march to Chieveley immediately to entrain there for Estcourt. This was, of course, a retreat. It was wonderful to see how, with clockwork regularity, over 15,000 men with heavy artillery and transports broke camp and marched off, leaving behind nothing but empty tins and broken cases. It was an extremely hot day for marching—this portion of Natal is treeless as well as waterless. The Corps commenced its march at noon under these trying conditions. On reaching the railway station at about 3 o'clock, the station-master informed the Superintendent that he could not say definitely when he could place the carriages—I mean open trucks in which the men were to be packed like sardines—at his disposal. The European Ambulance men and the Indians had to remain about the station yard till 8 p.m. The former were then entrained for Estcourt, and the latter were told to shift for the night as best they could on the veldt. Tired, hungry, and thirsty (there was no water available at the station except for the hospital patients and the station staff), the men had to find means of satisfying both hunger and thirst, and of obtaining some rest. They brought dirty water from a pool about half a mile from the station, cooked rice and by midnight, after partaking of what was, under the circumstances, regarded as an excellent repast, wanted to sleep. Practically the whole of General Buller's Cavalry passed by during thenight, and the men had very little rest. Next day the men were closely packed in the trucks, and, after five hours' waiting, the train proceeded to Estcourt where, in a violent storm, exposed to the sun and wind, without shelter, the Corps had to remain for two days, after which orders were received to temporarily disband it. General Wolf-Murray had officially recognised the services rendered by the

Corps.

On January 7th, the Corps was reformed and proceeded to Estcourt, this time under somewhat better auspices, in that the nine hundred and odd bearers also were provided with tents. Fully a fortnight elapsed, however, before actual work was commenced. The interval was passed in drilling the men and their leaders under the indefatigable Dr. Booth, who volunteered on the same terms as the leaders (i.e., without any remuneration) to accompany the Corps in the capacity of medical officer. The drill consisted in teaching the bearers how to lift the wounded, and to place and carry them on stretchers. They were taken long distances over extremely rugged ground. All this training was found to be of inestimable value, and none too strict. Thus, fitted as the Corps was more or less for military discipline, it did not find it difficult, when the orders were received at 2 a.m., to entrain for Frere at 6 o'clock in the morning, to break camp, load the two wagons and march to the station within three hours. From Frere a distance of 25 miles had to be covered on foot before the headquarters at Spearman's Camp could be reached. I shall let the special correspondent of The Natal Witness speak of the experiences and trials of this journey.

> Early in the afternoon, heavy clouds began to bank upon the horizon, and at half past three, a storm seemed imminent. Meanwhile the wagons had arrived and been loaded up. The start was not auspicious. At the first dip between the station and our camping ground, the leading wagon stuck fast and half an hour elapsed before it could be extricated. By that time, a terrific wind had arisen, which appeared to be blowing the threatening thunderstorm away from us to the southward.... In less than three-quarters of an hour, the wind suddenly veered, bringing the storm back with tremendous force) and hail along with it....The hail certainly ceased after a while, but the rain continued in a steady downpour.... At length, it was decided to halt and wait for the wagons, and the rain having now stopped, although the clouds gave evidence of more to follow, ovens were made out of antheaps, at which we endeavoured (for the most part, unsuccessfully) to dry our sopping garments....At 8 o'clock, just as we were becoming partially dry and recovering our spirits under the influence of the fires, down came the rain again in tropical torrents. All the time, a bitter wind blew, and for discomfort our situation could scarcely have been excelled. The leading wagon had got stuck in a drift from which, owing to the awful state of the road and weather, the combined spans of oxen (32) had been quite unable to remove it.... The next morning, fifty stretchers went out to the temporary hospital. Here Major Bapty, Secretary of the Principal Medical Officer, sent word to the leaders that it was optional for

> them to take the stretchers or not to the base at Spion Kop, about two miles on the other side of the river, as it was within range of the Boer guns, and he could nor be sure that they would not drop a shell or two on the pontoon bridge. This preliminary was due to the fact that the men were told, as I have said before, that they would have to work without the line of fire. But the leaders and the men were quite ready not to mind the risk and go to the base and undertake the work. By evening almost all the wounded were brought to the stationary hospital, the bearers often having to make three or four journeys from the temporary hospital to the base. Full three weeks were thus passed in almost continuous work, emptying one hospital after another, chiefly the stationary hospital. During the time five journeys were made to Frere, the men three times carrying the wounded the whole distance of 25 miles in a single day, and twice taking them up at or near the little Tugela bridge at Springfield from the European bearers.

The Corps had the honour of carrying some officers of note—Major-General Woodgate being among them. It was freely remarked each time the "light-footed, elastic-stepped" bearers covered the whole distance of 25 miles with their charge, under a trying sun and over a difficult road, that they alone could perform the feat. Says the special correspondent of *The Natal Witness*:

> One hundred miles in five days may be accounted fairly good walking for a man unburdened with any weight but that of his own carcass and clothes. When the wounded have to be carried on stretchers for nearly half that distance, and the greater portion of the remainder is traversed by men Iaden with heavy kit, such marching, I think, will be acknowledged as very creditable work. Such is the feat lately performed by the Indian Ambulance Corps, and one that any body of men may be proud of.

Thus honoured and thus satisfied with the thought of having done its duty, the Corps was again temporarily disbanded—but recent events go to show that its services may not be needed again.

The Indian merchants had supplied the leaders with large quantities of cigarettes, cigars, pipes, and tobacco for the wounded, and these were freely distributed among them. Of course, they were very much appreciated, especially as no cigarettes, etc., could be had in or near the camp. The leaders and the bearers were by no means satisfied with having carried their charge safely and well to their destination; but, at each stopping place during the long marches, even neglecting their own comforts, they left no stone unturned to attend to the wants of the wounded, e.g., helping them to tea and fruit—often doing so with their own money, or from their own rations. Nor is this the only part the Indian community has taken in the war. All the

leaders who went without pay were not capable of maintaining their dependents during their absence. The Indian merchants, therefore, started a fund which contributed to the support of the families of such leaders as needed it, and at no inconsiderable cost fully equipped the volunteers. In order to still more effectively identify themselves with the patriotic wave, and to show that they are capable of sinking their differences in the face of a common danger, they have subscribed a respectable sum of £65 to the Durban Women's Patriotic League, a local organisation formed for the purpose of providing medical comforts for the wounded soldiers and volunteers, some of which latter are violent anti Indian Colonists. the Indian ladies have come forward to prepare pillowcases and handkerchiefs for the same purpose, out of cloth furnished by the Indian merchants. Thus speaks The Natal Mercury anent the subscription:

> This gift of money for the Women's Patriotic Fund, specially for the purpose of assisting in the care of the sick and wounded volunteers at the front, is a very acceptable and eloquent expression of the feeling of the Indian people. It is not enough, in their minds, to succour the large mass of Indian refugees, as they are doing in an open-handed manner, but they must bestow this added contribution, we believe, as a token of their devotion to the Queen-Empress and to the country in which they have come to reside. Nothing can better show the real feeling that animates this portion of our population, who too often have very little said on their behalf, than such a display of loyalty.

The Indians have entirely taken on their shoulders the maintenance of thousands of Indian refugees not only from the Transvaal but also from the upper districts of Natal which are temporarily in the hands of the enemy. This fact has so much impressed the Colonial mind that the Mayor of Durban made the following public acknowledgement:

> They knew full well that many of the Indian nationality had been compelled to leave their posts and come down here as refugees. They had had a large number arrived, and the Indians had borne the expense themselves. For that he sincerely thanked them.

It derives, at the present moment, a peculiar importance. The Central Committee in London have cabled withdrawing their support from the able-bodied European refugees, confining it solely to women and invalids, and the matter is now taxing to the' utmost the resources of the Refugee Relief Committee in Durban. It may not be amiss to mention also a few instances of individual sympathy for the

soldiers. An Indian woman who lives on the daily sale of her fruits is reported, on the soldiers landing at the Durban wharf, to have emptied the whole contents of her basket into Tommy's truck, saying that was all she could give that day. We are not told where the noble-hearted woman found her food for the day. Similarly, several Indians, in an outburst of enthusiasm are reported to have showered cigarettes and other delicacies on Natal's fighters from over the waters. When the joyful news of the relief of Kimberley and Ladysmith was flashed across the wire, the Indians vied with the Europeans in their patriotic zeal to celebrate the occasion by decorating their stores, etc. They also held, on the 14th instant, a meeting. The Hon. Sir John Robinson, K.C.M.G., the first Prime Minister of Natal under Responsible Government, was invited to preside on the occasion, and he very kindly accepted the invitation. Over a thousand Indians from all parts of the Colony and over sixty leading European citizens attended the meeting.

The Times of India (Weekly edition), 16-6-1900

126. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANE,
Durban,
March 17, 1900

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I have the honour to forward the petition[1] of Ava, wife of Amod Abdoolla of Durban, praying for mercy to be shown to her husband who is at present undergoing imprisonment in the Central Gaol, Durban, for His Excellency the Governor's consideration. I venture to think that to pardon the man would be to save the woman's honour. She being alone, young, and comparatively well-bred, is exposed to temptations which may ruin her for ever.

The occasion alluded to by her, the relief of Ladysmith, may be considered sufficient to justify the exercise of the prerogative of

[1] This is not available.

mercy in the present case.[1]

I have the honour to be,
sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C. S. O. 8646/1901.

127. CONGRATULATIONS TO BRITISH GENERALS

[Prior to *March 26, 1900*]

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Witness
DEAR SIR,

I beg to enclose herewith for publication copies of the telegraphic communications which the Hon. Sir John Robinson, K.C.M.G., in his capacity as chairman of the meeting of the Indian community held in Durban on the 14th day of this month, has received from the Generals, Lord Roberts, Sir Redvers Buller, and Sir George White, in reply to congratulatory resolutions adopted by that meeting and at its request telegraphed by the honourable chairman to the distinguished Generals. I enclose also copies of the resolutions above referred to.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI
HON. SECRETARY, N.I.C.

[Enclosures]

Resolution No. 1: This meeting of the Indian subjects of Her Majesty the Queen-Empress tenders its respectful congratulations to the Right Hon. Field Marshal Frederick Sleigh Lord Roberts of Kandahar, V.C., K.P., G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Commander-in-Chief of the Forces in South Africa, on his having secured the relief of Kimberley, and after a stubborn fight having captured General Cronje and his commando, and having thus turned the tide of fortune in favour of the British arms, and records with gratification the fact that it is the hero of Kandahar, and sometime Commander-in-Chief of the

[1] Amod Abdoolla was granted a remission; *vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", June 11, 1900

Forces in India, who is leading the British Forces in South Africa from victory to victory.

Resolution No. 2: This meeting of the Indian subjects of Her Majesty the Queen-Empress tenders its grateful congratulations to the Right Hon. General Sir Redvers Henry Buller, V.C., G.I.B., upon his brilliant victory, in the face of almost insurmountable difficulties, over an enemy holding naturally invulnerable positions, and upon his having, undismayed by temporary reverses, effected the relief of the beleaguered garrison in Ladysmith, thus vindicating the might of the British Empire and valour of the British soldier.

Resolution No. 3: This meeting of the Indian subjects of Her Majesty the Queen-Empress expresses its prayerful thankfulness to the Almighty for having restored to the Empire General Sir George Steward White, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., and his brave troops, including so many sons of the soil—the Natal and other South African Volunteers—who, with unexampled fortitude and patience, for close upon four months went through the arduous trials of the siege, often repelling the advances of the enemy; and tenders its respectful congratulations to the gallant General on his having sustained British honour and prestige under circumstances presenting exceptional difficulties; and wishes to record its pride in the fact that it was India's former Commander-in-Chief who was instrumental in saving the Colony from falling into the hands of the enemy.

(1)

March 17, 1900

FROM
LORD ROBERTS
BLOEMFONTEIN

TO
SIR JOHN ROBINSON
DURBAN

I beg to thank you for the kind telegram you have been good enough to send me embodying a resolution passed at a meeting of the Indian community of Natal. I am deeply grateful for the congratulations and kind wishes expressed therein.

(2)

March 16, 1900

FROM
GENERAL BULLER
LADYSMITH

TO
SIR JORN ROBINSON
DURBAN

The address you kindly sent me from Indian community has given me much gratification.

(3)

March 16, 1900

FROM
SIR GEORGE WHITE
EAST LONDON

TO
SIR JOHN ROBINSON
DURBAN

Please accept and convey to the Indian community of Natal my sincerest thanks for the most kind resolution passed by their meeting. My connection with India has been a long one, and the best days of my life have been spent there, and the good wishes of my Indian fellow-subjects are very gratifying to me.

The Natal Witness, 26-3-1900

128. THE INDIAN HOSPITAL[1]

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
April 11, 1900

DEAR . . .

I enclose herewith a copy of the monthly report of the Indian Hospital.

It was as you know established nearly 18 months ago.[2] The need is real, as will appear from the report. All sections of the Indian community have received help from the hospital. It is a boon to the poor.

It could not have been opened but for the subscriptions from

[1] A circular letter.
[2] The hospital was opened on Septemoer 14, 1898.

the Durban Indians, who have subscribed nearly £84, and for the services rendered by Dr. Booth and Dr. Lilian Robinson, now replaced owing to her illness by Dr. Clara Williams.

As Durban has been bearing the brunt of almost all the subscriptions, it may not be considered out of place to invite the Indians from the other parts of the Colony to enjoy the privilege of succouring the poor in the best possible manner, viz., alleviating bodily sufferings.

At least £80 are needed to enable the hospital to continue for 2 years and to pay the arrear rent. But a much larger sum is necessary if the hospital is to be continued, as I venture to think it must be, seeing that, during its existence, it has answered a hardfelt need.

I fully trust that you will give your share and induce others to do likewise.

Receipts will be fully acknowledged and accounts furnished.

I am,
yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the handwritten office copy: S. N. 3725.

129. AN APPEAL FOR FUNDS[1]

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
April 11, 1900

SIR,

You all know that a hospital for Indians was opened in Durban about a year and a half ago. Dr. Booth and another doctor work in it in an honorary capacity. Prior to the opening of the hospital, a meeting was held in Durban at which it was decided that Indians should contribute £85 per annum as rental charges. This arrangement was to hold good for a period of two years. A fund was immediately raised and a sum of £6l collected. The balance of, £24 is still to be collected. But this amount will not suffice to meet the expenses. Over nine months' rent is in arrears. As Durban has contributed to many funds, it is not proper to put the responsibility for the remaining amount on it alone. Hence this letter.

[1] A circular letter.

A report of the working of the hospital for the first six months is enclosed from which you will see the usefulness of the institute.

Madrasi women entering it in a very serious condition have come out cured. The Gujaratis also have benefited from it. No community has been left out. Free medicine is supplied to hundreds of patients who deposit some amount, according to their capacity, in the charity box kept for the purpose; even those who cannot contribute anything receive medicine. Medicines are bought out of the box collections and the deficit, if any, is met by the missionaries.

If we are not able to help, the hospital will have to be closed down. As the two doctors serve honorarily, it is being run at a small cost and many poor people benefit from it. A blind, old, infirm Gujarati gentleman received free treatment in the hospital for many days.

You ought to spare whatever you can for such a cause and also collect contributions from others and forward them. Receipts will be issued for any money received. I hope you will exert yourself to the utmost.

M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the original in Gujarati: S. N. 3725.

130. INDIAN AMBULANCE CORPS[1]

DURBAN,
April 18 [*1900*]

Perhaps, in reading the accounts published from day to day of the Boer War, you have Showed the movements of the Indian community in connexion with it in so far as they have been chronicled by the newspapers But, I am also aware that the Press has not been able to give anything like a full account of the doings of the Indians in South Africa. I need hardly say that, as soon as war was declared, irrespective of their opinions as to the justness or otherwise of the war, the Indians to a man made up their minds to give their humble support to the British Government during the crisis; and, as the immediate result of this sentiment, an extremely will attended meeting of the English-speaking Indians of Durban was held, and as

[1] This letter of Gandhiji; appeared in India as from its "Indian Correspondent", He had already sent a fuller account to The Times of india (Weekly edition), *vide* 'Indian Ambulance Crops," post 14-3-1900

many as could signed, there and then, a declaration offering their services to the military authorities, unconditionally and without pay to do any work that they may be Considered fitted for especially mentioning the field hospital and commissariat departments, and recording the fact that they did not know the use of arms.

The offer was ultimately accepted in connexion with the Indian Ambulance Corps which, at the instance of the military authorities, was formed in Natal. The bearers for the Corps consisted mostly of indentured Indians supplied by the Estates in Natal, through the Protector's Department, and through the above-mentioned volunteers who were to act as leaders of the parties of stretcher-bearers, the Indians being perfectly free either to go to the battlefield or not. Thus about 1,000 Indian bearers, and thirty leaders (no more of the latter being really necessary), carried the wounded after the battle of Colenso, and by their arduous work commanded the admiration of all concerned and more than satisfied the patients themselves. It was freely acknowledged by the European Superintendent of the Corps and other Europeans who came with it that, without the leaders, the carrying could not be done with saticfaction. The Corps, having been formed only for the advance to Ladysmith through Colenso, was disbanded after the reverse, and Was reformed when General Buller tried to force passage through Spion Kop.

The nature of the work this time was, if possible, more exacting undoubtedly, more risky. The Indians, contrary to the announcement that they were to work without the range of fire, had to fetch the Wounded from within the range, at times shells falling within hardly 100 yards of them, all this, of course, being unavoidably due to the unexpected reverseat Spion Kop and retirement from Vaalkranz. The bearers and the leaders had to march with their charge to a distance of twenty-five miles, from Spearman's Camp to Frere, over the Natal roads which, as you are aware, are very rough and hilly, at one time doing a distance of over 125 miles in a week. Moreover, our Indian merchants supplied cigarettes, etc., for the wounded, which was quite a feature of the Indian Corps. Many Europeans who ought to know have told me that no European Ambulance Corps could cover the distance of twenty-five miles, carrying the wounded under such difficult circumstances, in a single day, which our Indian bearers and their leaders did in the face of serious difficulties about food and shelter.

Not being satisfied with this work, and in order that our merchants may be still more effectively identified with the patriotic feeling, and in order to show that we were quite capable of sinking our local differences at a time of common danger, a substantial fund to the amount of £65 was collected by them and handed over to the Durban Women's Patriotic League, which is a local organisation for supplying medical comforts to the wounded soldiers and volunteers, some of the latter being violently anti-Indian Colonists. Our Indian ladies prepared handkerchiefs and pillow-cases out of cloth supplied by our merchants for the wounded. All the Indian refugees, counting thousands, have been entirely supported by the Indian community—a fact that has elicited from the Mayor of Durban a public acknowledgement of gratefulness, and this fact becomes the more important in view of what is going on at present. The Refugee Relief Committee find it very difficult to adequately maintain even the European refugees. The Central Committee in London has cabled withdrawing the support hitherto given as well to the able-bodied men as to the women and infirm men. When the welcome news of the relief of Kimberley and Ladysmith was received, the Indians, side by side with the Europeans, marked their sense of joy by closing their shops, decorating their stores, etc. They also held a public meeting. Sir John Robinson, who was the first Prime Minister of Natal under responsible government, was invited to preside for the occasion, which invitation the Honourable gentleman very kindly accepted. The meeting was a brilliant success and was attended by about 1,000 Indians representing all parts of the Colony, and over sixty leading Europeans.

India, 18-5-1900

131. LETTER TO LEADERS OF AMBULANCE CORPS

DURBAN,
April 20,1900

DEAR SIR,

You have shown your patriotism and brought honour to yourself and your country by joining the Indian Ambulance Corps as a leader and have thereby rendered service both to your own self and your motherland. It will, therefore, behove you to look upon that as a reward in itself.

But I have a feeling that you enlisted partly out of regard for me and to that extent I am beholden to you. I cannot compensate you for

it in terms of money as I have no power to do so. But I have not forgotten your act of regard for me and, as a memento for the assistance you gave me in serving the motherland at a critical juncture, I offer you the gift of my services, which please accept. I hope you will make such use of them as you can. I promise to take up without fee any legal work that I can do in Durban for you or for your friends to the extent of £5 during the course of a year from today, while I remain in South Africa and do not leave for India.

M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the original Gujarati: S. N. 3445.

132. LETTER TO STRETCHER-BEARERS

[DURBAN,
April 24, 1900][1]

DEAR SIR,

While we were doing at the front the work of carrying the wounded, I promised to make a small present myself to the stretcher-bearers within my charge in the event of their doing their work creditably.

The officers are pleased with your work as indeed with that of all the bearers. It is, therefore, time for me to act according to my promise. As a token of my appreciation of your work, I present you with the accompanying,[2] which I trust you will be good enough to accept.

You have rendered a service to the community in having gone to the front. That you may always do good deeds, earn your bread honestly, and perform your duty, firmly trusting that you cannot but serve yourself in serving your countrymen, is the prayer of your well-wisher,

M. K. GANDHI

From an original, cyclostyled letter signed by Gandhiji: C. W. 2939.

[1] The date is taken from a similar letter in Gujarati (S. N. 3729) addressed to Shri Pragji Dayal, one of the stretcher-bearers.

[2] The documents available do not disclose the nature of the present.

133. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
May 21, 1900

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of the message which the representative Indians intend to send by cable to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies on the 24th inst. tendering their humble and loyal congratulations to Her Majesty on her eighty-first birthday and, by their desire, to request you to forward same.

I am to add that, on receipt of a memo. of monies spent from you, I am authorised to forward you a cheque.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M.K. GANDHI

[Enclosure]

"Natal Indians tender humble and loyal congratulations to Her Majesty on her eighty-first birthday fervently praying Almighty may shower choicest blessings on her."

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C. S. O. 3760/1900.

134. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
June 11, 1900

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the 9th instant conveying the information that His Excellency has been graciously pleased to grant a remission of 18 months out of the 3 years' imprisonment passed upon Amod Abdoolla.[1]

I have given the information to Amod Abdoolla's wife who, while she had hoped that, amid so much rejoicing, her husband would be restored to her at once, is extremely grateful for the mercy shown to her husband and herself by His Excellency.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C. S. O. 8646/1901.

135. FAREWELL ADDRESS TO DR. LANCELOT PARKER BOOTH[2]

DURBAN,
June 29, 1900

We the undersigned Indian subscribers place on record on the eve of your withdrawal from Indian work in this Colony, the sense of gratitude the Indian community owes you for your many acts of charity and kindness. To the poor among us you have been a friend and benefactor, irrespective of creed or caste. Many of us know from personal experience how we could rely upon your free medical assistance at all times. Your gentleness and kind sympathy have often succeeded where medicine alone would fail. The Indian Hospital,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", March 17, 1900.

[2] This was drafted by Gandhiji on behalf of the Indian Community on the eve of Rev. Booth's departure from Cape Colony to take up an appointment in Umtata.

which was the direct result of your 17 years' labour in alleviating human suffering, is a standing testimony to your work in that direction.

Your services in connection with the Indian Ambulance Corps, the training you were good enough to give the ambulance class, also much sacrifice of time, the willingness with which you offered to accompany the corps in spite of pressing duties in Durban, your medical aid to bearers at the front and your counsel to the leaders, can hardly be overvalued by the Indian community.

We may say without exaggeration that you have presented to us a pattern of an upright Englishman and good, gentle Christian who knows no distinction between Jew and Gentile. The fact that half the number of Indian schools owe their existence to your energy is an indication of your efforts on behalf of the masses.

It is hard for us to tender you, unmixed with sorrow, our congratulations on your preferment. Umtata's gain is our loss. You leave behind you a gap; it will be difficult to fill. The congregation of your church may find an equally eloquent preacher and as safe a guide, but where shall your congregation find so faithful, sympathetic and tried a friend whom they have learnt to know and love for close upon two decades? As a slight token of our esteem for you, we beg of you to accept this address and the accompanying purse for the benefit of your Indian Hospital.

We wish you and Mrs. Booth a happy time in your new sphere and pray that the Almighty may long spare you and your wife to continue your work of love.

The Leader, 3-9-1993

136. CIRCULAR FOR RESOLUTION OF THANKS[1]

DURBAN,
July 13, 1900

A good word has been written about us in the annual report of the East India Association. The Association has expressed its intention to make every endeavour to uphold our rights. A resolution of thanks for this gesture is enclosed.[2] Those gentlemen who favour the

[1] The draft-circular in Gujarati is followed by another in English, briefer but ro the same effect.

[2] The text of the approved resolution is not available.

forwarding of this letter may please sign this.[1]

From the photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's handwriting: S. N. 3467.

137. TELEGRAM TO GOVERNOR'S SECRETARY

[DURBAN,]
July 26, 1900

TO
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR
PIETERMARITZBURG

YOUR TELEGRAM. I SHALL HAVE THE HONOUR TO WAIT ON HIS EXCELLENCY AT 10-30 A.M. FRIDAY NEXT UNLESS I HEAR FROM YOU TO THE CONTRARY.

GANDHI

From the photostat of an office copy: S. N. 3474.

138. THE INDIAN FAMINE

DURBAN,
July 30, 1900

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Advertiser

SIR,

The Natal Emigration Agent at Calcutta has forwarded to the Protector of Indian Immigrants leaflets for distribution among the indentured Indians and those that have become free and settled in the Colony, appealing for funds in aid of the relief of the terrible famine now raging in India. This appeal, in my opinion, has an awful meaning. It shows the intensity of the calamity; it shows also that, in spite of the resources of a great Empire, it has been found necessary to ask even poor Indians to contribute their quota.

It will be recollected that in 1896, when India was visited by a widespread famine, a direct appeal was made to the Mayor in South Africa, to which a prompt response was made from all parts of the

[1] The circular bears several signatures in support of the proposal.

continent.[1] This time, evidently, there has been no such direct appeal made, owing to the distress which we are undergoing ourselves. The same cause has prevented the Indian community in Natal, which has narrowly kept itself in touch with the situation in India and which has so far contented itself with having forwarded subscriptions to the branch office in India, from placing it before the Colonists generally. But the Viceroy of India has sent a fresh, pathetic appeal to the Lord Mayor of London, which urges every part of the great Empire to come to the rescue. The receipt of copies of the appeal and the simultaneous arrival of the leaflets from Calcutta change the aspect very materially, and, in my humble opinion, makes it incumbent upon the Indian community here, not only to make a fresh effort itself, but also to bring the matter, at any rate, to the notice of the Colonists, so as to enable them to exercise the privilege (shall I call it) of helping millions of their starving fellow-beings, who are, moreover, subjects of the same Queen as themselves. It will be, at the same time, exceedingly improper to ignore the fact that the Colony has suffered, and will yet have to suffer, a great deal owing to the war. But I may be pardoned for saying that our State is very prosperous compared to the miserable conditions of the millions in India, who have to be engaged in a war in which there is no victory to be gained, in which, probably, the only reward is a painful and lingering death. One penny would just feed a man for a day in the disaster area in India. Is there a man in theColony Who cannot, without any inconvenience, spare a shilling, and thus be the means of feeding 12 hungry mouths for a day? Though, therefore, it is quite true that many individual members cannot give very large sums, hundreds, even thousands, can give at least a few shillings each.[2]

The Lord Bishop of Natal has dwelt on the good that the War, bad as it is, has done, in that it has brought closer together the various parts of the mighty Empire to Which it is our pride to belong. It may be that the threefold scourge in India—viz., famine, plague and cholera—black as it is, will be the means of forging another link in the chain that ties all together.

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

[2] In response to an appeal for funds by Sir John and others, over £2000 were subscribed by the Natal Europeans alone. *Vide* "Notes," post 3-9-1900, *infra*. Later, in a letter to the Press, however, (*Vide* "The Famine Fund", February 16, 1901, *infra*,) Gandhiji mentions that "about £3000 were contributed by the Europeans, £1700 by Indians, and £300 by the natives".

Close on 6,000,000 of the famine-stricken in India have to be daily supported through the State, not to mention the flow of private charity, which saves tens of thousands of lives. Mr. Adamji Peerbhoy alone supported, according to *The Times of India*, during the month of May last, 16,300 men per day. The number of those seeking relief, according to Dr. Klopsch, increases by 10,000 per day.

The welcome rains that have watered the greater part of the afflicted area, will, for the present, increase the numbers to be relieved and put a heavier strain on the resources of the State, both in men and money. The plague has been doing its work of destruction unremittingly for the last four years, and the cholera fiend, the right hand of famine, has completed the havoc, Besides the various British Colonies and Settlements, America has raised a fund and sent a special representative, Dr. Klopsch, to administer it. Germany has also come to the rescue. India's misery is such as all friends and strangers alike may assist in alleviating. Why not Natal?

In conclusion, it is my pleasant duty to announce that His Excellency the Governor of Natal, the Honourable the Attorney-General, and the Honourable Sir John Robinson have showed great sympathy for the starving millions of India, and promised to patronise any fund that may be raised on their behalf.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Advertiser, 31-7-1900

139. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
July 31, 1900

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARLTZBURG

SIR,

The Mahomedans, British Moslems of Natal, are preparing for presentation an address to H. M. the Sultan of Turkey as the Spiritual Head of that community, on the approach of his Silver Jubilee. I have

been asked to advise as to the best way of sending the address, and it strikes me that the more formal and proper way would be to send it through His Excellency the Governor as it is to another sovereign in Europe from the Queen's subjects.

I shall be obliged if you will be good enough to guide me as to the etiquette. As the address must leave on Saturday next, I shall esteem it a favour if you will kindly advise me early.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C.S.O. 6061/1900.

140. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
July 31, 1900

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I have the honour to enclose copies of correspondence[1] that has passed between the Immigration Restrictions Officer and myself in connection with an application for a certificate of domicile. The rule referred to therein seems to have been passed only lately.

I venture to think I have but to bring it to the notice of the Government to secure its relief. I have not been fortunate enough to obtain fromthe Immigration Officer the reasons which led to the passing of the rule. But, in my humble opinion, there could be nothing to justify the passing of such a drastic rule which, in practice, would prevent even the bone *fide* Indian residents of Natal from coming to the Colony.

I would, therefore, be obliged if the Government would be pleased to instruct the Immigration Restrictions Officer to withdraw

[1] This is not available.

the rule in question and consider the application submitted to him on its merits.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
pro M. K. GANDHI
V. LAWRENCE

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C. S. O. 6063/1900.

141. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
August 2, 1900

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I have the honour to request you on behalf of the representative Indians in the Colony to forward the following message by cable to the Secretary of State for the Colonies to be placed before Her Majesty the Queen Empress:

"Natal British Indians humbly condole with Her Gracious Majesty in her grief."[1]

I am authorised to forward to you the cost of the message on hearing the cost from you.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C.S.O. 6142/1900.

[1] The occasion for the message was the passing away, on July 31, of the Queen's second son, Prince Alfred, Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

142. TELEGRAM TO GOVERNOR'S SECRETARY

[DURBAN,]
August 4, 1900

TO
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR
PIETERMARITZBURG

YOURS OF YESTERDAY RECEIVED. I SHALL HAVE THE HONOUR TO WAIT ON HIS EXCELLENCY MONDAY 13-30 MORNING.

GANDHI

From the photostat of the office copy: S. N. 3480.

143. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANES
DURBAN,
August 11, 1900

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I beg to acknowledge your letter of the 9th inst. informing me that His Excellency the Governor has transmitted to the Secretary of State for the Colonies our message of condolence with Her Majesty embodied in my letter of the 2nd inst. for which I beg to thank His Excellency. I enclose herewith cheque for £2.14.0, being cost of massage.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C. S. O. 6142/1900.

144. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
August 13, 1900

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I beg to acknowledge your letter of the 11th instant conveying the information that His Excellency the Governor has received from the Secretary of State a telegram stating that Her Majesty desires that her thanks may be conveyed to the Natal British Indians for their message of condolence.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C. S. O. 6142/1900.

145. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
August 14, 1900

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG A

SIR,

I have the honour to inform you with reference to your telegram of the 10th inst. that the promoters of the congratulatory address to H.M. the Sultan[1] sent last Saturday the address to the Turkish Ambassador at London, as the time for the Silver Jubilee is approaching very near. If His Excellency the Governor considers that the address ought to be sent through the Rt. Hon'ble the Secretary of State for the Colonies, I think it is possible to request the Turkish Ambassador to hand it over to the Colonial Office at London. In any

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", July 31, 1900.

case, I shall be glad if I receive His Excellency's opinion for future reference in such matters.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C. S. O. 6061/1900.

146. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
August 18, 1900

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the 14th instant regarding the application for a certificate of domicile for one Dosa Desa.

I regret to trouble you in the matter again.

I tried to obtain from the Immigration Restrictions Officer information as to the causes that led to the introduction of the rule in question, but failed.

It is quite possible that some people have abused the previous practice and if the abuse, assuming that it exists, was brought to the notice of the Indians generally, in my humble opinion, it could be mitigated, if not altogether stopped. If affidavits have been made falsely, the culprits could be legally punished. But the rule in question, though it may not be a hard and fast one, will, it is submitted, be a great hardship, especially to the poorer. As it is, they are put to considerable expense in getting the certificates, but the new rule would put unnecessary obstacles in their way. In practice, it is hardly possible to expect men to apply from India for certificates. It takes as a rule 30 days and often longer for a letter to reach India and, if there was any flaw in an affidavit, it is difficult to say how long it would not take before a certificate could be issued. Moreover, it is hardly to be expected that the limited number of Indians who may be known to the Immigration Officer as respectable could know the persons for whom

certificates of domicile may be required.

Under the circumstances, I submit that the rule should be withdrawn altogether and the ordinary procedure may be adopted to meet the abuse, if any, of the Immigration Restriction Act,[1] under the old practice of issuing certificates.

I may mention that my client, the applicant for the certificate, Dosa Desa, is much inconvenienced owing to the delay in obtaining the certificate.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C. S. O. 6063/1900.

147. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
August 30, 1900

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the 29th instant with reference to the application for a certificate of domicile for one Dosa Desa.

I notice that the Government presume the existence of a rule for departing from which no sufficient reasons appear to them to have been shown. The fact is, the rule complained against is an innovation on the established practice for the introduction of which the community immediately concerned with it has been furnished with no reasons and the source of which it still does not know.

May I, then, enquire how the Immigration Act has been evaded under the recently existing practice?

I venture to think that the innovation is causing an amount of inconvenience the measure of which the Government do not realize.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to F. S. Taleyarkhan", 27-3-1897 to "Petition to the Natal Governor", 6-4-1897.

If it affected only persons who may leave the Colony hereafter, it may not cause any hardship, but hundreds of Indians, who knew nothing of it when they went to India and who require such certificates, would find it very difficult to come to the Colony although they have a right to enter it.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C. S. O. 6063/1900.

148. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
September 3, 1900

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

With reference to the correspondence re Dosa Desa, I have the honour to inform you that on the production of a certificate or reliability of the maker of the affidavit in support of this application which the maker was able to obtain, the Immigration Restrictions Officer has now granted the certificate applied for.

The settlement of this application, however, in my humble opinion, does not dispose of the general question as to the innovation referred to in my letter of the 30th ultimo.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C.S.O. 6063/ 1900.

149. NOTES

NOTES ON THE PRESENT POSITION OF THE BRITISH INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA[1]

[Post *September 3, 1900*][2]

A suggestion has been made that the friends in England of the Indian settlers in South Africa should be put in possession of the latest facts regarding their grievances, so as to enable them to place the matter for consideration before the proper authorities, in view of the pending settlement of South African affairs. It has also been suggested that a memorial to the Colonial Secretary, backed up by public meetings, should be promoted in order that it may strengthen the hands of the workers in England. After mature consideration, the latter plan has been dropped. There are sound reasons for the belief that, if adopted, it will be misunderstood here, where the feeling is that until the war is over, and the troubles attendant thereon have entirely disappeared, no questions not arising from the war should be discussed or considered. Moreover, it is likely that a memorial at the present time would disturb the happy relations which, for the time being, appear to subsist between the European and the Indian communities.

It is most difficult to say what the future would bring, and whether the old soreness would not be revived as soon as peace is restored. Indeed, there are grounds for the fear that there will be no change in the former attitude. *The Natal Witness* only a few days ago, in the course of a leading article, said that the services rendered by the local Indians, as ambulance-men and otherwise, should not be allowed to blind the Colonists to the necessity of keeping an ever-vigilant eye en the Indian question, and seeing that the temporary military occupation under Lord Roberts who, owing to his Indian connexion, might entertain pro-Indian views, is not permitted to encroach upon the position Natal has hitherto maintained successfully in restricting Indian immigration and enterprise, and that the services referred to above were rather an acknowledgement by the Indians of the justice of Natal's position than that they were rendered in spite of their

[1] This was published in *India*, 12-10-1900, as from "a Natal Correspondent"

[2] This date has been arrived at on the basis of references in the "Notes" to the immigration Restriction Act (*vide* "Notes", 3-9-1900, *infra*), a specific case under which was dealt with in the letters to the Colonial Secretary dated July 31, August 18 and 30, and September 3, 1900.

legitimate grievances.

The Indians formed a Volunteer Stretcher-bearer Corps of over 1,000, each bearer drawing £1 per week, i.e., a little over half the pay drawn by the European stretcher-bearers, assisted by over 30 leaders who served without any remuneration whatsoever, and included the most respectable portion of the community, and who left their business or employment to serve their Empress. When they did so, it was clearly stated that it was done in spite of the grievances, because they felt it their duty, at a time like that, to sink the domestic differences. The Indian merchants, if they could not join the Corps, equipped the leaders and maintained the families of such of them as stood in need of help. The Corps served at the fateful battles of Colenso, Spion Kop and Vaalkranz. High praise has been bestowed on the work done by it. Sir John Robinson the first Prime Minister of Natal—has thus spoken of its services:

> With reference to the part played by the Indian community during the crisis, I can only say that it redounds to the credit and patriotism of you all. Reasons which you can well understand forbade the employment of any but British troops in the battle-field. But whatever use could be made of your loyal ardour —what opportunity could be afforded to your eager desire to co-operate in the Empire's cause—was gladly agreed to by the authorities. Though you were debarred from actual service in the field, you were able to do excellent work in succouring the wounded. I cannot too warmly thank your able countryman, Mr. Gandhi, upon his timely, unselfish and most useful action in voluntarily organising a corps of bearers for ambulance work at the front at a moment when their labours were sorely needed in discharging arduous duties which experience showed to be by no means devoid of peril. All engaged in that service deserve the grateful recognition of the community.

The Indians contributed what has been called a handsome sum (over £57) to the funds of the Women's Patriotic League, of which The Natal Marcury says:

> This gift of money for the Women's Patriotic Fund, especially for the purpose of assisting in the care of sick and wounded volunteers at the front, is a very acceptable and eloquent expression of the feeling of the Indian people. It is not enough, in their minds, to succour the large mass of Indian refugees, as they are doing in an open-handed manner, but they must bestow this added contribution, we believe, as a token of their devotion to the Queen-Empress and to the country in which they have come to reside. Nothing can better show the real feeling that animates this portion of our population, who too often have very little said on their behalf, than such a display of loyalty.

The Indian ladies gave their work in the shape of making

pillowcases, handkerchiefs, etc., for the wounded out of cloth supplied by the Indian merchants over and above the above contribution. The Indians throughout the trying times also maintained thousands of their fellow-countrymen, refugees from the Transvaal and the parts of the Colony in Boer occupation, practically without encroaching upon the funds sent from London and raised locally, and administered by the Refugee Relief Committee.

The Mayor of Durban has acknowledged that service in the following words (spoken in March last):

> The Mayor took the opportunity of thanking the Indian community for their loyalty during the last four months or so. Many of their people had been compelled to leave their abodes in the upper parts of the Colony, and had come down here for refuge. These they had taken amongst themselves; and borne the burden of maintenance at their own expense. For that he thanked them sincerely.

It may be stated, without any affectation, that these services have been rendered without any intention to secure any reward. If we claimed privileges as British subjects we could not very well shirk the duties of such subjects, which the very humble services undoubtedly were, and, therefore, could carry no reward.

It might be worthy of note that the local Indians were not behind-hand in materially assisting the Indian Camp Followers' Fund, initiated by Captain Leumann, I.M.S. They subscribed over £50, and the Colonial-born Indians gave an amateur performance, handing to it the net proceeds thereof to the extent of over £20. As an illustration of the happy relations may be mentioned the great meeting held by the Indians to congratulate the British Generals on the relief of Ladysmith and Kimberley, which was presided over by Sir John Robinson, and attended by over fifty leading European citizens; also, the extremely generous response made by the Europeans in Natal to an appeal for the famine-stricken masses of India, over £2,000 being subscribed by them alone. The Governor is the Patron of the Fund, the Mayor of Durban is the Chairman, the Protector of Indian Immigrants the honorary treasurer, an Indian gentleman the honorary secretary, and leading European planters and merchants on the Committee—a combination that might have been impossible a year ago.

The above remarks on the feeling regarding the British Indiansin Natal clears the ground for a statement of grievances. It may be as well to read the following summary side by side with the circular

letter dated 27th March, 1897.[1]

As to the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, nothing need be said at present, except that it may be confidently expected that none of the grievances which, owing to the past status of the two States, the Colonial Office declared itself powerless to redress however much it sympathised with the Indians, will be allowed to exist in the slightest degree under the new regime where there would not have to be considered even the sentiments of a self-governing Colony as in the case of Natal.

Zululand, now being part and parcel of Natal, does not require separate mention, though it may be stated that the regulations prohibiting Indian bids at land sales when it was directly under the Crown were withdrawn before it was incorporated with this Colony.

In Natal, the position remains unchanged. The Immigration Restriction Act is still being enforced as vigorously as it could be under the circumstances. A short statement of its working may not be out of place.

Under it, no person who is unable to write out, in any of the European languages, an application in the form attached to the Act, can enter the Colony unless he has been previously domiciled. Notices, for which there is no sanction in the Act itself, have been issued to the shipping companies warning them against taking Indian passengers for Natal unless they are armed with certificates of domicile, which were at first issued free of charge on a verbal application either by the person himself or by his friends. A charge of 2s. 6d. was then introduced for its issue. Later on, an affidavit of proof of domicile was required. Then two affidavits were insisted upon, and proof that the applicant for the certificate had been resident in the Colony at least two years; and the latest innovation is that either the person wishing to enter the Colony must himself apply for a certificate of domicile, or persons of known respectability should tender, under oath, proof of domicile. Thus, it will be seen that the cordon of restriction has grown tighter with the lapse of time. The practical effect of the working of all this is that all but the well-to-do are shut out of the Colony. As to this, it is contended for the Government that it would be no hardship for the persons requiring certificates of domicile to make the application under their own

[1] *Vide* "Letter to *The Natal Mercury*", 15-11-1897.

signatures, as they could always take them out before leaving the Colony. Such an argument would be perfectly sound if the innovation were to affect only those that may hereafter leave the Colony. But it is positively harmful for those that are outside the Colony. A person in India requiring such a certificate may have to wait one year before he could get it. The postal service between India and South Africa is as irregular as it could be; and there is no guarantee that the receipt, by the Immigration Officer, of an application invariably insures the issue of the domicile paper. For, as has often happened before, it is not at all unlikely that it may have to be returned several times to India for some flaw therein—imaginary or real. Theoretically, the shipping companies: may defy the notices which have no legal force; and the Indians claiming admission may not take out domicile certificates which are not required by law. In practice, the shipping companies resolutely decline to issue passages except on production of certificates above referred to; so much so, that it is very difficult for those who write out the English application to obtain a passage, because they cannot produce a domicile certificate, and the shipping companies would not look at the provision exempting such persons from the operation of the Act. The reason given for introducing such elaborate restrictions is that they are necessary to prevent evasions of the law; and it may be admitted that some evasions have occurred. It is, however, submitted that they ought not to be used as a handle for making unduly harsh a law which is, in its very nature, severe, and committing what is a breach of the fundamental principles of the British Constitution. The evasions should be publicly denounced and, if necessary, punished, for which there is ample provision made in the Act itself. Unfortunately, the latter course has not been adopted, with the result that the innocent have to suffer for the lapse of the few guilty persons. Everything that could be done locally to induce the authorities to relax the severity has been and is being done; and it would be unfair to omit to mention that the authorities have endeavoured in a measure to meet the wishes of the Indian community. Much more can, however, be done, if not now, at any rate after the war is over, by pressure of the Colonial Office to which the Government has been found to be amenable in the past.

Another effect of the Act is that it imposes vexatious restrictions on those who intend to pass through, or sojourn temporarily in the Colony, neither of which acts is prohibited by law. The Government, however, in order to prevent surreptitious settlement of Indians in the

Colony have, perhaps rightly, introduced what are called Visiting and Embarkation passes. The objection, therefore, is not so much to the introduction of the passes as to the conditions under which they are issued. Formerly, a deposit of £25 for Embarkation passes was required, and a fee of £1 for either a Visiting or Embarkation pass. The Government, however, in answer to Indian representations, were pleased to reduce the £25 to £10, and withdrew the £1 fee. The £10 deposit, however, still stands, much to the inconvenience of intending visitors, not all of whom could afford to deposit the sum, small as it may appear in the estimation of the Government. It was this Act that was instrumental in sending away a shipload of Indian refugees from the Transvaal from Delagoa Bay, who would fain have come to Natal, and thus saved not only the passage-money from India to Delagoa Bay for their return after the war, but not have been also a burden to the already overpressed famine-stricken India.

The other Act, not by any means the next in importance, but rather the worst of all, is the Dealers' Licenses Act, only at the present time its effect is not much felt. The country beyond the Tugela is yet under semi-military government. The Newcastle, Ladysmith and Dundee Corporations which gained, in 1898, unenviable notoriety for the harsh and oppressive way in which they enforced the Act, have not been able to shake themselves free from the misery caused by the Boer occupation. In Durban and Maritzburg, the Licensing Officers have not given much trouble. What will happen in January next, at the time of the renewal of licenses, it is difficult to foresee. The poor traders, however,: are already trembling in their shoes because of the great uncertainty in which the Act leaves them from year's end to year's end. The friends in London may recollect that Mr. Chamberlain has approached the Natal Government, suggesting that they should introduce legislation repealing the clause depriving the Supreme Court of the ordinary appellate jurisdiction over the decisions of the Licensing Officers or the Corporation, as the case may be; and that the Natal Government have written to the various municipalities. informing them that, unless they judiciously exercised their powers under the Act, they might have to introduce legislation of the nature above indicated. This may be good so far as it goes, but it is sincerely hoped that it has not satisfied the Colonial Office. The least that is necessary is the removal of the terrible uncertainty that hangs, like the sword of Damocles, over every Indian licensee; and this can only be done by restoring the authority of the Supreme Court. There

was (and very rightly) a howl of indignation when Mr. Kruger usurped the function of the High Court at Pretoria; but perhaps the very rottenness of the Transvaal Constitution was somewhat a safeguard from any real danger from such usurpation. But in Natal, where there are all the safeguards of a well-ordered Constitution, the deprivation of the jurisdiction of the highest Court of Justice in the land makes the danger terribly real and tangible, because it receives the solemn sanction of the legislature.

The truth of these remarks will be fully borne out by recalling to the mind what has been possible in the Transvaal in spite of the vagaries of its laws and what the Town Councils, free from the healthy restrictions Of their Courts which, as British bodies, they are bound to fear and respect, have been able and attempted to do. War has prevented an approach to the Colonial Office in this matter. While correspondence on the subject with the local Government was going on, war broke out; and it was considered prudent to stay further action till the cloud melted away.

The 9 o'clock rule, and numerous other troubles referred to in the circular letter, need not be recapitulated here. They but serve to show what the Indians have to suffer in the Colony. We would give much to find ourselves in reality at one with the Colonists as we are on paper, being British. subjects; and it will be time enough to trouble our friends in London with the comparatively smaller troubles when the Immigration Restriction and the Dealers' Licenses Acts have ceased to worry us.

One thing is day by day causing much soreness of feeling, and that is the education of the Indian youths. The Government, which is ruled by the majority, perhaps not unnaturally finds itself powerless to assist the Indians. The result is, the Indian children are entirely shut out of the ordinary primary schools as well as the high schools. The Head Master of the Durban High School is said to have written, some time ago, to the Minister of Education, to the effect that parents would withdraw their children if an Indian was admitted. It is, however, submitted that the Colonial Office should make it clear to the local Government that the Indians have an equal right with the Europeans in the Colony to receive education in the Government schools which are supported by taxes paid as well by the Indians as by the Europeans. For the logical consequence of the threat (it is nothing less) held out by the Head Master would be that the Indians might

have absolutely no status if it were carried out in every department of life in the Colony. What would prevent a ring of European merchants, under the threat of clearing out from a particular street in a commercial centre in the Colony, from asking the Government to drive out an Indian merchant or two from their neighbourhood?

The following are referred to for further information, if necessary:

Memorial (*re* Immigration, Trade Licences, etc.), 2nd July, 1897.

Memorial (*re* Dealers' Licences), 31st December, 1898.

General Letter (Licences), 31st July, 1899.

Special Articles on the Indian Question in South Africa, and Editorial Notes in *The Times of India* (Weekly edition): 11th March, 18.99; 15th and 22nd April, 1899; 19th August, 1899; 9th December, 1899; 6th January, 1900; 16th June, 1900.[1]

From the photostat of the original printed copy: S. N. 3474A.

150. LETTER TO TOWN CLERK

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN, NATAL
September 24, 1900

TO
WM. COOLEY, ESQ.
TOWN CLERK
DURBAN

SIR,

As soon as the intention of the Council to introduce a bye-law making it an offence for a riksha hauler to take up a coloured passenger in a riksha labelled for "Europeans only" was known, many Indians asked me to draw up a protest, but I felt at the time that it would not be proper to do so. I thought it would be inconsistent with the self-respect of the Indian community to wish to insist on having the right to use the same riksha used by the Europeans if the latter objected to share it with the Indians, so long as the same kind of vehicle was available to the Indians also. But I have now begun to feel

[1] The two memorials, the general letter ("Petition to Natal Governor") and the special articles referred to have been given in this Volume in their chronological sequence.

that I committed a grave error in proffering the above advice.

The practical working of the bye-law has created and is creating an irritation among the Indians of all classes which it would be folly on my part not to bring to the notice of the Council.

I freely confess that the problem is not easy of solution. Yet it may not be altogether insoluble. In this communication it is not my intention to raise the legal question though I humbly believe that the bye-law is illegal. I wish, if possible, to obtain partial relief by appealing to the good sense of the Council.

I trust that what is objected to is not so much the colour of a fare as his dirty clothes or appearance. If so, might it not be possible to give instructions to the haulers not to take such fares? I am told that the haulers are shrewd enough to understand and carry out such instructions. The suggestion is obviously difficult, and will by no means be free from hard ships and injustice but it is likely to allay the present acute soreness.

The very rigorous working of the bye-law may defeat its own object, and in my humble opinion, it can only be worked without friction if its application is very largely tempered with discretion. It is, I submit, no small thing that hundreds of coloured people who have hitherto freely used the rikshas as a mode of conveyance, suddenly find themselves de barred from its use; for I understand that there are very few rikshas without the label above referred to.

May I ask you to place this before His Worship the Mayor and the Council Committee at the earliest possible opportunity and hope that it will receive the consideration that its subject matter deserves? I trustI also that it will be considered in the spirit in which it is written.

I remain,

yours obediently,

M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the original in Durban Town Council Records.

151. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI[1]

DURBAN, NATAL,
October 8, 1900

Confidential

DEAR SIR,

In view of the approaching session of the Congress,[2] it may not be out of place to draw your attention, and through you that of our other leading men, to what we here think may be done by the Congress. I know that we who know the value of your services to your country have to see that we do not unduly encroach upon your attention and thereby probably affect your health; if, therefore, it is not possible for you to give this matter your personal attention, I doubt not that you will be good enough to forward this letter or copies thereof to the proper quarters. The matter treated as affecting the whole of the emigration from India seems to be of the utmost national importance. A draft resolution to be submitted to the Congress is enclosed herewith.[3] A few copies of the notes,[4] specially prepared for the friends in London at the desire of Sir William Wedderburn, are also being sent in a separate packet. They will give an idea of the position as it stands at present, and may be of use to the gentleman who will take charge of the resolution which, of course, may be altered or amended as the subjects committee think fit.

[1] This is an incomplete copy of a letter written by Gandhiji to Dadabhai Naoroji which has been found among the documents in Sabarmati Sangrahalaya. (For Dadabhai Naoroji.)

[2] The Indian National Congress.

[3] The Congress passed the following resolution on the question of "South Africa":

RESOLVED: That this Congress once more draws the attention of the Indian Government as well as of the Secretary of State for India to the grievances of the British Indians in South Africa, and earnestly hopes that, in view of the re-arrangement of the boundaries in that continent and the incorporation of the late Boer Republics into the: British Dominions, the disabilities under which the Indian settlers laboured in those Republics, and as to which Her Majesty's Government owing to their independence in internal matters felt powerless to obtain redress, will now no longer exist, and that the serious inconvenience caused to the settlers in Natal, among others by the Immigration Restriction and the Dealers' Licenses Acts of the Colony, which are manifestly inconsistent with the fundamental principles of the British Constitution as also the Proclamation of 1858, will be materially mitigated. if not entirely removed.

[4] "Notes on the Present Position of the British Indians in South Africa" dated post September 3, 1900.

The matter derives special importance owing to the sudden and unexpected activity of the Cape Legislature the members of which, while, as you are aware, they are divided into two very evenly balanced parties holding diametrically opposite views, seem to be almost unanimous on the Indian question. A cutting from the *Cape Times*[1] giving a pretty fullreport of the debate in the Cape Assembly, attached hereto, will give some idea of what is going on in that part of South Africa. The Cape gentlemen are evidently anxious to go further even than Natal, as if the latter had not almost completely shut the door against new-comers from India. They would not tolerate the Indian, whether as a merchant, clerk, or labourer. In Mr. Chamberlain, they have a Colonial Secretary who is anxious to go any length in respecting the wishes of the self-governing Colonies. The India Office, on the other hand, appears to be terribly inactive. But, seeing that there is unanimity of opinion between the Indians and Anglo-Indians on this question, it may be possible to rouse that office into proper activity, and obtain some relief. An influential deputation to wait upon Lord Curzon may go a great way in the desired direction.

The attitude of the Cape Colony seems to show that the services rendered by India, in that it was Sir George White with his Indian contingent who was the first to be on the scene to check the effective advance of the enemy, that it was the hundreds of dhuli-bearers[2] who rendered admittedly yeoman service during the siege of Ladysmith, and at the initial reverses, not to speak of the volunteers (Lumsden's Horse) equipped entirely from money subscribed by the Indians, the Bhisti Corps[3] and other Indian followers who were sent in shiploads from India, and the locally raised Indian Stretcher-Bearer Corps, will be entirely forgotten, and the Indian treated, if they had it all their own way, as a social leper.

Natal for the present seems to be not quite ill disposed, but it will not take much to draw it out and, it is to be feared, make it return to its original opposition to the Indian. The gentleman who will speak to the resolution may be asked to gratefully acknowledge Natal's magnanimous response to the Indian Famine Fund, and a subscription of £100 collected for Prabhu Singh, an indentured Indian who rendered signal service at Ladysmith, and whose bravery was publicly

[1] This is not available.
[2] Stretcher-bearers.
[3] Water-carrier Corps.

acknowledged by Sir George White. (This is the man for whom Lady Curzon sent a "choga"[1] which was publicly presented to him in Durban the other day.) The subscriptions to the Indian Famine Fund amount to over £4500, of which about one-half comes from our own community.

The Transvaal and the Orange River Colony ought to be absolutely free to the Indian, but we are all very nervous about it.

As showing to what lengths the people in South Africa would be prepared to go, what happened about a year ago at Umtali in Rhodesia[2]. . . .

[*Incomplete*]

Sabarmati Sangrahalaya: S.N. 3743.

152. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
October 26, 1900

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I have the honour to enquire whether there are any restrictions upon the sale of Crown lands to Indians.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C. S. O. 8658/1900.

[1] Robe.
[2] *Vide* "Indian Traders in Rhodesia" March 11, 1899

153. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
November 8, 1900

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the 7th inst., in reply to my letter of the 26th ulto., enquiring whether there were any restrictions upon the sale of Crown lands to Indians, and I beg to tender my thanks for the very full reply you have favoured me with, as well as the enclosures.

Mr. Jan Mahomed of Port Shepstone, I understand, bought from Mr. H. E. Barnes of that place Erf No. 45 in the May of 14398 and declarations were prepared and signed; I am also instructed that, on the declarations being taken to the Surveyor-General's Office, the Surveyor-General declined to register the cession. On enquiring of Mr. Pitcher, who seems to have taken the declaration to the Surveyor-General's office, I find that the reason that officer gave for his refusal was—the cessionee was an Indian. On enquiring further of the same gentleman whether the Surveyor-General gave any legal grounds for his decision, Mr. Pitcher informs me that officer gave him to understand he was acting in accordance with Government orders.

The above information seems to be in conflict with that contained in your letter.

May I know what actually happened in connection with this particular matter and whether the Government will be pleased to instruct the Surveyor-General to register the cession. My client, I am instructed, has already paid a portion of the purchase price to Mr. Barnes.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C.S.O. 8658/1900.

154. TELEGRAM TO GOVERNOR'S SECRETARY

[DURBAN,]
November 30, 1900

PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.
PIETERMARITZBURG

IT IS THE WISH OF BRITISH INDIANS TO PRESENT LORD ROBERTS WITH AN HUMBLE ADDRESS ON HIS ARRIVAL IN DURBAN. MAY I REQUEST HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR TO ASCERTAIN FROM HIS LORDSHIP WHETHER HE WOULD BE PLEASED TO ACCEPT SAME IF SO APPOINT TIME AND PLACE.

GANDHI

From the photostat of the Office copy: S. N. 3542.

155. TELEGRAM TO "GOOL"[1]

[DURBAN,]
December 6, 1900

TO
GOOL
CAPE TOWN

PLEASE PRESENT ON BEHALF OF CAPE INDIANS ADDRESS LORD ROBERTS. SHOULD NOT REFER TO HIS SON'S DEATH. CONGRATULATE HIM ON BRILLIANT CAREER SOUTH AFRICA. NO POLITICAL REFERENCE.

GANDHI

COPY TO ALLY
C/O DURBAN ROAD
MOWBRAY

From the photostat of the office copy: S.N. 3551.

156. SPEECH AT INDIAN SCHOOL

The following is a brief press report of the mid-summer breaking-up function of the Higher Grade Indian School, Durban.

December 21, 1900

Mr. Gandhi, in speaking of the headmaster's work, said that the best of institutions would suffer if there were not men to give life to them. This was well illustrated in the case of the Higher Grade Indian School. The Indian parents had to thank the Government for presenting the school with Mr. Connolly, who had made the school his own. Even Mrs. Connolly assisted him id his great work, and his

[1] Hamid Gool, a leading Indian of Cape Town.

brother, who had lately arrived from England, was kind enough to place his voice at the disposal of the school. The Indians had to thank Mr. Connolly and his staff very much for their zeal and devotion. With reference to the gymnasium, he ventured to suggest that a movable and portable set of single and double bars and sets of dumb-bells could, for very little expense, be procured, and would in a measure compensate for the want of a suitable ground. Credit could not be withheld from Mr. Paul for inducing the parents to avail themselves of the school for their children.

The Natal Advertiser, 22-12-1900

157. PETITION TO NATAL GOVERNOR

DURBAN,
prior to *December 24, 1900*

TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE
SIR WALTER FRANCIS HELY-HUTCHINSON,
KNIGHT GRAND CROSS OF THE MOST DISTINGUISHED
ORDER OF SAINT MICHAEL AND SAINT GEORGE,
GOVERNOR AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN AND
OVER THE COLONY OF NATAL, VICE-ADMIRAL OF
THE SAME, AND SUPREME CHIEF OVER THE
NATIVE POPULATION

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED, REPRESENTING
THE BRITISH INDIANS RESIDENT IN DURBAN

HUMBLY SHEWETH,

That your petitioners beg to draw Your Excellency's attention to the enclosed Bye-law passed recently by the Durban Town Council and approved by Your Excellency.

At the time the said Bye-law was proposed to be published, the Indians who generally use the rickshas were alarmed, but it was then hoped that the Bye-law would not be so enforced as to apply to all non-Europeans without distinction.

Your Petitioners thought that, if the European community did not wish the Indians to make use of the same rickshas as they, the latter consistently with their self-respect could not take exception to such attitude so long as there remained a sufficient number of rickshas not set apart for the exclusive use of any particular

community.

In practice, however, it has been found, during the short time the Bye-law has been in operation, that it is extremely difficult to find a ricksha without the label "For Europeans Only". For a time, and only for a time, no particular hardship was felt as there were a number of rickshas without the above label and the police did not unduly interfere with the ricksha "boys" carrying people cleanly dressed. The thing, however, was soon changed as the Town Council gave definite instructions to the police to rigorously enforce the said Bye-law, with the result that a very large number of, your Petitioners venture to call, cleanly dressed Indians suddenly found themselves deprived of the use of the above vehicles to their great inconvenience and annoyance.

The Town Council was approached with a view, not to obtain a cancellation of the Bye-law, but such enforcement thereof as not to deprive the Indians altogether of use of the rickshas.[1]

The Town Council has, however, declined to accede to the request.

Your Petitioners venture to submit that the said Bye-law is illegal in terms of Section 75 of Law No. 19 of 1872, as it is opposed to the general spirit of the British Constitution and the Laws of the Colony.

By reason of the premises, your Petitioners pray that the said Bye-law may be cancelled or amended so as not to cause the inconvenience complained of.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners shall for ever pray &c. &c.

M. C. CAMROODEEN & CO.,
AND TWENTY-FIVE OTHERS

Durban Town Council Records, 1901.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Town Clerk", September 24, 1900

158. LETTER TO PROTECTOR OF IMMIGRANTS

DURBAN, NATAL,
January 16, 1901

THE PROTECTOR OF IMMIGRANTS
DURBAN
SIR,

CHELLAGADU AND WILKINSON[1]

This matter came on before the Supreme Court in review. The Court decided that it had no jurisdiction to review the decision of a Circuit Court Judge in the matter of appeals from a Magistrate's decision.

This leaves the question of the interpretation of the law as to the transfer where Mr. Justice Beaumont has left it. You were good enough to say, when I approached you in the matter, that you would, in the event of the Supreme Court deciding it had no jurisdiction, approach the Governor for remission of the sentence, a fact which by itself would show that Mr. Justice Beaumont's decision is Wrong.

I, therefore, now leave the Case in your hands and enclose the papers herewith.

I am etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure in Despatch No. 49 of 19th February, 1901, from Governor of Natal to H. M's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Colonial Office Records: South-Africa, General, 1901.

159. QUEEN VICTORIA'S DEATH

[DURBAN,]
January 23, 1901

TO
THE HONOURABLE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

THE COMMITTEE OF THE NATAL CONGRESS DIRECT ME TO REQUEST HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR TO FORWARD BY CABLE THE

[1] An indentured Indian, Chellagadu, was sentenced to a fine of £1 or, in default, imprisonment on a charge of neglect of work on the Sugar estate of one Wilkinson to whom Chellagadu's master had transferred him. Gandhiji's plea that an indentured Indian could be transferred only with the consent of the Protector Or Immigrants was rejected and the sentence upheld by the Circuit Court Judge.

FOLLOWING MESSAGE TO THE ROYAL FAMILY: BRITISH INDIANS NATAL TENDER HUMBLE CONDOLENCES TO THE ROYALFAMILY IN THEIR BEREAVEMENT AND JOIN HER MAJESTY'S OTHER CHILDREN IN BEWAILING THE EMPIRE'S LOSS IN THE DEATH OF THE GREATEST AND MOST LOVED SOVEREIGN ON EARTH."

GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C. S. O. 1071/1901.

160. MOURNING THE QUEEN'S DEATH

[DURBAN,]
February 1, 1901

TO
HAJEE JAMALKHAN
DUNDEE

YOUR LETTER. WE ARE HAVING GREAT PROCESSION SATURDAY MORNING MARCHING TO QUEEN'S STATUE TO PLACE FLORAL WREATH.[1] PLEASE HAVE SOMETHING SIMILAR THERE SAY MEMORIAL SERVICE. NOTE ALL BUSINESS MUST BE STOPPED.

GANDHI

From the photostat of the office copy: S. N. 3766.

161. MOURNING THE QUEEN'S DEATH

[DURBAN,]
February 1, 1901

TO
(1) AMOD BHAYAD
(2) GODFREY, UMGENI COURT
(3) STEPHEN, SUPREME COURT
PIETERMARITZBURG

WE ARE TRYING TO HAVE SATURDAY MORNING GREAT INDIAN PROCESSION TO START FROM GREY STREET TO GARLAND QUEEN'S STATUE. PLEASE HAVE SOMETHING SIMILAR THERE. NOTE THAT ALL BUSINESS SHOULD BE ENTIRELY STOPPED TOMORROW.

GANDHI

From the photostat of the office copy: S.N. 3767.

[1] The procession was led by Gandhiji and Nazar who carried the floral wreath on their shoulders.

162. TRIBUTE TO QUEEN VICTORIA

The following is based on a brief press report of Gandhiji's speech at the wreath-laying ceremony in Durban.

[*February 2, 1901*]

Mr. M. K. Gandhi dwelt on the noble virtues of the late Queen. He referred to the Indian Proclamation of 1858, and the Queen's deep interest in Indian affairs—how she commenced the study of Hindustani language at a ripe age, and how, although she herself could not go to India to be in the midst of her beloved people, she sent her sons and grandsons to represent her.

The Natal Advertiser, 4-2-1901

163. TELEGRAM TO TAYOB[1]

[Durban,]
February 5, 1901

TO
TAYOB
CARE GOOL
CAPE TOWN

YOUR WIRE. FOUR NAMES[2] ARE ABDUL GANI OF CAMROODEEN, HAJEE HABIB, MALIM [HALIM?] MAHOMED AND ABDUL RAHMAN AND TRY FOR SHAMSHOODEEN OF ABDOOL HACK SAHEB. HAJEE HABIB FOR PRETORIA AND OTHERS FOR JOHANNESBURG. REPLY.

GANDHI

Sabarmati Sangrahalaya: S. N. 3770.

164. TELEGRAM TO TAYOB

[Durban,]
February 6, 1901

TO
TAYOB
CARE GOOL
CAPE TOWN

PLEASE TRY FOR KARODIA ALSO IF POSSIBLE.

GANDHI

Sabarmati Sangrahalaya: S. N. 3770.

[1] A leading Indian of Cape Town.

[2] These are names of Indian traders who had substantial assets in the Transvaal and wanted to return there when the Boer War ended.

165. TELEGRAM TO TAYOB

[DURBAN,]
February 9, 1901

TO
TAYOB
CARE GOOL
CAPE TOWN

CENTRAL COMMITTEE REQUIRE INFORMATION ABOUT JOHANNESBURG AND PRETORIA INDIAN STORES AND ASSETS. HAVE YOU ANY INFORMATION. IF SO STATE DEFINITELY WHAT. GIVE ALSO YOUR ESTIMATE OF NUMBER STOREKEEPERS AND VALUE THEIR ASSETS. NAME OFFICER WHO REQUIRED NAMES FROM YOU.

GANDHI

Sabarmati Sangrahalaya: S.N. 3773.

166. THE FAMINE FUND[1]

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
February 16, 1901

DEAR SIR,

Now that the Famine Fund raised in the Colony is closed, it may be as well to give you its genesis. While the Indian community was agitating itself whether it would be possible, as in 1897, in spite of thepresent distressing circumstances in South Africa, to make an effort, the Viceroy's letter to the Lord Mayor of London for further help was published in the local papers, and, almost simultaneously with this, came a request to the Protector of Indian Immigrants from the Natal Agent at Calcutta to collect subscriptions from the indentured Indians. We thereupon bestirred ourselves, and, on behalf of the Indian community, H. E. the Governor was approached with a view to secure his patronage. He most graciously consented to become the Patron of any such fund that might be raised in that behalf and promised to head the list with £20. The Hon. Sir John Robinson, ex-Premier of Natal, and the Hon. Henry Bale, the Attorney-General of Natal, very actively espoused the movement. A strong Central Committee was formed with the Mayor of Durban as Chairman and

[1] This letter, which appeared in India, 15-3-1901, and in Gujarati in Mumbai Samachar 16-3-1901, was addressed to the Press in general.

the Protector of Immigrants as Honorary Treasurer, and an appeal for funds was made in the papers which, too, rendered great help. A local artist drew up a realistic cartoon which The Natal Mercury consented to issue as a special. The excellent pictorial representations of The Times of India were pressed into service. The result was that nearly £5,000 were collected, of which about £3,000 were contributed by the Europeans, £1,700 by the Indians and £300 by the natives. The magistrates in the various divisions, chairmen of Local Boards, the clergy and a band of Indian workers, besides the Committee members, vied with one another in making collections. Lady Robinson, supported by her friends, also rendered valuable help. Colour prejudice was for the time being forgotten, and the best traits of the character of the community were, in this instance, brought into play. In 1897, the European contribution to the famine fund was over £200 and the Indian was about £1,200—there was no organization formed then for collections among the Europeans.

The Viceroy has acknowledged the generosity of Natal in very suitable terms.

I am,
yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the office copy: S. N. 3777.

167. TELEGRAM TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

DURBAN,
March 7, 1901

TO
C. BIRD, ESQ.

MR. K. C. DINSHAW SON OF LATE MR. ADENWALA C.I.E. ADMIRALTY AGENT LOURENCO MARQUES LEFT DURBAN FORTNIGHT AGO FOR CAPETOWN ON BUSINESS. HE HAS NOW RETURNED PERSCOT BUT BEING PREVENTED FROM LANDING BEING COLOURED PASSENGER. MR. DINSHAW HOLDS SPECIAL CERTIFICATE FROM CAPE. PORT OFFICER DR. FERNANDER SAYS HE HAS COMMUNICATED WITH GOVERNMENT. MAY I ASK YOU TO WIRE PERMISSION FOR MR. DINSHAW TO LAND? AM WIRING YOU PERSONALLY TO SAVE TIME AS MATTER VERY URGENT.

GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C. S. O. 1929/1901.

168. TELEGRAM TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

[DURBAN,
March 8, 1901]

TO
HONOURABLE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

I BEG TO THANK YOU FOR YOUR WIRE EVEN DATE GRANTING PERMISSION FOR MR. DINSHAW TO LAND ON CONDITIONS MENTIONED THEREIN.

GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C.S.O. 1929/1901.

169. TO HEADS OF INDIAN SCHOOLS

(A Circular Letter)

DURBAN,
March 19, 1901

DEAR SIR,

As you know, Mr. Russell delivered an address to the Indian children in the Town Hall on the reign of our late beloved Kaiser-i-Hind, and a memorial souvenir[1] was presented on behalf of the Indian community to the children. The Committee consider that the other Indian children, too, who could not possibly attend the function, should receive the souvenir. It is worth preserving, and I would suggest that one copy should be framed and hung in the schoolroom, and each pupil should be induced either to frame it, if he can afford it, or neatly paste it on a nice piece of thick cardboard and hang it in his room.

Will you kindly let me know how many pupils you have in your school so that I may post the number of copies?

If you can induce local storekeepers to decently frame and exhibit it in their show window, a few more copies could be sent. At the same time, as we have only a limited supply, I would ask you to be good enough to restrict yourself to the exact number required.

[1] This souvenir consisted of: a photograph of Queen Victoria, with an extract from her Proclamation of 1858 to the people of India, at the top; and six dates in her lifes in relation to India, at the bottom; a map of India in 1901 showing it, in its entirety, as a British possession, and her remark "I will be good", then she was informed at the age of 12, that she was the future Queen of England.

May I also suggest that you should carefully study Mr. Russell's address and discourse upon it to your pupils, so that they may have a fairly good idea of the ever-memorable reign.

Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the office copy: S. N. 3789.

170. TELEGRAM TO HIGH COMMISSIONER

[DURBAN,]
March 25, 1901

TO
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
HIS EXCELLENCY HIGH COMMISSIONER
JOHANNESBURG

SOME BRITISH INDIANS WHO ARE AT PRESENT IN PRETORIA AND JOHANNESBURG WRITE TO INDIAN REFUGEE COMMITTEE SAYING THEY HAVE RECEIVED NOTICE TO REMOVE TO LOCATIONS. THEY ARE NOT ALLOWED WALK ON FOOTPATHS AND THAT GENERALLY ANTI-INDIAN LAWS OF THE LATE REPUBLIC ARE BEING STRICTLY ENFORCED. I AM REQUESTED RESPECTFULLY TO DRAW HIS EXCELLENCY'S ATTENTION TO THE ADMISSION OF HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT THAT SUCH LAWS ARE OBJECTIONABLE, AND THE STATEMENT THAT THEY WOULD ENDEAVOUR TO HAVE THEM REPEALED. THE LAWS IT APPEARS WERE NEVER UNDER THE OLD REGIME ENFORCED AS THEY NOW ARE AND PENDING FINAL SETTLEMENT COMMITTEE PRAYS FOR RELIEF.

GANDHI

From the photostat of the office copy: S. N. 3792.

171. TELEGRAM REGARDING PERMITS

[DURBAN,]
March 25, 1901

TO
PARWANA[1]
CAPETOWN

YOUR TELEGRAM 21ST INST. LARGE MEETINGS OF REFUGEES HELD YESTERDAY HAVE NOMINATED MR. ABDUL GANI OF MAHOMED

[1] The code address of the Permit Secretary to the High Commissioner at Capetown.

CASSIM CAMROODEEN & CO. MR. M. S. KAVADIA, JOHANNESBURG, MR. HAJEEHABIB HAJEE DADA, PRETORIA, MR. ABDUL RAHMAN, POTCHEFSTROOM, AS IN THEIR HUMBLE OPINION THE MINIMUM WHO SHOULD BE ALLOWED PERMITS IN VIEW OF LARGE INTERESTS AT STARE. THEY CONSIDER ONE PERMIT TOO FEW. IF IMPOSSIBLE TO GRANT FOUR THE ABOVENAMED REPRESENTATIVES APPOINT MR. ABDUL GANI TO BE THE FIRST TO GO.

I AM REQUESTED TO SUBMIT THAT SEEING THAT HUNDREDS OF OTHER REFUGEES HAVE RECEIVED PERMITS AND ALMOST ALL EUROPEAN STORES PRETORIA AND JOHANNESBURG ARE NOW OPEN, THEY FEEL VERY KEENLY THAT INDIANS HAVE NOT RECEIVED THEIR FAIR SHARE OF PERMITS AND EVEN FOUR WOULD NOT MEET THEIR NEEDS. IF HIS EXCELLENCY CAN GRANT THE PRAYER OF THE MEETING AS TO FOUR THE FAVOUR WOULD BE MUCH APPRECIATED.

GANDHI

From the photostat of the office copy: S. N. 3793.

172. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

L 4, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
March 30, 1901

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG
SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the 18th inst.

May I enquire whether His Excellency the Governor has issued any instructions in terms of Sect. 1 of the Act,[1] or whether the Health Officer acted on his own responsibility in Mr. Dinshaw's case, under Sect. 2 of the Act, and whether the report in the newspapers to the effect that instructions have been issued to the Steamship Companies not to take any Asiatic passengers for Durban from Capetown and the intermediate ports is correct?

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C.S.O. 1929/1901.

[1] The Act referred to is Act No. 26, 1899.

173. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
March 30, 1901

TO
THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

A kind friend has sent me a copy [of an] extract from General Buller's dispatch wherein among the officers mentioned is included my name, described as "Mr. Gandhi, Asst. Supt. Indian Ambulance Corps." If the extract is complete, according to my correspondent, no more officers of that Corps are thus mentioned. If that be so, and if the credit given is to the Assistant Superintendent as such, it belongs to Mr. Shire, who was the only Gentleman in the Corps recognised as such. And if the description of the office is of no consequence and if I am entitled to any credit for having done my duty, it is due in a greater measure to Dr. Booth, now Dean of St. John's, and to Mr. Shire, who spared no pains in making the Corps the success it proved to be. If I may venture to estimate their work, it is due to them to state that Dr. Booth's services as Medical Officer in particular and adviser and guide in general were simply inestimable, and Mr. Shire's were equally so in connection especially with the internal administration and discipline.

May I ask you to bring the contents of this communication to the notice of the Military Authorities.[1]

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C. S. O. 1901/2888.

[1] The Commanding Officer Natal, in a letter to the Principal Under Secretary, commented on this as follows: "I think this was meant as a compliment to Mr. Gandhi's nationality, of which the Bearer Corps was formed. No doubt the work of the other gentlemen was equally of great value, but it is difficult to include all names." The Colonial Secretary's reply of April 16, acknowledged by Gandhiji in his letter of April 18, (*vide* the next page) is not available.

174. TELEGRAM REGARDING PERMITS[1]

[DURBAN,]
April 16, 1901

TO
(1) INCAS
(2) EAST INDIA ASSOCIATION
(3) SIR MANCHERJI BHOWNAGGREE
LONDON

HUNDREDS EUROPEAN CIVILIAN REFUGEES MALE FEMALE ALLOWED RETURN TRANSVAAL. ALL BUT INDIAN SHOPS OPEN. AUTHORITIES OFFERED MONTH AGO TWO PERMITS FOR THOUSANDS INDIAN REFUGEES NONE GRANTED YET. SUFFERING HEAVILY. PLEASE HELP INDIAN COMMITTEE.[2]

GANDHI

Sabarmati Sangrahalaya: S. N. 3810.

175. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
April 18, 1901

TO
THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the 16th inst. in reply to my letter of the 30th ultimo with reference to the special mention in General Buller's dispatch of officers of the locally raised Volunteer Indian Corps, and I beg to thank you for the same.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C. S. O. 1901/2888.

[1] Edited copies of this cable also appeared later in India, 19-4-1901, and some British newspapers.

[2] Indian Refugee Committee.

176. A CIRCULAR LETTER[1]

DURBAN,
April 20, 1901

SIR,

The position of the British Indians in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony is sufficiently serious to call for a statement from us to enable you to move in the matter. It will be recollected that Mr. Chamberlain has lately announced that the legislation of the late South African Republic and the Orange Free State would, "so far as possible", be adopted by the Imperial Government. The question at once arose in our minds whether the legislation of the old governments was included in the qualifying clause "so far as possible". If present regime is any test of the future, then, indeed, the question has been solved for us to the horror of every Indian in South Africa. The whole of the anti-Indian legislation in the Transvaal is being enforced with a rigour unknown before. The laxity of the late Government was totally in our favour. Though the Location Law was there, and the cab regulations, footpath and numerous other bye-laws existed in the Statute book, they were more or less a dead letter. The enforcement of the Location Law, although often threatened, was never carried out as against the respectable Indians, the storekeepers and others, and only a few—very few—actually suffered the indignity of the footpath and other bye-laws. All is now changed. Every anti-Indian ordinance of the late Government is being unearthed, and, with strict British regularity, applied to the victims. The handful of poor Indians that were unable to leave the Transvaal before the war broke out, and who are therefore now there, have protested against the enforcement, but so far in vain. The following telegram was forwarded to His Excellency the High Commissioner on the 25th March last:

To Private Secretary, His Excellency High Commissioner: Some British Indians, who are at present in Pretoria and Johannesburg, write to Indian Refugee Committee saying they have received notice to remove to Locations, they are not allowed walk on footpaths, and that generally anti-Indian laws of the late Republic are being strictly enforced. I am requested respectfully to draw His Excellency's attention to the admission of His Majesty's Government that

[1] This was addressed to select friends of India in England. A copy was also sent to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. It was published in *India*, 24-5-1901, with minor changes, as "from a Correspondent".

such laws are objectionable and the statement that they would endeavour to have them repealed. The laws, it appears, were never it appears, were never under the old regime enforced asstrictly as they now are and, pending general settlement, Committee prays for relief.

We are anxiously awaiting reply; but the non-receipt of any reply till now forebodes, we are afraid, disappointment. It should be recollected that the protests against such legislation made by the then British Agent, as well as the Secretary of State for the Colonies, had much \ to do with the laxity of the Republican officials above alluded to. Mr. Chamberlain's reply, from which the following extracts are taken, to the Indian Memorialists as to the Location Law was very sympathetic, and shows clearly that he strongly disapproved of it, and stopped only when he felt helpless:

> I regret extremely that I cannot return a more encouraging answer to the memorial before me, for the petitioners have my sympathy. I believe them to be a peaceable, law-abiding, and meritorious body of persons, and I can only hope that, even as matters stand, their undoubted industry and intelligence, and their indomitable perseverance, will suffice to overcome any obstacles which may now face them in the pursuit of their avocations.
>
> In conclusion, I would say that, whilst desirous loyally to abide by the award and to allow it to close the legal and international questions in dispute between the two Governments, I reserve to myself the liberty, later on, to make friendly representations to the South African Republic as to these traders, and possibly to invite that Government to consider whether, when once its legal position has been made good, it would not be wise to review the situation from a new point of view, and decide whether it would not be better in the interests of its own burghers to treat the Indians more generously, and to free itself from even the appearance of countenancing a trade jealousy, which I have some reasons to believe does not emanate from the governing class in the Republic.

Are we, then, when everything is in his power, to groan under all the disabilities which so roused his indignation? Even a few weeks before the war broke out, the British Agent assured the deputation that waited on him at Pretoria, that everything short of a declaration of war was done by him, that negotiations were still going on, and that if, unfortunately, the threatened war broke out, we need not bother thereabout. Lord Lansdowne has declared publicly that the an legislation which was clearly in breach of the Pretoria Convention was one of the principal causes of the war. Is, then, the very evil to remove which, among others, the war has been entered upon, to be continued under the very shadow of the British flag, and when the Colonial Office cannot even put forth the excuse that it has not sufficient

control over the self-governing Colonies? For, neither the Transvaal nor the Orange River Colony has yet got self-government.

We notice with much regret and misgiving that the King's speech on the opening of Parliament pointedly refers to the equality of all the white races south of Zambezi, and a fair treatment of the native races, as the only objects in view at the time of the coming settlement. Before the war, it used to be "equal rights for all the civilised races in South Africa". If, therefore, the change to "the whites" is deliberate, it suggests a cause for grave anxiety. We attach

hereto an abstract of the laws of the late Republican State affecting the Indians. The question is most serious, our position most painful. Labouring under the oppressive yoke, we feel too exhausted to make an effort ourselves. We can only cry out in anguish. It is for you to help us to be free from the grievous burden. We have done, we hope, everything to deserve better treatment. We have taken our share, however humble, side by side with the European Colonists in the war, and have endeavoured to show that, if we are anxious and ready to pray to be allowed to enjoy the rights and privileges of British subjects, we are not unmindful of our duty as such. We have shown also, incontestably, that there is absolutely nothing in us to justify all the indignities we have to suffer in South Africa.

A great and combined effort on the part of the public bodies and the public press in India, and the friends in England, cannot fail to secure justice. It is perfectly feasible in that, as there are, there can be no two opinions about the justness of our cause. The time, too, is now or never; for, after the settlement has taken place, it is clear from experience that no amelioration would be possible.

We remain,

your obedient servants,

MAHOMED CASSIM CAMROODEEN & CO

AND NINETEEN OTHERS

ABSTRACT [OF] LAWS

Of the late South African Republic and the Orange Free State
affecting British Indians only

SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Every Indian must take out a Registration Ticket for £3.

When the officials treated the Indians as the natives of the soil, they insisted upon their taking out shilling travelling passes.

The railway regulations prevent Indians from travelling first or second class.

No Indian can own native gold, or take out a digging licence. (This law has not operated as a hardship, as the Indians have not gone in for speculation.)

Law 3 of 1885 gives the Government the right to point out to the Indians, for sanitary purposes, certain Locations for habitation. An attempt was made before the war to sent away all the Indians in Johannesburg to a Location nearly five miles from the centre part of the town, where it was proposed to restrict their trade also.

Certain bye-laws in Pretoria prevent the use, by the Indians, of footpaths and public vehicles.

N.B.—For fuller information hereon *vide* letter to the British Agent, 21st July, 1899, and memorial to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, May [16], 1899.

ORANGE FREE STATE

Chapter 33 of 1890 prevents any Asiatics from (1) remaining in the State for more than two months without permission from the State President; (2) owning landed property; (3) trading or farming.

Chapter 71 levies a poll tax of 10s. per annum when permission to reside has been granted, subject to restrictions mentioned above.

N.B.—The full text of the anti-Asiatic laws of the late Orange Free State is set out in general letter, dated 24th February, 1896.[1]

From the photostat of an original printed copy: S. N. 3814-5.

177. ADDRESS TO EX-GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY

At a reception presided over by the Mayor, Durban Indians presented the following address to Lord George Canning Harris, once Governor of Bombay. He was passing through Durban on his way to London.

DURBAN,
April 20, 1901

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR LORDSHIP,

We the undersigned, representing British Indians residing in Natal, venture respectfully to welcome Your Lordship in our midst. Knowing as we do Your Lordship's intimate connection with India, and more especially with Bombay, we feel that we would have failed in our duty if we had not taken the opportunity of paying our respects to Your Lordship. We feel very thankful to Your Lordship for having graciously consented, at so short a notice, to meet us so as to enable us to testify our regard for a former representative of India of our beloved Kaiser-i-Hind.

We wish Your Lordship a pleasant voyage and a long life of usefulness to our gracious Sovereign, and venture to hope that Your

[1] This document is not available.

Lordship will always keep in your heart a corner for the Indian settlers in this Garden Colony.

We beg to subscribe ourselves, etc.

The Natal Advertiser, 22-4-1901

178. INDIAN PERMITS[1]

P. O. BOX 182,
DURBAN,
April 27, 1901

DEAR SIR,

I beg to enclose herewith a copy of the cablegram[2] forwarded to you on behalf of the Indian refugees from the Transvaal. Day by day, the list of Europeans receiving permits to go to the Transvaal is swelling; but upto the time of writing not one permit has been granted for the Indian refugees. Representations were made to Lord Roberts when he was in South Africa, also to the High Commissioner, but all without avail. Mr. H. T. Ommanney (retired I.C.S.) who has been appointed Permit Secretary to the High Commissioner has been endeavouring to secure some for us, and last month even went so far as to telegraph for one-representative merchant's name from Durban, the other being from Cape Town. A name was there and then submitted to him under protest that one permit was almost useless, but even that has not been granted.

I venture to hope that action has already been taken by you in the matter, and that as a result some relief would be granted ere this reaches you.

Copies of the cablegram have been sent to[3]....

With reference to the circular letter[4] sent to you last week, I enclose herewith copy of the replies[5] received to the representations made by the few British Indians who are at present in Pretoria and

[1] This letter was addressed to the same parties to whom the cablegram of April 16, 1901 was sent.

[2] The cablegram of April 16, 1901.

[3] The office copy of the letter does not indicate to whom these were sent.

[4] The letter of April 20, 1901.

[5] These, with extracts from this letter, were published in *India*, 24-5.1901.

Johannesburg and who were unable to leave the Transvaal before the hostilities broke out.

I am,

yours truly,

From the photostat of the office copy: S. N. 3817.

[Enclosure]

IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT, MUNICIPALITY,
JOHANNESBURG,
24th November, 1900

TO
MESSRS. N. G. DESAI AND OTHER PETITIONERS
P. O. BOX 3348
JOHANNESBURG
SIRS,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 22nd inst. The Regulations to which you refer were passed by the late Town Council, and it is not the intention of the military authorities to alter any regulations which existed before the date of British occupation.

I beg to suggest that a petition of a similar nature should be sent to the first Town Council appointed.

Yours faithfully,
(Signed) O'MEARA MAJOR,
ACTING BURGOMASTER

FROM PRETORIA,
SUPERVISOR OF INDIAN IMMIGRANTS *March* 15, *1901*

TO
E. OSMAN LATIFF
P. O. BOX 4420
JOHANNESBURG

I beg to inform you that the Military Governor's former decision remains unaltered in so much as all "Asiatics," Hindus ant Mahomedans that are in Pretoria "now" must reside in the Coolie Location. As regards Asiatic general dealers "in a big way," their request to reside in the town may be considered, but as none of such a class are at present in Pretoria the order stands that all Asiatics at present in Pretoria must reside in the Location. The Military Governor has kindly sanctioned that two men may reside in the "Mosque" to look after the same. I have this day ordered all Asiatics at present residing in the town to go and live in the Location.

(Signed) J. A. GILLAM

179. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANE
DURBAN,
April 30, 1901

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I venture to address you on the Indian Immigration Amendment Act Bill published in this week's *Government Gazette*.

The first section of the Bill provides that the rate of wages payable to any Indian woman under the Act of 1895 shall be one half of the respective rates provided therein, or such other special rate as may be agreed upon by the employer and the woman. I presume the Government intend one half of the rates provided in the Act of 1895 to be the minimum, but I think such intention is not sufficiently clear from the wording of the section. May I suggest the addition of "but in no case less than one half of the respective rates aforesaid".[1]

I beg to draw your attention to the fact that the Law 25 of 1891 provides for the wages of Indian women to be half those of men, and I hope the Government do not propose to make alteration in the minimum.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C. S. O. 3486/1901.

[1] The suggestion was accepted.

180. LETTER TO BOMBAY GOVERNMENT

DURBAN,
May 4, 1901

TO
THE HON'BLE R. J. C. LORD
[GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY
BOMBAY]

[DEAR SIR,]

I am requested specially to forward the enclosed[1] to you and humbly to suggest that some action might be taken in the various Legislative Councils in India, and if that be not possible, in the Viceregal Council, though seeing that Bombay, Madras and Calcutta send a very large number of immigrants to South Africa, there is no reason why the local Governments should not take notice of the disabilities which the British Indians are labouring under.

This question is one of those about which there is a unanimity of Indian and Anglo-Indian opinion; and I venture to think that united action on the part of the non-official members will do much for our cause. There is very little doubt that the official sympathy would also be with us, and under the strong and sympathetic Viceroy we have in Lord Curzon, the great question which underlies our disabilities (as put by the London *Times*)—"May the British Indians when they leave India have the same status before the law as other British subjects enjoy. May they or may they not go freely from one British possession to another and claim the rights of British subjects in allied states"—cannot but be decided favourably if only it is sufficiently brought to His Excellency's notice.

From Despatch No. 35 of 1901 from the Government of India to the Secretary of State for India.

Colonial Office Records: South Africa, General, 1901.

[1] The circular letter of April 20, 1901. Gandhiji's letter and its enclosure were sent by the Government of Bombay to the Government of India who transmitted them to the Seeretary of State for India. The India Office appended a minute to it to the effect that Mr. Chamberlain had replied, in reference to the memorial, that the question of the status of British Indians in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony had been reserved for the consideration of Milner on his return to South Africa.

181. PETITION TO MILITARY GOVERNOR[1]

P. O. BOX 4420,
JOHANNESBURG,
May 9, 1901

TO
HIS EXCELLENCY
COLONEL COLIN MACRENZIE
MILITARY GOVERNOR
JOHANNESBURG

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

We, the undersigned members of the Indian community of Johannesburg, beg respectfully to bring to your knowledge that an important Notice has appeared in the *Johannesburg Gaz*ette, wherein [it is stated that] an Indian Immigration Office has been opened to deal solely with all Asiatics, and whereby all such subjects have to get their passes changed, and to deal with all Government matters that they may be interested in.

We beg to point out that hitherto our dealings direct with His Imperial Majesty's Authorities have been carried out without any complaint, and we fear that this new departure will lead to dissatisfaction amongst many of our fellow-subjects.

We have not seen any notice regarding the changing of passes of the subjects of foreign countries, and we thus infer that a distinction is being made; if this be so, we shall be grieved thereat.

We have ever been loyal and desire to be direct under the Imperial Authorities, as heretofore, whose treatment and kindness we greatly appreciate.

Trusting that Your Excellency will give this matter your serious consideration and grant our humble request.

We subscribe ourselves,

Your Excelleney's most humble
and obedient servants,

From the photostat of the office copy: S.N. 3822-3.

[1] A petition in identical terms was also addressed the next day to the British High Commissioner and Governor of the Transvaal, signed by Osman Hajee Abdul Latif and 139 others.

182. LETTER TO EAST INDIA ASSOCIATION

P. O. BOX 182,
DURBAN,
May 18, 1901

TO
THE HONORARY SECRETARY
EAST INDIA ASSOCIATION
LONDON

DEAR SIR,

I write this particularly to suggest the advisability of a deputation waiting on Sir Alfred Milner, if indeed not also on Mr. Chamberlain. There is no doubt that most important matters will be discussed between the two statesmen and, if a strong deputation representing all shades of opinion and consisting of, say—Sir Lepel,[1] Mr. Dadabhai, Sir William Wedderburn, Sir Mancherji, Messrs. Romesh Dutt,[2] Parameshvaram Pillay, Gust, etc., were to put the Indian question before them, it cannot but do good. From the conversation I used to have with Lords Northbrook and Reay, I am inclined to think that, if either of them were approached, he would lead the deputation. The facts you would need have all been already supplied.

Letters in a similar strain are being sent to the British Committee of the Indian National Congress, etc.

I am,
yours truly,

From the photostat of the office copy: S.N. 3825.

183. TELEGRAM REGARDING PERMITS

[DURBAN.]
May 21, 1901

TO
PERMITS
JOHANNESBURG

YOUR TELEGRAM 20 INSTANT. BEG TO SUBMIT NAMES MR. HAJEE HABIB PRETORIA MESSRS. M. S. COOVADIA AND I. M. KARODIA JOHANNESBURG, MR. ABDUL RAHMAN POTCHEFSTROOM FOR FURTHER PERMITS.

[1] Sir Lepel Griffin.

[2] Romesh Chunder Dutt, prominent Indian Civilian; presided over the Congress session at Lucknow, in 1890.

HAVE WIRED CAPETOWN FOR TWO NAMES. THE FOUR NAMESMAY BE CONSIDERED AS REFUGEES NATAL NOT DURBAN. MOST PRINCIPAL REFUGEES RESIDE IN DURBAN. NAMES ARE REPRESENTATIVE AND SELECTED AT MEETING REFUGEES. RESPECTFULLY SUBMIT THAT EVEN FOUR PERMITS FOR NATAL TOO FEW.

GANDHI

From the photostat of the office copy: S.N. 3827.

184. LETTER REGARDING PERMITS

[DURBAN,]
May 21, 1901

TO
H. T. OMMANNEY, ESQ.
PERMIT OFFICE
JOHANNESBURG

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your telegram of the 20th instant and have been instructed by. the Indian Refugee Committee to tender its thanks for same.

I beg now to submit the following four names for Natal, namely Hajee Habib Hajee Dada, Pretoria; M. S. Goovadia, Johannesburg; I. M. Karodia, Johannesburg and Abdool Rahman, Potchefstroom Three of those refugees are in Durban and one (Mr. A. Rahman) in Ladysmith. These are representative names and have been selected at a meeting of the Indian refugees. The meeting laid down more than these names as the minimum and, therefore, to bring the number to four, lots had to be drawn. Most of the Indian refugees are in Durban and I have been requested to draw your attention to the fact that the four permits for Natal are too few.

I have wired for two names from Cape Town.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,

From the photostat of the office copy: S.N. 3829.

185. TELEGRAM TO TAYOB

[DURBAN,]
May 21, 1901

TO
TAYOB
CARE GOOL
CAPETOWN

PLEASE SEND TWO CAPETOWN REFUGEES NAMES PROPERLY ELECTED FOR SUBMISSION TO PERMIT SECRETARY.

GANDHI

Sabarmati Sangrahalaya: S.N. 3828.

186. LETTER TO REVASHANKAR ZAVERI

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
May 21, 1901

RESPECTED REVASHANKARBHAI,[1]

Mansukhlal's[2] letter brought me news. of the passing away of Kavishri.[3] I also saw it later in the papers. It was hard to believe the news. I can't put it out of my mind. There is very little time in this country to dwell on any matter. I got the letter while I was at my desk. Reading it, I felt grieved for a minute and then plunged immediately into my office work. Such is life here. But whenever there is a little leisure, the mind reverts to it. Rightly or wrongly, I was greatly attracted to him and I loved him deeply too. All that is over now. So I mourn out of selfishness. What consolation can It then give you?

Respectfully yours.
MOHANDAS

From the original Gujarati: C.W. 2936.

[1] Revashankar Jagjivan Zaveri, a life-long friend of Gandhiji.
[2] Raychandbhai's brother, *vide* footnote 3.
[3] Rajchandra Ravjibhai Mehta, or Raychandbhai, a poet and 'seeker after Truth', to whom Gandhiji has devoted a chapter in the *Autobiography* (Part 11, Ch. 1).

187. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
May 21, 1901

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

An Indian named Kara Tricam was robbed of a purse containing £40, in daylight, in West Street on the 6th inst. by certain Europeans. One of the men was caught and partly tried on the 10th inst. The man who was tried was released on bail which he had forfeited. I applied for £40 out of the bail at the Criminal Investigation Department office and was told to write to the Government for it.

I now beg to apply for the sum of £40 to be paid to my client out of the bail money. If any further proof than that recorded before the Magistrate be required as to the possession by my client of £40, I would be prepared to submit it to the Government.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C.S.O. 4258/1901.

188. TELEGRAM TO TAYOB

[DURBAN]
June 1, 1901

TO
TAYOB
CARE GOOL
CAPETOWN

WHY NO REPLY 21ST REPLY SHARP.

GANDHI

Sabarmati Sangrahalaya: S.N. 3835.

189. JOINT ACTION FOR PERMITS[1]

DURBAN, NATAL,
June 1, 1901

SIR,

The papers received this week contain news that Mr. Chamberlain, in reply to Mr. Caine's question on the subject of the permits for the return of the Indian refugees to the Transvaal, informed him that at the request of Sir Mancherjee he had already cabled to Sir Alfred Milner in the matter.

Reuter's message received this week says that, in reply to another question, Mr. Chamberlain said that the anti-Indian laws of the late South African Republic would remain in force until modified. Mr. Chamberlain does not seem to have added that the laws will not be enforced in practice as they were not under the old regime. In the absence of any such understanding, the present state will be far worse than the old. I confess this news has disappointed us.

Although the workers here have imbibed their zeal and ideas of duty from the self-sacrificing devotion of the Congress leaders and are content to copy the Congress pattern, they have appealed to all parties for help and there seems to be no difference of opinion as to the justness of the cause. Holding this view, we feel that it suffer for want of concerted action on the part of the different friends.

The East India Association has already suggested joint action and I respectfully submit that a large measure of success would be

[1] The contents of this letter and connected documents show that it was addressed to the British Committee of the Indian National Congress.

attained if a small committee of persons representing all shades of opinion were formed and a concerted move were always made.

An unsympathetic reply from the Colonial Secretary produces a bad impression here and encourages further opposition to the Indians. The method, therefore, of obtaining information by letter to Mr. Chamberlain or a personal interview is, in my humble opinion, better adapted to the circumstances of our case. Mr. Chamberlain's reply, cabled by Reuter as above, is calculated to do some mischief. The interpretation put upon it is that he will yield to popular clamour and give up the Indians entirely.

I know that we who are on the spot suffer from the nearness of vision and may consequently take merely a narrow and parochial view and may not give due attention to the situation there or the position of the leaders working in our behalf. If, therefore, there is anything presumptuous in my suggestion, I trust you will be good enough to overlook it.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Honourable Dadabhai Naoroji.

I remain,
yours truly,

From the photostat of the office copy: S.N. 3836.

190. OFFICE NOTE REGARDING A CHEQUE

DURBAN,
June 2, [*1901*]

This cheque is issued in accordance with the Congress resolution. The resolution was to the effect that funds should be collected for Mr. Dunn's school and if they were not adequate, the Congress should pay Mr. Dunn the balance that would remain after the purchase of Mr. Shaikh Fareed's property. It does not seem likely that the collections will swell now and hence this cheque is being issued to-day.

Resolution, 23rd November 1900

M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the original in Gujarati: S.N. 3837.

191. TELEGRAM REGARDING PERMITS

[DURBAN,]
June 14, 1901

TO
CAMROODEEN
BOX 299
JOHANNESBURG

PERMITS NOT RECEIVED. ENQUIRE.

GANDHI

Sabarmati Sangrahalaya: S.N. 3847.

192. TELEGRAM REGARDING PERMITS

[DURBAN,]
June 20, 1901

TO
DOUGLAS FORSTER
RANDCLUB
JOHANNESBURG

KINDLY ENQUIRE PROMISED PERMITS NOT YET RECEIVED NAZAR.

GANDHI

Sabarmati Sangrahalaya: S.N. 849.

193. LETTER TO M. M. BHOWNAGGREE

P. O. BOX 182,
DURBAN, NATAL,
June 22, 1901

DEAR SIR MANCHERJI,

I acknowledged last week your two letters. Since then I have received yours of the 24th ultimo. Your letters have revived our spirits, and I beg to thank you on behalf of the poor sufferers in South Africa for the great work you are doing. We on this side entirely agree with you that so far as possible the thing should be managed by friendly interviews, such as you have been having with Mr. Chamberlain and others, for an unsympathetic answer to a question in the House cannot but do a great deal of damage—where justice is entirely on our side, and no difference of opinion exists between the

several parties. A constant reminder to the authorities and unwearing[1] vigilance are all that is needed in order to secure the desired result. We have anticipated you in the suggestion as to a combined movement in India, and letters[2] have been addressed to the. leaders on that side requesting them to promote memorials and put questions in the Viceregal Council. At the same time, I am not very hopeful of success, owing to the absence there of any organized committee to deal exclusively with the South African Question, or rather with the question of grievances of the Indian emigrants. But a combined powerful representation to the India Office from the East India Association and the Congress Committee may well supplement or take the place of what may be done in India.

I know that you feel very keenly in this matter of our disabilities, and that they are bad enough to arouse righteous indignation in the coolest head. But may I ask you not to mar the sterling work you are doing there by precipitating a hot debate unless you are sure of success. We fully realise that no man in England is more capable of doing justice to this matter than yourself owing to the warm interest you take in it, your position in the House, your influence with the authorities and above all your willingness to work.

The information supplied to Mr. Chamberlain by the authorities in the Transvaal with reference to the cablegram[3] sent to you as to the permits is, I venture to say, misleading. I still affirm that the cablegram is correct. The information was derived from the report sent to the local newspapers by their special correspondents. I went over yesterday myself to see the Secretary of the Uitlander Committee and he told me emphatically that most of the shops are open, and that the requirement that the men shouldjoin the Rand Rifles is more or less a formality, and surely, if they don't want the Indians to join the Rand Rifles, it should not, to say the least, be used as a bar against their return; and it should be recollected that many European ladies have been allowed to proceed, and that it is a daily occurrence to see a crowd of families entraining for the Transvaal. I regret to have to inform you that up to the time of writing no further permits have been received, though six have been promised—four for Natal and two for Cape Town. But, of course, the question of permits is, after all,

[1] This is perhaps a mistake for "unwearying".
[2] These are not available.
[3] The cablegram of April 16, 1901.

insignificant, and only a temporary, though, while it lasts, a very severely felt, difficulty compared to the all-absorbing question—what is to be the position of the Indians under the new regime? There is yet no declaration to the effect that, at the very least, the existing legislation will be considerably modified. Our hopes are centred in what the friends in London may, taking advantage of Lord Milner's presence there, accomplish.

I hope to write more next week; in the meanwhile, with renewed thanks,

I am,
yours very truly,

From the photostat of the office copy: S. N. 3853.

194. SPEECH AT INDIAN SCHOOL

The following is a brief press report of Gandhiji's speech at a prize distribution function of the Government Higher Grade Indian School in Durban. The Governor of Natal, Sir Henry McCallum, presided.

[DURBAN,
prior to *June 28, 1901*]

Mr. M. K. Gandhi, in moving a vote of thanks to His Excellency, said he thought the Indian community might take just pride and feel very highly gratified in the fact that His Excellency, in the very early stage of his administration) should come in touch with them, and that in such an agreeable manner. He recalled to mind the competition between the Irish Association and the Indian community on the occasion of the visit of Lord Roberts. The Irish Association claimed His Lordship as an Irishman, and the Indians claimed him as an Indian. His Excellency had already been claimed by the Scotchmen, but he thought they had good grounds for claiming Sir Henry to be an Indian by adoption. He expressed the hope that the Government would let them have a gymnasium and singing classes they had promised. He also hoped they would grant a girls' school on the model of the Indian Higher Grade School.

The Natal Mercury, 28-6-1901

195. TELEGRAM REGARDING PERMITS

[DURBAN,]
July 2, 1901

TO
PERMITS
JOHANNESBURG

MY LETTER TWENTY-FIRST MAY. INDIAN REFUGEE COMMITTEE RESPECTFULLY REQUEST INFORMATION REGARDING PERMITS PROMISED. YOUR WIRE TWENTIETH MAY.

GANDHI

Sabarmati Sangrahalaya: S.N. 3858.

196. TELEGRAM TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

[DURBAN,]
July 26, 1901

TO
HONOURABLE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

MAY I ENQUIRE WHETHER CLAUSES OF CORPORATIONS BILL OBJECTED TO BY INDIAN PETITIONERS HAVE PASSED COMMITTEE AND IF NOT WHETHER GOVERNMENT PROPOSE TAKING ANY ACTION.

GANDHI

From the photostat of the office copy: S.N. 3866.

197. TELEGRAM TO HENRY BALE

[DURBAN,]
August 8, 1901

TO
SIR HENRY BALE
PIETERMARITZBURG

BEG RESPECTFULLY TO TENDER CONGRATULATIONS ON BEHALF OF MY COUNTRYMEN ON THE HONOUR CONFERRED ON YOU BY HIS MAJESTY .

Sabarmati Sangrahalaya: S.N. 3876.

198. TELEGRAM TO C. BIRD

[DURBAN,]
August 8, 1901

TO
C. BIRD, ESQ.
C. M. G.
PIETERMARITZBURG

BEG TO TENDER CONGRATULATIONS ON THE HONOUR CONFERRED ON YOU BY HIS MAJESTY THE KING-EMPEROR.

Sabarmati Sangrahalaya: S.N. 3877.

199. ADDRESS TO ROYAL VISITORS

The following address, which was engraved on a silver shield, along with pictures of the Taj Mahal, the Karla Caves of Bombay, the Buddha Gaya temple; and of indentured Indians working in Natal Sugar Estates, was presented by Durban Indians to the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York when they visited Natal.

[DURBAN,
August 13, 1901]

ADDRESS TO THEIR ROYAL HIGHNESSES THE DUKE AND DUCHESS OF CORNWALL AND YORK

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESSES,

We, the undersigned, on behalf of the British Indians residing in this Colony, humbly beg to welcome Your Royal Highnesses to these shores. Among the countries visited by you during the present tour, Natal is one that has a large number of British Indians, and, seeing that India is not included among the countries to have the honour of the royal visit, it becomes a double duty incumbent on us to render homage to Your Royal Highnesses.

It shows the great regard His Majesty the King and Emperor has for his people that, amid the overwhelming grief which, in common with the royal family, has shrouded myriads of his subjects in the departure from our midst of our late beloved Kaiser-i-Hind, he has commanded Your Royal Highnesses to visit not only Australia, but also other parts of the great Empire, a visit which, we respectfully venture to say, has drawn tighter the silken cord that binds together the different parts of the British Raj.

We fully realise the blessing of the munificent British rule. It is because we are in the folds of the all-embracing Union Jack that we have a footing outside India.

We humbly request you to assure His Majesty the King and Emperor, our Maharaja, of our loyal attachment to the throne, and. we wish Your Royal Highnesses a pleasant time in this garden of South Africa and pray to the Almighty that He might guide you safelyhome on the termination of your tour, and may shower His choicest blessings upon you.

We remain,
Your Royal Highnesses' humble and
loyal servants,
ABDUL KADIR, M. C. CAMROODEN & CO.,
AND ABOUT 60 OTHERS

The Natal Advertiser, 17-8-1901

200. INDIANS AND THE DUKE

MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
August 21, 1901

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury

SIR,

I enclose copy, as supplied to me, of the resolutions and covering letter addressed to me as Chairman of "the Protest Meeting of English-speaking and other Indians", by the convener. Chairman though I was of the meeting, I am not at all in sympathy with the resolutions, as they contain many material errors of statement, and are misleading. But realizing that ventilation in the Press of grievances, fancied or real, is the best safety-valve, I forward them, to be used as you may think fit.

I am, &c.,
M. K. GANDHI

[*Resolutions*]

At a protest meeting of the English-speaking and other Indians which was held in the Congress Hall on the 2nd inst., Mr. J. L. Roberts, the convener, proposed, and

Mr. D. C. Andrews seconded, the following resolutions, which were carried unanimously. Mr. M. K. Gandhi occupied the chair.

1. That this meeting strongly disapproves of the manner in which the Indian representatives were chosen for the presentation of the address to their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York, inasmuch as only the Mohammedans were apprised of the meeting, thus depriving the other Indians from participating in it.

2. That this meeting strongly disapproves of the fact that the majority of representatives elected to attend the presentation of addresses to their Royal Highnesses are Mohammedans and that the other Indians in the Colony, being greater in number than the Mohammedans, should have had at least an equal number of representatives as the Mohammedans.

3. That, out of the eight further representatives who were chosen to receive invitations (if the Reception Committee grant it), six are Mohammedans; thus, again, the other Indians do not receive a fair share in the representation.

4. That this meeting strongly disapproves of the practice of the Mohammedans, who, after choosing men to represent themselves, should invariably choose one Mr. H. L. Paul to represent the English-speaking and other Indians, thus acting in direct opposition to the wishes of the Indians in question.

5. That copies of the foregoing resolutions should be sent to the secretary of the Duke and Duchess of York, the Indian Reception Committee, the Mayor of Durban, and the Press of Natal.

The Natal Mercury, 23-8-1901

201. INDIAN OR COOLIE?[1]

[LADYSMITH,]
September 11, 1901

Mr. Gandhi asked to be allowed to appear at that late stage, as the case was important to the Indian community, and the Police seemed to be labouring under a delusion with regard to their status. They had, a few days ago, arrested a number of Natal-born Indians, who had from very shame forfeited their bail. An attempt had been made to bring defendant, an Indian, who came to Natal of his own will, under the section of the law, by terming him a "coolie". The section read "after 9 P.M.," "failing to produce a pass from the employer." How could he do this, when he was his own employer? He quoted *Mrs. Vinden v. Corporation of Ladysmith*, in which the

[1] An Indian barber, Abarrah, was charged under the Pass Law. On the day the case came up for decision before the magistrate of Ladysmith, Gandhiji appeared for the accused.

Supreme Court laid down that the term could be translated "indentured Indian".

His Worship said that, in view of the case quoted, he did not feel called upon to say anything further. He could not lay down a hard and fast rule, for such cases had to be treated on their merits. The law was difficult. Though accused was plainly a coloured person, the law did not call him that, so he was discharged.

The Natal Mercury, 12-9-1901

202. LETTER TO TOWN CLERK

14, MERCURY LANE,
[DURBAN,]
September 17, 1901

TO
WILLIAM COOLEY, ESQ.
TOWN CLERK
DURBAN

DEAR SIR,

I have to thank you for your letter of the 12th instant conveying thanks to the Indian Vigilance Committee for what it was able to do in connection with the measures adopted for the prevention of the Plague.

I am to say that the Committee did what was merely its duty and, should an occasion arise again, the co-operation of the Indian community, in any measure that may be undertaken by the Town Council in the interests of the health of the Borough, will be as readily forthcoming as before.

I remain,
yours faithfully,

From the photostat of the office copy: S.N. 3910.

203. BALANCE-SHEET OF NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

When the balance-sheet of the Natal Indian Congress up to 31st August 1901 was prepared for submission to the Congress, Gandhiji noticed some discrepancy of figures in the list of 723 subscriptions and donations totalling £ 3404, and he recorded the following note

under his signature and the following addition to the balance-sheet in his own hand.

September [?], *1901*

NOTE

The difference between the total of the ledger accounts and the amount shown in the balance-sheet, which is the correct amount, is due to some mistake in posting entries from the cash book—a task which I had no time to undertake though the book has been checked twice.The mistake is likely to have occurred owing to many names having been struck out owing to their not having paid thesubscriptions for which they obtained receipts. An examination of the cash book would have shown this at once.

M. K. GANDHI

[Addition to the Balance-sheet]

(In balance-sheet add)

To subscriptions and donations—including £182 Loan—received up to 31st August 1901 as per list, subject to difference explained at the

Sabarmati Sangrahalaya: Vol. 966.

204. STATEMENT FOR COUNSEL'S OPINION

DURBAN,
October 2, 1901

Act. 18 of 1897 regulates & controls the issue of licenses to wholesale & retail dealers.

Sec. 1 of said Act includes in the licenses mentioned in sub-section (a) sec. 71 of Law. No. 19, 1872, licenses to wholesale dealers, so as, it is contended, to give the control over licenses to wholesale dealers to the Corporations.

The expression, retail dealers, is specially made by sec. 3 of the said Act to include hawkers, and therefore, by inference, it is contended, to exclude all others.

Is a baker or a butcher, in the opinion of Counsel, a retail or wholesale dealer within the meaning of the Act, & is his license governed by that Act?

Counsel's attention is drawn to the fact that there is a separate

tariff for a baker's & a butcher's license from the tariff for a retail shopkeeper's (dealer's) license under Law No. 19 of 1872, that a baker's license does not, at any rate in the popular belief, cover transactions not incidental to a bakery, & that, similarly, a retail dealer's license does not cover a baker's business.

M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the original: S.N. 3915.

205. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
October 8, 1901

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I had the honour to write to the Government in the month of November last regarding the transfer to Mr. Jan Mahomed of Port Shepstone of a property in Port Shepstone.

The Government were pleased to decide that, if the conditions of the contract have been carried out, the transfer may be passed in the ordinary course. All the instalments having been paid, I applied through my agent at P. M. Burg for the final deed of transfer and he wrote to me on the 21st August saying the Government declined to issue the title applied for, inasmuch as "the Building Clause set forth in the Certificate of Sale and purchase has not been complied With".

I have been corresponding with my client and I find it is true that he has built wood and iron buildings without the previous written permission of the Magistrate, but I understand such buildings have been erected all over the place. The Magistrate has, moreover, given his certificate as to the value of the building, which was produced before the Surveyor-General.

I am further informed that the titles have been granted to others similarly situated, that my client, before he put up the wood and iron building, applied for permission to make bricks; that on the permission being refused he put up the wood and iron building; that the building in question is occupied by very respectable tenants, viz., the Standard Bank, and that my client is erecting brick or stone

buildings also on the land.

Under the circumstances, I request a reconsideration of my client's application for registration of his title, and venture to trust that the Governor will be pleased to grant it.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C.S.O. 8658/1900.

206. SPEECH AT FAREWELL MEETING

On the eve of his departure for India, Gandhiji was presented with addresses; on behalf of the Natal Indian Congress and other Indian organizations. The large gathering in the Congress Hall, Durban, included several leading European citizens. The following is a brief report of the speech Gandhiji made on the occasion:

[DURBAN,]
October 15, 1901

Mr. Gandhi returned thanks from the bottom of his heart for the splendid and costly address.[1] He thanked the donors of the many presents; and also those who had spoken so flatteringly of him. He had not been able to find a satisfactory answer to the question of how he came to deserve all this. Seven or eight years ago,[2] they embarked on a certain principle, and he accepted the gifts as an earnest that they would continue on the lines on which they then embarked. The Natal Indian Congress had worked to bring about a better understanding between European and Indian Colonists. They had progressed in that, if only a little way During the recent election speeches they heard much against the Indians What was wanted in South Africa was not a white man's country; not a white brotherhood, but an Imperial brotherhood. Everyone who was the friend of the Empire should aim at that. England would never part with her possession in the East, and, as Lord Curzon had said, India was the brightest jewel in the British Empire. They wished to show that they were an acceptable section of the community, and, if they continued as they started, they "would know each other better when the mists have rolled away". Mr. Gandhi

[1] *Vide* enclosures 1 and 2.
[2] The reference is to the founding of the Natal Indian Congress in 1894.

then addressed the Indians in their native language, and the meeting terminated with cheers for their distinguished countryman.

The Natal Advertiser, 16-10-1901

[Enclosure 1]

[The Address]

TO

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI, ESQ.,

Barrister-at-Law,

Honorary Secretary, Natal Indian Congress, &c., &c.

SIR,

We, the undersigned, representing all classes of Indians living in Natal, beg leave to present this Address to you on the eve of your departure for India, to very briefly express, howsoever poorly, the deep sense of gratitude we entertain towardsyou for the valuable services you have so untiringly and cheerfully rendered, and the exemplary self-sacrifice you have ever-willingly undergone to watch and further the interests of your fellow-countrymen since your arrival in the Colony over eight years ago.

Your unique career teaches many a luminous lesson, and we hope to model our actions by the noble example set by you.

In all you did you were guided by high ideals, and your unflinching devotion to duty made your methods and work most efficient.

We feel that in honouring you we honour ourselves.

We sincerely hope that after discharging the domestic duties that necessitate your going to India, you will decide to cast your lot with us again, and continue the work you have been so admirably doing.

In conclusion, we wish you *bon voyage*, and pray to the Almighty to confer His choicest blessings on you and yours.

We beg to remain,

Sir,

Ever yours gratefully,

ABDUL CADIR [AND OTHERS]

Durban, 15th October, 1901

From the photostat of a printed copy of the original: S.N. 3918.

[Enclosure 2]

[Resolution]

That this meeting of the Natal Indian Congress while accepting with deep regret the resignation of its Honorary Secretary Mr. M. K. Gandhi deems iv its bounden duty to place on record the profound sense of gratitude it entertains for the invaluable services he has so untiringly, unostentatiously and cheerfully rendered and the immense self-sacrifice he has ever-willingly undergone, to protect and promote the (further) interests of his countrymen in Natal especially and South Africa

generally, since his arrival in this Colony about eight years ago, and its sense of appreciation of his unflinching devotion to duty which alone has guided all his actions.

From the photostat of a draft: S.N. 3930.

207. TELEGRAM TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

[DURBAN,
October 18, 1901]

TO

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

INDIAN COMMUNITY DURBAN WISH PRESENT RESPECTFUL ADDRESS LORD MILNER. WILL HIS LORDSHIP ACCEPT SAME.

GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C.S.O. 9038/1901.

208. LETTER TO PARSEE RUSTOMJEE

DURBAN,
October 18, 1901

TO

PARSEE RUSTOMJEE, ESQ.
HONORARY SECRETARY
ADDRESS COMMITTEE
DURBAN

DEAR MR. RUSTOMJEE,

I have been thinking what written reply to give to the handsome and costly address presented to me by my fellow-countrymen. After deep consideration, I have come to the conclusion that, consistently with professions made by me from time to time, I must not be satisfied with merely saying that what I value is the affection that has prompted the gifts, not the gifts as such. I have, therefore, decided to hand over the jewellery, as per accompanying schedule, to the African Banking Corporation with instructions to deliver the articles to the Natal Indian Congress against a receipt signed by the President and Honorary Secretary or Secretaries for the time being.

I make them over to the Congress on the following conditions:

(1) The jewellery or its value should form an emergency fund to be utilized only when the Congress has no other funds to

fall back upon without the two landed properties.

(2) I should have the right to withdraw any or such of the jewellery that may then not have been utilised for devoting same to any beneficial object, whether within or outside the scope of the Congress.

When the necessity for utilising the jewellery arises, and if it is possible, I would feel it an honour to be consulted by the Congress as to whether the object for which it is sought to utilise same is, in my opinion, an emergency within the scope of this letter. But the Congress is free at any time to withdraw the jewellery without reference to me.

I have taken the above step deliberately and prayerfully. I feel that neither I nor my family can make any personal use of the costly presents. They are too sacred to be sold by me or my heirs, and, seeing that there can be no guarantee against the last contingency, in my opinion, the only way I can return the love of our people is to dedicate them all to a sacred object. And since they are in reality a tribute to the Congress principles, to the Congress I return them.

Lastly, I repeat the hope that our people would translate into acts their good intentions (for the institution) of which the recent presentations were an earnest.

That the Congress may continue to serve the Empire and the Community and that my successors may receive the same support that was extended to me is my fervent prayer.

I remain,
yours truly,

[Schedule of jewellery]

Gold medal presented in 1896.

Gold coin presented in 1896 by the Tamil Indians.

Gold chain presented by the Johannesburg Committee in 1899.

Gold chain, sovereign purse and seven gold coins presented by Mr. Parsee Rustomjee.

Gold watch presented by Mr. Joosub of Messrs Dada Abdoola & Co.
Diamond ring presented by the Community.

Gold necklace presented by the Gujarati Hindoos.

Diamond pin presented by Mr. Abdul Cadir and a Silver cup and plate presented by the Katiawar Hindoos, Stanger.

From the photostat of the office copy: S.N. 3922-3.

209. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
October 18, 1901

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I had the honour on behalf of the representative Indians to telegraph this evening as follows:

Indian community Durban wish present respectful address to Lord Milner. Will His Lordship accept same?

In anticipation of His Excellency's consent, I am authorised to submit for His Excellency's approval copy of the proposed humble address.[1]

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C.S.O. 9038/1901.

210. ADDRESS TO LORD MILNER

DURBAN,
October 18, 1901

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

We the undersigned, on behalf of the British Indian settlers in this Colony, as well as the British Indian refugees from the Transvaal, beg respectfully to welcome Your Excellency to this Borough, and to tender our hearty congratulations upon the great honour conferred on Your Excellency by His Most Gracious Majesty the King-Emperor.

We fervently pray to the Almighty that He may bestow on Your Excellency health and long life to enable you to continue and to bring to a successful issue the Imperial work Your Excellency has undertaken of uniting under the British flag the different races in South Africa.

[1] *Vide* the following item.

May we draw Your Excellency's attention to the question of the position of the British Indians in the new Colonies which awaits solution at Your Excellency's hand, and trust that in coming to a conclusion thereon, Your Excellency would bear in mind the traditions of the country of our birth, our unswerving and proved loyalty to the Throne, and our acknowledged law-abiding instincts? Knowing Your Excellency's wide sympathies, generous disposition and intimate knowledge of the different parts of His Majesty's vast dominions, we feel confident that the cause of the Indian settlers in the new Colonies cannot possibly be in better hands.

We would respectfully request Your Excellency, on behalf of hundreds of British Indian Refugees, if it be possible, to expedite their return, especially in view of the fact that they have not availed themselves of the general Relief Fund.

In conclusion, we request Your Excellency to convey to His Gracious Majesty the King-Emperor an expression of our loyal and reverent attachment to the Throne.

We beg to subscribe ourselves,
Your Excellency's
most humble and obedient servants

Pietermaritzburg Archives: C. S. O. 9038/1901.

211. SPEECH IN MAURITIUS

On his way to India, Gandhiji stopped at Port Louis, Mauritius, where the Indian community gave him a reception. The following version of his speech on the occasion is based on the local Press reports.

November 13, 1901

Mr. Gandhi thanked the guests at the gathering and especially the host. He said that the sugar industry of the island owed its unprecedented prosperity mainly to Indian immigrants. He stressed that Indians should regard it their duty to acquaint themselves with happenings in their motherland, and should take interest in politics. He also laid much emphasis on the urgent need to pay attention to the education of their children.

The Standard, 15-11-1901
Le Radical, 15-11-l901

212. APPEAL FOR DEPUTATION TO VICEROY

Gandhiji reached India in the middle of December. This was his first public statement on the question of Indians in South Africa.

BOMBAY,
December 19, 1901

TO
THE EDITOR
The Times of India
BOMBAY

SIR,

The Indians in South Africa are eagerly waiting to see in what direction the Indian public are going to help them in the struggle which they are carrying on for existence in that sub-continent against awful odds. The East India Association has, as you are aware, sent up a strongly-worded memorial to Lord George Hamilton. Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree has been rendering a most useful service to the cause of the sufferers. In season and out of season, within the House of Commons and without, by pen and voice, he has been asking for, not without success, a redress of our grievances. You; Sir, have uniformly assisted us, and so the whole of the public, both Indian and Anglo-Indian. The Congress[1] has been passing resolutions year after year sympathising with us. But, in my humble opinion, something more is required. I have been asked by the leading Indians in South Africa to suggest a representative deputation to the Viceroy, similar to the one that some years ago waited on Mr. Chamberlain, and which was promoted by the late Sir W. W. Hunter. It is evidently necessary to strengthen the hands of the Viceroy as well as the workers in England. The authorities here and in Downing Street are not—cannot be—unsympathetic.

The Europeans in South Africa are doing all they can to bring pressure to bear upon the Colonial office. They want absolute power to legislate as they will against the British Indians. A deputation, therefore, backed if possible by public meetings, cannot fail to haveits effect. Let there be no mistake as to the real situation. Mr. Chamberlain has, let us hope, once for all laid it down that he would not allow an affront to be placed upon millions of His Majesty's subjects in the shape of special disabilities on the Indians. Natal has,

[1] The Indian National Congress.

therefore, sought to carry out its object by indirect methods; e.g., Immigration Restriction and Dealers' Licenses Acts, in theory applicable to all, but in practice mostly enforced against the emigrants from India.

In the Cape Colony, the legislators propose to impose restrictions similar to those in Natal.

In the Transvaal and the Orange River Colonies, very drastic anti-Indian laws are in force. In the former, the Indian cannot hold land, must live and trade in Locations only, cannot walk on footpaths, etc. The latter he cannot even enter, except under special permission, and then only as a domestic servant or labourer. Unlike the two old Colonies, which enjoy complete self-government, the newly annexed territories are under the direct control of the Colonial Office; and it is there the question is most pressing. Mr. Chamberlain, in answer to a question put by Sir Mancherjee, has given an answer which, though worded in a friendly spirit, is far from satisfactory. He evidently does not wish at once to put the pen through the laws inherited from the late Republics. Lord Milner has been charged with the task of considering what alterations should be made in those laws. This, therefore, is the time for India to assert her position as an integral part of the British Empire, and to claim for her sons in South Africa the full rights of a British citizen. The question is admittedly of Imperial importance. Are the British Indians, in the words of the late Sir W. W. Hunter, as soon as they leave India, to enjoy the full status of British subjects or not? The answer to that question would, to a very great extent, depend upon the action of the public in India. Even the Colonies would not care to disregard, especially at a time when the Imperial wave is passing throughout the length and breadth of the British Empire, a unanimous, emphatic, temperate and continuous expression of the public opinion of India.

May I, then, on behalf of the Indian settlers in South Africa, appeal to you and your contemporaries to help us in the desired direction? I would venture also to ask your contemporaries, if possible, to copy this letter.

M. K. GANDHI

The Times of India, 20-12-1901

213. SPEECH AT CALCUTTA CONGRESS

At the 17th session of the Indian National Congress held in Calcutta, Gandhiji made the following speech while moving a resolution on the status of Indians in South Africa:

[CALCUTTA,
December 27, 1901]

MR. President, and Brother Delegates,

The resolution that I have to commend to your attention is as follows:

That this Congress sympathises with the British Indian settlers in South Africa in their struggle for existence and respectfully draws the attention of His Excellency the Viceroy to the anti-Indian legislation there, and trusts that while the question of the status of British Indians in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colonies is still under the consideration of the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State for the Colonies, His Excellency will be graciously pleased to secure for the settlers a just and equitable adjustment thereof.

Gentlemen, I appear before you not as a delegate, but more as a petitioner on behalf of the hundred thousand British Indians in South Africa, and probably also of the future emigrants, who we wish would go outside of India and carry with them the status of British subjects. Gentlemen, South Africa, as you are aware, is almost as big as India and has a British Indian population of one hundred thousand, fifty thousand of whom are absorbed in the Colony of Natal, the only Colony in South Africa that imports indentured labour, and it is that labour that raises this great question so far as South Africa is concerned. Gentlemen, throughout South Africa, our grievances are twofold. The first class of grievances arises from the anti-Indian attitude of the European Colonists, and the second class of grievances arises from the reproduction of that anti-Indian feeling in anti-Indian Legislation throughout the four Colonies in South Africa. To give you an instance of the first class of grievances, I may tell you that all the Indians, no matter who they may be, are classed as coolies. If our worthy President[1] were to go to South Africa, I am afraid, he too will be classed as a coolie, as a member of the semi-civilised races of Asia. Gentlemen, I will give you two illustrations to show how that term coolie has worked mischief throughout South Africa. A short time ago, last year, I believe, the son of the great Adamji Peerbhai of

[1] D. E. Wacha.

Bombay, himself a member of the Corporation, came to Natal. He had no friends there, he knew nobody. He applied for admission at several hotels. Some proprietors who had better manners told him they had no room, whereas other proprietors replied: "We do notaccommodate coolies in our hotels." Gentlemen, the son of the late Mr. Cowasjee Dinshaw of Aden, Mr. Kaikobad, also came to Natal, and then he went to Cape Town. From Cape Town he was returning to Natal. He had to suffer great inconveniences before he could land. That was the time when there were plague restrictions in South Africa. He succeeded in securing a first-class passage to Natal, but what happened when he came to Natal? The Plague Officer simply said, "I cannot land you; you seem to be an Indian. I have got instructions not to land any coloured people at all." And will you believe me, a telegram had to be sent to the Colonial Secretary of Natal, before he was allowed to land. All this because he had a black skin.

Now, as to the second class of grievances, so far as Natal is concerned, I am afraid, it is a sealed book. The legislation has been already sanctioned. It prevents any Indian from entering Natal unless he or she can write out in one of the European languages the form attached to the Immigration Act. This Act prevents a very large body of Indians from emigrating to Natal. There is another law also in the Colony of Natal, namely, the "Dealers, Licenses Act." That Act gives Licensing Officers almost absolute power to refuse or issue trade licences. There is absolutely no appeal against these officers except to the executive body, Local Boards, and Corporations by whom the officers are appointed, in some cases with instructions that they are not to issue any Indian licences. In the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, there is not much anti-Indian legislation. So far as the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies are concerned, unfortunately for us, the old legislation is still in force. In the Transvaal, Indians must live and trade in Locations, they cannot walk on the footpath, they cannot own landed property except in Locations. The Orange River Colony we can only enter as labourers. Now, with due deference to the uncrowned king of the Bombay Presidency,[1] I believe that our position is so very bad in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, because proper steps were not taken to withstand an attack on our rights as British subjects, and had no steps been taken in Natal, the

[1] Pherozeshah Mehta.

position would be infinitely worse there today than it is. Such is the position throughout South Africa.

What, then, is the remedy that the Congress can apply? Mr. Chamberlain has been so far very sympathetic with reference to the Transvaal. During the old regime, he sympathized with our grievances, but could do very little, because he was then helpless. Such is not the position now. He is all-powerful. He has promised to confer with Lord Milner as to how the old legislation should be changed. Now, therefore, is the time for us in South Africa, or never. After he has conferred, and after changes have taken a practical shape, nothing can be done. Friends in England in their advice to me say, "Move the Indian public; let them hold public meetings; if possible, send deputations to the Viceroy, and do everything that you canto strengthen our hands here. The authorities are sympathetic, and you are likely to get justice." That is one way in which you can show your sympathy, but we do not want mere lip sympathy, nor do we ask you to put your hands into your pockets. For the matter of that, our countrymen in South Africa have rendered very material help to the famine-stricken in India. You will be surprised to learn from me that the Colonial-born Indians actually shed tears when they saw the pictures we reproduced, for distribution, from The Times of India. The Indians gave 2,000 and, I must admit, the Europeans, too, at the time came forward with handsome contributions. To return, there are delegates who are editors of influential newspapers, there are delegates who are barristers? who are merchants, princes, etc. All these can render very practical aid. The editors can collect accurate information and overhaul in their papers the whole question of foreign emigration and ventilate our grievances systematically. Professional men can serve themselves and their countrymen by settling in South Africa. The Congress is, I believe, meant, among other things, to testify to our ability to stand side by side with the other civilised races of the world in foreign enterprises and self-government. Now, if we were to look for a moment at European emigration, we will find the speculator followed by the trader who, in his turn, is followed by the missionary, the doctor, the lawyer, the architect, the engineer, the agriculturist, etc. No wonder if, wherever they settle, they blossom into independent, prosperous, self-governing communities. Our traders have gone in their thousands to different parts of the world, to South Africa, Zanzibar, Mauritius, Fiji, Singapore, etc. Are they followed by Indian missionaries, barristers, doctors, and other professional men? It is,

unfortunately, the European missionaries who try to teach religion to the poor emigrants, European lawyers who give them legal advice, and European doctors, who cannot understand their language, [who] try to give them medical advice. Is it, then, any wonder if the traders, groping in the darkness, not knowing what their rights are, not knowing where to go to for directing their boundless energy into proper channels, and surrounded by strange faces, are much misunderstood and are obliged to settle down to a life of humiliation. and degradation? This evening our proceedings were opened with a song, the last verse of which exhorts us to undertake foreign enterprises with strictest honesty and love for our land as moral equipment, knowledge as our capital, and unity as the source of our national strength. Gentlemen, if some of the distinguished Indians I see before me tonight were to go to South Africa, inspired with that noble spirit, our grievances must be removed.

From *Seventeenth Indian National Congress*, published by the All-India Congress Committee, Calcutta, 1902.

214. SPEECH AT CALCUTTA MEETING[1]

CALCUTTA,
January 19,1902

Mr. Gandhi, after describing South Africa generally, explained the position of the British Indians in that sub-continent. He said that in Natal the Immigration Restriction Act, the law relating to licences and the state of education of Indian children were chiefly matters of concern. In the Transvaal, the Indians could not own landed property nor could they trade anywhere except in Locations. They could not even walk on the footpaths. The Orange River Colony the Indians could not even enter except as labourers, and then under special permission. He had to repeat many things concerning the treatment the Indians received in South Africa which had already appeared in the papers, but he observed that his mission before them was not to give the dark side of the situation, with which they were partially familiar, but the bright, the roseate side. He then narrated how, since the war, they had been able to enlist the sympathy of some of the Colonials, and the cause of the Indians, he thought, was a little progressing. He, however, strongly deprecated the latest anti-Indian

[1] This is a brief Press report of Gandhiji's speech at public meeting at Albert Hall, Calcutta.

measure which sought to exclude every Indian from the Colonies who could not read any of the European languages. The gentlemen present at the meeting, who all knew at least the English language, might not fully appreciate the gravity of the situation, but its effect would be disastrous upon a people the vast majority of whom were unlettered and those who knew only the vernaculars of India. The hatred of the Colonials against them was no doubt intense, but what Mr. Gandhi proposed was to conquer that hatred by love.

The speaker asked his audience not to treat the statement as merely a formality. The Indians in South Africa believed in this maxim and they tried to follow it. The war, which must have proved disastrous to others, came to them as a blessing, as it furnished the Indians with an opportunity to prove their mettle. Before the war broke out, the Colonials often used to taunt them by saying that, in times of danger, the Indians would scuttle off like so many rabbits, and such were the people: who demanded privileges like them ! But the war showed that the Indians did not scuttle off; they put their shoulders to the wheel and were prepared to take equal responsibility with others. When the war broke out, the Indians, irrespective of their opinion whether the war was right or wrong (for which the Sovereign, and the Sovereign alone, was responsible, they thought), agreed to give their services free to Government and with that view approached it with a petition, but their prayer was not granted Subsequent to this, however, Colonel Gallwey, who apprehended to a certain extent what the affair at Colenso would be, wrote to a leading Indian1 to organise an ambulance corps, and this was done with 36 Indians as leaders and 1,200 Indians as ambulance bearers. What sort of service they rendered to the country was known to them all, and this had even drawn forth the admiration of the violent Colonials who, for the first time then, saw the good trait in the Indian.

Mr. Gandhi added that, in one sense, the Indians themselves were to blame for the feeling of hatred raised in the Colonials against them. If the Indian settlers had been followed by better-class Indians who could be the peers of the Colonials in every phase of life, so much bad blood would not have been created. However, the feeling had now been improving. It had improved so much that it enabled some of the Indians to start a national Famine Fund to help India in

[1] This was Gandhiji himself. *Vide* "Letter to Colonel Gallwey", January 7, 1900.

her last famine and to raise a sum of £5,000, of which £3,300 were paid by the Colonials.

The speaker concluded his remarks by saying that, at that meeting, he was merely concerned with bringing out the best points of the two communities. There were harshnesses also, but it was better to contemplate the former. The Indian Ambulance Corps was raised in the same spirit. If they claimed the rights of British subjects, they must recognise the responsibilities also of that position. The work of the Corps in which the Indian labourers worked without pay was specially mentioned in General Buller's dispatches.

The Englishman, 20-1-1902
Amrita Bazar Patrika, 21-1-1902

215. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

INDIA CLUB,[1]
[CALCUTTA]
January 23, 1902

DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

Your letter to hand. I was glad to read it. You should keep on writing in English only. Pay Mehtaji[2] his salary. Take the money from your aunt.

When you relate stories to Gokaldas[3] and Harilal,[4] you had better read out to them stories from *Kavyadohan*.[5] All the volumes are to be found among my books. You should read out and explain to them preferably the stories about Sudama, Nala and Angada. Narrate the story of Harishchandra or read it out from the book. It is not necessary at present to read out to them plays by English poets. They won't be much interested in them. Moreover, there isn't so much moral to be drawn from the works of the English poets as from our old story-poems.

Take care to see that the children behave well in the classroom. Let me know to whom else you go to teach. What do you receive for

[1] Gandhiji stayed at the Club on arrival in Calcutta and later went to reside with Gokhale.

[2] Gandhiji's clerk.

[3] Son of Gandhiji's sister.

[4] Eldest son of Gandhiji.

[5] A collection of story-poems in Gujarati based on the *Mahabharat*, the *Bhagavat* and other works.

it?

Also write to me how Manilal is faring. See that no bad habits of any kind are picked up by the boys. Mould them in such a way that they always have deep love for truth.

You will see that, besides attending to studies, they also take adequate exercise.

Respects to Khushalbhai and Devbhabhi.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the original in Gujarati: C.W. 2937.

216. LETTER TO D. B. SHUKLA

[CALCUTTA,]
January 25, 1902

MY DEAR SHUKLA,

I am leaving for Rangoon on Tuesday next.

I have been successful in a way. I approached the President of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, who interested himself in the matter[1] & requested an interview with the Viceroy who, instead of receiving a deputation, has given a most sympathetic reply.[2] The President has also promised to forward a memorial whenever necessary.

I have also been on the stump.[3] The leaders have certainly begun to interest themselves in the question.

Many thanks for going to my house. Please continue to do so now & then. All the boys it seems have been getting fever by turns.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the original: G.N. 2328.

[1] The question of the British Indians in South Africa.

[2] The reply was to the effect that the views of the Viceroy and the Government of India had been more than once pressed upon the Home Government and that the channel of approach was the Secretary of State for the Colonies, whose sympathies were assured and with whom the ultimate decision lay (S. N. 3931).

[3] He had addressed a public meeting on January 19.

217. SPEECH AT CALCUTTA MEETING[1]

[CALCUTTA,
January 27, 1902]

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

Last Sunday week I had the honour to address you on my experiences in South Africa. In the course of my remarks, you will recollect, I said that the policy that was followed by our countrymen in South Africa in connection with their legal disabilities could be summed up in two maxims which guided it, viz., to stick to the truth at all costs and conquer hate by love. This was the ideal to be realized. I then implored you, as I implore you now, to believe that these are no catch phrases, but that we have all through these years tried to live up to the ideal. The local Indian contribution to the present war is, perhaps, the very best illustration of that line of action.

When in the October of 1899, the Boers issued their ultimatum, the British Government, as you are aware, was unready. According to their prearranged plan, the Boers crossed the Natal border immediately on the receipt of the reply from the British Government. Sir W. Penn Symons, at the cost of his life, gave the enemy's forces a temporary check at Talana Hill, and Sir George White[2] allowed himself and his 10,000 brave men to be surrounded in Ladysmith. These events were as unexpected as they were surprising, and followed in such quick succession that the people had hardly any time to turn in and ponder over them. Mafeking and Kimberley were besieged at the same time. Half of Natal was in Boer hands. And often did we hear that the Boers were going to take Maritzburg and capture Durban. But strange as it may appear, Sir George White and his army saved Natal by allowing themselves to be besieged, thus occupying the Boer General and the flower of his army. This was the contribution of British India to the Colony.

The calmness and fortitude with which the people of Natal contemplated these events reflect the highest credit and show the secret of British power. There was no stir. Business went on as if nothing had happened. The Natal Government never flinched. Although the Treasury was nearly empty, the servants were regularly

[1] This second speech at Albert Hall, Calcutta, deals largely with the work done by the Indian Ambulance Corps during the Boer War.

[2] Sir George White was, earlier, Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army.

paid. The common courtesies of ordinary English life were performed. And but for the presence of so many khaki-clad gentlemen and the unusual bustle at the harbour, you would not have noticed that there was any imminent danger of even Durban being

taken.Volunteers were called out and Durban was emptied of its best sons within twenty-four hours of the call. What was to be the attitude of the 50,000 Indians in the Colony in such a crisis? The answer came in emphatic earnestness. We claimed the privileges of British subjects. Now was the time to discharge the responsibilities of that status; the local differences were to be sunk if the policy referred to at the outset was to be carried out; we had nothing to do with the question whether the war was right or wrong. That was the function of the Sovereign. Thus argued your countrymen at a great meeting convened for the purpose. Here was the opportunity to answer the oft-repeated charge in the Colony, that, if there was a war, the Indians would scuttle away like rabbits. It was resolved at that meeting to offer the services of those assembled there, free of charge, to do any work at the front for which they might be found fit. The Government, while thanking the volunteers, replied that their services were not required. In the meanwhile, there returned from England a gentleman who had devoted 20 years of his life to Indian work as a medical missionary belonging to the Church of England. His name is Canon Booth, now Dean of St. John. He was pleased to find that the Indians were ready to serve the Empire during the war. He offered to train them as ambulance leaders. And for several weeks they had lessons in first-aid to the wounded from Dr. Booth. In the meanwhile, Colonel Gallwey, the principal medical officer attached to General Buller's Army, in anticipation of a bloody fight at Colenso, issued instructions for raising a European Ambulance Corps. We thereupon telegraphed to the Government informing them as to how we were qualifying ourselves. And intimation was received from the Government that we were to help the Protector of Indian Immigrants in forming a volunteer Indian Ambulance Corps. Within four or five days, about 1,000 Indians were collected, a majority from the various estates. These were, of course, in no way bound to offer their services, nor was the slightest pressure imposed on them. It was entirely a free-will offering on their part. They, in common with the European volunteers, received one pound per week and rations while on duty. You will understand the force of these remarks when I tell you that some of the stretcher-bearers were traders earning far more than £4

per mouth. As an officer remarked, however, this war was a war of surprises in many respects. Among the Europeans, too, there were professional men of the highest standing, serving as stretcher-bearers.. It was rightly considered a privilege to be able to succour the wounded.

But the leaders who had undergone the training accepted no remuneration. The good Dr. Booth, too, came with us as a leader, without pay. Colonel Gallwey afterwards installed him as medical officer for the Corps. The leaders included two Indian barristers,[1] a gentleman connected with a well-known London firm of agents, shop-keepers and clerks.

The Corps thus constituted served just after the action at Colenso. Thirsty, hungry and fatigued, we reached the Chieveley camp at dusk. The action had just ended after a sanguinary struggle against an unseen enemy. Colonel Gallwey came up and asked the Superintendent of the Corps whether we would be able to carry the wounded to the stationary hospital there and then. The Superintendent turned towards the leaders who at once said they were quite ready. By 12 o'clock midnight, about thirty wounded officers and soldiers were removed. The work was done with such despatch that there were none left ready to be carried. It was at 12 o'clock midnight that the bulk of the men broke their fast—men (some of them) who had never been used, to put it in expressive though not quite elegant English, to roughing it.

The distance to be covered was about five miles. The European ambulance party attached to the army brought the wounded from the battlefield to the field hospital where the wounds were dressed. We carried them to the stationary hospital—each stretcher having six bearers and three bearer parties having a leader whose duty it was to direct the bearers, and to attend to and feed the wounded.

Early next morning, before breakfast, orders were received to resume work which continued up to 11 a.m. Hardly, however, had the work of removing the wounded finished, when orders were received to break up camp and march. Colonel Gallwey then personally thanked the Corps for the work done and disbanded it—saying that he relied upon a similar response when he needed it. During the interval, General Buller was taking his men across the Tugela to force his way

[1] Gandhiji and Khan, a co-worker.

to Ladysmith through Spion Kop. After ten days, recess, the P. M. O. sent orders to reform the Corps, and within three days over 1,000 men were collected.

Spion Kop is about 28 miles from Frere, which was the railway base, and the station where the wounded had to be brought before they could be taken by rail to the general hospitals. Spion Kop—the hill of Spion— overhangs a bush where tents were pitched to form a field hospital, from which the wounded, after being dressed, had to be removed to Spearman's Camp—a distance of about three miles. A narrow stream lay between the field hospital and Spearman's Farm. Across this was erected a temporary pontoon bridge which was within the range of the Boer guns. The route between Spearman's Camp and Frere was rather rugged and hilly.

Neither the European Corps nor the Indian were to work within the range of fire. But the European Corps, both at Colenso and Spion Kop, had to work under fire, and the Indian Corps, only at Spion Kop and Vaalkranz. Major Bapty, Secretary to Colonel Gallwey, who has covered himself with glory by facing great perils, and who has received the V.C., thus addressed us:

> Gentlemen, you have been engaged to work without the range of fire. There are many wounded men to be removed from the field hospital. There is just a chance, though very remote, that the Boers may drop a shell or two on the pontoon. If you are prepared to cross the bridge in spite of the little risk, and you are at liberty to say no, I shall be glad to lead you.

These words were spoken with such earnestness and so kindly and gently that I have endeavoured to reproduce them, as far as possible, as they were uttered. The leaders and men with one voice offered to follow the gallant Major. The unexpected reverse at Spion Kop kept us incessantly at work for three weeks, though the Corps was on duty for over nine weeks. Thrice or four times did it cover a distance of 25 miles per day with its precious load of wounded. And I may be permitted to say for the Corps, without any self-esteem, that the work was done so much beyond all expectations, that those who were competent to judge thought that the 25-mile marches, with the load, were record marches. Colonel Gallwey had given us the option to do the distance in two days.

The work of the Corps has been honourably mentioned in General Buller's dispatches.

Such briefly is the record of work of the Natal Volunteer Indian

Ambulance Corps.

The Indian merchants, who could not leave their business to join the Corps, collected a fund for the support of the dependants of those volunteer leaders who needed it and also supplied uniforms for them.

A handsome donation was sent to the Durban Women's Patriotic League Fund for the volunteers who had gone to the front. Indian ladies contributed their quota by making pillow slips, vests, etc.

We were also supplied by the merchants with cigarettes to be offered to the wounded. And all these funds were raised at a time when the Indian community of Natal was feeding at its own expense, without encroaching on the general refugees' relief fund, thousands of Indian refugees, both from the Transvaal and from the parts of Natal occupied by the enemy.

I would not be true to myself if I did not give you an idea of the impression that was created in the minds of many of us about the life of the British soldier when at work, and especially under temporary reverses. I ventured last Sunday week to give you a description of the Trappist monastery and the holy stillness that pervaded it. Strange though it may appear to some of us, the same impression was created in those vast camps. Although the energy put forth was the greatest—not a minute was passed idly by anybody in those stirring times—there was perfect order, perfect stillness. Tommy was then altogether lovable. He mixed with us and the men freely. He often shared with us his luxuries whenever there were any to be had. A never-to-be-forgotten scene happened at Chieveley. It was a sultry day. Water was very scarce There was only one well. An officer was doling out tinfuls to the thirsty. Some of the bearers were returning after leaving their charge, The soldiers, who were helping themselves to the water, at once cheerfully shared their portion with our bearers. There was, shall I say, a spirit of brotherhood irrespective of colour or creed. The Red Cross badge or the khaki uniform was a sufficient passport whether the bearer had a white skin or brown.

As a Hindu, I do not believe in war, but if anything can even partially reconcile me to it, it was the rich experience we gained at the front. It was certainly not the thirst for blood that took thousands of men to the battlefield. If I may use a most holy name without doing any violence to our feelings, like Arjun,[1] they went to the battlefield,

[1] Third of the Pandava princes to whom Lord Krishna expounded the *Gita*.

because it was their duty. And how many proud, rude, savage spirits has it not broken into gentle creatures of God?

I have been talking flatteringly of our countrymen's work in connection with the war. I would detain you for a moment to look at the other side. The real work, to my mind, has now commenced. Compared with the trials that the soldiers and soldier-volunteers have undergone and are still undergoing, our work was after all very little. It has been well spoken of, because it was never expected. Now that we have raised expectations, shall we in future come up to them? Therein, to my mind, lies the reason for humility instead of self-praise. While, therefore, it was perhaps my duty to bring prominently to your notice the little work of our countrymen, it is equally my duty to remind ourselves of the work that lies ahead of us. I may now, I think, perhaps pardonably, quote what the late Right Honourable Harry Escombe and others thought, almost too generously, of our work. Mr. Escombe, at our request, blessed us on our departure for the front and spoke as follows:

> I thank you for paying the marked personal compliment of asking me to address a few words of farewell before you leave for the front. You carry with you not only the good wishes of those present here, but of all the people in Natal and the Queen's great Empire. This incident is not the least interesting of the many episodes of this remarkable war. The meeting shows the willingness and the resolve of the Indian subjects in Natal to do what they can to promote the unity and the solidarity of the Empire, and they who claim rights in Natal, we recognise, are now performing their obligations to their country. They are going to occupy as honourable a position as those who are doing the fighting, because if there were none to look after the wounded, war would be much more horrible than it now is. . . . It cannot be forgotten that you Indians in Natal—who have been treated with more or less injustice—have sunk your grievances and claim to be part of the Empire and to share its responsibilities. You carry with you the hearty good wishes of those who know what is taking place today. The knowledge of what you are doing will help to bring closer the different classes of Her Majesty's subjects throughout the whole Empire.

The Natal Advertiser wrote thus:

> The Indian population of the Colony have to be congratulated on the admirable spirit they have shown. This is more commendable because of the attitude of the Colony towards Indian immigration, and the Indian population generally. The Indian community might easily have wrapped themselve s up in a sullen reserve and said: `We shall not help the enemy, but neither shall we help you, as you have shown yourselves so antagonistic to us.' But they did

not; they took occasion to assist where they could. They subscribed liberally to the various war funds; their ladies assisted in supplying comforts for the sick and wounded, and many of them have gone to the front to assist ourtroops in whatever capacity they can. This conduct should be appreciatively remembered in their favour. It is no small matter at a crisis of this character, that we should be able to rely upon the unswerving loyalty of our coloured population. And it should make us the more ready to endure small faults on which perhaps we are prone to expatiate largely in times of peace.

Such, gentlemen, is the testimony in favour of a community that is trying to live by Truth and Love.

The Englishman, 28-1-1902

218. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

PER S. S. GOA,
January 30, 1902

DEAR PROFESSOR GOKHALE,

We expect to reach Rangoon tomorrow. The weather has been very fine. How I wish you had been on board! Your cough would have left you in two days. I hope, however, that you are feeling better and that you have taken proper advice.

How shall I thank you for all your kindness during the time I was under your roof?[1] I cannot easily forget how anxious you were to wipe out the distance that should exist between you and me. I should be quite content to have the privilege of your confidence and guidance. More I do not deserve. It is my honest opinion—and I yield to no one in my honesty—that you have appraised my services to the country altogether too generously. You have unduly magnified little incidents of my life. Yet when I come to think of it, I feel that I had no right to question your taste on Monday evening. I was too presumptuous. Had I known that I would cause you thereby the pain I did cause, I should certainly have never taken the liberty. I trust you will forgive me for the folly.[2]

[1] Gandhiji stayed for a month in Calcutta with Gokhale. (For Gokhale.)

[2] Gokhale used a horse-carriage rather than a tram-car when going about in Calcutta, as his travelling in the latter would have been difficult in view of his wide popularity. Not . knowing the reason; Gandhiji had commented on Gokhale's preference for the carriage and the latter had felt hurt at Gandhiji misunderstanding him. *Vide his Autobiography*, pp. 232-3.

Your great work in the cause of education has admirers even on board this little vessel.

I forgot to give the coachman a gratuity. Will you kindly ask Mr. Bhate to give him a rupee and the groom half a rupee?

Please remember me to Dr. P. C. Roy.[1]

I remain,
yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the office copy: G.N. 3723.

219. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

7 MOGUL STREET,
RANGOON,
February 2, 1902

DEAR PROFESSOR GOKHALE,

As there was no post for Calcutta before Monday I postponed posting the letter written on board, which I enclose herewith.[2]

I was fortunate in just catching Professor Kathawate.[3] He left for Madras yesterday morning. The Professor did not like the Rangoon climate. It was too trying for him. He requires a bracing climate which the Rangoon climate does not appear to be.

From a sanitary standpoint this is a very good place. The streets are broad and well laid out. The drainage system too appears to be fairly good.

I remain,
yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the original: G.N. 3724.

[1] Indian scientist and patriot, Dr. (Sir) P. C. Ray, 1861-1944.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] A friend of Gokhale whom Gandhiji met in Calcutta.

220. LETTER TO P. B. DESAI

[RAJKOT,
post *February 26, 1902*]

P. B. DESAI
TONGAAT
DURBAN, S. A.

DEAR MR. PURSHOTTAM BHAICHAND DESAI,

It is a matter of deep regret that you have not been able to keep your promise, despite your assurances. I had told you how much I would depend upon the amount due from you and am writing again[1] to say that I need it badly and shall be obliged if you send it to me. Please send me in full the instalments for three months which are in arrears, and it will help me greatly if you let me have the remaining instalments regularly month by month.

The condition of the country is worse than I had thought. I need write no more. Let me know how you are faring in your business.

From the photostat of the office copy in Gujarati: S. N. 3970.

221. LETTER TO DEVKARAN MULJI

[RAJKOT,
post *February 26, 1902*]

DEVKARAN MULJI
TANKARA [KATHIAWAD]

DEAR MR. DEVKARAN MULJI,

Your letter dated 21st January was received here but has remained without reply as I was away in North India. I think it will be very difficult for you to go to Natal just at the present moment. Because of the war, only those who have Rs. 1,500 in cash can proceed there. It will be difficult for you to do so unless you have the money. This law is not likely to be repealed as long as the war lasts. However, if you are keen to go abroad, let me tell you that I recently came here *via* Rangoon. I can say from personal experience that you will be able to earn your livelihood there. That country is prosperous and interesting, and if one is healthy, is not ashamed of manual

[1] The earlier letter is not available.

labour, is not lazy and maintains truthfulness, there should be no difficulty in earning one's bread there. One Indian has made very good arrangements for board and lodging in Rangoon; so you will experience no difficulty of any kind. You can get there *via* Madras or Calcutta. The cost of the journey will be from Rs. 30 to Rs. 40.

From the photostat of the office copy in Gujarati: S.N. 3938.

222. LETTER TO PARSEE RUSTOMJEE

[RAJKOT,
March 1, 1902][1]

DEAR SETH PARSEE RUSTOMJEE JIVANJEE,

I am in receipt of your three letters, dated 31st December, 7th January and 10th February.

I have also received the cheque for £25 sent by you to be spent on feeding the famine-stricken people in Kathiawad or for any other charitable object I deem fit.

All your three letters reached me when I arrived here from North India three days ago. I also received a letter at Rangoon, but it is in my luggage, which has not yet been received from Calcutta. I do not remember that it contained anything special that called for a reply.

The famine in Kathiawad is very acute. But I have not yet obtained full information regarding the extent of relief being given to the famine-stricken. When I obtain it, I shall utilize the cheque sent by you. If I find that it is not needed immediately, I intend to spend the amount after June, for real scarcity will be experienced thereafter. If, unfortunately, we get no rains in June, there is a possibility that the conditions of 1897 might recur. Since it will be advisable to have as much money as possible for that contingency, I do not consider it meet to use this amount just now, except when absolutely essential. I shall write to you if there is any change in this decision. The cheque was deposited yesterday with a local banker at _ per cent interest.[2] The money will be spent under my personal supervision. You need, therefore, have no anxiety in this matter.

[1] This letter was written three days after Gandhiji's return to Rajkot from Calcutta on Wednesday, February 26. *Vide* "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", March 4, 1902.

[2] Indian bankers quote the rate of interest per month. though the interest is collected annually.

I cannot understand why Mr. Khan and Mr. Nazar should not attend to your work properly. You should have patience and take whatever work can be taken from them. People cannot speak or act always in the same manner. I think it is not right to form an adverse opinion on that account. As long as a man carries out with care the work entrusted to him, it is not necessary to pay attention to his ways.

I have already sent to the secretaries a report of the work done here so far. As you must have seen it, I do not write about it again. The Governor there has declined to receive our address, saying that the Indians constitute a part of Natal's population. Please let me know in exactly what context he has said so. You must have seen the question asked about us in Parliament and Mr. Chamberlain's reply.

Let me know immediately what Lord Milner writes. The Bengal Chamber of Commerce is willing to take up our work. Hereafter, please forward also to Prof. Gokhale at Poona copies of whatever literature, newspapers, etc., you may have to send from there to other gentlemen He is a member of the Imperial Council and he does a lot on our behalf.

I very much regret to note that the Congress work there has become slack. You should do as much as you can. One should content oneself with doing one's duty as one understands it, facing insults, obstacles, etc., courageously and behaving politely in every respect. What more can I write from this distance?

It is, indeed, a matter of profound regret that the ideal of inviting Sir Mancherjee has been abandoned. It will, however, be to our advantage if we can still exert ourselves and invite him.

When I go to Bombay, I shall call at your house and inquire after your children. But I am not sure when I will go. Everything here is undecided. I intend settling down in Bombay if I can afford it. It is a little difficult to do public work from here. The future alone will decide it. Dr. Mehta strongly advises that I take complete rest at least for the next two or three months.

The children are here with me. They are for the present attending the local school. Gokaldas and Harilal are studying in standard IV of the secondary school. Manilal studies privately; he has not been admitted into any specific standard at school. I hope you have recovered completely by now. It is necessary to take proper care of your health there. It is essential that one should observe moderation and regularity in the matter of food. Please give my compliments to

those who may enquire after me.

With regards

From the photostat of the office copy in Gujarati: S.N. 3937.

223. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE[1]

RAJKOT,
March 4, 1902

DEAR PROFESSOR GOKHALE,

Having passed five nights in the train, I reached here on Wednesday last, i.e., only a day later than I would have had I not stopped at the intermediate stations.

It was with very great difficulty that I found a seat in one of the intermediate carriages and that after I offered to stand the whole night if necessary. As it was, it was merely a trick on the part of the friends of some of the passengers. The former had occupied all the spare room with a view to prevent any more passengers from getting in. They got out as soon [as] the guard blew the whistle for the train to go. There was absolutely no room in the 3rd class carriages. You cannot adopt gentlemen's time and travel 3rd. From Benares, however, I travelled 3rd only. In your words, it was only the first plunge that was difficult, the after-effect was all pleasure. The other passengers and I talked freely and at times became even chummy. Benares is probably the worst station for the poor passengers. Corruption is rampant. Unless you are prepared to bribe the police, it is very difficult to get your ticket. They approached me as they approached others several times and offered to buy our tickets if we would pay them a gratuity (or bribe?). Many availed themselves of the offer. Those of us who would not, had to wait nearly one hour after the window was opened, before we could get our tickets and we would be fortunate at that if we did so without being presented with a kick or two from the guardians of law. At Moghalsarai, on the other hand, the ticket master was a very nice man. He said he knew no distinction between a prince and a peasant.

In the carriages we were packed anyhow. There was no restriction as to numbers, though there were notices in the

[1] An earlier handwritten draft (S.N. 3940) is available; in this the words 'Hindoo', 'Palanpur', 'Karbhary' and 'Kattywar' have been differently spelt.

compartments. Night travelling under such circumstances does become rather inconvenient even for the poor 3rd class passengers.

There was plague inspection at three different places, but I cannot say it was carried on with any harshness. My experience is yet very little, but the picture that the imagination had drawn of the terrible lot of these passengers has become somewhat toned down. Five days can hardly afford sufficient data for drawing a fair conclusion. I feel all the richer and stronger in spirit for the experience which I would resume at the very first opportunity.

I alighted at Benares, Agra, Jeypore[1] and Palanpur. The Central Hindoo College is not a bad institution though it is difficult to speak with confidence on a hurried visit. "The dream in marble" is certainly worth a visit. Jeypore is a wonderful place. The Albert Museum is a far better building than the Calcutta one and the art section is by itself a study. The Jeypore school of arts appeared to be flourishing under its Bengalee Superintendent.

I now come to the most important part of my letter. To Palanpore I went to see merely the State Karbhary[2] who is a personal friend of mine. I casually mentioned to him that I might join you in collecting subscriptions for the Ranade memorial fund in April next. The State Karbhary, Mr. Patwari, who is a sincere man, says that it will be a great mistake to start it in April next, especially if we want to do Gujarat. He thinks that we would lose at least Rs. 10,000 thereby. All the States are more or less groaning under the effects of famine and he is strongly of opinion that the collection should be undertaken in December or January next. I place his views before you for what they may be worth.

Plague is raging in several parts of Kattywar.[3]

Please remember me to Professor Ray.

Please excuse the dirty typing. The typewriter is quite different from the excellent one I had there. My things have not yet arrived from Calcutta.[4]

I remain,
yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the original: C. W. 3722.

[1] This is the old spelling for Jaipur.
[2] Executive Officer.
[3] Kathiawar.
[4] This para is in Gandhiji's handwriting

224. LETTER TO POLICE COMMISSIONER

RAJKOT, KATHIAWAR,
March 12, 1902

TO
THE POLICE COMMISSIONER
BOMBAY

SIR,

Will you be good enough to let me know on what conditions permits are issued to people desiring to go to South Africa.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Sabarmati Sangrahalaya: S. N. 3941.

225. LETTER TO W. S. CAINE[1]

RAJKOT,
March 26, 1902

TO
W. S. CAINE, ESQ.

DEAR SIR,

I have just received your letter of the 14th instant. At the request of the Editor, *India*, I have already prepared a brief statement of the position up to date of the British Indians in South Africa. I enclose a copy thereof.[2] Though, I presume, the request made by the Editor was on your behalf, I feel that to force a debate on the whole question on the treatment of the British Indians in various Colonies is likely to do more harm than good, for the situation in the different Colonies is not the same. In Natal, for instance, the Immigration Restriction Act, the Dealers' Licenses Act and such other Acts, of which copies have been supplied from time to time to the British Committee, are already in force. The Natal model is being followed both in Australia and Canada. Under the circumstances, it would be very difficult if not impossible to obtain repeal in Natal or altogether to frustrate the

[1] Member of the British Parliament.

[2] *Vide* the succeeding item, which was ready on March 27, after which the letter to W. S. Caine must have been posted.

attempt of Australia and Canada to copy Natal. The key to this is to be found in Mr. Chamberlain's address to the Conference of Premiers at the time of the Diamond Jubilee. I enclose acopy of an extract therefrom for your perusal. He has met the Colonies half way, but the half way is probably more dangerous than the whole, for his sanction of indirect legislation has opened up possibilities for mischief which were never dreamt of, as you will see from my statement. Mr. Chamberlain's latest utterances are hardly reassuring. They will simply strengthen the Colonial Governments in their anti-Indian attitude. The remedy, therefore, so far as Natal is concerned, is for the Indian residents in that Colony to induce the Colonial Government to accord fair treatment, which is now more or less a matter of administration of the old laws, and where they may attempt to pass fresh restrictive measures, to appeal to the Home Government and for the friends to help them. Continued pressure from the Colonial Office and a sympathetic discussion of the Natal [question] in the Home newspapers are the chief influences that are calculated to soften the Ministers in Natal. In a measure, I think, by the aid of friends in England and India, we have succeeded there. As to Australia and Canada, the remedy is to take up the proposed measures, the text of which, unfortunately, I have not seen, and to attack the details so as to make them as lenient as possible. On the main points Mr. Chamberlain simply will not help and, if the debate is forced, he will make a speech which would embolden the Colonists in their anti-Indian attitude.

For the new Colonies in South Africa, our position is and ought to be infinitely stronger than elsewhere. The Colonial Office has a much freer hand. The past remonstrances to Mr. Kruger on the very anti-Indian legislation which is now being enforced will, for very shame, make Mr. Chamberlain take up an entirely different attitude. I enclose herewith an extract from his reply[1] to our memorial on the Transvaal legislation. He then did not help because he was powerless. Now that he is all powerful, how can he help granting relief, and yet, unfair as it may appear to draw an inference not creditable to him, we are very much afraid that he has gone back upon his old love and may, if not properly watched, give away our position in the two new Colonies.

In anything that the friends may do in England, I think all the

[1] Not given here.

efforts ought, for the present, to be concentrated on getting redress in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colonies. In Natal, relief for the present is unobtainable. In Australia and Canada, there is no resident Indian population which has to suffer. There it is a matter of principle which certainly is a great one. In the Transvaal, the principle is there, the grievance is present, tangible and real because of the very large vested Indian interests, and relief is obtainable if only because Mr. Chamberlain has not yet committed himself one way or the other and, according to Lord Lansdowne, the treatment of British Indians was one of the causes of the war.

In this matter there is no difference of opinion. The East India Association has worked in our behalf, so has the London *Times* and soalso Sir Mancherji. I hope, therefore, that in your crusade against the Colonial prejudice you will work in co-operation with them.

If I may venture to make a suggestion, I would like our friends to seek an interview with the Colonial Premiers who are expected to attend the Coronation ceremony and to discuss the situation with them.

The contributions of the local Indians in Natal to the present war may be taken into account in dealing with the question. I enclose herewith the cutting[1] which would give you an idea of their work.

I have taken the liberty to write you fully and frankly for which I trust you will be good enough to excuse me. If you require any further information, I would be glad to place it at your service.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,

From the photostat of the office copy: S. N. 3945.

226. NOTES ON THE INDIAN POSITION

[RAJKOT,
March 27, 1902]

CONFIDENTIAL

NOTES ON THE PRESENT POSITION OF THE BRITISH INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Anything that appears hereunder only applies to the situation as it stood two months prior to the date hereof, seeing that letters from

[1] Presumably, a cutting of the Press report of Gandhiji's speech of January 27, 1902.

South Africa take a long time reaching here. It is necessary to bear this in mind because, evidently, the Indians in South Africa are still passing through a crisis as would appear from the following.

Too much stress cannot be laid on the necessity of distinguishing between the Indian question in Natal and in the two new Colonies. Cape Colony may, just for the present, be kept out of mind. The double question asked in the House of Commons about the new Colonies in Natal was, in my humble opinion, a tactical blunder. Mr. Chamberlain's reply that he does not, at present, propose to make representations to the Natal Government with reference to its anti-Indian legislation already in force has created, if anything, a bad feeling in the Colony and emboldened the Colonists in their anti-Indian attitude. The Pass legislation of Natal can, in the light of Mr. Chamberlain's well-known views, be only a subject of constant correspondence between him and the sympathising friends.

As to Natal, then, the Immigration Restriction Act and the Dealers' Licenses Act are the chief measures which are prejudicial to the British Indians. The latter more especially, because it gives unlimited powers to the licensing officer as to the issue of license without recourse to theSupreme Court. The latest advice and development in effect enable them to curtail the right of the Indians. The Natal Civil Service Act gives powers to the Civil Service Board to pass bye-laws under it with reference to the examination of candidates, etc.; now the Constitution Act requires that all class legislation, before becoming law, must be sanctioned by His Majesty. Moreover, it is clear that no bye-laws could be enacted under an Act so as to change its fundamental principles. The Natal Government have escaped going to the Colonial Secretary for sanction for class legislation by simply publishing a bye-law which goes to the very root of the Natal Civil Service Act.

The bye-law in question prevents any person, among other things, who is disqualified from acquiring the Parliamentary franchise, from becoming a candidate for admission to the Civil Service. The disfranchising Act is well known and under it the Natal Government would say the British Indians are disqualified and, therefore, also disqualified to exercise the franchise to compete for the Natal Civil Service; of course, there are very few Indians who go in for that examination. Still the principle is there. And the method adopted to carry it out is most dangerous, and opens up a very wide latitude for

the Colonists to further harass the Indian settlers. The matter might be brought to Mr. Chamberlain's notice by correspondence.

As to the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, the situation is most critical in view of Mr. Chamberlain's reply. All the anti-Indian laws in both the Colonies are in full force; under them, in the Transvaal, the Indians cannot own land or trade except in Locations, and must, like the Kaffirs, hold travelling and other passes. The Orange River Colony they cannot even enter except as domestic servants. It is regarding these laws that, according to Mr. Chamberlain's answer, Lord Milner is to advise him, and His Excellency's attitude, there are grounds to fear, is not quite so friendly as was at one time expected. He has proclaimed a Coloured Pass-law which is supposed to be an improvement on the old Transvaal Pass-law which it replaces; copy of the recent Proclamation is enclosed herewith.[1] It will be seen therefrom that the relief afforded by it can mostly be availed of only by the Kaffirs, though the term Coloured person therein, as of old, includes Indians also. Under the old regime, the Pass-law was rarely in force against the Indians; what the position would be under the strict British authority can easily be surmised. If relief to be granted is to be of the above nature, it is evident that it would be no relief at all. In contravention of the 14th article of the London Convention, the Transvaal Government passed laws practically classifying Indians with the natives of the soil. It will be remembered that both the late Lord Loch and Sir Hercules Robinson protested against any such classification and, under the above article, claimed for the Indians the same rights as the other British subjects. (See South African Bluebook—*Grievances of British Indians*.) Therefore, even if all the anti-Indian legislation in these two Colonies is not to be repealed, the least that could be done is to distinguish between the British Indians and the Zulus. Under the circumstances, all the available energy must, for the present, be devoted to the question in these two Colonies and, if full justice is done there, Natal would soon have to fall in with them.

In preparing these notes, in order to avoid needless repetition of facts, a previous knowledge of the memorials, etc., on the part of the sympathising friends has been assumed.

From the photostat of the office copy: S.N. 3946.

[1] This is not given here.

227. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

RAJKOT,
March 27, 1902

DEAR PROFESSOR GOKHALE,

I was exceedingly sorry to hear that you had got fever. I need hardly say that among your many duties one of the most important is to preserve your health for the sake of your country, and, therefore, hope that it was not over-anxiety or over-work that brought on the illness. If I may be permitted to make a remark, strictest regularity in your household would benefit not only you but, what is more, those who may have the privilege of coming in contact with you. I may be wrong, but I feel sure that its observance is not a matter of great difficulty.

I see in the papers that a Bill is to be introduced in the Viceregal Council regulating the emigration of artisans, mountebanks, etc. What may this be? Is it a concession to Colonists or meant really to be in the interests of ourselves? I hear that Mr. Vadia[1] passed through Rajkot and collected a few hundred rupees for the Ranade Memorial. I expect to hear from you about your movements during the next few days.

May I trouble you to inform Mr. Bhate that I have at last received my things from Calcutta.

I remain,
yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.] Mr. Turner has at last sent me a copy of the letter from the private secretary. I enclose copy.

M. K. G.

From the photostat of the original: G.N. 3721.

[1] Gandhiji has spelt the name thus.

228. COVERING LETTER FOR THE "NOTES"

RAJKOT,
Marsh 30, 1902

TO
THE EDITOR
India

DEAR SIR,

I had your letter of the 28th February redirected to me from Bombay. As requested, I send you herewith notes on the position of the British Indians in South Africa[1] as far up to date as possible. Assuming that you possess all the papers sent to you from time to time, I have not restated all the previous history. I am sending a copy to Sir Mancherji also, whose co-operation, I suppose, the British Committee would invite in this matter.

I am,
Yours truly,

From the photostat of the office copy: S. N. 3948.

229. LETTER TO M. M. BHOWNAGGREE

RAJKOT,
March 30, 1902

TO
SIR M. M. BHOWNAGGAREE,[2] K.C.I.E.M., ETC.
LONDON

DEAR SIR MANCHERJI,

As you are aware, after our meeting in Bombay, I went over to Calcutta and attended the Congress where the following Resolution was passed:

INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

VI. This Congress sympathises with the British Indian settlers in South Africa in their struggle for existence, and respectfully draws the attention of the Viceroy to the anti-Indian legislation there, and trusts that while the question of the British Indians in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colonies

[1] "Notes on the Indian Position", March 27, 1902.
[2] This is how Gandhiji has spelt the name.

is still under the consideration of the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State for the Colonies, His Excellency will be graciously pleased to secure for the settlers a just and equitable adjustment there of.

After that I stopped in Calcutta for some time with a view to promote a deputation to His Excellency the Viceroy through the Honourable Mr. Turner, President of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, who on approaching the Viceroy received a reply, copy of which I enclose herewith;[1] in view of such a reply, the deputation has necessarily to be dropped. I have only just returned to Rajkot and now enclose herewith a statement[2] of the present position of the British Indians in South Africa, prepared at the instance of the Congress, and I venture to hope that, until the whole question is satisfactorily solved, you will be good enough to take the same warm interest that you have hitherto done.

I remain,

yours truly,

From the photostat of the office copy: S.N. 3947.

230. LETTER TO KHAN AND NAZAR

RAJKOT,

March 31, 1902

DEAR MESSRS. KHAN AND NAZAR,

It is a great pity you have not found time to write to me now for a very long time. I am now able to enclose herewith a copy of the letter written by the Viceroy to Mr. Turner.[3] I enclose also a copy of the note[4] prepared for the British Committee of the Congress at the request of the Editor of India. I have sent a copy to Sir Mancherji also. Had it not been for some anonymous friend who has sent me Johannesburg Gazette and a paper containing the new Civil Service rules, the two facts could not have been embodied in the notes. I do still hope that Sir Mancherji would be invited. I repeat the request made in my letter from Rangoon[5] that, if our people propose to

[1] This is not given here.

[2] "Notes on the Indian Position", March 27, 1902.

[3] *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Letter to D. B. Shukla", 25-1-1902, *supra.*

[4] "Notes on the Indian Position", March 27, 1902.

[5] This letter is not available.

enforce the promise made by me,[1] it should be done while my plans are yet unsettled, though I know that there is no such condition attached to the promise. It would be a gracious act to free me unless it is to be enforced in the near future. If you have not already sent the credit balance by draft, please do so immediately on receipt here of. How are you both getting on? The copies of pamphlets, etc. are still coming; so also copies of the correspondence which James was to have prepared for me; all this must be due either to unflinching devotion, or to the minting operations. I hope it is the latter. A cablegram in the Times received today announces the death of the uncrowned king of South Africa.[2] It is impossible to withhold a tear in spite of all his faults.

From the photostat of the office copy: S.N. 3949.

231. LETTER TO MAURICE

RAJKOT,
March 31, 1902

DEAR MR. MAURICE,

I had your letters, two in Calcutta and a third redirected from Calcutta to Rangoon. I was surprised to learn from your last letter that even up to the date thereof you had not received my reply to your first letter. I hope, however, that before you embarked for South Africa, you had received it.

I do not know that I deserve the thanks you have thought fit to express for anything that I may have done in Calcutta to make your visit as comfortable as possible. It was nothing but duty done, and I wish I could have done more.

After tremendous difficulty, I was able to move the President of the Chamber of Commerce, and as a result, a very sympathetic reply from the Viceroy has been secured. But, of course, sympathy alone would do very little. In order to call forth action in accordance with it, great effort on the part of the Indian public is necessary.

I wish you were with me during my voyage to Rangoon as well as the 3rd class travelling in the North West. Your letter had very nearly taken all the wish out of me, but I thought I was bound to carry

[1] While leaving South Africa, Gandhiji had agreed to go back within a year should the Indian community there need him. (The *Autobiography*, p. 219).

[2] Cecil Rhodes, who died on March 22.

out the programme first sketched, and so I did, I am glad to say, with the result that I feel all the richer for the experience thus gained. I confess, I do not share altogether your views about the dirty habits of the 3rd class passengers. I do not know that you have travelled 3rd class on the Continental railways as I have. I would far rather be in a 3rd class compartment in India than in Europe; for, at times, the company of the 3rd class passengers on the Continental railways I found to be very disagreeable both from a sanitary standpoint and otherwise. So Mr. Rhodes is dead. However much one may dislike his policy, it is impossible, now that the man is gone, to withhold a tear; that he was a true friend of the Empire it would be very difficult to gainsay. I hope you have settled down once more in Cape Town and that you and your family are keeping good health. Please let me hear from you if you have not written already.

yours truly,

From the photostat of the office copy: S.N. 3950.

232. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

RAJKOT,
April 8, 1902

DEAR PROFESSOR GOKHALE,

I tender you my respectful congratulations on your great Budget speech of which I have received a copy. I am well aware that my praise is uninformed, yet it is none the less sincere. I would like, if it is possible, to get a few copies of your speech for distribution among friends in Natal.

I await your promised letter in reply to my previous letter referring to the Ranade Memorial subscription.

I remain,
yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the original: G.N. 3719.

233. LETTER TO G. K. PAREKH

[RAJKOT,]
April 16, 1902

THE HONOURABLE MR. GOKALDAS KAHANDAS PAREKH
MAHABLESHWAR LODGE
MAHABLESHWAR

DEAR MR. PAREKH,

I have yours of the 9th inst. for which I beg to thank you. When I am likely to be in Bombay I will duly inform you beforehand.

From the photostat of the office copy: S.N. 3956.

234. INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

RAJKOT,
April 22, 1902

TO
THE EDITOR
The Times of India

SIR,

Your issue of the 10th instant contains a cablegram to the effect that a Bill, which imposes on the children of indentured Indians in Natal the same disabilities as the parents themselves, has been read a second time in the Legislative Assembly of the Colony.

In the absence of the full text, it is rather difficult to comment upon the measure; but as the delivery of letters from South Africa is so very uncertain, and as I know with what swiftness Bills can become the law of the Colony, I venture to offer a few remarks.

It was, I think, in the year 1893 that delegates appointed by the Natal Government came to India to persuade the Indian Government to sanction legislation requiring indentured Indians to return to India after the completion of their indentures or to pay a poll-tax of £25 per year. There is a long history behind this delegation which, although painfully interesting, I am obliged to omit, in order to be brief. The then Viceroy, His Excellency Lord Elgin, while he absolutely refused to impose a poll-tax of £25, unfortunately accepted the principle by consenting to a reduced tax of £3. Had His Lordship known, as I fear

he did not do then, that a similar attempt was made some twenty years back without avail, probably he would not have yielded.

Now the present Bill is, I fear, in a measure intended to accomplish what the delegation failed to do in 1893. For under it all children of indentured parents (even infants in arms!) would be liable to pay the £3 tax, and if an indentured Indian happens to have seven children, by no means an unlikely event, between him and his children he would have to pay £24 per year, a thing that would be absolutely beyond his capacity. I shudder to contemplate the evil effects of such a measure on the moral tone of the community which is called upon to pay such heavy penalties for the mere permission to exist in the country to which they have been actually invited or, shall I say, allured.

The iniquity of the measure sanctioned by Lord Elgin in 1893 was graphically described by you, as well as the late Sir W. W. Hunter, who called the state of indenture one of semi-slavery. I would beg to quote the opinions also of the Natal legislators, given when the proposal to compel return of the labourers was first made.

The late Mr. Saunders, a distinguished Colonist, sometime member of the Natal Legislative Council, made the following remarks on the proposal:

> Though the Commission has made no recommendation on the subject of passing a law to force Indians back to India at the expiration of their term of service unless they renew their indentures, I wish to express my strong condemnation of any such idea, and I feel convinced that many, who now advocate the plan, when they realise what it means, will reject it as energetically as I do. Stop Indian immigration and face results, but don't try to do what I can show is a great wrong.
>
> What is it but taking the best out of servants (the good as well as the bad), and then refusing them the enjoyment of the reward! Forcing them back (if we could, but we cannot) when their best days have been spent for our benefit. Where to? Why, back to face a prospect of starvation from which they sought to escape when they were young. Shylock-like, taking the pound of flesh, and Shylock-like we may rely on meeting Shylock's reward.

The late Mr. Escombe, sometime Prime Minister of the Colony, at the time of giving his evidence before a Commission appointed to inquire into Indian matters, deposed as follows:

> With reference to time-expired Indians, I do not think that it ought to be compulsory on any man to go to any part of the world save for a crime for which he is transported. I hear a great deal of this question; I have been asked

> again and again to take a different view, but I have not been able to do it. A man is brought here, in theory with his own consent, in practice very often without his consent. He gives the best five years of his life, he forms new ties, forgets the old ones, perhaps establishes a home here, and he cannot, according to my view of right and wrong, be sent back. Better by far to stop the further introduction of Indians altogether than to take what work you can out of them and order them away. The Colony, or part of the Colony, seems to want Indians but also wishes to avoid the consequences of Indian immigration. The Indian people do no harm as far as I know; in certain respects they do a great deal of good. I have never heard a reason to justify the extradition of a man who has behaved well for five years. I do not think that the Indian, at the expiration of his five years' service, should be placed under police supervision unless he is a criminal. I know not why Arabs should be placed under police supervision more than Europeans. In cases of some Arabs the thing is simply ridiculous. They are men of large means, large connections, who are always used in trade if they can be dealt with more profitably than others.

I am aware that the honourable gentleman, after all, under pressure of electioneering circumstances, later on did "take a different view." The above extracts deal with compulsory return, but seeing that the poll-tax is meant to secure such a return of the indentured Indians they are applicable to it also, and the Bill under discussion would necessarily imply the return of the children, should they choose not to pay the tax.

You as well as your other contemporaries have laid the Indian settlers under deep obligation by frequently ventilating their grievances. It, however, appears that European Colonists in Natal will not be happy until every Indian is driven out of Natal. It is, therefore, with the Indian a life-and-death struggle. His cause is admittedly absolutely just. There are many other circumstances favourable to justice being done. We have a very strong Viceroy. The Colonial Secretary has often expressed his sympathy. Will you kindly put all these forces in motion? It would not be premature to move now. Probably, by the time papers are received from Natal, the Bill, too, would have been received at the Colonial Office for sanction. There is, therefore, hardly time to wait. I may state that the Colonial constitution requires sanction from the Home Government for all Colour legislation.

M. K. GANDHI

The Times of India, 1-5-1902

235. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

RAJKOT,
April 22, 1902

DEAR PROFESSOR GOKHALE,

May I trouble you about the Indians in Natal? You may have read the cablegram that appeared in the *Times of India* of the 10th inst. I have written to the Editor a letter on it. I have also sent him, in order to enable him to study the history of the question, a copy of one of the memorials on the subject. It appears to me, if I may venture to make a suggestion, that the most effective measure in which probably you can help us, is to see the Editor and discuss the situation with him. A powerful and intelligent agitation in the press is, at present, the only mode of action. As soon as the papers are received from Natal, it may be necessary to take Mr. Turner at his word and ask him to join in sending a representative memorial to the Viceroy. I am very sorry I cannot send you also a copy of the memorial referred to above; but if the Presidency Association have at all filed the papers sent to it from time to time, you will get a copy from there. I am writing to Mr. Munshi about it. I hope I am not unduly trespassing on your time.

I remain,
yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the original: G.N. 3720.

236. LETTER TO J. ROBINSON

RAJKOT,
April 27, 1902

DEAR SIR JOHN,

I have to thank you for your kind and welcome letter of the 11th March, as also for the photograph which I shall prize very much.

I am very glad to find that you liked Professor Max Muller's book. Nothing to my mind can conduce better to an understanding between the Western and the Eastern branches of the Imperial family than a fair knowledge, on the part of either, of the best of the other.

I thank you for your inquiry about my health, which appears to be steadily improving.

I fear that there is a great deal of truth in what some speakers

and writers say about the growing poverty of the mass of the Indian peoples. Some classes have certainly become more prosperous, but the millions seem to be sinking. I was here in 1896 and the difference between what I saw then and what I see now is very great. The distress is indescribable. This, however, does not necessarily prove what those speakers and writers allege to be the cause of the poverty. All the same, a return to Akbar's method of administration may to a certain extent alleviate the distress caused by famine and plague. My remarks on this matter are subject to correction, as I have not yet been able to study the question as fully as I should like to.

I hope you are enjoying good health and pray that God may grant you many years to enable the country to receive the benefit of your great experience in many problems that still await solution in South Africa. With my respects to you and Lady Robinson,

I remain,

yours truly,

From the photostat of the office copy: S. N. 3961.

237. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

RAJKOT,
May 1, 1902

DEAR PROFESSOR GOKHALE,

I have to thank you very much for your kind note. I could quite understand that the reason for your silence must have been something quite unavoidable, but I did not think, until I saw Mr. Wadia 3 days ago, that it was your illness. I hope that you will soon regain your normal health. You will be pleased to learn that for the time being I have accepted the very responsible position of Secretary to the State Volunteer Plague Committee which has been established in view of an impending outbreak in Rajkot. I was therefore just thinking how I should manage, if I receive the summons from you for the Ranade Memorial, for which I need hardly say you may count upon me as your assistant, whenever you begin the work; that is, of course, should you require me then.

I remain,

yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the original: G.N. 3718.

238. NOTES ON THE INDIAN QUESTION

RAJKOT,
May 6, 1902

In these notes, the Indian question as affecting Natal and the two new Colonies is alone considered.

NATAL

Natal is a self-governing Colony whose constitution requires that all Colour legislation, before coming into force, must receive the sanction of His Majesty the King, and it provides generally that any laws passed by the Colonial legislature may be disallowed within two years of their passing.

The Colony has a white population of about 60,000 and an equal number of British Indian settlers. The indigenous people, that is, the Zulus, are a fine body of men, but they are very lazy, and will with difficulty work at a stretch for six months. When, therefore, the white settlers were at their wit's end with reference to the steady supply of reliable labour and the Colony was becoming bankrupt, the Legislature resorted to Indian labour and, after some negotiations, the Indian Government sanctioned the immigration of indentured Indians of Natal. This was nearly 40 years ago. The demand for Indian labour continued to increase and with it also the prosperity of the Colony. These men contracted to serve, for a period of 5 years, any master to whom they may be allotted at a monthly wage of 10s. for the first year, with an increase of Is. per year. The contract also included free lodging, medical attendance and a free return passage at the end thereof.

The relations between the masters and the men are regulated by a special code which imposes some very stringent obligations on the men, a breach whereof becomes a criminal offence.

These labourers were naturally followed by free Indian settlers, that is to say, those who paid their own passage and went to the Colony in pursuit of trade, etc. The indentured Indians, too, after becoming free, instead of availing themselves of a free return passage, for the best part elected to remain in the Colony and developed into mechanics, petty traders, farmers, etc. This aroused keen trade jealousy among the white men who found no difficulty in picking out weakest points, viz., the habit of overcrowding, communal insanitation and some crude customs or superstitions. These were terribly

magnified and were often, to our great disadvantage, discussed in the papers, and thus arose the popular prejudice against the Indian settlers who, being themselves unlettered and having no friend who would put their side of the question before the people, were unable to correct it. Before 1894, Natal was a Crown Colony, and attempts made to reproduce that prejudice in legislation were frustrated, but the Colony, having secured rights of complete self-government, succeeded in passing anti-Indian measures. The first attempt made was to pass laws. specially applicable to Indians; for instance, a Bill was introduced preventing Indians from exercising the right of franchise. This was objected to by the Indians and, ultimately, the Colonial Secretary disallowed it. At the time of agitating against the measure, the Indians made it absolutely clear that they did not desire to possess in the Colony any political power, but they objected to it on the ground that it was a preliminary step, as it afterwards proved to be, towards the curtailment of the rights of the British Indian settlers. To return, although the Bill was disallowed, it was replaced by another equally bad, if not worse, for the replacing Bill, which is now the law of the land, disqualifies those who have not hitherto exercised the Parliamentary franchise in their own country. Thus was opened the door to indirect legislation, such as the laws affecting immigration and dealers' licenses. The Immigration Restriction Act prohibits the entry into the Colony of all those who, not having been previously domiciled there or not being wife or minor children of such persons, are unable to write out in one of the European languages an application in terms of the form attached to it. The Dealers' Licenses Act gives absolute powers to the Licensing Officers appointed thereunder to refuse or to grant trading licenses. Their decisions are appealable only before the Municipal Corporations which appoint them and which, consisting as they do chiefly of tradespeople, try to do away with as many Indian licenses as possible. As a matter of fact, these bodies even instruct their officers whether to grant particular licenses or not. The inherent jurisdiction of the Supreme Court has been specially taken away. The licensing law is a matter of eternal soreness and, as the licenses must be renewed every year, the Indian trader has to tremble on the approach of every new year. Notwithstanding these vexing disabilities, nothing, I am afraid, can be directly done for the present, seeing that they are all laws of Natal duly accepted by the Home Government, but the Europeans are not satisfied with what they have gained. They are anxious to impose

further disabilities by indirect means. I see from the papers received from Natal that the Natal Civil Service Board has lately passed a bye-law regulating the admission of candidates for that examination, and it provides that children of parents. affected by the disfranchising law above referred to shall not be admissible as candidates. In my opinion, this bye-law is illegal, going as it does to the root of the Constitution of the Colony. For, if it were an Act of the Colonial Legislature, it would require the sanction of the Home Government. Moreover, on general principles the bye-laws cannot be allowed to widen or restrict the scope of the Act under which they are framed. I have seen the Civil Service Act and in it I read no warrant for such a bye-law. I cite this instance just to show to what length the principle of indirect legislation has been carried. Of course, our people in Natal will have, if necessary, to test its legality. I have also advised them to memorialize the Governor of the Colony.

The recently published cablegram[1] in the papers shows the activity of the Europeans in another direction. In 1895, the indentured immigration law was amended so as to lengthen the period of indenture to 10 years and to compel the return to India after the completion of the indenture or, in lieu thereof, to an annual poll-tax of £3. Now according to the cablegram, they propose to exact the poll-tax not only from the indentured immigrant but also from his children.

TRANSVAAL AND THE ORANGE RIVER COLONY

In the Transvaal, the Indians cannot own land or live except in Locations. They cannot walk on the footpaths, must take out passes like the Kaffirs. Now when the Location law was passed, Mr. Chamberlain, in reply to the Indian memorial protesting against it and the subsequent stages, gave a very sympathetic reply. He even suggested he might have granted tangible relief had his hands not been tied down by the acts of his predecessor. Moreover, Lord Lansdowne has been reported to have given the disabilities of the Indians as one of the causes of the present war.

Under such circumstances, it was naturally expected that, after the country passed into British occupation, the disabilities of the Indians would be swept away, but it is feared that the expectation may not be realised. Mr. Chamberlain appears to be shuffling. He talks of

[1] *Vide* "Letter to *The Times of India*", April 22, 1902.

conferring with Lord Milner and asking him what changes are possible in the old legislation inherited by the British. Such an attitude is very dangerous. Why should there be any such reference at all? Surely, the very first thing to do should be to equalise the status of all British subjects and then consider whether any section merits special treatment. I understand, and to a certain extent, even sympathise with, this position. In 1896, when he penned his dispatch referred to above, he little thought that the war would be coming so soon and that, too, in such an acute form as to throw the whole country into his hands. Now he must find it difficult, on the one hand, to conciliate the very reasonable and absolutely just demands of the Indians as well as to act according to the terms of his despatch, and, on the other hand, to satisfy the anti-Indian prejudice. He also probably seems to be on the verge of seeing, in his own lifetime and during his term of office, the South African Federation completed. The Indian question must stand in his way, and, if he can harmonise anti-Indian legislation in South Africa, that difficulty is removed. It is, if I am not mistaken, for this reason that he is "tacking". He wants to sound the Cape and Natal on the question and modify the old legislation only so far as it is acceptable to the two Colonies.

It is, then, clear what should be the *modus operandi* on the part of the Indian publicists. All the available energy has to be directed towards the new Colonies, and, if a satisfactory solution can be secured, the Colony of Natal must necessarily yield, and, in my humble opinion, the way theagitation [. . . . .][1] the Indian papers to keep the matter constantly before the public and the Government. Anglo-Indian sympathy in this matter is with us and that must at all hazards be retained. I attach hereto a copy of the letter from the Viceroy addressed to Mr. Turner which shows his views and which shows also that the Bengal Chamber of Commerce is prepared to move. The public associations must combine. And, if one association were to. make the question of foreign emigration its special study, it can direct in proper channels the whole agitation such that the Home Government cannot easily disregard it.

In South Africa, we are engaged in a struggle for existence with a race that is intensely active and rich, and which does not brook a defeat. A corresponding activity continually is required on our part, and success is ultimately bound to come.

[1] Not decipherable.

Several leaders in conversation with me have given way to despair. I must confess I do not share any such feeling, though, certainly, the position is very difficult, and any false move may retard success. It is only to justify such sanguine attitude that I mention the fact that in several matters the Europeans in South Africa have been unsuccessful in carrying their point. In Zululand, for instance, which is part of Natal, legislation was actually passed depriving Indians of the right of buying land[1] and it was disallowed. The Immigration Restriction Act and the Dealers' Licenses Act are also a compromise. The original draft Bills went much further than these, and it was due to persistent agitation that Indians have beep able to retain a footing at all in Natal or the Transvaal. In the Colonies, our endeavour has been to conciliate the Colonials by removing misunderstanding, by sympathising with them in their difficulties in howsoever a humble manner and even by taking part in the war.

In the Orange River Colony, the disabilities are far more serious. The Indians have no rights there at all, but I imagine that the legislation will be the same as in the Transvaal.

From the photostat of the office copy: S.N. 3963.

239. LETTER TO ABDULKADAR[2]

RAJKOT,
May 7, 1902

DEAR MR. ABDULKADAR,

I enclose herewith a Gujarati letter[3] addressed to you as well as Messrs. Rustomji and Miankhan. I do hope you will have the letter properly read and understand it. I need not add any further to it. You have not acknowledged any of my letters. I shall thank you to let me have draft for the balance of my bill which I need badly.

Yours truly,

From the photostat of the office copy: S.N. 3964.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to *The Natal Mercury*", 3-2-1896.

[2] A prominent businessman of Durban, vice-president of the Natal Indian Congress in 1894 and president in 1899.

[3] This is not available.

240. INDIANS IN NATAL

RAJKOT,
May 10, 1902

TO
THE EDITOR
The Times of India
BOMBAY

SIR,

With reference to my letter about the position of the British Indians in Natal published in your issue of the 1st instant, I have now received from Natal the papers containing the text of the Bill, which I beg to give below:

> Bill to amend the Indian Immigration Amendment Act, providing that every Indian child, on attaining the age of majority (males 16, females 13), shall be obliged (*a*) to go to India, or (*b*) to remain in Natal under indentures similar to and renewable in the same manner as the re-indenture referred to in Act No. 17, 1895, as amended by subsequent Acts, or (*c*) to take out year by year, in terms of Section 6 of Act No. 17, 1895, a pass or license to remain in the Colony.
>
> Provided, however, that if such child attains majority before the completion of his father's first or any subsequent indenture, the operation of this section shall be suspended until the completion of such indenture. In the case of a child whose father is dead or not in Natal, or whose mother was unmarried at the time of the child's birth, the above reference to the father's indenture shall be deemed to apply to the mother's indenture. A child to whom this Act applies shall be entitled to a free passage to India in order to enable him to proceed thither at the end of the first or any renewed term of indenture of his father (or of his mother, as the case may be). The right to a free passage shall however be lost (*a*) if the father, or, as in the above case, the mother, shall have completed a term of indenture during the child's minority, and shall not have returned to India or entered into a fresh indenture in terms of Act No. 17, 1895, (*b*) if the child does not go to India by the first opportunity available to him after attaining his majority or after the end of a term of indenture entered into under this Act. The Act does not apply to persons who have attained the age of majority previous to the date of taking effect of the Act, but it makes no difference whether the child is born before or after arrival of parents in Natal.

The Bill, then, if it is any satisfaction to know the fact, is not to apply to infants in arms. The more, however, one considers it, the more unjust it is found to be.

It is worthy of note that the children who have received an

elementary education in the Colony are expected by the Bill to serve at a rate of wages far below the market-rate, like well-built men as field-labourers from "sunrise to sunset", and that the children born of the so-called unlawful connections, too, are brought under the Bill. Thus, the children of an indentured woman married according to the religious rites of her sect to a free Indian, but whose marriage is not registered and not recognised in the Colony, will be under the same restrictions as indentured Indians. But it is hardly worth while to examine the details of a measure whose principle is repugnant to the ordinary rules of justice as it is known to those brought up under the British Constitution.

The same mail that has brought the papers containing the text of the Bill also brings the news that Indian children, attending the schools in the Colony, are to be debarred from receiving the Coronation commemoration medals which are to be presented by the Government in June next to all the European children attending the schools. The exclusion is certainly not based on grounds of economy, for the Indian children are, I think, about 3,000 against 20,000 European children. Evidently, the Coronation celebration day is to be marked out for the Indian children to realise as vividly as possible that the possession of a brown skin is a sure mark of humiliation and degradation in the estimation of the Government of the Colony.

The Times of India, 14-5-1902

241. LETTER TO DINSHAW WACHHA[1]

RAJKOT,
Sunday, May 18, 1902

DEAR MR. WACHHA,

I have your letter. Although I think the sentence referred to by you may stand as it is, now that it has struck you as perhaps unwarranted in order to avoid the slightest semblance of exaggerated language, I propose the following in its place. "It is now evidently sought as much as possible to reach the same figure by taxing the children of indentured men after they have attained the artificial

[1] This is how Gandhiji spelt the name.

majority." I suppose you are printing the memorial.[1] If so, I hope you will let me have a few copies.

I am,
yours truly,

From the photostat of the office copy: S.N. 3967.

242. LETTER TO EAST INDIA ASSOCIATION

RAJKOT ,
May 18, 1902

TO
THE SECRETARY
EAST INDIA ASSOCIATION
WESTMINSTER
LONDON

DEAR SIR,

The enclosed[2] will tell its own tale. The East India Association has laid the British Indian settlers in South Africa under deep obligation by advocating their cause. It has already demanded suspension of emigration from India of indentured people, if no redress can be granted in respect of general disabilities. Such a demand would be very appropriate at this juncture, for, the Bill referred to in the enclosed directly affects the interest of the indentured people. I believe the Presidency Association here is moving in the matter. May I request some similar action on the part of the Association. A combined movement is bound to achieve success.

I remain,
yours truly,

From the photostat of the office copy: S.N. 3966.

[1] "Memorial to Lord Hamilton", June 5, 1902.

[2] The enclosure evidently consisted of copies of his two letters on the Immigration Bill dated April 22 and May 10, 1902, to *The Times of India*.

243. LETTERS TO M. M. BHOWNAGGREE

RAJKOT ,
May 18, 1902

DEAR SIR MANCHERJI,

I hope you received my last letter dated the 30th March. Since then the Natal Government has made another attempt to impose further disabilities on the British Indian settlers in that Colony. The enclosures[1] will explain the situation thoroughly. To my mind, this attempt is bound to be frustrated if all the available forces in favour of the settlers were set in motion. To demand suspension of emigration in Natal, if the Bill cannot be vetoed, would be absolutely just, for it isthe very indentured people that are now concerned. As you are aware, the East India Association has asked for such suspension even in respect of the general disabilities of the Indians in South Africa. How much more necessary it must be in the present case! I believe the Presidency Association has already moved the latter. May I request your powerful help on behalf of the poor people?

I remain,
yours truly,

From the photostat of the office copy: S.N. 3971.

244. INDIANS IN NATAL

RAJKOT,
May 20, 1902

[TO

THE EDITOR
The Englishman]

[SIR,]

I venture to ask for a short space in your paper to enable me to draw the attention of the public to the latest attempt of the Natal Legislature to impose further disabilities on the British Indian settlers in that Colony.

The Natal Parliament has passed a Bill which makes the children (males 16, and females 13 years old) of indentured Indians liable, like

[1] *Vide* footnote above.

their parents,

(a) to return to India, or

(b) to enter into indentured service, or

(c) to pay the annual poll-tax of £3.

During Lord Elgin's viceroyalty, a deputation[1] came all the way from Natal to induce His Lordship to sanction legislation terminating the indentures in India, thus preventing their permanent settlement in the Colony, or imposing a poll-tax of £25 per year on each indentured Indian who may wish to remain in the Colony as a free man. Happily,

His Lordship would not listen to any such proposal, but unfortunately, and, I believe, because His Lordship was probably unaware of certain circumstances, reluctantly accepted the principle of taxation as a price for freedom by sanctioning the imposition of the £3 annual tax. Now if the Bill in question becomes law, the Natal Government would have very nearly succeeded in attaining what they failed to get 8 years ago.

Imperialism is on the lips of everybody, more especially in the Colonies.How to weld the different parts of the British Dominions into one beautiful unbreakable whole is a problem which the greatest British politicians of the day are endeavouring to solve, and yet, here is a Colony which is making invidious distinctions between one class of British subjects and another in a most aggravating manner.

The attitude of the Natal Government towards the indentured Indians is indefensible from every point of view. These men go to Natal at the invitation of the Colony to materially help forward its advancement. Only last month you published a cablegram stating that the Premier of the Colony, in reply to the proposal to stop indentured emigration from India to the Colony, said that such a thing would paralyse its industries. It was,"when", in the words of a Natal Legislator, "the fate of the Colony hung in the balance," that "Indian labourers were introduced, up went the prices, and up again went the revenue, wages and salary." It hardly accords with justice and fairness to tax the people who have thus given the best 5 years of their lives to the Colony at a rate of wages far below the market-rate. Even in the Colony, though it was a voice in the wilderness, there was one

[1] The Binns-Mason Commission of 1893-4.

gentleman, an ex-Attorney-General, Mr. Morcom, K.C., who protested against the Bill in the following terms. He said

> that Indian children who happened to be born in the Colony would have to be deported, or indentured for life, or pay the license [fee] of £3 a year. The way in which the Colony was flooded with Indians for labour might induce many undesirable circumstances but it was utterly impossible for the House, without disregard of justice or constitutional propriety, to deport these children who had had the misfortune to be born in the Colony.

So long as there are men in Natal who, like Mr. Morcom, are not blinded by prejudice, so long will there be hope for justice being ultimately secured, but, until public opinion there has veered round in favour of justice and fairness, it is very essential that the Indian public should remain on the alert, and that the Home Government firmly insist on justice being done to the Indians.

In the words of Mr. Morcom, "the idea seems to be to get all the advantages out of the system without regard to its drawback." Would it not then be "better by far", in the words of another Natal Legislator, "to stop the further introduction of Indians altogether than to take what work you can out of them and then order them away"?

This is a question on which there is, there can be, no division of opinion. May I ask you to raise your powerful voice against the contemplated injustice? I may state that the Bill has been specially reserved for sanction from the Home Government before it can become law of the Colony.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Englishman, 26-5-1902

245. INDIA AND NATAL[1]

The Imperial wave is passing rather furiously over the British dominions. There will be hearty rejoicings wherever the Union Jack floats, during the Coronation. At such a time, peace and good-will unto all British subjects should be the desire of everyone owning the sovereignty of King Edward VII. There can be no true imperialism

[1] This article by Gandhiji (*vide* "Indians in Natal", 31-5-1902, *infra),* was first published in *The Voice of India. Harijan, 23-10-1949,* reproduced it from an earlier, typewritten draft (with several verbal variations) in the possession of Chhaganlal Gandhi, Gandhiji's nephew and associate in South Africa.

unless we have oneness, harmony and toleration among all classes of British subjects. Let us see, then, how the Colony of Natal, which prides itself on being the most British Colony in South Africa, proposes to help in realizing this imperial brotherhood and in spreading peace and good-will among all. Attention has already been drawn to the piece of injustice sought to be perpetrated by the Natal Government on the British Indian settlers in that fair land. To understand thoroughly the gravity of the situation, it would be well to know the history of Indian emigration to Natal.

As early as 1862, the Colony found, after several experiments, that it could not "stand on its legs" unless it imported Indian labour in order to develop its agricultural resources. The natives of the soil, 400,000 in number, were found to be too lazy to work. The climate was too trying for the white men to do much out-door work. When, therefore, the "fate of the Colony hung in the balance," the Indian Government were approached to help it out of its difficulty. All kinds of inducements were offered to the first Indian settlers, and a continual stream of emigrants flowed into the Colony from India. Later on, when misgivings arose as to the utility of introducing the Indian element into the Colony, a Commission was appointed to examine the whole question, and one of the Commissioners, Mr. Saunders, thus recorded his opinion:

> The Indian immigration brought prosperity, prices rose, people were no longer content to grow or sell produce for a song; they could do better; war, high prices for wool, sugar, etc., kept up prosperity ant prices of local produce In which the Indians dealt. . . .
>
> Our records prove, as do those of other Colonies, that the introduction of coloured labour which develops and draws out the hidden capabilities of the soil and its unoccupied acres, opens out at the same time numerous unforeseen fields for the profitable employment of white settlers. If we look back to 1859, we shall find that the assured promise of Indian labour resulted in an immediate rise of revenue. . . . But a 'few years later, alarm arose that it will be suspended simultaneously; down went the revenue; . . . and yet another change, a fresh promise of renewed Indian immigration created is effect, and up again wentthe revenue. . . . Records like these ought to tell their own tale and silence childish sentimentalities and mean jealousies.

The present Premier of the Colony has informed us only lately that a stoppage of Indian emigration would paralyze its industries. The Indian labourer, then, is admittedly indispensable to the welfare of the Colony. As in 1862, so in 1899, it was India which came to the

rescue in its hour of need. Without Indian labour in 1862 the Colony would have become bankrupt, if its own legislators have given us correct information. In 1899, as the whole world knows, without an Indian army, its capital and its port would have been in Boer hands.

As a reward for all these services, the Natal Parliament has passed a Bill, imposing an annual tax of £3 on the children of indentured Indians (males 16 years, females 13) unless, on attaining the artificial majority, they either deported themselves from the Colony or entered into a series of indentures during their stay in the. Colony! It maybe remarked in passing that the indenture wage is 10s. per month the minimum, and £1 per month the maximum—a rate which is far below the market-rate; moreover, breaches of these indentures on the part of the indentured men become criminal offences which, under ordinary contracts, can only be dealt with civilly.

It is painful to recall the fact that it was Lord Elgin's Government that paved the way for the imposition of a poll-tax on the children of the immigrants by consenting to a levy of the tax on the parents; but we have no hesitation in saying that the parents' liability to pay the tax cannot justify a similar imposition upon the children, for, the former, at any rate, are presumed to know the conditions under which they go to Natal, and lawyers may say, that if they choose to accept very onerous conditions, it is their look-out. But are the children presumed to know any such conditions? That they are born of such parents is no doubt a grievous misfortune. Unfortunately, they cannot help themselves. The parents, again, know what indentured labour is, they know what India is; but the same cannot be said of their children born in the Colony. To expect them, after they have, perhaps, received some education, and known its worth in the Colony, either to go to India or to accept a status described by the late Sir W. W. Hunter as that of semi-slavery, is cruel in the extreme.

Evidently, the Colony wants to get all it can out of the poor Indian, and at the same time to avoid the consequences of the introduction of Indian labour. A more straightforward course to adopt would be, if it did not care to have the Indian as he is, to do away with his labour altogether—an attitude which would be at once intelligible and satisfactory. We have no wish to force our countrymen on them, but it is fair to expect a just British treatment for those who are invited to the Colony; and if it is impossible for the Indian Government to

secure for the settlers a fair treatment, and if the Colony will not, of its own accord, stop the State-regulated importation of Indian labour, it is clearly the duty of our Government to help it to do so. We have fortunately a vigilant andmasterful Viceroy in Lord Curzon, and we hope His Excellency will not allow any serious injustice to be perpetrated. May we not also appeal to sober-minded people in the Colony itself? We see that one member at least of the Natal Parliament, Mr. Morcom, would have nothing to do with the Bill, the un-British character of which he showed up in forcible language. We are sure there must be many who think like Mr. Morcom. Why will they not all speak out like him and break down the barrier of prejudice against the poor British Indian? In the meanwhile, however, we have a right to look up to Mr. Chamberlain to exercise his powerful influence ii the Colonies on the side of justice and fairplay.

The Voice of India, 31-5-1902

246. LETTER TO JAMES GODFREY

[RAJKOT,
prior to *June 3, 1902*]

[TO]
JAMES GODFREY
[DURBAN]

MY DEAR JAMES,

I have your letter of the 25th April for which I thank you. I am very glad you are working so well. Never mind reward for your services. It always comes without the slightest doubt *when we do not pine for it*.[1] It may not come in the manner we may expect A. But that matters very little. Really speaking, a consciousness that we are doing what we consider to be our duty to the best of our ability is the highest reward. I wish you every success in your studies Shorthand you must not neglect on any account. I have written a letter2 to a few Colonial-born friends. As the facilities for multiplying copies are not as I should like them to be, I have omitted to send one to you or your father. Please, therefore, do read it either from Messrs Paul Done, Amboo or Laurence. It is meant for all. I am glad George has found something at Johannesburg. Please ask him to write to me. I am also

[1] These italicized words are underlined.
[2] This is not in available.

glad that your father is now all right. Mrs. Gandhi often thinks of Mrs. Godfrey and your sisters. Remember us to all members of your family. Do write me from time to time.

Yours truly,

From the photostat of the office copy: S.N. 3957.

247. LETTER TO NAZAR AND KHAN

RAJKOT,
June 3, 1902

DEAR MESSRS NAZAR AND KHAN,

I now enclose herewith a memo of expenditure[1] on account of the Natal work. You will notice that it amounts to Rs. 378-7-9, a trifle over Rs. 375 realised from the draft. Of late, South African work has increased considerably. I returned from Calcutta at the end of February, and since that time I have engaged a clerk on the usual terms, namely, that he gets copying charges which are for the most part paid by the clients. At present I am supposed to be taking rest, nor would there be much work for me in Kathiawar even if I opened a regular office. The real use I can make, therefore, of clerical assistance is with reference to public work. Now about 100 sides of type-written matter have been already copied, not including carbon copies, besides a lot of Gujarati correspondence and other work. As copying fees for this work, I have so far paid only Rs. 15. The usual charges here are half a rupee per each written side. I think I am understating the work when I say that he has had to devote on an average 3 hours per day. Under the circumstances, I consider the payment to be very small. I should like to be able to pay him at least Rs. 40 for the whole of the work up to date. Moreover, the work continues. Had I got funds, I should have been able to distribute literature more widely. As it is, I am obliged to work as if I had no funds. I should very much like to subscribe to one or two papers, for instance India, Englishman, etc., which are not to be had in the Rajkot Library; also to directories. Soon after reaching Bombay, I invested in a typewriter Rs. 200. The machine has been wholly used for public work. I have, therefore, to submit the following three propositions to the Congress:

1st. It should vote the balance of my account and Rs. 25 extra

[1] This is not available.

for clerical fees, i.e., Rs. 28-7-9.

2nd. It should buy over the typewriter, to be taken over by me whenever I am in a position to do so, at the same price, unless, it is sooner taken away by the Congress from me.

3rd. The Congress should vote a further sum of £25 to cover future expenses.

If all the three propositions are accepted, you will have to send me £25, and the cost of the typewriter plus Rs. 28-7-9. I am thoroughly aware that any expense beyond £25 is undertaken at my own risk and, at the time of buying the typewriter, I had absolutely no thought of making the proposal I am now making, as I did not then expect my pecuniary position to be so bad as it is. It is, therefore, entirely at the option of theCongress whether to accept or to reject the first two proposals, by which I mean the Congress must not think of sanctioning them, because they are my proposals. If, on their merits, they appear to be reasonable and if it was a matter of buying a new typewriter, the Congress would still invest in it, then alone should the 2 proposals be considered. I may also state that the clerk working with me is my nephew and, but for the volume of work, I should not have thought of paying any clerical charges to him. He is not a volunteer who may be expected to work to any extent without pay. He has no source of income except through me, As to the 3rd proposal, if it is accepted, it will enable me the better to carry on the public work, whenever any expenses are necessary.

I herewith enclose a copy of the Presidency Association Memorial,[1] and my letter to the Englishman[2] and an article for the Voice of India.[3] I am daily expecting at least 100 copies of your Immigration Memorial,[4] as also a few photographs and copies of the coronation address, not to say copies of other memorials, South African Blue book, etc. I should very much like to possess Bird's *Annals of Natal* and the latest report of the Superintendent of Education. The

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Lord Hamilton", June 5, 1902.

[2] *Vide* "Indians in Natal", May 20, 1902.

[3] *Vide* "India and Natal", May 31, 1902.

[4] A memorial which Natal Indians presented to Chamberlain in June 1902 in respect of a Bill to amend the Indian Immigration Act of 1895. *(Vide India,* 19-9-1902).

Government Gazette and *The Natal Mercury* weekly I ought to receive without fail.

Yours Truly,

From the photostat of the office copy: S.N. 3976.

248. LETTER TO MADANJIT[1]

RAJKOT,
[*June 3, 1902*][2]

DEAR MADANJIT,

Happening to go to Junagadh, I met there your brothers, mother-in-law and brother-in-law. I did my best to explain the position and have pacified them. Your mother-in-law complained that they had had no letter from you. This is not proper. You ought to write to her from time to time. That gives satisfaction as well as consolation. Most probably, Labhshanker will bring your wife with him. If, however, your mother-in-law does not at all agree to this, he will come alone. You may come here and take her with you when she is in a position to attend to household work. It seems your mother-in-law is opposed to sending her with anyone else. Please read the letter I have written to Mr. Nazar to-day. From that you will understand how great must be my need of money. For the present, I think, it will be possible for me to stay in Bombay only if the amounts due start coming in from your end regularly.

From the photostat of the office copy in Gujarati: S.N. 3958.

[1] Madanjit Vyavaharik, a co-worker of Gandhiji in South Africa. He set up the International Printing Press in Durban, in 1898, at Gandhiji's suggestion and with his help started in 1903 the *Indian Opinion*, which Gandhiji took over in 1904.

[2] The date is determined by the reference in this letter to the one he addressed the *came* day to Nazar and Khan.

249. MEMORIAL TO LORD HAMILTON[1]

BOMBAY PRESIDENCY ASSOCIATION
APOLLO BUNDER,
BOMBAY,
June 5, 1902

TO
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD GEORGE HAMILTON
H.M.'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA-IN-COUNCIL
LONDON

YOUR LORDSHIP,

By direction of the Council of the Bombay Presidency Association, we beg to draw Your Lordship's attention to a Bill which has passed its second reading in the Legislative Assembly of Natal and which is termed "The Bill to Amend the Indian Immigration Amendment Act".

The Bill in effect purposes to bring [under it] the major children (males 16 years and females 13) of the British Indians, indentured under the Act No. 17 of 1885 of the Natal Legislature, and would, therefore, like their parents, render them liable:

(a) to return to India at the Colony's expense or

(b) to enter into indentured service or

(c) to pay the annual poll tax of £3.

It is difficult to say whether the Bill will be finally passed by both the Houses and reach the Colonial Office for sanction. But, in view of the uncertainty of postal delivery of letters from South Africa, the Council deems it right, even at this somewhat premature stage, to enter this humble protest against this latest attempt of the Natal Government to impose restrictions of a harsh character on the liberty of the British Indians.

As Your Lordship is aware, it was with great reluctance that HisExcellency Lord Elgin, the then Viceroy, sanctioned in 1894 the imposition on the indentured Indians of the £3 tax, euphemistically called a pass or licence, to remain in the Colony. That tax is admitted

[1] An advance copy bearing the date May 24 was sent to *India*, but the memorial was submitted to the Government of Bombay under the date June 5, for transmission to the Secretary of State for India.

to be severe enough, though the original proposal of the Natal Government was to secure permission to levy a £25 tax.

It is now evidently sought to reach the same figure as much as possible by taxing the children of the indentured men after they have attained the artificial majority.

The object of regulating by law the emigration of the population of India is, the Council understands, to foster foreign settlement and 40 protect such settlers. This object would be obviously frustrated if the labourers, after they had given, in the words of the Natal legislators, the best 5 years of their lives to the Colony, are compelled to return to India.

And if it is a hardship on the men who have been brought up in India to return to India, how much more so must it be for those who went to the Colony as infants or were born there. The object of the Bill cannot be mistaken. The tax is to be levied not for the purposes of revenue. The intention is to make it sufficiently severe to oblige those coming within the scope of the intended legislation to return to India.

Indeed, Europeans in Natal are endeavouring to secure such legislation as would make the indentures terminate in India. The Prime Minister of the Colony has, as it appears from recent cablegrams, stated that the stopping of Indian immigration would paralyse the industries of Natal. The Council asks respectfully, whether the people, who are so indispensable to the welfare of the Colony, and who have materially helped to make it what it is, are to be singled out for special taxation.

The Council, moreover, begs to draw Your Lordship's attention to the fact that these very indentured Indians, at a time when their service was imminently required, voluntarily came forward to help the military authorities as stretcher-bearers. The work of the Natal Volunteer Indian Ambulance Corps is well known to Your Lordship. It has been favourably mentioned in Despatches.

The Council ventures to think that such men deserve a better treatment than being subjected to an annual tax of the character above described

The principle of the measure is so manifestly unjust that the Council does not consider it necessary to enter into an examination of its details.

Ever since the Colony has obtained self-government, the Indian

settlers there, whether free or indentured, have not had rest from "pin-prick', legislation of the character to which Your Lordship's attention has been drawn by various public bodies, including the Association.

If it is found difficult to restrain the self-governing Colony from riding rough-shod over imperial considerations and treating British subjects as aliens, the Council of the Association, in common with the East India Association, which has only recently approached Your Lordship, respectfully considers that it is time Your Lordship should adopt measures to suspend State-regulated emigration from India to the Colony, the moreso now, seeing that it is these very people who are touched by the Bill in question.

We remain, &c.,
PHEROZESHAH M. MEHTA
President
DINSHAW EDULJI WACHA
AMEEROODIN TYABJI
CHIMANLAL SETALVAD
Honorary Secretaries

Colonial Office Records: C.O. 179, Volume 225, India Office.

250. LETTER TO MEHTA[1]

[RAJKOT,
prior to *June 30, 1902*][2]

MY DEAR MEHTA,

I have your two letters. The enclosed will show you the nature of the work I have undertaken.[3] I see that it is exceedingly difficult to dispose of the books, but as the chief aim is to popularise the information contained therein, I have lent copies to half a dozen Plague Volunteers. I shall try to take my weight. I cannot say I yet feel strong enough, but people who saw me in Natal and who have seen me here notice a considerable change for the better. I am obliged

[1] Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta of Rangoon, a friend of Gandhiji since his student days in London .

[2] The office copy is undated, but the reference to the opening of the second term of the Technical Institute "on the last Monday in June" (i.e., 30th) would support this inference.

[3] The enclosure is not available. Gandhiji was, at this time, Secretary of the Plague Committee; *vide* "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", May 1, 1902.

to take fruit salt once or twice a week. I try to take as much exercise as possible, but the heat is against it.

If Oomiashanker[1] is to join the Technical Institute, which I think is an excellent idea if you are prepared to pay the expenses, I know it is not necessary for him to matriculate and the sooner he joins the Institute the better. Fees are 36 rupees per annum for Engineering or Cotton manufacture. The second term commences on the last Monday in June every year. The qualifications are study up to the 6th standard. Even if you want Oomiashanker to go up for the matric, I am sure he won't pass. His heart is not in it and I do not think he is industrious enough; he may require a little goading. The Technical School here is not doing much. The telegraphic class is closed. So the only thing he is doing at present is typewriting. The book-keeping class is very indifferently managed.

From the photostat of the office copy: S.N. 3959.

251. LETTER TO D. B. SHUKLA

AGAKHAN'S BUILDING, 2ND FLOOR,
OPPOSITE HIGH COURT,
BOMBAY, FORT,
[post *July 11, 1902*][2]

MY DEAR SHUKLA,

Thakor of Tharad has just seen me. I have cursorily glanced through the papers. I remember you suggested an appeal to the Privy Council, but against which decision? Not against that of the Political Superintendent! And I don't suppose it can lie against that of the Bombay Government! The Thakor is anxious to obtain an opinion from Mehta, whom I propose seeing this afternoon.

I have at last secured an office at the above address where please direct your reply. I have to pay Rs. 20 per month for one room. What is the period within which you may appeal to the Government of India?[3]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the original: S.N. 2325.

[1] Addressee's nephew.

[2] On July 10, Gandhiji left Rajkot for Bombay, with the idea of setting up practice and reached there the next day. (*Jeevannu Parodh*: Prabhudas Chhaganlal Gandhi, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 1948, p. 59)

[3] This sentence is in Gandhiji's handwriting.

1. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

AGAKHAN'S BUILDINGS, 2ND FLOOR,
OPPOSITE HIGH COURT,
BOMBAY, FORT,
August 1, 1902

DEAR PROF. GOKHALE,

I think I have told you that if I receive the funds expected from Natal, I would settle in Bombay. Having received over Rs. 3000, I have opened an office here and propose giving a year's trial to this place.

I need hardly repeat the assurance that you could command me at any time.

I hope you are doing well constitutionally.

I remain,
yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the original: G.N. 3717.

2. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH[1]

OPPOSITE HIGH COURT,
BOMBAY, FORT,
August 6, 1902

MY DEAR DEVCHANDBHAI,

I did not wish to suggest that Mr. Indrajit should be given any responsible work at all. His wish is to act as junior counsel in addition to your paid junior. All he wants, I suppose, is to be able to say that he appeared as Junior Counsel in a Privy Council case and possibly to gain some practical knowledge.

I have taken up a room from Payne, Gilbert, Sayani and Moos for office, and a part of Keshavji Tulsidas' Bunglow in Girgam Back Road for residence. That is all the progress I have made so far.

I have just finished the welcome draft work that Shukla sent me while I was in Rajkot, and am now free to lounge about the High Court letting the Solicitors know of an addition to the ranks of the

[1] A friend of Gandhiji who later gave up legal practice to join States politics and Gandhiji's constructive work.

briefless ones.

Mehta, on my going to him for a blessing, gave me a curse which as he said might prove a blessing. He thought, contrary to my expectations, that I would be foolishly wasting away in Bombay my small savings from Natal. Wachha, I have not yet been able to see. Gokhale is not here. The Solicitors, whom I have seen, say that I would have to wait long before I could get any work from them. The Chief Justice is very anxious for the advancement of the junior barristers and only last week established a moot society for their benefit.

Such briefly are the circumstances under which I find myself. The work is uphill. But I do not despair. I rather appreciate the regular life and the struggle that Bombay imposes on one. So long, therefore, as the latter does not become unbearable, I am not likely to wish to be out of Bombay.

I am very glad to learn that Manilal is doing so well.

It is true that my nephew at first sent disappointing reports from Benares: that they provide only two meals per day does still appear to me to be a drawback. But it is yet too soon to pass judgment one way or the other. He will be able to send me more reliable reports after he has become used to his totally new surroundings.

If the rains fail in Kathiawar this time also, the outlook must bevery serious. I am afraid the joshis[1] and other weather prophets are good only for evil reports.

Please show this to Shukla.

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

Mahatma, Vol. I; from a photostat.

[1]Astrologers.

3. LETTER TO D. B. SHUKLA

AGAKHAN'S BUILDINGS,
OPPOSITE HIGH COURT,
BOMBAY,
November 3, 1902

MY DEAR SHUKLA,

I have your letter. Yes, I received a cablegram from Natal asking me if I could go to London and thence to the Transvaal. I replied saying no unless it was absolutely necessary. Just then my children were ill and in any case I do not yet feel strong enough for the mental strain a visit to London and South Africa would require. I have not yet heard in reply to the cable from me.

I cannot yet say, I have begun to feel my way about here. I am not, however, anxious about the future. So far the office work has paid my expenses which I see will reach a higher figure than we thought there.

I am very glad you have been retained for the prosecution in the Najawala case. For more reasons than one, I hope you will succeed in securing a conviction.

I do not know whether letter-heads for a Barrister are in good taste. Whether they are or not, mine are a present from Durban and I have been using them though not yet for office work.

The Plague must have changed the face of Rajkot. I hope it is now on the wane.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the original: G.N. 2329.

4. LETTER TO D. B. SHUKLA

AGAKHAN'S BUILDINGS,
OPPOSITE HIGH COURT,
BOMBAY,
November 8, 1902

MY DEAR SHUKLA,

I have received a message[1] with funds requesting me to sail for Natal at once. As I have not left in me sufficient energy to cope with the difficulties there, I have asked certain questions before deciding to leave, so that my way may be Rs smooth as possible under the circumstances, so far at any rate as the internal management is concerned. 99 chances to 1, I will have to leave and that too on the 19th instant. This therefore may be my last letter to you in India. I have not the time to write to Devchand Parekh separately; kindly therefore show this to him. If he is ready to go, or if Vanichand, of whom he talked to me, is ready to go, I shall be prepared to do all I can. South Africa can accommodate 6 Indian Barristers, if not more, and if some, of course of the right stamp, were to come with one eye on their living and the other on public work, much of the burden may be distributed —not to speak of the relief in the pressure here. I am corresponding with another party too.

Now for self; whether Mrs. Gandhi accompanies me or not will be decided after I receive the reply from Durban. But whether; she does or not, I propose to leave the two boys Gokaldas and Harilal here. They would go to Rajkot as soon as it is free from plague. Benares I have tried but it would not suit. Gondal has no special attractions. The best thing therefore to do is to put them in the Kattywar High School and to keep a trustworthy, paid man who would look after their education. All I have to say to you, then is, please look after the boys, look them up now and then, induce them, if you have no objection, to use your tennis court. I might have also to trouble you to find out the right man for them if I fail in doing so myself.

[1] The following cable had been sent to him from Durban: "Barrister Gandhi, Rajkot. Committee requests fulfil promise. Remitting." (S. N. 4013).

How is the plague going on there now?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the original: G.N. 2330.

5. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

OPPOSITE HIGH COURT,
BOMBAY,
November 14, 1902

DEAR PROF. GOKHALE,

When I was just feeling that I had settled down in Bombay, I received a message from Natal asking me immediately to go there. From the cablegrams exchanged between our people in Natal and myself, I think it is in connection with Mr. Chamberlain's approaching visit to South Africa that I am required there. I propose to leave by the first steamer available. That would be probably the 20th instant.

I wish I could meet you before my departure. But that seems impossible.

I hope you will keep an eye on the Indian question in South Africa. So long as I am there, I would deem it my duty to keep you informed of the position. I consider Lord George Hamilton's reply to be rather hopeful. And if the movement in India were well directed, I feel sure that much good will be done to the cause.

I hope you are keeping good health. Mr. Wachha told me sometime ago that you were going to Mahabaleshwar for a change.

I remain,
yrs truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the original: G.N. 2245.

6. DEPUTATION TO CHAMBERLAIN

THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS,
P. O. BOX. 182,
CONGRESS HALL,
DURBAN,
December 25, 1902

DEAR MR. MAYOR,

There is an insuperable difficulty in the way of the Indian deputation waiting on the Right Hon. Mr. Chamberlain tomorrow, as it is a Friday, and as it is just the very time for prayer which most of the gentlemen, who are to form the deputation, would be quite unable to forgo. Under the circumstances, I shall be very much obliged if you will be good enough to fix some time on Saturday for the Indian deputation.

I remain,
yours truly,

From the office copy in the Sabarmati Sangrahalaya: S.N. 4020.

7. PETITION TO CHAMBERLAIN[1]

DURBAN,
December 27, 1902

TO
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN
HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF
STATE FOR THE COLONIES
DURBAN

RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR,

We, the undersigned, representing and on behalf of the British Indians residing in the Colony of Natal, respectfully venture to draw your attention to the following statement of the legal disabilities under which Indian subjects of His Most Gracious Majesty the King-Emperor are labouring.

The Dealers' Licenses Act, which was promulgated on the 29th

[1] The petition was presented by the deputation of Natal Indians which waited on the Secretary of State for the Colonies during his visit to Durban. Gandhiji led the deputation.

day of May, 1897, giving as it does practically absolute power to the Licensing Officer appointed thereunder to grant or refuse applications for licenses to shopkeepers or hawkers, is an engine of very great oppression, and affects a large body of the most respectable and the wealthiest portion of the Indian community in the Colony. There is a right of appeal against the decisions of the Licensing Officers to the local Corporations, Boards or Licensing Boards, as the case may be. It deprives the Supreme Court of its inherent jurisdiction over the judgment of these popular bodies in this matter, and we need hardly point out how popular bodies at times abuse powers vested in them. In course of our previous representations on the subject, we had the honour to draw your attention to cases of real hardship caused by the operation of the Act. Indirectly, it checks a great amount of Indian enterprise, the poorest trader not even venturing to make an application for a license, and all Indian traders remaining under suspense from year's end to year's end, for these licenses have to be renewed every year, and are liable under the Act to be refused any year. In response, we believe, to a representation from you to the Natal Government when most Local Boards threatened to wipe out Indian traders wholesale, one Corporation at first refusing all Indian applications, the Natal Government wrote to them saying that, unless they exercised the arbitrary power given by the law to them in a judicial and fair manner, it might have to be revoked. Since then, we must confess, as a rule, the old licenses have not been touched; but it is a law that may involve at any time many an Indian merchant in ruin, and so long as it remains unmodified, it is difficult for us to be at ease. We would venture to quote an instance of gross injustice committed under it. One Mr. Amod Ebrahim, who is able to read, write and speak the English language fluently, a merchant of 17 years' standing in the Colony, held a trading license for over six years in Greytown. This year, his application, although backed by 138 residents for the transfer of his license from an old building to a new and more suitable one, has been refused without any reasons being given therefor. The Greytown Board passed last year the following resolution in respect of the Indian merchants there:

> That the licenses held by the present Arabs, at the pleasure of the Board, will only be renewed as long as the Arabs hold same, but no fresh licenses will be issued for other Arab tenants for vacated premises.

The same merchant has also been refused a license in respect of

his own land in Greytown. The matter was brought before His Excellency the Governor, who has declined to interfere.

All that we ask for is a restoration to the Supreme Court of its jurisdiction over the decisions of the bodies above mentioned, who, very often, being traders, are interested parties. We have exhausted every means in our power, having gone as far as the Privy Council which has decided that, under the Act, the Supreme Court is powerless to grant substantial relief. We think the Indian community, as has often been acknowledged by the Licensing Officer in Durban, as well as the Sanitary Inspector, is always ready to comply with the sanitary requirements of the law, and we fee] it very keenly that, even when all these have been fulfilled, we may not get licenses to trade merely because of the colour of our skin.

The Immigration Restriction Act, which was promulgated on the 8th day of May, 1897, directly affects many British Indians intending to emigrate to the Colony and indirectly affects those already settled in it. The clause which tells rather hardly on intending settlers is one imposing the education test whereby a knowledge of one of the European languages is insisted upon. A merchant, well versed in an Indian language, would, under the laws, be a prohibited immigrant. Where, however, it becomes most irksome is when the settlers in the Colony intend to bring out storemen, salesmen, assistants, clerks, cooks and other domestic servants. It is not always possible to draw upon the men previously domiciled in the Colony, who under the law are free to enter it whether they have a knowledge of the English language or not. Applications have often been made to the Natal Government to allow facilities for admitting such persons for local requirements, but they have been invariably refused, with very rare exceptions. Moreover, a person domiciled in the Colony is unable to have his parents or his other relations with him, except his wife and minor: children, although they may be dependent upon him. The possibilities for grave mischief under the law are very numerous. To take only one instance: during the war, hundreds of Indian refugees from the Transvaal found themselves unable even to pass through the Colony, unless they could deposit £10 each. The matter became very serious. The Government were twice approached. But it was only when His Excellency the High Commissioner intervened that permission was granted to these refugees to pass through the Colony. That British subjects, neither criminals nor paupers, should find it difficult to enter

any part of His Majesty's dominions is a thing very difficult to understand.

The question of Indian education is becoming day by day more serious. At the same time, we are not blind to the fact that the Government have to contend against great popular prejudice. Be that, however, as it may, it is respectfully submitted that the Indian population in the Colony, which contributes its quota to its general revenue, is fairly entitled to reasonable facilities for educating the Indian youths who are born in Natal, and to whom Natal is their only home. Gentlemen occupying responsible positions under the Government, living entirely in the European style, as many Indian youths having English as their mother tongue, were debarred, in spite of representations to the highest authorities, from sending their children to the ordinary Government schools. Government have been pleased lately to open two Higher Grade Indian schools, one in Durban and the other in Maritzburg, where elementary education is being given, but there are no facilities, after an Indian boy leaves these schools for further education.

That the indentured Indians, upon whom depends the prosperity of this Colony, after the completion of their indentures, have to pay a polltax of three pounds sterling every year, if they decide to remain in the Colony, is, in our humble opinion and as has been admitted by His Excellency Lord Elgin, bad enough. But now a Bill has passed through the Natal Parliament imposing the tax on their children above the age of thirteen years in the case of girls and sixteen years in the case of boys. That Bill is now before you for consideration. All that could be said on it has been said in our memorial laid before you thereon, and seeing that it is so manifestly against British traditions, we feel confident that it will not receive the Royal assent.

There are other disabilities of perhaps minor importance which we do not propose to dwell upon: for instance, the vexatious Pass Restrictions, both during day time and night time, and alike in country places as in towns. We recognise that so long as there is indentured Indian population in the Colony, some Pass law is necessary, and the remedy probably lies in the judicious administration thereof. Respectable people, men and women, were only' lately arrested under the suspicion that they were indentured Indians; one man was out in search for a doctor for his wife who was in labour. Bail was refused for them. The matter was duly brought before the Government, who

advised legal steps!

We are engaged in an incessant struggle for existence in the Colony. We never know when the finality in the list of our disabilities will be reached. There is a serious talk about compelling the time-expired indentured Indians to return to India, and about preventing the Indian residents from buying land. The Indian community is practically without any political power, nor does it aspire to any. When years ago we protested against disfranchisement, we did so because of the degradation it involved, and because it was admittedly an earnest of anti-Indian legislation which was to follow. The Honourable Sir John Robinson, at the time of introducing the disfranchising measure, in reply to the fear above referred to, said that no such fear was to be entertained as, after disfranchisement, it would be the special duty of the Legislature to look after the interests of the disfranchised. The disabilities narrated above show how unavailing the Honourable Gentleman's assurances have been. The colour prejudice born of unreasonable fear of trade competition has been too strong.

The first two enactments have received the Royal assent, but we trust it will not on that account appear out of place for us to refer to them, seeing that they are a source of constant irritation to us. Nor are we unaware of the slightness of the check that is exercised by the Home Government on the Self-governing Colonies. But we venture to trust that the question now brought before you is of such importance as to belong to the category of those which call for the exercise of whatever power the Home Government may possess over the Self-governing Colonies.

Ours is not, after all, a question that affects only a few thousand Indians but it is that of the status of His Majesty's Indian subjects. In the words of the late Sir W. W. Hunter [writing in the London *Times*]:

> May the British Indians, when they leave India, have the same status before the law as other British subjects enjoy? May they, or may they not, go freely from one British possession to another, and claim the rights of British subjects in allied States?

Regarding Natal, Lord Ripon assured us in one of his despatches that:

> It is the desire of Her Majesty's Government that the Queen's Indian subjects should be treated upon a footing of equality with all Her Majesty's other subjects.

Locally, we have been doing our utmost to deserve a better treatment, as we doubt not the Ministers will inform you. The Protector of Indian Immigrants, although he deals only with the lowest, or rather, the poorest, of our countrymen, in his last Report says:

> On the whole, the Indian immigrants resident in this Colony, I am happy to say, still form an orderly, law-abiding and respectable element of the community, and may be considered as generally prosperous.

We need hardly add more. We know we have your sympathy, and we pray that you will be graciously pleased to exercise your great influence in our behalf.

We have the honour to remain,

Your most obedient and humble servants,

M. K. GANDHI

AND FIFTEEN OTHERS

Colonial Office Records: Petitions and Memorials, 1902, C.O. 529/1.

8. LETTER TO COLONIAL. SECRETARY

338, PRINSLOO STREET,
PRETORIA,
January 2, 1903

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PRETORIA

SIR,

It is the wish of the British Indian community in the Transvaal to lay before the Right Honourable Mr. Joseph Chamberlain its views on the legal disabilities it is labouring under in the Colony as well as the Orange River Colony.

I have the honour on behalf of the community to enquire whether the Right Honourable Gentleman will be pleased to receive a deputation in the matter and, if so, when.

From 1894 to the middle of 1901, my countrymen here have been guided by the advice of Mr. Advocate M. K. Gandhi by whom were also prepared most of the representations submitted to the Colonial Office during that time.

The Honourable the Assistant Colonial Secretary, on whom I

and our secretary, Mr. Hajee Habib, waited this morning, as also did Mr. Gandhi, says that he (Mr. Gandhi) not being a resident of the Transvaal will not be allowed to represent us before Mr. Chamberlain. But as we have not among us one who has studied and knows anti-Indian laws of the late Republic as Mr. Gandhi has and does, and as he has been specially sent for from Bombay, I am to beg respectfully to ask for permission for Mr. Gandhi to accompany the deputation above referred to if the Right Honourable Gentleman graciously consents to receive it.

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
your most obedient servant,

TAYOB HAJEE KHAN MAHOMED

From the photostat of the office copy: S.N. 4023.

9. LETTER TO THE TRANSVAAL GOVERNOR

CALCUTTA HOUSE,
PRETORIA,
January 6, 1903

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR
PRETORIA

SIR,

I had the honour on the 2nd inst., as Chairman of the British India Committee, to write to the Honourable Colonial Secretary enquiring whether the Right Honourable Mr. Joseph Chamberlain would graciously receive a British Indian deputation in connection with the disabilities of my countrymen residing in the Colony, and protesting against the refusal of the Assistant Colonial Secretary to allow Mr. Advocate M. K. Gandhi to be the spokesman of the deputation. The Assistant Colonial Secretary has after several verbal and written reminders and after 4 days' delay sent the enclosed reply.[1] Copy of the letter to the Honourable the Colonial Secretary[2] is herewith enclosed.

I have the honour now to repeat the request for permission for Mr. Gandhi to be our spokesman. The refusal seems to my

[1] This is not given here.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

Committee, with due respect, to be a most extraordinary procedure. As His Excellency is probably aware, Mr. Gandhi has been hitherto allowed to represent the British Indians here before British officers; as, for instance, he represented us on several occasions before His Honour the British Agent at Pretoria, as well as the British Vice-Consul at Johannesburg, before the war broke out.

Hostile as the late Republican Government was to our interests, he was moreover allowed to represent us before its members.

My Committee also desires me to enter its respectful protest against the Supervisor of Asiatics being imposed upon us as our interpreter and spokesman. We have always understood that the Right Honourable Gentleman's wish is to receive deputations from representatives without any official restraint and the presence of that officer is hardly likely to carry it out.

I am to request you to place this communication before His Excellency, and I venture to trust that His Excellency will be pleased to give my Committee directions in the matter.[1]

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
TAYOB HAJEE KHAN MAHOMED

Pretoria Archives: Lt. G. 92 & L.G. 2132, No. 97.1.2: Asiatics, 1902/1906.

10. ADDRESS TO CHAMBERLAIN[2]

PRETORIA,
January [*7*],[3] *1903*

TO
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN
HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY
OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
PRETORIA

SIR,

We the undersigned, representing and on behalf of the Indian

[1] In a reply dated January 7, the Lieut.-Governor regretted he could not aceede to the request for Gandhiji's inclusion or see any objection to the presence of the Supervisor of Asiatics. (S.N. 4027). Gandhiji deals with this incident in his *Autobiography*, p. 259.

[2] Gandhiji mentions in his *Autobiography* (p. 259) that he drafted this memorial.

[3] The Address was presented an January 7.

subjects of His Most Gracious Majesty the King-Emperor, respectfully venture to draw your attention to the following statement of the legal disabilities under which our countrymen are labouring in the Colony. According to the laws of the late Republic, the British Indians:.

(1) cannot own landed property. except in Locations,

(2) are bound to have their names entered in a separate register within eight days of their arrival and pay therefor the sum of £3, stg.,

(3) must trade and reside only in Locations,

(4) cannot be out after 9 P.M., except on special permission,

(5) cannot travel on the railways except third class,

(6) cannot walk on the footpaths in Johannesburg and Pretoria,

(7) cannot, in Johannesburg and Pretoria, drive in hire vehicles,

(8) cannot own native gold or take out diggers' licences.

Such, so far as we have been able to ascertain, is the anti-Indian legislaton inherited by the Imperial Government from the late Republic and [it] remains still unrepealed.

Of these laws and bye-laws, the curfew, the railway travelling, the footpath and the cab regulations, although they were strictly enforced soon after the war, have been latterly considerably relaxed; at the same time, so long as they remain unrepealed, they are apt, at any moment, to be enforced strictly and, in any case, put an unnecessary affront on the Indian community.

As is well known, the whole of the anti-Indian legislation of the late Boer Government is due to their classing us with the natives of South Africa. Soon after the passing of the London Convention, that Government interpreted the term "Natives of South Africa" to include British Indians. Against such interpretation and the treatment based thereon, there was on the part of Her late Majesty's Government, with one unfortunate vacillation arising from a mis-understanding, a continued protest.

Then, what is more, there was the constant, wholesome fear of the intervention of the British Government in our behalf. The result was that, although the principal law against us was passed in 1885, and although we had to remain in a state of great suspense and uncertainty, most of us were able to ward off the final blow. But, now, the laws stand without such consoling circumstances surrounding them. The sole duty of the Asiatic Department is to enforce the laws

affecting us, and to say who shall receive the permits to enter the Colony. While, therefore, the Europeans, whether British subjects or otherwise, get permits practically for the asking, the Indian refugees have to apply to the Supervisor of Asiatics who decides whether he would allow the Permit Officer at the Cape, Natal, or Delagoa Bay, as the case may be, to issue particular permits or not. And, as if this were not enough, the Indian refugees after their arrival are expected to take out what are called residential passes, although these are now no longer necessary for the rest of the inhabitants.

Whereas, under the lax Boer Administration, many Indians traded without paying for their licences with full knowledge of the authorities, under the vigilant British Administration such a thing is naturally impossible.

You, Sir, when appealed to in our behalf, were pleased to say that, although our complaint was admittedly just and that we had your sympathy, you were then powerless to do anything further than making friendly representations to the late South African Republic. Moreover, when war came, it was declared officially that the disabilities of the British Indians were one of its causes.

With the end of the war, therefore, we thought that our difficulties would be over. But, so far, unfortunately, the hope has not been realized. The laws above referred to, which are manifestly un-British, are now, as a rule, being enforced with British regularity. The curfew and the other laws which have been relaxed were never rigidly enforced even under the old regime.

There has been established what is known as the Department of Asiatic Affairs which, however well-intentioned its institution may have been, has been, in practice, an innovation on the old system very much to our disadvantage. When it was inaugurated, we respectfully protested; but it was understood that it was only a temporary department, to be withdrawn on regular business being resumed. Under the old regime, there was no separate department with only Indian matters to attend to.

There are now, therefore, fewer Indian merchants and storekeepers than before, and the tendency is towards greater strictness. Some licences were issued at the commencement of the British occupation to those who did not hold the same before the war. The Government have notified their intention not to issue licences to such people. Thus, many of us, who traded before the war without a

licence and had licences issued to us last year, are new confronted with the prospect of our licences being stopped.

In Pietersburg, notice has already' been issued to such holders that they would receive only temporary licences for three months to enable them to sell off their stock.

The resident Magistrate of Wakkerstroom has informed the Chamber of Commerce that the existing Indian licences will not be renewed this year. Our proper course, we know, is, in such matters, to approach the higher authorities here before appealing to you. We men-tion them only to show how we are at present worse off than before and that it is an incident of the separate administration of Asiatic Affairs, which, moreover, tends to accentuate the distinction between classes.

To show further how our position is for the time being worse than before, it may be stated that the children of a Government Officer,who were allowed under the Boer regime to attend an ordinary European school, have been, after British occupation, removed from it.

Just before the outbreak of the war, the Boer Government were trying to remove the present Indian Location at Johannesburg to a place far away from town. A protest was lodged.[1] Mr. Evans, the then Vice-Consul, intervened on our behalf, and the matter was allowed to remain in abeyance. Now, however, it has progressed far enough to fill its residents with alarm. We know that the present medical officer has condemned it in unmeasured terms. But, if it is in an insanitary condition, from what he states, apparently the fault is not one-fourth that of the residents. Its requirements were neglected under the Boer regime. The charge of insanitation against the Indian community has been fully discussed and, we hope, thoroughly refuted in our previous memorials.[2] We venture to quote below two medical certificates by practitioners of standing.

Dr. H. Prior Veale, B.A., M. B. B. C. (Cantab), certifies as follows:

> I have generally found them (Indians) cleanly in their persons and free from the personal diseases due to dirt and careless habits. Their dwellings are generally clean and sanitation is willingly attended to by them. Class considered, I should be of opinion that the lowest-class Indian compares most

[1] *Vide* "Letter to British Agent", July 21, 1899.

[2] *Vide* " Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies" 15-3-1897

> favourably with the lowest-class white, that is, the lowest-class Indian lives better and in better habitation and with more regard to sanitary measures thanthe lowest-class white. I have further found that, during the period that small-pox was epidemic in the town and district, and it is still epidemic in the district, although every nation nearly had one or more of its members at some time in the Lazaretto, there was not a single Indian attacked. Generally, in my opinion, it is impossible to object to the Indian on sanitary grounds, provided always, the inspection of the sanitary authorities is made as strictly and regularly for the Indian as for the white.

Dr. F. P. Marais, M. D. (Edin), certifies:

> Having a very extensive practice among these people, I can speak from personal experience, and repeat that they are more cleanly than the poor whites, and if the coloured people were to be moved on account of want of cleanliness, then some of the poor whites will have to suffer the same fate.

But we need not labour the point any further, in view of the fact that you were pleased, in reply to our memorial, to declare yourself satisfied that restrictions on our liberty were an outcome of trade jealousy. Nor, perhaps, is it necessary for us to refer to the White Leagues that have been formed in some parts of the Colony. It is a strange irony of fate that, when the famous Uitlander petition was sent to the Home Government, we were invited as brethren to join in protest against the Boer misrule and were told how our disabilities were sure to be removed as soon as the Imperial rule was established. Now, these gentlemen are passing resolutions asking the Imperial Government to keep the very disabilities afoot.

If it is permissible to refer to the anti-Indian legislation in the Orange River Colony, we beg to summarize it below.

Chapter 33 of 1890 prevents any Asiatics from:

(1) remaining in the state for more than two months without permission from the President,

(2) owning landed property,

(3) trading or farming, and Chapter 10 levies a poll-tax of 10 shillings per year when permission has been granted subject to the restrictions above named.

Out of the many Indian traders who were settled there, three who struggled for existence up to the last moment were by the late Government expelled from the country under the ordinance referred to, at a loss to them of over nine thousand pounds.

Amid all these difficulties, we have been able to derive consolation from the fact that they have engaged the close and sympathetic attention of yourself and His Excellency the High Commissioner.

His Majesty the King-Emperor, according to the newspaper reports, in his message to the people of India at the great Delhi Durbar renews his assurance of his regard for their liberties, rights and welfare.

And now, Sir, that you have come to study the Indian Question among many others in the new Colonies, may we hope that, in the near future, the gracious assurance will be translated into an act of freedom for us, in common with other British subjects, to earn ourlivelihood in the new Colonies without being subjected to the indignities and restraints such as have been above described.

We have the honour to remain,

Sir,

your most obedient and humble servants

Colonial Office Records: Petitions and Memorials,1903, C.O. 529, Volume 1.

11. PETITION TO LORD CURZON

DURBAN, NATAL,
January [?], *1903*[1]

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE LORD CURZON, OF KEDLESTON, P.C., G.M.S.I., G.M.I.E., &C., &C., VICEROY AND GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA, CALCUTTA

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED, REPRESENTING THE BRITISH INDIAN COMMUNITY RESIDING IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

RESPECTFULLY SHOWETH THAT:

Your Excellency's petitioners hereby beg to approach Your Excellency with reference to a Commission that has just set out from Natal With a view to induce the Government of India to sanction the compulsory return of the indentured Indians who go to Natal after the expiry of their indentures.

[1] The original did not specify the date.

Your Petitioners draw Your Excellency's attention to the fact that, in 1894, the Natal Government deputed two gentlemen to confer With the Indian Government with the same object in view, and they succeeded in persuading your predecessor, much against his will, to approve of a condition in the contracts of indentured Indians whereby they undertake, during their stay in the Colony, to continue to serve under indentures, or to return to India, or to pay an annual Poll-tax of £3.

The Commissioners, after their return to Natal, reported that though the Government of India had not accepted the proposal for compulsory return, their mission might be regarded as successful in that "so far, no second term of indenture has been agreed to in the case of any country to which coolies emigrated, although the consent of the Government of India had been frequently asked for, and in no case had the condition of compulsory return at the end of the indenture been sanctioned."

Seeing, therefore, that the Government of India went as far as it did in 1894, with so much reluctance, your petitioners have every confidence that the Commission that has proceeded to India this year will not receive countenance tom Your Excellency.

Your Petitioners will, however, crave leave to take a brief survey of the situation in Natal and contemplate the results of the drastic proposals about to be submitted to Your Excellency by the Commission.

The last Report of the Protector of Indian Immigrants emphasises the fact that the demand for Indian labour is day by day increasing.

Mr. T. L. Hyslop, President of a Farmers' Association in Natal, in his annual address last year, is reported to have said as follows:

> We at times hear a great outcry against the introduction of Indians into the Colony. We may as well look the fact in the face that, however much we would like to do without the coolie, any attempt to stop his introduction here would paralyse every industry in the country. There is much talk amongst badly informed people that we should do this, that, and the other thing with the Indians, but there is no use blinking the fact that we are very much in the hands of the Indian Government in regard to this question. I believe it is a fact that recent legislation in this Colony, and still more, ill-advised speeches by some of our legislators, have occasioned considerable irritation in India, and it is useless for us to appeal for further concessions at present. I understand that the proposal to have the indentures of Indians to terminate in India has no

chance of being listened to by the Indian Government.

The Natal Mercury, in a leader commenting on Mr. Hyslop's speech, says:

> The Indian Government have to consult the well-being of the people under their care more than our convenience, and if crude legislation is passed by Parliament, and ill-advised speeches are made by Members, we may find ourselves very seriously hampered in getting the labour we need from India. At one time, it was only the sugar planter that made much use of the Indian labourer. Now the up-country farmer is quite as much in need of his services, and not only the farmer, but the mine owner, the contractor, the manufacturer and the merchant.

It is thus clear that the more thoughtful among the leaders of public opinion in Natal realise the unfairness of the proposal, and do not expect the Indian Government to countenance it. But, were it otherwise, in your Petitioners' humble opinion, there can be no two opinions about the Indian view of the question. If the labourer is to be forced back to India, the very object with which the Emigration Act was passed in India would be frustrated. It was for the protection and the benefit of the emigrants from India that it was passed, and not for the benefit of the Colonies. As it is, in your Petitioners' humble opinion, Natal already enjoys the most favourable terms. It has more than a lion's share in the partnership and now it wants to go many steps further. The goal of its ambition is either "the coolie must remain under bondage in the Colony, or must return to India if he wants to remain free." That in returning to India he might have, in the words of the late Mr. Saunders, a legislator of Natal, "to face starvation" is a matter of no consideration for the Colony.

The main argument used to justify the proposal of compulsory return is that there cannot be any hardship in the conditions of a contract a party willingly undertakes to perform. The late Right Honourable Mr. Harry Escombe, sometime Prime Minister of Natal, in his evidence before a Commission appointed by the Natal Government, said as follows:

> A man is brought here, in theory with his own consent, in practice very often without it. He gives the best 5 years of his life, he forms new ties, forgets the old ones, and he cannot, according to my view: of right and wrong, be sent back.

The Indian Government by the very act of prohibiting the emigration of such men, except under State supervision, have answered

the argument by implying that they are in a state of pupillage and, therefore, incapable of understanding their own interests.

Your Petitioners would respectfully refer Your Excellency to the petition addressed to your predecessor with reference to the sanction of a £3 Poll-tax[1] hereinbefore referred to, wherein is collected evidence to show how the matter was exhaustively gone into, in 1887, by a Natal Commission, and how it reported against the proposal of compulsory return. But, even if every one in Natal thought otherwise, your Petitioners venture to trust that Your Excellency will not allow Indian labour to be exploited for the one-sided benefit of Natal.

Your Petitioners, therefore, humbly pray that if the Colony is not prepared to grant the indentured Indians the elementary rights of British citizenship, viz., freedom of settlement in the Colony, Your Excellency will be graciously pleased to advise the Colony to discontinue importing Indian labour.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, &c.

From the photostat of an original, printed copy: S.N. 4031.

12. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

14, MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN,
January 30, 1903

[THE HONOURABLE DADABHAI NAOROJI
LONDON]

[SIR,]

Two Indian deputations waited on Mr. Chamberlain in Natal—one at Durban and the other at Maritzburg. The statement[2] sent herewith was presented by the Durban deputation: it needs no comment.

The Rt. Hon. Gentleman considers that with reference to the laws already in force he can do very little, as the Colony is "responsibly"(?) governed. This reply in a measure is true. He also said that, with reference to the recent Bill imposing a tax of £3 on the children of indentured Indians, he would be guided by advice from the India

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Lord Ripon", before 5-5-1985
[2] "Memorial to Chamberlain", December 27, 1902.

Office. From what Lord George Hamilton has said to you at the deputation, it is to be hoped that the Bill will be rejected. He[1] seems to share the fear of the Colonists that, unless the immigration of free Indians is checked, and indentured Indians are driven back to India on the termination of their indentures, this sub-continent will be swamped by the Indians. In a way he seemed to justify the attitude of the Colonists. I was present when he addressed the deputation in Durban. It was my intention to try to remove one or two of his misapprehensions when he received the Maritzburg deputation; but I was asked not to discuss any matter. So, I simply endorsed what had been represented to him at Durban, and Mr. Chamberlain repeated what he had said there.

Recently, the Natal Government has sent a commission to India to secure the termination of indentures in India, so that the indentured Indians may not have the opportunity of settling in Natal. This, of course, would be the climax in injustice, if it is at all countenanced by Lord Curzon. There is absolutely no precedent for it and it would be unadulterated slavery for a term of years. That, after the preaching of Imperial patriotism by Mr. Chamberlain, Natal should still make an effort to exploit Indian labour for its sole benefit, in total disregard of reasonable principles of contract, passes comprehension, and shows that the Colony has not in the least degree changed its hostile attitude towards British Indians. This is further confirmed by the fact that the Maritzburg Town Council is endeavouring to debar Indians from owning land. The solution is simple and most effective, viz., prohibition of indentured emigration to Natal, as suggested by Lord George Hamilton.

Yours very truly,

From the photostat of the office copy: S.N. 4035.

[1] Mr. Chamberlain.

13. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
Thursday, February 5, 1903

DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

Though I am at the above-mentioned place, write to me at Durban only.

Received your long letter. Maganlal[1] and Anandlal[2] have opened a shop.[3] So I do not think he[4] will come here. I have written to himto come if he so desires. There are good prospects of employment. If ever I have to stay here, there is a good chance to secure him a job. Even then I have left it to him. He had a slight fever on board the ship. But that was not a matter to be communicated to you.

There is a great uncertainty about me. Despite my best efforts, I am not in a position to give you more satisfactory news. If it is not possible to stay on here, I may leave in March. If I have to stay on, it will be possible to bring you all after six months. There is no chance of getting you here immediately; if it does not involve breach of duty, I shall make every possible effort to return home. It's no bed of roses here. I cannot offer more definite news. I shall wire if I am to come. If my staying on is decided upon, even then I shall send a wire if only for the satisfaction of you all.

I do not mind [paying] Manilal's fees, but he must be sent to learn instrumental music. It was not proper to have withdrawn him. The blame is not yours, but your aunt's.

You must have received the books from Mr. Narbheram.

Pay my respects to Mr. Daftari[5] and request him to write to me. When I find time, I shall write him a separate letter. The sum of Re. 0-8-0 he sent was by way of a formal adjustment. The matter is now over.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

[1] A brother of the addressee.
[2] A nephew of Gandhiji.
[3] This was in Tongaat.
[4] The reference is to Maganlal.
[5] A solicitor in Bombay working with Gandhiji.

[PS.]

You need not be in a hurry to vacate the place.[1]

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 2938.

14. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

P. O. BOX 299,
JOHANNESBURG,
February 18, 1903

TO
THE HONOURABLE
COLONIAL SECRETARY
PRETORIA

SIR,

In accordance with the desire expressed by His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor[2] and yourself, I beg to record the Indian view of the proposed institution of Bazaars in the principal townships of the Colony.

Such an institution would, in my humble opinion, be acceptable to the Indian community provided that:

1. the Bazaar (or Bazaars) is situated within the town limits in a business portion usually frequented by all classes including Europeans;
2. there should be no legal obligation on the part of the Indian community to reside or trade in the Bazaar;
3. in any case, the Indian merchants and traders, at present residing and(or)trading in towns, and those who traded or resided within town limits in any township in the Colony before the war, should not be expected to reside or trade in Bazaars;
4. the Indian community should be allowed to purchase Stands in any such Bazaars subject to the buyer's acceptance of the Building and Sanitary Regulations that may be imposed by the Government.

[1] The reference is to the chambers rented by Gandhiji while he practised in Bombay.

[2] Gandhiji had interviewed the Lieutenant-Governor.

If Bazaars are established on the above principle, I venture to think that the Indian community would respectfully co-operate with the Government in making the institutions a success.

The drifting Indian population mentioned by His Excellency would gladly avail itself of cheap and comfortable dwellings that will naturally be erected in any such Bazaars.

If any further information, or my presence, is required, I shall be happy to supply it, or wait on you, as the case may be.

l have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M K. GANDHI

Pretoria Archives: File Lt. G. 94.

15. THE INDIAN QUESTION[1]

BOX 299,
JOHANNESBURG,
February 23, 1903

A SHORT STATEMENT OF THE INDIAN QUESTION IN THE TRANSVAAL AND THE ORANGE RIVER COLONIES

Mr. Chamberlain will probably sail for England this week, but the position of the Indians remains unchanged.

A small deputation waitedon His Excellency the Lieutenant-Gov-ernor of the Transvaal[2] and he said the whole question will be consider-ed *en bloc* when the enlarged Legislative Council was formed. He was very courteous.

Mr. Chamberlain is said to have told an anti-Indian deputation that it was a question which will have to be submitted to the Cabinet at Home when it will be finally decided.

Putting together this reply and His Excellency's reply above quoted, it would appear that Mr. Chamberlain, after consultation with the Home Government, would cable here a scheme of legislation which would be submitted to the Legislative Council. Against such

[1] The statement was sent to Dadabhai Naoroji, who forwarded it to the Secretary of State for India; a copy sent to Sir William Wedderburn was forwarded by him to the Viceroy of India.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", February 18, 1903.

legislation, after it is passed, there would be practically no appeal, if it is found to be against Indian interests. Hence the great need for concentration of efforts upon the proposed legislation in the new Colonies.

What the anti-Indian legislation is has been clearly set forth in the statement placed before Mr. Chamberlain,[1] copies of which have already been forwarded to the friends in England.

From one responsible source comes the information that the Government, being over-anxious to please the Colonists, are going to sell the Indians and propose legislation that would go further than the Cape and Natal, even Australia.

From another equally responsible source comes the information that the legislation will be adopted on the Natal lines of anti-Asiatic legislation.

Mr. Chamberlain said to the Indian deputation somewhat as follows: "What is the use of my passing such legislation now as would be repealed on my granting responsible Government in two or three years? You must, therefore, try to conciliate public opinion and work with the authorities in the Transvaal." He is said to have told the anti-Indian deputation "Indians are our fellow-subjects, and are entitled to fair and honourable treatment. At the same time, I would be prepared to sympathise with you in your opposition to unrestricted influx of millions from India who may easily swamp you. I would, therefore, recommend restriction on further immigration in undue numbers, but cannot undertake to place disabilities on those that are already settled in the Colony."

If Mr. Chamberlain has spoken to the anti-Indian deputation in the above terms, it is very satisfactory.

Indians cannot swamp the Colony. They would not emigrate in such large numbers. There are not more than 12,000 Indians in the Transvaal as against nearly 100,000 Europeans in Johannesburg alone. But, if the Government wish to give legislative recognition to the fear of swamping, the utmost that we can agree to, if that is to say the Indian voice is to be heard, is legislation on Natal lines with modifications. In Natal, there is legislation of a general character applicable to all whereby intending settlers not formerly domiciled in Natal, unless they are wives or minor children of domiciled men in the

[1] *Vide* "Address to Chamberlain", January 7, 1903.

Colony, are not allowed to enter the Colony unless they have a knowledge of one of the European languages.

If instead of European languages, "any language used or spoken in His Majesty's Dominions" were inserted, it will then leave room open for the respectable merchants, etc., and yet shut out the illiterate millions. There should also be a clause added that special permission would be granted to those who may be bona fide required in the interests of the domiciled community, such as domestic servants, cooks, &c., who are, illiterate but are absolutely required for the old settlers. Moreover, any such legislation should not affect those domiciled in South Africa.

I need not repeat that it is the wretched anti-Indian legislation inherited from the Republics that we are struggling against—not its operation. I, therefore, do not burden these notes with the numerous instances of injustice that are happening daily. To have that alone remedied would be to lop off the branches; we, therefore, ask that the tree itself should be uprooted. For, what is the use of palliatives in the shape of instructions from Home to the effect that the laws, in themselves bad, are not to be enforced strictly?

I hope there would be no acceptance of the principle of Locations as was hinted at in Lord George's remarks to the Deputation. They are not in vogue in the self-governing Colonies of the Cape and Natal. Can they then be in the Crown Colonies of the Transvaal and Orange River?

I hope that the Joint Committee[1] that waited on Lord George will ask for information as to when the legislation is to be passed repealing the old and on what lines. It is very necessary to hasten it. The difficulties the people have to go through are very great owing to the presence of some very unsympathetic officials who are administering Indian affairs. If it takes long, it might be necessary to draw the attention of friends to some very typical cases of hardship. At present, we are trying to get justice locally.

M. K. GANDHI

India Office: Judicial and Public Records, 402.

[1] The British Committee and the East India Association had set up a joint body to deal with matters concerning Indians in South Africa.

16. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

BOX 299,
JOHANNESBURG,
February 23, 1903

DEAR PROFESSOR GOKHALE,

Events have been progressing very fast in this country & naturally I have been in the thick of the fight. The struggle is far more intense than I expected.

Herewith statement[1] presented to Mr. Chamberlain at Pretoriaand a copy of statement[2] up to date sent to London. There is a great deal of underhand work going on. The old laws are being severely en- forced. And it probably means my having to stop here longer than March.

I was just in time to join the Durban deputation that waited on Mr. C.[3] I hope you received copies of the D'n[4] statement.[5]

I hope you will do what you can there. The matter being constantly & intelligently discussed in the papers wd. do good. Hoping you are well [,]

I remain,
yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the original: S.N. 4100.

[1] "Address to Chamberlain", January 7, 1903.
[2] "The Indian Question", February 23, 1903.
[3] Chamberlain.
[4] Deputation.
[5] "Petition to Chamberlain", December 27, 1902.

17. TELEGRAM TO P. S. TO LT.-GOVERNOR, TRANSVAAL

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION,
BOX 299,
JOHANNESBURG,
February 28, 1903

TO
PRIVATE SECRETARY
HIS EXCELLENCY LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

RESPECTFULLY PRAY FOR EARLY RELIEF REGARDING INDIAN STORES CLOSED.[1] WAKKERSTROOM AND RUSTENBURG BOTH SUFFERING HEAVILY.

BIAS[2]

Pretoria Archives: LG. 92 97/LG

18. TELEGRAM TO P. S. TO LT.-GOVERNOR, TRANSVAAL

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION,
BOX 299,
JOHANNESBURG,
March 5, 1903

TO
PRIVATE SECRETARY
HIS EXCELLENCY LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

ASSOCIATION AGAIN RESPECTFULLY VENTURE TO REMIND HIS EXCELLENCY ABOUT RUSTENBURG AND WAKKERSTROOM INDIAN STORES WHICH STILL REMAIN CLOSED. OWNERS SUFFERING HEAVILY.

BIAS

Pretoria Archives: LG. 92 97/LG

[1] The stores had been refused trading licences; *vide* also "Physician, Heal Thyself" , 18-6-1903 & "The Bright side of the Picture", 25-6-1903

[2] Telegraphic address of the British Indian Association, Transvaal, of which Gandhiji was the Honorary Secretary

19. TELEGRAM TO P. S. TO LT.-GOVERNOR, TRANSVAAL

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION,
BOX 299,
JOHANNESBURG,
March 12, 1903

TO

PRIVATE SECRETARY
HIS EXCELLENCY LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

ASSOCIATION WILL HIGHLY APPRECIATE SOME REPLY REGARDING BRITISH INDIAN STORES STILL REMAINING CLOSED RUSTENBURG AND WAKKERSTROOM. SUSPENSE VERY PAINFUL TO PARTIES CONCERNED.

BIAS

Pretoria Archives: LG. 92 97/LG

20. INDIAN POSITION 1N NEW COLONIES[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
March 16, 1903

A SHORT STATEMENT REGARDING THE INDIAN POSITION IN THE NEW COLONIES

The developments taking place daily are filling the Indian residents with alarm.

THE TRANSVAAL

There is yet no knowing when the promised changes in the existing anti-Indian legislation will be made.

In the meanwhile, the following events have happened.

The store of Hoosen Amod, a merchant of ten years, standing in Wakkerstroom, has been forcibly closed and a trading license has been refused to him. His is the only Indian store in that town. It has now remained closed for over two months.

Suliman Ismail, who had a license issued to him last year, has

[1] This statement with some verbal changes and omissions was published in *India*, 17-4-1903.

been refused his license this year, and his store[1] has now remained closed for over a month.

Both the above merchants have a large stock. They have already suffered great loss, and, if they are not allowed to open their stores, it would mean ruin to them.

Transfers of licenses from one store to another or from one person to another are being refused.! An Indian trades in a place rented by him. The landlord gives notice to quit. The Indian wants to remove to another place. The Licensing Officer would not allow this. The man must either go to a Location or close altogether. Another Indian wants to retire. An old resident of the Colony is prepared to buy the business as a going concern. The licensing officer would not transfer the license to the buyer. The original owner can, therefore, only sell out by auction. It follows that no new licenses are being granted.

The Asiatic Office is a terror to the people. Its business is to invent new engines of torture. Those who want to leave the country with the intention of returning must take out passes on which are to be affixed their photographs. Thus, the Indians are to be treated as criminals. Of course, the idea is to prevent the passes from being unlawfully used. So, the whole community is to be branded for the sake of some who would make a fraudulent use of their passes. The introduction takes no note of the religious objection on the part of the Mahomedans to have themselves photographed at all.

The Chairman of the British Indian Association, managing partner of the premier Indian firm in South Africa, Messrs N. C. Cumroodeen and Co., was ordered last week to get out of a foot-path in Johannesburg. He stood his ground and would not. All the same, he had to suffer much indignity. The matter is now engaging the attention of the Police Commissioner. The thing is that, so long as the foot-path bye-law remains on the statute book, so long must such cases occur.

There is a slight outbreak of plague in Natal. The authorities have made this an excuse for stopping the entry of Indians from that Colony. The result is that even the refugee Indians, those who have to prove their claims here, are shut out, whereas Europeans and Kaffirs are allowed to come in freely. Let it be noted that the plague has

[1] Situated in Rustenburg.

attacked all classes.

The above is merely a selection from the long catalogue of Indian grievances. There is no sentiment about them. They are real and substantial. They represent a life-and-death struggle.

And yet when we sank the differences and formed the Volunteer Ambulance Corps at the time of the war, we were "sons of the Empire, after all". Our grievances were one of the causes of the war and made Lord Lansdowne's blood to boil.

Nor is there here a question of future immigrants. It is that of the residents who, Mr. Chamberlain assured the Indian deputation, were "entitled to fair and honourable treatment".

There is no hesitation in saying that, in the darkest days of the community under the old republican regime, it was not subjected to the treatment it is now undergoing. And what is more, then the British Government served as an effective shield against any serious wrong-doing. But, where are we now to find a shield against attacks from the very quarters which erstwhile afforded protection?

ORANGE RIVER COLONY

The old drastic legislation remains in force in this Colony. There is no relaxation. The Government refuse to grant any exemptions and decline to say when the legislation will be modified or repealed. Even the Indians who, before the legislation, traded in the Colony are not allowed to trade there.

CAPE COLONY: EAST LONDON

The Indian community there being small has requested the Committee here to help them. The Muncipality of the Borough of East London received in 1895, when there was a very small Indian population there, power to pass bye-laws preventing Coloured people from walking on the foot-paths. This law, for the reason above stated, passed unnoticed. Last month, under the power vested in it, the Municipality passed a bye-law, and now the Indian community there finds itself face to face with the humiliation of having to abandon the foot-paths. Registered owners or occupiers of landed property in the Borough of the value of £75.0.0 are exempt from the law. As soon as the Indians heard of the law, they approached the Governor, who says they were too late. What are they to do now? They have addressed another representation to the Governor and cabled to the friends in London. The bye-law has its origin in the alleged or real, impudent

and, in some cases, indecent behaviour of the Kaffirs. But, whatever the charges are against the British Indians, no one has ever whispered that the Indians behave otherwise than as decent men. But, as it is the wont in this part of the world, they have been dragged down with the Kaffir without the slightest justification.

NATAL

Contrary to expectations, the Natal Bill taxing the children of indentured parents has received the Royal assent.

NOTE

As regards the Transvaal, it may be mentioned that the community has approached the Governor in the various matters mentioned. H. E. is now considering them.

India Office: Judicial and Public Records, 402.

21. LETTER TO "THE VEGETARIAN"

BOX 299,
JOHANNESBURG,
[post *March 21, 1903*]

TO
THE EDITOR
The Vegetarian
[LONDON]

SIR,

Regarding the information wanted by your correspondent"K" in your issue of the 21st. ult., the following may be of some use to him:

Except mealie meal, which is South African produce, every necessary of life in South Africa is dearer than in England. The cost of fairly decent living for a bachelor may be put down at at least £15 per month. A single bedroom fetches £4 per month easily. A fairly good board would cost nothing less than £l2 monthly.

Some vegetarian specialities are imported by a grocer in Natal, but so far as I am aware, no one imports them in the Orange River Colony. Your correspondent will do well to keep a small stock of these with him.

There is a well-managed vegetarian restaurant in Johannesburg, conducted on the principles laid down by Kuhne. I may add that fruit

being very plentiful in this country, there is no difficulty about the vegetarian diet.

It may not be superfluous to warn your correspondent against building hopes of prospects in South Africa for earning a living. There is everywhere a great pressure of population. The number of unemployed is very great, business is dull, and people do not know what will happen if the mining labour problem is not solved in the near future.

I am etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

THE VEGETARIAN, 25-4-1903

22. LETTER TO W. WEDDERBURN

BOX 299,
JOHANNESBURG,
March 22, 1903

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN, BARONET, LTC.
CHAIRMAN
I.N.C. COMMITTEE[1]
[LONDON]

SIR,

On behalf of the British Indian Committee, a cablegram[2] expressing respectful sympathy of the community to the late Mr. Caine's[3] family was yesterday sent through you.

In my communication last week,[4] I forgot to mention that the store of Suliman Ismail closed forcibly is situated in Rustenturg in this Colony. The position still remains unchanged. H. E. the Lieut.-Governor has not yet sent a reply to the Committee's representation.

I remain,
Sir,
yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the office copy: S.N. 2282.

[1] The British Committee of the Indian National Congress.

[2] This is not available.

[3] W. S. Caine was a leading member of | the British Committee of the Indian National Congress.

[4] *Vide* "Indian Position in New Colonies", March 16, 1903.

23. TELEGRAM TO P. S. TO LT.-GOVERNOR, TRANSVAAL

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION,
BOX 299,
JOHANNESBURG,
March 24, 1903

TO

PRIVATE SECRETARY
HIS EXCELLENCY LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

ASSOCIATION HUMBLY THINKS SOME DEFINITE REPLY MAY NOW BE GIVEN REGARDING RUSTENBURG AND WAKKERSTROOM STORES WHICH HAVE REMAINED CLOSED VERY LONG.

BIAS

Pretoria Archives: LG. 92 97/LG

24. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY, TRANSVAAL

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION,
BOX 299,
JOHANNESBURG,
March 25, 1903

TO

THE HONOURABLE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to draw your attention to the enclosed copy of the notice served on British Indian store-keepers by the Magistrate in Pietersburg.

The notice has naturally produced consternation among the Indians in Pietersburg.

The threat conveyed by the notice was first given in December last. As you are aware, the matter was brought before Mr. Chamberlain[1], but the Supervisor of Asiatics assured the Right

[1] Principal Secretary of State for Colonies; *vide* "Petition to Transvaal Governor"

Honourable gentleman that he had fixed up the thing with the Magistrate and that the licences would be renewed from quarter to quarter.

Again when the Magistrate in spite of the above assurance insisted on giving the notice that the licences issued last year to Indians in the town who were not trading before the War would not be renewed after the 31st March, the Supervisor was approached, and he gave the assurance that his understanding with the Magistrate was that the licences should be issued from quarter to quarter and stopped after 31st March.

But the Magistrate still insisting on giving the notice above referred to, the complaint was placed before you personally, first by Mr. Lunnon[1] and then by Mr. Gandhi both of whom, my Committee understands, were told not to bother about the notice and to advise the store-keepers concerned to take out quarterly licences and that they would be renewed from time to time at the end of every quarter.

The men on the strength of the assurance took out the licences. And yet my Committee is grieved to find, the notice herein referred to has been served by the Magistrate who evidently intends to enforce the threat first held out.

My Committee will be greatly obliged if you will be good enough to let me know by wire whether the Government will be pleased to instruct the Magistrate to withdraw the notice in question or to give my Committee the assurance that the threat covered by the notice will not be enforced.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ABDOOL GANI

CHAIRMAN, BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Pretoria Archives: LG. 97/12 Asiatics. 1902-1906

[1]A solicitor of Pretoria

25. TELEGRAM TO P. S. TO LT.-GOVERNOR, TRANSVAAL

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION,
BOX 299,
JOHANNESBURG,
March 28, 1903

TO
PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

REPLYING TO ENQUIRY HOOSEN AMOD WAKKERSTROOM SENDS FOLLOWING STARTLING WIRE: "LOCATION HERE ABOUT TWO MILES AWAY BUT NOT OCCUPIED. HOW CAN TRADE THERE. NO INDIAN LOCATION HERE NOR OTHER INDIAN IN PLACE."

BIAS

Pretoria Archives: LG. 92 97/LG

26. LETTER TO P. S. TO LT.-GOVERNOR, TRANSVAAL

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION,
BOX 299,
JOHANNESBURG,
March 28, 1903

TO
PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR
PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your telegram of yesterday's date, informing the Association that His Excellency has been pleased to instruct the Magistrate at Rustenburg to grant the licence to Suleman Ismail[1] but that the Magistrate at Wakkerstroom has properly refused the licence to Hoosen Amod[2] as there is a Location in Wakkerstroom.

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Bhownaggree", 30-8-1898.
[2] *ibid.*

I am to tender the Association's respectful thanks to His Excellency for granting relief to Mr. Suleman Ismail.

As to Mr. Hoosen Amod my Committee is enquiring into the condition and position of the Location at Wakkerstroom but in the meantime my Committee would humbly draw His Excellency's attention to the fact that the principle that the decision seems to lay down is fraught with very serious consequences to the whole body of Indian traders. For the Licensing Officers may refuse licences to old Indian traders to continue to trade in towns where there are Locations set apart for Indians. Almost in every township of importance, the Indian merchants are liable to be compelled to trade in Locations. This would virtually mean that Indian merchants now trading in towns may at any time have to close business altogether. For the trade in towns is by no means always of the same description as in Locations.

Hoosen Amod's case, in my Committee's humble opinion, is probably the strongest that could be imagined. He has been trading in Wakkerstroom for over ten years under licence granted in his ownname, a privilege that very few Indians enjoyed during the old regime. He is the only Indian merchant in the midst of many European merchants trading in towns. He held a licence up to the outbreak of War. Almost every Indian occupying a similar position has been granted a licence. This case was brought before Mr. Chamberlain's notice on the strength of a newspaper report that his licence was to be refused for this year. The Right Honourable gentleman was not disposed to credit the report.

Hoosen Amod brought out from Durban Mr. Goodricke, a solicitor, who waited on the Assistant Colonial Secretary who, my Committee understands, assured Mr. Goodricke that at least temporary permission would be granted to Hoosen Amod to open his store pending consideration of his case as to a full license on its merits.

My Committee, therefore, respectfully requests His Excellency to reconsider the decision and order the licence to be granted to Hoosen Amod, if only temporarily pending final decision.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
ABDOOL GANI
CHAIRMAN, BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Pretoria Archives: LG. 92 97/LG

27. LETTER TO P. S. TO LT.-GOVERNOR, TRANSVAAL

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION,
BOX 299,
JOHANNESBURG,
March 28, 1903

TO

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR
PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to enclose herewith a letter addressed by the Association to His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor regarding a notice sent by the Magistrate at Pietersburg to the British Indian store-keepers there. The promise referred to in the letter was made byMr. W. E. Davidson[1]. A reply has been received today from the Colonial Office signed by Mr. W. H. Moor, copy of which is enclosed herewith.

My Committee felt much aggrieved at the nature of the reply from Mr. Moor, in spite of the promise given by Mr. Davidson and the assurance given by the Supervisor of Asiatics. My Committee has telegraphed to Mr. Davidson personally but as the matter is of great importance and the quarter ends on Tuesday next, my Committee has decided to simultaneously approach His Excellency also.

May I request a telegraphic reply to this representation?

My Committee trusts it will be pardoned for the trouble it is often obliged to give to His Excellency for which the grave turn the events are taking for the community is the only excuse.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,
ABDOOL GANI
CHAIRMAN, BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Pretoria Archives: LG. 97/12 Asiatics. 1902-1906 97/l/K. C. 24-8-59

[1] Colonial Secretary; *vide* also “The New Move”, 25-06-1903

28. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

BOX 299,
JOHANNESBURG,
March 30, 1903

TO
THE HONOURABLE DADABHAI NAOROJI
[LONDON]

DEAR SIR,

I have to thank you for your letter. I now enclose a statement[1] up to date just to keep friends informed of the terrible position here.

At the request of the people in East London, I am sending today to Sir William a draft for £20-0-0 in connection with their matter. The state there is just the same, though I understand that the police, after the representations from the people, are not enforcing the regulation about foot-paths strictly.

I remain,
yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat d the office copy: S.N. 2256.

29. POSITION OF INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL

JOHANNESBURG,
March 30, 1903

ON THE POSITION OF THE BRITISH INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL

The license to Suliman Ismail at Rustenburg has been granted.

As to the license to Hoosen Amod at Wakkerstroom, His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor declines to interfere, as there is a Location there. If this principle were to be established, nearly every Indian store-keeper must become insolvent. But what is more, the Location in Wakkerstroom is not for Indians. A site was certainly fixed by the late Government, but it remains totally unoccupied to the present day. And such as it is, it is situated two miles from the Town. These Acts have been placed before H.E. with a prayer for reconsideration.

[1] The following item.

In Pietersburg (please read the reference to the matter in the Statement submitted to Mr. Chamberlain[1]), some Indians, Who did not trade there before War, were last Bar granted licenses to trade in Town. They have imported large stock. Last December the Magistrate gave them notice that, after 31st March, they would not receive licenses to trade except in Location. It was brought to Ma Chambelain's notice, but the Supervisor of Asiatics said to him that he had seen the Magistrate and that the notice will not be acted upon.

Despite the assurance, the Magistrate insisted on giving the above notice to every Indian who applied for a renewal of his license. The matter was, therefore, brought to the Supervisor's notice, who repeated what he had said before Mr. Chamberlain, but said he was helpless, as the Assistant Colonial Secretary was against the applicants.

The matter was, thereupon, taken to the Colonial Secretary by Mr. Lunnon, a well-known At solicitor of Pretoria, as also by Mr. Gandhi. The Colonial Secretary assured them that, even if the Magistrate made it a condition before granting a quarterly license that he should give notice as aforesaid, he, the Colonial Secretary, would see that the licenses were renewed. The matter there ended for the time being.

In February last, the quarterly licenses were issued. The Magistrate did not give any notice.

But, on the 23rd March, he served a notice reminding the store-keepers of the December notice above referred to. The Colonial Secretary was approached. The Assistant Colonial Secretary replied that the notice of December must be adhered to. A telegram has, therefore, been sent to the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Davidson, personally, as being the officer who gave the assurance to Messrs. Lunnon and Gandhi. The matter has also been brought to the notice of H. E. the Lieutenant-Governor. The quarter ends on Tuesday next. No reply has been received up to the time of writing. It may be mentioned that to Indians only are quarterly licenses granted, in itself a great grievance. But these matters dwindle into insignificance before the life-and-death struggle illustrated by the above instances. And all these are merely symptoms of the disease. The anti-Asiatic laws still remain. The Indians are, therefore, absolutely at the mercy of the officers for such relaxation as they may grant in spite of the laws. H.

[1] *Vide* "Address to Chamberlain", 7-1-1903

E. has said that the whole question of legislation is to be dealt with when the enlarged Legislative Council is formed.

These notes are sent to friends just to keep them informed of what is going on, not necessarily for immediate action. For, by the time they are in their hands, relief might have been granted by the Government. Yet, they may be helpful for future action to explain cables, if it becomes necessary to send any.

Colonial Office Records: C.O. 291/61.

30. LETTER TO P. S. TO LT.-GOVERNOR, TRANSVAAL

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION,
BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
April 2, 1903

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR
PRETORIA

SIR,

With reference to the Association's telegram[1] dated the 28th ultimo regarding the Wakkerstroom licence, my Committee has now received a confirmed report from the ex-Receiver of Revenue under the old Government, which I have the honour to enclose herewith. It bears out the telegram and shows that although a site was selected in 1899 by the late Government for an Indian Location, It was neverand is not now occupied. My Committee feels sure that Hoosen. Amod is not expected to remove to that site.

Since the Magistrate, according to newspaper reports, refused a licence, yielding to pressure from the local Chamber of Commerce, Hoosen Amod has sent my Committee a document signed by some Europeans in the place showing that they have no objection to the licence being granted to him. It may also be mentioned that his custom is largely European. That the local traders should object is not strange.

Mr. Goodricke, his solicitor, met with an objection that he was not trading immediately before the War. So he had two affidavits

[1] *Vide* "Dada Osman's Case", september 14, 1898

prepared, one from the late Manager of the National Bank and the other by himself showing that he was trading till the October of 1899. These have been handed to my Committee and are hereto attached.

Thus every conceivable objection has been answered and my Committee ventures to think that if any Indian deserves a licence to trade in a township, the first is Hoosen Amod. My Committee, therefore, humbly trusts that early relief will be granted in the matter.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ABDOOL GANI

CHAIRMAN, BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Pretoria Archives: LG. 92 97/LG

31. INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL[1]

THE INDIAN CASE

The Indians are entitled to equal privileges with Europeans in this British Colony, on the ground, firstly, that they are British subjects, and, secondly, that they are in every way desirable citizens. No matter what part of the world they have gone to, Mr. Gandhi said to the representative of The Star, they have proved themselves amenable to control, never interfering with the politics of the country, and besides they are industrious, frugal and sober.

Speaking as to the desirability of according them full citizenship, Mr. Gandhi said he knew that their alleged insanitary habits were put forward as a ground for their exclusion, but he contended that a real study of the situation would disclose the facts that Indians were not so insanitary as to be beyond improvement, and that the authorities were responsible for the insanitation that existed in their abodes and habits. [In] any community which was entirely neglected in that direction, a proportion of it would drift into a condition which would be objectionable.

The strongest point he is urging and devoting his attention to at

[1] This is an extract from a report originally published in *The Natal Witness* and reproduced in *The Times of India*.

present is the abolition of what he calls “class legislation”, which is reflected in the restrictions imposed by the Supervisor’s Office and by the Town Council. To his mind there is absolutely no chance of a great influx of Asiatics into. South Africa. Immigration is restricted by the Immigration Restriction Act, which has been rightly enforced in Natal against the Indian. An Act framed on similar lines came into operation in the Cape Colony, and the Delagoa Bay authorities have enforced regulations which are still more severe in their application. Under these Acts, an immigrant must prove that he was previously domiciled in the country, or he must be able to read and write one of the European languages before he will be allowed to disembark. The laws in this regard are not solely applied to Indians, and as an enactment is bound to be put on the statute book, Mr. Gandhi has been forced to accept the situation, and he suggests local legislation should be on the lines of the Natal Act, with slight modifications. He will urge the removal of the regulations, which will provide the Locations for Indians and in support of this, he argues that the poorer class of Indians would of their own free will reside in any place set apart for them, while only a few more wealthy and prosperous merchants would live in the town itself. As the Transvaal is a Crown Colony, he is pressing on the Government the desirability of removing the restrictions governing the issue of trading licenses to Indians. Natal and Gape Colony are self-governing, and can make their own laws affecting internal affairs, but the Imperial Government, he contends, must apply its general policy of freedom in trade and action to the subjects of the Crown in the Transvaal.

The Times of India, 6-4-1903

32. LETTER TO P. S. TO LT.-GOVERNOR, TRANSVAAL

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION,
BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
April 11, 1903

TO

PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR
PRETORIA

SIR,

(1) The Committee of the Association ventures respectfully to approach His Excellency regarding the Government Notice No. 356 of 1903[1] published in the newspapers.

(2) It appears to be in reply to the various matters submitted to His Excellency by the deputation that waited on him at Johannesburg on the 12th February last. It has filled the Indian community with sorrow and alarm.

(3) His Excellency was pleased to assure the deputation that as soon as the enlarged Legislative Council was formed, suitable legislation replacing the old anti-Asiatic legislation would be introduced. The Notice in question would appear to disappoint the hopes based on the above assurance.

(4) His Excellency has been pleased to order licences to be renewed for the current quarter to all the Indian traders who, though they were not trading on the outbreak of hostilities, were granted licences last year. The Notice is silent as to whether the renewals will be continued or not. The matter is of such serious importance that, my Committee submits, a definite pronouncement is necessary.

(5) His Excellency was pleased to say to the deputation that if any officers had refused transfers of licences, either for other places in the same town, or to other persons, he would see that relief was granted. Contrary to my Committee's expectations, therefore, the statement that no transfers of licences would be granted has come as a great shock. And the publicity thereof is likely to ruin many Indian merchants, unless relief is soon granted. For landlords will not be slow

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H.V. Vora", June 30, 1903

to take advantage of the Notice and to raise rents of premises occupied by Indian merchants to a prohibitive extent. If the Government would fully respect vested interests, transfers, in my Committee's humble opinion, are absolutely necessary.

(6) The last clause of the Notice, while it is no doubt intended to confer benefit on the Indian community, impliedly casts a slur on the great race to which we belong, in that it assumes every Indian to be unfit to inhabit civilized townships unless he proves to the contrary. My Committee with the greatest deference submits that, barring popular prejudice born of trade jealousy, the whole of the evidence that could be collected in South Africa, would go to show that British Indians have everywhere been found to be amenable to the general sanitary laws of the place of their domicile. Only a few weeks ago, the Sanitary Inspector of Johannesburg reported that he had no fault to find with the manner in which the dwellings of Indians were kept in Market Street. My Committee would gladly co-operate with the Government in promoting a voluntary settlement of the poorer class of Indians in localities where suitable dwellings can be procured for cheaper rents. But my Committee ventures respectfully to protest against a compulsory removal to Locations or Bazaars—a principle against which Her Late Majesty's Government fought strenuously, when it was sought to be established by the Boer Government.

My Committee therefore ventures to hope that His Excellency will be pleased to grant relief in the following matters:

(a) Whether an early alteration in existing anti-Indian laws is contemplated on the enlarged Legislative Council being formed.

(b) Whether the renewal will be granted in the cases mentioned in paragraph (4) here of.

(c) Whether transfers to places or persons will be authorized.

(d) Whether the principle of compulsory segregation will be removed.

If further discussion of the above points is desired by His Excellency, a small deputation will wait on His Excellency.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant

ABDOOL GANI

CHAIRMAN, BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Pretoria Archives: LG. 92/2132 Asiatics. 1902-1906

33. BRITISH INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
April 12, 1903

The present position regarding British Indians in the Transvaal is as follows.

The foot-path grievance in Standerton has been temporarily removed, the Government having instructed the Commandant not to enforce the bye-law against well-dressed and well-behaved Asiatics.

The enclosed Government Notice shows the position regarding licences. It has filled the community with alarm because:

(1) it seems to shelve indefinitely the question of repealing the anti-Indian legislation of the old Government;

(2) it leaves in suspense the Indian traders who were not trading on the outbreak of war, but who were granted licences last year, licences which Mr. Chamberlain said could not be touched;

(3) while pretending to respect the vested interests of those who were trading on the outbreak of war, it deals a death-blow to them in that it prohibits transfers of licences from one place to another, and thus leaves the store-keepers to the mercy of their landlords, and from one person to another, and thus prevents the store-keepers from ultimately realising profits by selling their business as going concerns;

(4) it casts a slur on the whole race in that it impliedly assumes every Indian to be unfit to reside in civilised townships, unless he proves the contrary.

These points have, after the publication of the Notice, been urged on the attention of His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, and a reply is awaited

With regard to Pietersburg, the Government have, after much difficulty, given a general decision:

(i) that all existing Indian licences will be provisionally renewed for the current quarter;

(ii) that no new licences will be granted to the Indians, whether they traded before the war or not;

(iii) that existing licences will not be transferred to other

[1] This was published in *India* as "From a Correspondent".

premises or other names, pending consideration of the whole question.

Thus, there is again another period of suspense and anxiety. The existing licences may or may not be renewed after the expiry of the current quarter. Mr. Chamberlain has definitely assured us that vested rights will not be touched. The outcome of the decision embodied in the last two statements above is that, if a landlord gives notice to quit, the store-keeper must necessarily close his business, and since his licence cannot be transferred to another person, he cannot sell it as a going concern. The District Commandant has issued the following notice to the Indian community there:

> All coolies, being holders of licences, can obtain permits to walk on the foot-path in the town of Standerton, by applying to the police office. Any coolie or other coloured person found walking on the foot-paths in Standerton, not being in possession of a permit after April 1, will be prosecuted according to law.

Mark the contempt and utter disregard of the Indian feeling that are implied in the application of the term "coolie" to all Indians. During the Boer regime, Indians were not at all interfered with while walking on the foot-paths, much less were they required to carry permits of exemption. When such an attempt was made to enforce the bye-law, the British Government promptly intervened and stopped it. A protest against the above notice has been sent to the Government.

There are isolated cases of the bubonic plague in Durban and Maritzburg, in Natal. Kaffirs are the most largely attacked.They and the Europeans, who are also attacked, are allowed to enter theTransvaal from Natal, free of any restrictions. But the Indian immigration from Natal, not merely the infected towns, is totally prohibited. The Indian refugees, too, are not allowed to enter the Colony from Natal.

Indians here are, according to Mr. Chamberlain's advice, patiently trying to get redress from the local authorities. And it is but fair to mention that H. E. the Lieutenant-Governor is inclined to hold the scales even between the conflicting interests.

As to East London (Cape Colony), the foot-path grievance still remains without redress. H. E. the Governor has not yet replied to the last communication. The bye-law is not being enforced rigorously.

[Enclosure]

GOVERNMENT NOTICE
NO. 356 OF 1903

It is hereby notified for general information that His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, in Executive Council, has decided that in the disposal of applications made by Asiatics for licences to trade, the provisions of Law NO. 3 of 1885, as amended by Executive Council Resolution, Article 164, of the 12th August, 1886, which was adopted by the Volksraad on the 12th August, 1886, by Resolution, Article 1419, shall be enforced, with due regard to the vested interests of those Asiatics who were trading outside Bazaars at the commencement of the late hostilities, and has resolved accordingly:

1. That the Government take immediate steps to have Bazaars in every town set apart in which alone Asiatics may reside and trade; the Colonial Secretary shall be charged with the duty of defining such Asiatic Bazaars in consultation with the Resident Magistrate, or where such exists in the Town Council or Health Board.

2. No new licences to trade shall be granted to any Asiatic except to carry on his business in Bazaars set apart for the purpose.

3. In the case of Asiatic traders who held licences at the commencement of the late' hostilities to trade in places not specially set apart by Government, licences may be renewed to trade under the same conditions during the residence in this Colony of the licensee, provided that such licences shall not be transferable and that, no licensee shall be entitled to hold more licences in any one town than were held by him at the commencement of hostilities.

With regard to the residence of Asiatics, which by the Law above-mentioned is confined to those streets, wards and locations which may be set apart for the purpose, His Excellency has decided that an exception shall be made in favour of those whose intellectual attainments or social qualities and habits of life appear to entitle them to it, and has accordingly resolved that any Asiatic who shall prove to the satisfaction of the Colonial Secretary that he holds any higher educational certificate from the Education Department in this or any other British Colony or Dependency, or that he is able and willing to adopt a mode of living not repugnant to European ideas, nor in conflict with sanitary laws, may apply to the Colonial Secretary for a letter of exemption which shall enable him to reside elsewhere than in a place specially set apart for Asiatics.

W. H. MOOR
(Assistant Colonial Secretary)

Colonial Secretary's Office,
Pretoria, April 8, 1903.

India, 15-5-1903

34. LETTER TO P. S. TO LT.-GOVERNOR, TRANSVAAL

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION,
BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
April 20, 1903

TO

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR
PRETORIA, TRANSVAAL

SIR,

Your letter dated 31st March and numbered LG2131 was delivered only today as the wrong box was marked on the envelope.

The objection referred to in the letter under reply has been fully answered by my letter of the 2nd[1] instant which still remains unanswered.

The affidavit of the ex-Manager of the National Bank at Wakkerstroom shows conclusively that Hoosen Amod's store was not closed in July 1899, but that owing to the War he closed it himself on the 2nd day of October 1899. His store was never closed by the Landdrost, and he could not do so because Hoosen Amod held his licence for the full year 1899, and not a quarterly licence as now.

The statement that Hoosen Amod's lease has not expired is, my Committee is informed, quite correct. His lease is and has been, my Committee is informed, in the possession of the Magistrate, and the Lessor is prepared to make an affidavit confirming the statement.

Hoosen Amod informs the Committee that some interested store-keepers in Wakkerstroom have thoroughly prejudiced the Magistrate against him, and given him false information regarding the alleged closing of the store by the Landdrost.

Objections have been raised against him one after another as the previous ones failed not to allow an answer.

He has been put to considerable loss for no fault of his own. Many Indians not having half his claims are now trading, and Hoosen Amod, a store-keeper of ten years' standing, backed by

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Colonial Secretary" November 3, 1898

non-interested Europeans in Wakkerstroom and in possession of a long lease still in existence, finds his store forcibly closed. The Notice lately issued protects those occupying his position. My Committee respectfully submits that the injustice he is labouring under is manifest beyond doubt and craves justice at His Excellency's hands.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ABDOOL GANI

CHAIRMAN, BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Pretoria Archives: L.G 92 97/LG

35. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

THE BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
April 25, 1903

TO
THE HONORABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PRETORIA

SIR,

I venture to bring to your notice the following translated extract from a letter addressed to the British Indian Association by the Indian residents of Heidelberg, and dated the 23rd instant.

> This morning, at 5.30, the police constables surrounded every store, opened the doors and entered in and woke up all the people sleeping in the rooms, and struck terror into the people by shouting 'Come out, come out.' They did not allow them to wash their hands and faces, or to take tea or other tiffin. Many opened their shops at 6 o'clock, thinking that two or three might remain in the shops, while the others accompanied the police. But the masters were taken beforehand. On the men declining to close the shops, the police closed the doors themselves, drew the men out, handed the keys to them, and marched them out. Thus, every man was arrested as if he was a criminal. The only difference was that we were not handcuffed.
>
> Thus were all the people brought to the Charge Office at 8 a.m. and kept under custody. Each man was separately taken into the office room, asked to

produce his permit or proof of his former domicile, and new permits were issued to those who could establish their claim. Then each was dismissed through the front door. Even these were at first detained after the permits were issued, but when we protested, they were allowed to go. Those that were thus freed were not allowed to hold any conversation with those that were detained, so the men who have been kept under custody since morning, hungry and thirsty as they are, had not been discharged up to 12.30 p.m. This letter is being written at 12.30 p.m. Still there are some merchants under custody. The spectacle of respectable Indian store-keepers being arrested early in the morning and marched through the streets has become the topic of general conversation in the town.

Thus, the police rudely and without permission entered all the rooms and did not quite mind our warning that some of the rooms contained Zanana ladies. When asked by what order we were being arrested, the reply was 'By order of the captain; we are going to take every one except women and children, and if you do not come willingly, we will force you.' The written order was asked for. They declined.

Such is the account of the police proceeding in Heidelberg. I may state that a similar occurrence happened in Johannesburg. The matter was brought to Captain Fowle's notice, and it was thought thatthe procedure would not be repeated. It was, however, repeated in Potchefstroom. It was still allowed to slide down. But it has now become impossible for my committee to remain silent.

In the darkest days of our time under the old regime, we were not subjected to such physical ill-treatment. The community has, so far as my committee is aware, committed no crime, and yet it has not only to face popular prejudice and its effects, but has now to face ill-treatment from those who are expected to protect us.

My committee humbly request an enquiry and an expression of opinion from the Government as to the proceeding of the police above referred to.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

your obedient servant,

ABDOOL GANI,

CHAIRMAN,

[THE] BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

The Rand Daily Mail, 28-4-1903

36. TREATMENT OF INDIANS

THE BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
April 27, 1903

TO
THE EDITOR
The Rand Daily Mail
JOHANNESBURG

SIR,

I beg to enclose herewith a copy of a letter[1] addressed to the Government for publication. The letter refers to the treatment by the police at Heidelberg of the British Indian residents there. Comment on the letter is superfluous. Whatever may be the policy of your paper on the question of the status of the British Indians in the Colony, I venture to trust that you will be able to sympathise with my countrymen in the physical ill-treatment alluded to in the letter. If there is one thing that is dearly cherished by the British Constitution, it is the respect for personal liberty the meanest of the King's subjects, whether white or black. This evidently is at stake in the Colony, as far as the British Indians are concerned.

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
ABDOOL GANI,
CRAIRMAN,
[THE] BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

The Rand Daily Mail, 28-4-1903

[1]*Vide* the preceding item.

37. LETTER TO P. S. TO LT.-GOVERNOR, TRANSVAAL

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION,
BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
April 27, 1903

TO

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR
PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the 22nd of April received on the 24th instant.

My Committee tenders its respectful thanks to His Excellency for the reply which shows that he is anxious to do justice to the Indian Community, in that it puts a liberal construction on the Government Notice No. 356 of 1903.

But the reply has deeply grieved the community, in that it is, in my Committee's humble opinion, a departure from the declarations before War, of Her Late Majesty's Government, as well as the assurances since given by His Majesty's Government, that the existing Law would be reconsidered. My Committee will therefore be obliged later to revert to the general question. In the meanwhile, I am to request information on the following further points that ariseout of the Notice and your letter under reply.

Indians who did not hold licences before War and yet were granted them last year were not informed that they were temporary. The first information given to such effect was last year and it was repudiated by the Right Honourable Mr. Chamberlain as soon as it was brought to his notice. Such store-keepers have in some instances gone to the expense of building substantial structures. Others hold long leases and all have built up a fair custom which is likely to increase as time goes on. It will be, therefore, in my Committee's humble opinion, unjust to require them to remove to Bazaars. The removal, as a rule, cannot be effected without a heavy loss, no matter how well situated the proposed Bazaars may be.

The Notice in question refers to renewals of licences outside

Bazaars to those who were trading on the outbreak of War. The letter under reply mentioned "trading before War". Is my Committee right in understanding that all Indians who were trading before War, whether on the outbreak or not, will have their licences renewed? If not, an Indian who opened a store in 1899 outside Locations would be entitled to a renewal where as one who traded for fifteen years and went to India for a trip, closing his business in August 1899, would be disentitled, thus causing [sic] manifest injustice.

The enforcement of the whole Law would seem to imply a continuance of the prohibition to British Indians to hold landed property except in Locations or Bazaars. There are some Indians who hold landed property in the names of white persons. Most of these cases are already before His Excellency for consideration, more especially the three mosques in Johannesburg, Pretoria and Heidelberg. Law 3 of 1885 and its amendment contemplated a registration fee of £ 3 on every Indian—a clause that was formerly as a rule enforced only in the case of storekeepers and hawkers and because the Receivers of Revenue would not grant licences without the production of the Registration Certificate. A large number, however, never paid the fee nor were they ever called upon either to register themselves or to pay the fee. My Committee has seen the Notice appointing Captain Fowle[1] as the Registration Officer for Asiatics, but my Committee respectfully hopes that it is not the intention of the Government to enforce the provision which was notenforced during the old regime and which can have nothing to do with the Anti-Asiatic agitation on the part of the public at large.

My Committee, therefore, requests information

(a) Whether His Excellency will be pleased to respect the vested interests of all existing licensees, whether they were trading before the War or not.

(b) Whether licences will be granted to those who were trading before War outside Locations whether on the outbreak thereof or earlier.

(c) Whether Law 3 of 1885 as amended in 1886 is to be enforced as to the prohibition to hold landed property, and if so whether permission will be granted for the transfers of those properties which are held by Indians in the name of white persons.

[1] Hamilton Fowle

(d) Whether it is the intention of the Government to enforce payment of the registration fee of £ 3 in terms of the Law.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ABDOOL GANI

CHAIRMAN, BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Pretoria Archives: LG. 92/2132 Asiatics. 1902-1906

38. TELEGRAM TO P. S. TO LT.-GOVERNOR, TRANSVAAL

JOHANNESBURG,
[After *April, 1903*][1]

TO

PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO HIS EXCELLENCY LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

RECEIVED LETTER CAPTAIN FOWLE INTIMATING INTENTION ENFORCE £ 3 TAX. RESPECTFULLY REQUEST SUSPENSION PENDING HIS EXCELLENCY'S DECISION ON REPRESENTATION DATED 27TH ULTIMO AND PETITION FROM MR. HOSKEN AND OTHERS.

BIAS

Pretoria Archives: LG. 92/2132 Asiatics. 1902-1906

[1] From the reference to the petition signed by W. M. Hosken, which was dated "April, 1903"; *vide* " The Proclamation of 1858", 9-7-1903

39. LETTER TO LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR[1]

THE BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
May 1, 1903

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR
PRETORIA

SIR,

Mr. William Hosken and other leading residents of Johannesburg, whose names appear at the foot of the enclosed petition[2] addressed to His Excellency, have entrusted the Association with the task of submitting same to His Excellency, which, on behalf of the Association, I do hereby.

In doing so, I may state that the petition owes its origin to the request of the Association to the gentlemen in question to put their views before the Government regarding the notice No.356 of 1903 and to express their opinion generally regarding the Indian question. This they have gladly done.

I may be permitted to mention that, with very few exceptions, all the Europeans with whom we have come in contact have expressed sentiments similar to those of the petitioners. A few have approved of the notice in ignorance of the state of the law which it is intended to enforce, as also owing to misunderstanding as to the real scope of its meaning.

As to the subject matter of the petition, my committee would be prepared to agree to the principle of the legislation, submitted as model by the petitioners, with slight modifications. It would generally meet the object sought to be served by the notice in question and cannot fail to regulate the granting of licenses to the satisfaction of the most vehementopponent of the British Indian, in that, subject to the control, in extreme cases, of the Supreme Court, the popularly elected

[1] Gandhiji sent a copy of this letter to Dadabhai Naoroji to be forwarded to the Secretary of State for India.

[2] *Vide* enclosure on the following page.

bodies would regulate the granting of new licenses and would, at the same time, remove from the statute book the existing legislation which puts an unnecessary affront on His Majesty's loyal Indian subjects. The proposed legislation would moreover regulate the future immigration which the notice does not do.

In talking to the European gentlemen, my committee has also found that their opposition is not so much against the Indians as against the Chinese. To quote one glaring instance, when the statement dealing with Asiatics, made in the pamphlet published by the Johannesburg branch of the South Africa League, was brought to the notice of the executive of the League, they admitted at once that the use of the term Asiatic was an error. Their objection was entirely against the Chinese and not at all against the British Indians.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

your obedient servant,

CHAIRMAN,

[THE] BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

India Office: Judicial and Public Records, 402.

[Enclosure][1]

The following is the text of the petition signed by W. M. Hosken and others, referred to in the above memorial of the British Indian Association:—

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR OF THE TRANSVAAL

PRETORIA

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED, RESIDING IN THE COLONY OF THE TRANSVAAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH—

Your petitioners have read the Government Notice recently published in the papers regarding the Asiatics, and would venture respectfully to express their opinion on the question as follows:

1. Your petitioners regard it as necessary that the immigration of Asiatics into the Colony should be regulated by law, and would, therefore, suggest that in the place of the existing anti-Asiatic legislation, the Natal Act or the Cape Act may be copied with advantage. It would do away with race or colour question, while setting at rest any fear of an influx of undesirable people of any nationality.

[1] This was published in *India*, 25-9-1903.

2. But the notice in question, if it is meant to be permanent, appears to your petitioners to be in conflict with the declarations before the war of Her late Majesty's Government, in that they were then opposed to the anti-Asiatic laws of the late Republic so far as British Indians were concerned, and protested against their enforcement.

3. While, as stated above, your petitioners would object to an unrestricted influx into the Colony of the Indian population, in their humble opinion the present population is entitled to fair and honourable treatment.

4. The refusal to transfer existing licenses from one person to another or from one place to another would be tantamount to requiring the present holders to close their businesses sooner or later, and then at a heavy loss.

5. The notice in question is not clear whether all existing licenses will be renewed from time to time. It would be unjust to withhold licenses to trade outside Bazaars from those Indians who obtained them last year from British officers.

6. In your petitioners' humble opinion the best solution of the intricate question will be in Town Councils or Health Boards being granted powers, as in Natal, to refuse or grant licenses to new applicants, subject to safeguards against abuse thereof in the shape of the right, to the aggrieved party, of appealing to the Supreme Court against their decisions. The renewals of existing licenses, too, should be subject to the sanitary report from year to year.

7. In your petitioners' humble opinion the British Indians resident in the colony are an orderly, law-abiding and useful section of the community, and are quite equal in honesty and sobriety to others who are not British subjects, and yet enjoy full trading and other rights.

8. It is evident that the Indian supplies a felt want, because the general public support him.

Your petitioners, therefore, pray that the notice in question will 'be reconsidered in view of the points herein submitted, or such other relief will be granted to His Majesty's Indian subjects as may seem meet.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your petitioners as in duty bound shall for ever pray, etc., etc.

Johannesburg, April, 1903

W. M. HOSKEN, L. W. RITCH
[AND SEVERAL OTHERS]

40. CABLE TO "INDIA"[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
May 9, [*1903*]

A PUBLIC MEETING OF INDIANS FROM ALL PARTS OF THE TRANSVAAL WAS HELD ON THE 6TH INST., AT WHICH A RESOLUTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY PASSED, PROTESTING AGAINST THE ENFORCEMENT OF THE ANTI-INDIAN LAWS OF THE LATE REPUBLIC, RESTRICTING INDIANS TO BAZAARS, ETC., ON THE GROUND THAT SUCH ENFORCEMENT CONSTITUTES A DEPARTURE FROM THE DECLARATIONS MADE BY THE GOVERNMENT ON AND AFTER THE OUTBREAK OF THE WAR, AND THAT THE LAWS ARE CONTRARY TO THE PROCLAMATION OF 1857[2], AND TO BRITISH POLICY, EVEN IN SELF-GOVERNING COLONIES.

THE RESOLUTION CONCLUDED BY PRAYING FOR THE REPEAL OF THE LAWS IN FAVOUR OF LAWS IN HARAMONY WITH BRITISH TRADITIONS.

India, 15-5-1903

41. NOTES ON THE POSITION

P. O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
May 9, 1903

NOTES ON THE POSITION UP TO DATE

The Notice 356[3] is still in force. The enclosures are all most important.

The complaint about the police proceedings in Heidelberg[4] (enclosure 1) shows the great patience of the community. The tyrannical proceedings in Johannesburg and Heidelberg were, deliberately and in spite of the protest of the sufferers, allowed to pass by in the hope that such exemplary patience would create a favourable impression on the minds of the officers immediately concerned. Evidently, the silence was misunderstood. It, therefore,

[1] This appeared as "By an Indian Correspondent".
[2] This is evidently a slip; the Proclamation was issued in 1858.
[3] *Vide* enclosure to "British Indians in South Africa", 12-4-1903.
[4] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", April 25, 1903.

became imperative to treat the Heidelberg incident more seriously. The Government are now making [an] inquiry and the result is anxiously awaited.

The enclosure No. 2[1] shows that the most respectable members of the European community are hot unwilling to see justice done to the Indians. Mr. William Hosken, who is the first signatory to the petition, is one of the most prominent leaders in the Transvaal. He was a delegate of the recent Bloemfontein Conference and is a nominated unofficial member of the new Legislative Council. The signatories are all merchants of the highest standing. The petition is now in the hands of His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor.

The enclosure 3 and 4[2] shows the intensity of the feelings of the Indian community. The great hall was crowded in every part. What we feel most is, not inconvenience due to the prejudice, but the utter degradation involved in Indians, as a class, being forced to the Locations or Bazaars. The existing law applies to Indians as such, a principle which Mr. Chamberlain has more than once set his face against.

Legislation on the Natal lines will be acceptable on the following conditions: (1) The educational test must include a knowledge of any of the Indian languages. Even this test would exclude millionsof Indians, and it is the millions which are a bugbear to the Europeans. And the power should be reserved for the Government to allow special permission to those Indians who, though devoid of a knowledge of languages, are specially required for the benefit of the domiciled Indians.

(2) As to the traders' licenses, the existing ones should not be touched, but new applications, whether of Europeans or Indians, should be dealt with by the Local Boards, provided that the Supreme Court should have the power to revise their decisions in cases of gross in justice. Such legislation takes note of every reasonable objection that could be advanced against Indian settlers.

EAST LONDON

The foot-path bye-law is, evidently, now in working order. An Indian cleanly dressed has been fined £2 for walking on the

[1] *Vide* enclosure to " Letter to Lieutenant-Governor", May 1, 1903.

[2] The reference is to the newspaper reports of the meeting, which are not given here.

foot-paths. A cablegram has been sent to the British Committee and Sir Mancherji regarding the prosecution by the East London Indian Association.

India Office: Judicial and Public Records, 402.

42. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

COURT CHAMBERS, RISSIK ST.,
P.O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
May 10, 1903

[TO]
THE HONOURABLE DADABHAI NAOROJI
LONDON

DEAR SIR,

I am much obliged to you for your letter of the 16th April last. Lord George's reply is satisfactory so far as it goes. But the greater the delay in passing the desired legislation, the greater will be the difficulty. We here absolutely subscribe to the statement that an undue influx of cheap labour should be restricted. Nor do Indian labourers enter the Colony in large numbers. But, as you will see from the most important papers[1] I am enclosing herewith, in order to show our *bona fides*, we are prepared to accept legislation on the Natal basis with the very reasonable modifications suggested in the enclosed. As to Bazaars, not an Indian has accepted the principle of compulsory removal to Bazaars, but we are ready to co-operate with the Government in making the Bazaar system a success, if it is applied to new applicants. The real point is there should be no legislation to that effect compelling Indians as such to submit to the institution of Bazaars. I may add that Bazaars as understood here are merely an euphemism for Locations. I enclose herewith a letter that was addressed by me to the Government on the question and also the letter sent to them enclosing the petition from the Europeans of the

[1] The papers enclosed were: "Letter to Colonial Secretary", February 18, 1903; "Letter to Lieutenant-Governor", May 1, 1903, "Notes on the Position", May 9, 1903, and the petition of Europeans to the Lieut.-Governor, April 1903, "Letter to lieutenant-Governor", 1-5-1903 [Enclosure]

Transvaal sent herewith.

I know I am loading you with papers and documents in the midst of your other work. The great importance of the question is my only excuse.

I am,

yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

India Office: Judicial and Public Records, 402.

43. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

COURT CHAMBERS, RISSIK ST.,
P. O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
May 10, 1903

DEAR PROFESSOR GOKHALE,

I have settled here under very great difficulties. The question has assumed a very serious aspect & requires very close attention. How long I will have to stop, it is difficult to say. I have hardly time to write about myself.

The enclosed cuttings are most important. I notice that the Bombay Chamber of Commerce has sent a strong protest. But it is, I fear, uninformed. The Cape Act is certainly bad. It required amending. But it is well nigh impossible to have an absolutely open door. Under it many white aliens have been turned away. It seems to be the settled policy of the Colonists that they would regulate immigration into their country. The real & effective stand we have therefore to take up is to fight legislation based on colour. The Cape & Natal Acts are general in terms. They hit us hard because the education test does not include a knowledge of the Indian languages. The Cape Act was drafted so as to include Indian languages but it was amended in Committee. The legislation here is against Indians (described as the "aboriginal races of Asia") as such & deprives them of the right of owning property, etc. You will find the full text of these laws in the papers sent before.

If your health is good & if time permits it, please study the question & direct the movement in India against it. The more I observe the effect of emigration of our people on their character, the more convinced I become that, if an open door is kept for us to

migrate to the colonies even the under restrictions of a general character applicable to all, there are great possibilities for us.

I remain

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the original: G.N. 4101.

44. N0TES

POSITION IN THE TRANSVAAL

BOX 6523,
JOHANNESBURG,
May 16, 1903

Hardly has the ink dried on the pen when information is officially received that it is the intention of the Government to enforce the £3 registration tax in terms of Law 3 of 1885. The information received from friends in London goes to show that the Law is to be altered. If so, it is difficult to imagine why it is now proposed to collect the registration tax of £3. It was never compulsorily collected during the Boer rule.

It is inconceivable why the very tax from which we were protected by the British Government should now be collected in its name. And there is not even the excuse of popular prejudice in favour of the tax. The agitation from the Europeans is against trading licenses. No one at any of the anti-Asiatic meetings has ever whispered a word as to the collection of the tax.

We have sent a respectful protest to His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor and it is unlikely that the collection of the tax would be suspended before this reaches London. But the situation has become so critical that it has been thought advisable to pass on to London any developments in the position.

India Office: Judicial and Public Records, 402.

45. THE BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION AND LORD MILNER

His Excellency Lord Milner has forwarded to the Press the following account of his interview with the deputation of the British

Indian Association on the 22nd ultimo.

Present: His Excellency the Governor of the Transvaal, and Messrs. M. K. Gandhi, Abdul Gani, Haji Habib, H. O. Ally, S. V. Thomas, and Imam Shekh Ahmed.

Mr. M. K. Gandhi said that, on behalf of the deputation, he wished to thank His Excellency for receiving them. They wished to discuss the £3 tax and the general question. When they read His Excellency's address to the Municipal Congress, they felt obliged for the sentiments which he had expressed, and thought that they saw the end of their troubles. But the following morning they received a letter from His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor of the Transvaal, from which it appeared that the Government were going to enforce Law No. 3 of 1885, and that it would not be altered at all. It was quite true that this tax had been paid by some of the Asiatics to the old Government. Indeed, they could not get a license to trade unless they had previously paid this tax. But it was never regularly enforced. In 1885, when this law was passed, complaints from British Indians poured in, and there was a good deal of correspondence with the Colonial Office on the subject of the right of the Boers to impose this tax, and to pass the law. Finally, the late Government agreed to arbitration. But the decision[1] went against the British Indians. However, Mr. Chamberlain said that he reserved to himself the right to make friendly representations to the Transvaal Government. Mr. Chamberlain also told them that he heartily sympathised with the British Indians. In the end, the law was never wholly enforced. In 1899, when an attempt was made to enforce the Location Law, a deputation waited upon Sir Conyngham-Greene and Mr. Emrys Evans. The latter afterwards saw Dr. Krause, who was then the Public Prosecutor, who assured him that he had received no instructions to prosecute in cases where the people refused to go into Locations. But now the position was absolutely changed, and they were to be compelled to pay the tax and to go to Bazaars. He ventured to submit that the tax would be a grievous burden to the Indian community. Large numbers of Indians were employed as house-boys, domestic servants and waiters, and their wages were about £3 per month. Thus, they would have to pay one-twelfth of their wages by way of a tax. It was also a kind of a penal measure, for, if they did not pay, that law provided that a fine of

[1] *Vide* "Open Letter", before 19-12-1894 & "Letter to Europeans" 19-12-1894

from £10 to £100 could be imposed or, in default, fourteen days' to six months' imprisonment.

His Excellency: Is this an annual tax?

Mr. Gandhi said it was not, and had only to be paid once. It was intended to act as a deterrent to Indian immigration. That such payment should now be enforced against those already in the country came as a great surprise to them.

As to passes, Mr. Gandhi said that originally, after refugees were permitted to return to the Transvaal, permits held by Indians were taken away from them by the Asiatic Office, and temporary passes were granted. Passes were further necessary if an Indian wanted to visit a friend in another part of South Africa. These passes were made out for as many days as the issuing officer chose. There was, besides, a vast amount of unnecessary trouble. Later on, these passes were again exchanged for permits, and instead of a notice being put in the papers to this effect, Indians were brought to the office simply to be told about it. In one case, some Indians were dragged out of their homes at four o'clock in the morning, and kept waiting at the office till 9.30, simply to be told that their passes were no longer of any use, and had to be changed for permits. The community needed rest from these constant changes of passes and permits.

That was their position, and they had come to His Excellency to pray for relief, both as regards the present permit system and the £3 tax. This law was most painful to them—all the more so, as the enforcing of it now showed the intention of the Government to perpetuate it. It had been publicly declared that the refusal of the late Government to repeal that law was one of the causes of the war. But what did they find? That the new Government was going to enforce Law No. 3 of 1885 as it had never been enforced by the late Government. That being so, it followed that they would never be allowed to hold property in the Transvaal, except in Bazaars and Locations. He respectfully submitted that that was quite contrary to the principles of the British Constitution, and that it was not in vogue in any other British Colony. Now, a new Crown Colony was leading the way in this direction. In this connection, he would like to mention another difficulty. The sites where stood the Mosques in Pretoria and Johannesburg had been purchased many years ago, but owing to this law, they could not be transferred to them. And there was the same difficulty regarding the Mosque at Heidelberg. Lord Roberts, when

approached, pointed out that military law was still in force, but added that he hoped that, as soon as the civil administration was established, al; British subjects would be treated alike. Yet this very law was being enforced against them by the present Government.

Then there was the trouble about photographs on visiting passes. If an Indian wished to visit friends in another Colony, he had to send three photographs to the Asiatic Office before he could get a pass to leave the Colony and return. Such a course might be necessary to prevent a fraudulent use of such permits, but he ventured to submit that it was not fair to assume that, because some Indians might make a fraudulent use of a permit, all Indians were criminally inclined. Those who were should surely be caught and severely punished. They had frequently protested against this and the way the Asiatic Office was carried on. The officer there was reported to have said, in the course of an interview which appeared in the *Star*, that it was intended to advance the views of the White League and not to watch over the interests of Asiatics.

When Mr. Chamberlain was here, he received a Deputation of British Indians, and he told them that they should make it their duty to agree with the sentiments of the European population, so long as these sentiments did not interfere with their rights. They had taken that advice to heart, but now the White League demanded that they should be sent out of the country altogether. He could assure His Excellency that they had all been trying to follow the advice of Mr. Chamberlain, in so far as it was consistent with their self-respect. He did not think he need add anything more than to remind His Excellency that Mr. Chamberlain had said that those Indians already in the country would receive fair and honourable treatment, and that was what they now asked for.

H. O. Ally complained that they were not allowed to trade where they liked, and that they could not get transfers of licences.

Imam Shekh Ahmed stated that, some months ago, he applied for a permit for a Mohammedan priest, but it was refused point-blank. Surely no country could refuse to allow a priest to enter it for the purpose of ministering to a section of the inhabitants of that country. He had always found that great difficulties were put in their way when they went to any of the Government offices to see the officials. He could never, for instance, get in to see the Colonial Secretary.

His Excellency: I think what has just been said is rather an

illustration of the necessity of having an Asiatic Department. It is quite possible that the present Asiatic Office, which is a new institution, may not work very well. But my idea is that it would be an immense advantage for the Asiatics in this country if they had a special member of the Government to whom they could go about their affairs, instead of having to compete with so many other bodies for the attention of a very much overworked office like that of the Colonial Secretary. I admit that this special officer should not regard himself as a man merely to enforce the law with regard to Asiatics, but as a man to look after their interests, and by whom they should be well received when they have any complaint to make. I think such an Asiatic Department is very desirable, and its establishment is in your own interest. The discussion to-day has turned largely upon the £3 tax. It seems to be rather a small point among many big ones. The only reason for pressing for the £3 tax, which, I may tell you, I consider a very fair one in any case, is that it is part of the existing law. We are enforcing the laws as we find them. But I may say at once that we do not consider Law No. 3 of 1885 a perfect one at all. I have always maintained that it was necessary to deal with the position of Asiatics in this country by special law, but the law, under which I think they should be dealt with, would be materially different from Law No. 3 of 1885. I do not know that we should altogether agree as to what the provisions of such special law should be, but while I should not agree with you in all respects, neither should I agree with much I hear said, and with what I read in the newspapers with regard to the treatment of Asiatics.

I think we have a perfect right to restrict Asiatic immigration, and any other immigration for that matter, for the general good of the community,—that is a right inherent in every State which cannot for a moment be disputed—but I think that those As Asiatics who are already here, and whom we may hereafter admit, should be well trea-ted and feel that their rights are guaranteed. I hoped that ere now a new law of a permanent character would have beer passed, so that a British Indian, or anyone else, could say to himself: "I know that, if I go to the Transvaal, I must abide by certain conditions, and, that being-done, I shall be all right," while those already in the country would be protected in their acquired rights. But, unfortunately, delays have occurred, and you see for yourselves what the difficulties are in passing a law dealing with this matter. I have a great faith in the effect of time, discussion and

consideration to bring conflicting views closer together. But at present, such a law as I should propose might not have the consent of the Government of Great Britain, and might cause protest from the Government of India: and, on the other hand, any law, which the Home Government suggested. to us, might not meet with public assent here, and, even if passed, might make your position worse by stimulating the opposition to you, and would then, on the establishment of self-government, almost certainly be repealed at once. It is no use trying to force the position here against the overwhelming body of white opinion. I think a reasonable law is possible—not a law which will give you all you want, but one which will give you a great deal; not a law which will altogether please the "White League", but one which will do much to conciliate the reasonable members of the white population. Meanwhile, the Government of the Transvaal has been repeatedly called upon to enforce the law that exists, and it cannot do otherwise while it remains on the statute-book. You make a point of the fact that this law was not enforced by the old Government. That is what I object to about the system of the late Government of the Transvaal—it was so arbitrary. The law was enforced and. it was not enforced. But all the time it was hanging over your heads, and you never knew what was going to happen to you. Some were made to pay the tax and some were not. While the tax is on the statute-book, I say that it must be paid by all alike.

It has been said that my sentiments differ from those of the Lieut.-Governor. I do not think there is any inconsistency. I adhere to the sentiments which I expressed the other day, and to which you have refer red. But I also adhere to this, that you must make the best of existing conditions and submit to the existing law until it is altered. I do not think it is being carried out harshly. The present Government is showing a reasonable regard for the position of Indians already here. I think that registration is a protection to them. To that registration there is attached a £3 tax. It is only asked for once. Those who have paid it to the old Government have only to prove that they have done so, and they have not to pay it again. Again, once on the Register, their position is established and no further registration is necessary, nor is a fresh permit required. That registration gives you a right to be here, and a right to come and go. Therefore, to me, registration seems a protection to you, as well as a help to the Government, and in any law that is passed. I should like to see registration

included.

As to Bazaars, continued His Excellency, would it not be better for. the Indians to accept Bazaars, provided that they are good Bazaars, in reasonable localities and properly organised? I must say that I think once they are properly established, it would be a distinct advantage tothe Indian community to occupy them, instead of causing general opposition to themselves by settling down here, there, and everywhere among people who do not want them. It would not be just to force into Bazaars those Indians who have already established themselves elsewhere, or Indians of a superior class. If some gentlemen of the "White League" would like to see all Indians, irrespective of their social position and irrespective of their acquired rights, compelled to migrate to Bazaars, I say I do not agree with them. But, rightly or wrongly, and for my own part, I think not unreasonably, the white population resent and will resist any large and indiscriminate influx of Asiatics into their own midst.

I have made a note of some of the points you have raised about photographs, about the difficulty of getting the title to mosques registered in your own names, and about passes. All these matters I will enquire into. I do not myself suppose that the difficulty about the registration of the title to the mosques is anything more than a technical legal difficulty. Whenever there is legislation on the subject, I have no doubt that we shall provide that places of worship may be registered in the names of those who use them. I think it is a very hard thing that they should not be allowed to hold them in their own names. Generally speaking, I am opposed to everything that would tend to make the life of Asiatics, uncomfortable, to make them feel themselves slighted, or to subject them to any restrictions except those absolutely necessary in the interests of the whole community, such as the restriction on immigration and regulations as to the place of residence of those who do not belong to what you may term the superior class, and who have not lawfully established themselves already.

You say that we have not recognised all acquired rights. That is because a number of people have come into the Transvaal since the war without proper authority. We have recognised the rights of the Indians who were here before the war, and who held licences before the war. We allow them to renew their licences for the premises they had prior to the war or to transfer them to other premises.

M. K. Gandhi: Those who have got new licences were refugees who had traded in other parts of the Colony. They have now built new homes and shops for themselves, and will have to leave them at the end of the year, when their licences expire, because they may not renew them.

His Excellency: Those original licences were for wholly different localities. At present, if an Indian had a licence for one street in Johannesburg before the war, he can either renew the licence for that shop or go to another, still in Johannesburg.

M. K. Gandhi: My point is this: some Indians had trading licences for the other parts of the Transvaal before the war. They went away as refugees, and now have come back to different localities and have obtained fresh licences. But now they are told that they cannot renew those licences at the end of the year, because they were not licensed in those districts before the war.

His Excellency: That is a new point. What I was thinking of was the case of people who were trading in any particular town before the war, but now desired to trade in another shop in the same town.

H. O. Ally: This is the point. Assume that I was trading in Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, before the war, and now desired to trade in Heidelberg instead. That I am not permitted to do, because I had not had a licence to trade in Heidelberg prior to the war.

His Excellency: That is quite a new point. I cannot express an opinion without further considering it.

H. O. Ally: This agitation against us is largely due to trade jealousy.

His Excellency: I think there is a great deal of trade jealousy. That is quite natural. There are a limited number of white people living here amongst a very large black population, and there are only certain employments open to them. Naturally, they do not want a large influx of strangers to come and take the bread out of their mouths. They are perfectly right in asking that we should control immigration. If there is at present a living here for, say, 100,000 people, we do not want 200,000 to rush in and swamp us. Our numbers are too small to allow of uncontrolled immigration, especially of a different race, when we have already so many racial problems.

Haji Habib: And yet many white people are making their bread

by trade with the Indians in India. But with regard to the Bazaars, how can they put up what are required? Today there might be a demand for 30, and tomorrow 300 might be wanted. The point about Bazaars is that we do not want any law forcing us to go into Bazaars.

His Excellency: I do not want to force those present to go into Bazaars, but I think that we have the right to say that we will not have more than a reasonable number of Asiatic traders here, and that, if they come, they must do so under certain restrictions.

M. K. Gandhi: A proposal was made to H.E. the Lieut.-Governor the other day. We asked to have the sites, which had been acquired for the purpose of Bazaars, pointed out to us, and suggested that anyone desiring to obtain a new license should be asked if he would take one out for a shop on that site, but that it should not be made compulsory that we should go and trade at that place. Then the thing becomes offensive to us. If there was a Bazaar, the poorer class of Indians would naturally go there. At present most of that class are in the Locations. They have naturally gravitated there.

His Excellency: What you say must be considered in dealing with new legislation. But my point for the moment is this, that, while the present system continues, the Government is quite right in saying that the law must be observed. Needless to say, the Government has no prejudice against you, though it may feel that the influx of any large additional number of Asiatic traders is undesirable. For those already here, I can only say that I hope they may continue to prosper.

M. K. Gandhi: That is a sentiment confined only to Your Excellency. For instance, it takes three months for an Indian, from the time he lands at one of the ports, to get up here.

His Excellency: I can tell you as a fact that at one time a far larger number of Indians were coming up here than people of all other nationalities, except British, put together. I must say that I, at one time, thought we were going too far and issuing far too many permits to Indians.

H. O. Ally: The mistake was made by the railway authorities, because they thought that any Indians who showed that they were refugees were entitled to return at once. That went on till the Peace Preservation Ordinance was passed.

His Excellency: To revert to the £3 tax. I have heard no valid argument against it.

H. O. Ally: It is a special tax. Greeks, Armenians, and others do not have to pay a special tax. They pay 18s. a year, and that is all.

His Excellency: Yes, but they pay that every year, whereas you pay the £3 tax once and have done with it.

H. O. Ally: And we should prefer to pay this 18s. a year, instead of the £3 tax.

His Excellency: But there is no choice in the matter. The law at present says that you have to pay £3, and that law is going to be enforced.

H. O. Ally: We have protested against this law for years, and we think that, if we submit to it now, we shall be prejudicing our case against it

His Excellency: You have a perfect right to make your views heard. What I say is that you would put yourselves in the wrong by resisting the action of the Government in carrying an existing law into execution.

H. O. Ally: We will never do anything like that. That is why we came to Your Excellency. Whatever conclusion the Government comes to in the matter, we will abide by that. But I think that, if the objection to us is that our homes are not sanitary, the Municipality should pass more stringent measures, and send inspectors round to see our places. I do not think any man would need to be fined a second time, and one fine would act as a warning to the others.

After thanking His Excellency for granting them the interview, the deputation withdrew.

Indian Opinion, 11-6-1903

46. POSITION IN THE TRANSVAAL

[JOHANNESBURG,
May 24, 1903]

THE POSITION IN THE TRANSVAAL FOR WEEK ENDING 23RD MAY, 1903

The Law 3 of 1885 as amended in 1886, it will be remembered, requires from every Indian settling in the Colony a registration fee of £3.

The Government, having decided to enforce the above Law, notified that the Indians who had not paid £3 tax during the old

regime were to pay it forthwith. The community, therefore, appealed to Lord Milner for protection on the following grounds:

(1) The Law 3 of 1885 was never approved by the British Government and it remained on the statute-book only after diplomatic representations had failed.

(2) The tax was never regularly enforced during the late regime.

(3) The Law, the removal of which was one of the causes of the war, should not be enforced.

(4) The Indian community needs rest from the constant change of passes and officers. The Asiatic Office, under whose yoke it is groaning, took away the permanent permits held by the Indians and granted temporary passes, for which there was no legal authority. These passes were changed for permits, and hardly has the police prosecution been effaced from the mind of the Indian community, when comes the proposal for registration certificates for which £3 have to be paid.

(5) The payment would be a crushing burden to poor Indian hawkers and others to whom the sum of £3 is not a joke.

(6) Unlike other personal taxes in the Colony, failure to pay the tax renders a man liable to the penalty of £10 to £100 fine and, in default, 14 days' to six months' imprisonment. The other taxes in the Colony are recoverable only by civil writ.

(7) The tax is not meant for the purposes of revenue but as a deterrent to future immigrants. But, seeing that *bona fide* refugees only are allowed to enter the Colony, there is no necessity for a deterrent.

(8) The £3 tax is merely a penalty for wearing the brown skin and it would appear that, whereas Kaffirs are taxed because they do not work at all or sufficiently, we are to be taxed evidently because we work too much, the only thing in common between the two being the absence of the white skin.

(9) The strangest part of the thing is that there is no demand on the part of the White Leagues for the enforcement of the payment. The only thing they want is the banishment of the Indians, if not out of the country altogether, certainly to Locations outside townships.

His Excellency received a deputation in the matter and gave it a

very long, patient and courteous hearing, but said that he saw no valid reason, in all the grounds enumerated above, for not enforcing the pay-ment, that the Government were not unfriendly to the Indians, that while future immigration will most certainly be restricted, he considered that the present population were entitled to fair treatment. Replying to other matters raised by the deputation, His Excellency said he was considering in what way the existing law could be replaced, and he could see nothing wrong in a separate Asiatic Office) which was really (he added) in the interests of the Indians. His Lordship advised us not to resist payment of the tax and [to] bow to the inevitable.

Although we respectfully differ from His Excellency regarding the payment of the tax, we have decided to obey His Excellency's advice, (1) because we are anxious to fall in with the Government whenever it is possible, and (2) because we think that our energy and that of the friends in London should be concentrated on one central point, namely repeal of the existing law.

As to the Asiatic Office, while His Excellency's. views are very soling as to its being in our interests, so far, in practice, it has proved a veritable yoke since its establishment. The community has not known what rest from vexation is.

EAST LONDON

Two well-dressed Indians, Doorysammy and Nadda, were fined £2 each or 14 days' or one month's hard labour respectively for walking on the foot-path in Oxford Street, East London, on the 6th and 9th May respectively. The foot-path bye-law is, therefore, in full working order and has naturally created consternation among the Indians in East London. It was hoped from the tone of the Town Council's reply to the Indian protest that the law would not be systematically enforced and that cleanlydressed Indians at any rate would not be molested. The Secretary of the East London Indian Association has, however, been politely asked by the police to keep off the foot-path on pain of being arrested. The situation is most cruel. Even if Mr. Chamberlain cannot officially interfere with the working of the existing legislation in East London, or the legislation itself, the people there are hoping that he will be graciously pleased to make friendly representations and use his great influence. with the Colonists in persuading them to desist from the irritating prosecutions for which there is no justification whatsoever. In the meanwhile, the most res-

pectable Indians of East London are obliged, for fear of being arrested, to keep off the foot-paths in the principal streets of East London. They have a perpetual reminder that they belong to an outcast race and thatthe fact that they are loyal British subjects is of no account in the British town of East London.

India Office: Judicial and Public Records, 402.

47. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

25 & 26, COURT CHAMBERS,
RISSIK STREET,
JOHANNESBURG,
May 24, 1903

THE HONOURABLE DADABHAI NAOROJI
LONDON
SIR,

I beg to enclose herewith a statement[1] up to date regarding the Transvaal and East London. We read in the papers that Mr. Chamberlain is expecting Lord Milner's despatch as to the alteration of the existing legislation affecting the Indians. I trust a draft copy will be supplied to you. And if it is, I also trust that you will not accept any draft without letting me see it.

It is necessary, also, that something should be done with reference to the legislation of the Orange River Colony which shuts out the Indians altogether.

I remains
yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

India Office: Judicial and Public Records, 402.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

48. NOTES

[JOHANNESBURG,
May 31, 1903]

NOTES ON THE POSITION UP TO THE WEEK ENDING 30TH MAY 1903

In the previous notes, the British Indian Deputation that waited on Lord Milner has been alluded to. The official minutes thereof have been published in the papers. Cutting is hereto attached. It is sincerely to be hoped that in the new legislation that is under consideration, no class distinctions will be made.

ORANGE RIVER COLONY

It is time that something was done with reference to this Colony which practically shut out Indians altogether. There were many who were driven out of the Colony when it was under the old Government. The British Government could not then grant any relief as it was an independent Republic. Should not these be now reinstated?

During the Military rule there was some indication of the Law being altered, but now the situation is growing more and more serious; the matter, it is submitted, ought to be brought separately to the notice of Lord George Hamilton and Mr. Chamberlain. Unlike the Transvaal, the legislation in that Colony has already commenced to establish the principle of colour legislation by introducing colour distinction into the municipal franchise.

CAPE COLONY

A report[1] hereto of the meeting held by the British Indians there sufficiently explains the situation.

The story of the grievances of the Indians in East London is already familiar to the Fends.

The lead of the Transvaal in establishing Bazaars is, as will be seen by the report, being followed at the Cape.

India Office: Judicial and Public Records, 402.

[1] The is not available.

49. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

25 & 26, COUT CHAPTERS,
RISSIK STREET,
JOHANNESBURG,
May 31, 1903

TO
THE HONOURABLE DADABHAI NAOROJI
LONDON

DEAR SIR,

I beg to enclose herewith the usual statement.[1]

At the request of the store-keepers in Heidelberg I have returned with this a copy of the magisterial proceedings which took place during Mr. Chamberlain's stay in South Africa. They say the note is to be sent to you. I hope, however, you will not take any action thereon. Our countrymen here are at present naturally in such a state of unrest, confusion and terror, that they are unable to take a dispassionate view of things. I would therefore request you to be chary of receiving and using statements not received from Mr. Nazar or myself. Our policy is & must be to put up with the inconveniences such as those described in the Heidelberg proceedings. They are but a phase of the larger question. The whole effort has to be concentrated on the repeal of the existing legislation.

I remain,
yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the original: S. N. 2257.

50. OURSELVES[2]

We need offer no apology for making an appearance. The Indian community in South Africa is a recognised factor in the body politic, and a newspaper, voicing its feelings, and specially devoted to its cause, would hardly be considered out of place: indeed, we think, it

[1] *Vide* the preceding item

[2] This was Gandhiji's unsigned editorial in the inaugural issue of *Indian Opinion*.

would supply a longfelt want.

The Indians, resident in British South Africa, loyal subjects though they are of the King-Emperor, labour under a number of legal disabilities which, it is contended on their behalf, are undeserved and unjust. The reason of this state of affairs is to be found in the prejudice in the minds of the Colonists, arising out of misunder-standing the actual status of the Indian as a British subject, the close relations that render him kin to Colonists, as the dual title of the Crowned Head so significantly pronounces, and the unhappy forgetfulness of the great services India has always rendered to the Mother Country-ever since Providence brought loyal Hind under the flag of Britannia. It will be our endeavour, therefore, to remove the misunderstanding by placing facts in their true light before the public.

We are far from assuming that the Indians here are free from all the faults that are ascribed to them. Wherever we find them to be at fault, we will unhesitatingly point it out and suggest means for its removal. Our countrymen in South Africa are without the guiding influence of the institutions that exist in India and that impart the necessary moral tone when it is wanting. Those that have immigrated as children, or are born in the Colony, have no opportunity of studying the past history of the nation to which they belong, or of knowing its greatness. It will be our duty, so far as it may be in our power, to supply these wants by inviting contributions from competent writers in England, in India, and in this subcontinent.

Time alone will prove our desire to do what is right. But we can do very little unaided. We rely on generous support from our countrymen; may we hope for it from the great Anglo-Saxon race that hails His Majesty Edward VII as King-Emperor? For, there is nothing in our programme but a desire to promote harmony and good-will between the different sections of the one mighty Empire.

Indian Opinion, 4-6-1903

51. THE BRITISH INDIAN IN SOUTH AFRICA

The question which we propose to discuss in these columns for the next few weeks is a very large one. It is daily growing in importance. As with social questions, so with this, it will be readily admitted that prejudice has played not an inconsiderable part: it will be our duty then to steer clear of it, and to deal with the situation

without any bias, and with strict adherence to proved facts.

No politician worthy of the name can afford to ignore this matter. The presence of nearly 100,000 Indians in British South Africa cannot but affect the sub-continent for good or for evil. What to do with them is a problem on the correct solution of which depends their happiness, and in which every householder is undoubtedly concerned. Let us then see what the position is to-day.

In Natal, the Immigration Restriction Act effectually prohibits the entry of immigrants unless they have been formerly domiciled in the Colony, or unless they can read and write one of the European languages. The Dealers' Licences Act[1] places the trading class at the mercy of licensing officers who have practically absolute discretion either to grant or withhold trading licences which have to be taken out every year.

Then there are the vexatious laws about passes[2] under which even respectable persons? men and women, may be arrested, during day time or night time, and alike in country places as in towns. The question of education is growing in seriousness. Public schools are no longer open to Indian children. The Government has lately opened two Higher Grade Indian schools, one in Durban and the other in Maritzburg, but the education given there is elementary, and there are no facilities for further studies after the youth has finished his school course. In the Capital of the Colony, the Town Council has passed a resolution prohibiting alienation or leasing of townlands to the Indian subjects of His Imperial Majesty the King-Emperor. And the Prime Minister has sent the Durban Town Council a copy of the recent Transvaal Government Notice No. 356 of 1903, dealing with the trading licences and residence of "Asiatics":[3] this is ominous.

The presence of a large indentured population further complicates the situation. The lot of this population is harder still. After it becomes free at the end of full five years' indenture, it is subject not only to the general laws of the Colony, but also to some special ones. Thus, it must either enter into a series of fresh indentures, or return to India, or pay an annual tax, a poll tax, euphemistically described by the legislature as a licence, of £3. A recent Act imposes this hardship also on the major children of indentured immigrants,

[1] *Vide* A Study in Facts", 18-6-1903 & "Immigration Bill" 25-06-1903

[2] *Vide* "Immigration Bill" 25-06-1903 & "The Bright Side of the Picture"

[3] *Vide* enclosure to "British Indians in South Africa", April 12, 1903.

i.e., on girls of 13, and boys of 16 years of age.[1]

The Cape Colony passed in February last an Immigration Act which goes further than the Natal Act in that the education test is so severe that it is possible for an officer to reject even well-educated Indians, though it is liberal in another respect in that it keeps the door open for people domiciled not only in the Cape Colony, but in any part of South Africa. The Town Council at East London has passed a legislation prohibiting Indians, not owners or occupiers of landed property of the Corporation value of £75, from walking on foot-paths, and [conferring] powers to restrict them to Locations. In fact, the Municipal Act classes the Indian with the Native of South Africa.

In the two new Colonies His Majesty's Government has inherited the legislation of the late Republics, which is naturally very drastic. It is now being reconsidered, and the whole of it will be recast in the not very distant future.

However, as the yoke falls most heavily upon Indians in the newly annexed territories, it is worthwhile recapitulating the Republican legislation.

In the Transvaal, the Indian cannot trade, or reside, or own landed property, except in Locations set apart for him. He must pay a registration fee of £3. He may not be out after 9 P.M., and may not walk on the footpaths. These are the principal disabilities. The licensing measure is being enforced with a severity unknown before.

In the Orange River Colony, the Indian has no footing except as purely and simply a labourer.

There is this marked distinction, worthy of note, between the Cape-Natal legislation and the Republican legislation, namely, that while the former, in theory, is applicable to all nationalities, the latter is especially directed against the Asiatics as such.

Strong popular prejudice has practically kept the Indian from the other parts of British South Africa.

Socially and popularly, the Indian is a pariah—in some places less so than in others. He is nicknamed "coolie". In fact, popular prejudice has portrayed him as a "filthy being", without any virtue. The prejudice, it must be confessed, has become much toned down in Natal. And though the differences between the two communities

[1] *Vide* "Indians in South Africa", April 22, and "Indians in Natal", May 10, 1902.

undoubtedly still exist, they are perhaps more based on the fact that each looks at the problem from a different standpoint from the other than on colour prejudice, pure and simple. The struggle seems to be fiercest in the Transvaal.

Indian Opinion, 4-6-1903

52. IS IT FAIR?

If a European commits a crime or a moral delinquency, it is the individual: if it is an Indian, it is the nation. This statement has been recently verified in the case of a certain Indian who has seen fit to let houses, taken by him on lease, for immoral purposes. For conduct such as this there is absolutely no defence. But it is one thing to condemn the individual, and another to justify and advocate restrictions on a whole nation, as the usually sober "Man in the Moon" of Mercury Lane[1] and our esteemed evening contemporary[2] have done, because of the acts of the man referred to above. And let it not be forgotten that it is a European landlord who has leased the premises to the Indian in question. But the incident ought to serve as a lesson to our countrymen. Like Caesar's wife we must all be above suspicion. Living as we are in a country where somehow or other everything against us is immensely magnified, the least of us have to be careful as to what we may do, lest we may stultify the whole community.

Indian Opinion, 4-6-1903

53. VIRTUOUS INCONSISTENCY

Foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, said Emerson. Evidently the Transvaal Government thinks that uniform treatment during a plague scare would be 'foolish consistency'. Therefore it has ruled that no Indian from Natal is to enter the Transvaal, while Europeans and Kaffirs are allowed in without restrictions, despite the fact that the plague has not respected persons, and has been foolishly consistent in attacking all the three races inhabiting Natal. The Indian may be forgiven if, therefore, he arrives at the conclusion that the embargo placed on him is more in the nature of a

[1]A weekly columnist of *The Natal Mercury*:
[2]*The Natal Advertiser*.

political closure than a precaution in the interests of public health. During the first stages of the scare, perhaps the restriction was excusable, in view of the popular prejudice. But a deliberate prohibition against Indians only, without the option of temporary quarantine, in the face of the fact that the plague is now, let us hope so, dying out, and that it has not progressed in all these months beyond the Capital, may be virtuous inconsistency, but to the victims of the embargo it becomes a very serious matter indeed. Refugees, and others who have connection with the Transvaal, suffer great loss and inconvenience. May we appeal to the local Government to obtain some measure of relief from such manifest injustice against a portion of the inhabitants of Natal, Indians though they may be? Fair play is the great characteristic of the British race; and we ask every true Britisher to say whether the onesided treatment described above is a sample of fair play.

Indian Opinion, 4-6-1903

54. BETTER LATE THAN NEVER

The British Indian League in Cape Town has, at a large meeting of British Indians, passed resolutions protesting against the recently enacted Immigration Act[1] and the proposed measure for relegating Indians to Bazaars.[2] Our countrymen there have the powerful aid of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, in their attempt to have the Cape law modified. The measure, in its Bill stage, was harmless enough. It protected the rights of British subjects, whether coloured or not; and it also recognized the Indian languages for the educational test. The Bill was introduced at the fag-end of the session, and rushed through the House in indecent haste, beating even Natal in this respect. Until, therefore, it had passed through all its stages, the public naturally could say nothing in the matter. For our part, we do not think that there is slightest danger of an un-due Indian influx. Mr. Chamberlain has laid down the principle that self-governing Colonies have the

[1] The Act 47 of 1902 imposed restrictions on Asiatic immigration (by removing Indian languages from the scope of the educational test). The British Indian League submitted a petition to the Colonial Secretary on June 6, 1903, protesting against the Act.

[2] The City Council of Cape Town sought to segregate Asiatics on the lines adopted in the Transvaal.

right, very largely, of governing immigration. Lord Milner, too, repeated the principle the other day in more emphatic terms[1] and our countrymen bow to it, as they must. But there are well-defined limitations to the doctrine, one of which is that colour is no ground for restriction, and the other is that a whole nation cannot be debarred. Now, the Cape Act nullifies both the tests. It lays down an educational test, under which even a graduate of a University may fail; and seeing that it does not include in the test a knowledge of the Indian languages, in effect it totally prohibits the Indian immigration. It is open to almost all the objections applicable to the Natal Act. It is to be sincerely hoped that next session it would be so modified as to respect reasonable Indian objections while upholding its main object. Indeed, the ministers said that as the Bill was being rushed, they would be prepared to amend it during the following session.

Indian Opinion, 4-6-1903

55. WORDS AND DEEDS

That the liberal-minded Premier[2] of this fair Colony should address municipalities in Natal on the Bazaar Notice of the Transvaal Government, and thus influence their action in the same direction, is a distressing surprise to us. What would Sir Albert have the municipalities to do? They have unlimited powers already. Very few new licences are granted. Whom would Sir Albert then send to Bazaars? Surely not these who are already established; for, such are not affected by the Transvaal Notice. It is a strange comment—this action of the gallant Premier—on the Imperial mission of Mr. Chamberlain to South Africa. Imperial spirit, imperial unity, this is the dominant note of the eighty speeches of the Right Honourable Gentleman. Dealing with the Indians, he laid down the rule that those already settled, were "entitled to fair and honourable treatment". To force Indians to Bazaars, in plain terms Locations, is hardly 'fair' or 'honourable'. One would have thought the Indians would be allowed to have rest after the passing of what to our mind are drastic measures; namely, the Immigration Restriction and Dealers, Licenses Acts. The Almighty has evidently willed otherwise.

(Since the above was in type, we have learnt, with a shock of

[1] *Vide* "The British Indian Association and Lord Milner", 11-06-1903

[2] Sir Albert H. Hime, Premier, 1899-1903.

surprise, the opinion passed by the Mayor of Durban in the form of a minute. We reproduce the full text elsewhere,[1] and reserve comment till our next issue.[2])

Indian Opinion, 4-6-1903

56. MINUTE BY THE MAYOR

The statement[3] made by the Mayor of Durban in Committee of the Whole Council on Tuesday last, which we reproduce below, seems to be a premature effort to introduce into Natal the repugnant old laws temporarily revived in the Transvaal, regarding Asiatic segregation, laws that roused the righteous indignation of the British Government before the War, and are being considered by the Imperial Government. It is a singular travesty of equal rights—of "fair and honourable treatment", and is being evidently rushed with such undue haste as to suggest that the promoters are not anxious to court criticism.

THE MINUTE

The Hon. the Prime Minister has been good enough to forward copy of resolution passed by the Transvaal Executive Council, prescribing the principles to be adopted in dealing with applications for trading licences by Asiatics, which may be summarised under four headings, viz., (I) to provide for the allocation of Asiatics for trading and residential purposes in bazaars; (2) to restrict all new licences to premises in such bazaars; (3) to provide that existing licences outside the bazaars shall not be transferred to any other Asiatic trader, and that the holders of such licences shall not have more licences in any one town than they hold on a given date; and (4) permitting Asiatics, under certain circumstances in regard to method of living, to reside outside such bazaars.

We have now had six years in which to prove the success or failure in this borough of the legislation introduced in 1897, and I regret to have to confess that we have not experienced the benefits that were anticipated from that legislation —I refer to the Immigration Restriction Act, 1897, and' Act 18 of 1897, "To amend the law relating to licences to wholesale and retail dealers."

During the past six years, there have been very marked increases in the number of licences held by Asiatics, and we now find that in the main streets of the borough,

[1] *Vide* the succeeding item.
[2] *Vide* "The Lion and the Lamb", 11-6-1903.
[3] The reference is to the minute which follows this editorial note by Gandhiji.

large blocks of valuable property are held by Asiatics, that they are daily acquiring other properties, and that many new buildings are being erected for trade purposes by Asiatics, which buildings under the existing laws will, in all probability, be licensed, because such laws will not permit of applications for licenses being arbitrarily refused.

It is impossible to overlook the fact that, by permitting these people to reside and carry on business in every part of the borough, we are perpetuating a very serious menace to the health of the community. In this connection, I need only refer to the preponderance of cases of bubonic plague, which have occurred amongst Indians, to prove that the habits of these people are not conducive to the health of the borough. I find that out of the 160 cases of plague to date, no fewer than 93 were Asiatic cases. Although the leading representatives of the Indian community have rendered very great assistance to the Health Department duing the outbreak of plague, yet, owing to the customs of the race, considerable difficulty has been experienced in carrying out sanitary requirements, and these difficulties would, to a large extent, be overcome, if all Indians living in the town were required to reside in a given area. I do not anticipate any grave trouble in selecting a suit. able neighbourhood as an Asiatic quarter.

The Asiatic owners of premises in West Street, Smith Street, Pine Street, Commercial Road, Railway Street, and elsewhere, have no vested right in the licences under which they trade, as, for good and sufficient reasons, these and other licences might not be renewed at the end of any given year. So, far from being a hardship, I consider it would be an advantage to the Indians themselves if their business premises and habitations were congregated together in a special area, instead of being distributed over the whole length and breadth of the borough, as at present. It might be somewhat harsh if existing licences were cancelled forthwith, but by permitting the present licensees to continue to hold licences for the same premises at present occupied during their lifetime, subject, of course, to their being kept in a thoroughly sanitary condition, I think justice would be done them. Under no circumstances, however, should the existing licences be transferred to other Indians, and, to secure this, it would be necessary to have a proper register kept of all Indians in the borough.

After giving the matter very careful consideration, it appears to me that the time has arrived when this Council should petition Government to introduce legislation, on somewhat similar lines as the laws in force in the Transvaal, in order to safeguard the health and trade interests not only of Durban, but of the whole Colony, and I would urge that no time be lost in approaching Government, as it is only to be expected that the effect of the new Transvaal regulations will be to encourage Asiatics to leave that Colony in favour of Natal, where they may, under

present conditions, conduct their businesses and reside in any part of the borough they may choose. Should Government be prepared to introduce the necessary legislation to put the Colony upon an equal footing with the Transvaal in the method of dealing with Asiatics, I would suggest that the Bill should provide:

1. For the registration of all Asiatics in boroughs or townships in a similar manner, as provided by the Transvaal Law 3 of 1885.

2. That Asiatic bazaars (or locations) be set apart by the municipal authorities in which shall reside all Asiatics, other than domestic servants in the employ of Europeans, or employees of Government, corporations, or firms providing suitable barrack accommodation.

3. That no new licences shall be granted to Asiatics except to carry on business in such bazaars.

4. That existing licences held by Asiatics be not transferred to other Asiatics, but on the decease of present licensees they be cancelled forthwith.

5. That no Asiatic shall be permitted to hold more licences than held by him on the date of the promulgation of the Bill.

6. That any Asiatic who shall prove to the satisfaction of the Colonial Secretary that he holds any high educational certificate from the Education Department in this or any other British Colony or dependency, or that he is able and willing to adopt a mode of living not repugnant to European ideas, nor in conflict with sanitary laws, may apply to the Colonial Secretary for a letter of exemption which shall enable him to reside elsewhere than in a place specially set apart for Asiatics.

Legislation on these lines would not have the effect of at once removing Asiatic businesses from our main streets, but it would preclude additional licences being granted there, and, if, simultaneously with the provision of native locations, we are enabled to compel all Asiatics to reside in bazaars (irrespective of where their business premises may be situated), we shall have accomplished an end which will be the means of improving the sanitary condition of our borough to a greater extent than is possible under any other conditions.

Indian Opinion, 4-6-1903

57. TELEGRAM TO INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
June 6, 1903

INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
84, PALACE CHAMBERS
BRIDGE ST.
LONDON S. W.

LORD MILNER REPLYING WHITE LEAGUE SAID HE ASKED INDIAN GOVERNMENT SUPPLY INDENTURED INDIANS WHO SHOULDRETURN AFTER COMPLETION INDENTURES. HOPE PROPOSAL COMPULSORY RETURN NOT SANCTIONED.

GANDHI

India Office: Judicial and Public Records, 402.

58. POSITION IN THE TRANSVAAL

JOHANNESBURG,
June 6,1903

THE POSITION IN THE TRANSVAAL UP TO 6TH JUNE 1903

This week, Lord Milner received a deputation from the White League. A copy of the full report is hereto attached. His Excellency was sympathetic towards the Indians and, if he was firm with the Indian Deputation, he was equally so with the White League.

A petition is now being prepared for submission to His Excellency with reference to his reply to the Indian Deputation. An advance proof copy be being sent by the same mail as this The petition would explain the whole situation and show what the needs of the Indian community are.

There was one point in Lord Milner's address to the White League which is ominous. His Lordship is in negotiation with the Indian Government for a supply of indentured labour from India on the condition that the Indians are forcibly repatriated. Happily, the Indian Government do not so far appear to have returned a response satisfactory to His Excellency. But seeing that the negotiations are still

[1] This cable, obviously addressed to the British Committee, was also sent to *India*, and a copy was submitted by Dadabhai Naoroji to the Secretary of State for India.

pending, the following cable was despatched to-day:

> Lord Milner replying White League said he asked Indian Government supply indentured Indians who shall return after completion indentures. Hope compulsory return not sanctioned.

The proposal means nothing short of a reversal of the whole British policy. The Indians are wanted for the benefit of those who require their labour as bondsmen. As soon as their bonds are loosed they are to go back. In other words, the Colony would, if it could, take everything from India and give little in return. For the wages that would be offered would be always below the standard wage and, no matter how high they may be, they could hardly be high enough to compensate the Indian for the deprivation of his personal liberty and the right to settle in the country. Apart therefore, from the fact that the Transvaal cannot expect to receive any assistance from India until it is prepared to treat the free Indian population in a reasonable manner, it is to be sincerely hoped that it will not be allowed to exploit Indian labour for its own, one-sided benefit.

The people in East London cry aloud for redress. It is P true that it is a part of a self-governing Colony. But they appeal to Mr. Chamberlain for the exercise of his great influence to make the same friendly representations to the East London Municipality (which is, after all, a part of the Empire) which he was pleased to make to the late South African Republic, which was not a part of the Empire.

NATAL

Lord Milner's Bazaar Notice has produced an effect most damaging to the Indians throughout South Africa. The notice is now acknowledged to be temporary so far as the Transvaal is concerned. But the Durban Town Council has seriously taken it to heart and is asking the Natal Parliament to pass fresh legislation embodying the principle of Bazaars, that is, Locations, etc. It shows what mischief a single false step on the part of a great man may do. That the notice was a false step is hardly a matter for dispute. For, when it was framed, it was meant to be permanent. Now Lord Milner has declared that it is only tentative. Natal, as well as the Cape, has evidently treated it as permanent. In this connect on, the remarks of the Director-General of Statistics in India are worth perusal. A cutting giving the same is hereto attached.

India Office: Judicial and Pubic Records, 402.

59. PETITION TO TRANSVAAL GOVERNOR

THE BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

25 & 26, COURT CHAMBERS,
RISSIK STREET,
JOHANNESBURG,
June 8, 1903

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO HIS EXCELLENCY
THE GOVERNOR OF THE TRANSVAAL
JOHANNESBURG

SIR,

This Association ventures to approach His Excellency regarding the various points submitted to His Excellency by the Deputation which he was graciously pleased to receive on the 22nd May last.

The Committee of the Association feels that during the time that was at its disposal the Deputation could not sufficiently explain some of the points, nor could it give a humble reply to His Excellency's address.

Before proceeding to discuss those points, the Committee of the Association begs respectfully to thank His Excellency for the long, patient and courteous hearing that His Excellency was pleased to grant to the Deputation, and for His Excellency's sympathetic reply.

I THE ASIATIC OFFICE

With the greatest deference to His Excellency, my Committee still ventures to think that, as at present worked, it constitutes a heavy burden on the Indian community, and an unnecessary tax on the revenues of the Colony. In making remarks about its working, my Committee disclaims any intention to reflect on any of the Supervisors.

(*a*) *The Asiatic Office has caused a great deal of hardship in the matter of permits.*

His Excellency was pleased to say that at one time too many permits were being issued to Indians. But my Committee begs to say that, with perhaps isolated exceptions, permits have never been so far granted to non-refugee Indians. During a few days after the passing of the Peace Preservation Ordinance, the Railway Authorities, thinking

that there were no permits compulsorily required, issued railway tickets without production of permits, and there was no inspection thereof on the border towns. The result was that several Indians, quite unconscious of the fact that they were committing a breach of the law, were able to enter the Colony. These have been prosecuted and given notices to depart from the Colony. The entry of the Indians in the above manner, therefore, does not affect the question of the harsh working of that office.

Unlike Europeans, owing to the establishment of the Asiatic Office, the Indians cannot obtain permits unless they apply nominally to the Colonial Secretary, but virtually to the Asiatic Office. But the Supervisors of these offices have no power to grant the permits. They merely recommend them. The General Permit Officers then, but not till then, grant the permits thus recommended, at the coast towns. The evidence as to the *bona fides* of the applicant produced before the Asiatic Office is exactly the same that would be produced before the General Permit Officer at the coast. The difference is that the officer on the coast can see the applicant face to face and weigh the evidence he may produce. Not so the Supervisor who has to judge from a distance of several hundred miles. The procedure, without being of any use, involves an unnecessary waste of time. It takes, as a rule, three months before an Indian applicant has his permit granted. In several cases, a month has been known to elapse before the permits were granted after recommendation. If, therefore, the Office is in the interests of the Indian community, it has evidently not fulfilled its purpose so far as permits are concerned. It has meant a great deal of worry and legal expense.

(b) The Asiatic Office introduced a system of passes which has been proved to be utterly useless.

The Asiatic Office, having no jurisdiction over the Indians save such as it could invent for itself, instituted quite gratuitously a system of passes. Every Indian who arrived in the Colony was. deprived ofhis permit and was given an Asiatic pass, the only use of which was to have the name of every Indian arrival on the register of the Office, which, as a matter of fact, it already had, in that the permits were issued after its recommendation. Whereas the permits were and are of a permanent character, entitling the holder to move about freely and leave and re-enter the Colony, the passes were of a temporary duration

and of no effect for the purpose of leaving and re-entering. Thus, as soon as the Indian entered the Colony, he found: his freedom of movement much curtailed. Unscrupulous Indians and Europeans were not found wanting to take advantage of the pass system; and abuse resulted very largely. As soon, therefore, as the Ordinance to amend the Peace Preservation Act was passed, the Chief Secretary for Permits issued instructions that the Asiatic passes were to be exchanged for permits. While the intention of granting permits was in itself good, the way in which it was carried out amounted to a cruel persecution of thousands of Indians in Johannesburg, Potchefstroom and Heidelberg. My Committee need not dwell on it, as it is occupying the attention of the Colonial Secretary. The point is that, but for the existence of the Asiatic Office, such a thing would have been an impossibility.

And now, notwithstanding the existence of that Office, the Government have found it necessary—my Committee knows not why—to appoint a new Registrar of Asiatics independent of the Asiatic Office.

His Excellency was pleased to say, in justifying the registration tax, that registration was useful. My Committee has loyally accepted His Excellency's advice and does not now wish to re-open it, save in so far as it is necessary to illustrate the present argument. As a matter of fact, then, registration was once made, as said 'above, by the Asiatic Office. It was made for the second time, as also said above, by the Chief Secretary for Permits. It is now being done for the third time. The enforcing of the Law 3 of 1885 does not, in my Committee's humble opinion, necessitate the elaborate registration that has now been undertaken. The £3 could have been collected without it from those that did not pay the amount during the old regime. But a separate Office has given rise to the arrangements made on the large but, in my Committee's humble opinion, useless scale.

(*c*) *The Asiatic Office has unnecessarily interfered with the Licensing Office.*

An Indian trader or hawker may not take out his license without the recommendation of the Asiatic Office. There is nothing in the law to justify it. But departmental instructions seem to have been issued to Revenue Officers not to issue them without such recommendations. Why the recommendation is required, my Committee is at a loss to understand. The applicant in any case produces his permit and makes

the usual declaration before he is granted his license. If it is intended to identify the applicant with the permit and his declaration, the Asiatic Office is in nobetter position than the Revenue Officers to do so. Fraud in such cases is in the very nature of the thing practically impossible.

(*d*) *The Asiatic Of/ice is responsible for the institution of photographic passes.*

As if the hold of that Office on the Indian were incomplete, the system of visiting passes has been lately instituted, which interferes with the movement of the Indian—a system, moreover, for which there is no warrant in law.

The above completes the functions of the Asiatic Office.

(e) The Asiatic Office is an unnecessary burden on the Revenue.

That the Office is an unnecessary waste of public money will have been seen from the foregoing. For, if the authorised number of permits could as well, if not better, be issued by the officers at the different coast towns without the recommendation of the Asiatic Office, if the Revenue Officers could be trusted to issue licenses to British Indians in the usual manner, there is nothing left for the Asiatic Office to do.

(*f*) *Such a Department does not exist either at the Cape or Natal, where there is a far larger Indian population.*

Moreover, no such Office has been found necessary at the Cape or Natal, where there is a far larger Indian population than in the Transvaal. In Natal there is an Office of the Protector of Indian Immigrants, but that office has jurisdiction only over the indentured Indian population, and has absolutely no control over the free Indian population. And what is perhaps more, such a want was never felt by the old Government of the Transvaal.

(*g*) *The Asiatic Office does not do away with the approach to the other ordinary Departments.*

His Excellency was pleased to say that the Asiatic Office was necessary, in order that the Indians may have an easy access to officers who were solely devoted to Asiatic affairs, and might avoid having to go to other offices at all. Such, however, is not the case, for the intervention of the Asiatic Office is merely an additional burden, and does not in any case do away with the approach to the other

officials.

My Committee, therefore, ventures to hope that it has succeeded in convincing His Excellency that the Office is unnecessary in every way. Indeed, when it was first established, it was intended to be a temporary institution, and in any case it would have little left to do, as soon as the permit system is abolished.

II THE BAZAAR NOTICE

The Association is grateful for the liberal construction that has been put upon the Notice No. 356 of 1903, which lays down the principle of Bazaars. But the notice, it is respectfully submitted, is still open to objection on two grounds:

> (1) *Because it implies compulsory segregation and restriction on trade merely to Bazaars.*
>
> (2) *Because in its working it will give rise to great hardships.*

As to the first ground, the Association would humbly point out that compulsion of any kind is contrary to the principles of justice, when it is intended to restrict freedom. It has been often said that the Indians ought not to object to Bazaars, because they are used to them in India. With deference, the Association would draw His Excellency's attention to the fact that an Indian bazaar is situated in the very heart of a town and is the busiest portion of it, and, in any case, there is no compulsion on any man to trade in bazaars. Needless to say, an Indian bazaar is never a place of residence. In fact, any place where trade is carried on is called a bazaar, and is by no means restricted to a particular class. Under the notice in question, the Bazaar is merely a euphemism for the Location, and is meant both for trade and residence. That the Government themselves do not consider the Bazaars to be of much respectability or consequence is evidenced by the fact that the pre-war Indian traders are not to be compelled to remove to Bazaars, and that Indians of education and position may be exempted from having to reside in them. Nor will the Transvaal Bazaars, unlike the *bona fide* bazaars of India, be centrally situated. That the Bazaars are to be located within town limits would not, the Association may be pardoned for saying, be in any way a lenient construction of the existing law, for it clearly contemplates the setting aside of streets and wards which could only be in towns. Again, the streets, wards, or Locations are, according to the law, to be set apart for

residence. Trade is not mentioned in it at all. It is, therefore, the Association submits, a strained construction to confine Indian trade to Bazaars only. The Association is aware that the High Court of the late Republic has laid down that the term "residence" shall include "trade" also for the purpose of construing the law. That decision was not unanimous—Mr. Justice Morice being the dissenting judge. And the Association submits that it is hardly a lenient interpretation of the statute to enforce the above decision, in view as well of the fact of the dissent as of the fact that the British Government always protested against any such interpretation even when they felt compelled to accept the law itself.

His Excellency was pleased to say that new legislation is under consideration. If so, the Association fails to see any occasion for enforcing the law at present. Very few Indians are being allowed to enter the Colony. Those who traded before the war are to have the right to trade outside Locations renewed. The new applicants, therefore, may be treated as the Government may think fit, pending legislation.

The White League has taken strong exception to the Bazaars being established within town limits. If it is wrong to issue trading licenses to Indians in towns generally, it is none the less wrong because it is issued in a portion of the town which is called a Bazaar. The Association, therefore, fears that if the Bazaars are established according to the intention of the Government in accessible parts of towns, the agitation against Indians would continue.

The Association, therefore, submits that, looked at from any point of view, the principle of the Bazaar is unsatisfactory.

While the Association does not admit that there is any fear of overtrading on the part of the Indians, the best solution of the difficulty would be in powers being given to the municipalities to control the granting of new licenses to trade, subject to revision of their decision by the Supreme Court. Thus, the existing licenses, so long as the law as to sanitation, proper book-keeping, etc., is observed, would be untouched by them, and the granting of new licenses, whether European or Indian, would practically depend upon the municipality, which represents the will of the people. With such a law, without any competition, each community would be automatically separated in distinct localities. The class of buildings could be improved from year to year, and the whole tone of the community

raised and no offence given to any portion of it. For the Association firmly believes that, if a good portion of a town were selected and Indians given the choice of going there, a large number would be found willing to avail themselves of the choice without any compulsion.

Coming to the second ground, the notice in question seriously affects the vested interests which the Government intend to protect, in that

(1) it does not respect all the existing Indian licenses;

(2) it does not give the right of transfer of licenses from man to man outside Bazaars;

(3) it is not clear whether only those who held licenses to trade outside Bazaars are alone to have their licenses renewed, or all who traded outside Bazaars before the war whether with or without licenses;

(4) it is not clear whether, in the case of a firm trading before war outside Bazaars, all the partners are to be entitled to a renewal or only one of them;

(5) it contemplates exemption only in respect of residence.

The Association would crave leave to discuss shortly all the points mentioned above.

(1) *It does not respect all the existing Indian licenses.*

Too much stress cannot be laid on this point, which practically means a matter of life and death to many present license-holders. Some Indian refugees who returned to the Transvaal with permits received licenses to trade in towns in which they were not trading before. These they received from British Officers for the full year without condition. But towards the end of last year, in some towns, the magistrates gave notices that such licenses would not be renewed. The matter was specifically brought to Mr. Chamberlain's notice by the Indian Deputation that waited on him. And he emphatically assured it that such licenses would be respected and renewed. Yet, the notice in question would relegate all such traders to Bazaars at the end of the year. The matter was brought by the Deputation to His Excellency's notice, who was pleased to say that he would consider the point. In the opinion of the Association, such traders with, in some cases, long-established businesses, having entered into long leases of premises and built upon them, never suspecting that, under British

rule, their tenure of licenses could be assailed, are entitled, if possible, to greater consideration than those old license-holders who have not yet returned to the Colony, but whose rights are respected because they traded outside Bazaars before the war. In the one case, the new man has an established business; in the other, the man, though an old trader, has to. start *de novo*. The Association, therefore, trusts that, irrespective of any decision His Excellency may arrive at on the other points, this at any rate will be decided favourably to the men in question.

(2) It does not give the right of transfer of licenses outside Bazaars.

The notice respects the rights of those who traded before the war, and it does not; for it authorises a renewal up to the time of the residence of the holder. As soon as he thinks that his business is in a flourishing condition, he has established a goodwill and may well retire, the full fruition of honest labour is snatched from the lips. He cannot sell his business, as his license is not transferable, as a going concern. What the deprivation of this simple right of a tradesman means, it is unnecessary for the Association to dwell upon. If the vested interests are, therefore, to be really respected, the Association ventures to think that the right of transfer should be recognised. The point has been brought out by Mr. William Hosken and other European gentlemen of standing, who have presented a petition to His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor on the Notice, and which is hereinafter more fully referred to, and a copy of which is attached hereto.[1]

(3) *It is not clear whether only those who held licenses to trade outside Bazaars are alone to have their licenses renewed, or all who traded outside Bazaars before war, whether with or without licenses.*

This is an important point. There were many Indians who, though they traded before the war, had no licenses issued to them. Very few held licenses. Many traded on the tender of license money, and some in the name of white men—all with the knowledge of the authorities. Such a state of things was tolerated because of the pressure from the British Govornment. Now the preamble of the Notice says "with due regard to the vested interests of those Asiatics who were

[1] This is not given here; *vide* "Letter to Lieutenant-Governor"1-5-1903

trading outside Bazaars at the commencement of hostilities". But the 3rd Clause speaks of Asiatic traders "who *held licenses* at the commencement',, etc. Many Indians, therefore, would suffer if the exception is restricted to those only who *held licenses* before the war, as distinguished from those who traded before war.

(4) *It is not clear whether in the case of a firm trading before waroutside Bazaars, all the partners are to be entitled to a renewal or only one of them.*

This point is left open by the Notice. It would be manifestly unjust to allow a license to one partner who may come first, and refuse it to another or others. All traded before the war, and if a license was issued, all had an equal right to it.

(5) It contemplates exemption only in respect of residence.

To the Indian community, the whole principle of exemption is a sore point. Why an Indian should have to take out an exemption and thus pose as superior to his other countrymen, before he can reside anywhere he likes on British soil, is difficult to understand. But, accommodating oneself to such (if the Association may be excused the use of the term) an offensive principle for the sake of argument, the exemption only applies to residence. His Excellency was inclined to think that the exemption extended to trade as well as residence. But the Notice clearly limits it to residence. There would be some value in it, if it was meant to be an exemption from the whole Law 3 of l 885 .

But the Association is anxious not to labour the point. Its respectful protest is against the whole Notice. In its opinion, it is a departure from the Declaration of Her late Majesty's Government, is unnecessary in view of impending new legislation, is full of ambiguity and leaves the Indian community in practically the same state of suspense under which it has been for the last 15 years, and from which it had a right to be free on the establishment of the British Government, which entered on the costly war, if mainly for the redress of the grievances of the European Uitlander, not a little also for the redress of those of the Indian.

III PROHIBITION TO HOLD LANDED PROPERTY SAVE IN LOCATIONS

The Law 3 of 1885 prevents Indians from owning landed property in the Colony except in streets, wards and Locations pointed out by Government. The Association respectfully considers the

prohibition a serious hardship and injury to the loyal British Indians. That a British subject cannot buy a piece of land where he likes in British territories is a thing extremely difficult to understand. The Association is hoping that this disability would be removed by the new legislation that is now being considered and, therefore, refrains from making any further remarks on the question.

IV

His Excellency was pleased to say that every State had a right to choose its citizens, a principle which the Association has always admitted, and still does admit. But, in the opinion of the Association, there is no fear of an Asiatic influx into the Colony. There are very stringent restrictive laws in force in the maritime Colonies of South Africa. That fact, coupledwith the disinclination of the ordinary Indian to emigrate from India, are a substantial bar to any undue influx of Indians. But the European Colonists think otherwise. The chief reason for coercive legislation is this fear of the influx. The Association, therefore, would accept without demur any legislation of a restrictive character which is applicable to all, does not recognise colour distinc-tion, and leaves the door open for a respectable class of Indians, and such Indians as may be necessary for the business of Indians established in the Colony.

In the petition horeinbefore referred to, Mr. William Hosken and the other petitioners have suggested the adoption of the Natal or the Cape Immigration Restriction Act, with certain modifications. The Association would gladly accept the solution proposed by the gentlemen, provided that the educational test recognises a knowledge of the principal Indian languages, and the Law gives authority to the officer to grant special permission to servants, managers and others, even if it be for a limited term, who may be required for the local Indian merchants.

CONCLUSION

The welfare of the British Indians in South Africa is in His Excellency's hands. The Bazaar Notice is already having a far-reaching effect in other parts of South Africa, and if the rights of the Indians are curtailed, or legislation on colour distinction is introduced in this Crown Colony, and that at the hands of His Excellency, holding the dual position of High Commissioner and Governor, and occupying a very large place in the hearts of the people of South Africa, the self-governing Colonies of the Cape of

Good Hope and Natal will not be slow to copy any such legislation.

In the humble opinion of the Association, it is only partially true that this country has been won by the white man. The arrival of the Indian Contingent at the nick of time was no mean contribution to the war from India. Nor did the Contingent consist wholly of white men; it had a large number of *dhooley*-bearers and other followers who were just as useful, and who braved the perils just as much as the soldiers. The local Indians were not behindhand in doing their duty. Indian soldiers are fighting the Empire's battles in many parts of the world.

The Indians are taught from their infancy the principle of equality between British subjects in the eye of the law. The people of India received their charter of liberty in 1857,[1] after the termination of a sanguinary strife, in which, it has often been acknowledged, the sterling loyalty of the people at large, put to a most severe test, saved India for the Empire.

What the British Indians pray for is very little. They ask for no political power. They admit the British race should be the dominant race in South Africa. They admit the principle of restricting the influx of cheap labour, no matter from which source it may come. All they ask for is freedom for those that are now settled and those that may be allowed to come in future to trade, to move about, and to hold landed property without any hindrance save the ordinary legal requirements. And they ask for abrogation of legislation that imposes disabilities on them because they wear a brown skin. The white inhabitants, or a portion of them, do indeed ask for drastic legislation against the Indians, and they are strong. The Indians are weak. But the British Government has always been known to protect the weak. The Association humbly appeals to His Excellency to extend that protection to the community and grant its prayer.

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
ABDUL GANI,
CHAIRMAN,
[THE] BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

From the photostat of the original printed copy: C. W. 2940, India Office: Judicial and Public Records, 402, and *Indian Opinion*, 18-6-1903.

[1] This is a slip; the Queen's Proclamation was issued in 1858.

60. PETITION TO NATAL LEGISLATURE

THE BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

25 & 26, COURT CHAMBERS,
RISSIK STREET,
JOHANNESBURG,
June 10, 1903

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF
THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF THE COLONY OF THE TRANSVAAL
PRETORIA

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED ABDUL GANI IN HIS CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN OF THE BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT,

Your Petitioner is the Chairman of the British Indian Association which represents the British Indians residing in the Transvaal.

Your Petitioner, on behalf of the Association above named, respectfully protests. against the amendment made in clause No l1 of the Draft Ordinance for Elective Municipal Councils now under consideration by this Honourable House.

The amendment, imposing as it does a disqualification from becoming Voters at the election of Town Councillors on the British Indians among others, casts a slur on the ancient and loyal Indian race.

The Indian community has followed, not without a great deal of pain, the debate in this Honourable House on the clause in question, in that they have been treated on a footing of equality with the Natives of South Africa.

Your Petitioner begs leave respectfully to remind this Honourable House that the Indian nation has been used to Municipal self-government for ages past, as the following from Sir Henry Sumner Maine's works would show.

> It does not appear to me a hazardous proposition that the Indian and the ancient European systems of enjoyment and tillage by men grouped in village communities are in all essential particulars identical. . . .
>
> No Indian phenomenon has been more carefully examined, and by men more thoroughly in earnest, than the village community. For many years past

the discovery and recognition of its existence have ranked among the greatest achievements of Anglo-Indian administration. . . . If very general language were employed, the description of the Teutonic or Scandinavian village communities might actually serve as a description of the same institution in India. . . .The description given by Maurer of the Teutonic Mark of the Townships as his researches have shown it to him, might here again pass for an account, so far as it goes, of an Indian village.

At the present day in India, there are hundreds of Municipalities which are managed by Indian Councillors.

Many Indian residents in the Transvaal have exercised the Municipal franchise in India.

Nor do the articles of Surrender referred to as the Treaty of Vereeniging, in your Petitioner's humble opinion, affect the position of the British Indians since they apply only to the Natives, as will appear from clause 8 thereof which provides that "the question of granting the franchise to natives will not be decided until after the introduction of self-government".

The question, therefore, of the kind of franchise does not arise in the case of the British Indians

The dominance of the British race in South Africa, in your Petitioner's humble opinion, would not be affected by granting the Municipal franchise to such British Indians as may be otherwise fitted for its exercise.

The distinction of colour, although legally made and recognised by the late Government, is repugnant to the British Constitution and your Petitioner respectfully submits, subversive of the broad foundation on which the British Empire is built.

The amendment in question, your Petitioner submits with deference, disregards the feelings of the British Indians altogether.

Your Petitioner, therefore, humbly prays that this Honourable House would reconsider the amendment and extend justice to the loyal British Indians or grant such other relief as to this Honourable House may seem meet.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioner shall, as in duty bound, for ever pray.

ABDOOL GANI,
CHAIRMAN,
[THE] BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

India Office: Judicial and Public Records, 402.

61. THE BRITISH INDIAN IN SOUTH AFRICA

(TRANSVAAL)

In the last issue we gave a bird's-eye view of the legal disabilities of the British Indians in South Africa. The Transvaal deserves more than passing attention. There, as our readers will recollect, the struggle is most acute. The restrictions are most galling. What adds to the difficulty is the utterly unsympathetic attitude of the officials who are in charge of the Asiatic Department.

Under the Boer rule, while the laws were very harsh, the administration was as lax as it well could be. The officials who had to enforce the laws did not share the prejudice that gave birth to them. The Government was by no means over-anxious to drive the Indian traders who had a large number of Boer customers into Locations; and, if it ever showed signs of activity, the protecting hands of the British Agent were stretched forth to stay it. We cannot but recall with deep gratitude the encouragement given by the then Vice-Consul, Mr. Emrys Evans, who, when he heard that the British Indians had received peremptory notice to go into Locations, said in effect: 'Ignore the notice, and if any force is attempted, I will protect you'. Naturally then, although the position was undoubtedly one of suspense and uncertainty, Indians traded in the Transvaal practically without any molestation. Many traded on the strength of tenders of license money, others in the names of Europeans. And all this was done openly. The Government knew it, and connived at it. An attempt to enforce the foot-path bye-laws was met by a severe protest from the then High Commissioner; and Dr. Leyds conveniently disclaimed any knowledge of the attempt, and assured Her late Majesty's Government that it was not the intention of the Boer Government to enforce the byelaws against the Asiatics. Of course, the immigration was totally unrestricted.

But now the position is entirely changed. There is no more any laxity, no more connivance. Some of the officials are sorry for past mildness which prevents them from enforcing the legislation as they would. There is no effectual protest against their acts. The result is that justice is unattainable, unless our countrymen approach His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor who, we are aware, is anxious to hold the scales evenly. After British occupation, the policy of the

Government was to respect the position that the Indians held before the war, pending new legislation on the question. Most of the few refugees who were fortunate enough to reach the Colony during the first few months were, therefore, allowed licenses to trade in townships. At present, however, that policy has been set aside in favour of one of severity. An Indiantrader is not allowed to have his licenses transferred to another person. He cannot, therefore, sell his business as a going concern. There was no such difficulty during the Boer rule. Attempts are being made by the local authorities in different parts of the Colony to enforce the foot-path bye-laws. Immigration has for the present been virtually stopped. The Plague scare has provided a good excuse for prohibiting it altogether from Natal. And it is after great difficulty that Indian refugees get permits to return to their homes from Delagoa Bay or Cape Town. Contrast this with the almost unrestricted immigration of the European newcomers who are not British subjects. The institution of the Asiatic Offices has filled the cup of woe, and has marked a sharp distinction in the eye of the law between Europeans and Indians. The division is, therefore, not between British subjects and non-British subjects, which would be a natural division, not between the civilized and the uncivilized, as Mr. Rhodes[1] laid it down, but it is the most unnatural, namely, between the white people and the coloured people. Such, in brief, is the dark cloud that hangs over our countrymen in the Transvaal. But we do not despair. We have unfailing faith in British Justice. And we hope and believe that the present situation is but a storm before a calm. We know Mr. Chamberlain's advocacy of our countrymen's cause in South Africa during their troubles under the late foreign rule; we have read his address to the Colonial Premiers laying down the rule as to immigration; we have also the speeches of the Imperial Ministers on the outbreak of war as an earnest that we would not be thrown overboard; and last, but not least, we believe in the watchfulness of the All-Wise Providence who dispenses Justice with an unerring hand.

Indian Opinion, 11-6-1903

[1] Cecil Rhodes.

62. THE LION AND THE LAMB

Once upon a time a lamb was drinking from a sparkling stream when a lion, so the story says, came upon the scene. Wanting to find some pretext for devouring the lamb, he muddled the water, and saddling the responsibility upon the lamb began abusing him. "Sire," said the lamb, "the water is running from your side, so I could not have dirtied it". "Shut up," said his lionic majesty, "if it is not you, it must be your father". "But my father is dead," gently pleaded the lamb. "Stop all that nonsense, it must be some kinsman of yours, then," and so saying, the lion made short work of the lamb. This was in the immortal Aesop's days. In our days, the European lion wishes to repeat the feat on the Indian lamb. He, therefore, says in effectto the Indian, "I will have none of you, for you dwell in shanties, and live on the smell of an oil rag". The poor Indian pleads, "But won't you look at the fact that all these years I have been trying to live as you do? In the whole of Grey Street, for instance, I have been replacing the shanties by substantial buildings, and the process is slowly but surely going on." "So much the worse for you then," roars the European lion. "How dare you build such palaces and encroach on my preserves? You are certainly doomed now." Such is the gist of the minute presented by His Worship the Mayor of Durban on the proposed Asiatic Bazaars. Like the boy in the tub in a well-known pictorial advertisement, the Europeans won't be happy till they have "got it"—namely, the extinction of the free Indian.

The fact that some Indians have prospered during the last few years, bought landed property, and built substantial structures, for which they have put thousands of pounds into European pockets, is too much for the Europeans. But we had expected better things from the sober-minded, patriotic and just Mr. Ellis Brown[1]. We venture to say that his Bazaar proposal is neither sober nor patriotic, and the manner in which he has seen fit to support it is hardly just. The proposal cannot be sober, because it is not considered final in the land of its birth, and is now being reconsidered. It is not patriotic, because it has been made irrespective of what his fellow-British subjects would think of it. As to the manner in which it has been supported, the less said about it the better. That a gentleman occupying the civic chair of

[1] The Mayor of Durban.

the Borough should make random statements which cannot bear the searchlight of facts is very distressing indeed. We can only hope that under the spell of Lord Milner's authority, and in the hurry of the modern rush, having no time to study the subject, the injustice done to the Indian community has been unconsciously done.

For he who runs may read that the Immigration Restriction Act has not proved a failure from the anti-Asiatic standpoint, and that the Indian community has been groaning under the weight of the system of certificates and passes issued under the law, and the police supervision exercised on every ship bringing Indian passengers. We commend to our readers' attention the latest Report of the Immigration Restriction Officer. As to the Dealers' Licenses Act, unless His Worship accuses the Town officers in the Colony of not carrying out their duties conscientiously, a material increase in the Indian licences is impossible, if only because traders are absolutely at the mercy of the licensing officers. We ask for figures.

One of the most potent causes of the revival of the anti-Asiatic feeling is the continued increase of indentured labour from India. We read that the Immigration Trust Board is unable to cope with the ever-increasing applications. But the Colony persists in committing that sin, and wishes to avoid the consequences. We say with all the earnestness we can command: stop the indentured immigration, and you will soon see the number of Indians in the Colony materially diminishing as years roll by. It would furnish a practical demonstration as to whether the Colony can or cannot dispense with such labour. If it can, well and good. If it cannot, then it will be a potent reason for stopping the 'pin-prick' policy towards a the Indians.

Indian Opinion, 11-6-1903

63. LORD MILNER ON THE ASIATIC QUESTION

His Excellency the High Commissioner for South Africa has boldly spoken out against the "savagery of the opposition" to the Asiatic. He would have none of the colour distinction. 'Equal rights for all civilized men South of the Zambesi', is His Lordship's motto, as it was that of the late Mr. Rhodes. His Lordship repeated the sentiments to the British Indian Deputation that waited on him on the 22nd ultimo. He further assured it that the Government had no

prejudice against the Indians, and that it did not like the laws of the late Republic as affecting them. For all this and much more in his reply to the Deputation, we are deeply thankful to His Excellency. But when Lord Milner descended to particulars and the practical applicability of his propositions, we confess to a feeling of disappointment. Take the Asiatic Office. The officers are all estimable men, and we should be sorry indeed if they were not provided for in the event of the disestablishment of that Office. And vet, what good has it done? Let us consider His Lordship's justification. A member of the Deputation said that he could not see the Colonial Secretary: therefore, said His Excellency, the Asiatic Office was a necessity; the Indian could have his grievances heard there. The Indian does not find it so. The Asiatic Officer at present is merely a conduit, and a very faulty one because of the constitution of his office. In not a single instance is the Indian able to avoid having to see the regular officers whenever he has any business to do: such is the report that reaches us from the Transvaal. Having nothing of importance to engage his attention, he 'finds some mischief still to do'. For, is it not the Asiatic Office that has invented the system of taking photographs and branded its protege as a criminal? With due respect to His Excellency, we do think that the man who has the practical experience is a better judge of the usefulness or otherwise of the thing experienced.

His Excellency is emphatic on the £3 tax. Our countrymen in the Transvaal have thought fit, and we think wisely, to bow to His Excellency's decision, and not to appeal to Mr. Chamberlain. At the same time, itdoes appear inconsistent to a lay mind that His Excellency should in theory object to colour distinction, and in practice justify the imposition of a penalty on colour. For to us, it is not the amount but the principle that is objectionable. A Kaffir is tobe taxed because he does not work enough: an Indian is to be taxed because he works too much, as Sir Hiram Maim would say. The only thing in common between the so is that they do not wear a white skin.

His Excellency justifies the Bazaars on much the same ground: namely, that of colour. The Deputation very reasonably suggested that the removal to Bazaars should be left optional; it would be found that the poorer class of Indians would go to Bazaars of their own accord. But His Lordship could not see his way to do that Why? Because the Indian is a coloured man! There is no law to force the poor whites to

the particular quarter. The idea of compulsion is hateful to the Englishman, as applied to himself. An erudite Bishop once said that he Would see the whole English nation rather free and drunken than bound and sober. The Indian may not go the same length with the learned divine, but it may be permitted to him to resent compulsion when its effect is to degrade him.

But there is consolation in the thought that the bazaar Notice against which the Deputation protested is merely temporary, and that His Excellency is now considering new legislation. We only hope and pray that Providence will so guide His Excellency that he will bring out legislation that will put to an end once and for all the eternal anxiety and stress under which the Indian has been groaning in the Transvaal. Indeed, it is time that the Indian had rest from the pin-pricks to which he been subjected there for the past eighteen months at least more than during the old regime.

Indian Opinion, 11-6-1903

64. "WITH WHAT MEASURE", &C.

We request His Excellency Lord Milner to ponder over the verse we have adopted as the heading of this note. His Excellency has seriously proposed to the Indian Government that it should let him have indentured Indians for developing the resources of the Transvaal on the understanding that, as soon as their indentures are finished, they should be compelled to return to India. The Indian Government so far seems to have turned a deaf ear to the proposal. But we ask His Excellency whether he would for a single moment accept such a pro-posal as he has made to the Indian Government, for the Europeans? We think not. We are entirely at one with the White League, that there should be no assisted Indian immigration, and that encouragement, and even assistance, be given to white men. We certainly appreciate the sentiment that the country being suitable for European settlement, it should be kept for them so far as it is consistent with the well-being of the Empire as a whole. Where we beg to differ from it is when it would shut out free Indian immigration altogether, or refuse equal opportunity to the Indians who have already settled in the country. The true solution of the colour prejudice is not in treating every coloured man as a beast, an animal having no feelings, but in actually flooding the country with white

men. If this cannot be done, if you must introduce Indian labour, then we say, be just be fair, do unto us as you would be done by.

Indian Opinion, 11-6-1903

65. THE BRITISH INDIAN IN SOUTH AFRICA

ORANGE RIVER COLONY[1]

We reproduce in another column the full text of the anti-Asiatic law of the late Orange Free State. That law allows no footing to the Indian. He may be allowed to remain in the State practically as a labourer, pure and simple, and that, too, not without the permission of the State President. Should he be found with this permission, he is liable to pay a fine of £25, or to go to prison for 3 months. He must pay a poll-tax of ten shillings per annum. Curiously enough, the law does not apply to the Malays from the Cape Colony. This law is allowed to blot the statute-book of this British Colony of Orange River, though over two years have elapsed since the British occupied the country.

The history of the legislation is briefly this. There were in the Colony, before 1890, a iv Indian merchants who so roused the ire of the European merchants that the latter presented a petition to the President making all sorts of charges against the entire Indian race, one of which was that it considered women as soulless,[2] and another was that it introduced all kinds of loathsome diseases into the State. There was no convention with Britain enabling it to stop the then President from complying with the wishes of the good merchants who were afraid of the entry of the people with no sense of morals and tainted with horrible diseases. The law in question was, therefore, passed. Indian merchants were hounded out of the State without compensation. The British Government was approached, but it felt powerless. It had no jurisdiction. So the merchants had to suffer losses to the extent of nearly ten thousand pounds sterling.

The question naturally arises, has the British Government any jurisdiction now? Two of the old merchants, we understand, have already tested it and got a reply in the negative. Under the existing law, the Colonial Government says, it cannot grant them permission to

[1] The name given to the Orange Free State on its annexation by the British.

[2] *Vide* "Notes on the Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa", September 22, 1896

resume their trade. Asked when the law with be repealed or modified, it has no knowledge. The British Government, therefore, has either no jurisdiction or no willingness to rescind or alter the law. It has changed and abrogated many laws in that Colony, but not this.

It was said in the early days of British occupation, that the law could not be even modified until civil government was established. When civil authority did take the place of the military, Mr. Chamberlain's visit was to be awaited. Mr. Chamberlain has come and gone, and yet nothing is done—why?

Before the war, everybody was agreed that, as soon as it was over, all British subjects would be free in the two Republics. May we not appeal to every true Britisher and ask whether he approves of the above law?

The Indians have no desire to flood that Colony, or, for that matter, any other. But loyal as they are, we think that they are perfectly justified in asking that the law may be brought into harmony with the British sense of right and justice. Every Indian child is taught to sing, before he reaches Standard IV of his vernacular school in India, that under the British rule there is no inequality, the lion cannot hurt the lamb—all are free and well protected. Having been nurtured in such sentiments, we find it hard to understand the practical working of that mighty Government in this sub-continent. The European lion bids fair to swallow up the Indian lamb in British South Africa, while the arbiter at Downing Street is looking on!

Indian Opinion, 18-6-1903

66. IS IT IMPERIAL OR EMPIRICAL?

The debate in the newly formed Legislative Council of the Transvaal on the Elective Municipalities Ordinance would be an extremely interesting reading if it were not painful. How the non-official members of the Council argued themselves into the belief that it was strictly just to debar all coloured people from the exercise of the Municipal franchise, whether they were British subjects or aliens, passes our understanding. Indeed, if we did not know that Sir George Farrar[1] voted against the Government clause, we would have considered him to be a champion of the reasonable rights of coloured

[1]A nominated member of the Legislative Council of the Transvaal.

British subjects. For, we read that Sir George Farrar twitted Mr. Harry Solomon for his *volte-face*; in fact, before the war, he was always inclined to treat coloured people justly; and that, now that the British Government was established, he disregarded them entirely as members of the Empire to which he and they belong. Sir George Farrar admitted that it would be very offensive to the coloured people if they were debarred from the municipal franchise, because they happened to wear a brown skin, but as he was only a nominated member, Sir George thought that he could not possibly vote in favour of the Government clause. Now, what is the Government clause?

It provided that all who could read and write, *to the satisfaction of the officer*, either English or Dutch, and possessed certain property qualifications, were entitled to be placed on the voters' roll. Every member admitted that under that clause hardly a few coloured men would be able to have their names placed on the voters' roll. So, evidently, the question, as Mr. Loveday frankly and bluntly put it, was purely and simply "one of colour". It was not, then, as Sir Percy Fitzpatrick would have us believe, a question of keeping up the dominance of the British race. Indeed, it is assured beyond a doubt and, if we may put it with due deference to Sir Percy, we think that the action of the non-official members has certainly contributed to weaken the hold of the Empire on a portion of loyal British subjects. The argument was strong, also from the articles of Surrender, to the effect that if the articles were not broken to the letter by this Government clause, they were certainly broken in spirit, in that the Boers could not draw a distinction between municipal and political franchise! Now the clause of the article referred to by the honourable members says: "The question of granting the franchise to natives will not be decided until after the introduction of self-government'?. Even assuming that there is any force in the argument, it evidently does not apply to coloured people other than the natives of South Africa, and, therefore, certainly not to the British Indians, with whom alone we are at present concerned. If the action of the non-official members was surprising and painful, what shall we say of that of the Government which, after making a most able defence of their clause, and after having a majority in favour thereof, had to yield to the non-official members? We make bold to say that this is really going too far; and it very much appears as if the Transvaal was going not only to rule the whole of South Africa, but to trample under foot all that is most dearly cherished by the British Constitution, and that has stood the test

of time. Sir Richard, in announcing the decision of the Government to yield to the wishes of the thirteen non-official members, said that, on a question of that kind, the Government did not intend to override the feeling of the non-official members. We, in our simplicity, would have thought that it would be exactly on a question of that kind that the Government would stand firm. Why should a few, no doubt very influential, men be able to dictate a material change in the fundamental policy of the British Government, it is difficult for us to understand. Perhaps, the remarks made by the non-official members to the effect that the measure in question was only temporary, and that there was no reason why within a few years a change should not be made in the clause admitting coloured people to the franchise, weighed with the Government. We have come to think that all such promises are absolutely vain. We do not believe that when self-government is granted, the prejudice against colour would be removed at a stroke of the pen. On the contrary, the action of the Government during the transition stage would be quoted as a precedent for future restrictive legislation; and that by that time the prejudice, having been fed, as it were, by the Government, would have hardened so much as to be ineradicable.

The cloud, however, is not without its silver lining. Although itwas a voice in the wilderness, it was that of Mr. William Hosken, who was the only non-official member who spoke out his mind boldly and fearlessly en favour of justice and humanity. If the other non-official members had no respect for the feelings of those whom by their action they were insulting, and if the Government in their wish to please them gave up the bare rights of the coloured people, Mr. Hosken at any rate showed by his action that he was not going to be a party to any such thing.

One thing we may venture to remind the honourable members of, *viz.*, that the British Indians have known the privilege of municipal government for ages past. We have the authority of Sir Henry Maine, the late Sir William Wilson Hunter, the official historian of India, and a host of other eminent writers, for saying that India enjoyed municipal self-government long before even the Anglo-Saxon race. And, though we admit that the great race has now left India behind it in advancement, we hope the honourable members do not think that the instinct of self-government has so far forsaken us as to make us unworthy of the municipal franchise in the Transvaal.

Mr. Chamberlain came to South Africa as the apostle of Imperial unity. We well remember the occasion of the great meeting in the Wanderers' Hall; how every sentence of Mr. Chamberlain's speech was applauded; and how the Imperial spirit, as distinguished from the parochial, pervaded that great assembly. Is it, then, Imperial to "cast a slur" on millions of His Majesty's subjects simply for the sake of gratifying a bit of prejudice, or, as we have asked in the heading, is it Empirical?

Indian Opinion, 18-6-1903

67. "PHYSICIAN, HEAL THYSELF"

Now that the Durban Town Council has formally raised the question of Bazaars, we think it is not inopportune to ask the Council what it is doing with its Eastern Vlei and Western Vlei. We do not suppose any evidence is necessary to show how rotten and how filthy these two places are from a sanitary standpoint. We can only cite the testimony of the Hon. Mr. Jameson, the apostle of sanitary reform in the Colony, and Mr. Daugherty, the Sanitary Inspector, in justification of the strong expressions we have used in describing the two places in question. And they are filthy and rotten, not because it is the Indians who are living there, but because the situation itself is so singularly unhealthy, and the sanitary control is so utterly insufficient. The Town Council has furnished an object lesson to the Indian community in sanitation by allowing "two plague spots" to exist in this model Borough of Durban. In discussing the Mayor's Minute on the Bazaars[1], the Town Councillors showed great anxiety for the welfare of the Indian residents, and they were good enough to argue that it was really in the interests of the Indians themselves that Bazaars were necessary for their residence. May we, then, ask the Town Council, first of all to deal with the Eastern Vlei and the Western Vlei, and put them in thorough order, and make them habitable before it thinks of undertaking the compulsory segregation of thousands of British Indians residing in the Borough? It is all very well to say that effective supervision is not possible when Indians are scattered about, and when their habits are so different from those of the Europeans. We join issue on both these points, and venture to say that even at the present time the Indians are all, as a rule, living in particular localities, and that

[1] *Vide* "Minute by the Mayor", 4-6-1903.

their habits have really very little to do with sanitary control, because, the latter can be most effectively exercised in keeping with the Borough bye-laws, in spite of any habits to the contrary. Surely, the buildings are built in accordance with the plans approved by the Town Council; and, so far as the sanitary upkeep thereof is concerned, it is merely a matter of the Borough bye-laws being strictly and rigorously enforced. For, does the Town Council intend, if it succeeds in segregating the Indians, to leave them absolutely to themselves, without any sanitary supervision, or does it intend to exercise stricter sanitary control after segregation? How compulsory segregation is going to solve a difficulty that does not exist, we cannot understand.

Indian Opinion, 18-6-1903

68. WHAT IS IT ALL COMING TO?

It looks as if the Government of the Orange River Colony has not the remotest intention of altering or amending the drastic and un-British anti-Asiatic laws which it has inherited from the old Republican Government. For, one reads in the Government *Gazette Extraordinary* dated 19th May, a draft ordinance to provide for an increased *Poll-tax on coloured persons outside public diggings*. If, as was hoped at the time of the war, and as is hoped even now by British Indians, that the British Government would repeal the laws referred to, we do not understand this proposal to increase the poll-tax. We are aware that there is hardly any Indian population in that Colony. But we are trusting that, at no distant date, the door will be opened for reasonable immigration of British Indians into that Colony. Lord Milner is now supposed to be considering in what way and to what extent the anti-Asiatic legislation of the late South African Republic would be changed. Are we to suppose that, because there is no Indian population in the Orange River Colony, the door is for ever to remain closed against British Indians? We remember the time when, in reply to the protest by the British Indians against the laws of the Orange Free State, the Colonial Secretary said that it was an absolutely independent Republic, and that, much as he would like to help the British Indians, he was powerless. The Colonial Secretary is not now powerless. He has the control in his own hands. Will he exercise it on behalf of Right and Justice, or is he to be powerless against a new obstacle in the shape of downright trade jealousy and colour prejudice?

Indian Opinion, 18-6-1903

69. A STUDY IN FACTS

Sir Mancherji, to whom the whole of the Indian community in South Africa is beholden for his great advocacy, in season and out of season, of their cause, has put a question to Mr. Chamberlain to which the right honourable gentleman is reported to have replied as follows: "So far as Indians in the Transvaal were concerned, the old Law had not been enforced with its former rigour; indeed, considerable modifications had been introduced." We give below, in parallel columns, the facts of the matter, and make bold to say that the old laws are being enforced with a rigour unknown during the old regime.

BEFORE WAR	NOW
"The Indians were not compelled to pay the £3 registration fee."	"Every Indian has now to take out his registration on pain of being fined from £10 to £100, or on failure, being imprisoned from 14 days to six months."
"Any Indian could trade in any part of the Transvaal without a license, in most cases simply as against tender of license money; and this because of the protection of the British Government."	"Every Indian must remove to Bazaars for trade, except those who held licences to trade in town before War."
"Any Indian could live in any part of the Transvaal without molestation and without having to apply for exemption."	"No Indian, unless he receives a special exemption from the Colonial Secretary, may live in towns: but all Indians must remove to Locations, now to be called Bazaars."
"Indians could hold landed property, if only in the names of white people."	"It is extremely difficult for Indians to hold landed property now in the names of white people."
"Indians held 99 years' Leases in Johannesburg, under the old Government, for landed property in the Indian Location there."	"This land is now being taken away from them under ',Unsanitary Area Commissioners Report.' There is no guarantee that they will receive an equal title to land elsewhere in Johannesburg in a suitable place."

"Indians were free to enter the Transvaal without any restrictions whatsoever."	"Even *bona fide* Indian refugees are only sparingly allowed to enter the Colony, and then after nearly 3 months' delay after application."
"There was no separate Asiatic Department for Indians, with its passes and permits.	"The Asiatic Department has become a painful fact with the Indian community in the Transvaal, with its inconveniences which are now occupying Lord Milner's attention."
"Vested interests were never touched by the Transvaal Government, because of the mighty protection that was ever affored to the Indians during the Republican regime by British Consuls."	"Some present 'licensees' possessing thousands of pounds' worth to stock are under notice to shift to Location at the end of the year; although they received the licenses from British Officers."

The above is merely a sample of what is now happening to the British Indians in the Transvaal. After two years' British occupation, they are unable to say what definitely their position is under the flag whose protection they have been taught to rely upon from childhood. What was running in Mr. Chamberlain's mind when he allowed himself to make the statement above referred to, we do not know. Sir Mancherji would be rendering a great service if he would press for a definite reply to the indictment drawn up above.

Indian Opinion, 18-6-1903

70. LETTER TO P. S. TO LT.-GOVERNOR, TRANSVAAL

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION,
25 & 26 RISSIK STREET,
JOHANNESBURG,
June 22, 1903

TO

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

SIR,

I have the honour to draw His Excellency's attention to the last communication of the Association dated 20th May, with reference to the plague restrictions on Indian arrivals from Natal.

A telegram appearing in the newspapers announces that the

plague is on the wane in Durban. In any case as His Excellency has been pleased to relax the total prohibition in favour of those Indians who may wish to visit Natal and return, my Committee respectfully trusts that His Excellency will graciously order removal of the total prohibition for Indians who may wish to come to the Transvaal from Natal under such precautions as His Excellency may deem fit to impose.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ABDOOL GANI

Pretoria Archives: LG. 92/2132 Asiatics. 1902-1906

71. IMMIGRATION BILL

The following petition has been sent to the local Parliament:

DURBAN,
June 23, 1903

[TO]
THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE HONOURABLE
THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NATAL
IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED
PIETERMARITZBURG

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED REPRESENTING THE
BRITISH INDIANS RESIDING IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH:

That your Petitioners respectfully approach this Honourable House with reference to the Bill to place closer restrictions on Immigration, now before this Honourable House for consideration.

Your Petitioners, while accepting the principle of the Bill, beg to submit that further restrictions which are now sought to be imposed by the Bill in question are, in your Petitioners' humble opinion, unnecessary.

They are:

The raising of the educational test by sub-section A of Section 5

Fixing the age of majority at sixteen under sub-section F of Section 4.

The necessity for an applicant for a visitor's pass to attend before the Immigration Restriction Officer, or other Officers thereto appointed under Section 23.

The requiring of a residence in Natal for a period of not less than three consecutive years under Section 32, to entitle an applicant to claim the benefit of sub-section F of Section 4.

The denial of the benefit of domicile to indentured Indians in spite of at least five years' service in the Colony.

Your Petitioners would venture to discuss seriatim the clauses referred to above:

According to the last report of the Immigration Restriction Officer at Durban of the working of the present Act, it appears that only one hundred and fifteen Asiatics entered the Colony having passed the education test. Your Petitioners submit, with due deference to the officer who has, in spite of the above figures, advised a higher education test, that the number that has entered the Colony under the test is very insignificant, and does not justify a higher test. In fact, the opening remarks of the Immigration Officer would go to show that the Act has worked very satisfactorily, and that it has to a very great extent answered the purpose for which it was framed. But if this Honourable House is of opinion that the education test should be raised, your Petitioners humbly submit that this would be a suitable opportunity for granting the request of the Indian community that was made to this Honourable House when the present Act was introduced, namely, that the education test should recognise the principal Indian languages. Your Petitioners would then cheerfully submit to a higher educational test all round. It may be mentioned that millions in India are totally illiterate, and they would, therefore, be still. prohibited immigrants under the Law. Such a test, moreover, will free the Act from the appearance of being offensive to the Indian nation.

The fixing of the age of majority at sixteen will, your Petitioners submit, be a very great hardship to those who are entitled to immigrate to the Colony, more so to the Indians. As this Honourable House is aware, Indian children are not withdrawn till after they have reached the age of over twenty-one years from parental control, and it will be a most serious thing for a domiciled Indian in the Colony to contemplate the abandoning of his children while they are yet hardly sixteen years; how close the family tie is in India, your Petitioners

need hardly point out.

Your Petitioners trust that the requiring of the attendance of an applicant for a visiting or an embarkation pass before an officer is merely an oversight. An applicant may be resident in any place, and it is hardly to be expected that the Government would make provision for stationing Officers at each and every place out of the Colony. It would, therefore, be manifestly impossible that an applicant could always attend before Officers appointed under the Act for passes. Your Petitioners, therefore, submit that the attendance of an agent before Immigration Officers should be accepted as sufficient.

Hitherto, a period of two years' residence has been considered as sufficient to entitle an applicant to claim former domicile in the Colony. Your Petitioners humbly think that even that period is too long, but to raise it to three years would prevent many members of the Indian community from returning to Natal, although they may have businesses and connections in the Colony. It may mean, in many cases, very serious loss to individuals.

Your Petitioners respectfully protest against the denial of simple rights of citizenship to indentured Indians who have deserved well of the Colony. Day by day the indentured Indian is becoming more and more indispensable for the prosperity of the Colony, and your Petitioners submit that he is entitled, by reason of his service, to most favourable consideration by this Honourable House

Your Petitioners would venture to make a suggestion with reference to the Bill in question.

Now that the whole of South Africa has come under British control, it is respectfully submitted that all those who are domiciled in British South Africa be free to enter the Colony unless they come under any of the sub-sections C, D, E, F and G of Section 5 of the Bill. Your Petitioners venture to draw the attention of this Honourable House to the fact that in the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope such a principle has already been adopted.

In conclusion, your Petitioners hope that this Honourable House would take this humble Petition under favourable consideration and grant the relief prayed for herein, and for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc.

ABDOOL CAADIR
OF MOHAMED CASSIM CAMROODEEN & CO.
AND OTHERS

Indian Opinion, 25-6-1903

72. THE BRIGHT SIDE OF THE PICTURE

So far we have been dealing with the grievances of the British Indians in South Africa; and lest we may be understood to be merely harping on that one theme, as if there was no relieving feature, we hasten to assure our readers that, in our opinion, there is much to be thankful for even amid the difficulties that undoubtedly surround the British Indian community throughout South Africa. Indeed, if there was no bright side to the gloomy picture that we have considered it our duty to draw in these columns, life would be absolutely unbearable for the Indians in this sub-continent.

It appears tat the existing situation is, after all, inevitable, and that the white inhabitants are not perhaps much to blame, because circumstances control men's actions to a very great extent.

We are living among a thoroughly active and self-seeking (we do not use the latter term in any disparagement) community here, and there is no elbow-room to be found for those who would not help themselves or see to it that rights are not infringed: colonisation can only be made on that condition. It is only too true that people do not emigrate to the Colonies from any altruistic motives, but that they do so in order to better their material position to be wealthier, happier, and stronger in every respect. Such being the condition and such being the only aim for the time being, the members of the European community are slow, if not absolutely unwilling, to tolerate any competition with them in the same department of life in which they may be engaged and that, to our mind, is the key to the whole situation. If it were not for the presence of a large number of coloured people in South Africa, there would have been a warfare—we mean pecuniary warfare—going on between one white race and another, the same as we see going on at present in Europe. England, which has been the only apostle of Free Trade, finds one of its foremost men championing a mild form of protection, the underlying motive of which is evidently to gain relief from foreign competition. We lay stress on this phase to shew how much need there is among ourselves for patience and also for thankfulness—patience, because the causes for the colour prejudice lie deeper than we ourselves may perhaps care to admit, and thankfulness, because the situation is due, not merely to the opposition to colour, but to well-defined laws which govern new communities.

But there are far stronger reasons for contemplating what is the bright side of the picture. Was it not the late Right Honourable Mr. Escombe who came to our rescue in our time of need? It may not be generally known that it was he who, when he realised what harm the Dealers' Licenses Act was doing to the Indians, threw the whole weight of his influence in. our favour, and saw that justice which was due to us was done. It was he, again, who spoke words of encouragement and gave his blessing to the little band of Indian Volunteers who went to the front.[1] His words to them have now become historic, because they were his last pronouncement before he was taken away from us. That speech throughout breathes nothing but the true Imperial spirit. Our readers will be able to call to mind many such happy incidents, the most noted of which was the generous response made by the Colony at the time of the acute famine which was raging in India in 1900.[2]

Looking beyond the border of Natal, we find Mr. Garlick, a member of the Legislative Council at the Cape, leading the British Indian Deputation and championing the cause which to him appeared to be just and honest. In the Transvaal we have Lord Milner defining forthe Colonists a true policy that ought to be followed, and if we have cause to complain of His Lordship's views when they are translated into acts, we can well believe that it is not because he is less willing, but because he considers himself to be powerless. We find also Mr. William Hosken ranging himself on the side of right and justice.

We may go on repeating such amenities of the Indian life, but we think we have mentioned enough to show that we have every reason to be hopeful as to the future, and to think that, as the European community grows older, the awkward corners would be rubbed out, and that the different members of the Imperial family in South Africa would be able to live in perfect peace in the near future. That time may not come within the present generation; we may not live to see it, but that it will come no sane man can deny; and that being so, let us all strain our every nerve to hasten its coming, and that can only be done by calmness in discussion and strict adherence to facts and high ideals, and last, though not least, by trying to step into the shoes of our opponents and endeavouring to find out what may be running in their minds—to find out, that is to say, not merely the points of

[1] *Vide* "Indian Ambulance Corps", December 13, 1899.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dadabhai Naoroji", 8-10-1900 *supra.*

difference, but also points of agreement.

Indian Opinion, 25-6-1903

73. THE NEW MOVE

We have read the new Immigration Bill which is to be introduced by the Government during the present session of the Natal Parliament. One thing we have all to admit, namely, that the Home Government will not interfere with the right of the self-governing Colonies to regulate immigration within their borders so long as they do not, in so doing, tread upon the fundamental British policy. We have, therefore, nothing to say against the introduction of the Bill in question, excepting that the present Act has not received a fair trial, and that so far as it has gone, it has not failed to satisfy the expectations that were raised when it was first introduced. We also venture to think that the whole situation has not been carefully examined. However, seeing that the Government have brought in their Bill, it will perhaps be a hopeless task to expect them to withdraw it altogether, but we would say this that while they are about it, will it not be graceful to concede the just demands of the Indian community which is vitally affected by it?

We do not think that there is the slightest occasion for raising the educational test. Mr. Harry Smith[1] has stated in his last annual report that about one hundred Immigrants entered the Colony, having satisfied the educational test. Now, that in our opinion is eloquent testimony in favour of the sufficiency of that test; but, if the Government think that the testought to be made more severe, then we do sincerely hope that they would take into consideration the reasonableness of the demand that has been made during all these years by the Indian community that the test ought to recognise the great Indian languages which belong to the same Aryan family as most of the European languages. At any rate, the experiment is worth trying. We can speak from experience that millions in India are absolutely illiterate, and that they would still be debarred from coming to the Colony under the more liberal test we have suggested, and if that test is adopted, we should have no quarrel with the set form being done away with, and that the knowledge required of any language should be more than elementary. If the experiment fails, and if it is

[1] Immigration Restriction Officer, Natal.

found that thousands can gain entrance into the Colony, there can be no difficulty about modifying the educational clause. Our contemporary, the *Natal Mercury*, has said that it is well the Bill has been brought, because it brings the Natal legislation in harmony with the Cape legislation on the question. Unfortunately, the Natal Act has not copied the Cape Act in all its essentials, for the Cape Act exempts from its operation not merely those that are domiciled in the Cape Colony, but all that are domiciled in South Africa, provided, of course, they are not criminals or are not otherwise objectionable, and it is but right, now that South Africa has become British, that persons living in one part of it should be free to move about in other parts without difficulty or hindrance. The Bill in question, moreover, includes under the term 'domicile' a residence for a period of three years. This we consider to be very unjust. The Government instructions have been to grant certificates of domicile to all who can prove two years' residence; why the period should now be increased to three years it is difficult to understand—we do think that even two years' continuous residence is a severe requirement. As to the indentured Indians not being considered domiciled in the Colony after the completion of five years' residence, we can only say that there is no justification whatsoever for it. They are the most deserving and the most useful people in the Colony. In the words of the late Mr. Escombe, they give the best five years of their life for a paltry wage under conditions which perilously border on slavery, and to deny to these people, after they have become free, the elementary rights of citizenship, is, to say the least of it, very unjust.

We hope the Government will see their way to consider seriously the objections we have ventured to make in connection with the Bill. The Indian community, as they have often admitted, has deserved well of the Colony. So far as we know, it has never been extravagant in its demands. It has always adopted a reasonable attitude, and has often exercised great self-control. If, therefore, we ask for a sympathetic hearing on its behalf, we trust we are not asking too much.

Indian Opinion, 25-6-1903

74. THE CAPE INDIANS AND SIR PIETER FAURE

We have to congratulate our countrymen at the Cape on the success of their deputation to the Honourable the Colonial Secretary, and on getting Mr. Garlick to introduce the deputation. Sir Pieter was decidedly sympathetic, and has promised to reconsider the Cape Immigration Act, to induce the East London Town Council not to enforce its foot-path bye-law against respectable Indians, and not to accept the Bazaar proposals that may be made by the Cape Municipality, without due consideration. All these are hopeful signs, and we doubt not that, if our countrymen at the Cape moderately but persistently continue to make their voice heard, they will get the desired relief to which, as the *Cape Times* in the course of its remarks on the deputation admitted, the community is undoubtedly entitled. If the Cape Parliament would lead the way by recognising the great Indian languages, it would have, in our opinion, performed a service to the Empire. It would go a long way towards conciliating Indian opinion, and would at the same time keep intact the principle of the Immigration Act. That the foot-path bye-law in East London is an anomaly would be admitted by any man, and the sooner it is done away with, the better. As Dr. Abdul Rahman aptly put it, he himself would be liable to be arrested for walking on the foot-paths in East London under the present regulations.

Indian Opinion, 25-6-1903

75. MR. CHAMBERLAIN ON THE INDIAN QUESTION

We notice in the cablegrams that have been lately published in the: papers that, in answer to a question in the House of Commons, Mr. Chamberlain is reported to have replied to the effect that the Indians in the Transvaal had not complained of physical ill-treatment, and that there was nothing definite in the letter of the President of the British Indian Association at Johannesburg.[1] It is very difficult to understand the meaning of Mr. Chamberlain's reply from the meagre cables. It is quite true that the Indian community in the Transvaal, and, in fact, throughout South Africa, has never complained of systematic physical ill-treatment; it is the anti-Asiatic

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", April 25, 1903.

laws which have formed the basis for complaint; but we respectfully join issue with the Right Honourable Gentleman when he says that there is nothing definite in the letter of the President of the British Indian Association if he was referring to the Heidelberg incident. We have already reproduced the letter in these columns, and we make bold to say that it gives chapter and verse to shew that, at any rate, there was physical ill-treatment, but we are loathe to dwell on the incident in question, for we firmly believe that it was isolated, and that, whenever such things do happen, the higher authorities on the spot are ever ready and willing to see that justice is done. We are only concerned with the truth and definiteness of the statement made by the President of the British Indian Association, and as to that we know that, when the letter was first published, the opinion was unanimous that it betrayed a serious breach of duty on the part of the police.

Indian Opinion, 25-6-1903

76. AN INSANITARY REPORT

In another column, we reproduce a telegram to the Johannesburg *Star* purporting to be the substance of a report of the Sanitary Inspector in Krugersdorp on the condition of the Indian Location there. It is evident that the Sanitary Inspector, when he paid his night visit, had the saying in his mind, namely, that "if you want to hang a dog, call it a bad name". Really, it is monstrous how responsible officers can let their imagination cloud their reason entirely and allow themselves to make what are undoubtedly libellous statements. We do not wish to soil the editorial columns by quoting anything from the report which speaks for itself: we only hope that the Government will not be led astray from their clear duty by such highly coloured reports. At the same time, we wish very emphatically to warn all our countrymen about the serious position they are in at present in the Transvaal. While we have no hesitation in saying that the report of the Sanitary Inspector is most inaccurate, we feel constrained at the same time to admit that the condition of the Location at Krugersdorp is certainly not all that could be desired from a sanitary standpoint. While it is, perhaps, a complete answer to any charge that may be brought by the Health Board that the Location has been entirely neglected by it and that the fault is more that of the Health Board than of the Indian community if the Location is not in a perfectly sanitary condition, such an answer is a very poor comfort to

us. We ought to be able to live decently and in a sanitary condition without requiring the supervision of the Sanitary Inspectors. If we could persuade our countrymen, be they the lowest, to follow out the plan suggested by us, what the Sanitary Inspector of Krugersdorp has pronounced will be turned into a blessing. Then, instead of feeling aggrieved at the report, we shall have to thank the Sanitary Inspector for having drawn upon his imagination in describing the condition of the Indian Location in Krugersdorp.

Indian Opinion, 25-6-1903

77. LETTER TO P. S. TO LT.-GOVERNOR, TRANSVAAL

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION,
25 & 26 COURT CHAMBERS,
JOHANNESBURG,
June 26, 1903

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR
PRETORIA

SIR,

The attention of my Committee has been drawn to the Draft Ordinance[1] published in the *Government Gazette* dated 19th June, to replace Law No. 11 of 1899.

My Committee is very reluctant to say anything whatsoever with reference to the proposed Ordinance dealing with a subject of a very delicate nature, but at the same time my Committee deems it a duty to draw the attention of His Excellency to subsection 5 of Section 19 of the Bill which, in my Committee's humble opinion, casts a serious affront on the whole of the Indian community.

My Committee ventures to think that the object aimed at by Section 19 could be served in a less offensive manner and without bracketing together in the same expression the British Indian subjects and races of mixed descent or the native races of Africa.

My Committee respectfully submits that in defining the

[1] For suppression of immorality; *vide* "Indian Art", 17-9-1903, "Notes", 21-9-1903 & The Dealers' licenses Act Redivivus: III, 24-9-1903

expression "native" in the sub-section in question no account has been taken of the feelings of those that are affected by it and therefore ventures to hope that His Excellency will be pleased to embody such an alteration in the section as would remove the objection raised by my Committee.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ABDOOL GANI

CHAIRMAN, BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Pretoria Archives: LG. 92 Asiatics. 1902-1906. L.G. 2132

78. TELEGRAM TO P. S. TO LT.-GOVERNOR, TRANSVAAL

June 29, 1903

TO

PRIVATE SECRETARY

TO HIS EXCELLENCY LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

TELEGRAM APPEARS IN PAPERS SAYING PLAGUE HAS NEARLY DISAPPEARED DURBAN. ASSOCIATION REQUESTS FAVOURABLE REPLY LETTER 22ND INSTANT.

BIAS

Pretoria Archives: LG. 92/2132 Asiatics. 1902-1906

79. LETTER TO LT-GOVERNOR OF TRANSVAAL

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION,
25 & 26 RISSIK STREET,
JOHANNESBURG,
June 30,1903

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

OF THE TRANSVAAL

SIR,

In continuation of my telegram of yesterday's date, I beg to quote below a telegram that appears in today's *Leader* that refers to the plague in Durban, namely:

that the borough is now pronounced free of plague and the last patient, an Indian, having been discharged cured, no further bulletins will be issued.

Under the circumstances, I trust that His Excellency will be pleased to remove the plague restrictions referred to in my telegram.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ABDOOL GANI

CHAIRMAN, BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Pretoria Archives: LG. 92/2132 Asiatics. 1902-1906

80. LETTER TO H. V. VORA[1]

COURT CHAMBERS,
RISSIK ST.,
P. O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
June 30, 1903

MY DEAR HARIDASBHAI,

I have your two letters. I am very glad that Harilal is now out of danger. You know that I sent a cablegram[2] asking that he should be sent here with Chhaganlal, and I do hope that he will be sent here. By the time he reaches, the cold weather will have passed, and seeing that he must not go to school for some time to come, perhaps he will benefit by the change of climate and greater regularity of habits. Moreover, your ideas about natural living will be far better enforced here than there and I shall see, so far as possible, that he does not receive any drugs.

During my self-imposed exile, I have been overwhelmed with kindness of friends in India. I know that you and Revashankarbhai have supplied my place to Harilal. I do not wish to enlarge upon that subject. I can only wish that he was here to be attended to by me, and regret that he should have been a source of anxiety and worry to

[1] Haridas Vakhatchand Vora, a leading lawyer of Kathiawar, who pleaded against Gandhiji's excommunication after return from England in 1891, and later helped him in his early practice at Rajkot.

[2] This is not available.

either of you.

I hope that you are not overworking yourself in your cases. I would like to know a little more about the nature of work you are getting there and the state of your health and that of the children. I know you will be anxious to know something about me.

I am doing fairly well with reference to the office work; in fact, during the few months that I have opened an office here, I notice that I have built up a decent practice and that I can afford to pick and choose. The public work, however, is of a most exacting nature and often causes very great anxiety. The result is that, just at present, I have to work from nearly a quarter to nine in the morning to ten o'clock at night, with intervals for meals and a short walk. It is a time of constant exertion and worry, and I see no prospect in the near future of the public work slackening. The Government is now considering the modification of the existing legislation, and one has to be very much on the alert. The thing is most difficult to foresee. Such being the case, I do not know what my future plans will be, but the more I look into things, the more I feel that it will be almost impossible for me to get away for several years. The thing is that I shall very likely have to repeat what I had to do in Natal. The question, then, is as to the fulfilment of my promise to Mrs. Gandhi. I told her that either I should return to India at the end of the year or that she should come here by that time. I am most anxious to fulfil the promise. How to do so is the difficulty. To return at the end of the year is out of the question. It however, she would allow me to recede from the promise and not insist on coming here, there is a likelihood of my being able to return to India earlier than I otherwise would. In any case, according to present plans, I must not think of returning for three or four years. Will she consent to remaining there all that time? If she does not, then, of course, she must come here it the end of the year, and I must be quietly to settle down in Johannesburg for ten years or so. It will, however, be a terrible thing to establish a new home here and to break it up as I did in Natal. Experience teaches me that it would cost a very great deal and, if there were great difficulties about it in Natal, they will be greater in Johannesburg. Please, therefore, consider this thing and, if Mrs. Gandhi is where you are, then you may all consult and let know. I do thick, however, that if she would consent to remain there, for the time being at any rate, it Would enable me to give undivided attention to public work. As she knows, she had

very little of my company in Natal; probably, she would have less in Johannesburg. However, I wish to be guided entirely by her sentiments and I place myself absolutely in her hands. If she must come, then she may make preparations in October and leave in the beginning of November. Between now and then there will be plenty of time for exchange of news.

I am very glad Bali[1] is not to be married this year. The later she is married, the better it will undoubtedly be for herself and her future husband.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of a handwritten copy: Sevagram No.1.

81. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
June 30, 1903

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I enclose a copy of my letter to Haridasbhai.[2] It gives all the news about mm Read it out and explain the situation here to your aunt. It is highly desirable that she should decide to stay on there, as life here rather expensive. If she remains there, savings made in this place will enable her and children to lead a comparatively easy life in India. In that case, I may be able to return home in two or three years' time. But if she insists, I shall not retreat from the promise I made her on the eve of my departure. If, however, she decides to leave, make all requisite preparations by October and take the first available boat in November. But do try to convince her that it will be best for her to remain in India. In consultation with Revashankerbhai, she may choose to stay either in Bombay or in Rajkot. If you have not already started with Harilal, and your aunt intends to accompany you, bring Ramdas and Devadas also along with you. Proper arrangements should be made in regard to the accommodation and education of Manilal and Gokuldas in Bombay. But if Manilal is not willing to stay behind, let him also join you. It will be good if Gokuldas continues his studies in Bombay. Let me know his mind and also what Raliatbehn has to say about it.

[1] Daughter of Haridasbhai
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

Bring as many books and photographs as you can from the list I sent you. It will be good if all the money is deposited with Revashankerbhai. Please see that the account of Fuli is closed. Settle the account with Shivlalbhai, if necessary by going to Rajkot. That will leave with you enough money for the journey.

If your aunt decides to stay in Rajkot, it will be better to bring Manilal here.

Maganlal[1] is doing well at Tongaat.

Read out this letter to Revashankerbhai. Having been hurriedly written, it will be difficult for him to read it himself.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

Based on a translation of the original Gujarati in My Childhood with Gandhiji, pp. 192-3.

82. THE BALANCE-SHEET

A merchant who, hugging to himself a contemplation of his stock and outstandings, loses sight of his liabilities is doomed to perdition. Nemesis overtakes him all of a sudden, and his stock and outstandings are swept away in one swoop when he finds himself surrounded by a torrent of creditors. His surplus then vanishes, and he becomes insolvent. A wise merchant, therefore, sees that his liabilities are punctually paid. He is then assured of a surplus, more or less large. As with individuals, so with communities; as in pecuniary affairs, so in political matters.

Having, then, taken stock of the principal grievances of the British Indians in South Africa, and shown, as we believe, conclusively, that the unreasoning and unreasonable colour prejudice is generally at the bottom of them, we propose now to examine the other side, and see how far we are ourselves liable for the situation. And unless we take care to know our faults and wipe them out, we may find, one fine day, that what seemed to be a credit balance has been turned into a deficiency.

We are, then, charged with insanitation and niggardly living. In our opinion, neither charge is technically provable. Our countrymen have often been able to produce conclusive evidence that as a class the

[1]A brother of Chhaganlal Gandhi and a close associate of Gandhiji.

British Indians are no worse than the Europeans, as to sanitation. It has also been shown that the Indian does not live on the smell of an oil rag. Boiled clown, the charges amount to untidiness and extreme thrift. But, in matters political, where masses have to be dealt with, technical evidence is of little account. The populace will insist on repeating that our habits are so insanitary as to be a danger to the whole community, and that our mode of life is so low that we live on the smell of an oil rag.

It cannot be denied that we might have done better in either respect. While it is perfectly true that our poverty is responsible for our shanties and over-simple habits, no amount of poverty would be a sufficient excuse for gross untidiness and offensive simplicity observable in many an Indian home. It is certainly within our power to keep our huts scrupulously clean, and insist on living in a decent style even amid humiliating surroundings such as avail in the Eastern Vlei and Western Vlei in Durban, or Locations In the Transvaal.

We have an unique opportunity of learning from our neighbours. Left to themselves, a body of Englishmen would evolve order out of chaos, and would make a garden in a wilderness. Durban owes its elegance to English enterprise and English taste. As a matter of fact, the Indians have been earlier Colonists in Africa. A large Indian population settled in Zanzibar before the Englishman put his foot there. But the Indian settlers, though in many instances they have built substantial structures, have certainly not made it an elegant town. The reason is obvious. We lack the spirit of unity, co-operation, and a full measure of the spirit of sacrifice for the sake of the general good.

We look upon our troubles as a divine chastisement. If we would but learn the lessons that have to be learnt from our adversity, it will not have been lost upon us. We would emerge from the trial a community richer in social virtues, stronger in the justness of our cause, and, to take up the analogy we have used at the outset, with a far larger credit balance in our favour than we started with. We submit this before the thoughtful members of the Indian community all over South Africa.

Indian Opinion, 2-7-1903

83. TRUE IMPERIALISM

Mr. Chamberlain's reply to the Australian Colonies about the employment of Lascars on British ships is significant. Through Australia he has really addressed the Colonies generally, and has laid down the British policy in unmistakable terms, namely, that the coloured British subjects are entitled to be treated the same as the other British subjects. Let us hope that he will have strength enough to follow up the policy regarding the British Indians in South Africa. Be that, however, as it may, he has placed the British Indians under deep obligations to him for his clear enunciation of the British policy on the colour question.

Indian Opinion, 2-7-1903

84. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

25 & 26, COURT CHAMBERS,
CORNER, RISSIK & ANDERSON STREETS,
JOHANNESBURG,
July 4, 1903

DEAR PROFESSOR GOKHALE,

I have been sending you the papers in connection with the Indian situation in South Africa from time to time. Although you are, I know, overwhelmed with other public work, I see no way of avoiding having to trouble you about our grievances. It is felt that there is not enough sustained action taken in India and that unless the hands of the Viceroy, who, I believe, has been making ardent protests against the action of the Colonies, are strengthened by pubic opinion, the situation may be lost. The curious thing is that, even here, Lord Milner seems to be most anxious to do justice, but is almost frightened by what passes for public opinion on this side. As a matter of fact, the people in South Africa are so much engrossed in making money: that they take very little notice of what is going on outside their own sphere. But there are a few interested agitators who continue to send in protests to the Governor against any relaxation of the old anti-Asiatic laws as well in the Transvaal as in the Orange River Colony. It is, therefore, I think, very necessary that to counteract the effect of such agitation, a well-directed movement ought to be taken up and continued throughout India. I hope that you will find time to take the

matter up. You know what Mr. Turner[1] said to me when I was in Calcutta, and I doubt not that, if you wrote to him or could see him, he would be prepared to take action.

I am writing to Mr. Mehta,[2] but I hope you will see him in the matter.

I remain,

yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the original: G.N. 4102

85. THE PROCLAMATION OF 1858

This memorable Proclamation, which has been rightly termed "the Magna Charta of the British Indians", is worthy of the attention and study of the people of South Africa, especially at a time like this, when a sustained agitation has been set up against British Indians throughout this sub-continent. It may not be out of place to refer to the origin of that document. As the world knows, the year 1857 was a year of great anxiety and trouble throughout the British dominions owing to the great Sepoy Revolt in India. At one time the cloud looked so black that even the final result had become a matter of uncertainty. An appeal was made to the worst superstitions of the people of India, religion was greatly brought into play, and all that could possibly be done by the evil-minded was done to unsettle people's minds, and to make them hostile to British rule. It was at that time of stress and trouble that the great mass of the Indian people remained absolutely firm and unshaken in their loyalty. The late Sir John Lawrence has been called the Saviour of the Punjab, as indeed he was the saviour, in a very great measure, of the whole of British India. The reason, however, why he came to deserve that title was because he turned to the very best account the loyalty of the martial races of the Punjab, who had, only a few years before that eventful year, offered stubborn resistance to the British army at the historic field of Chillianwalla.[3] And throughout India did the masses remain faithful, and refuse to make common cause with the mutineers. All this was known to Lord Canning. He, in due course, transmitted to the late

[1] President, Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

[2] Sir (then Mr.) Pherozeshah Mehta

[3] This was during the Second Sikh War, 1848.

Queen-Empress the pathetic incidents that took place when the British Indians, at the peril of their lives, saved hundreds of English men and women. When, therefore, the Mutiny was ultimately stamped out, and when the time came for showing the Royal clemency, Lord Derby, the then Prime Minister, was commanded by the Queen to draft a proclamation. All the incidents connected with the draft have been preserved to us by the late Prince-Consort. We read in his work that the Queen did not like the draft because she considered it to be too tame, and not in keeping with the events that had taken place in India in connection with the Mutiny. She, therefore, commanded Lord Derby to re-draft it, laying stress upon the fact that it was a female Sovereign speaking to the millions of her faithful subjects who had just emerged from a terrible time, and that the Proclamation should be a document of freedom for the people of India, which they could treasure and value. It was then that the Proclamation in its present form was drafted and given to the people. It is superfluousto refer to the numerous occasions on which it has been referred to as the document giving the people of India full privileges and rights of British subjects. Viceroys after Viceroys have repeated the same thing, and Lord Curzon has, more than once, from his place in the Legislative Council at Calcutta, reiterated the promises made therein. Last, but not least, our King-Emperor, in his message to the Viceroy at the Delhi Durbar, said much the same thing.

Is it, then, any wonder that the British Indians, no matter where they go, invoke the aid of that Proclamation in their favour whenever any attempt is made to curtail their liberties or their rights as British subjects? We reproduce below the main portions of the Proclamation. Our readers will notice that in it there is absolutely no qualification whatsoever with reference to the place where the people to whom it was given are to enjoy the fulfilment of the promises given therein. It becomes necessary to mention this fact, as attempts have often been made in South Africa to explain away the document by saying that, as it was given in India, its applicability was confined merely to that place. As against this contention, we might, however, state that, in reply to a representation from Natal which referred to the Proclamation, Lord Ripon, the then Secretary of State for the Colonies, affirmed that: “The Queen’s Indian subjects were entitled to the same rights in the Colonies as all her other subjects”. Time and circumstances have thus combined to sanctify the Proclamation, and no matter what others may say to the contrary, it will ever remain a cherished treasure to the

Indian community, wherever settled, so long as the British Empire lasts.

Portions of the Proclamation referred to above:

> We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects; and those obligations, by the blessings of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil.
>
> And it is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified, by their education, ability, and integrity, duly to discharge.
>
> In their prosperity will be our strength; in their contentment, our security; and in their gratitude, our best reward. And may the God of all power grant to us, and to those in authority under us, strength to carry out these our wishes for the good of our people.

Indian Opinion, 9-7-1903

86. THE LABOUR QUESTION IN THE TRANSVAAL

We have no desire to meddle with this peculiarly difficult problem, which is one for solution by those who are intimately connected with and affected by it; but seeing that, to a very large extent, it would affect the general Indian question and the position of the British Indians in the Transvaal, who have settled there of their own account as free men, and as the Labour Question has often been mixed up with the general Indian Question, we can no longer sit still and merely look on as totally disinterested spectators.

Every report we have read of the meetings of the White Leagues and other Associations has, in dealing with the Labour Question, drifted into a discussion of the existing anti-Asiatic laws, as if they had the remotest connection with the proposal to bring in Asiatics under indenture.

The Cape Parliament has spoken in no uncertain terms. It has unanimously resolved against the introduction of Asiatic labour, and to send its resolution by cable to Mr. Chamberlain. That shows earnestness. The great meeting of the Boers at Heidelberg has come practically to the same conclusion. The Manifesto signed by Mr. J. W. Quinn, as chairman of the committee recently formed in the Transvaal, including prominent merchants of Johannesburg, has also

emphatically proclaimed its opposition to any scheme to bring in Asiatic labour.

So far as the Indians are concerned, we think their opinion also would be on the side of the Gape Parliament, the Heidelberg meeting, and the Association headed by Mr. Quinn, though not perhaps for the same reasons as advanced by them. We have admitted in these columns that British dominance is a proposition which is beyond dispute. South Africa, and the Transvaal pre-eminently, has a climate which is well suited for white settlement and white immigration; the country has, moreover, inexhaustible resources, and England certainly requires an outlet for its paupers; so, looking at the whole question impartially, it is difficul t not to sympathise with the opposition to an assisted immigration of Asiatics, whether it is the Indian, or the Chinaman, or even the Japanese. No matter what restrictions may be placed upon the liberty of the indentured labourers, as Mr. Quinn has stated in his Manifesto, if the people choose to exercise their rights as free men, no law could control their liberty beyond a certain limit. We, therefore, have no hesitation in agreeing with the view that in the long run assisted Asiatic immigration into the Transvaal would be disastrous to a white settlement. People will gradually accommodate themselves to relying upon Asiatic labour, and any white immigration of the special class required in the Transvaal on a large scale will be practically impossible. It would be equallyunfair to the Natives of the soil. It is all very well to say that they would not work, and that, if the Asiatics were introduced, that would be a stimulus to work; but human nature is the same everywhere, and once Asiatic labour is resorted to, there would not be a sustained effort to induce the Natives to work under what would otherwise be, after all, gentle compulsion. There would be then less talk about taxing Natives and so forth. Natives themselves, used as they are to a very simple mode of life, will always be able to command enough wages to meet their wants; and the result will be the putting back of their progress for an indefinite length of time. We have used the words "gentle compulsion" in the best sense of the term; we mean compulsion of the same kind that a parent exercises over children.

What, however, about the Asiatics themselves? The whole of the argument on the European side has been advanced from one point of view, and if it was at all possible to repeat the days of slavery, we have a suspicion that much of the agitation against the importation of Asiatic labour would vanish, and that people would be perhaps ready

to import Asiatic labour if they could be assured absolutely that the labourers would ever be labourers, and that, at the end of their indenture, they would be transported back to their countries. But from an Indian standpoint, and, in fact, from an ethical standpoint, we have no hesitation. in considering such a compact unholy. If the Colony must have Asiatic labour, it must suffer the full consequence of its introduction, and be prepared to grant the labourers the ordinary human liberty. Such a condition is admittedly out of [the] question for the Transvaal. The result, therefore, of the introduction of Asiatic labour would be unfair alike to the Asiatics and demoralising to their masters. We have said before that it is the importation. of Indian labour into Natal which has complicated the Indian Question not only in this Colony, but throughout South Africa; and we still hold the opinion that the true solution of the question lies in stopping assisted Asiatic immigration, and in assisting throughout South Africa white immigration, leaving under reasonable restrictions free immigration of all classes to work itself out. The balance will then be redressed, and there would be hardly any opposition to the Indian trader, or to Indian enterprise in general.

Looking at it, therefore, from every point of view, there is no doubt that so far as the Labour Question is concerned, the European as well as the Indian opinion is in perfect agreement, and we sincerely hope that Asiatic immigration will never be embarked upon in the Transvaal.

Indian Opinion, 9-7-1903

87. THE IMMIGRATION RESTRICTION BILL

We printed in a recent issue the petition from Mr. Abdul Kadir and others, addressed on behalf of the Indian community to the Legislative Assembly. It lays great stress on the advisability of recognising, for the purpose of the educational test, the principal Indian languages which are not only highly cultivated, but have an extensive literature, and are spoken by millions of His Majesty's loyal subjects in India. As the petitioners remark, even after the great Indian languages are recognised, there will remain millions of illiterate Indians who would be totally debarred by the Bill. Seeing that the Government have not hesitated to bring in a replacing Bill after a very short trial of the present Immigration Restriction Act, there can be no

risk in making the small concession asked by the Indian community, for, if it is found that more than a fair number of Indians are able to avail themselves of the new test, such as to “alarm” the Colonists, the matter could be reconsidered, though we have no hesitation in saying that such a course would be absolutely unnecessary, unless it is the intention of the Colonists to prohibit free Indian immigration altogether.

There are other points raised in the petition which, too, are worthy of the attention of the Government. If the policy is to assimilate South African legislation on immigration, the privilege of domicile, as the petitioners request, ought certainly to be extended to all who are domiciled in South Africa, and not in Natal only. The Government might yield something, if only to foster the sentiment of unity under the same flag. If South Africa consisted of foreign States, it would be a different thing; but, as the inland States are now British Colonies, the distinction seems to be invidious. We consider that there ought to be perfect freedom of movement among the British Colonies in South Africa. Such sentiments have often been expressed by Colonial politicians, and it is a very opportune moment for bringing the Natal Bill into harmony with the Cape legislation.

The raising of the period of residence from two to three years under the Bill is undoubtedly a cause for complaint, and the petitioners have done well in protesting against it. We believe that even the arbitrary fixing of two years’ limit to entitle a person to claim former domicile was considered to be unjust, but the raising of it to three years would disqualify hundreds of Indians who have practically made a home in Natal, and have become dependent on it for a living.

We, therefore, hope that the Government will be pleased to consider the reasonable request of the petitioners, and make the concessions which we doubt not will be very much appreciated by the Indian community. We wish to recall in this connection the brilliantspeech made by the Honourable Sir John Robinson, when he was Prime Minister of the Colony, at the time of the introduction of the Franchise Bill. He then said that the House, by disfranchising the Indians, took upon itself a grave responsibility, and that by reason of the disfranchisement it became the duty of every member to represent Indians, and to see that no injustice was done to them, and that the Indian sentiments were respected as far as possible. We will anxiously await the result of the deliberations over the Immigration Bill. Will the

House give effect to the words uttered by Sir John? Let us hope so.

Indian Opinion, 9-7-1903

88. THE PLAGUE

It is a matter for congratulation that Durban is declared free from plague. We had occasion in these columns to refer to the very strict plague embargo that was placed on Indians leaving the Colony for the Transvaal. We understand that the restriction still continues. It is really very difficult to account for it. We have all along considered that it was more a political move than a health precaution, and if the restriction has not been removed in spite of the Colony being declared absolutely free, it becomes purely and simply a piece of highhanded injustice, for which there can be absolutely no justification. We are aware that hundreds of refugees are only waiting to return to their respective callings in the Transvaal. It should be remembered that when the refugees were in receipt of public relief at the time of the war, the whole of the cost of supporting Indian refugees was taken over by the Indian community. Some of these refugees are still in Durban, and, though they are not now being supported by the Indian community in general, they are certainly being housed and fed by their friends. We appeal to the authorities in the Transvaal to see that the tension is relieved by removing the embargo, and giving all facilities to the refugees to return to the Transvaal.

Indian Opinion, 9-7-1903

89. SPECIAL PLEADING

Our contemporary, *The Natal Advertiser*, has indulged in a bit special pleading in justification of the now famous Mayor's Minute[1] on the proposed segregation of Asiatics. It bases the segregation on "salus populi suprema lex". We do not read "Europeani" before "populi". We, therefore, think that since the Indian is, after all, a human being, he is included in the term "populi". If so, what is thesupreme law for the safety of the people in general? Surely, not to degrade a portion of them, and push them into ghettos or pens, as if they were so many sheep or cattle! Our contemporary proceeds: "Experience has proved that the unrestricted intermingling of the two races does not conduce to the highest

[1] *Vide* "Minute by the Mayor", June 4, 1903.

interests of the European population", but it has failed to produce a single fact to prove the statement. The fact is that the Indian has made Natal the Garden Colony in South Africa. He has been officially described as "a sober, useful, and law-abiding citizen". We wonder if such people do harm to the country in which they settle. Our contemporary has used the word "intermingling''. The fact is, there is no intermingling between the two races except in business. And that, we believe, will continue whether the Indians are compulsorily segregated or not, so long as our European friends choose to do business with them, or to avail themselves of their services. But apart from business intermingling, the Indians are at present, without compulsion, as a rule, living only in certain localities. Supreme the English are, and must remain, in the Colony. Nor do we want them to practise altruism in our favour. But we do request them not to use the supremacy in order to do us injustice, to degrade and insult us. "Fair field and no favour" is the just and reasonable demand of the Indian community. Our contem-porary certainly performs a feat when it refuses to see anything in the speeches made at the Indian mass meeting to convince it that "any essential injustice will be wrought by carrying out the Mayor's pro-posals". Well, there is no convincing a man against his will. Otherwise, we might put it to our contemporary whether restraint on the personal liberty of a body of people who have committed no crime is not an injustice—as the term is understood under the British Constitution. Our contemporary deplores that the Indian population is equal to the European. We may remind it that out of the 50,000 Indians nearly one-half are serving their indentures, and are, therefore, not to be reckoned for comparison for the purposes of the argument. The crux, however, is there—cease to import Indian labour, and the problem is solved.

Indian Opinion, 9-7-1903

90. PETITION TO NATAL COUNCIL

DURBAN,
July 11, 1903

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF THE
HONOURABLE THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF NATAL

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED, REPRESENTING THE BRITISH INDIANS RESIDING IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH:

That your Petitioners respectfully approach this Honourable House with reference to the Bill to place closer restrictions on Immigration, now before this Honourable House for consideration.

Your Petitioners venture to submit herewith a copy of the petition addressed, on behalf of the British Indians residing in Natal, by Abdool Caadir and one hundred and forty-six others, to the Honourable the Legislative Assembly of Natal, as follows:[1]

Your Petitioners hope that this Honourable House will be pleased to give favourable consideration to the suggestions contained therein.

And for this act of justice And mercy, your Petitioners, as in duty bound, shall ever pray.

(Signed by): D. M. MATALA,
AND TWENTY-NINE OTHERS

Colonial Office Records: Memorials and Petitions, 1903; C. O. 181, Volume 53, Votes and Proceedings of the Natal Parliament.

[1] Quoted here was the text of the petition of June 23, *vide* "Immigration Bill", June 25, 1903.

91. LETTER TO P. S. TO LT.-GOVERNOR, TRANSVAAL

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION,
25 & 26 COURT CHAMBERS,
P.O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
July 11, 1903

TO

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the 4th instant[1] with reference to the Draft Ordinance published in the *Government Gazette* of the 19th June last.

My Association was waiting, before replying to the letter, for advice as to the Cape Law on the question and my Association is now advised that there is no such interpretation in the similar enactments of the Cape Colony, and my Association understands that the definition complained of in my letter of the 26th ultimo is not to be found in similar enactments in Natal.

My Association understands also that the Bill is to come up before the Council next week and in view of the fact that it has not passed through the final stage, my association respectfully ventures to trust that the relief requested will be granted.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ABDOOL GANI

CHAIRMAN, BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Pretoria Archives: LG. 92/2132 Asiatics. 1902-1906

[1] *Vide "Notes"*, September 21, 1903

92. ORANGE RIVER COLONY

Some time after Mahmud Gazni had conquered portions of India, a poor widow from his Indian dominions, who could not get justice at the hands of his lieutenants, went all the way to Gazni in order to lay her complaint before the King. The reply that Mahmud is said to have returned was that he was unable to do anything for her, as his dominions were so far away from his capital. "Sire," promptly returned the widow, "if you cannot take care of your subjects inIndia, you have no business to rule there". The story is old, and well known, and it has a moral which is of very great significance at the present moment to the British Indians in South Africa, who occupy much the same position as the poor widow of old, and canbring exactly the same complaint before the King-Emperor. The reply, we know, would not be of the same kind that Mahmud returned to the widow; all the same, it has so far been one of hopelessness. Now it seems to be a question whether the Empire at large will not have paid too dearly for owning the Transvaal and the Orange River CoIony if these possessions are to be allowed to tread upon the principles of British policy which have been cherished for hundreds of years. In our opinion, if that policy is to give way to one of caste and colour distinctions and prejudices, the boundless treasures and torrents of blood that have been poured on the South African soil during the war will have been poured in vain. And yet, when we come to look at the situation, such seems to be the opinion at least from an Indian standpoint, and the Indian standpoint, whether for weal or woe, means practically the opinion of millions of the King-Emperor's subjects.

This reflection arises from a perusal of the *Government Gazette* of the Orange River Colony, dated 3rd July. On page 1469 thereof, we read what purports to be regulations for the Natives of Pietersburg, framed by the municipality of that place, and sanctioned by the Honourable the Acting Lieutenant-Governor and the Executive Council. The heading would perhaps show that they do not apply to other coloured persons, but on a perusal of the 21 articles of those regulations, it will be seen that they apply to all coloured persons. Just at present, the interest that the Indians would take in such regulations would be more theoretical than practical, seeing that there is no Indian population worth naming in that Colony; but we hope that at no

distant date the gates of the Colony will be open to a respectable Indian immigration, no matter on howsoever small a scale. Then, these regulations would stare them in the face, and act with the same deadly effect that the regulations of the East London Municipality, to which we have referred in these columns, have been acting against the Indians in East London.

These regulations confine all coloured people within certain Locations. The Municipality has to keep a "list of all coloured inhabitants, such lists to contain the names, means of livelihood, the number of stock they possess, and the names of their masters". They are to take out passes from the Town Clerk, for which a yearly payment of Is. must be made. All coloured persons coming from elsewhere have to register themselves within 48 hours of their arrival. They may not wander about in town after 9 p.m. It would be optional for the Municipality to allow a coloured person to own or not to own stock, and ownership without permission renders such coloured person liable to a penalty of 3s. for every head of large, and 6d. for every head of small stock. The arrival of a guest is to be reported to the Town Clerk immediately. They may not own dogs. No schools, public meetings, etc., are to be held without the permission of the Municipality in the Location.

The list is by no means complete, but this is a fair sample of the powers vested in the Town Councils with reference to the management and control of coloured persons. If we are mistaken in thinking that coloured persons include Indians and others, we shall be very glad to be corrected, though there seems to be absolutely no mistake as to the meaning of the term on the face of the regulations.

Well may Sir Mancherji Bhownaggree and Sir Raymond West, who spoke at the meeting lately held under the auspices of the East India Association, express a feeling of despondency in the face of the regulations referred to in this article, and the suggestions that are being put forth from time to time in order to make the fetters of the British Indians heavier and heavier.

We commend these regulations to the attention of the Right Honourable Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, who came to South Africa as the peacemaker, and who assured every Indian deputation that met him that the British Indians were entitled to fair and honourable treatment. We appeal to him, as the author of the despatch to the Australian Commonwealth on the question of the employment of

Lascars; and we appeal also to Lord George Hamilton, who has, more than once, expressed himself in sympathy with the British Indian settlers in South Africa. We also appeal to Lord Milner, who, as the High Commissioner of South Africa, has, we presume, to look after the policy of the Empire at large and see that there is no break in its continuance so far as South Africa is concerned, to come to the rescue and, as he himself said to the Indian Deputation, settle the difficult question once for all on a reasonable and fair basis.

The regulations in question suggest another thought for the Indian community, namely, that in the British Empire any subject who is not ever on the look out as to his interests is likely to be pressed out amid all sorts of complicated claims. It is, therefore, more than ever necessary for British Indians to remain on the alert, and, at any rate, to send in a respectful protest to the powers that be, whenever an attempt is made to curtail their rights. It is for them to ask; whether it will be granted to them or not is a question about which they need not trouble. The duty will have been done in the asking.

Indian Opinion, 16-7-1903

93. THE LABOUR IMPORTATION ASSOCIATION

We reproduce elsewhere the manifesto of the Labour Importation Association signed by Mr. G. H. Goch, Mr. J. W. Leonard, K. C.., and other leaders of thought in the Transvaal. It follows closely on the heels of Mr. Quinn's manifesto. If we are asked to choose between the two, we should have. no hesitation in casting our vote in favour of Mr. Quinn's document. It is very sad, indeed, to contemplate gentlemen of Mr. Goch's broad sympathies and Mr. Leonard's culture and vast experience of human nature givingtheir signatures to a document which virtually favours a system of modified slavery, and has nothing to say in favour of poor in. dentured labourers.

The document in question is of interest to the Indians because we know that Lord Milner is now in communication with the Colonial and the India Offices, with a view to secure their permission to import Indian labour from India. It is evident that the conditions laid down by the Association on which non-African labour is to be imported would apply to the importation of Indian labour also. Now, if we understand the term "slavery" correctly, it is a state in which a man

sells his services for life beyond recall to a fellowman, and any attempt to shirk the same makes it a crime punishable by imprisonment. If this is a correct view of slavery, then what Mr. Goch and his co-signatories propose is nothing less than slavery for a term; for, according to them, the labourer is to sell his services for a term of five years, that he can only work as an unskilled labourer, that each employer is to be "bound to provide adequate guarantees to the satisfaction of the Government for his repatriation", and that he would be confined to compounds, and that severe penalty should be imposed for any violation of the Indenture Law.

If this is not temporary slavery, we should very much like to know what is? The vital difference between the ordinary contract of service and the proposed indenture is that, whereas in the first case the servant can tree himself from the liability to serve by paying damages, and that in no case does the shirking of it become a criminal offence, in the other case freedom from liability is ordinarily impossible, and any breach of the contract renders the servant criminally liable. The issue, therefore, is absolutely plain. Shall Indian or other labour be exploited for the purpose of developing the resources of the Transvaal without recognising the rights of those whose labour is to be exploited? We do not consider the payment of a wage, no matter how high, to be any satisfactory recompense to the labourer, in spite of himself, from selling his services at their market value, or from recouping himself for any loss he may have sustained by reason of his indenture after it is completed. Such a system was described by the late Sir William Wilson Hunter as "a system perilously near to slavery". We quote below the opinion of the late Right Honourable Harry Escombe, when a similar proposal was made in Natal. He gave the following evidence before the Commission that was appointed in Natal some years ago:

> A man is brought here, in theory with his own consent, in practice very often without his consent. He gives the best five years of his life, he forms new ties, breaks the old ones, perhaps establishes a home here, and he cannot, according to my view of right and wrong, be sent back. Better by far to stop the introduction of Indians altogether than to take what work you can out of them and order them away. The Colonists, or part of the Colonists, seem to want Indians, but also wish to avoid the consequences of Indian immigration The Indian people do no harm as far as I know. In certain respects, they do a great deal of good. I have never heard a reason to justify the extradition of a man who has behaved well for five years. I do not think that the Indian, at the

expiration of his five years' service, should be placed under police supervision unless he is a criminal.

We only hope that the Colonists in the Transvaal will be helped, in spite of themselves, out of the unjust, unchristian, un-British attitude in which, from self-interest which blinds temporarily their sense of justice, they would place themselves.

Indian Opinion, 16-7-1903

94. THE MAYORAL DEPUTATION TO SIR PIETER FAURE

It is a healthy sign that at the Cape, at any rate, Sir Pieter Faure has been able to keep clear of the prevalent prejudice and look at the facts as they are.

Sir Pieter told the deputation of the Mayors of different Municipalities at the Cape, that he did not see any occasion for introducing any fresh legislation in connection with the proposal to segregate Indians. He also dispelled the fear as to the growing Asiatic influx, for he made it quite clear that the Immigration Act has been working very well and that there is not any congestion in the Colony.

This is a matter for our Legislators also to consider well. As we have said before, in Natal, the powers given to the Town Councils are very wide and that if any change in the legislation is necessary, it is in connection with the Licensing Act. We have also pointed out in these columns that in view of the Immigration Act there is no likelihood of any large Asiatic immigration, and that being the case, it seems to us to be totally unnecessary that there should be any compulsory segregation whatsoever. If the Colonists will take the trouble to go into the facts, it will be easily found that the alleged danger to the health of the community from the residence of Asiatics in several townships merely exists in the imagination of people who refuse to face the facts as they are. We recall in this connection the evidence given before the Insanitary Area Commission at Johannesburg by Dr. Johnston, a gentleman who is an expert on sanitary matters and has a very wide experience of the South African climate. Dr. Johnston gave it emphatically as his opinion that he found nothing against the Indian inhabitants in Johannesburg so far as their sanitation was concerned, and that segregation was not a principle he could give his assent to from a sanitary standpoint.

We, therefore, hope that we have heard the last of the Bazaar

proposal throughout South Africa, for even so far as the Transvaal is concerned, we have Lord Milner's promise to the deputation that the existing legislation will be very soon replaced by laws more in harmony with British ideas.[1]

Indian Opinion, 16-7-1903

95. PROPOSED INDIAN BAZAAR AT THE CAPE

We are now enabled to give our readers a copy of the clause in the Private Bill of the Corporation of the City of Cape Town, which it seeks to promote in the Cape Parliament. It asks for powers to enable the Council to establish, maintain and control, either within or beyond the limits of the city, Indian or Asiatic Townships or Bazaars, and to compel the residence therein of Indians or Asiatics *who, by reason of their habits, manner of living, or overcrowding, may, in the opinion of the Medical Officer of Health for the City, be detrimental to public health,* and to charge rents for the use of Stands in such Townships and Bazaars.

The portion in italics is an amendment inserted by the advisers of the Council in order to meet the objections raised to it.

While the proposed amendment shews a willingness to respect the opinion of the Indian community, it hardly meets the wants, and it is too ingenious to deceive anybody, for one would have thought that, if there was anything objectionable in the manner of living or if there was any overcrowding, it would be a matter to be dealt with, not by sending people away from the Town and leaving them to continue such mode of living, but to remove it by careful watch and punishing breach of sanitary regulations whenever such a course may be necessary. Apart from the amendment, it is wonderful how each succeeding proposal for restricting the liberties of British Indians "goes one better" than the preceding one. The famous Bazaar Notice[2] in the Transvaal which set the ball rolling contemplates Townships *within* town limits. The Cape Town Council, however, has improved upon it and means to have powers to establish Townships either within or *beyond* the limits of the city. In view, however, of Sir Pieter Faure's reply to the Mayoral Deputation, we are hoping that we have heard the last of the Bazaar proposal so far as the Cape is concerned. We,

[1] *Vide* "The British Indian Association and Lord Milner", 11-06-1903 supra.
[2] *Vide* enclosure to "British Indians in South Africa", April 12, 1903.

however, deem it advisable to warn our countrymen at the Cape to be very careful and to see that no cause is given for complaint in the way of overcrowding or insanitation. Seeing that every act of the British Indian is being most closely watched, it is his first duty to avoid giving a handle for any opposition.

Indian Opinion, 16-7-1903

96. WELL DONE

We have to congratulate Mr. Moor, the Assistant Colonial Secretary of the Transvaal, on the noble stand he has taken up on behalf of his wards against the unreasonable attitude of the Health Board at Boksburg, as will appear from the report sent by its special correspondent to our contemporary, the *Star*. That there is cause for thankfulness in Mr. Moor having taken up a firm stand, is because our countrymen have been latterly so much used to the want of any help from the authorities; otherwise, Mr. Moor, after all, has done no more than what the old Republican Government would have done under the circumstances. We understand that the present Location in Boksburg is far enough from the Township, but it does not suit the Health Board of Boksburg that the Indians should feel any security as to their lodgings or the goodwill they may have established in the place where they have been located for years past. It must be remembered that the present site was chosen by the old Government in none too generous a spirit. It is merely the force of circumstances that has brought some trade to the Indians residing in the Location. Now the Health Board would remove them to One Tree Hill, about 1_ miles, according to their own shewing, from the town, and where certainly there is not the slightest prospect of trade. It may be a fine situation from a sanitary standpoint, but unfortunately, the inmates of the Location are not in a position just yet to build health resorts where they can go to after the day's work. The attitude, however, of the Health Board need not excite the slightest surprise. The fault, if it is to be allocated anywhere at all, rests absolutely with the Government, which has allowed the people to think that it would be ready to tamper with the liberty of the British Indians, if there was a sufficient clamour for it. Do we not know that the Bazaar Notice has been justified by Lord Milner on the ground that there was a demand for the enforcement of the old legislation? It is a strange irony of fate that at the time of the

Bloemfontein Conference in 1899,[1] it was His Lordship who pressed for justice to British Indians, and now, it is the same gentleman yielding to the popular clamour in enforcing the very legislation against which he so nobly protested during the old regime. It is the Government, then, which has been pouring oil over the fire of prejudice, and if it now promises to burst out in greater vehemence and to spread beyond the limits contemplated by it, is there any cause for wonderment? We only hope that the Government, after having taken up a reasonable attitude with reference to the Baksburg Health Board, would not recede from it.

Indian Opinion, 16-7-1903

97. LETTER TO P. S. TO LT.-GOVERNOR, TRANSVAAL

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION,
25 & 26 COURT CHAMBERS,
P.O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
July 16, 1903

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR
PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the 15th instant in reply to my letter of the 11th instant regarding the Draft Ordinance published in the *Government Gazette* of the 19th June last.

With the greatest deference to His Excellency I venture to say that the only possible interpretation to be placed upon the definition of the term "Native" in the clause in question is the one that is natural to it and it includes "a person manifestly belonging to any of the Native or Coloured Races of Africa, Asia, America or St. Helena".

Unless, therefore, His Excellency means that the definition does not include British Indians in spite of the word "Asia" occurring therein, my Association ventures to submit that British Indians are

[1] Talks between Sir Alfred Milner, British High Commissioner in South Africa, and Paul Kruger, President of the Transvaal.

manifestly bracketed together with the Natives of South Africa, St. Helena and others.

If, therefore, the contention humbly submitted by my Association is correct, I respectfully trust that in view of the fact that the Bill has not passed the third reading, His Excellency will he pleased to so alter the phraseology as to make it less offensive to the British Indians.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ABDOOL GANI

CHAIRMAN, BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Pretoria Archives: LG. 92/2132 Asiatics. 1902-1906

98. ON THE POSITION IN THE TRANSVAAL

JOHANNESBURG,
July 18, 1903

The Legislative Council has passed an Ordinance for the regulation of Municipal elections. The Government in their draft Ordinance reserved the right to all persons, irrespective of race or colour, provided that they have certain property qualifications and can pass an education test confined to a knowledge of either the English or the Dutch language. At the second reading, all the non-official members with the exception of one opposed the Government; thereupon, the Government, in spite of their majority, yielded to the wishes of the Opposition.

The Ordinance now, therefore, restricts the Municipal franchise only to white British subjects.

As soon as the Government signified their intention of yielding to the Opposition, a petition respectfully protesting against it was sent to the Council, but to no effect.

Lord Milner has now given his consent to the Ordinance.

The attitude of the Government shows probably how the British Indians would fare if the non-official members unitedly opposed any attempt to treat them with justice and in accordance with the expectations that were raised at the time of the war.

It may be mentioned that the Indians enjoy the Municipal

franchise both at the Cape and Natal, self-governing Colonies though they are.

The Government have lately introduced a draft Ordinance in the Legislative Council for the suppression of immorality. To the principle of the Ordinance there cannot be the slightest objection, but an important principle is involved in it. There are certain things in the Ordinance in question which are treated as a serious crime if committed by "any Native"; and sub-clause 5 of Clause 19 of the Ordinance defines the expression "Native" as a "person manifestly belonging to any of the Native or coloured Races of Africa, Asia, America or St. Helena".

Now, so far as the British Indians are concerned, they have not the slightest objection to the acts mentioned in the Clause in question being treated as crimes in their case also; the objection is to their being bracketed together with the Natives of Africa, America or St. Helena. The sting lies in the manner of doing it. H.E. the Lieutenant-Governor, who was approached in the matter, has returned the following reply:

> His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor has given the matter his most careful consideration and has endeavoured to try and meet the wishes of the Association. I am, however, to point out that it is not now possible to alter the section complained of and that the wording is taken from clauses of similar enactments in other colonies. His Excellency hopes that you will accept the phrasing in the sense in which it is meant and that it is not intended to bracket British Indian subjects as suggested by you.

The reply is sympathetic, but it does not solve the difficulty. lt is dated the 4th July, when the Ordinance had only been read a first time. It is, therefore, difficult to understand why the alteration in the phraseology could not be made during the Committee stage. Enquiry has since been made, and no such offensive definition occurs either in the Cape or Natal Acts dealing with the same subject; in fact, neither Act applies to British Indians. A short protest[1] has, therefore, also been sent to H.E. the Governor, Lord Milner. The result is not yet known.

The Colonial Secretary has announced this week that the Government intend to spend a large portion of the sum of £8,000 over laying out Locations for British Indians, for a population of about 10,000, of whom nearly 8,000 are absorbed by Pretoria and

[1] The text of this is not available.

Johannesburg. They intend to lay out 54 Locations.

This is a most serious matter and, if Mr. Chamberlain is still considering in what direction the laws are to be altered, it is not easy to know why such a rush is being made in laying out Locations even in places where there are hardly twenty or thirty Indians.

More serious news, however, just comes from Potchefstroom, to the effect that proceedings have already been taken for compelling Indian hawkers to remove to Locations. It was thought that no drastic measures would be taken until after the whole legislation was re-cast; no prosecutions in connection with Locations have ever been taken before, and it will be remembered that, when, in 1899, compulsory removal was imminent, the British Agent intervened and successfully prevented the late Republican Government from carrying out its threat.

India Office: Judicial and Public Records, 402.

99. BRIEF FOR COUNSEL'S OPINION

[JOHANNESBURG,]
July 21, 1903

Some British Indians last year, at an auction sale, bought certain Stands in an estate called the Edendale Estate from Messrs. P. Amm & Sons. Neither the Auctioneer nor the Purchasers seem, at the time, to have known that Law 3 of 1885, as amended in 1886, was then in force and that, under it, British Indians could not own fixed property except in Streets, Wards or Locations set apart by the Government.

The Purchase price together with interest has been paid.

The Solicitors drew up the transfers and, at the time of doing so, they discovered that the transfers could not be registered in the names of the Purchasers.

The questions for Counsel to decide are:-

(1) Whether the Purchasers can compel the Sellers to put up again at auction the property in question and receive the benefit of any enhancement in price that might be offered at the sale.

(2) If not, whether the Purchasers could obtain any damages in connection with the breach committed by the Sellers, if their legal inability to give transfer constitutes a breach.

(3) If no damages can be recovered, whether the Sellers can be made to return the monies received by them together with interest thereon at the usual rate for the use they had of same.

(4) Generally, what would Counsel advise the Purchasers to do under the circumstances.

M. K. GANDHI

Sabarmati Sangrahalaya: S. N. 4068.

100. LETTER TO P. S. TO LT.-GOVERNOR, TRANSVAAL

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION,
P.O. BOX 6522,
RISSIK STREET,
JOHANNESBURG,
July 22, 1903

TO
PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR
PRETORIA

SIR,

With reference to my letter of the 25th ultimo regarding the issue of permits to non-refugee British Indians, my Association has received a letter signed by the Honourable the Assistant Colonial Secretary in which he says:

> I am directed to inform you that it is regretted that the number of permits that are being issued at present cannot be increased.

On further reference to the letter of the 25th ultimo, it will be noticed that my Association has not requested an increase in the number of permits issued, but my Association has ventured to ask for relaxation of the permit regulations in favour of non-refugee British Indians whose presence may be required in the Colony in the interest of the British Indian residents.

I therefore beg to invite His Excellency's attention to the request of my Association and venture to hope that the request contained in my letter referred to before will receive His Excellency's sympathetic consideration.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
ABDOOL GANI
CHAIRMAN, BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Pretoria Archives: LG. 92/2132 Asiatics. 1902-1906

101. LEGISLATION IN ANTICIPATION

BRITISH INDIANS IN EAST LONDON

In the year 1895, there was a very small Indian population in East London. The Municipality of that port, therefore, thought that it had a good opportunity of legislating against Indians. So it approached the Cape Legislature for the necessary powers, not for legislation against Indians only. The Asiatics—for that is the term used—find mention only in two or three places in an Act which covers over ten closely printed pages. The Act gives the usual powers for making bye-laws, and by a section which deals with regulation of traffic, sewerage, etc., the liberties of His Majesty's Indian subjects have been lightly given away. For, in sub-section 24 of Section 5 of the Act, we read that the Municipality shall have the power to frame bye-laws "for allotting and setting apart, and from time to time changing portions of the Municipality as locations for the residence of natives and Asiatics, and for abolishing such locations". Again, sub-section 25 of the same Section gives similar powers "for regulating the conditions upon which the natives and Asiatics may reside in such locations, and the fees, rents, and hut tax to be paid by them in respect of such residence, etc". The Act also gives powers to frame bye-laws "for fixing such parts of streets or open spaces, or pavements of the same on which natives or Asiatics may not walk or be". The Act does not apply to such Natives or Asiatics as are owners or occupiers of landed property in the borough of the rateable value of £75, and who take out certificates to that effect from the Town Clerk, and to exempt Natives.

It should be remembered that, in the other parts of the Cape Colony, the British Indians are far better off than anywhere else in British South Africa. The Act in question goes much further than the legislation of the Boer Government. How it received the Royal sanction is a mystery to us. But it shows how easily important interests could be given away if there is no watch kept over them. For, we make bold to say that, if the un-British measure had been promptly brought to the notice of the higher authorities, the injustice would never have been perpetrated. The Act, as our readers will have noticed, puts the Indian lower than the Native of south Mica, for there is no exemption

for the Indians, and thus ignores, as the President of the local Indian Association rightly says, “the past of the Indian nation, which, as Lord Miner said the other day, “has an ancient civilization” and is “better born”, as Mr. Chamberlain said to the Colonial Premiers in 1897. We are aware that the Municipality has been gracious enough not to exercise all its powers. But the thin edge has commenced. The Indian may not Walk on the foot-path. Two well-dressed Indians have been already fined for walking on the foot-path of East London. And evidently there is nothing to prevent the Municipality from passing further bye-laws regarding the other powers referred to herein.

Is this a result of Mr. Chamberlain’s mission? The Right Honourable Gentleman said, the Indians were “entitled to fair and honourable treatment”. He advised the Colonists to look beyond the parochial horizon and to realize their membership of the Empire. We ask the Colonists in East London if they can reconcile their welcome of Mr. Chamberlain and endorsement of his policy with the existence of the law that disfigures the statute-book, and wantonly insult a whole race whose only fault is that its members are thrifty, sober, and industrious.

Indian Opinion, 23-7-1903

102. THE LONDON MEETING I

We have reproduced a report of the great meeting lately held under the auspices of the East India Association.

The proceedings of the meeting, which was attended by many prominent Anglo-Indians and the well-known leaders of Indian society, show that there is decidedly a silver lining to the cloud that overhangs the Indian community in South Africa.

To offer thanks to Sir, William Wedderburn, who has practically given his life for the cause of the British Indians, is to limit the greatness of the noble Boer. He has been now for years working for the cause of the Indians, whether in India or outside it, with untiring zeal, and has given not only his time, but also his purse, to their cause. Nothing, therefore, that we may say in the shape of words of gratitude, can affect in any way the debt which every Indian owes to Sir William.

Anyone, who has at all studied Indian history and English statesmen whom India has produced, cannot fail to be struck by the unanimity which pervaded the proceedings. Although Sir Lepel

Griffinand Sir William Wedderburn have often stood on opposite sides of other platforms, in this instance, they had no hesitation in standing side by side; in fact, each speaker vied with the other in showing his disapprobation in strong terms of the attitude of the Colonists towards British Indians.

It has often been said that people on the spot, being unable to take a correct focus, are often unfit to pass an unbiased judgment, especially when it is their own conduct which is the subject for decision. We, therefore, put it to the Colonists whether it does not strike them that there must be something radically wrong with their attitude when, outside South Africa, it meets with almost unanimous condemnation.

Sir Raymond West, a great jurist, who at one time adorned the High Court Bench at Bombay, and never given to exaggeration, gave vent to his feelings at the meeting in the following terms:

> He expressed the strong sympathy he had with the objects of the meeting. They must look it boldly in the face, and determine whether our Indian fellow-subjects were to be regarded as members of this Empire or not.
>
> He appealed to the members of the Indian community to imbibe and make themselves thoroughly absorbed in that great Imperial spirit and that bond of union with all subjects of His Majesty.
>
> Dealing with the treatment of our fellow-subjects by the South African Colonists, he wondered what would have been said if, after receiving aid from Tasmania and South Australia, the Colonists had responded by passing a Bill that no Tasmanian was to walk on the side-path of the street, or they had passed an Act to the effect that no one from New South Wales was to be admitted in the Colony without paying a poll-tax, and, when so admitted, were not to be allowed municipal privileges or rights of citizenship. What would be the feeling throughout the Empire with regard to conduct of that kind? What could be nobler than the conduct of those poor men who rushed into the midst of the contending armies and carried off the wounded? That was conduct which ought to go home to the hearts of all members of the Empire, and more especially to those Colonists who had won so much by the devotion of Indian fellow-subjects. He thought if the appeal were to be properly made, the Colonists could not for very shame continue to maintain the attitude they at present held. It was a survival of a feeling which had been fostered and nurtured by trade jealousy and race prejudices, and it was their business as members of an Empire to get over those race prejudices and trade jealousies, and in a matter of this kind to regard all members of the Empire as on an equality.

He felt it his duty to express himself strongly, because the welfare of the Empire, built up with such care, add at the cost of so much money and blood, depended very much on the way this question must be treated.

Our readers would find an echo of such sentiments in the other speeches delivered on the occasion: Sir Lepel did not hesitate to bring in the treatment of the ews in the Russian Empire as an analogy, though we have no desire here to put the two situations on the same level. Sir Mancherji did not mince matters at all, but spoke out strongly against the Colonial injustice. Used to the free atmosphere of the great Metropolis, and knowing the question intimately from a deep study of it, we do not wonder that he felt appalled by the magnitude of the legal disabilities of the British Indians in South Africa. Mr. Thorburn gave utterance to words which we hope will be pondered over by our countrymen in India. The suggestions made by him are valuable, and, if carried out, cannot but do good. We trust that the Colonists, busy as they are throughout South Africa, will find time to read the report of the meetings, and study it carefully.

Indian Opinion, 23-7-1903

103. EAST RAND VIGILANTS

Whatever may be said of the methods of this Association, there is no doubt that the members of it have fully justified their choice of the title they have assumed for their society; for, since its formation, the Association, has been undoubtedly very "vigilant", if only with reference to the Indian question, of which it has made a speciality. It is now engaged in a duel with Mr. Moor in connection with the proposed removal of the Indian Location in Boksburg. The persistence with which the gentlemen of the Association return to the charge is simply admirable. It is a pity such energy, which is worthy of a better and nobler cause, is being devoted to depriving innocent men of their liberty and, possibly, their means of livelihood. We copy, in another column, from the *Transvaal Leader,* the admirable report of the proceedings of the meeting of the East Rand Vigilance Association, which lately took place at Boksburg. We fail to see how, as they complain, the Health Board has been snubbed by the Colonial Secretary in not acceding to its wish to remove the Indians to One Tree Hill ; for, it must be remembered, that the reference in the Bazaar

Notice to the consultation with the Health Boards is more a matter of courtesy than of obligation on the part of the Government, and for them to listen to every advice that Health Boards or Town Councils may choose to give on the selection of sites for Locations, would be clearly a departure from the strict letter of the Law 3 of 1885, on which the Notice in question is based. It does not give or contemplate any powers whatsoever to Local Boards. The Government and the Government alone are responsible for laying out Locations, and we question very much whether even the Government, reading the law strictly in favour of those to whom it is to be applied, have the power to remove Locations after they are once fixed. If the Association is very anxious about the health of the town, and if it is not actuated by trade jealousy or other prejudices, then all we can say is that they should follow the excellent lead given by the Health Board at Krugersdorp, and set about working in right earnest towards removing any sanitary defects or departure from strict principles of hygiene in the Location, rather than coop all the Indians in a place far away from town, to control which it must be very difficult. We are loath to believe that it is the wish of the members of the Association to leave the inmates of the Location severely alone after they have been removed far away. They cannot surely be labouring under the delusion that, byremoving the Indians some miles from the town, and neglecting their sanitary condition, the town would be free from any danger to health, always assuming that the presence of Indians is really a danger to the health of the locality they may inhabit. We have the authority of Dr. Veale of Pretoria, and other medical gentlemen for saying that given ordinary control, class considered, Indians live better and in better habitations than others.[1] Looking at it, therefore, from every point of view, the position the gentlemen of Boksburg have taken up is utterly untenable. We notice in the same report that the Association has decided that if they must have any Asiatics at all, it must be the Chinese, and we sincerely congratulate the Association on its decision, and join it in the hope that indentured Indian labour will never be countenanced for the Transvaal. Knowing as we do the popular prejudice, we have absolutely no desire to see indentured Indians brought to the Transvaal in thousands. The problem is complicated enough without their presence, and, as we have said before, we trust that even if the Colony as a whole favours the introduction of Indian

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Lord Ripon", Before 5-5 1895

labour, the Government of India will step in and decline to favour the proposal.

Indian Opinion, 23-7-1903

104. PRECAUTION OR PERSECUTION?

Although the Colony is free from plague, the Transvaal Government continue the embargo on the Indian refugees who may wish to return to their several places there. This really seems to us to be incomprehensible. The restriction is so palpably uncalled for, that it is hard to believe that it is imposed merely as a precaution, and in the interests of public health. And why should the British Indians alone be singled out for prohibition? We understand that the British Indians in the Transvaal have approached the Government saying that rather than be debarred altogether from entering the Transvaal, the refugees and others who may wish to go to the country will be prepared to undergo quarantine at Volksrust. To us, the acceptance of quarantine when there is not the slightest occasion for it, seems to be a preposterous thing; but to think that even such a request has not been granted savours more of persecution than precaution. We are very much inclined to believe that the restriction is more in the nature of a concession to popular prejudice, and an excuse for shutting out British Indians, than for the sake of safeguarding the interests of the community in general. Mr. Chamberlain was pleased to say that the anti-Asiatic laws in the Transvaal were enforced more leniently than they ever were before. We make him a present of the undisputed fact that the Transvaal was absolutely open to the free immigration of British Indians during the old regime, and, if they had chosen to migrate to that Colony in hundreds of thousands, they could havedone so without any difficulty whatsoever. Now, under their own Government, British Indians find the gates of the Colony practically closed in their faces. It is true that refugees are allowed to enter the Transvaal from Cape Town and Delagoa Bay in dribblets, but even they have to wait months before they can receive authority to proceed to their respective businesses. It is interesting to know that the British Indians in Natal, if they chose, could go to the Cape or Delagoa Bay, and then, when their turn came to receive permits, they would be accepted in spite of the plague restrictions in this Colony. It shows how absurd the regulations are. The reason has often been given that

there have been more cases of plague among Indians than among other races. The chairman of the recently held British Indian meeting in Durban conclusively disposed of the fallacy of the argument that was drawn from the figures. He showed that most of Indian cases were among the indentured labourers who are naturally very poor, and for whose health their employers are responsible. Under such circumstances, it is small wonder that there have been more cases among them. It has been found that the better class Indians have been just as free from the infection as the other classes have been. Moreover, it is a fact that the plague has not travelled beyond Maritzburg. Why should, then, there be any difficulty in the way of British Indians residing up country? And why, indeed, should there be any fear of the plague visiting the Transvaal, when evidently the bacillus does not find suitable soil in a dry climate and in high altitudes? We hope that the Transvaal Government will see its way to recede from the totally indefensible position which it has taken up on this matter.

Indian Opinion, 23-7-1903

105. LORD MILNER ON THE COLOUR QUESTION AGAIN

His Excellency was the recipient of an address last week from the Cape coloured people, and although His Lordship's remarks, which we reproduce elsewhere, were addressed to them, we think they have a bearing on the position as affecting British Indians also. There can be no doubt about Lord Milner's broad views and sympathy with the position of the coloured people of the Transvaal. But from His Lordship's remarks it is evident that he will not veto the Municipalities Election Ordinance which disfranchises British Indians and others. That part of his address which deals with the ordinary rights of British citizens is, however, most open to objection. These are his words:

> In the meantime, in the absence of votes and of any immediate prospect of getting them, there is a great deal which the coloured people have reason to be thankful for under the British flag. They are freemen, they are protected in the exercise of their industry and in the enjoyment of their property. The law knows no difference in these respects between them and any other section of the community. Excepting this Municipal Franchise, I do not know what is withheld from them.

Now, if these remarks are meant to apply to the British Indians also, then, of course, they are misleading, because they do not enjoy

the same property rights and other civic rights granted to the rest of the community, and we do think that to call such ordinary rights of citizenship by the name of privileges to be highly valued as if they were special concessions, is, with due respect to His Lordship, a little too much. However, we are more concerned with the great sympathy he has shown. and the advice which he gave to his audience. It is one which British Indians also may take very much to heart. We quote His Lordship's concluding words:

> I would say to them that there is a great future before them, and a future which lies very largely in their own hands. They are settlers in a country of great resources, in the prosperity of which they are entitled to share. It is to their interest and their duty to take every advantage of the privileges already offered them without fretting over, though without ceasing to aspire to, any privileges which may still be withheld. That, after all, is not a bad position for a man who has got any grit in him to develop. One thing is absolutely certain, and that is, that it is only by making the fullest use of the advantages they already possess, that they will overcome the prejudices and win the respect of the majority, as they already, in their efforts to raise themselves, possess the deepest sympathies of the best of their European fellow-citizens.

Indian Opinion, 23-7-1903

106. THE TRANSVAAL BAZAARS

It is quite plain, from the reply reproduced in another column, given by the Colonial Secretary of the Transvaal to Sir George Farrar, when he questioned the item of £10,000 in the Transvaal Estimates put down for Asiatic Affairs, that the Government intends, in thorough earnestness, to relegate the British Indians to Locations. We entirely agree with Sir Percy Fitzpatrick and Sir George Farrar when they imply that the £10,000 voted is a waste of public money. It can do no good to those for whom the money is to be spent. But there seems to be no help for it unless the Imperial Government would do its duty. From the figures presented by the Honourable the Colonial Secretary, they are going to establish Locations at 54 different places for about 10,000 British Indians. Apart from the question of the harshness, the idea seems to us to be simply monstrous. We are reminded of an incident in India, where there is perhaps more "red tape" than anywhere else, when over an anna stamp reams of foolscap were simply wasted because an official who thought he had detected an

unwarranted use of the stamp, carried on a lengthy correspondence for months. The situation about the Transvaal Bazaars is very much like what was produced by the official in India. The Colonial Secretary is good enough to admit that in many places there are very few Indians, and yet, the public money is to be wasted in laying out Locations in 54 different places. This, again, in spite of the fact that Mr. Chamberlain has promised to consider the whole situation, and the Colonial Secretary himself has admitted that the present legislation is to give place to something quite new. If, therefore, the Bazaars are to be established, what is the meaning of Mr. Chamberlain's declaration, and the Colonial Secretary's admission? We trust that some member of the Legislative Council of the Transvaal, or of the Imperial Parliament, will have the point cleared for the benefit of all concerned.

Indian Opinion, 23-7-1903

107. TELEGRAM TO P. S. TO LT.-GOVERNOR, TRANSVAAL

July 23, 1903

TO

PRIVATE SECRETARY

HIS EXCELLENCY LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

ASSOCIATION RESPECTFULLY REQUESTS REPLY REPRESENTATION DATED 11TH INSTANT PLAGUE RESTRICTIONS[1].

BIAS

Pretoria Archives: LG. 92/2132 Asiatics. 1902-1906

[1] *Vide* "From Slave to College President", 10-9-1903

108. LETTER TO P. S. TO LT.-GOVERNOR, TRANSVAAL

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION,
P.O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
July 24, 1903

TO
PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR
OF THE TRANSVAAL
JOHANNESBURG

SIR,

My Association ventures to bring to the notice of His Excellency a very serious grievance under which the British Indian community has been labouring since February last.

On the outbreak of plague in Natal, all Indian permits were cancelled and the entry of British Indians, although refugees from the Transvaal, was absolutely prohibited.

The prohibition lasts to the present day.

The matter was brought to the notice of His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor and several representations have been made[1], but His Excellency has, so far, declined to grant any relief.

My Association even went so far as to agree that any British Indians coming from Natal should undergo quarantine at Volksrust.

My Association feels that the community is being very unjustly treated in the matter. Europeans and Kaffirs are being allowed to enter the Colony from Natal, so far as my Association is aware, without any restrictions, although the plague has attacked all communities.

At present, Durban is practically free from plague, and in any case, there has been no plague at any time beyond Maritzburg.

There are in Natal hundreds of British Indian refugees awaiting permission to return, and these are dependent, in the meanwhile, for maintenance, on their friends. It is, therefore, a double hardship. Not

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Chamberlain", 31-12-1898

only are the men themselves suffering greatly pecuniarily owing to being prevented from returning and resuming their vocations, but they are also a charge on their friends in Natal.

My Association ventures to draw His Excellency's attention to the fact that British Indian refugees, even when the War was going on, never availed themselves of the Mansion House Relief Fund[1] that was sent to various local committees for distribution among refugees. Relaxation has lately been made by His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor in favour of those British Indians who, after having entered the Colony after the War, had to come to Natal on business and have been prevented from returning owing to the outbreak of plague.

My Association, therefore, humbly approaches His Excellency for relief under such conditions as may be considered necessary as to quarantine.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ABDOOL GANI

CHAIRMAN, BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Pretoria Archives: LG. 90/2132 Asiatics. 1902-1906

109. NOTES[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,
July 25, 1903]

ON THE POSITION OF BRITISH INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL

The enclosed newspaper cuttings[3] in connection with the resolution passed by the Legislative Council this week will show that the Government of the Transvaal seem to be determined upon enforcing fully Notice 356 of this year with reference to the removal of British Indians to the Bazaars. In accordance with the resolution, at 19 different places in the Transvaal, Locations have been already established. It is very much feared that the Government do not intend

[1] This fund of £5,50,000 was created to provide relief during the Indian famine of 1897.

[2] This was also published in *India*, 4-9-1903.

[3] These are not available.

to make any satisfactory change in the existing legislation, otherwise, they would not have gone to the expense of laying out Locations in different places in the Transvaal. Nothing is yet known in reply to the representation sent to Lord Milner, and therefore, the position of those Indian traders who were granted licenses to trade after the war is very uncertain. Mr. Chamberlain was pleased to say that the Law is being enforced as leniently as possible, but the facts all go to show the contrary. The least that would be expected of the Government is that they should give whatever little benefit the Indians may be able to receive from Law 3 of 1885. It gives them the right, at any rate, to hold fixed property in Locations and, yet, the Government propose to grant only 21 years' leases, and then, the leases are hedged in with so many restrictions that they do not possess any marketable value. At Potchefstroom, proceedings have already been commenced against Indians who are residing in town. The case has been postponed up to the 4th of August next, but it is difficult to understand why such a rush is being made to enforce the Locations Law. Even under the late Orange Free State Law, people were given one year's notice to comply with it. In the Transvaal, the Location Law as to residents has remained a dead letter since its promulgation, that is to say, for 12 years. The intention to enforce it was given out under our own Government in April last, and, before three months have hardly elapsed, proceedings have been commenced under it, in spite of the fact that, as soon as the Bazaar Notice was published, a declaration was also made that it was only temporary and that new legislation would be soon introduced. The attitude of the Government, as evidenced by the proceedings in Potchefstroom and the resolution taken by the Legislative Council, has naturally created alarm among British Indians and unsettled their minds. It was thought that the immediate effect of the Bazaar Notice would not go beyond restricting the issue of new tra-ding licenses, against which alone is the whole of the agitation directed. The plea of insanitation and other charges are brought forward merely to strengthen the main policy of rooting out the traders. It is to be hoped that the uncertainty would be removed as soon as possible.

The Lieutenant-Governor has replied to the last communication with reference to the plague restrictions in Natal, saying that His Excellency is unable to remove the embargo on Indian arrivals, although they may consent to undergo quarantine at their own expense. This is becoming more and more serious as time goes by.

The refugees awaiting their return in Natal complain most bitterly, and they are being reduced practically to destitution. The times in South Africa at present are very bad, and it taxes the resources of the friends of refugees very considerably for them to support the latter, and the embargo seems to be utterly meaningless. Indians are allowed to enter Natal from the Transvaal and return. If, therefore, there was anything special in the Indians so that they would bring the plague far more quickly into the country than other races, those who are allowed to go to Natal and return are just as liable to bring it as those who are now staying there and awaiting permission to return.

Another matter also, which is becoming more serious, is the fact that non-refugee British Indians are not allowed to enter the Transvaal under any conditions, on the plea that they cannot be allowed until all the Indian refugees have entered the Colony. This rule does not apply to the Europeans at all. The prohibition tells upon the residents because they are unable to get Storemen, Salesmen and Domestic Servants from either the Cape, Delagoa Bay or Natal, which materially hampers their businesses, and it affects those who, knowing that there was no restrictive legislation in the Transvaal, left India under the belief that they would be entitled to enter the Transvaal. We had hoped that we would be able to secure relief from the Local Government, but as no response whatsoever has been made to the efforts, it has become necessary to trouble the friends in England about the plague restrictions and the prohibition against non-refugee Indians.

Cuttings containing Mr. Chamberlain's reply to the demand by Lord Milner for Indian labour are also attached hereto.[1]

The community has, with gratefulness, noticed the efforts of the Indian Government to ameliorate its condition, and it is hoped that theposition will be kept up until relief is granted by the Government of this Colony.

India Office: Judicial and Public Records, 402.

[1] These are not given here. *Vide Indian Opinion,* 30-7-1903.

110. THE CINDERELLA OF THE EMPIRE

Mr. Brodrick has announced that India will be asked to bear a portion of the expenses of keeping a garrison in South Africa on the ground that the soldiers stationed in South Africa might, in the event of a Russian invasion, be required for the defence of the Indian frontier. So, on the off-chance of such an invasion, if the Indian Government is complaisant enough, India, poor as she is, will have to bear part of the cost of keeping a South African garrison.

We notice from the cable reports that most of the great dailies in London have protested against any such idea, and have called the suggestion "shameful"; but this is a matter of high politics in which we may not dabble. We only mention the fact as it has a very great bearing on the position of the British Indians in South Africa. What is to be the policy of the Colonists on this question in this sub-continent which one day is to be a great federated South Africa? So far as the burden of the Empire is concerned, at every step, India is called upon very naturally to give at least her own share, and that in no ungrudging spirit. Is India to take her full share of the burden only, and never receive or participate in the glory of the privileges of the Empire?

We read that, from the earliest struggles, she has been, shall we say, heroically performing her duty. We are told by Lord Macaulay that at the siege of Arcot, the Indian soldiers voluntarily denied themselves a portion of their own rations and gave up their rice to their English comrades, contenting themselves with merely the water in which the rice was boiled. This was not done for sentiment only, but the privations that the besieged had to suffer were so great, that the Indian soldiers considered it their duty to forgo their own portion. During the wars in Afghanistan, do we not read, in the graphic description left of them by the late Sir John Kaye, that thousands of Indians were embedded in the snow passes uncomplainingly? Who has been fighting Britain's battles in Somaliland, compared to which, the late Burghers who have returned from Somaliland assure us, the Boer war was a mere pastime? Such are the terrible difficulties of transport and supply of water in that place! During the late Chinese expedition, we are told again, that the Indian soldiers fought just as bravely as their other comrades, and commanded the admiration, by their

bearing, of all the composite troops. Coming nearer, we find further that it was Sir George White's 10,000 seasoned troops which arrived in the nick of time that materially saved the situation in South Africa. But we might be told, though not, we venture to think, with good grace, that the bulk of the men who came from India were, after all, Englishsoldiers. If so, we quote the following portion from *The Standard,* copied by *India:*

> Ladysmith, we should remember, was defended mainly by regiments which had been embarked in India. It was an Indian General, commanding native troops from India, who relieved the Legations at Pekin; and it was from native regiments that our Chinese contingent of occupation was supplied. Since the beginning of the war in South Africa, more than 13,000 British officers and men had been sent to that country from India, and they were accompanied by over 9,000 natives, principally followers and attendants. To China there were forwarded from India 1,300 British officers and men, some 20,000 native troops and 17,500 native followers. Such is the scale on which India, at the shortest notice and without dislocating her establishments, can contribute towards the military capabilities of the Empire beyond her borders.

So we know that there were at least 9,000 British Indians also, who served during the late war, and it is unnecessary for us to recall the testimony given at the time of the perils and difficulties which these followers cheerfully went through, though they bore no arms.

We are unwilling to prolong the list of these services, nor do we intend to lay any undue stress upon them. Moreover, we are not blind to the fact that the English share of the burden is far greater, far severer, far ampler in quantity than any that India has borne, but we do say that, if comparison were to be set up between the privileges also enjoyed by both, we do think that India would not come out unfavourably in the competition. We may state, parenthetically, that we do not import into consideration the fact often flung in the faces of the Indian races, namely, that, after all is said and done, they are conquered, and therefore, not entitled to the same rights as real Britishers. We dismiss this from our consideration for two very sound reasons, the one given by Professor Seely in his *Expansion of Great Britain,* namely, that in the real sense of the term India is not a conquered country, but that it is British because the vast majority of its people have, perhaps for selfish reasons, accepted British rule the second reason is, that British statesmen have times without number disavowed any connection whatsoever with the idea of inequality

necessarily existing between the conquerors and the conquered, other things being equal, and they have done this more especially with regard to the British Indians.

We have, therefore, now cleared the ground for asking the Colonists a simple question: where does India come in so far as their Imperialism is concerned, if British Indians may not have simple rights of citizenship in British territory, as the Colonists here and perhaps elsewhere would have it? Is it an equable bargain that, while India is expected to bear the burden of the Empire, she may not get the benefits of that Empire? No doubt all of us, if we had our own way, would perhaps elbow out everybody else and keep everything to ourselves; but, so long as people in South Africa are content to remain members of the British Empire, does it behove them to take up an attitude practically of defiance, and say, "we will have everything we want, without giving any consideration whatever?" The glory that England derives from possessing British India is appropriated as a common heritage of all British people, and consequently, of those who have made their home here. Are they then satisfied to appropriate that glory, and constantly offend millions of British Indians who contribute to it?

These are, in our opinion, very serious reflections worthy of the attentive study on the part of the Colonists.

We are likely to be told that all these things look very well on paper, and in theory, but that in practical daily life, if carried out, they would bring nothing but disaster. To such, our reply in anticipation is, that we do not hold them to be at all theoretical or merely a paper policy to be looked at. It is these very principles which have made Great Britain what she is, and it is these very principles which guide her policy, maybe with temporary aberration, from day to day; and if Greater Britain is to continue its traditions, then, we think it is time that she pondered and waited before going down, what is to our mind, an. awful incline.

We are addressing these thoughts to the Colonists in the hope that they will receive them in the spirit in which they are given.

Indian Opinion, 30-7-1903

111. THE LONDON MEETING: II

SIR W. WEDDERBURN'S ADDRESS

We have already dealt with the meeting of the East India Association addressed by Sir William Wedderburn on the position of the British Indians in the Transvaal.[1] Now we propose dealing more particularly with the view placed before his distinguished audience by Sir William.

The speaker divided his address into three parts.

The first part dealt with the position taken up by the Transvaal Government as defined in Notice 356 of this year, known as the Bazaar Notice, and Sir William had no hesitation in coming to the conclusion that the Bazaar Notice lowered the status of the British Indian far more than what it was before the war; and he rightly contended that, as not the "smallest misconduct" has been proved on the part of the Indians, and as "it is universally admitted that throughout the recent troubles, the Indians have shown themselves loyal and useful citizens, rendering the most valuable services to the sick and wounded during the war", Lord Milner ought, at least, "to have maintained the *status quo* pending the decision by the Imperial authorities upon what is clearly an Imperial question".

Now, on this phase of the question, with all due respect to Mr. Chamberlain's announcement that the anti-Asiatic laws are being enforced more leniently than ever before, as we have shown in a previous issue, we think conclusively, by quoting facts, that the position today is far worse than before the war: licences are sparingly given, the Indians are unable to hold landed property, no new licences are granted to trade outside Locations, and permit regulations press most severely upon the Indian community, and serve the purpose of a drastic immigration restriction law. These, and other points too numerous to mention here, we have touched on already in a special article.[2]

The second portion of the address lays down the principles upon which, in the opinion of the speaker, the decision should be based by the Imperial Government; and here again, we think very

[1] *Vide* "The London Meeting: I", 23-7-1903.

[2] *Vide* "The British Indian in South Africa: Transvaal", 11-6-1903.

rightly, Sir William brushes aside the argument of public feeling unless it were founded on reason and justice, and quotes chapter and verse to show that, from Mr. Chamberlain downward, every official connected with the question took up, prior to the war, the attitude of sympathy for the British Indians, and declined to be guided by public feeling based on trade jealousy and race prejudice. Sir William takes an Imperial view of the question, and says:

> This question, affecting the rights of British citizens all over the world, is essentially an Imperial one, to be decided by the central authority, in accordance with the established principles of the Empire. Those principles have been well stated in a letter recently Addressed to the Colonial Office by the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, protesting against the legislative exclusion of British Indians from the South African 'Colonies: 'This exclusion,' it says, 'appears to the Chamber to be unjust to the natives of India, who are considered to be entitled to the same rights as other subjects of the King, of free movement and residence in any part of the Empire, entirely unrestricted by any legislation such as that complained of. It is regarded as impolitic also, and as prejudicial to the interests of the Colonies themselves. The Chamber entertains, not without reason, a high opinion of the qualifications of His Majesty's Indian-born subjects for their good citizenship, their intelligence, their industry, their peaceful disposition and their commercial aptitudes.'

The third, and the most important, as also the most practical, part of the address deals with the suggestion he has made, and therein, in view of the fact that there is conflict of opinion in South Africa, and conflicting opinions are involved, Sir William advocates a full and formal inquiry as to the necessity for any anti-Indian legislation, to he made by an Imperial authority under the direction of the Colonial Office. He adds two conditions, namely, that

> as the measures proposed to be taken against the Indians are of a restrictive character, the burden of proof should lie entirely upon those who desire to impose disabilities upon the Indians, and that the Pretoria notification should be withdrawn so as to place the parties on a fair and equal footing.

Such inquiry has again been asked for by the British Indians in several memorials, and Sir William will have deserved very great thanks if his efforts in that direction are crowned with success. Nothing can be fairer than such a procedure to either party. We have always courted full publicity as to the demerits as well as the demerits of the Indians, and we would welcome such inquiry most heartily. It is a very effective method of satisfying public feeling. Those who are

born and bred under the British Constitution naturally love order and justice. At present, there exists a great deal of misunderstanding as well as un-informed opinion, and a large number of the Colonists consider that the presence of the British Indians is an unmixed evil to be guarded against at an risks; but, if the findings of any impartial commission go to show, as we have not the slightest doubt they would, that such opinion is not based on any sound data, and that, if anything, the presence of the Indians has contributed, be it ever so little, to the welfare of the community in general, we think the public would accept any such pronouncement, and much of the ill-feeling and prejudice will die a natural death.

It is to be hoped, therefore, that in the interests of all parties concerned, the very reasonable proposal made by Sir William Wedderburn, and which was accepted by the meeting addressed by him, will find favour with the Colonial and India Offices, and that the otherwise interminable question will be solved once and for all, by the appointment of an impartial commission.

Indian Opinion, 30-7-1903

112. ON TRIAL

Our countrymen in the Transvaal are at present undergoing trouble and worry which we think are enough to tax the patience of any body of men, but it will be exactly these troubles and worries which would show whether they are able to come out of them with credit to themselves, and whether they possess the virtues of patience and fortitude which have often been claimed by us for British Indians. The Transvaal Government, quite lightheartedly, propose to give away even those rights of the British Indians which they ought to have in terms of the laws passed by Mr. Kruger's Government. The Colonial Secretary, at the sitting of the Legislative Council on the 22nd instant, moved that a certain resolution passed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Executive Council be confirmed, and the Council, after a declaration from some of the members that the resolution was giving too much to the Indians, passed it with some amendment. Unless we have some positive proof to the contrary, we must reluctantly come to the conclusion that, either the present Law is not to be repealed at all, or that the replacing Law will be no better than the existing Law, and it is highly probable that it would be much worse. The resolution in question reaffirms the principle of Notice 356 of this year—

commonly known as the Bazaar Notice—and purports to give leases for periods not exceeding 21 years at a fixed rental to British Indians and others in Asiatic Locations which have been mapped out already in 19 townships, and in each case, we are told, the Resident Magistrate or the Assistant Magistrateand Health Board have been consulted and have agreed. Not one word is to be found as to whether those who are to be compelled to reside in these Locations have been at all consulted. We know what the Health Boards and Resident Magistrates are likely to have done, if the action of the Boards at Boksburg and Germiston is an index of that of the others. In Boksburg, an attempt is being made to remove the present Location, and there is a deadlock between the Board and the Colonial Secretary. In Germiston, the Magistrate waxes eloquent over the audacity of the Colonial Secretary in consulting others besides himself as to the suitability of sites for the Locations, as he is pleased to say, "behind his back". The net result of the resolution is, that everything is cut and dried, and the British

Indians, when the Stands are ready, will be forced to remove to these places whether they will or not. And be it remembered that their trading rights also will be confined to the Locations. This is a decided improvement on the methods of the Boer Government. Then, at any rate, the Indians had an opportunity of protesting against the selection of sites. When a concession was proposed to be given to Mr. Tobianski in connection with the establishment of a new Location in Johannesburg, the Indian community was able to know the thing before it was done, and was able to make its voice heard effectively. Not a single Indian was removed, nor was concession ultimately granted. The position today is that, in 19 different places, Locations have been established without taking into confidence those who are to be located there. The situation is undoubtedly serious and most aggravating. Leases, contemplated by the resolution, are also a curtailment of the rights to which the Indians would be entitled under the existing Law, for there is nothing therein to show that, within the Locations, they have no right to own fixed property as the community have elsewhere in the Transvaal. In Johannesburg, for instance, full rights were given under the Law to the residents of the Indian Location, and every one of the 96 Stands in that Location is held under a 99 years' lease, as almost all the Stands in Johannesburg are. And yet, strangely enough, we find Mr. Chamberlain informing his questioners in the House of Commons that the existing Law is being enforced more leniently than before! Comment is superfluous.

Indian Opinion, 30-7-1903

113. LORD MILNER ON HAWKERS, ETC.

The correspondence, published elsewhere, in connection with the proposed introduction of indentured Indians for the working of the Transvaal Railways, is a most instructive reading. Today we propose to deal with only one passage in Lord Milner's despatch to Mr. Chamberlain. His Lordship has allowed himself to make the following remark: "At present, we are in the absurd position of being flooded by petty Indian traders and hawkers who are of no benefit to the community, and not allowed to have Indian labourers whom we greatly need." If these sentiments had proceeded from a partisan, there would not be much to complain of, although they would be still inconsistent with facts; but bearing the stamp of the high authority of Lord Milner, they are very difficult to understand, and, with due deference to His Lordship, we have no hesitation in saying that it is a very unkind cut. We very much fear that the burden of ever-pressing work left no time to His Lordship for studying the situation, and he has been simply carried away by the prevailing opinion about the Indian trader and hawker. Now let us see what verdict has been pronounced by the populace itself when it did not suffer from the high gold fever which has evidently attacked the community at present. We find then that in 1896 nearly 2,000 Europeans, including many late burghers, promoted a petition to Ex-President Kruger assuring him that in their opinion the Indian traders and hawkers were a real benefit to the community in general. Even at the present time, the hawkers are considered to be almost indispensable. It is they who supply the wants of families living in the suburbs where it would not pay storekeepers to open stores, bearing in mind the fact that the houses are very much scattered, except in the principal towns, and then only in business portions. The best proof of the pudding is in the eating; so, the best proof of the usefulness of the hawkers, and indeed the traders also, consists in the indisputable fact that they are dependent very largely on the European support, and we are surprised to find that such a patent fact has not struck His Lordship. But, even apart from this incontestable proof, if it is allowable to adduce evidence given in Natal on the subject, we commend to His Lordship's attention the voluminous testimony given in favour of the Indian traders before the Commission that sat in Natal to investigate the Indian question. After going into the mass of evidence placed before

that Commission, it has recorded its opinion as follows:

> We are content to place on record our strong opinion, based on much observation, that the presence of these traders has been beneficial to the whole Colony, and that it would be unwise, if not unjust, to legislate to their prejudice.

The chief charge against these traders and hawkers has been that they have lowered the prices of the necessaries of life, and much hampered the petty European trader. Now, if Mill's doctrine of the greatest good of the greatest number still holds good, then according to that test, we make bold to say, with all respect to Lord Milner, that they are a veritable boon. We are not at all prepared to admit that the petty European trader has been really the loser by the presence of the Indian trader, but assuming such to be a fact for the sake of argument, has not the lowering of prices benefited the far larger number of buyers? Have they, the Indian traders, not been a boon to the poor European householders? The latter, as we have said before, by their invariable support, seem to appreciate the presence of the Indian trader. But His Lordship has not only pronounced judgment against the Indian trader, but he has also indirectly given his sanction to the statement so often made that "the Transvaal is being flooded by Indians." We should have thought that of all persons, Lord Milner would be the first man to know his own laws. The Peace Preservation Ordinance has effectually prevented the entry of any British Indians unless they are refugees, and in these columns we have shown how difficult it is even for *bona fide* refugees to enter the Transvaal. But now that Lord Milner has made the statement, it will, we are very much afraid, like the Bazaar Notice, be taken up throughout South Africa, and the Indian trader will come in for a good round of abuse, and we should be very much surprised if he escapes totally unhurt.

Indian Opinion, 30-7-1903

114. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY[1]

BOX 57,
PRETORIA,
August 1, 1903

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the 28th ultimo, and I note that you will be pleased to take over the Mosque property in your name in trust for the Mahomedan community on the conditions mentioned therein.

My Committee is grateful to you for the proposal, but it is regretfully obliged not to accept it for the reason that it is contrary to the Mahomedan religion to have any property for religious purposes held in the name of a non-Mahomedan.

My Committee ventures to draw your attention to the following:

(1) This matter of the transfer has been pending for several years.

(2) The British Agent, prior to the war, assured my Committee that if the war came, there would be no difficulty about the transfer after its termination.

(3) My Committee is advised that the Government have power to authorise the transfer of the property by setting aside that particular portion as one in which British Indians may hold fixed property.

(4) Even if, strictly speaking, under the existing law, the Government think they have not the power, they could, as pointed out before, graciously relax the Law in this respect, as it has been regarding licences.

(5) The matter is daily becoming serious owing to the old ageof the gentleman in whose name the property is at present registered.

(6) The Government, in refusing the request of my Committee, are taking over a serious responsibility, in that the Mahomedan community may, in the event of the death, before transfer, of the registered owner, lose the property and thus suffer heavy lass.

(7) The British Indians are, in the humble opinion of my

[1] This was also published in *India*, 18-9-1903.

Committee, entitled to some consideration, if only in regard to their religion, and when there can be no question of the European prejudice being in their way.

(8) It grieves my Committee to find that even the religious scruples of the Indian community are disregarded by the Government.

(9) My Committee had hope, in view of His Excellency the Governor's assurance that new legislation would probably be introduced during the session just closed, that relief would be granted before long, but the non-passing of such legislation has filled my Committee with disappointment.

For the reasons above mentioned, and as the matter is very urgent, my Committee humbly ventures to trust the Government would be pleased to grant the necessary relief.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
(Signed) HAJEE HABIB

Indian Opinion, 27-8-1903

115. N0TES[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
August 3, 1903

ON THE POSITION OF BRITISH INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL

With reference to the prosecutions against British Indians in respect of the Location Law, the Government have been pleased to withdraw them.

Another difficulty has, however, cropped up in the township of Klerksdorp. The Magistrate there has served Notices on British Indian merchants, informing them that, unless they submit to him proofs before the 7th instant that they held licences to trade prior to the hostilities, they would be expected and compelled to remove their businesses to the Locations. This has, naturally, terrorised the merchants there. They do not know what their position is. The action seems to be very hasty; for Mr. Chamberlain, as well as Lord Milner, is considering in what direction the existing Law is to be changed. If so

[1] This appeared in *India*, 4-9-1903, as "From its Correspondent".

there could be no meaning in serving the Notices on the British Indians at Klerksdorp. All of them, certainly, did not trade before the war in that locality, although all of them are *bona fide* refugees and traded in some part or other of the Transvaal; nor did all of them hold licences to trade, prior to hostilities, in the township of Klerksdorp. Ii is necessary here to distinguish between trading and holding licences to trade. It will be remembered that many British Indians were allowed to trade outside Locations in the Transvaal prior to the war, owing to the protection afforded by the British Government, although they did not hold any licences. Very few people, therefore, would be able to show that they held licences to trade prior to the war. It was only in the year 1899 that the Transvaal Government had issued licences to some British Indians for trading outside Locations.

This, therefore, is the most serious matter demanding early consideration and settlement. The points have been definitely raised in the printed representation to Lord Milner. Mr. Chamberlain, when the complaint was brought before him by the British Indian Deputation at Pretoria, said emphatically that all existing licences issued to British Indians in the Transvaal, whether they were trading, before the war, or not in the localities in respect of which they were issued, were to be respected. It must also be remembered that when, soon after the conclusion of the war, British officers issued licences to British Indians, absolutely no stipulation was made that they were temporary, and on the strength of their licences, they have built substantial stores and imported largely from England through English agents. It would mean complete ruin to such merchants if their licences are to be at all interfered with. In the interests of vested rights, before all other things, the following is absolutely necessary if they are to be really respected:

First: All existing Indian licences should be renewed without restraint.

Second: That they are to be transferable from place to place.

Third. That they are to be transferable from man to man, as all ordinary licences are.

Uniformity of law and procedure is really very necessary in order to enable the British Indians to have even breathing time. At present, the situation is so uncertain and complicated that each Magistrate adopts his own course. The result is utter confusion.

The plague embargo on British Indian refugees in Natal still continues in spite of the efforts of the British Indian Association and

the offer that the *bona fide* refugees, intending to return to their homes in the Transvaal, should undergo quarantine at their own expense.

Non-refugees are still being prevented from entering the Transvaal whether from the Cape or Delagoa Bay, and only 70 permits are issued weekly to British Indian refugees.

In the telegraphic dispatch from Lord Milner to Mr. Chamberlain, there occurs the following passage:

> At present, we are in the absurd position of being flooded by petty Indian traders and hawkers who are of no benefit whatever to the community, and not allowed to have Indian labourers whom we greatly need.

With the greatest deference to His Excellency, the expression "flooded by petty Indian traders and hawkers" is totally misleading in view of what has been said above. There can be no flooding when even the refugees have not all been permitted to return. The few who had come without permits, during the confusion that ensued after the Peace Preservation Ordinance was passed, have been hounded out of the Transvaal.

The statement that "the petty Indian traders and hawkers are of no benefit whatever to the community" is inconsistent with facts, as has been shown conclusively by the Natal Commission and in view of the fact that both the traders and hawkers are almost entirely dependent on European patronage. Thousands of hawkers supply vegetables cheaply from day to day to the families, scattered all over the country, at their doors, and petty Indian traders act as middlemen between the lordly European merchant and the poor white customer or the Zulu. Their profits, moreover, find their way largely into the pockets of the wholesale European houses and banks controlled by European capital and European landlords.

The cablegrams lately received show that Lord Milner's dispatch to Mr. Chamberlain in connection with the existing legislation has been published in England. His Excellency appears to have stated that "compulsory segregation is necessary on sanitary and moral grounds". The Indian community bitterly feels the charge made by His Excellency. It has been refuted over and over again by disinterested, unimpeachable evidence. "Moral grounds" is an expression which has been, probably, for the very first time, used by any British representative. When it was made a basis of a petition to the late Orange Free State Legislature, it was resented by the British autho-

rities. Not even the bitterest opponents of the British Indians have laid any such charge against them during the present controversy, and it is beyond our comprehension on what proof His Excellency has been pleased to bring such a charge.

As to "sanitary grounds", only lately, when the Insanitary Area Commission sat at Johannesburg, in reply to a very highly coloured and imaginative report from the Health Medical Officer for Johann-esburg, two medical gentlemen, one of them a well-known sanitary expert (Dr. Johnston), gave evidence controverting all the points dwelt upon by the Health Medical Officer for Johannesburg. And, in any case, it is not a matter so much for compulsory segregation, as for enforcing of sanitary regulations. It should also be remembered that what we object to is the sting of compulsion. The poorest-class Indians would, of their own accord, avail themselves of any accessible locality that might be made available for them by the Government. Such has been the experience during the past twelve years throughout South Africa, although no compulsion has been used.

India Office: Judicial and Public Records, 402.

116. CABLE TO BRITISH COMMITTEE[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
August 4, 1903

WHILE EUROPEANS GRANTED PERMITS ENTER TRANSVAAL HUNDREDS INDIAN REFUGEES NOT ALLOWED ENTER MORE THAN SEVENTY WEEKLY. NON-REFUGEE INDIANS EVEN THOUGH EDUCATED NOT ALLOWED AT ALL. MANY INDIANS AT COAST THERE-FORE SUFFERING. THOUGH EUROPEANS KAFFIRS FREELY ALLOWED ENTER TRANSVAAL FROM NATAL INDIANS TOTALLY PROHIBITED. EXCUSE PLAGUE THOUGH CONFINED ONLY DURBAN NOW PRACTICALLY AT AN END. INDIANS OFFER UNDERGO QUARANTINE OWN EXPENSE. THOUGH MR. CHAMBERLAIN CONSIDERING EXISTING LAWS GOVERNMENT HAVE ALREADY LAID OUT NINETEEN LOCATIONS. MAGISTRATE KLERKSDORP HAS SENT NOTICE THOSE WHO BEFORE SEVENTH INSTANT CANNOT PROVE POSSESSION TRADE LICENSE

[1] This cable was published, in an edited form, in *India*, 7-8-1903, as from its "Johannesburg Correspondent" and in *The Times of India*, 26-8-1903, as from "A British Indian".

BEFORE WAR MUST GO LOCATION. END YEAR STORE-KEEPERS WHO HELD LICENSES BEGINNING YEAR DO NOT GET RENEWALS IF THERE WAS BREAK DUE OFFICIALS REFUSAL. THIS CONTRARY BAZAAR NOTICE. ASSURANCE EXISTING LICENSES WOULD REMAIN UNTOUCHED IMPERATIVELY NECESSARY. INDIAN TRADE SUFFERING. SUSPENSE TERRIBLE. RESPECTFULLY PROTEST AGAINST LORD MILNER'S STATEMENT SEGREGATION NECESSARY SANITARY MORAL GROUNDS. MORALITY PLEA FIRST HEARD FROM BRITISH REPRESENTATIVE. SANITATION CHARGE REPUTED BY TWO DOCTORS ONE SANITARY EXPERT.

GANDHI

India Office: Judicial and Public Records, 402

117. MR. CHAMBERLAIN'S DESPATCH

The despatch of Mr. Chamberlain addressed to Lord Milner on the question of indentured Indian labour for the Transvaal is of momentous interest to the Indian community. It may be divided into three heads:

First: Mr. Chamberlain refuses to even think of sanctioning theintroduction of Asiatic labour into the Transvaal in any shape or form until he is clearly satisfied that it is the wish of the majority of the white population of the Transvaal.

Secondly: That even if it is made clear, it is a question whether indentured Indian labour with a view ultimately to repatriation of the labourers would be sanctioned so far as India was concerned.

Thirdly: That before he could say yes or no, the conditions laid down by the Indian Government would have to be satisfied, namely, that the existing legislation should be so modified as to remove the special tax of £3 for registration and abrogate the Location regulations, except for those for whom they may be necessary on sanitary grounds, to include freedom to trade outside Locations, freedom to hold property except for speculative purposes, and to remove all special restrictions against the better class of Asiatics.

Now with reference to the first point, every right-minded man

must agree that indentured labour from India cannot be thrust upon the Transvaal in the teeth of the opposition of the majority of its European inhabitants, and we can only hope that the majority will always remain opposed to the introduction of indentured labour from Asia, whether it is India or China. On this point, though not for the same reasons as would guide the Europeans, there is complete agreement between European opinion and the Indian. In the long run, indentured labour under the conditions mentioned can do absolutely no good to either party. To the Europeans it would be in the highest degree demoralising, and to the labourers entirely unprofitable.

As to the second point, we hope that the Indian Government would never listen to the novel proposal, as Mr. Chamberlain terms it, of repatriation. There is no precedent for such a step. So far, the Indian Government have turned a deaf ear to any such advance from other Colonies, and although we are aware that the influences that can be set in motion on behalf of the Transvaal are very weighty and great, we think that they cannot be allowed to outweigh the interests of the Indians, which it is the special duty of the Indian Government to safeguard, and if the condition of repatriation is insisted upon, it cannot by any stretch of imagination be said to be for the benefit of the Indians. Indeed, Lord Milner does not say it is, he only suggests it "in view of public feeling". And the British Indians in South Africa would be simply selling for a mess of pottage the rights of thousands of their humbler brethren in India if, in a weak moment, they ever accepted the principle of bargaining away the liberties of Indian labourers in exchange for their own.

It is, however, the third point which is of the greatest importance to the Indian community, especially in the Transvaal, and it is refreshing to find the Indian Government sticking out on behalf of the British Indians who have settled in the Transvaal. Of course, it is very difficult to know what is meant by "better class Asiatics" and "speculative acquisition". We very much fear that there would not be the same interpretation put upon these two terms by Lord Curzon and Lord Milner. It may be perfectly possible by a process of elimination to refuse to admit any Asiatic as "belonging to the better class", and there is no knowing that in the term "speculative acquisition" even an ordinary ownership may not be included. But we are dealing with these points before they have assumed a concrete form. It is yet too early to know how far the Transvaal Government would be prepared

to accept the proposals of the Indian Government. We would only, at this stage, beg the authorities in India to remember that anything that is now done should be plain, unequivocal, and definite. Loopholes of any kind, as we know to our cost, are very dangerous. We, therefore, think that the qualifications ought to be included in any legislation, instead of leaving them to the discretion of an officer. As Lord Milner has said, the chief thing is to define the status of British Indians with certainty, so that everyone would be able to know what it is.

We are deeply indebted to Lord George Hamilton for including in his proposals the legislation of the Orange River Colony also. It IS high time that the anti-Asiatic activity of the legislators of that Colony was arrested in its progress. As our columns would have shown, hardly a month passes without some disabilities in anticipation being imposed on British Indians in that part of the British dominions.

Indian Opinion, 6-8-1903

118. THE LONDON MEETING: III

SIR CHARLES DILKE AND THE EAST INDIA ASSOCIATION

We have already dealt with the proceedings of the East India Association addressed by Sir William Wedderburn on the position of the British Indians in South Africa; but, as we consider that the meeting was of very great importance, and that the speeches made thereat demand very careful attention of the Colonists, we propose to deal with the speech made by Sir Charles Dilke, who presided at the meeting.

The Honourable baronet has always taken a very sympathetic interest in Indian affairs, and ever since the commencement of the struggle of the British Indians in South Africa, he has followed up his sympathetic attitude and endeavoured to secure justice for us. We, therefore, owe him, as well as the other distinguished friends who have been helping us in our troubles, a deep debt of gratitude. We wish to remind the Colonists that Sir Charles' opinions ought to carry a great deal of weight with them in view of the fact that he has made a special study of colonial questions. The author of *The Problems of Greater Britain* knows intimately almost every phase of the Colonial question, and we hope that his opinions will receive the weight that attaches to his ripe experience of the King's dominions beyond the seas.

This is what Sir Charles Dilke said at the meeting in his

preliminary remarks:

> The question which brought them together was that of Indians in the Transvaal in particular, but, of course, incidentally, the position of Indian subjects outside India in all parts of the British Empire was one that very naturally produced much feeling in India itself. He was present some time ago at a deputation to the Secretary of State which was introduced by the late Mr. Caine, and on that occasion by none of those who advocated the principle, which brought Sir W. Wedderburn there that afternoon, i.e., the principle of the right of British Indian subjects to live freely and carry on their avocations freely in all parts of the British Empire—was that cause pleaded more strongly than by the Secretary of State himself. It was impossible for any member to be otherwise than satisfied with the Right Hon. Gentleman's language.

The above quotation shows the sentiments of Sir Charles Dilke. The more one studies the question, the more convinced one becomes of the justice of the claims put forward on behalf of the British Indians in South Africa. One reads similar observations on the part of the Indian Government in the correspondence lately published in the Transvaal, and reproduced by us last week. We shall, however, deal with it later on.

That the meeting was held under the auspices of the East India Association is also a matter of considerable importance. The Association is one of the oldest established in the United Kingdom in connection with Indian affairs, and numbers among its members most of the retired Viceroys, Governors, and distinguished Anglo-Indians who have devoted years to the study of Indian problems. That such a body of men should throw the weight of their great influence in favour of the Indian subjects of His Majesty settled in South Africa cannot but be a matter of very great satisfaction to us. It shows unmistakably that not only are our demands just, but that if we have patience enough, we are bound to win in the end. We have very great faith in the education of public opinion, and it is because we feel strongly that, the more food the Colonists get for consideration of this particular problem, the quicker will be the solution, that we try to keep the proceedings of the East India Association as prominently as possible before them.

Indian Opinion, 6-8-1903

119. IMMIGRATION RESTRICTION BILL

In spite of the efforts of the Honourable Mr. Jameson to secure a sympathetic hearing for the British Indian petition to the Legislative Council, the Immigration Restriction Bill has passed without an amendment. Mr. Dan Taylor's straightforward remark that the printing of the petition was a waste of public money has come true. It seems both the Houses had prejudged the issue and made up their minds about the Bill. We wonder what Sir John Robinson thinks of this latest instance of the local Parliament practically denying the right of the British Indians to be heard with any effect. At the time of introducing the disfranchising Bill. he declared that the rights of the disfranchised would be jealously guarded, as every member would consider himself in a measure a guardian of the rights of the disfranchised. Well may the Indians say: 'Save us from our guardians.' We hope we have shown conclusively that the prayer of the petitioners was very reasonable. It was something to have their assent to the principle of the measure, and what they suggested was nothing but an experiment. But our legislators thought otherwise. To them the pleasure of insulting their Indian fellow-subjects and their cultivated languages was of far greater value than the performance of a simple duty they owed to India and the Empire. They are satisfied that they can draw upon Indian labour which is so indispensable for the prosperity of the Colony. We are told that the members open their proceedings with a prayer, and that the Bible occupies a conspicuous place on the Speaker's or the President's table. We wonder if the followers of the Prophet of Nazareth ever saw a little verse from the lips of their Master: viz., 'Do unto others as you would be done by', or is it that the printers have made a mistake and omitted a little 'not' after 'do'? Let us see how Mr. Chamberlain the Imperialist treats the petition.

Indian Opinion, 6-8-1903

120. P0TCHEFSTROOM INDIANS

We have to congratulate the British Indians in Potchefstroom on having held a very successful meeting in connection with the recent prosecutions regarding Locations at that place. The reasonableness of their resolution is undeniable. It says that no action should be taken by the Transvaal Government until His Majesty's

Government has declared its views on the subject. No exception could possibly be taken to such a request. Mr. Chamberlain has more than once assured his questioners in the House of Commons that he is going to consider the whole question thoroughly and carefully and advise Lord Milner as to what he is to do. It is, therefore, quite clear that the solution does not rest entirely with the white Colonists of the Transvaal. If, therefore, the Imperial Government is to have a say in the matter, it certainly seems incomprehensible that the Government of the Transvaal should be in such a haste as to override all considerations of justice, and summarily send the Indians to Locations. We draw the attention of the authorities to the following from Mr. Abdool Rahman's[1] speech:

> It grieved him to have to refer to the fact that the local police still visited their houses in the early morning and marched them to the Police Station like a herd of criminals simply for the purpose of exchanging their permits, and he thought that they should protest against this sort of thing to the high officials, and he felt sure they would get sympathy.

It is due to all parties concerned that the Government should institute a searching enquiry into the allegations made, for, if the statement is true, the proceedings seem to be insufferably high-handed.

Indian Opinion, 6-8-1903

121. RUSHING THINGS

Potchefstroom has set the ball rolling with reference to the enforcement of the Bazaar Notice, as will appear from the short report of the magisterial proceedings which we have copied elsewhere. It will be seen that proceedings have already been taken against about a dozen British Indians for residing outside the Location. This is what may fairly be called "rushing things". Mr. Chamberlain is supposed to be considering Lord Milner's despatch on this very question; the Government of the Transvaal are supposed to be considering new legislation to replace the existing Law. We wonder whether, before the result of their deliberations is made known, it is the intention to give full effect to the Bazaar Notice irrespective of consequences to those who are affected by it. Even the late Orange Free State, when it passed drastic anti-Asiatic legislation, had the decency to give a year's time to

[1] Secretary, Potchefstroom Indian Association.

those that were already settled under the late Republic. It must be remembered that most Of these people who have been prosecuted are old residents of the Transvaal. They have never before been molested in their occupation. The Bazaar Notice was published in April last. Hardly have the people realised their situation. And while protests against it are still being considered, within three months of the publication, without even a written notice, summonses are sprung upon them. However, the Magistrate has been good enough to adjourn the case to the 4th of August in order to allow the accused to bring evidence. As, therefore, the matter is *sub judice* and as we understand an approach has been made to the Government for relief, we hold over further remarks.

Indian Opinion, 6-8-1903

122. PHENOMENAL ACTIVITY

The activity of the Orange River Colony Legislature towards restricting in anticipation the rights of British Indians is simply phenomenal. From the *Government Gazette* of that Colony dated the 24th of July, we quote below the sections from the Ordinance regulating the Municipal Corporation and Government of Bloemfontein, giving powers to the Town Council with reference to Locations.

118. The Council is empowered to establish locations on such part or parts of the Municipal lands as it may think fit, within which all coloured persons other than domestic servants residing in their employers' premises shall be compelled to reside, and may from time to time close such locations and establish other or others. The Council is further empowered to frame regulations for the proper control of all such locations.
119. The Council shall make compensation to the owners of any huts, dwelling houses or other buildings on such locations which shall be pulled down or removed by the Council for the value of the same, to be ascertained by the Municipal Valuers and approved by the Council.
120. The Council shall be and is hereby authorised, subject to the provisions of sections 124 and 125, to make, amend or repeal regulations for the control of natives residing within the Municipality, and for all or any of the following matters:
    (a) The proper registration of natives employed by the day or month, or any longer period or seeking employment within

the Municipality

(b) The registration of contracts between masters and servants who may wish to register such contracts.

(c) To control vagrancy, or riotous or indecent behaviour.

Our readers will notice that in the sections, 'Natives' and 'Coloured Persons' are convertible terms and mean one and the same thing. That they may be removed like criminals or cattle from one place to another at the sweet will of the Corporation has not struck the British Legislators in the Colony as highly un-British. Comment is superfluous.

Indian Opinion, 6-8-1903

123. STOOPING TO CONQUER

The visit of Their Majesties the King and Queen to Ireland is one of vast significance not only to the Irish people but to the Empire at large, and it teaches the humblest of His Majesty's subjects a practical lesson in humility in a manner which the most thrilling sermons from the pulpit would fail to teach. The Dublin Corporation, shall we say, in its pettiness, thought fit to decline to present an address to the King and the Queen on their visit to Ireland, as if they were responsible for that country's distress. Now, in the face of such an attitude, what did Their Majesties do? They might have refused to visitIreland, seeing that its capital city was not prepared to extend a formal welcome to them; or, having gone there, they might have shown in a significant manner their displeasure at the proceedings of the Corporation. But they were pleased to think otherwise; and they have actually by their warm words of sympathy and open-hearted manner disarmed all opposition, and by returning good for evil shamed the Corporation of Dublin into an attitude, so we are told, of repentance. We read further in the cablegrams that the King walked through the slums of Dublin, visited the homes of the poor, and spoke to them words of sympathy. Nor did Their Majesties stop at mere words or sentiments of sympathy; they have translated them into a donation of £ 1,000 Now we are very apt to think that sovereigns can afford to give away money without feeling tile slightest pinch, but it is a well-known fact that, probably of all the first-class sovereigns in the world, the English King is the poorest, and when one adds to this the fact that there are a thousand and one calls on the

purses of sovereigns, the donation, to our mind, is by no means an insignificant portion of Their Majesties' acts during their tour in Ireland. Her late Majesty the Queen has left behind her a memory that cannot be easily forgotten; but if it were possible to eclipse such a memory, or even to equal it, it seems that our present King-Emperor and Queen-Empress bid fair to do so. The British Constitution has been well settled during the long Victorian era. There is, therefore, not the slightest fear of any tampering with it. It is then a matter of great satisfaction to all the King's subjects that he does not spare himself in actively looking after their welfare in his own domain. But, apart from what we have said above, the event has a special significance for India. Our readers will remember that when he was Prince of Wales, the King-Emperor visited India, and by his generous sympathy was able, during his short visit, to win the hearts of the Indian people. He has evidently further developed that trait in his character to a very great extent. Have we not, then, reason to hope that whenever an opportunity occurs, like his illustrious mother, he will not fail to put in a word on behalf of his millions of subjects in India, even though they are several thousand miles away from him?

Indian Opinion, 6-8-1903

124. MIXED UP

It grieves us to find Lord Milner appealing to the gallery, and that in State documents. His Excellency's despatches to Mr. Chamberlain on the Indian question show unmistakably that Lord Milner, the statesman, has not left behind Mr. Milner, the editor of the *Pall Mall.* In his two despatches lately published in the papers, His Excellency has made the following three statements which, with due deference to him, we are constrained to say, are without foundation: (1) The Indian traders and hawkers are of no benefit to the Transvaal. (2) The Indians are overrunning the country. (3) Segregation is necessary on moral and sanitary grounds. With the first two, we have dealt already. In passing, we may advert to the statement made by the Colonial Secretary that there are only 10,000 Indians in the Transvaal, i.e., hardly half the number of Indians before the war, that only seventy Indian permits are issued weekly as against hundreds of European permits, and that many Indians who had innocently entered the Colony have been hounded out of it because they entered the

sanitary grounds! We seem to be reading the pre-war petitions of interested traders presented to the President of the late Orange Free State, which made all kinds of charges of immorality against British Indians. The British agents *then* protected us from them. It had remained for Lord Milner to revive them and give the stamp of his high authority. His Lordship does not appear to have deigned to give particulars. That the staid, sober, industrious, God-fearing Indian can do a moral injury to a community with which he may come in contact is a 'novel' idea. Even the late Transvaal Government never brought such a charge against him. We respectfully submit to His Excellency that, in justice to the King's inoffensive Indian subjects, he should either withdraw it, or substantiate it by producing facts. As to the hackneyed charge of insanitation, we refer His Excellency to the voluminous evidence produced by the British Indians in 1896 in refutation. That portion of it which is true is not serious, and in any case the fault is largely that of the authorities for the neglect of the community; and the serious portion of it is, in the opinion of unbiased Europeans, not true. Dr. Veale, for instance, says:

> I have generally found them (the Indian) cleanly in their persons, and free from the personal diseases due to dirt or careless habits. Their dwellings are generally clean, and sanitation is willingly attended to by them. Class considered, I should be of opinion that the lowest class Indian compares more favourably with the lowest class white, i.e., the lowest class Indian lives better, and in better habitation, and with more regard to sanitary measures, than the lowest class white.... Generally, in my opinion, it is impossible to object to the Indian on sanitary grounds, provided always the inspection by the sanitary authorities is made as strictly and regularly for the Indian as for the white.

Indian Opinion, 6-8-1903

125. ACCURACY NEEDED

The gentlemen at Boksburg continue to take an interest in the Asiatic question. It is a thousand pities that to their activity they do not care to add accurate knowledge. It is unjust to themselves, and unfair to the poor Asiatics. Their resolutions would not carry the same weight that they would if they were based on facts, and a judgment based on a misconception of facts is likely to do unintended harm to those to whom it applies. We notice that at one of their meetings, the

President, Mr. Alex. Osborn, is reported to have delivered himself as follows in support of the resolution that "if the recent Ordinance dealing with Asiatics be put into operation, the effect will assuredly be disastrous to the vital interests of the European traders of these Colonies. They, therefore, urge the Government to enforce in its stead the Law which was passed by the late Government of the Transvaal which, if stringen-tly carried out, will meet the exigencies of the situation": "The Boksburg Chamber was a credit to the Colony in its judicial judg-ments, and its manner of bringing the trading community's grievances so well and prominently forward." Now, with due deference to the "judicial judgments" of the Boksburg Chamber, we might be permitted to remind the members that what they are pleased to call "the recent Ordinance" is merely a Government Notice showing their determination to enforce the law of the late Government of the Transvaal. That the Notice is intended to carry out the law stringently, we have shown conclusively on more occasions than one. We, therefore, hope that the gentlemen who form the Association will read up the law of the late Republic and the Government Notice, compare the two and inform themselves as to how the law was being worked during the Boer regime, and then answer the question for themselves whether or not the old law is being stringently carried out.

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126. EXPLANATION OF CABLE[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
August 10, 1903

DETAILED EXPLANATION OF THE TELEGRAM DATED AUGUST 4 ANNEXED HERETO

I beg to enclose herewith copy of the cablegram sent last week; we are anxiously awaiting result.

The telegram divides itself into seven parts:

(1) Non-refugee Indians are not allowed to enter the Colony at all, thus causing grave inconvenience to local men.

[1] This statement was sent by Gandhiji to Dadabhai Naoroji who forwarded it to the Secretary of State for India. It was also sent to *India* which published it, with slight omissions, on 18-9-1903 as from its Johannesburg Correspondent

(2) Even refugee Indians are very sparingly allowed.

(3) There is a total embargo on Indian arrivals from Natal on the excuse that there is plague there. Europeans and Kaffirs are freely allowed. Indians in the Transvaal are now permitted to visit Natal and return. The embargo is, therefore, hardly a plague prevention.

(4) Mr. Chamberlain is considering Lord Milner's dispatch, also the existing anti-Indian law, and yet the Government have already laid out 19 Locations. Measures, under the existing law, of a temporary nature, may be taken pending replacing legislation, but measures of a permanent character, such as the fixing of Locations, are difficult to understand, if the law is really to be modified.

(5) Mr. Chamberlain promised that all existing Indian licences to trade outside Locations granted by British Officers would be respected. But, apart from such promise, the least that the Indians expect is a recognition of their vested interests under the British Constitution whether they were created before or after the war. Under the Bazaar Notice, the licences of those who did not hold such on the outbreak of war are in danger. The printed memorial to Lord Milner is still under consideration, but an early assurance regarding the licences is necessary to ease the mind of the community.

(6) Some licences were granted last year to Indians who did not hold them on the outbreak of war. These were not renewed this year by the Officers. According to the Bazaar Notice, such licences are renewable up to the end of the year at least. Yet on the plea that they have lapsed, the Receiver of Revenue at Johannesburg refuses to renew them, though the fact that they were not renewed at the beginning of the year is no fault of the licensees.

(7) Lord Milner is reported to have said that compulsory segregation; is necessary on moral and sanitary grounds. The charge is so serious that it was thought wise to refute it by cablegram. Nothing, more need be said at present about it. Restriction of trade to Locations cannot be justified even if the charge were true. The Editor of the *Indian Opinion* is dealing with the charge more fully and quoting from official documents a statement in refutation.[1] I may mention that the management of the paper is in responsible hands and that great pains are taken to give the most accurate information, and to observe strict moderation.

M. K. GANDHI

India Office: Judicial and Public Records, 402.

[1] *Vide* the next item.

127. EVIDENCE AGAINST LORD MILNER'S CHARGE OF INSANITATION

In view of the cablegram published in the newspapers in the Transvaal to the effect that Lord Milner has dwelt on the insanitary condition of the Indian Location at Johannesburg in his despatch on the proposed change in the existing legislation of the Transvaal, we give below extracts from the evidence given by Dr. F. P. Marais and Dr. Johnston.

It will be remembered that Dr. Marais is a medical gentleman having bout ten years' practice in Johannesburg, having large practice among the Indians, and possesses the M.D. degree of Edinburgh.

Dr. Johnston is a sanitary expert, is a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh, and holds a diploma of Public Health of Edinburgh and of Glasgow, and possesses very wide South African experience.

We have not copied the whole of Dr. Johnston's interesting evidence where he is made, in cross-examination, to compare his own statement with that of Dr. Porter, the Medical Officer for Johannesburg. Those that have the time to go through the voluminous evidence given before the Johannesburg Insanitary Area Improvement Scheme Commission are referred to the printed evidence published on the 22nd January this year.

Dr. Porter is a very estimable gentleman, but has next to no experience of life in South Africa. To him, anything that fails to come up to the standard observed in London, and is untidy or uncouth, is quite insanitary. There is only one word we know that would describe his evidence, namely, hysterical. We give one sample. This gentleman says of the Indians in the Johannesburg Location:—"They would never think of calling in a doctor and, ostrich-like, would consider it the right thing to conceal the existence of the disease."

Dr. Johnston, when asked what he had to say to this evidence, retorted, "You have Dr. Marais' statement to the contrary."

The reply is conclusive. Dr. Marais has had nine years' practice among the Indians; Dr. Porter, as admitted by himself, has had no experience among Indians. How did he then know that they "never thought of calling in a doctor," or that they "consider it the right thing to conceal the existence of the disease"?

However, the extracts we quote from the evidence of the two gentlemen above referred to speak for themselves.

Dr. F. P. Marais' Evidence on General Condition (*Indians*)

Q.: You have practised among them for a considerable period?

A.: Yes, for about eight or nine years.

Q.: You have a large practice there?

A.: Yes, I have a good practice amongst them.

POSITION

The position of the Indian Location is good, being on a slope, with a good fall. Besides, there is a deep sluit at the lower border, which acts as a drain.

CONDITION OF SURROUNDINGS

North side—Perfectly clean.

South side—Good.

East side— The big open space was, till lately, used as a depositing site for nearly the whole of Johannesburg, and is in a filthy condition.

West side—Kelly's Home, clean.

Beyond that most disgraceful, due to all sorts of rubbish, manure, etc., being deposited there by the Town Council's sanitary carts, and others.

Thus, it will be seen that the Location is fairly well isolated, and the surroundings good, *except where they have been rendered insanitary by the Town Council, past and present.* For the rubbish, etc., on the square north of Fords burg (and only a few yards from its northern boundary), the present Town Council is responsible.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Since compulsory notification, I have had only two cases of acute dysentery in the Coolie Location. Not a single one of typhoid. There were a few cases of malaria, but all contracted in Delagoa Bay. Not a single case of diptheria, of which I had lately four in Vrededorp, four in Fordsburg, and one in Burghersdorp, at the back of Hoffman's old bar.

CONDITION OF HOUSES AND YARDS

Was asked to inspect Stands 75 and 77 (Bhayroo's) with houses thereon. Found 75 clean, with a well-built brick building, large lofty rooms well ventilated. Closets also of brick, and clean yard.

Stand 77.—Iron building, large rooms well ventilated, yard clean.

Stand 36.—Iron house, big rooms, lofty and well ventilated. Yard, etc., clean.

THE TOWN COUNCIL'S NEGLECT

Mr. Balfour: Now, just in amplification of that report, what were you to tell us as to the sanitary carts on the west side?—That it is only since the new Town Council was appointed that that square has been used for depositing the rubbish and manure which has not been wanted anywhere else.

Did you see some carts there recently?—I saw them every day, and some time ago, I went to the manager, the new sanitary manager, and complained to him about rubbish being deposited there. At that time, I was not sure whether the carts were sanitary carts or not.

Mr. Forster: When was that?—About a fortnight ago, and I lodged a complaint with the new sanitary manager. He told me he knew nothing about it, and he could do nothing for me, and I had to go.

The Chairman: This is hardly evidence.

Mr. Balfour: No. What I want is your own experience in the matter.—Well, after that I went to see whether these were Town Council carts or not.

Did you go personally?—Yes, I did; and found that they were sanitary carts. Yesterday morning I saw two sanitary carts depositing rubbish there.

HEALTH OF INDIANS

Now, speaking from your own experience of your patients in the Coolie Location, what have you to say as regards the question of typhoid among the Coolies?—Typhoid is considered to be eminently a filth disease, one of the diseases ascribed particularly to filth and dirt, and the fact that I have not had a single case of typhoid during these nine months speaks well for the Coolie Location.

Do you think Coolies are not subject to typhoid?—I should think they are as subject as other people.

Have you had any cases of enteric?—Not a single case.

SANITARY SERVICE—INDIFFERENT

Now, with regard to the sanitary service there. Is that good, bad, or indifferent, according to your experience?—I should think it pretty indifferent.

Have you ever had occasion to look at the buckets there?—Yes; in the beginning of September, I attended an old woman, one of the cases of consumption mentioned in my report, and I saw three buckets in a row, all overflowing, which ought to have been carted away by the authorities.

Have you ever noticed anything in the streets with regard to the sanitary service?—One day I was passing when one of the Coolies called me in and showed me the contents of two buckets being emptied into the road. He asked me to give him a

certificate to the effect that I had seen it, as he wanted to go to the Town Council and complain. I gave him a certificate that I saw the contents Iying there, but I did not see them being emptied. I saw the contents, and there was no doubt that the contents had come out of the buckets.

A COMPARISON—POOR WHITES AND POOR INDIANS

With regard to the overcrowding there, do you think the Coolie Location is very much overcrowded?—I do not think it nearly as bad as some parts of Ferreira's Township and other parts of Johannesburg.

Have you occasion to go to the Coolie Location at night?—Yes, I have a good practice all over these parts among the Coolies, and I find that they (meaning Europeans) are very much overcrowded in Ferreira's Township, almost worse, I should say, than in the Coolie Location.

Now, among poor white areas, have you seen any overcrowding there?— Yes, there is great overcrowding near the Goods Station, at the west end of Kerk Street and Jeppe Street, amongst poorer classes of whites.

CROSS-EXAMINATION—IS THE LOCATION SANITARY?

The Coolie Location. Are you prepared to pledge your professional credit and state that that Location is a sanitary place?—I am prepared to state that it is as sanitary as many parts of Johannesburg.

Pardon me, we will come to that presently. We are dealing with the Coolie Location. Are you prepared to state that, in your opinion, that is a sanitary area? —I am prepared to state that the soil is as good as any soil in Johannesburg.

Never mind the soil; I am speaking of the whole area.—Some of the houses are insanitary, but the majority of them are not insanitary.

My question was whether the area, as a whole, was a sanitary area?—As a whole, I would say the area is sanitary.

You say that, on the whole, you consider this area sanitary?—Yes.

The Coolie Location?—Yes. I have been amongst these people for the last ten years, and now I know almost every house.

And from your intimate acquaintance as a medical practitioner in that neighbourhood, you say that the area as a whole is sanitary?—As a whole, it is sanitary.

You are aware that several medical gentlemen in practice in Johannesburg have given strong evidence to the contrary?—I know doctors differ.

And you are prepared to differ from them?—I am prepared.

Dr. Johnston, the Specialist, on the Condition of the Buildings in the Indian Location

Examined by Mr. Balfour.

You are a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh?—Yes.

And you hold a diploma of Public Health of Edinburgh and of Glasgow?— Yes, a Diploma of Glasgow and of Edinburgh.

How long have you been practising in Johannesburg?—Since August, 1895.

And how long in the Transvaal?—That is the time I have been practising in the Transvaal.

Now, then, with regard to the building on the Coolie Location, I understand that on the former occasion you made a house-to-house visitation?—Yes.

And you saw a good many houses, a day or two ago?—I did see a certain number.

Now, speaking generally, what is your general opinion in regard to the buildings on these stands?—There are stands on which there is a certain amount of over-crowding, that is where buildings are huddled together. Dr. Porter calls them "congeries of narrow courtyards". Well, there are one or two cases that might be described as such, but, taking the area as a whole, it is not overcrowded with buildings. On nearly every stand where there are buildings, they have got a regular square courtyard, and in most instances the buildings are ranged round the courtyard. I have not come across one instance where there was no courtyard, as, if there was no courtyard on one stand, then they had the courtyard on an adjoining stand. I do not know whether it is a feature of the buildings of the Indians or not, but it certainly prevails there.

Speaking generally, are these courtyards usually wide enough for health purposes?—Yes; and I think it a very wise provision on the part of those Indians that they made these particular courtyards.

Are they wide enough for purposes of ventilation?—They are exceedingly good for purposes of ventilation. In these courtyards, they seem to sit a good deal, instead of in their houses.

The result of building the rooms round the courtyard is that every room opens directly into the air?—Yes; into the courtyard.

Now, there were some buildings you found to be very bad?—There are some not in a good state of repair.

Will you mention the worst place?—The worst one I came across was on Stand No. 28, belonging to a man named Bajanath.

What was the nature of that?—On that stand, fronting the house, there is a

sod-built house, what is known as a lean-to house. I specially wanted to see that, because it struck me as being particularly bad. I accordingly told the man, with whom I went, that I wished very much to see that particular stand, and he took me over it. I found this low sod house, and in the courtyard a number of what I should describe as scratch-work tin shanties. The whole of the buildings on that stand one would condemn as being filthy, and although I should say there is plenty of air in these tin shanties, still they are not such as one would like to see in a place like Johannesburg. I saw in the centre of this yard a great many bricks, and I asked the meaning of it.

Mr. Forster: I do not think this is evidence.

The Witness: I was told the bricks were there for the purpose of erecting a new building. That was what the Indian told me.

Mr. Forster: I do not want to know what anyone told you.

Mr. Balfour: That was the worst house you saw, Doctor. Are there any others as bad?—No; I do not remember others so bad. That was the only sod building.

Now, supposing you were the autocrat of Johannesburg, what would you do with that?—I would pull it down and make them build it according to sanitary regulations.

Are there any other houses you would treat in the same way in the Location?—At the top end there may be one or two, but I cannot recall to memory the individual stands which I examined in June last. There may be one or two other stands, not sod buildings, but iron buildings, which might be improved.

And what would be the total number of buildings you would condemn absolutely if you were the autocrat of the place? — I have not estimated the total number of buildings I would condemn, but I do not think that there are very many which I would condemn purely for insanitary reasons. I have not my notes with me which I took in June last.

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128. AN EYE-OPENER

MR. MOOR'S REPORT

Elsewhere we print the report drawn up by Mr. Moor, the Assistant Colonial Secretary of the Transvaal. It is a document of abiding interest to the Indian community giving, as it does, a resume of the position of the British Indians as on and up to the 31st December, 1902. The position has considerably changed since then. All the same, the report is a very fair indication of the intentions of the Government. In one respect, at any rate, the Government have

considerably changed their attitude, to the detriment of the British Indians. We refer to the enforcement of the £3 registration. Mr. Moor says, in the report under review, that the £3 registration is not to be enforced. Now, however, it has been enforced with the utmost rigour. Several prosecutions, too, have taken place and, in some cases, fines have been imposed on those who failed to have their names registered. We wish to correct one statement made by Mr. Moor, namely, that the Resolution 1101 of the Executive Council of the late Government, notifying its intention to enforce the provisions of Law 3 of 1885, was being carried out before war until the cause for it was removed by the exodus of the British Indians. An attempt was undoubtedly made, but owing to the intervention of the then British Agent and the then Vice-Consul, no proceedings whatsoever were taken, and when the Boer Government was asked about the notification issued to the different Landrosts,[1] the British Agent was assured that the Law was not to be enforced. Not a single British Indian was ever compulsorily removed to Locations or prevented from trading outside Locations.

Mr. Moor's summary of the objections on the part of the Europeans to the presence of the Indians shews the same lack of knowledge on their part as has been dwelt upon by the British Indians. We, therefore, do not propose to deal with them for the present.

With due respect to Mr. Moor, we feel constrained to say that he has fallen into the popular error of confusing immigration of Indian labour with the free immigration of people who pay their own passage and wish to enter the Transvaal as independent men. He also, evidently mixes up the Indentured Immigration Act of Natal with the free immigration, and proceeds to suggest legislation under the belief that it would be similar to the legislation in other South African Colonies. On no other ground would it be possible to understand the proposal that, (first,) permits should be issued to those who may produce indentures from a responsible employer, (second,) that they should pay, by way of registration, £5 per head, (third,) that they should take out passes at 1/- each to control their movement. The first provision presupposes that every Asiatic has to enter the Transvaal only as an indentured labourer. The payment of £5 has, we suppose, been copied from the Natal Act, which imposes a penalty of £3 annually on those indentured Indians who may wish to settle in the Colony after the

[1] District Magistrates.

expiry of their indentures. The pass proposal, also, we presume, owes its origin to the Natal Laws. This shews that Mr. Moor has not been able to distinguish between Natal legislation regulating labour and the legislation regarding immigration.

Although we are quite willing to think that the confusion on Mr. Moor's part is an oversight, it does a great deal of injustice to the British Indians. Coming as it does so authoritatively, it is likely to produce a wrong impression on the minds of the people in the Transvaal and abroad. We hope, however, that it is unnecessary for us to deal with these proposals at any great length in view of the fact that the policy of the Government has since been considerably changed, and that new legislation is being considered.

But the report in question shews how imperative it is for our countrymen in the Transvaal to be ever on the look-out for danger from unexpected sources. The report, moreover, proves most clearly that much of the prejudice against British Indians is based on want of knowledge. Every Indian, therefore, should consider it his duty to make a decided effort towards dispelling the existing prejudice by spreading correct information with reference to the habits of the Indian community as well as its aspirations. The best way to do it is for each and every one of us to endeavour to live the life of a model Indian. What that means is known to everyone who knows anything at all about India, and ought to be known to every Indian child.

In the last portion of the report in question, Mr. Moor says: "Asiatics would, on the whole, welcome the restriction of Bazaars on plans in conformity with those traditions to which they have been accustomed in the East," and that "they perceive that the concentration and grouping of their trades in fixed quarters would extend the scope of their business and attract buyers in large numbers". This, to us, is a revelation, and unless we have positive proof, we must refuse to believe that any responsible Indian could ever have made the statement. It is simply suicidal, and contrary to the effort of the Indian community, which it has been making in the Transvaal for the last fifteen years, to have the Location legislation removed. How is it possible that any well-knowing Indian could so suddenly change his mind, and advocate and accept the principle of compulsory segregation, whether it be called Bazaars or Locations?

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129. GREYTOWN LOCAL BOARD

The Greytown Local Board is much perplexed over the possibility of an Indian buying or leasing land that is to be thrown open. The Principal Under-Secretary says in reply to its representation that the matter has been placed before His Excellency the Governor, who in his turn has sent the papers to Mr. Chamberlain. Mr. Meek, a member of the Board, considers it "inconvenient to prolong the matter for another year, awaiting negotiations". The Board has said the word, and it must come to pass without delay. "In the beginning," we read, "[God said] Let there be light, and there was light." Now the Greytown Local Board is to give the fiat regarding British Indians, and who shall say nay ! Seriously, we do not understand why, whenever it is the Indian who is concerned, the proposal is always to adopt any but the legitimate course. In the first place, we do not think there is any danger of an Indian buying land in Greytown in residential quarters. Secondly, in what way is he going to be an objection, if he puts up a structure in keeping with the bye-laws and the surroundings? This he, as everybody else, may be compelled to, do. But a little regard for the feelings of the Indian, and the roughness would have gone without the Colonists running the risk of being in any way inconvenienced by the presence of the Indian.

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130. A SUR-REJOINDER

The *East Rand Express* has paid us the compliment of quoting and replying to our remarks on the quarrel that is going on between Mr. Moor and the Boksburg Health Board on the latter's proposal to remove the present Indian Location to One Tree Hill. Our contemporary thinks that, in holding that the Government alone has the right to fix Locations, we have indulged in special pleading. We may be permitted to say that we have done nothing of the kind. We remind our contemporary of the fact that the Government Notice, it is not even a proclamation, is merely an indication of its intention to enforce the anti-Asiatic law of the Transvaal, and it lays down rules as to how and to what extent it is to be enforced. Our contemporary must know that the Government cannot alter or add to the law itself: that

could only be done by the Legislative Council. Now the law says, "the Government shall have the right to appoint special streets, wards, and locations as their residence." There is, therefore, no power reserved under the law to the Health Boards or Town Councils. It is then quite clear that the notice in question merely pays a compliment to such Boards, in re-quiring the Colonial Secretary to fix Locations in consultation with Local Boards. It also presupposes a reasonable attitude on their part, and, to say the least of it, we venture to think that it is hardly correct for the Boksburg Health Board to convert what is a compliment during pleasure into a right, and to dictate to the Colonial Secretary. We have dealt with this matter at length, because we feel that the Board has taken up a position which is clearly not warranted by law. We could wish our contemporary had not written the concluding sentences of its rejoinder. They seem to convey a threat to the Indians living in the present Location. We should be sorry to think that the people of Boksburg would so far forget themselves and the Imperial tie as to take the law in their own hands. And if threats are to frighten the residents of the Location, they would deserve to go. There is no room for cowards in South Africa. We are reminded of the incident that happened in Aliwal North some years ago. Then, in spite of the feeling of the focal Europeans, the Magistrate refused to withhold from an Indian merchant the renewal of his licence which he had been in possession of for several years. The enraged gentlemen therefore—in hundreds—marched to the store of the offending Indian, and threatened divers penalties if he did not remove bag and baggage from the town. The Indian, in face of tremendous odds, stood his ground, and firmly refused to budge. The sequel was, protection was ultimately given to him, and he was left unmolested. We are living under British, not Russian, rule.

Indian Opinion, 13-8-1903

131. TELEGRAM TO P. S. TO LT.-GOVERNOR, TRANSVAAL

August 18, 1903

TO

PRIVATE SECRETARY
HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR
PRETORIA

ASSOCIATION VIEW HIS EXCELLENCY'S TOUR REQUESTS RELIEF BEFORE TOUR REGARDING PLAGUE EMBARGO INDIAN ARRIVALS FROM NATAL.

BIAS

Pretoria Archives: LG. 92/2132 Asiatics. 1902-1906

132. THE USES OF ADVERSITY

There can be no question that the British Indians in South Africa are hemmed in on all sides by restrictions more or less severe according to the Colonies in which they are imposed, and that they are also very much misunderstood. By this time, those of our readers who have followed these columns at all, attentively, would have noticed that there is ample proof for the two statements we have just made. The purpose of this article is to draw some lessons from these adverse circumstances. We are told "Sweet are the uses of adversity," which should be "the instructor of the wise." Let us see, then, whether we have learnt any lessons from adversity.

There are, in India, sharp divisions between the different races inhabiting it; for instance, the Tamils, the 'Calcutta men', as the inhabitants of the upper provinces are called here, the Panjabis, the Gujaratis, etc. There are also the Mahomedans, the Hindus, the Parsis, and others, according to religions. Then, among the Hindus there are the Brahmans, the Kshatriyas, the Baniyas, and others. Now, to our mind, if we have brought from India these divisions and differences as very valuable cargo to be treasured up all this distance, then there is no doubt that it would clog us at every step, and hinder our progress. South Africa ought to be to the British Indians a great Puri[1] where all divisions are abolished and levelled up. We are not, and ought not to be, Tamils or Calcutta men, Mahomedans or

[1] A town in Orissa famous for the temple of Jagannath, 'Lord of the Universe', where caste distinctions are not observed.

Hindus, Brahmans or Baniyas, but simply and solely British Indians, and as such we must sink or swim together. That the interests of all the divisions are absolutely identical cannot be gainsaid. That being so, it is plain enough that our duty lies in doing away with any such prejudices. That is a preliminary step, and an indispensable one. We are quite aware that our people have made a very great advance in that direction, but in drawing general lessons from our difficulties, the statement would be incomplete without a warning.

It is also incumbent on every Indian not merely to be satisfied with having made sufficient to feed and clothe himself and his family; he must be prepared to put his hands deep into his pocket for the public weal, and here again we know that the community throughout South Africa has not altogether failed in its duty, but we have no hesitation in saying that it might have done much better.

Courage and patience are qualities which one needs very badly when one is placed in difficult circumstances. We had, during the late war, a precious opportunity of watching these two qualities at their best among Englishmen in South Africa. The history of the siege of Ladysmith and its relief will always be an example of invulnerable courage and inexhaustible patience. Many Indians who took part as stretcher-bearers will be able to recollect the scenes that they were witnesses to at the fights of Colenso and Spion Kop. In spite of fearful odds and bad reverses, there was no yielding. When at one time, even General Buller was inclined to think that relief was impossible, the world knows that there flashed across the wire a message from the hero of Candahar, that as long as General Buller had one man left with him, he was not to give in. The great result we all know. Ours is not a struggle so difficult, or so heroic to contend against, but it teaches a lesson in courage and patience which we ought to learn. If no sum of money, no quantity of blood and no amount of time were considered too great for the honour of the British Empire to relieve what were, after all, a handful of the besieged in Ladysmith, shall we not think similarly when we are engaged in a struggle for our liberties, and come to the conclusion that we must have courage and patience enough to tide over passing misfortunes? We should not forget that "Calamity is man's true touchstone," and that "none can cure their harms by bewailing them".

But we require something more also. We are apt as a nation, and the Missionaries have brought it up against us as a charge, to look at things material with philosophical indifference, and make little of

everyday comforts of life. Now, that is an attitude for which we haveunbounded admiration; but it would be very much misplaced in South Africa. Such an attitude would be a credit to those who do not strive after material gain, but it becomes a misnomer in the case of those who strive their utmost in order to enrich themselves; and we do not know that there are many Indians in South Africa who have migrated with any other desire than that of bettering their material position. To such, then, it would be more philosophical to fall in with the natural order of things, and to be prepared to spend in proportion to their earnings. The charge, then, against the Indians that they live on nothing a year would be dispelled. At the same time, nothing can be further from our thoughts than to suggest that we, as a community, should give ourselves up to pleasure. What we do wish to emphasize is the fact that we ought, as far as may be, to "do in Rome as the Romans do", still retaining the attitude of mental indifference. If we can have such comforts, well and good; and if we cannot, well and good, also.

But, above all else, what is most needed in a community which considers itself to be ill-treated at the hands of others is the virtue of love and charity. It is well known that, after all, men, being creatures of circumstances, would do things which are unjustifiable quite unconsciously, owing to the control exercised over them by the circumstances in which they are placed. Is it not, then, necessary for us to be charitable in our judgments? We, as a people, are devoted to religious speculations, and to doctrines of non-resistance and of returning good for evil. We believe firmly in the fact of even our thought colouring the actions of those of whom we may think. We see such instances often in daily life. A great crime committed by a man has been known to change his face in such a way as to stamp the crime on it. Similarly, a great good act done by a man has produced the opposite effect on his features, and he has been known, as the case may be, either to attract to, or to repulse from, himself people by his very act. We then hold it to be our paramount duty not to think evil of those who we may consider are dealing unjustly by us. There is hardly any virtue in the ability to do a good turn to those that have done similarly by us. That even the criminals do. But it would be some credit if a good turn could be done to an opponent. If this very simple thing be always borne in mind, we do think that success will come to us far more quickly than we are likely to imagine. We hope, as time goes by, to develop more fully each one of the points cursorily

touched upon in this article. At present, it is enough for us to ask our countrymen to ponder over what we have said, and to be always on the alert, otherwise, storm-tossed as we are, a surging wave may all of a sudden come upon us and engulf us, when any action we may wish to take will be *Too Late.*

Indian Opinion, 20-8-1903

133. STANDING COUNSEL FOR SOUTH AFRICA

Truly does Mr. Chamberlain hold a brief for the white Colonists in South Africa. Whether good or bad, the cause of South Africa he has made his own. He believes, and to a very great extent thinks rightly, that his business is to conserve the interests of the Colonies to the exclusion of every other, be it ever so great or just. And if the other ministers do not do justice to their clients, and if, as a consequence, they suffer, it is no fault of the Colonial Secretary. It is in that spirit that he has treated the very reasonable proposals of the East India Association suggesting an impartial inquiry into the question of anti-Indian legislation in the Transvaal. As counsel for his clients, he could not very well accept a proposal which might compromise their position. He would, therefore, enter into correspondence with Lord George Hamilton, counsel for the British Indians. Such a procedure leaves the position of the Colonists unfettered. The charges made by them against British Indians would remain unrefuted; and much less will have to be granted to the Indians labouring under such charges than would have been the case if the inquiry had been undertaken and the finding had exonerated them.

The generous effort of Sir William Wedderburn and the East India Association has met with little response; still, we do not lose courage or hope. Mr. Chamberlain is undoubtedly sympathetic; Lord George Hamilton has promised to do everything he can to secure justice; and we doubt not that the Colonists, for whom Mr. Chamberlain has been doing so much, will not fail to accept his advice to extend to the British Indian settlers "fair and honourable treatment".

Indian Opinion, 20-8-1903

134. ACCIDENT?

The catastrophe at Paris[1] must have filled all the portions of the globe where the news reached with gloom. We can well imagine the feelings of the victims and the survivors. To us, these untoward happenings are not merely accidents but we look upon them as divine visitations from which we, if we chose, may learn rich lessons. To us, they show a grim tragedy behind all the tinsel splendour of the modern civilization. The ceaseless rush in which we are living does not leave any time for contemplating the full results of events such as have placed Paris in mourning for the time being. The dead will be soon forgotten, and in a very short time, Paris will again resume its usual gaiety as if nothing whatsoeverhad happened. Those, however, who will give the accident, if so it may be called, more than a passing thought, cannot fail to realize that behind all the splendour and behind all the glittering appearances there is something very real which is missed altogether. To us, the meaning is quite dear, namely, that all of us have to live the present life merely as a preparation for a future, far more certain and far more real. Nothing that the modern civilization can offer in the way of stability can ever make any more certain that which is inherently uncertain; that, when we come to think of it, the boast about the wonderful discoveries and the marvellous inventions of science, good as they undoubtedly are in themselves, is, after all, an empty boast. They offer nothing substantial to the struggling humanity, and the only consolation that one can derive from such visitations has to come from a firm faith not in the theory, but in the fact, of the existence of a future life and real Godhead. And that alone is worth having or worth cultivating which would enable us to realise our Maker and to feel that, after all, on this earth we are merely sojourners.

Indian Opinion, 20-8-1903

[1] This was a disastrous fire in the underground Electric Railway on August 10, in which 84 persons were killed and many injured

135. THE BLEEDING CRY

Will His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor of the Transvaal, who is now also the Governor of that Colony and High Commissioner for South Africa, amid all his multifarious duties find time to listen to the bleeding cry of the British Indian refugees in Natal who are suffering agony owing to being prevented from returning to their homes? The number of cases that are being brought to our notice from day to day is very serious, and if His Excellency would only relax the embargo, it would be nothing more than an act of humanity, pure and simple. We have said before that there is no consistency about the plague policy of the Transvaal Government. They allow hundreds of Europeans and thousands of Kaffirs to enter the Transvaal from Natal from week to week without any restrictions whatsoever. The poor Indian refugees, so anxious they are to return to the Transvaal, have offered to undergo quarantine at Volksrust at their own expense, and still the Transvaal Government have so far turned a deaf ear to their petition.[1] Latterly, they have been allowing Indians from the Transvaal to enter this Colony and return. Will they not carry with them the plague germs and spread the dread disease in the Colony of the Transvaal? The Government evidently seem to think they will not. In their opinion, there must be something very special about the British Indian refugees in Natal that renders them more susceptible to plague than any other class of people. Really, this is going altogether too far, and unheard of in a British Colony. If the embargo is political, it would be simple honest to make the confession, and tell the British Indian refugees in Natal that they need not hope ever to return to the Transvaal. Such a reply, if very unjust to the petitioners, would at any rate be honest and remove the extreme suspense under which the poor refugees are at present labouring. I they may not claim to return to their homes, they have a right to be made absolutely certain as to their position, one way or the other, and we sincerely trust that the Transvaal Government would see their way to make a definite and decisive reply so that they would know Where they are.

Indian Opinion, 20-8-1903

[1] This is not available.

136. PERMITS AND NON-REFUGEES

Apropos of the plague embargo, we might once more mention the severe restrictions that are imposed about the granting of permits to British Indian refugees throughout South Africa and the total prohibition against non-refugee Indians The granting of 70 permits only per week to *bona fide* refugees is altogether inadequate. As the Colonial Secretary informed the Legislative Assembly, there be a iv thousand applications still undisposed of from applicants in South Africa. This does not take into account hundreds of Indians who are still in India and have not been able to return to South Africa for some reason or other. We Ail to understand the reason for preventing the refugees from returning except in dribblets. That they have a right to enter the Colony is not disputed. If the only reason, therefore, that all are not allowed to return at once, be that of fear of congestion and too many Indians unable to support themselves entering the Colony, that would be undoubtedly a very fair objection, but there is a remedy, and a very safe one, against any such evil. Every refugee can be made to give reliable security that, on his entry into the Transvaal, he will not only be able to find suitable residence but that he has friends ready to support him in case of need. Then there need be no fear of overcrowding or starvation. The prohibition against non-refugees is also, in our opinion, very unjust It means serious inconvenience to the Indian traders and others who may require assistants, salesmen or servants. And it is exceedingly unfair to the refugees themselves, who are deprived of earning in the Transvaal a certain livelihood which might be offered to them. We do not contend for one moment that all newcomers should be allowed to enter the Transvaal unrestricted, but we do think that those who have actual employment offered to them ought to be allowed to join such employment, without any hindrance. We, therefore, hope that the Transvaal Government will be pleased to give this matter also their sympathetic consideration.

Indian Opinion, 20-8-1903

137. INDIAN TRADE LICENCES IN THE TRANSVAAL

JOHANNESBURG,
August 22, 1903

Lord Milner's dispatch, dated May 11 and addressed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, has been received by this week's mail. The Indian community is grateful to His Excellency for the sympathy he has shown for them and regard for their feelings. There are, however, statements therein which require correction. It appears that they have been made on the persistent assertions of the members of the White League. His Excellency says in his despatch:

> Had we had to deal merely with the Asiatic population as it existed before the war, it might have been possible to remain passive until a new law could have been framed to the satisfaction of His Majesty's Government But, with so many newcomers constantly pouring in and applying for licences to trade, and with the European population protesting with ever-increasing vehemence against the indiscriminate granting of such licences and against the neglect of the Government to enforce the law which restricts Asiatics to locations specially set apart for their residence, it became impossible to persist in the policy of complete inaction.

It is submitted that the Asiatic population even at the present day is smaller than it was before the war. The registration law has been enforced, and the result has been to show that there are not more than 10,000 Indians at present in the Colony. The official report published by the Government shows that there were at least 15,000 British Indians in the Colony prior to the war. Both these statements are official. Moreover, stringent "permit" regulations prevent any but British Indian refugees from entering the Transvaal. It is, therefore, hardly correct to say that the enforcement of the law became necessary owing to "so many newcomers constantly pouring in and applying for licences to trade". Moreover, the Bazaar Notice deals not merely with applicants for new licences but with all, whether they held licences prior to the war or not, subject to reservations made therein. Had the Government declined to issue licences to non-refugees, there would be nothing to complain about, but as it is, the whole of the law is at present directed against *bona fide* refugees. His Excellency says:

> The Government are anxious, however, to do so (enforce the law) in the manner most considerate to the Indians already settled in the country, and with

the greatest respect for vested interests, even where these have been allowed to spring up contrary to law.

As has already been said in a previous letter, as well as in the printed memorial[1] submitted to His Excellency, vested interests are not respected in the sense here understood. Hundreds of Indians whotraded before the war contrary to law (that is, without licences) are under notice to remove to Locations at the end of the year, causing complete dislocation of Indian businesses. Moreover, all the partners of a single firm are not allowed licences, but only one of them who happens fortunately to be in the country and anticipate his other partners. Nor are they allowed to remove their trade from one place to another in different districts. Nor are the licences transferable from one person to another, a prohibition which completely deprives the trader of the value of his goodwill. Thus, it will be seen that every Indian trader must ultimately remove his business to the Location.

His Excellency says (in answer to the complaint that the anti-Asiatic laws are being more rigorously enforced under the British regime than under the Boer regime):

> (1) It (Government) is providing in every town special quarters in which Asiatics may reside, and in the selection of these quarters, it is doing its best to choose sites not only healthy but affording reasonable opportunities for trade.
>
> (2) It has declared its intention not to disturb Asiatics who had established themselves in business before the war,. but to renew their licences. Under the old Government, all these men were under notice to quit.
>
> (3) It proposes to exempt Asiatics of a superior class from all special legislation.

With reference to the first, it is hardly a relief that Locations will be established in every town, for it is against the establishment of these that the Indians very successfully protested under the old regime. With the exception, therefore, of a few towns, the late Transvaal Government did not dare lay out any Locations. Now the Government have already selected sites for nearly twenty townships. As to the choice of healthy sites affording reasonable opportunities for trade, in the absence of any information, it is difficult to say much, but what is already known is not very reassuring. In spite of the protests of the British Indians, the existing Location at Barberton is to be removed

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Transvaal Governor", June 8, 1903.

away, and though the distance is not very great, it is easy to understand what a great loss the traders of the Location must suffer by reason of the removal.

As to the second, under the Boer regime, and in spite of any non-declaration of intention not to disturb vested rights, the representations of British Agents protected them all up to the outbreak of hostilities. The notices to quit were then considered not to be worth the paper on which they were written (for all the Indian traders were under notice for several years, and yet they were never enforced). As soon as an attempt was made, a protest was sent to the Home Government and relief was instantaneous.

As to the third, if the exemption was of the nature contemplated by Lord Milner, namely, "from all special legislation", it would undoubtedly be of considerable advantage, but the Bazaar Notice is in conflict with any such view. It merely grants exemption as to residence. The humour of the situation lies in the fact that respectable British Indians, if they would live in towns after the end of the year, would have to get special exemption and prove to the authorities that "they are in the habit of using soap", and that "they do not sleep on the floor", and so on. But Indians of the servant class are, by law, entitled to reside in towns without any special permission being necessary there-under, for the section of the law reads: "The Government shall have the right to appoint special streets, wards and locations as their residence. This provision shall not apply to servants living with their masters." Hundreds of Indian servants, therefore, if not thousands, (for they are very much appreciated as domestic servants), may live in towns without having to make any application for exemption, but a handful of well-to-do, respectable British Indians may not reside in towns with out having to undergo the indignity of an offensive examination. No such exemption was necessary under the old regime because compulsory segregation was never adopted.

The statement, therefore, made by the British Indians that the anti-Asiatic laws are being enforced with a rigour never before known, is literally true.

As to the charge of insanitation based on an extract from Dr. Porter's report, the enclosed article from *Indian Opinion* speaks for itself. If prejudiced statements were made against British Indians prior to the war, statements utterly unsupported by facts, the British Indians are still labouring under the same prejudice. The evidence of

Dr. Porter falls undoubtedly under the same category.

To pass to another matter, the British Indian Mahomedans at Pretoria bought a piece of property for the purpose of erecting a mosque in Pretoria some fifteen years ago. This property still remains in the name of the seller owing to the Boer law prohibiting the ownership of land by Asiatics outside Locations or streets set apart by Government. Several representations were made to the British Agents prior to the war, and on the eve of it, Sir Conyngham Green assured the British Indians that, if war broke out, there would be no difficulty about the transfer after its conclusion. In spite of several representations, the Government has refused at present to allow the land to be registered in the names of the trustees. A letter has been addressed to the Colonial Secretary by Mr. Hajee Habib on behalf of the Mahomedan congregation.[1] The seller is a very old man and, in the event of his unfortunately dying before the transfer is given, complications may arise meaning loss of property which is very valuable to the British Indian Mahomedans in Pretoria. The same difficulty has been experienced in Johannesburg with reference to the Johannesburg Mosque, but here the need is not so great, as the seller is not in the same position as the seller at Pretoria. It is, therefore, hoped that Mr. Chamberlain will be pleased to induce the Government to grant the transfer.

India, 18-9-1903

138. PETITION TO CHAMBERLAIN

DURBAN,
August 24, 1903

TO
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN
HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
LONDON

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED REPRESENTING THE BRITISH INDIANS RESIDING IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT:

Your Petitioners humbly venture to approach His Majesty's Government with reference to the Immigration Restriction Bill passed

[1] "Letter to Colonial Secretary", August 1, 1903.

during the present session of the Legislative Assembly of the Colony of Natal.

Your Petitioners, while accepting the principle of the Bill, took the liberty of protesting against certain clauses thereof, and presented memorials[1] to both Houses, but, unfortunately for your Petitioners, none of the objections raised by them were entertained by either House.

It has, therefore, become incumbent upon your Petitioners to approach you, fully trusting that you will be pleased to secure for your Petitioners the relief requested in the memorials above referred to.

As all that could be said on behalf of your Petitioners is stated in the memorial presented to the Honourable the Legislative Assembly, your Petitioners venture to attach hereto a copy thereof, and request your kind consideration of same.

Your Petitioners would not trouble you with any further argument but would add that, in their humble opinion, the request contained in the memorial is exceedingly reasonable; and seeing that the present Bill is an experiment, your Petitioners think that a tentative adoption of your Petitioners' suggestions could not be of any disadvantage to the European Colonists.

Your Petitioners, therefore, humbly pray that you will be graciously pleased to advise His Majesty to withhold the Royal Assent or to grant such other relief as may be meet.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners shall, in duty bound, for ever pray.

Enclosure in Despatch 370 of 18-12-03 from the Governor of Natal to Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Colonial Office Records: C. a. 179, Volume 227, Despatch 370.

139. PREJUDICES DIE HARD

We are indebted to the *Times of India* for the letter of the Special Correspondent at Johannesburg of the *Daily Telegraph*, dealing with the position of the British Indians *in* the Transvaal, which we reproduce elsewhere. Although the letter is rather an old one, it

[1] *Vide* "Immigration Bill", June 23, 1903 and "Petition to Natal Council", July 11, 1903.

gives us pleasure to bring it to the notice of our readers, as it shews how others regard the position of the British Indians. The letter shews, moreover, the truth of the saying that "prejudices die hard". We know Mr. Ellerthorpe, the accomplished correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, and we are sure that he would not knowingly do an injustice to anybody—much less the British Indians. However, in giving his resume, he has *very* much been guided by the popular fallacy about British Indians.

The Special Correspondent says:

> The Indians, on the other hand, in attacking the Government, very much overstated their case. Put shortly, they charged the British Government with perfidy. In 1885, they said, you protested against the action of the Transvaal Government, you asserted our right as British subjects to full privileges of immigration, residence and trade. Now you turn round and apply the same tyrannical laws yourselves. This would be an unanswerable argument, were it only accurate. But it is not accurate. In the course of the correspondence, both Lord Ripon and Sir Edward Stanhope, as Colonial Secretaries, assented to the modification of Article 14 of the Convention. The Transvaal Government desired to modify it on sanitary grounds, and to this the British Government assented. In the reference to the Chief Justice of the Free State, the British Government expressly conceded the point as to residence in locations, and only asked for the right of trading outside native bazaars, and Mr Chamberlain, to whom the Indians specially appealed, writing in 1885, says: 'To make friendly representations to the South African Republic as to these traders, and possibly, to invite that Government to consider whether, when once its legal position has been made good, it would not be wise to review the situation from a new point of view and decide whether it would not be better, in the interests of its own burghers, to treat the Indians more generously, and to free itself from even the appearance of countenancing a trade jealousy which, I have some reasons to believe, does not emanate from the governing class in the Republic.'

Now, in these statements, there is more than one inaccuracy, and it is a great pity that in the modern rush people are unable to verify *as* fully as it is necessary their statements before they are reduced *to* writing and given to the world. With the best intentions not to do injustice, statements made in influential papers like the *Daily Telegraph*, if they are not borne out by facts, are calculated to do irreparable injury in many cases. So far as we are aware, never, in a single instance, have the British Indians (we mean, representative

British Indians) overstated their case. In fact, those who have at all studied the question have often admitted the extreme moderation on the part of the British Indians. They can have nothing to gain by exaggeration, and a great deal to lose. That the British Government in the Transvaal is now enforcing the laws of the old Republic, against which they protested vigorously up to the commencement of the war, is a fact which is beyond dispute, and while the quotation from Mr. Chamberlain's despatch is correctly given, it does not represent the full attitude of Her late Majesty's Government on the question. All that the despatch states is that the legal relations were closed by the award given by the Chief Justice of the late Orange Free State, but, later on, Mr. Chamberlain "reserves to himself the right to make friendly representations to the Boer Government, and to ask it to reconsider the decision from a fresh point of view". Nor is this all. In the Blue-book on South African Affairs are published various telegrams dated after Mr. Chamberlain's despatch, protesting against the enforcement of the law, and asking the Boer Government to deal with the Indians leniently. In the submission to the Chief Justice of the late Orange Free State made on behalf of Her late Majesty's Government, the interpretation of Law 3 of 1885naturally states that: "The British Indians be allowed to reside in some quarters which, for sanitary reasons, may be assigned to them", and nothing has been said on the part of the British Indians in conflict with that statement. What, however, is the fact, and what has been repeatedly submitted on behalf of the British Indians is that, although the Law 3 of 1885, as amended in 1886, so far as the legal position was concerned, was accepted by the British Government, they continued to bring pressure to bear upon the late Boer Government, with the result that the Law ever remained a dead letter until after British occupation. The point, therefore, made by the British Indians is, not that the Law was not accepted by the British Government, but that, in spite of the acceptance, it was never enforced owing to the protests made by the British Agents from time to time. Whether, therefore, the Law remained on the statute-book or not, it did not matter much to the British Indians so long as the protecting arm of the British Agents gave them immunity from it. Such being the case, the statement that the British Government is now enforcing the very Law against which they protested so effectively is literally true. It should also be borne in mind that a careful reading of the whole of the correspondence between the two Governments on the subject would show conclusively

that the Law itself was assented to under a misapprehension. So much with reference to the alleged overstatement of their case by the British Indians.

The suggestions made by the Special Correspondent with reference to the treatment of the problem, unfortunately, also betray a hasty judgment. Contrary to all evidence, he condemns small shopkeepers and hawkers, and sees nothing wrong in the relegation of the Indian population to the Locations, and brings forward in justification of the proposal the oft-refuted charge of insanitation. He has also fallen into the error of thinking that the new regulations (namely, the Bazaar Notice[1]) apply only to future immigrants, forgetting that at present immigration of non-refugee Indians is altogether prohibited, and that with reference to licences, only those who held them before the war will have renewals granted to them.

However, the whole of the article is interesting reading, and the writer evidently is not unsympathetic; and if we have not brought out the fair remarks that he has made at the commencement of his letter, and laid stress on what we consider to be inaccurate statements, we have done so because the fair remarks will speak for themselves, and inaccuracies need always to be corrected, especially when they appear in journals which are read by tens of thousands of people, and whose presentation of questions is often accepted as gospel truth.

Indian Opinion, 27-8-1903

140. LORD MILNER'S DESPATCH

We are enabled to print in full, in this issue, Lord Milner's despatch to Mr. Chamberlain. The telegram in the *Rand Daily Mail*, on which we have remarked, has reference to Lord Milner's despatch. It is a document of very great interest and also, to some extent, of hope to the British Indians in South Africa. It shews at once what they have to fear and what they are to expect from the present Government in the Transvaal. That His Excellency is actuated by great sympathy and excellent motives is evidenced throughout the despatch, and where there is good ground for complaint, the cause is not Lord Milner himself, but those who have placed facts before him—perhaps, not even those latter because they, amid the overwork of office, have

[1]*Vide* enclosure to "British Indians in South Africa ‘‘, April 12, 1903.

not been able to place before His Excellency correct facts. Our duty, therefore, is to draw His Excellency's attention to such facts. Lord Milner says:

> They (the Government) are anxious, however, to do so (that is, enforce the legislation) in a manner most considerate to the Indians already settled in the country and with the greatest respect for vested interests, *even where these have been allowed to spring up contrary to law.*

We have already pointed out that this is not warranted by the Bazaar Notice, for those who were trading prior to hostilities without licences, and, therefore, contrary to law, are under notice to remove to Locations at the end of the year.

His Excellency says further:

> In some cases, no doubt, laws which were either obsolete or wholly bad have been simply repealed where no inconvenience was likely to arise from such a course.

It would be interesting to know what laws these are which have been repealed. His Excellency goes on:

> Had we had to deal merely with the Asiatic population as it existed before the war, it might have been possible to remain passive until a new law could have been framed to the satisfaction of His Majesty's Government, but with so many newcomers constantly pouring in and applying for licences to trade. . . it became impossible to persist in the policy of complete inaction.

Here, again, we venture to point out that no newcomers have yet been allowed to enter the Colony with the exception perhaps, in the early stages, of a handful who could be counted on one's fingers. The British Indians have so far merely asked for bare justice in favour of old traders, and have protested against the refusal to grant them licences. The "policy of complete inaction", therefore, could very well have been maintained until further legislation was passed, and the enforcement of the £3 tax, in the light of this statement of Lord Milner's, is evidently not justified, if not uncalled for.

"We have no wish to subject respectable British Indians or civilized Asiatics generally to any disabilities," says His Excellency.

We thank His Excellency for isolating British Indians from other Asiatics, and recognising their status as British subjects. As we have pointed out in dealing with the telegram in the *Rand Daily Mail,* all British Indians, respectable or otherwise, are at present labouring under the fullest disabilities common to the Asiatics, except that they

may be exempted as to residence, and that alone.

Lord Milner proceeds:

> In the first place we shall see whether, when the sites of the proposed Asiatic quarters have been marked out, the opposition of the Asiatics to reside in them will be maintained.

If we know the feeling of our countrymen correctly, we do not think that the opposition will taper down so long as the sting of compulsion keeps it alive and smarting. We are not surprised at His Excellency having made use of Dr. Porter's fanciful description of the Indian Location in Johannesburg. We would, however, refer His Excellency to the reports of Dr. Marais, Dr. Johnston, and several others[1] who have made statements contrary to Dr. Porter's, and Medical Officer of Health though he is, we think that the opinions of the gentlemen we have referred to are entitled to greater weight because of their greater and more mature experience.

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141. MORE LIGHT ON THE INDIAN QUESTION

The *Rand Daily Mail* correspondent has sent a long telegram with reference to a Parliamentary Paper issued by the Colonial Office on the position of the Indian question in the Transvaal. We have ventured to copy it in another part of this issue. We are aware that it is very difficultto comment upon State documents when we have before us only a very imperfect summary, but as it may be some time before the paper itself arrives in South Africa, and as the question dealt with by it is of very great importance, on the presumption that the telegram is a fair summary of the document in question, we propose to offer a few remarks thereon. According to it, in "three most important respects" a consideration is said to have been shown to Asiatics by the Bazaar Notice, which the late Government did not show, namely, "that the Locations are being selected in healthy localities and affording reasonable opportunities for trade","that the Asiatics, who had established themselves in business before the war, are not to be disturbed"; and "that exemption will be granted to those of a superior class from all special legislation".

With reference to the first, we do not propose to deal at present,

[1] *Vide* "Evidence against Lord Milner's Charge of Insanitation", 13-8-1903.

as we do not know the sites for the various Locations.

With reference to the second and the third statements, they are utterly misleading. According to the Bazaar Notice and to the decisions given thereon, we know positively that licenses are being granted only to those who held them on the outbreak of hostilities, and not to those who had established business before war if they did not also possess licenses. This makes a very great difference. Hundreds of British Indians traded on the strength of tenders made for licenses which were never granted to them, and this with the full knowledge of the Boer Government. These will now, under the Bazaar Notice, be prevented from exercising trading rights. As to the exemption, the Bazaar Notice merely contemplates it regarding residence and residence alone. It does not free Asiatics of a superior class from all special legislation. It comes, therefore, to this: that, after all, the Bazaar Notice concedes to the Indians nothing they were not in possession of before the war, for they were never compelled to reside in Locations. Not a single Indian had any difficulty in trading, and, as there was no compulsion as to residence, there was naturally no question of exemption.

Lord Milner anticipates no difficulty with reference to the new legislation which is to be on lines similar to those followed by the Cape Colony and Natal. Here there is complete agreement between the Government and the Indians. Not that the Indians consider it desirable or necessary that such restrictive legislation should be passed, but they have been reluctantly compelled to accept the inevitable, and to work in co-operation with the Government so long as special and offensive restrictions are not imposed on them on the ground of racial distinction. We join His Excellency in the hope that the more difficult question of restriction to Bazaars will be satisfactorily settled, and we know of only one solution: Take off the hateful compulsion. Lay aside decent accessible sites. Invite Indians to co-operate with you, and you will find that a large number would, of their own accord, gravitate to these sites. Anyhow, it is an experiment worth trying. No legislation would be required for the purpose and the question will solve itself.

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142. A CRUEL WRONG

We reproduce elsewhere the letter addressed by Mr. Hajee Habib, of Pretoria, to the Transvaal Government, with reference to the Pretoria Mosque. Our readers may remember that the property on which the elegant mosque at Pretoria is situated was bought by the Mahomedan congregation about fifteen years ago. It is a very valuable piece of property now. The British Indians, as soon as the property was purchased, approached the then Government for special authority to have it transferred in the names of the trustees of the mosque, but the Republican Government returned a disappointing reply. They thereupon approached the British Government, but without success. Before the outbreak of the war, the only hope Sir Conyngham Green could hold out was that, if war did break out, there would be no difficulty in the transfer being granted to the trustees under the British Government. And yet, strange to say, up to the present moment the Government has declined to authorise the transfer. It is true that the Colonial Secretary offers to receive it in his own name on behalf of the congregation; but the property being dedicated to religious use, according to the tenets of their religion, the latter cannot accept the offer. Such, we believe, is the position. The proposal made by Mr. Hajee Habib, that the portion on which the mosque is situated should be declared by the Government to be a ward or street in which Indians may hold land, is very reasonable, and would certainly meet the case, but we understand the Government has declined to grant the request. The position is undoubtedly serious, and the Mahomedan community, which has a right to have its religious feelings respected equally with the others, may one of these days find the property slipping out of its hands, and have to remain without a place of worship. It is a pretty outlook for people living under the British flag, which takes under its protecting fold all the religions. We may, therefore, well ask, what are the Indians coming to in the Transvaal? Is the British Constitution going to be revised at Pretoria? Or will justice ultimately triumph?

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143. THE PRECIOUS EXEMPTION

We print elsewhere the form that is to be filled in before exemption is granted to Asiatics under Clause 4 of Government Notice No. 356 of this year, known as the Bazaar Notice. There are twenty questions to be answered, some of which are harmless, some humorous, and some are offensive in the highest degree. Before the precious exemption is granted, the applicant has to say: how many persons he employs? Whether they are Asiatics? What is the condition of the latrines? Do any persons. sleep in his shop, if any? How many persons sleep in the dwelling rooms? Are the day rooms distinct from the night rooms? Do the inmates sleep on the floor? Do the inmates use soap? etc. We wonder whether ordinary cleanliness, separation of day rooms and night rooms, prohibition to sleep in shops, sanitary condition of latrines and such other matters are to be dispensed with when the Asiatics are forced into Locations? If the enquiry of the above nature is only necessary when an exemption is to be granted, it follows that the Government suppose either that the inmates of the Location will live in an ideal state, rendering supervision unnecessary, or that they will be allowed to wallow in dirt and filth if they choose to do so. One simple question suggests itself to us, namely, whether the Government have ever considered the Law 3 of 1885, and whether they know that Asiatics, if they are servants, are free to reside in towns without any exemption whatsoever, and without having to satisfy any officer as to whether they use any soap and whether there is any provision for washing and bathing or not? We quote the Section from the Law itself. It says: "Government shall have the right to appoint special streets, wards and locations as their residence. *This provision shall not apply to servants living with their masters.*" It, therefore, comes to this, that Asiatic servants need not undergo the indignity of having to answer the questions, but those whom Government consider to be respectable have to pass the examination and satisfy the Government officers before they can receive the certificate. And this is the exemption which His Excellency Lord Milner has laid so much stress upon in his despatch to Mr. Chamberlain. We know that Lord Milner has construed the exemption clause in a much wider sense not warranted by the Notice itself. Is it, then, any wonder if our countrymen in the Transvaal persist in saying that the Transvaal legislation regarding Asiatics has never before been enforced so rigorously as now? We

only hope that no self-respecting British Indian would so far forget himself as to fill in the form for the sake of the privilege of living within town limits.

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144. LORD SALISBURY[1]

By the death of Lord Salisbury, the British Empire has lost a statesman who was loved and respected in the Empire and feared outside it. The late Lord Salisbury's life is an object lesson to every member of the Empire—in uprightness, industry, and all that is worth cultivating in this life. His, moreover, is an example to be treasured up by the rich men in any land. To history, however, he will be bestremembered as one of the greatest Foreign Secretaries of the Victorian era. And it was his masterly grasp of the situation and full realisation of the greatness of the Empire which cut out for him a unique position among the continental nations. Lord Salisbury was no opportunist, and to him, politics were not a matter of gain. He, therefore, cared little for popular applause, and spoke out against wrong, whether it came from his own party or the Opposition. As Lord Cranborne, when he was Secretary of State for India, he did not hesitate to call a spade a spade, and this was the view he gave about the poverty of India:

> The injury is exaggerated in the case of India where so much of the revenue is exported without a direct equivalent. As India must be bled, the lancet should be directed to the parts where the blood is congested, or, at least, sufficient, not to those already feeble for the want of it.

The statement has become historical, and has been quoted from many a platform. As to policy, he said:

> To keep peace, and to push on the public works—that is in brief the policy that we have to follow. If we can increase the immense means she (India) possesses for the production of commodities—if we can draw forth the enormous elements of prosperity that lie in the richness of her soil and the teeming millions of her population—if we can impress upon the neighbouring Powers (whether they lie outside her borders or are included in her own dominions)—if we can impress upon them that her rulers have renounced for ever the policy of annexation and territorial aggrandisement, which formerly

[1] 1830-1903: twice Prime Minister of Britain.

spread distrust and caused disturbance all round; if we do these things, and if we can spread to all the populations there under our charge the blessings of English civilization and English government, if we can give them the culture which will enable them to appreciate those blessings and to take part in spreading them and in making them effectual—if these things can be done, then this present method of repose and of apparent stagnation will be put to the best use it possibly can be put to . . .We can only be assured that if we

make the best use of our present opportunities—if we push to the utmost of our power the moral and material, improvement of that vast territory and of the teeming nations that people it, we shall have placed our Empire upon foundations that cannot be shaken.

Again, as showing the frankness of his disposition, the following extract from his speech, taken from the great work[1] of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, is very apt:

The general concurrence of opinion of those who know India best is that a number of well-governed small Native States are in the highest degree advantageous to the development of the political and moral condition of the people of India.... The British Government has never been guilty of the violence and illegality of Native Sovereigns. But it has faults of its own, which, though they are far more guiltless in intention, are more terrible in effect. Its tendency to routine, its listless, heavy heedlessness, sometimes the results of its elaborate organisation, a fear of responsibility, an extreme centralisation; all these results, traceable to causes for which no man is culpable, produce an amount of inefficiency which, when reinforced by natural causes and circumstances, created a terrible amount of misery.

The same frankness guided the noble man during the critical period of the late Boer War. When disaster followed disaster during the initial stage of the bloody conflict, he, of all the statesmen in Great Britain, was ready and willing to admit that the disasters were undoubtedly due to mistakes, drawing, at the same time, historical parallels and showing that in the initial stages of almost every great war the British had been engaged in, they had committed serious blunders.

On July 20, 1900, he even stated that:

It was very desirable that the treatment of India should be generous and liberal, because, as one reason, the mass of the people of that country were much more struggling and suffering than the mass of the people here.

[1] *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India*, 1901.

Lord Salisbury, again, it was who, at the risk of losing popularity, did not hesitate, on the very platform of the Propagation of the Gospel Society at the time of the Chinese expedition, to utter some disagreeable though wholesome truths. Before his distinguished audience, with reference to the missionary work in China, His Lordship, true Christian gentleman that he was, reminded the missionaries that, as they had fallen from the advice of Christ, and instead of meekly suffering hardships, and even death if necessary, in pursuit of their calling, asked for the assistance of temporal power in carrying on their work, it was their duty to temper their zeal with prudence, so as not to compromise or place in a false position countries they represented.

For the information of our readers, we give elsewhere an extract from His Lordship's address at the above-mentioned meeting, which shows the height and the depth and the breadth of his nobility and purity of motives.

Such was the great and good patriot the British Empire has lost, and whose loss it mourns.

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145. AN UNRIGHTEOUS COMPACT

We print elsewhere Mr. Chamberlain's speech in the House of Commons dealing with the question of Indian labour. There occurs in that speech the following most ominous passage:

> Now, in order that the development may proceed at the greatest possible rate, Lord Milner applied to me and said: 'We are thinking of employing coolies on the railway. Will you represent to the Indian Government our desire in that respect and use your influence to induce their assent?' It was assent to a proposal which the Indian Government had already accepted in the case of Natal—namely, that the coolies should come for a given period, and their indentures should expire in India, that the balance of their pay should be given to them in India, so that they would not be permanent residents in the South African sub-continent, but would return to their native country with their savings in their pockets. It was believed by the Indian Government to be the best way to secure labour for the sugar estates and other work without inducing a permanent population of Asiatics. That agreement had been made and assented to by both sides.

We can only hope that either Mr. Chamberlain has been

misreported, or that he was himself labouring under a misapprehension when he made the statement above quoted. We all know that a deputation on behalf of the Natal Government went to India, and that it has returned, but we have not been made aware of the result of their mission. No statement has been made by the Government here to the effect that the principle of compulsory repatriation, such as has been referred to by Mr. Chamberlain, has been accepted by the Indian Government; and yet; the statement wehave quoted is as clear as it possibly could be, that after the completion of their indentures, the indentured men must return to India, and to ensure their return, a most effective method has been adopted—namely, that the balance of their pay is to be given to them in India. And it is under such terms that "the development" of the Transvaal is to proceed "at the greatest possible rate", if only the Indian Government would grant to the Transvaal what it is said to have granted to Natal! All we can say, with due respect to Mr. Chamberlain, is that, if the statement is correct, the poor Indian labourer has been sold for the benefit of the Colony, and that a form of modified slavery is to be revived in South Africa in this twentieth century under the sanction of the British Government and in the name of a people who have spent any amount of blood and treasure for the sake of the emancipation of slaves. The partnership into which the employers of Indian labour and the employees are to enter in the Transvaal would be what is known as a leonine partnership, in which one party gets all the benefit and the other party bears all the burdens. The position that the gentlemen of the White Leagues in the Transvaal have taken. up does, indeed, in the light of these facts, command admiration. It is capable of being understood, and is certainly in harmony with justice to a greater extent than the proposal made by Lord Milner; for, a refusal on the part of the White Leaguers to admit into South Africa the Eastern races cannot by any means be placed on a par with the proposed exploitation of Indian labour without giving the Indians a right of settlement. In the one case, the refusal is unjust merely from an Imperial standpoint; and if South Africa were not British, no one can cavil at the position taken up by the Europeans in South Africa as to the exclusion of any but themselves from a participation in the advantages that are offered in this sub-continent to settlers. But the proposal as to importation of labour under the. restrictions mentioned is unjust without regard to the Imperial standpoint. It is unjust, that is to say, under any circumstances; while the one is merely an outrage

on the Imperial instinct, the other is an outrage on the instinct of humanity, and in the words of the late Right Honourable Harry Escombe, we cannot "think that it ought to be compulsory on any man to go to any part of the world, save for a crime for which he is transported", and we do not know that the Indian has committed any crime, unless the inheritance from his ancestors by him of the colour of his skin is a crime in British South Africa.

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146. TRANSVAAL LICENCES

There is one point in Lord Milner's despatch published in the last number of the *Indian Opinion* which requires special attention. His Excellency says:

> During the war, and since the declaration of peace, a large number of temporary licences were issued to newcomers. These licences have been renewed until December 31st 1903, but the holders have been warned that on that date they will be required to remove to streets or bazaars selected for this purpose.

Now it has been pointed out before, that none of the licences were issued as "temporary licences", nor were they issued to "newcomers". Neither during the war nor since the declaration of peace have any newcomers been able to either enter the Transvaal, or, at any rate, to secure licences to trade. It is capable of being proved without the slightest difficulty that those who were granted licences were all *bona fide* refugees and, before war, engaged in trade in some place or other in the Transvaal. The British officers, who granted them licences, attached absolutely no conditions either verbally or written, and they were all granted in the usual manner—that is, up to the end of last year. It was only when agitation against the British Indians was raised about the time of Mr. Chamberlain's arrival that the Magistrates began to give notices that such licences would not be renewed, and the very fact that the Government has overridden all such notices and granted renewals up to the 31st of December next shews that the Indians in question were not in possession of temporary licences. Be that, however, as it may, the question is a most serious one for the parties immediately affected. In many cases, we understand, the licence-holders, believing in the perfect security of their rights under the British Government,. have built at considerable expense substantial stores, imported very largely from home manufacturers, and formed good connections. To expect them to remove to Locations or Bazaars

at the end of the year would practically spell ruin for them; even if it were a question of removing an established business from one place to another in the same street, a mere. novice in mercantile affairs would be able to say that the removal would involve a great deal of loss. Whether, therefore, the Bazaars become an established institution or not, and whether new applicants are granted licences or not, and irrespective of the fact of new legislation removing the existing one described by Lord Milner as un-British, the assurance to these poor merchants that their licences are perfectly safe is very desirable and absolutely necessary. Two things stand out most prominently in connection with the Bazaar Notice. One is about these so-called temporary licences, and the other about the distinction between British Indians who held licences prior to war and those who traded prior to war without any licences. The existing Indian licences are divisible into three parts, namely, (first) those Indians, who although *bona fide* refugees and traders before war, have been granted licences in respect of districts in which they did not trade before war which are now described as temporary licences; (second) those refugees who traded before war without licences, but with the knowledge of the old Government, in the same district in which they are now trading, and (third) those British Indians who held licences prior to war and are trading now. It is only with reference to the third class that the Bazaar Notice guarantees security in unequivocal terms. The other two classes are at present labouring under very great uncertainty. The result of deprivation of their licences in respect of their present positions will be the same, no matter to what class they may belong, because all are now in possession of licences. Moreover, while, so far as these are concerned, the matter is of very small importance to the Government, it is one of life and death to the traders themselves. These facts were brought to the notice of Mr. Chamberlain at Pretoria and he pooh-poohed the idea that under the British Government the licences referred to could ever be disturbed. We, therefore, on the ground of justice, or on the strength of promise made by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, think that these men who may be counted on one's fingers have a right to expect an assurance of perfect safety, and we have every hope that the Government will be pleased to give the necessary relief in the matter.

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147. INDIAN LABOUR AND MAURITIUS

The island of Mauritius has always been cited in South Africa to the disadvantage of the Indian. The superficial critics have not hesitated to declare that the Indians have ruined it, forgetting that it owes its present position to Indian enterprise, and that, but for Indian labour, it would very probably have been a howling wilderness. They are unable to point to a time when, without the Indian, the island was in a better condition. The following is the uncourted testimony to the worth of the patient Indian toiler in that island:

> South Africans may note, says the *Times of India,* the remarks of Lord Stanmore at the meeting of the Credit Foncier of Mauritius. Last year, Mauritius had the misfortune of passing through the very worst crisis ever remembered there. The cattle plague finally deprived most estates of the bulk, if not the whole, of their draught animals and that at a time when they were most wanted for the crop which was then being gathered in. But Lord Stanmore says this catastrophe strikingly showed how admirable a labour force Mauritius possesses in its Indian coolies. They cheerfully and readily undertook work ordinarily done only by oxen and mules, and without stipulating for advantages which, had they demanded them, it would have been impossible to refuse.

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148. NATAL'S PRIDE

The Colony has honoured itself in honouring the memory of the late Right Honourable Harry Escombe. The unveiling of the statue of the deceased statesman in the Town Gardens on Saturday last, by his friend and co-worker, Sir John Robinson, does no more than justice to the memory of the great man. Although there were often occasions for the British Indians to complain of his attitude, it can never be said of him that he did anything in the justice of which he did not fully believe. For the man who could risk his position, his great popularity, for the sake of what he believed to be the truth (we refer to the attitude, up to the day of his death, on the Bar problem)[1]

[1] Attorney-General Escombe supported Gandhiji's enrolment as an advocate of the Natal Supreme Court in 1894, despite opposition by the Law Society on grounds of colour.

in the teeth of practically united opposition of the whole Colony, was not the man who would do anything against his firm convictions. In later years, on the Indian question, the Right Honourable Gentleman considerably modified his views, and, if we quote an instance which is not recorded in the newspapers, we do so in order to do justice to the fairness and the magnanimity of the great man. Three hours before he died, he expressed his regret that, when he passed his anti-Asiatic measures, he did not know the Indian community as he knew then, and hoped that time would remove any inconvenience that the Indians may have to suffer owing to the legislation. Among his kindnesses to the Indian community, the generous manner in which he gave his blessing and a treat to the Leaders of the Natal Indian Volunteer Ambulance Corps[1] will always occupy a first place, and for which the community cannot be too grateful. He addressed the Leaders in the following terms which were his last public utterance:

> Mr. Escombe said he thanked them for paying him the marked personal compliment of asking him to address a few words of farewell before they left for the front. They would carry with them not only the good wishes of those present,but of all the people in Natal, and in the Queen's great Empire. This incident was not the least interesting of the many episodes of this remarkable war. The meeting showed the willingness and the resolve of theIndian subjects in Natal to do what they could to promote the unity and the solidarity of the Empire, and they, claiming rights in Natal, recognised in what they were now doing their obligations to the country. And they were going to occupy as honourable a position as those who were doing the fighting, because if there were none to look after the wounded, war would be much more horrible than it now was. War was sad enough, but there were things worse than war. It had to take place when a country was invaded, but war would be much more horrible were it not for all that was done to minimise those horrors, and it was a movement in which they could take an honourable part. War was uncertain, except where the British Empire was concerned—a war in which that Empire took part could have but one end. There might be incidents, but the conclusion could be but one, and the conclusion would bring about a better state of things in South Africa—under one flag! At a time not far, some of them had hoped to unify South Africa—without disturbing the autonomy of the States—in one federation under the flag of Britain, but when Natal was once invaded, these hopes had to yield to different conclusions altogether, and now things had happened which made it impossible for them to do otherwise than bring the whole of South Africa into the Empire. And it could not be forgotten that the

[1] *Vide* "Indian Ambulance Corps", December 13, 1899.

Indians in Natal—who had been treated with more or less injustice—had sunk their grievances, and claimed to be part of the Empire and to share its responsibilities. They took with them the hearty good wishes of those who knew what was taking place that day, and the knowledge of what they were doing would help to bring closer together the different classes of Her Majesty's subjects throughout the whole Empire

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149. BOKSBURG LOCATION

As will appear from the proceedings of the Boksburg Health Board, the gentlemen there are still active with reference to the removal of the present Indian Location. Evidently, Captain Colley, the Chairman, who has only lately returned from Europe, is not in sympathy with the drastic proposals of the Board, but it is a question how far he will be able to do justice single-handed. The main chance, therefore, of retaining the present Location is still dependent upon the action of the Government. Justice is absolutely on the side of the inmates of the Location, and we can only hope that the Government, after having taken up a consistent attitude, will not abandon it owing to the pressure of the members of the Health Board. May we not, however, appeal to the sense of fair play of the members of the Board? We have suggested a British solution to them. They allege that nearness of the Location to the town is a source of danger to the health of the community. Assuming that the fear is justifiable, the remedy lies in their own hands, but it does not consist in removing the Location. As Dr. Johnston would say, 'the removal could merely aggravate the danger'. The remedy, therefore, consists in putting the Location in thorough sanitary condition, and preserving it in that condition, if it is not so at present. If the inhabitants of the Location are themselves the culprits, the law could be relentlessly enforced, Sand a few prosecutions would do a far greater amount of good than prejudiced agitation for removal of the site, and then leaving the residents of the Location without sufficient sanitary control.

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150. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI[1]

P. O. BOX 6528,
JOHANNESBURG,
September 7, 1903

TO
THE HONOURABLE DADABHAI NAOROJI
WASHINGTON HOUSE, 72 ANERLEY PARK
LONDON S. E.

DEAR SIR,

In the *Indian Opinion* being posted to-day, you will notice an extract from Mr. Chamberlain's speech.[2]

You may recollect that a Commission went to India on behalf of the Natal Government last year with a view to induce Lord Curzon to agree to the compulsory repatriation of indentured Indians after the termination of their indentures. The Commission has returned, but no statement has been yet made by the Natal Government. Mr. Chamberlain's speech, however, would go to show that the Indian Government accepted the principle of compulsion in a most objectionable manner—that is to say—a portion of the wages of the indentured men is to be paid them on their return to India. This will be nothing less than temporary slavery, and we, in South Africa, feel it so strongly that such a stipulation should not be agreed to even in exchange for a grant of more rights to free Indian settlers in Natal. The fight regarding the licences and other matters affecting free Indians ought to be carried on independently of the question of indentured labour, except that, if the free Indians are not guaranteed fair treatment, indentured immigration may be withdrawn entirely. But to give away the liberties of indentured Indians who may be brought to Natal, for the sake of a better treatment of free Indians, would be highly immoral, and would never be acceptable to the latter. It is to be hoped, therefore, that a continued protest will be made against the principle of compulsory repatriation. From Mr. Chamberlain's statement, it would appear that the thing is already done. The Natal Government,

[1] This was also published in *India*, 2-10-1903, with some verbal changes, as "From a Correspondent".

[2] The speech on the Transvaal Labour question was made in the House of Commons; *vide Indian Opinion*, 3-9-1903.

however, is quite reticent and, therefore, there is just a hope that, after all, Mr. Chamberlain has made a mistake in making the announcement he has done.

The struggle about licences (Dealers') in Natal has been revived as a direct result of Lord Milner's Notice. Natal has naturally grown bolder, and, in view of the coming new year, the situation has become very acute.

In Newcastle, as you will notice from the *Opinion*, a licence in respect of ideally good premises has been refused to a British Indian. Four licences in Durban have been refused simply because it was a matter of change of premises, not that they were new licences. Mr. Nazar would probably be writing to you from Durban, but as I know the history of the Dealers' Licenses Act from the very commencement, I thought I might deal with it also.

In the Transvaal, the position is just as it is described in the long cablegram that was sent some time ago. It is high time that a definite pronouncement was made regarding the existing Indian licences here, and that the congestion regarding permits to *bona fide* refugees was removed.

Your obedient servant,

M. K. GANDHI

India Office: Judicial and Public Records, 2852.

151. THE DEALERS' LICENSES ACT REDIVIVUS: I

It is a curious coincidence that the Durban Town Council is showing its former vigour in suppressing Indian licences at the same time as the Newcastle Town Council. It has, sitting as a Court of Appeal, confirmed the decision of the Licensing Officer who thought fit to refuse a renewal of four Indian licences in respect of new premises, as to which we might say, in passing, there was no complaint from a sanitary standpoint. Mr. Robinson, who acted as counsel for the four appellants, hinted that the Licensing Officer had received instructions previously from the Town Council to refuse renewals of Indian licences for new premises and, in spite of the denial of the Town Council, we venture to think that there was some truth in Mr. Robinson's statement. Diplomatic denials are not unknown in South Africa, and the Town Council's repudiation, to our mind, smacks more of diplomacy than anything else. However, it is not with that

phase, painful though it is to us, that we are concerned, but it is with the grim struggle that is being again forced on the Indian community in its terrible earnestness which touches most deeply the life of its mercantile portion.

Mr. Chamberlain, when he was at a distance of thousands of miles, and had not seen South Africa, was able to secure relief for the British Indians in the Colony. We refer to the circular that was sent round to the different municipalities by the Government at his suggestion, to the effect that although they had been given arbitrary powers, they were expected, on pain of being deprived thereof, to use them in a reasonable and gentle manner, and that, in no case, if they wished to retain those powers, were they to touch vested interest.

We had thought that the circular had done id work, although when it was issued, the Congress had done well to remind Mr. Chamberlain that the remedy provided by him was a stop-gap thing, and that it by no means insured protection to the British Indian merchants for all time. The fear has been more than realised, and we now witness a revival of the root-and-branch policy that had been adopted by the Town Councils throughout the Colony, when they found themselves in possession of the extraordinary authority given them by the Act in question; and, if we were to seek for the reason for the renewed activity of the Town Councils, it is to be found in Mr. Chamberlain, when he paid his memorable visit to South Africa, and also Lord Milner. Probably, the Colonists had never expected that they would find him so yielding as he was found to be as to matters of fundamental principles of the British Constitution. Since his return to England, also, he has been himself unwilling to protest against the Colonial policy in South Africa, even when it has been a clear departure from British traditions. Lord Milner has strengthened the impression thus gained by the Colonists as to their powers by his Bazaar Notice, and they have really come to the conclusion that, if the principle of Locations and restrictions of licences to British Indian subjects can be sanctioned and approved of in a Crown Colony, much more so in a self-governing Colony like Natal.

The result is the enforcement of de Dealers' Licenses Act in fullest vigour, and this is probably only the beginning of another struggle for existence on the part of the British Indian in Natal; and if we are justified in our forecast, then we may truly say that British Indians, who expected bread out of Mr. Chamberlain's visit to South Africa, have got stones instead.

Indian Opinion, 10-9-1903

152. FROM SLAVE TO COLLEGE PRESIDENT

Mrs. Besant has said somewhere that England owes her present position not to her warriors, but to her one great national act, namely, the emancipation of slaves. truth is very strikingly realised in the life-story of Booker Washington. Mr. Rolland has contributed a very interesting article to the latest number of *East and West* on Booker T. Washington, which is worth bringing to the attention of our readers.

Booker, as he was known when yet a slave, was born about the year 1858, the exact date being unknown to him. "His lot," says Mr. Rolland, "was the average one. He did not fall under the tyranny of one of those brutes so forcibly depicted in Mrs. Beecher Stowe's novel. . . . Yet even those masters who were kind to their slaves, treated them like inferior beings—a kind of useful cattle which had to be well fed if they were to work well, and which had no need of comforts they would be unable to appreciate." When freedom for the slaves was proclaimed, Mr. Booker's family left the plantations and went to town. He had a very great desire, illiterate though he was, to learn and educate himself. He, therefore, set about learning the rudiments of the English language, and attended a night-school. In his uphill work towards mental progress, he was helped by many white patrons of his, chief among whom was General Armstrong who had served in the Civil War. "He was," proceeds Mr. Rolland, "a sort of apostle who devoted his life to the coloured races, whose needs he thoroughly understood, and who founded in 1868 in Virginia the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute to train young men and women of the negro and (Red) Indian races to become teachers among their own people." Our hero longed to receive his education at the Institute; he, therefore, accepted service in a military officer's house, and after he had saved some money started for Hampton. The distance he had to cover was nearly five hundred miles. "The difficulties of the road were still further increased by his being a coloured man who could not be received at the same hotel as white people. More than once, he had to sleep out of doors, and to work all day in order to get enough to eat, but he never hesitated. At last, he reached Hampton. His appearance was so wretched and disreputable that the gates would have been closed against him if the matron of the establishment had not thought he might be useful as a servant. Thus, he got permission to stay. He was able to pay for his board and teaching by fulfilling the

duties of doorkeeper, room cleaner and man-of-all-work, Washington, manifold occupations did not prevent him from assiduous attention at the classes." It was not likely that such marvellous industry would escape the sympathetic notice of General Armstrong, who bestowed special attention on him, with the result that Mr. Booker came out of the Institute as one of the most brilliant students. Having imbibed knowledge himself which enabled him to take a broader view of life and to fight poverty and all difficulties, he thought that he could not better devote his life than being instrumental in imparting a similar knowledge to his fellow-countrymen. With such a laudable aim, he opened a small school, first at Malden, then at Washington, until he was called back to Hampton to occupy the post of teacher to the Indians of the Institute. Being himself a negro, he had some difficulty with the American Indians, but by his gentleness and prudence he soon succeeded in disarming all opposition to himself. This humble beginning laid the foundation of what is now an ideal college at Tuskegee. He realised that "the one thing needed by negroes, for the time being, was to learn how to work to advantage in the trades and handicrafts; how to be better farmers; how to be more thrifty in their lives; how to resist the money-lenders' inducements to mortgage their crops before they were made". With this resolution, he set out for Tuskegee, and began his teaching in 1881 in a shanty. He had, however, like many pioneers, not only to found a school but to attract pupils to it. His idea about combining industrial education with a knowledge of letters merely, as might be well imagined, was not taken up enthusiastically. He, therefore, travelled from place to place, lecturing to the people on the advantage of his system. In his struggle for reform, he found Miss Olivia Davidson to be a worthy helper, whom he afterwards married. The result was that the support he received as to the number of the pupils soon outgrew the capacity of his humble school building. But Booker, who by this time had added Washington to his name, was equal to the occasion. He borrowed money and purchased a plantation of a hundred acres. Here was an opportunity for him of putting into practice his theory of industrial training. His students were, therefore, set to work, and a suitable structure was built. The clay was dug by them, and the bricks, too, were burnt by them. The Tuskegee College has now forty buildings and a beautiful library, a gift from Mr. Andrew Carnegie, on an estate of 2,000 acres, besides fifteen cottages belonging to it. It represents a value of £100,000, the annual cost is £ 16,000, the number of people

about 1,100; the cost of each student is £ 10 per year, board being paid partly in money, partly in labour—£ 40 suffices to complete a four years' course, while £ 200 provides a permanent scholarship. A great number of donations from great philanthrophists and voluntary contributions from all kinds of people have every year added to the funds of the College, and a grant of 25,000 acres of land in Alabama was given by the Government of the United States in 1898. The students come from twenty different States and territories. There are eighty-six instructors in the college and twenty-six different industries taught, every student, man or woman, having to learn a trade in addition to his or her studies in the class-room. The men learn printing, carpentering, bricklaying (in which they have become so competent that they turn out a hundred thousand bricks of superior quality a month), and various agricultural processes. The women learn plain sewing, dressmaking, cooking, ironing, and all about dairy work and poultry, horticulture, which is now a special feature at Tuskegee, five thousand pear trees being grown on the farm. They have a market garden which they have planned and made themselves. They have constructed a cold farm house, doing the carpentry work themselves. They keep an account of the expenses incurred in raising and amounts realised from the sale of all vegetables. A nurse-training department has lately been established, and there is now a Kindergarten in the College. A savings bank has been founded on the grounds, and a school Post Office recognised by the State and responsible to the Government. A newspaper is also issued every month.

Such is the work done by Mr. Booker T. Washington, single-handed, in the face of enormous odds, without a glorious past to look back upon as an incentive which more ancient nations can boast of. His influence at present is so great and universal that he is liked by all, both black and white. We read some time ago in the newspapers that the President of the United States invited him to the White House—"an unprecedented event—a revolution in the States where, a short time ago, no white man would have touched the hand of a negro without thinking himself defiled by this contact". Harvard University has honoured him with the degree of Master of Arts. In travelling through Europe, he has drawn crowds of appreciative audiences. A life such as this teaches a lesson to all of us. If it is one full of honours, the honours have been well earned, after patient toil and suffering. Mr. Washington might hate chosen another career in which

he might have shone perhaps better in the estimation of some, but he chose first of all to raise his people, to qualify them for the great task lying before them. With himself he has raised his own countrymen also immeasurably, and set to them, as indeed to all of us who care to study his life, an example worthy to be followed. One word to our own countrymen, and we have done. We have in our midst in India men who have devoted their lives to the service of their country, but we make bold to say that the life of our hero would perhaps rank higher than that of any British Indian, for the simple reason that we have a very great past and an ancient civilization. What, therefore, may be and is undoubtedly natural in us, is a very great merit in Booker Washington. Be that, however, as it may, a contemplation of lives like this cannot fail to do good.

Indian Opinion, 10-9-1903

153. INDENTURED LABOUR

In reply to the question put by the Honourable Mr. Jameson in the Legislative Council, the Prime Minister has informed him that the papers relating to the question of the compulsory repatriation of indentured Indians, being confidential, cannot be published, and that correspondence is still going on between the two Governments. This statement goes to show that the Indian Government have. not yet consented to the compulsion clause. If so, Mr Chamberlain's remarks, which we printed in last week's issue, are premature, and based on insufficient information. At the same time, there no doubt that the Indian Government have at least lent a willing ear to the proposal of theNatal delegates. We can only hope that the public opinion in India, and also in England, would make it impossible to sanction the insertion in the indentures of a clause which is admittedly unjust and unfair. Better by far, said the late Mr. Saunders, to stop further immigration than to take what you can out. of the poor men, and then to send them away.[1]

Indian Opinion, 10-9-1903

[1] Report of the Immigration Commission.

154. ORANGE RIVER COLONY

Mr. Francis Lazarus, described as "an Indian born in Durban, aged 27 years", has applied to the Resident Magistrate at Bloemfontein for permission to reside in the sacred Colony of the Orange River, and to be engaged as a photographer's assistant. The public of Bloemfontein are notified that they may file their objections to the application within 30 days of the notice. At the expiry thereof, the Magistrate will have to send the application to the State President, now the Lieutenant-Governor, who may either decide to grant the applicant the "privilege" of residence, or appoint a commission of inquiry—for such is the value set upon the privilege by the State—as to the question of granting the application. And then, if the decision is in favour of the applicant, he may be a proud resident of the Colony which is miscalled British. We may note that the nett result of the formalities is merely the right to reside in the Colony, without the right to own fixed property, to trade or to farm. The residence, of course, is to be confined to Locations, unless the applicant is a domestic servant, and as such, resides with his master. When the war broke out, we were among those who assured the sceptical Indians that the bonds of the British Indians in the two Republics would fall with the close of the war, and we were able to silence any misgivings by pointing to the fact that, as the Indian disabilities were one of the causes of the war, a successful end of the latter was bound to bring about the end of the former also. For the time being, however, the sceptics have triumphed, and anti-Asiatic legislation in both the Colonies is doing its deadly work among our countrymen. When will Mr. Chamberlain wake up?

Indian Opinion, 10-9-1903

155. PERSEVERING POTCHEFSTROOM

The Chamber of Commerce at Potchefstroom seems to be very jealous of the British Indian traders in that Township. Not being satisfied with the decision of the Magistrate with reference to the recent prosecution against some hawkers in connection with their residence, they have now decided to collect evidence so that thay may find out whether or not there was a Location set apart by the old Government, and they have, therefore, resolved to apply for

permission to examine the old records. The Chamber of Commerce at Potchefstroom, if the report we publish elsewhere from the *Rand Daily Mail is* correct, would go "one better" than the gentlemen at Boksburg. The attitude of the Chamber betrays want of confidence in the decision of the Magistrate, and they, therefore, propose to sit in judgment upon that decision. They have also promoted a petition, signed, so we are told, by ninety-six traders, which requests the Chamber's influence in preventing the further issue of licences to British Indians, and particularly to "one Patel, opening on the Burgher Right Erven". We venture to remind the petitioners, as well as the Chamber, of the fact that the issue of all the British Indian licences is now regulated by the Bazaar Notice, and that it would be hardly constitutional for the Chamber to go outside that Notice in order to harass the poor traders. We use the word "harass" advisedly, because, as we have shown before, the Notice in question grants precious little to the British Indians. All the new license-holders are, in accordance with it, under notice to remove to Locations; nor are any of these licences transferable from person to person. Would the influential members of the Chamber of Commerce at Potchefstroom deprive the British Indian traders even of what little remains to them under the Notice?

Indian Opinion, 10-9-1903

156. JAPANESE QUARANTINE

The alert enterprise of Japan has long been the admiration of the world. In its quarantine regulations, it equals, if not surpasses, Western countries. A writer in the *Medical Record* says that the Japanese quarantine rules are strict, for the Chinese and Korean pestilence centres are only two or three days' distance by steamer, and Japan has much commerce with the mainlands

On entering a Japanese harbour, a steamer is met by a boatload of quarantine doctors. Their launch is equipped with microscopes and apparatus for making bacteriological examinations. Each of the doctors is able to speak at least one foreign tongue, so that English, French, German, Russian and Chinese, indeed, people of all nations, can be examined in their own languages.

All the passengers and the members of the crew are lined up on deck, called by name and checked off on the list. While this is going

on, the physicians pass along the line, feel every man's pulse, make him put out his tongue, and if he shows signs of illness, they produce thermometers and take his temperature.

Nothing escapes the doctors. It is useless to try the old trick of sending a man round the deck-house to be counted twice, for every man not present must be accounted for and examined wherever he is on duty while the count on deck is going on.

Men who have symptoms of illness are set aside and examined. The doctors show proficiency in the latest methods of diagnosis.

So carefully axe the quarantine regulations observed, that the crew is inspected even on a vessel going from one Japanese port to another

Indian Opinion, 10-9-1903

157. THE DEALERS' LICENCES ACT REDIVIVUS: II

The decisions of the Town Councils of Newcastle and Durban are a warning to the British Indian traders in Natal of what is in store for them in January next when licences will have to be renewed. As the events of 1898 bid fair to be repeated in all their ugliness during the coming year, it might be as well to recall the incidents connected with the Indian licences during that year. It was the Newcastle Town Council which led the way then, and perhaps, quite by accident, it leads the way now. In 1898, as we have already said in a previous issue, all the Indian licences were, in the first instance, refused by the Licensing Officer at Newcastle. Counsel had to be engaged by the aggrieved storekeepers at a heavy fee, with the result that six out of nine licences were ordered to be renewed by the Town Council. The matter, it will be remembered, went to the Privy Council in order to test the question as to whether the Supreme Court of the Colony had appellate jurisdiction over the decisions of Town Councils under the Dealer's Licenses Act. The then Chief Justice said that the Supreme Court had jurisdiction. The Privy Council, however, decided against the British Indian contention. The appeal cost the community over £600. The upshot, however, was that Mr. Chamberlain felt, as also did the legislators, that the deprivation of the right to appeal was a serious mistake, and the Government issued circulars to the Town Councils and Local Boards saying that unless they exercised their powers in a judicious and reasonable manner and respected vested rights, the law

might have to be re-considered. This had the desired effect for the time being, and up till now, except in the country places and isolated places, no difficulty was experienced as to renewals of licences. Some of the Town Councillors in Durban did not hesitate to express their disapproval of the Act, and the manner in which discretion was exercised by the Licensing Officers. Mr. Collins was one of them. Mr. Labistour, the present Attorney-General, when he was in the Town Councils, made some strong remarks, and said that the Town Councils were called upon m perform a "dirty work" in that they were expected tacitly to refuse licences merely on the ground of colour, and suggested that, if he Legislature wanted such work to be done, it ought to have had the honest to legislate in that direction, and not leave the Town Councils to do it. Now, However, the effect of the circular in question seems to have been entirely destroyed. The position is very serious, and would require all the energy that the Indian community can put forth in order to avert a disaster. Mr. Chamberlain, when he was in Durban in December last, was pleased to say that the Indians already settled in the Colony were entitled to fair and honourable treatment. Sir Albert, in confirming Mr. Chamberlain's view, went so far as to admit that the Dealers' Licenses Act was faulty, in that the right of appeal had been taken away.

We have said times without number that the Town Councils may fairly regulate the issue of dealers, licences in view of the popular prejudice, but it certainly ought not to be done capriciously, nor should the objection be based on the sole ground of colour. If the stores are not in keeping with the surroundings, the Town Council-might say so and insist on suitable premises being built. If there is anything wrong with the applicant himself, he might be called upon to remedy the defect. But after all the reasonable requirements have been fulfilled, we consider it a very serious injustice that any man should be prevented from trading because he does not wear a white skin. And it would hardly be called fair and honourable treatment to deprive innocent traders of their living by a stroke of the pen. The remedy for the evil, in our opinion, lies solely in giving to the Supreme Court the jurisdiction which, We contend, has been unconstitutionally taken away from it. It is a matter for thankfulness that the highest Courts of Justice throughout the British dominions are always pure, and the meanest of British subjects can rely upon getting fair decisions without favour or prejudice. These courts are the sheet anchor of the liberties of the people, and until the legislature restores

to our Supreme Court the power of reviewing decisions of the Town Councils sitting in appeal over Licensing Officers on merits of each case, there will be no rest for the Indian traders, and the attitude of the legislature will always stand condemned in the estimation of lovers of justice and fair play.

Indian Opinion, 17-9-1903

158. COMPULSORY REPATRIATION

> Though the Commission has made no recommendation on the subject of passing a law to force Indians back to India at the expiration of their term of service unless they renew their indentures, I wish to express my strong condemnation of any such idea, and, feel convinced that many who now advocate the plan, when they realise what it means, will reject it as energetically as I do. Stop Indian immigration and face the results, but do not try to do what I can show is a great wrong. What is it but taking the best of our servants (the good as well as the bad), and then refusing them the enjoyment of their reward? Forcing them back (if we could, but cannot) when their best days have been spent for our benefit. Where to? Why, back to face the prospect of starvation from which they sought to escape when they were young—Shy-lock-like, taking the pound of flesh, and Shylock-like, we may rely on it meeting Shylock's reward. Stop Indian immigration, if you will; if there are not enough unoccupied houses now, empty more by clearing out Arabs and Indians who live in them, and who add to the productive and consuming power of a less-than-half-peopled country. . The Colony can stop Indian immigration, and that, perhaps, far more easily and permanently than some 'popularity seekers' would desire; but force men off at the end of their term of service—this the Colony cannot do—and I urge on it not to discredit a fair name by trying.

These are the words of the late Mr. James R. Saunders, who uttered them with all the responsibility on his shoulders of Commissioner to investigate the question of Indian immigration, and what was true in the year 1887 is equally true today, for Mr. Saunders took up the highest platform, namely, that of right and wrong, and we question very much whether the idea of right and wrong has changed very much within the last sixteen years. With some people it may have, owing to selfishness or other reasons; but these were carefully examined by Mr. Saunders in 1887, and he could not come to any other conclusion than that compulsory repatriation could not be

resorted to by a British Colony. What are we, then, to think of the attempts that have been lately made and repeated by the Natal Government to bring about the forced return of indentured Indians to India after the expiry of their indentures? We hope against hope that there is some mistake made by Mr. Chamberlain when he made the statement that the Indian Government had accepted the proposal made by the Natal Government.

When, in 1894, the first Commission on behalf of Natal went to India to persuade the then Viceroy, Lord Elgin, to accept the principle of compulsory return, while declining to entertain the proposal in the form in which it was submitted, His Lordship said:

> I should myself have preferred the continuance of the existing system, under which it is open to an emigrant at the termination of his period of indenture to settle in the Colony on his own account, and I have little sympathy with the views that would prevent any subject of the Crown from settling in any Colony under the British flag; but, in consideration of the feeling manifested in the Colony of Natal towards Indian settlers, I am prepared to accept the proposals, A to F, set forth by the delegates in the memorandum of 20th January, 1894, subject to the following provisions, viz.: (a) That a coolie, when first recruited, shall be required by the terms of his contract, to return to India within, or immediately on, the expiration of the period of his indenture, unless he may prefer to re-enter into a further indenture on the same conditions. (b) That such coolies as may refuse to return should not, in any case, be made subject to penalties under criminal law. (c) That all renewals shall be for a period of two years, and that a free passage should be secured to the immigrant at the end of the first term for which his engagement is made, as well as at the end of every subsequent renewal.

We note that, following up Lord Elgin's suggestions, a £3 tax was imposed on all who did not wish to return or to re-indenture, and that is the state of the law at present. It was expected at the time the law was passed that the Indian Government would not go any further than Lord Elgin thought fit to do. Lord Curzon is credited with unsurpassed strength of will and firmness of purpose, and also with a desire to protect the interests of those over whom he is appointed as guardian. He has shown all these qualities in connection with the proposed grant by India towards the payment of Mr. Brodrick's South African garrison. We have, therefore, every reason to hope that, although, in this instance, it is the interests of the dumb coolie, he will not be less eager to extend his protection.

Mr. Chamberlain's despatch to Lord Milner, in connection with the proposal to introduce 10,000 indentured Indians into the Transvaal, raises a suspicion that the Viceroy may think that if he could secure better treatment for free Indians in the Colony, he might yield to the wishes of the Natal Government regarding indentured labour. We, therefore, hasten to clear the point as emphatically as possible, and we think we do but voice the universal Indian sentiment when we say that there is not in the Colony a free Indian who would agree to buy better treatment at the expense of his indentured countrymen. After all, the free Indian is in a position to look after himself. He can wait for better treatment until the Colony has veered round, or the Imperial Government has asserted its position in matters of Imperial policy. But the indentured Indian, even as it is, is practically helpless. He comes from India in order to avoid starvation. He breaks asunder all the ties, and becomes domiciled in Natal in a manner that the free Indian never does. To a starving man there is practically no home. His home is where he can keep body and soul together. When, therefore, he comes to Natal and finds that he can, at any rate, have no difficulty as to feeding himself, he quickly makes of it a home. The associations he forms in Natal among his own class are to him the first real friends and acquaintances, and to expect him to break that home is nothing short of cruelty. We have, therefore, no hesitation in saying that an Indian with any humane feelings, and any sense of' common tie and common blood, would simply decline to have his position bettered at the price which may be asked by the Natal Government.

Indian Opinion, 17-9-1903

159. PREJUDICE WITH A VENGEANCE

We are constrained once more to revert to the vexing Plague Restrictions on British Indian refugees wishing to enter the Transvaal. Although there is absolutely no plague in the Colony, and there has been a long interval between the last case of plague and now, the Transvaal Government, in their eagerness (?) to save the Colony from the introduction of the disease, continue the prohibition against British Indian refugees. We have often remarked that there is about this cruel embargo not the slightest sense of justice, and the sooner the Transvaal Government see their way to allow the refugees (hundreds of whom are dependent on their friends) to return to theirhomes, the

better it would be for them as also for the refugees. Lord Milner was pleased to say to the British Indian deputation that the Government had no prejudice whatsoever against the Indians. We wonder what answer His Excellency would give in justification of the plague embargo.

Indian Opinion, 17-9-1903

160. INDIAN ART

The Times of India weekly edition to hand gives a very interesting description of the new palace which is being built at Mysore for the Maharajah. We reproduce portions of it for the edification of our South African readers, both European and Indian. The former will be able to realise what Indian art means, and also that India, as is often believed in South Africa, is not a place dotted merely with huts inhabited by savages. To the Indians who have never been in India, it would be a matter of national pride and satisfaction that the enlightened potentate of Mysore is bent on encouraging Indian art, and on reviving it in a most practical form. It will be seen from the description given by *The Times of India* that nearly twelve hundred workmen belonging to families trained to the craft for generations find that their work can be appreciated and prized, at any rate, in Mysore. We wish we could give our readers a reproduction of the fine supplement to *The Times of India*, giving some of the illustrations of the work being done in Mysore. A quotation on Indian art from the late Sir William Wilson Hunter's *Indian Empire* may not be out of place here:

> The Hindu palace-architecture of Gwalior, She Indian-Muhammadan mosques and mausoleums of Agra and Delhi, with several of the older Hindu temples of Southern India, stand unrivalled for grace of outline and elaborate wealth of ornament. The Taj Mahal at Agra justifies Heber's exclamation, that its builders had designed like Titans, and finished like jewellers. The open-carved marble windows and screens at Ahmedabad furnish examples of the skilful ornamentation which beautifies every Indian building, from the cave monasteries of the Buddhist period downward. They also show with what plasticity the Hindu architects adapted their Indian ornamentation to the structural requirements of the Muhammadan mosque. English decorative art in our day has borrowed largely from Indian forms and patterns. The exquisite scrolls on the rock-temples at Karla and Ajanta, the delicate marble tracery and flat wood-carving of Western India, the harmonious blending of forms and

colours in the fabrics of Kashmir, have contributed to the restoration of taste in England. Indian art-work, when faithful to native designs, still obtains the highest honours at the international exhibitions of Europe.

Indian Opinion, 17-9-1903

161. NOTES[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
September 21, 1903

THE POSITION UP TO 21ST SEPTEMBER 1903

In none of the cases referred to in the long cablegram sent on the 4th August[2] has relief been yet granted. Non-refugee British Indians required for trade purposes are not allowed to enter the Colony, nor have all the refugees been yet granted permits.

The licensing question still remains where it was, although the time for renewals is drawing near. For those who are in possession of licenses now but who did not trade on the outbreak of hostilities in their respective places, the situation is most critical, as, if they are forced to remove to Bazaars or Locations it would mean practically ruin to them.

The mosque property at Pretoria[3] still remains in jeopardy; the Government have not sanctioned transfer thereof in the names of the trustees.

The embargo on the arrivals from Natal has not yet been taken off, although the Natal Government has declared that the last case of plague was over now nearly a month ago.

The Orange River Colony still closes its doors against the Indians except as labourers, pure and simple, and then only after a great deal of trouble and worry.

These are things which call for *immediate* attention and redress.

Indian Opinion of 17th September, 1903 enclosed.

India Office: Judicial and Public Records, 402.

[1] This statement was sent to Dadabhai Naoroji who forwarded it to the Secretary of State for India; *India* published it in its issue of 16-10-1903.

[2] "Cable to British Committee", August 4, 1903

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", August 1, 1903.

162. THE DEALERS' LICENSES ACT REDIVIVUS: III

AN APPEAL TO THE LEGISLATORS

> It is with great regret that your petitioners have to record that the fears expressed in the memorial[1]. have been more than realised, and that the judicial interpretation has been against the British Indians in the Colony in a case herein below referred to. Their Lordships of the Privy Council have decided that from the decision of the Town Councils or the Town Boards, there is no appeal to the Supreme Court of the Colony under the above Act. This decision has paralysed the Indian traders. Consternation has seized hold of them, and there prevails amongst them a feeling of insecurity and a nervous fear as to what may happen during the ensuing year. . . . How the next year will open for the Indian traders, your petitioners do not know. Every storekeeper is, therefore, in a state of feverish anxiety. The suspense is dreadful. The large houses, fearing that their customers, small storekeepers, might be refused their licences and, having the only hope they had of securing some check on the licensing authorities taken away from them by Their Lordships of the Privy Council, have become despondent and hesitate to clear their goods.

This was written by the British Indian traders in 1898 and addressed to Mr. Chamberlain in connection with the Dealers' Licenses Act. History has repeated itself this year, and the above prayer may well be addressed, in view of what has passed during the last three weeks, to the legislators of the Colony.

Let us clear the way by at once making an admission for the sake of agreement, conciliation and yielding to the wishes of the Colonists, namely, that some restriction should be placed on traders' licences. Mr. Ellis Browne, in his now famous Bazaar Notice, dealt with the question of insanitation, and undue competition on the part of those who did not live as lavishly as the European traders. We will, for the sake of argument, assume that there exists undue competition, and that there is a great deal of insanitation amongst the British Indians, and that these two evils ought to be remedied by some legislation. That agreement being arrived at between the Europeans and the Indians residing in the Colony, the question is: How should the end be achieved?

The Europeans responded in 1897 by passing the Dealers'

[1] "Petition to Chamberlain", December 31, 1898.

Licenses Act. Then followed an interval. It was recognised that the Act was too drastic, and its operation was tempered with a large amount of discretion, reason and justice. Now, however, there seems to be a reaction, and the Act is to be enforced, if the decisions lately given by the Newcastle Town Council and the Durban Town Council are a fair index, to the fullest extent without regard to right or wrong. As against this, the position taken up by the British Indians is, in our humble opinion, unanswerable. The Act is, in its present form, manifestly unjust. In taking away the jurisdiction of the ordinary Law Courts of the Colony, it strikes at the very foundation of the principles of the British Constitution. It gives extraordinary powers to men whose interests are in conflict with those of the applicants for licences who may appear before them, and it enables them to appoint an officer (the Licensing Officer) who holds practically the livelihood of poor men in the palms of his hands, one who cannot give an unbiased, disinterested, and fearless judgment. The British Indians then say: 'Take away all this from the Licensing Act. Define, as nearly as possible, the powers of the Town Councils and Local Boards. Deal with insanitation ruthlessly, and insist on suitable buildings—dwellingrooms separate from stores, proper book-keeping, etc. But after you have your requirements fulfilled, let the applicant feel certain that he will receive his licence, whether it is a new licence or whether it is merely a renewal. Let the Licensing Officer be not merely a creature of the Town Council, but an independent officer, who will be able to give his decision on the merits of each application, and, with certain well-defined reservations, let there be an appeal from the decisions, either of the Licensing Officer or of the Town Councils, to the Supreme Court.' There will then be no opposition from the Indians. Not that any opposition from the Indians is worthy of consideration by the legislators, still we state it as a fact for what it may be worth. Anyhow, there will be no injustice. The law will be capable of being understood by outsiders, and those who may be affected by it will know exactly what their position is.

This is what Sir Walter Wragg said in connection with the appointment of Licensing Officers:

> It has been suggested to the Court that an officer so appointed must have a certain amount of bias in his mind because he was an officer permanently under the Town Council and must be in the Council's confidence. His Lordship was not going to decide the matter on that point, but he could quite see that the

Licensing Officer should be some person who was not in the Town Council's service and who was not in the confidence of the Council.

How the powers vested in the Town Councils have been abused in the past will be clear from the following remarks made by Mr. Justice Mason, who then adorned the Natal Bench. In the course of proceedings in appeal filed on behalf of the British Indians:

> He 'considered the proceedings under appeal were a disgrace to the Town Council, and he did not hesitate to use this strong language. He considered, under the circumstances, that it was an abuse of words to say there had been an appeal to the Town Council.'

The present Attorney-General, when he was a member of the Town Council, gave vent to the following sentiments:

> He 'had purposely refrained from attending the meeting owing to the anomalous policy pursued in appeals of that kind. He disagreed with the dirty work they (the Councillors) were called upon to do. If the burgesses wished all such licences stopped, there was a clean way of going about the matter, namely, getting the Legislative Assembly to enact a measure against the granting of licences to the Indian community; but sitting as a Court of Appeal, unless there were good grounds to the contrary, the licences should be granted.'

Dealing with the question of deprivation of the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, and the decision of the Privy Council on the Act in question, *our* contemporary, *The Natal Advertiser*, expressed its opinion as follows:

> We can only say that we deeply regret the decision (of the Privy Council) . . . . It is an Act which might have been expected from the Transvaal Raad. That body in the Aliens Expulsion Law has outstepped the jurisdiction of the High Court, and our readers will remember the outcry raised about it in the Colonies. But it is not one whit worse than this Act; indeed, if there is any difference, ours is worse, because it is likely to be much more frequently enforced. It is absurd to say that the. Act would not have been effective if right of appeal to the Supreme Court had been allowed. Surely, that body could be trusted to exercise common sense.... Far better, indeed, that in one or two eases, the latter (the desire of the Municipalities) should have been overruled than that the principle should be laid down in a self-governing community under representative institutions, that, inany case affecting the rights of the citizens, recourse to the highest judicial body in the State should be deliberately debarred.

We hope we have thus shown from the mouths of the

responsible Colonists how far the objection recited above has been held just by them.

We, therefore, appeal to the legislators, and the Colonists in general, to set themselves right without any pressure from Downing Street in a matter of such vital importance, especially because what they want to do can be done in a far less offensive manner, unless the intention is really to root out every Indian trader from the Colony, whom, Sir James Hulett only last week, in giving his evidence before the Labour Commission of the Transvaal, has described as a benefit to the Colony. Mr. Ellis Browne, also, was pleased to say that the intention was not to offend the feelings of the Indians nor yet to root them out, but to do justice and to recognise vested rights. We hope that, in uttering these sentiments, he has voiced the general Colonial feeling. If so, our appeal is, in our humble opinion, fair, and it ought to receive the consideration it deserves.

Indian Opinion, 24-9-1903

163. THE LABOUR QUESTION IN THE TRANSVAAL

The Labour Commission, which has been sitting at Johannesburg in order to inquire whether there is a sufficient supply of labour in Africa for the development of the Transvaal, is now drawing to a close. The Commissioners, who went out to the East to find out whether Chinese labour is available, are due to return some time this week. That the Commission will find that the labour supply available in Africa is inadequate for the demand, is a foregone conclusion. That importation of Asiatic labour, and most likely Chinese labour, would be then decided upon, may also be taken for granted.

The question, therefore, affects the British Indians residing in the Transvaal to some extent. The British Indians already know, to their cost, how the status of independent Indian settlers has been very much mixed up with the question of importation of indentured Indians. The Transvaal Government, as it were by prophetic vision, have prepared us for further confusion. In the Transvaal, the most specific term “British Indians” has given place to the more general term “Asiatics” It is “The Department of Asiatic Affairs”, “Asiatic Supervisors”, and “Asiatic Bazaars”. The importation, therefore, of the Chinese will, if only indirectly, prejudice the Indian cause. Be that, however, as it may; for the present, we propose to examine the

question from the Chinese standpoint, and on broad general principles.

We have already said that, in thinking of the importation of the Chinese, the millionaires and their supporters in the Transvaal forget the native of the soil entirely, and forget also the interests of the future generation of white settlers. Bad enough, however, as the positionis from these two standpoints, it is infinitely worse from that of the poor people, who would be imported into the country under most galling terms. The millionaires, in their eagerness to add to their millions, and others in their rush to become suddenly rich, do not even consider it necessary to give a passing thought to the fact that the Chinese, much abused as they are, have some claim as their fellow-human beings on their attention. And we make bold to say that the mere fact of their agreeing to conditions that may be imposed on their arrival would not, in any degree, lessen the awful responsibility of those who would make them. According to the British laws, there are some contracts which are void or voidable even though the contracting party may have given the necessary consent. For instance, those entered into by minors, or married women. If a ruffian were to present a loaded revolver at a man and say, "Your life or your signature", and if the latter gave the signature, the law steps in and says it is of no effect whatsoever. If any undue influence is used in obtaining the ratification of a contract, it is also void. A starving man giving away all his possessions and all his liberties would be allowed to recall them as soon as he wished to, and we have no hesitation in saying that, in spite of all the elaborate preparations that might be made to explain the nature of the indentures that might be offered to the Chinese, and in spite of their assent thereto in the presence of big officials, it would be morally, at any rate, if not legally, undue influence, for we cannot conceive the possibility of a free human being willingly agreeing to the terms such as those proposed at the various meetings that have recently been held in the Transvaal.

The labourers will be expected to enter into a contract of service for a term of years, Sat the end of which they would be forced back to the place where they came from. In the Transvaal, they are to be confined to Compounds, and they will not be allowed to use their brains, or their pens, or the brush, or the chisel. All they may use would be the shovel and the spade. We have hitherto been accustomed to think that the natural abilities of a man would be

allowed to have full play when coming in contact with a type of men other than himself, but the poor Chinese will not be able to do anything of the kind, and it is no earthly use whatever for him to find out after his arrival that he would be able to earn, for instance, in cabinet-making, as much in one hour as he would as a mining labourer in eight hours. He must allow his intelligence to be dwarfed, and be content to remain an unskilled labourer, pure and simple. This we consider to be totally indefensible and unjust. The pity of it all is that, after creating such an artificial situation, the Colonists would grumble if the "Heathen Chinese", as he is called, turns out to be a moral leper, resorts to all kinds of make-shifts in order to throw off his yoke, and by hook or by crook endeavours to make use of his abilities which he may have inherited from his ancestors. The mining industry is undoubtedly the mainstay of the Transvaal, but the Colonists may be buying its development too dearly. Nor is it at all contended that it will come to a standstill without the supply of labour from outside sources. Sir George Farrar, at the great meeting held some months ago at Boksburg, (which, in spite of his eloquence and persuasive powers, by an overwhelming majority very rightly rejected his proposal to introduce forced Asiatic labour) compared the mines to "treasure chests". The gold locked up in those chests is not going to rust away for want of labour. Why not, then, keep some of these chests locked up for the use of the future generations? Why should they be forced open for the benefit of the few at the sacrifice of everything else?

Ours, we know, is a very insignificant voice in the wilderness. All the resources of the White Leagues seem to be proving absolutely ineffectual against those of the magnates who are determined upon bringing 200,000 Chinese. So far, however, these gentlemen have taken up, if we may venture to say so, a low standpoint of selfishness. May we not appeal to them to add to their mode of propaganda, and strengthen their position by defending the defenceless and the voiceless also? Let us make it perfectly clear that, in making our appeal to them, we do not wish to be understood as advocating the free immigration of Asiatics. We have said before, and repeat here, that restrictions on immigration will be perfectly justified within reasonable bounds. We believe as much in the purity of race as we think they do, only we believe that they would best serve the interest, which is as dear to us as it is to them, by advocating the purity of all the races and not one alone. We believe also that the white race in

South Africa should be the predominating race, and the gentlemen of the White Leagues will be simply furthering their object by standing on the rock of morality, and saying: "Even if we believe that all those restrictions which are so much talked of can be enforced, and that the Chinese who may be brought here would without difficulty be sent back, we reject them as inhuman and as unworthy of a race that leads other races in civilisation." We would remind them of Lord Macaulay's remark in one of his essays, wherein he says: "We are free, we are civilised to little purpose if we grudge to any portion of the human race an equal measure of freedom and civilisation."

Indian Opinion, 24-9-1903

164. MR. STUART THE MAGISTRATE

On reading Mr. Stuart's minute on an Indian murder case, referred to elsewhere,[1] it gave us pain to remark upon his making political capital out of it. It now gives us pleasure to congratulate our worthy Magistrate on putting his foot firmly down on the serpent of immorality, as he did in the case of a wretched Indian the other day. That is the kind of proceeding which would appeal forcibly to the delinquents against the morality law. We hope that the Indians would endorse the action of the Magistrate by visiting the man with such ostracism as the Indians alone know how to do. Such men as the culprit are a curse to society, and do infinite harm to a community which has the misfortune to own them. The biter has been well bit this time, and we are glad that Mr. Stuart has imposed the maximum penalty of the law.

Indian Opinion, 24-9-1903

165. MR. STUART IN A NEW ROLE

The correspondence between the Colonial Secretary and the Governor of Natal, published by the *Mercury*, has been in our hands for some time; but we have been loath to publish it, as we thought it would do no good. For, it is not isolated cases of hardship which constitute the grievance of the Indian, but the studied manner in which he is being degraded and deprived of the means of living. We have always held that the Indian gets as good justice as any other in the

[1] *Vide* the following item.

Courts of Justice, especially the higher. But as the correspondence has been published, some remarks are inevitable. And it is very distressing to find Mr. Stuart occupying the role of a special pleader and sensationalist, instead of the cool, unbiased magistrate that he generally is. He has, in our opinion, unnecessarily given a political aspect to a simple case of murder, which was referred to him for inquiry. Note Mr. Stuart laying stress on the Indian advocate defending the case of the accused, the Indian community not co-operating in giving information—as if only it could give same, and as if it knew the culprit. Henceforth, according to Mr. Stuart, if there is an Indian murder, and if the murderer is not traced, the 70,000 Indians in the Colony are to be blamed it is their province, and not of the police, to find out the murder[er]! May we correct Mr. Stuart and inform him that "Mr." Bhownaggree is a knight, and therefore Sir Mancherjee? The informant of the worthy knight may be a local newspaper, in which case it would be easy for our amiable A. A. M.[1] to find out the correspondent, and take his deposition.

Indian Opinion, 24-9-1903

166. LOCATION LAW OF THE TRANSVAAL

The current issue of the *Government Gazette* of the Transvaal gives a list of the Indian Locations surveyed and appointed by the Government. The outlook is bleak for our countrymen in that Colony. The ex-Colonial Secretary has said more than once that the whole question was engaging his attention. Lord Milner says the Bazaar Noticeis only tentative. Either, therefore, the Government of the Transvaal propose to ignore Lord Milner, or are unjustifiably wasting public money over a matter which has yet to be finally decided. Lord Milner has very adroitly remarked that one of the three things in which the present Government are granting relief not granted before is in laying out Bazaars. In naked terms, whereas the Boer Government did not remove the Indians to Bazaars, Lord Milner proposes to do so. The Government have "gone one better", and have already mapped out Locations. And yet Lord Milner takes the Indians to task for saying that they are being worse treated now than before, during the old regime. Oh! for a little consistency!

Indian Opinion, 24-9-1903

[1] Acting Assistant Magistrate.

167. A THREE-BARRELLED RESIGNATION

Mr. Chamberlain, Lord George Hamilton, and Mr. Ritchie[1] have resigned. This is a veritable thunderbolt. At a time like this, we cannot but think that the withdrawal of the strongest and most masterful minister from the Cabinet is a serious misfortune. No man in the Empire at present knows so well as Mr. Chamberlain the intricate questions that still await solution in South Africa. The work of destruction is finished, but that of reconstruction, which is, after all, far more difficult and far more important, can hardly be said to have commenced. It is, therefore, a matter of no little difficulty that Mr. Chamberlain has thought fit to give up his position, and the Premier will find it almost impossible to replace him at the Colonial Office. To the British Indians, the uncertainty of their position becomes still more uncertain. Mr. Chamberlain has studied, though not as fully as we would have liked, the British Indian question in South Africa. We have become more or less familiar with his views. His despatch to the Federal Ministers in Australia on the employment of Lascars as seamen has placed the question on the Imperial platform, but now we are face to face with, perhaps, a revision by the Colonial Office of the situation. Lord George's resignation, also, and the fact that Mr. Brodrick (who has made himself so thoroughly unpopular in India by his proposal to tax her for the sake of keeping up a large garrison in South Africa) is to succeed him, are ominous signs. Let us, however, hope that Mr. Brodrick, on taking up his new portfolio, will think more of India than he has been hitherto known to do.

Indian Opinion, 24-9-1903.

168. SIR J. L. HULETT AND INDIAN TRADERS

Sir James Hulett has given some very interesting evidence before the Labour Commission, now sitting at Johannesburg, to enquire into the question of the African supply of labour for the Mines. We copy elsewhere from the Johannesburg *Star* of the 15th instant Sir James' evidence before the Commission. We venture to offer our congratulations to the Honourable Gentleman on having spoken out boldly in favour of the much abused Indian trader. It is, however, a sign of the

[1] Chancellor of the Exchequer.

times that, in spite of holding views flattering to the Indians, he can reconcile himself to the idea of putting legal disabilities on their enterprise and compulsorily repatriating indentured Indians who, in his opinion, have evidently saved the Colony from ruin, and who are to this day indispensable for its prosperity. Speaking of the traders, Sir James said, in reply to Mr. Quinn:

> The Arabs were limited, and were traders almost entirely. The ordinary small trader could not compete with the Arab. The retail Kaffir trade of the Colony was practically in the hands of the Arabs. In the country districts, witness had no objection to this, because he thought the ordinary young white man or woman could do something better than looking after country Kaffir stores. The Arab's wants, were less than the ordinary white man's wants. They sold at a smaller profit and, to a certain extent, they dealt fairer with the natives than the European traders, who, at the country stores, desired to make such large profits.

In answer to Mr. Evans, he said that

> he did not think that the importation of Indians had been harmful to Natal. Without it, there would have been no cultivation, and hardly any population in the coast ports. The whole cultivation depended on a plentiful supply of labour.

Indian Opinion, 24-9-1903

169. THE MILLIONAIRE AND THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT

Sir George Farrar's wrath has descended upon the Indian Government and the Colonial Secretary for daring to insist upon less than half of the rights of the British Indians, as such, in the Colony of the Transvaal before they would think of lending Indian labour to the Colony for the development of its resources; and, with the weight of millions that Sir George can bring to bear on any problem he may handle, we do not know what effect it would have upon the objects of his indignation. Intimately connected with, and being dependent for his millions upon, the mining industry, Sir George's position is quite capable of being understood. With a money-making man, the end very often justifies the means. Following up that doctrine, it matters little to Sir George, and the other mining magnates, how the source of their wealth is to be fed, and to them, from such a point of view, if anyone offers any opposition, just or otherwise, he is a man to be silenced somehow or other. Sir George must have been in some such

mood when he uttered the following words before the monthly meeting of the Chamber of Mines held in Johannesburg on the 17th instant:

> It was with a view to relieving this tension that it was suggested by your Chamber that the Government should import indentured coolies from India for the purpose of new Railway construction. After some time, the reply of the Secretary of State for the Colonies was laid on the table of the Legislative Council. I feel it my duty to refer in strong terms to the attitude taken up by the Indian Government, endorsed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Whilst feeling strongly our position as a fellow-unit with India in the British Empire, yet we are forced to consider the welfare of the white population in this Colony. We have already offered a labour market to the people of overpopulated India, who could but benefit by the wages taken home by these labourers at the end of their contracts, but we consider that it is the right of the people of this country to decide whether they will allow this country to be overrun by Indian traders, free to compete and settle in a country which we hope some day will be wholly a white man's country. We give to our fellow-subjects in India the right to trade in bazaars, and in this way we consider that the Government have made a generous concession, and in return we certainly do not expect, when we have pledged ourselves to a contribution of 30 millions towards the cost of the South African war, the interest of which we are only able to pay out of the results of our industrial prosperity, that the Indian Government should be so short-sighted as to refuse to help us to meet our obligations incurred in the interests of the Empire of which India is a portion.

Indian Opinion, 24-9-1903

170. LETTER TO P. S. TO LT.-GOVERNOR TRANSVAAL

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION,
P. O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
September 25, 1903

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR
PRETORIA

SIR,

As the end of this year is drawing near and the position of the British Indians is undefined, and as the existing licences held by old *bona-fide* residents of the Transvaal are in danger in view of Notice 356 of this year, and as the working of that Notice has already caused serious inconvenience to the community represented by my Association, I have been desired by my committee to approach His Excellency with a view to inquire whether he Will be pleased to receive a small deputation and grant a hearing on the general questionin so far as immediate relief is required.

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
ABDOOL GANI
CHAIRMAN, BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Pretoria Archives: LG. 92/2132 Asiatics. 1902-1906

171. THE DEALERS' LICENSES ACT REDIVIVUS: IV

PROMISE AND PERFORMANCE

Mr. Cressler has let the cat out of the bag and shown the real reason why the mining magnates wish to insist upon Asiatic labour. We now know it is not a question of the impossibility of getting white labour at a paying rate, but it is that of the white labourer becoming, in course of time, master of the situation and dictating terms to his employers as to wages, period of working and numerous other things, and becoming a strong political factor in the Transvaal. It is, therefore, the old story of the strong and the powerful wishing to retain all the

power to themselves, and shutting out competitors. The fear that actuates the mining magnates is the fear which actuated our legislators in Natal when responsible government was granted. And when the first step they took was to silence the British Indian by depriving him of the right to vote, Sir John Robinson, meaning every word of what he said in reply to the British Indian petition,[1] insisted that their position would be far better without the votes as the House would be taking over a serious responsibilityon its shoulders, and would have to see that their liberties were not, in any other respect, curtailed. Unfortunately, that was a promise which had not the force of law. Although, therefore, such a speaker as the then Prime Minister expressed the above authoritative and representative opinion, and, therefore, morally binding on our legislators, the performance has been quite contrary to the promise which Sir John so generously made. The Immigration Act and the Dealers' Licenses Act followed closely on the heels of the disfranchising Act. It is, however, the latter on which we wish to lay the utmost stress, as it is a law which affects the well-being of those who have already settled in the Colony, and to whom it is an everpresent danger. We have already dealt with the different ways in which that Act has injured British Indian interests. We reproduce elsewhere the petition[2] to which we referred last week. It deals exhaustively with the working of the Act, and is very seasonable in view of the activity shown by the Durban and Newcastle Town Councils. What we fail to understand is the tenacity with which the Town Councils cling to the most objectionable portion of the Act, namely, the deprivation of the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court over their decisions in regard to the granting of dealers' licences; for, as we have already shown, the object they had in view can be easily and equally well served without recourse to what has been proved to be an unconstitutional procedure. We cannot do better than quote from the *Times of Natal*, as it admirably expresses the Indian opinion:

> By all means make them (Indian traders) adhere to the strictest sanitary regulations, keep their books in English, and otherwise do as English traders do, but when they have met these demands, give them justice. No honest thinking man can say that the new Bill (referring to the Dealers' Licenses Act) gives these people justice, or the community justice, because it puts into the hands of interested parties the power to push out competition which is

[1] *Vide* "Guide to London", 1893-94

[2] "Petition to Chamberlain", December 31, 1898.

beneficial to the multitude, and enables these interested parties to fill their own pockets.

This was written in 1898, and what was true then is doubly true today after the experience the British Indians have had of the working of the Dealers' Licenses Act now for the last seven years. Unless prejudice has entirely blinded the sense of justice of the Colonists, it is simple enough to recognise that the utmost uncertainty which hedges round every Indian licence owing to this Act should be removed, and that after the requirements, no matter how severe they may be, are fulfilled, the applicant ought to be allowed to feel certain as to his position. And until this elementary measure of fairness is meted out to the British Indians, there can be no rest, and it is the clear duty of our countrymen to persistently agitate, so that the desired amendment may be made in the Act.

Indian Opinion, 1-10-1903

172. THE JOHANNESBURG INDIAN LOCATION

About two years ago, it was that Major O'Meara, the then dictator of Johannesburg, with his fine Irish humour, perpetrated on the Johannesburg public a practical joke by drawing up a most sensational report on the alleged insanitary condition of the Indian Location in Johannesburg. He warned the public, in the plainest terms possible, of the grave and immediate danger to health owing to the existence of the Indian Location. The cry was later taken up by Mr. Lionel Curtis and Dr. Porter, two enthusiasts fresh from London. Thinking that they should render the Johannesburg community some signal service and earn their wages as also the gratitude of a certain class of people, they improved upon the worthy Major and condemned some other sites also near the Indian Location, the cry still being that the whole of what was dubbed "Insanitary Area" constituted an ever-present and immediate danger to the lives of the inhabitants of Johannesburg. The Town Councillors, consisting of business men, naturally scented a cheap bargain for the Municipality, and drew up a thundering report for submission to Lord Milner, asking His Lordship to give the Town Council extraordinary powers for the expropriation of what they described as an insanitary area. Lord Milner hesitated a little and effected a compromise by appointing a Commission to inquire into, and to report upon, the

proposition made by the Town Council. The farce was gone through. The Commissioners decided in favour of the Town Council, condemning the area, and advised Lord Milner to give the Town Council the power of expropriation. Thus, Major O'Meara's leisurely report has resulted in the deprivation of the just rights of thousands of inhabitants within the area. If there is any doubt about our statement, we refer the sceptic to the burning words of the late Sir William Marriott, who condemned the policy of the Town Council in no measured terms. Many eminent medical men, also, gave evidence to the effect that the area, which it pleased the Town Council to describe as insanitary, was not more so than many another part of Johannesburg, and that the defects pointed out as existing in that area were common more or less to the whole of Johannesburg. All that, however, was of no avail. The Town Council was determined upon having all that portion of Johannesburg, and Mr. Curtis and Dr. Porter proved valuable agents in accomplishing the object. Nero's fun, however, has only just commenced. The Town Council has entered upon the whole of that area, and holds the inhabitants at its mercy. We read in the Johannesburg newspapers how the claims for compensation are being starved out. We also understand that, danger or no danger, the Town Council proposes at present not to disturb the occupation of tenants and that it would graciously allow the tenants to occupy its premises at the same rental they used to pay to their respective landlords before the 26th of September. If, therefore, there were rack-renters, the Town Council would now have the honour of taking up that role. f there was overcrowding before, and we have it on the authority of Dr. Porter that overcrowding in some parts of the insanitary area was beyond description, then such overcrowding also is to remain, with this difference that whereas, prior to the 26th September, the poor individual landlords were subject to the Town Council regulations as to overcrowding, etc., the Council itself is practically free from any such restrictions. And now that the Council is in possession, the danger to the health of the community has, of course, vanished altogether. Such, also, is the difference between strength and weakness, power and subjection. Two years have elapsed and no epidemic has visited Johannesburg, nor have the inoffensive inhabitants of the so-called insanitary area proved a source of danger in any way whatsoever. That fact is an irrefutable demonstration of the hollowness of the hysterical arguments advanced by Dr. Porter. But the pinch of all this will be most felt by the weakest among the weak,

namely, the British Indians in Johannesburg. It is they whose position is the worst possible. Others will be able to invest what they may receive in respect of their claims in landed property elsewhere in the Transvaal. They will be able to reside where they please. But the Indians are now without either of these rights. The only place in the Transvaal where the Indians held ninety-nine years' leases in their own names was Johannesburg and it was in connection with the ninety-six stands in the Location in question. But now they do not know whether they will be allowed to hold land elsewhere in Johannesburg under an equivalent title. And although provision is made in the Insanitary Area Expropriation Ordinance for the residence of the people dispossessed on a site very near to the expropriated area, there is entire uncertainty as to where they are to be located. It should also be remembered that most of the Indian population is concentrated in Johannesburg. Our countrymen there have our sympathy, and if the powers that be do not help them, we have an abiding faith in the mercy of the all-wise Providence, who will not forsake them.

Indian Opinion, 1-10-1903

173. POLITICAL MORALITY

We dealt last week with Mr. Stuart's report on the enquiry made by Mr. Chamberlain regarding certain cases in Natal. We propose now to deal with the cases of two licences in the Transvaal about which Lord Milner sent a report to Mr. Chamberlain. In dealing with the report, however, we are aware that, if it is at variance with the facts of the case, His Excellency could hardly be held responsible, seeing that he would have to depend upon the statements placed before him by those in charge of the matter in question.

We print below the official version and the true facts as we know them.

OFFICIAL VERSION

(1) The Indian in question (Hoosen Amod) was trading in Wakkerstroom in 1899 in premises occupied under lease not in his own name, which lease expired on the 15th July, 1899.

FACTS

(1) The report omits to state that the lease was in the partner's name, and that although it expired on the 15th July, 1899, it was renewed, both of which facts were

within the knowledge of the Magistrate.

OFFICIAL VERSION

(2) By the First Volksraad resolution, article No.1072 of the 5th August, 1892, he was prohibited from trading after that date except in the Coolie Location, and on the 15th July, 1899, the Landrost of the district closed the store.

FACTS

(2) The report omits to mention that the resolution was never acted upon in a single instance, that the licence-holder denied that the Landrost ever closed the store, and produced evidence of responsible European residents of Wakkerstroom, one of whom was a bank manager, and the other an officer in the employ of the late Government, showing that the store remained open, at least, up to the end of August, and that he (Hoosen Amod) voluntarily locked it when the exodus from the Transvaal commenced owing to the impending war.

OFFICIAL VERSION

(3) In June, 1902, Hoosen Amod applied to the Resident Magistrate of Wakkerstroom, stating that his lease had not expired. The Resident Magistrate, without making enquiries, granted a licence to trade until the 31st of December, 1902. In November, the Magistrate discovered that the lease had really expired, and that the licence granted had, consequently, been obtained under false pretences.

FACTS

(3) It has been already stated above that the lease had not expired because it was renewed. Therefore, if the charge of false pretences had been brought by an ordinary man, it would have been considered a libel. At the time the Magistrate granted the licence, he had seen the lease in question.

OFFICIAL VERSION

(4) The case of Hoosen Amod did not come within the scope of the principle by which this office had been guided in dealing with the applications of Asiatics for licences to trade, which was to the effect that those who had held licences to trade before the war, and whose trade was stopped by the war either by its outbreak or in anticipation of it, were entitled to a renewal of their licences. Hoosen Amod was not trading at the outbreak of war, and his trade was not stopped by any reason connected with the war.

FACTS

(4) The practice, at the time the question of this licence was engaging the attention of the Government, was that all who traded before the war, whether they closed their business on the outbreak or in anticipation of war, were able to get their licences. Indians who traded in the Transvaal in 1898, or even earlier, were then being granted licences. Instances by the dozen could be produced to prove this. The

applicant urged the contention and brought the fact to the notice of the Government, without avail. Further, if anybody could be said to have closed his store in anticipation of the war, it was Hoosen Amod.

OFFICIAL VERSION

(5) Nevertheless, it having been ascertained that the trader has laid in a large stock of goods, and in spite of the fact that this had been done, on the face of a licence acquired by him under false pretences, it was decided to extend every leniency that was possible in the case, and to renew Hoosen Amod's licence, instructions to which effect were issued to the Resident Magistrate at Wakkerstroom in April last.

FACTS

(5) The report omits to mention that the Government took four months to find out that Hoosen Amod had a large stock of goods, and that he was practically starved out, his store having been forcibly and illegally closed, there being no statutory Authority for forcible closing of stores, the only remedy open to the Government against persons trading without licence being to prosecute them for a breach of the law, and to fine them.

A few remarks, however, may well be added to complete the story of downright oppression. (The term is not strong enough, in our opinion, to characterise the proceedings to which Mr. Hoosen Amod was deliberately subjected.) He was a resident of the Transvaal for over ten years, and was one of the select few who were favoured by the old Government with licences to trade in their own names. Our readers may be aware that most of the British Indians traded under the Republic either without any licences whatsoever, under the protection guaranteed to them by the British Agents, or under licences taken out by their white friends. The report, naturally, does not mention the fact that even white inhabitants of Wakkerstroom were so disgusted at the treatment that was meted out to Mr. Hoosen Amod that they signed a certificate expressing their opinion that he was fully entitled to a licence. We look in vain, in the report, for a statement to the effect that Mr. Hoosen Amod's was the only Indian store in Wakkerstroom, and that he was largely supported by the European houses there.

We now deal with the other licence, namely, that of Mr. Suliman Ismail in Rustenburg.

OFFICIAL VERSION

(1) Suliman Ismail held no licence to trade in Rustenburg at the time of the out. break of war, but during the British military occupation, he established this branch of his house.

FACTS

(1) The report does not give the material fact that the military authorities granted him the licence, enabling him to establish a business in Rustenburg.

OFFICIAL VERSION

(2) In October, 1902, the Resident Magistrate of Rustenburg served on the representative of Suliman Ismail a notice to the effect that he was not entitled to trade in town.

FACTS

(2) The report might have added that the Resident Magistrate, being the successor in office of his predecessor who granted the licence, could not question the latter's decision and recall the licence granted to the applicant under the full knowledge that he did not possess licence to trade in that district previous to the war.

The report, moreover, omits other material facts that were brought out before this licence was granted, namely, that in many other districts, licences under similar circumstances were granted to British Indians although they never traded in the respective districts, and that these licences were not disturbed. It was merely, in the case in question, an eccentricity on the part of the Magistrate.

The report might also have added that it was by an accident that justice was done to Mr. Suliman Ismail, for the reason for refusing a renewal of his licence, given officially, was that he should remove to the Location. Fortunately, he was able to point out that there was no Location whatsoever in Rustenburg at the time. The Government, being thus cornered, had no option but to grant a renewal. His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor realised the injustice done to the man, so much that the fine, imposed on him by the Magistrate for trading after the expiry of his licence without obtaining a renewal, was graciously refunded to him.

We had no desire to dwell on these two distressing cases, but the report having been published in the *Mercury*, we could not, consistently with what we consider to be our duty, remain silent and allow it to pass unchallenged. The only relieving feature in the whole of this miserable business and official *zulum* is, the painstaking manner in which His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Arthur Lawley, personally investigated the two cases, and in spite of the deliberation with which the officers at the respective places attempted to prevent justice being done, meted it out to the aggrieved parties, although tardily enough.

These two cases are an index of the official feeling in the Transvaal, and they shew most clearly how difficult it is. under a separate Asiatic administration for British Indians to get the barest possible justice. The injustice becomes enhanced when we remember that the fear of such things happening was mentioned by the deputation at Pretoria to Mr. Chamberlain,[1] who assured them that licences granted after British occupation could never be withdrawn. To him, coming from the English atmosphere, the word of a British officer was "as good as a banknote", much more so his signature given by him in his official capacity.

Before closing this painful chapter, we wish to add that all the statements we have made in this article are based on documentary evidence which is in our possession, and if we appear to have used strong language, we have done so because we feel strongly.

Indian Opinion, 1-10-1903.

174. THE VALUE OF A VOTE

Dr. Jameson, the leader of the Progressive Party at the Cape, has returned the following characteristic reply to a coloured voter who tackled the gentleman on the policy of the Progressive Party on the colour question:

> (1) Education, compulsory where possible, and free where necessary. This applies absolutely to everybody, white or coloured, and of whatever race. (2) Equal rights to all civilised men absolutely again, to both white and coloured. It is only the aboriginal natives whom we consider uncivilised. Reading and writing is not the test. (3) The Malays in this country are British subjects, and as such there is no prejudice against them, and they shall have equal rights with the whites.

The coloured community at the Cape commands enough votes to turn the scales in hotly contested elections where each candidate is trying his best to keep his opponent out. Mr. Merriman has been severely chastising General Botha for having spoken out his mind on the Native labour question, because his party wants the Native vote. He, therefore, waxes eloquent on the unrighteousness of compelling the Native to work and depriving him of his laws, and even compares the position of General Botha's countrymen to that of the Natives,

[1] *Vide* "Address to Chamberlain", January 7, 1903.

conveniently forgetting for the while that the Republics gave precious little to the Natives and care less for their sentiments or rights. We, therefore, hope that the coloured gentlemen at the Cape will, by wisely using their power, continue to enjoy the privilege of the franchise which, under the British Constitution, is such a powerful instrument for securing justice. Here in Natal, the late Mr. Escombe thought fit to deprive us of it, and we know to our cost what harm has been wrought to us. A community without the vote under popular government is an anomaly and without a valuable faculty.

Indian Opinion, 1-10-1903

175. A CAUSE FOR THANKFULNESS

It is seldom that we get an opportunity for congratulating the Transvaal Government. We have a very good reason, however, to do so this week, for we read in the *Government Gazette* that the work of granting Indian permits has been re-transferred to the Chief Secretary for Permits. This ought to have been done long ago. The Indians have been protesting against the separate Asiatic administration ever since its establishment; and we sincerely trust that the reform in the matter of issuing permits is the beginning of the end of the Asiatic Department, which is absolutely unnecessary and a waste of good money. The Government, we read, are carrying on retrenchmenton a large scale. The Legislative Council has voted a large sum for the Asiatic Department. Sir Percy Fitzpatrick raised a mild protest at the time. Why not do away with it now? It would save a few thousand pounds to the Colony, and remove at the same time a cause of legitimate complaint. Neither in Natal nor in the Cape Colony, where there is a far larger Indian population, is there any distinction in dealing with free Indians and others. In the meanwhile, we are thankful for the small mercy, and trust that Captain Hamilton Fowle will deal with the Indian permits as justly; as he has dealt with the others. We do not want to flood the Transvaal with Indians, but we do want prompt attention, and we do want the refugees to receive their permits both without vexatious delays and useless expense.

Indian Opinion, 1-10-1903

176. AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE INDIANS

We congratulated Mr. Stuart last week on the stand he took up against the social evil[1]. But our congratulations are not unmixed with pain. For he seems to have been unable to resist the temptation of overdoing it. We notice a slight tendency on his part to bring in the whole Indian community. And we venture to think that his remarks about Mr. Khan were hardly justified. So great an authority as Lord Brougham used to say that an advocate who, although he knew the guilt of his client, declined to take up his case, was unworthy of his profession; and on the principle that every man in the eye of the law is innocent until he is found guilty by a duly constituted court, the doctrine is sound enough. The case of a well-known member of the Cape Legislative Assembly is still fresh. The M.L.A. was found guilty of the crime for which the Indian was tried. Will Mr. Stuart say that the learned counsel who defended him was not justified in taking up the brief? We all have our private opinion about that case. But shall we say that the leading barrister who argued the appeal for the M.L.A. or the Chief Justice, who upheld the appeal because there was an element of doubt as to the legal guilt, was to blame—the one for championing the apparently guilty man and the other for discharging him? What, again, is the duty of an advocate who finds out in the middle of a case that his client is really guilty? Is he to throw up the brief? If we dare do anything of the kind, we fancy that his conduct would be regarded as highly unprofessional. The matter bristles with difficulty. And we think that it is one for every advocate to determine for himself, and not for the Magistrate to read a homily to the defending counsel whenever he thinks that the case is bad. So much for the "tiff" between Mr. Stuart and Mr. Khan; while it takes away fromthe good work done by Mr. Stuart, the residue is sufficient to entitle him to praise. The Indian community has got a unique opportunity of showing the best that is in it. By an effort in the right direction, it can clear the Augean stables, by running the powerful stream of public opinion through them. It can put the finishing touch to the work done by the police and the Magistrate, without whose assistance the moral pressure exerted by it would not have produced any impression on the rhinoceros hide of the hardened delinquents. But if it strikes now

[1] *Vide* "Mr. Stuart the Magistrate", 24-9-1903.

while the iron is hot, the blow will be fully effective. We do not want to see a single Indian among us living on the disgusting and demoralising traffic. We are glad that the Indian community thoroughly approves of the action of the police and the Magistrate, and is determined to visit the parties concerned with such social penalties as may be considered advisable.

Indian Opinion, 1-10-1903

177. THE IMMIGRATION RESTRICTION ACT, NATAL

The erstwhile Immigration Bill[1], having received the Royal assent, has been gazetted as an Act, and is now of full force and effecting the Colony. It was never doubted that it would receive sanction from Downing Street. The Colonies have become very powerful, and are becoming more and more so day by day. The Indian subjects of the King-Emperor, therefore, have to patiently and quietly submit to the restrictions that the Colonists may choose to impose upon them, hoping with Lord Milner[2] that "times and discussion" would enable the Colonists to see the error of their ways and recognise the obligations that they should discharge as component parts of the mighty Empire. It may be well to set forth the material difference between the old Act and the new.

OLD

(1) The language test consisted in the ability of the applicant to write out, in the characters of some European language, an application in accordance with the simple form that was attached to the Act.

NEW

(1) The applicant has to write out any application that may be dictated by the Immigration Officer.

OLD

(2) The minor children of eligible immigrants were entitled to enter the Colony, whether they could satisfy the language test or not, the age of majority being 21 years.

[1] *Vide* "The Immigration Restriction Bill", 9-7-1903,"Immigration Restriction Bill" 6-8-1903 & "Potchefstroom Indians", 6-8-1903

[2] Sir Alfred Milner, High Commissioner and Governor of Cape Colony (1897-1901) and of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony (1901-5).

NEW

(2) The age of majority has now been arbitrarily fixed at sixteen years.

OLD

(3) Any person who could prove two years' residence in the Colony was entitled to a domicile certificate, and, therefore, was not a prohibited immigrant.

NEW

(3) The period has now been increased to three years.

OLD

(4) Temporary passes were granted to applicants making applications through friends or agents.

NEW

(4) Personal application is now to be insisted upon.

OLD

(5) The law was silent as to whether an indentured Indian, by having served the Colony for five years, could be considered to have been domiciled.

NEW

(5) It now lays down that such five years' residence would not constitute domicile within the meaning of the Act.

Thus, in five essential particulars, the restrictions have been made harsher by the law of the Colony in spite of reasonable objections raised by the British Indians against the Bill, and there is no guarantee that we have seen the last of them.

Indian Opinion, 8-10-1903

178. MR. WYBERG AND ASIATIC LABOUR

Mr. Wyberg, the Commissioner of Mines for the Transvaal, in gving his evidence before the Labour Commission, has placed it on a platform higher than that hitherto adopted by any of the witnesses, and a member though he is of the Legislative Council, he has not hesitated to utter some home truths.We give below the most telling points made by him in reply to Mr. Quinn, the indefatigable opponent of the introduction of Asiatic Labour.

Mr. Wyberg said:

He knew nothing personally of the experiments which had been made in the use of white unskilled labour on the mines, but he had followed the

controversy with great interest. His opinion with regard to the use of white labour was expressed in the adage, ‘Where there’s a will, there’s a way’. If there was a great desire to extend the employment of white labour, he could not help thinking it would be done. He looked upon it primarily as a political question of great importance. It all depended upon the policy to be pursued.

The question as to whether white labour would be employed, or Coloured, obtained locally or elsewhere, depended entirely upon the wishes of the mine-owners. If they said to their engineers. ‘We wish you to make a great effort to have white labour, and the man who can show us how best to use it will be freely rewarded,’ then he thought very great efforts would be made to use white labour, and also that it might be successful. On the other hand, if the mine-owners said, ''We would rather not have white labour,’ then, I don’t think the engineer [would]¾he should not, as an engineer¾have an adequate incentive to put himself out to try and make it a success.

In reply to Mr. Whiteside, Mr. Wyberg proceeded:

He took a keen interest in public affairs in pre-war days and was at one time President of the South African League, whose policy was to get all the Englishmen into Transvaal that they possibly could. That was his policy and the policy of every Englishman, he supposed. There could be no two opinions as to the encouragement of Englishmen settling in this country being of the very greatest importance, and it should be the object of every loyal man in the country. He would go further and say that, apart from all questions of loyalty or disloyalty, from the point of view of making this a valuable portion of the British Empire, such as Canada and Australia, which were white man’s countries, and not allowing it to sink into the position of Jamaica or British Guiana, or other sub-tropical countries, where the white man was the task-master and the bulk of the population little better than slaves, ¾ from that point of view–it was of the highest importance that they should make the bulk of the population here white men, and white men who would do the work of the country. It was a most demoralising thing to take up the attitude that, if they could not get enough Coloured labour in South Africa, they must supplement it from some other source.

Mr. Wyberg in these telling sentences has made it clear that, in his opinion, the position of indentured labourers from Asia would be little better that that of slaves, and that it is one of the grounds on which he bases his objections to the introduction of assisted Asiatic labour. There is nothing in an attitude of this kind against which any reasonable man can take exception, and we can but hope that his evidence will be considered weighty enough to turn the scales agianst

those gentlemen who are so eager, irrespective of considerations of right and wrong, to exploit the Asiatic labour in order to benefit themselves. Mr. Wyberg is evidently a man with principles, and strong enough to resist interested pressure at the risk of losing money, for Mr. Quinn elicited from him the fact that he had to leave the Consolidated Gold Fields because, Mr. Wyberg said, "they wished me to alter or suppress my political opinions". It is interesting also to note that, in Mr. Wyberg's opinion, he does not consider that there is any real paucity of Native labour. When told by Mr. Quinn that his statement did not agree with a good deal of the evidence that preceded his, Mr. Wyberg said:

> I have had exceptional facilities for finding out what is going on, and I think there is no likelihood of a great immediate demand for labour in the outside districts.

Indian Opinion,8-10-1903

179.. MOCKERY OF GOD IN THE ORANGE RIVER COLONY

His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Hamilton John Goold-Adams, signed a proclamation appointing last Sunday a day of humiliation and prayer or of thanksgiving, as the case may be, "in order that." the proclamation proceeds. "we may humble oursleves before Almighty God and beseech Him that the country may be freed from the scourge of the drought and blessed with plenteous and refreshing rain". "In case," the proclamation adds, "it may please Almighty God to send the blessing of rain before the above-mentioned date, I hereby, proclaim that the day shall be observed as a Day of Thanksgiving". As fate would have it, this proclamation is immediately followed by one making it compulsory for Coloured people to be vaccinated on pain of being fined five pounds, or in default, being imprisoned with hard labour for 14 days. The juxtaposition of the two is no doubt purely an accident. The safeguard against smallpox, we believe to be necessary; and, by itself, there can be no serious complaint against the Coloured people being specially subjected to compulsory vaccination. But coming as it does from the OrangeRiver Colony, the second proclamation is typical of the most hostile policy against Coloured people, which has been handed down to it by the old Government.

What, then does the first proclamation mean? In days of yore, when men humbled themselves, they sacrificed something. They insti-

tuted a searching self-examination, repented of their sins and turned over, as it were, a new leaf. Did it ever occur to Mr. H. F. Wilson, the Colonial Secretary, who drew up the proclamation, or the Lieutenant-Governor who signed it, that there was no repentance intended, that, in the opinion of the Government whom they represent, there could be no turning away from its policy, whether sinful or otherwise? We venture to think that the Colony's blind and unreasonable prejudice against colour and its deliberate closing of the Colony's gates against the people of British India, of whose assistance it gladly availed in its hour of need, is a national sin before God, and that so long as that policy is continued, so long will it be impossible for it to practise real humiliation that would be acceptable in the sight of God Almighty, Who will judge, not according to a man's colour, but according to his merits. We have the authority of the Asiatic Prophet, Jesus Christ¾ a Coloured man by the way¾ for saying that a mere lip prayer does not ensure entrance into heaven: "Not every man that sayeth unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the will of my Father". The prayer unaccompanied by deed is a vain repetition. "The Earth is the Lord's", says the Bible. The Colonists have revised the text and say, "The Earth is ours". The appointment, therefore, of a day of humiliation is a mere hollow pretension, so long as God's commands are trampled under foot. And yet, we are free to confess that the proclamation is not a deliberate mockery of the Godhead. It is the yearning of the heart after our Maker in the hour of need and trial. But it is also a fine illustration of the weakness of our natures. We measure God by our measure, forgetting that our ways are not His ways. Were it otherwise, we would very soon be without many things in spite of what we may, in our vanity, mis-term humiliation and prayer. The All-wise God makes His sun shine alike on the good and the wicked.

May we not, however, ask His Excellency and his Government to pause and think? The proclamation is a sign of a godly heart. Is it consistent with godliness to condemn a whole race of men, related to one by ties of allegiance to a common sovereign, because they happen to wear a skin different from one's own? Have the British Indians committed any wrong to merit the degradation that they are subjected to in the Colony? But if the crusade against men of colour must be presisted in, why offend God and humanity by appointment of days of humiliation falsely so called?

Indian Opinion, 8-10-1903

180. THE ASIATIC DEPARTMENT

We print elsewhere what our contemporary the *Rand Daily Mail* properly calls an illuminating letter from a correspondent of the *Barberton Goldfields News*. The letter deals in the clearest language possible with the enormous expenditure that the present Transvaal Government have incurred in the administration of the affairs of the Colony. Unless the correspondent's figures are unreliable, it is quite plain that the late Boer Government cannot hold a candle to our own Government in the Transvaal. May we add to the long catalogue given by the writer in the *Goldfields News* the Asiatic Department, which is costing the sum of £ 10,000 yearly, without being of any use whatsoever to the Asiatics? There was nothing corresponding to this expenditure in the old Government, because, however hostile it was to Indian interests, it did not have a separate Asiatic Department. Sir Percy Fitzpatrick,[1] our readers will remember, protested against this wasteful expenditure of £ 1 per head, because there is hardly a population of 10,000 Indian in the Transvaal. When it is remembered that this money is being spent over the control of people, the most harmless in the world, and who give very little¾if any¾trouble to the police, it becomes a marvel how the Transvaal Government can justify it. Retrenchment is in the air. The whole of the Civil Service of the Colony is to be overhauled. We think that the first department to go overboard should be the Asiatic Department.

Indian Opinion,8-10-1903

181. JOHANNESBURG INDIAN LOCATION

The Health Committee of the Town Council of Johannesburg has presented a report to the Town Council which we reproduce from *The Star* in another column. It is painful reading, and if the recommendations of the Committee are adopted by the Town Council, and if the Government in its turn accepts the suggestion that might be made by the Town Council, the fate of the largest number of Indians in the Transvaal is sealed. It should be borne in mind that Johannesburg accommodates more than one half of the Indian population. The present Kaffir Location, which we have seen and which is, at least,

[1] Member, Transvaal Legislative Council

a mile from the location now expropriated by the Town Council, is the site chosen by the Health Committee for the accommodation, not only of the people dispossessed, but also of the Indian population at present residing in the town of Johannesburg, which, the Health Committee expects, will be forced to the Location. To speak plainly, what the Health Committee proposes is to take the bread out of the mouths of the British Indian store-keepers. It is utterly impossible for Indians to carry on any trade whatsoever, except among themselves, there. Any yet we have Lord Milner assuring us that the Bazaars will be so selected that the Indians may have a fair amount of the trade of the town, both white and Kaffir. It is not clear whether the Health Committee's suggestions as to limiting the size of the Stands to 30X20 instead of 50X50 is applicable to the Stands in the Indian Location also. Let us see what the Government has to say with reference to the egregious proposal. Things are done post-haste in the Transvaal. The millionaires want to extract their gold within a few years. The Town Council has deprived thousands of innocent people of their holdings within an incredibly short time. We can, therefore, quite understand what the Health Committee means when it says:

> It is desirable that this scheme should be put in hand with the least possible delay, in order that accommodation may be provided for the Asiatics who will have to be removed from the old Coolie Location in Burghersdrop and other parts of the Insanitary Area.

Indian Opinion, 8-10-1903

182. PERMITS FOR THE TRANSVAAL

We draw the attention of our Indian readers to the advertisements regarding Permit Regulations, which appeared in our last issue. We have to congratulate Captain Hamilton Fowle, the Chief Secretary for Permits, on having drawn up regulations which are so simple and yet effective. Our readers will note that they will not now have any longer to go through half a dozen channels before receiving their permits. The idea of doing away with the necessity of applicants having to go to the Permit Offices at the different towns is, in our opinion, very sound and original. All that a refugee has now to do is to obtain a form of application for permit, fill it in, sign it before a J. P., and forward it to the Chief Secretary for Permits. The applicant then would receive by return of post, an acknowledgment, and as soon as his turn comes, would receive his authority to enter the Transvaal.

He has then to report himself at Johannesburg and take out the perma-nent document entitling him to reside in the Colony. It would at first appear somewhat hard that people wishing to go to other parts of the Transvaal must necessarily pass through Johannesburg: but, seeing that the choice was between having different offices for issuing of permits and for all to proceed to Johannesburg, we consider that the latter course was the lesser evil of the two, when it is borne in mind that a very large percentage gravitate to Johannesburg. The applicants should bear in mind that, after the receipt of authority to proceed to the Transvaal, they would have only a certain time within which to proceed. It would, therefore, be well for them to be very careful about not exceeding the time limit. In these permit regulations, we see an altogether new era before the poor refugees who have hitherto been simply robbed of honest money in endeavouring to get what they ought to have got without the slightest trouble or expense. Captain Fowle reminds the applicants that "there is no charge whatsoever either for application forms or permits", and adds, "Should an applicant have any complaint against any member of the permit staff at any time, he is requested to communicate direct with the Chief Secretary for Permits". Refugees should note that their applicatoions have to be sent directly to the Chief Secretary for Permits, and not through an agent. It will be their own fault if they spend any money over agents or solicitors.

Indian Opinion, 8-10-1903

183. POTCHEFSTROOM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mr. Hartley, President of the Chamber of Commerce at Potch-efstroom, makes the following remarks in his statement to the Chamber:

> The Coolie Question has engaged the serious attention of the Chamber but, in spite of their efforts to restrict the issuing of fresh licences and confine new-comers to the duly appointed Bazaars, we find new stores opened in various parts of the town, and can get no satisfactory reply from the local authorities as to why the Ordinance dealing with this question is not carried into effect.We have been in communication with other Chambers to take united action in this matter, and I would strongly urge upon the members, the necessity of leaving no stone unturned to restrict the importation of Coolies, as they will undoubtedly prove a source of serious danger to the European trader.

Evidently, the gentlemen at Potchefstroom have taken a leaf out of the book of the East Rand Vigilants.[1] They are very anxious to remove every Indian store-keeper in the township of Potchefstroom to a Location where he cannot do any business whatsoever. At the meeting of the Chamber, Mr. Hartley was able to announce that,

> in regard to the Coolie Question, he was able to state that the matter was in the hands of the higher authorities, and from what he had been told, he believed it would be well to allow it to stand in abeyance for three months, during which time he thought the Government would have done something to meet the wishes of the white traders.

We can quite understand who the high authorities are that have assured Mr. Hartley that, at the end of three months, the Indians will be wiped out of the township of Potchefstroom, and it is a very pretty outlook for the poor store-keepers if the Locations are to be what we hear about them. It is worthy of note that it is the European traders at Potchefstroom, as Mr. Hartley puts it, who are opposed to their Indian fellow-traders. If, therefore, the Government is to listen to their complaint, it would be a question of interested agitation succeeding in having all to itself. We are anxiously waiting to know what His Excellency the High Commissioner has to say to the British Indian petition which was presented to him now some months ago, anticipating all the troubles which threatened to overwhelm the British Indians in the Transvaal next year.

Indian Opinion, 8-10-1903

184. MR. SKINNER'S REPORT ON CHINESE LABOUR[2]

Mr. H. Ross Skinner, who was deputed by the Chamber of Mines to visit the different parts of the world which have any intercourse with China, has presented his report to the Chamber of Mines, and it has been published in the Johannesburg newspapers. One looks in vain for a single passage in the report dealing with the interests of the labourers. It is an able document, and bristles with facts and figures. All the same, the want of humanity about it makes it an exceedingly disappointing report: not that we had ever expected anything from the deputy except a merely cold businesslike view of the labour

[1] *Vide* "East Rand Vigilants", 23-7- 1903

[2] There was a proposal by the mine-owners of the Transvaal to import 200,000 Chinese labourers. *ibid*. "In the Nature of a Test Case"27-5-1905

problem touching the mining industry. How to secure the labour for that industry under terms the most favourable to it, and the least favourable to the labourers themselves, is the question Mr. Skinner has set himself to answer throughout the five-and-a-half columns which it occupies in the Johannesburg *Star*.

These are the restrictions which Mr. Skinner would impose on the labourers:

(1) Indenture for a term of years.

(2) The restriction to certain classes of labour and places of abode.

(3) Prohibition of trade and inability to lease and own property for such period.

(4) Compulsory return on termination of indenture, unless indenture renewed.

(5) The necessity of complying with English laws and health regulations; both foreign to Chinese traditions.

Thus, with the exception of the first and the fifth, all the restrictions are to be imposed so as to prevent the Chinaman from making use of his brains or his limbs more profitably than his masters will allow him to. Mr. Skinner adds to these restrictions the Compound System, and would, therefore, make the labourer a prisoner, pure and simple. The next step now as the *Leader* gravely puts it, is for the Legislature to sanction the introduction under the disabilities mentioned above, and the labour problem of the Transvaal is solved. We would, however, in spite of Mr. Skinner's conclusion, venture to hope that, although the legislation may be sanctioned,¾ as to which we have serious doubts¾ the people affected will turn a deaf ear to the persuasion of the labour agents and simply decline to accept the inhuman terms. Then the question of the mining industry will be solved gradually, and with benefit both to the white settlers and the native of the soil, without having the distrubing elements in the shape of Chinese or any other assisted Asiatic immigration. Indeed, Mr. Skinner himself fears the possibility of guilds or combinations working against the interests of his masters. We give that portion of the report in his own words:

> A very potent force amongst the Chinese is a system of co-peration somewhat akin to freemasonry. They understand well the power and advantage to be derived from combination. In San Francisco, there are six Chinese Companies or Guilds, and to one or other of these the great majority of Chinese

immigrants used to contribute and become members. The system is far-reaching, but in the general application exercises a wholesome influence. These guilds transact business for their members, they supervise labour contracts, receive and deposit money, or remit same to China, and generally look after and take a lively interest in the welfare of the Chinese community. Another function of theirs is to make all the necessary arrangements, when so desired, to have the bones of deceased members sent to their relatives in China. Such societies, comprehensive as they are, if established on the Rand, would have a very powerful bearing on the Chinese immigrants. In many ways, as in those mentioned above, they might be useful and beneficial, but their power might also become a danger, especially if they could suppose that the mines were entirely dependent on the Chinese for their unskilled labour. To avoid such an emergency, it is plainly desirable that all the present effort to increase the supply of Kaffir labour should be vigorously continued with a view to balancing, as far as possible, the supply of Kaffir, Chinese and other unskilled labourers on the mines. This principle might also be adopted in the cases of Chinese from different districts. For instance, experience points to the fact that it is unlikely that northern men would co-operate with the southern Chinese.

Thus, Mr. Skinner would evidently follow the policy of "divide and rule". We, however, think that, in basing his hope on legislative enactments to break down combinations, he is counting without his host. However much the northern Chinese and the southern Chinese may quarrel among themselves in their own land, he will find that a common grievance would make them good companions, and that it would not prevent them from combining together in order to resist the practical working of Compounds and the deprivation of their personal liberties. Mr. Skinner's suggestion as to the details of the scheme is very interesting, though, in our opinion, utterly impracticable. As soon as he imports Chinese doctors and Chinese headmen, he will find that they will want their personal liberty, and they will want to use their brains in an unrestricted manner. It would be a most interesting experiment to watch one set of intelligent people trying to dwarf the intelligence of another set of people equally intelligent. We give the details as under, and leave the reader to judge for himself whether any legislation that can be devised by Sir Richard Solomon would be sufficient to carry out the paper policy so light-heartedly drawn up by Mr. Skinner.

The composition of the complement of Chinese labourers for one mine would broadly be:

(1) One headman who would act as interpreter to, and work along with, the Compound manager.

(2) Four under-headmen, two for underground and two for surface work, capable of talking or sufficiently intelligent to acquire soon, a little English.

(3) Overman or boss coolies: one for every thirty men, to act in the same capacity as the boss boys in gangs of Kaffirs.

(4) One cook for every 50 men, with a young coolie as assistant.

(5) One Chinese doctor. He can act as headman in charge of the hospital under the local mine doctor. Many of the Chinese, especially at the outset, would insist on the option of being treated by a countryman of their own. To meet this, a supply of Chinese medicines will require to be kept.

Individual mines will have to be manned by white skilled and Kaffir unskilled, or by white skilled and Chinese unskilled. No mixing of Kaffir and Chinese on any one mine should be permitted. Indeed, it would be advisable to prevent mixing in districts, if it could be arranged. Along with the first few thousands of coolies, who would probably precede the main flow, men accustomed to Chinese ought to be brought to see that the coolies are pro-perly handled, and also to assist those mines likely to employ Chinese labour in the study of it, so that they will not have a new condition of things sud-denly sprung upon them without some preparation.

Indian Opinion, 15-10-1903

185. THAT INSANITARY AREA IN JOHANNESBURG

The speakers at the mass meeting held on the 7th instant at Johannesburg, Main Road, did not mince matters in giving expression to their views on the position taken up by the Johannesburg Town Council regarding the payment of expropriation claims, and the charging of rents against the quondam owners of the Stands within that Area. Some very strong language was used. The action of the Town Council was considered to be an outrage. Mr. Mark Gibbons, the Chairman, considered "the action of the Town Council was really disgraceful, and it imposed a burden which they ought not to bear". Another speaker described expropriation to be "confiscation", and motives were freely attributed to the Town Councillors. We do not consider that these epithets are justified. Unless we have positive proof to the contrary, we would decline to believe that Mr. Quinn and his coadjutors are actuated by any but the purest motives; but when we have said so much, we have said all that can possibly be said in favour

of the Insanitary Area Committee. That its action is very niggardly we have not the slightest doubt, and as it has to deal with a very large number of Indian claims, it might be as well to examine the two charges laid at its door by the speakers, who would have done far greater good to themselves if they had confined themselves to a bald statement of facts, which are staggering enough. And the best proof to be adduced against the Town Council is in its own admission, namely, that out of 1,200 claims, only164 claimants have thought fit to accept the ridiculous offers made by it. It might be said that claimants knew their business far better than outsiders, and that their having accepted a settlement shows that the offer must have been very fair. Those, however, who will argue thus, forget the main fact that the Council and the claimants are not equally matched. People who are deprived of their land, which is perhaps their only support in life, and are hard pressed by creditors, would have to, whether they would or not, come to terms with their adversary, who may control an inexhaustible purse, as the Town Council undoubtedly does, so far as the poor residents of the Insanitary Area are concerned. We, therefore, think that even the settlement of the few claims cannot be put forward to the credit of the Town Council. But it stands self-condemned when we consider that the largest number of claims is still undisposed of. Coming to the nature of the claims, we have been supplied with information which goes to show that the work of valuation has been taken up without any methods. There are Stands, on which very decent buildings have been erected, which have been valued at the same price as those on which there are rickety structures only. It should be borne in mind that the Stands in question are, apart from the structures, of the same value, being in the same locality and almost adjacent. And these are not merely isolated instances. In many more cases, Stands, which, when last changing hands, brought a fair value, have been undervalued by the Council Valuators. It is all very well to say that the owners have put in exorbitant claims. They may or may not have done so, but we do think that, in adopting the cheese-paring policy, the Council is doing but an ill-service to the general body of ratepayers. In doing so, the Councillors have perhaps formed an exaggerated opinion of their duty, and in trying to save money to the ratepayers in general, they are inflicting an injustice on those ratepayers who are most in need of fairness, if not generous treatment. The law has deprived them, the owners, of the benefit of the rise that will take place in the value of rent within the Insanitary Area after the improvements have been

made thereon. No complaint can be made against the proposition that the whole of such increment would belong to the ratepayers. But that being so, it was only to be expected of the Town Council that it would treat the owners of the Insanitary Area in a fair and handsome manner. As to the proposal of the Town Council to charge rents from the owners, it is very difficult to withhold one's sympathy from those who are opposing it. The speakers at the mass meeting uttered nothing but the truth when they said that many of them were dependent on the income from their properties. The Town Council may be legally justified in insisting on its pound of flesh, but in a matter of this kind the legal justification becomes nothing short of cruelty if it is not tempered with humane considerations. The question of finding residential sites for those who have been dispossessed is more or less indefinietly postponed. If, therefore, until full arrangements for their housing are made, the owners are not allowed to make use of their properties temporarily and receive the income therefrom, what are they to do, especially in these times of stress and trouble? Rains are very much belated, and we do not know when the heavens will smile on South Africa. The industries are stagnant, the money market is dull, and we read in the newspapers that there are thousands of men in Johannesburg absolutely without work. To deprive innocent men, under such circumstances, of their only means of living is an action for which there cannot be the slightest justification. The Council is still nominated and can perhaps afford to disregard popular feeling but we believe that, owing to its irresponsible position, it is doubly its duty to deal with the inhabitants of the Insanitary Area with justice and fairness, and if it cannot, or will not, do so, then it can easily suspend action until the elective Council is established in Johannesburg, which will be within a very short time.

Indian Opinion,15-10-1903

186. JOHANNESBURG LOCATION

We have no hesitation in supporting the petition said to be in circulation, as will appear from the extract we print today from *The Transvaal Leader* of the 7th instant, on the part of the "Residents and Ratepayers of Johannesburg", addressed to the Town Council, asking for the removal of the present Indian Location to a more suitable position. The petition has reference to the proposal of the Health Committee of the Johannesburg Town Council, namely, that the

present Indian Location, of which the residents have been dispossessed under the Insanitary Area Expropriation Ordinance, should be removed to the Kaffir Location, and that the Kaffir Location should be placed further up. We confess that the reasons that induce the ratepayers to make their protest against the suggestion are not the same that guide us. The petitioners evidently consider that the Indians ought to be removed further away from even the present Kaffir Location. In our opinion, the Kaffir Location itself is too far away from the Expropriated Area to be of any use to the British Indians, [more so] in view of the fact that the law provides that the residents within the Insanitary Area should not be removed from their occupation until a site near the Insanitary Area has been pointed out to them for their residence. Now we are aware that the Kaffir Location is over a mile form the Location expropriated by the town Coucil, and we hardly think that removing the men fully one mile away from their present place will be considered to be in accordance with the requirements of the Expropriation Law. Either, therefore, the men have to be allowed to remain within the Expropriated area, or another less objectionable site pointed out to them. The example of Cape Town is cited in connection with the proposal of the petitioners and justification sought for the removal of the British Indians to a place far away from Johannesburg on the strength of the Kaffirs in Cape Town being brought all the way from Maitland. There is, however, absolutely no analogy between the two. If the Indians residing in the Location were all of them workmen pure and simple, there might be something to be said in favour of the Cape Town system being repro-duced in Johannesburg, but seeing that most of them are independent men engaged in trade and some of them depending for their living on the trade in the Location itself, it will be seen at once that the site has to be so near the town as to afford, at any rate, reasonable facilities for attracting the town custom alike from the white people as the Natives.

Indian opinion,15-10-1903

187. MR. BALFOUR'S CABINET

The die is cast, and Mr. St. John Brodrick has been inflicted upon India. The universal judgment about Mr. Brodrick's career has been that he has succeeded in utterly mismanaging the War Office, and that he has shown himself incapable of holding a ministerial position. Mr. Balfour found, however, that he could not very well give

him the go-by, and has, therefore, given him a position against which there cannot be an effective outcry. He is not likely to forfeit a single vote by Mr. Brodrick being installed at the India Office. India may unanimously cry out against the appointment, but then India has no votes and no say whatsoever in the election of members of the House of Commons. It did not matter a bit that Mr. Brodrick brought out, in order to save himself, the preposterous proposal to saddle India with an annual cost of nearly £ 500,000 towards the upkeep of the South African garrison. It did not matter at all that the scheme was so universally condemned that it had to be abandoned. The injustice and the heartlessness of the appointment have appealed even to the people in South Africa. We could not have written more strongly against it than the leader-writer in *The Transvaal Leader*. This is what he has to say on the appointment:

> That Mr. Brodrick should have left Pall Mall is unquestionably a gain, but we doubt whether people in India will be pleased to see him at the head of their affairs. It is difficult to resist the unanimous verdict that he is a thor-ughly incompetent man, and, that being the case, he should be quietly dismissed into unofficial life. Of course, it is impossible to ascertain all the facts of the case. In Lord Curzon, he has the strongest, most competent Viceroy since the time of Lord Dalhousie, and he may have received secret instructions to defer to Lord Curzon in all things, and to be a figure-head simply. It can only be hoped that this is the case, for really the experiments he has initiated, so far, have been such disastrous failures that no one wants any tinkerings with the delicate affairs of the East from his hand.

Indian Opinion, 15-10-1903

188. INDIA'S SERVICE TO THE EMPIRE

One of the recent numbers of *India* to hand gives some startling figures regarding the contribution made by India to the Empire, and these services are very widely distributed and have been rendered ever since 1860. We read then that in 1860 and 1861 India sent two regiments and one regiment respectively to New Zealand. In 1867, for the Abyssinian Expedition, India lent sixteen infantry regiments, five cavalry regiments, seven companies of engineers, five batteries of artillery, commander and staff. In 1875, the whole of the Perak Expedition was fitted out by India. The Afghan War of 1878 and 1879 claimed from 60,000 to 70,000 men. In 1882, the Egyptian Expedition drew on India for five infantry regiments, three cavalry regi-

ments, two companies of engineers, and two batteries of artillery. The expeditions for the Soudan and Suakin in 1885 and 1896 respectively were formed entirely in India. In all but one instance, India paid all the ordinary expenses. During the Afghan War, India paid £18,000,000 as against £5,000,000 paid by Great Britain, and for the Egyptian Expedition, India not only paid the ordinary expenses, but £800,000 besides for extraordinary expenses. We may add to this India's contribution to the Afghan War before 1860 when thousands were buried in snow, and when General Sai was enabled to make his name famous through his Indian brigades. We might also add to this wonderful record the recent Chinese Expedition, the most timely aid rendered to South Africa by Sir George White and his 10,000 from India, and the war at present going on in Somaliland. We have, in a previous issue, described India as "the Cinderella of the Empire",[1] and we ask our readers whether our description is at all far-fetched. We venture to think that, in the history of the Empire, especially in the history of the Colonial expansion, there is nothing to compare with the record we have been able to produce. The colonies have never given, or been called upon to give, to the same extent as India, and while it is undo-ubtedly a matter of satisfaction and pride to every member of the Empire that the colonial response during the late war was very liberal, we think that it dwindles into insignificance before that which India has undergone and given, for the fact should not be lost sight of that, after all, the Colonists have been paid for every bit of service they have rendered, and, if we be permitted to mention an incident, we may state that the Australian ministers even went so far as to charge comm-ission and interest for moneys disbursed by them on account of Great Britain, as if the relation between the Mother Country and Australia was merely that of Agent and Principal.

Indian Opinion, 15-10-1903

189. BETTER LATE THAN NEVER

We notice in a recent issue of the Trahsvaal *Government Gazette* that the Asiatic Office at Germiston has been abolished. The Government deserve the congratulations of the community on having taken the right step, though late in the day. It proves what the British Indians in the Transvaal have been saying since the establishment of the Asiatic Department, namely, that it is a waste of money. We hope that

[1] *Vide* "The Cinderella of the Empire" 30-7-1903

the Government will go a little further, and do away with the Department altogether. It does nobody any good, and causes a great deal of inconvenience and injury to the feelings of the British Indians. It would be interesting to know, now that the Permit Department has been taken away from its control, what work it has to do. It exercises no financial control. The licensing officers issue licences. Registration of Asiatics is being effected by the Chief Secretary for Permits. It is inconceivable, therefore, where the utility of the Department comes in.

Indian Opinion, 15-10-1903

190. LETTER TO LT.-GOVERNOR'S SECRETARY

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

25 & 26 RISSIK STREET,

JOHANNESBURG,

October 19,1903

TO

THE PRIVATE SECRERTARY

TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

PRETORIA

SIR,

With reference to your letter of the 1st instant, I beg now to remind you thereof, and to request on behalf of the Association the appointment of a day for the British Indian Deputation[1] to wait on His Excellency.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ABDOOL GANIE[2]

CHAIRMAN

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION.

Pretoria Archives: L.G. 2132, Asiatics 1902-1906.

[1] On September 25, the request was fisrt made for permission to lead a deputation to discuss trading licences.

[2] A variant spelling of 'Abdul Gani'.

191. TRANSVAAL PERMITS

The Return of Permits issued by the Chief Secretary during the past months, published in the Johannesburg papers, is a document of very great importance and interest to the British Indians. The total number of permits granted during that period is 32,351, of which 7,827 only were granted to old residents, and 24,524 to new-comers. These figures are for the Transvaal only. There were 11,865 permits granted between January and March, 11,844 between April and June, and 8,642 between July and September. The figures do not take into account any of the ex-burghers who surrendered during the war, or ex-burghers who were allowed to return. They, therefore, apply solely to the non-Boer Europeans, for it should be remembered that they do not include Asiatic permits. These are a complete answer to the charge often brought against the immigration of British Indians into the Transvaal, namely, that it would, if it was allowed to be unrestricted, flood the Colony. According to official returns, there are at present scarcely 10,000 Indians in the colony of the Transvaal as against, according to one Johannesburg newspaper, nearly 500,000 Europeans, including burghers. It does not, therefore, seem as if there was any imminent danger of the British Indians overrunning the Transvaal. But the figures also tell another painful tale, namely, that, while three times the number of European refugees have been allowed permits to enter the Transvaal, very few, if any, permits have hitherto been granted to the non-refugee British Indians, no matter what their claims may be to special consderation. We are aware of scores of instances of men, who were promised employment to the Transvaal being unable to accept same owing to permits having been refused to them on account of their not being refugees. Only seventy permits per week are issued to Asiatics, including, we presume, Chinese, and the reply to applications from non-refugeeBritish Indians has been that, unless the whole list of applications from refugee British Indians is exhausted, no such applications could be considered. The Permit Department has now been entirely transferred over to the Chief Secretary for Permits, and may we hope that he will, in dealing with Indian applications, show the same generous spirit to British Indian applications as the has evidently shown to Europeans, whether British subjects or not. We do not suggest for one moment that he should allow thousands of non-refugee British Indians to enter the Colony; in the first place, there are not thousands waiting to enter the Transvaal, and in the second place, even if there were thousands of Indians wishing to immigrate to the Transvaal, we quite understand that the applications could not be

considered. But when men are required for the assistance of those who have already settled in the Colony, or when men are well educated, or have independent means and probably connections in the Transvaal, they ought to be treated in a liberal manner. Lord Milner has assured Mr. Chamberlain,[1] that the Transvaal Government is not enforcing the old Law as strictly as before. We have entered our respectful protest against the statement, because it is not borne out by facts. And the question of Indian immigration is very much in point in this connection, for, whereas during the old regime the Indian immigration to the Transvaal was quite unrestricted, now even the refugees are not being allowed to return except in dribblets, and the gates of the Transvaal are entirely closed against non-refugee Indians. The Transvaal Government, therefore, not only goes beyond the old anti-Asiatic Law, but it goes much further than either the Natal or the Cape Law. Indians domiciled either in the Cape or Natal are free to leave their respective Colonies and re-enter them at any time they like, and those who have a knowledge of one of the European languages are allowed to enter and settle in either of the Colonies, whether they have been previously domiciled or not. Lord Milner has suggested the Natal Act as a model to replace the Law 3 of 1885 of the Transvaal. May we then suggest that, at any rate for the time being, the applicants who would not be considered prohibited immigrants either under the Natal Act or the Cape Act should be allowed to enter the Transvaal without hindrance, and that the refugees should be granted permits as fast as they apply? Both the Natal Act and the Cape Act contain also a provision for special permission for those who are neither domiciled nor educated in any of the European languages, but are nevertheless eligible as immigrants. Such people as, for instance, domestic servants required by the settlers in the Transvaal, or store men should also have free access. These we venture to consider to be very reasonable demands. They would go far to propitiate Indian sentiment, and, as under the suggestion we have made, there can be no question whatsoever of unrestricted influx, nor of a very large number of non-refugee applicants, we hope that the Government will see [it] fit to give a sympathetic consideration thereto.

Indian Opinion, 22-10-1903

[1] Joseph Chamberlain (1836-1914), Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1895-1903.

192. BRITISH AND INDIAN EMPIRE LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA

We have received the manifesto of this important Association formed in Australia. It is a healthy sign that the British Indians, who have settled in different parts of the world, are banding themselves in order to resist any attempt to curtail their rights as subjects of the King-Emperor. A perusal of the list of office-bearers of the Association would show that our countrymen in Australia have been able to secure the active co-operation of some influential Europeans also. We read the names of Messrs. Tepoo Hall, G. Thorburn, Pascall, Quinn and others. And if the list of members of the Committee be any indication of the general members, the Association evidently represents all classes of Indians.

We understand that Mr. Charles Francis Seivwright is one of the founders of the Association. The gentleman, according to the *Indian Daily News*, is a native of Melbourne, and the second son of Mr. Marcus Seivwright, a barrister in practice in Melbourne. Mr. Sevwright has been deputed by the Association to represent it at the forthcoming session of the National Congress, as well as the Mahomedan Education Conference. He is the bearer to them of petitions urging them to look after the interests of their brethren beyond the seas. This is a right step, and we shall follow Mr. Seivwright's efforts with a great deal of interest. For, although the Indian question in South Africa has its own local bearings and, therefore, may not be much affected by Mr. Seivwright's mission, in so far as it is an Imperial question, what the authorities in Downing Street may do in Australia will very largely apply to South Africa.

The objects of the Association are such as to command general approval. Its aim is "to assist the Commonwealth Government to carry out its laws as they relate to undesirable immigrants, such as those of ignorant, pauper, and immoral classes". Having done so, it aims also "at removing certain hurtful restrictions which now operate detrimentally against natives of British India, who belong to the more enlightened commercial classes". The league also seeks "to improve the social status of Indian citizens of Australia, and in doing this, will serve the dual purpose of benefiting the Indians themselves as well as those with whom they are thrown in contact in their daily life". The manifesto proceeds:

> We shall work together and without regard to personal aggrandisement of any individual member, bearing in mind that the interests of the whole of the members must take precedence over all other considerations. We shall have to be whole-hearted and unselfish, and work for no class or clique in making our appointments to the various high places of the League, and our aim as an organisation must be 'justice throughout the Commonwealth for all British subjects'.

The objects are laudable, and such as no one can take exception to. The spirit with which the members are to work in admirable. And if they continue to work along the lines laid down in their manifesto, success must be certain. We welcome the formation of the League, and wish it a long and useful career.

Indian Opinion, 22-10-1903

193. A VIRTUE OF NECESSITY

It would appear from the Johannesburg papers that, after all, the Chinese may not be imported for the mines. Mr. Skinner's figures[1] would seem to show that Chinese labour would be unprofitable for the deep levels. The report shows also that they are not likely to come for the asking, but that they will require a great deal of coaxing before they could be induced, in sufficient numbers, to accept the terms proposed. If the report is correct, the people in South Africa will have every reason to congratulate themselves on the deliverance. It will not surprise us if the millionaires suddenly find out that the slump is due to other causes not connected with the labour question, and that mines can go on without the Chinese labour. But this would be a virtue of necessity. They would have endeared themselves to the working classes, if they had taken up the dignified position of saying, "We would not, even though the mines may have to be shut down, do an injustice to them by importing indentured Asiatic labour, and would not traffic in what is virtually slavery".

Indian Opinion, 22-10-1903

[1] *Vide* "Mr. Skinner's Report on Chinese Labour", 15-10-1903.

194. IN TRUE COLOURS

The following is taken from a report in *The Natal Mercury* of the meeting of the Dundee Town Council recently held in Dundee:

> Councillor Willson protested against the action of the Licensing Officer in granting a licence to an Indian store-keeper who had erected a building for trading purposes. He considerd this most unfair, as similar licences had been refused to proposed Indian tenants of substantial stores built by Europeans, and with which the former building could only be classed as a hovel.
>
> Councillor Jones spoke very strongly on the subject, and stamped the action as disgraceful, in view of the express wish of the Council that no further Indian licences be granted.

Councillor Jones has come out boldly, and called the action of the Licensing Officer, in using his judgment, as "disgraceful". Councillor Willson thought it was "unfair". Truly good judges of the appellate court! For it should be remembered that the Dundee Council is the appellate court to hear appeals against the decisions of the Licensing Officer. The Licensing Officer in Dundee, therefore, is henceforth not to give his own decisions on applications for licences, but he is merely to become the mouthpiece of the Council, and carry out its behests. And yet, in a British Colony, we are told that the Dealers' Licenses Actreserves to the applicants the right of appeal! We take the liberty to say that rather than the action of the Licensing Officer being "disgraceful", it is the remarks made by the above-named councillors (both store-keepers in Dundee) which are disgraceful.

Indian Opinion, 22-10-1903

195. ASIATIC BAZAARS

We have much pleasure in reproducing a portion of the remarks made by our contemporary, the *Western Transvaal Advertiser & Zeerust Express*, apropos of the Asiatic Bazaar Question.

Dealing with the agenda of the Chamber of Commerce, our contemporary, in a leading article, proceeds:

> The third question, that of Asiatic Bazaars, is a subject that needs a deal of discussion. We have yet to learn the reason of the Chamber of Commerce for moving so vigorously in this matter. We are simply informed that the subject will be discussed at the meeting. We presume that the form of

discussion will be that Government will be asked to take immediate steps to have the Ordinance enforced. We are perfectly in the dark as to why the Chamber is in such feverish haste to do something to have the Asiatic traders shifted out of the town, and think that a discussion on the present dusty state of the streets would be more in place.

It is refreshing to find our contemporary taking such a sensible view of the question, and we join the *Advertiser* in the remark that the Chamber is in feverish haste in trying to summarily remove the Asiatic traders settled in Zeerust. We understand that at Zeerust there is already a Location established under the old regime, and that now the government has re-surveyed it and wishes to rename it a Bazaar, and then force all the Indian traders who did not hold licences prior to war to the Location. We consider that such action on the part of the Government would hardly be in accordance with its own notice,[1] for it has said deliberately that Bazaars shall be so far within the towns as to enable the British Indians to have a portion of the white trade also. Now, if the old location at Zeerust, which is on the outskirts of the town and therefore not within it, is a sample of how the Bazaars are to be established in other towns, then we think that it would be a most serious matter. In any case, it would be serious enough for established traders to have to remove their businesses, and we still hope that no such procedure will be adopted as to touch vested interests. But it would be utterly impossible even for new applicants for licences to do any business in places situated in out-of-the -way localities and, as the end of the year is drawing near, the matter is becoming more and more pressing every day.

Indian Opinion, 22-10-1903

196. INDENTURED LABOUR FROM INDIA

We dealt last week with a portion of the interesting report of the Acting Protector of Immigrants for the year 1902. During that year, sixteen vessels¾eleven from Madras and five from Calcutta¾landed 4,373 Indians, 2,940 being men, and 1,069 being women. There were, during that time, 18,000 applications, and 1,902 applications undealt with for the year 1901. At the end of the year 1902, therefore, according to the report, there was an unsupplied balance of 17,500 men.

Unless, therefore, the report proceeds, recruiting in India can be expedited,

[1] *Vide* "British Indians in South Africa" 12-4-1903

and the despatch of Indians increased, it is hardly possible that the Indians required can be supplied much under two-and-a-half years at the earliest. The greatly increased demand arises from the utterly unreliable character of the Native labour of the Colony, especially for agricultural purposes.

The other reasons given for the extraordinary demand are that

the Natives have been used to higher wages during the war; that, as riksha-pullers, they can make as much as £ 1 per day, and that the increase in the white population of 9,000 must have absorbed a very large number of Natives. In consequence of this great scaricity of labour, Natives and free Indians are continuing to receive very high wages¾ for the seventh year as high as 60s per month.

Thus the report shows most clearly how indispensable the Indian is for the prosperity of the Colony. He is needed everywhere, and yet we see writers in the newspapers complaining of the influx of Indians in the Colony. Our contemporary, *The Natal Advertiser*, even goes so far as to confuse the Immigration Restriction Act with the Indentured Immigration Law of the Colony, stating that the former has utterly failed to be of any use whatsoever in restricting immigra-tion. We may remind our contemporary that indentured labour is taken out of the scope of the Immigration Act, and that, therefore, there is no connection between indentured labour and restrictions on free immigration. During the year under review, 329 men and 105 women returned to India, and, under the Act amending the Indentured Immigration Law of 1891, 643 men and 296 women re-indentured themselves after the expiry of the five years; 1,655 men and 451 women paid the £ 3 poll tax, giving to the Colony and annual revenue of £ 6,318. The fact that so many men and women have paid the annual tax further shows the extraordinary demand that there is for even free Indian labour.

The demand for special servants, such as cooks, waiters, dhobies, etc,. continues to be as great as ever. Many free Indians have gone to the Transvaal at high wages, and an ordinary cook will not now proceed to the inland colonies under £ 6 per month, and a man with special qualifications can command even £ 16 per month. These high rates of wages have made it next to impossible for ordinary people in private life to employ free Indian servants of this class, and it is only by employing indentured Indians that they can afford to hire such servants at all.

The last sentence proves also that it is only by a form of slavery that the people in need of servants can obtain them at less than half

the market price, and yet these very people who give their services at such ridiculously low rates for a term of five years or longer have to pay the penalty of £ 3 per year for the sake of their freedom.

The Indian Marriage Law of the Colony continues to remain in a most unsatisfactory state.

> 1,053 marriages of Indian immigrants were registered as against 403 in the pervious year. Of these, 527 were registered before the allotment of Indians after arrival, the remainder being marriages contracted in Natal. . . . The question has been again raised as to the validity of religious marriages when one of the contracting parties refuses to register the marriage under Section 71, Law 25 of 1891. Many abuses are no doubt practised by unscrupulous persons who give their children in marriage at a tender age, and then when the child becomes of age, place impediments in the way, and even, for a consideration, induce her to take up with some other man; and as the religious ceremony is not necessary under the section, it has no value so far as registration is concerned.

The difficulty will continue until the Law is brought into harmony with the laws of the Colony, and recognition given to marriages solemnised according to the religion of the parties. Indians have an inveterate prejudice against registering their marriages. With them, marriage is not merely a question of civil contract, but it is a religious ceremony endowed with peculiar sanctity. With many sects, the tie once bound is inviolable, and divorce is not recognised at all. Registration, to such people, is practically a farce, and, as the Protector has shown:

> With the better class of Indians, naturally, scarcely any troubles arise, troubles which are almost wholly confined to the class of people who look upon their daughters as so much value in coin. Several women who have presented themselves for registration were unable to declare, on oath, that their husbands were dead, consequently, they could not be registered as married.

There are two ways of mitigating the evil; the one is to take an accurate record of married and unmarried men and women before they leave India, and the second is to recognise all marriages contracted in accordance with the religions of the parties, so long as they are not repugnant to the genreral law of the Colony as to polygamy and marriageable age. Indian marriage officers of undoubted integrity might be appointed to compile a record of all marriages, and recognised Indians priests might be given the authority to frame such rec-

ords. And although under some such regulations, the difficulty will not altogether disappear, we doubt not that it will very greatly be minimised.

1,412 Indians who returned to India are said to have taken with them, in cash £ 16,522, and in jewellery £ 4,809, giving a little over £ 15 per head, representing the savings during five years' stay in Natal¾that is to say, a saving of £ 3 per year. If these figures are at all an indication of the savings of the general body of immigrants, they show that the proposal to terminate the indentures in India would leave such people without tangible resources; for £ 15 after five year hard toil will not carry the people, even in a poverty-stricken place like India, very far, and would hardly serve as sufficient capital on which to engage in any occupation, trade, or pursuit there.

It is worthy of note that the Madras Indians have once more proved their thrifty habits by taking £ 12,600 with them as against £ 8,700 by their Calcutta brethren. The total population of Indian immigrants on the 31st of December was 87,000, of whom 15,000 were born in the Colony. We notice, also, that the Indians continue to be employed for the gold mines, though the experiment does not seem to have become entirely a success, the chief reason being that they have been employed during the cold weather, which naturally puts them at a disadvantage. The wages offered to those who would work underground are 50 per cent. higher, being 15s. per month instead of 10s.

> Remittances made by the Indians through the Protector's department amounted to £ 2, 676 12s. from 233 Indians, and the amount remitted through the Post Office was £ 105,889. The amount standing to the credit of Indian immigrants in the Natal Savings Bank on the 31st of December was £ 46,309, and the number of depositors 1,787 as against £ 34,108 by, 1,310 depositiors in the previous year.

The Protector says: "It is pleasing to report that the Indians are, on the whole, very law-abiding". The pity of it is that the law-abiding instinct is very much wasted in a place like South Africa.

Indian Opinion, 29-10-1903

197. INDIANS IN LADYSMITH

Our contemporary, *The Natal Witness*, gives a fair report of an interesting meeting of the Chamber of Commerce at Ladysmith. Mr. D. Sparks, the Mayor, expressed the following sentiments regarding Indian licences:

> He pointed out that the Arabs paid their best men £4 per month, whereas the white store-keeper had to pay £ 20 or more. The Indians had licences to trade, but they ignored the usage of the European store-keepers, and kept their premises open at all hours. He wished those present to say whether they wished their employees to work from five in the morning until nine at night. The question was coming home to them, and the sooner they moved in the matter, the better it would be for Ladysmith, for the district, and for their children after them. If they went on in the slipshod way they were doing, that historic town of Ladysmith would become an Asiatic town.

It would be difficult to compress in half a dozen sentences and equal number of mis-statements as the worthy Mayor of Ladysmith has evidently managed to do in the remarks noted above. We challenge Mr. Sparks to prove his first statement, namely, that the Indian merchants pay their best men £ 4 per month. We claim to have some little knowledge of the wages paid to clerks and storemen in Indian businesses, and we have much pleasure in presenting Mr. Sparks with the information that the best men are paid even as much a £ 25 per month, or an equivalent, that is to say, they draw a salary of about £ 12 to £ 15 besides being provided with food and lodgings. We may add also that the best men receive, at the end of their term of employment, handsome rewards. We could mention half a dozen instances, and if Mr. Sparks would be good enough to bring out the names of the best men employed by Indian merchants receiving £ 4 a month, we would be pleased to give the names of those who have been in receipt of the wages mentioned by us. It is perfectly true that some Indian clerks and employees receive £4 a month, and when they do so, as a rule, they deserve probably no more. Men totally new to the work, who have to be trained, and who are very much at a disadvantage so far as knowledge of the English language is concerned, can not expect very handsome wages. And even when £ 4 per month are paid, it should not be forgotten that, as a rule, board and lodging are added. It is not our contention that the Indians do not accept a lower salary: as a

matter of fact, they very often do, but we do protest against extravagant statements which are calculated to unnecessarily add to the prejudice that is already existent. Their simple mode of life and frugal habits enable the Indians to be satisfied with a lower salary, and we do not know that in a place where competition is keen and open to all, there should be any grumbling as to the salaries. While we are prepared to admit that Indian shops are kept open longer than many, though by no means all, European shops, it is far from true to say that they are opened at five in the morning and closed at nine o'clock at night. As to the historic town of Ladysmith becoming an Asiatic town, may we remind His Worship that, if Sir George White's testimony is correct, it was saved from passing into the Boers' hands, even temporarily, to some extent be it ever so small, owing to the work of a single Indian, namely, Parbhu Singh?[1] It was he who, at the peril of his life, sat perched upon a tree and gave the warning by ringing a gong, each time that the Boer gun from the Umbulwana Hill was fired. The work done by Parbhu Singh was considered sufficiently important to merit special mention by Sir George, and a special recognition on the part of Lady Curzon who sent a *choga*[2] to be presented publicly in Durban. The taunt, therefore, from Mr. Sparks comes with ill grace. While, therefore, we consider that the remarks made by the Mayor, and the other gentlemen of the Chamber of Commerce at Ladysmith, were hardly justified, we wish to sound a note of warning to the British Indian merchants and store-keepers in Ladysmith. We cannot but sympathise with the objection raised by Mr. Sparks, in the first instance, and urged so well and so moderately by Mr. G.W. Lines, the Lincensing Officer, as to the unfairness of the Indian stores being kept open for longer hours than the general European stores. Mr. Omar, one of the merchants, pertinently remarked that the Indian trade was not the same as the European, and that the former's customers required the keeping open of the shops for a longer time, but we have no doubt that a middle way must be possible, and the demand of the European store-keepers ought to be treated in a reasonable manner. In these, and matters affecting the well-being of the community as a whole, we ought to be able without any pressure to respond to all sensible suggestions and advice. It is quite possible that the law may step

[1] Gandhiji describes the incident in his *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Chapter IX pp. 78-9.

[2] A robe

in and regulate hours of business, but it would be far more graceful and far more profitable if the Indian merchants took the initiative and brought about the necessary reform. We would then be able to show that, whenever a just cause for complaint is brought to our notice, we are ever ready to rectify the error and co-operate with the Europeans. We, therefore, trust that the promise that the Indians who met Mr. Lines have made, as to considering his moderate proposal would bear good fruit.

Indian Opinion, 29-10-1903

198.. WHAT CONSTITUTES RESPECT TO THE COURT

Sir Henry Bale, the learned Chief Justice of Natal, is reviving the question of what is proper respect on the part of British Indians, when they enter the Law Courts. One "Manorath", a British Indiain, who was a witness in a case pending before His Lordship, appeared without his head-dress. His lordship required of the Interpreter (Mr. Matthews) as to what the custom was in India regarding witnesses and, on the Interpreter saying that it was an insult to the Judge if the witness wore boots, His Lordship intimated that he should write to the Chief Justice of Calcutta to ascertain the exact practice. His Lordship added that he noticed Indians in court wearing both head-dress and boots, humorously adding also that, if they removed their boots, they were likely to disappear. We respectfully venture to think that Sir Henry has made "much ado about nothing". The practice, so far as Natal is concerned, has been settled more than once. Sir Walter Wragg[1] met an Indian deputation years ago, and decided that *salaam* should be accepted as an equivalent to the removal of the head-dress. When the delegates on behalf of the Natal Government went to India in 1894, they also brought out full particulars as to the Indian custom, and dwelt upon it in their report submitted to the Government. They made it clear that the custom in India is not to remove the head-dress or the boots when the parties are dressed either wholly or partly in the Indian costume; that is to say, if the head-dress is Oriental, then it is not to be taken off, but the shoes or boots have to be taken off in accordance with the Oriental practice if they are of Indian make. Sir Walter, who knew this, ordered that the boots or shoes need not be taken off because of the impracticability in Natal, and because, as rule, it was only the European boots or shoes that were used by the Indians in

[1] Puisne Judge, later Acting Chief Justice, Natal.

South Africa. We may also remind His Lordship that, when he was in practice and ornamented the Natal Bar, he was Senior Counsel in the case of Cassim Abdulla & Bennett, wherein Mr. Cassim Abdulla sued Mr. Bennett, the Magistrate, for damages on account of the Magistrate having ordered forcible removal of the head-dress of a witness in a case before him. He was then able to secure a dictum from the judges that the British Indians were not to be forced either to remove their head-dress or their boots, but that they were to *salaam* on entering the court. This practice has been followed ever since, and it would be a pity to re-open the question.

Indian Opinion, 29-10-1903

199. THE BAZAARS IN THE TRANSVAAL

The notices to the British Indian store-keepers and merchants in the Transvaal about removal to the Location (miscalled Bazaars) expire on the 31st December next. There seems to be somewhere in the Asiatic Department of the Government an evil genius working through it. We have seen notices issued by the Magistrates in different townships offering Stands to applicants, and the offers are hedged in by so many restrictions, that we cannot help saying that there appears to be a deliberate attempt to deprive the Indian of even what little he had under the existing law. Why there should be on the part of, or, at any rate, in the name of, the Government of the Colony, such petty jealousy of the Indian ever arising in business, we cannot understand. The following is what one of the notices states:

> If you require particular Stands, you should state in your application your reason for requiring them, and any claims you may have to the lease of these Stands. You must bear in mind that I cannot give Stands to any person who is not actually residing or trading within the town and does not require Stands for the purpose of his residence or trade, nor more than he actually requires for his residence or trade.

We cannot recall any such dog-in-the-manger policy even by the late Republican Government. We are hoping that, no matter how tempting the offers may be for Stands in the so-called Bazaars, the Indians in the Transvaal will refuse to have anything to do with them until the Legislation promised by Lord Milner has been settled. But, in any case, why should an applicant give his reason for requiring Stands? Under the law, it is open to Indians to hold land without restriction in places set apart for the purpose. Why should not, then, any

applicant receive a Stand if he wants one in those Bazaars? Why, again, should an applicant be restricted to a Stand or Stands only in so far as the same may be required for his residence or trade? Are we to understand that the lessors of such Stands will not be allowed to sub-let their Stands and must always remain thereon themselves on pain of being deprived of their leases? Why again, should the giving of leases of Stands be confined to those only who are now residing or trading within the towns? Every Indian Location established during the old regime had owners or lessors who were not residing on their Stands, but who were allowed to deal with them freely, to sub-let them, as also to hold any number of Stands. Why should they, under the British Government, be deprived of such freedom of action? The assurance given by Lord Milner that the Government has no prejudice against the British Indians, and that it wants to deal with them justly, fairly, and even liberally is utterly at variance with the practice as we see it illustrated in the notices that have been sprung upon the community regarding the precious Bazaars. If the Government intends to drive the Indian out by harassing regulations, it would be mercy to send them out bag and baggage at once. They will then know their position, and there would be no hypocritical justification for any action that the Government may take. Like the late Government of the Orange River Colony, it could take a firm stand and absolutely declare: "Though you are British subjects, we will have none of you because you wear the brown skin". The course would be drastic, perhaps un-British, but it would be an honest course. And if the Government really means well by the Indians, and if the assurance above referred to is to be carried out, then the sooner there is a change in the policy hitherto pursued, the better it will be for all concerned.

Indian Opinion, 29-10-1903

200. BRITISH INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL

We offer no apology for reverting to the question of the so-called Indian Bazaars in the Transvaal. The position of the British Indians there is very critical, and we consider it our duty to concentrate much of our attention on it, seeing that it is, at present, the weakest part of the question. We reproduce in another column a notice signed by the Magistrate at Standerton addressed to the Asiatic community, which shews clearly the spirit which seems to guide the policy of the Asiatic Department in dealing with the British Indians. Acc-

ording to the notice, applications were invited for lease of Stands in the Bazaar, the list closing on the 30th ultimo. Applicants are to "state in their applications their reasons for requiring particular Stands and the claims they may have, if any, to the lease of these Stands". then "on the date mentioned, the Magistrate will consider the applications and apportion the Stands between the applicants subject to the provisions that

(a) no person is to be given any Stand who has not actually resided or traded in the town and does not require Stands for the purposes of his residence or trade;

(b) no person is to be given more Stands than he actually requires for his residence or trade;

(c) if there is more than one applicant for any particular Stand, the appointtment shall, in the absence of the possession by any claimant of a good claim to preferential treatment, be decided by law or in some other way as the Magistrate may decide.

Now, as we have pointed out more often than once in these columns, the Law 3 of 1885 gives unrestricted right to Indians to hold landed property in wards, streets, or Locations that may be set apart for them, but this right is to be hedged in by most vexing conditions with reference to Locations far away from towns where it would be utterly impossible to trade and very dangerous to live. In order to understand the extreme harshness of the terms imposed, one has to bear in mind the fact that the Stands are mere vacant pieces of ground; the lessees have not only to pay survey fees and rental, but they have to erect their own buildings, and then they can get the Stands only for their residence or trade, and enough only for such purposes and no more. How does the Government expect every Indians to take out a lease and build on the Stand and live there, presumably without being able to sub-let? The thing is very difficult to understand. In order to be able to comply with the ridiculous conditions laid down in the notice, every Indian will have to be a man of considerable means, which, unfortunately, he is not. And then, if he fails to erect handsome structures, or erects only tin shanties, the blame will be placed on his shoulders, and he will be held up to scorn and contempt because he lives in mere shanties, although the situation will have been not at all of his creation, but of the Government's. Notices, more or less similarly worded, haver been sent to British Indians in many places in the Transvaal. We very much question whether His Excellency the Gover-

nor has any part whatsoever in imposing the conditions therein related. Indeed, the fact is quite plain, seeing that each notice is worded differently form the rest. It would, therefore, appear that the Magistrates have been acting on their own initiative, probably on very general instructions from headquarters. If so, it illustrates once more the position taken up by us¾namely, that there is no connected, settled policy regarding the Indians, and that they are more or less at the mercy of the Magistrates or other officers who deal with them leniently or severely in proportion to their prejudices for or against Indians. Such a state of things cannot last long, and it is to be hoped that Sir Arthur Lawley, who has a large heart, will spare some time from his multifarious duties and take a personal interest in the matter. The Indians, who have been obliged to remain in a state of uncertainty and suspense for the last two years, have a right to expect a clear definition of their status. In the meanwhile, as we have said already in our last issue, we trust that the British Indians in the Transvaal would patiently await developments and decline to have anything to do with the Bazaars.

Indian Opinion, 5-11-1903

201. EAST LONDON AND ITS INDIAN RESIDENTS

We reproduce in another column a temperate leading article from the *East London Despatch* on the question of the right of British Indians to hold landed property within that borough. Our contemporary has based it on the incident of an Indian having lately bought a piece of land in a principal street there for which he has paid a handsome price. We entirely agree with our contemporary that the Town council should strictly enforce the building regulations so as to prevent the erection of shanties, and we assure it that if the Town Council will only do its duty in that direction, the ever-docile and law-abiding Indians would never think of building structures in breach of regulations. And in proof of our statement, we cite the splendid buildings that have been erected by Indian merchants in Grey Street and elswhere in Durban. The chief thing is to treat the Indian as a fellow-being and fellow-subject. And we doubt not that there is an effective remedy against undue or unfair competition, and the defects that are usually and often unfairly ascribed to Indians.

Indian Opinion, 5-11-1903

202. THE PLAGUE AND THE RED TAPE

Complaints have been received by us from several correspondents to the effect that, although the plague restrictions of Indian departures from Natal to the Transvaal have been removed, authorised British Indians are required to take out medical certificates costing them 10s. 6d. each, and are still subjected to medical inspection at Volksrust. The medical officer gives them letters addressed to the Magistrate, saying that they are to be under medical surveillance for ten days. This appears to us to be red tape with a vengeance. If the harassment is to continue in spite of the removal of the regulations, we do not know the meaning of the cancellation of the Plague Notice of the Transvaal Government. The taking out of the medical certificate and payment of half a guinea therefor are a totally unnecessary tax on the poor refugees, and the sooner the Government in the Transvaal issue the necessary instructions to their officials, the better it will be for the Indian refugees. As it is, these poor people have been put to no end of trouble and inconvenience for the last nine months in the name of sanitary and health precautions, when thousands of other people form Natal have been freely allowed to enter the Transvaal without the slightest medical inspection or supervision.

Indian Opinion, 5-11-1903

203. "THE EAST RAND EXPRESS" AND ITS FACTS

Under the heading "Underhand Movements", our contemporary, *The East Rand Express*, contributes a sub-leader to a recent number of that admirable weekly on the question of Indian licences said to have been granted in the district of Spelonken. Our contemporary says:

> It would be interesting to know what is really going on in the Spel-onken. From what can be gathered, the authorities have granted licences to a number of Indian traders to do business there, despite the fact that before the war no Indians were allowed licences. What has become of Government Notice 356 of 1903, if its provisions can be so flagrantly broken? That notice distinctly states in clause 2: 'No new licences to trade shall be granted to any Asaitic except to carry on his business in Bazaars set apart for the purpose'. Now the Spelonken has no Bazaars, being a wide tract of country inhabited mainly by

> Natives. It would seem that Government is deliberately violating its own proclamation, and setting open the gate for unlimited Asiatic competition. If the Government intends to introduce the Natal laws as to Asiatics, let it do so publicly, and we shall know how to act, but let us have an end of such underhand business as has been outlined above.

Now our information is contrary to that given above. We know that two Indians narrowly escaped deprivation of their old licences. We happen to know that it is from Pietersburg, within which district the Spelonken is situated, that most of the troubles of the Indian traders have radiated. And we believe that the information supplied to our contemporary is a feeler thrown out [so as] to heap further sorrows on the devoted heads of the Indians. Now, there is an honest difference of opinion as to the Indian question between our contemporary and us; but we believe that our contemporary does not wish to misrepresent facts in dealing with it, and we, therefore, ask it to inquire and ascertain whether what we have said above is not an accurate statement of facts.

Indian Opinion, 5-11-1903

204.. TRAVELLING IN THE TRANSVAAL

Our contemporary, the *Transvaal Leader*, has given prominence to an anonymous writer regarding the Native railway travellers, and waxes very wrathful over the audacity of the railway administration in having accommodated Native travellers in a first-class carriage on a local train. The facts appear to be, according to the corespondent in question, that these four Native travellers were found by him in a first-class railway compartment in a train from George Goch, all the other compartments being occupied by European passengers. The correspondent held a first-class ticket, and wanted to travel by that train. Not finding room in any of the other compartments, he seems to have passed by the one occupied by the Native passengers. This was altogether too much for him; he could not understand why they should be allowed to travel first-class at all. That they had paid their fares was no question for him to consider. He approached the guard, and the guard seems to have said that, seeing that the Native passengers had paid first-class fares, they were as much entitled as the correspondent himself to travel by that train in a first-class carriage. But the guard's reply is the reason why he has rushed to the Press. In his letter, he has mixed up the Natives with the Indians, and so has our contemporary-

by no means an unusual thing in this sub-continent. It just shows the danger that faces our contrymen in South Africa generally, and particularly in the Transvaal. There is often a tendency to use the terms "Natives, Coolies and Indians" as if they were all one and the same. The *Leader* calls upon the railway authorities promptly to prohibit first-class travelling by Natives and coolies, ¾ as it is pleased to call British Indians¾ forgetting that the railway regulations at present do not prohibit first-class travelling by either the Indians or the Natives; [that] only with reference to the latter it is provided that they have to make their applicaions at least half an hour before the advertised time of departure of trains, and that their application would be specially considered if they are in companies of four or more. We may remind our contemporary that, even during the old regime, first-class travelling by Indians was not prohibited, and we may further remind it of the fact (though in newspaper history, we are told, precedents count for nothing) that the *Transvaal Leader* before the war was the champion of the rights of Colourd people who had not a more sympathetic friend than Mr. Pakeman, who adorned the editorial chair.

Indian Opinion 5-11-1903

205. INDIAN STORE-KEEPERS IN LADYSMITH

We have much pleasure in making room for notes from the *Natal Witness* and *The Times of Natal* regarding the action of Mr. Lines towards the Indian store-keepers in Ladysmith, and his threat that their licences will not be renewed unless they consent to close their stores at the same time as the Europeans. After denouncing, in its usual fashion, the British Indians, *The Times of Natal* proceeds:

> But for all that, it is a question how far Mr. Lines, the Town Clerk of Ladysmith, was justified in his action in calling the Arab traders together and practically ordering them to close their places of business at the same hours as their European fellows, and to observe the same holidays, under threat of having their licences withdrawn. This strikes one as being a very arbitrary exercise of the powers of a licensing officer. Once a man has obtained a licence and observes the laws of the country generally, and by-laws of his municipality particularly, it should be beyond the powers of any local official to so utterly ruin him, as proposed by Mr. Lines, for, if this latest instance of officialdom be carried to a just conclusion, then the autocrat of Ldysmith and others similarly placed throughout the Colony, can order any European to

close his store at any hour he may please. It is a ticklish subject if you like, but the old nostrum that 'an Englishman's house is his castle' will have to be knocked on the head before it can be solved by Ladysmith.

These remarks are undoubtedly just, and from a purely legal and British point of view, the proposals made by Mr. Lines are arbitrary and high-handed. All the same, we adhere to the opinion we have already expressed, namely, that it would be very graceful on the part of the British Indians in Ladysmith, notwithstanding the arbitrary procedure adopted by Mr. Lines, to fall in with Mr. Lines suggestion, provided, of course, that it is at all workable. If they could do so, they would have in their hands an exceedingly good weapon of defence, and it would disarm much of the opposition in Ladysmith. So long as the Dealers' Licenses Act remains on the Statute-book of the Colony in its present form, so long will it be necessary for the Indian community to be on its guard, and to be yielding whenever yielding is feasible, even at the risk of some pecuniary loss, because, as has been repeatedly pointed out, they are (we mean the traders) totally at the mercy of the licensing officers and Town Councils or Local Boards; and while it may be possible in isolated instances to secure relief from the Home authorities, it should be recognised that it is a very slow machinery to move. The safest thing, therefore, is to recognise the position as it is, to make all the efforts in order to have the law removed, and in the meanwhile to act in such a manner as to show by our action how utterly underserved are the disabilities that are imposed on us.

Indian Opinion, 5-11-1903

206. LETTER TO LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR'S SECRETARY

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

25 & 26 COURT CHAMBERS,
RISSIK STREET,
P.O. BOX 6522
JOHANNESBURG,
November 7,1903

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIEUTENANT- GOVERNOR
PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge you letter of the 4th instant, No. 2131.[1]

As I have already said, I have no wish to lay stress on the question of His Excellency's replies regarding Notice No. 356 of this year to the representation of the British Indian Association.[2] But I do venture to hope that, in the light of the facts placed before His Excellency, the request respectfully made by the Association would be favourably considered. And in this connection, I may be permitted to draw His Excellency's attention to Lord Milner's dispatch[3] to Mr. Chamberlain, which appears to lay down the Liberal policy about the position of the British Indians.

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
Your humble servant
M. K. GANDHI

Pretoria Achives: L. G. 2132, Asiatics 1902-1906.

[1] This was in reply to Gandhiji's letter of November 2 which is not available.

[2] The Lt-Governor had written that there was no room for any differences in the interpretaion of his replies, adding: "In every case the words used are clear and explicit and distinctly limit the number competent to claim exemption under the notice, who 'held licences' to trade beofre the war".

[3] *Vide* "Lord Milner's Despatch", 27-8-1903

207.. NOTES[1]

JOHANNESBURG.
November 9,1903

NOTES ON THE INDIAN QUESTION IN THE TRANSVAAL, ENDING NOVEMBER 9, 1903

The question of paramount importance is, at present, the working of Notice 356 of this year, known as the Bazaar Notice.

In view of the approaching end of the year, a British Indian deputation waited on His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor[2] with a view to induce him to respect the licences of all British Indians who are at present trading in the Colony under licences duly issued to them.

It will be remembered that, according to the Notice, strictly speaking, only those who held licences at the commencement of hostilites are entitled to trade outside Locations after the end of this year.

Two classes of licences remain, therefore, to be considered. First, those who traded before the war, but not with licences. Second, those who had licences granted to them, after British occupation, by British officers on the strength of their being refugees.

From the correspondence with His Excellencey on the Bazaar Notice, it was hoped that there would be no difficulty regarding licences belonging to the first class, because a very large majority of British Indians traded in the Transvaal before the war without any licences whatsoever (because none were granted) on the strength of tenders of licence money or in the names of their white friends, with the knowledge of the then Government.

But, His Excellency, unfortunately for the British Indians, took a different view and said that he never meant to convey to the Association that any but those who actually held licences to trade outside Locations before the war should be allowed to continue to do so after the 30th December next.

However, His Excellency, on learning that, as a matter of fact, there were hundreds of British Indians who traded before the war

[1] Gandhiji as usual forwarded this statement to Dadabhai Naoroji who sent a copy to the Secretary of State for India. *India* published it as a despatch in its issue of 4-12-1903.

[2] On October 30.

without licences, owing to the protection granted to them by the British Government, said that he would consider the question at a meeting of the Executive Council.

There is, therefore, reason for hoping that the licences belonging to the first class will get relief.

We are, however, used, nowadays, to so many disappointments that it may not be amiss to state the position clearly and to contemplate the consequences of sending such men to Bazaars or Locations.

Although it is difficult to give authentic figures, it may be safely assumed that more than 50 per cent of the licence-holders would fall under the first class.

They have been, many of them, in business for the last ten or more years; they hold long leases of premises equipped by them, and are large importers, doing white as well as Kaffir trade. Are they to remove to Locations at the end of the year? Although it was for these very men that Mr. Chamberlain fought strenuously and successfully during the Republican regime!

They were allowed to trade outside Locations without licences, because the British Governemnt proved too strong for Mr. Kruger;[1] and why should the favoured few Indians who were able to obtain licences from the Boer Government receive exceptional treatment? Indeed, their case is in no way stronger than that of the unfortunate men of the first class who are now under notice to remove to Locations.

The reason why some of them were able to get licences before the war is as follows:

After voluminous correspondence with the British Government, and after the Boer Government had realised that it could not relegate British Indians to Locations, it was decided in 1899 to grant licences to British Indians who had been trading before that year outside Locations. Those who were able, therefore, got out their licences, but others who had left the Transvaal for a time in 1898 were unable to do so; nor were all granted their licences at once.

The Boer Government machinery was very slow; the Licensing Officers hardly ever acted promptly, or in accordance with instructions. The result was [that,] in outlying districts, in spite of applications, many Indians were unable to get their licences, but at the same

[1] S. J. Paul Kruger (1825-1904), President of the Transvaal, 1883-1900. *Vide* "Late President Kruger", 23-7-1904.

time they were not disturbed in their businesses.

Are they now, then to be deprived of the right of trading in towns outside Locations for no fault of their own?

There still remain to be considered the licences belonging to the second class.

Now, these men received their licences upon British occupation without any conditions whatsoever. The question of enforcing the law 3 of 1885, as stated in Lord Milner's despatch, was only evolved this year. Last year nobody ever thought of enforcing the anti-Asiatic, un-British laws of the late Government. Those men were refugees. Many of them engaged before the war in trade in some district or another, and the British officers who were not trained in the local prejudices could not naturally understand why they should refuse to grant trading licences to British subjects when they were being granted to foreigners.

It was reserved for the Asiatic Office to unearth the anti-Asiatic laws, and make suggestions for enforcing them. Its hands were strengthened by the interested agitation set up against British Indians, and the result was that we have the Bazaar Notice.

When the British Indian deputation waited on Mr. Chamberlain in January last,[1] he could not understand how licences once granted could ever be taken away.

Moreover, men of the second class are very few; they, too, have large stocks on hand, in some cases having leases, and it would mean entire ruin to them to be compelled to remove to Bazaars.

The British Indian Association has been trying to get authentic reports from professional men in the various districts in which the Government have seen fit to select sites for Bazaars, and, according to reports received, not in any case are the sites selected such as to attract any trade whether white or Kaffir, although both Lord Milner and Sir Arthur Lawley assure us that they will be selected within towns and in such places as to give the British Indians reasonable facilities for getting both white and Kaffir trade.

In every one of the cases, the Bazaars have been fixed in out-of -the-way places and, though legally within the town boundary, certainly away from the inhabited protion thereof. In one case, an attempt was made to remove the existing Location to a site much further

[1] *Vid*e "Address to Chamberlain", 7-1-1903

away. It may be here mentioned that His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor told the deputation that, in his opinion, the Bazaar sites were well selected and gave to those who might have to go there a fair opportunity of trade.

With the greatest deference, it may be pointed out that the reports of men quite unbiased, having large local experience, and the opinion of the men who have passed a lifetime in trade is, after all, more reliable than that of His Excellency.

The following is a typical report on a Bazaar site.

Mr. J. A. Nesir, J. P., Solicitor, says of the Klerksdorp Bazaar:

> In my opinion, the site proposed is not suitable for trade purposes, as it is not likely that inhabitants from the town will proceed all that distance to make purchases. . . . There was no Indian Bazaar under the old Government.

Dr. Jupp, M.B.B.Sc., says:

> In my opinion, the site as at present marked is to be condemned from a sanitary point of view.

Since this report was drawn up, even the District Surgeon of the place has condemned it.

India Office: Judicial and Public Records, 402

208. THE ORANGE RIVER COLONY AND COLOUR LEGISLATION

A recent number of the *Government Gazette* shows quite plainly that the Government of the Orange River Colony is not to be deterred by any considerations whatsoever from following up the legislation restrictive of the liberties of Coloured people. In the *Gazette* dated 23rd October is published a draft Ordinance to amend the Law relating to Municipalities, and we read the following provision regarding the qualification of voters for the municipal elections: Any one

> who is a Coloured person in terms of Article 8 of Law 8 of 1893, and who is not the offspring of a lawful marriage of a white father with a Colourd mother, or a coloured father with a white mother, or who, being such an offspring, has not obtained the right to the ownership or occupation of immovable property in this colony under provision of Chapter 34 of the Law, is disqualifed from being a voter.

Now by Article 8 of Law 8 of 1893,

> the expression ‘Coloured person’ appearing in this Law shall be interpreted and taken, unless the context clearly forbids it, to apply to and include a man,

> or men, as well as woman, or women, above the age or estimated age of sixteen years, of any Native tribe in South Africa, and also all Coloured persons, and all who, in accordance with law or custom, are called Coloured persons, or are treated as such, of whatever race or nationality they may be.

The definition, therefore, is as wide as could be imagined, and includes British Indians also. Taken by itself, the provision is hardly of much consequence, for we are aware that the Transvaal Government has only lately disfranchised all Coloured people from participation at municipal election, and such a disqualification is by no means the most important disability of the British Indians, but taken as an indication of the deliberately hostile policy of the Government against the British Indians, it is a matter of no small importance. There is, for the Government of that Colony, absolutely no turning back from the inheritance of the past. When there is any change at all in the past legislation, it is for the worse. Mr. Chamberlain, in his despatch to Lord Milner in reply to his demand for Asiatic indentured labour, dwelt upon the anti-Indian legislation in both Colonies, and expressedthe hope that they would grant relief in the direction pointed out by him. The clause we have referred to above and the clause we are about to refer to are the answers returned to the despatch by the Government of the Orange River Colony. It is inconceivable how the Government of that Colony, which is, after all, subordinate to, and under the direct control of, the Colonial Office, can defy the head of that office and continue not only to refuse to undo the past but to tighten the cord that binds the British Indians. Later, in the same draft Ordinance, we notice certain clauses referring to Locations. The marginal note merely mentions "Native Locations", but the clause itself clearly applies to "all Coloured persons". It reads:

> The council is empowered to establish Locations in such part or parts of the Municipal land as they may think fit, within which all coloured persons, other than domestic servants residing on their employees' premises, shall be compelled to reside, and they may from time to time close such Locations and establish other or others. The council is further empowered to frame regulations for the proper control of all such persons. . . No Coloured persons, male or female, above the estimated age of sixteen years, or under the estimated age of sixty years, shall reside for more than forty-eight hours within any such Locations, unless
>
> (a) he is actually in the employment of a white employer residing within the Municipality, or within a radius of five miles from the limit of the Municipal

area and is in possession of a permit from the Town Council to that effect, Or unless

(b) he has obtained a certificate of permission to work on his own account in terms of Article 3 of Law 8 of 1893, and is actually engaged in such work, Or unless

(c) he is a person who has obtained a letter of exemption under the provisions of the Coloured Persons Relief Ordinance, 1903, Or unless

(d) she is the lawful wife of a person residing within such Location under the aforesaid provisons.

Boiled down, these sub-clauses mean that, even to be able to live within the confines of a Location, which like a stable, or a pound may be removed at the sweet will of the Concil, a Coloured persons must have obtained previous permission and must be a menial servant, that is to say, he cannot reside in any part of the colony except as a labourer pure and simple. Lest our readers might imagine that there are very great privileges reserved, by the laws referred to, to the wearers of a coloured skin, we may mention that Article 3 of Law 8 of 1893 contemplates special permission to be given by the Local Board on payment of a fee of 5s. per month to a Coloured man to sell his services to anybody he likes, provided that he obtains the necessary certificate for so doing. The Coloured Persons Relief Ordinance defines the qualifications, which are high enough, entitling a Coloured person to obtain exemption from liability to carry a personal pass renewable from time to time and bearing a certain fee. The precious exemption is granted after very irksome formalities having been gone through, and really consists in the carrying of the exemption certificate in exchange for the ordinary pass. Beyond this, the Ordinance gives no relief, and leaves such exempted persons under all the other disabilities, namely, those as to trading, farming, holding immovable property, residence outside Locations, etc. Such, then, is the attitude of the Government of the Orange River Colony towards Coloured persons, and unless the Colonial Office chooses to exercise its prerogative for the protection of non-white subjects of the Empire, it will go hard with the hundreds of British Indians who are waiting to emigrate to the Orange River Colony and settle there for purpose of earning a livelihood. We trust that the friends of British Indians in England will see these remarks of ours, study them, and come to the rescue and insist on the Colonial Office doing its duty towards the loyal Indian subjects of the King-Emperor. During his fiscal

campaign, Mr. Chamberlain has not been slow to lay stress upon the fact that India contains an inexhaustible reserve of fighting material upon which the Empire could draw without the slightest hesitation in case of need. Yes, India is ever ready to do her part for the service of the Empire at large. Will the Right Honourable Gentleman also use his influence in inducing the Colonies to do theirs?

209. THE LATE SIR JOHN ROBINSON

Death has removed from our midst one of the Makers of Natal in the person of the late Sir John Robinson. The first Prime Minister under responsible Government, Sir John has left behind him a record of useful service to the Colony which it will not be easy for anyone to equal, much less to surpass. It was a most fortunate thing, as the recent events have shown, that when self-government was granted to the Colony, in securing which Sir John was chiefly instrumental, it was governed by him and his equally able colleague, the late Right Honourable Mr. Harry Escombe. Had it not been for the great start that they gave, it is not difficult to see what would have been the position of Natal under responsible government. From Editor to Prime Minsiter is a long leap, and that fact alone shows the sterling worth of the man who is now no longer among us. By his ability zeal, and honesty of purpose, he succeeded in making *The Natal Mercury* the power that it is in Natal. He brought all those qualities to bear on the government of the Colony only in a higher degree, and his merit was recognised by the Sovereign also in that he received the Order of K.C.M.G. By the British Indians, the honourable gentleman will be best remembered as the author of the Disfranchising Bill[1]. The British Indians had then reason to differ with him in the views he held, but no man can say that he was actuated by any but what to him were lofty motives in embarking upon the measure. The Bill, as subsequently modified, remains part of the Statute-book of the Colony. We can only wish that the words he uttered at the time of introducing the measure were also a part of the legislation, for he distinctly said that, in disfranchising British Indians, every member of the Legislative Assembly took upon himself a very serious responsibility and became a trustee for them. Had that spirit guided our legislators in framing the legislation that has followed, there would have been very little to com-

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Natal Legislative Assembly" 27-4-1896

plain of. That Sir John had a warm corner in his heart for the British Indians is proved from the fact that, at no small sacrifice to his health, ¾ for he had hardly recovered from his serious illness¾ he was pleased to accept the invitation of the Natal Indian Congress to preside at a meeting in the Congress Hall to celebrate the relief of Ladysmith.[1] As was usual with him, he entered into the progrmme whole-heartedly and paid a generous tribute to the Natal Indian Volunteer Ambulance Corps.[2] We reproduce in another column the full text of his eloquent speech on that occasion. We tender to Lady Robinson and the family our most sincere sympathy in their bereavement, which is a bereavement for the whole Colony.

Indian Opinion, 12-,11-1903

210. THE PROPOSED SITE FOR THE ASIATIC BAZAAR IN KLERKSDORP

We understand that the British Indians in the several towns, for which the Transvaal Government has selected sites for Asiatic Bazaars, have had reports drawn up as to the suitability or otherwise of these places. Klerksdorp Indians have done likewise, and the medical gentleman who has reported for them appears to have condemned the site from a sanitary standpoint. Confirmation of that report appears from very strange quarters, According to the Klerksdorp Mining Record of the 3rd instant, the District Surgeon for the place has also reported unfavourably about it, and it would be quite laughable, if it were not painful, how the Health Board for that district has professed helplessness in the matter as the site has been selected by the Government. They would, therefore, if they could, wash their hands clean of any complicity whatsoever in the selection. Unfortunately for the Health Board, however, according to the Government Notice regarding Bazaars, the Government could not possibly have fixed upon the particular spot without consultation with the Health Board, and while there may be some excuse for the Government, having their seat in Pretoria, not knowing about the unfitness of the site from a medical standpoint, there can be none for the Health Board, as the members are local men and they must have recommended the site with their eyes wide open. We cannot do better than quote the full report as it appears in the

[1] *Vide* "Congratulations to British Generals", 14-3-1900
[2] *Vide* "Notes" 3-9-1900

Klerksdorp Mining Record.

> Letter was read from the District Surgeon in which he stated that he condemned the site of the Asiatic Bazaar, as in the rainy season it would be submerged. It was pointed out that there were 200 Stands in the Bazaar, of which at least three-fourths would not be required for years, and that though a few of the outside Stands were on low ground, the majority were in a splendid position. The matter was also out of the Board's jurisdiction as the site had been approved of by Government, surveyed and was declared as the Bazaar.

It is Boards like this which have recommended sites in other places also, and yet Lord Milner has given his assurance to the Colonial Office that the Bazaars will be well selected as well from a health, as from a business, standpoint.

Indian Opinion, 12-11-1903

211. THE WHITE LEAGUE AND BRITISH INDIANS

A meeting was held on the 5th instant, under the auspices of the White League at Fordsburg, in Johannesburg, where a number of questions were discussed. The proceedings, according to the newspaper reports, appear to have been: "extremely lively" and "at times noisy". Mr. A. Macfarlane presided, and there seems to have been an attendance of about eighty persons. The chairman, in his opening speech, dwelt at some length on the question of Asiatic immigration.

> The League, he said, was formed about a year ago, because of the feeling that Johannesburg was being flooded by large numbers of an undersi-rable class of aliens who were filling up the small shops and trading areas, forestalling in many cases people of our own nationality who had been detained at the coast and had in many ways borne the full brunt of the war. . . He referred to the ease with which Asiatics got permits to return after the war, the difficulty which the British people experienced in getting permits. By the Transvaal Law, Chinamen and Indians were precluded from holding licences, but this law had been supended by the present Government for Chinamen and Indians who were engaged in business illegally previous to the war. . .The question might be asked whether, in view of the Indian Government having refused permission to allow labourers to be recruited there for the relief of the railway labour demands, we should not ask for repatriation of the whole of these people now here, who, as traders, simply acted as a Drag on the real advancement of this country.

This is what Mr. Macfarlane has to say on the British Indians.

The facts are, according to official records, that whereas nearly 28,000 permits have been issued to Europeans between January and October, less than a 10,000 permits have been issued from the declaration of peace up to now to the British Indians. Moreover, from the figures already published by us, it would appear that the whole of the 28,000 Europeans were non-refugees. With the exception of perhaps a few dozen British Indians, all who have received permits have been refugees. As to the alleged unscrupulous methods of the Asiatics in obtaining permits, we refer the worthy chairman to the prosecutions instituted lately by Captain Hamilton Fowle against several Europeans for being in the Transvaal without permits, or for having trafficked in the permit trade. The Greek Assistant Vice-Consul, who only lately was heavily fined for such traffic, we presume, was instrumental in obtaining permits for Europeans only. The suggestion that the Indians, who have been domiciled in the Transvaal for several years, who have vested interests in it and have entered the Colony as free men, should be repatriated, because the Indian Government declines to sell Indian labour to the Transvaal on terms bordering on slavery, is quite in keeping with the whole tenor of the speech. And it is the opposition of these gentlemen that counts with the present Government that has inspired the Bazaar Notice, and that fairly promises, by the end of the year, to make beggars of hundreds of British Indian store-keepers. We reproduce in another column the full report of the meeting taken from the *Daily Mail* to show the kind of opposition that is set against +British Indians.

Indian Opinion, 12-11-1903

212. INDIANS AND "THE EAST RAND EXPRESS"

Our contemporary is still busy over the Indian question. In one of the latest issues, over half a column is devoted to the purchase by an Indian of a piece of land in the East Rand district. The facts as set forth are fairly accurate; we are in full possession thereof. We may, however, remind our contemporary of one very material fact, namely, that the land in question was bought in a perfectly *bona-fide* manner. When the Transvaal was occupied by the British, the people ¾ including officers, the general public, and the Indians themselves¾ came to the conclusion that the old discriminating laws had lapsed. The dispatches of Lord Milner and the speeches of Her late Majesty's ministers were still fresh in their memory, and bearing them in mind, they came

to the natural conclusion that the evil, to remove which the late war was fought, must certainly have disappeared. In no other part of the British Dominions do such discriminating laws against British subjects exist. The Indian, therefore, bought the property, and the white man sold it, under the full belief that the transfer would be registered. Indeed, it was even submitted to the Registrar for registration. The only thing, therefore, that could be done when it was found that the hopes of the Indians were not to be fulfilled, and that the lot could not be transferred to an Indian name, was to have it in the name of a white man. The poor man applied to a white friend to help him by taking up the property in his own name, so that when it could be sold, he would sell it and save himself from loss. The friend, be it said to his credit, consented to do so. There the matter ends. To us it is painful, but if our contemporary can derive any satisfaction from such a state of things, we wish it all joy of it. We can only say that it is exremely un-British, but we are not surprised at the attitude taken up over this paltry case, for, in the same article, we read later of that the programme of the East Rand people is to be: (1) No Asiatic trading save in Bazaars outside the towns as provided by the law; (2) the support of the existing law prohibiting Asiatic ownership of land and fixed property; (3) the placing of all Asiatics on the same basis as Kaffirs. We have always admired the frankness of our contemporary, and in this instance we find the same trait; there is no hesitation to call a spade a spade. The Government is to be asked to set apart Bazaars outside the towns. Really speaking, this request is unnecessary, because the Government has already done so in almost every case in which sites have been selected. We hardly think that the most rabid East Randite could have made better selections from his own standpoint. They are so situated that trade is practically imposssible, and living dangerous. The second request also is hardly necessary, because the Government has not shown the slightest willingness to depart from the existing law, and its activity has been all towards making the restrictions as severe as possible. The third is undoubtedly the frankest of all, and would certainly solve the question once for all, if only the question of the status of British subjects can be indefinitely shelved. The placing of all Asiatics on the same basis as Kaffirs is a very simple solution, but the inconvenient fact is that no matter how willing and ready the Government of the Transvaal may be to trample under foot all the past declarations, we fancy that even they would hestitate to adopt the course suggested by our contemporary. It would mean the

abrogation of Law 3 of 1885 in favour of legislation which they never allowed the old Government to pass. The attempt was often made by Ex-President Kruger to secure the consent of Her late Majesty's Government to the amendment of the 14th article of the London Convention so as to include all Asiatics in the term "Natives of South Africa". Lord Derby, however, was quite firm and would not think of any such proposal. The plan, therefore, suggested by our contemporary, simple though it is, is not free from some difficulty so long as there is the slightest vestige of fair dealing with the Indians as yet left in the Transvaal.

Indian Opinion, 12-11-1903

213. LETTER TO LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR'S SECRETARY

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

25 & 26, COURT CHAMBERS,
P.O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
November 14, 1903

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR
PRETORIA

SIR,

The question of the removal for present holders of trading licences is to them so important and serious that I venture again to trespass upon His Excellency's attention.

It was submitted to His Excellency by the deputation that Lord Milner's despatch dated 11th May and addressed to Mr. Chamberlain strengthened the view held by the British Indians that existing licences would not be affected by the Notice 356 of this year. In support, I beg to quote as follows from the despatch.

> They (the Govenment) are anxious, however, to do so in the manner most considerate to the Indians already settled in the country, and with the greatest respect for vested interests, even where these have been allowed to spring up contrary to law. . . . Had we had to deal merely with the Asiatic population as it existed before war, it might have been possible to remain passive until a new law could have been framed to the satisfaction of His Majesty's Government, But with so many new-comers constantly pouring in and

applying for licences to trade, it became impossible to persist in the policy of complete inaction. . . . As I have already stated, the government is prepared to recognise the vested interests of Asiatics resident here before the war. On the other hand, it feels that it would not be justified in allowing new vested interests to spring up contrary to the law. During the war and since the declaration of peace, a large number of temporary trading licences were issued to new-comers. These licences have been renewed until December 31st, 1903, but the holders have been warned that, on that date, they will be required to remove to streets or Bazaars selected for this purpose.

From the above, it is clear that Lord Milner has been under the impression that trading licences have been granted to new-comers and therefore they alone should be removed to streets or Bazaars. But as the deputation has submitted, there are very few new-comers, if any, that have been granted licences to trade outside Bazaars.

Again Lord Milner states:

We have no wish to subject respectable British Indians or civilised Asiatics generally to any disabilities. . . . It (the Government) is in there most important respects showing a consideration for these Asiatics which the late Government did not show.

One of these respects is exemption of Asiatics of a superior class from all special legislation. So far, it is meant to be granted in respect of residnets only. I venture to submit that, pending new ligis-lation, those who conform to the sanitary and other regulations should, according to the above, be left undisturbed in their trade.

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Pretoria Archives: L.G. 2132, Asiatics 1902-1906.

214. NOTES [1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
November 16,1903]

WEEKLY STATEMENT ENDING NOVEMBER 16,1903

The situation remains still the same. The summary given last week[2] may be very greatly elaborated on the strength of Lord Milner's dispatch dated 2nd May, 1903 and addressed to Mr. Chamberlain,

It was shewn last week how very little regard has been paid to the Indians, although Lord Milner states that the Government are anxious to enforce the Law in a way most considerate to the Indians already settled in the Colony.

In view of the great interests which are at stake, it is necessary to pick out other passages from Lord Milner's dispatch to shew how truly at variance it is with the practice that is being followed at present. Lord Milner says:

> Had we had to deal with merely the Asiatic population as it existed before the war, it might have been possible to remain passive until a new law had been formed to the satisfaction of His Majesty's Government; but with so many new-comers constantly pouring in, etc. it became impossible to persist in the policy of complete inaction.

His Lordship continues:

> As I have already stated, the Government is prepared to recognise the vested interests of Asiatics resident here before the war. On the other hand, it feels that it would not be justified in allowing new vested interests to spring up contrary to the law. During the war and since the declaration of peace, a large number of temporary trading licences were issued to new-comers. These licences have been renewed until December 31st, 1903, but holders have been warned that on that date they will be required to remove to streets or Bazaars selected for this purpose.

Now, according to the above, there should be no difficulty inthe way of those who were trading before the war either with or without licences, also, with those who were settled in the country before war, whether they traded in the country before war or not. The Bazaar

[1] This statement was sent by Gandhiji to Dadabhai Naoroji, who forwarded a copy to the Secretary of State for India. It was published in *India* of 11-12-1903.

[2] *Vide* "Notes", November 9, 1903.

Notice should, according to the dispatch, affect only those new-comers who are said to have poured in. As a matter of fact, as has been pointed out in previous statements, there are very few new-comers, because only refugees have been allowed to enter the country. It would not, therefore, do to rely upon the dispatch in question and sit still. Time is quickly passing by, and it is very necessary that, in accordance with the dispatch, there should be a guarantee given to the poor British Indians that their licences would be respected.

Further on, Lord Milner states:

> We have no wish to subject respectable British Indians, or civilised Asiatics generally, to any disabilities,

and therefore, His Excellency proceeds:

> It is, in three most important respects, shewing a consideration for the Asiatics which the late Government did not shew.

One of those respects is exemption of Asiatics of a superior class from all special legislation; this consideration has not yet been shewn, except with regard to residence, which is the least important thing; the most important part being to leave undisturbed the trade of the men who conform to the laws of the country. Much stress is undoubtedly laid on the right of residence outside Locations, but comparatively speaking, the right of residence is a matter of sentiment, the right of trade one of bread and butter.

As to the selection of the Bazaar sites, there is only one opinion among the Indians, namely, that they could not have been worse chosen by their inveterate opponents; for trade they are perfectly useless; in most cases they are vacant pieces of ground away from the business centres. Disinterested professional men have testified to their being valueless for trade.

With reference to the Rustenberg Bazaar, even a member of the Health Board has not hesitated to say that trade cannot be carried on there, and yet this is what Lord Milner has said to Mr. Chamberlain:

> As you are aware, the sites selected by the Government of that late South African Republic for the purpose of Asiatic Bazaars were in many cases most unsuitable for such a purpose, being remote from the business centres of the town. In many towns, no site at all was selected. It is the intention of the Government to lose no time in selecting suitable sites for Asiatic Bazaars accessible to all classes of the community, and I am confident that, once the Bazaars are established and arranged in conformity with the customs and requirements of the occupants, the latter will be enabled to carry on their busi-

ness with as great, if not greater, advantage than under exisiting conditions.

The quotation shews not that Lord Milner's intentions are not good, but that they are not being carried out by those in whom is vested the administration of the Law 3 of 1885. Indeed, they are enforcing it in a manner most hostile to the Indians, because the law does not tie the Government down to selection of Bazaars in out-of - the-way corners only, but it gives them the power to point out streets, wards, and Locations for residence of the Asiatics. Lord Milner himself contemplated the setting apart of streets, when he said in the same dispatch that "they will be required to remove to streets or Bazaars selected for this purpose".

It will, therefore, be seen that Lord Milner's statement is as definite as it possibly can be; the least that is, therefore, expected of the Government is that they should give full effect to Lord Milner's declaration, and save the British Indian traders from ruin by continuing the renewal of their licences. New applicants may be treated, if they so choose, in a different manner.

As shewing the apathy or hostility of the administration towards the Indian interests, the action of the Health Board at Barberton may be cited as an instance in point. There, as stated last week, the attempt was made to shift the present Location to a place further away from town. The Government have since written saying that the equipment of the present Location will not be disturbed, as the Health Board is not able to pay them compensation for removal, or to bear the cost thereof; but what has been given with one hand has been taken away with the other, because a Notice has just been issued signed by the Resident Magistrate, imposing on the tenancy of the present occupants new and extraordinary conditions, unheard of even between private parties; that is to say, if they do not want to remove to the new Locations, they will not be permitted to sub-let their premises, or even to have any visitors "on pain of eviction", [and] "in default of the payment of the rent due, on the prescribed date, the tenancy will be terminated". The licences are never transferable in respect of place, or renewable, except for the present holders. Thus, the Board, if their decision is upheld, would have the satisfaction of removing the Indians from the present Location without having to pay a single penny. All this is clearly contrary to Law 3 of 1885, for, at any rate, within the Location, the British Indians may have the same rights as any ordinary Individual. The matter has been placed before the Government.

India Office: Judicial and Public Records, 402

215. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
November 18, 1903

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I have written in detail about myself to Revashankarbhai[1]. You will know everything from it. I cannot make any sort of promise to your aunt[2]. I think I shall take another four years. I do not like the idea of her staying there for the sake of the jewellery or any such temptation. If she wishes to stay there, she should live contented and without being a burden to others. But if she cannot do that she has my permission to come over. Read this to her.

Pass on the letters I am writing to Chi. Harilal and Gokaldas[3]. Send the books I have asked for and also the unframed as well as the other photographs. Of the framed photographs, keep those you think worth while. I am sorry that you have not yet regained your health. Let me repeat that you must not strain yourself because you feel ashamed. There is no warrant for making distinctions. And where there is no sense of distinction, there is no question of embarrassment. If your aunt or anyone else feels hurt by anything, do not think about it when it comes to looking after your health or performing other duties. Then alone shall I feel happy. Bring your aunt here if she wants to come, even if she does not wish to stay here long. I think it will be good. But if you think that you will not feel comfortable on a steamer, I shall not insist that you come braving hardships.

In such a case you can make alternative arrangements. I see no harm in [your aunt] coming alone by the s.s. *Nadia*. Send the booksand the photographs early. Give to Mulibehn[4] the amount she has not received from Bhai[5]. From now on make the remitance to her every month. It would be good if the accounts of Shivlalbhai and Narbheram were settled soon.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11294 Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] Revashankar Jagjivan Jhaveri
[2] Kasturba Gandhi
[3] A nephew of Gandhiji
[4] Gandhiji's sister
[5] Lakshmidas Gandhi

216. THE TRANSVAAL BAZAARS

The friends of British Indians, in London, will do well to compare Lord Milner's dispatch to Mr. Chamberlain dated the 11th May with the attitude of the authorities in the Transvaal regarding the trading licences of British Indians. Lord Milner in his dispatch states regar-ding the store-keepers that

> they (the Government) are anxious, however, to do so (that is, to enforce the existing law), in the manner most considerate to the Indians already settled in the country, and with the greatest respect for vested interests, even where these have been allowed to spring up contrary to law.

Now, according to this statement, it would lead one to suppose that all those Indians, who are at present trading in the Colony under licences issued to them, will not be disturbed and will not be compelled to remove to Locations. The fact, however, is that, with the exception of the very few who were able to obtain licences to trade before the war, all the others, even though they were engaged in trade before the war but without licences, will have to remove to Locations as if such people did not have any vested interest. People in England, therefore, not knowing the correct situation in the Transvaal, are likely to be lulled into a sense of security under the mistaken belief that the traders holding their licences will not be touched at the end of the year. We, therefore, warn them against holding any such belief, and have very good reasons for assuring them that, unless Herculean efforts are made to protect these innocent men, in spite of the above quotation from Lord Milner's dispatch, hundreds of Indian traders are likely to be ruined at the end of the year. The more we consider Lord Milner's dispatch, the more we feel that it is misleading. His Lordship says:

> As I have already stated, the Government is prepared to recognise the vested interests of Asiatics resident here before the war. On the other hand, it feels that it would not be justified in allowing new vested interests to spring up contrary to law. During the war and since the declaration of peace, a large number of temporary trading licences were issued to new-comers. These licences have been renewed until December 31st 1903, but the holders have been warned that on that date they will be required to remove to Streets or Bazaars selected for this purpose.

Here there is not a word to show that either those Indians who traded before the war without licences, or those Indian refugees who,

although they did not trade in the respective districts before the war, had their licences granted since, would be disturbed. The only question, according to Lord Milner, is that of new-comers. If then the Bazaar Notice were to apply merely to new-comers in possession of temporary trading licences, perhaps not much could be said, but every one of the present licence-holders, almost without exception, could be proved to be a refugee "resident here before the war". And yet these men will be required to remove to "streets or Bazaars selected for this purpose". And mark again the word "streets", and read what follows:

> As you are aware, His Lordship proceeds, the sites selected by the Government of the late African Republic for the purposed of Asiatic Bazaars, were in any cases most unsuitable for such a purpose, being remote from the business centres of the town. In many towns no site at all was selected. It is the intention of the Government to lose no time in choosing suitable sites for Asiatic Bazaars accessible to all classes of the community, and I am confident that, once the Bazaars are established and arranged in conformity with the customs and requirements of the occupants, the latter will be enabled to carry on their business with as great, if not greater, advantage than under existing conditions.

A reading of the above would naturally lead one to suppose that Bazaars would be very fine places, and very unlike those selected by the late Republican Government, and that, after all, it may mean meerely a change of streets; but we again hasten to assure those who have no means of knowing the conditions in the Transvaal that the Bazaars have not been selected in the spirit above mentioned, that in no case have streets been set apart for Indian trade or residence. They are, in almost all the cases, as far away from business centres of the towns as they could possibly be. We reproduce the reports handed to us for publication and prepared, at the instance of the British Indian Association in the Transvaal, by professional gentlemen of standing in the colony, and they would show that the unanimous opinion is that the sites selected are unfit for trade. Lord Milner acknowledges that the Bazaars selected by the late Government were most unsuitable for trade. We say then with the utmost confidence that the sites selected by the present Government, in most cases, are doubly so. An attempt has been made to remove the existing sites selected by the old Government further away, and with the exception of one or two cases where there were old sites, they have been retained. In almost all cases, at present they are veritable deserts, without sanitary conveniences, without any water laid on, without any buildings. It may be unbelievable

5,000 miles away from the Transvaal, but it is literlly true that the people who are to inhabit these Bazaars have really to establish practically new townships. They are to get leases of Stands, build on them themselves at their own expense, and attract, if they can, a new trade. We lay some stress on the pharse "at their own expense", because it is only those who want to use the Stands for their trade and residence who are to compete for them. It will, therefore, be easily understood that petty traders cannot command from £ 300 to £ 400 in order to build a decent structure. The Bazaars have just been selected, and they are to be expected to commence building, finish before the 1st of January, and transport themselves to their new abode on that date. "The Bazaars," His Lordship says, "would be accessible to all classes of the community". If by that is meant that they will not be fenced in with barbed wire, with a yellow flag flying over them, the expression is true; but if it is meant to convey an idea that all classes of the community will go there to make their purchases, we again say that they will do nothing of the kind. They will decline to walk one mile from business centres and go out of their way to make purchases in Indian Bazaars, And yet His Lordship expects that "the latter (that is, the Indians) will be enabled to carry on their business with as great, if not greater, advantage then under existing conditions". The heartlessness of the situation is beyond description. It is only the hope that, before the year is out, some relief will be granted and that the present licence-holders will not be disturbed which buoys them up. We have not yet done with the dispatch. We have noticed, both in the papers received from England and from India, that the impression created by the dispatch is that respectable British Indians or civilised Asiatics will not be affected by the Bazaar Notice, for, says Lord Milner,

> we have no wish to subject respectable British Indians, or civilised Asiatics generally, to any disabilities. . . . While the present Government is, for the time being, maintaining the law on the subject passed by the late Government, it is in three most important respects showing a consideration for the Asiatics which the late Governement did not show.

The present tense used by His Lordship is worthy of notice. One of the three important respects is exemption of Asiatics of a supe-rior class from all special legislation. We once more assure our readers in England and in India that the principle of exemption is not yet recognised, is no part of the law except as to residence, and that if it is to come at all, it will come at some future unknown date. In the meanwhile, respectable British Indians and others sail in the same boat,

and will be unceremoniously compelled to remove to Locations and trade there and there alone. Such is the wide difference between the picture drawn by Lord Milner of the position of the Asiatics and the picture that we have drawn from existing conditions. The one is likely to blind the people to the real state of things; the other is true to life without, we say with deliberation, the slightest exaggeration. We have endeavoured to keep strictly to facts and reports. We can only hope that the position being so accute and un-British, even at the eleventh hour, there will be a turning away from it, and the New Year will dawn upon the British Indian traders not so gloomily as it at present promises to do.

Indian Opinion,19-11-1903

217. THE GRAND OLD MAN OF INDIA

The mail papers to hand from India contain very long notices of the birthday anniversary of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, who is undoubtedly to India what Mr. Gladstone was to Great Britain. He has entered upon his 79th year, and the whole of India has celebrated the anniversary in a manner befitting the occasion. Millions of voices have gone up to Heaven praying for the blessings of the Almighty to be showered upon the grand old man and for many years of life on this earth. We join the millions in their prayer. Mr. Dadabhai is loved form the Hindukush to Cape Comorin and from Karachi to Calcutta as no other living man in India is loved. He has given a lifetime to the service of the country of his birth, and though a Parsi, Hindus, Mahomedans, Christians and all revere him just as strongly as the followers of Zoroaster. He has sacrificed for the cause of India ease and luxury, and has imposed upon himself a long exile. He has devoted his wealth also to the cause. His is the purest type of patriotism and comes from a sense of duty to the motherland. Nor is this all. Mr. Dadabhai's private character has been also a perfect pattern to be copied by the rising generation in every respect, and if we are not much mistaken, there is behind all his political work a strong religious pious fervour which nothing can quench. The land which is capable of producing a Dadabhai has every reason to hope for the best in the long run. Soon after he was elected member of the House of Commons, an honour conferred by a British constituency for the first time on an Indian, he paid a visit to India, and those who were privileged to witness his triumphal progress from Bombay to Lahore have

testified that the enthusiasm with which he was received was only equalled, if at all, by that which accompanied the progress of the ever to be remembered Lord Ripon when he retired from his Viceroyalty. The nation certainly honoured itself by honouring such a man. To us in South Africa, a life of so much devotion and so much self-sacrifice in the midst of enormous difficulties (and Mr. Dadabhai had, as many of our readers will remember, much to suffer) should be a very rich lesson in loving our country and our people, and also in patience. In the political struggle, victories are not won in a day. Disappointmens are often the lot of people who are engaged in them. We have in South Africa a very fair share thereof, and if we would but remember that Mr. Dadabhai has been struggling for the last forty years or more, we would find in the thought a great deal to console us that, after all, our struggle has only just commenced, and that we have not been without silver linings to the clouds which have hung over us. Amid all his labours, Mr. Dadabhai has always found time to attend to the question in South Africa, and has been one of the most zealous patrons of our cause. May he continue to enjoy health and vigour of mind for a long time to come, and may he yet be privileged to serve his country is our sincere prayer to the Almighty.

Indian Opinion, 19-11-1903.

218. LORD HARRIS AND BRITISH INDIANS

According to a cablegram received by our contemporary, the *Transvaal Leader*, Lord Harris, ex-Governor of Bombay, in his capacity as Chairman of the Consolidated Gold Fields of South Africa, in the course of his remarks on the labour question in the Transvaal, is said to have expressed dissatisfaction at the attitude of the Indian Government in that they have declined to assist the Transvaal by supplying labour from India unless it was prepared to redress the grievances of the resident Indian population. Lord Harris is a most estimable gentleman, but his remarks, if he is correctly reported, are an illustration of how self-interest could blind a man. His Lordship is no longer Governor of Bombay, and therefore, does not feel called upon to look at the problem from an Indian standpoint at all. He is a financier, chairman of a very big gold company, responsible to the share-holders for their dividends, and finding his company in a difficult strait for want of labour, resents the attitude of the Indian Government when it endeavours to protect those that are under its charge. He

can take only a one-sided view of the question. To him, the disabilities of the Indians in the Transvaal and the one-sidedness of the terms of indenture proposed for the labourers are nothing compared with the prospect of no dividends for his company. The incident also shews how careful the friends and patrons of British Indians in England have to be in watching the interests of the latter. But we would venture to ask His Lordship to look back upon his past career as the Governor of Bombay, and appeal to his sportsmanlike instincts on behalf of our countrymen for whom, as he was pleased to say to the representatives who met him at Durban when he passed through the Colony, he would always have a warm corner in his heart.

Indian Opinion, 19-11-1903

219. THE NATIONAL CONGRESS AND INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

By the time this issue of *Indian Opinion* reaches India, preparations for the meeting of this national assembly will have very far advanced. Mr. Lal Mohan Ghose[1] is the President-elect and we have no doubt that his long and able services to the country as well as his unrivalled oratory will attract vast crowds of people. Mr. Lal Mohan Ghose is an old hand at politics; he knows well how to rouse the sympathy of his fellow-countrymen as well as the Government. He has thrilled many an audience in England, and we have no doubt whatsoever that the cause of the British Indians in South Africa will come in for very able treatment at his hands. We are quite aware of the limitations that necessarily circumscribe the work of the great assembly. It is, at present, only a self-organised advisory council to the Government, but as years go on and it continues, as it has hitherto, to grow in volume, in strength, in wisdom, and moderation, it cannot but command respect and attention from the Government for the views the assembly may place before it. The Indian question in South Africa is one of the few question which are totally above party politics and about which there is no difference of opinion between the powerful Anglo-Indian element and the Congress. Both, therefore, can work hand in hand and make a unanimous appeal to the Government from the same platform. What is more, the Government does not need

[1] Lal Mohan Ghose (1849-1909), lawyer, writer and advocate of self-rule for India.

coaxing on this particular question because Lord Curzon has more than once said that he viewed the attitude of the Colonies on this question with very strong disfavour. All, therefore, that is needed is a continued movement in India such as to strengthen His Excellency's hands in his endeavour to secure justice for British Indians in South Africa. And we hope that the Congress under the presidency of the great patriot will not forget us in South Africa, few though we are compared with the millions in India. Underlying this question of our disabilities is a very great Imperial principle the possibilities of which it is very difficult to fathom. Many distinguished Anglo-Indians have reproached the Indians with want of enterprise and narrow-mindedness because they would not emigrate in sufficiently large numbers in search of adventures. Now it is quite clear that they cannot carry with them their full status as British subjects outside India, there is an impossible barrier against free emigration. As Western education spreads through the land, there will have to be an outlet for the energy of enterprising Indian immigrants. What is to be done with these is by no means a small or an unimportant matter.

Indian Opinion, 19-11-1903

220. THE HISTORY OF A PERSECUTION

For several years and long before the war, the British Indians have been in occupation of a Location established for them by the late Government at Barberton. Emboldened by the Bazaar Notice, the Health Board of that place decided to remove the inhabitatnts of the Location to a place further away from the town on various excuses. The Health Board had necessarily to obtain the sanction of the Government, which was at once given on condition that the buildings on the present Location should be removed to the new one at the expense of the Health Board, or that due compensation in respect of the buildings only should be paid to the owners. Notices were therefore given to the occupants, who, grasping the situation, set about working in right earnest and approached the Government, protesting against the contemplated removal. They sent several petitions, and an enquiry was made. The grounds taken up by the petitioners were: 1st that they had been established for a long time in the Location where they were at present and had formed good-wills in connection with their trade; 2nd. that to such people it would mean a very serious loss to have to remove to the new Location; 3rd. that it was not such as would enable

them to do any trade at all; that it was much further away from town than the present location, and that it was not a healthy site. They had a special report prepared in connection with the matter and Mr. Bertier, a well-known surveyor of the town, reported that the new site was one mile 930 yards from the Market Square by the shortest route, that the soil

> of the new site is of the same granitic nature as that of the adjacent Hospital kopje, a portion of the site being actually on the slope of the kopje. In view of this, the ravages caused by white ants to the hospital buildings on the said kopje are worthy of serious consideration.

Mr. Bertier also goes exhaustively into the question whether the removal of the present Location is at all called for, and shews clearly that it is not, and says as follows:

> While the present position of the Indian Location, close to the Main Road from Barberton to the Kaap Valley, allows trade to a certain extent at the Location, and while its distance from the town proper does not preclude business transactions in town, the new site would only in one corner abut on the Main Road, and the increase of distance from the town would entail increased difficulties in the transaction of business, the more so as public passenger transport is unprovided for in the township and suburbs. Whatever road east of the Hospital kopje is made to penetrate in the proposed Location will pass within one hundred yards of the Health Board site, where mules are stabled, night soil and rubbish waggons out-spanned, and buckets tarred and stacked.

The Government, however, has returned a reply saying that it does not consider the site to be unhealthy. It ignores the fact that the removal is totally unnecessary, but says that, as the Local Board is not prepared to pay compensation or bear the cost of removal, the present occupants will be left undisturbed. Were it not for the most exasperating conditions now imposed on them, the above might have been considered a fair compromise as thing go with the British Indians in the Transvaal, but the terms under which the occupants are to be allowed to remain undisturbed are such as to render the compromise utterly useless. What has been given with one hand has been taken away with the other, for we read in a notice sent to these poor people as follows:

> Only existing licensees, their wives and children will have the option of remaining in the present Location. That in default of payment of the rent due on the prescribed date, the tenancy will be determined. That no licensee shall

sub-let or permit others to occupy his Stand on pain of eviction. That no new licences will be issued in respect of the present Location, nor any right to transfer licences granted.

Now these terms appear to us to be most exasperating. We have the misfortune of being tenants, but we must confess that our landlord has not imposed any such conditions whatsoever, nor are we aware of any lease containing such novel conditions. It would have been far more decent of the Board if they had said:'We do not want to pay you any compensation and you shall have to remove to the new Location,' but to drive the people away from their position by underhand indirect policy hardly reflects any credit on its authors. In Barberton, the Health Board evidently wishes to override the Law of the Colony, such as it is, affecting British Indians. Either the site at present occupied by the British Indians is a Location in terms of Law 3 of 1885, or it is not. If it is, then unless we have misread the law, any Indian has not only the right to live there but to have sub-tenants and certainly to have guests, also to trade in any part of the Location he likes on payment of the licence fee. But as will have been seen according to the new conditions, the Board would prevent the residents from having any guests "on pain of eviction". We understand that the matter has been placed before the Government. We shall await its decision with anxiety. We wonder what His Excellency Lord Milner would have to say in defence of what the Health Board of Barberton proposes to do.

Indian Opinion, 19-11-1903

221. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

25 & 26, COURT CHAMBERS
RISSIK STREET,
JOHANNESBURG,
November 23, 1903

TO
THE HONOURABLE DADABHAI NAOROJI
WASHINGTON HOUSE
72, ANERLEY PARK
LONDON, S. E. ENGLAND

DEAR SIR,

I wrote last week[1] regarding the position of the Indian traders in the Transvaal and therein suggested that, if posssible, a personal interview shiould be sought with Mr. Brodrick or Mr. Lyttelton. The more I think of the matter, the more convinced I feel that some such course is absolutely necessary, and at such an interview, the discussion might be confined merely to the mostpressing question, namely, the rights of the present holders of licenses. In the curerent issue of *Indian Opinion*, you will find reports by responsible men on the proposed sites for Bazaars. In most of the cases, Government has returned the reply that the reports are inaccurate and that the sites are the only available ones in the respective townships. With all deference, I have nohesitation in saying that the sites are utterly useless for trade, and, really speaking, the Government does not contest the point but takes shelter under the plea that noo other sites are available; in any case, for those who are at present trading ouside Locations to remove there is utterly out of the question. I have already dealt with Lord Milner's dispatch which would go to shew that he, at any rate, never contemplated the removal of these men who are all refugees. Mr. Chamberlain's word to the deputation in January last is also to the same efect,general of the British Indians, if sufficient pressure were exercised by the Colonial Office and the India Office, there is every prospect of the poor men getting justice.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the office copy: G.N. 2258.

[1] *Vide* "Notes", November 16, 1903

222. LETTER TO LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR'S SECRETARY

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

P.O.BOX.6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
November 25, 1903

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIEUTENANT - GOVERNOR
PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the 24th instant, numbered 97/2, in reply to my letter of the 14th instant regarding trading licenses held by British Indians.

Since the date that the British Indian deputation waited on His Excellency at Johannesburg, no communication has been received from the Colonial Secretary on the question.

His Excellency was pleased to say to the deputation that the matter would be considered at a meeting of the Executive Council at an early date and that a reply would then be sent to the Association.

May I know whether the Association will receive such reply?

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant
ABDOOL GANI
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Pretoria Archives: L.G. 97/2, Asiatics 1902-1906.

223. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
November 25, 1903

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (BOMBAY)[1],

I have received your two letters through Maganlal[2]. I have also received a letter about the late Dharamshi Pragji from his brother. Necessary efforts are being made but no balance [of money] is found here. The chances of finding it are very rare, and the laws here (of the Transvaal) are very difficult in such cases. So, even if there is any balance left here, it will take time for the heirs of the deceased to get it.

While settling the account with Shivlalbhai,[3] please keep it in mind that we have deposited with him Rustomji's (Durban) money. Find out how much it is and add it to the loan Shivlalbhai has taken. Write to me what the amount is. Whatever interest Shivlalbhai pays us, we have to give the same amount (to Rustomji Seth).

The burden of work I had is eased now as there are a number of men in the office. The office expense however has increased disproportionately.

It is good that you are continuing your shorthand lessons.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 32900

224. ENGLAND AND RUSSIA

A COMPARISON

East and West for October reproduces Mr. Skrine's interesting lecture delivered at the Imperial Institute on the 7th of July, 1903, on the government of Asiatics by England and Russia. The subject has more than an academic interest for us in South Africa. It is yet too

[1] Chhaganlal Gandhi, a cousin of Gandhiji and a founder-member of the Phoenix Settlement; Editor of Gujarati *Indian Opinion* after 1908; was sent to England in 1911 to study for the Bar as part of Gandhiji's scheme to train members of *Indian Opinion* staff for increased responsibilities.

[2] Addressee's younger brother, son of Gandhiji's cousin Khushalchand Gandhi

[3] He had a jewellery shop in Rajkot.

early in the history of nations to pronounce final judgment on the success or otherwise of either rule in illimitable Asia and its thousand and one races differing as poles asunder in many repects, and yet having something perhaps indefinable in common. According to the lecturer,

> the Tsar of all the Russians has several millions of Buddhist and Pagan subjects, and 207,000,000 Hindus acknowledge the sway of the Emperor of India; but Islam alone presents identical problems to their servants in the East. . . . British India includes no fewer than 53,804,000 followers of the Prophet. According to the census of 1897, those who owe allegiance to the Great White Tsar numbered 18,707,000. . . . By way of contrast I may state that the Commander of the Faithful at Constantinople has less than 18,500,000 subjects who acknowledge his creed.

It is thus apparent that Mr. Skrine has set well-defined limits to his comparison, and while it therefore does not admit of any bold generalisations, it is a paper well worth reading. The Government of India has been somewhere called "benevolent despotism", and probably, although the expression involves a contradiction in terms, it very nearly explains the condition of British rule in India. So long as there is no interference with the paramountcy of English rule, the institutions which the people of India have inherited from ancient times are respected and left intact. They have, in domestic affairs, self-government of a more or less crude nature. The historc Proclamation of 1857[1] and the later declarations of the succeeding Viceroys show that the intention is to do away with all distinctions of caste, colour and creed, and to ensure equal rights for all the subjects of the Empire. If, therefore, in India itself, these declarations are not carried out to their fullest extent, it is not because the authorities did not intend to fulfil them, but because in practice they are limited either by undue fear as to the supremacy of British rule or by vague suspicion about the governed. In spite, however, of temporary aberrations, there are grounds for hoping that such suspicion or fear will gradually give way to confidence as opportunities occur to test the inborn loyal spirit of the people. The recent war in South Africa, as well as the expedition to China, has created a striking impression on the minds of the rulers of India, and indirectly has done a lot of good from the Indian standpoint. The chief point, however, on which Mr. Skrine has laid stress is religious rather than political, and he contends that there is not that

[1] Evidently a slip for 1858.

toleration of religions noticed among the rulers which is so very essential when millions of human beings have to be dealt with. He says:

> The intense friction generated by the secular contest between chris-tian and Moslem has rendered us a little unjust towards the rival creed. That its tenets are not incompatible with intellectual and material progress is evinced by the glories of the Moorish regime in Spain. Islam, in fact, has many features which compel our respect. Its ideals of the Unity of God, and the brotherhood of all his creatures, could have been evolved only among a poetic and reflective people. They are a powerful antidote to the soul-debasing materialism and the reckless pursuit of wealth which threaten to destroy the form of civilisation known in Western Europe and America.

To this high testimony, we may add the unexampled success that the writings of Omar Khayam have met with in the West. As we are writing, millions of followers of the Prophet will be carrying out a self-imposed fast for full one month in the face of difficulties and trial, and a body of men who are capable of undergoing such hardships not for the sake of any material or tangible gain, but for the sake of very intangible and purely spiritual benefit, must have something in their faith which enables them to do so to command admiration. After recounting the advantages of British rule, Mr. Skrine proceeds:

> Candour compels me to paint in the shades which lessen the glamour of that marvellous growth¾the British Empire in the East. Our rule, taken as a whole, is perhaps the best and the most honest in the world; but it is cold and colourless, and still reeks of the counting-house. It appeals to the instinct of admiration which is the saving clause in the Indian's character, but it does not touch his heart. The fault lies partly with ourselves. We are, as a race, deficient in imagination, and therefore unable to put ourselves mentally in other people's places, or ask ourselves how we should regard an attitude on their part such as we habitually adopt. If Englishmen had a larger share of the divine gift of sympathy, there would have been no South African war to cripple our resources and distract attention from more important concerns.

The last two sentences, as our readers will at once grasp, are very applicable in South Africa. If only the Colonists could place themselves in the position of the legally disabled British Indians, they would at once find out how undeserved the disabilities are. The following is the picture drawn by Mr. Skrine of Russian rule:

> At a date which synchronises with the end of our Wars of the Roses, the oligarchies of old Muscovy were consolidated under the Grand Duke of Muscow. The Tsardom was an accomplished fact, and the Greek church

brought forces into play which outmatched the declining fanaticism of Islam. Thus Russia threw off the Tartar yoke and started on a career of conquest and assimilation. Though Napoleon's oft-quoted apothegm, 'Scratch the Russian and you will find the Tartar', is the exact converse of the fact, the Russian people show still an unmistakable Mongolian strain. The instinctive sense of relationship has smoothed their path in Asia. They are free from racial pride, and meet their Oriental fellow-subjects on equal terms. At Samarkand I dined with the Mohammadan District Officer, and met his wife and children in social intercourse. Englishmen, on the other hand, are apt to regard Oriental races as inferior to themselves, and this attitude must aliencate forces which, if they were consolidated, would work a political revolution in India.

We might go on quoting from the paper, but our purpose in merely to whet the appetite of the reader and send him to the original. We would, however, close with the concluding remarks of the lecturer where he has attempted to draw a parallel. He says:

It is as difficult as it is invidious to compare the British and Russian methods of governing Orientals. The Tsar's officers have to contend with vast distances and an unhealthy climate, for irrigation without sub-soil drainage brings malaria in its train. But the administrator's greatest difficulties arise from a dense population, and the consequent acuteness of the struggle for life. Thus an enormous predatory class has been evolved in British India which has no parallel in Central Asia. Turkestan in 1897 had but 3,342,000 inhabitants in an area nearly twice as large as France; Transcaspia only 833,000 spread over a country more than thrice as great as the United Kngdom. Moreover, the standard of comfort among them is high. Famine is unknown, and the isolation of these territories almost guards them against cholera and plague. Speaking as an Indian official who has studied Russian methods on the spot, I believe that each Power sincerely desires to raise its Eastern subjects to a higher social and political level.

Indian Opinion, 26-11-1903

225. "THE EAST RAND EXPRESS" AND OURSELVES

Our contemporary continues to do us the honour of noticing our remarks on the status of British Indians in the Transvaal, and as we consider that many of the difficulties of the Indians are due to a misunderstanding and that moderate interchange of views in likely to remove such misunderstanding, we revert to the question in reply to our contemporary's remaks made in the issue of the *Express*, dated

the 14th instant. We admit the statement made by our contermporary that the number of Indian licences in the town of Pietersburg is a little greater now than before the war, but so far as the Spelonken district is concerned, we say most emphatically that there has been very little increase there. The Indian store-keepers who are now doing business in the Spelonken district have been in business in their respective places for the last ten years or more, and we may inform our contemporary that they have been able to secure renewals of their licences after a very great struggle. But these are individual cases, and merely symptoms of the general disease. The crux lies in the following remarks made by the *Express:*

> It is just as well to be frank and admit that the Transvaal does not want any free Asiatics in the country if it can be avoided. The reason is not that we regard the educated Indian as an inferior, as seems to be the impression in some quarters, but that it is impossible for white men to compete with him on lawful terms. As a merchant he is fast monopolising the trade of Natal, joining to a keen business instinct a frugality which enables him to undersell all competitors. He would do the same here if permitted any footing, and it is because we recognise this that East Randites are opposed to any Asiatic being granted a social or business status. The only Asiatic we want in this country is the unskilled indentured labourer, and, hard as it may seem, preservation, the first law of nature, demands that all others be prohibited residents. Those with existing rights will have them respected as far as possible, but here concessions must stop.

In this statement, we have the real reason for the prejudice against the Indians, and we would endeavour in as few words as possible to show that there is a great deal to be said against it. The instance quoted of Natal, if examined a little deeper, would show that it proves quite the contrary. No doubt there is a large number of Indian traders in Natal, but the cream of the trade is still, and must always continue to be, in the hands of the Europeans. While the Indian merchants have been able to earn a decent livelihood, not one of them has been able to rise to the status of Harvey, Greenacre & Co., or S. Butcher & Sons, or any of the other big houses, although some of the Indian merchants started at the same time as these firms did. In fact, we know a case in which an Indian merchant, who brought capital with him, took into partnership a stuggling European. They became very fast friends, and the relations between the parties are up to the present day very satisfactory. All the same, the European who started without any capital has now left his quondam partner very far behind in the

race, and has now a first-class position in the Colony. The explanation for this phenomenon is quite obvious. If the Indian is more frugal in his habits than the European, he lacks the latter's organising ability, his knowledge of the English language, and the commercial worth of his European connection; these possessions of the latter, in our opinion, more than make up for the frugality of the Indian, and have stood [the European] in so good a stead that even in India the great European firms have been able to hold their own against Indian houses. The most lucrative trade even in India is still largely in the hands of the Europeans, although there the Indian has the freest scope for his ability and enterprise. What, therefore, the Indian has done is to serve as the middleman whether in South Africa or elsewhere, and we are free to confess that he may have in isolated cases successfully competed with the small European store-keeper, the result, in the words of Sir James Hullett, even then being in favour of the latter, seeing that he has better scope in the other departments for his enterprise. Those who may have, in the absence of the Indian, been petty Kaffir traders in Natal, are now either wholesale merchants employing a very large staff under them, or are themselves working in connection with such whole-sale houses, are owners of freehold property, and are living in comparative ease and luxury on the Berea. We, therefore, think that too much is made of simplicity and frugality of the Indian. But is there nothing to be said in this connection from an Imperial standpoint? For better or for worse, the Indian is a partner, no matter how humble, in the Imperial partnership, and is it right to grudge him a fair share to which he may be entitled by his ability or industry? Our contemporary would have him only as the unskilled indentured labourer and no more. Preservation may be the first law of nature, but we hardly think that it admits of one crushing out of existence the very man through whom one may have risen. From a purely selfish standpoint, it may be excusable to shut out of a country a race of people altogether, but it is hard to reconcile with any law of nature the attitude that demands of one man being used merely for another's ends, and then being kicked out as soon as he is no longer required. The struggle for the present, however, on the part of the British Indians in the Transvaal is to have the rights of those who are already settled in the country fully respected. Our contemporary admits the position, but adds the safe and vague clause "as far as posssible", and it would very much depend upon how the question is viewed, whether "as far as possible" goes far enough to satisfy the reasonable require-

ments of the Indian community. As publicists, we think that it is the duty as well of our contemporary as [of] ourselves so to educate public opinion as to find out the best way out of the difficulty.

Indian Opinion, 26-11-1903

226. MR. CRESWELL'S BOMB-SHELL

Mr. Creswell, the erstwhile Manager of the Village Main Reef Gold Mining Co., Limited, has sent to the Johannesburg Press for publication a long letter addressed by him to Mr. Bilbrough, the Secretary of the Company, tendering his resignation, which has been accepted by the Company. The letter but corroborates the impression created by him when he gave his startling evidence before the Native Labour Commission that sat in Johannesburg. He shewed then most conclusively that the attempt on the part of the big mining corporations to import indentured Asiatic labour for the working of the mines was more of a political move than an economical necessity. It will be remembered that at that time he produced, in support of his contention, a letter written to him by Mr. Tarbutt wherein it appeared that most of the big mining companies viewed with disfavour the experiment that was then being carried on in employing white labour. It is because that letter was produced that Mr. Creswell was called upon to give an explanation. "Your directors," says Mr. Bilbrough, "consider also that the publication of Mr. Tarbutt's private letter of the 23rd July, 1902 was inexcusable". Mr. Creswell was not likely to remain silent under the sting. The result is the long letter he has written to the Company. It is impossible not to sympathise with Mr. Creswell. Against all odds he has tried successfully to employ white labour on his mines. His whole heart was in it but he was practically single-handed. He could not keep pace with the rush for large dividends and large outputs. We can only say, as we have said often in these columns, that the attitude taken up by Mr. Creswell is the one that will benefit posterity, and time alone will show that, if ever indentured labour from Asia is imported for the so-called development of the mining industry, it will have been a false step which the future generation would rue and for which it would unhesitatingly condemn the authors of the scheme. The resignation of Mr. Creswell is a small and personal matter. He may or may not suffer from a pecuniary standpoint, but his withdrawal makes the cause of the reformers all the more difficult and on that account is a very serious loss to those who, while they are

anxious for the welfare of the present generation, are equally anxious for the interests of the future generations.

Indian Opinion, 26-11-1903

227. THE ASIATIC BAZAAR AT KLERKSDORP

We have much pleasure in reproducing the very temperate remarks made by our contemporary, the *Klerksdorp Mining Record*, on the Asiatic Location at that place in reply to what we had to say recently on the subject. We are grateful for the assurance that the Board does not wish to deal unfairly or unjustly with the British Indians residing in Klerksdorp. We, however, take leave to say that some admissions made by our contemporary go to show how difficult the position of the British Indians in Klerksdorp must be, and how justifiable their opinion is regarding the proposed site. It is clearly admitted that the District Surgeon's report condemned, at any rate, a part of the proposed site. It is hardly any answer to the objection that the whole of the site would not be required at once. If it is not necessary, we fail to see why it was included in the map at all. There would have been nothing to prevent the Resident Magistrate from allotting some of the lowlying Stands to applicants, and seeing that very great powers have been reserved by the Government as to the disposal of the Stands, it might have insisted on, in the first instance, dealing with the lowlying parts only. We still venture to think that it is hardly the correct attitude for the Board to take up and say that the matter was out of its hands after the site was fixed. Seeing that it was party to the selection in the first instance, we cannot help thinking that it would have been a very graceful act on the part of the Board if, on receipt of the District Surgeon's report, it had protested against the inclusion of the lowlying portion in the Bazaar site. Our contemporary adds that the site in question is

> the only suitable site available in the town itself; there are only thirty unappropriated Stands, and in any case they could not be utilised as an Asiatic location. A small number of Stands could be pegged on the north and west of the town close to the existing township, but holders of contiguous Stands would naturally object to such a proceeding.

Now here, there is an admission of helplessness, and an admission that the selected site is far away from the town. Leaving aside for the time being the principle involved in setting apart fixed

quarters for British Indians, we think that if the Board cannot find a site where the British Indians could trade with equal facility as in the town itself, it should leave them absolutely undisturbed. Once the principle of segregation is admitted, people will no doubt be found objecting to the British Indians being housed in their neighbourhood. Are the Boards in towns, therefore, to plead helplessness and remove the British Indians so far away as to make it impossible for them to trade? The instinct of an Englishman is not to touch vested interests, and to deal fairly even with his opponent. Well, the British Indian is hardly an opponent; he is a fellow British subject, and we do think that it is neither fair nor just that he should be removed from his place where he may have built up a good trade, and sent away to what may be practically a desert without regard to his well-being. Therein lies the crux of the whole question.

Indian Opinion, 26-11-1903

228. APPEAL TO THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

From the letters received by us, we understand that the Indian National Congress, due to meet at Madras in December next, will discuss the condition of Indians in British Colonies. We should take heart at these tidings and watch how things shape there. With a view to drawing the attention of the Government and the people to this question, the Congress set up a clamour, over the last five or six years, against the disabilities to which Indians in the Colonies were subject. It has also passed resolutions demanding the redress of their grievances.[1] Indian settlers in the Colonies are, therefore, grateful to that organization and hope that it will persevere in its fight on their behalf, to a successful conclusion.

This is a very important year for Indians living in the Colonies. Australia's behaviour towards the Lascars has further opened the eyes of the people of India. In this country [South Africa], too, open oppression has begun to increase. When the Immigration Restriction Bill was passed in the Cape Colony, the Bengal Chamber of Commerce took the right step in drawing the Government of India's attention to it. The people of India are well informed of developments here through reports of the large meetings held by Indians in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban. But the Government appears to be somewhat vacillating in its attitude, and for this Lord Milner is respon-

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Calcutta Congress", 27-12-1901

sible. His dispatch to Mr. Chamberlain has affected us adversely. Lord Milner's goodwill towards us seems to have led the Government of India to believe that the laws are administered leniently and that men of position experience no difficulty at all. We have been pointing out repeatedly how mistaken their impression is.

Between 1897, when the legislation was first enacted, and 1902, the hardships caused by it have been analysed threadbare. But we now invite the especial attention of the Indian people to the situation, as it has become extremely grave with the passing of the new Immigration Restriction Law in the Cape Colony; the issue of the Bazaar Notice in the Transvaal, the reckless action of the Orange River Colony authorities in placing oppressive laws on the Statute-book, the demand of the Municipalities in Natal for the introduction of legislation similar to that of the Transvaal, and the passing of the fresh law concerning indentured labour by the Government. If the Indian Government does not wake up forthwith and take strong steps, we are afraid that, with the advent of the new year, there will be great alarm among the Indians here. We fear that many of those who would be considered successful traders in December, 1903 would become insolvents and beggars by January, 1904. We fear that at least some traders will be unable in that month to obtain the annual licences to trade in the Transvaal as also in Natal. And if that happens, there will be widespread distress. Our compatriots in India will realise from this that the present moment is critical and that it is very necessary to deal with the situation boldly. The cry raised here takes time to reach either England or India, and when it does so, it is not [heard] in its full strength. Taking this point into consideration, if the Indian National Congress, in accordance with its moral obligation, raises a strong protest and moves the Indian Government, we are hopeful that some measure of relief may be forthcoming. If the Congress passes a resolution, if a number of leaders from each province wait in deputation upon the Governor, and if a deputation personally meets Lord Curzon and apprises him of the intensity of popular feeling and, at the same time, requests him to send immediate directions by cable to stop oppression, we are sure that the mounting persecution will be checked and Indians will get justice even if belatedly.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-11-1903

229. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

25 & 26, COURT CHAMBERS,
RISSIK STREET,
JOHANNESBURG,
November 30, 1903

TO
THE HONOURABLE DADABHAI NAOROJI
WASHINGTON HOUSE
72, ANERLEY PARK
LONDON, S. E., ENGLAND

DEAR SIR,

Last week a letter was received from the Government saying that it would ask the Legislative Council to amend the Bazaar Notice to the effect that all those who were trading of the outbreak of war, whether with or without licences, will have their right to trade ouside Bazaars or Locations respectively. This will be some relief but very meagre. Nothing short of an assurance with regard to all the existing licenses will meet the ends of barest justice. Moreover, the expression "trade on the outbreak of hostilities" will give rise to many complications; for instance, what will happen to those who were engaged in trade in the beginning of 1899 or earlier but were not actually in the Transvaal and trading on the 11th of October? Although, it seems to me, that both should have the same consideration. In fact, a man who may have commenced to trade just two months prior to the outbreak of war has far less right than those who were engaged in trade for years in the Transvaal but were not trading on the outbreak of war. As I have already said, it is utterly impossible for any of the present holders of licenses to carry on their trade in the so-called Bazaars. I therefore, venture to trust that you will be able to secure and interview with Mr. Brodrick or Mr. Lyttelton and put the cablegram in motion.

I remain,
Yours truly,
M.K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the office copy: G.N. 2259.

230. LETTER TO THE CONGRESS

[JOHANNESBURG]
December 1, 1903

TO,
THE HON. SECRETARIES
INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
MADRAS

DEAR SIRS,

I send per book-post (registered) a few copies of the statement presented by the Indian community to Mr. Chamberlain when he visited Durban last year[1], and the memorial submitted to the local Assembly,[2] protesting against the passing of the Immigration Bill.

The statement will give you a fair idea of the legal disabilities in Natal, till the end of 1902. Since then, Natal has been trying to follow the example set by the Transvaal. I may refer you to the proceedings of the large meeting held here¾they are published in *Indian Opinion*.[3]

The Immigration Bill passed through both Houses, in spite of our protests, and has received the Royal assent.

Indian Opinion gives you the latest news in English and some suggestions in Gujarati. I understand the Proprietor has sent you a few copies of all the issues of the paper.

Unless the Indian Government takes a firm stand, and that, too, immediately, I am afraid the New Year will ruin many an Indian in South Africa.

I hope your committee will realise the seriousness of the postion and exert [itself] in right earnest to secure early relief.

I remain
Yours faithfully,

From a photostat of the office copy: S. N. 4106.

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Chamberlain", 27-12-1902
[2] *Vide*,"The Plague", 23-1-1905
[3] Dated 4-6-1903.

231. THE LORD BISHOP OF BOMBAY AND INDIA

For the edification of our Colonial readers, we reproduce a portion of the speech delivered by Dr. Macarthur at Mr. Tata's Mansions, Bombay, on the eve of his departure for England after having held the positon of Bishop of Bombay for over five years. During his short stay in India, broken by absence owing to ill-health and other causes, he was able to endear himself to all the classes, and although the head of the English Church, he had no difficulty (not by any means an easy task) in drawing to himself Hindoos, Mahomedans, Parsees, and all the other races not professing his religion. The key-note of his somewhat extraordinary success, as Mr. Justice Chandavarkar[1] said at the reception, was to be found in the spirit of humility which guided all his acts.

> The reason, the learned judge proceeded, seemed to him that in the first place Bishop Macarthur had in him a good deal of the truly religious quality of humility. He called it a religious quality but he was recently reading somewhere that humility was also the key-note of the scientific spirit of the time. Here then was a quality which both science and religion were agreed upon to call a virtue, and that virtue Bishop Macarthur possessed in abundant measure.

The Bishop, in reply, uttered the following pregnant words:

> It seemed to him that the position of an Indian Bishop, which had been referred to so ably and so eloquently by Mr. Mehta, might be a very narrow and insignificant one, or it might be a very great and splended position in very many ways. It depended altogether on the conception which one formed of it, and the attitude which one adopted in regard to it. He came to India with considerable hazard and anxiety, and was genuinely distrustful of his own ability to fill that great position. He could not form any kind of forecast as to what the attitude of the Indians would be towards anyone coming in the position of a Bishop. . . But the attitude adopted by the Indians swept away all his anxiety, and he began to feel that he had a distinct opportunity of doing good work among them. . . He felt the greatest possible interest in the study of mind of the Indian people. There were certain features in the Indian mind and consciousness for which he had the greatest admiration. They had a very keen, subtle and refined intellect charcterising the best type in India.

[1] Sir N.G. Chandavarkar, social reformer and judge of the Bombay High Court, presided over the Congress session at Lahore in 1900.

They had a most wonderful power of self-discipline and self-reliance, and they had in them a very deep and true religious instinct. With these qualities he thought that India had a very great contribution to make to the future of humanity. He was one of those who believed that there were good essential elements common to all religions, and all the greater religions of the world had capabilities of producing beautiful fruits, and he had seen beautiful fruits produced by all religions which he had observed in India. These religions had capabilities indicative of the aspirations of the soul and of guiding the soul in the higher walks of spiritual life, and the experience of all these religions seemed to him to have the capabilities, and therefore, whatever one might think of their deficiencies, still one could not help thinking that they possessed these powers, and one, in these circumstances, was never disposed to criticise them in any kind of narrow unsympathetic way. He did not think he ever was a proselytiser. He had not asked on a single occasion any educated man or woman to embrace his religion. He repudiated the idea that Englishmen were in India to advance their own interests through that country. He repudiated again the idea of a selfish purpose. If they were not there to do good to India, to carry forward the social life, and to help her to make a contribution which she could make to the world, then he did not think they should be in India at all. If they felt that they were not doing good to the country, then they had no right to continue in their present position. They were not there to obtain money and to acquire position, but they merely stood in the position of turstees, and their function and their vocation was to give a great opportunity in coming years to the Indian people to rise to the higher level of material, moral and spirtual prosperity, and by so doing to make a contribution to humanity which, he believed, [he?] could influence them to make.

We have given the above extract at some length, because we consider the words of the Bishop to be very weighty by reason alike of his great position as of their intrinsic value. The whole of his speech and the proceedings are worth studying, especially in a place like South Africa, where material ambition and self-interest occupy a predominant place in men's minds. If all of us had a tithe of Dr. Macarthur's breadth of view, charity, and humility, life would be far more bearable than it is. To our European friends the above words, coming as they do from a religious teacher belonging to their own persuasion, ought to be very welcome and ought to carry conviction to their minds as to the correct attitude to adopt towards British Indians. While they can easily look after and conserve their own interests, an inculcation of the catholic spirit of Bishop Macarthur would go a long way to smooth the differences between the two communities

which nature has brought under one flag. Men cannot be really good or really civilised unless they can embrace in their goodness or their civilisation all that lives. And whether we look at the question from a religious, scientific, or political standpoint, there can be no doubt that the Bishop has spoken words of wisdom which ought to be treasured by all of us. And if one man alone, as we read in the papers, has been able to do within a brief space of five years a great deal to bring the two communities nearer than they were before, what must be the possibilities of a similar attitude of mind permeating the masses living under the same flag? The world, as Emerson has said, is governed very largely by the law of compromise, and there is no doubt that, in order to bring about a desirable state of things, each party has to give a little of it as also to receive something. And we only hope that the Bishop's speech will reach many readers and that it will influence them for good.

Indian Opinion, 3-12-1903

232. COLONIAL SECRETARY, TRANSVAAL

Mr. Patrick Duncan, the new Colonial Secretary in the Transvaal has been gazetted Colonial Secretary in place of Mr. W. E. Davidson, who has resigned. The appointment is not devoid of interest to our countrymen in the Transvaal. We do not know whether to congratulate them on the change or not, for we have no knowledge of Mr. Duncan's attitude on the Asiatic question. At present the Asiatic Department is immediately under the control of the Colonial Secretary, who has delegated his duties to his assistant, Mr. W. H. Moor. We would, therefore, venture to remind the honourable gentleman that he has a very sacred trust in his hands, in that he is the guardian of the interests of a minority which has to struggle against the prejudices of a powerful majority. The present will be the turning point in the position of British Indians in the Transvaal. Many questions arising out of the anti-Asiatic laws and the Bazaar Notice will await his decision, and it will require all the energy and firmness of purpose that he can bring to bear on the intricate problems that will be placed before him for solution. If he can add to these a little bit of sympathy, we have no doubt that he will earn the gratitude of our contrymen in the Transvaal.

Indian Opinion, 3-12-1903

233. THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND COMPENSATION FOR WAR LOSSES

The Johannesburg papers contain the interesting information that the Government still declines to reconsider its decision regarding its refusal to award compensation to large firms or companies, whether they are British subjects or otherwise. Mr. George Mitchell, the President of the Chamber of Commerce, considers the action of Sir Arthur Lawley to be tantamount to a breach of faith. He says that Mr. Chamberlain definitely promised that all those who had suffered damage during the war were to be compensated. He, therefore, thinks that the Government has no right to discriminate between large and small firms, and we cannot but sympathise with the view. After all, the distinction between large and small firms would be more or less arbitrary and totally unscientific, and those who have the slightest knowledge of trade would easily realise that firms which may appear to be large may really need all the assistance that might be given to them owing to their large undertakings, and in not a few cases the effect would be felt far more severely by such firms than by those who, having little, have little to lose. Moreover, the smaller firms, as we know from personal knowledge, have been able to withstand successfully the demands of their creditors in the absence of compensation. Not so firms with reputations to keep. It has, therefore, to them been a double hardship. They have been obliged to pay, in many cases with interest, their own creditors, and have now to face the decision of the Government which would deprive them of the compensation to which they are justly entitled. Mr. Mitchell has threatened to approach the Home Government and also the British Parliament, and though we consider that, unless the Government here is prone to listen to the Chamber's complaint, there is very little to be gained from an approach to the Home Government in such a matter, we sincerely hope that the efforts of the Chamber of Commerce would be crowned with success, and that it would be able to convince the Home Government of the reasonableness of the complaint.

Indian Opinion, 3-12-1903

234. THE LABOUR COMMISSION REPORT

The report is now out. For the present, we propose to deal with the Minority Report signed by Messrs. Quinn and Whiteside. We are aware that these gentlemen are fighting a most up hill battle. All the same, we cannot help thinking that their conclusions are just, not because of any figures that they have produced or because they have been able to adduce, in support of their opinion, a long array of witnesses. In our opinion, no such thing is necessary, because their statements are almost axiomatic truths. Those who are not blinded by self-interest or prejudices will have no difficulty in agreeing with the following opinion of the two commissioners:

> We are of opinion that a figure representing the nett requirements of Native labour is not to be arrived at by accepting, without scrutiny, the statements of interested parties, and especially of persons who have no permanent interest in the country, but desire immediate expansion regardless of future consequences or the permanent prosperity of this Colony.

Those who have at all followed the evidence will see without any difficulty the force of these remarks. The definition, too, given by them of requirements is, in our opinion, ideal, and one does not need fourteen thousand odd questions to know whether there is in the country enough labour for such "requirements". The commissioners proceed:

> By requirements we, consequently, understand the number of Natives required to place the industries of the Ttransvaal in an equally prosperous condition, both as to product and cost, to that existing before the war, plus the number required for expansion of those industries, at the maximum rate compatible with the sound and permanent prosperity of the inhabitants of this Colony, both white and Coloured.

Here, then, is the key to the whole situation. If the country is to be boomed and exploited for the benefit of the capitalists and only for the present generation, there is no doubt that the Majority Report is perfectly sound, but if it is to be gradually developed, there cannot be the slightest doubt that it must rest content with what labour may be available in the Colony. There is all the difference in the world between a manufactured, unnatural growth and a studied, gradual process of evolution. The one would be a hot-house production, good and tempting to look at but rank poison in the end. The other, though not equally tempting, would produce lasting benefit and, though we doubt

whether any effort that can be put forth will be successful in warding off the invasion of indentured labour. We cannot but think that Messrs. Quinn and Whiteside have done their duty fearlessly for which they deserve the heartiest congratulations.

Indian Opinion, 3-12-1903

235. THE PROTECTOR OF ASIATICS IN THE TRANSVAAL

A correspondent at Pretoria has sent us a printed form signed by Mr. W. H. Moor, Assistant Colonial Secretary, dated the 5th November, notifying all Asiatics residing in Pretoria that

> applications for the lease of Stands in the Pretioria Asiatic Bazaar for 21 years, or less if so desired, from the 1st day of January, 1904, will be received up to noon of the 30th November, 1903, by Mr. Chamney the Protector of Asiatics who will consider the applications and apportion the Stands.

Then follow the conditions under which they would be considered and granted. We have dwelt in previous issues on the iniquity of the proposal of compulsory segregation as well as the choice of sites for Bazaars elsewhere. The same remarks would apply to the site at Pretoria. The Location is situated in a corner and a sluit divides it from the town. Most of the Indian trade is concentrated furthest away from the Location, in Prinsloo Street. For people in Prinsloo Street to remove to the Location is to court disaster. However, we do not wish to deal with that phase of the question at present, but to notice the position that Mr. Chamney occupies. We understand that he has a very wide Indian experience and is a gentleman of broad views and having a large measure of sympathy for those over whom he is appointed Protector. We confess that we are not enamoured of the title; it savours too much of identured labour, and, so far as South Africa is concerned, such a title is identified with the relations between indentured Indians and the officer appointed to watch over their interests as in Natal, but we do not wish to quarrel with the name either. The pertinent question is: Is Mr. Chamney performing the work to the satisfaction of the Indian community? Now if our correspondent is correct, Mr. Chamney, in spite of all his willingness to do justice to the Indians, is not able to do so because he has no independent powers at all. The sole management and control of the Asiatic Department is still in the hands of the Colonial Secretary and Mr. Chamney has merely to act under him. If this is so, we cannot help saying that it is a most extraordinary state of affairs. Even the Protector of Immigrants in

Natal has far wider powers and the title carries weight and influence. He is responsible to the Governor, but evidently in Pretoria things are managed in a different way. A gentleman of position is appointed as Protector and yet has not power to initiate anything. If we are incorrectly informed, then, there is a splendid opportunity for Mr. Chamney, without in any way whatsoever departing from the law laid down for him by the Government, for doing justice as between man and man. A man in the street would at a glance know that it would be a crying scandal to drive away hundreds of British Indians,—at present holding licences to trade outside Bazaars,—to these places at the end of the year. The matter requires patient investigation and we doubt not that, without there being any conflict with the Euro-pean opinion, it can be settled. If Mr. Chamney has the powers, will he rise to the occasion? If he has not the powers, will the Government be pleased to cease to dangle before the Indians a name and title without meaning anything?

Indian Opinion, 3-12-1903

236. AN APPEAL[1]

COURT CHAMBERS
JOHANNESBURG,
December 7, 1903

TO
THE EDITIOR
THE *Leader*

SIR,

I trust you will allow me to trespass on your courtesy on behalf of the few British Indian treaders whose lot hangs on the decision of the Government on the Notice 356 of this year.

The Notice in question contemplates the removal to Bazaars at the end of the year of all Indians, whether for trade or residence. It, however, makes an exception as to trade in favour of those who held licences to trade outside Location or Bazaars on the outbreak of hostilities. The exemption to be granted to certain Asiatics as to residence may be passed by, being unnecessary for the present purpose. It is a notorious fact that many Indians traded outside Locations, prior to the war, without any licences. This they were able to do owing

[1] Republished from the *Transvaal Leader*.

to the protection granted to them by the British Agents, acting under instructions from Downing Street. The Government, therefore, recognises the necessity of extending the exception above named to such traders, although they had no licences, if they could prove that they were engaged in trade outside Locations at the outbreak of hostilities.

There would still remain those who, although they were not trading before the war, being refugees, were last year granted licences to trade outside Locations by British officers without any conditions or reservations. Most of these men are in Johannesburg. In my humble opinion, their interests are as much vested as those of their more fortunate brethren who happened to have business before the war. They have established a fairly good trade. I need hardly point out that it is impossible for them to remove to Locations, away from business centres and totally uninhabited, and attract any trade. To force them to Locations is, therefore, to take the bread away from their mouths. And this result is to be brought about in the name of the people of the Transvaal. I refuse to believe that the majority of the people are capable of any such (if I may be pardoned for using the right term for the threatened act) inhumanity. I have good reason to state that a large number of merchants in Johannesburg, when they urged the Government to enforce the anti-Asiatic laws of the late Republic, did not intend that *bona-fide* refugees in lawful possession of licences should be affected. They wanted to prevent, as they have suceeded in preventing, new interests from cropping up by the granting of licences to new applicants. It would be strange indeed if members of a nation, which, in its respect for vested rights, recognises what might not unreasonably be termed the immoral interests of slave-owners and publicans, were to disregard those of innocent traders.

My appeal is, moreover, based on the plighted word of the highest authorities in the State. The threat to deprive the Indians in question of the right to renewal of their licences was first given about this time last year. The matter was brought to Mr. Chamberlain's notice. and he, who made the famous declaration that a British officer's note was as good as a bank note, would not believe that any such threat could be carried out. To him, it was merely a mistake on the part of a local officer who had issued it. The result was that the licences were renewed, though not without a painful struggle, and then only, first, up to June last, and then up to the 31st instant. As, therefore, the relief granted was for the first time stated to be of a temporary nature by the local authorities, Lord Milner was approached. He

has laid down his views in the despatch to Mr. Chamberlain wherein His Excellency says (if my reading is correct) that, of the present Indian licence-holders, only those who were not resident in the Transvaal before the war would be expected to go to Locations at the end of the year. I have already stated that the Indians in question are *bona-fide* refugees.

The expression, "at the outbreak of hostilities", would give rise to interminable difficulties and invidious distinctions. Look at the question, therefore how you will, the simple solution is to respect all the existing Indian licences on condition, if necessary, that the holders thereof were residents of the Transvaal before the war.

I can but briefly touch the charge of unfair competition levelled against my countrymen. The best proof of a pudding is in the eating. Is it not a fact that, in spite of the competition, the European merchants overwhelmingly preponderate? The Indian, it is true, is frugal and simple in his mode of life, but he is also simple in his business and frugal in organising ability. It will be time enough to fear his competition when he has attained the faculty of organisation. Numbers, it may be said, will tell if the flow was unchecked; but then, my appeal is only on behalf of those who are at present engaged in business. The British Indians have also suggested that the control of licences might be placed, under proper safeguard against abuse, in the hands of the Town Councils or District Boards. They would gladly carry out any reasonable sanitary and building requirements that may be considered necessary, whether in the interests of health or general appearance of the towns.

My countrymen, I venture to submit, have a claim on the sympathetic attention of Britishers settled in the Transvaal. Their aid was needed before the war, and was cheerfully rendered. The members of the then Uitlander Committee, who have now the ear of the Government, said that, as soon as the British flag waved in Pretoria, the disabilities of the Indians would be swept away by its breeze, for were they not British subjects? I do not raise the general question of disabilities; out of the much that was vouchsafed, I ask for a very small portion. Will it be denied?

In conclusion, may I take the liberty of mentioning that the Indians were not during the war behindhand in doing their humble share. Their work finds honourable mention in despatches. *Punch* then sang "We were sons of the Empire after all". I am aware of

nothing since done by my countrymen to disentitle them to the flattering description, and all it conveys.

Indian Opinion, 24-12-1903

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

237. PETITION TO THE TRANSVAAL COUNCIL[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
December 8, 1903

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF THE TRANSVAAL

THE PETITION OF ABDUL GANI, CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION IN THE TRANSVAAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH:

That your Petitioner approaches this Honourable House in connection with the notice given by the Colonial Secretary of a motion to be proposed by him on the 9th instant regarding Asiatic Bazaars.

Your Petitioner respectfully submits that the relief to be granted under the proposal would be totally inadequate for the requirements of justice.

The British Indian traders carrying on business outside Bazaars or Locations may be divided into three classes:

Firstly, those that held licenses to trade outside Bazaars on the outbreak of hostilities;

Secondly, those who thus traded without licenses;

Thirdly, those who, alothugh they did not carry on any trade on the outbreak of hostilities, being *bona-fide* residents of the Transvaal before that time, were last year granted licenses to trade outside Bazaars by British officers without any conditions or restrictions.

Those belonging to the second class make by far the largest number.

Those belonging to the third class are very few and are mostly concentrated in Johannesburg.

It would be a serious matter for the last-named class to remove to Bazaars where it is entirely impossible to carry on any trade whatsoever, much less to take with them the white and Kaffir retail

[1] This was published in *Indian Opinion*, 17-12-1903.

trade built up by them in the respective places for which they are in lawful possession of licenses.

Apart, however, from the unsuitability of the Bazaar sites, your Petitioner humbly draws the attention of this Honourable House to the following facts.

It was about this time, last year, that, in Pietersburg, all British Indians belonging to the third division above named received notices that their licenses would not be renewed after their expiry. The matter was, therefore, brought to the notice of the then Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies during his visit to the Transvaal, and he was pleased to say that the threat could not be carried out, and these licenses have so far been renewed.

His Excellence Viscount Milner has also emphasised the point in his despatch addressed to the Right Honourable Mr. Chamberlain, dated the 11th May, 1903.

His Excellency says:

> They (the Government) are anxious, however, to do so (enforce the Republican Legislation) in the manner most considerate to the Indians already settled in the country and with the greatest respect for vested interests, even where these have been allowed to spring up contrary to law. . . . Had we had to deal merely with the Asiatic population as it existed before the war, it might have been possible to remain passive until a new law could have been framed to the satisfaction of His Majesty's Government, but with so many new-comers constantly pouring in and applying for licenses to trade... It became impossible to persist in the policy of complete inaction.

His Excellency again says in the same despatch:

> As I have already stated, the Government is prepared to recognise the vested interests of Asiatics resident here before the war. On the other hand, it feels that it would not be justified in allowing vested interests to spring up contrary to the law. During the war, and since the declaration of peace, a large number of temporary trading licenses have been renewed until December 31st, 1903, but the holders have been warned that on that date they will be required to remove to streets or Bazaars selected for this purpose.

The despatch, therefore, in the humble opinion of your Petitioners, clearly contemplates the exemption, from the operation of the Bazaar Notice, of all the existing British Indian licensees who may have been resident in the Transvaal before the war.

Your Petitioner's association has always respectfully protested

against the enforcement of Law 3 of 1885, seeing that is was a matter of contention between Her late Majesty's Government and the late Republican Government, that it was one of the causes of the late war, and that it is repugnant to the British Constitution.

Without, however, for the present raising the general issue, your Petitioner ventures to hope that interference with the present Indian license-holders will not be countenanced by this Honourable House.

According to the information in possession of your Petitioner's Association, those who never traded before war would not exceed probably one hundred. The renewal of their licenses outside Bazaars would hardly affect the principle underlying the Bazaar Notice, while it is a matter of life and death to the men themselves.

Moreover, the expression, "at, or immediately before, the commencement of hostilities," is likely to give rise to much difficulty in its application and to invidious distinctions.

It would, in the humble opinion of your Petitioner's Association, be manifestly unjust to renew the licenses of those who were trading in the middle of 1899 if the same concession were withheld from those who were trading at the end of 1898 but not in 1899. Again, in 1899, there may have been two partners in the same business. It would not be an easy matter, in the event of both applying for a license, to give preference to the one over the other.

These are only illustrations of the many difficulties that the Notice in question will create in administering the law in accordance therewith.

The British Indians are loyal subjects of the Crown and admitted to be sober, industrious and law-abiding citizens.

Your Petitioner's Association, therefore, humbly prays that this honourable House would give a favourable consideration to the subject matter hereof and so amend the Notice in question as to except from its operation the existing Indian licensees on production of proof that they have been resident in the Transvaal before war, and to make it consistent not only with justice and fair play but also with the declarations, above referred to, of the right Honourable Mr. Chamberlain and His Excellency Viscount Milner.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioner shall, as in duty bound, for ever pray, etc.

Dated at Johannesburg, this 8th day of December, Nineteen Hundred and Three.

ABDOOL GANI
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

From a photostat of the original in Pretoria Archives, Petition L.C. 4/03.

238. LORD HARRIS AND INDIAN LABOUR

The Johannesburg *Star* has reproduced the speech delivered by Lord Harris on November 12th in Cannon Street Hotel, London, before the ordinary general meeting of the shareholders of the Consolidated Gold Fields of South Africa. The speech enables us the better to understand His Lordship's views on the Asiatic labour question. We must confess that we are sadly disappointed, and with due deference to His Lordship, we think that his judgment has been warped by his anxiety on behalf of the financial interests represented by him. Lord Harris has discovered that it would be really for the benefit of the Indians that they should be imported under terms which would prevent them from using their brains, if they have any, and compelling them to return to India after the termination of their contract, irrespective of the question whether they can earn a better living in that country or not. His Lordship says:

> It seems to me to be somewhat short-sighted to make permission for the recruiting of coolies for the mines dependent on better treatment for the trading class. . . .
>
> Clooies are not a highly educated class; they are merely manual labourers and the treatment they would receive would certainly not be worse, probably better, than the treatment they would receive on mines in India, and certainly infinitely more considerate than the treatment they would receive from the higher castes in India itself. . . .
>
> It seems to me that the whole Indian community would benfit if such an out and in flow from India to South Africa and back again were encouraged.

We would take the liberty of answering those remarks by putting a few pertinent questions.

Does His Lordshiop know that it is possible in India for the lowest class to rise to the highest level by patience and perseverance? Does he know that many an Indian has risen to a very respectable

position from the very coolie class? Is it not a fact that the knowledge that, on their regaining freedom, they are likely to compete in trade and other businesses with the Europeans is the cause for insisting on compulsory repatriation? Would it not be a sad reflection on the Government if it were true that the Indian miners would receive better treatment in the Transvaal than they would in India? (Personally, we do not think that the question of physical treatment enters into consideration at all, for we firmly believe that the treatment of labourers, as such, will be fair enough in the Transvaal.) Does His Lordship seriously contend that, if the higher castes in India do not give considerate treatment to the lower castes, it would be any reason for keeping up such a distinction, even in a modified form, under a Liberal Government? And is not His Lordship aware that, no matter what may be the shortcomings of the higher castes in India, they do not for their own selfish ends resort to a modified form of slavery? Will it be an economic benefit either to the labourers who may be imported, or to the Indian community in general, if, after a term of years, the laboures who have made the Transvaal more their home than India are sent back to face starvation? Will it be right in any sense of the term to forcibly dwarf the growth of a body of men for fear that they might set up a competition against another body of men? Is it not a more straightforward course to avoid such a contingency by not resorting to indentured labour at all, and by letting the country gradually but steadily evolve progress?

Indian Opinion, 10-12-1903

239. INDIAN LICENCES IN LADYSMITH

Mr. Lines, the Town Clerk of Ladysmith, in his capacity as Licensing Officer for the town, has sent notices to the Indian traders in that place informing them of the sections of the Dealers' Licenses Act governing the issue of trade licences and sending them application forms to be filled in, wherein occurs the following significant paragraph:

> I undertake not to keep my premises open for business after the hour of 5 P.M., except on Staurdays. I further undertake to close my place of business on all public holidays.

It was only a few weeks ago that we reproduced the report of the inteview between Mr. Lines and the British Indians in Ladysmith at

which Mr. Lines threatened that he would not renew British Indian licences for next year unless the applicants agreed to close their stores at five o'clock. He has now taken a further step and evidently the threat is to be carried out. We have already expressed our opinion that, if it is at all possible, it would be well for the Indian store-keepers in Ladysmith to meet Mr. Lines' proposal. It would, we doubt not, do much good in the end. The question, of course, is whether, by closing their stores at five o'clock in the evening, the Indian traders will be in a positon to do their business. It may be that most of their business is done only after five o'clock, in which case it will be utterly impossible for them to comply with the demand, but if that is so, and if it could be conclusively proved, we think that Mr. Lines would be reasonable enough to waive the undertaking. It is a matter entirely of compromise, and we trust that the Indians in Ladysmith will be self-possessed enough to see that it would be to their advantage to follow the course suggested by us. Of course, in no case could the undertaking be given if the rule as to closing of shops is not to apply to all the traders. In this connection, we invite their attention to the following clause also in Mr. Lines' notice:

> No licence shall be issued in respect of premises which are unfit for the intended trade or unprovided with proper and sufficient sanitary arrangements or not affording sufficient and suitable accommodation for salesmen, clerks and servants apart from the stores or rooms in which goods and wares may be kept in cases where premises are used for both purposes.

This, of course, is an arrangement which there should be no hesitation or difficulty in fulfilling; in fact, we are aware that most of the Indian stores in Ladysmith are free from any objection of that description, but it is as well to emphasise the point that the clause in question should be given effect to both in spirit and to the letter.

Indian Opinion, 10-12-1903

240. THE GOVERNMENT AND BARBERTON INDIANS

There appears in the Transvaal *Government Gazette* dated the 4th December a Notice over the signature of Mr. W. H. Moor, appointing the present Indian Location in Barberton as a site for the Bazaar. It contains the following extraordinary paragraph.

> Stands in this Bazaar will be rented on a monthly tenancy, with no power to sub-let, to those Asiatics *only*, (the italics appear in the Notice itself,)

who are at present residing or trading in it. Leases will not be given.

Thus, the most objectionable feature to which we drew attention some time ago of the Notice issued by the Resident Magistrate at Barberton has been kept up by the Government and, in trying to secure substantial justice by protesting against the threatened closing up of the Location, the Indians find themselves face to face with the prospect of being compelled, owing to the restrictions on sub-letting, to remove without compensation to the new Bazaar against which, as our readers will be aware, serious objections have been raised, or of leaving Barberton altogether. And yet Lord Milner says that the Indians are being treated better now than they were during the Boer regime!

Indian Opinion, 10-12-1903

241. THE "MORNING POST" AND ASIATIC LABOUR

The Johannesburg papers to hand report an appeal made to the Indian Government by the *Morning Post* for a supply of indentured Indian labour. The correspondent of the *Daily Mail* says that the paper has not lost all hope of the mines being worked by British Indians rather than by alien Chinese. It points out that it is entirely in the inerests of the British Empire that Mr. Brodrick, the Indian Secretary, should urge Lord Curzon, Viceroy of India, to come to some arrangement with the Transvaal which should ensure good treatment but not political rights to coolies in the Transvaal. We do not know what the *Post* understands by "political rights", but we very much fear that there is a new definition for the term intended to be of use in South Africa so as to include the ordinary rights of a British subject, namely, those of freedom of locomotion, trade and residence. Franchise the Indians do not aspire to, but they do insist on complete liberty to trade, and reside where they like so far as such liberty is not in conflict with sanitary arrangements and customs which may be applicable to all, irrespective of colour distinctions: and if the *Post* considers these rights as defined by us as a part of good treatment, we should have nothing to say against its appeal. If, however, compulsory repatriation and the other restrictions urged by the people of the Transvaal are to be inflicted on the indentured people, then we repeat, as we have said often, that the rights of Indian traders will have been bought too dearly, and seeing that such an influential organ as the *Morning Post* countinues to urge the necessity of Indian labour for

the Transvaal, the friends of Indians cannot be too careful in watching the trend of events in England as well as in South Africa.

Indian Opinion, 10-12-1903

242. AMENDMENT TO BAZAAR NOTICE[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
December 11, 1903

The Government propose to bring before the Legislative Council an amendment to the "Bazaar Notice" which would have the effect of exempting some British Indians in the Transvaal from the liability to carry on their trade only in Bazaars or Locations specially set apart for the purpose.

The amendment, however, does not include all the holders of existing licences, and the effect of the amended law will still be to require the compulsory removal of about one hundred British Indian traders to Locations. This will mean the utter ruin of the traders concerned.

Accordingly, a mass meeting of British Indians has been held, and [it] has passed a resolution requesting that protection may be given to all existing licences, pending the promised alteration of the anti-Indian laws in the Transvaal.

The Legislatve Council is to consider the proposed amendment on Monday next, December 14.

India, 18-12-18903

243. CABLE TO BRITISH COMMITTEE

JOHANNESBURG,
December 12,1903

TO
INCAS

GOVERNMENT PROPOSE BRING AMENDMENT BAZAAR NOTICE BEFORE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL EXEMPTING SOME INDIANS FROM LIABILITY TRADE WITHIN BAZAARS WITHOUT INCLUDING ALL EXISTING LICENSES. THIS WOULD MEAN COMPULSORY REMOVAL ABOUT HUNDRED TRADERS LOCATION CAUSING UTTER RUIN. BRITISH INDIAN MASS MEETING THEREFORE PASSED RESOLUTION REQUESTING PROTECTION

[1] This appeared as "from a correspondent".

ALL EXISTING LICENSES PENDING PROMISED ALTERATION ANTI-INDIAN LAWS. COUNCIL CONSIDERS AMENDMENT MONDAY. PLEASE HELP.

GANDHI

India Office: Judicial and Public Records, 57/1904.

244. GENERAL LETTER[1]

[Prior to *December, 17, 1903*]

SIR,

With reference to the motion standing in the name of the Honourable the Colonial Secretary regarding the amendment of the Bazaar Notice 356 of this year, a petition has already been sent for submission to the Legislative Council[2] for consideration to which my Association invites your sympathetic attention.

There are, however, things which could not well be mentioned in the petition.

My association, therefore, ventures to take the liberty of addressing this communication to you.

The matter discussed in the petition is of vital importance to the Indian community, and of comparatively no consequence from the European traders' standpoint.

If the relief sought is not granted, the position of Britsh Indian traders on the 1st January next will be very precarious.

In order to enable you to grasp the situation thoroughly, I venture to say, with due deference to the Government, that the sites selected for Bazaars are worthless for purposes of trade. They are, in almost every case, far away from towns [and] without the ordinary conveniences. In fact, it would mean for the Indians an establishment of absolutely new townships or villages.

It is unnecessary to dilate upon this as you are acquainted with the country and know the situation of at least some of the Bazaar sites. For this reason alone, if for no other, it is submitted that the disturbance of the present holders of licences will be disastrous to them.

My Association is aware that some honourable members of the Council hold the view that there is at present a larger Indian popu-

[1] This was addressed to the members of the Transvaal Legislative Council by British Indians.

[2] "Petition to the Transvaal Council", December 8, 1903

lation in the Colony than there was before war, and that many Indians who have not formerly resided in the Colony have entered it. I beg to assure you that such is not the case; there is no doubt that a few new-comers have entered the country but many of these have been sent across the border under the recent permit prosecutions, and, in hardly any case, are new-comers in possession of licenses.

The appeal of my Association therefore, is not on behalf of new comers, but on behalf of *bona-fide* refugees. The only reason why an attempt is now being made to remove them to Bazaars is because they have not traded in the Transvaal before war or, rather, they have not traded before war in the respective places for which they hold licenses at present. This is a distinction the justice of which it is difficult to understand. It is the so-called competition on the part of the Indian traders in the smaller townships that is feared, but my Association ventures to say that, in such townships, there are very few Indian traders. They are mostly in Johannesburg, where, after all, the prejudice is not so strong, and where competition cannot be felt because European traders are in an overwhelming majority. Is it, then, right that the few Indian traders are to be deprived of the means of livelihood? For it cannot be too often repeated that it is impossible to remove the Indian trade now going on outside Bazaars to the Bazaars with any prospect of success. My Association would give a few illustrations.

In Rustenburg, for instance, there is one and only one Indian trader who is trading in the town, although he did not trade there before war. It may be parenthetically remarked that he has been trading for years in Johannesburg. Is this one man to remove to a Bazaar, which is practically a wilderness where there is no traffic, and which is probably a dangerous place for one man to live in? And will the removal of one man make any appreciable difference in the business now being done by the other traders in the town?

The case in Schweizer Reneke is, if possible, even more serious. There are two Indian traders there who did not trade before war in that locality, although at least one of them traded before war in the Transvaal. The place itself consists of very few houses and is very sparsely inhabited. Could these two men be expected to do any business in the Location which is situated far away, and is at present totally uninhabited?

Such instances could be multiplied. They shew the extreme

disproportion between the means to be adopted and the result to be attained. The removal of these traders scattered throughout the contry to Bazaars would be, in the opinion of my Association, a very violent remedy without its curing the disease alleged to exist. My Association can quite understand the wish that no further licenses to new Indian arrivals should be granted for trade outside Bazaars, but it is very difficult to reconcile one-self to an attitude which disregards what are undoubtedly vested interests, for the licenses that were granted last year were received by the Indians openly in a *bona-fide* manner, and were given by the British officers with the knowledge that they were giving them to Indians, although they were not engaged in trade within their districts prior to war, on the grounds that they were refugees. There were no conditions attached at the time of issuing those licenses.

My Association, therefore, respectfully asks whether it is worth while disturbing a handful of Indian traders who have already established themselves in business, have got in a large stock, and in some cases, secured long leases of the premises in their occupation. My Association ventures to believe that you represent not merely the European interests but the interests of all who are settled in the Colony, more especially those who are British subjects, and therefore hopes that you will find time to study the question put before you and come to a just decision.

Hoping to be excused for troubling you,

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ABDUL GANI

CHAIRMAN,

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 17-12-1903

245. BRITISH INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL

We read in the Johannesburg newspapers that the proceedings of the Legislative Council of the Transvaal were opened with prayers. At the conclusion of his remarks, His Excellency the President of the Council commended the members "to the guidance of Almighty God"and he "fervently prayed that all their consultations might tend

to the advancement of His glory and the prosperity of the State", and trusted that "God's blessing might rest upon their labours". All this is very religious and, so far, very satisfactory. There is nothing to be feared from those who walk in the fear of God and invoke His guidance in all their doings. Unfortunately, expressions such as the above have become very much stereotyped. We pray because it is the fashion and not because there is any special stress laid upon the fact or that there is necessarily that attitude which is indispensable before there can be any guidance from on high. And we are very much afraid that when His Excellency read the prayers or concluded his speech, he never asked himself the question whether there was not something in what was to be placed before the Legislative Council which could not possibly be to the glory of God. Let us see the facts, as they are. The Colonial Secretary, Mr. P. Duncan, gave notice of the following motion:

> That Government Notice No. 356 dated 8th April 1903, regarding the provision of bazaars in which trade may be carried on by Asiatics be amended by the addition of the following words after the word "hostilities" In Clause 3: 'Licenses my be granted under similar conditions in the case of Asiatic traders who were *bona-fide* carrying on trade at or immediately before the commencement of hostilities, and in places not specially set apart by the Government, even though such traders may not have held the licenses required by law for such trading. All traders claiming to have licences under this clause must produce evidence to the satisfaction of the Receiver of Revenue that the above conditions are fulfilled in their case.

Our readers will have sufficient [?] in this issue of the paper to shew them what the British Indians think about the motion. We have often said in these columns that the Bazaar Notice is uncalled for and in contravention of the promises made from time by Her late Majesty's ministers, as well as Mr. Chamberlain, But it is not our intention to raise that question at present; we would merely examine the position take up by the British Indian petitioners.

Before we do that, we take this opportunity of congratulating our countrymen in the Transvaal on the most praiseworthy activity shown by them, and the methodical manner in which they have placed their representations before the authorities. Between Tuesday and Friday of the same week, to send a petition to the Legislative Council, address a long circular letter to the members, and to convene a successful meeting which, it would appear, was attended by over five

hundred people, is a very creditable performance worthy of imitation by us in Natal.

To return, the position is briefly this.

The Bazaar Notice does not interfere with the licenses of those British Indians who can shew that they held licenses to trade outside Bazaars on the outbreak of hostilities. The Government now proposes to extend the protection to those also who were trading without any licenses on the outbreak of hostilities. There remain, then Indians who, although they did not trade before war, have been able, on the strength of their being refugees, to secure licenses from British officers. The British Indians have, therefore, approached the Legislative Council and say that the last named class of traders also should be given the same protection. They argue somewhat this way.

Those from whom you want to withold the protection form a very small number not worthy of consideration so far as the European sentiment is concerned. There are nearly six hundred license[e]s from which [number] you might be able, by excluding the new traders in the above sense, to drive, say, one hundred men to Locations. This would make hardly any difference in the competition. You have often promised to protect all those license[e]s; Mr. Chamberlain has done so; Lord Milner has done so. Before war, the British Agents secured the trade of British Indians by making effective representations to the Republican Government. Therefore, although you have got the lion's strength, you should not use it in order to crush these few men out of existence. We have committed no crime. You charge us with faults which, if properly examined, are not faults at all, and even trade jealousy may not be allowed to go so far as to endanger vested rights.

Argument such as this seems to us to be unanswerable, and if the facts are as the speakers at the great meeting held in the West End Hall in Johannesburg stated them, is the attitude taken up by the Government consistent with the commending by His Excellency of the Members of the Legislative Council to the guidance of God? Is it consistent with the fervent prayer that the consultations of the Council should tend to the advancement of the glory of God? We frankly confess that we fail to see herein the hand of God, and we certainly do not see that the ruin of hundreds of inoffensive traders can advance His glory, or even tend to the prosperity of the State.

We notice that our friends the East Rand Vigilants are up in

arms against the Government in daring to introduce the amendment above referred to. They are wrathful that the very Government, which was instrumental in enabling British Indians to trade without licenses before war and in defiance of the laws of the late Republic, is now doing a tardy act of justice by clothing these licenses with the same protection. They have, therefore, promoted a petition to the Legislative Council. The Government has then, on the one hand, to face the opposition of the East Rand Vigilants to any justice being done to the Indians, and, on the other hand, to consider the very reasonable demands of the British Indians for the smallest measure of justice. The argument advanced by the Boksburg gentlemen is very full of humour if it is also full of pain. They consider that it would be, on the part of the Government, a breach of faith with the white inhabitants of the Transvaal if it were to amend the Bazaar Notice in any direction whatsoever. Will the gentlemen, however, consider for a moment the ridiculous position in which they place themselves by advancing an argument of that nature, for it was impossible for the Government to make any promise whatsoever to the white inhabitants without, in the first instance, committing a very serious breach of faith with the Indians themselves? How could our friends expect the Government to make any definite promises to relegate Indians to Locations when the Imperial Government went to war on that very question? The Bazaar Notice is certainly there, but in the light of the facts we have stated, it cannot be interpreted as any promise to the white inhabitants, though we are free to admit that it is a sign of weakness that the Government has ever issued the Notice, but having issued it, it seems to us to be far-fetched to argue that they have not now the right to amend it in any manner they choose. In our humble opinion, the strong Transvaal Government has a clear course before it, namely, not only to carry out the promises made to the British Indians, but apart from any such promises, to protect them (the weaker party) from the opposition and prejudice of the stronger party, namely, the Europeans. Self-interest may blind the sense of fairness of the latter. It is then for the Government not to be led away by their oppostion, however, strong it may be, but to hold the scales even between conflicting interests, and to do justice.

Indian Opinion, 17-12-1903

246. A MASS MEETING OF INDIANS IN JOHANNESBURG

A mass meeting of our brethren was held in Johannesburg on Friday morning. Representatives from almost every village attended at a notice of only 24 hours, for which they deserve credit. Sheth Abdul Gani, Manager of the well-known business house of Messrs. Mahomed Cassam Camroodeen, took the chair, He made an impressive speech and proved that the modifications sought to be effected in the law by the Government were not adequate. There are at present three categories of traders in the Transvaal: (1) those who are carrying on trade under licences obtained prior to the war: (2) those who have been trading without a licence; and (3) those who obtained licences after the commencement of British rule. The licences of those who were trading before the war are being renewed. And now the Government intends to enact a law to the effect that those belonging to the second category, that is to say, those trading without a licence before the war, would be issued licences. The meeting was held in order to secure justice for the third category, so that those who did not trade before the war but who were granted licences by the British officials might also obtain them. Mr. Chamberlain had himself said that they, too, should get the licences.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 17-12-1903

247. A GENERAL LETTER[1]

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

21-24, COURT CHAMBERS,
RISSIK STREET,
JOHANNESBURG,
December 17, 1903

SIR,

In view of the approaching meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce at Pretoria, in connection with the proposed amendment of the Asiatic Bazaar Notice No. 356 of this year, I have the honour, on behalf of the British Indian Association, to submit a short

[1] The letter, which was addressed to members of the Associated Chambers of Commerce at Pretoria, was published in *Indian Opinion*, 24-12-1903. It was also sent to Dadabhai Naoroji, who forwarded a copy to the Secreatry of State for India.

statement for your consideration.

A British Indian deputation waited on the Right Honourable Mr. Chamberlain during his visit to the Transvaal, when the members of the deputation were advised by him, as far as possible, to agree with the European inhabitants of the Colony. I venture to assure you that such has ever been the desire of the members of the community represented by my Association.

I take it that the general objection to the Indian is in regard to his mode of living. I beg to state, then, that so far he has not been allowed the opportunity to show what he can do in that direction. His position has never been clearly defined; he has been obliged to remain in a state of uncertainty. In any case, I venture to assure you that the Indians would be readily amenable to any regulations that might be framed with a reference to sanitation, or the separation of dwellings from business places. My Association has, in fact, already submitted to the Government that the giving to the Municipality of the control over dealer's licenses to new applicants with the right of appeal to the courts of law by way of safeguard against abuse of power, would be quite acceptable to the Indian community.

My Association is also aware that there is prevalent in the minds of many in the Colony the fear that the Indians, if allowed to immigrate unrestricted, might by their very numbers swamp the white population. Although my Association considers any such fear to be groundless, yet, as an earnest of its desire to co-operate with the Europeans, my Association has accepted the principle of legislation to restrict immigration on the lines of the Cape Act, with certain modifications.

However, for the purposes of considering the proposed amendment, it is hardly necessary to examine the general question. The Colonial Secretary's proposal but carries out the spirit of the Bazaar Notice, though, in the humble opinion of my Association, it still falls short of elmentary justice unless it is supplemented as urged by my Association. It proposes to protect the vested interests of British Indians who, during the Boer regime, were able to trade without licenses outside Locations or Bazaars by reason of the intervention of the British Agents. My Association would be painfully surprised if you were to oppose a continuation of the same protection when the British Government is in a better position to give it.[1]

[1] *Vide* item 68 above.

And, if you would approve of the Colonial Secretary's proposal, to clothe all existing licenses with protection, [you] would be simply complementing it.

There are, probably, not more than 600 Asiatic licenses outside Bazaars in the Colony, of which 500 will be left undisturbed under the notice and proposed amendment. There will, therefore, be only 100 licenses not covered by the Notice. And it is contended that the rights of these latter are entitled to as much consideration as of the others, since they are all former residents of the Transvaal, and had their licenses granted last year by the British officers without restrictions. If, therefore, you would waive your objection to the 500 licenses, it would be but the barest justice to put the balance of licenses under the same category.

Probably, before the war, you were a member of the Uitlander Committee; if so, I may state that, just on the eve of war, the Committee was glad to secure the co-operation of the Indian community in order to further its views. One of the arguments advanced by it in favour of the Indian community making common cause was that, after British occupation, we would not suffer the disabilities imposed by Law 3 of 1885. My Association, therefore, it is submitted, has a right to expect fulfilment of that assurance.

Indians are British subjects. India has been described by British statesmen as the brightest jewel in the British Crown. She is ever ready to fight the Empire's battles. It was the Indian army that probably saved the situation in Natal. The local Indians too, were not behindhand in doing their humble share. It is for the members of that community that my Association requests your sympathy, and that, too, in a matter which, while it is of very great importance to the Indians, is of comparative insignificance to you. My Association, therefore, ventures to trust that the meeting of the Associated Chambers would decide to recommend protection of all existing Indian licenses.

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
ABDUL GANI
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

India Office: Judicial and Public Records, 57/1904.

248. THE TRANSVAAL CHAMBERS AND BRITISH INDIANS

We reproduce elsewhere copy of a circular letter[1] addressed by the British Indian Association to the members of the Chambers of Commerce of the Transvaal. The conference met at Pretoria on the 18th instant, and *The Rand Daily Mail* publishes a report of the proceedings from which it would appear that the circular letter produced no effect whatsoever on the delegates. It may be because the circular was sent rather late owing to the decision, at the eleventh hour, of the Colonial Secretary to postpone the consideration of the proposed amedment. The circular letter makes it quite plain that, if it is right to respect the vested interests of those who traded before the war without licenses, it is more so to respect such interests created after the war. The reference in the letter to the co-operation given by the Indian community to the Uitlander Committee of the pre-war period ought to have gone home. We can speak from personal knowledge that the leaders of the Committee were most anxious that the Indians should join them in making representations to the Home Government. The question of the disabilities of Indians was specially discussed and all were agreed that, if the war came, the disabilities must go. It, therefore, ill becomes the members of the conference now to turn round and propose drastic measures which were not even dreamt of during their worst days before the war. The arguments advanced at the conference in support of the different contentions put forward by the members, we take leave to say, were of the weakest type, and in some cases, based upon distorted facts. We do not wish to convey that the distortion was deliberate. Probably, it was due to the inability of the speakers to look at facts without bias; but we do say that, in some instances, there was no foundation for the statements made by the speakers. That men occupying responsible positions, and who in private life would be ashamed to make statements without first verifying them, should in their public capacity father such statements without applying the necessary test is a sign of the times. The chairman of the conference is reported to have said:

> Wealthy Indians in Barberton had approached leading merchants of the town asking them to lend their names for the purposes of securing premises and licenses. The Indian boasted that, if he succeeded, every other Kaffir store-

[1] Item 69 above.

keeper would have to close within twelve months.

Now, we have no hesitation in saying that there is not a vestige of truth in this statement. Barberton has no wealthy Indians. there are very few Indian traders, and these are in the Location only; there are no Indian traders established within the town; the few who are doing any business in the Location are too poor even to dream of the ambition ascribed by the chairman to them. Most of the inhabitants of the Location are hawkers, and we challenge the chairman to give the name of the Indian who is alleged to have boasted that he would drive away every Kaffir store-keeper within twelve months. The chairman also uttered the following grandiloquent sentiments:

> It would not be their intention to approach the Government. . . . in an antagonistic spirit, but their attitude should be absolutely friendly and patriotic. It was a case of saying: 'Gentlemen, mind what you do; you had better be careful because it is a very serious matter. It is a matter on which the feelings of the people of this country are deeper than you believe. It is the one question that will unite the people against the Government, and it is an exceedingly grave matter if Government takes up the attitude of partisanship of the coloured races as against the white population.'

It is rather humorous that the gentlemen, who are interested being themselves engaged in trade, and who would, if they could, form a ring excluding from it all competitors, should speak in such strain in the name of the community as if their interests and those of the vast amount of buyers were identical. The chairman, in saying that the feelings of the people of the country were deeper than might be believed, forgot that the Indians were dependent upon white custom to a very great extent, and if the feeling is so deep, how is it that the support is still held out to them? Why is it necessary to ask the legislature to harass the Indians into leaving the Colony when the remedy of ostracism is in their own hands? It would be news to many readers that the Government has taken up an attitude of partisanship of the Coloured races. Well may Lord Milner say that he is between two fires: the Indians say the Government is treating them worse than they were treated before the war, and the members of the conference say that they (the Indians) have been taken under Government patronage.

The traders are a mere handful, and yet the position created by their presence has been magnified out of all proportion. The serious evil which threatens to overtake the Colony in the shape of indentured Coloured labour was airily passed by because, forsooth, Sir George

Farrar had assured the chairman that every precaution would be taken against the permanent settlement of such indentured men. If the people are to be united against the Goverment in any matter, it is undoubtedly this one of indentured labour.

Of the petition and the resolutions passed at the conference, we would say very little. Both are in keeping with the speeches delivered by the various delegates. The petition dwells upon "the commingling of the Coloured and white races". May we inform the members of the conference that, so far as the British Indians are concerned, such a thing is practically unknown? If there is one thing which the Indian cherishes more than any other, it is the purity of type. Why bring such a question into the controversy at all? We would very much like to learn a bit of the past history and experience gained by the petitioners.

One of the resolutions passed "views with intense alarm and disfavour any legislation which might stultify such principle". This is really very funny. The members are alarmed at what is not even in existence. Lord Ellenborough said that, during the Afghan War, there were people who thought they heard the sound of guns if a beetle chirped. The members of the conference evidently seem to be in some such position, for no legislation has yet been given to the public, and, for aught we know, when the much-promised legislation does come, it would be worse from the Indian standpoint than the present laws. We give the members the credit of supposing that they have not mistaken the proposed amendment of the Colonial Secretary for legislation, especially after his lucid explanation of the real bearing of the Bazaar Notice on the general question.

We would urge the members of the different Chambers of Commerce in the Transvaal to consider dispassionately the opening paragraphs of the circular letter of the British Indian Association. The two statements made therein ought to be considered quite effective from the European standpoint. The Town Councils or Town Boards consist mostly of traders. The Indians say: 'Our position is so reasonable that we do not hesitate to place ourselves at your mercy and abide by your decision as to our licenses, provided that you do not take away the right of appeal to the Supreme Court against your decision. So far as new settlers are concerned, we are quite willing that there should be reasonable restrictions along the lines laid down by Mr. Chamberlain in his address to the Colonial Premiers. If you adopt this policy, you will keep up more or less the British traditions.'

Such a position, in our humble opinion, is unexceptionable, and we invite the Chambers to spare a few moments and, after full consideration, ask themselves whether it does not constitute a very reasonable compromise.

Indian Opinion, 24-12-1903

249. MR. DUNCAN ON HIS AMENDMENT

The Colonial Secretary[1] is to be congratulated on his able, sympathetic, and historical survey of the anti-Asiatic legislation in the Transvaal. He had naturally no difficulty in making out a very strong case in favour of his amendment. He shewed conclusively that it was owing to the protection afforded by the British Government during Mr. Kruger's regime that Indians were able to trade in the Transvaal in defiance of the law and that, therefore, it was impossible, even if it were desirable, for the British Government to retrace its steps and drive the Indians away to the Locations. It was not a question, as he said, of sentiment or policy, but one of simple justice. He exhorted the members, and through them the public generally, to consider the matter dispassionately and not to run away with the idea that the present Government could play ducks and drakes with the Indians. The pity of it all is that Government did not see all this beforehand, nor is it easy to understand why, in an administrative matter, it should make all this fuss and go to the Council for amendment of the Bazaar Notice. Mr. Duncan has himself admitted that the Bazaar Notice has no legal value, because it could not be considerd a piece of legislation. We give his own words:

> In the first place, they must remember that this was not a law but mere-ly a notice, expressing a policy which the Government desired to pursue in interpreting the law of the country.

It was then clearly unnecessary to bring forward the matter before the Legislative Council at all. It is difficult for the lay mind to understand the distinction between acts of the Legislative Council which would have the force of law and other acts which would not have the same effect, but which are merely an expression of opinion on the part of the Council: to the lay mind, all such notices are law of the country. The people also forget that the notice has actually taken away the rights that the Indians enjoyed before it was introduced, and

[1] Mr. Patrick Duncan.

that the proposed amendment is a restoration of some of the rights thus taken away. They construe the amendment to be a concession and then protest against it. No amount of logic and reason could take away the feeling so created. We think, therefore, that it was clearly a mistake on the part of the Government to have, in the first instance, brought up the Bazaar Notice before the Legislative Council. It has voluntarily tied its hands down and given rise to an undesirable agitation¾unless the Government intended that such agitation should take place in order to strengthen its hands in pursuing an anti-Asiatic policy. The speech of the Colonial Secretary, however, precludes us from forming any such opinion.

Moreover, after the very convincing argument advanced by the Colonial Secretary in favour of his proposal, we fail to see why he has not included in the exemption Indians who were granted licenses to trade last year without any conditions, although they were not trading before the war. He has based his powerful plea on the strength of the past acts of the British Government. The same argument would apply, only more forcibly, to the case of the traders we have just referred to, and on whose behalf the British Indian Association at Johannesburg has been making very laudable efforts. In the case of the traders who received licenses last year, it is the act of the present Government which is now being over-ridden if these men are to go to Locations. Mr. Chamberlain has assured us that the note of a British officer is as good as a bank-note. Well, the licenses granted to these traders are notes singned by British officers. We have seen many, and we do not notice any conditions whatsoever endorsed thereon. Why should they, then be treated diffierently from any other licenses? These are considerations which ought to have weighed with the Government. We have said before that Govenment is afraid to do justice and seeing that the proposed amendment has raised a hue and cry at Boksburg and Barberton, the Government probably thinks that it had better not risk its popularity for the sake of doing an act of simple justice and equity to the British Indians. Such are not the traditions of Governments owning the British flag, and we would still hope that the poor traders who are under notice to remove to Locations will have their licenses to trade outside the Locations renewed.

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250. BRITISH INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL

Events happening in the Transvaal are so stirring that they must continue to occupy our attention for some time to come to the exclusion of many other matters to which we should like to devote some of our space. The debate in the Legislative Council that took place on the 22nd instant was most interesting and instructive. We have often had occasion to complain of the attitude of the Transvaal Government regarding the position of Indians. We therefore, hasten to offer our thanks for the bold stand it has taken up on the motion of the Colonial Secretary. It would have been surprising if it had done otherwise. All the same, the position of the British Indians has, of late, become so very uncertain that we were not sure that the Government would not again vacillate and yield to the extreme demand of interested traders and withdraw the motion. That it has ultimately consented to accept the amendment proposed by Sir George Farrar does not, in our opinion, detract in any way from the attitude it has taken up in this matter. Both the Colonial Secretary and the Attorney-General made it perfectly plain that, in accepting Sir George Farrar's proposal, they did not wish to abandon the intention of respecting the licenses of all those Indians who traded before the war in the Transvaal, whether with or without licenses. Sir Richard Solomon made a very eloquent defence of the position and did not mince matters. The learned gentleman said:

> If they did not amend the resolution, honourable members would be doing and injustice to a large class of persons. Honourable members seemed to be surprised at the attitude taken up by the Imperial Government, but when they remembered the responsibilities which His Majesty's Government had in regard to the Indian Empire; when they remembered the millions of people who inhabited that Empire and their loyalty to the throne, they quite understood the necessity of holding the scales evenly between man and man. That was how Great Britian relied on the loyalty of the millions of people who comprised the Empire because the people had confidence in the administration of justice in the Empire.

Of the non-official members, Mr. Hosken took up a very sympathetic position and pointed out to the House that, after all, the agitation against the Indians was confined to the traders; that the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce did not identify itself with it, and that

the presence of the Indian trader was by no means a disadvantage."The attitude." proceeded Mr. Hosken, "taken up there (by the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce) was that the very fact that people traded with the Indians was a proof of demand for them, and if there were a pronounced objection to them, they would be boycotted and their trading would be rendered impossible".

The opposition was led by Mr. Loveday and Mr. Bourke. Mr. Loveday we can quite understand. He had not a word to say during the old regime in favour of the Indians. To him the Indian is an unmitigated curse, but we confess we were very disappointed to read Mr. Bourke's remarks. We have always understood him to be a very generous-minded citizen of the Transvaal and one capable of taking an unbiassed view of any case that may come up before him for decision. In his anxiety, however, to further the intersts of the white trader, he has, in our humble opinion, been carried away by prejudice, for it is difficult to account otherwise for his weak argument. He could not see why traders who were granted full protection by the British Government before the war and encouraged by its representatives to defy the Transvaal law and carry on their trade should now also continue to receive the same protection from the same Government, although it is in a better position to do so. He ingenuously admitted that the opposition against the Indians proceeded not from the Boers but from British traders, and he now seeks protection of the British traders from Indian competitors even though the British Government should be called upon to compromise itself by taking away the vested rights of British Indians. Mr. Bourke, as a merchant of very long standing and as a businessman, should have known better than repeat the platitude that the Indian trader, if unchecked, would drivethe European trader away, forgetting that when he was unchecked before, he did not succeed in doing so and that in Pretoria the Indian trade compared to the Euopean trade is, after all, very small.

We may add that, even if the fear were justified, it has no bearing on the present question, because the Legislative Council had under discussion the matter only of old licenses. Sir George Farrar suggested a middle way between the Colonial Secretary's amendment and Mr. Bourke's amendment. The result is that Commission is to be appointed to investigate the cases of "those Asiatics trading here before the war without licenses, provisional licenses being issued meanwhile to the Asiatic store-keepers, and the Government would intro-

duce legislation embodying the principles of the Cape Immigration Act".

We welcome the appointment of the Commission, for we have always felt that there is very great misunderstanding as to the number of existing Indian licenses and that the members of the White League and other bodies have exaggerated the effect of Indian trade. The Commission, therefore, will afford the opportunity of clearing up the mist, and everyone will know definitely the position of Indian trade in the Colony. The Indians have always asked for daylight to be shed upon their doing, and we look forward with every confidence to the result of the Commission. And if our expectations are realised, the sober-minded Colonists in the Transvaal could have no excuse for continuing the anti-Indian agitation which can do no good to either party, and which unncessarily embitters the feeling between two communities who ought to be able to live side by side in peace.

Indian Opinion, 31-12-1903

251. COLOURED RAILWAY TRAVELLERS IN THE TRANSVAAL

The same day that Mr. Duncan's amendment of the Bazaar Notice came up before the Legislative Council, Mr. H. Solomon moved his resolution about Coloured railway travellers; and although his remarks were mostly devoted to Native passengers, they are instructive, shewing how easy it is, by using the term "Native" and "Coloured Person" synonymously, to drag down the British Indians. The honourable member's resolution, too, was so vague and contradictory that Sir Richard had no difficulty in pulling Mr. solomon up. The latter had to eat his own words and to say in reply to Sir Richard's remark that, if the honourable member did not want Coloured people to travel first class, he should not inflict them on the second-class passengers either, that he never meant to say anything of the kind and that he contemplated separate accommodation of the same class for Coloured people.

We venture to agree with Sir Richard that the resolution was ill timed and calculated to give rise to unnecessary bitterness and ill-feeling. If the white travellers on the railways would not have either Natives or Asiatics as fellow-passengers, we think that it is prudent to avoid friction, and place separate compartments at the disposal of Coloured people, so that there should then be no grumbling if any

white person not finding room in other compartments and knowing that there are Coloured people in some other compartments, chose to take advantage of accommodation offered there, he should have no cause for complaint.

The matter is clearly one of railway management rather than of legislative enactment. With all deference to Mr. Solomon, we consider that he hardly consulted the dignity of the House in bringing forward before it the resolution that he did. It savours more of pandering to the popular prejudice than of an earnest desire to remedy a defect or to bring prominently to the notice of the Government a matter of public importance. If therefore, he found in Dr. Turner an opponent going beyond the scope of the resolution, it was he himself who was to blame. The debate has, however, done indirect good in that it has shown that the Coloured community has in Sir Richard Solomon a friend and sympathiser who is ready to see that justice is done between man and man and who would not allow himself to be carried away by popular sentiment, no matter how strong it may be, when it is in conflict with the elements of justice.

Indian Opinion, 31-12-1903

252. A NOTE ON ETERNAL BLISS

[*1903 ? 1904*][1]

The Missionaries have hastily interpreted the great Hindu belief in ETERNAL BLISS to a belief in NOTHINGNESS. They say "according to the Hindu belief, the greatest thing is to vanish into nothing¾annihilation". This presentment has created a wide gulf between the Christian and the Hindu faiths, to the detriment of both.

The whole confusion arises from a want of agreement as to the meaning of the Sanskrit term[2] which is translated as "nothingness". The word means what it popularly conveys only on the assumption that what we now are is everything, in which case the Hindu philosopher truly says, 'Nothing is to me everything, for what you call everything is demonstrably evanescent.' (Will not the body and the

[1] The original note was found in the collection of Mr. James Stuart, Resident Magistrate of Durban, along with Gandhiji's "Letter to J. Stuart" of January 19, 1905. Now in the possession of Miss Kellie Campbell, it is undated and bears the following note by Mr Stuart. "This is by M.K. Gandhi—given me about 1903-04 in Durban". During this period Gandhiji had much dicussion with Theosophists on Hinduism. *cf. Autobiography*, Part IV, Chapter IV.

[2] Presumably *kaivalya* (कैवल्य)

senses perish and so everything else we see or feel?) Nothingness, thus understood, conveys the same idea as the final salvation, as being one with the Divine. This Divine is the great "Unknowable" of Spencer, but it is only relative unknowable; that is to say, not capable of being known by means of the ordinary instruments of knowledge described by Spencer. If, however, you admit the existence of a higher instrument than the mere common intellect, which as a matter of fact both the Hindus and the Christians do, "It" may not be unknowable.

The Hindus say "It" is knowable, the Christians say likewise. "Those that have known Me have known the Father." But again, what is the meaning of the last quotation? Probably there is no difference in the two presentments, save in the mere wording. 'We shall know each other better when the mists have rolled away." In the meanwhile, may it not help us to reach that state earlier, if we try to find out the points of contact rather than those of difference?

Courtesy: Miss Kellie Campbell, Durban.

253. LAST YEAR'S STOCK-TAKING

THE TRANSVAAL

Last year at this time the British Indians in the Transvaal were full of hope because Mr. Chamberlain had been assuring them that at any rate those who were settled in the country, and those who might be allowed under a general Immigration Law to enter the Colony were entitled to fair and honourable treatment[1]. The position was at the time very uncertain. Notices were issued to the traders that their licenses would not be renewed. Law 3 of 1885 was still upon the Statute-book of the Colony. In some parts of the Transvaal even foot-path regulations were being enforced. The fate of the inhabitants of the Johannesburg Indian location was trembling in the balance. Dr. Porter's fanciful report about the sanitary condition of the Location hung over them like the sword of Damocles. The White Leagues throughout the Colony were holding meetings, calling on the Government to impose further restrictions on the British Indians who were already settled in the Colony. The working of the Asiatic Offices was causing a great deal of mischief. Corruption was rampant in the Johannesburg Office and refugees were unable to enter the Colony unlesss they paid through the nose for getting permits which on many an occasion were

[1] *Vide* "Indian Position in New Colonies", 16-3-1903

worthless documents. Mr. Chamberlain's emphatic statement to the deputation, which waited on him at Pretoria was the only ray of light piercing this thick cloud of difficulties, although unfortunately it has not been found to be strong enough to dispel it. Later in the year, that is in the month of April last, the Government, in reply to the Indians' request for a clear definition of their status and an assurance regarding the existing licenses, sprang upon the community Notice 356, known as the Bazaar Notice, and appointed Captain Hamilton Fowle the Registrar of Asiatics for the collection of the £ 3 registration tax in terms of Law 3 of 1885, which had remained dormant for many years past. The British Indian Association of Johannesburg appro-ached Lord Milner,[1] but beyond lip sympathy, it was unable to get anything more from His Lordship. He strongly advised the community not to resist payment of the £ 3 tax, and promised to go carefully into the question of licenses and other matters that were brought to his notice. His Excellency also made the important statement that the Bazaar Notice was only a temporary measure, and that, in the near future, probably during the then session of the Legislative Council, a Bill would be introduced replacing Law 3 of 1885.

Today the situation is not very much better, although in some respects there is decidedly progress to be reported. The Bazaar Notice is still in force, and it has taxed all the resources of the British Indian Association to prevent it from causing utter ruin. In practical working, it has been found to be full of ambiguity. Licensing Officers have not always been able to give definite rulings on its interpretation, with the result that in order to protect vested interests, Herculean efforts had to be made by the communtiy. And yet today no one can say whether all the existing licenses are to be respected or not. The Transvaal Colonial Secretary's attempt to amend the Notice, so as to protect the interests of those Indians who traded without licenses before the war owing to the British intervention, has ended in a compromise. The Government has accepted Sir George Farrar's amendment for appointment of a commission to investigate the claims of such British Indians and requesting the Government to bring in legislation along the lines of the Cape Immigratiton Act. It is impossible to say at this stage what the effect of this amendment will be. We have accepted it as an earnest of good intentions, and as such we have put upon it the only construction that is possible and that is consistent with the declarations

[1] *Vide* "Notes" 16-5-1903

even of the present Government, namely, that all those who were trading before the war will have licenses granted to them to trade outside Bazaars, and that passing of an Act similar to the Cape Act would mean a total repeal of the existing anti-Asiatic laws, and not an addition to the burden the Indians are already labouring under. One thing should be quite clear, namely, that under the British Government the positon ought not to be made more intolerable than it was during the old regime, if only because one of the ostensible reasons given for the war was the disablities of the British Indians in the Transvaal. There have been two decisive reforms during the year. The Permit Department has been re-transferred to the Chief Secretary for Permits and, from the reports we have received, we feel thankful to say that the corruption has entirely disappeared and *bona-fide* refugees are able to get there permits without unreasonable delay. The Asiatic Offices still remain for what reason we know not, but, in Mr. Chamney, the "Protector of Asiatics" the Indian community has, we understand, a friend and sympathiser.

The Johannesburg Location is lost to the Indians. It would not be a very serious calamity, if it were not for the fact that it was in Johannesburg alone that the Indians had been given the right to hold ninety-nine years' leases within that small area, and that the inhabitants are not only now uncertain as to whether they will have the same facilities given to them, but they are also uncertain as to where the new site will be appointed. In any case, it will never be so advantageous as the present one.

Such in brief is the state of affairs in the Transvaal. The threatened introduction of Asiatic indentured labour makes confusion worse confounded, and the presence of so many indentured men will be used as an excuse for tightening the cord that binds the Indians. Lord Milner, however, is the one strong man in South Africa. when, rightly or wrongly, he was convinced that war was necessary, he went through it against all the opposition. We will therefore, continue to hope that His Excellencey will be able to fulfil the promises he has already made and clearly lay down the principles of Government policy regarding British Indians. The prejudice against the Indians on the part of the interested traders is undoubtedly strong, but that, in our opinion, is all the greater reason why His Excellency should remain firm and protect the weak against the opposition of the strong.

ORANGE RIVER COLONY

Turning to the Colony, there is nothing but despondency. The present Government has jealously guarded the anti-Indian legislation of the late Republic and prevented any encroachment upon it. As these columns have shown, it has even gone further and passed legislation in anticipation. It has given extraordinary powers to Municipalities for the control of all Coloured people. Mr. Chamberlain promised to look into the matter carefully and grant redress at an early date. Nothing, however, has come out of it, and in spite of nearly two years of British rule, the Orange River Colony remains closed against British Indians, no matter what position they may occupy. Not even those who were trading in that Colony some years ago are allowed to return: indeed, we hear that only last month some Indians, who having undergone all the preliminaries were living in the Colony as servants, were arrested and fined because they appeard to be doing some other service than that for which they were first engaged. Mr. Lyttelton[1] is credited with possessing the spirit of broad Imperialism. He is in a position where he has the power to put his Imperialism to the test. Will he rise to the occasion and open the Colony to British Indians? Not, of course, without restriction, for we have yielded the point that legislation of a general character regulating immigration might be passed in view of the colour prejudice existing in South Africa, but we do contend that anyone who passes the test imposed by an Immigration Act ought to be free to enter any British Colony irrespective of class, creed, or colour and engage in any enterprise he chooses.

NATAL

Coming nearer home, there is not much to say. The same words of encouragement which Mr. Chamberlain uttered, when meeting the British Indian deputation at Pretoria, were the words spoken by him when he met similar deputations in Durban and Pietermaritzburg. The Immigration Restriction Act has become more stringent. The educational clause has been amended so as to make it very difficult for anyone to pass the test if the immigration officer is so inclined. That, however, is not a matter of very great moment. It is the Dealers' Licenses Act which causes the most serious trouble. The activity shown by the Durban Town Council and several Local Boards in Natal gives good grounds for the fear that it may be enforced with harsh-

[1] Lyttelton succeeded Chamberlain as the Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1903.

ness. So long as the Supreme Court remains deprived of its jurisdiction over the decisions of the Town Councils sitting in appeal over those of their Licensing Officers, so long will the Act remain a potent cause of trouble. The Licensing Officer at Ladysmith has given notices to the Indians that unless they are prepared to observe the usual closing hours they will not have their licences renewed. We have more than once expressed the hope that the British Indian merchants in Ladysmith will be able to arrive at an understanding with the officer in this matter, for we hold that it is one of extreme delicacy, and one in which, if they commit any error of judgment, it will be very difficult to get redress.

Mr. Ellis Browns's proposal regarding Locations or Bazaars in Durban, though it appears to be as dead as Queen Anne, has left a bad taste in the mouth, and one never knows when an attempt may be made to revive it. It followed close upon the publication of the Transvaal Bazaar Notice, and as we then shewed, the prosposal was made by the worthy Mayor in indecent haste. Hardly had the ink become dry on the Minute Paper[1] when the news was received from the Transvaal that the Bazaar Notice was merely a temporary regulation, and that it was not intended to become part of the permanent laws of the Colony.

The question of Indian education is a seriuos matter in Natal, seeing that there are so may thousands of Indians living with their families and having children to bring up. No matter how willing the Government may be to give a fairly good education to the Indian, the closing of the publc schools of the Colony against Indian candidates has placed the Indian community at a very great disadvantage. The last three Indian girls who were receiving education in the Government school in Durban have passed out with credit to themselves, and now there is no chance of such education being received by their less fortunate sisters. All these three girls belong to typical Indian families, are very well brought up and, we understand, were very well liked by their school mistresses. They were always in the front rank, and bore a very high character for industry, honesty and gentleness. It is a sad reflection that other Indian girls who, if given the same facilities, would be able to repeat the performance, should have the opportunity taken away from them merely because of the colour of their skin.

Comparative freedom from unrest has enabled the Indian

[1] *Vide* "Words and Deeds", 4-6-1903

community in Natal to undertake educational reform. The Habibi Madressa[1] is an instance in point. It is a flourishing institution, and ably managed under the supervision of the Sufi Saheb. We can only wish that we had more institutions of the kind dotting the Colony. The Rev. Mr Smith, has just founded a training college for Indian teachers. Properly managed and well encouraged, it ought to be a centre of very great moral and educational influence in the Colony.

There are many other reforms that may well be undertaken by the Indian community: let us hope that last year's depression will give place to prosperity this year, and that some of our generous-minded Indian merchants will be able to carry out some of them.

CAPE COLONY

In the oldest Colony, there is not much to report upon. The Immigration Act came into force in January last. We understand that it is not being enforced with any special harshness. Some difficulties are inevitable in the working of an Act of that nature, but, on the whole, the authorities appear to be anxious to soften its harshness.

In East London, the Location Law and the Foot-path Law that were passed in anticipation at one time bade fair to create much irritation. We understand, however, that well-dressed British Indians are not molested while walking on the foot-path, even though they may not have taken out the exemption certificate. Satisfactory as this appears to be at present, such a bye-law is, in our opinion, a blot on the Municipality, and the sooner it is repealed, the better it will be for its credit. It is an anomaly that, in the Cape Colony, where anti-Indian legislation is the least irksome, such a law should ever have received the assent of His Majesty's Government. It, however, ought to serve as lesson to the British Indians, namely, that, under the British Government no community can thrive unless it is vigilant in looking after its own interests.

OURSELVES

In closing this brief review of the status of the British Indians in South Africa, we may be pardoned for making some reference to ourselves. *Indian Opinion* has been in existence hardly seven months but we venture to think that within that short period it has carved out for itself a position. Whatever influence it may have gained it has been our endeavour to use for the benefit of the community and the Em-

[1] Arabic word meaning school or college.

pire, to which it is our pride to belong. The programme that we have mapped out is an ambitious one. It has not been possible to carry it out in its entirety, nor did the authors of it ever expect that it would be realised all at once; it is rather the goal that we would reach with the least possible delay. One thing we have endeavoured to observe most scrupulously, namely, never to depart from the strictest facts and, in dealing with the difficult questions that have arisen during the year, we hope that we have used the utmost moderation possible under the circumstances. Our duty is very simple and plain. We want to serve the community, and in our own humble way to serve the Empire. We believe in the righteousness of the cause, which it in our privilege to espouse. We have an abiding faith in the mercy of the Almighty God, and we have firm faith in the British Constitution. That being so, we should fail in our duty if we wrote anything with a view to hurt. Facts we would always place before our readers whether they be palatable or not, and it is by placing them constantly before the public in their nakedness that the misunderstanding now existing between the two communities in South Africa can be removed. And if we can assist in hastening the removal to any extent whatsoever, we shall have been amply rewarded.

Indian Opinion, 7-1-1904

254. LABOUR PROBLEM IN THE TRANSVAAL

Sir George Farrar's motion,[1]

> that the attention of the Government be called to the report of the Transvaal Labour Commission,[2] and that the Government be requested to introduce a draft Ordinance providing for the importation of indentured, unskilled coloured labourers for the purpose of supplementing the supply of labour on the mines within the Witwatersrand area, under such restirctions as will ensure their employment as unskilled workmen only, and their return to their native country on the completion of their contracts; and that, in order to secure full consideration of the important issues involved, such draft Ordinance be published in English and Dutch for a reasonable time before being introduced into this Council,

has, after a very long debate, been carried by an overwhelming majority, twenty-two having voted in favour of and four namely, Messrs, Bourke, Loveday, Raitt, and Hull against it.

[1] In the Transvaal Legislative Council

[2] *Vide* "The Labour Commission Report", 3-12-1903, *supra.*

Sir George Farrar spoke for over three hours, Mr. Hill for four hours, but the speech of the occasion was probably Sir Richard Solomon's. The occasion was unique, and will be considered a landmark in the history of the Transvaal under the British regime, if not in the history of the whole of South Africa,. The speakers in support of the motion undoubtedly made out a strong case. All the same, in our opinion, the hands of the clock have been put back many years, and we do consider that Sir George Farrar and his supporters have not been able to look ahead. We can quite understand the attitude of men struggling for fat dividends in being unable to take an impartial view of the question involving a sacrifice of such dividends. Other men similarly placed would have taken probably the same view that the pro-Asiatics have done. The argument that the restrictions the Government would impose for the regulation of Chinese labour would be so stringent as to answer all the objections that have been raised by the anti-Asiatics is certainly flimsy. The gentlemen who argue thus take no note of the fact that the Chinaman is a human being, and that, no matter how stringent the regulations are made, he cannot but leave an impress on the whole community in South Africa. Of course, we do not hold with the anti-Asiatics that he is more immoral than other people, or that he is a despicable being. Our objection to the presence of such a large number of indentured Chinese or, for that matter, Indians is that it cannot but tell on the future of South Africa, and that for the worse from a white man's standpoint. If there is any forced immigration to South Africa, it should be undoubtedly that of the inhabitants of the British Isles, and of no other. It is futile to expect that, in time to come, things would so shape themselves that the white men will not mind doing manual work. The chances are that, after the Euopeans in South Africa or the Transvaal are once used to consider manual work to be below their dignity and are accustomed to having Coloured people for such work, they will decline at a later stage to do otherwise and take up such work themselves. Sir Percy[1] wanted his hearers to contemplate the result of declining to have any indentured Coloured labour in the Transvaal, and pictured what he thought was a very gloomy outlook, namely that most of the enterprise that have been undertaken by the different Municipalities would have to be given up. We must frankly confess that, if the people in the Transvaal would but take care of the future, hard as it may seem at first, we see

[1] Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, member of the Transvaal Legislative Council.

nothing extraordinary in such enterprises being given the go-by. It is quite true that many exaggerated ideas formed at the time of the British occupation might have to be rearranged. But it will all have been for the best. We regret that, throughout the long and weary debate, there was not a single speaker to raise his voice against the latter clause of Sir George's motion as to restrictions. It is a disappointing fact that no one in that brilliant assembly thought it worth while to consider it from the Chinese standpoint. Everyone agreed that the Chinaman was industrious, intelligent and capable, and yet no one considered it incongruous that he should be treated merely as a slave, that he should be forcibly deprived of the use of his intelligence and capability except in so far as they may be necessary for the development of the mines. Sir Richard[1] thought that, if a Kaffir was made to work by Government intervention or by taxation, it would be compulsory labour, and it could not be tolerated by a British Government, Is it not very much the same to take what you can out of a man, to restrict his movements, and pack him away as soon as he has served his indenture? However, it is no use advancing any arguments at this stage. The die is cast. We shall soon have the draft Ordinance, and probably within a few months thousands of indentured men. Time will shew the effect of the important step that the Transvaal is about to take.

Indian Opinion, 7-1-1904

255. INDENTURED LABOUR DRAFT ORDINANCE IN THE TRANSVAAL

We reproduce in another column the full text of the Ordinance to regulate the introduction of non-European unskilled labour into the Transvaal. The Government has quickly responded to Sir George Farrar's motion. The Ordinance is cleverly drawn up, but it is impossible to congratulate the Government on the performance. That a Christian British Government can put forward the proposals embodied in the draft Ordiance in this enlightened century is a sad commentary on the state of modern civilization. The draft Ordinance is drastic enough in all conscience, and will turn thousands of Chinamen, or any other Asiatic races that might be introduced thereunder into so many bests of burden. Their movements will be restricted within a mile radius of their working places, which they may not leave without a

[1] Sir Richard Solomon.

duly signed pass, and then for no longer a time than forty-eight hours. They are not to use their skill, if they have any, and at the end of three or five years, as the case may be, they are to be sent away from the Transvaal. The way the compulsory repatriation is to be brought about is very simple and very effective, but is equally inhuman. The provision which is to regulate compulsory repatriation lays down that, if any of the indentured labourers refuse to go back, they are to undergo practically perpetual imprisonment, which can only be ended on their consenting to be transported from the country. So the days of refined slavery are to be revived in the Transvaal under pressure of circumstances. The mines must be worked at any cost ¾ even at the sacrifice of the most dearly treasured principles of British policy. There are people in England who busy themselves with the conerns of other nations, read lectures to the South Americans and others who, in their opinion, fall from Christ's teaching. We wonder what they will have to say with respect to the draft Ordinance which is to be promulgated in the Transvaal in the name of the King of Great Britain and Ireland and Emperor of India.

To the Indians, the draft Ordinance is of more than academic interest, for, if only the Indian Government would listen to the overtures of the Transvaal, the Government of the Colony would gladly give the people of India the benefit of the precious Ordinance.

Clause 29 enacts that

> nothing in this Ordinance contained shall apply to the introduction into this Colony by the Lieutenant-Governor of British Indians to be employed on the construction of railways sanctioned by the Governor or on other public works; provided always that such introduction shall be subject to such regulations as the Legislative Council may approve of, and provided further that the provisions of this Ordinance in respect of the return of labourers to the country of origin shall *mutatis mutandis* apply to such British Indians.

We hope that the leaders of opinion in India and the friends of Indians in England will bear this in mind. It shews that the Transvaal Government does not consider that the Government of India will quietly swallow the provisions of the draft Ordinace, but it unfortunately shews that they do expect the Indian Government to san-ction an early introduction of indentured Indian labour under condi-tion of compulsory repatriation. We have more than once expressed our opinion that we would not exchange the freedom of the free Indians for the virtual slavery of indentured Indians, and it should be borne in

mind that the Transvaal Government by its action has not yet shown any desire to do the most 'ele-mentary justice" (Mr. Duncan's phrase) to the Indians. Like the drowning man, the people of the Transvaal are ready to catch at any straw that would save the Colony from bankruptcy, and they are ready to descend to any level if only the material development of the mines, and therefore the material prosperity of the Colony, could be secured. We can only hope that the Chinaman or the Chinese Government would, by declining to have anything to do with the draft Ordinance, and the Indian Government, by adhering to the original position taken up by it, refuse to help the people of the Transvaal in spite of them-selves, and save the community from (we say with all deference) what is crime against humanity.

Indian Opinion, 14-1-1904

256. A NEW YEAR'S GIFT

When the Colonial Secretary of the Transvaal made his very sympathetic speech at the time of introducing his proposed amendment to the Bazaar Notice, we saw in it a hopeful sign for the future of the Indian traders and concluded that the acceptance of Sir George Farrar's proposal was a very good solution. It will be remembered that Sir George's proposal was to appoint a Commission to enquire into the vested interests of Indian traders, and that the licences of all who were *bona-fide* traders beefore the war were to be provisionally renewed. What has happened however, is that the Government has instructed the Receivers of Revenue in the different parts of the Transvaal to issue provisional licences only to those who can satisfy them that they were trading before the war, with or without licences. The Colonial Secretary's original amendment was that those who could so satisfy the Receivers of Revenue were to have unconditional licences issued to them, and, although the Colonial Secretary in his speech valiantly defended his position and accepted Sir George's proposal because it carried out the spirit of his amendment, the instructions we have referred to are a clear departure from the policy. Proof has still to be submitted to the Receivers of Revenue as if the original amendment had been carried with this difference that, whereas under the amendment unconditional licences would have been granted, under the instructions only provisional licences are to be ganted. Thus, there is a wide diffrence between promise and performance. Hopes were raised by the Colonial Secretary only to be

dashed to pieces when it came to a matter of translating his words into deeds. The Indians have already once tendered proof of former trade ¾ for the practice was that no one was to be granted a licence to trade without recommendations from Supervisors of Asiatics. The Indians cried aloud against the requirements but to no avail. All sorts of affidavits had to be taken to the Supervisors who went thoroughly into the claims of applicants for licences, and they recommended the granting of licences only to those who, in their opinion, had traded before the war or were otherwise fit to receive them. Now all these recommendations made by officers appointed by the Government are to be treated as worthless. Further proof is to be submitted to the Receivers of Revenue and then as if the torture was not complete, every Indian licence-holder will have to be dragged before a Commission, will have again to go through the ordeal of proof, and then Heaven only knows whether his licence will be rehabilitated.[1] The result of the decision of the Government is that the Indian community will have to spend hundreds of pounds on affidavits and other documents before provisional licences are issued. Those who cannot prove that they traded before the war will have to close down their shops: it does not matter that they received unconditional licences last year or the year before on the recommendation of Asiatic Officers.

Such is the pass at which they have arrived in the Transvaal. The reason for this miserable state of affairs is not far to seek. Mr. Bourke has made it clear that the European traders would have none of the Indian competition, and Mr. Bourke represents a moneyed class, and he is also the author of the proposal for withdrawing the war contribution of £ 30,000,000, which was given out to the world with such a flourish of trumpets during Mr. Chamberlain's visit. The government, carried away like ordinary people by the boom that set in on the declaration of peace, have incurred heavy liabilities and undertaken work which they cannot carry on without funds. They, therefore, want to conciliate all who are likely to have a voice in these matters, even if such conciliation involves a flagrant breach of promises and consequent ruin to inoffensive citizens, and cancellation of documents given by their own officials. They are too weak and too much afraid to do justice.

What, then, is to be the attitude of the British Indians amid such

[1] 'Revalidated' is evindently meant.

a crisis? To our mind, it is quite clear what it should be. The Indians must keep themselves absolutely cool and remain patient, still relying upon justice being ultimately done. They must make respectful representations to the Government, but they should also firmly decline to give proof to the Receivers of Revenue, offering to do so before the Commission that is to be appointed. It may be that prosecutions will take place for carrying on trade without licences, and if summons are issued and penalties imposed for carrying on trade without a licence, The persons prosecuted should rise to the occasion, decline to pay any fines and go to gaol. There is no disgrace in going to gaol for such a cause: the disgrace is generally attached to the offence which renders one liable to imprisonment, and not to the imprisonment itself. In this instance, the so-called offence would be no offence at all, and it would be a most dignified course to adopt. We are aware that the Indian community in the Transvaal has hitherto deliberately refrained from standing on its legal position, hoping that in the end the Government would do it justice; but, if the Government would abdicate its function and decline to protect the Indian community, it must invoke the aid of the Supreme Court, and test the question whether residence includes trade. The Law 3 of 1885 requires Indians to reside in Locations; it says nothing as to trade. The Boer High Court, by a majority, decided that for Indians residence included trade. We hardly think that such a decision would be binding on the Supreme Court. Anyhow, the point is important and worth considering, and though we still hope that recourse to law-suit will be unnecessary, if the Government insists on withholding protection to all the existing licence-holders, we see no way out of an appeal to the highest tribunal of justice in the Colony.

Indian Opinion,14-1-1904

257. THE FOOT-PATH BYE-LAW

On the 7th instant, Mr. Loveday moved at a meeting of the Town Council of Pretoria that,

> in view of the instructions issued to the police not to interfere with coloured persons using the foot- or side-walks, the Council take immediate steps to remedy this abuse of the rights, customs, and privileges of the citizens of Pretoria.

In his speech introducing his motion, he has made some extraordinary statements and, although his remarks are mostly applicable to the Kaffirs, it is evident that in the sweeping assertions he

includes all Coloured persons. To him, evidently, the Kaffir is an abomination and, no matter how much advanced he may be in education, he is not fit even to walk on the foot-paths. However, we hold no brief for the Kaffir: at present we are concerned with the very strange arguments Mr. Loveday has advanced in defence of his proposal. He thinks that, if the Kaffir¾and, for that matter, any Coloured person¾is allowed to walk on the foot-paths, he will get the municipal franchise, the political franchise, and sit side by side with him in the Legislative Council. May we remind the honourable gentleman that it was only the other day that the same Government, which is said to have instructed the police not to interfere with well-dressed Natives, walking on the foot-paths, agreed to deprive all Coloured persons of the municipal franchise? In his endeavour to prove his points. Mr. Love-day informed his hearers that the Indians were not allowed to travel in the same railway carriage as Europeans on the railways in India. We should very much like to know from where he got his information. If he were a mere novice in municipal life who made such a statement, it might be held excusable, but for a gentleman of Mr. Loveday's stan-ding to make assertions without first verifying them, assertions more-over which might create a great deal of mischief, it is nothing short of a scandal. It is known to anybody who has lived in India for any len-gth of time that there are no such regulations, as alleged by Mr. Love-day, and that it is a most frequent occurrence to see Europeans and Indians travelling in the same compartments, whether first-class or sec-ond-class, on the great railways in India. However strong Mr. Love-day's views may be on the Native question, we have always thought that he held them honestly and that he would not lend his nave to any statements without first making himself certain as to his facts; but, just as he has in this instance been the means of conveying a false impres-sion about Indian railway travelling to his brother-Councillors, so also has he done an injustice to the Government by basing his motion on a passing conversation with a policeman in the street. It was due to the Council as also to the Government that he should have entered into correspondence with the Police Commis-sioner and verified the information imparted to him before bringing the motion he did at the Council meeting.

Indian Opinion, 14-1-1904

258. A REQUEST TO MR. BOURKE

The honourable member for Pretoria, in the Legislative Council of the Transvaal, has put down on the notice paper a question he will ask Sir Richard Solomon on the opening of the Legislative Council, as to the regulations in force in India for the accommo-dation of European and Indian passengers on the railways. We may take leave to inform the honourable member in advance that no distinction is made between passengers, whether European or Indian, and that Indians have just the same right as Europeans travelling any class. There are, however, on some of the railways, owing to the enormous third-class Indian traffic, theird-class compartments reserved only for Europeans and Eurasians. If we may venture to make a suggestion to the honourable member, he might add to this question and ask generally as to the status of Indians in India itself. He will then be informed that, in the eye of the law, there are no distinctions of class, colour, or creed, that in the Imperial Legislative Council Indian members sit side by side with the European, that there are Indian Judges in all the High Courts of India, that on the municipal corporations the majority of Councillors are Indians, that the President of the Municipal Corporation of Bombay for last year was an Indian, that an Indian is at present Acting Chief Justice of the High Court of Judicature at Madras, and that there is complete freedom of trade and residence for all.

Indian Opinion, 14-1-1904

259. MR. GLADSTONE'S BIOGRAPHY

A biography in three volumes of Mr Gladstone, one of the greatest men of this age, written by Mr. Morley,[1] his principal follower, has come out recently. Since biographical writing is rare in India, people there have not unfortunately been able to appreciate its value. People in the West are more advanced in this matter. Many kinds of lessons are to be found in the lives of great men, and they make a profound impression on the community.

The honourable Mr. Chandavarkar spoke on the type of man that Mr. Gladstone was, before a distinguished audience in the Prarthana Samaj Hall in Bombay on November 22, 1903, He began by explaining who really are great men, what qualities they must possess and what kind of man Mr. Gladstone was. After brief, prefatory remarks on the reason why all the peoples of Europe regarded Mr. Gladstone a great man, Mr. Chandavarkar paid a tribute to him. In doing so, he cited the example of the philosopher, Emerson, and said that only he could be called great who possessed eminently such qua-lities as humility, gentleness, equanimity, kindness, respect even for those who held different views, however much mistaken these might be, a capacity for understanding, far-sightedness, unshakable devo-tion to eternal truth and determination to do one's job. Such a man was Emerson. Mr. Chandavarkar said that greatness could not be attained through fatuous talk, but by cultivating reticence.

It appears from Mr. Morley's biography that Gladstone was no less great as a statesman and politician than Emerson was as a philosopher. Because of this greatness, not only England but also many other nations revered him. No one better understood his duties and abilities than Mr. Gladstone. The best evidence of this is his diary, which he maintained regularly and carefully. He passionately desired national progress, and so deeply did he love learning that he was respected both by the Government and the people, and he became much beloved of them. He was a man of remarkable intelligence and exemplary statesmanship. He excelled in carrying to completion whatever job he took in hand. He was never disheartened by failure and he stuck to truth always. Success did not him; in fact when the

[1] Later Viscount John Morley (1838-1923), Liberal statesman and author, Secretary for Ireland 1886 and 1892-95 and Secretary of State for India, 1905-10

people of the world became pleased with him and the Press sang his praises, he thought only of his shortcomings. Although he failed in his endeavours to get self-rule for Ireland, [this] in the interests of England's prosperity, even Englishmen and his opponents could not say that his labours had not been in the cause of the people's weal. He never got puffed up with pride, even when he had won the esteem of the Government and the people. In fact he prized the people's regard more than that of the Government. All this was due simply to his high sense of duty and his courteous nature. Mr. Chandavarkar read out examples of such virtues in Mr. Gladstone from Mr Morley's biography. Among them, the great man's gentleness and humility, devotion to family, the state and the people, loyalty to the Queen, patriotism, and faith in the moral law appeared most worthy of emulation. It is a matter of regret that Gujaratis rarely have the benefit of such lectures. Mr. Chandavarkar's glowing tribute to Mr. Gladstone in the Prarthana Samaj Hall is like a wreath placed on the grave of that great man.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-1-1904

260. TELEGRAM TO GOVERNOR'S SECRETARY

JOHANNESBURG,
January,16, 1904

TO
PRIVATE SECRETARY
HIS EXCELLENCY LORD MILNER

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION JUST INFORMED BY GOVERNMENT LICENCES UNLESS HOLDERS TRADED BEFORE WAR WILL NOT BE RENEWED EVEN IN OLD LOCATIONS IN TOWNS WHERE NEW ONES HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED. THIS ALTOGETHER BEYOND SCOPE BAZAAR NOTICE AND NOT WARRANTED BY ANTI-INDIAN AGITATION. NEW LOCATIONS ARE ALL WILDERNESSES. TRADERS EVEN IF THEY CAN GO THERE HAVE TO BUILD AT THEIR OWN EXPENSE WHICH MANY CANNOT AFFORD. MOREOVER NEW BUILDINGS CANNOT ALL BE ERECTED AT ONCE. ASSOCIATION HUMBLY REQUEST HIS EXCELLLENCY'S INTERVENTION AND TRUST EXISTING LICENCES WILL BE RENEWED PENDING REPORT

COMMISSION. EARLY REPLY SOLICITED AS TRADERS FEAR PROSECUTION.

BIAS[1]

Pretoria Archives: L.G. 92: No. 97/1/2 Asiatics 1902-1906.

261. POSITION IN THE TRANSVAAL[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
January 18, 1904

STATEMENT SHOWING THE BRITISH INDIAN POSITION IN THE TRANSVAAL UP TO DATE

The Government has taken up an untenable and hostile attitude as will appear from the following.

Mr. Duncan, the Colonial Secretary, brought in a motion before the Legislative Council to the effect that the licenses of all those who traded before war, although without licenses, should be renewed. Sir George Farrar brought in an amendment that such licenses should be provisionally renewed and that a Commission should be appointed to investigate the claims of such people. One would have thought that, under the circumstaces, all the existing Indian licenses would be provisionally renewed, but the Government has narrowed the scope of the amendment and has issued instructions to the Licensing Officers that they are to take evidence as to previous trade and, if satisfied, issue provisional licenses. Others are not to have their licenses renewed except for Bazaars. Now, this means a commission within a Commission. If the Commission to be appointed is to take evidence, why should the poor traders be put to the expense of bringing any proof before the Receivers of Revenue? Especially when their licences are to be renewed only provisonally? Morever, these men were forced to submit proof to the Supervisors of Asiatics before their licenses were granted after declaration of peace. The Supervisors submitted them to a rigid examination, satisfied themselves that they were *bona-fide* refugees and were engaged in trade before, and it was then that they issued recommendations, on the strength of which licenses were issued by the Licensing Officers. Now, all that proof, tendered to the Govern-

[1] Telegraphic address of the British Indian Association.

[2] This was sent to Dadabhai Naoroji who forwarded a copy of it to the Secretary of State for India. It was also published in *India,* 19-2-1904.

ment Officers in spite of the protest of the Indian community, is to be treated as null and void. Their decisions are to be of no effect and the Indians have to undergo an examination again which would, in its turn, be totally inconclusive. Such uncertainty of possession has never before been known under the British flag.

Nor is this all. Lord Milner has said that licenses were granted temporarily after war. This statement has been controverted by the British Indians. Most substantial proof has been placed before the Government in support of the contention that the licenses were mostly granted unconditionally and for a full term last year. Cases of five or six men have been placed before the Government in which the men have got five years' leases of the premises for which they were granted, in the early part of last year, licenses terminating on the 31st December last, there being no conditions endorsed thereon. One of the men was granted a license because he was engaged in trade somewhere else in the Transvaal before war and was instrumental in saving a soldier's life during the war for which he received a very good certificate. In another case, the man, being too afraid to take over responsibility, submitted his lease to the Magistrate which the Magistrate initialled before granting the license, thus clothing him with full legal protection. And yet both these men, and many others more or less similarly situated, have to remove to wildernesses, miscalled Bazaars, because they were not trading in the respective places immediately before war.

This is far more than Mr. Kruger ever attempted. The humour and the pain of the situation will also become apparent when I mention that one of those men, in 1899, was threatened that he should have to remove to Bazaars. He approached the British Ágent who was good enogh to telegraph to him asking him to disregard the notice and remain where he was. The same British Government which was then ready to protect its subjects is now paralysed and afraid to do so when, as it would appear to outsiders, it is in a better position to grant such protection. Before war, travelling trader's licenses were granted to the Indians as a matter of right. Receivers of Revenue now decline to do so.

Too much stress, moreover, cannot be laid upon the fact that the Bazaars are not Bazaars at all. Even the Government has admitted that, in some cases the sites selected by them are not suitable for trade. The excuse, however, for fixing such sites is that the agitation is too great.

In other words, the Government is unable to do justice because the opponents of the Indians are too powerful and the Government expects that, at some future date, these places, when they grow, will afford facility for trade in what are at present wildernesses.

Again, the terms under which the Stands are to be granted in the so-called Bazaars are that the Stand-holders should build on them at their own expense. It is not every trader who can spend £ 400 or £ 500 on building suitable premises. and the Stands are not to be granted to any but those who want to reside or trade in them.

Look at the situation, therefore, how you will, there is nothing but ruin staring the Indian traders in the face.

At Middelburg and Pietersburg, there were Bazaars or Locations established by the old Government. These are fairly favourably situated. The present Government, however, has fixed Bazaars in these places further away from centres of business. Now, in these old Bazaars, there are several Indians trading. There is absolutely no white competition there. No white traders will open businesses. And yet, painful to relate, the Government has decided that Indians trading in these Bazaars must go to new sites, thus going beyond even what the inter-ested European traders would like the Government to do.

But Lord Milner's despatch to Mr. Chamberlain has proclaimed to the world that in three essential particulars the present Government is relaxing restrictions, namely, that Bazaars are being selected in quarters which would be accessible to all communities and not far from centres of business; that licenses held by *bona-fide* refugees to trade outside Bazaars will be renewed for the respective places, and that Indians of better standing would be free from all legal disabilities.

The above unvarnished statement of facts shews clearly, with the greatest deference to His Excellency, that not one of the statements made above can be borne out by facts; for Bazaars have been selected in inaccessible quarters, licenses held by *bona-fide* refugees are not being renewed, and, no matter what standing an Indian may possess, he is liable to all the disabilities. The only exemption so far promised is as to residence and it is surrounded by such insulting regulations that hardly any self-respecting Indian has applied for exemption. What is more, residential exemption is the last thing needed by the Indians, for what is that exemption worth if it does not carry with it the right to trade? The order has been inverted under the present regime. Formerly, Mr. Chamberlain, recognising that trade was an essentisal

part, asked the Boer Government to leave undisturbed the Indian trade in towns but said that he would have no objection to Mr. Kruger setting apart portions, for sanitary purposes, for separate residence of British Indians.

If the Indians, on whose behalf the war was partly undertaken, cannot better their position, they have a right to claim that the position they enjoyed before war might at least be maintained.

Colonial Office Records: C.O. 291 Volume 75, India Office.

262. ORANGE RIVER COLONY

As a rule, the Government Gazette of any country is very dry reading, and it is only those who want to study insolvency notices and such like that approach it, unless they happen to be lawyers. But the *Government Gazette* issued in the Orange River Colony is an exception to the general rule. The numbers of that *Gazette* are often interesting, if also to some of us painful, reading. It shows the progress which His Majesty's Government in the Colony is making by leaps and bounds towards complete assimilation of the British policy to the Boer policy on the Colour question. And, just as newly made converts are the most enthusiastic people, so also the Government of the Orange River Colony, being thoroughly converted to the Boer view of the Colour question, is out-Boering the Boers themselves. The *Gazette* for the 31st December last (by the way, a very suitable date for laying down a policy) contains in the regulations published therein for the town of Brandfort a new definition of the term "Native".

Article 114 lays down that

> the term native or natives occurring in these regulations, unless the reading expressly states otherwise, shall be held to mean and apply to and to cover the male or males as well as the female or females above the age, or probable age, of sixteen years of all South African native places,[1] and also all coloured persons, and all who, by law or usage, are termed natives or coloured persons, or treated as such, whatever race or nationality they may belong to;

Then follow the enslaving regulations to which we have drawn attention in these columns more than once. The definition is as wide and insulting as it possibly can be; so that if Prince Ranjitsinghji[2] or

[1] A misprint for "races"?

[2] Prince Ranjitsinghji Vibhaji, (1872-1933), Maharaja Jam Sahib of Nawanagar, well known for his cricket as 'Ranji'

Sir Mancherji, or, in the words of Lord Milner the Japanese Ambassador, in spite of all the vapourings we read in the newspapers about the Japanese, would, in the town of Brandfort, if he chose to travel as a private gentleman, be treated as a native of South Africa, would have to be confined to Locations, take out residential passes, be reckoned as a "loose Native" whatever the term may mean, may not be in public streets or open places after "tolling of the Curfew Bell", and may not drive in cabs other than those marked "Natives only". The method, too, whereby such a drastic departure from traditional British policy is brought about, is very ingenious. If any such distinction were to be embodied in the legislation of the Colony, it would have to receive sanction from the Colonial Office, which probably, however yielding it is, may not see its way to go "the whole hog". Therefore, resort is had to the bye-laws which need no sanction from Downing Street and which the Lieutenant-Governor of a Colony, constitutionlly governed, naturally and courtenously sanctions without demur. And yet, like the girl who persistently shouted 'yet we are seven", the Government of the Orange River Colony would not be ashamed to say, "Yet we are carrying out the British policy". It is hoped that someone in England will see the regulations in question, which we reprint elsewhere, study them, and inform the public what is being done in its name in the enlightened Orange River Colony.

Indian Opinion, 21-1-1904

263. SELF-SACRIFICE

Sacrifice is the law of life. It runs through and governs every walk of life. We can do nothing or get nothing without paying a price for it, as it would be said in commercial parlance or, in other words, without sacrifice. It would secure the salvation of the community to which we belong; we must pay for it, that is sacrifice self. Working for the community, we may keep for ourselves only a proportion of what is secured, and no more. And herein lies the sacrifice. At times we have to pay dearly. True sacrifice lies in deriving the greatest pleasure from the deed, no matter what the risk may be. Christ died on the Cross of Calvary and left Christianity as a glorious heritage. Hampden suffered, but the ship-money went. Joan of Arc was burnt as a witch to her eternal honour and to the everlasting disgrace of her murderers; the world knows the result of her self-sacrifice. The Americans bled for their independence.

We have given these illustrations to draw a contrast between the very little that the Indians as individuals have to sacrifice so that the community may gain a great deal, and the much that had to be sacrificed in the instances quoted by us. The Indians in South Africa in general, and the Transvaal in particular, are undergoing many troubles. Their fate in the Transvaal hangs in the balance. Their very means of livelihood may be ruthlessly snatched away fom them. They may be uncermoniously driven to ghettos. What, then is the self-sacrifice to be performed by the British Indians before they may expect relief? Every Indian must consider the question as if it affected him personally, put his hands into his pocket for the common good, give his time and energy. Individual differences must be sunk in the face of common danger. Personal ease and personal gain should be surrendered. To all this must be added patience and self-control. The slightest deviation "from the strait and narrow path" mapped out here would bring us down the precipice, not because the cause is at all unjust or weak, but because the opposition set up against us is over-whelming.

No race or community has ever achieved anything without the communal spirit. The desire to advance a national cause may be present, but a mere desire, while a necessary stage in the progress towards the goal, is useless without more. There should be the readiness to adopt the means required for the attainment. A chain is no stronger than the weakest link in it, and unless we are prepared to stand and work shoulder to shoulder without flinching and without being daunted by temporary disappointments, failure would be the only fit reward, or rather punishment, for gross neglect of duty. Nor is there any heroic sacrifice required by communities living under British rule; well-sustained, continuous and temperate constitutional effort is the main thing needed. Earnestness commands success anywhere. It does so much more in the British Dominions. If the British machinery is slow to move, the genius of the nation being conservative, it is also quick to perceive and recognise earnestness and unity. Even a mother, says an Indian proverb, does not serve without being asked¾much less does a British Government. We, therefore, hope that our countrymen throughout South Africa will make a careful note of this is aspect of the British Constitution, and refuse to rest until full justice is granted.

Indian Opinion, 21-1-1904

264. DR. JAMESON AND ASIATICS

Dr. Jameson[1] has taken the wind out of the sail of the Bond Party at the Cape by making an eminently reasonable proposal to His Excellency the Governor of the Cape Colony, and the fact that his proposal has been accepted by the Governor cannot but help the worthy Doctor's party in a very material manner. He requested the Governor, in view of the impending arrival of the Chinese labourers in the Transvaal, to initiate legislation closing the borders of the Colony against the Chinaman. Consistently with his profession of Imperial sentiments, he suggested that the restriction should apply only to non-British Asiatics¾thus, for the first time, recognising the status of Asiatic British subjects. He even submitted a draft Bill for approval, and the Governor has responded by publishing in the *Gazette* a Bill embodying, in all the essential particulars, the recommendations made by the leader of the Progressive Party. One may still hope that the people of the Transvaal will decide even at this eleventh hour not to take the plunge, which is fraught with awful consquences, and render unnecessary the passing of the Bill in question which, even though applicable only to non-British subjects, is particularly drastic and, therefore, hardly suitable for a British Colony. Such legislation will, moreover, indefinitely retard the progress of federation. It may, therefore, yet be not too late for the people of the Transvaal to reconsider the position, and tide over the present difficulties by less questionable means.

Indian Opinion, 21-1-1904

265. REPORT ON ASIATIC PERMITS

At the reqest of Lord Milner, Captain Hamilton Fowle has prepared a memorandum shewing the return of permits granted to the Asiatics. It is a lucid statement of bare facts, and a complete answer to Mr. Loveday and his friends who cried themselves hoarse that thousands of Indians had surreptitiously entered the Colony; and, with all deference to His Excellency Lord Milner, it is also a complete refutation of the statement made by His Excellency in his despatch that many non-refugee British Indains had entered the Colony and obtained licenses. It is true, as Captain Fowle states, that 579 Indians

[1] Sir L. S. Jameson (1853-1917), Prime Minister of Cape Colony, 1904-1908.

were sent across the border for being in the Colony without permits. This does not by any means shew that these men entered deliberately. It was stated in the beginning of last year that, when peace was declared and the permit regulations were relaxed, no permits would be required to enter the Colony. There was no railway supervision and the Indians naturally entered the Colony. These have now been driven away. The justice of the step would be questioned by many, seeing that the Indians were British subjects, and not such as were likely to be a danger to the community within the meaning of the Peace Preservation Ordinance. In our opinion, the Ordinance is being wrongly applied to restrict the immigration of British Indians. When it was passed, the object was clearly to keep out of the Colony people who were likely to be a political danger; certainly not the most loyal subjects of the Crown as the Indians admittedly are. That there are only 8,121 Indians in the Colony shews how rigorous has been the enforcenment of the Ordinance against them. In 1899, according to Sir Conyngham Green, (then Mr. Green,) the adult Indian population was estimated at over 15,000. 7,000 refugees have, therefore, still to be accounted for. It may also be stated that the restriction of Indian immigration is an innovation on the old practice. Whatever the lows of the old regime were, there was absolutely no check on the entry of British Indians, nor was the clause regarding registration strictly enforced. And yet we find His Excellency assuring Mr. Chamberlain that the old laws are not being so strictly enforced as before!

Indian Opinion, 21-1-1904

266. SACRIFICE¾1

Man's nature is such that he does not notice very common things. We say that man cannot live a moment without food and water; but while saying so, we do not realise that air is far more vital than food and water. Because we always breathe, we pay no attention to that fact. And because we feel hunger and thirst from time to time, we call them to mind frequently. This is also true of sacrifice. Life is sustained by sacrifice, yet no attention is paid to it.

Sacrifice is of many kinds. Today we shall discuss only the sacrifce of self-interest. Everyone knows of the nobility of sacrifice. The more a man reflects on it, the more he feels its necessity and understands it. If primitive people think about it, they, too, will surely realise

it. The wise will not only experience it and understand it, but after understanding it, will even volunteer with such sacrifice. We know this from infancy, and hence we often say that nothing can be gained without labour. But as we grow and as we reflect, through personal experience as also through the study of history, we comprehend the import of this ordinary saying more and more. It takes some effort to climb a hillock, but a great deal more to ascend a mountain; it requires little risk and more pains. If we see the necessity of ascending a mountain, we do not mind the great effort; and if we want to do a big job, we think nothing of the risk and pains involved. That is to say, we do not shy at sacrifice once it is considered necessary. Our brethren living in this country are not unfamiliar with such a line of thought. They come here and earn a little as a result of their sacrifice. They left their homes, gave up their kith and kin, and crossed the ocean; they made this sacrifice, and that after careful thought. They could come to this country and improve their condition only because they made this sacrifice and showed daring. In other words, they understand quite well that sacrifice wisely made leads to good results. That is why they make sacrifices from time to time and attempt to better their lot. We are hopeful that, through continuous and wise sacrifice, they will improve their own and the general condition day by day.

We write today on one's obligation of sacrifice because the whites are bent on making our condition in this country, chiefly in the Transvaal, extremely difficult. One by one our common rights are being snatched away from us. Even then no one conducts a powerful fight on our behalf. Therefore, the whites think us to be helpless and weak; and their arrogance grows daily. The local government is under the control of the whites and, as it fights shy of displeasing them, it accepts their perversity, however improper and unjust, and confirms it; and then gives the British Government to understand that it is obliged to do so in order to respect public opinion. To our misfortune, the British Government does not use its authority and exert sufficient pressure against this [misuse of public opinion][1]. The Government of India, whose special obligation it is to protect us, appears to raise its voice a little at times out of fear¾but only a little. When pressure was exerted on our behalf, and Lord Milner made a demand for Indian labour and we thus got a chance [to state our case], we said that, if he would improve the condition of [free] Indians, we would send out

[1] The original has "against this explanation".

labourers from India willing to accept slavery for a time! Our rights have nothing to do with the slavery of labourers, and yet such a condition was laid down. From this the inference can be drawn that the Government of India cannot improve the condition of Indians settled in the Transvaal, if the Transvaal withdraws its proposal to indent Indian labour to work as slaves. We hear nothing of Natal or the Orange River Colony¾ [as if all was well there!][1] Our condition is unfortunate and hence we have to write repeatedly of our duties and obligations. Such sayings of our elders as "You cannot go to heaven unless you die," and "Dependence on others always results in disappointment" come to mind at the time of such sad experiences, and we appreciate their significance.

This much should be remebered, that the British Government's intentions are fair and that it desires to do justice. The rule is British and hence it is incumbent upon us to understand British politics. As we study British statecraft and its rules and regulations, we shall understand in what manner we should present our demands; and if we understand that, it is not very defficult to realise our aspirations. It takes time, but in the end the thing intended comes to pass (if it is reasonable). It is not that it takes time for Indians alone to get justice. Consider Ireland's example; British nature is like that. It is now our duty to bear this in mind and labour on. If we cherish noble thoughts and look. upon another's happiness as our own and another's gain as our gain, and go on doing our work with single mindedness, we shall certainly attain our objective, because we ask for justice, not favour.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 21-1-1904

267. AN UNEQUAL CONTEST

The Indian question in the Transvaal has entered upon a new and distressing phase. The Government of that Colony has turned a deaf ear to the cry for justice. It has decided upon a dog-in-the-manager policy; so much so, that even in Kaffir Locations, Indians may not trade lest thereby they may be able to eke out a living! The Government thinks that it has granted a mighty concession in that it has changed the term "Location" into "Bazaar,"and having done so, it is natural that by way of compensation they should remove Locations

[1] Literally, the Gujarati here reads ". . . . as if rivers of milk flow there!"

further away from where they were during the Boer regime and to places where, according to its own admissions, in some cases at least, trade is not possible at present.

There is a process of cure known to medical men as the starvation cure. The Transvaal Government has adopted a similar cure for the Indian trouble. If it cannot decently put the Indian acrosss the border, there is no reason why it cannot at least put him outside the town limits either to starve or to go away altogether. Applied to the erstwhile Uitlanders, such a process was described by Lord Milner as a pin-prick policy. and yet what the Boer Government did to the Uitlanders[1] could not be compared for heartlessness to what is now being done by the Transvaal Government to a portion of its own subjects. As a last chance, therefore, the Indians have wisely decided to test in the highest court of the Colony the right of the Government to refuse to grant licenses to British Indians to trade outside Locations. It is a thousand pities that such a course has become imperatively necessary. It will undoubtedly stand to the credit of the British Indians in the Transvaal that they have refrained from bringning the matter before the Supreme Court for nearly two years, and endeavoured to get only a small measure of justice from the Government instead of having a ruling from the Supreme Court and setting the question at rest. They have closely followed Mr. Chamberlain's advice, attempted to come to a reasonable understanding with the white traders and the Government, and asked for protection of existing interests only; and it is when even this is being denied to them, in spite of Lord Milner's despatch to Mr. Chamberlain, that must perforce see what they can raise out of the Supreme Court.

It is an irony of fate that the very matter that will be taken to the Supreme Court by the Indian community, in the teeth of opposition from the Government, is one in which Mr. Chamberlain took the side of the Indians and defended it to the Boer High Court[2] was contrary to expectations and contrary to the British contention. Mr. Chamberlain told Mr. Kruger that he would make representations on behalf of the Indians from a different standpoint. The occasion we refer to occurred in 1898. It will be remembered that the then Chief Justice of

[1] Dutch word for non-Dutch white settlers.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to the British Agent", 28-2-1898 "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 21-7-1898 to "*Telegram to India*", 30-8-1898

the late Free State gave an award[1] in a submision by the British Government and the Boer Government as to the right of the latter to pass anti-Asiatic Legislation. The arbitrator awarded that the Boer Government had the right to pass Law 3 of 1885 as amended in 1886, and thereby it reserved "the right for sanitary purposes to point out to them (persons of the aboriginal races of Asia)", defined streets, wards, and Locations for habitation. This, however, did not decide the question fully, for it still remained to be known what was the meaning of the word "habitation," that is to say, did it mean that, although Indians could not reside anywhere they liked, they could trade anywhere they liked. The British Government contended that they could. The Boer Government thought otherwise, and a test case was brought before the full bench of the High Court of the late Republic. Justices Morice, Jorrisen, and Esser formed the full bench. Justice Morice gave the leading decision. Justice Esser concurred but Justice Jorrisen disagreed. Justice Morice, as will appear from the judgment, argued entirely in favour of the British or Indian contention, but felt bound to respect a previous unanimous decision of the High Court. Justice Esser also based his concurrence on the same ground. Justice Jorrisen had no difficuly in giving a fearless decision, and as he could not conscientiously interpret the term "residence" to include trade or business, he had no hesitation in overriding the previous decision of the High Court.

Nothing daunted, the British Government was still resourceful enough to protect the Indian interests, and in spite of the adverse decision, up to the outbreak of the war, the British Agent was able to prevent the Boer Government from sending Indians to Locations. The times have changed and so has the British policy. We will revert further to a more complete analysis of the three judgments, in view of the impending struggle.

Indian Opinion, 28-1-1904

[1] *Vide "Letter to the Natal Advertiser"*, 21-1-1895

268. "THANK YOU, MR. BOURKE"

Sir Richard Solomon gave Mr. Bourke the following information regarding his enquiry[1] as to the regulation of Indian travellers on the railways in India:

> I have no personal knowledge of the arrangements for regulating European and native passenger traffic on railways in India. I sent a copy of the hon. member's question to the Commissioner of Railways, who has informed me by letter that the practice on Indian railways is that a native can go into any compartment he wishes, if he pays his fare; that ladies' compartments are provided in every train, but that, if a white man wishes to travel with his wife and be sure of having no natives in his compartment, he must engage a whole compartment.

The information is exactly as we anticipated, and although we sympathise with Mr. Bourke that he has not got what he wanted, the honourable member is to be thanked for his pains, and let us hope that he will abide by the answer given. He threw down the challenge. The answer he anticipated was that there were distinctions made on the railways in India, and that, therefore, such distinctions could very legitimately be made in the Transvaal also. The converse should also hold good, and since no distinctions are made in India, it follows that they could not be made for British Indians in the Transvaal. Mr. Bourke is a gentleman; althugh he is afflicted with colour prejudice, he will not, therefore, recede from the position he has deliberately taken up.

Indian Opinion, 28-1-1904

269. THE BLOEMFONTEIN DISASTER

South Africa is indeed a place of surprises and disasters as it has also been described as a grave of reputations. During the last ten years troubles have come thick upon it. The Begbie explosion, the Glencoe Junction Railway disaster just on the eve of the Jameson raid, and the latest in the shape of a cloud-burst in Bloemfontein shew amid what uncertainty people are living in South Africa. Five minutes before the people standing on the balcony of the Royal Hotel in Bloemfontein were engulfed, probably they thought they were enjoying a splendid

[1] *Vide* "A Request to Mr. Bourke", 14-1-1904.

sight, when the waters came rushing, and alas, at the end of five minutes, the whole of the substantial structure came tumbling down, leaving only one or two to tell the sorrowful tale. That in these times of depression nearly half of Bloemfontein has been washed away, nearly four hundred people left homeless, and over sixty people buried under the waters altogether, is a pinch very hard to bear, and the sympathy that has gone out to the ill-fated place from all parts of South Africa is the only relieving feature of the desolate spectacle. It speaks volumes for the different Municipalities that they have responded to the appeal of the Mayor of Bloemfontein promptly and splendidly, and we are glad to be able to inform our readers that the Indian community also is subscribing towards the relief of sufferers. However humble the mite may be, it will all be given in time and for a most suitable purpose. We, therefore, appeal to our readers, no matter what their position may be, to put their hands into their pockets and send in their subscriptions.

Indian Opinion, 28-1-1904

270. THE JOHANNESBURG CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The following is the proposal made by the Executive Committee to the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce:

> Attention has been given to the Government notice of April last; to the amendment thereof submitted by the Colonial Secretary to the Legislative Council; the resolution of the Legislative Council appointing a Commission of Enquiry; and the recommendations of the conference of representatives of Transvaal Chambers of Commerce held on December 19.
>
> Your Committee now recommends:
>
> (1) That the arrangements made by the Executive council and contained in Government Notice No. 356 of April 1903 should be allowed a fair trial. (2) That it is represented to the Government that the exceptions mentioned in the last clause of the above notice should be granted with great reserve, as any extension of the number of Asiatics residing in the midst of the European community would be against the general feeling of that community. (3) That the Chamber should withhold any expression of opinion on the cases of Indians trading without licences before the war until the investigations of the Government Commission appointed in this matter have been completed. (4) That no Asiatic should be allowed to trade in a white man's name, or have any interest in the profits of any business in which the licence is taken out in the

name of a white man. (5) Notwithstanding recommendation No. 1 above, and having regard to the importance of arriving at a permanent and conclusive settlement of the whole question, and of preventing any further attempts to re-open the matter, your committee recommends that the Government be invited to take into consideration the advisability of removing into Bazaars all Asiatic traders without distinction, compensation being provided for such as may have vested interests which have been legally acquired.

The recommendations of the Committee are decidedly disappointing. From the past record of the Chamber, we had expected a more statesman-like proposal from the Committee and we yet hope that the Chamber will decline to accept the proposal made by its Executive. When the Committeee states in one paragraph that the Bazaar Notice should be given a trial, and in another paragraph that, in spite of such trial, the British Indian store-keepers should all be driven out of Bazaars and compensation paid to them, the logic is difficult to understand. The Committee would have the Government to grant residential exemptions very sparingly. This, coming from a cosmopolitan city like Johannesburg, is rather humorous. However, we may assure the Committee that the Indians have so far exercised sufficient self-restraint, and declined to take advantage of any exemption whatsoever. Unless they can make good their legal status, the Indians are not going to depend for their residence on the charity of the Government.

Indian Opinion, 28-1-1904

271.. SACRIFICE¾2

Most of us have learnt by experience that unity promotes the public good. Twenty years ago, the persecution of Indians in Natal had grown so much that the Government had to appoint a special Commission. After much investigation, it finally gave its verdict in our favour. [Since] the whites had the virtues of diligence and unity in ample measure, the persecution continued and the demand to confine Indians to Locations was made again and again. As, at that time. there was not the requisite unity among the Indian population, their troubles did not cease. On the contrary, they became more intense. Soon after Natal secured self-rule, laws designed to insult and harass Indians began to be enacted. The Indians woke up though belatedly and, because they commenced working with enthusiasm and vigilance, further oppression stopped. Else, everyone would be in a Location today.

Unfortunately, the enthusiasm lasted only about three years; even so, we profited much. Though that enthusiasm is absent today, a unity of purpose is evolving, and if it gathers strength, our condition cannot but improve. It is easy here, on reflection, to realise the importance of sacrifice. When our people began to sacrifice self-interest, an awarenes of higher ends blossomed forth and finally yielded good fruit. Without some sacrifice, there cannot be unity and concerted action. Society has been built on sacrifice.

We would draw the particular attention of our brethren in the Transvaal to this article, because the condition there is disorganised and saddening. Until now we believed that the Government would certainly do us justice, and we did not think of going to a Court of law. But if the Government remains under the influence of the white population and is either disinclined or powerless to do justice, it will be absolutely necessary for the entire community to meet, consider the matter and take appropriate steps. Surely, in doing so, they will, if need be, sacrifice time or money and later, both. Now the situation is very critical, and the opportunity once lost cannot be regained. Our Transvaal brethren should bear this in mind and make the fullest endeavour to protect themselves, and we are confident they will spare no effort [in doing so]. Our demand is just, and if we direct our movement with wisdom, we cannot but gain victory ultimately. This is the time to unite and to give of time and money [to the cause]. We must do our duty; the will of God will then come to pass. A story about a cartman, which we read in our childhood, is worth recalling. When a wheel of his cart got stuck in mire, he started praying to God. Thereupon God said that his work would not get done by mere prayer. If he made the effort, God would help in the sequel. Thereafter, the cartman laboured hard, and the wheel was extricated. We can all understand the moral of this without explication. To make all possible effort is our duty; the result is in God's hands.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-1-1904

272. BRITISH INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL

Last week we touched upon the test case of Tyob Haji Khan Mahomed and F. W. Reitz N.O.[1] In that case, as we have shown, the whole argument turned upon the interpretation of the term "residence". Law 3 of 1885, as amended in 1886, enacts that

> the Government shall have the right for sanitary purposes to point out to them (persons of the aboriginal races of Asia) defined streets, wards, and locations for habitation.

It was contended on behalf of the then Transvaal Government that habitation for Indians included residence for purposes of trade also, and that, therefore, Indians could only trade in defined streets, wards, and Locations. The British Government, on the contrary, argued that the term "habitation" could only refer to residence as apart from business and that the clause "for sanitary purposes" showed clearly that the Indian trade was to be left unrestricted. The presiding judge, Mr. Justice Morice, based the whole of his judgment on a previous decision given in 1888 in the matter of Ismail Suliman & Co. It should be remembered that this case of Ismail Suliman & Co. was tried before the delivery of the award of the Chief Justice of the then Orange Free State. According to the judge's own view,

> the Court would have decided by more judicial principles if it had made a distinction in the case of Ismail Suliman & Co. between living and trading in a place. According to the common use of words, one is not said to live where he trades and does not sleep.

But the learned judge thought that he was bound by the decision previously given, and therefore, although his own interpretation was different from that placed upon the term, he would not overrule the decision in the case of Ismail Suliman & Co. Now, as it appears, full use was made then of the clause in the Republican Constitution, namely, that "there should be no equality between whites and blacks in the state". It was assumed that the Indians belonged to the black races (of South Africa). That being the case, it was argued that the Law 3 of 1885 was an enabling act and in no way restrictive. Whatever one may say with regard to the case of Ismail Suliman, and the use of the above argument, it could not in any way apply to the later case of Tayob

[1] *Vide* "An Unequal Contest", 28-1-1904.

Haji Khan Mahomed, because the Chief Justice had clearly laid it down that, in terms of the London Convention of 1884, the Transvaal Government had no right to pass any legislation restrictive of the liberty of the British Indians, and he held that both the Govern-ments were bound by Law 3 of 1885 as amended in 1886, because the British Government had specially agreed to those two laws being passed. We venture to think that this argument was not sufficiently brought before the notice of the judges, and that they gave their decision in the case as if there was no award whatsoever. Justice Jorrisen, although he, too, unfortunately for the British Indians, concurred in the judgment given by Justice Morice, argued entirely in favour of the interpretation given by the British Government. With reference to the inequality in the constitution, the learned judge says:

> To infer from this that the Government can take any measures aganist the coolies that it may think fit is, in my oinion, giving an extensive interpretation which could never have been intended by the legislature. The coloured people in this article are those coloured people who lived here at the time, namely, the Kaffirs. That the coolies are not included hereunder appeared to be the feeling of the Volksraad when they made a separate law for them.

These judgments, however, are worthy of perusal at the present moment, and we, therefore, reproduce them in another column.

Indian Opinion, 4-2-1904

273. ORANGE RIVER COLONY AGAIN

We publish in another column the draft Ordinance, consolidating and amending the laws relating to the Poll Tax on Coloured Persons, appearing in the Orange River Colony *Gazette Exrtraordinary*, dated the 16th January. The anti-colour activity of the present Government in that Colony is simply remarkable. The worst form of slavery is being practically revived there, and one is reminded of similar legislation in South America. We read in the papers that in that country Negroes who fail to pay a fine may be alloted for service to any white man who may pay the fine for them, and thus, by a side-wind, slavery, which is illegal according to the American Constitution, is carried on in broad daylight and sanctioned by law. Section 13 of the draft Ordinance referred to above reads as follows:

> In the event of a coloured person not being able to pay the poll tax when called upon to do so by the tax collector, in terms of this Ordinance, such collector shall forthwith give notice thereof to the white owner, lessee, or

> occupier (if any) of the farm or house, and thereafter unless the said tax is paid or sufficient security given for its payment, the Resident Magistrate of the Distirict of Special Justice of the Peace therein, as the case may be, shall place the said coloured person under contract with a white person residing within the said district who is willing to pay the said tax, provided that every said contract shall be for not more than one year.

Thus, if a Coloured person fails to pay the poll tax imposed under the the Ordinance, namely, £ 1 per year, he may be placed under contract with a white man who may be willing to pay the tax for one year.. And this tax is to be paid by every Coloured male of the age of eighteen up to seventy years. There seem to be no exemptions owing to illness or any such causes, and such harsh legislation would be slavery to us even if it were to apply only to the native races of South Africa. We find it difficult to restrain our feelings when we come to know that it applies even to British Indians, for in section 20, we read:

> The expression 'coloured persons' shall for the purpose of this Ordinance include Arabs, Chinese and other Asiatics, and also all other persons who are by law or custom in South Africa regarded as coloured.

It is not only that the Colony continues to shut its doors against Indian immigration, but it must heap further insults on British Indians even in respect of the few Indian domestic servants who are carrying on their peaceful avocations in that Colony. Was it for this that the war was undertaken and millions of money and thousands of lives thrown away? Lord Milner is credited with humane and broad views. His Excellency has more than once said that he has no prejudice against colour. Will he sanction this Ordinance?

Indian Opinion, 4-2-1904

274. BRITISH INDIAN TRADERS IN THE TRANSVAAL

His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor has, in accordance with the resolution of the Legislative Council, now appointed a commission consisting of Messrs Honey, Sheridan, Rubie and Chamney, the last named as Secretary,

> to consider the cases of Asiatic who were trading in the Transvaal in towns outside locations without licences at, and immediately before, the outbreak of hostilities, and to enquire and to report as to the number of such traders of their having been allowed to trade outside locations.

With [regard to] the personnel of the commisssion, we can have nothing to say. In Mr. Chamney, as Secretary, the Indians have a gentleman of Indian experience and impartiality. Mr. Honey is Director of Customs, and Mr. Sheridan is Inspector of Revenue. These gentlemen, it is fairly safe to assume, would not approach the work with any degree of bias. Mr. Rubie is a barrister of attainments, and has been doing good work in connection with the revision of Voters' rolls. His legal training ought to assist the other commissioners in keeping them within the terms of the reference, as well as in dealing with any legal points that might arise in connection with it. Some interest, however, arises as to the utility of the commission, for the Indians have embarked upon a test case. If it is decided in their favour, as it ought to be, then the labours of the commission will have been in vain. It would, therefore, appear that it would have have been better if the appointment of the commission had been postponed, pending the result of the case. The Transvaal especially is not at present in an overflowing condition, and it is a pity that good money might have to be thrown away in a wild goose chase. The terms of reference are such that they are likely to tax the legal acumen of Mr. Rubie in interpreting the expression, "immediately before the outbreak of hostilities", [and deciding] who would be considered as coming within these limits. How would the commissioners fix a date which, in their opinion, would be immediately before the outbreak of war? However, it is no use now discussing the various distinctions, often invidious, that are likely to arise in the course of the investigation. The ball has been set rolling, and we now await with considerable curiosity the proce-edings of the commission.

Indian Opinion, 4-2-1904

275. BRITISH INDIANS IN AUSTRALIA

We draw the attention of our readers to a report of the work being done by Mr. Charles Francis Sievwright, the European Commissioner of the British Empire League of Australia, published in the *Advocate of India* at Bombay. We believe Mr. Sievwright is doing good work, and we wish him every success in his mission. The fact that Mr. Sievwright has taken up such a position shows that, even in Australia, where the other day shipwrecked men were prevented from landing because of the colour of their skin, there are Europeans who are heartily ashamed of the Colour legislation and the attitude of the

masses on the question. We appeal to the Colonists in South Africa whether they would not read the signs of the times, and whether, as Imperialists, they would not consider it worth while to take note of the feelings of the millions in India on the question. If they continue to outrage the sentiments of the Indian peoples by imposing most galling disabilitites on them, should they choose to travel or settle in South Africa, a permanent estrangement between India and the Colonies is merely a question of time, and however insignificant India may appear in the estimation of the Colonies at the present moment, a time must shortly come when they will have to recognise the mistake; only in may then be too late. A policy of give and take is the only practical policy. The Colonists, of all the men in the world, are supposed to have more than an ordinary measure of practical common sense. If they would only apply it to this question they would see that it is nothing but wisdom to give if only a little in return for what they take.

Mr. Sievwright has drawn up a manifesto which, too, we publish in another column. He has made an appeal for funds. This is a delicate matter. We think that every moral support should be extended to the mission, but as the problem in Australia is not necessarily the same as in South Africa, it is impossible to divide the funds. Each community must be allowed to secure its own salvation, and for that purpose, it is necessary that each should husband its resources, and we hold that it is only thus that effective co-operation can be given.

Indian Opinion, 4-2-1904

276 THE UNTIMELY DEATH OF MR. DOMAN TELOO

We very much regret to announce the death, in the prime of his life, of an able and active Indian of Johannesburg, Mr. Doman Teloo. All the Indians in Johannesburg knew him very well. He used to live in Umgeni, but later moved to Johannesburg to seek his fortune. By dint of hard work, he earned some money in his calling as a goldsmith and in other business and as an owner of land, some of which is in Natal. He learnt a little English by his own exertions, and studied Hindi for commercial use and under the spell of religion. An intensely religious man, he was always keen to exalt Hinduism. He was also enthusiastic in his public work. Since his parents were poor and he was brought up amidst the hardships commonly faced by Indians in Natal, he had learnt to be patient, but act with firmness. This experience stood him in good stead in Johannesburg.

He pursued with determination whatever he set out to do, but knew how to proceed keeping his keenness within bounds. Both before and after the war, he took an active part in all the public activities of the Indian community. When the war was over, he devoted almost all his time to securing, without profit to himself and with great integrity, permits for his compatriots and to removing other hardships of theirs. When, after the Boer trouble was over, hopes of improving our condition under the British were dashed to the gorund, he spared no pains to unite all our brethren and carry on the struggle. Along with others, he made strenuous efforts and founded an organization called the Indian Association; and he worked day and night to collect funds for it. It was his intention to take up much more public work. By his death, the Indian community has lost a good man. He was an agent of *Indian Opinion* and himself used to sell 50 copies a week, sacrificing his own work, and he would not accept the usual agents' commission due to him. We offer our heartfelt condolences to the members of his family as also to the Indians of Johannesburg, and we pray to God to grant deliverance to his soul.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-2-1904

277. LORD HARRIS ON LABOUR

We publish in another column a report from the *Daily Mail* of an interview which its representative has had with Lord Harris, the ex-Governor of Bombay, who is at present in Johannesburg and who is the Chairman of the Consolidated Gold Fields. His Lordship has given to the interviewer his views on labour importation and he thinks that the opposition against it at home is very unreasonabloe and quotes, in support of his contention, the fact that the West Indies and other countries have before now imported Coloured indentured labour. One would have expected far better argument than this from His Lordship, for we are sure he could not be unaware that there is very great difference between the West Indies and the Transvaal as also between the labour ordinances elsewhere and the Labour Ordinance which the Transvaal Government would have the Home Government sanction without any demur. The West Indies it is well known, is hardly suited for white labour, the climate of that country being very trying, whereas the climate of the Transvaal is ideally good and the white workmen would have no difficulty in doing the same kind of work

that they are used to in England. Nobody has ever contended that the climate is not suitable for such labour: the only objection is that white labour is too expensive. Mr. Morley has disposed of the economic argument by pointing out that the mines ought to be satisfied with less profits and those that could not be worked at all by white labour need not be in a hurry to give up their gold. As to the difference between the indenture laws elsewhere and in the Transvaal, there is that difference between the the two which exists between the contract of slavery and a free contract. So far as we are aware, in the histroy of British colonization, it would be difficult to find an indenture law so drastic, so sweeping, and so unjust to the labourer as the Labour Importation Ordinance of the Transvaal. The indentured labourers who go to the West Indies and elsewhere do not go there as slaves, but as soon as their contract is finished, they are free to settle in the country and enjoy the ordinary civic rights. It is, therefore, we respectfully submit, hardly fair that Lord Harris should cite the West Indies and other countries as an example.

His Lordship's remarks on the attitude of the Indian Government are even more interesting and instructive.

> From the Indian point of view, says His Lordship, I think the Government of India made a mistake orginally, whatever their attitude be now. The trader and the coolie are entirely different persons. It would have been a splendid thing for India if there had been an out and in flow from India to the Transvaal. Considerable trade would be certain to spring up between the two countries, and the coolie, having given the Transvaal the benefit of his labour, would go back to his village with his rupees, the capital that India precisely wants.

We may be pardoned for saying that although the coolie and the trader may be different persons, it does not follow that the coolie must always remain a coolie and be treated as chattel. Why should he be denied the right, if he is brought to the country at all, of settling and earning an honest livelihood? And why should the Indian Government go out of its way to accommodate a Government which is callous to all ideas of justice in treating the resident Indian population with fairness? It is all very well to talk of the trade between India being considerably increased owing to the importation of indentured labour. A few thousand Indians going to the Transvaal as slaves would hardly solve the problem of Indian poverty, and we think that the Indian Government has come to a proper decision in not allowing indentured

emigration from India to the Transvaal on the terms suggested and without amelioration of the condition of the British Indians who have already settled in the colony.

Indian Opinion, 11-2-1904

278. LADYSMITH LICENCES

Mr. Lines, the Town Clerk and Licensing Officer at Ladysmith, has now issued license to British Indian store-keepers with the following note endorsed thereon:

> This license is issued strictly in accordance with the undertaking entered into by the holder hereof that the licensed premises shall not be open for business after the hour of 5 p.m. except on Saturdays and that the licensed premises shall be closed on holidays.

Having accepted the principle that the Indian store-keepers should agree to the stipulations laid down by Mr. Lines as to early closing, we cannot say much against the above endorsement. Subject, however, to such reservation, we are bound to protest against the remarks being made on the licenses because they are illegal and out of place. It is one thing to hold certain powers and another thing to dangle them before the public in an offensive manner. If Mr. Lines had remained content with his victory and not paraded it on the licenses, it would have been no less effective and would have appeared graceful. He could have taken severe notice of any breach of the undertaking the following year. As it is, we venture to think that the whole of the grace has been taken away by the note made as above. Mr. Lines may also know that, in spite of the endorsement on the licenses, supposing any of the holders chooses to ignore same and continues to open his business after five in the evening, he (Mr. Lines) could not cancel the license once granted. There is no process of law available for enforcing the prohibition. It is merely a matter of compromise and compact beween himelf and the Indian store-keepers. We, therefore, regret that Mr. Lines has endorsed the note on the licenses. At the same time. there is no use crying over spilt milk, and we think it is clearly the duty of the British Indian store-keepers in Ladysmith to strictly abide by the undertaking.

Indian Opinion, 11-2-1904

279. LETTER TO DR. PORTER

21 TO 24, COURT CHAMBERS
February 11, 1904

DR. C. PORTER
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
P. O. BOX 1049
JOHANNESBURG

DEAR DR. PORTER,

I venture to write you regarding the shocking state of the Indian Location. The rooms appear to be overcrowded beyond description. The sanitary service is very irregular, and many of the residents of the Location have been to my office to complain that the sanitary condition is far worse than before.

There is, too, a very large Kaffir population in the Location for which really there is no warrant.

From what I hear, I believe the mortality in the Location has increased considerably and it seems to me that, if the present state of things is continued, outbreak of some epidemic disease is merely a question of time.

I know you are very great on sanitary reform. May I, therefore, ask you to be good enough to pay a personal visit and deal effectively as well with the overcrowding as with the sanitation. If I can be of any service, I shall be pleased to accompany you, should you approve of my suggestion.

I would add that for the present state of things the occupants of the Location are in no way responsible.

I remain,
Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion. 9-4-1904

280. LETTER TO DR. PORTER

21 TO 24 COURT CHAMBERS,
February 15, 1904

DR. C. PROTER
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
JOHANNESBURG

DEAR DR, PORTER,

I am extremely obliged to you for having paid a visit last Saturady to the Indian Location and for the interest you are taking in the proper sanitation of the site. The more I think of it, the uglier the situation appears to me, and I think that, if the Town Council takes up a position of *non possumus*, it will be an abdication of its function, and I do respectfully say that nothing can justify the Public Health Committee in saying that neither overcrowding nor insanitation could be helped. I feel convinced that every minute wasted over the matter-merely hastens a calamity for Johannesburg and that through absolutely no fault of the British Indians. Why, of all places in Johannesburg, the Indian Location should be chosen for dumping down all the kaffirs of the town passes my comprehension. While the great projects for sanitary reform of the Public Health Committee are undoubtedly very laudable and probably necessary, the obvious duty of dealing with the present danger of insanitation and overcrowding in the Indian Location, in my humble opinion, is not to be neglected. I feel that a few hundred pounds now spent will probably cause a saving of thousands of pounds; for, if, unfortunately, an epidemic breaks out in the Location, panic will ensue and money will then be spent like water in order to cure an evil which is now absolutely preventible.

I do not wonder that your staff, hard worked as it is, is unable to cope with sanitation in the Location, for what you do want, and what you cannot get, is a *topaz* for each Stand. What is everybody's business is also nobody's. You cannot expect every resident to look after the sanitation. Before expropriation, every Stand-holder was held responsible, and very naturally, for the proper sanitatiion of his Stand. The result, as I know personally, was that evry Stand, had a *topaz* attached to it who continually looked after the Stand, and I have no hesitation in saying that compared to what the Stands are now, they were kept in an ideally good condition.

You ask me to suggest remedies. I have slept over the matter and, if only the Town Council would take up a reasonable atitude, I have no doubt that an immediate improvement, without any cost to the Town Council, and probably to the saving of a few pounds, is possible. Let short leases¾six-monthly or quarterly¾be given to the Stand-holders. The leases may state exactly how many people are to be kept on each Stand, or in each room. The lessees could pay, say, 8 per cent on the valuation of the valuators and should be made strictly responsible for the sanitation of the Stand leased by them.

The sanitary regulations could then be strictly enforced; one or two inspectors could visit the Stands daily and come down upon defaulters with a heavy hand.

If this humble suggestion is accepted, you will see a vast improvement in two or three days, and you, by a stroke of the pen, could deal effectively with insanitation and overcrowding. The Town Council would also be saved the necessity of having to make individual collections of rents.

Of course, under my suggestion, the Town Council must withdraw the Kaffirs from the Location. About this mixing of the Kaffirs with the Indians, I must confess I feel most strongly. I think it is very unfair to the Indian population and it is an undue tax on even the proverbial patience of my countrymen.

Although I have not personally visited other portions included within the Insanitary Area, I very much fear that the same condition of things exists there and the suggestion I have made above would apply to the other parts also.

I trust you will receive this letter in the spirit in which it is written, and I hope that I have not expressed myself more stongly than the urgency of the occasion requires. I need hardly add that my services in this connection are entirely at the disposal of yourself and the Public Health Committee and I have no doubt that, if the Town Council would but give the Indian community a fair chance of proving what it is capable of doing in the way of sanitation, I do not think it would be much mistaken.

You may make what use you like of this communication.

In conclusion, I hope that an immediate remedy will be found for the danger that threatens the community.

I remain,
Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 9-4-1904

281. SIR GORDON SPRIGG AT EAST LONDON

Like a drowning man catching a straw, Sir Gordon Sprigg[1] has been making Herculean efforts to secure re-election at East London. He never before seems to have condescended to address the native electors in their Location, but as the people of East London seem to have shown the cold shoulder, he decided to address the native voters at their Location. The meeting, however, unfortunately for Sir Gordon, passed a unanimous vote of no confidence in the Right Honourable Gentleman. One of the speakers at the meeting rightly reminded him that he had done nothing for the Natives, and that East London was the only place in the Cape Colony where the Natives had not the right to walk on the foot-paths. The speaker rightly blamed Sir Gordon for having sanctioned the municipal regulations referred to, and the only lame reply that he (Sir Gordon) could make was that it was municipal matter, and that he did not wish to judge the Councils' action. What, however, is of more immediate interest to us is the indirect light thrown on the question by the Mayor of East London, who said that

> the regulation laws were to some extent due to the re-opening of the canteens because when natives were in drink, they would give way to no one, not even to white ladies. Very possibly, if the canteens were closed again, there would be no need to enforce the regulation.

If the facts are as the Mayor has stated, there seems to be some excuse for the regulation, so far as the Natives are concerned, though we can-not see why such people could not be prosecuted and severely puni-shed for being drunk and disorderly and causing an obstuction. The proper method would undoubtedly be to deal with the evil in some such manner, and in accodance with the ordinary rules of wrong-doing. Be that, however, as it may, there can be no such excuse for the application of the regulation to the handful of British Indian residing in East London, against whom no one has ever breathed a charge of drunkenness or of obstruction. So far as we are informed, there never has been a case of drunkenness among the Indians in East London. We understand that the Indian Association at East London has approached the Town Council of that place in the matter, and we sincerely hope that, if the reason for introducing the regulations be

[1] Four times Premier of the Cape Colony, he replaced Dr. Jameson in 1904.

what the Mayor has expressed, they will be cancelled so far as they are applicable to the British Indians.

Indian Opinion, 18-2-1904

282. PIETERSBURG AGAIN

Pietersburg, which last year led the way in harassing British Indian store-keepers,[1] continues its policy with unabated vigour. The newly formed Town Council, in its anxiety to keep up the persecution, has now passed a resolution that even hawkers are not to be allowed to carry on their trade without molestation. Mr. Krause, one of the members of the Town Council, has proposed that

> a bye-law be drafted stating that no licenses would be issued to Asiatics or coloured persons except for trading in such places as are set aside for them specially.

Mr. Chittenden seconded the resolution and, continues the *Zoutpans-burg Review*, "It was agreed that infringement of the bye-law, if confirmed by the Lieutenant-Governor, should be punishable by a fine of £20 or six months imprisonment." How a hawker can be made to confine hawking merely to a Location, it is difficult to understand. Mr. Kruger's Government, although it did many unkind things, never went so far as the Pietersburg Town Council would go. There are many lawyers on the Pietersburg Town Council, and it seems strange that it never occurred to any of them that the Town Council was making itself ridiculous in trying to arrogate to itself powers which by statute it does not possess. Pushed to its logical conclusion, the resolution would involve the compounding of British Indians without the elaborate necessity of a special Ordinance, for if an Indian can hawk his goods only within the confines of his Location, it could not be at all unfair to say that he could move about also only within his Bazaar, and should never go beyond the Bazaar line. We have no doubt that such an interpretation of the powers of the Town Council would be an ideal thing in the estimation of the Town Council of Pietersburg. We, however, hope that Sir Arthur Lawley will save the Council from ridicule and an impossible position by telling it plainly that the bye-law proposed to be framed could not be sanctioned.

Indian Opinion, 18-2-1904

[1] *Vide* "Address to Chamberlain" , 7-1-1903 & "Position of Indians in the Transvaal", 30-3-1903.

283. LETTER TO DR. PORTER

21 TO 24, COURT CHAMBERS,
February 20,1904

DR. C. PORTER
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
JOHANNESBURG

DEAR DR. PORTER,

I am obliged to you for your letter of even date.

The only reason why I wrote the letter, to portions of which you have taken exception, was to serve the cause of sanitation and my own countrymen. I do not withdraw anything that I have stated, because, if it were necessary, every one of my statements could be supported.

I cannot however, help correcting your impression that Kaffirs are taken by the Indians as lodgers. They have absolutely no power to sub-let.

I can only hope that the condition of things at present existing will soon end.

I remain,
Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 9-4-1904

284. THE MUNICIPAL CONFERENCE AND INDIAN TRADERS

At the meeting of the Municipal Conference of the Transvaal which sat at johannesburg last week. Mr. George Constable, representing the Boksburg Council, moved the following resolution:

> That in view of the fact that a new Asiatic law is to be brought before the Legislative Council for its consideration, and that the question is of such vital importance to local governing bodies, this Conference of Transvaal Municipalities places on record its opinion that the most satisfactory policy to the inhabitants will be to place all Asiatics in Bazaars, fair compensation to be paid to any who may be trading outside under licenses first granted by the late Government; further, that all local authories be permitted to make what by-laws may be necessary to regulate matters concernig coloured people and in regard to the fixing of sites for bazaars, places of residence, etc.

The resolution was carried, Mr. Goch alone dissenting.

The resolution modestly asks that all Asiatics be placed in Bazaars for trade and residence; that those who traded before the war under licenses be compensated, and that powers be given to the Municipalities to regulate these matters. In naked terms, the proposition means that the British Indians should be starved into leaving the country. In Mr. Goch's words "the idea of placing Asiatics in bazaars is not so much to put them there as to get rid of them altogether." The British Indians have shown conclusively that the so-called Bazaars are totally unfit for habitation or trade. It were a mercy to put the British Indians out of the country altogether rather than subject them to vivisection and kill them by inches. Mr. Constable's ideal of the powers he would have for the Municipalities is Brandfort in the Orange River Colony. We had occasion some time ago to deal with the municipal bye-laws for that township, and we think we shewed how the Coloured people thereunder become mere chattels.

It is, we fear, useless to appeal to Mr. Constable's sense of fariness. He worships the fetish of the law of self-preservation. And he has no difficulty in getting round his conscience, as so many of us do when blinded by prejudice or bigotry, and satisfying himself that the great law demands that the British Indians should be ruined. We have had other interpretations of the law by Englishmen who were perhaps more equi-minded and, therefore, better able to judge. They thought that the law was limited by another and higher, namely, that we should so preserve ourselves as not to encroach upon other people's rights. The simple corollary that Mr. Constable's countrymen have also laid down as flowing from the above limitation is that when we have to deal with people who do not do as we do, and if we are satisfied that we are in the right, we should act by them so as to raise them to our level and not to crush them. May we ask him and his friends to consider this view?

What is, however, the secret of the increasing intensity of the opposition to the Indian trader? Not that the number hostile to the Indian interests is increasing, but the gentlemen who first instigated the oposition are becoming more and more exacting in their demands for repression of the Asiatic.

Have the Indians given any cause? The answer is undoubtedly in the negative. What is it, then, that has fed the flame of prejudice? The speakers at the meeting have supplied the answer. They supported the

resolution to aid the Government. Why aid the Government? Is it anti-Asiatic? Does it, therfore, need the support of the populace in the policy? We would not go so far as to say that the Government is deliberately anti-Asiatic. But the gentlemen of the White Leagues, having found by experience that, if they cry loud enough and persistenty against the Asiatics, they can practically get what they want, have naturally grown bolder in their demands. They asked for the enforcement of the Law of 1885 and the Bazaar Notice was the reply. they wanted the Asiatics sent to Locations, and Bazaars have been established in several places. We might quote further instances of yielding to the white opposition on the part of the powers that be. Such accommodation on the part of the Government has been rightly interpreted as an invitation to continue the agitation. Mr Constable's motion is the response. Lord Milner having tinkered with the rights of the Asiatics, our friends at Boksburg, like the baby in the tub, "won't be happy till they've got it". Lord Milner has promised to alter the anti-Asiatic laws so as to bring them in harmony with the British Constitution. The Muncipal Conference has declared in what way it wants them altered. It would out-Kruger Mr. Kruger. The erstwhile Uitlanders complained that they had no voice in the affairs of State during the old regime. Now that they cried themselves hoarse, they would make the British Indians, whose co-operation they were glad to have in fighting the old rergine, Uitlanders under the common flag. And this is their view of honour and faith!

In the midst of the whole of the wretchedly painful proceedings of the Conference, Mr. Goch's speech was an oasis in the deseert. He spoke plainly and firmly. He protested against the resolution and adduced arguments in support of his protest which would convince anyone not steeped in bias. The Indian community is beholden to Mr. Goch for his outspokenness and the stand he took up for Justice. And so long as we have men like him, we shall continue to believe in the ultimate triumph of a cause which is inherently just.

Indian Opinion, 25-2-1904

285. LABOUR FOR THE TRANSVAAL FROM INDIA

In his excellent review of the year's work for the mines, submitted last week to the annual meeting of the Chamber of Mines, Sir George Farrar naturally dwelt on the labour question at length. From the remarks made by him it would appear that an attempt is still being

made to obtain indentured labour for the mines from India. He said:

> It may be that we may extend our operations to India, but so far, the attitude of the Indian Government has been one of opposition, They are willing to send us labourers, but they object to our terms of repatriation. When however, it is seen to what extent the return of labourers, after their term of contract in these mines, brings prosperity to their own country, then the objections which the Indian Government holds to-day may be waived in the sole interests of the Indian Empire.

It is wonderful how people would find arguments in support of their preconceived ideas. That the Indian Government would waive objections in the sole interests of the Indian Empire is not a novel idea. Lord Harris, who might be expected to know better, has said as much and more already. We are not, therefore, surprised that Sir George Farrar should adopt a similar view. If, however, he would only look a little beneath the surface, he will find at once that there is nothing whatever in his arguments. We assume, for instance, the 20,000 Indians went to the Transvaal under the proposed conditions at, say, a monthly wage of £ 3 or even £ 3-10-0; that they saved £ 30 per year. That would mean a saving of £ 90 at the end of three years, that is to say, £ 1,800,000. among 20,000 labourers. India has a population of 300,000,000. How many years' continuous working would be necessary before there would be £ 1 per head distributed in India out of the indentured labour in the Transvaal? Will any man in his senses contend that, for the sake of such a visionary gain, the Indian Government would sell Indians into virtual slavery? The figures we have quoted are, of course, based on the supposition that every Indian would save almost the whole of his wages. Moreover, year after year, if the principle of compulsory repatriation were accepted, India would have to support an Indian population used to a comparatively more expensive style of living, and the result would be that, instead of identured immigration under the conditions proposed being a blessing, it would be a veritable curse even to the labourers themselves.

Indian Opinion, 25-2-1904

286. THE ELECTIONS AT THE CAPE

The Progressive Party has won perhaps beyond expectations. Even those who were most hopeful never thought that it would have a clear majority of five in the Assembly. We tender our humble congra-

tulations to Dr. Jameson on his victory. The success of his party, let us hope, is a happy augury for the British Indians at the Cape, although they have not so many grievances at the Cape as in Natal or the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony. At the Cape, too, the tendency of late has been to take away their rights, and we have to thank the Bond Party for the anti-Indian alterations that were made in the Cape Immigration Restriction Act. It was Mr. Merriman and his friends who carried the amendment to the draft Bill to regulate immigration into the Colony applying it to British subjects also. We are aware that the Bond approached and tried to induce Coloured people at the Cape to give the few votes they have to the Bond candidates. And although perhaps, there is not much to choose between the Progressive and the Bond men, so far as the British Indians are concerned, if a choice were to be made, we have no hesitation in saying that the Progressives should have the preference. Indeed, Dr. Jameson came forward quite frankly and stated that he did not believe in any distinction. That is a state-ment to which no one could take any exception. We can only hope that the worthy Doctor, now Premier of the Colony, will not swallow his own words and yield either to the interested clamour of rival traders, or to the agitation of the Bond, to curtail the rights and liberties of the British Indians residing in the old Colony.

Indian Opinion, 25-2-1904

287. THE DEALERS' LICENSES ACT

The Durban Town Council has once more proved what a terrible engine of oppression the Dealers' Licenses Act is to the traders. One Mr. J. M. Woolfson has been in trade for the last three years, as appears from the proceedings. This year, however, the Licensing Officer took it into his head to refuse to renew his license. No reasons were given for it, and the aggrieved trader, therefore, procured Mr. Askew's services and has gone through the farce of an appeal which is provided for in the Act. Mr. Askew was, however, groping in the dark as he did not know on what grounds his client's bread had been taken away from him. He had only guessed that his client's books were not properly kept, and now wanted to know definitely whether that was the cause for refusal. The Mayor, therefore, called for the report of the Licensing Officer, but Mr. Askew was not to see it as it was "privileged". In vain did Mr. Askew protest until he found in Mr. Burne a Councillor who was not prepared to sit still and be a party to the cruel

injustice of condemning a man unheard. On the Mayor protesting that the document in question could not be divulged, Mr. Burne threatened that he would not in the future sit in appeal if the Mayor persisted in his objection. This was a threat which His Worship could not disregard and, therefore [he] effected a compromise by saying that the matter would be considered in committee. Mr Askew, therefore, rightly intervened and said that they were going back to the Middle Ages. For our part, we do not know that even in the Middle Ages such a shocking state of affairs was allowed in the teeth of well laid down legal procedure: surely, if a man has a right to appeal, he ought to have a right to see the documents which are on record. Mr. Justice Mason, in deciding the case of Somnath[1] quoted by Mr. Askew, passed some trenchant remarks on the high-handed action of the Town Council, some years ago, in refusing to allow the appellant to have access to the record or in considering anything in committee, that is behind the back of the appellant. However, in [to] committee the Town Council did go on this occasion, and, after having been in labour for some time. They brought forth the proposal that Mr. Askew might look at the record. It was laconic enough! "Books unsatis-factory; license refused." Mr. Askew then produced evidence to shew that the books were kept by a competent book-keeper and that, therefore, the Town Council should exercise its jurisdiction and order the Licensing Officer to issue a license. The Town Council, however, was not to be so easily induced to do justice. It, therefore, dismissed the appeal but suggested to Mr. Askew that he should renew his application to the Licensing Officer.

That the Town Council of the premier and model borough in South Afirica should thus disgrace itself and make a confession of its incapacity to take an unbiassed view of cases that may come before it sitting as a Court of Appeal, is, in the face of it, a sad reflection; but it is not at all suprising. The fault lies with the Legislature. It has chosen to give most arbitrary powers to the Town Councils, and even the Town Council of a well-regulated place like Durban could not resist the temptation to use such powers when there are no salutary checks against its abuse. The members who sit in appeal are not trained in law. Some of them are rival traders, and it is not fair to expect them to give an impartial decision when their own interests are involved. So

[1]*Vide* "The Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa: An appeal to the Indian Public", 14-8-1896

long, therefore, as the Dealers Licenses Act is allowed to disfigure the Statute-book of the Colony, so long must the people of the Colony be prepared for a repetition of the discreditable proceedings to which it has been our painful duty to draw the attention of the public.

Indian Opinion, 3-3-1904

288. JOHANNESBURG INDIAN LOCATION

We reproduce in another column the report made by the Public Health Committeee regarding the new site for locating British Indians dispossessed under the Insanitary Area Expropriation Ordinance. The report shews that the Public Health Committee of the Town Council of Johannesburg has changed its mind. It is curious how the Government as also public bodies continue to shift the[ir] anti-Asiatic policy from time to time. The slightest pressure from outside, no matter how interested it may be, is sufficient inducement for a departure from principles previously laid down. Not long ago, we informed our readers that the Public Health Committee of the Town Council had recommended the site of the present Kaffir Location for an Asiatic Bazaar. The Indian protested against it on the ground, among many others, that it would be far away from the present Location. But a petition was also presented to the Committee signed by 1300 persons, many of whom are said to be residents in Brixton, Mayfair, and Fordsburg, disapproving of the Council's suggestion because in their opinion the site was too near the localities above mentioned. The Indian protest was, of course, useless, but the protest of the 1300 petitioners was not to be disregarded by the Public Health Committee. It has, therefore, swallowed its own opinions expressed a few months ago, and it now comes forward with the suggestion that the site that was proposed by the late Government for a new Indian and Chinese Location should be taken up for the Asiatic Bazaar, and the Committee argues that

> the ground which it is now proposed to utilise as the site for this bazaar is the ground that has been marked for many years as reserved for this purpose. The objections to the use of this site for the purpose are, therefore, less strong than those which could be brought against the use of any other site within the same distance from the town.

In order to completely isolate the proposed site from Brixton, it is proposed

> to lay out the site in such a way that a clear space of about two hundred feet in

width will be left on the western boundary between the Asiatic bazaar and Brixton.. and to erect on the western and northern boundaries an unclimbable fence to prevent the residents in the location gaining direct access to Brixton.

The Public Health Committee might have added that the very site which they now recommend was the one against which the British Government, before war, very strongly protested, against which the then Vice-Consul, Mr. Emrys Evans, drew up a scathing report, and which was ultimately rejected also by the late Government. Is the site now so wonderfully improved? Or has the distance between the Market Square and the site during these years decreased so as to make it suitable under the British regime? In 1899, the distance from the Post Office was $4\frac{3}{4}$ miles.

Indian Opinion, 3-3-1904

289. THE MALAY LOCATION

The following is the recommendation of the General Purposes Committee of the Town Council of Johannesburg regarding the Malay Location in Johannesburg.

> The total area of the ground referred to in this recommendation amounts to 18,885 acres. The Commission recommends that this ground should be vested in the Council, with the exception of a triangular portion of the South, 41 acres in extent, the greater portion of which is at present occupied by the Malay location. With regard to this piece of ground, the Commission recommended that it should remain the property of the Government, and should be earmarked for the future requirements of the railway. It is understood that the suggestion of the Commission is that the council should have the control and use of this ground until such time as it my be required by the railway. The Public Health Committee have approved of the Commission's recommendation, but recommended that a proviso should be inserted, making it clear that the cost of removing and compensating the Malays, who are at present in occupation of this ground, should be borne by the Railway Administration or the Government whenever the Council may find it necessary or expedient to remove them, and that the Council should be compensated for any buildings which it may find it necessary to erect in order to provide for sanitary or other requirements in connection with the Malay location, as long as the Malays remain in occupation.

The inhabitants of the locality will, therefore, have to be very careful in safeguarding their interests. There never has been even so

much as a whisper against the place from a sanitary standpoint. The residents live very decently. They have built substantial premises; some of them have built even brick buildings, and it would be cruel if the people are now removed from their places. It is high time the Government gave the Coloured people in the Tansvaal some fixity of tenure and an assurnance as to their status. When the Location was laid out, it was a wilderness. If it has now become a flourishig place, it is due to the energy of the people living there. The Government owe it to them to recognise their industry and perseverance. We note that the rent for the Stands in the Location has been raised from 7/6 per month to £1 per month.

Indian Opinion, 3-3-1904

290. IMMIGRATION RESTRICTION REPORT

We give in another column the main points of the interesting, exhaustive, and able report drawn by Mr. Smith[1] and presented to the Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

Before proceeding to examine the different points, we venture to draw Mr. Smith's attention to what appears to us to be the one fault of his otherwise unexceptionable summary of the year's work in restricting immigration into the Colony. Mr. Smith has a vigorous style of writing, but, with all deference, it is hardly becoming in an Official report to adopt a theatrical or newspaper style. Speaking of the complaints of delay on the part of passengers at the time of examination, he says:

> Facts are of little account to the man with a grievance associated with the landing basket and a sixty minutes's wait in a tug at the anchorage in fresh weather. The circumstance that the officer in question may have finished his work and be himself anxiously waiting to get ashore is unknown to him. He has heard someone (probably a returned Colonist) speak dispargingly of the Department, and he takes the tune with facility. Full of uncharitable feelings, he hurries to his hotel to write and dispatch to the Press a commentary on the shortcomings of the Department, and to exercise his altruistic instincts in the framing of impracticable suggestions for the amelioration of the lot of future passengers.

Take, again, the following:

> I have already shown the futility of expecting any relief from passengers who

[1] Harry Smith, Immigration Restriction Officer.

'know the ropes.'

The report is ínterspersed with such racy paragraphs which no doubt make interesting reading, but, in our opinion, are out of place in a matter-of-fact document, such as official reports should be. Moreover, the style adopted betrays irritation on the part of Mr. Smith, who is othrwise not easily upset and who is universally courteous to those who have any dealings with his office. We think that the public have a perfect right to make complaints. Some times the complaints are unreasonable, often expressed in forcible language, and occasionally exaggerated. Unfortunately, that is a state of things that cannot be corrected and on the principle that "what cannot be cured should be endured", officers who have to perform unpleasant duties are expected to tolerate such things from the public and not ridicule them. We do not at all mean to convey that Mr. Smith should not have attempted a reply to the complaint. Our objection is to the manner in which it is done.

Coming to the report itself, Mr. Smith, in his opening paragraph, takes pardonable pride in the fact that the original Immigration Restriction Act 1897 "has been repealed and been substituted by the new and more comprehensive measure on the lines which I (he) had the honour of suggesting". To us, it is not easy to see why there should be any ocasion for glory in the fact. To refuse entrance to men who may come to the Colony for the purpose of earing a livelihood, and whose only fault is probably their poverty or their skin, could at no time be a pleasant duty, and it must be particularly painful to a man of Mr. Smiths's generous temperament. We find in his report that he succeeded in shutting out 6,763 would-be immigrants, of whom 3,244 were British Indians, including 24 females and 37 children, Of course, the Immigration Act being the law of the Colony, and Mr. Smith being the officer entrusted with the work of enforcing it, he could not but turn away the men who did not fulfil the test applied under the Act, but it shews how harsh the law itself is and with what terrible effect it is telling on the British Indians, for it should be remembered that these men had undergone a long voyage, and had probably invested all they had in taking out a passage for Natal, thinking that they would not be prohibited from landing in a British Colony. In spite of the Act, which has hardly reached the ears of the millions of India, the people there cannot assimilate the doctrine that there could be differences in the nature of their rights as citizens of the Empire under the same flag in different parts of it.

The immigrants admitted after examination were 1,869 Indians, including 195 females and 499 children, 21 Chinese, I Egyptian, 38 Greeks, 8 Singalese, 1 Syrian and 8 Turks, Of the Indians admitted, 158 passed the educational test. This is less than one-tenth of the total admitted. It may be here remarked that the new Act has only just come into operation, and the next report from Mr. Smith will, we very much fear, shew us considerable decrease in the number of those who would have passed the educational test.

Mr. Smith gives the interesting information that

> during the twelve months, some 269 certificates (of domicile) were conficated and the men who produced them sent about their business.

Seeing that thousands of such certificates are now in vogue, the number of certificates improperly used is remarkably small. All the same, it shews that the Legislature in its wisdom has put a temptation in the way of the public to evade the law. That is the history of all restrictive legislation throughout the world, and it is especially so when it is restriction of personal freedom and pesonal movements.

The report would have been more complete if Mr. Smith had included in his summary the grounds on which intending immigrants have been debarred from entering the Colony. Another thing also seems to have been omitted from the report, namely, that British Indians who entered the Colony after 1897 after having passed the examination under the Department are being turned out of the Colony although they may have settled. While we may not say much against a ruthless carrying out of the law so far as new immigrants are concerned, we do feel that the Department will be going a little too far in attempting to drive away men who are already established in the Colony. It is hardly fair to hound decent people out of the Colony as if they were criminals, especially when it is known that the very Department which allowed them to enter the Colony is driving them away. We would not go into the question of how and why they succeeded in establishing themselves after 1897. Although they did not fully satisfy the requirements of the law, the fact stands the they have not stolen into the country, but that they entered after having been properly examined by the officers engaged to do the work under Mr. Smith. We, therefore trust that Mr. Smith would be pleased to stay his hand so far as the British Indian residents of the Colony are concerned, no matter whether they were in the Colony before 1897 or not.

Indian Opinion, 10-3-1904

291. THE ASIATIC TRADERS COMMISSION

The British Indian traders have before them a very difficult task about submitting their claims rearding vested interests created before the war, and in view of the fact that the Commission is to hold its preliminary meeting on the 14th instant, it may not be amiss to study the reference to the Commission.

It is wide enough in its scope, but in this instance the fact that the terms are so general gives rise to many intricacies and to the question: what are to be treated as vested interests? In the first place, the Commissioners are to

> consider the cases of certain Asiatics and to enquire and report as to the number of such traders, and the nature and value of the vested interests claimed by them in respect of their having been allowed to trade outside locations.

Thus, the Commissioners have no power to deal with the trading question at all, but merely to submit a report to His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor. The strict interpretation of the reference would appear to be that they are not even to value the vested interests or to determine their nature, but merely to report what the Asiatics may have to say on these points. If so, the question is very simple. All that the British Indians have to do is to state in what manner, where, and how long they have been trading, whether they had partners or not, and what value they place upon their good-will and business because vested interests would include not only the actual price of the goods in which they dealt on the outbreak of war, but also the price of good-will. It is, however, in putting a valuation on it that the greatest difficulty will arise. Then comes the most thorny question as to who are the Asitics that would be allowed to file their claims. We know that, according to the terms of reference, they are defined as

> those who were trading in the Transvaal in towns outside locations without license at and immediately before the outbreak of hostilities.

A British Indian, therefore, before he can file his claim, has to prove

1 that he was trading in the Transvaal;
2 that he was trading outside Locations;
3 that he held no license;
4 that he was trading at the outbreak of hostilities;
5 that he was trading also immediately before the outbreak of hostilities.

If we are not mistaken, "and" occurring after "at" should read ör" in the above quotation, because the whole of the debate in the Legislative Council went to shew that the intention was to respect the rights of those who either traded actually at the outbreak of hostilities or immediately before. And yet we find that the claimants, in accordance with the reference, have to shew that they were not only trading at but also immediately before the outbreak of hostilities. To put the difficulty in a concrete form, it means that, according to the reference, it is not enough that an Indian was trading, say, in the month of June 1899 and left the Transvaal owing to the prospect of war, but he should also prove that he was actually engaged in trade on the 11th of October, 1899. And if the terms are strictly adhered to, hundreds of claimants would be simply brushed aside.

We have mentioned these difficulties in order to shew the expensive nature of the work before the British Indians.

The test case is to be heard before the Supreme Court very shortly. If the result is favourable to the Indian community, the Indian traders need not go to the expense of filing their claims at all. But they are on the horns of a dilemma. It is not certain when the case will be heard. The Commissioners have fixed the 15th of this month as the irrevocable date before which the claims are to be filed. The British Indian Association, we understand, have approached the Commissioners for an adjournment. The request seems to us to be extremely reasonable. On the other hand, the Commissioners have a duty to perform; they must report to the Lieutenant-Governor with all dispatch. The appointment of the Commission was made before the test case was brought, and unless His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor authorises the Government to postpone their deliberations until the case is decided, we can quite understand that the Commisioners would find themselves in an awkward predicament in deciding upon the request for an adjournment. Yet it would be simply cruel to expect the Indian traders to file their claims when they have every hope of avoiding the inconvenience and the expense attendant thereupon in view of the test case. It is, therefore, to be trusted that the Commisioners will be able to cut the Gordian knot and do justice to the Indians consistently with the duty imposed upon them by His Excellency the Lieutentant-Governor.

Indian Opnion, 10-3-1904

292. LOGICAL

We have already dealt with the action of the Municipal Conference[1] at Johannesburg with reference to Mr. Constable's proposal that all Asiatic traders should be removed to Locations, subject to compensation being paid only to those who held licenses to trade outside bazaars or Locations before war. Our contemporary, the *South African Guardian* has a very reasonable article on it the logic of which is irresistible. The *Guardian* rightly states that, if there is to be an invasion from China in the shape of slaves, there could be no ground for harassing a handful of British Indian traders, and the argument receives very great force from the fact that Boksburg, on behalf of which Mr. Constable spoke, has decided in favour of the Chinese invasion. We give the argument in our contemporary's own words:

> The lack of principle inspiring this movement is shown by the fact that it was pressed forward by Boksburg traders, who have been most active in advocating the introduction of hordes of Chinese into the Transvaal under restrictions which preclude them from trading. These men are not concerned with the moral well-being of the community, all they wish is that trade shall be diverted into their establishments which at present goes to the Indians. While advocating the introduction of 100,000 or more Mongolians, who will corrrupt and debase the national life they urge that a few Indian traders shall be compelled to forgo opposition to their trade, and that the people of the Transvaal shall provide opposition compensation. The people of the Transvaal might well do this to separate Asiatics from Europeans, and to prevent, as far as possible, race contamination. If, however, the Chinese are to come in their tens of thousands, all hope of maintaining a high standard of civilization in the Transvaal must be abandoned, and the presence of Indian traders will be a minor evil compared with that which has been so enthusiastically endorsed by the traders of Boksburg. If these gentlemen think that, having abandoned principle, they can obtain something which can only be urged with success on the grounds of that high expediency which demands the prevention of race contamination, they are, we fancy, doomed to disappointment. It would be an injustice to the taxpayer to call upon him to provide compensation for Indian traders denied the right to trade in a Mongolian community. It has been proclaimed that it is the will of the people of the Transvaal that Asiatic labour should be made the basis of its prosperity. If this should come about, the loss sustained by white traders in competition with coloured will not be a matter of any particular importance.

Indian Opinion, 10-3-1904

[1] *Vide* "the Municipal Conference and Indian Traders" 25-2-1904.

293. THE ASIATIC BAZAAR, JOHANNESBURG

The British Indians residing in the expropriated Location at Johanesburg have our full sympathy. Theirs is a most pitiable condition. Since September last, many inhabitants of that area have been deprived of their only means of livelihood. The assessment of their claims for expropriation takes no notice of the high rents they were in the habit of receiving. The awards, therefore, made by the arbitrators, while they are considerably above the final offers made by the Town Council, are but a poor consolation to them as it is impossible to get enough interest of the amounts received by them to enable them to live at all comfortably. They have all to be cooped up within the expropriated area and be at the mercy of the Town Council, for no permanent accommodation has yet been provided for them in terms of the law. They cannot invest their monies in land, because they do not enjoy the right to own fixed property in the Transvaal. From the reports received, the sanitary condition of the Location has never been so bad as it is now. The surplus Kaffir population also is being housed in the Location, the result being that it is overcrowded beyond description. When the Stands were under the control of the owners, they were held liable for the[ir] proper upkeep, and their place was certainly habitable then. Each owner employed a sweeper for his Stand and saw that it was not unduly crowded. Now however, the sanitation of the Location is nobody's business. The Town Council is expected to look after the whole place, but it has hopelessly failed for want of management and proper staff. Dr. Porter, we are aware, is anxious to do all he can, but he has not the funds at his disposal to place a sweeper on each Stand. All that he has done and can do is to increase the number of inspectors. That, however, is hardly enough. If the condition we have described above had been the condition of the Location be[fore expropriation][1] there would ha[ve certainly been a] howl from all parts as to the habits of the British Indians and the[ir] neglect of sanitation. It was Major O'Meara who struck the first note and condemned what is now termed the Insanitary Area, including the Location. Dr. Porter took up the strain and painted the Location in the blackest colours. Both Major O'Meara and Dr. Porter contended that the existence of the Area, and especially the Location, was an ever-present, immediate danger to the health of the town, and they

[1] The original is mutilated.

advised that not a moment should be lost in sweeping away the whole of the site. And yet the site is there, only it is much worse than it was before and this cannot be denied either by the worthy Doctor or the Town Council. What, then, could have been the meaning of the term "immediate danger" every reader can guess for himself. The reports published in the Johannesburg newspapers, moreover, go to shew that the settlement of a new site and improvement are as far off as ever. The proposal of the Public Health Committee has been resented by the inhabitants of Brixton and other parts of Johannesburg. The Town Council has received a deputation and petition presented to it. There is, therfore, no doubt that the latest proposal of the Public Health Committee is not by any means the last. Not that it matters much because, if we are not mistaken, the British Indians would simply decline to remove to a place which is totally worthless for trade purposes. All the objections raised to it in 1899[1] are equally sound today. But the deputation teaches a lesson which it is well to understand. The Health Committee advises that the present Kaffir Location be utilised for the habitation of the Indians. The gentlemen in Brixton resisted the proposal and they were successful. They are now again objecting to the second recommendation, and we learn that the Town Council has, instead of accepting the proposal of the Public Health Committee, adjourned its discussion for a personal inspection of the proposed site. We shall not, therefore, be at all surprised if the recommendation of the Public Health Committee is shelved. The inhabitants of Brixton and the surrounding area, therefore, have merely to persist in their objection, and it will be respected. In the meanwhile, the poor Indian must patiently wait. Arguments advanced by the petitioners are quite in keeping with the [present attitude of Europeans towards the British ind]ians. We[may][2] note in passing that a clergyman, the Reverend Mr. Brown, acted as spokesman for the petitioners who state that "It will be impossible and dangerous for our women and children to live in this district". It will be interesting to know how these gentlemen have been able to live within the district all these years, for it should be remebered that the Kaffir Location and the Indian Location have been where they at present are for over ten years, and the Europeans in the neighbourhood have been able to live without danger, and have not found it impossible to reside there; for, it is not a question of putting

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Chamberlain", 16-5-1899

[2] Word effaced in the original

the Kaffirs in the neighbourhood now for the first time. Again the petitioners remark.

> thus although accommodation will be found for Asiatics, a large section of the community (European) will be left homeless, there being no other land available at a reasonable price within easy distance of the town and the place of daily labour.

This is really humorous! No question has been raised as to removing them (the Europeans) from where they are—in fact, they have been granted every facility for bettering their condition and building their own homes. It is no use arguing with people who are so much blinded by prejudice as to become totally unable to distingush between right and wrong. Their suggestion is that the Indians should be sent to some place south of the reef where they will be cut off from all communi-cation with the Town except with difficulty. When they are met with the objection that sites south of the reef are all within the Mining Area and, therefore, proclaimed, they say that as the Government have the right to appropriate so much of the Mining Area as may be necessary for cutting roads, depositing purposes, etc., and as the Town Council had already taken up some portion of it for depositing the refuse of the town, it might also deposit what is to them the living refuse of the town.

The Colonial Secretary is the final arbiter between the gentlemen represented by Mr. Brown and the Indians who by law are entitled to be housed as near to the present Location as possible. It is due to the latter as human beings that the suspense under which they are now labouring should be ended, and that they should be placed in in a position that would enable them to eke out a livelihood.

Indian Opinion, 17-3-1904

294. FOOT-PATHS AGAIN

Ever since the British occupation of the Transvaal, representations have been persistently made to the Government regarding the anti-Asiatic laws of the country among which is the old Town Regulation preventing Coloured persons from using the side-walks. Last year, the British Indian Association drew the Lieutenant-Governors attention to this Regulation, and His Excellency said that he did not want to deal with the anti-Asiatic legislation haphazard, but that the whole question would be dealt with together. In the meanwhile, he assured the deputation that waited on him that British Indians would

not be molested by the police. News has, however, arrived from the Transvaal that the Commissioner of Police has issued instructions for the enforcement of the Foot-path Bye-law, the reason for the sudden departure is this. A Kaffir is alleged to have misbehaved himself. The case came before Mr. Van Der Berg, and he (the Kaffir) was discharged. Some interested parties thought that it was a miscarriage of justice. Letters, most passionately worded, were sent to the Press. The *Leader* encourged the agitation by opening its columns and advocating a stringent anti-Native policy. The result is what we see, and if any regulations are to be enforced against the Natives, other Coloured people including Indians are covered by them as a matter of course. Lord Milner has declined to draw the distinction, and the Indians have to suffer. Indeed, the Commissioner of Police has been pleased to add to the instructions that Coloured persons of the better class and Natives exempted under Ordinacce 28 of 1902 are not to be interfered with. The police, therefore, will have a very invidious duty to perform. They will have to become experts in knowing Coloured people of the better class from others. Evidently, there is no test laid down as to what is to constitute a Coloured person of the better class. The matter will, therefore, be left to the absolute discretion of the police. It does not seem to have struck the Commissioner of Police that such instructions are bound to create a great deal of irritation and inconvenience. Rather than having regulations which are so very indefinite in their scope, it would be infinitely better for all concerned to enforce the regulations as they are and prevent any Coloured person from using the foot-paths. It may be a drastic remedy, but if the anti-Coloured Policy is to be followed up by the Transvaal Government, we see no other solution. The latest regulations are one more illustration of how the complaint of the British Indian Association that the old laws of the Transvaal against the Asiatics are far more severely enforced now than before is being justified, for it should be noted that the foot-path regulations were totally a dead letter during the Boer regime so far as the British Indians were concerrned.

Indian Opinion, 17-3-1904

295. LETTER TO DR. PORTER

21 TO 24 COURT CHAMBERS,
JOHANNESBURG,
March 18, 1904

DR. C. PORTER
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
JOHANNESBURG

DEAR DR. PORTER,

I send you the enclosed rough note[1] as it comes to me. I understand there are about fifteen Indians, in the condition described, in the Location. Many of them are paupers. One man has died, and no one has removed, or is in a position to remove, the dead body.

Will you kindly interest yourself in the matter? A great deal is being done by volunteers, and the patients are being attended to. An attempt is being made to raise subscriptions also. In the meanwhile, however, I hope that you will be good enough to do all that may be necessary.

I understand that these men have come from the mines where they have been working. If you will give one of the vacant Stands in the Location to be used as a temporary hospital, it will be very much appreciated. I believe it is the duty of the Town Council to attend to these men. The Indian community, however, will raise subscriptions and partially fit out the place. Dr. Godfrey, who has just returned from Glasgow, will probably attend to the patients free of charge or at a nominal fee. I, however, leave the matter entirely in your hands.

I remain,
Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

[ADDENDUM][2]

On the first of March, a short note[3] was written to Dr. Porter,

[1] This is not available, but Gandhiji says in his *Autobiography* (Part IV Capter XV) that the pencil note by Madanjit was to the following effect: "There has been a sudden outbreak of the black plague. You must come immediately and take [prompt measures, otherwise we must be prepared for dire consequences. Please come immediately".

[2] The correspondence was released to the Press with this explanation.

[3] This is not available.

informing him that, in my opinion, plague had broken out. Letter of the 8th March is the reply thereto.

No copy of the letter was kept and, it being probably at Dr. Porter's house, Health Office cannot supply a copy.

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 9-4-1904

296. INTERVIEW TO "THE STAR"[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
March 21, 1904

Mr. M. K. Gandhi, the well-known Indian advocate, who has acted on two Plague Committees, and was a volunteer nurse of plague patients for two years, interviewed by a representative of *The Star* this morning, said that the Indian community warned the proper authorities of what were very suspicious indications about two months ago. Subsequently, another communication was sent to Dr. Porter, stating that plague symptoms had developed. Four days later, Mr. Gandhi stated that he received a letter from Dr. Porter to the effect that the health officer had failed to find any indication in substantiation of the statement. On Friday, however, Mr. Gandhi was informed that number of Indians "dead or dying" were being "dumped" down in the Location by rickshaws. After informing the authorities, Mr. Gandhi, accompanied by Dr. Godfrey, Dr. Pereira and a health inspector, visted the suspected area, and on entering a house which the Indian community had themselves isolated, they discovered 14 patients. Voluntary subscriptions had been taken up amongst the Indians, and the patients had been made comparatively comfortable under the supervision of a number of volunteer male nurses. Dr. Godfrey at once took control of the improvised hospital, and arranged that there should be a medical attendant present through the night. On Saturday morning, Mr. Gandhi states that the Town Clerk visited him, and said that, while he could not undertake any financial responsibility on behalf of the Town Council, he would as requested, grant the use of the Government Entrepot, Station Road, as a temporary hospital, and that Dr. MacKenzie, the District Surgeon, would supervise the arrangements, leaving the details to Dr. Godfrey. By voluntary assistance, the

[1] This was reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 24-3-1904.

premises offered were cleaned, disinfected, 25 beds brought in, and by 3.30 o'clock the patients had been admitted. Dr. MacKenzie had arranged that Sister West should be sent over from the nurses quarters to superintend the work of the male nurses. Medical opinion was not at that time made up as to what the symptoms indicated, but, by reason of the virulence of the disease, Dr. MacKenzie subsequently came to the conclusion that the patients were suffering from pneumonic plague. Out of the 25 patients admitted, only 5 were alive on Sunday night, 3 of whom were sent to the lazaretto at Reitfontein. Continuing, Mr. Gandhi said that the Indian community had done everything it possibly could to prevent the spread of the outbreak, and up to the present every case had been reported by it. Speaking as a layman, Mr. Gandhi considered that, if proper precautions were taken, there should be no spread of the disease. He had been nursing in quarters where there had been extraordinary mortality from plague, owing to the great care exercised by those who came in contact with the patients, the disease had been confined to the isolated spot. In conclusion, Mr. Gandhi said: "In my opinion, the plague has broken out entirely owing to the insanitary and overcrowded condition of the Insanitary Area, aggravated by the recent wet weather. I do not think that the germ must necessarily have been imported; the plague is nothing more than an acute type of pneumonia. The Indian community was not at all to blame for the outbreak. It is the machinery of Government that is faulty, and I say with all due deference that, if the Public Health Committee had been more practical, there would have been no outbreak. The only thing now to be done is to burn the whole of the buildings on the Insanitary Area, and move the people to a temporary camp, and feed them. This would entail expense, but it would be well worth incurring."

The Star, 21-3-1904

297. BRITISH INDIAN ENTERPRISE

Our contemporary, *The Natal Advertiser*, has published from its special correspondent a communication dealing with the question of British Indian landowners in the County of Victoria.

The correspondent is very wroth that Indians should hold any land whatsoever in Natal. Unfortunately for him, the arguments and the facts adduced by him all go to shew that the settlement of Indians in that County and the holding by them of land have been a great

boon to the County itself.

Before we deal with the facts stated in the communication, we would take the liberty of correcting an error. The writer of the article thinks that a very large quantity of land has passed into the hands of the Indians. We may, however, state that up to now the bulk of the land is still owned by the Europeans. The vast plantations are theirs and so are the magnificent mansions which have become possible owing to Indian labour. And, surely, a path of land here and there in the hands of Indians would not justify the alarm that the writer evidently intends to raise. In any case, however, what has the writer got to say in disparagement of the Indians? He says:

> Anyone who travels over the district. . . will find no difficulty in admitting that. . . this is at least the most diligently cultivated district in the Colony. A few years ago, the North Coast belt had not this prosperous appea-rance. Before so much land came under cultivation, at this time of the year about all that could be seen between the Umgeni and the Tugela was great stre-tches of veldt browned with summer sun. Today the area of natural grass is becoming insignificant and that, with the abundant rains, is as green as spring verdure, while the crops approaching maturity are said never to have been so prolific.

One would have considered that such a state of things woul be a cause for congratulation, but the writer considers that it is deplorable because the prosperity of the County is due to Indian enterprise. He would rather see the County barren and devoid of any population than see it green and yielding any splendid revenue to the Colony, making it possible for hundreds of princely European farmers to enjoy themselves. The writer, moreover, admits that much of the land is leased out to the Indians by the Europeans, that is to say, the European farmers are unable themselves to make the land pay unless they are to employ Indian agriculturalists to till it. Again, it should be remembered that, after all, if it has been possible for the Indian to own any land at all, it is due to the sale by the original European owners, and in spite of the correspondent of our contemporary calling them unpatriotic on that score, unbiased people would consider that it was not only a benefit to the sellers but also to the community in general that they, by giving the Indian an opportunity of working on the soil, have added to the prosperity of the Colony.

The arguments and facts advanced by the correspondent, in our humble opinion, shew deplorable weakness of mind and a lack of appreciation of economic policy. Well-behaved, sober, industrious

people would be considered a valuable asset in any community. It is only in the Colonies where a dog-in-the-manger policy is the ruling passion that we hear an outcry against such people. After all, we imagine that a community bereft of simple-living and industrious people would not be able for long to hold its own and turn the resources of the land upon which it lives to good account.

Indian Opinion, 24-3-1904

298. PLAGUE IN JOHANNESBURG[1]

THE GREAT WORK OF THE INDIAN COMMUNITY

The Plague had been discovered (it would not be correct to say it had broken out) in Johannesburg nearly two months ago. The Indians gave the warning to the authorities[2] that they must expect an epidemic unless they remedied the condition that the so-called Insanitary Area had assumed after the Town Council took possession, for, after the 26th September, tenants were accepted by the Town Council within that area irrespective of the size of the buildings let. There has, therefore, taken place overcrowding that defies description. Add to this the increase in insanitation owing to inability of the Council to keep the premises clean. The responsibility having been taken out of the hands of the Stand-owners, they were powerless to control fifty or more people living on each Stand. Before the 26th September last year, the owners of 96 Stands in the Indian Location, for instance, were liable for proper sanitation; when the Town Council assumed control, it therefore meant the employing of at least 96 *topazes*. This the Council could not or would not do; anyhow, the area that never was so insanitary as to call for expropriation has been made so by the Council. Hence the necessity for the warning above referred to. On top of this, came the recent phenomenal wet weather which gave rise to acute pneumonia, which can easily become infectious: and this disease, finding suitable soil in the Insanitary Area, assumed a very deadly form and became the pneumonic plague. As soon as such cases occurred, the authorities were again informed. But after 4 days' investigation they came to the conclusion that they were brought to the Location in a dying condition. The matter was again reported to the authorities. But the community now took the matter in its own hands also. It realised that red tape might prevent prompt action.

[1] This appeared as "From our own Correspondent".

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Porter", February 11, 1904.

Medical assistance was promptly rendered to the patients. Dr. Godfrey, who had just come from Glasgow, placed his services freely at the disposal of the community. Later the same day (Friday), the Health Inspector came on the scene and gave a helping hand, still being unable to take up official responsibility. Some buildings were commandeered and temporarily turned into a hospital. Those who witnessed the scenes at this hospital, patients who should never have been ill suffering agony, Dr. Godfrey, Mr. Madanjit, and young educated Indians becoming at much risk nurses and carefully attending to the 14 patients who were crowded into the small rooms, and the patients dying one after another, would never forget the sight at once ghastly and inspiring—ghastly, because of the grim tragedy, and inspiring, because the event showed the ability of the community to rise to the occasion and to organise. While the patients were being looked after on one Stand, a very largely attended mass meeting was going on on another Stand. Nearly £ 1,000 were subscribed by the rich and the poor in order that a permanent hospital may be erected for the use of the community. The manner in which the poor men came forward with subscriptions reflects the greatest credit on them.

On Saturday morning, the authortities seemed to grasp the situation. They provided a large warehouse, the old Customs House, as a temporary hospital, the Town Clerk still declining to undertake any financial responsibility for the time being and leaving it to the community to find beds, mattresses, etc. The Indians, however, could not afford to calculate the £.s.d. and took [over] the managership. The District Surgeon very kindly provided a very good trained nurse, and at last five out of twenty-five patients have been removed to the lazaretto and the outbreak of the plague has been officially declared. Thus, it has required an ocular demostration of poor men dying like flies to enable the Town Council to come up to the scratch. And yet no one indvidual is to blame; for every one as such has been anxious to do good. It is the soulless bulky corporation wound up in red tape and nurtured on theory that must be held blameable for the ghastly tragedy. A cordon is now drawn round the Location, though there are cases of plague in other districts also. But the Indian community is bearing its troubles with a heroic patience worthy of its traditions.

Indian Opinion, 24-3-1904

299. THE PLAGUE[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
March 30, 1904

The statistics up to date are:

WHITES	
Proved cases	6
Suspected	9
COLOURED	
Suspected	4
ASIATICS	
Proved	50
Suspected	6
NATIVES	
Proved	6
Suspected	23

DEATHS OF PROVED PLAGUE CASES

WHITES	ASIATICS	NATIVES
6	47	3

Almost all of these cases are those taken over after the discovery of the outbreak. That is to say, there have been very few new cases since the fatal 20th. It was during the first two days when the cases were being picked up that the heavy mortality occurred. This, moreover, accounts for the great preponderance of the Asiatic cases. The pneumonia assumed the plague form first among the Indians. The cases were treated by medical men as simple. The precautions were neglected. The authorities, too, were not convinced, in spite of the warning, that it was plague. And the infection spread. The moral evidently is that ordinary caution should be used even in simple cases. All disease is more or less infective. And nothing whatsoever is lost by using disinfectants liberally, and isolating patients even in the same house.

The fiction that the Indian Location alone is infected is still being kept up, and perhaps it is as well. It satisfies the public, and undue fear is prevented.

[1] This appeared as "From our Johannesburg Correspondent".

There were at the time of drawing the cordon 1,361 Indians in the Location. Of these, over 800 have already been removed to Klipspruit, which is about 12 miles from the Market Square in Johannesburg. The authorities are perfectly satisfied with the behaviour of the Indians whose misfortune it is to be quarantined. They, in their turn, are giving all reasonable satisfaction to the community. Religious prejudices are respected. The cordoned people are fed by them on a fairly liberal scale. The dispatch of the people is being carried on with consideration, and complaints, unavoidable when things have to be done in rush, are attended to promptly. The whole of the Location will be cleared this week and the buildings reduced to ashes. Thus, what ought to have been done on the 26th day of September last year, when the so-called Insanitary Area was expropriated, is now being done at great cost, under a state of panic.

At Klipspruit, Mr. Burgess is in charge of the camp. Dr. William Godfrey, who has endeared himself to the people, has been appointed by the Town Council as the Assistant Medical Superintendent, and there is no doubt, in a few days, the camp will be in thorough working order.

If the authorities in Johannesburg have been doing things smoothly, the same unfortunately cannot be said of the other places in the Transvaal, except Pretoria. At Pietersburg, Krugersdorp and Potchefstroom, full advantage is being taken of the trying condition of the community, as Dr. Pakes has said, to eradicate the Indians, and not merely to prevent the introduction of the plague. Jealousy of Indian enterprise is having full play without let or hindrance, and under cover of plague precautions, Indian trade is being ruined and all kinds of inconveniences are being put in their way. The Indians are, however, bearing their troubles patiently and heroically. The European traders have got their chance. But if the Indians continue to preserve their calmness, the wind will be taken out of the sails of their detractors. At Krugersdorp, the Indians have been rightly exasperated. But Mr. Ritch[1] has gone to Krugersdorp, and what promised at one time to become a serious matter has now been amicably settled. This is not the time for Indians to assert their rights but to realise their responsibility by suffering. The plague first broke out among them. The majority of cases are Indians. The popular inference is that the Indian is the cause of the evil. Whether right or wrong, it has got to be recognised. And

[1] L. W. Ritch was then an articled clerk working with Gandhiji.

the community is doing well in living it down by patient suffering.

Indian Opinion, 9-4-1904

300. THE PLAGUE

The plague has after all broken out in Johannesburg. It has claimed already about 60 victims, of whom 46 are Asiatics, six whites and four Natives. The mortality has been practically cent per cent. This is an appalling fact. It is not so in India, and has not been so in South Africa before. The type in Johannesburg, therefore, is the deadliest yet known. The victims, again have been carried away in an incredibly short time. What at first appear to be a slight fever and a little coughing, in a few hours, or the second day, develop into high fever, spitting of blood, and violent paroxysms. The suffering of the patient is terrible. Delirium and death follow the third day. During the last stages, the patient gets so exhausted that, even though one notices intense agony on his face, the poor sufferer is not able to give it speech. Our correspondent has stated the cause for it. The Public Health Committee of Johannesburg has now risen to the occasion; but this fact does not ¾ [it] cannot¾absolve it from blame for the past neglect. The timely warning given to it through the letter addressed to Dr. Porter, which, we understand, was passed on to the Chairman, was unheeded. Valuable time was wasted in wrangling about a site. The Town Council collectors, in the meanwhile, continued to pack the Insanitary Area with tenants irrespective of the rules relating to overcrowding. Sanitation was totally neglected, individual tenants being unable to do anything in the matter. The people of the Transvaal are now paying dearly for it.

We would, however, much rather bury the dead past. Drs. Pakes and MacKenzie,[1] Special Plague Officers, are grappling with the scourge with great courage and devotion. The Committee having realised the danger is unsparing in its efforts and has wisely given unlimited powers to the worthy doctors who are assisted by a good staff of inspectors. They have got it well under control, and by this time the plague has lost its terrors. The Public Health Committee has thus expiated for its laches. It is however sad to have to confess that the Indian community cannot be held free from blame. The Nemesis that has overtaken it more than any other community is, we fear, more

[1] District surgeons assigned especially by Town Council for this work.

or less deserved. They ought to have protested against neglected sanitation and overcrowding. That the Town Council allowed such a state of things is no excuse. While we are the first to defend our countrymen from violent attacks and exaggerated charges often brought in order to make political capital, we would not be true to our profession if we failed to apportion the blame without flinching. The fact that there have been 47 cases among the Indians is positive proof of the low degree of sanitation observed in quarters inhabited by the poorer of our countrymen.

Have they, like the Public Health Committee, done anything to atone for the crime against nature? We are glad to be able to say emphatically, yes. They woke up when the Council was asleep. The moment they realised that the disease had commenced in its most virulent form, they began to work with commendable industry and patience. They improvised a hospital and collected funds; volunteers came forward to do the nursing and other necessary work; every case of sickness was brought to the notice of the authorities; and [they] have with great resignation been complying with the special restrictions imposed on them. All this is [re]assuring and creditable. It shows the spirit of obedience to law and order, and it shows also that any excess of restrictions or hardships would not be justified on any ground. A community that is amenable to control can easily be purged of any defects in it. But the punishment that the community has received would be too small, if it does not learn a permanent lesson, and emerge from the ordeal well able to take care of the sanitary laws without supervision or control.

Indian Opinion, 2-4-1904

301. THE ASIATIC TRADERS' COMMISSION IN THE TRANSVAAL

We reproduce in another column from the *Johannesburg Leader* a report of the proceedings of the Asiatic Traders' Commission at its first regular meeting held on the 16th March.

The Commissioners have ruled that they have no authority to examine the claims of those British Indian traders who are not in a position to prove that they were trading outside Locations with licenses on the eve of the war and that they were obliged to leave their business owing to the outbreak of war; that is to say, men who were

engaged in trade for fifteen years in the Transvaal but who disposed of their businesses in, say, August of 1899 would have no status before the Commissioners; and, if the report of the Commissioners under the restricted Reference is to be the end of the matter, then hundreds of Indians who are now trading under licenses will be deprived of their right to trade, and will consequently be totally ruined. Hard, however, as the ruling appears to be, the Commissioners had absolutely no choice. In fact, we had already prepared our readers for it when we dealt with the question some time ago.[1] The wording of the Reference leaves no loop-hole; it merely states that the Commissioners are to consider the cases of those who were trading without licenses outside Locations at, and immediately before, the outbreak of hostilities. We hope that the Government, when it drafted the Reference, never contemplated any such result, for the Colonial Secretary, as also Lord Milner, has repeatedly said that it is not the intention of the Government to disturb the trade of those Indians who were carrying it on prior to the war, whether with or without licenses. There can be absolutely no distinction between those few Indians who managed to get licenses to trade in 1899 and those who did not but were yet trading. In the estimation of the Boer Government, they were doing so illegally, but the illegality was created and fostered by the British Government to which the Law 3 of 1885 was absolutely hateful. Indians, therefore, were allowed, during the fifteen years preceding the war, to have confidence in the British protection; so much so, that they left the Transvaal and re-entered at will, established businesses, desposed of them and re-established them, also at will. A vested interest, therefore, was created in the right to trade outside Locations in defiance of the law, and although it is undoubtedly an extraordinary state of things, it is nevertheless a fact. While such a situation was in vogue, the war broke out, and "one of the causes of the war was the law 3 of 1885". Indians, therefore, very naturally thought that the successful issue of the war would see the end of the law, and it follows that, if the British Indians could trade in defiance of the Law at any time before 1899, they have now a stronger claim, for it does not in the slightest degree matter whether they were trading immediately before the war or not. The test is whether they ever traded in the Transvaal before the war; and if they did, they at least have the right to do so now in accordance with the policy that the British

[1] *Vide* "The Asiatic Traders' Commission", 10-3-1904

Government followed during the Boer regime, for any Indian who entered the Transvaal and established himself in trade before the war knew that he could set up in trade any time he liked and break it up and renew it. We therefore, feel that if any justice is to be done to the British Indians, the Reference to the Commission will have to be considerably widened. Mr. Burgess, Supervisor of Asiatics, gave evidence before the Commission, and he clearly stated that very few Indians (3) we granted licenses after the war, unless they could prove to his satisfaction that they were doing business in the Transvaal outside Location before the war. All those Indians, therefore, (as has always been contended by the British Indian Association,) who are now licensed to trade outside Locations, have already proved their right to do so, in accordance with Mr. Burgess' statement. At the risk of repeating, we may add that no conditions were attached to the issue of these licenses, and according to our view of right and wrong, it will be a miscarriage of justice if a single British Indian trader who is now doing business in the Transvaal outside Locations is interfered with.

Indian Opinion, 2-4-1904

302. NATAL DEALERS' LICENSES ACT

At Weenen the other day, seven Indian traders appealed to the Local Board against the decision of the Licensing Officer who had refused all the seven applications for dealers' licenses. From the evidence given it would appear that one of them is a store-keeper of eight year's standing; the others are also old store-keepers having held liceness to trade for several years. The Licensing Officer declined to renew these licenses, hence the appeal to the Local Board. One of the applicants gave evidence to the effect that he had held a license for eight years and that his books were kept by his English book-keeper from time to time out of rough memoranda kept by him. The others too, had the same system of book-keeping. After hearing these cases for two days, the Board decided that it was not satisfied with the system of book-keeping and, therefore, upheld the decision of the Licensing Officer. If things continue to be managed in this fashion, we are very much afraid that almost every Indian store-keeper will be swept away. It is a matter of common knowledge that petty store-keepers are not in a position even to keep books. Their transactions are all in cash. They buy and sell largely for cash and it is exceedingly hard to expect these people to keep any books at all. In the

present instance, the men have made an attempt to keep books in the English language. Evidently, the Board expects them to keep their books through competent book-keepers from day to day which would mean £ 6 or £ 7 per month or more. Petty traders who hardly save from £ 10 to £ 15 per month out of their businesses cannot possibly indulge in a luxury of that kind. The result would be that, if the Local Boards insist upon such a manifestly absurd rule as the keeping of books by competent book-keepers in the English language from day to day, it would be a short cut to the extermination of, at any rate the petty Indian trader in the Colony. Was the Dealers' Licenses Act passed with such a view? The decision of the Board raised once more the question of amendment of the law. Just when the Dealers Licenses Act was passed, there was a tendency to abuse the powers given to the Municipalities. Then followed a remonstrance from Mr. Chamberlain which had the desired effect, but it was only momentary. Unless therefore, some definite powers are included in the Dealers' Licenses Act enabling the aggrieved party to go to the Supreme Court or defining the reasons for which licenses may be refused, cases of the kind we have alluded to above are bound to occur from time to time. The matter is worthy of serious consideration by the Government if the vested interests of people are to be respected.

Indian Opinion, 2-4-1904

303. LETTER TO THE JOHANNESBURG PRESS[1]

COURT CHAMBERS,
JOHANNESBURG,
April 5, 1904

SIR,

In view of Mr. Roy's[2] denial, if he is correctly reported, that notice of plague cases was ever given either to the Medical Officer of Health or to the Public Health Committee, and now that the disease, thanks to the efforts (though late in the day) of the Public Health Committee, assisted by Dr. Pakes and MacKenzie and the glorious weather we have had since the discovery of the outbreak of plague, is under control, and, therefore, the public are in a position to judge dis-

[1] When Gandhiji released his correspondence with Dr. Porter for publication, he addressed this explanation to the Johannesburg Press. His letters to Dr. Porter of February 11, 15, 20 and March 13 appear earlier in this volume at their proper places.

[2] J. Roy, Chairman of the Public Health Committee.

passionately, I venture to enclose herewith copy of correspondence between Dr. Porter and myself, with Mr. Roy's concurrence, for publication.

It will be seen that sufficient warning was given of what was impending on the 11th February last, i.e,. exactly a month and nine days before the official discovery of the existence of the plague in our midst. It was repeated in strong terms (entirely justified, I think, by the events that have since happened) on the 15th February last. On the 1st of March, a letter was written to Dr. Porter definitely informing him that, in my humble opinion, plague had actually broken out.

Could there be anything more precise? The only answer to this perhaps is that the information given was unofficial and came from a layman. But was there not a terrible confirmation there of in the mortuary record, which showed, as we are officially told, a pronouncedly abnormal mortality in the Insanitary Area? No, sir, it required an ocular demonstration of the ghastly tragedy that took place on the 18th, 19th and 20th of last month before energetic measures could be officially taken. What was a clear public duty was left to be perforemed by volunteers who, the disease having got a fatal grip of the patients, had to wade through what was a chamber of horrors.

I need not recall the graphic though fanciful description of the Insanitary Area by Major O'Meara in the middle of 1902 and the repetition thereof by Dr. Porter in 1903. The danger to public health was even then considered to be so immediate that the Town Council was advised not to wait for expropriating until an elected Council was given to Johannesburg. The Council received on the 30th day of April, 1903 authority to expropriate. It had then the right, as it was its clear duty, to fix upon a spot for the habitation of the people who had to be dispossessed. It failed in its duty; it gave notice of its intention to expropriate on the 6th June, 1903 but it still failed to provide a site for the housing of the residents of the Insanitary Area, It entered upon possession on the 26th September 1903. If, on that day, instead of becoming landlord to every individual tenant and leaving it to its collectors, who received a commission, to let the premises to as many tenants as chose to apply, it had dealt with the area as it is doing now under stress, would the ratepayers have been mulated of £ 20,000? Would precious lives, though Indian, have been lost? Would a whole family, save one member left as a reminder, have been wiped out?

And yet the Indian is being made to feel the heat of the burden[1] especially in outside districts. He is debarred from the markets. He is prevented from earning his livelihood. Though there may be no plague there, he is quarantined or at least removed to isolation camps far away from towns. I do not seek to justify him. On the contrary, I admit that the poorer of my countrymen do not observe the laws of sanitation, except under supervision. But I do submit that they are not the keepers of public health, They are defaulters as individuals, and they have suffered as such. It is the Public Health Committee which has to enforce obedience to such laws, and not flagrantly break them, as it has done since the 26th of September last.

A trinity of interests (viz. of truth, public weal and my countrymen) is my excuse for trespassing upon your courtesy.

I am etc,

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 9-4-1904

304. LETTER TO E. F. C. LANE

[JOHANNESBURG,]

April 8, 1904

ERNEST F. C. LANE, ESQ.
OFFICES OF THE INTERIOR
CAPE TOWN

DEAR MR. LANE,

I notice in the Union *Government Gazette* a Marriage Proclamation requiring those who want to have their marriages celebrated by their Mahomedan or Hebrew Marriage Officers to have notices published of their intention so to do. I do not know whether this Proclamation is deliberate as showing the future policy of the Government in anticipation, or whether it is a proclamation required for the Hebrews but necessitating reference to the Mahomedans in terms of the Natal Marriage Law referred to therein. If it is the former, I beg to draw General Smuts[2] attention to the fact that what has been submitted by me on behalf of the Indian community is that past *de*

[1] Evidently "the heat and the burden" was what was intended.

[2] Jan Christian Smuts (1870-1950) one of the founders of Het Volk Party; Colonial Secretary and Minister of Education 1906; Minister of Defence, Mines and the Interior 1910 and; Prime Minister 1919-24 and 1939.

facto monogamous marriages celebrated according to Indian religious customs should be legalised and that [in] future such marriages should be recognised as legal. The Marriage Proclamation in question introduces the practice of the Publication of banns¾ a practice which is totally opposed to both Hindu and the Mahomedan usage; nor is any such publication necessary, because of the respective religions themselves requiring an elaborate process which render fraudulent marriages impossible. I feel that, whilst the legislation to give effect to the recommendations of the Commission is being drafted, I should bring this matter to the notice of General Smuts.

I observe, too, from Mr. Burton's reply to Mr. Meyler that the indentured Indians in the employ of the Railways Department have deducted from their wages instalments in part payment of the £ 3 Tax. I venture to suggest that continuance of this practice is hardly consistent with the attitude shown by the Commission regarding the Tax. One of the chief points that the Commission had to advise upon was the £ 3 Tax, and it is submitted that this deduction might have been stopped by the Government at least pending the report of the Commission, and now that the Commission has made such strong recommendations for the repeal of the Tax, I do trust that the officials concerned will be advised, if they have not been already, not to insist upon this deduction, for I assume that, if the Government bring in a Bill for the repeal of the Tax, the arrears will be remitted.

I am
Yours truly,

From a photostat of the office copy: S.N. 5957.

305. THE PLAGUE IN THE TRANSVAAL[1]

Although the scourge has not entirely left the Colony, it is now robbed of its terror and it is officially notified that, the pneumonic

[1] The full text of Gandhiji's undated letter to Dadabhai Naoroji, enclosing an advance copy of this note, is not available. Forwarding it to the Secretary of State of India on April 25, Dadabhai Naoroji wrote: "My correspondent, in the course of his letter, says that the memo herewith is a fair summary of the position in the Transvaal. He also remarks that this visitation of plague will in all likelihood be used as a handle to impose further restrictions on the Indians. 'It is, therefore, very essential that the blame should be placed on the right shoulders. But for the criminal neglect of the Johannesburg authorities, the outbreak would never have occurred.'" (C. O. 291, Volume 75, India Office)

plague having developed into the bubonic, the few cases that may happen are not expected to be so fatal. There is, therefore, no need for panic and yet measures are being taken outside Johannesburg which could be justified only on two grounds: either that the plague is increasing or that there is some ulterior motive for imposing exraordinary restrictions, especially when these are applicable to Asiatics only. Evidently, when Dr. Pakes said that the measures which were being taken in the outlying districts were taken more in order to eradicate the Indians than to prevent the plague, he spoke truly. In Krugersdorp, for instance, where there has not been a single case of plague and where the health of the Indians residing in the Location was excellent, the authorities suddenly came to the conclusion that they must remove all the inhabitants of the Location to a place for away from town. Naturally, the poor people resented such high-handed action, but seeing that the Indians are labouring under very great prejudice [of the whites] accentuated by the outbreak of plague at first among them, it was considered advisable for the time being that the people should fall in with the wish of the authorities. Mr. Ritch therefore, paid a visit to Krugersdorp, explained the position to the people and they have now, with the exception of a few store-keepers, removed to a temporary camp far away from town. Nor is this all. The majority of the inhabitants of the Location who have been thus removed are hawkers and they are simply ruined owing to the prejudice and are at present living on the charity of friends, for the Municipality has not undertaken the feeding of the people. There may be no hope against individuals dec-lining to deal with the hawkers, but what is one to say of the action of the Municipality in closing the market against them entirely? It seems to be harsh, uncalled for, and illegal. The position in Pietersburg is much the same. But Potchefstroom heads the list in the war against the Indian. On the arrival by train of two or three Indians from Johannes-burg, they were taken by the authorities of Potchefstroom to the Location. Then their presence in the midst of the people in the Location was made an excuse for quarantining the whole of the Location, thus dislocating Indian trade entirely. It should be remembered that the Kaffirs, because they are wanted for the European householders, are left untouched. The Government, when appealed to, said it was powerless to give any aid in the matter. At Heidelberg the Municipality took up the most dangerous attitude of disallowing religious worship in the mosque. Happily, it has now come to its senses and the prohibition, after much difficulty, has been

withdrawn. But these instances may give some faint idea of the hardships of the Indian population in the Transvaal. It is in Johannesburg and Pretoria alone that the authorities have been at all reasonable and considerate.

The whole of the population of the Location in Johannesburg has now been removed to Klipspruit, a distance of over twelve miles from Johannesburg. From the health point of view, the situation is charming and the tent-living is bound to do the people a lot of good. The whole of the camp is under the superintendence of Mr. Tomlinson, assisted by Mr. Burgess, and the people are being fed at the expense of the Municipality. The following is the scale of rations issued to the people. With the exception of some items, it may be considered fair enough:

1 loaf or 1 1b. flour
$\frac{3}{4}$ 1b. rice
$\frac{1}{2}$ b. meat or fish with *dholl*[1]
3d. worth of vegetables with *dholl* (for vegetarians)
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. worth of vegetable (for meat-eaters)
1 tin milk per adult per fortnight
$\frac{1}{2}$ oz. tea or coffee
3 oz. *dholl* (split peas)
3 oz. *ghee* or mustard oil
1 oz. salt per day
1 oz. sugar
1 oz. curry powder
$\frac{1}{2}$ oz. tamarind
$\frac{1}{4}$ oz. chillies
6 1b. wood and coal
1 candle per tent per day
1 bar soap per tent per day
2 boxes [of] matches per tent per week

There are sixteen hundred Indians living at the camp, including women and children. A mile away is the Kaffir camp. It is worthy of note that, when the removal from the Location took place, contrary to regulations, there were found to be in the Location nearly fifteen hundred Kaffirs, all tenants of the Municipality. This sudden removal

[1] *Dal*

of the people has meant a loss, without exaggeration, of thousands of pounds, for all the people are by no means labourers earning their daily wage. There are nearly twenty store-keepers of considerable standing, also laundrymen with a very large custom. Seven hundred pounds worth of washing was at the time of the outbreak taken out of the Location by the plague committee, disinfected and delivered. To the store-keepers the removal and stoppage of their businesses means practically ruin, for, when the quarantine of the camp is removed, they have nowhere to go, and it is a question whether the authorities will allow them to open stores within town limits, pending the fixing of a permanent site. Moreover, all their goods have been stored by the Municipality, and though the store-room is a very good place, those having any knowledge of business will at once appreciate what damage would be done to the things which are stored loose in a place for some length of time without being aired. All these troubles the community is bearing with philosophic calmness, and it is only to be hoped that when the plague has been entirely wiped out, their patience would stand them in good stead.

That the plague among the Indians was solely due to the neglect of the Town Council is proved by the fact that in the outside districts Indians have been almost absolutely free. In Pretoria, the few cases that have happened have been confined to Europeans and Natives. In Benoni, two Natives have been attacked. In Germiston also, it has been the Natives that have been attacked and at all these places the Indians have been living on their own premises. It was after the Municipality became, in Johannesburg, the immediate landlord to every individual tenant that the mischief of excessive overcrowding and insanitation arose, bringing in their train the awful scourge.

Indian Opinion, 9-4-1904

306. THE THIBETAN MISSION

The British Mission to Thibet has already come into conflict with the Thibetans. The official estimate of the loss suffered by the latter is 300 killed and 200 taken prisoners. Reuter wires a most glowing account of the stolidity and the courage with which the ill-matched and the ill-equipped Thibetans fought the disciplined British army possessing the most modern weapons. Even in their retiral, the enemy is said to have been most dignified, so much so that the manner of their retiral seems to have left a lasting impression on the peo-

ple who were privileged to witness it. It is impossible not to sympathise with a people so cool and so brave. With [regard to] the political charcter of the mission or the necessity thereof, we have at present nothing to say. It may or may not be justified. But to think that a plucky nation like this has to brave the battle with the British forces is a matter for very great pity. And we can only hope that the moulders of the British policy have satisfied themselves beyond doubt as to the necessity of entering upon the mission, and that, when the whole thing is finished, they will be able to justify their action before the public. Reuter mentions that probably the great courage of the Sikh army saved the missions from disaster. This is welcome news, though not at all astonishing, being quite in keeping with the traditions of the Indian army. The news, however, gives rise to many a thought. The Colonies would be prepared as part of the British Empire to appropriate the results of the Sikh bravery, and if it were found that the great plateaus of Thibet were filled with gold, there would be a mad rush to the land. But it is a sad fact that they are not at all prepared either to welcome the Sikh soldiers themselves or their compatriots as settlers in the Colonies. It is to be wished that such an inconsistent attitude will strike the Colonial leaders as something to be rectified. To take all without giving anything in return may be very satisfying for the recipients but can not be held to be just or fair.

Indian Opinion, 9-4-1904

307. LETTER TO "THE RAND DAILY MAIL"

JOHANNESBURG,
April 14, 1904

TO
THE EDITOR,
The Rand Daily Mail

SIR,

There are features in the report[1] of the Public Health Committee in refutation of the statements made by me regarding the outbreak of the plague which necessitate my asking you to extend your indulgence of a brief explanation.

It is worthy of note that it is not now any longer denied that I

[1] This was submitted to the Johannesburg Town Council on April 11, and included in the minutes of its special meeting on April 20 (Colonial Office Records: South Africa, General: 1904)

did give information as to the outbreak on March 1.

An attempt has been made in the report in question to controvert my statement that there was a terrible confirmation of my opinion given on March 1 in the mortuary record. Figures have been produced for the period commencing from July, 1903 to February this year, which show that the highest mortality from pneumonia in any single month was seven, and the average mortality from the same cause 4.75 per month.

During the first seventeen days of the month of March last, there were fourteen deaths from the same cause, that is to say, at the rate of 25.35 per month. In other words, the mortality during the first fortnight after the date of my letter was three-and-a-half times as much as the highest mortality during the preceding eight months, and six times as much as the average mortality per month during the same period.

I venture, therefore, to ask again whether there is not herein a terrible confirmation of the opinion expressed on March 1 last. It is a gratuitous assumption that my reference to the mortality has any connection with the period prior to March 1. The letters addressed to Dr. Porter in February merely gave warning of the calamity that was impending but never once stated that the plague had actually broken out.

Mr. McCann,[1] in speaking of my inability to furnish particulars of suspicious deaths, refers to the single interview.[2] What happened was this. I had not the names or the numbers of the Stands before me. I rang for the clerk who knews something about this matter, and it was there and then Mr. McCann was supplied with the names of at least three men who, in my opinion, had died from the plague, and the numbers of the Stands.

I have nowhere stated that the Kaffirs were first introduced into the Indian Locations after the Council entered on possession, and I freely admit that some of my countrymen and Kaffirs are their tenants. But I have stated, and I venture to repeat, that they were dumped down in the Location after September 26th last, and I am in a position to show that several Stands which were never occupied by Kaffirs before that date were crowded by them after it. Even if the Council could not remove the overcrowding that existed on that date, any increase thereto was, in my opinion, unpardonable. And that there

[1] The Health Inspector

[2] This was soon after Gandhiji wrote to Dr. Porter on March 1.

was an increase in the Location, both in the Indian population and the Kaffirs, is capable of proof. There were on March 20, 1904, in the Location over 35 residents per Stand; and, if you will add at least 1,000, (which, I think, is the number that left during the month of March,) you have 45 to the Stand.

The gravamen of my complaint is not that the Public Health Commitee failed to declare outbreak of plague, but that it or the Town Council failed in its duty to anticipate and provide against the disaster of which it had received warning in the year 1902, repeated in 1903, and still more forcibly repeated in February last, although it was in a position to do so effectively at any rate on September 26 last.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 23-4-1904

308. THE PLAGUE

Although the plague has practically left Johannesburg, the restriction against the Indians continue in all their rigour. Potchefstroom seems to take the lead, as will appear from the following:

1. That Asiatics and Coloured persons arriving in Potchefstroom from plague-infected areas be given their choice of quarantine for 10 days or returning to their point of departure.

2. To remove Asiatics and Indians from the town proper.

3. That the Police authorities be requested to stop Asiatics and Natives from entering the town by trunk roads.

4 To stop the importation of fruit of all descriptions from stations between Potchefstroom and Johannesburg, and stations north of Johannesburg.

5. That Section 7 of the Public Health Bye-Laws be in force for six months.

6. That Natives, accompanying their masters or in charge of cattle, be allowed to pass to and fro, provided they are in possession of their usual Monthly Passes, proving them to be resident in this District.

Thus, the movements of the Indians are far more severely controlled than those of the Natives. And yet plague in the districts outside Johannesburg has by no means been more prominent among the Indians than among the other races. In fact, the Indians seem to have been more immune. With reference to Johannesburg itself, the correspondence we published last week shews quite clearly that the

blame for the outbreak lies entirely at the door of the Town Council. Had the excessive overcrowding which took pace after the 26th of September¾that is, the date of entry as owners by the Town Council¾been prevented, there would probably have been no plague whatsoever throughout the Colony. The Indians residing in the Location protested against the disgraceful state of affairs. They had to remain in the Location merely by force of circumstances. They did not want to become tenants of the Town council, and repeatedy asked for a site in lieu of the Location in terms of the law. It is, therefore, quite clear the terrible outbreak in Johannesburg was under circumstances quite beyond the control of the Indians. The natural inference from this chain of facts is that the special restriction imposed on the Indians are quite unwarranted and uncalled for. The Central Government may take up a position of helplessness, saying that they cannot interfere with the action of the local authorities, so long as it is not in contravention of the plague regulations. Our complaint, however, is against the regulations themselves, especially when the powers imposed thereunder are abused by the Local Boards and Councils and are made to subserve trade jealousy. We have more than once admitted that during the plague scare some hardships are inevitable, that suficient powers should be given to the local authorities, in order to stamp out the scourge, but when, as in Potchefstroom, the local authorities go beyond all bounds and subject British Indians to unnecessary restrictions, it is time to cry "halt". The position of the British Indians, undefined as it is, has become far more difficult owing to the outbreak of the plague, and we venture to think that it is the clear duty of Lord Milner who, to use his own simile, "sitting on the watch- tower" has an opportunity of taking a larger view of everything pas-sing under his notice, to protect the inoffensive British Indians from further molestation under the excuse of plague precautions.

Indian Opinion, 16-4-1904

309. THE VALUE OF A FICTION

Dr. Turner, Medical Officer of Health for the Colony of Transvaal, in his letter to the press on the plague, said that apart from simple, ordinary restriction nothing more was necessary to be done in order to prevent or stamp out the disease, and gave it as his opinion that the extraordinary measures that were being taken were merely an appeal to sentiment. This dictum is more than verified in the confla-

gration that took place in Johannesburg last week in connection with the Indian Location. It was essentially a theatrical display calculated to fire the imagination of the people. While the buildings should certainly have been gutted out, to think that, because they have been burned down, the only source of infection is gone quite contrary to facts, and, as our correspondent has pointed out, the cordon round the Location and the control over movements of the inmates were merely a fiction kept up to satisfy¾not the requirements of sanitation¾but public sentiment. The rookeries outside the Location are infinitely worse than were the worst parts of that much–abused site. The most deadly cases of plague came from Station Road in Burghersdorp, Johannesburg. Other cases also have happened within the Insanitary Area of Johannesburg but outside the Location. Nothing has been done and nothing probably was necessary beyond disinfecting those places. The movement of the people residing there was not interfered with. And yet no amount of argument and cold reasoning by Dr. Pakes would have eased the public mind as has this burning down of the Location and the isolation of the people residing in it. Now, however, that these two measures have been carried out, let us trust that, so far at any rate, as Johannesburg is concerned, the British Indian population would be left fairly free.

Indian Opinion, 16-4-1904

310. ORANGE RIVER COLONY AND THE PLAGUE

This Colony is nothing if it is not thorough in its hatred of the Asiatics. The *Government Gazette* dated 25th March has the following two regulations:

> (1) From and after the date of these regulations, it shall not be lawful for any Asiatic to enter this Colony from the Transvaal so long as the said regulations shall remain in force. Any Asiatic contravening these regulations shall, on conviction, be liable to a fine not exceeding £5 or in default of payment, to imprisonment not exceeding one month, and such convicted person shall on payment of the said fine or completion of his imprisonment be forthwith deported beyond the limits of the Colony.
>
> (2) Every coloured person entering this Colony by rail or otherwise shall be subject to examination and if, in the opinion of a duly qualified Medical Practitioner, he or she shall display any actual or suspicious symptoms of plague, or have been in contact with actual or suspicious cases of plague, such person shall be detained and segregated in a camp until such time

as the Medical Officer in charge shall be of opinion that it is safe for him or her to be allowed to travel.

Thus, a Coloured person other than an Asiatic may enter the Colony under restrictions, but an Asiatic, no matter who he may be, is not to place his foot on the sacred soil of the Orange River Colony so long as the plague scare lasts, under penalty of a fine. And even after he has paid the fine or completed the term of imprisonment, he is to be "forthwith deported beyond the limits of the Colony"! We well remember and cannot but recall the occassion of the war. At that time in Queenstown, among the followers of the army that had come from India, a plague case had actually occured. The populace was a little uneasy, but we do know that neither the Orange River Colony nor, for that matter, any other part of South Africa was prepared to put an embargo on the entry of the British Indian syces, *bhistis*, and *dooly*-bearers. In fact, in spite of the plague outbreak, these followers were sent to all parts of South Africa as fast as transport could be provided. Times, however, have now changed. The Indian is no longer required for the wants of the Colonials, and, therefore, he may be kept out indefinitely. Whether he wishes to enter O.R.C. or not is a very small matter and no business of the powers that be.

Indian Opinion, 16-4-1904

311. WAR AGAINST COLOUR

In the Orange River Colony *Gazette* dated 31st March appears the following in the Additional Board of Health Regulations for Registered Vehicles:

> Any cab proprietor desirous of employing his cab for the purpose of conveying coloured passengers ("kleurlingen") only may obtain from the Town Clerk a board with the words "For Coloured Passengers" legibly printed thereon, which board shall be affixed outside in a conspicious manner on the back or the left side of the vehicle.
>
> No coloured person shall be allowed to travel in any registered cab, save and except those set apart for the purpose and distinguished by the painted board herinbefore mentioned.

We have so often dealt with the uncompromisingly hostile attitude of the Orange River Colony Government against Coloured people, that we merely draw the attention of our readers to the above extracts to emphasise our remarks. No further comment is necessary.

Indian Opinion, 16-4-1904

312. CAMP LIFE[1]

April 20, [*1904*]

The plague Bill to date is as follows:

Proved plague cases¾15 whites; 4 Coloured (including Malays); 54 Asiatics; 35 Natives. Of these, deaths¾7 whites; 51 Asiatics; 14 Natives.

There are 3 white suspects, 1 Asiatic and 25 Native suspects. These are the figures for Johannesburg. In Germiston, there have been 5 proved plague cases of Natives, 1 Asiatic, no Asiatic suspects, and 13 Native suspects. Of these, the single Asiatic case has proved fatal. In Benoni there has been only one Native case proved plague, which has turn out to be fatal. In Krugersdorp, one Native plague case and five suspects, also Natives, of which three have proved not be the plague. Thus it will be noticed that the Asiatic cases are practically those that happened in the first stage. The increase has been mostly in the Native cases and a little in the white cases. In the districts outside Johannesburg, in Krugersdorp and Benoni no Asiatic cases at all. In Germinston one. Thus, then, upto the time of writing the statement made before that the disease is not personal to the Asiatic still hold good. At the Klipspruit, however, the regulations continue to be extremely irritating. The camp has been declared open since the 11th instant. There had been no plague cases whatsoever since inauguration of the camp. Nor has there been any sickness worth mentioning. And yet the movements of inmates are very uncomfortably controlled. They can not leave except on permits, which have to be renewed from day to day, and these permits are issued only if the inmates are in a position to produce the registration certificates which are merely receipts to show that they have paid £ 3. There is a train service between the camp and Johannesburg, the morning train leaving 6 a.m., and the evening train leaving Johannesburg for the camp at 6.15 p.m. For this, a sum of 3s. is charged per week, excepting Sundays. Only third-class compartments are provided, and no lights for the evening train. Those who want to leave the camp for any town in the Transvaal except Johannesburg, must notify same to the Superintendent of the Camp, giving the description of the dwelling to be occupied by the applicant. The Medical Officer of Health then enters into correspondence with

[1] This appeared as "From our Johannesburg Correspondent"

the officer of the town that may be named by the applicant, and if the dwelling is certified as habitable and sanitary, permission is given to leave the camp entirely. Those who wish to reside in Johannesburg have to follow the same routine, and if the dwelling pointed out is approved by the Medical Officer of Health, a leaving pass is granted. Unless a man is in possession of a leaving pass he must report himself at the camp before 8.30 p.m. and failure to do so makes him liable to penalty not exceeding £ 15, or, in default of payment, imprisonment for three months for the first offence. A repetition of the offence subjects the offender to a penalty not exceeding £ 50, or to imprisonment with hard labour for a period not exceeding six months. Rations have been stopped since Monday last except for women and children and employment is offered for excavation or quarry work at 2s. per day rising to 3s. per day, if the labourer proves to be first class. On their return, the inmates are examined and also searched. This is more or less a prison life hardly deserved by the men who have, as admitted by authorities, behaved splendidly. If the camp is really open, there seems to be no reason why there should be such a sharp distinction between the Asiatics living in the camp and the Asiatics living in Johannesburg. The only purpose that the camp should really serve now is to afford shelter to those who cannot find residence elsewhere. Why they should be obliged to point out such residences, and make application, and go through the whole of the tedious routine above described, it is difficult to understand. Surely if the authorities wish to examine the dwellings, they can do so without subjecting the people to the above restraints. It is¾and if it is not, it should be¾an offence for anybody to occupy any dwellings which do not fulfill the requirements of the sanitary regulations and the Rand Plague Committee which is constantly of the *qui vive* for insanitation should certainly been in a position to hound out any Indians who may occupy insanitory dwellings. But it is hardly justified in putting what are, after all, unlawful restraints on the liberty of the subject. Outside the camp, the condition of the British Indians is also very diffcult. No Asiatic can travel outside the district of Witwatersrand unless he is in possession of a health certificate. In many places, they are debarred from the use of the market. Potchefstroom refuses to receive any Indian from the Transvaal at all. The result is that the railway authorities decline to issue any tickets. The Indian merchants and store-keepers are suffering heavily owing to the ousting of the 1,600 men from the Location, many of whom are

indebted to these merchants and store-keepers and who are now unable to meet their liabilities. The Johannesburg Town Council has met today to consider advisability of asking for further powers to the Indian Locations as it has over Kaffir Locations. This is evidently meant to get out of its liability, under the Insanitary Area Expropriation Ordinance, to find suitable accomodation within the Insanitary Area or in the immediate vicinity thereof. What the upshot of all this anti-Indian activity will be no one can foretell. Time alone will show whether justice will in the end be triumphant.

Indian Opinion, 23-4-1904

313. THE PLAGUE

Although the plague in the Transvaal is dying out, the cases found on a mine in Krugersdorp shew that there is still necessity for very strict vigilance. And if it is permissible to derive any satisfaction from such painful occurrences as plague cases, the Krugersdorp incident, happily for the British Indians, shews that, after all, the plague is no respecter of persons and that the extra special restrictions to which British Indians in the Transvaal have been subjected are unnecessary, for the majority of cases outside Johannesburg proper have been Native cases, including Europeans. The disease, therefore, can in no case be described as personal to the Indians. In fact, the plague seems to have arisen in and been brought from the mines, for these Indian cases that happened in the Location were, in the first instance, confined to those who were working on the mines, and the fact that at first it was merely the pneumonic variety goes probably to establish some connection between the mine-working and the plague. Be that however as it may, the central fact to which we have drawn attention and which is never to be lost sight of is that the Indian is being blamed for the outbreak without any valid cause. It is necessary to bear this prominently in mind, as we are very much afraid that attempts may be made to impose further permanent legal disabilities on the British Indians in the Transvaal, and to colour the negotiations that are now going on between the Indian Government and the Transvaal Government in the matter. The cause of the outbreak has been now clearly shown in the correspondence[1] that was published by us the other week and the correspondence we publish in this issue.

[1] *Vide* letters to Dr. C. Porter dated February 11, 15 and 20, 1904.

The utter incapacity of the Johannesburg Town Council to attend to details is the real and chief cause for the outbreak of plague in Johannesburg. From the figures published by the Town Council, it is clear that the mortality in March from pneumonia was so abnormally high that the inertia of the Town Council in the face of this tremendous fact is totally unaccountable unless it be that the Council as a body believed that Johannesburg was proof against an outbreak of plague. It is not often that authorities receive gratuitous, definite, and urgent warnings, as has happened in Johannesburg. It was always possible for the Town Council to prevent the outbreak by attending to the elementary principles of sanitation, and yet, for nearly eighteen months, the Council never went beyond framing big schemes on paper. It is, therefore, nothing but a hollow mockery now for the Health Committee to state that they did everything they could, and that it was not possible for them to fix a new site in place of the Insanitary Area by reason of public opposition, as if any such opposition could warrant the Council endangering, as it undoubtedly did, the health and lives of the community at large. It should be borne in mind that the plague broke out five months after the Council took possession of the Insanitary Area. The questions then arise: Why did not the Council, before expropriating, sound the public sentiment as to the choice of a site? Having failed to do that, why did not the Council remain satisfied with a mere constructive possession? Why did it not allow the people, who were prepared to continue to perform the work of landlords, to do so? Having rejected that proposal, why did the Council not cease deriving rents from property which was condemned by itself as unfit for human habitation and which was allowed to be inhabited either, as we would say owing to its gross neglect, or, as the Council would say, owing to public opposition to the adoption of the site selected by it in place of the Insanitary Area? Having, however, under-taken the landlordship of each individual tenant in the Area, and having decided to derive an income from the tenants, why did the Council introduce overcrowding and horrible insanitation? Why was the rubbish allowed to remain on the Stands? Why, while there was time, did not the Council accept the very reasonable suggestion made in Mr. Gandhi's letter to Dr. Porter in February? In our opinion, these very pertinent questions require decisive answers. We cannot recall any instance of a public body, having stumbled upon mistakes after mistakes, declining to profit by past experience, and declining to see even the natural conclusions and proposition laid down by itself. Was it merely a

subterfuge that the Town Council went to Lord Milner for authority to expropriate the Area on the ground of its insanitation, which was described to be so great that nothing but the complete taking over of private property could cure the evil? And if it was not a subterfuge, then it was certainly its clear duty to see that the first thing to do, after [obtaining the] authority to expropriate, was to remove the people within the Area to healthier quarters. Unfortu-nately, beyond the removal of the inhabitants of the Indian Location to a temporary camp at Klipspruit, we see even now no sign of a movement towards selection of a permanent site. From the foregoing, it must be clear that the outbreak of plague amongst the Indians in the first instance at Johannesburg, was due to exceptional circums-tances, for which the Council, and it alone, is responsible. The power for observing sanitation, as the poorer class of Indians know it, was taken away from them on the 26th September. It was so bad that they cried out against it, and the overcrowding that took place in the Location after the 26th September under the direct control and supervision of the Town Council was such as they were not used to and though they themselves wanted to escape from it, there was no provision made by the Council for them and so they were helpless. That the Council rose to the ocassion after the actual discovery of the outbreak is beside the point when we are considering the first cause.

Indian Opinion, 23-4-1904

314. KRUGERSDORP AND BRITISH INDIANS

Krugersdorp Town Council has approved of the recommendation of the General Purposes Committee that no Coloured person should be allowed to be out of doors between the hours of 9 and 4 o'clock during night time, and that no such person should be allowed to walk, be on, or remain on any pavement or foot-path. In using the phrase "Coloured person", the Municipality of Krugersdorp could only mean British Indians, for, besides the Natives, the only Coloured people in Krugersdorp are probably a handful of British Indians. We suppose that the recommendation is one of the results of the outbreak of plague in the Tansvaal. From the report of the proceedings of the Municipality, which we reproduce elsewhere, it appears that that body holds that the outbreak of plague was due to the neglect of the Johannesburg Town Council, and yet the Councillors would punish not the guilty party, which, of course, is too powerful for them, but they

would punish the innocent, who are quite powerless. We would anxiously watch how His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor views the recommendation, and, in the meanwhile, may we hope that such manifestly unjust regulation would not meet with His Excellency's sanction?

Indian Opinion, 23-4-1904

315. THE PRETORIA TOWN COUNCIL AND BRITISH INDIANS

The Town Council of Pretoria wants the entire control of Native Locations. The proposal seems on the face of it, to be quite innocent, and we do not know that, under the Town Council, the Indians will be much worse off. At the same time, at present there is central authority and, even in the harshness, there is possibility of uniformity of procedure. But the proposal of the Pretoria Town Council will, if carried out, not only leave the Indians entirely to its tender mercy, but would subject them to all the regulations to which the Natives are exposed. While it may be that the regulations that have been framed regarding the control of the Native Locations are necessary in that the Natives are all, or almost all, of the labouring class, they would be dangerously irksome for the British Indians. The following is the reply sent by the Colonial Secretary to the proposal:

> I have the honour to inform you that, as both the locations are situated within the jursdiction of the Town Council, the Council has the same control over them as it has over every other portion of the Municipal area. The Government exercises no extraordinary control except that, in so far as the Asiatic Location is concerned, it is the landlord who apportions the Stands between the various applicants. These leases are, as I believe you are aware, granted subject to the condition that all Municipal by-laws are complied with and Municipal taxes paid by the lessees. So far as the Cape Location is concerned, I am not aware on what principle the stands are leased out, and I would suggest that you would place yourself in communication with the Department of Native Affairs on the subject. The application that the income derived form the Asiatic and Cape Locations may be transferred to the Municipality I have referred to the Secretary to the Treasury, whom I have asked to address you direct on the subject.

The Town Council has rejoined saying that it desires to obtain control of the Indian and Cape Locations on the same terms as the Native Location. It should be borne in mind that the Town Council has got

special powers for framing regulations regarding Native Locations, and this is exactly what the Council evidently wants regarding Indians. When the Municipal Corporations Ordinance was passed, the point was raised, but the Government decided not to yield. And so long as the Law 3 of 1885 is on the Statute-book, it is difficult to see how the Town Council can have the power asked for without special legislation. On the one hand, the Law 3 of 1885 is objected to very strenuously, and we think rightly, by the British Indians. On the other, even its full enforcement does not satisfy the Pretoria Town Council, as indeed the other Town Councils also in the Transvaal. Well may Lord Milner say he is between two fires! We can only hope that he will not succumb to the fire from the Town Councils and other anti-Indian gentlemen, who would, if they could, blot out all the British traditions from the Transvaal, and allow the Union Jack to wave in Pretoria merely as an empty show, and, if anything, as a shelter for all the anti-British measures, under cover of the rights of a self-governing people.

Indian Opinion, 23-4-1904

316. A LESSON FROM THE PLAGUE

The plague has taught the British Indians lessons which we trust will not be forgotten, and which, it is hoped, the community will profit by. We have a homely saying in India that it were better for a man to lose millions then that he should lose a good name. It follows as a corollary from the saying that, once a man has acquired a bad name, it is difficult for him to undo the effect and to rehabilitate himself in the popular regard. What is true of individuals is equally true of communities. The French have a name for the artistic, the English for personal bravery, the Germans for hard-headedness, the Russians for frug-ality, the Colonies in South Africa for gold hunger; similarly, the Ind-ians in South Africa have, rightly or wrongly, got the evil reputation of being insanitary and ignorant of the first principles of hygiene. The result is that the individaul members against whom such a charge could not be proved to the slightest extent are often obliged to undergo hardships merely because they belong to the Indian community. Nor could it be otherwise. This has been very forcibly exemplified owing the the outbreak of plague in the Transvaal. Restrictions, for which there would not be any warrant if they were examined calmly and fairly, have been imposed on the liberty of the Indians throughout South Africa. In the Transvaal, the inhabitants of the late Indian

Location are being treated practically as prisoner. Even dogs, cats, and other animals that were found in the Location have been killed—lest their contact with the Indians may have conveyed to them the plague germs! The Local Boards of the different towns there have erected barbed-wire fence regulations against the Indians. The Orange River Colony has entirely closed its gates against the Indians from the Transvaal. The Cape and Natal admit him under severe restrictions which have no scientific meaning. For instance, an Indian may be sharing the same compartment with a Kaffir. As soon, however, as the train bringing the passengers reaches the Natal border, the Indian is obliged to undergo 5 days' quarantine before entering the Colony, whereas the Kaffir is permitted to do so without let or hindrance.

Such regulations, harsh as they undoubtedly are, ought not to make us angry. But we should so order our conduct as to prevent a repetition of them. And with that end in view, we should set about putting our houses in order as well literally as figuratively. The meanest of us should know the value of sanitation and hygiene. Overcrowding should be stamped out from our midst. We should freely let in sunshine and air. In short, we should ingrain into our hearts the English saying that cleanliness is next to godliness.

And what then? We do not promise that we shall at once be freed from the yoke of prejudice. A name once lost is not to be so easily regained. The loss of a name is like a disease, it overtakes us in no time, but it costs us much to remove. But why need we think of reward in the shape of subsidence of prejudice? Is not cleanliness its own reward? Would it not be an inestimable boon to ward off another attack of the plague? Would we not cease to be harassed by sanitary inspectors and their regulations in that they will have lost their use? By and by, when we have asserted our position as a people regarding sanitation and hygiene as part of our being, and not merely of lip profession, the prejudice, in so far as it is based on that charge, will go. And we shall gain for ourselves a name for the practice of the laws of health which would always stand us in good stead. This is the lesson we would have our countrymen learn from the recent trial they have undergone. It is well for us to protest against exaggerated charges. It is our duty to strain every nerve to prevent legislative measures based on them. But we hold it to be equally our duty to examine those charges critically, admit the partial truth in them, and strive to correct the evil that may be in us. It is thus, and only thus, that we can rise in the estimation of our neighbours.

Indian Opinion, 30-4-1904

317. KLIPSPRUIT FARM

In order to control the plague, the Johannesburg Municipality have spent large sums of money, and opened the Klipspruit camp about a month ago for the Indians [moved] from the Locations. In the beginning, the people had to suffer a variety of discomforts, but these related only to food and lodging. Provisions are given free to the poor, while all are free to enter the city, but that does not appear to have afforded relief to the people to any extent, since only those who can afford to pay heavy rents can benefit from this concession. Also, in the ciy, it will be impossible for every man to get a place to live in. Taking advantage of the condition of Indians, landlords demand exorbitant rents, which the poor cannot pay. Despite the expense and the [consequent] shortage of money, some of them have rented a few houses. But they can go to stay in the city only after the Municipality have inspected the houses and passed them as fit. Till then it would appear that the "prison" at Klipspruit must be suffered.

The procedure for getting a house approved is by no means easy. When a man has gone through this mill, he looks squeezed dry. He looks like one who has been slapped in the face, but acquiesces helplessly in the situation. He is dazed, looks troubled, but cannot speak out his mind. Since he brought these troubles on himself [by not observing sanitary regulations,] how can he talk of his woes to others? After the house has been approved, he goes post-haste to Klipspruit. On inquiry there, he learns that his application has not been received back by the Camp Superintendent. He then returns to Johannesburg only to find out that the Superintendent is not at fault. When a man is worried, all manner of fearfull fancies arise in the mind. Though the forebodings are sometimes baseless, it cannot be claimed that all of them will prove untrue. On the one hand, money is hard to come by; on the other, there is the desire to get away from the Camp. Again, the landlord has pocketed the rent well in advance and the [paid up] rent goes on accumulating. But then as the municipal authorities have already checked the plague, they are content, like a man who has had his fill, to do their duty leisurely and urge patience on the poor ones, [eager to move into their city houses] reminding them that haste only makes for despair. But one cannot advise a poor man who has lost patience to pass through the inevitable ordeal. This is how things are, and we do not know who is to blame. But this much

is certain: one should not be dispirited by adversity, and throw away milk, as if it were water; nor, like the potter who, having thrown out the milk, vented his anger upon his donkey, should one find fault with the Municipality. No one will sympathise with a person who follows the wrong path, because he would not take the right one, trips and then blames it on his luck. We know it is difficult to get a house in the city. Therefore, we should petition the Municipality to set apart special places for us. If the Municipality is unheeding, we should apply to the Government for employment in the Railways asking for reasonable wages. If the Government is willing to pay five or six shillings a day, we do not see why we should not accept work in the Railways. Those who have the money have not to worry in this situation, but then as they have become used to paying lower rents in Location, they may pay high rents for a month or two, but they cannot afford it much longer. However, they will find houses of their choice and they will carry on. But who will succour the poor? Only two remedies are open to them:

1. to apply to the Municipality for the allotment of houses to Indians and wait and suffer meanwhile;
2. to work on the Railways for some time if the Government offers reasonable wages. [In any case,] once they are discharged from the Camp, all is bound to be well.

We are of the opinion that the latter is the better course, as it will not be possible now to live as inexpensively as in the Locations. Moreover, we have not been accustomed to high rents. Even if the people are willing to pay them what is the way out, if there are no houses to be had?

Menacing clouds [which portend suffering] will always loom over Indians in this land of the white man. And when we are at fault, we can expect that the sky will darken further. It will take us time to live down the blame for the outbreak of plague. We shall be rid of this blot only when we demonstrate our loyalty to the Crown on some other ocassion as we did by rendering assistance during the last war.[1] But even though we have been punished sufficiently, we do not appear to have learnt a moral from it. For instance, some people are smuggling bottles of liquor into the Camp, from the city. Every night each man is consequently made to line up like a prisoner opposite the

[1] The reference is to the Indian Ambulance Corps organised by Gandhiji during the Boer War.

Camp Station and he has to submit himself to an unreasonable search of his person by the Camp superintendent, who has come to suspect this. Many suffer for the fault of one¾as they do in many other matters, too. Some may be able to secure houses; others may proceed to Natal, but will that alleviate the privations of two thousand Indians?

Persons entering Natal are subjected to a very strict medical examination. And it has been alleged that the examination of women is conducted without regard to modesty. This charge, however, is absolutely without foundation, but you cannot stop wagging tongues.[1] It would seem that Indians possess a natural gift for exaggeration.[2] They believe all they hear without caring to inquire what is true and what is false.

In conclusion, we will have to admit that a Camp is not a place for relaxed slumber, rather it is a wilderness. That people are sore is but natural, as life in tents has made dysentery a common complaint. We can well imagine that the people will become more miserable if they do not get better places to live in.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-4-1904

318. EAST LONDON[3]

The Municipality of East London is engaged in a war against the Indians, and notices have been sent to many well-to-do Indians, calling upon them to vacate the premises in their occupation and remove to the Location. The object of these notices is simply to degrade the Indians and compel them to take out certificates, thereby gradually moving them out of the town. The powers of the Municipality are very wide. Section 5 of Act II of 1895, to amend and add

[1] The Gujarati goes on: "You cannot tie a strainer-cloth round people's mouth . . . ."

[2] The Gujarati has "to make an elephant out of a speck of dust".

[3] In his letter of May 25, forwarding a copy of this statement to the Secretary of State for India, Dadabhai Naoroji remarked: "My correspondent, referring to Sir M. M. Bhownaggree's question in the House of Commons on April 20th, says that the two points to be borne in mind are:

(1) The legislation was passed practically in anticipation because in 1895 there was a very small Indian population.

(2) The law has never been enforced before and it has been left to the option of the Indians whether to make use of the Location or not." (I. O. Judicial and Public Records: 1236)

to the laws regulating the Municipal Corporation and Government of East London, gives authority to do such things among which are:

> Allotting and setting apart, and from time to time changing, portions of the municipality as Locations for the residence of Natives and Asiatics, and for abolishing such Locations. For regulating the conditions upon which Natives and Asiatics may reside in such Locations and the fees, rents and hut tax to be paid by them in respect of such residence, and for the providing for the registration of such residence and any horses, cattle, oxen, sheep, or goods belonging to them; and for regulating or prohibiting the use of the commonage by the same. For providing for the appointment of Superintendents and Headmen of such Locations and regulating their duties and authority, and preventing obstruction of such officers in charge of their duties. For regulating, permitting, or prohibiting of shops, trading stations, and trading within such Locations for the issuing or refusing of permits to Natives and Asiatics to reside in such Locations and for regulating the manner in which persons no longer entitled to reside there may be removed. For fixing, and from time to time altering, the limits within which it shall not be lawful for Natives and Asiatics to reside, and be in the street, public places or thoroughfares within such limits without a written pass or certificate from their employer, or the inspector or superintendent of police, or a superintendent of a Location; and for fixing such parts of streets or open spaces, or pavements of the same on which Natives and Asiatics may not walk or be. For regulating and setting apart portions of the rivers and sea where Natives and Asiatics may not bathe.

The proviso to this extraordinary section says that

> the regulations regarding Location, the curfew and the foot-paths shall not be applicable to the registered owner, or the occupier of landed property within the municipality valued for the municipal purposes at not less than £75, and provided that a certificate to that effect has been taken out from the Town Clerk which certificate is to be granted free of charge.

Thus, the object of the notices is to make the British Indians take out such certificates. Naturally, people who consider that, being respectable British subjects they are entitled to the same privileges of citizenship as others, resent any interference with their liberty and strongly object to taking out certificates. Sir Mancherji, who has been doing humane service to the British Indians resident in South Africa, has approached Mr. Lyttelton, and the matter is now being investigated by the Local Government. We trust that the enquiry will result in full justice being done to the Indian settlers in East London and that they may be saved the indignity of having to carry passes with them

enabling them to live outside Locations. We understand that the dwellings of these occupiers who have received notices to quit are in every respect good and in a sanitary condition. Moreover, the Indian population of East London is very small and it seems to us to be the height of injustice to bother a handful of peaceable and law-abiding inhabitants without any reasonable cause whatsoever.

Indian Opinion, 7-5-1904,

Also India Office: Judicial and Public Records: 1236.

319. THE CAPE IMMIGRATION ACT

Dr. Gregory's report on the working of the Cape Immigration Act, a condensation of which we give in another column as it appears in *The Star* is interesting reading. Acording to it, during the months of May and June last year the number of alien immigrants was 2,032 and during the three months October to December, it was 4,715. The proportion of alien immigration to that of British passengers was 20.2 per cent during May and June, 22.7 during July to September, and 25.2 during October to December, and Dr. Gregory thinks that even this high proportion[1] is not high enough when it is considered that the British immigration is of a totally different type. According to the report, of the 46,933 British passengers, 3,947 were domiciled in the Colony, 11,093 were women, 7,203 were minor children, and 6,969 travelled first class. The proportion, therefore, if only real British immigrants were taken into consideration, will be much higher. A very considerable portion of these aliens are Russians and Jews, being, the report proceeds, "unsatisfactory in most important respects, being ill-provided, indifferently educated, unable to speak or understand any language but Yiddish, of inferior physique, often dirty in their habits, persons and clothing, and most unreliable in their statements". Dr. Gregory also raised the question as to whether Yiddish is to be considered a European language, if a language at all, and he suggests that the onus of proving that it is a European language should be thrown on the immigrants themselves. So, as we have all along expected, as soon as the European Colonists in South Africa have done with the Indians, they would commence operations against immigrants from Europe, and when the aliens have been dealt with, as happened in the case of the English hatters[2] in Australia, opposition will be

[1] Of British immigrants.

[2] A "hatter" is a miner who works alone and without much capital.

raised against poor Englishmen. To us the whole spirit is bad, and, while there may be some justification for restricting immigration of criminals and persons suffering from serious diseases, the power of restriction is a power which has to be used with a very great degree of moderation. We will watch how the Legislative Council at the Cape receives the suggestions made by Dr. Gregory.

Indian Opinion, 7-5-1904

320. KRUGERSDORP INDIAN LOCATION

As will be seen from the report of the Public Health Commitee at Krugersdorp, for which we are indebted to our contemporary the *Krugersdorp Standard*, the Town Council has now decided not to expropriate the buildings in the Indian Location, the only reason being that their own valuator has put a higher valuation on the buildings than the original valuation arrived at by the Town Council and that Mr. Barnett, who valued the buildings on behalf of the Indians, has placed a yet higher valuation thereon. The buildings, therefore, that were only a few days ago considered "disgracefully insanitary" and a menace to the public health of the town, have suddenly ceased to be so and are to be allowed to remain where they are. It is, therefore, a question purely and simply of money. But, although they are now to be allowed to remain the property of the British Indians and are not to be destroyed, the Town Council has decided that the Indians are not to re-inhabit them until they have provided buildings in accordance with the building regulations of the town. We do not know what this means. If it means that the Indians have to pull down the buildings and re-inhabit them until they have provided buildings in accordance with the building regulations of the town. We do not know what this means. If it means that the Indians have to pull down the buildings and re-build, it certainly is an easy way of depriving the of their property without the Council having to pay a single penny. Whether such a piece of jobbery would be just or not is evidently no concern of the Town Council. The decision of the Town Council, however, opens up a serious question; how far, if at all are the buildings really in an insanitary state? To what extent are alterations or improvements required and what is, generally the authority of the Town Council with reference to the embargo placed upon the Indians? For we understand that the dispossessed inhabitants are still compelled to remain under canvas in a place far away from the town. We hope,

however, as there is absolutely no plague in Krugersdorp, and as it has generally died out in the Transvaal, the awkward situation will be ended and that the Indians will be allowed to re-occupy their premises without having to question in a court of law the right of the Town Council to adopt the high-handed procedure it evidently has.

Indian Opinion, 7-5-1904

321. THE LICENSING CASE IN THE TRANSVAAL

The test case in connection with the trade licences for British Indians has been tried and, as was expected, judgment has been reserved. Most eminent counsel had been retaind on both sides, British Indians having engaged the services of Messrs. Leonard, Esselen, Gregorowski and Ducksburg; the Transvaal Government Messrs. Ward, Matthews and Burns Begg. The main quesiton is that of interpretation of the term 'residence', the British Indians contending that the confinement of residence to Locations or special streets fixed by the Government does not include trade, especially because the restriction to the Locations according to the law is intended for sanitary purposes only. The Government, on the other hand, argued that residence included trade also, especially on the ground that the High Court of the late South African Republic placed that interpretation upon the term in the case of *Tayob* v. *leyds*.[1] It should be recollected that judgement was not unanimous. It is the irony of fate that, when the case was argued before the High Court of the late Republic, the British Goverment was represented before the judges, and it sought to uphold the contention on behalf of the British Indians. Times have now changed and so has the British Government. It is now on the platform occupied by Mr. Kruger's Government, The British Government asks for dismissal of the case with costs. To the Indians the matter is of the utmost importance, indeed of life and death, and it is well what they have been able to retain on their behalf the very best legal talent. It will not, therefore, be for want of the best legal advice that they will have lost the case, if indeed they must. There is a very favourable opportunity in the Transvaal at present. The question of the constitution that could not be raised before the late High Court has been boldly raised by Mr. Leonard for the Indians. Sir Richard Solomon himself has confessed that he could not understand the judgment of the

[1] *Vide* "Notes on the Test Case", 4-4-1898

Republican judges. The Indians have, therefore, much in their favour, and it is to be hoped that the decision will be such as to settle the troublesome question once and for all, and in a manner that would enable hundreds of British Indian traders in the Transvaal once more to breathe freely. Should the British judges, however, feel bound by the decision of the majority of the judges of the late High Court, the British Indians have yet one more desperate chance, namely, appeal to the highest tribunal in the British Dominions¾the Privy Council. We hope that such a step will be unnecessary, but if, unfortu-nately, it becomes unavoidable, we have no doubt that the British Indians will not flinch, and carry the matter to the final issue.

Indian Opinion, 7-5-1904

322. IF THE PLAGUE BROKE OUT IN NATAL?

Rats have been found to be dying at the Point in the block between McEwan's premises and the Union Castle offices. It is stated that they have died of plague. The authorities have taken prompt precautions in order to prevent an outbreak in Natal, and we sincerely hope that their efforts will be crowned with success. Should, however, the plague break out, it will be a misfortune for the Indian community. It is struggling to be free from the effect of the visitaion in the Transvaal, and an outbreak at this juncture would simply fill to overflowing the cup of its woe. We cannot help, however, uttering a word of warning to the Indians. The slightest sickness, especially fever or pneumonia, should be attended to without any delay and, if necessary, reported to the authorities. There is, perhaps, too much laxity in dealing with such sicknesses, but especially at a time like this, it would be a great folly to treat lightly either fever or pneumonia. We would also ask them to completely isolate all such cases, so that the risk of infection may be minimised. Above all, however, it is imperative that light and air should be allowed to have full play in the meanest of dwellings. All dirt should be banished from every home. And if these elementary precautions are taken by every individual, we have no doubt that the calamity will be averted. A very great deal has already been done in the way of improving Indian dwellings, and we see reforms in all directions. Redoubled efforts are, however, necessary in view of the threatened visitation, and we hope that our remarks will be taken to heart by every Indian in the Colony.

Indian Opinion, 7-5-1904

323. A WELL-DESERVED VICTORY

So the Supreme Court has given judgment in favour of the plaintiff with costs in the Indian test case,[1] to which reference has been made in another column. We offer our hearty congratulations to our countrymen in the Transvaal on the successful ending of the case. The victory has been dearly won and is richly deserved. We can only hope that the Indian community will be allowed by the Government to enjoy the fruits of the victory. We think that, in this great and unequal struggle, the British Indians have behaved in accordance with their traditions. It was open to them to bring this case soon after British occupation, and we are aware that they were advised by the best counsel of the day in the Transvaal to adopt the course, but they thought otherwise. They felt that it was their duty at first, instead of challenging the Government, to get justice from them and to ask them to fulfil the promises made by the authorities in Downing Street. They also felt that they should approach the Chambers of Commerce and other public bodies who had taken up a hostile attitude towards the Indian traders and try to convince them of the injustice that was being done to the Indians owing to the refusal to grant licenses, they were prepared to accept a very reasonable compromise, and suggested, therefore, that all the existing licenses should be left untouched, and that their licenses to trade outside Locations should be renewed from time to time, and that other applicants might be dealt with on merits. This was rejected and the culminationg point was reached last December when practically every Indian trader was threatened with ruin. It was after every means to arrive at a compromise was exhausted that the community embarked upon the test case. The result could not well be otherwise, although having suffered so much, there was tremendous anxiety about it. There is however, a bright side to the sorrrowful picture of injustice, and this is that, in British Dominions, no matter how high prejudices may run, there is always a haven of safety in the highest courts of justice. Tradition has made the British judges practically invulnerable against prejudice or sentiment, and the

[1] *Habib Motan* v. *The Transvaal Government*: The judgment held that the instructions given to the Licensing Officers to refuse licences to Indian traders to trade outside Location were illegal and that the plaintiff was entitled to get licence to trade as a general dealer in the towns of Pretoria and Pietersburg.

meanest subject can, if he has only sufficient means at his command, get unadulterated justice if the law itself allows it. The judges of the Supreme Court of the Transvaal have not hesitated to brush aside the judgment of the late High Court, and in spite of the stand taken up by Counsel for the Government, they have decided that every Indian is free in accordance with law 3 of 1885, as amended in 1886, to trade wherever he likes. This nullifies all the Government Notices and the action of the Government with reference to Indian license-holders. It is our duty, however, to warn our countrymen against being too much elated by this success. Probably it means only the beginning of another struggle. Opposition will be raised up against them throughout the country, and the Government may bring in a Bill to counteract the effect of the judgments of the Supreme Court. They will, therefore, have yet to work and to exercise patience and prudent restraint. The Government, unfortunately, is one thing and the Supreme Court is totally another. The former is swayed and affected by all the prejudices and sentiment, and, unfortunately, in the Transvaal, itself too weak even to do what is, in the words of Mr. Duncan, "purely elementary justice." In spite of Lord Milner's strong rule, and stronger will, His Excellency has succumbed to the anti-Indian agitation and failed to protect the weaker party. The decision in the test case, however, makes it impossible for the Government to shelter itself behind Law 3 of 1885 and tell Mr. Lyttelton that the demand of the Colonists to enforce the old legislation cannot be resisted. We now know that the old legislation puts no restriction on Indian trade, and the burden is doubly on the Government to shew that there is any cause whatsover for any special restriction of Indian trade.

Indian Opinion, 14-5-1904

324. BRITISH INDIANS IN EAST LONDON

We reproduce in another column a leading article from the East *London daily Dispatch*, dated the 2nd instant, on the question and answer that have passed between Mr. Lyttelton and Sir Mancherji, with reference to the notices to many British Indians living in the town of East London, calling upon them to remove to the Location within a definite time. Our contemporary, disliking the publicity given to the action of East London Municipality, has come to the erroneous conclusion that Sir Mancherji sits on the radical benches. May we remind our contemporary that the worthy knight is a conservative of

conservatives and does not move in any matter unless he is convinced of the justice of the cause he is advocating. He, naturally, would not like to, in any way, embarrass the Government representing his own party without very good cause. After a careful perusal of the leading article, we confess that we are unable to see any variance between the state of things represented by Sir Mancherji and the actual state as it exists in East London. Now our contemporary, we take leave to say, understates the truth and thereby does an injustice alike to the Municipality and to the Indians in saying that "the Municipality has requested the Indians to reside,[1] or at least the Municipality has notified those who resided about the town, that they must quit" This leaves an impression on the reader's mind as if there was no compulsion to be used. The notice served on the Indians however, reads as follow:

> Take notice that the Sanitary Office having ascertained that you are contravening the Amended Regulation No. 32 Chapter 18 (*vide* Corporation Notice No. 3 of 1903 published in the *East London Daily Dispatch* of the 29th August, 1903 together with the Regulation refered to) by residing at the above premises, such being within Town limits, where Asiatics may not so reside.
>
> The Council hereby requires you, within 14 days from the service of this notice, to comply with the provisions of the above-mentioned regulation, and for the purpose to vacate such premises as aforesaid and to take up your abode at the Asiatic Camp,
>
> The Superintendent of the Camp will allot you suitable quarters upon your producing this notice.
>
> And further, that in default, prosecution will follow. Dated at East London, this 12th day of April, 1904.
>
> R. E. DOWDING
> TOWN CLERK
> THOS. BEETHAM,
> SANITARY INSPECTOR

There is a heavy penalty attached to non-compliance, Was not Sir Mancherji, then, justified in asking the question the manner he did? Again, our contemporary puts words into the mouth of Sir Mancherji which he has never uttered. He never meant to convey that the Indians were to be expelled from East London, but he definitely

[1] This part of the quotation is incomplete and should read: "The Municipality to meet the case of the Indians erected boarding houses apart from the native location were they according to the regulations, request them to reside." *vide* "East London and Asiatics," *Indian Opinion*, 14-5-1904.

stated that they had received notices to remove to Locations, which is the barest truth. *The East London dispatch* is less happy in justifying the procedure adopted by the Municipality. The facts according to the *dispatch* are that there is in all a population of six hundred Indians in East London, of whom only one hundred Indians live in the town; our contemporary adds: "under no municipal control". Are the Indians free from the municipal regulations? We have gone through the whole of the regulations and we find no such freedom from liability to observe the municipal regulations on the part of the Indians. Is there the slightest necessity for removing a handful of Indians living amongst a European population of over twelve thousand? It should also be remembered that these men have been living there for several years. No charge of insanitation, so far as we are aware, can be laid against the men. The fact that over four hundred Indians are living in the Location also strengthens the position of the British Indians in that those who do not wish to live up to the Western standard of comfort of their own accord live in the Location. It is only a very fair inference, therefore, that the few who are living in the town are doing so under good sanitary conditions. The plague in the Transvaal has been brought into the argument, but, as we have already shown in previous issues, the large number of cases among the Indians are due entirely to the gross neglect on the part of the Johannesburg Town Council, and that, beyond Johannesburg and beyond the Indian Location the Indians have not fared any worse than the other communities. Our contemporary acknowledges the Indian to be law-abiding, and is good enough to admit that "his status as a civilised man from an intellectual point of view cannot seriously be called in question". If, then, he fails in reaching the Western standard of sanitation, is it after all such a difficult thing to bend him to the reform without relegating [him] to a ghetto? And does not the experience of Cape Town, Durban, and other places where the Indians, having the opportunity, have not failed to learn lessons from the Europeans, belie any of the misgivings indulged in by our contemporary? We cannot help thinking that the *East London Dispatch* would have rendered a better service to the community, in whose interests it is published, if it had examined the position dispassionately, taken a correct view of the facts as they actually are, and supported the action of the Indian community in its endeavour to resist the unnecessary degradation to which the Municipality seeks to subject it.

Indian Opinion, 14-5-1904

325. THE PLAGUE IN JOHANNESBURG

On the 29th April, so the public of Johannesburg has been informed, two Europeans were attacked with the bubonic plague in the market-house in Johannesburg. Nothing was done by the Rand Plague Committee up to the 4th instant beyond removing the patients to the lazaretto at Rietfontein. They gave the market-house the benefit of the doubt and inferred that, unless the contrary could be proved, the infection must have come from outside sources. Thus, the ordinary rule was reversed. For, speaking as laymen, we have always understood that, if a case of plague or any other infectious disease occurs in a particular locality, the first thing to do is to assume that the locality itself is infected and try to trace the infection to something in the place itself. Thus, in Durban, Cape Town, and other parts of South Africa as well as the rest of the world, wherever such cases have happened, the places have been locked up, put under quarantine, and disinfected. In go-ahead Johannesburg, however, the much-praised Rand Plague Committee reverses the method, and failing to trace the infection elsewhere, sets about finding if it is not, after all within the market-house itself, and succeeds after four days' search in finding that rats were plague-infected. The committee then suddenly, in a theatrical manner, surrounds the market, on the 4th instant at noon, with a police cordon and places the premises under modified quarantine. All this certainly strikes the imagination of the people, creates a lot of stir and possibly brings praise, but we venture to think that it looks very much like locking the stable door after the steed is gone. For full four days after the discovery of the two cases, the infection is allowed to spread in the town through the market. The wonder undoubtedly is that the whole of Johannesburg is not now reeking with plague. The congratulations, however, for the general immunity from plague are hardly due to the Committee, in this case at any rate, but to the glorious weather and the high altitude of Johannesburg which, in spite of the blundering of the Committee, prevent the plague germ from thriving.

Indian Opinion, 14-5-1904

326. THE JUDGMENT IN THE TEST CASE[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
May 16, 1904

You have no doubt seen the judgment given by the Chief Justice in the test case. The only question was that of interpreting the term "residence" occurring in Law 3 of 1885, and the Chief Justice, with the concurrence of his two colleagues, decided that it does not include place of business. So, after fifteen years' hard struggle, the Indian position is vindicated and the Indians have the right to trade in any part of the Transvaal. You will notice, also, that the Chief Justice felt called upon to make some very strong remarks regarding the heartless and inconsistent attitude of Local Government, supported by the Colonial Office, namely, the going back on the position the Government took up before the war. You will also notice that, in the opinion of the Chief Justice, to relegate Indian traders to Locations is tantamount to deprivng them of the[ir] means of livelihood. As he said, it would be giving with the one hand and taking away with the other.

So that every complaint that the British Indian Association has made regarding the operation of Law 3 of 1885 and the establishment of Location has been proved to be fully justified. What, however, will be the outcome of all this is a very serious question. Ordinarily, the Indians should now be in a position to face difficulties, and rely upon the Colonial Office doing the rest, but, unfortunately, the Government here is too weak to do justice. The faint echoes of the clamour that would be raised against the Indians enjoying the fruit of their most dearly-won victory have already begun to be heard, and it would not be at all surprising if the Government sought to rush through the Legislative Council a Bill, again robbing the Indians of the fruit of their victory.

One thing however is, certain; there cannot be any justificaton on the grounds of the old law being unfavourable to the Indians as to their trade. We now know that the old law places no restriction on Indian immigration and trade. Indian immigration has been most

[1] This is the text of a statement by Gandhiji edited and pulished in *India* as "From a Correspondent". He had sent a copy also to Dadabhai Naoroji, who quoted portions of it in his letter dated June 7,1904 addressed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Secretary of State for India (C.O. 291, Volume 79, Individual—N).

effectively stopped by the Peace Preservation Ordinance, and a new law under the Crown Colony would have to be brought in order to prohibit Indian trade, that is to say, a new disablity would be placed on the Indian, to which he was never subjected by law during the old regime. Such is the cruel irony of fate. Before the war, the British Government granted protection to the Indians, although it was foreign domination then. Now, after the war, the all-powerful British Government refuses to protect one portion of British subjects simply because they are the weaker party. Will the Colonial Office now put its foot firmly down on any attempt to impose further disabilities on the British Indians? Will the Indian Government do its duty?

India, 1-5-1904

327. ADDRESS TO LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR[1]

HEIDELBERG,
May 18, 1904

TO
HIS EXCELLENCY SIR ARTHUR LAWLEY
LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR OF THE COLONY
OF THE TRANSVAAL

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY:

We, the undersigned, representing the British Indians residing in Heidelberg, respectfully welcome you to this town, and we take the opportunity of bringing to your Excellency' notice the fact that the Asiatic Bazaar sought to be established in Heidelberg is altogether too far away from town.

Although, in view of the decision in the test case, the distance is not of very great moment, we respectfully submit that it will still be inconveniently situated for hawkers and others.

We venture to trust that the Government would be pleased to let us enjoy the fruits of the decision of the Supreme Court regarding Indian licenses under such sanitary regulations as may be considered necessary.

We beg also to bring to your notice the fact that the Stand on which the Mosque has been built is not yet registered in the name of

[1] The address was presented by the Indian community of Heildelburg when Sir Arthur Lawley visited the town.

the Mahomedan community.

In conclusion, we wish you a pleasant time in our midst and request your Excellency to convey to Their Majesties, the King-Emperor and Queen-Empress, an expression of our loyalty and devotion to the throne.

We beg to remain,

Your Excellency's obedient servants,

A. M. BHAYAT,

[AND OTHERS]

Indian Opinion, 28-5-1904

328. THE TEST CASE

The exhaustive and luminous judgment of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Transvaal is worthy of study, both by the Transvaal Government as well as the Indians. By the former, because the Chief Justice has shown, as no other man could have shown with equal authority, how heartless and inconsistent has been its attitude towards the British Indians. By the latter, because it shews how much there is to love in the British Constitution and in British rule, in spite of temporary aberration on the part of the local authorities who, whether out of selfishness, weakness, or prejudices, are unable to take just view of various situations that present themselves for disposal by them, and to distribute even-handed justice. The learned Chief Justice may not have gone into the different phases of the question. He might have spared the feelings of the Government, but he had no such compunction. He evidently felt that justice and truth demanded that he should speak plainly and set the seal of legal approval on the complaint that has been reiterated without intermission by the British Indian Association. Probably, he also felt that it was demanded of him, as the chief representative of the British nation in the legal department of the Transvaal, that he should entirely dissociate himself from the incompatible position taken up by the Government.

In stating the law, Sir James Rose Innes said:

> It is quite clear that the legislature contemplated the case of Asiatics settling in the country for the express purpose of trading, and if it was intended to confine the business operations of such settlers within the limits of locations, some definite provisions to that effect would surely have been inserted, for it was no small matter, but one of great importance to Europeans

> and Asiatics alike. If the Indian was to enter the country without restriction and to trade where he pleased, he would be a most formidable competitor to the white store-keeper, and if, on the other hand, his commercial dealings were to be restricted to the location in which he lived, situated out of the town proper and peopled only by men of his own race, then he might, for practical purposes, as well not trade at all. The law, while recognising his right to settle in the country for the purpose of trading, and while charging him a registration fee on arrival, would be insiststing on conditions which make such trading impracticable and unprofitable. It would be giving with the one hand and taking away with the other.

The Indians have never spoken so strongly. We have now a corroboration on the complaint so hotly repudiated by the Government that the Locations were totally useless for trading purposes, and that they were meant merely to starve the Indians out of the Colony.

The real sting, however, follows a little later. After dealing with the definition of the term "residence", the learned judge proceeds:

> One thing, however, is clear from the despatches, and that is, that the interpretation which the Transvaal authorities now seek to place upon the law is the one which the Government of the South African Republic always advocated and which the British Government consistently opposed. Under the circumstances, it does strike one as remarkable that without fresh legislation the offcials of the Crown in the Transvaal should put forward a claim which the Government of the Crown in England has always contended was illegal under the Statute and which in the past, it has strenuously resisted.

To have taken up such an attitude on British occupation and to have ridden roughshod over all the promises made in the name of the British Government while Mr. Kruger was the ruler shews, we say with the greatest deference, a lamentable ignorance of British tradition, or worse still, a deliberate departure from all that has been held hitherto sacred in the British Dominions and that has held the different parts together. The decision is of momentous importance and the judgment a complete vindication of the Indian position. But one thing is now needful in order that our countrymen in the Transvaal may be able to reap the full benefit of the result, and that is that the representatives of the community should restrain the ardour of its members and make only a moderate use of the right of trading. It is now obtained after the incessant struggle against enormous odds for the last fifteen years. We know it is very difficult to carry out the precept in practice. It is not always possible to say who shall apply for a

license and who shall not when everyone has the right, but it is just when there are difficulties of such a nature that the real stuff of which a community is made can be measured. If the people go mad over the victory and begin to apply for licenses to trade here, there, and everywhere, a great deal of harm would be done, and their detractors would not be slow to use such a state of things as a weapon for dealing further blows. The situation is delicate, but if the full fruit is to be enjoyed, it has got to be faced by the leaders.

Indian Opinion, 21-5-1904

329. THE PLAGUE REGULATIONS IN NATAL

The plague regulations published in the Natal *Government Gazatte*, dated the 10th instant, betray an unwarranted fear of the Indians introducing the plague from the Transvaal. They make Charlestown the sole place of entry into the Colony for Natives, Indians and other Coloured persons coming from the Transvaal. From Charlestown, they cannot proceed further unless they are in possession of a travelling pass issued by the Transvaal Government which, by the way, is not issued except after a strict medical examination, and unless they obtain from the Medical Officer at Charlestown a free pass authorising them to proceed on their journey. Why there should be this double precaution or distrust of the action of the Transvaal authorities is not clear, and seeing there is such distrust, why should there be any necessity for the production of the Transvaal certificate? Moreover, those who come from the Witwatersrand district, whether they possess the Transvaal pass or not, are to be detained at Charlestown for a period of five days. We are always ready to appreciate the efforts of the Government and co-operate with it in preventing an introduction of the curse into the Colony, but we do think that the above regulations are very irksome and not justified. Detention at Charlestown at this time of the year is a most trying thing, and a medical examination on board the train of all the passengers, or only Coloured passengers, ought to be quite enough. And if on such examination any person is found to have any symptoms, he should be isolated and quarantined, not necessarily at Charlestown, but at Durban or some such place. Surely the entry of a suspected person who is kept under observation cannot introduce the plague in to the Colony? One may be thankful, however, to the Government for giving the Medical Officer in charge at Charlestown discretion to pemit any Coloured person

travelling by first class or second class to proceed to his destination without the above-mentioned formalities being gone through, and the regulation which are, as we have shown, very inconvenient, can be made to work smoothly by a liberal exercise of the discretion thus given. So after all, whether the regulations are found to be very troublesome or not will very greatly depend upon the temperament of the Medical Officer in charge and his subordinates at Charlestown.

Indian Opinion, 21-5-1904

330. WHAT IS A "COOLIE"

The report of the Municipal Corporations' Laws Commission, together with the Draft Bill prepared by it, is published for general information in the Transvaal *Government Gazatte* dated the 3rd instant, The Bill itself is a carefully prepared document, covering 326 clauses apart from the schedules. It contains certain sections which very vitally affect the Indian community and constitute a very serious departure from the municipal policy of the Colony. In another column we print such parts of the Bill as affect, directly or indirectly, the British Indians settled in the Colony. In the interpretation clause, the words "Coloured person" have been so defined as to give official sanction to the word "coolie", and are so vague as to cause a great deal of trouble in future. One would have thought that after the remarks made by Sir Walter Wragg in Mrs. Vinden's case that happened some years ago,[1] the framers of the Bill would be, very careful as to how they used the term. According to the definition, a Coloured person shall mean coolie, among others. No one knows exactly what a coolie is! If it is to bear the Indian meaning, then it means a labourer or porter, pure and simple. If it is to have the popular vulgar meaning, then every Indian, no matter what he is or who he is, is a coolie. If it is to bear the restricted meaning applied to it by the better informed people in the Colony, it means an indentured Indian. Now it would have an easy thing to have given a definition which could have at once expressed on the face of it which class of Indians the Commissioners intended to include in the term "Coloured persons". The definition of the term "uncivilised races" is most unsatisfactory and offensive to the Indians. We take leave to say that even indentured Indians are hardly an uncivilsed race, but to taboo their descendants as such is

[1] *Vide* "Notes on the Test Case, 4-4-1898 (Appendix)

beyond comprehension. We recall to our minds hundreds of Indian children, as Sir Henry M'Callum said, most intelligent and decent who, because they are born of indentured Indians, would be classed as uncivilised. This we consider nothing but wanton insult to the British Indians. The most objectionable feature of the Bill, however, is the qualifications for burgesses. So far, the municipal franchise has been open to Indians under the general law, but the Bill provides that those who are disqualified for the parliamentary franchise by Act No. 8 of 1896 also are to be disqualified from becoming burgesses. The late Mr. Escombe said definitely that he did not want to touch the municipal franchise, and he declined on the same basis as the political franchise. And yet we now find the Commissioners gravely proposing that the Indians should be disfranchised absolutely, even with reference to municipal elections! They take no note of the great self-control that the Indians have exercised hitherto in that they have not exercised the right to be placed on the Burgess Rolls of the Colony, but have been satisfied with the right itself without the exercising thereof. The Commissioners have also shut their eyes to the fact that, even if it may be argued that, in India, Indians have no political franchise, ¾ a statement which we question¾ there is no room for argument as to millions exercising the municipal franchise. There are hundreds of Municipalities dotted all over India which are governed mostly by Indians. Having defined the terms "Coloured persons" and "uncivilised races", it would be surprising if they had not made use of the terms in framing their Bill. They propose to give the Town Councils the right to make bye-laws prohibiting the use of pavements and rickshas by "Coloured persons" and they would make it an offence on the part of a "Coloured person" to be out during such hours as the Town Council may fix. The Bill also authorises the municipalities to make bye-laws establishing a system of registration of persons belonging to "uncivilised races" and as there is nothing in the section to shew that it applies only to domestic servants, it means that Indian clerks, and others similarly employed, if they are sons of indentured Indians, will have to be registered. It is one thing to register Natives who would not work, and whom it is very difficult to find out if they absent themselves, but it is another thing and most insulting to expect decent, hard-working, and respectable Indians, whose only fault is that they work too much, to have themselves registered and carry with them registration badges. Last of all, the Commissioners have provided the thin edge of the wedge by making all the

Corporation sales subject to the approval of the Town Councils and giving the Town Councils the discretion either to confirm or to reject any such sale without assigning any reason therefor. Thus, what it may not be possible to get Mr. Lyttelton to sanction if it were addressed to him directly, will, if the Bill is accepted by the Government, be so placed before him that he cannot but accept. Thus, the Bill, we have no hesitation in saying, is of most reactionary nature, and if the Government proposes to father it, the British Indians will have to make a very great effort to frustrate this fresh attempt to curtail their freedom.

Indian Opinion, 21-5-1904

331. THE EAST RAND VIGILANTS

There is no mistaking the vigilance of the gentlemen of the East Rand. Hardly has the ink become dry on the paper containing the decision in the test case when our friends are up in arms against it, and are urging the Government immediately to pass legislation giving effect to their views conveyed to it by means of anti-Asiatic resolutions. Their policy is tersely expressed in: "No Asiatic residents or their trade except in Locations". They are also calling upon the Chambers of Commerce in the Transvaal to meet and to consider steps to be taken against what, in their opinion, is a common danger. It is no use our appealing to their sense of fair play or British justice, for they do not believe in either. All they want is not the Asiatic's company but his room. And they would not consider the ways and means so long as they can bring about such a result. They have found a Receiver of Revenue, if the reports are correct, who is ready enough to play into their hands, for it is reported that he has refused to grant licenses to Asiatics, and has referred the matter to the authorities. In the face of an attitude such as this, the warning we have conveyed above ought to be taken to heart by the British Indians in the Transvaal. It would be interesting to know what the Government now proposes to do. Hitherto it has shielded itself in its dealings behind the Law 3 of 1885 as interpreted by the late High Court. Now that this protection has slipped out of its hands, will it have any other excuse for snatching the bread out of the mouths of the British Indian traders? Lord Milner has assured Mr. Lyttelton that the old laws are being enforced with every consideration for the feeling of the Indians, and not half as strictly as before. This, of course, as we have shown, is

not borne out by facts. But what could His Lordship say now? The old law does not in any way fetter Indian trade! Will he then forge new ones? For the sake of His Lordship's statesmanship, if for nothing else, we sincerely hope not.

Indian Opinion, 21-5-1904

332. KRUGERSDORP AND THE BRITISH INDIANS

The Krugersdorp Town Council has unanimously decided practically to condemn the choice made by its predecessor regarding the Asiatic Bazaar. They are under the impression that the site was chosen merely for the Indian traders and that there was to be another Location where hawkers and other Indians were to reside. Could ignorance go any further? And yet the destiny of the Indians is placed by Lord Milner and his advisers practically in the hands of gentlemen who care little about British Indians and less about[1] their own doings. The present Town Council wishes to override the decision arrived at by the late nominee Board, and is now inviting the Government to make another selection. Now that the licensing question has been set at rest, at any rate for the time being, the matter is of great importance. At the same time, it shews how Indian interests are likely to be treated by the Town Councillors of Krugersdorp, and we very much fear that what applies to Krugersdorp applies also to the rest of the Transvaal. His Worship the Mayor was good enough to suggest that, owing to the extreme cold, the people who were now living under canvas should be allowed to return to their houses, or the Town Council should at once expropriate the old Location and allow people to take up sites in the new Bazaar or new Location. The pity of it is that His Worship had not the courage to maintain his humane advocacy and insist on Justice being done to the people who are suffering, not because it is a case of danger to public health which demands it, but because of the rooted prejudice against colour and trade jealousy on the part of the Councillors of Krugersdorp.

Indian Opinion, 21-5-1904

[1] The original has "no less about. . . "

333. THE ASIATIC TRADERS' COMMISSION

A brief notice appears in the Johannesburg papers to the effect that the sittings of this Commission have been suspended owing to the result of the test case. This is another instance of reckless expenditure of money by the authorities. That which they should have done before has now been done under stress of circumstances after a waste of hundreds of pounds. The British Indian Association, as soon as the test case was brought, approached the Government imploring it to postpone the sittings of the Commission until after the test case was decided, but no argument would convince it. All the reply that the Government had to return was that, the Commission having been appointed by the Legislative Council, it could not interfere. Now, however, that the test case has been decided against the Government, it suddenly finds itself armed with the power to suspend the sittings of the Commission. This is fairly red tape with a vengeance. The request of the Association was very moderate and reasonable and was calculated to assist the Government and to save expense. And yet, because it might be called yielding to the wishes of the British Indian Association, a flat refusal was given. It will be interesting if a member were to ask the questions at the next sitting of the Legislative Council as to why the Commission was persisted in in spite of the bringing of the test case; or, was it that the Government felt absolutely certain of a victory over the Indians?

Indian Opinion, 21-5-1904

1. *LETTER TO M. M. BHOWNAGGREE*[1]

25 & 26 COURT CHAMBERS,
RISSIK STREET,
JOHANNESBURG,
May 23, 1904

TO
SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE, M.P.
196 CROMWELL ROAD
LONDON, ENGLAND

DEAR SIR,

His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Arthur Lawley, while passing through Heidelberg, in reply to an Indian deputation which presented His Excellency last week with an address,[2] said in effect that the liberty of the Indian to trade unrestricted in virtue of the decision in the test case will not be tolerated and that Mr. Lyttelton has already been approached with a view to sanctioning legislation in the desired direction.

The position of the Indian as defined in Law 3 of 1885 as amended in 1886 and interpreted in the light of the test case is this:

(1) An Indian can immigrate into the Colony without restriction.

(2) He can trade anywhere he likes in the Colony. Locations may be set apart for him but the law cannot force him to reside only in Locations, as there is no sanction provided in the law for it.

(3) He cannot become a burgher.

(4) He cannot own landed property except in Locations.

(5) He must pay a registration fee of £3 on entering the Colony.

With the exception, therefore, of the prohibition as to holding landed property, even in virtue of the above law the condition of the Indian is now not altogether precarious.

Freedom to immigrate, however, has been almost absolutely taken away by making what is, after all, an unjust use of the Peace

[1] A copy of the letter was forwarded to the Colonial Office by Bhownaggree. *India*, in its issue of 1-7-1904, published the text as from its correspondent.

[2] *Vide* "Address to Lieutenant-Governor" May 18, 1904.

Preservation Ordinance which was passed to restrict rebels and other disloyal people but not law-abiding British subjects.

In what form it is now intended to introduce legislation, it is difficult to say, but seeing that before it can even be introduced Mr. Lyttelton's consent is necessary, I trust that you will approach him and discuss the question with him, for, after he has given his sanction to a prticular course, it would be very difficult to get redress.

What I venture to suggest is that the law 3 of 1885 should be entirely repealed as also the town regulations regarding foot-paths and other laws specially disqualifying Asiatics; that an Immigration Act on the Cape lines should be introduced but so as not to taboo, in the educational test the Indian languages and; [that] a Dealers' Licenses Act should be introduced on the Natal lines provided that the right of appeal to the Supreme Court be granted against decisions of the local authorities on licensing applications and provided that the existing licenses are not touched by it except in so far as the shops may not be in accordance with sanitary or ornamental requirements.

Thus, the great bogey of immigration will be set at rest once and for all, and there would be no question of undue competition in trade. The local authorities will be able to regulate the number of licenses.

All that the Indians claim is that they should have the right, under the general laws of the Colony and so long as they conform to Western requirements, to trade and to hold landed property and to enjoy other rights of citizenship.

I would also remind you that Lord Milner has committed himself to some such legislation and not legislation specially disqualifying British Indians, and also that British Indians of education or standing should be entirely exempted from any restrictive legislation.

Colonial Office Records: C.O. 291, Volume 78, Individuals—B.

2. BRITISH INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL

The British Indians at Heidelberg did well in presenting a loyal address to His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor of the Transvaal, and in doing so to draw His Excellency's attention to the recently decided test case. It drew from His Excellency an important pronouncement on Government policy. The answer given by Sir Arthur Lawley to the deputation was elaborated in his speech at Volksrust at the banquet given in his honour by the people of Volksrust. His

Excellency paid a well-deserved compliment to the loyalty of the Indian people and their industrious habits. Dealing with the[ir] status in the Transvaal, His Excellency was very guarded. He said that nothing could be done by the Government until sanction was received from the Colonial Secretary. But he had no hesitation in saying that he sympathised very much with the desire of the white inhabitants not to be nonplussed by the Asiatic traders, and he promised the Volksrust people that he would do his best to further the desire of his fellow-countrymen, though the promise was qualified by statement that the Government would have to act with strict justice; that it would have to protect vested interests and accurately define the position of those who are already settled in the Colony, and would also have to state what disqualifications those who might enter the country in future would labour under. All this is eminently satisfactory. Anything would be welcome to replace the present uncertainty, and if a just interpretation is given to the term "vested interests", those who are already carrying on business in the Transvaal need not have any anxiety. Unfortunately, however, the past does not inspire hope for the future. The ill-fated Asiatics Traders' Commission has made it clear as to what the Government means by "vested interests." It would only respect the trade of those British Indians who were actually carrying on trade outside Locations in the Transvaal "at, and immediately before, the outbreak of war". We know what this means, and we know how the Commissioners interpreted the expression. It would only protect a dozen Asiatics who, leaving their trade intact at the time of war, went away from the country owing to fear. And if such is the interpretation to be placed upon the term "vested interests", in the expressive words of the Chief Justice of the Transvaal, the Government would again be taking away with the other hand what it professed to give with the one hand. The danger has been foreshadowed by His Excellency himself in stating that the Government would protect the trade of British Indians only during the lifetime of the present licence-holders. A man engaged in trade knows what this means. Certainty is very essential in all commercial transactions and seeing that life is very fickle, would there be merchants found who would give any credit whatsoever to British Indian traders when the law informs them that the traders who ask for credit have no security of tenure, and that on their deaths their businesses would be abruptly closed? How such a doctrine can be reconciled with strict justice which His Excellency would dole out to the Indians, it is difficult to understand. We have, therefore, reluctantly to take the intentions of the Government to do justice with a great deal of reserve and caution. Nor do the opinions His Excellency has formed regarding the effect of Indian trade on the

white trade afford any ground for consolation. We respectfully protest against His Excellency talking of the great influx of Asiatics when he must be well aware with what rigidity the Peace Preservation Ordinance is being used as a handle to keep out of the Colony even British Indians. When the Chinese Importation Ordinance was passing through the Legislative Council, it became necessary for the Government to shew that the Peace Preservation Ordinance was being effectively used in order to keep out all but *bona-fide* Asiatic refugees. A report was prepared by the Chief Secretary for Permits which shewed that hardly any new-comer was allowed to enter the Colony, and that permits were only sparingly granted even to refugees. It, therefore, seems rather hard and inconsistent that His Excellency should now talk about the great influx of Asiatics. His Excellency said that

> only those who had seen for themselves realised that Indians were able to live here they could not live in a colder climate, such as England—and to compete with white men and oust them from many fields of trade and commerce.

Now this is a very damaging statement if it were true, coming as it does from the Lieutenant-Governor; but is it true? Is there any department of trade or commerce in which the Asiatic has ousted the white man? There are only two branches in which there is any competition between the two, namely hawking and petty shop-keeping. Now, the facts as to hawking are that white men, except of a particular class, simply would not condescend to do the onerous work. As has been shown by our contemporary *The Star*, many an attempt has been made by the white hawkers, but each time they have given it up, not because of the Indian competition, but because they do not care for it. But there is a class of white men who are carrying it on successfully and against the Indians. We refer to the Syrians and Russian Jews. They are industrious, do not mind walking great distances with a heavy load on them, and we see them doing that business successfully. Moreover it should not be forgotten that, in hawking about towns, the Indians supplies a felt want and does a double good. He brings to the very door of the householder vegetables and other things, and enables the wholesale merchants to make easy profits out of the Indains. It is because he has been found to be so profitable that wholesale European houses have invariably supplied him. If they suspended credit to the Indian, he would be thoroughly impossible in South Africa as a hawker. And what we have said with reference to the hawker applies more strongly to the petty shop-keeper. In fact, beyond Johannes-

burg, Pretoria, and a few other towns, the petty Indian shop-keeper is not to be found. And there is a keen competition between the European petty shop-keeper and the Indian in which the former invariably has advantage over the latter. But when these two trades are excepted, there is absolutely no competition whatsoever between the two races. In the Cape Colony, for instance, where competition is absolutely free and the Indian has almost all the rights, he has not been able to oust any white store-keepers. Nor has he been able to do so in Natal, where there is such a large Indian population. The statements, therefore, that the Indian ousts the white man in trade, with due deference to His Excellency, is hardly fair, except to an extremely limited extent. And even where the Indian may seem to oust the white man, he only raises him a step above himself (the Indian) by becoming a middleman and making him a wholesale dealer instead of a retail trader.

But the speech made by His Excellency just shows how much work there is yet to be done before the Indians in the Transvaal will be in a position to retain any hold of the trade which ought to be theirs as a matter of right by reason of the decision in the test case.

Indian Opinion, 28-5-1904

3. "THE EAST RAND EXPRESS" ON THE TEST CASE

There has been so much said with reference to the licensing test case in the Transvaal and we, on our part, have had so much to say regarding it, that we have not been able to overtake and deal with the different cuttings which lie before us. One, however, from among them we must hasten to single out, for it is very typical of the temper of the East Randites. It grieves us, however, to find that our contemporary, *The East Rand Express*, has associated itself with a most dangerous doctrine, and, although it is vey cautiously stated in the issue of the 14th instant, reading between the lines, the conclusion is irresistible that veiled advice has been given to the East Rand people to take the law into their own hands and prevent by force the opening of any Indian stores within that district, should such an attempt be made. Such tactics and such methods are unworthy of people who call themselves British and of British journalism. Our contemporary would be selling for a mess of pottage all that is held sacred by British communities if, in a moment of irritation, it descends to a level so low. We would allow our contemporary to speak for itself and leave the

reader to judge whether our remarks are at all exaggerated. After dealing with the judgment, which it has misinterpreted, it goes on:

> It may be taken for granted that the Asiatics will endeavour to avail themselves of the opportunity. Hitherto, East Rand townships have kept the coolies at a distance, but it wuold appear that legally they can in future offer no resistance. What is to be done? We are as determined as ever to allow no Asiatic trading outside bazaars. the bazaars are fixed at a reasonable distance from the towns. Can voluntary action replace the protection hitherto generally offered by the State? As regards the East Rand, we believe the judgment of the Supreme Court will be of none effect. When the law fails to protect any community, history shows that [the] community as a rule finds some way of protecting itself. We should, however, deplore the public taking the law into their own hands, but it is to be feared *that if Indians or Chinese attempt to start trading in this district among whites under the decision, what would be termed by a general 'a regrettable incident' would occur. At Barberton, prior to the Asiatic Law being made as stringent as it was of late years under the Boers, some Asiatics attempted to trade in that town. The day after opening they evaded hanging by escaping in the early hours of the morning,* leaving their goods behind them. This action on the part of Barbertonians should, of course, be strongly condemned, but it points a moral to our Asiatic friends of what despite every effort of the municipalities and police, might conceivably occur elsewhere. It would not be fair to local authorities to place on them the onus of maintaining order in such circumstances, and we therefore trust that government will lose no time in passing a law to suit the wishes of the public.

Either writing such as this conveys an empty threat, in which case our contemporary has misjudged the Indian entirely, or it is seriously meant. In the latter event, for the sake of the Indians, apart from any Imperial considerations, we would welcome a hanging or two by the people in the East Rand, should an Indian open a store. It would at once bring up the whole question to the surface and enable the Indians to know whether the flag which has hitherto been found to afford perfect protection for physical liberty is still sufficient or not. It would also shew whether the Indian is cowardly enough to be staggered by any such proceedings, and skulk away from the country. So far, therefore, as the Indian himself is concerned, his position, we doubt not, will be infinitely strengthened if the East Rand community accept the advice of our contemporary. We may, however, remind it of a parallel that happened at Umtali some years ago[1]. An Indian was granted a license to trade there. The whole of the European

[1] *Vide* "Indian Traders in Rhodesia", 22-1-1899

population turned out and threatened to burn down the store and to wreak dire vengeance on the Indian himself, if he would not close his store. Fortunately, single-handed as he was, he defied the crowd, refused to close the store or to run away. In the meanwhile, police assistance came, and the crowd, finding itself checkmated, withdrew, leaving the Indian to carry on his trade peacefully. We present this incident to our contemporary for reflection, and ask once more whether the office of respectable journalism is to provoke breaches of law or to inculcate order and good behaviour in the community in whose interest it is published.

Indian Opinion, 28-5-1904

4. MR. DAN TAYLOR

At the same time that Mr. McLarty's motion was carried, Mr. Dan Taylor, to the astonishment of all, made a very energetic speech, notifying that he would move heaven and earth to see that Chinamen were introduced into Natal in lieu of the Indians. Mr. Dan Taylor of 1896[1] was quite different form Mr. Dan Taylor of today. He was then an arch agitator against Coloured labour in any shape or form. He inveighed against the planters and was determined to throw the Indians, who had then just arrived from India, overboard if they claimed the right to land on the Natal shore. All this is history.[2] But manners change with the times and so do men, and Mr. Dan Taylor now thinks that some Coloured labour is absolutely essential for the prosperity of the Colony. And if he can carry his proposal, we would certainly suggest that a vote of thanks be given to him by the Indian community. He is against Indian labour because he finds that the Indian Government will not allow the Indian to be worked as a slave to the extent that would satisfy him. We are against Indian labour under indenture because we consider that the form under which the Indian is imported into the Colony is, in the words of the late Sir William Wilson Hunter, perilously near to slavery. We can never reconcile ourselves to the Capitation Tax of £ 3 annually which is the price that the law exacts from the Indian for his freedom, a freedom which, in the words of the late Mr. Escombe, is granted to him after he has given the best five years of his life to the Colony for a paltry wage.

[1] *Vide* "memorial to secretary of state for the colonies", 24-12-1896

[2] The episode is described in detail in the "Memorial to Chamberlain", *ibid.*, p. 184 *et seq*.

Though, therefore, it is from different points of view, it is great satisfaction to us that we find ourselves in perfect agreement with Mr. Dan Taylor, and we shall certainly hail the day when Indian indentured labour under present circumstances is stopped. It would, moreover, open the eyes of the Colonists to the real benefit that the presence even of the free Indian has contributed to the prosperity of the Colony. It is all very well to inveigh against the Indians getting a bit of freehold land, but the gentlemen who cry out against this entirely forget that every bit of land that passes into Indian hands is turned into a veritable garden. What possible objection there could be to the Indian turning to good purpose the land that the European would not touch, we cannot understand. However, the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and if Mr. Dan Taylor succeeds in stopping Indian immigration, what we have now been stating as an opinion will become a realised fact in a very short time after the prohibition of indentured labour from India.

Indian Opinion, 28-5-1904

5. *THE LATE SIR JOHN ROBINSON*[1]

A cablegram from London announces that a committee has been formed in London, as it has been formed in the Colony, to collect subscriptions for a memorial for the late Sir John. This is as it should be if only because he was the first Prime Minister of the Colony under responsible Government, and because he was the prime mover in bringing about responsible Government for the Colony. His claim, however, to public recognition is far greater because of his devotion and self-sacrifice towards the promotion of the public weal. The late Sir John was entirely a self-made man. His work as a journalist is well known to everyone and as an educationist, he was probably second to none in South Africa. With him, journalism was not a matter of pounds, shillings and pence; he used it as a vehicle for educating public opinion, imparting a healthy tone to the community. In fact, he used his great talents not for intellectual pleasure but for the sake of the country. As a public speaker, too, he was second only perhaps to the late Mr. Escombe in eloquence, though perhaps his style was more polished than that of the latter. We hope that the Indian community will associate itself with the movement to perpetuate the memory of the deceased statesman. He has a claim on the attention of the Indians from a special point of view, and here we may

[1] *Vide* "The late Sir John Robinson", 12-11-1903.

gratefully recall the occasion when the late Sir John undertook, at much inconvenience to himself owing to his ill-health, to preside at the meeting held by the Indians to celebrate the relief of Ladysmith, Mafeking and Kimberley. His speech delivered at the time[1] was full of encouragement and generous recognition of the work of the Indians at the time of the war. It shewed on his part a large-hearted sympathy. It also shewed that he, for one, was not infected with the current prejudice.

Indian Opinion, 28-5-1904

6. INDENTURED INDIANS

We have received from the Protector of Indian Immigrants a copy of his annual report for the year ended 31st December 1903. The indentured Indian population of the Colony, including the descendants of such Indians, at the end of the year, was 81,390 as against 31,712 in the year 1896, and 78,004 in the year 1902. The birth rate for the past year was 32.11, and the death rate 20.78. The lowest death rate was in the year 1898, namely, 14.30, and, curiously enough, the same year shews the lowest birth rate, namely, 19.09. Plague claimed 52 victims during the year under review; pneumonia and other lung complaints 328 and phthisis 262. These figures are rather disquieting and require careful investigation. As has been remarked in the report, in the Coal Mines the death rate among the Indians has been rather high. Of 40 deaths occuring among the small number of Indians within the mining circle, 16 died from phthisis and 8 from pneumonia, and it is to be hoped that the Protector will not rest content until the mortality has been considerably reduced. 1,053 marriages were registered at the Protector's office last year of which 2 were polygamous. The savings of the 2,029 Indians who returned to India last year amounted, in cash and jewellery, to £ 34,690, that is to say, a little over £ 17 per head. Herein there is a conclusive argument against the notion often put forth that the Indians could very well return to India and live on their earnings for the rest of their lives without having to do anything, or could utilise the savings otherwise so as to enable them to earn a decent living. Now, even in a poverty-stricken place like India, it could not seriously be contended that £17 could go a great length in supporting a man. Of the 2,029 returned Indians, 1,542 were Madrasees and 487 Calcutta men. The savings of

[1] *Vide* "The late Sir John Robinson", 12-11-1903.

the Madrasees amounted to £27,417 ¾ that is, £18 per head ¾ and those of the Calcutta men amounted to £ 7,273¾ that is, £15 per head. There is an interesting classification given by the Protector of the savings of the Immigrants. 47 Madrasees had above 2,000 rupees each as against 5 Calcutta men. 25 Madrasees had under 2,000 as against 6 Calcutta men. 22 Madrasees had under 50 rupees as against 11 Calcutta men. And so, throughout, the Calcutta man has come out extremely badly. It shows that he is not so industrious or so thrifty as the Madrasee, and it would be well if our Calcutta friends would take note of this important fact, and those who have influence inculcate among them the necessity for greater prudence. Of the 81,390 Indians, 30,131 were under indenture; the balance had become free. Under the heading "Employer and Employees", we are told that the relations, generally speaking, between employer and indentured Indians have been good, and as a consequence the Indians are well treated.

New rules have been framed with reference to the Indians who may be desirous of going to the Protector for making complaints; whereas, formerly, the Indian was free from arrest if he could shew that he was proceeding to the Protector for the sake of laying a complaint before him, under the new rules, he would not be free unless he possessed a pass to that effect from the Magistrate of his division which may or may not be granted. Thus, really speaking, he has to establish a *prima facie* case before the Magistrate in order to enable him to proceed to the Protector's office. We cannot help remarking that this is an innovation which was hardly necessary. It would have been far better if the freedom of the Indian had been unrestricted with reference to any complaints he might have to make. No doubt there would be a few frivolous complaints, but we think it is better to overlook them than that those who have *bonafide* complaints should have any difficulties placed in their way.

The demand for Indian labour seems to be increasing at an alarming rate. There were, at the end of the year, 15,033 applications undealt with. The agent in India is utterly unable to cope with this extraordinary demand. It shews that the Colony simply cannot do without indentured Indian Labour, and yet we hear men crying out against it, and arguing that the Colony has been ruined by indentured Indian labour.

The following is what the Protector has to say on the suicides:

> Suicides, who are not included in these figures, during the year numbered 31. Of these, 20 were indentured men, and 3 women, while 6 men and 1 woman and 1 boy were free Indians. A Magisterial enquiry is made into the

> circumstances attending each case of suicide, and whenever the evidence tends to shew that the fatality in any way resulted form ill-treatment received from an employer or employee, I make a personal visit to the estate and enquire myself into the circumstances. In one instance and one only, did the evidence tend in this direction, but my own enquiry did not confirm this suspicion, which was created by the ship-mates of the deceased, who was a shop assistant in India and kept the books of the proprietor, and it appeared to me that he really committed suicide because the work of a sugar estate was not congenial to him. One woman, married to a well-to-do man who had finished his first term of indenture and was well treated, committed suicide because she regretted her union to a man of lower caste after nine months. One man was deserted by his wife. Another attempted to kill his wife and, thinking he had done so, hanged himself. Why a free Indian boy of nine years of age, while tending cattle belonging to his father's Indian employer, should kill himself is a mystery yet to be explained. Generally speaking, witnesses state that they can give no reason for the suicide, and if those who are supposed to know decline to give any information, it is impossible in many cases to arrive at even a probable cause.

We have given the remarks of the Protector on this painful subject in full, and we cannot help expressing our surprise that it has been dismissed so light-heartedly. Suicides among the indentured Indians have become a feature year after year, and we think that the cause ought to be probed to the bottom. And it is hardly an answer coming from the Protector of Indians that he cannot arrive at even a probable cause if those who are supposed to know decline to give any information. There is a homely English proverb, “Where there's a will, there's a way,” and if the Protector would only feel as we feel, having the powers of an autocrat, he should have not the slightest difficulty in tracing the cause. There is enough in the Protector's statement to shew that there must be something wrong. Out of the free Indian population 51,259, there were 8 suicides. Out of 30,131 indentured Indians, there were 23. Why this great disproportion? Now, the highest rate is to be found in Paris¾namely, 422 per million¾and Paris is considered to be most notorious in this respect. But the rate among the indentured Indians comes to 741 per million. These figures are sufficient to give cause for very serious reflection. We think that the information given in the report on the subject is exceedingly meagre. There should be a statement shewing which estate shews the highest number, and there should be a summary at least as to the nature of evidence given, etc., at the Magisterial enquiries. We do not wish to draw any conclusions against the employers from these staggering figures, but we do plead for a thorough enquiry, alike in the interests of the Indians as of the employers, and we consider that nothing short of an impartial commission to investigate the cause would meet the ends of justice. And an ideal commission ought to include a medical

gentleman of good standing, a nominee of the Immigration Board, the Protector, and, if it is not a sacrilege to make the suggestion, an Indian of standing in the Colony. Such a commission cannot but result in arriving at the truth. The greater the light thrown on the subject, the better it would be for all concerned, and we hope that the remarks we have ventured to offer will be favourably considered by the authorities[1].

Indian Opinion, 4-6-1904

7. PRETORIA TOWN COUNCIL AND THE GOVERNMENT

It seems that the Government and the Pretoria Town Council have the knack of disagreeing on all important matters, in each case the Council being hopelessly in the wrong. Then latest instance is in connection with its very constitution. The Council is powerless to do much work for the rate-payers unless it allows itself to come under Ordinance 58 of 1903, regulating Municipal Corporations, but the Council is unwilling to do so unless, in the words of Mr. Van Boeschten, a Councillor, "it receives the power to force Coloured people to keep off the foot-paths", which power is not reserved by the Ordinance in question. The Government, therefore, has notified the Council that is must either decide to come under the Ordinance or not at all, as the matter has been hanging fire now for several months, pointing out to the Council that,

> unless it comes within the scope of the Ordinance, it has no power towork tram-ways, to expend money on a fire brigade, or upon many other things which it is necessary for the Council to do or carry on. In particular, they have no power to raise money on loan from persons other than the Government, and the Government is not in a position to advance money on loan to the Municipality.

This communication from the Government has been resented by the Council, and it has again shelved the question by passing a

[1] Gandhiji communicated with Dababhai Naoroji in this matter, as is evident from what the latter wrote to the Secretary of State for India on June 29: ". . .my correspondent in the Transvaal refers to the abnormal number of suicides among indentured Indians on the plantations in Natal which, he says, 'have been keeping up a very high average from year to year', and suggests that an enquiry should be instituted. He also refers to the drastic anti-Asiatic laws still remaining in force in the Orange River Colony". (India Office: Judicial and Public Records, 1567). The full text of Gandhiji's letter is not available.

resolution that "the Council will be prepared to come under Ordinance 58 of 1903 after the Traffic Bye-Laws regarding sidewalks have been passed". This is nothing less than a challenge thrown down by the Council. If it were not for the fact that the party opposing is the Council of the Metropolis of the Transvaal, the action would be considered to be very churlish. On the one hand, there is the question of the legal existence of the Council, and as the Assistant Colonial Secretary to the local Government states, a loss to the extent of several thousands of pounds per annum to the rate-payers; on the other, that of excluding Coloured persons from using the foot-paths. An ordinary business Corporation would have, at any rate, first of all secured the ample powers in virtue of the Ordinance and then, if it was considered necessary, set about insisting on getting its Foot-path Bye-Laws. The Pretoria Town Council has, however, reversed the order, and like the baby in the tub, it would not be happy till it has got the power to prohibit Coloured people from using the foot-paths. We shall watch with interest the development of the struggle between the Government and the Council.

Indian Opinion, 4-6-1904

8. MR LOVEDAY AND THE BRITISH INDIANS

Mr. Loveday has been again fulminating against the British Indians at the Mayoral Banquet given in Pretoria. The honourable member seems to be quite unable to shake off the Indian fever from his brain. He spoke as follows on the question:

> He held that the conditions which existed as regarded them in pre-war days should remain unchanged, inviolable, and sacred¾ (applause.) ¾until the advent of responsible government. (Renewed applause.) That was the cry of the whole people, and it was a cry of self-preservation. Whatever representations might come from India, there could only be one reply. There was no more room in South Africa for any more black people. (Loud applause.) What did the Indian bring to this country in exchange for the drain upon the money of the country? So far, he had brought nothing but disease, which periodically cost them some hundreds of thousands of pounds, not to eradicate but to stop for the time being. Such was the position of the Indian in this country, and yet they were calmly asked by those sentimental gentlemen across the water to accept that condition of affairs. For his own part¾he might say for the whole country¾it was impossible for them to have a thorough white South Africa, with the supremacy of the white man, if South Africa was going to be thrown open to an invasion from the East. (Applause.) There was in this country

a great fear that they were being used, and would be used, for the purposes of party politics across the water. He had lived many years in this country, and his memory went back to 1881, when they passed through the same state of things, and when a certain school of politicians¾he could not call them statesmen¾used South African matters for the purposes of party politics in England, and this country was sacrificed to those purposes. (Applause.) They did not wish to have their domestic affairs made a shuttle-cock of for party politics in England. (Applause.)

He would thus have the conditions which existed as regarded the Indians in pre-war days remain "unchanged, inviolable and sacred". Will he, therefore, be kind enough to ask the Government to allow the Indians to trade anywhere they like without licenses as they did before war and to enter the Colony absolutely without restriction? We would also ask him to quote figures to shew how much drain has been caused by the Indians in the country, and if we may take the liberty of informing him, it may be stated that most of the takings of the Indian have gone into the hands of the wholesale European houses and European landlords. To say that he has brought nothing but disease to the country in the face of the revelations about the neglect of the Johannesburg Town Council is very much like "perambulating around the suburbs of veracity", and, after all, barring the plague, Mr. Loveday point out any other disease with which the Indian is at all connected? Take, for instance, the enteric fever which is, according to Dr. Turner, far more deadly and far more infectious than the plague. Is it not a fact that the Indian is particularly free from this disease and that the mortality and the infection are mostly restricted to the Europeans? Would the honourable member, therefore, shut out European immigration from Europe? However, it is no use arguing with a person who simply does not want to be convinced, and if we have taken the trouble to discuss Mr. Loveday's views on the Indian ques-tion, it is because we are anxious that those who may see his speech may not be misled by what he has stated with reference to the econo-mic drain and the plague.

Indian Opinion, 4-6-1904

9. VOLKSRUST AND BRITISH INDIANS

The people of Volksrust are very much agitated over the decision of the Supreme Court in the Indian Licensing test case. We are told that they met on the 27th May last, at Abnerthy Hall, that "the meeting was a gigantic success, and that the hall was crowded". They have passed a string of resolutions, very drastic in their nature,

one of which calls upon "the whole country to establish a referendum to the people, giving them the opportunity to assert their opposition to the introduction and settlement of the Indian trade in this country", and calls upon the people of Volksrust not to, either directly or indirectly, encourage Indian trade. With all this we cannot quarrel; it is perfectly constitutional, and if there is a general boycott instituted, the Indians cannot complain. The agitation, however, seems to be utterly insincere in that the agitators have absolutely no confidence in their ability to carry out the programme, for in the same breath as they propose a wholesale boycott, they also call upon the Government to introduce legislation depriving the Indians of the right which the Supreme Court had decided they have under the law of the country. Mr. Fisher, the chairman of the Urban Board, suggested that, "pending legislation, by hook or by crook, they must tide over the next few months". We do not know what the phrase means, but we can only say that, if it implies departure from constitutional methods, with all deference, it is unworthy of the gentleman occupying the responsible position that Mr. Fisher does, and we hope that the Government will take note of the undeserved difficulties that surround the position of the Indian in the Transvaal.

Indian Opinion, 4-6-1904

10. THE JOHANNESBURG TOWN COUNCIL AND BRITISH INDIANS

The Town Council of Johannesburg has given notice of its intention to introduce a Private Bill in the Legislative Council whereby, among other things, it would ask for authority to the Council to

> establish locations for Natives and Coloured Persons, and bazaars for Asiatics, beyond the limits of the municipality, and to render any such locations or bazaars subject to by-laws made by Council. To erect buildings for the occupation of Natives, Asiatics, or Coloured Persons in any location or bazaar.

This evidently shews that the Town Council has at present no intention whatsoever of complying with the requirements of the Expropriation Ordinance, whereby it is bound to provide for the men dispossessed from the expropriation area, accommodation in the neighbourhood thereof. The sixteen hundred Indians who were sent from the Indian Location to Klipspruit are still without suitable

residences. Some of them are still living under canvas in Klipspruit and have to be satisfied with enforced idleness. Those have been allowed to return to town are obliged to pay enormous rents for the privilege of living in Johan-nesburg, simply because the Town Council has failed to carry out its legal duty. But apart from this consideration, if the powers above mentioned are granted to the Town Council by the Legislative Cou-ncil, it would mean a very serious matter for the British Indians, and it would also be a very great step in advance of the old Republican legislation against the Indians, for, as matters stand at present, the Town Councils have no control whatsoever, except in matters of sani-tation, over Indian Bazaars or Locations. The power of fixing these sites rests in the Government and the Government alone, and the people have the right, at any rate within the restricted area, to own fixed property and to build their own dwellings. If the intention of the Town Council is carried out, Indians will be placed on the same level with the Natives, and will be totally at the mercy of the Town Council. They would be merely tenants-at-will and be subject to cons-tant removal. There would be an end then to any ownership of land in the Locations. Such a state of things is too dreadful to contemplate, and were it not for the fact that the local Government has shown itself unable to protect the weaker party, we would decline to believe that it is at all possible for the Town Council to get the powers it would like to possess in connection with the British Indians. We can only hope that the members of the Council will remember the pre-war days, their promises when they were Uitlanders to the British Indians, and as honourable men do their duty by fulfilling them.

Indian Opinion, 11-6-1904

11. PROPOSED NEW ASIATIC LEGISLATION IN THE TRANSVAAL

Mr. Moor, the Assistant Colonial Secretary, has replied to the East Rand Vigilants Association, saying that the Government is seriously considering a change in the existing legislation affecting the Asiatics, namely, Law 3 of 1885, as amended in 1886. We are aware that the Government has been doing this ¾ whether seriously or not is a moot point ¾ now for the last eighteen months, but we can quite understand why, now that its policy and interpretation of Law 3 of 1885 have been judicially condemned, it has become serious about

the matter. Mr. Lyttelton has shown himself to be strong-willed in more matters than one. He has not hesitated to disregard the demand of the mining people in Rhodesia for introduction of Chinese labour until the Legislative Council of that portion of South Africa has declared its view in the matter. Again, he has not hesitated to defy the strong public opinion in England, as well as in other parts of British Dominions, against such introduction in the Transvaal because, rightly or wrongly, he has made up his mind that it is good for the country, and that it is favoured by the people in the Transvaal. Will he hold his own with regard to the Indian legislation in the Transvaal? He has assured Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree that he will give the matter his most careful consideration. The question of Chinese introduction is hardly an Imperial question. It does not affect the status of British subjects. But the Indian question has been acknowledged to be an Imperial one, and also very important. Much has been said and much has been written on it. The opinion outside South Africa is overwhelmingly in favour of the British Indian claim. The Imperial Government is, moreover, tied down to a policy favourable to the British Indians since the time of the Republican regime. It fought the Indians' battle when Mr. Kruger reigned in Pretoria. Its representatives deliber-ately stated that the grievances of the British Indians in the Transvaal were one of the causes of war. There is in all this much to guide Mr. Lyttelton aright. He is bound as an Imperialist to protect Indian interests. He is further bound by the promises made to the British Indians by his predecessors, and we can only hope that any new legisl-ation that is framed to replace Law 3 of 1885 will be in consonance with the Imperial spirit and the promises.

Indian Opinion, 11-6-1904

12. IMITATING EAST LONDON

In going through the Acts of the Parliament of the Cape of Good Hope gazetted on the 31st May last, we find in the Act, entitled the Act to amend, consolidate, and add to the Laws regulating the Municipal Corporation and Government of Uitenhage, in Section 125, certain powers given to the Town Council, among which is included the power to make Bye-laws

> for allotting and setting apart, and from time to time changing, portions of the Municipality as Locations for the residence of Natives and Asiatics and for abolishing such Locations; for regulating the conditions upon which Natives and Asiatics may reside in such Locations and the fees, rents,

and hut tax to be paid by them in respect of such residence, and any horses, cattle, oxen, sheep, or goats belonging to them, and for regulating or prohibiting the use of the commonage by the same. For regulating, permitting or prohibiting of shops, trading stations, and trade within such Locations. For fixing and from time to time altering the limits within which it shall not be lawful for Asiatics and Natives to reside.

These restrictions are not to apply to

any Native or Asiatic who may be the registered owner or occupier of landed property within the Municipality, valued for Municipal purposes at not less then £ 75.

Now these powers are very much on the same lines as those vested in the Municipality of East London. The British Indians at the Cape do not seem to have noticed them, and we fear that they have, therefore, passed unchallenged. Nor need such an omission excite any surprise, because it is too much to expect a trading community to wade through Government Gazettes. And we are not aware of the whole of the Bill in its passage through the Cape Parliament having been published in any of the important local newspapers. But what shall we say of the Government which gives such drastic powers to a Municipality, or of the Colonial Office which advises His Majesty the King to sanction such legislation, for, being class legislation, it evidently required the Royal assent before being proclaimed Law of the Country? We have said so much in dealing with similar legislation for East London that we do not consider it necessary to offer any comments upon its application to the Uitenhage Municipality. We, however, hope that our remarks will attract the attention of the friends of British Indians in London as well as in India and the authorities, and that some relief will be granted.

We note also that the Chinese Ordinance has been reserved for special assent. We do not know why this Bill should not have been likewise reserved, especially as it applies to all Asiatics, whether British subjects or not. Or, is it that the sections we have referred to escaped the Governor's notice as well as that of the Colonial Office? And if so, it shews that there is a necessity for some power in the Letters Patent whereby all class legislation would be invalid unless it is embodied in a separate Act dealing with such differential legislation and that alone.

Indian Opinion, 11-6-1904

13. THE INDIAN INTERPRETERS

Mr. Hyslop asked the Colonial Secretary whether he would not replace Indian Interpreters by European, as he had been informed that the former did not give satisfaction. The Colonial Secretary agreed with the honourable member but said that there were difficulties in obtaining Europeans, and added that at the Umgeni Court an Indian was superseded because a European was found.

This incident teaches a moral. The Indian Interpreters are tolerated only because Europeans are not be found in the Colony having even a smattering of the Indian languages, and it will be as well if the Indian Interpreters throughout the Colony will take note of the fact. The Government evidently would have no hesitation in summarily dismissing them if non-Indians could be found to take their place. We cannot, however, help protesting against the charge brought against a body of most industrious civil servants by Mr. Hyslop, namely, that they do not give satisfaction. On the contrary, we would very much like the honourable member, in justice to the men he has maligned, to give the source of his information. We have no hesitation in saying that, if they do not give satisfaction, it is a scandal which the Government should remove at the earliest opportunity. On the other hand, if they are competent, industrious and honest, the fact should be recognised and they should be absolved from the charge. As a matter of fact, we have seen the testimonials of not a few of these Interpreters who have simply made themselves indispensable to their superiors, not only by giving complete satisfaction in the discharge of their own work, but by taking over the clerical and other work which they are not in any way obliged to do. Mr. Hyslop could hardly know that the Indian Interpreters labour under a very great disadvantage in that they are called upon not only to interpret in one of the Indian languages but, as a rule, in three, and it is a well known fact that, if you want first-class Interpreters, you cannot combine a knowledge of four languages in one. It is also notorious how badly paid the Interpreters are. To say the least of it, therefore, it would have been graceful if Mr. Hyslop had not brought the charge against them, but simply contented himself by advancing the interests of his clients, against which we should have had nothing to say.

Indian Opinion, 11-6-1904

14. "MERCURY" AND INDENTURED LABOUR

Our contemporary, *The Natal Mercury*, which as a rule is well informed in all it has to say, has been misinformed with reference to its comparison between the Chinese Ordinance of the Transvaal and the Ordinance in force in Trinidad and British Guiana, regulating the introduction of indentured labour. Our contemporary is perhaps led into making the mistake, because, for political reasons, Mr. Balfour has seen fit to draw a parallel between the British Guiana Ordinance and the Chinese Ordinance, and we may state, for the information of those that argue so, that there is as much difference between the two as there is between black and white. The British Guiana Ordinance does not deprive the indentured man of the use of his intelligence. It does not insist upon the indentured labourer leaving the country on the termination of his indenture, nor does it reduce the immigrant merely to the status of an unskilled labourer by prohibiting him from doing anything else, or by prohibiting others from making use of him as anything else than an unskilled labourer. There is, moreover, no Compound System[1] as is to be enforced against the Chinese, and the labourer in British Guiana is free to settle in the country after the termination of his indenture and work as an independent man. Not so the Chinese. We wonder whether, in spite of all these fundamental differences between the two, our contemporary would still hold that the only difference is "that some political partisans denounce as slavery in the Transvaal a system which is regarded complacently as indentured labour in other Colonies".

Indian Opinion, 11-6-1904

15. CONSISTENT ORANGE RIVER COLONY

The Government *Gazette* of the Orange River Colony, dated the 3rd June, contains amended and new regulations for the town of Winburg. From them we extract the following:

> No coloured person shall be allowed to reside anywhere within the Municipality, except with permission of the Council.
>
> Any coloured person residing within the Municipality must be able and is obliged, when requested thereto by the Town Clerk or other Municipal

[1] According to this, the Chinese were perforce to live on the premises in which they worked and their movements were to be restricted, through a system of passes, within a mile's radius of their places of work.

Official, to give an account and supply proof of his means of existence, and if it should appear to the Town Clerk or such other official that no satisfactory proof of an honest means of existence can be given, such coloured person shall be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of chapter 133, section 2 of the Law Book. The law referred to provides that any such coloured person, being found without a pass from a white master or some official, may be fined £5, or in default, imprisoned with or without hard labour for a period not exceeding three months, or (at the option of the Magistrate) be placed under contract as a servant with a white inhabitant of the State for a period not exceeding one year, the offender being entitled to select his master within the district where the offence was committed.

After having received twenty-four hours' notice from the Town Clerk, any coloured person found without work, either as daily or monthly servant, shall leave the town commonage and may not return without permission from the Council.

No coloured person shall be allowed in any public place or street in Winburg ten minutes after the ringing of the bell at nine o'clock, unless provided for the occasion with a pass of his or her master.

No coloured license-holder shall have the right to employ more than two coloured persons under the license.

No dance parties, tea meetings, or other assemblages will be allowed in the location after 10 p.m., without written permission from the Town Clerk.

All coloured persons above the estimated age of sixteen years, who have obtained leave from the Council to reside within the Municipality, shall be liable for service, and shall be obliged to have themselves registered monthly at the office of the Town Clerk, and there receive a residential pass on payment of 6d for each pass.

The expression 'coloured person' or 'coloured persons' must be distinctly interpreted, unless the reading or text prohibits or hinders such, and be taken to be applicable to, and include the male or the males as well as the female or the females of all natives of South Africa, and also of all coloured persons and all those who, according to law or custom, are called coloured [person] or coloured persons, or are treated as such, of whatever race or nationality they may be.

Here, then, there is an unblushing distinction drawn based absolutely on colour and that of a most drastic character. It goes, we make bold to say, even so far as to admit of temporary slavery, if enforced service be accepted as such. The price of staying in the Municipality of Winburg is service under a white master. The regulations, it will be noticed, make no exception in favour of British subjects or in favour of Coloured persons of standing. Indeed, they recognise no standing for Coloured persons. We have more than once reproduced in these columns similar regulations for the Municipalities of the

Orange River Colony. We have protested in vain against them, and somehow or other nothing has been done even in London. The Letters Patent have provided against any such legislation, except with the consent of the Colonial Office, but although one would have thought that the greater would include the less, there appears to be no safeguard against municipal legislation of the character above described, and it seems to be hopeless to expect the local Government to veto such legislation. We hope the regulations will attract the attention of the Colonial Office, and that at any rate a pronouncement will be made on the anti-Coloured policy that is being followed under the British flag and in the name of the King-Emperor in the Orange River Colony.

Indian Opinion, 18-6-1904

16. THE PERMIT OFFICE IN THE TRANSVAAL

Lord Milner, in his capacity as President of the Inter-Colonial Council that recently sat at Pretoria, remarked as follows on the vote for the Permit Department:

> The President, referring to the vote of £ 9,500 for the Permit Office, said his own impression was that this department would be required for another year. The machinery of the Permit Office had turned out to be used for purposes somewhat different to what was originally contemplated, but which were, nevertheless, of great benefit to the community. In the first instance, no doubt, the permit system was a political one; but the number of people to whom permits had been refused on political grounds had been exceedingly small. The Permit Office, however, had been their only means of defence against the immigration of floods of undesirables, some of them European, but most of them Asiatic. If they were to give up that weapon before they had a permanent law of a satisfactory character, he did not know what the lives of any of them would be worth. (Laughter.) Of course, it was a transitory system, but he did not think it likely that it could be done away with immediately. If the vote was not necessary, they would not spend the money.

We have here a corroboration from the highest authority in the Transvaal of what we have all along been saying, namely, that the Peace Preservation Ordinance is being used for purposes for which it was never intended. And His Excellency is evidently delighted that he has got such an instrument in his hands for preventing the immigration of "floods of undesirables, some of them European, but most of them Asiatic", and His Lordship does not know what the lives of the people in the Colony would be worth if the weapon were to be given up. If such remarks had proceeded from a demagogue, we would have understood them, but coming as they do from the head of the State, and one, moreover, who is believed to be one of the

foremost states-men in the British Empire and an out-and-out Imperialist, they fill one with pain and dismay. In the first instance, to talk of floods of under-sirables is an exaggeration unworthy of His Lordship, and, in the second place, to state that, in the absence of the weapon, the lives of the people in the Colony would not be worth anything is to make a confession of utter weakness. And, after all, is the country so much over-populated? Have the lives of the people at the Cape or Natal, or any other British Dominion for that matter, become worthless because they do not possess the engine which has been used by His Lordship in the Transvaal? True, for a few years in Natal, and for one year at the Cape, an Immigration Restriction Law has been in force, but it is nothing compared to the Peace Preservation Ordinance of the Transvaal, under which even *bonafide* refugees find it most difficult to gain entrance into the Colony, though they may be British subjects, men of standing, and having large stakes in the Transvaal. And if the remarks which fell from His Lordship represent his sober views on immigra-tion, it foreshadows an exceedingly poor outlook for the British Indians in the Transvaal. We hope, however, that His Lordship has per-mitted himself to make the above remarks in order to enliven the very prosaic proceedings of the Council and to put the refractory members, who have been handling the different departments rather roughly, in good humour, for we notice that His Lordship's remarks about the weapon were received with laughter.

Indian Opinion, 18-6-1904

17. SEPOY BRAVERY

We have much pleasure in copying from the *Transvaal Leader* the following graphic account of a skirmish in Tibet.

> The attack, says Reuter's Special to the 'Leader', began at dawn. To the accompaniment of blood-curdling yells, two solid masses of the foe rushed down the hill leading to our position. The British, with the excep-tion of a solitary Sepoy who refused to budge, quickly retired behind the forti-fications. The surging mass of fanatics¾they were 100 strong¾then swept down upon the devoted Sepoy, who, with heroic courage, stuck to his post, calmly aiming at the Tibetans. He had succeeded in shooting five of the enemy when he was cut down by the swordsmen. The attacking horde next attempted to clamber over the walls protecting the British force, impotently hacking with their swords at the loop-holes from which belched forth an incessant hail of bullets.

What Victoria Cross would commemorate the bravery of the solitary Sepoy, and how many such deeds often remain unrecorded? It must have been bravery of this description which evoked, time

after time, from Lord Roberts unstinted recognition. There has been hardly during the last sixty years a British war in which the Indian soldier has not taken an honourable part, whether as an armed man or whether merely as a *dooly*-bearer or *bhisti*, as in the late Boer War. In the words of Lord Tennyson:

> Their's not to make reply,
> Their's not to reason why,
> Their's but to do and die.

These memorable words were written in connection with the famous *Charge of the Light Brigade*, but we venture to think that they apply equally to the Indian Sepoy.

Indian Opinion, 18-6-1904

18. AN APPEAL TO THE NATAL CONTEMPORARIES

We make no apology for reverting to the question of suicides among the indentured Indians in Natal, which we raised in our issue of the 4th instant[1]. We feel sorry that, with the exception of *The Natal Mercury*, the other dailies have not taken the matter up, which is purely and simply one of humanity in which they, as public journals, cannot but be interested. Our desire in asking for a commission is simply to elicit the truth, and we cannot help feeling that even the employers themselves, if they would look at the matter dispassionately, should welcome the appointment of a commission of enquiry. If an impartial commission comes to the conclusion that they (the employers) are in no way responsible for the terrible number of suicides that are committed annually among the indentured Indians, it would be a great relief to them and to the public generally. If, on the other hand, there is anything that they can do which would prevent the unnatural mortality, it would be an advance in the right direction as well for themselves as for the unfortunate men who are working under indenture. This is not a subject which, in a British Colony, can be dismissed with a few lines of lame explanation betraying an attitude of hopelessness. We have not the slightest doubt that there must be a remedy for the evil, if only it is sought after earnestly and in the right spirit. We,

[1] *Vide* "Indentured Indians", 4-6-1904.

therefore, hope that our contemporaries will strengthen our humble efforts in the search after truth.

Indian Opinion, 18-6-1904

19. SIR MANCHERJEE'S SERVICES

We give in another column *in extenso* several questions asked by Sir Mancherjee[1] in the House of Commons and replies given by Mr. Brodrick or Mr. Lyttelton. They shew what inestimable service the honourable member has been rendering to his countrymen, whe-ther in South Africa or in other distant possessions, or in India itself. And it shews also with what tenacity the worthy Knight has been following the British Indian position in South Africa. He never misses an opportunity of making a point whenever one is to be made, and the manner in which he goes about his business has so recom-mended itself to the ministers concerned that they give him, as a rule, as ample information as is possible under the circumstances, and often meet his questions in a sympathetic spirit. May he have a long life and may he continue to honour the House of Commons by his presence and to serve his countrymen is the earnest prayer of every Indian in South Africa.

Indian Opinion, 18-6-1904

20. INDIAN TRADE OUTSIDE LOCATIONS[2]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that Sir Arthur Lawley stated, in reply to an address presented him at Heidelberg by a deputation of British Indian residents on May 18 last[3], that the liberty of licensed traders to carry on business outside Locations, declared by the Supreme Court in the Test Case of *Habib Motan* v. *The Transvaal Government* to be legal, will not be tolerated, and that the Secretary of State for the Colonies had already been approached with a view to sanctioning legislation to annual the deci-sion; and, if so, whether, in case he is so approached, he will refuse to

[1] Bhownaggree.

[2] The text of a question forwarded to Sir M. M. Bhownaggree by Gandhiji on behalf of the British Indian Association, Johannesburg.

[3] *Vide* "Address to Lieutenant-Governor", May 18, 1904.

countenance any such legislation in view of the pledges repeatedly given by Lord Milner that existing rights will not be interfered with.

India, 24-6-1904

21. LETTER TO RAND PLAGUE COMMITTEE

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

P.O. BOX 6522,
25 & 26 COURT CHAMBERS,
RISSIK STREET,
JOHANNESBURG,
June 24, 1904

TO
THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
RAND PLAGUE COMMITTEE
P.O. BOX 1049
JOHANNESBURG

SIR,

I have the honour to invite your attention to my letter of the 29th April[1] with reference to the Plague Regulations in the Orange River Colony and Delagoa Bay. As you are aware, British Indians are not even allowed to pass through the former in a train on their way to the Cape Colony, although they may be in possession of the usual certi-ficates from the Permit Office, and they are not allowed to enter Delagoa Bay at all in spite of possession of such permits.

My Association will be obliged if you will kindly secure relief with reference to both these places.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
ABDUL GANI
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Pretoria Archives: L.G. 92/2132.

[1] This is not available.

22. NATAL IMMIGRATION RESTRICTION ACT AND ITS WORKING[1]

Two cases of considerable importance have been tried lately in Martizburg under this Act, and both of them were against British Indians. We give the full report of the proceedings in another column. The case of Dayal Ooka appears to us to be very hard. We would not offer any lengthy remarks, seeing that an appeal has been noted. The facts, however, so far as the evidence enables us to see, are that the defendant has lived in the Colony over five years, and that he paid £8 to somebody on board the steamer before he could land on his return from India. Against this evidence, there was nothing produced by the prosecution, but the Magistrate would not believe the testimony given by the accused and sentenced him to imprisonment for two months, unless the deportation of the accused could be arranged to take place before. If, therefore, the decision of the Magistrate is upheld, it would appear that every British Indian will be presumed to be a new-comer, unless he can prove, not only on oath himself, but by some other testimony, that he has been in the Colony before the passing of the Act. If such a view is taken, no Indian's position in the Colony will be secure. However, we must postpone further remarks on these extraordinary prosecutions until the appeal is decided. For the present, we would content ourselves with appealing to the Government to stay these prosecutions, because it is its duty to prevent the surreptitious entry of prohibited immigrants into the Colony, but, in our humble opinion, it would be going altogether too far to molest the people who are already in the Colony, and who have landed in spite of the precautions taken by the officers appointed under the Immigration Restriction Act, even though they may labour under the restriction as to former domicile.

Indian Opinion, 2-7-1904

[1] *Indian Opinion* dated 25-6-1904 is not available and hence it has not been possible to include Gandhiji's Contributions therein.

23. THE PRETORIA MUNICIPALITY ON COLOUR

We produce elsewhere further correspondence between the Government and the Pretoria Municipality on the question of the foot-path bye-laws. The Government is to be congratulated upon the firm stand it has taken in the matter, and it is impossible not to admire the tenacity with which the Pretoria Municipality is also fighting the Government. The pity of it is that the tenacity is being shown by the Municipality of the metropolis of the Transvaal in what would appear to any common-sense man to be a discredited and unworthy cause. It could not seriously be argued that any question of principle is at stake in allowing Coloured people to walk on the foot-paths. The Municipality surely would not thereby be assenting to the principle of equality between the two races in other respects. That is a big question and could be kept absolutely separate from the foot-path question. The Mayor of Pretoria evidently now sees that the Municipality is making itself a laughing-stock by persisting in its opposition to the Government, but the other Councillors, led by Mr. Loveday, would not listen to his arguments, and have sent a letter to the Government asking it to give them a special ordinance like the Johannesburg Municipality. It is an interesting duel that is going on between the Government and the Council. We can only hope that the Government will stick to the principle laid down by it and not yield at the eleventh hour to the dictation of the Municipality.

Indian Opinion, 2-7-1904

24. INDIAN PROMISSORY NOTES

We sincerely congratulate the Government on bringing in the Bill to regulate the signing of negotiable instruments by Indians. It is an earnest of their solicitude for their well-being. Within our experience, there have been cases of gross fraud, not necessarily between Indians and Indians, but even on the part of some Europeans, perpetrated owing to the inability of the Indians to sign such promissory notes in English characters. Very often, such notes are made without the contents being known to the maker; and the Bill in question is undoubtedly calculated to be a great relief to innocent people. To put the finishing touch to the Bill, may we suggest that it would be better if the thumb-impression were also insisted upon? It has been found

that it is impossible to forge a thumb-mark, and the thumb-impression would be the surest safeguard against impersonation, for it may happen that the man who may put his mark before a Magistrate or a Justice of the Peace may not at all be the person intended to be charged with the debt. Promissory notes will derive very great weight being made before a Magistrate or a Justice of the Peace, and if there has been any impersonation, it will be very difficult to prove it. Nor will it be fair to expect the Magistrates or Justices of the Peace always to scrutinise the identity of the persons appearing before them to make promissory notes. We hope, therefore, that the Government would be pleased to embody our suggestion in their Bill and make it complete and really effective.

Indian Opinion, 2-7-1904

25. FOOT-PATHS IN THE TRANSVAAL

The Boksburg Town Council has addressed the following circular letter to the Town Councils and Municipalities in the Transvaal:

Gentlemen,

No doubt you are fully aware that a clause exists in the 'Traffic By-laws', providing that no native shall walk on the footpath, save when crossing any street and the entrance to any private property, *vide* clause 19, chapter 2.

It will be noticed under "Definitions" in same code of by-laws, clause 20, the term "native" shall mean "any person whose parents belong to any aboriginal race or tribe of Africa".

In submitting this letter to you, I am instructed to point out that it is the desire of my Council to solicit the co-operation and assistance of the various Municipal Councils and Urban District Boards to have the present law amended in such a manner as to include all coloured races without distinction of nationality.

It has been the contention of my Council that the presence on the publicside-walks of other coloured races is equally as obnoxious as that of the native aboriginal tribes of this country, and with a view to having the law amended (so far as this Council, is concerned) and made applicable to all coloured races, the following amendment has been submitted to the Assistant Colonial Secretary for Local Government to be inserted in the 'Traffic By-laws':

'All coloured persons are prohibited from walking on the side-walks of any street, or on any *stoep*[1] serving as a side-walk', and pointing out that other Municipalities should be in a position to enjoy that privilege which is in existence in Johannesburg.

The Assistant Colonial Secretary states in reply:

[1] A platform along the front and, sometimes, the sides of a house.

'That the Municipal Corporations Ordinance does not apply to Johannesburg Town Council, who are able to enforce the by-law, we refer to in regard to the use of the side-walks by coloured persons which is contained in the old Town Regulations by virtue of the Proclamation under which that Council is constituted. I regret that I am unable to recommend approval of the by-law submitted by you since it would be necessary to alter the law to permit of it being enforced by the Boksburg Council.'

It will thus be seen that all other towns are to be precluded the privilege of enjoying rights which are in force in Johannesburg simply because that town still possesses an old Town Regulation which so far has not been repealed.

The necessity for this provision is being urged by my Council for the serious and immediate attention of the Assistant Colonial Secretary for Local Government, and should this contention meet with the support of your Council, our aim would be perhaps best met by similar representation being made by resolution of your Council.

I thank you in anticipation for your co-operation.

To a certain extent, it is difficult to withhold sympathy from the Boksburg Council. They do not want to see any Coloured people on their foot-paths. Johannesburg possesses the right to prevent all Colo-ured people from using them; why should, then, the other Town Councils not be placed on the same footing as Johannesburg? The position appears to be logical enough. What has happened is this: Johannesburg, having got a constitution of its own, does not need to come under the General Corporations Ordinance, and in the special Ordinance for Johannesburg, the draftsman omitted to deal with the town regulations of the old regime. When, however, later, the Municipal Corporations Ordinance was passed, the matter was effectively dealt with by giving a proper definition to the term "Native". The bolder and honester policy would certainly have been for the Government to delete from the Statute-book that portion of the regulation which unnecessarily subjects Coloured people other than Natives to the indignity; but the straight course having been rightly or wrongly abandoned, the Town Councils in the Transvaal, who feel aggrieved that they have been taken unawares, are now, naturally from their own standpoint, agitating against it. It is no doubt a difficult position. The only reasonable solution seems to be that Johannesburg ought to be placed on the same footing as the other Town Councils in this matter. Then full justice will be done and the other Town Councils will have to rest content with the powers they have got. It, however, does seem strange and somewhat painful that influential and important bodies like the Town Councils of the Transvaal should make a mountain out of a mole hill, and take pleasure in the unnecessary heaping of insult

upon insult on people who have done no harm to them and who, if anything, have deserved well, for, leaving aside for the present the British Indians out of consideration, it must not be forgotten that hundreds of Cape Coloured people were used by the erstwhile Uitlanders, now gentlemen of the Town Councils, for their own benefit. They were fondled; the British flag was constantly dangled before their eyes; its protective power was eloquently placed before them so that they might rush into their arms, make affidavits regarding the *zulum*[1] of the Boer Authorities, and make common cause with them, so that the hands of the Colonial Office might be forced and pressure put upon Mr. Kruger. Surely, these men have a right at least to walk without molestation on the side-walks of any street in the Transvaal, towards the upkeep of which, like other rate-payers, they contribute their quota.

Indian Opinion, 9-7-1904

26. BRITISH INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL

The debate on Mr. Bourke's motion in the Legislative Council of the Transvaal, calling upon the Government to pass legislation restricting the liberty of the Indians, took place on Tuesday evening last. The usual platitudes were uttered by the honourable gentleman. The prospective ruin of the petty white trader was dangled before the members. The right of the Transvaal to pass any legislation in the matter was insisted upon, while statements were made as to the entry of Indians into the country. But Mr. Hosken as also Dr. Turner were able to shew completely that Mr. Bourke was hopelessly out of date as to his statements. Mr. Hosken shewed from figures that the Indian has been, and continues to remain, a blessing to Natal, which owes its prosperity to his presence. Dr. Turner, in reply to a violent attack on the Indian on the part of another member about the so-called insanitary habits of the Indians, was able to shew conclusively that the authorities alone were to blame with reference to the condition of the now burned down Indian Location in Johannesburg. The community should feel very grateful to the worthy Doctor for not hesitating to utter the truth, and for thus defending the Indian from undeserved attacks. Mr. Duncan shewed conclusively that the Indians had been allowed to enter the Transvaal most sparingly, and that, with the exception of four, all were *bona-fide* refugees. Mr. Duncan, however, has assured the House of his sympathy, and has promised to bring the whole matter before the Colonial Office. Mr. Solomon's amendment was ultimately accepted shewing satisfaction at the assurance given by the

[1] Urdu for tyranny or oppression.

Colonial Secretary that legislation would be brought during the present session, more or less giving effect to the wishes expressed in Mr. Bourke's speech and motion. Mr. Duncan had to admit that the British Government was tied down by promises made before the war; we shall see how the promises are fulfilled.

Indian Opinion, 9-7-1904

27. SUICIDE AMONG INDENTURED INDIANS

Mr. Lyttelton has, to our utter astonishment, if the cable report is correct, told Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree that the rate of suicides among the indentured Indians is not great and that, consequently, he would not institute an enquiry.

According to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*: "Its existence is rightly looked upon as a sign of the presence of maladies in the body-politic which, whether remediable or not, deserves careful consideration". So even apart from the question of the largeness of the number of deaths from suicide, it is a matter which requires investigation. Even the Protector of Immigrants in his report does not go as far as Mr. Lyttelton; he considers the death-rate to be sufficiently great to deserve more than a passing mention.

But let us compare statistics. Out of the free Indian population of 51,259, there were eight suicides. Out of the 30,131 indentured Indians, there were twenty-three. This by itself ought to make one pause. According to the table given in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Saxony had the highest rate, namely, 371 per million in 1882. The rate amongst the indentured Indians is 741 per million. Does not this great disparity between the highest figures on the continent and among the indentured Indians in Natal require some consideration? And yet, as we have repeated before, for the present we blame nobody; we have suspended judgment. Probably the cause is simple, and capable of an easy explanation. All we demand, with the greatest deference to Mr. Lyttelton, is that the matter should be probed to the bottom and cleared up in the interests of justice and humanity. We hope, therefore, that Sir Mancherjee having taken it up will not allow it to slide down, but persist in his enquiry.

Indian Opinion, 9-7-1904

28. MORE DISABILITIES

The Transvaal *Government Gazette* for the 1st July contains a draft Ordinance to regulate brick-making, lime-burning and quarrying on proclaimed land, in which we read the following in section 3 of the Ordinance:

> Any white male inhabitant of this Colony over the age of eighteen shall be at liberty to take out, at the office of any district Registrar, a license for brick-making, lime-burning or quarrying.

So far the restriction has applied to gold-mining, and with reference to that we have said nothing; but now it will be unlawful for an Indian even to make bricks, for he could not get a license to do so. Mr. Lyttelton, in answer to Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree, only a few days ago, assured the honourable gentleman that the rights of the British Indians already settled in the Colony would be fully protected. The draft Ordinance before us does not appear to carry out the intention. May we, therefore, take it for granted that the Ordinance will be altered by the Government, or, if it is passed in its present form, vetoed by Mr. Lyttelton?

Indian Opinion, 9-7-1904

29. THE PLAGUE PEG

The plague has served as a peg in the Transvaal on which to hang many a disability on the British Indians. The latest we hear is that, under cover of the plague precautions, the issue of permits to British Indian refugees from all the Colonies in South Africa has been stopped, and the only reason, so it would appear, is that plague-infected rats have been found in some localities in Johannesburg, and that, too, not in Indian quarters, but in poor European quarters. The stoppage of the permits was resumed after the appearance of a plague case or two in Durban, but seeing that the plague has suddenly stopped in Durban, some excuse was necessary, and the plague rats have been pressed into service. We do not know what the intentions of the Transvaal Government are, but if the policy of slow torture is to be reproduced in the proposed legislation, the condition of the British Indians in the Transvaal will be simply pitiable. In this connection, it may be as well to reproduce a paragraph from Dr. Murison's report on the health of the borough to show on what flimsy pretext the permits from Durban were stopped.

During the month of June, there have been two cases of plague in Durban, both of which were male natives. They were both found dead¾one at the Harbour Board Barracks, and the other in Kaffir quarters at Queen Street¾ and owing to the fact that neither of the cases had been previously attended to by a medical practitioner, diagnosis was only made after post-mortem examination. No fresh cases of plague infection have been discovered during June, no plague-infected rats having been found outside the Premises named in my report for the month of May, although large numbers of rats from various localities have been examined both by Dr. Fernandez and myself. The intense infectiveness and mortality of plague among rats were very well exemplified on the case of the infected bond store at Alexandra Road. The premises being securely closed against any possible exit of rats, the disease spread rapidly amongst them, and the dead bodies of as many as 40 rats were found in a single day, till, practically speaking, every one succumbed to this disease. A large quantity of oats, which afforded shelter and food for these rats, and which was certain to be plague-infected was removed and destroyed by fire, and the store and its contents thoroughly disinfected.

Indian Opinion, 16-7-1904

30. THE LATE MR. KRUGER

Ex-President Kruger is no more, and in him one of the most striking personalities of the nineteenth century has passed away, leaving the world the poorer for it. His was a strong character which had, perhaps, many contradictions, but the net result was undoubtedly in his favour. His devotion to those whom he was proud to call his people was unexampled, and even the mistake that he made in defying a powerful nation like the British and in sending his world-famous ultimatum is a mistake that would count, not against him, but in his favour. It was his intense love for the country and its people that made him take the fatal step. There was no vainglory about it. He felt that he was in the right. His faith in the Old Testament teaching was sublime, and he believed that God was on his side and, that being so, he could never lose. Indeed, even after the issue was finally decided, during the short period that he was on this earth, he never allowed himself to waver and still continued, as many Boers do, to believe that good for them will yet come out of the British annexation. And so it undoubtedly will; not perhaps in the manner they would wish, but then God's ways are not our ways, and the future will shew what the destiny of the nation is to be. It has often been urged that the deceased President's flight from Pretoria was due to cowardice. We have

never, however, brought ourselves to accept the charge. He considered that he could best serve his countrymen by remaining away and managing affairs from a distance and he went. To think that the brave man who, when he was wounded by a tiger, with his own hand cut off a finger and dressed the wound and went about his business as if nothing had happened, would be the man to fly from a post of danger is a mistaken idea. His demeanour, too, on the Continent was worthy of a great and godly man. He shewed no undue irritation, resigned himself to the inevitable, and ever continued to guide his people by his advice. The one lesson that he has left behind him is his single-minded, though at times misguided, patriotism, and we venture to think that it will be as a staunch patriot that he will be best known to posterity. The British Indians personally have very little to thank the deceased statesman for. We are yet smarting under his legislation in the Transvaal, but that need not prevent our countrymen from recognising his great virtues, and in joining those who are sorrowing for the death of so great a man.

Indian Opinion, 23-7-1904

31. ENGINEERED AGITATION

Boksburg merchants continue their activity against trade licenses being granted to British Indians and other Asiatics. They have addressed a manifesto to all the Chambers of Commerce in the Colony with a view to united action being taken. Most extravagant statements are made in the documents that percolate through Boksburg. For instance, the other Chambers are calmly told that "injustice and danger are being inflicted on the white community by allowing unrestricted Asiatic trade to obtain a footing in the Colony". The suggested resolution, if listened to, would simply make the Legislative Council look ridiculous in the eyes of the world, for the resolution gravely asks the Council to "suspend the issue of licenses to Asiatics, pending the bringing into force of a permanent law governing Asiatics".Yet we are told that they have succeeded so well in combining that not a single Chinaman has been able so far to obtain a footing near the Chinese compound. Why should, then, there be any indecent haste one fails to understand, but we have it on the authority of our contemporary, *The Star*, that it is essential that such forcible agitation should take place in order to strengthen the hands of the local Government in its representations to the Colonial Office. Read

in that light, we understand what all this means: it is nothing less than intimidation. The people say in effect to the Imperial Government that, "if you do not grant us what we want, we will quarrel with you", for it is stated that "a further resolution is to be moved to the effect that, if the Imperial Government will not grant consent, an agitation for responsible Government be commenced in order that the Transvaal may secure the right to control its own internal affairs". It is quite clear that, so long as the Goverment continues to fence with the ques-tion and, instead of doing perfect justice, thinks of pleasing both the parties, such unhealthy and udesirable agitation retarding the establi-shment of peace between European British subjects and Asiatic British subjects will continue.

Indian Opinion, 23-7-1904

32. THE CHINESE PUZZLE

The fight over the Chinese trade which was inevitable has commenced in all earnestness and bitterness. The Boksburg people are up in arms against the very idea of the Chinese store-keepers having any dealings with their indentured countrymen. It is not enough that they are to be themselves deprived of all the civil rights and to be reduced to serfdom; it is not enough that they are to get¾ as a Chinaman told *The Star* interviewer¾ wages so little that they would leave very little savings, although the prospect before them at the end of the indenture is that they must return to China. The European store-keeper in Boksburg must, in addition, derive exorbitant profits also from the Chinese trade, and whatever the indentured men may have to spend out of their wages must go into the pockets of the European store-keepers. Then, indeed, would the gentlemen in Boksburg consider that some small measure of justice has been done to them, otherwise the Chinese labourers need not have come at all. And if the Chinese store-keepers are allowed to supply the necessaries to their countrymen, it would be the height of injustice and a deprivation of the rights of the European store-keepers. They confess their utter inability to compete with the Chinese store-keeper. In naked language, it means that they would want to charge the poor slaves far more than the Chinese store-keepers would ever think of doing. And so they are concentrating all their energy, influence and power in preventing a single Chinese trader, or, for that matter, an Indian trader, from having any share in the Chinese custom. They have petitioned

the Lieutenant-Governor, they have called upon all the Chambers of Commerce to join them in the combination and in creating a trust[1] in the Chinese trade in their favour. They have been saying pretty plainly that, if the Government does not come to their assistance, they will take the law into their own hands and, by hook or by crook, prevent a single Chinese store-keeper from having a footing in Boksburg. This shows the temper of the community, and it shows also to what length they are prepared to go in order to assert or, shall we say, usurp the rights which do not exclusively belong to them. Like spoiled and petted children, having so far had their own way, they have overstepped all bounds and simply consider that it is their right to dictate terms to the Government on any question they like. Will Mr. Lyttelton yield?

Indian Opinion, 23-7-1904

33. THE BOKSBURG VIGILANTS

We reproduce the following report of the meeting held in Boksburg in connection with Indian trade, and we are reminded very much of similar agitation in Durban in 1896;[2] and there is a very strong Durban favour about the second resolution proposed and carried at the meeting. It runs as follows:

> That this public meeting of the inhabitants of the Municipality of Boksburg hereby pledges itself to maintain the principles of the existing Asiatic law as always interpreted by the people of the Transvaal by using every possible means to prevent any Asiatic storekeeper trading or residing in Boksburg Municipality outside the location, and urges on Government that, in view of the complications which have arisen, the new law absolutely prohibit Asiatic trading.

Here, then, we see a defiance of Supreme Court in the request for absolute prohibition of Asiatic trading, and a threatened resort to violence, should an Asiatic intend to settle in Boksburg outside a Location. The mover of the resolution illustrated what he meant by every possible means, and these are his pregnant remarks:

> So far, by splendid combination and public spirit, the people had refused to let any store or stand to Asiatics in the township, although a Chinaman had secured a licence in Driefontein. He was happy to say, however, that it was hoped by the following morning that danger would be removed and the whole Municipality be absolutely clear of any Asiatic licence

[1] 'A White monopoly of trade with Chinese labour' is meant.

[2] The reference is to the European opposition to the landing of the Indians. *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the colonies", 15-3-1897

on a stand outside the location. (Applause.) Such was the force of the 'moral suasion' hitherto so successfully exercised. They must, however, be prepared for further attacks and therefore should pledge themselves *to resist by every possible means* the encouragement of Asiatic. ¾*The Star*.

We need not say what "moral suasion" means.

This was too much for a few of the sober-minded who attended the meeting, and among them we were pleased to notice Mr. Constable of *The East Rand Express*. Violently hostile, as we venture to think, he has been to the Asiatic, to his constitutional instinct the resolution appeared to be very obnoxious, and he moved that "every possible *constitutional* means," [be substituted for "every possible means"] and that the clause as to total prohibition be erased. The voices of Mr. Constable and his supporters were voices in the wilderness and reason had to give place to passion and prejudice.

As we have often said, if the gentlemen of Boksburg consider that by unmanly threats they will be able to intimidate a single British Indian wishing to assert his right, they are much mistaken, and we refer them once more to the Durban incident as well as the incident at Umtali.[1] In Durban, the ultimatum of the self-styled Demonstrative Committee was powerless to intimidate the Indians into returning to where they came from, and a mob in Umtali was unable to coerce the single inoffensive Indian trader into leaving his store. He defied them to do their worst and stood his ground until police assistance came and the Superintendent of Police discharged the crowd.

What, however, came from the Mayor of Boksburg, when he persuaded the meeting to drop the intimidation of the Government covered by a resolution for the early introduction of Responsible Government, was far more ominous. The Mayor made it quite clear to the meeting that Mr. Duncan, the Colonial Secretary, was working hand in glove with them. We do not wish to put our own views, because we do not wish to do even an unconscious injustice to the Colonial Secretary. These are his words:

The Mayor then explained that he had visited Pretoria that day and could tell them that the Asiatic question was burning one there as on the East Rand. They must not think for one moment that the Government was indifferent to the reports that were being made, but the Government felt it was powerless to prevent licences being granted to Asiatic with the law at present. They were, however, trying all they could to get permission to legislate immediately that no further licences be issued. He was afraid that had Mr. McKew been allowed to place his resolution before them, it would defeat the object of the Government. On the authority of Mr. Duncan (Colonial Secretary) and Sir George

[1] *Vide* "Indian Traders in Rhodesia" 22-1-1899

Farrar, he could state that the Government was quite in sympathy with the white population, and as a proof of that, he was asked to wire the resolutions passed that evening to Pretoria to be sent Home. He was told that the resolutions would strengthen the hands of the Government and he hoped they would soon get speedy relief. The Colonial Secretary told him distinctly that three or four days ago, cables dealing with the question had been sent Home, and that the Government considered the question of vital importance. (Applause.) ¾*The Star*.

We cannot give stronger or better proof in support of what we said last week, namely, that the whole of this agitation is being engineered, and to find that the Colonial Secretary, as representing the Government, should take up a partial attitude and stand behind the agitation asking for strength and so on is a humiliating spectacle. Even the late President Kruger's Government did not act so. He did not ask his burghers or the Uitlanders to strengthen his hands; he fought fairly and squarely. There was nothing behind the scenes, and the Indians knew what they had to face. As it is, they have absolutely no notion of what is going on behind the curtain. The Mayor has only allowed us a peep behind, but that peep is enough to stagger us and to make us despondent. When all these reports of the meeting are telegraphed to Mr. Lyttelton, there will be no one to tell him that these meetings have been practically called forth by the Government, have been encouraged by it, and that the policy of the Government is the policy of the meeting. *Fiat justitia ruat Coelum* has been proclaimed from thousands of British platforms. The saying will now have to be revised in the Transvaal in order that it may fit in with the new order of things which has been established. And read by the light of the remarks made by the Mayor of Boksburg, we feel that the splendid advocacy by Mr. Duncan of the Indian traders at the time of the resolution, moved by Sir George Farrar for the appointment of the Asiatic Traders' Commission, could hardly be considered sincere.

Indian Opinion, 30-7-1904

34. SUICIDE AMONG INDENTURED INDIANS

We are now enabled to print in *extenso* the question put by Sir Mancherjee, on the point raised in *Indian Opinion* of the 4th June last, about the abnormal rate of suicide among indentured Indians, and the answer given by Mr. Lyttelton:

Sir M. Bhownaggree asked the Colonial Secretary if his attention had been drawn to the statement in the Annual Report for 1903 of the Protector of Indian Immigrants in Natal that there had occurred in that year no fewer than 31 cases of suicide, being at the rate of 741 per million; if the indenture

labourers committed suicide in an overwhelmingly large proportion; and whether the local authorities had been able to trace the causes to which this voluntary destruction of life was due.

Mr. Lyttelton said he had seen the report referred to. The rate per million among Indians was 382, and not 741, as stated, the rate among free Indians and indentured Indians being 157 and 766, respectively. He was informed that a Magisterial inquiry was made into the circumstances attending each case of suicide, and whenever the evidence tended to show that the fatality in any way resulted from ill-treatment received from an employer or employee, the Protector of Indian Immigrants made a personal visit to the estate and inquired into the circumstances. In one instance, and one only, did the evidence tend in this direction. Generally speaking, witnesses stated that they could give no reason for the suicide, and if those who were supposed to know declined to given any information, it was impossible in many cases to arrive at even a probable cause. The general rate among Natal Indians in 1902 appeared to have been 333, and in 1901, 383, so that the rate for the year 1903 was not altogether exceptional. This rate had been exceeded in Paris.

Sir Mancherjee's figures have been taken from this paper,[1] and Mr. Lyttelton put into Sir Mancherjee's mouth a statement which we see he has never made, and then denied the authority of his figures. Sir Mancherjee enquired whether the rate was not 741 per million among indentured Indians. There is slight error, namely, that Sir Mancherjee refers to 31 cases. Now the 31 cases are the total number of suicides, of which 23 were among the indentured Indians, but his ratio is quite correct. Sir Mancherjee's figures, therefore, remain quite unchallenged and, as the *Daily News* has pointed out, by the figures that Mr. Lyttelton himself produced, he has simply given additional force to the remarks made by the Indian member, for, according too Mr. Lyttelton's ratio, the figure is not 741 but 766 as against 157 among free Indians. These are eloquent if also very painful figures. And in the face of those appalling figures, Mr. Lyttelton declared himself satisfied with the meagre reference to the matter in the Protector's report, and in so doing, he has, in our humble opinion, missed the very point we have raised. We do not yet ascribe the suicide to the ill-treatment received from the employers, as Mr. Lyttelton has evidently assumed, but we do say that the condition which causes such a death-rate from self-destruction is such as to call for an enquiry, in the interests of both the employers and the employed. We know that the rate is not exceptional for the year under discussion, but it has been going on from year to year, and that is the worst of the situation. That is why we consider it to be high time a full

[1] *Vide* "Indentured Indians", 4-6-1904; it is not unlikely that Gandhiji sent Bhownaggree a copy of this article.

and impartial enquiry were instituted. It may be that it is the situation under which the indentured men are placed which is to blame rather than any actual ill-treatment by the employers. It may be that the men themselves who are called upon to do the work find it too trying for them, or that there are climatic conditions which predispose them to such acts or that it is simply home sickness on their part. Be the cause whatever it may, it is essential that the public should know exactly what it is, and that the Indian mind also which is very much agitated over it should be satisfied on the point. We cannot, therefore, understand what possible objection there could be to a reasonable request for an enquiry, except perhaps that of expense, but we dismiss that from consideration altogether, knowing as we do, how enquiries after enquiries are granted on much less important matters, involving a very heavy outlay. We, therefore, trust that this question will not be allowed to rest, and that it will be made clear to the Colonial Office by the worthy Knight that the suggested enquiry does not pre-suppose ill-treatment by the employers, and that it is not intended to cast the slightest reflection on them. All that is needed in an investigation into the truth and no more.

Indian Opinion, 30-7-1904

35. FROM PILLAR TO POST

The report of the meeting of the Town Council of Johannesburg, which we give in another column, about the housing of Natives and Asiatics, is interesting reading. It will be remembered that, during the plague outbreak, the old Location was burned down and the inhabitants were removed to Klipspruit Camp. Some members of the Council were of the opinion that it was a good riddance and thought that the Camp was a permanent Location. They, however, found that, after the isolation period had expired, the inmates were allowed to remove to town, provided they could shew dwellings to the satisfaction of the Rand Plague Committee. It should also be borne in mind that the Indians thus dispossessed have nothing at all in the shape of a piece of land where they could permanently reside. No Location in place of the one burned down has yet been appointed, and, not possessing the right to own fixed property, they are obliged to remain in a state of suspense. The report now shews that the Town Council does not know its own mind. It is yet as far away from the choice of a suitable site as it ever was, and the position is that, in the

meanwhile, the Indians may be driven from pillar to post at any m[oment?].[1] They have to pay exorbitant rents in the already over-crowded Malay Location. Their trade is gone. They are without goods, which have been burnt, and are without compensation. The position is truly pitiable and not a finger is raised by the Colonial Secretary, who is supposed to insist on a suitable site being provided for them, while the Town Council is carrying on profitless discussion on various schemes. When will this injustice end?

In striking contrast to the indifferent attitude of the Town Council and the Local Government is the following cablegram published in our esteemed contemporary's columns, wherein Mr. Lyttelton is reported to have said:

> We could not coerce the inhabitants of the Transvaal to allow the importation of Indian labour, but we might endeavour to persudade them.
>
> A policy of exclusion is short-sighted and inhumane.
>
> But if the Transvaal choose to place difficulties in the way of British Indians entering the Colony, although I should deply regret the decision, I do not believe that it could resist the case of Indians who came under the Republican law, which is quite different.
>
> I think that the decision of the Supreme Court ought to be upheld, as it is impossible for us to assume a position inconsistent with our national dignity and honour, and to refuse privileges which have been asserted in a court of law.
>
> It is impossible to say that these Indians have not the rights under the British flag which the Boer law gave them.
>
> I am perfectly certain that the citizens of the Transvaal who value the Imperial connection will honour the dignity of the British name as much as anybody, and freely grant such rights.

Mr. Lyttelton's remarks are cheering; the only question is whe-ther he will be strong enough to put them into practice and to wit-hstand the opposition from the local Government. We have all along been saying that the treatment meted out to the British Indians since the British occupation is inconsistent with British dignity and British national honour. We now find the Colonial Secretary endorsing that view from his seat in the House of Commons. Let us hope that his deeds will be as good as good as his words.

Indian Opinion, 30-7-1904

[1] The original is mutilated.

36. A RETROSPECT

We have much pleasure in announcing that the plague restrictions on the movements of the British Indians within the Transvaal itself, imposed by the Rand Plague Committee, have been withdrawn, and now Indians wishing to travel from one place to another in the Colony would no longer be required to submit to a medical examination and carry travelling permits. We wish to congratulate our countrymen in the Transvaal on their deliverance, and more so on the exemplary patience shown by them. We have always held that the restrictions were totally unnecessary, though we have, at the same time, also advised that submission was the very best thing that could be done by them. The plague officially broke out in the middle of March last and, beyond the first virulent outbreak, it has never raged in a dangerous form. For the last three months, there have been only isolated cases, and these confined mostly to the Natives. And yet for four months and a half, the Indians have laboured under grievous disadvantages as to their movements. The statistics shew conclusively that, outside the Indian Location, the plague has been no respecter of persons,and outside Johannesburg hardly an Indian case had happened. Some of the districts have been absolutely free from any Indian cases. Moreover, the authorities have not been able to bring a single complaint against them. They have shown themselves willing and eager to fall in with the wishes of the authorities, and even when their houses and effects were burned down, and when they were asked to go to a camp thirteen miles from the town, they did so without grumbling. Dr. Turner, the Medical Officer for the Colony, has deliberately given it as his opinion that, for the outbreak in the location in Johannesburg, the Indians were in no way to blame, and that the authorities, having neglected their first duty as to keeping the place in a sanitary condition, were responsible for the state of affairs. Hundreds of Indians, who have been rendered homeless and whose goods have been destroyed, are yet without payment of any compensation whatsoever or without a fixed abode. We take leave to say that very few communities are to be found in the world behaving in the manner in which the Indians have during the trying ordeal, and under most vexatious difficulties. Will the Government take note of this? Will the Rand Plague Committee, which has come in close contact with the people, have the courage to give the Indian his due? Will Mr. Lyttelton take into consideration these facts in approving of any restrictive

legislation? And will the friends of Indians in England bring them home to the authorities and see that the work so well done is not wasted away?

Indian Opinion, 6-8-1904

37. SIR PHIROZSHAH

The mail papers to hand bring the most gratifying news that the Honourable Mr. Phirozshah M. Mehta has been knighted. If any man deserved the honour, it certainly is Sir Phirozshah. He is one of the oldest public workers. He is the father of the Corporation of Bombay and probably there is not a single member of that great Corporation who has attended so many meetings or served the length of time that Sir Phirozshah has done. He is the uncrowned king of the Bombay Presidency and is recognised as the first leader as no other man in any other province in India is. His unrivalled ability and experience, his eloquence, his tact and unfailing courtesy to his opponents have earned for him great popularity with the people and prestige with the Government. He has left his mark on many legislative enactments of the Bombay Presidency, and, during the short period that he was enabled to serve the Imperial Legislative Council at Calcutta, he carved out for himself a unique position. It is worthy of note that Sir Phirozshah had always been associated with the National Congress and has twice been the President of that institution. The conferring of the knighthood, therefore, is no less a compliment to the Congress than to the honourable gentleman himself. We think that in honouring him the Government has honoured itself. This is not the first time that a Congress leader has been so honoured. The Honourable Mr. Gokhale, who, as our readers are aware, has been doing yeoman service in the Imperial Legislative Council, has only lately received the distinction of C.I.E., and we note, among the recent recipients of honour, the Honourable Sankaran Nair.[1] All this shews perhaps the signs of the times, but it shews also that the Government is fully alive to the good work that is being done for it by the leaders of the Indian community in different parts of India.

Indian Opinion, 6-8-1904

[1] Sir Chettur Sankaran Nair (1857-1934), a judge of the Madras High Court and President of the Indian National Congress in 1897.

38. THE BRITISH INDIANS IN LOURENCO MARQUES

A correspondent named "Fairplay" wrote some time ago to our contemporary, *The Star*, in connection with the position of the British Indians in Lourenco Marques as compared to the[ir] position in the Transvaal. The correspondent made the Indians in Delagoa Bay say as follows:

> We are perfectly and absolutely free here under Portuguese rule, and we are a hundred times better here than in the Transvaal, although we are all British subjects.

On this, the regular correspondent of *The Star* writes from Lourenco Marques to our contemporary, stating that

> it may be news to the writer that an act was crowded out of the last sitting of the Cortes from want of time, and is to be brought up at the next sitting, under which newly-arrived Indians are to be taxed at the rate of £80 per head per annum. It is stated that this measure has the approval of the Government. If the above proposal of Mr. Deputy Carvalho passes into law, 'Fairplay' will find some other dumping ground than Portuguese territory for his friends.

Now, if the information given by *The Star* correspondent be correct, it shews once more that it is not the Portuguese in Delagoa Bay who are opposed to the Indians, but that it is the general body of European merchants, such as the Uitlander class is composed of, which have succeeded in getting round the Portuguese Government, so that they may be able to get a monopoly in trade. They did not during the old regime in the Transvaal, and persuaded the late President Kruger to pass legislation. It has been only recently that a large Europan population have settled in Delagoa Bay, and we should not be at all surprised if they have persuaded the Portuguese Government to place restrictions on British Indians. Mr. Lyttelton will have to be very careful if he is at all jealous of the rights of the British Indians in South Africa, and once the Portuguese Government embarks upon restrictions on the British Indians, the problem will undoubtedly be far more complicated, because Delagoa Bay is not a British Colony, and because the ways of the Portuguese are often inscrutable.

Indian Opinion, 6-8-1904

39. SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE AND BRITISH INDIANS

Superintendent Alexander has submitted to the Durban Town Council a report which is full of interest. His remarks about Indians are very satisfactory. He says in connection therewith:

> In dealing with our large population (about 16,000), I have had very little trouble. They are most amenable to law and order. Only in one instance, at their last annual Mohurrum festival, did some of them attempt to resist my orders; but as soon as they knew the order was to keep them clear of public-houses, they at once apologised.

The following remarks of his on drunkenness shew how much the Borough owes to the Superintendent for his good work in this direction, and we can only hope that he will long be spared to the community to render his services in the manner has for the last twenty-five years and more.

> During the year, 15,438 crimes and offences were brought to notice by your police, and dealt with, as shown in the statistics. I am glad to say that, on the whole, the community have behaved well, considering the large number (about 300 Europeans) out of employment, and that half of the population are uncivilised blacks of many nationalities, and that we have also a large number of European foreigners amongst us. There is, I am glad to say, a large falling-off in drunkenness amongst Europeans. No doubt the depres-sion in trade has had something to do with it, but from constant observation, I am more inclined to think that the large facility now in town for obtaining refre-shments of all sorts (not intoxicating) has more to do with it than any thing else, as one can now take a friend into a restaurant who would not go into a public-house; and, when one has there refreshment of this sort, one does not care for other liquors. I know the publican complains of how hard it is to pay the rent, etc., through the falling-off in his takings. This can only be remedied by the owners of the property reducing their rents which are now much too high to permit the proprietor to deal as honestly with his customers as he would probably wish to do. It is for this reason alone that I have throug-hout endeavoured to keep down the number of licences, and I think the Borough can congratulate itself upon having less licences for the sale of intoxicating liquor than any other seaport town of its size in Great Britain or her Colonies, as we have only 5 hotels, 18 hotels and bars, 17 public-houses, and 7 bottle stores. I am further glad to say that drunkenness amongst European women in this Borough is very small compared with towns in Great Britain. Of the 1,317 Europeans arrested for drunkenness last year, only 24 were women, and only one case of a lad under 19 years of age; whilst I find by the Police statistics of seaport towns in Great Britain, some of them shew 60 per cent. arrested for drunkenness to be women and 50 out of the 1,000 lads

under 19 years of age. With Indians and Natives arrested for drunkenness, the percentage of women is nine and ten respectively.

But the burden of our remarks today will be applied to the little sentence in the report wherein the Superintendent states that "with Indians, the percentage of women arrested for drunkenness is nine". This is not a new thing but, all the same, it is heart-rending to think that Indian women, who in their own country have never known what drink is, should here be found in the streets in a state of drunkenness. There are undoubtedly cases which are beyond one's control, and much may be urged in extenuation of the weakness of the fallen women, but we conceive that so long as a single Indian woman is to be found in the Borough under the influence of drink, it must reflect upon the Indian community. We have often had to perform the duty of urging the rights of the community. It is today our privilege to draw the attention of the community to a very obvious duty which it owes to itself and to its womanhood. Personally, we would see it made criminal for Indian women to be supplied with drink at any of the bars in town, but it would be far more satisfactory if, so far as Indian women are concerned, the community could carry on a battle against the curse, and we have no doubt that success can be easily attained. There are Indian societies in town, and enough young Indians with plenty of time at their disposal to carry on the much-needed temperance work, and here all creeds might usefully join hands. We may also appeal to the Reverend Mr. Smith and the Reverend Father Murray, who have all the facilities at their command and a suitable organisation to work with. And there are also educated Indian ladies who could be very helpful in the matter. It ought to be quite feasible to have small bands visiting each Indian bar and speak[ing] to the women as well as to the barmen, for we do not see why even barmen, who are mostly Indians, should not be persuaded to decline to serve women. We need not go into the merits of the question, for there can be only one opinion. It is hardly necessary to point out the awful results that flow from drunkenness, especially among women. The stamp that the crime (for it is nothing less) leaves on posterity is often indelible, and it ought to be held as sufficient to wake up within us unquenchable energy to see the reform through. We shall be glad if our young readers would ponder over the suggestion we have ventured to make and take it up without and delay.

Indian Opinion, 13-8-1904

40. THE PIETERSBURG CLAPTRAP

In another column, we publish a report copied from the *Zoutpansberg Review and Mining Journal*, dated 29th July, of the anti-Asiatic meeting held in Pietersburg, which is said to have been attended by from two hundred to three hundred people. The main resolution passed was similar to that passed at Boksburg, and the usual fallacies were dished up with an increasing mixture of spices in order to render them palatable to the meeting. For instance, one of the speakers said that the Indians lacked "the desirable qualities in residents of towns" in that they did not leave "something of a lasting and progressive nature". Another speaker said, "They kept no carriages, bought no produce, and spent no money", and a third said, "If an Indian took 5s. in a days' business, he went without food altogether, and if he took £5, he would kill a fowl". These statements are made by people who would be accepted as sober in ordinary business affairs. To degrade a class of people with deliberation, to coop them up in pens, to deprive them of the right of buying land, and then to turn round upon the very men and charge them with want of qualities desirable in citizens is a fine game. If any of these worthy speakers have travelled beyond the boundary of the district of Zoutpansberg, we might venture to direct their attention to what they, the indians, have done in the way of progressive citizenship in Cape Town, Durban, and other places where they are allowed some rights. They have built business places in each of these towns which would compare favourably with any, and in building those places, they employed European architects, European contractors, European builders, bricklayers, carpenters, etc., and some of these buildings are tenanted also by Europeans. In one instance, we know a man, a European, who was a tenant for nearly twenty years. The Indian landlord never increased the rent during that time. The tenant was reduced to poverty and could not pay rent, and the generous-minded landlord excused payment of rent for, we believe, a number of years, and would not take proceedings for ejectment. This is fact and no fairy tale. We would be pleased even to give the names of the parties to any *bona-fide* enquirer. May we ask whether all this shews lack of good citizenship? One of the speakers said again that "the true solution of the Asiatic question lay in the application of the maxim, 'the greatest good for the greatest number'". We must confess that we are not blind believers in that maxim; we think that it has worked untold mischief in many cases, and is yet likely to do so in the history

of the world's progress. But for the sake of argument, assuming its soundness, let us examine its application. The gentlemen who spoke at the meeting held briefs for the traders. The crime committed by the Indian is that he competes with them, he lowers the price of the necessaries of life and, having a fund of patience at his command, is a better seller, especially to those whose pockets are not too full, whether they be Europeans or Natives. Even then, if the Indian trader is of any disadvantage to the European trader, which we deny, he is on the whole of great benefit to the largest number of the inhabitants of the Transvaal and, in proof of that, the very fact that he has to depend for his business on the support received from the poor whites, including the Dutch and the Natives, may be mentioned without fear of any contradiction. And, strangely enough, the meeting itself found it necessary to establish a provisional White League Committee "for the propose of devising means to discourage trade with the Asiatics". The drafting of the constitution has been left in the hands of the Mayor and others. So then, we have the Local Board taking sides in a question of this description. But in arguing about this matter, we know we are beating the air. To men steeped in prejudice, an appeal to reason is worse than useless. We can only hope that what reason may not accomplish will be accomplished by the great healer, Time, and the Indian can afford to wait, as justice is on his side.

Indian Opinion, 13-8-1904

41. THE MAYOR OF DURBAN

We have to congratulate Mr. Ellis Browne on his re-election as the Chief Magistrate of the Borough for the third time. In this go-ahead and daily growing town, consisting as it does of a cosmopolitan population, having often conflicting interests, the office of Mayor is no sinecure. In Mr. Ellis Browne we have a gentleman of varied acquirements and possessing a large amount of industry. So far as the British Indians are concerned, he knows them well; he has been brought into frequent personal contact with all classes of the community, and but for his notorious minute on the Bazaar question, he was known to be fair-minded and impartial. That he lost his head, as so many did, on the Bazaar question is easy of explanation. It was Lord Milner's spell under which he was then labouring. His Excellency's Notice 356 of last year[1] came down on the Indians like a bomb-shell.

[1] *Vide* "British Indians in South Africa", (Government Notice), 15-5-1903

It affirmed the policy of the Government with regard to Indians, and it meant that His Excellency approved of the old Republican legislation. Naturally, our worthy Mayor thought that it must have been sanctioned by Downing Street and what could be allowed in a Crown Colony where, moreover, the very subject-matter of the Notice was a cause of the war, should a *fortiori* be permissible in a self-governing Colony like Natal, and that was the reason why he hurled his minute at the Indian community. Let us hope, however, that it is now forgotten, and if we have rescued it from oblivion it is to shew that it was a temporary aberration, and by no means representative of the general attitude of Mr. Ellis Browne. We wish him further success and prosperity to the Borough during his term of mayoralty.

Indian Opinion, 13-8-1904

42. OUR GRAND OLD MAN

The number of *India* to hand by the last mail shews the perennial activity of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, the Grand Old Man of India. Nothing comes to him amiss if it is at all to be of benefit to the millions of his fellow-countrymen, and the correspondence between Mr. Lyttelton and himself published in *India*, and which we reproduce in another column, on the question of the status of the British Indians in the Transvaal, is but an instance of his activity. Many a man at his age would be entitled to retire from public life and enjoy well-deserved rest, but Mr. Naoroji, in spite of his age, can give points to many young workers in the cause. In his self-imposed exile, the only pleasure he knows is that of doing what he considers to be his duty by his countrymen. For spotless purity of life, for utter selflessness, and for sustained public activity without caring for reward or praise, it will be difficult to find Mr. Naoroji's equal, not only in India but, we may say without exaggeration, in any part of the globe.

Indian Opinion, 13-8-1904

43. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,

August 15, 1904

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

What a pity about Devchand Kothari ! I am doing my utmost regarding your permit. It is not at all certain that I am going to Durban. Did you receive the two Pitman books which were sent to you some days ago?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Please impress upon Abhechand[1] and Anandlal[2] the absolute necessity of sending something every month to their father.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5651

44. FOOT-PATHS IN THE TRANSVAAL

Last week there took place in the Legislative Council an interesting discussion on the amendment proposed by the Colonial Secretary, in the Municipal Corporation Ordinance, giving the right to the Municipalities to

> prohibit the use of the side-walks of any public street by Natives not holding letters of exemption, issued under the Coloured Persons Relief Proclamation, 1901, and by coloured persons who are not respectably dressed and well-conducted.

This amendment was opposed by Mr. Brink and, as might be expected, was seconded by Mr. Loveday. The honourable gentleman said that the old regulations ought not to be tampered with. Now the old town regulations prohibit the use of the side-walks by Coloured people entirely, and it was said that it was a trespass upon the rights and privileges of the people for the Government to make any change whatsoever in the old law. The Attorney-General stated that, under the old law, a Kaffir even when entering a shop was liable to be arrested for being on the foot-path. He also said that it was practically a dead

[1] Nephews of Gandhiji
[2] *ibid*

letter, and that even during the Republican regime, respectably dressed Coloured people were not interfered with. To that, we may add the instance of an Indian who was pushed off the foot-path, and who approached the then British Agent. The British Agent at once took up the defence of the Indian and made a strong representation to the State Secretary, Dr. Leyds, who sent a letter of apology and said that it was under a mistake and misapprehension that the police interfered with the Indian who was walking on the foot-path, and he assured the British Agent that such occurrences would not be repeated. No protest was made by Mr. Loveday then against such a relaxation of the law, but now that the Government wishes to recognise the relaxation, Mr. Loveday an his friends are indignant. And yet it must be apparent to anybody that the Government amendment is, although meant to give relief, nothing less than an affront, because to make distinctions with reference to use of side-walks is so foreign to British traditions. It can only be in this enlightened twentieth century, and that in the Transvaal, tah in the name of that Government such a thing is possible. And the proviso as to [being] 'respectably dressed and of good conduct', is so elastic that, under it, unless the police have very special instructions, much mischief may be done. Even Dr. Turner, official member though he is, felt that the whole thing was ridiculous, and gave a very apt and humorous instance of a white man whom he saw outside the Government Buildings in Pretoria, "swaying to and fro, with his hands in his pockets and a pipe in his mouth, and spitting all round a clear six foot circle". The question, therefore, is hardly one of colour, but of hygiene and sanitation. The proper thing would be to punish all people who soiled the foot-paths, and it provides an intelligible, safe and inoffensive remedy.

Indian Opinion, 20-8-1904

45. INDIA MAKES THE EMPIRE

Our contemporary, the Johannesburg *Star*, has a leading article on "India and the Empire", based on Lord Curzon's speech[1] at the Guildhall, and it endorses Lord Curzon's view of the importance of India, and quotes with approval the following remarks that fell from Lord Curzon's lips:

> If you want, he says, to save your colony of Natal from being overrun by a formidable enemy, you ask India for help, and she gives it; if you want to rescue the white men's legations from massacre at Peking, and the need is

[1] Made in London on July 20, 1904

urgent, you ask the Government of India to despatch an expedition, and they despatch it. If you are fighting the Mad Mullah in Somaliland, you soon discover that Indian troops and an Indian General are best qualified for the task, and you ask the Government of India to send them. If you desire to defend and of the extreme outposts or coaling stations of the Empire, Aden, Mauritius, Singapore, Hong Kong, even Tientsin or Shan-hai-kwan, it is to the Indian Army that you turn. If you want to build a railway in Uganda or in the Soudan, you apply to India for labour.

But our contemporary has not a word to say to the Colonists on behalf of the inhabitants of India who are settled in the Transvaal! Proud as the descendants of Englishmen are in the Colonies to belong to the British race, and eager as they are to enjoy the privileges that the British Empire has to offer them, they would shirk the responsibility that membership of the Empire imposes on them, especially so far as British India is concerned. They are willing to appropriate the glory that comes from the British connection with India, and from a distance to applaud the valour of the Indian soldiers, but when it comes to a fair treatment of the brethern of these very soldiers, they want to hold themselves aloof. It is, therefore, a pity that our contemporary did not make use of its opportunity, in dealing with Lord Curzon's speech, of placing before its numerous readers the principle of recognising the very elementary and simple duty of *quid pro quo*. As Sir Mancherjee has said, the Colonies cannot with impunity continue to insult and embitter the feelings of three hundred millions of inhabitants of India for an indefinite length of time. Slowly, though surely, the exclusive policy of the Colonies is making a deep impression on the minds of the Indian people, and it cannot but make the task of government in India more and more difficult as it becomes known that for an Indian the privilege of British citizenship or British connection means little or nothing outside India, and that no matter what his status or ability may be, he is not wanted by the Colonies.

Indian Opinion, 20-8-1904

46. SUICIDE AMONG INDENTURED INDIANS

Some correspondents have of late been writing to *The Natal Mercury* a bout our remarks on the high rate of suicides among the indentured Indians. The writers have chosen to write anonymously, and although as a rule we decline to notice correspondence relating to matters appearing in this journal published in some other, especially under fictitious names, we feel disposed

for the sake of elucidation of the truth to offer a few remarks. One of the writers styling himself "A White Man" has sent a letter which is totally beside the purpose. He discusses the personnel of the editorial and the managerial staff of the paper and draws, in his imagination, a distinction between the Hindoos and the Mahomedans, and gives it as his opinion that the journal does not represent the Indian community. We do not propose to answer any of these allegations. Whether the paper represents anybody or not would not in any way detract from the truth of the statements made by us regarding the question of the suicides. We may, however, parenthetically draw "A White Man's" attention to the advertisement[1] that appeared in connection with this paper in the preliminary numbers. It was signed by all the influential leaders of the community, and if he will take the trouble to scan the list, he will find an answer to most of his allegations. He will study therefrom also the aims of the paper. When, however, the writer states that it is our purpose to calumniate the whites in discussing the Protector's report on the Indian suicides, we think it right that we should protest against any such insinuation. We commend the following from our very first leader on the subject[2] and leave "A White Man" and those who may think with him to judge for themselves:

> We do not wish to draw any conclusions against the employers from these staggering figures but we do plead for a thorough enquiry, alike in the interests of the Indians as of the employers, and we consider that nothing short of an impartial commission to investigate the cause would meet the ends of justice.

We have not in any way whatsoever cast any reflections on the planters. All we care for is an investigation in the interests of all concerned. That the figures we produced were staggering no one would deny, but "Anglo Indian" has questioned them. We can only, therefore, draw his attention to the corroboration given to them by Mr. Lyttelton, the Colonial Secretary, when he said that the rate among the non-indentured Indians was 157 per million and among indentured Indians 766 per million. If, therefore, we erred, we have erred in very good company, and in spite of the remarks of "Anglo-Indian" and "A White Man", we adhere to the statements we have made and urge that an enquiry should be instituted.

Indian Opinion, 20-8-1904

[1] This appeared in Gujarati, Tamil and Hindi, signed by representative Indians speaking those languages. *Vide* "Ourselves", 4-6-1903

[2] *Vide* "Indentured Indians", 4-6-1904.

47. MR. LYTTELTON'S DESPATCH

The debate in the Legislative Council of the Transvaal on the Indian traders' question and the publication of Mr. Lyttelton's despatch mark a most important stage in the history of this much-vexed controversy. On the one hand, the Home Government finds that it cannot, consistently with national honour, give away the rights of the British Indians which they jealously guarded during the Boer rule. On the other hand, the local Government and the Colonists seem to be bent upon rooting out the Indian. More than once has Sir George Farrar expressed in emphatic terms that probably the first act of a responsible Government when it came would be to extinguish the Indian trader by giving him compensation. We all know what the giving of compensation means! Thus, then, there is a direct conflict between Imperial interests and local prejudice¾we will not dignify it by the name of local interests, because we venture to think that the presence of the Indian in no way constitutes a menace to the white community. We have in these columns times without number shown that the white trader has not been driven out either in the Cape or Natal, where the Indians enjoy comparatively greater rights than in the Transvaal, but that they are earning side by side with the white man an honest livelihood. The unmeaning prejudice takes no account of the immeasurably superior facilities that the European enjoys in many respects, and the organising power which the Indian lacks. These two more than counterbalance the so-called cheap living of the Indian. But, as a matter of fact, nobody has ever asked for unrestricted trading rights on behalf of the Indians. All that is necessary is to absolutely protect vested interests, and to allow the Indian a reasonable share in future trade. To see men like Sir George Farrar and Mr. Bourke haranguing about the impending ruin threatening the Colony in the event of the Indians being allowed to continue to trade¾when they must know that the Indian is an almost negligible quantity, when one of them alone could but out every Indian in the colony thrice over¾is a most humiliating spectacle unworthy, shall we say, of those who profess to be guided by British traditions. If so much could, with justice, be said of the non-official members of the Legislative Council, what are we to think of the attitude of the Government? What are we to think of the Lord Milner of today asking Mr. Lyttelton to take

away practically everything from the Indian, and of the Lord Milner, on the eve of the war, who persisted in his advocacy of the Indian cause, and who would not barter away the rights of one class of British subjects for the sake of securing those of another class? Lord Milner prides himself on being an out-and-out Imperialist. Is His Excellency's Imperalism confined to South Africa only? The reading of Mr. Lyttelton's despatch has been both pleasant and distressing. What the local Government was ready to grant in the beginning of 1902, it has now retracted. What Lord Milner promised to do, when he justified the now notorious Bazaar Notice No.356 of last year, has now been retracted. His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, instead of taking up an impartial attitude, has constituted himself an exponent of the anti-Asiatic policy. All this is painful. Mr. Lyttelton, therefore, takes up the cudgels on behalf of the Indians, and on behalf of the Imperial policy and promises made by British statesmen and ministers. He shews conclusively that there can be only one solution of the question, namely, to grant reasonable rights to British Indians. But the reading becomes again distressing when we come to look at his final proposals, which seem merely to require the protection of the existing trading licences, leaving the principle of compulsory segregation intact, as also the great principle of Colour legislation. But all this later, because even what little the Colonial Secretary requires, the Transvaal Government is not prepared to grant. We have no doubt that the resolution of the Legislative Council has been cabled to the Home Government, and much will depend upon the attitude that may be assumed by it.

Indian Opinion, 27-8-1904

48. MEMORIAL TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

[Prior to *September 3, 1904*][1]

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY,

PRETORIA

SIR,

The despatch addressed by His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor to His Excellency the Governor, dated the 13th April this

[1] The date on which the petition was presented is not available.

year, on the status of British Indians in the Transvaal, contains certain matters which have deeply grieved my Association, and I am, therefore, directed to humbly submit the following to His Excellency and to request that the same may also be forwarded to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The despatch recommends the immediate adoption of the recommendations made therein as to alteration in the existing law with regard to British Indians, and based before on two incidents, the first being the test case of Habib Motan and the Government, underlying which is, in the words of His Excellency, the problem of self-preservation, and the second, the prominence into which the question came owing to the outbreak of bubonic plague.

To take the second incident first, my Association ventures to submit that it has been shown most conclusively that the Indians residing in the Location were in no way responsible for the outbreak. My Association would gladly have refrained from making any remarks in the matter, but as it is responsible for the statements supplied in this instance to Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree, and as his information has been controverted by His Excellency, a brief explanation has become necessary in justice to my Association.

It will be recollected that the plague was officially declared as having broken out on the 18th March last. The Location was expropriated by the Johannesburg Town Council on the 26th September last year. Before that date, each owner of the Stands in the Location was held responsible for a proper sanitary upkeep thereof. The owners, therefore, employed men in order to keep the Stands in a clean condition, and up to that date, no epidemic was known to have arisen in the Location, and the Indian community had remained particularly free from infectious or contagious diseases. The sanitary control, from the 26th September, 1903, passed into the hands of the Town Council. The owners were not allowed to have any say either as to the manner in which the Stands were kept or as to tenants that were received. Instead of one man or men to clean each Stand, there were a few men employed by the Municipality to look after the whole area. The result was that they were totally unable to cope with the work. The population, too, went up considerably, as, regardless of the accommodation in the Location, the Town Council accepted tenants. Complaints were frequently made about this unsatisfactory state of

things, but nothing was done. The following letter was written to Dr. Porter, giving the necessary warning:

21 TO 24 COURT CHAMBERS,
15th February, 1904

TO
DR. C. PORTER
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
JOHANNESBURG

DEAR DR. PORTER,

I am extremely obliged to you for having paid a visit last Saturday to the Indian Location, and for the interest you are taking in the proper sanitation of the site. The more I think of it, the uglier the situation appears to me, and I think that if the Town Council takes up a position of *non possumus*, it will be an abdication of its function, and I do respectfully say that nothing can justify the Public Health Committee in saying that neither overcrowding nor insanitation could be helped. I feel convinced that every minute wasted over the matter merely hastens a calamity for Johannesburg and that through absolutely no fault of the British Indians. Why, of all places in Johannesburg, the Indian Location should be chosen for dumping down all the Kaffirs of the town passes my comprehension. While the great projects for sanitary reform of the Public Health Committee are undoubtedly very laudable and probably necessary, the obvious duty of dealing with the present danger of insanitation and over-crowding in the Indian Location, in my humble opinion, is not to be neglected. I feel that a few hundred pounds now spent will probably cause a saving of thousands of pounds; for, if, unfortunately, an epidemic breaks out in the Location, panic will ensue and money will then be spent like water in order to cure an evil which is now absolutely preventible.

I do not wonder that your staff, hard worked as it is, is unable to cope with sanitation in the Location, for what you do want, and what you cannot get, is a *topaz* for each Stand. What is everybody's business is also nobody's. You cannot expect every resident to look after the sanitation. Before expropriation, every Stand holder was held responsible, and very naturally, for the proper sanitation of his Stand. The result, as I know personally, was that every Stand had a *topaz* attached to it who continually looked after the Stand, and I have no hesitation in saying that, compared to what the Stands are now, they were kept in an ideally good condition.

You ask me to suggest remedies. I have slept over the matter, and if only the Town Council would take up a reasonable attitude, I have no doubt that an immediate improvement without any cost to the Town Council, and probably to the saving of a few pounds, is possible. Let short leases—six monthly or quarterly—be given to the Stand-holders. The leases may state exactly how many people are to be kept on each Stand, or in each room. The lesees could pay, say 8 per cent. on the valuation of the valuators, and should be made strictly responsible for the sanitation of the Stand leased by them.

The sanitary regulations could then be strictly enforced; one or two inspectors could visit the Stands daily and come down upon defaulters with a heavy hand. If this humble suggestion is accepted, you will see vast improvement in two or three days, and you, by a stroke of the pen, could deal effectively with insanitation and over-crowding.

The Town Council would also be saved the necessity of having to make individual collections of rents.

Of course, under my suggestion, the Town Council must withdraw the Kaffirs from the Location. About this mixing of the Kaffirs with the Indians, I must confess, I feel most strongly. I think it is very unfair to the Indian population, and it is an undue tax on even the proverbial patience of my countrymen.

Although I have not personally visited other portions included within the Insanitary Area, I very much fear that the same condition of things exists there, and the suggestion I have made above would apply to other parts also.

I trust you will receive this letter in the spirit in which it is written, and I hope that I have not expressed myself more strongly than the urgency of the occasion requires. I need hardly add that my services in this direction are entirely at the disposal of yourself and the Public Health Committee, and I have no doubt that, if the Town Council would but give the Indian community a fair chance of proving what it is capable of doing in the way of sanitation, I do not think it would be much mistaken.

You may make what use you like of this communication.

In conclusion, I hope that an immediate remedy will be found for the danger that threatens the community.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) M. K. GANDHI

Dr. Porter in his turn passed this letter on to the Public Health Committee which, however, took no action. Extraordinary rain supervened and brought on the much-dreaded plague.

Here, then, in the humble opinion of my Association, there was nothing left undone by the Indians residing in the Location. It was with them purely and simply a matter of helplessness. There was nowhere else for them to go to. It was impossible to vacate the Location and overrun the town. In spite of urgent entreaties, no site was fixed for them in lieu of the expropriated Location. Dr. Porter's opinion about the condition of the Location, which my Association has taken exception to, was given in 1902, and yet, up to the time of expropriation, (that is, for nearly one year,) the Location was allowed to remain in the same condition without any epidemic having broken out.

Here, then, there is a practical demonstration of the truth of evidence given by Dr. Johnston and the late Dr. Marais.[1] The Location

[1] *Vide* "Evidence against lord milner's charge of insanitation", 13-8-1903

did, as a matter of fact, assume the state described by Dr. Porter after if became the property of the Town Council, and after the Indians themselves became unable to look after it.

Furthermore, the Medical Officer of Health for the Transvaal is reported to have said as follows in connection with the outbreak, thus absolving the Indians in the Location from liability:

> The coolie Location at Johannesburg was in a disgraceful condition, and why? Because those poor people were compelled to live in it like chickens in a coop, and it was left in a most insanitary condition by the authorities. If Mr. Raitt (member, Legislative Council) has been compelled to live in it, he would have been just as dirty.

It is also noteworthy that Indians have been no more liable to the disease in the Transvaal than the other communities outside the Location, that is to say, where they had control of their premises. For instance, in Pretoria and Potchefstroom, where there are Indian Locations, there were practically no cases of plague amongst the Indians.

Before concluding this portion of the representation, my Association invites His Excellency's attention to the following from Drs. Veale and Spink, both medical gentlemen of long standing:

> I hereby certify that I have practised as a general medical practitioner in the town of Pretoria for the last five years.
>
> During that period, I have had a considerable practice amongst the Indians, especially about three years ago, when they were more numerous than at present.
>
> I have generally found them cleanly in their persons, and free from the personal disease due to dirt or careless habits. Their dwellings are generally clean and sanitation is willingly attended to by them. Class considered, I should be of opinion that the lowest class of Indian compares most favourably with the lowest class of white, i.e., the lowest class Indian lives better and in better habitation and with more regard to sanitary measures than the lowest class white.
>
> I have, further, found that during the period that small-pox was epidemic in the town and district, and is still epidemic in the district, that, although every nation nearly had one or more of its members at some time in the Lazaretto, there was not a single Indian attacked.
>
> Generally, in my opinion, it is impossible to object to the Indian on sanitary grounds, provided always the inspection of sanitary authorities is made as strictly and regularly for the Indian as for the white.
>
> H. PRIOR VEALE, B.A., M.B., B.C., (Cantab.)
>
> This is to certify that I have examined the residences of the bearers of this note, and that they are in a sanitary and hygienic condition, and, in fact, such as any European might inhabit. I have resided in India. I can certify that their habitations here in the South African Republic are far superior to those of their native country.
>
> C. P. SPINK, M.R.C.S., & L.R.C.A., (London.)

As to the first-mentioned point, in dealing with it, His Excellency has dwelt on three illustrations, namely, Johannesburg, Pietersburg and Natal. In the humble opinion of my Association, the fact that Johannesburg has been able to hold its own against the British Indian shews that the Indian is unable to compete with the European in trade, except in petty trading, and then, too, he is not successful in ousting the European, for it is notorious that, in Johannesburg, the petty trade is mostly in the hands of aliens from Europe. In Pietersburg, too, with the greatest deference to His Excellency, the bulk of the trade, both wholesale and retail, is in European hands, and the European houses, which are referred to by His Excellency as having wholesale businesses only in Pietersburg, are also, according to the information in possession of my Association, carrying on a retail trade, whereas the Indians there confine their trade to the retail branch.

My Association respectfully submits that the comparison drawn from Natal is very unfair to the British Indian community, for there is no analogy between Natal and the Transvaal. The former has been importing labour from India now for over thirty years, and the bulk of the Indian population is under indenture. The free Indians who have entered the Colony as independent men number less than ten thousand (10,000). But even there, my Association ventures to submit, the retail trade has not passed entirely into Indian hands. In all the important towns, it is still controlled by the Europeans.

The following is the testimony given by Sir James Hullett only last year as to the value of the Indian to Natal:

> The Arabs were limited and were traders almost entirely. The ordinary small trader could not compete with the Arabs. The retail Kaffir trade of the Colony was practically in the hands of the Arabs. In the country districts, witness had no objection to this because he thought the ordinary young white man or woman could do something better than looking after Kaffir country stores. The Arab's wants were less than the ordinary white man's wants, they sold at a smaller profit and, to a certain extent, they dealt fairer with the natives than the European traders, who, at the country stores, desired to make such large profits. Apart from the country districts, he supposed—from appearance—that Arab traders were doing an ever-increasing business in the towns. They were supported to a certain extent by white inhabitants. The white inhabitants, and with a certain amount of justice, complained of the Arabs, but yet helped to support them because of being able to get their goods cheaper from them than elsewhere. But all this did not mean the climination of the white man from trade altogether. (This witness said emphatically).

Most public men there believe that Natal owes its prosperity to the presence of the Indian. The special Commissioners, who, some years ago, examined the whole question, said, especially with reference

to the British Indian trader, against whom His Excellency has been pleased to advance so much argument, gave their opinion [*sic*] as follows:

> We are content to place on record our strong opinion, based on much observation, that the presence of these traders has been beneficial to the whole Colony, and that it would be unwise, if not unjust, to legislate to their prejudice.
>
> Nearly all of them are Mohammedans, either total abstainers from alcoholic liquors, or drinking them in moderation. They are thrifty by nature and submissive to the law.

Out of the seventy-two European witnesses, who gave their evidence before the Commission, almost every one of those who spoke as to the presence of the Indian affecting the Colony has said that he is indispensable for its welfare.

But the most striking instance, perhaps, shewing that the Indian is not the menace that he is popularly considered to be to the white predominance, is to be found in the Cape Colony. That Colony has never imported Indian labour, but up to last year, it was open to receive any Indian who went there. Indians are entitled to own land, they may take out licences to trade without any let or hindrance, and they enjoy practically all the rights possessed by His Majesty's other subjects. And yet his competition has not told upon the European community in any way whatsoever, except in so far as his presence has stimulated healthy rivalry. There are at the Cape far wealthier Indians than in the Transvaal, but they have not made any appreciable impression on the ownership of land.

My Association, therefore, ventures to submit that the past, in so far as it throws any light on the question, does not bear out the fears expressed by His Excellency.

That the opposition to the British Indian is confined to the trader class in the Transvaal, and therefore, purely interested, is, in the humble opinion of my Association, plain from the fact that the Indian depends largely upon European support. Having been found reliable, the European banks give him credit, European houses sell him goods on credit, and the European customers purchase goods from him, his best customers being the Dutch people. It may here be mentioned that, even during the Boer rule, a Petition, extensively signed by the Dutch people as also the English people, was presented to the late President Kruger favouring the presence of the Indian.

The social and political equality, it is true, was never recognised during the Boer regime as between white and Coloured people, but the Indian, it will be readily admitted, has studiously kept himself aloof

from intruding himself on any of the two departments.

My Association craves leave to discuss the proposals made by His Excellency which have been termed by him "concessions", but which, in the humble opinion of my Association, constitute a further encroachment on the small measure of liberty enjoyed by the British Indian under Law 3 of 1885, which the proposals are intended to replace.

(1) Under the Law, then, as now interpreted, the Indian, is, as in practice he has always been, free to trade anywhere he chooses.

(2) Though there is in the Law a clause restricting residence to Locations, wards, or streets set apart for the purpose, as the Supreme Court has held, it is inoperative, as there is no sanction provided for it in the Law. The British Indian is, therefore, free to reside where he likes. He may not own fixed property, but he is entitled to own leases.

(3) There is in the Law no restriction whatsoever on the free immigration of Asiatics.

Under the proposals made by His Excellency, the issue of licenses outside Bazaars would be restricted only to those who were carrying on business at the commencement of hostilities, and, then only, during the residence in this Colony of the licensees, a proviso which materially curtails the possibility of expansion even for the few who were trading at the commencement of hostilities. The proposal, therefore, would ultimately mean a complete sweeping out of the British Indian trader, except from Locations.

Exemption from liability to reside in Locations is contemplated, but, as has been shown above, the liability to reside in Locations does not exist, but will have to be created and will, therefore, be a new restriction.

Exemption from registration will be merely nominal, as almost all the old residents of the Transvaal have, in obedience to Lord Milner's advice, paid the registration fee, and as the fewest possible new men would be allowed to enter the Colony under the Immigration Ordinance proposed to be introduced. As a matter of fact, the Peace preservation Ordinance is employed to shut out every Indian who is not a refugee, no matter what his intellectual attainments, social qualities, or habits of life may be.

It is, therefore, respectfully submitted that in not a single particular will the proposals under discussion concede anything to the British Indians, but they would very materially restrict the rights hitherto enjoyed by them.

My Association is grateful to His Excellency of advising that the Indians may be allowed to hold land in their own names which

may be devoted to religious purposes, but my Association may be pardoned for saying that, when the bulk of the Indian population is compulsorily segregated, the concession would be of little or no use, and could not be availed of if the land is not allowed to be used for purposes of drawing an income for the support of religious institutions. Nor is the proposal altogether new, because, time after time, Her late Majesty's agents brought the matter to the notice of the late President Kruger, who had promised to grant relief.

His Excellency has been pleased to say that "the British Indian Association maintains that these sites (referring to the new Locations laid out) are quite unsuitable, but they have in my opinion overstated their case". With the greatest deference to His Excellency, my Association ventures to submit that it has always been its endeavour to place facts without any varnish at all, and, in making its submission regarding the new sites, my Association has, in every instance, supported its objections with disinterested testimony. The members of my Association, being most of them traders of long experience, also claim to speak with confidence regarding these sites, and however valuable they may become in the distant future, for immediate purposes, save in one or two instances, they are totally useless, situated as they are in isolated and uninhabited spots where there has been no traffic. In Pietersburg, for instance, the new site has been fixed nearly two miles from the town where, as it is only a small village, there can be no traffic. It is, therefore, a question purely and simply of establishing a new Indian village. Half a dozen store-keepers removing there will have only themselves to trade with. To say that removal to such a Location would be tantamount to removal from Cheap-side to Hampstead Heath in London would, in the humble opinion of my Association, be an understatement of the case. And the very fact that these sites have been fixed so far apart is a limitation of the powers vested in the Government in virtue of Law 3 of 1885, which contemplates the setting apart of "streets and wards" besides Locations.

The crux, however, of the whole question is legislation in anticipation of the future, and my Association cannot help saying that the future being guarded against by the Immigration Act on the Natal or Cape lines, there would appear to be no reason for the fear of the Indian swamping the European in any department of life. As against the ever increasing European population, the Indian population, which may be estimated at twelve thousand (12,000), would always remain stationary with the addition of the few who may be able to enter the

Transvaal under the education test. In Natal, for instance, during the five years' working of the Act, only 158 new men were able to enter the Colony under the test, when it consisted of a simple set form. As His Excellency is aware, now the test has been considerably raised, being the same as in the Cape Act, which makes it impossible for any but those who have a fairly competent knowledge of the English language to enter the Colony. And although my Association does not share the fears expressed by His Excellency, in view of the popular prejudice, it is prepared to accept the imposition of the restriction, so long as reasonable facilities are afforded for servants and salesmen, who may be absolutely necessary for the carrying on of existing businesses, to enter the Colony.

With reference to the issue of new trading licences to those who did not at any time trade before war in the Transvaal, whether with or without licences, my Association, in order to allay the popular prejudice, and as an earnest of its desire to meet the wishes of the European Colonists as much as possible, would be prepared to accept a general measure, leaving it to the option of the Government or the Local Boards either to grant or refuse such licences, subject, however, to an appeal to the Supreme Court in cases of manifest injustice; for instance, where the new applicant is supported by a majority of European residents, provided, however, that the existing licences are not in any way interfered with, except when the premises are not kept in a sanitary condition or the licensee does not comply with the regulations as to book-keeping, etc. Thus, the issue of new licences will be regulated without any invidious legislation based on distinction of colour.

My Association respectfully submits that the prohibition to own fixed property is as unjust as it is uncalled for, and to prevent a handful of Indians in the Colony from buying land freely is manifestly contrary to British traditions.

My Association has refrained from saying anything with reference to the promise made on behalf of the British Government forty years ago, because, in its humble opinion, the case for the British Indians is exceedingly strong on its merits, but I may take the liberty of saying that, if the situation when Sir Charles Napier gave his proclamation in 1843 was different to what it is today, it was certainly not so different when the late Lord Rosemead and the late Lord Locke, as also Lord Milner, made, during the Boer regime, the most strenuous effort on behalf of the British Indians and more or less successfully protected their rights against encroachment by the late President Kruger. The position, when the hostilities broke out and

when Her late Majesty's ministers declared that the disabilities of the British Indians were one of the causes of war, was also not very different from what it is today.

My Association, therefore, feels that the Indian community has not been fairly treated in that these facts have been overlooked. My Association respectfully submits that the Indians, as subjects of the Crown, and as law-abiding and peaceful residents of the Transvaal, have a claim to an impartial consideration of their position at the hands of His Excellency as representative of the King-Emperor and Head of the State.

The British Indians, moreover, may be excused for drawing His Excellency's attention to the humble services that they, as a race, have always rendered to the Crown. Whether it is in Somaliland, Tibet, China, or in South Africa, the Indian soldier has, side by side with the soldier from the British Isles, borne the brunt of the battle. Lord Curzon spoke the other day in the following glowing terms about India's services to the Empire:

> If you want to save your Colony of Natal from being overrun by a formidable enemy, you ask India for help, and she gives it. If you want to rescue the white men's legations from massacre at Peking, and the need is urgent, you ask the Government of India to despatch an expedition and they despatch it. If you are fighting the Mad Mullah in Somaliland, you soon discover that Indian troops and an Indian General are best qualified for the task, and you ask the Indian Government to send them. If you desire to defend any of the extreme outposts or coaling stations of the Empire, Aden, Mauritius, Singapore, Hong Kong, even Tientsin or Shan-hai-kwan, it is the Indian Army to which you turn. If you want to build a railway in Uganda or in the Soudan, you apply to India for labour. When the late Mr. Rhodes was engaged in developing your recent acquisition of Rhodesia, he turned to me for assistance. It is with Indian coolie labour that you exploit the plantations equally of Demerara and Natal. It is with Indian trained officers that you irrigate Egypt and dam the Nile. It is with Indian forest officers that you tap the resources of Central Africa and Siam, with Indian surveyors that you explore all the hidden places of the earth.
>
> Unless we can persuade the millions of India that we give to them absolute justice as between man and man, equality before the law, freedom from tyranny and injustice and oppression, then your Empire will not touch the hearts and will fade away.[1]

[1] The wording in this extract from Lord Curzon's Guildhall speech differed slightly from that cited earlier in "India Makes the Empire", 20-8-1904, with which this has been brought in line.

Sir George White generously acknowledged the services of the devoted Prabhu Singh, who, at great risk, sat perched up on a tree within the range of the Boer fire, and never once failed to give the warning of the firing of the Boer guns from the Hill of Umbulwana during the siege of Ladysmith. The Indian monument on the Observatory Hill in Johannesburg is also a testimony to the Indian contribution to the war in South Africa. The British Indians in the Transvaal who belong to that race are, in the humble opinion of my Association, entitled to some measure of consideration, specially as to their vested rights and their right to earn an honest livelihood in the Transvaal, with dignity and self-respect, and without being perpetually reminded that the colour of their skin is a bar to the ordinary civil liberty, as distinguished from the political, under the British flag.

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
CHAIRMAN
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 3-9-1904

49. LETTER TO "THE STAR"[2]

COURT CHAMBERS,
JOHANNESBURG,
September 3, 1904

TO
THE EDITOR
The Star

SIR,

I trust you will allow me to say a few words with reference to your editorial on the representation of the British Indian Association. I am afraid the most important point of the representation has been missed by you, and, in my humble opinion, the publicists in the country would render a service to it by drawing the attention of the public to the fact that the representation meets entirely the most pressing objections of the Europeans who do not want unrestricted immigration of Indians, and would allow no new licences to them. The Association accepts Sir Arthur Lawley's proposal as to the introduction of an Immigration Ordinance on the Cape model, and

[1] This was reproduced in *Indian Opinion* under the title "British Indian Association: A letter from Mr. Gandhi".

makes a suggestion whereby the objectors themselves, namely, the local authorities, would have the virtual control over the issue of new licences. Could the Indians go further? It should not be forgotten that, when the late Mr. Kruger wanted to nullify the decision of the late High Court by Volksraad resolutions, there was tremendous opposition. The Colonists, who then formed the Opposition, are now asking for the very thing they opposed, for it is nothing less than the decision of the Supreme Court that they wish to override by stopping or suspending the issue of Asiatic licences. Such a thing in a British country would be impossible if self-interest did not temporarily blind the fine sense of British justice. And yet, the British Indian Association, recognising the popular prejudice, is prepared to forego very largely the fruits of victory dearly won after a tremendous struggle. Personally, I do not fear the verdict of any Commission that may be appointed, believing, as I humbly but firmly do, that many of the objections raised against the Indians have no foundation in fact. The number of retail Indian traders in the Transvaal is very small compared to the European. But I think that the appointment of a Commission is unnecessary and it will indefinitely postpone a settlement of the question. It will be very surprising if Mr. Lyttelton goes back upon his despatch and suspends the issue of Indian licences, pending the finding of the Commission. The British Indian Association has ever tried to meet the wishes of the Europeans. It has again made a supreme effort, and you would, I submit, be serving the country by laying stress upon this fact, especially in view of the extreme measures that are being suggested at Potchefstroom and elsewhere. The time is of the essence at present; the controversy has reached a stage which admits of a definite decision as the only remedy. Session after session, legislation has been passed, and each time the question has been shelved. The Association has made definite proposals which, I venture to think, afford a reasonable solution worthy of a trial, at any rate. They have, moreover, the merit of disposing of the question locally.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 10-9-1904

50. THE INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL

We confess that we do not understand Lord Milner's attitude on this question, if the cablegrams received by our contemporaries give a fair summary of His Excellency's view, for we are told that His Lordship thinks that

> an attempt to place coloured people on an equality with whites in South Africa is wholly impracticable and wrong in principle, but he holds that when a coloured man possesses a certain high grade of civilisation, he ought to obtain a white man's privileges, irrespective of colour.

If this is all that His Excellency means, we can see nothing inconsistent with it in Mr. Lyttelton's despatch, for he has proposed that further immigration of British Indians should be stopped, save for those who would satisfy the test laid down by His Excellency. With reference to those that are already in the country, he proposes that segregation for sanitary purposes, but not for trade, may be allowed. There, then, remains the question of trading still open, but Lord Milner has answered that question himself when he says :

> While we should be justified in legislating even contrary to public opinion to protect the vested rights of the Indians already here, we should not be justified in regulating the Asiatic question so far as it is *res integra* in a manner opposed to the voice of a vast majority of the European population.

If then, the vested rights are to be protected, nothing more has really been asked for by Mr. Lyttelton, for we claim that every Indian who is now settled in the Transvaal, having been allowed to trade free[ly][1] during the Republican regime, has a vested right in such ability to trade, whether he actually traded or not, and those who may come hereafter will only be such as would possess a certain high grade of civilisation! The whole of the [op]position from His Excellency [fal]ls to the ground, but, un[fort]unately, during the last two [years], we have learnt things [which] enable us to know that [howev]er, painful it may be to [have to] say so, Lord Milner does not mean what he says. There is no intention to grant the better-class Asiatic any special rights, and the vested rights have tapered down to actual trade carried on by Indians on the 11th of October,1899. For, was it not the contention of the Asiatic Traders' Commission that they had authority

[1] This and other words in square brackets have been reconstructed from the damaged original

only to investigate the cases of those who were trading at, and immediately on, the commencement of hostilities, and that, under the reference, they could only deal with the cases of people who were trading as far back as October 1899? Had it not been for the godsend in the shape of the Supreme Court decision, more than 75 per cent of the Indian traders would by this time have been wiped out of existence under the above reference, and probably the Colonial Office would have done nothing. We, therefore, plead for a frank statement of the policy. As to the European opposition also, we have to protest against His Excellency laying so much stress upon it for two reasons: [first] no opposition on the part of one body of British subjects could be allowed to avail in order to take away the legitimate rights of another body; [second] the opposition is fostered by the Government itself. Mr. Lyttelton's despatch has in that respect been an eye-opener. Although Mr. Duncan and Sir Richard Solomon made what appeared to us to be a righteous defence on behalf of the weaker party, when the Asiatic Traders' Commission was appointed at Sir George Farrar's instigation, both of them, as would appear from the despatch, have been asking Mr. Lyttelton as vigorously as they could to take away practically everything from the Indians. We find the same subservience to European sentiment in the Legislative Council. The motion proposed by Sir George Farrar, regarding a Commission to be appointed from England, and a stoppage of the issue of all new Indian licences in the meanwhile, is gladly accepted by the Government. When the late Mr. Kruger passed any resolutions to nullify the decisions given by his High Court, he was furiously blamed. His conduct was considered to be brutal, short-sighted, and all the ugly names that could be given him were brought into play. Not a voice, however, is raised in protest when the very same thing is proposed by the representative of the British Crown, namely, to take away the right of the Indian to trade in the Colony, which has been emphatically recognised by the unanimous decision of the independent judges of the Transvaal. We hope, therefore, that Mr. Lyttelton will realise the position in which the British Indians in the Transvaal are placed, and will realise also that the local Government, having so thoroughly allied itself with the popular prejudice, is hardly in a position to give an unbiassed opinion. The fact is that, rightly or wrongly, it has been very much discredited. There is intense dissatisfaction among the people of the Transvaal with reference to its policy in many other matters. It is, therefore, afraid to do right in the Indian case, because it

is that of people who are voiceless and who are powerless to give any trouble to the Government. May Mr. Lyttelton have sufficient strength to save what he has termed "the national honour" in connection with the Indian question is our fervent prayer.

Indian Opinion, 3-9-1904

51. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI[1]

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

25 & 26 COURT CHAMBERS,
RISSIK STREET,
JOHANNESBURG
September 5, 1904

TO
THE HONOURABLE DADABHAI NAOROJI
22, KENSINGTON ROAD
LONDON, ENGLAND

SIR,

The matters have now reached a crisis with reference to the Indian question. The *Indian Opinion* would give you all the information up to date. The representation of the British Indian Association printed therein will, I think, shew the position clearly. The proposals of the Association are as moderate as they possibly could be and they represent the irreducible minimum that the British Indians are entitled to. You will there see all the most reasonable objections of the Colonists met. Even the point as to the educational test has been yielded, but the right of review by the Supreme Court on the question of licences and the ownership of land are absolutely essential. As to the latter, if necessary, certain portions may be reserved for exclusive European ownership. As to the licences, I may, at the risk of repetition, state the position clearly. Any Licensing Act should leave untouched the existing licences and the right to trade freely to those who were trading before war whether with or without licences but who have not yet taken out licences since British occupation mainly because they have not yet been allowed to return to the Colony, unless, of course, with reference to these licences, the premises are not kept according to the

[1] Dadabhai Naoroji communicated the contents of this letter, excluding the postscript in the form of a statement to the Secretary of State for the Colonies (C.O. 291 Volume 79, Individuals¾N) and the Secretary of State for India (C.O. 291, Volume 75, India Office). The statement was also published in *India*, 7-10-1904, as a despatch dated September 9 from its Johannesburg Correspondent.

sanitary requirements or because the books are not kept in the English language. As to the new licences, the Government or the municipal authorities may have full discretion subject to the right of review. This will set the whole question at rest. The proposal is based on the Natal model without its most unjust clause depriving the Supreme Court of its inherent jurisdiction, a fact which has rendered uncertain the position of every Indian trader there. If the proposals of the Association are accepted, the appointment of a Commission would appear to be quite unnecessary. The licences could not be suspended, as suggested by the Legislative Council resolution. And if the licences are not suspended, I hardly think Lord Milner will accept a Commission. In fact, the object of asking for a Commission was to secure indirectly what Mr. Lyttelton declined to grant directly. It would, too, indefinitely postpone the question of licences and, if Mr. Lyttelton agreed to suspend the issue of licences, there would be no hurry on the part of the anti-Indians to have any definite legislation.

I note that the question of the Orange River Colony has not yet been raised. I venture to think that it should be kept prominently in view for, to my mind, it is nothing short of a scandal that the Colony is still allowed to shut its gates almost entirely in the face of Indians.

I remain,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

PS.

Sir Arthur Lawley, as also Mr. Duncan, the Colonial Secretary, left last week for London. May I suggest that a mixed deputation should wait on them and discuss the question with them? It might influence them very greatly, and, in any case, it will shew them that influential men holding different shades of opinion are absolutely unanimous in connection with this question.

From a photostat of the typewritten original: G. N. 2260.

52. THE TRANSVAAL

We have published the important dispatches from Lord Milner and Sir Arthur Lawley, to which Mr. Lyttelton's dispatch, also already published in these columns, was a reply. These documents shew the importance of the Indian question, not only in the Transvaal, but in South Africa. The British Indian Association of the Transvaal has sent in a representation to the Colonial Secretary, Pretoria, (reproduced by

us last week)[1], controverting some of the assertions made by His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor in his dispatch, wherein he has clearly shewn himself to be more a partisan than an impartial administrator. There is throughout that dispatch an eagerness to put forward all the points that His Excellency could conceive of as being in favour of the European objections. He has not hesitated to advise Mr. Lyttelton even to break the promises repeatedly given to the British Indians in the name of the Government he represents. Now we do not consider that in affairs of State there may not be circumstances justifying a breach of promises once made, but in this instance there is not a shadow of justification for it. Sir Arthur Lawley has dwelt on Sir Charles Napier's proclamation of 1843, and thinks that the situation then was quite different from the one presented to-day. As, however, the British Indian Association has reminded His Excellency, that promise was acted on even up to 1899. Not long ago, Lord Ripon laid it down as the emphatic policy of the Government, in the dispatch, when he was Secretary of State for the Colonies, that it was the wish of Her Majesty's Government to treat all her subjects on a footing of equality. We must confess that we have failed to see a single circumstance which would justify a wilful breach of promises solemnly made and reiterated. Nor is there any ground for magnifying the question out of all proportion, and then justifying iniquitous differential legislation. One could understand such an attitude if the doors of the Transvaal were proposed to be kept wide open for the reception of the millions from India, but in the same breath that Sir Arthur Lawley draws a lurid picture of the state in which the Transvaal would be, if India was allowed to pour her millions into the country, he also advocates the adoption of the Cape Act¾ thus reducing Indian immigration practically to a vanishing point. To put a few thousand Indians, under galling restraints, in a population of one million white men, a population, moreover, which is ever increasing, is a measure that ought not to be tolerated for a single minute in a British Colony. That Sir Arthur Lawley, however, has been fit in his representative capacity to advocate such a measure is a circumstance of ominous importance. What has happened today with reference to the Indian question may happen tomorrow regarding some other. It is the underlying principle which should cause anxiety for the future. If the views held by His Excellency are at all popular with the British administrators, they

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Colonial Secretary", dated "Prior to September 3, 1904".

mark, in our humble opinion, a decline from the highest British traditions which alone have made the Empire what it is. And even while the so-called "Imperial wave" is passing through the Empire, seeds are probably being sown for its disruption. For the sake of keeping up a nominal connection with the Colonists, England has to surrender all that is noblest and best in her. Looking at the representation of the British Indian Association, it appears to us to be unanswerable; and, if the proposals made therein are accepted by the Government, they afford an extremely easy solution of the difficult question. We consider that the Association could have rested on the advantage gained by the decision in the recent test case; but, since life is made up of compromises, and a policy of conciliation is preferable to any other, the Association has done well in putting forward the most reasonable and conciliatory suggestions as to immigrations, as also dealers' licences. One fact, however, must be borne in mind, namely, that it is, as it ought to be, the irreducible minimum that the Indian community could be expected to accept. We have never been able to reconcile ourselves to the view of tabooing the Indian languages in the education test. It is uncalled for, and it will ever remain a matter of soreness that both Lord Milner and Sir Arthur Lawley refused to agree to the perfectly just proposal made by Mr. Lyttelton that Indian languages should be recognised. However, for the sake of buying peace, and in order to shew how reasonable the Indians are, as they have always been even under most trying conditions, the British Indian Association is prepared to accept an Immigration Act along the Cape lines, and to give absolute control, subject to review by the Supreme Court, over the issue of fresh dealers' licences, which means practically for an Indian to surrender his right to trade, and yet that is exactly what the Association has done. In return, all that the Association asks for is the right of ownership of fixed property and yet, we are not sure that it would be a new thing, for it is a question whether it is possible to attack the ownership clause in Law 3 of 1885. The principle of compulsory segregation also is repudiated by the Association, and as the Supreme Court has shewn, there is no compulsion warranted by Law 3 of 1885. In the face of this fact, it is indeed strange that Sir Arthur Lawley should call his proposals "concessions", and then tell Mr. Lyttelton that he may have difficulty in carrying them out. Every one of His Excellency's proposals, as a matter of fact, constitutes a fresh restriction of the liberty of the British Indians. If, however, the representation of the British Indian Asso-

ciation is met in a fair spirit, the whole controversy can be closed, at any rate for the time being, and the necessity of an expensive commission from England be avoided. The argument has often been advanced that, seeing that the self-governing Colonies have been allowed to pass certain laws, the Transvaal also ought to be placed on the same footing. We may, therefore, incidentally mention the fact that nowhere has the Home Government agreed to such extraordinary proposals as those made by Sir Arthur Lawley. Australia, it will be recollected, passed an immigration Act applying to Asiatics as such. The Act was vetoed, and one of a general character based on the Natal model had to be passed by that Colony. Natal itself, when it endeavoured to pass an Act specially directed against Asiatics, was unsuccessful in the attempt. If, therefore, the legislation proposed by Sir Arthur Lawley is at all countenanced, it will be totally new departure on the part of the Home authorities.

Indian Opinion, 10-9-1904

53. AN ENGINE OF OPPRESSION

Permit restrictions against Indians entering the Transvaal become more and more severe day by day, while greater facilities are being afforded to the Europeans, whether British subjects or otherwise. Now, officers have been appointed to board steamers on their arrival, so that Europeans who may wish to proceed to the Transvaal may have their permits granted to them without having to wait. On the other hand, on the ground of plague, the Indians are being prevented, whether they are at the Cape, Natal or Delagoa Bay, from entering the Transvaal, and that, although they may give absolute proof that they are refugees. The most glaring instance that has come to our knowledge is in connection with the visit of the Indian football teams from Kimberley and Durban. In another column, we publish the whole of the correspondence which speaks for itself. The Acting Chief Secretary could not see why temporary permits should be granted to British Indian players who, be it remembered, are all respectable men and living in European style, if that counts for anything. Football is an essential[ly] English game, and we would have thought that Mr. Robinson would not have referred to it sarcastically, as he has done in the correspondence in question. Mr. C. Bird, Principal Under-Secretary, to whom the Indian players ought to feel most deeply grateful, sent a pressing wire to the Permit Secretary, which, too met with scant courtesy at the hands of the Transvaal authorities. Mr. Bird was very emphatic. He said: “The Natal team are all respectable men,

chiefly employed as clerks, and I see no more danger in allowing them to go to Johannesburg than anyone else". Nothing could have been stronger, and coming as it did from responsible quarters, the recommendation might have been listened to. But perhaps in the Transvaal people are living in the Middle Ages.

Indian Opinion, 10-9-1904

54. THE INDIANS IN POTCHEFSTROOM

The people at Potchefstroom seem to be very much exercised over the few Indian store-keepers who are earning their livelihood in the town. In their eagerness to drive every Indian away from Potchefstroom, they are resorting to intimidation. Only the other day, a fire took place in an Indian store which, it is believed, is the work of an incendiary. The papers say the Indians are alarmed, and that the insurance companies do not take Indian risks, and that even the white men living in the vicinity of the Indian stores have become uneasy. Happily, the police seem to be on the *qui vive* and there seems to be no ground for great anxiety on that score. We are grieved, however, to find that even the Potchefstroom Town Council has allowed itself to be carried away, and has placed on record a resolution unworthy of a representative body. The following is the recommendation of the Health Committee of the Town Council:

> That, in view of the fact that no movement is being made by the Gove-rnment to locate Asiatics in bazaars, this Council order all Asiatics in the town to retire and reside at night in the Indian location. That a month's notice be given the said Asiatic traders by way of advertisement in the local newspapers, in which to conform to the Council's direction. And further, should it prove necessary, that fifty special white police be enrolled to assist in the carrying out of the Council's resolution, and that the Council urgently requests the Resident Magistrate to give all the assistance in his power to that end.

As we have already said in previous issues, there is no power given in Law 3 of 1885, as amended in 1886, to compulsorily segregate British Indians. The action of the Council would, therefore, be utterly illegal if an attempt were made to enforce the resolution above quoted. How, in the face of the dictum of the Chief Justice with reference to this clause in his judgment in the Test case of *Habib Motan* v. *The Government*, the Town Councillors of Potchefstroom have thought fit to suggest that fifty special white police be enrolled to put the Indians in the Location,¾ presumably by force,¾ we cannot understand. We can but hope that the Government would take note of the resolution in question and warn the Town Council against any such step. The Indians have by law a perfect right to trade and reside

where they like, and they have a right to expect protection in the exercise of that right from any violence, even though it may be from a legally constituted body like the Town Council of potchefstroom.

Indian Opinion, 10-9-1904

55. INDIANS AT THE CAPE

In the Cape of Good Hope *Government Gazette*, dated the 30th August last, appears the following proclamation issued by His Excellency, Major-General Edmund Smith Brook, the officiating administrator of the Colony:

> I do hereby proclaim, declare and make known that, from and after the date hereof, it shall not be lawful for any Arab, Indian or other Asiatic, of whatsoever nationality, to enter any of the Teritories aforesaid (namely, the Transkei, including Gealekaland; Tembuland, including Emigrant Tembuland and Bomvanaland; Pondoland, including East and West Pondoland; Port St John's; Griqualand East;) without a special permit signed by the Resident Magistrate, or by his order, and approved by the chief Magistrate of the Transkeian Territories; and any such person entering any of the said Territories without any such permit shall, upon conviction, be liable to a fine not exceeding twenty shillings, or in default of payment of fine, to imprisonment with or without hard labour for any period not exceeding one month, and be ordered to remove from the Territory forthwith; and should any such person as aforesaid disobey such order, he shall, upon conviction, be subjected to a further penalty not exceeding twenty shillings and be liable to be summarily removed beyond the boundaries of such Territory.

What the Indians have done in the Cape Colony to merit this restriction, we do not know. The Indian population at the Cape is small enough in all conscience, and the Cape politicians have often made it a boast that, in that Colony, they are not guided by Colour prejudice. The ink with which Mr. Schreiner penned his reply to the *Bloemfontein Post* on the Question of the Native franchise is hardly yet dry, and we now read in the cape *Government Gazette* the Proclamation referred to. If, as Mr. Schreiner says, it is true that the people at the Cape are quite satisfied that the native of the soil should enjoy the franchise right, and that the test whereby a person's merits should be judged is to be not the colour of his skin but the degree of civilisation attained by him, this prohibition against the entry of the Indians into the Cape dependencies appears to be unintelligible. If it is not a crime for the resident Indians at the Cape to remain there, why should it be a crime for them to enter its dependencies? Special circumstances could undoubtedly be conceived which would justify such a

treatment, but certainly the Proclamation is totally silent. We are, therefore, quite in order in concluding that the prohibition has been issued against the Indians as such. We consider it to be a wanton insult offered to the Indian community, aggravated by the fact that the Cape Peninsula is practically closed against any new Indian immigrants. Indeed, this latest invasion of the Indian's right as a British subject savours too much of the anti-Colour wave that is at present passing over South Africa, and which was initiated last year by the Transvaal Government issuing the Bazaar Notice 356 of 1903. We hope that the British Indians at the Cape have protested against the proclamation, and that they will not rest content until it is abrogated or shown to be justified by any exceptional circumstances. We have altogether too much of this kind of Proclamations against which there seems to be no effectual remedy. The Letters Patent which, if it were a question of passing legislation through the proper channels,¾ as for instance, the Legislative Council, ¾ would have to be referred to the Home Government, but legislation by Proclamation, as in the case in question, is evidently not under any such control. The Governor acts without the assistance of the legislative body, and his orders have the force of law. These Proclamations are not submitted to the authorities in Downing Street before they are issued. It, therefore, amounts to this, that sometimes it is really easier to tighten the yoke that grinds the Indian in territories that are more directly under the Crown than where there is a properly constituted legal machinery. This is a question which we submit for consideration by politicians in England who are interested in the Imperial question of the status of British Indians outside India.

Indian Opinion, 17-9-1904

56. THE LATE MR. PRISK

Death has removed from us a courteous gentleman and a publicist of great ability in the person of Mr. Prisk. In a quiet and unassuming manner, the deceased gentleman did a great deal for the community in his own special department. The life of a journalist is never an easy one. He has responsibilities of which, perhaps, the public have no adequate notion. On the one hand, he has to please his employers, and, on the other, to represent public opinion, in doing which he may have to make great sacrifices. He has often also to deal with conflicting interests and examine matters that come before him, not merely from the public standpoint, but also from his own, and when his own views, conscientiously held, run counter to public opinion in a given

matter, the situation becomes very delicate. Mr. Prisk, however, steered himself clear of all the shoals and rocks that come in the way of newspapermen, and performed his duties unflinchingly. We can well remember the assistance that he rendered in an encouraging manner at the time when Indian famine relief subscriptions were opened in Natal. Many of our readers will recollect the special cartoons that were published as supplements to *The Natal Mercury*, and the great space that was allotted to the famine literature in that paper. We tender to Mr. Prisk's family our respectful condolences, and hope his mantle will fall on worthy shoulders.

Indian Opinion, 17-9-1904

57. INDIANS IN PIETERSBURG

Our contemporary, *The Star*, publishes the information that "a White League has been formed in Pietersburg to take action on the Asiatic question. The executive committee consists of three representatives of the Town Council, four delegates of the local Boer Vereeniging, and four other prominent townspeople" and that, at the Town Council meeting, it was decided to approach the Government with the object of obtaining authority for Municipalities to regulate hours of business. We are not surprised at the idea of forming a White League in such a hotbed of Colour prejudice as Pietersburg is. All we can say is that we do not understand the reasons for this activity, for Lord Milner, with an iron hand, has stopped the entry even of the few Indian refugees who were allowed to return to their homes per month. Indeed, as our readers must have noticed, His Excellency would not even allow temporary permission to an Indian football team to pass the sacred precincts of the Transvaal. What, then, would the White Leagues do to justify their existence, unless, like the Potchefstroom vigilants, they intend to terrorise the resident Indians? The proposed action of the Town Council with reference to the regulation of closing hours, we sympathise with. We understand that the Indians in Potchefstroom have taken the lead in the matter and have decided to close their stores at the same hours as the Europeans. And we can but hope that the Indians in Pietersburg will follow the excellent example set to them by their Potchefstroom brethern, and render it unnecessary for the Town Council to have any such bye-laws. It will be a graceful and timely action on their part, and perhaps, it will go a long way to shew the

would be members of the proposed White League that, so far as possible, they are anxious to conciliate their sentiments.

Indian Opinion, 17-9-1904

58. INDIANS IN POTCHEFSTROOM

We reproduce in another column an admirable letter addressed to the *Transvaal Leader* by Mr. Abdool Rahman, the Secretary of the Potchefstroom Indian Association. The letter shews clearly how mistaken the zeal of the Vigilants' Association is, and to what an extent the Indians are prepared to meet the wishes of the white men. The most important part of the communication, however, is the information contained therein that the Indian merchants in Potchefstroom have decided to close their stores at the same time as the Europeans. This step has been taken without any pressure, and we consider that it is one in the right direction and worthy of imitation by British Indian merchants in other towns. Indeed, as it is, they have got a very strong case, but this latest move on the part of the Potchefstroom Indians makes their position much stronger. We hope that Mr. Abdool Rahman's request for "some reciprocation of the sentiment from the European British subjects who, for better or for worse, have to rely upon protection from the same flag that covers the British Indian" will meet with the response it deserves.

Indian Opinion, 17-9-1904

59. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI[1]

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

25 & 26 COURT CHAMBERS,
RISSIK STREET,
JOHANNESBURG,
September 19, 1904

TO

THE HONOURABLE DADABHAI NAOROJI
22, KENSINGTON ROAD
LONDON, S.E., ENGLAND

DEAR SIR,

From the Blue book received this week on the Indian position, I notice that Mr. Lyttelton has laid stress on the question of the sites for Indian bazaars.

As you will have seen from the British Indian representation[2] in reply to Sir Arthur Lawley's dispatch, the statement is reiterated, and lest the matter may be overlooked, I again emphasis the fact that most of the sites are certainly unfit for trade. The statement has been made not without totally independent testimony from Europeans of standing and all those reports have been furnished to His Excellency. In Krugersdorp alone is the site chosen at all good, and therefore, without any compulsion, those who wanted Stands have applied for them. In other places where new sites have been established, practically no applications have been made.

The chief thing, however, is to avoid compulsory segregation. So far as the principle of Bazaars is concerned, people may be induced to take up sites by setting apart Bazaars in suitable localities and the problem will solve itself.

I hope you will see the leader in the *Indian Opinion* on the Cape Administrator's Proclamation, prohibiting the entry of Indians into the Transkeian Territories without permits. This is a fresh restriction the reason for which it is difficult to understand, and the

[1] Dadabhai Naoroji reproduced the text of this letter in a communication which he addressed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Secretary of State for India. (C.O. 291, Volume 79, Individuals¾N., and C.O. 291, Volume 75, India Office).

[2] *Vide* "Memorial to Colonial Secretary", dated "Prior to September 3, 1904".

Territories mentioned in the schedule to the proclamation are the depen-dencies of the Cape.

I remain,
Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten original : G.N. 2261.

60. MORE ABOUT SIR ARTHUR LAWLEY'S DISPATCH

The Blue book received this week from London shews very forcibly how His Excellency has been less than fair in dealing with the position of the British Indians. Sir Mancherjee resented the general description of the Indians in South Africa as "Asiatics of a low type". His Excellency, therefore, has in reply appended to his dispatch the correspondence that was published in *The Rand Daily Mail* during the plague epidemic, signed by some Indians. When the cordon was, drawn round the Location, it is not surprising that a few of them, considering themselves to be better-living than the rest, thought that, by throwing mud at the latter, they would gain some advantage for themselves, and so wrote the letter in question. But His Excellency, who knows the exact position personally, might have made use of his knowledge in order to correct the exaggerations of the frightened correspondents. His excellency ought to have known that the reference was directed to the Indians who were living in the Location, who undoubtedly, as a rule, are below those who are living outside the Location. He might have known that they did not and could not represent the whole of the Indian community; and the correspondence itself shews that even the writers who were living in the Location resented the idea of being classed in the same category as some of the lowest-class Indians, and be cooped up in the Location. From that point of view, they were perfectly correct, because we have seen and known many decent-living people in that locality, some of them having well-built, substantial residences. With due deference, therefore, to His Excellency, it may still be said that to describe Indians in South Africa as "Asiatics of a low type" is "unfortunate".

Our contemporary, *The Natal Advertiser*, has controverted Sir Arthur Lawley's description of Natal, namely, that "the moment one crosses the Natal border, he loses the impression that he is travelling in a European country at all". Our contemporary calls it "an exaggerated description", and we cannot but echo the sentiment. Except at the railway stations between Pinetown and Charlestown, you see very few

Indian faces on the main line, and, if you see a few porters at the stations, it is because the railway authorities find it convenient to employ indentured Indian labour. If, therefore, it is an evil, the Colony has courted it itself, and in spite of His Excellency's sneer, it will continue to do so.

Mr. Lyttelton required definite observations on the statement furnished to Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji that "the sites for the Asiatic Bazaars were utterly useless for trade". His Excellency has dismissed the matter in a few lines thus:

> The British Indian Association maintains that these sites are quite unsuitable, but they have, in my opinion, overstated their case. The objections raised by the townspeople have been also unreasonable. I think that the selections have been well made.

Now we make bold to say that His Excellency has not seen the new sites in the majority of cases. The British Indian Association has reite-rated the charge and it is, to say the least of it, very unfair that, without having seen the localities, His Excellency should have made the state-ment he has, as against the testimony of eye-witnesses who are, more-over, Europeans of standing in their own towns, either merchants or medical men, quite competent to pronounce a dispassionate judgment. It is they who have condemned the sites in the majority of cases as totally unfit for trade, and often unsuitable even from a sanitary stand-point. In any case, it cannot be denied that in not a single instance have streets or wards been assigned for Bazaars, but in every case, Locations have been set apart and miscalled Bazaars.

If we have dwelt at some length again on His Excellency's dispatch, we have done so in order to shew how much more difficult the position of Indians is rendered by the head of the State taking up a biassed view of the situation. Important negotiations are still going on. The question is undecided, and we think it right to lay stress upon the fact that the British Indians have in no case overstated the position, and that wherever they have been able to do so, they have shown a willingness to yield to European sentiment.

Indian Opinion, 24-9-1904

61. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

25 & 26 COURT CHAMBERS

RISSIK STREET,

JOHANNESBURG,

September 26, 1904

TO

THE HONOURABLE MR. DADABHAI NAOROJI

22, KENSINGTON ROAD

LONDON, S.E., ENGLAND

DEAR SIR,

I have your two letters, for which I thank you. Mr. Omar, too, told me what you had advised in your letters. I shall endeavour henceforth to divide my communications whenever it becomes necessary. I have written to Mr. Nazar to send directly *Indian Opinion* with the marks as you suggest. The Government has written saying that it does not propose to introduce legislation along the lines laid down in the latest representation submitted by the British Indian Association. This shews that the Government is not going to be satisfied with merely accomplishing its object, to restrict future Indian immigration and to regulate the issue of licences to new applicants. It evidently intends to establish the principle of legislation applicable to British Indians as such. If so, it is a most dangerous doctrine and it will be a reversal of Mr. Chamberlain's policy. If differential legislation is sanctioned for the Transvaal, the Cape and Natal will certainly follow suit.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original : G.N. 2262.

62. THE GRAND OLD MAN OF INDIA

The number of *India* to hand by the last mail contains a graphic account of the reception given to Mr. Naoroji at the recently held International Socialist Congress which met at Amsterdam.

The special correspondent of *India* states:

> The President, Herr Van Kol, called upon the Congress to rise and stand in silent reverence. . . . There then followed a wonderful and most inspiring manifestation. As Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji walked slowly to the centre of the platform, the great audience that filled the vast hall stood silently and uncovered before him. Simple as was the deed, the earnestness and unanimity of its performance rendered it most impressive, particularly when it was borne in mind that the same homage was rendered by the representatives of so many and such very different peoples and nationalities. Then, after a sorrowful tribute had thus been paid to the people whom Mr. Naoroji represented, a tremendous and enthusiastic demonstration was made in honour of the representative himself. From the people of India, the thoughts of the great audience centred on the dignified person of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji. They remembered what had been said concerning his life-long endeavours, and awakended the echoes by their cheers, by the clapping of hands and shouts of welcome and applause. Long and earnestly was the ovation continued, and it made an indelible impression on all who witnessed this great manifestation of that international solidarity which has spread, not merely from nation to nation, but from continent to continent.

It must be a matter of pride to every Indian to know how the revered father of India, as Mr. Dadabhai is endearingly called by the Indians, is held in esteem by the people of Europe. Mr. Dadabhai, having been born on the 4th of September, 1825, celebrated his seventy-ninth birthday on the 4th September last. May he live still for may years to come to stimulate the younger generation to deeds of self-sacrifice and service of their country is our prayer.

Indian Opinion, 1-10-1904

63. THE TRANSVAAL WHITE LEAGUE

In another column we publish the prospectus of the Transvaal White League, formed in Pietersburg. The objects are

> to make a united stand by all the white inhabitants of this country against the Asiatics, to promote legislation to regulate and control the issue and renewal of licences to Asiatic traders, and to force them to vacate the towns and country districts and to reside and trade in bazaars specially set aside for them.

The other three objects are intended to further the two we have just quoted. The League, except making a blustering noise, will be simply beating the air, because there is no influx of Asiatics into the country unless, of course, it would bestir itself towards preventing the entry of thousands of Chinese indentured slaves who are flooding the country; for the free immigration of Asiatics, British and otherwise, has been effectually prevented by Lord Milner, even to the extent of

stopping the entry of those who have paid to the old Government the sum of £3 as the price of being allowed to remain in the Colony. As to the regulation and control of the licences, the British Indian Association has offered it to them. And as to forcing the Asiatics to vacate the towns and country districts and to reside in Bazaars, we could hardly conceive that it is seriously required, if the gentlemen can get full control of the licences. It is worthy of note that on the League is represented very prominently the Town Council of Pietersburg. Side by side with this establishment of the Transvaal White League, prepara-tions, so the Johannesburg papers say, are now being made to canvass signatures to the Petition, which emanated from the Potchefstroom Vigilance Association, and it has already appeared in this paper. Supposing that it is singed by every adult European male in the Transvaal, would it make the proposal for confiscation-and it is nothing else-legal or justifiable? Or would it be the clear duty of His Majesty's Government, in spite of the Petition, to protect the vested interests and rights of the British Indians ?

THE ENGLISH PRESS AND THE BRITISH INDIAN BLUE BOOK

In sharp contrast to the above, one finds a perusal of the almost unanimous opinion expressed by the English Press on the Blue book very refreshing.

> To take away from them the right they enjoyed under the Kruger regime, of trading outside locations, would be to stultify ourselves in the eyes of the world, and to sanction an act of injustice to men who are as entitled as are the white inhabitants of the Transvaal to equitable treatment at the hands of the Imperial Government.

Thus says the conservative *Morning Post*, and adds that

> the adoption of Lord Milner's proposal would furnish just cause for resen-tment among the three hundred millions of His Majesty's Indian subjects, whose rights and feelings cannot be ignored.

The Times is no less emphatic. It shews, therefore, that outside, unbiassed opinion is absolutely on the side of the British Indian. There are, indeed, very few instances in which the weight of authority has been thrown so forcibly against the cause, and yet its justice has remained supreme.

Indian Opinion, 1-10-1904

64. THE ORIGIN OF THE FIRE AT POTCHEFSTROOM

We take the following from the *Transvaal Leader* to shew how the fire in an Indian store at Potchefstroom originated.

> The Town Police are evidently perturbed at the outbreak of fire which recently occurred on the stoep of a coolie store, and the Chamber of Com-merce has been asked to assist in the protection of property from incen-diaries. Captain Johns' letter stated:
>
> 'The plan adopted in this case was the throwing of paraffin over the verandah, shutters and doors, and setting same alight with wax matches'.
>
> No traces of paraffin were found inside, and Captain Johns was convinced that the attempt was made by some malicious person from without, which person, being still at large, and having been frustrated in his efforts in this case, may extend his energies to other parts of the town.
>
> The letter continued:
>
> 'In view of this idea, I have increased the number of police on night duty; but I suggest that you advise your members to employ their own watchmen, as it is impossible for me, with the few men at my disposal, to give absolute security against a determined incendiary'.
>
> A reply was sent that it was not considered that any danger to white merchants' stores existed.

Captain Johns of the Fire Brigade deserves the thanks of the community for being on the alert, but what are we to say of the reply returned by the Chamber of Commerce to his letter asking the Chamber to keep a watch? The Chamber knows too well that there is no danger involved for the white merchants' stores, and, therefore, it considers that it is no concern of the Chamber to busy itself about fires in Indian stores, even though fires may take place owing to malicious intention.

We understand that a similar occurrence has taken place at Pietersburg, where an Indian store has been burned down. We are not yet in full possession of the facts, but we draw the attention of the Transvaal Government to the curious coincidence at both places. At Potchefstroom, the activity of the Vigilance Association synchronises with the fire in an Indian store there. At Pietersburg, the formation of the White League is immediately followed by a fire in an Indian store, and the activity at both these places is, we venture to think, a direct

result of the dispatches by Sir Arthur Lawley and Lord Milner. They have given the mischief-makers extraordinary encouragement.

Indian Opinion, 1-10-1904

65. WARMBATHS IN THE TRANSVAAL

A correspondent from Warmbaths in the Transvaal writes to us in Gujarati, complaining that the authorities do not provide facilities for British Indians to make use of these famous healing waters. He says that, if any Indian wants to make use of them, he is merely directed to go to the rooms set apart for the Kaffirs. It appears that he offered to build a place for Indians, but the offer was not entertained. We are sure that, if there is any truth in the statement made by our correspondent, the Government will remedy the difficulty at once, and provide suitable facility for those Indians who may wish to make use of these waters.

We draw the attention of the British Indian Association of the Transvaal to the letter in question.

Indian Opinion, 1-10-1904

66. INDIANS AT THE CAPE

We reproduce in another column a letter written by the Cape Government to Mr. A. Kadir, Secretary of the British Indian League at Cape Town, in connection with the complaint made by the League regarding the working of the Immigration Restriction Act. The letter is courteous enough, but beyond that we cannot say much for it. In not one essential particular has any concession been made by the Government, and shelter has been taken behind the legislation passed from which relief was asked for. The League made a very reasonable request that some facility should be given to the resident merchants for importing servants from India in place of those who might return to India. The answer given is that such a servant, if he does not know a European language, cannot enter the Colony. A similar reply has been given with reference to minor brothers of persons who may be domiciled in the Colony, but the answer merely begs the question. If the Government is really anxious, as is stated in the opening paragraph of the letter, "that the law should be administered so as not to cause unnecessary hardship to any individual, or to any particular section of the community, irrespective of class, creed or colour" there is

ample power given to it to give relief in the desired direction. A clause in the Cape Act provides for special exemptions being made, and we certainly think that, if the resident merchants are to be at all considered, they ought to have the right to import servants. Whether they may be able to write in a European language or not, the servants might be allowed to enter the Colony under restrictions, and without being given the full rights of citizenship, but if total prohibition is enforced, it means that the position of the domiciled Indians would become more and more difficult as days go by, and as the indigenous supply of servants is exhausted, as it is bound in time to become; we hope that the Secretary of the British Indian League will not leave the matter until full justice is done.

Indian Opinion, 1-10-1904

67. A GOOD EXAMPLE

We extend a hearty welcome to Mr. Omar Hajee Amod Zaveri, who has returned after a long absence from the country, and after a prolonged visit to Europe and America. We think that Mr. Omar was well advised in paying a visit to these continents. The more our merchants go to these countries, the better able they would be to succeed in business, as also in other departments of life. After travelling in Europe and America, not merely for the sake of pleasure, but for the sake of gaining knowledge and broadening one's mind, one is able to cope with many difficulties, especially such as face an Indian in south Africa, and Mr. Omar has set in this respect an example worthy to be followed by other merchants. We hope that Mr. Omar will make full use of the knowledge he has gained during his travels and, wherever necessary, put it into practice.

Indian Opinion, 1-10-1904

68. AN UN-ENGLISH ENGLISH MAGISTRATE

A globe-trotter, who styles himself "An English Magistrate", has been travelling in Natal, and has given his impressions to the public through the columns of *The Natal Mercury*. After speaking in a flattering tone of Durban, "An English Magistrate" proceeds:

> Notwithstanding this, however, knowledge of Durban is, in my view of it, accompanied with one or two regrets. How is it that so marked a position has been acquired in a white man's city by Indians and Arabs? They are fellow-subjects with us of His Majesty the King, to be sure, but white is white and black is black, all the same. I was told—whether legendary or not I cannot

say—that the proprietor of one of the most palatial stores in Durban, wishing to acquire honourably the store of a small Arab trader at his corner, sent his solicitor to inquire if he might be allowed to buy the business and at what figure. The Arab replied that he was not just then disposed to sell, but that, if his neighbour would name the price for his store, it would be at once considered.

The other regret that the writer expresses is that there should be any Kaffir policemen in Durban. If the traveller had enquired sufficiently about the history of Durban, he might have known that though a white man's city, as he calls it, it owes its beauty and grandeur to the presence of the Indian; he might have known that the Durban Corporation employs a very large number of indentured Indians in order that travellers like "An English Magistrate" may find all the modern comforts of life. As to the other regret of his: in deference to the poor Kaffir constable, we cannot help saying that Durban owes its comparative freedom from crime to his presence, not because the Kaffir police are more efficient than the European police, but because it is impossible for the Borough to afford the necessary number of policemen [except] by employing the lower-paid Kaffirs. But for the presence of the Indian and the Kaffir police in white man's or otherwise. Why, then, such un-English jealousy? Or is there something insidious in the South African climate itself which makes a man forget his traditions?

Indian Opinion, 1-10-1904

69. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

21-24 COURT CHAMBERS,
CORNER RISSIK & ANDERSON STREETS,
P.O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
October 3, 1904

DEAR PROFESSOR GOKHALE,

I have purposely refrained from writing to you from time to time as I know how busy you are, but in view of the approaching session of the Congress, I can no longer do so, and I beg to enclose herewith a copy of the Blue book published in London on the situation. That deals with the Transvaal only, and it is to the position in the Transvaal that all effort has to be directed. Contrary to all expectations, Lord Milner, who, on the eve of the war, was the champion of

the oppressed including the British Indians, has completely turned round and, as you will see from his dispatch, is quite prepared to deprive the Indians of even what little rights they possessed in the Transvaal before war. I enclose the representation of the British Indian Association in reply to the dispatches which would shew how far the Indians are prepared to go. You will see that therein the Indians are willing to concede almost all that the Europeans would want, namely, restriction of Immigration and regulation of licences by local authorities in exchange for the right to own landed property, but the proposal has been rejected by the Government as unsatisfactory, simply, I fear, because it wants to establish the principle of differential legislation. The British Indian Association says the legislation, whatever it may be, should be applicable to all; the Transvaal Government wants to pass a measure which would be applicable only to Asiatics, whether British subjects or not. Such legislation, as you are aware, has not been sanctioned even for self-governing Colonies, as, for instance, the Cape and Natal, although at both the places Government intended to pass such legislation.

In Sir Mancherjee's representation in the Blue book (Statement A), the registration fee of £3 is stated to be an annual payment. As a matter of fact, it is a payment once for all.

As to the licences, the test case since brought[1] puts the Indians on the same footing as the Europeans.

The institution of photographic passes has been done away with.

In the Orange River Colony, the legislation is most drastic and nothing has yet been done to remove it.

In Natal, the Dealers' Licenses Act, which gives arbitrary powers to the local authorities without the right of appeal to the Supreme Court, is causing a great deal of hardship.

I hope that you have been following *Indian Opinion* which gives most accurate information.

The Times and other newspapers in London think that the effect of the harsh treatment in the Transvaal will be very bad on the Indian mind and that it will be a great strain on Indian loyalty. This shews that there ought to be in India articulate and persistent agitation in favour of justice being done to the British Indians in South Africa. The Congress, therefore, should, I think, pay much more attention to the matter than has been paid hitherto and public meetings, too,

[1] *Habib Motan* v. *The Transvaal Government*: *Vide* "A Well-deserved Victory", 14-5-1904

should be held all over India protesting against a continuance of the ill-treatment.

I hope you are keeping good health. I shall very much appreciate a line from you.

I remain,
Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original : C.W. 4103.

70. THE JOHANNESBURG LOCATION

Elsewhere we publish the report of the Public Health Committee on the much-vexed Location question in Johannesburg. Our readers will remember that this is the 4th report of the Public Health Committee, and in the 4th, the Committee has made a clean breast of all the hypocrisy, and it has come out in [its] true colours. The report is indirectly a complete answer to Sir Arthur Lawley's contention that the Asiatic Bazaar sites have been well chosen, and that they afford scope for both the Native and the European trade. The Public Health Committee at first fixed upon a site very near the Malay Location. It then recommended the site which was chosen by the Boer Government, and now it has fixed upon the site which was used as an isolation camp during the plague outbreak, and which is situated thirteen miles away from Johannesburg. And it is there that about five thousand Indians, including hawkers and traders, with the exception of a few old established merchants, would be removed, if the Committee's recommendations are carried out, and here are the reasons :

> If, says the Committee, the existing state of things is allowed to be continued, certain kinds of industry, as, for instance, that of small tradesmen and artisan class, which would otherwise afford a means of livelihood to a considerable number of Europeans, will inevitably fall into the hands of Asiatics, and the growth of the self-supporting European population will consequently be materially impeded.

It is wonderful how arguments which were never thought of before are being now found to support what is, in naked terms, a policy of slow confiscation. We say, without the slightest fear of contradiction, that the Indian artisan class in Johannesburg simply does not exist. It is true that there are a few indifferent carpenters and fewer bricklayers, but they do not wish to enter into any competition whatsoever. The present Indian population of Johannesburg has been resident there since at least 1896, because it was then that the census

was taken and the number is now about the same as then. And yet, the Indians have not been able to oust the Europeans in any department whatsoever. White Johannesburg is still white, and yet the Public Health Committee has suddenly found out that the presence of the Indian population will "materially impede the growth of the self-supporting European population", although the European population is ever on the increase, whereas, owing to the misapplication of the Peace Preservation Ordinance to the Indians, the Indian population is and must be on the decrease. The census statistics produced in support of the contention are utterly misleading, and could only be meant for consumption in England, for they cannot possibly mislead the people on the spot. The statement that the Coloured population of the Transvaal already outnumbers the white population by 77.83 to 22.17 is a misrepresentation, for which, we must confess, we were not prepared from a representative body like the Public Health Committee of Johannesburg. What possible connection there can be between the vast Native population of the Transvaal and the Coloured population, we cannot understand, and if the Public Health Committee had only taken the trouble to deal with the Indians for whom alone the Location is to be established, it could have shown conclusively that the fears about the Indians cutting out the Europeans are imaginary, for the Indian population is hardly more than 7,000 as against 84,000 whites in Johannesburg, and the Indian population of the Transvaal is hardly over 10,000 as against the European population of 300,000. On the one hand, to talk of Indian competition ruining the whites and, on the other hand, to dangle before the English public figures including the Native population, and then shew the terrible disproportion, is hardly worthy of a great public body. Then, the Committee has gone into a comparison of the position as between Johannesburg on the one hand, and Natal and Pietersburg on the other. This is a second edition of Sir Arthur Lawley's comparison. We have already dealt with this phase of the controversy,[1] and humbly endeavoured to shew that it is all in favour of the Indians. The Committee now boldly states that the British Indians should not have any share in the European trade at all, and that"the Bazaar should be kept completely apart from any neighbourhood inhabited by Europeans", and it is for that reason that the Committee has chosen the wilderness at Klipspruit for dumping down the Indians, who can neither do any hawking nor any trade, except among themselves and the few Kaffirs. But the Kaffirs cannot

[1] *Vide* "The Transvaal", 10-9-1904 and "More about Sir Arthur Lawley's Dispatch", 24-9-1904

be any customers of the Indians because, being most of them workmen, they will have to go to town early in the morning and return probably about eight o'clock at night. They are, then, not likely at that time to go to the Asiatics and make their purchases there; they will naturally make them in town. The charge of insanitation has also been dished up again."It is impossible", says the Committee, "by any method of supervision to insure the observance of the Public Health Bye-Laws by these people". We challenge the Committee to produce statistics in support of the contention, we ask for figures shewing how many prosecutions under the Public Health Bye-Laws have taken place against the Indians; in how many cases they have neglected to conform to the regulations. So far as we are aware, and we know Johannesburg Indians a bit, we would be much surprised if there have been six prosecutions against British Indians throughout the year, and we make bold to say that in hardly a single instance has there been a second prosecution against the same man. Sanitary inspectors throughout South Africa have laid stress upon the docility of the Indian and his willingness to comply with lawful orders. The Committee says:"The recent outbreak of plague, and the events connected with it, proved the difficulty of effectively isolating a Location situated within the town itself". Either, therefore, Dr. Pakes, who in his report shewed that he had successfully cordoned [off] the Indian Location and thus stamped out the plague, was wrong, or the Public Health Committee is wrong. Dr. Pakes has been congratulated upon his splendid work, and it is offering an insult to him to imply that effective isolation was impossible, owing to the Location being situated within the town. We deny the reckless statement of the Public Health Committee that the Indians are particularly susceptible to smallpox. The experience in Natal shews that such has not been the case. And as to the plague, too, we question very much that the Indian is necessarily more susceptible. The plague, which originated in the Indian Location, and for which the Public Health Committee alone was responsible, remained confined to the Location, and if the number of cases in the Location be eliminated, it will be found that the Indians were not more attacked than others. The last reason given by the Public Health Committee is the miserable plea of social intercourse between the poorer whites and the poorer Indians. In the first instance, there is absolutely no social intercourse between the two, and, in the second, we would very much like to know in what way the presence of the Indian has contributed to social deterioration of the white man; what is the particular vice of the Indian community which the white man has contracted during the last seventeen years. And the phenomenon of the two classes living side by side is by no means peculiar to

Johannesburg. They have been doing so in Cape Town, in Kimberley, in Durban, in Mauritius, in Ceylon, in India. Nowhere has this charge been brought against the Indians; nowhere has this plea been urged for the complete isolation of the Indians. Better by far that, instead of such slow torture, as is proposed by the Public Health Committee, the Indians should by legislation be bundled out of Johannesburg, once and for all. Either the resident population should be well treate or it should be driven out of the country. The latter operation, though drastic, would be far more merciful than the process of slow but sure arsenical poisoning, in the shape of cooping the community up within an enclosure miles away from its scene of activity, and letting it die for want of nutrition.

Indian Opinion, 8-10-1904

71. THE DEALERS' LICENSES ACT

The Natal Licensing Act still continues to remain the Damocles' sword hanging over the heads of the Indian store-keepers in Natal. So long as this un-British law disfigures the Statute-book of the Colony, so long will the Indian stores be without any value as a mercantile asset. Mr. Hoondamal, a silk merchant of long standing depending entirely on high-class European custom, having received notice to vacate premises in a principal street of Durban, removed to another shop in West Street. He holds the usual trading licence which enables him to trade up to the 31st December next. He, therefore, did not suspend business until the transfer of premises was registered by the Licensing Officer. The Officer refused to register the transfer. He still continues his business and lodged notice of appeal. In a court of law, such notice would leave things in *status quo*. But the Licensing Officer, who holds autocratic powers, felt that his dignity was hurt by Mr. Hoondamal continuing his business. He, therefore, brought him before the Magistrate, who considered quite improperly, we submit, that the defendant traded in defiance of the authorities, and imposed the maximum penalty of £20. Notice of appeal has been lodged and we, therefore, refrain from making any further comment on this extraordinary decision. We would only remark that, if the decision is sound, no subject of the King may with impunity act upon his interpretation of the laws of the country. We commend this case to the attention of the Government as showing that, until the law is altered, there can be no rest for the poor Indian merchants of Natal.

Indian Opinion, 8-10-1904

72. SPEECH AT A DINNER

The following extract is from a report of a dinner given in honour of Gandhiji and other leaders of the Indian community in Durban.

[*October 10, 1904*]

Mr. Gandhi spoke on self-sacrifice and, citing the example of the Emperor and the people of Japan, remarked that the uplift of a nation depended on the sacrifices made by its individual members.

He clarified many points raised in the questions put to him on the subject of his speech by those present on the occasion.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-10-1904

73. HOONDAMAL'S LICENCE

The last has yet not been heard of this most important case. Since we wrote about it in our last issue[1], it has entered upon the second stage. It will be remembered that the defendant, Hoondamal, when he was charged before the Magistrate for trading without a licence, applied in vain for adjournment, pending judgment on his appeal to the Town Council against the Licensing Officer's refusal to sanction transfer of his licence from the Grey Street premises to West Street. The appeal was heard on Friday, October the 7th and, after the farce of a formal hearing and a great speech by Mr. Binns on behalf of the applicant, was dismissed. For his refusal, the Licensing Officer gave two reason, namely, that the applicant already held five licences, and that it was not desirable to add to the number of Asiatic merchants in West Street. Mr. Burne, the only lawyer-Councillor of the Council, was bold enough to expose the *suppressioveri* that the Licensing Officer, in his zeal to serve his masters, thought fit to practice. He was able to get an admission from the Officer that the five licences were not shop licences but hawkers' licences. Asked as to the reason why he did not mention the fact in his statement of reasons, he said he did not consider it necessary. Mr. Burne thought, as many people have done, that the omission to mention such a material fact savoured very much

[1] *Vide* "The Dealers' Lincenses Act", 8-10-1904.

of an attempt to mislead the Council and the public. The other reason given by the Officer was, we say with all deference, no less discreditable to West Street, which has only eight Indian stores as aganist about 100 European stores. If, therefore, it were a question of bare proportion, the time can hardly be said to have arrived for a total prohibition of Indian licences in that street. But the facts that Mr. Binns conclusively proved before the Council show how cruel has been the injustice done in the case, and how clearly the question has been treated purely on racial lines. For it was proved that the appellant had been in trade in Durban off and on since 1895, that his business, which consisted of the sale of Indian and Japanese silk and fancy goods, in no way competed with the European houses, that his custom was entirely European and that of the better class, that the premises he occupied were, in point of elegance and sanitation, suitable in every way, that he was himself cultured and of high standing in the Indian community, and that over a dozen European firms testified to his being in every way a desirable and fit person to receive permission to trade in the premises in question, and that over forty European householders strongly supported the application, and that he had already carried on his business in West Street[1], which he was obliged to leave because his lease had expired, and because his landlord wanted the premises. The only ground, therefore, for robbing the man of the opportunity of earning a decent livelihood was that of the colour of his skin. We do not wonder that Mr. Binns indignantly protested that what would be treated as a laudable enterprise in a European was deemed a cause of unfitness in his client. And here, be it noted, there was little regard shown for the interests of the Indian landlord. The taunt has been often flung against him that he does not keep pace with the times and builds only shanties. Now, in the present case, he has gone to the expense of several thousand pounds in building stores which would compete with the best of their kind in West Street, even in ornamental design. And lo! the reward for his pluck is a prospect of ruin, and for the applicant who has been endeavouring to live up to the best western standard, a prospect of insolvency. This, moreover, is one of those cases which the late Mr. Escombe thought could never be touched by the Licensing Act. We quote below extracts from his speeches at the time of introducing the measure, as also the late Sir Henry Binns' prophetic remarks thereanent. We shall have to deal with the

[1] Evidently, a mistake for 'Grey Street'

further aspects of this tale of injustice in a future issue, as the appellant, we understand, is raising before the Supreme Court the question of the Council's right to regulate transfers from place to place.

Indian Opinion, 15-10-1904

74. TRIBUTE TO MADANJIT

Gandhiji spoke at a function held in Durban to bid farewell to Mr. Mandanjit, the proprietor of Indian Opinion, *on the eve of his return to India. The following is a brief report.*

[*October 15, 1904*]

Mr. Gandhi gave a brief account of Mr. Madanjit's career since the latter landed in the country in 1894, and praised him for the patience and perseverance with which he had been conducting *Indian Opinion* for the benefit of the Indian community, exerting himself physically, mentally and monetarily, and undergoing hardships arising from the financial difficulties of the press. In addition, Mr. Gandhi apprised those present of many of the facts concerning the printing press.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-10-1904

75. THE JOHANNESBURG TOWN COUNCIL

The Town Council has considered the very important report of the Public Health Committee, and adopted, with painful unanimity, the operative suggestions made by the Committee. Under it, the Indians, as well as the Malays, are to be housed, should a compulsory segregation ordinance be passed, on the Klipspruit Farm, near the Native Location, a distance of 13 miles from Johannesburg. Mr. Quinn, in commending the proposals to the Town Council, justified them on the grounds that the Indians did not conform to the sanitary regulations, that, if the Kaffirs were to be removed to Klipspruit, the Indians should be removed *a fortiori* because they were worse neighbours than the former, that the Indian trade was confined to the Indians and Kaffirs, and that, therefore, it would be no hardship to them to be located at such a great distance.

Now, the first objection is no founded on any data whatsoever. Mr. Quinn stated in support that, even if there were prosecutions against Indians, they returned to their old practice. We venture to contradict the gentleman and publicly state that there has hardly been a sanitary prosecution against an Indian without producing a lasting effect. We would also add that, wherever proper supervision has been

exercised, the Indian has proved most amenable to such regulations. To go no further, we would cite the instance of the Location at Pretoria, as also the condition of the Indians in Heidelburg. In the one case, owing to kind but firm supervision, the sanitary condition of the type of Indians living in Locations is all that can be desired. In the other case, that of the Indian store-keepers living in the heart of the town is equally so. The second objection raised by the speaker is no less flimsy than the first. For, if the Indian is amenable to sanitary control, surely there can be no objection against him as a neighbour. He has no war-dances, nor does he drink Kaffirbeer. The third is merely a travesty of facts. It is unfair to state that the Indian trade is confined to the Kaffirs and the Indians. The pioneer Indian settlers in the Transvaal could not have entered the country with a view to trade among the Indians, for there were none, and it is a notorious fact that the Indians have a large trade among the Dutch people and the poor whites. Underlying the objection is the important admission that the Klipspruit Farm is not suitable for the white trade at all. It should, moreover, be remembered that the proximity of the Kaffir Location does not necessarily mean that the Indians will have any trade among the Kaffirs¾if only for the simple reason that Kaffirs would remain in the Location during night time only and arrive from town after business hours. If, then, it is totally unjust to house the Indians at such a great distance, it would be doubly so to disturb the inhabitants of the Malay Location. There may have been some ground for condemning the old Indian Location from a sanitary standpoint; but not a whisper has been uttered against the dwellers of the Malay Location. The vast majority of them are, as the name implies, Malays, a clean-living, industrious and perfectly loyal people. They have been in possession of the place now a number of years. An attempt to dispossess them during the Boer rule was frustrated owing to the efforts of the British Government: are the poor people now to be summarily ejected and forced to live in a wilderness in the name of the British Government ? The idea is simply repugnant, and we hope that Mr. Lyttelton would not be a party to such wholesale confiscation of the rights of people whose only crime is that they wear a brown skin.

Indian Opinion, 22-10-1904

76. DR. PORTER "TOUCHES THE SPOT"

The energetic Dr. Porter is again busy writing academic reports on the insanitary condition of several places in Johannesburg. As in the case of the late Insanitary Area, so in the present instance, he has

drawn up a most lurid and sensational picture of what is known as the township of Ferreiras in Johannesburg. He informs the Town Council in the strongest terms possible that the area described by him should be overhauled without the slightest delay. He says:

> There are within these areas numerous houses, shanties, rooms, courts and alleys, which, on account of the bad arrangement, crowding on area, want of proper sanitary conveniences, and their wretched and dilapidated condition, are not only dangerous and injurious to the health of inhabitants in the vicinity, but are a very serious menace to the municipality generally.

Now, it is admitted that the area, such as it is, has been allowed to exist for the last two years, at any rate. If it is so insanitary, and we do not deny it is so, why has not the matter been dealt with before this? We very much fear that, for months to come, the report will merely remain on the shelves of the Town Clerk's office, and things will continue to go on much as they are today, though what we want in the face of the present danger is not words, but deeds. The report is undoubtedly interesting, also painful, reading. It is also probabaly calculated to alarm old women, and to put them on their guard as to the condition of their houses and surroundings. If the township is so dangerously insanitary, it is ill-adapted for half-measures. The buildings comprised within it should be burnt down without a moment's delay. We, however, very much fear that the experience about the Insanitary Area will be repeated in the case of the township of Ferreiras. It will be interesting to learn that the population of the whole area is 1,812, of which 288 are Indians, 58 Syrians, 165 Chinese, 295 Cape, 75 black, and 929 (or more than half) white. The population of the insanitary Stands is 255 coolies, 17 Syrians, 126 Chinese, 192 Cape, 31 black, and 241 white.

Thus, in this neighbourhood, it is the whites who are more to blame than the Indians, and the Town Council, most of all. And although it is the whites who have to be dealt with more than any other class of people, we do not for one moment suppose that any such thing will happen. The report will be used for advocating further disabilities on the British Indians. The Public Health Committee has already begun to press it into service in order to compel them to reside in a locality nearly 13 miles from Johannesburg. As a matter of fact, the report is a condemnation of the inaction of the Town Council in not attending to the proper sanitation of the place. When the Insanitary Area Commission was appointed, this township was considered dangerous to public health. But as nothing is done in Johannesburg except on the sky-scraper scale, proper sanitary control was a thing beneath the dignity of the Town Council.

Indian Opinion, 22-10-1904

77. LORD MILNER

It seems pretty certain that Lord Milner is about to leave South Africa for good. What the verdict of history will be on His Excellency's work in this sub-continent, it is difficult to say. That he brought the war to a successful issue ensures His Excellency's title to glory as a destructive statesman. He, of all the men, was the one strong hand at a most critical period, and, in spite of reverses and gloomy despatches from the generals who were conducting the war, he remained absolutely firm and unshakable in his determination to see the thing through. The invincible faith that he had in his own pre-vision regarding the issue has not, we fear, been the guiding star in the much more difficult task of reconstruction. Nor, indeed, could it be said that His Excellency took the correct view of the times that were to follow. Forming expectations which were never to be realised, Lord Milner framed a top-heavy structure on a weak foundation. The result has been enormous expenditure on the administration of the country without an adequate return. In spite of His Lordship's unceasing attention to every detail of administration, and his great industry, the difficult problems, such as the labour question, the Native question and the Asiatic question, could not be said to have been solved in a satisfactory manner. The importation of Chinese labour is yet in the experimental stage, and it would be too early to pronounce a definite opinion one way or the other. The vacillating policy adopted regarding the Native and the Asiatic questions has satisfied neither party, and with respect to the latter, even "national honour" has suffered in His Lordship's hands. Thus, it is doubtful whether Lord Milner will rank as a first-class constructive statesman.

If it be true, as the London papers inform us, that there will very soon be a change of power in England, it would be interesting to know what the outgoing government intend to do for Lord Milner's services to the Empire and the Conservative Party. We know that, some months ago, it was given out that His Lordship was a very likely successor to Lord Curzon at Calcutta. He would then be no doubt perfectly free from interference by the Liberal ministers and, apart from the Imperial view of bestowing such patronages, the Conservative Government have nothing better to offer to His Lordship. The speculation, therefore, is of more than passing interest to the British Indians in South Africa. We wonder whether the author of the despatch to Mr. Lettelton, in the recently published Blue book on the British

Indian question, will retain strong anti-Indian prejudices which have been allowed to colour that document, when he has been translated to the Viceregal throne.

Indian Opinion, 22-10-1904

78. LYDENBURG INDIANS

The authorities at Lydenburg have given notice to the Indians to remove to the Bazaar for sleeping, within seven days, on pain of being prosecuted for disobedience. A similar threat was held out in Potchefstroom some time ago and nothing came out of it. In view of the emphatic dictum of the Chief Justice of the Transvaal[1], one would have thought that the Indians would be left undistrubed. But evidently, it is not to be so. The only remedy for our countrymen under the circumstances is to sit still and watch events.

Indian Opinion, 22-10-1904

79. INDIAN INTERPRETERS

The Natal Farmers' Conference is hard put to [it] for excuses for wiping out the Indian interpreters from the Colony. It would not tolerate even a few Indian interpreters in the Government employ, thought it wants the indentured Indians very badly. The Government has replied to a previous resolution of the Conference that it is unable to obtain the services of Europeans who can speak more than one Indian language, which is insufficient for the requirements. It has thereupon passed the following resolution.

> That this Conference re-affirms its opinion, that provided adequate salaries are given, European interpreters can be obtained who can speak more than one Indian dialect, and that the Government should give the same inducement to the European youth of the Colony to acquire a knowledge of the Indian dialects as is accorded to students of the Zulu language.

The Government has again replied saying efforts are being made to employ Europeans wherever possible, but that the difficulties do not appear to diminish. Thus, the Indian interpreters have to thank not the Government, but the paucity of Europeans having knowledge of Indian languages, for the safety of their positions.

Indian Opinion, 22-10-1904

[1] *Vide* "The Test Case", 21-5-1904.

Mr. Hoondamal's case can no longer be looked upon merely as a personal question, but it is one involving wide interests. By the time this is in print, the appeal to the Supreme Court against the decision of the Magistrate may have been decided. Last week's proceedings, however, deserve more than a passing notice. Mr. Hoondamal, in spite of the Town Council's decision, but under legal advice from a premier firm of solicitors, had continued to trade on the strength of the licence issued to him to trade in the Borough. The Licensing Officer, therefore, again issued a summons, charging him with the crime of trading without a licence¾in respect of the premises in West Street. The defendant applied for an adjournment, pending the hearing of the appeal. The Magistrate granted the adjournment and repudiated the suggestion of the prosecution that the defendant was trading in contempt of Court. And yet he made a most extraordinary order, namely, that the store should be forcibly closed down, unless the defendant received permission to trade.

What, therefore, he granted with the one hand, he attempted to take away with the other. For what could be the value of the adjournment if the store was to be closed? If the Magistrate was so certain of the decision of the Supreme Court, why did he adjourn the proceedings at all? But this point, important as it is, pales into insignificance before the question whether the Magistrate had any right to make the order he did. We understand that Mr. Hoondamal's solicitors have written to the Magistrate, informing him that he has acted beyond his authority, and that he would be held personally liable in the event of the forcible closing of the store. We have always considered Mr. Stuart to be an impartial, sober, and fair judge. But, with great deference, we must state that our confidence in his knowledge of the authority possessed by him is much shaken. We cannot conceive that he has consciously committed what, in our humble opinion, is a grave error of judgment. For the effect of his decision, if carried out, would take us back to the Middle Ages, when the liberty of the subject was dependent on the mere caprice of the judges whose jurisdiction and authority were circumscribed only by their good sense.

Why, however, should there be this unseemly feeling between the great Town Council and a humble burgess of the town? Surely, there is no principle at stake in not interfering with the poor merchant for a few days. He could not by taking a few shillings in sales every

day materially reduce the takings of the other West Street merchants in the same time. They have raised no objection against him. We put it to Mr. Ellis Brown and the other Councillors whether it befits the dignity of the great corporation thus to persecute a poor man.

We do not question the right of the Council to regulate trade. We have always considered it a privilege to render our humble assistance in guiding Indian opinion and smoothing it whenever it has been necessary. We think that the Council would be perfectly right in generally reserving special areas for special trades. But all such reservations, unless they are elastic enough, defeat their own end. We would gladly co-operate with the Council in reconciling the Indian mind to the idea that West Street should be very largely in the hands of European merchants. But there is an important and necessary prov-iso that the Indians already carrying on trade there, as also Indian landlords, should be fully protected, and that those Indians who are prepared to satisfy the sanitary and ornamental requirements in keeping with the best stores in West Street, and whose trade is mainly European, should not be prohibited from trading there. Indeed, they should be encouraged, if it is true that the objection is not against colour, and that, if the Indian conformed to the European standard, he would be welcomed as a desirable citizen. Now, the facts are that there are very[1] Street, and that the case under consideration satisfies all the tests above laid down. May we not appeal to the Town Council to stay its hands and free itself from the suspicion that, in prosecuting Mr. Hoondamal, it is persecuting him and, through him, the Indian storekeepers and landlords, who are anxiously watching the dramatic stages through which this case has been passing.

Indian Opinion, 29-10-1904

81. PIETERSBURG INDIANS

News comes from Pietersburg to the effect that the Indians living and trading in the old Indian Location, lately converted into a Native Location, are being summarily evicted. The history of the struggles of the poor men is very simple, though intensely painful. They were threatened with ruin last year. The matter was brought to the notice of the higher authorities and the Pietersburg Local Board stayed action. The Board's power was limited, and nothing more could be done to the men. Early this year, the Board requested the

[1] Apparently, the printer has missed out some works between "very" and "Street".

Government to de-proclaim the Indian Location and change it into a Native Location. This was done without regard to the rights of the Indians. The Native Locations regulations prevent any but Natives from living or trading in Native Locations. Under this power, the Board has been trying to evict the Indians. Owing to the intervention of the Protector of Asiatics, Mr. Chamney, its action was stayed temporarily. But the Board seems to have triumphed in the end. And by a process of indirect legislation, it is in a position to confiscate¾we know no other term to adequately explain the action¾the property and rights of the inoffensive traders. They have spent many thousands pounds in building good stores. We know that the cost of labour is in South Africa. The people are to receive no compensation! It is true they may remove their buildings. The veriest novice in trade knows the value of wood and iron thus removed. The action of the Board spells ruin for the men. And the Government protest helplessness !

Indian Opinion, 29-10-1904

82. THE LATE MR. DIGBY[1]*, C.I.E.*

By the death of Mr. William Digby, C.I.E., India has lost a champion whom it will be difficult to replace. His advocacy of the Indian cause was strenuous and well-informed. His unrivalled experience of India always stood him in good stead in answering his opponents. He was the founder of the Indian Political Agency, and the first Editor of *India*, which has been doing eminent service, and without disparagement, we may say that the editing of that journal by the deceased gentleman has never been equalled. By his voluminous writings, the late Mr. Digby ever kept the different Indian questions before the public. We offer our sincere condolences to the deceased gentleman's family.

Indian Opinion, 29-10-1904

[1] Mr. William Digby (1849-1904), authority on Indian economic problems, author of *Prosperous British India* and a member of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress.

83. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI[1]

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION
25 & 26 COURT CHAMBERS,
RISSIK STREET,
JOHANNESBURG,
October 31, 1904

TO
THE HONOURABLE DADABHAI NAOROJI
22, KENNINGTON ROAD
LONDON, S.E. ENGLAND

DEAR SIR,

I have your letter of the 19th September enclosing copy of letter received by you from Mr. Lyttelton regarding my letter[2] of the 4th April last on the plague outbreak. His Excellency Lord Milner's reply is, in the light of what I know, very painful reading. I am taking the liberty of addressing a communication[3] to His Excellency in the matter, but in the meanwhile I may state that I have nothing to withdraw from my letter of the 4th April last and I write this under a full sense of my responsibility and deliberation. I enclose a copy of *Indian Opinion*[4] , which gives the whole of the correspondence between Dr. Porter and myself and shews in my humble opinion conclusively how the plague broke out. The expropriation by the Town Council took place in September 1903. The plague was officially declared as having broken out on the 20th March last¾that is, six months after the Council took possession. The first note of warning[5] was given, as will be seen from the correspodence, on the 11th of February. On the 15th February, definite suggestions[6] were made in order to ward off the calamity, and I venture to state as emphatically as I can, though with the greatest respect, that nothing was done after that date to set matters right. Indeed, even after the 18th of March last, plague cases were being dumped down in the Location and the

[1] Dadabhai Naoroji quoted the bulk of this letter in a communication he addressed to the Secretary of State for India on November 22, 1904. (C.O. 291, Volume 75, India Office).

[2] This letter is not available, but it is very likely that Gandhiji sent Dadabhai Naoroji a copy of his article "The Plague", 2-4-1904.

[3] *Vide* the succeeding item.

[4] The issue of 9-4-1904; *Vide* "Letter to Johannesburg Press", April 5, 1904.

[5] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Porter", February 11,1904.

[6] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Porter", February 15,1904.

intimation of same was given by me to the Town Council. The Town Clerk informed me on the 19th March that he was unable to take charge of the patients or incur any financial responsibility until after the 21st, beyond giving the Government Entrepot to be used as a temporary hospital and providing one nurse. This was originally a Customs Depot. Thirty volunteers were put on to it. The place was thoroughly cleaned and voluntary Indian nurses worked night and day, taking charge of all the patients that were being received. Drs. Pakes and Mac Kenzie, when they visited the hospital, now realised the gravity of the situation and they took most effective steps on the 20th. Every bed, all the medical comforts, food, and everything were in the interval supplied entirely by the Indians. It is but fair to state that the Town Council has since paid the expenses incurred. All this, however, is beside the point, and if I have laid stress upon the work done by the Indians, it is in order to shew that I am speaking from bitter experience and not without feeling. If the facts set forth in the correspondence herewith sent are correct, ¾ and they have not been challenged, although the conclusions I have drawn have been repudiated¾ I would not be serving the truth if I said anything less than I have done in my letter of the 4th April last, namely, that, "but for the criminal neglect of the Johannesburg Municipality, the outbreak would never have occurred." It and it alone must ever be held responsible for the awful death-roll of March. All honour to it that, after the situation was realised, it spent money like water in dealing with the calamity, but that work could never undo the past. It is true that, as early as the year 1901, long official reports were drawn up condemning the Location as insantitary. and yet, in that state it was allowed to remain up to the 26th of September 1903, and that without any outbreak of plague. Strange as it may appear, it was only after the Town Council came into full possession, got what it wanted and, with it, an opportunity of keeping the Location in a thoroughly sanitary condition, that the plague broke out. I am afraid that His Excellency has been totally misinformed with reference to the genesis of the plague. The thing is now finished. The Indians have suffered undeservedly but the statements made by me could easily be verified. Dr. Pakes' repudiation has, I suppose, reference to the following occurring in the leader in *Indian Opinion*: "Evidently when Dr. Pakes said that the measures which were being taken in the outlying districts were taken more in order to eradicate the Indian than to prevent the plague, he spoke truly"[1]. Whether Dr. Pakes actually said so or not, he was certainly reported in

[1] *Vide* "Plague in the Transvaal", 9-4-1904.

the newspapers to have made such a statement and the remark in question is based on the newspaper report.

I beg to draw your attention also to the fact that the contention that the Town Council was responsible for the awful visitation is practically borne out by Dr. Turner, the Health Officer for the Colony and member of the Legislative Council.

You may make what use you think fit of this communication.

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original: G.N. 2263

84. LETTER TO HIGH COMMISSIONER'S SECRETARY

[JOHANNESBURG,]
October 31, 1904

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE HIGH COMMISSIONER
JOHANNESBURG

SIR,

I shall be obliged if you will kindly place this communication before His Excellency.

The Honourable Mr. Dadabhai has sent me a copy of a letter received by him from Mr. Lyttelton in reply to his letter enclosing a communication addressed to him by me on the 4th April last on the outbreak of plague in Johannesburg. Mr. Lyttelton has quoted a portion of His Excellency's dispatch on the subject and, as it deals with the statements made by me, I venture to trespass on His Excellency's time by offering an explanation in defence thereof.

His Excellency has said :

> I consider the statement that the recent outbreak of plague would not have occurred but for the neglect of the Johannesburg Municipality to be absolutely unjustifiable. So far from having been negligent in the matter, the Johannesburg Council has displayed considerable foresight in anticipating and making preparations for the outbreak of plague more than a year before the disease actually appeared.

It has never been denied that the Council made preparations in anticipation of the outbreak in that a hospital was established at Rietfontein, etc., but, with the greatest deference, it is submitted that

the one preventive measure that was necessary was totally omitted, namely, to look after the sanitary condition of the so-called Insanitary Area.

His Excellency has also stated in his dispatch that

> it was in a great measure due to opposition on the part of the owners and inhabitants of the Location that its expropriation and clearance was delayed until the outbreak of plague had occurred.

May I humbly draw His Excellency's attention to the fact that expro-priation was effected more than five months before official declara-tion of the plague¾that is, on the 26th September last year¾and that clearance was, therefore, absolutely within the power of the Town Council. Since that date not only was there no opposition on the part of the Indians concerned either against expropriation or clearance, but I myself on their behalf frequently appealed for a new site both to the Town Council as well as the Colonial Secretary. His Excellency has evidently been informed that the expropriation was effected after the outbreak of the plague. For His Excellency in his dispatch again says:

> Up to the date of expropriation the Indians were their own landlords, and the statement that the conditions of overcrowding existing in the Location were due to the general negligence of the Johannesburg Town Council can only be described as a gross perversion of the truth.

Had expropriation taken place after the outbreak of the plague,

I should plead guilty to the charge of having been the means of perverting the truth. As a matter of fact, however, as already stated, the Council expropriated the Location as well in law as in fact on the 1st of October last year, and, contrary to the suggestions made by the inhabitants of the Insanitary Area, and in spite of the fact that the Council was not in a position to look after the proper sanitation of the Location for want of men, it became immediate landlord to each tenant, established rent collecting offices, and took over the fullest control. The condition under the new regime became so unbearable that the inhabitants, against whom the charge of uncleanliness was repeatedly brought in official reports, to which His Excellency has made reference, came to me with complaints and I, therefore, wrote to Dr. Porter on their behalf on the 11th February this year¾that is, more than a month before the actual declaration of the plague:

> I venture to write to you regarding the shocking state of the Indian Location. The rooms appear to be overcrowded beyond description; the sanitary service is very irregular and many of the residents of the Location have been to my office to complain that the sanitary condition is far worse than before. There is, too, a very large Kaffir population in the Location for which really there is no warrant. From what I hear, I believe the mortality in

the Location has increased considerably and it seems to me that if the present state of things is continued, an outbreak of some epidemic disease is merely a question of time.

On the 15th of February, in a second letter to Dr. Porter, I elaborated the points mentioned in the first letter and even ventured to offer suggestions, but up to the 18th of March nothing was done, although on the 1st of March a note was addressed by me to Dr. Porter saying that in my opinion the plague had actually broken out.

I beg to enclose for His Excellency's perusal copies of all the correspondence in this connection which was published in the papers. The main facts to this day remain unchallenged, and knowing personally as I do every phase that the inhabitants of the Location have passed through since the beginning of last year, with deference, I feel bound to say that I have stated the barest truth in saying that, but for the criminal reglect of the Johannesburg Municipality, the outbreak would never have occurred. The immediate work lying before it was totally neglected by it in favour of large schemes for shifting the whole of the population within the Insanitary Area.

In conclusion, I may state that, in writing to Mr. Naoroji, I had no other desire than that of serving the truth and of guarding against unwarranted charges against my countrymen.

I trust the importance of the subject-matter of this communication will be considered sufficient excuse for my encroaching upon His Excellency's valuable time.

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant

From the office copy : C.W. 2264-2,3,4,5.

85. TELEGRAM TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

[JOHANNESBURG,]
November 3, 1904

TO

COLONIAL SECRETARY

[PRETORIA]

MR. ROBINSON INFORMS LORD ROBERTS WILL BE PLEASED RECEIVE AN ADDRESS FROM INDIAN COMMITTEE DURING HIS STAY PRETORIA.

WILL YOU KINDLY ASCERTAIN DATE FROM HIS LORDSHIP.

GANDHI

Pretoria Archives : 92/2. L.G. 93: Asiatics 1902-1906, File No.2

86. FARMERS IN CONFERENCE

The Conference has dealt with a great variety of matters, two of which dealt with Indians. The Conference passed some time ago a resolution to the effect that all the Indians should hold passes, for what reason it is not stated, except perhaps to insult the non-indentured Indian population. The Government have returned a reply saying that they are not prepared to pass legislation of the character wanted by the Conference. The Rev. Jas. Scott, therefore, moved that the resolution should be sent back to the Government. The President pointed out that, if too many restrictions were imposed on the Indians, the Indian Government might have something to say. Mr. Scott, however, said that in that case Natal could tap other sources of labour supply. We wish it were so. It will then be possible to arrive at a reasonable understanding as to the resident Indian population. Moreover, the Colony will learn by experience the economic value of Indian labour. Ruskin has somewhere said that man, as an economic factor, is not be studied simply as a machine, but has to be taken with all his mental attributes. Considered as such, we believe that the Indian is the most efficient labourer in the world. He may be puny, he may be slow, he may be weak, but he is most sober, uncomplaining, patient, and long-suffering. He, therefore, gives no trouble to his masters, and is a reliable worker. If some other labour were introduced, if only temporarily, all the attributes we have mentioned as specially belonging to the Indian will be appreciated, and he will be prized on that account. But as long as the Colony must have Indian labour, it must be satisfied with the restrictions it has already secured, without adding to them the humiliating one of compelling every Indian to carry passes. Mr. McCrystal incidentally said that most of the Asiatic were not British subjects, but Arabians. Some Indians do indeed call themselves Arabian merchants, but there is no excuse for the gentleman betraying the ignorance he has. The term "Arabian" has come to be used in this Colony synonymously with Mahomedan, for the reason that the Moslem faith has its rise in Arabia.

The other matter dealt with by the Conference was the shortage of labour supply. On the one hand, then, the Conference wanted further restrictions on the Indians; on the other, it complained of the paucity of labourers. Even India has its limitations and we must not

suppose that it is an inexhaustible field for recruiting labour. There is a vast system of inland immigration in India itself where there is a continuous stream flowing towards Burma and Singapore. Add to this the other Colonies, including Ceylon, Mauritius, and Fiji. Natal is only one of the many competitors moving[1] the Indian labourer. It must not, therefore, be surprised if it finds itself handicapped owing to excessive restrictions imposed on the labourers. We have no doubt that the new Immigration Act, which imposes an annual tax of £3 on the indentured men and their children after they have regained their freedom, has a considerable effect on the supply. The Colony wants Indian labour, and yet wishes to avoid many of its natural consequences. It is, to our mind, this anomalous position which comes in the way more than the requirements as to the percentage of women to accompany the immigrants, as some speakers at the meeting supposed.

Indian Opinion, 5-11-1904

87. A RIFT IN THE LUTE

The so-called Asiatic National Convention in the Transvaal will have to be held, if it is held at all, without Johannesburg being represented. It will be a case of *Hamlet* being played without Hamlet. Both the Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Trade in the "golden city" have declined to associate themselves with a convention whose object, in the words of Mr. Mitchell, is to confiscate the property of inoffensive people. The resolutions submitted by the conveners of the convention, the Chambers contend, are too drastic to be acceptable to a British community in that they contemplate forcible removal of British Indian traders to Bazaars without compensation, and take no notice of vested interests. The pill offered by Messrs. Bourke and Loveday is too strong even for the Potchefstroom Vigilance Association, which, as our readers are aware, was violently hostile to the Indians when the Blue book on the Indian question was given to the public. We venture to offer our congratulations to the two Chambers and the Potchefstroom Association for daring to be just. It is a relief to recognise, amid the heap of blind, unreasoning prejudice, sober views and sentiments expressed by representative bodies. A little more patience, a little more time, and perfect equanimity on the part of the British Indians will, we doubt not, do the rest. Unwearied reiteration is, as the late Professor Max Muller used to say, the only remedy for

[1] Perhaps a misprint for "wooing".

driving a new truth home, and for enabling people to remove preconceived notion. Our duty is, therefore, plain. We should continue, in season and out of season, to show that the case for the Indians is invulnerable, and that the Indian has never asked for anything that could not reasonably be granted, consistently with the interests of the white traders and white predominance.

Indian Opinion, 5-11-1904

88. COLOURED PASSENGERS ON THE TRANSVAAL RAILWAYS

The Johannesburg newspapers publish the interesting correspondence between His Excellency the High Commissioner and the Rand Pioneers on the subject of the Natives of the Transvaal travelling first and second class on the Central South African Railways. Lord Milner has assured the Rand Pioneers that henceforth no Natives, except those holding certificates of exemption, will be allowed to travel first or second class on the railways, and that the inspectors and station-masters have been instructed to separate Coloured passengers from the white passengers. The Rand Pioneers have restricted their demands only to the Natives, but the instructions issued by Mr. Price, the General Manager, cover all the Coloured people, including British Indians, although it is some satisfaction to learn that respectable British Indians are to be allowed first or second-class tickets without difficulty. Special coaches for Coloured passengers are to be joined to the Pretoria-Pietersburg line as an experiment. This is one of the instances how a mountain can be made out of a mole-hill, and if separate carriages are to be provided for different races, logically, there should be compartments for Natives, Chinese, British Indians, Cape Coloured people, Boers, Englishmen, Germans, and so on. It would, indeed, then be a question as to how to make the line pay, but that would be a very small affair compared to the respect that has to be paid to sentiment in the Transvaal, whether such sentiment be reasonable or otherwise. Joking apart, however, if the distinction is to be drawn, we imagine that it will be necessary to have three distinct compartments, namely, for Europeans, Natives and Asiatics. The circular issued by the General Manager is a veritable hornet's nest, and we are quite sure that we have not heard the last of it. The Rand Pioneers have already notified their dissatisfaction, and they do not believe in the Natives of the Transvaal being allowed to travel first or

second class at all, refusing, as they do, to recognise any distinction between those who hold exemption certificates and those who do not.

Indian Opinion, 5-11-1904

89. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

21-24 COURT CHAMBERS,
CORNER, RISSIK & ANDERSON STREETS,
P.O. BOX 6522
JOHANNESBURG,
November 5, 1904

TO
THE HONOURABLE DADABHAI NAOROJI
22 KENNINGTON ROAD
LONDON

DEAR SIR,

I have your letter of the 13th October. As a rule I do send the weekly letter to you. Sir William, Sir Mancherjee, and the East Indian Association. I enclose herewith copy of the letter addressed by me to Lord Milner[1] on the plague correspondence.

I remain,
Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original : G.N. 2264-1

90. ADDRESS TO LORD ROBERTS[2]

[*November 9, 1904*]

The pleasant ceremony of presenting an address to Lord Roberts by the British Indians was performed on Friday, 11th November, at 2.45 p.m., and the signatories to the address were graciously received by the veteran soldier, and the whole of the function passed off satisfactorily. The following is the text of the address :

TO

FIELD MARSHAL THE RIGHT HONOURABLE EARL ROBERTS, OF KANDAHAR, WATERFORD, AND PRETORIA, K.G., K.P., G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., O.M.V.G., PRETORIA

[1] *Vide* "Letter to High Commissioner", October 31, 1904.
[2] This was published as "From our Special Correspondent".

MY LORD,

We, the undersigned, representing the British Indians residing in the Transvaal, beg to tender to Your Lordship, Countess Roberts, and Ladies Aileen and Edwina Roberts, a respectful welcome to this the country of your recent labours for the Empire.

It is a matter of no small pride to us that it is India which has given the Empire the greatest solider of the present times, in whom are combined the sternness of the soldier and the gentleness of the godly man.

We pray to the Almightly that He may bestow on you and Countess Roberts and family all His blessings, and that the Empire may long continue to receive the benefit of your experienced counsels.

Dated at Pretoria, the 9th day of November, 1904.

We beg to remain,

Your Lordship's humble and obedient servants,

ABDUL GANI,

HAJI MAHOMED HAJI JUSAB,

HAJI HABIB HAJI DADA,

M. S. GOOVADIA,

ISMAIL AMOD MOOLA,

AMRITHALINGA CHETTY,

AMOD HAJI TAYOB,

AHMED LATIB,

HAJI OSMAN HAJI ABBA,

M. K. GANDHI

It was illuminated on vellum, and Miss Ada M. Bissicks, in whose hands the work was placed, thought out quite an original design for it. The whole of the left side of the address is taken up with a faithful representation of that most exquisite bird, the peacock of India. The lettering is also very chaste, and the whole illumination is a work of art. The address was enclosed in a solid silver casket, with lotus flowers engraved on it. Both the address and the casket were worthy of the distinguished recipient and the Indian community.

Indian Opinion, 19-11-1904

91. THE ASIATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION

By the time this is in print, the so-called National Convention in the Transvaal will have been held. The representative Associations in Johannesburg have now decided to send their delegates, and Messrs. Bourke and Loveday have accepted the amendments suggested by the former. The resolutions, therefore, embody the principle of compensation, but in our opinion, all the amendments put together mean very little indeed. Previous experience warns us against expecting anything from the adoption of such a principle. The Asiatic Commission that was appointed and which, happily, owing to the Test case of *Habib Motan* v. *The Government*, proved abortive, as may be recollected, rejected the claims of all those who were engaged in trade immediately before the outbreak of hostilities. The Potchefstroom people have made it pretty clear that, according to their notion, compensation should be restricted only to those who at the outbreak of war held licenses to trade outside Locations. To us, therefore, the idea of compensation means little or nothing. What is, then, to be the upshot of all this anti-Indian agitation? If the dictation of the National Convention is to carry the day, we know the result. Every self-respecting British Indian must then be prepared to face the inevitable and leave the country. That is to say, he must be an outcast in his own home. He has been taught from his childhood by, very often, his English schoolmasters, out of books printed and published under British supervision, that the long arm of the British Government protects the weak against the strong. As the late Poet Laureate[1] of Gujarat sang,"Lo! the enmities have died out, the doers of black deeds are for ever crushed and (under the British Government) no one twists even the ear of a lamb". He has been taught also that, in places which are included within the Dominions of the King-Emperor, every one of his subjects enjoys the fullest liberty and all civil rights, so much so, that even the shackles of foreigners fall off on British soil. If, as we say, the National Convention carries the day, the Indian must unlearn all this, the slate must be wiped clean, he must forget all that he has hitherto regar-ded as beautiful in the English constitution, and he must be content to see the means of his livelihood taken away from his mouth. But we must decline to believe that any such thing can possibly happen so long as the Transvaal continues to prize the Union Jack. We cannot conceive that Mr. Lyttelton is likely to go back upon the policy laid down in

[1] Dalpatram.

his dispatch, and sanction what would, if not in letter, certainly in spirit, be an act of confiscation of the rights of British subjects.

Indian Opinion, 12-11-1904

92. THE NATAL VOLUNTEER INDIAN AMBULANCE CORPS[1]

Our London contemporary, *India*, has fallen into the error of accepting official figures in connection with this Corps, although it has in its own files the correct figures. The whole of the medal-giving regarding this Corps has been unfortunately bungled up. We may, therefore, state the facts once more for general information. The Corps was formed at first for service at the battle of Colenso. It then consisted of over 25 leaders, not *sirdars*, and over 600 bearers. The leaders did not receive any pay whatsoever¾even their uniforms were paid for by the Indian merchants. After a short service, the Corps was disbanded. When the first move to Spion Kop was attempted, Colonel Gallwey ordered that the Corps should be re-formed. There were about 30 leaders and at least 1,100 to 1,200 bearers. The Corps was on active service this time for 6 weeks and performed surprising marches, doing as much as 25 miles per day, carrying the wounded. Its work has been specially mentioned by General Buller in his dispatches. Why only eight clasps have been distributed no one knows. Everyone of the leaders is entitled to them, and if the War Office intends to distribute medals among the men, as it certainly ought to, we would undertake to find almost all of them. A complete record was then kept of the names of the bearers, together with their addresses, and it should be in possession of the Superintendent of the Corps. We have not said much about the manner in which the medals have been distributed, because we are anxious that the leaders who worked should not connect themselves with any reward. They undertook the work as a labour of duty, pure and simple, and they should be ever ready to take such duty up again, irrespective of recognition of merit.

Indian Opinion, 12-11-1904

93. THE EDWIN ARNOLD MEMORIAL

We have received a copy of the circular issued by the Edwin Arnold Memorial Committee. The Committee

> think that the most fitting tribute to Sir Edwin's work would be one linking

[1] *Vide* "Indian Ambulance Corps", 13-12-1899

his name with his great services to Eastern literature. It was his privilege by the gift of poetry. . . as well as by his graphic and illuminating prose writings on oriental manners, customs and events, to bring to the peoples of the West in Europe and America, a fuller knowledge of the peoples of the East, thus creating a reciprocal interest and sympathy which cannot fail to contribute to the welfare and happiness of both. . . . They therefore propose to endow a scholarship or scholarships, or found prizes at the University of Oxford for proficiency in oriental literature.

The Committee include the name of the Right Honourable Lord Brassey, as Chairman, His Highness the Aga Khan, Sir M.M. Bhown-aggree, Sir George Birdwood, the Right Honourable Joseph Chamber-lain, the Viscount Hayashi, Mr. Rudyard Kipling and others. Subscri-ptions may be sent to Messrs. Henry S. King & Co., at 65, Cornhill, London. If any of our readers would send their subscriptions to us, we would be pleased to acknowledge them in *Indian Opinion* and for-ward them to the Treasurers from time to time. The services of Sir Edwin to the East and West have not yet been sufficiently appreciated. Time alone would show the measure of those services. *The Light of Asia* alone has left on the Western mind an indelible impression for good. It has been said that he missed the Poet Laureateship because of the Oriental turn of his mind. We hope, therefore, that our readers, both European and Indian, will largely contribute to the Memorial Fund.

Indian Opinion, 12-11-1904

94. LONG LIVE THE KING-EMPEROR!

We tender our respectful and loyal congratulations to His Majesty the King-Emperor on his birthday. His Majesty completed his 63rd year on Wednesday last, and there went up from one end of the Empire to the other the prayer that he might have many happy returns of the day. Of all the European monarchs, there is none that fulfils the ideal as King Edward does. Recognising the limits of a constitutional monarchy, he yet has proved that he can render to the Empire immense service by his tact and gentleness. His work in France, his visit to the Pope, his meeting with the Kaiser¾all these have promoted the cause of peace. It is an open secret that His Majesty was largely instru-mental in securing a termination of the Boer War. His liberality and his sympathy for his subjects are well known. His visit to India

when he was Prince of Wales won for him the personal veneration of the Indian nation, for whose welfare he has always evinced very great regard. May His Majesty be long spared to the Empire is our humble prayer to the Almighty.

Indian Opinion, 12-11-1904

95. BRITISH INDIANS IN THE ORANGE RIVER COLONY

The reactionary and anti-Indian policy is being consistently followed by the Government as well as the people in the Orange River Colony. We publish elsewhere some extracts which show in what manner the Indian is being hunted down. It would appear that, not being satisfied with insisting on the declaration of the Indian desiring to settle in the Colony that he will always during his stay remain in service under someone or other, the Government now insists on his making a fresh declaration each time that he changes masters or the nature of his work, and then, it would depend entirely on the will of the authorities as to whether he should stay in the Colony or not. A situation such as this requires prompt ending or mending. We have often drawn attention to the drastic legislation in the Colony against Asiatics, but we have seen hitherto no relief being granted. Are we to understand that this humiliating treatment of British Indians in the Orange River Colony is to be perpetuated, and that the India Office is to sit still ?

Indian Opinion, 12-11-1904

96. LORD ROBERTS AND THE BRITISH INDIANS

We congratulate our countrymen in the Transvaal on having presented Lord Roberts with an address with a silver casket. We give the text of the address and the description of the casket in another column[1]. It was a very graceful act on their part. As the signatories to the address have said, it is a matter of no small pride for the Indians that the greatest soldier of the times has been given to the Empire by India. Lord Roberts has a very great deal of humaneness in him, in

[1] This was actually published in the issue of 19-11-1904 with the remark: "We regret that the following report was omitted from our last issue". *Vide* "Address to Lord Roberts",19-11-1904

spite of his stern soldiership. His treatment of the prisoners during the Boer War was marked by very great consideration. He has always taken a sympathetic interest in the Indian soldiers and all that pertains to India, and it was but fitting that the Indians in the Transvaal should do honour to His Lordship during his visit to the country.

Indian Opinion, 12-11-1904

97. CABLE TO DADABHAI NAOROJI[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
November 18, 1904]

TO
INCAS
LONDON

CROWDED MEETING BRITISH INDIANS ALL TRANSVAAL. RESOLUTIONS PROTESTING PROCEEDINGS ASIATIC CONVENTION BECAUSE NO DISTINCTION OBSERVED BRITISH SUBJECTS AND OTHER NATIVES AND THEMSELVES [AND] CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS IF CARRIED MEANT CONFISCATION RUIN ASKED PUBLIC INQUIRY ALLEGATIONS CONVENTION, ACCEPTED PRINCIPLE RESTRICTION IMMIGRATION GENERAL NOT RACIAL LINES, SUGGESTED REGULATION

[1] Dadabhai Naoroji, whose telegraphic address was "Incas", forwarded a copy of the cable to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. (C.O.291, Volume 79, Individuals¾N). *India* published the following edited version of the cable in its issue of 25-11-1904:

JOHANNESBURG,
November 18, 1904

A crowded meeting of British Indians from all parts of the Transvaal has been held in Johannesburg, and has adopted resolutions protesting against the proceedings of the "Convention" held at Pretoria, on November 11, with reference to the immigration of Asiatics into the Transvaal.

The ground of the protest is that the "Convention" in question observed no distinction between the natives of South Africa and Indians, who are subjects of the British Crown.

The meeting declared that the resolutions of the "Convention", if carried out, would mean confiscation and ruin to Indian traders.

The meeting further asked for a public enquiry into the allegations of the "Convention" accpeting the principle of restriction of immigration in general, not on racial, lines. It was suggested that a Regulation might be framed providing for the granting of new trade licences by Local Boards, subject, however, to an appeal to the Supreme Court.

Colonial Office Records: C.O. 291, Volume 79, Individuals¾N

98. THE CHIEF JUSTICE AND BRITISH INDIANS

Sir Henry Bale the other day remarked that the Indians entering the Court-house were seemingly disrespectful, in that they did not shew any outward mark of respect to the Court. The turbans or the caps they would not take off, because of their custom to the contrary, and the boots could not be taken off, because it would be inconvenient to do so. His Lordship ruled that, unless every Indian on entering the Court salaamed, the omission would be treated as contempt of Court. We respectfully draw His Lordship's attention to the fact that the very wearing of the turban or the Indian cap implies a mark of respect, for just as on entering a place the European custom requires the taking *off* of the hat, Indian custom requires that the turban and the cap, as the case may be, should be kept on. Want of respect is not an Indian characteristic, and we venture to assure His Lordship that in the omission to salaam there can be no disrespect meant. The salaaming presupposes the meeting of the eyes of the person salaamed and the person salaaming, which is hardly possible in a Court-house where the judge is absorbed in the case before him. The only feasible course, in our opinion, is that, on enterning the witness-box, the Indian should certainly be made to salaam, but we think that such a caution is hardly necessary, as every Indian on entering the witness-box almost instinctively offers the respect due to the Court. However, it is as well for the Indian litigant who may have occasion to visit the Courts to bear in mind the requirements laid down by His Lordship. We must not, under any circumstances, allow ourselves to be even suspected of any disrespect to the judges or other authorities.

Indian Opinion, 19-11-1904

99. ORANGE RIVER COLONY AND THE BRITISH INDIANS

The Farmers' Congress, which was held on the 8th instant at Bloemfontein, drew from His Excellency the Governor of the Orange River Colony the following remarks about the anti-Indian legislation of that Colony:

> With regard to the introduction of Asiatics into the Colony, this is a very delicate question for me to touch upon as there is considerable feeling amongst our people at Home in regard to British Indians, but at present I may say there will be no alteration in the legislation from that adopted by the late Government, nor do we contemplate at present any alteration.

Here, then, we have a definite pronouncement from the head of the State as to the disabilities of the British Indians in the Colony. It would, therefore, appear that there is to be no relief from the galling restraints that are put upon the Indians as soon as they enter the Orange River Colony.

Indian Opinion, 19.11.1904

100. THE LATE LORD NORTHBROOKE[1]

We were profoundly grieved to read the news of the death, on Wednesday afternoon, of H.E. Lord Northbrooke. We have been familiar with his name for years now. Lord Northbrooke succeeded Lord Mayo as Viceroy and Governor-General of India after the latter's assassination. Two memorable and historic events took place during his viceroyalty: the Prince of Wales' tour of India[2] and the deposition of H.H. Maharaja Malharrao Gaekwad of Baroda.[3] We mourn him especially because Lord Northbrooke had great sympathy for us. He proffered excellent advice and even extended help, whenever necessary, to the representatives of South African Indians when they were in London during 1897-8. Apart from this, he assured them that, should the need ever arise to ask question about us in the House of Lords he would help to the utmost. Sympathetic letters from His Lordship used to be received even at Durban. The local Congress

[1] Viceroy of India, 1872-76.
[2] In 1875.
[3] On a charge of attempted murder of the British Resident, though the Court of Inquiry could not reach unanimity concerning his gult.

will, we are sure, discharge its duty by passing a fitting resolution. The Transvaal Indians in Johannesburg have done the right thing by passing an appropriate one, with which we are in full agreement.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-11-1904

101. HOONDAMAL'S LICENCE

As we expected, Mr. Hoondamal has won his appeal, and we congratulate both him and his counsel, Mr. Binns, on the victory. It is, however, quite clear from the learned Chief Justice's judgment that the struggle is by no means over. The appeal has been decided practically on a side issue. The judge held that Mr. Hoondamal was wrongly summoned for trading without a license because he held one, but declined to decide upon the issue raised in the appeal as to whether the Licensing Officer had the right to restrict trade to any particular locality. Therefore, the Indian community has to approach the new year with a great deal of anxiety and fear. Such a state of things ought not to be allowed to last in a British Colony, and we trust that before long the law will be amended. The late Mr. Escombe said that he gave wide powers to the Town Council because he had faith in their moderation. The Corporation of Durban has, we are sorry to say, on more than one occasion, belied those expectations, and if the pre-mier Corporation in this Colony has not been able to justify them, what is to be expected from lesser bodies? Everyone recongnises that the Dealers' Licences Act is a terrible engine of oppression May we not, then, appeal to our legislators to take the temptation away from the local authorities? It would be perfectly possible even then to regulate and control the issuing of licences, and probably in a far more satisfactory manner. Another thought that arises from the appeal is that, in spite of his victory, Mr. Hoondamal comes off second best. He has been put to enormous expense simply because of the vagaries of the prosecution and, may we say with deference, the hasty judgment of the Magistrate. It is admitted that the prosecution was wrongly brought, and yet Mr. Hoondamal has to pay for this mistake. The struggle is unequal and the pecuniary aspect of it should never be lost sight of. The least that the Town Council may be expected to do is to

reimburse the poor men the expenses that they might be put to owing to the Council's mistakes.

Indian Opinion, 26-11-1904

102. THE ANTI-ASIATIC CONVENTION AND THE BRITISH INDIAN MEETING

The Anti-Asiatic Convention, held at Pretoria on the 10th instant, has produced some remarkable results probably never anticipated by its authors. With the exception of a few newspapers, even the South African Press has condemned its proceedings as arbitrary and unjust. The London *Times*, which gave the lead, said that they betrayed lack of statesmanship on the part of the delegates, and added that agitation of that nature, however violent, could not be allowed to override Imperial obligations, and that the proposals laid down by Mr. Lyttelton in his dispatch on the question could not be departed from to the detriment of the British Indians. We have read all the reports about the Convention, and what has grieved us most is the fact that, if they are a fair summary of the proceedings, they show, shall we say, an utter lack of knowledge on the part of the speakers. Wildest statements were made regarding British Indians, as also the intentions of the Imperial Government. We hear that the speeches made were most inflammatory, and that the reporters have considerably toned them down. We are told that some of the speakers even hurled defiance at the Imperial Government. Now, just as, as between the Europeans and the Indians, it is admitted that the former should remain the predominant partner, is it not a fact that, as between the Imperial Government and the Colonies, the former has the dominant voice? If the members of the Convention claim that they must have all they want, as was said by one of the Boer delegates, it opens out a most serious question as to the value of the tie wherein one party must have all, and the other must give all. The Empire has been built up as it is on a foundation of justice and equity. It has earned a would-wide reputation for its anxiety and ability to protect the weak against the strong. It is the acts of peace and mercy, rather than those of war, that have made it what it is, and we make bold to say that the members of the Convention are much mistaken, if they think that, for their selfish ends, the established policy of the Imperial Government is going to be suddenly changed,

and that an act of spoliation, as Mr. Quinn termed it, would be committed by the Imperial Government at their bidding. Though, therefore, the violent proceedings of the Convention. need cause no fear among the British Indians, it was well that the British Indian Association promptly convened a public meeting[1] of Indians throughout the Colony, in order to consider the proceedings of the Convention. The full report we published last week shows that the meeting was very largely attended, that representatives went to it from all parts of the Colony, and that the proceedings were quite moderate, though, at the same time, sufficiently emphatic. Mr. Abdool Gani made it clear in his speech that the gathering at Pretoria assumed a state of things that never existed and then proceeded to apply a remedy. It was well, too, that he laid stress upon the fact that the distinction between British subjects and non-British subjects was entirely disregarded by the Convention, as also the distinction between the natives of South Africa and the British Indians. More harm has been done to the Indians by overlooking these two fundamental facts than [by] anythings else. It may suit those gentlemen, whose interest lies in driving the Indian out of the Transvaal, to confuse the real issue by including the Indian among all the Asiatics, and then bracketing the latter with the natives of South Africa. They have some justification for doing so, as even Sir Arthur Lawley in his despatch has succumbed to this view, but we trust that now that the real intentions of the majority of those who attended the Convention are made clearly known, we would have the distinction Mr. Abdool Gani has insisted upon drawn by the authorities at Home. We commend to their attention also the proposals of the British Indian Association reiterated at the meeting. They offer at once a complete and, if we may say so, a statesmanlike solution of the intricate question.

Indian Opinion, 26-11-1904

103. A PLAGUE SPOT

We reproduce Dr. Porter's graphic report on Ferreiras Township, and it would appear that this place is infinitely worse from a sanitary standpoint than the old Indian Location at Johannesburg. It is at

[1] Held on November 17, to protest against the proceedings of the Anti-Asiatic Convention. (*Indian Opinion*, 19-11-1904.)

once the strength and the weakness of the British Constitution that nothing can be done under it, not even if it be clearly in the public interest, except under legal authority. The Johannesburg Plague Committee find that, whether plague breaks out in this place or not, they are not authorised by law to apply, what Mr. Quinn has termed, the fire cure, and that therefore, Johannesburg must run the risk of another outbreak during the rainy weather. We hope that a remedy for this difficult position will be found, and that the area within Ferreiras Township will be quickly dealt with, as it should be. The figures given by Dr. Porter provide food for interesting study. The population of the whole area is 288 Indians, 58 Syrians, 165 Chinese, 297 Cape, 75 Kaffirs and 929 whites. Of these, the Insanitary Area proper contains the following distribution according to Dr. Porter: Indians 255, Syrians 17, Chinese 126, Cape 192, Kaffirs 31 and whites 241. Thus we see that the lowest class in all the communities is more or less the same. We think, however, that the real culprits are the landlords. So long as they get a fat rent, they do not mind in the slightest degree what happens to the poor tenants or how they live, and the landlords, have been able to perform a blood-sucking operation, because of the laches of the Johannesburg Town council, which might have dealt with the place long ago. It is worthy of note that the landlords in this connection are not Indians at all but Europeans. Not that by making this statement we wish to imply any particular merit in the Indian landlords of the same class as the European landlords who infest Ferreiras Township. It is merely a proof of human nature being more or less alike, whether it is covered by a white skin or a brown skin.

Indian Opinion, 26-11-1904

104. BRITISH INDIANS IN BOKSBURG

The following Notice has been received by the British Indians residing in the Indian Location at Boksburg:

NOTICE

> Asiatics residing in the Asiatic Location, Boksburg, are reminded that their Tenancy is Temporary only, and subject to a Month's Notice as ordered in Government No.1379 of 1903. Persons erecting Permanent Buildings, therefore, do so at their own risk, and should the position of the Location be changed at any time, they will be entitled to no consideration for any loss incurred.

It was hardly necessary to remind the residents that their tenancy is temporary, but the notice bears some meaning which is ominous. Why the poor people should be driven from pillar to post, it is difficult to understand. The condition of the Location is unexceptionable, it is not overcrowded, and is isolated from the town. The people have been allowed to live there prior to the war, and what the Republican Government never did, or could do, is now being threatened or done under the British Government. Although all such tendancies were, during the late Mr. Kruger's regime, temporary, nobody ever thought of disturbing the tenant's occupation. The Notice does not say that the people will have to remove at a definite time, but warns them against building permanent structures. Many Indians, wishing to live better, have begun to erect suitable buildings, and the Notice is the result. Thus, conditions unfavourable to the better mode of life are artificially created, and then the people who have to labour under such disabilities are blamed for any results that flow therefrom. The Boksburg Vigilants will still be able to point the finger of scorn and say the Indians do not spend on building, and do not live in decent style, forgetting that they are in that position by force of circumstances. When will such an ominous situation end? Even if the Government intend to remove the people, why should it be impossible to give them a clear, long, definite notice? What do they propose to do with reference to those who, before the Notice, had already built expensive premises? We appeal to the Government for justice and fair play.

Indian Opinion, 26-11-1904

105. "ANGLO-INDIAN" ON THE BRITISH INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

We have had on our table, for review, an interesting article that appeared on the 10th November in *The Rand Daily Mail*, entitled: "The real Indian danger" by "an Anglo-Indian". The writer of the article has advanced must astonishing arguments in favour of shutting out the Indian entirely. The writer says,

> For the sake of the future of the Transvaal as a white man's country, it is to be hoped that no Gotham-like system of restrictions will be considered sufficient to shut out the Indian trader.

He then says:

> It is not from any racial feeling, or from views of health or sanitation, or morality, or any other semi-sentimental ground. Those who know the Asiatic believe it is better for South Africa that he should remain outside. It is a precaution dictated by the instinct of self-preservation.

The writer then adduces reasons why he considers the Indians as dangerous, and this is the reason:

> Place 100,000 natives of India on an uninhabited South-Sea Island and 100,000 Kaffirs on another. Leave them alone for a century to work out their own salvation. At the end of that period, you would find the Kaffirs indulging in a beer drink in a mud village, and the Indians would have founded a kingdom, have built some cities, have formed a fleet of ships, and opened out trade with other lands, and evolved a civilisation and a religion equal in many ways to any found in the West.

Now, this kind of argument is very seductive. The writer has evidently overlooked some important facts, as also the exprience of history. We have it on Mr. Lyttelton's authority that South Africa is not the white man's country, and so long as the great numerical inequality between the Europeans and the Kaffirs continues to remain in favour of the latter, it is passing strange how any man could call South Africa a white man's country. Mr. Lyttelton, only the other day, said that, had it not been so, he would never have consented to introduce the chinese into the Transvaal. It cannot be denied that, rightly or wrongly, the white man wishes to begin and end as a boss in South Africa. He would not perform manual work. Under the circumstances, the Kaffirs must play a very important part in the economy of South Africa, and so long as such a condition of affairs prevails in South Africa, the brown man must find a place. Had it not been so, he would certainly never have come to South Africa. The writer has instanced East Africa to show how it has been overrun by

Indians. The statement is mis-leading in that it is not true in the manner it is intended. That is to say, there has been no displacement of the white man by the Indian in East Africa. There the nature of the climate and the soil has failed to attract white settlers, and so the Indian has been encouraged to develop the country. The praise showered on the Indians by the writer is flattering to the Indian mind, but it is utterly misleading. We would indeed wish that all the praise was well deserved. While there is a great deal of truth in it, we must confess that, when the Europeans and the Indians have come in contact, the former have shown superior organising ability, probably superior communal spirit, and superior foresight. The result is that the Indian has occupied, as a class, a subordinate position. Why has not the writer taken Europe first as an example? There Indian immigration is totally unrestricted, and yet the Indian has not been able to displace a single white man. The reason is obvious. There is no use or demand for him there. In South Africa, on the other hand, there are things which the white man would not do, and the Kaffir could not do. It has, therefore, been possible for the Indians to live in South Africa. There may be overlapping in some instances, but as a rule each of the races has found its own level and its vocation. It is to our mind preposterous for any one to contend that there is any grave danger in the Indian displacing the white man. Alarming arguments such as the one under review are calculated to confuse the real issue and to retard a reasonable solution of the problem. It is the province of prudence to anticipate the future and provide for or against it. But it is prudence run amuck to assume danger where there is none. No one has contended that immigration from Asia or, for that matter, from any part of the world, should be totally unrestricted in South Africa. Reasonable restrictions have been proposed, and if they have not been carried out, it is simply the fault of the people who share the views expressed by the Anglo-Indian, who, of all the people in the world, must know, having lived in India, that the danger foretold in his article is a mere phantom.

Indian Opinion, 3-12-1904

106. PETITION TO LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

JOHANNESBURG,

December 3, 1904

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE ACTING LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

PRETORIA

THE PETITION OF ABDUL GANI, CHAIRMAN OF THE BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION AT JOHANNESBURG

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT,

Your Petitioner begs respectfully to approach Your Excellency in connection with certain British Indian claims filed with the Rand Plague Committee in respect of goods destroyed at the instance of the Committee during the outbreak of the bubonic plague in the Colony this year.

After the discovery of the plague in the late Indian Location at Johannesburg, its inhabitants were cordoned [off] for a few days and subsequently removed to an isolation camp at Klipspruit. The removal to Klipspruit was effected on very short notice. When the inhabitants of the Location removed to Klipspruit, they were, as a rule, prevented from taking with them anything beyond their beddings. All their valuables, furniture and even bedsteads were ordered to be left behind.

On the people protesting, they were assured by Dr.Pakes, the Special Plague Officer, that all the goods destroyed should be paid for by the Committee, and that, therefore, the Indians need not have any anxiety. It was on this understanding that the Indians removed to Klipspruit without taking anything with them. Even the domestic animals, such as the dogs and cats, were ordered to be destroyed, in spite of the protests made by the owners; so, too, were most of the birds. In spite of the assurance given by Dr, Pakes, the Rand Plague Committee has repudiated its liability in the matter on the ground stated in its letters to the claimants. The Assistant Secretary of the Committee in repudiating the claims writes as follows:

> I am directed to advise you that, acting on the opinion of Council, the Committee cannot accept liability for payment of the amount. In terms of the Plague regulations, any articles which are likely to be or become infected with, or spread infection of bubonic or oriental plague, may be disinfected, and in case, disinfection is impossible for any reason, may be destroyed, and the Committee are advised that no compensation is payable in respect of any

act done in execution of their powers or duties under the regulations.

My Association respectfully submits that, irrespective of the legal position of the Committee, it is morally bound to respect the plighted word of its only Officer who was at the critical time responsi-ble for the public safety. Had no such promise been made, it is doubtful whether the inhabitants of the Location would have left their belongings as they did, without a murmur, in order to carry out the wishes of the Special Plague Officer. Among the goods destroyed were whole bags full of dry cereals and pulses and tinned foods which, according to the Vienna Convention, have been held not to carry infection. There was also household furniture, both wooden and metallic, destroyed. It could not be said that such articles were incapable of disinfection.

After protracted negotiations, the Committee has seen its way to accept claims for goods actually used by it out of the Location stores. At one time, even these claims were practically repudiated. It has been admitted that the goods that were used were of the same class as some of the stable goods that have been destroyed. The reason given for destroying the other eatables, instead of using them, is that it was the intention of the Committee to avoid among the inmates of the isolation camp the possibility of the slightest risk of infection. As a matter of fact, some goods were even sent to Klipspruit. The inmates themselves were quite willing to use up the stores that were in the Location.

It is worthy of note that the distribution of the orders for goods was by no means even or impartial, the purchase by the Committee being mostly confined to a few store-keepers only. Thus, it has happened that, while a few luckly men who were able to get rid of all their stores in so far as their claims are confined to stores have received full payment, their less fortunate brethren have received little or nothing.

Many inhabitants have, by reason of such wholesale destruction of their goods, become practically penniless.

My Association, therefore, humbly ventures to approach Your Excellency for intervention and trusts that Your Excellency will be pleased to secure a favourable consideration of the claims of the inhabitants of the late Indian Location for the value of their goods which were destroyed under orders of the Rand Plague Committee.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioner, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc.

(Signed) ABDUL GANI
CHAIRMAN
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 10-12-1904

107. LETTER TO "THE STAR" [1]

25 & 26 COURT CHAMBERS,
RISSIK STREET,
(JOHANNESBURG,)
December 9, 1904

SIR,

With reference to the letter published in your issue of the 8th inst. over Mr. T. Kleinenberg's signature, I take the liberty of joining issue on his statement.[2] I do not admit the figures quoted by Mr. Kleinenberg. I deny that there are at present 49 Indian traders in Pietersburg; there are only 28 stores owned by Indians within the township, as distinguished from the Location, and of these, some are held by the same Indians. I have not in any way endeavoured to amend my original statement, which was a denial of the allegation that there was a great disproportion between the numbers of Indian traders trading in town before war and after. Those who were trading without licences before war could hardly be called law-breakers, especially, by Mr. Kleinenberg, who knew the exact position, and probably¾be it said to his credit¾helped to create it. They traded without licences, it is true, but under legal advice, with the knowledge of the Republican Government, on tenders of licence money and under the protection of the British Government. If this was law-breaking, I must confess that I do not know the meaning of the term. Within the township before war, there were at least 23 Indian stores: the names are as under.[3] The probability is that there were more, but I have indisputable proof as to the names and the numbers I am now giving. The original list from which the names are taken was prepared in March, 1903, in order to be produced before the Government. I think I have given enough for Mr. Klenenberg to investigate. If my figures are incorrect, I shall be

[1] This was published as part of an item under the heading "Mr. Kleinenberg and the British Indian Association" with the prefatory note: "The following correspondence to *The Star* was crowded out from our earlier issues. Though belated, we publish it as showing the truth of the statement made by Mr. Abdul Gani at the great Indian Mass Meeting recently held in Johannesburg".

The text of Kleinenberg's letter to which the above is a reply is here omitted

[2] The letter challenged the Chairman of the British Indian Association to produce evidence in refutation of certain figures given by Kleinenberg at the National Convention.

[3] Listed in the following paragraph.

glad to admit the correction. If, on the other hand, they cannot be challenged, and if you think that my statement has been verified, I hope you will be good enough to collect the sum of £50 from Mr. Kleinenberg and hand it to the Nazareth House. One word more and I have finished. My object in troubling you is merely to place the truth and nothing but the truth before the public. Mr. Kleinenberg is well known to the British Indians in Pietersburg. I doubt not that he is guided by honest motives, and it is because I feel that want of information is the greatest mischief-maker in this controversy, that my Association has felt it to be its duty to take up statements made at the National Convention and refute them, wherever it was necessary.

The stores referred to above are:

Hassim Moti & Co. (3), Tar Mahomed Tayob (2), Ahmed Moosa Bhayat (2), Ahmed Ebrahim Wadi, Abdul Latif Ali, Cassim Suliman, Cassim Tayob, Osman Mahomed & Co. (2), Gane Hassim, Haji Mahomed, Tayob Haji Khan Mahomed (3), Janellahomed Osman, Harsim Mahomed, Abhechand, Ebrahim Mahomed and Gadit.

I am etc.,

ABDUL GANI

Indian Opinion, 31-12-1904

108. THE RAND PLAGUE COMMITTEE

We reproduce in another column the petition of the British Indian Association addressed to the Acting Lieutenant-Governor,[1] with reference to certain claims filed with the Rand Plague Committee for goods that were destroyed on its instructions, on the outbreak of the plague in Johannesburg in March last. The petition discloses a story of meanness and callous disregard of all moral obligations on the part of the Rand Plague Committee. According to the petitioner's version, before the goods were destroyed, Dr. Pakes had made a definite promise that compensation would be given to the owners, and if it be true that furniture, metallic things, and whole bags of dry food were burnt down, the destruction must have been more in order to fire public imagination and to conciliate sentiment than to guard against danger to public health. It would be monstrous to suppose that iron bedsteads or even wooden furniture could not be properly disinfected. It will be remembered that, when the plague outbreak took place first in Natal, the Natal Government sounded the views of the Indian Government as to the ability of rice and such other food-stuffs to

[1] *Vide* "Petition to the Lieutenant-Governor". December 3, 1904.

carry infection, and the expert opinion sent by the Government of India was that there was no danger in receiving rice bags and such other foods from even plague-infected districts in India. Again, the inmates themselves, it would appear, were quite willing to have the eatables found in the Location served out to them. We, however, very much question whether public safety was at all advanced by the wholesale destruction of the goods. Be that, however, as it may, if the Rand Plague Committee chose to have the luxury of burning down the belongings of the poor men, it cannot escape liability to pay for them. The attempt to avoid payment under legal protection in the circumstances above mentioned is, in our humble opinion, simply scandalous. We must repeat for the tenth time that it was due to the gross neglect of the Johannesburg Municipality that the plague broke out. The Indians, it is admitted, behaved during that critical time in a most exemplary manner. Relying on promises made by its responsible officer, they quietly moved away to Klipspruit with the quickest dispatch, and without giving the authorities the slightest trouble. Repudiation of the just claims of such people is tantamount to an unwarranted confiscation of their property. To saddle the few men, who had the ill-luck to be in the Location at the time the cordon was drawn round, with the loss of all they possessed is a heartless procedure unworthy of a great corporation like the Rand Plague Committee. Those who went out to Klipspruit, and were practically kept under restraint, and were prevented from following their daily vocation, deserve sympathy and better treatment, and we hope that His Excellency will give careful consideration to Mr. Abdul Gani's petition, and do justice to the British Indians by ordering payment of compensation.

Indian Opinion, 10-12-1904

109. INDIANS IN PIETERSBURG

Mr. Kleinenberg, of Pietersburg, has written to *The Star*, challenging the statement made by Mr. Abdul Gani regarding the number of Indian traders in Pietersburg before and after the war in the course of his address to the recently held mass meeting at Johannesburg. In support of his statement, Mr. Kleinenberg produced certain figures, and triumphantly declared that, if they could be disproved, he would forfeit to the Nazareth House the sum of £ 50, provided that a like sum is forfeited by the other party, in the event of his figures being proved true. Mr. Abdul Gani has written to *The Star*, promptly taking up the challenge. We are surprised that, with Mr. Kleinenberg's experience, he should have allowed himself to be misled by the

figures supplied to him. Indeed, if the number of licenses issued to British Indian traders before the war were any test of the actual number that carried on trade, we would find that there were hardly 100 Indian traders in the Transvaal, whereas everybody who knows anything about the country knows that there were far more than 100 British Indian traders carrying on trade in the Transvaal before war outside Locations. Such a state of things was possible because of the strong hand of the British Agent affording protection to unlicensed Indian traders. The incident thus shows the proof of the statement, made at the Indian meeting, about the best men in the Colony in the Transvaal being ill-informed and not studying their facts well before forming their judgment. Mr. Kleinenberg, again, forgets that the number of Indian licenses supplied to him by the Revenue Office includes Indians trading in the Locations at Pietersburg of which there is a large number. Now the Indians who are trading in Location do not enter into the controversy at all. The proceedings of the Convention were directed against trades established outside Locations or Bazaars. We hope, then, that either Mr. Kleinenberg will acknowledge his mistake as an act of fairness and justice or proceed to substantiate his proposition, if he does not accept the explanation offered by Mr. Abdul Gani.

Indian Opinion, 10-12-1904

110. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

21-24 COURT CHAMBERS,
CORNER, RISSIK & ANDERSON STREETS,
P.O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
December 10,1904

TO
MR. DADABHAI NAOROJI
22, KENNINGTON ROAD
LONDON S.E.
ENGLAND

DEAR SIR,

Indian Opinion has entered on a third stage in its career.[1] I would not weary you with the important step that has been taken in connection with it. You will see the full particulars[2] published in it in

[1] The reference is to the shifting of the office to Phoenix
[2] *Vide* "Ourselves", 24-12-1904

the course of this month. It is now intended to have a weekly or a fortnightly letter from England of general interest but also dealing particularly with the Indian question in South Africa, as it may have effected [*sic*] from time to time in London. Could you recommend anyone who would undertake the work and if so, at what rate? I have nothing special to report on the question this week.

I remain,
Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original: S.N. 2265.

111. THE HOONDAMAL CASE[1]

December 14, 1904

Mr. Gandhi proposed that, if Mr. Hoondamal won his appeal with costs, he should bear the other expenses, if any. Otherwise, the Congress would bear them, provided that it paid no more than £ 50, and that any fine imposed was paid by Mr. Hoondamal.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 17-12-1904

112. THE HOONDAMAL LICENCE AGAIN

Like the boy in the tub in a well-known advertisement, the Town Council won't be happy till it was ruined Mr. Hoondamal by robbing him of his licence. A summons was, therefore, again issued against the unfortunate trader; and our political Magistrate, Mr. Stuart, in an extraordinary judgment, found him guilty, and imposed the maximum penalty of £20 fine. Mr. Stuart, forgetting that the defendant was acting under legal advice, asked if the Europeans complied with the law, why should not the Indians? What the interpretation of the law has to do with the distinctions between Europeans and Indians, we fail to see. Again, Mr. Stuart suggests that Indians should follow the Roman saying: "When in Rome, do as the Romans do". We wish we were treated like Romans by the advisers. In making these remarks, it never seems to have occurred to Mr. Stuart that the Europeans had no difficulty about the transfers of their licences. However, we understand, a notice of appeal has been lodged. The public, therefore, will

[1] The question of financial assistance to Hoondamal in the test case came up before the Natal Indian Congress on December 14.

again have the opportunity of judging how far the politician has got the better of the judge in Mr. Stuart. As the matter is *sub judice*, we must not go in [to] the merits of the case.

Our contemporary, *The Natal Mercury*, has seen fit to allow itself to make remarks on the case which are hardly in keeping with its usual tone of fairness. Our contemporary says:

> The Hoondamal case makes it evident that the Indians are determined to fight the local authorities in the matter of the granting of licences. I have no remark to make upon the case now occupying the attention of the Court, and upon which judgment is to be given this morning. Indeed, it would be grossly improper to do so until that decision is announced, but I may remark upon the general question that it is more than ever evident that the burgesses must demand that the matter shall be so dealt with that their wishes shall be observed. If the Indians are going to defy the desire of the burgesses as regards trading, and as instanced by the wretched Kaffir market in Queen Street, then they must not be surprised if restrictions are imposed of a far more drastic character than have hitherto been contemplated. I have the fullest respect for the rights of British Indians, but the Indians generally must understand that, if they are going to show obstruction, to force their wills upon this community, and to spread over this town *a la* Mauritius, they will have all sections of the whites united against them. It is well that this should be stated plainly. The burgesses of this town, who have built it up and are responsible for it, are not going to be dictated to by the Indians, who are going the right way to bring into existence an organisation that will insist on the Town Council proceeding on such lines, or obtaining such powers, as will leave no loophole of escape, and that will greatly shackle the Indian community. The attitude on the Queen Street Kaffir market is alone sufficient to arouse the anger of the community, and the situation will not be helped by defiance in regard to licences after legal rights have once been settled.

Our contemporary mixes up the Kaffir Market in Queen Street with the Hoondamal case, with which it has not the remotest connection; and it mixes up the Hoondamal case with the whole of the Indian licensing question, and then incites the burgesses against the Indians.

Now the Kaffir Market is an eyesore which has nothing to recommend it; and it has to be dealt with on its own merits. But it would not be proper to blame the whole community for the obstinacy of an individual. Nor is it right to suggest that there is any idea of determined opposition to the reasonable wishes of the burgesses. We admit that the transfers of licences should be regulated. But, in the

present case, we consider that the action of the Town Council is high-handed, prejudiced, oppressive and unjust. Mr. Hoondamal has an exceedingly strong case on merits. His premises are in excellent condition, comparing most favourably with the best of the class in West Street. He is a man of exceptionally clean habits. His trade is high-class European, and commands the confidence of a large number of European houses. Law seems to be on his side. Why, then, should he not fight for what he is justly entitled to? And, if, against the whole weight of the Town Council, which is thrown against him in an unjust manner, the Indians in general rally round the oppressed merchant, it is nothing but their duty so to do. And we think that our contemporary should appreciate rather than deprecate the efforts on the part of the Indians to secure justice. When that proposition has been made good, it would be time to appeal to the Indians to respect the wishes of the Town Council.

Indian Opinion, 17-12-1904

113. MR. LOVEDAY: STATESMAN!

We have much pleasure in giving the following[1] in our leading columns. The writer was specially deputed by us to report the proceedings of the Potchefstroom meeting, and a Britisher that he is, he resented most keenly the tone and the bitterness that Mr. Loveday thought fit to import into what might otherwise have been a sober meeting, and although, as a rule, we are averse to a trenchant, biting style in our leading columns, we have no hesitation in making an exception in favour of the following which represents the true feelings of a man who witnessed the proceedings, and whose sense of fairness and justice would not restrain him from calling a spade a spade.

Indian Opinion, 17-12-1904

114. THE KAFFIR MARKET IN QUEEN STREET

We entirely re-echo the chorus of condemnation that has been showered on those who are associated with the keeping up of the disgraceful Kaffir Market in Queen Street. The sooner it is blotted out from our midst, the better it would be for all concerned. We see in the

[1] Not reproduced here.

discussion a tendency to bring in the Indian question. But a little reflection would show that the Indian question has nothing to do with it. It is true that the upper landlord is an Indian. It will be remembered that there were two such markets. One of the landlords, Mr. Omar Haji Amod, as soon as the nuisance was brought to his notice, summarily stopped the Market. That shows the better side of Indian nature. The other landlord is obdurate; and the Town Council must find some way to meet the difficulty. But it may be well to remember that the place is let to European who are managing the Market. It is a question for each community to use the ordinary social pressure, supplemented by law, if necessary. The Indians, as a class, have no more to do with the evil than the Europeans; and it will facilitate the smooth working of the social machinery if this fact is borne in mind, and kept clear of other racial questions that have no bearing on this matter.

Indian Opinion, 17-12-1904

115. INDENTURED LABOUR ON THE COAL MINES

We print elsewhere a report from the *Witness* representative on the condition of the indentured labour on the coal-mines in Natal. If the allegations are true, they reveal a shocking state of things. Our contemporary demands an inquiry. We join in the request. It should be welcomed by the mine-owners. But if an investigation is held, we trust that it will be open, public and absolutely impartial. The commission, in order to command confidence, should be preponderatingly non-official; and, if we may venture to say so, should include an Indian gentleman of standing. The general condition of the indentured labourer in the Colony is satisfactory; and it can only enhance its reputation if causes even for suspicion are removed.

Indian Opinion, 17-12-1904

116. THE POTCHEFSTROOM MEETING

INACCURACIES IN THE RESOLUTIONS

We propose to deal now with the resolutions passed at the mass meeting at Potchefstroom, and to show how they are full of inaccuracies.

We will take each of these resolutions in its order.

The first commences with the statement:

> Whereas the Government of this country and the Home Government have decided that immigration of Asiatics should only be permitted under indenture, and a Labour Importation Ordinance has been passed regulating the immigration of Asiatics.

Now, neither the Home nor the Transvaal Government has decided that the immigration of Asiatics should only be permitted under indenture. There is no Labour Importation Ordinance passed "regulating the immigration of Asiatics". What has actually happened is this. On the 11th day of February, this year, an Ordinance, No.17 of 1904, was assented to"to regulate the introduction into the Transvaal of unskilled non-European labourers". That is a very different proposition indeed, and one that entirely alters the complexion of affairs. Moreover, we read, in Section 34 of this same Ordinance that

> nothing in this Ordinance contained shall apply to the introduction into this Colony by the Lieutenant-Governor of British Indians to be employed on the construction of railways sanctioned by the Governor or on other public works; provided always that such introduction shall be subject to such regulations as the Legislative Council may approve of; and provided further that the provisions of this ordinance in respect of the return of labourers to their country of origin shall *mutatis mutandis* apply to such British Indians.

So that not only do the provisions of this Ordinance refer only to"unskilled"non-European labour; and not only are British Indian labourers expressly said to be outside of the working of the Ordinance; but it will be necessary for special regulations to be passed by the Legislative Council dealing with their particular case. Further, the expression "unrestricted immigration of British Indians" assumes that Indians have been entering the country on a large scale. The fact is that the immigration of British Indians has been almost entirely stop-ped, except for those who are *bonafide* refugees.

It will be well within the memory of our readers that, no longer than a few months since, the Chief Secretary for Permits reported to the High Commissioner that no new Indians were allowed to enter the Colony, and that permits were only sparingly granted to *bona-fide* refugees.

In the second Resolution we read:

> Whereas, owing to the unrestricted issue of trading licences to Asiatics, Pietersburg has now more than treble the number of Asiatic traders than white.

The facts are that in Pietersburg, before the war, there were 23 Indian stores. The number at the present time is 28. There are, we make bold to say, more than 14 white stores in Pietersburg.

Resolution No.3 refers to the depreciation in value of the properties adjoining stores and land rented by Asiatics. The fact,

again, is that land and stores adjacent to properties rented by Indians have actually increased in value for the simple reason that they pay good rents.

We need not pursue the inquiry further. If the resolutions contain such exaggerations as we have shewn above, the inference is obvious that the speakers to them have not been behindhand in recklessness of statement.

Indian Opinion, 17-12-1904

117. LETTER TO "THE STAR" [1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
Prior to *December 24, 1904*]

TO
THE EDITOR
THE STAR

SIR,

May I venture to trespass on your courtesy with reference to a venomous attack made by Mr. Loveday, M.L.C., on the British Indians, when he delivered his address to the anti-Asiatic meeting held at Potchefstroom on Saturday last. Mr. Loveday condescended to reply to my address to the Indian mass meeting,[2] and, in the course of his heated remarks, allowed himself to descend to abuse and statements, the recklessness of which I have never seen surpassed in a person holding the responsible position of Mr. Loveday. He has not hesitated to charge me with having made "deliberate, wilful, and wickedly false statements, and Oriental duplicity". However, I have no wish to descend to Mr. Loveday's level, but I repeat again every statement that I have made in my address, and withdraw nothing, and with your permission, I would endeavour to give some of the many proofs in support thereof. Mr. Loveday resents that portion of the address wherein I have complained that he omitted to state at the National Convension, when he was giving the history of the Convention of 1884, the fact that there were at the time British Indians in the Colony, and that Law 3 of 1885 was passed on misrepresentation. If you and your contemporaries reported the honourable gentleman at all correctly, my assertion is perfectly true. Mr. Loveday is reported in *The Star* to have said as follows:

[1] This was published in *Indian Opinion* under the heading "Mr. Loveday and the British Indian Association".

[2] Held at Johannesburg on November 17. *Vide Indian Opinion*, 19-11-1904.

> When the 1881 Convention was concluded, there were no Indians in the Transvaal, and there is little or no doubt that the Asiatic side of the question never presented itself to the authors of that document sitting in Pretoria, and a study of the whole of the provisions of that document clearly shows that the white race and the natives resident in the country alone, were contemplated. It was only after the arrival of the first Indian traders, and after the 1884 Convention had been substituted for that of 1881, that restrictive legislation was proposed.

Thus, Mr. Loveday, if he is correctly reported, has contended that, as no Indians had arrived before 1884, the words "other than Natives" could apply only to the Europeans, whereas the fact is that there were already Indian settlers in the country before the Convention of 1884 was passed. I have taken the trouble of comparing your report with that of the other newspapers, and it is substantially the same. So far, therefore, as I am concerned, my complaint, that Mr. Loveday omitted a material fact in stating the history of the question, is completely justified. As to the misrepresentations on which Law 3 of 1885 was passed, I quote the following from one of the several petitions that were used by the late Government in order to induce the British Government to sanction legislation embodied in Law 3 of 1885:

> the dangers to which the whole community is exposed by the spread of leprosy, and the like loathsome diseases engendered by the filthy habits and immoral practices of these people. . .

Again,

> as these men enter the State without wives and female relatives, the result is obvious. Their religion teaches them to consider all women as soulless, and Christians as natural prey.

These petitions were signed by responsible and representative men, and it was due to these gross, unfair, and untrue statements that Law 3 of 1885 was accepted. Mr. Loveday has thought fit again to reiterate his statement that an Arab tradesman spends not more than £ 40 per annum. He has quoted the report of the Asiatic Traders' Commission in support, but the Commissioners have said no such thing. At Potchefstroom, he was more emphatic. I, therefore, again deny the assertion, and can only state that I ought to know better than Mr. Loveday as to how much an Indian trandesman spends. Some have to pay in rent alone even as much as £40, not per annum, but per month. Does Mr. Loveday know a single Indian trader? Has he ever examined their books? Has he studied the report of the Asiatic Commission? Will he now go through the books of 20 Indian traders, which I shall have much pleasure in submitting to him? I deny the statement that the Indian employees do not receive more than 20s. per

month, and I am in a position to place before him names of Indian employees receiving more than £100 per annum over and above their board and lodging expenses. Mr. Loveday again states that my statement, that no new Indians were allowed to come into the country, was "wickedly false". If I have erred, I have erred in the company of the Chief Secretary for Permits, who, you will recollect, only a few months ago, reported to Lord Milner that no new Indians were allowed to enter the Colony, and that permits were only sparingly granted to *bona-fide* refugees. Mr. Loveday, in refutation of the statement, cited Pretoria and Potchefstroom, and he says the population of the Indian Location at Pretoria had been doubled since the war, and, whereas before there were from 15 to 20 traders, there are now between 90 and 100. This is utterly without foundation. The Indian population of Pretoria has certainly increased, but not doubled. The increase is due to the influx of Indians from other parts of the Colony, who are unable to get licences or otherwise to get a living. According to the Permits Officer, there are in the Colony not more than 10,000 Indians. There were in 1896 nearly 10,000 Indians in the Transvaal, and it will not be doubted that the Indian population had increased considerably in 1899."In Pietersburg,"the honourable gentleman says,"prior to the war, they had 13 Indian stores; today they had 49". As against that, I venture to state that there were 23 Indian stores before the war in the town alone, and that there are to day 28. Then, again, Mr. Loveday has stated:

> The Indians had told them that they had certain rights, what they called their 'Charter of Liberty', but was there any social intercourse between Indians and whites in India? None whatever.

The question is gratuitously brought up. The Indians have never clai-med any social intercourse here. All they have claimed is the elemen-tary right of reasonable facilities of trading, reasonable facilities for immigration under general restrictions, freedom of locomotion and of ownership of property; but, for the information of Mr. Loveday, I may state there is a measure of social intercourse also between Indians and Englishmen in India. The balls given by the Maharaja of Kuch Behar attract the best European society. Functions and parties are given by the Viceroy and the Governors, where Indians of all classes are invited. The levees held from time to time in the chief cities in India are open as well to the Indian subjects as to the English subjects of the King-Emperor. If I state this fact, I do so merely to show the lamentable want of knowledge on the part of our oldest legislator, and not in order to excite the slightest desire on the part of my country-men for a share in any of the social functions. We have

no wish to thrust ourselves into the social economy of the white settlers in the Colony. I need hardly go any further with this, to me a painful subject. It was impossible to allow the honourable gentleman's state-ment at the Potchefstroom meeting to go unchallenged, but if he has not rendered himself utterly incapable of seeing things in their true light when the question of colour is under discussion, I would appeal to his sense of justice and fairness, and would merely ask him to study his history and his facts, to study also what I venture to consider are the very reasonable and moderate propositions of the British Indian Association and than to ask himself whether he is not wasting his energy, misleading the people over whom he exercises so much control, doing an injustice to the responsible position he holds in the country, and also doing a disservice to the Empire to which he pro-fesses he is proud to belong.

I am, etc.,

ABDOOL GANI

Indian Opinion, 24-12-1904

118. OURSELVES[1]

Indian Opinion enters upon the third stage of its career in the short space of the eighteen months of its existence. The proprietor, being guided by patriotic motives, embarked upon the enterprises on the slenderest resources. He had to depend for the editing of the paper on purely voluntary and unpaid assistance. This he readily received. It was his intention to make the paper self-supporting by devoting the profits from the general printing to meeting the expected deficiency on the paper. But such was not to be the case. Although this journal supplied a real want, what may be termed a commercial demand had to be created. In other words, the paper had not only to find its matter, but its readers also. Moreover, the sending of over five hundred complimentary copies was a great drag. Pecuniary assistance had, therefore, to be called in. The Natal Indian Congress and the British Indian Association came to the rescue, and voted certain funds towards the payment of the expense of printing and posting the complimentary copies.

Still the paper continued, octopus-like, to devour all it received

[1] This was later reprinted in a supplement to the issue of 31-12-1904 with this introductory note: "The following leading article appeared in our issue of the 24th Dec., 1904, and as we were unable then to issue enough copies to meet the demand for it, we issue it as a supplement, and we would supply sympathisers and friends with as many copies as they want for free distribution. ¾ (Ed. *I.O.*)"

and wanted more. The situation could only be saved by heroic measures. Patchwork was useless. Palliatives were dangerous. There remained then an appeal to the devoted workers and friends in favour of adopting a novel and revolutionary project. They were to look not to the present but to the future; not to their pockets but to the paper first. And why not? The object of *Indian Opinion* was to bring the European and the Indian subjects of King Edward closer together. It was to educate public opinion, to remove causes for misunderstanding; to put before the Indians their own blemishes; and to show them the path of duty while they insisted on securing their rights. This was an Imperial and pure ideal, towards the fruition of which anyone could work unselfishly. So it appealed to some of the workers.

The plan was shortly this. If a piece of ground sufficiently large and far away from the hustle of the town could be secured for housing the plant and machinery, each one of the workers could have his plot of land on which he could live. This would simplify the question of living under sanitary and healthy conditions, without heavy expenses.

The workers could receive per month an advance sufficient to cover necessary expenses, and the whole profits could be divided amongst them at the end of each year. The management would thus be saved the necessity of having to find a large sum of money from week to week. The workers also could have the option of buying out their plot of land at the actual cost price.

Living under such conditions and amid the beautiful surroundings which have given Natal the name of the Garden Colony, the workers could live a more simple and natural life, and the ideas of Ruskin and Tolstoy [be] combined with strict business principles. Or, on the other hand, the workers could reproduce the artificiality of town life, if it pleased them to do so. One could hope that the spirit of the scheme and the surroundings would have an educative influence on them. There would be a closer brotherly combination between the European and the Indian workers. There was a possibility that the daily working hours could be reduced. Each could become his own agriculturist. The English workers could belie the taunt that the Englishman in South Africa would not cultivate the soil and work with his own hands. He had here all the facilities for such work, without any of the drawbacks. The Indian worker could copy his European brother, and learn the dignity and utility of healthy recreation as distinguished from constant, slaving toil for miserable gains.

The incentive would be threefold to all: and ideal to work for in the shape of *Indian Opinion*; perfectly healthy surroundings to live in, and an immediate prospect of owning a piece of land on the most advantageous terms; and a direct tangible interest and participation in the scheme.

Such in outline was the argument. It has been translated into action. The printing works have been removed to a large piece of ground near Phoenix Station, on the North Coast line. There are already Englishmen and Indians working here under the scheme. It is yet too early to forecast the result. It is a bold experiment and fraught with momentous consequences. We know of no non-religious organisation that is or has been managed on the principles above laid down. If it succeeds, we cannot but think that it would be worthy of imitation. We write impersonally, and no one on the staff of this journal claims any glory over the matter. We, therefore, think it but right to take the public into our confidence. Their support would encourage us very greatly, and no doubt contribute largely to the success of the scheme. We can appeal to both the great communities residing in South Africa and trust that they will assist the management to bring the scheme to the successful issue that we believe it deserves.

Indian Opinion, 24-12-1904

119. A CASE FOR INQUIRY

Our contemporary, *The Natal Witness*, continues to give prominence to the prosecutions that have recently taken place in Ladysmith for assault on indentured Indians. *The Natal Witness* is to be congratulated on giving so much as a column-and-a-half, in its issue of the 16th inst., to the prosecution of a European underground manager at the Ramsay Collieries for assault on an indentured Indian employed on the mine. The manager was found guilty. And according to Sergt. Lempriere's fearless address for the Crown, the assault was serious. The story of the alleged sale of a woman which camp up as a side issue is most discreditable, if it is true. It is a matter for consolation that we have in the Colony Crown Prosecutors like the Sergeant, who do not flinch in doing their duty. The whole matter, however, requires careful investigation by the Government. The reading of the report of the case leaves a bad taste in the mouth. An impartial inquiry would bring the truth to light, and it should, as we have said before, be welcomed by the Collieries Company.

Indian Opinion, 24-12-1904

120. THE POTCHEFSTROOM VIGILANTS AND BRITISH INDIANS

The Potchefstroom Vigilants are going mad again. They want to clear their town of the Indians entirely. After their first outburst, it will be remembered, they had cooled down considerably; and, in spite of the opposition of their friends from Boksburg, they had decided that compensation should be awarded to those Indians who might be driven to the Bazaar. But they have evidently repented of their moderation. They would now take the law into their hands, and establish in Potchefstroom a reign of terror. They would disregard the religious feelings of inoffensive, law-abiding people. They would not allow an Indian Mosque to be erected in their town. They would make it hot for all who may have dealings with Indians. The householders are not to be allowed, on pain of social ostracism, to buy from Indians; the merchants, similarly, are not to trade with them; and the landowners are to evict their Indian tenants. From a selfish standpoint, the Indians ought to welcome such hysterical opposition, because it is exhausted by its own violence. But from an Imperial standpoint, the action of the Potchefstroom Vigilants cannot be too strongly condemned. The history of British rule is the history of constitutional evolution. Under the British flag, respect for the law has become a part of the nature of the people. Our friends the Vigilants are belying their profession of loyalty to British rule by treading under foot the very corner-stone of the glorious constitution which enables them to enjoy freedom of speech as it is enjoyed nowhere else in the world. They have mistaken liberty for licentiousness of speech. May we appeal to them for a little sobriety?

Indian Opinion, 24-12-1904

121. A NEW WEEKLY

A new weekly has made its appearance in Johannesburg, called the *Rand Rate-payers' Review*, with its motto "Truth the People". It is well got up. That it must be a very useful and independent journal,

if it continues as it has begun, will appear from its following remarks on the Asiatic question:

> Within three miles of Johannesburg post Office an obelisk looks down from a high kopje[1] on several rapidly developing townships. Close to that monument is a small graveyard, containing several large mounds, and one headstone inscribed, 'There is no God [but God,] and Mahomed is His Prophet'. In that graveyard rest the mortal remains of swarthy soldiers of our Indian Empire, whose lives were sacrificed during the war on behalf of liberty for British subjects in the Transvaal. We think of this in connection with the votes that were given by the present Town Councillors at their first meeting on November 2nd; and in connection with a subsequent meeting of delegates from all parts of the Transvaal in the Opera House at Pretoria the following week, when one man after another rose in his place and clamoured for resolutions which would, if enforced, prevent our fellow-subjects from India having any rights in the Colony other than those permitted to the heathen Chinese who are imported as indentured labourers. It seems to us that a little modification of language is required on the part of those who essay to seek a topic; and more than a little thoughtfulness. It is not wonderful, while such prejudices exist, that Lord Curzon declined the opportunity of coming here as the successor of Lord Milner; and if there be one reason stronger than another, which will cause the Home Authorities to delay the grant of "Responsible Government' to the Transvaal, that reason will be fear lest such a privilege might be used to the detriment of any who helped Englishmen to acquire this Colony. It is common knowledge that the Boers did allow trading Asiatics certain privileges under license, but those privileges were not considered fair or complete. This fact was urged on England as an additional cause for armed intervention. England cannot so soon forget those arguments, as the authors of them seem anxious to do; and through the thoughtless clamour for 'no rights at all' to other than Europeans, the cry of the Uitlanders still rings out clearly in many a bereaved English home. Happily for the Rand, there are many men of worth and wealth who will not permit prejudice to override a strict sense of justice.

We congratulate our contemporary on its fearless independence of thought and for daring to be just, and wish it every success.

Indian Opinion, 24-12-1904

122. YEARLY BALANCE-SHEET

A merchant who does not take a review of his position from year to year would be considered a fool. A missionary hymn-book advises us to "count our blessings one by one" and see how much the Lord has done for us. We would, therefore, be following a good precedent and be strictly orthodox if we attempted a short review of

[1] Hillock

the position of our countrymen in South Africa which has rendered our existence necessary. We, however, regret that we cannot "count many blessings" for our countrymen in this sub-continent and will have to be satisfied with softening the harsh appearance of the dark clouds around us by drawing attention to the silver linings here and there.

To commence with Natal, the position remains much the same as before so far as new legislation is concerned. But the tendency of the working of the anti-Asiatic measures has been decidedly towards restriction bordering often on harshness. The new Immigration Act continues to give a great deal of trouble to the people. The supervision of the incoming vessels bringing Indian passengers is far stricter than it used to be. The interpretation of the term "domicile" has been much narrowed and many deserving Indians, although they have been in the Colony before, are being shut out. The Dealers' Licenses Act has given, and is still giving, a great deal of trouble. The Hoondamal case is still fresh in the memory. A merchant of long standing, having first-class European custom, trading in a store decently kept, has been persecuted for daring to remove his store from one place to another, only a few doors away, for the reason that the change has been made to West Street, which the Town Council wishes to reserve not for European trade but for European store-keepers only. The issue between the Town Council and the Indian community has not yet been decided. The matter is under review by the Supreme Court. But it is abundantly clear that the Natal Licensing Act, if it is to give any peace to the Indian community, must be changed so as to restore to the Supreme Court its inherent powers to review all judicial decisions given by any officer whether he is called a Magistrate or a Licensing Officer. The condition of the indentured Indians now and then calls for remarks. The cases that have recently been tried in Ladysmith and to which prominent attention has been drawn by our contemporary, *The Natal Witness*, require investigation. The question of the education of the Indian children in Natal is a most important one and, as the ex-Superintendent of Education, Mr. Barnett, has well said, they cannot safely be neglected if only for the sake of the white Colonists. Either the ordinary schools should be left open or new schools be established to give a suitable education to the Indian children. And here it may be remarked that it would be a desirable addition to the usual curriculum to require a knowledge of Indian languages. Interpretation that avails in the Colony is by no means satisfactory without the fault of the interpreters and it would be a cheap way of getting suitable interpreters to educate the Indian youths in Indian languages.

As to the Transvaal, it still continues to be the source of the greatest anxiety to the Indian community. Nothing there is yet settled. Law 3 of 1885 is being enforced rigorously. Indeed, the present Government have even gone beyond the Law. They have pressed into service the Peace Preservation Ordinance, which is purely a political measure, in order to keep the Indian out of the Transvaal. Even *bona-fide* refugees are prevented from entering the country. The case of *Habib Motan* v. *The Attonery-General* has given the Indian traders a sort of relief and has saved them from threatened extinction. But the victory in that case has given rise to a violent, aggressive and uninformed agitation against the British Indians in the Transvaal. It culminated in the now notorious anti-Asiatic convention which recommended drastic and un-English measures and supported them by inflammatory speeches. Mr. Loveday distinguished himself by making a speech which drew from the Chairman of the British Indian Asso-ciation a sharp reply. Mr. Loveday tried to controvert the statements made by Mr. Adbul Gani. But he has been again baffled by that gentleman. He has sent to *The Star* a complete and categorical retort.[1] Thus, although the British Indian Association is often able to meet unscrupulous statements by true facts, the position remains acute. The people of Potchefstroom and other places have been advocating a boycott and wounding even the religious susceptibilities of the local Indians. In the meanwhile, previous time is being wasted by an ever shifting policy. Lord Milner has failed to be firm on the side of justice and has yielded away the rights of the British Indians to a clamorous and interested agitation. Happily, the Indian Government have shown firmness and it may be hoped that a reasonable solution of the diffi-culty will be arrived at before long.

The Orange River Colony has remained thorough. That it has also remained un-British does not concern its inhabitants. The war was waged for the Indians, among others. The Union Jack waves over Bloemfontein but it affords no shelter to the British Indian who is shunned like a Pariah.

At the Cape, one notices the curious phenomenon of separate legislation for separate parts of the Colony. Thus, an Indian in Cape Town enjoys the ordinary civic liberty. At East London, he may not walk in foot-paths, and the dependency of Transkei, he may not even enter. We firmly believe that this reactionary policy is a direct result of Lord Milner's Bazaar Notice in the Transvaal. Thereby, he let the world know that the British Indian was not to receive common protection of his rights. No wonder that the self-governing Colony of the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to *The Star*" dated "Prior to December 24, 1904".

Cape of Good Hope quickly copied the example so far as it could.

Such is the difficult position at the end of the year for the British Indian. But sweet are the uses of adversity. It damages more him who inflicts it than him on whom it is inflicted. A learned divine has said:

> It is good for a man to suffer the adversity of this earthly life, for it brings him back to the sacred retirement of the heart where only he finds that he is an exile from his native home.

Rightly used, therefore, the adversity we find ourselves in should chasten us and guide us aright. There is no cause for disappointment. Ours is to work away in behalf of what we consider to be right and just and leave the result to Him without Whose permission or knowledge not a blade of grass moves.

If we may be pardoned for saying it, we believe that the community has in *Indian Opinion* a friend and advocate that would not flinch. We have endeavoured to the best of our ability to serve our countrymen and believing, as we do, in the ultimate triumph of truth and justice and having faith in the good sense of the British people, dark as the cloud appears to be at present, we wish, with every hope of realisation, to our countrymen and all our others readers

A HAPPY NEW YEAR

Indian Opinion, 31-12-1904

123. OUR TRIAL

In our last issue, we wrote about the present position of *Indian Opinion*. We also said that among those who work on it are three Englishmen. With a view to giving the readers a clearer idea of the recent step we have taken, we now propose to say who the three gentlemen are, what risks they have taken in joining our press and why they have done so.

One of them is Mr. West.[1] He is quite familiar with the work of a printing press, having had one of his own in Johannesburg. It fetched him a good income, and he had several hands working under him. When *Indian Opinion* was in real trouble, he got ready within 24

[1] Gandhiji First met Albert West at a vegetarian restaurant in Johannesburg. Coming of peasant stock from Lincolnshire, West had an ordinary school education. Later, he went to work with Gandhiji at the Phoenix Settlement, of which his wife, mother and sister, Miss Ada West, also became inmates. Was arrested during the passive resistance movement. *Vide Autobiography* Part IV, Chapter XVI, *et seq.*

hours, gave up his own business and arrived here.[1] Now he takes from us just enough for his bare needs,[2] but stays on with us in the faith that there will be profits eventually. He toils away from morning to evening looking upon the work as his own.

Mr. Kitchin[3] is another. He was an electrical contractor, had a firm of his own and used to earn much. He was greatly moved on learning of the step recently taken. He felt that the objectives of *Indian Opinion* were worthy. As he does not seek mere money and will be satisfied with what he can get from the press for his upkeep, and also because living in Phoenix is simple, cheap and interesting, he has joined us having given up his own business.

The third is Mr. Polak.[4] He is at present the Assistant Editor of the newspaper, *The Critic*,[5] and draws a good salary. Since he is a man of much simplicity and believes that he can freely express his feelings against oppression through *Indian Opinion*, he has informed his chief of his intention to resign, and he will arrive here towards the beginning of next year. Meanwhile, he has started writing for this journal. Many [of our readers] must have read a full report, written in English by Mr. Polak, of a big anti-Indian meeting held at Potchefstroom. He also wrote an account of the late President Kruger's funeral.

To our knowledge all the three Englishmen are good, capable, and selfless men. When people of another community do so much for us, we must surely wonder what we are ourselves doing for the venture. Everyone who has a desire to help can do so according to his capacity and without incurring expense. Our work cannot be achieved

[1] The press was set up at Durban and later moved to phoenix in 1904.

[2] To start with, his salary was fixed at £10 a month with a share in the profits. However when it was found that the enterprise was not self-supporting and was moved to phoenix, £3 was laid down as the monthly allowance per head, regardless of colour and nationatlity.

[3] A theosophist, Herbert Kitchin, edited *Indian Opinion* after Nazar's premature death. Lived with Gandhiji for a time and worked with him during the Boer War.

[4] Gandhiji met Henry S.L. Polak also at the Joannesburg vegetarian restaurant. It was Polak who gave Gandhiji a copy of Ruskin's *Unto This Last*. Polak qualified himself to be an attorney at Gandhiji's instance and joined him in his work. Succeeded Kitchin as Editor of *Indian Opinion*. Visited India and England to help South African Indians in their struggle, and went to prison during the passive resistance movement.

[5] *The Transvaal Critic*.

single-handed.[1] We must look upon this paper as belonging to all Indians, and only if we work in that spirit shall we succeed.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 31-12-1904

124. SOME MORE POTCHEFSTROOM INACCURACIES

We cannot allow certain statements, made at the Potchefstroom meeting, recently reported[2] in our columns, to pass unchallenged, as we consider it necessary to place before our European friends the true facts, so as to enable them rightly to understand the Indian position.

We would quote Mr. Loveday's own words with regard to the admission of Indians into the Transvaal.

> It was only after the arrival of the first Indian traders, and after the 1884 Convention had been substituted for that of 1881, that restrictive legislation was proposed.

Mr. Loveday would, therefore, make it appear that there were no Indian trading in the Transvaal before 1884, and that, therefore, Indians were not contemplated when the Convention was drawn up.

It is, nevertheless, a fact that Indians were contemplated in the working of the Convention, and that Indian merchants were trading in the Transvaal in 1881 and 1882 and, consequently, before 1884. Mr. Loveday's "facts" are thus vitiated, in this respect at least. Moreover, as Mr. Gani has pointed out in a letter to *The Star*,[3] Law of 3 of 1885 was passed owing to very grave misrepresentations on the part of a large section of the white population. It will scarcely be denied that such statements as the following,

> the dangers to which the whole community is exposed by the spread of leprosy, syphilis,[4] and the like loathsome diseases engendered by the filthy habits and immoral practices of these people. . . .

and also,

> as these men enter the state without wives or female relations, the result is obvious. Their religion teaches them to consider all women as soulless, and Christians as natural prey;

are scarcely in accordance with our normal sense of what is fair and just representation.

[1] The Gujarati original has, "You cannot clap with one hand".
[2] *Vide* "The Potchefstroom Meeting", 17-12-1904.
[3] *Vide* "Letter to *The Star*", dated "Prior to December 24, 1904".
[4] *Vide* however, the same quotation at p. 318, *supra*.

It is needless trouble to refute such imputations as those that we have quoted.

Mr. Loveday, then, as we have said, has been guilty of sins of omission and of commission, and it will became him to attempt to draw the red herring of personal abuse across the trail.

As for the matter of Arab traders spending no more than £40 per year, it is incorrect to say that an Indian merchant spends no more than £ 40 a year. If, as Mr. Loveday says, he has five assistants, as is not infrequently the case, each at £24 per annum, that must be an initial expense of £120 per annum, exclusive of his own trade expenses, personal expenses, rent and rates. In any case, we do not, from experience, expect Mr. Loveday to accept Mr. Gani's challenge.

In another article,[1] we have already dealt with the number of Indians now in the Transvaal, and the question of their alleged continuous arrival in the Colony. We need only remark that we have the authority of the Chief Secretary for Permits that Mr. Loveday's "facts" are wrong. In referring to the number of stores *in Pretoria*, Mr. Loveday was careless enough to remark that they had increased enormously. It is a fact that, since the war, they have decreased by some *thirty per cent*, the number of white stores having increased in at least a similar proportion¾ *in Pretoria*. The Location is quite another matter, and the subject should not have been dragged in by the hair of the head, for the purpose of creating fictitious impressions. If, then, Mr. Loveday is wrong as to matters relating to his own town, how can he be expected to know the facts concerning other towns of the Transvaal, concerning other Colonies of South Africa, concerning India itself? We propose to deal in a further article with the charge of untruthfulness levelled against the Indian, and endeavour to show that men, perfectly qualified to give an opinion on such a matter, ¾ which, we submit, with all due deference, Mr. Loveday is not¾ hold very different views.

Mr. Loveday stated that the Crown Prosecutor in India had certain powers of re-trying prisoners, quashing sentences, and taking cases to higher courts, because perjury, in India was looked upon as the proper thing. Apart altogether from the question of perjury, it will no doubt surprise Mr. Loveday to learn that the Crown Prosecutor in India has no greater powers than the Attorney-General of the Transvaal and, in fact, his powers are not nearly so wide.

But Mr. Loveday has so far left his information undigested as to

[1] *Vide* "Letter to *The Star*", dated "Prior to December 24, 1904".

omit to mention the cardinal fact that many of these Crown Prosecutors have been and are Indians. That is an improtant and a significant omission.

Referring now to the franchise of the Indian, it is a fact that he does possess a very definite francise. Almost every town of importance in India has its Town Council or Local Board, partially or wholly elected by the rate-payers the majority of whom are Indians. There is, therefore, the municipal franchise to begin with. There is also an indirect political franchise, in that some of the members of the Legislative Councils of the different Presidencies are elected by the members of the Corporations, who themselves are directly elected by the tax-payers. Hence we are quite within our rights in using the expression "Indian franchise". Therefore, also, Mr. Loveday was, as usual, inaccurate in stating that, in India, "there were no forms of representative institutions, and that all present knew the Indian was governed by military rule, aided by religion and caste". As to there being no social intercourse between Indian and white, Mr. Loveday forgets the great viceregal and Governmental receptions, where both sections of the community commingle, and such functions as the balls given by the Maharaja of Kuch Bahar,[1] where white and Indian meet on equal terms. But this is all beyond the mark, for the Indian community in South Africa does not desire and has never demanded social intercourse with the whites believing it to be unnecessary and and inadvisable, for many reasons.

Certainly Indians are entertained at officers' messes, as witness the case of Colonel Sir Pertab Singh, the King-Emperor's personal friend and aide-de-camp. Certainly, also, white soldiers salute the higher ranks of Indian officers.

The question of a bastard race, resulting from intercourse between whites and Indians, was also brought forward, for obvious reasons, at the meeting. It does not require to be said that anybody with the faintest knowledge of Indian life and Indian customs would never have dreamt of bringing forward such an argument as this, and we will not labour the subject.

We have one word to say, however, with regard to Mr. Loveday's contemptuous reference to Sir M. M. Bhownaggree:

[1] Cooch Behar, a small former state in north-eastern India, now merged in Assam.

The people at Home had so far forgotten themselves that they had actually elected a black man to the British House of Parliament; they, in this country, would never do it, they would not so far forget their colour,said Mr. Loveday. But what can we say to so ungentlemanly a remark? We think that the electors who sent Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji to Parliament, despite the gibe of the late Lord Salisbury, fairly represen-ted the accumulated statesmanship of some forty millions of British people. We have but one more inaccuracy to refute. Mr. Sampson stated that Indians made chairs and tables in their own houses in Joh-annesburg, and sold them on the open market, in competition with the goods of white manufactures. This is, bluntly, untrue. There are no In-dian artisans in Johannesburg working on such a scale as this. Surely, the absurdity of such a statement is self-evident enough.

The above statement reminds us of the story of a merchant who, one day, said to his traveller: "Get business, honestly, if you can, but get business". A similar idea seems to have prevailed amongst the speakers at the Potchefstroom meeting. It was as though they had said to each other: "Create a strong anti-Indian feeling, honestly, if you can, but create it !"

Indian Opinion, 7-1-1905

125. MR. KLEINENBERG AND MR. ABDOOL GANI

We have carefully examined the columns of our esteemed contemporary, the Johannesburg *Star*, and, so far, have failed to observe that Mr. T. Kleinenberg has written his acceptance of the challenge thrown out by the Chairman of the British Indian Association. We shall be glad to learn if Mr. Gani's opponent intends to avail himself of the opportunity given to him to refute the statements made at the Indian mass meeting. It seems to us to be most unfair, not only to Mr. Gani and to the public at large, but to Mr. Kleinenberg himself, for the latter to leave the matter where it now stands, and we are sure, knowing what an honourable man Mr. Kleinenberg is, that he has no intention of passing over the challenge issued by the Mr. Gani. We have no doubt whatever but that, if Mr. Kleinenberg finds that he has made a serious error in endeavouring to rebut the facts given by Mr. Gani, he will have the moral courage to acknowledge the correctness of the figures that Mr. Gani gave, and to withdraw his own statement.

Mr. Gani himself has publicly stated his willingness to make the *amende honorable*, should he be found to be in fault. That being the case, we see no reason whatever why a matter, so easily settled by facts offered or rebutted by either side, should not assume some sort of finality at as early an opportunity as is feasible.

Indian Opinion, 7-1-1905

126. POTCHEFSTROOM CHURLISHNESS

Even the business people in Potchefstroom, who have only a remote and temporary connexion with the place, are either infected with its unreasonable anti-Indian prejudice, or are being intimidated into the commission of acts of which, in their freer moments, they would be heartily ashamed. An esteemed correspondent informs us that the insurance agents have, suddenly and without notice, withdrawn their fire policies from the Indian merchants. We have never heard of such an instance anywhere else. We are informed that the petty agents, who have succumbed, as we have said, either to local prejudice or to intimidation, represent world-famous insurance companies, and we should be very much surprised if the stupid and unbusinesslike action of their agents be sanctioned by the head officers of these companies. We only hope that both the agents and the managers headquarters will see these lines, and we strongly advise the Indian merchants concerned to make representation at headquarters. The policy that Potchefstroom is developing in this matter is un-British in the extreme, and it remains to be seen how far it will be endorsed in other parts of the Transvaal.

Indian Opinion, 7-1-1905

127. THE PLAGUE

News has been received of two whites in East London who have had an attack of the plague. The weather is hot, rainy and favourable to an outbreak of the epidemic. As one of our correspondents says, we have not yet become vigilant about the matter. Dr. Murison[1] is very sympathetic and ready to help us. It is therefore, our duty to avail ourselves of his good offices. If, out of sheer selfishness or indo-lence, we fail to do what we ought to, we are afraid we shall have to repent later on. It is very necessary to appoint a committee, and as on the

[1] Medical Officer of Health, Durban.

previous occasion, inspect residential quarters and try to the utmost to remove all filth, wherever found. We hope our leaders will take immediate steps in this direction.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-1-1905

128. SPEECH AT OPENING OF LIBRARY IN DURBAN

The following is a report of Gandhiji's speech at the opening of a library in Durban, started in memory of Shri Lallubhai, the founder of the Natal Sanatan Dharma Sabha.

[DURBAN,
January 10, 1905]

While making a few important suggestions to the organisers of the Library, Mr. Gandhi said that, in a big city like Durban, where there was a large Indian population, a good library was indeed necessary; and to meet that need leading citizens and businessmen of Durban had, some years earlier, made great efforts, and a library known as the Diamond Jubilee Library[1] was started in commemoration of the event. But later, for lack of sufficient care and supervision, it was closed down. He hoped that the new Library would not be reduced to a similar condition but that it would improve from day to day. that the organisers would keep up their present enthusiasm and continue their efforts to ensure its permanent existence.

Mr. Gandhi then made some valuable suggestions regarding the selection of books and the hours during which the library should be kept open. He exhorted the public to visit the library, particularly on Sundays, sit amidst the books, those mute, noble friends, and study them to profit.

He closed his address with a few words about *Indian Opinion*, and the library was then declared open.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-1-1905

[1] *Vide* The furniture and books of the Diamond Jubilee Library were made over to the new Library.

129. LETTER TO G.K. GOKHALE

21-24 COURT CHAMBERS,
CORNER, RISSIK & ANDERSON STREETS,
P.O. BOX 6522
JOHANNESBURG,
January 13, 1905

TO
THE HONOURABLE PROFESSOR GOKHALE
POONA

DEAR PROFESSOR GOKHALE,

The existence of *Indian Opinion* you know. It has now embarked on career when I think I may fairly appeal to you for active sympathy. I propose to write perfectly frankly, as you know me too well to misunderstand me. When I saw that Mr. Madanjit could not carry on the paper without pecuniary assistance and as I knew that he was guided by thoroughly patriotic motives, I placed at his service the bulk of my savings. That, however, was not enough. Three months ago I took over the whole responsibility and management. Mr. Madanjit still remains nominally the proprietor and publisher, because I believe that he has done much for the community. My own office is at present being worked in the interests of *Indian Opinion* and I have already become responsible to the extent of nearly £ 3,500. Some English friends, who knew me intimately and before whom I placed the scheme as described in the enclosed, took up the idea and now it is in full working order and, although it does not show the same measure of self-sacrifice as shown by the founders of the Fergusson College in Poona, I venture to think that it is not a bad copy. It has been a most delightful thing to me to see the English friends coming forward so boldly. They are not literary men but they are sterling, honest, independent men. Each of them had his own business or employment where he was doing well, and yet none of them had the slightest hesitation in coming forward as a worker for a bare living which means £ 3 per month, with a distant prospect of getting profits.

It is also my intention, if my earnings continue, to open a school on the grounds, which would be second to none in South Africa for the education primarily of Indian children who would be resident boarders and, secondarily, of all who want to join the school

but would also reside on the premises. For this, too, volunteer workers are required. It would be possible to induce one or two Englishmen and English ladies here to give their lifetime to this work, but Indian teachers are absolutely necessary. Could you induce any graduates who have an aptitude for teaching, who bear a blameless character and who would be prepared to work for a mere living? Those who would come must be well-tried, first-class men. I would want two or three at least but more could certainly be accommodated, and after the school is in working order, it is intended to add a sanatorium with open-air treatment on hygienic lines. My immediate purpose, however, is in connection with *Indian Opinion*. If you approve of all I have said regarding it, will you kindly send a letter of encouragement to be sent to the editor for publication; also if you could spare a few moments, occasionally write an article ever so small for it? I am also anxious to secure either honorary or paid correspondents who would contribute weekly notes in English, Gujarati, Hindi and Tamil. If it becomes expensive, I might have to be satisfied with only English correspondence which would lend itself to being translated in the three Indian languages. Could you recommend any such correspondent or correspondents? The weekly notes should give an idea of what is being done on your side with reference to the Indian question, giving extracts from notices of the question in the newspapers, and should contain matters that are likely to be interesting to the Indians in South Africa. You may at your discretion disclose partly or wholly the contents of this letter in so far as such a course may be necessary in the interests of the subject-matter hereof. I hope you are keeping good health.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

1 Enclosure

Servants of India Society.

130. THE TRUTHFULNESS OF THE INDIAN

There seems to be a very general impression current that truthfulness, the outward manifestation of the eternal search after Truth, is a virtue entirely foreign to the nature of the inhabitants of India. Room is not left for the possibility of misunderstanding, allowance is not made for the probability of wrong comprehension, but the Indian is set down at once as a scamp, a rogue, a lying vagabond¾all said, as a human being destitute of every vestige of honour.

Little or no differentiation is made between the Indians who have come to this country. All are classed indiscriminately as "coolies"or "Arabs", and all are stigmatised as actual or potential liars. It is for-gotten, that generally speaking, there are two main classes of Indians in South Africa, the first being the indentured labourer class, and the second being the trading class. As often as not, the indentured Indian is of low caste, and, consequently, once removed from his accustomed surroundings, and the moral restraints of his place of residence in India, he is liable to fall, in exactly the same way as any other human being situated in similar circumstances, from the ethical standard that he had set up for him when in India. We cannot do better than quote the following from a widely circulated pamphlet:[1]

> Everyone I have met with in the Colony has dwelt upon the untruth-fulness of the Indians. To a limited extent, I admit the charge. It will be very small satisfaction for me to show, in reply to the objection, that other classes do not fare much better in this respect, especially if and when they are placed in the position of the unfortunate Indians. And yet, I am afraid, I shall have to fall back upon argument of that sort. Much as I would wish them to be otherwise, I confess my utter inability to prove that they are more than human. They come to Natal on starvation wages (I mean here the indentured Indians). They find themselves placed in a strange position and amid uncon-genial surroundings. *The moment they leave India* they remain throughout life, if they settle in the Colony, without any moral education. Whether they are Hindus or Mahomedans, they are absolutely without moral or religious instruction worthy of the name. They have not learnt enough to educate themselves without any outside help. Placed thus, they are apt to yield to the slightest temptation to tell a lie. After some time, lying with them becomes a habit and a disease. They would lie without any reason, without any prospect of bettering themselves materially, indeed, without knowing what they are doing. They reach a stage in life when their moral faculties have completely collapsed owing to neglet. . . . Are these men, then, more to be despised than pitied? Are they to be treated as scoundrels, deserving no mercy, or are they to be treated as helpless creatures, badly in need of simpathy? Is there any class of people who would not do as they are doing under similar circumstances?[2]

With regard to the trading classes, we absolutely deny that the Indian trader is more prone to falsehood than any other trader of any other race. Probably, he is less addicted to untruthfulness than most, for, not having so many luxurious habits as his competitors of a more

[1] *Open Letter*, December 1894; *vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Council", 6-7-1894 to "Constitution of the Natal Indian congress", 22-8-1894

[2] *ibid*., "The Asiatic Traders Commission in the Transvaal", 2-4-1904

complex civilisation, he has, therefore, not such great incentives to "lie for the benefit of the firm".

And here we make bold to assert that it is an unfortunate characteristic of the less cultured Englishman that, when he is brought into contact with what is strange and to which he is unaccustomed, he does not endeavour to investigate its nature, but spurns it contemptuously, as something foreign to his own outlook upon life, and he attributes to it every evil thing that can be imagined.

We think that, at this juncture, it would prove useful to hear what some very eminent white men have said publicly with reference to the truthfulness of the Indian.

Thus, Sir, George Birdwood, a very experienced Anglo-Indian, says:

> Moral truthfulness is as marked a characteristic of the Settia (upper) class of Bombay as of the Teutonic race itself. The people of India, in short, are in no intrinsic sense our inferiors, whilst, in things measured by some of the false standards¾false to ourselves¾we pretend to believe in, they are our superiors.[1]

Mr. Pincott says:

> In all social matters, the English are far more fitted to sit at the feet of Hindus and learn as disciples than to attempt to become masters.[2]

And truth is certainly a social virtue.

Elphinstone says:

> No set of people among the Hindus are so depraved as the dregs of our own great towns.

Sir John Malcolm says:

> I have hardly ever known, where a person did understand the language, or where a clam communication was made to a native of India, through a well informed and trustworthy medium, that the result did not prove what had at first been stated as falsehood had either proceeded from fear or from misunderstanding. I by no means wish to state that our Indian subjects are more free from this vice than other nations that occupy a nearly equal position in society, but I am positive that they are not more addicted to untruth.

Sir Chas. E. Elliot, K.C.S.I., Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, writing in his book, *The People of India*, says:

> The natives of India are often said to be altogether ignorant of the truth. I have not found them so. In Court, no doubt, far from the public opinion of their own village, bribed or interested witnesses are guilty of amazing flights of perjury. But in their own villages, among their own

[1] *ibid* "The Plague", 30-3-1904
[2] *ibid* "The Plague", 2-4-1904

> people, I have seldom known them tell a lie, even when the truth was to their own prejudice.

Professor Max Muller said that he had been repeatedly told by English merchants that

> commercial honour stands higher in India than in any other country, and that a dishonoured bill is hardly known there.

He says elsewhere:

> In their punchayets, (Colonel) Sleeman tells us, men adhere habitually and religiously to the truth, and 'I have had before me hundreds of cases', he says, 'in which a man's property, liberty, and life have depended on his tel-ling a lie, and he has refused to tell it'. Could any English judge say the same?

Professor Max Muller points out, with Colonel Sleeman, that whoever is ignorant of the life of the Indian village communities, as is practically every Englishman, is absolutely unqualified to give any opinion regarding the social and ethical virtues of the Indian, for "all the native virtues of the Hindus are intimately connected with their village life".

We think that we have quoted sufficiently from men able, from experience, to give a just opinion, to prove the utter falsity of the general charge of want of veracity levelled at the Indians. Where there is any lapse from strict adherence to accuracy of fact, it is but too often due to the Indians having been removed from all sources of moral control. Indeed, Sir George Campbell is quoted as saying that "the longer we possess a province, the more common and grave does perjury become".

We will conclude with one brief reference to the recent mass meeting at Potchefstroom. Mr. Loveday had much to say concerning Oriental duplicity, falsehood, and cunning, and he even quoted Lord Macaulay as saying, with regard to Clive, that it was "unquestionable that the duplicity of India had left its stain upon his (Clive's) character".

Now, we beg to point out that Macaulay, of all historians, is no longer read for his accuracy or his strict adherence to the simple facts of the case, but rather for his literary style and merit. However, since Lord Macaulay has been quoted, we make no apology for reproducing the following words of his, which apply now, to-day, and for all time, so long as India and England are linked together:

> We shall never consent to administer the *pousta* to a whole community, to stupefy and paralyse a great people, whom God has committed to our charge, for the wretched purpose of rendering them more amenable to our control. What is the power worth, which is founded on vice, on ignorance, and on misery¾which we can hold only by violating the most sacred duties

which, as governors, we owe to the governed, which, as a people blessed with far more than an ordinary measure of political liberty and of intellectual light, we owe to a race debased by three thousand years of despotism and priestcraft? *We are free, we are civilised to little purpose, if we grudge to any portion of the human race an equal measure of freedom and civilisation.*[1]

Indian Opinion, 14-1-1905

131. INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS AND RUSSIAN ZEMSTVOS[2]—A COMPARISON: 1

The Indians resident in London, together with their European friends, gave a dinner in honour of Sir William Wedderburn and Sir Henry S. Cotton at the Westminster Palace Hotel on November 29, 1904, before their departure from that city. Prominent people were invited to the function, and speeches were made. In his speech Sir Henry Cotton made a brief comparison between the Indian National Congress and the Russian Zemstvos. From a perusal of a later report, this analogy gives rise to a number of thoughts.

Every Indian knows in general and ought to know, if he already does not, what the Indian National Congress is, its origin, its function and its influence on the people as well as on the Government. It is now twenty years since the Congress was founded. The first session was held in Bombay; and such was the enthusiasm, insight, perseverance and courage of our Indian leaders of the time that far-sighted persons felt convinced that the association would certainly be able to breathe new life into this country. It is particularly necessary to remember this origin of the Congress. Lord Dufferin believed that such a body should be founded. He talked about it to Mr. Hume; the idea was very much to the latter's liking and, as a result of his consultations with prominent public men in India, the Congress was ultimately founded. It is necessary to bear this fact in mind, as it would be useful to us in refuting the numerous charges levelled against the Congress by its enemies. The founding of the Congress caused great alarm particularly in the minds of the autocratic, short-sighted and haughty officials. For they foresaw that the Congress would grow in strength day by day; that, looking upon the Congress as their very mother, the people would express their thoughts and feelings fearlessly at its

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mrs. A.M. Lewis", 4-8-1894

[2] Local territorial assemblies in Russia regulating the affairs of the districts. They were abolished by the Bolsheviks in 1917.

sessions; and that, consequently, autocracy and arrogance would no longer have their way unchallenged. They were afraid and began to raise an outcry through their Press and made all sorts of unbecoming charges against the loyal Congress, hoping that as a result its life would be cut short. These officers and their journals began heartily to abuse Congress leaders and tried to show that it was a seditious body and that, if the Government did not suppress it, the organisation would prove dangerous to the state. The battle of arguments carried on during Lord Ripon's[1] regime, however, opened their eyes and proved that not only could Indians understand their own interests, but that they could also formulate honest plans for the advancement of their country. On the establishment of the Congress these thoughts recurred to the officials with the same intensity, and pressure was brought to bear on the Government. Moreover, with a view to creating internal dissensions in the Congress, the Hindu-Muslim question was raised and attempts were energetically made to foster disunity within the ranks of the Hindus and of the Muslims by creating distinctions as between Bengalis, Punjabis and Madrasis, etc. In a short time, these obstructionists raised such a clamour that it influenced even a sound statesman like Lord Dufferin, who, speaking at the St. Andrew's Dinner before leaving Calcutta, won Anglo-Indian applause by venting his spleen upon the Congress. It is no doubt true that, when the late Mr. Bradlaugh[2] expressed his opinion on this subject, Lord Dufferin had thought it fit to write to him [in order to clarify his speech]. But that is another story. What we have at present to consider is just this: that, in spite of such difficulties, our leaders did not lose heart, but went on calmly doing their duty. And thanks to their efforts, the time has now come when even the enemies of the Congress have to admit its stren-gth, and haughty officials have to pay heed to its suggestions.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-1-1905

[1] Lord Ripon, Vicerory of India and Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1880-4.

[2] Charles Bradlaugh, (1833-91), well-known public worker, Member of Parliament, and an avowed atheist. He evinced a keen interest in Indian affairs and drafted, in 1889, a Bill for the reform of the Indian Councils. He attended the third session of the Congress held in Bombay in 1889. While a student in England, Gandhiji attended Baradlaugh's funeral.

132. PLAGUE AND LIQUOR

The Punjab Government Report on liquor states that many people in the Punjab have taken to drink out of a dread of plague, and there has consequently been a great increase in the excise revenue from liquor. The Report, moreover, states that the epidemic has broken out more virulently and casualties have been more numerous in places where people took to drinking in the belief that liquor prevented plague infection, but that rather less harm was done by plague where people did not drink at all. Although this does not prove that abstainers are immune from plague, this much it does prove that drinking leads to utter ruin. Dr. Mellis, who was the Chief Medical Officer in the Plague Hospital in Johannesburg, is also of the same opinion, namely, that drinking does not check, but aggravates the plague.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-1-1905

133. PLAGUE IN JOHANNESBURG[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
January 16, 1905

Plague seems to have broken out in Johannesburg. A few days ago, the son of a Muslim hawker in Sower Street caught the infection. His doctor informed the authorities on Saturday. On Sunday, he was removed to the Plague Hospital, the young man died to-day and has already been buried. No funeral rites could, therefore, be performed. Normally, the authorities would gladly have handed the body over for this purpose.

Once again the dark clouds are gathering. it will be to the great benefit of our people, if they bear in mind the following rules; otherwise, there would be immense harm. What is more, it might be used as an argument for enacting more severe laws against us.

1. No one should think that the Government will harass the patient after removing him to the hospital.

2. The Government should be immediately informed in case of a sudden attack of fever or asthma.

[1] This appeared as “From Our Correspondent”.

3. A doctor should immediately be consulted.

4. Every one should stay where he is without becoming panicky.

5. Those who might have come in contact with a plague patient should not try to conceal the fact, but should come forward to have their clothes, etc., disinfected.

6. On should not, under any circumstances, have one's bed-room attached to the shop in order to save money.

7. One should not stock any goods for sale in one's house.

8. One should keep one's house scrupulously clean.

9. Every house or room should be well lighted and well ventilated.

10. One should sleep with the windows open.

11.The clothes worn by day as well as those used during the night should be kept clean.

12. The food taken should be light and simple.

13. Lavish dinners and feasts should be stopped.

14.Dry earth or ashes should be provided in latrines where buckets are used; and every one should, after easing himself, cover the night-soil thoroughly with these so that no flies sit thereon.

15. Lavatories and urinals should be kept clean.

16. The floor and other parts of the house should be washed clean with disinfecting fluid mixed in hot water.

17. No articles from an infected place should be used elsewhere without being properly disinfected.

18. More than two persons should not sleep in a room of normal proportions.

19. One should never sleep in the kitchen, dining room or the larder.

20. Walls should be plastered with cement in order to keep out rats. Care should, most of all, be taken to see that foodstuffs are kept beyond their reach.

21.Those who always work indoors should go out into the open air and walk a couple of miles daily for exercise.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 21-1-1905

134. LETTER TO J. STUART[1]

21-24, COURT CHAMBERS,
CORNER, RISSIK & ANDERSON STREETS,
P.O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
January 19, 1905

J. STUART, ESQ.
RESIDENT MAGISTRATE
DURBAN

DEAR MR. STUART,

I venture to bring to your notice the journal, Indian Opinion, which has been now in existence for the last eighteen months. During that period I have been intimately connected with it. In my humble opinion, it is discharging a worthy mission in that it acts as an interpreter between the two great communities in South Africa. Its aim is Imperial and though it does and it must lay stress upon the grievances of the British Indians in South Africa, it often tones down the feelings of the Indian community, and it never fails to point out to it its shortcomings in the clearest possible terms, but now in its new garb and in its new abode, it represents much more. It represents a scheme which is briefly described in the enclosed,[2] and if it is at all successful, it may mark a revolution in business methods. Anyhow the fact that there are four independent Englishmen who were engaged in their own businesses, [who] have given them up in order to work for its realisation and that there is an equal number of Indians who have done likewise[3] cannot but commend itself to you. In spite, however, of this band of eight founders the scheme must depend upon public support for success. There are two ways in which, I venture to think, you could assist the enterprises. The first by becoming a subscriber and by occasionally writing for it either over your own signature or anonymously.

[1] *Vide* "Mr. Stuart the Magistrate", 24-9-1903

[2] The document is not available; but it appears to have been the same as that which Gandhiji enclosed in his letter to Gokhale, on January 13, concerning the publication of *Indian Opinion* from Phoenix. That it was probably an off-print or a cutting of "Ourselves" from *Indian Opinion*, 24-12-1904, is borne out by Gandhiji's reference to it in his letter of December 10, 1904 to Dadabhai Naoroji.

[3] Among the Englishmen were Herbert Kitchin, Albert West and Henry Polak, and among the Indians were Chhaganlal Gandhi, Maganlal Gandhi and Anandlal Gandhi, the last two having accompanied Gandhiji on his return to South Africa in 1902.

The terms of subscription are 12/6 for Natal and 17/- outside Natal. The Offices are at Phoenix, Natal. If the object of *Indian Opinion* commends itself to you and you consider the scheme it represents worthy of support, will you kindly let me have a letter of encouragement which I may pass on to the editors for publication, apart from the two requests above made.

Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

PS.[1] I venture to think that you could write for the paper now and then on non-political matters.

M. K. G.

From the original: Courtesy, Miss Kellie Campbell, Durban.

135. INDIAN OPEN-HANDEDNESS¾ AND ITS SEQUEL

In another column of this issue will be found the published correspondence between the Potchefstroom Chief of Police and the Secretary of the Potchefstroom British Indian Committee, relative to a subscription from the latter body in support of a scheme for the establishment of a properly equipped fire-brigade. This correspondence passed some few weeks since, and it throws an interesting light upon a side of the Indian character that has been hitherto carefully ignored by the white residents of Potchefstroom. It is to be hoped that other journals will give wider circulation to the facts chronicled in these two letters, for it is eminently desirable that the attitude of the British Indian community in Potchefstroom should be properly understood by our opponents.

We learn that the Municipality found themselves unable to contribute the necessary funds in aid of the fire-brigade scheme, and, so far as we are aware, that scheme fell through.

But the point that we desire to make is this, that, at the time the proposal was made by Capt. Jones and accepted by Mr. Rahman, several of the Indian merchants, and those, too, who would have subscribed most largely to the fund, were already insured against fire.

We wish this to be very carefully understood in view of the sequel, for it throws the disinterestedness of the motives of the British Indian community of Potchefstroom in high relief against the somewhat gloomy background of Vigilance vindictiveness.

[1] The postscript is in Gandhiji's hand, while the letter, possibly a circular addressed to influential persons, is typewritten.

In our issue of January 7th, we drew urgent attention to the action of a fire-insurance agent in Potchefstroom in causing the cancellation, without notice, of certain policies that had been granted to British Indian merchants, covering their premises against the risks of fire, and that did not expire for several months to come. It transpires that this gentleman represents one of the oldest established fire-insurance companies in the world. At least six important merchants are affected, and their premises are no longer insured. We are told, upon the best authority, that this gentleman has, if not actually joined the Anti-Asiatic Vigilance Association, at least been adversely influenced by that body of terrorists. The "fiery cross" has gone forth, and the world now knows that the white people of Potchefstroom have instituted a system of boycott that has, as one of its direct effects, the placing of the premises of inoffensive citizens in jeopardy, and that creates a serious risk to the Indian merchants of seeing the whole fruits of many years of hard, irksome toil consumed before their very eyes. Malignancy could go no further. With no fire-brigade at hand, these unfortunate people are now helpless, and at the mercy of any stray spark that the winds may carry along, or of any incendiary whose morbid Colour-madness may induce him to bring fiery ruin upon the head of the wretched owner of the first inviting store that may present itself.

We do not speak wild words of hysteria, for the danger is a very real one. The dastardly attempt at incendiarism in Potchefstroom, shortly after the virulent anti-Indian epidemic reached a crisis there, will still be fresh in the memories of our readers. We use the world "incen-diarism", in this connexion, on the authority of the Chief of Police himself, and we regret to think that this courteous officer is not in a position to guard every store that is liable to attack in this cowardly way.

From the point of view of the fire-insurance company itself, the Indian stores in Potchefstroom should at least be a favourable a risk as those of the European traders, for, from our own intimate knowledge of them, the comparison between the stores of the two sections of the community would not be unfavourable to the Indians. Consequently, we are unable to find any grounds for the inexplicable action of the company in cancelling the policies. There could surely be no question of commercial integrity involved, or the traders affected would never

have been granted polices. Moreover, they are all well-known merchants of established character, and even the most superficial inquiries would have revealed the fact that there could be no foundation for any imputation against their honour and trustworthiness.

The whole affair does not greatly redound to the credit of Potchefstroom, and the scandal thus perpetrated places a stigma upon the fire-insurance company concerned.

It is our intention to call the immediate attention of the headquarters staff of the company to the matter. We are certain that its British sense of justice and of fair play will induce it to make the most stringent inquiries, and we have no doubt whatever but that an intolerable situation will be terminated as speedily as is possible in the circumstances.

Indian Opinion, 21-1-1905

136. INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS AND RUSSIAN ZEMSTVOS —A COMPARISON: 2

Every wise ruler is eager to know the real condition of his subjects, their happiness and their misery, and so are, more or less, our King-Emperor Edward and the Czar of Russia. Both of them have the same desire, but employ different methods. Fortunately for us, the officers in India are not so arrogant as those in Russia; nor have they the same [wide] powers. That is to say, Indian officials have to conform to rules and cannot show the same arrogance and high-handedness as their opposite numbers in Russia. So that, on the whole, officials in India cannot, even if they would, tyrannize over the people to the same extent as in Russia. Even so, some of the sufferings of the Russian and Indian peoples are of the same kind, even if those in India are comparatively less acute. But the people India in do not look upon their hardships as normal-and this is but natural. In Russia there is no difference of colour, creed, caste or language between the officials and the subjects, while in India the officials are in every way different from the people, and some aloofness-though this is hardly necessary-is, therefore, always felt. These grievances naturally cause the people some unhappiness. There, then, exists, in both the countries, a certain coolness and distance between the officials and the people and

the latter smart under it. They believe that the relations between the ruler and the ruled should be very close; that there should be mutual trust, that they should share in the other's weal and woe and treat one another with love and affection. In short, there should an identity of interest between the king and his subjects, the former being considered happy only if the latter are so. The king no doubt wields power, but if he abuses it, both he and his subjects will suffer. Hence it is that wise rulers are always eager to know the true condition of their subjects, their joy and their sorrow.

The kingdoms of old were generally very small compared to those of to-day, and the king could easily rule over his subjects himself. But, as the kingdoms grew in size, the need of employing officials arose, with the result that in all civilised communities kings have been reduced to the status of figure-heads, and officials have become indispensable and all-important. The officials know quite well that, without them, there can be no king, and they naturally contrive in all possible ways to ensure that their prestige and authority are never detracted from. Consequently, they begin to consider self-interest more important than duty, and sufficient attention is not paid to the welfare of the people. This leads to discontent and as the officials do not have the patience to listen to the complaints or criticism of the people, a cleavage between the two develops. This leads to all possible efforts and plans by the subjects to break official high-handedness and to protect their own rights. Instances are few where the standard of administration is good; more often it is inefficient or corrupt. There is a great deal of difference between the policies of the Governments of Russia and India, and, consequently, between the people's condition and feelings in the two countries. But the officials in both countries have more or less excessive powers and, therefore, the relations between them and the people are not what they should be. It must be clear from the foregoing that the feelings and demands of the people are, in several respects, the same in both countries, though the conditions differ. This is due to the far too scanty contact between the ruler and the ruled. As the causes are similar, so are the results.

Wonderful are the ways of Nature. Last November, there was a public discussion regarding the agenda for the Congress session at Bombay. About the same time, the local assemblies in Russia, called Zemstvos, declared their aspirations and demands. Whereas the resolutions to be moved in the Congress session were first discussed in provincial committees and subsequently published by the Congress

Committee, the resolutions of the Zemstvos were first published in St. Petersburg and thereafter received the assent of 31 out of 34 local Zemstvos.

[From Gujarati] (*Incomplete*[1])

Indian Opinion, 21-1-1905

137. THE PLAGUE[2]

JOHANNESBURG
January 23, 1905

Last week I sent you news of the outbreak of plague and outlined preventive measures to be observed.[3] Meanwhile, six or seven cases have been reported from Durban, all of them Indian or Kaffir. That the plague does not take long to spread among our people seems to be patent enough. If it spreads further, it will render our movements difficult. No one should fail to observe last week's instructions.

The maternal uncle of the boy who died of plague had come here to see him. He fled to Pretoria in fear, with the result that he got into more trouble. He and his family were inoculated and kept under quarantine for a few days. Had he, instead of running away, stayed here under the supervision of the authorities, he would have been spared all this trouble.

The condition of the Malay Location here has greatly deteriorated in some respects. People have huddled together and some of them pay no heed whatever to any talk of sanitation. A committee has been appointed, which goes out every night to inspect the houses; and it has now been decided that, if the people do not listen to its instructions, the authorities should be informed. Indeed, it is better that this should be so. If we keep our weaknesses hidden over a period of time and plague subsequently breaks out there, the Malay Location, too, will be wiped out like the Indian, and we shall have to wring our hands in helplessness. It is, therefore, necessary to publish the names of those who are willing to get out of the filth for that will only be administering a bitter dose in their interests as well those of others.

The local doctor has accepted our request that our people be informed of any death among the Indians in the Plague Hospital, so

[1] This series was not continued.
[2] This was published as a despatch "Form our Correspondent".
[3] *Vide* "Plague in Johannesburg", 16-1-1905.

that the body could be taken charge of and the funeral rites performed.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-1-1905

138. INDIANS IN POTCHEFSTROOM

We publish in another column a very important statement from our correspondent at Potchefstroom. Two glaring mis-statements were made at the Convention. The one was with reference to Pietersburg, and the other, to Potchefstroom. With respect to both these towns, the speakers boldly alleged that the Indians were swamping European trade, and that their present strength was considerably in excess of what it was before the war. As to Pietersburg, the fallacy has been exploded. Mr. Kleinenberg has not yet shown that the statements, made by Mr. Abdool Gani. *The Star*,[1] are incorrect. Now we have a report from Potchefstroom, and, seeing that our correspondent gives the names of the British Indian store-keepers at present trading within the town limits, we think that this report should be considered satisfactory by the public as it undoubtedly is to us. Even were it true that there is now a greater number of Indian store-keepers in Potchefstroom, or in any other place, that could never be a reason for confiscation of rights, but since sensational statements have been made without any truth in them, it is as well that the public should be placed in possession of facts as they are, and that the Indian said of the question should not be prejudiced by exaggeration on the part of the anti-Indian party. The most painful part, however, of this whole affair is that those who pose as leaders have shown themselves utterly incompetent even to examine the truth of matters that have been placed before them. They have, in their eagerness to make out an anti-Indian argument, accepted any fiction that has been passed on to them.

Indian Opinion, 28-1-1905

139. THE PLAGUE

With the advent of the wet season, we have rumours of plague, as well as actual cases. We must once more draw the attention of our Indian friends to the letter we published in these columns, addressed

[1] *Vide* "Letter to *The Star*", December 24, 1904.

by the Health Officer for the Borough of Durban. We cannot but think that this is an opportunity for the Indians to show their capability, and it is for the leaders to come forward and appeal to the rank and file with reference to strict observance of sanitary regulations. The plague is undoubtedly the off-spring of poverty and filth. We know that the poorer class of Indians are not in a position to do all that may be necessary. They may not, for instance, be able to have well-ventilated rooms or houses situated in healthy localities, but when allowance has been made for all these things, there is undoubtedly a great deal that can be done by proper co-operation and gentle coaxing, and we hope that the community will rise to the occasion and take the necessary precautions. We would, at the same time, draw the attention of our esteemed Health Officer to the condition of the Western Vlei[1] and the Eastern Vlei. These two spots require immediate attention, and with them the Indians are unable to deal. It is for the Town Council to take heroic measures, and either permanently mend the two places or end them. They are, anyway, a reflection on the premier borough in South Africa. The disquieting news from Johannesburg, too, should place us on our guard, and we have no doubt that the British Indians there will do their duty, and assist the authorities in every possible manner to prevent a repetition of the outbreak that took place last year. We are informed that the attention of the authorities has been more than once drawn to the state of the Malay Location, and, although it is kept by the inhabitants in a very good condition, whilst the houses are well built, the fact that practically the whole of the Indian population of the burnt-down Location is now concentrated in the Malay Location should not be lost sight of, and the Town Council of Johannesburg will not be able to free itself from blame if the plague unfortunately breaks out in the Location. It has, certainly, hirtherto failed in its duty to provide permanent shelter for those who were dis-possessed on the burning of the Indian Location, and, as the custodian of the public health, it will have failed in its duty still further if it neglects to remove the pressure on the Malay Location.

Indian Opinion, 28-1-1905

[1] Vlei is a swamp.

140. DOES A KAFFIR FEEL?

The Johannesburg Town Council has been for some time considering the question of Native cyclists. The Works Committee brought out, last week, a report, and advised that a bye-law should be passed whereby "every Native, holding a cycle permit and riding a cycle within the municipal area, should wear on his left arm, in a conspicuous position, a numbered badge which shall be issued to him, together with his permit". That, in a cosmopolitan town like Johannesburg, the Town Council should, by a large majority, have passed such a drastic bye-law is to us a matter of painful surprise, notwithstanding the fact that colour prejudice is a strong ruling sentiment in South Africa. Mr. Langermann was the champion supporter of the bye-law against the mild protest from Messrs. Mackie Niven and Quinn, and he justified it on the ground that they must make a distinction between Native and white riders of bicycles. "The badge," he said, "must be in front. It was absolutely necessary to distinguish the Native from the white men." This remark naturally excited some laughter, as, unlike Mr. Langermann, the other members were evidently quite capable of distinguishing a Native from a white man without a badge being necessary. Mr. Langermann, in our opinion, proves the truth of the adage that those, who have suffered persecution, instead of sympathising with the persecuted after they have escaped from it themselves, delight in the persecution of others. Mr. Langermann is never slow in protesting against the persecution of his co-religionists in Russia. May not a Native ask the question¾has he no feelings? However, we are more concerned with the general attitude of the Town Council, as represented by the majority of its members, than with Mr. Langermann's views. The tone of the speeches made at the meeting was, we say with all deference to the Town Council, highly discreditable, and reflects all the greater honour on the minority consisting of Messrs. Niven, Quinn, Rockey, and Pim, who had the courage of their convictions, and did not hesitate to defend the Native against unnecessary and wanton indignity. We are, as a rule, very reluctant about expressing opinions on matters not specially coming within the purview of this journal, but the proceedings of the Town Council are, in our opinion, so scandalous, that we should be failing in our duty if we did not, in

the interests of the community of South Africa, raise our humble protest against them.

Indian Opinion, 4-2-1905

141. THE HOONDAMAL CASE

The Hoondamal case has now entered upon the last stage, or, shall we say, the first stage of a new phase. Hoondamal, the individual, disappears from view, but the Indian trading community replaces him. In the Test Case of *Hoondamal* v. *Rex*, the Supreme Court has said the final word, and the Durban Town Council has won a momentary triumph.

We use the word "momentary" deliberately. We cannot think that a triumph of prejudice and injustice can ever be permanent. Such a conclusion would be entirely opposed to all the teachings of history and philosophy.

Is there anyone who will dare say that the Town Council of Durban has shown even the slightest desire or inclination to mete out justice to this unfortunate man? Every means has been taken by it to bring about his ruin, because, in the words of the Licensing Officer-which have been officially disapproved of, but which, we have only too much reason to believe, are privately endorsed by members of the Town Council "further Asiatic licences should not be granted in West Street".

There are times when what is nearest the heart is nearest the lips, and we fear that, notwithstanding the official disclaimer of the Town Council, the Licensing Officer's opinion is emphatically held by his employers, and the cat has, perhaps unwittingly, been let out of the bag. The effect, then, of the Supreme Court's decision is to make West Street a close preserve for white traders, and "no Indians need apply" for licences to trade in that select thoroughfare.

But, we ask, can the matter be allowed to remain where it is? Dare such a condition of affairs be permitted to be continued? We think not. We do not now deal with the legal merits of the case, but it appears more than strange that the Supreme Court should have ruled that a man, holding a trading licence, can have his, licence nullified by mere removal from one place to another within the boundaries of the same town. However that may be, the matter seems to us to be sufficiently important to be taken to a higher tribunal. It may well be that other arguments can be produced that will entail some modification of the present conditions.

Whilst the drama before the Supreme Court was in process of enactment, a side issue was being considered within the Town Council Chamber. The Durban Corporation has attacked the Hoondamal citadel in West Street from all directions, and it would appear that the sapping tactics have proved successful in undermining its foundations. By these devious methods, the fortress has, seemingly, fallen, but the defender has not been disgraced, for from the ashes of his defence will arise a yet mightier champion, who will wrench justice from reluctant hands, an compel circumstances to his needs.

The side issue, to which we have made reference, was the appeal of Mr. Hoondamal to the Town Council against the Licensing Officer's decision to refuse a licence in respect of the premises in West Street. In spite of the dignified protest of Mr. Burne, the Town Council has upheld the Licensing Officer's decision to refuse the licence, and although dissociating itself publicly from the reason given by the Licensing Officer, it has not substituted a reason of its own for the one repudiated.

But another astounding point arises in connection with this hearing. The Mayor has laid down the extraordinary dictum that the Licensing Officer's discretion is arbitrary, and not, as contended by Mr. Hoondamal's counsel, to be exercised within the four corners of the law. It is not within our province to comment upon the legal aspect of this ruling; we merely place it on record. The struggle promises to be a titanic one. Indeed, the Indian community must either take it up or succumb. It is no mere question of the annihilation of Mr. Hoondamal. Whilst such a result would be deplorable, it would be comparatively insignificant. The matter is of far larger concern than the conservation of the privileges of an individual. The whole Indian trading community is threatened with extinction. What has happened to Mr. Hoondamal may happen to every single Indian trader. So long as the newly-laid-down interpretation of the law holds good, no Indian's business is worth a day's takings.

The net result of the decision of the Supreme Court is this. It is known that the desire of the white population is to stamp out the Indian traders piecemeal. It has been ruled that licences are granted for particular premises only and are not transferable. A landlord may, in consequence, rackrent a tenant trader to the top of his bent, and the trader is abjectly helpless. He must either be ruined by the landlord or

he must seek new premises. If he chooses the latter alternative, his licence becomes invalid, and his trading privileges null and void. He cannot obtain what will then be considered a new licence, for just as it may be (unofficially) judged to be unnecessary to issue new licences for Asiatics to trade in West Street, so every other trading locality within the town limits may be debarred to him, and he will be extinguished as absolutely as a moth in a candle flame.

This is a matter, not for individual consideration, but for the corporate deliberation of the whole Indian community all over South Africa. The battle-ground has been temporarily removed from the Transvaal to Natal. What applies to Durban applies to the whole Colony, and what now applies to Natal may not improbably apply to South Africa as a whole. Evil example is quickly followed.

Indian Opinion, 11-2-1905

142. IS IT BRITISH?

In past issues, we have devoted a considerable amount of space to the discussion of Potchefstroom's doings. We have done this, not so much because of the importance of Potchefstroom as a centre of opinion, as because we regard that town as typifying much that is evil in South Africa in regard to the attitude adopted towards the Indian community. English people are accustomed to view, with unqualified abhorrence, the taking of the law into their own hands by certain sections of the American people, when unfortunate negroes are martyrised under the unorthodox code known as "lynch law". Potchefstroom is evidently anxious to put itself beyond the pale of British civilisation in like manner, for we read, with respect to the building of a Mohamedan mosque in the town: "If the Indians persist in violating public feeling, there will probably be trouble over the matter, as some strong expressions of opinion have been made use of. What is legal is one thing, and what is likely to meet with resentment is another." Thus speaks our contemporary, the *Potchefstroom Budget*. There can be no two readings of this statement. It can only be regarded as a direct incitation to go beyond what is permitted by the law. It has, we believe, been held that the Potchefstroom Town Council is not legally empowered to prevent the erection of the mosque. Can it be that our contemporary has the rash courage to urge that the building of the mosque should be prevented by other than legal means? That is not in

accordance with the great British tradition of fair play-but we are almost inclined to wonder, despairingly, whether South Africans have cast aside the foundation-principle of British national honour.

Indian Opinion, 11-2-1905

143. PIETERSBURG TRADERS

We publish, in another column, a report from our Pietersburg correspondent, together with correspondence that has passed between the Employees' Association and the local British Indian Committee on the question of early closing. It will be evident, from a perusal of these documents, that there is a rather strong feeling existent in Pietersburg on this subject. We have repeatedly pointed out that invidious distinction is made between Asiatics and Europeans, in matters of trade especially, and again and again have we shown how the white population has endeavoured to saddle the Indian community with a share of responsibility and of penalty, whereas is has carefully refrained from granting them any measure of privilege. Now it happens that human nature is so organised that deprivation of privilege is not considered, by those who are deprived, as an equivalent to equality of responsibility or imposition of burden and it cannot be wondered at that, in such circumstances, the Indian community has frequently refused to accept obligations thrust upon it by the white inhabitants who persist in refusing equality of opportunity. The Pietersburg Indian traders, as a matter of fact, did fall in with the wishes and desires of their white fellow-traders, so long as the latter imposed upon them no special disabilities. But when the white traders commenced their methods of boycott and ostracism, the Indian traders began to perceive that they must consider themselves apart from the rest of the community. The sequel is to be found in this correspondence to which we make reference. The white traders must alter their mode of procedure if they wish the Indian merchants to abide by the convention they would set up. There must be give and take on both sides.

Indian Opinion, 11-2-1905

144. THE COLOURED FRANCHISE

In another column of this issue will be found an extract from a lengthy report, appearing in the *Johannesburg Star* of the 4th inst., dealing with a meeting of Coloured people in the Transvaal. At this meeting a resolution was submitted, requesting His Majesty's Government not to forget or tamper with the just rights and privileges of the

Coloured subjects of the Crown in the Transvaal, when framing the Constitution that is now in process of being. We can only say that the Coloured community has our fullest sympathy in its endeavour to escape from political oblivion. Time was when the late Mr. Rhodes uttered his famous dictum that the franchise should be given to every civilised man south of the Zambesi. That ideal seems, in these latter days, to be rapidly falling into disrepute. It is unfashionable, now a days, to be guilty of having on ideal, and a crime to be so shameless as, having one, to act in accordance with it. We have seen only recently how a Native Commission has issued an official report, in which the recommendation is made that Coloured people, already enfranchised, should retain their franchise rights only in State elections, but should lose them in the event of elections for a Federal Parliament. The manifest injustice of this needs no emphasis. It is much at one with the general attitude adopted by the white population of South Africa towards the non-white. In matters of Colour prejudice, it is, unfortunately, almost impossible to convince by logical argument. Where blind prejudice rules, of the Transvaal will have to wait long before they succeed in securing the recognition of what we conceive to be their just rights. We trust that they will continue to protest against ill-considered treatment and to urge the inherent justice of their demands.

Indian Opinion, 11-2-1905

145. ATTACK ON THE KAFFIRS

The Johannesburg Town Council could not bear to see the Kaffirs riding bicycles like the whites, and therefore passed, at its last meeting, a resolution to the effect that a Kaffir who had a permit to own a bicycle must wear on his left arm, while riding in the city, a badge with the number on it, easily visible.

The Transvaal administration is nowadays carried on in such a manner that this resolution causes us no surprise. We write about it today only to remind our Indian brethren¾though we do not think it quite necessary¾that present-day Johannesburg is far different from the Johannesburg of pre-war days. Most of the people how now hold the reins of power were known, before the outbreak of the war, as Uitlanders, and were always quick to raise an outcry demanding justice for themselves. Foreign nationals called themselves British subjects and made all possible efforts to secure for themselves the rights enjoyed by the British. In this, the English, the Russians, the Germans and

others were all one and united. The Boers were then the rulers, against whom these people used to complain vociferously that they did not administer justice equitably. These were the very British subjects, who first incited the Boer Government against Indians, and later questioned its authority to legislate against them. It was again these British subjects who at last got Lord Milner and Mr. Chamberlain to go to war with the Boers. It was these self-same British subjects who during the war went about trumpeting that, when the war was over, true justice would be done, and all discrimination based on race or colour would be eliminated from the Statute-book. This was the first act of the dramas.

In the second act, everything was forgotten, and these very British subjects became engrossed in serving their own interests. Then followed the third act, in which open enmity to the Indians began to be manifested. And in the fourth act, which is being staged now, oppressive laws are being passed and put into execution with the utmost rigour.

All this must redound to the credit of these very British subjects. As on the Indians, so also on the Kaffirs and the Coloured people, the attack is bound to come without fail. They should, therefore, take heed that, if the one is attacked, the other, too, is bound, sooner or later, to meet the same fate. It will not be very surprising if the rule enacted today for the Kaffirs is applied tomorrow to the Indians.

The queer thing about it is that those who are clamouring for this atrocious legislation have themselves been aliens who only a brief while ago began to call themselves British subjects. Mr. Langermann[1] spoke at length on this resolution and, in the heat of his eloquence, forgot even the colour of the Kaffir, sending the house into fits of laughter. He argued that the badge should be worn in front, so that the Kaffir might not pass for a white! It is given to Mr. Langermann alone to express such thoughts; and we congratulate him on the suggestion that, in the absence of the badge in front, the Kaffirs might be mistaken for whites! But, for a proper appreciation of what Mr. Langermann said, it would be useful to know something about him. Mr. Langermann feels very deeply for his Russian brethren and, therefore, criticises the Russian Government a great deal. It is the law of nature that a man, brought up under tyranny, forgets, on becoming free, his own miserable days, abuses his newly acquired freedom and even becomes cruel. It is, therefore, small wonder that the gentlemen who came from Poland and have recently been converted into British subjects should lose their balance.

[1] A member of the Town Council.

The only matter for satisfaction during the discussion on the resolution was that Messers. Mackie Niven, Quinn, Rockey, and Pim did not forget that the Kaffirs, too, were human being and raised their voice [of protest] against their unwarranted humiliation. But theirs was a cry in the wilderness. Nevertheless, they deserve our respect for giving expression to their true thoughts unmindful of popular sentiment.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-2-1905

146. SLAUGHTER-HOUSES IN THE CAPE COLONY

The report by Inspector Keyne on the condition of the slaughter-houses in the Cape Colony, just out, is worth perusal. He says that, of the slaughter-houses inspected by him, one or two were extremely dirty. On the main road in Meadland, he found entrails and fat hung against the wall from a hook. Blood and offal had got stuck to the wall to a height of four feet above the ground. He found that the common practice of the place was to lime-wash the walls over the accumulated layers of waste matter, and this had resulted in solid accretions of lime and refuse on the walls. The men working there were very slovenly, their clothes dirty and covered over with layers of grease. These often came in contact with the meat.

Needless to say, all this has been found in slaughter-houses run and managed by the whites, too. The question arises how such offences have remained undetected all these days. Who can tell the number of people who must have been taken ill by eating the meat produced in such insanitary places? What would be the consequence if Indians were responsible for such a state? The whites would have at once resorted to lawlessness and demanded that not only the offenders, but the entire Indian community should be banished or severe restrictions imposed on it. But, fortunatley for us, such uncleanliness has been found in shops belonging to the whites. Let us see how the authorities deal with the matter.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-2-1905

147. THE CONGRESS AND LORD CURZON[1]

Sir Henry Cotton, who presided over the recent session of the Indian National Congress, had requested H. E. the Viceroy for an appointment to place before him personally all the resolutions passed at the Congress session. But the Viceroy refused either to see Sir Henry as the President of the Congress, or let him submit the resolutions. However, to show that he meant no affront to Sir Henry personally, Lord Curzon agreed to see him as a private gentleman. This only means that Lord Curzon feels no compunction in hurling an insult at the Congress. It appears from *India* that the reason for his refusing to see Sir Henry was that, if once the Viceroy saw him, he would have to see his successors, too, in the future. Earlier Lansdowne[2] had also on similar grounds refused to see the Presidents of the Congress. How, then, could Lord Curzon violate the precedent already established? The thought never occurred to His Excellency that, by his strict adherence to precedent, he was offending the feelings of millions of people. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the Congress that has lived these twenty years will live on and grow from day to day.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-2-1905

148. BYE-LAWS FOR CAPE TOWN BARBERS

The *Government Gazette* publishes the rules and regulations framed by the Cape Town Municipality for barbers. Under the rules every barber's shop is liable a medical inspection. Every barber is required to keep his shop tidy. The scissors, razors and other implements used for one customer must not be used for another without being cleaned. Brushes, etc., should be properly washed and kept clean. A fresh towel must be used for every customer. When a person suffering from disease is given a shave or has his hair cut, the same instruments should not be used again before being washed clean with an antiseptic liquid. A defaulter is liable to a fine of up to £5. Officials have been authorised to inspect and find out whether these rules are properly observed or not. By themselves, the rules are excellent, but it

[1] Viceroy of India, 1899-1905.
[2] Viceroy of India, 1888-94.

would be very difficult to enforce them. But now that the rules are there, they are likely to exercise some check on the barbers. We see such rules for the first time in the Cape Town Municipality; and they are likely to be introduced in other places also. Indian barbers will be well advised to heed the warning. There is not doubt that the conditions in shops owned by Indian barbers needs to be improved. The implements and towels are not too clean. It does take a little time to attend to their cleanliness, but it does not involve any expense. If the tools and implements are kept free of dirt and in proper trim, they last longer, and clean towels, etc., promote custom. Even many of the white barbers keep their instruments, etc., unclean; but we need not view with them in undesirable matters.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-2-1905

149. "QUESTIONS OF COLOUR"

We quote elsewhere from an editorial in the *Rand Ratepayers' Review* under the above title, and we do so because our contemporary has hit the nail exactly on the head. The article is written by a man who, unlike some petty politicians in South Africa, can keep in mind the true proportion of things when dealing with this matter. It is a momentous one, for, if South Africa endorse an un-British anti-Asiatic policy, the consequences may be very grave. But we cannot believe that our statesmen, in the consideration of local affairs, will lose sight of Imperial interests. We ourselves attach no more importance to the anti-Asiatic crusade than does our contemporary; for one has only to look at the facts of the case to see what little basis there is for agitation of this character. The origin of the whole matter is trade jealousy. It is this petty motive alone that animates the anti-Indian movement; and it is perfectly apparent to all who are not blinded by colour prejudice. The *Review* speaks only simple truth when it says:

> The undignified spectacle of villagers holding public meetings to prevent Indian merchants from trading in any part of the Empire is most absurdly foolish.

We presume that the writer had specially in mind Boksburg and Potchefstroom. Boksburg is a village that cannot rise beyond the consideration of its own pump, and Potchefstroom is a small dorp[1] that rose out of obscurity only when it became bitterly anti-Asiatic. And yet it is expected that Indians¾who, as the *Review* points out, form

[1] Village

half the population of the Empire¾ are to be deprived of their rights as British subjects, at the bidding of small provincial towns !

Granted that Indian traders undersell the European; does not every European trader endeavour to do just this very thing to his competitor? Is not competition the soul of business? Granted that the Indian can live on "the smell of an oily rag"; would not any medical man say that a simplification of diet is exactly what the European needs? Why, then, charge the Indian with this virtue as if it were a crime? The fact of the matter is that the European detests his Indian competitor because he himself is not permitted to gain exorbitant profits by making the consumer pay inflated prices for his commodities. If the anti-Asiatics gain the victory, the person who will suffer most is the white consumer. Let South Africans remember that.

Says the *Review*:

> There are plenty of ways whereby white people can safeguard their own interests and preserve their authority without these ever-recurring public sneers by one section of the King's subjects against another. If a few white men hate the Asiatic as a trader, while they compass sea and land to introduce him as a labourer, they are not compelled to trade with him. They can just let him alone and trade with their own kind.

Another argument used to bolster up the anti-Asiatic position is that Indians are a danger to the public health. This may or may not be so; but, most certainly, if they are, the fault lies, not with them, but with the sanitary authorities.

Indians have everywhere in South Africa proved themselves specially amenable to health regulations. This was shewn, beyond all controversy, by the remarkable manner in which the whole community submitted itself to the plague authorities during the recent outbreak in Johannesburg.

Another charge that has been brought against Indians is that they did not fight for the Empire during the late South African war. The ignorance of the framers of this charge is typical; for, with the exception of themselves, the whole world knows that Indians were as ready to fight and, if need be, to die for the Empire as any other of its children, but were not permitted to do so. There are some people who know that the Indians of Natal and the Transvaal again and again petitioned the Natal Government to be allowed to go to the front "in any capacity". And there are some also who know that, of all the best of the British Army, the leaders of the Natal Indian Volunteer Ambulance Corps[1] were the only ones who served and refused all remuneration.

[1] *Vide* "Indian Ambulance Corps", 23-12-1899

The fact is, there are men among the Indian community who are more British than the majority of the anti-Asiatics and who have their full share of that patriotic and public spirit which has made the Empire what it is. It is absurd to suppose that men, aware of their status as British subjects, will meekly allow themselves to be relegated to "Bazaars" or "Locations" nay, more, it is criminal to attempt to destroy this patriotic spirit. And it is equally foolish to expect them to be crushed by methods of misrepresentation, injustice, and intimidation. The attitude of the anti-Asiatics in South Africa can be summed up in one word: give a dog a bad name and hang him.

Indian Opinion, 18-2-1905

150. CONCEALMENT OF PLAGUE

We regret that there are still Indian in Durban who do not yet know the serious consequences of concealing infectious disease. On Monday last, an Indian employed by the Durban Corporation was sentenced to pay a fine of £ 20, or, in default, to three month's hard labour, for concealing a case of plague. The sentence is exemplary, and rightly so. The case was that of a girl, who was removed to an empty house by her father, so soon as he found she was sick. The reason he gave the Magistrate was that he did not want the European doctors to take her away from him. That, perhaps, was very natural; but Indians must learn that, in this matter, they are under the same law as Europeans. Each case of infectious disease must be notified to the authorities, whoever the sufferer may be; and everyone, whether he be Indian or European, has to put his own private feelings into his pocket, for the general good. It is too much to expect that every Indian of the indentured class will look at the matter from this point of view, but it is not too much to expect that Indians of the higher class will assist Dr. Murison in dealing with disease. We again call attention to the Health Officer's letter in our issue of Dec. 10th., and to our remarks thereon. Our Indian friends must remember that every prosecution of this kind reflects, however undeservedly, on the whole community. But the fault does not lie only on the side of the Indians. We cannot agree with *The Natal Mercury* that "it is due to the action of certain Indians that the plague is still with us". It is true that Indians are generally the victims of this dread disease. But, as in answer to the question, "Who breeds our plagues?" a correspondent very pertinently replied in our columns last week, "Who puts the Indian under such circumstances as to make him a breeder of plagues?"

There are "plague spots" in Durban under the direct control of the Town Council: why, then, lay all the blame on the poor Indian, if, as a natural consequence, plague is developed? The matter is, indeed, too important to be lightly dismissed, and we propose to deal fully with the whole question of municipal sanitation in a succeeding issue.

Indian Opinion, 18-2-1905

151. INDIAN LICENCES: NEED FOR VIGILANCES—1

Sheth Hoondamal's licence has been a subject of discussion for the past several months. Our readers are aware that Sheth Hoondamal has been carrying on trade in Durban for nearly ten years. At first he opened a shop in West Street, one of the principal thoroughfares of Durban. As the landlord wanted to get the building repaired, he had the shop vacated. Not being able to get a place to his liking in West Street, Sheth Hoodamal secured a good shop in nearby Grey Street and started his business there. Some months later, on being required to vacate the premises, he rented from an Indian landlord a better and larger shop in West Street which had been recently vacated by an Indian merchant, and began to trade there. Simultaneously, he applied to the Licensing Officer to have his new address entered on his licence. Not only did that Officer reject his application, but he also charged Hoondamal with trading without a licence. Legal proceedings were instituted against him in a Magistrate's Court, and Sheth Hoondamal was fined. The latter thereupon appealed against the Magistrate's judgment. Before this appeal could be heard, the Town Council dragged Sheth Hoondamal to the Magistrate's Court twice or thrice, and each time the Magistrate fined him, and on one occasion the Magistrate, Mr. Stuart, even exceeded his authority and passed an illegal order, asking Sheth Hoondamal to close down his shop. The latter, of course, disregarded the order as it was illegal; and through his attorney, Mr. Wyllie, sent a strongly worded note to the Magistrate and the police, saying that, if the order was implemented, the executing officials would be held responsible for the consequences. The Magistrate was greatly enraged at this, but he was helpless, the order not being lawful. The appeal was heard by the Circuit Court when it sat in Durban, and Sheth Hoondamal was found not guilty. Thereafter, the police brought another charge against him, and the Magistrate found him guilty.

The appeal against that judgment was heard by the Supreme Court this month, and to the misfortune of the Indian traders, the judges gave their decision against Sheth Hoondamal. Sheth Hoondamal

had applied last month for a licence for the current year, which the Licensing Officer rejected. An appeal was then field before the Town Council. Stating the reason for not granting Sheth Hoondamal a licence, the Licensing Officer said that it was not desirable to issue more licences to Asiatics in West Street ! When this reason for refusal was brought to the Knowledge of the Town Council by Sheth Hoondamal's counsel, the Councillors naturally felt abashed, for the Licensing Officer had also added that such was the desire of the Councillors as well. On hearing this, Mr. Burne, who is a member of the Council and also a renowned lawyer, immediately protested that the Licensing Officer had no warrant to attribute such a desire to the Town Council. At this the Officer got up and answered that he had rejected applications on the same ground in the past, and that his decision had always been endorsed by the Council; his claim could not be proved incorrect. To prevent this dispute from developing further, a Councillor moved that the appeal be dismissed. Another member seconded the resolution, introducing while doing so a further legalistic argument that under the law the discretion to grant or refuse licences was vested in the Licensing Officer. After hearing this point of law, the applicant's counsel answered that even this discretion could only be exercised in accordance with the law, and that it was no discretion which violated the law or transgressed it. The Councillors did not relish this argument. Consequently, Sheth Hoondamal was not granted a licence and has had to close down his shop.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-2-1905

152. CORPORATION INSANITATION

There was submitted, at the ordinary monthly meeting of the Durban Town Council, on the 7th inst., a Report by the Inspector of Nuisances relative to the Eastern and Western Vleis. It is noteworthy that this official makes reference to certain areas, the buildings on which are variously described as dilapidated and imperfect as to sanitation and building characteristics, whilst the ground itself is said to be undrained. These buildings, moreover, are declared to be "used for habitable purposes", and also "unfit for human habitation".

We are forcibly reminded of a meeting held, under the auspices of the Natal Indian Congress, in June of 1903, when emphasis was laid upon an allegation made in the Minute, submitted by the Mayor to the Town Council, concerning the insanitary habits of the Indian population, and urging this as one of several reasons why Indians should be relegated to Locations, or, as they have been euphemistically designated, "Bazaars".

Lord Milner, it will be remembered, in his memorable Notice No. 356 of 1903, drew special attention to the exception that was to be made in respect of Asiatics whose habits of life and social qualities were not repugnant to European ideas or in conflict with sanitary laws. We venture to suggest that any doctor or hospital nurse will confirm our assertion that, even amongst higher-class Europeans, scientific sanitation is not always favourably regarded. That, however, is by the way. The real point is that it is not always just that the *general opinion* of Europeans, who are often most ignorant of what they are most assured, and as often prejudiced against conditions and circumstances that are strange to them, should be taken as a reasonable criterion. The opinion of the man in the street is, notoriously, vastly different from, and often opposed to, the opinion of the man in the study, who has greater and more frequent opportunity of collecting, sifting and judging the facts of which he speaks.

There are Indians and Indians; there are Indians who approach absolutely to the scientific European standard of sanitation, and there are Indians who have not yet adopted other modes of sanitation than those to which they have been accustomed, almost from time immemorial, in the remote districts of India. Similar distinctions may, indeed, be made amongst the inhabitants of civilised nations the world over. There is always, and will be for long years to come, this difference between the educated and the ill-instructed.

When, then, we hear the charge so frequently levelled against the Indian that he is insanitary, we are impelled to ask: "Which Indian do you mean? And do you refer to personal cleanliness or to domiciliary sanitation?" For nothing is more important than that those who bring a charge of this impalpable nature should be pinned down to something more definite and less dangerously vague. It is a common observation that a generalisation is often a successful catchword to throw to an unthinking man, whereas a definite statement of fact would crush him.

It is our experience that, generally speaking, the Indian is not insanitary. It must be distinctly borne in mind that we do not assert that no Indians are insanitary. We argue from a knowledge of the national customs and traditions of the various Indian peoples, and can confidently say that, be these Hindus or Mohamedans, their faith, which is a living one to them, inculcates absolute principles of personal cleanliness and, as a corollary, domestic sanitation, even amongst the lowest classes, and this may easily be confirmed by any one who is at all conversant with the normal conditions of Indian life.

But what have we? We have the Eastern and the Western Vleis! We have heard much hard talk of "Bazaars" and Locations, of disinfection and of segregation. Somehow or other, the remaining terms of the proposition appear to have been very carefully-or, shall we say, carelessly-left out of consideration.

For the benefit of the public that takes an interest in sanitary matters and question of hygiene, we propose to quote from the Report of the Sanitary Committee of the Town Council, published in *The Natal Mercury* so far back as 1899, and of which Committee the Hon. R. Jameson was Chairman.

> 2. We next inspected the compound on what is known as the Western Vlei. Here are two corrugated iron buildings accommodating 22 men and 33 women and children. These structures were found to be in fairly good condition but to bring them within the terms of our sanitary bye-laws, they require to be provided with roof, guttering and down-pipes, more light and more ventilation, and another latrine, the existing one not being sufficient for decency. The fence requires repairs, the houses should be lime-washed internally. There being a water-supply adjacent, a small iron structure should be provided for bathing and washing purposes. The open drains in the vicinity should be well opened up before the summer rains set in, as otherwise this site is swampy.

This is a description of the condition of no less than a "Bazaar," or Location, or Compound, or what you will, under the direct control of so authoritative a body as the Corporation itself ! Who is responsible, we ask, if Indians domiciled in such buildings, placed in the very midst of insanitary conditions, are insanitary in their habits? The Indians? Surely not! And yet, to all intents and purposes, this unsavoury area remains in much the same condition at this date as at the time when this report was made, now some five-and-a-half years ago!

What is the Corporation doing to remedy such a disgusting condition of affairs? It can spare time and energy for licensing prosecutions; why can it not utilise some of that same energy to do away with this and other centres of disease and death?

We are told in *The Natal Mercury*:

> The coolie is not a cleanly individual, and if left to himself he would soon make even a first class villa resemble a piggery more than anything else.

And it goes on to say:

> But it is the business of his employer, and particularly of the Protector of Immigrants, to see that he is not left to himself in the matter of sanitation, not only for his own sake, but for the sake of the whole community. It is also a matter for the Medical Officer of Health for the Colony to see to, and if employers are found providing inadequate and filthy accommodation for their coolies, they ought to be made to mend their ways.

With the second of these statements we are in entire accord.

Indeed, it goes far to answer those who insist upon the alleged insanitary habits of the Indians as a whole. The first assertion requires to be examined before being accepted. It is disposed of in the following extract from the Report already quoted:

> It was specially noted here (Queen Street Compound) that the com-pound, being connected with the sewerage system, enabling as it does ample washing, bathing, and latrine needs, was *remarkably clean compared with any of the other places inspected.*

So we have it on record that the Corporation has had the evil pointed out to it; that such evils, being permitted to continue, cast a stigma upon the [1]body that condones them; and last, but not least, that the Corporation has, in the cases of the Eastern and the Western Vleis, done practically nothing to remedy them. Who, then, has a right to add insult to injury by urging the insanitation of the Indian community as a reason why they should wiped out of existence? The effect of the Corporation's policy of *laissez faire* is obvious. How long will the cause remain undealt with?

Indian Opinion, 25-2-1905

153. THE PLAGUE

The question of sanitation as a whole, in so far as the Indian community is affected, has been already dealt with[1]. We now propose to examine the cause of the particular disease that is claiming its unfortunate victims epidemically, and to discuss the effect of that cause.

In last Saturday's *Mercury*, there appeared a lengthy paragraph dealing with the attitude said to be adopted by "the Indians" towards the authorities, especially in reference to the concealment of plague-sickness. The writer made a number of curiously inadequate statements, upon which he based several somewhat querulous enquiries, and concluded by suggesting that "possibly this conduct (concealment of plague) has much to do with the recrudescence of the disease occasionally".

What are the plain facts? We have a community composed of whites and Indians, the poor of the former section being, proportionately, fewer than those of the latter. It follows, then, that the poorer folk amongst the Asiatic population are more liable, numerically, to disease than are the poorer Europeans. Next, we have an assertion made that "the Indians" seriously hamper the authorities "by refusing to give information and in every way endeavouring to conceal the where

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

abouts of any suffers". Again we ask, "What Indians?" Surely, it is not intended to saddle the *whole* Indian community with the fault of a few of its most ignorant section. Why are these careless generalisations made? Is it not possible to impress upon the intelligent public the fact that there are as many subtle sub-divisions amongst Indians as amongst any other civilised people? It is almost disheartening to observe how these mis-statements continue to be made, with an utter irresponsibility that makes one wonder whether the facts of history are ever conned and become a part of our present-day philosophy.

The higher-class Indians never cease, both by personal example and by precept, to impress upon their less-favoured brethren the necessity of co-operating with the authorities in order that the effort to stamp out the fell disease, that is now rife amongst us, may not prove abortive. Over and over again, we ourselves have, in our leading columns, both in English and in the vernacular tongues, done our best to point the moral that "Cleanliness is next to Godliness". And yet we have foolish people asking why "the Indians" do not co-operate with the authorities !

Moreover, if, class for class, a comparison be made between Europeans and Indians, it will, we feel assured, be found that there is no greater frequency of concealment, no greater reluctance to advertise cases of plague, amongst the latter than amongst the former. We do not lay special stress upon this fact, nor do we care to use the *tu quoque* argument. We are, however, compelled to do so in self-defence, for it is distinctly unfair to suggest that such conduct on the part of a few Indians, which no one deplores more than we ourselves, "badly prejudices" the Indian Community "in the eyes of Europeans". There is, however, one important reason why cases of concealment do occur. We are informed that, at the plague hospital, no distinction is made between Indians and Kaffirs, all being herded together indiscriminately. Anyone with even the slightest knowledge of Indian habits and prejudices will at once see how great a factor this negligence is in impending the good work initiated by the authorities. We can only say that, so long as no separate accommodation is allotted to Indians as such, and so long as no differentiations of creed and caste are made amongst the Indians themselves, with due regard to religious customs and traditional beliefs, so long will the authorities cope in vain with many of the difficulties that could, with a little foresight, be easily avoided.

We have already shown, in part, how and why insanitary conditions are created for the poorer Indians. Plague has again broken out in Durban. Who are the first victims? Indians. But, we ask, pertinently, *what* Indians? Who are these Indians? None other than those

employed, housed, and "cared for" by the Corporation of the Borough that prides itself upon being the model borough of South Africa! These Indians are employed by the Corporation to perform the filthiest work. They are used to clean drains and sewers, and in every possible unsavoury pursuit¾and are "housed" in "sanitary" quarters like the Eastern and the Western Vleis. What wonder, then, that these unfortunates are liable to contract this and every other dirt disease? The Sanitary Commission's Report, to which fuller reference has been made elsewhere, describes, realistically enough, the horrible surroundings amidst which these wretched people are compelled to perpetuate a degraded existence. And, when plague not unnaturally breaks out amongst them, although complaint after complaint has been directed to the authorities by the Indian community, and by the experts appointed by those same authorities, the Indians, without distinction, are blamed, for insanitary habits, and "the coolie" is incontinently dubbed a breeder of disease. A man that is made to live in a pigsty is not unlikely to become as filthy in his habits as is its rightful denizen. Dr. Turner, the Medical Officer of Health for the Transvaal, when speaking in the Legislative Council regarding the condition of the Johannesburg Indian Location, remarked:

> The coolie location at Johannesburg was in a disgraceful condition, and why? Because those poor people were compelled to live in it, like chickens in a coop, and it was left in a most insanitary condition by the authorities. If Mr. Raitt (M.L.C.) had been compelled to live in it, he would have been just as dirty.

We are obliged to say, with regret, that the culprit, in the case of insanitation, is the Corporation itself, upon which is the guilty responsibility for the awful conditions that are known to exist upon its own property and for the deaths that have taken place from the plague. It is deliberately drawing a red herring across the trail, in the light of these facts, to accuse the Indian community, or even the wretched "coolie", of insanitary habits and wilful lack effort to co-operate with the powers that be to remedy the evils.

We have to express our acknowledgements to the plague experts that have been employed by the Government and the Corporation. They have done their best to have the evils remedied, and have offered recommendations, but all to no purpose. It is quite useless seizing upon an effect and regarding it as a cause. None the less, it remains an effect, and the cause, being quite other than what it is reported to be, is still to seek.

Notwithstanding all this, we find responsible people approving the introduction of further legislation upon the lines of Lord Milner's notice, relegating Indians to "Bazaars" ¾there "to stew in their own

juice", as Mr. J. E. O' Connor, late Director-General of Statistics to the Indian Government, aptly stigmatised it¾ and so perpetuate horros similar to those existing *in the Locations on Corporation ground*! It has been held that the true test of good government is that it raises the lowly to a higher conception of duty, never that it degrades them to an even baser servitude. But "a foolish consistency", a broad spirit of statesmanship, certainly does not mould the sanitary and political policies of the Durban Municipality!

Indian Opinion, 25-2-1905

154. AN APPEAL TO INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

We recommend that our readers carefully study the newspapers coming these days from India, for that will convince them how our brethren there are ready to rush to our succour. At the Congress session recently held in Bombay, there was a very good discussion of the disabilities and hardships we are experiencing here, and the speeches made there by our representatives created such a strong impression upon that august body that the leaders have begun to realise the gravity of our problem and to make efforts to improve our condition. Even the Press has taken up our case with vigour. All this is very satisfactory, and we should be thankful to God that the representatives of the Indian people themselves have turned their attention to the redress of our grievances. We should, therefore, be prepared to discharge our duties with greater enthusiasm. The proverbs go, "God helps those who help themselves," and "You cannot go to heaven without dying yourself". Likewise we needs must do our duty and, if we do not, our subject will not be fulfilled. The greater the help we receive from others, the greater should be the intensity of our own efforts; for such help adds to our responsibility. It is but natural that we should struggle to remove our hardships. If we did not, we would be considered worse than beasts. When there are people coming forward to help us, we must also think of our duty towards them, and redouble our efforts and work with greater ardour and enthusiasm, so that they may be satisfied, encouraged and feel that we are not unworthy of their goodness. By proving our worth, we shall add to their zeal, doing ourselves a service in the process. Even an utterly worldly man will realise the truth of this. More so, those who are religious-minded.

It is, therefore, our earnest appeal to all our Indian brethren in South Africa that they should ponder over what has been said above, and be prepared to do their duty. When the Indian leaders are ready to help us, it is our obvious duty to arm them with the means of doing

so; for we must know that, if we do not do so, they will not be able to render us the assistance they would like to. The following three things are at present needed: (1) we should keep up our efforts; (2) we should keep them informed of the true state of our affairs; and (3) we should provide them with sufficient funds to defray the expenses they might have to incur for carrying on any activities on our behalf. All the three things are quite necessary. The first two we are already doing to some extent; that is our own efforts are continuing more or less; and we do publicise the true facts. As for the third item, viz., the funds, we have not done anything so far. It is, therefore, necessary to give full thought to this without delay. Supplying the necessary funds is like arming them with a very potent weapon. In the modern world, money is needed at every step; and if it runs short, one has to face disappointment in the end, however great and noble one's hopes and aspirations might be. Just as man needs food, so does public work require money. Those who would help us would give their valuable time and gladly exert themselves, but if we tighten our purse-strings when they need money, we would be considered mean and contemptible.

We should consider how our leaders can help us; and with our experience in this country, it should not be difficult to think of the means. We have learnt, from experience, how to achieve our aims under British rule. The Transvaalers, when they willed it, forced a war; and now, when they so will it, they can cause us a lot of harassment. How do they do this? They hold meetings at different places to canvass public support for their views; since it is not always possible for the whole community to attend the meetings, they launch newspapers and go on writing, day in and day out, whatever they like; they also issue pamphlets and write open letters to the Press, they draft petitions, get them printed and obtain a sufficient number of signatures on them; and they send out telegrams to publicise their activities. To do all this, money is essential, and their leaders, therefore, do not hesitate to relieve their purses a little. And though these people are powerful, intelligent and united and wield great influence here as well as in England, they always go on making efforts tactfully to gain their objective avoiding obstacles. It is such men we have to contend with. We are weak, less intelligent, and unable to unite, not knowing the full significance of unity. We have no influence with the Government and there is a deplorable lack of thought and the enthusiasm necessary to show our mettle. How, then, can we put up a fight? As against our shortcomings, we have justice on our side; and justice can discomfit the opponent. However, to gain the final victory, we must certainly show our mettle and worth, for, in the absence of these qualities, justice itself gets weakened.

Fortunatley for us, there are in India at the moment several men of position and prestige from this country, through whom help should be rendered to the Indian leaders. We should give all the monetary help possible from every part of South Africa, particularly from Natal and the Transvaal, and so back the Indian leaders that, in conformity with British practice, they might ventilate the people's feelings in the matter and demand justice from the Government. Things do not cost as much in India as they do here. The country being poor, a little money would be enough. But the country is very large. Our leaders here should therefore take all these facts into consideration and do their obvious duty without delay. That is to say, they should immediately send respectable sums of money to India so that the enthusiasm of the Indian leaders might not cool down, and they might carry on ceaseless agitation throughout the country by issuing pamphlets and holding meetings. This would also mean that the Indian Government had the full backing of the people. The British Government would, consequently, be compelled to pay attention to the matter.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-2-1905

155. GENERAL DEALERS AT THE CAPE

The Cape *Government Gazette* publishes the text of a Bill to regulate the trade of a general dealer. We can understand the regulation of dealers' licences, but that the Law should regulate the trade of the dealers also is an idea altogether novel. We reproduce the operative clauses of the Bill in another column. It contains in all 35 sections, most of which could, more or less, have been avoided; but we must, at the same time, confess that, though the Bill is drastic enough, it shows on the part of the framers great regard for the interests of the general dealers, and in that respect it is undoubtedly less open to objection than the Natal Act. According to the Bill, all the present licence-holders are protected unless they have committed breaches of the law regarding Sunday trading, the selling of spirituous liquor, or sanitation, or unless the premises have been allowed to become a nuisance to the neighbourhood by reason of the habits of the dealer's customers, his associates or himself. With reference to the new licence, a Resident Magistrate may issue a certificate enabling by the Licensing Court. Both the Magistrate and the Licensing Court have the power to refuse the licence on grounds, *inter alia*, of the character of the applicant, of his inability to write in some European languages, or to keep intelligible records of his transactions. There is, too, the power granted to the

licence-holder, in the event of his licence being cancelled, to appeal to the Supreme Court, except when the cancellation has taken place by reason of conviction under the Liquor Act. The most objectionable clause throughout the Bill is with reference to the European languages. The habitual affront to the millions of British Indians and their cultured languages that such a provision implies renders it necessary for the British Indians at the Cape to oppose the Bill, which otherwise they could have gladly assented to. The importation of such vexatious provisions is not calculated to gain the co-operation of the Indians. We cannot understand why a man, who is a capable merchant, thoroughly honest, and able to keep his books in the English lan-guage through outside assistance, should be debarred from obtaining a licence. We could point out scores of miserable shanties, in every way a disgrace to any town of importance, owned by those who have a knowledge of "some European language". Why should they get a licence, and a well-behaved Indian subject, having business premises in a perfectly sanitary condition, and bearing an unexceptionable character, be insulated by having it flung in his face that he is unfit because he does not know a European language? We trust that the British Indians at the Cape will co-operate in resisting this fresh attempt at imposing a burden on them, and that the Government will see their way to expunge from the Bill the objectionable clause, and thus secure the active co-operation of a large body of the traders concerned.

Indian Opinion, 4-3-1905

156. INDIAN LICENCES: NEED FOR VIGILANCE—II

These two defeats[1] are not to be considered as those of Sheth Hoondamal along, but of all the Indian traders in Natal. We cannot say that the Supreme Court has done deliberate injustice; but we do believe that, if an appeal is preferred to the Privy Council against the decision of the Supreme Court, the result would, in all probability, be favourable to the Indian traders. Had the intention of the legislators been what the Supreme Court holds it to have been, the question arises why the licence form originally required only the name of the town and not the actual place or locality. The practice of mentioning the locality was introduced subsequently, and that fact is by itself an answer to the decision of the Supreme Court. But it is not necessary at present to go into legal niceties. It is, however, necessary to realise that the licensing law is on the whole disastrous to the Indian traders; and

[1] *Vide* "Indian Licences: Need for Vigilance", 18-2-1905.

all possible efforts should be made to get it altered. It has been adequently demonstrated, and all are agreed, that the law is oppressive, that it has caused much injustice, and because of it, many a shopkeeper is faced with ruin. It is, therefore, our clear duty not to sit silent but to make all possible efforts to get the law altered and persist in them till we succeed. It is obvious that the slightest indifference in such a matter may prove disastrous.

Let us now consider what should be done immediately. Perfectly reliable information should be gathered from every place as to whether or not Indians received regular licences at the beginning of the year; and this information should be made as widely known as possible. The leaders of the community should ponder over this information and take the necessary steps in regard to it. All facts should be communicated to those working on our behalf in India and Great Britain, so that, as our local efforts progress, parallel attempts to strengthen our cause might also be made there. Unless and until work proceeds in this way, it is, in our opinion, futile to hope for any improvement in the condition of our traders. We should remember that it was as a result of similar efforts made by us in 1898 that the Colonial Secretary here, acting on Mr. Chamberlain's strong despatch, wrote confidentially in 1899 to all Municipalities in Natal warning them that, if the Indian traders were harassed, the law would have to be altered and the demand of the Indians for the right of appeal to the Supreme Court conceded. Soon after, war broke out and everything came to a stand still. Now that the mischief has started again, there is the greatest need for us to be vigilant. Bearing this incident in mind, we should do our work courageously. If we go on doing our duty properly, we are sure to succeed in the end.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-3-1905

157. HINDUISM

[JOHANNESBURG,

March 4, 1905]

Mr. M. K. Gandhi delivered the first of a series of four lectures on the above subject at the Masonic Temple, Plein Street, on Saturday evening last, under the auspices of the Johannesburg Lodge of the Theosophical Society, Major Peacock, vice-president, in the chair.

Mr. Gandhi introduced his subject by remarking that the endeavours of the Johannesburg Lodge to promote interest in the

study of different religious systems were most praiseworthy, tending, as they did, to widen people's sympathies, and enlarge their comprehension of the motives and beliefs underlying the actions of those who were strangers in creed and colour. He himself had endeavoured, during his eleven years' residence in South Africa, to remove the prejudice and ignorance that existed concerning his own people.

Continuing, the lecturer described what was meant by the title "Hindu", referring it to the branch of the Aryan people that had migrated to the trans-Indus districts of India, and had colonised that vast country. As a matter of fact, Aryanism would have been a better descriptive word than Hinduism, is explanation of the faith accepted by so many millions of his countrymen.

One of the most remarkable characteristics of the religion professed by Hindus was self-abnegation, and this was obviously shown in the name of the religion itself, for, unlike most of the great world religions, it did not derive its name from any prophet or teacher, although it counted some of the greatest within is fold. The lecturer further instanced the historic siege of Arcot in support of this contention, when the Indian soliders, at a time when starvation faced the whole British Army, waived their claim to the rice rations in favour of the British soldiers, they themselves being content to have the water in which the rice had been boiled, although it was customary to throw this water away; and also the case of Prabhu Singh,[1] an indentured British Indian, who was chosen for the post of honour of warning the inhabitants of Ladysmith during the siege, whenever a Boer shell was coming, by ringing a bell when perched in a tree, at imminent risk to himself. This man was mentioned several times in despatches by Sir George White.

The Hindus themselves claimed that the date of their scriptures was veiled in the mist of antiquity, the scriptures themselves being God-given. As against that, some Europeans contended that the scriptures were not more than 3,000 or 4,000 years old. Mr. Tilak, a well-known Indian Sanskritist, has, however, calculated that, from certain astronomical observations made in these works, they were at least 10,000 years old, although they were only committed to writing some three hundred years after Christ. The *Vedas*, as these scriptures were known, consisted of separate hymns, each being held to cover a definite period, and quite independent of each other. And, typically, not one author's name had passed down to posterity! The *Vedas* had inspired the thought of many illustrious men of the West, amongst whom

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dadabhai Naoroji", 8-10-1900 and *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Chapter IX.

might be mentioned Arthur Schopenhauer and Professor Max Muller.

Over two hundred millions of people professed Hinduism, and this faith entered into their every act. The key-note of Hinduism on the spiritual side was *moksha*, or salvation; that is, the final absorption of the Soul in the Infinite Soul that pervades all things. In regard to religion, pantheism was the chief characteristic, whilst, on the ethical plane, self-abnegation was the most notable quality, with its corollary, toleration. In social matters, the characteristic of caste was predominant, whilst the ceremonial characteristic was the sacrificing of animals. At a time when the faith of the Hindus had become more formal, Prince Gautama Buddha, having learnt the spiritual worth of things during a prolonged period of contemplation, commenced to teach that animal sacrifices were despiritualising, and that the highest from of love was expressed by extending that toleration, which was already a tenet of their faith, in the direction of refraining from killing or otherwise detroying living things. Hinduism had never, as a religion, been missionary, as were Christianity and Mahomedanism, but, under King Ashoka, the Buddhist priests were sent far and wide to propagate the new belief. Buddhism had a reforming effect upon Hinduism, somewhat similar to that of Protestantism upon Catholicism, but there was a great difference in the spirit underlying that reform. No Hindu bore the Buddhist any ill-will, a statement that could not be made in reference to the Protestants and Catholics. Buddhism was sometimes said to have declined in India. This was not really so. The Buddhist priests had endeavoured to propagate their faith too zealously, and had aroused the jealously, at the time, of the Hindu priesthood, who had driven the Buddhists to the outskirts of the country, to Tibet, China, Japan, Burma and Ceylon. But the spirit of the Buddhists remained in India, and actuated every principle professed by the Hindus.

In this connection, the lecturer briefly referred to Jainism as a most interesting form of faith. The Jains claimed that it was altogether independent of Buddhism, not a growth from it. Unlike others, they did not claim for the faith that it was of Divine origin, recognising that its sacred writings were the results of human workmanship. Jainism was, [1]perhaps, the most logical of all faiths, and its most remarkable

[1] Louis Walter Ritch gave up business in 1903 and became an articled clerk under Gandhiji. A Thesophist, he introduced Gandhiji to the Theosophical society. Left for England in 1905 for legal studies and there did much valuable work on behalf of South African Indians through frequent contributions to the Press.

[2] Of this episode, Gandhiji wrote later: "Mr. Ritch had a large family. He was ready to take the plunge, but I prevented him. I had not the heart to expose him to the risk. So he attended to the work outside the danger zone". (*Autobiography*, Part IV, chapter XV). Whether the speech was correctly reported in *Indian Opinion* or his memory was at fault while writing the above 20 years later, one cannot say.

characteristic was its scrupulous regard for all things that lived.

After the lecture, Mr. Gandhi answered some questions put to him members of the audience, and the proceedings terminated with a vote of thanks to him, which he deprecated smilingly, on the ground that they were not yet deserved.

The second lecture of the series will be given on Saturday evening next, the 11th inst., at the same hall.

The Star, 10-3-1905

158. SPEECH AT FAREWELL TO L.W. RITCH

This is a brief report of Gandhiji's speech at a Johannesburg function to bid farewell to Ritch.

[*March 9,1905*]

Mr. Gandhi said he would like to add his own expression of appreciation both of Mr. Ritch's character and his actual work in the speaker's office. Mr. Gandhi gave a brief history of his relations with Mr. Ritch, describing the sentiment of brotherhood that attached them to each other. Special stress was laid upon Mr. Ritch's self-sacrifice at the time of the plague last year, when he insisted upon tending the Indian plague-patients, regardless of possible consequences to himself.[2] He regarded the cause of Mr. Ritch's departure for Home as God-sent, and he had no doubt that whatever happened would be for the best.

Indian Opinion, 25-3-1905

159. A POLITICAL MEDICAL REPORT

The Medical Officer of Potchefstroom, at the instance of the Town Council, has prepared a report on the condition of the Indian quarters in that town. The circumstances under which it was prepared are rather peculiar. As our readers are aware, the Potchefstroom, people are very much exercised over the proposed erection of a mosque by the Indian Mahomedans. At the Town Council meeting where, in spite of legal opinion to the contrary, the Councillors decided to oppose the erection of the mosque, they also passed a resolution instructing the Medical Officer to make an inspection of that part of

the town and report at once to the Council. One would think there is absolutely no connection between the erection of the mosque¾which is purely and simply a building devoted to religious worship and which is never used as a dwelling place¾and the sanitary condition of the surrounding houses. However, the Town Council of Potchefstroom, like the wolf in the fable, wanted some charge to go on with. The Medical Officer, Dr. Friel¾faithful servant that he is to the Town Council¾has risen to the occasion and submitted a report, according to their desire, which is a curious document. The Doctor says:

> The premises were on the whole fairly clean, but if any epidemic broke out, it would be very difficult to disinfect them, as they largely consist of a patchwork of shanties of all shapes and sizes.

The question naturally arises: what has the Officer been doing all this time? The plague has been in the Transvaal now for a year, and these premises have not been found a source of danger. To-day, they are found to be an urgent danger to the town, and must be dealt with at once, not to prevent the plague, but¾the building of a mosque! This would be ludicrous, were it not so openly dishonest. The doctor says there were sanitary conveniences in each of the premises; but as a statement of this description is very damaging to the cause of the Town Council, he must, forsooth, add that in most cases the bath water is thrown on the street. He does not say how many of the European in Potchefstroom also throw their bath water on the street, and on our own part we strongly suspect the Indians who do so have no other course open to them. The Doctor, however, still could not make out a transgression of the bye-laws, and so he adds:

> Although they may not actually transgress the bye-laws, still the minimum of air space was closely approached in every case, and the rooms were badly ventilated.

We wonder whether the Potchefstroom Municipal bye-laws allow of bad ventilation being tolerated. If so, why does not the Municipality ask for an amendment of the bye-laws, so that they might satisfy the requirements of hygiene and sanitation? As a matter of fact, we happen to know that the public health bye-laws framed by the Government have been adopted by the Municipality of Potchefstroom, and that they are stringent and exacting. The Doctor concludes the medical portion of the report, by saying that, taken as a whole, their manner of living is not up to the present-day standard, and that houses and their residents in the centre of the town are a continual source of danger to public health. We see nothing in the report, which is so frankly contradictory, that would warrant the opinion given by the Doctor. And, as if the medical report made by him were not

enough, he goes on to give a legal opinion, and suggests that the Government should be approached to compel all Asiatics other than duly licensed traders to reside in the Bazaars.

Although this report is in our opinion self-condemned, it might be worth while producing an impartial opinion about the very dwellings on which Dr. Friel has given his verdict. We are, fortunately, in possession of a report prepared at the instance of the Indians in Potchefstroom by Dr. Thomas J. Dixon, the District Surgeon. He says:

> In going through the various premises I am pleased to say I was greatly impressed with the general condition of each place I visited, both internally as well as externally. Taking all things into consideration, the backyards are all perfectly clean and sanitary. I saw no accumulation of rubbish; this, I understand, is being carried away daily by the contractor. The bucket system is in force, as in other parts of the town, which is also attended to by the sanitary department, and I can find no fault from what I saw. There appears to me to be no fault as regards sleeping accommodation. At the back of each business, in addition, I noticed a kind of mess room capable of seating about 5 to 8 persons, and each has its own kitchens, which are also well kept.

We have before us a detailed report of each of the dwellings examined by the Doctor. Here, then, is an unbiassed medical report given by a gentleman having no master to please, and who finds that the Indian dwellings are not open to objection from a sanitary standpoint.

Dr. Friel's report, we notice, has been referred by the Town Council to the Government, and we await what it has to say to it. It is palpably the effusion of a man whose inclination runs counter to his conscience.

Indian Opinion, 11-3-1905

160. THE HEALTH OF EDUCATED INDIANS

When we compare educated persons in India with those in other countries, we are sadly disappointed. The formation of a new Liberal Ministry in England is now under consideration. The ages of the leaders of this group are very significant for us. Mr. Bryce and Mr. John Morley are 67 years old, Lord Bracey and Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman are 69, Earl Spencer is 70, the Duke of Devonshire is 72 and Sir Henry Fowler, 75. Even Sir Charles Dilke, whose inclusion in the Ministry is not very probable, is 60, and Lord Rosebery, 57. Some at any rate of these gentlemen are bound to be in the new Ministry.

Now, if we look round among Indians in any walk of life, we are unlikely to come by many elderly persons who can boast of sound health and vigour. One might attribute it to the Indian climate, but this

can be valid only up to a point. Our men of earlier generations enjoyed long life, full of health and vigour. They were so tall and well built that our contemporaries look dimunitive beside them. If the Indian climate of old was so healthy and bracing, it cannot be that it does not now favour a good physique. The real reason is that we are unmindful of the maxims of good health. This attitude of negligence, which begins at school or college, continues into maturity. We remain engrossed in our work, in earning money and in improving our lot. We then hardly stop to realise that it is only natural for the body to wear down under severe strain. Most educated Indians do not have the habit of regular physical exercise. They seem quite innocent of the fact that the mind needs rest and recreation as well. One might find stray clubs and societies [among Indians,] but very few participate in their affairs actively. Some of them, who have little to do at home, prefer low types of pleasure to a chat or a game or two of billiards. Again, unlike Europeans who have an intelligent appreciation of the importance of health and happiness, they do not go to parties, balls, plays nor have they other pastimes. Their lives are dull and monotonous, if we leave out of account the variety of business that demands their attention. Such ways spell the ruin of a whole people; but, unfortunately, no one can as yet forsee their deleterious consequences. Not yet conscious of any ill-health themselves free from disease. And because they can do their work, digest their food and do not feel any manifest ailment, they consider themselves healthy. All of a sudden, this sense of well-being ceases; they find themselves in the grip of some serious disease, and they despair. We must learn from the example of those who have earlier fallen a prey to this habit, and beware. But then we are too slow and careless to profit by such examples. That is why we do not find among educated Indians persons of ripe old age. This defect is by no means peculiar to any individual or family, rather the entire Indian nation suffers from it. A countrywide effort is most essential in order to save Indian youth from being blighted prematurely.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-3-1905

161. A WAR OF GIANTS

JAPAN AND RUSSIA

From the news received from the front, it appears that the battle now being fought between Japan and Russia near Mukden bids fair to be considered the greatest in all ancient or modern history. To call the battle of Mukden, now in progress, the greatest may be dubbed an exaggeration. It is natural that, as a result of the frequent publication of sensational news in the papers, the people in general develop a dislike for such reports and, consequently, calling the battle of Mukden the greatest might be considered an exaggeration. Nevertheless, we must point out that tens of thousands of men are now being annihilated on both sides in the battle. Japan has here attacked Russia from east, west and south, that is, the attack is not frontal, but on the flanks of the Russian army. If is possible that, if the flanks succumb, the van also might give way.

At the helm of all these manoeuvres of the army stands the heroic figures of Marquis Oyama of Japan. The battle covers an area of a hundred miles, and a million men have entered the field. The weapons of destruction used range from the smallest rifles to the biggest guns. No effort possible for human talent has been spared to bring about the quickest destruction of men. Courage and endurance have not been found wanting under any test. A hundred thousand men have been utterly destroyed. If Japan defeats Russia in this battle, there is strong reason to believe that the end of the war is near at hand. Having lost. Port Arthur,[1] Russia no more holds any sea power; and it is improbable that she will send more men to Manchuria by land. The people in Russia have already begun to detest the war; if, therefore, the army at present in Manchuria sustains a defeat, it will not be necessary for Japan to make any further sacrifices.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-3-1905

[1] On August 10, 1904.

162. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

21-24 COURT CHAMBERS,
CORNER RISSIK & ANDERSON STREETS,
P.O.BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
March 11, 1905

TO
THE HONOURABLE DADABHAI NAOROJI
22, KENNINGTON ROAD
LONDON

DEAR MR. DADABHAI,

This will serve to introduce to you Mr. L.W. Ritch of Johannesburg. Mr. Ritch and I have known each other intimately for several years. Mr. Ritch holds very decided pro-Indian views and in order, among other things, the better to serve the Indian cause he is proceeding to England to study for the Bar.

I shall esteem it a favour if you will be good enough to give him the benefit of your assistance. Mr Ritch has studied the Indian question in South Africa.

I remain,
Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original: G.N. 2266.

163. HINDUISM

[JOHANNESBURG,
March 11, 1905]

Mr. Gandhi delivered his second lecture on "Hinduism" under the auspices of the Johannesburg Theosophical Lodge, at the Masonic Temple, on Saturday evening. The hall was well filled.

The lecturer, after giving a short resume of the previous lecture, said that the second lecture would be devoted to what might be termed the second epoch of Hinduism. After the reformation that took place from within, under the influence of the teachings of Buddha, Hindu-

ism was very largely addicted to idolatry. Several explanations were offered in extenuation, but the lecturer could not deny the fact that the Hindus seemingly worshipped stocks and stones. The Hindu philosophers easily recognised and worshipped God as the purest spirit, and Pantheism took them to the highest flight. It similarly brought down the ignorant masses to the lowest depths. If the infant mind could not realise God as a pure spirit, it had no difficulty in worshipping Him through His various manifestations. Many worship Him through the sun, the moon and the stars, and many worship Him through stocks and stones also, a mode of worship to which philosophical Hinduism, with its tolerant spirit, had no difficulty in reconciling itself. So the wheel of Hindu life went merrily on, until there arose in the desert of Arabia a power that was destined to revolutionise ideas and to leave a permanent impress. Mahomet, whilst yet a boy, on seeing around him people given to idolatry, to lustful indulgences, and to drunkenness, burned within himself with rage. He saw also Judaism prostrate and Christianity debased. He felt, even as did Moses and Christ, that he was a man with a mission. He decided to deliver his mission to the world, and he chose the members of his own family as the first recipients. The lecturer was not one of these who believed that the religion of Islam was a religion of the sword. Washington Irving, in his work on Islam, had asked a pertinent question, namely," Where had Islam, in its first stage, found men to wield the sword?" He believed that the success of Mahomedanism was largely due to its simplicity and to its recognition of human weaknesses. He [the Prophet] taught that God was One and only One, that he was His Messenger. He taught also that prayer was absolutely necessary as an uplifting influence, and in order to bring together his followers, if only once in a year, he instituted the pilgrimage to Mecca, for those who could afford it, and recognising that people would amass wealth, he enjoined upon his followers that they set apart a certain portion of it religiously for charitable purposes. The key-note of Islam was, however, its levelling spirit. If offered equality to all that came within its pale, in the manner that no other religion in the world did. When, therefore, about 900 years after Christ, his followers descended upon India, Hinduism stood dazed. It seemed to carry everything before it. The doctrine of equality could not but appeal to the masses, who were

caste-ridden. To this inherent strength was also added the power of the sword. The fanatical raiders who, from time to time, found their way into India, did not hesitate to convert by the sword if they could not do so by persuasion. They more or less overran all parts of India, breaking idols after idols, and although the Rajput valour was at the disposal of Hinduism, it was powerless to afford protection against the Mahomedan inroad. In keeping with the spirit of Hinduism, an attempt was made at first to bring about reconciliation between the two faiths, and in the city of Benares, there arose a holy man about the 13th century, by name Kabir, who endeavoured, by keeping intact the chief tenets of Hinduism and by borrowing somewhat from Mahomedanism, to bring about a fusion, but the attempt was not quite successful. The Punjab, through which the Mahomedan conquerors poured into India, and which bore the first brunt, produced Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh religion who drew upon Kabir of his doctrines and added to it militant Hinduism. He offered the olive-branch by respecting the Moslem susceptibilities, but if that were not accepted, he was equally ready to defend Hinduism from the Moslem aggression, and thus Sikhism was a direct result of Islam. It was well known how brave the Sikh was and what service he had rendered to the British Government. The influence of Mahomedanism on Hinduism was that it gave rise to Sikhism and it brought out one of the chief characteristics of the religion, namely, toleration, in its true light and fulness. When there were no political influences at work, there was no difficulty about the Hindus and the Mahomedans living side by side in perfect peace and amity, each respecting the prejudices of the other, and each following his own faith without let or hindrance. It was Hinduism that gave Mahomedanism its Akbar, who, with unerring insight, recognised the tolerant spirit and adopted it himself in ruling India. Hinduism, moreover, showed its elasticity in that, in spite of the fierce struggle, the classes as well as large majority of the masses were left totally untouched, and Hinduism arose out of the struggle braced, as we would rise out of a cold bath, with warm glow. The first shock was, no doubt, severely felt, but the Hindu religion soon asserted itself. The lecturer also mentioned the Fakirs and the Yogis, and said that they lived almost the same kind of life, although the former belonged to the Islamic faith and the latter to the Hindu faith.

At the end of the lecture several interesting questions were put, and the proceedings terminated after the usual vote of thanks.

The third lecture[1] of the series will be given next Saturday at 8 o'clock in the Masonic Temple. The synopsis is as follows: The advent of Christianity in India; comparison between Mahomedanism and Christianity as they appeared to the Hindus; influence of Christianity on Hinduism; a mixture of Christianity and modern of western civilisation; the direct failure and indirect success of Christianity in India; Ram Mohan Roy, Keshub Chunder Sen, Dayanand; Theosophy, the Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj; the state of Hinduism to-day; its vivacity and the secret of its great staying power.

The Star, 18-3-1905

164. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
March 14, 1905

TO

THE HONOURABLE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PRETORIA

SIR,

My Association ventures respectfully to draw your attention to the enclosed cuttings[2] from the *Potchefstroom Budget*, giving a report on the anti-Asiatic demonstration that took place on Saturday the 4th instant a Potchefstroom in front of the Indian stores on the market square.

My Association has been informed by the British Indian living in Potchefstroom that the proceedings were violent and that speeches were made such as to arouse the worst feelings of the populace. After the speeches were finished, some mischievously inclined people began to throw stones at the shop windows of the Indian stores, and had it not been for the efficient manner in which the police had prepared

[1] The reports of the third and forth lectures in *The Star*., if any did appear, are not available. A summary of the four lectures, however, was later published in *Indian Opinion Vide* "Lectures on Religion", 15-4-1905.

[2] Not available

themselves for such emergency, it is difficult to say to what extent the violence would have gone. As it was, the injury done was restricted to the breaking of a few plate-glass windows.

It is worthy of note that the demonstration was headed by some of the principal men in the town, such as the President of the Potchefstroom Chamber of Commerce, a prominent member of the Town Council, and others holding public or semi-public positions. It was the proposed erection of a mosque in the town that was used to inflame public prejudice against the Indian community, but my Association is informed that the site for the proposed mosque is

(a) not in the centre of the town,

(b) not in a main thoroughfare,

(c) is some distance form and not, as alleged, next door to a new hotel said to have cost £30,000,

(d) the site is in a back street and the proposed buildings would be invisible from any of the neighbouring streets,

(e) the buildings immediately surrounding the site are nearly all wood and iron and of far inferior construction to the proposed mosque buildings.

My Association, therefore, respectfully ventures to submit that the British Indian community at potchefstroom is entitled to a declaration from the Government, disapproving of the manner in which the anti-Asiatic agitation is being carried on a Potchefstroom and to an assurance that their persons and property will be fully protected. Probably the Government may be aware that the Potchefstroom Vigilance Association, and such other bodies in the Colony, carry on the agitation with a view, as they have stated, to strengthen the hands of the Government, who, they say, are prepared to fall in with their "Demands" and who are in their opinion at present engaged in negotiations with the Home Government, having that end in view.

My Association cannot conceive that such can be the intentions of the Government, but in its humble opinion the absence of a clear declaration to the contrary by the Government is likely to be misinterpreted and thereby to accentuate the violence of the agitation.

My Association, therefore trusts that the Government will be pleased to take such steps as may be necessary for protecting the

rights of the inoffensive British Indian in Potchefstroom and other towns in the colony.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
ABDOOL GANI
CHAIRMAN
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Pretoria Archives: L.G. 93, Miscellaneous Files 97/3 Asiatics 1902/1907

165. THE NATAL MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS BILL

We have before us the Natal *Government Gazette* of the 21st February, 1905, containing a "Bill to amend and consolidate the law relating to the Municipal Corporations". We give in another column the clauses that bear directly or indirectly on the British Indian question. This will be the second attempt of the Government to introduce this Bill and pass it into law. The definitions given of the terms "Coloured person" and "uncivilised races" are very unsatisfactory, and are calculated to incorporate into the Bill the mischief that has been already created by the definition of "Coloured person". According to the Bill, the term includes, among others, "any Hottentot, Coolie, Bushman or Lascar". Now the terms "coolie" and "lascar" themselves require difining, and it is exceedingly dangerous to leave their interpretation to the administrators of the measure, from the Attorney-General down to Kaffir policemen. How, for instance, is a Kaffir policeman to know who is a "coolie" and who a "lascar"? Why, again, should the term "coolie" be at all retained in the Bill, when it is well known how offensive it has become?

The definition of the term "uncivilised races" is an insult to the Indians concerned, and more so to their descendants. An infallible test of civilisation is that a man claiming to be civilised should be an intelligent toiler, that he should understand the dignity of labour, and that his work should be such as to advance the interests of the community to which he belongs. Apply this test to the lowest indentured Indian, and he will satisfy it. Why, then, should he be called a member of an Indian labourer uncivilised because he undertakes to serve the Colony under indenture, why should the ban be placed upon his descendants? The Higher Grade Indian School, about whose pupils the Governor and the late Administrator have spoken in flattering and eloquent terms, contains many children of Indians who have been under

indenture. The children would do credit to any community. They are intelligent and receive a liberal education. Is it right that they should be labelled members of "uncivilised races"? The distinction between such Indians and others would be based purely on an accident, for we assure the framers of the Bill that there are many identured Indians who are quite as good as some Indians who have paid their own passage and entered the Colony as free men. Indeed, the indentured Indian deserves if anything, better treatment than the free Indian, because the former has been invited and induced to come to the Colony and has contributed not a little to its prosperity.

Coming to clause 22 of the Bill, contrary to the declarations made by the late Mr. Escombe and the late Sir John Robinson,-who, at the time of introducing the political franchise Bill, commended it to the Legislative Assembly on the ground that it left the municipal franchise alone-we find the provisions of the Parliamentary Franchise Act being applied to the municipal franchise, and if the Bill, as it stands, become law; no person who is disqualified for the parliamentary franchise by Act No. 8. of 1896, shall be eligible as a municipal voter. That is to say, persons belonging to the races which have not hitherto enjoyed representative institutions would be disqualified from being voters at municipal elections, although they may have enjoyed representative municipal institutions in their own country. It is well known that India possesses elective Municipalities in all the chief cities, that there are hundreds of such Municipalities and that there are thousands of Indian voters who elect members to them. Why should they be disqualified? The framers of the Bill have taken no note whatever of the great self-control that the Indian community has exercised in connection with municipal elections. They have refrained from having their names placed on the burgess roll, and the clause in question is the one offered to the community as a reward. We consider the clause to be a deliberate insult, and we hope that the members of the Assembly will not lend their support to the putting of such an affront upon the Indian community.

In clause 182, the Municipalities are to be given the power to frame bye-laws regulating the use of pavements, foot-paths and rickshaws by Coloured persons. It is here that the interpretation of the terms "coolie" an "lascar" is necessary, and it is not difficult to imagine what an engine of oppression the bye-laws are likely to be, if the present definition is retained. This clause, evidently, is a result of the agitation that is still going on in the Transvaal with regard to the use of foot-paths by Coloured people, and of the vacillating policy of the Government of that Crown Colony.

Clause 200 makes provision for registration of persons belonging to uncivilised races, resident and employed within the borough. One can understand the necessity for registration of Kaffirs who will not work; by why should registration be required for indentured Indians who have become free, and for their descendants about whom the general complaint is that they work too much? Is the son of an indentured Indian, seeking employment as a clerk, to be registered?

There are other objectionable clauses in the Bill, but we refrain, for the present, from adverting to them in this brief notice of the Bill. It is merely one of the many proofs of an attempt that is being made all over South Africa to crush the Indian, because the whole of the agitation that is at present going on, though nominally directed against the Coloured man, is in reality directed against the British Indian. The policy that is being followed is the policy that was ascribed to the Boers by Lord Milner with reference to the Uitlanders, in his famous Kimberley speech before the war. His Lordship described it as a pin-prick policy; yet it will not be doubted that the Uitlanders, in spite of the political disabilities to which they were subject, were infinitely better off and better able to put up with them than the Indians. If the treatment of the Uitlanders be described as a policy of pin-prick, what shall we say of the policy that is being followed in connection with British Indians in South Africa? As a member of the Legislative Assembly of Natal once said, the Colonial ideal should be to make the position of the British Indians in South Africa as uncomfortable as possible, so that their patience would be exhausted and they would leave the country.

What, now, is the duty of the British Indians under this trying ordeal? The answer is simple. Patience is the badge of the Indians, and they must not on any account forget that fact. It is a precious heritage, and if they would only add to it a large fund of industry, well-sustained and combined opposition to a usurpation of their rights as subjects of the King-Emperor, they might still gain the victory, even though the odds may be against them. They must have the faith of the undaunted prophet who, with the courage born of a living confidence in his God, was wont to defy the hordes of the enemy, and who, when reminded by his disciples that they were only three against the enormous numbers of the latter, retorted that they were not three but four, because the invisible presence of the Almightly was with them.

Indian Opinion, 18-3-1905

166. THE CAPE GENERAL DEALERS' BILL

We are glad to see that the British Indians at the Cape have not allowed the grass to grow under their feet with reference to the Dealers' Bill, which is to be introduced during the present session of the Cape Parliament. An Indian deputation, headed by Sir William Thorne and the Hon. Edmund Powell, has already waited on the Hon. The Attorney-General. We must, however, confess to a feeling of disappointment about the lame reply given by Mr. Sampson.[1] It is all very well for him to say that "a Resident Magistrate was not bound to take into regard the question of keeping books in a European language. The Bill said he might or might not." We all know what these discretionary powers mean. They have been abused before and there is no guarantee that they will not be abused in future. We are quite willing to accept the assurance that the Bill is "not a hit at the Indian", but so far as the latter is concerned, it would amount to it, if it is capable of being so used. We make bold to say that this is undoubtedly a Bill that will lend itself to a great deal of persecution. Again, the Attorney-General totally missed the point when he contended it was a question of keeping books in a European language. The Bill goes much further, and authorises a Licensing Officer to refuse a licence on the ground of the applicant's not knowing a European language. We should have no objection to the books being required to be kept in the English language, which could be done by competent book-keepers, but it is a totally different proposition to require the applicant to know some European language. If the clause is meant to prevent fraud, we cannot understand why the books should be kept in any other European languages than English. Such an alteration, if confined to book-keeping and not extended to the licence-holders, would take away from the clause the sting of insult to the great Indian languages. The learned Attorney-General then proceeds to read a lecture to the Indians, and says:

> He was not talking of things that he did not understand. He was a fair man and knew the position. Take Indian trading on Sundays, for instance. Did they mean to tell him that the Indian traders did not carry on trading on Sundays?

With great deference, we submit that they do not, and that if, in isolated places, they do, what is his Department doing? Is there no

[1] The Attorney-General.

Sunday trading law at the Cape? Could not illicit Sunday trading be stopped with a heavy hand? And, if we may use the *tu quoque* argument, is illicit trading confined to Indians? Moreover, it is painfully surpri-sing to see that the leader of the legal profession at the Cape so far disregards the traditions if law as to bring in support of his no bearing on it, for what possible connection can there be between illicit Sunday trading and knowledge of a European language on the part of an Indian trader? How would be prevent Sunday trading by requiring of an applicant for a licence a knowledge of a European language? The honourable gentleman proceeds:

> There was another difficulty in regard to Indians. They often came out with their families, and the whole of them carried on a business. If the trader became tired, them his wife looked after it for a while, and when she got tired, the children could look after the shop. They would find European people had to live in a different way. They had to send their children to school for a very large portion of the day, and they could not compete fairly with people not under the same obligations.

We have no hesitation in saying that, in making the statement, the honourable gentleman was thinking of people other than Indians; for we speak with knowledge when we say that there are very few Indians whose wives assist at the sales. That the sons of the poorer store-keepers may do so, we are not prepared to deny, but that would be due more to jealousy regarding education of Indian children than to anything else. It is hardly fair to place every obstacle in the way of Indian education and then to say that the parents would not educate their children. It this inequality, if such it be, to be avoided by requiring knowledge of a European language by an Indian store-keeper?

It would have been far better, and more dignified, if Mr. Sampson had effected a compromise and shewn some respect for Indian sentiment. The principle of the Dealers' Licenses Act is such as would commend it to all right-thinking men under the present circumstances of South Africa. The whole argument of the Attorney-General, so far as it is applicable, goes to show that the books of all store-keepers should be kept in English. If so, it should be so stated in the clause. It would then disarm criticism, and would considerably help the Law Department in enforcing the provisions of the Bill, as they would then be accepted by a majority of those whom it is likely to affect.

In passing, we would draw the attention of our readers to a curious sidelight that has been perhaps unconsciously thrown by Mr. Sampson on the attitude of the Government. He said:

> Although Yiddish was accepted as a European language for immigration

purposes, it did not apply in that way to books which were to be kept in a European language.

Apparently, the Government when it suits them can Europeanise a lan-guage for enforcing one law, and de-Europeanise it for enforcing another.

Since the above was written, the full report of the interview with the Attorney-General has come to hand. From this we learn that the objectionable clause relating to a knowledge of some European language is to be withdrawn.

Indian Opinion, 18-3-1905

167. LAWYERS AT THE CAPE

The Incorporated Law Society at the Cape wishes to promote a Bill whereby they intend to prevent any Coloured men being admitted to the Cape Bar or the Side Bar. We are not aware of such legislation having been undertaken in any of the British Dominions. The Cape has hitherto enjoyed the distinction of being the most liberal among the South African Colonies, and the freest from colour prejudice. That in a Colony having such traditions there should be a body of men, supposed to be the most intellectual portion of the community, who wish to promote class legislation of the worst type is very remarkable, for there appears to be absolutely no justification for a step of that description. We wish to bring the proposed Bill to the notice of the Inns of Court in London as also to the Incorporated Law Society. We wonder what they will have to say in connection with this most extraordinary proposal. It has been hitherto assumed that, to a barrister passing out of one of the Inns of Court, the whole of the British Dominions are open for practice. Is the Cape Colony, flying the Union Jack, to set aside the rules framed by the Inns, and shut out barristers from those Inns should they happen to wear a coloured skin?

Indian Opinion, 18-3-1905

168. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI[1]

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

25 & 26 COURT CHAMBERS,
RISSIK STREET,
JOHANNESBURG,
March 20, 1905

DADABHAI NAOROJI, ESQ.
22, KENNINGTON ROAD
LONDON
ENGLAND

DEAR SIR,

A reactionary policy is being followed throughout South Africa regarding the British Indians. I commend to your attention the current numbers of *Indian Opinion* wherein you will find that at the Cape they are trying to introduce a general Dealers' Licenses Bill which is calculated to do a great deal of harm to the British Indians settled at the Cape. In Natal, as you will see, a Fire-arms Bill has been published in the *Gazette* which needlessly insults British Indians. There is, too, a reproduction of the Transvaal anti-Asiatic legislation in the district of Vryheid which has been lately annexed to Natal and the Municipal Corporation Bill contains clauses which are most objectionable. In the Orange River Colony disabilities upon disabilities are being imposed upon Indians through the instrumentality of bye-laws, and I venture to draw your attention to the fact that, while a great deal has been done there regarding the Transvaal legislation as also the Natal legislation, I have not yet seen a question out in the House of Commons regarding the Orange River Colony. I, therefore hope that this matter will also be taken up. The current number of *Indian Opinion* deals with the Natal Municipal Bill among other things and the next number will deal with the other matters referred to in this letter.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original: G.N. 2267.

[1] A copy of the letter was forwarded by Dadabhai Naoroji to the Secretary of State for India and the Secretary of State for the Colonies. The letter was also published in *India*. 14-4-1905.

169. THE ORANGE RIVER COLONY AND ASIATICS

We have more than once drawn attention to the violently anti-Asiatic policy of the Orange River Colony. In such policy, the late Boer Government did not nearly approach the present Government, which, in the name of the King-Emperor, is setting the seal of its approval on the prevalent colour prejudice. We have waited in vain for the fulfilment of Mr. Chamberlain's promise that the anti-Asiatic laws of the Orange River Colony would be remodelled in accordance with British ideas. They are certainly being remodelled, but we have yet to learn that the way in which they are being altered is consistent with the traditions that have been always associated with the word "British". The latest instance is to be found in the *Government Gazette* of the Orange River Colony for the 10th inst. In the regulations for the village of Odendaalsrust, which have received the sanction of His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor and the Executive Council, are contained some clauses regarding Natives with reference to their living in Locations, the sale and manufacture of Kaffir beer by them, the holding of dance parties in the Locations, the keeping of guests therein, the owning of dogs, etc., by them. Now in the regulations, the term "Native" shall be interpreted and taken to apply to and include a man or men, as well as a woman or women, above the age, or estimated age, of 16 years, of any native tribe in South Africa, *and also all Coloured persons and all who, in accordance with law or custom, are called Coloured persons or are treated as such, of what*[*ever*] *race or nationality they may be*. In the clearest possible language, therefore, the "Municipality" of the village has been allowed to include in the term "Native" the British Indians and other Coloured people. If such a definition and such regulations were passed in the Legislative Council of the Orange River Colony, they would be subject to veto by the Home Government; but because a village board passes them, and chooses to give an unwarranted definition to the term "Native", the Home Government is not to be consulted, and the accommodating local Government has no hesitation in countenancing wholesale restrictions of the character above mentioned. Apparently, it does not matter to that Government whether such regulations offend the feelings of the Indian subjects of the King-Emperor or not. We draw the attention of public men in England, who cherish the proverbial sense of justice and fair play, to the scandal revealed by the regulations in question which we reprint in *extenso* in another column.

Indian Opinion, 25-3-1905

170. THE ANTI-INDIAN ACTIVITY OF NATAL

In the *Government Gazette* of Natal for the 28th February, a Bill is published regulating the use of fire-arms. Part 4 of the Bill deals with the use of fire-arms by Natives Asiatics. We give all the sections in another column. Evidently the framers of the Bill have associated the Asiatics almost instinctively with the Natives, and it is that attitude of mind against which we have always firmly and respectfully protested. Since distinctions are made between one class and another, justice will never be done to the Asiatic unless he is treated as apart from the Natives. The Native question is a big question in South Africa. The Native population is very large. The Native civilisation is totally different from the Asiatic or the European. The Native, being the son of the soil, has a right to fair treatment, but being what he is, perhaps some legislation, which may be of a restrictive character, in necessary. It can, therefore, never apply to Asiatics. In this instance of the fire-arms, the Asiatic has been most improperly bracketed with the Native. The British Indian does not need any such restrictions as are imposed by the Bill on the Native regarding the carrying of fire-arms. The predominant race can remain so by preventing the Native from arming himself. Is there the slightest vestige of justification for so preventing the British Indian? It is a matter of common knowledge that the British Indian who has settled in the Colony is not a military man. He is most docile. Why should he, then, be insulted by being placed in the same category with the Native? Would not a stranger, visiting Natal, and coming across legislation of this kind, come to the conclusion that the British Indians must be a very troublesome community? There are occasions when British Indians, living in out-of-the-way places, require to have a gun or a revolver. They are then, if the Bill becomes law, to go not to the ordinary authorities, but to the Secretary of Native Affairs, who has not connection with the British Indians, and there beg for permission to own a revolver or a gun, as if the Magistrates were incapable of using their discretion with reference to the possession of fire-arms by British Indians. We do not know that, in feeding anti-Indian prejudice in this wanton manner, the Government are not unnecessarily exasperating the British Indians. We hope that an amendment will be made in the Bill when it comes up before the Natal Parliament.

Indian Opinion, 25-3-1905

171. THE VALUE OF STRAY MOMENTS

Some time elapses in merely thinking about a piece of work before it is actually begun. Such time is known as stray moments. We carelessly allow these bits time to pass. If we add up these stray moments which are thought to be of little account, they make no mean part of our life; and not to make a proper use of them is to waste life itself.

Each one of us talks, more or less, about his education and improvement. We make plans of how best to use our spare time; but, whenever we get a few stray minutes of leisure, we men and women-particularly women-allow them thoughtlessly to pass away. We go on cherishing dreams of the many things we would do, if and when we have the time. The time we get is just a quarter or half hour or just a few minutes. Then, we say to ourselves, "Well, it does not matter, there isn't enough time now". Thus we go on dreaming and the golden opportunities slip away.

What a fool we shall call the person who, needing £10, does not take care of the few shillings he regularly gets! Nevertheless, we behave just like him. We regret that we do not get time; and yet, we idle away the stray minutes, which put together would make a whole day, just as the stray shillings make a Bank-note.

By making regular, daily use of such minutes, a young European lady succeeded in learning Italian. Another was able to collect an astonishingly large sum of money in a year by knitting for charity during such moments of leisure.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-3-1905

172. SLEEP (BEST) RESTORER OF ENERGY

When a man feels exhausted and is unable to carry on his work, the best remedy is to lie down and sleep and, if possible, to remain in bed for about a week. This is the best means to regain lost energy, particularly mental energy, for during sleep the brain enjoys complete rest, and the brain cells that are consumed during active work are then restored through the supply of blood. Just as every revolution of the wheel of an imposing streamer is the result of fuel burning in the furnace of the boiler, so also every thought arising in the brain is

caused by the utilisation of its cells during the process of thinking. The brain cells thus spent up can only be restored from the life-giving substance in the blood, which is formed out of the food we eat. The brain is so constituted that it can recover its used up cells only in the quietude of rest or sleep. Intoxicating drinks or drugs cannot give any nourishment to the brain. They only stimulate it and force it to consume more of its cells; so much so that the brain gets ultimately exhausted, and has no strength left even to take in the food needed by it, even as a man about to die of hunger and thirst cannot swallow any food or drink.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-3-1905

173. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

21-24 COURT CHAMBERS,
CORNER, RISSIK & ANDERSON STREETS,
P.O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
March 25, 1905

THE HONOURABLE DADABHAI NAOROJI
22, KENNINGTON RD.
LONDON S.E.

DEAR MR. DADABHAI,

I have not been able before now to reply to your letter of the 20th January regarding the South African Bulletin. Just at present it is very difficult to give any pecuniary help to the Paper as the funds have been almost exhausted in carrying on the fight locally. However, if you think that the Paper is deserving of support, I think it may be possible to pay £10 towards it.

I am,
Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original: G.N. 2268.

174. SPEECH AT THEOSOPHICAL LODGE[5]

JOHANNESBURG,

[*March 25, 1905*][6]

Gandhiji said he had come to the conclusion that Theosophy was Hinduism in theory, and that Hinduism was Theosophy in practice.

There were many admirable works in Theosophical literature which one might read with the greatest profit, but it appeared to him that too much stress had been laid upon mental and intellectual studies, upon argument, upon the development of occult powers, and that the central idea of Theosophy, the brotherhood of mankind and the moral growth of man, had been lost sight of in these. He did not wish to suggest that such studies had no place in a man's life, but he thought that they should follow, not precede, the absolutely certain course which was necessary for every life. There were certain maxims of life, which they had not only to get an intellectual grasp of, but which they had to weave into their very being, before they could at all follow the great scriptures of the world.

When a man desired to qualify in any science, he had first of all to pass an entrance examination, but they seemed to think that when they took up a religious book, no previous preparation in any other direction was necessary, but that they could read these scriptures untaught and interpret them for themselves; and that attitude of mind was considered to be real independence of spirit. In his opinion it was nothing but sheer licence taken with things of which they had not the slightest knowledge. They were told in all the Hindu scriptures that, before they could even handle these books, they must cultivate absolutely pure and truthful lives, they must learn to control their passions, which took them away from the central point.

The mind had been likened to an intoxicated monkey, and so it was. If they were to analyse their minds, they would find that they had very little reason to think ill of others, and would begin to think ill of themselves, for they would find that they harboured within themselves robbers and murderers—terms used by them so glibly in connection with others. He wished that they would recognize a limitation in regard to their studies, and that such limitation, instead of hampering

their activity, would further their strength and enable them to soar higher.

He did not think it at all a part of their lives to extend their scope, but thought it their duty to intensify it both with reference to their studies and to their activities; for, if a man concentrated his attention on a particular thing or idea in life, he was likely to make much better use of himself and of his opportunities than if he divided his attention between this, that, and the next thing.

Hindu sages told them that to live life, no matter how hampered it might be, no matter with what limitations, was infinitely superior to having a mental grasp of things divine. They had taught them that, until, one by one and step by step, they had woven these things into their lives, they would not be able to have a grasp of the whole of the divine teaching; and so he urged them that, if they wanted to live the real life, it was not to be lived in that hall, it was not to be lived in Theosophical libraries, but it was to be lived in the world around them, in the real practice of the little teaching that they might have been able to grasp.

From a copy: C. W. 11295. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi; also *Mahatma*, Vol. I,pp. 86-7

175. A DOUBLE-BARRELLED CIRCULAR

There is an Act on the Statute-book of the Colony of Natal, No.28 of 1897 which is intended as a protection to Indian immigrants who do not come within the scope of the laws affecting indentured Indians. When it was passed, the Indian community suggested that it was a law which could be used as an engine of oppression. Its purpose was to give those who would apply for it a certificate to the effect that the holder was not an indentured Indian, so that he might not be arrested on suspicion that he was under indenture and had left his employer. It might well be that poor hawkers and such other Indians would really, by taking out a certificate of this description, be protected from molestation. But its effect has undoubtedly been to cause a great deal of trouble and heart-burning; for although the Act is simply permissive, it has been treated as if it were obligatory, and many an Indian has been detained, and called upon to produce a pass under that Act, or otherwise to show that he is not under indenture.

A further complication has been added to this Act by a circular relating thereto, issued from the Colonial Secretary's Office to the

Magistrates in Natal. Mr. C. Bird, Principal Under-Secretary, thus addresses the Magistrates:

> I have to request that, when forwarding an application to the Protector of Indian Immigrants for a pass, under Act No. 28 of 1897, you will send with the application, the Certificate of Domicile of the Applicant, or a statement to the effect that this certificate has been produced.

The intention is quite evident. It is to prevent Indians, who may have entered the Colony in breach of the Immigration Restrictions Act, from getting a pass from the Protector under the Act above referred to, and thus defying the Immigration Act. But from reports that we have received, the circular has caused a great deal of mischief. It punishes a whole community in order that a few guilty ones may be found out. It is also calculated to impose an unnecessary fine of two shillings and six pence upon poor people. Those who need a pass, under Act 28 of 1897, have first of all to arm themselves with a certificate of domicile, for which a fee of 2/6 has to be paid, and then, when such a certificate has been obtained, a shilling has to be paid for a pass from the Protector.

Now, as a matter of fact, such cumbersome formalities are totally unnecessary. A pass, obtained under Act 28 of 1897, in no way carried with it immunity from prosecution under the Immigration Restrictions Act; and if a certificate of domicile be necessary, the best thing to do is undoubtedly to repeal Act 28 of 1897, so that those Indians who are in the Colony, and are entitled to remain in it under the Immigration Restrictions Act, may take out a certificate of domicile, should they be afraid of any molestation. To expect them to go through the double procedure laid down by Mr. Bird is hardly fair or just, and we question very much whether it is a proper thing, by means of circulars such as the one to which we have drawn attention, to interfere with the administration of law. There is nothing in Act 28 of 1897 requiring production of a certificate of domicile. We have no doubt that an Indian who insisted could, as a matter of law, compel the granting of the pass by the Protector on application. To require, then, the production of a certificate of domicile is to make an unwarranted addition to the Act. We, therefore, trust that either the circular in question will be withdrawn, or that the Government will take an early opportunity of repealing Act 28 of 1897.

Indian Opinion, 1-4-1905

176. A KINDLY WORD FOR INDIANS

In the current number of *The Outlook*, the organ of the Johannesburg Congregational Church, appears an article entitled "In Justice to the Indians", an abstract of which appears in another column. Our contemporary feels it time to protest against some prevailing views affecting the Coloured sections of the community. It confesses to a feeling of disgust at the sordid character of the opposition to British Indians, and has read reports of anti-Asiatic proceedings at various places "with feelings of humiliation for their unfairness of attitude and inaccuracy of statement". It recongnises that some people really believe the presence of Asiatics in South Africa to be detrimental to the public interest, and it strikes the right note when it pleads for strict honestly when the reason for objection is stated. It is not right to bring unfounded charges against Indians when the objection is really based on colour prejudice, or to find them to be a "danger to the public health", when they are merely inconvenient competitors. The Indian fills his own place in South Africa. The prosperity of Natal is very largely dependent upon indentured labour, and, as *The Outlook* says, in trades that he has made peculiarly his own, the Indian is indispensable. His sobriety and respect for the law make him an excellent citizen. We make bold to say that, could the people in this subcontinent view the Asiatic question form outside, the attitude of the Indian community under the most trying circumstances would provoke only admiration. Their confidence in the British sense of Justice remains unshaken, even in the face of harassing regulations such as those to which we have recently drawn attention. Ultimately, Justice will be done them. Indians have an ever increasing circle of friends among the cultured Europeans of South Africa: some day their voice will be heard. We thank our contemporary for this most timely contribution; for, its evident sincerity, moderation and sanity will commend it wherever *The Outlook* is read.

Indian opinion, 1-4-1905

177. A TRIVIAL QUERY

The organ of the Potchefstroom Vigilance Association, in doing us the honour of referring to a recent article that appeared in these columns with reference to the alleged insanitary conditions in which Indians are said to live in the Market Square area,[1] has, at the same

[1] *Vide* "A Political Medical Report", 11-3-1905.

time, queried the validity of Dr. Dixon's report which we published, showing that no such charge of insanitation could justly be brought against the Indian community in Potchefstroom. We do not quite know why facts are jeered at so frequently by our contemporary, or why reputable statements are often misinterpreted or ignored. It would appear that, it the King can do no wrong, the Indian can do no right. No amount of proof that one can bring will convince those who are obsessed by a contrary opinion, and, to us, it almost seems to be flogging a dead horse to reply to such querulous comments as those to which we draw attention. Our only reason for so doing is that unprejudiced readers may have food for reflection, and that they may the more fairly judge of the rights and wrongs of the cause we advocate. Dr. Dixon, at the beginning of October last, when the anti-Indian feeling began to break its legitimate bounds, made his examination at the request of the Indian community, he being authorised to do so in his own time, at his own convenience, and in any way that he thought fit. Therefore, there could be no possible control over his actions on the part of the Indians concerned, nor did the latter receive any warning as to his visits. Moreover, the District Surgeon made such enquiries, as is evidenced by the report under review, as to disprove the allegation of overcrowding at night. But the whole point of our argument seems to have been missed by the *Budget*. We asserted that, notwithstanding the obvious political animus underlying Dr. Friel's report, even he was unable to prove that the Indians had contravened the municipal regulations. He said they were living in a manner which did not satisfy his own standard. What that standard is no one knows but the Doctor himself. And so far, the *Budget* has not replied to us. Meanwhile, we understand that the Government has hinted pretty plainly that what the Municipality would like to do is *ultra vires*.

Indian Opinion, 1-4-1905

178. ORIENTAL IDEAL OF TRUTH

Lord Curzon has proclaimed in his Convocation address that "the highest ideal of truth is to a large extent a Western conception", and that "undoubtedly truth took a high place in the moral codes of the West before it had been similarly honoured in the East, where craftiness and diplomatic wile have always been held in much repute". We commend the following texts from Oriental Scriptures and Epics and other religious and ethical works on Truth and Falsehood to His Excellency's attention, and if Lord Curzon has any regard for Truth and for the people of this country, as we have no

doubt he has, he is in honour bound as Viceroy of India, as Chancellor of Calcutta University and as an English gentleman, to withdraw his baseless and offensive imputations:

> Cross the passes so difficult to cross. Conquer wrath with peace; untruth with Truth. *The sama Veda, Aranya-Gana, Arka-Parva*.
>
> Truth alone prevails and not untruth. Truth is the pathway which learned men tread. It is by this path that the sages, satiated in their desires, have obtained salvation in Him who is the infinite ocean of Truth. *Mundaka Upanishad*, III-1-6.

The very first injunction given to a disciple after he has taken the sacred thread and entered upon his studies is:

> Speak the Truth, observe duty, do not swerve from Truth. *Taittiriya Upanishad*, I-II-I

According to Hinduism, Truth is the very essence of Brahma:

> Brahma is Truth eternal, intelligence immeasurable. *Taittiriya*, II-I-I.
>
> Speech rests on Truth; everything rests on Truth. Therefore they call Truth the highest: *Mahanarayan Upanishad* XXVII.I
>
> There is no duty higher than Truth and no sin more heinous than untruth. Indeed, Truth is the very foundation of Righteousness. *Mahabharata*

Prince Rama is exhorted by a courtier priest to disown his father's promise that he should be banished for fourteen years. But that Prince of immortal fame, in the course of his reply, points out:

> Truth and mercy are immemorial characteristics of a king's conduct. Hence royal rule is in its essence truth. On truth the world is based. Both sages and gods have esteemed truth. The man who speaks truth in this world attains the highest imperishable state. Men shrink with fear and horror from a liar as from a serpent. In this world the chief element in virtue is truth. It is called the basis of everything. Truth is lord in the world, virtue always rests on truth. All things are founded on truth; nothing is higher than it. Why should I not be true to my promise, and faithfully observe the truthful injunction given by my father? Neither through covetousness or delusion nor ignorance will I, overpowered by darkness, break through the barrier of truth, but remain true to my promise by my father. How shall I, having promised to him that I would reside in the forest, transgress his injunction and do what Bharata recommends. *Professor Max Muller's translation*.

Laws of nature are expressions of Truth, and Virtues are but forms of Truth, and all vices are forms of untruth. Bhishma described from as follows:

> Truthfulness, equability, self-control, absence of self-display, forgive-ness, modesty, endurance, absence of envy, charity, a noble well-wishing

towards others, self-possession, compassion, and harmlessness-surely these are the thirteen forms of Truth. *Mahabharata, Shanti Parva*, CLXII, 8,9.

Truth is That which Is, and Untruth is That which Is Not. As Bhishma says:

Truth is eternal Brahman. . . . Everything rests on Truth. *Mahabharata, Shanti Parva*, CLXII, 5.

Aryan heroes have often declared:

My lips have never uttered an untruth.

In the *Ashvamedha Parva*, Shri Krishan, has stated:

Truth and Dharma ever dwell in me.

Bhishma, speaking of Truth and declaring it to be sacrifice of a high order, says:

Once on a time a thousand horse-sacrifices and Truth were weighed against each other in the balance. Truth weighed heavier than a thousand horse-sacrifices. *Mahabharata, Shanti Parva*, CLXII, 26.

There is nothing greater than Truth, and Truth should be esteemed the most sacred of all things. *Ramayana*.

Truth ever more has been the love
Of holy saints and God above,
And he whose lips are truthful here
Wins after death the highest sphere.
As from a serpent's deadly tooth,
We shrink from him who scorns the Truth.

Ramayana.

The virtues that bring about unity and harmony, secure peace and calm, and enable a man to fulfil his destiny, were thus stated by Shri Krishna:

Fearlessness, *Sattvic* purity, steadfast pursuit of wisdom, charity, control of the senses, sacrifice, study, austerity, uprightness;

Harmlessness, truthfulness, absence of anger, designation, peace of mind, avoidance of calumny, pity for all beings, absence of greed, gent-leness, modesty, absence of restlessness;

Energy, forgiveness, endurance, purity, freedom from hatred and from pride—these are his who is born to the divine qualities, O Bharata. *Bhagvat Gita*, XVI, 1-3.

Right speech is thus described in the *Bhagvat Gita*. XVII, 15:

Speech causing no annoyance, truthful, pleasant and beneficial, and the repetition of the Vedas—this is called austerity of speech.

According to Hinduism, Ishvara himself is Truth. The Devas

adoring the Divine Lord, when he appeared as Shri Krishna, broke forth:

> O True of promise, True of purpose, triply True, the Fount of Truth, and dwelling in the True, the Truth of Truth, the eye of Right and Truth, Spirit of Truth, refuge we seek in Thee. *Bhagvatpurana*, XII, 26.

The Institutes of Manu are dated, according to Sir William Jones, at least 1280 B.C. if not 1580 B.C. The tenfold law, as laid down by Manu, gives some of the qualities needed for the discipline of the mind and reaching the highest Truth, the one Reality:

> Endurance, patience, self-control, integrity, purity, restraint of the senses, wisdom, learning, truth, absence of anger, are the ten signs of virtue. *Manusmriti*, VI, 92.

Elsewhere they are briefly described as follows:

> Harmlessness, truth, integrity, purity, control of the senses, said Manu, is the summarised law of the four castes. (*Manusmriti*, x, 63).

Manu thus denounces those who are "dishonest in speech":

> All things are governed by speech: speech is the root, from speech they originate; that man verily who is dishonest in speech, he is dishonest in all. *Manusmriti*, IV, 256.

Aryan sacred books inculcate constant practice of righteousness and performance of duty:

> The man who is unrighteous, or he who gains wealth by falsehood, or he who ever delights in injuring, never obtains happiness in this world. Although suffering from unrighteousness, let him not turn his mind to unrighteousness; he will behold the speedy overthrow of the unrighteous, of the sinners. Unrighteousness, practised in this world, does not bear fruit at once like a cow; slowly reacting it cuts off the very roots of the doer. *Manusmriti*, IV,170-172.

> Let him say what is true, but let him say what is pleasing. Let him speak no disagreeable truth, but let him not speak disagreeable falsehood; this is a primeval rule. iv, 138.

> Let a man continually take pleasure in Truth, in justice, in laudable practices and in purity, iv, 175.

> Let him never eat the food of a back-biter or of a false witness, iv, 214.

> For he who describes himself to worthy men in a manner contrary to truth, is the most sinful wretch in this world; he is the worst of thieves, a stealer of minds, iv, 255.

> They whose eating is solely for the sustaining of life; and whose speech is only to declare truth, surmount difficulties. *Hitopadesh*.

There are four sins of speech:

1. Lying, 2. Slander, 3. Abuse, 4. Unprofitable conversation. *The Ethics of Buddhism*.

Truth and falsehood stand to one another in the relation of a stone to an earthen vessel. If a stone be thrown at an earthen vessel, the latter will break. In either case it is the earthen vessel that suffereth. *Sikh Teaching*.

No act of devotion can equal Truth; no crime is so heinous as falsehood; in the heart where Truth abides, there is My abode. *Kabir*.

Indian Opinion, 1-4-1905

179. PRAISEWORTHY WORK BY CAPE INDIANS

MEETING AND DEPUTATION IN CONNECTION WITH THE NEW BILL

We congratulate our Indian brethren of the Cape on waking up betimes and actively discharging their duty in regard to the new Bill. As soon as the General Dealers' Licences Bill was published in draft form in the Cape *Government Gazette*, the leaders sensed its real purport. They held a big meeting in Cape Town[1], expressed their feelings about the Bill and passed some resolutions, details of which have already been published before[2]. Alive to the gravity of the situation, they have not remained content with just this. They waited in deputation upon the Honourable the Attorney-General of the Cape Colony, presented these resolutions and discussed them with him. In choosing the members of the deputation, they showed tact, and included two respectable local Members of Parliament[3] to lead them.

The Attonery-General, Mr. Sampson, explained to them a number of points about the draft Bill. Some of these explanations were all right, but his answers, on the whole, cannot be said to have been satisfactory. It is apparent that the Indian leaders will have to be very much on their guard when the Bill comes up before Parliament. The question of language, in particular, came in for much discussion at this interview. An article in the Bill requires, of every applicant for a licence, a knowledge of at least one European language. On this point Mr. Sampson did some plain-speaking, but a few other things he said showed that he was being shrewdly evasive. The satisfying part of the interview was that he agreed to clarify, in the provision relating to language, that only the account books need be kept in a European

[1] A meeting of a large number of prominent Indian residents of Cape Town was held under the auspices of the British Indian League at the Masonic Hall, Cape Town.

[2] *Vide Indian Opinion*, 18-3-1905, and *Indian Opinion*, 25-3-1905.

[3] Sir William Thorne, M.L.A. and the Hon. Edmund Powell, M.L.C.

language and that it was unnecessary [for the authorities] to ensure whether or not the applicant knew the language. The Indians have no objection to the books being required to be kept is a European language; even so, the Attorney-General passed many strictures [on Indian traders] with reference to this point. Although there was little force in his arguments, Indians have to be cautious, particularly about what he said on the subject of discretion being vested in the Magistrate. For any matter to be left to discretion nowadays means uncertainly and endless delay. We have seen that, all along, everywhere is South Africa, discretion has had only one result, viz., it invairably goes against Indians. Mr. Sampson tried to show that the Indians did not have much to fear but in doing so he somewhat transgressed the limits of his own caution. Thus it was he let the cat out of the bag when, in his final reply to Mr. Powell, he said he had spoken vaguely in order to please. His reply sounds like a joke. "It is not at all necessary that the application to the Magistrate should be in English, though it should be intelligible to him." What does this mean?

From Mr. Sampson's comments on the reasons for the proposed law, it appears that he, too, is suspicious and not well disposed towards Indians. He does not appear to have taken the interview seriously; and the illustrations he offered are in our opinion pointless. At one point, he said that the Bill was not designed for Indians in particular; and, at another, that such a law had to be enacted, as the Chambers of Commerce and other mercantile bodies had been bringing pressure [on the authorities], complaining that account books of Indians were unsystematic, that he had, as a matter of experience, found it the law courts to obtain the necessary information form the books kept by Indians. The law he said, was being enacted to protect European merchants, etc. Obviously, this explanation appears to have been given without full consideration. He then began to show that he was fair-minded and exhibit his knowledge of Indians. While doing go, he referred to trading on Sundays and asked if there were not instances of whole Indian families doing business on Sundays. In this connection he mentioned a letter he had received, which said that a certain entire Indian family, i.e., including the merchant's wife and children, was doing business illegally on Sundays. With such people the whites could not compete. In this respect the Indians and the Greeks were equally blameworthy, and all of them had to suffer for the sake of the few, etc. This drew form Mr. Gool[1] the rejoinder that his correspondent must have been prompted

[1] Mr. G. M. H. Gool, a prominent Indian Merchant of Cape Twon and one of the members of the deputation.

by jealousy, for his facts were not true. If however, any Indian was guilty of this offence, why were they not prosecuted and punished according to law?

This, in brief, was what transpired at the interview. Now, the question that occurs to us is: will a knowledge of English or some other European language prevent these offences? We are much surprised and grieved that the Attorney-General who is an able advocate did not hesitate to argue as if it would. What relation can there be between a man's language and his character? Will the complaints cease if Indian merchants keep their account books in European languages?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-4-1905

180. THE PLAGUE HAVOC

Plague has wrought havoc in India. Its virulence this year has been inordinate. The Government is helpless and the people despondent. In the Punjab, the attack has been so fierce that trade has suffered heavily. And even those with a high standard of living who were less susceptible to its attack are no longer so. Nevertheless, the dread epidemic is found spreading only among the indigenous population. Many people think that this plague is the visitation of God's wrath on us for our accumulated sins. A correspondent of *The Times of India* has accordingly made a suggestion to the Government that they should fix a day when all India might offer prayers to God to eradicate the epidemic.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-4-1905

181. MEMORIAL TO NATAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY[1]

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE COLONY OF NATAL, PIETERMARITZBURG

April 7, 1905

That your petitioners hereby venture to approach this Honourable House in connexion with certain two Bills that will be brought up for your consideration during this session-namely, the Bill "to amend and consolidate the law relating to the Municipal Corporations," and the Bill regulating the "use of fire-arms", in the following respects:

Your petitioners venture to think that the definition of the expression "Coloured person" in the first Bill above mentioned is very unsatisfactory, in that it means, among others, "any coolie or lascar", which themselves require a definition; for, it will be very difficult for a police constable to know whom he is to consider a "coolie" or a "lascar", as the terms do not denote a particular race, but are applied to mean unskilled labourers and seamen respectively.

In the humble opinion of your petitioners, the definition of the term "uncivilised races" is also unsatisfactory, and the term itself is offensive to those whom it is intended to include. Moreover, your Petitioners fail to understand why the children of indentured Indians should be classed among "uncivilised races". Many of them have, by industry, risen very high in education and culture, and occupy important positions in the Colony, either as employees or independent men.

By sub-clause (c) in clause 22, persons who are disqualified for the parliamentary franchise by Act 8 of 1896 are disqualified from being placed on the Burgess Roll. Act No. 8 of 1896 disfranchises those who belong to countries which have not hitherto possessed representative institutions founded on the parliamentry franchise.

Your Petitioners venture to submit that there is no connexion between the parliamentary franchise and the municipal, and that even though it may be, for the same of argument, true that British Indians do not possess the parliamentary franchise in India, it is capable of conclusive proof that they possess the municipal franchise to a very

[1] A copy of this memorial on behalf of Abdul Cadir and other British Indians was later annexed to the petition to Lord Elgin dated August 15, 1906, and also reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 18-8-1906.

large extent, some of your Petitioners having been, in India, either burgesses or councillors themselves. Nor would the past history of the British Indians settled in the Colony justify a disability of the above nature. Your Petitioners therefore humbly submit that it would be an unnecessary insult offered to the British Indians should the clause in question receive your approval.

Your Petitioners have failed to see any justification for authority to the Town Councils in the Colony to make by-laws with respect to the use of pavements and foot-paths by "Coloured persons", and also the use of rickshaws by them, in so far as the term includes Indians. It is thus in this connexion that the definition of the term "Coloured person" comes into play, and is calculated to give rise to a great deal of mischief.

Your Petitioners also humbly protest against clause 200 of the said Bill, in that it authorises the Council to frame by-laws establishing a system of registration of Natives or persons belonging to "uncivilised races". In your petitioners' opinion, registration of those Indians who are included in the term "uncivilised races" is totally uncalled for, as Indians have never been found unwilling workers. It will furthermore appear, from the clause under discussion, that registration would be required of even cultured Indians.

With regard to the second Bill, your Petitioners venture to submit that it has very much grieved the British Indians residing in the Colony. Sections 44 to 47 deal with the use of fire-arms by Natives and Asiatics. Your Petitioners think that the Indians with the Natives is hardly justified. The Indian is a very docile Colonist, and has never given any trouble, and your Petitioners venture respectfully to point out that to bracket Indians and Natives together, and to compel the former to deal with the Native Department before they can obtain a permit to own a fire-arm, which may be required for self-protection, would be extremely degrading.

Your Petitioners, therefore, in conclusion, pray that the Bills above mentioned will be so amended as to remove any cause for complaint.

India, 14-9-1906

182. MR. LYTTELTON ON THE INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL

From a cablegram in the local papers, we notice that Mr. Lyttelton, in reply to a question, has stated that the position of the British Indians in the Transvaal has been bettered by the judgement[1] in the Test Case of *Motan* v. *The Government*. With all due respect, we venture to think that the statement is not in accord with facts; and in any case, why should he or the Government take the slightest credit for any relief in the position because it was obtained in spite of the Government? Is it not a fact that the Government opposed the application for a licence made to the Supreme Court? They were represented by three eminent counsel, and they really drove the Indian community to the test case, because it was undertaken after even the old *bona-fide* traders were refused licences to trade, on the ground that they did not hold licences immediately before the outbreak of hostilities. That they traded outside Locations before the war was not held sufficient.

We are, indeed, strongly reminded of the pre-war days. Then, too, there was a test case[2] exactly similar to the one referred to by Mr. Lyttelton. Then, the British Government assisted the Indians to fight the case. They contended, with the Indians, that under Law 3 of 1885, Indian trade outside Locations was not prohibited, but after the Transvaal passed into British hands, a different tune was played. The same British Government, in the test case of Motan, instructed Counsel to oppose the Indian contention. It is strange that, having this knowledge, Mr. Lyttelton should appropriate credit for the decision of the Supreme Court on the test case. But, as we have said, the position of the Indians has not in any way become better than it was during the Boer regime. It has certainly become better that it was before the test case, but after the establishment of British Government in the Transvaal, the decision of the Supreme Court enables the Indians, *on payment of licence money*, to trade where they like. Before the war, under the protection of the British Government, the Indians were able to trade where they liked *without payment of any licence money*. It is

[1] The judgment was that Habib Motan, an Indian trader, could not be refused a licence to trade outside locations.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to the British Agent", 28-2-1898, "Letter to G.V. Godfrey", 18-3-1898, "A Statement of Account", 25-3-1898 & "Notes on the Test Case" , 4-4-1898.

true that the Indians tendered the licence money, but the Boer Government declined to accept it, and were powerless, owing to British opposition, to prosecute the Indians who, with their knowledge and under notice to them, traded outside Locations. Thus, the position of the British Indians, so far as regards trade, was better before the war than it is to-day. In other respects, too, the position is bad enough, and certainly no less gloomy than before the war, and it is unexcusably painful, so far as Indian immigration into the country is concerned. Before the war, any Indian was free to enter the Transvaal. To-day, even a *bona-fide* refuge Indian, who is in a position to show that he has been previously domiciled in the Transvaal, and that he has paid, before the war, the sum of £3 as the price of permission to settle in the Colony, finds it tremendously difficult to obtain a permit to enter the country; and a British Indian, no matter what his qualifications or status may be, if he be not a refugee, cannot possibly enter the country. His application receives scant treatment at the hands of the Government; and this all but total prohibition of Indian immigration has been brought about, not by fair and open means, but by pressing into service a political ordinance passed, in the first instance, to prevent the entry into the Transvaal of people who might be suspected of having treasonable designs. That Ordinance is being now abused to shut the Indian out of the country. The religious susceptibilities of the Indians were hardly ever touched during the old regime, but now, though it is true that one cannot say anything against the Government on this point, the fact stands that there is an agitation to-day going on in Potchefstroom against the erection of a mosque, not, as has been stated in a prominent place in the town, but in a by-lane. We could go on recounting the troubles of the Indians, and could show how, contrary to all expectations that were raised in the minds of the Indians by the conduct of the British Government, and by the speeches of British Ministers, the Indians now find themselves face to face with a life-and-death struggle, and for Mr. Lyttelton to say that the position of the British Indians in the Transvaal has been bettered is, to say the least, extremely misleading. Not until the Law 3 of 1885, and other laws dealing with the British Indians, have been erased from the Statute-book of the Transvaal Colony, and legislation passed in greater agreement with British ideas of justice, will it be possible for the British Indian in the Transvaal to say that he is once more a British subject, enjoying all the rights that flow from such a status. To-day he is a step-child seeking and yearning for protection on the part of his parents, which protection he does not get.

Indian Opinion, 8-4-1905

183. AN IMPORTANT JUDGMENT CONCERNING TRANSVAAL INDIANS

It is well known that Indians cannot hold land in their own names and that some of them, therefore, purchase land in the names of the whites. Mr. Syed Ismail, a resident of Johannesburg, possessed some land which he held in the name of a white friend of his, Mr. Lucas. When the Johannesburg Corporation acquired Locations, etc., this land also was taken over by them, and a resolution to pay Mr. Lucas £2,000 as compensation was passed. Mr. Lucas died during the war, and his estate was attached for insolvency. As his assets were not sufficient to pay off his debtors, in trustees claimed the compensation payable towards the land held by him on behalf of Syed Ismail. Syed Ismail thereupon filed a suit in the High Court claiming that this sum of £ 2,000 should be paid to him. The creditors of Lucas raised two issues: firstly that the amount claimed by Syed Ismail stood in the name of Lucas, and secondly, that, since the land to which Syed Ismail claimed a title was immovable property, he could not enjoy the right of its ownership. The rejoinder to this, submitted on behalf of Syed Ismail, was that, as the land was held on ninety-nine years' lease, it could not be regarded as immovable property and that, therefore, there could be no objection to Indians owning such land. And should the Court not hold this argument valid, there was the alternative answer that the law, which prevented Indians from ownership of immovable property, did not lay down that immovable property could not be held by others, such as the whites, in their own names on behalf of Indians. Giving the verdict in favour of Syed Ismail, the honourable judge remarked, with regard to the second issue, that land on a ninety nine years' lease should[1] be considered immovable property, and such land, therefore, could not stand in the name of an Indian. Granting Syed Ismail's second plea, however, the judge held that the whites could hold lands for the benefit of Indians, and that the law would protect the rights of an Indian owner if a white holding the propety intended to commit fraud. This decision is very satisfactory; therefore, the Indians who are hesitating to purchase land in the names of whites need have no such fear any longer. It should, however, be borne in mind that the white concerned must be a turstworthy person and a clear title-deed should be obtained from him. It appears certain that

[1] In the original, "not" seems to have been wrongly placed. It would mean "could *not* be considered immovable property".

this decision will strengthen us in our fight with the Government for our rights. We learn that the trustees for Lucas' estate have preferred an appeal against this decision to the High Court. Let us await the outcome of the appeal.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-4-1905

184. CURZON'S SPEECH ON INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

A Reuter cable tells us that Lord Curzon made a forceful speech in the Indian Legislature in support of our case. He said that the South African Colonies would get no help from India, so long as they did not guarantee that the rights of Indians would be fully safeguarded. He added that it was the duty of the Government of India to protect the Indians and that they would continue to discharge that duty.

These words are bound to gladden us. They will certainly have a good effect. The speech shows that our efforts here do not go in vain. It behoves us to continue to make added effort and, as opportu- nity presents itself, agitate for the redress of our grievances. We are sure that, given unity and concerted effort, we shall succeed.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-4-1905

185. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

25 & 26, COURT CHAMBERS,
RISSIK STREET,
JOHANNESBURG,
April 10, 1905

TO
THE HON'BLE MR. DADABHAI NAOROJI
22, KENNINGTON ROAD
LONDON

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Lyttelton is reported to have said that, since the decision in the test case in the Transvaal, the position of the British Indians had

become better than before war. You will notice a reply to this statement in *Indian Opinion* of the 8th April in its first leading article. The position generally has certainly not become better [but] has become worse than before war, and the relief that the test case has secured for the Indians simply takes them back to the pre-war days; but even for this the Government can hardly take any credit as they opposed the Indian contention strenuously before the Supreme Court.

In Natal, several Bills, as you will see from *Indian Opinion*, having an anti-Indian tendency are being introduced, and the Orange River Colony is ever tightening its grip of the Coloured people. Regulations are being passed in townships after townships, which, in my humble opinion, are unworthy of the British Constitution, and could never be sanctioned by Mr. Lyttelton, if they were introduced in the form of bills in the Legislative Council.

I earnestly hope that you will protect and do justice to the British Indian subjects of His Majesty, who look to you for relief.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original: G. N. 2269

186. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

JOHANNESBURG,

April 11, 1905

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY,

BLOEMFONTEIN

SIR,

The attention of my Association has been drawn to regulations that are published from time to time in the *Government Gazette* in connection with the various Municipalities in the Orange River Colony regarding Coloured persons resident therein, and to the Ordinance "to supplement and amend the provisions of law with reference to the Municipality of Bloemfontein".

In the regulations for the Township of Reddersburg, my Association noticed that the term "Native" is so defined as to include all Coloured persons, not excepting British Indians, and the regulations

for this Township, as also for that of Vrede, lay down rules for the control of the Coloured people living within those townships, which, in the humble opinion of my Association, are degrading, unjust and insulting; and while it is very probable that there are no British Indians staying in those townships, the regulations in question are none the less offensive on that account, and should a stray Indian happen to enter any of those townships, he would suddenly find himself hemmed in by galling restrictions.

My Association was pained to see similar powers granted by Ordinance 19 of 1905 to the Municipality of Bloemfontein. My Association ventures to think that such anti-colour activity in the Orange River Colony is contrary to British traditions as also the declarations made from time to time by Her late Majesty's Ministers, and it is incomprehensible to my Association why such legislation and regulations are countenanced by the Government of the Orange River Colony.

My Association will be extremely obliged if you will be pleased to inform me whether it is the intention of the Government to grant any relief in the matter.

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
ABDUL GANI,
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 22-4-1905

187. MR. BARNETT'S CHARGE AND MR. ANCKETILL

Mr. Ancketill is to be congratulated on having questioned the Colonial Secretary upon the charge levelled by Mr. Barnett, the ex-Superintendent of Education, against certain employers of indentured Indians in Natal, in connection with the condition of the latter's huts, which he described as "piggeries".

Mr. Maydon[1] has replied, saying that the charge made by Mr. Barnett is greatly exaggerated, and that the Protector of Indians looks after the welfare of the indentured Indians. Mr. Maydon promised to lay on the table of the House the report made by the Protector on the

[1] Colonial Secretary for Natal.

charge. We consider the reply of the Colonial Secretary to be unsatisfactory in every respect. Here is a charge of extreme gravity made with the fullest deliberation before an audience of cultured men, who enjoyed a most responsible position in the Colony. Mr. Barnett was then speaking generally on education in Natal, and the above charge is by no means an isolated passage in his address, which is a serious indictment against the system of education prevalent in Natal. To call for a report from the Protector of Immigrants in a matter of this kind is very much like setting a man to judge his own case. Mr. Barnett's charge, we contend, includes in its condemnation the whole of the Indian Immigration Department. We do not say he is right, but we do say that the report drawn [up] by a Department which is condemned contradicting the condemnation is hardly the way to meet the indictment.

It is not merely a question of consulting the interests of the indentured Indians, it is that of the fair name of the Colony. We think that the Government would be extremely ill-advised in not probing the question to the bottom, and giving the fullest satisfaction to the public. If the result of the independent inquiry in any way supports Mr. Barnett's charge, the sooner the blot is removed the better for the Colony; and if the charge is proved to be incorrect, Mr. Barnett should be called upon, as a past public servant, to offer an explanation. We hope, therefore, that Mr. Ancketill will continue to question the Colonial Secretary until what is needful has been done.

It is to be noticed, also, that Mr. Barnett delivered his attack before an audience that included the ex-Prime Minister of Natal, Sir Albert Hime, and many other Natal notabilities. Sir Albert Hime made lengthy remarks after the lecturer had finished, and we do not see anywhere a repudiation of the serious charge brought by Mr. Barnett. Does the Colonial Secretary not find food for reflection here?

Indian Opinion, 15-4-1905

188. LECTURES ON RELIGION

It appears from the Johannesburg newspapers that, on being invited by the Theosophical Society there to deliver a course of lectures on the Hindu religion, Mr. Gandhi gave four speeches on the subject at the Masonic Temple. On each occasion the hall was full. The last speech was delivered on the 25th of March. An account of two of the speeches has already appeared in *The Star*.[1] We give below, on

[1] *Vide* "Hinduism", March 4, 1905 and March 11, 1905.

the suggestion of some of our readers, a summary of the lectures, obtained from Mr. Gandhi.

CONTEMPT FOR INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

When the Theosophical Society invited me to deliver these speeches, I accepted the invitation on two considerations. It is now nearly twelve years that I have been living in South Africa. Everyone is aware of the hardships suffered by my compatriots in this land. People view with contempt the colour of their skin. I believe all this is due to a lack of proper understanding; and I have continued to stay in South Africa with a view to helping as much as possible in the removal of this misunderstanding. I, therefore, felt that it would to some extent help me in the fulfilment of my duty if I accepted the Society's invitation; and I shall regard myself very fortunate if I am able, through these lectures, to give you a better understanding of the Indians. I am to speak to you no doubt about the [Hindus[1]]; but the ways and manners of the Hindus and other Indians are all but identical. All Indians have similar virtues and vices and are descended from the same stock. The other consideration was that there was, among the objects of the Teosophical Society, this one, viz., to compare the various religions, find out the truth underlying these and show the people how those religions were only so many roads leading to the realisation of God, and how one ought to hesitate to dub any of them false. I thought that this object, too, would be realised to some extent if I said a few words on the Hindu religion.

THE HINDUS

Hindus are not considered to be the original inhabitants of India. According to Western scholars, the Hindus as well as most of the European peoples lived at one time in Central Asia. Migrating from there, some went to Europe, some to Iran, others moved south-eastwards down into India through the Punjab, and there spread the Aryan religion. The Hindu population in India exceeds two hundred millions. They are called Hindus because they once lived beyond the river Sindhu (Indus). The Vedas are their oldest scripture. Very devout Hindus believe that the Vedas are of divine origin and without beginning. Western scholars hold that these were composed before 2000 B.C. The famous Mr. Tilak of Poona has shown that the Vedas must be at least 10,000 years old.[2] The main thing that distinguishes the Hindus is their belief that the *Brahman* or oversoul is all-pervading. What we all have to attain is *moksha* or liberation, *moksha*, here

[1] In the original, the word used, clearly through oversight, is "Indian".
[2] In *The Arctic Home in the Vedas*.

meaning freeing oneself from the evil of birth and death and merging in the *Brahman*. Humility and even-mindedness are the chief qualities of their ethics; while caste reigns supreme in their temporal affairs.

The Hindu religion underwent its first trial on the advent of Lord Buddha. The Buddha was himself the son of a [king[1]]. He is said to have been born before 600 B.C. At that time the Hindus were under the glamour of the outward form of their religion, and the Bra-hmins had, out of selfishness, abandoned their true function of defen-ding the Hindu faith. Lord Buddha was moved to pity when he saw his religion reduced to such a plight. He renounced the world and started doing penance. He spent several years in devout contemplation and ultimately suggested some reform in the Hindu religion. His piety greatly affected the minds of the Brahmins, and the killing of animals for sacrifice was stopped to a great extent. It cannot, therefore, be said that the Buddha founded a new or different religion. But those who came after him gave his teachings the identity of a separate religion. King Ashoka the Great sent missionaries to different lands for the propagation of Buddhism, and spread that religion in Ceylon, China, Burma and other countries. A distinctive beauty of Hinduism was revealed during this process: no one was converted to Buddhism by force. People's minds were sought to be influenced only by discussion and argument and mainly by the very pure conduct of the preachers themselves. It may be said that, in India at any rate, Hinduism and Buddhism were but one, and that even today the fundamental principles of both are identical.

THE BIRTH OF PROPHET MAHOMED

We have seen that Buddhism had a salutary effect on Hinduism, that the champions of the latter were aroused by its impact. A thousand years ago, the Hindu religion came under another influence more profound. Hazrat Mahomed was born 1300 years ago. He saw moral anarchy rampant in Arabia. Judaism was struggling for survival; Christianity was not able to gain a foothold in the land; and the people were given to licence and self-indulgence. Mahomed felt all this to be improper. It caused him mental agony; and in the name of God, he determined to make them realise their miserable condition. His feeling was so intense that he was able immediately to impress the people around him with his fervour, and Islam spread very rapidly. Zeal or passion, then, is a great speciality, a mighty force, of Islam. It has been the cause of many good deeds, and sometimes of bad ones too. A thousand years ago the army of Ghazni invaded India in order to

[1] The original has "emperor"

spread Islam. Hindu idols were broken and the invasions advanced as far as Somnath. While, on the one hand, violence was thus being used, the Muslim saints were, on the other, unfolding the real merit of Islam. The Islamic principle that all those who embraced Islam were equals made such a favourable impression on the lower classes that hundreds of thousands of Hindus accepted that faith, and there was great commotion in the whole community.

Kabir[1] was born in Benares. He thought that, according to Hindu philosophy, there could be no distinction betwen a Hindu and a Muslim. Both of them, if they did good works, would find a place in heaven. Idolatry was not an essential part of Hinduism. Reasoning thus, he attempted to bring about a synthesis between Hinduism and Islam; but it did not have much effect, and his became no more than a distinct sect, and it exists even to-day. Some years later, Guru Nanak was born in the Punjab; he accepted the reasoning of Kabir and made a similar attempt to fuse the two religions. But while doing so, he felt that Hinduism should be defended against Islam, if necessary with the sword. This gave rise to Sikhism, and produced the Sikh warriors. The result of all this is that, despite the prevalence of Hinduism and Islam as the two principal religions of India to-day, both the communities live together in peace and amity and are considerate enough not to hurt one another's feelings save for the bitterness caused by political machinations and excitement. There is very little difference between a Hindu *yogi*[2] and a Muslim *fakir*[3].

JESUS CHRIST, THE PROPHET

While Islam and Hinduism were thus vying with each other, the Christians landed at the port of Goa about 500 years ago, and set about converting Hindus to Christianity. They also partly resorted to force and [converted] partly through persuasion. Some of their ministers were exceedingly tender-hearted and kind, rather one would call them saintly. Like the *fakirs* they made a deep impression on the lower classes of Hindu society. But later, when Christianity and Western civilisation came to be associated, the Hindus began to look upon the religion with disfavour. And today, we see few Hindus embracing Christianity inspite of the fact that the Christians are ruling over a vast kingdom. Nevertheless, Christianity has had a very considerable influence on Hinduism. Christian priests imparted education of a high

[1] A poet-saint who attempted, through his devotional songs, to unite Hindus and Muslims.

[2] A recluse.

[3] A religious mendicant.

order and pointed out some of the glaring defects in Hinduism, with the result that there arose among the Hindus other great teachers who, like Kabir, began to teach the Hindus what was good in Christianity and appealed to them to remove these defects. To this category belonged Raja Ram Mohan Rai,[1] Devendranath Tagore,[2] and Keshab Chandra Sen.[3] In Western India we had Dayanand Saraswati.[4] And the numerous reformist associations like the Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj that have sprung up in India today are doubtless the result of Christian influence.[5] Again, Madame Blavatsky[6] came to India, told both Hindus and the Muslims of the evils of Western civilisation and asked them to beware of becoming enamoured of it.

TENETS OF HINDUISM

Thus, we have seen how there have been three assaults on Hinduism, coming from Buddhism, Islam and then Christianity, but how on the whole it came out of them unscathed. It has tried to imbibe whatever was good in each of these religions. We should, however, know what the followers of this religion, Hinduism, believe. This is what they believe: God exists. He is without beginning, immaculate, and without any attribute or form. He is omnipresent and omnipotent. His original form is *Brahman*. It neither does, nor causes to be done. It does not govern. It is bliss incarnate, and by it all this is sustained. The soul exists, and is distinct from the body. It also is without a beginning, without birth. Between its original form and the *Brahman*, there is no distinction. But it takes on, from time to time, a body as a result of *karma*[7] or the power of *maya*[8], and goes on being born again and again into high or low species in accordance with the good or bad deeds performed by it. To be free from the cycle of birth and death and be merged in *Brahman* is *moksha* or liberation. The way to achieve this *moksha* is to do pure and good deeds; to have compassion for all living beings, and to live in truth. Even after reaching this stage, one does not attain liberation, for one has to enjoy embodied

[1] Founder of the Brahmo Samaj.

[2] & [3] Raja Ram Mohan Rai's work was continued by Devendranath Tagore and Keshab Chandra Sen, the former on the lines of pure Hinduism and the latter along those of Christianity.

[4] Founder of the Arya Samaj.

[5] The Brahmo Samaj was to some extent the result of Christian influence, but the Arya Samaj, which was based on ancient Vedic principles, was an attempt to meet the challenge of Christianity.

[6] Founder of the Theosophical Society.

[7] Sum of person's actions from a previous existence, viewed as deciding his fate in the next.

[8] Illusion.

existence as a consequence of one's good deeds as well. One has, therefore, to go a step further. We will, however, have to continue to act, only we should not cherish any attachment to our actions. Action should be undertaken for its own sake, without an eye on the fruit. In short, everything should be dedicated to God. We should not cherish, even in a dream, the feeling of pride that we do or can do anything. We should look upon all equally. These are the beliefs or tenets of Hinduism, but there admittedly exist a number of schools. Also, there have arisen a few factions or sects resulting from [differences in] secular practices. But we need not consider them on the present occasion.

CONCLUSION: AN APPEAL TO THE AUDIENCE

If, after listening to this, any one of you has been favourably impressed and has come to feel that the Hindus or the Indians, in whose country the religion expounded above prevails, cannot be altogether an inferior people, you can render service to my countrymen even without becoming involved in political matters.

All religions teach that we should all live together in love and mutual kindness. It was not my intention to preach you a sermon neither am I fit to do so. But if it has produced any favourable impression on your mind, I would appeal to you to let my brethren have its benefit and, as behoves the English people, to defend them, whenever they are maligned.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-4-1905

189. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
April 17, 1905

C. K. GANDHI ESQ.
C/O INTERNATIONAL PRINTING PRESS
PHOENIX

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. You should talk to Mr. Kitchin about the matters you mention. You should not sit still. You will find that your curiosity, which will be quite legitimate, will not be resented. How is the new arrangement working? Is the job-work now finished, or about to be? Before you tell me how many Hindi subscribers we have or unless the Hindi people would guarantee so many subscribers, we

cannot afford to increase the Hindi columns. In fact the letter that crossed your letter, under reply, would show you that I would even decrease the Hindi columns if you have not enough support. The same thing applies to Tamil. There is no prospect of my being able to go there at present. I have already send £ 100. You should not sign the notes in favour of M. C. Camroodeen three months hence. We should get at least six months. You need not bother about Mr. Nazar giving you any Gujarati. Can you definitely come in the beginning of May? If you fix your date beforehand, I can arrange for your permit. If Appoo wants you to send two copies, do so by all means, charging for one only, and you should regularly send three copies to Mr. Rustomji at Bombay. Can you not reduce the complimentary list for India and London? What is the total of foreign complimentary copies, that is outside British South Africa? I am studying Tamil very diligently and, if all is well, I may be able to fairly understand the Tamil articles within two months at the outside. I am rather anxious to get the Tamil books. Please therefore try if you cannot get them. You Understand, I suppose, what I want? You may go over to Mr. Mood-ley's place. I have written to him.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the typewritten original: S.N. 4232

190. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
April 19, 1905

C. K. GANDHI ESQ
C/O INTERNATIONAL PRINTING PRESS
PHOENIX

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I hope you will discuss your views with Kitchin about the Hindi and Tamil matter. Of course personally I should feel very sorry to see the two languages dropped. I entirely agree with you about Mannering. Please discuss the matter with Mr. West. When is Mannering likely to leave? I hope to let you have the cake per Shah who is leaving to-morrow evening. I have the Tamil books. They will be useful. What, however, I wanted was Pope's larger Grammar. You

know my book which I gave Madanjit. If you cannot make the cake properly, it must be the fault of the oven, or you do not add sufficient ghee. You will remember that the meal must be kept soaked in cold water for nearly three hours. When you make your cake the ghee should be added first and thoroughly mixed with flour before you pour water over it, and it should be well kneaded.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the typewritten original: S.N. 4233

191. LETTER TO "THE OUTLOOK"

[Prior to *April* 22, 1905]

A REPLY TO MR. HILLS[1]

TO
THE EDITOR
The Outlook
JOHANNESBURG

SIR,

Mr. W. Hills has made in his letter to *The Outlook* statements which are hardly borne out by the facts. The Editor has not supported a policy "which would hand over the Transvaal to a parasitical race". Mr. Hills himself admits, by implication, that the British Indian is very industrious and hard-working. It is scarcely fair to call a race of such men parasites.

Mr. Hills says his opposition to Asiatics is not due to "colour prejudice but to economic considerations"; and in support he states the experience of all Natalians. Now the experience of all Natalians it is difficult to know. The experience of some, who, moreover, are accepted as representative of the people of Natal, is on record. The late Mr. Saunders, the late Sir Henry Binns, the late Sir John Robinson, the late Mr. Escombe, the present Colonial Secretary, Mr. Maydon, Sir G. M. Sutton, Sir James Hullett, and many other, have testified to the usefulness of the Indian in Natal. The late Sir Henry Binns said, in giving evidence before a Commission, that it was when Natal was on

[1] This appeared, along with Mr. W. Hills' Letter of March 14, in *The Outlook*. The editor of that periodical had submitted Mr. Hills' letter to "one who has made the subject one of special study" ¾Gandhiji. Both the letter and the reply were later reprinted in *Indian Opinion*. Only the reply is reproduced here.

the brink of bankruptcy that Indian immigration was thought of. Sir James Hullett, only a few months ago, giving his evidence before the Native Affairs Commission, said emphatically that Natal owed its prosperity to the presence of the Indian immigrant, and that it could not do without him. The greatest proof, however, in support of the statement that Natal requires the Indian is given by Mr. Hills himself. If the Indian population in Natal has doubled since 1896, what is the cause? It is simply that more and more Indians are being required in order to keep going the chief industries of Natal, namely, sugar, tea and coal. It should be remembered that the Indian of whom Mr. Hills is thinking is not an intruder, but that he is actually invited to the Colony for its benefit. There are still 18,000 applications before the Indian Immigration Trust Board which have to be dealt with. The demand for indentured Indian labour is much greater than the supply. Verulam always had a large Indian population. Mr. Hills, in regretting that it has become an Indian township, forgets that it had either to become an Indian township or cease to be a town at all. The north coast of Natal takes in the largest Indian population. It has to be developed either by Indian labour or not at all. The Natalians have thought better, and have not hesitated to cultivate the coast land through Indian labour, and the palatial mansions which the white men occupy even on the north coast, let it be remembered, are due entirely to the assistance of the Indian immigrant, and are owned by the employers of Indian labour, so that the example of Natal is all in favour of the Indian, and the "economic considerations" on which Mr. Hills lays so much stress have compelled the Natalians to resort to Indian assistance.

Again, Mr. Hills makes a mistake when he states that "the law, under the late Government as interpreted for 15 years, confined Asiatics to Locations". It is a well-known fact that, under the late Government, the Indians lived outside Locations with absolute impunity, and, it is because they were able to do so, that the present Government find it difficult to oust them. It is true that, as they had British protection then, it could hardly be withdrawn now, and it should be again remembered that, during the Boer regime, there was no restriction against Indian immigration, whereas, today, as the Chief Secretary for Permits has shown, only those Indians who were settled in the country before the war are allowed to re-enter, and then, too, after much questioning and delay. Although Mr. Hills talks about the white population in general and its good, in applying his principles, he only takes notice of the Indian licences to trade. Is it, then, that he objects only to the Indian traders? Mr. Hills again makes the mistake of supposing that

the South African Coloured people are refused licences, whilst the Indians received them freely. Under the Supreme Court's ruling, the Government dare not prevent any Coloured people, as such, from getting licences, and if Mr. Hills' objection is, after all, as it evidently seems to be, against the trade of the Colony falling entirely or even largely into the hands of Indians, there is not much difficulty in sympathising with him, nor has the Editor of *The Outlook* suggested that such competition should not be regulated by a statute of general application. But to thus regulate Indian trade, and to hound the Indian out of the Colony by all kinds of vexatious legislation, are two different things. With the one, every sensible Colonist will be in perfect agreement, so long as vested interests are not touched, and licences are not refused to Indians as such. But it is scarcely in keeping with justice and fair play, for instance, to prevent the Indian from walking on foot-paths, from owning landed property, from living, subject to strict municipal regulations, or from building a mosque, anywhere he likes. Such restrictions are meaningless, if they do not proceed from colour prejudice, and it is questionable whether those who fan the flame of such prejudice would be doing any good to posterity. The facts must be taken as they are. India is part of the British Empire, like the Transvaal, and there ought to be a policy of give and take, whilst there certainly should be nothing done to needlessly wound the feelings of these men, who are, after all, subjects of the same King, and are a people with remarkable traditions and a wonderful ancient civilisation.

Two simple bills are likely to solve the whole difficulty. One would give to the Local bodies control of all trade licences, subject, in exceptional cases, to review by the Supreme Court, and the other would regulate immigration into the Colony after the manner of the Cape Immigration Act.

One more statement by Mr. Hills needs correction. After the correspondence that appeared in *The Star*, challenging the statement that there are 49 Indian, as against 13 white, store-keepers in Pietersburg, some caution, at least, is necessary. The British Indian Association has stated[1] definitely that there are only 23 Indian stores in that town. Mr. Kleinenberg, whom Mr. Hills has copied, has not been able to refute that statement. It is, therefore, necessary for Mr. Hills to ascertain from Mr. Kleinenberg whether the figures he gave *The star* could be verified. So far, the British Indian Association has had the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to *The Star*", "Prior to December 24, 1904".

last say. It is of the utmost importance that those who are responsible for guiding public opinion should have facts and nothing but facts before them.

Indian Opinion, 22-4-1905

192. THE ORANGE RIVER COLONY

Elsewhere will be found the letter[1] of the energetic British Indian Association of Johannesburg, addressed to the Colonial Secre-tary of the Orange River Colony on its anti-Asiatic activity. We must congratulate the Association on having made a move in this scandalous matter. Hitherto we have had to draw attention to the township regulations. Emboldened by the impunity with which these regulations have passed muster, the Municipality of Bloemfontein has now secured as Ordinance giving it almost the same powers that have been arrogated by several townships of the Orange River Colony through the regulations to which attention has been drawn from time to time in this journal. The passing of this Ordinance shows that the anti-Asiatic clauses thereof have met with the approval of the Imperial Colonial Secretary. As the Chairman of the British Indian Association states in his letter, there is no doubt that such legislation is "degrading, unjust and insulting" and that "such anti-Coloured activity in the Orange River Colony is contrary to British traditions, as also to the declarations made from time to time by Her late Majesty's Ministers".

We notice that Sir Mancherjee[2] has been again questioning Mr. Lyttelton on Indian matters in South Africa. We venture to think that, to his many services to the British Indians in South Africa, he will add yet another measure, if he will earnestly take up the question in the Orange River Colony, though it does not actively interfere with the British Indians at present. We do not despair of a time when a fair proportion of Indians will be allowed to settle in that Colony; and for that matter, even in the present day, there are probably no fewer than 200 Indians earning their livelihood in one or other of the towns in the Orange River Colony. We feel that even they, handful as they are, require protection from the studied degradation to which they are subjected by the laws of the State.

From a purely Imperial standpoint we may even go further, and

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", April 11, 1905.

[2] Chairman, South African British Indian Association in London.

ask whether it is politic or right that the natives of the soil should be harassed by unnecessary restrictions. Under British rule, no community is allowed to remain stagnant and unprogressive. The Natives are being gradually educated. It would be a mistake to suppose that they have no feelings or that they do not smart under a curtailment of their natural liberty. We are not exaggerating when we compare regulations of the control of Locations in the Orange River Colony with those for the control of prisoners in a well-ordered jail. If the inmates of the Orange River Colony Locations have a little greater liberty, it is only a question of degree but not of kind. The monster petition from the Natives in the Transvaal shews that they are awakening to a sense of their rights under the British flag. True statesmanship would consist in anticipating and providing for their reasonable wants. In the Orange River Colony, the Native is evidently not credited with having any feeling.

Indian Opinion, 22-4-1905

193. TAMIL IN LONDON UNIVERSITY

We have received a letter from Ceylon requesting us to arrange a meeting for the promotion of a memorial to the Registrar of Lon-don University, praying that Tamil may be accepted as an optional language in the curriculum of that University for the matriculation and other examinations in arts. We invite the attention of the Tamil-educated Indians to the matter which, in our opinion, deserves every encouragement. There should be no difficulty about their holding a meeting and adopting a simple memorial to the External Registrar of the University of London. Tamil immigrants in other parts of the world have already sent in their representations, and we do not see why the same thing should not be done by those in South Africa. Tamil is one of the greatest of the Dravidian languages and has a vast literature. It is supposed to be the Italian of India, and is in every way a language fit to be adopted by London University as an optional subject. London University is recognised to be the most liberal institution in the world, and seeing that Tamil is spoken by millions of the subjects of the King-Emperor, the University of the Metropolis of the Empire will do well to grant the prayer of the Tamil memorialists.

Indian Opinion, 22-4-1905

194. INDIANS ON THE MINES

Mr. Lyttelton has replied in the Imperial Parliament to Sir M. M. Bhownaggree's question as to the treatment of Indians on the mines. The reply is unsatisfactory in the extreme. Mr. Leyttelton said he was not aware that anything warranted such an inquiry: but when he receives the reports of the latest cases, he may alter his opinion. The fact of these unsavoury cases continually cropping up is quite sufficient warrant for a rigid and impartial enquiry. Mr. Lyttelton added that there was a Protector of Indians in Natal, thereby suggesting that he was the person to move in the matter. But we have not heard that he has done so. Commenting on Mr. Lyttelton's reply, which it regards as unsatisfactory, *The Natal Witness* reiterates the demand for an enquiry. With regard to the Protector of Indians, the *Witness* says:

> We know there is such an official, but the mine employees contend that they are prevented from approaching him, and that in itself is an assertion that needs looking into.

And it adds:

> If our Government fails to recognise its duty in these matters, it is to be hoped the question will not be lost sight of at home, and that influence will be exerted in the right direction from that quarter. Better, however, if the enquiry were instituted without such pressure, and these ugly charges proved or disproved once and for all.

We hope these cases will be brought to the notice of the Government of India, who, from past experience, will not be so easily satisfied as Mr. Lyttelton. But the best thing of all would be for the Natal Gove-rnment to institute an enquiry on its own initiative, as our contem-porary suggests, and probe the matter to the bottom without delay.

Indian Opinion, 22-4-1905

195. MALARIA IN DURBAN

Malaria has been raging in Durban with great virulence. There were only 12 cases in last January, but the number of persons attacked during March was 612. The figure is alarming. The only relieving feature is that the rate of mortality is not high. Again, according to Dr. Murison, it is largely women, children and others, who mostly keep

indoors, that have caught the infection. And it is pointed out that it has spread through mosquitoes from Zululand. Dr. Murison suggests the following preventive measures.

1. Mosquito-curtains with very small holes should be used by every one sleeping on a cot, and care taken to remove any mosquitoes on the bed and tuck in the lower edge of the curtain under the mattress along the four sides. A torn curtain should not be used until it has been properly mended.

2. As far as possible, quinine should not be taken as a preventive. If, however, one has to live in an infected house or to sleep without a mosquito curtain, one should take five grains of quinine every day before breakfast.

3. Water should not be allowed to collect in or around the house. Drains and gutters should be inspected, and pits and ditches filled up.

4. Where there are large pools of stagnant water, they should be sprayed with kerosene until the pits are filled up.

5. The authorities should be informed if water collects and stagnates, or there is an overgrowth of useless vegetation around the house within the premises.

It is necessary for every one to take these precautions. The main thing is that one should keep the house and its surroundings clean, not allow mosquitoes to breed, keep one's person clean and take light food.

The incidence of malaria is greater among the whites than among the Coloured people. Of the 612 cases mentioned above, 400 were whites, 185 Asiatics and 27 Kaffirs. This shows that some communities are more susceptible to certain diseases than others. While the Indians are more liable to plague, the whites are particularly susceptible to malaria. But if we consider the matter in this fashion, it would be just like the pot calling the kettle black. Nevertheless, malaria is not a deadly disease, while plague is a terrible killer. Through proper investigation, the causes of both these diseases can be found out. We must not fail in our duty to take all the necessary precautions.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-4-1905

196. INDIANS IN EAST LONDON

There are certain restrictions on Indians in East London in regard to walking on foot-paths and residing in the town. The law there allows only those Indians who own landed property or are respectable tenants to live freely in the town, provided they obtain a pass

from the Town Council for doing so. It is the duty of the Town Clerk to issue passes to all those who ask for them. The Indians in general refused to take out passes in this way. They carried on a fight for about a year and a half and managed to carry on without the passes. But when the Town Council took legal proceedings against them, the Magistrate decided in its favour. The Indians preferred an appeal against the decision on the plea that they were not "Asiatics" but Aryans who had subsequently settled in India. We are constrained to say that our brethren have wasted their money on the litigation, and brought ridicule on themselves to boot. It is all very well to say that we are Aryans, but such a plea in a law court is bound to harm—and has harmed—our cause.

We ought to have woken up when the East London law was enacted. It is very difficult to get a law repealed once it has been passed. Our advice now is that we should submit quietly to the law and take out passes. Compared with other places like the Transvaal, the situation in East London is still tolerable. While complying with the law, we should, of course, continue the fight. But the struggle should be carried on through Parliament. Our people in East London have the power and the right to vote. It would yield good results if we excercised them judiciously.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-4-1905

197. INDENTURED INDIANS

It appears from the Natal *Government Gazette* that 11,175 indentured men and 5,334 women had become free by December 31, 1904, since the introduction of the £ 3 poll-tax. Of these, 7,585 men and 1,845 women have paid the tax. That is, more than half the number of the freed men have paid the poll-tax to the Government and are at present engaged in some vocation or carrying on trade in the Colony.

The Government has already collected £ 28,290 from these people. This is by no means a negligible sum when one comes to think of it. It is a matter of great sorrow that such penalty is inflicted on British subjects; but where there is no remedy, one has to reconcile oneself to the situation. According to Lord Curzon, the average *per capita* income of an Indian is Rs. 30 a year,—which means that this tax is one and a half times the average income in India.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-4-1905

198. MALAY LOCATION IN JOHANNESBURG

The Johannesburg Administration has appointed a Commission to draft a law for the purpose of acquiring certain lands in Vrededorp. It is not yet decided whether the Malay Location is a part of Vrededorp or not: but a portion of it might fall within its limits. According to its terms of reference, the Commission are:

1. to determine how the lands should be acquired from the residents;

2. to suggest how compensation should be paid if it is decided to acquire the land;

3. to record evidence in this connection.

The chief Magistrate of Johannesburg, Mr. Badab, has been appointed the Chairman of the Commission. The date on which the Commission is to meet has not yet been fixed. But when this is announced, those living in the Malay Location will have to be on their guard.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-4-1905

199. JIU-JITSU

The eyes of Europeans are slowly being opened. Narmadashankar, the Gujarati poet, has sung:

> The Englishman rules, the country is under his heel.
> The native remains subdued;
> Look at their bodies, brother,
> He is full five cubits tall,
> A host in himself, match for five hundred.

The poet here tells us that the main reason for the rise of English is their sturdy physique. The Japanese have shown that not much depends upon the phyisque of a man. The fact that the Russians, though well set up and tall, have proved powerless before the short and thin Japanese, has put the English officials in a quandary. They gave thought to the matter and discovered that Europe was very much behindhand in physical culture and knowledge of the laws governing the body. The Japanese understand very well how the various joints and bones of the (opponent's) body can be controlled, and this has made them invincible. Many of our readers must be aware of the effect produced when a particular nerve of the neck or leg is pressed during an exercise. This very science the Japanese have perfected. A

Japanese coach has, therefore, been employed to train the English army, and thousands have already been taught the art. And *jiu-jitsu* is the Japanese name for it. The problem will now be to find something else after all the nations have learnt *jiu-jitsu*. This process is bound to go on endlessly.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-4-1905

200. SUGGESTION BY BARBERTON AGRICULTURAL COUNCIL

The Agricultural Council of Barberton had appointed Captain Madge to investigate if the soil surrounding that place was suitable for growing tobacco. He reported that the land could yield a very rich crop of tobacco. Thereupon, the committee of the Council has proposed that, since Indians are needed to assist in the cultivation of tobacco, they should be admitted to the areas around Barberton on the same terms as in Natal. Thus, the whites have begun to feel the need for Indian labour right from the beginning, for the Kaffirs are of no use and all the available Chinese are absorbed in the mines. Indian labour, is, therefore, in general demand.

Lord Curzon has declared in his speech[1] that, as long as the South African Colonies do not concede adequate rights to the Indians, they will receive no help from India. If, therefore, the Transvaal Government does really need Indians, Lord Curzon will have a golden opportunity to exert pressure in order to secure the rights of Indians. The Transvaal is not likely to achieve prosperity so long as agriculture is not introduced there. And there is little likelihood of agriculture being developed without Indians.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-4-1905

201. LONGEVITY AMONG THE WHITES AND THE COLOURED PEOPLE

"Why do women live longer than men, and the Kaffirs, Hottentots and Malayas longer than the whites?" asks *The Cape Times*. The question arises from a perusal of the Census Report. There are more women than men in the Cape. The number of men is 12,18,940, while that of women is 12,90,864. Up to the age of sixty the number

[1] *Vide* "Curzon's Speech on Indians in South Africa", 8-4-1905.

of men is greater, but among those aged seventy, there are 21,788 men and 23,719 women; among those aged eighty-five, 2,355 men and 2,895 women; and among those aged ninety five, 88 men and 109 women. There are 300 persons in the Cape who are over a hundred years; of these, only 126 are men and the rest women. Similarly, the Coloured population is found to be more long-lived than the white.

The reason for this is clear enough. As the Europeans indulge in sensual pleasures more than the Coloured peoples, their lives are shorter. Again, the duration of life among men is shorter than among women because the former suffer more worries than the latter. The Indians stand lower in the scale than all the other for a variety of weighty reasons. But the main reason is the very poor standard of life that the Indians maintain in South Africa. In order to save money, our people live together in large numbers in single rooms; and for the same reason or from indolence, they take food which is either insufficient or inadequately nutritive. Many live on ill-baked bread made of musty flour. Small wonder, then, that such food has adverse effects.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-4-1905

202. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

21-24, COURT CHAMBERS,
CORNER, RISSIK & ANDERSON STREETS,
P. O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
May 1, 1905

C. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
C/O INTERNATIONAL PRINTING PRESS
PHOENIX

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letters. I have not been able to write to you for some time. I sent you Gujarati matter yesterday. I would like you to tell me whether what I send is enough; if not I could send more, in which case I should really have *The Indian Review* and some Gujarati papers sent to me.

I sent with Shah two loaves of Kuhne, biscuits, sweets, cake and *papad*[1]. The loaves were for Bean and West, one each, the rest for you.

[1] Dry, crisp and paper-like, it is made from a variety of pulses and spices.

I wonder whether you got all these things. Did you send the sweets from Durban? If so, please do not repeat the experiment. It is totally unnecessary, and I am anxious not to introduce complex dishes in the house.

You may send me the first part of Pope's Grammar. See that it is in both English and Tamil. Is it a new edition published? If not, don't buy it. A new edition was published, I think, last year. If they will give it to you on approval, then you can send all the three parts, deposit 30/- and if I find them not useful, they should refund the money and take the books back. I have already got a Tamil-English dictionary from Mr. Simon. All I now want is a good grammar.

I hope you have discussed the matter of Tamil and Hindi with Kitchin, and told him that neither can be rejected at the present stage. I have written to M. C. C. & Co.[1] regarding the P/Notes they want. Herewith statements for the Press to date[2]. I shall be interested to know how the English work is done this week in the absence of Mannering. Is Rugbeer gone altogether? I am extremely sorry for him. Have you knocked off night work?

Please put down Edward B. Rose, Esq., 45, Great Ormond Street, Bloomsbury, London, on the complimentary list. You may begin with the current number.

Yours Sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.] I see [the] sweets were brought by Desai.[3]

1 Enclosure: Statement.

From the typewritten original: S.N. 4234.

[1] The firm of M. C. Camroodeen & Co.
[2] This is not available.
[3] This is added in Gandhiji's own hand.

203. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[JOHANNESBURG,
Post *May 1, 1905*][1]

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,[2]

I have your letter as also Pope's Handbook. If P. Davis would sell the three volumes for less than 30/- you can buy three for £ 25.[3] If they would sell the first for 12/6, you can pay for it, but if they insist on three or none at all and charging 30/-, even then you should pay, get the other two parts and send them on.

Yes, £ 5/1/6 are what I sent you when you became a fixture in the Press. I transferred that amount on to the Press just in order to enable me to see in the end how I myself come out of it. Of course, that and the charge of £ 16 for Shah will not be included in the expenses for the current year. Debit me with the £ 5 paid to Shah as also the 5/- paid to him for his razor. Please let me know whether the Gujarati matter sent this week is enough, or whether I should send still more.

Yours sincerely,

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4235.

204. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

14 MERCURY LANE,
DURBAN, NATAL,
May 4, 1905

SIR,

I am requested specially to forward the enclosed to you, and humbly to suggest that some action might be taken in the various Legislative Councils in India, and if that be not possible, in the Viceregal Council, though seeing that Bombay, Madras and Calcutta [do not send] a very large number of immigrants to South Africa, there is no reason why the local governments should not take notice of the disabilities which the British Indians are labouring under.

[1] The reference in the letter to Pope's Handbook of Tamil Grammar and the statement of expenses, both dealt with in the previous letter, suggest that this was written subsequently.

[2] The original is mutilated, only the last two letters of the name being left. The contents, however, make it clear that the letter is addressed to Chhaganlal Gandhi, *vide* the preceding item.

[3] The "£" is evidently a slip; it must be 25 shillings.

This question is one of those about which there is unanimity of Indian and Anglo-Indian opinion; and I venture to think that united action on the part of the non-official members will do much for our cause. There is very little doubt that the official sympathy would also be with us, and under the strong and sympathetic Viceroy we have in Lord Curzon, the great question which underlies our disabilities (as put by the London *Times*: "May the British Indians when they leave India have the same status before the law as other British subjects enjoy? May they or may they not go freely from one British possession to another and claim the rights of British subjects in allied states?") cannot but be decided favourably if only it is sufficiently brought to His Excellency's attention.

I remain,

Sir,

Yours obediently,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C. Vijayaraghavachariar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

205. THE TRANSVAAL CONSTITUTION

The Transvaal Constitution has been on the lips of everybody in South Africa ever since its publication. We cannot recall an instance when the constitution of a British Colony has evoked so much interest as the one given to the Transvaal. Every newspaper has published leading articles: every important person in South Africa has offered his judgment on it; and the sum and substance of the great body of opinion that has gathered round the Constitution appears to be praise not unmixed with unfriendly criticism. In fact, Lord Milner, in his valedictory address at Johannesburg, anticipated such a result when he said that the Constitution would probably fail to please anybody wholly, but that it would be accepted by all fair-minded men as a genuine attempt to bring nearer together the British and the Boers, and to prepare the people in the near future for complete self-government.

The objections that have been taken to the details are, in our opinion, objections taken because of ignorance of the history regarding Constitutions for the other self-governing Colonies. The point is that, even wherein there has been strong agitation for the grant of self-government, or other representative institutions, there has never been such a close examination of the details before. People have hitherto

been satisfied with the granting of a principle, but to-day we find them insisting on every detail being arranged according to their notions. Hence it is that exceptions are seriously taken to the reservations by the Crown regarding legislation, although, if trouble were taken to examine even Constitutions for the self-governing Colonies, it would be found that the power of veto has been always retained, and occasionally even exercised. For instance, when the Australian Commonwealth passed its anti-Asiatic legislation excluding Asiatics as such, Mr. Chamberlain had no hesitation in disallowing the Act; and similarly in Natal. The first action of the responsible ministry in disfranchising Indians as such was promptly checked by Lord Ripon. It is conveniently forgotten that the Constitution which the Transvaal has received is perhaps the most liberal yet known of all the Constitutions granted preliminary to responsible government. The other objection taken, that the Orange River Colony has not received the same treatment as the Transvaal, goes to the root of all government. So long as Britain remains the predominant power, and so long as governments must ultimately depend upon force, it is useless to express dissatisfaction with what is, in the nature of things, unavoidable.

Apart, however, from the intrinsic merit of the Constitution, Mr. Lyttelton's despatch, which served as preamble to the Constitution itself, is the most important of all. It is a humane document worthy of a British minister.

Coming to the purely Indian standpoint, it is difficult not to feel that the British Indian, as also the British Coloured man, is only the step-child, and has been left out in the cold. He has no voice in the affairs of the Colony, and he is insulted by deliberate exclusion. Mr. Lyttelton says:

> His Majesty's Government have been unable, having regard to the Terms of Peace signed in 1902, to make provision for the representation of any of His Majesty's coloured subjects.

And here it may be noted that even Mr. Lyttelton has made the common mistake of including other people in the term "Native". The Terms of Peace mention only the natives of South Africa. Why should other Coloured people, then, be included by inference? Mr. Lyttelton proceeds:

> As a protection, however, for the interests of those sections of the population which are not directly represented in the legislature, the Governor will, as now, be required by his instructions to reserve any bill whereby persons

not of European birth or descent may be subjected to any disability or restriction to which persons of European birth are not also subjected.

It is to be hoped that the reservation will be fully exercised.

Indian Opinion, 6-5-1905

206. EDUCATION OF INDIANS

Speaking on education in the Natal Parliament, Mr. Wiltshire said that the Government should provide greater facilities for the education of Indians. He pointed out that Indians needed them and that a special responsibility devolved on the Government for the education of Natal born Indians. We should be thankful to the Honourable Gentleman for his speech. Our condition is likely to improve in every way with the increasing spread of education. The Government will no doubt have ultimately to discharge their duty in the matter. It appears that, in the absence of a separate school for Indians in Ladysmith, the Government have permitted Indians with a high standard of life to be admitted to the existing school.

Speaking in the Orange River Colony, Mr. Argette, the late Superintendent of Education in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, declared that he would make special efforts for the education of the Kaffirs in Basutoland. He is sufficiently mindful of the need for technical education. He was very sympathetic about the education of Indians, and was always trying to start schools for them in the Transvaal.

Indian Opinion, 6-5-1905

207. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

21-24 COURT CHAMBERS,
CORNER, RISSIK & ANDERSON STREETS,
P. O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
May 6, 1905

[MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,][1]

I am sending you to-day all the Gujarati matter. I may not send any more. Khanderia tells me he has sent a report[2] on the Pietersburg

[1] The office copy bears no superscription, but the contents leave no doubt as to the addressee.

[2] This was presented to the High Commissioner; *vide* "Sir Arthur Lawley and British Indians", 13-5-1905.

Address. If there is anything in conflict with the sub-leader I am sending you in Gujarati, you should strike out the portion, that is to say, there should be nothing falsely praising the Acting High Commissioner. His reply is not as satisfactory as it might have been, as you will see from what I am sending.

Desai tells me that you are not keeping quite good health, and that you are suffering from boils. This is inexcusable. There must be some irregularity about the diet. I cannot too strongly advise you to copy West's simplicity. We are all making a luncheon of Kuhne bread, nut butter and jam. The slices are cut out at home and brought to the office and luncheon made at the office. You could do likewise if you have to take your food in town. I would like you to be very careful. You should see the Gujarati people regarding the earthquake fund. It should not be allowed to become a fiasco. I am trying my best on this side. Has not Kaba yet arrived? Mr. Mukherji writes to me saying that neither he nor Mr. Dadabhai received their copies of *Opinion* during the middle of April[1]. . .applies for cheques...

Your letter to hand together with Maganlal's. I am sending Gujarati matter which is double that sent last time and still hope to send some more. I can understand from your letter the difficulties you are experiencing there. As I give most of my spare time to Tamil, I cannot cope with the work satisfactorily. Henceforward, as far as possible, I shall send, just as I am doing today, the bulk of Gujarati material by Saturday's post. Please be careful, as I do not read again what I write. Do send me *The Indian Review*. It will be possible for me to translate from it.

I was very much pleased to read Maganlal's letter. It is good that you have grown vegetables. Let me know if pests cause any damage to them. Whose plot is the best? Dada Sheth has not yet called me. I shall come if he does.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a Photostat of the original: S.N. 4236

[1] Hereafter the words are undecipherable. Then follow two paragraphs in Gujarati which have been here rendered into English.

208 THE NEW HIGH COMMISSIONER AND THE INDIANS

[*May 6, 1905*][1]

His Excellency Lord Selborne will arrive shortly in Johannesburg. From the account of his career given by the well-known journalist, Mr. Stead, in the April issue of the *Review of Reviews*, it appears that, when His Excellency made the speech about the war on November 1, 1899, he was secretary to Mr. Chamberlain. While recounting, in the course of that speech, the causes of the war, he said that the British Government fought it not in order to deprive the Boers of their rights, but to accord equal rights both to Boer and Briton. The British Government was not actuated by self-interest or monetary consideration, but they wanted to determine and uphold the rights of other peoples. The British Government were the trustees of the people of Canada and Australia, the Negroes in South Africa and the Indian immigrants in the Transvaal. It was, therefore, their duty to wage war for the protection of these peoples. Since it was the duty of the British to keep the promises they had made, they were bound to protect the rights of all these peoples. It was the duty of the British Government to protect the rights of British subjects wherever they were, whether white or Coloured. It was on these grounds that His Excellency defended the war.

Quoting the above speech of Lord Selborne, Mr. Stead remarks, "Let us see how Lord Selborne stands by what he has said". Let us hope the noble lord will stick to his words and add luster to the name of England by relieving the Indians of the hardships they are labouring under.

Indian Opinion, 13-5-1905.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", May 6, 1905.

209. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

21-24, COURT CHAMBERS,
CORNER, RISSIK & ANDERSON STREETS,
P. O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
May 11, 1905

C. K. GANDHI, ESQ
C/O INTERNATIONAL PRINTING PRESS
PHOENIX

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. Kaba writes to me saying he could not leave at the time he wanted to. He must have left on the 19th April. He tells me in his letter just received that he is coming without his wife. He may bring Harilal and Gokuldas with him, but as there is no cablegram, I do not think they have left. I see Orchard is very dissatisfied. You have said nothing about him. Please let me know what the matter is. I have an astounding letter from Anandlal.[1] He says he is living by himself, and wants me to let him occupy the rooms occupied by Bean. Why is this? Why have you remained silent about it? Messrs. M. C. Camroodeen have sent me their statements. One is for rents to the extent of £92/2/11 and the other for goods of £238/9/2. Have you checked them? Have you the original invoices about the goods from London? I am sending them a draft for the rent account which, of course, will be subject to correction if there is any error in it. As I have just now got some money with me, I am sending Parsee Rustomjee £500, so that he may use it and whenever you require any money, you will be able to get some from him.

Yours sincerely,
[M. K. GANDHI][2]

From a photostat of the original: S.N. 4237. Courtsey: Shri Arun Gandhi, Bombay

[1] Son of Amritlal and nephew of Gandhiji.
[2] This portion of the letter has been torn off.

210. LETTER TO OMAR HAJI AMOD ZAVERI

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 11, 1905

OMAR HAJI AMOD, ESQ.
BOX 441
DURBAN

DEAR SHETH OMAR HAJI AMOD,

Your letter to hand. I am very sorry about Abdulla Sheth. Please tell Dada Sheth that, if he wants me to go there, he may not embarrass me by asking me to do so at my expense. I have to be very careful, as most of my money has been spent on Phoenix.

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 10.

211. SIR ARTHUR LAWLEY AND THE BRITISH INDIANS

His Excellency, the High Commissioner, has been visiting Pietersburg in connection with an Agricultural Show, and British Indians took the opportunity of presenting His Excellency with a loyal address. The action is to be commended. They were able to draw from Sir Arthur Lawley some remarks on the Indian question. His Excellency is reported to have said that

> of all the difficulties which presented themselves to the Government at the present time, none was harder than that dealing with the status of British Indians in this country. The Government realised the conspicuous and splendid services which had been rendered to the Empire by them in India and in other parts. The Government appreciated the value of those services fully. People in this country, however, recognised that the conditions governing the Indians were not the same as those existing in the land from which the latter came. Here prejudices had arisen in the minds of the people owing to past history with coloured classes, and the question of the Indians' presence was looked at from an entirely different standpoint. He was sure the Indians must recognise this. The Government was called on to hold the scales of justice impartially, and the question was still a matter of correspondence between the Home Government and the Colonial administration.

We thank Sir Arthur for his acknowledgement of India's contribution to the Empire; but the result of such acknowledgement, we are sorry to have to say, is very poor. We cannot help recalling His

Excellency's advice to Mr. Lyttelton that promises made to the British Indians, having been made in ignorance, were better broken than fulfilled. The British Indian Association has shewn conclusively that promises were made to the Indians in the Transvaal with full knowledge of the circumstances and by no means in ignorance. We fear that His Excellency has, shall we say with deference, committed the same mistake in his remarks quoted above. Why should he mix up the Indians with other Coloured classes? If a majority of the white people in the Transvaal will not see a distinction, is it not the duty of the Government to educate them up to a proper appreciation of it? How can Indians be expected to recognise unreasonable prejudice if it is meant thereby that they should bow to it? Recognition of such prejudice is undoubtedly necessary; but it is so only in order that it may be removed by calm discussion, and by placing constantly before the public the true facts. The Government "would hold the scales of justice impartially" only when it boldly tackles the question, and instead of indirectly encouraging the current prejudice, endeavours to stem its tide by taking up a firm attitude. As to the carrying on of a correspondence with the Home Government, we have good reason to believe that this is meant to wring from the latter a consent to the imposing of further disabilities on British Indians. Has His Excellency studied carefully the very moderate propositions made by the British Indians in the Transvaal? Has his Government ever told the people of the Transvaal that the claims put forward by the Indians are extremely reasonable, and that they have shewn a laudable desire to meet the views of the white Colonists so far as possible?

Indian Opinion, 13-5-1905

212. JUVENILE SMOKING

There appears, in a recent issue of the Cape *Government Gazette*, an interesting Bill to be introduced by Mr. T. L. Schreiner, the well-known member of the Cape House of Assembly. Mr. Schre-iner is known to be a philanthropist and a moralist. The Bill we are alluding to is called the "Youths' Smoking Prevention Bill", and is intended to prohibit smoking by youths of or under the age of 16 years, or appearing to be so. The manner in which the Honourable Gentleman wishes to achieve his object is very simple. The Bill makes it criminal for any tobacconist to sell tobacco, cigars, or cigarettes to boys appearing to be of 16 years or under. It also authorises the police to confiscate and destroy any tobacco, pipe, cigar or cigarettes

found on the person of such youths and authorises the parents or guardians of the latter to sue the seller of the offensive product for a refund of the money paid to him, notwithstanding destruction of the things sold, whilst it also enables teachers in Government schools to punish smoking by boys as a school offence. It has been often said that people cannot be made sober by an act of Parliament, and the same may be equally applicable to Mr. Schreiner's Bill; but we are not prepared to concur in the view that temperance legislation has not been productive of some good. We are inclined to think that this Bill, if it meet with the approval of the Cape House, will be a step in the right direction. Smoking, in any case, is neither a desirable nor a clean habit, and whilst, under certain circumstances, it may be of some use, and may also be a great soother of pain, the habit of smoking amongst boys is undoubtedly harmful, and ought to be checked by all legitimate means. The Bill is, perhaps, proof of the existence of the evil to a large extent. Indeed, we see the habit often indulged in by telegraph boys and messengers who are much below 16 years. The specious plea is often put forward, in defence of juvenile smoking, that, if it is good for adults, it could not be bad for youths. A moment's thought, however, would convince the casuists that what is good for the one is not necessarily good for the other; and smoking is one of such things which may not be indulged in by boys with impunity. It undermines their constitution and weakens their mental capacity. We, therefore, hope that Mr. Schreiner will be able to induce the Cape Parliament to accept the Bill.

Indian Opinion, 13-5-1905

213. EARTHQUAKE IN INDIA

News received by the latest mail from India gives full details of the havoc wrought by the earthquake. The Divine wrath that has descended on the people of Northern India is such that it will not be forgotten for years. Many an old historical monument, numerous villages, palatial buildings in large cities, the simple huts of the poor and tented camps of the army have all been devastated. Several families have been totally wiped out. The greatest damage has been done to Dharmasala, the Kangra valley, Palampur and Mussoorie. The account of the condition of the victims of the calamity is very pitiable indeed. Men were rendered quire helpless and died for want of food and water, as no news whatever of the people's condition could be had from certain parts due to a breakdown of telegraphic communications. The Government evinced great sympathy and ran special trains

to render all possible help to the distressed. Subscription lists have been opened in India as well as in Great Britain, and large sums have already been contributed. Our readers must already be aware that we, too have started a fund in aid of those unfortunate fellow-Indians who have been suddenly reduced to a state of penury. We hope everyone will do his duty and contribute to the fund to the best of his capacity.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-05-1905

214. LETTER TO ANNIE BESANT

[JOHANNESBURG,]

May 13, 1905

MRS. ANNIE BESANT
CENTRAL HINDU COLLEGE
BENARES CITY

DEAR MADAM,

The Managers of the International Printing Press have sent me your letter to them regarding the reprint of your *Bhagawad Gita*. The responsibility for the advice, as to the reprint and inclusion of the portrait, must rest entirely on my shoulders. I know that ordinarily it would not be considered a proper thing to reprint a book without the author's permission. A gentleman offered to have a translation of the *Bhagawad Gita* printed for distribution among Hindu boys and other if the Managers printed it at cost price. He was also in a hurry. Reprint of your translation was suggested. The matter was referred to me and, after much careful thought, as there was no time left for reference to you, I advised that your translation might be reprinted for circulation in South Africa. I felt that the motive of the management was pure, and that when the circumstances, under which the edition was published, were brought to your notice, you would overlook any apparent impropriety. Simultaneously with the publication, a letter, explaining the whole of the circumstances, was sent to you over the signature of the Manager and Proprietor. It seems to have miscarried. We were all wondering why there was no letter from you, either of disapproval or approval. Your letter of the 27th March, however, explains the absence of any previous communication from you. As to the portrait, I can only say that, if a mistake has been committed, it has arisen from excessive reverence for yourself. When I suggested the inclusion of

the portrait, I had in my mind the interpretation that was likely to be placed upon the act by some people, but I again felt that you would not resent the indiscretion, if such it was, when you came to know that a large number of the copies went to the Indian youths. Rightly or wrongly, as you are aware, publication or printing of such portraits in scared works is not uncommon in India. Only 1,000 copies were printed. Of these, there are perhaps not more than 200 left, and these are being distributed or sold now probably at the rate of 5 per month, and then only among real inquirers.

I have now placed the whole position before you, and it remains for me to express my deep regret for the offence done to your feelings and to apologise for it. If you consider that any public statement is necessary, or complete withdrawal of the book from further circulation, or simple taking out of the portrait is necessary, your wishes shall be carried out.

I remain,
Dear Madam,
Your obedient servant,

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4238.

215. MR. GANDHI'S CLARIFICATION[1]

May 13, 1905

I am glad the Editor forwarded the above letter to me, and I am grateful to Mr. Vavda for having expressed his views. There was only one object before me in delivering these speeches, viz., to serve Indians. I readily accepted the invitation to give an ideal of the Hindu religion in India and what it stood for. While doing so, I found it necessary to compare it with other religions. But in this, my one consideration was to point out, as far as possible, the special excellences of each religion and create a favourable impression on the minds of the whites. All the facts stated by me were drawn from history, which we have been learning at school since childhood. That Islam was spread by force is a historical fact. But along with it, I also pointed out that the potent cause of the spread of Islam was its simplicity and its

[1] In one of the lectures delivered on the Hindu religion under the auspices of the Theosophical Society, Johannesburg, *vide* "Hinduism," March 10, 1905 and March 18, 1905. Gandhiji, referring to the spread of Islam, had said that the majority of converts to Islam came from the lower classes. He had also mentioned fervour or passion as a powerful trait of Islam, which was responsible for many good deeds and someties for bad ones also.

special virtue of regarding all as equals. That the majority of converts to Islam were Hindus from the lower classes is also a fact that can be proved; and I, for one, do not consider that to be in any way derogatory. To me personally, there is no distinction between a Brahmin and a *bhangi*[1]. And I consider it a merit of Islam that those who were dissatisfied with the social distinctions in Hinduism were able to better their condition by embracing Islam. Nor did I suggest that all the converts to Islam came only from the lower classes of Hindu society. And I have not the least idea that by the lower classes are meant only the untouchable Dheds. While I admit that men from the higher classes such as Brahmins and Kshatriyas also became Muslims, it is universally known that the bulk of converts was not drawn from among them. However, the point I want to emphasise is that no stigma attaches to Islam if the Hindus of the lower castes became Muslims. On the contrary, it shows its excellence, of which the Muslims should be proud.

As for the fervour or passion of Islam, I do hold the view I have already stated. Mr. Vavda's interpretation of the word fervour or passion is quite mistaken. I have used it in a complimentary sense, and have clearly pointed out that it is a strong point of Islam. Nothing worth while can be accomplished without real fervour. The Turks could resist Russia and Greece successfully only when they fought desperately with real fervour, and now all are afraid of the Turkish soldiers. None could lay hands on Rajputana while the Rajputs fought with fervour. Japan has been able to take the fort of Port Arthur[2] only because she has been fighting with fervour. Fervour is as necessary in other tasks as it is in war, and it is a positive virtue. Edison is making inventions because of passion. It was the passion of Watt which let to the invention of the steam engine and made travelling in the world easy. And we shall be able to come together and succeed in our fight for the redress of our grievances against the whites if we have the same passion. This passion is the special merit of Islam. We shall benefit immensely if this very passion is brought to bear on other tasks.

These statements of Gandhiji created a stir among Indian Muslims in South Africa and several letters of protest were received by the Editor, *Indian Opinion*, who published three of them along with this letter which is Gandhiji's reply to Mr. A. E. Vavda's letter dated May 9, 1905.

[1] Scavenger.

[2] The Russian fleet at Port Arthur was defeated by the Japanese on August 10, 1904.

I have nothing more to add. I know that the question that arose in the mind of Mr. Vavda has arisen in the minds of others as well. I have said what I considered to be true. In doing so, I had no intention of offending the feelings of even a single individual. To my mind, there is no distinction between a Hindu and a Muslim or Christian. I have frequently said so and, I believe, I have been acting accordingly. I maintain that Hindu religion teaches us to look upon all with an equal eye without making distinctions between Hindu and Muslim, Brahmin and *bhangi*, and that is the religion I follow.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-5-1905

216. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

21-24, COURT CHAMBERS,

CORNER, RISSIK & ANDERSON STREETS,

P.O. BOX 6522,

JOHANNESBURG,

May 13, 1905

C. K. GANDHI, ESQ.

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. It reassures me about Anandlal. Still I am anxious to know from him why he wants to live alone. If the people at Rustomjee's are slow, you should hurry them on. M. K. Patel has not yet paid. I think I will receive the money some time next month. The £ 6 you saw in the notice I have explained to you are part of the subscriptions I brought from Cape Town. I have told you that the three items on the list represent subscriptions brought from Cape Town, and the names of the persons who have paid, including the advertisers, have been already sent to you. Did you not receive them? £ 1/14/- represents two more subscriptions collected by Mr. Gool. One of the subscribers is Wilson. The other name is one I did not receive through Lucheram who brought the money. Lucheram has received the parcel but has not yet paid. The £ 5 are not to be paid to the Press by you. I have explained why I have transferred the amount to the Press. It is

part of capital expenditure. You need not therefore bother about it. I hope the men who were ill are better now. For the shooting by Sam,[1] gentle persuasion and chaffing are the only remedies. I am afraid nothing more can be done. With reference to Kitchin, I suggest that you should go over to him and ask him to explain why he seems to be doing nothing. I know he won't resent it and in any case it is better that you should understand him thoroughly. Never mind about the weekly statement. You are only to print two more copies of the magazine. I do not know whether we will be able to recover the full amount. I am however hoping that we will. Having gone so far I feel that we ought to print the 12 numbers. You are now printing the eleventh and there will only remain the twelfth to be published. For the rest, if they want us to publish them, we will require a guarantee. I am glad you have received the Gujarati letter about my lectures. Print it in full in the next issue and print also my letter[2]. It shows that the paper is being eagerly read, and that is what we want. Misunderstandings will sometimes happen. That however need not make us flinch from our duty. Let that letter be printed first and underneath my explanation. There was some talk of the same nature here also, and though I have been trying to explain it, the letter you have send me enables me to give much fuller and more public explanation. For the time being, you may expect 32 sides of the scribbling paper in Gujarati per week from me. Why was a bill sent to N. Sen? Was it upon advice from Madanjit? You should write to the gentleman telling him that the account was sent because Madanjit wrote, if that is a fact; otherwise tell him that it was sent in inadvertence and that the management apologise for it. I enclose for your perusal as also of Kitchin, West and Bean, if they have seen Mrs. Besant's letter, copy of my letter[3] to her, and even if they have not seen her letter, you may mention the fact to them and show the copy. Evidently, Bean supplies for you Polak's place. He says it is well that he went to Phoenix if only for making your and Maganlal's acquaintance.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the typewritten original: S. N. 4239.

[1] "Sam" was Govindaswami, engineer in the Phoenix settlement and a Shikari.
[2] *Vide* "Mr. Gandhi's Clarification", 13-5-1905.
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Annie Besant", 13-5-1905.

217. LETTER TO KAIKHUSHROO AND ABDUL HUK[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 13, 1905

MESSRS. JALBHAI SORABJI BROS.
84, FIELD STREET
DURBAN

MY DEAR KAIKHUSHROO AND ABDUL HUK,

I enclose herewith a cheque for £ 500 which please credit to the Press account. I can spare this sum for the present and am, therefore, sending it; for I know that, if it remains there, it will save Shethji so much interest. Out of this amount, please give Chhaganlal as much money as he may want and I shall ask for the remainder when I require it. But whatever money accumulates with me, I should prefer to keep there and hence this cheque.

Salaams from
M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 35.

218. LETTER TO PARSEE RUSTOMJEE

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 13, 1905

RUSTOMJEE JIVANJI GHORKHODU, ESQ.
11, KHETWADI LANE
KHETWADI
BOMBAY

MY DEAR SHETH PARSEE RUSTOMJEE,

I hope you have reached safely.

I receive letters regularly from Kaikhushroo and Abdul Huk. Since they write to you also, there is no need for me to say more.

I know that you have to pay interest on overdrafts. As I had at present a little money to spare, I have sent the firm a cheque for £500.[2] A part of the amount, say £250, will go to Chhaganlal; even so

[1] Managers of Messrs. Jalbhai Sorabji Bros., owned by Parsee Rustomjee, who was away in India at the time.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

the balance will remain there. I shall take it back if I need it; and if I have more to spare, I shall send that also. Even otherwise we do not think it proper to hold up a big sum due to you from the Press, especially when, as I believe, I have money to spare.

Please do pay attention to the education of the children. Do not forget what I told you about your health.

My Salaams to Maji.

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 36.

219. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]

May 15, 1905

[SIR,]

Natal of late has been very active in its anti-Indian crusade. Attention has been drawn to the various Bills that have appeared in the *Government Gazette*, and which are now before the Natal Parliament.

The Firearms Bill, without the slightest justification, brackets the Indians with the Natives, and places them, so far as that Bill is concerned, under the Native Affairs Department. I need hardly say what the moral effect of this is likely to be.

There is another Bill published which makes occupation by Indians of rural land in Natal no occupation at all. The Bill seeks to impose a tax of one halfpenny per annum on every acre of unoccupied rural land when it is beyond 249 acres owned by one individual or company. For the purposes of the Bill, such land occupied by Indians, if they are not owners, would be liable to taxation. This is insulting and unjust. It is Indians who have made the cultivation of the coast lands possible.

India Office: Judicial and Public Records, 1960.

[1] The original is not available. This is only an extract, quoted by Dadabhai Naoroji in his letter dated June 6, 1905, to the Secretary of State for India.

220. LETTER TO HAJI DADA HAJI HABIB

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 15, 1905

MR. HAJI DADA HAJI HABIB
BOX 88
DURBAN

DEAR SHETH SHRI HAJI DADA HAJI HABIB,

Your telegram to hand. I have sent a reply. Lord Selborne is coming this month, so that it is very difficult for me to leave this place before his visit. There is a move to present an address of welcome to him, and if that is decided upon, it will be necessary for me to remain here. Whether he will accept the address or not will be known this week. Meanwhile, I have written to Abdulla Sheth not to force [us] to incur expenses.

I have asked for at least £40[1] to be sent to me if I needs must come. My present position is not such as to allow me to go there at my own expense—for which please excuse me.

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 40.

221. LETTER TO ATTORNEY-GENERAL

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 17, 1905

TO
THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I venture to enclose herewith copy of the correspondence[2] between the Principal Immigration Restriction Officer and myself regarding the forfeiture of a deposit by a British Indian.

I wish only to emphasise the fact that there was absolutely no fraud on the part of the holder of the pass. That, according to his own version, he was too ill to leave the Colony. That, in any case, he had no intention of misusing the pass he held, and that he is a poor man to whom the £10 were advanced by a friend.

[1] Telegram dated May 15 reads: "Will end month do please send forty pounds least."

[2] This is not available.

Under the circumstances and in view of the fact that there seems to be no warrant for a forfeiture, apart from an action at law, I venture to trust that you will be pleased to authorise the Principal Immigration Restriction Officer to refund the amount of the deposit. I have no desire to lay stress upon the legal point, but I feel bound, in justice to the applicant, to draw your attention to it.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant

Letter Book (1905): No. 65

222. LETTER TO PARSEE RUSTOMJEE

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 17, 1905

[TO]
RUSTOMJEE JIVANJEE GHORKHODU

MY DEAR SHETH SHRI PARSEE RUSTOMJEE,

Your letter to hand. I was very glad to read it. I am sure your mother must have been greatly delighted at your meeting her. It is a matter for great satisfaction that your heart's desire has been fulfilled.

I hope you will now pay sufficient attention to the education and conduct of your children.

You did a very proper thing in continuing your simple diet on board the steamer. And I am glad to have your assurance that you will be regular in your walks, food and baths in Bombay. Please do not entertain the feeling that I have rendered you a service. My only desire is that your health should continually improve and you might live long and do good deeds.

Please persuade my children to come here when you see them.

Please do not entertain any anxiety about the work here. I frequently receive letters. I believe both of them are working satisfactorily.

I am making enquiries about the bills in respect of previous cases. Please give my respects to Maji. Ask Jal[1] to write me a letter. Get Soharab[22] also to write a few lines below it.

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 70.

[1] Sons of Parsee Rustomjee.
[2] *ibid*

223. LETTER TO KAIKHUSHROO AND ABDUL HUK

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 17, 1905

MESSRS. JALBHAI SORABJI BROS.

MY DEAR KAIKHUSHROO AND ABDUL HUK,

I have received your letter. Contribute up to a maximum of five guineas to the Earthquake Relief Fund, provided Omar Sheth pays that much. Do consult him. Tell him that my advice is that both should pay that much. If, however, Omar Sheth contributes less, you may also pay the same amount. Let not your subscription exceed his. Get others also to contribute.

I have received a letter from Rustomjee Sheth, wherein he inquires about Mr. Laughton's bill in respect of the previous cases. Try and get it reduced, if possible; pay it, if not paid already; and inform him accordingly.

Rustomjee Sheth desires that you should so arrange things that either of you is almost always present at the shop. Do write to reassure him about this. I have written telling him that the business would always remain safe in your hands and that he need not worry at all.

You did well in having the photograph taken there.

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 72.

224. LETTER TO ISSA HAJI SOOMAR

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 18, 1905

TO
ISSA HAJI SOOMAR, ESQ.
RANAVAV
PORBUNDER
INDIA

DEAR SHETH SHRI ISSA HAJI SOOMAR,

Received your letter. I am glad to know that you agree with my opinion. If you take Mr. Joshi with you, the expenses incurred on acc-

ount of paper, etc., will be so insignificant that it is useless to ask for them. I believe you will surely benefit whenever you may go to England.

You need not be discouraged because your brothers do not help you.

Those who realise their duty have got to discharge it, whether or not others join them in doing so.

You must have seen the account of the property case appearing in *Indian Opinion*.

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 71.

225. LETTER TO OMAR HAJI AMOD ZAVERI

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 18, 1905

OMAR HAJI AMOD ZAVERI, ESQ.
BOX 441
DURBAN

DEAR SHETH SHRI OMAR HAJI AMOD,

Your letter to hand. I shall come there as soon as possible. But as there is a move afoot to present an address of welcome to Lord Selborne, it is very difficult to leave before that function is over.

I would not have made a demand for money but for the fact that, in view of my present position, it will be very difficult for me to come there at my own expense. I shall, therefore, be thankful if Dada Sheth sends some money at least.

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 75.

226. LETTER TO S. V. PATEL

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 19, 1905

MR. S. V. PATEL
P. O. BOX 208
KLERKSDORP

DEAR SIR,

Probably the best medical education is to be obtained in Germany, but then a knowledge of German would be necessary. Ordinarily, a medical degree obtained in Glasgow is considered very good, and no matter what degree may be held in Bombay, the course takes, as a rule, 5 years. A Glasgow degree would be considered quite sufficient for practice in any part of South Africa.

The address of the paper *India* is 84-85, Palace Chambers, Westminster, London.

Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

Letter Book (1905): No. 93.

227. LORD CURZON ON THE INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The Indian mail to hand brings the full text of Lord Curzon's remarks, at the time of the Budget debate in the Viceregal Council, on the Indians in South Africa.

His Excellency made a lengthy reference to the status of the British Indians in South Africa, and the British Indian settlers must feel deeply indebted to him for his strong advocacy. His Excellency devoted a considerable portion of his speech to the situation in Natal, and we now understand, for the first time, the nature of the work done by the delegates who proceeded to India some time ago on behalf of the Natal Government. Their object was to impose further restrictions on indentured Indians by making their return, at the end of their service, absolutely compulsory. Lord Curzon, we are glad to be able to say, repudiated any such suggestion, unless certain concessions were granted by the Natal Government in favour of non-indentured Indians settled in the Colony. His Lordship asked for the eventual abolition of the £3 tax, amendment of the Dealers' Licenses Act, as also of the

regulations in which Indians are classed with barbarous races, and other minor matters.

All this is extremely satisfactory, and it shews that the Indian appeal to the Viceroy has received very full consideration. His Excellency added that he was able to obtain one concession, namely, that three years' residence in the Colony was accepted by the Natal Government as freeing Indian residents from the prohibition under the Immigration Restriction Act. This means that His Lordship has been led to believe that it was a concession granted by the Natal Government. If so, we are sorry, because it would be a misleading statement. As a matter of fact, the Natal Government were bound to lay down certain rules with reference to the interpretation of the term "previous domicile". The law, as it stood, stated that those Indians who were previously domiciled in the Colony were free from the educational prohibition. In practice, two years' residence was accepted by Mr. Smith, as a rule, as evidence of previous domicile; and it was on Mr. Smith's recommendation that the Government have raised the period to three years and embodied it in the Act. Also, we may inform His Excellency that three years' residence is not necessarily to be accepted as sufficient evidence of domicile. We make bold to say that, but for the amendment of the Act, it would not be possible, even for an Indian who had resided in the Colony for six months, and could prove that he had changed his residence to Natal and intended to be domiciled, to be refused exemption. What, therefore, His Lordship considers is a concession, we are, with great deference, obliged to say, is no concession at all. The question, however, is whether His Excellency can safely stop where he has left the question. During the current year, the Natal Parliament has been actively pursuing an anti-Indian policy. We have already drawn attention to Bills containing anti-Indian clauses. The Dealers' Licenses Act is a thing of constant worry and irritation. Is it right, then, that Natal should still continue to draw upon India for the staple of her prosperity, and reject the advances of the Indian Government on behalf of free British Indians? To say the least, it is a one-sided bargain, in which Natal gets all without giving anything in return.

His Lordship dwelt on the position in the Transvaal. His statement is a recapitulation of Mr. Lyttelton's despatch, but it shews that he is fully alive to the interests of his wards. We hope that his watchful guardianship will, in the near future, cause the Indians to be released from the galling restraints under which they labour in that Crown Colony.

Indian Opinion, 20-5-1905

228. ANTI-INDIAN LEGISLATION IN NATAL

In a recent number of the *Natal Government Gazette*, there are three Bills published which shew how bad the financial position of the Colony is. One of the Bill is intended to impose a poll-tax of £1 per head on every adult male of the age of 18 years or over. It exempts from liability to pay the tax, poor or infirm persons, as also indentured Indians whilst they are under indenture. The second Bill imposes a succession duty on the estates of deceased persons, the minimum duty, in the case of lineal descendants or ascendants bearing one per cent. The two measures are likely, if they are accepted by the Parliament of Natal, to produce a fair amount of revenue.

It is, however, the third Bill with which we are more immediately concerned, and which raises a very important question, affecting the Indian community. The Bill is entitled "To Impose a Tax upon Unoccupied Rural Lands". It is sought thereby to impose a tax of a half penny per acre on every piece of unoccupied rural land of an extent of 250 acres or upwards. Clause 5 of the Bill states that

> land shall be deemed to be unoccupied unless the owner or some European has continuously resided thereon for at least nine out of the twelve months prior to the first day of March in any year.

Thus, any piece of rural land that may be occupied by Indians in the Colony, other than the owners, would, if the Bill becomes law, be considered as unoccupied for the purpose of imposing the halfpenny tax. The Bill may affect Indian landlords in the coast districts, where land is cultivated only by Indians.

This policy of constantly insulting and irritating the Indians without cause ought, in the interests of the Empire, to be checked by Mr. Lyttelton. It is true that Natal enjoys complete self-government, and it is therefore at liberty to make its own laws; but when liberty becomes license, it is a question whether the authorities in Downing Street, who are the custodians of the honourable traditions of the Empire, should not check legislation which insults British subjects not directly represented in the Legislature.

Indian Opinion, 20-5-1905

229. THE IMMIGRATION LAW IN THE CAPE

The Report of the Immigration Officer of the Cape, Dr. Gregory, on the working of the Immigration Law in that Colony, has been published. We find therein that, of the persons seeking entry into the Cape last month, 298 were not allowed to enter. Of these, 56 were disallowed because they were not literate in English, 156 because they were paupers and 74 because they were illiterate and poor; twelve were not allowed to land because they were prostitutes. Dr. Gregory's view is that, because of hard times, many who would have otherwise come have not been able to do so, and that, therefore, it is not possible to say what the real effect of this law has been. He also believes that many Indians were put to difficulty in not being able to land. And even if it is held that this law is good for preventing the entry of Indians, it is questionable whether it is just to prevent British Indian subjects from entering, when Yiddish-speaking Hebrews who are actual beggars can do so by borrowing money from their friends. It seems from the Report that Dr. Gregory himself regards this law as unjust. The Cape Government have promised Indians in the Cape that the provision in the law regarding language would be so amended as to make the knowledge of an Indian language acceptable. It is the duty of leading Indians in the Cape to get that promise implemented. We are sure that, if they pursue the matter energetically, the Government will make the necessary changes in the Act. We hope that the Cape Indians will take up the matter vigorously and see it through.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-5-1905

230. THE LATE MR. TATA[1]

A mammoth meeting was held early last April in the Town Hall in Bombay to perpetuate the memory of the late Mr. Tata, with Lord Lamington, the Governor, in the chair. The first resolution regarding the raising of a memorial was moved by the popular Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court, Sir Lawrence Jenkins. Justice Badruddin

[1] Sir Jamshedji Nasserwanji Tata (1839-1904), Indian industrialist and philanthropist.

Tyabji,[1] Justice Chandavarkar, the Honourable Mr. Parekh,[2] Sir Bhalchandra[3] and others attended the meeting. All the speakers, including the Governor, pointed out that a gentleman as liberal, simple and as sagacious as Mr. Tata had hardly lived before in India. In whatever he did, Mr. Tata never looked to self-interest. He never cared for any titles from the Government, nor did he ever take distinctions of caste or race into consideration. As Justice Badruddin observed, the Parsis, the Muslims, the Hindus—all were equal to him. For him it was enough that they were Indians. He was a man of deep compassion. Tears came to his eyes at the thought of the sufferings of the poor. Though he possessed unlimited wealth, he spent nothing from it on his own pleasures. His simplicity was remarkable. May India produce many Tatas!

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-5-1905

231. SIR PHEROZESHAH MEHTA

No one has served Bombay as well as Sir Pherozeshah Mehta. He has been a member of the Corporation for the last thirty years and attended its meetings, forgoing important lucrative cases. He is, therefore, regarded as the Father of the Corporation. There is talk of offering him the presidentship of the Corporation this year in view of the forthcoming visit to India of the Prince of Wales. Since he already holds a knighthood, *The Times of India* suggests that it would be only proper for the Government to confer on him the title of Lord Mayor, when he assumes the office of President. If the Presidents of the Corporations of Melbourne and Sydney can be Lord Mayors, why not those of Calcutta and Bombay?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-5-1905

[1] A distinguished member of the Bombay Bar and later judge of the Bombay High Court. He presided over the third session of the Indian National Congress at Madras in December 1887.

[2] Sir Gokuldas Kahandas Parekh, a member of the Bombay Legislative Council.

[3] Sir Bhalchandra Bhatavdekar, an eminent doctor and public-worker of Bombay.

232. LETTER TO HAJI MAHOMED HAJI DADA

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 20, 1905

HAJI MAHOMED HAJI DADA, ESQ.
BOX 173
DURBAN

DEAR SHETH HAJI MAHOMED HAJI DADA,

I have not read the book, *Kasassul Ambiya*.[1] If you send me a copy, I shall be able to say whether it can be reproduced in *Indian Opinion* or not. If it contains historical material useful to English readers, it may be possible to publish an English translation. I have often heard of this book. Is it not likely that the stories in it are already known to most of our readers? In case they are, it will be a problem deciding whether to reproduce it or not.

I am collecting money from Gunavantrai. £25 have already been received and credited to the account of Seth Haji Habib and I expect the balance will come at the rate of £5 a month.

Salaams from
M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No.102.

233. LETTER TO ABDUL HUK AND KAIKHUSHROO

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 20, 1905

MESSRS. JALBHAI SORABJI BROS.
84, FIELD STREET
DURBAN

MY DEAR SHRI[2] ABDUL HUK AND KAIKHUSHROO,

Your letter to hand. The power of attorney passed by Sheth Azam Gulam Hussain has been found.

Hussain Issop seems to be an employee in the shop. He has asked for an advance of £15 against his salary. He says that you have

[1] An Urdu book containing the lives of the prophets and saints of Islam.
[2] The original has "Shri 5," which means that the word Shri is to be repeated five times. Gandhiji has addressed others in this way.

asked him to get my sanction. I think there should be no objection to giving him such an advance, if his work is quite satisfactory, if he is trustworthy and is really in need of money. But I leave that to your discretion.[1]

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No.103.

234. LETTER TO OMAR HAJI AMOD AND ADAMJI MIANKHAN

[JOHANNESBURG,]

May 20, 1905

DEAR SHETH SHRI UMAR HAJI AMOD
AND SHRI ADAMJI MIANKHAN,

I hope the petition[2] I sent earlier through Mr. Nazar has been sent to the Assembly. If it has not been sent already, there seems to be very little time left to do so now.

I am to-day[3] sending another petition; it relates to another Act. I hope there will be no delay in these matters.

There is a private Bill of Durban about which a representation can be also made through a lawyer. I have suggested to Mr. Nazar to do so.

This time both of you have to exert yourselves to the utmost and work courageously. It does not matter if there are only a few signatures. At times, even the signatures only of the Chairman and the Secretary are enough.

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure: 1.

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No.104.

[1] Gandhiji, it would appear, was a consultant in the absence of Parsee Rustomjee; all sorts of problems were referred to him and his advice was often sought by the managers of the firm.

[2] *Vide* "Memorial to the Natal Assembly", 7-4-1905.

[3] This is not available.

235. LETTER TO HAJI DADA HAJI HABIB

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 23, 1905

MR. HAJI DADA HAJI HABIB
BOX 88
DURBAN

DEAR SHETH SHRI HAJI DADA HAJI HABIB,

I have received your letter together with the P. note. I am returning the P. note as I have no use for it. My condition is such that I hesitate to spend any money from my own pocket even for a short time. But since you are so importunate, I shall leave this place at the earliest if no satisfactory reply is received from Abdulla Sheth.

Salaams from
M. K. GANDHI

From the original Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 116

236. LETTER TO PARSI COWASJI

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 23, 1905

MR. PARSI COWASJI
115, FIELD STR.
DURBAN

DEAR MR. PARSI COWASJI,

Your letter to hand. I have had a talk with Rustomjee Sheth about you. He was not inclined to render help without a surety. I, therefore, cannot give my consent. The best thing for you to do would be to write to Rustomjee Sheth and patiently await his reply.

Salaams from
M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 119

237. LETTER TO GOVERNMENT OFFICER, CHINDE

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 23, 1905

THE GOVERNMENT OFFICER
REPRESENTING THE COLONIAL SECRETARY,
CHINDE
BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA

SIR,

At present in the Transvaal there are a few hundred Indians who are desirous of proceeding to Chinde[1] if they can receive employment on the Railways that, I understand, are being constructed under the Government. Some of them have already worked in Chinde or in other parts of British Central Africa.

I shall be obliged if you will kindly let me know whether there is any scope for them and, if there is, where they should apply.

I have the honour to remain
Sir,
Your obedient servant
M. K. GANDHI

Letter Book (1905): No. 120.

238. LETTER TO DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF POLICE[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 23, 1905

TO
THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF POLICE
"A" DIVISION
JOHANNESBURG

SIR,

I have the honour to enclose herewith, on behalf of Messrs. M. C. Camroodeen & Co., a warning issued from your office, which

[1] A small town in Portuguese East Africa, in which the British held a concession till 1923.

[2] A similar letter was addressed the same day to the Commissioner, South African Republic (Letter Book: 1905, No. 126).

described them as Camroodeen "coolie" .

I hope that the description is an unconscious mistake on the part of the official who has issued the warning. I need hardly draw your attention to the fact that the description is in the highest degree offensive, and that it would be totally wrong to describe Messrs. M. C. Camroodeen & Co. as "coolies". I may add, theirs is one of the oldest established British Indian firms in South Africa

I have the honour to remain
Sir,
Your obedient servant
M. K. GANDHI

1 Enclosure.[1]

Letter Book (1905): No. 124.

239. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 23, 1905

C. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
C/O INTERNATIONAL PRINTING PRESS
PHOENIX

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I send herewith Municipal Notice in Gujarati to be printed. Please have it translated in Tamil, Hindi and Urdu also. See that the translation is accurate. Please print the whole [in] four languages on double foolscap, all on the same paper print 10,000. You will see that the matter is of immediate importance, and seeing that it is a municipal matter, it should take precedence of others if there is pressure of work. Use decent paper. No proof is required, so that there need be no delay. I send you the original in English also, in order to enable you to have your translation without difficulty.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Enclosures[2]

Letter Book (1905): No. 133.

[1] This is not available.
[2] These are not available.

240. LETTER TO E. A. WALTERS

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 25, 1905

E. A. WALTERS, ESQ.
WINDSORTON
CAPE COLONY

DEAR SIR,

RE: COOVADIA & SIDAT

In this matter, all my letters recently sent to you have been ignored. The debtor himself writes to me saying that he has paid you the full amount. Unless therefore I have a settlement from you, I shall be most reluctantly compelled to submit the matter to the Incorporated Law Society at Cape Town.[1]

Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

Letter Book (1905): No. 145.

241. LETTER TO KAIKHUSHROO AND ABDUL HUK

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 25, 1905

MESSRS. JALBHAI SORABJI BROS.
84, FIELD STREET
DURBAN

MY DEAR MESSRS. KAIKHUSHROO AND ABDUL HUK,

Your letter to hand. In the matter of Nuruddin, you should act strictly in accordance with the instructions given by Rustomjee Sheth. I have asked him to write to Rustomjee Sheth directly.

Make an advance of up to £7 against his salary to Hussein Issop if he is trustworthy and his work satisfactory.

Salaams from
M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 153.

[1] Gandhiji did this later; *vide* "Letter to Law Society", 22-6-1905

242. LETTER TO OMAR HAJI AMOD ZAVERI

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 26, 1905

OMAR HAJI AMOD ZAVERI
BOX 441
DURBAN

DEAR SHRI OMAR HAJI AMOD ZAVERI,

Received your letter as well as copies of Sheth Haji Mahomed's letter. I am very much surprised and sorry to read the latter and to know that even mature and wise men [sometimes] forget themselves. I think it would have been good if you had sent a short reply as soon as the letter was received. But since no reply has been sent so far, I see no need to do so now. I shall write to you if I receive a letter.

Salaams from
M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No.157.

243. EMPIRE DAY

Empire Day—the anniversary of the birth of the late Queen-Empress—is a day set apart by universal consent in all parts of the Empire outside Great Britain to commemorate the reign of its most beloved Queen. It is but a deeper tribute to her memory that it is becoming known as "Empire" rather than as "Victoria" Day; for it is a recognition that no person has done more to draw together the units of those vast Dominions of which she was the Queen-Empress. By her large heart and wide sympathy; by her abilities and queenly virtues; above all, by her personal goodness as a woman, she has for ever enshrined herself in the hearts of every nation under the British flag. The lesser persons who administered her power might make mistakes; injustice even might be committed in her name; but the people ever knew that the mistakes and the injustice came not from Victoria the Good. As wife and as mother, she proved herself as worthily as Queen; and knowing that domestic virtue alone makes a household happy and prosperous, she was a firm believer in the scriptural statement: Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people. She saw, before all others, that the British Empire must

be founded on the rock of righteousness—individual and national—if it were to have a permanent prosperity. Other nations and other Empires the past has held; but all have been broken on this "rock of offense". From the first, when she spoke those simple words: "I will be good", she endeared herself to her subjects the world over. It may be noted here that Victoria owed her greatness in very large part, under Providence, to her own wise mother; and both before and since, great men and women without number have dutifully acknowledged the same. It is always true that a good mother makes a wise child. As another instance of this, we have but to see the universal satisfaction that is felt with the present occupant of the British throne, who by his tack and wisdom has already done so much for the Empire and the world. Of all contemporary monarchs, King Edward best exhibits that peculiar genius which constitutes true kingship; and this is due in most part to the influence of his august Mother.

In every way, then, Victoria is a name worthy to be honoured when we think of the Empire; and it is but fitting that the day set apart should be the anniversary of the hour that brought her into the world.

To Indians especially, Victoria Day should be sacred. No other person has done so much for the liberty of India as the late Queen-Empress. That this was recognised by the millions of India was apparent by the remarkable demonstrations of mourning that took place throughout India on her decease. Speaking of her, the Viceroy said:

> The hearts of all the Indian people had been drawn together by this singular and beautiful combination of mother, woman and queen. It was easy to say much about the mark which this marvelous reign had left upon the history of India, and to indicate many points where the sagacious hand and influence of the deceased Sovereign had been felt; but were not all her reign and character summed up in the famous Proclamation of 1858, the Magna Charta of India, and the golden guide of our conduct and our aspirations? It might be said of her that she turned Great Britain into a worldwide Empire, with India as its corner-stone.

Victoria's interest in India was always personal and profound. Not only did she surround herself with Indian servants; not only did she learn to speak and write Hindustani (no light task to one burdened with the cares of State); but she made the Viceroy send an account of the situation in India *by every mail*. And that her knowledge of Indian affairs was intimate is shewn by the following extract from one of her letters to Lord Northbrook.

> The Queen trusts the English are now kinder in their conduct to the

Natives than they used to be. It is so essential that these unchristianlike feelings should no longer exist. It is everywhere her greatest wish that there should be the kindest and best feeling between classes who, after all, are the same before God.

"The same before God" —that was the spirit which inspired the great Proclamation; and of which the Empire has scarcely proved itself worthy. It is with regret that we say it; and it is with regret that we have to call the attention of our readers and the authorities to various matters in which the spirit of Victoria the Good has been violated, when we would have wished that this issue of our journal at least should be free from anything that would detract from our satisfaction in belonging to the great British Empire.

Indian Opinion, 27-5-1905

244. IN THE NATURE OF A TEST CASE

An important decision has been given by the Supreme Court in the case in which one Said Ismail and another were plaintiffs, and L. K. Jacobs was defendant in his capacity as Trustee in the Insolvent Estate of one Lucas, deceased. The original action was brought in the High Court at Johannesburg. The plaintiffs held some landed property there, but being prevented from registering the title in their own names, had it registered in the name of their friend, the deceased Lucas. This was in the year 1896. Until recently, they had remained in possession, with the knowledge of the authorities, and they had paid all the assessment and other rates. They adopted that course upon the advice of a prominent firm of solicitors in Johannesburg; and in order to protect themselves, they took from the deceased Lucas an irrevocable power of attorney to deal with the property, and also a lease with a clause as to automatic perpetual renewal. Lucas became insolvent before the war and, some time after, died. The original Trustee never brought up the property in question, in the schedule. In the year 1902, among other properties, this too was expropriated under the Expropriation Ordinance by the Johannesburg Municipality, and compensation was fixed at £2,000. The award was naturally given in the name of the registered owner, namely, Lucas; but as the case was prosecuted by the plaintiffs, and as they claimed the money—the proceeds of the property which they contended Lucas held in secret trust for them—the money was deposited in the hands of the Master

of the Supreme Court, and the parties were left to have an adjudication as to their rights. The plaintiffs, therefore, sued the defendant for a declaration of rights, and demanded that an order should be issued to the Master for payment of the money to them. The defence raised was, first, that the plaintiffs, being British Indians, could not, in virtue of Law 3 of 1885, hold landed property, and that, therefore, the agreement on the part of Lucas to hold it for them was illegal and void, and, therefore, not capable of being enforced at law. The second ground of defence was that, even if it was competent for Lucas to enter into the agreement with the plaintiffs, the latter had only a personal right against him, and could thus only prove their claim as concurrent creditors, but could not make good their claim to the money on the strength of a universal right, in other words, as preferent creditors. Sir William Smith, though not without some hesitation, decided the point in favour of the plaintiffs, and gave judgement with costs. From this the defendant appealed, and the Supreme Court has adjudged on the appeal in favour of the defendant, holding, with him on the second defence raised. The net result, however, of this important judgement seems to be that the holding by Europeans of land for Indians is not illegal, but that, in the event of the insolvency of such Europeans, the Indians concerned must take the risk, unless their names are registered on the title-deeds, as *cestuis que trustent*. This case, therefore, takes the Indians a step further in their fight, and renders Law 3 of 1885 still more ineffective as a weapon to be used against them. It would be most interesting to test whether, as a matter of fact, if an Indian insisted on his name being registered as a *cestui que trust*, his name could be so registered. In the event of the successful prosecution of such a test case, Indians would practically be able to hold land in any part of the Transvaal without the slightest risk; and looking at it from a common sense standpoint, we are inclined to think that if follows as a corollary from the judgment of the Supreme Court. It would certainly be equitable, seeing that it has now been decided that Natives are free to hold landed property in any part of the Transvaal, and to have it registered in their own names.

Indian Opinion, 27-5-1905

245. MAHOMEDAN v. HINDU

It is with very great regret that we notice some correspondence in an East London journal between a Mahomedan and a Hindu. We should have thought that the palpable need for the utmost harmony between all sections of the Indian community in South Africa would have prevented amenities[1] of this nature. We do not desire to go into the merits of the letters, but merely to express out disapprobation of this kind of thing. We trust the writers will have the good sense to join in our regret and leave the correspondence where it stands. There are other and weightier matters that can more usefully employ their attention. We may perhaps be allowed to remind our readers that *Indian Opinion* is a journal specially devoted to the discussion of all Indian affairs in South Africa; and that, if unfortunately differences arise between Indians, our columns are the natural and most fitting medium for their ventilation.

Indian Opinion, 27-5-1905

246. SIR MANCHERJI AND MR. LYTTELTON

Sir Mancherji asked Mr. Lyttelton why Indians were excluded from the right to vote in the Transvaal Constitution. He asked further whether or not the Constitution would be amended in order to enfranchise them. Mr. Lyttelton replied that the Boers interpreted the terms of the Peace Treaty, signed on the cessation of hostilities, to mean that no Coloured person would get the right to vote until the Transvaal attained full self-government. In deference to this interpretation, Mr. Lyttelton had excluded the Indians so as not to give any ground to the Boers to doubt the honesty of the British Government. The word used in the terms of the Treaty is "Native" and not "Coloured people". Now the word "Native" can in no way be interpreted to mean "Indians". That word is invariably used in South Africa for the natives of this country. The practice of including Indians and other Coloured people in the term "Native" is of recent origin, and that too only when it is specifically so laid down in a law. It is surprising that Mr. Lytteltton should have given the above explanation when the word is not normally so interpreted even today. If Indians are thus included in the term "Native", great harm is likely to done to them.

[1] Perhaps this word is used satirically in the sense of pleasant manners or is a misprint for 'enmities'.

There is not the slightest likelihood of the Dutch or the British granting the franchise to Indians on the attainment of self-government. Sir George Farrar, a noted gentleman of the Transvaal, has already declared that the "Natives" would never be granted the right to vote. His views regarding Indians are very unfavourable. He would not even dream of granting rights to an Indian, in preference to a "Native".

The meaning of the above interpellation is that we should put up a tough fight whenever an attempt is made to include Indians in the term "Native".

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-5-1905

247. SMALLPOX IN JOHANNESBURG[1]

Smallpox has made its appearance in Johannesburg. It is said to have entered through passenger steamers. It started with the Malay Location. The first case was a Malay one, followed by another of a white. According to Dr. Porter, five Indians have also been affected. Great strictness is being observed in the Malay Location; people's houses are being inspected morning and evening.

Much inconvenience is likely to be caused if smallpox spreads further. Compulsory inoculation has been introduced in the Malay Location. But that is not all. Regulations have been framed by the Town Council, and when they come into force, much difficulty is likely to be felt.

The remedy lies in the people's own hands. To keep the tenements clean, to bathe daily, to keep water, milk, etc., clean, to put on clean clothes, and to let plenty of air and light into the house; these are the preventive measures for smallpox or any other illness. If anyone in the house catches the disease, the fact should immediately be intimated to the authorities. The more the people conceal such diseases out of fear, the greater will be their hardships, the more widely will the disease spread, and the greater will be the repression by the authorities. The patient is bound eventually to be removed to hospital. If, therefore, we inform the authorities of our own accord,

[1] This appeared as "From Our Correspondent".

there is likely to be less hardship. No harm will come to the patient if he is removed to hospital; on the contrary, he may recover the sooner for it.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-5-1905

248. LETTER TO MAHOMED SEEDAT

JOHANNESBURG,
May 27, 1905

MR. MAHOMED SEEDAT
C/O MR. M. C. ANGLIA
GREY STREET
DURBAN

DEAR SHETH SHRI MAHOMED SEEDAT AND OTHER ISLAMI TRUSTEES,

Your letter to hand. I find that you and the other gentlemen have been offended by my speeches[1] and my writings. I am sorry about this and beg to be forgiven.

My intention in that speech was to serve all Indians. I believe this was just the impression created on the minds of my hearers.

What I said was no doubt on the basis of history and I would request you in this connection to refer to *The Encyclopedia Britannica*, Hunter's *Indian Empire*, and such other books.

To my mind, members of the lower castes are not base. I consider it a godly act to take care of them. You ask me my caste; well, I am a Vaishya.

What more shall I say?[2]

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI.

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 163.

[1] *Vide* "Hinduism" March 4 and 11, 1905

[2] Gandhiji had earlier explained his stand in some detail; vide "Mr. Gandhi's Clarification", 13-5-1905.

249. ADDRESS TO LORD SELBORNE

JOHANNESBURG,
[*May 28, 1905*][1]

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY

We, the undersigned, representing the British Indian settlers in the Transvaal, beg to tender to Your Excellency a respectful welcome, and pray that your tenure of office may be marked by a return to prosperity of the country and by peace and good-will among the various sections of His majesty's subjects in this sub-continent. May we ask Your Excellency to convey to their Majesties the King-Emror and Queen-Empress an assurance of our loyalty to the Throne.

We beg to remain,

Your Excellency's humble servants,

ABDUL GANI,
A. A. PILLAY
M. K. GANDHI
[AND SEVENTEEN OTHERS]

Indian Opinion, 10-6-1905

250. LETTER TO ISSA HAJI SOOMAR

[JOHANNESBURG,]
June 1, 1905

TO
ISSA HAJI SOOMAR
RANAVAV
PORBUNDER
KATHIAWAD, INDIA

DEAR SHRI ISSA HAJI SOOMAR,

Your letter to hand. That Mr. Joshi is an able man is quite true. But I do not see any possibility of collecting any money here at present. Omar Sheth had given Mr. Majmudar[2] a considerable amount. You, too, can do likewise. If you go to England, you will have to

[1] The address was actually presented on Wednesday, June 7.
[2] Tryambaklal Majmudar of Junagadh, Gandhiji's fellow-student in England.

spend a lot; you should not therefore mind, if perchance a little more money is spent.

I am returning Mr. Joshi's letter herewith.

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No.210.

251. LETTER TO H. J. HOFMEYR

Delivered Personal

[JOHANNESBURG,]

June 2, 1905

TO
H. J. HOFMEYR, ESQ.
ZIMAN'S BLDGS.
JOHANNESBURG

DEAR MR. HOFMEYR,

I must confess that your letter enclosing cheque staggers me because I venture to think that there is a principle at stake. The cheque was given to me ear-marked. You know the money belonged to me. It did not come out of anything I had for Said Ismail, and seeing that the property to buy which it was given was not purchased, I think I was entitled to a return of the full cheque. I know that I won't come to grief with reference to the charges deducted by you, but, to my mind, it is hardly conducive to the growth of confidential relations which ought to exist between professional men. I hope you do not mind my writing to you so frankly, but I thought that I ought to pass on the thoughts that occurred to me when I saw your cheque, letter and the bill. Of course, I accept your cheque, so that anything I have said herein does not disturb the deduction made by you.

I am,

Yours truly

M. K. GANDHI

Letter Book (1905): No. 220.

252. BARODA: A MODEL INDIAN STATE

In a recent number of *India*, Sir William Wedderburn, one of India's truest friends, has contributed an appreciative article on the affairs of Baroda, a State in the Presidency of Bombay with a population of two millions, and with territories covering an area of eight thousand square miles; in other words, a State a little bigger than Wales. Sir William has based his appreciation on the report of administration issued by Mr. R. C. Dutt,[1] at one time Acting Commissioner of Orissa, now Finance Minister of Baroda, and who is known to the literary world as a brilliant author. The Maharaja Gaekwar himself, one of the most cultured Princes of India, has surrounded himself with able councillors, of whom Mr. Dutt is the brightest star. Mr. Dutt has written works expounding his view as to the amelioration of the poverty of the masses in India. His chief remedy is to make the revenue system as elastic as possible, and as soon as he accepted office in Baroda, he was allowed to put his views into force. Instead, now, of the cultivator having to pay a fixed tax in coin, he has, under well-defined rules, the opportunity of either paying in coin or in kind. This takes us back to the pre-British period, when the ryot throughout India paid a certain portion of his produce to the paramount lord. This was suited to the genius of the people and most convenient to either party. The paramount lord then shared the prosperity of the ryot and suffered with him in adversity. The Maharaja's councillor has also done away with petty, vexatious cesses. Nor does Mr. Dutt's activity stop at revenue reform. He holds decided views on education. An advanced district of the State has been selected for an experiment in compulsory education. According to Mr. Dutt's report, the following is the position of education in Baroda as compared with British India:

> In no department of administration is the far-sighted liberality of H. H. the Maharaja Gaekwar more conspicuous than in education, and in none are the results more real and tangible. The percentage of the State revenue spent on education is 6.5 in Baroda, as against 1.17 in Bengal, 1.44 in Bombay, 1.33 in Madras, and about 1 per cent in all British India. And the percentage of children under instruction to the total population is 8.6 in Baroda, as against 4.0 in Bengal, 6.2 in Bombay, 3.09 in Madras, and less than 3 per cent, in all British India. Seven annas is spent on education per head of population in Baroda, as against about one anna in British India.

[1] Romesh Chunder Dutt, prominent Indian Civilian, presided over the Congress Session at Lucknow in 1890.

Mr. Dutt, again, is very deeply interested in the problem of self government, and reviving or keeping up the great village communities of India, which have been so graphically described by the late Sir Henry Maine as self-contained republics. Mr. Dutt has, therefore, endowed the villages with control of their own management and has given certain powers to the headman, revived the village school-master, and upon the old system he has engrafted real elective representation. The village Panchayat, instead of being hereditary, will now be elected by the people. It is a bold experiment, and, if it succeeds, it will form a landmark in the government of Indian States, and as Sir William Wedderburn says, it may well be that the British Indian Government may have to copy Baroda; nor, adds Sir William, need there be any hesitation or shame about it, as it should be a matter of pride to the British Government, which has, after all, given to India the present Maharaja of Baroda, and an administrator of Mr. Dutt's remarkable capabilities. To our South African readers, a State like Baroda ought to serve as a help to dispel prejudices and illusions about India, for a country which has so much that is good, so much that is progressive, cannot after all be termed a country inhabited by savages or a semi-civilised, barbarous race.

Indian Opinion, 3-6-1905

253. AN INDIAN PHILANTHROPIST

We have been receiving for some time past copies of a journal called *The Indian Sociologist*, and "organ of freedom, and of political, social and religious reform". It is edited by Pandit Shyamaji Krishnavarma, M.A. (Oxon.), sometime lecturer at Oxford, and is published in London. It is a journal fearlessly edited, and the editor is imbued with the teaching of the late Herbert Spencer. The journal is evidently inte-nded to model Indian opinion in accordance with Spencer's teachings. The Pandit is an Indian scholar of distinction, and has a fair amount of capital at his command. He has established several scholar-ships for Indian students in order to enable them to carry on their post-graduate studies in Europe and America. Each scholarship is worth 2,000 rupees and is given to selected graduates from all parts of India, the chief conditions being that the candidates must remain and study for at least two years in Europe or America, and must not, on any account, accept government service. The candidates are also expected to enter into an agreement to refund the money thus

advanced in easy instalments after the completion of study. As a result of the first competition, the following five candidates have already been selected: Abdullah Al-Mahmun Suhrawdy, M.A., Sarat Chandra Mukerji, M.A., Parmeshwar Lall, M.A., Syud Abdul Majid, B.A., and Shaikh Abdul Aziz, B.A. The experiment is a very bold one. The donor's intentions are patriotic. Its success, however, will very largely depend upon the manner in which the first scholars use their opportunity. Their scholastic qualifications certainly betoken a happy augury. We wish every success to Pandit Shyamaji Krishnavarma in his enterprise. His example may well be copied by the Indian merchants in South Africa and elsewhere.

Indian Opinion, 3-6-1905

254. MR. GANDHI'S COMMENTS[1]

I am grieved to read the above letter. I wrote what I believe to be true. However, I find that some persons have taken offence at what I said, for which I am sorry and I apologise to them. As I do not wish to prolong the controversy, I do not think it advisable to reply to the letter at any length. I have not sought to lower Islam, nor do I hold it to be lowly. I do not think that such an impression was created on anyone's mind when I made the speech.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 3-6-1905

255. SMALLPOX EPIDEMIC IN JOHANNESBURG

There has been an outbreak of this epidemic in Johannesburg, but fortunately it is not yet very widespread. A boy in the house of Husanmal, and Indian living in the Malay Location, caught the infection, but Husanmal did not inform the authorities nor did he give satisfactory information even when they made inquiries about it. He

[1] Subsequent to Gandhiji's reply, *vide* "Mr. Gandhi's Clarification", May 13, 1905, two letters of protest were received by the Editor, *Indian Opinion*. The one signed by "A Muslim" asserted that ". . . The ancestors of over a lakh of Bohras, who are highly placed, had been the Brahmin priests of Sidhpur. Besides, the forefathers of Sunni Bohras from Central Gujarat had been Banias . . . Thus it can be proved that some people even from the higher classes were converted to Islam," to which Gandhiji replied as above.

was, therefore, prosecuted and fined £10. Our people should take a lesson from this instance. Nothing is gained by concealing the disease; on the contrary, much harm is done. Not only does the person concealing the attack suffer penalty, but the whole community has to suffer for it. There is no doubt that smallpox is infectious. We know that thousands suffer because of it; hence, we should be careful if only to safeguard our own health.

Again, it is all the more necessary to be careful in South Africa; the whole community is condemned and has to suffer hardships if even one of us commits a mistake.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 3-6-1905

256. MR. SAMUEL SMITH AND INDIA

Mr. Samuel Smith is a well-wisher of India. He is a member of the British Parliament, and went specially to attend the last Congress session. Writing to the London *Times*, he makes the following suggestions:

> (1) Three capable Indians, to be nominated by the Viceroy, should be given seats on the India Council in England;
>
> (2) at least one Indian should be appointed to the Viceroy's Executive Council;
>
> (3) one member each from [the Presidencies] of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras should be sent to the British Parliament. They should be elected by the respective Legislative Councils.

Mr. Samuel Smith says that, if this reform is introduced, it will give Indians great satisfaction and facilitate good administration. He further adds that the greatest malady India suffers from is poverty. In order, therefore, to make the people happy and contented, the land revenue should be settled permanently and should not be excessive. If the Government would consider these suggestions of Mr. Smith, it will surely yield good results.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 3-6-1905

257. INDIA AND THE GENERAL ELECTION

Now that it is thought that fresh elections to the British Parliament are likely to take place shortly, it is high time the facts about India are placed before the British electors. A resolution to send a

deputation to England was passed at the last Congress session with this end in view. The journal, *India*, tells us that Sir William Wedderburn, a staunch friend of India, has issued a circular in this regard, requesting the members from all the big towns in Britain to organise meetings to hear the tale of India's woes from these representatives. Mr. Gokhale, C.I.E. has been appointed the leader of this deputation. He is the same Mr. Gokhale who served as professor at the Fergusson College, Poona, taking a mere pittance to maintain himself. He is at present a member of the Imperial Legislative Council, Calcutta; year after year, he puts up a fight on behalf of India in that House.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 3-6-1905

258. PLAGUE IN INDIA

There occurred in India 65,780 cases of plague during the last week of April, of which 57,702 proved fatal. There were 23,387 deaths in the United Provinces,[1] 19,015 in the Punjab, 3,056 in the Bombay Presidency and 9,703 in Bengal. The *Liberty Review* has passed severe strictures on the British Government whom it holds responsible for the epidemic, and for this large number of deaths, for, it adds, there is extreme starvation in the land. It has been estimated that only three out of the thirty crores of the people get even one meal a day. This much is certain, that if a man obliged to starve, his body gradually gets weaker and at last becomes so reduced in resistance that it becomes more easily susceptible to infection or an attack of germs. Nevertheless, we must say that the criticism of the *Liberty Review* is to a certain extent unjustified. We can say from experience that the plague does not attack only the starving. We see that even those with a high standard of living are victimised by it. Moreover, we can add the following from experience:

1. Very often all the persons in a house affected by plague get the attack.

2. When once plague has spread in a village, it is never totally eradicated.

3. Persons observing the rules of hygiene are less susceptible to the plague.

[1] Now Uttar Pradesh.

4. Those who leave an infected village are saved.

5. The whites are not as susceptible to the plague as Indians.

6. The whites live more cleanly and observe the rules of health.

7. Wherever plague breaks out outside India, it is immediately eradicated.

We can see from this that plague has not much to do with starvation.

Doubtless the main thing to do in the case of plague is to observe cleanliness. Cleanliness does not mean merely bathing and washing. It is well to maintain personal cleanliness. But in addition to it, the house also should be kept clean; sufficient light and sunshine should be let into it; latrines should be kept clean; and in a house which is affected, things should be so arranged that the things used for the patient are not used by others. How to deal with plague is a wide subject, and we cannot say much about it here. However, our readers should remember that there is no other disease so deadly as the plague. Cholera has always been considered a deadly disease, but it is nothing as compared to plague. Moreover, plague is increasing daily in India and not on the decline. For, whereas there were 2,72,000 deaths in 1901, there were 5,00,000 in 1902 and 8,00,000 in 1903; and this year the attack has been so virulent that the number might easily shoot up to a million. The average number of deaths per month this year comes to about 1,20,000[1]. If mortality continues at this rate and goes on increasing from year to year, it will be little wonder if the whole of India becomes depopulated within 15 years. Several villages have already been laid waste. At many places in the Punjab, public works have come to a stop. Men who have survived the plague have deserted the villages. This should set every Indian thinking. Every Indian should search his heart and realise what his duty is.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 3-6-1905

[1] The figure 12,000 in the original is evidently a slip.

259. LETTER TO M. H. THURSTON

[JOHANNESBURG,]

June 5, 1905

M. H. THURSTON, ESQ.
P. O. BOX 1712
JOHANNESBURG

DEAR SIR,

With reference to the house occupied by me, I find the chimney in the dining-room is quite out of order, the wood-work having bulged out. Each time I light a fire, the dining-room is filled with smoke which issues out of the crevices left by the bulging out.

I shall be obliged if you will kindly have the matter put right without delay.

I would also like to draw your attention to the fact that rents all over Troyeville have gone down and I shall be obliged if you could make a reduction in the rent I am paying.

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

Letter Book (1905): No. 252.

260. LETTER TO OMAR HAJI AMOD ZAVERI

[JOHANNESBURG,]

June 6, 1905

TO
OMAR HAJI AMOD ZAVERI, ESQ.
BOX 441
DURBAN

DEAR SHRI OMAR HAJI AMOD ZAVERI,

I am sending you the enclosed telegram [received] from Pretoria. A certain gentleman named Shone has made an offer of £50 for a ten year lease to Tayob Haji Khan Mahomed in a letter which I received yesterday; but he has not mentioned the value of the building. I have asked the gentleman about it, but there does not seem to be anything in it. From the telegram, I guess that it must surely be

the building of 14,000 and £20.[1] However, as I have not seen Kallenbach, I have not wired. Do send me the documents.

I shall most probably leave on the 9th. I intend spending Sunday the 11th for Dada Sheth's work. I will have to return as soon as possible, because I am badly needed here. I shall have to give some time to Phoenix also. At the latest, I must be back here on the 19th.

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No.259.

261. LETTER TO KHUSHALBHAI GANDHI[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
June 7, 1905

TO
KHUSHAL JIVAN GANDHI
SARDHAR VIA RAJKOT
KATHIAWAD, INDIA

RESPECTED KHUSHALBHAI,

I have a letter from Chhaganlal to-day saying that Haki's[3] daughter has expired. I do not find time here even to reflect on such happenings. This is the special characteristic of this country. I can well realise the effect of such bereavement on the minds of both Bhabhi[4] and you. But such sorrow is a test for us all. We shall have stood it only, if we can remain calm and unruffled.

I shall see Chhaganlal and Maganlal when I go to Phoenix in a couple of days.

Respectfully yours,

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No.272.

[1] Evidently the cost and rental value of the building.
[2] Gandhiji's cousin, father of Chhaganlal and Maganlal.
[3] Harkunvarbehn, addressee's daughter.
[4] Elder brother's wife, here addressee's wife.

262. LETTER TO FULABHAI

[JOHANNESBURG,]
June 7, 1905

TO
MR. FULABHAI
BOX 128
POTCHEFSTROOM

DEAR MR. FULABHAI,

Your two letters to hand.

You had written to me in your letter that you would send me my fees and again promised to send money when Mr. Hussain Ibrahim went from here. Hence it was that I gave instructions to debit the amount to your account. It makes little difference to me to whose account the sum is debited, as I never file a suit against anybody. But for that very reason I invariably take the fees in advance from a person not known to me. Had it not been for your intervention, I would never have taken up the work without my fees. However, since you are unwilling, I shall not keep it in your account.

The store will be saved only if Hussain Ibrahim either comes here or sends the document duly signed from there, otherwise a single creditor will swallow it up. I shall prepare the document and send it if he sends me the fees. Please let me know where his goods are and whether a notice for sale has been issued.

Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati: Letter Book (1905): No. 281.

263. LORD SELBORNE AND THE INDIANS

In another column we print an interesting report of a presentation by the British Indians in the Transvaal to Lord Selborne. The text of the address,[1] suitably to the occasion, is colourless, but it shows that, in spite of the irritating circumstances that surround British Indians, they do not forget their inherent courtesy, and they showed this by their welcome to His Majesty's representative in South Africa. It is a pity that the address was not presented, as it should have been, publicly, but evidently there was no mistake made by the Indians.

[1] *Vide* "Address to Lord Selborne", May 28, 1905.

They seem to have made preparations long ago, and to have faithfully carried out the requirements of the private secretary to His Excellency. Although the receptions given to Lord Selborne were non-political, we notice that the Mayors both at Pretoria and Johannesburg could not refrain from alluding to the Indian question. Opinion would be divided as to the appropriateness of bringing the question thus early to the notice of Lord Selborne. The Mayor of Johannesburg, Mr. George Goch, who is otherwise a most liberal-minded gentleman, and who has often taken up the cause of the Coloured races in South Africa, allowed himself, in reply to the toast on his health, to remark that the last despatch from Sir Arthur Lawley on the British Indian question, addressed to Mr. Lyttelton, showed the true position, and that the community owed him much

> for lifting up that question on a plane which was far above that which any of them could conceive, and has given a basis in that despatch for the settlement of a most intricate and most difficult question in the new legislature, which by and by they would have under his guidance.

Now we have shown, conclusively we think, how that despatch is full of inaccuracies and sentiments hardly creditable to a British statesman. We have a very high regard for Sir Arthur Lawley. We believe him to be actuated by excellent motives; but we regret to have to say that he has been entirely misled on this question, and has been over-mastered by the prevailing prejudice to which he has succumbed. He has not hesitated to advise the Colonial Secretary to break the oft-repeated promises of the British Government, and has no doubt unconsciously misquoted facts in support of such dangerous advice. The strength of the British Government lies very largely in its rectitude and in its scrupulous observance of promises. It is true that, on many an occasion, there has been a departure from it, and on each such occasion, British prestige has suffered. No statesman recalls such departures with pride, but either glosses them over, or offers to explain them away, thus indirectly showing the British statesmen do not intend to fall away from the high standard. It is, therefore, a disquieting sign to find a gentleman of Mr. George Goch's standing ranging himself on the side of those who favour a policy which is calculated to revolutionise British methods. It nevertheless shows the temper of the Transvaal community on the British Indian question, and practical politicians have to take note of that feeling.

Indian Opinion, 10-6-1905

264. THE CHINESE AND THE KAFFIRS—A COMPARISON

A good deal of discussion is still going on in England regarding the employment of the Chinese in the Johannesburg mines. To pacify the minds of the people in the matter, Lord Milner had, before leaving South Africa, sent some communication to England, which has now been published. Lord Milner states therein that the *per capita* expenditure of recruiting and bringing the Kaffirs to Johannesburg has been £10-15-0 during the last three years, while the cost of getting the Chinese is £16-11-3 per head. From this, Lord Milner wants to suggest that the miners do not stand to gain in recruiting the Chinese. Moreover, the cost of maintaining the Chinese in Johannesburg is greater than that of maintaining the Kaffirs. For, while a Kaffir costs $5\frac{3}{4}$ d. per day, a Chinese costs 11d. Lord Milner, therefore, concludes that, if the Kaffirs can be had in sufficient numbers, the miners would leave the Chinese alone. But 30,980 Chinese have already entered the Transvaal.

In all this computation, Lord Milner has overlooked one fact, viz., that, while the Kaffir hardly works for six months, the Chinese have to do so continuously for three years. Moreover, the Chinese being more active than the Kaffirs, much more work can be taken from them than from the latter. This is a very important point, but His Lordship utters not a word about it. Unless this is taken into account, Lord Milner's figures are of no use whatever. Were it not so, those who pay a higher salary to the more efficient make, according to Lord Milner, a mistake. We, therefore, feel that Lord Milner's communication is not likely to have much effect in England.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 10-6-1905

265. JAPAN AND RUSSIA

Japan's star seems to be in the ascendant. She stormed the Fort of Port Arthur, captured Mukden and has done other deeds of valour. But all these pale into insignificance before her latest exploit. Not only did she defeat the great Russian fleet, but wounded its great Admiral and did not leave intact a single Russian man-of-war. No one ever imagined that Japan was capable of such bravery. Many had thought that Japan would find herself in a difficult situation once the

Russian fleet reached Singapore. It was also known that the Japanese Navy was not very strong, that is to say, it had fewer battleships than Russia. But in scouting and watchfulness, Japan surpassed all the others. Admiral Togo's spies were very accurate in their intelligence, and he pounced upon the Russian fleet just when it was most vulnerable. This was no ordinary deed of daring. Such courage is incomparable; but we consider supreme the patience and the cool composure shown by Admiral Togo in achieving his objective. Nothing was done with a view to winning honours or showing off their bravery to the world. Togo had only one objective, viz., to strike at Russia at the opportune moment and at the strategic place. That he has done; and Russia, which only two years ago was considered to be almost invincible, has now very nearly fallen into the hands of Japan. It is said that history has nothing which can bear comparison with this naval battle. England won a great [naval] victory in the sixteenth century. The "invincible" Spanish Armada was then destroyed in the English Channel, and the British Admiral was triumphant. That too has been considered a very fierce battle; but the Heavens then came to the succour of England. The Spanish Armada was very large, and the Channel narrow. And just as the battle was raging, a strong wind began to blow, which the Armada could not withstand, while it proved favourable to the English fleet.

In the nineteenth century, Nelson scored a great victory off the Cape[1] of Trafalgar and the British Navy won for itself a pre-eminent position; but the powerful steamers we see today did not then exist nor the dangerous weapons of the present age.

Japan did not receive any unexpected help. She had only the firm determination to win, and this determination has proved her true ally. In this war Japan has not known defeat.

What, then, is the secret off this epic heroism? We have repeatedly to ask ourselves this question and find an answer for it. The answer is: unity, patriotism and the resolve to do or die. All the Japanese are animated by the same spirit. No one is considered greater than the other, and there is no rift of any kind between them. They think of nothing else but service to the nation. They have so identified themselves with their motherland that they consider themselves prosperous [only] if they bring prosperity to the country in which they are born, bred, and destined to pass their lives; that, if the country

[1] The original has "in the Strait of Trafalgar".

rose, they rose; if she enjoyed political power, they were partners in that power. Such is their patriotism. This unity and patriotic spirit together with a heroic indifference to life [or death] have created an atmosphere in Japan the like of which is nowhere else to be found in the world. Of death, they do not entertain any fear. To die in the service of their country, they have always regarded as wholly good. If, after all, one has to die some day, what does it matter if one dies on the battle-field? There is no certainty that, if one stays home and does not go to the front, one will live longer. And even if one did live very long, what was the good of living as a subjugated people? Reasoning along these lines, the Japanese have become defiant of death. What wonder, then, that those, who thus sacrifice their flesh, blood and bones, should prove invincible on the battle-field?

But how will these thoughts avail us? What have we to learn from them? We do not find the requisite unity even in the minor struggle we are carrying on in South Africa; splits occur every day. Instead of patriotism, we see more of selfishness everywhere. "If only I am saved, it does not matter if the others perish," is the thought constantly on our mind. Our life is so dear to us that we pass away while we are still fondling it. If we do not achieve good in this world, what hope is there of achieving it in the next? This is the condition most of us are in. Our reading this account of the Japanese War will have been fruitful only if we emulate to some extent at least the example of Japan. We shall gain nothing by mere reading just as parrots do not attain to Heaven by repeating the name of Rama.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 10-6-1905

266. SPEECH AT NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS MEETING

The following is a report of Gandhiji's speech at a meeting of the Natal Indian Congress held at Durban under the chairmanship of Haji Mahomed Haji Dada:

June 16, 1905

Mr. Gandhi said: I would advise the members of the Congress to authorise the Secretaries to incur expenditure on the Hoondamal Licence Case, as it is a very strong one; if we do not put up a fight, we shall have to regret it later. We should also send money to help Mr. Madanjit, who is carrying on a commendable agitation on our behalf in India.

It appears some people have misconstrued the speeches I delivered at Johannesburg[1]. I had no intention in those speeches to hurt the susceptibilities of the Mahomedans. We should not discriminate between Hindus and Mahomedans. We know very well what the Japanese have been able to achieve through unity and accord. Though we profess different religions, we should regard ourselves as one in the matter of public work.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-7-1905

267. MEASURES TO ERADICATE PLAGUE IN INDIA

Dr. Turner of Bombay has addressed a long letter to the Government of that Presidency, stating that plague was on the increase from year to year and that the only way to eradicate it was for the people to have themselves inoculated. The Doctor believes that those who are inoculated rarely suffer an attack of the plague. But the great problem is how to persuade people to get themselves inoculated. Dr. Turner says that it is not possible to compel people to do so. It would be indeed very good, if the employers compelled their workers, but that takes time, so that will not do either. Finally Dr. Turner suggests that the Government should insure the life of the inoculated person, and endorse a document to the effect that, if the person dies within a year of the inoculation, they would pay his relatives Rs. 100. The Doctor hopes that this will induce many persons to undergo inoculation. Another doctor suggests instituting a lottery for those who get themselves inoculated. Chits bearing the names of the inoculated should be prepared, lots drawn, and prizes awarded to winners. Thus are these good men struggling in vain to eradicate the plague.

It is possible that some men may be able to save themselves through inoculation. But we see no advantage in this. This remedy of inoculation is just like the means adopted by men, given to the pursuit of pleasure, to escape the consequences of their indulgence. Inoculation does not extirpate the causes of the plague and unless these are removed, no real benefit can accrue. If, by chance, one does get rid of plague, another disease will appear in its place. Just as a tree is not destroyed unless its roots are pulled out, so also the plague will not disappear unless its causes are removed. It is necessary to bring about

[1] *Vide* "Hinduism", March 4 and 11, and "Lectures on Religion", April 15, 1905.

an improvement in the sanitary habits, morality and the economic condition of the people. I believe that we commit sin by not observing the rules of sanitation. Our moral standard is low, for we neglect our duties. Added to this, there is poverty which brings many miseries in its train. He will be considered a true alleviator of India's ills, who can think out a remedy for this, and, having discovered it, puts it into practice. Only after these essential remedial steps have been taken will it be proper for us to take other measures to supplement them.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 17-6-1905

268. INDIA'S MILITARY AID TO ENGLAND

From the figures published in the journal, *India*, relating to the military aid England receives from India, we learn that a troop of 8,215 soldiers had come to South Africa in 1899; a platoon of 14,371 men was sent out to China, when the Boxer Rebellion broke out in that country; and 3,376 Indian soldiers were sent to Somaliland. These figures are exclusive of those who are stationed in Tibet as also those posted to guard the North-west Frontier.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 17-6-1905

269. MR. GANDHI REPLIES[1]

All I have to say in connection with the above letter is that I am not aware if the facts stated in history books are incorrect. I shall be glad to correct my mistakes, if any. The facts I have in stated are to be found in *The Encyclopedia Britannica*, Hunter's *History of India* and other books. However, the fact whether I am right or wrong need not be emphasised, but the aim with which I presented the facts should be

[1] After "Mr. Gandhi's Comments", 3-6-1905, was published in *Indian Opinion*, the Editor received a letter protesting against it from "A Follower of Islam", who said: "The statement that the lower classes of Hindus had been converted to Islam is not supported by any Urdu or Gujarati books on Indian history. However, if any such thoughts are found in some wretched books of history, they must have been only the figments of Hindu imagination . . . . Will Mr. Gandhi be pleased to give the name of the history whence he has learnt such serious things?" This is Gandhiji's reply.

taken into consideration. And if I have presented the historical facts with the intention of doing good, nobody should take offence.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 17-6-1905

270. LETTER TO LAW SOCIETY

[JOHANNESBURG,]
June 22, 1905

TO
THE SECRETARY
INCORPORATED LAW SOCIETY
CAPE TOWN

SIR,

I intrusted [*sic*] Mr. E. A. Walters[1] of Windsorton, Law Agent, with the collection of an amount due to a client in Johannesburg by a resident of that place or district.

Mr. Walters, so the debtor writes to me, has been paid the full amount due by him, but he has only sent me a part of the debt, and has ignored letters written by me to him during the last twelve months. This matter was placed in his hands about the month of February 1904. In my last letter to him, which I wrote on the 25th May 1905, I informed him that I should bring his action to the notice of your Society if he ignored my communications. Unfortunately, I have not heard from him in reply to that letter also.

I, therefore, bring this matter to your notice for such action as the Society may deem fit to take.

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Letter Book (1905): No. 393.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. A. Walters", May 25, 1905.

271. LETTER TO TOWN CLERK

[JOHANNESBURG,]
June 22, 1905

TO
THE TOWN CLERK
P. O. BOX 1049
JOHANNESBURG

SIR,

RE: THE RIGHT OF INDIANS TO TRAVEL IN THE MUNICIPAL TRAM-CARS

If the Tramway Committee has considered this matter, I shall thank you for a reply to my communications herein.

My client, who applied for the monthly pass, is very anxious to bring the matter to a head, and test his right, should the Committee decline to entertain his application favourably.

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Letter Book (1905): No. 397.

272. LETTER TO PARSEE RUSTOMJEE

[JOHANNESBURG,]
June 23, 1905

PARSEE RUSTOMJEE JIVANJI GHORKHODU, ESQ.
9TH KHETWADI LANE
BOMBAY

DEAR SHETH SHRI RUSTOMJEE JIVANJI GHORKHODU,

I went to your firm when I visited Durban last week. Omar Sheth, Kaikhushroo, Abdul Huk and I sat together and went over the accounts. The receipts from rent have diminished considerably. They have gone below £200 and will go down a little further. But that can't be helped. I met the lady running the Avon Hotel. She said that she would stay on only if the rent was reduced, and I have agreed to do so. In business, too, I do not see much substance. But since Abdul Huk is confident, Omar Sheth's advice is that some business should be

carried on. He has agreed to supervise it himself. I therefore do not see any harm in doing a little business.

I remember what you said about rent. But you should not be in a hurry. Rents are bound to decline in these difficult times; but there is no cause for alarm. Please finish your work there without any hurry. The need for building the house is quite evident; please therefore let there be no interruption in it.

There were no letters from you either here or at Durban. It is necessary to write to the firm at regular intervals.

Please write to me about your health.

Please give my respects to Maji. Get Jal and Sorab to write to me.

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 402.

273. LETTER TO JALBHAI SORABJI BROS.

[JOHANNESBURG,]
June 23, 1905

TO
MESSRS. JALBHAI SORABJI BROS.
110, FIELD STREET
DURBAN

DEAR SIRS,

I have your letter. I have gone through Mr. Laughton's account. I think nothing could be said against it professionally. With regard to the bill with reference to Latiwala, you may plead for a reduction seeing that Latiwala has disappeared. I approve of your action regarding the Avon Hotel. Please tell Chhaganlal what the £ 7/4/- are for, so that he may make the necessary entries in the books. With reference to the Umbilo Road property, if the tenant would not pay more than £6, you may reduce it accordingly.

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

Letter Book (1905): No. 405.

274. LETTER TO "THE STAR"[1]

[Prior to *June 24, 1905*]

[TO
THE EDITOR
The Star
JOHANNESBURG]

SIR,

I see that Mr. Loveday has again repeated his statement about the influx of Indians into the Colony, in total disregard of the evidence that he admits having seen after he first gave currency to those statements. Mr. Loveday thinks that the Permit Department does not keep out British Indians, and that non-refugees have been entering the Colony. In the face of the report of the Chief Secretary for Permits, one can only come to the conclusion that Mr. Loveday declines to believe the report. I can only say that even the British Indian refugees find it extremely hard to enter the Colony. I have before me a letter, addressed from the Permit Office to a British Indian, who applied some seven months ago for a permit asking him whether he still requires a permit. The poor refugee being friendless, after having waited months for making good his right as a refugee to enter the Transvaal, has gone back to India, and the letter has been sent to me by the gentleman whose address he gave. Nor is this a solitary instance. Whereas Europeans, whether they are refugees or not, obtain their permits for the asking, the Indian refugees, many of whom have paid the sum of £ 3 as the price of being allowed to remain in the country during the old regime, have to wait at least two months before they are admitted, and then, too, each applicant has to go through a number of formalities and a good deal of expense before he can enter the Colony. He must call at the Permit Offices in the coast towns for an application form. He has to get it filled in, for which, as a rule, he pays a fee. On receipt by the Permit Office in Johannesburg, letters are sent down to those whose names have been given as references. These letters have to make affidavits on which a half-crown stamp has to be affixed. If the evidence produced as to previous residence is considered satisfactory, a notification is sent to the applicant authorising him to enter the Colony. Nor is this all. He must then proceed to

[1] This was reproduced in *Indian Opinion* under the caption "Refutation of Mr. Loveday's Inaccuracies".

Johannesburg, call at the Permit Office and submit himself for cross-examination, and if he satisfies the examining officer, he receives a permanent authority to stay in the Colony. I know cases in which many have been sent back because they were not able to satisfy the examining officer that they were refugees. If, therefore, any one could possibly complain against the Permit Department, it would be the British Indians; and they do not belong to the criminal class mentioned by Mr. Hosken. Mr. Loveday has once again brought up the statistics published by the Mayor of Pietersburg, and yet the Mayor of Pieters-burg has not taken up the challenge of the British Indian Association, although it was he who provoked it. I venture to quote from the letter addressed to you by the Chairman of the British Indian Association on the 9th December.

> I deny that there are at present 49 Indian traders in Pietersburg. There are only 28 stores owned by Indians within the township, as distinguished from the Location, and of these some are held by the same Indians. Within the township before war, there were at least 23 Indian stores.

The names of all these store-keepers have been given in the same letter. This statement has never been disproved, but Mr. Loveday says the Asiatic Traders' Commission report that there was only one Indian trader in Pietersburg without a licence before war. This is misleading. I have before me the full report of the Asiatic Traders' Commission. In the first place, it is an interim report. In the second place, the Com-missioners do not pretend to have ascertained the number of Indians who were trading without licences. All that the Commissioners have done is to mention the respective claims placed before them, and they state that there was only one British Indian claim for Pietersburg. They had in all only 233 claims presented to them. That surely does not exhaust the list of Asiatic traders before war. The newspapers also published the information that the British Indian claims were all with-drawn after the ruling that the Commissioners gave as to their autho-rity, and that the British Indians ceased to participate in their delibera- tions. The Commissioners add that their work was interrupted by the decision of the Supreme Court in the now famous test case about the right of a British Indian to trade freely in the Colony. Knowing, as he must have done, all these facts in connection with the report, it is stra-nge that a responsible politician like Mr. Loveday should allow him-self thus to mislead the public by making a statement which cannot be proved. I admit that the Indian population in the Location at Pretoria has increased. Probably, it has increased also in Pietersburg and Potchefstroom. Will he also take note of the fact that the Location in Johannesburg has been wiped out;

that there are not at present half the number of the British Indians who used to occupy the old Location; and that, during the last three months, not less than 300 Indians have left Johannesburg? According to the statistics placed before Mr. Conyngham Greene, there were in the Transvaal before the war 15,000 Indians. Not more than 12,000 permits have been issued to them by the Permit Department, and as the number of Indians leaving the Colony is greater than the number that is allowed to enter the Colony, I venture to submit that there are at present in the Colony less than 12,000 Indians. Mr. Loveday adds that indentured Indians of Natal, who have just become free, have gone to Potchefstroom and established themselves, a fact which is resented by the Indians them-selves in Potchefstroom. Will the honourable gentleman condescend to give the names of the Indians who have thus entered the Colony? He would certainly then be rendering a great service to his consti-tuents, the anti-Asiatic vigilants. Will he also be pleased to give the names of the Indians who have stated that they are being inundated by Indians from Natal, and if he cannot, will he have the grace to with-draw the serious statements he has made?

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 24-6-1905

275. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

[Prior to *June 24, 1905*]

[TO
THE HONOURABLE DADABHAI NAOROJI
22 KENNINGTON ROAD
LONDON, S. E.

SIR,]

I send herewith copy of *Indian Opinion*. The leading article shows to what extent it has now become possible under Law 3 of 1885 for the Indians to own land. The Supreme Court decision practically leaves them free, so long as they can get a European friend to become a trustee, to own fixed property. I draw your attention to the fact so that, in any legislation that may be drafted there, it may not be taken for granted that, under Law 3 of 1885, it is impossible for the Indians to own property.

From what has been going on here, it appears that the new legislation to replace Law 3 of 1885 will be as much as possible on the lines of Law 3 of 1885, that is to say, it is not the intention of the Government here to give any greater rights that [those] enjoyed under Law 3 of 1885. Just as, therefore, Mr. Lyttelton has taken up the stand,

saying that he would not, in view of the Supreme Court decision, consent to restrict the trading rights of the Indians, so also should he now refuse to sanction any legislation which would restrict an Indian's rights to own landed property.

The anti-Indian legislation that is at present being considered by the Natal Parliament is dangerously symptomatic. Almost every *Gazette* contains something about it. Indians are to be brought under the Native Department regarding the holding of fire-arms.

Their occupation of rural land, unless they are owners, is not to be accepted as such for the purpose of levying a land tax.

The Durban Town Council is asking for powers to impose licences on store-holders and bring them within the Dealers' Licenses Act.

The Municipal Corporations Consolidated Law is intended to deprive the Indian of the municipal franchise.

The latest Bills published in the Natal *Government Gazette* are intended to bring within the Dealers' Licenses Act Native Eating House-keepers, and to restrict the scope of Hawkers' Licenses to the magisterial divisions within which they have been issued (hitherto a licence to hawk outside municipal boundaries entitled the holder to hawk throughout the Colony excepting the municipal areas).

All this legislation is unnecessary and insulting. I, therefore, venture to think that, as stated by Lord Curzon in his Budget speech, it is time that the next step was taken, namely, to suspend indentured Indian immigration to Natal, unless the Natal Government would cease their anti-Indian activity and amend, at any rate, the Dealers' Licenses Act so as to give the aggrieved party the right to appeal to the Supreme Court.

Colonial Office Records: 417, Volume 414, India Office.

276 CORRUPTION DURING WAR TIME

It is true that patriotic fervour surges in everyone's breast during times of war. This fervour is very beneficial. Many a patriot has, under the stimulus of zeal, performed, with only a small army, feats that have astounded the world. While, on the one hand, some people abound with such enthusiasm, hundreds, thousands, nay, lakhs, of lives have, on the other, been lost, ruined or reduced to a state of dependence, through the doings of some selfish people who took advantage of the inability of officials to exercise sufficient control during war. Taking advantage of the chaos, normal persons have added to the prevailing disorder by committing, during war, misdeeds which they will not think of at other times. It seems that the rules of honesty and good conduct are entirely forgotten during times of war. The viola-

tion of these rules is more in evidence during a bigger war than a smaller one. For it is said that it is during a crisis that a man's character is put to the test. It cannot be claimed that he has been put to the test until he has had the chance successfully of committing a crime but remains steadfast in spite of the opportunity. Such steadfastness at a critical time may be found in a handful of men. It is indeed all too rare.

The bigger the war, the bigger the extent of chaos. The fraud and trickery, that were exposed during the Crimean War[1], and other sundry happenings that have later come to light, are most distressing. During that war, a large stock of boots was purchased and despatched to the front for the use of soldiers, but they all were found to be for the left foot! A large quantity of foodstuff for the army was sent from England; but when it was consumed, instead of helping to feed the army, it proved deleterious being very rotten meat. It was not only merchants who wanted to become millionaires, but even the generals on the front, the politicians who were out to sacrifice a large number of precious lives, and leaders who called themselves benefactors of the state, committed fraud. Large stock of useful medicines sent out for soldiers and officers on their deathbed disappeared mysteriously before reaching the hospitals for which they were bound, and not a trace of them was found. Merchants, the so-called patriotic generals and high Government officials thus went on misappropriating hundreds of useful and valuable articles to fill their pockets at the expense of hundreds of poor soldiers who had gone to the front to fight for their country, leaving their homes and hearths. When a news correspondent sent a full account of this, describing the condition of the army encamped at Sebastapol, the whole nation was so enraged that the ministry in power had to resign. In addition to this, there was a long list of oppressive tyrannies. But all these are insignificant incidents compared to those of the last Boer War. A scrutiny of how contracts, for the supply of provisions, uniforms, etc., to the army, were given and executed during that was has revealed how public money was utterly wasted. This was due solely to the misconduct of the autocratic officials. Contracts were blindly given by the departments concerned to contractors who were their favourites or were known to them and who made a profit of 50 to 500 per cent on some of the goods

[1] Between Russia and the allied powers, viz., Turkey, England, France and Sardinia (1853-1856).

supplied. Such corruption was not confined to Great Britain alone. The defeat France sustained in 1879 was due to its officers who had become slaves of mammon. For, at the time of that war, the French Government had kept every necessary article ready. Millions and billions had been spent on these arrangements at the very start, but all that expenditure was incurred secretly. All these things was purchased and stored—on paper only. Although money was spent like water, articles of even ordinary military use ran short at the very outset of the war. The reports of the present Russo-Japanese War, too, are astounding. Last April, a million roubles were given to Duke of Sergius to be spent on feeding and clothing the army in Manchuria. This stock was despatched to Manchuria in the month of May; but, instead of reaching there, it got transported directly from Moscow to Danzig, and from thence, goods worth thousands of pounds were sold for a song in Germany. Large sums of money were raised through subscriptions for the benefit of the widows of men and officers killed in the war; but not a farthing of that money reached the poor widows. The bags of suger despatched to the battle-field were found to contain sand instead of sugar! No trace could be found of millions of roubles that disappeared during the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway. But this is not all. Innumerable examples have been recorded of the corruption and bribery practised in Russia.

The conduct of the Japanese affords a marked contrast to all this. No merchant or officer in Japan has entertained any thought of exploiting the war situation, with the result that the Japanese army can secure its needs at a very small cost. The report of the Butler Commission on the war in South Africa, which has been published, tells us that the irregularities and corruption that prevailed during that war were in no way less [considerable] than in Russia. The way public money has been spent is very much to be deplored. A major part of this waste was due to incompetent officers, who were inexperienced and untrained. The Commission recommends that the officers deserve to be censured for such serious lapses. The country's wealth that was collected through heavy taxation was abused without limit, and the officers supposed to be responsible for it connived at it. This has cast a slur on the British administration, which has so for enjoyed a reputation for justice and integrity in public affairs. There was no limit to the chaos, corruption and dishonesty rampant at the time. The report of the

Commission, it is expected, will open the eyes of the Government, who will do whatever is still possible in the matter.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 24-6-1905

277. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

21-24, COURT CHAMBERS,
CORNER, RISSIK & ANDERSON STREETS,
P. O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
June 26, 1905

TO
HON. PROFESSOR GOKHALE, C.I.E.
84 & 85, PALACE CHAMBERS
WESTMINSTER

DEAR PROFESSOR GOKHALE,

By this time you must be deeply engaged in your mission in England. I have no doubt that you will have a corner in your heart for the British Indians in South Africa. Is it possible for you, on your return to India, to pass through South Africa? If you could do so, and if you would kindly let me have previous notice, suitable arrangements would be made for your stay in the different parts of the country. I suggest your giving one month to South Africa. If you could come, the expenses of your tour in South Africa would be borne by the community. You could land in Cape Town, pass through Kimberley, Bloemfontein, Johannesburg and Pretoria; go to Natal and see Durban, Pietermaritzburg, thence to Delagoa Bay, and thence either by the East Coast visiting Mosambique, Zanzibar, Lamu and Mombasa, or go via Ceylon and take in Mauritius on your way.

I remain,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original: G.N. 4105.

278. LETTER TO CAMROODEEN & CO.

[JOHANNESBURG,]
June 26, 1905

MESSRS. M. C. CAMROODEEN & CO.
P. O. BOX 126
DURBAN

DEAR SIRS,

I was exceedingly sorry to learn of the death of Mr. Dawnak. Will you please convey to his parents my sympathy in their loss? I cannot realise the fact. Together with your letter, I have before me a letter from him telling me how nicely he was getting on.

It will be far more convenient that Mr. Abdul Gani should accompany me when I go there for Dada Abdoola's affairs.

Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

Letter Book (1905): No. 433

279. LETTER TO ABDUL HUK AND KAIKHUSHROO

[JOHANNESBURG,]
June 27, 1905

MESSRS ABDUL HUK AND KAIKHUSHROO

MY DEAR SHRI ABDUL HUK AND KAIKHUSHROO,

There is a complaint against you both that you spend most of your time on Sundays playing cards, that you are not courteous to your customers and do not take sufficient care of your master's business. I do not believe much of this. If you are fond of playing cards, I personally do not wish to prohibit you. I believe you do your master's work carefully. I cannot persuade myself to believe that you are not courteous. Nevertheless, I consider it proper to convey to you what has come to my ears rather than keep it to myself. If you are really playing cards, I would suggest that it is better to utilise your leisure going outdoors or adding to your knowledge by reading good books. If, however, you must play cards, do so for a short while only. You know Rustomjee Sheth's nature. He does not like playing cards

at all. It will be a nice thing if you give up cards altogether, if only in deference to his wishes.

Do not speculate at all as to who has given me this information. Also do not be angry with any one for it. But, instead, take it that whosoever has given it has done so with the intention of doing good and reform yourself if there be any drawbacks, or do not worry, confident that you are already doing your duty in regard to such complaints against you.

There is again a letter from Mr. Nuruddin. I think it proper to return the note if there is no claim left on it.

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 449.

280. LETTER TO "THE STAR"

JOHANNESBURG,

June 27, 1905

TO
THE EDITOR
The Star

SIR,

I trush you will allow me to trespass on your courtesy to enable me to reply to certain statements made by your correspondent at Potchefstroom with reference to a letter I wrote to you on Mr. Loveday's statements at the Inter-Colonial Council meeting. Your correspondent states that I "regretted the continued stream of Indians, particularly those of the lower class". I am not aware of having ever expressed any such regret for the simple reason that I have never believed in a continued stream of Indians pouring into Potchefstroom or elsewhere. I speak with certain knowledge when I deny any such influx at all. That there has been some increase in the number of Indian traders in Potchefstroom, as well as in other places, is not to be denied, but the increase in the number of white traders is out of all proportion to the increase in the number of Indian traders. In your leaderette on the Krugersdrop meeting, you say that "Pietersburg has undoubtedly been one of the favourite places to which the Asiatic traders have gravitated of late". This has been shown to be wrong. The fact is that

Pietersburg had a fair proportion of Indian traders before the war but there has been no great influx since.

In this connection, may I say that the British Indian community in the Transvaal has never received sufficient credit for the spirit of conciliation and compromise it has throughout shown. Whilst all kinds of impossible remedies are being suggested, the only two infallible tests proposed by the British Indian Association still remain untried. In order to prevent any possibility of the Indians "invading" the country, an Immigration Restrictions Act on the Cape model has been suggested. The Act has been tried not only there, but in Australia, Natal and elsewhere, and has not been found wanting. It is useless to say that there cannot be strict watch on the border. Natal has succeeded in keeping that watch. Many an Indian has found out to his cost that he cannot enter Natal territories through Charlestown or any other inland stations, unless he can prove that he is entitled to enter the Colony under the Immigration Act. To prove that the Indians do not in any way mean to usurp the European trade, they accept municipal control over the licences, in such a manner that any Municipality will have the power either to refuse or to grant a licence to trade, subject in extreme cases to revision by the Supreme Court. It is true that such legislation will not be class legislation, and will be of general application. Does it, however, matter? It can be passed without any bother, if all parties agree upon the main principles, and it will set at rest the unhealthy agitation against the Asiatics that springs up in the Colony from time to time, and settle the minds of the Indians. There is no finality to any legislation under a progressive Government. If, therefore, the two measures above mentioned are, in practice, found not to answer, it will be time to consider what more is necessary.`

The Indians need not accept any such compromise, especially in view of Mr. Lyttelton's emphatic declaration that nothing that they enjoyed before the war would be taken away from them. They certainly enjoyed the rights of free immigration and free trading, and it is exactly [on] these two points that they have offered the above compromise; if only the very un-British Law 3 of 1885, and other harsh and needless regulations, which have nothing to do with the economic conditions, be removed from the Statute-book. Mr. Brodrick has only lately stated that British trade with India is greater than that with Australia, Canada and South Africa put together, and that, therefore, Imperially considered, India occupies a place second only to Great Britain. Will the Colonists continue to subject the inhabitants of that country to constant pin-pricks?

We are told that the Chinese guilds have been successful in bending the American Government. Lord Curzon has already talked

of retaliation. It is not possible, then, to realise what India could do if retaliation were seriously taken up? China and America are not under the same flag, whereas South Africa and India are. Would it not be a calamity if there arise permanent estrangement between the local Governments in South Africa and the Indian Government, and if Lord Curzon carries out his threat deliberately uttered in the Imperial Legislative Council at Calcutta? Some such thing is inevitable unless the Colonists see the sweet reasonableness of the compromise above offered.

I am, etc.,
M. K.GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 8-7-1905

281. LETTER TO "THE RAND DAILY MAIL"

[JOHANNESBURG,]
June 28, 1905

TO
THE EDITOR
The Rand Daily Mail

SIR,

Perhaps you will allow me to make a few remarks on your leading article in the *Daily Mail* of the 26th instant anent the Krugersdorp anti-Asiatic meeting.

After admitting that pledges were given before the war by the Home Government regarding the British Indians, you go on to advise them that "they must admit that their competition has driven out many white traders". With all due respect, I venture to think that you are advising the Indian community to admit what does not exist. There has not yet been given, at any of these meetings, one authentic instance of the white trader having been driven out by Indian competition. This can only be proved by the appointment of a commission to investigate the charge. In the meanwhile, the presumption is wholly in favour of the Indian contention that Indian competition has not "ruined white trade", or "driven out" any such traders. In the Transvaal itself, as well before the war as now, the white traders have held their own. At the Cape, in spite of the greatest freedom of trade granted to Asiatics, the white trader is largely predominant. In Natal, where there is the largest Indian population, Sir James Hullett only the other day said, in his evidence on oath, that the Indian traders had not seriously affected the white traders. I submit that this competition has been quite healthy, in that it has kept down the prices of the necessaries of

life. I am free to admit that the Indian scores by his simplicity of life, but this is more than counterbalanced by the white trader's knowledge of the English language his superior organising ability, and better facilities for making connections with wholesale houses in Europe.

But, Sir, the Indians are prepared to concede all that can reasonably be expected of them, without having to make the admission you advise them to make. They are prepared, in place of Law 3 of 1885 and other unnecessarily stringent regulations, to accept municipal control over the licences in general, whereby the local bodies will have the right either to grant or to refuse licences, subject, in special cases, to revision by the Supreme Court.

Their trading rights are the greatest cause of irritation, and this can be allayed without the slightest difficulty, and without loss of time, by accepting the compromise above suggested.

You seem to think that the Indians now here "have certain moral claims which will have to be dealt with by fresh legislation". This is not in accord with facts. They have a moral claim, certainly, to be placed on an equality with the Europeans, so far as the rights of trade, ownership of property and locomotion are concerned, but they have, today, a legal right to trade and live where they like, as has been laid down by the Supreme Court, and it is not capable of being restrictively dealt with by fresh legislation, as has been said, both by Mr. Lyttelton and Mr. Brodrick; and yet, in order to conciliate public opinion, the Indian community is prepared to accept a restriction on trade, on general and non-racial lines, under the proviso above mentioned.

Yours, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 8-7-1905

282. LETTER TO M. H. NAZAR

[JOHANNESBURG,]
June 29, 1905

TO
M. H. NAZAR, ESQ.
P. O. BOX 182
DURBAN

DEAR MR. NAZAR,

I enclose herewith draft for £108 with statement showing what it covers. I epitomize as following:

Doman	£ 29–17–0
Subhav	22–18–0
T. Maharaj	5–18–6
Vangad Samy	16– 7–0
Dubri	33– 0–0
Total	£ 108– 0–6

The other claims have not yet been received. Suramsamy's Power of Attorney I have not yet been able to trace, nor Verasamy's. Vandithumu's Power of Attorney has been sent to the Commission, but they are not able to trace this claim. Can you say how much the man received before, and then, if you could, I should be able to secure that claim.

I notice in the Natal *Government Gazette* received to-day a Bill to amend the Immigration Act of 1903. This ought to appear in this week's *Opinion*, but I am afraid that it will not. I think that it is your clear duty to see the *Gazette* the day it is received by you, and send anything that may be therein of importance to Phoenix. It does not look at all nice that Natal matters should appear a fortnight after they happen. Have you also borne it in mind that we have to send a memorial to the [Colonial[1]] Secretary as soon as the several Bills, about which we [have] petitioned, become Acts, or are accepted in their final [stages by] the Legislative Council? For that infor[mation I must rely] upon you entirely.

Yours sincerely.
M. K. GANDHI

2. Enclosure[2].

Letter Book (1905): No. 468.

[1] This and the subsequent words in square brackets are indistinct in the original office copy.
[2] Not available.

283. LETTER TO MAX NATHAN

[JOHANNESBURG,]
June 29, 1905

TO
MAX NATHAN, ESQ.
KEMPSEY BLDGS.
JOHANNESBURG

DEAR MR. NATHAN,

Re: Meer Allam & Leve

My clerk, Mr. Polak,[1] tells me that each time he has called on you regarding this matter, you have insulted him. This is painfully surprising as this would be the last thing I should expect from you. He came to you for a simple inquiry, and he tells me, in a rough tone you declined to see him or to give any information. Why so?

Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

Letter Book (1905): No. 470.

284. LETTER TO PARSEE RUSTOMJEE

[JOHANNESBURG,]
June 30, 1905

[TO]
RUSTOMJEE JIVANJEE, ESQ.
12 KHETVADI LANE
BOMBAY

DEAR SHETH PARSEE RUSTOMJEE,

Received your letter dated 20th May. I am returning herewith the two letters sent by you. I have written to Kaikhushroo and Abdul Huk[2] without mentioning your name or the writer's. It will take a day or two to receive their reply. You need not attach much importance to that letter. You will be able to judge better from the accounts and figures you receive. Please let me know if you find them defective. Anyway have no anxiety about the shop. Be at ease and complete the work you have begun.

[1] Henry S. Polak later became an intimate associate of Gandhiji and editor of *Indian Opinion vide* the *Autobiography* part IV, Chapter XVIII.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Kaikhushroo and Abdul Huk", June 27, 1905.

Let me know what steps you have taken in regard to the children's education.

I am glad to know that you have kept up your walks and baths. Perhaps you take the children also with you.

You have given a good report in the issue of the *Jame-Jamshed* you have sent me. The account given about me was not necessary. I can do public work better without getting publicity in this way. You know my thoughts on the subject.

A heavy bill[1] has been received from Mr. Laughton regarding Latiwala. I cannot intervene in that matter. I have, therefore, written to the store that they should see Mr. Laughton and plead for a reduction.

Give my respects to Maji. Let me know the names of people whom you have met.

2 Encl.

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): Nos. 481-82.

285. LETTER TO E. EBRAHIM AND CO.

[JOHANNESBURG,]
June 30, 1905

TO
MESSRS E. EBRAHIM & CO.
P. O. BOX 27
STANDERTON

DEAR SIRS,

Your letter to hand. *The panchas*[2] have charged no fees. I have not billed you for all the work I did for Mr. Ismail Kaji. But the fee of 30 guineas includes the charges for letters written in connection with making the settlement, the consultations held with you as well as with Mr. Kaji, the preparation of documents for presentation to the *panchas*, the presentation of the case before the *panchas* and the work done later for the *panchas*. I have not debited the fees for all these items separately but have charged the minimum amount I considered reasonable. Nevertheless, should you so desire, I shall prepare a detailed bill and send it to you. I cannot say what it will come to, because

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jalbhai Sorabji Bros", June 23, 1905.
[2] Arbitrators.

the 30 guineas I have charged have been debited at one time.

The cost of engaging a lawyer on your behalf cannot be recovered, as his work did not concern the arbitration. You may ask for further clarification, if you like.

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 488

286. LETTER TO HAJI HABIB

[JOHANNESBURG,]
June 30, 1905

TO
HAJI HABIB, ESQ.
P. O. BOX 57
PRETORIA

DEAR SHETH HAJI HABIB,

I forgot to reply to you in connection with Ismail Amod. What can be done until Mr. Lang agrees to the matter regarding him? I have told him that I shall write to him when something definite emerges. I think you need not be in a hurry about it. If a bond is found to be immediately necessary, you can get it prepared without producing the promissory note.

An insurance man will insure the property. He will send his agent to inspect the building and will insure it only if it is passed by the latter, not otherwise. We shall have to bear the travelling expenses, to and fro, of the agent sent by him.

I shall be grateful if you will send me some money against my bill. I am badly in need. I shall be thankful if you can get Mr. Habib Motan, too, to send some. All my money has gone to Phoenix and is still going there.

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati signed by Gandhiji: Letter Book (1905): No. 492.

287. NATAL LEGISLATION

There are four Bills published in the Natal *Government Gazette Extraordinary*, dated the 21st June, all of which are more or less

objectionable. The first is to amend the laws relating to liquor licences and other licences in their application to the province of Zulu land. In this Bill, which is very largely aimed at British Indians, a hawker is to be called upon to take out a licence from month to month, and this applies even to hawkers in goods not imported, although for the latter there is no licensing fee required. The fee for a hawker's licence to trade in imported goods is to be £l per month. Moreover, licences under Act 18 of 1897 are not to be granted unless with the approval of the Colonial Secretary, whose decision is to be absolutely final, and "from whose decision there shall be no appeal to any court of law or authority".

Another Bill dealing with British Indians is the one to impose a tax upon unoccupied rural lands. This is a reproduction of the Bill with which we have already dealt[1] and in which land is to be deemed unoccupied unless the owner or some European has continuously resided thereon for at least nine of the twelve months reckoned from January to December in each year.

The third Bill is the one to provide for the licensing of private Locations. A private Location is defined therein to mean "any number of huts or dwellings occupied by Natives or Asiatics on any private lands or any piece of Crown land in process of alienation". Thus, by a stroke of the pen, every piece of ground which may be occupied by Indians is to be turned into a private Location, and the landlord of the place on which the private Location is established is to take out a licence in respect of which he has to pay 10/-[2] per year per hut or dwelling. Licence fee is not to be paid in respect of any huts occupied by Asiatics or Native employees. The net result of this would be that every room occupied by an Indian, unless he is the owner or in the employ of the owner, shall be liable to an annual tax of 10/-, to say nothing of the insult which is implied in calling the Asiatics' habitations "Locations".

The fourth Bill is to impose a tax on occupied dwelling-houses. This is of general application, and probably the framers of the Bill had not in their minds British Indians at all; but in the end the Bill will tell far more heavily against Indians than any other class of the community. The Bill contemplates the levy of a tax of £1-10 on every house valued at under £750. The tax rises to £20 for a dwelling-house

[1] *Vide* "Anti-Indian Legislation in Natal", 20-5-1905

[2] Shillings

exceeding £4,000 in value, and the word "dwelling-house" means a house or a part of a house used as a dwelling and including domesticservants' quarters, stables, out-buildings and other buildings forming the adjuncts of a dwelling-house, in so far as they serve the residential purposes of the house, and this tax has to be paid not by the owners, but by the occupier. Therefore, every occupier of a room even if it is worth only £50 will have to pay an annual tax of £ l-10. There are many rooms which are made of wood and iron for which, probably, only five shillings per month is paid. The Government proposes to add a monthly half-a-crown to such rental. To say the least of it, there should have been some free limit under which the tax should not be levied. As it is, the Bill is open to very serious objection. These Bills are a sample of the activity of the new ministry.[1] We feel constrained to say that the stamp of inexperience is to be seen on every one of them. Every true citizen must sympathise with the Government in their efforts to bring the Colony out of its difficult pecuniary position; but the means adopted by them to raise revenue are almost without precedent in modern times, except during war time, and are opposed to sound economic principles. We hope that, for the sake of the fair name and fame of the Colony, these Bills will receive short shrift at the hands of the Assembly and the Council.

Indian Opinion, 1-7-1905

288. MR. BRODRICK[2] AND BRITISH INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL

Sir Mancherji[3] has drawn from Mr. Brodrick an important reply on the status of British Indians in the Transvaal. The member for Bethnal Green pressed for some solution of the Indian question, and Mr. Brodrick has stated emphatically that nothing of what the Indians enjoyed before the war would be taken away from them; that every pressure that could be brought to bear on the Transvaal was being brought, but that it was difficult to interfere with a self-governing Colony dealing with the immigration of such people as it may consider to be undesirable. The first statement made by Mr. Brodrick

[1]Headed by C. J. Smythe.

[2]St. John Brodrick, Secretary of State for India, 1903-5

[3] Sir Mancherjee Merwanjee Bhownaggree (1851-1933). Indian Barrister settled in England; Member of Parliament and of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress.

can only mean that it is the intention of the Imperial Government to see that Indians are not deprived of such rights as they may have enjoyed during the Boer regime. Such intention is not at present being carried out. To take only one instance: there was no restriction on the immigration of British Indians. At present, as these columns have shown repeatedly, no new Indians are being allowed to enter Transvaal territory, and the old residents are only allowed to enter in small numbers, and after they have undergone tedious, inconvenient and expensive formalities. That pressure is being brought by the Imperial we know and appreciate. We question, however, whether the pressure is commensurate with the gravity of the situation. For the third statement made by the Right Honourable Gentleman gives rise to many a misgiving. It betrays a feeling of helplessness. The Transvaal is not yet a self-governing Colony,[1] but, by implication, Mr. Brodrick has considered it as such. Mr. Brodrick does not deny the promises referred to by Sir Mancherji; nor can it be denied that, when the promises were made, the responsible ministers knew what was coming. They knew that there was to be only one conclusion to the war, and that after the declaration of peace self-government was bound to come. It, therefore, means that the Home Government are now prepared, in their eagerness to conciliate the Transvaal European opinion, even to recede from their promises. It is apposite here to inquire why, so soon as peace was declared, the promises made to the Indians were not immediately fulfilled; also, why, even now, as suggested by Sir William Wedderburn[2], so long as the Transvaal has not received actual self-government, the Home Government do not repeal the old restrictions on the British Indians, and thus throw on the Council that would be elected, under complete self-government, the onus of repealing such legislation and proving the necessity for it.

About the same time that Mr. Brodrick made the above statement, in a different place, but still as Secretary of State for India, he informed his audience that India had the first claim on their consideration, next only to Great Britain itself, in that the trade of Great Britain with India was larger than that done with Canada, Australia and South Africa combined. Had the interests of British

[1]It became one in 1906.

[2]Distinguished member of the Indian Civil Service, later connected with the Indian National Congress.

Indians in the Transvaal been considered in such a spirit on the conclusion of war, when Lord Milner[1] put his pen through scores of old Transvaal Ordinances which were not consistent with British principles, he would not have hesitated to do likewise in connection with the anti-Indian legislation. Nor was it a matter of oversight; for immediately the country was opened up, British Indians approached Lord Milner for a cancellation of the anti-Indian laws. If that step had been taken, nothing would have been heard, probably, of anti Indian agitation to-day; nor, in our opinion, is it yet too late to put into practice the theory propounded by Mr. Brodrick.

Indian Opinion, 1-7-1905

289. LORD SELBORNE[2] AND SELF-GOVERNMENT

In view of what we have already said with reference to Mr. Brodrick's statement,[3] it is interesting to examine the definition of self-government given by Lord Selborne to a deputation that waited on him last week in the Orange River Colony, in order to request the grant of self-government to that Colony. His Excellency has thus defined that

> within the British Empire responsible government means, in strictly local affairs, absolute independence; it means absolute local independence so long as that independence does not encroach on the general harmony of the British Empire, or infringe any of those principles on which it is founded, or any of those imperial considerations which bind it together.

This is a definition worthy of a distinguished representative of the King Emperor, and it is in accord with the professions repeatedly made by the Imperial Colonial Secretaries. The question, then, is whether the disabilities which British Indians suffer in the Transvaal do not encroach on the general harmony of the British Empire, or infringe any of those Imperial considerations which bind it together. The question is self answered. Let us hope that His Excellency, when he is called upon to deal with the Indian question, will apply the definition given by him, and remove the present anomaly.

Indian Opinion, 1-7-1905

[1] Viscount Milner, High Commissioner for South Africa, 1897-1905, Governor of the Cape Colony, 1897-1901 and of the Transvaal, 1901-5

[2] High Commissioner in South Africa and Governor of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, 1905-10

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

290. DISCRIMINATION IN PUBLIC SERVICES

Lord Curzon[1] has frequently declared that, in making public appointments, he made no discrimination between the white and the Coloured. On one occasion, he burst out with vehemence saying that Indians had no reason to complain in the matter of appointments. Moreover, he published a statement with figures to prove that quite a number of appointments were given to Indians. But the statement was misleading, for he had cleverly included in it many Indians drawing a salary of Rs. 75. The Hon. Mr. Gokhale[2] has exposed this hollow pretence.[3] He has shown that those who receive high salaries are almost all Europeans and that all the newly created posts have gone to them.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-7-1905

291. MAXIM GORKY[4]

A comparison can be made, up to a point, between the people of Russia and our own. Just as we are poor, the Russian people are also poor. We have no voice in conducting the affairs of State and have to pay taxes without demur; the same is true of the Russians also. Seeing such oppression, some Russians do come out bravely against it from time to time. Some time ago, there was a rebellion in Russia and one of the chief participants was Maxim Gorky. This man was brought up in extreme poverty. At first he served as an apprentice to a shoe-maker, who discharged him. Afterwards he served as a soldier for some time. While in the army, he evinced a desire for education, but being poor could not get himself admitted to any good school. He then served under a lawyer and finally worked as a hawker at a baker's. All this time he continued educating himself through his own efforts. The very first book he wrote in 1892 was so excellent that he soon became famous. Thereafter, he wrote many things, all of them with a single purpose, viz., to stir up the people against the tyrannies they were labouring under, to warn the authorities and to render public service, in so far as this was possible. Without caring to make

[1]Viceroy and Governor-General of India, 1899-1905

[2]Gopal Krishna Gokhale, (1866-1915), Indian leader and politician; presided over the Indian National Congress session in 1905.

[3]In one of his budget speeches in the Imperial Legislative Council.

[4] (1868-1936), Russian novelist

money, he writes with such vehemence and bitterness that the authorities keep a stern eye on him. He has also been to jail in the service of the people and considers imprisonment an honour. It is said that there is no other writer in Europe who is as great a champion of the people's rights as Maxim Gorky.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, l-7-1905

292. THE CHINESE AND THE INDIANS IN SINGAPORE

Singapore can be said to be as near to the Chinese as it is to us. In that Colony an Indian has all the facilities a Chinese has. Despite this, our people there cannot hold their own against the Chinese. Many Chinese are in Government service, in the Public Works Department or are contractors, and are all very well off. Some even own motor cars. The number of Chinese who entered Singapore territory was 200,947 in 1900, 178,778 in 1901, 207,l56 in 1902 and 220,321 in 1903; while the number of Indians who migrated there was 21,000 a year, most of them from Madras. This shows how much is yet to be achieved by our people in the matter of emigration to, and settling in, foreign territories. It is a shame that we cannot keep abreast of the Chinese.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, l-7-1905

293. LETTER TO HIGH COMMISSIONER'S SECRETARY

JOHANNESBURG
July 1, 1905

TO

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE HIGH COMMISSIONER
JOHANNESBURG

SIR,

I have the honour to enclose herewith copies of communications exchanged between the Government of the Orange River Colony and my Association,[1] in connection with the bye-laws from time to time

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 11-4-1905 to which the Government had replied that no legislation for the restriction of the powers Of municipalities in the Colony was contemplated.

sanctioned by His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor of the Colony, regarding Coloured persons. My Association ventures to draw His Excellency's attention to the fact that no fresh legislation has been asked for in my letter. In the humble opinion of my Association, the powers already possessed by the Lieutenant-Governor enable him to veto bye-laws which are contrary to British traditions and to the Letters Patent. My Association is informed that such legislation as the municipalities have been allowed to pass would have to be reserved for His Majesty's assent, if it were passed by the Legislative Council. My Association also ventures to think that the last paragraph of the letter, written by the Acting Colonial Secretary, is a complete justification for the complaint made by my Association, for, if the question raised is of no practical importance as there are so few British Indians, it cannot be of practical importance to pass legislation of the character referred to in my communication. While it is of no use in the Colony, it wounds, unnecessarily, the feelings of the British Indian community in South Africa, and my Association, therefore, ventures to trust that His Excellency will be graciously pleased to inquire into the bye-laws that have been passed and sanctioned for the various municipalities in the Orange River Colony, and grant the necessary relief.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ABDUL GANI,
CHAIRMAN
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 8-7-1905

294. LETTER TO KAIKHUSHROO AND ABDUL HUK

[JOHANNESBURG]
July 3, 1905

MY DEAR SHRI KAIKHUSHROO AND ABDUL HUK,

Your letter to hand. I am satisfied with your reply.[1] It is not proper for you to want to know the writer's name. I have written to you that it is not at all necessary for you to know it. There is nothing for you even to be afraid of. You should forget all about it. He who would do his duty should remain undaunted by what others say. Let

[1]To Gandhiji's letter dated June 27, 1905. Vide "Letter to Abdul Huk and Kaikhushroo", 27-6-1905

me know the amount that stands debited to my account. I have not yet credited the money that has been advanced to the press.

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

MESSERS JALBHOY SORABJEE BROS.
110 FIELD STREET
[DURBAN]

From the Gujarati in Gandhi's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 511

295. ORANGE RIVER COLONY LEGISLATION

We publish two important communications in this issue on the status of British Indians in the Orange River Colony. The one is a short and belated reply from the Colonial Secretary of that Colony to the protest of the British Indian Association at Johannesburg, against the anti-Asiatic municipal legislation that has been sanctioned by the Lieutenant-Governor from time to time by the municipalities of the Orange River Colony. The second letter is from Mr H. R. Fox-Bourne the Secretary of the Aborigines Protection Society, addressed to Mr. Lyttelton.[1] The two communications are a contrast The Colonial Secretary writes saying that the Government are not contemplating any legislation with a view to restricting the powers of local government at present enjoyed by municipalities in the Orange River Colony. This , in our opinion, is purely begging the question. The British Indian Association has never asked for any legislation to restrict the powers, because the veto is already [vested] in the Lieutenant-Governor. No bye-laws are of any force unless sanctioned by the Lieutenant-Governor, and we know of no statute, even for the Orange River Colony, which compels the Lieutenant-Governor to sanction any bye-laws that the municipalities may pass. On the contrary, the instructions issued to His Excellency are that he is not tosanction any colour legislation; and one would suppose that, if he may not do that in respect of laws applying to the whole of the Colony, he cannot also do so in respect of laws applying to a particular municipality in that Colony. The reason given by the Colonial Secretary is sarcastic. He says: "As there are so few British Indians in the Colony, I think you will agree that the question raised by you is not of great *practical* importance". The word practical is underlined in the letter. What is the meaning? It simply shows that the

[1]Alfred Lyttelton, Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1903-5

gates of the Orange River Colony are for ever to remain barred against the British Indian, and also that, if he ever entered the Colony, he would do so in the face of all the restrictive powers, and if he protests, he would be told that such laws could not be repealed. 'Too late' will be flung in his face. May we not ask the Colonial Secretary why, as there are so few British Indians in the Orange River Colony, the wanton insult is offered at all? Is it practical statesmanship to wound the feelings of a whole nation, even when there is not an iota of justification for it? Surely the municipalities of the Orange River Colony could not be so unreasonable as not to listen to expostulations from the Lieutenant-Governor on a matter which, on the Colonial Secretary's own showing, is of no importance to them, unless they delight in heaping unnecessary insults on a community which has never done them any harm. But we would not pursue the examination of the letter any further. We are glad that the-British Indian Association has already moved in the matter, and approached the High Commissioner.

In pleasant contrast to the letter we find Mr. Fox-Bourne's communication to the Colonial Secretary. We invite the attention of all South African Imperialists to this important communication, which we have copied from our contemporary, *India*. Much has been often said in South Africa against the Aborigines Protection Society. We hope, however, that the South African Press and South African readers will treat each act on its own merits, and not condemn, by reason of pre-conceived prejudice, anything that may emanate from the Aborigines Protection Society, which, after all, counts among its members some of the noblest of Britons. Mr. Fox-Bourne has also assurances to be fulfilled in this matter. He has reminded the Colonial Secretary that, before the war, in reply to his Society's representations, certain promises were given. He, therefore, "ventures to hope that no time will be lost in fulfilling those assurances", and he is "encouraged in the hope, at any rate as regarding Coloured persons who are British subjects and not uncivilised, by remarks made by Lord Milner". The Imperial Government have a hard nut to crack. They have either to adopt the advice of Sir Arthur Lawley[1] and boldly commit a breach of their promises, or to fulfil them in accordance with British traditions.

Indian Opinion, 8-7-1905

[1] Former High Commissioner in the Transvaal

296. THE CHINESE AND ABUSIVE LANGUAGE

A deputation on behalf of whites from the Transvaal mines waited upon Lord Selborne on July l, and prayed for protection for the whites against Chinese labourers. It stated that the whites did not behave badly towards the Chinese; that, since thirty or forty Chinese worked under a white supervisor, it was not difficult for the Chinese to take his life in the event of a riot; that the Chinese frequently insulted their white boss by using foul language and making indecent gestures; and that the language they used was so foul that it was impossible for the deputation to reproduce it. They said that a white man would not take such an insult lying down. In his reply, Lord Selborne said that there had been only twenty cases of assault by the Chinese until then, though the Chinese labour numbered 40,000; that their complaint about the language was without substance, for the white himself used abusive language and set a bad example. It was harmful to the whites themselves to indulge in drink and indecent behaviour in the presence of the Chinese. If one uses abusive words while addressing persons utterly ignorant of the language, they pick them up parrot-like, and it is then very difficult to mend matters. Moreover, he said, the whiteness of the whites should not be limited to their skin only but should permeate within also, that is, they should have the art of inducing respect, obedience and awe in others by their own exemplary conduct. Then only could they be called white in reality. In brief, he held the whites themselves responsible for the ugly behaviour of the Chinese, and indicated the need of winning the Chinese over by their own good behaviour. Several other difficulties also were placed by the deputationists before Lord Selborne, who promised to give adequate attention to them.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-7-1905

297. SALT TAX IN INDIA

DR. HUTCHINSON'S STRONG CRITICISM

The tax levied on salt in India has always been a subject of criticism. This time it has been criticised by the well-known Dr. Hutchinson, who says that it is a great shame for the British Government in India to continue it, while a similar tax previously in force in Japan has been abolished. The tax should be immediately

abolished. Salt is an essential article in our dietary. It could be said that to a certain extent, the increasing incidence of leprosy in India was due to the salt tax. Dr. Hutchinson considers the salt tax a barbarous practice, which ill becomes the British Government.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-7-1905

298. LETTER TO DADA OSMAN

[JOHANNESBURG,]
July 8, 1905

DEAR SHETH DADA OSMAN,

I have your letter. I see that it is absolutely necessary for you to go to Vryheid. I am afraid you will be able to do nothing without making the necessary arrangements there. I can do precious little, sitting here. In case a fine is imposed, I cannot advise you to have the shop kept open in your absence.

A lot will depend on Hoondamal's appeal.[1] Please see that all possible care is taken in the matter of that appeal. Let me know who will appear at the appeal. If it is won, you will be able to reopen your shop. Meanwhile it might be profitable to see the Town Clerk and other officials.

I do not see any cause for worry if Abdulla Sheth does not give the accounts. All hope of Dada Sheth's getting more money has already been given up, so that there is no cause for worry at all.

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

MR. DADA OSMAN
BOX 88
DURBAN

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 582

[1] *Vide* "The Hoondamal Case", 11-2-1905 "Indian Licences: Need for Vigilance—I", 18-2-1905 & "Indian Licences: Need for Vigilance —II", 4-3-1905

299. LETTER TO PARSEE COWASJI

[JOHANNESBURG,]

July 8, 1905

DEAR SHRI PARSEE COWASJI,

Your letter to hand. I am not in a position to give you monetary help.

M. K. GANDHI

MR. PARSEE COWASJI,[1]
115 FIELD STREET
D URBAN

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 584

300. LETTER TO J. DE VILLIERS

[JOHANNESBURG,]

July 12, 1905

TO
J. DE VILLIERS, ESQ.
L8 AEGIS BUILDINGS
JOHANNESBURG
DEAR SIR,

Re: Ismail & Lucas

I have purposely delayed sending you cheque for this bill in the hope of being able some time to wait upon you with a view to getting a reduction. Owing to pressure of work, however, I have not been able to get out of the office. All that Said Ismail had was this claim. To him, therefore, the loss of £1,300 and payment of costs are a very great loss. May I, therefore, ask you to make a substantial reduction in your account? I approached Mr. Leonard and he was good enough to grant a reduction.

[1] Gandhiji has spelt the name here as "Kavasji".

I enclose your bill herewith.

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

1 Enclosures[1]

Letter Book (1905): No. 630

301. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

JOHANNESBURG ,

July 13, 1905

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY

PRETORIA

SIR,

On behalf of my Association, I am respectfully to protest against clause 3 of the draft Ordinance to "generally amend the Municipal statutes" of the Colony, as published in a supplement to the *Government Gazette* dated the 7th inst.

My Association ventures to submit that the giving of the control of Asiatic Bazaars to the Town Councils is premature and calculated to prejudice the status of British Indians in the Colony in view of the fact that the whole question of anti-Asiatic legislation is now under consideration by the local Government as also by the Imperial Government. Law 3 of l885 contemplates government control, and seeing that the municipalities in the Transvaal are swayed very largely by colour prejudice, my Association humbly thinks that it would be an injustice to British Indians to give over control of Asiatic Bazaars to the municipalities or local boards.

My Association, therefore, trusts that the Government will be pleased to withdraw the clause in question, and allow the matter to remain in abeyance until the whole question of the status of British

[1] Not available

Indians in the Colony is placed on a final footing.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ABDUL GANI,
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 22-7-l905

302. LETTER TO JALBHOY & SORABJEE BROS.

[JOHANNESBURG]
July 13, 1905

MESSRS JALBHOY & SORABJEE BROS.
110 FIELD STREET
DURBAN

DEAR SIRS,

You have forgotten to send me an extract of the Press account against me. Please let me have it at your convenience. I hope you will be good enough to execute with promptness orders that may be given in connection with the Press, as things are not yet quite in order at Phoenix.

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I have your letter of the 11th instant. I am glad you have got the credit from Mr. Laughton,[1] which I return. I thank you [for] having paid Chhaganlal £100; I note you have sent a draft for £80 to Mr. Rustomji.[2]

Letter Book (1905): No. 633

[1] F. A. Laughton, a leading advocate.
[2] Parsi Rustomji, Indian merchant and co-worker of Gandhiji.

303. LETTER TO HINE & CARRUTHERS

[JOHANNESBURG,]
July 13, 1905

TO

MESSRS HINE & CARRUTHERS

P. O. BOX 26L

JOHANNESBURG

DEAR SIRS,

Re: Estate Abdul Karim Deceased

I regret that I have only just broken the back of the document left by you with me for translation. There are still 24 closely written sides to be translated. I need hardly say that this will be a most expensive translation. The amount of work already put in is over £2, and by the time I have finished, it will be quite £12. However, from what I have already read, it appears that my agents at Porbandar had to go by a most circuitous route to get a certified copy, the reason being the changes of the law which prevent any but the interested parties within the jurisdiction of the court getting certified copies. However, if you wish me to continue the translation, I will do so, and it will take me quite a week before I can let you have the whole of it, as under my present engagements it would not be possible for me to devote two full days to it, which is the necessary time for the work. I am in a position to devote only a little time from day to day.

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

Letter Book (1905): No. 649

304. LETTER TO OMAR HAJI AMOD

[JOHANNESBURG,]
July 13, 1905

DEAR SHETH OMAR HAJI AMOD,

Your letter to hand. I am returning herewith the newspaper clippings. They show that the influence of the *Opinion* is increasing.

I am enclosing a letter written in English so that you may show it to your lawyer. Some trustee should be appointed by the courts in virtue of the terms of the will. Then when the papers come here, the

property will be entered in the names of both of you. Thereafter the lease will be registered. As you will be able to understand what I have written in English I do not dilate upon it any further.

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

OMAR HAJI AMOD ZAVERI[1] ESQ.

BOX 441

DURBAN

From the Gujarat; in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 651

305. LETTER TO TOWN CLERK[2]

[JOHANNESBURG]
July 14, 1905

TO

THE TOWN CLERK

JOHANNESBURG

SIR,

Re: Indian Travelling on the Tram-cars

I have now slept over our conversation herein, and have also compared notes with my client. If a definite assurance can be given to the effect that facilities will be provided for Indian[s] travelling on the new tram-cars, my client will refrain from testing his right in a law court, but if it cannot, it appears very advisable that the issue should be definitely decided now. My personal experience has been that, where an absence of certain rights has been assumed without reason, rearrangement has, as a rule, proceeded upon such assumption, and what was once an open question has upon rearrangement been definitely decided against the granting of such right or rights. I venture, therefore, to think that the proposal above made is quite reasonable.

I have the honour to remain

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

M. K. GANDHI

Letter-Book (1905): No. 659

[1] The original Gujarati has, however, "Johari",
[2] Vide "Letter to Law Society", 22-6-1905

306. THE CAPE IMMIGRATION RESTRICTION ACT

We publish in another column the text of a letter received by the Chairman of the British Indian League at Cape Town from the Colonial Secretary's Office, in reply to representations of the League on the working of the Cape Immigration Act. The Colonial Secretary brushes asidein a single sentence the request made by the League as to the recognition of the Indian languages. We hope that the British Indian League will not leave the question at that. With reference to the interpretation of the term "domicile", the reply is most unsatisfactory. It is not every Indian who can show possession of immovable property, or presence of wife and children in the Colony. If such an interpretation is insisted upon, it cannot but cause unnecessary hardship, in spite of the intention of the Colonial Secretary not to do so. A man may leave his business at the Cape, pay a temporary visit to India, and find himself for ever shut out of the Cape, because his wife and children are not in the Colony, or he does not own immovable property. It would then simply mean ruin to the poor store-keeper who, under a false sense of security, may have gone to India, leaving his business in temporary charge of his manager. Nor is this illustration an imaginary one, for we understand that cases of such Indians having been refused re-entrance have actually happened. The least, therefore, that Colonel Crewe[1] could do to satisfy the requirements of justice is to recognise the rights of those who may have left business or employment in the country to re-enter. It will then be possible for them to talk of an exercise of leniency, for, in the definition given by him, so far there has been no leniency but a very strict application of the law; and then only will it be possible for the British Indian League to recognise the reasonable attitude of the Government. For the present, we think, with the greatest deference, that it is unjust, unreasonable and calculated to impose very serious hardship on the British Indians residing in the Cape Colony.

Indian Opinion, 15-7-1905

[1] Colonial Secretary, Cape Colony

307. MR. WACHA[1] *AND INDIANS*

Mr. Wacha, the genial Joint Secretary of the National Congress, has written to us a letter which is full of encouragement, hope and suggestion. We reproduce the main portion of it in another column. He has given a parallel case which is of some importance in the controversy that is going on in South Africa over the status of British Indians. "The settlers," says Mr. Wacha,

> on your side, seem to have forgotten how merchants and traders themselves used to complain in the bitterest terms of the East India Co., which, up till the Act of 1833, interdicted them from trading in India. Those who came were styled 'interlopers', but the interlopers were persevering and earnest,

and we know that they succeeded. Earnestness and perseverance are also the keynote to the situation in South Africa. We have far greater justice on our side than they of 1833. British Indians have a threefold right to have their status made good in South Africa. The Proclamation of 1858, no matter what may be said to the contrary, guarantees them full British subject rights. They have shown themselves to be industrious, sober, law-abiding and honest in South Africa, and, as has been often admitted, they have been very useful in developing its resources. They have also had promises of fair and equal treatment, especially regarding their civil rights in South Africa, from responsible ministers.

Indian Opinion, 15-7-1905

308. HOUSE TAX IN NATAL

Popular feeling is growing against the House Tax Bill published in the Natal *Government Gazette.* A public meeting was held on the night of the 10th instant in Maritzburg to consider the Bill, and a meeting was also held in Durban on Thursday evening. A large number of people has signed various petitions protesting against the Bill. The proposed house tax has become even more irksome than the

[1] Dinshaw Edulji Wacha, (1844-1936), presided over the Indian National Congress session in 1901 and was nominated member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council.

poll-tax. The measures proposed are very defective and the Bill is objectionable even if passed as a temporary measure. If introduced, this tax would be regarded more equitable than the poll-tax as a permanent levy. The poll-tax cannot be tolerated for ever, though it is true that it is levied in some countries. In view of the public feeling against the house tax, it should either be modified or droppedaltogether, so that the feeling against the poll-tax may not be intensified.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-7-1905

309. JAPAN'S PREPARATION FOR PEACE

THE CAPTURE OF SOUTHELIAN ISLAND

The Japanese have captured the Southelian Island from the Russians and landed their troops there. This island is 670 miles long, and 20 to 150 miles broad. Its area is 24,550 square miles, that is, more extensive than that of Kathiawad. The southern part of the island was in the possession of Japan till the year l875, but was later passed on to Russia in exchange for the Kuril Islands.[1] In that island, there are many kerosene wells, and coal also is found in abundance. The negotiations for peace now in progress have been very greatly influenced by the capture of such a big island by Japan. The Times says that no other event during the war has hit the Russians so severely. This event has proved that Russia is quite incapable of defending her boundaries. It is not yet fifty years since this islandcame into the hands of the Russians. She had taken possession of it through political machinations and Japan had to suffer a lot on that account. But for this great war, the island would have continued to be in Russian hands. Japan had had her eye on the island for a long time, and it is believed that this timely victory will strengthen the Japanese position in the peace negotiations at Washington. By the time the Peace Committee is in session, we might possibly hear of Marshal Oyama having dealt a severe blow to the Russian General, Linewich. The Japanese army declines to suspend hostilities for a short spell of truce, but intends to wage furious war and force Russia into concluding a lasting peace. And they will show that there is no

[1] A chain of small islands in the North Pacific Ocean.

alternative for Russia but to sign a peace treaty. They confidently declare that the Russian emissaries of peace will ultimately have to accept Japan's terms.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-7-1905

310. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

21-24 COURT CHAMBERS,
CORNER RISSIK & ANDERSON STREETS,
P. O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
July 15, 1905

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. An account has been sent to you up to date from which you will find the monies received regarding the Earthquake Fund.[1] You will notice also there are some monies received for the Durban flood fund from Miss Neufliess, which you may hand to Mr. Omar. Continuing sheets have been received, so also the scribbling blocks. I do not quite understand your reference to supervision. You should send me concrete instances, and I would understand the working much better. I should also like to know where loss has been incurred or sustained. Dahya Jogi's money has been received; the amount is £1-2-6. I know the matter was sent late. I am now sending you as much as possible to-day. Balance, if any, will be sent tomorrow. West[2] writes to me saying that Maganlal should leave about September, returning by December, telling me also that such is your opinion. If it is possible to manage without Maganlal, I have no objection. How are Kaba and Anandlal doing? Is Pillay now

[1] *Vide* "Earthquake in India", 13-5-1905

[2] Albert West met Gandhiji in 1904 in a vegetarian restaurant in Johannesburg and offered to nurse plague patients. Instead Gandhiji entrusted him with the management of Indian Opinion and the International Printing Press where it was printed. "From that day until I left the shores of South Africa," says Gandhiji, "he remained a partner of my joys and sorrow". Vide Autobiography, Part IV, Chapter XVI.

completely cured ? Did Maganlal receive the Tamil books ? Has he commenced the study ?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Please send Y.M.C.A. Johannesburg for one year *I.O.* The money has been received from Mr. Macintyre.

M. K. G.

Memo re. Earthquake and Miss Neufliess will be separate.

C. K. GANDHI, ESQ.

C/O INTERNATIONAL PRINTING PRESS

PHOENIX

From a photostat of the original: S. N. 4245

311. LETTER TO OMAR HAJI AMOD ZAVERI

[JOHANNESBURG,]

July 17, 1905

MY DEAR SHETH OMAR HAJI AMOD ZAVERI,

Your letter to hand. I am returning herewith both the letters of Sheth Haji Ismail[1]. I do not at all like the way he has written them. I can see from it that it will be difficult to exercise control over his expenditure. If the expenses there come to as much as the rent, you have to consider what is to be done about it.

If the business here does not yield profit enough to meet the expenditure at Porbandar, it will amount to consuming the capital. I believe it will be necessary to remit £100 a month for the present to Porbandar in order to obviate further bitterness. I am writing to Sheth Haji Ismail today.[2]

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 678

[1] Nephew of the addressee.

[2] *Vide* the following item.

312. LETTER TO HAJI ISMAIL HAJI ABOOBAKER

[JOHANNESBURG,]
July 17, 1905

DEAR SHETH HAJI ISMAIL HAJI ABOOBAKER,

I have received a letter from Omar Sheth in which he says that this expenditure is too much. I have also read your last two letters. I think they lack in the requisite courtesy. Omar Sheth is your uncle; therefore the letters from your end should be full of courtesy as only befits your noble family.

What Omar Sheth says about expenses deserves to be carefully considered. There is a world of difference between the time when Omar Sheth visited England and the present. The rents have gone down by half and will go down still further. The expenses here are met from the rents received, so that the time has come when you have to live on capital. I think your estate is such that it should never be necessary for you to live on your capital. Even millionaires who fell back on their capital have run through it. My earnest advice to you, therefore, is that you should be very careful in spending money on your household. I believe some of the expenditure can be reduced. Please take good care of your health. Exercise and regulated diet are the essential things.

Salaams from
M. K. GANDHI

HAJI ISMAIL HAJI ABOOBAKER AMOD ZAVERI, ESQ.
PORBUNDER
KATHIAWAD
VIA BOMBAY

From the Gujarati in Ganthiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 693

313. LETTER TO "THE DAILY EXPRESS"

JOHANNESBURG,
[*After July* 17, 1905]

TO

THE EDITOR
The Daily Express

SIR,

I trust you will allow me to reply to your correspondent who, under the elegant pseudonym of "Sinkramsam", has attacked British

Indians through your columns in your issue of the 17th instant. There is a homely Indian saying that you can take a horse to a watercourse but cannot compel him to drink the water. So also those who shut their eyes to facts placed before them are not to be disabused of their misconceptions. Your correspondent, I very much fear, belongs to that category. For his information, however, I ask again the question, if there were only thirteen Indian (not "coolie", as your correspondent would have it) "store-keepers, traders and hawkers" before the war, how is it that the challenge issued by the Chairman of the British Indian Association has not been taken up by Mr. Kleinenberg[1]? Remember that the names of these store-keepers have been supplied to the Press. I note that your correspondent has gone one better, in that he makes bold to say that the number thirteen includes store-keepers, traders and hawkers. Unfortunately for him, he has chosen a fatal number, and I am prepared to deposit with you the sum of £100 to be forfeited to any anti-Indian Association your correspondent may name if I fail to prove to the satisfaction of two arbitrators, one to be chosen by him and the other by me, with power to them to appoint an umpire, that there were more than twice the number of store-keepers, traders and hawkers mentioned by your correspondent prior to the war in the town of Pietersburg; provided that he forfeits to the British Indian Association an equal sum in the event of the award being in my favour. So much for Sinkramsam's figures.

As to the charge that the Native is being fleeced by British Indians, I can only refer your correspondent to Sir James Hulett's testimony[2] bet fore the Native Affairs Commission as to which is the greater evil-doer, the European or the Indian. With reference to the other charges made by your correspondent, and based on "information" supplied to him, I can only say that sensible people will rate them at their true value. If there is any nefarious trade done by Indians, and he has received the information, surely the remedy is in his own hands, and if the question of trading licences is not yet settled once and for all, it is because Sinkramsam and his coadjutors would not accept the very reasonable compromise suggested by British Indians, whereby the control of new licences would be handed to the Town Councillors to be elected largely by Sinkramsam and his friends. You, Sir, have some experience of the British Indian question as it was prior to the war. You have experience of British Indians also. You have adopted an independent attitude in journalism. I am sure

[1] *Vide* "Mr. Klinenberg and Mr. Abdool Gani", 7-1-1905 & "Potchefstroom Churlishness", 7-1-1905

[2] Vide "Sir J.L. Hulett and Indian Traders", 24-9-1903

you do not wish racial hatred between the component parts of the British Empire to grow. It must be within your knowledge that some of the facts stated by your correspondent are untrue. Will you not be carrying out your mission by correcting what are undoubtedly palpable mis-statements? Indians want only a fair field and no favour. Justice ought not to be a dear commodity under the British flag.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 29-7-1905

314. LETTER TO REVASHANKAR JHAVERI

[JOHANNESBURG,]
July 18, 1905

RESPECTED REVASHANKARBHAI,

Your letter to hand. Please debit Rs. 45 to my account for Capt. McGregor. I have debited the sum to his account crediting the same to yours.

I think it best to send Chi.[1] Harilal here. It is quite necessary to reduce to the utmost the expenditure that is being incurred there. The burden on me here is so heavy that it is difficult for me to meet the expenses there. Nor do I see that Harilal's interests are served thereby. Please write to Raliatbehn[2] that she should limit her expenses to about Rs. 20 to 25. I, too, have written to her to cut down on her expenses.[3]

I am glad to read the news about Chi. Manilal[4] and Suraj.

Yours respectfully,

MOHANDAS

MESSRS REVASHANKAR JAGJIVAN & CO.
JHAVERI BAZAAR
NEAR KHARA KUVA
BOMBAY

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 696

[1] Abbreviation for Chiranjeevi, meaning "long-lived". Prefixed to the name of a younger person, it implies the blessing, "May you live long!"

[2] Gandhiji's eldest sister.

[3] This letter is not available.

[4] Son of the addressee.

315. LETTER TO RAVISHANKAR BHATT

[JOHANNESBURG,]
July 21, 1905

DEAR SHRI[1] RAVISHANKAR BHATT,

Your letter to hand. In my opinion, we are all bound to honour and welcome any learned Indian who happens to come here. We have nothing to do with his religious preaching. Both Hindus and Mahomedans should join in honouring him. I, therefore, regard it our duty to honour Prof. Parmanand[2]. As to his religious teachings, thosewho are his associates in those teachings might do whatever they like later on. I, therefore, think that you should not refrain from honouring him. I have not given my consent to the collection of subscriptions, etc., nor do I intend to do so.

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

R. P. BHATT
BOX 529
DURBAN

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 727

316. LETTER TO MAGHRAJ & MOODLEY

[JOHANNESBURG,]
July 21, 1905

DEAR SIRS,

I have your letter of the 9th instant. I do not think that a collection is called for in Johannesburg just yet. I have already had a complaint before me saying that my name is being used in connection with the collection[3] being made there. I should very much like you not to give the reception a religious aspect. You may be aware that there are differences between the Samajic teaching and the orthodox

[1] The original has "Shri 5", which means that the "Shri" is to be repeated five times— a sign of respect

[2] A missionary of the Arya Samaj, later known as Bhai Parmanand; visited South Africa and delivered a series of lectures. Vide "Prof. Parmanand", "Letter to Revashankar jhaveri", 18-7-1905 and "Address to Prof. Parmanand", 27-10-1905.

[3] For Prof. Parmanand. Vide the preceding item.

Hindu teaching, and a complaint has been forwarded to me from the latter. We owe respect to any cultured Indian who may arrive from India, and I would rather you gave a suitable reception from Indians representing all classes, but that can only be done if it is bereft of the religious element, and then those who are interested in the Arya Samaj teaching will have to see specially to it.

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

MESSRS B. A. MAGHRAJ & A. MOODLEY
P. O. BOX 182
DURBAN

Letter Book (1905): No. 730

317. LETTER TO CAPT. FOWLE

[JOHANNESBURG,]
July 21, 1905

TO
CAPT. FOWLE
P. O. BOX 1199
JOHANNESBURG

DEAR CAPT. FOWLE,

I notice that the detectives are still going round in search [of] permitless Indians. In their search, they examined 16-year-old boys also. They are staying in the Colony, especially the one I have written to you about, on your assurance. They are, Sir, from their appearance, under 16 years or were certainly of that age when they arrived. The only defect is that they have not their parents here, but are either orphans and under their natural guardians, or are being brought up by their relations who take the position of parents. I hope, therefore, that you will be good enough to instruct the detectives not to touch these boys while the matter is being fixed up.

I remain,
Yours truly,

M K. GANDHI!

Letter Book (1905): No. 729

318. MR. BRODRICK'S BUDGET

There are features in the Budget statement made by the Secretary of State for India to the House of Commons on the motion that the House should go into committee on the East India Revenue accounts. It is a happy augury that Mr. Brodrick has presented his statement almost for the first time, within recent times, during the middle of the session instead of, as usual, at the end, when the Indian Secretary goes through the farce of addressing empty benches. The departure, too, has been deliberate. "Discussion," said Mr. Brodrick, "at this earlier period is more likely to lead to useful criticism and efficient administration". He hoped, too, that the precedent would be followed, whether in future he was the holder of the high office or an honourable member from the Opposition benches. Mr. Brodrick took occasion to show most clearly the extent of the services rendered to the Empire by much-maligned India, and both the services he laid so much stress upon are such as to command attention and appreciation in South Africa.

> Of the one hundred and forty-three million pounds of trade in 1902 and1903, sixty-two million pounds was trade directly with Great Britain. Of the trade of last year, one hundred and seventy-four million, seven hundred and forty-eight thousand pounds, seventy-seven million pounds was directly to and from Great Britain. That is not an inconsiderable item in the trade of Great Britain, and if we compare these figures, as some people from different points of view are now occupied in comparing the trade of the Colonies with the trade of India, I could point out that the exports from the United Kingdom to India in 1902, which were thirty-three million five hundred thousand pounds, were equal to the exports to Canada, the British Colonies, and North America, and to Australia, and last year those exports, which had grown to forty million pounds, equalled the whole of the exports from this country to Australia, to Canada and to Cape Colony combined.

There was no difficulty in Mr. Brodrick's drawing the natural deduction. He, therefore, went on:

> I trust I shall carry every member of this House with me when I say that the trade of India with the United Kingdom tends continually to increase. The stake of the United Kingdom in the trade of India and the stake of India in the trade of the United Kingdom are such that we are entitled to claim a first place for India in all the discussions that may take place as regards trade within the Empire.

Another statement that Mr. Brodrick made was with reference to the defences of the Empire. India forms a training ground for

seventy-five thousand British troops and a breeding ground for one hundred and forty thousand British Indian troops which are held at the disposal of the Empire in any emergency. The whole cost is borne by India, representing an expense of twenty-and-a-half millions out of a revenue of eighty-two millions. Distinguished generals from Lord Roberts downwards have testified to the efficacy of the services of the Indian Army. Sir George White and his army gave a striking illustration of this preparedness during the Boer War. These are all facts pregnant with meaning. They ought to be studied and pondered by South African politicians; and, after they have done so, we respectfully suggest to them that they should ask themselves the question whether it would pay, even from a purely selfish standpoint, to continuously treat the inhabitants of India as complete aliens undeserving of any consideration whatsoever at their hands.

Indian Opinion, 22-7-1905

319. ASIATIC BAZAARS IN THE TRANSVAAL

A recent issue of the Transvaal *Government Gazette* contains a Draft Ordinance which has the following amongst other clauses:

> (1) The Council may, with the approval of the Lieutenant-Governor, set apart, maintain, and carry on bazaars or other areas exclusively for occupation by Asiatics, and control and supervise the same in accordance with Regulations made from time to time by the Lieutenant-Governor, and may lease the land and any buildings or other erections thereon to Asiatics upon such terms and at such rents as may be prescribed from time to time by such Regulations aforesaid.
>
> (2) The sites of any bazaars or other places pointed out under the provisions of Law 3 of 1885 or any amendment thereof may be transferred by the Lieutenant-Governor to any Council of a Municipality, subject to existing leases thereover, and every such transfer shall be free of transfer stamp duty, and registration or other charges, and any such-bazaar or site so transferred shall be deemed to be a bazaar or area set apart under sub-section (I) of this section.
>
> (3) The provisions of section two of this Ordinance shall, *mutatis mutandis,* apply for the purpose of enabling a Council to close such bazaars and areas and lay out other land suitable for the same.
>
> (4) The term 'Council' in this section shall include a Council of a Municipality whether constituted under the Municipal Corporations

Ordinance, 1903, the Municipal Corporations Amendment Ordinance, 1904, or under any special law.

The British Indian Association at Johannesburg has lost no time in protesting against the contemplated transfer of the control of the Bazaars to the municipalities.[1] The objections to such transference are, in our opinion, unanswerable. The whole of the Asiatic question is still pending, and is the subject of correspondence between the Imperial Government and the local Government. Law 3 of 1885, as both the Parties have stated, is only a stopgap to be swept away as soon as possible. Any legislation, therefore, based on that law and amplifying the restrictions is inconsistent with the attitude of openness which the local Governments are bound to maintain. If not, what becomes of Mr. Lyttelton's statement that at least the *status quo ante bellum* would be kept up? Moreover, the prejudices of the town councils and local boards of the Transvaal are very strong on the colour question. They do not hesitate to proclaim them from house-tops, and some of the councils and boards would even go so far as to use violence, if they could. Under the circumstances, whilst there is a position of uncertainty as to the future, it seems strange that the Transvaal Government should bring in legislation as if Law 3 of 1885 were never to be erased from the Statute-book.

Indian Opinion, 22-7-1905

320. A SECRET CONCLAVE

Our contemporary, the *Transvaal Leader*, publishes a message from its Pretoria Correspondent to the effect that His Excellency Sir Arthur Lawley granted a private interview to the leaders of the anti-Asiatic Convention, among whom were present Messrs Loveday and Bourke. The *Leader's* correspondent also states that the interview was prolonged and that the interviewers left Sir Arthur with complete satisfaction. The curtain is then drawn over what actually took place. Lord Selborne, when he met the Boer leaders and members of the Responsible Association, adopted a different attitude. He invited the Press, and saw to it that the proceedings were made public. Why, then, should there be so much secrecy about Asiatic affairs? If the interviewers sought it does it mean that they are afraid of broad daylight being shed upon their doings and their statements; and if Sir Arthur courted privacy, we respectfully ask what was the motive? Was

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 22-7-1905

it that he anticipated the wildest statements from Mr. Loveday and was anxious to hide his shame? British Indians court fullest publicity as to whatever may have to be said against them or for them. They have nothing to fear, exaggerating nothing and minimising nothing, and having absolute justice on their side. Let us, therefore, hope that there may yet be an opportunity given to British Indians in the Transvaal of at any rate, examining statements made by the interviewers to His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor behind their backs.

Indian Opinion, 22-7-1905

321. INDIANS IN KRUGERSDORP

The Town Council of Krugersdorp has received the doctor's report after the meeting about Indians was held there.[1] The doctor says that the houses Of Indians are found to be mostly unclean; that they spit all around; that their lavatories are very dirty and water collects on the floor and never dries; and that they sit and sleep on the counters, etc. We know that much of this is untrue, and it is now up to the Indians in Krugersdorp to obtain another report to counter all this. Nevertheless, we will have to assent to these accusations to some extent. Nobody can deny that we spit any and everywhere and allow the lavatories to remain dirty. Our people are generally disinclined to cleaning lavatories themselves. We feel it necessary to overcome this. It is an established fact that many diseases spread through lavatories. It is very easy to keep them clean. One should spread dry dust or ashes into the bucket every time after use, wash the wooden planks with a disinfectant liquid and wipe them clean. If done regularly, this does not take much time and the cause for this antipathy disappears.

The matter of spiting also needs to be thought about. Everything considered, it is very necessary to cultivate the habit of spitting into a handkerchief or a spittoon, instead of all over the house or shop.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion 22-7-1905

[1] On June 23, l 905

322. INDIAN HOTELS IN THE TRANSVAAL

No laws have so far been enacted in respect of Indian hotels in the Transvaal. Licences are taken out for Kaffir eating-houses and European hotels. Chinese hotels came to be opened when the number of Chinese increased in the Transvaal. No licences are necessary for them. But the Chinese, apprehending trouble in the future, applied of their own accord to the Government for licences. The latter replied that no licences were necessary. The Chinese believed that no hotel could be opened without a licence, and, therefore, applied to the Government saying that a licensing law should be enacted. A Bill on the subject has now been published in the *Government Gazette,* which shows how one has to suffer the results of one's actions.[1] The Indian hotel-keepers will now have to take out licences. It is not even possible to oppose the Bill. All Indian innkeepers in the Transvaal should, therefore, take heed. We believe that licences will be granted only if the premises are quite clean.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-7-1905

323. JOSEPH MAZZINI

A REMARKABLE CAREER

Italy as a nation came into existence recently. Before 1870 Italy comprised a number of small principalities, each with its petty chief. Before 1870, she was like the India or Kathiawad of today. Though the people spoke the same language and had the same character, they all owed allegiance to different petty states. Today Italy is an independent European country and her people are regarded as a distinct nation. All this can be said to be the achievement of one man. And his name—Joseph Mazzini. Joseph Mazzini was born in Genoa on June 22, 1805. He was a man of such sterling character, so good-natured and so patriotic, that great preparations are being made throughout Europe to commemorate the centenary of his birth. For, although he dedicated his whole life to the service of Italy, he was so broadminded that he could be regarded a citizen of every country. It was his constant yearning that every nation should become great and live in unity.

[1] The original has "What is wrought by the hand hits the heart",

Even at the early age of thirteen, Mazzini showed great intelligence In spite of great scholarship that he evidenced, he gave up his books out of patriotism and undertook the study of law, and began using his legal knowledge gratuitously to help the poor. Then he joined a secret organization which was working for the unification of Italy. When the Italian chiefs learnt of this, they put him into prison. While still in prison, he continued to advance his plans for freeing his country. At last he had to leave Italy. He went to Marseilles and lived there. The Italian princes, however, using their influence, had him banished from that city. Though obliged to fly from place to place, he did not lose heart and kept on sending his writings secretly to Italy, which gradually influenced the minds of the people. He suffered a lot in the process. He had to run about in disguise to evade spies. Even his life was frequently in danger, but he did not care. At last he went to England in 1837. He did not suffer so much there but had to live in extreme poverty. In England he came into contact with the great leaders of that country and sought their aid.

In 1848 Mazzini returned with Garibaldi to Italy, and set up the self-governing State of Italy. But it did not last long, thanks to the activities of crafty persons and though Mazzini had to flee the country once again, his influence did not fade. The seed of unity that he had sown endured and, though Mazzini remained in banishment, Italy became a single united kingdom in 1870. Victor Emmanuel became its king. Mazzini was gratified to see his country thus united. But as he was not permitted to enter the country, he used to go there in disguise. Once when the police went to arrest him, he opened the door for them as if he were an usher and gave them the slip.

This great man died on March, 1873. His foes had now become his friends. People had come to recognise his true worth. Eighty thousand people joined his funeral procession. He was buried at the highest spot in Genoa. Today Italy and the whole of Europe worship this man. In Italy he is considered one of the greatest of men. He was a pious and religious man, ever free from selfishness and pride. Poverty was for him an ornament. The sufferings of others he regarded as his own. There are very few instances in the world where a single man has brought about the uplift of his country by his strength of mind and his extreme devotion during his own lifetime. Such was the unique Mazzini.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-7-l905

324. IMPORTANT SUGGESTIONS FOR INDIANS GOING TO THE TRANSVAAL[1]

Indians are now-a-days being subjected to very great severity in the matter of permits in the Transvaal. Many persons who were staying on false permits have been deported. Some, whose permits did not bear their thumb-impressions, have been sentenced to imprisonment for six weeks. It is probable that many more personswill be subjected to hardships.It is also believed that Permit Officers will visit different villages for investigation. It is therefore necessary that those who hold false permits should immediately leave the Transvaal. They should not under any circumstances make use of false permits; otherwise they will have to suffer imprisonment.

So far boys under sixteen and women were allowed to enter without a permit; but since the scrutiny of permits started, greater strictness is being exercised on the border. Boys under sixteen not accompanied by their fathers and women not accompanied by their husbands are being detained for want of permits. A woman proceeding to the Transvaal was made to detrain at Volksrust as she was not accompanied by her husband. Indians entering the Transvaal should therefore bear the following things in mind:

(1) one should not enter with a false Permit;

(2) unless accompanied by their husbands, women should not enter without a permit;

(3) boys, even if under sixteen, will be able to enter without a permit only when accompanied by their fathers.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-7-1905

[1] This was published as “From Our Johannesburg Correspondent”.

325. LETTER TO INSURANCE AGENT[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
July 25, 1905

TO

THE AGENT

NEW YORK MUTUAL LIFE INSURANCE SOCIETY

JOUBERT STREET

JOHANNESBURG

DEAR SIR,

You may recollect that Messrs Anandlal A. Gandhi and Abhechand A. Gandhi were insured through me. Their policies are numbered, respectively, 3369009 and 3369004. I understand that the premium on these policies has not been paid for some time. Will you kindly let me know if it is possible to revive these policies, and if so under what conditions, and whether, if the holders do not wish to revive them, they can have a refund of any of the premiums already paid?

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

Letter Book (1905): No. 771

326. INDIANS IN KRUGERSDORP

The Krugersdorp Town Council has sent a representation to the Government that a law should be enacted for the compulsory removal of Indians to Locations. The Transvaal Government have replied saying that nothing can be done at present as the matter was still the subject of correspondence between them and the Imperial Government. It appears from this that the controversy between Mr. Lyttelton and Sir Arthur Lawley is still going on. Sir Arthur wants laws enacted that would apply to Indians alone. The outcome is not likely to be known before the next year. Meanwhile, we hope Indians in Krugersdorp will keep their houses clean and tidy.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-7-1905

[1] Gandhiji wrote an exactly similar letter on August 8, 1905, to the Agent at Bombay, probably under instructions from the Johannesburg office.

327. TRANSVAAL PERMITS

We have already reproduced from the Transvaal *Government Gazette* the list of permits[1] bearing certain numbers that have been cancelled. Some people have interpreted it to mean that even the holders of genuine permits bearing the said numbers have to quit and that their permits are rendered invalid. This is a mistaken view. Those whose permits are genuine and bear their thumb-impressions need not be alarmed at all; their permits are not cancelled, though their names may have been published in the *Government Gazette*. This applies to the registers also.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-7-1905

328. THE INNER STORY OF THE BALTIC FLEET

Admiral Rozhdzhestvensky's[2] letter addressed to the Czar setting forth all Acts about the defeat sustained by the Baltic Fleet makes sad reading. Though the letter is written by a defeated Admiral, no one will take the reasons he has mentioned therein as excuses to explain his defeat. The secret facts, now revealed, clearly show that the crushing defeat sustained by the Fleet was only to be expected. The ablest of the world's naval officers used to say that the Baltic Fleet would teach the Japanese the lesson of their lives. They made this forecast because the men-of-war in the Fleet were gigantic, they were very well equipped with armaments, and could move very swiftly. They carried the best artillery of the latest type, and their admirals were considered very capable. But, as Admiral Rozhdzhestvensky says, the greatness of the Fleet existed on paper only. In his letter to the Czar, he says that, thanks to the corruption in the administration, not only was the building of the ships disgraceful, but they were not in fact properly equipped with the necessary armaments, etc. The guns were incapable of discharging shots as desired; enough coal could not be stored in the hulk; the speed of the ships was falsely praised; the engines always made a creaking noise as if in a ramshackle condition; two-thirds of the sailors were unfit for their jobs; the gunners had no sense of duty; and the worst of it all was that, after leaving

[1] Published in two instalments in Indian Opinion issues of July 8 and 15, 1905.

[2] Rear-Admiral Rozhdzhestvensky, Commander of the Baltic Fleet

Madagascar, all the men on board became rebellious. When such a fleet joins battle, defeat can be the only result. The letter gives a graphic account of what happened after they left Formosa. The Admiral was already aware of this condition of his Fleet; and the fact that he undertook to fight under these circumstances and showed such bravery is sufficient testimony to his loyalty.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-7-1905

329. INDENTURED INDIANS IN NATAL

Mr. James A. Polkinghorne has issued his yearly report ending 31st December last. As a contemporary states, the report is belated, as are most of the Government reports in Natal; consequently, there is no doubt there is not the same interest taken in them that would be if they were issued promptly. The present report is a document of more than ordinary interest in that it throws a good deal of light on the working of the Immigration Law as to re-indenture and poll-tax. It gives also a more accurate census of the indentured Indian population than hitherto. The information given by the Protector is an "eye-opener". The Indian population has increased very considerably during the past three years. Between 1876 and 1896, it was 31,712, in 1902, it was 78,004, at the end of 1904, it was 87,980, showing an increase in two years of nearly 10,000; and yet the Protector states in another place that he has not been able to supply the full number applied for in 1902, namely, 19,000. The demand for such labour is so great that it has been necessary to refuse fresh applications altogether. The reason for this large increase is obvious. This class of labour is very popular and is daily growing in popularity in the Colony. The men who come out give great satisfaction, and the bread and butter of thousands of Colonist depends very largely upon a steady inflow of indentured labour from India. The moral, too, is obvious. The noise that we find here about the Indian being an undesirable citizen is largely hypocritical or selfish. We had a striking corroboration of the deduction to be made from the above figures in the observation-srecently made by His Excellency the Governor of Natal at the time of the opening of the Agricultural Show, when he stated that the Indian agriculturist was indispensable for the development of the coast lands of Natal.

The Protector is very much dissatisfied with the working of the Law as to the poll-tax and re-indenture. He states that the Law is very

much evaded, and that it has failed in inducing the time-expired Indian to return to India. Many of those who have remained have succeeded in escaping the poll-tax. Last year, 888 men and 345 women completed their indenture under the new Law. Out of this number, only 137 men and 32 women offered themselves for re-indenture. 201 men and 58 women returned to India, 375 men and 146 women paid the tax, and 170 men and 105 women were at the time of drawing up the report unaccounted for. Nor is this to be wondered at. The poll-tax is never at any time a satisfactory mode of raising revenue. It has not been a deterrent to settlement in the Colony. The framers of the act never expected any such result. It constitutes a source of irritation to the indentured Indian. It levies from them unjustifiable contribution and constitutes a blot on the fair name of Natal. What is more, it is imposed on men whose services are considered, as has been already shown, to be indispensable to the welfare of the Colony.

Indian Opinion, 5-8-1905

330. WHY DID JAPAN WIN?

The reply given by Baron Komura to a question from the Press representatives in New York wanting to know the cause of Japan's victory deserves to be inscribed in one's mind. One reason he gave was that Japan's demand was just; the second was that she was united; there was no corruption either among the officers or the people; every one did his duty; the Japanese were not indolent; they did not shirk work; and they lived in great simplicity. Thanks to this simplicity, they were able to hold their own against the Russians. As their needs by way of clothing and food were few, these could be transported to the soldiers in fewer vehicles. Consequently, it was not very difficult for the Japanese to transport large numbers of men over long distances.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-8-1905

331. LETTER TO DADA OSMAN

[JOHANNESBURG,]

August 5, 1905

DEAR SHETH DADA OSMAN,

Your letter to hand. I am sending you a copy of the letter written to Mr. Wylie, giving all the details. I have not so far debited you for

any fees after you gave me a cheque in the matter of your licence. Please let me know whether I should do so or not.

It is good that you procured advertisements. Did you take the cheques or not ?

Send me, from the office, Mr. Labistour's opinion and other papers.

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

MR. DADA OSMAN
BOX 88
DURBAN

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 871

332. LETTER TO MISS BISSICKS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG ,]

August 5, 1905

DEAR MISS BISSICKS,

I am very sorry for your troubles. I am afraid it would not now be possible to recall the things mentioned by you, as they are included in the sale, as I understand from the Trustee. The sale has realized only £210-0-0 as a going concern. I understand Brown Bros. have bought the business.

I am sorry I shall not be able to cycle to you on Monday as I told Sister Heliel I might do.

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

MISS BISSICKS
C/O BOX 4207

Letter Book (1905): No. 872

[1] "An enterprising theosophist", who ran a vegetarian restaurant. On being approached for help to expand business. Gandhiji loaned her a thousand pounds belonging to one of his clients with the latter's consent. The amount, however, was never repaid and Gandhiji made good the loss. Vide Autobiography, Part IV, Chapter VI.

333. LETTER TO OMAR HAJI AMOD

[JOHANNESBURG,]
August 5, 1905

DEAR SHETH OMAR HAJI AMOD,

Your letter to hand. I am glad to know that you have secured advertisements in Maritzburg.

I am sure you have visited Phoenix. Please do so regularly. You should see that your sleep is not disturbed.

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

OMAR HAJI AMOD, ESQ.
BOX [441]
DURBAN

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 874

334. LETTER TO ABDUL HUK AND KAIKHUSHROO

[JOHANNESBURG,]
August 5, 1905

MY DEAR ABDUL HUK AND KAIKHUSHROO,

Your letter to hand. I am returning herewith Mr. Rustomji's letter. I shall write to him. It is possible to interpret the matter concerning rent the way you do. But you need not worry about it. It will suffice if you take adequate care to see that the house does not remain vacant. I have not yet done with Azam Moosa Hussain's power [of attorney]. You had under-stamped the letter.

Salaams from

M. *K.* GANDHI

Encl: 1

MESSRS JALBHAI SORABJI BROS.
110 FIELD STREET
DURBAN

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 876

335. LETTER TO CHIEF SECRETARY FOR PERMITS

[JOHANNESBURG,]
August 8, 1905

TO
THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR PERMITS
P.O. BOX 1199
JOHANNESBURG

SIR,

Re: Abdul Cadir's[1] *Duplicate Permit*

With reference to your letter of the 14th ultimo, No. 650, I note that you have now examined my client's thumb-impression and traced his permit and registration.

I venture to submit that in all such cases the issuing of a duplicate permit or some certificate is necessary in order to enable the registered residents to return without difficulty. My client is about to proceed to India, and I shall, therefore, be obliged if you will kindly let him have a certificate. There can be no question of fraud as the thumb-impression on the certificate you may issue would prevent its use by any one else.

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Letter Book (1905): No. 889

336. LETTER TO ABDUL HUK

[JOHANNESBURG,]
August 8, 1905

MY DEAR ABDUL HUK,

Parsee Cowasji writes that you will stand guarantee for him for one year if a loan of £50 is advanced to him. I believe you know what instructions Rustomji Sheth has left. If you deem it proper that the amount be debited to your account and paid to Parsee Cowasji, do let

[1] President, Natal Indian Congress, 1899-1901

me know, so that I may write to Omar Sheth to make out a cheque for that amount.

Let me know the monthly rental received at present.

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

ABDUL HUK, ESQ.

C/O MESSRS JALBHAI SORABJI BROS.

110 FIELD STREET

DURBAN

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 890

337. LETTER TO TAYOB HAJI KHAN MAHOMED

[JOHANNESBURG,]

August 8, 1905

DEAR SHETH SHRI TAYOB HAJI KHAN MAHOMED,

I have sent a reply as per copy enclosed in regard to your claim.[1] I am sorry I do not think there is anything more to be written to Lord Selborne. The fight is to be put up in England or here if Tayob Sheth comes here.

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

Encl:

MESSRS TAYOB HAJI KHAN MAHOMED & CO.

BOX 357

PRETORIA

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 900

[1] Relates to war losses.

338. LETTER TO HAJI HABIB[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
August 9, 1905

DEAR SHETH SHRI HAJI HABIB,

I have received your letter regarding Karodia. I have sent the notice.

Salaams from

M. K. Gandhi

[PS.]

I went to Pretoria last night on business. Since I returned by the 7.30 train in the morning, I could not see you, for which please excuse me. I have sent word through Mr. Kallenbach.[2]

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 907

339. LETTER TO ABDUL KADIR

[JOHANNESBURG,]
August 10, 1905

DEAR MR. ABDUL KADIR,

I have not had the time up till now to write to you. Before coming to business, I wish to write to thank Mrs. Abdul Kadir for the sandwiches that she sent to me. What was asked for in jest came-in very handy. As you know, Mr. Omar and Mr. Dada Osman were with me, and we all made our evening meal of them. Then again, there was an accident. An engine had been derailed, and at midnight all the passengers had to change trains. The result was that from midnight the train was running three hours late. The meals were not, therefore, provided at the usual stations, and the sandwiches were appreciated under those circumstances, not only by me, but by my other companions in the train, who, although Europeans, liked them very

[1] Secretary, British Indian Committee, Pretoria

[2] Herman Kallenbach, a wealthy German architect introduced to Gandhiji by Mr. Khan who had discovered in him a vein of other-worldliness; became a friend of Gandhiji and an associate in his experiments in simple living; courted arrest during the Passive Resistance Movement in South Africa. Vide Satyagraha in South Africa, Chapters XXIII, XXXIII to XXXV.

much. So tasty they were. The basket, therefore, before it reached Johannesburg, was half empty. Once more, then, I thank Mrs. Abdul Kadir for her kindness.

Mr. Abdul Gani[1] has shown me the guarantee taken by the bank. I think it is totally uncalled for. In my opinion the deed of dissolution does not in the slightest degree affect the bank's security. I do not understand the reason for altering the bond. However, seeing that all the transfers have to be newly made, it does not much matter. I hope you will hurry the matter forward. There should be no difficulty about taking out Mr. Mahomed Ebrahim's name, because even if he does not consent, the order of court will be quite enough. I understand that it is the desire of all parties to advertise the dissolution in the *Gazette*. I think it is as well. I, therefore, send a draft advertisement[2]. If you approve of it, it can be signed by all the five partners and advertised in the *Gazette* there, the *Gazette* here, and a daily newspaper there and a daily newspaper here. I enclose also draft letter[3] to be written to your London agents.

I was pleased beyond measure at the extreme prudence and calmness with which you approached the conferences we had there, and it is my earnest hope and prayer that both the businesses may flourish and that all of you may remain in perfect harmony. I would also ask you to be extremely cautious about your undertakings, though in the long run the future of South Africa is assured. We will have to go through yet worse times, and those whorealize this fact will come out best in the end. I have no doubt that there is a great deal of business to be done, but a very large measure of circumspection is necessary.

I am,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

MR. ABDUL KADIR

C/O MESSRS M. O. CAMOROODEEN & CO.

P. O. BOX 186

DURBAN

Letter Book (1905): No. 912

[1] Chairman, British Indian Association

[2] Not available

[3] *ibid*

340. LETTER TO MESSRS PEARKS LTD.

[JOHANNESBURG,]
August 11, 1905

MESSRS PEARKS LTD.
P. O. BOX 2789
JOHANNESBURG

DEAR SIRS,

Re: Jagannath

In this matter the case was heard this morning. Two witnesses gave evidence to the effect that 1 lb. of butter was asked for and a pat, like the one shown by Mr. Levy to me, was given to the inspector, and after the money had passed, the inspector weighed the pat, and while he was weighing, the accused pointed to the inscription on the pat. This was clearly an offence under the law, but the Magistrate held that the accused was quite innocent in the matter and, therefore, imposed a penalty of £1 only. This was the best I could do under the circumstances. It seems that there was a similar case last week in Court. It also came out in the evidence that the inscription on the pat sold was very illegible. Unless, therefore, there is a very much bolder inscription written on all sides of the label, I am afraid that the retailers would run the risk of being fined and fined very heavily because the ordinary penalty is £20 for selling pats of the above description to a customer to a demand for l lb. weight. I, therefore, [think that there] should be better inscription, or that all your customers should be told that each time they sell these pats, they should say that the weight is not guaranteed in any way.

I debit you with £3/3/- in the matter.

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

Letter Book (1905): No. 922

341. FALLING INTO LINE

Thanks to the action of the Rand Pioneers, the Church Council of Johannesburg has awakened to a sense of their duty. A deputation representing the Council has waited on Lord Selborne on the question of the Native land tenure in the Transvaal to urge upon His

Excellency the desirability of not tampering with the rights of the Natives as they existed before the war. The Attorney-General of the Transvaal has shown how the Native was free to own land in the Transvaal before the war. He was able even to cite an instance when the late President Kruger[1] informed certain petitioners, who wanted to curtail the rights of the Natives regarding land, that he could not comply with their request. It is true that the Natives were not, in practice, allowed to have their titles registered in their own names, but as the Attorney-General has clearly shown, the registration of a Native title in the name of the Commissioner for Native Affairs did not clothe that official with any discretionary power. He was bound to take transfer in his name in trust for a Native and was equally bound to take in any other Native as a *cestui que trust* at the instance of the original holder. In reply to the clamour of the anti-Native agitators led by Sir George Farrar,[2] Sir Richard Solomon has, much against his own inclinations, promised to introduce legislation to legalise the practice of registration of Native titles in favour of the Commissioner for Native Affairs. Against this, the Rand Pioneers have again commenced an agitation. They insist on the Native Commissioner having the power to refuse to act as trustee. If the request were granted, it would undoubtedly take away from the right of the Native to hold land as it existed before the war.

It is against agitation of this nature that the Church Council has raised its voice. The deputation led by Mr. Hosken made it clear to Lord Selborne that the treatment the Coloured races have been receiving in the Transvaal since British occupation is worse than before. He and his fellow-members also showed that the war was justified in the opinion of many because they considered it a war of emancipation. The Rev. Mr. Philips said that he went at his own expense to England to preach the crusade because he could not bear the hardships that were inflicted under the Boer regime on the Coloured races. But the reverend gentleman now found that these races were no better off under the British rule.

Lord Selborne's reply was as was to be expected. He had not sufficiently studied the question. He could not, therefore, pronounce an opinion. But His Excellency added:

> If in any respect the British administration is unjust to the Native, civilised or uncivilised, it is a blot and a stain on our administration, and one

[1] Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger, (1825-1904), Boer leader, President of the Transvaal, 1883-1900

[2] A nominated member of the Legislative Council of the Transvaal.

which I feel personally as an implication of disgrace.

These are the words spoken by one who is the ruler of the Transvaal. May His Excellency have sufficient courage and strength to initiate the policy he has thus boldly enunciated!

The interview is not without significance for the British Indians. What the deputation submitted to His Excellency applies equally to them. And the policy laid down by Lord Selborne is the policy applicable to all British subjects. It is a matter for congratulation that in Lord Selborne the Transvaal has a Governor and South Africa a High Commissioner who is determined to hold the scales evenly between conflicting interests.

Indian Opinion, 12-8-1905

342. THE NEW LAWS OF NATAL

The proposal of the Natal Parliament to enact laws on Locations and the levy of a tax on land has miscarried owing to the rejection by the Legislative Council of both these Bills, along with the Bill to levy a tax on the Kaffirs. Therefore, for the time being at least, our apprehensions about Locations have been allayed. Though we cannot say that these Bills have been thrown out because of our petition, there is no doubt that it has had some effect. The lesson we have to learn from this is that any efforts that we might make are bound to bring some measure of success.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-8-1905

343. NATIVES' RIGHTS TO HOLD LAND IN THE TRANSVAAL

The Supreme Court of the Transvaal has always given the benefit of the law to Coloured persons that is, it metes out even-handed justice without fear of the whites, regarding them and Coloured persons equal in the eyes of the law. There is in Roodepoort a church belonging to the Kaffirs. In deciding an application to transfer it to the names of its trustees, the High Court[1] has ruled that land can in that way be transferred to the name of a Native; the law does not prohibit such transfer of land. It appears from this case that the mosques situated in Pretoria, Heidelburg and other places can be

[1] "High Court" seems to be a slip for "Supreme Court".

registered in the name of their trustees. This question deserves to be considered by the communities of Pretoria and other places.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-8-1905

344. TREATY BETWEEN ENGLAND AND JAPAN

As the time for reviewing the treaty between England and Japan draws near, it is being discussed in English political circles. A peace treaty, to hold good for five years, was signed between the two countries on January 30, 1902. But, if by the end of the fourth year, no notice to terminate the treaty was given by either party, the treaty would continue to be in force even beyond the five years, and thereafter the party desiring to end the treaty would have to give a year's notice. Moreover, if at the end of the treaty period either of the parties was engaged in war, the treaty would remain effective till peace was restored.

Moreover, if either party had to go to war against a third power, the other contracting party should strive to prevent any other power from joining it. And if any such power rendered help to the party opposing either of the signatories to the treaty, the other signatory should rush to the help of the former.

If, therefore, a notice in accordance with the above terms to end the treaty is not served by either party by January 30, next year, it will remain operative beyond five years. If on the contrary such a notice is served in the meanwhile and Japan's war with Russia continues, the treaty would remain in force till the end of the war, even if the period of the treaty as originally stipulated had come to an end.

This treaty has proved very advantageous to both England and Japan. As a matter of fact, the whole world can be said to have benefited from it. For, if a third power had entered the war to help Russia, England would have been obliged to go to the aid of Japan, and this would have obviously disturbed world peace. There is, therefore, every reason to hope that this treaty will continue further.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-8-1905

345. LETTER TO TAYOB HAJII KHAN MAHOMED & CO.

[JOHANNESBURG,]
August 12, 1905

SHETH SHRI TAYOB HAJI KHAN MAHOMED & CO.,

I am in receipt of your letter. It is no longer possible to write to the High Commissioner. The only thing that remains to be done is to proceed to England. Or it may be possible if some trouble occurs here again. Please meet the Mayor of your place and find out what he has to say in the matter. I cannot advise you to write to England immediately; for, if Tayob Sheth comes here, the real fight will have to be put up here. With each passing day, it will become more and more difficult. It will be better if you send a cable as follows:

> High Commissioner declines interfere claim. Strongly advise you come.

Tayob Sheth will not require a permit, so you have not to worry about that.

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

MESSRS TAYOB HAJI KHAN MAHOMED & CO.
BOX 357
PRETORIA

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 934

346. LETTER TO HAJI HABIB

[JOHANNESBURG,]
August 14, 1905

DEAR MR. SECRETARY,

Your letters remind me of the speeches[1] I delivered. I had promised to send you the dates of *The Star* issues. The four lectures have appeared in *The Star* issues, dated March 10, 18 and 29. I am ready to send those speeches to any place and invite comments. I have read over these lectures in English again and I must say that there is

[1] A series of four lectures on Hindu Religion. Vide "Hinduism", 4-3-1905, "Letter to Dadabhai Naoroji", 11-3-1905 & "Lectures on Religion", 15-4-1905

not a single hard word about any religion.

I have expressed appreciation of every religion and pointed out the distinctive merit of each. There was not the least intention even in my dream of hurting anybody. Nevertheless, some people have been offended, for which I am really sorry. And I would like to assuage their minds, if I can do so somehow or the other. If you want any further explanation, please do write to me.

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

HAJI HABIB
BOX 57
PRETORIA

From the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: Letter Book (1905): No. 950

347. LETTER TO CHIEF SECRETARY FOR PERMITS

[JOHANNESBURG,]
August 15, 1905

TO
THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR PERMITS
P. O. BOX 1199
JOHANNESBURG

SIR,

I send the bearer, John Soukal, for his permit and registration. The documents in his possession, in my humble opinion, show conclusively that the bearer was in the Colony on the 31st day of May 1902 and has been ever since. The details that he gives with reference to his registration show, I think also, that he must have been registered under the Boer Government. A man of his class certainly could not escape registration, especially living in the country for such a long time as the bearer undoubtedly seems to have done. He tells me that he has no acquaintances in Johannesburg at present who could certify to his having taken out the registration under the Boer Government. The man seems to me to be very poor. I, therefore, trust that you will be pleased to issue him the permit, as also fresh registration, notwithstanding the fact that as usual he is not in a position to produce

affidavit regarding previous payment of £3. The case seems to me to be perfectly *bona fide* and deserving of consideration.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

M. K. GANDHI

Letter Book (1905): No. 971

348. LETTER TO ABDUL REHMAN

[JOHANNESBURG,]
August 16, 1905

TO
MR. ABDUL REHMAN
P. O. BOX 12
POTCHEFSTROOM
DEAR SIR,

I have to thank you very much for assisting Mr. Kalyandas[1] in connection with the subscriptions for *Indian Opinion.* You mentionedto me about insurance of stock in Potchefstroom. There is a Company who would insure such stock provided the buildings are nice and suitable, I think at £7-6. If there, are any who want their stock to be insured, please let me know.

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

Letter Book (1905): No. 981

349. WILL INDIA WAKE UP?

Lord Curzon has long been considering the partitioning of Bengal into two parts and merging one of them in Assam. In justification of the proposed measure, it is argued that Bengal is too large for one Governor to administer. As against this, it is pointed out that Assam is a small province with a very small population and, that it adjoins Bengal. It is therefore the intention of His Excellency the Governor-General to merge a part of Bengal in Assam. On the other

[1] Kalyandas Jagmohandas Mehta, who accompanied Gandhiji to South Africa in 1903 and stayed with him for about five years. He did much work during the plague in Johannesburg in 1904.

side, the people of Bengal argue that the Bengalis are quite distinct from the Assamese; they are highly educated, and they have been living together for generations. It would therefore be an act of grave injustice to separate and thus weaken them and tag large numbers of them on to Assam. A lot of discussion has already taken place over this matter, and a few days ago Mr. Brodrick declared that he had approved Lord Curzon's proposal. Since this news reached India, meetings have been held in almost every village of Bengal. People of all communities have been participating in them. Even Chinese merchants seem to have taken part. These meetings are said to have been so impressive that long telegraphic reports have reached far-off South Africa. Resolutions challenging the Government were, for the first time it would appear, moved at these meetings. It appears to have been suggested in the course of the speeches that, if the Government did not take heed, Indian merchants should stop all trade with Great Britain. We must admit that our people have learnt these tactics from China. But if the people really act accordingly, there would be nothing surprising if our troubles came to a speedy end. For, if this is done, Great Britain will be put to great loss; and the Government can have no means of dealing with it. They cannot compel the people to carry on trade. The method is very straight and simple. But will our people in Bengal maintain the requisite unity? Will the merchants suffer for the good of the country? If we can answer both these questions in the affirmative, India can be said to have truly woken up.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-8-1905

350. SIR MANCHERJI AND MR. LYTTELTON

Last year, the Legislative Council passed a resolution requesting Mr. Lyttelton to appoint a commission to go into the grievances of the Indians in the Transvaal. Sir Mancherji had written saying that he approved of the idea of appointing a commission. A question was again asked about this [in Parliament] by that honourable gentleman, to which Mr. Lyttelton replied that the matter was still under discussion. From this it appears that the Transvaal Government is still carrying on a controversy with Mr. Lyttelton and that there is no agreement between them. Mr. Lyttelton wants that immigration laws should be enacted on the lines of those in Natal while Sir Arthur Lawley wants those laws which would apply to Indians alone.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-8-1905

351. ELIZABETH FRY[1]

There are many reasons why the British should be ruling over us and why we are in such a deplorable condition. One of the reasons is that in modern times the British seem to have produced a larger number than we of brave and pious men and women of high principles. Nevertheless we believe that we are bound to benefit from a knowledge and constant contemplation of the lives of such devout men and women, and we therefore propose to give the stories of their lives from time to time. We hope that the readers of this journal will read their lives and follow them in practice and thus encourage us. We have suggested earlier that each one of our subscribers should maintain a file of *Indian Opinion.* We remind them of it on this occasion.

Mrs. Elizabeth Fry lived in England a century ago. She was a very religious-minded lady and it was her constant concern to help mitigate the sufferings of man. Though herself a chronic invalid she did not care; she was not to be daunted by personal suffering. There is a prison called the Newgate Prison in England where, a hundred years ago, men and women prisoners were huddled together somehow and lived quite uncared for. They were in an extremely bad state. Crime among them, instead of diminishing, was on the increase. Their life was more like that of cattle. Consequently, the condition of Newgate prisoners who were released after their sentences became very pitiable. This misery, the good Elizabeth could not bear to see.Her heart was deeply grieved, and she dedicated her life to the amelioration of their condition. Having obtained permission of the authorities, she began helping, in particular, the women prisoners, whom she used to comfort. But she did not stop here. By her writings and personal effort she got a number of reforms introduced through the authorities. As a result of her efforts the condition of prisoners improved much. But this she considered quite inadequate. In those days, prisoners used to be deported to Australia. They were subjected to great harassment while on board ships. Even the honour of women prisoners was not safe. Elizabeth saw that all her good work was being undone on board the ships while the prisoners were being thus transported. To remedy this evil, she visited the ships at great personal inconvenience. At last she succeeded in putting an end to the

[1] Elizabeth Fry, (1780-1845), belonged to the Society of Friends. She was a pioneer of prison reform.

sufferings of prisoners on the ships. Further, she effected some improvement in the miserable condition of the prisoners in Australia; and a law was accordingly passed to the effect that prisoners, on reaching Australia, were to be passed on to others for service after being trained there for six months. While thus sharing in the sufferings of many unfortunate persons, this good lady forgot her own suffering, and breathed her last, praying to God.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-8-1905

352. THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION[1]*: A SUGGESTION*

South Africa has had the unique honour of welcoming on its own soil this body of illustrious scientists. The British Association for the Advancement of Science is an institution of which the Empire may well feel proud. It was a happy idea that prompted the South African Association to invite their prototype to visit this sub-continent. The results are likely to be far-reaching. Not only will something be done for the main object of the Association—viz., the popularisation of science—but the visit will help to secure a more important result in drawing together South Africa and Britain, and the Colonies with one another. This is the third time that the Association has met outside the British Isles; and, in view of the importance of these visits and the cordiality with which the members have been received, it is not likely to be the last. We look forward to the day when the Association will meet in India. Such a visit would, we believe, be greatly to the advantage not only of India, but the Association itself.

We venture to make one humble suggestion. We have said that these external visits will do much to draw together the widely separated portions of the King's dominions; and in order that theAssociation may be everywhere recognised for what it really is—namely, one of the very greatest assets of the Empire—we would like to see the title amended to "THE BRITISH EMPIRE ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE".

Indian Opinion, 26-8-1905

[1] Founded in 1831.

353. LORD CURZON

The inevitable has happened and Lord Curzon is no more an Indian Viceroy. It is an irony of fate that when he seemed to be irremovable, he had to go under circumstances the most humiliating. A Viceroy to whom prestige was everything and who relied greatly on it for success in many things he undertook has been obliged to leave India without a vestige of it remaining. That such a fate should be brought about by the discredit of a War Minister adds point to the degradation Lord Curzon has had to undergo. It would almost appear to be an answer to the prayer of the suffering millions who were groaning under his autocratic rule.

We think that, in all he did, Lord Curzon was actuated by good intentions. He undoubtedly believed that he was doing good to the people of India in spite of themselves, in forcing down their throats what he was pleased to term reforms. No Viceroy excited on the threshold of his career the expectations that Lord Curzon did. His speeches led the Indians to believe that he would out-Ripon Ripon[1] in his treatment of Indian problems. In his minute on the behaviour of the British soldiers, he even translated his promises into deeds. His reduction of the salt tax and his advocacy of the cause of British Indians in South Africa will always stand to his credit. But when full allowance has been made for these things, the net result is such that he has succeeded in earning the dislike of the people at the end of his career, in the same measure that he began with their goodwill. Even though the cause of his resignation is unfortunate in that it betokens the triumph of military autocracy over civilian rule, we can quite imagine that today in thousands of Indian homes there must be a time of joy and thanksgiving for what will be considered, not without reason, a good deliverance.

The career of Lord Curzon makes it very risky to base any expectations upon the new Viceroy; and it would be perhaps far safer to expect nothing if we would be blessed; but in Lord Minto, the Viceroy-designate, India will have a nobleman not unknown to it, as he belongs to an illustrious family which has already given a Viceroy to India. His Colonial experience may be of inestimable advantage in

[1] (1827-1909), Viceroy and Governor-General of India, 1880-4, and Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1892-5

Indian administration; and, if the traditions of Colonial Governorship, which are always strictly constitutional, are kept up in India, that portion of King Edward's Empire may look forward to a peaceful and sympathetic rule for the next five years. Heaven grant that it may be so. Famine once again threatens to overtake the land; plague still continues to exact its toll; poverty daily undermines millions of families: only broadest sympathy and kindliness to the governed can help them in this dreadful trinity of evils.

Indian Opinion, 26-8-1905

354. PROFESSOR PARMANAND

Professor Parmanand, the distinguished scholar from the Anglo-Vedic College, has been in our midst now for a few weeks. He has delivered interesting discourses to crowded audiences. His mission seems to be to advance the teachings of the Arya Samaj, which is a body that has done most useful and practical work, apart from its religious doctrines. It has produced earnest patriots, a band of self-sacrificing teachers, and it has also done noble work in connection with the terrible earthquake that took place in India a few months back. The Professor who belongs to such a body of workers has a right to expect a warm welcome from Indians in South Africa. Indeed, we cannot have in our midst too many Indians of attainments and culture.

The question, however, remains as to what we shall make of such men and what they will make of us. We confess that we are not yet ripe for a vigorous missionary enterprise on religious lines. The soil is hardly ready for such work. Not that each religion may not have its own exponent and custodian. The Arya Samaj does not represent any established orthodox religion of India. It takes nothing away from its credit when we mention that it is still a cult struggling for existence and catering for converts. It represents a reformation of Hinduism. We feel that Indians in South Africa are not ready to receive any doctrines of reformation. The needs of the Indians, so far as internal work is concerned, consist of education and as much of it of the right kind as can be had. We have always admitted that there is room for improvement in the Indian household. This is not to be attained without education of the hundreds of Indian youths who are almost totally neglected in this sub-continent. The best thing we venture to think that Professor Parmanand can do is to turn his attention to this phase of the question. It is a most practical and effective mode of

exhibiting the strength, the purity and the usefulness of the Samaj he represents. We believe that to sufficiently educate Indian children in South Africa through paid teachers is well-nigh impossible. We want teachers of the highest qualifications, experience and culture even for primary education.

We venture to present these views to Professor Parmanand, and through him to the Arya Samaj and other like bodies in India, no matter of what denomination or religion, for their earnest consideration.

Indian Opinion, 26-8-1905

355. THE WORLD'S RELIGION[1]

The time has now passed when the followers of one religion can stand and say, ours is the only true religion and all others are false. The growing spirit of toleration towards all religions is a happy augury of the future. An article appeared recently in the columns of *The Christian World*, a London religious weekly, over the signature of "J.B.", one of that journal's regular contributors, on this question, extracts from which I intend to quote.

The writer, in a most liberal and generous spirit, reviews the question from the Christian standpoint, and shews how the world's religions are linked one with the other, each having characteristics common to all others. The appearance of such an article in the Christian Press is worth noting, and shews that it is moving with the times. A few years back, such an article would have been classed as heretical teaching, and its author denounced as a traitor to the cause.

After remarking upon the new spirit which was changing the attitude of Christians to other religions, and pointing out how, a few years ago, the idea prevailed of the Christian religion standing out [as] the only true religion amongst a multitude of false ones, he goes on to say:

> There has been an immense revulsion, and one of the features of it is the discovery, so vastly surprising to the average man, that the doctrine he was brought up on was not the earlier Christian teaching at all. The noblest of the old apologists thought very differently, he finds, of the outside races and faiths, from what he had been led to imagine. He hears of Justin Martyr, standing so close to the apostolic age, who regards the wisdom of Socrates as inspired by the 'Word'; of Origen, and Gregory of Nyssa, whose teaching is of

[1] This was published as "Specially Contributed".

> the entire race of man as under the Divine tutorship; of Lactantius maintaining that belief in Providence was the common property of all religions...
>
> ...The finer Christian minds have, in fact, in every age gone more or less along this line. It needed only that men should come into contact with these outside races, whether in their literature or face to face, to realise at once that the 'impassable gulf' theory between one religion and another was false to life and to the soul...
>
> ...Religion, by a hundred different names and forms, has been dropping the one seed into the human heart, opening the one truth as the mind was able to receive it.

"J.B." points out that many of the Christian institutions and doctrines were born of the knowledge of other religions. Many of the symbols are relics of ancient days.

> How marvellous, too, in this connection, is that ancient cult of Mithras in Persia, where, as M. Cumont says: 'Like the Christians, the followers of Mithras lived in closely united societies, calling one another father and brother; like the Christians, they practised baptism, communion and confirmation; taught an authoritative morality, preached continence, chastity and self-denial, believed in the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the dead'.

It is not surprising that the writer should claim for the Christian religion the premier position, but it is gratifying to find such a broadminded attitude taken up by Christian writers and the Christian Press.

To Europeans and Indians working together for the common good, this has a special significance. India, with its ancient religions, has much to give, and the bond of unity between us can best be fostered by a wholehearted sympathy and appreciation of each other's form of religion. A greater toleration on this important question would mean a wider charity in our everyday relations, and the existing misunderstandings would be swept away. Is it not also a fact that between Mahomedan and Hindu there is a great need for this toleration? Sometimes one is inclined to think it is even greater than between East and West. Let not strife and tumult destroy the harmony between Indians themselves. A house divided against itself must fall, so let me urge the necessity for perfect unity and brotherliness between all sections of the Indian community.

Indian Opinion, 26-8-1905

356. RUSSIA'S NEW CONSTITUTION

The Czar of Russia has given effect to his promise to his people regarding the introduction of a constitution based on the elective principle. From the cables received in South Africa regarding its clauses, it appears that it resembles very little the more democratic constitutions of modern times, which give wider powers to the people. It is also very doubtful if even this constitution will be given full effect to. Under this constitution the power of making laws is apparently vested in an elected body. Despite all these terms and clauses, however, the Czar has kept his sovereign authority intact. This has given the constitution a strange appearance. It makes imperative the assent of the Czar to whatever laws are passed by the elected National Council. Nobody believes that this Council will be able to exercise any check on the Czar's power. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that the new constitution is a step which will enable the people to make greater efforts in the future.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-8-1905

357. ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Last week we gave a life-sketch of Elizabeth Fry. This time we give an account of the life of a former American President.

It is believed that the greatest and the noblest man of the last century was Abraham Lincoln. He was born in America in 1809 of very poor parents. He received very little education until he was fifteen years old. He could hardly read or write and earned his meagre living, wandering from place to place.

At last he thought of bettering his lot. There being no steamers or other means of transport in those days, he voyaged through the big rivers on a country raft made of wooden planks and visited the various towns in America. At one place he got the job of a shop assistant. He was then twenty years old. Once he had a job it occurred to him that he might study further. Thereupon, he bought a few books and began to study them by himself. Meanwhile one of his relatives thought that Abraham might be able to do better if he studied law; and he apprenticed him to a lawyer, with whom Abraham worked with great

diligence and studied books. He showed such ability that his superiors were much pleased with him. He too felt that he was now in a position to serve the people among whom he was born. No sooner had the thought occurred to him than he decided, in accordance with American practice, to stand for election to the Senate. His first pamphlet fully revealed his special qualities. He put up a strong fight; but he met with defeat as he was yet an unknown man, while his opponent was well known. But the defeat only whetted his zeal.

His fervour became more intense. Only a person who has a clear picture in his mind of the America of those days, can properly appreciate Lincoln's virtues and his services. From north to south, America was at this time a camp of slaves. Nobody saw anything wrong in openly selling Negroes and keeping them in slavery. The high and the low, the rich and the poor saw nothing strange in owning slaves. No one thought it was wrong to do so. Religious minded men, priests and the like saw nothing amiss and did not protest against the system of slavery being kept up. Some even encouraged it, and all of them thought that slavery also was a divine dispensation and that the Negroes were born to it. Few could then see that the slave trade was very wicked and irreligious. And even those who did, preferred to remain silent, being unable to assert themselves. There were some who were content to play a minor role in the amelioration of the condition of slaves. Even today our hair stands on end to hear the accounts of the atrocities inflicted on slaves. They were tied up and beaten; they were forced to work, they were branded and handcuffed. And all this was not done just to one person but to all of them. It may be said without fear of contradiction that Lincoln alone, of all men, made and put into execution his resolution to change the ideas of men, ideas which were indelibly carved on their minds, to wage war against those hundreds of thousands of men who depended for their living on the system and to set free the slaves from bondage. He was so tender by nature, his faith in God was so great, and his compassion so deep that he began to convert the minds of men through his speeches and writings as well as by the example of his own life. Eventually there came into existence two parties in America: one headed by Lincoln, another by his opponents; and a big civil war broke out;but Lincoln remained undaunted. By this time he had risen so high up the ladder that he was already the President. The war went on for many years, but Lincoln abolished slavery from the whole of North America by l858-9. The bonds of the slaves were broken, and wherever Lincoln's name was mentioned, he was hailed as a great emancipator of men in distress. The language of the powerful speeches he delivered during

these stormy days is so sublime that they rank very high in English literature.

Although he had achieved such eminence Lincoln remained full of humility. He always believed that a powerful nation or individual ought to use that power to remove the miseries of the poor and the weak, not to crush them. Though America was his motherland and he was an American, he regarded the whole world as his native land. Just when he was at the height of his glory, and despite the fact that he was such a good man, some wicked men felt that he had ruined many people by abolishing slavery. So when it was known for certain that Lincoln was going to visit a theatre, a plot was hatched to assassinate him. Even the players at the theatre had been seduced, and a leading actor had undertaken to shoot him. As Lincoln was sitting in his special box, the despicable fellow entered it, closed the door after him and shot at Lincoln. The good man fell dead. The people who witnessed this dreadful deed tore the assassin to pieces before he could be taken to a law court.[1] In this tragic manner occurred the death of the greatest President of America. It may safely be said that Lincoln sacrificed his life in order to put an end to the sufferings of others. But Lincoln can be said to be still alive; for the changes he made in the American Constitution are still in force. And Lincoln's name will be known as long as America endures. It will thus be seen that Lincoln has become immortal, for his greatness consisted not in his talent or his wealth, but in his innate goodness. A nation that has such good qualities as Lincoln's is bound to rise.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-8-1905

[1] In fact, Booth, the assassin, was shot in a barn which was set on fire by the soldiers pursuing him.

358. LETTER TO GOVERNOR'S SECRETARY

[JOHANNESBURG,]
August 30, 1905

TO

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
THE GOVERNOR OF THE ORANGE RIVER COLONY

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the 18th inst., numbered P.S. 15/05, in reply to the submission by my Association of the 1st July last,[1] regarding certain Municipal Bye-laws affecting Coloured persons in the Orange River Colony.

My Association respectfully submits that, if there are no British Indians in the Location, it is a wanton insult offered to the British Indian community to apply the Location Regulations to it, especially as my Association is still not without hope that some day relief will be granted to the British Indians in the matter of immigration to that Colony. My Association cannot understand why the Location Bye-laws, which are meant to deal with the Natives of the country, should be made applicable by an artificial definition to British Indians.

My Association has not raised any objection to a regulation for the compulsory registration of Native servants, but my Association is respectfully of the opinion that the bracketing of British Indians with the Natives of South Africa is in principle wrong and unjust. I am, therefore, directed humbly to request relief in the matter.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ABDUL GANI,
CHAIRMAN
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 23-9-1905

[1] *Vide* "Letter to High Commissioner's Secretary", 1-7-1905

359. LETTER TO CHIEF SECRETARY FOR PERMITS

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

P. O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
September 1, 1905

TO
THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR PERMITS
P. O. BOX 1199
JOHANNESBURG
SIR,

My Association has been informed that a new rule has been introduced in the Permit Office whereby British Indian refugees are required to furnish two European references instead of any two known references, as hitherto. My Association submits that the proposed rule is, first, an insult to the British Indian community in that it implies want of faith in Indian testimony, and secondly, is impracticable in that there are few Indians who are known to the European residents by name. Store-keepers, assistants, salesmen and domestic servants in the employ of British Indians rarely come into contact with Europeans, and to expect them to produce European references would be tantamount to rejection of their application for a permit. Thirdly, it would put a premium on perjury, as it is quite conceivable that a few unscrupulous Indians will not find it difficult to find a few unscrupulous Europeans who would be prepared to perjure themselves for a consideration.

My Association, therefore, submits that the only safeguard is to be found in the respectability of references, irrespective of race or colour. Even then it is quite likely that some cases of perjury would happen, but that would be purely a matter for action against those who would lend themselves to such practices. One or two successful prosecutions would certainly do away with them. At the same time, my Association draws your attention to the fact that such questionable practices in the face of enormous temptations have been comparatively rare in connection with the permits. It is indisputable that there were over 15,000 British Indian male adults resident in the Transvaal before War. Only about 12,000 appear on your register. It is reasonable, therefore, to presume that most of the men who have received their permits are pre-War residents of the Transvaal.

My Association respectfully trusts that the rule will be withdrawn, and that the refugees who are now awaiting permission to return will have their applications granted without delay, as, in accordance with the information in possession of my Association, theyare suffering very severe inconvenience and loss.

I have & c.,

ABDUL GANI,
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Pretoria Archives: L. G. 92/2132

360. THE KAFFIRS OF NATAL

Some members of the British Association in England[1] are at present visiting South Africa. They are all scientists, and possess great knowledge. This is the first event of its kind in South Africa. A few days ago, when they were in Natal, the Hon'ble Mr. Marshall Campbell took them to his residence at Mount Edgecombe. Here these people were shown two things. Firstly, they were shown what the savage Negroes were like, and also their dances, etc. They were thereafter introduced to educated Kaffirs. Addressing them Mr. Dubey, their leader, made a very impressive speech.

This Mr. Dubey is a Negro of whom one should know. He has acquired through his own labours over 300 acres of land near Phoenix. There he imparts education to his brethren, teaching them various trades and crafts and preparing them for the battle of life.

In the course of his eloquent speech Mr. Dubey said that the contempt with which the Kaffirs were regarded was unjustified. The educated among them were better than the uneducated ones, for they worked more, and since they had higher standards of life, they offered more custom to the merchants. It was unfair to burden the Negroes with taxes; also it was like cutting down the very branch one was sitting on. The Kaffirs understood and performed their duties better than the whites. They worked hard and without them the whites could not carry on for a moment. They made loyal subjects, and Natal was the land of their birth. For them there was no country other than South Africa; and to deprive them of their rights over lands, etc., was like banishing them from their home.

Mr. Dubey's speech produced a very good impression on the whites, and he suggested to them that, if they sympathised with the

[1] *Vide* "The British Association: A Suggestion", 26-8-1905

Negroes, they might help him to start a smithy on his farm. The members of the British Association subscribed £60 on the spot and presented the sum to him. The Hon'ble Mr. Marshall Campbell also made a speech on the occasion praising the Kaffirs in Natal and pointed out that they were good and useful and that the ill-will shown to them was due to misunderstanding and was wrong.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-9-1905

361. COUNT TOLSTOY

It is believed that, in the western world at any rate, there is no man so talented, learned and as ascetic as Count Tolstoy. Though he is now nearly eighty years old, he is quite healthy, industrious and mentally alert.

Tolstoy was born of a noble family in Russia. His parents had enormous wealth, which he inherited. He is himself a Russian nobleman, and has, in his youth, rendered very good service to his country by fighting gallantly in the Crimean War. In those days, like the other noblemen of his time, he used to enjoy all the pleasures of the world, kept mistresses, drank and was strongly addicted to smoking. However, when he saw the carnage and bloodshed during the war, his mind brimmed over with compassion. His ideas changed; he began a study of his own religion and read the Bible. He read the life of Jesus Christ which made a deep impression on his mind. Not satisfied with the then current Russian translation of the Bible, he studied Hebrew, the language in which it was originally written, and continued his researches into the Bible. It was also about this time that he discovered in himself a great talent for writing. He wrote a very effective book on the evil consequences of war. His fame spread throughout Europe. To improve the morals of the people he wrote several novels which can be equalled by few books in Europe. The views expressed by him in all these books were so very advanced that the Russian clergy were displeased with him, and he was excommunicated. Disregarding all this, he kept up his efforts and began to propagate his ideas. His writings had a great effect on his own mind. He gave up his wealth and took to a life of poverty. He has lived like a peasant for many years now and earns his needs by his own labour. He has given up all his vices, eats very simple food and has it in him no longer to hurt any living being by thought, word or

deed. He spends all his time in good works and prayer. He believes that:

1. In this world men should not accumulate wealth;
2. no matter how much evil a person does to us, we should always do good to him. Such is the Commandment of God, and also His law;
3. no one should take part in fighting;
4. it is sinful to wield political power, as it leads to many of the evils in the world;
5. man is born to do his duty to his Creator; he should therefore pay more attention to his duties than to his rights;
6. agriculture is the true occupation of man. It is therefore contrary to divine law to establish large cities, to employ hundreds of thousands for minding machines in factories so that a few can wallow in riches by exploiting the helplessness and poverty of the many.

These views he has very beautifully supported by examples from various religions and other old texts. There are today thousands of men in Europe who have adopted Tolstoy's way of life. They have given up all their worldly goods and taken to a very simple life.

Tolstoy is still writing with great energy. Though himself a Russian, he has written many strong and bitter things against Russia concerning the Russo-Japanese War. He has addressed a very pungent and effective letter to the Czar in regard to the war. Selfish officers view him with bitterness, but they, and even the Czar, fear and respect him. Such is the power of his goodness and godly living that millions of peasants are ever ready to carry out his wish no sooner than it is spoken.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-9-1905

362. THE RISE OF JAPAN

The world over, all eyes are turned today towards Japan. Every one admires that country's bravery and sagacity. Count Okuma, a former Minister of Japan, has written an article in the *North American Review*, wherein he says that the present greatness of Japan is the result of reforms carried out over the centuries. She had remained backward in the eyes of the world simply because of her defective system of education. Japan found that she could not possibly keep

foreigners out of the country. She therefore thought of sending out her sons to foreign lands for learning the various sciences and arts. The patriotism shown by her in this regard saved the country's prestige. She introduced the best educational methods from foreign lands. She also introduced compulsory education for boys and girls. At the same time, she did not fail to attend to crafts and industry. She employed foreign experts until her own young men and women had completed their training.

When the educational scheme came into full operation, the Mikado issued an order to be read out in every school. It ran: "May you, our subjects, be devoted to your parents; be loving towards your brothers and sisters; live in peace and amity with your husband or wife; be straightforward in your conduct; be increasingly good and helpful to others; develop your virtues and intellect; bring credit to your country by benevolent deeds; honour the laws in accordance with the Constitution and, when occasion demands, throw yourself into public service and show your valour." Speaking in New York, Baron Keneko said that this was the foundation of Japan's greatness.

For soldiers and sailors also the following seven instructions were issued:

1. Be straightforward and loyal, and stay clear of untruth;
2. respect your superiors, be loyal to your comrades, and eschew arrogance and injustice;
3. obey the orders of your superiors without hesitation;
4. be courageous and brave, and give up unmanliness and cowardice;
5. do not boast of cruel deeds of daring; do not insult or quarrel with others;
6. be virtuous and thrifty; avoid extravagance;
7. preserve your self-respect, and guard against barbarity and niggardliness.

These orders of the Japanese Emperor have promoted virtue in the people, the army and the officials and welded all of them into a united nation. The greatness of Japan today owes much to the above orders.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-9-1905.

363. LETTER TO MINISTER OF EDUCATION

DURBAN,
September 5, 1905

TO
THE HON. THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION

SIR,

We, the parents or guardians of Indian children studying in the Higher Grade Indian School,[1] beg respectfully to submit the following for your consideration and relief.

We have come to know that it is the intention of the Government to change the Higher Grade Indian School at Durban into a school for Coloured children generally, and to observe no distinction as to girls and boys.

We humbly submit that the decision to open the school for all Coloured children is unjust to the Indian community, and is a departure from the assurance given by the then Minister of Education, as also Sir Albert Hime and Mr. Robert Russell, that the school will be reserved for Indian children only. It was established when the Government decided not to admit Indian children to the general schools in the Colony,[2] and we understand that even then a question was raised as to establishing a school for all Coloured children, but after mature consideration the Government decided to give a school to the Indian children alone, and it was on that account that it was given the name it bears today. Moreover, the term Coloured children is an elastic term. Everyone knows the meaning ofthe expression British Indian, but there is no fixed meaning for the term Coloured person, and seeing that the Government have adopted a policy of making distinctions, it is only fair that British Indians should have in the largest town in the Colony a school reserved for them. The Superintendent of Education, the other day, was pleased to say that the Indian parents did not object in the other places in Natal to such a mixture. We respectfully submit, however, that it is hardly fair to draw an analogy from the small townships of Natal. It is Durban which contains the largest free and well-to-do Indian population, and it is, therefore, only natural that the difficulty about such matters would be

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Indian School", 21-12-1900 & "Speech at Indian School", 28-6-1901.

[2] *Vide* "Notes", 3-9-1900.

felt keenly in Durban.

As to the question of non-separation of girls and boys, we can only say, as parents having had considerable experience, and speaking for Indian sentiment, that the decision is calculated to give rise to such legitimate complaint. There are not only practical serious objections to such a course being followed, but in many instances there is also the religious sentiment to be considered, and we doubt not that the Government will be pleased to give full consideration to such sentiments.

In conclusion, therefore, we hope that the instructions regarding the two matters referred to would be withdrawn, and that the Government would be pleased to carry out the assurance given to the Indian community when the Higher Grade Indian School was established.

We have the honour to remain, & c.,

ABDUL CADIR,
AND 99 OTHERS

Indian Opinion, 21-10-1905

364. THE TERMS OF PEACE[1]

Japan has acted generously in waiving more or less two of the conditions for peace which she had announced. Firstly, she would make no claims in lieu of war expenses, except that Russia should pay £12,00,000 to Japan towards the cost of keeping Russian prisoners and treating the wounded. Secondly, the Southelian Island should be divided equally between the two countries. Whereas the terms have spread jubilation among the Russians, they have caused much dissatisfaction among the Japanese, which shows no signs of abatement. The latest cablegrams show that the emissaries of both the countries are eager to return home, as soon as the terms are finalized and the treaty signed. Not only do the Japanese envoys not expect a warm welcome home, but are afraid that the people will look on them with angry eyes.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-9-1905

[1] Peace was signed at Portsmouth (U.S.A.) on September 5, 1905.

365. ATROCITIES ON CHINESE MINERS

In his reply to a question by a Member of Parliament on the above subject, Mr. Lyttelton had promised to make an inquiry and to put an end to the flogging. The description of how the Chinese are flogged, given by *The Daily Express* of Johannesburg, makes pitiful reading. We give below a summary of the same. The correspondent says that the facts given by him have been either personally witnessed by him, or are supported by the evidence of those who had ordered thousands of men to be flogged. On an average 42 Chinese were flogged in a Johannesburg mine every day, not excluding even Sundays, towards the beginning of this year. In the first instance, the Overseer complained against an offending miner, who was then taken to the office of the Compound Manager; the latter, in accordance with the nature of the offence, ordered ten, fifteen or twenty strokes to be administered. Then two Chinese policemen took him about fifteen steps away; the offender stopped at the policeman's word of command, took off his trousers and other clothes, and lay with face to the ground; one of the policemen held down the legs of the offender and the other his head, then the executor of the punishment beat him mildly or violently, according to orders, on his back with a wooden stick three feet long and with a flat end three inches broad. If in the meanwhile, the man made the slightest movement, unable to bear the pain, another pressed him down with his foot on his back, and the number of strokes ordered was completed. In some of the mines, the whip is used instead of the stick[1], and its strokes are so severe that they cause the flesh to swell and cut the skin. When Mr. Cook was Manager at the Norsedippe mines, he used to order any Chinaman, who failed to do 36 inches of drilling, to be punished. His method of punishment was even more cruel than the one described above. That gentleman ordered the use of stout sticks and the blows to be given on the back of the thighs where they were most unbearable; the full number of blows was inflicted even if blood streamed out from the wounds. Sometimes the injury was so severe that the poor Chinaman had to be sent to a hospital. One Mr. Place was later appointed to replace the cruel Mr. Cook. Being considered rather a gentleman among thieves, he ordered Bubber batons to be used instead of sticks. After some time the Mine Directors, finding that the average monthly output did not come up to their expectation, ordered Mr. Place to use more

[1] The original has "the stick is used instead of the whip".

force. On his refusing to do so, he was obliged to resign. On the matter being discussed in the House of Commons, it was ordered that some other mode of punishment should replace flogging. Thereupon, Mr. Place, who had experience of conditions in China, introduced a practice that is prevalent there. He had the offending Chinaman stripped, then had him tied with his pigtail to a flag-pole standing in the compound, and made him stand there for two to three hours, however biting the cold or scorching the sun. Then Mr. Place ordered other Chinamen to make faces at the offender. Another method of punishment was to. tie a thin rope to the offender's left hand; the rope was then passed through a ring in such a way that the man was suspended with his toe just touching the ground and kept thus for two to three hours. At some places, again, the poor miners were handcuffed and tied to a beam placed two feet above the ground and kept in that position for a couple of hours in such a way that no movement was possible. The new punishment was like falling from the frying-pan into the fire. When punishment by flogging was discussed in the House of Commons, the cruel mine officers had stopped the flogging; but everyone forgot to mention that a more cruel form of punishment had been substituted.

By exposing this matter, Mr. Peckmann, the Editor of *The Daily Express*, has earned the unspoken blessings of hundreds of Chinese. If all this is true,—and there is no reason to disbelieve it—what answer will the Mine Directors give their Creator? Small wonder it will be if they are ruined as a result of the curses of the poor labourers in South Africa. Was it for this that the British waged war and conquered the Transvaal ?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-9-1905

366. FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE[1]

We have in an earlier issue of the journal published an account of the career of the benevolent lady, Elizabeth Fry. Just as she brought about an improvement in the condition of prisoners and devoted her life to their service, so also Florence Nightingale sacrificed herself in the service of the men in the army. When the great Crimean War broke out in 1851[2], the British Government was as

[1] (1820-1910), famous nurse and pioneer of hospital reform

[2] In fact the Crimean War broke out on October 23, 1853.

usual not alive to the situation. There was no preparation. And just as in the Boer War, so in the Crimean War, too, they committed blunders in the beginning and suffered a crushing defeat. Fifty years ago, the various facilities for nursing the wounded which are available today did not exist. People did not come out to render aid in large numbers as they do now. Surgery was not as efficacious then as it is today. There were in those days very few men who considered it an act of mercy and merit to succour the wounded. It was at such a time that this lady, Florence Nightingale, came upon the scene and did good work worthy of an angel descended from heaven. She was heart-stricken to learn of the sufferings of the soldiers. Born of a noble and rich family, she gave up her life of ease and comfort and set out to nurse the wounded and the ailing, followed by many other ladies. She left her home on October 21, 1854. She rendered strenuous service in the battle of Inkerman[1]. At that time there were neither beds nor other amenities for the wounded. There were 10,000 wounded under the charge of this single woman. The death rate among the wounded which was 42 per cent. before she arrived, immediately came down to 31 per cent., and ultimately to 5 per cent. This was miraculous, but can be easily visualized. If bleeding could be stopped, the wounds bandaged and the requisite diet given, the lives of many thousands would doubtless be saved. The only thing necessary was kindness and nursing, which Miss Nightingale provided. It is said that she did an amount of work which big and strong men were unable to do. She used to work nearly twenty hours, day and night. When the women working under her went to sleep, she, lamp in hand, went out alone at midnight to the patients' bedside, comforted them, and herself gave them whatever food and other things were necessary. She was not afraid of going even to the battle-front, and did not know what fear was. She feared only God. Knowing that one has to die some day or other, she readily bore whatever hardships were necessary in order to alleviate the sufferings of others.

This lady remained single all her life, which she spent in such good work. It is said that, when she died, thousands of soldiers wept bitterly like little children, as though they had lost their own mother.

No wonder that a country where such women are born is prosperous. That England rules over a wide empire is due not to the

[1] On November 5.

country's military strength, but to the meritorious deeds of such men and women.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-9-1905

367. THE LATE MISS MANNING[1]

The latest number of *India* brings the sad news of the death of Miss Manning, the energetic Secretary of the National Indian Association, which owes its vitality to this noble lady's self- sacrifi-cing work. She was a true friend of young Indians who went to England for study. Her house was ever open to receive them.[2] Her guidance was always at their disposal.Her soirees had become an annual feature, and they brought together Anglo-Indians and Indians and thus promoted mutual goodwill. She was quite unassuming, and as *India* states, she avoided rather than sought public recognition. Her death is a distinct loss to the ever-increasing number of young Indians who visit England year after year for study or otherwise. We refer our readers to our London Letter for further information about this lady.

Indian Opinion, 16-9-1905

368. WHO WILL BE THE NEXT CONGRESS PRESIDENT?

India reports[3] that the following names are being mentioned in connection with the presidential election for the forthcoming

[1] Elizabeth Adelaide Manning, daughter of James Manning, a county court judge and learned lawyer. Became Secretary of the Froebel Society and was one of the founders of Girton College, Cambridge. In 1877, became Honorary Secretary of the National Indian Association and held the post till her death on August 10, 1905 at the age of 77. Edited *The Indian Magazine and Review* and was interested in all social movements in India.

[2] Gandhiji appears to have often visited the house when he was in England for his legal studies. *Vide Autobiography*, Part I, Ch. XXII.

[3] As from the Madras *Mail*.

Congress session: the Hon'ble Mr. Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Mr. Eardley Norton[1], Rao Bahadur Mudholkar[2], Sir Guru Das Bannerji[3], Dr. Rash Bihari Ghose[4] and Babu Kalicharan Bannerji[5]. All these are worthy gentlemen and have rendered great service to India. Even so, Mr. Gokhale's name among them is outstanding. He has put up an admirably tough fight against Lord Curzon in the Imperial Legislature.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-9-1905

369. HIS HIGHNESS THE GAEKWAD OF BARODA AND HIS MINISTER

Lord Curzon is not pleased with the appointment, by His Highness the Gaekwad, of Mr. Dutt[6] as his Minister. He has therefore, as The *Bengalee* reports, issued a confidential circular to all the Indian princes to the effect that, if any of them wanted to employ persons who had resigned from the Indian Civil Service, he should obtain the previous sanction of the Government. This appears to be one of Lord Curzon's last battles.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-9-1905

[1] Barrister and public worker in Madras.

[2] Later, presided over the Congress session at Bankipore in 1912; the original,however, has Akolkar.

[3] Ex-Justice, Chairman of the Banga Jatiya Vidya Parishad (Society for the Promotion of National Education in Bengal)

[4] Presided over the Congress Session at Madras in 1908.

[5] An Indian Christian, who took a keen interest in Congress affairs.

[6] Shri Romesh Chandra Dutt (1848-1909). Member of the Indian Civil Service; a close student of ancient Indian culture and civilization; author of *The Economic History of India since the Advent of the East India Company;* presided over the Congress Session at Lucknow in 1899; associated as Revenue Minister and later Diwan or Prime Minister with the former Baroda State. *Vide* "Letter to H.J. Hofmeyr", 2-6-1905

370. BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA

GOOD OPPORTUNITY FOR INDUSTRIOUS PERSONS

The construction of railways is going on in British Central Africa, for which, we learn, labour is needed. We are making further inquiries in the matter. Meanwhile, those desiring to go there may please send us their names and addresses in a neat and legible hand. We shall maintain a register of their names; and if we find that the conditions of migration are favourable, we shall let them know through this journal.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-9-1905

371. EARTHQUAKE IN ITALY

A severe earthquake rocked Calabria[1] in Italy a few days ago rendering thousands of people homeless and pitiably crying for aid. The King of Italy has donated £4,000 for relief. The numbers of those either dead or seriously injured are 300 at Parghelly, 200 at Geplo, and 2,000 at Martereno. The big quake was followed by another mild one after two or three days. The people are panic-stricken and are running about from place to place, and some are even leaving the country. It is estimated that the injured and the dead total 5,000. The earthquake of 1857 which involved a larger area took a toll of about ten thousand lives. Calabria has frequently had such calamities. During the 75 years preceding 1857, the total loss of life was 1,11,000, giving an annual average of 1,500 lives. There have been several earthquakes in Calabria during the last fifty years, but none of them caused so much damage as the present one. Many villages have been wiped out, and about a hundred thousand people have been rendered homeless. The government of the country is trying its utmost to give them all possible help.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-9-1905

[1] Mountainous region in extreme South-west Italy.

372. THE CHINESE AND THE INDIANS : A COMPARISON[1]

There are many Chinese living in Johannesburg. They cannot be said to be economically better off than the Indians. Many of them are merely artisans. A few days ago I had the occasion to observe how they lived. On seeing their way of life and comparing it with our own, I felt very sad.

They have founded the Chinese Association for public work, and for this purpose, they maintain a spacious hall. It is a strong structure built of brick and is kept clean and tidy. They meet the expenses for its maintenance by sub-letting the large plot of land they have taken out on lease. Since the Chinese have no facilities for lodging, they have started a Cantonese Club, which serves as a meeting place, a lodge and also as a library. They have acquired for the Club land on a long lease and have built on it a *pucca* one-storeyed building. There they all live in great cleanliness and do not stint themselves in the matter of living space; and seen within and from outside, it would look like some good European Club. They have in it separate rooms marked drawing, dining, meeting, committee room and the Secretary's room and the library, and do not use any room except for the purpose for which it is intended. Other rooms adjoining these are let out as bedrooms. It is such a fine and clean place that any Chinese gentleman visiting the town can be put up there. The entrance fee is £5, and the annual subscription varies according to the members' profession. The club has about 150 members who meet every Sunday and amuse themselves with games. The members can avail themselves of club facilities on week days also.

We have nothing similar to boast of. In no city Of South Africa have we a place of our own where an Indian visitor can be put up. Our hospitality is no doubt excellent, but it is bound to be limited. If we had something like a club, it could be used in a variety of ways. It would be very profitable if people could spend their leisure hours at such a public place instead of in one another's homes: no single person is taxed thereby; friendship grows; and our prestige, too, is enhanced. The rules of cleanliness also can be better observed. There is no doubt that this activity is quite essential and can be carried on without much cost.

It is up to us to take a lesson from the club founded by the

[1] This was published as "From Our Johannesburg Correspondent".

Chinese and start one on the same pattern. The charge of uncleanliness made against us is not totally unfounded. To establish such a club is the best way of giving the lie to it.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-9-1905

373. ISHWARCHANDRA VIDYASAGAR

We have already given in these columns brief biographical sketches of a few good men and women of Europe. The purpose of these sketches is to enlighten our readers and to enable them to make their own lives fruitful by emulating these men and women.

The strong movement that is being carried on in Bengal to boycott British goods is of no mean significance. Such a movement has been possible there because education is more widespread and the people in Bengal are more alert than in other parts of India. Sir Henry Cotton has remarked that Bengal holds sway from Calcutta to Peshawar. It is necessary to know the reasons for this.

There is no gainsaying the fact that a nation's rise or fall depends upon its great men. The people who produce good men cannot but be influenced by them. The main reason for the special distinction that we find in Bengal is that many great men were born there during the last century. Beginning with Rammohan Roy[1], one heroic figure after another has raised Bengal to a position higher than that of the other provinces. It can be said that Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar was the greatest among them. "Vidyasagar", which means an ocean of learning, was an honorific of Ishwarchandra, conferred on him by the pundits of Calcutta for his profound Sanskrit learning. But Ishwarchandra was not an ocean of learning only; he was an ocean of compassion, of generosity, as well as of many other virtues. He was a Hindu, and a Brahmin too. But to him, Brahmin and Sudra, Hindu and Muslim, were all alike. In any good deeds that he performed, he made no distinction between high and low. When his professor had an attack of cholera, he himself nursed him. As the professor was poor, Ishwarchandra called in the doctors at his own cost and himself attended to the patient's toilet.

[1] (1774-1833), A great social and religious reformer, founder of the Brahmo Samaj, supported abolition of *Sati* and worked hard for the spread of education.

He used to buy *luchi*[1] and curds and feed the poor Muslims at his own cost, in Chandranagar[2], and helped with money those who needed it. If he saw a cripple or any one in distress by the roadside, he took him to his own house and nursed him personally. He felt grief at other people's sorrows and joy at their joys.

Himself he led a very simple life. His dress consisted of a coarse *dhoti*, a shawl of a similar kind to cover his body, and slippers. In that dress he used to call on Governors, and in the same dress he greeted the poor. He was really *a fakir*, a *sannyasi* or a *yogi*. It behoves us all to reflect on his life.

Ishwarchandra was born of poor parents in a small village in the Midnapur *taluka*[3]. His mother was a very saintly woman, and many of her virtues were inherited by Ishwarchandra. Even in those days, his father knew some English, and decided to give his son a better education. Ishwarchandra began his schooling at the age of five. At the age of eight, he had to walk sixty miles to Calcutta to join a Sanskrit college. He had such a prodigious memory that he learnt the English numerals by looking at the figures on the milestones while walking along the road. At sixteen he became well versed in Sanskrit, and was appointed a Sanskrit teacher. Rising step by step, he at last became the Principal of the College where he had studied. The Govern-ment held him in great respect. But, being of an independentnature,he could not adjust himself to the Director of Public Instruction and resigned his post. Sir Frederick Halliday, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, sent for him and requested him to withdraw his resignation, but Ishwarchandra flatly declined.

His nobility and humanity had their true blossoming after he had given up his job. He saw that Bengali was a very good language, but appeared poor for want of fresh contributions. He, therefore, began writing books in Bengali. He produced very powerful books, and it is mainly due to Vidyasagar that the Bengali language is at present in full bloom and has spread throughout India.

But he also realised that merely writing books was not enough; and so he founded schools. It was Vidyasagar who founded the Metropolitan College in Calcutta. It is staffed entirely by Indians.

Considering that elementary education was quite as necessary as higher education, he started primary schools for the poor. This was a stupendous task in which he needed government help. The

[1] A kind of unleavened and fried bread made from flour.

[2] In Wesr Bengal, then a French possession

[3] In West Bengal

Lieutenant-Governor assured him that the Government would bear the cost; but the Viceroy, Lord Ellenborough[1], was opposed to this and the bills preferred by Vidyasagar were not passed. The Lieutenant-Governor was very sorry and suggested that Ishwarchandra might file a suit against him. Brave Ishwarchandra replied: "Sir, I have never gone to a court of law to get justice for myself. How, then, is it possible for me to proceed against you?" At that time other European gentlemen who used to help Ishwarchandra in his work rendered him good financial aid. Not being very rich himself, he often ran into debt by helping others out of their difficulties; nevertheless, when a proposal was made to raise a public subscription for him, he turned it down.

He did not rest satisfied with thus putting higher and elementary education on a sound footing. He saw that, without the education of girls, the education of boys alone would not be enough. He found out a verse from Manu which said that the education of women was a duty. Pressing it into service, he wrote a book on the subject and, in collaboration with Mr. Bethune founded the Bethune College for imparting education to women. But it was more difficult to get women to go to college than to found it. As he lived a saintly life and was very learned, he was respected by all. So he met prominent people and persuaded them to send their womenfolk to the College; and thus, their daughters began to attend the College. Today there are in that College many well-known and talented women of sterling character, so much so that they can by themselves carry on its administration.

Still not satisfied, he started schools imparting elementary education to small girls. Here food, clothing and books were supplied free of charge. Consequently, one can see today thousands of educated women in Calcutta.

To meet the need for teachers he started a Teacher's Training College.

Seeing the very pitiable condition of Hindu widows, he advocated the remarriage of widows; he wrote books and made speeches on the subject. The Brahmins of Bengal opposed him, but he did not care. People threatened to kill him, but he went on undaunted. He got the Government to pass a law legalizing remarriage of widows. He persuaded many men and arranged the remarriage of daughters of prominent men widowed in childhood. He encouraged his own son to marry a poor widow.

[1] Governor-General of India, 1842-4

The *kulin* or high-born Brahmins were given to taking a number of wives. They were not ashamed of marrying as many as twenty of them. Ishwarchandra wept to see the sufferings of such women; and he carried on his effort till the end of his life to eradicate this wicked custom.

When he saw thousands of poor people in Burdwan suffering from malaria, he maintained a doctor at his own cost and personally distributed medicines among them. He went to the houses of the poor and gave them the necessary help. In this way he worked ceaselessly for two years, secured government help and called for more doctors.

In the course of this work, he saw the necessity of a knowledge of medicine. So he studied homeopathy, attained proficiency in it, and began to prescribe medicines to the sick. He did not mind travelling long distances in order to help the poor.

He was equally a stalwart in helping big princes out of their difficulties. If any of them had injustice done to him or was reduced to poverty, Ishwarchandra used to help him with his influence, knowledge and money, and mitigate his distress.

While he was engaged in these activities, Vidyasagar passed away in 1890, at the age of seventy. There have been few in this world like him. It is said that had Ishwarchandra been born among a European people, an imposing column, like the one raised by the British for Nelson, would have been erected as a memorial to him. However, a column to honour Ishwarchandra already stands in the hearts of the great and the small, the rich and the poor of Bengal.

It will now be clear to us how Bengal provides an example for the other parts of India to follow.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-9-1905

374. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LT.-GOVERNOR

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

BOX NO. 6522,

JOHANNESBURG,

September 16, 1905

TO

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE LT.-GOVERNOR
PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th instant, No. LG 97/3, making certain enquiries about a letter addressed by me to the Chief Secretary for Permits[1] on the lst day of September current.

The writer of this letter has been in the Colony since 1883 with but brief interruptions, and has been in very close touch with the Indian community whom he has had the honour to represent now for over twelve years, and the first proof, therefore, that is respectfully submitted in support of the statement that there were over 15,000 British Indian male adults resident in the Transvaal before War is the writer's own experience.

My Association further submits the following in support of the statement:

1. In the year 1899, the British Agent submitted to His Majesty's Government a report giving roughly the British population, and the figures were published in the newspapers. To the best of the writer's recollection as to the British Indians, the figures given were 15,000.
2. In the year 1895, a petition was presented to His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies by British Indians in the Transvaal which is published in a Blue-Book on the grievances of the British Indians in South Africa. A rough estimate was made of the British Indian population in the Transvaal at the time and, in accordance with it, there were at least 5,000 adult male Indians, but those who were in South Africa between 1895 and 1899 know that the largest increase in the Indian population of the Transvaal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chief Secretary for Permits", 1-9-1905

took place between 1895 and 1899. The increase was considered to be so alarming that the late President Kruger was urged by some of the present anti-Indian agitators to take steps, but happily, so far as Indian immigration was concerned, the late President turned a deaf ear to any such suggestion. It was in 1896 that India was visited by the plague followed by two successive famines of extraordinary dimensions. The largest known exodus from India took place during that time. The steamers *Courland, Naderi, Hooseni,* and *Crescent* were specially run between Bombay and South African ports, each having on board per voyage over 400 Indians bound for South Africa. Most of these, it was then a matter of common knowledge, found their way to the Transvaal.

3. It was in the early part of 1897 that the Natal Immigration Act, was passed. In the December of 1896, the Durban Demonstration[1] took place in connection with the *Courland* and the *Naderi* which brought together over 800 passengers of whom in that month alone 500 went to the Transvaal. Each of these steamers made four trips per year, and, if they brought for the Transvaal without allowing for domiciled Indians only 300 per trip, there would be a yearly increase of 4,800 Indians between the four steamers alone, not to take into consideration Indians brought from the other parts of India by the Kings Line and the British Indian Steam Navigation Co. The facts as to the number of passengers per these steamers can easily be verified by reference to the steamship companies or the Port Authorities in Natal.

   The writer's opinion is supported by that of other British Indians who are very old residents of the Transvaal.

4. As to the opposite view, if reference is made to the public statements that have been made by what may be termed the anti-Indian party, it is difficult to speak of its representations with moderation. In almost every material particular, the allegations made by the members of that party have been over and over again challenged and even disproved, and yet they have not scrupled to reiterate them and to inflame the prejudices of the people against British Indians. To take only three instances. Certain figures were given by them regarding the number of traders in Pietersburg before War and after War. Both these Statements have

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897

been challenged. Names of the persons trading before War have been produced, and yet the original statement has been reiterated. They have said that it was impossible for British Indians before War to enter the Transvaal and not be registered. My Association has no hesitation in saying that the statement is entirely devoid of truth. Hardly one-third of the people who entered this country were actually registered, and they were only those who had to take out trade licences and even then the number did not necessarily include partners. My Association is in a position to prove from unimpeachable testimony that there were British Indians in the Transvaal before War who never paid the registration fee. Some of them are well known and can be identified by respectable European merchants.

The third statement that has been made is with reference to the alleged Indian exodus to Potchefstroom from Natal. Those that have made this statement can know nothing of the conditions of the working of the Naval laws regarding indentured labourers, and the statement has been made to the effect that it is men drawn from this class who have crowded into Potchefstroom. The detractors of Indians have, so far as my Association is aware, never yet succeeded in introducing any proof in support of the many statements they have made, and have never taken into account the great fact that it was Johannesburg which, before War, supported the largest Indian population, and it is from Johannesburg that the Indians have now radiated into other parts of the Colony. The trade in Johannesburg before War, so far as the Indians were concerned, as it was confined to the Dutch and the Natives, was very fair. Both the Dutch and Native trade at present stands at its lowest ebb. The result is that many traders who found it impossible to eke out a living in Johannesburg have now established in the different parts of the Transvaal. The Johannesburg Location supported a large number of Indian landlords. These have not only been impoverished, but have been obliged to leave Johannesburg and go to other parts of the Colony. If the original condition of Johannesburg was resumed and security of tenure re-assured to the British Indians which they enjoyed before War, most of the Indian population, which is dispersed over the different areas in the Colony, would again gravitate to Johannesburg and the anti-Indian gentlemen would have the satisfaction of knowing that the Indians have certainly disappeared from the many townships.

My Association will be pleased, if an enquiry were to be held, to adduce proof to verify every word of the statements made above. As

the Chief Secretary for Permits has forwarded my letter of the 1st September to His Excellency for direction, may I venture to express the hope that what appeared to my Association to be impossible rules, as to European references, will be withdrawn without delay. While all kinds of unsupportable statements are being made with reference to British Indians, innocent and honest men have to suffer much inconvenience and loss without any fault of their own, a hardship which they were never obliged to undergo when they were under a flag not their own.

I HAVE &C.,
ABDUL GANI,
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Pretoria Archives: L. G. 92/2132: Letter No. 504

375. THE HOONDAMAL CASE AGAIN[1]

The Supreme Court had another opportunity of deciding upon a point arising out of the Dealers' Licenses Act of Natal. This time it was a review of the decision, some time ago published in these columns, of the Town Council of Durban, confirming that of the Licensing Officer, who refused to register the transfer of Mr. Hoondamal's licence from Grey Street to West Street. The judgment given by the learned Chief Justice is most disappointing. It may be in accordance with law but certainly not with justice or equity. The obvious answer to this is that judges have to interpret and not to make law, but we respectfully think that it must be a serious state of law if it does not provide a remedy for an admitted evil. The Licensing Officer has extensive powers with reference to granting of licences to trade in the Colony. The learned Chief Justice said that, under the law, he was not to exercise judicial discretion. It, therefore, amounts to this, that the Licensing Officer may, in order to spite a personal enemy, decline to grant him his licence, and the Courts would be powerless to intervene. The dividing line between political animus and personal enmity, so far as such cases are concerned, is very narrow. The Dealers' Licenses Act is an administrative enactment. It is not a political law, in any sense of the term. In not granting the licence to Mr. Hoondamal, the Licensing Officer has been undoubtedly guided by political animus against the class to which the appellant belongs.

[1] *Vide* "Hoondamal's Licence", 15-10-1904

Indeed, he has said so in his reason, which is that it was not advisable to grant further licences to Asiatics in West Street. However, the mischief is done. The highest tribunal in the country has felt itself powerless to correct the evil. Every Indian licence is at stake; and if there is to be any relief secured, British Indian merchants must gird up their loins, rise to the occasion, and carry on ceaseless warfare until the disgraceful Act is blotted out of the Statute-book. Representations must be made to the Government, to the local Parliament, and to the Colonial Secretary, inviting their attention to the matter. If the local Parliament, whose members, in the words of the late Sir John Robinson, are trustees for the unrepresented British Indians, would not listen, the India Office, which is the paramount trustee for the millions of India, should intervene and induce Natal to grant the very small measure of justice to which Indians are entitled. The late Mr. Harry Escombe, at the time of introducing the Bill, said that the success of the measure would depend upon the moderation with which the powers given under the Act were used, and that, if the local authorities failed to exercise their powers moderately, they might have to be taken away. The Act has been in operation for over eight years, and no one can deny it has been capriciously enforced on many an occasion, and it has always hung like Damocles' sword over the heads of the Indian merchants in the Colony. It is time that the sword was removed, and that the sufferers were permitted to feel that they are under British constitutional rule and not under Russian autocracy.

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376. MR. GOCH AND INDIANS

Mr. George Goch, the Mayor of Johannesburg, let himself go, as the phrase goes, at the meeting recently held in Potchefstroom under the auspices of the Transvaal Progressive Association. He spoke, not as simple Mr. Goch holding independent views, but as a representative of the Progressive Association, and as one bound to express the official views, whether they coincided with his own conscientious opinions or not. Mr. Goch, in 1903, was among the few who raised their voices in favour of British Indians, at the deliberations of the Johannesburg Municipality. He then considered Asiatic competition to be quite healthy. He considered the British Indian as a desirable citizen, because he was industrious, thrifty and law-abiding. Mr. Goch, the Mayor of Johannesburg, does not hesitate to retail the falsehoods that were set in motion by Mr. Loveday and his friends. He does not

scruple to vilify British Indians. He sees in them a danger to the white community, whereas only a short time ago he considered them to be a strength to any community in which they were placed. To him, Asiatics are, to-day,

> totally different in their social conditions, whom it is not fair to allow to compete against the white traders, because they could not compete against each other. The Asiatics have very little sense of the burden of citizenship in the country. They avoid all the necessary burdens and duties which the white people have to undertake, and consequently,

says Mr. Goch, triumphantly,

> it is not fair to pit the white trader against the Asiatic and to allow the white trader to go to the wall because there is some far-fetched sentiment (to which, by the way, he himself succumbed in 1903) that, because the Asiatic is a British subject from another section of the Empire, he has the right to their sympathy.

Mr. Goch has not told us what constitutes the burden of citizenship. If it consists in giving public entertainments, if it consists in opening champagne bottles, we must confess that the poor Asiatic has very little sense of such burden; but if it means a readiness to comply with the laws of the country, to pay one's taxes, to earn one's livelihood by the sweat of one's brow instead of becoming a public charge, to conform to the social laws relating to morality, to assist in defending one's country of domicile, no matter how or in what humble capacity, then we have no hesitation in saying that the Indian has well discharged the burden of citizenship. We are afraid, however, that there is no arguing with people who would wilfully mislead. Mr. Goch knows all that we have been saying about the Indian, but expediency, an eagerness to snatch votes, required from him a change of front. Mr. Goch's example shows to what pass public life has come under modern conditions. The gods must be pleased at any cost. Nothing is too sacred to be sacrificed in order to appease them, and if this is to be the outcome of popular government, the time is not far distant when it will stink in the nostrils, and become a byword for hypocrisy and insincerity.

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377. INDIANS IN THE O. R. C.

We publish in another column the correspondence[1] between Lord Selborne and the British Indian Association at Johannesburg with reference to the status of British Indians in the Orange River Colony. Lord Selborne's reply is extremely courteous, but equally disappointing. In spite of His Excellency's anxiety and desire to soothe British Indians, he has been undoubtedly led away by the reports from the local officials who have smartly succeeded in confusing the real issue. The British Indian Association naturally protested against Indians being classed with all sorts of Coloured people, including the Natives of South Africa. It resented the application of regulations aimed at the Natives of the soil to the Indians who may go to the Colony. The injustice is all the more serious because, in practice, very few Indians are affected, as the application of such legislation to them is not called for by the circumstances of the case. The utility of the registration of servants has never been questioned. The regulations that have been reproduced in these columns from time to time have been shown to be restrictive of the personal liberty and insulting to those affected by them. It was of such legislation that the British Indian Association has rightly complained. What does it get in return ? An illustration, shown from Ceylon, to justify registration of servants, which has never been questioned! The Association, in its concluding reply,[1] has also very properly drawn Lord Selborne's attention to the fact that British Indians do expect in the near future to have the right to enter the Orange River Colony, and if the expectation is justly entertained, restrictive legislation in anticipation is open to exception. The matter is one that calls for immediate action, and we hope that Lord Selborne will be pleased to see that justice is done to British Indians who have now settled in the Orange River Colony, or who may have to go there in the future.

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[1] *Vide* "Letter to Governor's Secretary", 30-8-1905

378. THE FIRST COLONIAL-BORN INDIAN BARRISTER[1]

We extend a hearty welcome to Mr. Bernard Gabriel, who has just returned a full-fledged barrister from England. Under ordinary circumstances, it would be no cause to specially notice a lad becoming a barrister, but the event in which we are now interested is very significant. Mr. Gabriel comes of Indian parents who are among the earliest settlers in the Colony and who are drawn from the indentured class. It reflects the highest credit on them that they and their elder sons sacrificed almost all they had in order to give their youngest son a sound education. It speaks well for their public spirit and parental love. They have raised the poor Indians, who for their livelihood have to serve under indenture, in the estimation of all right-thinking men. Mr. Bernard Gabriel has also shown that, under the circumstances, the children of poor Indians are capable of attaining to a high degree of proficiency, and we think that the Colonists, too, ought to take pride in the event. There is another aspect. Whilst, as an Indian, Mr. Bernard Gabriel has every right to congratulate himself on being a barrister in legal education, he has to recognise the fact that his career is only commencing. He has to consider himself as trustee for his fellow young men in the same walk of life, and it is his example which, if well set, will induce other parents to send their children to England to finish their education. He has adopted an honourable profession, but if it be used as a means for amassing wealth, there may be failure staring him in the face. If his attainments are placed at the service of the community, they will grow more and more. We hope, therefore, that Mr. Gabriel has brought with him a real knowledge of the traditions of his profession, and that in all he does he will be prudent, calm, humble and patriotic.

Indian Opinion, 23-9-1905

[1] An address couched in similar terms was presented to Bernard Gabriel on September 19 at a meeting of Durban Indians in the Congress Hall (*Indian Opinion,*, 23-9-1905). Though Gandhiji does not appear to have been present and is not among the signatories, it *is* not unlikely that he had a hand in drafting the address, which contains the following sentence: "We have no doubt but that the interest and betterment of your countrymen, and the advocacy of their cause in South Africa will have your warm support, and that your influence for their well-being will ever be used on their behalf."

379. PERMIT REGULATIONS IN THE TRANSVAAL

STRONG REPRESENTATION BY BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Recently the Permit Office has introduced a regulation to the effect that persons seeking permits can get them only on furnishing the names of two Europeans for reference. This is outrageous. The Association has made a strong representation against it. It has been stated therein that there could be very few cases where a European would know Indians by name. The making of such a regulation only means that the Government does not intend to allow any more Indians to enter the Transvaal. This regulation will, moreover, encourage fraudulent practices; for many dishonest Europeans will come forward who will not hesitate to take a false oath for the sake of money. So far only 12,000 Indians have entered the Transvaal. Before the war their number was 15,000. Hence there is reason to believe that 3,000 more of the former residents are still to return. They are suffering many hardships, and it is the duty of the Government to admit them without delay. The permit Officer had forwarded the petition to H. E. the Lieutenant-Governor, who wanted to know the grounds on which it had been stated that there were 15,000 Indians before the war. In its reply the Association has submitted the following grounds :

(1) the personal experience of the President, Mr. Abdul Gani;

(2) the personal experience of other early Indian residents;

(3) the Report of the British Agent before the war in which the Indian population was shown to be about 15,000;

(4) the population in 1895 was stated as 5,000.

It would not be surprising if those who entered the Transvaal between 1895 and 1899 were to number 10,000. Thousands of men left India, because of the plaque in 1896 and the severe famine in 1897-8. Again stringent-laws were enacted in Natal in 1897. All this resulted in many Indians entering the Transvaal. Though there was at that time alien rule in the Transvaal, Indians could freely enter the country. The late Mr. Kruger did not listen to the suggestion that this be stopped. At the time, four steamships, *the Naderi*, the *Courland*, the *Hooseni*, and the *Crescent* used to ply between Bombay and South Africa, and each of them brought hundreds of Indians to South Africa. Each of the steamers made four trips a year, and calculating at the rate of three hundred passengers per trip, the sixteen trips in a year

must have resulted in the immigration of 4,800 Indians.

Besides laying this evidence before the Government, the Association has also shown the statements of Mr. Loveday[1] and others to be quite untrue and has made an appeal to the Government to pay no attention to them and immediately admit the poor Indians that still remain stranded outside.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-9-1905

380. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
September 23, 1905

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

Your letter to hand. What you write bout Kitchin is astounding. You have nothing to do with his temperament. He is not your boss. You can certainly reply to what he says without losing your temper. You are both equals, and can discuss matters as such. When I say, "You should tolerate him whatever he might say", it does not mean that you should not reply; it only means that you should not get excited while opposing his statements. I know the West incident. There the mistake was mine. I had asked him to go to Kitchin; but I forget the fact that the venerable Mr. Kitchin cannot tolerate anybody's presence. This is his shortcoming which we should ignore.

I have made it quite clear to you that I do not care in the least even if Kitchin or any other person goes away. The press will not close down on that account. My ultimate reliance is on you and West. The press is not going to close down so long as you two are there. It in spite of this you entertain any doubt, I would call that a weakness in you.

Though the expenditure on the electric lights, etc., in the press is not going to be incurred without reference to me, you may declare in the meeting that it cannot be done without reference to me, I have agreed to sanction £40 for it at the most. I have not given permission for the construction of an office in Kitchin's house at the expense of the press. I do not mind giving him a telephone.

You may give money to Mannering.

[1] Member, Transvaal Legislative Council, *Vide* Vol. IV, pp. 207-8.

You should speak to Kalabhai[1]. I have no idea how much money has been given to him. But he has most probably drawn Rs.500 from Revashankarbhai. I shall write again to Kalabhai about the work, if you want me to do so. You should not be diffident in such matter. I shall write to Shri Revashankarbhai.

Hemchand[2] is not to be dispensed with. Ramnath also is not to be relieved without the matter being given serious thought.

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I have received the telegram regarding Gokuldas. I wonder if he has brought his permit with him or left it with Kalyandas. If Suleman Ismail wants the bill for the money, the receipt of which we have acknowledged, do send it to him.

From a photostat of the original Gujarati: S. N. 4250

381. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
September 27, 1905

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I have received your letter. There is a letter from Hemchand today saying that a notice dispensing with his services has been served on him. I have thereupon sent a telegram asking that he be not discharged. I do not relish the idea of discharging even Ramnath. But if he can be posted with Chi. Jayashanker, you may do so. I am not at all inclined to discharge Hemchand for no fault of his. I intend to make some special use of him. I have already informed you that I have written to Kitchin about this.

I have written a letter[3] to Virji today reprimanding him. I have written to Kalabhai asking him to pay up the money by the end of the year.

Hemchand, it appears, does not get my letters. I am enclosing herewith a letter for him which you may read and then pass on to him. Let me know whether you receive the letters sent to the Grey Street address or not.

As he has asked for it, I have written to you to send Suleman

[1] Gokuldas alias Kalabhai, son of Permanand, a cousin of Gandhiji

[2] A relative of Shrimad Rajachandra

[3] Not available

Ismail the bill for the amount we have acknowledged in the paper. If after that, he does not pay, we shall write it off.

I do not think I shall be able to train Gokuldas for Gujarati in two months. He seems to be very weak in Gujarati.

You have arranged Manilal's time-table very well. Since he likes working on the land, ask him to do some work around the house. The main thing is to clear the big plot of land and water the plants. He will get to know more by himself if he looks after the trees. What is he learning? I shall write to you about his English composing. It will be all right for the present if he takes training in Gujarati.

I see that your mind has weakened a little. The real need is for you to stay here with me for a few months, which, however, does not seem to be possible. It is not enough that you are firm about staying on in the press. I have already shown you conclusively as in a mathematical problem that the press won't break down. You had agreed with me in that, and now you write that the circumstances are unbearable and precarious. This is exactly what I consider a sign of weakness. You have not been able to consider—nor did you have the time to do so—what our duty is in regard to the press, what your own duty is or how to deal with the workers; and your weakness is brought out by the adverse circumstances. I consider it a good thing that this has happened; but it can be so considered onlyif you understand the purport of it. I cannot explain all this in a letter. But this much I do say that: (1) the press will not break down so long as even a single man is entirely devoted to it; (2) I do not see anything better for you or the others than the press; (3) however bitter a man might be, he is sure to come round if we bestow upon him pure love in thought, word and deed; (4) but, whether he comes round or not, our duty is to follow the same course without misgivings. I believe it will be better if you train Hemchand and free yourself a little. And I want you to do so.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the original Gujarati: S.N. 4252

382. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
September 29, 1905

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

Orchard writes to me saying that you gave Ram directly an order for binding a book, and he complains that, if he is the foreman, this was irregular. He also states the book is not well bound. I have written to him saying that if you have done so, the giving of the order directly is irregular, but that you could not possibly have meant any offence to him or to break the rules, and I have also asked him to have a man-to-man conversation with you. I should, therefore, like you to have a chat with him and let me know also what this is about. It is quite true that all the orders should be delivered to him and not to the different men directly. Please send a copy of *Indian Opinion* to Karsondas[1], Ranavav[2], comp[limentary].

Yours sincerely
M. K. GANDHI

C. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
c/o *Indian Opinion*
PHOENIX

From a photostat of the original: S. N. 4253

[1] A brother of Gandhiji
[2] A town near Porbandar in Kathiawad

383. PETITION TO COLONIAL SECRETARY, TRANSVAAL[1]

[Before *September 30, 1905*][2]

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY

PRETORIA

THE PETITION OF HOLDERS OF STANDS IN THE MALAY LOCATION, JOHANNESBURG, BEING MALAY AND OTHER SUBJECTS OF THE CROWN HUBLY SHEWETH,

That your petitioners have been resident in what is Known as the Malay Location in Johannesburg for a number of years.

The Malay Location was established about the year 1893.

Your petitioners have held stands in the Location as monthly tenants for a number of years, but they have never been hitherto disturbed in their occupation.

Many of your petitioners have built very substantial premises of burnt-brick. Others have wood and iron buildings, but the majority of them are, in your petitioners' estimation, more or less expensive structures.

Some time before the year 1899 an attempt was made by the late Boer Government to dispossess your petitioners and to remove them to some other site, but through the intervention of the then British Agent, the attempt was frustrated.

Your petitioners often approached the then British Agent during the Boer regime for a fixed tenure of tile stands in their possession but they were not able to secure relief although the fullest sympathy was expressed with your petitioners.

Your petitioners are law-abiding British subjects. They have always observed the sanitary regulations and there never has been any complaint made either with reference to the quality of their residences or their mode of living.

The want of definiteness about their holdings very considerably hampers your petitioners.

Your petitioners, therefore, humbly pray that the Government

[1] This was signed by most of the stand-holders in the Malay Location.

[2] From the date of publication of *Indian Opinion*

will be pleased to allow your petitioners to have some fixed tenure of the stands in the Malay Location, and for this act of justice and mercy your petitioners, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray.

Indian Opinion, 30-9-1905

384. LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY IN THE TRANSVAAL

Although Sir Richard-Solomon, the Attorney-General for the Transvaal, stated that no contentious legislation would be introduced during the present session of the Transvaal Legislative Council, the latest *Government Gazette* to hand gives a list of ordinances passed by the dying Council, some of which are without doubt highly contentious, if, that is to say, the feelings of those whom they are intended to affect are of any consequence. There is, for instance, the Municipal Amending Ordinance which gives any Town Council in the Transvaal the power "with the approval of the Lieutenant-Governor to close any Locations for Natives established or laid out by it or under its control", provided that the Lieutenant-Governor may, before giving his approval to the closing of such Location, require the Council to lay out other land suitable for a Location. It makes further provision for compensation to be paid to the Natives for the value of their huts, etc. Section 10 gives the Council the power to set apart and maintain Asiatic Bazaars, and it makes the provision with reference to Native Locations above referred to applicable to the Asiatic Bazaars, which means that there is only this distinction between the two, namely, that, whereas Natives may be compelled to reside in the Location, Asiatics may not be compelled to remove to the Locations, which are euphemistically described as Bazaars. This legislation regarding Asiatic Bazaars arises from the struggle of the Pretoria Municipality for obtaining control over the Asiatic Bazaars at Pretoria. In theory, there may be no difference between governmental and municipal control; but, in practice, it will very largely depend upon the temper of the municipality that may happen to be in authority. Instead, therefore, of there being a continuity of policy regarding Bazaars, there will now be differences in accordance with the fancy of each municipality. It is very difficult to know why such legislation has been passed during the last days of the existing Council, in view of the fact that the whole of the Asiatic question is still a matter of correspondence between the Home Government and the Transvaal Government. Many more important and pressing matters have been naturally held in abeyance, in view of the establishment next year of an elective Council. The amending ordinances, however,

authorise the municipalities to impose licences for tea-rooms or eating-houses which may be used exclusively by Asiatics. For this, we believe the Asiatics in the Transvaal have to thank some Chinese store-keepers, who, in their eagerness to open Chinese eating-houses and not knowing that licences were not required for them, petitioned the Government to let them have facilities for opening such eating-houses. The Government have met the petitioners with what they deserve, and all Asiatic boarding-housekeepers will now have the pleasure of having municipal control over even small Asiatic refreshment rooms. Municipal control, for the sake of sanitation, we can quite understand and even welcome; but the imposing of licences over businesses which we apprehend are hardly lucrative, so far as British Indians are concerned, is simply preposterous. But British Indians are Asiatics; therefore, if there must be eating-house licences imposed for the catering of 45,000 Chinamen, the Transvaal Government argue there must also be licences imposed for eating-houses for 12,000 Indians. It did not occur to them that Indian eating-houses are very rare, as the custom of the community does not as a rule require them. Indeed, they are so few that hitherto they have not been even noticed.

There is, again, the Revenue Licence Ordinance which requires hawkers and pedlars to take out certificates from magistrates, Justices of the Peace, or Police Officers before being entitled to a licence, exception being made in favour of those who may be already in possession of their licences, provided that these fortunate men, within fourteen days before the expiry of their licences, hand them to the Revenue Officers within their districts.

The Johannesburg Land Ordinance makes it

> lawful for the Lieutenant-Governor to grant to the Councils of the Municipality of Johannesburg in such manner and on such conditions as it may deem advisable and subject to all servitudes at present subsisting therein in favour of any person the land described in schedule 'attached to the ordinance'.

Among the lands thus dealt with is the Malay Location in Johannesburg. This Location has been in existence for the last twelve years or more. There has never been any objection raised to it either on account of the habits of the inhabitants or its situation. The inhabitants, under a sense of security fostered by the different British Agents who represented the Government before the war, have built substantial houses. The tenure, however, from a legal standpoint is only a monthly tenancy. What, then, are the inhabitants to receive as

compensation, assuming that they will be removed ? We cannot but here recall the invidious distinction that has been drawn between one portion of Vrededorp and the other portion, for the whole of the Malay Location is part of Vrededorp. That portion which is inhabited by the old indigent burghers has received most favourable treatment at the hands of the Government. As our readers must have seen from these columns, they are not only not to be dispossessed but they are to have their monthly tenure converted into long leases. Why should not the same facility be given to the inhabitants of the Malay Location? It will be for the latter to see to their rights being properly safeguarded. These are only a few samples of legislation which has been termed non-contentious. It has in some shape or other dealt with the rights of the Coloured people who have no choice whatsoever in their government.

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385. THE CAPE IMMIGRATION RESTRICTION ACT

The following appears in the Cape *Government Gazette* for the 19th September, 1905:

In the event of a 'Prohibited Immigrant' having entered this Colony in contravention of the Act, it shall be lawful, after due enquiry into the facts by the Magistrate of the District in which Prohibited Immigrants shall have been found, to order such Immigrant to be detained and accommodated in such place as the Minister may from time to time direct, pending the removal of such Immigrant from within the territorial limits of the Colony, and where such Immigrant is in possession of sufficient means, the whole or the part of the cost of such removal to such port or other place as the Minister may direct shall be borne by such Immigrant.

The provision is very drastic. The Restriction Act has been passed in the supposed interests of the Colony. It is quite conceivable that a man may unwittingly enter it in contravention of the Act. It is hardly just, then, if he is found to be in possession of just enough to pay the cost of his removal to make him bear the burden. Although ignorance of law is in theory held to be no excuse, there are, perhaps, cases in which in practice ignorance is a valid plea. There is already in the Act a clause requiring the masters of all steamers that may bring Prohibited Immigrants to take them back. If a Prohibited Immigrant enter the Colony, it shows also lack of supervision on the part of the authorities, and it seems hardly fair that an innocent man should be punished, either because there is not complete supervision at the Cape,

or because the masters of vessels have been careless in selecting passengers. We, therefore, trust that the British Indians at the Cape, whom the new Rule is likely to affect most, will take the necessary steps to have the Rule amended.

Indian Opinion, 30-9-1905

386. THE CHINESE AND THE AMERICANS

The loss already sustained by the United States on account of the boycott of American goods by the Chinese is estimated at £5,000,000. This has led the American traders and merchants to urge their Government to abolish the anti-Chinese laws[1]. To counter this move, the working classes there have held large meetings and passed resolutions demanding that the anti-Chinese laws should not be repealed, whatever the loss they might cause to the traders. Thus, on the one hand, there is a split between the traders and the working classes in America, and on the other, the cablegrams received from China show that the Chinese boycott is gathering strength. This resolution by the Chinese is sought to be applied to all the places where anti-Chinese laws are in force. Moreover, it is also said that the feeling against the whites has become so strong in China that fears are being entertained about the safety of those residing in the interior. It is difficult to say what all this agitation will lead to.

The great advances said to have been made in the nineteenth century are now being put to the test in the twentieth. And it would appear that the present century might witness great upheavals. In all this commotion one thing stands out clear, namely, that where there is unity, there alone is strength, and also victory. This deserves to be carefully borne in mind by every Indian. The Chinese, though weak, appear to have become strong on account of their unity, thereby bearing out the truth of the Gujarati verse, "Thus do ants when united take the life of a fierce snake".

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-9-1905

[1] Intended to exclude Chinese labour

387. MOVEMENT TO ENCOURAGE INDUSTRY IN NATAL

COMMISSION APPOINTED BY GOVERNOR

The current issue of the *Government Gazette* announces the appointment of a Commission to recommend measures that should be adopted so that goods consumed in Natal may be manufactured locally and to suggest changes, if any, that should be made in customs levies to encourage the use of goods thus produced. The members of the Commission are: Mr. Moore, the Commissioner; Dr. Gubbins; Mr. Ernest Act; Mr. James King; Mr. George Pane; Mr. Saunders; and Mr. MacAllisker. We believe it would be a very good thing if our marchants gave evidence before this Commission. There are many things that can be produced in Natal and about which experienced merchants can be of help.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-9-1905

388. SCHOOLS IN NATAL

THE REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

In his Annual Report, Mr. Mudie, Superintendent of Education in Natal, states that sufficient attention is not being paid to the cleanliness of children in the schools for Indians and other Coloured people. This comment by Mr. Mudie deserves careful consideration. Though Mr. Mudie is not one of our well-wishers, we ought to ponder over our shortcomings when he points them out to us. Parents should give enough attention to this matter. Though we may not ourselves observe rules of cleanliness, it is very essential to teach them to our children. If they learn to follow them, muchimprovement is likely to result in the course of a generation. The following points about children should be borne in mind:

(1) Their teeth should be clean. They should be made to rinse them every morning and again before retiring at night.

(2) Their hair should be clean. It should be cut short and washed and brushed every day. No oil need be used.

(3) Their nails should be clean, clipped from time to time and always washed clean.

(4) Their clothes and shoes, however simple, should be neat and tidy.

(5) Their satchels and books, too, should be clean likewise. They should handle books with clean hands.

We need hardly add that it will accrue to the benefit of the children if these rules are kept in mind and they are made to follow them.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-9-1905

389. INTIMATION TO RESIDENTS OF JOHANNESBURG

We find from the Johannesburg newspapers that the season for epidemic fever has set in there. The Municipality has issued a public notice that those who keep their latrines unclean will be prosecuted. The local rules require that after a person has used a latrine, he should spread dry dust, ashes or some disinfectant powder over the faeces so as to cover them over completely. The latrine should not be wet or smelly. Any default in this respect is punishable with a fine up to £5. This is a very good rule. Ashes or dry dust can be had free of charge. We earnestly appeal to our readers to keep a tin filled with dust in the latrine and cover the faeces with dust or ashes.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-9-1905

390. GEORGE WASHINGTON

THE FIRST PRESIDENT OF AMERICA

Students of English must have read in their text books about one George who one day cut off, for the fun of it, a berry plant that was dear to his father. When he saw the fate of the plant, his father asked the boy about it. George replied: "Father, I wouldn't tell a lie. I cut the plant." When the father, who questioned him in an angry tone, heard this straight reply from George who had tears in his eyes, he was pleased and forgave him. George was then a mere child.

The boy, on whose mind devotion to truth was thus firmly imprinted, became at fifty-five the first President of America, which is today the admiration of the world. When he was elected to the presidency, the American people offered to crown him king, but he simply rejected the proposal.

George Washington was born in a wealthy family in the city of Westmoreland in Virginia on February 22, 1732. Little is known about

the first sixteen years of his life. Until then he had read little. Later, he was appointed manager of some estate. While on this job, he gave proof of his intelligence and courage so much so that, at twenty-three, he was appointed Commander- in-Chief of the Virginian army.

At this time North America was under British rule, and quarrels were going on between England and the American people. The people in America did not like certain taxes imposed on them by England. There were other matters also that troubled the Americans. Consequently, the feelings between the people of America and those of England ran high and resulted in war. The English armies were trained and well equipped, while the Americans were simple, rustic folk. They were not conversant with the use of arms. They were not accustomed to working in the disciplined manner of an army and suffering hardships. Washington was called upon to control such men and exact work from them, so that America could become independent and free from the British yoke. The people made him Commander-in-Chief. Washington protested: "I do not deserve this honour, but since you are pleased to appoint me to the post, I accept it in an honorary capacity with a view to serving the people." This was no mere formal sentiment, for he sincerely believed that he was not sufficiently capable and wrote in similar terms to his personal friends. But once the responsibility was entrusted to him, he braved all dangers, worked day and night, and so impressed the people that they began to act upon his word even before it was spoken and faced any danger they were asked to. The result was that the English armies were defeated, and America became independent. And once the task was accomplished, Washington relinquished his post. But the people had found in him a gem which they would not part with. So, when the American Republic was founded in 1787, George Washington was elected its first President. Even when he assumed this high office, he never thought of using it to gain selfish ends. At the end of a war, it always happens that false patriots come forward to fill their pockets. But all such people had to live in awe of Washington. In 1792-3[1] Washington was elected President for a second time. During his term of office, he showed the same courage and bravery that he had displayed in war in introducing land reforms, in keeping the people united and in enhancing the country's reputation. A writer has said: "Washington was first in war, as well as first in peace, and occupied the first place in the hearts of his countrymen!" When he was pressed to accept the Presidency for a third term, he refused the offer and

[1] The original has 1892-3, obviously an error.

went to live on his estate.

This heroic person died of a sudden illness on December 14, 1799. He was very tall; his height, it is said, was six feet three inches. No one in his time had such massive arms. He was always humble and kind. The high position to which America has risen today is due to his patriotism.The name of Washington will live as long as America lives. May India too produce such heroes.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-9-1905

391. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
September 30, 1905

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

Anandlal writes that it has been decided to hire an office in Mercury Lane. If this is so, it should not be done. I feel it is essential that I should be consulted before such changes are introduced. There is no harm, I believe, if the new office is located either in Grey Street or in Field Street.

You may place Ramnath under Jayashanker's charge, that is, of course, if he is willing to go. Jayashanker must now be experiencing difficulty in carrying on his business. Mansukhbhai is likely to come here. I have a long letter from him, he appears to be very anxious to come. He is only awaiting the permission of his parents.

I am enclosing the letter received from Klerksdorp. We have not received any money at all from there. In which issue have you acknowledged that money ? I remember, as I write this, that an amount from Krugersdorp was at first acknowledged as a whole but, on my suggestion, contributions were later acknowledged individually. It is possible that some confusion has crept in.

I received your letter in the afternoon.

As regards the office, I still think it is not proper to shift it to Mercury Lane.

Send me any letter that you may have received from Krugersdorp. All the moneys that came to me have been acknowledged.

I am enclosing Sumar Latif's letter, which you may return to me

after writing whatever you like on it.

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I have seen today the boot written by Sheikh Mehtab[1]. Do not take any notice of it in the *Opinion.*

MOHANDAS

[PPS.]

I am sending the Gujarati matter. As two life sketches have already accumulated there, I shall not send any this time.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the original in Gujarati: S. N. 4254

392. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,

October 2, 1905

DEAR MR. CHHAGANLAL,

Mr. Kitchin writes to me that at one of your meetings it was unanimously decided to dismiss Hemchand. When Hemchand wrote to me he had received notice of dismissal, I immediately assured him that the notice would be withdrawn, and I entered into correspondence with both Messrs Kitchin and Chhaganlal.[2] When Hemchand's services were retained, I had a chat with him and I told him that he would be trained in the Press, and that, so long as he behaved and worked well, he should consider himself a permanent fixture. Hemchand I know well, his people I know better. I consider him to be a good and valuable hand who, if the press had to undergo serious difficulties, would stick to it.

Apart, however, from all that, when I heard of Hemchand's dismissal, I felt that my pledge was at stake. It was for that reason that I gave him the assurance I have done.

May I now ask you to ratify my assurance and revoke your decision as to his dismissal in the light of what I am now telling you? For the future, I think that in all such matters I would appreciate the

[1] Gandhiji's companion during his school days. *Vide Autobiography,* Part I, Chs. VI and VII.

[2] This letter was sent to others in the Press besides Chhaganlal. See the Gujarati note following it.

consideration greatly if I were to be consulted before arriving at any final decision.

I am,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

[*To this is added a handwritten note in Gujarati.*]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Please read the above letter. I have written a similar letter to others. Kitchin has, it seems, made much of the matter. I have sent him too a telegram. If you find it necessary to be present at the meeting, you may do so.

Lachhiram is not getting the paper still. Let me know to which address you send it.

You should get a *kavad*[1] made for Manilal for fetching water. It seems, he finds it difficult to carry water.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Gabru, Box 5709, says that he received the *Opinion* only for a week and that he is not getting it now. I do not understand why the names of [subscribers to the] Madresa[2] [Fund] have not appeared. This should not happen in future.

From the typewritten (English) and handwritten (Gujarati) office copy signed by Gandhiji: S. N. 4377

393. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[After *October 2, 1905*][3]

. . . will send it after inspecting it. Enclosed are a credit note and the particulars of a new subscriber. Please see if they are in order.

[1] A pole carried over the shoulder and having a bucket (or basket) suspended from either end: a yoke.

[2] A Muslim school at Dabhel in Gujarat for which donations were being collected in South Africa.

[3] From the reference to Dabhel Madressa Fund the letter appears to have been written after the one to the addressee, dated October 2, 1905; *vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 2-10-1905.

Send me a list of subscribers in Johannesburg who have not yet paid their subscriptions for [previous years].

Let me know the rate we charged for [publishing] in the Gujarati section [of *Indian Opinion*] the names of contributors to the Dabhel Madressa Fund[1], as the Sanatana Dharma Sabha of Germiston wants to have names of contributors published in *Indian Opinion*. That. . . .

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 4742

394. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
October 5, 1905

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

Your letter to hand. Please send me my office letterheads and blank continuation sheets. Add "Telegrams: 'Gandhi' " to it. I have got the name registered. Get this done immediately.

Regarding a house for Anandlal, I was under the impression that he wanted to take Abhechand's house. If he wants to build a new house altogether, I would advise against incurring any expenditure for the present. I am writing to him accordingly.

I see no alternative to getting the house colour-washed for Mr. Bean.

Take full work from Hemchand. Please write to me from time to time how he is doing. Changes like recruitment, dismissal, etc., must not be made without my approval. I have already taken action in regard to this. We need not worry if Orchard[2] and Sam[2] are angry.

Mansukhlal will come here merely for a change for the present. If he comes at all, I shall have him with me for some time to give him bath [treatment], etc. He will then go and stay there for some time.

Kalabhai has written to me saying that he will give £3 every month. Write in the paper about Vasant Pandit. We do not know what is happening.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[1] A Muslim school at Dabhel in Gujarat for which donations were being collected in South Africa

[2] Workers in the Phoenix press

[PS.]

You still do not publish all the notices from the *Gazette.* There are many notices from page 1705 onwards in the current issue of the *Gazette,* viz., of (1) Iyer, (2) Ramsaroop, (3) Bogha, (4) Gisiavan, (5) Parathi, (6) Hoosan Amod and (7) Randeri. I have found these from a casual glance at the paper. All these notices should appear in all the three languages. Therefore carefully scrutinize the *Gazette* henceforth. Some of this work can be entrusted to Hemchand.

Please send me some small envelopes bearing the Phoenix address.

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the original Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 4256

395. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,

October 6, 1905

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I enclose letter from Virji for your information. Please return it. I am writing[1] to him about the incident you related to me in one of your letters. You may discuss the whole matter with him. I am telling him that I have sent you his letter to me. I wrote to him the letter[22] to which he has replied pointing out that I should be unable to keep him after his year is out if he did not give you satisfaction.

Why do you say the £20 given to Anandlal is a waste of money? If it was so, you should have told Anandlal. From your last letter I understand that Anandlal wanted you to give him £30 for making purchases in town and that he had given up the idea of buying from Tongaat.

I return Desai's letter. As you have found out the mistake, it was

[1] Not available
[2] *ibid*

not necessary for you to send the letter to me.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Enclosures[3]

C. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
c/o *Indian Opinion*
PHOENIX

From a photostat of the original: S. N. 4257

396. COMPULSORY EDUCATION IN INDIA

Whilst every attempt is being made in South Africa to discourage Indian education, signs are not wanting to show that in India itself the desire for education has taken deep root in the hearts of the people, and that, before many years are out, we may even find compulsory education adopted in the advanced parts of India. Macaulay penned the famous Education Minute in l836.[1] It was then that Indian education received its real impetus, and yet "in the census of 1901, it was found that only one in ten of the female population were literate". Mr. H. D. Kantavala, the Director of Public Instruction in the State of Baroda, contributes a very valuable paper to *East and West* for August. According to our authority, the number of students of all grades in 1901 was 3,268,726, and the expenditure incurred on the education of these students was less than two crores of rupees, that is, one-and-a-third million pounds. Of this amount, a little over one-fourth was spent on primary education. The expenditure on education represents 1.5 per cent. of the total revenue of Government. It is admitted that primary education has not received sufficient attention in India, and the main reason is that the Government of India has found it impossible to spend more owing to lack of funds. We will not at present go into the question of why money has not been available for further development of education, but we may say that the matter no longer remains absolutely in the hands of the Government.

Those who have appreciated the sweets of education are eager that their less fortunate brethren should have a share. The Corporation

[1] Thomas Babington Macaulay, (1800-59 President of the General Committee of Public Instruction and Law Member of the Executive Council of the Governor-General, wrote his Minute on February 2, 1835 in favour of introducing English education in India. Til1 this issue was decided as between opposite schools of thought, the Government could not launch a unified scheme of education in India.

of Bombay has lately passed a resolution approving of the system of compulsory education. His Highness the Maharaja Gaekwar has taken a practical step, and it is the experiment that is now being tried in Baroda in compulsory education that Mr. Kantavala has largely dealt with in his paper. It was in l892 that His Highness expressed his intention to introduce compulsory education in some portions of his territories and Mr. Kantavala was entrusted with this responsibility. He laid down the following principles for his own guidance.

(1) Before applying the compulsory law to a place, the Government should provide it with means of education.

(2) The law of compulsion should be made applicable to both sexes.

(3) The age of compulsion should be from seven to twelve in the case of boys, and seven to ten in the case of girls.

(4) The course of study should be elementary.

(5) Compulsory attendance should not exceed l00 days in the year.

(6) The defaulters should not be dealt with criminally but only civilly, and be subject to a fine recoverable only by a civil process.

With characteristic energy, and undaunted by serious difficulties of a complex nature, Mr. Kantavala selected a group of ten villages, the most backward in the State (as it was the Gaekwar's intention to see the working of the system at its worst), and enforced the principles above laid down. Several interviews which the Director of Education had with headmen, how he lived down all opposition, how he brought round to his way of thinking the recalcitrant spirits, are all very interesting incidents. We would, however, state the result only in the writer's own language:

> It was thus that I was able to introduce compulsory education in the most backward part of the Baroda State within a very short time. I had to pay special attention for months in order to work out the scheme successfully. By the end of the year, almost all children within the age of compulsion, that is, over 99 per cent. entered school, a result which, even in England and other advanced countries, is not achieved. The successful working of themeasure induced His Highness to extend compulsory education by taking up fresh groups of ten villages at a time. Compulsory education in the Amreli Taluka has stood the test of more than a dozen years, showing always that nearly cent. per cent. of the children attend the school, and that people have never raised any complaint of a serious nature against it. His Highness has recently sanctioned a scheme for applying to two parts of his territories the law of compulsory education to those children whose parents have a certain annual income.

This is a remarkable achievement, and yet it is only a little germ, when we consider the illiterate millions in India. No one can foretell to what stature the germ will grow in course of time. The experiment is not without its lesson to us in South Africa. It is but right that we should expect the different governments to provide suitable education for Indian children. It is the duty of those Indians who are better situated and who see the advantages of education to see that, if the governments in South Africa will not help them, they themselves make suitable provision for the education of Indian children.

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397. THE G. O. M. OF INDIA[1]

Our Indian exchanges bring news with reference to the meetings held to commemorate the eighty-first birthday of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, the Grand Old Man of India, on the 4th September last. Public meetings were held all over India. The services rendered by Mr. Naoroji to India, in our humble opinion, are far greater than the services rendered by England's Grand Old Man[2] to England. Mr. Naoroji's work has been pioneer work, and when he commenced it, few indeed were his helpers. The self-sacrificing devotion with which he has pushed forward the cause of India, in season and out of season, has hardly any parallel in India; and it is no wonder that he stands unequalled by any one in the estimation of millions of his countrymen. The spectacle of an old man of over eighty years wooing a British constituency, not for the sake of glory or honours, but in order that he may serve India the more, is most pathetic and magnificent. If the electors of North Lambeth send Mr. Naoroji to the new Parliament, they will have done themselves a unique honour. We echo the prayers that were offered by the millions in India for long life and health to Mr. Naoroji.

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[1] *Vide* "The Grand old man of India", 19-11-1903.

[2] William Ewart Gladstone, (1809-98), Prime Minister 1868-74, 1880-5, 1886 and 1892-4. *Vide* "Mr. Gladstone's Biography", 14-1-1904.

398. THE INSULT TO SIR MANCHERJI

It is with great regret that we notice the insult that has been offered to Sir Mancherji Bhownaggree at Calcutta recently. Because he differed from the [common] opinion on the Partition of Bengal[1], he was burnt in effigy on College Square. Sir Mancherji may surely hold his own opinion, even though it is seldom allowed nowadays to individual members of that temple of freedom—the British House of Commons. To offer such flagrant insult to a member of that assembly, who has proved his zeal in the cause of India, is unwise; nay, it is stupid. Indians may not always see eye to eye with Sir Mancherji, but they cannot fail to acknowledge that he is ever loyal to his native India and that he has always her interests at heart. Indians in South Africa will especially feel this insult; for he has proved himself a true friend to the unrepresented thousands here. Indians will do very wrong to value a man according to the power of his invective and the bitterness of his denunciation of Britain's perfidy. The more moderate opinions of a man like Sir Mancherji have far greater weight than the extravagances of hot-headed Radicals. It is the conviction of calm reasoning alone that will get the full measure of justice for India; and for this reason Sir Mancherji is, of all men, the least deserving of the ingratitude of his fellow-countrymen.

Indian Opinion, 7-10-1905

399. THE BOYCOTT

From cables and Indian papers recently to hand, it is evident that the boycott movement in Bengal is not destined to fizzle out in an inglorious fashion. Though there appears to be a deal of mob-law in preventing persons from buying British goods, the movement is so general as to show that it results from deep feeling on the part of the people. Whatever may be the result of the present agitation against the Partition, the effect of the boycott will be productive of only good to India. It has resulted in a wonderful stimulation of native industries which, we trust, will grow more and more. It is a result unlooked for, but not the less eminently desirable. The great need of India is that

[1] On grounds of administrative convenience, Bengal was divided into two provinces, one of which was predominantly Hindu and the other Muslim. The Partition, which raised a storm of protest throughout India and led to the movement for boycott of British goods, was finally annulled in 1911.

national characteristics should be fostered and improved. If the resolve to use only Indian goods, so far as possible, be maintained, it will be no small help in developing the national spirit.

Indian Opinion, 7-10-1905

400. DR. BARNARDO

The news of Dr. Barnardo's death last month has been cabled throughout the world. Our readers must be eager to know who this Dr. Barnardo was. We are, therefore, giving this time in these columns an account of the worthy doctor's life.

Dr. Barnardo was regarded as the father of orphans and waifs. In his early years the doctor felt deeply depressed whenever he happened to see an orphan. But he had then no means of helping them. Although he was poor, the idea occurred to him that he should undertake to bring up orphans and thus earn his own livelihood.

As the Gujarati saying, 'giving a needle in charity after stealing an anvil', goes, we want first to earn plenty of money and then spend it on some good cause. The entire lives of many are spent in the process of amassing wealth. Some others forget their original resolution when they have earned enough, yet others, when they have amassed money, do not know how to use it properly, waste it on all sorts of things and feel satisfied that they have spent it well. Never having been benevolent, they cannot use the money properly.

The intelligent Dr. Barnardo had seen all this. So he told himself: "My heart is pure; those who trust me and give me money will also realise that I too must support myself with it. At the same time, if I undertake to shelter and bring up orphans, I shall earn their blessings and the people, too, will see that I have no intention of making money for myself." With these thoughts in his mind, the brave doctor plunged into the work, and opened the first Home for orphan-waifs at Steveny-Causeway in London. People at first opposed him, many saying that he had only found a fine way of making money by deceiving the public. Dr. Barnardo, however, was not to be discouraged. He collected money from those who trusted him. By and by, more and more children began to flock to his Home. Instead of becoming vagabonds, they became studious, honest and industrious and secured employment. All the children thus brought up served as good publicity for Dr. Barnardo's Home. They saw that Dr. Barnardo looked after them better than their own parents would have done. The doctor founded more such Homes, till at last he established a colony

for orphans in a wood, six miles away from London. There he put up fine buildings, churches, etc., and the place has now become so famous that many people visit it and feel they are on a pilgrimage; and in course of time similar homes have been founded in many parts of the world. Dr. Barnardo himself brought up in this way during his lifetime 55,000 homeless children. There were some wicked parents who took unfair advantage of the facility provided by the doctor. They quietly left their children at night in Dr. Barnardo's backyard and went away. Undaunted, the doctor brought them up with careand returned them to their parents when they claimed them. Every year, in the big Albert Hall in London, a fair is held in which the children from these Homes take part and thousands of people pay to visit it. It has come to be known after the doctor's death that he had insured his life for £70,000. He has enjoined in his will that all this money should be spent on the maintenance of the Homes founded by him.

Such was this great man, Dr. Barnardo. He was pious and very kind. Though acts like insuring one's life, etc., do not accord well with our idea of religion, it was according to Western practice wise on the part of the doctor to have done what he did.

Dr. Barnardo has provided us, during the present age, a very good example of what a poor man could accomplish by dint of enthusiasm and kindness.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-10-1905

401. AN. INDIAN POET

By his English translations of the poems of Hali, Mr. Ward has made the poet widely known. It is said that there is no other poet who can equal him. His full name is Maulvi Sayed Altaf Hussain Ansari. He was born in Panipat, near Delhi. Most of his poems are in Urdu, though he has written quite a lot in Persian also. The poem he wrote on the occasion of the Jubilee of 1887[1] was so excellent that it resounded throughout North India. His works do not concern themselves with the pleasures of life, but with such useful themes as the duty of Muslims in the present age, the way both Hindus and Muslims should acquit themselves, and the way to know God. Sheth Abdul Kadar of Lahore tells us how during their school days he and his mates used to read Hali's poems, how they read them also when

[1]The Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria's reign

they were grown up, and sang them at community gatherings. He further tells us that they listen to them even now at their *anjumans*[1], and seldom feel tired of reading and hearing them again and again. He has written in very eloquent language of the life of the great poet Sheikh Saadi[2]. Writing about the work of the poet Hali, Prof. Morrison says: "What this poor poet has done unaided for the community far surpasses what the wealthy Muslims have done with their money." In appreciation of the services rendered by the poet to the community, the Government have conferred on him the title of *Shams-ul-Ulema.* We are sorry we do not have with us his Urdu poems, but we recommend that our readers obtain and read them.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-10-1905

402. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
October 7, 1905

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

Your letter to hand. It is good that you have shifted the office. Please go on appealing repeatedly to maintain cleanliness in regard to plague. Let me know where Hemchand stays. There seems to be some misunderstanding between us regarding him. But I consider it my fault because I gave you no details. You will learn more from my letter to West. Let me know if Hemchand gives you complete satisfaction in his work. Where is Ramnath ? Have you entrusted him to Jayashanker or not ? Jayashanker is very short of men. Send the *Opinion* to the enclosed address. I shall collect the subscription from here. Debit it to my account.

Will not the shifting of the office to Mercury Lane affect our Indian clientele? Did Sheth Abdul Cadir say anything? Why did you not find a place for the office in Field Street or Grey Street?

I am sending the Gujarati material today. I shall send more tomorrow.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the original Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 4258

[1] Meetings
[2] A Persian poet of the 13th century

403. ADDRESS TO LORD SELBORNE[1]

[POTCHEFSTROOM,
Before October 9, 1905]

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY

We, the undersigned, representing British Indians residing in Potchefstroom, hereby extend to Your Excellency a hearty and loyal welcome to this historic city.

We venture to hope that you will carry with you pleasant recollections of your stay among the people of Potchefstroom.

The difficulties that we labour under in Potchefstroom are common to British Indians all over the Transvaal. A charge has been laid[2] against British Indians in Potchefstroom as to their mode of life and the manner in which their business premises are kept. We would venture respectfully to invite Your Excellency's inspection of the premises[3] and form your own conclusions about them. We are most anxious, so far as it is possible, to conform to local customs, and to conciliate popular sentiment. All we ask for is freedom of locomotion, trade, residence, and ownership of property under such general sanitary and other regular general regulations as may be necessary without introducing class legislation.

We approach Your Excellency with all confidence that we will receive justice at your hands.

We beg you to convey sentiments of our attachment to Their Most Gracious Majesties the King-Emperor and the Queen-Empress.

S. D. ROBERT,
PRESIDENT,
E. H. GETTA,
E. M. PATEL,
M. E. NANABHAY,
HAJEE OMAR,
A. E. GONGAT,
A. M. CASSIM,

[1] The address was presented on behalf of the Potchefstroom Indian Association. Similar addresses were presented at Rustenburg, Klerksdorp and Krugersdorp. *Vide* "Lord Selborne on Trek", *Indian Opinion,* 14-10-1905.

[2] By the Potchefstroom Vigilants Association

[3] This is evidently a slip and should read: "We would venture respectfully to invite Your Excellency to have an inspection of the premises and form your own conclusions about them."

HASSIM TAYOB,
A. G. SALEY MAHOMED,
EBRAHIM BROTHERS,
MOOSA HASSAN,
D. I. VARYAVA,
A. RAHMAN,
SECRETARY.

Indian Opinion, 14-10-1905

404. POTCHEFSTROOM INDIANS' STATEMENT[1]

[POTCHEFSTROOM,
Before *October 9, 1905]*

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

Did we not know that what has been called the anti-Asiatic Vigilance Society is to make representations to Your Excellency with reference to the British Indians, so far as regards Potchefstroom, we would not have given any trouble whatsoever to Your Excellency, especially as we are aware that Your Excellency is to meet very shortly a deputation of the British Indian Association at Johannesburg.

Mr. Loveday it was who stated that Potchefstroom was being inundated with indentured Indians from Natal. To this we beg to give an emphatic contradiction. Some of us know the Natal laws, and we [know that it] is next to impossible for an indentured Indian to escape. In any case not a single instance has been brought forward to prove the statement above referred to.

Another statement was made by the Mayor of Johannesburg when he was here. He is reported to have said that, whereas there were nineteen licences issued to Asiatics before the war, now there were ninety-six traders' licences and thirty-seven hawkers' licences. This statement, so far as traders are concerned, is not true. We supplied before the war a list of British Indian traders in the town of Potchefstroom to the British Agent, and there were twenty-two British Indian stores in the town of Potchefstroom, as distinguished from the district. We have a true copy of the list that was sent to the British Agent, and we are to-day in a position, not only to give the names, but to locate each of the store-keepers. Seeing that Mr. Goch mentions

[1] This was read out by Mr. Abdool Rahman, Secretary, Potchefstroom Indian Association, after he had presented the address to Lord Selborne.

ninety-six traders' licences in connection with the nineteen before the war, we take it that he refers to ninety-six traders' licences for the town of Potchefstroom. If so, this is grossly untrue. There are only twenty-four British Indian stores in this town at the present day. We state this with a full sense of responsibility and knowledge, and we challenge our detractors to prove the contrary.

A third statement that has been made against us in Potchefstroom is with reference to the so-called insanitary condition of our dwellings and shops. These, indeed, speak for themselves, but when the charge was made, we took the opportunity of showing our places to the District Surgeon of Potchefstroom, and the following is the report that he gave:

> In going through the various premises, I am pleased to say I was greatly impressed with the general condition of each place I visited, both internally as well as externally. Taking all things into consideration, the backyards are all perfectly clean and sanitary. I saw no accumulation of rubbish, this I understand being carried away daily by the contractor. The bucket system is enforced as in other parts of the town, which is also attended to by the Sanitary Department, and I can find no fault from what I saw. There appears to me to be no overcrowding as regards sleeping accommodation. At the back of each business premises, in addition, I noticed a kind of mess room capable of seating about five to eight persons, and each has its own kitchen; these are also well kept.

We mention these things to show under what disadvantages we have to labour, and what misrepresentations are made against us. We have no hesitation in saying that the whole of the anti-Asiatic agitation is due to trade jealousy. Nothing can be further from our wish than to enter into an unfair competition with the white store-keepers.

Much has been said against our mode of life. We are proud to think that we are sober and simple in our habits, and if thereby we have an advantage over the rival white traders, we hardly think that it should be brought up against us in order to traduce and degrade us. It is totally forgotten, in this connection, by those who denounce us, that the white traders have other advantages which we cannot dream of having, namely, their European connection, their knowledge of the English language, and their better organising powers. Moreover, we are able to carry on our trade only because of the goodwill of the poor whites, and our ability to please the poorest class of customers; also, we have the support of wholesale European houses. It has been said that our competition resulted in many European shops being closed. We deny this. In the first instance, some of the shops that have been closed were not shops with which we could possibly enter into

competition, for instance, hairdressers and others. Some general goods stores have undoubtedly closed, but to connect their closing with Asiatic competition would be [as] unfair as to connect the closing of several Asiatic shops with European competition in this town. There is trade depression all over South Africa, and it has only resulted in getting rid of overtrading that was indulged in soon after the war, based, as it was, on high expectations which have never been fulfilled.

May we also, in this connection, state that much of the agitation against us is kept up not by *bona-fide* British subjects but by aliens who can have very little indeed to complain of against us. The policy adopted to drive us out of the township is a policy of irritation and insults which, though petty in themselves, are galling enough to be very much felt by us.

Without the slightest occasion, we are now served at special counters in the Post Office. We are debarred from having a breath of fresh air in a park which is called a "public" park, and which is kept up from rates which we are called upon to pay in common with other citizens. We mention these instances to draw Your Excellency's attention to the awkward position in which we are placed without any fault of ours. No opportunity is missed of degrading us and humiliating us. We do not wish to burden Your Excellency with such other instances. We have a right, we submit, to expect the British Government to protect us from such humiliation, and insure for us that freedom to which, as loyal British subjects, we are entitled wherever the Union Jack flies.

We beg to thank Your Excellency for giving us a patient hearing, and in conclusion hope that, as a result of Your Excellency's visit to this township, there will be an amelioration in our condition.

Indian Opinion, 14-10-1905

405. LORD SELBORNE AND INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL

His Excellency the High Commissioner has made, during his tour in the Transvaal, two very important speeches on the status of the British Indians in that Colony. His speech at Potchefstroom, which will be found in another column, is the more important. Lord Selborne has shown therein that, during his short stay, he has studied the question. He holds the honour of the Government very dear to him, and recognises the fact that there were promises made to British

Indians before the war which have to be carried out. His Lordship, weare further glad to notice, interprets the Indians' Proclamation[1] as an assurance of the rights of Indians as full British subjects all the world over. For all this, and a great deal more, we are truly thankful to His Excellency. When there is such an evident desire to hold the scales evenly between conflicting interests, there is every ground for hope that, in the near future, a solution will be found for this difficult problem which will be generally accepted.

One thing, however, that Lord Selborne is reported to have promised, fills us with disquiet. These are the reported words:

> No Indians who were not here before the war will be admitted into the country till you have your own parliament, and by your own representatives you can express your own opinion. I give you that assurance as your Governor and your High Commissioner.

We are sure that His Excellency could not have, at the time of making the promise, measured the full consequence of its operation. His Excellency is anxious to draw the distinction between Indians already settled in the country and those who may come hereafter. He impressed upon his audience the necessity of giving fair treatment to the old Indian settlers. Now the fact that Indian merchants must draw upon India for confidential clerks, managers, and other trustworthy servants has only to be mentioned to convey conviction. It is well-nigh impossible for them to continue to do business with any degree of safety without such facilities. Are we, then, to understand that, unless the incoming Transvaal Parliament chooses to do otherwise, Indian businesses are to be starved into surrender for want of reliable men?

His Excellency says again that it is not practical statesmanship to allow Indians to compete with white men without restriction. We have often discussed this proposition in these columns, and we think we have shown how hollow it is. For that which is true in it has been admitted by the Indians, and that which is not true arises only from pure trade jealousy. The soundness of the Indian position must be apparent to any but the most prejudiced man, when it is explained that, with proper safeguards, new Indian licences may be granted only at the option of the local boards, which consist largely of traders. But the anti-Asiatic agitators, who are bent on driving every Indian out of the Colony, will not be satisfied until they succeed in making his life totally unbearable. It is against attempts such as these that the Indians have a right to expect Lord Selborne to protect them.

Indian Opinion, 14-10-1905

[1] The Queen's Proclamation of 1858

406. THE VISIT OF LORD SELBORNE

Today Lord Selborne arrives in Durban, having spent most of the week in Natal[1]. In common with the rest of the community, we most heartily give our humble Welcome. Lord Selborne has been in South Africa only a short while, but already he has gained the confidence of all sections of the people that he will do his duty to everyone without Ear or favour. In many ways, His Excellency will find Natal different from the sister-Colonies. Natal presents some interesting problems for study, in that it has a large Native population with a comparatively small white population, which is dependent for the chief industries under As control upon a large indentured Indian population. The presence of the latter has naturally attracted to the Colony Indians of the trading class. We trust that, during his short stay, Hi Excellency be able to give stay of hi valuable time to a study of the British Indians in Natal who form by common consent one of the most loyal and law-abiding sections of Hi Majesty's subjects. And we hope with the rest of the community that His Excellency and family will enjoy their visit to the Garden Colony and carry with them pleasant recollections.

Indian Opinion, 14-10-1905

407. THE BUBONIG PLAGUE

Plague has come to stay. It is the annual messenger which, year after year, comes as a warning against darkness, filth and overcrowding. Wherever it has once appeared, it has hitherto unfailingly reappeared with more or less regularity. News has arrived that it has travelled as far as Chinde[2]. From there to Durban is not a far cry. It, therefore, behoves every good citizen to take the necessary precautions to ward off the Send. There should be no disguising of the fact that Indians are more susceptible to the ravages of plague than other communities, even as are the whites more liable to catch typhoid fever than the Indians. The latter, therefore, have to be doubly careful. All the surroundings of dwelling-houses and business premises should be kept perfectly clean. People should get as much light, sun and air as possible, and all

[1] An obvious mistake far 'the Transvaal', which Lord Selborne had toured earlier in the week. *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] A sea-port in Portuguese East Africa, to the north of Durban

suspected cases should be promptly reported to the authorities. These few simple precautions would be far more effective than a large expenditure, or, rather, waste of money, after the disease has once made its appearance. Leaders of the Indian community have in this respect a clear duty to perform. Every educated Indian has a unique privilege: he can become a missionary in hygiene and sanitation.

Indian Opinion, 14-10-1905

408. THE SALT TAX

A rumour is afloat that, to commemorate the visit of the Prince of Wales to India next November as well as to pacify the Indian people, the salt tax is entirely to be abolished. Every Indian sincerely hopes that this is well founded and will prove true.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-10-1905

409. SIR HENRY LAWRENCE

This great man was born in Ceylon on June 28, 1806. As he was born in the city of Matara[1], in jest, his mother called him "the Jewel of Matara", and he proved to be a real jewel indeed. In 1823 he went to Calcutta, where he got employment in the Bengal Artillery. The first responsible work entrusted to him was during the First Burmese War[2]. While discharging his duty during that war, he fell ill and had to go to England where, instead of passing his time in sports and amusements, he devoted it to study. He returned to India in 1830, and rejoined his battalion. He then studied Hindustani and Persian. He spent all his free time in solitude. One of his r easons for doing so was that he wanted to save as much money as possible for his mother. In the meanwhile, he was appointed to a very important and responsible post, where he fully utilized the knowledge he had acquired during his illness in England. The work entrusted to him was that of carrying out a survey in the North-West Province for the purpose of levying taxes from the people there. The real merits of Lawrence came to be known then. Though a soldier, he had a very tender and merciful heart. The survey work brought him into close contact with the poor, and this enabled him to understand the feelings and the manners and customs of the people. He became one of them

[1] A seaport in South Ceylon

[2] 1824-6

and mixed freely with them. As he was very hard-working and persevering, the idlers under him hated him. He did not hesitate to use compulsion against shirkers. Once it happened that one of the survey officers committed a blunder, to rectify which Lawrence ordered him to visit the place again. As the place was ten miles away, the surveyor hesitated to go. He was thereupon sent there in a litter. But despite this the man obstinately refused to work. So Lawrence made himsit on a mango tree, and posted two guards below with drawn swords. When the surveyor felt very thirsty and hungry, he begged pardon of Lawrence, agreed to do the work, and sought his permission to get down. After this the man shed this obstinate habit and began to do very good work under Lawrence.

We have heard that in the days of old, a brother was often ready to die for a brother, a friend for a friend, a mother for a son, sons for parents and a wife for her husband. But Lawrence acted in this manner in modern times. His elder brother had been taken prisoner in the Afghan War, and was released on parole for a few days by the Pathan Chief. He was bound to return after the period of parole was over. Considering that his brother's services were more useful, Lawrence offered to take his place in the prison. Although the brother refused to agree to the proposal, Lawrence as good as did it.

While Lawrence was serving as ambassador in Nepal, his kind-hearted wife spent her days in good works. At that time the two together erected, at their own expense, a big building at the foot of the Himalayas for bringing up and educating the sons of European soldiers. Similar institutions have since been built all over India, and all of them have been called Lawrence Asylums. In the Sikh War of 1846 Lawrence showed great valour. He readily complied with the orders to join active service within twenty-four hours, leaving his ailing wife behind. After the War, he did very good work as Her Majesty's representative in Lahore, for which knighthood was conferred upon him. When in 1849 it was proposed to annex the Punjab, Lawrence alone opposed it and stood up to a Governor-General of the calibre of Lord Dalhousie. Though he did not succeed, the Governor-General had so much confidence in him that he entrusted the main responsibility for work in the Punjab to him. For he had earlier come into very close contact with the Sikhs who greatly loved and admired him. It is because of this that the Punjab was pacified.

But the greatest service rendered by Lawrence was during the

Mutiny of 1857. By that time his health had broken down and he had already been sanctioned leave. But on the outbreak of the Mutiny, he at once proceeded to Lucknow instead of availing himself of the sanctioned leave. 927 Europeans and 765 Indian sepoys were involved in the Siege of Lucknow. Lawrence worked day and night and exacted work from the besieged men also. He sat on in his barracks, indifferent to cannon fire. On July 2, 1857, he was struck by a splinter from a cannon shot. The doctors told him that the wound was fatal and that he would not live more than forty-eight hours. In spite of the unbearable pain, he kept on giving orders. He breathed his last on July 4, praying: "Oh God! keep my heart pure. Thou alone art great. This world of Thine will certainly be pure some day. I am but a child, but it is through Thy strength that I can become strong. Always teach me meekness, justice, good-will andpeace. I seek not the thoughts of men. Thou art my Judge; do Thou teach me Thy thoughts, for I fear Thee." He loved Indians greatly. He condemned the atrocities that were perpetrated at the time of the Mutiny and believed that every Englishman was a trustee for India. As trustees, the English were not to loot India, but to make the people prosperous, to teach them self-government and to make over the country to the Indian people in a prosperous state. The English people have progressed because men like Lawrence are born amongst them.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-10-1905

410. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
October 18, 1905

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I have received a telegram from Mr. Kitchin asking me to leave here so as to pass at least Sunday at Phoenix. He says he has sent a letter which I am to expect tomorrow evening. Much will depend upon the letter whether I shall leave or not. If I do, I shall leave on Friday morning, reach there[1] at 1.16 p.m. [and] take the train to Phoenix at 1.20. Please be at the station and be ready with my ticket

[1] Durban

also. You can buy excursion[1]. I should leave Phoenix by the first train on Monday. The Durban clients will grumble, but it is not to be helped. Everything that you want to ask me, please put down on paper so that there can be nothing left undiscussed or undone. You may inform the people in Durban that it is possible I should thus leave, and tell them also that it will be impossible to give them anything but a few hours on Monday. It is impossible for me to prolong my stay. I need hardly say anything more. Please inform Mr. West and others.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

C. K. GANDHI ESQ.
c/o *Indian Opinion*
PHOENIX

From a photostat of the original: S. N. 4259

411. ANOTHER LICENSING CASE

Mr. Dada Osman[2], who has been in Natal for the last 15 years or more, is a landed proprietor who settled in Vryheid as a general merchant during the time of the Republican Government. He was allowed to trade in Vryheid unfettered up to the outbreak of hostilities, and now, after a single-handed struggle against the British power for over three years, finds himself face to face with ruin. And Dada Osman is a British subject! If a foreigner were to ask why a British subject should have British machinery put into operation against him in order to deprive him of his civic rights, he not being a criminal, the answer would be—such is the British Constitution. If it is very often strong to protect, it is also often powerless to defend against a palpable injustice. It is unbelievable that a man who has been lawfully trading for a long time should be deprived of the right of continuing his trade at the bidding of half-a-dozen of his competitors, who, being too cowardly to meet him in open competition, take advantage of temporary power placed in their hands to traduce their rival and ruin him. Yet that is what has happened in the present case. The Dealers' Licenses Act of Natal, to which copious reference has been made in these columns,[3] places at the mercy of Local Boards,

[1] Return ticket

[2] *Vide* "Dada Osman's Case", 15-9-1898

[3] *Vide* "The Dealers' Licenses Act", 3-3-1904 & "The Dealers' Licenses Act", 8-10-1904.

consisting of big traders, the smaller and the Indian traders. And the big traders have not hesitated to mercilessly use the power thus given them. The Act was passed to crush the Indian. When he is dead or gone, it will be used against the small white traders. Then will be a fight for the gods to see. The poor, humble Indian fights constitutionally. For a fight of that description, the Local Boards, in the intoxication of power suddenly placed in their hands, show supreme contempt.

In Mr. Dada Osman's case, there is not a shred of justification for the action of the Vryheid Board. He was the only Indian merchant in that township. His was not an application for a new licence. His business premises were kept in an exceptionally satisfactory condition. But because he wears a brown skin, the white members of the Board have closed his store without compensation, and, moreover, have rejected his solicitors' application for permission to keep his store open whilst he is trying to secure relief from a higher power. This is not a case of the Vryheid Local Board vs. Dada Osman. It is a case of white British subjects and white foreigners against the British Indian community. It is in that light that every Indian merchant has to look at the case; and it is in the same light that Mr. Lyttelton will have to examine it.

Indian Opinion, 21-10-1905

412. THE EVILS OF SMOKING

The Government of South Australia has noticed that smoking, besides consuming a lot of money, badly undermines the health of the people. More harm is done by cigarettes than by cigars, for the former, being smaller and cheaper, are consumed in excess. The Government therefore propose to introduce a Bill prohibiting the manufacture and sale of cigarettes.

The evil habit of smoking cigarettes has nowadays become very widespread among us, both young and old. This is sheer imitation of the English. Formerly, people were no doubt in the habit of smoking *bidis* or country cigarettes, but they used to keep it within limits. They felt ashamed of smoking any and everywhere. They did it at specific times and that, too, in privacy. It was considered lack of decency to smoke publicly in the streets at all hours of the day, and people rarely smoked outside their homes. Hence the saying about tobacco, that it spoils "a corner [in the house] of one who chews it, the whole house of one who smokes it, and the clothes of one who sniffs it". But the English today never mind smoking anywhere and everywhere, and we

too are copying them. When the people in a country like South Australia have begun to realise the harm done by smoking, we also, we hope, will learn a lesson and come to some decision in the matter.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 21-10-1905

413. RAJA SIR T. MADHAV RAO

Sir T. Madhav Rao was born in 1828 in the city of Kumbakonam[1]. His father, Shri R. Langa Rao, had been the Dewan of Travancore, and his uncle, Rai R. Venkat Rao, had been the Dewan as well as Revenue Commissioner of Travancore. Sir Madhav Rao had spent his childhood and received his education in Madras. He studied at Presidency College [Madras] under Mr. Powell. Madhav Rao was a hard-working student, and was proficient in Mathematics and Science. He had learnt astronomy while sitting on the stairs of Mr. Powell's house, and he made a microscope and a telescope from bamboo with his own hands.

Unwilling to part with such an intelligent student, Mr. Powell appointed him Professor of Mathematics and Physics under himself. Later, Madhav Rao got a good post in the office of the Accountant-General, and after some time, on being invited to work as a tutor to the princes of Travancore, he accepted the offer. This was how he entered,for the first time, the service of a Native State. Theprinces in his charge became good students, and their career as rulers also proved to be very successful. After working as a tutor for four years, he was given the responsible post of an assistant to the Dewan. He was later appointed Deputy Dewan, in which post he earned a good name. The State had been in a very bad condition. The late Mr. J. Bruce Norton has said of him: "He was a great scholar and a political administrator. In the short space of a year he established peace in the land. To everyone he meted out justice without fear or favour. He greatly reduced theft, treachery and deceit."

The Dewan of Travancore was a very weak man, and the Maharaja too was ill-informed. He did not know how the administration was going on, and the officers of the State too had become debased and corrupt. Their salary, moreover, was very low and sometimes fell into arrears for months. The loan advanced by the British Government had not yet been repaid, and the treasury was

[1] In Madras State

empty. The taxes being heavy, trade was in a very bad state and the people were reduced to utter poverty. This caught the attention of Lord Dalhousie[1] who resolved to take over the administration of the State on behalf of the British Government and proceeded to Octacamund with a view to annexing the State to Madras Presidency. At this time, the Maharaja appointed Madhav Rao to the post of Dewan and he successfully pleaded with the British Government to give him seven years' time to improve the State administration. In this way, at: the early age of 30, by dint of personal effort and honesty, Madhav Rao attained a distinguished position. The notable event of his career as Dewan pertained to the State revenues. The State finances were in a bad way when he took charge as Dewan. He abolished the excessive land revenue and other taxes imposed in the past as they were harmful to the prosperity of the people. He also abolished the system of monopoly for revenue collection. He met the deficit in the annual revenues by levying an export duty of 15 per cent. on all goods. As the State went on prospering, he gradually reduced the rate of this duty and brought it down to 5 per cent. Next he abolished the monopoly in tobacco also and permitted State subjects to buy it directly from outside, replacing the former system of Government first buying it at its own risk from the contractors and then selling it to the people. The tariff burden being thus made light, imports received much encouragement. He then removed many other petty taxes and cesses as they did not yield much revenue and were also harmful to the prosperity of the merchants. He reduced, at one stroke, the very heavy land tax in a certain village. In 1865, on behalf of Travancore, he entered into a trade agreement with the British Government and the Government of Cochin, as a result of which the customs duty on goods imported from British Indian and Cochin territories was abolished for the most part.

In appreciation of his able administration the British Government conferred upon him the title of K.C.S.I. When this title was ceremoniously conferred upon him before a large gathering in Madras, Lord Napier spoke highly of him. In 1872, Madhav Rao resigned his post. During his tenure he established an orderly government in place of misrule, and thereby ensured security of life and property for the subjects. He constructed huge and massive buildings, thus giving encouragement to the artisans. He had many works of public utility executed and promoted agriculture by reducing land revenue. But for Madhav Rao, the State of Travancore

[1] Marquess of Dalhousie, (1812-60), Governor-General of India, 1848-56

would have been lost to the Maharaja. Madhav Rao did for Travancore what Pericles did for Athens and Oliver Cromwell for England He was offered a seat in the Imperial Legislative Council, but did not accept it.

A little later Maharaja Tukojirao Holkar of Indore[1] requested the British Government to give him an able Dewan. When the Government offered the services of Madhav Rao, the Maharaja accepted them for a period of two years. The most noteworthy work he did there was the formulation of the Indore Penal Code. During the two years he held office, he did many good things for the people and raised the State to prosperity.

About this time Malhar Rao Gaekwar of Baroda had been deposed for maladministration of the State, and the offer was made to Madhav Rao of the post of Administrator of the State, which he accepted. Baroda was then in a very perilous condition. Treachery, murder and rioting were rampant everywhere. There was discord among the people, life and property were unsafe, and a strong man was needed to restore peace and order. The monopoly of collecting State revenues was vested in big *Sardars*[2]. Money-lenders tyrannized over the people with the aid of the police. The State was brimming over with intrigue and conspiracy, and there was no end of lawlessness. But Sir Madhav Rao was not discouraged. He conducted the administration ably. Troublesome intriguers were banished from the State. The *Sardars* and the *Sahukars*[3] were deprived of their monopolies, and the State revenue was placed on a sound footing. The land revenue sepoys were withdrawn and assigned civil duties. The courts of law were reorganised to ensure justice. Libraries were opened. Efficient men were called in from Bombay and Madras and the standards of the services raised. The narrow lanes in Baroda were demolished and burnt down so that beautiful buildings could take their place. Gardens were laid out and a museum was constructed. In this way, he went on for years without any respite, introducing one reform after another. In 1882 the British Government conferred upon him the title of Raja. In appreciation of his services the Maharaja Gaekwar gave him a gift of three lakhs of rupees. From then on he lived in retirement as a private citizen.Even during his retirement he did public work whenever the occasion demanded. He devoted a great deal of attention to education and pleaded for women's education. He

[1] An erstwhile Princely State, now merged in Madhya Pradesh

[2] Chieftains, big landlords

[3] Money-lenders

was in correspondence with Prince Bismarck of Germany. His career was considered illustrious not only in India, but in Europe also. India has known few such administrators. This illustrious son of India breathed his last on April 4, 1891, at the age of 62.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 21-10-1905

414. ADDRESS TO PROFESSOR PARMANAND

JOHANNESBURG,
October 27, 1905[1]

TO

PROFESSOR PARMANAND, M.A., ETC.

JOHANNESBURG

DEAR SIR,

We, the undersigned, on behalf of the Reception Committee, hereby extend to you a hearty welcome to Johannesburg.

You, Sir, belong to a band of self-sacrificing workers whom the Arya Samaj has given to India. You, in common with your fellow-workers, have given your lifetime to the cause of Religion and Education. We, therefore, feel honoured in honouring you.

We hope that your brief visit to South Africa will result in the Arya Samaj deciding to send some self-sacrificing educationists to work among the Indians in South Africa. Proper education is one of the greatest wants of the Indian community in South Africa.

We hope that you will enjoy your stay among us and carry with you pleasant recollections.

We remain, dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

M. S. PILLAY, V. M. MUDLIAR

CHAIRMAN,

MULJI PATEL, N. V. PILLAY,
G. A. DESAI, N. A. NAIDOO,
B. DAYALJI, S. A. MUDLIAR,
C. P. LUCHERAM, S. P. PATHER,
V. G. MAHARAJ, M. A.

[1] It is reported in *Indian Opinion*, 4-11-1905, that the address was presented at a meeting on October 28, when Prof. Parmanand delivered the first of his lectures. Gandhiji was present and interpreted the Chairman's speech.

PADIACHY,

C. KEVALRAM, TRIKAMDAS BROS.,

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 4-11-1905

415. HISTORY OF THE PLAGUE IN JOHANNESBURG

The long-promised report of the bubonic plague that broke out in Johannesburg last year is now published. It is a bulky volume covering one hundred and three pages, and containing many charts giving a graphic report of the epidemic. Dr. Pakes, the author of the report has given an immense amount of labour to the work, and has presented to the public a very learned disquisition. The most interesting part of the report must necessarily be the origin of the plague, and while, if the premises laid down by Dr. Pakes were correct, the conclusions drawn by him would be justified we fear that many of his most important premises are totally incorrect.

It is, perhaps, extremely unfortunate that a proper judicial inquiry was not made as to the origin of the plague before so much valuable time and money were spent over the report. In giving the startling reason that Dr. Pakes has done, he has run counter to the findings of the Vienna Commission, as also the Commission that was appointed by the Natal Government when the plague first broke out in Natal as also, indeed, to the cablegram that was received by the late Mr. Escombe from the Indian Government. Dr. Pakes contends that "the origin of the first cases was the plague-infected rice imported from Bombay". The authorities we have just quoted came to the conclusion that rice was not a carrier of plague infection. Amongst the premises that have led Dr. Pakes to his conclusion are that the first cases were those of store-keepers, that the Indian store-keepers were importing rice from Bombay in December 1903, that they said very definitely "this rice contained rat-droppings", and that no special precautions were taken at Bombay to prevent the export of probably and possibly infected rice.

Now, unfortunately for Dr. Pakes' theory, all these premises are without foundation. The very first mistake that has been committed in drawing up the report is to accept only the official date of the outbreak, and to ignore the whole of the previously known history. It was then contended, indeed proved beyond doubt, that

plague had existed in Johannesburg before the 18th March. In spite of the correspondence [1] that was brought to the notice of the plague authorities in their official capacity, Dr. Pakes has seen fit to ignore the whole of it in his report. He has also ignored the case of the late Dr. Marais, which points unmistakably to the existence of the plague long before he himself succumbed to it. The theory, therefore, that the plague started with store-keepers falls to the ground. Nay, more, the two names given by Dr. Pakes as those of store-keepers were not those of store-keepers at all, as we happen to know. The first cases, taking the outbreak as from the 18th March, were amongst the labourers who came from the mines.

We should very much like to know where the information, that rice was being imported from Bombay, comes from. As a rule, rice is not imported from Bombay but from Calcutta, and, even when it does come from Bombay, the bags are made up in Calcutta. It is a serious reflection upon the Indian Government to state that no special precautions are taken at Bombay to prevent the export of probably and possibly infected rice. Those who know anything of Indian travelling know that precautions taken at Bombay are very severe. Therefore, all the material premises leading to the conclusion that Dr. Pakes has arrived at are not, in our opinion, capable of being proved. How is it, again, that Johannesburg had remained free from the plague in spite of rice having been imported by Indians before also ? For it is not to be contended that rice was for the first time introduced into Johannesburg in 1904. What the real cause of the epidemic was will probably never be known, but so long as it is not found, so long will measures to prevent an outbreak fail. We do not suggest that there will be a recurrence in Johannesburg, for the plague epidemic, in an altitude so high as that of Johannesburg, is hardly possible, except under the most aggravating circumstances. In spite of his usual fairness, we fear that Dr. Pakes has failed to do justice in entirely ignoring the Herculean efforts that were made by the Indian community to prevent an outbreak of plague by placing at the disposal of the authorities all the information of suspected cases, as also warning them of the state of the Location after it passed into the hands of the Municipality. We feel that Dr. Pakes has shirked the real issue by giving extracts from the evidence of Dr. Porter before the Insanitary Area Commission in his work as to the then state of the Indian Location. The measures that were taken to eradicate the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Porter", 11-2-1904 /15-2-1904 & Letter to Dr. Porter, 18-3-1904.

outbreak are all accurately described in the report in question, and they reflect very high credit on the worthy Doctor and his assistants. The manner in which the Location and the Johannesburg Market were dealt with was worthy of very high praise, and it was no doubt due to the energetic action taken by Dr. Pakes and his able assistant, Dr. Mackenzie, that the disease was so promptly stamped out.

Indian Opinion, 28-10-1905

416. A CORRECTION

The Potchefstroom Budget has. noticed our remarks on Lord Selborne's speech wherein His Excellency has promised in his official capacity that no Indians except those who were here before the war will be admitted into the Transvaal until the introduction of representative government. Our contemporary says:

> This is a new phase of the 'grievances', and is evidently the initiation of a policy which will do much to alienate the sympathy that hasbeen extended to the Indians already here by the moderate section of the white population. If they are wise they will refrain, in their own interests, from forcing us to believe that, after all, their ultimate aim is to make the Transvaal a dumping ground for thousands of Indian subjects. *Indian Opinion* talks glibly about an attempt to drive every Indian out of the Colony. As far as the Potchefstroom policy is concerned, this is absolutely untrue, because it has been amply proved that the desire of the people of this district is to show the utmost consideration to the Indians holding vested rights by reason of their old established businesses. When, however, we are asked to tolerate an importation that will tend only to perpetuate an undoubted evil, the spirit of moderation will, we fear, be eliminated.

We are quite at a loss to perceive how the importation of a few necessary clerks can be "making the Transvaal a dumping ground for thousands of Indian subjects", but it is perhaps too much to expect the *Budget* to view the Asiatic question with even a modicum of common sense. The justice of our remarks is, surely, self-evident. The entire shutting out of new Indians would mean the ultimate driving out of most Indians from that Colony; and, however desirable such a consummation may be to a section of the Transvaal population, we can scarcely be expected to view the matter in quite the same light. We make bold to say that there is absolutely nothing in our remarks to justify the inference above mentioned. We have never advocated that the Transvaal should be made a dumping ground for Indians. But we do maintain that, if elementary justice is to be done, Indians already residing in the Transvaal ought to be allowed to draw upon India for a

necessary supply of clerks and such assistants, whether they are old residents of the Transvaal or not. These men can only number a very few per year. Our contemporary may not know that such facility is given even in the self-governing Colonies of the Cape and Natal, where also there are restriction laws. We have no hesitation in saying that to deny the right of Indian merchants to depend upon India for necessary skilled assistance is undoubtedly to contemplate slow starvation of the already resident Indian population. The position we have laid down is by no means novel. We refer the *Budget* to Lord Milner's despatch wherein he has most clearly laid down that Indians of education, means and ability should not be prevented from entering the Transvaal, whether they be new immigrants or not.

Indian Opinion, 28-10-1905

417. THE NELSON CENTENARY : A LESSON[1]

Horatio Nelson was the name that last week resounded from one end of the Empire to the other. The celebrations that took place on the 21st day of this month suggest very serious reflections, and to the Indian mind they should vividly show the secret of Britain's success. Max Müller has acknowledged in his writings that in Indianphilosophy the meaning of life is summed up in four letters spelt—DUTY. Probably at the present day such a meaning of life is not apparent in the conduct of the average Indian. A contemplation of Lord Nelson's life, then, presents in a most striking manner an illustration of duty lived from first to last.

The historic signal "England expects that every man will do his duty" is enshrined in the British heart. The signal was sanctified by the unflinching performance of its author, and has been hallowed by a century of its translation into deeds. The measure of England's success is the measure of her people's acceptance of Nelson's signal in the conduct of their own lives. If the sun never sets on the Empire, of which Nelson was one of the founders, it is because her sons have hitherto followed the path of duty.

Nelson is worshipped today as no other man is worshipped in the Empire, not because he was a naval hero, not because he was a man who never received an answer to his question as to what fear was,[2] but because he was a living embodiment of duty. To him his country

[1] This was published as "By an Indian".

[2] *Vide* "How England Won", 28-10-1905

was first—he himself was last. He fought because that was his duty. No wonder that his men followed where he led them. He it was who made England Mistress of the Seas. But he was much more. There was no self-interest in his service. His patriotism was of the purest type.

In a continent like South Africa, where there are constant deflections from the straight path shown by Nelson, it is well to remind ourselves of a life like his. It ought to sober down prejudices. It ought to set us all thinking more of our responsibility than of our rights. To the Indian especially, if the somewhat disagreeable life in South Africa embitters him against the Englishman who judges him harshly, the events of the past week should reassure him that they are still countrymen of Nelson's, and that they cannot quite forsake the path of duty so long as they cherish Horatio Nelson's memory. Herein there is reason for hope and an incentive to love Britain in spite of the faults of Britishers.

Indian Opinion, 28-10-1905

418. DEALERS' LICENSES ACT

Last week we related the sad story of the hardships and indignities showered on Mr. Dada Osman.[1] It is necessary to consider from time to time how to protect ourselves against such a downpour. The whites have fully girded up their loins. No wonder if the tyranny let loose in Vryheid today is repeated in another village tomorrow. No Indian trader can for a moment confidently say that his licence will be renewed from year to year. We have shown elsewhere how influential white men like Dr. Campbell[2] have been doggedly pursuing us with cudgels in their hands. If we sit back at such a time, we shallbe washed away by the flood. To wake up when it is too late would be like digging a well after the house has caught fire. The Indian traders, whether big or small, should immediately make it public whenever they encounter any difficulty in obtaining their licences. It is the duty of the Congress to appoint a special Licences Committee to investigate cases in which traders are deprived of their licences. It should be the duty of such a Committee to go from village to village and record such cases. We believe that this journal reaches and is read in every village. We can cope with the work properly only if the following details are sent to us regarding persons who have been unable to get

[1] *Vide* "Another Licensing Case", 21-10-1905

[2] Dr. S. G. Campbell, a leader of the Europeans in Natal

their licences:

1. the name of the person who has been refused a licence;
2. the place for which the licence was sought;
3. whether or not the person carried on trade before;
4. if he did, where;
5. whether the shop is owned by him or taken out on rent;
6. whether the structure is built of brick or tin: if possible, a pencil sketch should be attached;
7. the amount of the capital declared;
8. the arrangements for keeping account books;
9. whether there are any white merchants' shops in the vicinity, if there are, how distant;
10. the number of Indian traders in the village;
11. the reason given by the Licensing Officer for refusing a licence;
12. whether an appeal was preferred to the Local Board against the decision of the Licensing Officer;
13. all relevant originals or copies of documents, such as the application, the reply received, etc. to be enclosed;
14. if any certificates from well-known Europeans are available, these also should be sent;
15. all these documents should be sent in an envelope addressed to the Gujarati Editor, *Indian Opinion*, Phoenix, with the superscription "Regarding Licences" in a corner, in Gujarati.

If well-known people carefully send the above information from various places, we believe much good will come out of it. This work can be very easily done without money or labour. We intend to use the information in our English columns as well as in our communications to the Government in the matter.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-10-1905

419. BRAVE BENGAL

Bengal seems to have truly woken up this time. News is received every week that the more the Government is adamant on partitioning Bengal, the more determined the Bengalis are in their

opposition. On the very day[1] the Government installed with great pomp and ceremony the new Governor at Dacca, the Bengalis observed *hartal*[2] in Calcutta and held a mammoth meeting attended by 100,000 men and laid the foundation stone of the Federation Hall, thus demonstrating their solidarity. The movement to buy and use only *swadeshi* goods is rapidly gathering strength.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-10-1905

420. OUR DUTY

It has come to our knowledge that some Indians are offended by our article on the plague. We are sorry, but not surprised. We should rather be complimented on drawing attention to the subject, but we are being blamed because we do not hesitate to mention others' faults. Thanks to the plague, many villages in India have been laid waste, numerous families entirely wiped out, and people are running in fright from one place to another. Wherever there has been plague outside India, our people have largely been responsible for importing it, and its quick eradication from those parts has been due to the fact that the task of combating it is generally in the hands of other people. What is the duty of the Press, that is, our duty, on such an occasion ? We could easily win the applause of the people by suppressing their faults. But we would fail utterly in our duty if we did so. Our duty is to serve the people. While championing their rights, if we happen to observe any of their shortcomings, we must bring these to their notice. If instead of doing so we went on flattering them, we would be playing the part of an enemy. As we said at the very outset, we shall boldly defend our people if our opponents speak ill of them; but at the same time, if we notice any shortcomings in our people, we shall fearlessly expose them to the public gaze and urge their removal. Who will do this if we don't ? We have never cherished, nor do we do so now, the idea of doing anything simply to please others. It is our duty to administer the bitter pill. It is quite obvious that, when plague breaks out amongst us, it clearly leads to loss of life; more than that, it means a blow to the whole community. We must not forget how the entire community was affected when plague broke out in Durban,

[1] October 16, 1905

[2] General strike

Cape Town and Johannesburg.[1] The easiest way to deal with plague is to notify a case as soon as it occurs. When plague broke out in Bombay for the first time in 1896, neither the people nor the doctors did anything to suppress it. If the necessary steps had been taken in time, it is possible that hundreds of thousands of lives that were lost might have been saved. Plague can be rooted out even now if people are properly educated in this matter. There are certain reasons why this has not been possible in India. The people there are poor and ignorant, but here they are not. The people who travel five thousand miles, live amidst unfriendly folk and earn their bread cannot by any means be considered ignorant. If, living in this country, we do not learn how to deal with this contagious disease, we have only our obstinacy to thank. It is, we believe, the supreme duty of those who are in a position to offer guidance in such matters to enlighten people and lead them along the right path. We say this without the least fear; for whatever we have written so far will have been in vain if we try to flatter our readers out of fear. We have been repeatedly telling people to stick to their resolve, to remain courteous under all circumstances, and to discharge their duties courageously. We are publishing the biographical sketches of brave men and women like Sir Henry Lawrence and Elizabeth Fry and exhorting our readers to follow the examples of those heroic souls. In the end, we appeal to all our readers to take our writings in the spirit in which they are written. It is possible that we might unwittingly commit mistakes in the course of our public service. We shall be grateful if those who notice any such draw our attention to them.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-10-1905

421. AUSTRALIA AND JAPAN

The Government of Australia seem to have realized the strength of Japan. A Government communique recently issued says that students and traders from Japan, going on a tour of that country, will be freely admitted. They have also declared their intention so to amend their Immigration Law as not to hurt the feelings of Japan. This might benefit Indians too. So far and wide have the roots of Japanese victory spread that we cannot now visualize all the fruit it will

[1] *Vide* " The Plague Panic in South Africa", 20-3-1899 & "The Plague", 9-7-1903.

put forth. The people of the East seem to be waking up from their lethargy.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-10-1905

422. AN ABLE INDIAN

The Daily Mail, a well-known English paper, has narrated a story of great loyalty shown by an Indian in India. He was a surveyor named Khan Bahadur Mohiuddin. It fell to his lot in 1903 to survey arid waste land in Rajputana. He had with him four messengers, four assistant surveyors and two camels. Once, travelling at night, they found their water-bag burst and all the water drained. The messengers advised return, but brave Mohiuddin was not the man to turn back. He sent one of the messengers in search of water, which was fetched but was found to be exceedingly brackish. Marching on they came upon some water which, however, soon gave out. The Khan Bahadur had by then become absorbed in deep thought. The camel-drivers were tied to the camels, and the animals allowed to go as they pleased, for meanwhile the men had fainted, owing to thirst. At last they came to a watering-place and regained consciousness. When in search of water thus, Mohiuddin strayed from his men, and ultimately, lost his life while doing his duty. However, infected with his enthusiasm, the men bravely completed the task. We rarely come across examples of such bravery and devotion to duty. The Khan Bahadur's body was given an honourable burial and his companions, who survived him, were handsomely rewarded by the Government.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-10-1905

423. HOW ENGLAND WON

"What is fear ? I've never seen it." The boy who asked this question of his grandmother has made England a world power.

We must often wonder why the British rule over us. Perhaps we often look upon them with hatred. We feel how nice it would be if India were independent.

An answer to such questions and aspirations was had last week.

Horatio Nelson died on October 21, 1805. His death centenary was celebrated on the 21st of this month wherever the Union Jack

flies. He was born on September 29, 1758. This means that at the time of his death he was only 47. Few men in the world have done what Nelson did while yet so young; rare was the daring he showed and the tasks he performed. Togo[1] is said to have done something similar for Japan. But his victories being very recent, their consequences are not yet apparent. Our minds are not yet calm, and we cannot therefore appreciate them correctly.

"What is fear ?" Nelson asked the question of his grandmother when he was hardly twelve. The grandmother could give no reply, and all his life he knew no fear. At twelve he began going out to sea and doing brave deeds such as few men could do.

In 1789 the Revolution broke out in France. Napoleon Bonaparte came to the fore. He was determined to conquer all Europe. And he would have done it too, it is said, but for Nelson. In fact England alone remained unconquered. Napoleon told his Captains: "Hold the English Channel clear for me only for six hours, and I will conquer England." But Nelson foiled his hopes. A fierce battle ensued between the French and the English navies. In the three great engagements that took place, Nelson successively lost an arm, an eye and, finally, his life.

The biggest of these was the Battle of Trafalgar.[2] If England sustained a defeat this time, she would lose prestige. Nelson was well aware of this and had made the necessary preparations. The officers and men under him all but worshipped him. There was not a danger that he had not himself braved. When in the Battle of the Nile[3] he lost an arm, Nelson busied himself with caring for the wounded utterly regardless of his own pain. So daring was he. He was determined not to own defeat as long as a single British sailor was alive. His army was inspired by the same spirit. In his flagship, *The Invincible*, he roared like a lion. The crucial battle was fought on October 19. Nelson unfurled his flag and sent round the word: "England expects every man will do his duty." A French ship and Nelson's ship fell upon each other; there was a torrent of cannon fire; Nelson was wounded. He had himself carried to his cabin. He covered his badges, etc., with his hands so that no one should know that it was Nelson who had been wounded. The battle continued. In spite of unbearable pain, he went

[1] Admiral leading the Japanese fleet that defeated the Russians in the Russo-Japanese War, 1905. *Vide* "Japan and Russia", 10-6-1905

[2] In which the French fleet was destroyed and Nelson killed, 1805

[3] 1798, when Nelson defeated the French

on issuing orders. He was informed that the French were losing one ship after another and England was winning. Thus, doing his duty, he breathed his last with the words: “Thank God! I have done my duty”.

Since then the English navy has remained supreme. Napoleon’s hopes were shattered, and the English grew in strength. Though no more, Nelson is immortal. All his deeds and sayings are deeply engraved in the hearts of the English people, and even today they sing his praise. During the celebrations last week, it seemed as if Nelson had risen from his grave after a hundred years.

It is no wonder that a nation that produces such heroes and cherishes their memory with such care, rises high and enjoys prosperity.

We should not envy the nation, but emulate its example. Those who have faith in God recognize that the British do not rule over India without His will. This too is a divine law that those who rule do so because of the good deeds they have done before. Let us thereforeemulate them in their deeds so that our aspirations may be fulfilled.

Let us be as courageous as Nelson and like him know what our duty is. Let us also be patriotic like the nation to which Nelson belonged. Let us forget all thoughts of ‘I a Hindu, you a Muslim;’ or ‘I a Gujarati, you a Madrasi.’ Let us sink “I” and “mine” in a common Indian nationality. We shall be free only when a large number of our people are determined to swim or sink together. How can we walk without a staff so long as we are lame?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-10-1905

424. THE EVILS OF TEA

The Southwark Council in England has had an inquiry made into the benefits or otherwise of tea. We give below some of the notable facts collected.

The Chinese began taking tea in the ninth century and have done so ever since. Tea was first introduced into England in 1660. By the eighteenth century it had spread all over the country, and at the turn of that century, twenty million pounds of tea were imported into England every year. In the first decade of the nineteenth century, the *per-capita* [annual consumption of tea in England was a pound and a half, but during the last decade, the consumption has increased so

much that it now comes to six pounds.

The first to raise his voice against tea was the famous John Wesley. He was a very great religious preacher. He was subject to fits of giddiness; but he did not suspect that it was due to tea, because everyone thought it wholly beneficial. Once, all of a sudden, he swooned and fell down and then resolved to give up tea; his giddiness ceased. Sir Andrew Clarke, a famous doctor, has said that tea weakens the nerves. Thousands of women in England, it is reported, have been suffering for years; they have headaches, they have cramps in their legs and suffer from giddiness—all this is mainly ascribed to the tea habit. The officer in charge of the Southwark inquiry says that tea becomes all the more injurious if it is boiled. It is best of course to do without it; but if the habit cannot be given up, the best way of making tea is to pour boiling water over the tea leaves, and immediately pour it out into a cup. The brew should not at all be red, it should rather be the colour of hay.

Among us the custom of taking tea is of recent origin. In India, there is no need for it, but if, in imitation of the whites, people do want to have some drink, they should instead drink coffee or cocoa which are less harmful.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-10-1905

425. SIR THOMAS MUNRO

Sir Thomas Munro was born at Glasgow in the month of May, 1761. In 1780, he took service under the East India Company at Madras. At that time, the condition of the British in India was very precarious. Hyder Ali was preparing to oust them. The English employees of the Company were quarrelling among themselves. At this juncture, Munro rendered valuable service.

After he had been engaged for five years in military campaigns, he took up a civil post. He was appointed in the Revenue Department in Berhampur Taluk. Like Sir Henry Lawrence, he also took full advantage of this opportunity, and lived among the people. He was available to them at all times. He used to go out for walks with them, and listened to the long tales of the poor peasants, their joys and sorrows. He used to talk with the people unaccompanied by any clerk or peon, and lived a very simple life. In one of his letters, he says: “Today I made my porridge from wheat flour instead of oat meal, and tomorrow also, I do not think I shall take anything besides

8plantains. I am at present continuously touring village after village, fixing the land revenue to be collected from the ryots. I cannot think of doing anything else. I do not get even an hour's respite for personal work. Even as I am writing this, there are a dozen persons sitting beside me. They started coming in at seven in the morning. It is now twelve." In this way, Munro worked for seven years in the districts, pleased the people and at the same time put Government revenue on a sound basis. It was now that he was entrusted with an even more responsible job. He was placed in charge of the Kanara Taluk. Though the climate of the place was very bad, he worked without any respite for 26 months out of a sense of duty. Every day he spent as many as ten hours listening to the people's grievances. He says how, living in a small tent, in the midst of the people, he could win their hearts more easily than by living in a fine bungalow by the seaside, and how they were becoming loyal subjects. His bed consisted of a bamboo cot, a mattress and a pillow. As soon as he got up in the morning, he came out and was occupied in talking to the groups of people that were always there waiting for him. After breakfast, he issued instructions to the men under him and attended to the correspondence. Then he went to the office. He had tiffin at five in the afternoon, and again he resumed work at eight o'clock, the discussions, at times, going on till midnight. After he had dispensed peace and happiness to the people in the Kanara Taluk, he was given a more important post in the Nizam's territory. The people there had been reduced to utter poverty by famines in previous years. Brigandage and robbery were rampant, and bad characters had become all powerful. By his courage and determination Munro raised the state to prosperity.

Having served thus for twenty-seven years, Munro went home on leave. In England he got married. He returned to India as Chairman of the Commission appointed to inquire into the working of the Judicial Department of Madras Presidency. He gave effective expression to his sympathy for the Indians, and recommended that they should be appointed to higher posts in the Judicial Department. The work of the Commission was interrupted by the Maratha War of 1817, in which he became absorbed. Though the army under him was untrained and inadequate, it was wholly loyal to him, thanks to his popularity with the people. Munro became so engrossed in the War, and underwent so much physical strain that his health broke down, and on the termination of the war in 1819, he went back to England. In 1820 he was knighted and again came out to India as Governor of 8Madras. He held this post till the very end of his life. Even when he

was Governor, he worked as hard and lived as simply as before. He went out for walks alone and saw any one who sought an interview. Whenever there was an opportunity, he appointed or promoted Indians to responsible posts. This kind-hearted Governor died of cholera in 1827. He was never motivated by self interest. He was always keen on finding out what his duty was and how he could discharge it. He had boundless love for Indians. He fully deserved the title "Friend of the Ryot". There have been such simple and kind-hearted Englishmen in the past, and some are to be found even now. That is why, despite many blemishes, the star of British rule keeps on shining bright.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-10-1905

426. A PAINFUL DISCOVERY

The Prisons Reform Commission gives rise to many misgivings as to the condition of indentured Indians on some of the estates in Natal. At Verulam recently, according to a Reuter telegram published in the *Transvaal Leader*, evidence was given by gaol officials to the effect that it is customary with certain estates employing large numbers of Indians to get their coolies, when ill, convicted of some minor offence in order that they may be cured of their sickness at the expense of the Government and returned fit for work. Had such a charge been made by an outsider, he would undoubtedly have been hooted out of court, so inhuman and unbelievable does it appear at first sight. We ourselves are loth to credit it but those who have given the testimony must have spoken with a full sense of responsibility, and we may assume that they have rather understated than overstated facts. The matter is too serious to be left where it is. And it is a serious thing also that the public of Natal should get the first news of so grave an allegation from outside its borders. We believe the Natal Press has been wholly silent on this matter, though *The Natal Mercury* noticed in aneditorial note the shocking state of the Verulam gaol. We must be content to wait the usual length of time for the publication of the Report before we can know exactly what the evidence was.

We have said we cannot bring ourselves to believe that the charge can be generally sustained, but while thinking it somewhat improbable, we cannot forget the hideous things that were brought to light by a Commission on the treatment of indentured Indians in British Guiana about forty years ago. Then, things far more inhuman

and unbelievable were proved to have occurred, and not in isolated instances. The treatment of sick Indians especially was peculiarly bad, and that in spite of excellent laws for their protection. This can be to some extent understood when it is remembered that a sick indentured Indian is a dead weight on his employer. It is to be hoped that the estate-owners will themselves insist on a thorough investigation for the sake of their fair name. It is not right that the misdeeds of one or two—if the charge be proven— should reflect on others whose aim it is to treat their indentured and helpless employees not only with justice but with something more.

Indian Opinion, 4-11-1905

427. DIVIDE AND RULE

The title of this article is a maxim as old as the hills, and the policy underlying the maxim was enunciated by a British statesman in connection with British rule in India. The cablegram from India that has appeared lately in the newspapers brings the aphorism vividly home to us. It is said that twenty thousand Mahomedans at Dacca, the capital of the new province partitioned from Bengal, assembled together and offered prayers of thanksgiving to the Almighty for the partition, and their consequent deliverance from Hindu oppression. We cannot bring ourselves to believe that the movement could possibly be spontaneous. It is absurd on the face of it. Assuming that there was any oppression on the part of the Hindus, relief could be obtained without partition, because the might of the British power was there to protect one community against another. It is, therefore, we consider, a response to the very powerful agitation that has been set up in Bengal against partition. The boycott has spread with an intensity never known before. It has permeated classes as well as masses, and, if it is nursed long enough, it bids fair to weld together all the communities in Bengal, not excluding the Mahomedans. Those, therefore, who believe in the maxim above quoted, naturally wanted an antidote and they have found it amongst a few Mahomedans in Dacca. It is short-sighted statesmanship to contemplate the government of millions of human beings on the principle of setting one class against another. We know that such a suggestion would be vehemently repudiated, and we know also that pure British statesmanship would revolt against the idea. At the same time, thepolicy itself is deep rooted, has been followed before with

temporary effect, and the *tamasha*[1] in Dacca is but a continuation of it. If the Anglo-Indian administrators, who have really built up the Indian Empire, and who depended for its continuance on the goodwill of the people, were to rise from their graves today, they, in our opinion, would be the first to encourage the boycott agitation, at the same time, conciliating public opinion, which has become so excited. What can be more natural than for the people to wish to clothe themselves, to feed themselves, and to supply their luxuries out of home-grown products and home manufactures ? We see such movements worked out more extensively in many Colonies. It is a legitimate and healthy growth amongst the people, not in the slightest degree inconsistent with a feeling of loyalty to the British Crown. It is only a fulfilment of the prophecy uttered by Macaulay in connection with India.

But, if the rulers of India will not see the reasonableness of the movement, why should not the Indians ? It is true that, to a certain extent, the introduction of British rule was possible by reason of internal dissensions but it is the peculiar province, as also the privilege, of Great Britain to bring together the two great communities in India, and to leave to them an heritage for which she would receive not only the gratitude of the millions in India, but the unstinted admiration of the whole world. It behoves, then, both communities to seize the opportunity offered to them, and to sink material[2] jealousies and dissensions for their common good. Better far, that two brothers should suffer at the hands of each other, than that a third party should step into the breach and gain an advantage over them. We would ask those who see these lines, no matter who they be, to join with us in the prayer that the present agitation in Bengal, which has in it the germs of the unification of the different communities, may grow in strength, and that the people of Dacca or elsewhere, whether Hindus or Mahomedans, may have the good sense to refrain from doing anything that may mar the glorious possibilities that are opened up to the people of India.

Indian Opinion, 4-11-1905

[1] Farcical show

[2] This is obviously a misprint for “mutual”.

428. DADA OSMAN'S APPEAL

The Vryheid Herald, after quoting our remarks on this appeal[1], goes on to say that it is not a question of whether

> Dada Osman is entitled to a licence, it is a question of whether he is entitled to trade in any part of the town. Although Dada Osman held a licence for a few years, it did not give him a vested right to remain in the town for ever. Prior to 1886, when a number of Indians entered the Transvaal, they were granted licences on condition that they only traded in locations and in places allotted to them by the Government, and this was only a question of whether Dada Osman should go into a location.

Our contemporary then goes on to say that this is not a question of white and brown. Our remarks have been called an error. Unfortunately for our contemporary, we have to use the same expression for its remarks quoted above. The question whether Mr. Dada Osman was entitled to a licence or to trade is beside the issue, and a distinction has been drawn without any difference. The fact is that the decision of the Board ruins Mr. Dada Osman, and this was the burden of our remarks. That the applicant had no "vested right" in the legal sense of the term shows the strength of our contention that the British constitution, at times, is so full of weaknesses that it enthrones injustice and strengthens it, as in this case. To an ordinary man, the deprivation of a man's right to trade without any compensation, after he has been so engaged for several years, is very much akin to robbery, which is miscalled law when it is done under cover of a statute. We join issue with our contemporary when it says that it is only a question of whether Dada Osman should go into a Location. We venture to inform our contemporary that Law 3 of 1885, dealing with Locations, has been interpreted by the Supreme Court of the Transvaal to mean that it does not require British Indians to trade in Locations. In the Transvaal, an Indian has the right to trade anywhere he chooses, and he can demand a licence against tender of money. Vryheid has taken over the Transvaal laws including the Indian laws, and it has to abide by them. Had it not been, therefore, for the Dealers' Licences Act of Natal, Mr. Dada Osman would today be trading in the town of Vryheid. It is the Licences Act which has been put into operation against him, and which has enabled the rival traders thus to set aside all ideas of justice and to ruin a poor man because, we repeat, "he wears a brown skin". Did not the Licensing

[1] *Vide* "Another Licensing Case", 21-10-1905

Officer also give as his reason for refusal that he did not want to see the conditions of Dundee reproduced in Vryheid? In other words, he did not wish to see so many Asiatic traders in the town of Vryheid as there were in the town of Dundee.

Indian Opinion, 4-11-1905

429. LORD METCALFE

LIBERATOR OF THE INDIAN PRESS

"The right to rule belongs to the ruler only if he works for the happiness of the ruled." Charles Theophilus Metcalfe, who uttered these words and acted up to them, was born in Calcutta on January 30, 1785. After receiving an indifferent sort of education in England he gave up his studies at the early age of fifteen and [came to] Calcutta the following year. In those days the East India Company was very strict in selecting its employees, and inexperienced youths without proper education were not admitted to its service. Metcalfe was therefore obliged to enter the college at Calcutta. Thus, after receiving education for some time, Metcalfe was appointed to a subordinate post. At nineteen, he became Head Clerk to General Lake. General Lake and the officers under him were annoyed to find the young man in the civil department. Metcalfe took the hint and made up his mind to prove his valour in war. He took the lead in storming the fort of Dig[1] and put in such excellent work that General Lake became greatly pleased with him. Three years later Metcalfe was assigned a very responsible piece of work. The French were conspiring with Maharaja Ranjit Singh in the Punjab. Metcalfe was entrusted with the task of thwarting their designs and it was through his efforts that a treaty was signed between the British Government and Ranjit Singh. Lord Minto was so pleased with Metcalfe's achievement that he appointed him Resident in Delhi when he was only twenty-six.

Here he began to interest himself in public welfare. He placed the landholders' rights on a firm basis. This is what he wrote about it:

> The settlement of land revenue should be fixed for a long period, so that the landlords can make large profits and feel grateful to us. In place of the fear that their land might be taken away from them any time, we should create in them the confidence that nobody would deprive them of their land. If we do so, the people will be pleased, and will begin to consider our rule beneficial and in their own interest. There are some who fear that, if people become free and independent, British rule will be in danger. Even granting that this is

[1] A fort near Agra; the original has "Lig"

probable, how can we deprive the ryots of their rights? How can liberal rulers attach any weight to such an argument? The kingdom of man is controlled by the kingdom of God. The Almighty can bestow a kingdom in a moment and take it back in another. Man's ingenuity avails not before His command. The duty of the rulers, therefore, is only to advance the well-being of their subjects. If we but discharge this duty, our Indian subjects will be grateful to us, and the world will for ever sing our praises. What if in future a rebellion should break out as a result of such a policy? Well, if out of the base fear of a future danger we should oppress the subjects, we shall deserve the attacks that may be made against us. And, when we are driven to such a position, the world will scorn us, will spit upon us and call us all sorts of names.

Sympathizing with the ryots in their woes, young Metcalfe wrote such noble words. Metcalfe was later appointed Resident at the Nizam's Court. The Nizam's Government was at that time in great financial difficulty. Some crafty but powerful Englishmen had lent him large sums on interest. Metcalfe was much pained to learn of this. Without caring for what the Governor-General might think, he did his duty and got rid of the crafty men. In 1827 Metcalfe became a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council at Calcutta. The good Lord William Bentinck was the Viceroy then. When Bentinck was obliged for reasons of health to proceed suddenly to England, Metcalfe was appointed in his place as Acting Governor-General. At this time he did the greatest deed of his life. He enacted the famous law giving freedom to the Indian Press, which displeased his masters—the Board of Directors. But Metcalfe did not care. When prominent Englishmen opposed him, he made the following reply:

If the argument of my opponents be that the spread of knowledge may be harmful to our rule in India, I say that, whatever be the consequences, it is our duty to educate the people. If British rule can be preserved only by keeping the people in ignorance, our rule then would be a curse on the country and ought to come to an end. But I personally think that we have much more to fear if the people remain ignorant. The spread of knowledge, I hope, will remove their superstitions, will enable them to appreciate the benefits of our government, will promote the goodwill between the rulers and the ruled and will eliminate the differences and disunity amongst the Indians themselves. We, however, do not know what the will of the Almighty is in respect of the future of India. Our duty clearly is to execute the work entrusted to us for the good of the people.

Metcalfe, thereafter, was appointed Governor-General of Canada. There he fell seriously ill, but disregarding his illness went on doing his duty till the last. He was a deeply religious man. Having served the Queen loyally and won the love of the people, he died in 1840.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-11-1905

1. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[JOHANNESBURG,]
November 6, 1905

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

Your letter to hand. I am returning the letter addressed to Revashankar. I shall ask Abhechand to take the papers back. He has gone to Pretoria.

You have done well in writing about Kitchin. Your argument is not wrong. The facilities we have provided him are, generally speaking, too many. The money is being paid to him not for his proficiency but because of my folly; and because there was no other way of correcting my mistake. I did allow him to leave; but he pleaded with me that he was not in a position to do any other work, since he could not start work afresh in Johannesburg. Indubitably, he did wind up the big business he had. Under these circumstances, I could not bring myself to discharge him. So the best way I could find was to give him as much in salary as would meet his normal expenses. However, either of us is free to terminate the arrangement by giving a month's notice. It means that, if the condition of the press gets worse and it does not show any income, I can dispense with his services at a month's notice. Even if the condition improves, there is no stipulation about paying him more than £10, nor is it necessary. There is, therefore, no reason to believe that he will always draw the same salary. We need not suppose that he and Polak will not be able to pull on together when the latter comes. If they cannot, Kitchin will have to leave. Polak will take at least two and a half years to go to Phoenix; it is, therefore, unnecessary for the present to think of that far-off eventuality. I envisage the possibility of a great change in our condition during that period. There was no other alternative when we gave Kitchin a house and land. His heart is in Phoenix. He no doubt likes the life there. Please do not hesitate when you have to do something for him. We have to take into consideration the virtues of a man; we cannot bother ourselves about his drawbacks. We have to be satisfied if, by putting ourselves out, others can be made happy or can benefit. There is no difficulty in giving two acres of land to any of you who wants it, that is, yourself, West, Bean or Anandlal. I think I have already explained this to you. Polak also has asked for two acres. This much I believe: if Kitchin stays, his nature will change and he will do his work well. If, on the other hand, his nature does not improve, he will give in of his own accord. Do ask for further clarification, if

you need it. Always write to me unhesitatingly.

Gokuldas is good by nature; but he has become very selfish and narrow-minded because of his upbringing in the country. He seems to be prejudiced against you. In spite of my repeated attempts to persuade him I find that the idea that "maternal uncle is crazy" is deep-rooted in his mind due to the arrogant impetuosity of youth. His mind is set more on making money. We have to be very careful and see that his leanings become pure. You may watch him and guide him. I believe he will put in hard work. He will not take anything from the press at present; at the same time, he will not work the whole day. I have told him that he is still a student and has to behave accordingly. He will, therefore, work for some time in the press, some time on the land and the rest he will devote to studies. It is necessary for him to have a good knowledge of Gujarati, English and Tamil. I have asked him to start with composing Tamil matter in the press. I shall write a letter about this to Pillay also. You may come, if possible, during Christmas, after Gokuldas arrives there and has become conversant with the work.

How is West doing the job-work? Does he feel uncomfortable or is he cheerful? Who are doing the composing work for the newspaper? How does Virji behave? Write to me about everybody there. How is Bean doing? What is the position of the books now? How about Anandlal? I have written to him also about Gokuldas. I still feel that it will be better if you three brothers live together. But if there is even the least possibility of bitterness resulting from doing so, you have not to act on my suggestions. Gokuldas, of course, will stay with you.

Is Orchard still there in the house or has he left?

I have sent the Tamil material, but I find that there will be some difficulty for me in the matter. I saw that the man who did the translation has very little knowledge of the language. He felt very diffident and said that it would be better if I did not entrust the work to him. It will be quite enough if Gokuldas and Pillay understand it even after a strenuous effort. Gokuldas has learnt a little. The English matter that I send from here will merely have to be translated there. Consult Pillay about this. Who has written for this week's issue ?

Does Hemchand give you satisfaction or not? Does he go out for the collection of dues? Train him well.

What has happened to Ramnath? I had written a letter to Ajodha.

Has Jayashanker been able to procure any assistant or does he have the same difficulty still? Give Bean whatever miscellaneous things he wants. Send Moon's report when you get it. Who is to sow

the land that has been ploughed ? Does the leakage in the roof continue or has it stopped ?

Let me know if the shifting of the office to Mercury Lane has affected the flow of work. Do the whites come in greater numbers?

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Govindji says that he is not getting the paper regularly.

I sent more Gujarati matter yesterday.

Do see what is written on the back of the first four sheets also.

From a photostat of the original Gujarati: S.N. 4262

2. CABLE TO KING-EMPEROR[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before *November 9, 1905*]

BRITISH INDIANS, TRANSVAAL, TENDER TO HIS GRACIOUS MAJESTY HUMBLE CONGRATULATIONS ON HIS SIXTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY.

Indian Opinion, 11-11-1905

3. LONG LIVE THE KING-EMPEROR

Thursday, the 9th instant, was the sixty-fifth birthday of His Majesty the King-Emperor. Loyal congratulations were offered from all parts of his vast dominions. No monarch of modern times has commanded the admiration and love of his subjects as King Edward has. When he ascended the throne, his position was a most difficult one, since he had to succeed Victoria the Good; but, during the short space that he has occupied his supreme position, he has carried out the traditions left by that noble lady, and has shown that, even in a country constitutionally governed, the King has many opportunities of serving his subjects, in a way possible only to one who, like His Majesty, combines a real appreciation of the dignity of his exalted station with a more than ordinary ability. By his sound judgment and tact, he has materially assisted in promoting the world's peace, and the prosperity of the British Empire. He has endeared himself to his subjects the world over because, being lord of all, he has made himself the servant of all. In the whole history of the world, no throne has

[1] The cable was sent by the Transvaal British Indian Association through the Colonial Secretary.

been so firmly established in the hearts of the people as that of the King-Emperor today. That he may live long to add lustre to that throne is the earnest prayer of British Indians, the humblest of his subjects but not the least in loyalty and devotion.

Indian Opinion, 11-11-1905

4. AN INDIAN DELEGATION TO ENGLAND

The general election for the Imperial Parliament is now pending. It may come upon us any day. Mr. Chamberlain has expressed his opinion that the sooner it comes, the better. The most interesting feature to an Indian is the delegation that has gone to England, on behalf of India, to plead the Indian cause before the British electorate. Some knowledge about those who compose the delegation and its purpose may not be out of place even for our European readers in South Africa.

The Honourable Professor Gokhale and Mr. Lajpat Rai[1] are in London as the delegates sent by the National Congress, and towering above the two is Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, the Grand Old Man of India. He is not sent specially, but he is there living a life of self-imposed exile, a life of self-sacrifice extending over an unbroken period of half a century. Of him, Mr. Gokhale has said:

> What a life it has been! Its sweet purity, its simplicity, its gentle forbearance, its noble self-denial, its abounding love, its strenuous pursuit of high aims—as one contemplates these one feels as though one stood in a high presence. Surely there must be hope for a people that could produce such a man, even if, as Mr. Ranade[2] once said, he be only one in three hundred millions.

Such is the towering personality of Dadabhai, who is always in London to counsel Indian patriots and guide them by his advice.

In Mr. Gokhale, yet quite young, is centred the hope of India. He has won many laurels, and has many more to win. Young as he is, he has made for himself a name in the Imperial Legislative Council at Calcutta. Even those who differ from him have to acknowledge his patriotism and earnest eloquence. He is not to be matched in mastery

[1] (1865-1928), known as the "Lion of the Punjab", was deported by the British Government in 1907 and lived for some years in the U.S.A; President of the Congress session at Calcutta in 1920. Sustained injuries at the hands of the police during the boycott of the Simon Commission and succumbed to them.

[2] Judge of the Bombay High Court and social reformer, whom Gokhale regarded as his teacher.

of figures, and he has sanctified a life of love by a free gift of his services to the Fergusson College at Poona for twenty years.

Mr. Lajpat Rai, from the Punjab, is no less noble in mind. He is the recognised leader of the Punjab. He has been devoting his earnings and his energy to the promotion of the work of the Arya Samaj, which has been recently made familiar to our readers.[1] Hardly had he finished the self-imposed work of relieving the distress in the Kangra District, owing to the terrible earthquake, than, at the call of duty, he left for England. As the Honourable Mr. Gokhale could not join him in England in time, he went over to America, and popularized traditions of India to the great American people. This is what the *Boston Transcript* says of him:

> It is not many weeks since Colonel Young husband declared in London that, in all that relates to the spiritual and intellectual life, we Anglo-Saxons are to sit as learners at the feet of the Hindus and other Orientals. They have for ages cultivated, and still cultivate, as the highest and most important of human interests, that which we leave to an hour or so of quiet once a week in a church. The handsome and accomplished young Hindu, Mr. Rai...how magnificent is the beauty and vitality of a high-class Hindu...the delegate from the Indian National Congress, who spoke twice here this week, is on his way to England.

Such leaders, then, are at present in England to plead for India. They are there to tell the British electorate that India needs better representation and better service at the hands of the rulers. In the words of Mr. Schwann, M. P., the delegates are charged

> with the task of voicing the hopes, the fears, the aspirations, and the desires for reform of the Indian people. There was a desire among the Indian people for better education, for a land settlement varying with the varying needs of different parts of India, and for more self-government, because the people whom Mr. Gokhale represented thought that many of the Indian people were quite qualified to take part in their own government.

The delegation and many other things, which are at present happening in India, are unmistakable signs of the times. The Colonial statesmen may not misinterpret them or ignore them. If they would seek the protection of the British flag, they must count upon India asan integral part of the Empire, and, as such, entitled to every consideration. It will very largely depend upon the spirit that guides British, Colonial and Indian statesmen, whether the Empire is to remain firmly

[1] Prof. Parmanand's lectures on the subject were reported in the *Indian Opinion* issues of November 4, 11 and 18, 1905.

knit together, or whether it is to suffer disintegration owing to conflicting interests.

Indian Opinion, 11-11-1905

5. IMMIGRATION ACT OF NATAL

We draw the attention of Mr. Harry Smith, the Principal Immigration Restriction Officer, to a free translation we have given in another column of hardships that Indian passengers are alleged to have had to undergo on board the s. s. *Somali*. If the allegations[1] are at all true, they show a very serious state of affairs. The passenger who has made the complaint which is before us has signed it, and he was severely cross-examined before we decided to take it and give it publication. We are aware that Mr. Harry Smith is just as eager as we are to avoid any unnecessary hardships to the passengers who may be affected by the Immigration Act. We, therefore, feel certain that we have only to draw his attention to this complaint to insure a thorough investigation. We might mention that this is not the first occasion on which we have received complaints of this nature, but hitherto we have not thought fit to publish them or to do anything more than suggest to the complainants to forward their complaints to the proper quarters; but the facts that have come to us this time have been so well and earnestly put that we consider it to be our duty to draw public attention to them. We shall be happy to give an equally prominent publication to anything that the Immigration authorities may have to say either in contradiction, explanation, or justification.

Indian Opinion, 11-11-1905

6. RED TAPE

The Natal Mercury has rendered a public service in publishing correspondencen which throws a great deal of light on the working of the Immigration Restriction Act. It appears that a well-educated Indian, Mr. E. Vaz, was, on the 30th September last, on going to see a friend off by one of the German steamers, prevented from going to the steamer. The friend also, whom Mr. Vaz was to see off, although he produced his second-class ticket, was not allowed to board the steamer. Both of them were, it is complained, roughly

[1] Twenty-seven persons who had reached Natal Port on October 25, were detained on board in an ill-ventilated hold for three days, most of them without food or water. *Vide* "Treatment of Indians at the Point", 18-11-1905

handled by the constable on duty. Mr. Vaz thereupon wrote to the Superintendent of Water Police, who told him that the constablewas carrying out his instructions. He then approached the Colonial Office, and the Colonial Office, too, returned the same stereotyped answer, adding that instructions were from the Immigration Restriction Department. Mr. Vaz then applied to the Principal Immigration Restriction Officer, who put the finishing touch by declining to inform Mr. Vaz of the instructions, saying: "I do not feel called upon to answer inquiries from outside as to inter-departmental arrangements." Rough treatment is not denied. The action of the constable is throughout upheld, and when the public want to know what regulations there are which they have to obey, they are told it is not their business! This is a new method of administration. Hitherto, the people who have to obey laws have been acquainted with the nature of such laws, but now the Government has decided that the Immigration Department is to work its regulations in secrecy, and to expect the public, who are affected thereby, to guess what they are likely to be and obey them. We mention the Government specially, because Mr. Harry Smith has evidently written under inspiration. So far as we know, he has never withheld information from the public. What advantage the Government wishes to gain by keeping its precious regulations secret we do not know, but we do know that the action of the constable was undoubtedly illegal, and the attempt made by the Government to bolster up an illegality by withholding information from the complainant is, to say the least of it, highly un-British.

We congratulate our contemporary on having given publicity to what is nothing short of a scandal, and, what is more, for dealing with it strongly in an editorial note.

Indian Opinion, 11-11-1905

7. RUSSIA AND INDIA

The present unrest in Russia has a great lesson for us. The Czar of Russia[1] today wields the most autocratic power in the world. The people of Russia suffer numerous hardships. The poor are crushed by the weight of taxes; the soldiers put down the people, who have to submit to all the whims of the Czar. Intoxicated with power, the officers do not care for the welfare of the people. Their only function, they think, is to add to their own power and wealth. Entirely against

[1] Czar Nicholas II, (1868-1918), came to the throne in 1894.

the people's will, the Czar declared war against Japan,[1] causing a river of blood of Russian soldiers to flow. The wealth acquired by the sweat of thousands of labourers was thrown into the sea of Japan.

The Russian people have suffered all this for years, but they have now reached the limit of their patience. They have struggled hard to end this tyranny, but in vain. They rose in rebellion and killedthe Czars, but they could not secure justice. This time they have found another remedy which, though very simple, is more powerful than rebellion and murder. The Russian workers and all the other servants declared a general strike and stopped all work. They left their jobs and informed the Czar that, unless justice was done, they would not resume work. What was there even the Czar could do against this? It was quite impossible to exact work from people by force. It is not within the power of even the Czar of Russia to force strikers to return at the point of the bayonet. The Czar has therefore proclaimed to the people that they will be granted a share in government and that he will not make any laws without their consent. It is difficult to say what the ultimate result of this will be; but even if the Czar does not keep his word, it will not prove that the course adopted by the people was wrong. It will only show that the people were not firm enough in applying the remedy. For even the most powerful cannot rule without the co-operation of the ruled. If the Russian people succeed, this revolution[2] in Russia will be regarded as the greatest victory, the greatest event of the present century.

In the caption to this article we have put Russia and India together. We have therefore to justify it by showing how India is concerned with the events in Russia. There is much similarity between the governance of India and that of Russia. The power of the Viceroy is no way less than that of the Czar. Just as the people of Russia pay taxes, so also do we; just as the Russian taxpayer has no control over the use of the money thus raised, so also the Indians have none; as in Russia, so in India, the military is all-powerful. The only difference is that the power of the state is rather more brusquely exercised in Russia than in India. We, too, can resort to the Russian remedy against tyranny. The movement in Bengal for the use of *swadeshi* goods is much like the Russian movement. Our shackles will break this very day, if the people of India become united and patient, love their

[1] The Russo-Japanese War was declared in February 1904; the Russians were defeated and peace was signed on September 5, 1905.

[2] The revolution of 1905 which Lenin later described as a rehearsal for the 1917 Revolution.

country, and think of the well-being of their motherland disregarding their self-interest. The governance of India is possible only because there exist people who serve. We also can show the same strength that the Russian people have done.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-11-1905

8. SIR T. MUTTUSWAMI AIYER, K. C. I. E.

Sir T. Muttuswami Aiyar was born in a poor family at Tanjore on January 28, 1832. Having lost his father at a very early age, Muttuswami had to earn his own living. He therefore took up the job of a village clerk on one rupee a month. This went on till 1846. During this time, a gentleman named Muttuswami Naicker was struckby the boy's intel-ligence and industry. Once it happened that Naicker received news of the river embankment near a village having given way. He sent for his clerk, but the latter being absent, the boy Muttuswami answered the call. Asked by Naicker to make inquiries about the mishap, Muttuswami went round the whole place and brought all the news. Mr. Naicker did not quite believe him, but, being in a hurry, he passed on the boy's report. Later, Mr. Naicker was much pleased to know that the facts collected by Muttuswami were quite accurate.

Not being satisfied with the kind of life he was leading, Muttuswami resolved to rise higher and started going to school whenever he could find the time. Mr. Naicker, who noticed this, kept him for 18 months in a Mission school at Negapatam, and then sent him to a High School in Madras. He also gave him a letter of recommendation to Raja Sir T. Madhav Rao. Muttuswami made daily progress in his studies. Mr. Powell, who was then the Headmaster of the School, saw Muttuswami's merit, and gave him special attention. In 1854, Muttuswami wrote an English essay, which won him a prize of Rs. 500. After he had finished his studies at the High School, he was appointed a teacher on Rs. 60 a month. He rose by stages till he became a responsible education officer. The Government had meanwhile instituted an examination for the Pleader's *Sanad*[1]. Muttuswami prepared for the examination, and stood first in it. In those days the judges used to go on tour from time to time in order to inspect the work of the *munsiffs.*[2] Once Judge Beauchamp[3] went there

[1] Licence to practise

[2] Judges of subordinate courts

[3] Civil judge, Tanjore at the time

on a surprise visit. He was so pleased to see Muttuswami's work that he remarked, "Muttuswami deserves to take a seat by my side". Muttuswami's ability proved to be so outstanding that he was later appointed a Magistrate in Madras. Judge Holloway was much pleased with him. He advised him to pursue his legal studies further, and he did so. As an aid to this study, he learnt German also. He had a very independent mind. An Indian once lodged a complaint against a High Court judge, charging him with assault. Muttuswami, without any hesitation, issued a summons to the judge. The Chief Magistrate suggested that the judge need not be obliged to appear in person. But Muttuswami paid no heed. The judge had to appear before him and was fined Rs. 3. Later, Muttuswami became a judge of the Small Causes Court. In 1878, he was awarded a C. I. E. and made a High Court judge. He was the first Indian to be appointed to that office. His judgments were so sound and carried such authority that to this day, it is said, they can hold their own against those of the best English judges. The famous Mr. Whitley Stokes says that he has seen few judgments that can compare with those of Muttuswami Aiyar and Syed Mahmud. His work was so exceptional in every way that he was made Chief Justice in 1893. Worn out by hard work, Muttuswami died in 1895.

Not only was Sir Muttuswami foremost in the field of law, he also took the greatest possible interest in promoting the welfare of the Indian people. From time to time he spoke on such subjects as child marriage, widow re-marriage and foreign travel, and encouraged reformers. He was very kind and simple, always wore *swadeshi* clothes and was a sincere devotee of God. His bright career lent lustre to the entire Presidency of Madras.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-11-1905

9. AN INDIAN VOLUNTEER CORPS

Last week we reproduced, from *The Natal Witness*, some questions and answers at a political meeting in Newcastle with reference to the liability of Indians to serve during the time of war.

> Mr. Thorold urged that some arrangement should be made whereby the Arabs and Indians should be called upon to assist in case of the calling out of the first line of defence. It would be manifestly unfair to allow the Arabs to sit in their stores and to do business while the Europeans were fighting at the front.

Had Mr. Thorold known the inner working of the Government, he would not have made the remarks attributed to him. The Government simply *do not wish* to give the Indians an opportunity of showing that they are as capable, as any other community, of taking their share in the defence of the Colony. At the time of the Boer War, it will be remembered, the Indians volunteered to do any work that might be entrusted to them, and it was with the greatest difficulty that they could get their services accepted even for ambulance work.[1] General Buller has certified as to what kind of work the Natal Indian Volunteer Ambulance Corps did. If the Government only realised what reserve force is being wasted, they would make use of it and give Indians the opportunity of a thorough training for actual warfare. There is, too, on the Statute-book, a law for the purpose, which has been allowed to fall into desuetude from sheer prejudice. We believe a very fine volunteer corps could be formed from Colonial-born Indians that would be second to none in Natal in smartness and efficiency, not only in peace but in actual service also.

Indian Opinion, 18-11-1905

10. TREATMENT OF INDIANS AT THE POINT

We referred last week to the ill-treatment to which some of the Indian passengers[2] on board the *Somali* are said to have been submitted on their arrival in the Natal harbour. We have received corroboration of the fact from another correspondent, who writes to us in Gujarati, to the following effect:

> Those who did not have the Transvaal permits, but were Transvaal refugees, and those who did not possess the Natal passes, were put to much inconvenience. They were locked up for three days in the steamer-hold. They were not able to provide themselves with any food. The third day Mr. Hassim Juma, a merchant of Durban, engaged a solicitor and was successful in getting about five [persons] landed. When Mr. Hassim Juma himself went to deposit bail, it was not accepted. It was only after the intervention of a solicitor that, with great difficulty, they were landed. The passengers who were not able to land at Delagoa Bay were also kept under lock, and were not allowed to cook their food.

We draw Mr. Harry Smith's attention to the above version. If it be true, it is too painful for words, and if it be true that visiting passes were only allowed on the intervention of a legal gentleman, it is very

[1] *Vide* "Indian Ambulance corps", 13-12-1899

[2] *Vide* "Immigration Act of Natal",11-11-1905

evident that something is rotten in the state of Denmark. As it is, the poor Indians have, in order to make their claims good, either for residing or remaining temporarily in the Colony, to undergo a great deal of trouble and expense. We do not complain of a reasonable enforcement of the Immigration Restriction Act, but we do think that those who are entitled to land in the Colony, or those who should be given every facility for passing through Natal to a neighbouring Colony, ought not to be put to the expense of having to engage a solicitor for mere matters of form.

Indian Opinion, 18-11-1905

11. JOHANNESBURG LOCATION

The Johannesburg Town Council has resolved that the Kaffirs living near the Malay Location will be shifted to Klipspruit on the first of April next year. Now Klipspruit is thirteen miles away from Johannesburg We wonder how the Kaffirs will manage to live at such a distance. The Council also contemplates opening an Indian Bazaar near the Kaffir Location at Klipspruit and expects to do this as soon as it gets the necessary powers to do so.

A move to acquire the Malay Location is already afoot. This should forewarn the Indians. The best course is for all Indians to arrange for adequate accommodation within Johannesburg itself. We believe, however, that it will take the Council some time yet to acquirethe Malay Location, and that there is no likelihood of any new legislation affecting Indians being passed before June next.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-11-1905

12. INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING PERMITS TO TRANSVAAL INDIANS

We learn that the applicants for permits are no longer required—as they were for some time past—to furnish names of Europeans for reference. It is now enough—as it used to be formerly—to mention only Indians as witnesses. Hitherto the Indian witnesses were not called in for verification, but henceforth they will be required to tender oral evidence. We would, therefore, urge that great care should be taken in submitting names.

Regarding permits to children also, a clarification appears to have been made. According to this, permits will be issued to those

under 16 years whose parents are in the Transvaal. Printed forms prescribed for this purpose will have to be filled in by the father or the guardian.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-11-1905

13. JAPAN AND THE BRITISH COLONIES

The British Government finds itself in an embarrassing position in its relations with Japan. It has entered into a treaty with Japan, and has recognized Japan as a major power. The treaty shows that Japan has the same status as England. The English regard Admiral Togo as an equal of Nelson. They welcome and honour all Japanese subjects visiting England.

While this is the situation in England, the New Zealand Premier, Mr. Seddon, says that his country is not at all concerned with the treaty between England and Japan and that he will not allow any Japanese subject to enter New Zealand.

In Western Australia, there are the same rigorous laws against Japanese subjects as against other Asiatic peoples. This has hurt Japan's feelings. The Japanese Ambassador has sent a note, demanding repeal of these laws. The Colonial Secretary, Mr. Lyttelton, has written to the Australian Government that the laws should be changed. The West Australia Minister has replied saying that the laws would be so amended that they do not hurt Japan's dignity, but that in effect they would remain unaltered. This means that the same bitter pill will now be administered to Japan with a coating of sugar.

What will England do in these circumstances? If the Colonies go on acting in contravention of the policy of England, the latter will either have to give up the Colonies or allow herself to be dragged along and change her own policy.

What applies to Japan applies equally to India also. All the more so, because India, being a part of the British Empire, has a better claim.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-11-1905

14. THE CAPE IMMIGRATION LAW

The Cape Immigration Law is becoming increasingly rigorous. Hitherto restrictions had been in force only against people coming by sea. They will henceforward apply to any one entering through the

Transvaal as well. The Cape *Gazette* publishes Regulations to the effect that a person going to the Cape through the Transvaal should possess evidence of Cape domicile. If he fails to establish his right to enter the Cape, he will be deported and will have to pay the Cape Government the cost thereof. The Cape authorities have therefore[1] notified that those wanting to go to the Cape should first obtain passes. One has to face many difficulties in getting such passes in the Cape, for it is very difficult to establish one's Cape domicile if one has no land or children in the Colony. In fact, such a man does not get a pass at all.

It is very necessary that the British Indian League should take action in the matter; otherwise, the Cape persecution will go on increasing daily. The Cape offers facilities for putting up a fight such as no other Colony does. These, we trust, the British Indian League will put to the best use.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-11-1905

15. MOUNTSTUART ELPHINSTONE

The Elphinstones are a well-known family in Scotland. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, a scion of this family, Mountstuart Elphinstone, landed at Calcutta as an employee of the East India Company, at the early age of sixteen. Political disturbances were frequent in India. The country was in the grip of one such in 1796. Vazir Ali, the deposed Nawab of Ayodhya, was under surveillance at Benares. He attacked the Benares Residency. The English judge of Benares defended himself with a spear until relief arrived. Elphinstone, who was there at the time, also bravely defended himself. In 1800, there was trouble near Poona, and Elphinstone was posted there. By this time, he had acquired a good knowledge of languages, and had pleased General Wellesley[2] by his valour in war. He was then appointed Resident at Nagpur, where he pursued his studies further. In 1809, Elphinstone was deputed to the court of the Amir of Kabul. And since that time the British have been pampering the Amir out of fear. Obsessed with the fear of an attack on India through Kabul, the British Government spent money like water to ward off an imaginary danger. It was because of the same

[1] The Gujarati original however, has another word, meaning "alone", perhaps a misprint for another meaning "therefore".

[2] Afterwards, Duke of Wellington

fear that Elphinstone was sent to Kabul to enter into an agreement with the Amir. But he had to return empty-handed. Anyone else in Elphinstone's place would not have taken interest in a task not assigned to him, and he could not have been found fault with. The work that a man does out of love for it, without caring for reward, is generally of a superior quality than that done merely for wages. Such was the case with Elphinstone. What did it matter if he could not checkmate the Amir of Kabul? He utilized his time in other ways while in Afghanistan. He gathered plenty of information regarding places and people there and made it available for the benefit of the British. And though he had to return unsuccessful from Afghanistan, his reputation was enhanced. In 1811, Elphinstone was appointed Resident at Poona. At the time the Pindaris[1] were harassing the poor people; the Scindia, the Holkar and others were eager to attack the British. The Peshwa of Poona was with the British, but he was very weak. Trimbakji, his agent, was an intriguer. He had been imprisoned against the Peshwa's will for his atrocious misdeeds. He escaped from prison and went into hiding. Elphinstone came to know that the Peshwa himself was conspiring against the British. Though his means of defence were meagre, Elphinstone was not unnerved. Even when he came to know of the developments, he remained serene and unperturbed and no one knew of the preparations he was making. At last, the Peshwa launched an open attack. His army fell on the British camp, but was routed by Elphinstone with a handful of his men. Meanwhile, General Smith had come to his rescue. Peshwa Bajirao was completely defeated, and the British annexed Poona and pensioned off Bajirao. The famous Canning described Elphinstone's gallantry at the time in these words: 'Elphinstone is a civil officer. We do not expect our civil servants to show courage in war. Our fighting men are always at their command. But Elphinstone has proved during the war with the Peshwa that he is a soldier who would shine among our soldiers. That he is foremost in civil work is known to all.'

After the war with Bajirao was over, Elphinstone had the more difficult task of governing the people. The English rulers of the time cherished very kind feelings for the people. Before introducing new laws, they used to consider the kind of administration the people were accustomed to and what laws would satisfy them. Elphinstone, too, didthe same. He took care to see that the ancient Maratha families were preserved, and their *jagirs*[2] kept intact. With this end in view, he created the State of Satara for the descendants of Shivaji, which

[1] Mounted marauders during the 17th and 18th centuries

[2] Principalities or landholdings granted by the State

pleased the Marathas very much. He tried to ascertain popular feeling and took care not to hurt it.

This man of gentle qualities was appointed Governor of Bombay in 1819, and he captured the hearts of the people. He gave his best attention to education. He may be regarded as the first to realize that the foremost duty of the British Government in India was to educate the people. The present Elphinstone College in Bombay was founded in memory of this popular Governor. He introduced many reforms in the Judicial Department also. Thus, he ruled over Bombay for eight years as Governor. When he relinquished charge of his post, every community did him great honour. He spent the rest of his life in England, where he wrote a history of India, a work admired to this day. He was twice offered the Governor-Generalship of India, but on both occasions he declined it for reasons of health. This great man died at the age of 81, on December 21, 1859.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-11-1905

16. TELEGRAM TO SIR ARTHUR LAWLEY

[JOHANNESBURG,
After *November 24, 1905*][1]

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION TENDER CONGRATULATIONS TO HIS EXCELLENCY ON APPOINTMENT TO GOVERNORSHIP OF MADRAS.

Indian Opinion, 2-12-1905

17. THE POLL-TAX

It would be unwise for us to give publicity to the complaints that have come to us from hundreds of Indians in connection with the imposition of the poll-tax. Personally, we consider that every good citizen should share the troubles that the Colony is passing through, and one of the best and most practical methods of doing so is to contribute specially to the Colonial revenue. The Government has seen fit to pass the poll-tax measure, and everyone, no matter to what community he belongs, should bow to it and pay the toll with what cheerfulness he can. It is not a matter for mathematical calculation and of considering the question of poor people having to

[1] Sir Arthur Lawley was appointed Governor of Madras on November 24, 1905.

pay the same as the rich man. A poll-tax has always been an unpopular measure and, in its incidence, it falls very heavily upon the poorest members of the community. It is by no means a new thing or a new experience in South Africa, but was an annual contribution exacted in the Transvaal, though not very rigorously, even when the country was at the height of its prosperity.

In a time of depression such as the present, when work is scarce and ready money scarcer, it is no small thing for a poor working man with a wife and family to give even a single sovereign in one lump sum. It is obviously the poorer classes only that feel the burden of a poll-tax. There are thousands of Indians to whom the sum of one pound is no small matter. Take, for instance, the case of those who have just become free from indenture, and have chosen to settle in the Colony. As the price for permission to remain in the Colony, they, including their children, have to pay an annual tax of £3 each, and they would now be called upon to pay an additional £1. On the face of it, therefore, to exact contribution from such men would be highly unjust. The position of many small Indian farmers would be almost the same. They have to toil hard and long for their daily bread. To dignify them by the name farmers is, in fact, totally wrong, for, as a matter of fact, they are labourers pure and simple. It has often [been] argued that the Indian does not contribute sufficient[ly] to the revenue of the Colony. Those who have said so have advanced the argument in a thoughtless manner. No country in the world taxes labour, for labour itself is a contribution of the very best kind. It is upon labour that the prosperity of a country depends.

There is no doubt that the poll-tax is calculated mostly to affect the natives of the soil and Indians. Our Transvaal contemporaries have seen the point without any difficulty. The Europeans have been brought in order to give the measure an appearance of being general legislation, but we have no desire to look at it from that point of view. The measure has been passed, and though we cannot congratulate the Government upon it any more than it can congratulate itself, we all have to bow to the decision. At the same time, we commend to the earnest attention of the authorities and the public generally the special article on the poll-tax published in this issue.[1]

But whatever may have been the intentions of the legislators, it is not for us to complain, though, in our opinion, this conception of the measure, as also the facts we have shown above, prove unmistakably that the Government will have to use a large amount of discretion in excusing from payment those who really cannot afford to pay. For

[1] Not reproduced here

that reason, it is very necessary that the rules already published for collecting the tax should be revised, and the collectors given the authority, at their discretion, to excuse the poorest in the community from payment. The collecting of such a tax is, undoubtedly, a matter of mutual understanding between the Government and the communities affected thereby; otherwise, as one of the expressive Native speakers said at the meeting recently held by the Chief Magistrate,"The Government will have to line the roads of the Colony with gaols for the accommodation of the defaulters."

Indian Opinion, 25-11-1905

18. MR. HARRY SMITH AND INDIANS

We published last week a letter from the Immigration Restriction Officer in reply to our editorial note[1] on the alleged ill-treatment of Indian passengers on board the *Somali*.

We are thankful to Mr. Smith for having given a prompt reply, but we must confess that it is disappointing. Evidently, the facts stated by our correspondent, and supported by another correspondent, are, in the main, true. Mr. Smith has divided our correspondent's compl-aints under six heads, three of which relate to arrangements on board the steamer, for which Mr. Smith refuses to accept any responsibility whatsoever, saying that it is the shipping company that is res-ponsible as carriers. Technically, Mr. Smith is, no doubt, right, but as the Principal Officer responsible for the proper conduct of all who are affected by the Immigration Restriction Act, we venture to think that it is not possible for him thus to slur over what are, undoubtedly, hardships arising out of the enforcement of the Act. Indeed, if the argument advanced by Mr. Smith were to hold good, he might disclaim liability with reference to treatment under the other heads also, for he is certainly not required, according to the letter of the law, to see that the passengers, who may be cooped up by the steamship company in the hold, get proper food or are allowed to communicate with those on shore, because communications with the ship will be controlled by the shipowners; but, Mr. Smith has not seen fit to take up such an untenable position. The complaint has to be taken as a whole and treated as such, and, again it has to be treated, not in a cold-blooded manner, but in the humane, sympathetic spirit which we have almost invariably found in Mr. Smith. The letter, therefore, has come to us as a shock. We miss therein the humanity of

[1] *Vide* "Immigration Act of Natal", 11-11-1905

the man, and find the cold-bloodedness of a calculating head of a department, which is not to be ruffled by any amount of human suffering. Law or no law, we claim from an official of Mr. Harry Smith's temperament a large measure of liberal treatment. Assuming, then, that the truth of the complaint is borne out, is it not possible for the Immigration Department to come to an understanding with the shipping companies (and such things have been done before now, in spite of their being unnecessary, according to the strict letter of law), whereby the inconvenience can be mitigated, if not entirely removed? After all, the passengers placed in the hold were mere suspects, many of them probably had the right to land in the Colony. Many of themhad the right to receive a safe passage through the Colony, and the Immigration Department was, therefore, intimately connected with their proper treatment whilst their cases awaited examination. There would have been nothing extraordinary if the passengers had been kept under surveillance in a different manner. Why, again, were they refused visiting passes on their asking, and had [they] to get the intervention of a lawyer? A merciful working of the law, we are free to admit, may entail a little more expense, exercise of extra patience and waste of valuable time, but we think that all this expenditure will be small, compared to the comfort which would thereby be secured for the passengers.

There is also a question raised, as a side issue, in Mr. Smith's letter, which requires prompt attention. There are evidently some departmental instructions given to the under-officials, of which the public have no knowledge. It would tend to a smooth working of the law, if the public were acquainted with these instructions, seeing that they are intimately related to them.

With reference to the last paragraph of Mr. Smith's letter, that the Immigration and Police Officers are as much amenable to law as anyone else, it is obvious that the average poor Indian immigrant can scarcely be expected to take these cases to court. The point is that it should be some one's duty to protect them against insult or unfair treatment. The sensitiveness of many Indians [is] affected by the Act we admit, but we are not surprised at it. That it sometimes unconsciously leads them into a kind of exaggeration is also probably true, but men placed in the same position that the Indians are in South Africa, have been known to go much further than the Indians have ever done or are likely to do. An officer who has continuously to discharge an irksome duty of restraining natural liberty is likely, by habit, to attribute as a vice that which is merely a most natural result of the working of the human mind under galling restraints, and it is as well even for the most discerning men to bear this in mind, if even a fair

measure of justice is to be given to a people placed in the peculiar condition in which the Indians are.

Indian Opinion, 25-11-1905

19. BADRUDDIN TYABJI[1]

Badruddin Tyabji's is a famous name throughout India, particularly in the Bombay Presidency where he is known to all. He revealed his ability at a very early age and was a very good student at school. His career as a student was so bright that his elders decided to send him to England. Sir Pherozeshah and Badruddin were of the same age and were contemporaries at school.

Mr. Badruddin was perhaps the first Indian from the Bombay Presidency to go to England. He excelled in studies, won many laurels in England and then returned to Bombay. He earned a great reputation as an able barrister and was always compared to great English barristers. He successfully fought cases in which he had to confront the famous barristers Enstey and Inverarity. During the period of his practice at the Bar, there was hardly a big case in which he was not engaged by one or the other party. With his power of oratory and legal acumen, he pleased the judges and won over the members of the jury. He went many times to Kathiawar to fight big State cases, most of which he won. His greatest case was perhaps the defence of Nawabzada Nasuralla Khan. The Collector of Surat, Mr. Lely, had charged the Nawabzada with having offered him a bribe of Rs. 10,000. Mr. Lely gave very strong evidence in the case. Mr. Slater, the Chief Presidency Magistrate of Bombay, gave a harsh judgement, sentencing the Nawabzada to six months' imprisonment. Mr. Badruddin, who was engaged in the appeal against this judgement, argued the law points so ably that Justice Parson quashed the sentence pronounced on the Nawabzada by the lower court and passed severe strictures against Mr. Lely. Mr. Badruddin had, no doubt, won many cases before, but his fame spread all the more with this victory, which saved a member of a noble family from confinement and disgrace. Some time later the Government of Bombay offered Mr. Badruddin a seat on the High Court Bench, which he accepted. Though the judges' monthly salary was Rs. 3,750, Justice Badruddin was certainly a loser. His income from legal practice was, it is said, about Rs. 100,000 a year. His work as a judge is considered to be of a very high order. His judgments show independence of mind and give satisfaction to all the

[1] (1844-1906)

lawyers as well as the parties.

Just as Justice Tyabji has earned a name in scholarship and the legal profession, so has he won fame in public life too. He has done much for the spread of education in India, particularly among Muslims. He always encourages the education of women. His wife and daughters are all well educated. He has taken an active part in the politics of the country and has done much work in collaboration with Justice Ranade. He was a prominent worker of the Indian National Congress, and has also presided over it.[1] His presidential address was so good that it still ranks as one of the best speeches. Though he is now sitting on the Bench, he is as patriotic as ever. He takes interest in educational matters. By nature he is kind and humble. His knowledge of Hindustani is as profound as his knowledge of English. Few in the Bombay Presidency can match him in Urdu oratory.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-11-1905

20. DEPUTATION[2] TO LORD SELBORNE

Before presenting a statement on the position of British Indians in the Transvaal, Gandhiji addressed His Excellency as follows:

[JOHANNESBURG,]
November, 29, 1905

Before beginning to deal with the subject matter of this deputation, I have to tender our respectful thanks to Your Excellency for having spared the time amidst the many calls upon it to receive this deputation. As Your Excellency has personally interested yourself in every question submitted to you, it was felt that we should, instead of simply sending memorials, seek the opportunity of expressing our sentiments and feelings in a more tangible manner.

Before I deal with the statement I am to hand to Your Excellency, I have been asked to mention two matters that have occurred during your recent tour through the Transvaal. Your Excellency is reported to have said at Potchefstroom that "no non-refugee British Indians would be allowed to enter the Colony

[1] In 1887, at Madras

[2] The deputation, which was led by Gandhiji, consisted of Messrs Abdul Gani, Chair man, British Indian Association; Haji Habib, Secretary, Pretoria Committee; E. S. Coovadia, Moonsamy Moonlight and Ayob Haji Beg Mahomed. It waited on Lord Selborne at 3 p.m. on November 29, 1905.

until the Representative Assembly has considered the question next year". If the report is correct, it would, as I hope to show this afternoon, be a very grave injustice to the vested rights of the Indian community. At Ermelo, Your Excellency is reported to have used the expression "coolie store-keepers". This expression has given very great offence to the British Indians in the Colony, but the British Indian Association has assured them that the expression has probably not been used by Your Excellency, or, if it has, Your Excellency is incapable of giving thereby any intentional offence to British Indian store-keepers. The use of the word "coolie" has caused a great deal of mischief in Natal. At one time, it became so serious that the then

Justice Sir Walter Wragg had to intervene, and to put down the use of that expression in connection with any but indentured Indians, it having been even imported into the Court of Justice. As Your Excellency may be aware, it means "labourer" or "porter". Used, therefore, in connection with traders, it is not only offensive, but a contradiction in terms.

THE PEACE PRESERVATION ORDINANCE

Coming to the statement that the British Indian Association is submitting to Your Excellency, I would take first the Peace Preservation Ordinance. Soon after the Transvaal became part of the British Dominions, the services rendered during the war by the dhooly-bearers that came with Sir George White, and those renderedby the Indian Ambulance Corps in Natal, were on many people's lips. Sir George White spoke in glowing terms of the heroism of Prabhu Singh who, perched up in a tree, never once failed to ring the gong as a notice to the inhabitants each time the Boer gun was fired from the Umbulwana Hill. General Buller's despatches,[1] praising the work of the Corps, were just out, and the administration was in the hands of the military officers who knew the Indians. The first batch of refugees, therefore, who were waiting at the ports, entered the country without any difficulty, but the civilian population became alarmed, and called for the restriction of the entry of even the refugees. The result was that the country was dotted with Asiatic offices, and from that time up to today, the Indian community has known no rest; whereas aliens, in every sense of the term, as a rule got their permits at the ports on application there and then, the Indian, even though a refugee, had to write to the supervisors of Asiatics, who

[1] According to Sir Redveers Henry Buller, after the British repulse at Spion Kop, during the Boer War, the Indian Ambulance Corps volunteers had worked within the firing line, though not bound to take the risk. *Vide* Vol. III, pp. 221-2.

had to refer the applications to the Colonial Office before permits were issued. The process took a very long time, from two to six months, and even one year and more, and then, too, the Colonial Office had laid down a rule that only so many permits should be issued to British Indian refugees per week. The result of this mode of operation was that corruption became rampant, and there grew up a gang of permit-agents who simply fleeced innocent refugees; and it was a matter of notoriety that each refugee who wanted to enter the Transvaal had to spend from £15 to £30 and more. The matter came to the notice of the British Indian Association, repeated representations were made, and ultimately the Asiatic offices were wiped out. The mode of granting permits was, however, unfortunately still kept up, and the Chief Secretary for Permits has been always subject to instructions from the Colonial Office. Thus, the Peace Preservation Ordinance, which was intended to apply to dangerous characters and political offenders, under the influence of the Colonial Office, had become an Indian Immigration Restriction law, as it remains to this day. Under the present regime, too, therefore, it is a most difficult matter for even *bona-fide* refugees to get permits and it is only in rare cases that it is possible to get them, except after a delay of months. Everyone, no matter what his status may be, has to make an application on a special form, give two references, and put his thumb-impression upon the form. The matter is then investigated, and the permit is granted. As if this were not enough, owing to the charges made by Mr. Loveday and his friends, the Chief Secretary for Permits received instructions to insist on European references. This was tantamount to the denial of the right of British Indian refugees to enter the country. It would be hard to find twenty Indians who would be known to respectable Europeans by name as well as appearance. The British Indian Association had to correspond with the Government and, in the meantime, the issue of permits was suspended, and it has been only lately realised that the insisting upon European references was a serious injustice.

THE ENTRY OF CHILDREN

But still the difficulties, apart from the necessity for European references, are there. Male children, under 16 years of age, are now called upon to take out permits before they can enter the Colony, so that it has been not an uncommon experience for little children of 10 years of age and under to be torn away from their parents at the border towns. Why such a rule has been imposed we fail to understand. THE HIGH COMMISSIONER: Have you ever known a case where the parents have stated beforehand that they have children and which children have been refused permission to come in ?

MR. GANDHI: Yes; and the parents have been obliged to make affidavits before the children have been allowed to come in.

If the parents have the right to enter, so far as I am aware, every civilised country has admitted the right of minor children also to enter with them and, in any case, children under 16 years, if they cannot prove that their parents are dead or that their parents have been resident in the Transvaal before the war, are not allowed to enter or remain in the Colony. This is a very serious matter. As Your Excellency is aware, the "joint-family" system prevails all over India. Brothers and sisters and their children live under the same roof from generation to generation, and the eldest member in the family is nominally, as well as in reality, the supporter and the bread-earner. There is, therefore, nothing unusual in Indians bringing the children of their relatives into the country, and it is submitted that it will be a very serious injustice if such children, who have hitherto been left unmolested, are either deported from the Colony or are prevented from entering the Colony. The Government, again, intend to require the female relatives of resident Indians also to be registered in the same manner as the males. The British Indian Association has sent an emphatic protest against any such measure, and has even submitted that it would be prepared to fight the question in a court of law, as, according to the advice given to it, wives of resident Indians are not required to take out registration certificates and pay £3.

THE ENTRY OF SPECIAL CLERKS, ETC.

No new permits are granted by the Government, no matter how necessary it may be in certain cases. We were all extremely pleased to read in the papers Your Excellency's emphatic declaration that the vested interests of the Indians who are already settled in the country should not be disturbed or touched. There are merchants who have constantly to draw upon India for confidential clerks, in order to enable them to carry on their business. It is not easy to pick out reliable men from the resident population. That is the experience of merchants all over, and belonging to all communities. If, therefore, new Indians are absolutely shut out of the country until the establishment of Representative Government, it will seriously interfere with these vested interests; and, in any case, it is difficult to see why men of attainments and education, whether they be refugees or not, should not be able to have their permits on application. And in spite of all these hardships, our anti-Indian friends are never tired of saying the country is flooded with British Indians who were never in the Transvaal. They have made a point of saying that every Indian who was before in the country was registered. I hardly think it is necessary

for me to dilate upon this matter, as Your Excellency has been told that all the facts with reference to this charge are wrong, but I may be pardoned for referring Your Excellency to a case that happened in 1893. Shire and Dumat were large contractors of labour. They brought into the country at one time 800 Indian labourers. How many more they brought I do not know. The then State Attorney insisted that they should take out registration certificates and pay £3 each. Shire and Dumat tested the matter in the High Court, and the then Chief Justice Kotze held that these men were not, in terms of the law, called upon to pay £3, as they did not enter for "purposes of trade", and that he could not help the Government, even if the men, after the contract was over, subsequently remained in the country. That is only one instance, which cannot be gainsaid, in which hundreds of Indians remained in the country without paying £3 each. The British Indian Association has always submitted, and that from personal experience, that hundreds of Indians, who did not take out trade licences, remained in the country without ever registering themselves and paying £3.

BAZAARS AND LOCATIONS

Coming to Law 3 of 1885, it has been often urged that Indians, after the establishment of British government in this country, have received relief with reference to trade licences. Nothing, however, can be further from the truth. Before the war, we were able to trade anywhere we liked, as against tender of payment of licence money. The long arm of the British Government was then strong enough to protect us, and up to the very eve of the war, in spite of the constant threats of the then Government to prosecute British Indians who were trading, no action was taken; It is true that now, owing to the decision of the Supreme Court, Indian trade is unfettered, but that is *in spite of* the Government. Up to the very last moment the Government declined to come to the rescue, and a notice was published called the "Bazaars Notice" which stated that, after a certain date, every Indian, who did not hold a licence to trade at the outbreak of war outside Locations, would be expected not only to remove to Locations, but to trade there also. After the notice was published, Locations were established in almost every town, and when every effort to get justice at the hands of the Government was exhausted, as a last resort, it was decided to test the matter in a court of law. The whole of the Government machinery was then set in motion against us. Before the war a similar case was fought, and the British Government aided the Indians to seek an interpretation of the law, which we have now received from the present Supreme Court. After the establishment of the British Government, all

these forces were against us. It is a cruel irony of fate, and there is no use disguising the fact that we have felt it most keenly; and this, I may state, as has now transpired, in spite of the fact that the then Attorney-General told the Government that the interpretation they sought to place upon the law was bad, that if it went to the Supreme Court the matter would be decided in favour of British Indians. If, therefore, British Indians have not been sent to Locations and are free to trade anywhere they like and to live where they like—as I say, it is because it is notwith standing the intentions of the Government to the contrary.[1] In every instance, Law 3 of 1885 has been, so far as the Indians are concerned, most strictly interpreted against us, and we have not been allowed advantage of any loop-holes that are left in it in our favour. For instance, British Indians are not debarred from owning landed property in "streets, wards, or locations that may be set apart" by the Government. The Government have resolutely declined to consider the words "streets and wards" and have simply clung to the word Locations; and these Locations, too, have been established miles away. We have pleaded hard saying that the Government have the power to give us the right to ownership of land in streets and wards, that they should make use of that power in our favour, but the plea has been in vain. Even land which is being used for religious purposes, the Government would not transfer in the names of the Trustees, as in Johannesburg, Heidelberg, Pretoria and Potchefstroom, although the Mosque premises are good in every respect from a sanitary standpoint. It is time, we therefore submit, that some relief was granted to us while new legislation is under consideration.

CLASS LEGISLATION

As to the new legislation to replace Law 3 of 1885, the dispatch drawn by Sir Arthur Lawley has caused us a very great deal of pain. It insists on legislation affecting British Indians or Asiatics, as such. It also insists on the principle of compulsory segregation, both of which are in conflict with the repeated assurances given to British Indians. Sir Arthur Lawley, I wish to say with the greatest deference, has allowed himself to be led astray by what he saw in Natal. Natal has been held up as an example of what the Transvaal would be, but the responsible politicians in Natal have always admitted that Indians have been the saving of the Colony. Sir James Hulett[2] stated before the Native Affairs Commission that the

[1] This should perhaps read: 'I say it is not because of, it is notwithstanding, the in tensions of the Government to the contrary.'

[2] *Vide* "Sir J.L. Hulett and Indian Traders", 24-9-1903

Indian, even as a trader, was a desirable citizen, and formed abetter link between the white wholesale merchant and the Native. Sir Arthur Lawley had also stated that, even if promises were made to British Indians, they were made in ignorance of the facts as they now are and, therefore, it would be a greater duty to break them than to carry them out. With the greatest deference, I venture to submit that this is a wrong view to take of the promises. We are not dealing with promises that were made fifty years ago, though we undoubtedly rely upon the Proclamation of 1858 as our "Magna Charta". That Proclamation has been re-affirmed more than once. Viceroy after Viceroy has stated emphatically that it was a promise [to be?] acted upon. At the conference of the Colonial Premiers, Mr. Chamberlain laid down the same doctrine and told the Premiers that no legislation affecting British Indians as such would be countenanced by Her late Majesty's Government, that it would be putting an affront quite unnecessarily on millions of the loyal subjects of the Crown, and that, therefore, the legislation that was passed could only be of a general character. It was for that reason that the first Immigration Restriction Act of Australia was vetoed. It was for the same reason that the first Natal Franchise Act was vetoed, and it was for the same reason that the Colony of Natal, after submitting a draft Bill applicable to Asiatics as such, had to draft another measure. These are matters not of years gone by but of recent years. It cannot be said that there are today any new facts that have come to light to change all this. Indeed, even immediately before the war, declarations were made by ministers that one of the reasons [for the war] was to protect the rights of British Indians. Last, but not least, Your Excellency, too, gave expression to similar sentiments on the eve of the war. Though, therefore, the manner in which Sir Arthur Lawley has approached the question is, in our humble opinion, very unjust and inconsistent with the British traditions, we, in order to show that we wish to co-operate with the white Colonists, have submitted that, even though no such law existed before, there may now be an Immigration Act after the basis of the Cape or Natal, except that, as to the educational test, the great Indian languages should be recognised and that the already established British Indian merchants should have facilities afforded to them for importing temporarily men whom they may require in their businesses. That will at once do away with the fear of what has been termed an Asiatic invasion. We have also submitted that with reference to trade licences which have caused so much grumbling, the power should be given to the Local Boards or Town Councils to regulate the issue of any new licences subject to the control of the Supreme Court. All the existing licences should be taken out of the operation of any such statute, because they represent

vested interests. We feel that, if these two measures were passed and Law 3 of 1885 were repealed, some measure, and only some measure, of justice would be done to Indians. We submit that we ought to have perfect freedom of owning landed property and of living where we like under the general municipal regulations as to sanitation and appearance of buildings, and,during the time that the legislation is being formed, the Peace Preservation Ordinance should be regulated in accordance with the spirit of such regulation and liberal interpretation should be placed upon Law 3 of 1885. It seems to me to be foreign to the nature of the British Constitution as I have been taught from my childhood, and it is difficult for my countrymen to understand that, under the British flag which protects aliens, its own subjects should be debarred from holding a foot of landed property so long as good use is made of it. Under the conditions, therefore, submitted by the Association, it ought to be possible for the Government to free the Statute-book of the Colony from legislation that, necessarily, insults British Indians. I do not wish to touch on such questions as foot-path regulations when we have to consider the question of bread and butter and life and death. What we want is not political power; but we do wish to live side by side with other British subjects in peace and amity and with dignity and self-respect. We, therefore, feel that the moment His Majesty's Government decide to pass legislation differentiating between class and class, there would be an end to that freedom which we have learned to cherish as a priceless heritage of living under the British Crown.

THE STATEMENT[1]

There are, besides laws affecting Coloured people and, therefore, British Indians, the Peace Preservation Ordinance and Law 3 of 1885 as amended in 1886.

The Peace Preservation Ordinance, as its name implies, although framed to keep out of the Colony dangerous characters, is being used mainly to prevent British Indians from entering the Transvaal.

The working of the law has always been harsh and oppressive—and this in spite of the desire of the Chief Secretary for Permits that it should not be so. He has to receive instructions from the Colonial Office, so that the harsh working is due, not to the chief officer in charge of the Department, but to the system under which it is being worked.

(a) There are still hundreds of refugees waiting to come.

[1] This was published in the *Indian Opinion* of December 2, 1905, while the foregoing, the address by Gandhiji, appeared on December 9.

(b) Boys, with their parents or without, are required to take out permits.

(c) Men with old £ 3 registrations, coming into the country without permits, are, though refugees, being sent away and required to make formal application.

(d) Even wives of Transvaal residents are expected to take out permits if they are alone, and to pay £ 3 registration, whether with or without their husbands. (Correspondence is now going on between the Government and the British Indian Association on the point.)

(e) Children under 16, if it cannot be proved that their parents are dead, or are residents of the Transvaal, are being sent away, or are refused permits, in spite of the fact that they may be supported by their relatives who are their guardians, and who are residing in the Transvaal.

(f) No non-refugee British Indians are allowed to enter the Colony, no matter what their station may be in life. (The last prohibition causes serious inconvenience to the established merchants, who, by reason thereof, are prevented from drawing upon India for confidential managers or clerks.)

LAW 3 OF 1885

In spite of the declarations of Her late Majesty's ministers, and assurances of relief after the establishment of civil government, this law remains on the Statute-book and is being fully enforced, though many laws, which were considered to be in conflict with the British constitution, were repealed as soon as British authority was proclaimed in the Transvaal. Law 3 of 1885 is insulting to British Indians and was accepted totally under a misapprehension. It imposes the following restrictions on Indians.

(a) It prevents them from enjoying burgher rights.

(b) It prohibits ownership of fixed property, except in streets, wards, or Locations set apart for the residence of Indians.

(c) It contemplates compulsory segregation in Locations of British Indians for purposes of sanitation.

And (d) it imposes a levy of £ 3 on every Indian who may enter the Colony for purposes of trade or the like.

It is respectfully submitted, on behalf of the British Indian Association, that the Peace Preservation Ordinance should be so administered that

(a) it should facilitate the entry of all refugees without delay;

(b) children under 16 should be exempt from any restriction whatsoever, if they have their parents or supporters with them;

(c) female relatives of British Indians should be entirely free from interference or restriction as to the rights of entry; and

(d) a limited number of Indians though not refugees, should, on the application of resident traders who may satisfy the Permit Officer that they require the services of such men, be granted permits for residence during the period of their contract of service; and

(e) Indians with educational attainments should be allowed to enter the Colony on application.

Both Law 3 of 1885 and the Peace Preservation Ordinance, and all other colour legislation affecting British Indians, should be repealed so soon as possible and they should be assured as to

(a) their right to own landed property;

(b) [their right] to live where they like, subject to the general sanitary laws of the Colony;

(c) exemption from any special payment; and

(d) generally, freedom from special legislation and enjoyment of *civil* rights and liberty in the same manner and to the same extent as the other Colonists.

Though the British Indian Association does not share the fear of the European inhabitants that an unrestricted immigration from India will swamp the latter, as an earnest of its intention to work in harmony with them and to conciliate them, it has all along submitted that

(a) the Peace Preservation Ordinance should be replaced by an immigration law of a general character, on the Cape or the Natal basis, provided that the educational test recognise the great Indian languages, and that power be given to the Government to grant residential permits to such men as may be required for the wants of Indians who may be themselves already established in businesses;

(b) a Dealers' Licences Law of a general character may be passed, applicable to all sections of the community, whereby the Town Councils or Local Boards could control the issue of new trade licences, subject to appeal to the Supreme Court to review the decisions of such councils or local boards. Under such a law, whilst the then existing licences would be fully protected, except when the premises licensed are not kept in a sanitary condition; all new

applicants would have to be approved of by the Town Councils or the Local Boards, so that the increase of licences would be largely dependent upon the bodies above named.

Indian Opinion, 2-12-1905 and 9-12-1905

21. RETRENCHMENT AND THE POLL-TAX

At a meeting of the Durban Town Council on Tuesday last, the Mayor reported having interviewed the heads of all the municipal departments employing Native and Indian labour, and discussed with them the reduction of all Native and Indian wages by an amount equal to 10 per cent. of the monthly wage. This has been approved by the Council and comes into force as from the 10th November.

It seems evident that neither the Council nor the heads of the departments have considered the additional misery that this measure will mean to those unfortunate men affected by it. Practically all the free Indians employed by the Corporation come from the indentured class, and these have to pay an annual tax of £ 3 for the privilege of being a " free" British subject in a British Colony, and beyond this (a very large drain on a poor man) there is to be a further annual tax of £ 1. How these men are to bear this additional burden and pay their taxes, perhaps the authorities know. The least we can say is that this method of retrenchment reflects no credit on the humanity of the Council, and that the moment for putting it into force is singularly inopportune.

At the same meeting, the Council decided to raise the salary of the Borough Electrical Engineer's assistant to £ 400 per annum. This method of retrenchment applies to the Colony as a whole. In this connection, we may quote our vigilant contemporary, *Trade and, Transport:*

> The *Gazette* has not yet stated that among the Civil Servants chosen by Government to help the Colony out of a financial slough by an acceptance of a reduction in pay, there was one who point-blank declined to do so, and that in consequence the Government, instead of insisting, yielded to this individual's unwillingness to share with his fellows a common burden, and even went so far as to give him a substantial increase of salary instead, the excuse for such magnanimity being certain alleged conspicuous services rendered in connection with an undertaking quite beyond the sphere of duties properly belonging to the favoured one's special department.

If the Durban Town Council had retrenched by adequately reducing first of all the high salaries of those heads of departments who have been willing to see the Natives and Indians reduced, the

paltry £ 3,000 per annum, saved by taxing their very poorest employees, could easily have been made up. At the worst, it would have been a hardship felt by but few, instead of, as now, by many. But it is the old story: For, whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

Indian Opinion, 2-12-1905

22. SIR ARTHUR LAWLEY AS GOVERNOR OF MADRAS

We congratulate Sir Arthur Lawley on his appointment as Governor of Madras. It is a distinction well deserved by His Excellency. Sir Arthur is always kindly, courteous, and solicitous for the welfare of those whose interests are entrusted to him. His views about Indians are strange, and we have been often obliged to comment upon many inaccuracies[1] into which he has been led in considering this question, but we have always believed that these views have been honestly held. Moreover, wrongly though we consider it to be so, Sir Arthur has believed that, in upholding the anti-Indian policy, he would best serve the interests of the European inhabitants of the Transvaal. The mere fact, however, that Sir Arthur has been led to hold such views, owing to his extreme anxiety to serve the European interests in the Transvaal, may be his strength in Madras, for his kindliness, his courtesy, his sympathy and his anxiety have now to be transferred to the millions of Indians over whose destiny he is to preside for the next five years. Sir Arthur Lawley is to fill the place vacated by Lord Ampthill, who has endeared himself to the people of the Madras Presidency. We hope that Sir Arthur will continue the traditions he inherits.

Indian Opinion, 2-12-1905

23. INDIAN VOLUNTEERING

Our note on the subject of Indian volunteering,[2] we are glad to notice, has been warmly taken up by *The Natal Witness*, and some correspondence has appeared on the subject. We hope, now that the matter has been taken up by the Press, that it will not he allowed to die out without an expression of opinion from the Government as to its

[1] *Vide* "More About Sir Arthur Lawley's Dispatch" , 24-9-1904 & Sir Arthur Lawley and the British Indians", 13-5-1905

[2] *Vide* "An Indian Volunteer Corps", 18-11-1905

policy. Law No. 25 of 1875 was specially passed to increase "the maximum strength of the Volunteer Force in the Colony by adding thereto a force of Indian Immigrants Volunteer Infantry". Under the Law, the Governor is authorised "to accept, with the consent of the employer, the services of any Indian Immigrants who may be willing to be formed into a Volunteer Corps". The limit of the strength of the force was, in *those* days confined to one thousand three hundred men. Any planter could raise such a corps, and, subject to the approval of the Governor, be appointed Captain of the same. A capitation grant of twenty shillings per man is made for every efficient volunteer and no volunteer

> shall count as efficient who shall not attend a minimum of twelve days' drill of four hours per diem, or twenty-four days' drill of two hours per diem, or forty eight days' drill of one hour per diem in each year, and no drill shall count which is not of an hour's duration.

Provision is made also for compensation to any member of the Indian Immigrants Volunteer Force whilst engaged in actual military service, should he be wounded or otherwise seriously injured, and for pensions to the widows and children left in Natal of any such volunteer killed in action, or who shall die of wounds received while so engaged. Here, then, if the Government only wanted the Indian immigrant to take his share in the defence of the Colony, which he has before now shown himself to be quite willing to do, there is legal machinery ready made for it.

Indian Opinion, 2-12-1905

24. INDIANS IN DURBAN CORPORATION SERVICE

We hear that the salary of the Indians serving in the Durban Corporation has been reduced by two shillings per month. This news, if true, is to be very much regretted. We do not understand why this is being done. We, moreover learn that the salaries of the whites remain what they are. We shall return to this subject after we have more definite information about it.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-12-1905

25. MODERN CIVILIZATION

The Black Hole[1] of Calcutta is considered unique in history. But there occurred recently at Stanger[2] a tragedy which has outdone the earlier one of Calcutta. Last week 200 prisoners were kept in the Local Government Jail which has room for fifty only. The result was that the whole jail was stinking abominably and it was difficult to enter it. The prisoners were suffocating and most uncomfortable. Is this civilization?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-12-1905

26. ATTACK ON YELLOW SKIN

A white colonist of New Zealand abhorred the Chinese so much that he shot one dead in broad daylight, and reported himself at the police station. He was arrested and prosecuted. The jury took him for a mad man and recommended that he should not be sentenced to death. But the man shouted protesting that he had not committed the murder in a fit of insanity. He believed the Chinese caused the white population much harm. He had therefore committed the murder to give the Chinese a warning. He was ready to hang for it.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-12-1905

27. IMMIGRATION ACT OF NATAL

Mr. Harry Smith writes to say that our complaint regarding the hardships the passengers aboard s.s. *Somali* had to undergo is quite true. But instead of admitting his own fault, he holds the shipping company responsible for them and adds, that some passengers undergo hardships which are of their own making. We have already given in our English columns[3] last week a detailed reply to all this.

[1] An enclosed place, about 20 feet square, where, in 1756, by an order of Nawab Sirajud-daula, 146 persons were reportedly kept for a night, of whom 123 died. This "incident", is now considered to have been the fabrication of some official of the East India Company.

[2] A town 45 miles to the north-east of Durban

[3] *Vide* "Mr. Harry Smith and Indians", 25-11-1905

Mr. Smith cannot disclaim responsibility for sufferings arising from the application of the Immigration Act. It is the duty of Mr. Smith to see that no hardship is suffered by the passengers who are not allowed to land.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-12-1905

28. THE HEROIC SONG OF BENGAL

Every Western nation has its national anthem. They sing it on important occasions. The British anthem, *God Save the Sing*, is well known. The Englishman is inspired with heroism when he sings it. Germany, too, has its famous anthem. *La Marseillaise* of France is of such a high order that the French go into ecstasies when it is sung. Having realized this, Bankim Chandra, the Bengali poet, thought of composing a song for the Bengali people. The song, *Bande Mataram*, composed by him has become very popular throughout Bengal. Mammoth meetings have been held in Bengal in connection with the *swadeshi* movement where millions of people gathered together and sang Bankim's song. The song, it is said, has proved so popular that it has come to be our national anthem. It is nobler in sentiment and sweeter than the songs of other nations. While other anthems contain sentiments that are derogatory to others, *Bande Mataram* is quite free from such faults. Its only aim is to arouse in us a sense of patriotism. It regards India as the mother and sings her praises. The poet attributes to Mother India all the good qualities one finds in one's own mother. Just as we worship our mother, so is this song a passionate prayer to India. The words used are mostly Sanskrit, but easy to understand. The language, though Bengali, is simple enough for everyone to understand. The song is of such a high order that we print it in the Gujarati script below[1], and in the Devanagari script in the Hindi columns.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-12-1905

[1] Not here

29. LORD SELBORNE AND BRITISH INDIANS

Elsewhere will be found a report of the interview[1] that a deputation, on behalf of the British Indian Association of the Transvaal, had with Lord Selborne, on Wednesday, the 29th ultimo.

The British Indian Association has done well in placing the position so fully before Lord Selborne. It could not but have struck His Excellency, as it strikes us, that the case put before him on behalf of British Indians in the Transvaal is extremely moderate and reasonable. In fact, His Excellency admitted the "extreme reasonableness" of the statement that any restrictions,to be effective, must be such as are, in the strictest sense only, necessary. Examined from that standpoint, two things stand out prominently in the statement submitted to His Excellency by the deputation. The Indians recognise the existence of prejudice against them in the Transvaal and also recognise that it is largely due to a fear (whether that be unreasonable or reasonable, it is not necessary to inquire into for present purposes) of unfair competition on the part of Indian traders and undue influx of Indians into the country, and they propose to meet both objections in a manner that cannot but commend itself to all who are not blinded to a sense of justice by overpowering prejudice. If legislation restricting immigration on general lines were passed, on the Cape or Natal basis, with a proviso in favour of Indian languages, as an education test, it should meet all reasonable requirements. With a spirit of self-sacrifice, not to be ordinarily expected, the British Indian Association has gone further, and has suggested that control over all new trade licences shall be given to the Local Boards or Town Councils, subject to revision by the Supreme Court of the Colony. Here, then, is what ought to be an acceptable olive-branch offered to the anti-Indian agitators in the Transvaal. They are the men who cry out against Indian licences, and they are the men who either elect municipal representatives or are themselves such representatives. The Indian trading community relies so much upon their sense of justice and fair play that it does not hesitate to intrust its future to them. More it cannot be expected to do; and if anything more is done, it in spite of such advances, class legislation be deliberately undertaken, the whole of the "extreme reasonableness" will have been in vain, and, as said by the deputation, there will be an end to that freedom which Indians had learned to cherish as the priceless heritage gained to them by living under the British flag. The working of the Peace

[1] *Vide* "Deputation to Lord Selborne", 29-11-1905

Preservation Ordinance will come to many as a painful surprise. Though Lord Selborne held silence over the points that were brought to his notice, we cannot but think that His Excellency must have regarded some of them with strong disapproval. That children under sixteen years should be expected to carry permits with them, or that they should be deported, if their parents be not residents of the Transvaal, and that Indian females should be required to take out registration certificates, is a most discreditable thing. Regulations such as these savour very much of Russian methods, and for the fair name and fame of the Empire, of whose interests Lord Selborne is such a worthy custodian, we hope that he will, as he has promised, go into the matter thoroughly, and give Indians the satisfaction that right and justice demands.

Indian Opinion, 9-12-1905

30. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]

December 11, 1905

This week's *Indian Opinion* will give a full report of the deputation that has waited on behalf of the British Indian Association on Lord Selborne.[2]

The issues raised and discussed are, in my humble opinion, very important and the most important of all is the one regarding the doctrine of class legislation laid down by Sir Arthur Lawley and the opposition to it by the British Indian Association. Sir Arthur Lawley's suggestions are meant to conciliate the European prejudice and so is the proposal of the British Indian Association. If anything, the proposition of the latter meets the European view more completely than Sir Arthur Lawley's suggestion. It is difficult to understand why he has laid so much stress upon the differences between class and class, but if that doctrine is accepted, there will be no end to restrictions upon British Indians in South Africa. It is, therefore, a most important point. The reserve with which Lord Selborne dealt with matters urged by the British Indian Association shows that Mr. Lyttelton has not yet yielded to Sir Arthur's proposals.

India Office: Judicial and Public Records: 4289/1906

[1] This was quoted by Dadabhai Naoroji in his letter of January 1, 1906, to the Secretary of State for India.

[2] *Vide* "Deputation to Lord Selborne", 29-11-1905

31. THE IMMIGRATION ACT AT THE CAPE

We reproduce in another column a very important test case on the Immigration Act at the Cape. The British Indians at the Cape will have to be very careful as to how the Act is being worked. One Narotam Lalu, who has been a resident for nine years in Natal, was prevented from entering the Cape on the ground that he was not domiciled in South Africa. His claim to previous domicile was rejected, although he held a domicile certificate from Natal, because he did not have his wife and children with him, or in South Africa. The authorities at the Cape have instructed their officials that, unless applicants show that they possess immovable property in South Africa, or have their families in South Africa, their claims are to be rejected. Mr. Justice Maasdorp has given a fairly full judgment. He lays down that the requirement as to the presence of wife and children in South Africa, although it is a very great fact in support of domicile, is not absolutely essential. The learned judge has also laid down that a certificate of domicile from Natal is no proof of former domicile, because that is a question for a judge or some judicial authority to decide. The net effect of the judgment is that Indians who can prove long residence in South Africa and an intention of remaining in South Africa will be able to establish their claim to domicile. This is so far satisfactory, but they will not be able, as was very reasonably supposed, to enter the Cape without any trouble on production of a certificate of domicile from Natal. Now the law of the Cape recognises domicile in any part of South Africa, and in the interests of a just administration of the law it is very necessary that documents given by the Natal Government should be recognised at the Cape also, otherwise it would lead to endless complications and troubles. As counsel for the applicant stated, the law as to domicile is practically the same in Natal as at the Cape. There is, therefore, absolutely no reason why certificates of domicile granted in Natal, which, as everyone knows, are issued after very careful scrutiny, should not be accepted for the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope.

Indian Opinion, 16-12-1905

32. THE C. S. A. R. AND PASSENGER TRAFFIC

In the Transvaal *Government Gazette* for the 8th instant is published a Bye-law for regulating passenger traffic on the Central South African Rail ways. The Bye-law is a result of the investigation

carried out by Lord Selborne on the complaint of the Rand Pioneers[1], as also the Coloured people's deputation that waited on His Excellency some months ago. The Bye-law is purely impersonal, and, on the face of it, seems to be perfectly inoffensive. It states that passengers are to

> conform to any instructions given by the station-master, guard or other official authorities for the purposes, as to the compartment in which they shall travel or the seats they are to occupy, and no person shall remain in any compartment or seat if requested by such official to vacate the same. If the circumstances necessitate any passenger having to travel in a compartment of inferior class to that for which he holds a ticket, the difference in the fare shall be refunded by the Railway Department, on application to the Traffic Manager.

Refusal to comply with the Bye-law carried with it a penalty not exceeding 40s. or seven days' imprisonment. The Railway authorities have always possessed these powers, but the Bye-law emphasizes the fact. In its practical effect, it means that Coloured passengers may have to travel in an inferior compartment to that for which they may hold tickets. Whether it will be mischievous in its working or not will very largely depend upon those who will be authorised to regulate traffic, and a very great measure of tact will have to be exercised if inconvenience and rough treatment are to be avoided.

Indian Opinion, 16-12-1905

33. THE LONDON INDIAN SOCIETY AND PROF. GOKHALE

Within a short time of his arrival in England, the whole country has been resounding with the speeches of Prof. Gokhale. The London Indian Society gave a dinner[2] in honour of Prof. Gokhale and Dadabhai, the Grand Old Man of India. We give below the gist of Prof. Gokhale's speech delivered on the occasion, as it is very instructive and deserves careful study. The main point it emphasizes is the spread of education in India. We have already written on the subject in our English Section.[3] We hold that, even in South Africa, we shall not be happy without education. Education is the most potent means to happiness in the modern age. Prof. Gokhale has given 20 years of his life to the Fergusson College for a mere pittance, and is even now serving the country, without trying to amass wealth for

[1] Conservative Dutch settlers of the Transvaal
[2] On Saturday, November 11, 1905, with W. C. Bonnerji in the chair
[3] *Vide* "Compulsory Education *in* India", 7-10-1905

himself. Even the monthly income of Rs. 1,000[1] which he gets as a member of the Imperial Legislative Council, he does not use for himself, but for the country. In the course of his speech, he said:

> Twenty years ago, when I left the University and began to take an interest in public questions, the National Congress was held for the first time and you (Mr. Bonnerji) were called upon to take the chair on that occasion. Since that time down to the present day you have been active in the service of the country; and even today, though unwell, you are attending this gathering. The country can never forget the great services rendered by you. I have no wish to make any lengthy speech this evening. What can I say on the Indian question in the presence of two such veteran leaders of our cause as Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji and Mr. Bonnerji? But I cannot help saying a few words to emphasize the lesson we can learn from the speech of Mr. Dadabhai. He has spoken with that over-mastering force of conviction which comes from a life-long and strenuous exertion on behalf of his countrymen. He is the one man in India who is entitled to speak in the terms in which he has addressed us. We of the younger generation have no right to speak as he has spoken.
>
> You all know our present condition. I would say that it might deteriorate still further. We must rely mainly upon ourselves. If our aspirations are ever to be fulfilled, we must realize the solemn responsibility which such aspirations impose on us. It is no use merely analysing the difficulties of the situation, and then sitting still with folded hands. It is for the younger generation to plunge into th e struggle. We need not be afraid though dark clouds threaten us. It is really when times are dark that good men and true are tested. There can be but one issue to this struggle, if only we are true to ourselves. We have to take a lesson from the events happening inJapan and Russia. I think the time has now come when a number of our young men should give up everything in life in order to serve their country. If all of us are absorbed in our own pursuits, and look after our own interest mostly, we have no right to find fault with others if the condition of the country does not improve. The prime necessity of the country today is education. By education I do not mean the mere rudiments of primary education, but a knowledge of our rights, and along with them of our responsibilities and our duties. It is not enough that such education is spread among a handful of us; it has to be spread amongst the crores of our people. How is this to be done? We cannot expect this education to be given to the masses by our rulers. For that we have ourselves to be ready and devote time to it. The number of young men coming forward should steadily increase. We shall have truly honoured Dadabhai if we learn this lesson from his life. It is no use simply praising his numerous virtues—his humility, his simplicity,

[1] Members of the Imperial Legislative Council at the time were paid Rs. 5,000 a year.

his earnestness, his sacrifice, his selflessness and his tireless hope—we should try to emulate them. It should be our aspiration to die for the sake of our country. If a sufficient number of young men come forward to dedicate their lives to the service of the country, no power on earth can keep us back. Only then will the dark clouds hovering over us be dispelled. Only then shall we succeed, India will march forward, our pettiness disappear, our glory shine throughout the world, and the destiny of which we are dreaming today be realized.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-12-1905

34. TRANSVAAL PERMITS

Great changes are taking place in the procedure for issuing permits to Indians. Lord Selborne has ordered that the entire control of the Permit Office in Johannesburg be made over to the Colonial Office. This seems to have been largely due to the efforts of the deputation.[1] Improvement or deterioration in the condition of Indians will now depend on the manner in which the change is made. We believe it will improve, though we may have to suffer some hardship for the time being.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-12-1905

35. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
December 21, 1905

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter as also your telegram. If Hemchand is incapacitated or dismissed[2] you may use Gokuldas unless, according to my strong recommendation, he goes over to the Tamil desk, in which case I could send Kalyandas.

The excursion ticket is very cheap. I am trying to get your permit and you shall have it by the time you are ready. I am very glad you have finally decided to come over.

I have received from Mr. Hormusji Edulji[3] from Delagoa Bay a

[1] *Vide* "Deputation to Lord Selborne", 29-11-1905

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 2-10-1905

[3] 'Hormsgy Idolgy' in the original

draft for £3/7/6. He tells me that he would like to have a receipt from the Press directly. You may, therefore, send him a receipt for the amount, which covers his advertisement and subscription. He also tells me that he has not been receiving his Paper lately. Please see to this.

You say you have sent me a box of peaches. I may say that I have not yet received it.

Virji will be leaving at the end of the month. Please pay him his salary and pay him also his deck passage and something for food on board. I do not know what is the usual thing. You need not haggle about it but you may see him. Let him have all that on the last day of this month.

Yours sincerely,

M. K GANDHI

C. K. GANDHI, ESQ.

PHOENIX

From a photostat of the original: S. N. 4267

36. LETTER TO HIGH COMMISSIONER'S SECRETARY

JOHANNESBURG,

December 22, 1905

SIR,

I have the honour to draw His Excellency's attention to two Draft Ordinances that appeared in the Orange River Colony *Government Gazette* dated the 15th instant, namely, Draft Ordinances "to amend the Laws relating to Passes" and "to regulate and control the procuring and engaging of coloured people to do work or labour within or beyond the borders of the Orange River Colony".

My Association does not wish to deal with the details of the two measures, but my Association ventures to draw His Excellency's attention to the fact that both of them apply to British Indians also as being included in the definition of the term "Coloured people". In practice, none of the Ordinances would apply to British Indians. My Association, therefore, considers that the insult that is implied in the definition is totally unwarranted.

My Association will, therefore, feel deeply grateful if His Excellency could intervene on behalf of British Indians and free the Ordinance from the objectionable definition, which, while it does no

good to the Colony, is highly offensive to British Indians.

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
ABDUL GANI
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 30-12-1905

37. THE HARVEST

The harvest is indeed rich, but the labourers are few. There are many things that await workers, and every one of these things is most essential to be done. If, however, we had a choice to make amongst the many things as to what should receive precedence, education among Indians would be the first.

We are now in the midst of the Christmas holidays. The year will soon be closed upon us. To many British Indians who read these words it is, or it ought to be, a season of deep spiritual awakening, for, to Christians, the Christmas season is a season of holiness. We are, therefore, anxious to touch the most responsive chords in the hearts of the Indian youths who are born and bred in South Africa, and to whom South Africa is their home. Those that have received any education owe it to their parents, many of whom were, perhaps, without any knowledge of letters. What should the latter do in their turn for those of their countrymen who are in need of education and culture, and all that is implied in these two words? We have already remarked upon the fact that the education of Indian youths is very much neglected.[1] What little is being done is being done by missionary enterprise, partially supported by the Governments in South Africa. There is not a single school of importance, on which we can lay our hands, which is carried on entirely by Indian enterprise. This is one of those departments in which, while we have always a right to look to the Government to give the lead, it is possibleto help ourselves. Nor is it a matter merely of money. The First thing needful is a sufficient number of self-sacrificing young men who would devote themselves to educational work as a labour of love. That seems to us to be an indispensable condition. The Roman Catholics produced the best teachers in the European world because the teachers accept and expect no payment. Burmese children receive,

[1] *Vide* "Compulsory Education in India",7-10-1905

according to Burmese notions, a full education, because the teachers are volunteers. The same rule was followed in ancient India, and even today the village schoolmaster is a poor man. The Fergusson College, of which Professors Gokhale and Paranjape are such brilliant stars,[1] is an instance of a revival of the same after the modern style. Nothing short of an introduction of that type in South Africa would ever solve the whole Indian question. The duty, therefore, before the young Indians in South Africa is simple and clear. The work before them is not a work of a day or few months, but it is a work of years; nor is it a work which can be done without strenuous labour. They have not only to be content with poverty, but they have to train themselves for the vocation. There is no royal road to the goal, but no one need on this account be disheartened. Even if one young man took it into his head to devote his lifetime to the uplifting of Indian children, he could do it. Though co-operation and riches will always be of very great assistance, teaching is a department of work in which one teacher alone can be a host in himself. None need, therefore, wait for others to take up the work. And there is no calling so sacred. As a Sanskrit verse says:

> Kingship and learning are never equal:
>
> A King is worshipped in his own kingdom,
>
> But a learned man throughout the world.

Again:

> Riches are spent by use; but learning is increased by it.

While we are making this appeal to the Indian youths, we would draw their attention to the glowing words addressed by Professor Gokhale to the London Indian Society on the occasion of the reception given to Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji and himself. After placing vividly before his hearers the noble example of the Grand old Man of India, he says:

> Let us not forget that great events are happening around us and if we want to play our part in the world's history, we must show ourselves worthy of playing that part. I think the time has come now when a number of our young men should give up everything in life for the sake of serving their country. The magnitude of the task before us imperatively demands this. If all of us are absorbed in our own pursuits and look mainly after our own individual interests and leave the country to look after herself, we have no right to complain if things do not move faster than they do. Unless education is spread

[1] Both, as members of the Servants of India Society, worked on a meagre subsistence allowance. The members of this Society, founded by Gokhale, dedicated their lives to various forms of social service.

largely in our country—by education, I do not mean the mere rudiments of primary education but a knowledge of our rights, of what is due to us, of the responsibility which goes with such rights—unless this education is spread largely among the masses of the people, our hopes are likely to remain mere hopes for an indefinite period. Therefore, the only solution of the difficulty is that we should understand the necessity—the supreme necessity—of such education, and those of us who are qualified to spread it must recognise our duty and go forward and undertake the task. I think at the present day no work can be more truly patriotic than this. This is the responsibility which the words of our great and venerable leader impose upon us, and I venture to think that the country has a right now to expect that a certain proportion—small [as] it may be at the beginning but steadily increasing—of our young men will respond whole-heatedly to this call of duty. If this is realised, however dark the outlook at times may be, success must ultimately crown our efforts, for our numbers are so large that no power on earth can stay our forward march if only we do not ourselves falter.

There is nothing in these words of Professor Gokhale's, who, be it remembered, has tested in his own life for twenty years the truth he has inculcated, that does not apply to us in South Africa. Will anyone rise to the occasion? The harvest to be reaped is rich and plentiful.

Indian Opinion, 23-12-1905

38. THE N. G. R. AND INDIANS

We have received a complaint, signed by three Indians, which we reproduce in the Gujarati columns, regarding unnecessary inconvenience to which Indian passengers, it is evident, are put at some stations on the Natal Government Railways. Our correspondents say:

> We hope you will bring to the notice of the authorities our complaint as to our grievances. On the 13th December, our friend, Mr. Valli Arif, was leaving by the four o'clock mail train. We intended to go to the platform at the Central Station to see him off, but the constable at the platform, in a rough manner, prevented us from going. On our asking him to explain why we were being prevented, he abruptly said he would not let us go.

Our correspondents continue in the same strain. We are free to admit that there may be occasions when it may not be possible to admit an unlimited number of friends to see passengers off, but we are sure the Railway management would agree with us when we say that the public are entitled to a considerate reply and explanation, whenever occasion arises to prevent them from going on to the platform. We trust that the authorities will inquire into the matter, and

prevent a repetition of the treatment complained of by our correspondents.

Indian Opinion, 23-12-1905

39. INDIAN TRADERS AT THE CAPE

Last week our Cape Correspondent dealt with the question of Indian traders. We need hardly inform our readers that special correspondents do not necessarily represent the views or the polity of this journal. As a rule, we make it a point to give all sides of the question. There would have been no occasion for emphasizing this fact, had it not been that our Cape Correspondent has dealt with the question of Indian traders at length. We hold that the petty Indian traders have been of benefit to the Colony, and we share the view recently expressed by Sir James Hulett, and some years ago by Sir Walter Wragg, the late Sir Henry Binns and others, that they consider the petty Indian trader is a much better man than his fellow-trader of the same class, and that he supplies a much-felt want. Any restriction, therefore, on his liberty would be a very serious injustice to him, and it should be the duty of the Indians at the Cape to fight strenuously against any attempt that may be made in that direction.

Indian Opinion, 23-12-1905

40. AGREEMENT BETWEEN HINDUS AND MUSLIMS

We publish elsewhere[1] a letter addressed to us by Mr. Haji Habib on the subject. If what he writes about the Karachi Traders' Association is true,[2] we are sorry about it. We, also, hold that the Hindus, being the majority community, should act with greater humility. We also agree with Mr. Haji Habib, when he says that the rights demanded by the Indian National Congress would have been gained long ago if there had been unity among the Hindus and the Muslims.

There is no doubt that the leaders of both the communities should meet together and come to some kind of agreement on such matters. We see signs which indicate that such an agreement will shortly follow.

We must, however, reiterate what we have said before, viz.,

[1] In the issue of 30-12-1905

[2] Haji Habib had complained of Hindu traders raising compulsory contributions from Muslim merchants for the Cow Protection Fund.

whatever be the point of dispute between the two communities, no third party should be brought in to settle it. It is easier to put up with a quarrel between two brothers; but it is intolerable that an outsider should step in and deprive both of what they have. Everyone of usshould feel that way. As Mr. Rasool[1] has pointed out, a third party intervening in a quarrel is not likely to do either any good.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-12-1905

41. WONDERFUL IS THE WAY OF GOD[2]

AN INTERESTING STORY

A variety of pamphlets and booklets are published throughout Europe about Christmas time in which many noteworthy facts often appear. The well-known Mr. Stead has published a pamphlet in England, in which he has a life sketch of Count Tolstoy. We have already introduced Count Tolstoy to our readers in these columns.[3] Though a millionaire, he lives an extremely austere life. There are very few men as learned as he in the world. He has written books to show how man's life can be reformed; and, with the same object in view, has written some short stories also. We give below the translation of one of these, having the above title and considered one of his best. We invite our readers to give us their opinion about it. If they find it interesting and benefit from it, we shall publish more such stories from Tolstoy. It is said that the main incidents in the story actually occurred.

[*Here follows the Gujarati translation of an English version of the story*.]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-12-1905

[1] A. Rasool, presiding over a mass meeting of Muslims, as reported by *The Mahratta of* Poona, had appealed to the Hindus and Muslims of Bengal to unite on all questions including the partition of Bengal and the *swadeshi* movement.

[2] In the Tolstoy Centenary edition of his works published by the Oxford University Press, this story has the title "God Sees the Truth, but Waits".

[3] *Vide* "Count Tolstoy", 2-9-1905

42. A RETROSPECT

Each year at this period it has been our practice to take stock of the position of Indian affairs in South Africa, which justifies the existence of this journal, and to better which is its main purpose.

We wish it was in our power to present to our readers a cheering balance-sheet, but such cannot be, in the nature of the circumstances. It is for the Indian to toil, suffer and wait, and we cannot report that he has been able, during the past year, to throw off any of his burdens. Whether we look at Natal, the Transvaal, the Cape, or the Orange River Colony, it is not possible to recall anything that may be considered in the light of an achievement. The record we have to present is a record of prevention of further losses. The strength of the community has been spent in repelling encroachments.

In Natal, as if Indians had not had enough of trouble from man, Nature herself has proved unkind. The disastrous flood claimed the largest number of victims from the Indian community. The total number of deaths due to that calamity will, perhaps, never be known. It, however, showed what Indians were capable of doing. Practically the whole of the relief work was undertaken, and efficiently performed, by the leaders of the community.

In civil matters—political liberty the Indian in Natal has not as of old, the Dealers' Licences Act continues to be the greatest source of trouble. The two cases of Messrs Hoondamal[1] and Dada Osman[2] stand out prominently in this connection. They show most clearly the precarious position that every Indian merchant holds in Natal.

The Municipal Laws Consolidation Bill deprives the Indian of the municipal franchise. The Poll-tax measure, though applicable to all, is calculated most seriously to affect the Indian. The Immigration Restriction Act is being very rigorously enforced, and, as our columns have borne witness lately, the lot of an Indian passenger coming by the steamers from India is by no means enviable.

At the Cape, the Government has been strengthening its grip upon Indians by putting a wrong interpretation upon the restrictive clauses of the Immigration Act. The term "domicile" has been interpreted so as to exclude even Indian traders of old standing. Happily, the Supreme Court has come to the rescue, and has made it possible for such men to re-enter the Colony or to remain there.

[1] *Vide* "Hoondamal's Licence", 15-10-1904; 26-11-1904 & "The Hoondamal Licence Again", 17-12-1904

[2] *Vide* "Dada Osman's Case", 14-9- 1898

In the Transvaal, where the chief struggle is going on, the position is as indecisive as it was last year. Lord Selborne has not been able to give the Indian deputation that waited on him any definite answer, though he has promised to redress the grievances regarding the operation of the Peace Preservation Ordinance.

As for the Orange River Colony, Lord Selborne's reply, given some months ago to a representation from the British Indian Association,[1] shows that that Colony is not yet to open its gates to Indians, no matter who they may be.

In its communal life, however, the Indian population has shown distinct signs of progress. There is an anxiety to work in greater harmony; an anxiety to give the Indian youth a better education. In the person of Mr. Bernard Gabriel, we have the first Colonial-born Indian to have received a liberal education, and to have returned a barrister from England. The community has a right to expect him to give a good account of himself.

The visit of Professor Parmanand and the welcome given to him are an indication of the desire of the community to have in its midst more Indians of culture and education. It is to be hoped that, in the near future, this will be translated into action, and that there will be a concentrated effort to supply from within the educational needs of the community.

The retrospect is gloomy enough, and yet it is not without relieving features. Attempts to degrade the community by establishing the principle of compulsory segregation, although often renewed, have hitherto failed. There has been, on the part of the Press, greater willingness to ventilate Indian grievances. The question of Indian volunteering, first started by us, has been favourably received by it.

The revelations regarding the condition of indentured Indians, before the Prisons Commission in Natal, have received some publicity from the Natal Press, and though these are incidents which, by themselves, signify very little, they unmistakably point to the fact that the community has to proceed along the lines laid down by it when the struggle first commenced, namely, to continue it with reasonableness, as acknowledged by Lord Selborne, with patience, and

[1] *Vide* "Address to Lord Selborne", 14-10-1905 and "Potchefstroom Indians' Statement", 14-10-1905

yet with persistence.

Indian Opinion, 30-12-1905

43. THE ORANGE RIVER COLONY

We wish to call the attention of the responsible authorities to certain draft Ordinances that are published in the Orange River Colony *Government Gazette* for the 15th December, 1905, and to certain Town Regulations. The first Ordinance is entitled "to amend the Laws relating to Passes", and it requires every male Coloured person to hold a pass for a certain period, renewable from time to time. Another Ordinance is "to regulate and control the procuring and engaging of coloured people to do work or labour within or beyond the borders of the Orange River Colony". The method, according to which the framers of the Ordinance would "procure" Coloured labour, is by licensing labour agents, who may employ "runners or messengers to procure, ply, or seek for coloured labourers". The messengers are to hold 5/- permits. There are sections governing the issue of licences to such labour agents, and the usual safeguard against abuse of such licences or misrepresentations by labour agents. It has, we suppose, become a recognised thing in South Africa for such labour agents to be appointed for "inducing Kaffirs to work". Some call such a system a gentle coaxing; others call it a modified form of forced labour. We cannot question the policy that has been sanctioned for a long time, and its criticism does not lie within our domain. Unfortunately, the term "Coloured person" is, in the Orange River Colony, interpreted invariably to mean "all coloured persons, who, in accordance with laws or customs, are called Coloured persons, or are treated as such, of whatsoever race ornationality they may be". It, therefore, includes Asiatics, Malays and others.Both the above-mentioned Ordinances on that account are open to very serious objections, and we cannot understand why the studied insult implied should be irritatingly kept up. Lord Selborne, in his reply to the British Indian Association, has admitted that there are very few Asiatics in the Orange River Colony. Why, then, should the offensive definition be maintained? If it is, in practice, inoperative, the only reason for its existence can be for the wanton pleasure of the inhabitants of the Orange River Colony, who wish to triumph over this implied degradation of the Asiatic races. It is these gentlemen who were pleased, in the Republican days, to describe Indians as those who considered their women as soulless, and as being a people known for the loathsome diseases from which they suffered. Must the authorities

continue to feed the flame of such unreasoning, ignorant prejudice? We have referred to Town Regulations, and we find the old story repeated for the Municipalities of Dewetsdorp and Brandford—both of them townships bearing glorious names. These Regulations are of the same type as those which we have reproduced often in these columns. They are framed to control the movement of Coloured people, even the possession by them of cattle, horses, mules, sheep or goats! No Coloured man "may run on the Town Commonage more than four cattle, horses, or mules, and eight sheep or goats, for which he shall pay monthly 1/- per head for large stock, and three pence per head for sheep or goats". No Coloured inhabitant of the Location may have a stranger coming to him without notice being given to the Town Clerk, nor may an entertainment or a gathering be held without such permission. He may not walk even within the Location after eleven o'clock at night, "except for urgent reasons". We have said enough to revive our readers' recollections of similar by-laws for other townships. Are these by-laws, we ask once more, necessary for the protection of the predominant race, so far as British Indians are concerned ?

Indian Opinion, 30-12-1905

44. DISUNITY AND RIOTS IN THE HEIDELBERG COMMUNITY

The Muslim community in Heidelberg has for some time past been divided over the question of the local mosque, and this has led to the formation of two factions. Though the dispute was taken to a law court, where it was decided, unity in the community has not been restored.

This is a matter for great sorrow. That a quarrel regarding a mosque should be taken to a court of law is, we believe, in itself a thing to be ashamed of. But it is worse when the dispute continues even after it has been to the court. We are not going to adjudge who is at fault. We would only say to both the parties that such a quarrel is a stain on the whole community. We in this country are closely watched by all. It would be, we believe,a disservice to ourselves if we expose our faults in public under such circumstances. We still hope the members of both the parties will take thought and end the dispute. We give below a translation of a Special Correspondent's report published in the *Transvaal Leader* of the 23rd instant, which will show how serious the matter is:

Our Heidelberg Correspondent has sent us a telegram regarding the serious developments among the Arabs[1] there. Fortunately, the damage is not so great as was apprehended, though the dispute was serious. The peace of a quiet town like Heidelberg was disturbed at noon as a result of the misbehaviour of the Arabs. The quarrel started at a meeting of the trustees of the mosque held in the court building. At last, it became so serious that the police had to be called in to prevent bloodshed. The news having spread through the town, many onlookers collected in the Market Square to see the murderous rioting. Mr. Coutsey and Mr. Gisso tried hard to quieten the parties, but those responsible for the breach of the peace would not be mollified. For a time, the situation appeared very serious. Sticks and brickbats were freely used. The meeting became a pandemonium. From words, they came to blows. It is impossible to imagine what would have happened, had not the police arrived in time. An Arab's head was broken. The police thereupon cleared the room of all the men. Before the might of the police the excited Arabs scattered like straw before the wind. For a time it appeared that the police intervention had put an end to the strife. But on coming out, the Arabs started rioting again; and all efforts to quench the conflagration were in vain. One can only guess how the rioting started. But the matter must have been serious, for our Correspondent says that the conflagration has not yet subsided. The police still remain posted near the Town Hall. There is thus no cause for fear. The quarrel is confined to the Arabs only and the white population need not be alarmed. Both the parties say, however, that they will fight it out in the open. All was quiet last night, but the quarrel has not subsided and the danger of further disturbances persists. Who will not feel ashamed to read this? We have to hang our head from shame even while translating this. We hope the Heidelberg people will realize their folly, feel ashamed of themselves and return to normal.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-12-1905

[1] Indian Muslim traders

45. EDUCATION AMONG THE KAFFIRS

A journal, named *Invo,* is published in the Cape Colony for the benefit of the Kaffirs. Mr. Tengo Jababun, a Kaffir, who is its proprietor, seems to be striving for the advancement of his community. In the context of the discussion that is at present going on about the spread of education among the Kaffirs, Mr. Tengo Jababun is actively working for the founding of a huge college for Natives in South Africa. The object of his tour is twofold: firstly, to collect a big fund for the college, and secondly, to obtain signatures on a petition emphasizing the need for such a college and requesting the Government for assistance.

Mr. Tengo Jababun interviewed the Editor of the *Transvaal Leader* who has published his statement in full. Mr. Tengo hopes to raise £ 50,000 from among the Kaffirs and to get 2,00,000 signatures from them for his petition.

Mr. Tengo hopes to acquire the present Government school for Kaffirs and the adjoining site at Lovedale and there build a big institution for imparting higher education to the Kaffirs.

Out of the 836 Kaffirs from Lovedale who passed the Cape University examinations during 1886-1900, 13 boys passed the Matriculation Examination. In all, 768 Kaffir teachers have been trained by the Lovedale Institute. During this period, the Kaffirs in Lovedale paid £ 63,734 towards fees and other expenses.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-12-1905

46. AWAKENING IN CHINA

It appears that Japan's victory has led to a greater stir in China than one might suppose. The people there have begun to think of re-organizing their army on a sound basis. Seven students belonging to the Royal family have recently gone to London for training in armament factories. A few others have proceeded to Germany to be trained in the manufacture of Krupp guns.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-12-1905

47. LETTER TO HIGH COMMISSIONER'S SECRETARY

JOHANNESBURG,
January 3 1906

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR SOUTH AFRICA
JOHANNESBURG

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 20th ultimo with reference to certain Draft Ordinances published in a recent issue of the *Government Gazette* for the Orange River Colony.

I venture to invite His Excellency's attention to the fact that it is not stated in my letter of the 22nd ultimo that the Ordinances referred to do not apply to British Indians. The contention of my Association is that the Ordinances in question do apply to British Indians in theory but they do not in practice, and it is for that very reason, that the definitions [are] taken from the old law that my Association submits it is an unnecessary insult to the Indian community to retain the definitions. A continuous inclusion of British Indians in the term "coloured persons", as it is understood in the Orange River Colony and other parts of South Africa, has resulted in very serious injustice being done to them. My Association, therefore, humbly ventures to think that in all new legislation at any rate the definition should be amended so as to avoid the offence which the community, represented by my Association, feels so keenly. Moreover, I would venture to invite His Excellency's attention to the fact that there is already on the Statute-book of the Orange River Colony special legislation affecting Asiatics and, therefore, British Indians.

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
Yours obedient servant,
ABDUL GANI
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 29-1-1906

48. LETTER TO M. H. NAZAR

[JOHANNESBURG,]
January 5, 1906

DEAR MR. NAZAR,

I have been discussing with Chhaganlal the question of Tamil and Hindi editing. I see that Pillay must go. There is nobody to replace him. The more I think, the more I feel that we ought for the present to do away both with Tamil and Hindi. We do not give the right stuff. We are not in a position to do so. I know there are drawbacks, but I do feel that we have to put up with these drawbacks because the advantages to be gained by dropping Tamil and Hindi are many. So long as we make a definite statement that it is our intention, as soon as we have a proper staff, to resume Tamil and Hindi, I do not think we need be afraid. I am doing all I can to prepare for the Tamil work myself. Maganlal and Gokuldas will also do likewise, but until then I think that it is very necessary to drop both. Tamil will have to be dropped in any case; Hindi may therefore go with it. I shall thank you to let me have your opinion as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

M. H. NAZAR, ESQ.
P. O. BOX 182
DURBAN

From a photostat of the office copy: S.N. 4295

49. THE OUTLOOK

We gave, last week, a retrospect of the Indian position in South Africa[1] during the year that has just closed. We propose this week to dive into the future, and to ascertain whether there is any possibility of a better hope. We are inclined to think there is. First, because the Indian cause is just, and every just cause is its own strength. It can, therefore, only be spoiled by the Indians themselves giving way to despair and consequently lethargy. Secondly, although Lord Selborne has not given any definite clue to his policy regarding Indians, his desire to serve conscientiously all the subjects of the King-Emperor gives very good ground for the hope that when actual legislation in the Transvaal is passed, he will have given it a shape that will at least remove the present intolerable uncertainty, and do away with the

[1] *Vide* "A Retrospect", 30-12-1905

wanton degradation that the present Asiatic laws in the Transvaal imply. If such a position be secured in the Transvaal, seeing that it gives the lead to the other colonies in South Africa, it may not be unreasonable to suppose that, to a certain extent, the condition of Indians will improve in the other parts of South Africa also. But, above all we have a right to expect a change for the better from the new Government at Home. Mr. John Morley[1] is the custodian of the interests of the millions of the inhabitants of India. There is every reason to think that the Government will outlive the impending general election, and will have a good working majority in the House of Commons. Mr. John Morley has not hitherto worked half-heartedly in anything he has taken up. His sympathies for the weaker party are well known. A moderate appeal to him, therefore, on behalf of Indians in South Africa cannot fail to obtain a good hearing No matter how sacred may be the independence of self-governing colonies, he is not without remedy against oppression by the stronger over the weaker party. There is, too, ground for the hope that Lord Elgin[2] will not give away the position of British Indians. But most important of all must always remain the efforts of the Indian community from within. We have pointed to extraneous circumstances to show that the position of British Indians in South Africa is not entirely cheerless, but self-help alone can be the primary cause for any amelioration in that position. No Colonial Secretary, no Indian Secretary, no High Commissioner, however sympathetically inclined or desirous he may be to help, can do any substantial good, unless they have the hearty co-operation of the Indians themselves. They must show utility[3] of purpose, co-operation and strenuousness in fighting their own battles. Our Gujarati columns have shown that the people all over South Africa are desirous of attaining to a larger measure of these attributes. We have received ample encouragement for greater effort from what is at present going on in Bengal.[4] The Indians in that Presidency are, under circumstances the most adverse, exhibiting an unprecedented spirit of co-operation, self-sacrifice and patience. Professor Gokhale and Lala Lajpat Rai have shown, during their campaign in England, what even two earnest workers can do for

[1] (1838-1923), Secretary of State for India, 1905-10
[2] Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1905-08
[3] The word should perhaps be “unity”.
[4] The reference is to the movement against Partition.

a cause. How can Indians in South Africa, then, do otherwise than march boldly with the progressive current which is today impelling the Indian nation onward to its goal?

Indian Opinion, 6-1-1906

50. THE STATUS OF BRITISH INDIANS

As anticipated by us, the Indian National Congress did its duty towards Indians in South Africa, by passing a resolution, at its recent sitting at Banaras on the subject of the treatment of British Indians in this sub-continent, praying, as a means of extorting relief, for the suspension of the supply of indentured labour to Natal, until the "most Colony sees its way to redress[ing] the existing intolerable disabilities and recognises Indians as equally [sic] members of the Empire. We heartily congratulate Congress on thus once again publicly drawing attention to the subject, and supporting Lord Curzon's policy in this matter as declared by him in his last Budget speech at Simla.

Those who have kept themselves informed of affairs in India will have noticed that, specially since 1897, the entire Indian population, Anglo-Indian as well as Indian and the whole Indian Press, English and vernacular, have voiced persistently the sentiments to which the Congress resolution gives expression.Unfortunately,the system of government in India is such as to give very few opportunities for the responsible officers to publiclyannounce their opinions on public matters, however serious they may be; and the natural result is that it is very difficult to know them. It is for this reason, chiefly, that we find members of both Houses in England putting questions to the Secretary of State for India, and thus obtaining glimpses of what may be in the mind of the Government of India; and Indians in South Africa owe no little gratitude to such champions of their cause as the East India Association, Sir M. M. Bhownaggree, Sir Wm. Wedderburn andSir Chas. Dilke, whoby onstant orrespondence and timely questions have occasionally succeeded in eliciting something of the opinion of the Indian Government in the matter of the position of British Indians in he Colonies. Our readers cannot haveforgotten the several meetings of the East India Association, held specially to discuss this subject,when speakers disclosed what had passed between them and the Secretaries for India and the Colonies, individually; but proper light was only thrown on the ideas of the Government of India in this matter when an influential deputation

waited on Lord George Hamilton[1], and His Lordship gave a frank reply. Since then, vigorous efforts have continued to be made, with the result that Lord Curzon deemed it politic to take the Indian public into his confidence, and seized the last Budget speech as an opportunity for breaking the seal of secrecy (which, for reasons best known to itself, the Natal Government still very zealously guards) by publicly declaring the attitude and policy of his Government in the matter, and thus satisfying the millions under his care that he and his advisers were fully alive to the serious-ness of the situation, and that they would leave no stone unturned to secure justice for the tens of thousands of His Imperial Majesty's "loyal and beloved" subjects, who have emigrated to the Colonies with the view of bettering their material condition within the Empire.

Lord Curzon then said in the course of a weighty pronouncement:

> We have informed the Natal Government that we reserve to ourselves the fullest liberty to take at any time such measures in regard to emigration to that Colony as we may think necessary in order to secure proper treatment for our Indian settlers; and we have recently again declined to take any step towards facilitating the emigration of labourers under indenture until the Natal authorities substantially modify their attitude.

But there is one point about this matter—and that the chief one—which has not been sufficiently emphasised. It would seem that the treatment of British Indians in South Africa has not been raised above the arena of mere bargaining, and the rights of Indians as British subjects, apart from the special services in the terms of their indenture, appear to be ignored so far as possible by the Natal Government, and not adequately insisted on by the Government of India. Lord Curzon recognised that the need of indentured labour "might prove a powerful lever in our hands in securing better treatment for Indians generally in South Africa"; but, as we have said, this would be *extorting* relief and not securing it on high Imperial grounds. It would seem that were the supply of indentured labour to be stopped, the Government of India would feel itself powerless to protect its own subjects in South Africa. The position of British Indians would be a truly sorry one if that were so. But such a thing would be too anomalous under the British flag. We have now in Mr. John Morley, the new Secretary for India, a sympathetic, honest and most capable man, and in Lord Elgin, the Colonial Secretary, a statesman of broad views and large experience, who has himself been Viceroy of India. When it is remembered that Lord Minto, the present Viceroy, was

[1] Secretary of State for India, 1895-1903

Governor-General of Canada, it may reasonably be hoped that the question of the status of British Indians will be definitely and satisfactorily settled in the near future.

Indian Opinion, 6-1-1906

51. INDIANS IN THE O. R. C.

Lord Selborne has sent the British Indian Association a prompt and courteous reply to its representation[1], protesting against the definition of the term "coloured person" in certain draft ordinances recently published in the O. R. C. *Government Gazette.* We venture to think that Lord Selborne has misread the representation of theAssociation, which has not stated that "none of the ordinances referred to would apply to British Indians". It has said that, "in practice", they will not apply. The two statements are quite different. His Excellency has, moreover, justified the definition of "coloured person" on the ground that it is a legacy from the old Government. But British Indians object to the definition for that very reason. Their position is this. The ordinances will not in practice apply to them. The Boer Government insulted the Indians by classing them with the Kaffirs. Now there is no occasion to perpetuate a needless insult. The argument seems to be unanswerable. It is a pity that His Excellency, in spite of his wish not to offend, has not seen his way to grant the very reasonable request of the Association.

Indian Opinion, 6-1-1906

52. LETTER TO MOHANLAL KHANDERIA

Sunday, January 14, 1906

BHAISHRI MOHANLAL,

I got your letter and the notice served on you. You have sent the notice by Mr. Glelanberg. In the letter you refer to a summons, but you have not sent a copy. I don't know what I can say from here. Of course you will have to put up a defence there. I think you must win in this case. I could have been more definite if you had sent the summons. If your translation of the Gujarati into English is correct, the gentleman will be able to do nothing to you. If the case is not likely to come up on the 16th, it will be better for you to come over here with the papers. I too have heard that some Muslims have been trying to create difficulties, but you need not be anxious because of that. It is necessary to have patience. If you, on your part, show no

[1] *Vide* "Letter to High Commissioner's Secretary", 22-12-1905

anger, everything will subside by and by. I got your letter only today, that is, Sunday.

With regards from

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6207

53. LETTER TO MOHANLAL KHANDERIA

21-24 COURT CHAMBERS,

JOHANNESBURG,
January 16, 1906

BHAISHRI MOHANLAL,

I got the summons. Judging from it, I believe no harm can come to you. I don't think it will be proper to involve me in this matter; I will come, though, if you have any fears. If the matter can be settled out of court, there will be no harm; in fact it will be better.

Let me know to what date the case is adjourned and also inform me about the outcome. I shall send Chi. Chhaganlal if possible. Just now, he is busy collecting dues here.

With regards from

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6208

54. LETTER TO MOHANLAL KHANDERIA

21-24 COURT CHAMBERS,

JOHANNESBURG,
January 18, 1906

BHAI MOHANLAL,

I have your letter. If you insist, I will go, but I would advise you not to call me. At present, it will be better to keep me out of a dispute which has taken on a communal colour, be it only the slightest. Even if you call me, I shall not be able to appear in Court on your behalf in case I am required to give evidence about the books [of account] in Gujarati. I feel, therefore, that you should engage a local pleader. If he applies for the Gujarati and the English books to be sent to me for inspection and for a commission to be sent here to take my evidence, it will be possible for me to give evidence from here. It will be enough for you to prove that you had to write out the accounts from entries in Gujarati and that you have done this with accuracy. Even if you have

made a mistake somewhere, he will have to prove that that has resulted in a loss to him and only then will he be entitled to damages. This is all very difficult, but, if the local pleader is even moderately capable, you will come to no harm at all. You may get in touch with a pleader there and see what he says. Come up here after wards and then we shall consider if it is necessary for me to go there. However, I leave everything to you.

With regards from

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6209

55. PAYMENT OF THE POLL-TAX

The Poll-Tax, as was to be expected, does not seem to be paid with much enthusiasm, judging by the meagre response to date. The trouble will begin towards the end of next month. The authorities will not have an easy task in discriminating between those who can pay and those who cannot. But one thing, at all events, seems clear: the Government appear determined to squeeze blood out of stones. Some time ago, an Indian approached the Colonial Secretary, asking if Government would be prepared to extend the time of payment in the case of those who were dependent upon their meagre crops to provide the necessary sovereign, and received a reply that they were not prepared to do so, but suggesting that such people could raise a loan on the security of their crops. One would have thought that, in a civilised country, a man who was living such a hand-to-mouth existence that he had no money left after planting his crops would not be expected to pay the tax. But such a sorry condition appears to the authorities to be comparative affluence. There is evidently something very rotten in a State that has to descend to such depths as these. The authorities might have gone a step further and suggested that the poorest man could raise the money to pay the tax by mortgaging his body for dissection purposes. But we might point out that, according to section 14(4) of the Act,

> any person who shall prove that he is unable through poverty to pay the tax shall be excused therefrom for the time being, but this excuse shall not prevent a subsequent prosecution or action if such person shall afterwards become able to pay the tax and fails to do so.

It appears, therefore, that persons so placed as the correspondent referred to can plead poverty and pay the tax later from the proceeds of their crops. There will be no need whatever to go the length of

raising a loan on the growing crop (and paying usurious interest), since the Act provides for this very contingency.

Indian Opinion, 20-1-1906

56. MANSUKHLAL HIRALAL NAZAR[1]

It was in the dark days of December, 1896, that Mansukhlal Hiralal Nazar landed in Durban, a perfect stranger. He intended to live a quiet life, but a patriot of his type was not able to sit still when he saw his countrymen needing the help of a guiding hand during those trying times. The Durban Demonstration[2] was then brewing. Meetings were held in the Town Hall to protest against the immigration of Indians. The Indian passengers on board the *Naderi* and the *Courland* were threatened with dire results if they attempted to land on the shores of Natal. It was then that Mr. Nazar arrived on the scene, and was hailed as a deliverer by the Indian community. Not a soul knew who he was, but his magnetic personality and the authoritative manner in which he spoke about the duty of the people at the time attracted the leaders to him immediately, and it is difficult to say what the Indian community would have done had Mr. Nazar not arrived at the time. He remained closely closeted with Mr. Laughton, who was acting as counsel for the community, and I have it from Mr. Laughton's own lips that Mr. Nazar's assistance and his suggestions at the time proved to him of the utmost value. From that day to the date of his death, Mr. Nazar placed the public cause before his own; his dream of leading a private life was never realised, and though people were never allowed to know it, for the cause of his countrymen Mr. Nazar has died a pauper. For days together he used to live away from Durban, in a secluded home in Sydenham,[3] existing on nothing but a little milk and a few biscuits, and time alone will show the nature and value of the unostentatious services rendered by Mr. Nazar.

He was born in the early 'sixties, and belonged to a family of noble traditions and to one of the most cultured castes in India, namely, the Kayastha division. As is shown by his family name, the Nazars, in the early days, must have served the Mogul emperors as trusted officials. The late Mr. Hiralal Nazar, the father of the subject of this memoir, was one of the earliest products of English education in the Western presidency,[4] and was a tried servant of the Government.

[1] Died on January 20, 1906

[2] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897

[3] A suburb of Durban

[4] Bombay

He was a civil engineer, and, by his ability and strength of character, inspired so much confidence, that the Government allowed him to possess a knowledge of the secret defences in the fortress at Bombay. Mr. Nazar was very nearly related to the late Justice Nanabhai Haridas. He was educated in Bombay, and having passed his matriculation examination with distinction, he prosecuted his further studies at the Elphinstone College at Bombay. As a rule, he was easily first in his class, and gave promise of a brilliant career, but being of a restless turn of mind, he never finished his studies. He imbibed from Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji and the other Indian patriotic giants of the time the idea of using his life for the service of his country, and he was, therefore, instrumental in establishing an Un[der] graduates' Association which vied with the older established Graduates' Association, under the brilliant chairmanship of Sir Pherozeshah Mehta.[1] Memorials that were drafted by Mr. Nazar and presented to the Government about University Reform showed Mr. Nazar's brilliant penmanship and his political turn of mind. He also studied for four years at the Grant Medical College, and was thereby able to receive a fair amount of knowledge of medicine which was very useful to him in after-life. Mr. Nazar did not wish to accept any service, and belonging to the Hon. Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji's school of thought, he considered that the salvation of India must come both from within and from without, and that education was not to be used as a means for obtaining position nor was it to be ; divorced from commerce. He and his talented brothers, therefore, set out for England, and threw themselves into the commercial strife with great energy, but Mr. Nazar was always a politician first and everything else afterwards. He, therefore, continued his public work in London. He identified himself with many useful institutions, and was elected a delegate to the Oriental Congress that was held in Christiania.[2] He came into contact with the late Professor Max Muller and many other Orientalists, and by his accurate knowledge of Oriental literature, commanded their admiration. But Mr. Nazar was also something more. He was a journalist of a very high type. He used, at one time, to be very intimately connected with the *Advocate of India* to which he contributed not a little, free of charge. He used to correspond with many well-known news-papers in India as if he was preparing for a similar career in Natal. Not having succeeded so well as he wished to in his commercial affairs in Europe, all over which he had travelled morethan once, he migrated to South Africa. The story of his work in

[1] Prominent Indian Congressman;

[2] Oslo, Norway

Natal, which he made his home, is soon told. Instead of developing his commercial work, he threw himself heart and soul into public work. In 1897, he was sent to England as a special delegate to voice the grievances of the British Indians. There he met the late Sir William Wilson Hunter,[1] Sir Lepel Griffin,[2] the Hon. Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Sir Mancherji Bhownaggree, and many other public men. Sir William Hunter was so struck with Mr. Nazar's ability and moderation that he devoted a special article in the columns of *The Times* mentioning Mr. Nazar's work. The late Lord Northbrook, Lord Reay and other Anglo-Indians gave him a patient hearing, and as a result of his work, the East India Association took up the cause of British Indians most warmly. I do not wish to lay stress on Mr. Nazar's work in that direction. I wish to raise no discordant note. His most imperishable work was all done behind the scenes, and it consisted in nourishing the tender plant of mutual understanding between the two communities in South Africa. He served as a link between the two. He was a politician of a high order. There was nothing of the agitator about him. His work was all quiet. He interpreted the best traits of each community to the other. Whilst he advocated strongly the rights of his countrymen, in season and out of season, he placed before the latter their responsibilities, and always counselled prudence and patience. He was pre-eminently a friend of the poor. The poorest class of Indians found in him a faithful adviser and friend. When the Natal Indian Ambulance Corps[3] was raised, everybody advised him, because of the heart disease from which he then suffered, that it was not necessary for him to take an active part in the work of the Corps, but he would not listen, and volunteered his services as a member, and it was there that he used his knowledge of medicine to good purpose.

Without him this journal would never have come into being. In the initial stages of its struggle, Mr. Nazar took up almost the whole of the editorial burden, and if it is known for its moderate policy and sound views, the fact is due, to a very large extent, to the part that Mr. Nazar played in connection with it.

An Indian reading this account will understand thoroughly what Mr. Nazar was, when I state that he was a real *Yogin*, a cosmopolitan Hindu, knowing no distinction as to caste or creed, recognising no religious differences. His one solace in life was the

[1] (1840-1900); authority on Indian affairs and leading member of the British Committee;

[2] A member of the Indian Civil Service, and administrator in the Punjab

[3] Organised by Gandhiji during the Boer War, 1899-1902; *Vide* "Indian Ambulance corps in Natal", 14-3-1900

Bhagvad Gita, the "Song Celestial". He was imbued with its philosophy. He knew the Sanskrit text almost by heart, and the writer of this memoir is personally aware that amid his sorest trials—and he had his full share of them—he was in a position to preserve fairly perfect equanimity under the inspiration of that teaching. To an orthodox Hindu, some of his ways would appear to be strange, but Mr. Nazar was undoubtedly a strange mixture. It is not the writer's purpose to scrutinise the character of the dead man. Indians will have to search far and wide before they will be able to find Mr. Nazar's equal. He disdained praise and never wanted any, and whether he was blamed or praised, he never allowed his public work to be affected. We do not stumble upon such selfless workers anywhere and everywhere. They are few among all communities. Time alone will show what the Indian community and, shall I say even the European community, has lost in Mr. Nazar.

M . K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 27-1-1906

57. BLACK AND WHITE MEN

Under the above heading, Mr. H. W. Massingham contributes a powerful article to *The Daily News* of the 5th inst.,[1] dealing with the attitude adopted by the white community in South Africa towards the Coloured races. Mr. Massingham, with that humanitarianism that we are accustomed to attach to his name, has traversed every popular fallacy on the Colour question, and has done the Coloured community of South Africa an extremely great service. We have no fault whatever to find with his method of dealing with the subject, but we would point out the inaccuracies that appear in the portion of his article wherein he refers to the question of British Indians in the Transvaal. Mr. Massingham is apparently of the opinion that Law 3 of 1885 does not forbid them to hold land. In this contention, of course, he is quite wrong. Mr. Massingham commits the further error of supposing that Indians are "still allowed a share of the town foot-paths". This is technically incorrect, for, by reason of a well-known judicial decision, no Indian has the right to use any municipal foot-path, and may, at the will of the first policeman, be curtly ordered into the middle of the road. These errors, however, do not diminish the value of Mr. Massingham's timely protest against the supercilious sneer that has become so unfortunate a convention in

[1] The use of the word "instant" makes it evident that this article was written in January, at least three days in advance of the date of publication.

white South Africa, when dealing with the Coloured races that inhabit the country.

Indian Opinion, 3-2-1906

58. SIR DAVID HUNTER

It is with pleasure that we note Sir David Hunter intends to continue to make Natal his home, and that he has expressed his willingness to put his own wishes aside and entertain the idea of entering Parliament when he returns from his tour, should his fellow-citizens ask him to do so. That they will request him to represent them is certain, for, on all hands, Sir David's special fitness for parliamentary service is acknowledged. Although the Indian residents of Natal will have no vote in his election, their voice will none the less be raised to support him. Indians owe much to Sir David, for, in his position as General Manager of the Natal Government Railways, they have always found him not merely courteous but always considerate also. It is chiefly [due] to his sense of justice that Indians have the ordinary conveniences on the railways, instead of being compelled to travel only in a third-class compartment, as was desired by many people in the Colony; and, if their treatment by some of the railway officers is not all that it might be, it is not the fault of Sir David. He has also taken an active and practical interest in Indian education. Sir David is a fine type of the British gentleman, and the Colony has only honoured itself in honouring him. We wish Sir David a pleasant voyage, a pleasant tour, and a speedy return.

Indian Opinion, 3-2-1906

59. OUR TAMIL AND HINDI COLUMNS

We regret to announce that we are compelled to suspend our Tamil and Hindi columns for the time being. We have struggled against great difficulties in keeping on these sections, owing to the difficulty in securing the permanent services of the necessary editors and compositors. We have been painfully aware of the fact that for some time past our Tamil and Hindi columns have not been kept up to the level we desire. We are, therefore, reluctantly obliged to take this course until such time as the members of our staff, who are training for the work, are ready and able to do justice to the two great languages.

Indian Opinion, 3-2-1906

60. THE SHAH OF PERSIA

The Shah of Persia has granted his subjects a new Constitution and declared his intention to run the government in the manner of the Western countries. The people have been given a share in the governance of the land. If things really proceed as indicated, the Kingdom of Persia will prosper greatly. There is no doubt that all this is due to the recent Japanese victory.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 3-2-1906

61. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

JOHANNESBURG,
February 9, 1906

TO
THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PRETORIA

SIR,

My Association has been informed from various sources that, after the change of the Permit Office,[2] the following innovations have been made, without any warning to the Indian community, whether through my Association or otherwise.

1st. The age of minority of children who may wish to enter this country has been reduced from under sixteen to under twelve.

2nd. Affidavits of guardians are not accepted; that is to say, only those whose parents are residents of the Transvaal are allowed to come.

3rd. Witnesses for refugees outside Pretoria are now being examined by Resident Magistrates in the various districts, with the result that the applications of many refugees have, for the present, been indefinitely hung up.

My Association respectfully protests against the Indian community being thus taken unawares with reference to the above innovations. My Association has, as a rule, been at least kept informed of any contemplated changes, and, in some cases, the Government have been good enough to even consult my Association. It has come to my Association, therefore, as a disagreeable surprise that serious

[1] In the Russo-Japanese War; *vide* "Russia and India", 11-11-1905

[2] *Vide* "Transvaal Indians and Permits", 17-2-1906

changes affecting the Indian community have been made in the Permit Regulations, without any notice whatsoever, and then, too, the Indian community is allowed to know these things only through actual instances.

As to the innovations themselves, it is submitted on behalf of my Association that they are calculated to do very serious harm to the community. It is difficult to understand why the age of minority has been still further reduced. My Association invites your attention to the fact that nowhere else in the British dominions have children under sixteen been prevented from entering British dominions where their parents have been allowed the right of entry. It is a matter of the gravest importance to the Indian community that the domiciled Indians should be able to bring in their children without any difficulty. Why a child of thirteen years or fifteen years should, for instance, be prohibited from joining his parents, and receiving, say, his education under them, it is difficult to unde-rstand. My Association further draws your attention to the factthat the rule does not apply to the non-Asiatic communities in the Transvaal.

As to the second innovation, hitherto orphans have been allowed to join their guardians. Under the new rule, such children will be prevented from entering the Transvaal. My Association need hardly point out that such a rule cannot but cause very great hardship.

As regards the third innovation, if the Resident Magistrates are to carry on investigations, it will cause almost interminable delay. There are refugees whose applications have been pending even for the last nine months, and if all such applications are to be referred to Resident Magistrates in the various districts, enormous delay will be caused. Moreover, there will be no continuity of procedure as to the evidence to be taken, if each town is treated separately.

My Association further submits that, when witnesses reside outside Pretoria, it will expedite matters considerably, and secure uniformity of procedure, if the same official were to be appointed for the examination of witnesses throughout.

My Association further begs to point out that it is necessary, in the interests of Justice, that there should be a periodical visit by an official to attend to those requiring permits in Johannesburg, seeing that nearly seventy-five per cent. of the refugees are destined for Johannesburg or the surrounding districts. Whilst the central offices may remain in Pretoria, the mechanical work of issuing permits and taking thumb impressions should, in the humble opinion of my Association, so far as the Johannesburg refugees are concerned, be done in Johannesburg.

Nothing has yet been known with reference to the question of whether Indian women are or are not to hold separate permits.

My Association submits that the matters referred to herein are of very vital importance, and trusts that they will receive the attention they deserve. I respectfully request an early reply.

I have the honour to remain ,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ABDUL GANI

CHAIRMAN,

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 17-2-1906

62. LETTER TO TOWN CLERK

JOHANNESBURG,

February 10, 1906

TO

THE TOWN CLERK

JOHANNESBURG

SIR,

The attention of my Association has been drawn to certain recommendations made by the Manager of the Johannesburg Tramway system, for adoption by the Town Council, as regards the use of the electric tram cars by the Coloured people. My Association ventures to think that, in making these recommendations, the Manager has taken no note of the sentiments of the Coloured community or rather the British Indian community, with which my Association is concerned. My Association feels that the recommendations are scarcely meant to supply the want of British Indians. If Coloured servants may use the roofs of the tram-cars when they accompany their masters, it is very difficult to see why other Coloured people may not use them. The suggestion to run special tram-cars is hardly feasible, as the Coloured community will not then be able to have the same kind of service as the European community. The recommendation that trailer cars should be attached to the ordinary cars, for the use of Coloured people as well as for carrying parcels, is, in the humble opinion of my Association, highly insulting. My Association submits that British Indians are entitled to the same facilities as any other community in Johannesburg, I with reference to the use of the tram-cars. At the same time, my Association fully recognises the

prevalent prejudice and, therefore, suggests that the inner portion of the tram-cars may be reserved for Europeans only. That would leave the roofs free to the other communities. Indeed, there is no reason why compartments may not be made even in the inner portions of the tram cars, but failing that, my Association trusts that the suggestion above made will be accepted by the Town Council. I am to place on record that, as the position stands at present, Coloured people are by law perfectly free to make use of the municipal tram-cars. It is only their forbearance which prevents them from making use of the cars.

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
ABDUL GANI
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

The following are the recommendations of the General Manager above referred to:

1. That Coloured people should be allowed to travel on the same cars as white persons when they are domestic servants and are with their master or mistress, and that they be required to sit only on the top of the car and occupy the back seats arranged at the head of each staircase, viz., on the four seats at each end. To be charged ordinary fares.

2. That, where traffic is sufficient on any route to pay to run special cars for Coloured people, arrangements be made for Asiatics to occupy the inside of the cars and Kaffirs the outside, or *vice versa.* This to be experimented with on the Fordsburg and Newtown lines.

3. Should it be found later that the Coloured traffic is not sufficient to enable special cars to be run at a profit, experiments be made with single deck trailer cars coupled on to ordinary cars, and that this trailer type of car and also ordinary cars used for Coloured people be used for the parcels delivery business, which it is proposed to inaugurate at a later date.

Indian Opinion, 17-2-1906

63. LORD SELBORNE ON CHRISTIANS AND MAHOMEDANS

Lord Selborne is reported to have said at a Church meeting recently:

It seems to me that men of our race forget two things, and they are thereby often accused of caring much less about religion than they really do. They are too careless about those observances which mark their religion, and they are too shy to let it be known, publicly, on which side they stand. It has

> often happened to me that a friend of mine travelling in the East has been struck with the Mahomedan, who, wherever he is at a certain time of the day, will spread out his carpet and kneel down and pray; and he has argued from that that the Mahomedan is a much better man than the Christian. The conclusion is not borne out by facts. The probability was that the Mahomedan was a much worse man than most Christians; but he grasped one fact, which we are too apt to forget: that if a man wants to have an influence in the world he must not be afraid of public opinion, and he must not hesitate to let it be known on which side he stands.

If His Excellency has been correctly reported, we fear he has been guilty of a grave indiscretion. "The probability was that the Mahomedan was a much worse man than most Christians" is not a statement that should be made by the King-Emperor's representative in speaking of the King-Emperor's Mahomedan subjects. Owing to his position, His Excellency has not the same liberty of speech that can be claimed by lesser mortals, and a remark of this nature coming from him is calculated to cause pain to many followers of the Prophet. But indiscretion is not characteristic of Lord Selborne's public utterances, and it is only fair to point out that he may have been badly reported, and that, instead of saying, "The probability was", he may have said, "It was possible" In the latter case, the remark would be quite unexceptionable. Up to the present, however, we have not heard that His Excellency has corrected the statement.

Indian Opinion, 10-2-1906

64. BRITISH INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL

Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji has added to the debt of gratitude we owe him by his thoughtfulness on our behalf at a moment when one would scarcely expect that he would have any leisure to devote to our affairs. Yet we are reminded by the re-publication, in the number of *India* to hand by the last mail, of a letter addressed in duplicate to the Secretaries of State for India and the Colonies, commenting upon the deputation on behalf of the British Indian Association that waited upon Lord Selborne[1] some time since, that the watchdog of India has been on the alert in the interests of British Indians in South Africa, even in the midst of the fierce fight of an election. Mr. Dadabhai had not waited to communicate with the two Secretaries of State until the declaration of the polls, but had devoted some portion of the extremely little leisure that was permitted him to emphasising the reasonableness of the attitude adopted by the British Indian

[1] *Vide* "Deputation to Lord Selborne", 29-11-1905

Association. It is useless for us to endeavour to manifest our appreciation of the efforts of India's noblest patriot on behalf of his countrymen, but we would urge upon Indians in South Africa their immediate duty of endeavouring to aid Mr. Dadabhai's work by remedying the defects in their own organisation and developing still further that spirit of enterprise and solidarity without which all his work must prove abortive.

Indian Opinion, 10-2-1906

65. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
February 13, 1906

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I sent you some time ago Miss Neufliess' name as a paid subscriber. Please register her name as a subscriber if it is not already registered. Her post office box is 5889, Johannesburg. She ought to receive all the back numbers as from the first of January.

Manji N. Ghelani writes to me saying that he has not received for the current year numbers two and three. He has been receiving his papers regularly of late. You should therefore send him numbers two and three and let me know that you have done so. His box is 110, Pretoria.

Please change Mr. Ritch's address at London to 41 Springfield Road, St. John's Wood, London.

Let me know who have not paid regarding the sale Of Mr. Nazar's goods.[1]

Should such changes be notified to you in future, or shall I write to Hemchand about them? I am anxious to take much of such mechanical work from your shoulders, but I want to do it cautiously. If these instructions have to pass ultimately to Hemchand, it would then cause a saving to send them directly to him. Your immediate main work is to look after the Gujarati editing and to put the books straight as soon as possible, prepare the balance-sheet and find out the cost of each building. Please let me know how far you have progressed with reference to the straightening of the books, bringing the cash book up to date and finding out the cost of the buildings.

I sent you yesterday a correct[ed] copy of the current number of *Indian Opinion*. I would like you to note all the corrections

[1] *Vide* "Mansukhlal Hiralal Nazar", 27-1-1906

carefully and avoid them in future. We ought to make the Gujarati portion totally exceptional,[1] and if in order to do that you must concentrate your energy for a month or so to the exclusion of everything else except book-keeping, you may do so. I notice Gujarati is only seven pages. Why so? How much can Gokuldas now do of the Gujarati composition? Is he working steadily? Ask him to write to me.

With reference to your suggestion about paying £2/10 to Mr. Madanjit, we ought to pay all that and more if he kept in touch with us. It is impossible to pay anything unless he would do so. That he is working away in India I can well understand, but his work must be reproduced in the *Opinion*. I told him distinctly that he would be expected to help the Paper. If he will not, I do not think that we are at all called upon to give anything to him. He has not written to me. Two letters appear to have been sent from Pretoria yesterday. Please print them.[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

TO

C. K. GANDHI, ESQ.

c/o *Indian Opinion*

PHOENIX

From a photostat of the original: S.N. 4307

[1] 'Unexceptionable'?

[2] The last two sentences are in Gandhiji's hand in Gujarati.

66. LETTER TO TOWN CLERK

21-24 COURT CHAMBERS,
COR. RISSIK & ANDERSON STREETS,
P. O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG ,
February 13, 1906

TO
THE TOWN CLERK
P. O. BOX 344
KRUGERSDORP

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the 10th instant No. 249/6558/06.

I hope that, as soon as the By-Laws are passed, you will let me know. In the meantime, my client is, as I have already informed you, continuing his Eating House.

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Krugersdorp Town Council Records

67. LETTER TO ACTING CHIEF TRAFFIC MANAGER

JOHANNESBURG,
February 14, 1906

[TO]
THE ACTING CHIEF TRAFFIC MANAGER
JOHANNESBURG

SIR,

Mr. M. M. Moosajee has handed to my Association copies of the correspondence between your Department and himself in connection with the train leaving Johannesburg at 8.30.

You have informed Mr. Moosajee that "Coloured passengers are not permitted to travel by the 8.39 [*sic*] train from Pretoria to

Johannesburg", and I suppose *vice versa.*

This information comes to my Association as a very disagreeable surprise. To the Indian business community, the prohibition would be a deprivation which would seriously interfere with their movements. To the Indian community in general, it is in the highest degree insulting.

My Association cannot escape the conclusion that this method of pandering to local prejudice on the part of a great administration would result in making the position of Coloured people thoroughly intolerable. My Association will be obliged if you will kindly let me know whether it is the intention, and if so, will kindly refer me to the law or regulation under which the prohibition has been imposed. Incidentally, I may be allowed to remark that the manner in which such prohibitive rules are, from time to time, made without any warning or notice to the portion of the community concerned is extremely irritating and inconvenient. My Association thinks that British Indians are at least entitled to know beforehand regulations that may be framed with reference to them.

I request an early reply.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ABDUL GANI

CHAIRMAN,

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 24-2-1906

68. A REPLY TO "THE LEADER"

JOHANNESBURG,
February 16, 1906

TO

THE EDITOR

The Leader

SIR,

I take the liberty of offering a few remarks on your leaderette concerning the letter of my Association addressed to the Town Clerk,[1] on the question of the use of the tram-cars by my countrymen. You

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Town Clerk", 10-2-1906

have written in anger and have used threats. I cannot do either, but will venture to place some facts before you for your acceptance or refutation:

(1) My Association never contended that all Indians should be allowed to make use of the tram-cars. The right is claimed only for those who are well and cleanly dressed.

(2) Whatever may be the position in India, I need hardly demonstrate to you that no man is born a "coolie", and that the only test, so far as the use of the tram-cars is concerned, can be the personal appearance of the passengers.

(3) Does it not appear to you a little preposterous to raise the question of equality between the two races on the tramway question?

(4) My Association has emphatically disclaimed any intention toseek the contact of any unwilling Europeans, even with the most cultured Indians, and has, therefore, suggested that the inner portion of the cars may be reserved exclusively for Europeans. The roofs of the cars, it is contended, may, without infringing upon the sacred doctrine of "inequality", be legitimately used by Indians who are properly dressed.

(5) The point made by my Association about forbearance is quite logical. "The will of the people", so far as it has been reduced to law, as my Association has been advised, leaves it open to Indians to claim the right of riding on the tram-cars. The claim, therefore, as it is legal, can hardly be considered to be "absurd".

In this connection, may I ask you a few questions? Is it logical for the white people in the Transvaal, as soon as they go to Cape Town or Natal, to ride side by side with Coloured people? Is it logical that Coloured servants who may not belong to "the higher castes", whatever that phrase may mean, should ride on the tram-cars? Is it logical, as Mr. Soutter said at the Town Council meeting, that white men who drive in dog-carts should sit next to their Coloured drivers?

My Association takes its stand upon the policy outlined by Mr. Chamberlain before the Conference of Colonial Premiers[1] at the time of the Diamond Jubilee. The Right Hon. Gentleman said:

> We also ask to bear in mind the traditions of the Empire, which makes no distinction in favour of or against race or colour, and to exclude, by reason of their colour or by reason of their race, all Her Majesty's Indian subjects, or even all Asiatics, would be an act so offensive to those peoples, that it would be most painful to Her Majesty to have to sanction it.... It is not because a man is of a different colour from ours that he is necessarily an undesirable

[1] In 1897;

immigrant, but it is because he is dirty, or he is immoral, or he is a pauper, or he has some other objection which can be defined in an Act of Parliament, and by which exclusion can be managed with regard to all those whom you really desire to exclude.

I am, etc.,

ABDUL GANI

CHAIRMAN,

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 24-2-1906

69. TRANSVAAL INDIANS AND PERMITS

The lot of the British Indian in the Transvaal is undoubtedly very uncertain and very unhappy. The letter we reproduce in another column,[1] addressed by the Chairman of the British Indian Association to the Colonial Secretary of the Transvaal, is painful reading. The permit regulations in connection with Indians have been changed from time to time,much to their inconvenience. The latest instance, however, is in the nature of a "surprise-packet". The regulations referred to in the letter in question, according to Mr. Abdul Gani, have been sprung upon the community without any notice, and these regulations are, if the information given to Mr. Abdul Gani be true, applicable to all Indians. The result will be that those who have arrived in South Africa, without notice of any such regulations, will be adversely affected. Natal may afford them no protection, nor may the Cape. They will have come with the deliberate intention of entering the Transvaal, and if the regulations in question are to be enforced, and are to have retrospective effect, they will cause illness, trouble, expense, and worry to the persons concerned. The least that one expects in a British colony, or any British dominion, is that laws are framed with due deliberation and after fair warning. Even the self-governing colonies of the Cape or Natal, when they passed the Immigration Restriction Laws, gave fair warning to the people concerned, and then, after the legislation was passed, it was not rigorously enforced immediately. They gave the steamship companies, and the community affected thereby, time to study the legislation in its actual working. The Cape authorities have only just given notice of their intention to fully enforce the laws, that is to say, two years after they were passed. In the Transvaal, they evidently believe in "rushing" things. The Peace Preservation Ordinance is a

[1] *Vide*"Letter to Colonial Secretary", 9-2-1906

relic of the martial law period and, therefore, gives arbitrary authority to the Government. The use of such authority, during the period of war, is often justifiable, but when there is peace in the Transvaal, to invoke the assistance of that Ordinance against an inoffensive community, in the manner described in the letter to which we have referred, savours very much of Russian methods rather than of methods that are associated with the British Constitution. When we come to examine the regulations themselves, they are without doubt very irksome. The age of minority for children seems to have been suddenly reduced to under twelve years, and henceforth orphans, whose relatives may be settled in the Transvaal, will not be allowed to enter the Transvaal at all. Moreover, in the regulations, instead of the same official examining the witnesses who may be produced in support of the claim of a refugee, the authority to do so will be relegated to magistrates in the various districts, and all refugees, even after investigation is completed, will have to go to Pretoria in order to perform the mechanical act of receiving their permits. His Excellency Lord Selborne said only the other day to the Indian deputation that all restrictive regulations had to be reasonable in order to be acceptable and effective. Can such regulations as these, by any conceivable stretch of the imagination, be held to be reasonable ?

Indian Opinion, 17-2-1906

70. JOHANNESBURG TRAMS AND INDIANS

Elsewhere will be found printed a letter addressed to the Town Clerk,[1] Johannesburg, by the Chairman of the British Indian Association at Johannesburg, with reference to the proposed regulations for the use of the electric tram-cars by Coloured people. We have no hesitation in endorsing Mr. Abdul Gani's plea. The recommendations made by the General Manager are very arbitrary, and the fact that they have been withdrawn temporarily need not lull Indians into a false sense of security, for they have been withdrawn, not because the Town Council is actuated by any greater regard for Indians than the General Manager, but because the time, so it is said, is not ripe, as the tram-cars are not to run for some time. The use of the public tram-cars in Johannesburg, as elsewhere, is a question, not merely of sentiment, but of pecuniary importance. Indian businessmen, and other Coloured people, have as great a right to public conveyances as any other community of Johannesburg. They form part of the body politic; they are called upon to bear the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Town Clerk", 20-2-1906

burdens of citizenship by way of payment of taxation, etc., and the Johannesburg municipality finds it difficult to deprive them of the right of using the municipal tram-cars. Any regulations that may be passed will have to be sanctioned by the Lieutenant-Governor; and let us hope that, should the regulations, to which we have drawn public attention, be ever sent to His Excellency, he will have no hesitation in exercising his right of veto.

Indian Opinion, 17-2-1906

71. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[JOHANNESBURG,]
Saturday, February 17, 1906

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I am sending some Gujarati material today. And the rest will be posted tomorrow. In so far as it is possible, I shall send the "Johannesburg Letter" every week. It will be desirable to assign it the same place [every week]. You should divide the Gujarati pages into sections and see that, as far as possible, a particular type of material always appears in the same place.

Do spend a day every week visiting some outside town, so that you can also send in a despatch about that place. Do not fail to write me a detailed letter every week. How is Hemchand doing?

Please correct all the Gujarati material carefully. Make sure that the notices about the estates appearing in the Natal Gazette are never missed.

Let me know how much Gujarati type you have ordered. How many more pages can we have with that? We must get type enough to be able to have 12 pages next year. Send me a list of types if more is required on this account so that an order can be placed.

I hope you have read the letter about Mr. Brian Gabriel. It will be better, I believe, if he comes.

Please bear in mind what I said regarding Urdu. Do not do any composing work if it hurts your eyes.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 4310

72. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[JOHANNESBURG,]
Sunday, February 18, 1906

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I sent some matter yesterday and am sending more today. In the "Johannesburg Letter" that I sent, insert a separate heading beginning from "It is learnt from Reuter's cables...". I shall give as much as I can every week under "Reuter's Telegrams" and you too may add to it. I shall make the "Johannesburg Letter" a separate item and shall include in it mostly local news. I have asked for such news-letters from other places also.

It was as well that I did not write to Hemchand. Make the best use of him there. I shall also write to him. You needs must have a man of understanding to assist you. Don't mind it even if Hemchand makes some mistakes, but go on putting the responsibility for the work on him. When we are overburdened, we should consider the relative priority of our various duties and try to do the most we can. Everything will become easy if you look at things this way. Now the first thing for you to do is to improve the Gujarati Section; this, of course, is your duty. The second, accounts; this has also to be attended to by you. The third is the collection of dues; the fourth is job-work, and the fifth Gujarati cases, which had better stop for the time being. Of course, you should always keep these in mind. You might drop Urdu for the present. You must give some of your time to your own land. You should not go out for more than two days for collecting dues or for anything else. You should not bother about the income just now. You should think of other things only after the books have been put in order. It will be all right if you devote Thursday to the reading of proofs and Tuesday and Wednesday exclusively to general reading and to writing Gujarati. It will be enough if you go to town on Monday and Friday or Saturday. Don't worry if you can't visit the outlying places at present. It won't matter if you translate less from other newspapers. The main thing to do is to give all the important news about Natal, and this I do not find at present. It will become all right when local news begins to appear. I shall go on sending news about this place and translations from the newspapers. More skill will be called for in laying out the matter. It will perhaps do if you devote Wednesday alone to reading. Oh no, I forget; Monday would be better, for, while the types are being

distributed on Monday, you can be ready with the matter. Do not become unnerved if there are many things to do. You have done well to clear your position before all your colleagues. Even a mother does not give without being asked. They will, if you ask them.

I see that it is necessary to clear the Press land, and that with our own hands. It will be nice if half an hour is given to this job, though it may be after the Press work is over. If the others do not give of their time, you brothers at least will. Hemchand will help, and I shall write to him. West also will help. You may talk to Sam even now and convince him. Bean will understand only in course of time. I feel this work should start immediately.

I still firmly hold that it is good that we have given up job-work, and that it was right for you to have stayed on in the Press. Now that there is no worry about the job-work, there won't be any need for some one to sit in the office. I believe it would be better, in so far as it is possible, to have Indians working with us instead of Kaffirs. However, you may do what you think proper. In this matter you need not depend on my judgment. I shall speak to Mr. Isaac.

What you say about Mr. Brian is exactly what I have in mind. He should do composing for the present when he does come. Do talk to Anandlal about your difficulties and get his assistance and sympathy. You may take his advice also, so that he will be pleased. Keep your mind open.

If Kalabhai has not yet got a room, arrange for him to have one immediately.

I shall find out about the advertisement that has been withdrawn.

I shall enquire about your slippers, etc., tomorrow (Monday). Entrust to Hemchand the disposal of post coming in from outside. Tell Virasami that I have not received the order so far. I shall send it as soon as I receive it.

I have nothing more to add. Have more heart-to-heart talks with West. Since the two of you alone understand the scheme better than the others, you have to be in perfect agreement first. Get Anandlal to mix with you as much as possible. Try to persuade Sam; and win over Mr. Bean gradually. He likes me, but does not understand the scheme. He is a good man and hastherefore stuck to his post. His mind is more on the money because he lacks in real simplicity. Yet he won't go after money at any price. He will do better Town. In any case I am writing to them. Kindly dispose of later on. Do write me a letter every week, giving full expression to your thoughts.

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

It will not be possible for me to go there this month.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 4783

73. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
February 19, 1906

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I am returning herewith the letters addressed to the Editor. From the remarks I have made on them, you will see what I want. Please send Vali Mahomed Hala's letter about himself to Porbandar; write to him to say that a letter like that cannot be published in the *Opinion* and that you have sent it to the Director at Porbandar. It is needless to send me all the letters. Send only those about which you are doubtful.

It will suffice to observe the following rules in most cases:

(1) we should as a rule publish all letters against us, for instance, those of Habib Motan and Haji Habib;

(2) we should be chary of long harangues;

(3) we should consider who the correspondent is. If we feel that his contribution must be accepted, it should be abridged, if lengthy;

(4) we should take letters giving local news.

The reason why I asked you to print letters about the barber controversy[1] is that it is of interest to the people of Dundee. It won't be proper to close the correspondence abruptly.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 4311

[1] An Indian barber. in Dundee, while shaving an Indian merchant, left off in the middle to attend to a European customer. The Indian community thereupon decided to boycott the barber.

74. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
February 21, 1906

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

Received your letter. I have not, however, received the railway note. We should not mind it if we lose the advertisements from Cape the remaining belongings of Mr. Nazar in consultation with Motilal. I am writing about it to Bhatt and Adamji Sheth also. It will be better for you, as I see it, to reserve Wednesday at Phoenix for reading for the *Opinion.* If you do so, you will be able to read [other things] up to Wednesday. If, while reading, you come across anything worthy of note, put it down on a piece of paper. Start reading newspapers and writing [for *Indian Opinion*] only on Wednesday. It will be convenient, I feel, if you divide your time in this way. It will be well if you can set apart Monday or Tuesday and Saturday for going to town and other places. You will save a lot of time if, on days other than Wednesday and Thursday, you make it a rule not to read anything especially for the *Opinion* except my articles. How are you getting on with the account books?

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I shall most probably send your shoes and clothes today through Sheth Abdul Gani. It will be better if Hemchand stays either with you or with Anandlal.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 4312

75. BRITISH INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA[1]

STATEMENT REGARDING BRITISH INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL AND THE ORANGE RIVER COLONY

JOHANNESBURG,
February 22, 1906

Now that the new Government has been established, the Letters Patent have been withdrawn, and a new Constitution is being drawn up, both with [regard to] the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, it seems to me imperatively necessary to place the Indian question

[1] This statement was sent by Gandhiji to Dadabhai Naoroji, who forwarded a copy to the Secretary of State for India on March 20.

prominently before the new Government.

It is felt that the ordinary clauses about the right of veto being reserved for the Crown, and any class legislation being reserved forRoyal sanction, are not enough. Seeing that there is intense prejudice against Coloured people, almost bordering on mania, these time-honoured clauses, which are only on the rarest occasions put into operation, can never meet the case. If responsible Government is granted without due regard for the protection of British Indians, their position under it would be infinitely worse than it is today.

Experience of Natal shows that disfranchisement of a class in a community enjoying self-government means its complete effacement. Only those members are elected who would represent the feeling of the electors. Some effective representation must, therefore, be granted to British Indians, or the civil rights of the resident Indian population should be otherwise fully protected.

The position in the Transvaal is becoming daily worse. Permit restrictions are applied only to Indians and are exceedingly irksome, as will appear from the pages of *Indian Opinion*.

The Railway administration have now begun to prohibit Coloured people from making use of certain train services entirely. It can easily be imagined what it must mean to British Indian traders who require to use the trains constantly. Johannesburg is a place of big distances. There has just been established an electric tram service. Coloured people, who can ill afford cab fares, are practically prohibited from using these tram-cars.

These are not sentimental matters but are such as to affect the British Indian community vitally. Unless a firm stand is taken up by the Home Government, at the rate at which things are now going, what little Indians enjoyed under Boer rule will be lost. The prohibition against ownership of land, special registration fee of £3, foot-path regulation, etc., still continue to disfigure the Statute-book of the Transvaal.

As to the Orange River Colony, the old law prohibiting the entry of any Indians, except such as accept domestic service, is still prevalent, and by-laws are being framed all over that Colony further restricting the movements of those who may be in that Colony.

Pretoria Archives: L. G. File No. 92-94: Asiatics (1902-1906)

76. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Johannesburg,
February 22, 1906

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I have a letter from Mr. Kitchin in reply to a note[1] I sent to him last week. He has resigned and he will retire from the editorial department at the end of next month. I have written to Mr. Bean a letter which I suppose you will read. I would like you all the same to keep yourself in touch with Mr. Kitchin because there is a great deal to learn from him. I have asked for his permission that I should show his letter to you all to read and if I can, you shall have it.

Mr. Omar is here. He tells me that there are some subscribers from Mabeli near Delagoa Bay who do not get papers regularly but they get many copies of it all at once. Do you know why?

Please put down the following subscribers as new ones. Messrs Ebrahim Abdoola & Co., Box 28, Delagoa Bay, Mr. Abdul Gani Moosa, Amreli, Kathiawar, India. My impression was that the firstnamed firm were subscribers already but Mr. Omar tells me that they are not. Both these subscriptions will be paid to you by Mr. Omar when he returns to Durban.

I have heard from Mr. Gool of Capetown. He wants me to send him the Capetown list so that he can collect [monies due]. Please let me have the names of the subscribers with their addresses and names of the advertisers with the amounts that are owing.

I have received from you a batch of correspondence which I shall examine and forward on Saturday.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

C. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
c/o Indian Opinion,
PHOENIX

From a photostat of the original: S.N. 4313

77. THE KING'S SPEECH

Perhaps within the memory of living men, the King's Speech has never been looked forward to with so much anxiety or

[1] This is not available.

expectation, according to the persons concerned, as that which was delivered during the current week by King Edward at the opening of the Imperial Parliament, and there is no doubt that it is a pronouncement of far-reaching importance. The anxiety of those who fear the Liberal policy will be deepened, and the expectations of those who had hoped much of the liberals will, so far as promises are concerned, be satisfied.

India will be disappointed. The only mention there is to be found about India is that the papers in connection with the army administration will be published. There is no reference to the partition of Bengal; none, if the cablegram sent gives a full summary, regarding famine; but we have every reason to believe that, with a Radical Premier[1] at the helm, and with a statesman of Mr. John Morley's ability at the head of the India Office, India will not be altogether neglected.

The subject, however, of immediate importance to us is how far the withdrawal of the Letters Patent and the proposed immediate grant of Responsible Government, both to the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, will affect the position of British Indians in those parts of South Africa. The Constitution, it is but fair to assume, to be drafted by the Liberal Ministers, will be as favourable as possible to the white settlers. It cannot be otherwise. They will be given fullest possible control over their internal affairs. The same Liberal principles should also dictate a policy of full protection for the rights of weaker parties, and the first consideration, therefore, we take it, should be given to the question of Indian representation. Under a fully representative government, to leave the Indians totally unrepresented will be to hand them over to the tender care of legislators, who will have no mercy for them, because they will have no interest in the welfare of their *proteges*. The result of non-representation, in spite of the late Sir John Robinson's eloquent plea[2], that under such a system every member would be a member for Indians, has been very unfavourable in Natal. If the constitution that will be drafted leaves the Indians out of consideration, there will be an end to all expectation of justice ever being received in the two Colonies mentioned. There is a wave of agitation hostile to Indian interests passing through the Transvaal. The Orange River Colony simply shuts its gates in the faces of Indians, and if the control of legislation regarding them is given over to responsible legislators in the respective Colonies, all the difficulties that are now being

[1] Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Prime Minister of England, 1905-8
[2] *Vide* "The Plague", 9-7-1903

experienced by Indians will be accentuated. There will be reserved in the two constitutions the time-honoured veto, and the clause regarding non-European races; but in practice these reservations have proved very ineffective, as British Ministers have always felt reluctant to advise His Majesty to exercise the veto. Under the circumstances, if Indians are to be considered as a part of the Empire, equally important as the other races, we consider it to be imperatively necessary that their claims, as indeed also those of the other weaker races, should be specifically guarded.

Indian Opinion, 24-2-1906

78. BRITISH INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL

The lot of the British Indian is by no means enviable. He is being hemmed in on all sides by restrictions of the most galling nature. If he is a domiciled resident of the Transvaal and wishes to enter this country, he is met with disappointment at every step, and he is in a position to make good his claim only if he has an abundance of patience and money. Before he can get a permit to reside in the country, he is driven about from pillar to post. He has to submit to a most searching investigation, and his word is accounted for nothing, so that he has to supplement it by evidence of witnesses and of documents, before he can set his foot upon the sacred soil of the Transvaal. If he happens to have his wife with him, he is called upon to prove that he is her husband. If he has his children with him, no matter how young they may be, they must have separate permits, and he must prove that he is their father. If his children are not under twelve, they cannot accompany him on any account whatsoever. These are the preliminaries an Indian has to undergo before he is allowed to re-enter the Transvaal, which is his place of adoption. What does he find after he reaches the country?

The report of the Johannesburg Town Council meeting, in connection with the electric tram-cars, shows clearly what is in store for him. If he were a servant of a white master, he would be allowed to make use of the tram-cars, otherwise he is not to be allowed to make use of the ordinary cars. The speeches made at the Town Council meeting make very fine reading, but they are also very painful. On a matter of simple convenience for travelling, the whole of the question of equality of races was raised by several speakers. If a Coloured man makes any attempt to get justice, the cry is immediately raised that he wants to claim equality with the white men in the Transvaal. The position is simply ludicrous. Here is a vigorous community in Johannesburg. It is full of enterprise, pluck, and resource. When it

comes to a question of colour, it loses all sense of proportion, and scents danger where there is none. The people of Johannesburg are afraid that their predominance and superiority will be in danger if Coloured people travel on the same cars with themselves. This reminds us of the scare of a mutiny that used to exist when Lord Ellenborough was the Governor-General of India. In those times, if the slightest thing occurred, there was immediately an uproar and nervousness; so much so, that in one of his graphic despatches, His Excellency said that, if the soldiers heard the rustle of leaves or the chirping of a beetle, they became frightened. The condition of some people in Johannesburg is not very far removed from that description of the soldiers in the early' forties by Lord Ellenborough. In vain did Mr. Mackie Niven and his five supporters plead for a small measure of justice. His argument about the financial aspect of the question was set aside and, by a majority of sixteen to six, the Town Council decided to perpetuate the wrong that the General Manager of the Tramways, in his recommendations, had done to the Coloured community.[1] One of the speakers said that the Coloured people paid no rates or taxes, and that, therefore, they had no right to use the tram-cars. Such is the knowledge of which the enlightened city of Johannesburg gets the benefit from its Town Councillors. The Councillor in question conveniently forgot that Indians *do* live in houses in Johannesburg for which they have to pay rents as well as taxes. We may take the liberty of informing him that nearly 4,000 Coloured people, who live in the Malay Location, have to pay more than the ordinary rates and taxes in connection with the Stands occupied by them. The difference between them and the other residents of Johannesburg is that, as against such payments, they do not get the same service as the others, as anyone who has walked through the streets of the Malay Location can testify. The newly returned domiciled Indian to the Transvaal [sic], on his arrival, will find not only that he cannot make use of the tram-cars, but that he cannot even travel by any train he chooses, for the railway administration debars Coloured people from making use of some of the public trains. We print in another column the correspondence that has passed between the Acting Chief Traffic Manager and the Chairman of the British Indian Association,[2] where-from it appears that the railway administration has notified to the station masters that they are not to allow Indian and other Coloured passengers to make use of certain trains running between Johannesburg and Pretoria.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Town Clerk", 10-2-1906

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Acting Chief Traffic Manager", 24-2-1906

Mr. Abdul Gani has sent a strong protest to the railway administration, and we can only hope that this newest method of subjecting the Indian to indignity will be stopped. But the question is not merely one of indignity. To businessmen, it is one of serious inconvenience and loss. Thus, colour animosity has assumed a new form, in that it adds financial injury to social insult.

Indian Opinion 24-2-1906

79. A RESTRICTION WAVE

It seems that, all the world over, different States are pursuing a policy of restriction. Thirty years ago, the then President[1] of the American Republic laid down the doctrine that everyone was welcome to America, and that on his putting his foot on American soil, he became a citizen. Today, America follows a different policy. Even England has considered it necessary to restrict immigration of aliens, and we read, in the cablegrams in the daily newspapers, that several Jews, who fled from Russian oppression, were only the other day prevented from entering England, and that one of them said that, rather than return to Russia, to avoid which he had spent his last penny, he would kill himself. *The Natal Government Gazette* of the 13th inst. published a translation of an Order by the German South-West African Protectorate. Under it 'immigration into the German South-West African Protectorate may be prohibited by the competent authorities", if an immigrant is, amongst other things, a Coloured man; there are the other usual prohibitive clauses. Thus, the colour problem is making itself felt in one way or another throughout Africa. It is useful to recall, in this connection, the fact that it was the GermanEmperor who, some time ago, gave currency to the idea that in the victory of Japan lay the germs of an attempt to secure yellow predominance. Though it is still accepted in certain quarters on the Continent, the general notion is that the German Emperor was indiscreet in having made such an utterance, and that there Was no such fear. At the same time, if there is to be war against colour As such on the part of the great European nations, it is impossible to say that Japan, at any rate, will always sit still under the open insult offered to her citizens. It would be illogical for Europe to accept Japan as afirst-class power and at the same time treat her inhabitants as if they

[1] Ulysses Seymour Grant (1822-85), 18th President of the United States, 1869-77. The 15th amendment to the Constitution adopted on March 30, 1870 provides that suffrage should not be restricted on account of race, colour or previous condition of servitude.

were uncivilised.

Indian Opinion, 24-2-1906

80. A PERMIT PILLORY

We hear and read so much about the difficulties that are placed in the way of the poor refugees getting their permits to enter the Transvaal, that we have decided from next week to open a column under the above heading, wherein we shall be pleased to publish the names of all those British Indian refugees whose applications are more than two months old, and who are still without their permits. Not that we consider two months to be at all a reasonable time required for consideration of such applications, but as we hear that there are many applications which are over six months old, we have decided to choose the greater evil, and give it publicity. Comparatively, applications two months old may, at present, be considered normal, but as for older applications, we have no hesitation in saying that their very age shows an utter want of regard on the part of the authorities for the interests of the refugees. We would, therefore, ask all those who are suffering from the vagaries of the permit administration in the Transvaal to help themselves by supplying us with their names, addresses, and the dates of their applications. We do not say that all these men are *bona-fide* refugees, but we do say that they are all entitled to a definite, clear answer, so that they may not have to remain in a state of suspense. In some cases, we understand, they are holders of registration certificates issued to them under the old Dutch Government. They are now exiles from their own adopted land. Lord Selborne has made two promises, one to the white community, namely, that no non-refugee Indian will be allowed to settle in the Transvaal. This promise is being religiously observed. The other promise was made by His Excellency to the Indian community, namely, that all applications of the refugees will receive the earliest attention, and that they will receive full facilities for entering the country. If the information at our disposal be correct, the latter promise has still to be redeemed. We hope that our readers will help us to clear up a situation that has become intolerable.

Indian Opinion, 24-2-1906

81. TAMIL FOR THE LONDON MATRICULATION

We have received a reply from the Secretary of the External Registrar of the University of London, with reference to the petition of the Tamil inhabitants of the Colony, requesting that Tamil may be accepted as one of the foreign languages as an optional subject for the

matriculation examination of that University. Although the Joint Councils have not been able to make any recommendation to the Senate with reference to the matter, we do not think that it is one that need be dropped. Ancient bodies, like the University of London, are very difficult to move, but if the Tamil communities all over the world will persist in their efforts, we have no doubt that, ultimately, the Tamil language, which has a splendid literature, and which is the Italian of India, will be included in the London matriculation curriculum. We give the reply of the University in another column.[1]

Indian Opinion, 24-2-1906

82. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

25 & 26 COURT CHAMBERS,

RISSIK STREET,

JOHANNESBURG ,

TO

THE HONOURABLE DADABHAI NAOROJI

22 KENNINGTON ROAD

LONDON

DEAR SIR,

I beg to enclose herewith a statement[2] showing the Indian position in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony.

I venture to think that there should be a joint deputation waiting on the new Ministers[3] regarding the position.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

1 Enclosure

From a photostat of the original: G.N. 2270.

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] *Vide* "British Indians in South Africa", 22-2-1906

[3] John Morley and Lord Elgin

83. JOHANNESBURG LETTER[1]

February 26, 1906

TRAMWAY CASE

The tramway has become nowadays a subject of much discussion among the Indians of Johannesburg. Many Indians live at Fordsburg, and there is an electric tram service between that place and the Market Square. The people, therefore, naturally ask why Indians should not be allowed to use the tram. The authorities too find it difficult to prevent the Coloured people from using the tram-car. The proposals put forward by the Johannesburg Committee have been brushed aside, and tram-cars with the label saying that they are open to use by Coloured people are now being run. On the one hand, the whites say that they have an aversion to travelling with Indians, while, on the other, one finds many whites sitting with Coloured people in tram-cars with the above label. Arrangements are in progress to file a test case in this regard in the name of Mr. Coovadia. With a view to making a test case, Mr. Coovadia accompanied by Mr. MacIntyre[2] boarded a tram-car without the above label. He was allowed to travel in that one; but, as he was boarding another, the conductor told him that he could have a seat only if he was a servant of Mr. MacIntyre; but that he would not be allowed to do so as a private gentleman. The matter is being discussed in the Press also. Mr. Daruwala addressed a letter to *The Star*, to which a white gentleman wrote a perverse reply. To this Mr. Daruwala has sent a good rejoinder. Moreover, two other whites have written on the subject, one supporting and the other opposing Mr. Daruwala.

RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT FOR THE TRANSVAAL

The British whites have been agitated over the news that the Transvaal would shortly get responsible government. For it is feared that responsible government will mean greater power for the Dutch, which will adversely affect the mining interests. However, the building activity in Johannesburg, which continues unabated, shows that the people here are not discouraged and are still clinging to the country in the hope that they will prosper. Trade is very sluggish and will become yet more sluggish. Formerly, the Kaffirs and the Dutch made

[1] These despatches were published regularly in *Indian Opinion* as from its Johannesburg correspondent.

[2] A Scottish theosophist clerk articled to Gandhiji

many money transactions every Saturday. The Dutch are now reduced to poverty and the Kaffirs do not now spend as freely as before.

REPRESENTATION TO LORD SELBORNE

The British Indian Association has addressed Lord Selborne on permits, the tramway and the railway. To this he has replied personally over his own signature, saying that he would write again after a full inquiry into all the three questions. It is to be hoped that Lord Selborne will do something to redress these grievances.

MALAY LOCATION

The condition of the Malay Location has become disgraceful. The place is full of filth. People stint and huddle together in single rooms. The latrines and the courtyards stink badly. Plague is sure to break out under these conditions, if it should rain continuously for a long time. The matter needs to be seriously considered by thoughtful men. It would not be enough for people to keep their own houses clean, but they should persuade others also to do likewise. If they do not, they will not only lose the Malay Location as they did the Indian Location, but they will be required to go and live in Klipspruit, thirteen miles away. It is no use expecting that the authorities will take special care to keep the Location clean. If anything, it is in their interest that our houses remain as unclean as possible, so that they can accuse us of uncleanliness and have us removed.

NEW MOSQUE AT JOHANNESBURG

For many years now there has been only one mosque in Johannesburg for Indian Muslims. But the Surati Memons have raised a large fund and bought a piece of land in their locality, where preparations are going on for building another mosque.

TRAM-CARS

Dr. Krause, a member of the Town Council here, met his voters recently and told them that he would, if he could, prevent Indians and other Coloureds from using the tram-cars; but that was not legally possible, and so he could not oppose their using the trams.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 3-3-1906

84. ADDRESS[1] *TO ABDUL KADIR*

DURBAN,
[*February 28, 1906*]

We the members of the Natal Indian Congress cannot allow the occasion of your impending departure for India to pass without placing on record our sense of regard for the work you have done during your presidency of the Congress for the Indian community.

You succeeded a President, who, by his energy, had done a great deal of work for the Congress, and we have no hesitation in saying that the mantle fell worthily on your shoulders. You have contributed not a little to the financial stability which the Congress at present enjoys. During your presidency we have fought many a political battle, and we have found you always a willing leader amidst all the troubles. You have presided over the deliberation[s] of the Congress meeting[s] always with tact and prudence, and you have always responded, in your capacity as leader of the community, to the many calls on your purse.

As you are now going to India to enjoy well-earned rest, we wish you and yours may have a happy and successful sojourn in the land of our birth. And we hope that you will soon be amongst us again and resume your work for the good of our community.

Indian Opinion, 3-3-1906

85. SPEECH AT FAREWELL TO ABDUL KADIR

The following is a report of Gandhiji's speech made after the address had been presented to Abdul Kadir:

DURBAN,
[*February, 28, 1906*]

Mr. M. K. Gandhi addressed the meeting first in English and after wards in Gujarati. He referred to Mr. Abdul Kadir as a man who had done a great deal for the Indian community in Natal. He had, perhaps, a better knowledge of Mr. Abdul Kadir in political affairs than many of those present that evening. The presidency of the Congress had previously been held by men of worth and ability, who had done

[1] The address, which was enclosed in a silver casket, was read out by Adamji Miankhan at a meeting of the Natal Indian Congress, held to bid farewell to the retiring President on the eve of his departure for India. A similar address was presented to him on behalf of the Higher Grade Indian School, Durban.

excellent work for the community, and it was no easy matter to follow in such footsteps, but he had no hesitation in saying that the mantle had fallen on worthy shoulders. Mr. Abdul Kadir had worked hard to place the Congress on a sound financial footing, and it was largely due to his exertions that they had succeeded so well.

Mr. Gandhi called to mind an incident in this connection. When Mr. Abdul Kadir and other members of the Congress were collecting funds, a call was made at Tongaat, where one of his countrymen shewed reluctance to subscribe, but Mr. Abdul Kadir was not to be beaten; so he and the others slept on sacks spread on the ground and waited patiently until the morning, when they were rewarded by the "surrender" of the "enemy".[1]

Such was the character of their guest. Whenever there had been need for action, Mr. Abdul Kadir had been found willing to give his time and attention. He wished him and his family an enjoyable visit to India and a safe return.

Indian Opinion, 3-3-1906

86. THE ROYAL VISIT

We extend a hearty welcome to Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Connaught and Princess Patricia. It is worthy of note that three members of the Royal Family are abroad, two paying visits to His Majesty's dominions and a third to a country in alliance with England. The future King and Queen of England are touring through India, and by their kind and sweet dispositions are winning the affection of the Indian people. Prince Arthur is drawing tighter the bond of friendship between Great Britain and Japan. And our own Royal visitors are by their usual tactfulness endearing themselves to the South Africans. To have permitted the three members of the Royal Family, almost simultaneously, to leave England, shows the regard that Their Majesties have for the welfare of the Empire over which they so worthily preside. It is a happy sign for its future that the superb qualities of the late Queen Victoria have descended to her children. May they live long to carry out the traditions of the Empire is our prayer to the Almighty Father of us all.

Indian Opinion, 3-3-1906

[1] *Vide* " The Second Report of the Natal Indian Congress", 11-10-1899

87. INDIANS AND RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT[1]

> The Transvaal would receive the fullest and most complete form of Responsible Government; therefore, the competence of the Transvaal to decide whether it would allow Chinese labour on the mines and farms and exercise control over the industry generally was indisputable; but it was essential that it should not inherit the present Ordinance. It would beimpolitic and disrespectful to insert in the new Constitution any disability that would seem to suggest that we expect the Transvaal to act contrary to our notions of fight, but it was proposed, under the power that was reserved in the Constitution of every self-government Colony, to instruct the Governor that any measure dealing with imported labour must be reserved for the consideration and assent of the Imperial Parliament. Legislation corresponding to the present Ordinance might be vetoed, though he did not anticipate such a contingency.

These are the expressions used by Mr. Asquith during the Chinese debate, and they place the position of the Home Government regarding a question analogous to the Indian question in a nutshell. The Chinese Labour Ordinance is in conflict with the Imperial traditions; so is the Indian legislation, only the latter is much more objectionable and easier to do away with, in that it is an inheritance from the Dutch Government, whereas the former is a creation of the now defunct British Government, yet there is no hesitation, on the part of the Liberal Chancellor of the Exchequer, in saying that it should not be left to the incoming Responsible Government in the Transvaal as a legacy. It then, "the fullest and most complete form of Responsible Government" is to be granted to the Transvaal, it follows that a clean slate should be presented to it, so far as anti-Asiatic legislation is concerned. As Sir William Wedderburn most clearly put it to Mr. Chamberlain two years ago, it is the duty of the Imperial Government to do away with such measures of the Dutch Government as contributed to provoke the war, and then leave it open to the Transvaalers to bring in any legislation they choose for the consideration of the Home Government. Unless the suggestion be adopted, the only other manner in which the Indian position can be saved is to insert a protective clause in the new Constitution, in addition to the general clause as to the right of veto. To do so would, in the words of Mr. Asquith, be impolitic and disrespectful, as it would be suggestive of a charge against the Transvaal of wishing to "act contrary to" Imperial "notions of right". If a policy of *laissez-faire*

[1] This was also published in *India*, 6-4-1906.

be followed regarding this question by the Imperial Government, and anti-Indian legislation be not repealed before the grant of Responsible Government, it would be quite competent for the latter to refuse to blot out what the Crown Government dared not touch.

It is better, even at the risk of repetition, to examine the Indian position. Indians have always asked for the repeal of Law 3 of 1885 and other laws and by-laws which are specifically aimed at Asiatics, but they have always qualified this demand by an emphatic declaration that they do not wish to flood the country, as it has been said, with Indians, nor do they wish to usurp the trade, especially the Kaffir trade, from the whites. They have asked for a fair field and no favour. To show their *bona fides*, they have accepted the principle of restrictive legislation of a general character. An Immigration Restriction Act, on the lines adopted by the Cape or Natal, so long as it recognises the principal Indian languages, and leaves it open to import men necessary for the conduct of existing businesses, will completely meet the case, so far as the entry of new men is concerned. With reference to trade, Indians have suggested that control over new trade licences should be given to the local bodies, their decisions to be subject to review by the Supreme Court. This is the farthest limit to which restriction can be legitimately carried. It is trade jealousy and the spectre of an Indian invasion that are at the bottom of anti-Asiatic agitation. These two "dangers" being removed, there can be no justification for any further curtailment of the liberty of the Indian, or for subjecting him to "unnecessary affront". It would certainly be inconsistent with British notions of right to continue to deprive Indians of the right to own landed property, to move about freely, and otherwise to treat them as helots.

Indian Opinion, 3-3-1906

88. INDIAN TRADERS AT THE CAPE

We gladly make room for our Cape correspondent's letter, in reply to our remarks on his strictures on the petty Indian traders at the Cape, published in these columns some time ago. We certainly think that the testimony of Sir James Hullett[1] is as applicable to the Cape as it is to Natal. The Indian is just the same there as in Natal, and if his trade has benefited Natal generally, it cannot be otherwise at the Cape, where the material conditions are of a similar nature. But the chief point we have all along urged is that many of the charges brought against Indian traders by their detractors cannot be sustained. We have

[1] *Vide"*Memorial to Colonial Secretary", 3-9-1904

never advocated the policy of flooding any part of South Africa with Indian or any other traders, but we do believe that it is a question capable of adjustment, without restrictive legislation. It would certainly help to[wards] a solution, if our correspondent could prepare a comparative statement of the European and the Indian traders in the various districts of the Cape Colony. From the information at our disposal, we think that the latter are in a hopeless minority.

Indian Opinion, 3-3-1906

89. INDIAN TRAVELLERS ON THE C. S. A. R.[1]

A correspondent writes to us in the Gujarati columns that by the train that left Johannesburg for Durban on the evening of the 26th February last, he saw seven Indian passengers, including an Indian lady, accommodated in a single second class compartment. He states further that an eighth passenger was added at Germiston, much to the discomfort of the other passengers. An ordinary second class compartment is hardly capable of holding more than six Passengers for a night journey— we under stand that the passengers travelling by the night trains are entitled, for long journeys, to sleeping accommodation. Our correspondent does not state whether there was an unusual rush on the occasion alluded to by him. But be that as it may, we cannot help questioning the propriety of herding together so many passengers when one of them happens to belong to the opposite sex. Even an Indian lady is entitled to some consideration in such matters. The Indian public have a right to expect the accommodation they pay for. It will be a mockery to give them second or first class facilities in name only and deny them in reality. We draw the attention of the railway authorities to the complaint made by our correspondent and we do not doubt that they will take the necessary steps to avoid a recurrence of such complaints.

Indian Opinion, 3-3-1906

90. WARNING TO INDIANS PASSING THROUGH MIDDELBURG

We learn that the permits of the Indian passengers proceeding through Middelburg station are being invariably checked. This is not generally done at stations other than those on the Transvaal border. However, it is being done at Middelburg. We shall publish further

[1] Central South African Railways

information on this matter if we receive it from our readers at Middelburg. Meanwhile, the above fact should be borne in mind by passengers going to Middelburg. [From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion , 3-3-1906

91. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

March 3, 1906

TRAM CASE

By the time this letter appears in print, the tram test case[1] will have been decided. After some difficulty, the Crown counsel has admitted the affidavit made by Mr. Coovadia, and issued a summons to the conductor who prevented him from boarding the tram-car. The case will come up for hearing on March 7. Meanwhile, the controversy about the tram service is still going on in the Press. A white gentleman has sent an insolent reply to Mr. Daruwala, saying that the whites would never allow the Coloured people to sit with them in the trams. Others have also written to say that, if the Coloured people were allowed to use the trams, it would be to admit their equality with the whites. A couple of persons have been gratuitously writing to the Press in this fashion. Meanwhile, the whites use without aversion the tram-cars that are especially run for the Coloured people. Such is the city's charm!

CHINESE LABOUR

At present all the people here are exercised over the question whether the Chinese would be allowed to stay on or be driven out. Cablegrams from England show that orders have been issued by the Government to send back those Chinese who are not satisfied with their lot in the Colony. This has created a panic among the miners and they have tightened their purse-strings, with the result that all trade has now become slack. Moreover, the Kaffir rebellion in Natal has had its effect on the Kaffirs here. There is, therefore, no hope[2] left from any quarter.

DEPUTATION TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

A deputation in connection with permits for the Indians will wait upon the Colonial Secretary. It is expected that some relief will certainly be forthcoming. An officer is likely to be stationed at Johannesburg to issue permits, etc.

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 3-3-1906

[2] For the recovery of trade. *Vide*"Johannesburg Letter", 3-3-1906

Mr. Chamney, Protector of Asiatics, has arrived and assumed charge of his office.

The Lieutenant-Governor has agreed to receive a deputation on the subject of the Malay Location. It will shortly wait upon him.

LORD SELBORNE

Lord Selborne has returned from Masseroo, where nearly 2,000 Basuto Kaffirs had gathered to greet him. These Africans are a very intelligent people. They have their own Parliament, which they call Pitso. The shorthand reporter attached to the Pitso is a Basuto, who has taken down a report of the speech made by Lord Selborne.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 10-3-1906

92. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
Sunday, [*March 4, 1906*]

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

Do not fail in the slightest degree in doing your duty. It is absolutely necessary to bring the accounts up to date. The balance-sheet should be made up. You should take Mr. Bean's help in correspondence; associate Hemchand with Gujarati. It is not at all necessary to keep him in Durban. I shan't be able to send Kalyandas for the present. Most likely Brian Gabriel will come. It will be good if he does. The shortage of men we are experiencing will then cease. You alone know best how to lighten your burden. It will be enough if you go to Durban only for a day [in the week]. The main work is the collection of outstandings.

You should have the same arrangement in the Gujarati section as you have in the English. The leading article should come first, followed by the smaller leaders. After that should come the translations of articles on important subjects, etc., followed by letters like the "Johannesburg Letter" and last of all, Reuter's Telegrams.

The article on the Kaffir rebellion which you had placed first ought not to be there; it should have appeared in the news section. As I have entrusted the question of the Kaffir rebellion to you, I do not pay any attention to it. But you should study the subject well. If you make notes, you will be able to give a column or more of the latest news on Thursday. In accordance with the above arrangement, "The Natal Indian Congress" will be the leading article this time.

We should give the Gujarati "contents" at the end.

Discontinue the advertisement from Haji Suleman Shah Mahomed as we are not going to get it. Reduce Mr. Gool's to half. He has made a special request about it as his condition is not sound at present. I see that many advertisements from Cape Town will be discontinued. But I am not worried in the least by that. We shall get others. I am persevering in my efforts.

Mr. Isaac will arrive there during this month. Please keep a table and a chair for him in our office.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I have not translated Mr. A. Cadir's speech assuming that you would do it, which please do.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S.N. 4314.

93. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
March 5, 1906

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I have read your letter to Kalyandas. I understand that R. Peerkhan does not want you to execute any of the orders as they are all overdue. Please let me know what Transvaal orders are still unexecuted. Let me know also which orders require revision in quotation because of the job having to be done outside and let me know the difference in prices.

Miss Neufliess met me last evening and told me that she got her *Indian Opinion* for the first week with the back numbers and now she is not getting any at all. I have sent a wire with reference to the order, you will recollect, I sent to you for an Indian restaurant-keeper. I told you also that I made a promise to the man that he should receive his notices on or before to-day. He, therefore, came over to-day and inquired. I see you did not mention the matter when I was in Phoenix and I did not see any letter from you either addressed to the office. I think I told you in my letter that, if you could not execute the order within the time, you were not to have done it. Please let me know, if you have not already telegraphed to me, what is to be done. I shall be sending you to-day a Theatrical order. The Company is to play next Wednesday. They will naturally require the handbills and the programmes before that time. If, therefore, it is impossible for you to accept the order, you should wire to me before taking it up. I am most

anxious to fulfil promises that have been once made.

Yours sincerely,

M. K GANDHI

C. K. GANDHI, ESQ.

c/o Indian Opinion

PHOENIX

From a photostat of the original: S.N. 4315

94. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
March 5, 1906

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

Mr. Gool writes to me saying he is waiting for the list of Capetown subscribers and advertisers. If it is not sent, I hope you will send it without delay.

Mr. Dada Osman will want from you the names of the leading newspapers in England, India and South Africa. You may ask Hemchand to prepare a list of the papers to whom we send *Indian Opinion,* and give it to Mr. Dada Osman.

In taking job work, please be most particular that you do not take any orders from strangers unless cash is paid down. There should be no hesitation in refusing. The only people for whom we should accept orders on credit should be regular customers of known standing who are also supporters of the Paper. There should be no indecision about it.

I notice Mr. Omar's article about Delagoa Bay has not appeared. I take it, it will appear this week. I sent another article from his pen yesterday. That, of course, should be reserved for next week.

I notice you have not announced the report of the Abdul Cadirmeeting[1] and a translation of the address will be given in this week's issue. However, I take it that you are going to do it.

Yours sincerely,

M K. GANDHI

C. K. GANDHI, ESQ.

c/o Indian Opinion,

PHOENIX

From a photostat of the original: S.N. 4316

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Farewell to Abdul Kadir", 28-2-1906

95. LETTER TO A. J. BEAN

JOHANNESBURG,
March *5, 1906*

DEAR MR. BEAN,

I think Brian Gabriel will join at the end of the month. He has sent me the enclosed sketch[1] of alterations he would like to have made to the house occupied by Orchard. Will you kindly go into them and let me know what the alterations mean in money? Please let me know whether there are bath-room, water-closet and tank in that house. Are the walls of that house ceiled? I am leaving this purposely to you so as not to bother Chhaganlal as he complained of overwork. I shall thank you to let me have a reply to this, if possible per return. I hope you are considering my letter[2] and will let me have a favourable reply.

Kuhne's book[3] was to have gone on Saturday. It is now being posted to-day.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

A. J. BEAN, ESQ.
c/o Indian Opinion
PHOENIX

From a photostat of the original: S.N. 4317

96. LETTER TO A. J. BEAN

JOHANNESBURG,
March 7, 1906

DEAR MR. BEAN,

I have your letter about Mr. Mannering. I am sorry that he feels unsettled on account of the conversation with him. I intended to talk to him when I was there, but I hadn't the time. When I went to the Press, I was incapable [*sic*]. I have been thinking over the alleged understanding I gave to all. The circumstances were these, so far as I can recall them. I was talking about Pillay or somebody at that time. I

[1] Reproduced on opposite page
[2] This is not available.
[3] *The New Science of Healing or the Doctrine of the Oneness of all Diseases* by Louis Kuhne

did say that nobody, because he taught or did anything, need feel that he was to go as soon as he finished it, that everybody should consider himself absolutely safe in the Press, so long of course as the Press was not actually starved. I do not know whether Mr. Mannering was at that time on the pay basis or whether he was a schemer, but the assurance was not given after Mr. Mannering left the scheme and returned again. I believe that when he was taken over I told Chhaganlal—the letter[1] must be in his possession— that if Mr. Mannering was taken back, he should do so on a monthly basis. I may not be correct, but such is my impression. In any case, I certainly never had the intention of giving any assurance that everybody, that is to say, those who did not belong to the scheme, was to consider himself safe under all circumstances, and at the salary he was getting. All I wanted to convey was that there was not the slightest intention of driving anyone out when others were raised to take his place. To that opinion I adhere even now. I do not know what Mr. Mannering intends doing, but so far as I am concerned, I am quite willing that he should remain on at £8 per month, at least up to the end of this year. I know that you think that he should get a higher wage, and if the schemers agree, I have not the slightest objection; also if the schemers consent to it, you may treat this letter as binding on me and Mr. Mannering may rest assured that no matter what changes my personal opinions may undergo, he should consider himself a fixture, at least up to the end of this year. I am writing to Mr. Mannering also separately in the matter.[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

A. J. BEAN, ESQ.
c/o Indian Opinion
PHOENIX

From a photostat of the original: S.N . 4318

[1] This is not available.
[2] This letter is not available.

97. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[Before *March 9, 1906*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Things there have not quite settled down yet. Turn your stay in Phoenix to the best account. You have submitted long enough to what others say; now you should open your mouth. Put to Sam[2] again and again the arguments I used to advance. Ask Bean[3] to be frank and talk things over with him. Encourage West[4] and see that you three brothers[5] work in such spirit and have such understanding among yourselves that you make only the best impression on others. Whatever is to be done about Hemchand, do immediately. Call him to Phoenix, if that is best. Observe how Rama and Rajkumar behave. Encourage them too. I am convinced that the resolution that has been adopted is the right one. The case containing Mr. Polak's books did not arrive, after all. There has been some misunderstanding. I amwriting again to Sheth Rustomjee's[6] people. If you go to town, please inquire.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 4764

98. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
March 9, 1906

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

You asked me to send a list of those who have not paid regarding Mr. Nazar's estate. Did you not make a list of the whole thing? I don't know what £15/5 represent. I have an impression that you told me you had made out all the bills. If you haven't a list, I

[1] From the reference to Bean in the letter, this appears to have been written before the one to the addressee, dated March 9, 1906; *vide* " Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 9-3-1906

[2] Govindaswami, engineer in the Phoenix settlement

[3] A. J. Bean

[4] Albert Hume West

[5] The addressee, his brother Maganlal Gandhi and his cousin Anandlal Gandhi

[6] Parsee Rustomjee

would be able to send you one, but would not know who had paid and who had not. You are to collect undoubtedly from Thanu Maharaj. You need not bother Bhatt, Subhab, but there will be at least that dividend to be paid to them. From Mr. Miankhan you should collect. I return the paper.

I have not received the correspondence you refer to in your Gujarati letter received to-day. I have now received it.[1]

I shall write to Osman Amod.

Of course, we do not want to make extracts from the *Islam Gazette.* I received your telegram saying that you will be able to do the Theatrical job. I should have been quite content if it had not been done. All I would want you to be careful about is having made a promise to keep it. I may send you work from here without knowing whether you will be able to do it or not, but you have always the right not to do it if you can't.

If you cannot get satisfaction from Osman Amod, you should refuse to accept work. Make the position perfectly clear to him that we have to pay for work done outside in hard cash. We have to do nothing in fear. We want to please in a reasonable manner only and if we fail to please, the blame won't be ours. All, therefore, we have to do is to put ourselves to inconvenience for others, be always courteous, and to suffer when necessary. Further than that we are not called upon to go.

I have not yet received Coovadia and Patel's letter[s], but as soon as

I do, I shall reject them but will give you a note in reply to their correspondence.

We cannot, and we do not want, to ask the Congress or the British Indian Association to defray the expense of complimentary copies.

It is a pity that we have no cable from Maganlal.

We do not wish at this stage to give Mr. Dowd Mahomed's photograph, but you should give Mr. Abdul Cadir['s], even if it is next week.

You have sent me no bill for the restaurant except the handbills. My instructions were to send me the bill also. Please let me have it. You should be always careful to send bills whenever you executeorders. I was to have received cash against delivery. How can I

[1] This sentence is added in Gandhiji's own hand.

if I have not got the bill from you[?]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Enclosures[1]

C. K. GANDHI, ESQ.

c/o Indian Opinion

PHOENIX

From the photostat of the original typescript signed by Gandhiji: S.N. 4321

99. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL, GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
March 9, 1906

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

Your letter to hand. I follow what you say about Mr. Bean. You have done the right thing in not passing on the letter to Sam. I always want to know your views on such matters. I do not wish to importune Mr. Bean overmuch. I wrote my last letter[2] to him yesterday and I will write no more. To Mr. Kitchin also I have written clearly.[3] I feel for him somewhat because he will have, as he says, to upset all his arrangements. He has spent a lot and I rather felt that he would not go away from Phoenix. Hence the feeling that it will be good if he stays. Nevertheless, I have no intention of pressing him overmuch. You had better give up trying to persuade Mr. Bean now. You should act only on those among my suggestions which appeal to you as reasonable. I always assume this, when I communicate to you, without reservation, my thoughts as they occur to me.

Now that you are keeping all the account books yourself, I should like to know how it has affected the work. I desire that the accounts be got ready immediately.

Brian Gabriel writes that he will arrive there by the end of this month.

I think it will be difficult to send Kalyandas there at present. I already carry a big burden and it will become heavier, if I send him away. It is, moreover, doubtful whether he will stay there cheerfully or not. I shall, however, send him, if possible, during the winter for a time.

Please send me the file of the *Opinion.* Make as much use of

[1] Not available
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*

Mr. Isaac as you can.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I have received the papers. None of them is worth publishing. Please write to both the Patels directly as follows: "Received your letter. We receive plenty of such material, which we do not think it necessary to publish in the *Opinion.* It leads to counter-allegations and adds to the bitterness. The *Opinion* being chiefly meant for discussing political and social matters, it seems improper to introduce too many topics pertaining to religion." It is not necessary to reply to them through the journal. Inform Osman Amod that I have written to him directly.

The enclosed is the name of a new subscriber: his subscription has not been received.

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the original Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 4320

100. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

[After *March 9, 1906*][1]

. . . I have written asking to be sent local news. If you receive anything from him, publish it as 'From Our Correspondent'. Certainly do the necessary editing. The cases containing the books have been received. But the one containing Mr. Polak's books has not arrived. I cannot understand why. They write from Rustomjee Sheth's that it has been dispatched. A solitary book was received: I wonder if they mean that.

Despite there being no job work who on the paper[2] is hard up? I can understand about the Gujarati section. All the same, in this matter follow for the time being any practice that works.

If you feel that I should write to Hemchand, let me know. I will then write further.

I understand about the kitchen door.

Let me know how much Gujarati Gokaldas does.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[1] From the reference to the case containing Polak's books this appears to have been written after "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi"; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Indian Opinion*

[PS.]

Heidelberg, etc. . . .

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 4679

101. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

[DURBAN,
Before *March 10, 1906*]

TO

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY

MARITZBURG,

SIR,

The Committee of the Natal Indian Congress has read with pain and anxiety Government Notice No. 150 published in the Natal *Government Gazette* dated the 27th ultimo, imposing certain fees in connection with various passes and certificates issued under the Immigration Restriction Act No. 30 of 1903 as amended by Act 3 of 1906. Our Committee ventures respectfully but strongly to protest against the tariff of fees mentioned in the Notice.

It is submitted that the fees amount to a tax on British Indians who are entitled to remain in the Colony or to pass through it.

It is well known that the Act is enforced very largely, if not entirely against British Indians. The various passes and certificates issued there under are granted more in the interest of those who desire their enforcement than of those to whom the provisions are applied.

Our Committee, with the greatest deference, thinks that the fees sought to be imposed are extortionate.

Our Committee reminds the Government of the fact that, during the lifetime of the late Right Honourable Harry Escombe, an attempt was made to impose a fee of £1 for visitors' passes. A respectful representation was sent thereupon protesting against the imposition and the late Right Honourable Gentleman immediately withdrew the Notice regarding the imposition.

At that time the Certificate of Domicile was free from the £l fee.

Our Committee, moreover, draws your attention to the fact that British Indians who may be residing in the inland colonies are at least entitled to a passage through Natal without having to pay a charge of £1 for the privilege of passing through the Colony.

Indeed, even from a selfish standpoint, the fact that such Indians bring to the Natal Government Railways a certain amount of revenue

should weigh with the Government in not imposing a prohibitive fee.

Act 3 of 1906 contemplates a reasonable charge of £1. My Committee submits that a charge of £1 for a visiting or embarkation pass or a Certificate of Domicile can never be considered reasonable, and if the wife of a domiciled British Indian is entitled to remain in the Colony or to enter it, and if an Indian who can satisfy the educational test is also, as of right, entitled to enter the Colony, it seems, in the humble opinion of our Committee, not only hard but insulting that either the wife of a domiciled Indian or an educated Indian himself should have to pay what is after all a tax of 5/- for not being a prohibited immigrant within the meaning of the Act.

Our Committee does not understand the term transit pass.

Our Committee ventures to trust that the Government will be pleased to withdraw the Notice and allow the charges hitherto imposed to stand.

Our Committee hopes that your early attention will be given to the complaint as the matter is rather urgent.

We have the honour to remain,

Sir,

your obedient servants,

O. H. A. JOHARI

M. C. ANGLIA

JOINT HON. SECRETARIES, N. I. C.

Indian Opinion, 10-3-1906

102. "INFLUX OF ASIATICS"

The Congress of the Associated Chambers of Commerce of South Africa, that met in Durban last week, has again passed a resolution about Indians. Mr. E. F. Bourke, of Pretoria, moved

> that this Congress of Chambers of Commerce of South Africa views with alarm the increasingly detrimental effect upon the commerce of the whole of South Africa because of the continual influx of Asiatics, and desires to express its conviction that it is imperative, in the interests of the white population of South Africa, that concerted action should be taken by the various Governments with the least possible delay.

Mr. G. Mitchell moved that the word "continual" be omitted, and the resolution was passed without it. A resolution of this nature, passed by an important body like the Congress of the Associated Chambers, ought to carry weight, and it is to be feared that, althoughthe resolution is without foundation in fact, it will be used as

an authoritative expression of opinion on the part of the Chambers of Commerce in South Africa.

If the resolution were examined calmly, it would be found that the influx of Asiatics could not detrimentally affect the commerce of the whole of South Africa, for Indian immigrants would, after all, be consumers, no matter how humble they may be; but we imagine that the framers of the resolution intended to say that the increase of Indian traders, due to the influx of Indians, had such an effect. Although both the question of influx and that of Indian trade have been fully examined in these columns more than once, we propose again to deal with them in order to show how ill-informed the speakers were as to the true position. So far as the Cape Colony and Natal are concerned, there is, as the Immigration Office records show from day to day, a most effective barrier set against Indian immigration, and the manner of enforcing the restrictions is daily being made more irksome. From the letter[1] we reproduce in another column from Professor Parmanand, it will appear that the Immigration Officers are no respecters of persons. The learned Professor, whose fame and name preceded him, was subjected to an educational test before he was allowed to set foot on the ground at Port Elizabeth. Could severity go any further?

The Orange River Colony does not come into the calculation at all, as nobody has ever suggested that there is any Indian population or Indian trade worthy of the name in that Colony, and yet we find the resolution applying to the whole of South Africa.

With reference to the Transvaal, Lord Selborne, as well as other Government officials, has more than once stated, in emphatic terms, that no non-refugee British Indians are being allowed to enter the Transvaal. Our permit pillory[2] will bear witness to this.

One of the speakers said that the fact of the Advisory Boards having been appointed showed that an influx was going on. May we inform him that the Boards have been established, not because an influx has been going on, but in answer to the agitation that was set up by certain interested parties in the Transvaal, and in total disregard of the feelings and convenience of Indian refugees. The Boards could not act any more effectively than the permit officers have hitherto done. The same speaker went on to say that he could "give evidence that the Government knew of certain Asiatics coming in unlawfully". Either the statement is true, or it is untrue. If it be

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] *Vide* " A Permit Pillory", 24-2-1906

true, it is a duty the speaker owes to the Government, as well as to the Indian public, that he should give detailed information with names; if it be untrue, as an honourable man he should withdraw it. Serious statements of that nature, without any facts to support them, made before a public body like the Congress of Associated Chambers of Commerce, cannot be allowed to pass unchallenged, and westate emphatically that there has been no such unlawful influx of Indians into the Transvaal, as has been suggested by the speaker. We would here draw the attention of the public to the fact that the British Indian Association at Johannesburg invited public enquiry into the matter, which the Government did not grant, as the Government was fully convinced that there was no such influx. With reference to the so-called increase in Indian trade in Natal, there is a most effective and tyrannical check actually exercised over Indian licences. As the members of the Congress must have known, the Natal Dealers' Licenses Act places every Indian trader absolutely at the mercy of the Licensing Officer. They must also have known that two respectable Indians[1], traders of long standing, have been wantonly deprived of their licences, although they were, as a matter of fact, not even competing with Europeans in their trade.

In the Transvaal, the position is no better, if only because the Indian population of the Transvaal is not so large as the Indian population of Natal, and also because even refugees find it difficult to enter that Colony. At the same time, we are free to admit that the decision of the Supreme Court in the test case has undoubtedly, to a certain extent though not in any appreciable degree, increased the number of Indian licences, but Indians have showed their extreme moderation by suggesting that, as against repeal of Law 3 of 1885 and all class legislation, they would be prepared to accept the principle of control over new trade licences by the municipal bodies. It is worthy of note that, of the eight speakers who are reported to have taken part in the debate on the resolution, there were only two from Cape Town, and they did not appear to have brought forward any facts or figures to show that Indian trade was in any way affecting European trade. Thus, examined from every point of view, the resolution is totally unnecessary, and certainly not based upon facts. The only real remedy which lies at their door, the people of the Transvaal have hitherto declined to accept. It is also worthy of note that, out of the eight speakers, there were five from the Transvaal; and evidently the resolution was passed, not in the interests, as it has been said in the

[1] Dada Osman and Hoondamal; *vide* Dada Osman's case ", 15-9-1898 and "Indian Licences: Need for vigilance —I", 18-2-1905

body of it, of South Africa generally, but in the interests of the Transvaal only.

Indian Opinion, 10-3-1906

103. A CONTRAST

We have drawn attention to Professor Parmanand's hardships, whilst he was passing through the Cape Colony, in our remarks on the proceedings of the Congress of Associated Chambers of Commerce.[1] Professor Parmanand, it would appear, was unnecessarily subjected to the indignity of an examination, before he was allowed to land at East London.

A letter from Mr. Omar Haji Amod Johari, which we publish in another column,[2] shows what even the most respectable Indians have to undergo in South Africa. Mr. Johari is a leader among Indians in South Africa. He represents the well-known firm of E. Aboobaker Amod & Bros., of Natal. He is a cultured Indian, and has travelled in Europe and America. All this was of no consequence to the permit officer at Volksrust, who, not being satisfied with having examined his permit, had the effrontery to ask Mr. Johari to put his thumb-impress on his book. We confess that we fail to see the reason for this procedure. Well may Mr. Johari ask whether he is to be treated as a criminal, without being guilty of any offence, save that of wearing a brown skin.

And yet, when it was a Japanese subject who was treated rudely only the other day, a howl of public indignation went up throughout South Africa, and our contemporary, *The Transvaal Leader*, in an angry editorial, after having severely censured the authorities for the delay in granting a permit to Mr. Nomura and for subjecting him to the offensive process of giving his thumb-impression, offered a public apology to the gentleman on behalf of the people of the Transvaal.

We believe that Mr. Nomura was entitled to the apology. But we cannot help contrasting the attitude of the public towards that incident, and the incidents to which we are now drawing attention. We fear that there will not be even so much as one feeble voice raised in favour of Professor Parmanand or Mr. Johari. The moral is obvious. Mr. Nomura belonged to an independent nation in alliance with Great Britain. Messrs Parmanand and Johari are only British Indians, after all. But a little reflection should show that a British subject is deserving

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Not reproduced here

of at least as much solicitude on the part of the public, and that persistence in such a policy as this to which we draw attention cannot but lead eventually to the disruption of the Empire.

India Opinion 10-3-1906

104. A CRYING SHAME

The Natal *Government Gazette* for the 27th February last contains a notice under the Immigration Restriction Act. It seeks to impose sundry fees for the various documents which people, who are affected by it, have to take out. A nominal fee we do not mind, though we question the legality of even a trivial charge. But the notice in question is nothing short of a shameful attempt to replenish the empty treasury of Natal. A certificate of domicile, a visiting pass or an embarkation pass are to cost £1 each. A certificate of ability to pass the educational test, a wife's exemption certificate and a transit pass (whatever the latter may mean) are to cost five shillings each. Thus, although an Indian may be entitled by law to enter Natal or to remain in this Colony, he cannot henceforth do so without paying a price for it.

An imposition of the above kind was attempted in 1897, but the late Rt. Hon. H. Escombe[1] saw the reasonableness of the protest of the Natal Indian Congress against it, and withdrew the tax immediately.

It does not appear to have struck the authors of this notice that, in seeking to exact the high fees from the Indians, they will not necessarily decrease the deficit of the Colony. An Indian living in the Transvaal wishes to return to India. He can only do so by going through the Cape, Durban or Delagoa Bay. The Durban route is the most popular. The Indian passenger traffic is no mean thing. It behoves the Natal Government to take care that, in trying to exact an additional pound from an Indian, they do not kill the goose that lays the golden egg of Trans-Natalian Indian passenger traffic. So much for an appeal to selfishness.

On the ground of justice, the case is overwhelmingly in favour of the Indian. The Immigration Act is supposed to apply to all, irrespective of nationality. In effect, it is enforced chiefly, if not solely, against Indians. The charges sought to be imposed by the notice, therefore, constitute special taxation on the Indian community. We sympathise with the Government in their financial embarrassment, but

[1] Sir Harry Escombe, (1838-99), leading advocate of the Natal Supreme Court, sometime Attorney-General, and Prime Minister of Natal, 1897

can scarcely approve of the method they have adopted of filling the State coffers.

Indian Opinion, 10-3-1906

105. A POLL-TAX GRIEVANCE

Our Gujarati columns show that much irritation is caused to Indian payers of the poll-tax, owing to the alleged difference between the treatment of European and Indian payers. One of the aggrieved parties states:

> When a European goes to pay the poll-tax, he does not have to stop even five minutes, whereas an Indian has to devote practically the whole day, before the money is taken from him and he is dispensed with.

If it be true that the intending Indian tax-payers have to pass very nearly a day before they can pay the tax and get the receipt, there is something very bad about the arrangements made by the Government, and the attention of the authorities is drawn to the complaint.

Indian Opinion, 10-3-1906

106. INDIAN PASSENGERS BY THE GERMAN EAST AFRICA LINE

More than one correspondent draws attention, through our Gujarati columns, to the inconvenience that was felt by the passengers on board the steamer *Somali* during her last voyage to Durban. One of them writes:

> On board the *Somali*, which left on the 20th January, passengers had to undergo many difficulties about cooking, etc. The crew on board were totally careless as to the comfort of the passengers, and the Captain, on the complaints being taken to him, did not listen.

We draw the attention of the Agents of the German East Africa Line to the allegations above made. We shall be pleased to publish any explanation that they may have to give. In any case, we trust that full investigation will be made; and in view of the fact that Indians give very considerable support to the line, even a policy of selfishness will dictate consideration towards Indian passengers.

Indian Opinion, 10-3-1906

107. THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

Great changes have come about in the s et-up of the Natal Indian Congress. After having occupied the presidential chair of the Congress for eight years, Mr. Abdul Kadir has left for India. May his wishes be fulfilled, and may he return here safely! The Indian community has conferred on him great honour, which he amply deserves.[1] In honouring him, the community has honoured itself. A number of speakers rightly emphasized the philanthropy of Mr. Abdul Kadir. Mr. Abdul Kadir maintained the dignity of the Chair with solemnity and modesty. He did much to put the Congress on a firm footing. Whatever honour is done him must, therefore, be deemed inadequate.

With the departure of Mr. Abdul Kadir, Mr. Adamji Mian Khan relinquished the office of Joint Honorary Secretary. Mr. Adamji is one of the very few educated persons among businessmen in the Indian community. He has been serving the Congress ever since its inception. In 1896, when the condition of our people was very critical, Mr. Adamji worked with great zeal, tact and humility. During his tenure of office, there was great enthusiasm among the members of the Congress. Mr. Adamji was mainly responsible for collecting £1,000 during that brief period. Moreover, he took the same keen interest in political matters also. When the residents of Durban staged a demonstration[2] against the steamers, *Courland* and *Naderi*, Mr. Adamji acted with patience and firmness. Later when the late Mr. Nazar and Mr. Khan relinquished their office as Congress Secretaries, Mr. Adamji Mian Khan was elected Joint Secretary along with Mr. Omar Haji Amod Zaveri. Since then, he served the Congress, along with Mr. Zaveri, until last week. The reasons why Mr. Adamji resigned are, first, his indifferent health and, secondly, his desire to give Surati brethren an opportunity of holding office. We regret Mr. Adamji Mian Khan's ill health and pray to the Almighty that he may soon be restored to health. The second reason which has led Mr. Adamji to resign his office does him greater credit. The well-being of his country has always been the uppermost thought in his mind.

Mr. Dowd Mahomed has succeeded Mr. Abdul Kadir as President, and Mr. Mahomed Cassim Anglia has taken the place of Mr. Adamji. The largely attended meeting at the Congress Hall

[1] *Vide* "Address to Abdul Kadir", 28-2-1906

[2] On January 13, 1897. *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897

greeted them with loud acclamation. In the trading community here, the Suratis preponderate, and it is in the fitness of things that two Surati gentlemen should be elected simultaneously to these high offices. It will indeed be difficult to maintain the traditions built up by such able men as Mr. Abdul Kadir and Mr. Adamji, but we expect that both the [newly elected] gentlemen will play their part ably.

Mr. Dowd Mahomed has been a leading member of the Congress from the beginning. He has rendered good service to the Congress. He was the first to be elected an office-bearer of that body. His ability known to all. He has many virtues, and if he employs them all in the service of the Congress, he will, we are sure, bring great credit to the Congress.

Mr. Mahomed Cassim Anglia is an educated gentleman and has experience of political work. And though he has not so far taken an active part in Congress activities, he is quite qualified to hold the Secretary's post. At present, great enthusiasm prevails among Congress members. We are confident that Mr. Dowd Mahomed, as also Mr. Omar Haji Amod Zaveri and Mr. Mahomed Cassim Anglia, will take advantage of this enthusiasm and carry on Congress work successfully.

For a long time now, no funds have been collected for the Congress. It is necessary to undertake certain political activities, which can be easily done if some effort is put in. Like the new Ministry in England, the Congress, too, has got a new executive body. This coincidence is such that we can justly expect some good to come out of it.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 10-3-1906

108. A FRESH MOVE TO SEPARATE VRYHEID FROM NATAL

The Dutch are greatly heartened by the Liberal Ministry coming to office in England, for they believe that they will now get whatever they demand. When Vryheid was taken out of the Transvaal and merged in Natal, they objected to it, although without success. Now they have again resolved to submit a mass petition. They do not like the Natal laws, and want to remain with the Transvaal. Indians will benefit much if Vryheid is merged in the Transvaal. At present the oppressive laws of both the Transvaal and Natal apply to them and they do not have the benefit of the good laws of either.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 10-3-1906

109. MR. JOHN MORLEY AND INDIA

Mr. John Morley has spoken on the Indian question. Replying to Mr. Roberts, he said that the partition of Bengal had already been accomplished. It was impolitic to have offended people over the matter of fixing boundaries. There was no need, however, to make changes in what had already been done. It was necessary that the agitation that had disturbed the administration should now subside. The time for granting the people a share in the government of the country had not yet come.

These words of Mr. Morley are disappointing. They mean that the people of Bengal will not get justice. Of course, if Mr. Morley had been at the helm of affairs at the time, the partition would not have come about. From this it appears that the hope that Mr. Morley would act boldly and fearlessly and do what was necessary has been belied. In effect, therefore, for the duration of his career, it is only when new laws are enacted that attention will be paid to the feelings of the Indian people. Moreover, his statement that our people are not fit to take part in the governance of the country might be construed to mean that we are not yet fit for self-government. At the same time, it would not be proper to infer from a statement of this kind that India would notreceive any benefits from Mr. Morley. However, Mr. Morley's views are similar to those of the average Anglo-Indian; and they are likely to change only if we put in the requisite effort. It will be futile to hope that he would exert himself in our favour as he did for Ireland.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 10-3-1906

110. NEW REGULATIONS FOR DOMICILE PASSES, ETC., IN NATAL

The following regulations have been published in the Natal *Government Gazette* of February 27:

The following fees will be charged from persons desiring to take out certificates, etc., under the Immigration Act:

	£	s	d
Exemption Certificate, i.e., special permission for entry into the Colony	0	5	0
Certificate of knowledge of language	0	5	0
Domicile Certificate	1	0	0

Temporary Pass for a visitor	1 0 0
Embarkation Pass (for boarding a steamer)	1 0 0
Separate pass for the wife	0 5 0
Certificate for passing through Natal	0 5 0

It would be a very bad thing if these taxes were to continue. We hope that the Natal Indian Congress will immediately take up this matter.

A similar proposal to levy taxes was made by the late Mr. Harry Escombe, but it was withdrawn as a result of a strong representation made by the Congress.

Natal has been impoverished; the Government is, therefore, making desperate efforts to collect money from all possible sources. It has adopted this new tax device. But this in effect has defeated its purpose.[1] For Indian residents in the Transvaal who wish to sail home, the shorter route lies through Natal. If such persons go *via* Natal, the Government will stand to gain in its railway revenue. If, alternatively, they go *via* Delagoa Bay, the Natal Government is likely to suffer a corresponding loss. We are sure that, if these penal taxes continue, Indian travellers will boycott the Natal railway and travel through Delagoa Bay.

The Natal Government has no right at all to levy such a tax. This law is being enforced for the benefit of the Natal public. If, therefore, the burden of the levy is to fall on any group, it should be on the whites. And if an Indian wishes to visit Natal for a short period, the Natal Government is bound to assist rather than penalize him.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 10-3-1906

111. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

March 10, 1906

TRAM TEST CASE

The tram test case was heard by Magistrate Kar last Wednesday. The plaintiff, Mr. Coovadia, was represented by Mr. Gandhi, and the respondent by Mr. Hile, the Town Council advocate. The Crown Counsel, Mr. Blaine, appeared on behalf of the Government. He conducted the case well without discriminating between the white and

[1] The Gujarati original has: "This has resulted in the Government cutting its own foot with an axe."

the Coloured. During his examination, Mr. Coovadia deposed that the respondent forbade him to travel by the tram and asked him to use the tram reserved for the Coloureds; the case was, therefore, brought to court. On the Counsel for the Town Council admitting the said facts, it was not considered necessary to record Mr. MacIntyre's evidence. The respondent argued that he had orders from the Town Council not to admit Indians or other Coloured persons into the tram unless they were servants accompanying their white masters, and that he had accordingly refused admission to the plaintiff. In his address to the court, Mr. Blaine said that, according to the bye-laws of the Johannesburg Tramway, Indians were entitled to travel by any tram-car, and that the respondent was, therefore, guilty.

In his address, Mr. Hile admitted that the tramway bye-laws did not prohibit Indians from travelling by any tram-car. But there was a regulation, introduced by the Sanitary Committee [of the Town Council] during the Boer regime, which made it an offence for any Coloured person to use a tram, a bus or a cab reserved for the whites. By virtue of that regulation, still unrepealed, an Indian could be refused a seat in a tram. To this Mr. Blaine replied that the said regulation was no longer applicable and that Indians were entitled, by virtue of the bye-law passed by the Council, to travel in the tram. Mr. Kar has deferred judgment in the case till Monday. If it is announced on Monday, I shall communicate it.

According to news subsequently received, we have won the tram case and the Municipality has preferred an appeal.

RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT FOR THE TRANSVAAL

The agitation for responsible government is still continuing in Johannesburg. The Boer People's Committee and the leaders of the Responsible and Progressive Parties met at the residence of Sir George Farrar with the object of arriving at a unanimity of views. What transpired at the meeting is not so far known; but it is believed that they could not reach an agreement and dispersed without taking a decision.

Meanwhile, a huge movement is in progress here. It has been decided to send a deputation of whites to England and a mass petition to King-Emperor Edward, to which thousands of signatures are being obtained. The demand of the signatories is that, in any future constitution [for the Transvaal], there should be provision for equal rights to all voters and the number of members to be elected should be proportionate to the strength of the voting population.

The object of this petition is to increase the power of the British [in public affairs], for the Boer population is smaller than the British.

The Boers, on the other hand, demand that the members be elected according to the villages. If this is granted, the Boers, being more numerous in the villages, would gain in power. In other words, they would regain, through responsible government, what they lost through the war. This tussle is well matched and sustained, because neither party is inferior to the other in perseverance and effort. The Boers command considerable influence with the Liberal Ministry. Let us hope that, in this struggle between two great powers, the poor Coloured people will not be crushed out. Who will listen to the shrill pipe while the drums beat loudly?

[From Gujarati]

Indian opinion, 17-3-1906

112. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Sunday, 3 a.m., [On or after *March 11, 1906*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I sent some articles yesterday. I am sending some more with Dalal. The rest I am writing now. If possible, I will despatch them by the evening mail. I will send them by book-post. Let me know when you receive them. Last week I posted them on Sunday but I see from your letter that you had not received them by the morning of Tuesday. I do not understand this delay. I cannot find time except on Saturdays and Sundays. So I want that you should get the Sunday mail on time. I am looking for a remedy from this end.

It will be good if Mr. Bean is given a warm send-off and presented an address. All of you should get together and present him a short address. On the last day, you should dine with him. All this will be in order. Go to see him off. Discuss this with Mr. West.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

What happened to the two missing pages from Omar Sheth's article?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 6086

[1] From the reference to the farewell to Bean this letter appears to have been written after the letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi dated March 9, 1906; *vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 9-3-1906 The following Sunday fell on this date.

113. "LEGALIZED ROBBERY"[1]

We publish in another column a special report[2] of a case that was argued on Monday last before the Supreme Court of the Transvaal. Our correspondent has called it "legalized robbery" and we have no hesitation in adopting the title for this note. Law 3 of 1885 has formed the subject-matter of many complaints on the part of the British Indian Association, but we cannot think of any case so cruel or harsh and so unjust as the one reported by our correspondent. A law under which such a glaring wrong can be perpetrated must, to say the least of it, be utterly inhuman. Mr. Leonard, in his eloquent address, evidently thought of the inhumanity of the law when he asked the judges to put a humane interpretation upon it, and if possible to give the unfortunate victims justice. The late Mr. Aboobaker Amod was one of the first Indian settlers in South Africa. He was one of the foremost Indian merchants, and held very considerable landed property in Natal and in other parts of South Africa. He was respected, and very properly so, both by Europeans and the Indians of his time. He was cultured in every sense of the term. He held some landed property in the Transvaal. He made a will bequeathing it to his brother and his son, both of whom are well known and well educated. It has now become possible to rob the heirs of what has been left to them by the testator, and in spite of their wishes to the contrary, the judges of the Supreme Court of the Transvaal were unable to right the wrong. It is hardly possible to get a purer or a more independent bench of judges than the people of the Transvaal have in their Supreme Court. They are not carried away by the slightest prejudice, and we have known them to have given fearless decisions before now. The cause was represented by the ablest lawyer in South Africa, who put his whole heart into it, and yet the judges have not been able, as they virtually admitted, to do justice. The cause is not far to seek. Law 3 of 1885 was passed by a legislature that had no regard for the feelings of British Indians, or, for that matter, any Coloured people. It was manifestly un-British and in breach of all the known rules of civilisation. It was an item of discussion at the Bloemfontein Conference[3] that preceded the Boer War, and when the late President

[1] This was also published in India, 13-4-1906.

[2] Not reproduced here

[3] Held in 1899 when Lord Milner, Governor of the Cape, and Paul Kruger, President of the Transvaal, discussed, among other things, the controversial subject of franchise for non- Dutch white settlers in the Transvaal.

Kruger seemed to yield the point of the franchise, Lord Milner it was who sent a cablegram to Mr. Chamberlain, "What about the Coloured men?" Such was his solicitude for them before War, but with the times, His Lordship's views changed. One would have thought that amongst the first acts of his administration would be repeal of this hateful Law, but His Lordship temporized. British Indians approached him, and he put them off until it became impossible for him to purge the Statute-book of Law 3 of 1885, because of the agitation of the white inhabitants of the Transvaal; and up to this day, it remains in force in the Transvaal as a mark of indelible disgrace for the British administration in the Transvaal over which His Excellency presided. Is the Liberal Government going to perpetuate the terrible wrong under which British Indians are labouring?

Indian Opinion, l 7-3-1906

114. THE POLL-TAX

A correspondent from Ladysmith writes in the Gujarati columns:

> In the *Government Gazette* dated the 28th February, there is a notice about the poll-tax which states that those, other than Natives, who do not pay the tax before that day, shall be liable to a penalty. This has caused terror amongst the Indians. Those living in the town of Ladysmith have already paid the tax, but the poor Indians, who have just emerged from their indenture and who are living on farms and in distant places, cannot realise the thing, and have not been able to pay the poll-tax. These men have to be informed. The sergeant-in-charge receives the poll-tax, gives them a receipt, and then takes them before the Magistrate and the men are fined. If they do not pay the fine, they have to go to gaol. An instance happened in my presence. An Indian named Motai was living five to seven miles from Ladysmith. He was informed by a friend that he should pay the tax. He, therefore, mortgaged his ear-rings for one pound, at an interest of half-a-crown per month, and paid the tax. He got the receipt and was taken to the Magistrate. He was fined ten shillings. Where is he to get the money from ? He had a pass. He has left it in the Court and has promised to bring the fine. . . . Up till now, nearly twelve to fifteen men have been fined.

We bring the above to the notice of the Government. If the information given by our correspondent be true, it reflects the greatest discredit on those who are concerned with the collection of the poll-tax. To make the poor people not only pay the tax, but when they come to pay it, to impose on them a fine seems to us to be the height of injustice. The penalty clause, we should imagine, is applicable, not to those who pay the tax willingly, but to those who

want to avoid payment. The daily newspapers report that Indians have been paying the tax with the greatest despatch. As our correspondent points out, it is cruel to expect those who are living in out-of-the-way places to go to the paying-booths before the advertised time and pay the money. We have no doubt that many of them do not know anything about their liability, and if, as our correspondent points out, it is true that the men have to be informed, it is only reasonable to expect the Government to instruct their officers to take the money from those who may pay, and not arrest the men, and have them fined for an alleged contravention of the poll-tax act. We have trust enough in the humanity of the Government to feel that they will stop the injustice that is being perpetrated in the name of law.

Indian Opinion, 17-3-1906

115. A PLEA FOR INDIAN VOLUNTEERING.

The Natal Native trouble[1] is dragging on a slow existence. There can be no doubt that the imposition of the poll-tax is itself the immediate cause, though probably the trouble has been brewing for a long time. Whosesoever the mistake may be, report has it that it I s costing the Colony two thousand pounds per day. The white colonists are trying to cope with it, and many citizen-soldiers have taken up arms. Today, perhaps, no further assistance is necessary, but this trouble ought to suggest reflections to the Government, as also to every thinking colonist. There is a population of over one hundred thousand Indians in Natal. It has been proved that they can do very efficient work in time of war.[2] The suspicion that they were worthless in emergencies has been dispelled. In the face of these incontrovertible facts,is it prudent for the Government to allow a source of strength, which always lies at its disposal, to run to waste? Our contemporary, *The Natal Witness*, has recently written a very thoughtful editorial on the Indian question, and has shown that, some day or other, the question of Indian representation must be seriously taken up by the colonists. We agree with the view, though Indians do not aspire to any political power in the Colony. All they require is a guarantee of full civil rights under the general laws of the Colony. This should be the birthright of every British subject living in a British territory. Refusal to accept anybody as an immigrant is, in certain

[1] The Zulu revolt led by Bambata; *vide* "Speech at Congress Meeting", 28-4-1906

[2] The reference is to the role of the Indian Ambulance Corps during the Boer War; *vide* "Indian Ambulance Corps", 13-12-1899

circumstances, justifiable, but imposition of disabilities upon well-behaved and physically sound immigrants can never be justified either on economic or political grounds. Whilst, therefore, the question of Indian representation is undoubtedly very important, we consider that the question of Indian volunteering is more important because it is more practicable. There is, it is nowadays fully recognised, work in the field which does not require the bearing of arms, but which is just as useful and quite as honourable as the shouldering of a rifle. If the Government, instead of neglecting Indians, were to employ them for volunteering work, they would add appreciably to the utility of the Militia, and would always be able in times of trouble to rely upon Indians giving a good account of themselves. The Government, we doubt not, recognise that it is impossible for them to drive Indians out of the country. Why not, then, make the best of the material at hand, and convert a hitherto neglected community into a permanent and most valuable asset of the State ?

Indian Opinion, 17-3-1906

116. AN INTER-STATE NATIVE COLLEGE

A considerable amount of enthusiasm has been evoked by the movement that was initiated some months ago by Mr. Tengo Jabavu, Editor of *Imvo,* with the object of creating an Inter-State Native College with the present Lovedale Institute as its nucleus. Both Mr. Jabavu and Mr. K. A. Hobart Houghton, organising secretary of the movement, have been touring South Africa, their purpose being the threefold one of enlisting the sympathetic co-operation of the various South African Governments, creating a healthy Native opinion on the subject by means of careful explanation and illustration, and, perhaps, most important of all, the collection of funds to enable serious work to be commenced in the near future. We have already in these columns drawn attention to the excellent and instructive programme carried out by Mr. Booker T. Washington at the Tuskegee Institute in America.[1] It is proposed to develop the work to be undertaken by the new College on the same lines of industrial training as in the American Institute. All this can do nothing but good, and it is not to be wondered at that an awakening people, like the great Native races of South Africa, are moved by something that has been described as being very much akin to religious fervour. To them undoubtedly the work must be sanctified and hallowed, for it opens

[1] *Vide* "From Slave to College President", 10-9-1903

up a means to advancement of thought and gives a great impetus to spiritual development. The enormous sum of £50,000 is in contemplation of collection *[sic]* from the Natives, apart altogether from subsidies from the various States and the different religious bodies interested. British Indians in South Africa have much to learn from this example of self-sacrifice. If the Natives of South Africa, with all their financial disabilities and social disadvantages, are capable of putting forth this local effort, is it not incumbent upon the British Indian community to take the lesson to heart, and press forward the matter of educational facilities with far greater energy and enthusiasm than have been used hitherto? Reformation, in matters educational, has to come from within, and we would urge that aspect of the question most earnestly upon our readers.

Indian Opinion, 17-3-1906

117. SIR WILLIAM GATACRE

We regret to note the death of Major-General Sir William Gatacre in Egypt from fever following on sunstroke. Sir William had a peculiar claim upon the gratitude of British Indians. He was the Chairman of the first Plague Committee formed at Bombay, and by his tactful and delicate handling of most difficult matters, practically all friction and bitterness were avoided. He was a striking example of what is best in the Anglo-Indian character, represented so excellently by such gallant and courteous exponents of British rule as Mountstuart Elphinstone, Munro, Tod, Sleeman, Forbes, Lawrence, and many another. Whilst Britain can produce noble gentlemen of the calibre of the late Sir William Gatacre, there is yet room for hope that India will receive that sympathetic treatment at the hands of her rulers of which she stands so much in need.

Indian Opinion, 17-3-1906

118. UNDER-POPULATION IN AUSTRALIA

The whites in Australia are jealous of any one landing on the island. They do not admit even men of their own race. Of Coloured peoples they are sworn enemies. The result is that north Australia has only 820 white inhabitants. That is, for every seven hundred square miles, there is only one white man. A man cannot eat the land; and if there are not enough men on the land, it remains barren and must be regarded as useless wealth. The people of Australia are now waking up

to reality. President Roosevelt[1] has written to the Australian people that they would do themselves harm by keeping their country under-populated. Mr. Richard Arthur, a Member of Parliament, is of the opinion that, as Asia and Australia are neighbours, Asians should be allowed to settle in Australia. As such ideas spread, one may expect that Indians will eventually be able to settle in Australia.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 17-3-1906

119. DISABILITIES OF TRANSVAAL INDIANS[2]

DEPUTATION TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY

Last Saturday, the 10th instant, an Indian deputation waited upon the Assistant Colonial Secretary. It comprised Mr. Abdul Gani, Mr. Haji Habib and Mr. Gandhi. Mr. Chamney and Mr. Burgess were present. The meeting lasted from 11-15 a. m. to 1 p. m. The following were the demands made by the deputation.

1. It takes a great deal of time to obtain permits. It should not take so long; permits should be issued promptly.

2. Great hardship is caused because applications have now to be forwarded to the Magistrate for investigation. This does not take place, and they lie unattended to.

3. The same official should visit the different places to make the investigation, so that it is done uniformly and the matter disposed of quickly. The local people may, if they want, raise objections, but the decisions should be available quickly.

4. Those who are in possession of old registration certificates should not be required to produce witnesses; permits should be issued to them as soon as they have given explanations about their registration certificates.

5. Permits should not be necessary for women, for they at any late do not compete with the whites. It is very insulting to subject women to scrutiny. The number of Indian women in the Transvaal is very small, and they are all here with their menfolk. There is no reason, therefore, to doubt their *bona fides*.

6. It is outrageous to demand, at the border, both the permit and the registration certificate. Permit-holders should be

[1] Theodore Roosevelt, (1858-1919), Republican President of the U.S.A., 1901-9

[2] This was published as “Specially Contributed”.

immediately allowed to pass as also those who produce only the registration certificate.

7. The practice of taking thumb-impressions of permit-holders at the border is needlessly humiliating.

8. The regulation that boys under twelve years of age can enter only if their parents are in the Transvaal is oppressive. From the beginning, all boys under sixteen have been entering the Transvaal and they should, therefore, be allowed now also. Even if changes are to be made in the regulation, those boys who have already come in should be granted permits without fuss. Adequate notice must be given of the new regulation. As for children who have lost their parents, their relations should be regarded as their guardians.

9. Those who have lost their permits should be granted either certificates or some other proof. If these persons wish to go to India, they should invariably be equipped with some document of this kind. Without it they experience difficulties in coming back. If the Government have any doubts regarding their *bona fides*, the certificates may be delivered to them at the harbour. If, in the Transvaal, one loses a permit, one suffers much inconvenience in obtaining licences, etc.

10. Temporary permits should be issued for the asking. People must have full freedom to come and go for business purposes.

11. An officer should visit Johannesburg once a week in order to issue permits. People should be liable to no more than the minimum of inconvenience; for most of these people have no need to go to Pretoria except for the sake of a permit.

12. The issue of tickets [to Indians] for the train leaving at 8-30 a.m. from Johannesburg or Pretoria has been discontinued. This is quite wrong. It is hoped that immediate redress will be granted in this regard.

13. It is clearly improper to seat both men and women, and more particularly to crowd them in a single compartment as is done now.

14. As for the trams in Pretoria, Mr. Moore had said that a clarification would be issued. A change in the present arrangement is necessary. The whites should not object to Indians occupying the last one or two benches.

15. The right to travel by tram should be granted, evenif the decision in the test case at Johannesburg should prove

unfavourable.[1]

16. The ousting of the Kaffirs from the Bazaar at Pretoria is wrong; for, whatever the law, Indians have for many years now earned rentals from Kaffir tenants. It behoves the Government to ensured that Indians do not suffer any loss on this account.

In his reply to the above demands, Mr. Curtis[2] said that he would place all the facts before Mr. Duncan. He was not in a position to give any decision on the spot. It was not the intention of the Government to put Indians to hardship. All possible redress would be granted. Very likely, magistrates would be asked to scrutinize refugee applications within a fortnight. If they did not do so within that period, the Protector would give the decision. He felt that women ought to pay £3. To this the deputation answered that, if the Government were of this view, they were prepared to go to court.

Mr. Curtis said that it would be a great convenience if all the ten finger-prints were given on the permit.

The deputation flatly refused to agree to this. In the end, Mr. Curtis promised to give his decision on all the points as soon as possible and the deputation took leave of him after thanking him.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 17-3-1906

120. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

March 17, 1906

FIRE AT JOHANNESBURG

This week there was a very big fire here in Rissik Street, in which much valuable material for manufacturing motor cars, etc., was destroyed. The loss is estimated at about £30,000. The landlord has been hard hit because the loss was not fully covered by insurance.

PERMITS

The hardships on account of permits have increased. The Protector now refuses to issue even temporary ones. Two such cases have occurred recently. A merchant from Howick who wanted a temporary permit has received a flat refusal from the Protector.

[1] *Vide"*Johannesburg Letter", 26-2-1906 / 10-3-1906

[2] Lionel Curtis, Assistant Colonial Secretary

Similarly, a permit has been refused to a nephew[1] of the well-known Mr. Manga of Delagoa Bay. The matter is still being pursued, but it would appear a tough fight will have to be put up over permits.

Meanwhile, the Indian population of Johannesburg is being depleted day by day. As opportunities of earning money decrease, the people are obliged to leave.

CHINESE LABOUR

The mining magnates here are worried and upset by the recent news that the immigration of Chinese labour is to be prohibited. This in turn has caused great disappointment among the people. It is difficult to say what the future of this city will be.

Owing to these circumstances, starvation has increased. Many are out Of employment and see no way to earn their daily bread.

VICARIOUS LIABILITY

An interesting suit was recently heard in the law court here. Dr. Kincaid Smith's motor car was being driven by his chauffeur and an engineer, named Mr. Clark Dacurtey[2], was at the time riding his bicycle. Dr. Smith's chauffeur turned the car slightly in from his side of the road and collided with Mr. Dacurtey's bicycle, knocking him down. He was hurt and had to be removed to hospital. Dr. Smith was not in the car when the accident occurred. Mr. Dacurtey filed a suit in the High Court here claiming £2,000 as damages. Justice Bristow, giving judgment, awarded £750 to Mr. Dacurtey; but while doing so, the honourable judge remarked that, though Dr. Smith himself was not at fault, he had to suffer vicariously for the fault of his employee. People ought to be very careful while employing a person. If the servant commits a fault resulting in injury to a third party, the damage has to be made good by the employer. Had the offence been committed by Dr. Smith's servant while he was not going on his master's business, Dr. Smith would not have been obliged to pay.

This case has a lesson for persons engaging servants, especially chauf- feurs, who often make mistakes either through insolence or lack of sufficient ability, and for this the masters have to suffer.

DR. ABDURAHMAN

Dr. Abdurahman, the famous physician of Cape Town, is visiting this place next Tuesday. He will address meetings of the Coloured

[1] Mr. Suliman Manga, a young Indian lawyer
[2] Transliteration of 'Daugherty'

people here and at Pretoria, and immediately return to Cape Town.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 24-3-1906

121. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI[1]

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

25 & 26 COURT CHAMBERS,
RISSIK STREET,
JOHANNESBURG ,
March 19, 1906

TO
THE HON. DADABHAI NAOROJI
22 KENNINGTON ROAD
LONDON
ENGLAND

[SIR,]

I beg to invite your attention to the issue of *Indian Opinion* of the 10th March, containing a protest[2] addressed to the Natal Government by the Natal Indian Congress regarding the imposition of prohibitive fees for certificates and passes that are granted under the Immigration Restriction Act.

I need hardly say that the imposition is a totally unjust exaction for which there is not the slightest justification.

Another serious blow to the Indian community in South Africa has been given in the Transvaal. You will see from the issue of *Indian Opinion* of the 17th March a case heard before the Supreme Court of the Transvaal under Law 3 of 1885.[3] A full report of the case and comments thereon appear in the *Opinion*. Both the matters require urgent attention.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

From the typewritten original: G.N. 2271

[1] The text of this letter was, as usual, forwarded by Dadabhai to the Secretaries of State for India and for the Colonies.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to colonial Secretary", Before 10-3-1906

[3] *Vide* "Legalized Robbery", 17-3-1906

122. THE EARLY CLOSING ACT OF NATAL

The effects of the Early Closing Act are now beginning to be felt. We have never held that an Early Closing Act would not be justifiable under any circumstances. On the contrary, we conceive that a wel-thought-out measure would always be of great benefit to the community at large; but the present Act has been framed without sufficient consideration for the consumers, or for the small retail traders. The result has been to cause much inconvenience to poor householders and a very great loss to the small traders. The only persons that could possibly benefit are large retail houses. We entirely endorse the remarks made by *The Natal Mercury* representative when he says that

> the small trader is gradually being swamped by the large houses, the number of which can be counted on one's fingers. It would be a misfortune, indeed, if legislation of this type is allowed to force good colonists to the wall and deprive them of an honest livelihood.

The remedy suggested is suspension of the Act Experience has shown that the shops ought to be allowed to keep open later than half-past Eve, and that Saturday closing is a serious mistake. The Natal Witness has taken up, in connection with this matter, that may be reasonably termed a somewhat spiteful attitude. It concludes some remarks on the subject by saying

> it is a well-known fact that the Arab and Indian merchants in the town have been hard hit. Let the Europeans bear this well in mind.

Our contemporary urges the Europeans not to agitate against the Act, on the sole ground of its having adversely affected Indian trade. In it haste to see the Indian injured, The Witness has entirely forgotten that, in injuring the Indian, the small white traders, who alone can feel the competition of Indian traders, will not only be injured, but will be wiped out entirely, for whilst the frugal habits of the Indian may enable him to tide over the difficulty, the white petty traders, who notoriously fail to save, will be entirely helpless.

The real remedy is not to kill the small white retailer, so that the Indian will be hit but in having reasonable closing hours for both European and Indian traders, so that they may get a chance of earning a living after the large retail houses have closed. The latter will always be obliged to close much earlier than the small retailers. *The Witness*, by having taken a prejudiced view of the situation, has also fallen into the error of supposing that the saving of expenses of electric light to the shopkeepers is any gain. We give *The Witness* the credit for

understanding that no shopkeeper would pay for the electric current, if he could not more than make up for the expense by the profits he Would Gain from the trade he would be doing during those hours.

Indian Opinion, 24-3-1906

123. THE COLOURED PEOPLE'S PETITION

We have been favoured with a copy of the petition of Coloured British subjects "resident in the Colonies of the Cape of Good Hope, the Transvaal, and the Orange River Colony" addressed to the King-Emperor.

It seems that the petition is being widely circulated, and signatures are being taken of all the Coloured people in the threeColonies named.The petition is non-Indian in character, although British Indians, being Coloured people, are very largely affected by it. We consider that it was a wise policy, on the part of British Indians throughout South Africa, to have kept themselves apart and distinct from the other Coloured communities in this country. It is true that British Indians and other Coloured people have much in common regarding their grievances, but they have little in common regarding the points of view from which each section can urge its claim. Whereas British Indians may, and do effectively, use the Proclamation of 1858 in support of their claims, the other Coloured people are not in a position to do so; and whilst some sections of the Coloured people can claim full rights as to property and movement in the Orange River Colony, British Indians have no footing whatsoever. Similarly, in the Transvaal, many sections of other Coloured people are capable of owning landed property, but British Indians are debarred from doing so under Law 3 of 1885. Whilst, therefore, the Indian and non-Indian sections of the Coloured communities should, and do, remain apart, and have their separate organisations, there is no doubt that each can give strength to the other in urging their common rights. Hence we have no hesitation in welcoming the document before us. We must congratulate the framers of the petition on having confined themselves to the barest facts. It has always appeared to us that the case for the Coloured people in South Africa is so overwhelmingly strong and just that a statement of facts in connection with it is more eloquent than any other form of pleading. The petition has left many things unsaid, but the deductions to be drawn from the statements made therein are plain enough. The petitioners have shown clearly that, in one part of South Africa, namely, in the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, they have enjoyed the franchise ever since the

commencement of representative institutions, and they show also that, even in 1892, when there was a revision of the Franchise Act, there was no alteration made imposing disqualification on colour; and, as a result, there are, at the present day, at the Cape, 14,000 qualified Coloured voters on the register. The petitioners go on to say that they have

> looked upon the possession of that right as an inducement to obtain the necessary property and education test, and have, they humbly submit, exercised that right with dignity and propriety, and in the interests of the whole community without respect of creed or colour.

But, they add, as soon as they migrate either to the Orange River Colony or the Transvaal Colony, they and their descendants come under the ban of disqualification on the ground of colour. The petitioners have rightly made the franchise the greatest plank in their programme, because, in their own language,

> deprived of these rights, Your Majesty's coloured subjects are deprived also, to a great extent, of the means of publicly ventilating, and obtaining redress by constitutional means, of any grievances that they may suffer from, and those grievances are not such as can be rectified by recourse to a court of law.

The truth of this statement can be verified from scores of illustrations. In a country enjoying popular institutions, it is a bad day for those who have no voice in the choice of popular representatives; and through no fault of theirs or of their representatives, the disfranchised gradually go under, because under self-government, self-interest becomes predominant. British Indians have, in order that they may never be misunderstood, made it clear that they do not aspire to any political power, but they have found to their cost that, in Natal as elsewhere, as they have no voice in the election of popular representatives, their civil liberty has suffered very considerably. The Coloured petition is a weighty document. It is being numerously signed, and it is to be hoped that its prayer will receive the attention and consideration which it undoubtedly deserves. The Liberal Ministers have more than once avowed their desire to help the weaker members of the Empire. In granting the Constitution to the new Colonies, they have an unfettered discretion and a unique opportunity of putting their principles into practice.

Indian Opinion, 24-3-1906

124. THE COLOURED PEOPLE'S PETITION

We print in this issue a report of the meeting held by the Coloured people at Pretoria. We also publish a translation of the petition submitted by them. We use the term "Coloured people"[1] because, if translated as "black people", it would include the Kaffirs also. There were no Kaffirs present at the meeting. It mainly consisted of the people known as "Cape boys". And there were those who had a white father or mother. Some Malays also joined it.

This Association of Coloured People does not include Indians who have always kept aloof from that body. We believe that the Indian community has been wise in doing so. For, though the hardships suffered by those people and the Indians are almost of the same kind, the remedies are not identical. It is therefore proper that the two should fight out their cases, each in their own appropriate way. We can cite the Proclamation of 1857[2] in our favour, which the Coloured people cannot. They can use the powerful argument that they are the children of the soil. They can also argue that their way of life is entirely European. We can petition the Secretary of State for India, whereas they cannot. They belong largely to the Christian community and can therefore avail themselves of the help of their priests. Such help is not available to us. The Coloured people have evidently started a big struggle; hence the need for these comments.

In their meeting at Pretoria, they transgressed the limits of propriety and used insulting language about Lord Milner, and this hasbeen severely criticised by *The Times of Natal*. The President of the meeting declared that, just as the Boers lost their kingdom by committing outrages against the Coloured people, even so the British would lose theirs if the atrocities continued, implying thereby that the Coloured people would rise against them. But then they have not the strength even to confront the whites. A man should always measure his strength before embarking on a task.

The petition prepared by the Coloured people is very good. They have stated all the facts necessary and nothing besides. Their facts are so eloquent that it is hardly necessary to adduce any argument in support. They have shown that they have so far enjoyed full rights in the Cape Colony, and ask why they should not have the same rights in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony.

[1] Gandhiji has transliterated the term in Gujarati.

[2] Evidently a slip for 1858

To canvass support for their petition, they propose to send Dr. Abdurahman[1] to England. This is a very desirable and necessary move. It is necessary for every community to do all that is possible to make its grievances heard. It is necessary to send one or two persons to England. It is to be seen what comes out of this movement of the Coloured people. They are striving so hard that, most likely, their efforts will yield some fruit. And if their grievances are redressed, the benefit will accrue to the Indians also.

We should also attempt something similar to what they are doing.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 24-3-1906

125. A WORD TO THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY IN HEIDELBERG

We have published a number of letters on the dissensions persisting in the Muslim community in Heidelberg. We have allowed both sides to state their points of view fully. To publish further correspondence on the subject will serve only to keep the quarrel alive. We shall therefore stop publishing such letters from next week.

The letters already published indicate that possibly both sides are more or less in the wrong. We do not propose to dwell on this. Whosesoever be the fault, we can see that the quarrel is over a petty matter, and it continues primarily because of the obstinacy on both sides. We appeal to both the parties to remove the causes of dissension and live together in peace and amity. It is the duty of their leaders to see this done. In this country we have so many hardships to suffer that they should not be aggravated by internal dissensions and difficulties. If people learn to give and take and be patient, the quarrel will soon come to an end. We earnestly hope therefore that the leaders of the two sides will come together, remove the discord within the Heidelberg community and restore unity.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 24-3-1906

[1] President of the African Political Organization and member of the Cape Town Municipality

126. SMALLPOX IN THE CAPE

News has been received from the Cape that smallpox has started amongst the non-whites there. The Cape leaders should investigate the matter and take effective measures. It is easy to deal with smallpox by following a few rules. The danger of the infection spreading can largely be avoided by segregating the patient in a separate room and carefully nursing him there. Nothing is to be gained by concealing such diseases; for, ultimately, it is the community in which such cases occur that has to suffer.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 24-3-1906

127. PLAGUE IN SYDNEY

News received by cablegram states that five cases of plague have occurred in Sydney. Another cablegram during the week mentions two cases on board a steamer, and adds that these were among the Coloured people. Sydney is doubtless far away, but experience shows that, whenever cases of plague occur outside India, they occur simultaneously in many places. Moreover, in a country where they are always looking hard for plague cases to be used as an argument against us, it is necessary for us to act warily. We have often pointed out that the main causes of plague are uncleanliness and impure air. We should therefore bear in mind the following instructions: houses should be kept clean; no filth should be allowed to accumulate in latrines; each time faeces should be covered over with ashes or sand; floors should be washed clean with disinfectant liquids; plenty of fresh air and light should be freely let into the house; and simple food should be eaten regularly. One need not entertain any fear if one follows these directions.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 24-3-1906

128. A CERTIFICATE FOR SOAP

21-24 COURT CHAMBERS,
CORNER RISSIK & ANDERSON STREETS,
P.O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
March 26, 1906

This is to certify that I have now for some time used the soap manufactured by The New Soap Manufacturing Co., Bombay, and I have found it to he quite satisfactory in quality. The freedom which I understand this soap enjoys from any animal fats to my mind very considerably enhances its value.

M. K. GANDHI

From the typewritten original signed by Gandhiji: C.W. 915Courtesy : Venilal Gandhi

129. LETTER TO HAJEE ISMAIL HAJEE ABOOBAKER JHAVERI

21-24 COURT CHAMBERS,
CORNER RISSIK STREET,
P.O. BOX 5622,
JOHANNESBURG,
March 28, 1906

SHETH SHRI HAJEE ISMAIL HAJEE ABOOBAKER JHAVERI,

I got your cables. The deed was received today, duly registered. No pains have been spared. However, we could not succeed in retaining the property in the name of the late Sheth Aboobaker or his heirs. In my opinion, we had no option but to take the step we did.[1] I don't think there is any risk to you in what has been done. It is true that the property is not in your name, but it is yours all the same. That is the deed. The will is to that effect and, to make things doubly sure, we have also secured a bond to the same effect. You have, therefore, no need to worry at all. One copy of the deed, signed by you, will have to be given to the Registrar. Sheth is sending it for your signature.

I am hopeful that the property may yet be transferred to your

[1] *Vide*, "The Land Act in the Transvaal", 7-4-1906

name. We are moving in the matter. A representation has been sent to England. We were not in a position to challenge the law in the Privy Council but I am corresponding on a political level. Whether or no they amend the law in other respects, efforts are being made for provision of legal authority for the transfer of this property to your name.[1] Meanwhile, it remains yours to all intents and purposes. Its enjoyment rests with you. Also, the rent which it yields will be wholly yours.

I hope you are keeping fit.

Regards from

M. K. GANDHI

HAJI ISMAIL ABOOBAKER JHAVERI, ESQ.

PORBUNDER

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3296. Courtesy: Jhaveri Brothers

130. PETITION TO LORD ELGIN

DURBAN,
March 30, 1906

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF ELGIN

HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

LONDON

THE PETITION OF DADA OSMAN OF VRYHEID, IN THE COLONY OF NATAL,

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT

l. Your petitioner is a British Indian subject.

2. Your petitioner has been domiciled in South Africa for the last 24 years.

3. Your petitioner opened business in Vryheid in the year 1896 as a General Dealer at what was then known as the Indian Location.

4. Your petitioner has built premises thereon estimated at £300.

5. Several attempts were made by the late Boer Government to remove your petitioner from the said premises on to a place which was to be fixed as a new Location, but owing to the intervention of the British Government, your petitioner was able to continue his business

[1] *Vide* "Letter to "*The Rand Daily Mail*", Before 9-8-1906 & "*Fair and Just Treatment* ", 11-8-1906

in the said premises.

6. Your petitioner always traded in Vryheid under a licence properly issued to him.

7. Your petitioner had a stock of soft goods and groceries valued at about £3,000.

8. Such was your petitioner's position when Vryheid was annexed to Natal.

9. The terms of annexation provide for the retention of Law 3 of 1885, as amended in 1886, which is known as the anti-Asiatic Law of the Transvaal.

10. According to the interpretation put upon the Law by the Supreme Court of the Transvaal,[1] British Indians are not restricted to any area as to their trade, and are free to take out trade licences in the same manner as other British subjects.

11. The Vryheid Local Board, however, refused to renew your petitioner's licence in respect of the premises above mentioned, and offered to allow your petitioner to trade in Vryheid if he removed to a new site fixed by the Board at a Location.

12. The said site is far away from Vryheid and totally unsuitable for trade.

13. It is impossible for your petitioner to carry on his business in a place which is away from the business portions of the town.

14. Your petitioner has built up an excellent goodwill in connection with his said premises.

15. Your petitioner made many attempts to get a renewal of his licence which was refused.

16. The Local Board, in order to prevent your petitioner from trading on the said premises, enforced a Natal Law, 18 of 1897, entitled the Dealers' Licenses Act.

17. Your petitioner is, therefore, subject to twofold restrictions—namely, the Transvaal Law, as also the Natal Law—which make the position of British Indians in Vryheid worse than in the Transvaal, or in other parts of Natal.

18. In accordance with Act 18 of 1897, your petitioner had to apply for his licence to the Licensing Officer, who is also the Town Clerk, and who, therefore, takes his instructions from the Local Board.

19. The Licensing Officer refused to grant a renewal.

20. Your petitioner, therefore, appealed to the Local Board in terms of the Law.

[1] *Vide* "The Judgment in the Test Case", 16-5-1904

21. The Local Board, which mainly consists of rival traders and members prejudiced against your petitioner, has confirmed the decision of the Licensing Officer.

22. The following are the reasons given by the Licensing Officer for his refusal:

1. The Licensing Officer has no power to issue licences for premises on the Town Lands, and far less for such Town Lands as have not been formerly leased by the Local Board.
2. I refused the Licence in the second place because by issuing the same I would act in direct opposition to Government Notice No. 191, *Government Gazette*, of the 14th March, 1905, and the laws thereunder proclaimed to be in force in the Northern Districts, which distinctly prohibit the issuing of licences to Indians, except in Locations.
3. I refused the Licence because in so doing I acted in the best interests and with the expressed feelings of the whole community, with the exception, perhaps, of the applicant's Attorney.

This will more fully appear from copy of the record hereto attached.

23. The first reason given by the Licensing Officer is entirely misleading in that your petitioner has been refused a licence to trade anywhere except in Locations.

24. The second reason is also bad in accordance with the decision of the Supreme Court of the Transvaal above referred to.

25. The third reason is the only real reason, that is to say, that your petitioner is a British Indian.

26. There is no appeal under the said Act 18 of 1897 to the Supreme Court of the Colony, the decision of the Local Board being considered final.

27. Your petitioner approached the Local Board for reasons for its decision, and the Local Board has decided not to give any reasons for its decision, as will appear from the correspondence between your petitioner's Solicitor and the Town Clerk, copy whereof is hereto attached.

28. Your petitioner then applied for temporary permission to carry on trade, pending further proceedings by your petitioner for obtaining relief. The Local Board has declined to grant the application.

29. Your petitioner has been advised that he is without any legal relief against the action of the Local Board.

30. Your petitioner has, therefore, been obliged to close his store, and has thrown upon him the whole of his stock, book debts and

his servants.

31. Your petitioner respectfully submits that the action of the Local Board is high-handed, unjust and arbitrary, in that by its action in refusing to renew your petitioner's licence without any fault of his and without any compensation, your petitioner has been deprived of the means of livelihood, so far as the Board is concerned.

32. Your petitioner further submits that the manifest injury he has sustained ought not under the British Constitution to remain without a remedy.

33. Your petitioner, therefore, prays that His Majesty's Government will be pleased to intervene on his behalf and, in such a manner as to them may appear meet, would secure relief for your petitioner.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your petitioner shall as in duty bound for ever pray, etc.

Dated at Durban, this 30th day of March 1906.

DADA OSMAN

Indian Opinion, 14-4-1906

131. THE EARLY CLOSING ACT

A mountain is being made out of a molehill by some writers in the Natal Press on the Early Closing Act. Many of them chuckle with delight that at last they are in a position to hurt the Indian trader. Our contemporary, *The Natal Advertiser*, thinks with us that the Early Closing Act is not likely to detrimentally affect the Indian community, without more seriously affecting petty white traders. Had it stopped there, we should have nothing to say, but it goes on to suggest that

> a mass meeting should be called in the Town Hall, both of traders and working men, to consider this subject, and to devise some means for putting an effective check on this Asiatic immigration and competition. If this were done, we have no doubt that the real facts of the situation would come out in a way that would astonish some people and lead to some really effective and useful action being taken. This, we think, is no matter for playing with; it is a matter of self-preservation, a matter of real life and death to the white people of all classes in Natal.

We propose calmly to consider the suggestion.

We have no objection to a mass meeting being held in the Town Hall; but will it attain the object desired by our contemporary? Have the masses ever entered into a calm discussion of any subject? A mass meeting can only give strength to a movement which is based on facts,

but it never sifts and finds true facts. It is guided often by invective and appeals to passions. Mass meetings, therefore, become dangerous when they are called upon to deal with a situation which has not been ascertained. We will accept the premise that the question is one of "self-preservation and of real life and death to the white people". Facts, therefore, have to be found and effective action taken thereon. Now, one fact is absolutely clear, namely, that the Indian trader is entirely at the mercy of the Licensing Officer and Local Boards. Another fact, too, is quite clear, that in several cases Licensing Officers and Local Boards have acted in a most arbitrary and high-handed manner. A third fact is that Mr. Harry Smith is watching with ever increasing vigilance the entry of every Indian immigrant into the Colony, and not an Indian is allowed to enter, either through the port or through the land border of the Colony, unless he can prove former domicile. What more can be required ? If it is a question of the working of these two laws, then certainly a mass meeting will not serve the purpose. A commission of enquiry is the only remedy, and we would welcome it with open arms. If it be really felt by the European population in Natal that the Indian trader is flourishing, that he is competing unfairly and that the stringent laws are not being stringently enforced, a small committee of impartial men would soon bring out the facts, and if they proved the existence of any such situation as feared by our contemporary, it would then be time enough to call a mass meeting to give point to the findingsof such a commission of enquiry.

Indian Opinion, 31-3-1906

132. THE BULWARK OF JUSTICE

A very important case has just been heard before the Circuit Court in Potchefstroom. An attempt was made by two Europeans to levy blackmail on an Indian merchant in Potchefstroom. The method adopted was to take him to the wife of one of them, and there to charge him with an attempted rape. The conspiracy was all but successful. The blackmailers received £300 by cheque from the terrified Indian, but fortunately for the latter, he immediately sought legal help. His lawyer advised him to stop payment of the cheque and lodge information with the police. This was promptly done. The men were arrested and so was the woman. The result was a sensational case before Justice Wessels, and the Indian's reputation was made good. The charge of blackmail was proved, and the two male prisoners were sentenced to three years, imprisonment with hard labour. There was no supporting evidence for the Indian's story with reference to the

blackmail; as against him, there were the two Dutch prisoners, who emphaticlly said that he was attempting to rape the female prisoner. The Indian stoutly denied it and said that he was inveigled into the house and then falsely charged.

That, under such difficult circumstances an Indian has been able to get justice is a matter for universal congratulation, as it is of very great satisfaction to British Indians. Once more it has been proved, in a most striking manner, that the fount of British justice, when it is a matter of the High Court, is the purest possible. A long line of fearless and impartial judges has handed down traditions which have become an inherent part of the British Constitution, and we have no hesitation in saying that one of the greatest secrets of the success of the Empire is its ability to deal out even-handed justice. A case such as the one we have referred to makes up for many a defect in the legal administration in the various British possessions. It serves as a beacon-light to tell Indians, and all those who may suffer from temporary disabilities and consequent irritation, that they need not be without hope, so long as the fierce sun of pure justice beats on the chill surface of broken promises.

Justice Wessels in his summing-up not only dealt with the case itself but felt called upon to deal generally with the right of the meanest British Subject to have a full and fair hearing. "It was a painful thing," said His Lordship, (we quote the report in the *Potchefstroom Budget*,)

> to hear in this country—he had heard it in that Court that when they had a conflict of evidence between a white man and a black man, they ought to accept the testimony of the white man. That was a fallacy, an untruth. He thought the jury would act very wrongly if they accepted the testimony of the white man against the black that day. The liberties and property of the black man should be respected to the utmost of their power. There would be nothing more fatal than that they should, when they had the interests of the white and black man to deal with, for one moment swerve from their sense of justice. The black man in this country must have as true justice meted out to him as the white man among the highest in the land. That was a maxim they must keep before them, and not, because the prosecutor was a black man, let the prisoners off.

Every true lover of the Empire must feel deeply grateful to Justice Wessels for having so nobly vindicated British justice.

Indian Opinion, 31-3-1906

133. INDIAN VOLUNTEERING

Mr. Watt, the Minister of Defence, has been "letting himself go" at a recent meeting which was held in connection with the militia. In reply to a question:

> Do the Government propose to make Arabs, in possession of stores in various parts of the Colony, join the militia reserves, and if so, will they provide them with rifles ?

the answer, we are told, which Mr. Watt gave, drew forth a round of applause. "I am pleased," he is reported to have said,

> to say that the militia is composed entirely of Europeans. I should be sorry indeed if I should have to depend for the defence of myself and family on Arabs, but the Government, I am glad to say, has power in time of war to turn out all the Coloured population—Indians, Natives and Arabs—for any service which may be necessary.

The following further question was then put:

> Does the Government recognise that when the Europeans are called out, the Arabs will obtain the trade' in all districts? What do they propose doing in regard to this?

Mr. Watt's reply was in keeping with the first:

> That is a matter in which I think the leaders should have a voice. If I were a leader, I should advise the Government to regulate the opening and closing times of shops. I should see that Europeans were not treated worse than Arabs, and I should see that the Arabs had their share of the work, if not in carrying rifles, in digging trenches.

We have no doubt that, as Defence Minister, Mr. Watt knows that digging of trenches is just as necessary in warfare as the shouldering of a rifle. If, then, he would not depend for his own and his family's defence on Arabs, why will he have the latter to dig trenches? Either work, we have it from the late Mr. Harry Escombe, who, too, was a Minister of Defence, is equally honourable. Whether Mr. Watt, on reconsideration, would have himself or the Colony defended by Arabs and Indians or not, by the work of digging trenches or other work, how does he expect them to do any work in connection with warfare unless previous trainingis given? Even the camp-followers in an army require proper discipline, otherwise they are, instead of being a help, a positive nuisance.But we despair of having either common sense or justice at the hands of a Minister who so far forgets himself as to offer an unwarranted insult to a whole class of inoffensive people.

In contradistinction to the attitude shown on various occasions by the Minister of Defence—whose business it is as a Minister, we

might remark, to put his personal prejudices in his pocket — we welcome an editorial in *The Natal Advertiser* of the other day, which we reprint elsewhere. Our contemporary rightly gives Indians and Coloured people the credit due to them. It also points out that Section 83 of the Militia Act states that no ordinary member of a Coloured contingent shall be armed with weapons of precision, *unless such contingents are called out to operate against [persons] other than Europeans.* Now it is evident that, in the unfortunate event of such a state of affairs arising as to necessitate the arming of an Indian contingent, the arms would be useless in the hands of inexperienced men. Why will not the authorities adopt the suggestion we made some time ago,[1] and raise a volunteer corps from amongst Indians ? We feel sure the Colonial-born Indians especially —Natal's own children equally with the whites—would give a good account of themselves. Why do not the Colonists insist on these, at all events, being given a chance to prove their mettle?

Indian Opinion, 31-3-1906

134. THE TRANSVAAL CONSTITUTION

The Home Government have lost no time in appointing the much-talked-of Committee of Inquiry on Transvaal affairs. Two of the members, Sir West Ridgeway[2] and Lord Sandhurst[3], are men with Indian experience. The scope of the inquiry is to be limited to finding out a basis for the new Constitution. The Government do not[4] "find it possible to form a Constitution without information, and this it hopes to obtain from you". The Commissioners are to take into their consideration, amongst other things, "community or diversity of interests", and political and social conditions; and though it is difficult to state whether the scope of the inquiry includes an examination of the question of Coloured franchise, it is to be hoped that the Commissioners will have full power to advise upon that difficult and delicate subject. Events that are happening in the Transvaal and elsewhere show the force of the remarks made in these columns, that, in the absence of any other remedy for the protection of Indian rights, Indian representation seems to be necessary.

Indian Opinion, 31-3-1906

[1] *Vide "A* Plea for Indian Volunteering", 17-3-1906

[2] Formerly, Governor of Ceylon

[3] Formerly, Governor of Bombay

[4] The original has "cannot".

135. INDIAN LABOUR FOR THE TRANSVAAL MINES

The Transvaal papers are full of cablegrams regarding the proposed negotiations with the Government of India for the supply of Indian labour. We are glad that the Anglo-Indians in England are hostile to the movement for two reasons; first, that there will be very great mortality amongst the Indian miners, and secondly, because Indian mine-labourers are all required for mining enterprise in India itself. It will be remembered that, when Lord Miner asked Lord Curzon to let him have ten thousand Indians for the railway works, Lord Curzon declined to give the assistance unless the grievances of British Indians resident in the Transvaal were redressed.[1] This was two years ago. The position of British Indians in the Transvaal is no better today than it was at the time Lord Curzon declained to come to the rescue. There are, therefore, three good reasons why Indian labour should not be made available for the mines in the Transvaal. We think that, in any case, the bartering of the liberty of Indian labourers for the removal of the disabilities of British Indian settlers in the Transvaal would not be a creditable act and would create a very bad precedent. Each in our opinion, ought to be treated on its own merits. We have no doubt that British Indians in the Transvaal would decline to receive greater freedom if it involved unjust and unnatural restrictions on the liberty of their poorer countrymen. We also feel that an introduction of thousands of Indian mine-labourers into the Transvaal would render more complicated a situation which is already fraught with many difficulties. We, therefore, trust that. both Mr. Morley and Lord Minto will firmly oppose any proposal to assist the Transvaal at the expense of the interests of their wards.

Indian Opinion, 31-3-1906

136. INDIANS AT THE CAPE

The Cape *Government Gazette* of the 16th March contains a Bill to amend the Cape Immigration Restriction Act of 1902. The Bill is decidedly a retrograde step, so far as British Indians are concerned. The Act of 1902 was conceived in secrecy and sprung upon the public in indecent haste, so much so that many members of the Cape Aseembly protested against its being rushed through the House. However, the Act was passed. Now, by the Bill in question, it is proposed to amend it. British Indians who approached the Govern

[1] *Vide* "Indentured Labour Draft Ordinance in the Transvaal", 14-1-1904

ment were almost assured that the latter would take an early opportunity of altering the Act in the direction suggested by them, and that they would probably ask the House to recognise the great Indian languages for the educational test, and make suitable provision for the entry of domestic servants and others for the benefit of those that were already settled in that Colony. Instead, however, of any such improvement being made in the Act, the Bill is calculated to place still further restrictions on the liberty of British Indians. That it is of general application does not take away from its deadly effect on the Indians at whom it is mainly aimed. There is no definition of an immigrant in the present Act. The common law definition, therefore, that an immigrant is one who enters to settle in the country, is applicable under it, and therefore, by inference, the Act leaves it free for the Minister to grant visitors' passes, and to allow Indians and others, who may enter the Colony for a temporary visit, to do so unmolested. The Bill in question changes all this, and defines an immigrant to "mean and include any person who, arriving [from] without this Colony, enters or claims to enter from land or sea". We imagine that, in such a definition, which is quite artificial, there will be no room left for provision being made to enable mere visitors to pass through or sojourn in the Colony. Another important difference the Bill makes is that, whereas the Act of 1902 excepts from its operation persons domiciled in South Africa, the Bill excepts only those who "prove to the satisfaction of the Minister that they are domiciled in the Colony, and that they do not come under sub-sections *c*, *e*, and *f* of the preceding section". The restriction, therefore, is much more severe, and will put endless obstacles in the way of British Indians entering the Colony. The question of domicile is now to be left in the hands of the Minister, instead of being left to the interpretation of the Supreme Court. Only a few days ago, we commented upon a case that happened at the Cape where an Indian was able, because he could approach the Supreme Court, to make good his claim to a domicile in South Africa. Had the poor man been left to the mercy of the Minister, he would have received short shrift. Then, again, domicile under the Bill is to be restricted only to the Cape Colony. Those, therefore, who are still in the Transvaal or Natal will be unable to enter that Colony. We trust the British Indian League of Cape Town will take the matter up, and see that proper relief is granted.

Indian Opinion, 31-3-1906

137. DEATH OF MISS BISSICKS[1]

It is our painful duty to announce the death of Miss A. M. Bissicks of Johannesburg on Monday last after an operation. Miss Bissicks was an accomplished English lady. She took a leading part in the vegetarian movement at Johannesburg, and was a prominent member of the Theosophical Society. In many ways she had much sympathy with Indians, and her death will be greatly regretted.

Indian Opinion, 31-3-1906

138. PERMIT HARDSHIPS IN THE TRANSVAAL

We hear that the hardships caused by the problem of permits in the Transvaal are increasing daily. The issuing of temporary permits now seems to have been stopped altogether. Mr. Suliman Manga, the nephew of Mr. Ismail Manga, who arrived recently in Durban from England, applied for a temporary permit for proceeding through the Transvaal to Delagoa Bay, but his application was rejected by the Colonial Secretary, and Mr. Suliman Manga had to take the sea route. This is no small injustice.

Mr. Nomura of Japan had difficulty in obtaining a temporary permit, and he shook up the whole of the Transvaal because of it. Mr. Suliman Manga, being a British subject, had a greater right than Mr. Nomura. His education also gives him a better claim. Yet he was not permitted to pass through the Transvaal.

This is only an instance of the present hardships. But if all the reports we hear are correct, the promise made by Lord Selborne is being honoured only in the breach.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 3 l -3-1906

139. WAR CLAIMS

The Commission appointed to examine the claims for damages filed with the Government by persons who have suffered losses on account of the war have completed their inquiry. It appears from their

[1]*Vide* "Letter to Dada Osman", 5-8--1905 & "Letter to Miss Bissicks", 5-8-1905

Report that nearly 90,000 claims were filed, amounting in all to £20,00,000[1]. The claimants have been awarded £95,00,000[1], of which £50,00,000 goes to the burghers of the Orange River Colony, £20,00,000 to British subjects and others, and the rest in favour of the burghers of the Transvaal and Vryheid.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 31-3-1906

140. NEW COMMITTEE OF BRITISH M. PS. FOR INDIAN AFFAIRS

Sir William Wedderburn misses no opportunity of doing India a good turn. The latest issue of *India* shows that he held a meeting and organized a parliamentary committee for India. Some years ago, there existed a committee, which, however, became practically defunct during the last Parliament. Members of Parliament who are well-wishers of India have joined this Committee, and it is a very powerful one. Some very eminent Members of Parliament, such as Sir Henry Cotton, Mr Herbert Roberts, Mr. Pickersgill and Mr. O'Donnell have joined it and they believe that India will get justice at the hands of the new Parliament. For all this we are beholden to Sir William Wedderburn.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 31-3-1906

141. SIR GEORGE BIRDWOOD'S COURAGE AND THE MEANNESS OF A CLUB

St. Stephen's Club in London is very old and famous; Sir George Birdwood was a well-known member. He has served for many years in India and has always been a friend of the Indian. Sir George proposed the name of a very famous Indian for membership of the Club. But as the other members objected to the proposal, Sir George resigned his membership. Congratulations to Sir George! It is thanks to such Anglo-Indians that Indians have tolerated British rule.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 31-3-1906

[1] There is some error in the figures, for the compensation paid could not have exceeded the claims preferred.

142. DONATION BY CADBURY BROS.

HOW TO TREAT EMPLOYEES

The firm of Cadbury Brothers, of Cadbury Cocoa fame, is well known throughout the world. From small beginnings they have built up a huge concern. They are now the proprietors of the *Daily News* of London and belong to the baker sect. They have always spent a portion of their profits on improving the conditions of their employees. They have raised a fund of £60,000 to pay the pensions of their employees, of whom they have a large number, many of them very old and loyal. Where there is such appreciation of labour, small wonder that the workers should consider their master's work as their own and do it with care and diligence.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 31-3-1906

143. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

DR. ABDURAHMAN'S ADDRESS

A large meeting of the Coloured people was held in the Milner Hall on March 21. Dr. Abdurahman, who is the President of the African Political Organization as well as a member of the Cape Town Municipality, had especially come here to attend it. The meeting was presided over by Mr. Daniel, and the hall was packed, about 500 men attending. Some Indians too were present, including Mr. Abdul Gani, Mr. Omar Haji Amod Zaveri, Mr. Haji Ojer Ally, Mr. Gandhi and others.

The following were the main points of Dr. Abdurahman's speech.

PURPOSE OF MEETING

"We have foregathered here today with a view to petitioning His Majesty about our rights. The petition has already been drawn up and signatures of all the Coloured people are being obtained. When we in the Cape learnt of the hardships suffered by you in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, we thought that we should do the best we could for you. That would be in our interest as well. For, if your rights are whittled down, the same may well happen to us in the Cape to.

OUR GRIEVANCES

"The Coloured people in the Transvaal and the Orange River

Colony have to suffer many deprivations. But the most important among them is that they do not have franchise and have been divested of many civil rights. If we continue in a state of slavery, our condition is bound to deteriorate from day to day. There is no difference between taxing people without their consent and stealing their money. If therefore the Coloured people do not possess the right to franchise, no taxes should be levied on them.

THE REMEDY

"The best way to end these hardships is now to petition the King Emperor. We have done all we could here in South Africa. A new ministry has come into power in England, and hopes of these grievances being remedied have been aroused. If we start putting forth our best efforts, we shall doubtless obtain our rights gradually.

"We are worthy of these rights. The greatest hero of the South African War was Esau who sacrificed his life out of loyalty to the British. When the majority of the Boers opposed the British Government, the Coloured people remained single-mindedly loyal. In the Cape, the Coloured people have the right of franchise just as thewhites have and they have never misused it. If it is true that the war, as British officials have claimed, was fought for our sake, then there should be no oppression practised against us.

A DIFFICULTY

"Our position is strong, and we should, therefore, by and large, acquire these rights. But there appears to be an obstacle in the way. When the peace treaty with the Dutch was signed, it was agreed that the Natives should not be granted the right to vote before responsible government had been established. Everything hinges on the interpretation of the word 'Native'. If all those who are born in South Africa are to be regarded as Natives, the whites born there should also come under that category. But no one would interpret the term thus. The word 'Native' has but one meaning everywhere, viz., one whose mother and father are both Kaffirs. If this interpretation is correct, we are not covered at all by the treaty with the Dutch. This small lacuna in the treaty we owe to Lord Milner. However, in the meeting at Bloemfontein, Lord Milner posed the question, 'Even if everybody's claims are met, what about the Coloured people?' We too wish to ask the same question."

RESOLUTIONS AT THE MEETING

After this speech, two resolutions were passed: one adopting the draft of the Coloured People's Petition, and the other deputing Dr. Abdurahman to act as our spokesman before Lord Selborne.

After the two resolutions were passed, *God Save the King* was sung, and the meeting dispersed.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 31-3-1906

144. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

March 31, 1906

DR. ABDURAHMAN

Dr. Abdurahman has left for the Cape after spending eleven days in this Colony. He had interviews with Sir Richard Solomon and General Smuts at Pretoria. He interviewed Lord Selborne at Johannesburg on March 30. He placed before His Excellency the grievances of the Cape Coloured people residing in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony. The substance of Lord Selborne's reply was that he was unable to do anything for the present. He would render all possible help when the new constitution came to be framed. He was very polite, and favourably disposed. But it is doubtful whether he will be here when the new constitution is drafted.

Many Coloured people from the Cape were present at Bloemfontein station to see Dr. Abdurahman off.

TRAMWAY CASE

The Town Council had given notice of appeal against the Magistrate's judgement in the tramway test case which was decided in our favour.[1] But their lawyer has announced that the Council do not now wish to prefer an appeal. However, it appears that the Indians will be allowed to travel in the trams only after yet another case has been fought and won, for the Town Council believe that their point of view was not argued fully in the former instance. I am afraid therefore that our people will have to wait for some more time.

SCRUTINY OF HOUSES

Dr. Porter has been conducting a rigorous inspection of houses. Even in a locality like Dorenfontein, a building belonging to a white has been sealed and he has been obliged to have his house demolished. Landlords of Indian houses, wherever these are in a bad condition, should therefore be wary.

CHINESE LABOUR

The excitement over the question of Chinese labour is still

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 10-3-1906

continuing. The miners are ill at ease, with the result that trade is becoming slacker every day and, at least for another year, trade will continue to drift much the same way.

Hundreds of white workmen, masons, painters and others are idle. Of the 500 railway workers at Bloemfontein, only 300 remain, and 150 of these have been served with notices by the Government terminating their services.

Two Indians have been arrested for entering the Colony without permits or with forged ones. Their cases will be heard on April 9. Meanwhile both of them have been released on bail.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-4-1906

145. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
April, 6, 1906

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. Am I to understand from your letter that you received the Gujarati matter from me only on Wednesday? If so, there must be something terribly wrong, for I took very special precautions that the matter written on Sunday was posted before four o'clock. The matter written on Saturday was posted in due time. I have asked youto send me the envelopes bearing the dates, so that I may have the matter investigated here.

Why should there be any difficulty in giving quotations for full-page, half-page and quarter-page advertisements? I do not think the rate depends upon the quantity of type to be used. When a man hires so much space, we are bound to give him all he can require within that space, so long as we can put it in reasonably, so that it should not be difficult to give quotations for space. As soon as you give the quotation, it is possible to get a very good advertisement from Cape Town. Please therefore do not delay the matter.

I am anxiously awaiting your decision regarding Mrs. MacDonald.

I am glad Maganlal is getting better. He should not overwork himself. If therefore he feels very weak, he should stay away yet for a day or two, for, if he has a relapse, he will feel infinitely worse and weaker than before.

I have already told you not to print the letter from Mr. Bhayat. I returned the letter last week with instructions endorsed on the letter

not to print it. I am now destroying Mr. Bhayat's letter you have sent me.

I cannot think who R. K. Naidoo is. You may try to get the money through Lawrence. I have already told you that you may in your discretion issue letters of demand against those who continually neglect payment.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

1 ENCLOSURE

C. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
c/o Indian Opinion
PHOENIX

From a photostat of the original: S.N. 4345

146. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

DURBAN ,
[Before *April 7, 1906*]

TO
THE HON. THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG
SIR,

We have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the 24th ult., dealing with the subject-matter of our letter of the 10th ult.,[1] in an exhaustive manner for which the Committee of our Congress is obliged to you.

Our Committee freely admits that the passes and certificates referred to in our letter are intended for facilitating the movements of those who hold such passes.

The submission of our Committee is that such passes are issued for the satisfaction of those who desire the enforcement of the Act.

Our Committee contends that, although the immigration of certain persons affected by the Act is prohibited, their passage or their temporary sojourn in the Colony is not. Although there is no obligation on the part of those who are entitled to remain in the Colony to take out domicile certificates, etc., the stringency with which the Act is being enforced renders it absolutely necessary that British Indians should hold them.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", Before 10-3-1906

Our Committee is aware that most of the visiting passes are taken out by Indians in the Transvaal. This is natural, as there is so much inter-trade between the two Colonies.

Our Committee is of the humble opinion that every facility should be given to Transvaal Indians by issuing visiting passes. Both visiting and embarkation passes, as to which a prohibitive fee has been imposed, are a source of considerable revenue to the railways. The whole of this question was raised during the late Mr. Escombe's administration when similar fees were imposed and, subsequently, on representations by our Committee, withdrawn.

Our Committee feels that the charge for wives' passes, as also the embarkation and visitors' passes, is a very serious thing and, therefore, requests reconsideration.

We have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servants,

O. H. AMOD JOHARI
M. C. ANGLIA
JOINT HONORARY SECRETARIES,
NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

Indian Opinion, 7-4-1906

147. LETTER TO THE ''LEADER"[1]

WHEN IS AN INDIAN NOT AN INDIAN ?

[JOHANNESBURG]
Before *April 7, 1906]*

[TO
THE EDITOR
The *Leader*
JOHANNESBURG
SIR,]

Some time ago, you were pleased to offer to Mr. Nomura, a Japanese subject, a public apology, because the Chief Secretary for Permits had refused to grant to the gentleman a temporary permit. May I enlist your sympathy on behalf of a British subject?

[1] This undated letter was published in the *Leader* of April 7 under the heading "Distinction without Difference".

Mr. Suliman Manga[1], I understood, was a British Indian. He is studying for the bar. He has returned from England to pay a visit to his relatives in Delagoa Bay. I was instructed to apply for a permit for Mr. Manga, enabling him to pass through the Transvaal on his way to Delagoa Bay from Durban. The Government declined to grant the permit, and have hitherto declined to give reasons for their decision. I had the honour to represent Mr. Nomura. His status was undoubtedly high; Mr. Manga's is, if possible, higher. He is the son of a very well-known Indian merchant in Delagoa Bay, and is himself a member of the Middle Temple. Yet, considered as a British Indian, he could not pass through the Transvaal.

I have now discovered that I was mistaken in thinking that Mr. Manga was a British Indian. On his reaching Delagoa Bay by sea, he made another fruitless attempt to obtain a permit through the Government, but they would not alter their decision. He was born in Portuguese India, and he, therefore, claimed the rights of a Portuguese subject. As such, he approached the Secretary to the Government at Delagoa Bay, on whose intervention he has obtained a temporary permit to enter the Transvaal. Mr. Manga, a Portuguese subject, has won; Mr. Manga, a British subject, has been disgraced. Such is the reward that the British Indian community gets at the hands of the Government for its extraordinary patience and forbearance

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI]

Indian Opinion, 14-4-1906

148. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
April 7, 1906

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I have received the parcel through Mr. Bean. I wish you would make use of Hemchand and instruct him to write to me on official matters. It is very necessary that I should be kept informed. I am quite aware of the pressure under which you are labouring, but it is for you to relieve the pressure by taking advantage of the help that may be at your disposal. Surely you can even ask Gokuldas to drop me a line. All the matter I send ought to be acknowledged, so that in the event of miscarriage I may send more if in time. I am most anxious to learn

[1] *Vide* "The Transvaal Permit Ordinance", 14-4-1906 and "Letter to William Wedderburn", 12-4-1906

your views about Mrs. MacDonald. They can be expressed also through Hemchand or Gokuldas or Anandlal. There are so many details to be attended to by me which I cannot without information from you. Motilal writes to me saying that there is a new arrival from Bombay. His name is Dhoribhai. He says he knows the press work well. He offers his services at £4 per month and free lodgings. It is worth while knowing him, if you think that there is pressure. Whatever happens, three things are absolutely necessary:

(l) Books must be kept up to date;

(2) The paper must not be starved;

(3) You should not be over-worked.

Neglect any of these things and there will be a catastrophe. One result of your trying to do too much is disregard of official correspondence. For instance, you should have quoted the rates immediately. I would therefore like you to consider this carefully and put the matter right. It is for this reason that I have suggested Mrs. MacDonald. She is a most excellent worker, methodical and in industry quite a match for you or Mr. West, and I have no doubt that she will be able to keep the books. I shall probably be there next week. I want to take my ticket before the Easter holidays are over, but I am anxious to decide about Mrs. MacDonald before I go there, so that, if necessary, I can bring her with me. I am sending some Gujarati matter today and I hope it will be received by you on Monday. If both you and Mr. West and others can come to some decision, I should appreciate a telegram from you in this matter. You should consult Anandlal, Maganlal and Sam. If you get the *Weekly Star* or the*Weekly Leader* or the *Weekly Rand Daily Mail* in exchange, please pass [it] on to Mr. Isaac.

Yours sincerely,

M. K GANDHI

TO

C. K. GANDHI, ESQ.

c/o *Indian Opinion*

PHOENIX

From a photostat of the original: S.N. 4347

149. THE HAVEN OF REFUGE

Amid all the turmoil that South Africa is passing through, the Court of the different Colonies have been standing out as places of safety. We had the pleasure of reproducing Mr. Justice Wessels'

summing-up in an Indian case[1]; in this issue we give, from the *Transvaal Leader*, Mr. Justice Mason's judgment in a Chinese case. As it is the Transvaal which is at present suffering from the most arbitrary laws, it is there that the judges are called upon to exercise their traditional independence to protect the liberty of the subject.

A Chinese policeman in the employ of the Foreign Labour Department, having proved troublesome, was, it appears, without any warrant, arrested, handcuffed, and lodged in a cell at the instance of the Superintendent of the Foreign Labour Department, and under a section of the Chinese Labour Ordinance, ordered to be repatriated. Before the unfortunate policeman was sent away to Durban, he was prevented from receiving legal assistance or from seeing his friends, and had it not been for the fact that he was able, surreptitiously and behind the back of the Superintendent, to sign a power of attorney appointing solicitors, he would probably have gone away to China without relief and without being heard. Whether the policeman was a dangerous character or not is quite beside the point. We do not enter into the merits of the case. The Acts we have stated above are admitted.

The Superintendent of the Foreign Labour Department was informed that the solicitors who were retained by the man were going to apply to the Supreme Court for a writ of *habeas corpus*, and yet, before the writ was issued, the man was safely sent away to Durban. The Superintendent was, however, called upon to appear before the Supreme Court and to produce the policeman. At the hearing, which took place on the 30th day of March before Mr. Justice Mason in Pretoria, an attempt was again made to frustrate the application by the Superintendent stating that it was physically impossible for him toproduce the policeman,owing to the Chinese Labour Ordinance preventing any Chinaman from entering the country without a licence, and owing to such licences having been stopped.

The matter was argued by Mr. Smuts, on behalf of the Chinaman, and Mr. Justice Mason, in delivering judgment, strongly deprecated the action of the Superintendent.

> One of the most serious features of the case was that, in substance and in fact, the Superintendent of Foreign Labour had brought to bear a tyrannical exercise of power in preventing any one from having access to the Chinese Sergeant. He regarded that as a very serious thing indeed. He thought the only way of preventing a person being illegally done away with and illegally treated was to uphold to the fullest extent the right of every person to have any of his friends to see him who chose to go. . . . His action had the effect of defeating

[1] *Vide* "The Bulwark of Justice", 31-3-1906

any such action, and he did wrong in sending the coolie out of the Colony with a notice, like that served by the solicitors, hanging over his head.

The learned Judge has made an order for the production of the man, and has ordered the Superintendent to show cause why he should not be punished for contempt of court by deporting the Chinaman from the Colony when he knew that an application was to be made for his protection before the Court. He also ordered that Mr. Jamieson[1] should pay all the costs, as between attorney and client, of the application, and added that "he made that order chiefly because of, what he has called before, 'the tyrannical exercise of power in preventing any person from having access to the applicant' ".

Here is an official, on the one hand, enjoying a very influential position, and, on the other hand, a humble policeman, and yet the policeman has been able to make good his right of being heard before the highest tribunal of justice in the Transvaal. The Superintendent himself must feel proud of an institution which thus protects the liberty of the meanest subject under the Crown; for what has happened to the Chinaman at his hands, it is quite conceivable, may happen to the Superintendent at the hands of those who may be superior to him. It may be a mere error of judgment on Mr. Jamieson's part, but it is better that he should suffer rather than that the liberty of the subject should remain without vindication.

Indian Opinion, 7-4-1906

150. THE INDENTURE TAX

We took from *The Times of Natal*, last week, a report of a prosecution, under the Immigration Law of the Colony, for recovering the annual tax of £3. On looking through *The Natal Witness*, we find that the prosecution was not only against himself, but also against his wife. The only manner provided by law of recovering the tax is "by summary process by any clerk of the peace or other officer appointed to get in such licence money". In the process, it appears the personal jewellery of the Indian woman has been taken, under order of Court, by the prosecuting sergeant as security. She has been given three months within which to pay the tax, under pain of her jewellery being sold if the tax is not paid within the period. Both the magistrate and the prosecuting sergeant have been considerate, and yet the grievous hardship that indentured Indians, who become free, have to suffer, by reason of the imposition, has been clearly brought out by the prosecution. So long as the poor woman has a bit of jewellery or other

[1] Superintendent, Foreign Labour Department

personal effects about her, she will be called upon to pay the money, whether she was earning anything or not, and whether she can otherwise afford it or not. This is the reward that the indentured Indians get after five years' service in Natal!

Indian Opinion, 7-4-1906

151. POLITICAL TURMOIL IN NATAL

Important events, the effects of which will not be forgotten for many years, took place in Natal last week. As a result of these, Natal has gained in stature. The cause of self-government has triumphed; but the British Empire has received a set-back.

The Kaffirs in Natal rose in revolt against the poll-tax. Sergeants Hunt and Armstrong[1] were killed in the revolt; martial law was declared in Natal and the Kaffirs were severely dealt with. Some Kaffirs were prosecuted under the martial law, and twelve of them were condemned to death and blown up at the mouth of a cannon. The Kaffirs from neighbouring areas and their Chief were invited to witness the execution, which was to take place on March 29.

Meanwhile, Lord Elgin sent a cablegram from England to the Governor of Natal, asking him to suspend the execution of the sentence. The executive councillors of the Natal Government resented this and tendered their resignations to the Governor. The Governor asked them to wait until a further communication was received from Lord Elgin, and to this they agreed.

As soon as the full story became known, a wave of excitement swept over the whole of South Africa. The Press protested vehemently, arguing that the constitution of self-governing Natal was violated by Lord Elgin's intervention. They said that, as Natal was a self-governing Colony, the Imperial Government could not interfere in its administration. Congratulations were showered from every side on the executive councillors for having resigned. Meetings were held at many places, and speeches made against the Imperial Government.

The Imperial Government believed that, since they had helped Natal to put down the rebellion, it was their duty to see that justice wasdone to the Kaffirs; and hence they saw nothing improper in asking the Natal Government to put off execution of the sentence. But South Africa became excited, the arguments of the Imperial Government proved unavailing, and Lord Elgin had to bow down before Natal opinion.

[1] Sub-Inspector Hunt and Trooper Armstrong of the Natal Police

Lord Elgin has written to the Governor that, on inquiry, it was found that justice had been done in the case of the Kaffirs, that the Imperial Government did not now wish to interfere in the administration by the executive councillors of Natal, and that they could do what they deemed proper. Lord Elgin has, however, put the entire blame on the Governor. He further says that no intervention bythe Imperial Government would have taken place if the Governor had supplied all the facts of the case at the outset. Twelve lives have been taken for two. The twelve Kaffirs were blown to death at the mouth of a cannon on Monday.

During all this excitement, only one man kept a cool head, and that was Mr. Morcum. At a meeting in Maritzburg, he declared that Lord Elgin's move was quite proper. It was a matter of saving human life, and there was no need for the executive to resign. Hunt and Armstrong were killed before martial law was declared; and hence the Kaffirs ought to have been tried by the Supreme Court. The whole meeting was against him, and though they hissed and hooted at him, the brave Mr. Morcum had his way.

What is the outcome of all this? That some Kaffirs were killed will soon be forgotten. We cannot say for certain whether or not theyhave received justice.But wherever self-government has been granted, a people become overweening. They will take undue liberties, and the Imperial Government will hesitate to intervene. It will seldom do so, for, as the saying goes, a man once bitten by a serpent dreads even a length of rope. It is only the Coloured people who stand to lose by this. They have no vote. Where they have it they cannot use it effectively, so that the Colonial authority will place greater restrictions on them, and they alone will get justice who ingratiate themselves with it. Great changes are likely to take place in South Africa during the coming years. The Indians and other Coloured people have much to ponder and they must act with circumspection.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-4-1906

152. THE LAND ACT IN THE TRANSVAAL

AN IMPORTANT LAW SUIT

In the Transvaal, there was only one plot of land outside the Location registered in the name of an Indian, the well-known Sheth Abubaker Amod, who is no more. The land was in Church Street in Pretoria. The late Mr. Abubaker bought it in June 1885, and the sale-deed was presented at the Registrar's office on June 12, 1885.

The anti-Indian Act came into force on June 17. There were some difficulties in getting the deed registered. The British Agent intervened, and it was only after a special letter was written by the State Attorney that the Registrar registered the documents on June 26. Mr. Abubaker died in 1888. Until now, the possession and enjoyment of the land has vested in the heirs or trustees of the late Mr. Abubaker. According to law, the disposal of a man's estate on his death should be through the Government. This estate has not, however, been dealt with in this manner, and the land has remained untransferred to the heirs. When the land fell vacant in 1905, it was decided to let it out on a long lease for building a house on it. Now, according to the Transvaal laws, every long lease has to be registered at the Registrar's office. Hence steps had to be taken to have the land transferred to the names of the heirs, for, under the law, land could not remain in the name of a deceased person. The heirs being Indians, the Registrar refused to transfer the land to them. Thereupon an appeal was filed against the Registrar before a civil judge. The Registrar put forward two reasons for not transferring the land to the heirs. First, the land was registered after Act 3 of 1885 had been passed; and since that Law prohibited Indians from holding land in their names, the sale-deed executed in favour of the late Mr. Abubaker was void and should therefore be cancelled. Secondly, even if it was conceded that the sale-deed in favour of Mr. Abubaker was legally valid, his heirs, being Indians, could not hold the land in their own names under the Act of 1885. Justice Fox who heard the appeal accepted the Registrar's second plea, and dismissed the case. An appeal against this decision was preferred to the Supreme Court on behalf of the heirs. Barristers Leonard and Gregorowski were engaged by the heirs, on whose behalf they represented that, if the Supreme Court did not order the land to be transferred to the names of the heirs, they should at least pass orders for the registration of the 21-year lease and allow meanwhile the original deed to remain in the name of the late Mr. Abubaker. Mr. Leonard advanced strong arguments and the judges expressed much sympathy, but regretted that they were helpless to do justice by the heirs. The judges admitted that the Act of 1885 itself was very bad, and if they wanted justice in spite of that law, they could get it only from Parliament. In view of this judgment, the only remedy left to the heirs to save the land for the time being was to get it transferred to some white person andthemselves retain physical possession. This step they have taken and their enjoyment of the property will not therefore be hampered in any way. However, the fact that, according to the judgment of the Supreme Court, the land cannot be transferred to the heirs' names is bound to make them feel

oppressed. The only thing that remains to be done is to carry on a political struggle through Parliament. We know that they will do so. Thejudgment in this case makes it quite clear that even the judges admit that the Act of 1885 is oppressive. Sir Henry Cotton has asked a question about this in the Imperial Parliament. We shall await the outcome.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-4-1906

153. J0HANNESBURG LETTER

April 7, 1906

PERMITS

Permit difficulties are increasing and people get no relief. The applications of refugees lie unattended to. Regulations go on changing continuously. Now fuel has been added to the fire. Mr. Suliman Manga, who is a relative of Mr. Ismail Manga, the well-known merchant of Delagoa Bay and is reading for the bar in England, came here recently to visit his relatives. He got down at Durban, and wanted to proceed to Delagoa Bay via the Transvaal. Mr. Gandhi applied for a temporary permit on his behalf, but the Colonial Secretary refused it. Mr. Manga waited for a few days at Durban, and then proceeded to Delagoa Bay by sea. From there, he applied again, [this time] himself, but got a reply in the negative. So far, the matter was dealt with on the assumption that Mr. Manga was a British subject. Mr. Manga, who came seized with the British spirit [of freedom], was not the sort of person who would sit back. Taking advantage of the fact that he was born at Daman[1] and was therefore a Portuguese subject, he approached the Secretary to the Government in Delagoa Bay and applied for a permit. Thereupon the Secretary immediately wrote to the British Consul, who issued the necessary permit without delay. This shows that, had Mr. Manga been a British subject, he could not have set foot on the golden land of the Transvaal; but he could do so at once by virtue of his being a Portuguese subject.

Mr. Manga spent a day at Johannesburg and has returned to Delagoa Bay. The Association[2] has written to the Government about this anomaly. It has written also to Lord Selborne, who, while acknowledging receipt of the letter, says that he is inquiring into the

[1] Portuguese possession in India

[2] British Indian Association

matter. Mr. Gandhi has also written a letter to the *Transvaal Leader*.[1] It is possible that the gross injustice done in Mr. Suliman Manga's case may open the eyes of the indolent British Government. When a permit was refused to Mr. Nomura, a Japanese subject, a wave of excitement passed over the whole of the Transvaal.[2] But is there none to care for a British subject in a similar plight?

RAILWAY HARDSHIPS

Mr. Mahomed Surati, the well-known merchant of Aliwal North[3], was in Johannesburg for two days. He was much inconvenienced during his train journey from Germiston. He was insulted and removed from the first-class compartment, which he was occupying, to another carriage. He was not aware that, in the Transvaal, there were separate carriages for non-whites. Though there was no white passenger in the compartment he was occupying, he was harassed by the guard. He has therefore lodged a complaint with the railway authorities.

A deputation of the British Indian Association met the General Manager of Railways in connection with the prohibition of Indian passengers from travelling by the 8.30 train leaving Pretoria for Johannesburg as also that from Johannesburg to Pretoria. The General Manager suggested that the Indian community would do well not to press the point as the train was reserved for whites only. The General Manager is not, however, in a position legally to justify his point of view. The deputation replied that the Indian community could not possibly go back on their position as the Indians needed the amenity as much as the whites did. The position is likely to become clear in about ten days.

THE TRAM CASE

The Johannesburg tram case has not yet been decided. Our people are not allowed to travel by the trams; hence a fresh test case has been filed. Mr. Coovadia was refused a place in the tram as he was about to board one. He has therefore again made an affidavit, and the date for the hearing of the case will be fixed in a couple of days.

FILTH IN THE LOCATION

This week Dr. Porter and his company came down upon the Indians residing in the Malay Location. Many of them were arrested as there was much overcrowding. In this matter as well as in keeping

[1] *Vide* " Letter to the *Leader*", Before 7-4-1906

[2] *Vide* "Permit Hardships in the Transvaal", 31-3-1906 & "War Claims", 31-3-1906

[3] Town situated on the Orange River

the house, compound and latrines clean, our people are very negligent. The consequences have to be borne by the whole community. Our troubles will not end so long as we do not make lasting improvements in these matters. And if meanwhile plague or other epidemics or infectious diseases should break out, we will have to put up with endless trouble. It would appear that our people have forgotten the experience of the plague in 1904.[1]

THE ENTHUSIASM OF THE WHITES

In a very short time, 35,000 signatures have been obtained, and many more are being collected for the petition of the whites addressed to the King-Emperor on the proposed constitution. We should become affected by this new enthusiasm that is abroad. We wouldenjoy a different in status this country if we are infected with this enthusiasm rather than the spirit of discord.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-4-1906

154. EXTRACTS FROM LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,
April 10, 1906]

[The prohibitive fees for certificates and passes that are granted under the Immigration Restriction Act are] a totally unjust imposition for which there is not the slightest justification. . . . Another serious blow to the Indian community in South Africa has been given in the Transvaal.

Colonial Office Records : C.O. 417, Vol. 434 Ind.

[1] *Vide* "letter to Dr. Porter", 9-4-1904, "A Lesson from the Plague", 30-4-1904 & "The Plague", 25-2-1905.

[2] Gandhiji's own letter to Dadabhai is not available. This item is an extract from Dadabhai's letter to the Colonial Secretary where he quotes Gandhiji ("my correspondent"). This letter refers to the *Indian Opinion* of 10-3-1906 and was sent along with the issue dated 17-3-1906

155. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[JOHANNESBURG
April 10, 1906]

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I return Hoosen Khan's letter. It will be dealt with in the English columns. You may say in the Gujarati columns that the matter is being dealt with in the English columns.

I half expect a letter from you to-morrow. I may leave by the Friday morning train.

I am still discussing the situation with Mr. Kitchin. He may rejoin. I hope Maganlal is now much better.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

1 Enclosure
C. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
c/o *Indian Opinion*
PHOENIX

From a photostat of the original: S.N. 4349

156. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

21-24 COURT CHAMBERS
CORNER RISSIK & ANDERSON STREETS,
P. O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
April 11, 1906

MY DEAR CHHANGANLAL,

I have your letter. I am not saying anything much. I leave by the Friday morning train that will bring me there[1] Saturday afternoon and I will take the train for Phoenix that leaves just after the arrival of the Johannesburg train.

I am afraid you have not yet understood the question put to you regarding the rate for advertisements. You should remind me when I reach there and I will explain the position to you. Meanwhile, I would like you to put down your thoughts in writing, all that you me have to

[1] Durban

say and all that you may have to suggest. Do not be afraid of being misunderstood because I shall be able to ask you questions on everything you may write and you will be able to explain. I would also ask you to put down your thoughts independently of consultation with anybody else and I propose to ask everybody to do likewise. Please pass this on to Maganlal so that he may too, if he is strong enough, put down everything that occurs to him fully in writing, and in any case put down your questions also to be put to me.

I do not propose to telegraph unless my plans are altered.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

C. K. GANDHI, ESQ

PHOENIX

From a photostat of the original: S.N. 4348

157. LETTER TO WILLIAM WEDDERBURN[1]

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

25 & 26 COURT CHAMBERS,
RISSIK STREET,
JOHANNESBURG,
April 12, 1906

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN

PALACE CHAMBERS

LONDON

SIR,

The position in the Transvaal of British Indians is getting day by day more insecure and harassing. I need only recapitulate what is happening and appeal for active work.

Whilst it is true that the Home Government will be slow to interfere with the Crown Colony of the Transvaal, I take it there must be a limit to this policy of non-intervention. There is a Peace Preservation Ordinance in the Transvaal under which the immigration of British Indians is restricted in a most high-handed manner.

(a) The Ordinance was intended to preserve the peace [and], therefore, to keep out rebels and others who were ill disposed towards

[1] This seems to be a circular letter. A copy of it was sent to Dadabhai Naoroji who, omitting the last paragraph, forwarded it in the form of a statement to the Secretary of State for the Colonies on May 8, 1906.

the British Government, but it is today being, in fact, solely used to restrict British Indian immigration.

(b) The British Indian Association has accepted the position that non-refugee British Indians who do not possess educational attainments may be kept out.

(c) As a matter of fact, even refugees who were in the Colony before the war and who had paid £3 as a price for permission to reside in the Colony are now being prevented from entering, except under most difficult circumstances.

(d) Such men have to wait in the coast towns for months before the permit officer would issue them a permit.

(e) A most vexing examination is carried on and then they are called upon to put their thumb-impressions and to undergo other unnecessary severities before they get a permit to enter the country.

(f) Their wives, too, are often required to produce documents before they are allowed to enter the Transvaal.

(g) Their children over eleven years are totally prevented from accompanying them.

(h) Children under twelve of such refugees are made to take out permits before they can come. Just recently, a boy under six years was torn away from his father and detained at Volksrust because he did not hold a separate permit, in spite of the fact that the registration certificate of the father mentioned that he had two boys.

(i) Only three months ago, boys under sixteen, if they had their parents, or if their parents were dead and they were with their guardians in the Transvaal domiciled, were free to enter the Transvaal. Now, as mentioned above, all of a sudden a new regulation has been sprung upon the Indian community and boys who are under twelve only are allowed to enter. The result is that many boys under sixteen who have arrived in South Africa after considerable expense have, instead of joining their parents who are domiciled in the Transvaal, to return to India.

(j) About three months ago, temporary permits for Indians, who wished to pass through the Transvaal on their way to other parts of South Africa or intended to do some business, were granted fairly freely; now such permits are issued after the greatest scrutiny. Mr. Suliman Manga,[1] the son of a well-known Indian merchant of Delagoa Bay, who is studying at present in England for the Bar, recently returned from England to pay a visit to his relatives in Delagoa Bay. He landed at Durban, applied for a permit to enable him to pass

[1] *Vide* also "The Transvaal Permit Ordinance", 14-4-1906

through the Transvaal on his way to Delagoa Bay and the permit was refused. His case was considered as if he was a British Indian. He went to Delagoa Bay, therefore, by sea. There he attempted again through the Transvaal Government to receive a temporary permit as he intended to see Pretoria and Johannesburg but his application was refused. He, therefore, thought that he, having been born in Portuguese India, should approach the Portuguese Government. He did so and a permit was immediately issued to him. It comes, therefore, to this that a British Indian, no matter what his status may be, cannot even pass through the Transvaal and have safe conduct, but if an Indian belongs to a foreign power, he gets a permit for the asking.

(k) From the above, it follows that Indians of attainments are unable to get a permit to settle in the Transvaal, that is to say, the Peace Preservation Ordinance is so administered that, whereas before war any Indian was free to enter the Transvaal, now an Indian who can enter by reason of his being able to pass the educational test of the self-governing Colony of the Cape or Natal is debarred from entering the Crown Colony of the Transvaal. Here, there is no question of the British Government having inherited pre-war legislation, but it is a question of deliberate[ly] pressing into service an ordinance passed just after martial law and which ordinance had no connection with British Indians.

Under Law 3 of 1885, the British Indian heirs of the late Mr. Aboobaker Amod, one of the Indian pioneer settlers of South Africa, have been prevented from having the property left to them registered in their names.[1] Such is the working of the law regarding ownership of and by Indians. It should be noticed that Natives of the Transvaal, as is quite proper, are free to own landed property anywhere they choose. The Cape Coloured people are also free to hold immovable property in the Transvaal. The ban is placed only upon Asiatics.

Before war, Indians were not debarred from making use of any train service in the Transvaal. Now the Railway Board has issued notices to the station masters not to issue tickets to British Indians and Coloured people for an express train service between Pretoria and Johannesburg,[2] thus causing serious inconvenience to Indian businessmen. It is highly probable that relief will be ultimately granted, but this notice shows which way the tendency of the Government lies.

In Johannesburg, as in Pretoria, British Indians and Coloured

[1] *Vide* "Legalized Robbery", 17-3-1906

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Acting Chief Traffic Manager",14-2-1906

people are unable to make use of the municipal tram cars.[1]

In Natal, the position is briefly as follows: The Dealers' Licenses Act causes the greatest amount of mischief. Mr. Dada Osman, a British Indian merchant of very long standing, had his store in Vryheid before war when it was part of the Transvaal, [and] he traded there unfettered. When Vryheid was incorporated with Natal, the anti-Asiatic laws were also taken over, so that in Vryheid there is Law 3 of 1885 in force as also the Natal Dealers' Licenses Act. Acting thereunder, Mr. Dada Osman's licence has been taken away from him and his Vryheid business has been totally ruined.[2] Another case of equally severe hardship has happened in the Ladysmith district. There, one Cassim Mahomed has been trading on a farm for some time. Last year, his servant committed a breach of Sunday Trading Law. He sold a piece of soap and sugar to traps who were sent by an adjoining store-keeper. The owner himself, it was proved, was absent. This year, because of this offence, his licence has not been renewed.[3] The Appellate Board upheld the decision of the Licensing Officer, saying he acted on the principle they had laid down in a case about a white man. This, however, is not true. The white man in question was known to have allowed his sub-tenants to traffic in liquor sold to Natives and was convicted of selling opium on his premises. No contravention of law was made in comparison with the studied breach of regulations of the above description by the white man and the technical breach of Sunday Trading Law [*sic*].

The third case is that of Mr. Hoondamal, to whom a transfer of his licence from one place to another in Durban was refused.[4] These three are only illustrations showing what has been done under the Dealers' Licenses Act in scores of cases. Mr. Chamberlain made representations to the Natal Government in connection with the hardship under the law. The result was that the Natal Government issued instructions that the law was not to be rigorously enforced, otherwise it would be altered. It is not possible to give cases of greater hardship than those quoted above. All that is claimed by British Indians is that the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court over the decisions of the Licensing Officers and the Licensing Boards, which consist mainly of traders, should be restored.

Under the Immigration Restriction Act, rules have been now framed whereby a fee of £1 is imposed for the issue of a domicile

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Town Clerk", 10-3-1906

[2] *Vide* "Petition to Lord Elgin", 30-3-1906

[3] *Vide* "A Hard Case", 14-4-1906

[4] *Vide* "Indian Licences : Need for Vigilance —I" 18-2-1905

certificate to each domiciled Indian who is entitled to it as a matter of right. A similar fee is imposed for visitors' passes,[1] that is, for Indians who want to pay a visit to Natal as also for embarkation passes, that is, for authority for Indians to pass through Natal to catch a steamer for India. This is an indirect method of taxation and causes very much inconvenience and loss to poor Indians.

I venture to think that these matters should be placed continually before the Colonial and Indian Secretaries by the Indian Parliamentary Committee.

I beg to remain,
Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original typescript signed by Gandhiji. Courtesy: Servants of India Society

158. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

JOHANNESBURG,
April 13, 1906

CAUTION TO INDIAN LAND-OWNERS IN TRANSVAAL

I have come across a very important case which concerns the vast majority of Indians who own land in the Transvaal. A certain Indian holds land in the name of a White. He has secured no bond from the latter, who is practically on the verge of insolvency. It has now become extremely difficult to save this land. The White himself is eager enough to help. He has no right over the land but, since there is no bond against it, there is every danger of his creditors swallowing it up. If a bond had been secured from the White in time, no such contingency would have arisen. After this case, it is imperative that every Indian who holds land in the name of a White should secure a bond against it, however trustworthy the White may be; otherwise he will run the risk of being put to a severe loss.

PERMIT CASE

There has been a noteworthy permit case in the magistrate's court here. I stated in a previous letter that two Indians had been arrested.[2] One of them was charged with having entered without a permit. The magistrate gave notice to the first Indian to leave within

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", Before 10-3-1906
[2] *Vide* "letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 6-4-1906

seven days and dismissed the case against the second on the ground that he had no jurisdiction, since the application the Indian had made for a permit was made in Durban, and for some other reasons.

Mr. Gunvantrai Desai and many other Indians have left Johannesburg for India.

The deputation about the Malay Location which was to wait on Sir Richard Solomon has done so. I hope to be able to give more information about this next week.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 21-4-1906

159. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[JOHANNESBURG,
April 13, 1906][2]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I am sending you herewith some Gujarati matter together with advertisements, etc. Please ask Mr. West to see that all the advertisements appear in this very issue, as far as possible.

Let the advertisement of Garlic Hentz be of the same size as the one given earlier for Carmen. Bear in mind what I have written on his advertisement. Give six inches to Jivanji. There is nothing to be said about the others.

I shall bring Mr. Harilal Thakar with me. I shall leave by the last evening train.

Blessings from

Mohandas

[PS.]

Please attend to the needs and comforts of Suliman. I shall be able to give the rest of the Gujarati material only after I come there. There is no alternative.

From a photostat of the original Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 4353

[1] *Vide* "letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 6-4-1906

[2] The date April 23, 1906, given in the original, seems to be an error, as the advertisement of Garlic Hentz mentioned therein appeared in *Indian Opinion* dated 21-4 1906. The letter must have been written about a week earlier, possibly on Friday, April 13, the day Gandhiji was to leave for Phoenix. *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 10-4-1906

160. A HARD CASE

We gave last week a *resume* of a licensing appeal case heard in Ladysmith on the 30th March last. An Indian trader has been trading within Klip River Division on a farm called Wittekleifontein for the last three years. Latterly, a European firm, by name Burdett & Co. has opened a store near his. The firm has amongst its partners, so it would appear from a report in *The Natal Witness*, Sergeant Batterberg, who is the Prosecutor for the Division. During his absence, the Indian trader's store-assistant was trapped by the police and convicted of Sunday trading. He sold a bit of soap and some sugar. The store-keeper, on his return, finding that his assistant had been guilty of trading on Sunday, dismissed him. When the time came for renewal, Messrs Burdett & Co. lodged their objection with the Licensing Officer against the Indian store-keeper's getting a renewal of his licence, on the ground that he had committed a breach of the Sunday law. The Licensing Officer upheld this objection, and the licence was refused. Against this decision, the poor Indian store-keeper appealed to the Licensing Board, but in spite of the eloquent defence of his counsel, the appeal was dismissed, and the Board, in giving judgment, said that they did so because of a breach by the store-keeper's assistant of the Sunday regulations, and they supported their decision by quoting a similar case where they [had] refused the application for a licence made by a European.[1] We think, however, that the European case quoted by the Board could have no bearing on the present case, as some of the ingredients were wanting. Here, the Indian store-keeper himself has not committed the crime. He repaired the mischief in the only manner that was possible for him, and, after all, it is patent to any layman that the whole of the objection has been raised by a rival firm of store-keepers who are interested in removing the Indian store-keeper. The fact, too, that the firm contains, as its partner, the Public Prosecutor in Ladysmith, who conducted the prosecution against the Indian's store-man, is not without serious significance. It is indeed a pity that the Board did not allow the objection raised by the appellant's counsel that Burdett & Co. had no *locus standi* before the Board, and we cannot help thinking that the Board have, by their decision, encouraged opposition of the kind raised in the case in question. The deprivation of a licence is altogether a disproportionate penalty imposed on a man for a breach of a statutory provision by his servant, who had already been punished for the same offence. But this

[1] *Vide* "The Ladysmith Licensing Board", 21-4-1906

case merely illustrates how unjust and oppressive the Dealers' Licenses Act of Natal is. The Ladysmith case supports the argument advanced in Dada Osman's petition[1]. Unless the right of appeal to the Supreme Court is restored, there is no possibility of any justice being done under the Dealers' Licenses Act.

Indian Opinion, 14-4-1906

161. THE TRANSVAAL PERMIT ORDINANCE

The Peace Preservation Ordinance, passed at a time when, as its name implies, peace within the Transvaal borders was in danger, has hung over the heads of British Indians like Damocles' sword, ready to descend upon them at any moment. The latest instance is brought to our readers' notice by our Transvaal correspondent.[2] It appears that Mr. Suliman Manga, the son of a very well-known Indian in Delagoa Bay, has been studying for the Bar for some years in England, and has been admitted as a member of the Middle Temple. He has just arrived from England to pay a visit to his relatives in Delagoa Bay. On his landing at Durban, he intended to pass through the Transvaal on his way to Delagoa Bay. He instructed a solicitor in Johannesburg to apply for his permit. The solicitor, Mr. Gandhi, seems to have assumed that he was a British Indian, and proceeded with the application. After a few days' delay, he received a reply saying that his client could not be granted a temporary permit. He then applied to the Colonial Secretary and received the same answer. No reasons were given for the refusal. Mr. Manga then took a steamer to Delagoa Bay. Young, enthusiastic, and freshly returned from England, he could not brook rejection of his application. During his brief stay, he wanted to see the capital of the Transvaal, and the centre of the gold-mining activity. He, therefore, again applied to the port Protector of Asiatics, who could only confirm the reply given to his solicitor. Mr. Manga, being in fact a Portuguese subject, then appealed to his own Government, who soon procured relief for their subject, and Mr. Manga entered the Transvaal on a temporary permit granted to him by His Majesty's British Consul-General.

This is an instance of a most glaring abuse of arbitrary powers vested in the hands of the Government. We may here recall the parallel case of Mr. Nomura, a Japanese subject. This gentleman, in order to dispose ofhis wares in the Transvaal, applied for a temporarypermit, which the Chief Secretary for Permits declined to

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Lord Elgin", 30-3-1906.

[2] *Vide "Letter to the Leader",* Before 7-4-1906

grant. He evidently reasoned to himself that, if a British subject could not get similar facilities, he could not grant it to Mr. Nomura.[1] The case was publicly discussed, and the *Transvaal Leader* offered a public apology to Mr. Nomura. The High Commissioner immediately ordered the Chief Secretary for Permits to issue a permit to Mr. Nomura, and it was delivered to him personally at his residence in Durban.

Mr. Manga's case is much stronger than Mr. Nomura's. As it was first put before the Colonial Secretary, it was a case of a British subject and a student asking for permission merely to pass through the Transvaal. He had no business to transact in the Colony, and, therefore, he could not come into competition with anybody. We question whether the most rabid member of the anti-Asiatic Convention could ever have contemplated rejection of an application like Mr. Manga's, and yet so long as Mr. Manga was considered as a British subject, and so long as there was no intervention on the part of any foreign government, his case was not considered worthy of attention by the Transvaal Government.

So soon, however, as it is known that Mr. Manga happens to be a Portuguese subject, he gets a permit. The net result of this case is that, at the hands of the present Government in the Transvaal, there is to be no justice for British Indians. The latter may be insulted, they may be put to all kinds of inconvenience, their applications may be summarily rejected, they may not be given reasons for arbitrary decisions of the Government, even though *bona-fide* refugees, it may take months before their claims can be considered for re-entry into the Transvaal, their very means of livelihood may be allowed to depend on the absolute discretion of the Government. Yet we have Lord Selborne's assurance that it is not his desire that Indians should be treated in a harsh manner, or that regulations under the Peace Preservation Ordinance should in any way be unreasonable.[2] The community has every right, therefore, to appeal to Lord Selborne for some measure of justice being meted out to it.

Indian Opinion, 14-4-1906

[1] *Vide* "A Contrast", 10-3-1906

[2] *Vide* "Transvaal Indians and Permits", 17-2-1906

162. A LICENSING PETITION

Our readers will recall the facts in connection with the licence of a British Indian in Vryheid. Mr. Dada Osman, the Indian merchant concerned, having failed to obtain the justice to which he was entitled, owing to the state of the Dealers' Licenses Act, has now approached His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies,[1] and has forwarded to us a copy ofthe petition for review. The petition is a colourless statement of facts, but it shows most clearly that underlying it is the general question as to the operation of the Dealers' Licenses Act. Unless it is erased from the Statute-book of the Colony, there will be no rest for British Indian traders. It is not fair to them, and it is less fair to the licensing officers, that arbitrary powers should be placed in the latter's hands. We do not ask for indiscriminate trading rights, but we do contend that every trading application should be treated on its merits, and where no reasons, save those of prejudice, can be adduced against such application, it should be granted. The case before us is aggravated, because the petitioner labours under a double-barrelled disability, for, in Vryheid, he, being a British Indian, labours under all the disabilities of the Natal laws, without getting any of the advantages, as Law 3 of 1885 of the Transvaal has also been retained, in spite of the incorporation of Vryheid with Natal. The condition is as anomalous as it possibly could be, and it is to be hoped that Lord Elgin will secure substantial justice for his petitioner.

The question of interference with the domestic affairs of the Colony will naturally be raised. The principle of non-interference can hardly stand, in the case of those who are totally unrepresented in a Colony governed under representative institutions. Natal enjoys self-government, on the tacit assumption that it is capable of governing itself. There is little self-government exercised, when one class of subjects living in the Colony are meted out scant justice. Self-government means self-control; if privileges are granted, responsibilities must be assumed also, and if these privileges are enjoyed to the fullest extent, without discharge of the responsibilities, the power that gave them surely has the right to see to it that those responsibilities are properly discharged.

Indian Opinion, 14-4-1906

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Lord Elgin", 30-3-1906

163. A LICENSING CIRCULAR

A Gujarati correspondent draws our attention to some rules said to have been framed by the Government for the guidance of traders' licenses officers. The latter are, so our correspondent states, instructed henceforth, in issuing licenses to Indians, to take their finger-prints and signatures on counterfoils of the licences granted. This, we understand, has been done in order to establish identity. If our information be correct, the preliminary question that occurs to us is, why have Indians alone been singled out for this further disability? Where is the occasion for establishing identity? Does it mean that the Natal Government do not desire that the Indian businesses may be continued after the withdrawal of their present owners? Do they, in other words, mean to convey to the Licensing Officers that Indian businesses are to become extinct with their owners? If so, it means that, sooner or later, every Indian must be compelled to sell off, instead ofdisposing of his business as a going concern. And why should the Government interfere with the administration of the law in such a one-sided manner? If the Licensing Officers are to exercise their own discretion, unfettered by any considerations save those of justice, how can the Government restrict their discretion [by] issuing circulars such as the one we are now considering? The position under the Licensing Law is becoming more and more unbearable, and unless some relief can be granted by the Home Government, it is merely a question of time as to when British Indian traders in Natal will have to close their businesses entirely.

Indian Opinion, 14-4-1906

164. THE NATAL REBELLION

The twelve Kaffirs sentenced to capital punishment have been shot dead.[1] The Colonists of Natal are pleased. Mr. Smythe's prestige has been vindicated. The Imperial Government have had to climb down. Mm Churchill made a very good speech in this connection. He showed that the Imperial Government were entitled to an explanation from Natal. For, if the Kaffirs did not remain under proper control, the Imperial Government were bound to send an expeditionary force. Incidents that followed, like Mr, Smythe's resignation, are to be ascribed solely to the speeches made by Mr. Chamberlain's partisans and to the fact that all the newspapers in South Africa are controlled

[1] *Vide* "Political Turmoil in Natal", 7-4-1906

by that party. Mr. Churchill pointed out that, if Mr. Smythe's act should become a precedent, the good feeling between England and the Colonies would not endure.

While Mr. Churchill was speaking thus, the third chapter of this woeful tale was being written. Though twelve Kaffirs were put to death, the rebellion, instead of being quelled, has gathered strength. Bambata, the Kaffir Chief, was deposed and another installed in his place, because the behaviour of the former was not satisfactory. Seizing the right opportunity, Bambata kidnapped the new Chief and rose in revolt. And the disturbance continues in Grey Town. The region in which Bambata is operating as an outlaw is in difficult terrain full of bushes and trees, where the Kaffirs can remain in hiding for long periods. To find them out and force a fight is a difficult job.

The small party of soldiers that was on Bambata's trail included the Englishmen who had shot the twelve Kaffirs. Bambata and his men encircled the party and, though they fought very bravely, the soldiers were defeated in the end and managed to escape with great difficulty. Some of them were killed. The dead included those who had shot the twelve Kaffirs. Such is the law of God. The executioners met their death within two days.

At the time of writing, Bambata is at large. Meanwhile, his followers go on increasing. There is no knowing how all this will end.

What is our duty during these calamitous times in the Colony? It is not for us to say whether the revolt of the Kaffirs is justified or not. We are in Natal by virtue of British power. Our very existence depends upon it. It is therefore our duty to render whatever help we can. There was a discussion in the Press as to what part the Indian community would play in the event of an actual war. We have already declared in the English columns of this journal that the Indian community is ready to play its part;[1] and we believe what we did during the Boer War should also be done now. That is, if the Government so desires, we should raise an ambulance corps. We should also agree to become permanent volunteers, if the Government is prepared to give us the requisite training.

Such a step would be considered proper, even if we viewed it from the standpoint of our own interests. The case of the twelve Kaffirs shows us that whatever justice we may seek is to be had ultimately from the local Government. The first step in trying to get it is to do our own duty. The common people in this country keep

[1] *Vide* "Indian Volunteering", 31-3-1906

themselves in readiness for war. We, too, should contribute our share.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-4-1906

165. A THREAT TO HAWKERS

The Durban Town Council has passed a resolution calling upon the Licensing Officer not to issue fresh licences to hawkers, and to reduce, as far as practicable, the number of licences already in force, because shop-keepers are adversely affected by the hawkers' trade. Hitherto the Town Council issued confidential instructions to the Licensing Officer; now it has openly told him what to do. This means that the Town Council arrogates to itself the functions of both the lower and the appellate courts.

Moreover, this order means that, no matter what inconveniences the people may have to suffer, the interests of the shop-keepers must be safeguarded. Some relief can be had only if a very strong struggle is put up against such a regulation.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-4-1906

166. THE LADYSMITH LICENSING BOARD

We have already dealt with what has appeared to us to be a case of very great injustice done to an inoffensive Indian trader.[1] We have since been placed in possession of fuller information regarding the case of Mackillican referred to by the appellate court in support of its decision. We have a true copy of the original record of that case placed before us. From it we find that the reasons for refusing to renew the licence of Mackillican were overwhelmingly strong. They are:

I. Because a native man and woman were convicted on the 19th October, 1903, for selling liquor without a licence in a shed—a building on applicant's premises which were only licensed as a retail store. No less than three large casks of beer were found in the shed. The applicant must have been cognisant of the carrying on of this illicit traffic.

2. Because the applicant was convicted on the 15th day of January, 1904 of selling opium at the same premises on the 7th day of November, 1903; this trade had been carried on for some time causing severe mental

[1] *Vide* "A Hard Case", 14-4-1906

depression and other injuries to the Indians at the Elandslaagte mine, besides being a constant cause of worry to the Manager, till he found out the source of the evil that was being wrought on his servants.

Thus, the applicant was indirectly guilty of poisoning Natives with liquor sold illicitly and of stupefying Indian miners by selling them opium in contravention of the law. In each case, the fault was the applicant's own. It is a prostitution of terms to compare this case with the Indian case and use it as a precedent for depriving the latter of his licence. It would have been more dignified and more honest on the part of the Board to have taken its stand on the true ground for refusal—that is, of colour.

We have been placed in possession, too, of some of the certificates produced by the applicant in support of his application. One of the principal merchants of Durban, writing to the Licensing Officer, states: "We consider him to be a very respectable, reliable, and straightforward Indian, and quite fitted to hold a licence in your district." Thus, while the personal character of Mackillican undoubtedly unfitted him to hold a trading licence, that of the Indian is irreproachable. What has happened to the poor Indian in Ladysmith is probably not an uncommon experience for Indians in Natal. We trust, therefore, that the Natal Indian Congress, which is ever watchful of the interests of the Indian community, will not fail to bring the matter to the notice of the Government and secure justice.

Indian Opinion, 21-4-1906

167. TRANSVAAL PERMITS

We reproduce elsewhere the remarks of our contemporary, *The Rand Daily Mail*, on the Manga case to which we have drawn attention in these columns.[1] Our contemporary's remarks are strong, but thoroughly deserved. We congratulate the writer on the courage of his convictions. Our correspondent at Johannesburg mentions another case in his "Jottings", which points to a state of affairs which, if continued, bids fair to make it impossible for even British Indian refugees to get redress. Our correspondent refers to the case of a British Indian refugee of position having been refused his permit, in spite of the fact that the applicant produced evidence of respectable Europeans to prove previous residence. This is the first case, so far as we are aware, of a refugee having been definitely refused permission to re-enter. What is more aggravating still is the fact that the Russian

[1] *Vide* "The Transvaal Permit Ordinance",14-4-1906

method of secrecy has lately been adopted regarding the administration of the Permit Ordinance, so far as Indians are concerned. Our correspondent states that, as in the case of Mr. Manga, so in this, the Permit Officer has declined to give the reasons for his refusal. So that, henceforth, British Indians will be kept out of the Transvaal without their being informed why.

Nor is this all. A correspondent in the Gujarati columns invites our attention to a case where a six-year-old infant was torn away from his parent at Volksrust, because the infant held no permit! We understand that the unfortunate father's registration contained a reference to his having two boys.

We beg to draw Lord Selborne's attention to the seriousness of the Indian position. It is high time that His Excellency's words were translated into deeds. We yield to no one in our desire to respect reasonable prejudice. We have, therefore, approved of the desirability of regulating the immigration of Asiatics who have not previously resided in the Transvaal. But the way in which the authorities at Pretoria are going about to please the anti-Asiatic party means a totally different proposition. And they are much mistaken if they think that Indians will allow vested rights to be trampled under foot without at any rate a serious effort to obtain redress.

Indian Opinion, 21-4-1906

168. THE DURBAN TOWN COUNCIL AND INDIANS

The Licensing Committee of the Durban Town Council has, *The Natal Mercury* reports, "expressed the wish that the Licensing Officers grant no new hawkers' licences, and curtail as much as possible existing hawkers' licences, since traders of this class interfere with the legitimate trade of shop-keepers". This recommendation of the Licensing Committee is the aftermath of decisions on the Dealers' Licenses Act. The judgment in the case of Dada Osman,[1] and other judgments in cases arising out of that Act, have emboldened the town councils in their policy of repression. From half- concealed suggestions to Licensing Officers, they have now proceeded to open instructions to them. It will, therefore, be a question of the town councils instructing their officers to give a judgment on licensing applications, and then sitting in appeal on what will be after all their own judgments. They will thus reduce the Licenses Act to a mere farce. Moreover, the instructions we have referred to above show

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Lord Elgin", 30-3-1906

clearly that, in administering the Dealers' Licenses Act, attention is paid, not to the general community, but to the store-keepers alone. As their trade is likely to be interfered with, no new hawkers' licences are to be issued, and existing licences are to be curtailed. That they supply a want, and that they are a boon to the householders who receive what they want at their doors is of no consequence to the town councils, so long as a privileged class can be raised up. Exception may be taken to our argument in that the instructions of the Licensing Committee are general, but so is our argument. It applies both to hawkers who are Europeans and those who are Indians, but as a matter of fact, the brunt of such a policy will have to be borne mainly by Indians, as hawking is their speciality, and most of the hawkers in Durban are Indians. We are, nevertheless, inclined to welcome these excesses in the administration of the law, because they will bring in their trail their own doom.

Indian Opinion, 21-4-1906

169. TRAVELLING DIFFICULTY ON THE C. S. A. R.

A correspondent writes to us from Klerksdorp, in the Gujarati columns, recounting the difficulties that the Indian passengers have to undergo on the trains between Klerksdorp and Johannesburg. Our correspondent complains that Indian passengers, no matter to what class they may belong, are not allowed a seat on the trains unless they have compartments attached to them having the labels "coloured" or "reserved". Our correspondent adds that, as a result of the action of the authorities, very few Indian passengers travel withany degree of comfort.All the trains do not have the labels, and if, therefore, an Indian passenger misses a particular train and wishes to take another having no reserved seats, he very often cannot do so. The only condition, our correspondent urges, of travelling by such a train is that the passengers have to remain standing in the corridor the whole of the time. This is no small matter, as the journey occupies over eight hours. If what our correspondent complains [of] be true, it is evident that the comfort of the Coloured travellers does not receive sufficient consideration.

Indian Opinion, 21-4-1906

170. VESUVIUS

Vesuvius in Italy is active and emitting lava; this is a reminder to us of Nature's power and a warning not to take life for granted even for a moment. The recent accident in the Courier mines in France

where many men were buried alive also brought home the same truth to us. In the latter case, one could find fault with the engineers and persuade oneself that the men would not have lost their lives if certain precautions had been taken. The same thing cannot, however, be said of the volcanic eruption. We do not want to expatiate further on this subject. It is futile to hope that men who have come all the way from far-away India can fully realise the significance of this line of thought; but we want particularly to draw the readers' attention to the courage shown by a scientist while the volcano was still active. In the vicinity of the volcano, there is a meteorological station where Professor Metusi lives. The station is in great danger of being destroyed any moment by the lava from the volcano. However, Professor Metusi has not abandoned his post and keeps sending information to Naples about the volcano. It is a matter of no ordinary courage thus to stay amidst danger. No one has forced him to stay at the danger spot. Nothing can be said in his reproach if, like thousands of other men, he leaves the place to save his life. Yet he has refused to leave. When many Indians too of this calibre are born in India or South Africa, we shall cease to suffer as at present.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 21-4-1906

171. INDIAN DEPUTATION TO ENGLAND

Last week we published the resolution passed by the Natal Indian Congress. It is highly creditable to the Congress officials that the Congress Hall was fully packed and people showed great enthusiasm. At present, a new Liberal Ministry is in power [in the United Kingdom], and it is eminently desirable that we go and placebefore it an account of our grievances. But we feel that the deputation had better leave after the visit of the Commission that is due to come. Moreover, if a deputation is to go, we strongly feel that it should be composed of at least three members so that it will carry weight with and be listened to by the Cabinet. Such tasks, however, cannot be accomplished without money. Help from many quarters will be needed and money has to be spent generously. Something can be achieved only if Indians from all over South Africa lend a helping hand.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 21-4-1906

172. INSTRUCTIONS TO INDIANS COMING TO NATAL BY STEAMER

We often find that Indian passengers entitled to land at Durban are greatly discommoded while doing so. In order that some at any rate of these difficulties may be avoided, we make the following suggestions.

There should be no difficulty at all about the entry of the wife whose husband is according to law a resident of Natal; but the Immigration Officer allows a woman to land only after she has produced legal proof of her marriage to a resident. Hence the man should make an affidavit and get it endorsed by the Immigration Officer in advance. This will enable his wife to disembark soon after the steamer arrives.

The same procedure should be followed in the case of children. The father making the affidavit should remember that the son or the daughter must be under sixteen years of age. It is not enough that the parent swears an affidavit that the age of his son or daughter is below sixteen. For it is up to the Immigration Officer to accept or reject the statement about age. A difficulty may therefore arise if the son or daughter appears to be over sixteen, the affidavit notwithstanding. Moreover, if the person is married, he or she, though under sixteen, is not entitled to land by virtue of the title of his or her parents.

If a resident of Natal himself wants to disembark but does not hold a domicile pass, he too has to put up with inconvenience. Strong evidence has to be produced before the officer well in advance. Nevertheless, there is one way by which such a person can land immediately: he should deposit £100 as security and after landing; produce the requisite evidence, or he should take out a £10 visiting pass and then do likewise. If £100 are deposited, one is not required to pay the fee of £1 to the Government. But, according to the new regulation, one has to pay that fee to take out a £10 visiting pass.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 21-4-1906

173. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

JOHANNESBURG,
April 21, 1906

DEPUTATION REGARDING MALAY LOCATION

As I promised last week, I give here an account of the deputation that waited upon Sir Richard Solomon[1] concerning the Malay Location.

Mr. Haji Ojer Ali saw Sir Richard and presented the following facts before him.

When land was allotted by the Boer Government to the Malay people, they developed it. On their applying for permission to construct buildings on it, the Government allowed them to do so unconditionally. Consequently many well-built houses of burnt brick have sprung up in the Malay Location. Moreover, the residents have effected lasting improvements in the land, and the population has increased. When the site for the Malay Location was fixed, the white population in the surrounding area was also increasing, but they did not raise any objection at the time. And though the improvement of the land by the residents of the Location has been going on for years, nothing has been done to give them security of tenure. An Ordinance was promulgated last September vesting the ownership of the Location in the Johannesburg Municipality. On the other hand, the Government intends to confer definite rights on the Dutch residents of Vrededorp. Handing over the Malay Location to the Municipality is likely therefore to prejudice the interests of the residents in the Location.

If rights are granted to the Dutch, they should be granted equally to the Stand-holders of the Malay Location, who have always been loyal subjects. If a permanent lease is granted to the people of the Malay Location, it can be safely assumed that they will improve the land further and construct even more elegant buildings.

In reply to this representation, Sir Richard has promised to go into the whole matter fully and write later in detail. He has shown much sympathy, but it appears that the Government is nowadays plentiful in that commodity. Even Mr. Winston Churchill has expressed much sympathy. What the worthy knight will actually do, he alone knows.

The situation regarding permits continues as before. There has

[1] Acting Lieutenant-Governor of the Transvaal

been very severe criticism of [the handling of] Mr. Manga's case, in a local paper, *The Rand Daily Mail.* It has two leading articles on the subject. They may have some effect on the Permit Office in course of time.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-4-1906

174. "INDIAN OPINION"

A meeting of Durban Indian was held at Mr. Omar Haji Amod Zaveri's residence on Monday, to consider the future of Indian Opinion. Mr. Abdulla Haji Amod Zaveri was in the chair. On being requested to place the position of the journal before the meeting, Gandhiji spoke as follows.

DURBAN,
April 23, 1906

Indian Opinion has been published for some years now. It was founded by Mr. Madanjit, who struggled hard to make it a success and put his all into it. When the paper was started, the extent of the financial liability was not fully realised. Later on, it was found that much more money was needed to run the paper. The total deficit could not be covered even after the £1,600 received by me as fees in the cases against the Johannesburg Corporation was handed over.[1] Every month there was a deficit of £75. which was beyond my means to meet. We had therefore to think of running the paper on different lines. It was decided to shift the Press to some place outside the city where the workers would lead a very simple life.[2] For this step no responsibility attaches to Mr. Madanjit. He was afraid that the paper would not come out under the proposed arrangement and therefore dissociated himself from it, leaving the responsibility solely to me. However, since Mr. Madanjit had started the paper for selfless reasons and since after his return to India he is still serving the country like a true patriot, his name has been retained as printer and publisher.

The paper has been published for some time past according to this arrangement; but I find that we have reached a stage when, if we do not make special efforts, we shall incur deficits and not have enough to pay even the bare monthly allowance to the workers who take only £3 a month. When I took charge of the paper, the number of subscribers was 887 and the advertisements had greatly decreased. I

[1] *Vide Autobiography*, PartIV, Chap. XIII.

[2] The Press was shifted to Phoenix in December, 1904.

am confident that I shall somehow continue to bring out the English section, at any rate as long as some of the Press workers hold on. But I have never believed that the Indian community will not accord the venture any support I, therefore, still hope that the paper will get all the help it needs.

The objects of the journal are threefold: first, to make our grievances known to the Government, to the whites here in South Africa and in England and to people in India; secondly, to tell our people of their ownshortcomings and to exhort them to over come these and, thirdly—and this is perhaps the principal object—to eliminate the distinctions as between Hindus and Mahomedans and also those among Gujaratis, Tamilians and Calcuttawallas prevalent here. The British rulers in India, it would appear, follow a different policy. They do not desire that we should come together and become united. Here in South Africa, these groups are small in numbers. We are all confronted with the same disabilities. We are moreover free from certain restrictions from which our people suffer in India. We can therefore easily essay an experiment in achieving unity. It is the aim of this journal to inculcate these ideals in the minds of our people and strengthen the community. It is necessary to secure the assistance of all thoughtful Indians to this end. I believe that many things can be achieved if this journal receives adequate support. I think that those among us who are educated and can afford to pay should subscribe to it. There are at least 20,000 Gujaratis living in South Africa. It would not be too much to expect 25 per cent. of this number to become subscribers. As for educated Indians, it is not enough that they become subscribers themselves. They should try their utmost to help in the fulfilment of the aims of the journal. They can persuade others to do so. The journal is a great instrument of education. It is necessary for every Indian to look upon the journal as belonging to him, not as something mine.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-4- l 906

175. TO YOUNG MUSLIMS

A meeting of the Young Men's Mahomedan Association was held at the Natal Indian Congress Hall, Durban, with Mr. Peeran Mahomed in the chair. Mr. M. C. Anglia made some suggestions regarding the name of the Association and asked Gandhiji for advice on this. He also suggested that the drafting of a constitution for the Association be entrusted to Gandhiji. Speaking on the occasion,

Gandhiji said:

DURBAN
April 24, 19 06

If the aim of this Association is to spread education, to promote morality and to introduce other reforms in the community, the name "Young Men's Mahomedan Association" would be proper. The Young Men's Christian Association is famous the world over. It has many prominent persons to encourage it. This Association can also work in the same way.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-4-1906

176. SPEECH AT CONGRESS MEETING

A meeting of the Natal Indian Congress was held in the Congress Hall, Durban to consider the advisability of raising an Indian ambulance corps to help the Government during the Zulu rebellion. Dawad Mahomed, Chairman of the Congress, presided. This speech by Gandhiji is extracted from a press report of the meeting at which others also spoke.

DURBAN,
April 24, 1906

Mr. Gandhi referred to the part that the Indians had taken during the Boer war. He said that the meeting was not concerned with the general question of Indian volunteering. He thought that the Government were neglecting a plain duty to the Colony in not utilizing the defensive force they had at their disposal in the Indian community. Mr. Watt had stated that he would not be defended by an Indian and at the same time said that he would use the Indian for digging trenches. We had the late Mr. Escombe's word for it that the digging of trenches and the nursing of the wounded were just as honourable and necessary as the shouldering of a rifle. But they had nothing to do that evening with Mr. Watt's views. They had to consider whether they should, during the present crisis, offer to the Government their assistance, however humble it might be. It was true they were labouring under disabilities and they were irritated. Opinions, too, may differ as to the cause of the Native revolt. But it was their duty not to be prejudiced by any such thoughts. If they claimed rights of citizenship, they were bound to take their natural share in the responsibilities that such rights carried with them. It was, therefore, their duty to assist in averting the danger that threatened the

Colony. The Indians had done good work during the Boer war. It was recognised by General Buller, and the speaker advised that a similar offer should be made to the Government this time also.

Mr. Advocate Gabriel then moved the following resolution:

> This Meeting of British Indians, assembled under the auspices of the Natal Indian Congress, hereby authorises the Chairman to send an offer to the Government, in connection with the Native rising, of the same nature as during the Boer war.

Mr. Lazarus Gabriel asked whether those who might vote for the resolution bound themselves to offer their services. Mr. Gandhi said such was not the meaning of the resolution. But every member who voted for it would be bound to assist in making the movement a success. It was for the members present to form a corps, should the Government be pleased to accept the offer.

Indian Opinion, 28-4-1906

177. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

DURBAN,
April 25, 1906

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

At a meeting of British Indians held on the 24th instant at the Congress Hall in Grey Street under the auspices of the Natal Indian Congress, and attended by over two hundred and fifty British Indians, the enclosed resolution proposed by Mr. Bernard Gabriel, Barrister-at-law, and seconded by Mr. Ismail Cora of the firm of Messrs. B. Ebrahim Ismail & Co., was carried unanimously.

I have the honour to draw the attention of the Government that, on the occasion alluded to in the resolution, several British Indians offered their services and they were accepted as leaders of ambulance parties. In the opinion of the Natal Indian Congress, it is possible to raise, similar corps, should it be necessary for the present crisis. The Congress trusts that the Government will be pleased to accept the offer. I may state that at the close of the meeting about forth British Indians handed in their names for ambulance or any such work for

which they may be considered fit.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

DAWAD MAHOMED

Indian Opinion, 28-4-1906

178. INTERVIEW TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"

It was decided by a committee appointed by the Natal Indian Congress that a deputation be sent to the Imperial Government to place before them the grievances of British Indians. Gandhiji, Ismail Cora and representatives of the Transvaal and the Cape were to form the deputation. The following is an extract from a report of The Natal Mercury representative who interviewed Gandhiji.

[Before *April 26, 1906*]

Mr. Gandhi, on being interviewed on the subject, said that the deputation would probably leave within the next two months. The Transvaal and Cape had not as yet replied. Their intention was to place before theHome Government the grievances of British Indiansthroughout South Africa, and to endeavour to obtain reasonable redress. They would also represent the disabilities under which British Indians laboured. No formal programme had been drawn up, but they would remain here until they saw the movements of the Commission[1], which left on the 7th inst. If necessary, he would appear before that Commission.

The Natal Mercury, 26-4-1906

179. AN INDIAN OFFER

The meeting held under the auspices of the Natal Indian Congress the other day is to be congratulated on having passed a resolution offering the services of Indians in connection with the Native revolt.[2] The offer is a complete answer to the many

[1] Presumably, the Constitution Committee headed by Sir West Ridgeway set up by the British Government to look into, among other things, the question of granting responsible government to the Transvaal. The deputation met the Committee on May 29; *vide* "Statement Presented to Constitution Committee", 29-5-1906

[2] *Vide*" Sppeech at Congress Meetting", 24-4-1906

correspondents in the local Press, who have been worrying themselves over the prospect, should the rebellion spread, of having to defend themselves and also Indians in the Colony. Those Indians who packed the Congress Hall last Tuesday evening have shown that they possess the faculty of discrimination in an eminent degree, and that they are capable of forgetting personal grievances when the common good of the body politic, of which they form a part, is concerned. We trust that the Government will see their way to accept the offer, and give the Indian community the chance once more of proving its worth.

But whether the offer is accepted or not, it shows most clearly the importance of the Government turning to good account the Indian willingness to take its share in the defence of the Colony by giving Indians a proper previous training. We have more than once pointed out the criminal folly of not utilizing the admirable material the Indian community offers for additional defensive purposes. If it is not possible to turn the present Indian population out of the Colony, it is surely elementary wisdom to give it an adequate military training. There is an expressive Indian proverb that you cannot start digging a well when a fire breaks out. Nor can you suddenly develop the Indians, however willing and capable they may be, into an efficient corps of even "trench-diggers". Will Mr. Watt and his fellow-ministers wake up to a sense of their duty in the matter?[1]

Indian Opinion, 28-4-1906

180. THE NATAL SHOPS ACT

Our contemporary, *The Natal Advertiser*, has given prominence to a lengthy contribution from the Secretaries of the Natal Stores Employees' Association on the Shops Act. In it the Secretaries have endeavoured to justify the Act by attempting to show that it has injured Asiatic trade. Whether it has injured that trade or not, we do not propose to discuss. We have accepted the principle underlying the Act. We believe it is right that the opening and the closing hours of shops should be State-regulated. But we cannot help thinking that the actual hours fixed by the statute are inconvenient in every respect. In fixing them, no account has been taken of the public who support the traders. To close the shops on Saturday afternoons is the height of absurdity. But all this is by the way. We believe that the Act will require early amending before it becomes workable.

It is, however, the irresponsible manner in which the responsible

[1] *Vide* "Indian Volunteering",31-3-1906

officers of the Association have dealt with the Indian traders that appears to us to call for some remarks. The Secretaries state that, before the Act, the Indian traders kept their shops open for 103 hours per week, as against 53 hours after the passing of the Act. There is no authority produced for the sweeping statement. It is inherently incorrect. The 103 hours per week mean 17 hours and ten minutes per day. Now, if we assume that the Indian store-keeper (not requiring, of course, any food and not attending to the toilet) opened his store at 6 a.m., he would not close, in order to have over 17 hours, until after 11.10 p.m. We should be glad to be furnished with the names of Indian traders who kept open during the pre-Act days between 6 a.m. and 11.10 p.m. We have heard of Irish members of the House of Commons tirelessly sitting out whole nights in the House, satisfying their hunger on a bit of kola-nut. But we have not heard of any Indian traders, with their employees, springing out of their beds (if they may be credited with having any) and hastening to their shops at 6 a.m., and standing behind the counter up to 11.10 p.m. We have heard many exaggerated accounts about Indians, but this one from the Natal Stores Employees' Association must certainly take the palm. We are prepared, however, to admit that some Indian store-keepers did keep open longer than they do now, but we are also prepared to show, if proof were needed, that European traders of the same type sinned equally, if not much worse.

Almost on a par with the above exaggeration are the other statements made by the Secretaries. We ask them to study their facts before they rush into print and they will, we assure them, find that the Indian trader is not as vile, after all, as they make him appear.

Indian Opinion, 28-4-1906

181. FINANCIAL POSITION OF THIS JOURNAL

Our readers may feel pleased to see that this journal is growing day by day. In the beginning we used to publish only four pages of Gujarati. Later, we made them five, and, after discontinuing the Tamil and Hindi sections, eight. This week we print twelve pages. It will be easily realised that such expansion means increased expenditure. And we cannot advance further without encouragement. The account of the meeting,[1] held at Mr. Omar Haji Amod Zaveri's place, will give some idea of the present financial position of the journal. We believe it is the duty of every Indian to help. All persons connected with the journal are such that they can earn their livelihood by other means.

[1] *Vide* "Indian Opinion", 23-4-1906

That they continue with the journal despite this is due, we believe, to the spark of patriotism that they keep alive in their hearts. And if enough support from the community is forthcoming, the journal can render even greater service. We wish therefore to suggest to our subscribers that, if each one of them enlists another, the number of subscribers will double in no time. We can assure them that any addition to the income of the journal will all be used for improving it.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-4-l906

182. APPEAL TO YOUNG INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Various associations of Indian youth are nowadays being formed in South Africa. They indicate an improvement in our condition. While a Young Men's Mahomedan Society has come into being in Durban, Sanatan Dharma Sabhas have been founded in Johannesburg and other towns. This is a matter for satisfaction. But we feel it necessary to sound a note of warning to both kinds of bodies.

It is a confirmed law of nature that an association of persons can grow and endure only if their minds are free from prejudice and all of them seek their good in the good of the association.

Every country depends a great deal on its young men and women. Old men with their set habits of thought cannot readjust their opinions as necessary. They cling to old ideas. Every community, however, has undoubtedly need of such men, for they help to contain the restless enthusiasm of youth within limits. While they have their uses, they have their disadvantages also, since they often hesitate to do things which needs mustbe done. This may be thought becoming in them; but it is helpful to have good young men coming forward, for it is they alone who can venture to experiment. It is therefore as necessary for us to encourage these associations as to caution them against over-enthusiasm.

The members of these youth organizations will be able to achieve many great things, if they work with sincerity and with the sole intention of doing the right thing by their country. For instance, there is much insanitation among us. Mr. Peeran Mahomed has already commented on this subject at a Congress meeting. Our young men can do much to remedy this laxity by making house-to-house visits and politely persuading people. Some poor Indians are given to drinking, and their wives have also fallen victims to the habit. Our young men can do much, if they take up the very important work of redeeming them. We should like here to ask our Gujarati readers not

to assume that they may not do this kind of work among the Madrasis given to drinking. We may add that the drinking habit is spreading among some Gujarati Hindus also. Whether Hindus or Muslims, all of us can help in reclaiming them.

Moreover, it is necessary for such youth organizations to be more mindful of the needs of education. There is a dearth of education even among our youth. We do not consider mere literacy to be education. We ought to have some knowledge of world history, the constitutions of various countries and other related subjects. We can learn from history how other nations have progressed. We can emulate them in the matter of their burning patriotism. Youth organizations can do many such things; indeed, it is their duty to do so. We do hope that these associations will fulfil their obligations by taking on such benevolent functions, earn people's gratitude, and take their due share in meeting the difficulties that are our lot in this country.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-4-1906

183. THE MEETING AT MOMBASA

There seems to be no end to India's misery. Wherever the Indian goes, the whites there are against him. Where there is no danger from the whites, there are internal quarrels. If we are free from these, we are caught by the plague. And if we escape these three calamities, famine is there at our heels.

These thoughts come to mind as we read the account of the meeting of our brethren at Mombasa, published elsewhere in this issue. The whites cast their greedy eyes on the fertile territory of Nairobi, near Mombasa. They tried to drive the Indians out of the place or to stop them from entering the territory. They seem to have succeeded in the attempt. Following this, our people held a big meeting and are preparing to resist the whites. So great was their enthusiasm that, within half an hour, they succeeded in collectingRs. 20,000and have further undertaken to raise Rs. 400 a month for calling in a lawyer to help.

We are witness to much unhappiness in this country, but as against that, we are also becoming united. If our hardships should thus lead to unity, we might as well welcome them for the time being. If we unite and put up a fight in every part of the world, our problems will ease, they will soon be forgotten and we shall become one unified community.

The Chairman of the meeting said in his address that we in

South Africa enjoyed equal rights with the whites. If Mr. Jivanji does at all know of this journal, he must be aware of our privations. We are sorry to have to tell him that our political condition here is worse than that of our brethren in Mombasa. If an Indian in Natal can acquire land, he has other hardships to face; and preparations are afoot to deprive him even of the right to hold land. In the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, land cannot be owned by an Indian to this day.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-4-1906

184. THE NATAL REBELLION AND AID TO NATAL

Bambata is still at large, and it is reported that he has 300 men with him. Many speeches have been made on the armed encounters with him. The Natal cabinet has declared that it will not seek aid from England. Telegrams have been received which mention a large meeting held at Johannesburg and say that the people there are prepared to render all aid to Natal. All this means that the strength and the independence of Natal will increase. It was right and proper of the Indian community to have gone to the help of the Government at such a time. Had they not made the offer, a slur would have been put on our good name for ever. Those who have enlisted themselves for war have indeed shown great courage and enthusiasm. Most of them are Colonial-born. It is a matter of satisfaction to us that they have joined the other Indians and it is the duty of the leaders to encourage them to go forward.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-4-1906

185. STIR IN CHINA

The Times correspondent says that the Chinese are taking greater liberties every day and are attacking the whites. Chinese newspapers publish very inflammatory articles, and in this they are being assisted by Japanese journalists. The speeches made by men of the Liberal Party on the subject of Chinese labour in the Transvaalmines have had a very bad effect on the Chinese who have become all the more enraged against the whites.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-4-1906

186. EVILS OF TOBACCO

An article by the renowned Dr. Cortez of Paris has appeared in the latest number of *The Indian Review*, wherein he mentions many evils of tobacco. The more important among them are that digestion is impaired and eyesight badly affected. It leads to loss of memory and disables one from developing high moral virtues. Moreover, it has now been found that even hearing is affected. The doctor has conclusively shown that irregular action of the nerves governing the sense of hearing is to be ascribed to tobacco.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion 28-4-1906

187. THE FATE OF SAN FRANCISCO

Owing to the earthquake, this city has been laid waste for the most part. The princes of yesterday have become paupers today. Many wealthy people have been left without shelter or clothes to wear. On this occasion of Nature's wrath, the millionaires and the penniless have been reduced to the same level. Even the distinction between white and black has disappeared. There is great scarcity of food in the city. Even bread is hard to get. A violinist who was living in a palatial building is roaming the streets, violin in hand, almost naked.

Notwithstanding this catastrophe, as the latest cablegrams show, the people in the city have started reconstructing it and making it as splendid as ever. Consequently, steel is in very great demand.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-4-1906

188. REPLY TO YOUNG MEN'S MAHOMEDAN SOCIETY

This report[1] was received while I was away at Phoenix. Since the Secretary desired that it should be published in full, I have passed on

[1] This was a report in *Indian Opinion* covering the proceedings of the two meetings of the Young Men's Mahomedan Society, Durban, held on April 16 and 24. Some speakers at these meetings had complained, among other things, that articles of interest to Muslims, reports of the activities of their Society, their subscription lists and letters to the Press, etc., were not published in *Indian Opinion* in full or given adequate publicity. This would not have happened, they pointed out, had they had a paper of their own. Gandhiji's statement is in reply to this criticism.

the whole of it for publication. But I have a word to say to my young friends. Reports should always be such as to enable people to learn something from them. I see nothing of the kind in the above report.

I accept the criticism levelled against me in all humility, and do not in the least hesitate to print it. I have nowhere said—nor indeed can I say—that the Muslims were converted from among *bhangis* and the like. I have not offended the feelings of the whites either; rather, I spoke in their favour. However, if I have committed an error in anything that I said, I have already requested my brethren to forgive me.[1]

I have allowed all the letters written against me or this journal to be published while I disallowed the letters to the Editor written in my defence. But I must add that writings likely to encourage dissension in the community will never be published. I shall always be glad if another Gujarati journal or other printing presses are started. To render public service is the only aim of this journal. It will be a matter for pride for the men running this Press, if others come forward and compete in rendering such service.

The lists acknowledging receipts of contributions to the Hindu Crematorium Fund were published against payment in *Indian Opinion*. So also were contributions to the Dabhel Madresa Fund. This journal is being published under such difficult conditions that all Indians are expected to render it maximum help. All the space in it is so valuable that whatever matter is printed in it free of cost should be such as to educate and enlighten.

In brief, my only request to my young friends is that they ought to display enthusiasm for public work. This journal is for the service of the entire Indian community. If they help it, they will be deemed to have done their duty. Their help will lend strength to the journal, which in turn will redound to the community.

I hope my friends will not take offence at what I have written and will construe it aright. My purpose in writing this is also to serve.

M. K. GANDHI

29-4-1906[2]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-4-1906

[1] *Vide* "Mr. Gandhi's Comments", 3-6-1905

[2] This date is evidently incorrect since the issue in which it was published bears the date, 28-4-1906.

189. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
April 30, 1906

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I am sending more Gujarati [matter] to-day. I intended to send some this morning but I was not able to post it as Kalyandas came to the office late and I wanted to get on with the office work. I hope, however, all the matter will be in good time.

I am leaving for Pretoria at 11.30. I, therefore, cannot write much.

Kalyandas will leave on Wednesday morning and not on Tuesday. He is anxious to pass a day here. He will, therefore, be with you on Thursday. You may send the Kaffir boy to meet him and take his things by the afternoon train. All of you, I know, will be engaged on Thursday over the paper.

Let Gokuldas start on Friday, if possible. He can leave by the 4.30 train, if he can be spared and take the mail train. Of course, he should take a single ticket. If he cannot leave on Friday, he must leave without fail on Saturday so as to be here on Sunday, but please try to send him on Friday as I shall be very much rushed.

Kalyandas should immediately take up the town work. You should get an annual second class pass for him. If he has to leave in the meantime, as you said, we can get a refund. For the present, your whole attention should be entirely devoted to the books.

I hope to write more fully in the train today or at the house tonight.

I am glad you have shaken off the fever.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

C. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
c/o *Indian Opinion*
PHOENIX

From a photostat of the original signed by Gandhiji: S.N. 4354

190. NATAL LAND BILL

The Parliament of Natal will have before it a measure of far-reaching importance for consideration in the shape of the Land

Clauses Bill. It is the second attempt of the Natal Government to pass the measure through Parliament. The clause of the greatest importance to the Indian community is that which restricts the meaning of beneficial occupation, so far as tenant's occupation is concerned, to European occupation only. Thus, land that may be occupied by Indian tenants would be considered to be non-beneficial occupation, and will be subject, on that account, to heavy taxation. It has been universally admitted that, whatever may be the faults of the Indian, he is not lazy; he is a born tiller of the soil. He is, by common consent, considered to have reclaimed some of the worst soil in the Colony. He has turned dense bush into gardens, and has made it possible, by his productive capacity, to bring garden produce within easy reach of the poor householder in Natal. Is his very virtue to be singled out for taxation? Will the Government thereby promote European occupation? We doubt it. And if our doubt be reasonable, we are safe in saying that the Government will be pursuing a dog-in-the-manger policy, by persisting in retaining the definition, above alluded to, of the expression "beneficial occupation". It is not by Acts such as thin that the Government will be able to solve the Indian question in Natal. It behoves the ministers and the leaders of public opinion to reflect seriously and calmly on the whole question and deal with it in a statesmanlike manner, instead of by the recent spasmodic anti-Indian legislation.

Indian Opinion, 5-5-1906

191. CAPE DEALERS' LICENCES

The Cape *Government Gazette* of the 20th April contains the text of a Bill to regulate the trade of a general dealer. We have no hesitation in welcoming the measure. Granted that some restriction of an indiscriminate issue of trade licenses is necessary, the Bill before us is free from reproach. It safeguards vested rights, and provides reasonable precautions against any injustice being done to applicants for new licence". It gives the power ultimately to the people themselves to say whether they will have among them a new trader or not. The Bill, whilst it protects existing traders against undue competition, gives fair facilities for new enterprise. It avoids all the faults of the Natal Dealers' Licenses Act, and secures all that the Natal Act could ever achieve consistently with regard for vested rights. We hope that the Natal Government will copy the measure and free the Statute-book of the Colony from legislation that has been condemned by all thoughtful men, and that has

caused intense irritation amongst a portion of His Majesty's subjects.

Indian Opinion, 5-5- 1906

192. BRITAIN, TURKEY AND EGYPT

The latest cablegrams show that the ill-feeling between the British and the Turkish Governments has further increased. The whole trouble is about the Egyptian boundary which still remains undefined. The first clash occurred near Akaba. Following this, the Turkish army marched on Taba Yama in the Sinai district with a view to taking possession of it. The British Government thereupon sent a communication to their Ambassador, Sir Nicholas O'Connor, asking him to lodge a strong protest with the Turkish Government and urge them to withdraw their army from Taba. The Turkish Government took no notice, and was, on the other hand, encouraged by the German Emperor to flout the British Government's wishes. Now the Turkish army is building a fort at Akaba and apparently preparing for war.[1] In retaliation, the British Government have started strengthening their garrison in Egypt. Moreover, the British Government fear that the Egyptians too are on the side of the Turkish Government. If these differences between the British and Turkish Governments should lead to war, it would be the first of its kind. It does not seem likely that the Turkish Government will retract. A cablegram received by *The Witness* shows that the border posts erected near Rafa have been demolished by the Turkish army.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-5-1906

[1] Taba was occupied by the Turkish forces ostensibly to protect the Turkish Railway between Damascus and Mecca. Eventually, a new demarcation of the frontier between Rafa and Akaba was agreed upon.

193. OUR DUTY

A correspondent who has signed himself "Ajax" has addressed a letter to *The Advertiser*. We print a translation elsewhere in this issue. The letter deserves to be pondered over by all Indians. It is intended to stir up public feeling against us. All of it is written in an ironical manner, the purport being that Indians are useless in times of war.

We should give this accusation earnest thought. In sending an offer of help to the Natal Government we took the right step. Because of this, we can face others with some measure of confidence. But that is not enough. We should strive harder with a view to playing [a more direct] part in times of war. Under the Militia Law, enlisting is compulsory for whites when war breaks out. If we can also prove our willingness and ability to fight, our disabilities may possibly disappear. But whether these are removed or not, we Indians in South Africa ought to hold ourselves in readiness to share in the adversity that might befall Natal or any other part of South Africa. If we fail to do so, we shall be found wanting to that extent.

There is rumour of a revolt in Swaziland. The Natal Government has ordered huge quantities of ammunition. All this goes to show that the Natal rebellion will last many more days. And if it spreads further, it might affect the whole of South Africa. This time help from the Transvaal has already reached Natal.[1] The Cape has promised aid, and an offer has been made by England also. If we keep aloof at such a time, it is bound to create a bad impression about us. It is necessary for every Indian to consider this matter very seriously.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-5-1906

194. THE EXAMPLE OF MOMBASA

Two more issues of the newspaper published in Mombasa have been received, which show that the Indians there are determined to do all that is necessary to secure their rights. Their example deserves to be followed by us all. We wish the Indians of Mombasa success.

From the subsequent issues of the paper, one learns that the apparent misunderstanding at the meeting about South Africa was due

[1] *Vide* "The Natal Rebellion", 14-4-1906

really to incorrect reporting.[1] The Indians there know quite well that we in South Africa do not enjoy the same rights as the whites do. But the more important thing one finds is what the Editor of the journal himself points out. He says that there is no unity among the Indians and that they will not succeed in securing their rights as long as it is not achieved. There are many factions amongst them. If the Commissioner wants any information about the whites, he can immediately find a white person to speak for all of them; but when the Commissioner desires to know anything about Indians, he has to invite half a dozen men of different communities. This is indeed unfortunate, if true. As we all come from the same country, we should forget that we belong to different communities. So long as we do not bear this in mind, we can never be rid of our hardships.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-5-1906

195. WORKMEN'S LIVING HABITS

Nowadays, there is an increasing appreciation among enlightened men of the need for open air. Where large cities have come into being, labourers have to work cooped up in factories the whole day. As the price of urban land is high, factory buildings are not spacious enough, and the tenements of labourers are also very small. This invariably results in a steady deterioration of their health. Dr. Newman of Hinsborough in London has shown that the death rate per thousand is 38 in areas where too many people live huddled together in one room, but where the same number live in two rooms, the death rate is 22; where the same number of people share three rooms, it is 11 and where they have the use of four rooms, the death rate is only 5. There is nothing surprising in this. A man can do without food for several days and live a day altogether without waters but it is impossible to carry on without air even for a minute. If a thing that is so very vital to life is not pure, the result cannot but be deleterious. It was for these considerations that large manufacturers like Cadbury Brothers and Lever Brothers, who have always been very mindful of the welfare of their workers have shifted their factories to open places outside cities. They have built very good quarters for their workers with all the attendant amenities, such as gardens and libraries; although they have spent all this money, they have flourished in their business. A similar movement has spread all over England in the wake of this example.

[1] *Vide* "The Meeting at Mombasa", 28-4-1906

This matter deserves consideration by Indian leaders. We suffer much because we do not realise the value of pure air, and this again is a strong reason why diseases like plague spread among us.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-3-1906

196. INDIAN MERCHANTS' CHAMBER

In our last issue, we published Mr. Omar Haji Amod Zaveri's letter on this subject. It deserves careful consideration. Every Indian who knows the conditions in South Africa can understand how much influence the British Chamber of Commerce wields. Had Indians taken *part* in the activities of British chambers from the beginning, the condition of the Indian trader would be different today. Numerous reforms could have been effected through them. We know that, when Indian traders first came to South Africa, Englishmen used to invite them to join their Chamber. Now the situation is such that we would be rejected if we sought admission.

Mr. Omar Zaveri now puts forward the idea that, if we cannot secure admission to the British Chamber, we can start one of our own. If it is started and our traders work for it diligently and introduce such reforms as are necessary, and if all of them act according to its advice, it will be able to achieve a good many things. The British chambers command great influence because their authority is accepted by all traders. If we cannot bring about such a state of affairs, it will make no difference whether or not we set up a Chamber. If therefore experienced and public-spirited Indian merchants meet together, consider the matter seriously and found a chamber of Indian merchants, we stand to gain. And it will be considered a good step taken to better the lot of Indian merchants.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-5-1906

197. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

THE MALAY LOCATION

I have already reported that the deputation regarding the Malay Location waited upon the Lieutenant-Governor.[1] The latter has sent his reply, saying that a part of the Malay Location will be taken over

[1] *Vide* "Johannesbuurg Letter", 21-4-1906

by the Railway authorities and the rest by the Johannesburg Municipality; that they will pay compensation to owners for buildings in the Location taken over by them, and that the Colonial Secretary will set up another Location for the displaced tenants. This reply means nothing. This outcome was anticipated even before the deputation waited on the Lieutenant-Governor. It does not appear that, for the present, the local Government will render any kind of justice.

HARDSHIPS ON THE RAILWAY

The Chairman and the Secretary of the British Indian Association saw Mr. Price, the General Manager, regarding the prohibition of Indian and other Coloured passengers from travelling by the 8-30 [a.m.] and 4-40 p.m. trains from Johannesburg to Pretoria and the morning train leaving Pretoria at 8-30 for Johannesburg. The interview lasted about an hour. Mr. Price argued that the feeling among the whites ran rather high then and it would not be desirable for the Indians to press the point further. Finally, he gave the assurance that, if an Indian had to travel by any of these trains for any urgent piece of work, the station master would, on request, arrange for him to travel with the guard. Mr. Price, however, suggested that, for the present, as few Indians as possible should travelby these three trains. He said that such restriction would not continue for long. A recent case that has a bearing on this subject deserves notice. A Coloured man was travelling in a second-class carriage with a white woman sitting beside him. Mr. Bowcker, a white, noticed this, and his blood boiled at the sight. He asked the Coloured man to vacate his seat, but the latter merely produced his ticket. But Mr. Bowcker was not satisfied and spoke to the guard who refused to intervene. Mr. Bowcker thereupon brought other white passengers to the carriage and threatened to evict the Coloured man. The helpless guard was forced to throw him out. It is not here possible to apportion blame to any official. Such difficulties are bound to occur as long as the whites continue to behave excitedly over this question.

The following is a translation of what another white writes in *The Transvaal Leader* under the title “Coolie Traveller”.

Mr. Bowcker deserves the gratitude of the whites for what he has written about the Coloured man. Some time ago, I was travelling from Potchefstroom to Park. There were also two ‘coolies’ in the train. It is true that they were in another compartment; but that does not lessen the evil. For a white will have to sit in that compartment after they leave. Moreover, the two ‘coolies’ wiped their hands with the towels kept there. The same would have to be used by the white also. And I am sure no decent white would want to use the cup or the towel used by a ‘coolie’. Surely, it behoves the Railway authorities to show some consideration for the public.

One comes across such correspondents in many papers. The only thing Indians could do on such occasions is to be patient.

MR. RITCH AND MESSRS GEORGE AND JAMES GODFREY

Cablegrams received by the local Press say that Mr. Ritch has passed his examination in England; and so have Messrs George and James Godfrey. The two brothers will shortly return, having qualified as Barristers.

THE CONDITION OF THE CHINESE

The Imperial Government is pressing for early publication of notices for the repatriation of the Chinese mine-workers at Government cost, if the latter find this work distasteful. The mine-owners, on the other hand, say that they will not put up the notices in their compounds. A serious dispute is likely to arise if the mine-owners decide to flout the Government.

THE TRAM CASE

The tram test case is not over yet. The case of Mr. Coovadia will be heard again before the Magistrate. The Crown Counsel had the hearing fixed for Saturday, the 12th.

THE CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

The Commission headed by Sir Joseph West Ridgeway has arrivedin the Transvaal. It is at present sitting in Pretoria. The BritishIndian Association has inquired whether the Commission will record such evidence as the Association may place before it regarding the condition of Indians. If the Commission agrees, it will be possible to present the whole case before it.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-5-1906

198. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
May 5, 1906

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I am surprised you did not receive the Johannesburg letter this week. I certainly sent it. I have a list of all the articles I sent. I should check it as soon as I receive *Indian Opinion*, and then let you know. If it is at all possible to let me have Gujarati copy as well as English copy in advance on Fridays, it will be very much better, as I should then receive them on Sunday mornings and make use [of them]. You have sent me many cuttings. I am dealing

with them in Gujarati but some of them really should have been dealt with this week and if they have, I should not have to write on them at all. That I could do on Sundays if I got an advance copy. You may also in sending your copies mark there whether you have dealt with it in the current issue or not. I do hope Gokuldas left yesterday. I can then prepare him for the work on Monday, but as there is no telegram, I fear that he has not left. I would like you to tell me whether Mr. Isaac has dealt with the matters you entrusted to him. I want you to remind me about the list of Mr. Nazar's effects next week. As I am destroying your letter, I may forget all about it. You should do the work of general supervision as to the other matters and devote the balance of your time entirely to the books. I wish you to promise to yourself as to the time when you will have the balance-sheet ready.

Kalyandas ought to be a tower of strength to you. If he is willing to stay with you he may do so, but I think that if he remains with Hemchand, he will exert a better influence on him. He will not very often take his luncheon in Phoenix. All, therefore, he will have is one meal in the evening. He may as well have that separate but you may all decide otherwise, if you choose to. I am glad you are attending to the improvements of your ground. It is most necessary work, and I would like you, now that you will be freer, to devote your time to it methodically. There should not be a weed within your two acres. I will write to Sam about the garden.[1] I return the cutting on gardening you have sent me. You should keep it and let othersread it. You should read other books also on gardening. I think there is a little book with Mr. West.[2] You should learn to lead in such matters. I shall write to Mohanlal about a weekly letter. I spoke to Vyas also. I do not think it is necessary at present to offer to send them the *Opinion* free of charge. Let them feel that it is their duty to write these letters.

I have not yet recovered the money from the theatre people. You should not, therefore, execute the job until I have done so.

Apropos of the Johannesburg letter, may it not have been received by Anandlal directly, because I believe the first batch of my Gujarati writing I addressed to Anandlal...[3]

From a photostat of the original: S.N. 4356

[1] This letter, if written, is not available.

[2] On this, Mr. West writes : "I think that the book referred to was written by one Du Casse, a man of great practical experience in Natal who had a lovely garden at Hillary, not far from Durban. Many of our fruits and ornamental trees planted at Phoenix come from his nurseries. The title of the book I cannot remember. The publishers, I think, were P. Davis & Son, Pietermaritzburg. . . ."

[3] The letter is incomplete.

199. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Sunday, [*May 6, 1906*]

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

There is something I have to write to you about but have no time today. You have to occupy yourself wholly with the books for the present. I am sending herewith the Gujarati matter. Go through it yourself, and after showing it to Harilal Thakar, pass it on to Anandlal. At the moment I do not have the time to write him a letter. I shall address the matter that I write to-night directly to him. Please take care that nothing incorrect is printed in Gujarati. You may keep an eye on it, but put the whole burden of it on Mr. Thakar. I shall write asking him to show all the Gujarati material to you. But you are not to spend much time over it at present. I collected twenty more names by Friday, which I shall send you tomorrow. Subscriptions from six of them have already been received. Kalyandas will leave on Tuesday morning, arriving there on Wednesday evening. It will do if either you or some one else meets him at Phoenix on Wednesday evening. Entrust all the Durban work to him. It will be enough if you go [to Durban] once a fortnight with the editor's ticket. It is necessary that you concentrate mostly on books.

Send Gokuldas as soon as you can. Else on Saturday.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 4357

200. LETTER TO LORD SELBORNE[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before May 12, 1906]

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 30th ultimo, No. 15/4/1906. My Association ventures to think that the complaint forwarded to His Excellency[2] has not received that investigation which the circumstances required. As to the dilatoriness, my Association will watch the working of the new

[1] This was published in *Indian Opinion* under the caption "British Indian Association's Reply".

[2] *Vide* "Letter to William Wedderburn", 12-4-1906

department. In the meanwhile, attention is respectfully drawn to the fact that applications have been pending for months, and it is difficult for my Association to reconcile such a lapse of time with any regard for the convenience of the applicants.

With reference to the case of Mr. Suliman Manga, my Association has ascertained the full facts, and my Association thinks that the information given to His Excellency is by no means complete. There was absolutely no mis-statement of material facts in connection with the application. The application was made through Mr. Gandhi, who, my Association understands, was instructed by a friend of the Mangas'. The ground for the application was not that Mr. Manga wanted to visit his uncle, but that he wanted to pass through the Transvaal on his way to Delagoa Bay. A reply was received on the 14th March rejecting the application for a temporary permit. The variation as to the description of the relative only took place after rejection of the application. In reply to the letter in question, Mr. Gandhi wrote to the Permit Officer expressing his surprise and there described the uncle as father, which, as he explains, was written without his having referred to the previous letter. In any case, there was no question of misleading, as the variation in the description of relationship was so palpable that it could only be accounted as a mistake. As a matter of fact, as it now transpires, Mr. Manga had neither a father nor an uncle in Delagoa Bay, but he had a cousin, and for that matter there was a further discrepancy that Mr. Manga was described as a British Indian, whereas he happened to be a Portuguese Indian. All this arose as instructions were given by a friend of the Mangas' who did not know them intimately. But none of these facts had any direct bearing on the application. In the second letter, information was given to the effect that Mr. Manga was a student from England. A later development of the case showed the painful fact that Mr. Manga, considered as a British Indian, was unable to securewhat he got for the asking when it became known that he was a Portuguese subject. The case of Mr. Suliman Manga is, in the humble opinion of my Association, very important as showing the difficult position in which the British Indian community is placed in the Transvaal. The reason, too, given for the refusal was denied to my Association. My Association became aware of it for the first time through your letter. The foregoing statement of facts shows that the reason for refusal could not have been the variation in the description of the relative in Delagoa Bay, because when the decision was announced, the slip as to the uncle being described as father had not occurred. My Association ventures to submit that there should be sufficient latitude granted in connection with temporary permits, or what may be termed visitors'

passes, and that in any case applicants should have reasons given to them as to why their applications have been rejected. My Association has obtained copies of the correspondence in the matter which I take the liberty to enclose herewith.[1]

Regarding the age limit for the introduction of male Asiatic minors, my Association respectfully submits that the reduction of the age limit would hardly cure the abuses referred to in the letter under reply. Those who intend to practise deception will continue to do so whether the age limit is sixteen or twelve. Abuses under legislation restrictive of human liberty are inevitable, but my Association respectfully submits that the abuses have by no means been extensive, and they have always been avoidable. May I further venture to state that the reduction of age limit is a punishment awarded to the innocent for the crimes of the guilty persons.

With reference to all persons irrespective of age or sex being required to obtain permits, my Association takes it that it only refers to British Indians or Asiatics, for it is within the knowledge of my Association that many European children and ladies have entered the country without any permits at all. My Association ventures to submit that the requiring of wives, and children five years of age, or, as it has been said, infants-in-arms, to carry permits is hardly called for and is calculated to create a great deal of irritation. My Association, therefore, once more respectfully requests His Excellency's sympathetic intervention.

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
ABDUL GANI
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 12-5-1906

201. INDIAN VOLUNTEERING

Correspondence has appeared in *The Natal Advertiser* on the offer of the Indian community, in connection with the Native rebellion, which ordinarily we should not feel justified in noticing. As, however, the subject discussed by the correspondents of our contemporary is of such vital importance both to the Indian community and to the Colony, we make no apology for dealing with the points raised by them. We have no concern with the reckless abuse

[1] Not reproduced here

indulged in by some of the correspondents.

One of them has satirically suggested that Indians, so that they may not run away, should be placed in the front-line, and that then the fight between them and the Natives will be a sight for the gods. We propose to take the correspondent seriously, and venture to suggest that, if such a course were adopted, it would be undoubtedly the very best that could happen to the Indians. If they be cowardly, they will deserve the fate that will overtake them; if they be brave, nothing can be better than for brave men to be in the front-line. But the pity of it is that the Government, and the European Colonists who have dictated the policy to the Government, have not taken the elementary precaution of giving the necessary discipline and instruction to the Indians. It is, therefore, a matter of physical impossibility to expect Indians to do any work with the rifle; or, for that matter, to do any work in connection with war with much efficiency. The Indian Ambulance Corps, at the time of the late war, did excellent work, without the necessary instruction and discipline, only because the Indian leaders who joined the Corps had previously been instructed and prepared under Dr. Booth.

Another correspondent has suggested that Indians should not be armed, because if they were, they would sell their arms to the Natives. This is a suggestion which is made wickedly, and without any foundation in fact. Indians have never been armed; it is, therefore, sheer folly to say that, if they were, they would act in a particular direction. It has also been suggested that the offer has been made to gain cheap applause, and also to gain something not made apparent in the proceedings of the Congress meeting. The first statement is slanderous, and the best way to disprove the stricture is for these correspondents to make the Government accept the offer, and to see whether the response is adequate or not. The second statement is difficult to understand. If it is intended to convey the impression that Indians, by serving during war time, hope to obtain a redress of their wrongs, the statement is true, and no Indian should be ashamed of such a motive. What can be better and more praise worthy than that Indians, by standing shoulder to shoulder with their fellow-Colonists in the present trouble, should show that they are not unworthy of the ordinary rights of citizenship which they have been claiming all these years? But it is equally true also that the offer has been made unconditionally, as a matter of simple duty, and irrespective of whether there is any redress of the grievances granted or not. We, therefore, consider it to be the special aim of every Colonist to support the Indian community in the offer it has made, and thereby to show prudence and foresight, for it cannot be seriously

argued that there is any wisdom or statesmanship in blindly refusing to make use of, for purposes of war, one hundred thousand Indians who are perfectly loyal, and who are capable of good training.

Indian Opinion, 12-5-1906

202. INDIAN PERMITS

Lord Selborne has now replied to the representations of the British Indian Association on the working of the Permit Ordinance. The Association has sent in a further representation, traversing some of the facts and arguments contained in His Excellency's reply. We cannot help saying that Lord Selborne's reply is most disappointing. The Manga case has been fully dealt with by the Association in its reply.[1] We need not, therefore, comment any further upon the curious reason given for refusing Mr. Manga's application for a permit.

It is evident, from Lord Selborne's letter, that the age limit has been reduced arbitrarily from sixteen to twelve, for, as the Association has pointed out, evasion of the regulations by some people could be no ground for reduction of the age limit. But where utter want of regard for the feelings of Indians has been shown is in connection with separate permits being required for wives accompanying their husbands. This is an innovation which has absolutely no justification for it. The anti-Asiatic party has never said one word regarding the influx of Indian women. There are, as is well known, very few Indian women in the Transvaal, and they do not in any way compete in trade. Their work is confined solely to looking after their households. We must, therefore, frankly confess that we were not prepared for the reply that Lord Selborne has given regarding separate permits for wives. Is it a new discovery that "all persons in the Transvaal, irrespective of age or sex, are required under the Peace Preservation Ordinance to obtain permits"? If it is not, why have Indian women not been called upon hitherto to produce any permits? Why have Indian children been exempted until recently from having to carry any permits?

And,as the Association points out, the Peace Preservation Ordinance is not by any means universally applied, in that European ladies and children under sixteen years are free from having to obtain orcarry permits when travelling with their husbands or parents; nor has His Excellency taken any note of peculiar Indian susceptibilities regarding Indian womanhood. We have no hesitation in saying that

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Selborne", Before 21-5-1906

the regulation is unreasonable, insulting, and totally uncalled for. If it is enforced, it will create irritation which will be difficult to allay. It is strange, indeed, that, with the innovations introduced, His Excellency can conclude his letter by saying that the permit work is being done with "as much consideration for the convenience of the applicants as is possible under all circumstances". Not until the age limit has been restored, not until Indian women are rendered free from unwarranted insult, not until Indian refugees can have their applications considered immediately on their receipt, can, in our humble opinion, His Excellency say, with any show of justice, that the Permit regulations are enforced with any degree of reasonableness. We can quite understand the difficulties in the way of the officers who have to administer the law, but if they are short-handed, it is the duty of the Government to supplement the staff, so as not to delay consideration of the applications. Such an increase in the staff can only be temporary, for there must, some time or other, be an end to the applications from refugees. It is the congestion of work in the Office which has to be dealt with. Why cannot that congestion be removed by employing extra men?

Indian Opinion, 12-5-1906

203. THE COLOURED PEOPLE'S PETITION

The Coloured People's Vigilance Committee has prepared a petition, for submission to the House of Commons, in connection with the new Constitution to be granted to the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony. The public are not informed whether the petition is in continuation of that addressed to King Edward VII by the African Political Organization[1], or whether it is a distinct and separate movement. In any case, both the petitions represent practically the same interests. The only difference is that, whereas the petition to the King deals with Coloured people as distinguished from the Natives, the present petition seems to include the Natives. There is no doubt that, ultimately, the policy enunciated by the late Mr. Rhodes[2] will have to be accepted by South Africa, if there is to be federation, and if it is to continue to remain under the British flag. We, however, question whether, in view of what Mr. Churchill has

[1] *Vide* "The Coloured People's Petition", 24-3-1906

[2] Cecil Rhodes, Prime Minister of Cape Colony, 1890-6. His policy was to unite the Dutch and the British in a self-governing South African Federation which will extend gradually to cover Native territories. He also believed in self-government within the Empire.

so often said, it will be at all possible to grant the prayer of the petitioners, though either petition cannot help *[sic]* but do good, as they will have paved the way for a discussion of the subject so soon as the Parliaments of the two Colonies meet under Responsible Government.

Indian Opinion, 12-5-1906

204. HOME RULE FOR INDIA

Mr. Parekh, the Vice-President of the Indian Home Rule Society, delivered a speech at Newcastle in England to the effect that home rule should be granted to India. He said that India should be given complete independence and that Englishmen should leave the country. The present policy was good for neither the rulers nor the ruled. That policy sometimes vitiated the character of the persons going out to serve in India. It is said that the administration of India is carried on under the direction and control of Parliament; but in reality the authority of Parliament was so limited as to be almost negligible. Since Parliament had no time to listen to the grievances of India's millions, the bureaucracy there exercised its powers arbitrarily. If home rule was granted, the condition of the people would certainly improve.

The reason why famines continually recur in India is not that there is not enough grain in the country. Where there is scarcity of grain, it is often confined only to particular parts of the country. The reason for countrywide famines, however, is quite different. Grain there is, but the people have not the means of buying it. India suffers from starvation because there is dearth not of grain, but of purchasing power. The Government there does not do its duty by its subjects; and the claim that British rule promotes the common weal has become a sheer pretence and mockery. In the name of justice and for the good of humanity, India must be given home rule.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-5-1906

205. THE CHINESE CAN RETURN

The mine-owners in the Transvaal caused a furore over the notice which the Government intends to put up regarding permission to the Chinese to go back to their country. A public meeting was convened at Boksburg on the 8th instant, and it was demanded of the Government that they should not give the Chinese money to return

home. Similar resolutions were passed, at a meeting in the Market Square, by the Rand Pioneers and the Krugersdorp Chamber of Commerce.

One mine-owner prevented a Government official from putting up the notice on his premises, and filed a test case in the Transvaal High Court. While delivering judgment, the Chief Justice stated that the Government had every right to put up such a notice. The plaintiff's suit was dismissed with costs; and circulars have been issued asking managers of mines to assist Government officials in putting up the notice in every compound occupied by the Chinese.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-5-1906

206. NATAL SHOPS ACT

The Natal Store Employees' Association published a long statement in *The Advertiser* concerning the Act that has been passed regarding the closing time of shops in Natal. We gave a summary of it. We wrote strongly against it in our English section[1] and the Secretary of the Association has replied to that. Apart from showering abuse, he has nothing in particular to say. It is a good thing, he says, that Indians have been forced to submit to the Act, and that they have suffered so much in consequence. There is no doubts he adds, that Indians used to keep the shops open up to 11 in the evening. He is still not able, however, to give any proof of this.

We have again commented[2] on this in the English section above and asked the Secretary to produce evidence in support of his charge.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-5-1906

207. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

May 14, 1906

TRAM TEST CASE

THE TRAM CASE WAS TO HAVE BEEN HEARD TODAY. HOWEVER, AS THE MUNICIPALITY HAS DECIDED TO ENGAGE A BARRISTER EVEN FOR THE MAGISTRATE'S COURT, THE CASE HAS BEEN POSTPONED TO FRIDAY. SIR

[1] *Vide* "The Early Closing Act of Natal" 24-3-1906

[2] *Ibid*

RICHARD SOLOMON AND LORD SELBORNE ARE TAKING A KEEN INTEREST IN THIS CASE. HARDSHIPS ON THE RAILWAY

The local Chamber of Commerce has protested against the power given to Railway guards to shift passengers about from one compartment to another. As a regulation to that effect will apply to all, the Chamber's protest will cover Indians automatically. All this has arisen from a minor inconvenience caused to a white passenger. Vehement speeches were made at the Chamber meeting also.

A few days ago, while Mr. Ahmed Surtie of Aliwal North was travelling from Germiston to Park Station, the guard put him to needless trouble. Mr. Surtie complained to the Railway authorities, who replied saying that the guard had been reprimanded. I have already mentioned the interview which the Chairman and the Secretary of the British Indian Association had with the General Manager.[1] Construing our conciliatory attitude as a sign of weakness and taking advantage of it, the General Manager has now gone a step further and says that Indians or other Coloured passengers should not attempt to travel even by the train leaving Pretoria at five o'clock in the afternoon. The Association has expressed its inability to agree to the imposition of this handicap, for, as the five o'clock train is convenient to them, Indians will not give up their right to use it.

THE COMMISSION MEETINGS

The Ridgeway Commission held three meetings at Johannesburg, at which the Progressive Party and the Rand Pioneers-gave evidence.Major Barnett has written to the British Indian Association to say that the Commission will record their evidence when they visit Johannesburg next. Mr. Daniel, too, is trying to get a hearing for his testimony on behalf of the Coloured People's Association.

UNCLEANLINESS AMONG INDIANS

At the corner of Pioneer and Park Roads in Fordsburg, there is a fruit and vegetable shop owned by an Indian. He was accused of sleeping in the same room where he kept foodstuffs. Giving evidence, the constable said that he saw fruit, bread and vegetable stored in the room in which the accused and another man were sleeping. Furthermore, there was also a bitch with a litter of eight pups in the same room behind a curtain. The shop stank badly. The Court sentenced the store-keeper to a fine of £5 or imprisonment for three weeks. A white showed me the report of the case published in *The Star*

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 5-5-1906

and said, “It is such men as these that do harm to the cause of your countrymen. How can you defend such a man?” I had no defence to offer. I could only hide my face in shame, while taking the newspaper from him.

THE TRANSVAAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

The Transvaal Legislative Council will meet on the 25th. The items on its agenda must be important, for this is probably its last session. A new Council is likely to come into existence next year

THE CHINESE POSTERS

The mine-owners had approached the Supreme Court contesting the order which required a poster to be put up within every mine-compound to say that the cost of returning Chinese indentured labour to their country will be paid. Despite Mr. Leonard’s best efforts in their behalf, the Supreme Court has once again shown its independence and sense of justice. Chief Justice Sir Joyce Rossiness, delivering judgment, said that the Government has full authority to put up such a notice in the mine premises. The Court has dismissed the application of mine-owners with cost, and 3 notice in Chinese has been put up at every mine. The effect of this now remains to be seen. Some people think that many Chinese will avail themselves of this opportunity and return to their country. Others believe that the notice will have no effect them at all. If the number leaving is large, the mine-owners will be very badly affected. Some of them are threatening to close down their mines.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-5-1906

208. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

21-24 COURT CHAMBERS,
CORNER RISSIK & ANDERSON STREETS,
P. O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
May 16, 1906

THE HON’BLE DADABHAI NAOROJI
[LONDON]

DEAR SIR,

This is to introduce to you Mr. A. H. West who has been managing the International P. Press and sub-editing in *Indian Opinion*. Mr. West is one of the founders of the scheme under which

the paper is being published. Mr. West is paying a short visit to his people and during that time he will do what public work he can.

I am,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original: G.N. 2272

209. AN ASIATIC POLICY

The well-known writer L. E. N. has now finished his able articles contributed to *The Rand Daily Mail* on Asiatics in the Colonies. He has suggested the following measures for dealing with the question:

(1) Keep out masses of Asiatics as permanent residents, as far as possible, at all costs.

(2) If indentured labour is needed, insist on repatriation on expiration of contract.

(3) Fair, even generous, treatment to those Asiatics who have, under the conditions of the old days, become part of the population of the country.

(4) No irritating restrictions on the movements of the temporary visitor or traveller. L. E. N. winds up by saying:

> With such a policy there must be no vexatious restrictions to insult the educated man—things more irritating and harmful than the regulation which quietly keeps out thousands of the poorer class. The cultured traveller of the Eastern world ought not to have to submit to treatment which is not even meted out to a pauper immigrant on a New York quay; he should not have to consent to having his thumb-impressions taken like a criminal or to be threatened, as the extremists of the Transvaal threatened him, with instant removal to a location.

With a presentment such as this we can heartily agree except in one particular. In fact the policy sketched out by L. E. N. is one thathas been accepted by the Indian community. The exception, however, that we have in mind is a very serious one. If indentured labour be introduced from India, whether for the Rand mines or for the plantations of Natal, it should not be subject to the repatriation clause. Had such labour not been introduced, probably the Indian question would never have arisen in South Africa, but if it be considered absolutely essential to the prosperity of any portion of South Africa that indentured Indian labour should be introduced, it is only fair that, after the men have been so introduced, and, in the words of the late Mr. Escombe, have given the best five years of their lives,

they should be free to settle in the country and reap the reward of their services by following any honest occupation they may choose. Even the late Sir William Wilson Hunter, who was known for his extreme moderation, and who was always credited with being able to take a sane view of things, did not hesitate to consider the state of indentured labour as "one perilously near slavery". The least, therefore, that such men are entitled to is freedom of residence in the country which they have served so well. We think, therefore, that L. E. N. would have added greater weight to his contributions had he treated the question of free Indian immigration on its own merits, because such immigration is a matter of Imperial policy, whereas the question of indentured labour is a matter of contract and bargain.

Considerations that guide the examination of the one question do not necessarily apply to that of the other; in South Africa, where both the Transvaal and Natal are largely dependent upon indentured labour, either from India or other parts of Asia, it is extremely necessary to bear this distinction in mind.

Indian Opinion, 19-5-1906

210. MOVE FOR SHOP-CLOSING HOURS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Everyone knows that a law requiring shops to be closed at a given hour has already been enacted in Natal. We said earlier that a similar Bill was to be brought before the Cape Legislature. Now comes news from Johannesburg that a like move is afoot in the Transvaal too. There was a meeting of leading Europeans at the Masonic Temple, presided over by Sir George Farrar, and the Mayor of Johannesburg was present. The meeting passed a resolution to say that a law should be enacted requiring shops to be closed at a given hour. Indian merchants should take a hint from this. It would behove us to act of our own accord before a law is passed enjoining us to do so. The store-managers of Natal are trying to show that, in closing shops after being compelled by law to do so, we are doing nothing extraordinary. This is true to some extent. When Indian merchants in Potchefstroom decided to close shops at regular hours, we congratulated them. Our agent, however, informs us that they have reverted to their earlier practice. We are sorry if this is true. We would strongly urge upon the Indian merchants in Potchefstroom as also those in other places that they reach an understanding with white merchants in the matter of closing shops before a law is enacted.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-5-1906

211. POTCHEFSTROOM AND KLERKSDORP[1]

There is at present a trade depression in Potchefstroom. The discrimination that Indians there have to suffer relates in particular to using cabs and visiting public gardens. It is difficult for an Indian to hire a cab readily. There is little chance of securing legal redress in the matter. For when an incident of this nature occurred earlier, the Potchefstroom Municipality framed a bye-law, which is now in force. The remedy about the use of gardens lies in the hands of the Indians themselves. We cannot be legally debarred from visiting the public gardens; and we can institute a case even in a Magistrate's court and seek redress.

The agreement arrived at by the Indians in Potchefstroom after negotiations with the British traders, regarding the closing of shops at the same time as whites, appears to have been broken. This is not at all proper. The agreement should have been implemented in the same way in which it was negotiated. It should not happen that, because the whites are not fair in their dealings with us, we should also fail to do the right thing.

As between Klerksdorp and Potchefstroom, the Indian stores in the former town excel those in the latter. The Klerksdorp stores are built better and their facades, too, are more pleasing. There is no reason why the same cannot be done in Potchefstroom. Both at Klerksdorp and Potchefstroom, the Indian stores were mostly found to be quite comparable to those of the Europeans in elegance and in other respects; but the backyards and living conditions need improvement. The tenements in the yard should, however, be cleaner and more spacious; and the bathrooms, etc., should also be kept clean.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-5-1906

212. OUR SHORTCOMINGS

The lack of cleanliness among Indians, to which our Johannesburg Correspondent refers, deserves to be pondered over by all of us. If one glances at the newspapers of the last twenty years, one will find that the most serious accusation against Indians has all along been about their uncleanliness. In so far as the whites have

[1] This article was based "On a Visit by Our Special Representative".

exaggerated this charge, we have given suitable replies. The case which our Johannesburg Correspondent mentions should, however, put us to shame. That the same room should be used for sleeping and keeping vegetables, bread, etc., is reprehensible. We have nothing to say against the fine imposed by the court. Neither can we say that the offence was unwittingly committed. We want repeatedly to draw the attention of the Indians in South Africa to such incidents. The remedy for this kind of evil should lie in our own hands. It is not enough that we do not commit such offences ourselves; it is our duty to persuade our neighbours, our acquaintances and others whom we can influence to eschew such faults. It would not be thought improper if we appointed committees to bring about reforms in the matter. We believe that this should be the main function of the associations that have been recently founded. We specially invite the attention of the Mahomedan Association and the Hindu Sanatan Dharma Sabha to these matters. Our big merchants, who are the true leaders of the community, can effect many improvements in this respect. To begin with, they can clean up the backyards of their stores and, by so doing, influence the small traders and hawkers.

It will not be wrong to say that we have brought upon ourselves certain of these stringent regulations; and if we do not wake up now, late as it is, we shall only meet with greater severity. While talking among ourselves, we compare our position with that of the Jews and say that, though they live in a more slovenly fashion, they do not have to suffer the same inconveniences as we do. This is only a half-truth, and a half-truth is always misleading. There is no doubt that the living habits of poor Jews are worse than ours. But when money comes into their hands, they can make very good use of it. Instead of hoarding wealth, they put it to appropriate use. In Durban, in Johannesburg or in Cape Town, wherever we look, it is quite obvious that the Jews who have made money know how best to spend it; that their houses are very tidy and elegant, and that their standards of life are high. They mix easily with other Europeans and by doing so, they have been able to make so much money that, in Johannesburg, they wield as much influence as the rulers themselves. The richest persons in the world are to be found among the Jews.

It is characteristic of human nature to discover in others the faults which are in oneself, and thus to feel complacent in the beliefthat others share one's defects. Men of discernment who are patriotic, and who are moved by the valour of others, should entertain good thoughts, should consider the merits and not the demerits of

others, and should try to follow their example and persuade others to do likewise.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-5-1906

213. "THE RAND DAILY MAIL" ON INDIANS

For some weeks past, a writer who signs himself 'L. E. N.' has been writing a series of articles on the condition of Indians for The *Daily Mail* of Johannesburg in South Africa. The concluding article of the series appeared last week. In it the writer has expressed the following views.

(1) In so far as it is possible, Asiatics should not henceforth be allowed into South Africa.

(2) If Asiatic labour be found necessary, it should be provided for in the contract with them that they would be repatriated to their native country, India or whatever it be.

(3) Generous treatment may be given to those Asiatics who have already settled in the country.

(4) No restrictions should be imposed on Indians who wish to come on a short visit.

The writer is an influential person and has written in the same strain in several other papers also. One may generally accept all his views excepting that relating to the compulsory repatriation of labour imported under indenture, and, as a matter of fact, we have been making similar demands for some time past.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-5-1906

214. INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING PERMITS FOR CHILDREN

Permits are not at present granted to children under sixteen, but the British Indian Association is active in the matter. In all probability those who are above 12 but under 16 years and have already entered South Africa will not have any difficulty. We therefore request those persons, whose children above the age of 12 are stranded in any of the ports in South Africa, to let us have their names, addresses and other details so that we can send these to the proper quarters.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-5-1906

215. THE QUESTION OF REPATRIATING THE CHINESE

We had earlier told our readers that the British Government had taken up the matter of repatriating the Chinese and that they were also prepared to bear the cost of doing so.[1] This has led to much excitement in the Transvaal, and the white mine-owners are planning, among other things, to send a deputation to England to prevent Chinese repatriation. General Botha has written to the Government saying that the Chinese not only did not desist from acts of violence against Boer farmers but were, in fact, becoming more cruel. The question arises as to how long these outrages will continue. If the Government of the Transvaal and the mine-owners could not stop this outrageous conduct by the Chinese, the Boers would complain to the British Government about it. He further says that, if the Government did not give a satisfactory reply, the Boers would send a deputation to the British Government in order to appeal to them to arrange the repatriation of the Chinese.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-5-1906

216. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

[After *May 18, 1906*][2]

TRAM TEST CASE

The case filed by Mr. Ebrahim Saleji Coovadia against the Johannesburg municipality was heard last Friday the 18th by Mr. Cross, the Magistrate. In his deposition, Mr. Coovadia stated that he was the Treasurer of the British Indian Association and that, when, on April 7, he attempted to board an electric tram, the conductor refused to admit him. The conductor deposed on behalf of the municipality, and with his testimony, the presentation of the municipal case was over. On this occasion, the municipality was represented by Barrister Feetham. On behalf of Mr. Coovadia, Mr. Gandhi was present to brief and assist Mr. Blaine, the Defence[?] Counsel. Arguing the case for the municipality, Mr. Feetham said that, at the time of the outbreak of

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 5-5-1906

[2] The original is wrongly dated May 14, 1906. It is clear, from the reference to the hearing of Coovadia's suit against the Municipality on Friday the 18th, that this despatch was written on or after that date. The last few paragraphs are dated May 22, 1906.

smallpox in 1897, the Boer Government had issued certain regulations. Under these regulations, Coloured persons could not travel with whites in a tram-car unless they were servants of the latter. As the regulations were then still in force, Indians could not be allowed to travel by trams. The Magistrate, Mr. Cross, did not admit the argument and found that Mr. Coovadia had the right to use the tram under the regulations framed by the municipality in the matter and sentenced the conductor to pay a fine of 5s., or undergo imprisonment for a day in default. The conductor immediately paid the fine.

During the case, it transpired that the Town Council, with a view to thwarting the Indian case, had stated, while taking out a licence, that the trams were for the exclusive use of the whites; and Mr. Feetham was all flushed with triumph when he produced the licence before the court. But, as the Gujarati proverb goes, he who digs a pit for others falls into it himself; the Town Council committed a blunder in producing the licence. For it was found to have been issued four days after the date on which Mr. Coovadia had attempted to board the tram; and Mr. Feetham had to hang his head from shame when he realized the mistake.

Press reporters were present to cover the case, and a fairly full report has appeared in all the local papers. But though the success of the Indians was thus complete, the Town Council has wrested the fruits of victory from their hands. The joy at the court decision on Friday was marred by the regulation issued by the Johannesburg municipality and published in the *Government Gazette* on Saturday. It simply states that the regulations framed by the municipality in the matter of the tramway have been repealed. There is nothing apparently objectionable in such a regulation; but its legal implications are as follows.

Our plea was that, as the tram regulations of the Johannesburg municipality came after the smallpox regulations, the latter, which were not in consonance with the said municipal regulations, stood abrogated. But the argument of the municipality appears to be that, since the new regulations have now been repealed, the old ones about smallpox come into force again.

This is a clear case of betrayal. This means that we shall have to put up a fresh struggle beginning all over again—which will be both very troublesome and costly. But it has to be undertaken if the Indian community does not want to submit to this defeat.

There is a member of the Town Council named Mr. Lane who asked the Chairman of the Tramways Committee some questions yesterday and wanted to know the expense to which the Town Council put the citizens by fighting law suits of this nature. He also suggested

that, if the Council at all cared for its prestige, it should no longer harass Indians.

LORD SELBORNE'S REPLY ABOUT PERMITS

Lord Selborne has replied to the second communication of the British Indian Association. The reply is both brusque and arrogant. Itsays that he is for the present unable to do anything further in the matter of permits. This means that it would be obligatory even for women to take out permits. However, I believe the Indian community will not yield to such a law and His Lordship's views regarding Indians will not be allowed to prevail.

MALAY LOCATION

The owners of the Stands in the Malay Location have decided to send a deputation to Lord Selborne regarding the authority granted to the Town Council to acquire the Location.

THE COMMISSION FROM ENGLAND

The Indian deputation will appear before this Commission at 3-15 p.m. on Tuesday, the 22nd. An account of what happens there will, if possible, be sent in time for this issue.

Tuesday, May 22, 1906

THE INDIAN DEPUTATION BEFORE THE CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

The Indian deputation appeared before the Constitution Committee today. It included Mr. Abdul Gani (Chairman), Mr. Haji Ojer Ali, Mr. Ebrahim Saleji Coovadia (Johannesburg), Mr. Ismail Patel (Klerksdorp), Mr. Ibrahim Khota (Heidelberg), Mr. Ibrahim Jasaat (Standerton), Mr. E. M. Patel (Potchefstroom) and Mr. M. K. Gandhi. A telegram was received from Mr. Haji Habib saying that he was prevented from joining the deputation at the last minute owing to pressure of work.

A statement prepared by the deputationists was submitted to the Commission and was hurriedly gone through by the Chairman of that body. He then asked some questions pertaining to it and further invited the delegates to raise any more points if any of them wanted to. In response to this Haji Ojer Ali said that the Indians were more particular about their general rights as British Indians than about the right of franchise; that they were not allowed even to use the trams and had to suffer frequent humiliation.

On the Chairman's wanting to know more about the problem, Mr. Gandhi gave a full account of the difficulties relating to the use of trams and added that there was another difficulty which caused greater

harassment to the Indians: they were not only denied the right to purchase land, but they could not hold it in their own names even for religious purposes. Constant difficulties were experienced in the matter of transferring such lands in Pretoria, Johannesburg, Heidelberg and other places. It was a gross injustice to seek to place Indians in the same class as the Kaffirs. There were a number of laws in the Transvaal in which the term "Native" did not cover the Indian.

After this, the Chairman of the Commission asked the deputationists to send to the Secretary in writing all the details aboutthe problems of trams as also whatever additional information they wanted to give, so that the Commission might consider them. The deputation then withdrew.

Lord Sandhurst, who was formerly Governor of Bombay, then came out and made casual inquiries about Bombay, etc., adding that he liked Bombay very much and would like to go there again.

Next week I shall send the statement submitted to the Commission.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-5-1906

217. LETTER TO "TRANSVAAL LEADER"[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
May 21, 1906

TO
THE EDITOR
Transvaal Leader
[JOHANNESBURG]

SIR,

May I say with reference to your leader on the tram-car case, brought at the instance of the British Indian Association, that the magistrate's decision does not "throw open the trams to Coloured persons of every grade". For instance, it does not throw open the cars to the Natives, and it leaves untouched the regulation which enables conductors to reject passengers who are drunken, ill-dressed or otherwise objectionable. So that when you say that your "remarks are directed to the matter in its broadest aspects", you give away the case for the Council. For nobody has ever contended that the cars should be usable by all without distinction.

[1] This was published under the caption "Tram Case".

But, Sir, the Town Council, by a method which is the reverse of honourable, has deprived the Indians of the fruits of their victory. For, in the current number of the *Government Gazette*, there appears a by-law which repeals the Traffic By-laws regarding tram-cars. This means that the tram-cars are now to run without any regulations to control the traffic on them. But it means too that now it will not be possible for a British Indian to claim to ride in the municipal cars under the general by-laws. And, I expect, the municipality will contend that the repeal revives the smallpox regulations of the old Government which the magistrate held to be not applicable in the face of the by-laws now repealed. Britishers are rightly proud of the fact that they never hit below the belt. With great deference, it appears to me, as it would, I hope, to every other ratepayer, that the Town Council, in adopting the above procedure, has departed from that proud tradition.

Consequent upon the Town Council's action then, for the timebeing, your fear as to the tram-cars being used by "Coloured persons of every grade" are groundless, apart from the facts submitted by me. I, however, ask you whether you approve of the means adopted by the Town Council to achieve its purpose.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Transvaal Leader, 25-5-1906

218. EMPIRE DAY

On Thursday last, throughout the Empire, the birthday of the late Queen-Empress was celebrated. As the years roll on, the memory of that noble lady remains as fresh as ever. Her interest in India and its people was intense, and in return, she received the whole-hearted affection of India's millions. Her late Majesty showed her interest in and toleration for the religions of India, when she had the whole of the Proclamation of 1858 re-written, because of an unwarranted reference to the power the Government possessed of undermining native religions and customs. In her letter to Lord Derby[1], the Queen wrote:

> Such a document should breathe feelings of generosity, benevolence, and religious toleration, and point out the privileges which the Indians will receive in being placed on an equality with the subjects of the British Crown, and the prosperity following in the train of civilization.

[1] Edward Stanley Derby, (1799-1869), Prime Minister of England, 1852, 1856 and 1866

These were the principles on which the Empire's foundation was laid. Expansion of trade and the acquisition of territory are not the only things true Imperialists aim at. There is a greater and a nobler ideal to work for: that of producing, as John Ruskin puts it, "as many as possible full-breathed, bright-eyed, and happy-hearted human creatures". We would place this ideal before our South African public men, and ask them to put away the feelings of race hatred and colour distinction. The great British Empire has not risen to its present proud position by methods of oppression, nor is it possible to hold that position by unfair treatment of its loyal subjects. British Indians have always been most devoted to their Sovereign, and the Empire has lost nothing by including them among its subjects. India is a vast storehouse of wealth to Great Britain, whilst thousands of its inhabitants are dying of starvation with scarcely a murmur. We venture to suggest that, if there were more of Queen Victoria's spirit of enlightenment put into the affairs of the Empire, we should be worthier followers of so great an Empire-builder.

Indian Opinion, 26-5-1906

219. A RAILWAY GRIEVANCE ON THE N. G. R.[1]

A correspondent writes a letter to us in Gujarati, of which the following is a translation:

> By the train that left Durban at 6 p.m. on the 1st of May, 1906, an Indian gentleman, by name Mr. Kundanlal Shivlal Maharaj, took a second-class ticket for Ennersdale from Estcourt. He occupied a seat in a reserved compartment. But there being many second-class white passengers, Mr. Kundanlal was forced by the Station Master to leave his compartment, and go to a third-class one.

Our correspondent adds that this matter has been already brought by the aggrieved passenger to the notice of the General Manager. We hope that the complaint will be thoroughly investigated. There appears to be no reason to justify the alleged action of the Station Master at Estcourt.

Indian Opinion, 26-5-l906

220. THE NATAL LAND ACT

We are likely to be saved incidentally because of the whites this year as we were last year. We earlier published the news that, among the new Bills to be introduced in the Natal Parliament, one would

[1] Natal Government Railways

relate to a new tax on land. That Bill was introduced, but, during examination by Committee, it was rejected. Mr. Rethman, a member of Parliament, moved that it should be rejected saying that, if it were passed, it would mean great loss to the people living beyond the Railway limits. The motion was passed, and the Natal Government sustained a defeat. This has created a situation in which the Ministry should normally resign; but they have not done so and have stayed on in office. However, the Land Tax Bill will remain in abeyance for the present. What will happen next remains to be seen, though there is reason to hope that the Bill will not be passed during the current session.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-5-l906

221. A SIGN OF CHINESE AWAKENING

There is an island to the east of China named Weihaiwei. This island was given by the Chinese Government to the British Government on certain conditions, one of them being that the whites could occupy the island as long as Port Arthur was in Russian possession. Now, since Russia has been obliged to vacate Port Arthur, as a result of the Russo-Japanese War, China has asked Britain to quit Weihaiwei. China refuses to pay the large expenditure incurred by Great Britain on the island. There is a likelihood of serious trouble arising out of this situation which may involve the Governments of China, Germany[1] and England.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-5-1906

222. THE YELLOW PERIL

We have already published the news that some Japanese people are on a visit to Australia. Though they are treated with all courtesy, inwardly the Australian feeling appears to be anti-Japanese. It is said on the strength of a cablegram from Melbourne that the Australians rejected the invitation from the Japanese Naval Officer to visit a fighter vessel, for, according to the former Defence Minister of Australia, they could not trust the Japanese. The Minister fears that Japan might some day try to take possession of Australia. It appears

[1] After the capture of Kiaochow in 1897, Germany became interested as a colonial power in the off-shore islands of China.

from the leading journals of Australia that this view is held by many people there.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-5-1906

223. WEALTHY AMERICANS

It is well known that America has a large number of wealthy persons. Generally speaking, the people of Europe are found to be foremost in amassing fortunes. With the help of new inventions and technology, the people of Europe see to it that the world market does not go out of their hands. Despite this, it would not be wrong to say that Europe lags far behind America in the race for wealth. There are, of course, some reasons for this. The people there are caught in the spell of money more than the Europeans, and it has been found that, once large quantities of wealth accumulate, they tend to go on increasing. This becomes understandable if a long-range view is taken. Now, some of these Americans have grown so inordinately rich—so we learn from a speech by President Roosevelt, the Head of the United States—that it will not be improper to enact a law enabling the State to limit this acquisition of wealth. He said that one might not think it wrong for a man to own one or two million pounds; but that hoarded fortunes have so exceeded this volume and so spread in extent that there is a large number of Americans who have a hundredtimes this sum.These multi-millionaires, President Roosevelt has found, might some day influence State authority. With the power of their money they can influence, as they deem fit, such institutions of the State as courts of justice, and elections to a municipality or the Senate. Such a development, it is felt, will be dangerous, and limiting by law the accumulation of wealth is contemplated. An individual may not hold more than £10,00,000 and whatever he may have in excess, he must distribute as he likes among his relatives and others. These thoughts of President Roosevelt have greatly perturbed American multi-millionaires.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-5-1906

224. CHANGES IN THE CONDITION OF CHINA

It cannot be gainsaid that civilization is spreading day by day. Few can be ignorant of the effect produced on India by European civilization. This march of civilization has received a new impetus

from the progress made by Japan, which has attracted the attention of the whole world. Wherever we go, we hear Japan being discussed. It is clear that in the circumstances, European civilization should influence China, a neighbour of Japan.

This civilization is burgeoning everywhere in China. On the one hand, thanks to the Japanese living in China, the attention of the people is drawn to education; on the other, hundreds of young Chinese go to foreign countries to learn the various arts and sciences. Some Chinese students have gone to Japan for all kinds of study, and others have gone as far as America for the same purpose. These students not only acquire proficiency in the arts and sciences, but the noteworthy thing is that they also bring home with them new ideas from America, Japan and Europe. The spirit of freedom blowing through those lands has thoroughly permeated their youthful blood. These students return home and lend their energies to promoting the progress of China.

By holding meetings and making speeches at various places, they have begun to impress their ideas upon people's minds. They start new journals and send out men in all directions to propagate their ideas. Thus, they educate the people in a number of ways and sow the seeds of freedom and ideas of reform in their minds. Neither do they appear to have left political reform out of their list. They are carrying on an agitation to keep foreigners out of their country, and this has set the white nations a-thinking. That the boycott of American goods is spreading with more or less success in some parts of the country is also due to these new ideas. In this agitation, some Japanese, too, are taking a leading part.

It is natural that everyone who desires the growth of civilization should welcome these signs of progress. Yet, there are some Europeans who say that this enthusiasm has exceeded the limits of propriety and is likely to lead the people astray, and that it should therefore be kept under restraint.With this end in view, a writer has suggested that the Chinese Government should be persuaded to bring under control, and if possible eliminate, those journals which spread undesirable ideas and incite people to harmful acts.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-5-1906

225. THE PRINCE OF WALES' VISIT TO INDIA

Their Royal Highnesses the Prince of Wales and his Consort have returned to England after their visit to India. A very big reception was held in London to welcome them. The speech made by the Prince on the occasion deserves to be noted. He expressed his thanks to the people of India and praised their loyalty. Concluding, he said:

> I believe that, if we show more sympathy for the people while carrying on the administration of India, it will be easy to rule that country, and I am sure that we shall be amply rewarded. Every Briton going to India can help to bring about better understanding between that country and England, and spread goodwill and a feeling of brotherhood.

It is necessary to understand the true significance of this speech. It shows us that the Prince has a kind heart and much sympathy for Indians. He has noticed the hardships we are made to suffer and, since he cannot directly intervene in matters of administration, he has no more than hinted that the Indian officials in India should think twice before resorting to any harsh measures in dealing with Indians. Mr. John Morley, Secretary of State for India, has endorsed the Prince's speech.[1] We have reason, therefore, to hope that some relief will soon be forthcoming to the people of India.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-5-1906

226. DISCRIMINATION AGAINST INDIANS IN BASUTOLAND

Writing from Bloemfontein, a correspondent of *The Rand Daily Mail* says that trade licences will not be issued to Indians in Basutoland. The Government had at one time thought of issuing about twelve licences, but they have since given up the idea.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-5-1906

[1] At a lunch given in honour of the Prince of Wales at the Guild Hall, London, on May 17, 1906, Mr. Morley, speaking after the Prince, endorsed the latter's plea "for a wider element of sympathy in the task of governing India". *Vide India*, 25-5-1906.

227. CHINESE LABOURERS

We mentioned earlier that General Botha had addressed a letter to the Transvaal Government regarding the outrageous behaviour of Chinese labourers towards Boer farmers.[1] Thanking him for the letter, Sir Richard Solomon has expressed his regret for the cruel deeds of the Chinese. He has promised to ask the mine-owners to ensure that the Chinese are unable to obtain explosive materials, and that every effort will be made to improve the conduct of the Chinese. He sincerely hopes that atrocities of this kind will cease when the recommendations regarding stricter regulation of the working conditions of the Chinese are implemented.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-5-1906

228. THE SHOPS CLOSING ACT

In the Natal Parliament, Mr. Rethman moved an amendment to the Shops Closing Act, enabling the rural areas to fix any day of their choice for a half-holiday. To this, the Natal Government replied that no changes in the Act were contemplated for at least a year. From this, it would appear that a change of some kind in the law would ultimately be effected.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-5-1906

229. THE NATAL SMALLPOX ACT

We have earlier reproduced the provisions of this Act in this journal. We have also mentioned the protest of the whites against the stringency of the Act. This matter has attracted much attention and is being widely discussed.

The opponents of vaccination say that it cannot be asserted that, by getting oneself vaccinated against smallpox, one will become absolutely immune to the disease. Not only this, vaccination has often done harm also. Instances are known of small children who were found to have contracted syphilis after vaccination. Besides, one strange instance was cited of a child who, because of vaccination, did

[1] *Vide* "The Question of Repatriating the Chinese",19-5-1906

not at all grow physically for several years. On the strength of several such examples, the opponents of the VaccinationAct say that they cannot believe that any benefit is to be had from vaccination. They therefore desire that a "conscience clause" be added to the provisions of the Act to say that the Smallpox Act will not apply to persons who declare on oath before a magistrate that they conscientiously object to vaccination. There is such a provision in the British law also. The whites are holding meetings and carrying on heated discussions to secure the adoption of a similar clause here. As a result of all this, the clause may be added.

Looking at the matter from the Indian standpoint—quite apart from whether vaccination does good or harm—one fact is certain that, if the proposed clause is not added, some Indians may have to suffer some ill-treatment.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-5-1906

230. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

May 26, 1906

LORD SELBORNE'S REPLY REGARDING PERMITS

To the communication that the British Indian Association had again addressed him, Lord Selborne has replied saying that for the present he has nothing more to add to his previous answer. This means that women will have to take out permits and that only children under twelve will be able to enter.

THE REMEDY

This reply will cause much disappointment. However, women need not take out separate permits but the struggle about children should continue.

THE REQUEST OF THE BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

The Association has addressed a letter to Mr. Chamney, the Registrar, demanding that permission should at least be granted to the boys who are twelve years old and are waiting at various ports to enter the Transvaal. The Association says that the number of such boys is not likely to exceed a hundred.

AN IMPORTANT PERMIT CASE

While official pressure is thus being exerted against us, the law is in our favour. There is a boy under 12, named Adam Ebrahim, whose

father is at Johannesburg. He has come with a "Letter of Notification". He has not yet got a permit. He has not been to Pretoria. Meanwhile, he was charged with failure to take out a £3 register and the case was heard by Mr. Cross yesterday. Mr. Gandhi, who appeared on behalf of the boy, pleaded that it was not necessary for children to take out such a register in any case not for a person who did not himself carry on a trade. The Magistrate admitted the plea and dismissed the case.

THE CONSEQUENCE OF THE CASE

If no appeal is preferred against the Magistrate's decision, it will mean that, for boys who are already in the Transvaal, there will be no difficulty in remaining there even without a permit or a register. Really speaking, the decision in the case does not give a ruling about permits; but it can be so construed by implication. It may perhaps be necessary to have a test case about permits for children.

THE TRAM CASE

The discussion on the matter is still going on. The Town Council has not yet answered the question put to it by Mr. Lane. Mr. Gandhi has addressed a letter on the subject to the *Leader* to the following effect.[1]

You say that the Magistrate's decision is unsatisfactory, because it would enable a person, however unclean, to travel by a tram and that even the Kaffirs would be able to do so. But the Magistrate's decision is quite different. The Court has declared that the Kaffirs have no legal right to travel by the trams. And, according to tram regulations, those in an unclean dress or in a drunken state are prohibited from boarding a tram. Thanks to the Court's decision, only clean Indians or Coloured people other than Kaffirs can now travel by the trams.

But even this victory that we have achieved has been snatched away from us by the Council in an indecent manner. For, while the Magistrate gave his decision on Friday, on Saturday appeared the news in the *Government Gazette* that the Town Council had withdrawn the tram regulations. This means that an Indian will no more be able to file a suit under the bye-laws; and the Council may perhaps be under the impression that the Smallpox Act of 1897 will now apply to Indians.

It has been a common belief that the British people never stab any one in the back. But I feel—and other tax-payers must also feel the same— that the Town Council has stabbed the Indian community

[1] *Vide* "Letter to *Transvaal Leader*" 21-5-1906

in the back. You express sorrow at the decision in the case; but, even apart from the instances mentioned by me, there is nothing to be sorry for, at least for the present. But do you approve of the crooked way in which the Council has brought about this result?

Now commences the third stage of the tram case.

RAILWAY HARDSHIPS

Disabilities on the railways have ever been troubling us. As I said earlier, the General Manager had written to say that Coloured people might not travel even by the 5-5 afternoon train from Pretoria to Johannesburg. To the Association's protest against this, the General Manager has now replied saying that the restrictions against the non-whites with regard to that train will be relaxed. The same relaxation has now been asked for in regard to the train leaving Johannesburg at 4-30 in the afternoon. Even if a favourable reply to this is received, the prohibition against travelling by the morning train between Pretoria and Johannesburg will continue for the present.

THE DEPUTATION TO ENGLAND

Letters were addressed to Sir William Wedderburn and other well-wishers of ours, inquiring whether or not we should send a deputation to England. Sir William has sent a cablegram in reply, asking us to wait till his letter reaches us. We expect to get the letter by June 15.

AN INDIAN MURDERED

Today's papers report the murder of an Asiatic, named Hyder, last night by an unknown person near Cleveland Station. He seems to have been stabbed with a dagger. It is not known who committed the crime and why. The papers report that Hyder was poor and in search of employment.

NEW LOCATION FOR KAFFIRS

Preparations are being made to transfer the Kaffirs quickly to Klipspruit. The municipality has even framed the regulations in that regard. It is, however, reported that the Kaffirs, instead of going to the Location, continue to stay on with their masters in the town, though some of them have acquired land in the Location.

NEW LAW FOR THE MUNICIPALITY

The Johannesburg municipality wants a new law to be passed during the current session of the legislature. It has asked for, among

other things, authority to provide for Asiatic Bazaars also.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-6-1906

231. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS GANDHI[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
May 27, 1906

RESPECTED BROTHER,

I have your letter of the 17th April. I do not know what to say. You are prejudiced against me. There is no remedy against prejudice. I am helpless. I can only reply to your letter in full.

1. I have no idea of separating from you.
2. I claim nothing there.
3. I do not claim anything as mine.
4. All that I have is being utilized for public purposes.
5. It is available to relations who devote themselves to public work.
6. I could have satisfied your desire for money if I had not dedicated my all for public use.

I have never said that I have done much for brothers or other relations. I gave them all that I could save; and this I have mentioned not out of pride, and only to friends.

Rest assured that I will cheerfully assume the burden of supporting the family in case you pass on before me. You need have no fear on that score.

I am not now in a position to send you money as you desire.

It is well if Harilal is married; it is also well if he is not. For the present at any rate I have ceased to think of him as a son.

I am willing to go to India to attend Mani's wedding if at all possible. But I cannot give you any idea of my present condition. I am so hard pressed for time that I scarcely know what to do. Please cable the date of marriage, so that if possible I might hold myself in readiness to go.

I might perhaps inform you that I am in debt to Revashankarbhai.

[1] The letter was translated from Gujarati by V. G. Desai who tells us that it was revised by Gandhiji himself.

You may repudiate me, but still I will be to you what I have always been.

I do not remember that I expressed a desire to separate from you when I was there. But even if I did, my mind is now quite clear, my aspirations are higher and I have no desire for worldly enjoyments of any type whatever.

I am engaged in my present activities as I look upon them as essential to life. If I have to face death while thus engaged, I shall face it with equanimity. I am now a stranger to fear.

I like those who are pure in heart. Young Kalyandas, Jagmohandas's son, is like Prahlad in spirit. He is therefore dearer to me than one who is a son because so born.

M. K. GANDHI: *Selected Letters:* (First Series), Navajivan, 1949

232. STATEMENT PRESENTED TO CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
May 29, 1906]

WHITE PREDOMINANCE

(1) The British Indian Association has always admitted the principle of white predominance and has, therefore, no desire to press, on behalf of the community it represents, for any political rights for the sake of them. But past experience shows that in a Colony enjoying self-government, communities that have no voice in the choice of representatives have been very largely neglected.

HISTORY OF BOER ANTI-INDIAN LEGISLATION

(2) There is in the Transvaal, at the present moment, an estimated population of over 12,000 British Indians. Before war, the adult Indian population was 15,000.

(3) The first Indian settlers found their way into the Transvaal in the early eighties.

(4) They were then free from restrictions of any kind whatsoever.

(5) But by their successful enterprise, they aroused the jealousy of white traders and soon there sprang up an anti-Indian agitation

[1] This along with the addenda was presented to the Constitution Committee. *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", After 18-5-1906

initiated by chambers of commerce wherein the British element was predominant.

(6) As a result, the Government of the late President Kruger approached Her late Majesty's Government for permission to pass legislation restrictive of the liberty of British Indians. They proposed to interpret the term, "Natives", occurring in the London Convention, to include Asiatics.

(7) This contention Her Majesty's advisers rejected but they were not unwilling, for "sanitary reasons", to sanction legislation restricting Asiatics as to their residence to Bazaars or Locations with the proviso that British Indians of the trader class should be left entirely free.

(8) As a result of these negotiations, Law 3 of 1885 as amended in 1886 was passed.

(9) Immediately it became known, a strong protest went up from British Indians.

(10) It was then realized that the Law was, contrary to the expectations of Her late Majesty's Government, sought to be enforced against all British Indians.

(11) Then followed a series of strong representations by Her late Majesty's Government, addressed to the late Boer Government, culminating in the matter being submitted to the arbitration of the then Chief Justice of the Orange River Colony.[1]

(12) Between 1885 and 1895, therefore, the Law 3 of 1885 practically remained a dead letter, although the Boer Government always threatened to enforce it.

(13) The award of the arbitrator did not define the legal position. But it left the question of interpretation of Law 3 of 1885 to the Courts of the late Republic.[2]

(14) British Indians again appealed to the British Government for protection.

(15) Mr. Chamberlain, whilst he declined to disturb the award, did not abandon the case for the Indian subjects of Her late Majesty. In his dispatch dated the 4th September 1895, he stated:

> In conclusion, I would say, that whilst desirous loyally to abide by the award, and to allow it to close the legal and international question in dispute between the two Governments, I reserve to myself the liberty later on to make friendly representations to the South African Republic as to the

[1] 1888.

[2] *Ibid*

traders, and possibly to invite the Government to consider whether, when once its legal position has been made good, it would not be wise to review the situation from a new point of view, and decide whether it would not be better in the interests of its own burghers to treat the Indians more generously, and to free itself from even the appearance of countenancing a trade jealousy which, I have some reason to believe, does not emanate from the governing class in the Republic.

This was in 1895.

(16) Owing, then, to such representations, which continued up to the time of the war, the Law in question was never effectively enforced, and Indians traded and lived where they liked, in spite of the prohibition contemplated by it.

(17) But an enforcement of the Law being imminent in 1899, it was, among other things, a subject for discussion at the Bloemfontein Conference, which preceded the war. The subject was considered so important by Lord Milner that, when the question of franchise to the Uitlanders seemed to admit of a settlement, Lord Milner cabled that the question of the status of coloured British subjects was still outstanding.

(18) Lord Lansdowne declared that it was a contributory cause of war.

(19) At the close of the war, and at the time of the Vereeniging compact, His Majesty's Government informed the Boer representatives that the status of Coloured persons should be the same in the two Colonies as at the Cape.

THE POSITION TODAY

(20) But today the position is worse than before war.

(21) The Progressive party, from which at least Indians as fellow-loyalists and fellow-sufferers before war may claim a fair measure of justice, has stated it as an item of its programme that the liberty of British Indians should be specifically restricted. If its desires were carried out, the position, bad as it is today, would be much worse then.

(22) From the Dutch party, it is now impossible to expect any measure of reasonableness.

(23) Under Responsible Government, then, British Indians and others similarly situated, unless they are specially protected, stand practically little chance of justice being done to them.

REMEDY

(24) It would, therefore, seem that the granting of the franchise

to British Indians would be the most natural means of protecting their interests.

(25) It has been urged that the treaty of Vereeniging precludes the possibility of any such provision being made.

(26) But it is respectfully submitted that the term "Natives", whatever else it may mean, can never include British Indians.

(27) The Statute-book of the Colony is replete with laws which deal with the "Natives", but which admittedly do not apply to Asiatics or British Indians.

(28) The fact that Law 3 of 1885 deals specially with Asiatics and does not apply to the "Natives" shows, too, that the Transvaal laws have almost invariably distinguished between "Natives" and "Asiatics".

(29) Indeed, whereas Natives can, owing to the meaning that the term has borne, hold landed property in the Transvaal, Asiatics cannot.

(30) Thus, therefore, so far as the Vereeniging compact is concerned, there appears to be no justification whatever for depriving the Indians of the franchise.

(31) But the Committee of the British Indian Association is well aware of the almost unanimous hostility of white races against provision being made in the Constitution for a grant of the franchise to British Indians.

(32) If, therefore, such a grant be considered impossible, it is absolutely essential that, apart from the orthodox reservatory clause as to the power of veto over all *class* legislation, there should be a special clause which shall be a living reality, and which, instead of being exercised only on the rarest occasions, should ensure the fullest protection to the British Indian settlers as to their right to own landed property, freedom of movement, and freedom of trade, subject to such safeguards of a *general* nature as may be considered necessary, and are made applicable to all, irrespective of race or colour.

(33) Then, and only then, will it be possible, apart from the inherent right that every British subject should have to ordinary civil rights in British dominions, for His Majesty's advisers to redeem the promises specifically made to British Indians as to their status in the Transvaal.

(34) Much of what has been stated above applies to the position of British Indians in the Orange River Colony.

(35) There the Indian has no rights, save as a domestic servant. An elaborate anti-Asiatic law deprives him of practically all civil

liberty.

(SIGNED) ABDUL GANIE
PRESIDENT, B. I. A.
E. S. COOVADIA
H. O. ALLY
EBRAHIM H.
KHOTA
E. M. PATEL
E. M. JOSSEP
J. A. PATEL
M. K. GANDHI

APPENDIX A

For authorities in support of the facts cited in the foregoing statement, the Deputation beg to refer the Constitution Committee to the following:

1. *Transvaal Green Book*, No. I of 1894.
2. *Transvaal Green Book*, No. 2 of 1894.
3. *Blue Book on Grievances of British Indians in the Transvaal*, published in 1896.
4. *Blue Book* containing correspondence relating to British Indians in the Transvaal—Cd. 2239.
5. *Laws and Volksraad Resolutions*, & c., relating to "Natives and Coolies" (a separate Government publication).
6. Chapter XXXIII, p. 199, *Laws of the Orange River Colony*.

APPENDIX B

The following is a comparison of the position of British Indians in the Transvaal under Boer and under British rule.

Before the War	*Under British Rule*
(1) Indians were free to enter the country without restriction.	(1) No immigration permitted other than of *bona-fide* refugees who left on the eve of the war, and they are only admitted gradually and after long delay for the consideration of their applications. Permits are required even for little children, and every Indian has to attach his thumb-impression on these documents.
(2) Payment of registration fee not enforced.	(2) Registration fee of £3, on pain of fine not exceeding £100, or imprisonment for not more than 6 months, strictly enforced. Attempt is being made now to exact

	registration fees from Indian women and require them to take out permits.
(3) Landed property could be held in the names of Europeans.	(3) The law against Asiatics holding real property strictly enforced, even in cases where land is required for religious purposes.
(4) Indians held 99 years' lease for landed property in Location or bazaar in Johannesburg.	(4) These leases have been expropriated under the Insanitary Area Commissioner's Report, without the owners receiving equal title elsewhere in Johannesburg in a suitable position.
(5) No separate inquisitorial Asiatic Department.	(5) Office of Registrar of Asiatics established; is arbitrary in procedure and delays the settlement of individual applications, permits, etc.
(6) Many harsh legislative restrictions allowed to remain inoperative owing largely to British intervention.	(6) Inoperative Boer enactments brought into force, and rendered more stringent by Ordinances or Executive Orders, and British Indians offensively classed in legislation with Kaffirs, savages, and semi-civilised races.

The following addendum was prepared at the instance of the Constitution Committee.

CIVIL DISABILITIES

I. The Commissioners seem to be under the impression that British Indians have full rights in the Transvaal.

II. Unfortunately, as will appear from the schedule attached to the statement, British Indians have very few civil rights; we venture to recapitulate the civil disabilities:

NO OWNERSHIP OF LAND

III. (1) British Indians cannot own landed property, including even long leases, except in Locations or streets set apart for them.

(2) There are no streets set apart, but there are Locations far away from town, like the Continental Ghettos. And in these, too, except in one or two places, Indians are only monthly squatters. In Pretoria and Potchefstroom alone do they receive twenty-one years' leases. In Germiston, they have even received notices not to receive any tenants on their Stands. The notice reads as follows:

> You are hereby notified that you are not permitted to sublet rooms to natives or others. Such subletting to any person is a breach of the contract

> under which you are allowed to hold a stand, and renders you liable to have your stand permit cancelled, and yourself expelled from this location.

(3) So much is this prohibition carried out in practice that Indians are unable to have their mosques transferred in the names of Indian trustees.

REGISTRATION FEE

(4) Indians have to pay a registration fee of £3 on arrival in this country. The Government has now threatened even to require women and children to take out registration certificates.

FOOT-PATHS AND TRAMWAYS

(5) Indians in Pretoria and Johannesburg are prohibited by law from walking on the foot-paths. They, however, do make use of them on sufferance. An attempt was only recently made to prevent them from using the foot-paths.

(6) Indians are not allowed to make use of the tram-cars in Pretoria.

(7) They are prevented in Johannesburg from riding in the ordinary cars but special trailer cars are occasionally run for Coloured people.

(8) It was contended on behalf of the Indians that, under the ordinary by-laws, they could insist on riding in the tram-cars. The Town Council opposed the contention on the ground that certain smallpox regulations that were promulgated by the late Dutch Government in 1897 were still in force. The matter was twice tested before the Magistrate at Johannesburg and, each time, the Town Council lost. It has, therefore now met the Indians by cancelling, the by-laws regulating the traffic on the tram-cars. In order to gain its end, the Town Council is now running the Municipal cars without any by-laws whatsoever. Whether under the common law Indians will be able now to make good their right or not is an open question.

It is worthy of note that the above-mentioned cancelling by-law was surreptitiously published in the following manner:

> Prior to the 9th May, 1906, in accordance with Section 22 of Proclamation 16 of 1901, a notice had been published in a newspaper circulating in the Municipality, setting forth the general purport of these proposed amendments and stating that they were open to inspection at the office of the Council.

On the 9th inst., a meeting of the Town Council was held. The notice was apparently advertised in such a manner as to render it almost a matter of impossibility for parties concerned to challenge the

proposed amendments, owing chiefly to the fact that no report of them had appeared in the ordinary columns of the newspapers, and to the further fact that, as will be seen, the proposal came through the Works Committee, instead of the Tramways and Lighting Committee, which would ordinarily concern itself with Tramways Regulations as it has done in the past.

On the occasion of the aforesaid Council meeting, the Works Committee brought forward the proposed amendment on the following pretext:

> Since the Tramway System was taken over by the Municipal Council, the Traffic Bye-laws applicable to tram-cars are no longer required as they were only intended for application to private tram-cars. It is proposed, therefore, that the Bye-laws should be amended accordingly.

The proposals were submitted at the end of a long agenda, when even the most vigilant Councillor might have been lulled into a sense of security, especially in view of the seemingly innocuous nature of the preamble and passed without comment. A notice appeared in the *Government Gazette* of the 18th inst., adopting the proposed cancelling bye-law, and giving it the force of law. The whole matter, therefore, was settled practically behind the backs of the British Indians within a period of nine days, for all practical purposes, without warning.

(9) Attempt is now being made to expropriate what is known as the Malay Location in Johannesburg, which has a large Indian population, and to send the Indians to a place thirteen miles away from Johannesburg.

PERMIT ORDINANCE

(10) Whereas formerly Indians were free to immigrate into the Transvaal, at present the Peace Preservation Ordinance, which is purely a political law, is being wrested from its legitimate purpose to prevent Indians from entering the Transvaal. Not only are new Indians being prevented from entering the country, but the following exceptional hardships are imposed on all residents of the Transvaal:

(a) There are no published regulations regarding the administration of the Ordinance.

(b) It changes according to the whims or prejudices of the officials administering it. The following is, therefore, the practice in vogue today:

(i) Indians, who were in the Transvaal before war and who paid £3 for registration, are prevented from returning, unless they can prove absolutely that they left on the outbreak of hostilities.

(ii) Those who are allowed to enter the Transvaal have to put their thumb-impressions upon their applications, as also upon their permits, and they are required to put them each time they enter the Transvaal. This is applicable to all Indians without regard to their position and without regard to the fact whether they can sign their names in English or not. An England-returned Indian gentleman, who speaks English well, and who is a very well-known merchant, was twice obliged to put his thumb -impression .

(iii) Wives and children under twelve years of such Indians are now required to take out separate permits.

(iv) Children, twelve years old or over, of such Indians are not allowed to join or accompany their parents.

(v) Indian merchants are not allowed to import any trustworthy clerks or managers, unless the latter are themselves such as fall within the first clause hereinbefore referred to.

(vi) Even those who are allowed to enter have to wait for months before they are permitted to enter the country.

(vii) Even temporary permits are refused to Indians of respectability. Mr. Suliman Manga, who is studying for the bar in London, wishing to pass through the Transvaal on his way to Delagoa Bay, was refused a permit when his case was considered as of a British subject. When it became known that he was a Portuguese subject, for fear, evidently, of international complications, he was granted a temporary permit.

(viii) Such is the terrible position of British Indians who are resident in the Transvaal. It is growing daily worse, and unless the Imperial Government is willing and ready to protect them, the ultimate result can only be slow extinction.

WHAT EUROPEANS WILL DO.

(11) The following facts will shew what the Europeans of the Transvaal will do, if they are left to themselves:

(a) The National Convention, which specially met to consider the Asiatic question, passed the following resolutions:

(lst) That having regard to the preponderance of the native races in this country, the difficulties surrounding the settlement of native policy, the necessity for protecting the existing European population and encouraging further European immigration, this Convention affirms the principle that Asiatic immigration should be prohibited except under the provisions of the Labour Importation Ordinance.

(2nd) That this Convention, having regard to the importance of arriving

at a permanent and conclusive settlement of the whole question and preventing any further attempts to reopen the matter, recommends that the Government be invited to take into consideration the advisability of removing into bazaars all Asiatic traders, compensation being provided for such as may have vested interests which have been legally acquired prior to the war.

(3rd) That this Convention, recognising the grave danger resulting from the continued issue of trading licences to Asiatics permitting trade outside bazaars, requests the Government to take immediate steps to pass the necessary legal enactments to prevent any further issue of such licences and that with regard to the appointment of any proposed Commission to deal with the Asiatic question, this Convention urges upon the Government the necessity for including therein men, other than officials, with a thorough knowledge of existing conditions in South Africa.

(4th) That this Convention affirms its opinion that all Asiatics should be required to reside in bazaars.

(b) The following is the declared policy of the Progressive party:

The restriction of immigration of Asiatics into the Transvaal, except in the case of indentured labourers who are subject to repatriation at the expiration of their contract, and the regulation of Asiatic trading licences.

(c) The people of Potchefstroom once met together, created a disturbance, and even broke the windows of Indian stores.

(d) The Europeans of Boksburg wish to remove Indians from their present Location, which they occupied before war, to a site far away from town where trade is utterly impossible, and they have more than once threatened to use physical force should an Indian attempt to open a store outside the Location.

PAST EXPERIENCE—A PARALLEL

(12) In the main statement, the Deputation have urged that past experience shows that the deprivation of the franchise and the orthodox power of veto have been totally inadequate to protect Indians.

(13) We will venture now to give instances:

In Natal, after the grant of Responsible Government, Indians were virtually deprived of the franchise. The late Sir John Robinson, in supporting the Bill, said that, by disfranchising Indians, every

member of the Natal Parliament became a trustee for Indians.[1]

Soon after the Bill became an Act of Parliament the trust was thus discharged:

(a) An annual poll-tax of £3 was imposed on all indentured Indians, who entered after its promulgation, to be payable on the termination of their indentures, unless they returned to India or re-indentured themselves.

(b) An Immigration Restriction Act was passed prohibiting all who did not possess a knowledge of one of the European languages from entering Natal unless they were formerly domiciled in the Colony.

(c) A Dealers' Licenses Act was passed with absolute powers to the Town Councils or Licensing Boards to control trade licences. It ousts the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. Ostensibly applying to all traders, it is enforced only against Indians. And under it, no Indian, however, well established, is ever secure as to his license from year's end to year's end.

Against all this legislation, the Imperial Government has felt powerless to protect British Indians.

THE UNIQUE POSITION IN THE TRANSVAAL AND THE ORANGE RIVER COLONY

(14) Whether Indians are granted the franchise under the Constitution or not, a special clause protecting vested interests is absolutely necessary.

(15) No Colony on the eve of receiving self-government has presented the features that the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies present.

(16) All the causes for which the war took place have not been removed. Anti-Indian legislation of the Transvaal was one of the causes.

(17) Promise made by the Home Government that Indians and other Coloured people in the two Colonies should be treated the same way as those at the Cape has not yet been redeemed.

(18) Negotiations were actually pending between the Home Government and the Local Governments as to the removal of the disabilities of British Indians when His Majesty's new Ministers decided to grant Responsible Government to the two Colonies, and the negotiations have, therefore, been suspended or dropped altogether.

[1] *Vide* "The Plague", 9-7-1903

(19) The position at the Cape is that Indians have equal rights with the Europeans, i.e.,

(a) They have the same franchise rights as the Europeans.

(b) They are under the same Immigration Restriction Act as the Europeans.

(c) They have equal rights with the latter to hold landed property and to trade.

(d) They have full freedom of locomotion from place to place. Dated at Johannesburg this 29th day of May 1906.

Indian Opinion, 2-6-1906

233. INDIAN PASSENGERS

Of late our Gujarati correspondence columns have been full of complaints from Indian deck-passengers who so largely patronise the steamers of the German East Africa Company. Our correspondents have complained of over-crowding, insufficient sanitary arrangements, and general want of consideration for deck-passengers. Some of them state that the passengers are very much inconvenienced whenever the steamers touch any port. They are then without any cover, and are called upon to shift their luggage. We draw the attention of the local agents of the Company to these complaints. In many respects, we are aware that a certain amount of inconvenience is inseparable from the mode of travelling that the poor Indian passengers are compelled to select. It is impossible to expect much from accommodation on deck. At the same time, it is a notorious fact that the deck-passenger traffic is the most lucrative and least troublesome. It, therefore, behoves the Company's managers to ensure as much comfort as is possible in the circumstances for the deck-passengers, if only for mercenary reasons.

Indian Opinion, 2-6-1906

234. A PERMIT CASE

Our Johannesburg correspondent reports a case tried the other day before Mr. Cross at the Johannesburg Court. One Adam Ebrahim, a lad under twelve years, was brought before the Magistrate for being in the Transvaal without a registration certificate.

The form of prosecution was somewhat novel, for hitherto all such cases were tried under the Peace Preservation Ordinance. Whilst escape under it was less easy, there was no penalty in the nature of a fine or imprisonment, whereas a conviction under Law 3 of 1885

renders the accused liable to a fine of not more than £100 or not more than six months' imprisonment, with or without hard labour. Happily, counsel for the accused had no difficulty in showing that the boy was not liable to pay the registration fee on entering the Transvaal.

Thus, the more galling the shackles imposed by the Government upon the Indian, the heavier, it would appear, is the liberating blow delivered by the judicial hammer. The Judiciary protects what the Executive would gladly destroy. Will Lord Selborne still say that the administration of the Law, which has now been demonstrated to be illegal, is reasonable and is being carried on with due consideration for those affected by it?

Indian Opinion, 2-6-l906

235. THE LATE DR. SATHIANADHAN

We regret to have to chronicle the news of the death of the late Professor Sathianadhan of Madras. Our exchanges from India are full of appreciation of the deceased Professor's work. Dr. Sathianadhan died in harness, and in the prime of life. Brilliant as his career was, it was a life full of much greater promise.

The deceased gentleman was an M. A., LL. B. of Madras University, and [a] very conscientious convert to Christianity. He was respected by all classes for his sterling qualities both of the head and of heart, and so much enjoyed the confidence of the Government, that he was appointed to officiate as Deputy Director of Public Instruction. The death of such an Indian removes from Indian society a figure it can ill afford to lose. We beg to tender to the family of the deceased gentleman our respectful sympathy in their loss, which is indeed a national loss.

Indian Opinion, 2-6-1906

236. IMMIGRATION LAW IN THE CAPE

It appears from what our Cape correspondent reports that there will no longer be any difficulties for Indians on a temporary visit to the Cape. There has so far been in the Cape no provision for temporary visits such as exists in Natal.

However, according to our correspondent, the amendments to the Immigration Act that have come up for consideration before the present Parliament will cause much hardship. As we have said earlier, under the new Act, if it is passed, the authority to decide as to who has acquired domicile will pass from a court to an executive officer. If this

happens, it will be a very serious matter. Moreover, it is at present possible for a man to enter the Cape if he has South African domicile; but under the new Act, just as in Natal, only a Cape resident will be able to enter the Cape. The British Indian League ought to resist both these changes. We hope the members of the League will move in the matter immediately.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-6-l906

237. SIR HENRY COTTON AND INDIANS

Our readers will see from an extract we print from *India* how Sir Henry Cotton, at one time Commissioner of Assam, is putting up a great fight for us in Parliament, and for this we are all grateful to him. We must inform our readers on this occasion that the working force behind Sir Henry Cotton is the British Committee of the [Indian National] Congress. Sir Henry tables those questions that are prepared by the Committee, and the leading members of the British Committee are Sir William Wedderburn and Dadabhai Naoroji, the Grand Old Man of India. We are therefore under a deep obligation to that Committee also.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-6-1906

238. THE NATAL REBELLION

We publish elsewhere a translation of a letter an old Colonist has addressed to *The Times of Natal.* The substance of it is that the Indians are not able to go to the battle-field, but that they can assist the men at the front with the requisite amenities. It is necessary that Indians help in the way they did when a fund was started at the time of the Boer War. It will be good to collect some money and send it to the Government or to some Fund that might have been started. We shall then be considered to have done our duty to that extent. We hope the leaders of the community will take up this matter.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-6-1906

239. A NEW SAN FRANCISCO

It is certainly not for the first time that the reader is reminded of the proverb, "God can do what He wills within the instant." History furnishes many examples of a pauper becoming wealthy and a wealthy man turning pauper in a moment. But this rule is not confined to individuals. The rule, "from the palace to the hovel", and *vice versa* can apply equally to a whole city or country. The recent San Francisco earthquake is a case in point. Three hundred thousand persons—why, even more— were in a moment rendered homeless ! Thousands, who were used to living in comfort and the luxury of big palaces and did not have to tell day from night, were left without even a rickety hut. Spacious and well-furnished mansions and beautiful streets, razed to the ground in a movement and reduced to a heap of dust, have paid their obeisance to Time. A barren desert has spread over the site once covered by gardens and villas. Countless men have been deprived of shelter and food in the twinkling of an eye. Who, having seen this, would not wonder at the mysterious ways of God? By far the more astonishing fact is, however, quite a different one. True bravery consists in standing erect and boldly in the face of the cruel blow dealt by such a fearful catastrophe. This colossal task has been undertaken by the people of San Francisco. Well known for its perseverance and industry, the American nation is out to prove its mettle. The task of reconstructing a new and more splendid San Francisco without the aid of the outside world and in the face of divine wrath has begun. Plans are being drawn up to add to the world's beauty by recreating a more beautiful San Francisco. Huge structures are being erected for bringing a new celestial city into being. Thousands of workmen have been invited from distant lands. The quantity of steel ordered for the purpose is so large that it might lead to a boom in the country's iron market. Plans are being drawn up to construct a new dock of the latest style, the like of which will be found only in a few parts of the world. The streets are so planned that they will further add to the charm of the new city. The people there are thus fully prepared to meet this natural calamity in a variety of ways. With the help of electric power generated from waterfalls, human intelligence has been able to run railway trains and factories thousands of miles away. It has been able to produce ships and balloons voyaging across the high seas and reaching the highest regions of the sky. It is also conducting experiments to communicate with men on other planets of the Universe. But the selfsame

intelligence cannot feel the tremors within the bowels of the earth and is unable to prevent the occurrence of earthquakes. This, indeed, is a matter for sorrow, but it should certainly gladden our hearts to see how man faces such shocks with courage.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-5-1906

240. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

DURBAN,
June 2, 1906

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PIETERMARITZBURG
SIR,

We have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the 30th ultimo with reference to the offer of the Natal Indian Congress to raise an Ambulance Corps.[1]

The Committee of our Congress is grateful to the Government for accepting the offer. Our Committee has, as desired by the Government, placed itself in communication with the Principal Medical Officer, Natal Militia. Copy of said communication is herewith enclosed.[2]

We have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servants,
O. H. A. JOHARI
M. C. ANGLIA
JOINT HONORARY SECRETARIES, N.I.C.

Indian Opinion, 9-6-1906

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 25-4-1906
[2] *Vide* the following item.

241. LETTER TO PRINCIPAL MEDICAL OFFICER

DURBAN,
June 2, 1906

TO
THE PRINCIPAL MEDICAL
OFFICER
NATAL MILITIA
PIETERMARITZBURG
SIR,

The Natal Indian Congress has received from the Government a communication accepting the offer of an Indian Ambulance Corps.

As a preliminary trial, the Government state that the Corps should consist of 20 stretcher-bearers. Our Committee has the honour to inform you that 20 men will be at your disposal at the time and place that you may be pleased to advise. We take it that you will make the necessary arrangements for equipment, uniform and transport.

The Government have informed our Committee that the pay of the Corps will be one shilling and six pence per day per man. When the offer was made, it was the intention of the community represented by the Congress to pay the men. Our Committee, therefore, trusts that the Government will be pleased to allow the Indian community to pay their men. At the same time, we beg to submit that it is not possible to raise the Corps on a salary of less than one pound per week, which sum, we are instructed to say, the Indian community is willing to pay as long as the services of the Corps are required.

We beg further to add that most of the men, whilst in every respect willing to work, are untrained, for no fault of their own, for the purpose of an Ambulance Corps.

We have the honour to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servants,
O. H. A. JOHARI
M. C. ANGLIA
JOINT HONORARY SECRETARIES, N.I.C.

Indian Opinion, 9-6-1906

242. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

June 6, 1906

THE STORY OF THE TRAM CASE

The tram case has taken a new turn. A keen tussle is going on between the Town Council and the Indians. Neither side would accept defeat.

While, on the one hand, the Town Council abolished the tramway regulations on the excuse that none were necessary, a committee of the Council has, on the other, framed new ones. From information received from confidential sources, I learn that Mr. Duncan[1] attended the Committee meeting. The Committee expressed the opinion that there should be a provision in the Regulations forbidding Indians from travelling in tram-cars; that they might, if they so desired, use separate trams; and that only Indians with special permits could travel by all the trams. Mr. Duncan, it is said, opposed this view of the Committee, saying that, just as the Indian community had remained patient in the matter of the railway, so they would remain patient in the matter of the tramway too, if some concessions were granted. If further harassment were caused, they would be provoked and the result would be far from desirable. The Committee's work of framing Regulations is still going on. In a few days, when these are published, we shall know more about them.

The Town Council has thus been active in the matter. Meanwhile, the Indian community has taken a step forward. Mr. Abdul Gani, the Chairman of the British Indian Association, and Mr. Polak, the present English Editor of this journal, got into a tram. The conductor refused to allow Mr. Abdul Gani to sit, but he said that he would not get off the tram unless forced to do so. The conductor called in the police, who also got the same reply. At last, the Tram Inspector arrived and spoke politely to Mr. Gani. As a result of the talk, it was decided that Mr. Abdul Gani would be prosecuted on a charge of having obstructed the tram-car. Mr. Abdul Gani and Mr. Polak agreed to this and got down. When this was reported to the Town Council by the Inspector, the Town Clerk immediately wrote a note to Gani and Polak requesting them to see him. He told them that the Indians had done enough, and that they should not further harass the Council; that the Regulations in the matter would be published in a few days; and that, if the Indians did not approve of them, they might

[1] Colonial Secretary

challenge them. The Town Clerk requested them to spare the Council for the time being.

THE DEPUTATION TO ENGLAND

A second cablegram regarding a deputation to England has been received from Sir William Wedderburn. Though the Committee working for us in England is not very hopeful of success, it suggests that Mr. Gandhi alone may be sent to England by the same steamer by which the Constitution Committee will sail. The Committee is likely to leave for England towards the beginning of July. The Committee of the Association met on the night of Wednesday last to consider the membership of the deputation. It passed a resolution calling for a meeting of all the Indians in Johannesburg and appealing for funds. It further decided that Mr. Haji Habib, the Secretary of the Pretoria Committee, and Mr. Haji Ojer Ali might be sent, besides Mr. Gandhi, if sufficient funds could be raised. I have already written that this meeting will be held at 2 p.m. in the West End Hall.

MINERS' DEMANDS

The Miners' deputation, which waited on the Committee, demanded that Indians should in future be denied entry into the Colony, and that further issue of trade and other licences to them should be stopped.

PERMIT HARDSHIPS

Tired of the permit problems, the Association has now taken the last step. It has written to the Government saying that, if the difficulties regarding permits were not now ended, the Association would file cases to test the four following principles:

1. Those who can prove having made a payment of £3 to the Boer Government should be allowed to enter without permits;

2. children under sixteen of parents who are themselves entitled to enter should be allowed in, and that without a permit;

3. wives of those who are entitled to enter should be allowed in without a permit; and, lastly,

4. instead of the current practice of arbitrarily issuing permits to whomsoever the Government wishes, there should be clear and definite regulations to determine those eligible for permits.

The Association has issued instructions that, if the Government does not give a satisfactory reply in this matter, test cases should be instituted on all the said points.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-6-1906

243. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

DURBAN,
NATAL,
June 8, 1906

TO
THE HON'BLE DADABHAI NAOROJI KENNINGTON ROAD
LONDON

DEAR SIR,

I had your last cablegram suggesting that I should go to England alone by same steamer as the commissioners.

I was making preparations accordingly, when a communication was received from the Natal Government accepting the offer of the Indian community to form an "Indian Stretcher-Bearer Corps". I am, therefore, expecting to leave for the front any day.

Under the circumstances, we have all decided that the formation of the Corps is far more important than a visit to England. It is recognised that I should be with the Corps, at least in the initial stages. It is evident that the Natal Government intend to test the capability of the Indians for ambulance work.

I fear, therefore, for the present, I should abandon any idea of going to England.

We here, therefore, hope that the Committee that is looking after Indian interests in South Africa will take the necessary steps to place the position before the Government.

You will have seen the statement placed before the Constitution Committee[1] on behalf of the British Indians in the Transvaal. It represents all that could be said in the matter. The statement appears in *Indian Opinion* for the 2nd instant.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original: G. N. 2273

[1] *Vide* "Statement Presented to Constitution Committee", 29-5-1906

244. INDIANS AND THE NATIVE UNREST

The Government have at last accepted the offer of the Indian community, and put it upon its mettle. By way of experiment, they want a corps of twenty stretcher-bearers. The Natal Indian Congress has sent in a prompt reply.[1] We think the Congress has done well in offering to defray the wages of the bearers, so long as the corps remains in the experimental stage.

The acceptance by the Government synchronizes with the amendment of the Fire-Arms Act, providing for the supply of arms to Indians, and the statement made by Mr. Maydon to the effect that the Government intended to give Indians an opportunity of taking their share in the defence of the Colony.

Indians have now a splendid opportunity for showing that they are capable of appreciating the duties of citizenship. At the same time, the fact of the corps being raised is nothing to be unduly proud of. Twenty Indians, or even two hundred, going to the front is a flea-bite. The Indian sacrifice will rightly be considered infinitesimal. But it is the principle involved which marks the importance of the event. The Government have, by accepting the offer, shown their goodwill. And if Indians come successfully through the ordeal, the possibilities for the future are very great. Should they be assigned a permanent part in the Militia, there will remain no ground for the European complaint that Europeans alone have to bear the brunt of Colonial defence, and Indians will cease to feel that, in not being allowed to participate in it, they are slighted.

Indian Opinion, 9-6-1906

245. SOLDIERS' FUND

The Durban Women's Association has started a special fund for the soldiers who have gone to the front to fight the Kaffirs. All leading men have contributed to the Fund and some Indian names are seen among the contributors. It is our advice that more Indians, traders and others, should subscribe to the Fund. We mentioned last time how a correspondent had advised us to raise such a fund in Maritzburg. He says that, since we cannot bear our full share of the burden in the war, it is better that we help in this manner.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 2-6-1906

The soldiers' life is a hard one. The salary and allowances that the Government pay them are not always enough. Those, therefore, who do not go to the front should, in order to express their sympathy, raise a fund for the purpose of sending the soldiers fruits, tobacco, warm clothing and other things that they might need. It is our duty to subscribe to such a fund.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-6-l906

246. INDIAN POSITION IN NATAL[1]

[Before *June 13, 1906*]

Two things cause the greatest trouble to the Indian community in Natal. The first is the Dealers' Licenses Act.

When this Act was passed, the late Sir Henry Binns strongly protested against it, saying that it was an un-British measure, and that the ousting of the ordinary jurisdiction of the Supreme Court was a dangerous principle. Experience has shown the justness of these prophetic words. The administration of the Act was, in its initial stages, marked by an excess of zeal in restricting British Indian trade. The Licensing Officer at Newcastle refused to renew all Indian licences, that is, nine in number. It was after very great expense and trouble that six of them were renewed. As a result, and owing to pressure from the Colonial Office, the Government issued a warning to the licensing authorities that, unless they administered the Act with prudence and moderation and respected existing licences, the Government might be obliged to amend the law, and restore the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. The circular letter served its purpose for a time. It could do no more. Three typical cases have since happened to show how harsh has been the administration.

1. Mr. Hoondamal, who has been trading in the Colony for some time, wished to change premises, and to remove from Grey Street to West Street.[2] The shop was absolutely free from objection from a sanitary standpoint. It belonged to an Indian landlord, and it was in a block of buildings which have been devoted to Indian traders

[1] This was published in *The Natal Mercury* of 13-6-1906. That paper had suggested that Indians should "set down their grievances concisely in writing for the benefit of the public, who would then be in a better position to form an opinion". The statement was later reproduced in *Indian Opinion*

[2] *Vide* "Indian Licences: Need for Vigilance —I" 18-2-1905

for several years. Mr. Hoondamal had a fancyware business, and dealt in Oriental silks and other fancy goods. He did not come into competition with any European. His shop was kept in a scrupulously clean condition, but the transfer from one premises to another was rejected by the Town Council.

2. Mr. Dada Osman had been in trade in Vryheid for several years before the war.[1] The place he was trading in was considered a Location or a Bazaar during the Boer regime after Vryheid was annexed to Natal the Licensing Board refused to renew his licence, unless he would go to another Location far away from town, where it was impossible for him to do any business at all. Mr. Dada Osman's business in Vryheid has, therefore, proved a very serious loss to him. In this case, as also in the previous case, many certificates from Europeans of good standing were produced to show the respectability of the applicants. It should be remembered that Mr. Dada Osman's was the only Indian store in Vryheid. To add to the misery of the position, the anti-Asiatic laws of the Transvaal have been taken over bodily for this district of Natal. A British Indian, therefore, staying in Vryheid, not only has to undergo the disabilities that the Natal laws imposed on him, but has added to them the disabilities that the Transvaal laws have created for him.

3. Mr. Cassim Mahomed has been trading for three years on a farm near Ladysmith. For some time his was the only store. Recently, a European firm, by name Burdett & Co., have opened a store near by. Mr. Cassim Mahomed's servant, in his absence, was trapped and charged with a breach of the law as to Sunday trading, the servant having sold to the traps a piece of soap and a little sugar. Armed with this conviction, Messrs Burdett & Co. opposed Mr. Cassim Mahomed's application for a renewal of his licence. The Licensing Officer listened to their objections, and refused to renew the licence. There was an appeal to the Board, which confirmed the decision of the Licensing Officer. The court said that it was not guided by any prejudice; it proposed to treat Mr. Cassim Mahomed as it had treated a certain European. This was incorrect. This European was himself convicted of having sold opium, in contravention of the law, to the Indians working at the mines in his neighbourhood, and other allegations were made against him. There is an ocean of difference between the technical breach of the Sunday Law by the servant of Mr. Cassim Mahomed and the breach of the opium law of the Colony by the European personally. Mr. Cassim Mahomed, too, produced

[1] *Vide"*Dada Osman's Casee", 14-9-1898

excellent references from European firms of good standing.

In all the above-named three cases, there is not an iota of reason for depriving the applicants of their licences, and thereby, perhaps, their means of livelihood. They were all vested interests, but the popular Boards, in our opinion, did not hesitate to trample under foot all sense of justice and right. Had the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court been reserved, such gross injustice would never have been possible. It is possible to understand objections to traders whose premises are insanitary or even ugly, to traders who cannot produce any intelligible record of their transactions or have been known to have deceived their creditors. One could also understand a great deal of hesitation in granting new licences to Indian traders in view of popular feeling and prejudice, but it is hard to justify treatment meted out to cases like the foregoing. A study of the Cape Bill, recently published, in connection with this matter would be very appropriate, and would throw a great deal of light on the question. No reasonable exception could be taken to that measure, and yet itwould do all that the Natal Act was intended to do, without doing violence to British traditions, or even the elementary ideas of right and wrong.

A further difficulty has now been introduced by reason of a circular issued by the Government to the licensing authorities, to the effect that for Indian applications they are to take thumb-impressions on the counterfoils of the licences issued, in order to establish identity. Why such a distinction against Indians should be made it is difficult to understand, except on the supposition that the Government intend that, as soon as the present Indian holders have retired from business or died, the business should be sold, not as a going concern, but outright. What this means to a trader can be better imagined than described.

IMMIGRATION RESTRICTION ACT

Under this Act, latterly, the Government have framed rules imposing fees which are simply extortionate. Any Indian who is domiciled in Natal, and wants to return to Natal, as a rule takes with him some documentary proof and the Government grant him a certificate of domicile on sufficient proof being given. Hitherto, the nominal charge of 2s. 6d. has been made, but it has now been raised to £1. Similarly, facilities are afforded to those who wish to enter the Colony for a temporary visit, or who, belonging to the inland States, wish to pass through Natal on their way to India. These are called visitors' or embarkation passes, and were naturally issued till recently without any fee, but on a deposit of £10, to be refunded on leaving the

Colony. A fee of £1 has now been imposed on these passes also. The imposition is extraordinary. British Indians not only contribute to the railway revenue by passing through Natal, but have now to pay for the privilege of doing so a fee of £1. The same argument applies to visitors. One would consider that, seeing that the law restricts immigration, and not temporary sojourn, of people, the expenses of ensuring the return of those who wish to temporarily remain in the Colony should be borne by the general treasury. The Government, however, have taken a different view. They consider that a man who visits Natal temporarily may also be dealt with under the Immigration Restriction Act, and that, therefore, when he is allowed to visit the Colony, it is a privilege that is extended to him. For such a contention there is no support in law. Cases have occurred where British Indians in Johannesburg have taken out embarkation passes, for which they have paid £1. They have been obliged to change their minds, and to indefinitely postpone their visit to India, and yet they have been obliged to ferfeit the fee of £1 paid for their embarkation passes, although they have never used them, and when the time comes for them to go to India, they would have to take [out] other embarkation passes, and pay the fee again. The above fees, therefore, could only be interpreted as an attempt to indirectly tax British Indians.

Indian Opinion, 16-6-1906

247. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

We, the undersigned, solemnly and sincerely declare that we will be faithful and bear true allegiance to His Majesty King Edward the Seventh, His Heirs and Successors, and that we will faithfully serve in the supernumerary list of the Active Militia Force of the Colony of Natal as Stretcher-Bearers, until we shall lawfully cease to be members thereof, and the terms of the service are that we should each receive Rations, Uniform, Equipment and 1s. 6d. per day.

M. K. GANDHI, U. M. SEHLAT, H. I. JOSHI, S.B. MEDH, KHAN MAHOMED, MAHOMED SHAIKH, DADA MIAN, POOTI NAIKEN, APPA SAMY, KUNJEE, SHAIKH MADAR, MAHOMED, ALWAR, MUTHUSAMY, COOPOOSAMY, AJODHYA SING, KISTAMA, ALI, BHAILAL, JAMALUDIN.[1]

Indian Opinion, 16-6-1906

[1] Cf., however, "Indian Stretcher-Bearer Corps", Before 19-7-1906

248. LORD SELBORNE

Lord Selborne made a significant speech while laying the foundation-stone of the new Town Hall at Germiston. The speech consists of advice on morality and politics. Addressed as it is to the whites, it is perhaps of less direct interest to us from a political standpoint. But from the moral point of view, Lord Selborne's words deserve to be pondered over. Accordingly, we summarise the speech below:

The Municipalities exercise a necessary influence on the lives of us whites, who are politically very active. They are the schools which prepare men for the administration of the State. It is there that the seeds of the freedom of a people are sown and nurtured. The British prefer a harsh but self-governing political system to a mild alien rule. At all times and everywhere, the Municipalities have been the chief forum of public opinion. The Municipality serves as a training-ground not only for its members but also for the electorate and for others who discuss [public affairs]. The electors should never forget how to offer legitimate criticism. This is a region in which engaging storms blow. Storms are of two kinds: actual storms and the metaphorical ones in politics. One who preserves one's equanimity during an actual storm can be said to have a cool and collected temperament. In the same way, one who remains unperturbed during a political storm is considered a man of firm convictions. I should consider a person reliable who sticks to his own way of life in fair weather and foul. A man should prove that he isabsolutely firm in his principles regardless of whether or not people interpret his words or actions aright.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-6-1906

249. MR. SEDDON

Mr. Seddon[1], the Prime Minister of New Zealand, died at the age of sixty-one without having suffered any illness. He was an able English statesman. For a long time he was the President of New Zealand to which office he was elected; he earned a good name for himself and succeeded in bringing prosperity to the land entrusted to

[1] Richard Seddon died on June 10, 1906 aboard the *Oswestry Grange* while on his way back to New Zealand after a tour of Australia.

his care. He was in the front rank of Colonial statesmen. Though ever trying to increase the power of the Colonies by disregarding the Imperial Government, he was always considered fit to play a leading role in British Imperial Councils and Committees since his attitude was never really harmful to the interests of the British Empire.

At the Jubilee Colonial and Coronation Conferences, he proved to be the foremost among the Colonial Prime Ministers. The death of such a statesman will be mourned in every part of the British Empire. His Majesty King Edward has sent a message of condolence to the people of New Zealand. The Natal Government has also sent a similar message, which bears testimony to his popularity.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-6-1906

250. LETTER TO PATROL LEADER

DURBAN,
June 18, 1906

CHIEF LEADER N. CHIAZZARI
POINT
[DURBAN]
DEAR SIR,

In accordance with the efforts made by Captain Dray,[1] leader of Ward IV, to raise subscriptions from Indian merchants resident in the above ward, for the supply of uniforms to such members of the patrol for the said ward as may be too poor to afford the uniform themselves, we have much pleasure in informing you that we have now collecte dsubscriptions larger than the estimate made by Captain Dray, as you will see from the list herewith enclosed. The amount required was £70. 15. 0, and the amount subscribed is £86. 7. 0.

We beg to hand you herewith the sum of £50.0.0 cash to be used as above. Should you require more, we would send you the balance.

We shall feel obliged if you will kindly let us have for the information of the subscribers a list of those that may be so supplied with uniforms.

If, in view of the utter collapse of the rebellion, the fund is not

[1] He addressed a meeting of Indian residents of the Ward on June 2 in the Congress Hall. Gandhiji, along with some other leaders of the community, also spoke, and it was decided to raise a subscription of £70 for uniforms and to provide 16 men for ambulance work.

now required, we take it that the same will be refunded.

We would also like to add that the uniforms, should they be bought, should remain the property of Ward IV.

In conclusion, we beg to record our thanks to Captain Dray for enabling us to show our appreciation in ever so slight a manner of those townsmen who have come forward for the defence of the persons and property of their fellow-residents in Ward IV.

We remain, dear sir,

Yours faithfully,

S. P. MAHOMED & CO.

[Enclosure]

NAMES OF SUBSCRIBERS

	£	s	d
Aboobaker Amod & Co.	10	10	0
M. C. Camroodeen & Co.	10	10	0
Dawad Mahomed	10	10	0
B. Ebrahim Esmail	8	8	0
P. Dawji Mahomed	7	10	0
G. H. Miankhan	6	6	0
Parsee Rustomjee	6	6	0
S. P. Mahomed	4	4	0
M. C. Anglia	2	2	0
Hoosen Cassim	2	2	0
Abdool Hak & Amod	2	10	0
A. Hack Mahomed Ismail	2	2	0
A. M. Paruk	2	2	0
M. S. Randeri	1	1	0
G. H. Randeri	1	1	0
E. A. Tayob	1	1	0
N. Kotwal	2	2	0
East Indian Trading Co.	2	2	0
Dada Abdoolla & Co.	1	1	0
Abdool Hack Kajee Sahib	1	1	0
I. B. Timol	1	1	0
Friend	0	15	0
Total £	86	7	0

Indian Opinion, 23-6-1906

251. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

STANGER LAAGER,
June 22, 1906

DEAR PROF. GOKHALE,

I am writing this from the military laager at Stanger.[1] The Indian Stretcher-Bearer Corps received orders yesterday to march. The work before the Corps this time is of a more difficult type. In any case, it was absolutely necessary for me to accompany the Corps if it was to be formed at all. The question of my coming to England must, therefore, remain in abeyance.

I am very thankful for your long letter and the suggestions made by you.

I suppose we shall know in time the result of your interviews[2] with Mr. Morley. You will put a finishing touch to your brilliant work, if you could on your way pass through South Africa. That I know is a selfish view, but I may be pardoned for taking such a view, seeing that all my work at present seems to be connected with South Africa alone.

I am,
Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

[PROF. GOKHALE
LONDON]

From the handwritten original: Courtesy: Servants of India Society

252. AN IMPORTANT PERMIT CASE

Justice has again been vindicated, and the excesses of the Asiatic Permit Department in the Transvaal have received a salutary check at the hands of the presiding Magistrate at Volksrust. From the summary furnished by our Johannesburg correspondent of the case in question, it would appear that Mr. E. M. Bhyat, brother of Mr. A. M. Bhyat, of Heidelberg, a well-known Indian merchant, was refused a permit to

[1] A town 45 miles to the north-east of Durban

[2] Gokhale, who had presided over the Congress Session at Banaras in December 1905, was at this time in England and met Mr. Morley several times in connection with, the Partition of Bengal, proposals for reform and Indian problems generally.

re-enter the Transvaal, although he proved that he was an old resident of that Colony and had paid three pounds to the Dutch Government as the price of settlement in the Transvaal. Mr Bhyat's application had received very influential European support. He was to go to the Transvaal in order to replace his brother, who found it necessary togo to India for reasons of health. In spite of such proof, Mr. Bhyat could not get a permit, the reason alleged being that he, having left the Transvaal some time before the outbreak of war, could not be termed a refugee. The case went to Lord Selborne through the British Indian Association, but His Excellency declined to grant relief. It is a matter of painful surprise to us that the High Commissioner should have denied justice in a case of such importance. Indians have a right to complain that His Excellency did not show for the Indian community that reasonable regard to which he said some time ago it was rightly entitled.

Exasperated by the refusal, Mr. Bhyat appealed to the law court of the Colony, whose decision was entirely in Mr. Bhyat's favour. The Magisterial interpretation of the Peace Preservation Ordinance means that those Indians who have paid three pounds to the old Government are free to enter the Transvaal without permits, on proof of such payment.

The case shows once more how hard it is for an Indian to get justice from the Government in the Transvaal. Ever since the establishment of British authority in that Colony, Indians have been obliged to struggle against it for their right to exist in that portion of the British Empire. They have more than once been obliged to extort from an unwilling administration a measure of justice by the help of the law courts of the Colony. Lord Selborne was inclined to resent the complaint of the British Indian Association that the Government opposed the Indian community in the licence test case. Perhaps there was some ground for resentment, as there was a decided case of the Republican High Court to which the present Government felt bound to give effect. In the present case, there was no such precedent. The Peace Preservation Ordinance is a creation of the British Government. It has been wrested from its proper sphere in order to restrict Indian immigration. It was within the power of the Government to grant relief, of its own motion, without being troubled with any precedents. And yet an Indian merchant has had to undergo much expense and worry, and has been compelled to resort to the law courts of the Colony before he could receive even the elements of equitable

treatment. We wonder how Lord Selborne will justify this latest action of the executive authority in the Transvaal.

Indian Opinion, 23-6-1906

253. INDIAN VOLUNTEERS

Much discussion has been carried on in this journal regarding whether or not the Indians should participate in the war. The Government has agreed to accept a corps of twenty stretcher-bearers, and the Congress has got that number together. This has produced a very favourable impression on the minds of prominent whites. Some leading members of the community have, because of this, formed the opinion that we must have innate ability for such work; and they advise us that we should accordingly ask for a permanent place in the Volunteer Corps.

Between this proposal and the Stretcher-Bearer Corps that has already been raised, there is much difference. The Stretcher-Bearer Corps is to last only a few days. Its work will be only to carry the wounded, and it will be disbanded when such work is no longer necessary. These men are not allowed to bear arms. The move for a Volunteer Corps is quite different and much more important. That Corps will be a permanent body; its members will be issued weapons, and they will receive military training every year at stated times. For the present they will not have any fighting to do. Wars are not fought all the time. A war breaks out, roughly speaking, once in twenty years. It is now more than twenty years since the last Kaffir rebellion broke out. There is, therefore, absolutely no risk in joining the Volunteer Corps. It can be looked upon as a kind of annual picnic. The person joining it gets enough exercise and thus keeps his body in good trim and improves his health. One who enlists as a volunteer is much respected. People love him and praise him, calling him a civilian soldier.

If the Indians are given such a status, we believe it would be a very good thing. It is likely to bring in some political advantage. Whether or not any advantage is to be derived, there is no doubt that it is our duty to enlist. Hundreds of leading whites enlist themselves and take pride in doing so. Under the prevailing law, it is open to the Government to enlist compulsorily. We ought to obey the laws designed for the defence of the country we live in. Therefore, considering the matter from any point, it is clear that, if we are able to join the Volunteer Corps, the reproach against us would be lived

down, once and for all.

For fifteen years now the whites have accused the Indians that, if it came to giving one's life in defence of Natal, they would desert their posts of duty and flee home. We cannot meet this charge with a written rejoinder. There is but one way of disproving it—the way of action. The time to act appears to have come now. But how is it to be done? Not by making volunteers out of the poor labourers freed from their indentures. It is the duty of the trading community to take part in the movement themselves. Many men can be trained up even if each shop offers only one man. Trade will not suffer. The condition of those who join will improve. They will gain in strength and energy and will be deemed to have done their duty as citizens.

It is sheer superstition to believe, as some appear to do, that there is greater risk to life in going to the battle-field or preparing for it. Next week we intend to adduce examples in support of this.[1]

Meanwhile, we are placing these thoughts before the leaders of the community and we hope that they will receive due consideration.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-6-1966

254. THE CASE OF SULIMAN MANGA

We have already published in our English columns a full account of the case relating to a permit for Mr. Suliman Manga.[2] Sir Henry Cotton asked a question in the House of Commons based on this information. Mr. Churchill[3] in reply stated that a prompt inquiry would be made into the matter. Both the question and the answer are very important. It remains to be seen what reply Lord Selborne can give now. Probably the relief that one can hope for in permit problems will largely depend on his answer.

Mr. Churchill's reply that an inquiry would be made gives us adequate grounds to hope that the Home Government will not entirely disown responsibility.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-6-1906

[1] *Vide* "Should Indians Volunteer or Not?" 30-6-1906

[2] *Vide* "A Permit Case", 2-6-1906

[3] Winston Churchill, who was Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies

255. INDENTURED INDIANS IN LADYSMITH

Earlier, our Ladysmith correspondent wrote an account of the tyrannies perpetrated on the indentured Indians of Ladysmith. The despatch was published in our English columns also.[1] Mr. Polkinghorne, the Protector, who happened to read it, has informed us that necessary inquiries in the matter are being made. This is heartening news, and it is to be hoped that the poor Indians will get some redress.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-6-1906

256. INDIAN STRETCHER-BEARER CORPS

Mr. Omar Haji Amod Johari and Mr. Mahomed Cassim Anglia, the Joint Honorary Secretaries of the Congress, have received from the Government a reply to their letter offering to pay the salary of the members of the Stretcher-Bearer Corps. The Government have accepted the offer.

Mrs Nanji and Mrs Gabriel have together prepared Red Cross badges for the members of the Corps. These badges are worn on the left arm and identify those who are engaged exclusively in attending to the wounded. These badges cannot be very important in the Kaffirrebellion;but among European nations there is a convention that arms cannot be used against persons wearing such badges.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-6-l906

257. AN IMPORTANT TENANCY CASE

The Supreme Court of Natal recently decided an important case on the notice to be given to a tenant on a monthly tenure. The common understanding is that it is sufficient to give a tenant a month's notice beginning from any date of the month, and that he in turn, can give a similar notice and vacate the premises. This seems to be the interpretation accepted among some lawyers too. But the Supreme Court has decided that the notice should be given on the same date on which the tenancy began. For example, if the tenant took possession on the 6th of a certain month, he can give the necessary month's notice on the 6th of any month or earlier, but the

[1] *Vide Indian Opinion,* 9-6-1906.

notice will only take effect from the 6th of the succeeding month. The landlord also is, for his part, bound to give similar notice.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-6-1906

258. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

MR. BHAYAT'S PERMIT CASE

Just as there was a permit case in respect of Mr. Suliman Manga, so a case has now been decided concerning Ebrahim Bhayat. Mr. Manga, though fully and clearly entitled to a temporary permit, was not given one by the Permit Officer; he secured it at last from Delagoa Bay. Mr. Ebrahim Bhayat was an old resident of the Transvaal and knew a number of prominent whites; and his application was supported by many of them. Even so, he was refused a permit on the ground that it was not during the war that he had left the Transvaal but a year earlier. This was the limit of oppression. As it was absolutely essential for Mr. Bhayat to go to the Transvaal in connection with his brother's business, he decided to go to court. Mr. Benson's opinion had been obtained, and Mr. Lichtenstein appeared in the case at Volksrust. Mr. Bhayat's defence was as follows:

1. Mr. Ebrahim Bhayat was an old resident of the Transvaal

2. He had paid £3 to the Dutch Government, and had by that payment purchased the right of permanent residence.

3. By virtue of the London Convention such men were entitled to stay permanently.[1]

4. Furthermore, since Mr. Bhayat's marriage had been solemnized in the Transvaal, he should be regarded a permanent resident of the Colony.

The Permit Act could not be enforced in the face of these arguments; and the Magistrate decided that such persons needed no permits to enter the Transvaal.

This is a very good decision, and the Permit Office has met with a crushing defeat. We shall await the defence Lord Selborne can muster in reply.

As a result of this decision, those Indians who were formerly

[1] Under the terms of the London Convention, which provided for the free and unrestricted entry of all British subjects into the erstwhile Republic, a person was not subject to the Governor's discretionary powers unless he was considered dangerous or seditious.

residents of the Transvaal and hold a Dutch registration certificate will be able to enter without a permit. This will obviate many inconveniences met with by those applying for permits.

I must, however, point out that there is a confusion in this case. The good gentleman that the Volksrust Magistrate is, he has interpreted the law very sympathetically and in our favour. There are many eminent barristers who are of the opinion that it is necessary even for those who possess registration certificates to take out permits; and, undoubtedly, there are many difficulties in doing so. However, the Government cannot go in appeal against the Magistrate's decision; and as long as the Indians make out their case carefully and strongly, they should have no trouble at all. It will perhaps be easier for them to come through Volksrust than through Komatipoort, for there is no reason to suppose that all magistrates will give a similar decision. The matter cannot be taken as finally settled as long as the Supreme Court has not given its decision. It should also be remembered that this is not a case that can be taken to the Supreme Court.

New Act for JOHANNESBURG MUNICIPALITY

The Johannesburg Municipality intends to get a new law passed concerning its own powers during the present session of the legislature. It seeks further enabling powers to declare an area a Location or Bazaar, and to refuse a licence to those who are otherwise entitled to it on such grounds as the unsatisfactory condition of the building or the applicant being guilty of some offence. Persons dissatisfied with the decision of the Municipality would be able to prefer an appeal before a Magistrate. It does not seem possible to oppose either of these two points. However, the power to fix a site for a Location or a Bazaar does not authorize the Municipality to force people to shift there.

LORD SELBORNE

It appears from the local newspapers that a movement is afoot to recall Lord Selborne from South Africa. Members of the Radical Party believe that Lord Selborne does not carry out the policy of the Liberal Party in full measure.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-6-1906

259. SHOULD INDIANS VOLUNTEER OR NOT?

We commented on this subject in our last issue.[1] Towards the end of that article, we had said that most of us held back only because of fear. There is, however, no cause whatever for fear, as should be evident from the examples we propose to give for the benefit of those who believe that we should be ever ready to participate in war if we want to live happily and respectably in Natal, in South Africa or, for that matter, in any part of the British Empire. The Crimean War caused heavy casualties; yet it has been estimated that fewer men died from bayonet or bullet wounds in that war than through sheer carelessness or perverse living. It was calculated that, on an average, more men died of fever and other diseases during the attack on Ladysmith than by Boer bullets. The experience in every war has been similar.

Moreover, those who can take care of themselves and lead regular lives while at the front can live in health and happiness. The training such men receive cannot be had elsewhere, that is, if they do not go to the front only to prove their valour or quench their thirst for blood. A man going to the battle-front has to train himself to endure severe hardships. He is obliged to cultivate the habit of living in comradeship with large numbers of men. He easily learns to make do with simple food. He is required to keep regular hours. He forms the habit of obeying his superior's orders promptly and without argument. He also learns to discipline the movement of his limbs. And he has also to learn how to live in limited space according to the maxims of health. Instances are known of unruly and wayward men who went to the front and returned reformed and able fully to control both their mind and body.

For the Indian community, going to the battle-field should be an easy matter; for, whether Muslims or Hindus, we are men with profound faith in God. We have a greater sense of duty, and it should therefore be easier for us to volunteer. We are not overcome by fear when hundred of thousands of men die of famine or plague in our country. What is more, when we are told of our duty, we continue to be indifferent, keep our houses dirty, lie hugging our hoarded wealth. Thus, we live a wretched life acquiescing in a long, tormented process ending in death. Why, then, should we fear the death that may perhaps overtake us on the battle-field? We have to learn much from what the whites are doing in Natal. There is hardly any family from which someone has not gone to fight the Kaffir rebels. Following their

[1] *Vide* "Indian Volunteers", 23-06-1906

example, we should steel our hearts and take courage. Now is the time when the leading whites want us to take this step; if we letgo this opportunity, we shall repent later. We therefore urge all Indian leaders to do their duty to the best of their ability.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-6-1906

260. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI[1]

June 30, 1906[2]

Under separate cover, I am sending you marked copy of Indian Opinion, wherein will be found copy of correspondence from Lord Elgin to the Governor of the Colony of Natal on the subject of the Municipal Corporations Consolidation Bill. I would bring to your notice the resolution arrived at by the Municipalities Association at its recent meeting, held to consider Lord Elgin's despatch, to the effect that no alteration should be made in the definition of "Coloured Persons". This decision leaves the Indian community in the same danger of insult and degradation as before, and it is to be hoped that the Secretary of State for India and the Indian Government will insist upon the carrying out of the suggestion proffered by the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Moreover, I would point out that Lord Elgin omits all reference to the Clause of the Bill disfranchising all those who are not in possession of the parliamentary franchise. It will doubtless be within your recollection that the Indian community of Natal acquiesced in the disfranchisement of all Indians who were not at that time on the Parliamentary Voters Roll at the urgent desire of the late Mr. Harry Escombe, on the distinct understanding that such disfranchisement was not to be carried to any greater lengths. I need not do more than remind you that British Indians in Natal, if such Municipal disfranchisement takes place, will be in a worse position than they would be in India, where, of course, such representative institutions are enjoyed by them. In view of the action of some of the Municipalities, as reported on various occasions in the columns of Indian Opinion, in making invidious, arbitrary distinctions between British Indians and Europeans, it is obvious that a grave injustice will be inflicted upon the British Indian community in Natal, unless steps

[1] The original is not available. Dadabhai Naoroji, in his letter dated July 24 to the Secretary of State for India, quoted this as "from a letter received from a correspondent in Johannesburg", i.e., Gandhiji. Though the latter was away at the front on that date, it is not unlikely that he had drafted it earlier.

[2] *ibid*

are immediately taken to prevent this curtailment of their civil rights.

From a photostat of Dadabhai Naoroji's letter: G. N. 2316

261. INDIAN STRETCHER-BEARER CORPS[1]

[Before *July 19, 1906*]

COMPOSITION OF THE CORPS

This Corps, which has been formed at the instance of the Natal Government by way of experiment, in connection with the operations against the Natives, consists of twenty[2] Indians whose names are as fellows :

M. K. Gandhi (Sgt.-Major), U. M. Shelat (Sgt.), H. I. Joshi (Sgt.), S. B. Medh (Sgt.), Parbhu Hari (Corporal), Khan Mahomed, Jamaludin, Mahomed, Sheikh Madar, Sheik Dada Mia, Mahomed Essop, Puti Naiken, Appasamy, Kitama, Kupusamy, Bomaya, Kunji, Ajodhyasing.

According to religion, the Corps is composed of six Mahomedans and fourteen Hindus. Geographically, there are five belonging to the Bombay Presidency, twelve to the Presidency of Madras, two to the Punjab, and one to the Presidency of Bengal. It may be added that one of the twelve Madrasis is Colonial-born.

According to status, thirteen men have been, at one time or [an]other, under indenture in Natal, and are now working as free men, in the capacity of gardeners, domestic servants, etc. Two of them are engine-drivers by profession, one [is] a goldsmith, three are agents and book-keepers, having received higher education in India, and one is a barrister.

It is now well known that the Government has provided uniforms and rations, and the Natal Indian Congress pays the salaries.

AT THE FRONT

On the 22nd June, this Corps entrained for Stanger by the early train and joined the B. M. R. column under Colonel Arnott, who was in laager at Stanger. After discussion with the regimental Sgt-Major, Colonel Arnott gave orders that the Corps was to receive European rations, and rice and *dholl*, with curry-powder, in lieu of meat. For the information of readers of this journal, the scale per man per day is

[1] This was the first of the two despatches sent by Gandhiji and published in *Indian Opinion* as "From Our Special Correspondent at the Front"

[2] Actually only 18 are listed.

appended:

Bread or Biscuits 1 Ib., Sugar 5 oz., Tea _ oz., Coffee _ oz., Butter 1 oz., Salt _ oz., Jam 2 oz., Cheese 2 oz., Potatoes 4 oz., Onions 2 oz., Mealiemeal 4 oz., Pepper, Rice 1 Ib., Lentils _ Ib.

As there was no medical officer attached to Colonel Arnott's column, the Colonel authorized the issue of a small quantity of medicine of immediate necessity, and a supply of bandages. Seeing us with Red Cross bandages, application was made the same day by several troopers who had either suffered slight accidental injuries orwere suffering from malarial fever. The medicine, therefore, came in very handy, and one portion of the Corps' work commenced at the laager.

The night of the 22nd was passed in laager, and all of us had to sleep in the open. One blanket supplied to each of us was not enough protection against cold, and the overcoats, furnished from the Comforts Fund opened by the Indian community, were very much appreciated. After breakfast on the 23rd June, the whole column moved forward, the Durban Reserves, the Indian Corps, and an escort bringing up the rear.

We had to march with the whole of our kit on, and as the experience was new to most of us, and as the marching was mostly up hill, it was severely felt by some. On the way, we passed by Sir James Hulett's garden, and the troops were permitted to help themselves liberally to the luscious naartjes, with which the trees in the garden were weighted. After three cheers for the donor for the timely gift, the column moved forward and laagered about a mile beyond the estate. On the 24th, at 6-30 a.m., the march commenced. We were allowed on this occasion to put our kit onto the waggons—a great relief. The columns encamped at Otimati, a hill in a beautiful valley. Just near us ran a sparkling stream. The column was not intended to go as far as Mapumulo, but was to operate from the Otimati camp. The Corps had, however, instructions to proceed with the first convoy to Mapumulo. On the 25th June, therefore, we were in a state of uncertainty as to our fate, but hardly had our luncheon been half cooked, when orders were received that we should march to Mapumulo with some waggons that were leaving for that place. we had therefore to leave our food, pack up kit, and march, which we did within a quarter of an hour of the receipt of the orders. We reached Mapumulo at about 5 p.m. and reported ourselves to Captain Howden, the P. M. O. at that place. Captain Howden treated the Corps very nicely, and Corporal Little, who was to look after it, busied himself with providing us with tents,

etc., up to 10 p.m. We were given one bell tent, and five patrol tents, which after three nights in the open were more or less a luxury, though, to most of us, a very necessary one. Colonel Sparks, too, came and inquired about us.

Indian Opinion, 21-7-1906

262. INDIAN STRETCHER-BEARER CORPS[1]

[Before *July 19, 1906*]

FATIGUE DUTIES

On the 26th our task was allotted to us. Nine of us were to form a fatigue party to accompany the tank-waggon, which brought water from an adjoining stream. Some of us were detained to disinfect the whole camp, under the superintendence of Dr. Savage, the DistrictSurgeon for Mapumulo, and from three to four of us were to dress the wounds on the backs of several Native rebels, who had received lashes. One of us assisted at entering up the daily roll of patients treated by Captain Howden. The stretcher-bearing work, however, had yet to come. Some of the above work was partially interrupted or suspended as a helio-message was received to forward a stretcher party to Otimati in connection with operations that were to be undertaken by the B. M. R. column at Thring's Post. Early on the morning of the 27th, therefore, one-half of the Corps, with two stretchers under Sgt.-Major Gandhi and Sgt. Joshi proceeded to Otimati, where instructions were received to take a stretcher to carry one of the troopers who was dazed. Fortunately, the trooper had recovered before the party reached Thring's Post. But by an unfortunate accident, another trooper, by name Forder, had received a bullet-wound in the thigh from a co-trooper. He, however, pluckily rode to the camp. The stretcher party had to assist Mr. Stokes, of the N. M. C., in treating the wounded trooper, and others, who had received slight injuries through accidents or otherwise, requiring medical help. On the 28th, the stretcher party at Otimati were to take to Mapumulo Private Sutton of the Durban Reserves, whose toe was crushed under a waggon wheel, and Trooper Forder. The latter had to be carried on a stretcher, as his wound was very delicate. The work of carrying Trooper Forder proved to be much heavier than we had thought. The energy of all the available men had to be taxed to the utmost in carrying the wounded men, especially as it meant going

[1] This was the second and final despatch sent by Gandhiji from the front.

uphill all the way. As we were nearing Mapumulo, the Captain of our escort sent word that, if it could be managed, Forder should be placed in the ambulance waggon, as the Natives about the hill might wrongly consider that the rebels had succeeded in wounding at least one of our men. Trooper Forder, on hearing the message, gladly volunteered to go into the waggon. And the fatigued bearers were equally glad to be relieved of the necessity of having to carry their charge up the very steep hill near Mapumulo. With this brief interruption, then, the whole Corps resumed its former work, with which it had commenced, and continued to do so till the morning of the 3rd July, a day that will ever remain memorable to the members of the Corps.

HEAVY WORK

At 9 p.m. on the 2nd July, the Corps was ordered to follow a combined column at 2-30 a.m. the next morning which was to operate in the Umvoti Valley. We had to take two days' rations with us, our blankets, and five stretchers. We did so, and the march commenced at 3 a.m. on the 3rd. There were no waggons with the column, and, with the exception of the infantry, which had gone forward before, all were mounted men whom we had to follow. Men in the rear were to guard us. We were all unarmed. But as the troops galloped away in front of us and we followed them, we were quickly out-distanced. However, we marched on, trying, as far as possible, to overtake the column, but itwas a hopeless task.There was, therefore, as a rule, considerable distance between the rear-guard and ourselves. At daybreak, the movement of the troops became naturally more rapid, and the distance between them and us began to increase. However, there was no prospect before us except that of running after the troops or of being assegaied by the rebels. Probably we had a narrow escape. At 7 o'clock troops were operating at some distance from us. As we were struggling along, we met a Kaffir who did not wear the loyal badge. He was armed with an assegai and was hiding himself. However, we safely rejoined the troops on the further hill, whilst they were sweeping with their carbines the bushes below. Thus, we had to perform what seemed to be a never-ending march. We had to cross and re-cross the Umvoti River, an operation that was difficult enough, seeing that we were obliged to take off our heavy boots and putties. One of the men narrowly escaped what might have been a very serious accident, and he only crossed the stream less his putties and with a bleeding toe. However, he marched bravely on with the rest of us. Towards evening, the column retired to a rise near the valley and pitched the camp.

"DEAD TIRED"

All of us were dead tired, and it was a stroke of good luck that there were no casualties or accidents on our side. Had there been any, it is difficult to say how we would have discharged ourselves in carrying the wounded in such a fatigued condition, though the writer of these notes fully believes that, actuated as the Corps mainly was by a sense of duty, God would have given it sufficient strength to perform any such work. Anyhow, such was the answer given to the laughing troopers, who, half in pity and half in ridicule, inquired, as we were struggling along, what we should do if we had actually to carry some wounded. On the morning of the 4th, we were split up into two parties to accompany the two divisions of the column which were to operate in two different parts. The march had still to be without real protection. All this was inevitable in the nature of things. One party, however, had an easier day. Whilst it must have covered no less than 25 miles the previous day, on the 4th it could not have been more than 12 miles, but the other party, under Sgt. Shelat, had an equally trying time on that day. The result was that most of us were footsore, and it was about as much as we could do on the 5th to carry ourselves decently to Mapumulo, a distance of nearly 15 miles. Of course, the whole column was in a state of practical starvation, as, in the expectation of having only one night on the veld, everyone had taken two days' rations only. And so we had all to return to Mapumulo.

WEARY AND FOOTSORE

Our surprise can be better imagined than described, when reaching Mapumulo, where we had expected a day's rest, we were ordered to march to Thring's Post the day following and shift our own camp there. It was a physical impossibility for about nine or tenof us, and the Sgt.-Major informed the P. M. O. that, unless transport was provided for such as were totally unfit to walk, it would be impossible to resume the march the following day. The matter was placed before Colonel Sparks, who said that footsore bearers could go in an empty waggon that was going to Thring's Post, and thus we were able to undertake the journey to Thring's Post on the 6th July. There, we were attached to Captain Pearson, who treated us with every consideration. Transport that was provided for the footsore bearers put us on our feet again, and we were able to respond to the call of duty on the morning of the 8th. Orders were received on Saturday evening that we should follow with our stretchers the guns that were to leave for the Tugela Valley at 3 a.m. the following day. Compared to the work done in the Umvoti Valley, our task was easy, and the march

could not have covered more than 16 miles. We returned to camp the same day.

DOING THE IMPOSSIBLE

At 2-30 a.m. on the 10th, we had to proceed to the Otimati Valley with the infantry, and though the work was very difficult, we had by this time become more or less seasoned. We had to take two days' rations with us; the path lay through what would ordinarily be an inaccessible valley. It was impossible for any ambulance to go down, and in parts we had to descend steep precipices. Troopers had to lead their horses, and the route was so long that we never seemed to reach the bottom. However, at about 12 o'clock we finished the day's journey, with no Kaffirs to fight. But an incident happened on the way down the valley which was calculated to test our ability to do stretcher-bearing work. A Kaffir, being a friendly boy, who was guiding a private of the D. L. I., was shot by him, under the belief, it is said, that the Native was misleading him. The Native was badly wounded, and required carrying, which was entrusted to us. Orders were given that we were to take him the same day to Mapumulo, and we were given four friendly Natives to help us, as also to guide us. Three of them, however, as soon as the troops were out of sight, deserted us, and the fourth, though he remained with us, declined flatly to go with us to Mapumulo, as he feared that, without an escort, we might be cut to pieces by the enemy. Fortunately, the troops were yet within reach. The Sergeant-Major, therefore, reported the matter to the proper officer, and fresh orders were given that the wounded Kaffir should be taken the next day, and that in the meanwhile we should nurse and feed him. The whole of the troops encamped for the night in the valley, and the following day we resumed our march with our precious charge, with orders to go to Mapumulo. We were given about 20 Kaffir levies to help us. They did so with much difficulty over part of the way, and then, too, because Doctor Savage happened to be with us. The Natives in our hands proved to be most unreliable and obstinate. Without constant attention, they would as soon have dropped the wounded man as not, and they seemed to bestow no care on their suffering countryman.

INDIAN RESOURCEFULNESS

However, the Indian bearers carried him to Mapumulo in splendid style. All our resourcefulness was put to the test during the march. After we had finished the most difficult part of our journey along a narrow and steep pathway, the Japanese stretcher on which we were carrying the patient, who was very bulky, gave way, fortunately

without hurting him. The railway stretcher, on which he was first carried, had already broken under his weight. What were we to do? Luckily, we had skilled men among us. We temporarily mended the railway stretcher, and took our charge safely to Mapumulo, reaching there about 4 p.m., a distance probably of over 15 miles.

After a day's rest in Mapumulo, we returned, on the 13th, to Thring's Post, only to retrace our steps on the 14th to a spot near Mapumulo, where we are encamped for the present. With the capture of Messini and his fellow-chief, the rebellion seems to be over, and we are now resting, expecting orders every day to be disbanded. Thus, since the 3rd day of July, our Corps has accompanied all the important operations; and at the end of them, the writer of these notes is able to confidently assert that the little band is capable of performing any work that may be entrusted to it, and that can be done by any other such Corps.

Indian Opinion, 28-7-1906

263. SPEECH AT RECEPTION TO AMBULANCE CORPS

The Natal Indian Congress gave a reception to the Indian Stretcher-Bearer Corps which was disbanded on July 19, after six weeks at the front. Tributes were paid to the work of the Corps, to which Gandhiji replied. The following is an extract from a report of the proceedings.

DURBAN,
July 20, 1906

Thanking the organization on behalf of the Corps, Mr. Gandhi said that what the Corps had done was only its duty. If the Indians really wanted to show their appreciation of the work of the Corps, they should try through the Government to have a permanent Corps set up and should also exert themselves to improve their physique in order to qualify for admission. He said that if, for any reason, the traders could not enlist, other educated Indians as well as the servants and clerks of traders could easily do so. From experience gained during the fighting, he could say that the whites treated the Indians very cordially, and distinctions based on colour had ceased to exist. If a larger Indian Corps was formed on a permanent footing, such fellow-feeling would increase, and it was likely that in the processwhite prejudice against Indians might altogether disappear. He therefore

very strongly recommended the formation of such a Corps.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-7-1906

264. STATEMENT ON THE DIAMOND JUBILEE LIBRARY

At a meeting of the Natal Indian Congress held in the Congress Hall it was decided, among other things, to present silver medals to members of the Stretcher-Bearer Corps. The question of the management of the Diamond Jubilee Library also came up for discussion. Gandhiji made the following statement, which is an extract from the report of the proceedings.

DURBAN,
July 23, 1906

The Diamond Jubilee Library was started to mark the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria's rule. The ownership of the Library was vested in a special committee, which was also entrusted with its management, and the books were kept in the Congress Hall.[1] As the Lallubhai Library is not functioning at the moment, I saw the President of the Library, Mr. Ravishankar Bhatt, about bringing the books back to the Congress Hall, and he has agreed to return them. I have still to see one or two other gentlemen in this connection, and after securing their consent, the requisite transport will be sent to fetch the books.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-7-1906

265. TRANSVAAL PERMITS

In view of the recent decisions[2] of the Supreme Court of the Transvaal on the Peace Preservation Ordinance, it is necessary still further to examine the legal position created by those decisions. The dismissal by the Supreme Court of the application by the Attorney-General for a review of the Bhyat case leaves the question raised in that case undecided. Whilst, therefore, the Magistrate at Volksrust is bound by his own decision, and to recognise the Dutch Registration Certificates as equivalent to permits, we have no pronouncement from the Supreme Court endorsing the magisterial

[1] *Vide* "The Plague", 7-1-1905

[2] *Vide* "An Important Permit Case", 23-6-1906

view. And in the face of the contention raised by the Attorney-General, the state of the law is one of painful uncertainty to the Indian refugees. Other magistrates may unconsciously attach weight to the argument advanced on behalf of the Crown. It may then come to pass that an Indian holding the Dutch certificate may safelyre-enter the Transvaal through Volksrust, and another equally qualified, passing through, say, Komatipoort, may be prevented from so doing. Not even the most violent anti-Asiatic would, we presume, be able to justify such a deplorable state of things. The Supreme Court decision on the registration law bears out the whole contention of the Indian community. Can Lord Selborne still claim for the Transvaal administration a reasonable spirit in the enforcement of the Peace Preservation Ordinance and Law 3 of 1885? We trust that the ever-vigilant British Indian Association will invite His Excellency's answer to the query.

Indian Opinion, 28-7-1906

266. LETTER TO W. WEDDERBURN

[JOHANNESBURG,]
July 30, 1906

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN, BARONET
84-5 PALACE CHAMBERS
LONDON, ENGLAND

DEAR SIR,

I have just returned from the front. Although I cannot now be of any use in connection with the Report of the Constitution Committee, it is still the opinion of the British Indian Association that I should proceed to England accompanied by one or two merchants, not necessarily to influence the letters patent that will be granted but to place the British Indian position personally before the authorities. I shall, therefore, be obliged if you will kindly let me know by cable whether such a deputation is likely to be of any use whatsoever. If it is considered unnecessary, the word "needless" would explain the meaning. If you think that a deputation such as the above should proceed, please cable "yes". I do not know whether the end of September or October will be a suitable time.

I remain,
Yours truly,

From a photostat of the office copy: G. N. 2284

267. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

21-24 COURT CHAMBERS,
CORNER RISSIK & ANDERSON STREETS,
JOHANNESBURG,
July 30, 1906

DEAR MR. NAOROJI,

I have just returned from the front. I have your letter telling me that you have forwarded to the Secretaries of State for the Coloniesand India our statement[1] submitted to the Constitution Committee. I enclose herewith copy of my letter to Sir William Wedderburn[2] for your information.

May I tender you my congratulations on the success of your granddaughter at her examination for the M. A. degree of the University of Edinburgh ?

I am,
Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

THE HONOURABLE DADABHAI NAOROJI
LONDON, ENGLAND

[PS.]

This letter was too late last week even for the late post.[3]

From a photostat of the original: G. N. 2274

[1] *Vide* "Statement Presented to Constitution Committee",2-6-1906
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] This is in Gandhiji's hand.

268. LETTER TO PRINCIPAL MEDICAL OFFICER[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
July 31, 1906]4

TO
COL. J. HYSLOP
PRINCIPAL MEDICAL OFFICER
NATAL MILITIA
PIETERMARITZBURG
NATAL
SIR,

The Indian Stretcher-Bearer Corps was disbanded on the 19th inst., and the Corps reached Durban on the 20th.

The Corps was called upon to do the work of disinfecting the camp at Mapumulo, of dressing injuries and wounds, and of marching with the troops and doing stretcher work. Most of the bearers accompanied the troops during the operations at the Tugela, the Otimati and the Umvoti Valleys. In my humble opinion, the men did the work willingly and skilfully. The object of the Natal IndianCongress, in offering to form the Corps, was to show that Indians recognized their responsibilities as settlers in Natal, and to induce the Government to utilise Indians as a permanent portion of the Natal Militia. I venture to think that my countrymen are essentially fit for ambulance and hospital work. Trooper Forder, whom we carried from Otimati, had, in addition to being carried, to be nursed by us, and he was so satisfied that he sought me out specially on his recovery to express his appreciation of the men's work.

The Corps consisted of some skilled English-educated Indians, as also of Indians of the labourer type, but all of them were intelligent workers, and capable in civil life of earning much more than what would be paid to them by the Indian community. As the community was anxious that its offer should be accepted, in order to avoid any difficulty, the men were induced to accept only one shilling and six pence per day, which they gladly did; but, in my opinion, it is not possible to get intelligent men for less than £1 per week.

[1] In his reply, Col. Hyslop, acknowledging Gandhiji's letter as of this date, conveyed the Militia Commander's thanks to the members of the Ambulance Corps and expressed his own appreciation "of the very valuable services afforded to the Medical Department of the Militia, not only as stretcher-bearers, but also in connection with the more important work of sanitation".

I also think that those who may be called leaders of stretcher parties should receive five shillings per day.

Members of the Corps were all untrained and untried men; they were called upon, too, to do responsible and independent work, and to face danger unarmed. If the Government would form a permanent Ambulance Corps, I think that special training is absolutely necessary, and that they should all be armed for self-protection.

As one who has been intimately connected with the Indian community for the last thirteen years, I have ventured to place the above views before you for your consideration.

[*Yours faithfully,*]

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 11-8-1906

269. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

THE DEPUTATION TO ENGLAND

[Before *August 4, 1906*]

A meeting of the Committee of the British Indian Association was held last Friday, the 27th. Messrs Abdul Gani, Essop Mian, Coovadia, Mahomed Shahbuddin, Gulam Saheb, Mahomed Hoosain, Bhikhubhai; also Messrs Haji Habib and Amod Tayob of Pretoria, Messrs Amod Bhayat of Heidelberg and Omar Haji Amod Zaveri of Durban were present among others.

It was decided, after some discussion, that it was still necessary to send a deputation to England, as we were concerned more with the laws that would be enacted in the Transvaal after the Constitution had come into effect than with the Report of the Constitution Committee. On a proposal made by Haji Habib, it was resolved to ask for a grant of £250 out of the £1,000 sanctioned by the Natal Indian Congress towards the expenses of the deputation. Each member could draw up to £6120 as expenses, and the rest of the amount might be used to defray the expenses of the deputation as a whole. Furthermore, the Congress might avail itself of any aid received from the Cape. The Secretary has been asked to write a letter to that effect. If two persons go on deputations the expenses would be about £500. The Committee is of the opinion that the deputation should include Mr. Gandhi and a member from the trading class to represent the Transvaal. It has been decided to call for subscriptions at every place; the names of the members who should visit different places for the purpose have also

been drawn up. The Secretary has been asked to write letters to various places, and these have actually reached all the principal towns in the Transvaal. If therefore the requisite amount is raised; if the Natal Indian Congress agrees to contribute from it up to £250 towards expenses; and if no instructions to the contrary are received from England, the deputation will, in all probability, leave in September[1].

WAR CLAIMS

I append herewith the list of war claimants[2] that has been published in the Transvaal *Gazette*. It is necessary to draw the readers' attention to it, for the sums shown therein, if not claimed, will lapse at the end of the current year.

THE RETURN OF T.M.R.

The contingent which was despatched from here to reinforce the units engaged in suppressing the Native revolt, namely, the Transvaal Mounted Rifles, has now returned. It was received with much pomp and *eclat* by the people of the Transvaal. Big meetings were held in its honour and grand banquets given. The celebrations still continue. Reuter messages about the discharge of the Indian Stretcher-Bearer Corps and the good work done by it have appeared in the local papers.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-8-1906

270. SECRET JUSTICE

Our Johannesburg Correspondent last week drew pointed attention to Mr. Loveday's approval of the work of the Permit Department regarding Asiatics,[3] and his endorsement of the appointment of an inspecting officer at the coast. There is much more behind this incident than appears on the surface. The public have no knowledge of the fact that there are what are practically secret advisory boards, which control the action of the Registrar of Asiatics who has charge of the issue of permits. For all practical purposes, therefore, the Registrar, although nominally the responsible officer for issuing permits, is merely an agent of the advisory boards, mechanically following their directions. Evidently, Mr. Loveday is the

[1] It actually left in October.
[2] Of compensation for losses suffered during the Boer War
[3] In "Johannesburg Jottings", *Indian Opinion*, 28-7-1906

chief of these advisory boards, without being publicly appointed by the Government. Hence the innumerable difficulties placed in the way of British Indians, who have a *bona-fide* right to re-enter the Transvaal.

We do not object to the greatest strictness being exercised in connection with applications of refugees, but we do emphatically object to the secrecy that shrouds the doings of these advisory boards. We are not aware that the parties who are immediately interested are heard before the boards or allowed to be represented. The boards alone know what evidence they take and what evidence they consider sufficient for establishing claims on the part of British Indians to re-enter the Colony. Under a system such as this, favouritism—it may be quite unconscious—must exist. Bitter complaints reach us from all sides as to the rejection of claims that are easily provable. Boys of tender years are kept out of the Colony by these boards, which have been arbitrarily armed with powers to decide upon the applications of British Indian refugees.

It is a strange method of dealing out justice to entrust avowed partisans with the duty of judging their opponents or persons whom they have hitherto traduced in unmeasured terms. The least that the Transvaal Administration owes to British Indians is that they should be able to know their position definitely. Severest rules of procedure, if well defined and well understood, would be preferable to the hole-and-corner enquiry that is now being held as to British Indian permits. No Indian can today feel safe that he can re-enter the Transvaal without difficulty, on production of evidence of his prior residence. The conditions which the Transvaal Administration has created for the unfortunate British Indian refugees are most unsatisfactory, and discreditable in the extreme. It has gone very much further than Natal or Cape Colony, where, no matter what the restrictions are on immigration, everyone knows the legal position, and everyone is capable of asserting it in a Court of Law. It is a stateof things which it is the duty of every lover of justice and fairplay to see ended.

Indian Opinion, 4-8-1906

271. MR. BYTE'S WILL

We published in our last issue a brief account of the late Mr. Byte's will[1] which deserves to be taken note of by rich Indians.

[1] A Gujarati news item in *Indian Opinion*, dated July 28, 1906, said that, under

Mr. Byte earned millions of pounds in South Africa, and gave away the best part of that fortune to that country. Being an alien and having earned his name and fortune under the aegis of the British flag, he has provided for the widespread spending of a considerable part of his fortune in England as well. He has thus directed that his millions be used for deserving causes. The major portion of his legacy is to be spent on education. He has donated hundreds of acres of land in Johannesburg where a huge educational centre is to be set up; it is due exclusively to his munificence that the University of the Transvaal has come into existence. Such generosity has been an important factor in the progress of the whites. They know how to make money and also how best to spend it. We are backward in both respects, particularly in spending money aright. Even when we spend it, we do so indiscriminately, and largely for selfish ends or on personal pleasures.

To take the example of South Africa, there are few among us who have spent their money on the proper education of Indian children. It behoves us therefore to bear in mind such examples as Mr. Byte's. It is our prime duty to provide all the necessary means for the education of Indian children in South Africa. Our second duty is towards women's education. As long as our women do not realise their duty as mothers, the Indian people are bound to remain backward. And, thirdly, it is the duty of all gainfully employed, adult Indians to find some time at night to receive education. To do all this, money is needed. If Indians would come forward to emulate Mr. Byte, these things could easily be done. It is quite proper that we demand rights in South Africa and it is unjust that we should be denied those rights. We must, however, admit that we do not deserve them fully. It takes two to make a quarrel, and had we been without faults, we would not suffer in this land the hardships that we do.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-8-1906

Mr. Byte's will, £1,200,000 had been donated for improving transport and communications in South Africa, £200,000 for founding a University in Johannesburg, £20,000 for education in the Transvaal, £15,000 for education at Kimberley and £15,000 for education in the Cape Colony.

272. EGYPT AND NATAL—A COMPARISON

IS THIS CIVILIZATION ?

A controversy is going on in England about what the Natal army did during the Kaffir rebellion. The people there believe that the whites of Natal perpetrated great atrocities on the Kaffirs. In reply to such critics, *The Star* has pointed to the doings of the Imperial army in Egypt. Those among the Egyptian rebels who had been captured were ordered to be flogged. The flogging was continued to the limits of the victims' endurance; it took place in public and was watched by thousands of people. Those sentenced to death were also hanged at the same time. While those sentenced to death were hanging, the flogging of the others was taken up. While the sentences were being executed, the relatives of the victims cried and wept until many of them swooned. If this be true, there is no reason why there should be such an outcry in England against the Natal outrage.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-8-1906

273. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

August 4, 1906

THE ELGIN CONSTITUTION

The resolution to grant a new Constitution to the Transvaal and the details that have been published regarding it are at present a subject of public discussion. There is, of course, a good deal of difference between the Constitution awarded last year by Mr. Lyttelton and the one now proposed by Lord Elgin.

According to the Lyttelton Constitution, the governance of the country was to continue in the hands of the British bureaucracy. According to Lord Elgin's, it will be carried on by the party which has a majority of elected members [in the Legislature]. This is the main difference between the two. The Lyttelton Constitution envisaged representative government, that is, a government consisting of men who understand the wishes of the people, while the Elgin Constitution proposes responsible government, wherein the executive will be responsible to elected members; so that the latter can, if they will, remove it from power. In Ceylon and Mauritius, there is

representative government, Natal and the Cape Colony have responsible government.

Another great difference is that Lord Elgin's Constitution places the Boers in a position in which they can form a government. Thus either the Boers or the British can come to power in the Transvaal, asindeed they can in the Cape. The Constitution has not yet been drafted, but Mr. Churchill has said that this would soon be done. The drafting will take about three weeks, and the Parliament elected under the new Constitution is not likely to meet before January.

PLACE OF INDIANS

What will be our position under the new set-up? It is a very difficult question to answer. Nothing definite can be learnt from reports of Mr. Churchill's speech cabled here. Our situation could not be worse. In any case, it is certain that, whatever new laws are made, they will not be enacted before January next.

NATAL AND THE TRANSVAAL

The unification of Natal and the Transvaal is being discussed. Some men of experience and influence favour this course of action. A gentleman named Mr. Soutter has expressed his views on the subject in *The Daily Mail*. He says that, if the two are united, the "Indian Policy" of Natal will have to be revised. The Editor of *The Daily Mail* thinks that it will be very difficult for Natal to merge in other States so long as it imports indentured labour.

THE STATE OF SOUTH AFRICA

Underlying all the thoughts in people's minds is the poverty of South Africa. At present, trade is slack and land prices are very low. People are desperately looking around to see how matters can be improved. But all things considered, one is driven to the conclusion that, for another two years, there can be no hope of any appreciable change. According to what economists call natural laws and men of faith, the will of God, it appears that conditions change from moment to moment. He who rises must fall. This is true of a country as well. In the vicissitudes of life, South Africa has seen good days, and now it is her turn to go through bad ones. She has not yet passed through even two lean years. Sometimes it takes three, five or even seven years for a change to set in. If this is true, it will take at least another year and a half for present conditions to change. In the meanwhile, those who are patient and live within their means[1] will win through. The rest will be

[1] The Gujarati idiom literally means "...draw the sheet and stretch or huddle according to its size".

washed away with the tide.

A DISCUSSION IN THE LEGISLATURE ABOUT ASIATICS

In the Legislative Council today, Mr. Duncan gave the following information:[1]

> When the Council meets again, the Government proposes to introduce a Bill for the registration of Asiatics. That legislation would be in fulfilment of the policy of the Imperial Government with regard to Asiatics in this Colony: first, to afford just and fair treatment to those Asiatics who are already here and settled in this country; and secondly, to leave to the responsible government the question whether or not to allow new Asiatics to enter the country, and if they are to be allowed, under what restrictions. That is the policy the present Government has been attempting to carry out with the approval of the Imperial Government, and in doing so, it has had to rely upon the law passed by the Boer Government as well as the permit law[2] of the present Government. Experience has shown that these laws are not adequate to prevent the Asiatics from entering the Colony; for doubtless many Asiatics who had no title to enter the Colony have entered it on false evidence. Those who have never been in the Transvaal before have made false declarations in order to come in. The law regarding registration is vague; whenever a serious attempt was made to apply it, it led to litigation in the courts. We have therefore to accomplish two things: give fair and just treatment to those who were here before the war; and prevent an influx of Asiatics into this country before a responsible government is established. We should therefore get all the Asiatics now resident in the Transvaal registered afresh. They should take out [fresh] registration certificates, so that nobody may question their *bona fides*. Simultaneously, it is proposed to remove certain disabilities under which these Asiatics labour. No material changes in the law regarding ownership of land are envisaged. But it is proposed to enact a law which will enable Asiatics to hold the land on which their places of worship are built; again, the heirs of those who held land before the passing of Law 3 of 1885 will be enabled to inherit it. Furthermore, it is also proposed to make certain modifications in the existing permit law which will enable Asiatics to visit the country temporarily.

The statement is so important and disturbing that the Committee of the British Indian Association proposes to take immediate action on it. It is very doubtful now if the deputation can proceed to England in

[1] This version of the Colonial Secretary's speech has been collated with an English report from *India*.

[2] The Peace Preservation Ordinance

the immediate future.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-8-1906

274. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

[After] *August 4, 1906*[1]

THE DEPUTATION

The deputation to England has for the present been postponed as a result of Mr. Duncan's statement, which I sent last week.[2] Some persons were under the impression that the deputation was to visit England only in connection with the Report of the Constitution Committee, and that, since the nature of the Constitution to be granted to the Transvaal had been decidedm upon, there was no longer any point in sending the deputation.

This is a mistaken view. For, in the matter of the Constitution, there was little that the deputation could have done. Whatever laws are contemplated will be enacted later [that is, after the Constitution comes into force]. Even now we can approach the Imperial Government and represent before them our case regarding those laws. The deputation can therefore go to England to some advantage only so long as the Transvaal Parliament has not met and it is not known what new laws are going to be enacted. So far I have referred to the Transvaal only; but if and when the deputation does go, it will be its duty to take up the entire South African problem. This can be done whenever it may be that the deputation visits England. Moreover, if our case is put before our sympathisers who are already working on our behalf, they will understand it the better and will be better able to lend us active support. Furthermore, we would then get help from all parties. The Congress Committee[3], the East India Association and other bodies are agitating on our behalf. If all of them could be brought together and a committee formed, it would help us a great deal. It is thus clear that the deputation, if sent, is bound to have some effect.

Mr. Duncan's statement, as I have pointed out, has served to discourage the idea of sending a deputation. A communication in the matter had already reached England last week. *The Rend Daily Mail*

[1] This date seems to have been retained from the previous issue through oversight. This despatch must have been written after that date.

[2] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 11-8-1906

[3] British Committee of the Indian National Congress

has published a letter from Mr. Gandhi[1] on the subject. The British Indian Association has asked for a copy of the Bill referred to by Mr. Duncan. And as soon as it is received, petitions will be despatched. The situation is very serious; and we can save ourselves from this fresh attack only if we put up a tough fight.

As for the permits, on the one hand, new anti-Indian Acts are being drafted and, on the other, severity in dealing with Indians is increasing. Mr. Burgess has been inspecting the ports, and, as the rumour goes, many men have been obliged to return. One does not get a permit even after much inconvenience. It would seem that one can get a permit only if Mr. Loveday chooses to grant one. The issue of a registration certificate to children has been stopped; but in that case children should be free to enter. A question has been raised on this matter. Mr. Lichtenstein has written to the Colonial Secretary in strong terms pointing out some instances that serve clearly to illustrate the inconveniences encountered at the Permit Office. I give below some of these instances.

(1) When a letter was addressed to the Registrar regarding Shaikh Daud on June 21, he was informed that the decision would be arrived at when the Advisory Board met, but that it was not certain when the Board would meet. On July 10, he received a communication on the same subject saying that his application had been forwarded to the Advisory Board.

(2) On an application being made about a minor son of Hafejee Musa, the Registrar demanded proof of his age, etc. The evidence was produced on June 21. A reply was received on June 26, which said that the matter would be investigated in Natal.

(3) A permit was refused to Sakoor Nanjee despite the evidence of a disinterested physician and of the District Surgeon of Pretoria that he was only 16 years old.

(4) Though medical evidence has been produced to prove that Ebrahim Amod is only 12 years old, the Permit Office insists that the boy's age is 16.

Mr. Lichtenstein has cited 14 such examples. It remains to be seen what kind of a reply he will receive.

RAILWAY HARDSHIPS

The British Indian Association is still carrying on correspondence [with the railway authorities] in the matter of certain trains

[1] *Vide* "Letter to *The Rand Daily Mail*", Before 9-8-1906

between Pretoria and Johannesburg, by which Indians are either not allowed to travel at all or are made to sit in the guard's compartment. In deference to the General Manager's wishes, the Association temporarily agreed to the restriction relating to the 8-30 morning trains both ways. The General Manager wants such restriction to apply to the 5-30 train in the evening as well. The Association has refused to agree and, consequently, the matter is still under discussion.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-8-1906

275. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
August 6, 1906

THE HON'BLE D. NAOROJI

DEAR SIR,

The Colonial Secretary, Mr. Duncan, has made a statement in the Legislative Council of which I send you copy herewith.

The statement is most extraordinary, and if legislation is introduced based on it, frightful injustice will be done to the Indian community. There is not a vestige of justice and Air treatment about the proposed legislation. Robbed of the soft words which clothe it, it means that every Indian in the Colony will have to be now registered for the third time without the slightest excuse. Land is to be registered in the names of Indian trustees for religious purposes, but this is no gain whatsoever as the Supreme Court has decided that such land can be registered in spite of Law 3 of 1885. The only relief that is to be granted is in one individual case about which I have already written to you,[2] namely, that of the estate of the late Aboobaker Amod, and if that relief is granted, it is not a question of just and fair treatment but it is a question of simple duty to be dicharged by the British

[1] This letter as well as the one dated August 13 (p. 393) seems to have been addressed to Dadabhai Naoroji and some others, including the editor of *India*. The notings on the two letters, presumably by Dadabhai Naoroji, show that both of them were replied to on September 6, 1906 and that he deleted the last seven words of the first paragraph and the last two paragraphs of the first letter, added to it the last two paragraphs of the second and forwarded it to Mr. Morley and Lord Elgin, as we are informed by *India* in its prefatory note to the statement which it published as "from a well-informed correspondent". Except for a few verbal changes, this is the same as the one sent by Dadabhai Naoroji to the two Secretaries of State.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dadabhai Naoroji", 19-3-1906

Government towards an individual British subject.

If the proposed legislation is passed, the position of the British Indian will, as a matter of fact, be much worse than it is now. It should not be forgotten that the £3 registration is not an annual tax. Those who are in the Colony have paid the £3 and, under Law 3 of 1885, they cannot be called upon to pay over again. The proposed remission is, therefore, totally meaningless, for it is not to apply to newcomers, who are to be barred entirely until the coming Responsible Government chooses to pass an immigration law which may impose very severe restrictions. The question of granting visiting permits is also, I have no hesitation in saying, a blind, because such permits can be legally granted even under the existing law. That they are not granted where they ought to be is a discredit attached to the Government from which it cannot free itself by passing new legislation. I very much fear that the real situation is not understood by the Imperial Government, and that the local Government has evidently convinced the Imperial Government that, by passing legislation in the direction sketched by Mr. Duncan, they would be really granting concessions.

I have said before that, under the proposed legislation, the position would be much worse. I say so because I know that endless mischief is likely to be caused by new legislation. Indians were registered during the [rule of the] Dutch Government; registration then was simple. They were again registered after British rule was established; registration was then much more complex, and respectable Indians have been called upon to put their thumb-impressions. The third registration, if it comes at all, will, it is needless to say, be stricter still. All this because a few Indians who were not resident before war have stolen into the Colony and if they have done so, it is owing to the corrupt officials who were in charge at one time of the Permit Department. The matter had become so serious that, on the initiative taken by the British Indian Association, these officials were arrested and criminally tried. They were discharged by an indulgent jury but the Government was so satisfied of their guilt, that both these officials were discharged.

I hope, therefore, that unless some substantial justice can be done to British Indians before Responsible Government is granted, and unless the British Government will, in accordance with pre-war promises, put them, in its own words, on the same footing as British Indians at the Cape, it will be infinitely better that Law 3 of 1885 remained as it was and that the whole question was considered by Responsible Government.

Of course, all these remarks will still leave it free to the Government to do justice in the case of the late Aboobaker Amod with which, after all, the British Indian community as a whole is not concerned.

The unforeseen situation having arisen here, the question of a deputation proceeding from South Africa must remain in abeyance, as all the energy will have to be concentrated upon preventing this latest proposal to perpetrate an injustice on the British Indians in the Transvaal.

I venture to think that a personal interview with the Secretary of State for India as also the Secretary of State for the Colonies is necessary.

I remain,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I have run short of the cuttings and I cannot get them as today is a Bank holiday.[1]

M. K. G.

From a photostat of the original signed by Gandhiji: G. N. 2275

276. LETTER TO "THE RAND DAILY MAIL"[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before *August 9, 1906*]

[TO
THE EDITOR
The Rand Daily Mail]

SIR,

I trust you will permit me to offer a few remarks on your leading article regarding the Asiatic legislation foreshadowed by Mr. Duncan in what I would venture to term his extraordinary statement. In his brief pronouncement he thrice told his hearers that it was the desire of the Government to accord to the resident Asiatic population. "Just and fair treatment" and that it was for that reason that the legislation described by him was to be introduced, on the Legislative Council reassembling.

[1] This is in Gandhiji's hand.

[2] This was reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 11-8-1906.

You have considered that the Ordinance to be passed will mean generous treatment of the resident Asiatic population.

I very much fear that there is absolutely no generosity about the proposed legislation, but that it will fall very far short of even "just and fair treatment". Re-registration is certainly not part of such treatment, and it is perfectly meaningless. Every Indian who has entered the Colony is supposed to have been registered for the most part for the second time. The second registration was, in reality, a concession to the Permit Department, which was at the time very much appreciated. A third registration is not a remedy for the evil of alleged fraudulent entrance of Asiatics into the Colony. It is easy enough to examine the present registration certificates of the resident Asiatic population, and to prosecute those who are without them. The British Indian Association has denied the charge of any wholesale fraudulent entrance. There will always be a few people prepared to break laws, no matter how stringently devised and how well enforced. To brand as criminals a whole community—for that is what re-registration implies—is hardly "just" or "fair".

But Mr. Duncan says, in consideration for a fresh registration, he would give four things to the Asiatics, namely: (1) abolition of the £3 tax; (2) permission to the Asiatics to hold land for religious purposes; (3) permission for those Asiatics who held land before Law 3 of 1885 came into force to transmit same to their heirs; (4) authority to issue temporary permits to Asiatic visitors.

Now the first concession is, shall I say, a mere blind. It should be remembered that it applies to those only who are resident in the Colony, or perhaps to those who, being pre-war residents of the Transvaal, have a right to re-enter. The resident population has already paid the £3 and the majority of those who are still outside the Colony have also done likewise. There is no warrant in the existing legislation to charge the £3 fee twice. It is not an annual tax, but it is a fee that has to be paid once for all under Law 3 of l885 by Asiatics who wish to settle in the Colony.

Nor is there any merit about the proposed authority to be given for holding land for religious purposes because it is possible to do so under the existing law. The Superior Courts have decided that Coloured persons can, as a corporate body, hold land for religious purposes.

The third grant would have been a concession, if it was applicable to any large body of Asiatics. Mr. Duncan well knows that there is only one such piece of land. It would be a performance of

simple duty to allow the heirs to hold their two-fifths of an erf in the Transvaal, and in any case, in doing so, it is not the community that will receive justice but an individual.

The fourth, of course, is again no concession. Mr. Nomura and Mr. Manga suffered not because there was no authority to issue temporary permits, but because there was a disinclination to exercise the authority. The difficulty, therefore, lies not in the law but in its administration.

I hope I have thus clearly shown that there is no question of "just and fair treatment" of the resident Asiatic population behind the forecast given by the Colonial Secretary on Saturday last. On thecontrary, Damocles has again raised his sword [*sic*] over the heads of the poor Asiatics who, because of their belief in the sanctity of the British subject idea, have ventured to migrate to the Transvaal. There is no trace in Mr. Duncan's statement of the fulfilment of the promises made before the war and, even after it, by Lord Milner and other representatives of the Crown.

And if I may repeat what I have already said, what is it that British Indians (to distinguish them from other Asiatics) want? They accept the doctrine of the Transvaal having the right to regulate immigration, and they—although such was not the case during the Dutch Government—are quite willing that restrictions after the Cape or the Australian Immigration Law applying to British subjects may be imposed on them; but as against that, they claim that those British Indians, who have settled in the country, ought to have full civil liberty, namely, the right to move about freely, the right to own land subject to such general restrictions as may be imposed to provide against speculative acquisition, and the right to trade subject again to such municipal restriction as may be deemed advisable in the interests of sanitation and of fair trade. It will be only when this elementary right of the British Indian is recognised, and not till then, that it will be possible for any representative of the Crown to say that British Indians are receiving "just and fair treatment".

Remember, there is no attempt in the above statement to claim any political rights. British Indians only ask for what can easily be given, even by those who believe in the gospel of a white South Africa, if, that is to say, South Africa, to paraphrase Lord Selborne's words, is to be white not only in the exterior but also in the interior.

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Rand Daily Mail, 9-8-1906

277. "FAIR AND JUST TREATMENT"

On the adjournment of the Legislative Council of the Transvaal on Saturday last, the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Duncan, made an important statement on the proposed Asiatic legislation. In the course of his statement, which occupies only half a column of the *Transvaal Leader*, Mr. Duncan has thrice repeated that Asiatics resident in the Transvaal are entitled to "fair and just treatment". The honourable gentleman then proceeds to expound his meaning of such treatment. We have never seen a pronouncement so misleading as Mr. Duncan's and we can only hope that he is himself labouring under a mistaken view of the Law 3 of 1885, and has therefore come to the conclusion that, by the legislation he foreshadowed on Saturday last, he is really granting substantial relief. We will now proceed to shew that, instead of the legislation in question granting any relief at all to the Asiatic community settled in the Transvaal, it will simply cause intense irritation, and probably take away from the community what it already possesses.

Mr. Duncan has promised four things:

(1) Fresh registration of all Asiatics in the Colony.

(2) Abolition of the £3 registration fee.

(3) Permission to the Asiatic religious communities to hold land for religious purposes.

(4) Permission to the heirs of those Asiatics, who held land before the Law 3 of 1885 was passed, to get the same transferred in their own names.

The first proposal is most mischievous and most dangerous, and it is because the Government wishes to push it through that the last three are to be given as a sop, although even the first has been so cleverly put by Mr. Duncan as to give the impression that it is to be undertaken in the interests of the Asiatic community.

Let us go back to the past. Indians who held registration certificates from the Dutch Government were not called upon by law to take out any fresh registration certificates, but in order to have the same system applicable to all, when Lord Milner decided to enforce the Law 3 of 1885 as to the £3 fee, on representations made by the then Chief Secretary for Permits, British Indians consented to have fresh registration certificates on which were to be impressed thumb-prints. This procedure has since been uniformly followed. Let it be remembered that it was admitted by the Chief Secretary for

Permits, acting under legal advice, that there was no legal obligation on the part of the Indian community to take out fresh registration certificates. When, therefore, the British Indian Association consented to the proposal, it was naturally gratefully appreciated.

The hardships that the community had to undergo, when fresh registration took place, are still vivid in the minds of many Indians. They have not forgotten that they were practically pulled out of their houses in the early hours of the morning. Mr. Duncan now says that this registration is useless. Why, we do not know. It is therefore proposed to register the whole of the Asiatics [*sic*] over again, as if they were criminals. Mr. Duncan says that many Asiatics—one could wish he had discriminated between Asiatics and Asiatics, and said whether in his remarks he referred to British Indians, or Chinese, or other Asiatics—who had not previously resided in the Transvaal, entered the Colony under false declarations. We grant, for the sake of argument, that this is so. How is fresh registration to remedy the evil, and why should the majority of innocent men suffer because of the guilty few?

And may we here remind Mr. Duncan that, if some Asiatics have so entered the Colony, they have done so because of the corruption that was at one time rampant in one of the Chief Asiatic Offices. But, as a matter of fact, the British Indian Association has stoutly denied the charge that an appreciable number of Asiatics have entered the Colony under false declarations. In any case, it is a matter for judicial enquiry, and the Peace Preservation Ordinance is clear enough to meet cases of such description.

The second concession is again no concession at all. We hope Mr. Duncan is not thinking of the registration fee as if it were an annual charge. It is a fee only to be paid once. All Indians who are resident in the Colony, and who are by law required to pay the registration fee, have already paid it. Wherein, then, does the remission come into play? It certainly does not apply to the future new immigrants, because the door is to be completely barred against them until it is opened by the Responsible Government, under such conditions as it chooses to lay down. The abolition of the £3 fee, therefore, is totally meaningless.

Dealing with this subject, Mr. Duncan was pleased to say that the registration law proved a failure each time an attempt was made to seriously administer it. This is hardly correct. It has undoubtedly proved a failure when the Government has attempted to import into the law a meaning which the late Dutch Government never intended to give it. The law requires registration of those Asiatics who intend to

settle in the Transvaal for purposes of trade or otherwise. The local Government wanted to go further, and wished to register Indians, whether they were children or wives, or whether they wanted to trade or not. In this attempt, the Supreme Court has frustrated the Government. Is the law, therefore, vague and uncertain ? The answer, from any unbiased person, would be an emphatic "No". It is uncertain only to those partisans who wish to impose on Indians disabilities which the late President Kruger and his Government never even dreamed of.

The third concession is that relating to land held for religious purposes. The Witwatersrand High Court has laid it down that such land can be held by any Coloured persons, and as a matter of fact, British Indians have now ceased to trouble the Government for any such permission, and are preparing to have Mosque properties in the Transvaal duly registered in the names of Indian trustees. They, therefore, do not require any authority or protection from the Government. Thus, here again there is absolutely no concession given to the Asiatics.

The fourth is undoubtedly a concession, but it does not affect the Asiatic community as such. It is meant to give relief in only one individual case. There is only one piece of property in the Transvaal that was held by an Indian before Law 3 of 1885 came into force—two-thirds[1] of an erf in extent—and if relief is granted in that case, and the property is allowed to be held by the heirs, it will be a case of the British Government performing its simple duty to an individual British subject. To dignify such a proposal by the name of a concession to the Asiatic community is to offer an insult to its intelligence.

So far, therefore, as Law 3 of 1885 is concerned, its repeal in the manner foreshadowed by Mr. Duncan is totally unnecessary, and will give rise to endless difficulties, from which perhaps British Indians are at present free.

Regarding the Peace Preservation Ordinance, Mr. Duncan mentioned that provision would be made for permits being granted to visitors. This again is, we would say with deference, a mere blind. Hitherto, no provision has been found necessary for granting such permits. It is true that the Government have raised difficulties in granting them, and it is, on that account, the greater discredit to them. They cannot free themselves from it by now sweetly talking of providing for temporary permits, which the law has ever allowed them

[1] On "Letter to The Rand Daily Mail", Before 9-8-1906 the area is mentioned as two-fifths of an erf.

to grant, but which, from fear of anti-Indian agitators, they have hitherto declined to do.

Mr. Duncan, again, says that the policy defined in his statement has been the policy of the Imperial Government, as also the local Government. This is hardly consistent with facts, because the policy of Lord Milner was that, even before the Responsible Government was granted, Asiatic legislation should be brought into line with British traditions, and Indians, who were either qualified by education or other attainments, should be placed on an equality with the other subjects of the Crown in the Transvaal. Such also was the policy laid down in Mr. Lyttelton's dispatch. Mr. Duncan's statement, therefore, is a distinct retrogression from what was intended either by Lord Milner or, later on, by Mr. Lyttelton.

We ask whether the thrice-repeated declaration of "fair and just treatment" has any foundation in fact, or is it that, in Lord Lytton's words, "promises given to the ear are to be broken in practice", and that the effect of Mr. Duncan's declaration is to be exhausted in mere words?

Indian Opinion, 11-8-1906

278. SPEECH AT HAMIDIYA ISLAMIC SOCIETY

A meeting of Indians was held in the 17th Street Hall in the Malay Location, under the auspices of the Hamidiya Islamic Society of Johannesburg, then recently formed. Abdul Gani and Gandhiji, President and Honorary Secretary respectively of the British Indian Association, were among the invitees. On being requested by the President of the Society to address the gathering on the Political condition of the Transvaal Indians, Gandhiji made a speech, of which the following is a brief report:

JOHANNESBURG,
August 12, 1906

Mr. Gandhi, at the outset, thanked the Hamidiya Islamic Society and expressed his pleasure at the formation of this body. He regretted the controversy that was going on among the people over the question whether the Society had been formed in opposition to the British Indian Association. He declared that this impression was absolutely incorrect and added that, on the contrary, the new Society would serve to strengthen the British Indian Association and the two would help each other in future.

Speaking on the present political condition of Indians in the

Transvaal Mr. Gandhi cited Mr. Duncan's statement and explained at length how the situation was very serious. Pointing out the need for organizing a strong protest against this statement, he advised that the deputation to England be postponed. Adverting to the weak financial position of the British Indian Association, Mr. Gandhi called upon all those present to contribute to its funds. He also expressed the hope that the formation of such societies would greatly help the Muslims, who were backward in education, and appealed to them to do their best to overcome this disadvantage.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-8-1906

279. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI[1]

P. O. BOX 968,
JOHANNESBURG,
August 13, 1906

DEAR SIR,

The current issue of *Indian Opinion*[2] gives fullest information about the proposed change by Mr. Duncan in the Law 3 of 1885. Portions of Mr. Lyttelton's and Lord Milner's despatches and the full text of Law 3 of 1885 are also given.

It will be seen at a glance that Mr. Duncan is very much restricting the scope of the despatches in his proposed legislation. Neither Mr. Lyttelton nor Lord Milner have [*sic*] even mentioned anything about re-registration, and both of them have laid down that better-class Indians should, at least have full rights, so that for Mr. Duncan to state that he is carrying out the intentions of the Imperial Government is wide of the mark unless the Liberal ministers have veered round entirely and propose still farther to curtail the liberty of the British Indians than what the Conservative ministry was prepared to do.

I certainly think that while the Transvaal is under Crown Colony Government the Imperial Government should pass equitable legislation even though it may be as Lord Milner puts it "by using official majority and then throw the burden on the Responsible

[1] The original does not bear the addressee's name, but this letter was found in the Dadabhai Naoroji collection. *Vide* also "Letter to Dadabhai Naoroji", 6-8-1906

[2] Dated 11-8-1906

ministry of changing it if it dare to do so",

I remain,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original: G. N. 2276

280. PETITION TO LORD ELGIN

DURBAN,
August 13, 1906[1]

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF ELGIN, P.C., &C.

HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

LONDON, ENGLAND

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT

Your Petitioners beg to draw Your Excellency's attention to the Municipal Corporations Consolidation Bill passed recently by the Natal Parliament.

Your Petitioners have noticed with thankfulness Your Excellency's despatch endorsing some of the objections raised by the Indian community to the Bill in question.

Your Petitioners, however, feel aggrieved that one of the objections raised against the Bill by your Petitioners has not been considered by Your Excellency, namely, the proposed disfranchisement of British Indians as voters at municipal elections.

When the Bill was under consideration by the Natal Parliament, the Indian community presented a petition[2] embodying its objections to the Bill, copy of which is hereto attached for Your Excellency's information.

British Indians resident in Natal feel that, if they are deprived of the municipal franchise, it will be a very serious grievance and will be a departure from the declaration of the responsible statesmen of Natal at the time the measure disfranchising Indians as to the Parliamentary vote was passed. It was then recognised that, if India did not possess

[1] This is the date on the printed petition, which does not bear the names of the signatories, but *Indian Opinion*, 18-8-1906, in which this is reproduced, gives it as August 15.

[2] This is not reproduced here. *Vide* "Memorial to Natal Legislaive Asssembly", 7-4-1905

parliamentary institutions, it certainly enjoyed municipal institutions, and that there were in India thousands of municipal voters.

No legitimate ground has been urged in favour of the contemplated disfranchisement. Indians do not aspire to any political power in the Colony of Natal, but they naturally resent interference with municipal liberty when they pay the same rates as the other ratepayers.

It has often been said that the Indian population in Natal is, for practical purposes, composed only of Indians of the indentured class. It is respectfully urged that such a statement would be hardly fair, in that there is at present in Natal a population of free Indians, who have paid their own passage-money, numbering about fifteen thousand, ofwhom the largest portion is to be found in Durban. These men belong to a very respectable class, and are mostly merchants and those connected with mercantile business. Some of them are even highly educated in the English language.

Your Petitioners humbly submit that to disfranchise such a class of people would be to subject them to uncalled-for degradation.

Your Petitioners, therefore, respectfully pray that Your Excellency will be pleased to favourably consider the subject matter of the petition and grant such relief as may be meet and proper.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc., etc.

Dated at Durban this l3th day of August, Nineteen Hundred and Six.

[DAWAD MAHOMED
PRESIDENT,
O. H. A. JOHARI
M. C. ANGLIA
JOINT HON. SECRETARIES
NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS]

From a photostat of the original: C. D. 179, Vol. 243

281. LETTER TO HAJI ISMAIL HAJI ABOOBAKER JOHARI

P. O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
August 14, 1906

MY DEAR SHETH SHRI HAJI ISMAIL HAJI ABOOBAKER,

Now there seems to be very solid ground for hoping that, within a short time, the land in Pretoria will be transferred to the names of both of you! Since Omar Sheth has already written to you of this, I need not dilate upon it.

I have always complained to Omar Sheth about the expenses there. These are hard times now in South Africa, and they are likely to become harder still. The prices of land have gone down by 66 per cent., and it would be no matter for surprise if they fell still further. The rent you used to get has decreased by a half and will further decrease. Even a well-furnished shop on the first floor in a place like West Street remains untenanted. If, in such bad times, you do not reduce your household and other expenditure, whatever property you have will be eroded. As it is, you are living, so to speak, on capital. That we are making some profit in trade is, however, a matter for satisfaction. But, then, that profit consists of stocks and of arrears collected from clients. The actual profit from trade cannot be reckoned precisely unless the final accounts are made up and goods converted into cash. I must say that Omar Sheth is living a very simple life. The house he lives in does not become a man of your status and reputation. The food is likewise simple. Besides, heis at present staying with me and living a more than usually austere life. I am sometimes pained at this, but allow things to continue in the hope that he will ultimately benefit by it. For example, last evening he only had bread, butter, *papad* and cocoa for dinner, and walked with me three-and-a-half miles before turning in for the night. I do not mean to suggest that you yourself should go to these lengths; but I do wish to say that your monthly expenses should not exceed £25. People will criticise you for cutting down on expenses, but such critics are really no friends at all, for they will not help you to run your household. It is therefore the duty of those who realize their condition to think of the hard times and live accordingly. What more shall I say? I write in this strain because I wish well of you.

I hope you are all right.

The document pertaining to the sale deed which you have

signed and sent here does not bear the signature of a witness. I am therefore returning it to you for getting it witnessed. Please return it after getting it signed by a witness and attested by the Political Agent under his seal and signature.

Salaams from

M. K. GANDHI

HAJI ISMAIL HAJI ABOOBAKER JOHARI, ESQ.

[PORBUNDER]

[PS.]

You may send the enclosed documents through a State pleader to the Political Agent for signature.

M. K GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand received from Jhaveri Brothers, Durban

282. INDIA FOR INDIANS

This today is the cry of thousands of voices in India. No one can say that India is today the home of a single people, but all of us wish it were. To bring this about, patriotic Indians have been suggesting all manner of remedies that occur to them. Among such Indians is the editor of the *Indian World*—a well-known monthly published from Calcutta. He says that India will not become a single nation until most of the people in the various parts of the country speak a common language. Though English-speaking people are found in the different regions, their number is as yet small and will always remain so, for the main reason that, since it is a foreign language and a difficult one at that, the common people will not be able to learn it. There is therefore little likelihood of India achieving nationhood through that language. For this purpose, Indians will have to choose one of the Indian languages. There are, of course, many Indians who can speak Gujarati, Bengali, Tamil and other languages; but there is hardly any chance of any of these spreading throughout the country. One language remains, namely, Hindustani, which is spoken by North Indians. Derived as it is from Sanskrit and Persian, it suits Hindus and Muslims alike. Moreover, since the *fakirs* and the *sanyasis* both speak it, they help to propagate it throughout the land. Many Englishmen too study it. It is thus spoken over an extensive area. The language itself is very sweet, polite and spirited. Many books have been, and are still being, written in it. The editor of the

Indian World therefore suggests that it should be taught in every school in India in addition to the mother tongue. Parents too should inculcate the habit of speaking Hindustani to their children from their formative years. Only then can India truly become a nation.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-8-1906

283. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

August 18, 1906

MR. BHABHA'S CASE

In deference to the counsel's unfavourable opinion, the appeal in Mr. Mahomed Suliman Bhabha's permit case, which was decided at Volksrust, has been withdrawn. On the advice of his counsel, Mr. Bhabha refused to leave the Transvaal within the notified time and was therefore prosecuted again. It was argued that the order passed by him could not prevent Mr. Bhabha from staying on in the Transvaal, as he had the right to enter the territory. But the Magistrate did not accept this plea and sentenced Mr. Bhabha to a month's simple imprisonment, the minimum laid down. Mr. Bhabha has now appealed again, and it is believed that he will win.

IMPORTANT JUDGMENT IN LAND SUIT

This week, Sir William Smith has given an important decision on a petition presented to him. The well-known Sheth Mahomed Kasim Camroodeen of Johannesburg, whose entire land stood in the name of the late Mr. Chamberlain, wanted, on the latter's death, to get it transferred to the name of another European. On the Registrar's refusal to do so, the Sheth approached the court for an order of transfer. To begin with, Mr. Justice Smith himself raised an objection saying that the consent of the heir was necessary. It was argued before Mr. Justice Smith that the heir had no claim on the land. His Worship admitted the plea and issued orders for the transfer of the land to the name of the other European. It will be seen from this that, if proper precautions are taken in keeping the land in the name of a European, the true owner does not have to suffer in any way.

THE MALAY LOCATION

On behalf of the Location Committee, an application was made to the Town Council concerning the Malay Location. The Town Council, in its reply, says that the Location will not be allowed to

continue on its present site, that long-term leases will not be granted to the residents, but that leases would instead be offered to them at Klipspruit. The Committee has decided to challenge this reply [in a court of law].

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-8-1906

284. THE LATE MR. W. C. BONNERJEE

We regret to announce the death of Mr. Womesh Chunder Bonnerjee, one of the greatest Indian patriots of modern times. The late Mr. Bonnerjee belonged to what may be called the Naoroji school of patriots, who devoted their time and talents to their country's good. Mr. Bonnerjee was one of the foremost barristers in Bengal, and at a very early stage of his career rose to fame by his forensic eloquence and legal acumen. The unusual influence he thereby gained was used for the benefit of his country. The deceased was one of the founders of the Indian National Congress, of which he was the first President, and which he served up to the last day of his life, using his purse freely for the public cause.

Mr. Bonnerjee had an abundant faith in western education, of which he was so fine a product. He, therefore, bought a house in Croydon, where he passed half his time looking after the education of his children, with the result that the deceased statesman's sons and daughters have received a liberal education, of which they have been making, like their father, a public use.

A life, such as Mr. Bonnerjee's, teaches many a lesson to the present generation of Indian youth, and the best tribute that any Indian can render to the memory of the deceased is to copy his example. We tender to the late Mr. Bonnerjee's family our respectful sympathy. Their loss is also India's.

Indian Opinion, 25-8-1906

285. A PLEA FOR DISTINCTION

The Johannesburg *Star* has lately had a very severe leader on "Coloured Hooliganism". The reflections of the leader-writer arose out of the recent riots which have taken place in Cape Town. Our contemporary has taken care to distinguish the "Coloured people" from the Malays and others who are also universally labelled

"Coloured". But there can be no doubt that, to the average newspaper reader, the term "Coloured people" has meant Malays, British Indians and all other Asiatics. The very distinction drawn by *The Star* presupposes such a confusion in the public mind.

The result of classing Asiatics and others as "Coloured people" has caused a great deal of undeserved injustice to the British Indians in South Africa. The most glaring instance is that given by Mr. Winston Churchill. The deprivation of the franchise from the British Indians has been justified by the Colonial Under-Secretary, on the ground that the Dutch understood the term "Natives", that is, in this instance, "Coloured people", to mean natives of any non-European country. Lord Milner, we know, has protested against any such use, or rather abuse, of the term, but his protest has not availed to protect them from the above mentioned injustice.

There are, at present, in the Statute-books of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, laws which apply to British Indians, because, according to usage, the term "Coloured people" is applied to British Indians, although, from the nature of the legislation, one would consider it totally unnecessary to apply it to British Indians, who suffer doubly. They labour under disabilities imposed upon "Coloured people" as also because they are Asiatics. Thus, the illicit gold law and the foot-path regulations of the Transvaal apply to them, because they are "Coloured people", and the Law 3 of 1885 applies to them as Asiatics. Their position, therefore, is actually worse than that of the "Coloured people" who are not Asiatics.

We think, in the illustrations given above, we have shown sufficiently clearly that, if justice is to be done to the British Indians, they should be no longer classed with the "Coloured people". And this we say without wishing to make any odious comparisons. "Coloured people" and British Indians have different points of attack in their struggle for freedom of existence. They have to secure justice through different channels and it were well if the Government and the publicists were to recognise the importance of distinguishing between the two.

Indian Opinion, 25-8-1906

286. THE CONDITION OF THE HINDU CREMATION GROUND[1]

Mr. Daugherty has written us a letter on the condition of the Hindu cremation ground, to which we invite the attention of the Durban Indians. If its condition is really such as Mr. Daugherty describes, it is a shame and a disgrace to the Hindu community. It is the duty of every Hindu to keep the ground tidy. By failing to do so, we not only violate the law of the land and the rules of sanitation, but the maxim that in such matters we human beings should have a sense of delicacy. We have in fact received more letters about the condition of the cremation ground. We have not published them as they are caustic and indulge in personal criticism. But we would earnestly remind every Hindu that, whatever our differences in other matters, death should evoke in us nothing but tender and solemnsentiments. And if it cannot, that will be thought a grave shortcoming of ours, as everyone will readily agree.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-8-1906

287. THE SITUATION IN PERSIA

The Shah of Persia recently announced that a National Council would be convened to save the country from insolvency. This almost bankrupt condition to which Persia has been reduced is mainly due to the Shah's own extravagance. The people of the country have been so very disaffected with the present regime that at the beginning of this year hundreds of merchants and mullahs left Teheran and went abroad. The Shah was alarmed and promised to convene an elected council of mullahs, merchants and landlords; but the serious financial crisis that has arisen cannot be so easily resolved. The present Shah Muzaffaruddin has brought Persia to this sorry pass over a period of ten years. The country's entire revenue is at his disposal. The former Shahs were able to accumulate private fortunes, and the present Shah inherited some two million pounds. It is estimated that not only all this private wealth but the country's annual revenue of a million and a half pounds has been squandered. The country is daily being thus impoverished. The main source of revenue is the working classes. Immense wealth has been dissipated during the last three or four years on visits to Europe and on pomp in the palace. Describing the straits

[1] *Vide* also "The Hindu Cremation Ground", 8-9-1906

in which Persia finds herself, The Rand Daily Mail of Johannesburg says that we should be vigilant and ensure that Russia does not exploit this crisis in Persia to her advantage, since no Englishman will be happy to see Russia gaining a foothold in the neighbourhood of India.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-8-1906

288. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

JOHANNESBURG,
August 25, 1906

TO
THE HON. THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PRETORIA
SIR,

I have the honour, on behalf of the British Indian Association, to enter its respectful protest against the Draft Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance published in the *Government Gazette* dated the 22nd instant.

In the humble opinion of my Association, the Draft Ordinance in question is calculated to provoke the bitterest irritation among the Indian community and to wound its susceptibilities to an extent which it is difficult to measure.

The Draft, it is respectfully submitted, is a complete reversal of solemn promises repeatedly made by British administrators, and is in contravention of the despatches of Mr. Lyttelton and Lord Milner.

The Draft gives to the British Indians in the Transvaal absolutely nothing, and takes away from them much, and that too in a manner which, to use Mr. Chamberlain's words, "puts an unnecessary affront" upon British Indian settlers in the Transvaal.

My Association respectfully urges that, if the object of the Draft Ordinance is to remove from the Colony any British Indians who may not be residing in it by lawful authority, an inspection of the documents at present possessed by them would absolutely meet the case without hurting the feelings of British Indians and without causing to the Colony a heavy expense which the machinery proposed by the Draft Ordinance must necessarily do.

My Association has no hesitation in saying that the Draft under discussion shews unmistakably the power possessed by a strong party

over helpless men who have done nothing to offend the former and it shews a desire to wield that power with the greatest rigour and in total disregard of the feelings of the helpless victims. This would appear to be strong language, but, examining it from the British Indian standpoint, the language used represents the honest convictions of those British Indians who have studied the Ordinance.

My Association draws the earnest attention of the Government to the following among other most objectionable features of the Draft Ordinance:

(a) Section 2 sets the seal of approval on the part of the British Government on the insulting and false definition of the term "Asiatic" given by Law 3 of 1885, which ignorantly includes "the so-called Coolies, Arabs, Malays, and Mahomedan subjects of the Turkish Dominion". Such a definition is degrading to the Asiatics, in that it takes note only of coolies and perpetuates the use of the term as applied to all the inhabitants of Asia. The definition is false because there are hardly any Arabs and Mahomedan subjects of the Turkish Dominion, and does grave injustice to the Malays who have never yet been molested under Law 3 of 1885 and who have not suffered the misfortune in common with British Indians of being classed as competitors in trade with the Europeans.

(b) While the Draft subjects to innumerable pinpricks every Asiatic resident in the Colony, it leaves the position of the pre-war residents of the Transvaal who have not yet returned to the Colony as indefinite, as vague and as painful as heretofore.

(c) It takes no note whatsoever of the elaborate registration carriedon by Captain Hamilton Fowle. It may be here mentioned thatthe registration carried out by Captain Fowle was arranged in consultation with the Indian community, which, courteously and gracefully bowing to the advice given by Lord Milner, consented to the registration although, as was acknowledged, there was no legal sanction for it so far as those who had already paid the £3 to the old Government were concerned. Of this, and all such voluntary acts of the community, the Draft Ordinance makes no acknowledgement.

(d) Section 3 deliberately narrows even the advantages enjoyed by the Indian community under the Peace Preservation Ordinance. As the Government is well aware, there is a magisterial decision to the effect that possession of old Dutch registration certificates by a British Indian entitles him to enter the Colony without any further permit. The effect of the decision would be nullified by sub-section 2 of Section 3.

(e) Whereas under Law 3 of 1885 and under the recent decision of the Supreme Court, only male adults who intend to settle in the

Transvaal for purposes of trade are required to undergo registration, the present Ordinance would compel every Indian, male and female, over the age of eight to be registered. If the apprehension of my Association is correct, the Law will needlessly violate female modesty, as it is understood by millions of British Indians, and would ride roughshod over sentiments cherished dearly for ages by the community represented by my Association. This law of registration, if it is carried into effect, would mean that His Majesty's Government condemned every Indian as a criminal. So far as my Association is aware, such a law is unknown within British Dominions so far as the free Indian population is concerned.

(f) The so-called remission of the £3 fee is tantamount, in the humble opinion of my Association, to adding insult to injury, in that, almost all the Asiatics at present residing in the Colony are registered and have paid £3, in many cases twice over.

(g) Sub-section 4 of Section 17, authorising the Lieutenant-Governor to exempt a British Indian holder of a temporary permit from the provisions of the Liquor Licensing Ordinance, is an instance of another added insult to injury. My Association is not aware of any self-respecting Indian who would want the precious exemption.

It is possible to enumerate still further objectionable features of the proposed Ordinance, but my Association trusts that sufficient has been given above to shew what the Ordinance means to British Indians.

My Association will be pardoned for stating that the relief sought to be given by Section 21 is not recognised by the Indian community as such. If the Government chooses to perform a simple duty towards a British subject by allowing him to own his inheritance, it is no relief to the community in general. As to permitting fixed property to be held by British Indians for religious uses, my Association is advised that no provision is necessary in view of a decision given by the Witwatersrand High Court in a case recently adjudicated.

Responsible Government will soon be established in the Colony. My Association, therefore, respectfully urges that, if the Government does not intend to grant any real and substantial relief in accordance with the oft-plighted word of British administrators, Law 3 of 1885 may be allowed to remain undisturbed, and the Responsible Government may be left to deal with the whole position in

consultation with the Imperial Government.

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
ABDUL GANI
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 1-9-1906

289. LONG LIVE THE GRAND OLD MAN[1]

The fourth of September will be the eighty-second birthday of the Honourable Dadabhai Naoroji, the veteran patriot of India, who is its "Grand Old Man" as not even the late Mr. Gladstone was of England. The spectacle of Mr. Naoroji tirelessly fighting India's battles, hoping against hope, living a life of self-imposed exile and of incessant energy that would do credit to a youth of twenty-five, is magnificent, ennobling and inspiring. No one can, with any justification, talk of India as in its decline when it produces even one such life as Mr. Naoroji's. To him, India's service is the breath of life. It is his religion and it is his one occupation. He has dedicated his all to India as no one else has. We cannot but think that it is his intense love and devotion to the cause which enable him to bear his years so lightly as he has done. Shall we say it is also a result of divine pleasure over so much pure sacrifice of self? To us in South Africa, a life such as this teaches many a lesson and we can render no greater homage and offer no more sincere prayer for yet more divine pleasure to be bestowed upon the Grand Old Man than by endeavouring to copy the life that Mr. Naoroji has placed before all India. We feel certain, in fact we know, that nothing will give him greater pleasure than to know that we cherish his life's work and that we want to follow in his footsteps, and that even after the grave has closed over him, he will live in our memories and in our deeds. Those that are connected with this journal have in many of their trials been uplifted by the remembrance of this one name. Indeed, the enterprise has been possible only because of the great example set by the noblest Indian patriot living. Our heartfelt prayer goes to the Almighty for a long life to the Grand Old Man of India.

Indian Opinion, 1-9-1906

[1] This and the three following items were written on or before August 27, 1906. *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 27-8-1906

290. ABOMINABLE!

Abominable is a very strong adjective to use in respect of any act, and yet we can find, even after calmly considering it, no other term equally fitting to characterise the Draft Asiatic Ordinance published in the Transvaal *Government Gazette Extraordinary* dated the 22nd inst. This is in compliance with Mr. Duncan's forecast given at the time of the adjournment of the Legislative Council of the Transvaal. The worst fears of the Indian community of the Transvaal have been realised by the Bill under discussion. It is in violation of many a sacred promise made to the unfortunate Indians residing in that Colony. It sets at nought the British principle of justice and fairplay, and it tramples upon the ordinary ideas of right and wrong as they have been known[1] to mankind for ages past. We give in another column the strongly-worded protest of the British Indian Association[2] but the language used in it is none too strong even for an official document. The Ordinance goes much further than we had anticipated from Mr. Duncan's language. It unsettles the Indian mind as no other measure in South Africa has ever done before. It threatens to invade the sanctity of home life. Before it, Law 3 of 1885 pales into utter insignificance. The most pitiful part of it consists in the fact that what the Boer Government did in ignorance of facts and without meaning to do much harm and in respect of persons not its own subjects, the British Government is doing with the fullest knowledge of facts with the deliberate intention of injuring the Indian community and in respect of British subjects. In its method, the present Government intends to surpass the Boer Government and it would now bring under the clutches of the law those who were outside it under the Dutch rule, namely, women, children and non-traders. We are much pained to notice that our contemporary, the Johannesburg *Star*, welcomes the measure and actually gloats over its stringency. It betrays ignorance of the existing law and, therefore, deals with generalities, dignifying by the name of `'concession" that which the Indian community interprets as an insult. In *The Star* language, exemption from the Liquor Licensing Ordinance vouchsafed to "distinguished Asiatic visitors" is a "sensible modification". Such language in a paper edited by an ex-private secretary of an ex-High Commissioner for South Africa leaves little hope of justice being done by the present

[1] The original has " . . . are known".

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 25-8-1906

local Government. Asiatic law is to be amended not in order to fulfil promises given to theIndian community before and after war, but it is being introduced in orderto conciliate Messrs Loveday and Company who have been practicallydictating the Asiatic policy. Will the Home Government silentlyallow the proposed injustice to be perpetratedeven while the Transvaal is a Crown Colony? If the local Government has not the courage to do justice, it will be for it a safe escape out of doing wanton injustice to accept the proposal of the British Indian Association and to allow Law 3 of 1885 to remain as it is, pending introduction of Responsible Government.

Indian Opinion, 1-9-1906

291. COLONIAL INDIANS, NOTE!

Herr Adolph Stein speaks as follows of the trials of the German soldier:

> The lack of railways (in South-West Africa) has made it impossible for bigger supplies to be taken to the front and the troops have been on short rations since the beginning of the campaign which has now continued for two years and a half. The men have been without bread and salt for months together and there have been times when they have lived on the flesh of mules. These mules which were intended to drag the artillery had to be slaughtered to supply the starving soldiers with rations. The men have frequently fought or marched for forty hours without a drop of water or other beverage. Their uniforms are torn to shreds and have been replaced by all sorts of odds and ends of clothing, giving the troops a shabby appearance. Their shoes are worn out and have been replaced by sandals made from the hides of slaughtered oxen. Notwithstanding all these hardships, the troops have performed their duty without flinching.

There is a world of meaning to be read into these sentences by Indians in South Africa and particularly those who have been born and bred in this sub-continent. It must be remembered that these soldiers are, some of them, drawn from men ordinarily engaged in civil occupation. No country has become great without its inhabitants undergoing hardships and self-sacrifice. We often talk of the disabilities of British Indians in South Africa and we have a right to complain about them and to seek redress, but, as an esteemed friend wrote in these columns a few months ago, salvation of British Indians will ultimately have to come from within, and that will only be done when the rising generation of Indians recognise their communal duty and are prepared to undergo trials and difficulties even as German soldiers are now doing in South-West Africa.

Indian Opinion, 1-9-1906

292. THE CAPE LICENCES ACT

From the Cape *Government Gazette* of the 21st inst., we notice that the Cape Licences Bill has become an Act of Parliament and henceforth Indian traders, as indeed all other traders, will come under its operation. The Bill has undergone so many alterations that it is no longer possible to detect the original measure in the Act. In some respects it is undoubtedly harsh. The right of appeal to the Supreme Court has not been definitely taken away, but it is a moot question whether the decision that may be given by the Licensing Boards will be capable of being reviewed by the Supreme Court. Moreover, the safeguard that was left to intending applicants by the original Bill, by way of securing the consent of a majority of rate-payers, has been taken away. At the same time, the requirement as to the books being kept in English has been removed. We, however, never attached any importance to the clause; it was harmless, and we may here point out that, although there is nothing stated as to the keeping of books, it will be quite proper for the Municipal authorities to decline to grant licences if the applicants could not shew to their satisfaction that they are able to keep an intelligible record of their transactions. We have always recognised as legitimate a well-regulated control over trading licences. We, therefore, think that the Act should receive a fair trial. Much will, however, depend upon the manner [in] which the Licensing Boards will use their newly acquired powers. In the words of the late Mr. Escombe, we trust that, having received "a giant's strength", they will not use it as giants, but temper justice with mercy.

Indian Opinion, 1-9-1906

293. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

P. O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
August 27, 1906

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I am sending you three leading articles to-night; that about Dadabhai[1] will of course occupy the first place, the second should be that about Johannesburg[2] and the third, the Colonial-born Indians,

[1] *Vide* "Long Live the Grand Old Man", 1-9-1906

[2] *Vide* "Abominable!", 1-9-1906

Note[1]. I am too exhausted to give you more although I have a lot to write upon, nor have I the time, but I may be able to send an article or two to-morrow. They will reach you on Thursday. It is now nearlyfive o'clock; I shall try to give you some Gujarati, at least an article about Dadabhai. If possible, give Dadabhai's photograph as a supplement next week. Brian Gabriel has got the negative; he should do it free of charge. The block must be well printed. I was almost about to telegraph to you about the supplement but I think we do not want to hurry. It will come in very nicely next week. I am giving another article on the Cape Act[2] herewith, so that you have 4.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

C. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
PHOENIX
NATAL

From a photostat of the original: S. N. 4368

294. CABLE TO "INDIA"

JOHANNESBURG,
August 28, 1906

THE DRAFT ASIATIC ORDINANCE WHICH HAS BEEN PUBLISHED CONTRAVENES ALL PAST PROMISES, AND IS WORSE THAN THE EXISTING LAW, WHICH WAS TAKEN FROM THE BOER REGIME. IT SHOCKS INDIAN SENTIMENT BY REQUIRING WOMEN, AND CHILDREN OVER EIGHT YEARS, TO REGISTER. INDIANS, WHO HAVE ALREADY BEEN TWICE REQUIRED BY LAW TO REGISTER, REGISTERED THE LAST TIME VOLUNTARILY TO PLEASE LORD MILNER. THIS THIRD REGISTRATION IS BOTH UNNECESSARY AND OPPRESSIVE. INDIANS PREFER A CONTINUANCE OF THE OLD LAW TO SUBMITTING TO THE WANTON INDIGNITY WHICH THE PROPOSED ORDINANCE CONTEMPLATES. THE CHARGE OF UNLAWFUL ENTRY IS DENIED, AND A COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY IS REQUESTED.

India, 31-8-1906

[1] *Vide* "Colonial Indians, Note!", 1-9-1906.
[2] *Vide* "The Cape Licences Act",1-9-1906

295. KODAMA, THE HERO OF JAPAN

General Kodama died suddenly last month in Tokyo without suffering any illness. He was born in the Samurai or Kshatriya class of Japan, and was naturally therefore an able soldier. He was moreover a well-known strategist. By his death the Japanese army has suffered a great loss.

Kodama joined the Japanese army in 1872, where his ability quickly attracted notice and he rose rapidly, becoming Lieutenant-Colonel in 1880. He became General in 1904. During the last Russo-Japanese' War, he was Marshal Oyama's chief lieutenant. True to the nature of the Japanese people, he remained very patient and serene in war and was never impetuous. When, in the bloody battle of Layoyang, the Russian army made a fierce charge on the Japanese, he was at breakfast. As the Russians were marching towards General Kodama's camp:, his men, concerned for the safety of their General, requested him to shift to another place. He replied that this he could never do, adding that, if his soldiers came to know he had left the front-line, they might waver and lose heart. It was therefore better for him to remain where he was. This brave conduct of the leader gave the soldiers courage and enabled them to repel the Russian attack.

In build and appearance, General Kodama resembled an Englishman. Sixteen years ago, he was sent to Europe by the Japanese Government to study western techniques of warfare. He gave proof of his proficiency during the last Chinese War. In appreciation of his services in that war, the Mikado made him a Baron. He was considered a capable man in Japan and it was expected that he would one day become Prime Minister. He was 53 when he died.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-9-1906

296. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
September 1, 1906

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I have your exhaustive letter, also your telegram regarding Harilal. I am sorry about the permit, but it cannot be helped. I have read your remarks to Mr. Polak; he laughed over them and says you

should have spoken to him when he was there. Mr. Medh[1] himself wants only a temporary job so that if you want him only for a time he will be quite willing and I am quite agreeable that you should have assistance. I certainly feel that you want some one to help you. Otherwise, what I am afraid of is that you will break down or that you will leave something undone which ought to be done now, especially the books. But if you have Mr. Medh only temporarily it will be very bad to offer him only £3. You should offer him £4 per month and if he makes himself thoroughly efficient, for the second month he should have £5. You will want him for about six months I think, even after Mr. West's return. Although I should be sending Gujarati matter from here, the political movements going on make my position very uncertain. I might have to go to England or I might have to go to gaol. I have informed Mr. Duncan, whom I met today, that, in the event of the legislation going through, I would be the first one to go to gaol rather than be registered or pay the fine. I believe the people here, too, are determined, but I should naturally take the lead in a matter of this kind. If that happens, it means incarceration perhaps for three months. You must, therefore, make your preparations to carry on the work efficiently without relying on me. I have the account against Mr. Osman Latief in my mind; I think I will be able to recover the amount some time or other. You can print Suliman Amod's books in 200 pages or 100 whichever suits you better. The theatrical handbills were received yesterday afternoon. Could you not have sent them by post instead of by parcel? I am really delighted with Harilal's taking a deck passage and managing everything himself. The papers re-directed by you have been received. I am very sorry indeed to hear of the death of Thakarshi. It is wonderful how young men are taken off so quickly; I believe I have found out reasons for the phenomenon but if I were to discuss them my voice would be a voice in the wilderness. You should furnish Osman Amod with an estimate of the cost. I have had a complaint about the Smashan fund article[2]. I have written to Motilal and I shall deal with it in the Gujarati columns[3]. It is ridiculous for him to complain about it especially against you. I hope you have pruned down considerably Shelat's contributions; you need not insert any of his contributions without shewing them to me as I have told him I would not put them in unless I found them to be suitable. You should tell Messrs Woods & Son that we are debarred

[1] Surendra Medh, who worked with Gandhiji and later with Manilal Gandhi in South Africa

[2] *Vide* "The Condition of the Hindu Cremation Ground", 25-8-1906

[3] *Vide* "The Hindu Cremation Ground",8-9-1906

from circulating their handbills through the paper. I will write to Mr. Dada Osman about the advertisement. I received the proof sent by you at the same time as the paper.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Please send me Kuhne's book which might be with you or in Mr. West's room.[1]

C. K. GANDHI, ESQ.

PHOENIX

NATAL

From a photostat of the original: S. N. 4372

297. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

September 3, 1906

THE INTERVIEW WITH MR. DUNCAN

On Mr. Duncan expressing a desire to meet the Indian deputation regarding the Asiatic Act, Messrs Abdul Gani, Essop Mian, Hajee Ojer Ally, Peter Moonlight and Gandhi, who were deputed by the Committee of the British Indian Association for this purpose, went to Pretoria last Saturday; there they were joined by Mr. Haji Habib on behalf of the Pretoria Committee. Mr. Duncan saw them at 11 a.m. Before writing further on the subject, I must say that their troubles began even as they got into the morning train that leaves at 8-30. Mr. Chamney, who had agreed to make all the arrangements at the station, had for his part no doubt done so. But neither the station master nor the conductor knew anything about them. The latter became obstructive, arguing that they had come without previous notice. Finally, however, the members were accommodated in a second-class compartment up to Germiston, whence they were able to have a first-class carriage. There ensued a long discussion with Mr. Duncan. The deputation told him that the Asiatic Act would be unacceptable to the Indian community under any circumstances and that re-registration would simply not take place. It was tyrannical that, in response to the community's plea for relief, the Government should attempt to enforce a harsher law. It was unthinkable that women and children should be registered. Registration was not necessary during the Dutch regime, and besides, the practice does not obtain elsewhere

[1] The postscript, in Gujarati, is in Gandhiji's hand.

in British territory. The deputation presented a detailed account of permit problems. Messrs Haji Ojer Ally and Haji Habib spoke in impassioned terms about them. Mr. Duncan told them that the Government would consider all the points and send a reply. In answer to the question about the Malays, Mr. Duncan said that the Act of 1885 had at no time applied to them, and that the Government would therefore consider whether to extend the Act to them or not, although, strictly speaking, it should.

Mr. Essop Mian, who wanted to say something on his own, was asked to seek a separate interview, as Mr. Duncan had to attend another meeting.

DADABHAI BIRTH ANNIVERSARY

The Committee of the British Indian Association met in Johannesburg last Friday, about thirty persons attending. It was unanimously decided to cable congratulations to Dadabhai on his eighty-second birthday. The cable was accordingly sent on September 4[1].

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-9-1906

298. CONGRATULATIONS TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

[JOHANNESBURG,
September 4, 1906]

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION TENDERS YOU HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS BIRTHDAY. PRAY YOU MAY BE LONG SPARED SERVE YOUR COUNTRY.

India, 5-10-1906

299. CRIMINAL

We have already described the Asiatic Draft Ordinance of the Transvaal Government as abominable.[2] A closer examination of the Ordinance and the complaints we have received about it require the use of an even stronger epithet regarding the proposed action of the Government. It will be a crime against humanity if it is persisted in.

[1] The letter, though begun on September 3, was completed on or after September 4.

[2] *Vide* "Abominable!", 1-9-1906

There are, to-day, not more than 13,000 Indians all told, including women and children, in the Transvaal. Women and children do not possess any documents authorising them to enter the country because the permit regulations do not require them. They are, however, not lawful residents of the Transvaal, according to the definition given to permits by the Ordinance. Will they, then, be banished from the Colony and torn from their husbands, or parents, as the case may be? Perhaps not. All the same, power is given to the department concerned with the administration of the Ordinance to subject women and children to indignities, and even to banish them. Immemorial experience shews that arbitrary power left in the hands of the best possible men tends to lower their humanity and makes them, very often in spite of themselves, do things which, under other circumstances of greater responsibility, they would not have done. The Christian Teacher, whose tenets the Government of the Transvaal, we suppose, professes to follow, only uttered simple truth when He decried temptation.

Nor is this all. The effect of the Ordinance will be to impugn the validity of every permit and registration certificate issued before the date of the Ordinance, that is to say, every holder of these documents will have to appear before the Registrar of Asiatics and satisfy that official that he is the lawful holder. Indians in the Transvaal know what this means; they will be subjected to all kinds of unnecessary and often insulting questions, and they will have to undergo a very strict examination before they receive a third certificate. And what is the reason for all this? Why, [it is] that some few Indians, whose moral sensibilities have been blunted by official folly and needless severity, have entered the Colony of the Transvaal without authority.

The only apparent reason for this Ordinance is to cover hopeless incompetence in the administration of the present laws, which, we maintain, are sufficient to meet all cases of fraudulent entrance. There is, in the Peace Preservation Ordinance, a clause which enables officials appointed thereunder to inspect permits, and non-production of same renders persons inspected liable to be arrested and ultimately deported from the Colony. Failure to leave the Colony carries with it a very heavy penalty. We hold that these clauses, wisely employed, would soon shew how far the statements of the anti-Asiatic agitators are borne out. It is curious that, instead of employing this efficient instrument at its disposal, the Government has devised degrading legislation in order to find out whether there are any persons who have surreptitiously entered the Colony.

A correspondent, of nineteen years' standing in the Transvaal, has asked a pertinent question in the Gujarati columns which we

translate in another place in this issue, asking what is the difference between Russian rule and British rule *a la* Transvaal. The difference, in our opinion, lies in the fact that, whereas, in Russia, when it suits the authorities, they do not hesitate to murder people openly and directly, in the Transvaal, because the authorities wish to do away with Indians, but cannot do so openly and honestly, instead of resorting to the direct method of murdering them or banishing them from the Colony, they intend to kill them by inches. They would devise means which exasperate even the mild Indian into leaving the country of his own accord or adopting means which serve the same purpose. And so the authorities are able unctuously to declare: "We are not guilty of the civil murder of these men—they left of their own accord." We present this thought to the Government for its earnest consideration, and ask it now, whilst there is yet time, to withdraw from an utterly false position.

Indian Opinion, 8-9-1906

300. THE GRAND OLD MAN

The various associations in South Africa have simply done their duty by forwarding congratulatory messages to the Honourable Dadabhai Naoroji on his eighty-second birthday.[1] This birthday anniversary has become a day of national rejoicing throughout India, and Indian life in South Africa seems to us to be incomplete without a reproduction, on however humble a scale, of what has been going on in India for years in connection with the birthday anniversary of the one man who is enshrined in the hearts of millions of Indians as is no other man at the present day. These voluntary offerings must be a matter of very great solace to the aged patriot, and it cannot but further the work that he has been doing so ungrudgingly for over half a century. We hope that, having commenced it, Indians in South Africa will make the sending of these messages an annual feature, and hope that they will be privileged, for many years to come, to be able to commemorate the day. We publish with this issue a supplement, containing a portrait of the Hon. Dadabhai Naoroji.

Indian Opinion, 8-9-1906

[1] *Vide* "Congratulations to Dadabhai Naoroji", 4-9-1906

301. RUSSIA AND INDIA

Mr. Essop Mian recently compared [conditions under] British rule in the Transvaal with the state of affairs prevailing in Russia.[1] Such a comparison is indeed worth making. Just as the Russian people are tyrannised over by government officials, so are Indians in the Transvaal. People are openly assaulted and killed in Russia. Under British rule, the harm inflicted on the people is, as in the case of a rat-bite, not immediately noticeable, but it may be said that the ultimate effect is just as bad.

It is interesting to compare the reactions of the Russian people to tyranny with our own reaction to it. Under British rule, we draft petitions, carry on a struggle through the Press, and seek justice from the King. All this is perfectly proper. It is necessary, and it also brings us some relief. But is there anything else that we should do? And, can we do it? We shall think of these questions later. For the present, let us see what Russia is doing. The people there, both rich and poor, do not send petitions and stop there. The oppression there is such that it has given rise to a number of anarchists. They believe that all rulers are oppressive, and the State should therefore be done away with. To achieve this end, people in Russia kill the officials openly as well as secretly. In this, however, they are making a mistake. Such thoughtless adventures only serve to keep the minds of both the rulers and the ruled in a state of constant tension. All the same, it is admitted on all hands that men taking such risks must be brave and patriotic.

Even young girls set out on such adventures and court risks. A book was recently published about the lives of young women who have thus made themselves immortal. Knowing that death is certain, these fearless girls, actuated by patriotism and a spirit of self-sacrifice, take the lives of those whom they believe to be the enemies of the country, and themselves meet an agonising death at the hands of officials. Facing such risks, they serve their country selflessly. It will be no wonder if such a country succeeds in achieving freedom from tyranny. The only reason why it has not become free immediately is that such patriotism is misdirected, as we have pointed out before, and results in bloodshed. In consequence, these people cannot, according to divine law, obtain any immediate benefit.

Do our people display patriotism of this order? We have regretfully to say "No". No one can be blamed, for we have not yet

[1] *Vide Indian Opinion,* 8-9-1906.

been trained for this. We are children in political matters. We do not understand the principle that the public good is also one's own good. But the time has now come for us to outgrow this state of mind. We need not, however, resort to violence. Neither need we set out on adventures, risking our lives. We must, however, submit our bodies topain, and the new Transvaal Ordinance offers an excellent opportunity. The Ordinance represents the limit of oppression. It is not for us to punish those who made that Ordinance. If we did that, we would be as much at fault as the Russians. Indians are a meek people, and we wish they will always remain so. What, then, should we do? The answer to this question has been given by the Indian deputation to Mr. Duncan. They have told him that if, disregarding our attempts at gentle persuasion, the Government enforces the Ordinance, Indians will not abide by it; they will not [re-]register themselves, nor will they pay fines; they will rather go to gaol. We believe that, if the Indians in the Transvaal firmly stick to this resolution, they will at once be free of their shackles. The gaol will then be like a palace to them. Instead of being a disgrace, going to gaol will enhance their prestige. And the Government, for its part, will realize that it cannot with impunity go on humiliating Indians. What we do not do, besides addressing petitions—though we ought to do it—is that we will not sacrifice our bodily comforts. We give ourselves over to physical pleasures and cannot give them up. It is our duty to make some sacrifice for the sake of others. We do not realize that there is real beauty in this: that it is thus that we please God and do our true duty. The resolution[1] about the deputation [to England] is an excellent step. We hope that the Indians will not miss this golden opportunity and that every one of them in South Africa will support it.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-9-1906

302. FALSE PERMITS IN THE TRANSVAAL

We have received a letter about false permits which we think it is unnecessary to publish. The writer says that some Indians try to enter the Transvaal with false permits, and innocent men have to suffer in consequence. Those who make the attempt are, of course, sentenced. Some time ago, eight Indians at Barberton were fined £30 and obliged to return. Though, in our view, the fine was unmerited, we do believe that it is necessary for every Indian to act with caution. The more our

[1] *Vide* "The Mass Meeting", 11-9-1906

people misuse permits, the more they will add to our woes. We are sorry for those who cannot enter the Transvaal; we sympathise with them. But, so long as the law is against them, they have to remain patient. We must always bear in mind that, in the process of securing one's own interest, one ought not to harm others. We hope every reader will learn a lesson from the Barberton cases.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-9-1906

303. THE HINDU CREMAT1ON GROUND

We commented in a previous issue on the condition of the Hindu cremation ground.[1] Some persons have construed our comments as intended to find fault with the management. We have gone through the article again, but are unable to read in it any such intention. However, to preclude any possible misunderstanding, we hereby declare that we have not, in the article, held the management guilty of any fault. As far as we know, they have been doing their best to keep the cremation ground clean and in good condition.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-9-1906

304. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Urgent

[JOHANNESBURG,]
September 8, l906

SIR,

I have the honour to request Your Excellency to forward the enclosed telegrams to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India and His Excellency the Viceroy of India.[2]

You will notice that the text of the cable to His Excellency the Viceroy of India is different from that of the other two[3]. My Association has authorised me to disburse the expense of the cablegrams and on hearing from you, I shall forward cheque. As the

[1] *Vide* "The Condition of the Hindu Cremation Ground", 25-8-1906

[2] *Vide* the following items.

[3] Addressed to the Secretaries of State for India and for the Colonies

matter is one of great urgency, may I request that the cablegrams be sent today.

I am, etc.,

ABDUL GANI

Pretoria Archives: L. G. File No. 93: Asiatics

305. CABLE TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COLONIES[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
September 8, 1906

TO

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

BRITISH INDIANS ALARMED AT HASTE WITH WHICH ASIATIC ORDINANCE IS BEING RUSHED THROUGH LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL. ORDINANCE REDUCES INDIANS TO STATUS LOWER THAN KAFFIRS AND MUCH LOWER THAN THAT OCCUPIED UNDER DUTCH REGIME. BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION REQUEST IMPERIAL SANCTION BE STAYED PENDING DEPUTATION PROCEEDING DIRECTLY. ASSOCIATION REQUESTS REASSURING REPLY.

BIAS

Pretoria Archives :L. G. File No. 93 Asiatics

306. CABLE TO VICEROY OF INDIA

[JOHANNESBURG,]
September 8,1906

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY OF INDIA

BRITISH INDIANS ALARMED AT ASIATIC ORDINANCE PASSING THROUGH LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL. TRANSVAAL ORDINANCE DEGRADING, INSULTING, REDUCES INDIANS TO A WORSE STATUS THAN THAT OF PARIAHS. BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION REQUEST THE VICEROY'S ACTIVE INTERVENTION, HIS EXCELLENCY BEING DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR WELFARE.

BIAS

Pretoria Archives: L. G. File No. 93: Asiatics

[1] The same telegram was sent to the Secretary of State for India also.

307. SPEECH ON THE "BLACK ACT"

At a meeting of some leading Indians held to consider the draft Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance, Gandhiji explained its full implications. It shocked them as it had shocked Gandhiji. All present then resolved to hold a public meeting and consider and adopt measures to fight the "Black Act".

The following is Gandhiji's own reconstruction of the speech which, like the one at the mass meeting on September 11, (vide *pp. 419-22), brings out the importance he attached to defiance of an unjust law.*

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before September 9, 1906]

This is a very serious crisis. If the Ordinance were passed and if we acquiesced in it, it would be imitated all over South Africa. As it seems to me, it is designed to strike at the very root of our existence in South Africa. It is not the last step, but the first step with a view to hound us out of the country. We are therefore responsible for the safety, not only of the ten or fifteen thousand Indians in the Transvaal but of the entire Indian community in South Africa. Again, if we fully understand all the implications of this legislation, we shall find that India's honour is in our keeping. For the Ordinance seeks to humiliate not only ourselves but also the motherland. The humiliation consists in the degradation of innocent men. No one will take it upon himself to say that we have done anything to deserve such legislation. We are innocent, and insult offered to a single innocent member of a nation is tantamount to insulting the nation as a whole. It will not, therefore, do to be hasty, impatient or angry. That cannot save us from this onslaught. But God will come to our help, if we calmly think out and carry out in time measures of resistance, presenting a united front and bearing the hardship, which such resistance brings in its train.

M. K. Gandhi: *Satyagraha in South Africa,* Chapter XI; S. Ganesan, Madras; 1928

308. SPEECH AT HAMIDIYA ISLAMIC SOCIETY[1]

At a meeting of the Hamidiya Islamic Society, Gandhiji explained the political situation in the Transsaal. The following is an extract from a report of the proceedings:

[1] The report in the *Indian Opinion* has the caption, "Call to Action".

JOHANNESBURG,
September 9, 1906

We have received a reply to our cable[1] to the Colonial Secretary. (Mr. Gandhi here read out the reply.) I have also cabled to London[2] according to instructions. There is now no alternative to sending a deputation, because an intolerable and wicked law is being forced upon us; and we must not put up with it. As it is, our plight in the Transvaal is very bad, and now comes this vicious Draft Ordinance. My advice, therefore, is that we should not seek fresh registration.

Let the accusation of breaking the law fall on us. Let us cheerfully suffer imprisonment. There is nothing wrong in that. The distinctive virtue of the British is bravery. If therefore we also unite and offer resistance with courage and firmness, I am sure there is nothing that the Government can do. Even the half-castes and Kaffirs, who are less advanced than we, have resisted the Government. The pass law applies to them as well, but they do not take out passes.

I do not want to say more. I would only advise you not to register yourselves again. If the Government sends us to gaol, I shall be the first to court imprisonment. And if any Indian is put to trouble because of his refusal to register afresh in accordance with the Draft Ordinance, I will appear in his case free of charge.

On Tuesday next, we are holding a mass meeting, and I expect you all to close your business on that day and attend it.

Having explained all this at length, Mr. Gandhi made a few suggestions for collecting funds quickly, appointing a new committee to look after the funds and publishing the accounts every month.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-9-1906

309. THE MASS MEETING

A mass meeting of British Indians was held to protest against the draft Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance. Abdul Gani, Chairman, British Indian Association, presided. Several speakers opposed the Ordinance and called for non compliance in case it became law. The following is a report of Gandhiji's speech:

[1] This is not available.
[2] *Vide* "Cable to Secretary of State for Colonies", 8-9-1906

JOHANNESBURG,
September 11, 1906

Mr. M. K. Gandhi, (Johannesburg), Hony. Secretary of the British Indian Association, then addressed the meeting. He pointed out that by some critics it might be thought that there was a defect in the chain of reasoning as outlined by their resolutions, because they asked for redress of their grievances, and then went on immediately to threaten to go to gaol if their prayer was not granted. He contended, however, that there was no real flaw in the chain, because they were not holding out a threat. It was merely a question of one ounce of practice which was worth whole tons of speeches and writings. He had thought the matter over seriously and earnestly before he had given his opinion upon the step they should take, and he felt that it was their bounden duty to adopt the course laid down if their prayer was not granted. He contended that every adjective used that day was justified for the occasion, and said that if he could find a stronger adjective he would use it. He had studied the whole of the anti-Asiatic legislation throughout South Africa; but he never, in the whole course of his experience, came across anything like this present Ordinance. Even the legislation of the O.R.C., drastic as it was, was far superior to that now introduced here, which was so bad that no self-respecting Indian could live under it. He admitted that the responsibility for the serious step he had taken was upon his shoulders, and he took the responsibility in its entirety. He felt he had done the right thing in advising them to take this step as loyal British subjects. In all their action in this respect they were full of loyalty. No shadow of disloyalty could rest upon them. Some people might say that they were foolish, and he would say that their action was foolish if he had not full confidence in his fellow-countrymen. But he knew them; he knew that he could trust them, and he knew also that, when occasion required an heroic step to be taken,—he knew that every man among them would take it. (Loud Cheers.)

Indian Opinion, 22-9-1906

At the meeting, Haji Habib proposed that they should take a solemn oath to oppose the Ordinance. Explaining the implications of the suggestion, Gandhiji made a speech, which he recapitulates in Satyagraha in South Africa:

I wish to explain to this meeting that there is a vast difference between this resolution and every other resolution we have passed upto date and that there is a wide divergence also in the manner of making it. It is a very grave resolution we are making, as our existence in South Africa depends upon our fully observing it. The manner of making the resolution suggested by our friend is as much of a novelty as of a solemnity. I did not come to the meeting with a view to getting

the resolution passed in that manner, which redounds to the credit of Sheth Haji Habib as well as it [*sic*] lays a burden of responsibility upon him. I tender my congratulations to him. I deeply appreciate his suggestion, but if you adopt it you too will share his responsibility. You must understand what is this responsibility, and as an adviser and servant of the community, it is my duty fully to explain it to you.

We all believe in one and the same God, the differences of nomenclature in Hinduism and Islam notwithstanding. To pledge ourselves or to take an oath in the name of that God or with Him as witness is not something to be trifled with. If having taken such an oath we violate our pledge we are guilty before God and man. Personally I hold that a man, who deliberately and intelligently takes a pledge and then breaks it, forfeits his manhood. And just as a copper coin treated with mercury not only becomes valueless when found out but also makes its owner liable to punishment, in the same way a man who lightly pledges his word and then breaks it becomes a man of straw and fits himself for punishment here as well as hereafter. Sheth Haji Habib is proposing to administer an oath of such a serious character. There is no one in this meeting who can be classed as an infant or as wanting in understanding. You are all well advanced in age and have seen the world; many of you are delegates and have discharged responsibilities in a greater or lesser measure. No one present, therefore, can ever hope to excuse himself by saying that he did not know what he was about when he took the oath.

I know that pledges and vows are, and should be, taken on rare occasions. A man who takes a vow every now and then is sure to stumble. But if I can imagine a crisis in the history of the Indian community of South Africa when it would be in the fitness of things to take pledges, that crisis is surely now. There is wisdom in taking serious steps with great caution and hesitation. But caution and hesitation have their limits, which we have now passed. The Government has taken leave of all sense of decency. We would only be betraying our unworthiness and cowardice, if we cannot stake our all in the face of the conflagration which envelopes us and sit watching it with folded hands. There is no doubt, therefore, that the present is a proper occasion for taking pledges. But every one of us must think out for himself if he has the will and the ability to pledge himself. Resolutions of this nature cannot be passed by a majority vote. Only those who take a pledge can be bound by it. This pledge must not be taken with a view to produce an effect on outsiders. No one should trouble to consider what impression it might have upon the local Government, the Imperial Government, or the Government of India. Every one must only search his own heart, and if the inner

voice assures him that he has the requisite strength to carry him through, then only should he pledge himself and then only would his pledge bear fruit.

A few words now as to the consequences. Hoping for the best, we may say that, if a majority of the Indians pledge themselves to resistance and if all who take the pledge prove true to themselves, the Ordinance may not even be passed and, if passed, may be soon repealed. It may be that we may not be called upon to suffer at all. But if on the one hand one who takes a pledge must be a robust optimist, on the other hand he must be prepared for the worst. It is therefore that I would give you an idea of the worst that might happen to us in the present struggle. Imagine that all of us present here numbering 3,000 at the most pledge ourselves. Imagine again that the remaining 10,000 Indians take no such pledge. We will only provoke ridicule in the beginning. Again, it is quite possible that in spite of the present warning some or many of those who pledge themselves might weaken at the very first trial. We might have to go to gaol, where we might be insulted. We might have to go hungry and suffer extreme heat or cold. Hard labour might be imposed upon us. We might be flogged by rude warders. We might be fined heavily and our property might be attached and held up to auction if there are only a few resisters left. Opulent today, we might be reduced to abject poverty tomorrow. We might be deported. Suffering from starvation and similar hardships in gaol, some of us might fall ill and even die. In short, therefore, it is not at all impossible that we might have to endure every hardship that we can imagine, and wisdom lies in pledging ourselves on the understanding that we shall have to suffer all that and worse. If someone asks me when and how the struggle may end, I may say that, if the entire community manfully stands the test, the end will be near. If many of us fall back under storm and stress, the struggle will be prolonged. But I can boldly declare, and with certainty, that so long as there is even a handful of men true to their pledge, there can only be one end to the struggle, and that is victory.

A word about my personal responsibility. If I am warning you of the risks attendant upon the pledge, I am at the same time inviting you to pledge yourselves, and I am fully conscious of my responsibility in the matter. It is possible that a majority of those present here might take the pledge in a fit of enthusiasm or indignation but might weaken under the ordeal, and only a handful might be left to face the final test. Even then there is only one course open to the like of me, to die but not to submit to the law. It is quite unlikely but even if every one else flinched leaving me alone to face the music, I am confident that I would never violate my pledge. Please do not

misunderstand me. I am not saying this out of vanity, but I wish to put you, especially the leaders upon the platform, on your guard. I wish respectfully to suggest it to you that, if you have not the will or the ability to stand firm even when you are perfectly isolated, you must not only not take the pledge yourselves, but you must declare your opposition before the resolution is put to the meeting and before its members begin to take pledges and you must not make yourselves parties to the resolution. Although we are going to take the pledge in a body, no one should imagine that default on the part of one or many can absolve the rest from their obligation. Every one should fully realize his responsibility, then only pledge himself independently of others and understand that he himself must be true to his pledge even unto death, no matter what others do.

M. K. Gandhi: *Satyagraha in South Africa,* Chapter XII; S. Ganesan, Madras; 1928

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE MEETING[1]

RESOLUTION I

This mass meeting of British Indians here assembled, respectfully urges the Honourable the President and Members of the Legislative Council of the Transvaal not to pass the Draft Asiatic Ordinance to amend Law No. 3 of 1885, now before that Honourable House, in view of the facts that :

(1) It is, so far as the Indian community of the Transvaal is concerned, a highly contentious measure.

(2) It subjects the British Indian community of the Transvaal to degradation and insult totally undeserved by its past history.

(3) The present machinery is sufficient for checking the alleged influx of Asiatics.

(4) The statements as to the alleged influx are denied by the British Indian community.

(5) If the Honourable House is not satisfied with the denial, this meeting invites [an] open, judicial, and British enquiry into the question of the alleged influx.

RESOLUTION II

This mass meeting of British Indians here assembled respectf-

[1] In accordance with Resolution V, copies of Resolutions II, III and IV were sent to the Secretary of State for India through the Governor of the Transvaal, who was also requested to telegraph their substance to the Viceroy of India. *Vide"*The Mass Meeting", 11-9-1906 and Cd. 3308 issued in February 1907.

ully protests against the Draft Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance now being considered by the Legislative Council of the Transvaal, and humbly requests the local Government and the Imperial Authorities to withdraw the Draft Ordinance, for the reasons that :

(1) It is manifestly in conflict with the past declarations of His Majesty's representatives.

(2) It recognises no distinction between British and alien Asiatics.

(3) It reduces British Indians to a status lower than that of the aboriginal races of South Africa and the Coloured people.

(4) It renders the position of British Indians in the Transvaal much worse than under Law 3 of 1885, and, therefore, than under the Boer regime.

(5) It sets up a system of passes and espionage unknown in any other British territory.

(6) It brands the communities to which it is applied as criminals or suspects.

(7) The alleged influx of unauthorised British Indians into the Transvaal is denied.

(8) If such denial is not accepted, a judicial, open and British enquiry should be instituted before such drastic and uncalled for legislation is enforced.

(9) The measure is otherwise un-British and unduly restricts the liberty of inoffensive British subjects and constitutes a compulsory invitation to British Indians in the Transvaal to leave the country.

(10) This meeting further and especially requests the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India to suspend the Royal sanction and to receive a deputation on behalf of the British Indian community of the Transvaal in connection with this Draft Ordinance.

RESOLUTION III

This meeting hereby appoints a delegation with power from the Committee of the British Indian Association to add to its membership or to change its personnel, to proceed to England and to lay before the Imperial Authorities the complaint of the British Indian community of the Transvaal regarding the Draft Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance.

RESOLUTION IV

In the event of the Legislative Council, the local Government, and the Imperial Authorities rejecting the humble prayer of the British Indian community of the Transvaal in connection with the Draft Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance, this mass meeting of British Indians here assembled solemnly and regretfully resolves that, rather than submit to the galling, tyrannous, and un-British requirements laid down in the above Draft Ordinance, every British Indian in the Transvaal shall submit himself to imprisonment and shall continue so to do until it shall please His Most Gracious Majesty the King-Emperor to grant relief.

RESOLUTION V

This meeting desires the Chairman to forward copy of the first resolution to the Honourable the President and Members of the Legislative Council, and copies of all the resolutions to the Honourable the Colonial Secretary, to His Excellency the Acting Lieutenant-Governor, and to His Excellency the High Commissioner, and to request His Excellency the High Commissioner to cable the text of resolutions Nos. 2, 3 and 4 to the Imperial Authorities.

Indian Opinion, 15-9-1906

310. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

September 11, 1906

A mammoth meeting was held under the presidentship of Mr. Abdul Gani, at two o'clock on Tuesday afternoon at the Empire Theatre, in connection with the agitation at present going on in the Transvaal against the Asiatic law[1]. About three thousand Indians attended. An invitation was sent to the Colonial Secretary, who sent Mr. Chamney.

In the course of his speech, Mr. Abdul Gani made the following points:

We in the Transvaal have never had to face such critical times before. On this occasion, we have to put in a mighty effort. I do not want to make a long speech; there is much work for us to do. At the time of the Boer War, Lord Selborne said that the need to protect the rights of Indians was one of the causes of the War. For, under the Union Jack, no one should suffer any disability; all must have equal rights.

[1] Draft Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance

Again, at a meeting of Jews held a few days ago, he said that it was the duty of the British Government to redress the grievances of alien peoples as well. There should be no restrictions, he said, on living, no prohibition of acquisition of land in the British Empire. We have a right to ask how such speeches of Lord Selborne can be reconciled with the oppressive law directed against us.

We have already represented to the Government how drastic and offensive the law is. But, today, I want to read out to you Mr. Gregorowski's opinion on the subject. He writes:

> The act is far more severe than the Dutch Law. There is not a single provision in it that is favourable to the Indians. The act makes the position of the Indian worse than that of the Kaffir. Not every Kaffir is required to carry a pass on him; but now every Indian will have to do so. Educated Kaffirs are exempt from such restrictive laws. But the Indian, whatever his education and standing, will have to carry a pass. The pass, it seems to us, will be like the one carried by prisoners, etc. Whatever loop-holes there existed in the Law [3] of 1885 have been closed in this Act. While Kaffirs can own land, Indians cannot. It does not seem probable that the Liberal Government will approve such a law.

What we have been saying is by no means more strongly worded than what Mr. Gregorowski has said.

Now that a serious situation has arisen, we should think about what we ought to do if the Imperial Government does not heed our grievances. Today some resolutions will be placed before you. According to one of them, we shall resolve to send a deputation to England, of which I need say no more. But there is only one very important resolution for today. What shall we do if we fail to secure relief? We have patiently endured the hardships, which have continuedunmitigated. But the further disability proposed by this law is insufferable. We therefore want to resolve that, if the Imperial Government too intends to heap more oppressions on us, we will rather go to gaol than put up with it. It always happens that one hits upon the true remedy only when one goes through extreme suffering, and it is our duty firmly to resolve to defy the law and go to gaol. There is nothing to be ashamed of in going to gaol. And I pray to God to give us the strength and the good sense to adhere to our determination.

This is for us the time for deeds, not words. We have to act boldly; and in doing so, we have to be humble and non-violent. We should not speak or listen to any bitter words.

After the President's speech, the following resolutions were passed.

RESOLUTION I[1]

This mass meeting respectfully urges the Legislative Council not to pass the Asiatic Ordinance in view of the fact that

(1) it is, according to the Indian community, a highly objectionable measure;

(2) it subjects the Indian community to degradation and insult without any cause whatever;

(3) if it is supposed that Indians enter the Transvaal without permits, there is adequate provision in the existing law to prevent them from so doing;

(4) the Indian community denies the allegation that there is any large influx of permitless Indians into the Transvaal;

(5) if the Legislative Council disbelieves these statements, the Indian community demands that a judicial inquiry, which accords with British practice, be held.

RESOLUTION II

This mass meeting respectfully protests against the Asiatic Ordinance and humbly requests the local and the Imperial Governments to withdraw the Draft Ordinance for the following reasons:

(1) it is manifestly in conflict with the past declarations of His Majesty;

(2) it recognises no distinction between British Indians and other Asiatics;

(3) it reduces British Indians to a status lower than that of the Kaffirs and other Coloured persons;

(4) it renders the position of Indians much worse than it was under the Boer regime;

(5) it sets up a system of passes unknown in any other Colony;

(6) in effect, it brands all persons of the Indian community as criminals;

(7) the Indian community denies the alleged influx of unauthorised Indians into the Transvaal;

(8) if this denial is unacceptable, the Indian community demands that a judicial inquiry which is in conformity with the British system be held;

(9) the measure is otherwise unjust, restricts the liberty of the

[1] As the report has been translated from the summary in Gujarati, it is not a *verbatim* reproduction of the original English text of the resolutions. For the English resolutions *vide* "The Mass Meeting", 11-9-1906

Indian community and is calculated to oust the community through ill treatment.

(10) Furthermore, this meeting requests in particular the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India to recommend the withholding of Royal sanction (until after the Indian deputation has waited upon them).

RESOLUTION III

This meeting hereby authorizes the British Indian Association to send a deputation to England in order to put the grievances of the Indian community before the Imperial Government.

RESOLUTION IV

Should the Legislative Council, the local and the Imperial Governments reject the humble prayer of the Indian community against the Asiatic Ordinance, every Indian present at this meeting solemnly and sincerely resolves that, rather than submit to this tyrannical law and abide by its un-British provisions, he will prefer to go to gaol and will continue to do so until it pleases His Majesty the King-Emperor to grant relief.

RESOLUTION V

This meeting authorizes the Chairman to forward the first resolution to the Legislative Council and all the other resolutions to His Excellency the High Commissioner and through him to the Imperial Government by cable.

POSITION OF THE LAW TILL TUESDAY EVENING

I am unable to send reports of the other speakers or their speeches for the current issue. To be brief, the meeting was attended by representatives from Pietersburg, Klerksdorp, Krugersdorp, Pretoria and all other important places. The fear was widely shared that the law might have already received the approval of the Imperial Government. On this point, however, Sir Richard Solomon assures us that the law will not be enforced as long as it has not been sent to England and approved. There is thus still scope for the deputation to visit England, and for sending petitions, etc. Moreover, the law has been so amended that it will not apply to children under sixteen. That is to say, such children entering the Transvaal will not be prosecuted. Another amending clause has, however, been added according to which anyone who smuggles in a child of another as his own will be prosecuted and sentenced. Not only that, but his permit and

registration certificate will be cancelled, and he will be deported.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-9-1906

311. LETTER TO PRESIDENT OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

[JOHANNESBURG,]
September 11, 1906

TO

HON, THE PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to enclose herewith, by direction of the Mass Meeting of British Indians held this afternoon in Johannesburg, copy of the first resolution[1] unanimously passed by the Meeting for submission to the Honourable House for its sympathetic consideration.

I have the honour to request that the same may be read to the Honourable House.

I hare the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ABDOOL GANI

CHAIRMAN ,

BRITISH INDIAN MASS MEETING

Pretoria Archives: L. G. File No. 93: Asiatics

[1] *Vide* "The Mass Meeting", 11-9-1906

312. LETTER TO LT.-GOVERNOR OF THE TRANSVAAL

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

P. O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
September 12, 1906

TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR
OF THE TRANSVAAL AND JOHANNESBURG
SIR,

In accordance with a resolution passed by the British Indian Mass Meeting held at the Empire Theatre, Johannesburg, I have the honour to enclose herewith Resolutions 2, 3, 4 and 5 for Your Excellency's information.

I hare the honour to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
ABDOOL GANI
CHAIRMAN ,
BRITISH INDIAN MASS MEETING

Pretoria Archives: L. G. Files: 1902-1906

313. REPLY TO " THE RAND DAILY MAIL"

[JOHANNESBURG,
September 12, 1906]

[THE EDITOR]
The Rand Daily Mail
SIR,

You have accused me in your leading article of the confusion of the issues in connection with the British Indian mass meeting[1] held yesterday. I fear, however, that it is rather on your side than on mine. The point that I, and every other speaker, made was perfectly clear.

Here is what I stated, as reported in your paper:

> They did not ask to bring the 350 millions into this country, but they said that those who had entered the country were entitled to the same protection and

[1] *Vide* "The Mass Meeting",11-9-1906

rights and privileges as all the Europeans who had come in.

While the meeting earnestly pleaded for a reasonable treatment of the resident British Indian population, you, Sir, shall I say, deliberately have confused the issue by dragging in all Asiatics, British and otherwise, and by raising the question of immigration. How can we raise any such question when it is a matter of life and death for the handful of British Indians that are in the Transvaal? In order to accentuate my point, I did indeed say that, if aliens, not always of a desirable character, could enter the Transvaal freely and without permits, and enjoy all the privileges, it was reasonable that Indians, who are accepted as British subjects, should have a prior right.

You again talk of a suspicious disinclination to descend to details! There was no occasion for it as they are embodied in the British Indian protest which you have already published. No amount of amending the Ordinance as to details can make it acceptable when the very principle of it is bad, namely, to ask every Indian without exception to carry a pass under a system of identification applied only to criminals. We would be unworthy sons of India if, mild as we are, we submitted to the contemplated degradation.

[*Yours, etc.,*

M. K. GANDHI]

Indian Opinion, 22-9-1906

314. LETTER TO " THE STAR"

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before September 14, 1906]

TO
THE EDITOR
THE STAR

SIR,

You have been good enough, in your leading article on the British Indian protest regarding the Asiatic Draft Ordinance, to give advice to the British Indian Association which, in your opinion, is not very "judiciously" led.

It is a trite saying that "our neighbours always know best what is good for us," and I have no doubt that, on the principle, your opinion, that the British Indian community is badly led, is also correct. However, for the present, I am more concerned with the attitude you have taken up regarding the British Indian protest than with your judgement about the leaders of the Association.

You think that the community has no case whatever against the new Ordinance, because it is purely a matter of fresh registration and that it imposes no fresh disabilities on any class of His Majesty's subjects. I join issue on both the points. Just as the administration of the Peace Preservation Ordinance has been distorted in order to prohibit Indian immigration, so also the scope of Law 3 of 1885 has been distorted by the new Ordinance to meet a demand that was never made during the Dutch regime. The Dutch law was aimed at the traders. It policy was not to restrict immigration, but to penalise the immigrants who wanted to trade, and it was for that reason that, originally, it fixed a registration fee of £25, which was reduced to £3 on the intervention of the British Government.

The present Ordinance, which is supposed merely to amend Law 3 of 1885, and therefore, to continue its scope and not entirely change it, as a matter of fact, provides for a system of identification which, in its operation, cannot but be most galling to those who have to submit to it. Re-registration does not mean taking a census of the Indian population, but it means the following :

Every Indian resident in the Colony has to carry with him a registration certificate containing degrading identification particulars. He has to have his new-born child provisionally registered, giving such particulars as to identification as may be required by the regulation to be framed by the Lieutenant-Governor. He has to take out a registration for children above the age of eight years with similar conditions as to identification.

All this is absolutely new and never contemplated by Law 3 of 1885. And yet you have no hesitation in saying that the Ordinancedoes not impose any disability on the resident Indian population.

Let me assure you that the policy of passive resistance is not a *brutum fulmen.*[1] It is simply a resolve on the part of my countrymen to decline to submit to conditions that are quite unbearable, and if, as suggested by you, it provokes "a movement of their wholesale expulsion as an expensive nuisance", it will be a great relief. That it will be a new departure in the British policy, of course, does not matter to the new school of Imperialists, of whom you are, undoubtedly, a leading light. My countrymen have remained long enough in the background—not discreetly, as you suggest, but rather indiscreetly.

[1] This is in response to the following editorial observation made by *The Star*. "The suggestion of a policy of passive resistance is either a *brutum fulmen* or based on a very hazy notion of the value of that policy in the English educational controversy."

Their coming out of their seclusion will not mean much loss, if it brings no gain. In their opinion, they have already lost almost all.

If your inciting of South Africans results in their taking some interest in the Indian question, I make bold to say that, in spite of your suggestion above referred to, it will open their eyes, and show them how heavily they have sinned against British Indians, and how much they have misunderstood them.

I am, etc.,
ABDOOL GANI,
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

The Star, 22-9-1906

315. THE NEW TRANSVAAL BILL

The resolutions unanimously passed by the mass meeting of Indians appear in the Johannesburg Letter[1]. Our correspondent says that the meeting was attended by representatives from all over the Transvaal. We congratulate them on foregathering to pass the resolutions unanimously, and wish them complete success in their endeavours. We believe that the Government will be obliged to withdraw the Bill if this movement is continued with unity. The Draft Ordinance has gone through two readings in the legislature. A special amendment places women outside the purview of the Act. The Bill was presented for its third reading, when the telegram received from the British Indian Association was read out; and after some discussion—during which certain amendments were put forward—it was decided to put off consideration until the final report on the Bill [was ready]. If, as our correspondent asks, the Imperial Government should give its assent meanwhile and the Bill become law, what shouldIndians do? In that case, we hope and pray that God may give them the strength and tenacity to adhere to the Fourth Resolution passed unanimously at the mass meeting till the grievances are redre

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-9-1906

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 11-9-1906

316. STATEMENT ON DRAFT ASIATIC ORDINANCE[1]

[Before *September 17, 1906*]

It is much worse than was expected would be the case. If the Bill is passed, it will constitute a breach of the promises made hitherto. Instead of giving relief it is calculated to give the greatest irritation, and that, too, without the slightest justification.

Law 3 of 1885 as it stands is infinitely superior to the present Ordinance; for, under the latter, women, children, and adults who do not enter the country for purposes of trade will be liable to be registered, although they are free under the former. The remission of £3 merely adds insult to injury, for all those who have been registered have already paid the £3. It must not be forgotten that this measure, if it passes, will necessitate a third registration; and why? Simply because some [anti-]Asiatic agitators have said that many Indians have entered the country without authority. The British Indian Association has repudiated the suggestion as applied to the community in general.[2] Assuming, however, that a large body of people have so entered, the evil can be obviated by inspecting the permits already issued.

The Johannesburg *Star* states, evidently with authority, that the method of identification now to be adopted will be very severe. The Indian community has quite gratuitously, and in order to conciliate Lord Milner, allowed the authorities to take thumb-impressions. How much further the Government intends to go, and what further indignity it wishes to impose, it is not possible to conjecture.

I need not go further into the matter at this stage. Much fuller information will be found in the next issue of *Indian Opinion*[3] to which I beg to draw your attention.

From Mr. Duncan's statement, it would appear that the Imperial Government has already sanctioned the principle of the proposed legislation. If so, I can only say that they have not given any consideration to the matter. They have not studied the past despatches, which promised a great deal. Throughout these despatches, no mention is made of registration of the community as if it were merely composed of criminals. The Draft Ordinance draws no distinction between British Asiatics and others. In one of the Sections, you will

[1] This was sent to Dadabhai Naoroji who forwarded it to the Secretary of State for the Colonies on September 17. With the exception of the fourth paragraph, it was later published in *India* as from "A Well-informed South African Correspondent".

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 25-8-1906

[3] *Vide* "On Trial", 29-9-1906

notice exemption promised at the discretion of the Government from the Liquor Ordinance to holders of temporary permits. The Section is a wanton insult to the community. No self-respecting Indian will ever claim any such exemption. It is most galling to think that in British territories if Prince Ranjitsinghjee wanted to enter the Transvaal he should have to apply for a permit, and then, in order that he might have a glass of beer, he should have to apply cringingly to the Government for exemption from the Liquor Ordinance. Is this the way in which the most Liberal Government that the Empire has seen for years will protect weak and helpless members thereof?

India, 28-9-1906

317. LETTER T0 THE PRESS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
September 19, 1906[2]

[SIR,]

I trust for the sake of elementary justice you will give publicity to the following facts, and even comment, if you think, as I do, that those facts bring to light a shocking state of affairs in the Colony.

An Indian woman named Punia was travelling with her husband from Durban to Johannesburg on the l4th inst. by the Kaffir mail. Her husband held a permit and registration certificate, which mentioned his wife. The wife was, however, arrested and detained at Volksrust for being without a permit. The poor husband had also, therefore, to stay. Both passed the night in the lock-up. Next morning the wife was tried. She had to stand in the dock like a common felon. The arresting constable gave the following evidence:

> My instructions are to arrest all Indians entering this Colony without permits—no matter whether male or female, minors or adults. There is no age limit. These instructions apply even when women and children accompany their husbands and parents. It is of no account for the registration certificate to mention a wife.

It transpired, in the course of evidence, that, according to the husband's testimony, the wife was with him during and after the war in

[1] This letter was addressed by Gandhiji to the three local dailies of Johannesburg, and reproduced in *Indian Opinion* under the title, "A Shocking Permit Case".

[2] The letter, without the first paragraph, was published in *The Natal Mercury*, 20-9-1906, as a special despatch, dated September 19, from its Johannesburg Correspondent.

the Transvaal. The Magistrate held that he had no option but to order the wife to leave the Colony before 7 p.m. the same day, as she held no permit. The wife, however, under counsel's advice, proceeded to Johannesburg in defiance of the order of expulsion. She was, therefore, arrested at Germiston. The last has not yet been heard of the case.

But the future development has nothing to do with the point I wish to make. It is this: May the Government, in the name of the people of the Transvaal, thus set up a reign of terror for British Indian women and children? It was admitted at the trial that this was not an isolated case. Remember that, according to the authorised and printed permit regulations, wives and children under 16 years accompanying their husbands or parents are not required to take out permits. Are Indian women now to go to the Permit Office, and, after a process of exhausting and exasperating examination, to take out their permits? And what of babes in arms? This is no tale from the *Arabian Nights*. Infants hardly able to crawl have been detained at Volksrust. Do even Messrs Loveday and Company require all this? Do you?

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Star, 19-9-1906

318. LETTER TO DR. E. NUNDY

21-24 COURT CHAMBERS,
JOHANNESBURG,
September 20, 1906

DEAR DR. NUNDY,

My answer to both your questions[1] is yes, if the Court is

[1] The questions posed were:

"(a) In view of the fact that a certain number of Indians are said to have entered this Colony by illegitimate means and that there is a difference of opinion between the representatives of the British Indians and the officials of the Asiatic Department as to the approximate number, will you be prepared to accept the decision of a Commission or a special Court, composed of two persons, one a Magistrate of the Colony and the other a person unconnected with the Government, unbiased and capable of conducting a judicial investigation?

(b) In regard to those Indians who are said to be legitimately entitled to return to this Colony, whether they may be at present resident in India or elsewhere, and who for some reason or other are unable to obtain permission to enter the Transvaal, will you accept the decision of the aforesaid Commission in this ease, such decision to be final except when there is a difference of opinion between the two members forming the Court in which case an appeal should lie to the Supreme Court by either side?"

composed of men of known standing and ability.

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

[DR. EDWARD NUNDY
JACOB CHAMBERS
COURT ROAD
JOHANNESBURG]

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319. LETTER TO "LEADER"[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
September 21, 1906

THE EDITOR
Leader

SIR,

Your own Durban correspondent has sent you what purports to be an explanation of my letter to the Press[2] regarding Punia, who was

[1] This was re-published in *Indian Opinion*, 29-9-1906.

[2] Apropos of Gandhiji's "Letter to the Press", 19-9-1906, *The Natal Mercury*, 21-9-1906, published the following explanation of the Punia case:

"The detention of an Indian woman at Volksrust by the Transvaal authorities, which forms the subject of Mr. M. K. Gandhi's protest in *The Rand Daily Mail*, and published in the Natal papers yesterday, is clearly an incident upon which the wrong construction has been placed. The impression received from Mr. Gandhi's letter is that the intercepting of an Asiatic female, who presents herself at the border without a permit, is unprecedented, and the Transvaal Government's instructions to the police have been characterised as 'War on Women', but this is entirely denied by the immigration authorities in Durban. The Transvaal regulations require, it is explained, that every Asiatic immigrant, whether adult or child, male or female, shall possess a permit before they are allowed to enter the Colony, a man bringing his wife with him, having, in addition, to prove that he is married to the woman. The case is somewhat different in Natal where a woman, accompanying her husband, is not required to produce a separate permit. The man, however, has to furnish convincing evidence as to the woman being actually his wife, and not only has he to bring with him a certificate to that effect, but the matter is subjected to close individual investigation. As a rule, a description of the woman is entered upon the man's registration certificate, so that, as a substitute for her own individual pass, she may be readily identified, but it appears that this is sometimes omitted in the case of Mohammedan women, whose religion obliges them to go about with their faces veiled. It is seldom or never that the local immigration officials insist upon these women's veils being removed, every consideration being shown, wherever possible, to the immigrants' religious prejudices.

"The Transvaal, which has for some time been carrying out a policy of

recently arrested at Volksrust for being without a permit, although shewas in the company of her husband. "The reason," your correspondent says, "of altering the Transvaal regulations was that women are being taken in as wives by Indians already living in the Colony, who were nothing of the kind, but often of indifferent character". I can only use one expression to fit the wicked libel on Indian womanhood, namely, that it is an infamous lie. You should publish the name of the immigration official who is said to have given this precious reason. I challenge him to publish the name of even one such woman. I have no hesitation in saying that I am not aware during the whole course of the very considerable experience I have of the administration of the Peace Preservation Ordinance of a single Indian woman of indifferent character having entered the Colony in the manner suggested by your correspondent. I have asked for official information, which shall be placed at the disposal of your readers.[1] In the meanwhile, is it not somewhat strange that the explanation about Transvaal regulations should have to travel all the way from Durban?

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Transvaal Leader, 22-9-1906

320. THE LATE JUSTICE BUDRUDDIN TYEBJI

India has, of late, been losing the best of her sons. We had only the other day to record the death of late [*sic*] Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee.[2]

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vigorous Asiatic exclusion, makes the entry of coloured immigrants into their territory a matter of much greater difficulty; and this supplies the reason for women being required to carry permits as well as the men. At one time women and children were admitted without passes, owing to the clause in the Ordinance merely specifying `Asiatics', but this has since been amended to include females as well as males. It was found that women were being brought in ostensibly as the wives of Indians already living in the Colony, who were nothing of the kind, but persons of indifferent character, and the Transvaal authorities now insist upon women taking out permits, because, without that precaution, they feel that the men could bring in an indefinite number of women by simply stating they were married to them.

"At any rate, the woman who was stopped at Volksrust was no detached instance of the Transvaal authorities' activity in restricting unauthorised immigration, and, from the information which is obtainable locally, it certainly appears that the comment of one of the Transvaal papers as to the Government making war on women is justified only by the view that may be taken of the Transvaal's new laws."

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Leader",22-9-1906 ; 27--9-1906

[2] *Vide* "The Late Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee", 25-8-1906

We have now to chronicle the death of an equally distinguished patriot in the person of Mr. Justice Budruddin Tyebji. Like the late Mr. Bonnerjee, Mr. Budruddin Tyebji belonged to the Naoroji school.

He was one of the earliest barristers from the Bombay side, having been called to the Bar in 1867. He was the first Indian to be enrolled as an advocate in the High Court of Judicature at Bombay. The late Mr. Budruddin Tyebji, by his industry and ability, soon rose to the top of his profession. He was one of the promoters of the National Congress and was its third President. His knowledge of Urdu was unrivalled, and he shone equally as an orator, whether as an English or as an Urdu speaker. He was held in high estimation as a Judge of the Bombay High Court and his decisions were considered to be always sound and just. His activity as to social reform among his co-religionists was most praiseworthy, and he was an undaunted champion of female education. Not only did he push it among the Mahomedans by his speeches, but he illustrated it in his own family. His own daughters have all received first-class university education.

We tender our respectful condolences to the late Mr. Tyebji's family.

Indian Opinion, 22-9-1906

321. THE TRANSVAAL INDIAN PROTEST

The great Indian meeting[1] held in the old Empire Theatre has already begun to bear fruit. *The Rand Daily Mail* has ridiculed the meeting by setting up a false comparison between the Bengal partition agitation and the movement against the Draft Ordinance of the Transvaal, which culminated in the great demonstration recently held in Johannesburg. The ridicule shows that the importance of the meeting was felt. *The Star* has gone into hysterics over the meeting. It incites South Africans to inaugurate an agitation for physical expulsion of the Indians from the Transvaal by way of answer to the British Indian resolve to offer passive resistance to the Ordinance.

Neither *The Daily Mail* nor *The Star* has taken the trouble to study or understand the Ordinance. To them it is a harmless process of registration. If the Ordinance had been given its proper title, namely, an 'ordinance for the identification of suspects or criminals', instead of being misdescribed as a registration ordinance, perhaps our contemporaries would have realized its horror. It is not necessary, as *The Daily Mail* puts it, to impute to the Government any studied desire

[1] *Vide* "The Mass Meeting", 11-9-1906

to subject Indians to unnecessary indignity. The Ordinance speaks for itself. Let it be understood that Indians already hold registration certificates giving particulars, including thumb-prints, in order to identify the holders with the certificates. The new Ordinance now provides for a process of identification to be hereafter devised by regulations subject to change from time to time.

The Star, which seems to enjoy official confidence, informs us that the new system of identification will be drastic enough to ensure detection of abuse or misuse of certificates. Even without the information given by *The Star,* it is only reasonable to suppose that the new system must be stricter than the present one, as Mr. Duncan, with a self-assurance that is astounding, has declared that the present system is inadequate. We have reason to believe that Mr. Duncan, up to the eve of the first reading of the Ordinance, was not aware of the system in vogue. This, however, is by the way, and quite in keeping with the general ignorance and indifference displayed about Indian matters in the Transvaal.

The first registration under the British regime was a voluntary act by the Indian community. This self-effacing courtesy has been misinterpreted by the Government as[1] a docility of nature that would stand any strain and any indignity. If *The Star* thinks that the Indian is born to suffer any ignominy, a meeting such as the one that has agitated our contemporary, was necessary, if only to disabuse it of the idea.

Neither the ridicule of *The Daily Mail* nor the wild threats of *The Star* need turn the Transvaal Indians from their solemnundertaking.Threats were only to be expected and so was ridicule. We shall no doubt have much more of both before the struggle is ended. The information we continue to receive from different centres in the Transvaal goes to show that the determination to carry out the historic resolution is as keen as ever. May God help our suffering countrymen in their trial.

Indian Opinion, 22-9-1906

322. TRANSVAAL PERMIT ORDINANCE

In another place, we print the full text[2] of the judgment of the Supreme Court in the case of *Rex v. Bhabha.* It will be remembered that, some time ago, Mr. E. M. Bhyat entered the Transvaal on the

[1] The original has " . . . misinterpreted by the Government into. . .".

[2] Not reproduced here

strength of possession by him of an old Dutch registration certificate. The Magistrate at Volksrust decided that such a certificate was a formal authorisation to reside in the Transvaal, in terms of the Peace Preservation Ordinance. This case was brought in review at the instance of the Attorney-General, but the Supreme Court dismissed the application for review, and the point raised in Mr. Bhyat's case remained undecided.[1]

The same point was brought before the Supreme Court in the case we have mentioned above, and this time there was no difficulty in getting a judicial decision from the highest tribunal of justice in the Transvaal. The decision has gone against the British Indian contention, nor are we surprised at it, but the Supreme Court has decided the main point raised in this case in favour of the appellant, namely, that an expulsion order granted by a Magistrate at the investigation of an application for exemption from having to hold a permit does not prevent the Magistrate from reconsidering his decision on further evidence being brought before him. However, as the Court held that the Magistrate's judgment in Mr. Bhabha's case was right though based on wrong premises, the result was that the sentence of civil imprisonment passed by the Magistrate was reluctantly confirmed by the Bench, though the Supreme Court expressed a great deal of sympathy with the appellant. The Chief Justice suggested that the Crown should remit the sentence, as the case was in the nature of a test case, and both the Chief Justice and Justice Mason thought that Mr. Bhabha, being in possession of the old Dutch certificate, should have a permit issued to him. The Lieutenant-Governor has exercised the prerogative of mercy and remitted the sentence passed on Mr. Bhabha, and it is highly probable that Mr. Bhabha will be allowed to remain undisturbed in the Transvaal. So far, therefore, as the individual is concerned, at last justice will have been done.

But this case has important bearings on the Indian position. Itshews that there is something very seriously wrong with the administration of the Peace Preservation Ordinance. We have the solemn word of Lord Selborne, given to the British Indian deputation at Middelburg, that all pre-war Indian residents of the Transvaal shall be allowed to enter the country.[2] We have the assurance of the Colonial Secretary that such residents have a right to enter the country, and yet, we find that Mr. Bhabha had a very great deal of

[1] *Vide* "Transvaal Permits", 28-7-1906

[2] Lord Selborne gave this assurance when an address was presented to him at Middelburg on September 4; *vide Indian Opinion,* 8-9-1906.

difficulty about entering the Transvaal. There are many such cases in which, in spite of proof of registration certificates, men are still without their permits. May we not then hope that Lord Selborne's assurance will be translated into practice, and such men who have waited long enough at the coast will be permitted to re-enter the Transvaal?

Indian Opinion, 22-9-1906

323. DIFFICULTIES OF INDIAN WOMEN IN THE TRANSVAAL

The permit difficulties of women continue unabated in the Transvaal. We give details of one such case in our English columns. Mangare and his wife, Punia, were both travelling to the Transvaal on September 14. The Police Inspector at Volksrust forced the wife to detrain as she did not have a separate permit. Mangare produced his own permit and registration certificate. And though the wife's name was also mentioned in the register, she was not allowed to proceed. So the husband and the wife both got off the train and had to stay in the lock-up. When the case was heard on the 15th, the Police Officer deposed that his orders were to arrest permitless women and children whether or not they were accompanied by their husbands or parents and whatever the age of the children. The evidence also revealed that the wife was in the Transvaal on May 31, 1902. Nevertheless, on the ground that the woman did not come forward to give evidence, the Magistrate ordered her to leave the Colony before seven o'clock that very evening. Thus are wives separated from husbands and children from parents under this Government. It is necessary for us to take effective measures in this matter. We hope this case will, if necessary, be taken to the Supreme Court. We believe that it is a thousand times better for men to suffer imprisonment than to submit to such a law.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-9-1906

324. JOHANNESBURG LETTER[1]

THE MASS MEETING IN THE TRANSVAAL

The Rand Daily Mail says that no meeting has ever taken place in the Transvaal like the one held by the Indians in the Empire Theatre. The Theatre was packed, at least three thousand persons attending. Many people could not get in for want of room. The shopkeepers and hawkers had all closed business at ten in the morning. Though the Theatre gates were due to be opened at two, people began collecting from eleven onwards and the Theatre had to be opened at twelve. By 1.30 there was no room for anyone to enter the spacious Theatre. Though such a large number of persons had assembled, there was no untoward incident, and quiet prevailed everywhere. The people sat or stood patiently, waiting for the proceedings to start. Such a meeting and such enthusiasm have never before been seen among Indians.

Though all this shows the extent of oppression to which Indians are subjected, it must be admitted that much of the credit for holding such a meeting goes to the Hamidiya Islamic Society. The Society's Hall was thrown open to all, Hindus and Muslims alike. For a week past, meetings had been held there during which all the leading Indians held consultations. Very often, the meetings continued till midnight. Younger associations in South Africa would do well to follow the example of the Hamidiya Society.

The meeting was attended by representatives from a number of places. Telegrams or letters expressing sympathy and agreement with the aims of the meeting were received from Middelburg, Standerton, Klerksdorp and other places. Both the Colonial Secretary and Mr. Chamney were invited. Mr. Chamney attended and sat to the right of the President. In addition, white gentlemen like Mr. Lichtenstein, a lawyer from Pretoria, Mr. Israelstram, Mr. Littmann Landsberg and Mr. Stuart Campbell's manager were present. Reporters from all the three newspapers also came.

The President, Mr. Abdul Gani, began his speech exactly at three o'clock. Everyone felt that Mr. Abdul Gani was at his best. His speech in excellent Hindustani was brief and eloquent. His narration of the facts was quite moderate, yet forceful. His voice was loud and so audible everywhere. His speech was received with acclamation. When he spoke of gaol-going, the audience shouted in one voice,

[1] This despatch was entitled "A Special Report".

"We shall go to gaol, but will not register ourselves again."

The English version of Mr. Gani's speech was read out by Dr. Godfrey.

MR. NANALAL SHAH

The task of moving the First Resolution was entrusted to Mr. Nanalal Valji Shah, who spoke in English. We summarize his speech below:

> We have met today for very serious business. Mr. Duncan has said that the new law is necessary, because the registers[1] already issued are such as can be sold, and with these, others who do not have the right come in. Now let us take the example of a bank. Suppose a bank finds that some forged notes bearing its name have passed into currency, will it cancel all the notes? Mr. Duncan tells us that because our registers are faked, he will give fresh ones in exchange. What a law this is! But I assert that the registers are not counterfeit.

Producing his own register Mr. Shah declared, "This register contains my name, my wife's name, my caste, my profession, my height, my age," and slamming the paper on the table, he added:

> It bears even my thumb-impression. Is all this not enough? How can anyone else use this register? Does the Government want now to brand us on our foreheads? I will never return my register. Neither will I be registered again. I prefer going to gaol, and I will go there. (Applause.)

Mr. C. K. T. Naidoo seconded Mr. Shah and explained the matter to the Tamil-speaking people in their language.

MR. ABDUL RAHMAN

Mr. Abdul Rahman rose to move[2] the Second Resolution. In his brief speech he said that we suffered greater oppression under the British regime than under the Boers. As Sir Henry Cotton had put it, while the Boer Government flogged us, the British Government was scourging us with scorpion stings.[3]

DR. GODFREY

Supporting Mr. Abdul Rahman, Dr. Godfrey said:

> The tall promises made to us by Lord Milner, Lord Roberts and

[1] In the Gujarati, Gandhiji has used "register" for "registration certificates".

[2] The original has "to second".

[3] At the twentieth session of the Indian National Congress held at Bombay in 1904, he said, "In dealing with Indian Colonists their [the British rulers'] little finger has been thicker than Mr. Kruger's loins, and where he had chastised with whips, they have chastised with scorpions."

Mr. Chamberlain have proved worthless. ('Shame!')

The Doctor produced a photograph of the late Queen-Empress that had been distributed by the Indian community among its schoolboys in Durban,[1] and said:

> We worship this Queen, whose Proclamation has been set at naught by the Transvaal Government. Whereas under the Union Jack we should get equal rights, liberty and justice, we have instead slavery, injustice and denial of our rights. I do not at all agree that there has been an influx of Indians without permits or with false ones. I defy Mr. Loveday and his company to contradict me if they have the courage. We are not going to submit to such oppression We shall go to gaol rather than do so. Let no one imagine that we shall run away in fear. If the bill is passed, we will storm the courts and say, 'Arrest us'. (Applause.)

Mr. Getta of Potchefstroom spoke in Gujarati and supported the Second Resolution.

MR. ESSOP MIAN

The task of moving the Third Resolution fell to Mr. Essop Mian, who said:

> British rule in the Transvaal is worse than the regime in Russia. I myself went to Pretoria to wait on Mr. Duncan, who made many promises, but has fulfilled none of them and has betrayed us. It is necessary for us to send a deputation to England. We shall raise an outcry there, but if the Imperial Government does not listen to us, we shall go to gaol. I have been in the Transvaal for nineteen years, but never before have I seen such oppression as during the last three years.

MR. E. S. COOVADIA

Seconding this Resolution, Mr. Ebrahim Salejee Coovadia made the following speech:

> The chairman and others have already spoken on the Draft Asiatic Ordinance, so that little remains for me to say about it. This much is certain: wherever the subjects of a State are free from tyranny, they are happy and both the rulers and the ruled are relaxed. The late Boer Government, at the instigation of these same British friends, enacted oppressive laws before the war; being rather kindly disposed towards us, that Government did not, however, enforce them. Thanks to their kindness, we were quite happy until the war with the British broke out. Now that our [British] Government had won control of the Colony, we

[1] *Vide* "To Heads of Indian Schools", 19-3-1901 and illustration facing "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 9-2-1906

were hoping that we would gain all the rights, since the Government had also given us assurances to that effect, but unfortunately, what we see today is quite the opposite, and they are enacting insufferable laws against us. It is, of course, our duty to submit to all the reasonable laws that the Government may make in the public interest. But such is not the case. Since the present Government assumed power in the Colony, they have placed, upon us in particular, one severe restriction after another. All these we have suffered so far, but now we have had our fill. Just as a river in spate can take in no more and overflows its banks, so also can we no longer stomach oppressive laws. We should therefore take strong measures against the Draft Ordinance, though we are told that the law is designed for our benefit as we are British subjects. To this I would only answer, 'By these laws, you are not making of us British *raiyat,* but *maiyat*[1].' I therefore support the resolution moved by Mr. Essop Mian to send a deputation as soon as possible to England and to put up a stiff resistance.

Mr. A. E. Wania of Krugersdorp supported the resolution, and Mr. Manilal Desai of Pretoria spoke in favour of it.

THE GAOL RESOLUTION

Even as Mr. Hajee Habib rose to speak, the audience greeted him with cheers. His speech was so caustic and impassioned that even those who did not know Gujarati said they could follow its purport. Now and then, Mr. Hajee Habib used English anecdotes. The audience was greatly roused by his speech of which the following is a summary:

The Fourth Resolution is the most important of all. Everything depends upon it. There is no disgrace in going to gaol; rather it is an honour. Only a few people knew of Mr. Tilak before he went to gaol; today the whole world knows him. We are not going to get justice at the hands of the British Government. It kills us with sweet words; we should not be deceived. They offer us sympathy, but we ask for justice, not sympathy. The British are ever willing to advise others. They are always ready to appease the Christian peoples. Take the case of Turkey. The British do not hesitate to bully Turkey, and that not in order to secure the interests of their own subjects. Again in this country, the doors are open to the whites and Christians, even if they be foreign nationals. In their view, the whites are descended from Heaven and we, they think, have come from the other place. This Bill is most objectionable. If it is passed, I solemnly declare that I will never get myself registered again and will be the first to go to gaol. (Applause.) I recommend the same course to you all. Are you all

[1] "Not subjects but corpses"

prepared to take the oath ? (The Assembly stood up to a man and said, 'Yes, we will go to gaol!') Only by so doing shall we succeed. We tried this method in the days of the Boer Government also. Some 40 of our men were once arrested for trading without licences. I advised them to go to gaol and not to seek release on bail. Accordingly, they all remained there without offering bail. I immediately approached the British Agent, who approved of our action and ultimately secured justice for us. Now that a British Government is in power, the time has come for us to go to gaol, and go we will.

As he repeated the last phrase thrice, the meeting greeted his resolve with applause.

MR. HAJEE OJER ALLY

When Mr. Hajee Ojer Ally stood up to second the Fourth Resolution, the whole Theatre resounded with prolonged cheers which took some time to subside. Then Mr. Ally made a thundering speech in English, which is summarised below:

> The resolution I stand here to second is not an ordinary one, and it enjoins a great responsibility on us. I am the father of eleven children, but I am prepared to take up the responsibility. Like Mr. Hajee Habib, I, too, shall refuse to register myself and prefer to go to gaol and deem it an honour. The Government have betrayed us. In answer to our petition, they said that the matter was under consideration and that they would give us a definite reply. They said the same thing to the deputation. Despite this, two days later, they brought the Bill before the Legislative Council, and within four days, had it passed. ('Shame!') The Bill originally envisaged registration of women also. But, owing to the efforts of the Hamidiya Society, that provision was dropped.

Producing a Union Jack, he went on:

Since my childhood, I have been told that, under this Union Jack, I shall always find protection. That is exactly what we now ask for. On the occasion of the Delhi Durbar, His Majesty King-Emperor Edward declared that he would give us our rights and preserve our status just as Her Majesty Queen Victoria had done. Does not that promise extend to the Transvaal also? We, the Indians resident here, demand that we be allowed to live in peace and happiness. In fact, we should have more rights than the non-British whites. They complain, because a few of us might have entered the Colony without permits. I make bold to say that, if only the Government would send three constables with me, I shall forthwith have a thousand permitless whites arrested. For the last 25 years, I have been in South Africa. In the Cape I exercised the right to vote and other rights as well. Nowhere except here in the Transvaal have I seen such oppression of our people. And the Transvaal is still a Crown Colony. When itwas under the Boers, the British whites came to me for my signature to their

petition. Now they are against us. We will not take up rifles as they did but like them[1] we shall go to gaol. (Applause.)

Mr. Moonlight Mudaliar then supported the Resolution in a Tamil speech.

Seconding the Resolution, Dr. Godfrey said:

Just as India is the crown of the British Empire, so shall we, by going to Johannesburg gaol, become its most cherished possession. We won't wait for the police to come and arrest us.

Mr. Aswat, who spoke in support, appealed to those present to write and tell their people at home that they were all getting ready to go to gaol.

Mr. A. E. Chhotabhai of Krugersdorp supported the Resolution in a Gujarati speech, saying that the people of the town were prepared to go to gaol rather than register themselves.

Mr. Omarji Saheb also supported the Resolution.

Mr. Tar Mahomed Tayob of Pietersburg declared that the people there were ready to go to gaol but would not register themselves.

Mr. Imam Abdul Kadir also supported the Resolution.

In supporting the Resolution, Jemadar Nawabkhan said that he had served the Government in the War. He would now prefer gaol to the humiliation of registration.

Mr. Gandhi said that the responsibility for advising them to go to gaol was his. The step was grave, but unavoidable. In doing so, they did not hold out a threat, but showed that the time for action—over and above making speeches and submitting petitions—had arrived. When people passed a resolution, it was their duty to adhere to it. And if they did that, success was bound to be theirs.

Thereafter, the whole assembly stood up and passed, amid acclamation, the resolution about going to gaol.

Mr. Bhikubhai D. Malia moved the Fifth Resolution, and made a brief speech. Mr. Jusab Haji Vali of Pietersburg seconded it.

The business of the meeting was over at 5.30 p.m. Mr. Chamney then rose with the Chairman's permission and expressed his thanks for having been invited to the meeting.

Mr. Laishansai proposed a vote of thanks to the Chair, adding that he had never seen such a meeting before and hoped that the Liberal Ministry [in England] would do them justice. Mr. Israelstram,

[1] The contrast appears to be between the British in South Africa who fought the Boers and Britons like Hampden and Bunyan who went to gaol.

who seconded the vote, expressed sympathy for the Indian cause and appealed to the audience to continue the struggle.

The meeting dispersed at five minutes to six. Three cheers were called for King-Emperor Edward, and *God Save The King* was sung.

For Indians, this meeting will for ever remain memorable.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-9-1906

325. LETTER TO "LEADER"

[JOHANNESBURG]

September 29, 1906

[THE EDITOR

LEADER

SIR,]

I have promised, in my letter dated the 21st instant[1] regarding the treatment of the Indian woman, Punia, to let you have any official reply I might receive. The following is the text of a telegram I addressed to the Registrar of Asiatics:

> *Leader* publishes statement that reason for requiring women take out separate permits is that women are taken in as wives by Indians in Colony though they were not wives but were often of indifferent character. Will you please wire whether your office believes in above charge. I wish to publish your reply.

The Registrar has returned the following reply:

> With reference your telegram 21st inst., no such statement as that alluded to in your message was made by any officer in the service of this department.

In justice to the community that has been so cruelly libelled by your correspondent at Durban, I trust that you will publish the name of the official who is supposed to have given the information referred to by your correspondent, or ask him to withdraw the statement made

[1] *Vide* "Letter to *Leader*", 21-9-1906

by him.[1]

Yours etc.,

M. K.. GANDHI]

Indian Opinion, 29-9-1906

326. LETTER TO IMMIGRATION RESTRICTION OFFICER

[JOHANNESBURG,]
September 22, 1906

TO
THE PRINCIPAL IMMIGRATION RESTRICTION OFFICER
DURBAN

[SIR,]

I enclose herewith cutting from the *Transvaal Leader* referring to certain regulations that have been framed in connection with the granting of permits to Asiatics in the Transvaal.

I shall be obliged if you will kindly let me know whether any

[1] In response to Gandhiji's letter, *Transvaal Leader*, 9-10-1906, published the following apology:

"With reference to the statements published some days back concerning the grant of permits to British Indian subjects to enter the Transvaal Colony, and the allegation that women who were styled wives were 'frequently of indifferent character', *The Natal Mercury* of Monday last has the following: 'Mr. M. K. Gandhi has written to us from Johannesburg concerning an article which appeared in our issue of the 21st ult., in which the detention of an Indian woman, named Punia, at Volksrut, for being without a permit, was dealt with. Mr. Gandhi is displeased with certain contents of the article, which he views as casting an unjustified aspersion upon Indian women in the Transvaal. We applied to what quarters were available in Durban for information upon the incident, but it will be obvious that here in Natal the same facilities—such as those open to Mr. Gandhi, for instance—for obtaining full intelligence as to the Transvaal affairs do not exist as in Johannesburg, where Mr. Gandhi resides, and any unfounded or exaggerated statement is mainly attributable to that cause. It is emphatically denied by Mr. Gandhi that Indians domiciled in the Transvaal are seeking to gain admittance to the Transvaal of women of indifferent character, passing them off as their wives, and to prove this he has made enquiries in official and other quarters, and denial was the result. The statement must, therefore, be withdrawn as being one that is not in accordance with ascertained facts. It is well that the public should know this, and further, that Mr. Gandhi assures us that he does not know of a single such case.'

"Similar statements were published in this journal upon the authority of our Durban Correspondent, and conceivably derived from the same source, and it is therefore only fair that equal publicity should be given to the retraction."

[2] This was reproduced in Indian Opinion, 13-10-1906.

official in your department is responsible for the reason that is alleged to have been given to the Durban correspondent of the *Leader* by an immigration official, namely, that Indians in the Transvaal have taken in, as their wives, Indian women of indifferent character.

I may state that I addressed a similar enquiry to the Registrar of Asiatics at Pretoria and he has repudiated the statement.[1]

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI]

Indian Opinion, 6-10-1906

327. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

September 25, 1906

For the Indian community in the Transvaal the last week was full of restlessness, like that of a delirious patient tossing from side to side. Just when the deputation was to leave and all preparations had been finally made, came the bomb-shell—a letter from Lord Selborne which, as is now known, was full of ambiguities. It caused a split. Everybody took it that the Bill for re-registration had become law. It was therefore decided that the deputation should not sail. This was the state of affairs till Tuesday noon. In the afternoon on that day, a telephone message was received from the High Commissioner saying that Lord Elgin's approval did not mean that formal sanction had been given to the law. This again led to a new course of action. Thesame night some Indians met together, called on Mr. Haji Ojer Ally, obtained his consent, and considered recommending that the Indian community send him alone as a one-man deputation. On Wednesday that idea was put into execution; but it was shown last week to every Indian how and when man is rendered powerless. Messrs Gregorowski and Lichtenstein were of the emphatic opinion that it was absolutely essential to include Mr. Gandhi in the deputation, and that the deputation should certainly be sent. The Indian community in Pretoria, on the other hand, emphasized the need of Mr. Gandhi remaining in the Transvaal, lest through fear or temptation people should waver and take out new registration certificates. Strongly-worded telegrams were received from Natal to say that it was quite necessary to send the deputation as decided earlier. A meeting was therefore held on Friday, and it was unanimously decided that both Mr. Ally and Mr. Gandhi should go. The consensus of opinion was that Mr. Adbul Gani should also go,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to *Leader*", 22-9-1906

but the idea had to be reluctantly given up as there were strong reasons why he could not go. Before agreeing to go, Mr. Gandhi got the leading men to give a written undertaking that, notwithstanding difficulties that might arise, they would adhere to the Fourth Resolution. This document will be published next week.

ANOTHER LETTER FROM LORD SELBORNE

About the time this decision was taken, another letter was received from Lord Selborne. Clarifying the situation further, he said that the new Ordinance would be despatched that week to England, and that the Royal assent, if given at all, would naturally be after it had reached there. Under the circumstances, there was no cause for apprehension, It is likely that the Royal assent will not be given and the Bill cannot become law before the deputation returns.

DEPUTATION EXPENSES

The Committee has sanctioned up to £900 towards the expenses of the deputation of which £300 have been sanctioned for Mr. Ally for his domestic and other expenses. Mr. Ally has indicated that he will, if necessary, spend a portion of this sum on public work in England. The remaining £600 will be spent on the deputation, and a detailed statement of expenses will be submitted to the Committee.

MEMBERS OF THE DEPUTATION

Of one of the members of the deputation, Mr. Gandhi, it is needless to write here. The other, Mr. Haji Ojer Ally was born in l853 in Mauritius, where he had his education. He started work in 1868 and took up the job of a printer in the office of the *Commercial Gazette.* In 1873 he got employed as a clerk in a wharf, and joined the firm of Messrs Charles Jacob and Son as a shipping clerk in 1876. He then went on a pilgrimage to Mecca and became a Haji. In 1884 he landedat Cape Town and set up business as a manufacturer of aerated water. He began doing public work in 1885. The Government proposed to remove the Malay cemetery to a place far away from town. The Malays opposed the move and a disturbance was feared. Mr. Ally then intervened. A settlement was effected and a nearer site fixed for the cemetery. In Cape Town, Mr. Ally was a voter both for Parliament and the Municipality and always took a prominent part in the elections. In 1892 he went to Kimberley and other places, where he was elected Chairman of the Coloured Peoples' Organization. He took a leading part in the movement against the Franchise Law Amendment Act of the Cape, when a petition signed by 22,000 Coloured people was sent to London. After 1892 Mr. Ally went to Johannesburg and settled there. Mr. Ally interviewed the British Agent

and other public men in the Transvaal in connection with the condition of British Indians there. He is the founder of the Hamidiya Islamic Society and is at present its President. The Society is doing excellent work. As is well known, it has a large membership and its work is being carried on with great enthusiasm. Mr. Ally has a large family; he is the father of eleven children whom he has been giving a good education.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 6-10-1906

328. LETTER TO D. C. MALCOLM

JOHANNESBURG,
September 26, 1906

TO
D. C. MALCOLM, ESQ.
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
JOHANNESBURG

DEAR SIR,

With reference to your letter of the 24th instant addressed to the Association, will you be good enough to let me know whether it means that Royal assent has been given by cable to the Asiatic Ordinance?

I remain,
Yours faithfully,
ABDOOL GANIE
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 6- 10-1906

[1] *Vide* also "Haji Ojeer Ally",6-10-1906

329. LETTER TO DR. E. NUNDY[1]

21-24 COURT CHAMBERS,
JOHANNESBURG ,
September 26, 1906

[DR. EDWARD NUNDY
JACOB CHAMBERS
COURT ROAD
JOHANNESBURG]

DEAR DR. NUNDY,

I hold that a Colony has a perfect right to regulate immigration even as to British subjects, but not so as to make class distinctions.

You may make what use you like of this communication.

Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

Pretoria Archives : L. G. File No. 93: Asiatics

330. A PLEDGE[2]

September 27, 1906

We, the undersigned, propose that Mr. Abdul Gani or, in his place, Mr. Essop Mian or Mr. Ahmed Coovadia and Mr. Haji Ojeer Ally and Mr. Gandhi should be on the deputation going to England. We give the assurance that we shall do our utmost to see that these men are not prevented from obtaining new registration and we pledge our word that whatever the difficulties, we ourselves will definitely not

[1] This was in reply to Dr. Nundy's letter which read: "Would you mind putting in writing your views as to whether a country or Colony has the right to restrict by legislation the entrance into its territory of a particular race or class of people, even though the would-be immigrants are subjects of the same Crown?

"If as you stated to me, your views on this subject have been misunderstood, it would be desirable to correct such a misapprehension, and I shall be glad if, when writing, you would give me the permission to make use of your reply, if I consider it necessary."

[2] This was signed by 29 persons. Presumably this was the "individual pledge from leading Indians" mentioned in *Satyagraha in South Africa; vide"*Satyagraha in South Africa", 26-4-1928

The deputation comprising Gandhiji and Haji Ojeer Ally left for London on October 1 "to submit to the Imperial authorities the Indian view of the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance"; *vide"*Telegram to Transvaal Governor", 30-9-1906

obtain re-registration. But this is on condition that the deputation, or at least Mr. Gandhi, should reach the Transvaal before the first of January.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 4376

331. LETTER TO "LEADER"

[JOHANNESBURG ,]
September 27, 1906

[EDITOR
Leader
SIR,]

To complete the chain of enquiry regarding the libel on Indian womanhood published in your paper[1], I hope you will insert the following reply received by me from the Principal Immigration Restriction Officer at Durban:

> As the reasons that guided the Transvaal Government in the framing of the regulations touching Immigration are unknown here, it is impossible that any expression of them can have emanated from this Department.

Yours etc.,

M. K. GANDHI]

Indian Opinion, 6-10-1906

332. LETTER TO DR. E. NUNDY[2]

21-24 COURT CHAMBERS,
JOHANNESBURG S,
September 27, 1906

[DR. EDWARD NUNDY
JACOB CHAMBERS
COURT ROAD
JOHANNESBURG]

DEAR DR. NUNDY,

By class distinction I mean that there should be no legislation applying to Asiatics, Coloured people or Indians as such.

All legislation ought to be, [as] laid down by Chamberlain, of a

[1] *Vide* "Letter to *Leader*", 21-11-1906

[2] This was in response to Dr. Nundy's query as to what Gandhiji meant by "class distinction". *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Nundy", 26-9-1906

general character.

Yours truly,

(Signed) H. M. GANDHI[1]

FOR M. K. GANDHI

Pretoria Archives: L. G. File No. 93: Asiatics

333. ON TRIAL

We are enabled to publish copies of communications from Lord Selborne addressed to the British Indian Association, in connection with the new Asiatic Ordinance of the Transvaal. One of them states that Lord Elgin has already approved of the Ordinance, and that His Excellency does not consider that any useful purpose is likely to be served by sending the proposed deputation to England.

We offer our sincere congratulations to the British Indians in the Transvaal on the decision of Lord Elgin. The decision reflects no credit on a liberal Secretary of State for the Colonies, especially when one realizes that the Secretary of State for the Colonies has, at one time, occupied the Viceregal throne in India. But Lord Selborne has told us that out of evil very often cometh good, and if the British Indian community is true to itself, good will most assuredly result from the momentous decision of Lord Elgin. His Excellency has clothed with life the historic fourth resolution[2] of the great meeting, held in the now extinct Empire Theatre in Johannesburg. That resolution will be the touchstone by which the national and self-respecting spirit of Indians in the Transvaal is to be tested. LordElgin, evidently under the inspiration of Lord Selborne, has accepted the Indian challenge. On one side has now to be ranged brute force; on the other, simple passive resistance. British Indians have a just cause; it will become infinitely juster and more sanctified by their putting into force the fourth resolution and declining, in spite of Lord Elgin's approval of the Ordinance, to submit to its galling conditions, and to the "serious and wanton injustice" which the Ordinance contemplates. We have no hesitation in very respectfully repeating the last expression, although Lord Selborne, in one of his letters, does not agree that the Ordinance inflicts any such injustice. We must accept His Excellency's assurance that the Ordinance is not in conflict with the views expressed by His Excellency from time to time. He alone knew with what mental reservations he uttered the lofty

[1] Gandhiji's eldest son

[2] *Vide* "The Mass Meeting", 11-9-1906

sentiments before the Zionist meeting, and spoke of the trusteeship on the eve of the Boer war.

Similarly, we beg leave to take exception to His Excellency's judgement as to the Ordinance; it is those who have to submit to it that are at all capable of knowing whether it is just or otherwise. Lord Selborne's reply to the British Indian protest bristles with points which can be argued from a British Indian standpoint, but enough of argument has already been devoted to the controversy. It is now time, not for argument, but for action.

The first of January will be, for millions of His Majesty's subjects, a day of gladsome prospect. To British Indians in the Transvaal likewise, it will be a similar day, though not in the same sense. They must marshal their forces and conserve their energy. They will need to be ready to face the inevitable on that eventful day. The community is now on its trial. Let us hope it will emerge scatheless. By its action will be judged Indian character, if not throughout the world, certainly in South Africa. In having passed the historic resolution, the meeting has undertaken a trust which British Indians in the Transvaal must discharge, come what may.

Indian Opinion, 29-9-1906

334. THE PUNIA CASE

Our contemporary, *The Rand Daily Mail*, by its spirited advocacy of the unfortunate British Indian woman, Punia, has given thematter a prominence which is thoroughly deserved by the circumstancesof the case.[1] Indeed, it would appear that Mr. Gandhi

[1] *The Rand Daily Mail*, while publishing the "Letter to the Press", 19-11-1906 wrote: "The harshness complained of touches the British Indian community in a particularly tender spot. No nation is more careful of the women of its race than the mass of people of India. No one in the Transvaal desires to create friction and make an admittedly difficult problem still more difficult by stirring up bad feeling over such a delicate matter. We feel that the white people will demand an investigation and an explanation of the Punia affair as strongly as Mr. Gandhi. There is a fixed determination to prevent an influx of Aiatics, but the government has received no mandate from the people to make war on women."

has understated the gravity of the situation, in that he omitted to mention what is, perhaps, the most unpleasant feature of an unfortunate affair, namely, that the woman was made to give her ten finger-prints at the Charge Office in Volksrust, and was obliged to do so again at Germiston. The facts being undisputed, a discreditable attempt has been made to justify the regulations referred to by Constable McGregor who arrested the woman, and we are grieved to find that *The Natal Mercury* has lent itself, we have no doubt unconsciously, to such an attempt. The *Transvaal Leader* had the substance of the paragraph in *The Natal Mercury* telegraphed to it, to which Mr. Gandhi has sent a reply[1] repudiating the vile charge made against Indian women, and characterising it as an infamous lie. He then wired to the Registrar of Asiatics, who has promptly replied to the effect that no such statement as published in the papers had been made by any official connected with his department. *The Natal Mercury,* which is always fair, will, we hope, in this case, publish the name of the official who made the statement attributed to him or withdraw the libel.

If the working of the Permit Ordinance was as well known to the public generally as it is to us, they would have realised the full significance of the Punia case, and the cruel wrong that has been inflicted not only on the woman in question, but on the whole of the Indian community. The evidence given by the constable in this painful case was, we have reason to believe, the first authoritative pronouncement regarding British Indian women having to take out permits, even when they may be in the company of their husbands. The husband of Punia stated emphatically that he knew nothing about a permit being required for his wife, but we will assume that the husband was aware that a separate permit was necessary. It is still a legitimate question why Indian women should require any permits at all. The printed instructions issued by the Chief Secretary for Permits lay down that wives of husbands holding permits are not required to take [out] permits apart from their husbands, nor are children under sixteen years apart from their parents. If such be the case, why should separate instructions be issued for Indian wives, seeing that they, too, are governed by the same Permit Ordinance ?

Even if definite instructions were to be issued in writing regarding Indian women, we consider that it would be the paramount duty of British Indians to refrain from taking out any such permits for Indian women, and to protect them from the insult and degradation that attend the taking out of these permits. Are Indian women to make

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Leader", 22-11-1906

separate applications, put down their thumb-impressions, go half-a-dozen times to Justices of the Peace in order to make declarations required by the Asiatic Office, and to make affidavits that they are the wives of their husbands— perchance, also, to prove that they are refugees, for is it not the rule of the Asiatic Office not togrant permits to any but British Indian refugees? Suppose, further, that the application of a wife is delayed or refused, is the husband, who is holder of a legitimate permit, to remain out of the Colony until after the application of his wife is granted, or, to remain out of the Colony entirely, in the event of a refusal of the application on behalf of the wife ? There never has been any reproach against Indian womanhood in South Africa except now, for the first time, in the sinful imagination of an anonymous immigration official. But even if a few miserable specimens of Indian humanity were to introduce into the Colony women of indifferent character, will that be any justification for submitting wives of hundreds of honest Indian settlers in Johannesburg to the painful processes required to be undergone by the Permit Office ? If the authorities persist in the instructions said to have been issued, we have no hesitation in saying that they will be playing with fire, and they may give rise to a state of things for which they, and other South Africans, may have reason to be extremely sorry.

We can emphatically re-echo the sentiments of the leader-writer of *The Rand Daily Mail* that harshness of the kind that poor Punia had to undergo touches British Indian sentiment on its tenderest part. We think that our contemporary has rendered a public service in drawing pointed attention to this case. We hope that the authorities will issue definite instructions countermanding the orders referred to by Constable McGregor, and give those instructions as wide a publicity as possible.

Indian Opinion, 29-9-1906

335. TRANSVAAL PERMIT ORDINANCE

On the 15th inst., one Hafeji Moosa and his son, Mahomed Hafeji Moosa, were tried before the Magistrate at Volksrust under the Peace Preservation Ordinance; the father for having abetted his son (who was acknowledged to be under eleven years) in entering the Transvaal under a permit obtained by improper means, and the son with the offence of having entered the Colony on a permit obtained by improper means. Evidence was given to the effect that the father and son travelled together on the 5th July and passed through Volksrust. They were examined there. The father produced his permit

and the son is alleged to have produced a permit issued in the name of one Bhaima. The inspecting constable was unable to say that the boy produced the permit in question. The boy's thumb-imprints were taken, sent to Pretoria, and as they did not tally with the thumb-imprints on the counterfoil of the permit issued to Bhaima, both the father and son were arrested at Potchefstroom. It further came out, in the evidence of Mr. Cody, Chief Clerk in the office of the Registrar of Asiatics, that the instructions from the Permit Office were to arrest all British Indians, whether male or female, of whatever age, in the case of wives, whether [or not] they were in the company of their husbands, and in the case of children, whether [or not] they were in the company of their parents, unless they could produce separate permits. Both the father and son denied that the son had entered on the permit issued to Bhaima. The Magistrate discharged the father, but found the son guilty, and sentenced him to pay a fine of £50 or suffer imprisonment without hard labour for three months. Appeal has been noted. The case is considered to be of considerable importance, in that a boy of tender years, travelling with his father, has been sentenced so heavily, in spite of the fact that Magistrates are guided in the punishment of juvenile offenders by special powers given to them to administer cuts.

Indian Opinion, 29-9-1906

336. INDIANS IN DELAGOA BAY

The fear of an attack on the rights of Indians increases as more and more Englishmen crowd into Delagoa Bay. According to our correspondent, a movement is afoot in that place to drive Indians into Locations. It also appears that the Indians there will offer strong resistance. Our correspondent adds that an Association has been formed to fight the measure. We hope the Association will do its work with vigilance. It is very gratifying that, at this juncture, there is in Delagoa Bay a gentleman like Mr. Kothari. He is a lawyer of the Bombay High Court and a patriot. He has made good use of his stay in Delagoa Bay. He has studied Portuguese, which, we believe, will stand him in good stead in serving the country. Wherever there are educated Indians, it should be their duty to use their education in the service of their motherland.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-9-1906

337. A WARNING

The report of an Indian case, published by the Town Council in the *Krugersdorp Standard* dated September 1, is regrettable, and puts the Indian community to shame. A leading Indian of the place did not effect the necessary improvements to his premises despite a notice requiring him to do so. His bedroom had a ceiling only of cloth; the lavatory floor was not proof against the seeping of dirty water; and the lavatory was used although it had no bucket. Since the notice was ignored, the Town Council ordered proceedings to be instituted against him, with results so far unknown to us. But that those who are considered leading Indians should keep their premises in the condition described here makes us hang our heads in shame. One of the many charges the whites make against Indians is that of uncleanliness. Such cases only prove the charge, and the outcome cannot but be unfavourable when these are found among moneyed and respectable Indians. All Indians will, we hope, learn a lesson from this case and keep their premises clean. No one can deny that the state of our houses is not all that it should be. It is clear that we should be all the more cautious in matters where our shortcomings are only too apparent.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-9-1906

338. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

A WHIP

The huge meeting at the Empire Theatre is over. (The Theatre has [since] been gutted by fire.)[1] Three thousand men mustered together; they applauded; evinced enthusiasm; it was all very impressive. But all this seems to have vanished like a dream! All the men present in that theatre had resolved that a deputation must be sent to England. They had declared that there would be no difficulty in collecting the necessary funds. Your correspondent, who had full faith in the people had taken it for granted that men speaking such words could raise six to seven thousand pounds in a day. But I am sorry to have to say that Mr. Gulam Mahomed, the Treasurer, has not yet received even a thousand pounds towards the fund for sending a

[1] Round brackets are ours.

deputation and fighting the Asiatic Ordinance. Men who have collected money are not willing to part with it on the pretext that others are not doing so. A telegram from a certain place says that the collection is yet to be made. News received from another says that remittances would be made only after a certain Sheth has made his contribution. A message from a third town says that they do not mean to send anything because a certain community is not contributing. Thus, for a variety of reasons, money is not forthcoming. No one can say that a proper organization has not been set up for the management of the Fund. A committee consisting of about 25 leaders of different communities has been formed. Not a single cheque will be issued without the sanction of the committee. Four persons have to sign a cheque, and it is obligatory for the committee to publish detailed accounts every month. Thus, on the one side, our hardships are unlimited; on the other, we have with great care appointed a committee of management. What could be more shameful in these circumstances than to be unable to raise the necessary funds ? This is a testing time for every Indian; and if we are found wanting, we shall suffer a heavy penalty. Not only shall we be reduced to a sorry plight, but even our heirs shall taste the fruit of our sin. Not only has the money not been collected, but even the membership of the deputation has not been decided on.

MR. BHABHA'S CASE

An account has been given already of Mr. Bhabha's case up to the stage where it was taken to the Supreme Court. As recommendedby the judges, the sentence passed on Mr. Bhabha has been remitted, and he has now got the permit and the register enabling him to stay in the Transvaal. Three or four other Indians who had come in relying on Mr. Bhayat's case have also got their permits. One cannot say what will happen to the other Indians with old registers who are still outside the Colony. It is possible that the delay which was there before will not occur now.

HEAVY SENTENCE ON MINOR CHILD

A permit case against Mr. Hafeji Moosa of Potchefstroom and his eleven-year-old son, Mahomed, was heard at Volksrust on September 15. The charge against Mr. Moosa was that he had secured the entry of his son with a false permit, and the charge against his son was that he had entered the Colony with such a permit.

In his evidence, the constable who had examined the father and son could not say that he had seen the son. But it was established in the evidence that the son's thumb-impressions had been taken. The

magistrate found the father not guilty, and sentenced the son to a fine of £50 or three months' simple imprisonment. Such a heavy penalty on a mere child is dreadful. Had the magistrate looked into the matter more thoughtfully, he would have seen that a mere boy could not be given such a sentence. An appeal has been preferred to the Supreme Court, and, it is expected, the boy will be let off.

MR. QUINN AND THE INDIANS

Mr. Quinn, the Mayor of Johannesburg and Chairman of the Chamber of Trade, says in his monthly report that the passing of the Asiatic Ordinance is a proper step. According to him the unauthorised influx of Indians into the Transvaal justifies the Ordinance. It is not possible for the Europeans to compete with the Asiatics in [lowering] living standards. If it is thought that the law is strict, the fault was that of the Asiatics themselves. Referring to what Mr. Niven had said about the case of Punia[1], viz., that it could not be the view of the Chamber of Trade that women should be subjected to such hardships, Mr. Quinn said that it was their own fault, since they entered the Colony though they knew they would not be allowed in without a permit.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-9-1906

339. THE TRANSVAAL ORDINANCE

ASSENT OF IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT: DEPUTATION POSTPONED

The saying, " Man proposes and God disposes",[2] has proved true in the case of the Transvaal Indians.

LORD ELGIN'S REPLY

The deputation which was to proceed to England to represent our grievances [to the authorities there] was scheduled to sail on Monday, October l ; but owing to some obstacle, its departure has been postponed by a week. Just as arrangements were being made for booking the passages of delegates by steamer and letters were despatched to all the places to say that the deputation would leave on Monday, a communication[3] was received from Lord Selborne on

[1] *Vide* "Difficulties of Indian Women in the Transvaal", 22-9-1906

[2] The saying in Gujarati literally means, 'Tasks begun by us remain unfinished; only God's will be done.'

[3] The letter was dated September 24, 1906. This as well as the translation of Lord Selborne's letter on"The Transvaal Ordinance", 29-9-1906 has been collated with the English texts of the relevant letters.

Tuesday morning. It said:

> Lord Elgin desires Lord Selborne to inform you that though the former is aware that the new legislation does not effect all the improvements in the condition of the Indians which His Majesty's Government would desire, he has approved it as removing some of the hardships to which Asiatics are subject and goes as far as is possible on the eve of responsible government. Lord Elgin adds that, while delegates from the Transvaal, if sent, will be given every opportunity for stating their views, he does not consider that any useful purpose is likely to be served by sending the deputation.

MEANING OF THE LETTER

The implication of the letter is that Lord Elgin asks us not to send a deputation. It is obvious that there is nothing to be gained by the deputation going to England after the Ordinance has been passed. The other implication is that, since the Indian community has made a show of strength and has resolved to oppose the Ordinance, it should be suppressed. This is the way of the British: to look at accretions of strength with a stern eye and to dash them to the ground. Lord Selborne must have advised Lord Elgin that, if the deputation went to England and if he received it, the Indian community would be led to entertain hopes of the Ordinance being dropped and that the community would meanwhile go on gathering strength. It would therefore be advisable to nip in the bud their growing strength. Acting presumably on such advice, Lord Elgin has approved the Ordinance without listening to what the deputation has to say.

This has ever been the way of the British with a subject people. They have succeeded in it for the most part, since a conquered and subdued people is brave only in words, and shrinks back at the time of action.

OUR DUTY

Let us consider what the duty of the Indian community now is. Our resolve to resist the Ordinance can give strength; it can also take it away. If the Indian community firmly adheres to the Resolution, not only will it rise in the esteem of the people in the Transvaal and put an end to its many troubles, but the beneficent effect will be seen all over South Africa, and hundreds of men in the land of our birth will gain from it. If, on the other hand, the Resolution were not acted upon, those who took the pledge would lose face; the whole community would be disgraced; our petitions would in future carry no weight and our plight would become worse than at present. The whites would moreover laugh at us. They would spit upon us, spurn us and call us cowards. Never shall we be regarded as a united people.

NO ACHIEVEMENT WITHOUT ADVENTURE

Such risk is always there in great undertakings. In trade entailing great risks, if there is profit, it is immense, and if there is loss, it reduces one to utter poverty. As our poets[1] have said, it was through adventure that Alexander became an Emperor; it was through adventure that Columbus discovered America; nothing is achieved without adventure. Themselves an adventurous people, the British admire only those who are adventurous. It is therefore the clear duty of every Indian not to take out [a register] again, but to go to gaol and stand firm on the pledge taken at the Empire Theatre.

SECOND LETTER FROM LORD SELBORNE

Another letter has been received from Lord Selborne, which gives added force to our advice. The earlier letter which we have already cited in translation was written by Lord Selborne on behalf of Lord Elgin. Let us now see what His Excellency has to say for himself:

> From the argument which your Association puts forward, it seems that you have not grasped the real significance of the new law, which merely provides for the verification of existing documents . . . and for the substitution of more complete, authentic documents such as will relieve Asiatics from the inconveniences to which they are liable under the present system. If there is to be a system of registration, which will fulfil its purpose and prevent a general influx of Asiatics into the country, pending the establishment of responsible government, it must be complete and thorough.
>
> With regard to the definition of Asiatics and the position of pre-war Indian residents, the Ordinance does not disturb the existing conditions. The provision for exemption from the liquor law had no special reference to British Indians. It is intended to apply to individual Asiatics in respect of whom the present provisions of the law are an anomaly. The Ordinance will apply to males only.
>
> Lord Selborne cannot agree that the Draft Ordinance will be an act of serious wanton injustice directed against the Indian community or that it is in conflict with the views expressed by His Excellency from time to time.

This reply shows that Lord Selborne has not taken the trouble to acquaint himself with the Ordinance thoroughly or to understand the present situation. Where there is so much ignorance, our duty can only be this: to act up to the Fourth Resolution about gaol-going. The Government will then immediately see that, unless there were genuine difficulties, a thousand men would not court imprisonment.

[1] The reference is to Narmadashanker, a Gujarati poet.

But just as it is necessary to go to gaol, it is also necessary to raise a fund. The expenses now will be greater than if the deputation had gone to England. Without money it will be impossible to do things like sending telegrams about men sentenced to imprisonment, and providing for their families when they are in gaol. Moreover, it cannot be said that the struggle will be over in a couple of days. Money is therefore absolutely necessary. It has been shown earlier how our people lag behind in such matters. It is absolutely essential for us to remain thoroughly vigilant and wholly united.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-9-1906

340. TELEGRAM TO TRANSVAAL GOVERNOR[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,
September 30, 1906][3]

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION REGRETS LORD ELGIN'S APPROVAL OF ASIATIC ORDINANCE. IN ITS HUMBLE OPINION APPROVAL DUE TO MISUNDERSTANDING OF ORDINANCE. ASSOCIATION DOES NOT CONSIDER ANY RELIEF BEING GRANTED INDIAN COMMUNITY. ASSOCIATION HAS THEREFORE WITH GREAT DEFERENCE DECIDED TO SEND MESSRS GANDHI AND ALLY AS DEPUTATION TO LAY BEFORE IMPERIAL GOVERNMENTINDIANS'

[1] The following was added to the article above by the Editor, *Indian Opinion:*

STOP PRESS NEWS

"It will be seen from the foregoing that now there is no need for the Deputation to be sent. But the latest cablegram we have received says that the assent of the Imperial Government to the Ordinance has not been given and that it will take about five weeks to get it. A perusal of letters cited above shows that there has been some confusion in interpreting them. More clarification is likely to be available next week."

[2] This was forwarded to the Secretary of State for the Colonies on October 2 by the Transvaal Governor at the request of the British Indian Association.

[3] The Deputation left for Cape Town on October 1, on its way to England. This telegram, evidently, was sent a day before. The deputation carried the following credentials from the British Indian Association: "This is to certify that M. K. Gandhi, Esq., Honorary Secretary of the British Indian Association and Haji Ojer Ally, Esq., President of the Hamidiya Islamic Society, have been elected delegates to proceed to London, and submit to the Imperial Authorities the Indian view of the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance, as also to interview friends in England of British Indians in South Africa."

VIEW OF ORDINANCE AND PRAYS THAT ROYAL SANCTION WITHHELD PENDING HEARING BEING GRANTED.[1] DEPUTATION PROCEEDING BY NEXT MAIL.

BIAS

Pretoria Archives: L. G. File No. 93: Asiatics

341. SPEECH AT FAREWELL MEETING[2]

A meeting of the British Indian Association was held to bid farewell to the members of the deputation proceeding to London. The following is a brief summary of Gandhiji's reply to the speech of the Chairman, Abdul Gani.

JOHANNESBURG,
September 30, 1906

Mr. Gandhi pointed out that he was only going in view of the solemn promises of the leaders and their followers under no circumstances to comply with the requirements of the new Ordinance.

Indian Opinion, 6-10-1906

342. HAJI OJEER ALLY[3]

Mr. Haji Ojeer Ally was born on the 23rd November, 1853, in the island of Mauritius, and received his education at the Government schools there. In 1864, he started work as a printer at the Commercial Gazette Offices, and in 1868, he was employed as wharf-clerk with

[1] It became known later that the approval had reference only to the proposal to introduce such an ordinance but the Ordinance itself was yet to receive Royal assent.

[2] This is an extract from "Johannesburg Jottings" by the Transvaal Representative (Mr. Polak) of *Indian Opinion.* Tendulkar quotes another speech in his *Mahatma:* "We shall of course try our best, but there is little chance of our prayer being granted. We, therefore, must mainly rely upon the Fourth Resolution. We shall explain our case to all our friends in England. You too will do your duty by not submitting to registration. Money must be collected to carry on the movement and what is more important still, the Hindus and Muslims must be absolutely united." (p. 96, Vol. I; Jhaveri and Tendulkar, Bombay, August 1951). Neither the source nor the date of this speech has been found. It is not clear whether this is from another speech made at the second of the two farewell meetings held at the Hamidiya Society Hall. Or it may be from the same British Indian Association speech reproduced above.

[3] This is part of an article published under the title "The Personnel of the Deputation: Biographical sketches", which included a similar sketch on Gandhiji; the latter is not reproduced here. *Vide* also "Johannesburg Letter", 25-9-1906

Messrs P. Adam & Co. He was for some time assistant shipping clerk with Messrs Joshua Bros. and, later, was also shipping clerk to another firm. In 1883, as behoves every good Mahomedan, he visited Mecca and became a Haji. He came to South Africa in 1884, landing at Cape Town, where he commenced business on his own account as a mineral water manufacturer. Ever since that time he has taken an active part in the politics of the country and endeavoured to ameliorate the condition of the Coloured people, more especially his co-religionists, the Malays and his fellow-countrymen, the British Indians. He helped to quell a Malay disturbance that took place by reason of the Cape Government having fixed a Malay cemetery very far away from the town, and it was mainly through his efforts that a site was ultimately selected which satisfied the Malay community.

During his stay in Cape Town, Mr. Ally was both a parliamentary and municipal voter. In 1892, he was elected Chairman of the Coloured Peoples' Organization, and took a leading part in connection with the Franchise Law Amendment. A petition signed by 22,000 Coloured people was promoted and sent to London. Later, Mr. Ally migrated to Johannesburg, where, too, he has been taking an active part with reference to the position of British Indians in the Transvaal. Before the war, he interviewed the prominent Boer officials, as also the British Agents, and did a great deal to secure relief.

Mr. Ally is the founder and President of the Hamidiya Islamic Society; which has been doing excellent and useful work among the Mahomedans of Johannesburg, and which was chiefly instrumental in organising the Mass Meeting at the Empire Theatre. The Society is in a flourishing condition, and has a membership of several hundred Mahomedans.

Mr. Ally, although not a finished speaker, has a very good command of the English language, has a fine voice, and is often very eloquent. He is married to a Malay lady and is the father of eleven children. He holds liberal views regarding female education and has been endeavouring, in spite of the handicap of colour, to give a good education to his daughters.

Indian Opinion, 6-10-1906

343. DIVINE WRATH ON HONG KONG

While the news of how a beautiful city like San Francisco was suddenly reduced to dust and thousands of men were buried alive in a trice is still green in our memory, a similar earthquake has occurred in Chile and lakhs of people in Valparaiso and other places have been

rendered homeless and obliged to wander about without food. Hardly is that woeful tale over when there comes a cry from Asia that its children are no less unfortunate than those of America. Last week there appeared the news of a cyclone in the sea near Hong Kong to the south of China. Several ships and steamers were driven ashore and some completely wrecked. Small craft and fishing-boats sank and thousands of precious lives were lost. As the sea-rushed into the harbour, rivers began to flow through the city streets and the people in distress struggled hard to save themselves by means of boats. It is said that about fifty steamers and ships were engulfed in thestorm. Traces have been found of only a few of the 600 fishing-boats that were out on a cruise. At least 10,000 men lost their lives. All this happened within a couple of hours. Thoughtful persons will be grieved to know this. Stories told in text books of God making or unmaking a universe in a moment, we now see enacted before our very eyes. Inscrutable are the ways of God. Man has always some lesson to learn from His dispensations. While such an event is fresh in the mind, the virtuous have promptings from their inner selves, "Good man, take to the true path. We know not when Death will overtake us. Do good deeds then and make provision for your journey hence." The same event warns the erring: "You fool, cast off your pride and walk in fear of God. For Death might swallow you in no time."

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 6-10-1906

344. THE DUTY OF TRANSVAAL INDIANS

Since we give elsewhere a full account of the Transvaal situation, it is needless for us to say anything more about it here. The present time is so critical that even Indians outside the Transvaal have become alarmed. All of them feel that the step taken by the Indians in the Transvaal is very difficult and arduous. It will justify itself only if it succeeds. The Resolution passed by Indians is, and at the same time is not, unique. We consider it unique, because nowhere else in the world have Indians so far resolved, as they have done now, to go to gaol rather than submit to a law. On the other hand, we do not consider it unique because a number of similar instances are found [in history]. When we are dissatisfied with anything, we often resort to *hartal.* In India we often consider it our duty to do so, in order to obtain redress of our grievances, particularly in the Native States. The *hartal* only means that we do not approve of a certain measure taken by the ruler. This tradition of resisting a law has been in vogue among us from

very early days, when the English people were in a barbarous state. Thus, really speaking, the Resolution passed by the Transvaal Indians is nothing extraordinary and there is no reason why we should feel nervous.

Moreover, such examples are to be found even in South Africa. When President Kruger proposed to remove the Indians from the Malay Location and send them to the Tobianski Farm, Mr. Emrys Evans, the British Agent, gave Indians the specific advice that they should on no account submit to President Kruger's order. Hence, despite police investigations and detectives entering their homes, the people remained firm, and they won.

When there were difficulties about licences, the Indians carried on their business in the towns fearlessly without licences, did not bow to the Boer Government, and succeeded. That Government tried hard to send us to the Locations, but failed.

Subsequent to the war too, instances are found. When Lord Milner brandished the sword of the Bazaar Notice against the Indians, the people for once were scared, but later they thought over the matter and finally decided not to go to the Location. The summons that had already been issued at Potchefstroom had to be withdrawn. The Indian people refused to accept the passes bearing their photographs that Mr. Moore had issued, and the Regulation had to be withdrawn.

We can easily find such examples among other communities too. The Pass Law applies to Hottentots, but they oppose it and do not take out passes and the Government is powerless to do anything. A house tax is levied on the Kaffirs of Natal; but some of the Zulu tribes do not pay the tax at all. It is an open secret that the Government does not collect the tax from them.

All these instances show that there is no cause for us to be afraid at all. However, there is some difference between the instances quoted above and the Resolution of the Indian community. In all these instances no community as a whole had passed any resolution. Further, though the people chose not to submit to the laws in question, they had not decided on how to meet the consequences and bring the issue to a final conclusion. For example, when the Hottentots are arrested for not taking out passes, some of them pay the fine and some go to gaol. The Transvaal Indians are determined to go to gaol rather than take out a new Register. Two other alternatives are open to them—either to pay the fine or to leave the Colony. After giving serious thought to both, the Indian community has discarded them. And herein lie its uniqueness, its beauty and its strength. If we pay the fine, it will be just the thing the Government wants. If we leave the

Colony, the whites will rejoice, clap their hands and wave their flags. We will do neither of these things, for it would be ignominious and cowardly to do either. Going to gaol is a unique step, a sacred act, and only by doing so can the Indian community maintain its honour. What does it matter if, in doing so, we lose our trade ? If a fire destroys their houses and goods, traders accept it calmly and, being courageous, start their business afresh and earn their livelihood. No one who has hands and feet and possesses ability and intelligence has need, at any rate in this country, to starve. What if a hundred or more lose their all and become paupers in serving the community or the country? The English honour only those who make such sacrifice. Their shining glory has spread just because great heroes have been and are still born among them. Such were Wat Tyler, John Hampden, John Bunyan and others. They laid the foundations of England's political supremacy. Who they were and what they did we shall tell some other time.[1] But we shall continue to be in our present abject condition till we follow their example. The Indian community has a good opportunity today of proving its mettle. We hope that it willnot let it slip, but will rush to the field, plunge in whole-heartedly and fight to the last. There was a time in India when the mother refused to look at the face of a son who returned vanquished from the battle-field. We pray to God that every Indian in the Transvaal will remember that time.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 6-10-1906

345. CABLE TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COLONIES[2]

JOHANNESBURG,

OCTOBER 8, 1906

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION HAS READ WITH REGRET VREDEDORP STANDS ORDINANCE PUBLISHED IN GOVERNMENT GAZETTE. RESTRICTIONS AS TO TRANSFER LEASES TO AND RESIDENCE OF ASIATICS VREDEDORP UNJUST. REQUEST STAY ROYAL SANCTION PENDING RECEIPT

[1] *Vide* "Tyler, Hampden and Bunyan", 20-10-1906

[2] This was sent to the Transvaal Governor who cabled it to the Secretary of State for the Colonies at the request of the British Indian Association. The cable was presumably drafted by Gandhiji after the publication of the Vrededorp Stands Ordinance in the *Government Gazette* on September 28, before his departure for England on October 1. It was perhaps despatched by the British Indian Association later.

Colonial Office Records: 291, Vol. 103

346. PETITION TO LORD ELGIN[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
October 8, 1906[2]

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF ELGIN
HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
LONDON

The Petition of Abdul Ganie, in his capacity as Chairman of the British Indian Association of the Transvaal, Humbly Sheweth:

That the British Indian Association of the Transvaal respectfully approaches Your Lordship with reference to the Vrededorp Stands Ordinance of 1906 published in the Transvaal *Government Gazette* dated the 28th September.

(2) The Ordinance) your Petitioner notices, is not to take effect "unless and until the Governor shall proclaim in the *Gazette* that it is His Majesty's pleasure not to disallow the same".

Your petitioner, therefore, ventured to send Your Lordship a cable[3] requesting that the Royal pleasure may not be declared until the Association had the opportunity of making its submission to Your Lordship.

(3) The Association respectfully protests against sections 5, 8 and 9 of the second schedule to the Ordinance above named.

(4) The sections in question are as follows:

> 5. This lease shall not be transferable to any coloured person and if registered in the name of any such person this lease shall *ipso facto* cease and determine.
>
> 8. Neither the said stand nor any part thereof nor any building thereon shall be sub-let to any coloured person or Asiatic. Upon any breach of this condition the Council may forthwith by notice in writing given in the

[1] This was also published in *Indian Opinion,* 13-10-1906 and *India,* 2-11-1906.

[2] Though this was submitted a week after Gandhiji's departure for England, it is probable that, before he left, Gandhiji drafted this petition on an issue of vital concern to the Indians.

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

manner provided in Clause Four terminate this lease.

9. The Lessee shall not permit any coloured person or Asiatic other than the servant *bona fide* of some white person for the time being residing on the said stand to reside thereon or to occupy the same or any part thereof. If any coloured person or Asiatic other than such servant as aforesaid is at any time found residing on the said stand or occupying the same or any part thereof the Council may give notice to the Lessee in the manner provided in Clause Four requiring him to cause such person to cease to reside thereon or to occupy the same or any part thereof within a period of three weeks from the date of such notice and if at any time after the expiration of such period such person shall be found residing thereon or occupying the same or any part thereof, the Council may forthwith by notice to the Lessee given in the manner aforesaid terminate this lease.

(5) Thus, in effect, the Ordinance prohibits the residence of British Indians except as domestic servants.

(6) Such prohibition will create a fresh disability against British Indians.

(7) In the humble opinion of the Association, there is no justification for the contemplated restriction.

(8) The Association, moreover, draws Your Lordship's attention to the fact that British Indians have, for years past, held stands within the area affected by the Ordinance, from the original grantees—the burghers of Vrededorp.

(9) Some British Indians have erected substantial structures on such stands, and some are at present either residing on the stands leased by them or carrying on trade.

(10) If the clauses objected to are sanctioned, all such persons as are here in before referred to and have acquired vested rights will be adversely affected and some of them ruined in business.

(11) The Association ventures to point out that, when the Vrededorp Commission sat some time ago to report upon the Draft Ordinance, objection to any such clauses as are before referred to was submitted to the Commission on behalf of British Indians.

(12) The Association draws Your Lordship's attention to thefurther fact that the area affected by the Ordinance is contiguous to the Malay Location, which contains a large Asiatic, and principally British Indian, population. The relations between the inhabitants of Vrededorp and the Malay Location have always been satisfactory.

(13) The Association feels that, if the clauses referred to are approved by Your Lordship, the acceptance will form a precedent for other bodies, and may lead to the ultimate reduction of British Indians

to the status of menials and their compulsory removal to Locations.

(14) Your petitioner, therefore, humbly prays that the Ordinance in question will be disallowed, or such other relief will be granted as to Your Lordship may seem meet.

And for this act of justice and mercy your petitioner shall for ever pray, etc., etc.

Dated at Johannesburg this 8th day of October, 1906.

ABDOOL GANIE
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

From a photostat of the office copy: S. N. 4384

347. THE DEPUTATION'S VOYAGE—I

[S. S. *ARMADALE CASTLE*,
Before *October 11, 1906*]

Readers of *Indian Opinion* are aware of the election of the deputation to England with regard to the new Asiatic Ordinance and of the difficulties experienced in that connection. From the very beginning the people had decided that the deputation should consist of three men, viz., Messrs Abdul Gani, Ally and Gandhi; but at the last moment Mr. Abdul Gani withdrew and Messrs Ally and Gandhi had to go without him.

INITIAL DIFFICULTY

On Friday, September 28, a definite resolution was passed that the two members mentioned above should go. It was decided that they should sail by the s.s. *Armadale Castle*, and their passages were booked on Saturday, September 29. The delegates were to leave by the Cape Mail on Monday, October 1, and the tickets for that train were also purchased; but an hour later word was received from the Station Master that the deputation could not go by the Cape Mail, but only by the train leaving at 9 p.m. This meant that the deputation, being thus unable to travel by the Cape Mail, would miss the *Armadale Castle* and hence be delayed by a week. Mr. Gandhi immediately spoke to the General Manager over the 'phone and explained to him how necessary it was for them to leave by the Cape Mail. The General Manager could not understand the Station Master's objection and told Mr. Gandhi that he would make inquiries and then telephone the result to him. After an hour, a message was received saying that the Station Master had made a mistake and that there

would be no difficulty in the deputation travelling by the Cape Mail

ON THE TRAIN

The deputation boarded the train at 6-15 p.m. Certain persons, as previously decided, had come to the station to see the deputation off. They were Messrs Abdul Gani, Essop Mian, Coovadia, Omarji, Shahbuddin, Fancy, Bhikhubhai and others. Mr. Bhikhubhai had brought a coconut[1] and other things. The members of the deputation shook hands with everyone before taking leave.

MR. HAJI OJER ALLY'S HEALTH

Mr. Haji Ojer Ally was feeling exhausted owing to over-work during many days and he was ill and restless. He has rheumatism and, even when the deputation was being discussed, he was afraid of being troubled by it on the way. The fear came true on the train itself. Pain started in the joints. I pressed and massaged his joints and did whatever I could. But that gave no lasting relief. Mr. Ally took the food he had brought with him and also some coffee. He had no appetite for anything else. I went to the Saloon for meals, and took boiled potatoes and peas with bread. I also took the fruit and nuts Mr. Bhikhubhai had given us. I tin did my writing. Mr. Ally went to bed at ten. I retired at midnight after finishing my writing work. Mr. Ally spent a restless night. When he got up on Tuesday morning, he had a very severe pain, also slight fever and bronchitis.

ARRANGEMENTS ON THE CAPE MAIL

Amenities on the Cape Mail are almost the same as on a steamer. Food is served from the morning onwards. There is provision even for bathing. The passengers can have a shower-bath. Only first-class passengers can travel by this train.

IN CAPE TOWN

The train reached Cape Town at two o'clock on Wednesday. Messrs Yusuf Hamid Gool, Amod Gool, Lachhiram and Abdul Kadar had come to the station to receive us. Ma Yusuf Hamid Gool had arranged for our meal at his place. We took it and left at 4-45. All these gentlemen also came to the steamer to see us off.

"THE ARMADALE CASTLE"

This steamer is one of the biggest among those belonging to the Union Casle Line. Its tonnage is 12,973 and As horse-power 12,500. It is 590' 6" long, 64' 6" broad and 42' 3" high. It has

[1] The coconut is an auspicious symbol.

accommodation for 320 first-class, 225 second-class and 280 third-class passengers. For each of the classes there is a very large and beautiful dining-hall. It has excellent arrangements for ventilation. There are books to read and a separate reading-room for each class. The bathing arrangements are very good; and one can have as much hot and cold water as one wants. The lavatories are kept very clean, and there is a notice saying that passengers should not leave the seat dirty. The first and the second classes have four sections each. We hold first-class tickets for the third section and had each to pay £79-15-0.

CATERING ARRANGEMENTS

Catering arrangements in these steamers are such that it would appear that the passengers had nothing to do but eat the whole day. At six in the morning, the bearer brings coffee, bread and fruit. At 8-30 one has breakfast in the Saloon, and some ten different items are served. At eleven tea and biscuits are served on deck. Again at 1 p.m. lunch begins to be served in the Saloon; this again has ten to fifteen items. At four in the afternoon again, tea, biscuits, bread, etc.; at six o'clock dinner in the Saloon and at nine or later, tea, coffee, biscuits, cheese, etc., as the passengers choose. All this is covered by the steamer fare. In addition, the passengers can have wine, etc. between meals or at meal time for which they have of course to pay. One seldom comes across passengers who do not take alcoholic drinks.

PASSENGERS

Among fellow-passengers, there are three well-known men who must be mentioned. One is the Acting Lieutenant-Governor of the Transvaal, Sir Richard Solomon, accompanied by Lady Solomon. He is going especially to see Lord Elgin. Another is Sir David Gill, the famous astronomer of South Africa, and the third is Sir John Buchanan, a Judge of the Cape Supreme Court. Lord Wolmer is also with us.

In the next instalment, I shall describe Mr. Ally's state of health, the way Mr. Ally and I spend our time, and the arrangements we have made for our meals. Meanwhile, lest anyone should be anxious, I may say here straightaway that Mr. Ally's health has improved and, as I write this, he is enjoying himself on the deck.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 10-11-1906

348. THE DEPUTATION'S VOYAGE—II

[S. S. *ARMADALE CASTLE*
October 11, 1906]

WHAT DID WE DO ?

I said in my first article that Mr. Ally's health had not improved when we boarded the steamer. He was obliged to stay in bed. For two clays he took the pills he had brought with him and got me to rub in soap liniment. This seemed to result in some improvement, but the pain did not stop altogether. On the third day, the doctor was consulted, and he gave him Phenacetin, a medicine inducing perspiration. That loosened the joints, and on the fourth day, Mr. Ally could leave his bed, but he was not yet completely cured. I then recommended to him Dr. Kuhne's treatment. Accordingly, Mr. Ally now takes hot and cold baths and does without the morning meal. Formerly he used to have coffee on getting up, and porridge, coffee and fruit at breakfast. He has stopped all this, now has his first meal at 1 p.m. and has given up all medicines. It is now (October 11) three days since he began this treatment. As a result, Mr. Ally feels better. He is hungry at 1 p.m., and constipation and indigestion do not trouble him now. He does not even smoke till 1 p.m. And though his health cannot yet be said to have returned to normal, his rheumatism is certainly under control; and he has little difficulty in moving his limbs. His food is simple. At one, he takes fish and potatoes, pudding and coffee, and ginger ale. He has a cup of tea at four in the afternoon and at 6-30 p.m., fish, green vegetables, ginger ale; pudding and coffee. He does not seem to feel the need for anything more. If the reader is curious to know what I eat, I may say that, for three days, I had three meals a day. But finding these unnecessary, I now take milk, bread, potatoes, soda water or ginger ale, stewed fruit and cream at 1 p.m., cocoa at four and potatoes, boiled vegetables, stewed fruit and soda water or ginger ale at 6-30 in the evening. I do not eat bread, raw fruit and nuts for the only reason that a loose molar has been hurting me. I feel quite satisfied with this diet and can do a lot of work. The main reason for this is, I think, that the stomach has rest till l p.m. and finds this food satisfying and sufficient. Some of these items are outside my usual menu. Yet. the fact that I keep fit shows that food, on an empty stomach, never does harm.

Mr. Ally is reading Justice Amir Ali's *Spirit of Islam* and Washington Irving's *Mahomet and His Successors*. I am studying Tamil, and reading Forbes's *Rasamala or A History of Gujarat,* and

the *Alien Immigration Report*. Now that Madeira is approaching, I have started writing my despatch for the *Opinion*. We have very little contact with other passengers. Occasionally a few words are exchanged with Sir Richard Solomon. There are with us the Chinese Consul, his nine-year-old daughter, and Mr. James of the Chinese Deputation [going to England] in connection with the Asiatic Act. The Chinese Consul wears official uniform. By nature he is sociable, pleasing in his manner and intelligent. Having had a good English education, his daughter enjoys herself and also amuses the passengers who are quite free with her.

GENERAL ATMOSPHERE ABOARD STEAMER

Other passengers spend the day in much merriment. Sports have been going on for the last week. Subscriptions were collected for awarding prizes, and we had to part with a guinea each. Among the games are deck cricket, ring tennis, egg-and-spoon race, etc. The sports will be over on the 12th and prizes distributed on the 14th. At night the passengers dance, and the band plays twice a day. Even Sir Richard Solomon takes part in the sports. The chief reason why we have not been able to participate in them is Mr. Ally's poor health and my own studies. There are no sports on Sundays. There is a "Church" gathering in the Saloon where prayers are offered according to Christian custom.

THOUGHTS ARISING PROM THIS

When I see all this I often ask myself why it is that the English rule. I am reminded of a poem by the Gujarati poet Narmadashanker[1]:

The Englishman rules,
The country is under his heel,
The native remains subdued;
Look at their bodies, brother,
He is full five cubits tall,
A host in himself, match for five hundred.

As I observe all this, I find that the Englishman is not only full five cubits tall, a host in himself, match for five hundred but is capable in every other way. When he chooses to enjoy wealth and power, he excels in doing it and he makes the best of poverty, too. He alone knows how to give orders; and he knows too how to take them. In his behaviour he is great with the great and small with the small. He knows how to earn money and he alone knows how to spend it. He

[1] A late nineteenth century Gujarati poet whom Gandhiji often quotes

knows how to converse and move in company. He lives in the knowledge that his happiness depends on the happiness of others. The [English]man I observed during the war seems to be an altogether different person now. Then he did all his work himself, trekked over long distances and felt happy with dry bread. Here on board the ship he does not do any work. He presses a button, and an attendant stands before him. He must have nice dishes of all kinds to eat. Every day he puts on a new dress. All this becomes him, but he does not lose his balance. Like the sea, he can contain all within himself. Though, generally speaking, he has little sense of religion, yet living in society, he is disciplined and observes sabbath. Why indeed should such a people not rule?

The steamer is as big as a small town. There must be about a thousand persons on board, but there is no noise, no disorder. Everyone is absorbed in his or her own work. Only the waves make music and remind us of their ceaseless motion. More in my third instalment.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 17-11-1906

349. A WORD ABOUT THE NEW MUNICIPAL ORDINANCE

We publish elsewhere in this issue the Regulations giving certain powers to the Johannesburg Municipality. There is nothing to be said against the Regulations. They apply to all and can be considered necessary to maintain the health of the larger part of the city and for other similar reasons. In regard to many of them, we have got to struggle against ourselves. If we do not keep our compounds clean and have to suffer in consequence, we cannot find fault with others. It can be clearly seen from the Regulations that, if we do not observe the rules of cleanliness, we shall have to face many difficulties. If we do not take precautions, we shall have to suffer the consequences of our own doings. Our licences will be taken away, and we shall be left repenting and helpless. One who is surrounded by enemies has to be very vigilant. As the local phrase has it he has to live in a laager. Such is our condition. In cleanliness and other matters we have to compete with the whites. That stage has not yet come. But if we wake up from our slumber, give up our indolence, shed some of our greed and persist in our efforts, we can in no time drive away the evil of uncleanliness from our midst. We have been perpetually tormented by the malignant tumour of uncleanliness which eats into our vitals. Just as when a tumour is opened, we feel pain at first but relief later, so the

tumour of uncleanliness must be opened. That should be the work of the Hamidiya, Hindu and other Societies, not only in the Transvaal, but in the other places as well. Will they wake up?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-10-1906

350. CONFLAGRATION ALL ROUND

A lot of discussion is nowadays going on about the Asiatic question among public bodies in South Africa. In such discussions, Indians are held up to blame on the slightest pretext. Among the fault-finders, the foremost are the Chambers of Commerce. At a meeting of the Chambers of Commerce held in Delagoa Bay, a suggestion was made that Indians should be removed to a Location. We have referred to this matter earlier. Recently[1] a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce took place at Maritzburg, at which opinions about Indian traders were expressed. In his address the Chairman said that there had been an increase in the number of Coloured traders and a decrease in that of white traders. In saying this, the Chairman, Mr. Griffin, does not seem to have bothered about the correctness of his figures. Before asserting that the increase in the number of Indian traders was alarming, he should have offered precise proof of the increase. Mr. Griffin further stated that in the rural areas Indians were so well established that they could send a representative of their own to the [local] board. This statement, too, is as baseless as the earlier one. But supposing it is true, what is wrong about it? Do not the Indian traders contribute to the prosperity of the country? They require protection quite as much as the European traders. In the course of his speech, Mr. Griffin also blurted out that the Shops [Early Closing] Act had proved to be a weapon for crushing the Indians with. Such talk betrays the fact that the Act is aimed at Indians only. But the funny part of it is that, though the law was made to crush the Indians, the whites say that the Indians flourish in spite of it. If this is true, there must be some innate merit in the Indian. What then is to be gained by wasting time in finding fault with the Indian instead of learning from him?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-10-1906

[1] On October 2, 1906

351. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

[S. S. *ARMADALE CASTLE*,
Before *October 20, 1906*]

CHI. RAMDAS,

I must now get your letters.

MOHANDAS

RAMDAS GANDHI
Indian Opinion
PHOENIX, NATAL

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: Courtesy: Shrimati Sushilabehn Gandhi.

352. THE DEPUTATION'S VOYAGE—III

[S. S. *ARMADALE CASTLE*,
Before October 20, 1906]

MORE REFLECTIONS

Writing about the voyage, we have reflected why the English prosper. I am aware that, as every shield has two sides, so has the Englishman's way of life. It should not be our business to examine the reverse side. Just as a swan, as the saying goes, separates milk from water and drinks only the former, so must we learn to recognize our rulers' virtues, which alone we should follow. Continuing this train of thought, we noticed that people on the boat did not merely enjoy themselves all day long. Those who had work to do did it as if it was the most natural thing to do, without fuss. On this steamer there are passengers who are always reading. They read not for pleasure, but because it is necessary. As soon as their reading is over, they join others in sport and merriment. The crew discharge their duties punctually to the minute. Looking at the vanities around them, they do not forget their station in life. Envying none, they remain absorbed in their work. We Indians, too, behave in much the same way, and in certain respects excel them. But if we take an overall view, the balance-sheet will show more to the Englishman's credit. We do not possess the ability to build steamers like the one we are sailing in. Even if we can build one, we have not the ability to operate it. We cannot match their record in public sanitation. We rarely present the spectacle of a number of men working together without noise. Their

mode of life is such that they can save much time, and in the modern age to save time is to gain money. On the steamer there is a printing press. Programmes and menus are printed every day. Typewriters are used for routine work. Most of the cooking is done with machines. Thus, cleanliness is maintained and time saved. All this is necessary for the way they wish to live and do live. Viewing things in this manner we should conclude, without looking at their faults or envying them, that they deserve all they have, and for the most part it is necessary to behave as they do. This is not the place to consider how we can set about doing this. Here I have put my thoughts before the reader as they occurred to me during the voyage.

STEAMERS SPEED AND THE WEATHER

A steamer belonging to this Line generally travels fast. On an average we cover about 370 miles a day. The weather was cold during the first four days, but as we proceeded it began to warm up. At present we are near the Equator, and it is very hot; in these parts this heat is normal. It will continue to be hot for another five or six days. We do not feel this extreme heat because of the many cooling devices on the steamer. In portholes there are arrangements to let in air so that it remains cool throughout the night. Changes are also made in the food to suit passengers' tastes. Every passenger is provided with a fan.

A TALK WITH SIR RICHARD SOLOMON

We had a talk with Sir Richard Solomon as we were approaching Madeira. After we had discussed the whole question he said that he would consider the idea of appointing a Commission at some future date. His information was that the Indian community had engaged agents at every port to instruct the immigrants about the geography of the Transvaal and help them to enter, and that many men had entered in this manner. This would mean that the whole Indian community was deceitful and that the new law had been enacted to punish it. The next day, Sir Richard advised Mr. Ally to accept the new Act, which leads one to infer that Sir Richard has given up the idea of appointing a Commission. The reason for this, I think, is that he aspires to be the Prime Minister under Responsible Government, and that his ambition would probably be thwarted if he accepted our plea and appointed a Commission. He would therefore do nothing for us.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 24-11-1906

353. SOME QUESTIONS

Many questions have been asked about the new Transvaal Ordinance. We give below the important ones along with their replies.

QUESTIONS

l. How is one to disobey the law?
2. What defence can one offer for doing so?
3. May one seek release on bail or not?
4. What is the likely sentence?
5. Will they arrest the hawkers first or the others?
6. How will it affect the traders?
7. What will happen to licences next year?
8. What shall we do if nothing is gained even by going to gaol?
9. And if some take out new Registers?
10. What is the harm in taking out a Register?

ANSWERS

1. Many people believe that all Indians have to appear on January 1 at a Court or at the gate of a gaol and say, "We do not want to take out a Register. Arrest us." Resistance cannot be offered in this way. Even if all people thus present themselves, the Government willnot arrest them. Whether to arrest or not depends on the will of the Government. They definitely want and expect most of the people to take out new Registers before January 1. The Government will be in a fix what to do if, no Indian has, by that date, taken out a Register. It is probable that they might seek the opinion of the leaders. Whether they do so or not, the [British Indian] Association will have to write to them intimating that no one from the community will take out the Register and that, if they intend prosecuting the offender, it will be proper for them to proceed against the leaders. The Government may or may not pay heed to the letter. When one or more men are arrested for not taking out Registers, Mr. Gandhi is bound to defend them, as he has promised. There will be no other defence. He will narrate the history of the matter and plead that the real culprit is not the person not taking out the Register, but that either Mr. Gandhi or the Association must be deemed guilty, for it was on their advice that people refrained from taking them out. Then, Mr. Gandhi may perhaps be arrested for inciting the people, or the arrested persons may be fined or sentenced to short terms of imprisonment. As paying the fine is out of the question, the only alternative will be to go to

gaol. Reports of these cases and of others that may be instituted will be cabled to the whole world.

2. There is to be no legal defence other than the one described above. If perchance the Prosecutor commits a mistake in law, advantage may no doubt be taken of it.

3. When we have already passed a resolution to go to gaol, there can be no question of release on bail. No disgrace attaches to this kind of imprisonment.

4. The sentence generally will be either fine or imprisonment in lieu of fine, or both, and further imprisonment in lieu of a fine. In no case is the fine to be paid. No sentence can be passed under which a man can be seized by the arm and turned out. Even after serving his sentence, if a man does not take out a new Register, he is again guilty and therefore the Government can, if it chooses, keep all these persons in gaol for all time.

5. It is not possible to say who will be arrested first.

6. It is not likely that all traders will have to go to gaol. If perchance such a thing should happen, it would be nothing to worry about. In that case, the shop should be closed or may be entrusted to a reliable white. It is hardly likely that the Government will go to these lengths. However, one must not assume that certain things will never happen.

7. According to the new Act, those who do not take out the new Registers are not entitled to licences. If licences are not issued, the fee for them may be tendered and the business continued. Even if prosecuted for trading without a licence, one should not pay the fine, but serve the gaol sentence.

8. Such a question cannot arise. When going to gaol is in itself a gain, further questioning is useless. What could be worse than giving one's finger-prints and disgracing oneself? How can we do that which we consider disgraceful? Surely, we are not going to commit theft because others do so. When Hampden refused to pay Ship Money, he did not argue in this strain.

9. If some persons take out the new Register, they will lose their good name and earn the contempt of the Indian community.

10. The disadvantage in taking out the new Register is that our condition will thereby become worse than that of the Kaffirs. The question does not arise here whether men without permits gain or lose by taking out or not taking out the Register. By taking out Registers we shall disgrace ourselves. There is as much objection to taking out Registers as to disgracing ourselves. For those who cannot stand a gaol sentence, the better course will be to leave the Transvaal. It is, of

course, cowardly to leave the land, but it is even more cowardly to take out a new Register.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-10-1906

354. A RAY OF HOPE

There have not been two opinions on how for the Resolutions of the mass meeting will produce results. As for Resolutions 3 and 4, what will happen still remains to be seen. Their fruit is a long time away yet; and this depends upon the determination of the Indian community. Nothing but good can come of adhering staunchly to Resolution 4. However, who can say that it has not already begun to have effect? At one time it was thought that Resolution 3, about the sending of the deputation, might be dropped. Recent Press messages show that we did very well in sending the deputation in time. Our Johannesburg Correspondent says that the Secretary of State has sent a cablegram to Lord Selborne asking him to inform the British Indian Association that sanction to the Asiatic Act will not be accorded before the representation of the Indian deputation has been heard. This by itself shows that Resolution 3 has served its purpose. Among the reasons that prompted the Secretary of State to attach weight to Indian protests, the impact of Resolution 4 may be considered to be the primary one. Lord Elgin's cablegram proves the usefulness of Resolution 3 and also shows the impact of Resolution 4. Whether the deputation succeeds or not, this much is established that the Imperial Government has taken some notice of the Transvaal Indians. In these circumstances, the deputation will be able to do really good work. If Resolution 4 has begun to tell in such a short time, can it fail to have effect in England and elsewhere once it is actually put into execution?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-10-1906

355. TYLER, HAMPDEN AND BUNYAN

We have, on an earlier occasion, cited the examples of these three men.[1] The chains that bind us would certainly snap even if a single person from amongst us did in South Africa a hundredth part of what these men did for their country.

[1] *Vide* "The Duty of Transvaal Indians", 6-10-1906

Wat Tyler lived in the twelfth century[1]. Once the King of England imposed a heavy tax on farmers. The tax was unjust, and Tyler resolved not to pay it. Many farmers joined him. An army was sent against Tyler and his men. Tyler was killed, but the burden of tax on the farmers was ultimately removed. This event gave the people an awareness of their strength, further results of which were seen during the seventeenth century.

At that time, King Charles was the ruler of England and he wanted to wage wars in foreign lands. As his treasury had become empty, he imposed Ship Money. Hampden, a rich gentleman of great prestige, saw that, if Ship Money were paid, the King's demands would go on increasing and the people would suffer. He therefore refused to pay the tax, and many joined him in this. Though some of them agreed to pay the tax, Hampden remained firm and was prosecuted. The judges sentenced him, declaring that he had committed a crime in not paying the tax. Despite the sentence, Hampden did not pay the tax. Hampden and his companions went to gaol and the people congratulated them. Like them, the people too remained firm. Many did not pay the tax and there was a great revolt. The King became nervous and the whole matter was reconsidered. It was realized that thousands of people could not be sent to gaol. He therefore got the earlier judgment reversed by other judges and Hampden was set free. The seed of the struggle for freedom that he sowed grew into a mighty tree. As a result of the struggle he put up, Cromwell emerged and England acquired real power and the people were given a large share in the governance of the country. Hampden died fighting for his country; he remains immortal.

John Bunyan was a saintly man. His only interest was prayer to God. He saw the terrible religious oppression prevailing at the time, that is, in the seventeenth century. He did not think it proper to do the bidding of the Bishops. He hearkened only to the call of God. Parted from his wife and children, he remained in Bedford Prison for twelve years. There he wrote the most beautiful book[2] in the English language. Today hundreds of thousands of men derive solace by reading it. It is written in such simple language that children and grown-ups alike can read it with joy. The place where Bunyan was imprisoned has now become a place of pilgrimage for the English. Bunyan himself suffered, but he freed his people from suffering and sorrow. It is because of saintly persons like Bunyan that people in England today enjoy freedom in matters of religion.

[1] Wat Tyler lived in the fourteenth century.

[2] The Pilgrim's Progress

A people that has produced such a trinity—why should it not enjoy self-rule? If these men suffered so much hardship, it would not be too much for the Transvaal Indians to go to gaol or to suffer some loss in trade. If they do not, they will earn a bad name. If they do, their chains will break.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-10-1906

356. INTERVIEW TO "THE TRIBUNE"[1]

The Deputation consisting of Gandhiji and Ally arrived in England on October 20, 1906. Interviewed on board ship at Southampton by a representative of The Tribune, Gandhiji said:

[SOUTHAMPTON,
October 20, 1906]

We think that the position has not been properly placed before Lord Elgin. An amendment Ordinance concerning Asiatics was recently passed by the Transvaal Government.

The law against which we are to make our submission to Lord Elgin is intended to make every Indian now settled in the Transvaal carry a pass, just as the Kaffirs[2] are required to do. The Indian passes, however, will be much more rigorous and severe. It is supposed that every pass will bear ten finger impressions of the holder. All Indians in the Transvaal, no matter what their status may be, will have to submit to this, whether they can read and write English or any other European language.

The reason for introducing this law is, as the Colonial Secretary has stated, that there is an influx of Indians into the Transvaal. The British Indian community has always denied this charge, and has invited a commission of inquiry to investigate it. The number of Indians in the Transvaal, according to the permits, is 13,000, and by the census returns, 10,000. I may point out that they suffer from many other disabilities. They cannot hold landed property except in Locations or wards that may be set apart for their residence. They cannot ride in tram-cars in Johannesburg or Pretoria, and there are difficulties even in railway travelling. There are regulations which, though not at present in force, are still on the statute-book, preventing British Indians, together with other Asiatics,

[1] This report was reproduced in *Indian opinion,* 24-11-1906.

[2] A term by which the native African Communities in South Africa were described. The Expression, however, is no longer in use.

from walking on the foot-paths. This applies especially to Johannesburg and Pretoria.

The new Ordinance contains a clause to the effect that it shall not come into operation until His Majesty has signified his pleasure not to disallow it. We wish to get it disallowed. At the same time, recognizing the prejudice that there is against colour in the Transvaal, we have always accepted the principle of restriction of further immigration under well-defined regulations which should not be harsh and savour of class legislation. Our experience has invariably been that, wherever there has been class legislation, it has been far more difficult to secure relief than if there have been laws of general application, as, for instance, at the Cape and Natal.

All we claim is fair and honourable treatment for British Indians residing in the Transvaal. This has been often promised by the British Government. In fact, as Lord Lansdowne stated, the disabilities of British Indians in the Transvaal were one of the causes of the late war.

The Tribune, 22-10-1906

357. INTERVIEW TO "THE MORNING LEADER"[1]

[*October 20, 1906*]

Mr. Gandhi, in a conversation [at Waterloo station] with a representative of *The Morning Leader*, asserted that, so far from the war having brought relief to the Indians, these British subjects were now worse off than they were under Boer rule.

The only things the Boers did were to deprive the British Indians of burgher rights and landownership, and to pass the Law [3] of 1885 under which those of them desiring to settle as traders in the country had to be registered and pay a fee of £3. Under the British regime, although a Kaffir may hold land, we are still debarred from the privilege, except in Locations or wards specially set apart for us, the idea being to reproduce the system of the Jewish ghettos.

ADDED DISABILITIES

But other disabilities have been added. There are, for example, difficulties as to travelling in trams. In Johannesburg British Indians are only allowed to ride in trailer cars. In Pretoria they are not allowed to travel on trams at all. It is, however, more particularly in connection with the question of registration that we feel aggrieved. Under the Boers, the immigration of British Indians was absolutely free and

[1] This report was reproduced in *India*, 26-10-1906 and in *Indian Opinion*, 1-12-1906.

unrestricted. But today, not only are Indians prevented from entering the country, but even old settlers find it difficult to regain admission.

It is true that, under Law 3 of 1885 passed by the Boers, Indians settling in the country for purposes of trade had to register themselves. But the Legislative Council has now carried an amending law—the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance—which, the British Indians assert, is worse than the law which it seeks to amend. It is in connection with this new piece of legislation that the Deputation has come to London.

HARDSHIPS OF THE PASS

By virtue of that Ordinance, not only traders, but every Indian now resident in the Transvaal, must be registered and carry a pass (like the Kaffirs).This pass is euphemistically called a certificate of registra-tion. I must point out that this measure has been introduced in spite of the fact that Indians in the country are already in possession of permits which authorize them to reside there, while they also hold registration certificates for which they have each paid £3.

When Great Britain took possession of the Transvaal, the Indians, on the advice of Lord Milner, exchanged their Boer registration for English registration, and even submitted to their thumb marks being impressed on their registration certificates. This certificate, by the way, also contained particulars as to the age, height, and family of the person who carried it. In reality it was an identification certificate.

"UNAUTHORIZED" IMMIGRATION

And now the new Ordinance enacts yet a third registration.

The reason given is that there has been a large unauthorized immigration of Indians into the Transvaal, and it is proposed, by means of the new Ordinance, to ascertain who they are. But this object could just as well be attained by inspecting the registration certificate now held. As a matter of fact, the Indians stoutly deny that there is any unauthorized influx on a wholesale scale, as the Government asserts, and they have asked for the appointment of a commission to inquire into the question.

The amending law will require a much stricter identification than under the old system. As the Assistant Colonial Secretary (Mr. Curtis) said, the Indian, no matter what his status, will have to have ten finger impressions on his certificate (instead of the thumb-impression only). Failure to register will carry with it very severe penalties. Not only will the adult male population have to be registered, but also children of parents domiciled in the Transvaal, and even infants in arms.

PREJUDICE AGAINST COLOUR

The Indian community recognize the prejudice against colour in the Transvaal, and have, therefore, accepted the principle of restriction of British Indian immigration—but on such terms as are not humiliating, and do not interfere with the liberty of those already settled in the country. This can be easily done by passing legislation after the Natal or Cape style. Legislation of this character ought to be general, and applicable to all. Throughout the self-governing colonies, hitherto, special class legislation has been vetoed by the home Government. An attempt made by Natal to pass legislation specially affecting Asiatics was disallowed by Mr. Chamberlain; and we have come here to try and induce Lord Elgin to withhold the royal sanction to the amending law, and to appoint a commission to inquire into the allegation as to the Indian influx.

Mr. Gandhi states that the Indians are greatly stirred over the matter, and are prepared to go to gaol rather than submit.

The Morning Leader, 22-10-1906

358. LETTER TO "THE TIMES"[1]

[LONDON,]
October 22, 1906

TO
THE EDITOR
THE TIMES
[LONDON]

SIR,

I have seen the cablegram in your issue of to-day's date from your Johannesburg correspondent in connection with the British Indian Deputation that has arrived from the Transvaal to wait upon the Imperial authorities regarding the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance of the Transvaal.

I trust that, in fairness, you will allow us to correct certain misstatements made by your correspondent. He says: "The present Ordinance provides for the complete registration of all Asiatics in such a way that personation, in which the Asiatic is a past master, would be made impossible." We deny that there has been any personation, and we venture to state emphatically that the existing

[1] This was published "in substance" in *The Times*, 25-10-1906. The letter was reproduced in full in *Indian Opinion*, 24-11-1906.

registration certificates held by British Indians entirely prevent personation. These certificates contain the names of the holders [and] their wives, number of children, their age, height, [and] their thumb imprints. Whenever an attempt has been made to personate, the culprit has been promptly brought to justice.

Your correspondent states that the present Ordinance will give a full title to Asiatics already domiciled, and that it will extend greater privileges to them. They have the full title to residence already, unless it is to be snatch[ed] from them by fresh legislation. They hold permits authorizing them to enter and remain in the Colony of the Transvaal, also registration certificates above mentioned, which were taken out by them as a voluntary act on the advice of Lord Milner who at the time assured them that those registration certificates were final and complete.[1]

That Asiatics will be absolved from the obnoxious registration fee is a preposterous statement as they have already paid it, either to the Boer Government or to the British. They will not be given a title to their land and mosques, as your correspondent suggests. He is thinking of the Draft Ordinance which contained a clause authorizing the Government to give the British Indians a title to their mosques or places of worship but not to their land apart from mosque premises. But this clause does not now find place in the Ordinance as passed by the Legislative Council, nor was it necessary, because the Supreme Court of the Transvaal has decided that, in spite of Law 3 of 1885, Indians, acting as a religious corporation, [can] hold fixed property for religious purposes. British Indians in their wildest dreams have never claimed the right of free immigration into the Transvaal. They recognize the several prejudices against any such immigration, and have therefore accepted the principle of restriction in vogue at the Cape, Natal and other British Colonies.

The British Indians of the Transvaal respectfully but firmly oppose the Ordinance because it imposes wanton, uncalled for and unjust degradation upon them. It reduces them to a level lower than the Kaffirs. It sets up a system of passes and identification applicable only to criminals. Is it right that every Indian, irrespective of status, should be called upon to carry a pass containing impressions of all his digits, to be produced to every policeman who may choose to ask for it? Is it right that babies in arms should be taken to an officer called the Registrar of Asiatics, to give him particulars of identification in respect of the baby and to have it provisionally registered[?]

Whereas Law 3 of 1885 requires registration of traders only and

[1] *Vide* "The British Indian Association and Lord Milner", 11-6-1903

registration certificates under it are merely a receipt for £3, the present law requires registration of the above kind of every male Indian in the Colony.

The statement that the first undersigned has been the principal agent through whom Indians obtained permits to enter the Transvaal, and that he has in the past established a large business on this footing, is false. The large number of Indian refugees had already entered the Transvaal at the time the first undersigned was required to settle there.[1]

It is hardly necessary to deal with the personal element introduced by your correspondent. It is felt that the British Indian community has been much misrepresented and misunderstood.

Any influx of Asiatics into the Transvaal on a wholesale basis has been all denied by the British Indian community, whose position to-day is infinitely worse than it was under the Boer regime. The community has asked for an enquiry into the alleged influx of Asiatics on a large scale.[2] We assert that the vast majority of the 13,000 British Indians of the Transvaal are in possession of lawful permits and certificates. If there are any without the necessary documents, the Peace Preservation Ordinance is strong enough and severe enough to expel such people from the country. Successful prosecutions have often taken place in connection with such men.

It will therefore be seen that the British Indian community is prepared to meet in a perfectly fair spirit [the fear][3] as to undue influx or undue competition in trade; but it claims for the resident Indian population the ordinary rights of citizenship, namely, freedom to hold landed property, freedom of locomotion and freedom of trade under general regulations, without class distinction.

We are, etc.,

[M. K. GANDHI
H. O. ALLY]
MEMBERS OF THE
TRANSVAAL BRITISH [INDIAN] DEPUTATION

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4385

[1] This was in early 1903; *vide* "Chronology", 1903

[2] *Vide* "Influx of Asiatics", 10-3-1906

[3] These words are found in the version published in *India*.

359. LETTER TO F. MACKARNESS[1]

HOTEL CECIL,
[LONDON,]
October 24, 1906

DEAR SIR,

Mr. H. O. Ally of Johannesburg and I have arrived, being appointed as a Deputation by the British Indian Association of the Transvaal in connection with the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance passed by the Legislative Council of the Transvaal.

It is our intention to wait upon the authorities in connection with the Ordinance, as also upon prominent public men who have taken an interest in South African matters. I shall be obliged if you will kindly grant the Deputation an interview at an early d8[2] and allow it to place the position b4[3] you.

I remain,
Dear Sir,
Yours faithfully,

F. MACKARNESS, ESQ., M. P.[4]

6, KING'S BENCH WALK

INNER TEMPLE

Copy to Sir Lepel Griffin, K.C.S.I.,[5] Sloane Square, London[6]

From a photostat of the typewritten, unsigned draft: S. N. 4386

[1] According to the secretary's note, similar letters were sent to P. A. Molteno, M.P., Sir Charles Dilke, M.P. and Rt. Hon. Lord Stanley of Alderley.

[2] Date

[3] Before

[4] Frederic Coleridge Mackarness, (1854-1920), advocate of Cape Supreme Court, 1882; Liberal Member of Parliament, 1906-10

[5] (1838 1909); Anglo-Indian administrator and Chairman of the Council of East India Association, author of books on India and an advocate of the Indian cause in South Africa

[6] This is in Gandhiji's hand.

360. "INTERVIEW TO "SOUTH AFRICA"[1]

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
October 25, 1906]

[REPORTER:] Will you please give me your views on this question which has brought you so many thousand miles, Mr. Gandhi?

[GANDHIJI:] With pleasure, I had better begin at the beginning.

If you please.

Well, Mr. H. O. Ally, the Chairman of the Hamidiya Islamic Society, and myself have come over as an appointed Deputation from the British Indian Association of the Transvaal in virtue of the resolution passed by the great Indian mass meeting held at the Old Empire Theatre in Johannesburg last month.

And your object?

Our object is to place before the authorities here what we consider to be a true statement of the facts with a view to securing a disallowance of the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance of the Transvaal.

You consider, then, that the information so far available to the Colonial Secretary and the Secretary of State for India is inadequate?

That is so. I notice that you, as well as the London *Times*, have been misinformed regarding the Ordinance and the objection to it.

In what respect, may I ask?

For instance, it has been supposed that there is a very great unauthorized influx, [in] to the Transvaal, of British Indians, and that this influx is actually countenanced by the British Indian community as a body.

Then are those suppositions incorrect?

Yes. If those two statements were at all true, there would be some excuse for what is, after all, panic legislation; but the British Indian community has repeatedly denied the alleged unauthorized influx.

I take it that you agree with those denials, Mr. Gandhi?

Certainly. I claim personally to have a very wide experience of the working of the Permit Department, and I have no hesitation in saying that there is absolutely no unauthorized influx of British

[1] This appeared in *South Africa*, 27-10-1906, and was reproduced in *Indian Opinion*.

Indians [in] to the Colony, except [in] isolated cases; and those cases can be most effectively dealt with even under the present Peace Preservation Ordinance and Law No. 3 of 1885.

AS THE LAW STANDS AT PRESENT

Indeed, successful prosecutions have taken place in connection with any Indians who have tried to enter the Colony, either without permits, or on permits not belonging to them. Such persons can usually be detected by comparing the thumb-impressions of those who may present permits or registration certificates with the thumb imprints on those documents.

And if they do not agree, a prosecution follows?

Yes. If the thumb-impressions do not tally, the unlawful holders of such documents are liable to very heavy penalties. If an Indian is found in the Colony without a permit, he has either to leave the Transvaal on a summary notice, under pain of imprisonment, or to show that he belongs to one of the exempted classes mentioned in the Peace Preservation Ordinance. So you will see that the present machinery is absolutely complete. It therefore came to me as a painful surprise when I read a long cablegram in *The Times* last Monday to the effect that there was an unauthorized influx of British Indians [in]to the Transvaal, and that there was a great deal of personation going on which it was difficult to detect.

You complain, I believe, of injustice being done in some cases even under the present laws?

Undoubtedly. Even under the present laws, a great deal of terrible injustice has been inflicted, as, for instance, in the case of the Indian woman Punia,[1] which aroused general sympathy throughout the Transvaal. In that case, as is now well known, an Indian woman was torn away from her husband who held a proper permit.

But was not that rather an exceptional case?

By no means. In another case a child under eleven years of age was taken away from his parent because he was supposed to have come into the Transvaal on a permit not his own.[2]

What happened eventually?

A cablegram has now been received, stating that the Supreme Court has held the conviction of the child to be wholly bad, and has expressed the opinion that such prosecutions were calculated to bring

[1] *Vide* "Letter to the Press", 19-11-1906

[2] *Vide* "Transvaal Permit Ordinance", 29-9-1906

ridicule and contempt upon the administration of the law.[1]

SCOPE OF NEW ORDINANCE

If, therefore, the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance now before Lord Elgin is passed, one can easily understand how much more difficult the position of British Indians in the Transvaal is likely to be.

Does it represent, then, such very exceptional legislation ?

Indeed it does. The new Ordinance goes much further than anything I have seen in the legislation of any of the British Colonies.

But in what does the head and front of its offending consist?

I will tell you. It is most humiliating, in that it will require every Indian, irrespective of status, to put down the impression of his ten digits, and such a pass will have to be produced to every policeman who cares to demand it. All Indians, including children, will have to be registered in this manner, or, as it is called in the case of infants under eight years of age, provisionally registered.

And this is quite a new provision?

Yes. All this used not to be so under the Dutch regime, and we could always rely upon British protection whenever there was anything harsh or unjust in the administration of Law No. 3 of 1885.

But this Ordinance only amends the former Law?

No; it is a mistake to call the new Ordinance an amending ordinance, because its scope is entirely different from that of Law No. 3 of 1885. The latter penalises Indian traders to the extent only of one single payment of £3, whilst the former entirely restricts the immigration of British Indians.

Then do you take strong objection to that restriction?

No, with the restriction we do not quarrel, but the manner of it is, as I have shown, most humiliating and totally uncalled for.

The restriction itself, then, is not the bone of contention?

It is like this. We recognize the prejudice that exists in the Transvaal against British Indians and men of colour generally. We have, therefore, accepted the principle of restriction on the Cape or the Natal basis. After profound consideration, that has been the line of legislation adopted for all the colonies which have to face similar problems.

AN ENLIGHTENED INDIAN VIEW

There is not the slightest reason, why the Transvaal should be allowed to go any further than the other Colonies, or why the people

[1] *Vide* "British Indians in the Transvaal", 8-11-1906

of the Transvaal themselves should wish for any further powers, unless they intend—which I for one do not believe—to drive the Indians already in the country out of the Colony.

Has there not been considerable agitation against the Indian trader

We hear often of trade competition by British Indians, certainly, but I personally consider that new traders' licences may be regulated by the Town Councils or Licensing Boards, somewhat after the fashion of the Cape Dealers' Act; only such legislation, in order to be just, ought to be of general application, and not class legislation. You will therefore see that the British Indian community is perfectly willing to satisfy all reasonable objections raised to its presence, but, after that has been done, I think that all fair-minded men must admit that those at least who are [already] resident in the Colony should have freedom to move about, freedom to own landed property, and freedom to trade under the regulations I have referred to. I cannot conceive what exception any South African can take to a programme such as this.

Then the statement you have just made may be taken as embodying the case for the British Indians in the Transvaal, Mr. Gandhi?

Yes it is because we believe that there is a great deal of misunderstanding and exaggeration about our position that Mr. Ally and I have travelled all the Way from South Africa to endeavour to place our case fairly before the authorities. We are anxious to reconcile local opinions as much as possible.

You have not yet been received by Lord Elgin ?

Not yet; but all arrangements are being made, and we hope to see him in a few days. We should like the Deputation to be led and introduced by a number of British Members of Parliament and other prominent men who sympathize with the British Indians of the Transvaal on this question; and I thank *South Africa* from my heart for allowing me to give expression to our views in its columns.

Indian Opinion, 24- 11-1906

361. TELEGRAM TO SIR MUNCHERJI BHOWNAGGREE

[*October 25, 1906*]

TO
MUNCHERJI
196, CROMWELL ROAD, S. W.

SIR LEPEL HAS DECLINED TAKE PART DEPUTATION.[1]

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4388

362. TELEGRAM TO SIR GEORGE BIRDWOOD

[*October 25, 1906*]

TO
SIR GEORGE BIRDWOOD[2]
119, THE AVENUE
WEST EALING

MR. ALLY AND I HAVE ARRIVED FROM TRANSVAAL AS DEPUTATION WAIT ON LORD ELGIN. SIR HENRY COTTON, MR. NAOROJI, SIR MUNCHERJI, MR. COX[3] HAVE AGREED TO FORM DEPUTATION COMMITTEE AND INTRODUCE US AND LEAD. MAY I VENTURE ASK YOU JOIN AND BE SPOKESMAN, MAY I REQUEST ALSO INTERVIEW ? AM WIRING AS URGENT.

GANDHI, HOTEL CECIL

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4389

[1] He did ultimately lead the deputation.

[2] (1832-1917); Anglo-Indian official and author of *Industrial Arts of India* and other books and a student of Indian philosophy and art

[3] Harold Cox, [1859-1936); Professor of Mathematics, Aligarh College, 1885-7; economist and journalist; Member of Parliament, 1906-9

363. TELEGRAM TO AMEER ALI

[*October 25, 1906*]

TO
AMEER ALI[1]

WROTE YOU TUESDAY[2] REQUESTING YOU FOR INTERVIEW FOR INDIAN DEPUTATION FROM SOUTH AFRICA. HAVE NOT YET HEARD. PROBABLY LETTER MISCARRIED. IT IS PROPOSED THERE SHOULD BE DEPUTATION INTRODUCING US TO LORD ELGIN. HAVE JUST INVITED SIR GEORGE BIRDWOOD TO BE SPOKESMAN. SIR HENRY COTTON, MR. NAOROJI HAVE CONSENTED JOIN DEPUTATION. MAY I REQUEST YOU ALSO JOIN ? PLEASE WIRE REPLY AND TIME FOR INTERVIEW AT THE HOTEL CECIL.

GANDHI, HOTEL CECIL

From the typewritten office copy: S N. 4390

364. LETTER TO S. M. MANGA

[HOTEL CECIL]
LONDON,]
October 25, 1906

DEAR MR. MANGA,

Will you please give me a call on Monday between nine and half past in the morning, for all the other days I think I shall be engaged.

Yours truly,

S. M. MANGA, ESQ.[3]
106, BARON'S COURT ROAD
WEST KENSINGTON

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4392

[1] A former Judge of the Calcutta High Court, he was at this time a Member of the Privy Council. Author of the *Spirit of Islam* and *A Short History of the Saraeens*.

[2] This is not available.

[3] Suliman Manga was at this time studying for the Bar in London. *Vide "Letter to the Leader"*, Before 7-4-1906

365. LETTER TO J. H. POLAK

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
October 25, 1906

DEAR MR POLAK,

You will consider it perhaps funny that I have not yet looked you up.

Many thanks for sending the typist. Miss Lawson[1] is her name. She and I have commenced to know each other, and we are getting on very nicely. Unfortunately I had decided to take on Mr. Simmonds of South Africa, who was Private Secretary to Sir George Farrar[2], and whom I knew very well. I shall therefore reluctantly have to part with Miss Lawson next Saturday.

I want to discuss with you the question you incidentally raised while we were walking to your hospitable home. If therefore you should not be otherwise engaged, will you lunch with me tomorrow, and call here some time between one and two ? If I have not returned from my calls, I shall ask you kindly to wait either in the Hall or in my room until my return.

Yours truly,

J. H, POLAK, ESQ.[3]
28, GROSVENOR ROAD
CANONBURY, N.

PS.

If you will let me have a telephone message between 9 and 9.30 as to whether you can come or not, I shall be glad, as I am generally away after 9.30.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4393

[1] Miss Edith Lawson, secretarial assistant to the Deputation; *vide* "Certificate to Miss E. Lawson", 27-11-1906

[2] A miner, millionaire and legislator of the Transvaal; *vide* "Falling into Line", 12-8-1905

[3] Father of H. S. L. Polak

366. LETTER TO A. H. GOOL

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
October 25, 1906

DEAR MR. GOOL,

Your father has asked me particularly to see you before I return to Johannesburg. My arrangements do not allow of my paying friendly calls at present, and lest I may be too much engaged during the whole of my stay, may I ask you to give me a call at the above address between 9 and 9.30 in the morning, any day. The day is occupied with paying visits, and I am never sure when I am in. I hope you are getting on well.

Yours truly,

A. H. GOOL, ESQ.[1]
27, PECKHAM ROAD, S.E.

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4394

367. LETTER TO L. M. JAMES

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
October 25, 1906

DEAR MR. JAMES,

I waited for you on Wednesday at lunch time, thinking you would turn up. I am sorry you did not. I take it some engagement kept you away. I return the handkerchief you kindly lent me. Perhapsyou will be able to meet me some other time. Mr. Lew[2] was to have sent me a representative of the Chinese Embassy. I have to draw up a letter to the Foreign Office[3] in connection with it. Will you kindly therefore send me a copy of your representation ? I take it it is the

[1] Son of Hamid Gool, a leading Indian of Cape Town

[2] Yuk Lin Lew, Chinese Consul-General in the Transvaal. Both he and James sailed by the same steamer as Gandhiji and H. O. Ally.

[3] *Vide* "Draft for Chinese Ambassador", After 31-10-1906

same that I drew up.[1] Unfortunately I have not a copy with me.

Yours truly,

L. M. JAMES, ESQ.[2]
CHINESE LEGATION
PORTLAND PLACE, W.

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4395

368. LETTER TO SIR GEORGE BIRDWOOD

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
October 25, 1906

DEAR SIR ,

I am much obliged to you for your telegram in reply to my wire[3] regarding the Indian Deputation. I have been in constant touch with Sir Muncherji[4], and am writing to him again,[5] and have no doubt that he will approve of the idea of your becoming spokesman. I may mention that I approached Sir Lepel Griffin, but somehow, although he is in full sympathy with our views, he will not lead. Before, however, the deputation goes forth, Mr. Ally and I are anxious to pay our respects to you and to place the position before you. I hope, therefore, that there will be an appointment in your letter following your telegram. If not, I shall thank you to give me one.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

SIR GEORGE BIRDWOOD
119, THE AVENUE
WEST EALING

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4396

[1] This is not available.

[2] L. M. James was specially deputed by the Chinese community in South Africa to present, in person, a petition on their behalf to the Chinese Ambassador in England.

[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Sir George Birdwood", 25-10-1906

[4] Gandhiji now spells the name as "Muncherji", which is how Sir Muncherji Bhownaggree himself spelt it.

[5] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Muncherji Bhownaggree", 25-10-1906

369. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
October 25, 1906

MY DEAR RITCH

I had a very long chat with Sir Muncherji, and am to have another again. Will you please come up to the City tomorrow ? You need not necessarily see me, as I may be away, except between 9 and 9.30 but I would like you to look up office rooms[1] in Victoria Street or some such neighbourhood. I see that the main difficulty will prove to be with our finances in working the committee, especially for South African work. Sir Muncherji has promised to work whole-heartedly. He seems to feel most keenly about the question, and there is a great deal of organizing still to be done so that something may be definitely fixed before I go. I hope Mr. Cohen[2] is better; he should certainly be sent to a hospital. You should see him some time tomorrow, either before or after you have finished your round.

Yours sincerely,

L. [W.] RITCH, ESQ.[3]
[41, SPRINGFIELD ROAD
ST. JOHN'S WOOD, N.]

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4397

370. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD ELGIN

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON, W.C.,
October 25, 1906

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
THE RIGHT HON'BLE THE EARL OF ELGIN
HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
LONDON

SIR,

Mr H. O. Ally and I, appointed by the British Indian

[1] For the proposed South Africa British Indian Committee
[2] Ritch's father-in-law
[3] A theosophist friend and assistant of Gandhiji; was at this time in England keeping terms for the Bar.

Association ofthe Transvaal as a Deputation to wait upon Your Lordship in conn-ection with the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance of the Transvaal,published in the Transvaal *Government Gazette* on the 28th day of September, 1906, arrived on Saturday last, and I have the honour to report our arrival.

My co-Delegate and I shall have the honour to avail ourselves of the permission graciously granted by His Lordship to wait upon him in connection with the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance of the Transvaal. Several gentlemen who have interested themselves in the British Indian question in South Africa will probably introduce the Deputation to His Lordship, and they will in due course request an appointment.

1 have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten original: C. O. 291, Vol. 113, Ind; also office copy: S. N. 4398

371. LETTER TO SIR MUNCHERJI BHOWNAGGREE

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
October 25, 1906

DEAR SIR MUNCHERJEE

At the time I telegraphed[1] to you, I telegraphed to Sir George Birdwood[2] also asking him whether he will lead the deputation. He sends a telegram which I am sure you will appreciate. He says: "Yes, if Sir Muncherji approves I will attend and speak." I have now written to him telling him that I have no doubt you will. Will you kindly write to Sir George Birdwood whatever you deem fit, and let me know.

It is strange that Sir Lepel, although he has always sympathized, would not join the deputation. I believe it is because of his not being in harmony with the other proposed members of the deputation.

I have not yet heard from Mr. Ameer Ali. I have, therefore,

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Sir Muncherji Bhownaggree", 25-10-1906.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Sir George Birdwood", 25-10-1906

telegraphed to him.[1]

I remain,

Yours truly,

SIR MUNCHERJEE M. BHOWNAGGREE, K.C.S.I.
196, CROMWELL ROAD
LONDON, S. W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4399

372. LETTER TO G. J. ADAM

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
October 26, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I am very sorry I missed you when you gave me a call at the above address. I shall be pleased to see you between ten and half-past tomorrow morning, and to give you all the information you may require. My co-Delegate Mr. Ally, I am sorry to say, is at present at the Lady Margaret Hospital undergoing treatment for rheumatism.

Yours faithfully,

G. J. ADAM, ESQ.[2]
82, SHAFTESBURY AVENUE, W.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4400

373. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
October 26, 1906

DEAR MR. POLAK,

I am sending you all the cuttings that I consider to be useful. If I can find the time, I shall translate[3] the substance of the fight of the women suffragists for the Guzerati[4] columns, but if I do not, let Chhaganlal translate them, and make an

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Ameer Ali" 25-10-1906
[2] Of Reuter; *vide* "Interview to Reuter", 27-10-1906.
[3] *Vide* "Deeds Better than Words", 26-10-1906
[4] Gujarati

effective use of these valuable cuttings. I have asked Mr. Mukerji[1] also to deal with the matter in his London Letter. Of course all the cuttings I am sending you are not necessarily to be used for *Indian Opinion*. Some of them you would like to see yourself—that is why I am sending them.

I have not allowed myself a moment's rest ever since my landing here. Work commenced on Saturday immediately on landing.

I gave an interview to *The Tribune*[2] man on board, and to *The Morning Leader*[3] man, whom your father had brought with him, at the station immediately I got on to the platform. Soon after having my meal, Mr. Ally and I went over to the London Indian Society and paid our respects to the Grand Old Man, and made with him appointments for seeing Sir William[4] and Sir Henry[5]. I have not gone to bed before one o'clock, except on Wednesday night: interviewing people takes up a lot of time. So far as I have progressed, it seems that Sir George Birdwood, supported by Sir Muncherji, Sir Henry Cotton and others, will introduce us to Lord Elgin. It will therefore be a very good movement. Mr. Ameer Ali has telegraphed to me saying he also would join in introducing the Deputation. Lord Elgin will therefore know what an influential backing we have and that the Conservative, the Liberal, the Anglo-Indian and the Mahomedan opinion is all solid in our favour.

I have received your cable. It was extended by me for the columns of *India*. I hope it represents correctly what I received in your cablegram. It was not very clear. I send you a copy of the cablegram as received by me. You will see for yourself whether it is a correct copy. I hardly think it is. You should have given me the necessary stops.

As soon as the date of the Deputation is fixed, I shall cable you and shall include a few words regarding Mr. Abdool Gani. I may, however, state that I made absolutely no such statement as was attributed to me by Mr. Murray. I did not tell him that the second bond should be lodged with the Bank: on the contrary, I told him that we should use the second bond for raising a loan. The whole

[1] Gandhiji had asked him to send regular despatches for *Indian Opinion*, especially selected news items and comments from *The Times*; *vide* "Letter to J. C. Mukerji", 27-10-1906

[2] *Vide* "Interview to *The Tribune*", 20-10-1906

[3] *Vide* "Interview to *The Morning Leader*", 20-10-1906

[4] Sir William Wedderburn

[5] Sir Henry Cotton

conversation took place through the 'phone. You may, therefore, assure Mr. Abdool Gani that there was no such binding statement made by me.

I now come to the most important part of my letter. I think that it is quite possible to have here a very strong committee solely devoted to the affairs of British Indians in South Africa. Sir Muncherji is very enthusiastic. Sir William has approved of the suggestion. The way is therefore paved. Ritch's hands will be free. No matter whether the Deputation succeeds or not, its work must be continued, and there is not the slightest doubt that we will have legislation as soon as Responsible Government is established. We will then be able to avoid a Deputation, which will be almost [un]necessary if we have an effective working committee. We would not only then do more through it than through a temporary deputation, but would do it at perhaps one-tenth of the cost of a deputation; but if it requires the proper man, it requires funds also. I think that at the most—or perhaps at the least — have not yet all the figures before me—we would want to spend £25 per month. The committee will probably last two years. Anyhow we shall guarantee a year's expenses, viz., £300. We would not be able to take up offices cheaply on less than a year's lease. We would have to pay something to Ritch, as he cannot be expected in the present state of his finances to do the work gratis. After he returns to South Africa, it is my intention to offer the post to your father, if he will take it. I am going to discuss it today with him at luncheon time. Please therefore call a meeting of the Association British Indian Committee[1] and place the whole position before them. If they agree, let me have a cable saying, Yes. At the same time you should have funds ready. Do not send me the affirmative cable unless you get the funds there in your possession, or unless you feel absolutely certain of getting them. Mr. Ally entirely approves of the idea; probably he will be writing.

I passed last Sunday with your people. Nothing surprised me, as you had prepared me for everything; otherwise to meet your sisters and your brilliant father would have been a most agreeable surprise. Both the sisters are really most lovable, and if I was unmarried, or young, or believed in mixed marriage, you know what I would have done! As it is, I told them that if I had made their acquaintance in 1888 (for not doing which they took me severely to task) I should have adopted them as daughters, from which proposition your father violently dissented. Your mother was very hospitable. Professor Parmanand[2] was with me. He has made himself one of the family.

[1] Committee of the British Indian Association

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Revashankar Jhaveri", 18-7-1905

Your mother is suffering from a very severe attack of indigestion. I mildly proposed an extended Jewish fast. I am afraid the proposal won't wash, however it has gone in for what it is worth. I pushed in the claim for earth-bandages also, and by the time I have done with them, I might be able to make some impression. Anyhow she said she was quite open to conviction. The soup, let me tell you, was all prepared by your father. He told me he passed a considerable time in thinking out all the ingredients, etc., etc. I have not been able to go and see Milly's[1] sister. I see that I have more work before me than I bargained for, and have not a moment to spare to pay friendly calls. I have, however, written to her asking her to give me an appointment for an evening. The reply is due some time today. I will not leave before seeing her.

You will not be surprised to learn that this is being dictated to our friend Mr. Simmonds. I sent the cable[2] about our arrival, as Mr. Ally was anxious that I should. He has promised to do so to Mrs. Ally.

Since the above was in type I have seen your father. He thinks that £300 per year will not be sufficient. Of course his ideas are necessarily large. At the same time they are entitled to every respect, as he has local knowledge and experience. If, therefore, you can push through the proposal for £500, it will be better. We should simply spend what is absolutely necessary. At the same time, if authority is given for spending more, I know that the money will not be wasted. I have now seen Mr. Scott, and, you will be pleased to hear, Mr. J. M. Robertson. Your father took me to Mr. Scott, who is his personal friend, and it was at the House of Commons[3] that Mr. Robertson happened to come in, and we were introduced to him by Mr. Scott. Both gentlemen have interested themselves in the question. Mr. Scott suggested that I should address a number of members of the House of Commons,[2] and Mr. Scott and Mr. Robertson are going to see about it. A similar suggestion has been made by Mr. Mackarness also. Let us see what happens. This now brings me up to date. I need not now say anything more. Carefully go through all the cuttings I am sending you: they are worth reading. My kind regards to all. I have not the time to write separately to any one else. As it is, this portion of my letter is being dictated at five minutes to eight. I am to see your people again on Sunday.

Will you please send this letter to Mr. West so that I may not

[1] Mrs. Millie Graham Polak

[2] This is not available

[3] This he did on November 7; vi*de* "Meeting at House of Commons", 7-11-1906

have to repeat in my letter to him what I have said in this letter ? I do not think the personal matters I have touched upon need prevent this letter going to him. I am not sending you a copy of the full text of our letter to *The Times*[1] as you will see it reproduced in *India*. You will see something in the current issue of *India* about the election of Mr. Naoroji to the Presidentship of the Congress. You need not deal with the matter in the paper. I have no time to go into the reasons. Had it been necessary I would have dealt with it from here. You may reproduce two notes from *India* without any comment, regarding the treatment of indentured Indians on board the *Umfuli*.

Yours sincerely,

[H. S. L. POLAK, ESQ.
BOX 6522
JOHANNESBURG
SOUTH AFRICA]

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4406

374. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
October *26, 1906*

DEAR MR. WEST

Ever since Saturday last I have not had breathing time, and except for one night I have not been able to go to bed before one o'clock in the morning. I have written a very long letter to Polak,[2] and have asked him to send it on to you for perusal. Please read it yourself and show it to Chhaganlal. It will give you in full detail everything about my movements. As this is being typed at 8.30 p.m. you will excuse me for not giving you a long letter. I see that I shall be busy up to the end of my stay here. Under the circumstances it is hardly possible to cut myself away from London for full one day. I have, therefore, asked Miss Pywell[3] to see me in London by appointment, and have offered, if you will let me, to defray her expenses. I am only hoping that she will come. I have had a chat with Mr. Mukerji about

[1] *Vide* "Letter to *The Times*", 22-10-1906
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] Ada Pywell, later Mrs. West

his contribution.

Yours sincerely,

A. H. WEST, ESQ.
Indian Opinion
PHOENIX
NATAL

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4401

375. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
October 26, 1906

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I have not a moment to spare. It is now 8.30 p.m. and I have not touched the Gujarati letter. If I can, I want to give you one leading article[1] and one correspondence letter[2] in continuation of what I have sent you already from the *Armadale*. I shall do what I can: the rest you must learn from my long letter to Mr. Polak,[3] which I have asked him to send there. Mr. West is bringing his sister there. I think it is a wise step. She appeared to be simple and willing. We do want some English ladies there. Do please make the best use possible of her. Let your wife and other ladies mix freely with her, and let her feel that there is no distance between her and us, and make her as comfortable as possible. Let the ladies learn all that is to be learnt from her and give her all that can possibly be given to her in the way of teaching. Each party has very strong points for the other to imbibe. I do hope all the womenfolk go to the Press, especially on Saturdays. Let there be a real effort in that direction. I hope to place the London correspondence on a very strong footing before I come away.

Yours sincerely,

C. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
Indian Opinion
PHOENIX
NATAL

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4402

[1] "Deeds Better than Words", 26-10-1906

[2] Perhaps a typing error for 'correspondent's letter'. The reference is to "The Deputation's Voyage–IV": *vide* "The Deputation's Voyage —IV", 26-10-1906

[3] *Vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak",26-10-1906

376. LETTER TO SIR HENRY COTTON

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
October 26, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I beg to report that Sir Lepel Griffin has declined to lead the deputation that is to introduce the Indian Deputation from South Africa. I waited on Sir William and Mr. Naoroji this morning with the news. When I received an answer in the negative from Sir Lepel, not knowing all the local circumstances, I immediately telegraphed to Sir George Birdwood,[1] thinking he being a neutral man would be the next best person, asking him whether he would join the deputation and be the spokesman. He telegraphed saying he would if Sir Muncherji agreed. Sir William thought that I had done a rash act in asking Sir George Birdwood to be the spokesman, as the proposition might not be acceptable to the other members of the deputation. I realized my mistake too late. Sir William and Mr. Naoroji think that Sir Muncherji, who has been uniformly and zealously working in connection with the matter of the British Indians in South Africa, should be asked to be the spokesman, but they suggested that I was to secure your permission before I moved further. I, therefore, went to the House of Commons to see you, but a constable informed me that you were not in the House. I now write this asking you kindly to wire me whether you approve of the proposal that Sir Muncherji should be the spokesman.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

SIR HENRY COTTON, M.P.
45, ST. JOHN'S WOOD PARK, N. W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4403

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Sir George Birdwood", 25-10-1906

377. LETTER TO DR. J. OLDFIELD

HOTEL CECIL,
[LONDON,]
October 26, 1906

MY DEAR OLDFIELD

I see Mr. Ally has had a relapse last night. I write this just to ask you please to see Mr. Ally every day. Expense is of no consideration. Please, therefore, do not let that hinder you from seeing him every day. Your presence alone would be inspiring and cheering. I am most anxious to have him, if only during the day time, to work here and see people. It is necessary for him to do so.

I had a delicious supper last night at the place. I hope to be able to pay a visit in the day time and inspect all your arrangements and the Hospital grounds. I want to write about my sorrows[1] also, but I am too late to do so tonight.

Yours sincerely,

DR. JOSIAH OLDFIELD[2]
LADY MARGARET HOSPITAL
BROMLEY
KENT

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4404

378. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

HOTEL CECIL,
[LONDON,]
October 26, 1906

MY DEAR RITCH,

I see you called at the Hotel today while I was in. I asked the waiter to bring you up, but evidently you came in only to leave your card, as he did not find you. I notice, too, you saw George Godfrey, and learning from him he was looking for offices, you did not go. I, however, wanted you to make independent enquiries. We want to manage it as cheaply as possible. However, when you get the time,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. J. Oldfield", 27-10-1906

[2] Editor, *The Vegetarian*, and President of the Vegetarian Society, London. Gandhiji met him for the first time while a student in England.

please go out. I see, after all, that tomorrow I shall not be able to attend the confirmation ceremony. If I can, I shall certainly come in, but I have a letter from Sir George Birdwood asking me if Sir Muncherji is agreeable to see him at the latter's house in the afternoon. It is quite possible that I may be able, after I leave Sir Muncherji, to go over. If I can, I will do so. You need not wait for me, however. If I drop in, I shall have something to eat at your place, but if I do drop in, it is not likely to be before 7 or 8 o'clock. You need not expect me at all after 8. If Sir Muncherji does not wire an engagement in the morning, of course, I come down to your place. I am at the Hotel tomorrow at least up to 10.30, because I have given an appointment to Reuter's man[1] up to that time.

Yours sincerely,

L. W. RITCH, ESQ.
41, SPRINGFIELD ROAD
ST. JOHN'S WOOD, N.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4405

379. LETTER TO PROFESSOR PARMANAND

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
October 26, 1906

DEAR PROFESSOR PARMANAND,

I had a chat with Ratnam[2] when he was here with my luggage. Ever since that I have been thinking of him during spare moments. To me every one from South Africa is a valuable asset and to be converted into a still more valuable asset by proper nursing. I think that, even from a material standpoint, Ratnam's life is being very much wasted. His preliminary education being very poor, he will find it hard to battle in his profession; more so in South Africa where he will have to live down a great deal of prejudice. I know of no practitioner in South Africa with so little equipment as he will have at the time he is finished.

It is not enough that he will know English perhaps fairly well; he must have, in my opinion, a good grounding in mathematics. The leader of the South African Bar considers that a knowledge of French, Latin and Dutch (especially Latin) is almost indispensable for success

[1] G. J. Adam; *vide* "Interview to Reuter", 27-10-1906
[2] Ruthnam Pather, who was studying for the Bar

at the Bar. Some scientific training also is necessary; otherwise Ratnam will find himself very greatly handicapped when his opponents make use of scientific expressions, or the Court does so. Also, if ever he is going to dedicate his knowledge of law to the good of his country and does not wish to use it commercially, he must have a knowledge of some technical art as a means of living. He is young enough to do all these things. Above all, he must have discipline, even severe discipline. I, therefore, suggested to him that he should attend a school here and go through a regular matriculation course, and even if a pass is beyond him, the same grounding at the school will do him good. As you are looking after him, I thought I should tell you what I have already told him. He said he would consult you and let me know.

Yours sincerely,

PROFESSOR PARMANAND
65, CROMWELL AVENUE
HIGHGATE

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4407

380. LETTER TO H. O. ALLY

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
October 26, 1906

DEAR MR. ALLY

I have just heard through the telephone that you passed a very bad night. I am exceedingly sorry and I wonder what the cause of it could be. I am superstitious enough to say it was due to the cigar. As a matter of fact, I told George[1], as we were walking, that, while the progress was imminent, it might be retarded by even one puff of the deadly cigar—such is my strong conviction regarding nicotine. I have seen much suffering from it. However, I may be mistaken. If so, please pardon. All I want is to find you hale and hearty. I was delighted to see you chatting away so hilariously last night. I was, therefore, very much pained to hear through the nurse that you had passed a bad night.

I shall send George as soon as he comes. I have given the nurse a message for you to which I may receive a reply later on, but I put it down in writing also. I might have mentioned it there but I forgot.

I have been discussing with Sir Muncherji and Sir William

[1] George Godfrey

Wedderburn the advisability of establishing a permanent committee for British Indians in South Africa. Perhaps you recollect that you made the suggestion long ago. I think that our work could be usefully continued if such a permanent committee composed of people representing all shades of opinion is established, say, for one or two years. I am, therefore, most anxious that such a committee be formed. We could then perhaps afford a second deputation.

I have written to Mr. Polak about it and asked him to reply, yes or no.[1]

Will you kindly let me know your opinion on the matter and, if you agree with me, please write this evening confirming my opinion.

Yours sincerely,

HAJEE OJER ALLY, ESQ.
LADY MARGARET HOSPITAL
BROMLEY

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4408

381. LETTER TO YUK LIN LEW

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
October 26, 1906

DEAR MR. LEW

You promised to send me a representation addressed by the Chinese community to the Chinese Ambassador (or is it Minister?), so as to enable me to draft the letter you want me to.

I am quite ready to draft the representation[2] as soon as I get the Chinese petition, but you will recognize that it is necessary for me to have it, if only for the date and description.

Yours truly,

YUK LIN LEW, ESQ.
CHINESE LEGATION
PORTLAND PLACE, W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4409

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 26-10-1906
[2] *Vide* "Draft for Chinese Ambassador", After 31-10-1906

382. THE DEPUTATION'S VOYAGE—IV

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
October 26, 1906

I have already given an account of our voyage up to the time we were about to reach Madeira.

MADEIRA

We reached Madeira on the morning of Tuesday, October 16. Generally all passengers land at Madeira and go for a stroll, and we too went ashore. This island is very beautiful. Situated upon a hill, Madeira is inhabited, tier upon tier up to a height of 2,500 feet. There is greenery all round, with hardly an uncultivated patch. All over the island the paths are paved, and no wheeled carriages are used, only sledgelike barrows, drawn along the way. These barrows go down the slopes at great speed but without the least danger. The barrow is so light that a man can carry it on his head. The island is in the possession of the Portuguese and is inhabited entirely by them. No Indian was to be seen. The view of the island is lovely and charming.

ARRIVAL IN LONDON

On the morning of the 20th, we reached Southampton Docks where we were met by Mr. West and his sister. From here one has to take a train [to London]. A reporter of *The Tribune*, a well-known paper, came to see us on board the steamer. We told him all the facts. He published the whole account in his paper on Monday. The train reached Waterloo Station at 12.30. Messrs Ritch, Godfrey and Joseph Royeppen met us at the station and Mr. Henry Polak's father had also come there with a reporter of *The Morning Leader*. We gave him the story. The report[1] published by *The Morning Leader* on Monday was much better than that[2] in *The Tribune*. Thus, our work began even before we reached London. We went to India House, as Mr. Ritch had made arrangements for our stay there. There is not enough space this time for an account of India House. I propose to give one the next time.[3] We ate our meal and left forthwith for the meeting of the London Indian Society, where we had the good fortune of meeting Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji. He welcomed us, and a visit to him again on Monday was fixed. We spent the whole of Sunday meeting Indian

[1] *Vide* "Interview to *The Morning Leader*",20-10-1906

[2] *Vide* "Interview to *The Tribune*", 22-10-1906

[3] *Vide* "The Deputation's Voyage—V", 3-11-1906

youths and Mr. Polak and at night met Pandit Shyamji Krishnavarma.[1] Our conversation went on till one in the morning.

MONDAY TO FRIDAY

I do not get a moment's leisure here. As I write this it is 11 p.m. We have had interviews with Sir Muncherji, Sir William Wedderburn, Sir Henry Cotton, Mr. Cotton[2], Mr. Hall, Mr. Robertson, Mr. Arathoon,[3] Mr. Scott and other gentlemen. Our idea is to have men of different parties here to accompany and introduce us to Lord Elgin to plead for us and to give us their full support. Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Sir Muncherji Bhownaggree, Mr. Harold Cox, Mr. Justice Ameer Ali and Sir George Birdwood are already with us. Very probably the interview will take place next week. We have informed Lord Elgin of our arrival and his acknowledgement too has been received.

"THE TIMES" CORRESPONDENT

The Times correspondent in the Transvaal, as if by previous arrangement, cabled just on Monday to his paper saying that many Indians had entered the Colony. If they continued to enter in this way, the whites would have to leave bag and baggage. As the new act gave the Indians the right to hold land and other rights, it was hoped that Lord Elgin would give his assent to it. If he did not, the whites would be very much offended. Again, the correspondent hoped that Sir Richard Solomon would fully champion the cause of the whites in regard to the act. Moreover, he added, Mr. Gandhi, a member of the Deputation, was a clever lawyer, who was responsible for the entry of Indians into the Transvaal and who had made much money thereby. Such a cablegram was despatched from there to throw dust into the eyes of people here. The same day, we sent *The Times* a reply[4] from which important paragraphs were published on Thursday. The whole reply was published in *India* on Friday. In our reply we had said that, even if any Indians entered without permits, their number was very small, that the Government had even now the authority to expel them and that the new law was oppressive. No Indian wants that the whole of India should migrate to South Africa. Nor does anyone wish that the whites should be deprived of all their trade. In proof of our *bona fides* we are prepared to accept laws on the lines of those at the Cape or

[1] Gandhiji had several talks with him; *ibid*.

[2] H. E. A. Cotton, Editor, *India*.

[3] Editor, *Asia Quarterly Review* and Honorary Secretary of East India Association; elsewhere letters are addressed to or mention is made of C. W. Arathoon, W. H. Arathoon and W. Arathoon—presumably the same person.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to *The Times*", 22-10-1906

Natal, but we must have equal rights [with the whites] to hold land, etc.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-12-1906

383. DEEDS BETTER THAN WORDS[1]

[*October 26, 1906*]

Two things are now being widely discussed in England. One relates to the decision of the soap manufacturers who, like their American opposite numbers, have combined and resolved to increase the price of soap. The dealers in soap and the public naturally did not relish the decision. But they did not approach the Government for help; neither did they appeal to the manufacturers; but they resorted to direct action. They notified the manufacturers that they would not buy their soap even if it meant a great loss to them. The result was that Lever Brothers, of Sunlight Soap fame, who used till now to have fifteen ounces of soap in their one-pound cake, will henceforth give the full sixteen. The lesson from this is that deeds are better than words. The action of the dealers proved more fruitful than mere words.

The second example illustrating this saying is more remarkable. It is the movement in England for women's right to vote, which the Government is unwilling to concede. The women therefore go to the House of Commons and harass the Members. They have sent petitions, written letters, delivered speeches and tried many other means. Last Wednesday, they went to the House of Commons as soon as it opened and demanded the right to vote; they caused some damage also, for which they were prosecuted and sentenced to furnish a security of £5 each. On their refusing to do so, they were sentenced to imprisonment, and they are now in gaol. Most of the women have got three months. All of them come from respectable families and some are very well educated. One of these is the daughter of the late Mr. Cobden who was highly respected by the people. She is serving her term in gaol. Another is the wife of Mr. Lawrence. A third is an LL.B. On the very day these women went to gaol there was a huge meeting here in support of the resolve adopted by the brave ladies, and a sum of £650 was collected on the spot. Mr. Lawrence announced that he would pay £10 a day as long as his wife was in gaol. Some persons regard these women as insane; the police use

[1] This article was promised to Polak in Gandhiji's letter to him; *vide* "Letter to H.S.L. Polak, 26-10-1906

force against them; the magistrate looks upon them with a stern eye. Cobden's brave daughter said, "I shall never obey any law in the making of which I have no hand; I will not accept the authority of the court executing those laws; if you send me to gaol, I will go there, but I shall on no account pay a fine. I will not furnish any security either." It is no wonder that a people which produces such daughters and mothers should hold the sceptre. Today the whole country is laughing at them, and they have only a few people on their side. But undaunted, these women work on steadfast in their cause. They are bound to succeed and gain the franchise, for the simple reason that deeds are better than words. Even those who laughed at them would be left wondering. If even women display such courage, will the Transvaal Indians fail in their duty and be afraid of gaol ? Or would they rather consider the gaol a palace and readily go there? When that time comes, India's bonds will snap of themselves.

We have sent petitions; made speeches; and we shall continue to do so. But we shall gain our object only if we have the kind of strength we have spoken of. People do not have much faith in articles and speeches. Anyone can do that, they call for no courage. Deeds after all better than words. All other things are unavailing, and no one is afraid of them. The only way therefore is to sacrifice oneself and take the plunge. We have much to do yet, no doubt of that.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 24-11-1906

384. DRAFT LETTER TO LORD ELGIN[1]

196, CROMWELL ROAD,
LONDON, S. W.,
October 27, 1906

TO
THE RIGHT HON'BLE THE EARL OF ELGIN
HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
LONDON

DEAR LORD ELGIN,

Sir George Birdwood, Mr. Naoroji, Sir Henry Cotton and

[1] This draft letter, found among Gandhiji's papers, was clearly intended to be signed by Sir Muncherji Bhownaggree whose address it bears at the top. It was not sent as Sir Lepel Griffin did eventually agree to lead the deputation. *Vide* also "Telegram to Sir Muncherji Bhownaggree", 25-10-1906

Mr. Ameer Ali and a few others, including myself, have been approached by the Indian Deputation that has arrived from the Transvaal. The Indian Delegates have asked us to lead the Deputation as most of us have always taken an interest in the question affecting British Indians in South Africa.

I have been asked to become spokesman by those who have consented to take part in the deputation, and as I have studied the question perhaps more thoroughly than the others, I have accepted the position.

May I then, on behalf of the Committee, ask you to appoint a time for receiving the Delegates from the Transvaal, accompanied by the Committee.

I am,

Yours truly

From a photostat of the typewritten draft S. N. 4410

385. INTERVIEW TO REUTER[2]

[*October 27, 1906*][1]

Mr. Gandhi, speaking to Reuter's representative, said:

We have come to protest against the new Transvaal Asiatic Ordinance, which is humiliating for the British Indians, all of whom will have to carry a pass bearing thumb-prints and other marks of identification. The object of the new Ordinance is to prevent unauthorized Indians from entering the Transvaal. We hope to convince the Imperial Government that this is effectually done by the existing Permit Ordinance[2], which is very strictly applied.

The Times, 29-10-1906

386. LETTER TO H. O. ALLY

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
October 27, 1906

DEAR MR. ALLY,

George has seen me after his interview with you, and also Dr. Oldfield. I am delighted that what I feared was a relapse was, after all, a blessing in disguise. I am delighted also that, when he saw you, you

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. J. Adam", 26-10-1906 and the following item.

[2] Peace Preservation Ordinance

were looking hale and hearty. When I think of it, I do feel that our stay here would have been incomplete without George. Who [else] would have been the link between us?[1] The idea you have suggested about a gathering has been uppermost in my mind. As you may imagine, I have not been at all idle. I have been seeing people here and there. A suggestion has already been made that there should be a meeting in the House of Commons[2] which should be addressed by both of us. I do want you to be present at these gatherings, unless adverse circumstances prevent it. I would not think of addressing these gatherings without you. I know full well the value of your presence as also of your speech. The interview with Lord Elgin is not likely to come off before the week after next, that is to say, not for the next 8 or 9 days. I have just returned from a visit to Sir Muncherji and Sir George Birdwood. The latter paid a friendly call at the Hotel and enquired about you. I am only sorry that you are not with me during these visits; you would have seen a great deal of the public men here, and obtained an insight into the working of British institutions. However, I believe sufficiently in predestination, and I, therefore, take comfort in the thought that even in your absence from these meetings there may be some good lurking. It may be that, when you suddenly appear to address a gathering, you would lend a charm to it which would not have been possible if you had seen the members individually, but whenever there is a public function, even though it may be inconvenient, you shall always attend. There are likely to be two such gatherings. Mr. Polak is trying to have a gathering by an educational society. I beseech you to keep yourself religiously away from cigars. Certainly, have as much as you like of the hubble-bubble. Follow Dr. Oldfield's instructions implicitly. I am certain that no other doctor could restore you to health with the same amount of despatch as Dr. Oldfield. I feel, therefore, that you are in the safest hands. I sent you a budget of letters today, and a copy of *Indian Opinion*. *South Africa* has certainly given the very best interview[3] possible, and you will see how the Editor has veered round to a moderate expression in his editorial columns. You might not have seen his violent articles 3 or 4 weeks ago. The editorial this morning was, therefore, quite refreshing reading. Please command me if you want anything more, and do not hesitate to send any suggestions you wish to send.

I did not ring off this morning after you told me you were well.

[1] The original has, "George, who would have been..."

[2] *Vide* "Meeting at House of Commons",7-11-1906

[3] *Vide* "Interview to *South Africa*",25-10-1906

It was the silly girl at the exchange who did it. I then tried to have the connection restored, but failed, and then gave it up, because I wanted to be ready to meet Reuter's agent. I had a long chat with him at the Hotel. He saw immediately that the Ordinance was practically useless and tyrannical. These are, of course, mere words, but who knows, they may do good in the end.

Yours sincerely,

H. O. ALLY, ESQ.
LADY MARGARET HOSPITAL
BROMLEY
KENT

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4411

387. LETTER TO DR. J. OLDFIELD

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
October 27, 1906

MY DEAR OLDFIELD,

I told you that I wanted to write to you about my sorrows.[1] I think I mentioned that, when I was in Bombay, I had lost my sense of smell; as the doctor put it, I am supposed to be suffering from chronic[2] *ozaena*. I have chronic catarrh. Of course, I do not know whether you have made a speciality of throat diseases. If not, and you think it is worth while, you can put me on to a specialist again. I think it was when I was carrying on a fruit-and-nut diet experiment that I damaged my teeth. I believed that I had permanently damaged two molars and I thought that I was going to lose one of them on board. I certainly tried hard to pull one out but I did not succeed. Would you see them or do you want me to go to a dentist? If so, please give me a reliable name.

Friends though we are, if you are going to attend to either of the two complaints, you must do so professionally if only because whatever you receive, I know, goes to a humanitarian purpose.

If you will see me professionally, kindly give me an appointment, but you may name more than one time, so that I can make my selection. I have to interview so many people that it is not possible for me to make definite appointments. Mr. Ally telephoned

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. J. Oldfield", 26-10-1906

[2] The original has "chronis".

to me saying he is much better today. I was delighted to hear it. I hope you will soon put him right.

Yours sincerely,

DR. OLDFIELD
LADY MARGARET HOSPITAL
BROMLEY

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4412

388. LETTER TO J. C. MUKERJ1

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
October 27, 1906

DEAR MR. MUKERJI,

I forgot to tell you one thing, and I thought of it only as I was looking through *The Times* for *Indian Opinion*. I see that there is always enough matter in *The Times* to be sent for *Indian Opinion*. Although you may send your correspondence on Friday nights, I think you should send from *The Times* the latest news and Parliamentary reports on Saturdays and post them, if necessary, up to the last moment at the General Post Office. That is the only way, I think, you will be able to make your correspondence effective and up to date. While Parliament is sitting, I now notice that you can send a great deal from *The Times* on the Indian and cognate questions, as for instance, the Natives, the Chinese, etc. *The Times* evidently gives a very full report. You are then in advance of *India,* and you keep up with the South African papers, which, as I have told you, are thoroughly up to date. I reduce this suggestion to writingnow lest I may forget it.

Yours sincerely,

J. C. MUKERJI, ESQ.
65 CROMWELL AVENUE
HIGHGATE, N.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4413

389. LETTER TO F. MACKARNESS

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
October 27, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I am much obliged to you for your letter of the 25th instant. I have placed this suggestion before Sir William Wedderburn and he agrees that there should be a meeting like the one mentioned by you. I venture to think that, unless local circumstances prevent it, it need not necessarily be a meeting of Liberal Members only, as there is no division of opinion on the question of the treatment of British Indian in South Africa.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,

F. MACKARNESS, ESQ., M.P.
6, CROWN OFFICE ROW
TEMPLE

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4414

390. LETTER TO S. KRISHNAVARMA

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
October 29, 1906

DEAR PANDIT SHYAMJI KRISHNAVARMA,

I enclose herewith stamps for 1s 6d which you were good enough to advance last evening.

`I remain,
Yours faithfully,

Enclosure
PANDIT SHYAMJI KRISHNAVARMA
9, QUEEN'S WOOD AVENUE
HIGHGATE

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4415

391. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD ELGIN

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON, W.C.,
October 29, 1906

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
THE RIGHT HON'BLE THE EARL OF ELGIN
HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
LONDON

SIR,

I have the-honour to acknowledge your letter of the 26th instant in continuation of my letter[1] of the 25th. I beg now to state that Sir Muncherji M. Bhownaggree, Sir George Birdwood, Sir Henry Cotton, the Hon'ble Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, and Mr. Ameer Ali, among others, have consented to lead the British Indian Deputation from the Transvaal. A few more friends are also likely to join the deputation committee. May I now request His Lordship to fix a date, if possible some time early *next week*, for receiving the deputation so that I may inform the gentlemen above named and others who may wish to take part in the deputation.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original: C. O. 291, Vol. 113/Ind.; also a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4416

392. LETTER TO F. H. BROWN

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
October 30, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I have your letter of the 29th instant. I am sorry that I received it after the time I could have spoken to you through the telephone, and

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Elgin", 25-10-1906

as a matter of fact between 10 and 10.45 today I was out visiting. If it is at all possible for you to favour me with a call tomorrow or on Thursday between 1 and 2, we may perhaps lunch together and talk over the question of British Indians in South Africa. If you cannot do that, I must defer the pleasure of seeing you till Thursday at the time of the N.I.A.[1] reception for which you have so kindly sent me a card. If you can however conveniently lunch with me either tomorrow or the day after, please drop me a line.

I am sorry Mr. Ally, my co-Delegate, is laid up in bed with rheumatism, and is at present undergoing treatment at the Lady Margaret Hospital in Bromley.

I regret I have not any photographs with me throwing light on the question, nor have I a photograph of myself. Mr. Ally's I think I could let you have. It is in his family group.

I am inclined to think that we have met before, and that was when, I believe, you used to advise young Indians coming to London, I believe I was introduced to you by Mr. D. B. Shukla.

I am,

Yours truly,

F. H. BROWN, ESQ.
"DILKUSHA"
WESTBOURNE ROAD
FOREST HILL, S. E.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4417

393. LETTER TO J. C. MUKERJI

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
October 30, 1906

DEAR MR. MUKERJI,

I apologize for not keeping the appointment, but as you know every appointment outside the work that has brought me here is subservient to that work. As it was quite beyond my expectation, I had to be busy with Sir Muncherji up to six o'clock in the evening. Do you mind taking the same appointment for tomorrow, but this time let it be 6 o'clock. I shall endeavour to keep the appointment. We will then go to a restaurant, take a meal, and come back to the Hotel. I have cancelled all evening appointments also, so that I can cope with the arrears of dictating work, but we will discuss Rutnam for about

[1] National Indian Association

half an hour, though most of the discussion will perhaps have been finished at the dinner table. Please however do not go away, even if I am not in, because I am bound to be at the Hotel for my meal sooner or later. So far as I know at present, I should not be engaged beyond 6 o'clock tomorrow evening. Please convey my apologies to the Professor[1] also. My invitation extends to you and the Professor, as also to Rutnam, if you consider his presence to be necessary.

Yours sincerely,

J. C. MUKERJI, ESQ.
65, CROMWELL AVENUE
HIGHGATE, N.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4418

394. LETTER TO J. ROYEPPEN

HOTEL CECIL,
[LONDON,]
October 30, 1906

MY DEAR JOSEPH,

I must cancel the appointment for the evening I have given you, because I shall now be exceedingly busy, and it is only in the evenings that I am in a position to dictate anything. I shall write to you if I have a free evening.

Yours sincerely,

JOSEPH ROYEPPEN, ESQ.
36, STAPLETON HALL ROAD
STROUD GREEN, N.

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4419

395. LETTER TO M. N. DOCTOR

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
October 30, 1906

DEAR MR. DOCTOR,

I find that I am so very busy that I must cancel the appointment given you; but if you can come on Sunday at 12 o'clock, we can walk together and talk on my way to Mr. Polak's, with whom I have an

[1] Parmanand

engagement. If you know London well, we will then separate somewhere near Highbury.

Yours sincerely,

M. N. DOCTOR, ESQ.

102, WHARTON ROAD, W.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4420

396. LETTER TO LORD REAY

HOTEL CECIL,

LONDON,

October 30, 1906

MY LORD,

I ventured to call on Your Lordship yesterday, without appointment, with a view to paying my respects and placing before Your Lordship the position of British Indians in the Transvaal. Together with Mr. Hajee Ojer Ally, I have arrived from the Transvaal as a Deputation appointed to wait on Lord Elgin and Mr. Morley in connection with the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance recently passed by the Transvaal Legislative Council. Sir Charles Dilke[1], Mr. Naoroji, Sir Muncherji, Sir George Birdwood, Sir Henry Cotton, Mr. Ameer Ali, and a few other gentlemen who have taken an interest in British Indian matters in the Transvaal have kindly consented to introduce the Deputation to Lord Elgin and thus extend to our mission the weight of their influence. An appointment will probably be given by Lord Elgin for next week. May I know whether you will be pleased to join the introducing deputation. In any case, both Mr. Ally and I will be greatly obliged if Your Lordship will allow us the opportunity of placing before you the position of British Indians in

[1] Sir Charles Wentworth Dilke, (1843-1911); politician, writer and Member of Parliament, he became Under-Secretary of State in the Foreign Office in 1876.

the Transvaal.

I beg to remain,

Your Lordship's humble servant,

THE RIGHT HON'BLE LORD REAY[1]
6, GREAT STANHOPE STREET
LONDON

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4423

397. LETTER TO H. O. ALLY

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
October 30, 1906

DEAR MR. ALLY,

I have your note, as also your telephone message, but have only just settled down to work, i.e., 12 midnight. I have been away the whole day from 10.30 a.m. I looked in just at lunch time and at 8 o'clock at night, when I found the message from you, as also your letter. I shall find out the address of the Turkish Ambassador. I shall take some late train tomorrow unless I find it impossible.

Lord Elgin has appointed Thursday the 8th November at 3 o'clock to receive the Deputation, so you will see that there is ample time. My work, however, is entirely cut out for all that time. More when we meet.

Yours sincerely,

HAJEE OJER ALLY, ESQ.
LADY MARGARET HOSPITAL
BROMLEY
KENT

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4421

[1] Donald James Mackay, (1839-1921); Governor of Bombay Presidency, 1885-90, and first President of British Academy; Under-Secretary of State for India, 1894-5

398. LETTER TO J. H. POLAK

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
October 30, 1906

DEAR MR. POLAK,

I told you that I should pass the whole of Sunday with you, but I see that I shall have to attend to an important matter in the evening. The Pandit[1] of whom I spoke to you and I have not yet finished the whole of our discussion, and as it is rather important I am afraid that I must deprive myself of the pleasure, I was looking forward to, of passing the whole of next Sunday with you. I fear therefore that I will have to leave you next Sunday also at about 4 o'clock.

My regards to all.

Yours truly,

J. H. POLAK, ESQ.
28, GROSVENOR ROAD
CANONBURY

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4422

399. LETTER TO W. P. BYLES

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
October 30, l906

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your note of the 28th instant. I shall have much pleasure in sending you my card at the House of Commons some time this week, and I hope probably today.

yours faithfully

W. P. BYLES, ESQ., M.P.
HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4424

[1] Shyamji Krishnavarma

400. LETTER TO A. MERCER

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
October 30, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I am much obliged to you for giving me Mrs. Spencer Walton's address, and the enclosure.

Yours truly,

ARTHUR MERCER, ESQ.
17, HOMEFIELD ROAD
WIMBLEDON

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4425

401. LETTER TO MRS. S. WALTON

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
October 30, 1906

DEAR MRS. SPENCER WALTON,

I was exceedingly sorry to hear of the death of Mr. Spencer Walton. His death is an irreparable loss to you but I have no doubt that many feel poorer by his death. I was hoping to be able to pay you a visit during my stay here, but I find that I shall be so much occupied during the three or four weeks I am here that I may not be able to take a run down. However, I shall be obliged if you will drop me a line telling me when you are as a rule to be found at home.

I am,

Yours truly,

MRS. SPENCER WALTON
ANDREW HOUSE
TONBRIDGE
KENT

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4426

402. DRAFT LETTER TO LORD ELGIN[1]

22, KENNINGTON ROAD,
[LONDON,]
October 30, 1906

TO
THE RIGHT HON'BLE THE EARL OF ELGIN
HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
LONDON

MY LORD,

I enclose herewith copy of a Petition from the British Indian Association of the Transvaal regarding the Vrededorp Stands Ordinance of 1906 passed by the Legislative Council of the Transvaal[2] I understand from the Acting Honorary Secretary[3] of the British Indian Association of the Transvaal that the Petition was forwarded through Lord Selborne to you the same week that a copy was sent to me, and that a cablegram[4] too was sent through the Governor by the British Indian Association requesting that the Ordinance might not be sanctioned until the Petition was in your hands.

I venture to think that the Association has a very strong and just case. It is quite plain that this Ordinance, if sanctioned, will prevent British Indians even from holding leases of landed property, which they have hitherto been allowed to hold under Law 3 of 1885. Thus then, on the eve of the Colony receiving Responsible Government, it would appear that the present Ordinance, instead of at least maintaining the *status quo*, will render the position of British Indians worse in respect of holding land, as it has been in other respects, than before the war. I trust, therefore, that you will see your way to advise His Majesty to disallow the Ordinance.

In view of the arrival of the British Indian Deputation from the Transvaal and their mission, coupled with the fact of the passing of the Ordinance which is the subject matter of this communication, I think

[1] This letter was presumably drafted by Gandhiji, as an earlier draft bears some instructions to the secretary in Gandhiji's hand. The draft also clearly indicates that it was to be signed by Dadabhai Naoroji.

[2] *Vid*e "Petition to Lord Elgin", 8-10-1906

[3] H. S. L. Polak

[4] *Vide* "Cable to Secretary of State for Colonies", 8-10-1906

that a commission of enquiry such as was suggested by Sir Muncherji to your predecessor, which commission I understand was all but appointed, is very necessary for the protection of British Indians in the Transvaal.

I am, my Lord,

Your obedient servant,

From a photostat of the typewritten draft: S. N. 4427/2

403. CIRCULAR LETTER[1]

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON, W.C.,
October 31, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I beg to inform you that Lord Elgin has appointed Thursday the 8th November at 3 p.m. to receive the Transvaal Indian Deputation at the Colonial Office. Mr. Ally and I trust that you will be kind enough to make it convenient to attend at the Colonial Office at 2.30 p.m. on Thursday the 8th November so that there may be a short conference between the members of the introducing deputation. Sir Lepel Griffin has now consented to head the deputation and to introduce Mr. Ally and me.

I hope shortly to be able to let you have a copy of the Representation[2] to be submitted to Lord Elgin previous to the reception of the deputation, which will form the basis for the deputation to work upon.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the signed typewritten office copy: S. N. 4429

[1] The noting on the office copy shows that this letter was sent to Sir Charles Dilke, Dadabhai Naoroji, Sir Lepel Griffin, Sir Muncherji Bhownaggree, Sir Henry Cotton, Ameer Ali and Sir George Birdwood.

[2] "Representation to Lord Elgin", 31-10-1906

404. LETTER TO PROFESSOR PARMANAND

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
October 31, 1906

DEAR PROFESSOR PARMANAND,

I am sorry you cannot be here today. Pillay's Case is very sad. I do not know what should be done, but when we meet we shall have to think it out. He seems to have difficulty in finding even his good. Will you go into his case thoroughly and if necessary find him lodgings at India House?

Yours sincerely,

PROFESSOR PARMANAND
65, CROMWELL AVENUE
HIGHGATE

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4430

405. LETTER TO LORD STANLEY

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
October 31, 1906

TO
THE RIGHT HON'BLE LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY[1]
18, MANSFIELD STREET

MY LORD,

I am obliged for the appointment given by you. I shall avail myself of it at 10 a.m. tomorrow (Thursday).

I remain,

Your humble servant,

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4431

[1] (1839-1925); educationist and Member of Parliament

406. LETTER TO. F. H. BROWN

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
October 31, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your letter. I shall await you at 3.o'clock tomorrow and then after having a chat together I shall avail myself of your kind offer to take me to the reception.[1]

I remain,
Yours faithfully

F. H. BROWN, ESQ.
"DILKUSHA"
WESTBOURNE ROAD
FOREST HILL, S.E.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4432

407. REPRESENTATION TO LORD ELGIN[2]

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
October 31, 1906

TO
THE RIGHT HON'BLE THE EARL OF ELGIN
HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
COLONIAL OFFICE
LONDON

MY LORD,

APPOINTMENT OF DELEGATES

1. We, the undersigned, have been appointed by the British Indian Association of the Transvaal to lay before you the views of the Indian community of the Transvaal regarding the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance of the Transvaal Legislative Council published in the Transvaal *Government Gazette* dated the 28th day of September, 1906. At a mass meeting of British Indians, numbering nearly 3,000 British Indian residents of the Transvaal, held at the old

[1] *Vide* "Letter to F. H. Brown", 30-10-1906

[2] This was drawn up by Gandhiji on or before October 31 and forwarded with the "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Elgin", 2-11-1906

Empire Theatre in Johannesburg on the 11th day of September, 1906, it was among other things resolved to send a Deputation to attend on Your Lordship. The selection of the delegates was left to the Committee of the Association and, as said before[1], we were selected by the Committee.

WHO ARE THE DELEGATES?

2. The first undersigned is the Honorary Secretary of the Association, was one of the organizers of the Natal Indian Volunteer Ambulance Corps formed at the time of the Boer War, and was the organizer and in charge of the Indian Stretcher-Bearer Corps formed under the auspices of the Natal Indian Congress in connection with the recent Native rebellion of Natal. He is a Barrister of the Inner Temple and has since 1903 practised as a solicitor in Johannesburg.

3. The second undersigned is a merchant by profession, and besides being a member of the British Indian Association, is the founder and Chairman of the Hamidia Islamic Society of Johannesburg.

4. Both the undersigned are old settlers of South Africa; the first undersigned settled in South Africa in 1893 and is father of four children, all of whom are in South Africa. The second undersigned has settled in South Africa for the last twenty-three years and is the father of eleven children all born in South Africa.

INDIAN POPULATION OF THE TRANSVAAL

5. The present Indian population of the Transvaal is about 13,000 according to permit returns, and over 10,000 according to census returns, as against a white population of over 280,000. The Indians of the Transvaal are merchants, traders, their assistants, hawkers and domestic servants—the great majority being merchants or hawkers.

LAW 3 OF 1885

6. Law 3 [of] 1885 as amended in 1886 is applicable to Asiatics, including "coolies, Malays, Arabs, and Mahomedan subjects of the Turkish Empire", and as interpreted by the Supreme Court of the Transvaal,

(1) confines as to residence those who come under it to locations or streets set specially apart for them, for a breach of which provision there is no sanction provided in the law and which is therefore nugatory in effect,

(2) deprives them of burgher rights,

(3) deprives them of right of ownership of fixed property except in locations and streets before referred to,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Elgin", 25-10-1906

(4) and requires those who may settle in the Transvaal for purposes of trade or otherwise to pay a fee of £3 and be registered within eight days of their arrival. *(The Law as interpreted by the courts does not require eregistration of children of such settlers, their wives and those who are not traders.)*

7. The above Law is not restrictive of immigration but it is meant to penalize traders to the extent of £3. During the Boer regime it formed the subject of representations by the British Government and was therefore never then strictly enforced. For its administration there was no separate department of the State, and *registration merely consisted in passing to the payer a receipt for* £3.

UNDER THE BRITISH REGIME

8. After the advent of British rule, contrary to promises and expectations, separate Asiatic Offices were established. The Peace Preservation Ordinance, which was admittedly a measure calculated to safeguard the State from dangerous characters, was misapplied to restrict Indian immigration, and under it permits were only granted to British Indians on the recommendation of the officers in charge. This practice gave rise to much abuse and corruption. These officers accepted bribes on a wholesale system, and Indian refugees who had a right to immediate return to the Transvaal had difficulty in doing so, and were often obliged to pay as much as £30. This was brought to the notice of the local Government more than once by the British Indian Association, with the result ultimately that two officials were criminally tried, and although the jury discharged them for want of evidence, they were dismissed from Government service. The Asiatic Offices were then abolished and the granting of permits was transferred, as it should have been, to the Chief Secretary for Permits.[1] Though under this regime permits to British Indians were granted only sparingly and after a great deal of delay and searching examination, there was no corruption. In the meanwhile an official was appointed under the designation of Protector of Asiatics in the Colonial Department.

INDIANS REGISTERED

9. While the Permit Department was under the Chief Secretary for Permits, Lord Milner thought fit to enforce Law 3 of 1885 rigorously, and appointed the Permit Secretary to be Registrar of Asiatics. The British Indian Association respectfully protested against the step,[2] but although it was not obligatory on the British Indians who had paid £3 to the Boer Government to re-register, on the urgent

[1] *Vide* "Deputation to Lord Selborne", 29-11-1905

[2] *Vide* "The British Indian Association and Lord Milner",11-6-1903

advice of Lord Milner they allowed themselves to be re-registered. These certificates contain names of holders, their wives, number of children, the age of the holders, their distinctive marks and thumb-prints.

10. The following was the assurance given by Lord Milner at the time the advice was offered:

> I think that registration is a protection to them. To that registration there is attached a £3 tax. It is only asked for once. Those who have paid it to the old Government have only to prove that they have done so and they have not to pay it again. Again, once on the register, their position is established and *no further registration is necessary*, nor is a fresh permit required. That registration gives you a right to be here and a right to come and go.[1]

11. At the present day, save women and children, almost every Indian in the Transvaal is in possession of a permit bearing the holder's name, place of birth, occupation, last address, his signature and as a rule thumb-impression and in most if not all cases, registration certificates above described. If, therefore, there are any Indians in the Transvaal who are without permits and do not fall within the exemption clauses of the Peace Preservation Ordinance, they are unauthorized residents and liable to be expelled under that Ordinance. Those who cannot produce permits have the burden thrown on them of proving that they come within the exemption clauses. If they do not obey expulsion orders, they are liable to suffer imprisonment. The Peace Preservation Ordinance moreover makes it a criminal offence to obtain a permit by fraudulent representations, or to abet one in so obtaining a permit, or to enter on a permit obtained by fraud.

PRESENT MACHINERY FOR DETECTION OF UNAUTHORIZED ENTRY COMPLETE

12. Thus the machinery for punishing unauthorized Indian residents in the Transvaal is complete and effective. And by its voluntary act above referred to, the Indian community has furnished the authorities with complete means of identification of a double character. Those Indians who have tried to enter on permits belonging to other Indians have been heavily punished. Many such cases are on record.

13. There would appear therefore to be no occasion for any further measure of law to prevent fraud, or impersonation, or unauthorized entry. Under the present permit regulations, according to the testimony given by an official,

[1] *Vide* "The British Indian Association and Lord Milner", 11-6-1903

(1) women, whether they accompany their husbands or not, [and]

(2) children of whatever age, even infants, whether in company of their parents or not, are required to produce permits. Cases have happened where tender children five years old have been torn away from their parents, and wives from their husbands, although the fathers or the husbands accompanying the children or wives have produced permits.

14. Old residents of the Transvaal who have paid £3 as the price of their residence experience a delay of months before they receive their permits, and that after an investigation which is over-severe in character and carried on secretly, and by boards which sit at their leisure to conduct their examination.

NEW ORDINANCE

15. On the top of all these disabilities has come like a thunderbolt upon the Indian community the amending Ordinance. It sets up a humiliating system of passes to be carried by every Indian resident in the Transvaal. It establishes a system of identification which may vary from time to time. The Assistant Colonial Secretary informed a deputation of Indians that the imprints of all the digits should be required and passes containing such imprints should be produced by the holders to every police official who may wish to challenge the Indians. The permits and registration certificates, obtained after a great deal of trouble, are to be surrendered in exchange for the new certificates. We may state that, in order to carry out the above registration, people were dragged from their rooms in the early morning and subjected to much hard treatment.

ITS REAL NATURE

16. The Ordinance in fact is not one for registration but for identification, of a type applied to the worst criminals. So far as we are aware such a law is unknown in any of the British Colonies. It is hardly an amendment of the Law 3 of 1885, because its scope is admittedly totally different from that of the latter.

17. The amending law condemns every permit unless the holder of it can prove it to be not tainted with fraud. It leaves the children of parents, though the latter may be in possession of *bona-fide* permits, to the tender mercy of the officer in charge of its administration. It is class legislation of the worst type. While it is calculated to submit the Indians to intense irritation and humiliation, it gives absolutely nothing.

THE SO-CALLED RELIEF

18. For the remission of £3 fee is superfluous, as every adult male Indian and in many cases even children at present resident in the Transvaal have already paid it. According to the statement by the

Transvaal Colonial Secretary, no Indians who are not pre-war residents of the Transvaal will be allowed to enter the Colony until the Responsible Government has considered the question of immigration. And as the present Indian residents have already paid the £3, and as the pre-war residents who have still to re-enter have also mostly paid the £3 to the Dutch Government, the remission of the £3 payment is no concession at all.

19. The authority for temporary permits is also not required as they have been granted at the discretion of the authorities under the Peace Preservation Ordinance.

20. The relief as to the supply of liquor is, so far as it may be applicable to Indians, a direct insult.

21. The relief to the heirs of those Indians who may have held fixed property before the date of Law 3 of 1885 is individual in character and is meant only to affect one small piece of land in the Transvaal.

22. The Ordinance therefore is in no way a relief or protection to the Indian community.

COMPARISON

23. We cannot lay too much stress on the fact that the amending Ordinance, while it leaves untouched all the disabilities of Law 3 of 1885, makes the position of British Indians much worse than under Law 3 of 1885, as will appear more clearly from the following comparison:

UNDER LAW 3 OF 1885	UNDER NEW ORDINANCE
1. *Traders only* were required to pay £3 and take out receipts.	All male Indians (they have already paid £3) are now to take out certificates of registration.
2. No particulars of identification had to be furnished.	Most humiliating particulars of identification are to be furnished.
3. Registration was not in restriction of immigration.	This registration is essentially for restricting immigration.
4. Children of registered parents were not required to register.	Children of registered parents must all be registered: (a) Children under eight years to be provisionally registered, and parents to furnish means of identification. (A baby eight days old will have to give ten digit prints and be carried to the registering officer.)

(b) Children over eight years must be separately registered, subject to the same requirement as to identification.

(c) If the children are not so registered after they attain the age of 16 years, they are liable to expulsion under severe penalty unless they get themselves registered.

(d) Any Asiatic without authority bringing into the Colony a child under 16 years is liable to a severe penalty and cancellation of his registration and to expulsion. (This probably applies to parents bringing their babies in arms and certainly to lawfully resident Asiatics bringing the baby of another resident Asiatic.)

(e) Any Asiatic employing (even ignorantly!) such a child is liable to like penalties.

(f) Failure on the part of parent or guardian to make application under (a) and (b) renders him liable to a fine of £100 or 3 months' imprisonment.

5. Failure to register never carried with it expulsion.

Failure to register carries with it expulsion although the Asiatic in question be in possession of permit and registration, and therefore doubly a lawful resident of the Transvaal, even according to the amending Ordinance. *Thus by a stroke of the pen the present title to residence is to be rendered of no effect and value. In other words,*

	vested interests, hitherto considered so sacred, are to be taken away to satisfy a caprice.
6. Malays were subject to registration under Law 3 of 1885.	Malays are exempt from the operation of the new Ordinance.
7. Law 3 of 1885 was a law passed by an ignorant Government, and was under promise of total repeal by the British Government.	The present Ordinance has been passed deliberately by an enlightened Government in possession of full knowledge of the history of India and its civilization.
8. Responsible Government could not use Law 3 of 1885 as a precedent for class legislation.	Responsible Government would be perfectly justified in using this Ordinance as a precedent for class legislation.
9. Law 3 of 1885 was passed by a Government in respect of people not its own subjects.	The present Ordinance has been passed by a Government belonging to the same Imperial fold as the Indians.
10. There could be no question of exemption as registration was not humiliating.	The present Ordinance reduces Indians to a lower level than the Kaffirs: (a) because Kaffirs who carry passes do not have to supply humiliating identification particulars contemplated by the Ordinance, (b) Kaffirs having reached a certain status are exempted from liability to carry passes, whereas Indians, no matter what status they may enjoy or how well educated they may be, must be registered and carry passes.

REASONS FOR THE NEW ORDINANCE

24. We learn that the reasons for passing the Ordinance are that:

(a) the local Government wishes to stop the alleged large, unauthorized influx of Indians, against whom there is a great deal of prejudice on the part of the white residents of the Transvaal;

(b) the local Government believes that there is on the part

of the Indian community an organized attempt to flood the country with British Indians without authority.

25. It is not denied that there are Indians who attempt to enter the Transvaal without authority. To meet such cases the present laws are, as shown above, amply sufficient. A large unauthorized influx has been repeatedly denied by the Indians, and never proved. The allegation as to an organized attempt by the community is a pure fabrication.

LOCAL PREJUDICE

26. The prejudice on the part of many white men, especially of the petty trading class, is admitted. We would at the same time respectfully state that the general body of white people are indifferent. The Indian trader and the hawker—the former relying on the support of wholesale European houses and the latter on the white households of all descriptions—would not be able to exist in the Transvaal but for such support. The petition[1] presented on behalf of Indians by Mr. Hosken and other representatives of leading houses bears out this contention.

REMEDY FOR MEETING THE PREJUDICE

27. But recognizing the prejudice, the Indian community has all along accepted the principle of restriction of immigration along the Cape or Natal line, subject to permission to import assistants and servants, and since it is the traders who arouse hostility and jealousy, the community has also accepted the principle of control and regulation of *new* trade licences by municipal bodies, their decisions being subject in gross cases to review by the Supreme Court. These two enactment's, if adopted, would dispel all fear of an inordinate influx of Asiatics, or their competition in trade. *But any such legislation should, by repealing Law 3 of 1885, restore to the resident Indian population the right of ownership of fixed property and freedom of movement and locomotion.*

28. Legislation of the above-mentioned type, being applicable to all, would obviate gross abuse of authority, which experience has shown always takes place wherever there is class legislation specially applicable to weaker races. It will moreover continue the policy laid down by Mr. Chamberlain at the Conference of the Colonial Premiers and since re-affirmed by him in practice. It was that policy which dictated a veto of the first Disfranchising Bill of the Natal Legislative Assembly[2] and the Immigration Restriction Draft Bill[3] specially

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lieutenant-Governor", 1-5-1903

[2] *Vide*"A brief Chronicle of South Africa"; &."Speech at Publim Meeting, Bombay", 26-9-1896

[3] *ibid*

applied to Asiatics and submitted by the late Mr. Harry Escombe[1]. Such non-class legislation can be effectively passed now. It will then place before the incoming Responsible Government the Imperial idea of restrictive legislation and throw on it the burden of showing the necessity for any further restrictions.

29. If, however, such a step be not practicable at present, the whole question should, in the humble opinion of the Deputation, be left over until the newly formed Transvaal legislature under the new constitution has met.

A COMMISSION AS AN ALTERNATIVE

30. In the meanwhile, the least that is due to the Indian community is the appointment of a strong and impartial commission to investigate the allegations as to the unauthorized entry of British Indians into the Transvaal, and to report upon the administration of the Peace Preservation Ordinance as affecting British Indians, and also to report upon the adequacy or otherwise of the present laws to meet unlawful entry of Indians, and generally upon the legislation affecting British Indians. If those who have been making the allegations are sincere, the deliberations of the commission need not take a long time.

BRITISH INDIANS AS APART FROM OTHER ASIATICS

31. The Deputation has been specially directed to secure an insistence on the consideration of the question affecting British Indians as such, instead of their being mixed up with non-British Asiatics. Special promises have been made to British Indians, both in India and outside it, even in connection with the Transvaal laws. It may not be considered too much on the part of the Indians to ask for a proper fulfilment of such promises.

32. Above all, the integrity of the community is at stake. The amending Ordinance is a punitive measure. It has been brought in to meet the alleged organized attempt of the community to introduce into the Transvaal unauthorized Indians. If His Majesty's Government sanctions such a measure, it will be party to a wholesale condemnation of the Indian community, without any proof whatsoever having been

[1] (1838-99): Prime Minister of Natal, 1897;

publicly brought forward to substantiate such a serious accusation.

We have the honour to remain,

Your Lordship's humble servants,

M. K. GANDHI

H. O. ALLY

MEMBERS OF THE

TRANSVAAL BRITISH INDIAN DEPUTATION

From a photostat of the printed original: C.O. 291 Vol. 113/Ind.; also S.N. 4441a

408. LETTER TO G. GODFREY

HOTEL CECIL,

[LONDON,]

October 31, 1906

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Here is your Representation[1]. I believe it will be most effective. I have been thinking over the printing expenses; I think it will be more hallowed if the signatories bore the expenses. I have to render to the Association an account of every penny that is spent, and I hate the idea of even thinking that such a personal appeal has to be paid for. Ittakes away so much from the reality of the thing. The cost will be trifling. I can bear it myself; Mr. Ally has offered to bear it; but none of these things will meet the case. You must—five or six of you — divide it amongst you. You will understand the thing: it is the principle I want to inculcate here: it is a matter of very little moment, but you ought to be able to face anybody and say you have borne the expense, because you have felt. The Representation as drawn up by me will not cost more than £2, if that.

There should be no time lost in sending this out. I would like you and the others who will join with you to [go to] the House of Commons yourselves and make a personal canvass in our interests and a personal appeal in distributing the pamphlets, and similarly to go to the different Editors. If they do not receive you it does not matter: they cannot do the cause any harm, and if they do receive you,

[1] This draft was revised by Gandhiji after discussion with the signatories. For final version, *vide* "Representation to Lord Elgin", 3-11-1906

so much the better.

Yours sincerely,

GEO. GODFREY, ESQ.
LONDON

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4433

409. LETTER TO H. ROSE MACKENZIE

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
October 31, 1906

DEAR MR. MACKENZIE,

I am sorry I was away when you called at the Hotel. I thank you for the very good interview published in S.A.[1] and for the marked copy sent by you. The whole of my day is passed mostly in interviewing people, and I am never certain when I am here, but it is always possible for me to be at the Hotel between 1 and 2 o'clock. May I ask you to lunch with me tomorrow, if you are free, when we may have a further chat about the question that has brought the Deputation here. I still feel that a great deal can be done by a quiet chat, because there is much misunderstanding as to the Indian position. If you can kindly come, please telephone or wire.

Yours faithfully,

H. ROSE MACKENZIE, ESQ.[2]
WINCHESTER HOUSE, E. C.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4435

410. LETTER TO DR. J. OLDFIELD

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
October 31, 1906

MY DEAR OLDFIELD,

Many thanks for your note. I am so much occupied that I see I must encroach upon my dinner hours and see you at 145, New Kent Road, Elephant and Castle, on Thursday between 6 and 7 p.m. I take it

[1] *Vide* "interview to *South Africa*", 25-10-1906
[2] Representative of *South Africa*?

that you are there in any case. If I cannot come then, please do not wait beyond 7 p.m. I shall then try to be at Bromley on Friday some time after 4 p.m. I shall telephone or write if I have to disturb the appointment for Thursday, if I know it earlier.

I am delighted that Mr. Ally is making very good progress.

Yours sincerely,

DR. OLDFIELD
LADY MARGARET HOSPITAL
BROMLEY,
KENT

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4436

411. LETTER TO YUK LIN LEW

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
October 31, 1906

DEAR MR. LEW,

I had a copy of the Chinese Representation from Mr. James. I see that this is not in accordance with the draft[1] I had prepared. Paragraph 6 of the Petition is open to grave objection. There are other minor points also which might have been left alone. However, I do not consider it necessary to disturb the Representation. I enclose herewith draft of the letter[2] that should he forwarded to H. E. the Chinese Minister.

Yours truly,

Enclosure

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4437

[1] This is not available.
[2] *Vide* "Draft for Chinese Ambassador", After 31-10-1906

412. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD ELGIN

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
October 31, 1906

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
THE RIGHT HON'BLE THE EARL OF ELGIN
HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
LONDON

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the 30th instant informing me that Lord Elgin will be pleased to receive the Transvaal Indian Deputation at 3 o'clock on Thursday the 8th November at the Colonial Office, for which I beg on behalf of my co-Delegate Mr. Ally and myself to tender our respectful thanks to His Lordship.

I note the remarks made in the last paragraph of your letter, and I shall see to it that the number does not exceed twelve. As soon as the list is complete I shall have the honour to forward to you the names of those who will be present.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4438

413. LETTER TO MISS A. PYWELL[1]

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
October 31, 1906

DEAR MISS PYWELL,

I have your note of the 26th instant. I should be very sorry to have to leave England without having made your acquaintance. Will you kindly tell me whether I am likely to find you any day it may be possible for me to take a run to Leicester. It is just possible that I may

[1] *Vide* "Letter to A. H. West", 26-10-1906

be able to put in a day without disturbing my work.

Yours truly,

MISS ADA PYWELL
35, MELBOURNE STREET
LEICESTER

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4439

414. LETTER TO H. O. ALLY

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
October 31, 1906

DEAR MR. ALLY,

I am exceedingly sorry I have not been able to come this evening, but shall try to come tomorrow. When we see each other, I shall describe to you how I have been spending my time. In the meantime I can only tell you that I am working under greater pressure than in Johannesburg. I went to bed last night at 3.30 in the morning.

The Chinese Deputation is being pushed. I am in touch with them. I have forwarded a Representation[1] to be sent in by the Chinese Minister.

As to your coming here every day and returning in the afternoon, we will discuss that when we meet.

I chanced to meet Sir Richard Solomon[2] at the House of Commons tonight and had a brief chat with him. He was very nice about the whole thing. He enquired about you.

I have not yet been able to see Justice Ameer Ali myself, but have been in correspondence with him. Mr. Ameer Ali writes to me saying that he will meet us on the day of the Deputation. Sir Muncherji is strongly of the opinion that there should be a permanent committee.[3] I have, therefore, in order that it may be established while we are here, cabled today for sanction.[4]

I have sent you a phone message that I shall probably come to Bromley tomorrow. I am to see Dr. Oldfield between 6 and 7 in the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Yuk Lin Lew", 31-10-1906

[2] Sir Richard was in England at this time; *vide* "The Deputations's Voyage-I", 10-11-1906 and " Some Questions", 20-10-1906.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 26-10-1906

[4] The cable is not available.

evening and shall probably come along with him.

Yours sincerely,

H. O. ALLY, ESQ.
LADY MARGARET HOSPITAL,
BROMLEY,
KENT

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4440

415. DRAFT FOR CHINESE AMBASSADOR[1]

[After *October 31, 1906*]

FROM
HIS EXCELLENCY THE ENVOY EXTRAORDINARY AND MINISTER
PLENIPOTENTIARY OF HIS MAJESTY THE EMPEROR OF CHINA
LONDON
TO
HIS EXCELLENCY SIR EDWARD GREY
HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF
STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SIR,

I beg to forward herewith a true translation of a Petition received by me from the free Chinese subjects resident in the Transvaal in connection with their grievances in that Colony, and particularly with reference to an Ordinance called "The Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance" numbered 29 and passed by the Legislative Council of that Colony. I granted audience to Mr. L. M. James, the delegate who has been specially deputed by the Chinese subjects aforementioned to present in person the Petition above referred to, and to place before me their case.

It appears to me that, if the statements made in the Petition are correct, and from investigation made by me and from what I have learnt through the Chinese Consul-General for South Africa I have no doubt as to the truth of these statements, the Chinese subjects have a very real grievance.

I am aware that the objectionable features referred to in paragraph 7 of the Petition do not appear in the Ordinance itself, but I am informed that it is the intention of the Transvaal Government to

[1] This representation was drafted by Gandhiji; *vide* "Letter to Yuk Lin Lew" 26-10-1906 and "Letter to H. O. Ally", 31-10-1906

pass regulations requiring finger-impressions and other particulars of identification, which the Petitioners would properly resent. Apart, however, from any such regulations the Ordinance in question undoubtedly appears to be open to very serious objections, and exposes Chinese subjects to unnecessary hardships, inconvenience and degradation.

I invite your attention to the fact that the most amicable relations exist between His Majesty King Edward VII and the Emperor of China, and that British subjects are entitled to the most-favoured-nation treatment throughout the Chinese Empire. I therefore trust that Your Excellency will deem it fit to secure for the Chinese subjects in the Transvaal proper treatment to which I apprehend, as subjects of an independent nation in alliance with Great Britain, they are entitled.

I have the honour to remain,

Your Excellency's obedient servant.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4441

416. INTERVIEW TO "SOUTH AFRICA"[1]

[LONDON,
November 1, 1906]

In conversation with a representative of *South Africa*, Mr. Advocate Gandhi... stated that the Natal Indian Congress had passed a resolution sympathizing with the objects of the Deputation, similar to the one recently adopted by the British Indians at the Cape.

[GANDHI:] While on the subject of Natal, I may mention that 1 have received a cablegram[2] asking me to place before the authorities here the questions arising out of the Bill to be introduced in the Natal legislature by Mr. Ralph Tatham.

[REPORTER:] What are the main objections to that measure from the Indian point of view?

[GANDHI :] Well, the net result of that Bill, supposing it becomes law—which I cannot for a moment conceive—will be to deprive hundreds of Indian traders of their means of livelihood. It will mean the sweeping away of vested rights by a stroke of the pen. In Durban there are only about 250 Indian voters out of a List of 7,000, and in

[1] Published in *South Africa*, 3-11-1906 and republished in *Indian Opinion*, 15-12-l90G

[2] *Vide* "Letter to T.H. Thornton", 2-11-1906

Maritzburg, about 31 out of nearly 3,000, and all those Indian voters are not by any means merchant traders. Some of them are professional men, and at present many of them are not in Natal at all, so that the Bill, if passed into law, will make a clean sweep of the Indian traders both in Durban and Maritzburg. Moreover, the Voters' Roll, so far as Indians are concerned, is now a closed book for any future Indians because of the Franchise Act, which prevents all those who do not come from countries possessing Parliamentary institutions being placed on the Roll.

But the matter of licences is in the hands of the licensing authorities at present ?

Yes, that is so, and it makes the reason for bringing in such a Bill as this all the more inconceivable to me. The present Dealers' Licenses Act of Natal leaves [it] at the discretion of the licensing officers either to grant licenses or to refuse them.

And that discretion, I presume, is used fairly ?

On the contrary, the licensing officers have exercised that discretion sometimes in a most high-handed manner, without any relief being obtainable from the Supreme Court.

Can you mention a specific instance, Mr. Gandhi?

Certainly I can. In Vryheid the only Indian merchant, Dada Osman, was deprived of his licence to trade, although he was trading on his own ground, and had been doing so for a long time during the Boer regime.[1] Had Vryheid remained part of the Transvaal, Mr. Dada Osman would have been trading to-day; but as Vryheid has been taken over by Natal, subject to the anti-Asiatic laws of the Transvaal, there are two sets of laws in operation there against Indians, of which the Natal law is the more drastic, so far as the licensing of Indian traders is concerned.

How does that affect Mr. Osman?

The result is that, in virtue of the Transvaal law, he cannot hold landed property in Vryheid; whilst in virtue of the Natal law, he is at the mercy of the licensing officer for his trade. He has therefore been obliged to quit the district altogether.

Is not that an isolated case, resulting from the particular circumstances at Vryheid ?

Not so. The licensing officer in Durban refused to transfer the license of a well-known Indian silk merchant from one place of business to another, although the merchant referred to has been in

[1] *Vide* " Dada Osman's Appeal", 4-11-1905

business for a very long time, and his store was in no way in competition with European trade.[1] It seems to me in fact, that Mr. Tatham's Bill is quite uncalled for, and is really an attempt to drive the Indians out of Natal altogether.

But you know there is a strong prejudice growing against the Indian community in Natal?

I fail to see why there should be any such feeling. Natal has incurred a threefold obligation in favour of Indians. One is that it owes its prosperity to the existence of indentured Indian labour; the second is that it was the Natal Indians who raised an Ambulance Corps of over 1,000 Indians at the time of the Boer War,[2] whose work was specially mentioned in General Buller's despatches, and the third is that, during the recent native rebellion, the Indians, recognizing their duty ascitizens, irrespective altogether of their political opinions,offered the Government services of an Indian Stretcher-bearer Corps,[3] whose work was highly appreciated by Sir Henry McCallum.

Reverting for a moment to the question of the Transvaal Ordinance, our representative pointed out to Mr. Gandhi that the enactment contained no provisions necessitating the identification of Indians by means of digital impressions.

That is so. But Mr. Lionel Curtis, who was then Assistant Colonial Secretary for Urban Affairs in the Transvaal, told a British Indian deputation about three months ago that it was the Government's intention to establish a system of identification under which all Indians would be required to put down on their passes the impressions of their ten fingers, a provision which the Deputation naturally very strongly protest against.

But there is no such provision in the Ordinance?

No; but the Ordinance provides that the Lieutenant-Governor may from time to time make regulations under it, prescribing, amongst other things, the means of identification to be furnished by Indians. It is also laid down in the Ordinance that police officers shall have the right not only to demand from all Asiatics over the age of 16 years production of their passes, but to insist on their furnishing such means of identification as may be prescribed by the regulations, which, according to Mr. Curtis's declaration, means finger-impressions. Such a system is not in force, so far as I am aware, in any

[1] The case of Hoondamal; *vide* "Indian Licences: Need for Vigilance —I", 18-2-1905

[2] *Vide* "Indian Ambulance Corps in Natal", 14-3-1900

[3] *Vide* "The Case of Suliman Manga", 23-6-1906 and "Indian Stretcher-Bearer Corps", Before 19-7-1906.

part of the world, at any rate with regard to British Indians. It does not apply even to the indentured Indians in Natal.

Indian Opinion, 15-12-1906

417. LETTER TO SIR CHARLES SCHWANN

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
November 1, 1906

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Ally and I have arrived from South Africa as a Deputation on behalf of the British Indians of the Transvaal to wait upon Lord Elgin, and later on Mr. Morley, in connection with the recently passed Asiatic Ordinance of the Legislative Council of the Transvaal. Mr. Ally and I have been endeavouring to induce gentlemen who have sympathized with the British Indians in South Africa and who have at all studied the question to lead us. The gentlemen as per list[1] enclosed have already consented to join theDeputation, and Sir Lepel Griffin has been asked and has consented, to head-it. Mr. Ally and I shall be very much obliged if you could see your way, as you have often spoken in the House on the British Indian question in South Africa, to also lend the Deputation the weight of your influence by your presence. In any case we shall be obliged if you will favour us with an interview so that we may place the position before you. The date fixed by Lord Elgin to receive the Deputation is Thursday the 8th instant at 3 p.m. at the Colonial Office.

On behalf of Mr. Ally and myself,

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

Enclosure

SIR CHARLES SCHWANN, M.P.
HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4442

[1] This as well as the one mentioned in the "Letter to G. J. Adam", 2-11-1906, was very likely the same as that sent to Lord Elgin later. *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Elgin", 6-11-1906

418. LETTER TO H. COX

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 1, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I thrice attempted to see you at the House, and sent my card, but I have not been fortunate enough to meet you. I enclose herewith a letter given to me by Sir William Wedderburn. Sir Henry Cotton has sent me a message that you have consented to join the deputation, for which both Mr. Ally and I are extremely obliged to you. If you could kindly give me an appointment, I shall wait upon you at the time given by you and place the position before you. Lord Elgin has fixed Thursday the 8th instant at 3 o'clock to receive the Deputation at the Colonial Office. Sir Lepel Griffin has been asked, and has consented, to head the deputation.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

Enclosure[1]

HAROLD COX, ESQ., M.P.
HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4443

419. LETTER TO AMEER ALI

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 1, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I have your postcard. My letter informing you, however, of the date of the Deputation must have crossed the postcard. Mr. Ally, I am sorry to say, has not yet returned from the Hospital, though he is getting much better. Both he and I are anxious to pay our respects to you and to place the position before you before the Deputation waits on Lord Elgin. If, therefore, you can give an appointment some time

[1] Through oversight the enclosure was not sent with this letter. It was later forwarded by Gandhiji's secretary.

before Thursday Mr. Ally will come down from Bromley specially and we will wait on you.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

AMEER ALI, ESQ., C.I.E.
THE LAMBDENS,
BEENHAM
NEAR READING

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4445

420. CIRCULAR LETTER[1]

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 2, 1906

Will you please attend at the Hotel at 12 noon sharp tomorrow (Saturday, 3rd) in connection with the Representation[2] to be sent to Lord Elgin by the Indian students from South Africa.

Yours truly,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4448

421. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD ELGIN

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 2, 1906

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
THE RIGHT HON'BLE THE EARL OF ELGIN
HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
LONDON
SIR,

In continuation of my letter of the 31st October, I have now the honour to enclose herewith a Representation[3] containing a statement

[1] This was evidently addressed to George Godfrey and other South African Indians then studying in England.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to G. Godfrey", 31-10-1906

[3] *Vide* "Representation to Lord Elgin", 31-10-1906

of facts prepared by the Delegates which will form the basis for further submission to Lord Elgin on the 8th instant. I shall be obliged if you will kindly lay it before His Lordship.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure

From a photostat of the original: Colonial Office Records: C. O. 291, Vol. 113/Ind.; also a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4470

422. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

HOTEL CECIL,

[LONDON,]

November 2, I906

DEAR MR. POLAK,

I send you by book-post 25 copies of the Representation, presented to Lord Elgin by us as the basis for discussion at the interview which comes off on the 8th. It is not to be printed, because most of the points raised therein will be found in the memorials presented there. You may deal with it generally if you like, though it will be stale by the time it reaches you. You may, however, let friends have copies.

I am sending you only a short note this mail. I have not the energy to give you more. It is now 10.45. I am sending you a few cuttings also.

I expect a reply to my cablegram[1] and hope you have encountered no difficulty in getting them to agree. Mr. Ally is with me completely. I have asked for only £300, and it is possible to manage with that amount with close attention to economy, but if more could be voted more work could be got through. Sir Muncherji is very enthusiastic.

Please ascertain from Miss Neufliess Miss Taylor's address, and forward it to Mr. Bissicks. His address is 83, Commercial Road, Blackfriars, E.C.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4449

[1] Not available. From "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 26-10-1906, it is clear that the cablegram refers to the proposed South Africa British Indian Committee.

423. LETTER TO H. KALLENBACH

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON ,]
November 2, 1906

DEAR MR. KALLENBACH,

Just one line to thank you very much for your letter. I dare not say more. I am working under greater pressure than in J'burg. Except for one night, I have not gone to bed before one o'clock. At times I have sat up till 3.30 in the morning and I do not know when I shall retire tonight. It is now 10.15. I shall look forward to your letters every week. If I don't write again from here, you will know why.

Yours sincerely,

H. KALLENBACH, ESQ.[1]
P. O. BOX 2493
JOHANNESBURG
SOUTH AFRICA

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4450

424. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

HOTEL CECIL,
[LONDON,]
November 2, 1906

DEAR MR. WEST,

The enclosed[2] tells you all I have to say: I am too busy to say more. I had a letter from Miss Pywell in reply to mine[3]. I shall endeavour still to run up to Leicester, if I can.

Yours sincerely

Enclosure

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4451

[1] A prosperous Johannesburg architect and admirer of Tolstoy; became a close associate and friend of Gandhiji. *Vide Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XXIII and *Autobiography* Part IV, Ch. XXX.

[2] Not available

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Miss A. Pywell", 31-10-1906

425. LETTER TO W. J. MACINTYRE

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 2, 1906

DEAR MR. MACINTYRE,

I have your nice, chatty, and humorous letter. Your pun is good. It is funny that you should not have been aware to the extent you now are of the spirit of toleration I possess. However, we shall know each other better when the mists have rolled away. By the time this reaches you you will be nearing your examination. Mr. Ritch has passed, and your sanguine letter inspires me with the hope that you will do likewise. I expect tomorrow Mrs. Freeth's address.

Yours sincerely,

W. J. MACINTYRE, ESQ.[1]
BOX 6522
JOHANNESBURG

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4452

426. LETTER TO J. C. MUKERJI

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 2, 1906

DEAR MR. MUKERJI,

I received your wire. I had intended to send the list through the professor[2], but I forgot at the last moment. I shall now be sending the names to Mr. Polak himself. I hope I have not unnecessarily detained you.

Yours truly,

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4453

[1] A Scottish theosophist and articled clerk of Gandhiji
[2] Parmanand

427. LETTER TO G. J. ADAM

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 2, 1906

DEAR SIR,

Lord Elgin has appointed Thursday the 8th instant for receiving the Deputation. The Delegates from the Transvaal will be assisted by the gentlemen as per list enclosed. Sir Lepel Griffin will head the deputation. The list is subject to addition.

Yours truly,

G. J. ADAM, ESQ.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4454

428. LETTER TO H. COX

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON ,]
November 2, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I have your Letter and your postcard. I shall be pleased to wait on you on Monday at 4.30.

I am,

Yours truly,

HAROLD COX, ESQ.
6, RAYMOND'S BUILDINGS
GRAY'S INN, W.C.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4455

429. LETTER TO MRS. S. WALTON

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
.*November 2, 1906*

DEAR MRS. SPENCER WALTON,

I have your letter of the 30th ultimo. I am now preparing for the interview with Lord Elgin, which comes off on Thursday next. I shall

therefore endeavour to call on you either on Friday next, or early some time week after. I shall however drop you a note if I can at all spare the time.

Yours sincerely

MRS. SPENCER WALTON,

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4456

430. LETTER TO MISS E. LAWSON

[HOTEL CECIL,,
LONDON,]
November 2, 1906

DEAR MISS LAWSON,

Does your not having turned up show that: you have been suited?

If so, my congratulations. If you have not been fixed up, I will value a call from you tomorrow. If I am away, please wait. I am likely to be in the whole morning. If I go out in the afternoon I shall leave word with somebody as to my movements. Mr. Simmonds will probably be away for the afternoon; otherwise he would have waited.

Yours truly,

MISS LAWSON
C/O MRS. HOSTER
ST. STEPHEN'S CHAMBERS
TELEGRAPH STREET, E.C.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4457

431. LETTER TO J. C. GIBSON

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 2, 1906

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

I am obliged to you for your sympathetic note. As a matter of fact I fully intended to call on you before leaving Johannesburg, but working against time I have had to leave undone many things I would have liked to do. I do not see the slightest chance of my being able to go to Scotland. I have come here for a month, but I see I can put in a good six months' work and yet have a balance left over. I am

practically working day and night.

Yours truly,

J. C. GIBSON, ESQ.[1]
P. O. BOX 1261
JOHANNESBURG

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4458

432. LETTER TO S. HOLLICK

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 2, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I have your letter of the 31st ultimo. I shall be pleased to see you at the Hotel on Monday or Tuesday next at 9.30 a.m. if it is convenient to you.

Yours faithfully,

S. HOLLICK, ESQ.
62, LONDON WALL, E.C.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4459

433. LETTER TO H. BISSICKS

[HOTEL CECIL,]
LONDON,
November 2, 1906

DEAR MR. BISSICKS,

Your letter addressed to me at Johannesburg has been redirected to me here. You will no doubt be surprised to receive this letter. If you have the time I shall be glad to see you on Wednesday or Thursday next at 9.30 a.m. I would have called myself, but as my stay here is very brief, I am obliged to give up many friendly calls. I fully sympathize with you in your troubles, and I do not at all expect you to pay anything towards the advance made by me to the late Miss

[1] A resident of Johannesburg. It was to his private office that Gandhiji was carried in an unconscious state after being assaulted by Mir Alam and others on February 10, 1908; *vide Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XXII.

Bissicks[1]. It was my contribution to the cause of vegetarianism. I regret I do not know Miss Taylor's address, but I am asking my people in Johannesburg to send it to you.[2]

Yours truly,

H. BISSICKS, ESQ.
83, COMMERCIAL ROAD
BLACKFRIARS, E . C.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4460

434. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD ELGIN

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON, W. C.,
November 2, 1906

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
THE RIGHT HON'BLE THE EARL OF ELGIN
HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
LONDON

SIR,

As I have arrived here as a member of the Transvaal Indian Deputation, the Natal Indian Congress has forwarded to me the enclosed authority[3] to wait on His Lordship in connection with the local disabilities of British Indians in Natal. I was Honorary Secretary of the Congress for over six years, and even during my residence in Johannesburg I have had the privilege of advising the Congress. I therefore possess a fairly intimate knowledge of the situation in Natal.

On the 29th October I received the following cable:

> Alarming Bill to restrict renewal of licenses to Parliamentary voters only lodged in Assembly by Tatham. Trading liberty at stake. Explain Colonial Office British public. Message recommended by representative gathering.

This message has reference to a Bill that it is proposed to introduce b Mr. Ralph Tatham, [*sic*] a new Member of the Legislative Assembly of Natal, limiting the renewal of trade licenses to those only

[1] A theosophist, client and friend. The reference is to the money Gandhiji had lent her. *Vide* "Letter to Dada Osman", 5-8-1905

[2] *Vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 2-11-1906

[3] By oversight Gandhiji failed to enclose this letter of authority. *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Elgin", 7-11-1906

who are on the Parliamentary Voters' Roll. The effect of this measure would be, if it were passed into law, to efface the Indian trader entirely from the Colony of Natal.

I shall be greatly obliged if His Lordship would favour me with a short interview regarding the Natal matters, and I am sure that if Lord Elgin could spare the time the favour would be highly appreciated by the Natal Indian community.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

M. K. GANDHI

[Enclosure]

Colonial Office Records: C. O. 179, Vol. 239/Ind.; also a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4461

435. LETTER TO T. H. THORNTON

[HOTEL CECIL,

LONDON,]

November 2, 1906

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Arathoon told me that on the invitation of Sir Lepel Griffin you had kindly consented to join the deputation which is to wait on Lord Elgin in connection with the British Indians in the Transvaal. I beg, therefore, to state that the Deputation will be received by Lord Elgin at the Colonial Office on Thursday the 8th instant at 3 o'clock. I have advised the other members of the time, and venture to suggest that it will be better if all the members were at the Colonial Office at half-past two, so that there should be a short conference amongst the members of the deputation. I enclose also a Circular

Letter[1] I have addressed to the members together with some papers

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

3 enclosures

T. H. THORNTON, ESQ., C.S.I., D.C.L.[2]
C:/O THE EAST INDIA ASSOCIATION
3, WESTMINSTER CHAMBERS
VICTORIA STREET, S.W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4462

436. LETTER TO J. H. POLAK

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
November 2, 1906

DEAR MR. POLAK,

I sent Mr. Ritch over to you in connection with the meeting, not only because you know Mr. Scott much better than I do, but also because my time is otherwise very fully occupied and I feel that if you could spare a few hours during the 3 or 4 days that are available it might be possible to hasten the proposed meeting of Members. The idea is to have the meeting before the Deputation meets Lord Elgin and to have a resolution passed by the meeting, to be forwarded to Lord Elgin. If, therefore, you can do it, please bestir yourself. At the same time I shall certainly see Mr. Scott and other Members, as suggested by you.

What have you done with *The Morning Leader* man? Have you, too, further considered the question of the education of the young man[3] about whom I had a chat with you last Sunday?

May I say that any expenses you may incur in connection with the moving about, etc., should be paid by me.

As it is not possible for me to see the Pundit[4] before Sunday or on any other day, I am afraid I shall have to deny myself the

[1] *Vide* "Circular Letter", 31-10-1906

[2] Thomas Henry Thornton, (1832-1913); Chief Secretary to Government of the Punjab (1864-76); Acting Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, (1876-7); author of books on India

[3] Ruthnum Pather

[4] Shyamji Krishnavarma

pleasure of enjoying the musical evening at your house, and shall have to be satisfied with the few hours I shall be able to pass with you in the afternoon of Sunday. May I ask you also to look me up at the Hotel in the morning, before you go to your office.

Yours truly,

J. H. POLAK, ESQ.
28, GROSVENOR ROAD
CANONBURY

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4463

437. LETTER TO MESSRS A. BONNER

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 2, 1906

DEAR SIRS,

I enclose herewith cheque for £6.17.0 together with your bill in settlement of your account. I shall thank you to receipt the bill and return it.

Yours faithfully,

[2] enclosure[s]
Cheque, £6.17.0
Account
MESSRS A. BONNER[1]
1 & 2, TOOK'S COURT
LONDON, E.C.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4464

438. LETTER TO SIR HENRY COTTON

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
November 2, 1906

DEAR SIR HENRY,

Mr. Scott, Mr. Robertson, and Mr. Mackarness have suggested a meeting of Members at the House to hear the views of the Indian

[1] Printers of *India*, who presumably did Gandhiji's printing work while he was in England

Delegates. Sir William approves of the idea. It seems to me that if such a meeting were possible before the date fixed by Lord Elgin for meeting the Deputation, and if a resolution were adopted by the meeting sympathizing with the objects of the Deputation, it will strengthen the hands of the Deputation, as also Lord Elgin's. I have therefore written to Mr. Scott. If you approve of the idea, may I ask you to move in the matter. If you desire me to wait upon you, I will do so with pleasure.

Yours truly,

SIR HENRY COTTON, M.P.

45, ST. JOHN'S WOOD PARK, N.W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4466

439. LETTER TO SIR HENRY COTTON

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 2, 1906

DEAR SIR HENRY,

I am obliged to you for your letter of the 1st instant. I have now placed myself in communication with Mr. Harold Cox. I went over to the House twice to see him but I could not catch him.

Yours sincerely,

SIR HENRY COTTON, M.P.

45, ST. JOHN'S WOOD PARK, N.W.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4465

440. LETTER TO W. A. WALLACE

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 2, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I have your letter regarding the renting of room No. 28, Ground Floor, for which I thank you. I hope to be able to let you know

definitely in the course of next week.

Yours faithfully,

W. A. WALLACE, ESQ.
QUEEN ANNE'S CHAMBERS
BROADWAY
WESTMINSTER

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4467

441. LETTER TO YUK LIN LEW

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 2, 1906

DEAR MR. LEW,

I hope you have received the draft of the letter[1] for the Chinese Minister to send to the Foreign Secretary.

Yours truly,

HIS EXCELLENCY YUK LIN LEW
CHINESE CONSUL-GENERAL IN THE TRANSVAAL
RICHMOND HOUSE
49, PORTLAND PLACE, W.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4468

442. LETTER TO A. H. SCOTT

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 2, 1906

DEAR MR. SCOTT,

You and Mr. Robertson suggested that there should be a meeting of Members of the House who take an interest in the British Indian Association. May I know whether you have taken any further steps in the matter? A very strong deputation will introduce us to Lord Elgin. I beg to enclose herewith a list of the names [*sic*] of the deputation[2] and a copy of a representation to Lord Elgin which will be

[1] *Vide* Draft for Chinese Ambassador", Aftter 31-10-1906

[2] For final list of members of the deputation, *vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Elgin",6-11-1906

the basis for submission to His Excellency on Thursday next, when he will receive the deputation. Lord Elgin has asked me to restrict the number of the deputation to twelve. I am, therefore, precluded from inviting any other friends of the cause who I know would willingly join it. But I feel it would strengthen our hands, as also Lord Elgin's, if the meeting referred to above could take place before Thursday next and a resolution passed thereat, which could be conveyed to Lord Elgin. I shall esteem it a personal favour if you could kindly move in the matter. If you want me to wait on you I shall do so.

I am,

Yours truly,

2 enclosures

A. H. SCOTT, ESQ., M.P.
HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4469

443. LETTER TO LORD GEORGE HAMILTON

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 2, 1906

MY LORD,

I am obliged to you for your letter of the 31st October. Mr. Ally and will be in London at least up to the 17th instant. Lord Elgin will receive us on the 8th instant. If it is possible for your Lordship to give Mr. Ally and myself an appointment before that date we will feel greatly obliged.

I beg to remain,

Your Lordship's humble servant,

THE RIGHT HON'BLE LORD GEORGE HAMILTON[1],

17, MONTAGU STREET
PORTMAN SQUARE, W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4471

[1] Under-Secretary and later Secretary of State for India

444. JUVENILE SMOKING

We have drawn the attention of our readers more than once to the fact that the habit of smoking *bidis* or cigars is harmful.[1] Now we have yet another occasion to refer to it. A law has been enacted in the Victoria Province of Australia to check the evil habit; under this law none below sixteen may smoke. A shopkeeper found selling or giving a *bidi* to a boy below that age may be fined 20 shillings for the first offence and 40 shillings for the second; if he is caught a third time, his licence may be cancelled for five years. It is not for the first time in the history of the world that such strict measures have been adopted for the prevention of smoking. Such laws are in force in some civilized countries like Japan and Germany and, nearer home, the Cape Colony. A short time ago, a similar bill was introduced in Natal also. But the usefulness of a juvenile smoking bill is not recognized in a land where enthusiasm is misused for getting rich by ruining others and, if possible, driving them out. Tobacco does nothing but harm. It weakens body and mind. It is obvious that its harmful effect is felt all the more in youth. In certain places, religion forbids the use of tobacco, and it is true that many Indians do not smoke for that reason. But in some places the habit is so firmly rooted that we feel no hesitation in writing against it again and again.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 3-11-1906

[1] *Vide* "The Evils of Smoking", 21-10-1905

445. REPRESENTATION TO LORD ELGIN[1]

COMMON ROOM,
LINCOLN'S INN, W.C.
November 3, 1906

TO
THE RIGHT HON'BLE THE EARL OF ELGIN
HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
LONDON

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR LORDSHIP,

We, the undersigned British Indians domiciled in South Africa, have read with a great deal of pain and anxiety the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance of the Transvaal, and we have naturally followed with great interest the movements of the British Indian Deputation that has arrived from the Transvaal.

We are all students from South Africa, four of us studying for the Bar, and one of us studying medicine, and while we cannot but sympathize with the struggles of our countrymen in the Transvaal for liberty, our chief anxiety is regarding ourselves and persons placed in a position similar to our own, and we venture respectfully to approach your Lordship to explain our position in the light of the new Ordinance.

We are all of us either born or brought up in South Africa, and to us South Africa is more our home than India. Even our mother tongue is English, our parents having brought us up to speak that language from our infancy. Three of us are Christians, one a Mahommedan, and one a Hindoo.

According to the information received by us, and in accordance with the personal knowledge of the first undersigned, the effect of the Peace Preservation Ordinance of the Transvaal, the declaration made by Lord Selborne to the White Leagues of the Transvaal, and the present Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance which has brought the Indian Deputation to wait on your Lordship (with the exception of the first undersigned, who has lived in the Transvaal and who was practising as a sworn Translator and Interpreter in the English and

[1] This is the final form of the representation which Gandhiji drafted. *Vide* footnote to "Letter to G. Godfrey's, 31-10-1906 and "Circular Letter", 2-11-1906 The representation was reproduced in *Indian Opinion,* 8-12 1906.

Hindustani languages of the Honourable the Supreme Court of the Transvaal, and who came into very close contact with the Asiatic Department), all of us would be unable to proceed to the Transvaal because we are not pre-war residents of the Transvaal. The net result of this disability would be that, although the certificates we would receive on our being called to the Bar, or on our receiving the Medical Diploma, which [*sic*] would entitle us to carry on our professions in any part of the British Dominions on the production of those certificates and of evidence of good character, our diplomas or certificates would be valueless, so far as the Transvaal is concerned. We would moreover on the one hand be able, although being without the Transvaal border, on application to receive from the Court or from the Medical Society a license to carry on our profession, but we would be debarred from making use thereof by reason of the want of a permit to enter the Transvaal

Most of us, and many others born in South Africa and elsewhere, and equally well educated, would be required to submit to registration, and to produce a permit to any policeman who may demand to see it and to be marched off to the police station, or to the Criminal Investigation Department office to furnish means of identification in order to show that we are lawful possessors of those passes. We would also, we apprehend, be liable to be called upon to furnish means of identification at the time of taking out the passes in question, and be called upon to give the imprints of our ten digits and any other particulars that may be required under regulations to be framed by the Lieutenant Governor.

Having lived in England, and having breathed its free atmosphere, and having received every consideration from Englishmen in this country, your Lordship will easily appreciate the anxiety the prospect of the above Ordinance engenders. We are here being nurtured in the teachings of Bentham, Austin, and other English writers whose names are a watchword for liberty and independence, and we could hardly believe that anything of the kind referred to above would possibly be applicable to us. We would not have troubled your Lordship with this representation if it was a matter affecting and ending only with ourselves, but we are aware that the desire on the part of the Indians to give a good education to their children is daily growing. There are to-day Indians in South Africa occupying a status similar to our own. We therefore think, it is but right that we should bring to the notice of your Lordship and, through this humble representation, to the attention of every public man in the Empire the intensity of the feeling aroused by the present status of British Indians

in the Transvaal. We therefore humbly pray and hope that your Lordship will be able to grant us, and those similarly placed as we are, the protection that we venture to believe we are entitled to.

We beg to remain,

Your Lordship's humble and obedient servants,

GEORGE V. GODFREY

JOSEPH ROYEPPEN

JAS. W. GODFREY

A. H. GOOL

S. RUTHNUM PATHER

From a photostat of the printed copy: G. N. 2307

446. LETTER TO A. W. ARATHOON

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 3, 1906

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Ritch has given me your kind note. I forwarded to Mr. Thornton the papers under the care of the Association[1] yesterday,[2] which I hope you have re-directed. I am very thankful to you for the interest you are taking in the matter. I am writing to Mr. Thornton again today confirming my letter of yesterday.

Yours truly,

A. W. ARATHOON, ESQ.
3, VICTORIA STREET, S. W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4472

447. LETTER TO F. H. BROWN

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 3, 1906

DEAR MR. BROWN,

I venture to enclose herewith two copies of the Representation forwarded to Lord Elgin for your perusal. The Representation will be

[1] East India Association
[2] *Vide* "Letter to T. H. Thornton", 2-11-1906

used as the basis for discussion at the interview that comes off on the 8th instant.

Yours truly,

2 enclosures

F. H. BROWN, ESQ.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4473

448. LETTER TO NATAL BANK MANAGER

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 3, 1906

TO
THE MANAGER
NATAL BANK
LONDON

DEAR SIR,

Will you kindly give the bearer Mr Ritch a draft on Johannesburg for £100 filled in. I shall then sign it and return it to you to be placed to my credit.

Yours faithfully,

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4474

449. LETTER TO A. CARTWRIGHT

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 3, 1906

DEAR SIR,

A Mrs. Reide called on me today. She seemed to be very ill. I was unable to follow all she said, and as she appeared very nervous I did not put any questions to her. She gave me your name, and showed me some paper also bearing your name. I believe she needs some assistance. If you know of her case, or if you have interested yourself in her case, I shall thank you to let me know

something about it.

Iam,

Yours faithfully,

ALBERT CARTWRIGHT, ESQ.[1]
62, LONDON WALL, E. C.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4475

450. LETTER FO SIR CHARLES DILKE

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 3, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I am much obliged to you for your letter regarding the Indian Deputation from the Transvaal. If you cannot possibly come, I venture to hope that you will be good enough to send on Wednesday a letter of sympathy which could be read to Lord Elgin.

I beg to remain,

Yours faithfully,

THE RIGHT HON'BLE SIR CHARLES DILKE, BART., M.P.

SLOANE STREETS, W.

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4476

451. LETTER TO SIR LEPEL GRIFFIN

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 3, 1906

DEAR SIR LEPEL,

I am obliged to you for your letter of the 2nd instant. I sent you yesterday papers in connection with the question. I now beg to enclose herewith a list of those who have consented to join the deputation. Lord Elgin has asked me to restrict the number to twelve.

[1] Later editor of *The Transvaal Leader*, he mediated between Gandhiji and Smuts; *vide Satyagraha in South Africa, Ch.* XXI.

It is quite probable that Sir Charles Schwann would join.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

Enclosure
SIR LEPEL GRIFFIN
4, CADOGAN GARDENS, S. W.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4477

452. LETTER TO T. H. THORNTON

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 3, 1906

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Arathoon has forwarded your letter of the 1st instant to me. As soon as he gave me your name as one of the deputation, I forwarded the papers to you, and hope you have received them. I write now only to add that, if you could find time to see Mr. Ally and me before the deputation meets in order to enable us to pay our respects to you and to place the position more fully before you, we shall be very much obliged.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

T. THORNTON, ESQ., C.S.I., D.C.L., &C.
10, MARLBOROUGH BUILDINGS
BATH

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4478

453. THE DEPUTATION'S VOYAGE—V[1]

LONDON,
November 3, 1906

SHYAMJI KRISHNAVARMA AND INDIA HOUSE

As I promised in my last despatch, I now write about Mr. Shyamji Krishnavarma and India House. Mr. Shyamji Krishnavarma is a barrister from Bombay, and a son-in-law of Mr. Chhabildas Bhansali. As hisknowledge of Sanskrit was of a very high order, the late Prof. Monier Williams took him to Oxford where, because of his ability, he was made a professor and earned a lot of money.

Meanwhile he studied law and was called to the bar, took a degree at Oxford and studied Greek, Latin and other languages. When he returned to India, he took with him £2,000 which he had saved—a thing which, it is said, no other Indian had done before. In India he served as Dewan in Ajmer[2] and other States. Later, his ideas changed and he decided to spend his earnings for the benefit of the country. With this end in view he came to England and settled here. He lives on the land which he has purchased. Though he can afford to live in comfort, he lives in poverty. He dresses simply and lives like an ascetic. His mission is service to his country. The idea underlying his service is that there should be complete *swaraj* for India and that the British should quit the country, handing over power to Indians. If they do not do so, the Indians should refuse them all help so that they become unable to carry on the administration and are forced to leave. He holds that unless this is done the people of India will never be happy. Everything else will follow *swaraj*.

INDIA HOUSE

In order to seek support for these views and win people over to his faith, he has founded India House at his own cost. Any Indian student is allowed to stay there against a very small weekly payment. All Indians, whether Hindus, Muslims or others, can and do stay there. The expenses of some students are borne by Shyamji himself. There is full freedom for everyone in the matter of food and drink. Being

[1] This and the previous instalment, "The Deputation's Voyage-lV", 26-10-1906 , appeared together in the same issue of Indian Opinion. As this was, however, written later and meant to be a separate despatch, it is here printed separately in its proper sequence.

[2] Ajmer was British territory, not a Native State. Gandhiji seems to have mistaken it for Udaipur where Krishnavarma was Dewan.

situated in fine surroundings, the place has a very good atmosphere. On the first day of our arrival, both Mr. Ally and I went to stay at India House, and we were very well looked after. But as our work requires our getting in touch with important people and as India House is rather remote, we have been obliged to come and live at this Hotel at great expense.

EXPENSES IN ENGLAND

I had believed a man could live here on £1 a day, but my estimate has proved wrong. Here a bed-sitting-room costs 12s 6d a day, with extra charge for a bath. These charges are for a single person. For reasons of health, Mr. Ally sleeps in Dr. Oldfield's home. If one eats at the Hotel, a meal costs as much as 5s. We therefore eat at a vegetarian restaurant. We have a meal at the Hotel only when we ask an acquaintance over or invite an important person to lunch or dinner. Today, for instance, we had Mr. James, the Chinese delegate, and a Chinese lawyer. Mr. Ritch was also with us. The bill for a single meal came to £1.11s. At the vegetarian restaurant a meal hardly costs more than 1s 6d for a person. And as Mr. Godfrey or some other assistant is always with us, the cost for a meal comes to three to four shillings. As all the important persons live at distant places, we have to spend a great deal on transport. We go sometimes by train, sometimes by bus and often by cab. There is hardly time for walking. In spite of all this hurrying, we cannot see more than two persons a day. Often at the House of Commons we have to wait an hour before we can see a Member. However, we hope to be able to keep the expenses within the limits set by the Committee.

INSUFFICIENT TIME

We had intended to stay here for a month. But from experience I see that there would be work enough for us to do if we were to stay six months and that it would not all be fruitless. We find many people coming forward who sympathize with our cause and are ready to work for it.

INTERVIEW WITH LORD ELGIN

The meeting with Lord Elgin has been fixed for November 8, when Sir Lepel Griffin, Lord Stanley, Sir Muncherji Bhownaggree, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Sir Henry Cotton, Mr. Thornton, Mr. Justice Ameer Ali, Mr. Harold Cox, Sir George Birdwood and Sir Charles Dilke
will join us. Sir Lepel Griffin will act as the leader. A petition setting out the facts in brief has been printed and sent today to Lord Elgin. As it consists mostly of the arguments we have been advancing there, I do not give its translation here.

PRESS COMMENTS

Interviews [with the Press] have been published in *South Africa*, *The Morning Leader* and *The Tribune*. *South Africa*, which used to be bitterly critical, has now written somewhat in our favour. Our letter to *The Times* has been published in substance. Notice has been taken of it in other papers also.

MEMBERS OF HOUSE OF COMMONS

Efforts are being made to bring together some Members of the House of Commons so that they may hear us and pass a resolution expressing sympathy with our cause. In this matter we have received great assistance from Mr. Polak's father and Mr. Ritch. I cannot say more just yet. Efforts are also being made to arrange an interview with Lord George Hamilton, former Secretary of State for India, which most likely will materialize. Whatever happens, I at any rate expect to return before January 1. Mr. Ally has sought an interview with the Turkish Ambassador. A reply is expected on Monday.

NEED FOR A PERMANENT COMMITTEE

Sir Muncherji has been working hard in our behalf. He and some others are of the opinion that, for a few years at least, it is necessary to have a standing committee here. Even if Lord Elgin rejects the Ordinance, it is certain that, when the Transvaal gets self-government, new laws will be enacted, and some vigilant work will have to be put in here. Unless there is a person who gives all his time to a single cause, it is difficult to carry on public work in this city. Many may express sympathy, but if work is to be got out of them, they must be supplied with prepared material. Only then can they do something, for they have many other matters to attend to. The expenses for a committee of this kind may come to at least £300 a year. It can be formed only if the Transvaal Indian community undertakes to find the money. It will need an office, for which more than £50 a year will be required. Mr. Ritch has now done his final examination and as long as he is here, he can do a lot for us. He should be given an allowance of at least £10 a month. He is a poor man. Otherwise, he is so good that he would work for us free of

charge. Thus, £170 will be spent on the office and the Secretary. The furniture is expected to cost £30. The remaining £100 to be spent on house rent, conveyance, printing, dinners, etc., is a small amount. But I believe that, with this expenditure, much can be accomplished here. Such committees for big causes are to be found all over London. We find that a Committee of the Chinese League is already functioning here. As the committee can be formed only while we are here and as the work is urgent, a cablegram has been sent to South Africa. Natal and the Cape can both join in this. As there is not much to do for the Cape Indians just now and as their leaders have been passing through hard times, we have not suggested collection of any funds from the Cape. Many prominent Britishers have agreed to work on this committee, if it is formed.

BRAVE WOMEN

A vigorous movement is going on here for securing the franchise for women. When the Government showed willingness to grant special treatment in gaol to the brave daughter of the late Mr. Cobden, she replied, 'No matter how I suffer, I shall seek no favour from you. I am in gaol for my own and my sisters' rights, and I will live like a common prisoner till the franchise is granted.' Such words have stirred up public feeling in their favour, and the papers which used to ridicule them before have stopped doing so. Every Indian in the Transvaal should take to heart the example of these brave women.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-12-1906

1. CIRCULAR FOR MEETING AT HOUSE OF COMMONS[1]

HOUSE OF COMMONS,
November 5, 1906

DEAR SIR,

A meeting of the Liberal, Labour and Nationalist Members of this House will take place at 6 p.m. on Wednesday next, the 7th inst. in the Grand Committee Room, to hear the British Indian Deputation that has arrived from the Transvaal, in connection with the Ordinance passed by the Legislative Council of that Colony, termed the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance, and to pass a resolution.

In the opinion of the Delegates, the Ordinance reduces the British Indian settlers of the Transvaal to a position much worse than they occupied under the Boer regime and even than that of the Kaffirs.

They contend that the Ordinance in question is in contravention of promises repeatedly made by British Ministers and in conflict with British traditions.

The undersigned trust that you will be good enough to attend the meeting.

We are,
Yours faithfully,

HENRY COTTON	R. LEHMANN
H. COX	J. M. ROBERTSON
CHARLES W. DILKE	A. H. SCOTT
CHARLES SWANN[2]	J. WARD

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4482

[1] This was drafted by Gandhiji; *vide* "Letter to Sir Charles Schwann", 7-11-1906.

[2] Schwann; *vide* " Letter to Sir Charles Schwann,", 7-11-1906.

2. LETTER TO J. KITCHIN

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON, W. C.,
November 5, 1906

DEAR SIR,

Your brother and my friend, Mr. H. Kitchin, has written to me sending your address. He is anxious, and so am I, that I should make your acquaintance during my brief stay in London, and I shall thank you if you will kindly make an appointment.

I shall be exceedingly busy this week with reference to the Deputation that is to wait upon Lord Elgin. Will you therefore kindly make an appointment for some time next week?

Yours truly,

JOSEPH KITCHIN, ESQ.
"INGLENOOK"
BRACKLEY ROAD
BECKENHAM

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4484

3. LETTER TO AMEER ALI

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 5, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I have your note of the 3rd instant. Mr. Ally I expect here today from Bromley, and he and I will be pleased to wait on you at the Reform Club to-morrow at 4 p.m.

I am,
Yours faithfully,

AMEER ALI, ESQ., C.I.E.
THE LAMBDENS
BEENHAM
NEAR READING

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4485

4. LETTER TO G. J. ADAM

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 5, 1906

DEAR SIR,

With reference to your enquiry, the Deputation will be received by Lord Elgin at 3 p.m. next Thursday.

Yours faithfully,

G. J. ADAM, ESQ.
24, OLD JEWRY
LONDON

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4486

5. LETTER TO G. WALPOLE

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 5, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I have your letter of the 3rd inst. for which I thank you.

I shall not need your services with regard to the Deputation as I have permanently engaged the services of an expert shorthand writer.

Yours faithfully,

GEORGE WALPOLE, ESQ.
1, NEW COURT
LINCOLN'S INN

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4487

6. LETTER TO SISTER IN CHARGE, ST. EDMUND'S

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 5, 1906

TO
THE SISTER IN CHARGE
ST. EDMUND'S
"BROADSTAIRS"

DEAR MADAM,

Dr. Josiah Oldfield and I are old friends. The Doctor has just seen a friend of mine, Mr. Suleman Manga, whose case in the opinion of Dr. Oldfield calls for a change and rest for a week or two at your Convalescent Home. Would you kindly inform Mr. Manga by telegram whether you have accommodation for him, also your charges per week. Mr. Manga's address is: 106, Baron's Court Road, W. Kindly send Mr. Manga the telegram early tomorrow morning.

I am,
Yours faithfully,

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4488

7. LETTER TO EDITOR, "THE TIMES"

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 5, 1906

TO
THE EDITOR
THE TIMES
PRINTING HOUSE SQUARE, E.C.

DEAR SIR,

I beg to enclose herewith for your information [and] publication the signed letter[1] addressed by some of the Members of

[1] "Circular for Meeting at House of Commons", 5-11-1906.

the House of Commons.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,

[Enclosure]

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4489

8. LETTER TO G. J. ADAM

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]

November 5, 1906

DEAR MR. ADAM,

I enclose herewith for your information the circular letter addressed by some of the Members of the House of Commons.

Perhaps you will be so kind as to furnish the Press with information.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,

[Enclosure]
G. J. ADAM, ESQ.
24, OLD JEWRY
LONDON, E.C.

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4490

9. LETTER TO LORD ELGIN[1]

22, KENNINGTON ROAD,
LAMBETH,
November 5, 1906

TO
THE RIGHT HON'BLE THE EARL OF ELGIN
HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
COLONIAL OFFICE
LONDON

MY LORD,

I beg to draw your attention to the copy of *Indian Opinion* for the 13th of October, herewith enclosed. It contains the leading article "The Thin End", about which I have already had the honour to write to you, also a report of the case of Mahomed Hafejee Moosa on page 745 entitled "War on Infants".

I venture to think that the report brings into prominent relief the difficulties of British Indians (even infants) in the Transvaal.

I beg to remain,
Your Lordship's obedient servant

[Enclosure]

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4483,

10. LETTER TO A. CARTWRIGHT

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 5, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I am much obliged to you for your letter of the 5th instant.

I enclose herewith the Representation submitted to Lord Elgin, and also a circular letter addressed to the Liberal and other Members

[1] The address at the top would suggest that the letter was from Dadabhai Naoroji, but this copy was found among Gandhiji's papers. Gandhiji's letter to him dated November 17 (*vide* "Letter to Dadabhai Naoroji", 17-11-1906) shows that, during the Deputation's stay in England, Mr. Naoroji sent all papers received from South Africa to Gandhiji who returned them offering comment and explanation and sometimes suggesting courses of action. It is thus very likely that Gandhiji drafted the letter because of his ready familiarity with the South African situation.

of the House of Commons who are taking active interest in the question of the status of British Indians in the Transvaal in the light of the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance.

You may have seen that Lord Elgin receives the Deputation on Thursday next at 3 o'clock.

I also enclose a copy of the Representation[1] made to Lord Elgin by five young Indians from South Africa who are studying either for the Bar or for the medical profession. Your letter encourages me [to] seek your personal acquaintance. May I ask you to give me an interview some time after next Thursday, and if it is convenient to you, we might lunch together at the Hotel and talk over the matter that has brought Mr. Ally and myself to London.

I am,
Yours faithfully,

[3 enclosures]

ALBERT CARTWRIGHT, ESQ.
62, LONDON WALL, E.C.

From a photostat of the type written office copy: S. N. 4491

11. LETTER TO F. H. BROWN

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 6, 1906

DEAR MR. BROWN,

I thank you for your letter of the 5th instant. I send you the last two copies of *Indian Opinion*, which will give you some more information about the Ordinance, and also on the general movements of the Indian community in South Africa. You will also see that the last number contains photographs of the Delegates.

It was very kind of you to introduce Mr. Ritch and me to Sir Curzon Wyllie[2], though at the time you introduced us I did not know that Sir Curzon was the Political A.D.C. to Mr. Morley.

[1] *Vide* "Representation to Lord Elgin", 3-11-1906.

[2] Assassinated in July 1909 by an Indian terrorist at the Imperial Institute in London

I have shown your letter to Mr. Ritch, who will let you have a copy of his paper[1] some time previous to the Friday preceding the date of its delivery.

Enclosed you will find a complete list of the members of the deputation.

Yours truly,

3 enclosures

F. H. BROWN, ESQ.
"DILKUSHA"
WESTBOURNE ROAD
FOREST HILL, S.E.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4492

12. LETTER TO SIR CHARLES DILKE

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 6, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I am extremely obliged to you for your letter of the 5th instant. As suggested therein, I will not make use of the letter[2] before Lord Elgin.

I beg to remain.
Yours faithfully

THE RIGHT HON'BLE SIR CHARLES DILKE, BART., M.P.
76, SLOANE STREET, W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4493

[1] *Vide* "Ritch's Speech at East India Association", before 18-12-1906.
[2] The letter of sympathy, mentioned in "Letter Sir Charles Dilke", 3-11-1906.

13. LETTER TO MESSRS A. BONNER

[HOTEL CECIL.
LONDON,]
November 6, 1906

MESSRS A. BONNER
PRINTERS
I & 2, TOOK'S COURT, E.C.

DEAR SIRS,

I have your letter. I now enclose further cheque for One Pound and your amended bill, which please return duly discharged.

Yours faithfully,

2 enclosures

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4494

14. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD ELGIN

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 6, 1906

TO
THE RIGHT HON'BLE THE EARL OF ELGIN
HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
COLONIAL OFFICE
LONDON

SIR,

The list of members of the deputation is now completed. I beg to enclose same herewith. Including the two Delegates from the Transvaal, the number has reached fourteen, but I hope that Lord Elgin will be graciously pleased to excuse my having exceeded the number, as Sir Charles Dilke has written saying that although he will try to be present it may not be possible for him to do so as there is a Committee Meeting of the House of Commons on, at about the same time, which Sir Charles has to attend.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,

Enclosure

List of gentlemen who, together with the two Delegates from the British Indians of the Transvaal, will form the deputation to wait on Lord Elgin on Thursday the 8th November, 1906.

Lord Stanley of Alderley	Sir George Birdwood
Sir Charles Dilke	Mr. Harold Cox
Sir Lepel Griffin	Mr. Ameer Ali
Sir Henry Cotton	Mr. T. [H.] Thornton
Sir M. M. Bhownaggree	Sir Charles Schwann
Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji	Mr. J. D. Rees[1].

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4495-6

15. LETTER TO J. D. REES

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 6, 1906

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Ally and I are greatly obliged for your letter of even date. We have indeed watched your advocacy of the cause of the British Indians in the Transvaal, and in due course we would have waited on you. We are now sending your name to Lord Elgin as a member of the deputation. As you know, the deputation will meet Lord Elgin on Thursday next at 3 p.m. at the Colonial Office. All the members of the deputation have been requested to attend at the Colonial Office at 2.30 p.m., so that a short conference may be held. Sir Lepel Griffin will head the deputation. I beg to enclose herewith a list of the

[1] Sir John David Rees, (1854-1922); Indian Civil Service, 1875; Government Translator for Tamil, Telugu, Persian and Hindustani, Under-Secretary to the Madras Government; British Resident in Travancore and Cochin; additional Member of Governor-General Of India's Council; author of *Tours in India, The Mahommedans, The Real India, Modern India,* etc.

members forming the deputation, as also a copy of the Representation to Lord Elgin which will form the basis of submission to him on Thursday, and copy of the precis of the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance[1].

I hope you have received the Circular issued by several members of the House of Commons, convening a meeting of the Liberal, Nationalist, and Labour Members of Parliament. I venture to trust that you will find time to attend the meeting. If possible, Mr. Ally and I will take an opportunity of sending in a card to you at the House, so that we may be able to place the position before you more fully than we could at the conference on Thursday.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

3 enclosures

J. D. REES, ESQ.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4497

[1] *Vide* "Letter to J. D. Rees", 6-11-1906, enclosure.

[ENCLOSURE]

Precis of Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance, 1906[1]

[LONDON,]
November 2, 1906

DEFINITION: The term "Asiatic" shall mean any such person as is described in Article 1 of Law [3] of 1885.

The term "Asiatic" under Law 3 of 1885 includes the so called coolies, Arabs, Malays, Mohammedan subjects of the Turkish Dominions.

This Ordinance however excepts the Malays from its operation.

Registration: Section 3 requires every lawfully resident Asiatic in the Transvaal to be registered, for which no charges shall be made, and in accordance with the section, an Asiatic lawfully resident is one who has received, or may receive, a permanent permit to enter and reside in the. Transvaal, unless such permit is fraudulently obtained, or any Asiatic resident and actually in the Transvaal on the 31st day of May 1902.

SECTION 4: Requires every such Asiatic to make an application for registration, such application to be made in the case of children under 16 years of age by their parents or guardians.

SECTION 5: Lays down that, if the application for registration is refused, the applicant shall be directed to leave the Colony, under the process described in the section.

SECTION 6: Says that any Asiatic who is the guardian of any Asiatic child under the age of eight years shall upon making application for registration on his own behalf supply such particulars and furnish such means of identification in respect of such child as may be prescribed by regulation, and if such guardian is himself registered, the particulars aforesaid which he has supplied shall be provisionally noted on the Register, and such guardian shall within one year make application for registration on such child's behalf at the office of the Resident Magistrate of the district in which he himself resides.

The section then proceeds to lay down the procedure for the separate registration of such child after he has attained the age of eight years.

[1] This was prepared by Gandhiji to apprise sympathizers, particularly members of the introducing deputation, of the real scope and nature of the Ordinance.

SECTION 7: Deals further with the registration of children.

SECTION 8: Provides that any person who shall fail to make application for registration. . .either on his own behalf or as guardian shall be liable on conviction to a fine not excee-ding One Hundred

Pounds, and in default of payment to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period not exceeding three months.

SECTION 9: Provides that every Asiatic of the age of 16 years and upwards entering or residing in the Transvaal shall upon demand made upon him by any member of the Police Force lawfully established in this Colony, or any other person authorized thereto by the Colonial Secretary, produce the certificate of registration[1] of which he is the lawful holder, and shall also on like demand supply such means of identification as may be prescribed by regulation.

In the case of children under 16 years, the guardians or parents have to produce a certificate and supply particulars of identification.

SECTION 10: Makes certificates of registration conclusive evidence as to the right of the lawful holder to remain in the Colony. (N.B. To-day every Asiatic in possession of his permit has such right by law.)

SECTION[S] 11 & 12: Lay down the procedure for lost certificates.

SECTION 13: Provides that no Asiatic shall obtain a license to trade without production of certificate of registration.

SECTION 14: Makes the Registrar practically the arbiter as to the age of an Asiatic.

SECTION 15: Exempts declarations made for the purposes of the Ordinance from stamp duty.

SECTION 16: Imposes a fine of £500 or in default imprisonment with or without hard labour for a term not exceeding two years, or both fine and imprisonment, for the following acts:

(1) Any fraudulent or false statement or incitement to make such statement in connection with registration.

(2) Forgery of registration certificate.

[1] For the form of this certificate, *vide* appendix.

(3) Use of such certificate by a person not the lawful holder.

(4) Incitement to any person to use such certificate.

SECTION 17: Authorizes the issue of temporary permits, and authorizes the Lieutenant-Governor at his discretion to order that any Asiatic in possession of a temporary permit "shall not during the currency of such permit be deemed to be a Coloured person for the purpose of the provision of the Liquor Ordinance".

SECTION 18: Gives the Lieutenant-Governor power to frame regulations under the Ordinance.

SECTION 19: Generally provides that any Asiatic failing to comply with any requirement of the Ordinance shall be liable to a fine not exceeding £100, or in default to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period not exceeding three months.

The other Sections provide a heavy penalty for any Asiatic bringing without a permit a child under 16 years of age into the Colony, and among other things cancels [*sic*] such person's permit and certificate of registration, and renders him liable to expulsion, and makes it lawful for the heirs of the late Aboo Baker Ahmed to hold a piece of land bought by the late Aboo Baker Ahmed before 1885, and left under his will to the heirs.[1]

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4447

16. LETTER TO DR. J. OLDFIELD

HOTEL CECIL,

[LONDON,]

November 6, 1906

MY DEAR OLDFIELD,

Will you kindly take the bearer's case in hand. His name is A. Tanzi. He is working as a waiter in this Hotel. He has evidently been suffering from rheumatism for three months in the left hand. I shall

[1] *Vide* "Legalized Robbery", 17-3-1906.

thank you to charge him the poor fee, and let me know it.

Yours sincerely,

DR. JOSIAH OLDFIELD
2A, HARLEY STREET
PORTLAND PLACE
CAVENDISH SQUARE, W.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4498

17. LETTER TO MISS E. ROSENBERG

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
November 6, 1906

DEAR MADAM,

You have been massaging Mr. Ally at the Lady Margaret Hospital. Mr. Ally is now staying with me at the Hotel. Do you mind calling tomorrow and giving a massage to Mr. Ally at 3.30 p.m. precisely, and as it takes some time before your card will arrive through the page at the Hotel, if you will be at the Hotel at 3.15 you will be able to commence the massage at 3.30. Mr. Ally has to fulfil an important engagement at half past five, if not a little earlier.

Yours faithfully,

MISS EBBA ROSENBERG
5, CHESTNUT ROAD
ENFIELD
WASH

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4499

18. LETTER TO J. ROYEPPEN

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 6, 1906

MY DEAR JOSEPH,

Please call here if you can tomorrow at 5 o'clock p.m. I would like you to attend the House of Commons meeting and to distribute

the Representation by the Delegates, as also the personal representation[1] by you and others. I shall endeavour to have your representation printed. If you can come do not fail.

Yours sincerely,

JOSEPH ROYEPPEN, ESQ.
36, STAPLETON HALL ROAD
STROUD GREEN, N.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4501

19. LETTER TO A . CARTWRIGHT

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 6, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your note. It will give Mr. Ally and me very great pleasure to have you for breakfast on Friday at 9 o'clock. I do not know whether the interview with Lord Elgin is open to the Members, but as many enquiries have been made I am asking his Private Secretary. However, will it not perhaps be as well for you to enquire at the Colonial Office? I have suggested this to Mr. Brown. I very much value your advice about the meeting being public. I entirely agree with you in thinking that we have everything to gain by all our movements being open to the public, so just, I feel, is our cause. If however the meeting is not public, I should be at the Hotel immediately after the interview and if it is not inconvenient to you, you may await me at the Hotel after this. I do not think the interview is likely to last beyond half past five. Would you care to attend the meeting of the Members of the House of Commons tomorrow at 6 p.m. in the Grand Committee Room[2] I think I sent you a copy of the Circular Letter[3] yesterday. I, however, enclose

[1] *Vide* "Representation to Lord Elgin", 3-11-1906.
[2] The original has "Grand Tea Room".
[3] *Vide* "Circular for Meeting at House of Commons", 5-11-1906.

another copy.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

[Enclosure]
ALBERT CARTWRIGHT, ESQ.
62, LONDON WALL, E.C.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4502

20. LETTER TO S. HOLLICK

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 6, 1906

DEAR MR. HOLLICK,

I now enclose a copy of the Memorial[1] about which we had a that this morning. You will find it at page 8 of the copy[2] I am sending. I shall thank you to let me have the copy back after perusal.

Yours truly,

Enclosure
S. HOLLICK, ESQ.
62, LONDON WALL, E.C.

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4503

21. COVERING LETTER[3]

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON, W.C.,
November 6, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I beg to enclose herewith complete list of members who are to

[1] *Vide* "Draft Petition to Lord Elgin", before 8-11-1906.
[2] Not available
[3] Possibly addressed to the Press and members of the deputation

form the deputation that is to wait on Lord Elgin at 3 o'clock on Thursday next the 8th instant at the Colonial Office in connection with the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

[Enclosure]

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4504

22. LETTER TO SIR CHARLES SCHWANN

[HOTEL CECIL,

LONDON,]

November 7, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I apologize for the incorrect spelling of your name in the Circular Letter.[1] You will readily excuse the mistake when I inform you that I received instructions from Mr. Scott at 8 p.m. on Monday, and that I had to have these Circular Letters printed and posted the same night. It was with difficulty that I was able to find a printer, and it would have been impossible to do the thing but for assistance that was volunteered. However, there was no time left for examining the proof copy; hence the error.

I remain,

Yours faithfully

SIR CHAS. SCHWANN

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4505

[1] *Vide* "Circular for Meeting at House of Commons", 5-11-1906.

23. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD ELGIN

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 7,1906

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
THE RIGHT HON'BLE THE EARL OF ELGIN
HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
COLONIAL OFFICE
LONDON

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the 6th instant, with reference to my request for an interview with Lord Elgin on the position of British Indians in Natal. I have no desire to open the whole position, but if His Lordship would be graciously pleased to grant me an interview, I shall be able to show the inner working of the Natal legislation. I was privileged to come into very close contact with the late Sir John Robinson[1] and the late Mr. Harry Escombe, who were the joint authors of the Immigration Restriction Act and the Dealers' Licenses Act. These two, and especially the latter, are the cause of very great and constant irritation. Very serious injustice, in my humble opinion, has often been done in the administration of the Licenses Act.

I invite His Lordship's attention to the fact that even after the Act was passed, there was a confidential despatch from Mr. Chamberlain to the Natal Ministry as to the operation of the Act. The despatch was partly published, and it stated that unless the municipal bodies exercised the arbitrary powers given to them in virtue of the Licenses Act in a reasonable manner, it might become necessary to amend the Act. I am aware that His Lordship's intervention as to these Acts can only be diplomatic, and it is such intervention I would like to invoke. The object of the interview is to the best of my ability to place the position so before His Lordship as to enlist His Lordship's active

[1] (1839-1903); first Prime Minister, and Colonial Secretary of Natal, 1893-7.

intervention so far as it may be consistent with the traditional policy of the Colonial Office. The new Bill[1] introduced by Mr. Ralph Tatham in the Legislative Assembly makes it all the more imperative for me to approach His Lordship.

I regret exceedingly that the Authority referred to in my letter was not enclosed with it: it was an oversight, for which I beg to be excused. I have now sent it through Mr. Ritch, the Secretary to the Transvaal Deputation. As I have not kept a copy of the Authority, may I ask you to let me have one.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records: C. O. 179, Vol. 239/Ind.; also a photostat of the office copy: S. N. 4506

24. LETTER TO SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN

[HOTEL CECIL,

LONDON,]

November 7, 1906

DEAR SIR,

Sir Lepel Griffin was very strongly of opinion that you should join the deputation that waits on Lord Elgin tomorrow at 3 p.m. I forgot at the time to tell him of the objection you raised to your joining the deputation. However, as I promised Sir Lepel that would let you know, I am writing this. I beg to enclose herewith copy of the Representation and precis of the Ordinance for your information.

Yours faithfully,

2 enclosures

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN, BART.

MEREDITH

GLOUCESTER

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4507

[1] *Vide* ''Interview to *South Africa*", 1-11-1906,

25. LETTER TO J. H. POLAK

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 7, 1906

DEAR MR. POLAK,

This introduces to you Mr. Ruthnam. You can make your appointment with him for taking him to the City of London College, as also for putting him into the boarding house, and you may enter into a long chat with him to enable you to see his capabilities.

J. H. POLAK, ESQ.
28, GROSVENOR ROAD
CANONBURY, N.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4508

26. MEETING AT HOUSE OF COMMONS[1]

A meeting of more than a hundred Members of the House of Commons, drawn from the Liberal, Labour and Nationalist Parties, was addressed by Gandhiji and Mr. Ally in the Grand Committee Room of the House.

LONDON,
November 7, 1906]

...Mr. Gandhi said that in 1885 British Indians were described in documents

[1] Several members spoke. Sir Henry Cotton, the Chairman of the meeting, said that, under this Ordinance, British Indians were placed under the surveillance of the police in a manner which could not be differentiated from the treatment given in England to prisoners who were released from jail. Mr. Ally appealed in the name of Christianity and humanity for the support of British Members of Parliament in freeing Indians from a degrading law. Sir Charles Dilke said that it was notorious that there was a great jealousy of Indians because they made such admirable shopkeepers and medical men. Mr. Joseph Walton, Mr. Harold Cox and Mr. Higham supported a proposal to sign a memorial to the Prime Minister regarding the status of British Indians in the Transvaal. Sir Henry Cotton summed up the feelings of the meeting by saying that the question had become one of Imperial importance and had thus been taken out of the realm of party politics. A resolution supporting the objectives of the Deputation was then unanimously adopted.

which passed between the Republican Government and the British Government as 'filthy vermin and persons without souls'. They were then under great disabilities; they could not hold landed property, except in Locations that might be set apart for them for sanitary purposes, and they were required to register themselves and pay a fee to the Transvaal Government. Lord Derby tried to mitigate their grievances, and Mr. Chamberlain afterwards wrote a strong despatch to the Boer Government about British Indians, whom he described as honourable men and an asset of great importance to the Transvaal. The result of this was that British Indians went about the country as free citizens, and there was absolutely no restriction upon their movements. Recently a new Ordinance had been passed and British Indian subjects were classed with Asiatics and were treated in a most degrading manner....

The Times, 8-11-1906

27. DRAFT PETITION TO LORD ELGIN[1]

LONDON
[*Before November 8, 1906*]

TO
THE RIGHT HON'BLE THE EARL OF ELGIN
HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
COLONIAL OFFICE
LONDON

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED, RESIDING IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, REPRESENTING WHOLESALE HOUSES IN SOUTH AFRICA

HUMBLY SHEWETH

That your Petitioners are all London wholesale Shipping Firms and Merchants, having branches in, or in connection with, South Africa.

Most of your Petitioners have come into direct contact with British Indian Merchants in South Africa, including the Transvaal.

From their experience of British Indian Merchants in the Transvaal your Petitioners are in a position to state that the British Indian Merchants in the Transvaal are on the whole an honest and honourable body of men, and their connection with them has always

[1] The petition was clearly drafted by Gandhiji. It was enclosed with the "Letter to S. Hollick", of 8-11-1906.

been of a most satisfactory nature.

In your Petitioners' opinion their presence in the Transvaal is a distinct gain to the Transvaal community in general. At the very least their presence there tends to the distinct benefit of the Transvaal community by reducing the cost of living expenses to those who can least afford to pay the exorbitantly high prices and profits demanded by the European firms.

Your Petitioners have read the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance, and in your Petitioners' opinion the Ordinance will submit British Indians in the Transvaal to totally unnecessary indignity and hardship.

Your Petitioners desire to associate themselves entirely with the sentiments expressed in the Memorial submitted to His Excellency the Governor of the Transvaal by Mr. William Hosken and other notable European residents in the Transvaal in the month of April, 1903.[1]

In your Petitioners' humble opinion, while it is desirable that immigration of British Indians should be regulated in order to allay popular prejudice, they think that it should be along the Cape or Natal lines, and should not savour of class distinction.

Your Petitioners therefore pray that Your Lordship will be pleased to advise His Majesty to disallow the Ordinance above mentioned, or to grant such relief as will adequately protect the British Indians who have settled in the Transvaal.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners shall ever pray, etc.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4510

28. BRITISH INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL[2]

November 8, 1906

By the time this is in print Lord Elgin will have received what may be described as a very strong deputation representing all manner of opinion, and including well-known Members of Parliament and

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lieutenant-Governor", 1-5-1903, enclosure.

[2] This statement shows direct knowledge of happenings both in the Transvaal and England; it was moreover found among Gandhiji's papers. These facts would' suggest that the statement was drafted by him

Anglo-Indians of great experience. It is remarkable how the Delegates from the Transvaal have received support and sympathy from all quarters. A most striking illustration perhaps was afforded by the meeting of the Liberal, Labour, and Nationalist Members of the House of Commons at the Grand Committee Room on Wednesday last under the chairmanship of Sir Henry Cotton, the Member for Nottingham East. The attendance was fully one hundred. The Members gave the Delegates a very sympathetic hearing, and many of them showed their active sympathy by making short speeches for or questioning the Delegates. A resolution supporting the objects of the Delegation was unanimously adopted. One of the Members even wanted to know why the Conservative Members had not been invited to the meeting. Sir Charles Dilke, who has consistently championed the cause of British Indians in South Africa, immediately interposed that it was an oversight and that this was a question in which they could certainly secure Conservative co-operation. They and the Liberal Parliament always joined the the Conservatives in securing redress for their Indian fellow-subjects in South Africa.

Mr. Scott, who was the organizer of the meeting, remarked that the only reason why the Circular Letter[1] was confined to the Liberal, Labour, and Nationalist Members was that the Government that was being approached by the Delegates was a Liberal Government, and it was considered only right that the meeting should take the form it did. At the same time they would undoubtedly ask for and be willing to secure the co-operation of Conservative Members.

Sir Henry Cotton added that on the deputation were represented very staunch Conservatives.

These proceedings take the question out of party politics, and as Sir Charles Dilke has often said, it becomes a question of Imperial importance. These proceedings ought to strengthen the hands of Lord Elgin and encourage him to veto the Ordinance, or at least to appoint a commission on which the Delegates lay so much stress.

The Representation submitted to Lord Elgin exhaustively deals with the facts of the case, and shows clearly how unnecessary the legislation is, and how much harder it is than Law 3 of 1885. It is

[1] *Vide* "Circular for Meeting at House of Commons", 5-11-1906.

undoubtedly not an amendment, but a new law, making class distinctions of a very offensive nature. The prayer of the Delegates is very reasonable. They ask Lord Elgin to sanction legislation along the Cape or Natal line[s], leaving it open to British Indian settlers to import assistants and such other men as may be required for attention to their businesses. If such legislation be passed it would remove all fear of an unrestricted Asiatic influx. There would then be no necessity for the espionage contemplated by the Ordinance.

That the lot of the British Indians is hard enough without any such legislation is shown by a recent prosecution of an Asiatic child[1] under eleven years of age for entering the Colony of the Transvaal in the company of his father. We cannot do better than quote the words of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Transvaal who quashed the conviction of the child:

> The conviction is wholly bad. Here is a child of between ten and eleven years of age, charged not with an ordinary Common-Law offence, but with the offence of entering the Transvaal by means of a permit improperly obtained. It does appear—at any rate, there is evidence on the record to show—that the thumb-mark of this infant was pressed on a permit belonging to someone else. But this child was not *doli capax* at all. The child was put into the box, and said he did not know what a permit was, and had never seen one; and I dare say he was speaking the truth. There can be no doubt that the conviction cannot be sustained for one moment.
>
> The administrative order, of course, still remains. The Magistrate has seriously ordered this infant to leave the Transvaal at the expiration of the term of imprisonment, or upon a certain date, whichever happens sooner. If the child does not go away—and I do not suppose he can go away unless someone takes him—he will then, possibly, be brought up before the Magistrate as a criminal. But I trust that course will not be taken by the authorities. I cannot understand why this case was taken up at all. It is a very important matter. This child is an Indian; but the same would apply to any white child (not one of the exempted classes under the Ordinance) entering the Transvaal; and if it applies to a child of eleven, why not to a child in arms! Surely it was never intended that such an administrative order should be made, in circumstances of this kind. This legislation is sufficiently open to criticism without that. If there is anything which can bring the administration of such a

[1] Mahomed Hafeji Moosa; *Vide* "Transvaal Permit Ordinance", 29-9-1906.

law into ridicule and contempt it is administration conducted on the lines of this case. I trust we shall hear nothing more about the administrative order.

We had only the other day an example of what *The Rand Daily Mail* described as "War on Women"[1] In the above case, we have an instance of what *Indian Opinion* describes to be "War on Infants". Cases such as these call for prompt amelioration, and not for greater severity. The doctrine of relying on men on the spot will be carried to ridiculous extremes if Lord Elgin does not heed the representations made to him on behalf of British Indians in the Transvaal.

Very strong support is given to the delegation by a personal appeal[2] of five British Indians addressed to Lord Elgin in connection with the Ordinance. They are all students from South Africa studying for the Bar or for Medicine, born or brought up in South Africa, and in their words, "South Africa is more our home than India. Even our mother tongue is English, our parents having brought us up to speak that language from our infancy. Three of us are Christians, one a Mahomedan, and one a Hindoo." Are these men, after they have become barristers or doctors, on their return to South Africa, to be debarred from entering the Transvaal, or are they to carry "tickets of leave" as Sir Henry Cotton described the passes to be issued under the new Ordinance? If such legislation is to be the vogue in the Colonies, it would be a mercy not to allow the British Indians to receive a liberal education in England at all, because a memory of the good times passed by them in England would only enhance the sting of humiliation to be undergone by them in Colonies which are British only in name and un-British in conduct.

From a photostat of the typewritten draft: S.N. 4511

29. LETTER TO S. DIGBY

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 8, 1906

DEAR SIR,

Sir Muncherji gave me your name as the friend of the cause of British Indians in the Transvaal.

[1] *Vide* "The Punia Case", 29-9-1906.
[2] *Vide* "Representation to Lord Elgin", 3-11-1906.

I venture to enclose herewith copies of several Representations forwarded to Lord Elgin, whom, as you know, the Deputation meets to-day at 3 p.m.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

[Enclosure]

SAM DIGBY, ESQ.[1]

NATIONAL LIBERAL CLUB

LONDON

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4525

30. MEMORIAL TO LORD ELGIN

[LONDON,

November 8, 1906][2]

MY LORD,

Mr. Ally, my colleague, and I have to tender our respectful thanks to Your Lordship for receiving this Deputation. The task before Mr. Ally and myself is, I know, exceedingly delicate and difficult, supported though we are by friends who have always helped us in our troubles, and representing different schools of politics, and who have come to give us the weight of their influence at considerable trouble to themselves, especially on a day like this.

Your Lordship is aware that there was a great Indian Mass Meeting held at which resolutions were adopted. The text of these resolutions was cabled to Your Lordship[3] and in reply[4] Your Lordship was pleasedto send a cablegram informing the British Indian Association that Your Lordship had approved of the draft Ordinance in

[1] At one time Assistant Editor, *The Times of India*; Secretary of Indian section of Royal Society of Arts; he interested himself in the problems of uncovenanted civil services of India.

[2] This was presented when the Deputation met Lord Elgin on November 8, 1906.

[3] The only cable available on the subject does not contain the text of the resolutions but only requests the withholding of Imperial sanction to the Ordinance. *Vide* "Cable to Secretary of State for Colonies", 8-9-1906 and "Cable to Viceroy of India", 8-9-1906.

[4] For a summary, *vide* "The Transvaal Ordinance", 29-9-1906.

that it gave some measure of relief to British Indians. We, who are on the spot and to whom the Ordinance applies, think, with the greatest deference, that, instead of granting relief, it imposes on British Indians in the Transvaal hardships to which, so far as I am aware, there is no parallel in Colonial legislation. The Ordinance assumes that every Indian is capable of passing his permit to someone else so that he may unlawfully enter the Colony. It, therefore, violates the time-honoured maxim that every one is to be presumed to be innocent until he is found to be guilty. This Ordinance condemns every Indian as guilty and leaves no room for him even to show that he is innocent. It has been called an amendment of Law 3 of 1885. With the greatest respect I submit that it is no amendment whatsoever of the Law, but that it is a totally new Ordinance accentuating colour prejudice in the most offensive manner. The system of passes that the Ordinance introduces is unknown, so far as British Indians are concerned, in any other part of the British Dominions, and it undoubtedly reduces Indians to a level lower than that of the Kaffirs. The reason for such legislation is said to be that there is a large unauthorized influx of British Indians and that the British Indian community or the British Indian Association are making an attempt to introduce without authority a large number of Indians into the Colony; in other words, that the community is engaged in a criminal breach of the Peace Preservation Ordinance, and that it is in order to prevent such an attempt that the Ordinance has been passed. It is, therefore, a measure of punishment. One often hears of punitive measures being adopted in connection with communities some members of which have committed grave political crimes or severe breaches of the Common Law of the country. In this instance, the whole community is to be punished in a degrading manner for a crime against a statute restrictive of the liberty of the subject which is misapplied to British Indians, and a crime which the community has stoutly repudiated.

Such, in the humble opinion of the Indian community, is the Ordinance about which we are approaching Your Lordship. There are three things which are stated to be introduced into the Ordinance in the nature of relief to the British Indians—the remission of the £3 fee; but we have shown that there is no remission at all, as all who are at present in the Transvaal have paid the £3. The second is the authority which is given to the Government by the Ordinance to issue temporary permits, but this again is no relief because it is superfluous.

Such authority has always existed and been exercised at the discretion of the Government: there are today British Indians holding temporary permits.

There is again the relief to holders of temporary permits from the operation of the Liquor Ordinance. That relief the British Indians never asked for, and so far as it is applicable to them, it is interpreted as a wanton insult.

There is one thing that the Ordinance undoubtedly rectifies, and that is by restoring [it] to the heirs of the late Aboo Baker Ahmed who held land in his own name before 1885. This is individual in character, and I have no doubt that if the price the heirs have to pay for getting land which is theirs by right be the degradation of the whole Indian community of the Transvaal, I am sure that even the heirs themselves would not care to pay it, and the community will certainly never feel in any way thankful for such relief. It will be a most surprising thing if, after repeated promises and pledges, an Ordinance of this nature is countenanced by Your Lordship. I shall venture to quote extracts' from Mr. Chamberlain's despatches, also from those of Lord Milner and Mr. Lyttelton, to show what they intended to do after the war.... [1]

It is common knowledge that before the War the British Government used every effort possible that Law 3 of 1885 should be repealed. The condition today is changed, but we had hoped that it would change for the better, seeing that there is no foreign government to deal with, but our own Government. Unhappily, we are now in the position of strangers in what may be called our own land. We have always endeavoured to conciliate prejudice and with that view we have made suggestions which have been adopted in the self-governing Colonies. Failing, however, the adoption of these suggestions, we have asked that a commission of enquiry may be appointed. This is the time honoured British custom. Whenever a new step has been taken, a royal commission has preceded it. The latest instance, perhaps, is that of the Aliens Act in the United Kingdom. Before any steps were taken, a commission investigated the charges made against the aliens, and into the question of the adequacy of the existing laws, and into the question as to what new laws were

[1] The extracts, which are not available, were presumably to be inserted here.

necessary. We have asked for a similar commission regarding the British Indians in the Transvaal. We believe that we are entitled to this, in view of the very grave charges I have referred to. We have been asking all these years for bread, but we have received stones in the shape of this Ordinance. We have therefore every reason to hope that Your Lordship will not countenance the legislation above described.

From a photostat of the typewritten draft: S. N. 4513

31. LETTER TO S. HOLLICK

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 8, 1906

DEAR MR. HOLLICK,

Many thanks for your note. I am sorry, you were ill yesterday. I enclose herewith Memorial[1] for Lord Elgin. If you think that any change is necessary, you may make it and I will have the Memorial re-typed: otherwise it can be circulated as an original copy.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure
S. HOLLICK, ESQ.
62, LONDON WALL, E.C.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4526

[1] The reference is to "Draft Petition to Lord Elgin", 8-11-1906. *Vide* also "Letter to S. Hollick", 6-11-1906.

32. DEPUTATION TO LORD ELGIN[1]

CONFIDENTIAL COLONIAL OFFICE,

Thursday, November 8, 1906

PROCEEDINGS AT A DEPUTATION TO THE RT. HON. THE EARL OF ELGIN ON BRITISH INDIAN SUBJECTS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The deputation consisted of the following gentlemen:

Lord Stanley of Alderley
Mr. H. O. Ally }
Mr Gandhi } Delegates from [the] Transvaal
Sir Lepel Griffin, K.C.S.I.
Mr. J. D. Rees, C.I.E., M.P.
Sir George Birdwood, K.C.S.I.
Sir Henry Cotton, K.C.S.I., M.P.
Mr. Naoroji
Sir M. Bhownaggree, K.C.I.E.
Mr. Ameer Ali
Mr. Harold Cox, M.P.
Mr. Thornton, C.S.I.

THE EARL OF ELGIN: I should just like to say, gentlemen, that I made this interview a private one because I thought, from experience of other meetings of the same sort, we should be better able to discuss the matter friendly across the table without the presence of public reporters; at the same time, I am quite aware that the deputation wish to go into matters of some detail, and therefore I have made arrangements for a note to be taken so that anything which may be said shall be on record.

Then I should like to say one other word. I recognize among the deputation some of those with whom I have had the pleasure of working in India, and I hope they have explained to the deputation, if it was necessary, that my sentiments would all be in favour of doing anything I could for the interests of British Indians. ('Hear! Hear!')

SIR LEPEL GRIFFIN: My Lord, what you have just said makes my duty in

[1] While our source is the minutes in Colonial Office records, incomplete versions are found in Gandhiji's typewritten office copy S. N. 4512 and also in *The South African Blue Book*, C. D. 3308.

introducing the Delegates more easy. We are very much obliged to your Lordship for admitting this deputation of men who are all known to you as gentlemen connected with India, who have been most of them in India themselves, and are all interested in India, and we are very glad, without any question of party feeling—because all sides are represented in this deputation--to introduce to you the Delegates from South Africa: Mr. Gandhi, who is, as your Lordship is aware, a barrister of the Inner Temple and a man who, in the late Boer war and in the late rising in Natal, has done most excellent work for the country in organizing ambulance corps and in other ways—he practises now in Johannesburg—and Mr. Ally, his colleague, who is the representative of the Mohammedan part of the Indian community in the Transvaal, a merchant of very good position and the founder, and I believe the Chairman, of the Islamic Association in the Transvaal. To those gentlemen I propose to leave any details of the Ordinance which has now been passed and which we are about to ask His Majesty's Government to veto. But I would like to say a few words in explaining the matter now before the Colonial Office, and I shall take up the time of your Lordship only for a few minutes.

I have been asked to present this deputation principally, I fancy, because I happen to be the Chairman of the Council of the East India Association, of which your Lordship is a distinguished Vice-President, but the question which the East India Association has so often urged upon successive Colonial Secretaries and Secretaries for India and Viceroys of India is not directly concerned in our presence here today. The bed-rock, as your Lordship is aware, of the East India Association's protests [is] that all well-conducted, loyal, and industrious British subjects, whatever their race or colour, should receive equal rights in all Colonies of the British Empire; that is the bed-rock of justice which has always been refused in the past, but on which the East India Association, which is represented largely here today, begs to continue to rely and from which it must continue to make its protest. That, my Lord, is not precisely the question which this deputation desires to put forward this afternoon; they are not making any of those large claims which we have before made; they only ask that a certain Ordinance applying to the Transvaal alone may not receive the sanction of His Majesty's Government.

A few words only are necessary on this point. During the Boer Government the British Indians were treated with considerable harshness, but their immigration into the Transvaal was not prohibited, and with the exception of a fee for a licence for adult traders, they were not interfered with. But their position was an exceedingly uncomfortable one, and many protests were raised which, we understood, when the country fell into the hands of the English, would be redressed. So far from being redressed, their position is made worse and the rules for registration and identification were made exceedingly more rigorous. The Ordinance which has now been passed

makes, whatever people in South Africa may choose to say, their position infinitely worse and more degrading. It may be said that in the Transvaal these rules are for the benefit of the Indians, but the toad under the harrow knows where the harrow grips him, and the Indians in the Transvaal consider that the new regulations of this Ordinance are a grievance and an insult which is almost too grievous to be borne; and I for one most strongly support their claim and their protest.

Under this Ordinance every one in the Transvaal is exposed to the most rigorous investigation; the impressions of his fingers are to be recorded on every pass; no one is allowed in—man, woman or child—without registration of so rigorous a character that has been unheard of in any civilized country within my recollection. Under this regulation every Indian in the Transvaal, whether an adult male, whether a woman, or whether a child, and even babes in arms will be obliged to be registered under such conditions as ordinarily apply only to convicts in a civilized country; and evasion or ignorance or even forgetfulness on this point is punished by crushing fines, by imprisonment with hard labour, by expulsion, and by ruin. You, my Lord, who have been Viceroy of India, and whose sympathy is with the country, must know that legislation of this sort is unheard of under the British flag; indeed, today in Europe, I may say without any exaggeration, that, with the exception of the Russian legislation against the Jews, there is no legislation comparable to this on the continent of Europe; and in England, if we wanted a similar case, we should have to go back to the time of the Plantagenets.

And against whom is this legislation directed? Against the most orderly, honourable, industrious, temperate race in the world, people of our own stock and blood, with whom our own language has as a sister-language been connected. There is no occasion, in the presence of people connected with India, who know its history, to say what the Indian community is today; it is almost an insult to refer to it.

And by whom is this legislation instigated? I am told, and I believe it, that it is not by the best part of the British community in the Transvaal, who are, I believe, in favour of giving all reasonable privileges to British Indian subjects; it is by the alien foreign population in the Transvaal who are perhaps to some extent inconvenienced by Indian traders who are so very much more temperate and industrious than themselves. It does not come from the English. The legislation is prompted, and the prejudice against the Indians is encouraged, by the aliens, by Russian Jews, by Syrians, by German Jews, by every class of aliens, the very off-scourings of the international sewers of Europe. The English residents, against whom I do not wish to say one word of criticism, are a part, in my mind, of the Transvaal, but the Transvaal is only a Colony by conquest, not by settlement, and it is the aliens who are opposed to this honourable Indian community.

My Lord, I do not wish to take up more of your time, but what I wish to say is that today we ask you, as representing His Majesty's Government, and as we know your sympathies are with the Indians, over whom you have ruled with so much distinction, to procure the vetoing of this Ordinance. No large questions are brought before you today by this deputation. They are not asking for political rights; they are not asking for gratitude for their great and devoted services in the Transvaal war where so many of them lost their lives in their devotion to England, doing as courageous work as any one of the members of the armies which were sent by England, by Australia, or by Canada. Those services have not been recognized; on the contrary, they have been ignored and further burdens have been placed upon them. We ask for nothing today except the merest barest justice. We ask that the whips which the Boers have inflicted upon us may not be changed into scorpions wielded by the British Government.

I would say in conclusion that we hope everything from the present Government, and for this reason, that the grievances of the Chinese have received the utmost sympathy at the hands of the Government, but, so far as this deputation is concerned, the Chinese and other alien nations do not count. We ask not for the Chinese, but for our own fellow-subjects, and we ask that justice, if not generosity, may be dealt out to them and that your Lordship will save them from insult and oppression.

It was at your Lordship's request that this deputation was a small one; it might have been indefinitely extended. This is a test case—a question of going forward or going back. Your Lordship, as a past Viceroy of India, must know that the attention of the whole of India, 300 millions of Indians, is intent today upon the decision which will be given in this test case, and I beg your Lordship to think and to remember that, besides the Indians of Indian birth, against whom the insults of this Ordinance are directed, there are the whole body of Indian officials, to which I and most of the members of this deputation belong, who are insulted with the natives of India. Is it to be supposed that we who have worked with, we who have governed this province of India under your Lordship and under your predecessors and successors, have been governing degraded creatures who are placed lower even than the Zulus and Russian Jews? No, my Lord. We trust to you to do what you can to defend the people whom you have governed so well. And I will beg you to excuse any exciting warmth in my way of speaking, because I assure you that any warmth in my words is very much exceeded by the feeling of shame and resentment which fills my heart at the way in which the British Indians of the Transvaal are treated today by the settlers (I will not call them Colonists) of that country.

MR. GANDHI: Both Mr. Ally and I are very much obliged to your Lordship for giving us the opportunity of placing the British Indian position before you. Supported though we are by distinguished Anglo-Indian friends and others, I feel that the task before Mr. Ally and myself is very difficult, because your Lordship, in reply to the cablegram[1] sent to you through Lord Selborne, after the great British Indian mass meeting in Johannesburg, was pleased to inform the British Indian Association, that, although you would be pleased to give us every opportunity of stating our case, no good purpose was likely to be served as your Lordship had approved of the principle of the Ordinance, in that it gave some measure of relief to the British Indian community, though not as much as His Majesty's Government would desire. We who are the men on the spot and who are affected by the Ordinance in question have ventured to think otherwise. We have felt that this Ordinance does not give us any relief whatsoever. It is a measure which places British Indians in a far worse position than before and makes the lot of the British Indian well-nigh intolerable. Under the Ordinance the British Indian is assumed to be a criminal. If a stranger, not knowing the circumstances of the Transvaal, were to read the Ordinance, he would have no hesitation in coming to the conclusion that an Ordinance of that nature which carries so many penalties and wounds the British Indian community on all sides, must only apply to thieves or a gang of robbers. I venture, therefore, to think that, although Sir Lepel Griffin has used strong[2] language in connection with the Ordinance, he has not at all exaggerated, but every word of it is justified. At the same time I beg to state that the Ordinance, as amended, does not apply to British Indian females. The draft Ordinance undoubtedly applied to females also, but owing to the very strong protest made by the British Indian Association, and by Mr. Ally separately as Chairman of the Hamidia Islamic Society, pointing out the great violence that would have been done to female sanctity, if I may say so, the Ordinance was amended so as to take females out of its operation. But it applies to all adult males and even to children, in that the parents or guardians have to take out registration certificates for their children or wards as the case may be.

[1] *Vide* "The Transvaal Ordinance", 29-9-1906.

[2] The Original has "strange".

It is a fundamental maxim of the British law that every one is presumed to be innocent until he is found guilty, but the Ordinance reverses the process, and brands every Indian as guilty, and leaves no room for him to prove his innocence. There is absolutely nothing proved against us and yet every British Indian, no matter what his status is, is to be condemned as guilty and not treated as an innocent man. My Lord, an Ordinance of this nature [it] is not possible for British Indians to reconcile themselves to. I do not know that such an Ordinance is applicable to free British subjects in any part of His Majesty's Dominions.

Moreover, what the Transvaal thinks today the other Colonies think tomorrow. When Lord Milner sprang his Bazaar Notice[1] on British Indians, the whole of South Africa rang with the Bazaar idea. The term "Bazaar" is a misnomer; it has been really applied to Locations where trade is utterly impossible. However, a proposal was seriously made, after a Bazaar Notice, by the then Mayor of Natal[2], Mr. Ellis Browne, that Indians should be relegated to Bazaars. There is not the slightest reason why this Ordinance also, if it ever becomes law, should not be copied by the other parts of South Africa. The position today in Natal is that even indentured Indians are not required to carry passes as contemplated by the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance; nor are there any penalties attached to the non-carrying of passes as are defined in the Ordinance under discussion. We have already shown in our humble representation that no relief has been granted by this Ordinance, because the remission of the £3 fee, referred to by Mr. Duncan, is quite illusory, because all we British Indians resident in the Transvaal who are obliged to pay £3 under Law 3 of 1885, and those who, under Lord Selborne's promise, are likely to be allowed to re-enter the Transvaal, have paid the £3 already.

The authority to issue temporary permits is also superfluous in that the Government have already exercised the power, and there are today in the Transvaal several Indians in possession of temporary permits. They are liable to be expelled from the Colony on the expiry of their permits.

[1] *Vide* "The Transvaal Bazaars", 19-11-1903.

[2] Mayor of Durban.

The relief under the Liquor Ordinance[1] is, British Indians feel, a wanton insult. So much was this recognized by the local Government that they immediately assured the Indians that it was not intended for British Indians at all, but for somebody else. We have no connection with anybody else, and we have always endeavoured to show that the British Indians ought to be treated as British subjects, and ought not to be included with the general body of Asiatics with respect to whom there may be a need for some restrictions which ought not to apply to British Indians as British subjects.

There remains one more statement that is in connection with the land owned by the late Aboobaker.[2] That land should belong to the heirs by right, but under the interpretation reluctantly put upon it by the Supreme Court, that it is only individual in character and does not touch the community, the land cannot be transmitted to the heirs. The Ordinance is intended to rectify the error, but, as I had the honour to represent the heirs, I ventured to think that even they would not consent to pay for getting this relief at the price, in the nature of this Ordinance, for British Indians; and certainly the Indian community can never exchange for the relief given to their heirs of the land of Aboobaker an Ordinance of this nature, which requires them to pay so great a price for what is really their own. So that under the Ordinance in that respect again there is absolutely no relief. As I said before, we shall be, under the Ordinance, branded as criminals.

My Lord, the existing regulation is severe enough. I hold in my hands returns from the Court of the Magistrate at Volksrust. Over 150 successful prosecutions of Indians attempting to enter the Transvaal have taken place during the years 1905 and 1906. All these prosecutions, I venture to say, are by no means just. I venture to believe that if these prosecutions were gone into you would see that some of them were absolutely groundless.

So far as the question of identification is concerned the present laws are quite enough. I produce to your Lordship the registration certificate held by me, and it will show how complete it is to establish identification. The present law can hardly be called an amendment. I produce before your Lordship a registration receipt held by my

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 25-8-1906.

[2] *ibid*

colleague, Mr. Ally, from the Transvaal Government. Your Lordship will see that it is merely a receipt for £3. The registration under the present Ordinance is of a different type. When Lord Milner wished to enforce Law 3 of 1885 he suggested new registration. We protested against it, but on his strong advice, as a voluntary act, we allowed ourselves to be newly registered, and hence the form produced before your Lordship. At the time that registration was undertaken, Lord Milner stated emphatically that it was a measure once for all, and that it would form a complete title to residence by those who held such registration certificates. Is all this now to be undone? Your Lordship is doubtless aware of the Punia case[1], wherein a poor Indian woman, in company with her husband, was torn away from her husband, and was ordered by the magistrate to leave the country within seven hours. Fortunately, relief was granted in the end, as the matter was taken up in time. A boy under 11 years was also arrested and sentenced to pay a fine of £50 or to go to gaol for three months, and at the end of it to leave the country. In this case again the Supreme Court has been able to grant justice. The conviction was pronounced to be wholly bad, and Sir James Rose-Innes stated that the Administration would bring itself to ridicule and contempt if such a policy was pursued.[2] If the existing legislation is strong enough and severe enough to thus prosecute British Indians, is it not enough to keep out of the Colony British Indians who may attempt fraudulently to enter it?

It has been stated that the reason for passing the Ordinance is that there is an unauthorized influx of British Indians into the Transvaal on a wholesale scale, and that there is an attempt on the part of the Indian community to introduce Indians in such a manner. The last charge has been, times without number, repudiated by the Indian community, and the makers of the charge have been challenged to prove their statement. The first statement has also been denied.

I ought to mention one thing also, that is, the fourth resolution that was passed at the British Indian mass meeting.[3] It was passed by the meeting solemnly, prayerfully, and in all humility, and the whole of that great meeting decided by that resolution that, if this Ordinance

[1] *Vide* "The Punia Case", 29-9-1906.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*

ever came to be enforced, and we did not get relief, the British Indians, rather than submit to the great degradation involved in it, would go to gaol; such was the intensity of the feeling aroused by the Ordinance. We have hitherto suffered much in the Transvaal and in other parts of South Africa, but the hardship has been tolerable; we have not considered it necessary to travel 6,000 miles to place the position before the Imperial Government. But the straining point has been reached by the Ordinance, and we felt that we should in all humility exhaust every resource even to the extent of sending a Deputation to wait on your Lordship.

The least, therefore, that in my humble opinion is due to the British Indian community is to appoint a commission as suggested in the humble representation submitted to your Lordship. It is a time-honoured British custom that, whenever an important principle is involved, a commission is appointed before a step is taken. The question of alien immigration into the United Kingdom is a parallel case. Charges somewhat similar to the charges against the Indian community were made against the aliens who entered the United Kingdom. There was also the question of the adequacy of the existing legislation and the necessity for further legislation; all these three points were referred to a commission before any step was taken. I, therefore, venture to think that a commission should be appointed, and the whole question thrashed out before any drastic measures are taken.

I venture, therefore, to hope that your Lordship will see your way to grant this small measure of relief to the British Indian community.

MR. H. O. ALLY: My Lord, we are very much obliged to you for the patient hearing your Lordship is giving to the deputation. Mr. Gandhi has stated the case fully before your Lordship, and I do not wish to add much to what has already been said. I am not a lawyer, but as a layman, and as a resident of old standing in the Transvaal, I do wish to submit to your Lordship that the hardships that the present Ordinance would inflict upon us are unbearable. And I can assure your Lordship that, immediately the Ordinance was introduced into the Legislative Council of the Transvaal, my fellow-countrymen felt, and felt very keenly, to think that such laws can be passed under a British Government. It is what I should never have believed years ago.

Our lot is today infinitely worse than under the Boer regime; we were able to

get protection from the British Government during that time. Are we now, under the same Government, to be persecuted?

When aliens of all classes are, at the very moment that the Ordinance is introduced, pouring into the Transvaal, and when they enjoy all the rights and privileges granted to British subjects, my countrymen, who are always to the fore for the defence of the Empire, are suffering these serious disabilities and the disabilities threatened by the Ordinance. Today in India the frontier is guarded by my fellow-countrymen, who shoulder the rifle in defence of the Empire; and it is very grievous that they should have to suffer such misery, and that there should be class legislation against them of this type.

I appeal for justice, and I appeal to your Lordship in the name of the British traditions, that you will be pleased to remove the disability that the Ordinance will place upon us, by vetoing it, or at least by granting a commission. We are loyal British subjects, and as such we are entitled to the fullest protection. We have not asked for, and we do not now ask for, political rights: we are content that the white man should be predominant in the Transvaal; but we do feel that we are entitled to all the other ordinary rights that a British subject should enjoy.

SIR HENRY COTTON: I wish to say one word, my Lord, if I may. I am here not only as a retired Indian official, like many distinguished men I see around me, but also as a Member of the present Parliament, and as chairman of a meeting which sat in the Grand Committee Room upstairs in the House of Commons attended by more than 100 members of the Liberal Party. I take this opportunity of saying that I deeply regret that the invitations to attend that meeting were not extended to both sides of the House. ('Hear! Hear!') It was an unfortunate oversight which we all regret. But that meeting, I say, was attended by 100 and more Members of the House of Commons, and their feeling was very strong indeed upon this subject; indeed, they went so far as to record a resolution that they sympathized with and supported the prayer of the petitioners. Since that meeting, my Lord, I have been brought in contact with many Members of the House of Commons who were not present at the meeting, gentlemen on both sides of the House. Many gentlemen on the opposite benches have also intimated to me that there is a complete sympathy with the attitude taken up by Messrs Gandhi and Ally on behalf of their fellow-subjects in the Transvaal.

I wish also in associating myself, as I do completely, with the observations which fell from Sir Lepel Griffin, to remind your Lordship that it was Lord Lansdowne, for whom we all have the greatest regard and respect, who, although he is the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Lords, is at all events, as we know very well, a most liberal-minded statesman, who drew prominent attention in England to

the grievances which the British Indians in the Transvaal suffered from under President Kruger's administration. Nothing, he said, roused so much indignation in his mind or so much anger as the ill-treatment which the British Indians received in South Africa. And he went further even in his speech—it was a speech delivered at Sheffield two or three weeks after the outbreak of the war—for he said that he regarded with grave anxiety the state of feeling which must inevitably exist in India when it was known that the British subjects of India in South Africa were so ill treated and ground down. And he pointed out the imperative duty of the British Government to improve their status and position.

Now, my Lord, that is a pledge which was given by the head of the Opposition in the House of Lords, and I appeal to you, my Lord, as the representative of a Liberal Government, in dealing with this matter in South Africa, that your duty is at least as decisive as [that] Lord Lansdowne claimed for himself a few years ago.

It is true that the people of India do feel this matter very deeply. It is true also that the British Indians in South Africa have greater grievances to complain of now than they had under the Dutch Government; and the climax has been reached in the passing of this Ordinance, of which Messrs Gandhi and Ally here so justly complain. Representing as I do a very influential and large section of the House of Commons and, I believe, the almost unanimous official feeling in India on the subject, I do trust that your Lordship will be able to give this petition your favourable consideration.

SIR M. M. BHOWNAGGREE: My Lord, I think the case has been so ably and clearly put before your Lordship that there is not the least occasion for me to go into any details, and if I feel called upon to address your Lordship for a very few minutes, it is simply on account of the interest I took in this question all through my ten and a half years' career in Parliament. I want to bring to your Lordship's notice a few points which perhaps may not be within your knowledge.

In complaining of the grievances of British Indian subject in South Africa, I had opportunities of seeing your predecessors, Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Lyttelton, very often on the subject. My activity had taken the form at last of a long printed letter in which I detailed the whole narrative of the facts, and Mr. Lyttelton thereupon assured me that the case had been so fairly put, and the demands made were so reasonable, that he hoped to get some relief. I, on the other hand, knew what the local forces of opposition to a liberal policy on the part of any ministry of the Imperial Government would be, and while I thanked him for his sympathetic answer, I told him it might be necessary to appoint a commission to enquire into the whole subject. Sir George Farrar, who represented the anti British Indian interest[s] in the Transvaal legislature, also happened at the same time, to suggest that the appointment of a

commission would ventilate the matter, and might bring some solution of that very difficult problem. Thereupon I addressed Mr. Lyttelton again, accepting Sir George Farrar's offer, and matters were in that train, and I believe Mr. Lyttelton would have ultimately appointed a commission, but the Government, of which he was a member then, went out of office. Recognizing the very difficult position in which the whole question stands, I now urge that a commission might be appointed pending the report of which this Ordinance might at least be held in abeyance, so that you may have the benefit of judging of the whole question by the report of that commission.

I have only one word to add, my Lord. For five years your Lordship has been the custodian and guardian of Indian interests and the protector of their rights, during a memorable and distinguished viceroyalty. Today—as our leader, Sir Lepel Griffin, has well said—the eyes of all India are focused upon the proceedings which are taking place in this room, and I am only expressing the sentiments of the 300 millions of people of India when I express the hope that your Lordship will, on account of the sympathy which you have shown, and which I believe you are ready to show, and of which, even on our entrance into this room, you assured us, allow no other consideration but that of justice to weigh with you, and will grant the prayer which these gentlemen have come all this long distance here to ask at your hands.

MR. REES: I am not going, my Lord, into the subject of the merits of the case; I think they were amply dealt with by Sir Lepel Griffin; nor am I going to speak of my interest in this subject, which I have often brought before Parliament myself. But when Sir Henry Cotton spoke of the meeting yesterday, I should like to say that it was not only a party meeting, but it was a meeting of part of a party, and that I do deprecate with all my heart and soul, in a matter which is of such serious importance, any endeavour to make any subject connected with British India a party subject. I do not think there can be a more serious matter than this very serious one upon which we have come before your Lordship, namely, the unfortunate manner in which our fellow-subjects have been treated in the Transvaal.

MR. HAROLD COX: My Lord, I am in a somewhat different position from most of the gentlemen here, because I am neither an ex-official of the Government of India, nor am I myself Indian by birth, but I did have the honour personally of serving in India for two years under a Native Prince, and I look back to that period of my life with the greatest pleasure. That is one special reason why I am here today. But at the back of my mind the real reason why I am here today is because I am English, and because I think this matter is a disgrace to my country. Our country was pledged when we went to war with the Transvaal to do justice to the British Indians. That justice has not been done, and I contend that it is not possible for the present Government, of

which your Lordship is a part, to ride off on the plea that the Transvaal is a self-governing Colony. It is not a self-governing Colony. It is absolutely subject to your authority, and whatever is done by you today, or at any other time, is done not in the name of the Transvaal, but in the name of the English people, and in the name of the English people I protest against any injustice being done to British subjects.

MR. NAOROJI: I do not want to take up your Lordship's time, and after the able manner in which the whole subject has been laid before you, I would only join in the appeal that has been made to you on behalf of my fellow-subjects under the British flag. If there is one principle more important than another, it is that of the freedom of British subjects under the British flag, and I do hope that the British Government, especially a Liberal Government, will stand upon that basis.

MR. AMEER ALI: Will your Lordship allow me to make one observation only? Perhaps my recent experience of India is the most recent of all. I venture to say this: that the feeling of India is very strong on this subject of the injury done to British Indians in the Transvaal, and it will be a serious mistake if the subject is put on one side. That is the only matter I want to present to your Lordship.

THE EARL OF ELGIN: In the first place, I would like to say that I entirely accept the position which Mr. Cox put upon me. I am responsible, no doubt, for the advice which is given in this matter and nobody else, and I do not wish to shirk my responsibility. In the second case, I wish also to express my adherence to what was said by Mr. Rees, Sir Henry Cotton and others that I regard this as no party question at all. Sir Henry Cotton quoted from Lord Lansdowne, but I have before me a despatch from the Colonial Secretary of the last Government from which I should like to read one paragraph: 'His Majesty's Government cannot believe that the British community in the Transvaal appreciate the true nature of the proposition which some of its members are pressing upon you. They, as Britons, are as jealous of the honour of the British name as ourselves, and even if a material sacrifice were necessary to vindicate that honour, I feel assured they would cheerfully make it. His Majesty's Government hold that it is derogatory to national honour to impose on resident British subjects disabilities against which we had remonstrated, and to which even the law of the late South African Republic rightly interpreted did not subject them, and they do not doubt that when this is perceived the public opinion of the Colony will not any longer support the demand which has been put forward.'

SIR HENRY COTTON: May I ask which Colonial Secretary that was?

THE EARL OF ELGIN: It was from Mr. Lyttelton to yourself, written in 1904. Now, I understand from the gentlemen who have come before me today that we are not here to discuss general sympathies, nor even are we to consider anything further than the rights which the British Indian community possessed in the past. They do not ask

at this present moment for an extension of those rights. That limits the matter, as I think you wish it to be limited, to the question of this Ordinance itself.

SIR LEPEL GRIFFIN: For the present, my Lord. We are going to fight the question hereafter.

THE EARL OF ELGIN: Oh, yes; I am thinking of today, and the answer I have to give.

SIR LEPEL GRIFFIN: Yes.

THE EARL OF ELGIN: I only make that observation in order that I may be precise in my answer. The question, therefore, is with reference to this Ordinance, and following up the remark I made just now about its being no party question, I hope you will accept it from me that it was no intention of the men at the head of the Transvaal Government—they distinctly stated so to me—that they had no intention whatever in the legislation they brought forward to do otherwise than to improve, rather than to make worse, the condition of the British Indian community. I am not saying that the subject is not perfectly open to your criticisms, but I wish you to accept from me that that was the intention with which this legislation was brought forward.

Now Mr. Gandhi explained that, in some cases, for instance in the case of the poll-tax, this concession, which was supposed to be given under the Ordinance, was illusory. I admit that I think there was something in his statement that most of those who would come under the restriction I have just mentioned would probably have paid the £3. But at the same time, dealing with this as a matter of the status of the British Indians in the Transvaal, I conceive that the Government might quite fairly have held that in removing the imposition of the poll-tax once for all they were, *pro tanto*, improving the status of the British Indians.

Then with regard to the question of permits or registration, we have seen one of the permits given under the Boer administration. It is merely a receipt for the money. The Boer administration in that respect, as well as in a good many others, was not so accurate as the administration which necessarily with our ideas obtains under the British Government; and, therefore, I am only stating the view which has been put before me; the view of the Government of the Transvaal is this: that as it stood under the rules of the Boer Government which they had inherited, there was great confusion, and there were great administrative difficulties, and that consequently there was a considerable degree of friction, and also there arose considerable delay in the determination of cases of which 1 see traces in the petition itself. It was for that purpose, as I understand it, that the Government of the Transvaal proposed to substitute the form of registration, but according to their representations to me, there was no intention whatever of making that form of registration in any way more oppressive than the form of permits properly ministered.

And if I may, just for a moment—I do not want to go into all the details—follow this question of thumb marks, I think that thumb marks first came into notice prominently when Sir Henry Cotton and I were associated in the Government of India, under our friend Mr. Henry, who occupies a prominent position in the city now. No doubt the imposition of thumb marks was introduced in that case for the detection of criminals, but I do not know why the imposition of a thumb mark in itself should be a very debasing operation; in fact, as they say, it has always seemed to me a most marvellous thing that they say whey can trace every thumb mark, there might be an advantage over the hieroglyphics which some of us call our signatures. And there is this fact I want just to mention, and to bring to the notice of Mr. Gandhi, that on the permit which he has handed to me, issued under the present Ordinance, there is a thumb mark already imposed under the present Ordinance in just the same way as it will be imposed under the new Ordinance.

MR. GANDHI: Only that that, as I said, is a purely voluntary act done by us on the advice and the instigation of Lord Milner. He asked us to do it.

THE EARL OF ELGIN: Quite so; but still here is a certificate which is an official certificate, and it bears a thumb mark.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY: It was affixed without prejudice.

THE EARL OF ELGIN: I do not see why it should not be affixed to the registration certificate without prejudice.

SIR M. BHOWNAGGREE: Might I explain one thing? Whatever Lord Milner asked British Indians to do was done on the understanding that the whole question of the treatment of the community was the subject of consideration between the Colonial Secretary for the time being and Lord Milner and the local authorities, so that they might have submitted to Lord Milner's injunction in a respectful way and, as Lord Stanley just now said, without prejudice. But this imposes a sort of distinction between one subject and another in the Transvaal.

THE EARL OF ELGIN:: Do not suppose I am taking it further than this; I am only saying here is a document which is at present in use with a thumb mark, and it cannot be called debasing.

MR. GANDHI: It is the ten-finger mark.

THE EARL OF ELGIN:: Is it more debasing with ten fingers?

SIR HENRY COTTON: It is only required in the case of criminals.

THE EARL OF ELGIN:: I do not want to argue it, but I think there is just that much to be said.

Then there is one matter about registration; that is, that if the system of

registration was carried out it would give a final and indefeasible title to those who are registered to their rights in the Transvaal. That is the position of the Transvaal Government on that matter. And as regards the carrying of a pass, and any oppressive use of the power of inspection, I am informed, and I have taken some trouble to ascertain it, that all that would be intended, so far as checking the Ordinance certificate is concerned, is that it would probably be inspected once a year. As regards any other casual demand for it, it would be, as I am told, exactly in the same position as this permit is, which, if I am right, may be demanded from anybody in the Transvaal. This is the position. I do not want to elaborate too much on this subject, I only wish to make this explanation, that those were the sort of reasons which the Government of the Transvaal put before me when they asked my assent to the introduction of the legislation on these grounds, and it is distinctly upon my apprehension that these modifications of the law would, in the long run, be for the benefit, and not for the oppression, of the British Indian community that I gave my assent to the introduction of that legislation.

Now, gentlemen, we are in the position that this is challenged. I think I ought to say, without in any way challenging the authority with which Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Ally come here as the representatives of a large meeting, that I have got telegrams from the Transvaal advising me of the forwarding of a petition from British Indians which they say had been largely signed, in opposition to the views which have been placed before me today; and with regard to the general feeling I have today received two more telegrams, I say two more, because there are a good many others from different municipalities in the country urging the passing of the Ordinance and so on. I cannot, therefore, entirely subscribe to what Sir Lepel Griffin said about the opposition, and the nature of the opposition to this matter. I regret it more than anybody in this room. I suppose there could be found, if not in the records of this office, at any rate, in the records of the India Office, despatches with my signature attached to them, protesting, in as strong language as has been used here, against the restrictions on British citizens, and I do not go back from one single word. But we have to recognize the fact that all over the world there are difficulties arising on the part of white communities, and we have to reckon with them. I do not say that they ought always to succeed; they certainly ought not to succeed in points of detail which would, in any way, involve oppression. But the fact of there being that sentiment has to be borne in mind when we have to deal with matters of this description.

I do not think I have much more to reply to. Reference has been made to the proposition towards the end of the petition, that at any rate there might be a postponement for the examination of the subject by a commission. That, no doubt, is an alternative which might be adopted; but I am not in a position today to say

whether that is so or not. Indeed I think you will easily acknowledge that I paid you the best compliment when I did not endeavour to make up my mind until I had seen you, and heard what you have to say. That is my position. I have now heard what Mr. Gandhi had to say. I hope he has put before me, as fully as he desired, what he has come so far to say. I have heard the other gentlemen who have accompanied him. I will give the best consideration to their representations, and I shall think it my duty to make up my mind with the full responsibility which I have to assume.

MR. GANDHI: May I make one statement, my Lord, for one minute? I have listened with the very greatest attention, and with very great obligation, to your Lordship's statement, but I must submit that the information placed before your Lordship on some points is not accurate, and I am in a position to refute that information by documentary evidence with regard to permits, as your Lordship used the term, in connection with the Ordinance of 1885, but this is not the occasion when I could do it. But if your Lordship will ask us to wait upon you we: will do it. But that just shows that nothing short of a commission would place our position accurately before your Lordship.

SIR LEPEL GRIFFIN: My Lord, I beg, on behalf of the deputation, to express our best thanks for the exceedingly kind and courteous way in which you have received us, and the patience with which you have listened to what we had to say. We were assured before of your full sympathy in this matter, and knew it perfectly well.

(The deputation then withdrew.)

From a photostat of the printed original: India Office: Judicial and Public Records: 4287/06

33. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD ELGIN

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 8, 1906

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
THE RIGHT HON'BLE THE EARL OF ELGIN
HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
COLONIAL OFFICE
LONDON

SIR,

With reference to the interview that Lord Elgin was pleased to grant us, we beg to enquire whether His Lordship will be pleased to

acquaint us with the nature of the cablegram[1] of dissent received from some Indians in the Transvaal by His Lordship, as also with the names of the senders[2]. The information is of a somewhat startling nature and we might, if some further information were given to us, be able to render an explanation.

The Deputation this afternoon was intended more to strengthen His Lordship's hands in securing for the British Indians in the Transvaal fair and just treatment rather than to place before His Lordship a full statement. As we believe that some of the information received by His Lordship and used by him in his statement is not consistent withthe facts, may we request a brief private interview at which it will be possible for us to place the details more fully before him than we could at the Deputation that took place this afternoon.

We have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servants,

M. K. GANDHI

H. O. ALLY

From a photostat of the original: Colonial Office Records: C. O. 291, Vol. 112/Ind.; also the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4515

34. LETTER TO MRS. G. BLAIR

[HOTEL CECIL,

LONDON,]

November 8, 1906

DEAR MADAM,

I thank you for your note. Mr. Ally, my co-Delegate, and I are very much obliged to you for your note of the 5th instant. I fear it will be impossible for us to stay here up to January much as we should like to be able to address a meeting in Liverpool. We are likely to leave, at the latest, on the 24th instant. I suppose, therefore, that the idea of a meeting in Liverpool must be dropped. However, both Mr.

[1] Alleging that the Deputationists did not represent the Indian community and that Gandhiji was a professional agitator, etc. *Vide* appendix.

[2] Dr. William Godfrey and C. M. Pillay.

Ally and I are greatly obliged to you for your sympathy.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

MRS. G. BLAIR
HON. SECRETARY
LIVERPOOL INDIAN FAMINE FUND
21, CHURCH ROAD,
WATERLOO
LIVERPOOL

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4516

35. LETTER TO MRS. FREETH

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 8, 1906

DEAR MRS. FREETH,

I am sending this letter on the off chance of its reaching you. If you receive it you will be surprised to know that I am in London. As my departure from Johannesburg was very hurried I forgot to take your address with me. I asked my clerk to send it, but have not yet received it. I shall be exceedingly sorry if I have to leave London without seeing you. If you receive this letter, I hope you will let me know immediately your proper address.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. FREETH
LATE MRS. PILCHER
ST. JOHN'S WOOD ROAD
LONDON

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4517

36. LETTER TO MRS. BARNES

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 8, 1906

DEAR MRS. BARNES,

If this letter finds you, I know it will surprise you. If you are staying in Westbourne Park Road kindly drop me a line and I shall make it a point to see you before I leave for Johannesburg, where I have been living now for some years.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. BARNES
36, WESTBOURNE PARK ROAD, W.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4518

37. LETTER TO BARNES

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 8, 1906

MY DEAR BARNES,

I wonder if you are still in Victoria Street. If you are, please let me know and I shall look you up. I am here only for a very short time. My regards to all, if you receive this letter.

Yours sincerely,

BARNES, ESQ.
C/O MESSRS TROUTBECK & BARNES
SOLICITORS
VICTORIA STREET, S.W.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4520

38. LETTER TO SIR RICHARD SOLOMON

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
November 8, 1906

SIR,

We venture to address this informal letter to you on the strength of your having always been a friend of the Coloured people, using the term in its widest sense. Lord Elgin seemed to think, as you also thought, that a commission of enquiry was due to us. We venture respectfully to think that a word of approval from you of the idea of a commission would bring about, from our point of view, the desired result. The Ordinance proceeds on the assumption that every Indian is capable of abusing his permit or registration. From the statement made by Lord Elgin there is, in our humble opinion, no doubt that a great deal of inaccurate information has been placed before him. We think that nothing short of an impartial commission of enquiry can remove all the doubts and misapprehension that exist. May we appeal to you again for this small measure of justice, which it is in your power to grant.

Yours faithfully,
[M. K. GANDHI
H. O. ALLY]

SIR RICHARD SOLOMON
REFORM CLUB
PALL MALL, W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4521

39. LETTER TO MESSRS CAMERON, KIM & CO.

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 8, 1906

MESSRS CAMERON, KIM & CO.
SOLICITORS
GRESHAM HOUSE
OLD BOND STREET, W.

GENTLEMEN,

I have received, by the last mail from Johannesburg, papers in

connection with the action that is now pending in the Witwater-srand High Court. Messrs Bell and Nixon have probably written to you in the matter.

It was agreed between them and me that evidence should be taken of Mr. Dalglish, during my stay in London, before a commissioner to be appointed by us by mutual agreement between us.

I shall be obliged if you will kindly let me know whether evidence can be taken some time next week as I am likely to leave London if not Saturday week, certainly on the Saturday following.

Yours faithfully,

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4523

40. LETTER TO W. T. STEAD

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 8, 1906

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Ally and I have arrived, as you may have seen from the papers, as a Deputation to wait upon Lord Elgin in connection with the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance of the Transvaal, passed by the Legislative Council.

I beg to enclose herewith a copy of the Representation submitted to Lord Elgin. Mr. Ally and I shall appreciate an interview with you and if you will kindly give us an appointment, we would wait on you and endeavour to present to you the present position of British Indians in the Transvaal.

I am,
Yours faithfully,

[Enclosure]

W.T. STEAD, ESQ.[1]
MOWBRAY HOUSE

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4524

[1] (1849-1912); journalist and publicist; founder-editor of *The Review of Reviews*

41. LETTER TO S. HOLLICK

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 8, 1906

DEAR MR. HOLLICK,

I am much obliged to you for your note. I certainly accept the correction made by you, which is reasonable. I now return a fair copy[1] with the correction incorporated. I also send you an extra copy for yourself. I shall thank you to hurry forward the matter.

There was a very satisfactory interview with Lord Elgin; he was desirous that it should be kept private. I think that if sufficient effort is now made, relief will be granted.

I am,
Yours truly,

Enclosure
S. HOLLICK, ESQ.
62, LONDON WALL, E.C.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4527

42. LETTER TO SIR CHARLES DILKE[2]

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 9, 1906

SIR,

We beg to thank you for your presence at the deputation to Lord Elgin, in spite of the inclemency of the weather, and for the great support you have given to our cause by your presence. We venture to hope that you will be good enough to continue to take an active interest in the matter until a full measure of justice has been

[1] "Draft Petition to Lord Elgin", 8-11-1906.

[2] A note on the office copy shows that this letter was sent to "all the gentlemen who formed the deputation to Lord Elgin".

secured for the British Indians in the Transvaal.

We beg to remain,

Your humble servants,

[M. K. GANDHI

H. O. ALLY]

SIR CHARLES DILKE

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4519

43. LETTER TO SIR MUNCHERJI BHOWNAGGREE

HOTEL CECIL,

LONDON,

November 9, 1906

DEAR SIR MUNCHERJI,

I do not overstate when I say that probably you will be responsible if some measure of success is gained by the Deputation. Immediately Mr. Ally and I went to Sir Lepel Griffin, he told us he had received your note and that he entirely agreed with you that the Deputation should wait on Mr. Morley.[1] He was most sympathetic and enthusiastic and this is no doubt due to you.

I are now sending [a letter[2]] to ask an appointment with Mr. Morley. Mr. Ally and I had half an hour with Lord George Hamilton who was sympathetic but there was a ring of *non possumus* about all he said. However, he has told us that he will carefully go through the Ordinance.

I am,

Yours truly,

SIR MUNCHERJI BHOWNAGGREE, K. C. S. I.
198, CROMWELL ROAD, S.W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4529

[1] The deputation waited on Mr. Morley on November 22, 1906.
[2] *Vide* the following item.

44. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO MORLEY

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 9, 1906

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
THE RIGHT HON'BLE JOHN MORLEY
HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA
INDIA OFFICE
LONDON

SIR,

We, the undersigned, being Delegates appointed by the British Indian Association of the Transvaal to wait upon the Imperial authorities in connection with the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance passed by the Legislative Council, beg to report that we have waited upon His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies and now request an interview with the Right Hon'ble the Secretary for India.

Mr. Morley, in his communication to Mr. Naoroji, was pleased to say that he would receive the Indian Deputation, for which we beg to express our thanks.

Sir Lepel Griffin, who headed, and other distinguished gentlemen who formed the deputation yesterday, have kindly consented to join us and introduce us to Mr. Morley. We shall be pleased if the Right Hon'ble gentleman will appoint a time for receiving the Deputation.

We hare the honour to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant's
[M. K. GANDHI
H. O. ALLY]

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4531

45. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD ELGIN

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 9, 1906

TO
LORD ELGIN'S PRIVATE SECRETARY

[SIR,]

As Lord Elgin told the Indian Deputation yesterday that official notes would be taken of the proceedings of the Deputation, may I ask you to let me have a copy of the official notes.

I remain,
Your obedient servant,

From a photostat of the typewritten draft: S. N. 4535

46. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 9, 1906

DEAR MR. POLAK,

I am sending you all the cuttings I can. I will not enumerate them. The interview with Lord Elgin yesterday was exceedingly good. Sir Lepel Griffin spoke very nicely. You may read this letter to the members of the Association. I may be able to let you have the official copy of the proceedings next week. I have applied for it. Sir Muncherji, Mr. Naoroji, Mr. Ameer Ali and Mr. Rees spoke; they were all precise and to the point. The support we have received is beyond expectation. Everybody considers that a stronger deputation on Indian affairs has never yet waited upon the Government. There seems to be every reason for hoping that Lord Elgin will grant a commission and if he does, it will be exceedingly good. We have now asked for an interview with Mr. Morley; that Deputation will also, I believe, be very

strongly supported The meeting of the Members of the House of Commons[1] was very enthusiastic and sympathetic. Some of the Members thought that it was unprecedented ! Nobody had expected that over 100 Members would attend. The speakers too at the meeting vied with one another in showing their sympathy.

We saw Lord George Hamilton today: he gave us half an hour. He said he felt convinced that an injustice was being done. He has promised to study the Representation to Lord Elgin. There was, however, an attitude of *non possumus* about him.

We sent you a long cablegram[2] yesterday. The more we see, the more we feel that a permanent committee is absolutely necessary, if the work of the Deputation is not to be frittered away. Sir Muncherji is very emphatic on the point. It is, therefore, vexing that no cablegram has yet been received from you. This is not to blame you. I can quite understand the difficulties you are going through. This is not to blame you.[3] I simply state the fact that delay is dangerous and hope that tomorrow there will be a cablegram from you. I need hardly say that Mr. Ally is in thorough agreement with this view. We are both getting on very nicely.

You will be pleased to learn that Mr. Scott, your father's friend, played an important part in bringing about the meeting of the Members of the House of Commons and that your father devoted the best part of last Monday to seeing Mr. Scott and others for this meeting. His assistance to me has been very valuable in more ways than one. Your mother has promised to try earth bandages for her neuralgia. I tried to dig up some clean earth from your yard but it was not to be had. Your father was to procure some from elsewhere. I shall know more next Sunday as I am to pass almost the whole of Sunday afternoon with your people: having, however, found out Mrs. [Freeth's address,][4] I shall have to take away 2 hours from them.

I am not sending any article this time; I may write something if the spirit moves me. My outside activity has been so great that there has not been much time left for contemplation: anything, therefore, that I should give you would be purely superficial. You may, however,

[1] Held on November 7. *Vide* "Meeting at House of Commons", 7-11-1906.

[2] Not available

[3] The repetition of this sentence is due perhaps to an oversight.

[4] The words here are overtyped and illegible. *Vide* "Letter to J. W. Macintyre", 10-11-1906, who was asked to send her address.

give an article on the papers regarding the activity of the Deputation which I am sending. Mr. Mukerji will send you some cuttings and you may deal with the Representation by Godfrey and others, as also the House of Commons meeting and the Deputation. As I am dictating this, I now fancy that I may give you a leader[1] on Lord Elgin's reply to clear away some of the points.

You should not take anything from this letter about the Deputation to work up an article because the proceedings of the deputation are supposed to be [private][2]. The cablegram sent to Lord Elgin must be shocking!!! I suppose it is Dr. Godfrey. We have asked Lord Elgin to give us the text of the cablegram and the name of the sender. We may then give an explanation.

Yours sincerely,

[Enclosure]
H. S. L. POLAK, ESQ.
BOX 6522
JOHANNESBURG
SOUTH AFRICA

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4530

47. LETTER TO J. KITCHIN

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 9, 1906

DEAR MR. KITCHIN,

I have purposely delayed replying to your kind note as my movements were so uncertain.

I shall have much pleasure in dining with you on Wednesday next, and I shall take the train at Charing Cross at 6.45 p.m.

If it is not inconvenient to you, we might meet at the station about that time. I have not looked at a guide but I take it that it is the

[1] This, it would appear, was not sent.

[2] The original has the word "secret" which is scored out. Gandhiji apparently intended to replace it by "private"—which is how he describes the deputation proceedings elsewhere.

main station from which I get my ticket.

Yours truly,

JOSEPH KITCHIN, ESQ.
"INGLENOOK"
BRACKLEY ROAD
BECKENHAM

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4532

48. LETTER TO SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 9, 1906

DEAR SIR,

Both Mr. Ally and I are obliged for the tickets for the complimentary breakfast to be given to Mr. Naoroji on Tuesday, the 20th instant at 9.30 a.m.

Both Mr. Ally and I will consider it an honour to be present at the banquet.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,

SIR W. WEDDERBURN, BART.
84, PALACE CHAMBERS
WESTMINSTER

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4533

49. LETTER TO DR. J. OLDFIELD

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
November 9, 1906

MY DEAR OLDFIELD,

Mr. Simmonds attended yesterday to take down the article[1] you were to have dictated. I suppose that you were unavoidably detained.

[1] Dr. Oldfield wrote two articles on "Indian Parents' Duty" for *Indian Opinion*, which were published on January 5 and January 12, 1907.

I had hoped to be able to undergo the operation tomorrow and to pass with you from Saturday to Monday. I see, however, that I must not do so for the present, things having taken a turn for the better as also for the worse.

I must keep myself busy in connection with the Deputation work. I find that I cannot possibly leave next week. I may, therefore, be ready for treatment Saturday week.

Yours sincerely,

DR. JOSIAH OLDFIELD
LADY MARGARET HOSPITAL
BROMLEY

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4534

50. DEPUTATION NOTES - I

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
November 9, 1906[1]

INTERVIEW WITH LORD ELGIN

Though in order of time, the interview with Lord Elgin comes last, I shall deal with it first as it is very important. We were accompanied by Sir Lepel Griffin, Lord Stanley of Alderley, Sir Muncherji Bhownaggree, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Mr. Syed Ameer Ali, Mr. Harold Cox, Sir, Henry Cotton, Sir George Birdwood, Mr. J. D. Rees, Mr. Thornton and Mr. F. H. Brown[2]. The deputation included members from all the parties.[3] It is said that such a [strong] deputation has never before waited on Lord Elgin. We all presented ourselves before Lord Elgin at 3 p.m. on Thursday[4].

[1] The last paragraph of this item would suggest that this was completed on or after November 10, 1906; *Vide* "Letter to O. H. A. Johari", 10-11-1906.

[2] F. H. Brown was not in the list, circulated by Gandhiji, of members who were to wait in deputation on Lord Elgin; *vide* "Deputation to Lord Elgin",8-11-1906.

[3] The Conservative Party was not represented in the deputation although, according to Sir Henry Cotton the Transvaal Indian Deputation had the "complete sympathy" of individual Conservative Members; *vide* "Deputation to Lord Elgin", 8-11-1906.

[4] November 8, 1906

Sir Lepel Griffin made a spirited speech and appealed to Lord Elgin to reject the Ordinance. file said that the Ordinance was derogatory to Anglo-Indians[1]. One who read the Ordinance would think that those who ruled over such people[2] must be a worthless lot. The Indians and the British both originated in Central Asia. The Indians were very industrious, intelligent and honest. Those who had seen India would never tolerate the refuse of Europe collected in the Transvaal tyrannizing over the Indians there.

Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Ally spoke after Sir Lepel. Mr. Ally's voice choked with emotion as he spoke.

Then Sir Henry Cotton made a powerful speech. Quoting Lord Lansdowne, he said that the Members of the House of Commons also wanted that justice be done. While Kruger used the whip, the British Government were scourging us with scorpion stings. Sir Muncherji wanted to know what had happened to the commission which Mr. Lyttelton had promised him. If Lord Elgin could do nothing more, the commission at any rate should be appointed. Mr. Ameer Ali said that he had recently returned from India and that the whole country was unhappy over the sufferings of Indians in South Africa.

Mr. Dadabhai said that the British Government would stand disgraced if the oppression of Indians continued.

Mr. Rees said that this question was an all-party one.

Mr. Cox said that, as an Englishman, he felt ashamed of the disabilities Indians in the Transvaal had to suffer.

In reply, Lord Elgin said that his own sympathy was bound to be with the Indians. He had always wished well of the Indian people. The officials of the Transvaal Government had stated that the Ordinance was not oppressive. It was true in a sense that the remission of the £3 tax afforded, as Mr. Gandhi had pointed out, no relief in fact. However, it was something of a gain that the legal stigma of the £3 tax had been removed. There did not seem to be much objection to the giving of thumb-impressions. It was unlikely that the police would look into the passes every day and harass the people. However, there was no need to emphasize all these matters. Sir Lepel had said that the

[1] The British in India were also referred to as Anglo-Indians.

[2] The reference is to the people to whom the Ordinance applied, namely, the British Indians.

British whites there were not very hostile to Indians. But there were cablegrams from Krugersdorp and other places which expressed the hope that the Ordinance would receive Royal assent. While he would not say anything about Mr. Gandhi or Mr. Ally, he might tell them that he had received cablegrams from some Indians expressing contrary opinions. He added that all that was by way of information only. He did not regard the demand for a commission as unreasonable. The matter deserved consideration, and he would reply after giving it sufficient thought.

Seeking permission to speak for a minute, Mr. Gandhi said that Lord Elgin's information was not correct and that, if His Lordship gave them another appointment, the two Delegates would be able to prove this. Whether or not a second meeting materializes, all this clearly shows that the appointment of a commission is absolutely necessary and that such complicated matters can be settled only through a commission.

It is hoped that, as a result of this Deputation, a commission will be appointed.

MEMBERS OF HOUSE OF COMMONS

As we thought it would be very appropriate and helpful if the Members of the House of Commons met and passed a resolution expressing sympathy, we called upon some Members and had a discussion with them. In this matter we sought the help of Mr. Sootie[1] a Member of Parliament who is a friend of Mr. Polak's father, and the meeting at last took place on Wednesday night. Some half-a-dozen Members jointly issued a circular and invitations. Messrs Gandhi and Ally spoke and then the meeting passed a resolution requesting Lord Elgin to accede to the demand of the Indian Deputation. Many people think that the large meeting of Members of the House of Commons was the first of its kind in recent times. This shows that our cause is being widely discussed.

MEETING WITH AMEER ALI

Both the members of the Deputation had a private interview with Mr. Ameer Ali, during which he expressed much sympathy for our

[1] There is an error in the Gujarati original. It was Scott who helped Gandhiji to arrange the meeting at the House of Commons; *vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 9-11-1906.

cause and also promised to write on it, if possible, for prominent papers here.

INTERVIEW WITH LORD HAMILTON

Lord George Hamilton heard us patiently for half an hour. It will be recalled that he was at one time the Secretary of State for India. He has agreed to go into the question fully and do his best.

This matter is often discussed in *South Africa* and other papers. *South Africa* also published an interview[1] with Mr. Gandhi on Mr. Tatham's Bill. The correspondent has given a correct report of the interview.

A copy of the petition submitted to Lord Elgin has been sent to every Member of Parliament with a courteous covering letter.

A letter[2] seeking an interview with Mr. Morley has been despatched today. It will probably materialize next week. The Deputation has still so much work to do that it will be very difficult for it to leave on November 24.

SOUTH AFRICAN STUDENTS IN ENGLAND

A petition has been specially sent to Lord Elgin by these students.[3] In it they have asked to know what their own plight would be under the new law; but the petition covers the question of the rights of all the others as well. If Lord Elgin should say that separate laws would be made for those who had gone to England, he would be insulting the others; if, on the other hand, he should say that they would not get the rights, it would be gross injustice.

NATAL QUESTION

The Deputation is not concerned with Natal affairs. However, since Mr. Tatham's Bill has been published and a cablegram about it has been received here, Mr. Gandhi has asked for a private interview with Lord Elgin.[4] He has not yet given a definite reply, but has written saying that he will do so next week.

[From Gujarati]

Indian. Opinion, 8-12-1906

[1] *Vide* "Interview to South Africa" 1-11-1906.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Morley", 9-11-1906.

[3] *Vide* "Representation to Lord Elgin", 3-11-1906.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Elgin", 2-11-1906 and 7-11-1906.

51. LETTER TO S. M. MANGA

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 10, 1906

DEAR MR. MUNGA:

I have your note. I addressed one[1] to you yesterday, not knowing what your movements were.

Mr. Ally and I will be glad to dine with you next Saturday if it is convenient to you. Please let me know the time.

You have not told me how you are getting on, how you like the place, what the people are like and what they charge you, etc. We should like to have all information about the place. Please write to me fully. There is no excuse for you to give me only scrappyinformation.

Yours sincerely,

S. M. MUNGA, ESQ.
ST. EDMUND'S
BROADSTAIRS

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4540

52. LETTER TO SIR HENRY COTTON

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 10, 1906

DEAR SIR HENRY,

You may have seen *The Times*' report of the interview. In my opinion whoever gave the information, it was a shameful thing. Sir Lepel was very much annoyed about it, when I saw him yesterday.

Three reporters carne to me on Thursday evening, and I replied that I could not possibly give them any information, as Lord Elgin wanted the interview to be treated as strictly private.

Mr. Adam of Reuter's Agency has just come over to enquire whether any [member] of the deputation could have supplied *The*

[1] Not available

Times with the report. I have assured him that such a thing is not possible.

Sir Lepel is of opinion that the information must have been given by someone in the Colonial Office. Lord Elgin's speech has been given practically word for word.

Mr. Adam su ggests, and I entirely agree, that there should be a question[1] in the House enquiring why it was that *The Times* was so favoured.

Believe me,
Yours truly,

SIR HENRY COTTON, M.P.
45, ST. JOHN'S PARK, N. W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4536

53. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
November 10, 1906

DEAR MR. WEST,

I must still keep you without a long letter and I fear I shall have to do so during the short time I remain here. It seems impossible for me to leave next week; not that I ever thought that there was much chance. I shall probably leave here on the 24th November.

I send you a copy of my letter[2] to Mr. Polak.

I am going to see Miss Pywell tomorrow unless she countermands my letter posted yesterday.

I hope that Mrs. West is getting on nicely, that she is comfortable, and that Mrs. Gandhi received her well.

Your sincerely,

[Enclosure]

A. H. WEST, ESQ.
INDIAN OPINION
PHOEIX
NATAL

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4537

[1] On December 3, 1906, Swift McNeill asked this question of the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies. Supplementary questions were asked by Sir Henry Cotton and Sir Edward Carson. Harold Cox asked a supplementary regarding a similar leakage concerning the deputation to the India Office

[2] *Vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 9-11-1906.

54. LETTER TO J. W. MACINTYRE

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 10, 1906

DEAR MR. MCINTYRE,

You promised to send me Mrs. Freeth's address but you have not done so. Fortunately I have now got it. I have received the papers regarding Mr. Macdonald. I have written to the London solicitors about it.

I need not say anything further as you will see my letter[1] to Mr. Polak.

Yours sincerely,

J. W. MACINTYRE, ESQ.
BOX 6522
JOHANNESBURG

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4538

55. LETTER TO O. H. A. JOHARI

H[OTEL] C[ECIL,]
LONDON]
November 10, 1906

MY DEAR OMAR,

I have not the time to write to you in Gujarati. I am dictating this at 9.45 p.m. I have done all I could for the Natal question; I have sought an interview with Lord Elgin. I received a reply on Wednesday saying that I should put down in writing what I had to state: I sent a reply the same day, stating shortly my contention and asking for a private and informal interview.[2] I have heard again today to the effect that a reply will be sent to me next week. I send you also a copy of *South Africa* containing an account of the interview with him. Beyond

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 9-11-1906.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Elgin", 7-11-1906; also enclosure to "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Elgin", 1-12-1906, enclosure.

this I cannot go at present; I am too busy giving my attention to the Transvaal. I have, however, sent a cablegram suggesting 2 permanent committee here as I see that a great deal of work could be done with such a committee which should be not a Transvaal Committee but a South African Committee. I think that with careful management it could become a most efficient body.

I sent another cablegram[1] yesterday asking for immediate authority as the committee must be formed while Mr. Ally and I are here. I hope I shall receive some reply tomorrow.

Yours sincerely,

[Enclosure]

OMAR H. A. JOHARI, ESQ.[2]

BOX 441

WEST STREET

DURBAN

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4539

56. LETTER TO A. QADIR

[HOTEL CECIL,

LONDON,]

November 10, l 906

DEAR MR. QADIR,

Many thanks for your note. I am satisfied with the result of the interview with Lord Elgin, not because I am assured of success, but because of the necessary work done. However, Lord Elgin, instead of giving a blank, negative reply, has promised to consider the proposal about the commission. There is therefore some hope yet left.

I shall ask my manager to send you a copy of *Indian Opinion* regularly so long as you are in London. When you return you can advise the manager of the change of address and copies will be posted there.

I thank you for offering to send your monthly magazine to

[1] Not available

[2] Spelt also as Jhaveri

Phoenix. Mr. Ally also wishes me to thank you for the copy sent to him.

The papers you read before the East India Association I had seen while I was at Johannesburg; I dealt with it [*sic*] in the Gujarati columns of the paper.[1]

I send you herewith two copies of each of the Representations.

Yours sincerely,

[Enclosure]

ABDUL QADIR, ESQ.[2]

69, SHEPHERD'S BUSH ROAD

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4542

57. LETTER TO W. J. WEST

[HOTEL CECIL,

LONDON,]

November 10, 1906

DEAR MR. WEST,

Please send a copy of *Indian Opinion* to Abdul Qadir, Esq., c/o Thomas Cook & Son, Ludgate Circus, London, as exchange copy for a monthly magazine which he will send.

Mr. Qadir is a graduate of Punjab University and the proprietor of the magazine Urdo[3]. He may also become our honorary contributor.

Yours sincerely,

W. J. WEST, ESQ.[4]

PHOENIX

DURBAN

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4541

[1] *Vide* "Jivan Hind", *Indian Opinion*, 31-3-1906.

[2] Editor of *Lahore Observer and Urdu*

[3] *Urdu*

[4] There is an error in the initials for, apart from A. H. West, who managed the English side of *Indian Opinion*, there was no one else of that name at Phoenix.

58. LETTER TO MESSRS WOOLGAR & ROBERTS

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 12, 1906

MESSRS WOOLGAR & ROBERTS
58, FLEET STREET, E. C.

GENTLEMEN,

Both Mr. Ally and I have received your letters referring to press cuttings.

We will have those cuttings on the terms mentioned, viz., £1.1.0 for two hundred copies, if you can let us have the copies from the 20th ultimo. They need not necessarily be regarding the British Indian Association, Mr. Ally, or myself, but we will take copies generally regarding British Indians in South Africa.

Yours faithfully,

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4522

59. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD ELGIN

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 12, 1906

TO

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
THE RIGHT HON'BLE THE EARL OF ELGIN
HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
COLONIAL OFFICE
LONDON

SIR,

We have the honour to submit for His Lordship's information a cablegram received from the British Indian Association in Johannesburg, "Have affidavit Godfrey obtained signatures blank paper false pretence using name bias (code word for British Indian Associa-

tion) signature now withdrawn, cabling Lord Elgin, papers published full report conference".[1]

From this it would appear that the Johannesburg papers have received a report of the proceedings of the Deputation and it is evidently on the strength of the reference therein to cablegram received by His Lordship from Indians in Johannesburg that the British Indian Association has sent the cablegram to His Lordship.

We have the honour to remain,

Your obedient servants,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4547

60. LETTER TO "THE TIMES"[2]

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
November 12, 1906

THE EDITOR
THE TIMES
PRINTING HOUSE SQUARE, E.C.

SIR,

By your leading article in *The Times* of the 10th instant on the British Indian question in the Colonies, you have lifted it from the platform of parochialism to that of Imperialism. For the present, however, we will be thankful if you will allow us to deal with the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance without touching the larger issue discussed by you.

You say:

> It does not seem likely or desirable that a measure, which appears to be supported generally by the opinion of the people who are shortly to have power to make their own laws, should be refused the assent of the Crown.

We venture to take exception to your opinion for the following reasons:

1. You admit that upon the merits of the particular controversy aroused by the Ordinance there is "at present hardly evidence

[1] Also quoted in "Letter to Sir Henry Cotton", 12-11-1906, but the text varies slightly.

[2] This letter was not published in *The Times*.

enough to form judgement".

2. The Ordinance does not affect the broad question of Asiatic Immigration into the Transvaal, but it very materially alters to their prejudice the status of British Indians resident in the Colony.

3 It is not "a purely temporary measure"; for, while it is true that Mr. Duncan stated that it was introduced without prejudice to further legislation, there was no question of the Ordinance itself being "a temporary measure". In its very nature it is not capable of being temporary, because it is intended to carry out once and for all, so it is said, registration of British Indians in the Transvaal, and to compel them to carry passes, euphemistically called registration certificates.

4. Instead of preserving the status quo and relieving the Asiatic residents from "certain manifest grievances", it reduces their status and removes not a single grievance.

5. While the prejudice on the part of the general portion of the white community is admitted, the manner of giving effect to it is purely a creation of the Government and the Transvaal community is certainly not privy to the framing of the Ordinance. Its plan is undoubtedly drastic, but honest. If it had its own way, perhaps that portion of it which represents anti-Asiatic agitation will pass legislation involving deportation of Indian residents in the Colony. Such, in effect, it will be remembered, was the resolution passed by the so-called National Convention.

6. That the Transvaal is on the eve of getting Responsible Government is an additional reason why, instead of the British Indian position being prejudiced by the Ordinance in question, it should be so commended to the incoming Government as to bear the Imperial stamp; that is to say, the status of British Indians should be levelled up to that enjoyed by British Indians at the Cape.

7. There is absolutely no proof[1] justifying a dangerous departure from the traditions of Crown Colony Government in the shape of invidious class distinctions.

[1] Of a large unauthorized influx of Indians

8. Involving, as the question does, Imperial considerations of the highest order, the Imperial Government should think twice before sanctioning panic legislation which underlies the Ordinance.

The reasons we have above given for withholding the Royal sanction are also reasons showing why a commission should be appointed to go into the question, and to place such evidence before the public and the Government as is, on your own showing, at present lacking. You, Sir, have rightly said that every Indian returning from the Transvaal to India returns a missionary to sow discontent. We, who have the privilege of representing the community, can state that we have given only the most moderate expression to the sentiments of the thousands who attended the mass meeting referred to by you. It is not possible for us to describe in words the bitterness which animated that meeting regarding the measure. The lower the status of the Indian, the greater would be his hardship under the Ordinance. The well-to-do Indian may by reason of his position be able to escape the grossest forms of oppression which must inevitably flow from the Ordinance. Poor people were, under the registration effected by Lord Milner's advice, dragged at four o'clock on a cold winter's morning -from their beds in Johannesburg, Heidelberg and Potchefstroom, and marched to the police station, or Asiatic Offices, as the case might be.[1] It is they who under the Ordinance would be hustled by the Kaffir Police at every turn, and not the better-class Indians. They, therefore, feel the treatment more than we do, because to them their hardship is an ever-present reality.

The Indian community has all along contended that there is no unauthorized influx on a wholesale scale, that there is no attempt by the community to countenance any such influx, that the present machinery is absolutely effective to check unauthorized entry and the documents already held by Indians are sufficient for purposes of identification. If these statements are challenged, as they have been challenged, is it not at least in common fairness necessary to appoint a commission of enquiry [?]

We are etc.,

[M. K. GANDHI

H. O. ALLY]

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4543

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 25-4-1903

61. LETTER TO SIR LEPEL GRIFFIN

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
November 12, 1906

DEAR SIR LEPEL,

I am obliged to you for your note. *The Times* leader is very important and certainly on the whole sympathetic.

May I venture to ask you to write a short letter to *The Times* emphasizing the question of discontent and the Imperial importance of the question.

I beg to enclose herewith copy of the letter[1] written by Mr. Ally and myself to *The Times.*

I have been considering with Sir Muncherji the question of forming a permanent committee for the South African Indians. The work of the Deputation will be frittered away if it cannot be continued after its return to South Africa. If a small committee was formed it would be a very great assistance. May we rely upon your co-operation. Mr. Ally and I will be obliged if you will lend your name to the committee. A cable has just been received from Johannes-burg sanctioning the formation of such a committee.

I am,
Yours truly,

[Enclosure]

SIR LEPEL GRIFFIN, K.C.S.I.
4, CADOGAN GARDENS
SLOANE SQUARE

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4544

[1] The preceding item

62. LETTER TO H. COX[1]

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 12, 1906

DEAR MR. COX,

I enclose herewith *The Times* leading article on the British Indians. May I ask you to use your powerful pen? I enclose also copy of the letter addressed by Mr. Ally and myself to *The Times*.[2] If the matter is dealt with by the various members of the deputation in the columns of *The Times* I think it will keep the question prominently before the public and is likely to influence Lord Elgin.

I am,
Yours truly,

[2 enclosures]

HAROLD COX, ESQ., M.P.
6, RAYMONDS BUILDINGS

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4548

63. LETTER TO SIR MUNCHERJI BHOWNAGGREE

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
November 12, 1906

DEAR SIR MUNCHERJEE,

I have received a cablegram today authorizing formation of the committee. Unless I hear from you to the contrary I shall wait[3] on you on Wednesday at 11.30 a.m. to discuss what should be done. I have invited Sir Lepel's co-operation already. Will you kindly write to me?

[1] Copies of this were sent to Sir George Birdwood, Ameer Ali and J. D. Rees,
[2] *Vide* "Letter to *The Times*", 12-11-1906,
[3] The original has "await".

I have written to some members of the deputation urging them to write to *The Times*.[1] I submit a draft[2] for your approval. I think if you wrote something after the draft it cannot but carry weight and keep the controversy going. It will produce a good effect in South Africa.

I am,

Yours truly,

[Enclosure]

SIR M. M. BHOWNAGGREE, K.C.S.I.

196, CROMWELL ROAD, S.W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4549

64. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD ELGIN

[HOTEL CECIL,

LONDON,

November 12, 1906

TO

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO

THE RIGHT HON'BLE THE EARL OF ELGIN

HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

COLONIAL OFFICE

LONDON

SIR,

I am obliged to you for the copy of the Minutes of the deputation that waited on His Lordship on Thursday last. I note this copy is marked "Confidential". His Lordship may have seen the report of the proceedings in *The Times.* I may state that four reporters

[1] None of these is available. However, a letter from Sir Roper Lethbridge who was not a member of the deputation appeared in *The Times*, 12-11-1906. Sir Roper, who was editor of The *Englishman*, Calcutta, said that the entire British community in India was in sympathy with the representation of the Transvaal Indians to Lord Elgin.

[2] *Vide* "Draft Letter to *The Times*", 13-11-1906. It is dated November 13 and carries corrections in Gandhijis hand. Either the note was posted on November 13 or the draft letter was merely dated November 13 for the convenience of Sir Muncherji who was to send it to *The Times* under his signature.

came to me immediately after the interview and asked me to give them a report of the meeting. I told them that I was pledged by His Lordship to privacy. I was therefore somewhat surprised to find the report in *The Times*. I approached Sir Lepel Griffin, and he too expressed surprise. I am quite at a loss to understand how *The Times* secured the information. In view of the fact that a report of the proceedings has appeared in *The Times* and that it does not represent at all fully the statements submitted to His Lordship on behalf of British Indians, will His Lordship permit me to give a copy of the Minutes to the Press?

I hare the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4550

65. LETTER TO SIR HENRY COTTON

HOTEL CECIL,

LONDON,

November 12, 1906

DEAR SIR HENRY,

I am obliged to you for your note of the 12th instant. We have received today the following cablegram: "Have affidavits Godfrey obtained signatures blank paper false pretences using name bias (code word for British Indian Association). Signatures now with drawn. Cabling (Lord) Elgin. Papers publish full report confe-rence." This cablegram means that a full report has been publis-hed in Johannesburg and reference has evidently been made to the cablegram referred to by Lord Elgin. Mr. Ally and I know the gentleman well. Personally I can only say that he is a little insane. He is a medical man and has taken his degree at Edinburgh and in measures to be taken against the Ordinance he would go much further than we should. Indeed he even advocated violent measures, that is simply because there is no problem placed before him for solution but he loses his mental balance. There are other matters connected with Dr. Godfrey proving the statement made by me which I need not touch upon at any rate for the present. His two brothers are

undergoing legal education here and they have signed the personal representation[1] addressed to Lord Elgin of which they have sent you a copy. They too are enraged at their brother's con-duct and even went so far as to suggest that they should publicly disown his conduct.[2] Mr. Ally and I have, however, told them that such a course is not at all necessary. As you have asked the question[3], I thought I should place the above information at your disposal.

I remain,

Yours truly,

SIR HENRY COTTON, M.P.
45, ST. JOHN'S WOOD PARK, N.W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4551

66. LETTER TO SIR HENRY COTTON

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
November 13, 1906

DEAR SIR HENRY,

I thank you for your note of the 12th instant. In view of the fact that Mr. Morley has consented to receive a deputation on Thursday week, as you will see from a separate letter[4] that is being addressed to you, would it not be premature to ask a question about the decision of Lord Elgin regarding the appointment of a commission?

I remain,

Yours truly,

SIR HENRY COTTON
45, ST. JOHN'S WOOD PARK, N.W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4555

[1] "Representation to Lord Elgin", 3-11-1906

[2] They did do this in a letter to *The Times* 14-11-1906.

[3] The reference here is to a question in the House of Commons, on November 14, 1906, by Sir Henry Cotton, *inter alia*, whether the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr. Churchill, had received telegrams indicating that the petition in question "was spurious, and that the signatures to it were obtained under false pretences".

[4] Not available

67. LETTER TO L. M. JAMES

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 13, 1906

DEAR MR. JAMES,

I have your note of the 12th instant. You may have seen a short report of the interview with Lord Elgin in *The Times* of the 9th instant.

We are to see Mr. Morley on the 22nd instant. There is some hope of a commission being appointed. I think you should on your side send a reminder to the Foreign Office.

Yours truly,

L. M. JAMES, ESQ.
CHINESE LEGATION
PORTLAND PLACE, W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4556

68. LETTER TO LORD STANLEY

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 13, 1906

MY LORD,

Mr. Morley has appointed Thursday the 22nd instant at 12.20 to receive a small deputation with reference to the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance of the Transvaal. On behalf of my colleague Mr. Ally and myself, may I enquire whether you will be good enough to join the deputation? Sir Lepel Griffin has kindly consented to head it. If you will kindly attend, may I also ask you to be at the India Office at 12 o'clock on Thursday week.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,

THE RIGHT HON'BLE LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY
18, MANSFIELD STREET, W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4557

69. LETTER TO B. HOLLAND

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 13, 1906

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Ally and I will do ourselves the honour of waiting on you tomorrow at 4.30, as suggested in your letter of even date. You state in your letter "the 13th instant tomorrow afternoon". I therefore take it that "13th" is a slip.

I am
Yours faithfully,

BERNARD HOLLAND, ESQ.
COLONIAL OFFICE
LONDON

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4558

70. LETTER TO W. H. ARATHOON

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 13, 1906

DEAR MR. ARATHOON,

I am obliged to you for your note of even date. If you will kindly let me have as many invitation cards as you can spare, I shall distribute them amongst the M.P's.

I have received a copy of the Minutes of the meeting with Lord Elgin. I am taking copies for distribution. I shall have much pleasure in sending you one.

With many thanks for all the trouble you are taking,

Yours sincerely,

W. H. ARATHOON, ESQ.
3, VICTORIA STREET, S.W.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4559.

71. LETTER TO T. MORISON

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 13, 1906

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Ally and I, as you know, have come here as a Deputation from the British Indians of the Transvaal. We shall be obliged if you will kindly give us an appointment to wait on you in connection with our mission.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

THEODORE MORISON, ESQ.[1]
C/O THE EAST INDIA ASSOCIATION
3, VICTORIA STREET

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4560

72. LETTER TO SIR GEORGE BIRDWOOD

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 13, 1906

DEAR SIR GEORGE,

Thank you very much for your letter of even date. I return herewith your previous letter referred to in your letter under reply. I shall thank you to let me have an amended letter, as suggested by you. I entirely agree that Sir Muncherjee has made this question his own.

I am,
Yours truly,

Enclosure
SIR GEORGE BIRDWOOD
11 9, THE AVENUE
WEST EALING

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4561

[1] At one time Principal of the Mohammedan College at Aligarh; appointed to the Supreme Legislative Council by Lord Mayo and, towards the end of 1906, to the India Council by Morley

73. LETTER TO C. F. COOPER

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 13, 1906

DEAR MR. COOPER,

I enclose herewith copies of the latest Representations submitted to Lord Elgin in connection with the British Indian position in the Transvaal. More literature on this subject I shall send after my return to South Africa.

A permanent [committee] is in course of formation. I have handed your name to Mr. Ritch who will act as Secretary. He will correspond with you and see you in the matter and seek your co-operation which you have kindly promised to give and he may also, as opportunities offer, speak to meetings that may be organized by the Union[1] or any ethical society.

I am,
Yours faithfully,

[Enclosure]
CHARLES F. COOPER, ESQ.
36, OAKLEY SQUARE
LONDON, N.W.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4562

74. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO MORLEY

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 13, 1906

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
THE RIGHT HON'BLE JOHN MORLEY
THE INDIA OFFICE
WHITEHALL, S.W.

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the 12th instant

[1] Union of Ethical Societies

advising me of the date on which Mr. Morley will be pleased to receive the Indian Deputation.

I hope to submit the names of the members of the deputation in due course and shall endeavour to restrict the number as much as possible.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4563

75. LETTER TO MRS. G. BLAIR

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 13, 1906

DEAR MADAM,

I am very much obliged to you for your note of the 12th instant. Mr. Ally and I will be pleased to come over to Croydon, and to pay our respects to Mrs. Bonnerji[1], and to make your acquaintance, some time in the afternoon Of Thursday next. We hope to be there between 4 and 5 o'clock.

I am,

Yours truly,

MRS. BLAIR
C/O MRS. W. C. BONNERJI
''KIDDERPORE"
BEDFORD PARK
CROYDON

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4564

[1] Widow of W. C. Bonnerji. He died in England in July, 1906.

76. LETTER TO MISS F. WINTERBOTTOM

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 13, 1906

DEAR MISS WINTERBOTTOM,

I need hardly repeat to you how delighted I was to have a most interesting conversation with you regarding the lot of my countrymen in South Africa.

I enclose herewith copies of the two latest memorials submitted to Lord Elgin. Further literature I can only send you on my return to South Africa.

Mr. Ritch, of whom I spoke to you last evening, will see you in due course and acquaint you with the matters as they progress.

I thank you for offering to speak to the lady you mention in connection with the loan of furniture.

I am,
Yours truly,

[Enclosure]

MISS F. WINTERBOTTOM[1]
THE EMERSON CLUB
19, BUCKINGHAM STREET
STRAND, W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4565

77. LETTER TO DR. J. OLDFIELD

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 13, 1906

MY DEAR OLDFIELD,

Mr. Ritch is making an application to the Benchers for a remission of his terms. One of his reasons is that his father-in-law,

[1] Secretary of the Union of Ethical Societies

Mr. Cohen, is in a condition of insanity and that in his interest it is necessary for him to go to South Africa as early as possible. Absence from South Africa, where Mr. Cohen has passed his happiest days, makes him very morose. Will you kindly let me have a certificate as to Mr. Cohen's condition, [mentioning] the fact that it is necessary for him, if you so consider it, to go to South Africa as early as possible?

Yours sincerely,

DR. JOSIAH OLDFIELD
LADY MARGARET HOSPITAL
BROMLEY
KENT

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4566

78. DRAFT LETTER TO "THE TIMES"[1]

CONSTITUTIONAL CLUB,
[LONDON,]
November 13, 1906

THE EDITOR
THE TIMES
[LONDON]

SIR,

All thoughtful men must welcome your weighty leader on the Transvaal British Indian question which has recently come to the fore by reason of the visit of the Indian Deputation from the Transvaal. I have carefully read and re-read your remarks and I must confess that all that you have stated goes conclusively to show that Lord Elgin cannot possibly advise His Majesty to sanction the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance. As Sir Lepel graphically put before Lord Elgin, "The toad under the harrow knows where and whether it is hurt!" The Ordinance which is supposed to relieve British Indians has given rise to the greatest irritation to the Indian community. You will perhaps give me the credit for knowing fairly intimately the British

[1] This draft is by Gandhi. *Vide* "Letter to Sir Muncherji Bhownaggree", 12-11-1906. This letter did not appear in *The Times*

Indian question in South Africa which I have always considered to be one of the first-class magnitude. You, sir, have now very ably shown the Imperial importance of the question.

About a year ago, at a sitting of the Legislative Council of the Transvaal, Sir George Farrar suggested that a commission should be sent to the Transvaal to enquire into the whole position. I immediately accepted the proposition and approached Mr. Lyttelton who, had he been still at the Colonial Office,[1] I doubt not, would have appointed a commission.

In view of the approaching Colonial Conference, it becomes doubly imperative that the Imperial Government should appoint such a commission so that the Conference may have reliable data before it to go upon. There can be no conceivable objection from any quarter to the appointment of such a commission. Not to prejudge the case it will be only reasonable to withhold the Royal sanction for the Ordinance in question, pending the report of any such commission that may be appointed.

I re-echo your opinion regarding the terrible discontent that is being spread by British Indians from South Africa. As you very properly say, it is not a question of political disabilities but one of inability to enjoy the ordinary rights of a British subject or even a human being in a civilized country. If the Colonies persist in their policy of exclusion, they will force on the mother country for solution a very serious problem which the late Sir William Wilson Hunters[2] used to reiterate in your columns, namely, "Is India to remain a part of the British Dominions or not?" He who runs may read that England will find it difficult to hold India if her people, immediately they migrated to British Colonies, are to be insulted and degraded as if they belonged to barbarous race.

I am, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten draft with corrections in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 4552

[1] Alfred Lyttelton was succeeded by Lord Elgin as Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1905.

[2] Authority on Indian affairs and leading member of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress.

79. LETTER TO MRS. FREETH

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON ,]
November 14, 1906

DEAR MRS. FREETH,

I am exceedingly sorry that I shall not be able to be with you on Sunday evening. If you are free some other evening next week I should like to accept it provisionally.

I send you the photograph I promised. To Mrs. Gandhi's right is the only son[1] of my widowed sister.

Yours sincerely,

[Enclosure]
MRS. FREETH
48, FINCHLEY ROAD, N.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4568

80. LETTER TO J. C. MUKERJI

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 14, 1906

DEAR MR. MUKERJI,

I have your note. I have been occupied every evening; that is why I have not been able to write to you giving an appointment. Will you please come tomorrow at 6 p.m. and wait in the hall if I am not in or my room is not open? Mr. Ally and I are paying a Visit to Mrs. Bonnerjee tomorrow and we may be a little late; We shall then on our return dine together and continue our chat.

I am,
Yours truly,

J. C. MUKERJI, ESQ.
65, CROMWELL AVENUE
HIGHGATE, N.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4569

[1] Gokuldas, son of Raliatbehn

81. LETTER TO S. HOLLICK

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 14, 1906

DEAR MR. HOLLICK,

It is a pity you are meeting with difficulty in getting signatures[1]. If you think that any good purpose can be served by my accompanying you on your visits, I shall be glad to do so.

I send you a Copy of the Memorial referred to in your letter.

I am,
Yours truly,

Enclosure

S. HOLLICK, ESQ.,
162, LONDON WALL, E.C.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4570

82. LETTER TO SIR RICHARD SOLOMON

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 15, 1906

SIR,

As you were good enough to say on board that you would, if time permitted, give me a few minutes during your stay in London, may I ask you to give me an appointment?

I remain,
Yours faithfully,

SIR RICHARD SOLOMON
THE REFORM CLUB
PALL MALL

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4571

[1] For the petition of the Representatives of Wholesale Houses of South Africa to Lord Elgin, *vide* "Draft Petition to Lord Elgin'', 8-11-1906.

83. LETTER TO W. CHURCHILL[1]

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 15, 1906

WINSTON CHURCHILL, ESQ.
HIS MAJESTY'S UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
WHITEHALL

SIR,

Mr. Ally and I, who have come as a Deputation from the Transvaal on behalf of the British Indians, venture to request an appointment with you in order to enable us to place the British Indian position in the Transvaal before you[2] We shall be extremely obliged if you could spare a short time to enable us to wait on you.

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
Yours obediently,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4572

84. LETTER TO H. ROSE MACKENZIE

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 15, 1906

DEAR MR. MACKENZIE,

May I have a call from you tomorrow in the morning?

I am,
Yours truly,

H. ROSE MACKENZIE, ESQ.
C/O SOUTH AFRICA
WINCHESTER HOUSE, E.C.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4573

[1] Similar letters were sent to Lord Milner, A. J. Balfour and Alfred Lyttelton.
[2] Gandhiji met Winston Churchill on November 27, 1906.

85. LETTER TO W. A. WALLACE

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 15, 1906

W. A. WALLACE, ESQ.
QUEEN ANNE'S CHAMBERS
BROADWAY
WESTMINSTER

DEAR SIR,

Re: No. 28, Ground Floor

I have your letter of the 15th instant herein. I enclose herewith a cheque for the sum of £25 for the furniture mentioned in your letter in reply. Kindly let me have a proper receipt from Mr. Jamieson.

I enclose also agreement of lease signed by Mr. Ritch in his capacity as the Secretary and Treasurer of the South Africa British Indian Vigilance Committee[1]. The agreement is signed by Mr. Ritch because I myself will be shortly leaving for South Africa; at the same time if you wish the agreement to be endorsed by me, with reference to Mr. Ritch's signature, I shall be pleased to do so. Will you kindly let me have the lease signed by the landlord?

May I know when I receive the keys of the room?

I am,
Yours faithfully,

2 Enclosures

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4574

86. LETTER TO T. J. BENNETT

HOTEL CECIL,
STRAND,
[LONDON,]
November 15, 1906

DEAR SIR,

It has been decided and we have been authorized by the British

[1] The name was later changed to South Africa British Indian Committee. *Vide* "Letter to Sir George Birdwood", 20-11-1906.

Indian community in South Africa to form a committee for securing fair treatment to British Indian subjects in South Africa.

It is proposed to call the committee "South Africa British Indian Vigilance Committee".

Sir William Wedderburn, Sir Lepel Griffin, Sir Henry Cotton, Mr. J. D. Rees, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Sir Muncherji Bhownaggree, and other sympathizers have kindly consented to join the committee.

We shall be pleased if you will kindly let us know whether you will be good enough to join the committee. We may state that no continuous and active work will be expected of the committee as such work will be done by a small executive committee, but we are anxious to secure the moral support and influence of all who consider that British Indians in South Africa are not receiving fair and just treatment.

Mr. L. W. Ritch of South Africa has consented to act as secretary for the committee.

We remain,
Dear Sir,
Yours faithfully,
[M. K. GANDHI
H. O. ALLY]

T. J. BENNETT, ESQ., C.I.E.[1]
The Times of India
[LONDON]

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4575

87. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI[2]

[HOTEL CECIL
LONDON, W. C.,]
November 16, 1906

DEAR SIR,

We have been authorized by the British Indian community in

[1] Of Bennett Coleman & Co., publishers of *The Times of India*

[2] This is in fact a circular letter, and was sent also to Sir Henry Cotton, Sir George Birdwood, Sir Lepel Griffin, Sir Charles Dilke, Lord Stanley Of Alderley, Sir Charles Schwann, Sir William Wedderburn, A. H. Scott, J. M. Robertson, Harold Cox, T. H. Thornton and J. D. Rees.

South Africa to form a committee for securing fair and just treatment of British Indians in South Africa. It is proposed to call the committee "South Africa British Indian Vigilance Committee".

We shall be pleased and obliged if you will kindly let us know whether you will be good enough to join the committee.

We may state that no continuous and active work will be expected of the members of the committee, except by those who will also allow themselves to be nominated as members of a small executive committee.

We are anxious to secure the moral support and influence of all who should consider that British Indians in South Africa are not receiving fair and just treatment.

Mr. L. W. Ritch of South Africa has consented to act as secretary to the committee.

We are,

Yours faithfully

M. K. GANDHI

H. O. ALLY

DADABHAI NAOROJI, ESQ.
22, KENNINGTON ROAD, S.E.

From a photostat of the typewritten original: G. N. 2271

88. LETTER TO " THE TIMES"[1]

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
November 16, 1906]

[THE EDITOR
THE TIMES
LONDON

SIR,]

Perhaps it is necessary for me to say a word about the"petition" from certain Indians regarding the British Indian Deputation from the Transvaal which was the subject matter of question and answer in Parliament as reported in your issue of yesterday's date. It is said

[1] This was not published in *The Times*.

therein that I do not possess any mandate, that I am a professional agitator and that my advocacy of the Indian cause has resulted in harm being done to the Indians.

The appointment of my colleague and myself was made unanimously at a public meeting. We hold a document to that effect.[1] The mass meeting at Johannesburg which was convened by me as Secretary to the British Indian Association approved of the principle of the Delegation. The first signatory[2] to this "petition" was present at the meeting and spoke strongly in support of all the principal resolutions. He, moreover, offered himself as one of the delegates but was not accepted. The "petition" is signed by *two* Indians. It is necessary to distinguish the "petition" from a paper purporting to have been signed by 437 Indians and repudiating our mandate. As to this, the following cable was received by the Delegates from Johannes burg on the 10th instant: "Have affidavits Godfrey obtained signatures blank paper false pretences using name bias (code word for the British Indian Association, Transvaal) signatures now with drawn cabling (Lord) Elgin papers publish full report conference." The foregoing cable was evidently sent on the telegra-phic report of the interview sent by the Press correspondents.

The incident does not mean that the two signatories of the "petition" approve of the Asiatic Ordinance. On the contrary, in their opinion evidently I am the mischievous cause of the legislation which they detest as much as the other Indians. Their attitude resolves itself into personal objection to me and not into one of approval of the Ordinance.

As I have been allowed by the Colonial Office to see the "petition"— I know that the expression "professional agitator" means a paid agitator —I may then state that the thirteen years' service rendered by me to my countrymen has been a labour of love and [a matter of the] keenest pleasure to me.

Opinions may differ as to the usefulness or otherwise of my services. The late Sir John Robinson considered that they were not

[1] *Vide* ''Interview to South Africa'', 16-11-1906.

[2] Dr. William Godfrey

useless.[1] Mr. William Hosken[2] and others in the Transvaal also encourage me in the work I am trying to do, namely, to cement the relations between the European and the British Indian subjects in South Africa by removing all cause for misunderstanding.

The only reason for tendering this explanation is that the sacred mission which I have come here to discharge may not be prejudiced in the eyes of the public by leaving unchallenged the allegation in question.

[*I am, etc.,*

M. K. GANDHI]

Indian Opinion, 15-12-1906

Also typewritten draft: S. N. 4577

89. LETTER TO T. MORISON

[HOTEL CECIL,

LONDON,]

NOVEMBER 16, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I beg to enclose herewith the papers promised by me.

I shall thank you to return the Minutes of the meeting with Lord Elgin after you have done with them.

I am,

Yours truly,

Enclosure

THEODORE MORISON, ESQ.

C/O THE EAST INDIA ASSOCIATION

9, VICTORIA STREET, W.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4578

[1] *Vide* "Notes", post 3-9-1900.

[2] Prominent European member of the Transvaal Legislative Assembly

90. LETTER TO MESSRS A. BONNER

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 16, 1906

MESSRS A. BONNER
1 & 2, TOOK'S COURT
LONDON, E.C.

DEAR SIRS,

Herewith please find enclosed cheque for the sum of £2.8.0 together with your bill, which kindly return duly receipted.

Yours faithfully,

2 enclosures

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4579

91. LETTER TO MRS. S. WALTON

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 16, 1906

DEAR MRS. WALTON,

I have just been talking to a valued friend[1] about the conversation we had yesterday. He is a missionary belonging to the Arya Samaj of the Punjab. The Samaj is to Hinduism what Protestantism is to Catholicism. The missionary friend is under a vow of poverty and his talents are devoted to the work of education combined with religion. He is an M.A. of Punjab University but in order to increase his usefulness he is staying in London and studying for the London M.A. I suggested to him that, if he could enter a quiet, nice English home, he would be able to see the real culture and beauty of English life which would be of immense use in his work. At the same time he is to live as cheaply as possible. Do you know a home that would take him without pecuniary consideration? Of course he

[1] Prof. Parmanand

would pay for his board and lodging but he cannot pay more than £1 per week. It does not matter where such a home is so long as it enables him to reach the British Museum within half an hour or at the most three quarters of an hour.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

MRS. SPENCER WALTON

ANDREW HOUSE

TONBRIDGE

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4580

92. LETTER TO W. T. STEAD

HOTEL CECIL,

LONDON,

November 16, 1906

DEAR SIR,

As you were good enough to show very great sympathy with the cause of British Indians in the Transvaal, may I suggest your using your influence with the Boer leaders in the Transvaal? I feel certain that they did not share the same prejudice against British Indians as against the Kaffir races but as the prejudice against Kaffir races in a strong form was in existence in the Transvaal at the time when the British Indians immigrated there, the latter were immediately lumped together with the Kaffir races and described under the generic term "Coloured people". Gradually the Boer mind was habituated to this qualification and it refused to recognize the evident and sharp distinctions that undoubtedly exist between British Indians and the Kaffir races in South Africa.

If you were to place this position before them in your own graphic style and show to them that British Indians have an ancient civilization behind them, that they do not aspire to any" political power in the Transvaal, that they are a mere handful, i.e., 13,000, and

that further immigration can easily be regulated without accentuating class difference, I have no doubt that some at least of the Boer leaders would listen to you and give effect to your suggestions.

The Indian community in the Transvaal will feel deeply grateful to you if you could see your way to influence the Boer mind in the direction I have ventured to suggest to you.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,

W. T. STEAD, ESQ.
MOWBRAY HOUSE
NORFOLK STREET
STRAND

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4584

93. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

HOTEL CECIL,
[LONDON,]
November 16, 1906

DEAR MR. POLAK,

I haven't a moment to spare for any leading articles or matter. You will see from *India* a question[1] and answer regarding the Godfrey petition. Is it not a strange irony of fate that, while the doctor is madly doing all he can to injure the cause, his two brothers here are doing and rendering all the assistance in their power to further the cause? Arithmetically, therefore, any evil effect produced by the activity of the one should be neutralized, especially when it is remembered that the activity of the two is in the direction of the right course. Sir Muncherjee has addressed a letter[2] to *The Times* on it. So have I.[3] I

[1] *Vide* footnote 3 of "Letter to Henry Cotton", 12-11-1906.
[2] *Vide* "Draft Letter to *The Times*", 13-11-1906.
[3] *Vide* "Letter to *The Times*", 12-11-1906.

send you a copy of my letter, also copy of letter[1] by the Godfreys. Your cablegram tells me that your Association is cabling Lord Elgin. Up to the time of writing it would appear that the cablegram has not arrived.

I may have to cable next week for information.

We meet Mr. Morley on the 22nd. I think the deputation will be strong. Sir Lepel Griffin will head it.

A room has been engaged for the permanent committee at £40 per year. Furniture has been bought for £25. Sir Muncherjee will probably be the chairman. More later.

I am afraid that we cannot leave before the 1st week of next month because the committee will require organizing and there will be some work to be done after the interview with Morley.

We had an exceedingly nice chat with Mr. Stead. He has promised to do all he can. I have therefore suggested to him that he should write to his Boer friends to distinguish between Coloured people belonging to different nationalities. [2]

Ritch addresses his lecture[3] to the East India Association on the 26th instant.

I have met Miss Winterbottom of the Union of Ethical Societies. She feels very much interested.

The Pan-Islamic Society has sent a representation to Lord Elgin, copy of which too I am sending.

I want to draw up a report of the meeting of the London Indian Society[4] but it is not yet ready, as also of the Pan-Islamic Society[5]. I might be able to give it herewith. The Pan-Islamic's representation you should print. I am sending you also a splendid contribution by

[1] George V. Godfrey and James W. Godfrey; of Lincoln's Inn, wrote to *The Times* on November 15, 1906, entirely dissociating themselves from the petition of Dr. Godfrey, their brother, and repeating their "strong protest" against the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance. They added that Gandhiji's was "purely a labour of love" and not a means to a selfish end. The conduct of Dr. Godfrey, they thought, was inexplicable. See also appendix.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] *Vide* "Ritch's Speech at East India Association",before 18-12-1906.

[4] *Vide* "Meeting at London Indian Society", after 16-11-1906.

[5] *Vide* "Pan-Islamic Society", after 16-11-1906.

Dr. Oldfield. He will probably give us a series. You may write a short note on it, as also on the Indian Society meeting.

Yours sincerely,

[Enclosure]

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4581

94. LETTER TO T. J. BENNETT

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 16, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I know that you have consistently and continually advocated the cause of British Indians in South Africa throughout our troubles. Mr. Ally and I have come as a Deputation on behalf of British Indians in the Transvaal to wait on Lord Elgin and Mr. Morley. The Deputation has already, as you know, waited on Lord Elgin. Mr. Morley receives the deputation on Thursday next the 22nd instant at 12.20 p.m. at the India Office. We shall be obliged if you will kindly join the deputation and give it the weight of your influence. Sir Lepel Griffin will lead it.

I should also esteem it a favour if you will kindly give Mr. Ally and myself an appointment so that we may see you and place the position before you.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,

T. J. BENNETT, ESQ.
121, FLEET STREET, E.C.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4582

95. LETTER TO B. HOLLAND

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 16, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I am obliged to you for your letter of the 15th instant.

I note that Lord Elgin has no objection to the Minutes of the

Deputation being given to the Press, provided that they are printed as a whole and without any omission. I am taking the liberty therefore of sending the Minutes to the editor of the *Indian Opinion* with instructions to print them *in toto*.[1]

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

BERNARD HOLLAND, ESQ.
COLONIAL OFFICE
DOWNING STREET
WHITEHALL

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4583

96. INTERVIEW TO "SOUTH AFRICA"[2]

November 16, 1906

With reference to the "petition" signed by Dr. W. Godfrey and C. M. Pillay, apparently on behalf of 437 other British Indians, who discla im having given Mr. M. K. Gandhi any mandate to represent them in England, (which formed the subject of a question in the House by Sir Henry Cotton last week) Mr. Gandhi has stated to a representative of South Africa that a cablegram has been received from Johannesburg stating that the signatures of the 437 British Indians mentioned were obtained on blank paper by Dr. Godfrey, using the name of the British Indian Association.

Mr. Gandhi said:

So far as the position of the Ordinance itself is concerned, it is not affected by the petition (which is signed only by Dr. Godfrey and an interpreter named C. M. Pillay), as Dr. Godfrey was the strongest opponent of the Ordinance at the mass meeting held at the old Empire Theatre in September, when it was decided to send a Deputation to England. The only reason I can assign for his action is that he was very much annoyed because he himself was not elected as one of the delegates when the matter came before the committee appointed at that meeting to nominate the representatives to go to London. The petition of Messrs Godfrey and Pillay represents that I am a "professional political agitator". As to that statement it can only

[1] These were published in *Indian Opinion*, 15-12-1906.

[2] *India* republished this interview from *South Africa*, 17-11-1906.

arise from ignorance or wilful misrepresentation, because my services to my fellow-countrymen in South Africa for the last thirteen years have been purely a labour of love, and a matter of the keenest pleasure to me.

Mr. Gandhi, in conclusion, showed a document, dated "Johannesburg, October 1, 1906," and signed "Abdool Ganie, Chairman, British Indian Association," certifying that "M. K. Gandhi, Esquire, Honorary Secretary of the British Indian Association, and Hajee Ojer Ally, Esquire, President of the Hamidia Islamic Society, have been elected as Delegates to proceed to London for the purpose of submitting to the Imperial authorities the Indian view of the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance, as also to interview friends in England of British Indians in South Africa."

India, 23-11-1906

97. MEETING AT LONDON INDIAN SOCIETY[1]

[After *November 16, 1906*]

At a well-attended meeting of the London Indian Society, on the 3rd November, at 84 and 85, Palace Chambers, Westminster, the Hon'ble Dadabhai Naoroji in the chair, Mr. James Godfrey of Natal, who is at present keeping his terms for the Bar and has passed his final examination, gave a paper under the above title[2]. Below is given a condensation of the paper:

Since my arrival here, I have had ample opportunities of studying these people and I hope to show you that there are very many valuable lessons to be learnt from them.

Let us examine and analyse them and see what qualities have made them what they are and what are the potent factors which are securing for them the universal triumph which seems to be growing larger and larger every day, and which must command the admiration of even their bitterest enemies. I was led to make this examination myself owing to what I felt were unsatisfactory replies given to me by a large number of our countrymen when leaving this land for home. Invariably I put them the question: "What has England taught

[1] This is a report of the meeting held on November 3, and was published in *Indian Opinion* as "specially contributed". It was written by Gandhiji; *vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 16-11-1906.

[2] This item was published under the sub-title, "The Englishman as I Find Him''

you or what improvements have you in mind to suggest to your people when you return?" And to such questions I received the painful and saddening reply to the effect that they had been too much occupied with their immediate studies and occupations to devote any time to or concern themselves about the people or things surrounding them. As to improvements at home, that is a question which affects local interests and, therefore, must necessarily need local consideration, etc. Now gentlemen, I put it to you that such replies are anything but satisfactory. Whether this be the frame of mind of the majority who go back, I will not take upon myself the responsibility of stating. I hope I shall be told I am mistaken. Be that as it may, the knowledge of the fact of even one of us returning home in this mood of utter indifference and doubt, I feel, amply justifies a reference to the subject in a paper of this kind. The Englishman abroad is one person and the Englishman at home is quite another. In the first case he proves himself to be a veritable tyrant and a despot, but in the second case, i.e., in England, few will say that he is not a desirable person.

From this you will see, therefore, that we actually arrive in this country with more or less prejudiced views and ideas, and apparently some never seem to get beyond that stage, and can never see or appreciate any good in the Englishman. We never seem to realize that we have come all the way from home in order to benefit ourselves and secure that experience and status which it is somewhat difficult for us to secure in our own land. We come, not with the intention of merely qualifying in some particular profession, but of simultaneously gaining that wider experience of the world and its ways which can only be had by travelling in foreign countries. We defeat the very object of our visit to this country if we do not carry away with us some of the multifarious benefits derived by our sojourn here. We want, after our staying here, to go back with the very best that the place can give us... If we don't, the loss is ours and we are not doing our duty to ourselves, much less to our country.

The success of the Japanese is admitted on all hands to have been due chiefly to their having, for the last 40 years or more, sent out students and specialists for the express purpose of eliciting the best information, learning the newest and latest inventions and carrying back the cream of Europe's learning, advancement and ideas of progress, all for the benefit of their country. Mark you, they did not

only carry this knowledge and ideas back, but they actually applied them with a result and success which have astonished the whole world.

Let us try and reckon up some of their good points only and see if they are worth copying. The bad points we leave aside. Throughout their whole history, we find that they have displayed a remarkable spirit of love for freedom and independence. Did they not have to fight for this bit of land which they now proudly call England? Did they not have both internal and external foes and that through many centuries? The wonderful genius of the race seems to have conspired with the strengthening influence of the place itself in securing a sure, certain and steady progress onward. The great American writer, R. W. Emerson, says: 'These Saxons are the hands of mankind. They have the taste for toil, a distaste for pleasure or repose and the telescopic appreciation of distant gain. They are the wealth-makers and by dint of mental faculty which has its own conditions and terms. The Saxon works after liking or only for himself and to set him at work and begin to draw his monstrous values out of barren Britain, all dishonour, fret and barrier must be removed and then his energies begin to play.'

We see then that the whole mind of the race, so to say, has been expanding proportionately. They have persevered in it and kept up an even game. The English game appears to be one of main force to main force, the planting of foot to foot, fairplay and open field, a rough tug without trick or dodging. One cannot entertain any reasonable doubt of their ability and energy. Just realize for one moment the nature of the lightly artificial construction of the whole fabric here. The very climate and geography are in themselves matters which are contrary to such conditions as would enhance a natural existence. Bacon says: 'Rome was a state not subject to paradoxes, but England subsists by antagonisms and contradictions and is a perfect museum of anomalies.' Is it not true, though it has been humorously said, that 'no fruits ripen in England but a baked apple', and, again, is it not equally true that no indigenous animal worth the mention has ever before flourished in this country in comparison with other countries? Yet in spite of these natural difficulties they have, owing to their dogged perseverance, tact, zeal and energy, driven all before them and are now at the top of the tree. There seems to be some secret

power which permeates the whole nation and makes for progress. They have pride and affection for their race. Do we not hear everyone of them boasting and priding himself on the fact of his being an Englishman? Does he not flout it to your face at every turn that because he is an Englishman therefore he rules? They have solidarity or responsibility and trust in each other. It has been said of the Englishmen that 'they embrace their cause with more tenacity than their lives'.

The paper was very well received. Messrs B. J. Wadia, M.A., Parmeshwar Lall, M.A., J. Gowrieshanker, M.A., Nathuram, Dwarka Das and several other gentlemen who took part in the discussion congratulated the lecturer on his broad-mindedness and theability with which he had written his paper. Some of the speakers thought that Mr. Godfrey had over-drawn-the picture in favour of the Englishman, but Mr. Godfrey in his reply, whilst thanking the members for their sympathetic reception, said that he had purposely left out the other side of the Englishman's character, but he wanted to place before the members of the Society what he conside-red was best in his character and what was worthy ofimitation. A vote of thanks to the lecturer and to the Chair brought the proceedings to a close.

Indian Opinion, 29-12-1906

98. THE PAN-ISLAMIC SOCIETY[1]

[*After November 16, 1906*]

A meeting of the Pan-Islamic Society, whose headquarters are in London, took place at the Criterion Restaurant, on the 3rd November, in honour of its Founder and retiring Secretary, Mr. Abdullah Al-Mamoon Sohraworthy, M.A., M.K.R.S., Barrister-at-Law.

At the reception were present Mr. Syed Ameer Ali (ex-Judge of the High Court of Judicature at Calcutta), Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Mr. Shamji Krishnavarma, Mr. S. A. Quadir, Miss Martha Craig, Miss A. A. Smith, Mrs. Conseil, His Excellency Hamid Beg (Councillor of the

[1] This was published with the sub-title "Reception to Mr. Sohraworthy, M.A., M.K.R.S." as "Specially Reported for *Indian Opinion*" and appears to have been drafted by Gandhiji; *vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 16-11-1906.

Turkish Empire), Mrs. Hamid Beg, Miss Faizi (who is a scholar of Madras University and who is now training as an educationist), His Excellency Muin-ul-Vizarat (Charge d'Affaires of the Persian Legation), Dr. Pollen and many others.

Mr. M. H. Kidwai, of Lucknow, received the guests.

Mr. Sohraworthy, the retiring Secretary, has had a distinguished career in London. He is a much-travelled man and is the author of *Malki Law*, as also the *Sayings of Mahomed*. He has made Pan-Islamism his life work, and in his striking, though somewhat lengthy speech, he clearly showed that the object of Pan-Islamism was to bring together under its fold the different sects of Mahomedans and carry on a peaceful propaganda of the faith of the Prophet with a view to promote universal brotherhood.

This Society, which was originally called the Anjuman-e-Islam, was founded in 1886 in London. On the 23rd of June, 1903, it was re-named the Pan-Islamic Society. Mr. Ameer Ali was at one time President of this body.

The following are the avowed objects of the Society:

(a) To promote the religious, social, moral and intellectual advancement of the Mussulman world.

(b) To afford a centre of social union to Muslims from all parts of the world.

(c) To promote brotherly feelings between Muslims, and to facilitate intercourse between them.

(d) To remove misconceptions prevailing among non-Muslims regarding Islam and Mussulman.

(e) To render legitimate assistance to the best of its ability to any Muslim requiring it in any part of the world.

(f) To provide facilities for conducting religious ceremonies in non-Muslim countries.

(g) To hold debates and lectures, and to read papers likely to further the interests of Islam.

(h) To collect subscriptions from all parts of the world in order to build a mosque in London, and to endow it, and to extend the burial ground for the Muslims in London.

Its members are ordinary, extraordinary and honorary.

The annual subscription for ordinary resident members is 10/6; non-resident members pay only an entrance fee of 5/6.

Mr. Shaik Mushir Hoosain Kidwai, c/o Messrs Thos. Cook & Son, Ludgate Circus, London, E.C., the present acting Honorary Secretary, receives and answers all communications.

Indian Opinion, 15-12-1906

99. DRAFT QUESTIONS FOR MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT[1]

[*Before November 17, 1906*]

QUESTION I

Has the Right Hon'ble the Colonial Secretary received a petition from Mr. Abdul Ganie, Chairman of the British Indian Association of the Transvaal, regarding the Vrededorp Stands Ordinance published in the Transvaal *Government Gazette* dated September 28 last? Will His Lordship advise His Majesty, under the power reserved under the Letters Patent, to disallow the Ordinance, in that it imposes on British Indians and other Coloured people a restriction as to holding leases of or remaining in occupation of Stands in Vrededorp?

Is it not a fact that Vrededorp is contiguous to a Location called the Malay Location and inhabited largely by British Indians?

Is it not a fact that British Indians are already in occupation of several Stands in Vrededorp, that some of them have built substantial structures on some Stands and that they are carrying on their trade on such Stands?

Is it not also a fact that many British Indians resided in Vrededorp during the Dutch regime and that there was no objection taken to their presence during that time?

QUESTION II

In view of the foregoing question does it not appear to the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State for the Colonies necessary that an impartial commission should be appointed to investigate the whole question of the status of British Indians in the Transvaal?

[1] These four questions appear to have been drafted by Gandhi for Members of Parliament. The fourth one at any rate was sent to J. D. Rees with the covering letter (p. 181) dated November 17, 1906. The question was put to Churchill on November 22, 1906. Both the question and the answer were reproduced in *India,* 1-12-1906.

QUESTION III

Is there any precedent for legislation in the British Colonies after the manner of the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance published in the Transvaal *Government Gazette* dated the 28th September, 1906?

Is it not a fact that in no part of His Majesty's Dominions are British Indians, occupying the status of British Indians in the Transvaal, made to carry passes contemplated by the said Ordinance?

QUESTION IV

Has the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State for the Colonies seen the report of an appeal heard by the Supreme Court of the Transvaal on the .... day of.... [1] in the matter of Rex v. Mahomed Hafejee Moosa wherein a British Indian lad under eleven years of age, living with his father, was arrested and charged before the Magistrate at Volksrust, found guilty, sentenced to pay a fine of £50 or to undergo imprisonment for a period of three months and to leave the Transvaal after the completion of his term of imprisonment or paying the fine as the case may be?

Is His Lordship aware that the Supreme Court has quashed the conviction and made scathing comments condemning the administration of the Peace Preservation Ordinance regarding the British Indians? What action do the Government intend to take in connection with the matter?

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4667

100. LETTER TO MESSRS WOOLGAR & ROBERTS

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 17, 1906

MESSRS WOOLGAR & ROBERTS
88, FLEET STREET, E.C.

DEAR SIRS,

I have the press cuttings sent by you. I note that you have not sent me Sir Roper Lethbridge's letter in *The Times* of yesterday. I

[1] The question as reproduced in *India* has "heard this month by the Supreme Court of the Transvaal in the matter of...", etc.

should like you to be most accurate so that I may feel quite safe that I [am] receiving all the cuttings. I have not also received cuttings from the 20th October to the 3rd November. I know there were many references to the British Indian position in South Africa including the Transvaal and Natal. I had my attention drawn to references in *The African World* also. If you could complete these cuttings, I shall be obliged. Cheque will be sent to you in due course.

Yours faithfully,

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4586

101. LETTER TO BRITISH COMMITTEE OF INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 17, 1906

DEAR MR. HALL,

Mr. Naoroji has paid £3.10.0 for a cable he sent to the British Indian Association in Johannesburg in connection with the Asiatic Ordinance. The Acting Secretary of the Association now writes to me that he has received a memo from Mr. Naoroji. Will you kindly refund the amount to Mr. Naoroji out of the funds sent to the Committee for disbursements about the Ordinance. I had intended to speak to you about it when I saw you at Palace Chambers. I have been so much pressed for work that I have not been able to attend at the Palace Chambers as often as I should like to. Last Tuesday we met but the matter quite escaped me.

Yours truly,

THE SECRETARY
THE BRITISH COMMITTEE OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
84 & 85, PALACE CHAMBERS
WESTMINSTER

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4587

102. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON, W. C.,
November 17, 1906

DEAR MR. NAOROJI,

I have your notes. I had hoped that I would be able to wait on you personally and explain the letters from Mr. Polak. However, I have been so very busy in connection with the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance that I have not been able to do so.

Now that Tatham's Bill has been rejected by the Natal Assembly, nothing remains to be done for the present.

The petition[1] from Mr. Abdul Ganie you have dealt with already.

I return Mr. Polak's letters addressed to you for your file.

I remain,
Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

DADABHAI NAOROJI, ESQ.
22, KENNINGTON ROAD
LAMBETH

From a photostat of the typewritten original: S.N. 2278

103. LETTER TO EMPIRE TYPEWRITING COMPANY

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 17, 1906

TO
THE MANAGER
THE EMPIRE TYPEWRITING COMPANY
77, QUEEN VICTORIA STREET

DEAR SIR,

With reference to the "Empire" hired [2]by me, I shall keep it

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Lord Elgin", 8-10-1906.
[2] "Had" in the original

for a month as from the 12th instant. I understand that the monthly terms are 15/-. You have already received 7/6 and I now enclose cheque for the balance. I shall thank you to let me have the receipt.

Yours faithfully,

[Enclosure]

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4589

104. LETTER TO H. E. A. COTTON

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 17, 1906

MY DEAR MR. COTTON,

I am very much obliged to you for your note enclosing cutting from the *Empire.* Will you please look up *South Africa* and copy a report of an interview[1] with me in the next issue of *India?* I am sending a cutting to Sir Henry.

I see your notice about a contribution from Mr. Molteno. I have not been able to keep myself in greater touch with you as I have been very much pressed for work. I have not been able to go to bed at all during my stay here before one o'clock in the morning.

I am,
Yours truly,

H. E. A. COTTON, ESQ.
186, ADELAIDE ROAD
SOUTH HAMPSTEAD, N.W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4590

[1] *Vide* "Interview to South Africa",16-11-1906.

105. LETTER TO SECRETARY, COUNTY SCHOOL

HOTEL CECIL,
[LONDON,]
November 17, 1906

TO
THE SECRETARY
COUNTY SCHOOL
BEDFORD

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your letter of the 14th instant together with enclosures. The young man[1] for whom I have written to you,[2] is to study for the Matriculation Examination at the same time that he is studying for the Bar. He has already kept some terms. His previous education is very poor and it is necessary for him, if he is to hold his own in future, to go as far as the Matriculation of London University. The young man will stay there, or anywhere he is put, the whole of his time. His previous certificate given to him by the Head Master of the Higher Grade Indian School in Durban is filed with the Steward of Lincoln's Inn. Would you require production of the certificate or will a certificate from me be considered enough? I may state that he is not a Christian but a Hindoo.

I notice that the current term is half finished; will there be any reduction on that account?

Yours faithfully,

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4591

106. LETTER TO J. D. REES

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 17, 1906

DEAR SIR,

Will you be good enough to put the enclosed question[3]? You

[1] Ruthnum Pather
[2] This is not available.
[3] *Vide* "Draft Questions for Members of Parliament", Question IV, before 17-11-1906.

may have seen the report of the judgement of the Supreme Court of the Transvaal in this matter. I do not know whether the style of the question is proper but the facts stated therein are correctly set forth.

I am,
Yours faithfully,

Enclosure
J. D. REES, ESQ., M.P.
HOUSE OF COMMONS
WESTMINSTER

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4592

107. LETTER TO SIR HENRY COTTON

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 17, 1906

DEAR SIR HENRY,

With reference to your question put to Mr. Churchill, I enclose herewith cutting from *South Africa*. I have also written to *The Times*[1] and the two brothers of Dr. Godfrey, who are studying for the Bar here, have also written.[2]

I am,
Yours truly,

Enclosure
SIR HENRY COTTON, M.P.
45, ST. JOHN'S WOOD PARK, N.W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4593

108. LETTER TO G. J. ADAM

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 17, 1906

DEAR MR. ADAM,

I have received a reply from Sir Henry Cotton. He says that it is

[1] *Vide* "Letter to *The Times*",Letter to *The Times*", 16-11-1906.
[2] *Vide* footnote 4 of "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 16-11-1906.

not worth while putting the question[1] I suggested as the giving of information is part of the Colonial Office procedure. If you can get some other Member to ask the question, it will certainly be very good.

Perhaps you know that Mr. Morley receives the deputation on the 22nd instant. Almost the same gentlemen who joined the deputation to Lord Elgin will be included in this deputation also.

Yours truly,

G. J. ADAM, ESQ.
24, OLD JEWRY, E.C.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4594

109. DEPUTATION NOTES - II

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
November 17, 1906

INTERVIEWS WITH LEADERS: SYMPATHY AND PROMISE OF HELP

The last week has been very busy. We have had not a moment's leisure. We saw Mr. Theodore Morison of Aligarh and the well-known Mr. Stead of the *Review of Reviews*. Mr. Stead has boldly come out to give us all the help he can. He was therefore requested to write to the Boer leaders that they should not consider Indians as being on the same level as Kaffirs.[2]

We also saw Miss Smith, a lady who contributes to the *Punjabee* and the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. Miss Winterbottom, the Secretary of the Union of Ethical Societies, has promised to render all possible help.[3]

We had an interview on Transvaal and Natal matters with the Private Secretary to Lord Elgin. We talked about many things, and we may hope for some satisfactory results. From Mr. Churchill's reply to Sir Henry Cotton it appears that, for the present at least, the Ordinance will not receive assent.

The Pan-Islamic Society has made a representation to Lord Elgin, saying that the feelings of the Muslim community have been

[1] About how a report of the Deputation proceedings came to be published in *The Times*; *vide* "Letter to Sir Henry Cotton", 10-11-1906.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to W. T. Stead",16-11-1906.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Miss F. Winterbottom", 13-11-1906.

greatly hurt by the application of the Ordinance to Turkish Muslims, while the Christians and the Jews of Turkey have been excluded from its purview. Thus, help is being received from all quarters.

Mr. Ally had an interview with Sir Richard Solomon and because of this too, we have some ground for hope.

DR. GODFREY'S PETITION[1]

There is no rose without thorns. And these hopes have a thorn in the shape of Dr. Godfrey's petition. I am not depressed on this account. Neither need it hurt our feelings. We should not be angry with Dr. Godfrey. He is a child and lacks understanding. Often he is unaware of his own folly. He deserves pity rather than scorn. Lord Elgin's secretary showed us his petition, in which he states that the Indian community has given no authority to Messrs Gandhi and Ally. Mr. Gandhi was a paid agitator and had amassed money through that trade. The whites of Durban had beaten him up in 1896[2] and driven him away. His activities had resulted in great harm and created differences between the whites and the Coloured people. One Mr. Abdool Gani was the Chairman [of the British Indian Association] and he knew nothing [of all this]. Mr. Ally was a rebel who wanted to establish the authority of the Calif[3] in political matters also. The petition bears the signatures of Dr. Godfrey and Mr. C. M. Pillay. They also state that many persons did not sign the petition as they were afraid of the Association. Besides the petition, there is a document which is said to have been signed by 437 Indians. It says that Messrs Gandhi and Ally have no authority to act on behalf of the Indian community. The best part of the petition is now known to the public as Sir Henry Cotton asked a question about it in Parliament. As the question was raised by many, Sir Muncherji has addressed a letter [to *The Times*] on it, but this has not yet been published. Mr. Gandhi, too, has written one. And the two brothers of Dr. Godfrey who have been actively assisting the Deputation have also written to the Press. When all these letters are published, it is expected that the storm will blow over. It is necessary that all this news be published; it need not, however, cause any nervousness.

[1] *Vide* enclosure to "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Elgin", 20-11-1906,

[2] It was really in 1897.

[3] The original has "Sultan".

ARTICLES IN LONDON "TIMES"

A formidable article appeared last Saturday in *The Times*. A copy of it was despatched last week. In the article written by Sir Roper Lethbridge also, it is stated that India is very unhappy because of the sufferings of the Indian community.

PERMANENT COMMITTEE

The cablegram sanctioning the setting up of the permanent committee has been received. Accordingly a room has been rented for a year; £40 will have to be paid as rent. Sir Muncherji has helped a lot. He will probably become the chairman of the committee. Furniture worth £25 has been purchased. It is proposed to give a thanksgiving dinner to all the gentlemen who have helped us, and to announce the formation of the committee on that occasion. As the time is short, it remains to be seen how much of all this can be done. Mr. Ritch will work as secretary of the committee. As his financial position is not satisfactory, a nominal sum of £7.10.0 to £10 a month will have to be paid to him. He will give all his time to the committee. He is speaking on the 26th before the East India Association. If possible, I shall give a summary[1] of his speech next week. There is reason to hope that much of our work can be looked after by the committee. It should receive help from all over South Africa. Sir Muncherji has suggested that it may be named South Africa British Indian Vigilance Committee.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-12-1906

110. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO MORLEY

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 20, 1906

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
THE RIGHT HON'BLE THE EARL OF ELGIN
HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
COLONIAL OFFICE
LONDON

SIR,

I now beg to enclose herewith list of the members of the deputa-

[1] *Vide* "Ritch's Speech at East India Association", before 18-12-1906.

tion who will accompany Mr. Ally and myself on Thursday next.

In accordance with the desire expressed by Mr. Morley, the number of members has been restricted as much as possible. Many others have expressed their sympathy and were ready to join the deputation but for the reason above mentioned they are not coming.

I venture also to enclose two copies of Representations[1] submitted to Lord Elgin which give a resume of the position.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

your obedient servant,

3 enclosures

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4595

[ENCLOSURE]

List of gentlemen who, together with the two Delegates from the British Indians of the Transvaal, will form the deputation to wait on the Right Hon'ble John Morley, His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for India, on the 22nd day of November, 1906

1. The Rt. Hon. Lord Stanley of Alderley
2. The Rt. Hon. Sir Chas. Dilke
3. Sir Lepel Griffin
4. Sir Henry Cotton
5. Sir M. M. Bhownaggree
6. Sir Charles Schwann
7. Sir William Wedderburn
8. Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji
9. Mr. Harold Cox
10. Mr. Ameer Ali
11. Mr. J. D. Rees
12. Mr. Theodore Morison
13. Mr. T. J. Bennett
14. Mr. W. Arathoon
15. Dr. T. H. Thornton
16. Dr. Rutherford
17. Mr. Lorain Petre

[1] *Vide* "Representation to Lord Elgin", 31-10-1906 and "Memorial to Lord Elgin", 8-11-1906.

18. Mr. L. W. Ritch
19. Mr. A. H. Scott.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4617

111. LETTER TO J. D. REES

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 20, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I am very much obliged to you for your offering to join the proposed committee as also to become a member of the executive committee.

Both Mr. Ally and I agree that this question should be kept aloof from all parties and that it should stand on its own merits.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,

J. D. REES, ESQ.
CRAEGYNOG
NEW TOWN
MONTGOMERYSHIRE

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4596

112. LETTER TO MESSRS WOOLGAR & ROBERTS

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 20, l906

MESSRS WOOLGAR & ROBERTS
58, FLEET STREET, E.C.

DEAR SIRS,

I now enclose herewith cheque for £1.10.0 for press cuttings.

From and after the 28th instant, will you please address all the

cuttings to L,. W. Ritch, Esq., Secretary of the South Africa British Indian Committee, No. 28, Queen Anne's Chambers, Westminster.

Yours faithfully

Enclosure

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4597

113. LETTER TO W. ARATHOON

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 20 1906

DEAR MR. ARATHOON,

Sir Lepel Griffin thinks that you should join the deputation to Mr. Morley on Thursday the 22nd instant at 12.20 p.m. at the India Office. I have therefore taken the liberty of sending your name to Mr. Morley as a member of the deputation and I hope it will be convenient for you to attend.

I have left the papers I talked to you about at your office. Mr. Ritch and I went over to your office to see you, but you were away.

Yours truly,

W. ARATHOON, ESQ.
SECRETARY
EAST INDIA ASSOCIATION
3, WESTMINSTER CHAMBERS
VICTORIA STREET

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4598

114. LETTER TO SIR WALTER LAWRENCE[1]

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 20, 1906

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Ally and I have arrived from South Africa as a Deputation

[1] A copy of this letter was sent to Sir Raymond West, K.C.I.E., Chesterfield, College Road, Norwood, S.E.

on behalf of the British Indians in the Transvaal. We would be obliged if you would be good enough to give us an opportunity to place the position before you.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

SIR WALTER LAWRENCE, K.C.I.E.[1]
SLOANE STREET, S.W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4599

115. LETTER TO EMPIRE TYPEWRITING COMPANY

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 20, 1906

THE SECRETARY
THE EMPIRE TYPEWRITING COMPANY
77, QUEEN VICTORIA STREET, E.C.

DEAR SIR,

I have your receipt with memo endorsed regarding the hire of a typewriter from your office. My representative who called on you tells me that the terms arranged with you were 15/- per month forthe typewriter I am using. He tells me also that it was in your personal interest that you gave the new typewriter in order to advertise the machine. If therefore you think that you would much rather that I used an old machine for 15/-, the new one may be removed and an old one sent instead.

Yours faithfully,

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4601

[1] (1857-1940); Indian Civil servant and author of *India We Served*

116. LETTER TO CLEMENTS PRINTING WORKS

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 20, 1906

THE MANAGER
THE CLEMENTS PRINTING WORKS
PORTUGAL STREET
STRAND

DEAR SIR,

Your statement addressed to Mr. Ritch and sent to Mr. Polak has been handed to me for settlement. I now enclose my cheque for £4.9.0 and the receipt herewith which please discharge.

Yours faithfully,

2 enclosures

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4602

117. LETTER TO HEAD MASTER, COUNTY SCHOOL[1]

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 20, 1906

THE HEAD MASTER
COUNTY SCHOOL
BEDFORD

DEAR SIR,

I have your letter of the 19th instant for which I thank you. I am afraid I cannot leave London. My friend Mr. L. W. Ritch will therefore present the young man to you and you can then examine him. Mr. Ritch will show you the certificate also. Mr. Ritch will be there on Friday leaving St. Pancras by the 2.5 train.

yours faithfully,

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4603

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary, County School", 17-11-1906.

118. LETTER TO SIR WILLIAM MARKBY

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 20, 1906

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Ally and I have arrived here as a Deputation on behalf of the British Indians in the Transvaal. It is proposed, in order that the work may be continued, to form a permanent committee in which Sir Muncherji Bhownaggree, Sir William Wedderburn, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji and others are interesting themselves. Mr. Ally and I will be pleased if you will kindly allow your name to appear as a member of the committee.

I have to enclose herewith some papers in connection with the present position of the British Indians in the Transvaal.

If you are in London any time during this week or the next, we would consider it an honour to pay our respects to you.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

Enclosure

SIR WILLIAM MARKBY[1]
HEADINGTON HILL
OXFORD

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4604

119. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO A. J. BALFOUR

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 20, 1906

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY OF
THE RT. HON. A. J. BALFOUR
4, CARLTON GARDENS
PALL MALL

DEAR SIR,

I am obliged to Mr. Balfour[2] for your letter of the 19th instant. I

[1] (1829-1914) ; lawyer and jurist ; Judge, Calcutta High Court, 1866-78

[2] Arthur James Balfour, (1848-1930); philosopher and statesman, Prime Minister of Great Britain; he was at this time a Member of Parliament.

venture to state that the Delegates have already approached Mr. Lyttelton who has kindly granted an appointment.

As the leader of the Conservative Party and ex-Prime Minister, we would deem it an honour if the Right Hon'ble gentleman will allow us to pay our respects to him.

I remain,
Yours faithfully

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4605

120. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD MILNER

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 20, 1906

TO

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY OF LORD MILNER

46, DUKE STREET

DEAR SIR,

I beg to thank His Lordship for consenting to receive the Delegates. Mr. Ally and I will do ourselves the honour of waiting on His Lordship on Thursday next at 4 o'clock at the office of the Rhodes' Trust.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4606

121. LETTER TO LORD REAY

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 20, 1906

MY LORD,

I had the honour to call on Your Lordship and also to write.

Presuming that my letter[1] has escaped Your Lordship's attention, I venture to write again requesting an appointment for Mr. Ally and myself who have arrived here as a Deputation on behalf of the British Indians in the Transvaal. If Your Lordship could spare a few minutes, we shall be very much obliged.

I have the honour to remain,

Your Lordship's obedient servant,

THE RIGHT HON'BLE LORD REAY
6, GREAT STANHOPE STREET, W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4607

122. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO W. CHURCHILL

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 20, 1906

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY OF
WINSTON CHURCHILL, ESQ.
HIS MAJESTY'S UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
WHITEHALL

DEAR SIR,

I am obliged to Mr. Churchill for your letter of the 15th instant. Mr. Ally and I have sought an interview[2] with Mr. Churchill in order that we may place the whole position before him and pay our respects to him. As there will be hardly another occasion when we will be able to travel to England in connection with the general British Indian position in the Transvaal and as there will be probably much legislative activity on Responsible Government being granted and as we have only discussed with Lord Elgin the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance, we shall appreciate [it as] a great favour if Mr. Churchill will be pleased to grant us a private interview.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4608

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Reay", 30-10-1906.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to W. Churchill",15-11-1906.

123. LETTER TO A. LYTTELTON

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 20, 1906

SIR,

Mr. Ally and I are greatly obliged to you for giving us an appointment. We shall do ourselves the honour of waiting on you on Friday next at 4 o'clock at the House of Commons.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,

THE RIGHT HON'BLE A. LYTTELTON
16, COLLEGE STREET
WESTMINSTER

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4609

124. LETTER TO MESSRS ARCHIBALD AND CONSTABLE & CO.

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 20, 1906

MESSRS ARCHIBALD AND CONSTABLE & CO.
16, JAMES STREET
HAYMARKET, S . W.

DEAR SIRS,

With reference to your letter of the 13th instant I am sorry I have mislaid the form to be filled in. I shall thank you to let me have two copies of Mr. Ameer Ali's book, *Islam*[1] , addressed as above if it is obtainable before the 28th instant, otherwise addressed Box 6522,

[1]*The Spirit of Islam*, which Gandhiji wanted to translate and summarize for the benefit of the Gujarati readers of *Indian Opinion*; *vide* "Books to be Published", 5-1-1907.

Johannesburg.

I enclose herewith 24 stamps.

Yours faithfully,

Enclosure

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4610

125. LETTER TO SIR MUNCHERJI BHOWNAGGREE

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 20, 1906

DEAR SIR MUNCHERJI,

Mr. Ally, Mr. Ritch and I will wait on you tomorrow at 11.30 unless I hear to the contrary.

I am,
Yours truly,

SIR M. M. BHOWNAGGREE
196, CROMWELL ROAD, S.W.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4611

126. LETTER TO SIR CHARLES DILKE

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 20, I906

DEAR SIR,

With reference to the deputation that is to wait on Mr. Morley at the India Office on Thursday next at 12.20, Mr. Ally and I will appreciate it [as] a great favour if you will be good enough to attend as suggested in your letter.

I beg to remain,
Yours faithfully,

THE RT. HON. SIR CHAS. DILKE, BART., M.P.
76, SLOANE STREET, S.W.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4613

127. LETTER TO SIR GEORGE BIRDWOOD

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 20, 1906

DEAR SIR GEORGE,

I thank you for your note of the 17th instant. I appreciate the suggestion you have made as to the name of the Committee. Subject to Sir Muncherji's approval, the word "Vigilance" will be struck off.

Mr. Ally and I thank you for your consenting to join the Committee. I await your letter in an amended form as promised by you.

Yours faithfully,

SIR GEORGE BIRDWOOD
119, THE AVENUE
WEST EALING

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4614

128. LETTER TO EDITOR, "SOUTH AFRICA"

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 20, 1906

THE EDITOR
SOUTH AFRICA
LONDON

DEAR SIR,

Lord Elgin's Private Secretary has now supplied me with a copy of the Minutes of the proceedings before him at the time the Transvaal British Indian Deputation waited on his Lordship. His Lordship's instructions are that if the proceedings are published at all they should be published *in toto*. I therefore send the Minutes for your perusal. Unless you wish to publish them in [full,] I shall thank you to return same after use.

Yours faithfully,

[Enclosure]

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4612

129. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD ELGIN

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON, W.C. 2,
November 20, 1906

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY OF
THE EARL OF ELGIN
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
COLONIAL OFFICE
DOWNING STREET

DEAR SIR,

With reference to the interview that Mr. Ally and I had with you and Mr. Just in connection with the "petition" received from Dr. Godfrey and another and the papers said to be signed by 437 Indians and in connection with matters arising out of His Lordship's reply to the Deputation that waited on him on the 8th day of November, in accordance with your instructions, Mr. Ally and I submit herewith a written statement for submission to His Lordship.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure

[ENCLODURE]

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATES ON BEHALF OF THE BRITISH INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL REGARDING THE "PETITION" FROM DR. WILLIAM GODFREY AND ANOTHER AND OTHER MATTERS

"THE PETITION"

1. The "petition" is signed by Dr. William Godfrey and C. M. Pillay both of whom are personally known to the Delegates.

2. Petitioner William Godfrey is a doctor of Edinburgh University and is practising in Johannesburg.

3. The petitioner C. M. Pillay is an interpreter of no standing. He has been found to be the worse for liquor and may be described as a loafer.

4. So far as the recollection of the Delegates serves rightly, the points made in the "petition" are as follows:

(a) Delegates have no mandate from the general body of Indians.

(b) Mr. Gandhi is a professional agitator who has made money out of his work.

(c) Mr. Gandhi has caused an estrangement between Europeans and Indians and his advocacy has resulted in harm to the community.

(d) He was mobbed at Durban by the European community.

(e) He is proprietor of *Indian Opinion*.

(f) Mr. Ally is Chairman and founder of a politico-religious body which has as its object recognition of the Sultan as both the spiritual and political head of the Moslems.

(g) A Mr. Abdul Ganie is President of the British Indian Association.

(h) The petitioners have not been able to receive support for their contentions because of the intimidation on the part of the British Indian Association.

5. As to (a), the Delegates enclose herewith letter[1] signed by the Chairman of the British Indian Association. Their election was unanimous. It took place at a meeting of the Association that was largely attended. There was no protest sent to the Association although the election was before the public for a long time.

6. As to (b), Mr. Gandhi has received no remuneration for his public work throughout his thirteen years' career. He has from time to time contributed to the funds of the Association. The work has been purely a labour of love. His Lordship is further referred to correspondence that took place in *The Star* of Johannesburg on the 25th October in refutation of a somewhat similar statement made by *The Star* on the 23rd October.

7. As to (c), Mr. Gandhi is totally unaware of any estrangement having taken place between Europeans and Indians by reason of his

[1]*Vide* "Interview to *South Africa*", 16-11-1906, and also"Telegram to Transvaal Governor", 9-30-1906.

advocacy; on the contrary, his supreme effort has been to bring about a reconciliation between the two communities, such being the avowed object of the Natal Indian Congress, of which he was the honorary Secretary and one of the founders, [and] of the British Indian Association of which he is the present Secretary. On this point His Lordship is further referred to the following letter from the late Sir John Robinson, which is one among many received from distinguished residents at the time of his departure for India in 1901:

> I beg to thank you for your kind invitation to the meeting at the Congress Hall this evening (October 15, 1901). It would have given me great pleasure to have been present on the occasion of so well-earned a mark of respect to our able and distinguished fellow-citizen, Mr. Gandhi, but unfortunately my state of health prevents my going out at night, and I am for the present debarred from taking part in any public function, so I must ask you to kindly excuse my inability to attend.Not the less heartily do I wish all success to this public recognition of the good work done and the many services rendered to the community by Mr. Gandhi.[1]

The chief reason for his having organized the Indian Ambulance Corps at the time of the Boer War[2] and the Indian Stretcher[-Bearer] Corps at the time of the Native Rebellion, was to bring about such [re]conciliation, by showing that British Indians were not unworthy to be citizens of the Empire and were capable of recognizing their obligations if they also insisted on their rights.

8. As to (d), it is true that Mr. Gandhi was mobbed on the 13th January, 1897 on his return from India on a misrepresentation about his advocacy of the Natal Indian cause in India. Public apology was given to him on the 14th and when the whole of the position became known, the late Mr. Escombe invited him to see him and ever since that time he had the privilege of enjoying the late Mr. Escombe's friendship. The late Mr. Escombe at his request blessed the leaders of the Natal Indian Ambulance Corps and of his own accord gave them a tea party and made a very eulogistic and public-spirited speech on the occasion.[3] After the mobbing incident, he remained in Durban up to his return to India in 1901.

[1] *Vide* also "Notes", 3-9-1900.

[2] *ibid*.

[3] *ibid*.

9. As to (e), it is true that Mr. Gandhi is the real proprietor of *Indian Opinion* from which no profits are made and to which he has devoted the whole of his savings. There are two Englishmen associated with him in that work and they and several Indians have, for the sake of the paper, reduced themselves to voluntary pauperism. The paper is being run on Tolstoy's and Ruskin's lines. Its publicly declared mission is to bring the two communities together and become an educative medium for the Indian community.

10. As to (f)[1] , the terms in which Mr. Abdul Ganie has been spoken of are most derogatory and a product of ignorance. He is the managing partner of one of the most flourishing firms of Indian merchants in South Africa. Mr. Abdul Ganie has been the unchallenged President of the Association since its inception. He is a resident of the Transvaal of 25 years' standing and has come in contact with most of the British officials including High Commissioners and is very well known and is respected by European merchants of standing.

11. As to (g)[2] , Mr. Ally's whole life in South Africa, that is to say a period of twenty-three years, has been devoted to the service of the Empire. He had the honour of coming in personal touch with Sir Richard Solomon, the late Lord Loch, the late Lord Rosemead, Dr. Jamieson, Sir Gordon Sprigg, Sir James Sievright and the present officials in the Transvaal. He was asked by the Cape Government, at the time of the Malay discontent; regarding the position of a burial ground, to quell the discontent which he was successful in doing and for which he was thanked by the Government. This was in 1885; He has had the honour often to speak—being a voter himself at the Cape—on public platforms in support of the British Party candidate as opposed to Bond candidates. His free services were utilized by the Uitlander Committee for receiving signatures to the petition that was forwarded to the late Queen in connection with the Uitlander grievances.

It is untrue that the Hamidia Islamic Society, of which he is the Founder and President, has as its object recognition of the Sultan as the political head of the Moslem world. It is formed essentially to help poor Moslems, to defray the expenses of the burials of poor

[1] This should really be "(g)". *Vide* summary of petition in para 4, "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Elgin", 20-11-1906.

[2] This should be " (f) ".

Moslems, to do among them the work of social regeneration and to remove their special hardships.

Sir Richard Solomon, whom Mr. Ally saw on Friday last, has kindly consented that his name might be mentioned to His Lordship as guarantee of his intense loyalty and devotion to the Empire, if such be needed.

12. As to (h), the allegation of intimidation is devoid of foundation. Poor people, who would be the greatest sufferers under the Ordinance, do not require the slightest encouragement to make an effort for their deliverance from the impending calamity, for such it undoubtedly is to them.

The Delegates respectfully claim to be the most moderate exponents of the sentiments of over 10,000 Indians in the Colony of the Transvaal. It is not possible to give His Lordship an adequate notion of the bitter feeling engendered by the Ordinance. Many Europeans, including a government official, were present at the great Mass Meeting, which resolved, without a dissentient voice, to send a deputation. The visitors fully realized the depth of feeling to which the community was moved. His Lordship is referred for a description of the meeting to *The Star*, *The Leader* and *The Rand Daily Mail* which published fairly full reports of the meeting.

SUGGESTED EXPLANATION OF PETITIONER'S CONDUCT

13. Dr. Godfrey is a hot-headed youth, without any experience of practical life in the world. He only finished his studies over two years ago. He has never before, except in connection with the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance, come forward to do public work. He himself attended the Mass Meeting and spoke on the principal resolutions, including the resolutions condemning the Ordinance, appointing a commission and advocating going to gaol in preference to the submission to the carrying of passes. When the time came for selecting the delegates, he came forward as a candidate but was not selected. He sent a telegram at Cape Town wishing success to Mr. Ally and has given him a note of introduction to his wife's parents in Edinburgh, which reads as follows:

> This is to introduce to you one of our best of friends Mr. H. O. Ally. He is leaving here to fight the Indian cause and after his battles he will no doubt take a trip to Scotland. He will wire by what train he will be coming up and on what date. By religion he is an Islam and as such I will write you in detail

> as to the modes of their living especially as regards to their food and I hope (after my next week's letters) you will make him as happy and cheery as you can during his stay in Edinburgh. Don't forget to let him have a sight of the glorious F. Bridge and our ain little wee lael home at Tynecastle Terrace. John I have no doubt will know Mr. Ally well. It is the same who gave him the confetti before he left.
>
> *Yours aff* [*ectionately*,]
> (*signed*) WILLIAM

The original is hereto attached for His Lordship's inspection. He was for a long time one of Mr. Gandhi's clients and he was associated with Mr. Gandhi in nursing the plague patients in 1904 and at the time did very valuable work for the relief of the patients. The only way therefore his conduct can be explained is to ascribe it to his hot-headedness. The disappointment in this connection seems to have unhinged his mind. That appears to be the most charitable construction to place upon his conduct, otherwise his strong condemnation of the Ordinance, his strong recommendation to Mr. Ally, would be inconsistent with the despatch of the petition. From the following cablegram received by the Delegates and already sent to His Lordship,[1] it would appear that 437 Indian signatures taken on a separate document have been received on false pretences:

> Have affidavits Godfrey obtained signatures blank paper false pretences using name bias (code word for British Indian Association) signatures now withdrawn cabling (Lord) Elgin papers publish full report conference.

14. The Delegates have been obliged painfully and reluctantly to make the above statements, not in the slightest degree with the intention of injuring Dr. Godfrey or his associate and if they have been obliged to say anything regarding themselves, it is from a sense of paramount duty they owe to their countrymen, whose interests they have the honour to represent. As the personal element has been introduced here by the "petition" and in Johannesburg by *The Star*, it has become necessary to show respectfully to His Lordship that, so far as the personal element is to count in the controversy, the position held by the Delegates, in their humble opinion, would weigh, after the most searching examination in favour of the community. They

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Elgin", 12-11-1906.

would very much rather that the whole of the Ordinance were examined on its merits and they would therefore respectfully proceed to dwell upon some of the points that arise from His Lordship's reply to the Deputation.

LORD ELGIN'S REPLY: NO PERMIT UNDER LAW 3 OF 1885

15. His Lordship is under the impression that there were permits under the Law 3 of 1885 during the Boer regime and that the Boer administration was lax in the administration of the permit law. The Delegates respectfully venture to state that the Boer law did not require any permits at all. The receipts given for £3 therefore were not inaccurate. They were not permits authorizing entry or residence. There was no restriction on immigration contemplated by Law 3 of 1885, as the law itself shows. There was therefore no question of identification

The permits came into vogue only after the introduction of the Peace Preservation Ordinance of the British regime.

This distinction is very material in order to show that the Asiatic Ordinance, now for consideration before His Lordship, is not an amendment but a new law. It does not make accurate that which was inaccurate under the Boer regime. It creates a new disability.

VOLUNTARY THUMB-MARKS

16. It is respectfully submitted that the voluntary act of the Indian community in putting thumb-marks on permits and registration certificates was performed gracefully to please Lord Milner and to avoid legislation compelling such performance. It is therefore hardly fair to use the act as a precedent against the community.

NEW REGISTRATION

17. The statement that new registration will give a final and indefeasible title to those who are registered is again, in the humble opinion of the Delegates, not in consonance with facts. The title of those who hold permits is today indefeasible in law. The new Ordinance would actually cancel that title and not give it. After dispossessing the community of what it already possesses, it will restore a new title of doubtful value circumscribed by galling requirements and penalties. It will, therefore, restore to the community only a part of what will be taken away from it.

INSPECTION

18. Under the new Ordinance, it is possible to carry on a daily inspection. The assurance given to His Lordship, that the inspection will be yearly, is beside the mark. There is no guarantee of the same executive authority remaining in office. The experience of the community almost invariably has been that arbitrary power given to the executive in South Africa has been arbitrarily and almost fully exercised against British Indians. When a restrictive law is passed against a community labouring under popular prejudice, the executive has been powerless to resist popular demand for full enforcement of restrictions. This has happened even with the present executive in respect of Law 3 of 1885 and Peace Preservation Ordinance. So much has this been the case that the Indian community has had to go to the Supreme Court in order to resist the attempt of the executive to read into the above laws meanings they are not ordinarily capable of bearing.

PRAYER

19. It is for the Indian community a matter almost of life and death. It is respectfully urged that the matter can only be properly sifted by a judicial commission. If His Lordship is not satisfied as to the full justice of the Indian contention, it is submitted that the decision should be suspended pending the inquiry of a commission.

M. K. GANDHI

H. O. ALLY

[2 enclosures]

From a photostat of the typewritten original: C. 0. 291, Vol. 113/Ind.; also a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4545

130. LETTER TO LORD STANLEY[1]

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 20, 1906

MY LORD,

May I remind you that Mr. Morley receives the deputation regarding the Transvaal British Indians on Thursday at 12.20 and that the members meet at 12 o'clock at the India Office?

I remain,
Your Lordship's obedient servant,

THE RT. HON. LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY
18, MANSFIELD STREET, W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4616

131. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO A. J. BALFOUR

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 21, 1906

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
THE RIGHT HON'BLE A. J. BALFOUR
4, CARLTON GARDENS
PALL MALL

DEAR SIR,

Will you please convey Mr. Ally's and my thanks to Mr. Balfour for saying he will be present at the interview Mr. Lyttelton is giving us at the House of Commons next Friday at 4 o'clock.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4618

[1] A note in the office copy initialled by J. W. Godfrey says that, although this letter was not eventually sent, copies were sent to Sir Charles Dilke, Sir Lepel Griffin, Sir Henry Cotton, Sir Muncherji Bhownaggree, L. W. Ritch, Sir William Wedderburn, Dadabhai Naoroji, Harold Cox, Ameer Ali, T. H. Thornton, J. D. Rees, Theodore Morison, T. J. Bennett, W. Arathoon and Dr. Rutherford.

132. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO CHURCHILL

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 21, 1906

G. C. WILLIAMS, ESQ.
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
THE COLONIAL OFFICE
DOWNING STREET

DEAR SIR,

I shall be obliged if you will kindly convey to Mr. Winston Churchill the thanks of Mr. Ally and myself for consenting to receive us at the Colonial Office. We shall wait[1] on Mr. Churchill at 12 noon on the 27th instant.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4619

133. LETTER TO SECRETARY, NATIONAL LIBERAL CLUB

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 21, 1906

THE SECRETARY
NATIONAL LIBERAL CLUB
WHITEHALL, S. W.

DEAR SIR,

I shall thank you to redirect to the above address the letter lying for me at the Club.

Yours faithfully

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4620

[1] The original has “await”.

134. LETTER TO G. W. M. GRIGG

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 21, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I am obliged to you for your letter of the 20th instant, enclosing papers handed to you by Mr. Morison. Mr. Ally and I venture to trust that you will continue your interest in a question that, in my opinion, is of Imperial importance.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,

G. W. M. GRIGG, ESQ.
THE OUTLOOK
167, STRAND, W.C.

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4621

135. LETTER TO F. H. BROWN

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 21, 1906

DEAR MR. BROWN

Sir Lepel mentioned that you would like to join the deputation on behalf of *The Times of India*. Mr. Morley has sent a message saying that he would like to treat the deputation as private. I do not know whether under the circumstances you should attend. I suggest that you be at the India Office tomorrow and see what Sir Lepel thinks of the instructions sent by Mr. Morley. When I saw Sir Lepel, the instructions had not been received.

While I am dictating this I see your postcard. The time given by

Mr. Morley is 12.20. The balance of your questions are already answered.

Yours truly,

F. H. BROWN, ESQ.
''DILKUSHA''
WESTBOURNE ROAD
FOREST HILL, E. C.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4622

136. LETTER TO REMINGTON TYPEWRITER CO.

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 21, 1906

THE MANAGER
THE REMINGTON TYPEWRITER CO.
100, GRACECHURCH STREET, E.C.

DEAR SIR,

Will you kindly have your machine now removed and let me have your bill.

Yours faithfully,

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4623

137. LETTER TO SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 21, 1906

DEAR SIR,

On behalf of Mr. Ally and myself I beg to thank you for your very sympathetic letter to *The Times* regarding the British Indians and their position in the Transvaal.

I venture to enclose herewith a copy of the Representation submitted to Lord Elgin. If you could give us an appointment, Mr.

Ally and I will wait on you regarding our mission.

I remain,
Dear Sir,
Yours faithfully,

[Enclosure]
SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE
CARLTON CLUB, W.C.

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4624

138. LETTER TO S. HOLLICK

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 21, 1906

DEAR MR. HOLLICK,

I wonder if you are having any more success with your canvassing of the signatures for the petition[1] . The time is now ripe for presentation.

The deputation waits on Mr. Morley tomorrow.

Yours truly,

S. HOLLICK, ESQ.
62, LONDON WALL, E.C.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4625

139. LETTER TO BRITISH COMMITTEE OF INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 21, 1906

THE SECRETARY
THE BRITISH COMMITTEE OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
84 & 85, PALACE CHAMBERS
WESTMINSTER

DEAR MR. HALL,

With reference to the £3.10.0 paid by Mr. Naoroji on a cable-

[1] *Vide* "Draft Petition to Lord Elgin", 8-11-1906.

gram sent by the British Indian Association of Johannesburg, will you kindly deduct the amount from the draft forwarded to Sir William Wedderburn.

Will you also kindly send to the Secretary of the Hamidia Society, Box 6031, Johannesburg, *India* regularly. I will bring the annual subscription when I am over there.

I am,

Yours truly,

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4626

140. LETTER TO H. E. A. COTTON

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 21, 1906

DEAR MR. COTTON,

Will you please reproduce letter[1] from *The Times* by Godfrey brothers as also the interview[2] with me published in *South Africa* dated 17th instant. I think there is a great deal in the current issue of the *Indian Opinion* worth reproducing. Perhaps the most important article is the reproduction from *The Times of Natal*, page 788. I think too that the report, under the heading, The British Indian Association and the Indian Deputation, at the same page should also be [re]produced.

I have sent you already the names of those who are to wait on Mr. Morley tomorrow.

Yours truly,

H. E. A. COTTON, ESQ.
THE EDITOR
INDIA
84 & 85, PALACE CHAMBERS
WESTMINSTER

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4627

[1] Of November 15, 1906; reproduced in *India*, 23-11-1906
[2] "Interview to *South Africa*", 16-11-1906

141. DEPUTATION TO MORLEY

The following is a report of the interview between Mr. Morley, Secretary of State for India, and the deputation representing Brittish Indians in South Africa:

[LONDON,
November 22, 1906]

SIR LEPEL GRIFFIN: I have the honour, sir, to head this deputation today in order to present to you two Delegates from South Africa, Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Ally.

I would like to say with reference to Mr. Gandhi and a somewhat silly petition which has been sent from South Africa against him and his mission that this was the work of some mischievous schoolboy, and every one who knows Mr. Gandhi, or has been associated with his work for many years, as I have been, knows his single-hearted devotion to this particular cause and that without any personal motive or any reward. His methods and his motives have been altogether disinterested—to this I can pledge myself.

One thing that I think I may say without presumption is this. No one knows better than you, sir, how strong the feeling of India is on this point. It has been brought before the India Office and the Colonial Office by successive Viceroys and Indian Secretaries; and Colonial Secretaries themselves have, in reply to the memorials which I have had the honour myself to submit to them, expressed quite as warm sympathy with the grievances of the British Indians in South Africa as Indian Viceroys or Indian Secretaries at home. That point does not require any elaboration: The position between England and her Colonies seems to me very much like that which is now existing between the Central Government of the United States and the State of California, and that position will become aggravated in many parts of the world. ('Hear! Hear!') The difficulty of the case is, of Corsica, exceedingly great. You have two opposite positions, one represented by the clear and somewhat crude position, which nevertheless has a dignified and a worthy basis—that every British subject under the English flag should be free in his person and to carry on everywhere, without interruption, honourably any occupation he may see fit to undertake. ('Hear! Hear!') That applies, sir, to the whole Empire, and it is met on the opposite side by the position, which opposes reduction of the wages of labour—so far as white people are concerned, of course, the desire, and the proper desire is that the rate of wages should rise. The introduction of a very industrious, temperate class, who can live on very little, tends to lower the rate of earnings of white people who cannot live on so small a sum. These are the two opposite poles, and they have to be connected peaceably by some bridge which we ask you, sir, to try and build.

And I would also say, sir, that for two reasons you are the one person who can satisfy the claims of this exceedingly complicated case. In the first place, you hold the keys which shut and which unloose as Secretary of State for India.

Let me explain in one word. Take Natal, for example. I have more than once, as Chairman of the East India Association, sent petitions to the Secretary of State for India, urging that no indentured coolies be allowed to go to Natal until the status of their fellow-subjects in South Africa is altered. Natal cannot get on without the Indians, and yet it persecutes them: and it persecuted them in old days much worse than the Transvaal did: and their position is no better now, although Natal requires Indian coolies every year more and more because English colonists cannot do the field work themselves. These are not countries which Englishmen can ever colonize.

That, sir, is all that I think it is necessary to say, but I shall make a final personal appeal to you by saying that the other reason why I think you of all men are the one who can settle this question is that one of the classics you have given to the English people is a work[1] on compromise, in which I have very little doubt that the key to this exceedingly complicated question will be found.

MR. GANDHI: On behalf of my colleague, Mr. Ally and myself, I beg to tender you our respectful thanks for giving to us an opportunity of placing our position before you, sir. But I do not make any apology for trespassing upon your most valuable time, because I think, sir, that we have a right to come to you, our responsible advocate and trustee, whenever we find our interests are in danger. The Asiatic Ordinance was, as Sir Lepel Griffin has said, approved by Lord Elgin, I believe, under a misapprehension. The Ordinance, in my humble opinion, departs from the Colonial policy hitherto follo-wed in connection with Colonial legislation. In my humble opinion it is without any justification whatever in that it draws, with reference to free immigrants, a colour-line against which Colonial Secretaries as well as Indian Secretaries have repeatedly protested, and protested with success. The Ordinance has been described by one of the South African colonists as one which will make us go about the streets with dog's collars, and an indignant Indian at one of the meetings said that the treatment which would be meted out to us would be that, not of the colonial dog because he is a household pet, but of the Indian dog,

[1] The reference is to Morley's essay, *On Compromise.*

which is a vile dog. I know that that was the bitterness of feeling that was engendered throughout the great mass of my community. I cannot help saying, sir, that the feeling that was given vent to by the great meeting at Krugersdorp was fully justified by the experience of British Indians over and over again throughout the Transvaal as well as other parts of South Africa The reasons given for the introduction of the Ordinance have been stated in an inspired article in *The Star* as well as by Mr. Duncan, viz., that there is an unauthorized influx of Asiatics or British Indians into the Transvaal, and that the British Indian community is countenancing and encouraging such Asiatic influx. I think, sir, that that charge, or both of the charges, can be proved to be absolutely false. When they talk of an unauthorized influx, they mean that the British Indians enter the Transvaal without any permits, evading the police, and entering surreptitiously in defiance of the Peace Preservation Ordinance, which should regulate the entry of all, but which really regulates the entry of British Indians into the Transvaal. The census was taken, and at the time of the census there were found to be 10,000 British Indians as against 12,000 permits, which by itself, in my humble opinion, disposes of the charge of surreptitious entry. If that charge is disposed of, it follows that there cannot be any encouragement on the part of the British Indian community.

There have been during the last two years no less than 150 prosecutions—namely, 150 British Indians have been turned out by force. I do not know whether all these prosecutions were correctly brought, but the fact stands that these Indians were turned out. The Peace Preservation Ordinance has been strong enough to prevent Indian wives from accompanying their husbands; it has been strong enough to prevent Indian children of tender age from entering the Transvaal because they did not hold permits. The legislation that is at present in existence, the Peace Preservation Ordinance, is quite enough to prevent the surreptitious entry of British Indians. Anyhow, both these statements have been repeatedly denied by British Indians, and it is for that reason that we have been asking the local Government to appoint a small commission to inquire whether there has been really any such influx whatever.

I do not think, however, that it is necessary for me to take up a long time; I have sent in a representation to Lord Elgin, which places before him the whole of our position; but I do wish to mention one thing, and that is the colonial feeling. I have been studying the history of restrictive legislation throughout South Africa—at any rate, during the last thirteen years—and I well remember that in 1894 Lord Ripon vetoed the Disenfranchising Bill because it applied to Asiatics alone. Mr. Chamberlain disapproved of a draft bill that was submitted in 1897 in connection with a restriction on British Indians. Mr. Chamberlain then said that he could not allow a colour-line to be drawn in legislation with the object of restricting Asiatic and British immigration, and hence we had the law of 1897. A similar veto was applied without the slightest hesitation with reference to the Asiatic Exclusion Bill in the Australian Parliament. But, sir, in the Transvaal—also only last year, I believe it was, or in 1904—the Legislative Council passed the Native Land Tenure Bill, and I think it was passed without a single dissentient; but there was no hesitation whatsoever on the part of Mr. Lyttelton to veto the Land Tenure Bill. Now, sir, there is a wide distinction between that Bill and the present Ordinance, and I venture to think that there was not, perhaps, held so strong an objection to that legislation as there is to this legislation, because it did not debar the Natives of the Transvaal from holding landed property. It only meant Natives who held landed property; but even that was considered by Mr. Lyttelton as being too strong, and he had no hesitation in vetoing that legislation.

Much has been said with reference to the colonial sentiment against British Indians; I have no hesitation, sir, strange as it may appear, in denying any such sentiment. 'The proof of the pudding is in the eating.' The British Indians live in the Transvaal only because they are tolerated by the white colonists there. They may have to go to the British or white landlords for the land; they have to go to the white merchants for their goods, in respect of which they receive six months' credit. If there was real substantial general opposition against British Indians, I think, sir, that their existence would not be worth a day's purchase. A meeting was held by the Mayor of Krugersdorp, which was attended by a few white men, who passed a resolution that they would boycott British Indians in connection with land purchase and sale. That boycott did not stand for one single day. There is only one place throughout the Transvaal where they have tried to boycott with success. We think we shall be able to work out our own salvation

if only the prejudice which is restricted to the petty white store-keepers who are protected by the Government is removed. If this is not done, I can quite understand that our position must become intolerable; but otherwise, I think, sir, that it is possible even now to retain the position that we have in the Transvaal.

MR. MORLEY: Are you speaking now, Mr. Gandhi, of the position of those who are already resident in the Transvaal?

MR. GANDHI: Yes, sir; the Ordinance applies solely to those who are now resident, and those who are to enter the Transvaal under the Peace Preservation Ordinance. I may say with reference to future immigration that my friend, Mr. Ally, will probably deal with that point; and I may parenthetically remark that we have surrendered the whole position, and we have accepted the principle of restriction along the line[s] of the Cape Act, the only Act which, without drawing a colour-line, restricts British Indians from entering the Colonies because of the educational test—a very severe test. But we have thought it wise and prudent that we should accept that position even with reference to trading licenses. We have said that we would be quite willing to have our rights with reference to new trading licenses regulated and controlled by the municipal bodies; only such legislation ought also to apply to all, and not only to British Indians. My experience is that, wherever legislation is applied to a class of people, such legislation has worked very harshly; but when there is general legislation, such relief is possible to obtain. I venture to think, sir, that the Government does not mean to oppress those who are voiceless and voteless. I mention this fact not because we want political power. We have made it clear that, so far as British Indians are concerned, they do not aspire to any political power at all. But if we are to remain voteless, I do think the Government ought to protect those who are voteless, and not merely in a haphazard way, but that protection ought to be a real force, and we look to you, sir, as our advocate and trustee, to give us the protection we are entitled to, and to let us feel that we have it. (Applause.)

MR. ALLY: I do not think it will be necessary for me, sir, to address you at length with regard to our mission. Mr. Gandhi has already submitted all the points and the facts. I am simply instructed by my community to place before you especially their position in the Transvaal. They feel—and feel keenly—that the Transvaal administration under the British Government are passing class legislation against

them, whereas thousands of aliens of different races, such as Armenians, Syrians, Greeks, Russians, and Polish Jews, are entering the Transvaal without molestation and without any restriction. Our people remember the charter of 1857, as well as the message[1] that the King sent to the Delhi Durbar—to the people—assuring them of their liberties under the British flag; therefore they feel it very keenly that they are oppressed and degraded by the passing of this Ordinance.

I have spoken to you with regard to the aliens. Now the great question is that European feeling—that is, the colonists'—is against us. The colonists have never asked in any shape or in any way to degrade our people in the Transvaal. They have asked for protection against our trade competition, which is very strong against them, and all that they desire, sir, is not to see a great influx of Asiatics in[to] the Transvaal. We have from time to time said to the Government that we in the Transvaal are not desirous of seeing a great influx of Asiatics, and Mr. Duncan himself stated that the Imperial Government, with regard to the responsible government of the Transvaal, would deal with that question as well as with that of immigration. As we are not represented in the Legislative Council, the Imperial Government is our sole protector. Now, just to show you one point how this legislation and this Ordinance were thrust in. There was a clause which was unaffected by the new Ordinance, by which the descendants of the Dutch have been excluded from its operations, and yet no provision has been made for the Indian children born in South Africa, even when born in the Transvaal. Moreover, I personally pointed out to Mr. Duncan that it was unjust if you were to exclude any Asiatics who were born in South Africa, not to exclude the children of Indians. Now, just to show you how unjust it is, even under the Boer Government the Mahommedan subjects of the Sultan of Turkey were also affected by this Ordinance, but not the Christian subjects of the Sultan of Turkey. Now you can see how unjust this Ordinance is to Indians.

I do not think it necessary for me to go to any length, but I would say to you simply this: that the present permits that we hold under the Peace Preservation Act are quite sufficient for identification, and that they can trace any Indians who are in the Transvaal unlawfully without any permission. Therefore there is no necessity for them to pass a new Ordinance, or that we should be subjected to this degradation, as we hold these permits at the present time. We consider that it is directed against us, and we consider it, sir, an indignity. This Ordinance, we consider, is bad in principle, because it would be a precedent to self-governing Colonies. I would just draw your attention, sir, to the fact that, under the responsible government of the Cape Colony, where I was a resident for thirteen years myself, I had the Parliamentary franchise and the right of holding land and property, and also the right of mining, and there even up to the present moment we have got the same rights. Now, under the

[1] King Edward's message of 1903

Crown Colony, legislation has been contemplated directly against Indians. Therefore my Mahommedan community have especially sent me here to put before you the position of the Indians in the Transvaal. We have a just right to claim from our Government the same privileges and the same rights as any other British Subjects, unless the British Government are prepared to consent to the millions of Indians who are outside India having no protection. If the British Government are prepared to say so, then our people would know better than to get out of India in order to get under the British flag in the Colonies. (Applause.)

MR. H. COX: I would like to make a very few remarks on this question... The Indian shopkeeper or the Indian trader is more efficient than the white shopkeeper, who, by the way, as Mr. Gandhi said, is generally, or often, not a British subject, but an alien from Southern Europe or Russia. The question, however, that the British Government now has to consider is whether to maintain a system of alien white shopkeepers as against British subjects. That is really the whole point: whether we are virtually to subsidize the alien shopkeeper in the Transvaal and to give him a preferential right to trade; and in connection with that arises the much larger question of the future race destiny of South Africa. From an examination of the statistics of population in South Africa, and especially of the growth of population, I am absolutely convinced that South Africa is not, and never can be, a white man's land. The blacks are increasing at an enormously greater rate than the whites. It is true that in South Africa the white man can live and breed; but that he cannot engage in labourer's work is admitted on all sides. So it has been suggested by several people that, because white men will not do manual work, therefore we ought to make special provision to allow them to do shopkeeping work. Now I think that is an intolerable position to take up. It is an injustice to the rest of the population as well as to the Indians who want to engage in this work. Indians are more patient, and succeed better with the Natives. Moreover, a great many of the white people in South Africa welcome these Indian traders, because they find they can get things more cheaply from them. An English lady told me that her husband objected to her dealing with Indian traders, but, nevertheless, she always dealt with them, because she found she got things cheaper.

. . . After all we have got to defend these Colonies. We pay for and provide the soldiers for the defence of the Transvaal. The position is therefore this: that when the Transvaal was a foreign country we claimed the right to interfere on behalf of our own subjects; now that it is our own Colony, defended by our own troops, we humbly withdraw and dare not oppose their will. If this is so, we may as well altogether abdicate our position as an Imperial race. ('Hear! Hear!')

Then it is, in fact, an alien majority, for not only are the white population mainly Boers, but the immigrant whites are largely aliens. Therefore if we assent to this— because I consider this, to a large extent, the turning of the ways—we as Englishmen and on behalf of England assent to this proposition that the larger number of the inhabitants of the British Empire are to be regarded as permanently in a lower category than the minority of the British Empire. That is a very serious proposition for any British Government, and especially a Liberal Government, to assent to. Therefore the particular point I have to submit to you, Mr. Morley—and Sir Lepel Griffin forgot to mention it—is this, that before the present Government sanctions any legislation hostile to British Indians they will send to South Africa a commission to inquire into the whole question and to report to them.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY: . . .I may say, personally, that the prayer of the memorial falls very far short of my sense of what the justice of the case requires. I feel that in this matter we are face to face with a difficulty which will grow greater and greater unless we lay hold of some principle. I fear that too many of the speeches have been rather apologetic than challenging the bad principle itself...Now, I wish to call attention to one passage which puts our case very strongly with reference to the attitude we took up towards the Boers in the settlement at the time of the conquest of the Transvaal. I refer to Mr. Chamberlain's telegram in 1901 which will be found in *Colonial Paper 528*, page 5. Mr. Chamberlain then telegraphed that the legal position of Coloured people will be similar to that which they hold in the Cape Colony. . . . I do not say for a moment that in the complicated relations of the Crown with its self-governing Colonies we could not dream of interfering with the political arrangements and power[s] of a Colony; but I do feel that, so long as Colonies claim the protection of the British flag and the support of the British Empire, we have a right to expect that they will grant civil rights, leaving the question of political rights to the discretion of the Colonies.

'Well' now, perhaps, you may say, 'how do I propose to enforce this in case of a conflict between the central Government and the Colonies?' I do not say that you can enforce it. These are the problems of intricate relationship with concurrent rights; and though theoretically the Parliament of this country is supreme, practically nobody dreams of this country's supremacy in face of action by the Colony. In the first place, I do not believe that you will come to that point with a Colony. But if we can tamper with principle year after year, we encourage a base spirit of race supremacy to assert itself in the Colonies, and you will find it more difficult to tackle it afterwards. . . I may point out that, if the worst came to the worst, no Colony could complain if exactly the same humiliating restrictions were put upon white colonists going to India as they propose to put upon Indians going to the Colony. If an Australian merchant, for instance, had to live in a particular district, and had to take out a police license, I think many of them would soon realize that the impediments they are putting on other British subjects were not to be borne. I think

this is important.. .No, I think it is intolerable. I think, myself, that, invariably if we go away from principle, we very soon get involved in great difficulties. I do not say that you can quite act up to principle. I think the English Government cannot: but you should bear the principle in mind and get as near as you can to it.

I say, in conclusion, that I cannot quite agree with the satisfaction expressed by Sir Lepel Griffin with the assurance that we had from the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Sympathy is a very good thing but effective acts are much better.

SIR M. M. BHOWNAGGREE: . . . if by your influence, the Cabinet or His Majesty's Government were to be induced to veto this Ordinance, which the Delegates have come all this way to complain about, well and good. But if His Majesty's Government find that, between the prejudice subsisting on the part of so-called white men in the Colonies and the rights of the Indians, there is a gulf which they cannot bridge over by their own or your influence, then I beg to support the prayer that a commission may be appointed in order to investigate the whole question and put its conclusions before His Majesty's Government.... I am instructed by the Delegates, and I have the authority almost of the whole of the British Indian community resident in the Transvaal and in Africa generally, to say that they will abide by the findings of such a commission. They feel that six, eight, or a dozen impartial English statesmen sitting round a table and inquiring into a deep grievance like this cannot possibly go wrong...

SIR H. COTTON: . . .The people of India follow what is going on in South Africa most carefully, and they rely, sir, upon you—you who are the custodian of their liberties and their rights, their sole protector in fact in this country—to see that justice is done to them in whatever part of the globe they may settle.. .

SIR LEPEL GRIFFIN: I think, sir, that this will be sufficient....After all, it is a question of principle, and that should not be given up. Indeed, it has been asserted by this Government so strongly in the question of Chinese labour that I think, if the question were deliberately laid in its true facts before the present House of Commons, that they could, so far as consistency has any meaning, answer it only in one manner.

MR. MORLEY: ...There can be no doubt whatever, I take it—everybody of Indian experience with whom I speak on the subject agrees—that the effect upon public opinion in India is, and naturally is, and must be, rather serious. Those people who go to South Africa come back by and by and represent the indignities to which some of them and their kith and kin have been subjected. That in itself stirs up prejudice. Often the population in India—those who reflect—will ask themselves whether it is want of will or want of power in the British Government to which they submit that leaves them exposed to those disadvantages in a newly acquired possession of the British Crown. The irony of the situation of that newly acquired

possession has been pointed out by more than one speaker, and I was very glad indeed that my friend, Lord Stanley, read Mr. Chamberlain's telegram of 1901, and that reference has been made to Lord Lansdowne's well-known speech at Sheffield in the first week or two of the war. Mr. Chamberlain—to his great honour, be it said—throughout the whole time that he was at the Colonial Office urged with all his force the injustice, the harshness, the indignity of proceedings of this kind...

. . . It is, I repeat, a great irony that one of the first acts to which the eye of the British Government is directed is an Ordinance which, in effect—say what we like about it—along with other practices and habits of mind, does throw a bar sinister upon many millions of British subjects. ('Hear! Hear!')

I am heartily glad, though a responsible Minister is seldom a man who desires an appeal to principle, that Lord Stanley has gone boldly on to that thorny and difficult ground. It is well that we should be reminded that the principles that he alluded to and enforced today have become a little old fashioned; but I share adherence to them entirely with him. ('Hear! Hear!') But now we are—at least I am—in a responsible position, and the question is not what we would desire to do if we had a blank sheet of paper before us; but, as Lord Stanley admitted, we are to keep our principle in mind, and come as near to it as we can in practical applications.

But, then, what is the position of the India Office? Remember that the department and the Minister, first and immediately, and in a sense finally, concerned is the Minister for the Colonies...I see at once, and I submit to you, gentlemen, a very serious difficulty in the way of a commission, and that is that we hope by May that responsible government is going to be conferred on the people of the Transvaal. It surely would be a very odd preliminary to putting the reins of government into their hands to send out a commission which, if it is to do anything at all, and, if it is to affect the mind of His Majesty's Government here, must force His Majesty's Government to tell the new organized authority that is to be brought into being, what they are or are not to do in this very thorny and difficult field of legislation. Well, I only submit that as my answer to what Mr. Gandhi and Sir M. M. Bhownaggree said. Somebody said, by the way, that a commission would be a solution of the question. Now, I have been a great many years in Parliament, and I wonder what commission ever solved any question. Therefore, I demur to that general proposition, and I demur to the notion of a commission in the present circumstances because it might lead you into immediate collision with this new authority which you have called, or are about to call, into being.

No doubt the position of the Imperial Government towards a Colony such as the Transvaal is going to be, and such as Natal is, is a great paradox. There is no other word for it. But there it is. You have to accept our present system, miscalled an

Imperial system. You have to accept that, and you have to recognize this plain fact—and you ought to recognize it—that we cannot dictate to these Colonies. What can we do, and what ought we to do? What I hope is that such gatherings as this Deputation to Lord Elgin and to myself, and perhaps to other Ministers and other persons, will promote this operation. We can plead and argue the case, and press the principles that Lord Stanley has outlined. That is what we can do--whether in the Colonial Conference next year, or in the form of despatches, to Lord Selborne, for instance. That is what we can do: we can bring to bear the weight of British opinion and British influence upon the responsible bodies in the Transvaal.

Sir Lepel Griffin noticed that I indicated a little astonishment when he said that I could fasten or unloose these bonds. There is not a single Viceroy now living who has not tried, and tried pretty hard, to get these arrangements, the new form of which you are complaining of today, modified. What Lord Lansdowne thought of them you have already heard. Lord Elgin told you when you saw him that he had sent any number of despatches to this Office—on the way to the Colonial Office, I presume—making the same protest. Lord Curzon, the last Viceroy, carried on a tremendous battle. ('Hear! Hear!') I was this morning turning over his speeches, trying to see what he had said or done, and he gives in one of the speeches—his seventh Budget Speech—an account of his attempted dealings with the Government of Natal—in the year 1903, I think. This is what he says. It is very short, so I venture to read it. 'We stipulated for the eventual abolition of a tax of £3 a head which had been imposed on such persons for leave to reside; we stipulated for the amendment of an Act placing traders, of however old a standing, under the power of local corporations, who had absolute authority to refuse licenses to trade; we stipulated for the removal of Indians from another Act, under which they were classed with barbarous races; and for the provision of a summary remedy for free Indians, that is to say, Indians who had served their indenture, and had become free Indians, who might be wrongfully arrested on the ground that they were coolies under indenture or prohibited immigrants'. That was Lord Curzon's position dealing with the Government of Natal in 1903. What did the Government of Natal say? 'In reply,' says Lord Curzon, 'we were given to understand that there was no prospect of obtaining the consent of the local legislature to these conditions, and the negotiations were dropped.' It would surely be unwise, and I do not think Sir Lepel Griffin would recommend me to put myself (if I had the authority) in a position of that sort, or that I should write to Lord Elgin a communication which would urge him to put himself into the same position with reference to the new Transvaal Government, when it comes into existence as Lord Curzon was placed in by the established Government of Natal. . .

As I understand from Mr. Gandhi—and I was delighted to hear it, and perhaps a little surprised, but delighted—the feeling on the part of the white colonists towards the Indians who are now, and have been for some time, resident in the Transvaal is not bad, but rather good than otherwise.

MR. GANDHI: The feeling is bad enough, but it is restricted to the petty store-keepers. It is they who agitate, and they who inflame the popular prejudice.

MR. MORLEY: I understand that, but we must, after all, look at this thing fairly. It is not very unnatural that a small white store-keeper should be very happy if he could so far prevail upon the prejudices of the people as to induce those who are in authority to keep out his formidable competitors, because, of course, we know quite well—it is no secret—that it is not merely prejudice of colour; it is not a prejudice of racial inferiority, because that would be absurd when there are, as we know, Indians in the Transvaal, pursuing professions and so forth, who are not only not inferior but greatly superior in many of the elements that make a civilized being to many of those who are not excluded from the Transvaal. ('Hear! Hear!')...

...If a foreign power were to impose these disabilities upon fellow-subjects of ours, I think the Foreign Office would be set in motion to represent such a proceeding as an unfriendly act. ('Hear! Hear!') It is a disagreeable truth, but we ought to face these things: that there is no doubt we can more effectively remonstrate with foreign powers than we can in some circumstances with our own kinsfolk. ('Shame!') But this is carrying me into a very wide field indeed. Lord Stanley, I think, rather tempted me into these speculations. If there is any feeling in India, that, after all, is the only thing that I can do any good by endeavouring to convey. Whatever can be done by way of energetic expression of opinion, of energetic protest, when the time comes, against these harsh and humiliating indignities, you may feel perfectly sure, and they may feel perfectly sure, that this Office will not be at all slack in backing the Colonial Office in any representations that they may wish to make, or possibly even in going a little in front. ('Hear! Hear!') Nobody occupying my position could do anything less than promise you, which I do with the greatest sincerity, not only the sympathy of which somebody has spoken today, but as much support as I find myself able to give, now that I am in possession of the general views which you, gentlemen, have so ably laid before me. (Applause.)

SIR LEPEL GRIFFIN: . . . Mr. Morley, I beg on behalf of the deputation to express our best thanks for the very kind and sympathetic manner in which you have 1istened to us for so long, and for the answer which you have given to us.

The deputation then withdrew.

Journal of the East India Association, April 1907

142. LETTER TO "SOUTH AFRICA"

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 22, 1906

THE EDITOR
SOUTH AFRICA
[LONDON]

SIR,

You have laid the British Indian Deputation under deep obligation by your opening your columns for a discussion of the British Indian position in the Transvaal and, in the words of Lord Milner, it is such discussion alone which would bring us nearer to a proper solution. In your leaderette, however, you have done less than justice to the British Indian community by imputing to it a desire forthe franchise and for an Asiatic invasion of the Transvaal. May I state that the community has never desired any political power in the Transvaal or an invasion of it by British Indians, and it is for that reason that it has accepted legislation along the Cape or the Natal model, which restricts the immigration of British Indians (except those who enjoy a status) without insulting them. The community has also accepted the principle of the control of all new trade licences, subject to appeal to the Supreme Court, by local boards or municipalities.

The objection to the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance is taken not because the Ordinance is restrictive of immigration, but because it is restrictive of the ordinary civil liberty of the British Indians who are today domiciled in the Transvaal. It is not the present Ordinance which would restrict Indian immigration; as you are aware, the Peace Preservation Ordinance has been misapplied for effecting that purpose.

You say that Indians cannot be treated better than natives of South Africa. Without entering into a discussion of the proposition, may I inform you that they are being treated worse than the Natives, in that, whereas Natives can become owners of landed property in any part of the Transvaal, Indians cannot own it at all.

I am,
Yours etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

South Africa, 24-11-1906

143. LETTER TO T. MORISON

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 22, 1906

DEAR MR. MORISON,

I now enclose herewith a cutting with marked passages, giving the utterances of Lord Selborne. One was before the war and the other only lately.

I also send you copy of Sir Muncherji's letter to Mr. Lyttelton, with the passages marked.

That we would be satisfied with legislation along the Cape lines is made, you will notice, quite clear in the Representation to Lord Elgin of which you have a copy and of which if you need I will send you more copies. I hope you have noticed the fundamental objection to the Asiatic Ordinance, namely, that it draws for[1] the first time a colour line and it means a departure from the Colonial tradition. If there was no hesitation last year in vetoing the Native Land TenureBill, it passes comprehension why there should be any hesitation about vetoing this Ordinance which is infinitely worse than the Native Tenure Ordinance.

Yours truly,

[2] enclosure[s]
THEODORE MORISON, ESQ.
C/O THE EAST INDIA ASSOCIATION
3, VICTORIA STREET

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4628

144. LETTER TO MISS A. H. SMITH

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 22, 1906

DEAR MISS SMITH,

I have had the telephone message from you but I had not [sic]

[1] The original has ''from''.

been able to see to it only after 9.15 p.m. and as I considered it to be useless to telephone to you I am now writing.

I now enclose herewith a list of those who were present at the deputation. Mr. Morley has pledged the deputation to privacy. I, therefore, must not give you anything for publication. We were very well received. Mr. Morley was strong in some parts of his speech but I cannot say that the effect on the whole was encouraging. However, we have to wait and see.

Mr. Ally and I leave definitely on the 1st of next month.

Yours truly,

MISS A. H. SMITH
5, WINCHESTER ROAD
HAMPSTEAD

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4629

145. LETTER TO M. N. DOCTOR

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 22, 1906

DEAR MR. DOCTOR,

Will you please give me a call at 10 o'clock on Saturday.

Yours truly,

M. N. DOCTOR, ESQ.
102, WHARTON ROAD, W.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4630

146. LETTER TO MISS E. J. BECK

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 22, 1906

DEAR MADAM,

I shall thank you to let me have the book of instructions for

Indian youths coming to England for education as per advertisement in the magazine.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

MISS E. J. BECK
233, ALBION ROAD
STOKE NEWINGTON, N.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4631

147. DEPUTATION NOTES - III

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
November 23, 1906

This is our last week here. We had hoped to leave on November 24. But we have been obliged to stay on in order to complete the work regarding the Committee and do whatever is necessary after the interview with Mr. Morley. Now we have fixed the date of our departure for December 1.

MORE PROMISES OF HELP

During the current week, we met Lord Milner, Mr. Lyttelton, Lord Reay, Sir Raymond West and others. Everyone has shown much sympathy and offered to work for us. It is not possible to say what the outcome of all this will be.

INTERVIEW WITH SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

The deputation met Mr. Morley, the Secretary of State for India, on Thursday at 12.20 p.m. Those present were Sir Lepel Griffin, Lord Stanley of Alderley, Sir Charles Dilke, Sir Charles Schwann, Sir William Wedderburn, Sir Henry Cotton, Sir Muncherji Bhownaggree, Dr. Rutherford, Mr. Harold Cox, Mr. A. H. Scott, Mr. Lynch, Mr. F. H. Brown, Mr. J. D. Rees, Mr. Thornton, Mr. Arathoon, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Mr. T. J. Bennett, Mr. Theodore Morison and Mr. Ritch. Mr. Ameer Ali could not attend owing to illness. Sir Lepel Griffin, Lord Stanley, Mr. Cox and Sir Muncherji spoke at length. Lord Stanley

went so far as to demand sweet deeds in place of sweet words. Messrs Ally and Gandhi[1] said whatever was required on the occasion.

MORLEY'S SPEECH

Mr. Morley gave a long reply in which he said:

> I am glad to have met the deputation. For I desire to be familiarized fully with the condition of the country for whose administration I am responsible to Parliament. Moreover, the problem placed before me today has a very close bearing on the good government of India. That the feelings of the people of India are excited on account of the disabilities imposed upon Indians in South Africa is a serious matter. Indians returning to their native land from South Africa carry with them the story of the indignities to which they are subjected, and the result is that people are greatly agitated. People in India must be thinking that the Government lack either the will or the power to prevent oppression in South Africa. In either case, it is harmful. I believe the resistance offered by Mr. Chamberlain in 1901, in the interests of Indians, deserves praise. The first thing that has been brought to the notice of the new Government is that a bar sinister has been placed upon Indians in some Colonies. Men in authority do not like to be told about moral principles. But I am glad that Lord Stanley has spoken of moral principles. The views expressed by Lord Stanley may be held by some to be old fashioned, but I for one share them entirely. Unfortunately, we have not a white sheet of paper to write upon. We must face the facts as they are and then act, as far as possible, in accordance with moral principle. Now, let us see what the India Office can do. It has been recognized by Sir Lepel Griffin that the minister primarily concerned is Lord Elgin. Sir Muncherji asks me to demand that a commission be appointed. But a serious difficulty in the way is that in May next the Transvaal will be under responsible government. Now it would be a serious matter if a conflict arises between the [policies of the] new government and

[1] In his Gujarati despatches Gandhiji often refers to himself both in the first person and by name.

the commission's recommendations. I do not believe that such a commission will solve the question. I have been in Parliament for many years but I do not remember any commission which has solved any question. And the question regarding the Transvaal is not likely to be solved by the appointment of a commission. It will quite probably mean a collision with the newly organized government at the very outset of its career. The plain fact is that we cannot dictate to the self-governing colonies. We can plead, we can argue, we can press for the application of our principles. Whether at the Colonial Conference [next year] or in his despatches, Lord Elgin will, doubtless, advance strong arguments and make recommendations. Viceroy after Viceroy has written on the matter. Lord Curzon had written very strongly. He had made many recommendations about Natal but Natal paid no heed to his words. It remains to be seen whether the Transvaal will listen to the requests of Lord Elgin. I am glad to know that there are many whites in the Transvaal who are not against Indians. I can well understand the small white shopkeepers opposing them. I can even understand Indians [already in the country] opposing [further immigration of Indians].[1] But what I cannot understand is the prejudice felt by the whites against mere dark skin. I know that there are in the Transvaal many [Indians] who are superior to the whites. How can these then be tyrannized over? Just as Lord Lansdowne's feelings were hurt by the treatment meted out to Indians, my blood too boils at their sufferings. But it must be remembered that we cannot remonstrate as effectively with the Colonies as we can with foreign powers. But I have been tempted into a digression by the remarks of Lord Stanley. All I can now say is that it is my duty to do all I can. The India Office will not fail to make strong representations as frequently as may be necessary. I can definitely assure you that I shall not be slack in supporting the Colonial Office and, possibly, going ahead of it.

[1] This statement is not found in the official minutes of Morley's speech; *Vide* "Deputation to Morley", 22-11-1906

Though Mr. Morley has made such a strong speech, I do not yet expect that the Ordinance will be refused assent. Strong despatches seem to have been received from the Transvaal. I feel also that the rulers here think in their heart of hearts that we are an inferior race and there is no harm in piling up endless burdens on us. Today we saw Mr. Lyttelton and also Sir Raymond West[1], an ex-Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court. They appeared to be of much the same view. They felt much sympathy, but they also indicated that we would get no redress until we acquired strength like the whites. They are afraid of the colonies, not because they are white, but because they are powerful. If this is a true reading of the situation, we should realize that our salvation lies in our own hands.

OUR DELIVERANCE

While we are on this subject, the case of Miss Milne deserves to be noted. Miss Milne, a suffragette, began making a speech in front of the Houses of Parliament. The police attempted to stop her, but she persisted. She was then arrested and prosecuted. The Magistrate sentenced her to pay a fine of 10s or imprisonment for seven days. The brave lady preferred to go to gaol.

This will be our last letter from England. Hence I would appeal to all and say that, just as Miss Milne preferred going to gaol, so must every Transvaal Indian, taking it that the Ordinance will receive Royal assent. There is no doubt that the Fourth Resolution contains the key to the Indians' deliverance. If the Resolution is acted upon, there should be no anxiety, whether or not the Ordinance receives the assent.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 22-12-1906

[1] (1832-1912); Jurist, Vice-Chancellor of Bombay University; an advocate of agricultural credit in India

148. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO MORLEY

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 23, 1906

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
THE RT. HON. JOHN MORLEY
HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA
THE INDIA OFFICE
DOWNING STREET, W.

DEAR SIR,

I have seen in *The Times* what purports to be a report of the proceedings of the deputation that waited on Mr. John Morley yesterday. Several pressmen came to me yesterday and I told them that the proceedings were private and such intimation had appeared in *The Daily Mail* and *The Tribune*. I do not know how *The Times* has been able to get the report. I shall be obliged if you will kindly let me know whether Mr. Morley proposes to enquire as to how *The Times* has been able to publish the report.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4633

149. LETTER TO DR. J. OLDFIELD

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 23, 1906

MY DEAR OLDFIELD,

Will you please enquire whether Mr. Ally's parcel has been sent? Miss Rosenburg has not brought it at all. Will you also kindly let have the balance of the account against Mr. Ally?

My teeth are more shaky than when you saw them and yet I am afraid that I will not be able to undergo the operation at the hospital

either for the teeth or the nose.

Yours truly,

DR. JOSIAH OLDFIELD
LADY MARGARET HOSPITAL
BROMLEY
KENT

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4634

150. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD ELGIN[1]

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 24, 1906

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
THE RIGHT HON'BLE THE EARL OF ELGIN
HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
DOWNING STREET
LONDON
DEAR SIR,

I have seen Mr. Churchill's reply on the Vrededorp Stands ordinance in answer to Sir Henry Cotton's question[2]. In my

[1] This letter along with Sir Henry Cotton's question and Churchill's answer (footnote 2 below) was reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 22-12-1906.

[2] On November 22, 1906, Sir Henry Cotton had asked the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies in the House of Commons whether his attention had been drawn to Clauses 5, 8 and 9 of the Second Schedule of the Vrededorp Stands Ordinance Of 1906, under which the residence of British Indians, other than domestic servants, was prohibited within that area affected by the Ordinance; and whether, looking to the fact that the Ordinance did not come into effect until it had been assented to by the Crown, and that, for several years past, both under the Boer Government and at present, British Indians had been allowed to occupy land within this area under grants given by the bur ghers of Vre dedor p, and were still residing in this area, and had erected substantial structures thereon, the Secretary of State would advise His Majesty to disallow the Ordinance.

MR. CHURCHILL: My attention has been drawn to the provision referred to. This land was originally granted to poor burghers—that is, to white men onlt, and on condition of personal occupation. The Ordinance, therefore, merely perpetuates the legal conditions which were in existence before annexation, and in defiance of which certain Indians have, I understand, acquired some Stands and erected tin shanties. I may add that it is very desirable to keep the white and Coloured quarters apart, as the practice of allowing European, Asiatic, and Native families to live side by side in mixed community is fraught with many evils, and is, in Lord Selborne's opinion, injurious to the social well-being of all three. The whole question is, however, still under consideration.

humble opinion the answer is based on a misapprehension of the real state of affairs.

The act of granting Vrededorp to the poor Dutch burghers for personal occupation was accompanied by occupation of Vrededorp by persons other than the grantees irrespective of race or colour. As for instance, many non-Dutch white people occupied Stands in Vrededorp from the original grantees with the knowledge of the Boer Government.

The Ordinance does *not* perpetuate the legal conditions which were in existence before annexation, because the legal condition before annexation was that the grantees had only squatters' rights. The Ordinance now gives to them a permanent tenure with power to them to transfer their leases to whomsoever they choose save and except Asiatics so that the legal condition of personal occupation is now being changed into that of transferable leases.

I venture to protest against the statement that Indians acquired rights in Vrededorp in defiance of legal conditions. They acquired rights in Vrededorp in the same manner that those who were not poor burghers did. Nor is it true that Indians have erected shanties in Vrededorp. In my humble opinion, class considered, what are described as shanties are superior to many of the buildings in Vrededorp.

If the doctrine of the desirability of keeping the white and the Coloured quarters apart is sound, I fear that there will be an end to British Indian residence in the Transvaal with any degree of self-respect. The logical conclusion of such a doctrine will be a system of Locations which can only result in ruination to hundreds of law-abiding and respectable Indians.

One is appalled by the inaccurate information that is placed before His Lordship in connection with matters Indian and it is extremely painful that legislation that is otherwise without the slightest justification is justifiedon statements that are inaccurate or misleading.

In venturing to offer the above remarks, no reflection is cast on Lord Selborne but it is respectfully submitted that Lord Selborne himself receives misleading information, as is painfully apparent to those who are on the spot and know the inner working of

the administration.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4635

151. LETTER TO C. HAY

[HOTEL CECIL,

LONDON,]

November 24, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I beg to enclose herewith note of introduction from Sir Muncherji which speaks for itself.

As my co-Delegate, Mr. Ally, and myself have to leave for the Transvaal next Saturday, instead of requesting an appointment, I am taking the liberty of sending the enclosure to you and to say that Mr. Ally and myself will venture to send in our cards at the House of Commons at 2.45 on Monday next on the chance of being able to meet you. If, however, we are unsuccessful in seeing you, may I request a favourable reply as to your sympathy for our mission and your consenting to join the South Africa British Indian Committee?

As you may be aware, we are appealing to all parties and have received support too from them.

I enclose herewith a cutting from *The Times* giving a report of the interview with Mr. Morley which will further explain the position of British Indians in the Transvaal.

I am addressing similar letters to Sir Edward Sassoon, Major Sir Evans Gordon and Sir William Bull.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

Enclosure

THE HON. CLAUDE HAY, M.P.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

WESTMINSTER

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4637

152. LETTER TO LORD REAY

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 24, 1906

MY LORD,

Mr. Ally and I are extremely obliged to Your Lordship for having granted us the very sympathetic interview yesterday.

I now enclose herewith copy of the draft constitution of the South Africa British Indian Committee. Those whose names are given in the draft have consented to join the Committee. We are approaching the gentleman mentioned by Your Lordship yesterday.

If you could accept the Presidentship of the Committee, you will place the Indian community in South Africa under deep obligation to Your Lordship.

The draft constitution is being printed and will be circulated among the members, who have already joined, for their approval. Will you kindly therefore be pleased to let me know whether I may include Your Lordship's name as President of the Committee?

The complimentary breakfast, which Your Lordship has kindly consented to attend, will take place at the Hotel Cecil on Thursday next at 10.30 a.m.

A short conference will be held immediately after the breakfast among the members of the Committee for a mutual interchange of suggestions and for its inauguration.

I beg to remain,
Your Lordship's obedient servant,

THE RIGHT HON'BLE LORD REAY
6, GREAT STANHOPE STREET
PARK LANE, W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4638

[ENCLOSURE][1]

PROVISIONAL DRAFT

SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE
(November 1906)

PRESIDENT

VICE-PRESIDENT

Sir Lepel Griffin, K.C.S.I.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Ameer Ali, Esq., C.I.E.; T. J. Bennett, Esq., C.I.E.; Sir Muncherji Bhownaggree, K.C.I.E.; Sir George Birdwood, K.C.I.E., C.S.I.; Harold Cox, Esq., M.P.; Sir William Markby, K.C.S.I.; Theodore Morison, Esq.; Dadabhai Naoroji, Esq.; J. H. L. Polak, Esq., J. P.; J. D. Rees, Esq., M.P.; L. W. Ritch, Esq.; J. M. Robertson, Esq., M.P.; Dr. Rutherford, M.P.; Sir Charles Schwann, Bart., M.P.; A. H. Scott, Esq., M.P.; Sir William Wedderburn, Bart.; Sir Raymond West, K.C.S.I.

SUB-COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN: Sir Muncherji Bhownaggree, K.C.I.E.

MEMBERS: Ameer Ali, Esq., C.I.E.; Harold Cox, Esq., M.P.; J. H. L. Polak, Esq., J. P.; J. D. Rees, Esq., M.P.; J. M. Robertson, Esq., M.P.; A. H. Scott, Esq., M.P.

SECRETARY: L. W. Ritch, Esq.

HONORARY SOLICITORS

BANKERS: The Natal Bank Limited.

OFFICES: 28, Queen Anne's Chambers, The Broadway, Westminster, W.

THE CONSTITUTION

NAME

The Committee shall be called SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE.

OBJECT

The Committee is established for the purpose of

(a) concentrating and giving continuity to the efforts to secure fair and just treatment to British Indian settlers in South Africa of those friends who have heretofore exerted themselves to that end in Parliament and in other ways;

[1] Copies of the draft constitution were later sent to the others mentioned in the list.

(b) and of helping the Imperial Government to arrive at a proper solution of this difficult problem.

RULES

1. There shall be no subscription for membership of the Committee and members shall not be personally liable for any expenses incurred in the name of the Committee.

2. The Committee shall consist of a President, Vice-Presidents and members.

3. There shall be a sub-Committee of not more than six members besides Chairman and Secretary, who shall be ex-officio members of such Committee.

4. The sub-Committee shall meet every week on...at...

5. ....members shall form a quorum.

6. As to any matters touching which no provision is made in the foregoing rules, the ordinary rules of meetings shall apply.

7. The above rules are subject to change at the discretion of the sub-Committee.

From a photostat of the typewritten draft: S. N. 4576 and 4576/2

153. LETTER TO DR. J. OLDFIELD

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 24, 1906

MY DEAR OLDFIELD,

Many thanks for your note. If you can perform the operation at the Hotel without tying me down to the room for the rest of the day or if you can perform it any time after 8 o'clock in the evening so that you would free me for the next day's work, I should have it and feel greatly relieved. On Tuesday do you mind coming to the hotel at 5 o'clock or even at 4.45? I have an appointment[1] with *The Daily News* after 4 o'clock. As soon as I am free from *The Daily News* office I should come back to the Hotel. You may come up to room No. 256 and await my arrival. In any case should I be later than 5 o'clock and if you can have tea and then perform the operation or do whatever

[1] To meet Mr. Gardiner, the Editor; *vide* "Deputation Notes-IV", before 18-12-1906.

you like with me, I will endeavour to keep the whole of the evening free. Whatever you do please let me know beforehand.

I enclose herewith cheque for £1.1.0 regarding Mr. Simmonds.

Yours sincerely,

[Enclosure]

DR. J. OLDFIELD
LADY MARGARET HOSPITAL
BROMLEY
KENT

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4639

154. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO MORLEY

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 24, 1906

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
THE RT. HON. JOHN MORLEY
THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA
DOWNING STREET

SIR,

We shall be obliged if you will kindly bring the following to Mr. Morley's notice.

From what Mr. Morley stated yesterday there seems to be an impression that the Right Hon'ble gentleman believes that the Indian "petition" from the Transvaal is in approval of the Ordinance, which is not the case as will appear from the detailed reply[1] the Delegates have submitted to Lord Elgin. We now enclose herewith copy thereof.

With reference to the Royal Commission, what the Delegates have requested is a commission or rather a committee—it may be of local, but independent and impartial men, such as the judges of the Supreme Court or the Chief Magistrate of Johannesburg to enquire into the charges made against the Indian community and

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Elgin", 20-11-1906.

which have been used as reasons for passing the Ordinance. In our humble opinion, such a committee can give its report within a month from its formation. The Delegates respectfully submit that either the veto should now be exercised, as in the case of the Native Land Tenure Ordinance, or the Royal sanction should be suspended, pending result of the investigations by the committee or the commission described above.

British Indians in the Transvaal ask for full protection for the resident Indian population and that, in our humble opinion, should be granted to them, irrespective of the Colonial sentiment.

We have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servants,

[Enclosure]

From a photostat Of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4640

155. LETTER TO SIR WILLIAM MARKBY

[HOTEL CECIL,

LONDON,]

November 26, 1906

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Ally and I are extremely obliged to you for your having consented to join the South Africa British Indian Committee.

Under separate covers, the draft constitution and a breakfast invitation card are being sent to you. If you can possibly take the trouble of coming, I need hardly say that we shall be greatly obliged. Any suggestions on the constitution will be valued.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

SIR WILLIAM MARKBY
HEADINGTON HILL
OXFORD

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4641

156. LETTER TO T. MORISON

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 26, 1906

DEAR MR. MORISON,

I hope that you will be able to spare the time for the breakfast on Thursday in respect of which an invitation has been sent to you.

I have seen the article in *The Outlook*. The whole of it is based on wrong premises and a misunderstanding of the true situation. I do not know whether you have also felt it like that. If I have the time, I may send a reply.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,

THEODORE MORISON, ESQ.
ASHLEIGH
WEYBRIDGE

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4642

157. LETTER TO SIR EVANS GORDON[1]

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 26, 1906

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Ally and I are greatly obliged to you for your letter of the 26th instant. Under separate cover we have sent you a breakfast invitation card as also a draft constitution of the Committee. We trust that you will be able to spare the time for attending the breakfast.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,

MAJOR SIR W. EVANS GORDON[2]
4, CHELSEA EMBANKMENT, S.W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4643

[1] An identical letter was sent to Sir Edward Sassoon, 25, Park Lane.
[2] (1857-1914) ; Indian Staff Corps, 1876-97 ; author of *The Alien Immigrant*

158. LETTER TO SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 26, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I am extremely obliged to you for your letter of the 23rd instant.

I venture to send you herewith a breakfast invitation card as also the draft constitution of the South Africa British Indian Committee. If you can join the Committee, your patronage will be valued.

It was an agreeable surprise to me that you were connected with *The Englishman* of Calcutta. I may state that the late Mr. Saunders rendered the most valuable assistance to me when I was in Calcutta in 1896 and 1901 in connection with British Indians in South Africa; indeed, he even gave me notes of introduction to Sir Charles Turner and others and was largely instrumental in evoking from Lord Curzon a most spirited letter of sympathy regarding the status of British Indians in South Africa.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,

[Enclosure]
SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE
199, TEMPLE CHAMBERS
TEMPLE AVENUE, E. C.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4644

159. CIRCULAR LETTER[1]

HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON, W.C.,
November 26, 1906

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Ally and I have taken the liberty of sending you today an

[1] This was sent to the members of the South Africa British Indian Committee.

invitation card for breakfast on Thursday next at 10.30 at Hotel Cecil as a small token of the gratitude of the Indian community, whom we have the honour to represent, for your valuable support and sympathy. I trust that you will be able to accept the invitation. I am aware that the notice given is very short but as it is imperatively necessary for the Delegates to leave for South Africa next Saturday, we could not give a longer notice.

I beg to enclose herewith, for your suggestions, the draft constitution of the South Africa British Indian Committee which you have kindly joined. After the breakfast is over, it has been suggested that a brief conference should take place in order to consider any suggestions that may be made in connection with the draft.

As the Committee has been formed in obedience to instructions received from South Africa, the Delegates have taken the liberty of approaching Sir Muncherji for acceptance of the Chairmanship of the sub-Committee. We have done so because we feel that, among the friends of the cause in London, no one has studied the Indian question in South Africa so well as Sir Muncherji, he having actively interested himself in the cause for the last 12 years and having made a speciality of this question. Sir Muncherji has very kindly consented to accept the office if it also meets with the approval of the other members of the sub-Committee.

Lord Reay has been approached with a view to the acceptance of the Presidentship of the Committee and if it is at all possible for His Lordship to accept the office, he will do so.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure

From a photostat of the signed typewritten office copy: S. N. 4654

160. SPEECH AT EAST INDIA ASSOCIATION

At a meeting[1] *of the East India Association at Caxton Hall, London, L. W. Ritch read a paper entitled "The Burden of the British Indians in South Africa". Gandhiji opened the discussion that*

[1] For a report, *vide* "Ritch's Speech at East India Association", before 18-12-1906.

followed.

November 26, 1906

. . . Mr. Gandhi said that after what had been said by the lecturer it was unnecessary to say anything further with reference to the object of the mission with which he had been entrusted, but it would be ungrateful on his part if he did not take the opportunity of expressing his deep gratitude to the East India Association and its secretary, Mr. G. W. Arathoon, for the advocacy which the Indian cause in South Africa had received. There was one thing which all should bear in mind, namely, that whatever difficulties they were undergoing in South Africa were being undergone in the name of the English people [*sic*], more particularly in the Transvaal. The Ordinance which had brought them to England had been introduced in the name of the King.

For the first time in Colonial history, a precedent had been set by a Crown Colony of legislation which branded a class of people simply because they wore a coloured skin. Was India to be retained, or was India to be lost simply because Colonial sentiment had to be consulted? What was the proportion of the white population to the Indian?

Mr. Ritch had said, the Asiatics in the Transvaal were but a drop in the Ocean —13,000 as against 285,000 white men. They were simply struggling for peace, for contentment and self-respect in that Colony. Nearly all of them entered the Colony before the war. Today they were merely asking for the civil rights which ought to be granted to everybody who was a subject under the British Crown, and yet under the Ordinance they were to be treated differently to other British subjects. Was that kind of legislation to be sanctioned in the name of the British nation? (Applause.)...

The Journal of the East India Association, January 1907

161. LETTER TO MISS E. J. BECK

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 27, l906

DEAR MADAM,

I shall be obliged if you will kindly inform me whether you know anything suitable for a young Indian 18 years of age who requires school education as distinguished from college education and parental supervision. In my, opinion, he has in him the making of an exceedingly fine, strong and lovable character. What I want is a place

where he can receive education enabling him to pass the Matriculation examination of London University. His means are limited. He is not in a position to spend more than £8 per month including everything.

I am,

Yours truly,

MISS E. J. BECK
233, ALBION ROAD
STOKE NEWINGTON, N.

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4645

162. LETTER TO SIR GEORGE BIRDWOOD

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 27, 1906

DEAR SIR GEORGE,

I thank you for your long letter. I now enclose herewith copy of same. I thank you too for accepting the invitation. I know, the hour selected for-the breakfast is very bad. Unfortunately I did not know the time [of] the G. O. M.'s departure[1] at the time the cards were sent. It is my misfortune that I shall be unable to pay my respects to him at the station.

I am,

Yours truly,

Enclosure
SIR GEORGE BIRDWOOD
119, THE AVENUE
WEST EALING

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4646

[1] Dadabhai Naoroji was to leave for India on the morning of Thursday, November 29, to preside over the Calcutta session of the Indian National Congress.

163. LETTER TO LORD HARRIS[1]

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 27, 1906

MY LORD,

Mr. Ally and I have arrived, as perhaps Your Lordship is aware, as a Deputation on behalf of the British Indian community in the Transvaal.

We have waited on Lord Elgin and Mr. Morley who have given sympathetic answers with reference to our mission but we also feel that any representations that they may make in our behalf require to be considerably strengthened. Moreover, the support that we have received from all parties has been exceptionally warm. We are most anxious to make as much use as possible of it in our future struggle. We have further been instructed by the British Indians in South Africa to form a committee, so that the work now being done may be continued.

We enclose herewith copy of the constitution.

We have approached the Right Hon'ble Lord Reay with a view to his acceptance of the Presidentship of the Committee and we believe that, if you could see your way to lend the weight of your influence to the Committee by accepting a Vice-Presidentship, he will accept the Presidentship and Your Lordship will lay the Indian community in South Africa under deep obligation to you.

We beg to enclose herewith an invitation card to a complimentary breakfast we are giving on Thursday next at 10.30 a.m. If Your Lordship could honour the occasion by your presence at the breakfast, we would feel deeply grateful. Lord Reay has kindly consented to come a little after the breakfast to attend a short conference that will take place thereafter to discuss the constitution of the Committee.

We remain,

Your Lordship's humble and obedient servants,

[Enclosure]

From a Photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4647

[1] Though the letter does not mention the addressee, a reference in the following item makes it clear that it was sent to Lord Harris. The noting on the office copy shows that it was also sent to Lord Sandhurst, Sir James Fergusson and Lord Wenlock.

164. LETTER TO SIR MUNCHERJI BHOWNAGGREE

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 27, 1906

DEAR SIR MUNCHERJI,

I am obliged for your letter of today's date. I have written to Lord Harris and the three other gentlemen in accordance with the enclosed copy.[1] The circular letter[2] , of which I sent you a copy, had already gone by the time of the arrival of your letter.

Mr. Brown has since written saying that perhaps it will be better not to send invitations to *The Times* or any other paper.

I will feel very much obliged if you will kindly come on Thursday at 10.30. I do not think I need trouble you tomorrow. Mr. Winston Churchill has given us an appointment for tomorrow.

You will perhaps be going to the Bank tomorrow to give your signature as President of the sub-Committee and one of the signatories to the cheques and if at that time it is not too much trouble, you will perhaps drop in at the Hotel.

We had a very satisfactory interview with the Editor of *The Daily News.*

I have not told you all about Mr. Ritch's capabilities. He has handled many a meeting and has been secretary of more than one organization. He was twenty years ago perhaps what people may call a rabid Socialist. His has been a most chequered career. Today, I do not own a friend who knows me more than he does. He is one of those men who believe in dying for a cause that he [*sic*] holds dear.

I am,
Yours sincerely,

[Enclosure]

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4648

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] *Vide* "Circular Letter", 26-11-1906.

165. LETTER TO B. HOLLAND

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 27, 1906

BERNARD HOLLAND, ESQ.
THE COLONIAL OFFICE
DOWNING STREET

DEAR SIR,

The Delegates will leave for South Africa on Saturday. I shall be obliged if you will kindly, before that time, return the original letter[1] given by Dr. Godfrey to Mr. Ally.

I should also feel obliged if you could let us have a copy of the "petition" from Dr. Godfrey and another, that is, if Lord Elgin has authorized the giving of a copy to us.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4649

166. CERTIFICATE TO MISS E. LAWSON

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 27, 1906

We have much pleasure in certifying that Miss Edith Lawson has done secretarial work for the British Indian Deputation from the Transvaal to the Imperial authorities.

During the time, we found her a highly intelligent young lady, very obliging, punctual and energetic. What struck us most, however, was her capacity to identify herself with her work and we believe that she is capable of occupying a position of trust.

THE DELEGATES

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4650

[1] *Vide* enclosure to "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Elgin", 20-11-1906.

167. LETTER TO MISS A. H. SMITH

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 27, 1906

DEAR MISS SMITH,

I have your kind note. It is impossible for me to come up to your place tonight, nor can Mr. Godfrey do so. We have not a moment to spare. We are having a breakfast meeting tomorrow to thank those who have assisted us. I am not inviting you because you would have been the only lady present.

I send you a copy of the constitution of the Committee and after my departure may I ask you to see Mr. Ritch at 28, Queen Anne's Chambers, The Broadway, Westminster, and get full information about the breakfast meeting.

I enclose herewith cheque for £1.1.0 as promised by me for the December contribution. You can post it on Saturday, or let me have it.

I am,
Yours truly,

2 enclosures

MISS A. H. SMITH
5, WINCHESTER ROAD
HAMPSTEAD

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4651

168. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO CHURCHILL

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 27, 1906

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL

DEAR SIR,

In accordance with the desire expressed by Mr. Winston Churchill, we beg to enclose herewith three statements[1],on single

[1] Only one of the three enclosures, viz., "Objections to the Vrededorp Stands Ordinance", is available and reproduced here.

sheets of paper, showing the view of the British Indian community, first, on the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance, secondly, on the Vrededorp Stands Ordinance, and thirdly, on the general question.

We remain,

Dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

3 enclosures

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4653

[ENCLOSURE]

OBJECTIONS TO THE VREDEDORP STANDS ORDINANCE

1. The Ordinance if sanctioned will be a precedent for the inclusion of class-disqualifying clauses in leases in other townships in Johannesburg or the Transvaal and would therefore go beyond the Law 3 of 1885 in restricting British Indian rights.

2. British Indians with the knowledge of the Boer Government occupied and built upon Stands in Vrededorp just as many other Europeans did who were not the original burghers who received, from the late President Kruger, squatters' rights on the Stands.

3. Vrededorp is contiguous to the Malay Location, which is inhabited by a very large number of British Indians.

4. The Ordinance does not perpetuate the legal condition that was in existence before the war but it gives permanent rights to the original burghers with the power to sublet. Under this power, Europeans who were not burghers would be able to retain the rights granted to them by the burghers whereas British Indians will be dispossessed without the slightest justification.

5. Premises built by British Indians are not shanties but substantial structures as good as most other buildings.

6. If the Ordinance is sanctioned, it will be the first instance of a recognition by an Imperial Government of the right of a municipality to curtail the residential rights of British Indians in any part of the Transvaal which, under a Supreme Court judgment, British Indians are entitled to. It will indirectly create a system of Locations which otherwise the Imperial Government, it is presumed, would never sanction.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4636

169. LETTER TO BRITISH COMMITTEE OF INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 27, 1906

THE SECRETARY
BRITISH COMMITTEE [OF INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS]
84 & 85, PALACE CHAMBERS
WESTMINSTER

DEAR MR. HALL,

With reference to the balance of the handbook fund lying at your disposal, will you kindly transfer it to the General Fund of the Committee and take it as a donation from the British Indian Association.

I am,
Yours truly,

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4652

170. LETTER TO T. J. BENNETT[1]

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 28, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I hope you have received the invitation card which the Delegates have ventured to send to you for the breakfast tomorrow morning at 10.30 at the Hotel Cecil. I venture to trust that you will be good enough to honour the Delegates by your presence.

I am,
Yours truly,

T. J. BENNETT, ESQ.
HARWARTON HOUSE
SPELDHURST
TUNBRIDGE WELLS

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4655

[1] A similar letter was sent to J. M. Robertson, M.P.

171. LETTER TO F. H. BROWN

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 28, 1906

DEAR MR. BROWN,

I am much obliged to you for your letter. I enclose herewith draft constitution of the committee. From it you will see that Mr. Ameer Ali's active support has been retained.

An invitation has been sent to him and I have just received his letter accepting same.

I am,
Yours truly,

Enclosure

F. H. BROWN, ESQ.
"DILKUSHA"
WESTBOURNE ROAD
FOREST HILL, S.E.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4656

172. LETTER TO A. H. GOOL

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 28, 1906

DEAR MR. GOOL,

I hope you have received the invitation card. Be sure and come at 10.30 tomorrow and find your Way to the banqueting hall.

I am,
Yours truly,

A. H. GOOL, ESQ.
27, PECKHAM ROAD, S.E.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4657

173. LETTER TO LORD STANLEY

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 28, 1906

MY LORD,

The Delegates have not received your reply to the invitation card they have ventured to send to Your Lordship for breakfast at 10.30 tomorrow. the Delegates venture to hope that Your Lordship will honour them by your presence.

I beg to remain,
Your Lordship's obedient servant,

THE RT. HON. LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY
18, MANSFIELD STREET, W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4658/a

174. LETTER TO SIR LEPEL GRIFFIN

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 28, 1906

DEAR SIR LEPEL,

I have not yet received your reply to the invitation the Delegates have ventured to send to you to the breakfast that comes off tomorrow morning at 10.30 at the Hotel Cecil and a conference after. I do trust that you will honour us by your presence and your counsel.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,

SIR LEPEL GRIFFIN, K.C.S.I.
4, CADOGAN GARDENS
SLOANE SQUARE

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4658/B

175. SPEECH AT LONDON FAREWELL[1]

The following is a report of Gandhiji's speech at the farewell breakfast given at Hotel Cecil by the Delegates from the Transvaal to friends and sympathizers:

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,
November 29, 1906]

Sir Muncherji, My Lord and Gentlemen, before I begin to express our thanks for your attendance here and to those gentlemen who have not been able to attend this morning, I shall take the opportunity of reading some of the letters[2] which have been received in connection with the invitations.

The task before my colleagues and myself today is an exceedingly pleasant one---to thank you all who have honoured us by your presence, and also to thank those gentlemen who could not be with us this morning. Mr. Ally and I, when we came to the end of our mission, thought that the least we could do, as representing the 13,000 British Indians in the Transvaal, was to adopt this tangible method of showing our gratitude. The support we have received throughout our stay in England has been very encouraging. We have received it from all parties ever since the beginning of our campaign against the deprivation of our civil rights as citizens in this mighty Empire. We have appealed to all parties, and all parties have invariably extended their help to us. For this we cannot be too grateful, and I think it but right especially to mention the name of the late Sir William Wilson Hunter. As far back as 1893, Sir W. W. Hunter received one of the circulars sent out to him from South Africa, and he it was, I think, who first understood the national importance of this question, and ever since that time down to the date of his death, he was always busy

[1] This function was specially reported for *Indian Opinion*. Among those present were Lord Reay, Sir William Bull, M.P., A. H. Scott, M.P., Sir George Birdwood, Sir Frederick Fryer, Sir Raymond West, Sir M. M. Bhownaggree, Ameer Ali, Theodore Morison, Dr. Josiah Oldfield, Dr. E. P. S. Counsel, C. W. Arathoon, J. H. L. Polak, L. W. Ritch, G. V. Godfrey, J. W. Godfrey, A. Cartwright, F. H. Brown, H. E. A. Cotton, A. H. Gool, T. Ruthnum Pather, S. M. Manga and J. M. Robertson.

[2] Gandhiji read out letters of good wishes from Sir William Markby, Sir Roper Lethbridge and Sir Charles Schwann. He also mentioned similar latters from Sir Henry Cotton, Sir William Wedderburn, T. J. Bennett, Harold Cox and others.

doing something or other to assist the cause of British Indians in South Africa. In the columns of *The Times* and otherwise, he always advocated our cause, and I had a letter from Lady Hunter saying that, even at the time of his death, he had a long contribution in preparation in connection with this matter. In 1896, when I was in Calcutta, the late Mr. Saunders also came to the assistance of our cause, as also did *The Times of India*, which paper has always advocated the cause of the British Indians in South Africa. Coming nearer, the East India Association has helped us, and the British Committee of the Indian National Congress has given us valuable assistance. It is a matter of regret to both Mr. Ally and myself that we have had to issue this invitation just at the time the "Grand Old Man" of India,-Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, is leaving this country for the forthcoming session of the Congress. To him also we owe a debt of gratitude. As I have said, we have appealed to all parties in the House of Commons, and all have helped us. I must not fail to mention especially the name of Mr. Scott, who has helped us most sympathetically and most energetically in connection with our grievances, and now I come to the name of Sir Mancherji Bhownaggree. For the last 12 years, he has persistently and with unflagging zeal been advocating the cause of British Indians in South Africa. All have helped, but Sir Mancherji has made this cause his own. Sir Mancherji has worked as if he were actuated by the same strong convictions and feelings as we ourselves. He has felt as no other man has the national importance of the issues involved. In the House of Commons, outside the House, in his correspondence, he has always helped and counselled us as to how we were to go to work, and words cannot express our gratitude to him for all he has done for us in South Africa. The difficulties in our path have, perhaps, whether this Ordinance be passed or not, only just commenced. We, therefore, hope that the support, which all our friends here have hitherto afforded us, will be maintained, because, even if the Ordinance is disallowed—as there is some hope it will be—there is still a great deal to be done in regard to the general question. There is again the Vrededorp Ordinance. There is, too, the Natal Municipal Corporations Bill. Whatever is done in the Transvaal is likely to be done by the other Colonies. Ours has been a policy of the strictest moderation. We have always claimed that we have been able to enter into the feelings of our opponents (if one may use that term) in South Africa, and although we have examined the whole question from their standpoint and have always endeavoured to convince those

who are prejudiced against us of our desire to be moderate, we have still to ask you to extend your support to us in our struggle, and it is for this reason that we have been authorized by the British Indians in South Africa to organize and inaugurate such a committee as will always watch over our interests. The work that has been so well and ably performed here by our supporters will have been frittered away if it be not now concentrated and continued by means of such an organization as thisCommittee.

As most of you gentlemen have received copies of the circular[1] , I will only recapitulate the objects of the Committee. You will notice that it is merely a provisional draft. These are the ideas as they strike us, and we hope that you will consider them, and help us by your counsels. All whose names are printed on the draft have kindly consented to become members of the Committee, and it now only remains for me to ask you kindly to consider the draft constitution, and to formally inaugurate it, if you think that the step we have ventured to take is acceptable to you. I cannot better illustrate the gravity of the position in which we are placed in the Transvaal than by pointing to the young British Indians who are here today. They are more your hosts than guests. They are Indian students who belong to South Africa, that is to say, South Africa is more their home than India itself. They are studying here, but I have no doubt they are looking forward to their return to South Africa with considerable anxiety and apprehension, because they will have to share the same fate as the thirteen thousand British Indians in the Transvaal, and in fact all the British Indians in South Africa. Here, in England, they will become barristers or doctors, but there, in South Africa, they may not even be able to cross the border of the Transvaal.

Indian Opinion, 29-12-1906

176. LETTER TO SIR RAYMOND WEST

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 29, 1906

DEAR SIR RAYMOND,

May I, on behalf of Mr. Ally and myself, take this opportunity

[1] *Vide* "Circular Letter", 26-11-1906.

of repeating our thanks for your noble and inspiring utterances at the breakfast today? I know that we will have the benefit of your support and advice in our struggle for existence. The thought that so many distinguished men are heart and soul with us buoys us up and enables us to hope for better things though the cloud seems to be the blackest.

I remain,

Yours truly,

SIR RAYMOND WEST, K.C.I.E.
"CHESTERFIELD"
COLLEGE ROAD
NORWOOD, S.E.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4663

177. LETTER TO LORD REAY

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON ,]
November 29, 1906

MY LORD,

Mr. Ally and I, on our own behalf as well as on behalf of the British Indians of the Transvaal whom we have the honour to represent, beg to express our gratefulness to Your Lordship for your presence at the gathering today and for the interesting speech and message you were pleased to give to us to be carried to the British Indians of the Transvaal.

We are very grateful for the assurance that Your Lordship; and those [in] whose name you speak, shared our grievance, and would not be satisfied until it was redressed.

I beg to remain,

Your Lordship's obedient servant,

THE RT. HON. LORD REAY
6, GREAT STANHOPE STREET, W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4665

178. LETTER TO C. H. WANG

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 29, 1906

DEAR SIR,

I have your promise that you will let me have an article for *Indian Opinion*. I still await it. I leave on Saturday by the 11.35 a.m. train. If you can let me have it before, I shall appreciate it; if not, please forward it to me at Box 6522, Johannesburg, and mind you do not fail.

I have read your synopsis of the Chinese grievances. I think it is well drawn [up]. However, it is open to serious objections in one or two cases because you do not know the position thoroughly.

I am,
Yours truly,

C. H. WANG, ESQ., D.C.L.
28, MONTAGUE STREET
RUSSELL SQUARE

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4659

179. LETTER TO D. G. PANSE

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 29, 1906

DEAR SIR,

Some time during the month, on my return to the Hotel, I found a card left by you. I kept it in the hope of being able to call on you during my stay here. I however find that it is not possible for me to do so. I therefore now write to apologize.

I am,
Yours truly,

D. G. PANSE, ESQ.
INNS OF COURT HOTEL
HIGH HOLBORN

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4660

180. LETTER TO MISS E. LAWSON

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 29, 1906

DEAR MISS LAWSON,

Many thanks for your note. We leave on Saturday. I am delighted you are already in the thick of the fight and that you can speak so hopefully of your work. Both Mr. Ally and I will be interested to learn of your progress from day to day. I have yourpromise to keep yourself in touch with the British Indian question in South Africa. Have I not? You must secure from Mr. Ritch a copy of the *Indian Opinion* to read every week.

I am,
Yours truly,

MISS EDITH LAWSON
74, PRINCE'S SQUARE

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4661

181. LETTER TO MISS E. J. BECK

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 29, 1906

DEAR MISS BECK,

Many thanks for your note of the 28th instant. I am sorry, much as I should like to do so, that I could not pay you a visit before leaving for South Africa. The Deputation leaves on Saturday next.

I am asking Mr. Pather, the young Indian about whom I have written to you, to pay you a call on Sunday.[1]

I am,
Yours truly,

MISS E. J. BECK
233, ALBION ROAD
STOKE NEWINGTON, N.

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4662

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Miss E.J. Beck", 27-11-1906.

182. LETTER TO J. H. POLAK

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 29, 1906

DEAR MR. POLAK,

After all, I think that Ruthnum should, at least for the present, go to the Van Weenen's. The Bedford County School won't havehim by reason of his being overage. I have had no time to look up any other institution. He must leave India House at the earliest opportunity. If therefore the Van Weenen's are prepared still to accept him, will you kindly arrange so that Ruthnum can leave for Westcliffe on Monday? I would like Miss Weenen to give him all the education she is capable of giving him. Perhaps she can also secure a private tutor or admission for him to a school or class in Westcliffe. Under the above proposal, Ruthnum Pather need not take out a railway season ticket as he would be going to town only six days every term. I would like Miss Weenen to treat him as a member of the family, to be perfectly frank and open with him and never to hesitate to point out to Ruthnum his defects either in speech, in manner or in mode of living. He should in short be treated as a very young lad and receive loving supervision. He has in him the making[s] of a very good man if at the impressionable time of his life he receives proper handling.

You may, if you like, pass on this letter to Miss Van Weenen.

I am,
yours sincerely,

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4664

183. LETTER TO S. J. MEANEY

[HOTEL CECIL,
LONDON,]
November 29, 1906

S. J. MEANEY, ESQ.
THE COLONIAL OFFICE
DOWNING STREET

DEAR SIR,

With reference to your letter I now enclose herewith two copies of the printed letter[1] addressed to the Secretary of State for the

[1] This must be "Memorial to Lord Elgin", 8-11-1906, of which a printed copy is not, however, available.

Colonies by the Delegates.

I may state that the Delegates leave for South Africa on Saturday next.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

2 enclosures

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4666

184. LETTER TO THE PRESS[1]

HOTEL CECIL,
STRAND, W.C.,
November 30, 1906[2]

TO
THE EDITOR
THE TIMES
[LONDON]

SIR,

On the eve of the departure of the Indian Deputation from the Transvaal, may we trespass upon your courtesy to allow us to offer our thanks to the many supporters of the British Indian cause who have rendered us their valuable assistance in putting our case before the Imperial Government and the British public. The unfailing courtesy we have experienced from gentlemen representing different shades of opinion, from all parties, and from the Press has been a source of keenest satisfaction to us and has inspired us with a new hope. Our brief stay in London has prevented us from personally waiting on all whom we should have liked to meet. We have, however, received support and sympathy even from them.

The lesson we have drawn from the above is that we may rely upon the British sense of fair play and justice and that the cause we have the honour to espouse is absolutely just. May we restate it in a few words We ask for no political power in the Transvaal. We do not strive for unrestricted immigration of British Indians, but we do respectfully and emphatically claim the ordinary rights of citizenship forthose who are

[1] This was sent to other papers also and published in *South Africa*, 1-12-1906; was later reproduced in *India*, 7-12-1906, and in *Indian Opinion*, 29-12-1906. with a few verbal variations.

[2] The letter published in *South Africa* is dated November 29.

already in the country namely, free-dom of ownership of land, freedom of locomotion, freedom of trade, subject to such requirements as may be necessary in the interests of the community as a whole. In short, the British Indians in the Transvaal claim the right to live in the Transvaal with self-respect and dignity. The Indian community protests against any class distinction being made, and it has exerted itself against the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance, because it violates in the most brutal manner the principles above laid down. In our humble opinion we feel that if we cannot secure for our countrymen, whom we have the honour to represent, the above measure of recognition, the term "British Indian" becomes an empty platitude and"Empire" ceases to have any meaning for the British Indian. In coming to England and laying our case before the Home Govern-ment, we have no desire to offer violent opposition to the European Colonists in the Transvaal. Ours is wholly a defensive attitude. When the local Govern-ment, in the name of the people of the Transvaal, sends to the Imperial Government for assent a piece of offensive legislation[1] to protect and accentuate colour prejudice, we are obliged, in self-defence, to lay before the same Government the Indian side of the question. We are anxious and willing to work out our own salvation by our conduct, and by showing to the Colonists that their interests are also our interests and that our goal is the common advancement of them and us. We cannot do this if we do not get breathing time, by reason of the anti-Indian prejudice of the few being crystallized into and receiving the hallmark of legislation under the King's Sign Manual.

We are,

M. K. GANDHI

H. O. ALLY

The Times, 3-12-1906

[1] The *Indian Opinion* version reads: ". . . offensively restrictive legislation, we are obliged. . ."

185. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD ELGIN

UNION-CASTLE LINE,
R. M. S. *BRITON*,
SOUTHAMPTON DOCKS,
December 1, 1906

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
LONDON]

DEAR SIR,

I have been so much over-worked night and day that I have not been able before now to submit my promised statement[1] on Natal to His Lordship. I allowed it to be crowded out as Mr. Tatham's Bill was rejected by the Natal Parliament.

I have now forwarded to Mr. Ritch, the Secretary of the South Africa British Indian Committee, my statement and asked him to have it typed and then present the original with a typed copy to you for submission to Lord Elgin.

I duly received your letter with enclosures for which I thank you.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original: C. O. 179, Vol. 239/Ind.

[1] *Vide* enclosure.

[ENCLOSURE]

STATEMENT REGARDING BRITISH INDIAN POSITION IN NATAL[1]

1. I shall venture to deal with only the most important and pressing portion of the question.

THE IMMIGRATION ACT

2. Under this Act an undoubted injustice is done to British Indian merchants in that they are not allowed to import confidential clerks or domestic servants.

3. The result is that a monopoly is created among the few clerks and servants.

4. Nor is it possible to command a large supply of confidential clerks from those who are already domiciled in the Colony.

5. Confidential clerks as a rule and domestic servants invariably lack ability to satisfy the educational test under the Immigration Act.

6. It is not contended that such men should be allowed to possess rights of domicile but it is respectfully submitted that they ought to be allowed to enter the Colony to reside therein temporarily subject to guarantee being given that, at the end of their service with their masters, they should quit the Colony.

DEALERS' LICENSES ACT

7. This Act has caused and continues to cause the gravest mischief. British Indian merchants are totally at the mercy of the licensing officers whose decisions are not capable of being reviewed by the Supreme Court.

8. Under this Act most respectable Indian merchants of long standing have been deprived of their licences to trade i.e., of their vested rights. This happened in the case of Messrs Dada Osman and Hoondamal.

9. At one time an arbitrary use of their power by the licensing officers created a scandal. Mr. Chamberlain sent a strong despatch and the then ministry in Natal addressed a circular letter[2] to the municipalities of Natal that, unless they exercised reasonably, moderately and with due regard for vested rights, the power given to them, the Act would have to be amended so as to restore the inherent jurisdiction of the Supreme Court.

[1] This was forwarded by L. W. Ritch to the Private Secretary to Lord Elgin on December 4.

[2] *Vide* "Petition to Natal Governor", 31-7-1899.

10. It is submitted that the right of the Supreme Court to review the decisions of licensing officers should be restored at the earliest opportunity unless the Indian traders are to lose all they have in the Colony.

11. The late Mr. Escombe in his latter days deplored the deprivation of the right of approaching the Supreme Court in appeal against decisions of licensing officers.

MUNICIPALITIES BILL

12. The attempt to deprive the Indian ratepayers of the right to exercise the municipal franchise is held to be totally unjustifiable and wantonly insulting.

13. It is debatable whether India possesses representative institutions founded on the Parliamentary franchise. But it is not open to question as to the municipal franchise.

14. Both the late Sir John Robinson and the late Mr. Escombe said emphatically that the Indian community ought not to be deprived of the municipal franchise.[1]

15. The moral effect of sanctioning such legislation will be very serious and the Indians will be further degraded in the estimation of the Colonists.

CONCLUSION

16. It now only remains for me to add that regarding Natal the remedy is absolutely in the hands of the Imperial Government. [The] prosperity of Natal is dependent on a continuance of indentured labour from India. Natal cannot be allowed to draw upon India for a supply of indentured labour when she refuses to treat the resident Indian population with justice and decency.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original: C. O. 179, Vol. 239/Misc. Off.

[1] *Vide* "What is a Collie", 21-5-1904.

186. LETTER TO PROFESSOR GOKHALE

R. M. S. BRITON,
December 3, 1906

DEAR PROF. GOKHALE,

I am on way back to Johannesburg. I wrote to you from London.[1] Sir Muncherji suggests that there should be in India a separate South Africa British Indian Committee in the same way as in London. By this time you probably know all about the London Committee. If a committee were formed in India, I have no doubt all parties would unite. Mr. Bennett told me that Mr. Fraser of *The Times* [*of India*] would help willingly. Many members of the Chamber of Commerce too may unite and the Aga Khan will certainly do so. If some such organisation be formed, it will do most effective work.

The importance of the question was fully realized by everyone in London. I am aware that Sir Pherozeshaw[2] does not see eye to eye with us in this matter but I venture to think that he is mistaken. Anyhow if a committee were formed, even if it did not do much good, it could not do harm. In order to have a committee you certainly need some local man with an accurate knowledge of the position in South Africa. As to that I can make no suggestion.

I remain,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Please write to me Box 6522, Johannesburg.

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 2246

187. RITCH'S SPEECH AT EAST INDIA ASSOCIATION[3]

[Before *December 18, 1906*]

A paper on "The Burden of British Indians in South Africa" was read by Mr. L. W. Ritch at the Caxton Hall on November 26

[1] This letter has not been traced.

[2] Sir Pherozeshah Mehta

[3] This was drafted by Gandhiji on board the ship; *vide* following item, "Deputation Notes-IV", before 18-12-1906.

last, under the auspices of the East India Association. Sir Mun-cherjee Bhownaggree was in the chair. Among those present were Lord Reay, Sir Raymond West, Sir Frederick Tyler, Sir George Birdwood Mr. Cotton, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Brown, Mr. Morison and Mr. Arathoon. Professor Parmanand and Mr. Mukerjee were among the Indians present. The speech described in detail the condition [of Indians] all over South Africa. As most of the points made by Mr. Ritch are already known to the readers of this journal, I shall not summarize the speech here.

After Mr. Ritch had read his paper, the chairman called upon Messrs Gandhi and Ally to speak on the subject. Mr. Gandhi acknowledged with gratitude the help rendered by the East India Association to the cause of British Indians in South Africa and warned the assembly that, if the new act were passed, the responsibility would lie squarely on every Englishman. For, whatever laws were enacted in South Africa they were made in the name of the King Emperor. If therefore the British people were at all inclined to do justice to the three hundred millions in India, they should ensure that the hardships of Indians in the Colonies were ended.

Mr. Ally spoke next and supported Mr. Gandhi's argument. He pointed out that alien peoples such as Armenians were free to enter the Transvaal, while the Indians were subjected to various kinds of disabili-ties. This should happen no more.

Sir Raymond West said that, listening to Mr. Ritch's speech and the information given by the Delegates, he felt ashamed. Was the duty of England over once self-government had been granted to the Colony? If that were so, the term "Imperial race" ceased to have meaning and should no more be used. Self-government for a Colony did not give it the right to trample upon the non-whites. The Indians had a good cause, and with patience they were bound to get their grievances redressed.

Mr. Thornton pleaded strongly for justice being done to Indians in the Transvaal. He said that nothing could be more modest than the demands put forward by them, and they admitted of no dispute.

Mr. Nusserwanjee Cooper, Editor of *The Parsee Chronicle*, said that he had travelled in British Guiana and had found the Indians there quite happy. They enjoyed all the rights and many of them had risen to high positions. The Indians in South Africa should have the same rights and privileges. That they had to suffer hardships was gross

injustice.

Mr. Wise, a planter from Ceylon, took exception to Mr. Ritch's censure of indentured labour. They went there of their own free will, and it was not for others to say anything about it. Mr. Wise was followed by Mr. Martin Wood, Sir Leslie Probyn and others.

Replying to questions, Mr. Ritch said that, if one had to choose between doing the right thing by the Indians and losing the Colonies, it would be any day better to let the Colonies go. But to deny justice to the Indians would be a matter of shame to the British people.

Winding up the discussion, Sir Muncherji said that he had been thinking of the problem for many years and that he could not stand the hardships imposed upon the Indians in South Africa. Sir Raymond West had counselled patience, but he himself held there was no longer any room for patience. Where was the scope for patience when Indians were actually being deprived of their rights?

Before the meeting dispersed, a resolution expressing sympathy with the British Indians in South Africa was moved by Miss Winterbottom, the Secretary of the Union of Ethical Societies, and was passed. With a vote of thanks to Mr. Ritch, the proceedings came to a close.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-12-1906

188. DEPUTATION NOTES–IV

[Before *December 18, 1906*]

Their work completed, the Delegates left England by the same mail-ship which carries this letter. In fact, this note is being written on board the steamer.

The last week will abide in our memory for ever. Every moment strengthened our confidence that the mission on which the Delegates went to England would succeed.

SECOND MEETING OF M. P'S.

After Mr. Morley's reply, the Members of Parliament became more alert. They thought that, if the Royal assent were given to the Ordinance, England's prestige would suffer. They therefore decided to hold another meeting. Sir Charles Schwann, Mr. Cox and Mr. Scott busied themselves with this work. They asked us to issue circulars for

the meeting. These were got ready and despatched overnight. The meeting took place on Monday; and the Members resolved to wait upon the Prime Minister and speak to him about the Ordinance. A committee was appointed and it met Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. The Prime Minister said that he did not approve of the Ordinance, and that he would speak to Lord Elgin on the matter. This provided the first reason for entertaining the hope of which we have spoken.

INTERVIEW WITH CHURCHILL

We met Mr. Winston Churchill at the time fixed by him. He spoke nicely. He asked both of us whether we were not afraid of responsible government in case the Ordinance were refused assent. What if a worse act were to be passed by the new Government? We replied that we could not imagine an act worse than the present Ordinance,[1] and that we had asked for refusal of assent leaving the future to take care of itself. He then asked us to send him a brief note, covering, say, a foolscap sheet, of all that we had to say on this Ordinance, on the Vrededorp Stands Ordinance' and on the question as a whole. He would read and consider it. Mr. Ally then reminded him that he was the same person who had been present at the Point to receive Mr. Churchill on his return from the war[2]. And it was with the same Mr. Churchill that he now pleaded for redress on behalf of the Indian community. Mr. Churchill smiled, patted Mr. Ally on the back and said that he would do all he could. This answer added to our hopes. The brief account asked for by Mr. Churchill has already been sent to him.

INTERVIEW TO "THE DAILY NEWS"

The name of the Editor is Gardiner. When we repeated the whole story for his benefit, he promised to write strongly on the subject, and a poignant article was published the following day.

PARTY TO WELL-WISHERS

The Delegates may be said to have done the last bit of their work on the 29th. They gave a breakfast at Hotel Cecil to the gentlemen who had helped them. At the breakfast, the idea of the Committee was [formally] put forward. A fairly large number of persons was present. Lord Reay made a very good and powerful speech. There were also other effective speeches. But as I intend

[1] *Vide* enclosure to "Letter to Private Secretary to Churchill", 27-11-1906, enclosure.

[2] Evidently the Boer War

giving a separate account of the meeting and of the Committee, I shall say nothing more today.

DELEGATES' FAREWELL LETTER

The Delegates have sent a letter[1] of thanks to the Press. They have said that the Indian community did not want to fight against the Colony, but wished to solve its problems amicably. When a blow was directed against the community, it had to use a shield to ward it off. The community would, as far as possible, act with due deference to the views of the colonists. But at the same time, it would demand that there should be no detraction from the normal rights to which every citizen was entitled.

SEND-OFF

The Delegates left Waterloo station on December 1. Among those present to see them off were Sir Muncherji Bhownaggree, Mr. J. H. Polak, Mr. Ritch, the two Godfrey brothers, Mr. Suliman Manga, Mr. Mukerji, Mrs. Polak, Miss Smith, Mr. Simmonds, Prof. Parmanand and Mr. Ruthnum Pather.

THANKS FOR HELP

The names of those among the public men who helped us have already been mentioned and they have been thanked. But it remains for us to thank those who helped us without any thought of being publicly known. Among them are Mr. Simmonds, Miss Lawson, Mr. George Godfrey, Mr. James Godfrey, Mr. Ritch, Mr. Manilal Mehta, Mr. Adam Gool, Mr. Manga and Mr. Joseph Royeppen. Though Mr. Simmonds and Miss Lawson received payment, they did not work merely as wageearners. They worked late into the night ungrudgingly. The Godfrey brothers were in attendance everyday and assisted us. Gool and Manga, too, came whenever there was need. Similarly, Mr. Ruthnum Pather, who is at present studying in England, used to come and help us. But for all this help, the work of the M.P's. could not have been carried out as planned. The number of notices issued to the M.P's. alone was about 2,000. Anyone can realize the time that must have been taken in sending these out. It is superfluous to praise Mr. Ritch. His work is well known to the Indian community. Prof. Parmanand also gave us all the help that was needed.

[1] "Letter to the Press",30-11-1906.

RITCH'S SPEECH

Mr. Ritch delivered a speech[1] before the East India Association. As I give an account of it separately, I do not write about it here.

CABLEGRAM AT MADEIRA

Having finished our work, we left by s. s. *Briton.* We received two cablegrams when *Briton* touched Madeira. One was from Mr. Ritch, and the other from Johannesburg. Both said that the Ordinance had been refused assent by Lord Elgin. This was more than we had hoped for. But God's ways are inscrutable. Well-directed efforts yield appropriate fruit. The case of the Indian community was just, and circumstances turned out to be favourable. It is a happy outcome, but we may not exult over it. Much of the struggle still lies ahead. The Indian community has still to do much of its duty. We shall be able to digest our victory only if we prove our worth. Otherwise, it will turn out to be poison. We shall pursue these reflections later.

NATAL STRUGGLE

Lord Elgin has asked for a written statement[2] about Natal. This has been sent to him. The result will come to be known in the course of time. The Committee that has been set up is left with the work of striving for Natal and Vrededorp. It will thus have little respite.

CONCLUDED

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-12-1906

189. DEPUTATION'S THANKS[3]

[CAPE TOWN,]
December 20, 1906

The Delegates have received as many as thirty messages of greetings from Durban in addition to a few from Mafeking. As it is difficult to write individually to all those who sent these, they beg to acknowledge the messages with thanks. It is God who has to be thanked, not the Delegates who have done no more than their duty.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-12-1906

[1] "Ritch's Speech at East India Association", before 18-12-1906

[2] *Vide* enclosure to "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Elgin", 1-12-1906, enclosure.

[3] This was sent by Gandhiji to the Editor,- *Indian Opinion,* from Cape Town on his arrival from England on December 20.

190. RESOLUTIONS AT RECEPTION MEETING[1]

JOHANNESBURG
[*December 23, 1906*]

RESOLUTION 2.[2] This meeting of the British Indians of the Transvaal further tenders its thanks to the several friends in England who have helped the Delegates by their active support, and authorizes the Chairman of the British Indian Association and the Acting Chairman of the Hamidia Islamic Society to write to the gentlemen letters of thanks.

RESOLUTION 3. This meeting of the British Indians of the Transvaal further places on record the respectful desire of the Indian community to work in co-operation with the European colonists and to yield to their wishes in all reasonable ways and trust[s] that they will reciprocate the sentiment by helping the Indian settlers in the Transvaal to live in the Colony with self-respect and dignity, and in the enjoyment of those civic rights which all well-behaved citizens under civilized government have the right to possess.

Indian Opinion, 29-12-1906

191. SPEECH AT RECEPTION

The following is a brief report of Gandhiji's speech at a reception given in his honour by Omar Haji Amod Zaveri at his house:

[DURBAN,
December 26, 1906]

Mr. Gandhi thanked everyone. He expressed appreciation of the help rendered by Mr. Ally, and added that they should not be overjoyed at the cancellation of the Ordinance. The time had now come for all of them, Hindus and Muslims, to remain united and to carry on a real struggle. He emphasized the need for everyone to remain united in all such activity.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-12-1906

[1] On their return to South Africa, Gandhiji and Ally were given a reception by the British Indian Association at the Hamidia Islamic Society Hall on December 23. In reply to the addresses presented to them and to speeches eulogizing their services, Gandhiji and Ally said, according to *Indian Opinion*, that "their work had only just commenced. They had to show to the European Colonists that the Indian claim was just and reasonable and such as no sober Colonist would take exception to".

[2] This and the following resolution appear to have been drafted by Gandhiji. Earlier, the meeting adopted Resolution I congratulating Gandhiji and Ally on the success of their mission. All the three resolutions were unanimously passed.

192. REPLY TO WELCOME ADDRESS AT VERULAM

On December 29, 1906, the Indian community in Verulam presented an address to Gandhiji and H. O. Ally. Replying to the address on behalf of Ally, who was not present, and himself, Gandhiji said:

December 29, 1906

I thank you for the address of welcome to Mr. Ally and myself. I sympathize with the labourers in their hardships. We did put up a stiff fight when the [£3] tax was imposed on them. It is very difficult now to get any redress in the matter. We cannot do much about work taken on Sundays. As desired by you, I shall convey the message of your address and your thanks to Mr. Ally.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-1-1907

193. CABLE TO S.A.B.I. COMMITTEE

[JOHANNESBURG,]
December 29, 1906

TO

SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE

28, QUEEN ANNE'S CHAMBERS, S.W.

[LONDON]

PLEASE MOVE GOVERNMENT REGARDING ORDINANCE.

DEPURITION[1]

Colonial Office Records: C. 0. 291, Vol. 291/Misc.

194. A RETROSPECT

It has been our practice, during Christmas every year, to take stock of the position of Indians in South Africa. On this occasion we are glad to be able to inform our readers of the success achieved by the Deputation in the matter of the Transvaal Ordinance, which is the most important event of the year. As a result of Lord Elgin with holding assent to the Ordinance, it is not only the Transvaal Indians

[1] The Colonial Office Records show that this was the code word used by Gandhiji as Secretary of the Transvaal British Indian Association.

who have benefited, but the entire Indian community in South Africa. The community has gone one step forward. The main reason for withholding sanction was, we believe, saving the Indian community from a stigma which the Ordinance was certain to have put on it. This means that the Imperial Government will not sanction any law that will apply to the Indians but not to the whites. If we are right in assuming this, the Vrededorp Stands Ordinance, which prohibits Indians from holding any leases of Stands in Vrede dorp, should also be refused sanction. And the Natal Municipalities Franchise Bill should also be treated likewise. The Natal Mercury has, however, drawn a distinction and based on it the demand that, while the Transvaal is still a Crown Colony and so open to interference from the Imperial Government in its legislation, Natal is a self-governing Colony and that the Imperial Government should not interfere in its affairs. This argument is fallacious; for there is a clause in the Constitution of Natal which requires that all class legislation passed by the Natal parliament should have the approval of theImperial Government before it becomes law. If therefore this clause is not a mere show-piece but meant really to protect the Indian community, the argument of The Natal Mercury is not valid. There is therefore every reason to expect that the Natal Bill too will be vetoed.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-12-1906

195. OPPRESSION IN THE CAPE

It has come to our notice that, under the Cape Immigration Act, the Cape Indians, while taking out an immigration certificate or permit, furnish their photograph, pay a fee of £1 and, on occasion, give their right and left thumb-impressions as well. We have also come to know that this has gone on for some time past. We are deeply grieved to learn this. It not only makes the Indians hang their heads in shame, but, if not stopped, it will have repercussions elsewhere and will harm the cause of the entire Indian community in South Africa. It is quite easy to remedy this evil. For, as we understand it, it is not done under any properly enacted law; it is the immigration officer who, in consultation with a few Indians, has introduced this system of taking photographs. If, therefore, Indians meet the immigration officer, immediate redress may be possible. We are anxious to learn that

effective measures have been taken in this regard without the least delay. At one time the Asiatic Officer had introduced a similar regulation in the Transvaal; but it had to be repealed when the Indian community opposed it.

Moreover, it is found that these certificates will be valid for one year only. There is absolutely no reason why they should be so limited. To a man who has no knowledge of English but is a resident of the Cape, a permanent certificate should be issued stating that he has a right to return to the Cape. We are not prisoners released on parole that our certificates of freedom can be cancelled if we fail to return within a given period. The situation in the Cape is believed to be better than that elsewhere. We appeal to the Cape leaders to keep up that position by their diligence.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-12-1906

196. REPLY TO WELCOME ADDRESS AT DURBAN

A meeting of the Natal Indian Congress was held at Durban on Tuesday, January 1, 1907, to present an address to Gandhiji and H. O. Ally, with Dawad Mahomed in the chair. Gandhiji replied as follows:

[DURBAN,
January 1, 1907]

I do not propose to speak at length, as it is already late. Both Mr. Ally and myself are very grateful to you for the kind sentiments you have expressed about us. Unity is our greatest need here. We are sure to obtain our just rights if we stand united and demand them politely but firmly. We could not have achieved anything in England but for the help we received from the people there. We have seen that British rule is essentially just and we can find redress for our grievances through representations. But we should not be elated by our success. Our struggle has just begun. Now it is up to us to retain the [fruits of] victory. We have to explain things to the politicians here. Before I conclude, I would appeal to all of you to do your duty, working actively, with body, mind and wealth, for the good of the community.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-1-1907

197. SPEECH AT DINNER

On Wednesday, January 2, 1907, a dinner was given in honour of Gandhiji and Ally by Messrs M. C. Comroodeen & Co. at their premises in Grey Street, Durban. The Manager of the firm spoke on the occasion and Gandhiji and Ally replied. The following is a combined report of their speeches:

[DURBAN,
January 2, 1907]

Messrs Gandhi and Ally each replied, and narrated their work in London. During their stay, short as it was, they came in contact with all classes of men from the
humblest politician to the highest, including the Premier, and none of them on hearing the case put in such a reasonable light, grudged them their support, no matter what party he belonged to. To give some idea, the Delegates stated that 5,000 penny stamps were used for their work in London. The Committee that had been formed to watch their affairs was composed of highly influential men, to whom they entrusted their case in South Africa. Strong and sincere promises of help had been given by Members of both the Houses of Parliament, who were convinced of the moderation of their demand, and the conciliatory spirit of their case. When the Ordinance was introduced, it was passed so hurriedly that all the protests were disregarded, and yet they did not seek any outside interference. They took the right course, and the right had prevailed. They had high hopes from the work of theCommittee. The great organ of public opinion, *The Times*, in London, had opened its columns to discuss their case, and when the position was explicitly explained and understood, there was only one reply, and that was that their grievance was just, modest, and reasonable to any right-thinking human being. When they left the English shore, they had strong hopes that redress would not be denied to them: and when, after some days, they reached Madeira they had a cable to say that the Ordinance had been disallowed. The Delegates asked the audience to conform to all their responsibilities as citizens, and they had every hope from British justice. The struggle had only just begun, but they did not despair of the future.

The Natal Mercury, 4-1-1907

198. REPLY TO MAHOMEDAN ASSOCIATION'S ADDRESS

A well-attended meeting of the Mahomedan Association was held at Durban on Thursday, January 3, 1907, to present an address to Gandhiji and Ally with Osman Ahmed Effendi in the chair. Gandhiji replied as follows:

[DURBAN ,
January 3, 1907]

A number of associations have been founded recently. If they want to, they can do a great deal for the community. The workers in these associations should act as servants of these bodies, not as masters. Only so can real service be rendered. Also we shall gain much strength and influence if the various associations co-operate with one another. Moreover, the suggestion made by Mr. Paul about education really deserves consideration. He also referred to the land in Phoenix. I am glad to say that I do not look upon it as my personal property, but as belonging to the community. I am sorry to state that the Government in India is trying to create disunity among Hindus and Muslims there. It would like to see us divided as it believes that only thus can British rule in India be perpetuated. A cablegram is published in The Advertiser today, which we cannot accept as genuine. It is certainly the Government which sends out these cablegrams and arranges such meetings. Many people want to know the main reason of our success [in London]. It lies in the perfect accord that obtained between Mr. Ally and myself. Never were there any differences between us. We have been successful only because we acted with love and in concert, like father and son. It should be remembered by all that, even though following different relig-ions, we remained united in our struggle. Secondly, truth andjustice were on our side. I believe God is always near me. He is never away from me. May you also act in this faith. Believe that God is near you and always follow the truth. This is all I ask of *you*.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-1-1907

199. SPEECH AT DURBAN RECEPTION

An address was presented to Gandhiji and Ally by the Mahomedan Association at the Indian Theatre in Victoria Street on Thursday, January 3, 1907. In reply to the address and speeches by Dawad Mahomed, Dada Abdulla and others, Gandhiji and Allyspoke. The following is a combined report of their speeches:

The Delegates spoke, each in their turn, on broad politics, further giving the audience a review of their hard work in England. They acknowledged the sterling services and important counsels given to them by Sir M. M. Bhownaggree, who placed his immense influence and long experience at their disposal, as did Mr. Ameer Ali, ex-judge of the Calcutta Supreme Court. The importance of India as a precious possession of the British Empire, with its 300,000,000 people who form a third part of the King-Emperor's subjects, played a great part in their success. The English audience was, at several meetings, asked whether they would allow the South African colonists to ill-treat undeservedly the sons of India, who fought their wars in China, South Africa, Somaliland, Soudan, and the frontiers of India; the people whose loyalty could be gauged by remembering that a handful of white soldiers (about 78,000) was sufficient to guard the 300 millions of fellow-subjects in India, and whether they would like the representatives of the 13,000 British Indians of the Transvaal when they went back to India, to tell their kith and kin that the great Emperor who ruled this vast Empire was unable to save them from undue humiliation in South Africa at the hands of narrow-minded white colonists? The instant reply of the enthusiastic audiences was strongly in the negative.

Messrs Gandhi and Ally convinced the Indian audience that they had returned with a confident conviction from England that any reasonable and just grievance, when laid with moderation before the English rulers at Home, would not go unredressed; and, in conclusion, asked the members of the community to conform to all the laws and by-laws of the Government whether just or unjust, and make themselves good citizens, as in them lay their own salvation. They must convince their white neighbours that their presence in South Africa was not unbeneficial to the Colony, and they must work side by side with European colonists, who should always be honoured as the predominant race.

The Natal Mercury, 8-1-1907

200. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

In his annual report recently published, the Superintendent of Education in Natal has said that whatever education is given [to Indians] is provided by the Government at its own expense and that the Indian community does nothing in the matter. The charge is partly, though not entirely, justified. Besides running a Madressa at Umgeni and one or two other private schools, the Indian community makes small occasional contributions towards the education of

Indians. Hence we cannot admit the charge of the Superintendent in the form in which he has made it. But it will have to be admitted by every Indian to his shame that the charge is on the whole justified. Even in the Madressa there is plenty of scope for improvement if only we have the enthusiasm. We are firmly of the view that, just as there should be provision in every Madressa for the teaching of Arabic, so should there be provision for secular or practical education, that is, for the teaching of English and Gujarati or any other Indian language. Moreover, whatever teaching there is in Arabic is mostly parrot-like; in other words, it is learning by rote withoutunderstanding the meaning. On this point, we would advise our Muslim brethren to consider the example of Egypt. There education is imparted inArabic from childhood, but with comprehension of the meaning, so that all people can speak Arabic and understand what they read from the earliest age. This is also true of other education in the Egyptian Madressa. If this reform is carried out in every Indian Madressa, many Muslim children will receive some education without difficulty. In this matter we cannot but confess that the leaders of thecommunity have remained backward.

Apart from the Madressa, there is so little by way of other facilities, and the Indian community has been so careless that we must admit whatever charge is made against us on this count. It does not become us to pass on the blame to others by saying that the Government does nothing for education. It is as much our duty as that of the Government to provide for education. If the Government fails in its duty, that is no reason for us to follow suit. On the contrary, if the Government does nothing for education, the responsibility of the Indian community becomes all the greater. We are therefore constrained to say that the above charge is quite justified.

We know that it is easy to be critical but difficult to suggest remedies and apply them. But we shall be able to take a step forward only if we admit that we have been guilty. Three things are necessary for meeting the problem. The first thing is buildings and equipment. In this matter, only the well-to-do can do much.

The second thing to be done is that, just as the rich ought to contribute money, so also ought educated Indians to place their education at the disposal of the community, free of charge or all but free of charge. Making money is not the object of education. If the Roman Catholic community is foremost in the world in the matter of

education, it is so because it has from the beginning decided that those who are to be engaged in teaching should give their services free, accepting only what is necessary for their maintenance. Besides, they are of mature age and unmarried, so that they are able to devote all their time to the single job of teaching. We may or may not be able to reach that level, but there is no doubt that we ought to take a lesson from their example. Even those who have received but moderate education will do well to think over these suggestions. We shall consider later and in detail in what manner educated people can help, easily and without much trouble.[1]

The third remedy lies in the hands of the parents. If among our people the parents had been eager to see their children educated, they would have made the necessary provision somehow, and means would have been found easily enough for the two measures suggested above. But Indian parents are backward in this respect, and to us this is a cause of humiliation. We cannot find a single period in history when an uneducated people has become prosperous. It is not that education has become necessary only in modern times; it has always been so. Only the form has changed. The kind of education, which we cannot do without now, was not absolutely necessary in olden days. We believe that a people without modern education will fall behind in the end; not only that, it would not even be surprising if such a people were destroyed altogether. Be that as it may, it is certain that, whatever struggle we put up for our rights, the condition of Indians will never become what it ought to be as long as we remain backward in education.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-1-1907

201. INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

Many prominent people who formerly used to ignore the Congress took notice of its session this year. The main reason is the great storm that is raging in Bengal at present. Reuter has sent long reports to the newspapers here. This is the first time that the Congress has received such publicity. The session has also produced a great impression this year. The address by the Grand Old Man of India is

[1] *Vide* ''Duty of Educated Indians'',19-1-1907.

very forceful and effective. His words deserve to be enshrined in our hearts. The substance of the address is that India will not prosper until we wake up and become united. To put it differently, it means that it lies in our hands to achieve *swaraj*, to prosper and to preserve the rights we value. On an earlier occasion we mentioned Mr. Asquith's reply to the women of Great Britain that, if all of them demanded the franchise, it could not but be granted. We must therefore realize that, like us here, people in England too have difficulty in obtaining their rights. There, the people can secure their demands with less difficulty. That this is so is not because they are white, but because they are firmly united in their demands and, if these are rejected, they can create trouble for the rulers. When the South Africa British Indian Committee was formed in England, Dr. Oldfield said that strength and justice were dear to the British people. Under British rule, justice is often not to be had without some show of strength, whether of the pen, of the sword, or of money. For our part we are to use only the strength that comes from unity and truth. That is to say, our bondage in India can cease this day, if all the people unite in their demands and are ready to suffer any hardships that may befall them. These thoughts, which relate to India, will also be useful to us here.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-1-1907

202. TOBACCO

We have written now and again in these columns about the harm done by smoking or chewing tobacco. The evil effects of tobacco, as our realization of them grows, have alarmed many great men. The famous Major-General Baden-Powell[1] of Mafeking, addressing schoolboys in Liverpool, said that many of the world's best men were non-smokers. Basset, the football player, Grace, the cricketeer, Henlane, the great rower, Weston, the walking champion, Tej, the golf star, Taylor, the great hunter, Celloo, the famous hiker, are all of them non-smokers. When Baden-Powell's stock of tobacco ran out, the soldiers at Mafeking addicted to tobacco became absolutely useless, for they were helpless if they could not smoke. Thus smoking makes of man a slave. In England, it is said, addicts to smoking are quite

[1] (1857-1941); founder of the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides organizations

indifferent to those around them. The evil effects of this habit become really very dangerous when it spreads among juveniles. They learn to steal and commit other crimes. They deceive their parents and ruin their health. They become irritable, and by the time they become adults, they lose their strength of mind. The habit of smoking has not spread as much among Indians as among Europeans. However, it will be adding to our many ills if educated Indians lose their sanity and take to smoking.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 5-1-1907

203. BOOKS TO BE PUBLISHED

We intend to publish translations or summaries of Englishbooks which have not yet been translated in India, but which are likely to be of use, more or less, to all Indian readers. Considering that a large section of our readers are Muslims, we are thinking of publishing a translation of the celebrated Mr. Justice Ameer Ali's book on Islam which came out some time ago. Justice Ameer Ali has given us the permission to translate it. The consent of the publishers is yet to be had. If that also is received and if the idea is favoured by our readers and they are prepared to encourage us, we intend to publish a translation of *The Spirit of Islam* in book form. We must saythat Justice Ameer Ali's book has won fame throughout the world and deserves to be read by every Muslim, indeed by every Indian. There is much to be learnt from it. We shall gratefully bear in mind any suggestions our readers may have to make. The suggestions, it is requested, should be brief and legibly written.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 5-1-1907

204. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
About *January 5, 1907*]

The above sums must have already been credited to your account in the statements sent to you.

Shri Bhabha of Volksrust tells me that you still continue to send the advertisement bill to him. He has already paid it and the money also has been credited here.

Kalyandas is now busy recovering the dues here. Many subscribers complain that they do not get Indian Opinion regularly. The two enclosed copies were sent in a single wrapper. You will notice that the postal stamp on Desai's copy has not been defaced. You may remove the stamp and use it.[2] Kalyandas believes that some of our people there pack the copies and stick the wrappers carelessly, and they therefore fall apart and the papers get lost. I am writing to Mr. West also about this. We ought to be very careful. I think it necessary for someone to supervise the work of wrapping. You may discuss this with others there.

I am going to write about the London Letter. I shall write to The Times of India also. We are bound by a contract with Reuter for three months, so we can make an alternative arrangement only at the end of the three months. I am, however, moving in the matter straightaway.

Ask Mania[3] to write to me. Let me know what he reads under your guidance. I sent all the matter I could. Let me know whether or not it was enough. If you have received anything regarding the translation of Justice Ameer Ali's book, send it on to me.[4]

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand. S.N. 6071

[1] Of the three sheets of this letter, the first is missing. From the contents, however, it isclear that it was addressed to Chhaganlal Gandhi at Phoenix. The reference to Justice Ameer Ali's book in the last paragraph would suggest that the letter was written about January 5.

[2] Apparently, the stamped packet containing Desai's copy was itself wrapped in another stamped packet containing someone else's copy.

[3] Manilal, Gandhiji's second son

[4] The reference may be to the publisher's permission which was awaited; *vide* the preceding item.

205. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
About January 5, 1907[2]*]*

[MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,]

I see in the list of subscribers sent by you for collection, the name of K. M. Kagdi, Box 296. I remember having sent the name to you, but he tells me that he never received a single copy. He clears his box everyday, but does not receive any. Will you kindly make enquiries? If we have been sending the paper, collection is easy. If not, we have to drop this collection. You may, however, commence sending the paper from the date of this letter, if it has not been sent before. I have looked through the printed list sent by you, and I did not find the name there earlier.

You should try not to take Manilal from the English desk if possible. It is necessary to give him regular training. There is a great deal of force in Mr. West's argument with regard to him.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 6085

206. SUPERINTENDENT ALEXANDER

Mr. Alexander[2], till now the [Police] Superintendent of Durban, has left his post. He has received much honour in Durban in recognition of his excellent services. He was very kind to the Indians.To show the appreciation of the Durban Indian community there is, we hear, a move to present him with an address. We would advise that there should be no delay and the matter be taken in hand immediately. We hope that Mr. Donovan, who has been appointed in Mr. Alexander's place, will continue his policy and deal out justiceimpartially.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-1-1907

[1] This incomplete letter bears neither a date nor an address. From the contents, however, it is clear that it was addressed to Chhaganlal Gandhi. It refers to the collection of dues, which was being seriously undertaken at Phoenix about this time. Manilal's studies and the collection of dues are discussed in this as well as the preceding letter.

[2] It was this officer who came to Gandhiji's rescue when in 1897 he was mobbed at Durban. *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897, Appendix-O; also *Autobiography*, Part III, Ch. III.

207. REASONABLE SUGGESTION

The Cape Argus of Cape Town, commenting on the Asiatic Ordinance, suggests that the different governments of South Africa should consult with the Indian leaders with a view to finding a solution of the Indian problem in South Africa.[1] It says further that, if this is not done, both Britain and India will probably suffer. This is an important suggestion, made as it is for the first time by an English journal. If proper steps are immediately taken, it is likely to be acted upon. The suggestion shows that the withholding of assent to the Asiatic Ordinance has had a somewhat salutary effect on the mind of the white population all over South Africa. We have discussed this matter in greater detail in our English article, and we hope that some good will come of it.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-1-1907

208. ETHICAL RELIGION-I[2]

INTRODUCTION

We propose, during the next few weeks, to write a series of articles on this subject for readers of *Indian Opinion*. Hypocrisy has nowadays increased in the world. Whatever a man's religion, he thinks only of its outward form and fails in his real duty. In our crazy pursuit of wealth, we seldom think of the harm we cause, or are likely

[1] The Cape Argus, commenting on the situation created by the suspension of the Transvaal Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance, said: "We would have the local Governments everywhere take counsel with the leaders of the Indian community. It should be put to these men that they cannot expect white colonists to stand by and see the very texture of the community quickly transformed by an Indian influx; and that some regulations should be arrived at by which undue hardship on the men who are here could be avoided. It is by some such compromise only that we can avoid conflict, good for neither Briton nor Indian." Commenting on this in its English editorial columns, *Indian Opinion* (5-1-1907) described it as "A Wise Suggestion" and argued that "British Indians in South Africa have [always] accepted the principle of restriction of Indian immigration along non-racial lines''.

[2] In this and the subsequent seven articles of the same title, Gandhiji summarized, into Gujarati, *Ethical religion* by William MacIntyre Salter, the founder of the Society for Ethical Culture, Chicago. The book, one of a series issued by the Rationalist Press Association, was published in America in March 1889 and later in England in 1905. In the Gujarati series, Gandhiji summarized only eight of the fifteen chapters.

to cause, to others. Women in Europe do not hesitate in the least to wear soft [kid] gloves even though these are made by killing young and tender animals. It is known the world over how Mr. Rockefeller, said to be the richest man in the world, violated many rules of morality in amassing his fortune. It is because such conditions prevail around them that many people in Europe and America have turned against religion. They argue that, if any religion worth the name existed in the world, the inordinate wickedness that is rampant all round would not be there. This is a mistaken view. As it is common for a workman to quarrel with his tools and not try to look for his own faults, so, instead of thinking of the wickedness in themselves, men brand religion itself as humbug and go on acting and living as they please.

Observing this trend and fearing that, if all religions are destroyed, a great calamity may befall the world and people may forsake the moral path altogether, many Americans anal Europeans have come forward to try, in a variety of ways, to bring the people back to that path.

A Society[1] has been founded which has shown, after an investigat-ion of all religions, that not only do all of them teach morality but they are based for the most part on; ethical principles; that it is one's duty to obey the laws of ethics whether or not one professes a religion; and that men who would not obey them could do no good either to themselves or to others, in this world or the next. The object of these societies is to influence those who have led to look down upon all religions because of the prevailing hypocrisy. They find out the fundamentals of all religions, discuss and write about the ethical principles common to them and live up to them. This creed they call Ethical Religion. It is not among the aims of these societies to criticize any religion. Men professing all religions can, and do, join these societies. The advantage of such a society is that members adhere to their own faith more strictly and pay greater attention to its moral teaching. They firmly believe that man ought to abide by the laws of morality and that if he does not, it mean an end to all order in the world and ultimate destruction.

Mr Salter, a learned American, has published a book on the subject, which is excellent. Though it does not deal with any religion

[1] The Society for Ethical Culture, Chicago

as such, it contains teachings of universal application. We shall publish the substance of these teachings every week. All that needs to be said about the author is that he practises whatever he advises others to do. We would only appeal to the reader to try to live up to those moral precepts that appeal to him. Then only may we regard our efforts as having been fruitful.

CHAPTER I

It is the moral nature of man by which he rises to good and noble thoughts. The different sciences show us the world as it is. Ethics tells us what it ought to be. It enables man to know how he should act. Man has two windows to his mind: through one he can see his own self as it is; through the other, he can see what it ought to be. It is our task to analyse and explore the body, the brain and the mind of man separately; but if we stop here, we derive no benefit despite our scientific knowledge. It is necessary to know about the evil effects of injustice, wickedness, vanity and the like, and the disaster they spell where the three are found together. And mere knowledge is not enough, it should be followed by appropriate action. An ethical idea is like an architect's plan. The plan shows how the building should be constructed; but it becomes useless if the building is not raised accordingly. Similarly, an ethical idea is useless so long as it is not followed by suitable action. There are many who memorize moral precepts and preach sermons, but they neither practise them nor do they mean to do so. There are some who believe that moral principles are not intended to be practised in this world; they are meant for the other world—the world which lies beyond death. A great thinker has said, "If you wish to attain perfection, you must begin from this very day to live according to the laws of morality at any cost." We need not be scared away by such thoughts; on the contrary we should be glad to live up to them, considering our responsibility in the matter. "Certainly, cousin," said the gallant Earl of Pembroke, on coming up to the Earl of Derby before Aubercoche and finding the battle already won, "you have neither been courteous nor behaved honour-ably to fight my enemies without waiting for me, seeing that you had sent for me". Only when there is such readiness to accept moral responsibility will men tread the path of virtue.

God is omnipotent, He is perfect. There are no limits to His mercy, to His goodness and to His justice. If this is so, how can we, His bond slaves, stray at all from the moral path? It is no fault of the

ethical principles if one following them should fail. However, those committing a breach of morality have only themselves to blame.

In the path of morality there is no such thing as reward for moral behaviour. If a man does some good deed, he does not do it to win applause, he does it because he must. For him doing good is but a higher kind of food, if one may compare food and goodness. And if someone should give him an opportunity to do a good deed, he would feel grateful just as a starving man would be grateful to the giver of food and bless him.

This ethical religion, of which we have spoken, does not mean the cultivation of gentlemanliness. It does mean that we should become a little more diligent, a little better educated, a little cleaner and neater, etc. All this is no doubt included in it, but it touches only the fringe of ethical religion. Many more things have to be done by man if he would walk along this path; and he has to do them as a matter of duty, knowing them to be a part of his nature, not for gaining any worldly benefit.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-1-1907

209. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

January 8, 1907

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I saw the Secretary of the Hamidia [Islamic Society] again today in connection with its regulations. He lays the blame on you, saying that the proofs were sent after two months! Is this right? He has now promised to return the proofs and the report on Friday.

Don't forget that you are to send me a list of simple books in Hindi and Tamil.

Approach the men from whom no advertisements have been received, and some others as well. Let me know what happens.

I am also sending some matter.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 4681

210. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

January 11, 1907

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I can well understand how you must be working. I know, too, that you cannot leave Phoenix. It is because Kalyandas[1] is so enthusiastic that a long programme has been drawn up for him. All the same, he will be there on the 19th at the latest. I will instruct him to reach on the 18th. He will leave tomorrow. By staying on, he could clear the entire Johannesburg list. I will arrange about Suleman Ismail's advertisement. Do not take it out for the present.

I am sending a letter from Suleman Essop. It carries my comments. Print only these. The letter is not to be printed. I hope whatever I send is being kept in a separate jacket or in some such manner that it does not get mislaid.

Add the following names as new subscribers. Hemchand will send a credit note when their subscriptions are received here.

Mr. V. Naidoo

Wellington, C.C.

Messrs K. U. Naidoo & Co.

Robertson

Send copies of the last three or four issues to both. But enter them as subscribers from January only. See that everyone who arrives in Phoenix feels at home.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Let me know at your convenience the expenditure at Phoenix on my account, and also ask Miss West[2] to give the figure.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 4682

[1] Kalyandas Jagmohandas Mehta

[2] Ada West

211. LETTER TO "THE OUTLOOK"

[JOHANNESBURG
Before *January 12, 1907*]

[TO

THE EDITOR

THE OUTLOOK

SIR,]

May I congratulate you on having recognized by your exhaustive leader on "British Indians in the Transvaal" in your issue of November 24 the Imperial importance of the question? And may I, at the same time, point out that you have, in justifying the anti-Indian policy of the Europeans, done, no doubt unconsciously, an injustice to British Indians in a twofold manner?

First, in my humble opinion, you have missed the central question. You seem to think that Indians on the one hand demand an open door for an unrestricted influx of their countrymen, and that the white colonists on the other, from an instinct of self- preservation, demand that the door should be tightly closed. Such, however, is not the case. Indians ask for the ordinary civil rights enjoyed by all human beings, except criminals, in any civilized state. They admit the principle of restriction of further immi-gration of their brethren along the lines even as adopted by Aust-ralia, but they say, with Mr. Chamberlain that they may not be restricted solely because theyare British Indians. If Imperia-lism has any meaning, how can any exception be taken to a position such as above? I have no doubt that you, sir, will admit that even a self-governing colony, so long as it chooses to remain a part of the Empire, may not go so far as to degrade and ill-treat those whom it finds settled within its borders on assumption of self-governing powers.

Secondly, you talk of the necessity of sacrifice of a "principle of logic" (as you are pleased to term it) to the principle of "high expediency". To me, it is not logic so much as morality you would sacrifice on the altar of expediency; but assuming that a logical or a moral principle may be so sacrificed, what is "higher expediency"? It is a wanton wounding of the susceptibilities of a finely strung and highly loyal community like the millions of India, or a firm refusal on the part of the Imperial watchdog sitting, inLord Milner's language,

on the watch-tower, and sweeping the whole horizon before him to protect an unreasoning and unreasonable colour prejudice.

You incidentally mention the Treaty of Vereeniging[1]. May I draw your attention to the fact that, even if the term "Native" as used there were to include British Indians, it merely suspends a consideration of the granting of the *political* franchise to the "Natives" until after the establishment of responsible government in the Colony. British Indians have, however, in unmistakable language stated that they do not aspire, at any rate at the present stage, to political power.

Indian Opinion, 12-1-1907

I am,

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

212. QUINN'S SPEECH

Mr. Quinn's speech, as reported by our Johannesburg correspondent,[2] deserves attention. It shows that the white population is altogether in the dark about our conditions. Mr. Quinn believes that (1) the Asiatic Ordinance would have prevented the entry of Indians without permits; (2) there are many Indians who have entered the country without permits; (3) the Transvaal law would also have served to check Indian trade.

All these statements are incorrect. The Transvaal Ordinance which has been disallowed would not have prevented the entry of permitless Indians. The only law that can prevent the entry of such persons is the Peace Preservation Ordinance. Also it is not true that many Indians enter without permits. Recent cases show that people are effectively prevented from doing so. Furthermore, every one knows that the Asiatic Ordinance had no bearing on Indian trade.

All the same, it should be borne in mind that harm is done to the whole Indian community to the extent that some try to enter without permits or with forged ones. Those engaged in such activities should desist from them.

Above all, leading Indians should do all they can to remove this

[1] Signed between the Boers and the British Government in 1902, it brought the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony under British rule.

[2] *Vide* ''Johannesburg Letter'', 12-1-1907.

kind of misunderstanding among the white population. A recent example is the incident that occurred in the house of Mr. Dawad Mahomed, which we mention elsewhere.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-1-1907

213. VREDEDORP ORDINANCE

It will be seen from our Johannesburg Letter that the Vrededorp Ordinance has been passed.[1] Thus there is a danger of Vrededorp Indians having to leave the place. Now that the Ordin-ance has been passed, the Indian community should realize that there is much work ahead, and that it will have to put up a hard fight. If the Asiatic Ordinance was cancelled, it was only because the matter was widely discussed in England. The same telegram which brought us the news of the passing of the Vrededorp Ordinance also says that our Committee in London is working hard in the matter of the Natal Municipal Bill. It remains to be seen what the result will be. Whatever it be, one thing at least is proved by this: the Committee that we have formed in England should be strengthened and supported energetically. It certainly ought not to be wound up. We invite the attention of every reader to the summary of Mr. Ritch's first letter published by us. If the Committee continues to work in that manner, there is every chance of our profiting a great deal.

This Ordinance [business] also shows that there is nothing like self-help in any matter whatever. That is, as long as we do not do what needs to be done in South Africa, we cannot hope for complete success. What our duty is in South Africa, we shall consider on another occasion.[2]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-1-1907

[1] However, the ''Johannesburg Letter'' (12-1-1907) does not mention the Vrededorp Ordinance.

[2] *Vide* ''Natal Licensing Act'', 26-1-1907.

214. JAPAN AND AMERICA

The quarrel between Japan and America still continues. California has a large Japanese population, which has made much progress by dint of its intelligence and skill. There are many Japanese boys in American schools. The white population there cannot bear this. Japan is putting up a hard fight over this issue. So far, there has been no solution. President Roosevelt is in a difficult situation. On the one hand, a brave people like the Japanese is being insulted. On the other, those among the white population who would not mind America being involved in a war refuse to listen to Roosevelt's advice and do not allow Japanese boys to enter the schools. It is an impossible situation. America is not in a position even to fight. The Japanese Navy is very much stronger than the American, and only recently it proved its mettle.

In a situation such as this, England too has to weigh matters carefully. While the Japanese are friends of the English, the Americans are their cousins. Whom should England support? It is believ-ed that war can be averted only if England intervenes effectively.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-1-1907

215. JOHANNESBURG, LETTER[1]

QUINN'S SPEECH

A feverish election campaign is going on in-the Transvaal in view of the new parliament that is to come. into existence. Mr. Quinn is working hard to enter Parliament. Addressing his electorate, he spoke to the following effect:

> As a result of the Asiatic Ordinance passed by the Legislative Council some time ago, it has become very diffi-cult for Asiatics to enter without a permit. Those who voted for that Act bore no malice towards the Asiatics. There is no point in saying that they are British subjects. For there are some British subjects with white skins with whom I would have nothing to do.

[1] These despatches were published regularly in *Indian Opinion* as from its Johannesburg correspondent.

It is in self-defence therefore that we oppose their coming in. Our views in this matter are identical with those expressed by Mr. Chamberlain, The Asiatics who manage to live on a tenth of the money needed by the whites are not justified in expecting to enter and settle here in large numbers It is not proper that such men should compete with us. It is necessary therefore to take steps to prevent them from doing so. The present position is that, out of the five thousand licences issued at Johannesburg, ten per cent. have gone to the Asiatics—270 to the Indians and 255 to the Chinese. This should not happen. These shops should be closed down and the shopkeepers given compen-sation. The British Government with held assent to the Asiatic Ordinance because they were not aware either of our real condition or of our feelings in the matter. I do not believe that the British Govern-ment intend to do us harm. Theyhave not taken the side of the sufferers, and if they have with held assent to the Ordinance for that reason, they will not hesitate to accord sanction to the Ordinance when the [new] parliament of the Transvaal meets and reenacts it unanimously.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-1-1907

216. ETHICAL RELIGION- II

CHAPTER II: IDEAL MORALITY

The current views of morality are not of a very high order. Some believe that morality is not something quite essential. Others think that there is no relation between religion and morality. But an examination of the world's religions shows that, without morality, religion cannot subsist. True morality covers religion for the most part. Anyone who observes the laws of morality for their own sake and not for any selfish end can be regarded as religious. There are men in Russia who dedicate their lives to the good of their country. Such men are truly moral. A man like Jeremy Bentham, who discovered many good principles for English legislation, tried very hard to spread education among the English and took a prominent part in improving the condition of prisoners, may be regarded as truly moral.

Besides, it is a rule of ideal morality that it is not enough to

follow the trodden path. We ought to follow the path which we know to be true, whether it is familiar or unfamiliar to us. In other words, when we know a particular path to be the right one, we should set out on it without fear. We can progress only if we observe the laws of morality in this way. That is why true morality, true civilization and true progress are always to be found together.

If we examine our desires, we shall see that we do not wish for what we have already. We always value more that which we do not have. But desires are of two kinds: one is the pursuit of mere self-interest.To attempt to fulfil this kind of desire is immoral. The other impels us constantly to improve ourselves and to do good to others. We should never become overweening with any amount of good that we may do. It is not for us to evaluate it, but rather should we have perpetual longing to become better and do more good. True morality consists in our effort to realize such longing.

If we have no home or family of our own, that is nothing to be ashamed of. But if we have a home and abuse it, or own a business and practise fraud, we stray from the path of morality. Morality consists in doing what we ought to do. We can prove the need of morality through a few illustrations. Destruction has been the lot of peoples or families in which the seeds of immorality, such as disunity and untruth, were found. To take an example from trade and business, we do not come across a single person who will say that truth should not be followed. The effect of justice and goodness is not felt from outside; these qualities in here in us. Four hundred years ago, much injustice and untruth prevailed in Europe, so that people could not rest in peace even for a moment. The cause of this state of affairs was that people had no morality. If we take out the essence of all moral laws, we shall find that the attempt to do good to mankind is the highest morality. If we open the treasure-house of morality with this key, we shall find in it all the other principles.

At the end of each of these articles, we print select poems bearing on morality from Gujarati or Urdu poets in the hope that all our readers will benefit from them and will also commit them to memory. We begin with an extract[1] from Mr. Malbari's[2] book, *Adami Ane Teni Duniya.*

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-1-1907

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] B. M. Malbari, Gujarati poet and social reformer. The title of the book is *Man and His World*

217. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[Before *January 14, 1907*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I don't get *The Mercury* at all these days. Send me the back numbers, or cuttings.

As for the matter, I am sending five items today. More tomorrow.

I have sent an article entitled "White Races!" Give a Gujarati translation of it, and also of Sir Charles Dilke's[2] speech. You will find it in *India*.

I have written to Mr. West today asking him to give a photograph of the Amir[3] as supplement in the English section. Please attend to that. The thing must be done very soon. The feature[4] I will write and send.

You have not sent the customs form along with the parcels. Why?

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11159. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

218. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

January 14, 1907

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I sent some matter yesterday. Today, I send something about the Hejaz Railway and an incomplete feature about the Amir. The rest I shall write out tonight. All this must appear this week. I wrote to you earlier about the Amir's photograph. Let me know how many extra copies sell. What I write tonight will be in your hands on Thursday. That will be in time.

The list of persons in Johannesburg from whom subscriptions have been collected has been misplaced. Ask Kalyandas about it.

About publishing names, please speak to Mr. West yourself and

[1] The addressee received this letter on January 14, 1907; *vide* also the following item.

[2] Charles Wentworth Dilke, British Member of Parliament; *vide* also footnote of "Meeting at House of Commons", 8-11-1906.

[3] Habibullah Khan of Afghanistan

[4] *Vide* "Amir's Nobility", 19-1-1907.

be emphatic about it. He may entrust the work to Mania[1], if he chooses. I will also write. One should sometimes use one's discretion in matters like these.

Your devoting an hour between 8 and 9 to Manilal will naturally provoke resentment. It looks improper that you should do private work for me during Press hours. It should be enough, therefore, if you can give him any time before 8 in the morning or some time in the evening. It should be left to his luck what he can learn in that time.

I have promised a piano to Mania and that is what stands in the way. If he is agreeable, by all means save the expense for the present.

It was good that an appeal for a band was made. I feel this begging is selfless. If a band is secured, everyone will share in the benefit. I see its need for [every] one of us. I don't think Mr. West has made any mistake in this matter. It is not necessary to spend much effort on the thing. The loss of one day doesn't matter. We want ultimately to save time. The men we have are not yet well trained; when they are, all work will proceed apace.

I will give my views about the Hindi [section] after I hear from you again. It is certain, however, that the venture will be possible only if we are assured of subscribers in advance.

There is no objection to giving the market rates in the English section. They would go better, however, in the Gujarati sectionor in the advertisement columns. The English section is purely political at present; therefore, market rates will appear out of place in it.

I will write about the bill for the Anti-Indian Law Fund after giving some thought to it.

Ismail Mia has agreed to have the advertisement without a block. You may therefore have it so. Perhaps he will pay only for the reduced space.

Give me full particulars about the cuttings that have been left over.

I have written to Beck to say hat I cannot recommend patent medicines to anyone, since most of them seem to have no stuff in them.

Give me more news about Ritch[2]. The poster should be in

[1] Manilal Gandhi
[2] L.W.

English too. I will write to Mr. West.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 4684. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

219. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[Before *January 16, 1907*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have gone through the latest issue of *India.* Apart from giving any abstracts from it, if there is anything special worth translating, a translation should be given as a separate article.

There is no letter from you today. I received the telegram. The Shah [of Iran] is not much thought of here. However, there is no harm in giving a photograph, if a good one is available. The Amir is a Sunni and the Muslim community here is also of the same sect, and so they are interested in reading more about him. The Shah is a Shia. I write all this for your information in case you don't know.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Look into the comments I have made in the accompanying paper and make such use of them as you think best. If you are busy, pass the paper, as it is, to Thakkar[2].

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 4786

220. AMIR'S NOBILTIY[3]

His Majesty the Amir of Afghanistan has shown his nobility within a few days of his arrival in India. This is shown by two Reuter messages received here. When he was inspecting a guard of honour in Delhi, he was offered an umbrella because it was raining. The Amir too preferred to get drenched and refused the umbrella because the

[1] This letter is placed in the source before another dated January 16, 1907.

[2] Harilal Thakkar

[3] The immediate occasion for this article appears to have been ''an otherwise appreciative character-sketch'' of the Amir of Afghanistan by Angus Hamilton in the *Review of Reviews*, where the author described the Amir as ''barbarous'' and cruel.

soldiers were all exposed to the rain. The second cable says that the Muslims who wished to give a party in the Amir's honour had arranged for a hundred cows to be slaughtered on the occasion. The Amir suggested that this would probably offend the Hindu sentiment and advised the gentlemen that they might slaughter goats instead. They accepted his advice. It is said that the whole of India was agreeably surprised by the Amir's gesture. All the more so, as they did not expect His Majesty to show concern for others to the extent that he did.These two incidents show that His Majesty the Amir has a considerate and sincere mind. On both the occasions he thought of the people['s wishes], thus setting an example for monarchs of the West to learn from. Though the news agencies cannot tell us of more instances of such thoughtful actions of his, one can easily imagine that Amir Habibullah has all the virtues that his name[1] connotes.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-1-1907

221. DIFFICULTIES ABOUT LICENCES

In Ladysmith, Tongaat and other places, applications by [Indian] traders for licences have been rejected by the licensing officers and licences refused. At some places they have pointed to lack of cleanliness, or to the account books not being in order, while at others no reasons whatever have been given. Hence the traders have become anxious and wonder what will happen if they do not get their licences. When more precise information is available, next week [perhaps], we shall consider what is to be done.[2]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-1-1907

222. WOMEN'S EDUCATION

That India is very backward in the education of women is a fact that cannot be denied. But by admitting this, we do not mean to suggest that Indian women fail in their duty. We believe that, as there are in the world few men of any class who can compete with the

[1] Habibullah means ''beloved of God''.

[2] *Vide* ''Natal Licensing Act'', 26-1-1907.

Indians considered from all points of view, so are there few women anywhere in the world who can compare with Indian women. But this position can no longer be kept up in the present squalid, low and helpless state of India. The modern age is such that it does not allow anyone to remain in the same position. Those who do not want to go forward, or do not do so, must fall behind. In so far as this is true, we can see that Indian men have deliberately kept their women backward. Those who pose as refor-mers as also other well-to-do Indians, whether Hindu or Muslim, Parsi or Christian, either treat their women as if they were playthings or use them as they fancy for self-indulgence, with the result that they themselves become weak and help only to produce weaklings. And in this way they lead irreligious lives and still say, 'It is God's will that prevails.' If this state of affairs continues, India will remain in its present abominable condition even if she were to secure all her rights from the British Government. In all countries where the people live a decent life, there is no disparity in the condition[1] of men and women. It is easy to see how much the real wealth of India would be attenuated, if one half of her human beings remained ignorant and existed only as playthings of the others.

These thoughts occurred to us while reading an address delivered to French girls by M. Lavis, a great servant of France. Only a few years ago French women were in the same plight in which Indian women are today. French society has now awakened and does not wish to let a half of its body remain inactive. We give below a short summary of M. Lavis's speech:

> Girls, there is much for you to learn. It is your function to use the needle and the scissors. You have to learn how to keep your home tidy. If there is order in the home, its influence will be felt without, and the village or town will reflect the state of the home. You will also have to learn to use money. You will be mothers one day, and your children's future will depend on you. It is not enough that you learn to read and write. You have to cultivate your minds too. For it is the mother who provides the real training for her child. Just as you ought to develop your minds, so do, whether they are better or worse off than you. That is why must you inform yourself of what is happening around you, what countries there are in the world besides your own, what people there you are taught history and geography.

[1] The original has number instead of condition.

Just as there are schools for boys, there ought to be schools for girls also.

It is while thus addressing schoolgirls genially at a large Paris school that M. Lavis indicated in passing the duty of parents. We have a large number of girls and women among Indians in South Africa. It is our definite opinion that they should both have good education. Such education can be easily imparted; but only if we stop dallying with our womenfolk and realize our duty. While imparting education, we have to bear in mind its aims. We would gain nothing if such education were designed for selfish ends. That would be only like changing one's dress.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-1-1907

223. JAPAN'S GAME[1]

Every one—Indians in particular—has much to learn from Japan. There has been trouble in certain parts of America where Japanese boys are refused admission to schools. Reports in the English Press show that the dispute has not yet ended. The Americans do not wish to give up their stand. Japan, it appears, will not brook dishonour. Some persons believe that America and Japan will soon go to war over this. In that case, some believe that Japan will prove the stronger of the two. Much will depend on the British. At present there subsists amity between Japan and Britain. If the British intervene and help in maintaining peace, then alone, it seems, can bloodshed be averted.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-1-1907

224. ETHICAL RELIGION-III

CHAPTER III: WHAT IS MORAL ACTION?

When can it be said that a particular action is moral? In asking this question, the intention is not to contrast moral with immoral actions, but to consider many of our everyday actions against which nothing can be said from the conventional standpoint and which some

[1] *Vide* ''Japan and America'', 12-1-1907.

regard as moral. Most of our actions are probably non-moral; they do not necessarily involve morality. For the most part we act according to the prevailing conventions. Such conventional behavi-our is often necessary. If no such rules are observed, anarchy would be the result, and society—social intercourse—would come to an end. Still the mere observance of custom and usage cannot properly be called morality.

A moral act must be our own act: it must spring from our own will. If we act mechanically, there is no moral content in our act. Such action would be moral, if we think it proper to act like a machine and do so. For in doing so, we use our discrimination. We should bear in mind the distinction between acting mechanically and acting intentionally. It may be moral of a king to pardon a culprit. But the messenger bearing the order of pardon plays only a mechanical part in the king's moral act. But if the messenger were to bear the king's order, considering it to be his duty, his action would be a moral one. How can a man understand morality who does not use his own intelligence and power of thought, but lets himself be swept along like a log of wood by a current? Sometimes a man defies convention and acts on his own with a view to [doing] absolute good. Such a great hero was Wendell Phillips[1]. Addressing an assembly of people, he once said, "Till you learn to form your own opinions and express them, I do not care much what you think of me." Thus when we all care only for what our conscience says, then alone can we be regarded to have stepped on to the moral road. We shall not reach this stage, as long as we do not believe—and experience the belief—that God within us, the God of all, is the ever present witness to all our acts.

It is not enough that an act done by us is in itself good; it should have been done with the intention to do good. That is to say, whether an act is moral or otherwise depends upon the intention of the doer. Two men may have done exactly the same thing; but the act of one may be moral, and that of the other the contrary. Take, for instance, a man who out of great pity feeds the poor and another who does the same, but with the motive of winning prestige or with some such selfish end. Though the action is the same, the act of the one is moral and that of the other non-moral. The reader here ought to remember the distinction between the two words, non-moral and immoral. It may be that we do not always see good results flowing from a moral act. While thinking of morality, all that we need to see is that the act is

[1] (1811-84); American orator, social reformer and abolitionist

good and is done with a good intention. The result of an action is not within our control. God alone is the giver of fruit. Historians have called Emperor Alexander "great". Wherever he went [in the course of his conquests,] he took the Greek language and Greek culture, arts and manners, and today we enjoy the benefits of Greek civilization. But the intention of Alexander behind all this was only conquest and renown. Who can therefore say that his actions were moral? It was all right that he was termed "great", but moral he cannot be called.

These reflections prove that it is not enough for a moral act to have been done with a good intention, but it should have been done without compulsion. There is no morality whatever in my act, if I rise early out of the fear that, if I am late for my office, I may lose my situation. Similarly there is no morality in my living a simple and unpretentious life if I have not the means to live otherwise. But plain, simple living would be moral if, though wealthy, I think of all the want and misery in the world about me—and feel that Iought to live a plain, simple life and not one of ease and luxury. Like wise it is only selfish, and not moral, of an employer to sympathize with his employees or to pay them higher wages lest they leave him. It would be moral if the employer wished well of them and treated them kindly realizing how he owed his prosperity to them. This means that for an act to be moral it has to be free from fear and compulsion. When the peasants rose in revolt and with bloodshot eyes went to King Richard II of England demanding their rights, he granted them the rights under his own seal and signature. But when the danger was over, he forced them to surrender the letters. It would be a mistake for anyone to say that King Richard's first act was moral and the second immoral. For his first act was done only out of fear and had not an iota of morality about it.

Just as a moral action should be free from fear or compulsion so should there be no self-interest behind it. This is not to say that actions prompted by self-interest are all worthless, but only that to call them moral would detract from the [dignity of the] moral idea. That honesty cannot long endure which is practised in the belief that it is the best policy. As Shakespeare says, love born out of the profit motive is no love.[1]

[1] "Love is not love,
When it is mingled with respects that stand
Aloof from the entire point."

Just as an action prompted by the motive of material gain here on earth is non-moral, so also another done for considerations of comfort and personal happiness in another world is non-moral. That action is moral which is done only for the sake of doing good. A great Christian, St. Francis Xavier, passionately prayed that his mind might always remain pure.[1] For him devotion to God was not for enjoying a higher seat after death. He prayed because it was man's duty to pray. The great Saint Theresa wished to have a torch in her right hand and a vessel of water in her left, so that with the one she might burn the glories of heaven and with the other extinguish the fires of hell, and men might learn to serve God from love alone—without fear of hell and without temptation of heavenly bliss. To preserve morality thus demands a brave man prepared to face even death. It is cowardice to be true to friends and to break faith with enemies. Those who do good out of fear and haltingly have no moral virtue. Henry Clay, known for his kind liness, sacrificed his convictions to his ambition. Daniel Webster[2], for all his great intellect and his sense of the heroic and the sublime, once sold his intellectualintegrity for a price. By a single mean act he wiped out all his good deeds. This shows how difficult it is to judge the morality of a man's action because we cannot penetrate the depths of his mind. We have also the answer to the question raised at the outset in this chapter: what is a moral action? Inciden-tally, we also saw which kind of men could live up to that morality.[3]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-1-1907

[1] "Then why, O blessed Jesus Christ,
Shall I not love thee well?
Not for the sake of winning heaven,
Or of escaping hell;
Not with the hope of gaining aught,
Not seeking a reward--
But as thyself hast loved me,
O everlasting lord !"

[2] (1782-1852); American statesman and lawyer; his ''biographers insist that he was never personally dishonest'' —*Encyclopaedia Britannica*

[3] Here follows a poem from *Kavyadohan*, an anthology of Gujarati verse, but it is not reproduced in this volume.

225. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

CABLEGRAM TO AMIR

The Hamidia Islamic Society has sent a cable through Lord Selborne conveying greetings to His Majesty the Amir of Afghanistan on the occasion of his visit to India. Lord Selborne's Secretary has informed Mr. Haji Ojer Ally that the cablegram has been forwarded.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

The local Press is busy publishing reports of the election speeches of candidates for the proposed Transvaal parliament. These candidates have been making speeches at one place after another. Declaring their views on Indians, they all state that the parliament should re-enact the Ordinance that has met with the disapproval of the Imperial Government. Some say that every Indian trader should be paid compensation and sent back. Others say that they should be deported without the payment of compensation. None of them, however, understands the exact import of the Ordinance. This is the state of affairs in the Transvaal. Defeat seems probable for the Progressive Party, many of whose members are supporters of the mine-owners or big shareholders. The indications are that the Boers will defeat the others.

SIR RICHARD SOLOMON

Sir Richard Solomon has returned from England. After a brief stay with Lord Selborne, he has gone to Pretoria. When the Press representatives met him at Cape Town, he declined to express any opinion or to give any information. He intends to resign and enter parliament. People are eager to know which party he will join. Some persons are displeased because he has not expressed his opinion, and they accuse him of playing a double game.

PERMITS FOR BOYS

Indian children under sixteen whose parents are in the Transvaal can enter without a permit. But two questions have now been raised in the matter. First, how can these boys, on attaining majority, continue to remain without a permit? Secondly, how can they re-enter on return from a visit to their native country? The Registrar refuses to help and demands to know why a permit should be sought after the Supreme Court has ruled that no permit is necessary for children. It appears the

Registrar is only venting his anger. It is true that minor children need no permit. But that does not mean that a permit should not be issued to them as a safeguard when they become majors or go out of the Transvaal. Now there seems to be no remedy other than a petition. For the law does not oblige the Permit Office to issue such permits. The law only says that children need no permits and that they will be protected against harassment from any quarter.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-1-1907

226. DUTY OF EDUCATED INDIANS

While commenting on the report of the Superintendent of Education in Natal.[1] we said that we would consider later how educated Indians could help without much trouble to themselves. We do so now.

Among Indians, grown-ups as well as children have much to learn. During the day, most of them are too busy to learn anything. Similarly, educated Indians also are busy at that time. In all big cities of the world, there are large numbers of night schools. We take it that there are some truly educated young Indians who are patriotic and anxious to pass on to others the education that they have themselves had. Such persons can persuade all grown-ups and boys, with whom they come in contact, to learn; and if three or four persons agree to do so, they can decide to gather at one place. Even if only one person is willing, it should still be possible for them to go to his place to teach him.

As things stand, those who wish to learn are as few as those prepared to teach. For anyone who is eager to teach, it is not therefore enough just to be ready to do so. It is also necessary to inspire others with the urge to learn.Some may, we are well aware, think that all this sounds nice on paper, but that it is not so easy to work out. We only wish to say in reply that what we write here is addressed to courageous patriots and that it is moreover based on experience and so ought not to be dismissed as impracti-cable.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-1-1907

[1] *Vide* ''Report of Superintendent of Education'',5-1-1907.

227. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Wednesday, [On or before *January 23, 1907*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have not yet answered the points you raised in your letter of the 9th.

I did not follow what Mr. Anglia[2] and Mr. Osman said about advertisements.

I want a list in English, with prices, of Hindi and Tamil books available with Mr. Abdool Haq or Doraisamy. A White wants such books for Indians who work with him, that is, he wants books which Indians of average ability and knowing some Hindi or Tamil can understand. I have promised him a list.

Let me know what happened about the demand for a Hindi section.

I have not yet selected a photograph for the block.

I have great faith in you. I am in no position to give thought to myself. There is much work to be done. We are only a few, and not all of us well up in general knowledge. As I think of all this, I feel inclined to send you immediately to England. I want to know, however, if you have fully grasped the Indian problem here. What do you feel yourself? What encouragement is Maganlal likely to give? What does Anandlal think? All the same I want your opinion immediately whether Thakkar can assume the responsibility for the Gujarati section. I should like you to sail off, —no harm even if it takes four months—provided of course Maganlal agrees to share the financial burden and Miss West picks up the accounts. I leaveit to you whether or not to talk to others. You may talk about it only if you think fit. If you yourself feel that you should not go yet, there is no need to pursue the matter further.

In any case from next week pass on the responsibility for translations, etc., in the Gujarati section to Thakkar, so that you may be free for other work. It will suffice if you supervise the general policy of *Indian Opinion.* I don't think the last issue was bad. I will let you know after I hear from you as to what was held over. Entrust

[1] From the contents the letter appears to have been written before the one to the addressee, dated January 29, 1907; "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 29-1-1907, Wednesday prior to January 29 fell on January 23.

[2] Mahomed Cassim Anglia

feature-writing to him, so that you may be free. Of course, if anything improper appears, such as should not have been published, the blame will be yours.

Mr. Medh wants to leave. He has a chance of getting a job in Durban. Relieve him, therefore, on Monday, and pay him the arrears of his salary. Write to me if you think that a substitute will be necessary.

I shall wait for more information about Tongaat. There was a telegram here also.

You will be surprised to know that Mr. Isaac had been to Pretoria. I will take him round here too, and send him to Pretoria once again. Kalyandas told me that he had not received the complete list relating to Pretoria. Send me one again. I sent you the figures yesterday, from which you may understand which amounts to credit and which to debit. I have not looked into them. If there is anything in these figures to which it is worth drawing my attention, please let me know.

What you say about advertisements concerning fish is right. We will not refuse such advertisements if we receive any, but we will not solicit them.

So long as the name has not been changed in the Colonial Office, we must take out the licence in the name of Madanjit[1]. Please do so.

I had received the cutting concerning Jivanji. But what was to be done about it? You gave a summary of it in Gujarati. Have you received Jivanji's money from Mombasa? If not collect it from Adamji. It will be well to go to the Cape during Easter. I will write to Abdool Gani.

It is impossible for us to bring out the Tamil [section] just now. Its time will come by and by.

I see no need to write to Mr. Aiyar. Your replying in the negative is sufficient.

Anandlal has sent the list of Gujarati types. I will order them. Haria[2] must have sent the receipt for Kalyandas's luggage. stake delivery of it. You should not omit the advertisements from here

[1] Madanjit Vyavaharik, founder of *Indian Opinion,* who returned to India after entrusting it to Gandhiji in 1904

[2] Harilal Gandhi

without consulting me.

If you find it necessary to spend time over accounts, you may.

I am writing to Dawad Sheth.

Haria has given the key of the safe to Kalyandas. He will send the deposit. [£] 1,286 has been credited here. [You] will get the credit note. Haria says that you have to collect some dues from Jameson.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 4788

228. A MARE'S NEST

The Natal Advertiser has published what purports to be a report of an Indian meeting held in order to consider certain complaints against the Natal Indian Congress and to form a new body. We notice, from our Johannesburg correspondence, that the contents of the precious report were telegraphed to the Johannesburg Star, in extenso. It evidently appears as if the wish was father to the thought, and that some "good-natured" people would rather see a quarrel between different sections of the Indian community. We may, therefore, assure these friends that such a quarrel is not possible, because there can be no backbone to it. It is worthy of note that it is not stated in the inspired report where the meeting took place, who convened it, who attended it, and when it was held.

We have, however, taken the trouble to inquire about it, and we find that some such meeting did take place at a private house. But the whole aspect is changed when the facts are known. The meeting discussed the question of founding a political institution apart from the Congress, but little encouragement was given by the speakers to this proposal, and the weight of opinion did not favour it. We think the following letter, addressed to The Advertiser by Mr. V. Lawrence, Chairman of the meeting, places the matter in its true light:

> Sir, In your second edition of the 17th instant, there appears on page 5 what purports to be the report of a meeting of the Colonial Hindus and Christianized Indians that took place on Tuesday night last, headed "Natal Hindus, Dissatisfaction with the Natal Indian Congress, Representation Desired". As chairman of that meeting, I must most emphatically refute many of the statements therein. The object of that meeting was to form a very influential and representative committee to approach the Natal Indian

Congress, which is recognized by the Imperial and Colonial Governments as the representative institution of the Indian community in Natal, to make it a more representative body than it is at present. It is not true that it was pointed out during the discussion that the association of the Colonial Indian and Hindu community with the Mohammadan merchants was derogatory to the good opinion of the European section of the country in regard to the former.It was not only the idea, but the first and foremost object of the meeting was, and all the discussion that night was directed to achieve that object, to unite with, and not to dissociate from, the Natal Indian Congress, to obtain redress for the disabilities that are and may be heaped upon the Indian community.

It is not correct that minor matters were then discussed and the meeting broke up without any definite decision being come to. The meeting dispersed after the election of a thoroughly representative committee of all classes of the Indian community to approach the Natal Indian Congress, and I was deputed to interview the President and the Secretaries of the Congress, and ascertain from them what day, time and place will suit the Congress to hear the views of the committee. We have neither desire nor intention to work against either the Congress or the Europeans, but to unite with the Congress in creating a better understanding between the European and Indian communities.

We are glad to notice that the prominent Hindus of Durban met together on Sunday for the purpose of repudiating the statements made in the newspaper report. Mr. Sanghavi, the Chairman of this meeting, said that perfect amity and concord existed between the different sections of the Indian community, irrespective of caste, creed or religion.

If, however, there are any young Indians, besides the person that concocted *The Advertiser* report, who feel aggrieved at not being able to figure prominently in the work of the Congress, we strongly advise them to steer clear of any movement that would bring about discord between the different sections of the community.

It may be well to examine the origin of the Natal Indian Congress[1]. It was established when a general attack on the Indian community on the part of some European colonists was commenced. The trustees of the Congress include two Hindus, one of them a Tamil gentleman, and on the Congress membership are scores of Hindus and Christians belonging to different presidencies of India. Its objects are

[1] Founded in 1894; *vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Assembly", 28-6-1894: Deputation to Natal Premier", 29-6-1894, "Memorial to J. Chamberlain", 11-8-1895 and "The Second Report of the Natal Indian Congress", post 11-10-1899.

all-embracing, and if the attention paid to the Tamil community is to count for anything, it is but simple truth to state that, during the first few years of the Congress existence, it was largely occupied with matters more especially concerning that community. It may also be not amiss to say, in passing, that it was under the aegis of the Congress that the Natal Indian Educational Association was able to thrive and flourish. The Congress Hall was placed free of charge at its disposal. The Congress funds, again, enabled the Diamond Jubilee Library[1], opened chiefly in the interests of Colonial Indians, to be established. If the Indian traders today loom large at the Congress meetings, it is because they are the most in danger; and if they were neglected or allowed themselves to be neglected, who will suffer? Certainly the whole Indian community; for throughout the world it is the commercial class that supplies the sinews of war and even common sense to the community or nation to which it belongs.

Indian Opinion, 26-1-1907

229. WILL THERE BE DISSENSION AMONG INDIANS?

The Advertiser has published a report under the heading "The Hindus of Natal" which will perhaps cause concern among some Indians. However, we do not think, there is any need to be agitated. We print a summary of that report elsewhere. The report does not say who attended the meeting or where it was held. Also, we do not find what resolution was passed at the meeting. There is no doubt that this is the work of some disgruntled Indians. It is obvious enough that they will receive help from the Europeans. We have with us a circular notice of that meeting, signed by Messrs Bryan Gabriel, V. Lawrence and A. D. Pillay; and the meeting was held at Mr. A. D. Pillay's house on the 15th at eight o'clock. No action by us is called for, since there is no reason why any changes should be made in the constitution of the Congress. Moreover, this meeting was merely meant to be a threat, and there can be no question of yielding to such threats and making changes. However, it is the duty of the Congress leaders to adhere to the Congress constitution and to all its rules. Congress members who have not paid their subscription should be made to do so, and annual reports published as before. As for the meeting, it is not necessary to blame either those who convened or those who attended it. It can be

[1] *Vide* "The Second Report of the Natal Indian Congress", post 11-10-1899.

seen from [the report of] the meeting of the Hindu Reforms Council held in the Hall and from Mr. V. Lawrence's letter[1] that the report published in *The Advertiser* is quite false. The only thing for thoughtful people and the Congress to do is their duty, and then they should not entertain any fear. If this is done, there will be no dissension.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-1-1907

230. NATAL LICENSING ACT

At the beginning of each year Indians in Natal go through a period of acute anxiety. All traders, big and small remain in suspense for they are not sure whether they will get [renewed] licences. This time, it seems, preparations are afoot for greater harassment [of Indians].

LADYSMITH

In Ladysmith notice has been given to all traders that they will not get their licences next year. Some have been refused lice-nces even for the current year for the alleged reason that they do not know how to keep accounts in English.

TONGAAT

In Tongaat licences have been refused to many Indians, the reasons given being lack of cleanliness and the unsatisfactory condition of accounts.

ELSEWHERE

Meetings are held all over the Colony where Europeans pass resolutions to the effect that no licences should be issued to Indian traders. There is no immediate danger, as a result of these resolutions, of licences being withheld in all places. There is no doubt, however, that, if steps are not taken from now on, it will be too late afterwards.

REMEDIAL MEASURES

Let us consider what measures can be taken. It is quite necessary that those who have been refused licences should file appeals with the Licensing Board. Such appeals cost very little. While preferring an

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

appeal, it is necessary to produce evidence regarding account books, the condition of shops, etc. The reason for filing an appeal is that it is the only legal remedy. It must be resorted to before other steps are taken. Moreover, by filing the appeals, it will be possible to prove that the licensing officer and the Licensing Board are a single [authority], not two different ones. Along with the appeal an application should also be made to the local Government, that is, to the Colonial Secretary.

THE CONGRESS

In this matter, it is necessary to know the help that can be expected from the Congress and the expenditure that should be borne by each individual. The Congress will be able to write to the Government. But where it is necessary to file appeals, the residents of the respective towns and places will have to bear the cost.

SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE

As far as we know the Congress has sent a cable to the South Africa British Indian Committee asking it to take the necessary measures in the matter of licences. It will be the duty of the Congress to send additional information to the Committee as soon as the results of the appeals are known. The Committee will probably be able to work better if it is posted with full information. We should also add that, if most people followed the same procedure or acted through the same lawyer, the results would be better. Whether or not this is possible, it is essential that people should inform the Secretaries of the Congress immediately. But even if the people do not send the information, the Congress should not stand still. The Secretaries orother persons on behalf of the Congress should go from place to place collecting information. We should remember that the Europeans work united throughout the Colony and we should act in the same fashion.

FEAR

In this struggle we should have no fear. The Indian who concerns himself only with his own licence unmindful of what happens to others will be thought unmanly and a coward. It will be a great mistake for anyone to obtain a licence by flattery. It must be clearly understood that, if harm is caused by putting one trader against another, the jealous whites will not fail to exploit the situation. Such steps are outside the scope [of our objectives] and in the nature

of underhand dealings.

MEASURES CONCERNING OURSELVES

Let us now consider measures in so far as they concern us. In this fight we must know for certain whether or not we are at fault. He who cannot see his own fault is doomed. [On the other hand,] that we may suffer even when there is nothing that can be said against us is contrary to experience. It is our duty to offer resistance by legitimate, constitutional means; it is also our duty to think of our own faults. In relation to the law, we are at fault on three points: (1) lack of cleanliness; (2) the bad state of account books; and (3) the location of residence and shop in the same premises.

LACK OF CLEANLINESS

In regard to lack of cleanliness, we must confess that, though we are not as bad as Europeans make us out to be, the charge is by and large justified. The phrase "lack of cleanliness" covers both the general appearance of the house and one's personal appearance.

CONDITION OF SHOP

Very often the shop is found to be in a slovenly condition. The backyard is full of slush and dirt. Even the interior of the shop is sometimes dirty, and we are content that our shops should look like hovels. All this must change. It will be wise to give up all hope of carrying on trade anyhow, as we do in India, without giving much thought to the condition of the shop. If we cannot maintain our shop in as good a condition as the Europeans of better standing do, we do not deserve to be in trade. When they see our huts adjoining their well-kept shops, and see the same things being sold in our huts as in theirs, they are bound to feel a grudge against us. Let us not answer by asking if some Europeans do not also keep their shops untidy. No doubt they do, but we must never forget that, if we follow their example, we shall lose our case. We should not be surprised if they even expect more from us, for, after all? we belong to a different community.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

We should be particular about our personal appearance also. A shopkeeper in rags cannot hold his own in Natal or South Africa. If you become a trader, you must dress according to local custom. It is not necessary to dress in the western fashion. But the dress, if in the Indian style, must be clean and decent. We would warn Indians that it

is not proper to wear a *dhoti* in this country. In Tongaat shopkeepers and their assistants are seen cleaning their teeth and washing their faces in the street outside their shops, just as they do in our own country. It is sheer stupidity to believe that all these things will not prejudice the Europeans. When we make our appearance outside the house, we should always be fully dressed. [Among us] little attention is given to the condition of the turban or cap and the shoes. We assume that, if the head-dress is dirty, it is quite in keeping with custom. As a rule we do not polish our shoes, and some do not wear socks at all, or if at all they do, the socks are in tatters and double down over the shoes. All this must change. There is one key to all this. Personal activities, such as eating and drinking, washing and toilet, should be in private. That is, we should always be in a presentable condition while we are out. Similarly, we cannot attend a court or go out in public, chewing tobacco, betel-leaves or nuts.

ACCOUNT BOOKS

With regard to account books, complaints have appeared in newspapers that the books kept in English are unmethodical and disordered, or that they are false and are intended merely for show. We have to admit to our shame that the charge has some substance in it. Some simple-minded merchants go to the length of getting the books written up at the end of the year. How long can we go on with such patchwork? Indeed, we should wake up. It is not very difficult to keep regular books of account in English. The main reasons for not doing so would appear to be laziness and greed. We should overcome these weaknesses and start the practice of keeping regular accounts.

SHOP AND RESIDENCE IN SAME PREMISES

Many traders set up shop in residential premises. Europeans too do it. In the villages, one cannot help doing this to some extent. Wherever possible, the shop and the place of residence should be separate and at some distance from each other. Even if they have to be near each other, they must be separate. This should not be done merely by putting up a nominal curtain with the intention of deceiving. They should be really kept distinct from each other.

PROMISE

If these three things are attended to, we can promise that the condition of the Indian traders in Natal will improve in a short time, Even if they do not change the law, it will not come into effect. One

might ask what should be done to prevent shops being closed and locked up before all these wise precepts could be attended to. It is a pertinent question.

FOR THE BRAVE ONLY

Natal and South Africa are for brave Indians only. It is being proved every day that the coward and the miser are doomed. The answer, then, to the question is this: those merchants whose account books are in order, whose shops are clean and decent, whose dress is becoming and whose place of residence is clean and separate from the shop, will continue to run their shops even if they do not get the licence and lose the appeal. It will be possible to have their cases fought out in England and secure a favourable decision. It is certain that men of courage will be able to do all this.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-1-1907

231. "THE NATAL MERCURY" AND INDIAN TRADERS

The *Natal Mercury* has come out in favour of Indian traders. The gist of its argument is that those who oppose Indian traders are hypocrites. This means that, though ostensibly they are opposed to Indians, they do in fact have dealings with us. The *Mercury* also believes that, if the Europeans are really opposed to the Indians, the latter cannot hold out for long. For, says The *Mercury*, it is only because Europeans sell land to Indians that the latter can buy it, and that it is because Europeans lend them money and buy goods from them that Indians can carry on trade. There is much force in this argument. It was on the basis of this that the Deputation to England argued with Lord Elgin and Mr. Morley that, if the Europeans were really opposed to the Indians, they could boycott the matter. We advise everyone to support the talk of boycott. It will probably bring about a breakdown of law. There are many things which Indians have to fight against, and if the laws made against us break down, we shall be able to cope with other problems on one condition, namely, that we overcome our drawbacks. On that point, we have written at some length already, which readers may please look up.

No one should be afraid of a boycott, for it is such that, if the Europeans start it, we cannot save ourselves in spite of any laws

that may be made to protect us. The best thing for us will be to face it out. In Boksburg Europeans have no dealings with us, with the result that no Indian can go there though, under the law, every one has a right to do so. Where the Indian population is well settled, a boycott cannot be effective if we acquit ourselves well.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-1-1907

232. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

SELF-GOVERNMENT IN THE TRANSVAAL

Lord Selborne has been re-appointed Governor of the Transvaal under the new Constitution. The post of Lieutenant-Governor has now been abolished altogether. Those desiring to contest the election to the new parliament will file their nomination papers with the respective magistrates on February 9. People will go to the polls on the 20th.

WHAT IS RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT?

It will not be out of place here to explain the significance of the change now introduced in the Transvaal. In the British Empire, there are three types of territories outside Great Britain, viz., self-governing colonies, Crown colonies and dependencies. India is among the dependencies. Crown colonies includeMauritius,Ceylon, etc. Natal, Canada, Australia, etc., are among the self-governing colonies.

In a Crown colony there is generally a legislative body either elected by the people or nominated by the government. Officials are appointed only by the government, the legislature has no con-trol over them and they are in no way responsible to the members. All laws are regarded as having been enacted by the government.

Self-government is said to have been conferred on a people when power is transferred to it and it acquires the authority to appoint officers, levy taxes and enact laws. The British control over self-governing colonies is very slight. Their legislation requires Royal assent, but if the Crown should refuse the assent, there is always the probability that these countries may declare their independence. Many experienced politicians believe that self-governing colonies will become independent in a few years. Till recently the Transvaal was a Crown Colony, but it has now become self-governing. Under it the

members elected by the people can question the doings of the officials; it is therefore also called responsible government.

ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The election campaign has gone on for some weeks now. At the meetings sometimes they almost come to blows. Voters at times ask such absurd questions that one wonders whether such an election should be considered a sign of civilization or barbarism. Mr. Hosken is a rich, noble and well-known gentleman of this place. His opponent can in no way be considered his equal. The electors do not seem to have considered whether Mr. Hosken is a man likely to do good or harm to the public. They asked him the question where he obtained his provisions from. One need not be surprised if the fate of Hosken's election should hang on the answer to this question. The electors are in such a benighted condition. This is only an example or the questions asked. One can cite many more instances.

LAW RELATING TO NON-WHITES IN ORANGE RIVER COLONY

A Bill, intended to protect the rights of the Coloured people through a white, appointed to represent them, has been published in the Orange River Colony *Government Gazette*. Many municipalities have, according to Press telegrams received here, opposed the measure. The right which the Government proposed to grant was without any substance. But the white members of the brave municipalities of the Orange River Colony have opposed it as they were afraid that the Coloured people were being accorded a respectable status by the grant of this right, such as it was. It is very disturbing to think what the plight of the Coloured people would be under such men.

DR. PEREIRA'S SON

Dr. Pereira, who is working here as a private interpreter, has a son studying in England. He has passed his school examination and got a certificate for being the best behaved among the students. He will shortly proceed to Scotland to study medicine.

SIR RICHARD SOLOMON

On Monday Sir Richard Solomon made a speech at a crowded meeting in the Pretoria Town Hall. I cannot give a full account of that speech this time, but intend doing so next week.[1] He has now spoken

[1] *Vide* ''Johannesburg Letter'', 2-2-1907.

out his mind. Regarding the Asiatic Ordinance, he gave out that the Imperial Government would give its assent to the Ordinance if it was passed by the new parliament. The only inference to be drawn from this is that the Ordinance will certainly be passed in six or seven months. In that case it is probable that Indians will have yet to go and "enjoy life in the prison-palace". However, I shall discuss this point further next week.

INTERNAL FEUD[1]

A long telegram from the Durban correspondent of *The Star* states that a split has occurred in the local Indian community. It adds that the Congress is regarded as belonging to the Muslims, and that the Colonial-born or civilized Indians, being displeased, are thinking of founding a separate body. It is suspected that there must be some white person behind all this. From the wording of the telegram it appears that the writer is anxious to create dissensions among Indians. People in Durban may know more about this.

ASIATIC ORDINANCE

It is clear from the local newspapers that the Asiatic Ordinance of the Transvaal is not dead, but is only in a state of coma. At a meeting in Krugersdorp it was suggested that the matter should be taken up again in the Municipal Association; and as soon as the new government is formed, the Municipal Assoc iation should pass and forward a resolution [to demand] that the selfsame Ordinance be passed by the new legislature, and that Lord Elgin should give his assent to it. Such discussions have been going on not only at Krugers dorp, but throughout the Transvaal. The Indian community therefore needs to remain alert. People seem to have gone to sleep, elated by the rejection of the Ordinance; we should be wide awake.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-1-1907

[1] *Vide* ''A Mare's Nest'',26-1-1907 and ''Will There Be Dissension among Indians?'' 26-1-1907.

233. ETHICAL RELIGION- IV

CHAPTER IV: IS THERE A HIGHER LAW?

We constantly pronounce judgements upon the value of actions. Some actions satisfy us and others do not. Whether a certain act is good or bad does not depend upon whether it is beneficial or harmful to us. In judging it, we adopt quite a different standard. We have in our minds certain ideas and on the basis of those we judge the acts of others. Whether any wrong done by one to another affects us or not, we do feel it to be wrong. Sometimes we have a trace of sympathy for the wrongdoer; but despite that sympathy, we feel no hesitation at all in pronouncing his act to be wrong. It may be that at times our judgement is found to be mistaken. We cannot always fathom a man's motives, and may thus judge him wrongly. Neverth-eless, we find no difficulty in judging an act in so far as the intention is known. Even if our personal interests are sometimes served by wrong actions, we do feel inwardly that they are wrong.

Thus it is established that the rightness or wrongness of an act does not depend upon a man's self-interest. Nor does it depend upon his wishes. There is a difference between morality and sympathy. Out of sympathy for the child we wish to give it a certain thing, but if the thing is harmful to the child, we hold it immoral to give it. It is doubtless good to show sympathy but, unrestricted by moral considerations, it turns into poison.

We see also that moral laws are immutable. Opinions change, but not morality. When our eyes are open, we see the sun; when they are closed, it is not seen. The change here has been in our sense of sight, not in the fact of the sun's existence. The same holds true of moral laws. It is probable that in a state of ignorance we do not know what is moral; but once the eye of knowledge is opened, there is no difficulty in knowing it. Men rarely care to see single-mindedly the right or wrong of things; often prompted by personal considerations, they mistakenly describe the immoral as moral. The time is yet to come when men, freeing themselves from self-regarding considerations, will concentrate their attention on the ideas of morality alone. Moral culture is still in its mere infancy; it is as science was before the birth of a Bacon or a Darwin. Men were eager to know what the truth was. Instead of inquiring into morality, they have been hitherto engaged in

discovering laws of nature—the laws of the earth's motion, etc. Where do we find the disinterested student of mora-lity, patient and painstaking, who, setting aside his earlier superstitious notions, devotes his life to seeking only the ideal good? When men become as eager to explore the world of moral ideas as they are now to explore the realms of nature, we shall be able to bring together the various conceptions of morality. It is unlikely that, on ideas of morality, there will be the same divergence of opinion as exists among men on matters of science. However, we may not for a time arrive at unanimity of opinion regarding moral laws. This does not, however, mean that it is impossible to distinguish between right and wrong.

We thus see that, independent of and apart from men's wishes and opinions, there is something like a moral standard which we may call moral law. If there are laws of the state, why may not there be a moral law too? It does not matter if that law is not committed to writing by man, and indeed it need not be. If we grant or hold that the moral law exists, it is incumbent on us to obey it, just as we ought to obey the law of the state. A moral law is distinct from and better than the laws of the state or those of business. One may ask, "How does it matter if I do not obey the laws of business and remain poor? Or if I disobey the laws of the state and incur the ruler's displea-sure?" But it will never do —either for me or anyone else — to say, "What does it matter whether I tell a lie or tell the truth?"

There is thus a great difference between moral laws and temporal laws. For morality dwells in our hearts. Even a man practising immorality would admit that he has been immoral. A wrong can never become right. Even where a people is vile, though men may not observe the moral law, they would make a pretence of doing so; they thus are obliged to admit that moral laws ought to be observed. Such is the greatness of morality. It cares not for custom nor for public opinion. To a moral man, public opinion or custom is binding only so long as it is in harmony with the moral law.

Where does this moral law come from? This law is not laid down by the state, for different laws are found in different states. Many men were opposed to the morality which Socrates observed in his day. Even so the world admits that the morality he observed has remained, and shall remain, morality for ever. Robert Browning says, 'If ever Satan proclaimed the law of hatred and untruth in the world, even then

justice, goodness and truth will continue to be divine."[1] One may conclude from this that the moral law is supreme and divine.

Such a law no people or individual can violate to the end of time. As has been said, even as the dangerous storm ultimately passes, immoral men must meet their destruction.[2]

No sooner did the cup of sin in Assyria and Babylon become full than it broke. When Rome trod the path of immorality, none of her great men could save her. The ancient Greeks were an accomplished people, still all their art and philosophy could not continue in their immorality for long. The French Revolution was but an insurrection against immorality. The same was the case with America. The good Wendell Phillips used to say that immorality even if enthroned will not endure. This mysterious moral law brings prosperity to the man who observes it: it sustains the family that obeys it, and the community which lives by it ever flourishes. Freedom, peace and happiness are the lot of the nation that lets itself be ruled by this highest law.[3]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-1-1907

[1] ...justice, good, and truth were still
Divine, if, by some demon's will,
Hatred and wrong had been proclaimed
Law through the worlds, and right misnamed.

Christmas Eve, XVII

[2] As the whirlwind passeth, so is the wicked no more; but the righteous is an everlasting foundation. *Proverbs*, X.25.

[3] Here follows a poem from *Kavyadohan*.

234. HOW TO BUILD A NATION

[Before *January 28, 1907*]

Mrs. Besant has written an article for the December issue of Indian Review on "Nation—or as we have put it, "How to Build a Nation"—which deserves to be read carefully by all the communities in india are now bent on making India a single nation and improving in the country have put forward their urge well-known people in the country have put forward their ideas on the subject. Mrs. Besant is President of the Theosophical Society and spends six months in India each year and the other six in England. She enjoys the reputation of being one of the world's great orators and most of her writings, too, are very instructive. As this article by her is serious and thought provoking, we here publish a translation of it.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-2-1907

235. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[JOHANNESBURG,]
January 28, 1907

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Your letter to hand.

As a lot of material has been held over, Mrs. Besant's article[2] may well be postponed to next week. Whenever you print it, see that all of it appears in one issue. It may conveniently be held over for two weeks.It would be better if the article on the Amir[3] were concluded in this issue.

The suggestion about decreasing your burden is quite justified. Do keep Mothoo. You would be quite right if you had already decided to keep him before this reached you.

This is the time for you to give your fullest attention to realizing the dues and to the account books. We must on any account satisfy

[1] Here follows a translation of Mrs. Besant's article.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] *Vide* "Amir's Nobility", "Amir's Nobility", 19-1-1907.

our customers. If they do not get satisfaction just when they have begun to be interested in what we write, we shan't be able to keep them on the register. It is [however] as necessary to collect the dues as it is to satisfy our customers. You must therefore give full attention to the books. I realize this quite well.

You will be justified therefore if you have decided to keep Thakkar by offering him an increment. He can be cured of his bad habit if you keep an eye on him.

When will the balance-sheet be ready?

I am returning Sheth Haji Habib's advertisement about the mosque. I have written to him. I hope you remember that £6.10.0 have already been collected from him. A credit note for the amount has been sent to him.

I am sending you some more material today. Do not hold over anything that is topical.

Even though the expenditure on your visit to England is ultimately to be borne by the Press, I know that the money will have to be found by me now, and this is how I look at the matter.

The Press is growing day by day. Its work will increase as the purity of our objectives is progressively recognized and increases. If this purity is accompanied by skill and ability, we shall be able to do a great deal, provided of course that we do not succumb to greed and self-interest. For this we should lay down that no one among us could draw a monthly allowance of more than £10 or up to any other limit we decide upon. Whatever is left over after these charges have been met, we should use to promote education, health, etc. In order to do this we should ourselves be better educated. I have therefore decided to send a person to England, whom I consider the most steadfast of all. He should go there with the firm resolve that he would not make a single pie for himself from the education he receives, but would pass on all the benefit [of that education] to the Press and would accept and live on what the Press gave him. You appear to me to be the only Indian who has attained to this degree of fitness. I believe you understand the significance of the whole thing and you seem to be the only person who can be depended upon to carry forward the heritage of my thoughts and words. Messrs Polak and West know and understand a lot. There are things which they understand and you don't. However, it seems on the whole that you understand more than

they do. Our ultimate capital is not the money we have, but our courage, our faith, our truthfulness and our ability. If therefore you go to England, your intellect remains unspoiled and you return with your physical and mental powers strengthened, our capital will have appreciated to that extent. I cannot write more as people have again begun to drop in.

[*Blessings from*

MOHANDAS]

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 4690

236. MADANJIT'S ENTHUSIASM

[Before *January 29 1907*]

Mr. Madanjit has started, in Rangoon, an English journal entitled *United Burma* of which we have received the first few issues. His aim in starting the paper is to bring together the Burmese people and seek the redress of their grievances from the Government. Through the paper he also hopes to persuade the Burmese people to take part in the activities of the [Indian National] Congress. This is no doubt a great venture by Mr. Madanjit, to which every one will wish godspeed. From the large number of advertisements which it has been able to secure from Englishmen as well as Indians, it would seem that the paper enjoys a wide patronage. The address of the paper is No. 29, 27th Street, Rangoon; the annual subscription is Rs. 6; the price of a copy is three annas. Mr. Madanjit himself is Editor.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-2-1907

237. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[JOHANNESBURG,]

January 29, 1907

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. Please read what I have written to West about Hindi and Tamil [columns].

I note what you say about Miss West. Do what you think right. It is not an example to be copied.

I find that the office here has run into a great loss. I do not

therefore get a moment's respite.

Chi. Kalyandas[1] must be at Newcastle today. He has suddenly developed some pain in his hand. However he intends to complete his work. I have wired to him to put off his visit to the other places. I have not yet had any reply. Please take good care of his hand.

I have already written to you about dispensing with Medh's services.

I am sending today the rest of the article on the Amir (pages 44-73). It is in continuation of the previous instalment. Give it a suitable heading.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 4692

238. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[JOHANNESBURG,]
January 29, 1907

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Yours to hand.

I enclose herewith Desai's letter. If Mothoo has not yet come and if you know Nathalal and consider him suitable for our work, write to Desai. I have written to him asking him to write to you. We must have one person well trained before you leave. It would be nice if this could be Maganlal.[2]

I have thought of the Bar for you. If you have to say anything about it or suggest something else, do write to me. There is likely to be one difficulty in your going [to study] for the Bar, namely, it will entail an additional expenditure of £150. If we decide that you should study law, you can take the LL.B. degree of London University. Please let me know what you think about all these things.

I received the Pretoria list yesterday and have sent it to Gaurishankar.

I have already written to you to postpone printing Mrs. Besant's

[1] Kalyandas Jagmohandas Mehta
[2] Addressee's brother

article[1]. It would not matter if it appeared next week.

I have written earlier about Madanjit too.[2]

I send herewith the letter about drinking after making corrections; you may print it.[3]

I am trying to find Urdu poems bearing on Ethical Religion. I have not yet come across any. I hope to send one next week. The first poem you have sent to me does not strike me as appropriate. We want to give poems which do not start a controversy.

I shall be able to send a reply if the letter, about the Colonial Secretary is sent to me. Please send the Act along with the letter.

I am sending a demand draft for £35 in favour of you and West.

It is good that Anandlal[4] has got started.

I have already written all I had to say about Thakkar. If he goes away, I believe we shall be losing a very good hand. On the whole, Ithink he is all right; and we shall not be able to get another man as well informed in the near future. However, you may let him go if he does not stay even on £5.

Please let me know where Maganlal bought the type in Bombay, and in what condition it was received here. Also let me know if there would be any objection to our getting the type this time from the Gujarati Foundry.

I came to know from Harilal yesterday that the money had not been paid for the tea we bought from Sanghavi nor was the bill credited to him in our books. Please tell me what you know about this, and pay up the bill for the tea if it has not been already paid.

I have sent Manilal the Sanskrit book he wanted. What does he propose to do with it? Please let me know how he is getting on with his studies, how he is working in the Press, etc.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 4691

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 28-1-1907.
[2] *Vide* "Madanjit's Enthusiasm", 29-1-1907.
[3] *Vide* Indian Opinion, *2-1-1907*.
[4] A nephew of Gandhiji

239. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG
January 31, 1907

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I have your-letter and the list. We have to publish, on Mr. Adamji Miankhan's[1] departure, his photograph as a supplement, and we have also to give a brief account of his life. The account I shall send from here. I have asked Mr. Adamji to let us have his photograph. He will send one on to you there. As soon as it arrives, you should have the block made, so that we can make use of it when necessary and may not be rushed.

I should like you to let me have the total of complimentary copies and the total of exchanges we send, dividing [them] into two heads, complimentary copies and exchanges for Natal, and [those for places] outside Natal. The receipts for January are not quite bad. In the expenditure for the month, you have not shown the wages at all. Has the balance-sheet been started?

Who is to form the riddles, before we can think of prizes? Personally, I am of the opinion that we are not yet ripe for branching out in this direction.

What prescription has Dr. Nanji given for Kalyandas, and what reason does he assign for the sores on the hands?

I have duly received your list of advertisers for Johannesburg. They have all consented to pay. Chhotabhai has already paid; you must have received the Credit Note. Please inquire and let me know whether you have or not. The others will pay. You may, therefore, continue the advertisements.

It would be very good if you could collect the £3 from Mrs. Jamieson. I feel that I should refund the £3 to Vyas. Henceforth, you should not give notes of introduction to men in whom you cannot put a reasonable trust.

Do not overwork yourself. What about Mothoo? I have not yet received the *Parsee Chronicle* or the *Patrika*. The names of subscribers against which you have put a cross should be retained

[1] Honorary Secretary of the Natal Indian Congress during Gandhiji's absence from South Africa. He left for India in February, 1907. *Vide* "Adamji Miankhan", 5-2-1907.

until you hear further from me. The others may be struck off. I will, however, inquire.

I am glad you had the meeting on Sunday. How did the ladies take it? What did they understand? What pains were taken to explain to them what was read? Who gave the explanations? Where was the meeting held? It is a step absolutely in the right direction? and should be continued at any cost.

Yours sincerely

M. K. G.

From a photostat of the typewritten original: S. N. 4693

240. INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL

We invite the attention of every Indian to the speech by Sir Richard Solomon translated into Gujarati by our Johannesburg correspondent.[1] When Sir Richard makes a public speech, we should know that it is not for electioneering purposes only. He has just returned from England. He has met officials in the Colonial Office in London, and he is a favourite of theirs. Through him, the Liberal Government desires to unite the Dutch and the English. It is necessary, therefore, to look upon whatever Sir Richard says at this juncture as important.

Sir Richard says that the Asiatic Ordinance will have to be reintroduced in the new parliament, and that the Imperial Government will not reject an act passed by it.

Not only would Sir Richard have such a law passed, but, according to his line of thinking, no new Indian should beallowed to enter and settle in the Transvaal. Sir Richard does not therefore like the Natal or the Cape immigration laws. He would have the Orange River Colony law[2] enacted in the Transvaal. This means that, if the reins of government were to pass into the hands of Sir Richard, Indians would face very hard times indeed.

What are we to do in this situation? We have only one answer. We have hailed the refusal of assent to the Asiatic Ordinance as a victory. But true victory will come only when we show our strength. It is

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 2-2-1907.

[2] Under the law an Indian could enter the Orange River Colony "only as a domestic servant".

certain that the Asiatic Ordinance will be re-introduced. When that happens, there should be only one thought in the mind of every Indian: never to accept such a law. And, if it is enforced, he will rather go to gaol than carry a pass like a Kaffir. True victory will be won only when the entire Indian community courageously marches to the gaol—when the time comes—and stays there as if it were a palace.

Many things have to be done before this can come to pass. We must show that Indians without permits do not enter the Transvaal in large numbers. If any of them try to enter, they must be stopped from doing so. And the whites must be made to realize that their policy of repression is not at all called for.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-2-1907

241. THEODORE MORISON

Mr. Theodore Morison, who is a member of the South Africa British Indian Committee, has now been appointed a member of the India Council by Mr. Morley. Mr. Morison was the Principal of the Aligarh College. On some matters he holds liberal views. He comes of a noble family. This appointment made by Mr. Morley is a novel step. So far, all the members of this Council have invariably been Anglo-Indian officials, but Mr. Morison is not from that class. This musttherefore be regarded as a major change made by Mr. Morley in the set-up of the Council.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-2-1907

242. SIR JAMES FERGUSSON

A cable has been received saying that Sir James Fergusson, a former Governor of Bombay, was killed, having been buried alive in an earthquake in Jamaica. He greatly encouraged education in the Bombay Presidency. Before leaving for Jamaica he had accepted the Presidentship of the South Africa British Indian Committee. He was buried in Kingston with great honours.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-2-1907

243. NAUSEA

Generally speaking, every person has an aversion to something or the other. To some the sight of blood or pus is nauseating, to others the smell of kerosene. Similarly, an Englishman is averse to certain things. Of these aversions some are desirable, but others are carried too far. None the less, it is a fact that people do have these aversions. Trivial as some of these may seem, we should know what they are. It often happens that, starting from trifles, people go on to big quarrels. Because of trifles the whites sometimes cause havoc. We know of an instance in which a white man kicked an Indian simply because the latter happened to break wind. Once Mr. Miller, a Magistrate of the Amlazi Court, was so sickened at the sight of an Indian witness hiccuping that he could stand it no longer and asked the Indian to stop. Once an Indian and some Europeans were at dinner table. During the meal the Indian started belching. An English lady at the table almost fainted and could not eat at all that day. We can see from these instances how necessary it is for us always to show consideration for the feelings of others. Also, while we live in this country, we should so behave that the whites' prejudices against us are weakened. With this end in view, we list below some of the causes of their prejudice and appeal to all Indians to overcome them.

SOME DON'TS

1. Avoid, as far as possible, blowing your nose or spitting on swept or paved walks or in the presence of others.

On hygienic grounds also, this rule is worth observing. Doctors say that sometimes serious diseases are caused by contact with the nasal or oral discharge of another. Dr. Murison has said that we often spread tuberculosis through our habit of spitting anywhere. Both these things should be done into a spittoon while at home, and into a handkerchief while out, and, as far as possible, in privacy.

2. One should not belch, hiccup, break wind, or scratch oneself in the presence of others.

These [maxims] are useful for correct social behaviour. By practice one can learn to check one's instinct to do any of these things.

3. If you want to cough, do so holding your handkerchief

against the mouth.

If one's spittle gets blown on to others, it annoys them and if one has any disease, the spittle carries it to them.

4. Even after a bath, in many men, some dirt remains in the ears or under the nails. It is necessary to pare one's nails and keep them as well as the ears clean.

5. Those who do not grow a regular beard should, if necessary, shave every day. An unshaven face is a sign of laziness or stinginess.

6. One should not let mucus accumulate in the corners of the eyes. One who allows this to happen is considered slothful and a sleepyhead.

7. Every act of cleaning the body should be done in privacy.

8. The turban or cap and the shoes should be clean. The life of the shoes is prolonged by cleaning and polishing.

9. Those who chew betel-leaf and nut should do so at fixed hours, as with other kinds of food so as to avoid giving the impression that we are eating all the time. Those who chew tobacco have a lot to think about. They disfigure every spot by spitting. Addicts to tobacco, as the Gujarati proverb goes, spoil the corner of the house where they chew tobacco, the whole house if they smoke and their clothes if they take snuff.

These are rules for personal cleanliness. Later we shall write of those relating to the home and its environs.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-2-1907

244. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

SIR RICHARD SOLOMON'S SPEECH

I have already written of Sir Richard Solomon's election speech[1] at Pretoria on January 21 and said I would give, in translation, his ideas on Coloured persons. I do so today.

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 26-1-1907 and "Indians in the Transvaal", 2-2-1907.

ASIATIC ORDINANCE

Now I come to the question of Asiatics, which is related to that of the Kaffirs. Most of the Asiatics in this territory are Indians who have entered lawfully and secured their rights in a similar fashion. There are also those who have entered by breaking the law. Let them be punished for that. (Applause.) But the lawful immigrants are entitled to justice as well as to recognition, and they should get them. They should not be deprived of rights lawfully acquired. It is therefore necessary to maintain a complete register of the lawful immigrants. Moreover registration is necessary not only to protect the interests of those who are here by virtue of their legal right, but also to prevent the immigration of those who may in future be prohibited. With this end in view a law was passed by the Legislative Council, but it failed to receive the assent of the Imperial Government, as the Indian community raised unreasonable objections to it. This is quite understandable for the Imperial Government has a great responsibility in relation to India. As long, therefore, as the reins of power in this Colony are in the hands of the Imperial Government, it is clear that they will not assent to such an act.

"PASS LAW AGAIN"

But we can [now] pass a law similar to the previous one. I am sure the Imperial Government will give their consent to a similar bill-passed by a self-governing colony.

OTHER ACTS

Some may ask what should be done about Indian immigration in the future. The English traders in this Colony hold that the Indians, who have a different way of life and who enter into unfair competition with them, should be prohibited from entering and trading in the Transvaal. They are afraid that they will be ruined by the immigration of such men. I sympathize with this line of thinking. Hence I believe that the parliament of this Colony should, as early as possible, enact a measure to restrict Indian immigration. The model for such a law is to be had in the Cape or Natal.

ARE NOT CAPE AND NATAL LAWS ENOUGH?

I have given much thought to this question; and I think

that, if we adopt the laws of the Cape Colony and Natal, the immigration of ordinary coolies will discontinue, but the immigration of those whom you really wish to keep out, namely, the traders, will not stop. If, therefore, we adopt the Cape or the Natal Act, we shall have to add to it the further provision that the immigrant Asiatic cannot carry on trade.

SIR RICHARD'S REMEDY

I wish to speak frankly on this question. Personally I would prefer it that Indians were not allowed to come into the Colony at all. A concession may be made in favour of only those coming on a short visit. It is much better not to allow any Indians to come in rather than allow them in and then to suppress them, leading to a clash between the local and the Imperial Governments. I am therefore of the view that we should pass an act similar to the one in force in the Orange River Colony. It was enacted before the Boer War and the Imperial Government did not oppose it. In passing the measure we should provide for the continued stay of lawful immigrants and the protection of the rights acquired by them.

JOHANNESBURG CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Johannesburg Chamber has issued a statement giving the causes of the starvation now prevalent in Johannesburg. Competition from the Indian trader is mentioned as one of them. In his speech[1] a few months ago, Mr. Quinn had shown that it was no use blaming the Indian trader. But the Chamber's sole business at present is to rouse public opinion against Indians as much as possible.

INDIANS GOING TO DELAGOA BAY

News having been received of the ill-treatment of Indians going from the Transvaal to Delagoa Bay, an inquiry was made of the Portuguese Consul. In his reply he says that no further disability has been imposed; that, if any regulations were framed recently, they have not been published in the *Gazette*, and that an Indian going from the Transvaal has no difficulty. The hardship brought to our notice was that Indians from the Transvaal were detained at the border if they did

[1] *Vide* "Quinn's Speech", 12-1-1907 and "Johannesburg Letter", 12-1-1907. There is, however; no reference to this point made by Quinn in Gandhiji's summaries of his speech.

not hold a pass for Delagoa Bay similar to the Natal pass. Further correspondence with the Consul is going on, and another detailed letter from him is expected.

EAST INDIA ASSOCIATION

The Transvaal Leader today publishes a cable from England reporting the annual meeting of the East India Association presided over by Sir Raymond West. A speaker at the meeting pointed out that Indians suffered no hardships in places like Jamaica, because the whites there belonged to good families and were respectable people. In those places a considerable income could be earned by good, capable Indians, free from any bad habits. Commenting on this, Sir Raymond West said that there could be no comparison between Jamaica and South Africa, for the whites in South Africa were hostile to the Indians because they suffered from Indian competition. Sir Raymond concluded by saying that one of the remedies for Indian hardships in South Africa was that every Indian should receive adequate education. Sir Raymond means to suggest that, if we are educated, the displeasure of the whites may lessen, for in that case we should be copying their way of life.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-2-1907

245. ETHICAL RELIGION–V

CHAPTER V: MORALITY AS A RELIGION

The subject of this chapter may strike one as strange. The common idea is that morality and religion are distinct things; still this chapter seeks to consider morality as a religion. Some readers may think the writer guilty of confusion. That reproach may come from two sides— from those who regard religion as more than morality, and from others who think that, where there is morality, there is no need for religion. Yet the author's intention is to show their close relationship. The societies spreading ethical religion or religious ethics believe in religion through morality.

The common idea, it may be admitted, is that there may be morality without religion and religion without morality. One comes across many men of immoral conduct who claim to be religious in

spite of the sinful acts they commit. On the other hand, there are moral men like the late Mr. Bradlaugh, who are proud to call themselves atheists and would run away from the name of religion. Those who hold either of these views are mistaken. Those who hold the first view are not only mistaken, but also dangerous as they practise immorality under the guise of religion. In this chapter, there fore, we shall show that, considered intellectually and scientifically, religion and morality are united and should be so united.

Morality was in the beginning simply the customary conduct of a community, settled ways of acting that men living together naturally fell into. By a natural process the good customs tended to survive and the bad ones to die out, since, if the bad ones did not die out, they would weaken the community and lead to its extinction. Even today we see this process at work. It is neither morality nor religion if people observe good customs more or less unthinkingly. However, most of what passes for morality in the world today consists, as pointed out above, of good customs.

Moreover, men often have a merely superficial idea of religion. Sometimes men believe in religion only as a means to ward off dangers that threaten them. It would be a mistake to dignify actions as religious where they are performed out of a love that springs from fear.

But at long last a time does come when men begin to tread the path of morality consciously, deliberately with a determined will, regardless of gain or loss, of life or death, without turning to look back, ready to sacrifice themselves. Then can they be said to have been permeated with true morality.

How can such morality subsist except with the support of religion? One tells oneself, “If by doing a little harm to another, I can secure my personal interest, why should I not do that little harm?” The profit derived from doing harm is no profit, but a positive loss [to the doer]. How shall this unpalatable dose go down one’s throat? Ostensibly in Germany’s interest, Bismarck perpetrated dreadful deeds. Where then was his education? Where did those maxims of morality disappear which, at other times, he used to mouth before school children? Obviously, a reply to all these questions can be given. The reason why he could not keep up his morality in the face of these difficulties was that his morality was not grounded in religion. So long as the seed of morality is not watered by religion, it cannot

sprout. Without water it withers and ultimately perishes. Thus it will be seen that true or ideal morality ought to include true religion. To put the same thought differently, morality cannot be observed without religion. That is to say, morality should be observed as a religion.

Furthermore, it is seen that the rules of morality, laid down in the world's great religions, are largely the same. The founders of thereligions have also explained that morality is the basis of religion. If a foundation is removed, the superstructure falls to the ground; similarly if morality is destroyed, religion which is built on it comes crashing down.

The author adds that there is nothing wrong in calling morality a religion. Dr. Coit in his prayer says, "I shall have no other God except righteousness." On reflection, we shall realize that God will not help us and answer our impassioned prayer for help, if we utter His name, while having a dagger concealed under our arm. Let us take two men, one who believes in the existence of God, yet breaks all His Commandments; and another who, though not acknowledging God by name, worships Him through his deeds and obeys His laws, recognizing in the divine laws, their Maker. Which of the two men shall we call a man of religion and morality? Without a moment's thought, one would emphatically reply that the second man alone is to be considered religious and moral.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-2-1907

246. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
February 2, 1907

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Your letter to hand. I shall write about the firm on Monday.

I am sending herewith the letters you sent to me as well as the communication received by me with my comment on it. Please attend to these carefully.

Your bill for the Anti-I[ndian] Law Fund was quite in order. I

[1] Here follows a poem by Behramji Malbari which has not been translated.

am sending it to you today. I have credited the money. Please send me a stamped receipt. Please also prepare a bill for the £5 which I had credited to your account in October for the petition about the Vrededorp Ordinance and send me a receipt as of that date for my file.

I am sending very little material today. I shall send more tomorrow.

Please try to keep Harilal Thakkar as quiet as possible and treat him very kindly. I have a letter from him today. I have replied to it.[1] His mind does not seem to have yet calmed down.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I have sent Mr. Ritch's interview[2] to Mr. West. Please drop the portion I have deleted from it and give its translation in this issue.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 4695

247. ADAMJI MIANKHAN

[Before *February 5, 1907*][3]

Mr. Adamji Miankhan sailed home on the 7th. His services to the Indian community should be an example to all Indian traders. His portrait is published in this issue. Mr. Adamji comes of a noble family. His ancestors carried on a business in brocades and many varieties of cloth. In 1884, when he was eighteen, he came to South Africa along with his brother, Mr. Gulam Hussain, and his father, Mr. Miankhan. He had had some English education which proved very useful.

It was really in 1896-7 that the Indian community had the occasion to benefit from his public services. It was not long after the

[1] This letter is not available.

[2] Mr. Ritch's interview with a correspondent of the Pall Mall Gazette on the Vrededorp Stands Ordinance and Natal Municipal Bill. Vide Indian Opinion, 2-2-1907.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 5-2-1907.

Congress had been founded, and its first Secretary was to leave for India. The problem then arose of who was to take his place. But thanks to his knowledge of English and his tact and competence, Mr. Adamji was unanimously appointed Acting Secretary. At this time Mr. Abdul Karim Haji Amod Zaveri was the President. Within six months of their assumption of office the funds of the Congress rose from £100 to £1100. The members also in those days were full of enthusiasm. They used to travel long distances in their own carriages to collect funds. And the whole community now enjoys the fruits of the work they did at that time. Most of the credit for this work goes to Mr. Adamji; no society can progress unless its secretary is alert and has drive. But it was in December of 1896 and January of 1897 that Adamji's tact and ability were clearly seen. At that time the passengers from s.s. *Courland* and s.s. *Naderi* had a difficult time in landing at Durban.[1] The whites were opposed to their landing and were determined at all costs to prevent it. The occasion called for great self-restraint, a quick judgement and patience. Mr. Adamji showed all these virtues. He worked day and night, at the cost of his own business, to ward off the looming misery. It was at this time that the late Mr. Nazar came to South Africa and rendered valuable help. However, if Mr. Adamji had not shown that grit and tenacity, the happy ending could never have come about.

From the time of the above crisis until the present day, Mr. Adamji has always done public work to the best of his capacity and has given the benefit of his experience to Mr. Omar Haji Amod Zaveri and Mr. Mahomed Cassim Anglia who are now Joint Secretaries. We pray to God that Mr. Adamji may realize his wishes in his native land and return in good health for public work here; and we wish that other leading Indian citizens will follow Mr. Adamji's example.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-2-1907

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897.

248. ETHICAL RELIGION–VI

[Before *February 5, 1907*][1]

CHAPTER VI: RELIGIOUS MORALITY OR MORAL RELIGION

DARWIN'S VIEWS ON ETHICS

Before summarizing this chapter, it is necessary to give an account first of Darwin himself. Darwin was a great Englishman of the last century who made great scientific discoveries. His memory andhis power of observation were amazing. He has written some books which deserve to be read and pondered. With a mass of evidence and arguments, he has shown how man came into being; how he has evolved from a particular kind of monkey. After a large number of experiments and much sifting of evidence, he realized that there was not much difference between the anatomy of man and that of the ape. Whether this conclusion is correct or not has not much to do with ethics. Besides this, Darwin has also shown how ideas of morality affect mankind. And as many scholars have faith in Darwin's writings, our author has dealt with his views in Chapter VI.

CHAPTER VI

It is noble voluntarily to do what is good and right. The true sign of man's nobility is the fact that, instead of being driven about like a cloud before the wind, he stands firm and can do, and in fact does, what he deems proper.

Nevertheless, we ought to know the direction in which our environment disposes our instincts. We know that we are not in every way masters of our own life; there are conditions outside of us to which we have to adjust ourselves. For instance, in a country where Himalayan cold prevails, we have to put on adequate clothing, whether we like it or not, in order to keep the body warm. That is, we have to act with prudence.

The question now arises: does the influence of environment lead us to be moral? Or can it be that the forces that surround us are indifferent to morality?

At this point it becomes necessary to consider Darwin's views. Though Darwin did not write as a moral philosopher, he has shown

[1] *Vide* the following item.

how close the connection is between morality and environment. Those who think that morality is unimportant and that physical strength and mental capacity are the only things that matter should read Darwin. According to him, there is an instinct of self-preservation in men as in other creatures. He also says that those who survive the struggle for existence may be regarded as successful, that is, those who are unfit tend to extinction, but that the issue of the struggle does not depend on mere physical force.

Comparing man with the bear or the buffalo, we find that, in physical strength, the bear and the buffalo are superior to him; in a tussle he will surely be worsted. Nonetheless he is their superior by virtue of his intelligence. Similarly we can compare different races of men. In war it is not the side with the largest numbers or with the hardiest soldiers that wins, but the side with the ablest generals and the best strategy, though its soldiers may be fewer or less hardy. In these examples we see the superiority of intelligence.

But Darwin shows further that moral strength is even superior to physical and intellectual strength; and we can see in various ways thata man who has moral qualities lasts longer than one who is devoid of them. Some hold that Darwin taught that strength is enough; that is, those who are physically strong ultimately survive. Superficial thinkers may believe that morality is of no use. But this is not Darwin's view at all. We find from the evidence of the early history of man that races without morality have completely disappeared. The people of Sodom and Gomorrah were extremely immoral and they are now therefore completely extinct. We can see even today how races without morality are steadily declining.

Let us now take some simple illustrations and see how at least common morality is necessary for sustaining the human race. A peaceful disposition is one element of morality. At first sight it may appear that people with a violent disposition rise in life; but a little reflection will show that, when the sword of violence falls, it may be on one's own neck. Freedom from bad habits forms another element of morality. Statistics have proved that, at the age of thirty, intemperate persons in England are not likely to live beyond another thirteen or fourteen years, while the teetotaller's expectation of life is seventy years. Yet another element of morality is chastity. Darwin has shown that profligate persons die early. They have no children, or if they have any, they are weak. The profligate become feeble of mind, and

in course of time look like idiots.

If we consider the morals of various communities, we find the same state of affairs. Among the Andaman islanders the husband looks after his wife only until their child is weaned and begins to move about, and he then abandons her. That is, they do not have the quality of altruism, and utter selfishness prevails. The result is that the race is gradually dying out. Darwin shows that the altruistic instinct is present, to some extent, even in animals: timid birds display strength in defending their young. This shows that, if there had been no selflessness among animals, we should have in the world scarcely any life other than grass and poisonous flora. The main distinction between man and other animals is that man is more selfless than the animals. He has sacrificed his life for others in proportion to his strength, that is, for his offspring, for his family, his community and his country.

Darwin clearly shows that moral strength is supreme. The ancient Greeks had greater intelligence than the Europeans of today, but when the former gave up morality, their intelligence became their enemy, and no trace of them remains today. Nations are sustained neither by wealth nor by armies, but by righteousness alone. It is the duty of man to bear this truth in mind and practise altruism, which is the highest form of morality.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-2-1907

249. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
February 5, 1907

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I post to you today, with the necessary clarification, the papers you had sent me for my comments. I also send some Gujarati material, which has to be printed in this very issue. What I have written about Adamji Sheth[1] may appear some time later if he is not leaving just yet. I have suggested presenting him with an address. If one is presented to him by the Congress, I expect to get a separate report of

[1] *Vide* "Adamji Miankhan", 5-2-1907.

it.[1]

It is good that the speeches of the Congress session have appeared in the Gujarati columns of the current issue. The biographical sketch of the Amir ought not to have been postponed so long.

I have not yet been able to get an Urdu poem for "Ethical Religion". If you come across any there, do insert it. I had hoped to get some Urdu poem today. If you don't find any, let the thing go without it, but do not insert any that applies to the Hindus alone. There is one song by Pritamdas in *Kavyadohan* beginning with the line, "O man, without caring to know the supreme ideal, you have hankered after your selfish ends only". You may use it if you approve of it. If you can get Kabir's *bhajans*, they will be quite unexceptionable.

I hope to have a letter about Kalyandas and about other matters tomorrow.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Letters about the power of attorney and registration were despatched yesterday.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 4696

250. LETTER TO TOWN CLERK

JOHANNESBURG,
February 6, 1907

TO

THE TOWN CLERK
P. O. BOX 1047
JOHANNESBURG

SIR,

The Committee of the British Indian Association has seen the draft of the by-laws for licensing and regulating Asiatic tea-rooms or eating-houses. My Committee respectfully submits the following for

[1] This address was presented on February 6, 1907 and the function reported in *Indian Opinion*, 9-2-1907.

the Council's consideration, in connection with the by-laws.

It appears that the necessity for the by-laws has arisen on account of the large, indentured Chinese population and the catering for that population which has been undertaken by various persons. But, under the definition of the term, "Asiatic tea-room or eating-house" is evidently included any place where Asiatics are catered for, and it would, therefore, include the small British Indian restaurants which are conducted in Johannesburg. They are very few, and have very few visitors, the British Indian population being all permanently resident, and not requiring any houses for feeding it. My Committee, therefore, ventures to suggest that the definition should not include those of British Indians. At the same time, my Committee has no desire to protect the few small British Indian restaurants in Johannesburg from inspection with regard to sanitation, etc., but, in the humble opinion of my Committee, the ordinary public health by-laws are sufficient for the purpose.

In the humble opinion of my Committee, the procedure laid down for making application for a tea-room or an eating-house licence is cumbersome and costly, and could only be justified if there were large remunerative establishments. The fee fixed for the annual licence, too, in my Committee's humble opinion, is almost prohibitive, and is greater than the fee charged for either European restaurants or Kaffir eating-houses, the fee for the former being £7.10.0 only and for the latter £5. Moreover, the definition of an "Asiatic eating-house" includes a tea-room. Therefore, whilst a general tea-room carries with it a licence of £3, an Asiatic tea-room will require a licence fee of £10; and the fee of £2 for transfer of licences is, in my Committee's humble opinion, a heavy charge.

My Committee, therefore, ventures to trust that the Town Council will be pleased to favourably consider the objections herein raised to the proposed by-laws.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ABDOOL GANI

CHAIRMAN,

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 16-2-1907

251. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[JOHANNESBURG,]
February 7, 1907

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Your letter reached me on the 4th.

We are going to get the money for the advertisement of the Mahomedan estate. Please send the bill.

I have received the bills sent by you. I shall now see how much can be realized.

I did understand your suggestion about the riddles. I do not think it proper to introduce the riddles feature so long as we are not in a position to have it regularly and offer prizes ourselves. What can be the object of the man who wants to spend money on this? How long can he be expected to do so? Moreover, we can hardly expect many to take part in the competition. However, you may inquire of your correspondent if he intends paying for the prizes indefinitely. It would be very strange indeed if he wanted to do so. On the other hand, it would not be proper for us to start this feature if he agrees to give prizes once in a while. You may, however, write to me if you have more to say.

I follow what you say about Sanghavi.

Mr. B. P. Ibrahim has not asked us to discontinue the advertisement. I shall ask him about it when he comes. I shall see about the customers whose names you have sent me.

I am still trying to make arrangements for the Hamidia [Society] I know that Manilal is weak in his arithmetic. Please give him adequate attention.

How much English has the new man studied? Who is he? Is he the son of an indentured labourer?

I shall be able to credit the money payable to Hirji Valji.

Regarding the Anti-Indian Law Fund bill, Hemchand says it was paid in cash here.

As the post will not reach me on Saturday evening, you need not bother about sending me proofs here. It will be enough if you let me know in your letter of Thursday what subjects have already been dealt with. It will enable me to know what topics I need not write about.

About your going to England, I think it is desirable, if you can

go immediately. But your going depends mainly on your work there.

(I) When can you be conveniently free?

(2) Who will take care of your work in your absence?

(3) Will Harilal be able to look after the Gujarati columns?

I think the proper time for you to leave for England is when you can get away from the Press. When you think you can do so conveniently, you will first have to discuss it with all your colleagues and then write to me.

That Kalyandas is leaving seems to me a calamity. I think you should as far as possible avoid going to town. Maganlal may go if he has the courage to undertake the work in town. Harilal should look after the Gujarati work and Maganlal should look after the accounts, that is, the original entries should be made by him. If, however, Maganlal cannot cope with the two jobs, and if West cannot do it, then I think your going will have to be put off for the present. You will then be able to leave only after I go there, that is, in the beginning of next year. I may be able to go there towards the end of this year. But if I do not, I can go there only in March next year; and your going will be postponed till then. I am thinking of sending for Kalyandas's brother [from India]. Perhaps Goko[1] too might come. But all this is uncertain. You have to consider whether or not you can leave, if Kalyandas is not there and no extra hand has been recruited. Think all this over and let me know. It would be better, I think, if you talked things over with West and wrote to me. What does he feel about it? If your visit to England Materializes, you will be unable to go to India. You may think of going to India on your way back. What you do must depend mainly on your choice.

Though Harilal has agreed to stay, I find some uncertainty in what he writes. Therefore, I wrote to you to treat him in such a manner as to have a steadying influence on his mind.

The poster is found useful here. It may prove useful there too if we can arrange to send a man regularly to town. Do not think any more of discontinuing it. Try to make the best use of the posters now that they have been printed. It is worth trying if Sanghavi, Omar Sheth and others exhibit the posters and also stock copies of *Indian Opinion* for sale. Ask Adams also. Some people in Maritzburg also might well

[1] Gokaldas

stock these things. But all this requires time.

It is absolutely necessary to fix a particular amount per month so that nobody draws more. The better course would be to inform me every month how much each one has drawn, so that I can write to those who have [over]drawn. Or you may discuss the matter with Anandlal.

I feel the balance-sheet should now be made ready without delay. If Kalyandas can leave in April, please assign Maganlal mainly to this job and get it done by that time.

Please see what I have written to West yesterday about Sam Sardar's son who wants to stay there.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

In the printed list for Johannesburg which you sent, Mr. Ally's name is crossed. Why? Please find out and let me know.

Please send the paper to the following address if it is not already going there: Joseph Royeppen, 36, Stapleton Hall Road, Strand Green, N. London.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 4697

252. SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE

We publish today in another section an article on the South Africa British Indian Committee. The article shows that the Committee is working hard and will be able to do really effective work, if it receives help from South Africa.

The main thing that we can do is to support it through agitation. The Grand Old Man of India too has given the same advice. It is not enough that we feel the pain; our cry must be loud enough to communicate that pain. Even as a mother, as the saying goes, does not serve [food] unasked, we must know that, unless we agitate at this end, nothing will happen and we shall not be able to avail ourselves of all the help that the Committee can give.

Our position would deteriorate if, having brought the Committee into existence, we failed to support it. For those who help us do so on the [implicit] understanding that we deserve the help. We must support

the Committee by providing the funds. We cannot make up the deficit for this year unless we send them the £300 we promised. We should continue to finance the Committee until a solution is found for our problems.

The Committee has to deal with the four following problems: (1) the Natal Municipal Bill; (2) the Natal Licensing Act; (3) the hardships of [Indians in the] Transvaal; and (4) the forthcoming Colonial Conference.

The Colonial Conference is scheduled to meet on April 15, and the Committee will have to busy itself about it with all its energy. As for the other three problems, we have to send them the necessary information. Regarding the two Natal Acts, we feel that we should hold a [protest] meeting and send cables to Lord Elgin and also inform the Committee. It must be borne in mind that such an opportunity, once lost, will never come again.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-2-1907

253. TONGAAT LICENCE

The appeal against the rejection of the Tongaat licence was heard on January 31. A special report of this is given in our English section. It will be seen that, by and large, the Licensing Board has done no injustice. Those whose houses or shops have been certified fit by the doctors are given licences; and orders have been passed that licences be given to persons whose account books are fairly well kept. The result of this appeal provides full confirmation of the warning we had issued.

If we keep our shops and houses clean and maintain our accounts in an irreproachable manner, there will be no fear of our losing the licences. Nobody should be able to point the finger at us. It is not enough that our houses are ordinarily well kept; they should be so clean that no other houses can compare with them. We believe that Dr. Hill gave favourable evidence out of compassion. But we must not depend upon such pity. Nobody should assume that, because we are saved this year, we shall be saved next year also. Our houses, our shops and our books ought to be in proper condition, ready for inspection at any time. If they are, there will be little likelihood of difficulty in obtaining licences.

We earnestly hope that all Indian businessmen will take to heart the lesson learnt in the Tongaat licence case.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-2-1907

254. INDIAN TRADERS IN NATAL

We have written a great deal of the fresh troubles that have come upon the Indian traders in Natal.[1] Yet we cannot think too much about what we are to do in that matter.

Writing in *The Times of Natal,* one Mr. F. A. Baker says that he once saw a Kaffir painting the front of an Indian shop and goes on to make the following comments:

> I do not know whether the common man notices this sort of thing. If he did, he would never argue that Indian traders should not be driven out forcibly. However much we [Whites] patronize Indian traders, they will never patronize a White. They never drop a coin into the pocket of a White, unless forced to do so. I have seen [White] Government servants, workers and others, entering Indian shops. But have these traders ever given them any work? Even when an Indian trader knows of a starving White, he never helps him. Why should we show pity to such Indians? If our members of parliament do not pass an Act to drive out these Indians, we must replace them by others who will carry out our wishes.

From these views expressed by a White we have a lesson to learn: We must encourage the Whites too. It is a short-sighted policy to employ, through sheer niggardliness, a Kaffir for washing work. If we keep in view the conditions in this country and patronize the Whites, whenever proper and necessary, then every such White will serve as an advertisement for the Indian trader. We do certain things to flatter or please the White merchants; if, instead of doing so, or over and above that, we helped a White, not in order to humour him but for doing him a good turn, that will yield us better results. We believe that to help a needy White is much better in every way than to feed a serpent like Mr. Tatham with milk and be bitten later. It is in the belief that they

[1] *Vide* "Difficulties about Licences", 19-1-1907, "Natal Licensing Act", 26-1-1907 and "The *Natal Mercury* and Indian Traders", 26-1-1907.

will harm us that we have not hitherto helped poor whites. Even if they do us harm, we shall have no occasion for regret, for we did not help them in the hope of a good turn in exchange.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-2-1907

255. MIDDELBURG LOCATION

The Middelburg Town Council has served a notice on the Indians in the Location in that town to vacate it within three months. Those who have built houses have been asked to shift them from the site ! This would mean that Indians who have lived there for a long time would have to remove the structures and leave without compensation. The Indians in the Location have addressed the British Indian Association on the subject, and an enquiry is being made.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-2-1907

256. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

FOR INDIANS GOING TO DELAGOA BAY

I wrote last week about Indians going to Delagoa Bay.[1] Mr. Manga who has arrived here from Delagoa Bay met the Portuguese Consul. The Consul has agreed to permit Indians who make an affidavit before him to proceed to Delagoa Bay. To a communication addressed to him, he has sent the following reply:

> With reference to your letter dated the 22nd, I have to state that there are no restrictions on foreigners visiting Delagoa Bay. But those intending to stay in Delagoa Bay have to obtain a permit to do so. If they propose to stay for less than twenty days, they have to intimate to the municipality their addresses and the purpose of the visit. A statement to this effect may be made before me also. Those who do not make such a statement are liable to be penalised; but three days' grace is usually given for the observance of these regulations.

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 2-2-1907.

In view of this, Indians who desire to go to India through Delagoa Bay will meet with no difficulty, if they obtain the requisite permit from the Consul.

ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The election campaign is on. The rival candidates are spending a lot of money to get themselves elected. They have written letters to the electors asking for their votes. Sir Richard Solomon is going all out in his efforts at Pretoria. The result will be known by the 22nd of this month. *The Star* has called him the "National Scout".

DR. PORTER

In his recent report to the Johannesburg Town Council[1] on health and sanitation in the city, Dr. Porter has criticized the Indians as follows.

SMALLPOX

Writing about smallpox, Dr. Porter says:

> The greatest obstruction is caused by Asiatics and Somalis. The Asiatics resist anyone entering their houses [for purposes of inspection or treatment]. They obstruct the isolation of patients and measures to prevent infection. Whenever a medical examination is attempted, they send the patients into the toilet. It was only after a leading person was fined for an attempt to hide a case of suspected smallpox that they came to their senses. Later such cases came to the knowledge of the authorities without much difficulty, thanks to Mr. Lloyd. A great deal of help was forthcoming from the leaders of the Indian community at the time of the plague.[2]

MALAY LOCATION

There was a population of 4,200 in November 1905 in the Malay Location. Of this number 1,600 were Indians, 970 Malays, 70 Chinese and Japanese, 100 Somalis, etc., 40 Kaffirs, 1,300 Cape Boys and 120 Whites. Reporting on the Location in January 1906, Dr. Stock pointed out that, as there was a possibility of well-water being contaminated through percolation, it was necessary to drain the slop-water [on the surface]. There was danger of smallpox and plague breaking

[1] The original has "municipality".

[2] The original has smallpox, but the reference here is clearly to plague.

> out among the Indians because they concealed their patients. The Chief Medical Officer suggested at first that it would be better if all poor Indians, waiters and the like, were removed from the town to the distant Bazaars. There were no doubt difficulties in doing this, but as the Klipspruit Location had come up, arrangements could be made for Indians to go there. As many Indians did business with the Kaffirs, it was hoped that they would go to Klipspruit.

This, in substance, is Dr. Porter's report. It contains other important observations besides. But this summary requiresto be pondered over by every Indian. The suggestion about shifting to the Location is still here. And as long as we continue to conceal our patients and neglect the common rules of sanitation through niggardliness or laziness, the hreat of [removal to] the Locations will always remain.

ASIATIC EATING-HOUSES

The regulations governing Asiatic eating-houses, framed by the Johannesburg Town Council will come up before the Council in a few days. According to them the annual licensing fee will be £10. These regulations are meant primarily for the Chinese, but Indians too are covered by them. They will have to bear a great loss because the number of people using Indian eating-houses is very small, and they cannot therefore afford to pay the annual fee of £10. The British Indian Association has therefore written to the Council on the matter.[1] Other provisions deal with keeping the premises clean and the procedure for obtaining licences.

TURKEY AND GERMANY

A cable appearing in *The Rand Daily Mail* shows that a fresh cause of conflict has arisen between Turkey and Germany. As it is not a Reuter cable and may not appear in the newspapers there, I give a translation below:

> It appears that a few days ago Fehim Pasha, the chief of the secret police, detained a German ship carrying a cargo of timber. The reason for this was that its German owners did not offer bribes to the subordinate officers. The German Ambassador was informed of the Pasha's action and he sent a protest to the Port [authorities].He further declared that, if the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Town Clerk",6-2-1907.

Pasha did not forthwith hand back the ship, it will be recovered with the help of the German Army for the rights of the German people were inviolable. This warning had the desired effect and the chief of the secret police immediately informed the German company that the ship had been released. Now the Ambassador has written a letter to the Port saying that Fehim Pasha is corrupt, is a free-booter and a notorious thief. Besides casting a slur on the good name of His Majesty the Sultan, he has belittled the Ottoman Government in the eyes of foreigners. The Ambassador further demands that Fehim Pasha should be deprived of his position according to law and should be deported or imprisoned for life.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-2-1907

257. THE DEFEAT OF "THE ADVERTISER"[1]

The meeting of Indian leaders with the editor of *The Natal Advertiser* has yielded good results. *The Natal Advertiser* has written at length pointing out the fancied contradictions between our writings, the work done by Messrs Gandhi and Ally and the facts as stated by the leaders of the Indian community. It has further pointed out that even men like Sir Lepel Griffin are prepared to grant all rights to Indians and to allow any number of them to emigrate to South Africa. It is obvious that all this writing is of no value whatever. But instead of acknowledging its defeat, *The Advertiser* has tried to keep up the facade. Leaving aside *The Advertiser* article under review, it is easy to see that the paper holds the view that big traders should have no difficulties, that problems arising from the Immigration Act should be solved and a just attitude adopted towards the Indian community. If *The Advertiser* continues this policy, both the newspapers of Durban will, it may reasonably be expected, be somewhat friendly to the Indian community and not attack it outright. Much good can result if a similar arrangement can be arrived at with the Maritzburg papers also.

[1] A deputation of leading Durban Indians met the editor of *The Natal Advertiser* following a critical editorial by the paper on the Imperial Government's reaction to the British Indian Deputation. This was, however, followed by a more conciliatory article addressed to Indians and entitled "A True Agitation and a False", which said, "Let us, at all events, understand one another."

However, we must not assume that nothing remains to be done after what has appeared in *The Advertiser*. Admittedly, we shall have less to contend with if the newspapers do not write against us. But we have many other enemies like the Press to win over. The whites are not the ones to give up the struggle. For instance, Mr. Arthur Wade has started inciting the Kaffirs; he has appealed to them not to have any dealings with Indian traders. It is true that one or two speeches of this kind will not have much effect. But this speech should be a warning to us to be on the alert.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-2-1907

258. NATAL LICENSING LAW

During the hearing of an appeal about a licence before the Maritzburg Town Council, a member of the Council said that they ought to hesitate before refusing a licence to an Indian who is a British subject. Moreover, the local chamber [of commerce] has passed a resolution to the effect that an Indian should have no difficulty in obtaining a licence if he could prove that he was a British subject. In the four licence cases that were tried in Verulam the charges were that the shops were dirty, that access to the houses was only through the shops or that the shops were also used as dining-rooms. In Potchefstroom, licences were refused on the score of colour alone. All the appeals from Ladysmith and the neighbouring places have been dismissed on the ground that the traders do not know how to keep accounts, that they do not know English at all and that they depend wholly on low-paid employees in these matters. The court refused even to record the evidence of the book-keepers. All this goes to show conclusively that the whi tes are ben t on dri ving us out of thi s cou ntry. Tho se who hav e bee n ref used lic ences are , as a mat ter of fac t, epr ived of the ir mea ns of liv eliho od. Wha t are the y to do und er the se cir cumst ances ? Are the y to sta rve or tra de wit hout a lic ence ? The Gov ernme nt oug ht to thi nk abo ut thi s. The y had war ned the mun icipa litie s or tow n cou ncils tha t, if the pow ers giv en to the m wer e not use d jus tly, the se wou ld be wit hdraw n. If our Con gress and the Ind ian com munit y car ry on a det ermin ed str uggle and bri ng hom e to the Gov ernme nt and the wor ld at large the inj ustic e don e to Ind ian tra ders, we are sur e som e red ress can be sec ured.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-2-1907

259. CAPE LICENCES ACT

In this issue we publish a letter[1] concerning licences from Grahams-town in the Cape Colony. This leads one to suspect that a large number of poor hawkers is unable to carry on business for want of licences. Such licences are a source of income to many Indians. We have read the Cape Act and, as far as we know, the Town Councils are bound to issue licences. Legal action therefore can be taken in this matter.

The same difficulties are met with in Natal. The Act itself is very rigorous, but because of the strenuous efforts of Congress officials much harm has been, and will be, prevented. The Congress Secretaries go about from place to place, encouraging the people to take the necessary measures.

The Cape League and the [British Indian] Association should follow this example. It is the duty of these two bodies to enquire into the conditions prevailing in every town. If they make sufficient effort, we believe, redress can be had. It must also be remembered that Natal does not offer the advantages that the Cape does for putting up a fight. It will, therefore, be a matter of shame if the Indian leaders in the Cape do not offer resistance. We are prepared to publish the names and addresses of all those who have not been able to obtain licences in the Cape, and we request all our readers to send us the same.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 16-2-1907

[1] This letter was from a hawker who sought the intervention of the editor of *Indian Opinion*; he had held a hawker's licence for several years, which the authorities refused to renew and he was therefore faced with the prospect of starvation.

260. ETHICAL RELIGION–VII

CHAPTER VII: SOCIAL IDEAL

t is sometimes said that all morality involves social relations. This is well said; for instance, if the judge has a proper sense of justice, men who go to court obtain satisfaction. Similarly love, kindness, generosity and other qualities can be manifested only in relation to others. The force of loyalty can be demonstrated only in our relations with one another. Of patriotism, nothing need be said. Truly speaking, there is no aspect of morality the benefit of which accrues to the practitioner alone. Sometimes it is said that truthfulness and other virtues have nothing to do with the other person and are entirely personal. But we must admit that by telling the truth we prevent harm to another, just as by telling a lie and deceiving a person we do him an injury.

In the same way, when a man disapproves of certain laws or customs and withdraws from society, even then his acts affect society. Such a man lives in a world of ideals. He does not worry that the world of his ideals is not yet born. For him the mere thought that the prevailing standard is not good enough is sufficient to impel him to resist it. He will constantly try to change other people's way of life to his own. This is how prophets have caused the world's wheels to change their course.

So long as man remains selfish and does not care for the happiness of others, he is no better than an animal and perhaps worse. His superiority to the animal is seen only when we find him caring for his family. He is still more human, that is, much higher than the animal, when he extends his concept of the family to include his country or community as well. He climbs still higher in the scale when he comes to regard the human race as his family. A man is an animal or imperfect [as a human being] to the extent that he falls behind in his service to humanity. If I feel my wife's injury or that of my community, yet have no sympathy for anyone outside the circle, it is clear that I do not have any feeling for humanity as such; but I have, simply out of selfishness or a sense of discrimination, a certain feeling for my wife, my children or the community which I hold as my own.

That is to say, we have neither practised nor known ethical religion so long as we do not feel sympathy for every human being. Now we know that the higher morality must be comprehensive; it must embrace all men. Considering our relation to mankind, every man has a claim over us, as it is our duty always to serve him. We should act on

the assumption that we have no claim on others. He is merely ignorant who would here argue that the man acting in this manner will be trampled in the world's scramble. For it is a universal experience that God always saves the man who whole-heartedly devotes himself to the service of others.

According to this moral standard all men are equal. This is not to be interpreted to mean equality of position and function for all. It only means that, if I hold a high place, I also have the ability to shoulder its duties and responsibilities. I should not therefore lose my head and believe that men with smaller responsibilities are my inferiors. Equality depends on the state of our mind, and until our mind reaches that state, we shall remain backward.

According to this moral standard no nation can rule another for selfish ends. It is immoral of the American people to reduce the aborigines to an inferior status and run the government. A civilized race coming into contact with a savage one owes it to the latter to raise it to its own level. The same standard rules that the king is the servant and not the master of his people and that the officers are not there to enjoy power but to make the people happy. If the people in a democratic state are selfish, that state comes to no good.

Moreover, according to this law, the stronger members of a state or community have to protect, not oppress, the weaker ones. Under such a government there can be no starvation; nor can there be excessive accumulation of riches; for we can never be happy while we see our neighbours languishing in misery. The man following this high moral standard will never amass wealth. He who would be moral need not be scared away by the thought that few follow this ideal morality; for he is master of his morality, not of its results. He will be considered guilty if he does not practise morality; but nobody will find fault with him if his immoral behaviour has no consequences for society.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-2-1907

261. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

NEW PARLIAMENT

There has been a great deal of hustle over the new parliament of the Transvaal, which is to have 58 members, 38 of whom will represent the Johannesburg area. The nominations of candidates were filed on Saturday, the 9th. This issue of *Indian Opinion* will be in the hands of readers by the 16th or the 18th. The election will take place on

Wednesday, the 20th. The names of successful candidates will be known on the 21st. It is therefore hoped that these names will be available to our readers in the next issue.

THE PARTIES

In all there are five parties: Progressive (i.e. mine-owners), Hetvolk, (i.e., the Dutch), Nationalist, Independent, and Labour. Only two of these are parties in the real sense. The Nationalist Party, it may be said, has been formed for those who might be scared by the names, Progressive and Hetvolk. It is widely believed that the Hetvolk and Nationalist Parties will fare well and that, between them, they will secure a majority of the seats. Many look upon the Progressive Party with disfavour. The leaders of the Hetvolks are General Botha and General Smuts, those of the Nationalists Sir Richard Solomon and Mr. Wyburg and of the Progressives Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, Sir George Farrar, Mr. Hosken, etc. and others.

The real tussle that is going on is between Sir Richard Solomon and Sir Percy Fitzpatrick. They are both candidates from Pretoria. It is difficult to say which of the two will win. Sir Richard's views about the Chinese and theKaffirs havingundergone a change, he is being looked upon by many with scorn. He was ready to bring the Chinese into the Colony, but now says that his views in the matter have changed. Formerly, he used to say that the Kaffirs should get their legitimate rights; now he would approve whatever the other members propose to do about them.

An analysis shows that there are 35 Hetvolk, 29 Progressive, 32 Independent, 15 Nationalist and 12 Labour candidates. Five of the Hetvolk candidates have already been elected unopposed.

The Indian community, it appears, stands neither to lose nor to gain whichever party comes to power, for members of both the parties have already expressed themselves against the Indians.

PERMIT OFFICE

An article has been published in *The Transvaal Advertiser* which clearly appears to have been inspired by the Permit Office. It says that the Indian community causes the Permit Office much trouble, that the failure of the Ordinance to receive assent has increased the work of that office, that Indians enter without permits from hundreds of places, that they bring in their children without permits and employ them in the stores, and that the decisions of the Supreme Court have moreover created numerous obstacles in the working of the existing law. *The Advertiser* has thus tried to incite the people so as to ensure in advance that the new parliament passes the Ordinance again.

The statements are obviously false. Instead of the Permit Office being put to trouble, it is that office which gives trouble. The hardships caused by the law are increasing instead of decreasing; and the Supreme Court steps in only when the Permit Office transgresses all limits. It is not enough that we know all this. Knowing this, we ought to adopt remedies for these ills. The measures that need to be taken have already been indicated in *Indian Opinion*. But the greatest, the ultimate, remedy is going to gaol; and so long as that is not forgotten, no harm can befall [us]. The adoption of this remedy will also require a good deal of money. The British Indian Association and all other bodies should take quick and effective measures in this regard.

MIDDELBURG LOCATION

News has now been received from Middelburg about the Location there. Acting on it, the Association has written to the Town Clerk asking him why the notices have been issued. Further action in the matter will be taken after a reply has been received.

COOVADIA'S CASE

Mr. Coovadia, a well-known merchant of Johannesburg, who is the Treasurer of the British Indian Association, was on his way to Johannesburg with his 16-year-old son. The boy was forced to detrain at Volksrust because he did not have a permit. Earlier when a permit was applied for, it was refused, and Captain Fowle had given the assurance that there would be no difficulty at all. Though Mr. Coovadia had this letter with him, the boy was nevertheless asked to detrain.Medical evidence indicated that the boy was eighteen years old, whereupon the Magistrate refused to release him. A written representation was made to Mr. Chamney who declined to intervene. Last Monday, the case came up for hearing at Volksrust, when the Magistrate refused to send it up to Johannes burg for recording evidence. It will now therefore be heard next Monday. In the end, of course, the boy will be let off. But think of the trouble and expense Mr. Coovadia will have to go through before obtaining justice in such a trifling matter! When a permit was applied for, it was said that it could not be issuedas the boy was under sixteen.[1] And for want of a permit one has to undergo all this expense. When a well-known man has to suffer these hardships, what about the poor?

[1] The original reads: "If a permit had been applied for, it would have been said that it could not be given as the boy was under sixteen years." Gandhiji, however, mentions earlier that a perrnit was in fact refused.

REGULATIONS FOR ASIATIC EATING-HOUSES

The British Indian Association has sent a representation[1] against these Regulations to the Town Council. It states that the licence fee for an eating-house should not be as high as £10 and that there was no need for applying these stringent rules to the Indian community as it was small in number.

DR. HEGGER

Dr. Hegger has come here in connection with the election campaign. In a speech he made on Sunday he said that an Indian voter had offered him a large sum, which he had refused. Obviously this is quite untrue. We may hope to hear more of the matter. Mr. Macintyre, who heard this falsehood, has sent a report in English for *Indian Opinion*.

RAINS

This time there has been abundant rainfall in Johannesburg as indeed in the whole of the Transvaal. For three days it has been raining continuously. Great damage has been caused at Standerton by the heavy rain. The tank in Boksburg is overflowing.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-2-1907

262. CABLE TO S. A. B. I. COMMITTEE[2]

JOHANNESBURG,
February 22 [*1907*]

SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE
LONDON

PLEASE THANK IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT AND COMMITTEE FOR PRESSING CLAIM COMPENSATION VREDEDORP INDIANS[3] STOP INDIAN POPULATION VREDEDORP UNDER HUNDRED STOP INDIAN ASSETS INCLUDING BUILDINGS LEASES STOCK BOOK DEBTS NEARLY NINETEEN THOUSAND STOP SOME OLD RESIDENTS VREDEDORP STOP DUTCH GOVERNMENT NEVER INTERFERED STOP NO INDIAN SHANTIES SENDING PHOTOGRAPHS STOP ASSOCIATION REQUESTS INTERVENTION .

TRANSVAAL BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Colonial Office Records: C.O. 291/122

[1] This representation has been discussed in "Johannesburg Letter", 9-2-1907. *vide* also "Letter to Town Clerk", 6-2-1907.

[2] A copy of this was forwarded by L. W. Ritch to the Colonial Office, London, on February 25.

[3] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 26-2-1907.

263. WHEN WOMEN ARE MANLY, WILL MEN BE EFFEMINATE?

This question is suggested by some cablegrams received from England last week. While English women do manly deeds, shall we, though men, behave like women? This is no matter for fun, but a grave one indeed. Let us see how.

The women of England have no franchise. They are fighting for it without minding people's ridicule. A few days ago a procession of eight hundred women marched to the Houses of Parliament. then the police stopped the crowd, some brave women tried to force their way into the House. These women do not belong to the working class. One of them is a sister of General French[1], and over Sixty years old. Another, Miss Pankhurst, is the daughter of a well-known wealthy Englishman. Both are women of learning. There were many such women in this crowd of eight hundred. Of those who forced their way in, prominent ladies like General French's sister were arrested andprosecuted. The Magistrate sentenced them to fines ranging from £1 to £2, or to imprisonment for varying periods. Such sentences have been passed on 49 women, and each one of them, instead of paying up the pittance of a fine, has courted imprisonment. The aged sister of General French is also among them. We believe these women have behaved in a manly way.

Now let us look at our own house. Lord Selborne and Sir Richard Solomon say that the Asiatic Ordinance should be [re-]enacted. Perhaps that will be done in a month or two. Will Indians go to gaol if that happens? We think men cry for fear of imprisonment when they are caught while using a false permit, but not while committing the offence. This we regard as unmanly. Now when people are wrongfully treated as criminals and asked to give their finger-prints, will they quietly give them or will they go to gaol? If they give their finger-prints and suffer dishonour, we shall regard them as doubly unmanly. Hence we ask: will Indian men be effeminate? Or will they emulate the manliness shown by English women and. wake up? Will they choose to find happiness in prison taking it to be a palace, or will they submit to oppression when the Transvaal Government starts it? In a few days our mettle will be tested.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-2-1907

[1] Field-Marshal Sir John French, (1852-1925); served in the South African War and was later Commander-in-Chief of British Forces in France during World WarI.

264. LADYSMITH LICENCES

To return to the subject of the Ladysmith licences, we should examine how much of the blame lies with us. We have repeatedly written on this matter in our English columns. A question has been asked in the House of Commons on the subject at the instance of the [South Africa British Indian] Committee, but it would be better if we made a search nearer home.

It came out in the course of the judgement on the appeal that the account books had been written up newly or only occasionally and were got written by a man for an annual fee of £8. *The Natal Witness* has severely criticized these practices and approved the action of the Ladysmith Board. We must think over all this. It is essential to maintain regular accounts. It is unnecessary for every trader to employ a separate accountant; what is necessary is that the accounts must be written up regularly so that no one can say a word against them. It is also possible to have the accounts written by an English accountant or through a lawyer, where a competent Indian accountant is not available. We shall never succeed unless we give up some of our stingy ways.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-2-1907

265. CAPE IMMIGRATION ACT

Cables have appeared in the Press saying that the [Imperial] Government have assented to the new Cape Immigration Act and that it will soon come into force. The main difference is that, while formerly all Indians anywhere in South Africa were allowed to enter the Cape, now only the old Indian residents will be allowed in. There are other changes besides. We believe that the remissness of the Cape Indian leaders is partly responsible for these changes. It was quite likely that, even if there had been a strenuous struggle, the Indians would have lost the case, but then we would at least have done our duty. Again, for a struggle, the Cape offers advantages not found elsewhere. But the Cape Indians do not avail themselves of these advantages.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-2-1907

266. TRADING LAW IN NATAL

We have reliable information that the resolution of the Licensing Board of Ladysmith has alarmed many members of the Durban Chamber of Commerce. In a private meeting of members, many expressed the opinion that the Licensing Act should be repealed. In the end they appointed Messrs Handuz and Butcher to inquire into the matter. Here is an opportunity which we can use to great advantage, if only our leaders will meet prominent members of the Chamber, and particularly the two gentlemen above named, and come to some agreement. What should be done is indicated in an English article in the present issue. We shall publish a Gujarati translation of it in the next issue. Changes in the Act have been suggested from a disinterested point of view, and nobody is bound to agree with them. However, there is no doubt that this is the only course for us to adopt.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-2-1907

267. NATAL MUNICIPAL BILL[1]

We should be grateful to Lord Elgin for moving in the matter of the Natal Municipal Bill. He says that the term "uncivilized" should not be defined so as to include sons of indentured labourers. Moreover he says that it is not legitimate to include Indians among "Coloured persons", for all sorts of people are covered by the term. The Indian Government feels strongly in the matter and insists that the Indian community should be granted relief. Lord Elgin therefore hopes that the Natal Government will consider the point. In this controversy, it is probable that we shall win, if we do our duty. The Natal Municipal Council has replied that the Bill should remain unchanged.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-2-1907

[1] *Vide* enclosure to "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Elgin", 1-12-1906, enclosure

268. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

FIVE PERMIT CASES

The case of Mr. Coovadia's son was heard by the Magistrate of Volksrust on Friday the 15th.[1] Mr. Gandhi appeared for Mr. Coovadia. Giving Evidence, Constable MacGregor stated that boys under fourteen were allowed to enter without a permit, that permits were demanded of boys of fourteen and over, and that if they failed to produce them, they were arrested.

Mr. James Codie deposed that one could not say that Captain Fowle's decisions were always acceptable to the present Registrar. On being shown Captain Fowle's letter about Mr. Coovadia's son, he stated that the letter could not be treated as a permit and Mr. Chamney would not consider it as binding. On being severely cross-examined, he admitted that Mr. Chamney should accept every thing that had been done by Captain Fowle as Permit Officer. Mr. Amod Saleji Coovadia[2] giving evidence about his nephew's age said that he was a student at Johannesburg in 1903. Mr. Coovadia corroborated this testimony. Dr. Hick gave evidence about the boy's age, and Mrs Gandhi produced Captain Fowle's letters that were with him. The boy himself gave evidence to show that he had some knowledge of English. Here the hearing [of the evidence] was over. The Magistrate then heard the arguments on both sides and acquitted the boy.

After this the cases of four Indians were heard. They were alleged to have entered with other people's permits. Their names were Kika Parsad, Naga Bhana, Ambu Vallabh Soni and Mirzakhan. Three of them admitted that they had bought permits from others in Bombay on payment of Rs. 90 for each. The fourth man pleaded not guilty. All the four were sentenced to a fine of £40 or four month's imprisonment.

Mr. Coovadia's case shows that persons with genuine case sometimes obtain justice, after spending a lot of money. This is so mainly because of the false cases that are taken to the courts. It can be

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 16-2-1907.

[2] Brother of Ebrahim Saleji Coovadia

seen from the four cases heard on the same day that those who sell permits only get people into trouble by practising deceit and fraud. Those buying such permits lose their livelihood, are needlessly ruined and cannot live in the Transvaal. By such deeds they do harm to the whole community and are responsible for the enactment of rigorous laws.

ASIATIC BLUE BOOK

Lord Elgin has published in England the complete history of the Asiatic Ordinance. Long cables about it have been received by all the three newspapers here. Among these, Lord Selborne's statement, in particular, deserves to be noted by the Indian community. He severely criticizes Lord Elgin's decision. He says that, in granting the Indian plea, Lord Elgin has broken [Lord Selborne's] promise which he had made at Potchefstroom about not allowing fresh Indian immigrants till responsible government had been set up. This complaint of His Excellency is unjustified. For, the immigration of new Indians apart, even old residents have difficulty in re-entering the Colony and, if they succeed at all, it is after many months. He says further that many Indians continue to enter without permits. Even this statement should be regarded as improper, as the Indian community has repeatedly suggested to Lord Selborne the appointment of an inquiry commission to substantiate this. Lord Seiborne's bitter remarks only show one thing: the Indian community has to put up a fight not merely against the Whites, but also against the Governor himself who, instead of remaining impartial, has turned against the Indians.

NEW MEMBERS OF LEGISLATURE

Lord Selborne has nominated 15 members to the legislature, of whom 11 are Progressives and four belong to the Hetvolk. They are: Mr. H. Crawford, Mr. L. Curtis, Col W. Daerymple, Mr. G. J. W. Du Toit, Mr. R. Feelpam, Mr. W. Grant, Mr. Max Langermann, Mr. W. A. Martin, Mr. T. A. R. Purchas, Mr. A. S. Raitt, Mr. A. G. Robertson, Mr. P. D. Roux, Mr. J. Roy, Mr. J. E. Van Der Merwe, A. [D.W.] Wolmarans.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-2-1907

269. ETHICAL RELIGION–VIII

CHAPTER VIII: PERSONAL MORALITY

'I am responsible for this,' or 'This is my duty': this is a moving and wonderful thought. A mysterious, resounding voice seems to say, 'To thee, individually, O man, is given this task. Whether defeat or victory, both belong to thee. Thou art what no one else in the world is, for nowhere has nature created two similar objects. Thou hast a duty which no one else in the world can do, and if thou dost not do it that loss will stand debited to thee in the world's balance-sheet.'

'What is that duty I owe to myself?' Someone may quote the verse:

> Call not man God, for man is not God,
>
> Yet man is not distinct from God's glory,

And answer, 'My duty is to rest secure in the belief that I am a ray of God's light.' Another may answer that the duty is to have sympathy and fraternal regard for others. A third may answer that it is to revere parents, care for one's wife and children, and acquit oneself well with brother, sister or friend. Alongside of all these virtues, it is also a part of my duty to respect myself even as I respect others. As long as I do not understand myself, how shall I understand others? And how shall I respect one whom I do not know? Many hold the view that the obligation of proper conduct arises [only] in relation to others and that, in the absence of contact with others, one may do just as one pleases. He who holds this view does not know what he says. In this world none can, with impunity, act as he pleases.

Let us now see what our duty is to ourselves. Let us take, first, our private habits which are unknown to all but ourselves. We are responsible for them since they affect our character; but this is not all. We are responsible for them also because they affect others. Every person ought to control his own impulses, and keep his soul as well as body clean. 'Tell me,' says a great man, 'what a man's private habits are and I shall tell you what he is or will be'. We should therefore control all our appetites, so that we do not drink or eat to excess. Else we shall lose our strength and our good name. Worldly success never comes to him who does not abstain from sensual pleasures and does

not thus save his body, mind, intellect and soul.

Arguing along these lines and keeping one's instincts pure, one should further consider how to put them to use. One ought to have a fixed aim in life. If we do not discover our life's purpose, and keep steadily to the course, we shall be swept along like a rudderless ship on the high seas; we shall falter on the [moral] path. Man's highest duty in life is to serve mankind and take his share in bettering its condition. This is true worship—true prayer. He is a godly man who does God's work. Hypocrites and cheats going about invoking God's name are legion. Because a parrot utters the name of God, no one would call it godly. Contribution to an ideal order of human life is something everyone can aim at. With this aim in view the mother may legitimately rear her child, the lawyer may pursue his profession, the merchant may carry-on his business or trade and the working man may labour. A person with that fixed aim would never deviate from the path of morality, for if he did, he could not fulfil his aim of uplifting mankind.

Let us consider the matter in some detail. We ought constantly to examine whether our way of life tends to improve human life or to worsen it. Thus the merchant should ask himself whether, in transacting a business, he is cheating himself or another. The lawyer and the physician, acting according to this standard, will give more thought to their client or patient than to their fees. The mother in rearing her child would proceed very cautiously lest she should spoil the child out of misguided love or some selfish interest. The worker too would be guided by these considerations and do his duty. The result of all this would be that, if the worker fulfils his function in conformity with the moral ideal, he would be deemed better and higher than the wealthy merchant, physician or lawyer who lives without any discipline. The worker would be the true coin and those selfish men, even though more intelligent or wealthy, would be counterfeit. This further shows that any man, whatever his place in life, has the power to fulfil this aim. A man's value depends upon his way of life, not his status. One's way of life is not to be judged by one's visible outward actions, but by one's inner leanings. For instance, if of two men, one gives a dollar to a poor person to rid himself of his presence and the other half a dollar but with love and out of compassion for the man, obviously, the one who gave half a dollar is

truly moral, while the other who gave a dollar, the sinner.

To sum up, he alone is religious, he alone is happy and he alone is wealthy, who is sincere in himself, bears no malice, exploits no one and always acts with a pure mind. Such men alone can serve mankind. How can a damp matchstick kindle a log of wood? How can a man who does rot practise morality teach it to another? How can a sinking man save another from drowning? The man who lives a moral life never raises the question as to how to serve the world, for he is never in doubt. Mathew Arnold says of a friend:

> I saw him sensitive in frame,
>
> I knew his spirits low,
>
> And wished him health, success, and fame—
>
> I do not wish it now.
>
> For these are all their own reward,
>
> And leave no good behind:
>
> They try us—oftenest make us hard,
>
> Less modest, pure, and kind.

Time was when Arnold wished his friend health, success and fame. But he did not so wish now, because his friend's happiness or misery did not depend on their presence or absence; he therefore only wished that his morality might ever endure. Emerson says, "Adversity is the prosperity of the great." Both the money and the fame belonging to the base are a misery to them and to the world.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-2-1907

270. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

[*February 26, 1907*]

NOTICE REGARDING PERMITS

A notice published in the *Government Gazette* here says that permits, if applied for before March 31, will be issued to Indians who are at present in the Transvaal and can prove that they were there in 1899 and during or just before the war and that they left the Colony

[1] Here follows an Urdu poem by Nazir in Gujarati transliteration.

because of the war. After that date, those who do not hold a permit will be prosecuted. The notice means in effect that those who possess old registers and are at present in the Transvaal, or those who have other documents but not the yellow permit itself, should get one issued by March 31.

VREDEDORP ORDINANCE

A member of the South Africa British Indian Committee had tabled a question in the House of Commons about the Vrededorp Ordin-ance. Mr. Winston Churchill said in reply that correspondence was going on with Lord Selborne regarding the compensation to be paid to Indians. This shows that Mr. Ritch has been working for the Committee most energetically; and that its effect is being felt. On receipt of this cable, the British Indian Association held a meeting and resolved to have photographs taken of the Vrededorp Location and publish them in a supplement to *Indian Opinion* and to send a cable [to England]. In pursuance of this resolution, a long cable[1] has been sent to the Committee saying that Indians own £19,000 worth of property—land, goods, buildings and outstandings—in that Location and that as many as 75 Indians live in it.

ASIATIC EATING-HOUSES

A letter on this subject has been received from the Johannesburg Town Council saying that it will certainly not reduce the annual fee that had already been fixed. The Association has written again.

RAILWAY HARDSHIPS

Letters were addressed to the General Manager of Railways about Mr. Coovadia not being allowed to go to Pretoria by the morning train and about Mr. James, an Indian, who was insulted by the conductor during his journey from Germiston. The reply states that an inquiry is being made.

NEW ELECTION

Last time I sent 48 names. The remaining 21 are given below: Parktown—Colonel Sampson (P); Newtown—R. Goldman (N); Trefontein—F. Bayers (HV); Barberton—R. K. Loveday ( ); Carolina—Ven Ardot (HV); Armello—Collins (HV); Roodekopen—

[1] *Vide* "Cable to S.A. B. I . Committee", 22-2-1907.

Bezuideh Hout (HV); Leydenburg—C.T. Rabbi (HV), Mary Coel and Lomer (HV); Middelburg—Clarco (HV), De Wet (HV); Pretoria—J. Rissick (HV), De Erasmus (HV); Standerton—General Botha (HV); Bethal—Grovler (HV); Volksrust—J. A. Jubers (HV); Watterburg—F. Bayers (HV), De Wall (HV); Bloembauff—I. Farrera (HV); Zoutpansburg-—Manik (HV) and A. Mantus (HV). Thus of a total of 69 elected, 21 are Progressive, 35 Hetvolk, seven Nationalist, three Labour Party and three Independent.

The election campaign has ended with results that nobody had foreseen. The Dutch have won a victory leaving all the other parties well behind. The most that was hoped for was that the Dutch and the Nationalist Party together might win a majority. This means that in political affairs the Dutch have won back what they lost in the war. There is great excitement over Sir Richard Solomon's defeat at Pretoria. Sir Richard will not now be able to assume the office of Prime Minister. But it is being said that some elected member will resign his seat and Sir Richard will thus be given an opportunity to enter parliament. If this comes about, it seems probable that Sir Richard will become Minister for Justice. General Botha is likely to be the Prime Minister. That is to say, he will be as good as President. This has greatly elated the hearts of the Dutch. For us there is not much in this either to rejoice or to regret. However, one may hope that the Dutch will do the Indian community some measure of justice. Some of them know the Indian community well. It does not seem likely that they will be wholly unjust. I am writing this on Tuesday, the 26th. However, it would be no matter for surprise if the cabinet were to be formed before this issue of *Indian Opinion* is out.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-3-1907

271. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
February 26, 1907

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I am sending in a separate packet the Hamidia Society's job. The book is to be the same size as a printed copy of a report I am

sending you in the same packet. In addition to the Gujarati rules and their English translation both of which have already bee sent, you have to print the enclosed Gujarati matter. The Gujarati matter now enclosed is also to be rendered in English and printed. Will you please let me know the charge for printing 500 copies of the whole job? You need not count the cost of translation and let me know also approximately how many pages the whole thing will occupy. This will be in your hands on Thursday. If you can send me a telegram for 1s, you may let me know the charge by telegram, as I am likely to be there next week and I am anxious while I am here to get either the order or its withdrawal. I raised the question of cost myself, because it seemed to me that the job was rather bulky, and, if a bill was rendered to them, that might appear to them to be too big, [and] they might feel dissatisfied. I thought, therefore, that they should know the true position beforehand. I have got the Gujarati proof for the rules which I am sending in the same packet. You need not proceed with the printing because everything will depend upon the acceptance of our terms. You should keep the Gujarati matter at present with you, for, in the event of the acceptance of our terms, I shall be able to translate it there on my coming.

I am sending something more for Indian Opinion. You have sent me the proof of Messrs Avery's order. I return it. I wonder if you oticed the glaring blunders in the English portion. I had to telegraph you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[Enclosure]

[PS]

As regards the article by "The Colonist" which I had asked you to translate, we might add in the Gujarati translation that the ideas expressed in the article are 'ours'.

It is not necessary to rule the paper for me. The moneys for the Madressa that were posted elsewhere are now properly credited. These and the ones recently received are included in the settlement. Lalbhai's was received only yesterday. Kalyandas has not sent the customs note.

From a photostat of the typewritten original with a Gujarati postscript in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 4710

272. GOGA'S LICENCE

This licence appeal case should give us much food for thought. Mr. Goga deserves congratulations on his success. The Indian community, too, should be pleased. In this matter, T*he Natal Mercury* has commented strongly in our favour. So too has T*he Times of Natal.* The local Government also is helping us. But what is the good of all this? How much did Mr. Goga have to spend to get his right accepted? He had to engage three lawyers, all reputed to be at the top of the profession in Natal.[1] He had a very anxious time before he got his licence. And then, it was not out of a sense of justice that the Town Council gave it to him; but under pressure. For, as soon as the case of Mr. Goga's licence concluded, there came up the case of a poor Indian, Benne by name. In his case, too, the objection related to the books of account, but the licence was refused. The reason was that Benne could not engage three lawyers and take the matter further. And so he is to have no licence. It only means that those who are very rich can save their licences.[2] But how long can the well-to-do hold out while the poor are ruined? The ate he rich Indians depends upon that of the poor Indian shopkeepers. The subject is being discussed throughout the Colony at present. The Chamber of Commerce intends to work on our side, so that if we put up a good fight, we shall probably succeed in getting the law changed.

With this object in view we, as independent observers, have made some suggestions in the English section. It is necessary for us to organize resistance throughout the Colony along those lines. The Congress is working hard. It should exert itself further, establish contacts with the Chambers and approach other Europeans and important members of parliament in order to bring about a solution.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-3-1907

[1] Wylie, K.C., lawyer and legislator, was Goga's leading counsel. He was "part author of the Dealers' Licenses Act", took notable part in suppresssing the Zulu rebellion in Natal and argued during the case that "even an Indian was entitled to justice and fair play".

[2] Apart from the expenses on litigation, Russell, an ex-Mayor, extorted—so it transpired during the case —£50 from Goga for restoring his licence to him.

273. CAPE IMMIGRATION ACT

A new Immigration Act has been passed in the Cape, which, in our opinion, is much worse than the one in Natal. For the present, we reproduce here only its worst features. If an Indian not knowing English leaves the Cape without a permit, he cannot return even if he has been a resident. That means that an Indian who does not know English will have to take out a permit each time he goes out and pay a fee of £1. Such a permit will be issued for a limited period only. One cannot therefore have a permanent certificate. Moreover, according to the G*ezette* in which the Act is published, a person applying for such a certificate will have to produce his photograph and other tokens of identity. The clause requiring a permit is not relaxable because it is a part of the Act, and the Act has already received the assent of Lord Elgin. The matter of the photograph, however, falls within the discretion of the Governor. It is a local regulation, which can be amended from time to time. We would advise the leaders of the Cape to fight out the question of the photograph without losing time. It was a mistake that they allowed the Act to be passed in the first place. But we will regard it as a major crime if the clause requiring a photograph remains. If this practice is established in the Cape, it will have repercussions elsewhere, and offend religious sentiment. We hope the leaders of the Cape will lose no time in taking up this matter. We print elsewhere a translation of the main portions of the Act.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-3-1907

274. "THE MERCURY" AND INDIAN TRADERS

The comments appearing in T*he Natal Mercury* of February 21 on Indian traders deserve to be known and understood. The paper upholds the Indian traders and condemns the Ladysmith Council. But it also shows the kind of rocks the ship of our trade has to steer clear of. *The Mercury* says that Maritzburg merchants should consider it their good fortune that they have at all been granted licences. Despite notices served on them, they had not kept proper account books. It was only when another notice was served that they did so. The Council was not bound to give notice twice, and without caring for the

members of the Labour Party, the Council issued licences out of kindness. We should remember that such kindness is not likely to be repeated. The Whites have already risen in opposition to the issuing of licences in this manner. However, the danger has passed for this year. But if it happens repeatedly, the holder of the licence will lose it and the Congress will not be able to help such a negligent person. Every Indian trader should bear this in mind and devote full attention to the proper maintenance of books and to the cleanliness of his shop and his house.

From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-3-1907

275. SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE

his Committee has been doing excellent work as the two recent cablegrams show. One of them mentions the steps taken by the Committee in regard to the Ladysmith matter, as a result of which Lord Elgin has sent a strong communication. The notice in which the decision not to issue licences after a year was published has had to be publicly withdrawn. The second cablegram tells us that, though the Vrededorp Ordinance has been passed, the [Imperial] Government is again corresponding with Lord Selborne regarding the compensation to be paid to Indian residents. From this and from Mr. Ritch's letters which we publish every week, it is clear that much benefit is likely to accrue to us from the appointment of the South Africa Committee.

From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-3-1907

276. VREDEDORP ORDINANCE

We publish in this issue some photographs bearing on the Ordnance. They will show that what Mr. Churchill has described as shanties are not shanties at all but magnificent buildings. It was necessary to bring out this supplement [of photographs] because with these we could convince Lord Elgin that all the information sent to him from here should not be accepted as true. Especially when the information relates to the Indians, it is hardly ever likely to be true, because the European officials here are found to share the anti-Indian prejudices that the other Whites have. Lord Selborne may have no knowledge of the condition of Indian houses in Vrededorp, and we cannot therefore blame him. It is the officers below who do all the harm.

In this issue we also publish a table which will show that the loss suffered by the Indian community in Vrededorp amounts to £19,000. The table will lend much support to the agitation being conducted in London that Indians should be compensated for this loss.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-3-1907

277. NEW IMMIGRATION ACT IN THE CAPE

The new Immigration Act was published in the Cape *Government Gazette* of February 15. The following is a translation of the clauses relating to Indians:

PROHIBITED IMMIGRANTS

A person coming under any of the clauses below will be considered a "prohibited immigrant" and will not be allowed to enter: (1) a person who is unable, owing to insufficient education, to write out and sign, in the characters of any European language, an application to the satisfaction of the [Immigration] Officer; (2) a person who has no means of livelihood; (3) a person convicted of

he above clauses will not, however, apply to the following immigrants: (1) a person who has rendered satisfactory service in [His Majesty's] voluntary forces; (2) the wife, and child under the age of ixteen years, of any person eligible to immigrate into the Colony; (3) persons born in South Africa and persons of European birth domiciled in South Africa; (4) any Asiatic lawfully resident in the Colony and returning to it in accordance with the terms and conditions of a permit taken and authorizing him to be absent temporarily.

EXAMINATION ON LANDING

Every person landing at any port in the Colony shall be required to satisfy the Immigration Officer that he is not a prohibited immigrant and that he is exempted from the provisions of the Act. Under this regulation every one who lands in the Cape Colony, save a minor under sixteen and a wife accompanying her husband, will have to fill in a printed form. Those who do not fill in this form or those who, notwithstanding their having filled it in, are found to be [prohibited] immigrants, shall be liable to detention.

However, if a person wants to prove his right of landing, he will be given every reasonable facility to do so.

TEMPORARY PERMITS

Temporary permits will be issued to those who wish to enter in order to tranship or to reside temporarily in it for a reasonably necessary purpose on payment of a fee of £1 and of a reasonable sum to be deposited as security. The deposit shall bc refunded to the holder of the permit if he returns within the period for which the permit is issued. However, if a permit-holder overstays, he will forfeit his deposit and he may be arrested and prosecuted. Any permit-holder who gives a false or misleading address shall be liable to forfeit his permit and to prosecution. The Chief Immigration Officer will have the power to issue a permit for three weeks and the Minister concerned the power to issue one for three months.

PHOTOGRAPHIC PERMITS

Asiatics lawfully resident in the Colony can take out these permits. The period for which they are available and the port at which the holder shall disembark on return to the Colony will be stated in these permits. A fee of £1 will be charged for a permit; every permit shall contain a photograph of the holder and such particulars and marks as may be necessary for purposes of identification.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-3-1907

278. HIS MAJESTY AMIR HABIBULLAH AT ALIGARH COLLEGE

His Majesty the Amir visited Aligarh College on January 16, and he was welcomed with great honours. We give here a translation from *The Times of India* of his address to the students of that College on the occasion.

SHIYA AND SUNNI

You are young. Please listen to me. Some people may have told you that I am a fanatic Sunni. But does it mean that because I am a Sunni I am a fanatic? I shall ask you a question: Will those of you who are Shiyas show greater regard to Hindus than to Sunnis? Never. Will you then believe that I, who am a Sunni, will prefer Hindus to Shiyas? Never. You must have read in the newspapers that, on Bakr-Id, I prevented the killing of cows in Delhi lest it should hurt the feelings of Hindus. If such is my regard for the Hindus, do you believe that I shall have less for the Shiyas? I beg of you to give up from today the notion that I am a fanatic Sunni. In Afghanistan my subjects include sunnis, Shiyas, Hindus and Jews. I allow them all full religious freedom. Do you call this fanaticism? But one thing I must say: I cannot allow Shiyas to show disrespect to the three Khalifas. If people think it fanatical of me to prevent Shiyas from showing such disrespect, well, I am a fanatic.

EDUCATION

Many people have spoken against the Aligarh College. I have therefore come to find out the truth for myself. I am thankful to the Government of India for letting Muslims assemble in such numbers to meet me and for giving me this opportunity to address you. When I questioned the students of Aligarh College today, I was glad to find them well informed on religious matters. I shall therefore be able to silence those who have been speaking against the College.

WESTERN EDUCATION

I would never say that you should not receive western education. On the contrary, I would advise you—and I would say this twice

over—to exert yourselves to the utmost to receive that education. But before you do that you must have education in Islam. I have started the Habibia College in Afghanistan. There I have allowed western education to be imparted in order that the students may grow up to be whole Muslims. I found the students whom I examined today to be very well educated in religion.

DONATION TO COLLEGE

I am very sorry that, in view of the heavy expenditure I have to incur on education in my own country, I cannot help the Aligarh College as much as I should like to. For the present, I shall give the College Rs. 500 every month. It is my advice that those whom I examined today should be sent abroad for extensive travel. They will prove successful in the future. In addition to the Rs. 500 a month, I now donate Rs. 20,000 to the College.

WELCOME AT GWALIOR

After being honoured at Aligarh College His Majesty the Amir went to Gwalior where he was received with much pomp and ceremony. He was Maharaja Scindia's guest and stayed in his palace.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-3-1907

279. TELEGRAM TO REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS

[JOHANNESBURG,
March 2, 1907]

THE REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS
PRETORIA

ASSOCIATION INFORMED BY RUSTENBURG INDIANS THEIR FINGER-IMPRESSIONS TAKEN BY POLICE AUTHORITIES AND PERMITS EXAMINED. WHILE ASSOCIATION HAS NO OBJECTION TO EXAMINATION OF PERMITS ASSOCIATION RESPECTFULLY PROTESTS AGAINST FINGER-IMPRESSIONS BEING TAKEN. IF INFORMATION RUSTENBURG TRUE ASSOCIATION REQUESTS REASONS FOR TAKING FINGER-IMPRESSIONS AND ASSURANCE OF DISCONTINUANCE PRACTICE.

[BIAS][1]

Indian Opinion, 9-3-1907

[1] British Indian Association

280. LETTER TO REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before *March 4, 1907*]

[TO]
THE REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS
PRETORIA
SIR,

The following telegram was addressed to you on Saturday, the 2nd instant:

Association informed by Rustenburg Indians their finger-impressions taken by police authorities, and permits examined. While Association has no objection to examination of permits, Association respectfully protests against finger-impressions being taken. If information Rustenburg true, Association requests reasons for taking finger-impressions and assurance of discontinuance practice.

My Association has since heard that finger-impressions have been taken at other places in the Transvaal also. I, therefore, venture to request an early reply to the above telegram.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
ABDOOL GANI
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 9-3-1907

[1] This appeared in *Indian Opinion*, as "From Our Johannesburg Correspondent".

281. TELEGRAM TO REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS

[JOHANNESBURG,
MARCH 5, 1907*]*

TO
THE REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS
COLONIAL OFFICE
PRETORIA

YOUR TELEGRAM 67 TODAY.[1] ASSOCIATION IS ANXIOUS ABIDE BY AGREEMENT ARRIVED AT WITH LORD MILNER AND DESIRES ASSIST AUTHORITIES EVERY WAY. COMMUNITY FEELS TAKING TEN DIGIT IMPRESSIONS UNNECESSARY DEGRADATION, BUT AGREES TAKING THUMB-IMPRESSIONS FOR SECURING IDENTIFICATION.

IT MAY BE ADDED THAT A STRONGLY-WORDED CIRCULAR LETTER[2] HAS BEEN ADDRESSED TO THE BRANCH COMMITTEES OF THE BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION CALLING UPON THEM TO SEE THAT THE FULL TEN DIGIT IMPRESSIONS ARE NOT GIVEN, BUT OTHERWISE TO GIVE ALL ASSISTANCE IN THEIR POWER TO THE AUTHORITIES TO FACILITATE THE INSPECTION AND IDENTIFICATION OF PERMITS AND REGISTRATION CERTIFICATES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ARRANGEMENT COME TO WITH LORD MILNER.

BIAS

Indian Opinion, 9-3-1907

[1] The Registrar of Asiatics acknowledged the Association's letter (preceding item) and asked “whether your objection applies to taking of any finger or thumb impressions or whether objection only raised against taking impressions of the ten digits”

[2] Not available

282. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[Before *March 9, 1907*][1]

[MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,]

I have your two letters. I entirely agree with you. I am glad you have got thirteen pages this time. I am writing to Mr. West to persuade him. I anticipated your objection about the splitting up of letters in Gujarati words. I noticed the defect at Volksrust, where I was yesterday, and then and there wrote to Anandlal.[2] I sent some Gujarati matter and a lot of English from Volksrust. I hope you received both.

I enclose herewith an order for 1,000 handbills to be printed in Dutch and English. The paper may be any size not less than octavo. The English and Dutch should be as written on the enclosed. You should send 1,000 copies of this to Mr. A. E. M. Gachalia, Box 97, Volksrust. Please, also, put him down as a subscriber for Volksrust. You may already have the name for Pretoria also. I have agreed to charge £1 for 1,000 handbills. Of course, the railage will be extra. When the order is ready, you may send him your bill for £1 and subscription. 1 He has promised to send you an advertisement also within a week or so. If he does not send it, you may remind me.

I fear you will have to make some alterations in the Hamidia rules. Mr. fancy properly drew my attention to the fact that the English rules were more numerous than the Gujarati. You will, therefore, see the changes made by me. I have struck off from 49 to 53 inclusive; 48 has been replaced by another to read the same as the Gujarati, so, also has No. 22. You will see it more fully in the body of the rules which I am sending. Mr. Fancy has made some necessary corrections in the Gujarati matter also, which, too, you should note. You need not then send any further proof, but simply proceed with the printing. I have not gone through the English word for word, but I take it that there are no mistakes of spelling, etc. The [word,] Press, in Gujarati is printed in inverted type. This, of course, should be corrected. With reference to the closet arrangement for Harilal

[1] It is clear from the reference, towards the end of the letter, to Coovadia's advertisement, which appeared regularly in *Indian Opinion* till March 2, 1907 but was then discontinued, that this letter was written before March 9, 1907.

[2] This letter is not available.

and Dhoribhai, I certainly think that we should dig the trench if we have been doing so for the barrack people. I do not think that we should ask the employees to dig their trenches, unless they would do so of their own accord. I felt exactly the same thing as you have. I then argued it out for myself and gave the decision. At the same time if the barrack people have been digging their own trenches, it simply means that you have to get the structure erected and leave Harilal and Dhoribhai to dig the trench. The thing is that, somehow or other, it has got to be done:

I am writing to Mr. Lachiram. I have not heard from Tongaat regarding Gokaldas. I note what you say about the desk for Harilal. The enclosed household account is correct. ..[1] strike A. Coovadia's name off the list of subscribers and his advertisement, as he is broken. I return the letter.

M. K. Desai's letter with regard to Enavil's business is not to be printed. As a matter of fact, a copy of the same letter was shown by him to me and I told him that the letter could not go in.

Yours sincerely,

M. K GANDHI

[Enclosures]

C. K. GANDHI ESQ.

[PHOENIX]

From a photostat of the typewritten original: S. N. 4912

283. "ULTRA VIRES"

In the Natal *Government Gazette* for the 19th February last is published a notice which requires appellants under the Dealers' Licenses Act to deposit a sum of £12.10.0 to cover the travelling expenses of the members of the Board of Council sitting as a Court of Appeal. As it is the unfortunate Indians who have to appeal as a rule, or rather go through the farce of an appeal, this fresh imposition makes their lot harder still and makes attainment of justice prohibitive. We are perilously near to being asked next time to pay the travelling expenses of judges. The rule, however, it seems to us, is clearly *ultra vires.* The section which authorizes the Government to frame

[1] Here, in the original, part of a line is missing.

regulations empowers them to regulate procedure and to create fresh burdens of an arbitrary nature. We trust the Natal Indian Congress will promptly protest against this rule[1] and in the meanwhile we can safely say that appellants need not deposit the sum required under the notice in question. Indeed, if we are correctly informed in the recent appeals no such deposits were required or made.

Indian Opinion, 9-3-1907

284. THOSE FINGER-IMPRESSIONS

Our Johannesburg correspondent draws attention to a very serious state of affairs, if true. It appears that, in spite of the disallowance or suspension of the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance, the Asiatic Department has been proceeding as if the Ordinance had been allowed. It appears that the authorities have been inspecting permits and registration certificates held by British Indians, and at the same time, taking their ten finger-prints. There appears to be no justification for this high-handed action. We have nothing to say against the examination of permits and registration certificates—indeed, we consider it to be a proper thing, and the only remedy for weeding out of the Colony those British Indians or Asiatics who may have entered it without permits. But examination is one thing, and, under its cover, to call upon British Indians to give their finger-impressions distinctly another. The British Indians have consented to give their thumb-prints as a matter of grace and conciliation. The authorities should be satisfied therewith. Mr. Henry has shown that thumb-prints are, when properly taken, an invaluable test of identification. It is, therefore, a gratuitous insult to offer to the community to take their finger-impressions. We congratulate the British Indian Association on having moved so promptly in the matter. Our correspondent informs us also that the British Indian Association has circularized all the sub-committees warning them

[1] The Congress wrote to the Colonial Secretary requesting the withdrawal of the notice but the request was not acceded to. *Vide* "The Dealers' Licenses Act", 30-3-1907.

against giving finger-impressions, and informing them that there is absolutely no law justifying such a degrading procedure.[1]

Indian Opinion, 9-3-1907

285. LETTER TO "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"

[JOHANNESBURG,
March 9, 1907]

[TO
THE EDITOR
THE TRANSVAAL LEADER
JOHANNESBURG

SIR,]

Your leading article entitled "Who Rules This Colony?" appearing in today's issue contains a strange series of illogical inferences drawn from an analysis of the Blue book recently published on the British Indian question in the Transvaal. One of these specially needs refutation.

You state that those British Indians who are here should not be indiscriminately admitted to those political rights and privileges they do not enjoy in their own country. My Association has several times pointed out in your columns that the British Indian community of the Transvaal has no intention whatever of claiming, and in fact does not claim, any political rights and privileges at all in this Colony. British Indians simply demand the most elementary of civil rights, which is an entirely different matter.

I trust that you will take an early opportunity of correcting the mis-statement of facts above referred to.

[*I am, etc.*,
ABDUL GANI
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION]

Indian Opinion, 16-3-1907

[1] For the substance of the circular, however, *Vide* "Telegram to Registrar of Asiatics", 5-3-1907.

286. ENGLISH LIBERALITY

We have often had to write about the oppression we suffer at the hands of Englishmen. We are very glad now to have an occasion for speaking well of them while thinking of the coming restoration of Dutch rule in the Transvaal. The defeat of the Dutch in the war proved English tenacity. The British, even when thrown flat on the ground, do not accept defeat, call it a virtue or a failing. Once the war started, they alone knew how to win it.

The British saw, during the war, that the Dutch were not a people to be easily beaten; they too would not accept defeat. In defeat, the Dutch had truly won. Had they not been just a handful, they could never have been defeated. That was the impression they made on the British. Moreover, the British were shrewd enough to see that, in declaring war on the Dutch, they were themselves mainly at fault.

The party which had declared and fought the war was defeated at the last election. The Liberals won and they decided to hand over the reins of Government to the Dutch. As a result, General Botha and his colleagues have formed the Transvaal Ministry. Though they are now British subjects in the Transvaal, they are quite free. They will now be able to take into the public services as many Dutchmen as they wish. The air is thick with talk of helping the poor among the Dutch. And the Dutch language has today gained in prestige by fifty per cent. The Dutch are now to be seen in every town and village as before. They are flushed with enthusiasm and are again in high spirits.

No matter what the Dutch have done to us, we ought to congratulate them, considering that they deserve what they have gained. This [attitude] is an outstanding illustration of English liberality. It is a matter of joy for us that we are associated with such a people.

We have a lesson to learn from this. Why do the Dutch and the British both hate us? We believe the root cause is not the colour of our skin, but our general cowardice, our unmanliness and our pusillanimity. They will begin to respect us the moment we impress upon them that we can stand up to them. There is no need actually to fight, but courage is necessary. If a man kicks us, we take it lying down. He therefore thinks that we deserve nothing better. This is the

cowardice in us. There is a kind of courage in receiving a blow without returning it; but we are not speaking of that courage here. We receive kicks passively out of fear.

Making a false show of youthfulness, we waste our manhood in sensual pleasures and abuse our womenfolk. Without understanding the true significance of marriage, we remain blindly absorbed in carnal enjoyment. This is an example of our unmanliness.

In the Cape, we give our photographs [for proving our identity] In Rustenburg and Boksburg, out of fear, we give our finger-prints. Instead of entering the Transvaal openly and boldly, some of us do so wrongfully and surreptitiously. This shows our pusillanimity.

We are well aware that these comments do not apply to all of us. But the whole community has to suffer for such conduct on the part of a few. That is the state we are in, and, we believe, we shall get out of it soon if, instead of finding fault with the British, we realize our own faults. For the British who have today handed over the reins of Government to the Dutch will likewise give us our due.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-3-1907

287. WARNING TO TRANSVAAL INDIANS

It is shameful of the Rustenburg Indians to have surrendered their freedom by giving their full hand-prints. As the Gujarati proverb says, so long as the axe does not have a wooden handle to it, it cannot cut wood. Rustenburg has served as the handle by starting the giving of finger-prints. If, as a result, the Indian community comes to harm, the blame will be with the Rustenburg Indians. We are glad to find that prompt action has been taken by the British Indian Association.[1] It is well that it has lodged a protest with the Government whose action appears to be totally illegal. It is also a good thing that the Association has addressed letters to the Indian committees in all the towns.[2]

This instance shows that the Transvaal Indians have to act with great caution. Whatever steps are taken now should be taken in concert and in consultation with the Association. Nothing need be

[1] *Vide* telegrams to Registrar of Asiatics, 2-3-1907 and 5-3-1907.

[2] These are not available.

done out of fear of the officials. Why, and of whom, should we be afraid? When brave women are fighting for their rights in England, it should not be too much for the Transvaal Indians to fight with common courage.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-3-1907

288. HOME RULE MOVEMENT IN EGYPT

Messages in the papers indicate that an agitation for Home Rule is going on in Egypt. Large meetings are being held and resolutions passed by the Egyptians in order to gain political power by driving out Lord Cromer[1]. Writing strongly on the subject, the London *Times* says that the movement should be suppressed. We do not believe it likely that it can be stopped thus. There are some brave persons among the Egyptians; and education is widespread. If the movement continues long enough, we believe that the British will grant self-government to the Egyptians. In keeping with British traditions it has first to be shown that people who make demands are prepared to die for them. It is not enough to go on making verbal demands. The British follow this rule in their own country and that is how they endure.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-3-1907

289. LICENCE CASE

The Indian licence case of Port Shepstone which has been decided by the Supreme Court appears to be a discomfiture for us. Yet, we need not get into a panic on that account. We can use the case to convince the [Imperial] Government that, under the licensing act, the Indian community can never get justice. Success in Mr. Goga's case[2] was just fortuitous. The danger will remain so long as courts of law do not deal out pure justice. Mr. Ramsay Collins has shown that

[1] First Earl of Cromer, (1841-1917); British Comptroller-General in Egypt, 1883-1907

[2] *Vide* "Goga's Licence",2-3-1907.

the Town Councils are not capable of doing justice. We are not enamoured of the Supreme Court, but we want the right to appeal to that Court only because we know that we can get justice there. If the Europeans oppose this, it only means that they fear justice. In this matter the real campaign is to be waged through the Imperial Government. We are convinced of the need to work for a solution at both levels bearing in mind that we may not succeed. We are of the opinion that, as long as the Imperial Government does not exercise control or exert pressure over the local governments, we shall not succeed, nor can we win their favour. We should bear this in mind and work at both ends.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-3-1907

290. JAMES GODFREY

Mr. James Godfrey who went to England for his education has now returned a barrister-at-law. We congratulate him and extend to him a cordial welcome. It is a day of joy for his parents and a proud day for the Indian community.

There will be very few parents in South Africa who have had the courage to take the risks which the Godfreys have taken for their children. They have used all their property to give their sons and daughters a very good education. If other Indian parents were to follow this example in large numbers, the bonds that bind the Indian community would soon break. All of us admit the pressing need for education, but we are slow in acting on the belief.

Though Mr. James Godfrey has finished his academic education, he will start his [real] education only now. Education is just a means. If it is not accompanied by truthfulness, firmness, patience and other virtues, it remains sterile, and sometimes does harm instead of good. The object of education is not to be able to earn money, but to improve oneself and to serve the country. If this object is not realized, it must be taken that the money spent on education has been wasted. We hope Mr. James Godfrey will put his education to good use and pass on the benefit of his learning to the Indian community.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-3-1907

291. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

PERMIT LAW

The authorities seem to have begun the examination of permits in every town. Not only were the permits of Rustenburg Indians examined, but the police made them give their finger-prints also. After the finger-prints had been taken, the Rustenburg Indians referred the matter to the Association and were told that none of them should have given finger-prints. The giving of finger-prints has done no good. It is likely that the authorities will cite this instance of some Indians who gave finger-prints and argue that the Indian community had no objection to giving finger-prints. The British Indian Association has written letters to every town saying that the permits and the registers may both be produced for inspection on demand; that the authorities may be assisted in their work of scrutiny and all information required by them supplied; that thumb-impressions may be given if required, but that any further demand may be unequivocally refused and the Association informed that the authorities demand finger-prints. All Indians must bear these four points in mind.

A telegram[1] has been sent to the Government saying that the people regard it an outrage that finger-prints should have been taken at Rustenburg. The question has been asked on whose orders the prints were taken and whether or not the practice would be discontinued. The Transvaal Indians should take care that they do not get caught in the net that the authorities spread for them.

In reply to the Association's telegram, the authorities have inquired whether the objection is only to giving the impressions of all the fingers or if it extends to the thumb-impression also. In its reply[2] the Association has stated that, in accordance with the understanding with Lord Milner, it has no objection to Indians giving the thumb-impression for obtaining permits. The Association intends to assist the Government in the scrutiny of permits, but cannot agree about the giving of the ten fingerprints as this needlessly humiliates the Indian community.

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Registrar of Asiatics", 2-3-1907.
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Registrar of Asiatics", 5-3-1907.

TRANSVAAL PERMITS

Last week I wrote about the notice regarding persons staying in the Transvaal without permits,[1] In answer to an enquiry by the British Indian Association, Mr. Chamney has replied that those persons in the Transvaal who hold the old Dutch certificates will have permits issued to them up to March 31, and that all those who continue to live in the Transvaal after that date without permits will be prosecuted. From this it is not to be inferred that a permit will necessarily be issued to anyone who holds the Dutch certificate. These persons will have to produce evidence to the effect that the Dutch certificate belongs to the holder, and the holder was in the Transvaal immediately before the outbreak of the war and left the Colony because of it.

Every Indian resident in the Transvaal who possesses such evidence should take out a permit as soon as practicable. But it should be remembered that, unless the applicant is granted a permit, he is not to surrender his register.

TRANSVAAL RULERS

General Botha has now completed the formation of his Ministry. He has himself become Prime Minister; General Smuts has become the Colonial Secretary. Mr. De Villiers heads the Departments of Justice and of Mines. Mr. Hull is in charge of the Treasury, Mr. Rissick is the Minister for African Affairs and Mr. E. P. Solomon, the Head of the Public [Works?] Department. Sir Richard Solomon has declined to accept any office. Among the ministers, the Indian community will have to do mostly with Mr. De Villiers and Mr. Smuts. It now remains to be seen what course things will take.

RULES FOR ASIATIC BAZAARS

The current number of the *Government Gazette* carries regulations governing Locations. It appears that the idea of Locations has not yet been given up. The object in publishing these regulations seems to be to keep alive a separate Asiatic Department anyhow.

AMOD SALEJI COOVADIA

Mr. Amod Saleji Coovadia, a member of the British Indian Association and the Hamidia Islamic Society and also a trustee of the

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 26-2-1907.

Surati mosque, left here on Sunday on his way home. Mr. Amod Saleji took a notable part in the fight against the Ordinance. Dinners were given in his honour by Messrs Mamad Mamdu, M.P. Fancy, Bhanabhai, Essop Mian, Musa Dauji Karim, Gulam Mahomed Kadodia and others. Mr. Fancy presented him with a gold locket and other articles. He was also honoured and garlanded at the Surati mosque on Friday. Mr. Amod Saleji came to South Africa 22 years ago and is now forty-two years old. He is visiting India after ten years. Mr. Saleji is expected to leave Durban Port on March 20. It will take him nearly ten days to reach Durban from Johannesburg as on his way he will stop at many places which he has been invited to visit.

FOR INFORMATION OF BARBERTON INDIANS

The British Indian Association has received a communication from the Government about the Barberton Location. It says that the Location will be made over to the municipality and that a 21-year lease can be taken out from that body.

INCREASE IN SOUTH AFRICA COMMITTEE'S EXPENDITURE

Last Sunday a meeting of the British Indian Association and the Anti-Indian-Law Fund Committee took place at the residence of Haji Ojer Ally. Many members were present. The Committee unanimously resolved to increase to £15 the nominal monthly honorarium that is being paid to Mr. Ritch and to remit an additional sum of £100 for the purpose. It is a fact that there has thus been an addition of £100 to the sum of £300 originally fixed for remission to the Committee. It will be difficult to secure a full-time worker as capable even on a salary of £30. If Mr. Ritch had been well to do, he would not have cared to accept even this honorarium. Every week we hear of his activities.

GENERAL BOTHA

General Botha has been invited by Lord Elgin to attend the Colonial Conference. It is said that, if General Botha accepts the invitation, the British will welcome him heartily.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-3-1907

292. THE MASS MEETING

The Natal Indians met on Monday[1] night in large numbers to consider the question of traders' licences and the municipal franchise. The meeting seems to have been the largest on record. The Advertiser calls it "a record gathering, both in regard to the size of the audience and its enthusiasm". Delegates attended from all parts of the Colony and perfect unanimity prevailed. We congratulate the indefatigable Secretaries of the Congress on the admirable manner in which they organized the meeting.

The studiously moderate address of the chairman of the meeting and the array of facts presented by him should disarm all opposition. Nothing could be fairer than the compromise offered by him on the intricate trading question. Indeed Mr. Dawad Mahomed showed that he claimed for the Indian traders nothing more than what the reasonably-minded colonists have admitted they are entitled to at the very least. The first resolution[2] adopted by the meeting put in a concrete form the grievance of the community regarding the Licenses Act. There can be no doubt that nothing less than an amendment of the present Act will satisfactorily meet the difficulty.

The second resolution[3] was the outcome of the recent licensing cases. The contention of the Indian community is that, if with the possession of the municipal franchise by the Indian community, Indians have laboured under gross injustice at the hands of the municipal bodies, how much worse must the position become if the community is deprived of the municipal franchise. The meeting, therefore, emphasized the necessity for protecting British Indian rate-payers of Natal against the attempt to deprive them of the right to elect municipal councillors.

[1] March 11

[2] The first resolution protested against the manner of enforcement of the Dealers' Licenses Act and requested the intervention of the local and Imperial Governments; it further demanded that the Act should be "so changed as to safeguard vested rights".

[3] The second resolution requested the Imperial Government to "safeguard the right of British Indian rate-payers to vote at the municipal elections". The Natal Manicipal Bill proposed the disfranchisement of British Indians at municipal elections.

The two resolutions form a complete answer to the Colonial Patriotic Unionand show how necessary it is for the heads of the two communities to meet together and evolve a workable compromise. Let us hope that Mr. Poynton, who we believe is a moderate man, will consider our proposal and win the esteem of the colonists by paving the way to a real settlement of the thorny question of Indian immigration and Indian competition.

Indian Opinion, 16-3-1907

293. LORD SELBORNE'S DESPATCH

Lord Selborne's despatch to Lord Elgin on the anti-Asiatic Ordinance of the Transvaal has now been received. We regret to have to say that, in spite of His Excellency's usual fairness, he has throughout the despatch shown himself as a partisan rather than an unprejudiced administrator and representative of the Sovereign.

We will deal for the present with the alleged influx of unauthorized Asiatics into the Transvaal. We must unhesitatingly say that His Excellency has not produced a particle of evidence in support of the statement so repeatedly challenged by the Indian community of the Transvaal. The evidence referred to by Lord Selborne is the report made by Mr. Burgess as to his examination of Indian passengers at the Coast. It shows at best nothing more than that some Indians attempt to enter the Transvaal on permits not their own, and that such attempt is successfully arrested in its progress, even before Indians making the attempt have reached the Transvaal border. Now the attempt on the part of individual Indians to effect an entry into the Transvaal without lawful authority has never been denied. There is, however, no warrant for the inference, based on such attempts, that there is any successful entry. As to the allegation of "an organised agency trafficking in permits", there is not a tittle of evidence produced beyond undisclosed circumstances which have come to his (the Coast Agent's) knowledge. It is now the clear duty of the British Indian Association to call for the production of the evidence on which the statement is founded. Till then, the case for the introduction of the Ordinance remains "unproven".

Notwithstanding the fact, we find *The Transvaal Leader* basing an inflammatory article on Lord Selborne's despatch. *The Leader*

gravely asks whether British Indians are to rule South Africa or the white men. And all this because Lord Elgin has dared to do justice in the teeth of official opposition. *The Leader* then goes on furiously to urge that any such attempt on the part of British Indians to rule South Africa should be resisted, if need be, by the shedding of blood. We may, however, assure *The Leader* that no such heroic measures will be necessary, seeing that British Indians have no ambition to rule. We would ask our contemporary to peruse the statement[1] presented by the Deputation to Lord Elgin and we promise that it will show why it was that Lord Elgin vetoed the Ordinance.

Indian Opinion, 16-3-1907

294. MASS MEETING IN NATAL

We print elsewhere a report[2] of the mass meeting at Durban, to which we invite the attention of all our readers. That such a large meeting was held and attended by delegates from different places is evidence of the earnestness and energy of the Congress Secretaries. The resolutions passed at the meeting are bound to have some effect on the Imperial Government as also on the local Government. But we must sound a note of warning that the effect produced so far will disappear if we do not follow up the resolutions with appropriate action, and we shall then be falling from the flame into the fire.[3]

Such meetings have always to be followed up with much work. In pursuance of these resolutions we shall have to write letters to the Government and trouble them again and again. We may even have to send telegrams. All this work will cost money. We should remember that the Congress has no money now. All the money has been borrowed from banks. It is difficult to organize a big struggle in these circumstances. Therefore the first need is to collect money.

The second thing is to remember Mr. Peeran Mahomed's warning. As long as we do not learn to keep our houses clean, we are bound to suffer. That means that, if we want any good to come out of such big meetings, we must reform ourselves.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-3-1907

[1] *Vide* "Representation to Lord Elgin", 31-10-1906.
[2] *Vide* "The Mass Meeting", 16-3-1907.
[3] The original has "from ula to chula"

295. "INDIAN OPINION"

Some well-wishers have suggested that the Gujarati section should be expanded. They believe that people have begun to realize the value of *Indian Opinion* and its services. We have accepted the suggestion and added some pages in this issue itself, and from now on we shall have thirteen instead of twelve pages [of Gujarati]. We hope that this increase in size will be appreciated. We must, however, point out that *Indian Opinion* is not yet in a position even to pay full wages to its workers. It is only because they have some patriotic fervour that the journal continues to come out.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-3-1907

296. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

ORDINANCE BLUE BOOK

The Blue book containing the correspondence that passed between Lord Selborne and Lord Elgin regarding the Ordinance has now been received. It shows that Lord Elgin, who had heard only one side of the case, had at first approved the Ordinance, but his eyes were opened after he had heard the Deputation that visited England, and then he refused it [Royal] assent.

Lord Selborne, however, sticks to his earlier position and says in his reply that his hands have been weakened by Lord Elgin listening to the Deputation.

Among the reasons for passing the Ordinance, Lord Selborne mentions many Indians entering without permits. In support he quotes the report of Mr. Burgess, which says that he had personally seen several Indians holding false permits and that some had even erased the thumb-impressions on them. Even if some of these statements are true, it only shows that people are not able to enter wrongfully and that those attempting to do so can in fact be stopped. There are some more points worth noticing in Lord Selborne's letter, which we shall see later.

Commenting on this Blue book, *The Leader* and *The Star* say

that, whatever the situation may be, the Indians will be registered. *The Leader* goes so far as to say that the whites will even fight to achieve their object. The Association is preparing to reply to the statements in the Blue book.

PERMIT CASES

Cases of possession of false permits occur occasionally in Johannesburg. Some persons were arrested recently, and are being served with notices to leave the Colony. It is because people enter in this manner that the other Indians have to suffer so much hardship.

GENERAL BOTHA AND HIS MINISTRY

The residents of Pretoria gave a dinner to General Botha and his cabinet colleagues. Many prominent persons attended it. In his speech General Botha thanked the British and acknowledged that they had been very liberal in handing over the reins of Government to the Boers. As a result, the Dutch would remain loyal subjects of King Edward. The General further said that the Transvaal had been very much in the public eye, but that the people should let bygones be bygones and give the country a respite so that measures to promote its prosperity could be undertaken. The Boers wished to live happily and allow others to do likewise. They would treat the Kaffirs justly and would not harass the mine-owners. The Dutch and the British, as indeed the Dutch and English languages, were equal in his eyes.

This speech was generous and conciliatory. If it is lived up to, every one will be able to live happily under the Dutch regime.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-3-1907

297. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before *March 18,1907*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I am sending you today some sheets of the *Ramayana*[2]. The figures on the left indicate page numbers. You may go through them

[1] The noting on the letter shows that it was received on March 18.
[2] Presumably, a selection from Tulsidas's *Ramacharitamanasa*

if you find the time. I went over them last night and found the selection quite satisfactory. However, you may write to me if you have any suggestion to make.

While reading the proofs, compare them with the original book. Do not depend for spelling, etc., on the copy sent by me. Please send me the proofs before printing. Printing has to be done after deciding about the *format*, etc., of the book. And I believe it is desirable to print off after composing as much material as we have types for. Types necessary for job work, etc., should be kept apart. I shall send the rest of the *Ramayana* in small instalments.

I think a thousand copies should be printed.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[Enclosure]

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 4720

298. TELEGRAM TO "INDIAN OPINION" [1]

[Between *March 18* and *25, 1907*]

TO
OPINION
PHOENIX

DO NOT PRINT HAMIDIA WEEKLY REPORT THIS TIME SENT YESTERDAY IMPORTANT ENGLISH GUJARATI NOTES.

GANDHI

From the handwritten office copy: S. N. 4721

[1] The telegram carries no date. Its placing in the chronological order rests solely on the evidence of the serial numbers of Sabarmati documents, which in turn were largely determined by the original order of papers in Gandhiji's files.

299. TELEGRAM TO J. S. WYLIE[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
March 22, 1907]

[J. S. WYLIE
DURBAN]

I CONCUR ENTIRELY IN YOUR ADVICE TO DAWAD AND OTHERS.

[GANDHI]

The Natal Mercury, 27-3-1907

300. ASIATIC LAW AMENDMENT ORDINANCE

The Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance has re-appeared as a draft Bill to amend Law 3 of 1885 and has already passed the third reading in the Legislative Assembly of the Transvaal.[2] With the exception of the necessary verbal alteration, it is an exact replica of the original Ordinance. We congratulate the authors of the anti-Asiatic agitation in the Transvaal on their success in bringing the matter again to the fore, and on their phenomenal activity. The latter is worthy of imitation by British Indians. We frankly confess that we welcome the draft Bill as a challenge to British Indians in the Transvaal. They have to show of what stuff they are made. No new argument need now be

[1] Two thousand Indians were waiting to leave for Lobito Bay to work on the proposed Benguella Railway. The sanction of the Indian Government was awaited. In the meanwhile, the railway contractors had given an undertaking to the Natal Government that Indian labour would be well treated and returned to Natal or India on thc expiry of the engagement. The officials of the Natal Indian Congress had arrived to attend a mass meeting of Indians to be held on March 22. Mr. Wylie then sent the following telegram to Gandhiji at Johannesburg: "Mass meeting being held at noon today of Indians who are anxious to leave Natal for Lobito Bay, but cannot get away. Dawad Mahomed, Peeran Omar, and Anglia havc been to me to know what attitude, if any, they should take up. Before advising or acting, I should like to know your opinion. My advice is they should not interfere in meeting in any way meantime; but might be present to see what actually takes place. Please wire reply immediately." The telegram above was Gandhiji's reply. The concurrence of the Indian Government in the proposal was announced at the meeting.

[2] The new law was termed the Asiatic Registration Act. Gandhiji, however, continues to refer to it as the Ordinance.

advanced. There is no further argument left. The draft Bill will test the power of the Imperial Government to protect, and the ability of the Indian community to enforce, the famous resolution[1] regarding "passive resistance", as *The Star* described it.

Indian Opinion, 23-3-1907

301. THE MALAY LOCATION

The Johannesburg Town Council, as will be seen from our news columns, will very shortly receive title to the Malay Location. One of the conditions of the grant will be that the Town Council will have to compensate the inhabitants for the buildings erected by them and to find other Stands in lieu of those now occupied. At first sight, the provision seems to be equitable. But further consideration will reveal the fact that compensation does not include any payment in respect of the tenure or loss of rents, and so far as the present intentions of the Council are known, the giving of Stands means removal to Klipspruit. Stand-holders in the Malay Location, though, strictly speaking, only monthly squatters, were, up to the outbreak of war, at least as safe in their possession of Stands as the burghers of Vrededorp who occupied the Stands precisely on the same terms as the residents of the Malay Location. When, therefore, we compare the handsome treatment meted out to the burghers with the treatment that is likely to be the lot of the residents of the Malay Location under the Government grant, we realize fully what the possession of a brown skin means. If the Coloured people cannot show a legal title to anything they enjoyed during the Boer regime, their equitable right, no matter how strong, receives short shrift under the changed conditions. Will Lord Selborne once more maintain that the change from the Republican to the British flag necessitates a partial robbery of the rights of the residents of the Malay Location? For the paltry compensation that the Stand-holders will receive for the buildings can ill repay them for years of undisturbed occupation which enables many a holder to derive a handsome income from rents paid by sub-tenants and which is their means of livelihood. And to add force to our argument, let us for the hundredth time recall the fact that every attempt made by the late President Kruger to remove the inhabitants of the Location not

[1] Fourth Resolution; "The Mass Meeting", 11-9-1906.

thirteen miles from Johannesburg, but five miles, was successfully resisted by their late advocates, the representatives of the British Crown in the Transvaal.

Indian Opinion, 23-3-1907

302. SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE

We suggest that all our readers carefully read Mr. Ritch's letter this week. The work done by him, and through him by the British Committee, has been invaluable. He has been working with great enthusiasm and tact. We shall owe it to Mr. Ritch and the South Africa British Indian Committee if the Natal Municipal Bill is dropped, if the Vrededorp Indians receive compensation and if relief is secured at last from the oppressive Natal Licenses Act. Mr. Ritch will not be able to work without the Committee, and without Mr. Ritch, the Committee cannot do much. There is at present no one in London who can replace Mr. Ritch for vigilance and ability. Sir Muncherji and our other well-wishers do all they can to help us but not much can be done unless there is an able Secretary to bring them all together and to work under their guidance. Almost weekly we see from Reuter's cables that the Committee is active. Last week the news was received that, in pursuance of the resolution passed at the mass meeting [in Durban], the Committee had written strongly to Lord Elgin. This week we find that a debate was initiated by Lord Ampthill in the House of Lords. The report and cablegrams printed elsewhere in this issue will show that, in the House of Commons too, questions were asked and answered about our grievances. We owe all this to the efforts of the Committee and Mr. Ritch. It is clear that they have been making considerable effort. How is the Committee to continue and do more work? Mr. Ritch has himself supplied the answer. He writes that £250 a year will not suffice. We have published elsewhere the accounts submitted by him showing how the money is spent. Mr. Ritch had been drawing £25 per quarter, but the Committee has permitted him to draw £45, as £25 was not enough to meet even the deficit in his domestic budget. What is paid to Mr. Ritch is not a salary. The market value of his work cannot be less than £30 a month. He does not seek money nor does he work for it. He works because he feels [for the Indians in South Africa]. If his condition permitted it, he would not accept even a penny.

Among the Committee's expenses we see payments of £180 to Mr. Ritch, £50 to a paid employee and £50 as rent for the office. Thus salaries and rent took away £280, leaving £20, which was too little to meet the Committee's other expenses. Even after we remit £50, the balance of the promised £300, the expenses will not be fully met. The Anti-Indian-Law Fund Committee has resolved to send £100 more. But we feel that it is absolutely necessary to spend up to £500 in England. Expenses on this scale will, it appears, have to be maintained over two or three years. If compensation is paid to the Vrededorp Indians, we can recover more than £500 from that [amount] alone. Our expenses in England will be repaid a hundred times over if our traders can survive in Natal. The attack on the inhabitants of the Malay Location continues. If they can be successfully defended, that also will be a good return. We therefore specifically appeal to all our readers to make the requisite effort to maintain the Committee. The Natal Indian Congress has contributed £125. Out of the £50 yet to be sent, the Congress should pay £25 And just as the Transvaal has decided to contribute an additional £100, so must Natal too. That is the duty of the Congress. The Committee will be able to do its best only if money is remitted in this manner.

At present there is little likelihood of any help coming from the Cape, though efforts are being made. Our request to the Indians in the Cape is that, if it is not possible for them to send a collective contribution, individuals may send us whatever they can. We shall pass on the money, as from them, to the Committee. Even if the Cape Indians consider their own position relatively safe, they should share in their countrymen's adversities elsewhere.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-3-1907

303. NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

The Natal Indian Congress did very well in holding the mass meeting.[1] We can see from Reuter's cablegram that the Committee has acted promptly on the resolutions passed at the meeting, and written strongly to Lord Elgin. We congratulate the Congress Secretaries.

[1] *Vide* ''The Mass Meeting'', 16-3-1907.

The Secretary and the Chairman of a body are regarded as its guardians. The enthusiasm they displayed at the mass meeting they should evince in equal measure in the matter of funds for the Congress. The present position of the Congress is so bad that it has been obliged to take an overdraft from the bank. For this Messrs Dawad Mahomed and Omar Haji Amod have furnished personal guarantees. It was very good of them to do so, but the Congress cannot function for long on overdrafts.

The work on licences is a huge task and a great deal of money will have to be spent on it. To get the [Dealers'] Licenses Act changed will require considerable effort as well as money. The Congress, therefore, ought immediately to collect funds for the struggle over the licences and the municipal bills. Delay in this respect, we feel, will only mean repentance later.

We understand that the Congress has started raising contributions. We advise every patriotic Indian to help the Congress promptly and to the best of his ability.

To the Secretary and the Chairman we have to say that their first duty as guardians of the Congress is to place its finances on a sound footing. We are sure that a month's enthusiastic effort on their part will place the Congress in a comfortable position.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-3-1907

304. MALARIA AND DUTY OF INDIANS

Malaria is taking a heavy toll in the neighbourhood of Durban. It is said that nearly three hundred Indians have been buried on the other side of Umgeni. The Corporation has started distributing quinine free of charge. One philanthropic European has undertaken to supply medicine to all patients. Many Indians have availed themselves of his offer.

At this juncture the Indian community should not lag behind. We think it necessary that the leaders should come out, and go from place to place making inquiries about the victims of the disease and also arrange for their treatment. People should be persuaded to maintain cleanliness and not let water stagnate in the vicinity. The Congress should write to Dr. Murison for help. We believe that it is

the duty of Dr. Nanji to come forward at this time and give medical aid to patients. If he does so, Indians will have much relief and he will be able to do them a lot of good.

For the guidance of those who wish to help, we make the following suggestions: 1. simple food for the patient; 2. quinine as prescribed by the physician; 3. ensuring proper bowel movement; 4. removing vegetation, if any, from the neighbourhood; 5. draining of swamps, if any; 6. advising people to use mosquito-nets where possible; 7. the avoidance of overcrowding; 8. cleanliness of latrines, and night-soil to be covered with dry earth or ash.

These suggestions are very easy to carry out. It has been found that a malarious region becomes free from disease as soon as the land in the neighbourhood is drained.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-3-1907

305. PERMIT DEPARTMENT

The report of the Volksrust permit case which we print elsewhere is worth reading. The case of Shaikh Inas also brings out many things. It is interesting to know how far Mr. Burgess interferes in Durban. Not only does he examine those without permits but even others who have them. It is quite evident that this procedure is improper. For earlier when the person concerned appeared in court, the magistrate found his case in order, held his permit to be valid and acquitted him. Yet Lord Selborne relies on Mr. Burgess's report and has made out that many persons come in with forged permits or none at all.

The case of Abdul Rehman is equally important. He will produce witnesses who know him, and thus have himself acquitted. But he would not have been able to come in either, if Mr. Burgess had had his way.

We feel that, if the Natal Indian Congress makes some effort in this matter, it can secure redress. This kind of thing is happening in Durban, and hence it is within the purview of the Congress. It can ask Mr. Smith and the Natal Government under what authority they carry out searches on board steamers.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-3-1907

306. HISTORY OF ISLAM

The Spectator is one of the famous journals published in Britain today. Prince Tiano is a great Italian writer and has studied Eastern languages. At present he is writing a history of Islam and intends to publish it in twelve parts. The first part has already been published. It is priced at £.1.12.0 and runs into 740 pages of a large size. A review of this book has appeared in *The Spectator* of December 22, of which we give a summary below:

> Prince Tiano gives in the first part the history of the first six years of the Prophet's life, in which we see the Prophet as a statesman, law-maker and general. His power was growing from day to day. The Jews opposed him strongly, but the Prophet broke their power. Though there was not much pomp and splendour about him, his power was very great. What he did, no other religious teacher has done. He started preaching after the age of forty. His was not a struggle for self-interest, but for the good of others. At the time of his death he was the head of a theocratic state. He established a religion which came to enjoy world-wide allegiance, thanks to his greatness and sense of justice. He gave the Arabs a practical knowledge of world affairs, which they had lacked. He moulded them into a single people and made them doughty fighters. He ruled over different peoples; and today, though Muslims live under different governments, they believe in one God and His Prophet and maintain fraternal relations with others of the same faith. What the nature of this brotherhood is and what the Muslim community can do in the modern world has to be considered whenever we think of the pan-Islamic movement.

The foregoing is just a summary. We have omitted a considerable portion which is critical. But we would advise those who know English to read the whole article.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-3-1907

307. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

GENERAL BOTHA

General Botha's name is on everybody's lips here. Everywhere the reaction to his speech has been very good. *The Times* has written favourably of it and rates him very highly. Others too could have said what General Botha did. But the British have a special affection for one who speaks generously after having proved his valour in battle. The lesson for us is that the Indian community too should show courage.

A move is afoot here to give a dinner to General Botha and his colleagues in the Ministry as was done at Pretoria. It is said that the dinner will be at the Carlton Hotel on the 23rd.

General Botha is to go to England to attend the [Colonial] Conference. We have suggested to our Committee in London that they should meet him and put our case before him.

TRANSVAAL PARLIAMENT

The Transvaal parliament is meeting on the 21st. Every one is anxious to know what it will do. The parliament will not be in session for long, and will adjourn after a sitting of two or three days only.

RAILWAY HARDSHIPS

The difficulties on the railways still continue. Mr. Osman Latief has addressed a letter to the Manager about the inconvenience he had to undergo. Correspondence is still going on between the Association and the General Manager over the right of Indians to travel by the morning and evening trains between Pretoria and Johannesburg. The Manager has replied that the existing rules cannot be changed, where upon the Association has pointed out that the arrangement agreed upon was temporary, that it had resulted in much hardship, and hence the repealing of the provision preventing Indians from travelling by these trains is a felt need.

DELAGOA BAY RAILWAY

There has been a serious accident on the Delagoa Bay Railway. Many passengers lost their lives in a landslide. One of them was Dr. Jameson, a former Minister for Lands. He retired when the new Ministry was formed, and was proceeding to England. True to the saying "Man proposes, but God disposes", Dr. Jameson died in this accident before reaching England. His body was taken back to Pretoria and buried there.

ON THE ACCIDENT

The accident gives rise to many reflections. Others died besides Dr. Jameson. Some were injured. Again, two hundred lives were lost when a French man-of-war was wrecked near Toulon. Incidents such as these are constantly taking place but, intoxicated with this world of affairs, we see nothing. As children, we read [in Gujarati]

> Know, O Man, know thy mind
> And be afraid of death.
> Beware of the destined hour
> To ashes thou shalt turn.

We live on in the world as if we had come here with a charter of immortality; and as the Gujarati proverb goes, we go on killing buffaloes for shoe-laces. But if we reflect seriously and look at things calmly, we realize that all is done in vain which is not done for others' good. If every minute, hour and day given to us is spent in good deeds, in patriotic service and in maintaining truth, we shall have nothing to fear even when death strikes us down. Only a person who risks his life can fetch pearls from the depths of the sea. Similarly, from the ocean of life we have to seek out tasks precious like pearls. He alone who does not care for his life can do this. If our actions are effeminate, we cannot remain manly. Lord Selborne has made a biting remark that we are base and in the face of the least danger we think of bribing the officials. We can refute this charge only if we have true spirit within us.

GIVING OF FINGER-PRINTS

That this was started at Rustenburg I have already mentioned.[1] Now the Association has received a letter from the Rustenburg

[1] *Vide* ''Johannesburg Letter'', 9-3-1907.

Committee saying that the paper on which the finger-prints of some people were obtained at the instance of the Committee has been burnt. For this Rustenburg deserves our congratulations. Indians in other places should heed this warning and not give the ten finger-impressions under any circumstances.

VREDEDORP ORDINANCE

It has been suggested by the Johannesburg municipality that the Vrededorp Ordinance may be put into effect from July 1. Meanwhile, the South Africa British Indian Committee has been active about obtaining compensation.

MALAY LOCATION

On the subject of handing over the Malay Location to the Johannesburg Town Council, the Government have written that, as soon as it agrees to certain conditions, it will be granted a permanent lease. One of the conditions is that, should the Council evict the residents of the Malay Location, it should provide suitable Stands elsewhere for the evicted and also pay compensation, as determined by a tribunal, for buildings already erected by them in the Location.

This means that the inhabitants of the Malay Location will not be compensated for their right to the Stands which, for many years now, they have believed to be theirs; only the present value of the structures will be paid. That is to say, the payment will vary from £50 to £150. The Malay Location Committee should start an agitation from today. It is probable that the agreement between the Government and the Council will soon be signed.

PERMITS

Only a few days now remain for those persons who are now resident in the Transvaal, hold old registers but had left the territory just before the war, to apply for new permits. It should be remembered that, after March 31, no applications will be entertained.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-3-1907

308. ASIATIC LAW AMENDMENT ORDINANCE

This Ordinance is about to be enacted again in the Transvaal parliament. Almost word for word it is identical with the Ordinance which was cancelled. We here have an instance of the tenacity of the Europeans. Whatever they undertake they see through. With us the first flush of heroism is seen to die away soon. This is a time of real test. If the Transvaal Indians are prepared to go to gaol, they have nothing to fear. We cannot say whether the Imperial Government will cancel this Ordinance or not. We would suggest that every Indian male should call to mind, on this occasion, the great deeds of British women. Action is more necessary than talk.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-3-1907

309. CABLE TO S.A.B.I. COMMITTEE[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
March 23, 1907

[TO]

SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE
LONDON

BRITISH INDIANS STAGGERED OVER PASSAGE ASIATIC BILL DURING TWO SITTINGS TRANSVAAL PARLIAMENT. GAZETTED NINETEENTH, NO OPPORTUNITY GIVEN COMMUNITY BEING HEARD BEFORE PARLIAMENT. ALLEGATION CONTINUED ILLEGAL INFLUX TOTALLY DENIED AND REMAINS UNPROVED. UNDERLYING QUESTION IS THAT OF INDIAN STATUS WITHIN EMPIRE SUCH ALSO PRESS OPINION. TRUST COMMITTEE WILL SAVE INDIANS IMPENDING DEGRADATION.

[BIAS]

Colonial Office Records: C.O. 291/122

[1] This was forwarded by L. W. Ritch, along with his letter dated March 25, to the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, London. *Vide* also "Cable to Lord Elgin",30-3-1907.

310. LETTER TO SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 25, 1907

DEAR SIR WILLIAM,

I am obliged to you for your letter regarding Dr. Oldfield's contributions. I write this to request your very active interest in the matter of the Ordinance, which has been re-introduced in the new parliament. I venture to think that the matter has not been discussed in *India*, as it might be. The result will be that it will not be thoroughly dealt with by the publicists in India.

I had a letter from Mr. Frazer of *The Times of India* saying that, if the idea of a special committee for this purpose were taken up, he would gladly co-operate. If you could kindly suggest to public men in India the desirability of forming such a committee, I think that it will be taken up.

I have written to the Secretary of the South Africa British Indian Committee suggesting that a deputation should meet General Botha, and discuss this question.[1]

I remain,

Yours faithfully

M. K. GANDHI

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN, BART.

[ENGLAND]

From a photostat of the typewritten original: G. N. 2779. 2

311. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

JOHANNESBURG,
March 25, 1907

DEAR MR. NAOROJI,

I beg to enclose herewith for your perusal copy of my letter[2] to Sir William. I do think that India should, from week to week, prominently discuss this matter. Whatever is done in the Transvaal will

[1] This letter is not available.

[2] Preceding item

be followed throughout the Colonies, and, if the principle of degrading racial legislation that underlies the Ordinance is once accepted, there will be an end to Indian immigration.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

[Enclosure]

DADABHAI NAOROJI. ESQ.

22, KENNINGTON ROAD

LONDON, S . E.

From a photostat of the typewritten original: G. N. 2779. 1

312. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[JOHANNESBURG,]

March 25, 1907

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

Each week you will be glad to learn we run short of *Indian Opinion*. Today, if you had sent 100 copies, they would have gone. I think, therefore, it would perhaps be as well to send here next week 200 copies, because there is bound to be a very great demand. You may also send about 2 dozen copies of the current issue. I have instructed Hemchand to accept payment from those who may come here on the promise of supplying them with a copy. If they cannot be sold, I will keep them. You will, of course, take care for the present to print one or two hundred extra copies over and above the copies requisitioned. The two hundred copies for next week must be included in the requisition.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten original: S. N. 4724

313. RESOLUTIONS AT TRANSVAAL INDIAN MASS MEETING[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
March 29, 1907]

[Resolution 1][2] This meeting of British Indians, convened under the auspices of the British Indian Association, hereby respectfully protests against the passage of the Asiatic Law Amendment Bill by the new Transvaal Parliament, in that the Bill is unnecessary and degrading to the British Indian community.

[Resolution 2][3] This meeting of British Indians convened under the auspices of the British Indian Association denies the allegation of illegal influx of British Indians on a wholesale scale, and, in order to satisfy the Government and popular prejudice, offers to submit to voluntary regis tration, as was done by the community in 1904 under Lord Milner's advice, and in the manner sketched in the Chairman's speech thus practically fulfilling all the requirements of the Bill without its offensive character.

[Resolution 3][4] In the event of the humble proposal embodied in Resolution 2 not being accepted by the local Government, this meeting hereby requests full Imperial protection by reason of the fact that British Indians have no voice in the choice of the legislators, and represent a very small and weak minority.

[Resolution 4][5] That the Chairman be, and is, hereby authorized to submit the resolutions passed by this meeting of British Indians, by wire or cable, to the local Government and to the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State for India, and His Excellency the Governor-General of India.

Indian Opinion, 6-4-1907

[1] These resolutions were passed at a mass meeting, attended by delegates fiom all parts of the Transvaal, on March 29, 1907. It is likely that they wcre drafted by Gandhiji.

[2] This was moved by H. O. Ally.

[3] This was moved by Abdul Rehman of Potchefstroom.

[4] This was moved by Nadirshah A. Cama of Johannesburg.

[5] This was moved by Imam Abdul Kadir Bawazeer of Johannesburg.

314. THE DEALERS' LICENSES ACT

The reply[1] of the Natal Government to the Natal Indian Congress regarding the imposition of a heavy fee against a rule under the Dealers' Licenses Act is very unsatisfactory, except in so far as the reply shows an anxiety on the part of the Government to justify its action; but the analogy given from the Liquor Licences and the Road Boards Act is entirely misleading. The Liquor Licences Ordinance and laws are naturally and always restrictive to trade in liquor. The policy of the legislature, therefore, naturally is to put as many obstacles as possible in the way of those licences being multiplied. It may be retorted, it is true, that such is also the policy of the Dealers' Licenses Act so far as Indians are concerned, but we think that the Government could hardly take up such a position. The hardship created by the Act is great enough in that absolute discretion as to the granting of licences rests with the Appellate Boards. To impose a heavy penalty, for the fee of £12 10s is nothing less, would be, practically, to bar even an approach to these Boards. The analogy of the Road Boards also cannot hold good, because the interests involved are of a totally different nature. They regulate special rights and do not create social disabilities, whereas the Dealers' Licenses Act specifically restricts a natural right, which has hitherto been considered to be a vested right. We undoubtedly think that it is the duty of the Congress to pursue the matter, until the imposition shall have been removed.

Indian Opinion, 30-3-1907

315. TRANSVAAL ASIATIC ORDINANCE

The Transvaal Indians are again confronted with the same situation that they faced during September last. Today every one is watching to see what they will do next.

[1] The Government in its reply had said: "The rule requiring appellants under Act 18 of 1897 to deposit £12 is a proper one, and within the authority given by the Act. I may say that the rule is similar to others passed in connection with similar acts. It is almost identical with one of the rules under the Liquor Act; and, under the Road Boards Act, 1901, a deposit of £15 to £25 is similarly required to be made."

All Indians will be guided by what the Transvaal Indians do. What happens in the Transvaal may well happen all over South Africa.

"NOTHING VENTURE, NOTHING HAVE"

According to the saying, "Nothing venture, nothing have," if the Transvaal Indians do not rigidly adhere to the resolution on going to gaol, they will lose everything. Not only they, but other South African Indians also will lose their rights.

If the Indian community in the Transvaal does not carry out the resolution in regard to going to gaol, it will be eating its own words. The Europeans will laugh at the Indians. They will think us timid and cowardly and take it that we shall endure any burden imposed on us. No one will put any faith in our word, whether written or spoken.

IF BILL IS PASSED

If this Bill is passed, the Transvaal Government will soon draft other bills, and the Indian community will of its own lose its rights one after another. The laws which obtain in the Orange River Colony will be enacted in the Transvaal also and later in all the other places. There is already talk today of relegating all the traders to Bazaars, of sending people to Klipspruit thirteen miles away from the Malay Location, and entirely abolishing the right of Indians to own land outside a Location. If, therefore, the Indian community abandons the resolution on courting imprisonment, we believe that it will be impossible to get redress in any of the matters.

If we lose our reputation this time, we shall never recover it. It is our belief that there is nothing worse than withdrawing a threat once held out.

OTHER REASONS FOR OPPOSING ORDINANCE

These are listed below:

1. Under the Ordinance all (existing) permits will be withdrawn and new ones issued after fresh inquiry.

2. These permits will have to be produced before a Kaffir or any other constable.

3. Licences will not be issued to those who do not produce the permits.

4. Even when the permit is produced, the police have the right to

lock up a man for the night.

5. Even a child of eight years will have to be registered by its parents, and its identification marks noted.

6. It is not the people with forged permits or without permits who will have to face this harassment, since they will have left the Transvaal. It is the others with valid permits who will have to go through it all.

7. All the officers have said that the new permits will carry the impressions of all the ten digits.

8. There is a great difference between giving our thumb-impressions in the past and the same provision under the new law. So far, the thumb-impression was given voluntarily, now it is made compulsory under the law.

9. Hitherto the giving of thumb-impressions was not a statutory requirement, so that it had no consequences elsewhere, but now under the new law, it will have consequences everywhere.

10. If a stranger reads this Ordinance, he will only get the impression that those to whom it applies must be thieves, bandits or traitors.

11. The clauses of the Ordinance are such that these can only apply to criminals.

12. The reason advanced for the Ordinance is also of the same nature: the leaders of the Indian community secure entry for Indians into the Transvaal under false pretexts—which means that the leaders are criminals.

13. The Ordinance raises the question whether the Indian community has any status at all.

14. If the Indian community submits to this Ordinance, the result will be that Indians like Sir Muncherji Bhownaggree who may enter the Transvaal will also be required to take out permits with finger-prints. The responsibility for this will rest on the Transvaal Indians.

15. The Ordinance applies only to Asiatics, and not to Cape Boys, Kaffirs, or Malays. That means that all these three communities will laugh at the Indians. Supposing an Indian marries a Malay. No one will be able to ask the Malay to produce a pass, but everywhere the Kaffir police will accost the Indian and demand, "Your pass,

please!" This means that the status of the Indian will be lower than that of his Malay wife. Other such reasons can also be given. Yeaders should deeply ponder over the foregoing reasons and consider whether it is not better to go to gaol than to suffer such indignity. To take out a pass under the Ordinance is, we believe, like permanent imprisonment. In comparison with that, there is nothing wrong in going to gaol for a few days or months. On the contrary, besides bringing in some gain, it will redound to our credit. The other permanent imprisonment will cause us loss and discredit. It must be remembered that the resolution about courting imprisonment has already been passed by the Indian community and announced to the whole world. If the Ordinance was not acceptable in December, how can it be so now? As far as that Ordinance is concerned, the pledge about going to gaol must stand for ever. We request the Indian community to bear all this in mind and to adhere firmly to the resolution on courting imprisonment. And we pray to God to give us the courage to renew that pledge.

BRAVE WOMEN OF BRITAIN

We still receive cables from Britain regarding the struggle by some brave women. All of them go to gaol instead of paying fines. Though they have not won their rights so far, they have not lost heart. Instead, they believe that even though they themselves may not get the rights, their daughters will get them as a result of their struggle.

Now about this resolution on gaol-going, no one must argue that he will go to gaol only if all the other Indians do so. It is the man with courage who will have to go to gaol. We have to follow the example of the women referred to above. They go to gaol, though they are very few in number, and thus draw the attention of the world to their cause.

We earnestly request all our readers to have this article imprinted on their mind, and to act with great deliberation.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-3-1907

316. DUTY OF CAPE AND NATAL [*INDIANS*]

At this juncture, it is the duty of Indians in the Cape and Natal to hold meetings expressing sympathy with the Transvaal Indians. They should, moreover, pass resolutions and send them to the Imperial Government. It will also bc a good thing if Indians from every village and town were to pass resolutions and write to the Government respectfully saying that the law is oppressive and should be withdrawn. It may be remembered that cablegrams in support of the Transvaal Ordinance were sent to Lord Elgin by whites from every town. Everywhere the speeches should be reasonable and good-tempered.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-3-1907

317. INDIANS GOING TO LOBITO BAY

An Englishman named Stone intends to take Indian labourers to a place called Lobito Bay in Portuguese Africa a thousand miles to the north of the Cape. He wants to take Indians there to work on the railway which a British company is constructing. The question has arisen if the Indian community should encourage this proposal. The President of the Durban Sanitary Association has published certain facts which indicate that the arrangements made by Mr. Stone in Durban for the Indians are altogether bad. The building that he has rented for them is small and insanitary. If this is true, we should consider whether Indian labourers are likely to gain anything by going to Lobito Bay. Mr. Stone has also received the permission of the Government of India. He therefore stands in no need of help from the Indian community. But the above instance should make us realize that the Indian community cannot give its consent to such proposals. If need be, it can even register its opposition. We hear that the climate of Lobito Bay is pleasant. It is therefore probable that the Indian labourers will be happy there. Much will depend upon whether the foremen who will accompany them are good men or not.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-3-1907

318. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

ASIATIC ORDINANCE

In just two days the new Transvaal parliament passed the Ordinance exactly as it stood in September last. On the 20th the Ordinance was introduced in the Assembly, and the same day, within two hours, it went through all the three readings and was immediately sent to the Legislative Council, where, at the instance of Mr. Martin, it was postponed to the 22nd so that Members could have time to study it.[1] But this was merely a pretence. How were the Members to digest it in one night? The Legislative Council passed it on the 22nd.

TELEGRAM FROM ASSOCIATION

No one ever dreamt that the Bill would be passed in this manner. When the Association came to know of it, it immediately sent a telegram to the Council to the following effect:

> The Association finds with great sorrow that the Asiatic Bill has already been passed in the Assembly and is likely to pass through the Council today. The Association humbly requests that, until the Association's plea in the matter has been heard, further consideration of the Bill may be postponed. The Association begs to remind Your Honour that the function of the Council is to protect the interests of those who do not have the franchise. The Indian community is loyal, but is without the right to vote. The Association does not at all admit the charge that there is a mass infiltration into the Transvaal by Indians. All adult Indians possess permits bearing names and identification marks. Those who are without permits can even now be deported. It is our request that at the least a commission should be appointed to inquire into the allegation. We feel that the Bill is oppressive and uncalled for. The Association requests redress at the hands of the Council.

This telegram was read out before the Council, but without any result. Now the Bill has been sent to Lord Elgin for approval.

[1] Cf. *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XV where Gandhiji says that the Bill was rushed through all its stages in a single sitting on March 21, 1907.

The Colonial Secretary, Mr. Smuts, said that the whole white population of the Transvaal was of one mind in the matter. Indians should be stopped from coming in. They come in in large numbers. The Dutch Government attempted to prevent them, and this led to the [Boer] War. The Bill that had been presented that day had come up before the former Council. Its aim was just to have every Indian registered. Law 3 of 1885 was defective, and its drawbacks would be removed in the new Bill. The Imperial Government had vetoed the Bill because it was passed by the former Council. They were now in a position to show that they were unanimous in passing it. Further legislation would be necessary after that Bill had become law; but they would have to look into the matter later. For the time being it was necessary for them to know who had the right to live in the Colony. For these reasons the Bill must be passed the very same day.

Dr. Krautze supported the motion. Mr. Owen Jones said that all the municipalities demanded such an Act. It was absolutely essential to protect the whites. Mr. Loveday congratulated the Government on its promptness in bringing up the Bill. Mr. Jacobs said that all farmers wanted the Indians driven out. If the Indians were not sent back, they might even dispossess the farmers. The whites could settle in the Transvaal, but not in India. The Indians should not therefore leave their own country.

General Choke-Burger supported the Bill and so did Sir Percy Fitzpatrick. The Bill was thus passed, and then sent up to the Council.

IN THE COUNCIL

Mr. Curtis said that the Bill must be passed, but that the Council should have a night to consider it, lest anyone in England should think that the Council passed it without due consideration. The Bill was absolutely necessary. From his experience he could say that every month a hundred Indians entered the Transvaal without permits. If, therefore, South Africa was to remain in the hands of the whites, the Bill had to be passed.

Mr. Martin said that traders and all others had asked for such a Bill and that it should be passed. Mr. Roy congratulated [the Government] on bringing forward the Bill. Mr. Purchas said that the Bill was reasonable and that the Indian contention was not fair.

Indians were concerned only with their own interests. They did not consider the other side and their English friends were unaware of conditions here.

PRESS COMMENTS

The Leader, *The Daily Mail* and *The Star* make the following comments.

According to *The Leader*, Lord Elgin had now no alternative but to give his approval to the Bill. However, in vetoing the former Bill, he had raised a big issue. It was difficult to see how he could now approve the present Bill.

In the opinion of *The Rand Daily Mail*, the Bill was necessary to prevent Indian infiltration. It was well therefore that it had been passed. Those who remained in the Transvaal, however, should be able to live a decent life.

The Star says that Sir Richard Solomon had brought the news that the Bill would receive Royal assent in it was passed by the new parliament. The Bill must therefore be passed now.

COMMENTS IN ENGLAND

The Times says that the Transvaal parliament has made a serious mistake in passing the Bill. It did not think of the difficulties of the Imperial Government. The Conservative *Globe* also says that the Bill should not be approved. *The Tribune* thinks that it was improper that the Bill should have been passed. But now that General Botha was visiting England, Lord Elgin should be able to find a way out.

OUR COMMITTEE VIGILANT

Cables from England show that our Committee there has started a movement in Parliament against the Bill. Furthermore, a joint meeting of the Committee and the East India Association will take place at Caxton Hall on April 9.

ASSOCIATION MEETING

A joint meeting of the British Indian Association and the Anti-Indian-Law Fund Committee took place last Sunday at Mr. Coovadia's residence. It was followed by another meeting of the Hamidia Islamic Society on Monday. At both the meetings, it was solemnly resolved after due consideration to adhere to the Resolution

about going to gaol. Haji Habib, Secretary of the Pretoria Committee, was present at both the meetings.

At this meeting a cheque for the money raised for the struggle against the anti-Indian law, which had been so far with the Gujarati Hindu Society, was received as also another for the money that was lying with Mr. Alibhai Akuji. Attempts are now being made to recover the money collected by other persons.

NEED FOR FUNDS

Every one can understand that at such a time the need for funds will be great. A long discussion took place at both the meetings on the money which had not yet been received from the mofussil committees. They should remit these amounts immediately.

MASS MEETING

It has been decided to hold a mass meeting on Friday, the 30th[1]. Notices have been sent out to all the places. At the time of writing, it is expected that a large number of people will attend.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-3-1907

319. CABLE TO LORD ELGIN[2]

BRITISH INDIANS ALARMED AT FIRST ACTION OF RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT AND LOCAL PARLIAMENT REGARDING BRITISH INDIANS. BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION SUBMITS THERE IS NO WHOLESALE ILLEGAL INFLUX. ASSOCIATION WILL SUBMIT MEMORIAL DUE COURSE, AND TRUSTS DECISION WILL BE POSTPONED MEANWHILE.

[BIAS]

Indian Opinion, 30-3-1907

[1] This is an error, for March 30 was Saturday. The mass meeting was held in Johannesburg on the 29th.

[2] A similar cable appears to have been sent to Mr. Morley also.

320. CABLE TO S. A. B. I. COMMITTEE[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
March 30, 1907

[TO]

SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE
LONDON

REUTER SEND FULL REPORT PROCEEDINGS MASS MEETING. IF YOU DONT UNDERSTAND COMPROMISE OFFERED CABLE FOR EXPLANATION. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFUSED FORWARD CABLE HOME GOVERNMENT.

[BIAS]

Colonial Office Records: C.O. 291/122

321. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

[Before *April 4, 1907*]

MASS MEETING

As I am sending a separate report[2] of the big mass meeting, it is unnecessary to say anything about it here. One cannot visualize what the outcome of the meeting will be. A report of it has been cabled to England through Reuter at half rates and cost over £21. The 440-word cable has gone to all the papers in England. Another has been sent to the South Africa British Indian Committee.

The Colonial Secretary has been informed about the meeting, and the Association has sought an appointment for a deputation to meet him. The idea is to place all the resolutions before the Colonial Secretary and to persuade him to agree to the proposal contained in the Second Resolution.

Mr. Smuts has refused to forward to Lord Elgin the telegram sent to him. He adds that the Colonial Secretary will not object to the Association sending the telegram directly to Lord Elgin if it so desires. This reply shows that the new Government does not want to

[1] This was forwarded by L. W. Ritch to the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, London, on April 2.

[2] *Vide* "Mass Meeting of Transvaal Indians", 6-4-1907.

redress the grievances of Indians. Following this reply, the Association has now written to Lord Selborne to inquire whether he would forward the telegram, alternatively whether the Association might send it directly to Lord Elgin.

RAILWAY HARDSHIPS

The General Manager's reply to the Association's letter says that Indians will be permitted to travel only in the [guard's] van of the 8.35 morning express.

PRETORIA DEPUTATION

The Colonial Secretary, Mr. Smuts, has agreed to meet the deputation regarding resolutions passed at the mass meeting. The deputation will see him at Pretoria on the 4th.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 6-4-1907

322. A WAY OUT OF DIFFICULTY

The Indian Mass Meeting, held the other day at Johannesburg, shows the earnestness with which British Indians in the Transvaal are fighting an uphill battle. The central point of the proceedings was undoubtedly the Second Resolution, which embodied the eminently reasonable suggestion made by Mr. Abdool Gani, the Chairman of the Meeting and President of the British Indian Association. If the Transvaal Government have any desire whatsoever to conciliate British Indians and to look at the situation from all points of view, they will accept the proposal without the slightest hesitation. With statesmanlike moderation, British Indians have offered voluntarily to be re-registered; they have offered to exchange the double documents they now hold for another document to be mutually approved; and although there is no legislative compulsion, they have agreed to submit to certain restrictions which the Government have considered to be necessary. The Second Resolution is at once an earnest of the *bona fides* of the Indian community, and a way out of a delicate and difficult position. We should be very much surprised if it were not a fact that the Transvaal Ministry is not pining for a tussle with the Imperial Government. It should be thankful to take up the Indian suggestions, nor need Indians be at all frightened over the Resolution.

Whilst it undoubtedly exposes them once more to irksome procedure, in view of the prejudice existing in the Colony, it is necessary for them to undergo it. The step taken voluntarily will redound to the eternal credit of the community, and it will pave the way for a reasonable settlement of the whole Indian question. Moreover, the more the Indian community yields in a dignified manner, the more secure becomes its position in the event of the obnoxious Bill receiving the Royal sanction, and it being necessary for the community to enforce the Fourth Resolution of last September.

The Natal Advertiser has taken us to task for, as it terms it, "deliberately inciting the Transvaal British Indians to passive resistance". It is impossible for *The Advertiser* to enter into the feelings that actuate British Indians. It is not a question of martyrdom, nor is it a question of offering resistance for the sake of it. We have no hesitation in saying that to a loyal and law-abiding community, passive resistance, as the proposed going to gaol has been termed for want of a better word, is a recognized method of obtaining redress; as a matter of fact, the going to gaol is a legal method of submission to law. There are four things provided in the Bill: one is to submit to registration; secondly in its absence, to leave the country; thirdly, in the absence of either, to pay a fine if the option is reserved; lastly and fourthly, in the absence of any of the last three, to suffer imprisonment. We cannot conceive that there is anything wrong for a British Indian to accept the last remedy, if he considers that registration is worse than gaol. It is undoubtedly true that the last method is an extreme step justifiable under exceptional circumstances. Whether or not a particular state creates such circumstances is a matter of opinion, and the prudence of a community is measured by its capacity for finding out the real state operating to justify that method. If, then, all the moderate propositions submitted by the British Indians in the Transvaal fail to carry weight, and if the Imperial Government abdicate their function of protecting the weak against the strong, we re-affirm our opinion that for the Indian community to be considered a self-respecting body, no other course is left open, but with quiet courage and resignation, to prefer gaol to submission to the insult offered by the Bill.

Indian Opinion, 6-4-1907

323. SUGGESTION TO OUR TRANSVAAL READERS

This number of *Indian Opinion* is in our view a very important one. It carries a report of the Transvaal meeting[1] which every one should read carefully. But it is especially necessary to get as many whites as possible to read the English report and to draw their attention to the Second Resolution in particular. If they read it in the right spirit, we are sure they will support the suggestion contained therein. If this should happen, the Bill would not come into force. We therefore suggest that each reader order as many copies of this number as possible and distribute them among the whites and request them to read it. In the belief that this hope of ours will be realized, we have printed extra copies of this number. Copies may be had from the head office or from our Johannesburg office. A four-penny stamp for each copy may be sent with the order. Merely to pass on a copy to a white without any explanation would be like throwing it away. It would also be necessary to explain which portion he should read.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 6-4-1907

324. TRANSVAAL MASS MEETING[2]

Hundreds of Transvaal Indians met in Johannesburg on the 29th and passed a number of resolutions. The function went off smoothly without any untoward incident, for which the British Indian Association deserves to be congratulated. The situation at present is not such that, once the meetings are over, we can lapse into inactivity. It is the duty of every Indian to put up sustained resistance. We should bear in mind that the question does not concern the Transvaal alone. Let us think about what we should do if the Bill were passed. No one should presume that, because this mass meeting did not pass a resolution about going to gaol, the idea has been abandoned. We have no other remedy left except going to gaol and, if the Indian community adheres to this resolve, it may bring in benefits all round.

[1] *Vide* ''Mass Meeting of Transvaal Indians'', 6-4-1907.

[2] For a fuller report *vide* "Mass Meeting of Transvaal Indians", 6-4-1907.

If the Ordinance is passed, Indians must hold meetings in every town and village and inform the Government that they would rather go to gaol than take out passes. We believe it would be wise to start preparing for such an eventuality from now on. So, if those who are prepared to go to gaol will let us have their names and addresses, we will publish them in this journal. It is necessary to do this; for each will derive strength from the other and even the Government will be unnerved by the publication of the names. We propose to publish these names in the English section also.

We have already explained to the Natal and Cape Indians their duties in this context.[1] They should immediately hold meetings and pass resolutions of sympathy and send these to [the authorities in] England.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 6-4-1907

325. NATAL LICENSING ACT

We hold that the victory at Harding is no victory at all. The poor applicant was given the licence only after he had cancelled the deed of partnership. This is not justice. Today the appeal court demands this; tomorrow it may demand more. A licence can be had only after meeting the demands of the court [whatever they are]. This is possible only because the Board has excessive powers. It is quite clear from the Harding case that an even bigger struggle against the Natal Licensing Act is necessary.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 6-4-1907

326. MASS MEETING OF TRANSVAAL INDIANS

FULL ACCOUNT

A huge meeting of Indians was held at the Gaiety Theatre in Johannesburg on March 29 to protest against the Asiatic Act and pass the necessary resolutions. It was attended by delegates from

[1] *Vide* "Duty of Cape and Natal [Indians]", 30-3-1907.

distant places. Many people had to go back as the Theatre was filled to capacity. The President of the British Indian Association, Mr. Abdul Gani, was in the chair. On the platform were Mr. Haji Habib, Mr. Vyas, and others from Pretoria; Mr. Abdul Rehman Moti, Mr.Joosab Haji Vali, Mr. Mohanlal Khanderia from Pietersburg; Mr. Reshavji Giga from Spelonkin; Mr. A. M. Bhayat and Mr. Somabhai from Heidelberg; Mr. Ismail Kaji, Mr. Vaja and Mr. khurshedji from Krugersdorp; and Mr. Khan from Zeerust. Besides these, Mr. M. S. Coovadia, Mr. Haji Ojer Ally, Mr. M. P. Fancy, Mr. Essop Mian, Mr. Gulam Saheb, Mr. Amiruddin, Mr. Nadirshah Cama, Mr. Bomanshah, Imam Abdul Kadir, Mr. Osman Latief, Mr. Ibrahim Aswat, Mr. E. M. Patel, Mr. Moonsami Moonlight, Mr. V. Naidu, Mr. A. A. Pillay and Mr. Bapu Desai of Rustenburg; Mr. Manibhai Khandubhai, Mr. Nanalal Shah, Mr. Gabru, Mr. Omerji Sale, Mr. Ahmed Mahomed, Mr. Alibhai Akuji, Mr. S. D. Bobat of Potchefstroom, Mr. V. Appasami, Pandit Ramsundar, Mr. Lal Bahadur Singh, Mr. Dadlani, Mr. Gandhi and others were also present. Telegrams and letters came in from many places. The reporters of *The Star* and *The Rand Daily Mail* were present. The meeting began at 4 p.m. A translation of Mr. Abdul Gani's speech is given below:

WELCOME

It has fallen to me once again to welcome the Indians from Johannesburg and the delegates who have come to participate in the deliberations over important questions concerning our community. The act which was rejected by Lord Elgin has been passed again by the new parliament. Fortunately we were not under any illusion when we welcomed our Delegates on their return from England with the victory they had won. We knew then that our work had just begun. However, none of us had any suspicion at the time that the same law would be re-enacted within 24 hours and that normal parliamentary procedure would be suspended for the purpose.[1] Suspension of parliamentary procedure is nothing surprising; but it is done only in a great emergency.

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 30-3-1907.

HOW BILL CAME TO BE PASSED

If a state of real emergency had arisen and the country had to be saved, we could understand the rushing of a law through parliament; but on this occasion it was merely a fight between the lion and the goat.

WHITE AND BROWN

While, on the one hand, there are 250,000 whites who enjoy all political rights and the number goes on increasing monthly because they can enter without restriction, there are, on the other hand, 14,000 Indians whose number, it is said, increases by a hundred a month. It is in order to protect the all powerful whites that the Act to keep out Indians without a permit has been passed. People who do such a thing must be steeped in ill-will against us. Normally, the Act would have been placed before the public for consideration for three months and the champions of the Act, which is to protect the rights of 250,000 whites, would have had to run the risk only of 300 Indians entering the Transvaal.

HOW IS NEW LEGISLATURE?

It is deliberately that I describe our legislators as the custodians of the rights of the whites alone. At any rate the members of the Council do nothing else. It is said that the Legislative Council has been charged with the task of preventing the enactment of laws against the blacks.In fact, that this was their duty was urged as a reason when it was demanded that the Bill be postponed for the night. But I must regretfully say that this was merely a ruse. How could the members become familiar in a night with a bill, which was admittedly very important and complicated? How could the Council gauge within a night the feelings and opinions of those whose rights it was supposed to protect? Could the Council have passed the Bill as carelessly if the members had been elected by us? Could it have ignored our humble demand that the Bill be postponed to enable us to place our case before it? To prove that I am not making a mistake when I say this, I quote Mr. Curtis who is believed to be the author of this Bill. He said, ‘I am glad that this Bill has come up before the Council. However, I support Mr. Martin’s motion to postpone consideration of it for a night. If it is passed on the same day on which it is moved without

discussion in either of the Houses, we shall be placing a very big weapon in the hands of our opponents. The Bill was rejected by Lord Elgin not because of its objects but because of some of its clauses. How many members can claim that they have carefully read all the clauses of the Bill? This Bill is an important and serious one. It raises the question whether this land will continue to belong to the whites or become black.

DON'T INDIANS THINK?

While casting his vote in favour of the Bill, Mr. Purchas said that we looked at only one side of the question. We did not look to the interests of the whites. He also said that our English friends did not know the conditions in the Colony. In saying this Mr. Purchas has betrayed his ignorance of our case and of facts about our English friends. For his information I repeat that we know the conditions [of life] of the whites and we want to adapt ourselves to their ideas. That is why we have forgone our political rights and shown readiness to accept the law pertaining to trade and immigration without racial discrimination. If anyone says that we accept it because we cannot help it, he will be quite wrong. For had we wanted to do so, we could have fought against it, harassed both the Colonial and the India Offices and thus added to their worries. I claim credit for our community for we realized our position without compulsion and did not harass the Imperial Government. Again Mr. Purchas does not know our friends; for, if he did, he would find that many of our friends are renowned veteran Government servants. They would never go over to any party without careful thought. He who would accuse men like Sir William BuIl, Sir Lepel Griffin, and Sir Raymond West of partisanship surely does not know them. It is needless to name the other famous Liberals. It is thanks to them that [the Colony gained responsible government and] members are elected to the Council and the Assembly. Their motive in trying to secure justice for Indians from the rulers of the Transvaal is the same as that which made them show such unexampled generosity towards the Transvaal whites. Both according to them and to us, responsible government means the right to manage one's own affairs and not the right to tyrannize over others who do not have the vote. The people of the Colony forget this definition of responsible government and disapprove of the restrictions in the constitution for safeguarding the rights of the

blacks. And that is why even men like Sir Richard Solomon say that these restrictions are only nominal. This is our lot at the very beginning of responsible government.

LORD SELBORNE

Our freedom was endangered when the Colony won responsible government; similarly we now become nervous as we read Lord Selborne's despatches. We had hoped that Lord Selborne, who, before the war, talked about our rights, would now, with better opportunities to do so, protect us the better. But I must respectfully submit that, instead of working as a trustee, he has functioned as a partisan. Instead of having equal regard for all, he has been partial to the whites.

"BRIBERY IS RELIGION OF INDIANS"

Let me comment on some matters mentioned in his communications which are published in the Blue book. His Lordship, on being given information about false permits, levelled an unworthy and painful charge against us. His Excellency said, 'Those who have come in contact with the people of the East know that they do not look upon getting their work done through bribery as irreligious. Thanks to this state of affairs the permit inspector succumbs to temptation for which he should never be given the opportunity.' I know nothing about the habit of offering bribes among the people of the East, but I do know that even the lowest among the Indians knows that offering a bribe is bad. I must remind His Lordship that, in 1903, officials in the Asiatic Office at Johannesburg did accept bribes and that it was through the efforts of the British Indian Association that they were caught and dismissed.

IS BILL ADVANTAGEOUS TO INDIANS?

Lord Selborne says that the Bill is advantageous to the Indian community; but we have shown that this is not at all so. His Lordship therefore accuses us of over-reaching ourselves; but we can accuse him too of doing the same thing. According to him, it is unfair of us to say that [under the Bill] our position becomes inferior to that of the Kaffirs. I repeat what I said. The Kaffirs do not have to take out a pass as we have to; neither have they to have their children registered.

CHARGE AGAINST SIR LEPEL

Moreover, His Lordship has levelled a charge against Sir Lepel Griffin also and has criticized him for his remarks on the taking out of passes by women and children. But he has deliberately omitted the fact that Mr. Gandhi corrected Sir Lepel's minor mistake on the spot.[1] And it is undoubtedly true that children will have to be registered. It must also be noted that the Transvaal Government would have made registration compulsory for women also if they had had their own way.

DO MANY INDIANS ENTER WITHOUT PERMITS?

Many other matters arise from what Lord Selborne has written; but I cannot give an account of these here. I must mention one fact however. We can offer the same evidence to disprove Lord Selborne's contention—that many people enter without a permit—which he gives in order to show that they do. For the same proven offences which he uses against us show that the existing system of permits is sufficient to catch holders of faked ones. Those who have presented the facts before Lord Selborne have not differentiated between those who have already entered with false permits and settled here and others who now try to enter with such permits. And in the charged atmosphere of the Transvaal a single instance of a faked permit appears magnified a hundred folds In his report of September 27, Mr. Chamney says that, during the last six months, 287 persons were found without permits or with false ones. Of these 165 have been found guilty and 122 are in the Colony but cannot be traced. Therefore, if Mr. Chamney's findings are correct, 21 persons, on an average, enter every month with faked permits or without a permit altogether. Despite these facts, Mr. Curtis maintains that each month 100 Asiatics enter in this manner with faked permits.

WHAT ARE WE FIGHTING FOR?

Our fight is not against particular clauses of the Bill but against the entire Bill and its objectives. It puts a dark blot on us; it outrages our feelings. It presupposes that those to whom it applies are criminals. This makes our position worse in relation to Kaffirs and Malays, with whom we daily come in contact,

[1] *Vide* ''Deputation to Lord Elgin'', 8-11-1906.

by marking us off from them in an objectionable manner. Consequently our status is depressed. Admittedly it no more than wounds our susceptibilities; but such an affront cannot be put up with indefinitely. One does not mind it much if one's feelings are hurt on rare occasions and in some trivial matter. In fact, such things we suffer daily at the hands of the whites. But when our feelings are hurt on important matters and we are made to look small all the time, it would be cowardice and betrayal of our country for us to endure it all silently. We praise the whites because they think in terms of the future; but if we are sincere in our praise, we must emulate them. When we think of our future, should they not congratulate us? It is only right that they are ever active in defending their rights. Can't we then exert ourselves to preserve ours?

WHAT DID WHITES SUFFER?

When President Kruger made it obligatory for the whites to take out passes, they were highly agitated. All South Africa resounded with protests against the way the late President had, according to them, thought up a way of disgracing them. In the end, the President had to give in, although the humiliation that we are being subjected to is far more serious than theirs. Moreover there was a better reason for taking stringent measures against them, for they were attacking the state. But we have never been accused of any action against states or society. Even the annual report of the Transvaal [Government] states that our people never give the police any trouble. In spite of this, a law has been passed, as I said before, in 24 hours as if we were great criminals, and it now only awaits the sanction of the Imperial Government.

INJURY ADDED TO INSULT

Again, we raise our objection against the law not merely because our feelings are wounded. It will cause us great loss as well Our experience is that any law applicable only to a section of the people always causes much suffering. It leads to other consequential enactment's. Other laws are framed on a similar basis. I do grant, however, that no Bill can be more severe than this. But that is no consolation. I can give examples to show that, even where such class legislation was not so designed, it did cause much harm and hardship. Never during the Boer regime was the Law [3] of 1885 enforced as harshly as it is today. Sir Hercules Robinson (later Lord Rosemead) had in fact stipulated that this law would

not apply to respectable Indians such as traders. But Lord Rosemead's view passed with him and the law was applied to us according to its literal interpretation. The Bill confers such wide powers on the officials that if they were unsympathetic, it might lead to much harassment.

EXAMPLE OF NATAL

Even though the trading law applies both to the white and the black in Natal, it has become oppressive [to the latter]. For there is much divergence between its interpretation [now] and the promises made [at the time of its enactment]. The understanding was that the rights of old traders would not be infringed. This has been thrown to the winds, and no Indian trader seems to be safe because of the way the law is now being enforced. Such insecurity prevails in the Cape too. We too were given promises when the war broke out, but we got nothing besides. We must therefore realize that this Bill brings us to the brink of extinction.

IF THUMB-IMPRESSION, WHY NOT TEN FINGER-PRINTS?

We are being asked why, if we had willingly agreed to give the thumb-impressions, should we now object to giving impressions of the ten digits under compulsion? This question would suggest that the whole affair was merely one of the thumb or the fingers. As a matter of fact, our struggle raises a very big issue. Looking at it from another point of view, we find that we do many things willingly and feel no indignity in doing them. But the same things we will not do under compulsion. We look upon the law of compulsory registration as the sting of a scorpion. But mere argument cannot make the whites understand [our point of view]. They have a suspicion that we wish to swamp the Colony with Indians. Mr. Roy believes that, if we did entertain such a desire, it would be but natural. But we deny this. Mr. Smuts has said that the Bill has two objects. One is to separate the Indians who have the right to stay from those who do not have the right. The other is to give Indians, who are lawfully [in the Colony], permits which contain more details so as to enable [the Government] to detect those who enter the Transvaal in the future without a permit. All this can be done very easily, quickly and inexpensively—with the consent of the Indian community—by virtue of the laws that are already in force. We have agreed to help the Government at all times. I, therefore, put forward the following proposal today in your name so that the two objects mentioned by Mr. Smuts can be achieved without having to pass the new Bill.

THE PROPOSAL

This was in fact done during Lord Milner's time and both he and Captain Fowled were happy with the Indian community. This is the proposal that I make:

(1) The Governmnt should fix a day for the simultaneous examination of all the permits.

(2) Either all of them should be stamped with the seal of the Colonial Secretary or, where the existing permits are genuine, they should be replaced by new ones and their form and contents should be decided on in consultation with the Indian community.

(3) Instead of the two documents, a permit and a registration [certificate] that are taken out at present, only one should be issued to Indians.

(4) Permits should also be issued to boys and girls who have come of age.

(5) No Indian should get a trade licence if he does not produce his permit.

(6) The children of lawful Indian residents should also receive permits.

(7) Temporary permits should be issued only after a surety approved by the Colonial Secretary is produced.

These proposals, if accepted, would solve all problems. It is undoubtedly true that the observance of some of the provisions will depend on the goodwill of the Indian community; for example, not getting a trade licence without first having a permit. But in such matters we ask the Government to trust us. Again this [state of affairs] will not last long, for the whole problem will have to be solved quickly. Moreover, these problems are not covered by the registration law; other laws will be required to solve them.

APPEAL

In your name, I appeal to the Government to accept our proposals. That will end their conflict with the Imperial Government. We do not want to be always complaining to the Imperial Government. We want to live honourably in goodwill and amity with the whites under the aegis of the local Government and thus to respect

the wishes of the whites. But all that can be done only if they regard us as human beings, grant that we have the same feelings that they have; that we are fit to enjoy the same rights as they under the great British Empire. But if, unfortunately, this meeting cannot convince the Government of this unpalatable truth and of the justice of our demands, we shall have no alternative but to ask for the protection of the Imperial Govern-ment, which it is bound to give. Whenever the weak are oppressed by the strong, it is the duty of the Imperial Government to come to their help. I draw the attention of this meeting to the resolutions passed by the [executive] Committee of the Association. I thank you all for having attended this meeting. May God help us. May He give the officials the good sense to realize that our petition is just and to grant it in the belief that we have no strength save our truthfulness. May they, at the beginning of their rule, give us hopes for the future! (Applause.)

The speech was read by Mr. Nanalal Shah in English. Mr. Ally then moved the first resolution.

FIRST RESOLUTION

This meeting convened by the British Indian Association respectfully protests against the Asiatic Law Amendment Bill as being unnecessary and degrading to the Indian community.

[HAJI] OJER ALLY

I am happy to move this resolution. I was a member of the Deputation that went to England. The labours of the Deputation have been reduced to nought. No one can say that we are not loyal subjects. Though a law-abiding people, we are oppressed. We have not assembled here to defend those who enter with faked permits or with none. Let the Government drive them out if they want to, but it is unjust to punish the genuine permit-holders for theof Fences of the others. It has been stated in the new parliament that the existing law is not enough to expel the offending Indians. But that is not true. Let the Government, if they like, enact a law that no one without a permit can carry on trade or hawking or take up employment. If this is done, how can any Indian live on in the Transvaal without a permit? When the Deputation was in England, a petition was sent [from here] to say that the members of the Deputation did not represent the community as a whole. There are Indians of all communities in

this meeting. Delegates from all the towns are here. If there is anyone here who is opposed to that Deputation, let him speak up. Lord Selborne's tirade against us is undeserved. It is really strange that the Bill which Lord Elgin had rejected should be re-introduced. The President has pointed out that the Bill was passed within 24 hours; but I say that it was passed within an hour and a half. Would the British people lose their sense justice? If so, let the Proclamation of Queen [Victoria] and King Edward's message be withdrawn. If this Bill is passed,we shall be looked upon as criminals by the whole world. It is shameful that Mr. Smuts should call us coolies. When I was in England, I was made a member of the National Liberal Club. Even the lords respected me. If this Bill is passed, I will not stay in this land a moment longer. Rather than pass such laws, the Government had better drive us out of the Colony.

ESSOP MIAN

I support the resolution moved by Mr. Ally. It is pleasing to find that we can get together at a critical time [like this]. I believe Lord Selborne has been ill-disposed towards us from the outset. He has always regarded us all as coolies and no better than locusts. They fought the Boers on our behalf but have now handed the country back to them. And the Boers have re-enacted the law Will Lord Elgin now sign the same Bill which he once refused to sign? We have to fight with all our strength. There is goodwill for us in England, and we hope to obtain redress for our grievances there. Let Mr. Chamney put his thumb-impression on our permits if he likes. Who will then be able to erase those thumb-marks? [*sic*] The fact that the Government does not even forward our telegram shows that we are not going to get justice here. We can never accept such a law.

COOVADIA

I also support Mr. Ally's resolution. It is our duty to put up a struggle. The Ordinance is obnoxious and I appeal to everyone to refuse to submit to it.

HAJI HABIB

I support this resolution. Lord Selborne is sorry that the Ordinance was not approved by the Imperial Government for he believes that, without it, he will not be able to fulfil the

promise he made to a handful of whites. But does he not regret not having made good his promise to the Indian community before the war? Which is more important—his promise given to a handful of whites or the one given to the thirty crores of Indians? Again? Whose words are more important—those of Lord Selborne or those of the late Queen Victoria and King-Emperor Edward? The whites say that this country belongs exclusively to them. Let us think this over. There are [in the Colony] nearly a hundred thousand Indians,[1] five million Kaffirs and the rest Malays and Gape Boys. Only when these people are all banished from the country can this be called a white man's land. Let them send the Kaffirs away to Abyssinia, the Indians to India, the Chinese to China, the Malays to their native land and the Cape Boys to St. Helena. Then, certainly, this will become the land of the whites. Then we shall see how the affairs of the country are managed. We shall always need three things to put up a fight against this law or any other fight for that matter: those who will fight, and the means to fight, that is, money and unity. The first we already have; the second we can procure; the third, unity, we lack. That we must bring about any how.

JUSAB HAJI VALI

Are we supposed to be thieves or free-booters that even a Kaffir policeman can accost and detain us wherever we happen to be going? We have begged them [for our rights] for long. We can no longer trust the word of the whites. We will continue to fight by constitutional means. But self-help is necessary. To save the country from degradation, it is necessary for us to educate ourselves.

RAMSUNDAR PANDIT

The mother gives her child milk, but a step-mother eats him up. The Government is like a step-mother. The Grand Old Man of India, Dadabhai Naoroji, spent a lifetime in trying to get redress for Indian grievances but that redress has not been obtained. We should follow the example of Japan and unite, become industrious and educate ourselves. 1 think it is better to

[1] For census and Permit Office figures for Indian population in the Colony, *Vide* "Interview to *The Tribune*", 20-10-1906.

go to gaol than to submit to this law. In England women go to gaol in defence of their rights; how can we men be afraid of doing so? What does it matter if we have to die for our motherland? We should follow the example of great men like Babu Surendranath Banerjea. I think it is better to return to India than to live on here in humiliation.

Messrs Vaza, Khurshedji, M. V. Naidu and K. N. Dadlani also supported the resolution and it was then passed unanimously.

SECOND RESOLUTION

This meeting convened under the auspices of the British Indian Association denies the allegation of illegal influx of Indians on a wholesale scale into the Transvaal, and, in order to satisfy the Government and the people, offers to submit to voluntary re-registration as was done by the community during Lord Milner's| time and in the manner indicated in the chairman's speech thus fulfilling practically all the requirements of the Bill without its offensive character.

ABDUL REHMAN

I move this resolution. I do not understand it fully. But I consider myself bound to follow the Association. There is no chance of securing any relief from the Dutch Government. Mr. Smuts has pointed out that the war was fought on our account; this means that we can expect nothing favourable from the Dutch Government. As to Lord Selborne, why should he do us a good turn?

Mr. Rees has left our Committee[1] saying that Lord Selborne's despatch is unanswerable. But our chairman has given a very appropriate reply to it. We do not have even the vote. We have a lot to learn from the Dutch. They are courageous and that is why they have got their kingdom back. Shall we give in? It is better to go to gaol than submit to this law.

Messrs Ibrahim Gata, M. P. Fancy, S. D. Bobat, Abdul Rehman Moti, Mohanlal Khanderia, T. Naidu and V. Appasami supported the resolution and it was passed unanimously.

[1] South Africa British Indian Committee in England

THIRD RESOLUTION

In the event of the humble request embodied in the Second Resolution not being accepted by the local Government, this meeting requests full Imperial protection by reason of the fact that the Indian community has no voice in electing the government [of this country] and is a very small and weak community.

NADIRSHAH CAMA

I move this resolution. We must understand the nature of this law. It is very humiliating. We wish to live in peace and amity with the whites, but we will not be their slaves. Let those who have entered by fraudulent means be driven out. If all of us hold together, no harm will come to us. We demand no political rights. We have changed our permits several times. We gave thumb-impressions on Lord Milner's advice. During President Kruger's lifetime Lord Selborne was our trustee. After the President's death Lord Selborne has become another Kruger. This law is not meant for the Hottentots or Kaffirs; why then-should it apply only to us? I believe that though my skin is black, my heart is whiter than any white's. Our Committee is fighting for us in England and our Delegates have returned victorious. We need not, therefore, lose heart. Whatever may happen, we will never accept this law. It will degrade us in the eyes of the whole world. Does Mr. Smuts want to wreak vengeance on us for the war? We have many difficulties to face. Even if the Imperial Government gives its sanction to the law, I will never accept it.

E. M. ASWAT

The Act was enacted by the British; and now the Dutch are ruling. But they are not to be blamed. If a dog is hit by a stone, he bites the person who threw the stone at him, not the stone. We shall not eat the Boer Government's land. It was the locusts which ate up the crop. I will not accept this law.

GABRU

This law has a sting like that of a snake. If King-Emperor Edward does not give us justice, darkness will descend everywhere. Why must we be classed with all other Asiatics? Are

we to be refused even those rights enjoyed by whites who are not British citizens?

GAURISHANKAR VYAS

The resolution embodying the appeal is an obsequious one. But so let it be. I would remind you all of the resolution we passed last September at the Empire Theatre. That theatre has been gutted by a fire, but the words spoken there live on. If, in accordance with those words, you cannot go to gaol, you may leave the country, but do not accept slavery by taking out passes according to this law. I was present at the Benares Congress. At that time Lala Lajpat Rai described how the Bengalis had acted like lions. We too have to act likewise.

This resolution was supported by Messrs E. M. Patel, A. Desai, Omerji Sale, Ahmed Mahomed and A. A. Pillay and was passed unanimously.

FOURTH RESOLUTION

This meeting authorizes the chairman to submit these resolutions by cable to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy of India.

IMAM ABDUL KADIR

Freedom is the supreme thing; the spread of Islam was made possible by freedom. The British Government fought for the eradication of slavery in Zanzibar. Will that Government now force slavery upon us here? Lord Selborne has accused us of bribery. If the European official had done justice without taking bribes who would have offered him bribes? I shall never accept the imposition of slavery by those who have been sent here as [our] trustees by the Imperial Government.

OSMAN LATIEF

For a long time now, we have held meetings about this. We must have courage. We are being blamed for the poverty of the Transvaal whites. But what about the whites in the Orange Rear Colony who go on declaring themselves insolvent? Surely, there are no Indians there. We have got ourselves registered several times over; shall we go on doing so endlessly? The whites admit that, when their forefathers were still barbarians, ours were

civilized. How then can we, their descendants, bear this law?

MANIBHAI KHANDUBHAI

In this world, anything else can be conquered; but the mind of man is unconquerable. Whatever the sufferings we have to undergo, we must oppose this law. As for myself I will never accept it.

Mr. Bomanshah and Mr. Bapu Desai also supported the resolution, and it was passed unanimously.

MEANING OF SECOND RESOLUTION

Mr. Abdul Rehman had said that many people did not understand the Second Resolution; they felt that there was no difference between it and the Bill itself. Replying to this Mr. Gandhi said:

It is after serious consideration by the leaders, and with their approval, that the Second Resolution is placed before the meeting. Nevertheless, I take upon myself all responsibility for it. I feel that the success of our Deputation to England was due solely to the fact that we had earlier taken out fresh permits and registers on Lord Milner's advice. If we had obstinately held out at that time, our plight would have become worse. Lord Milner has written a letter to *The Times* in our favour. That is, I think, because he understood the facts put before him by the Deputation. For our part, just as we demand our rights vigorously and deny accusations against us where they are false, so should we admit our faults when we realize them. Illegal entry by Indians is not as extensive as the whites allege. We must nevertheless confess that some Indians do enter in this manner. The more this happens the more severe will be the restrictions on us. The Government argue that they cannot exercise an effective check [on illicit immigration] with the existing permits. According to them, the thumb-impressions on some are not clear, and a person sometimes sells his permit at one place and his register at another. This is true to some extent; as a community, however, we do not accept this charge. But the Government do not believe us. It would only be right for us therefore to try to inspire confidence in them. There would therefore be nothing wrong if we agreed to take out permits in the form acceptable to us, without the compulsion of law. We therefore place the proposal before the Government that they give up the idea of

passing the Act and we voluntarily take out fresh permits. If it is accepted, it will do us credit; the Government will have faith in us; we may even be consulted in future when new legislation is contemplated, and above all the new Bill may be abandoned. Anything voluntarily accepted by us cannot be regarded as humiliation. Another outcome of our proposal will be that our humility, forbearance and good sense will be appreciated in England. To prevent the passage of this Bill, there is, apart of course from gaol-going, no better remedy than this. Moreover, such [a system of] permits will be based on mutual understanding. If therefore at any time we were confronted with any inordinate hardship, we could refuse to act on the understanding.

If gaol-going—which we have been contemplating—comes after this proposal, it will appear more graceful. The ultimate remedy is, of course, gaol-going. The fact that this time we have not passed any resolution about going to gaol does not mean that, if the Bill is passed, we are not to court imprisonment. No one should put the idea of going to gaol out of his mind.

After a vote of thanks to the chair, the meeting dispersed.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 6-4-1907

327. CABLE TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
April 6, 1907

[TO
THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES]
LONDON

MASS MEETING BRITISH INDIANS MARCH 29TH ATTENDANCE 1500 PASSED RESOLUTIONS PROTESTING AGAINST ASIATIC LAW AMENDMENT BILL RECENTLY PASSED BY TRANSVAAL PARLIAMENT. SUGGESTED VOLUNTARY REGISTRATION EXCHANGE FOR PRESENT CERTIFICATES HELD BY COMMUNITY. FORM NEW CERTIFICATES TO BE MUTUALLY AGREED. ALL REQUIREMENTS OF BILL SATISFIED BY PROPOSAL WITHOUT OFFENSIVE CHARACTER BILL. IF COMPROMISE NOT

[1] A similar cable was sent to Reuter for release to newspapers.

ACCEPTED ASSOCIATION REQUEST IMPERIAL INTERVENTION ON BEHALF BRITISH INDIANS WHO REPRESENT WEAK VOTELESS MINORITY. IMMEDIATELY ON PASSAGE BILL WHICH WAS RUSHED THROUGH TWENTYFOUR HOURS ASSOCIATION REQUESTED GOVERNMENT FORWARD CABLE TO YOU BUT LATTER REFUSED ADDING NO OBJECTION ASSOCIATION CABLING DIRECTLY. HENCE THIS CABLE. FURTHER REPRESENTATION FOLLOWS AFTER RESULT NEGOTIATIONS LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Colonial Office Records: C.O. 291/122

328. CABLE TO S. A. B. I. COMMITTEE[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
April 6, 1907

TO

SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE
LONDON

REPORT[2] REGISTRAR ASIATICS PUBLISHED COMPLETE VINDICATION INDIAN POSITION. NO EVIDENCE WHOLESALE SURREPTITIOUS ENTRY. ALTOGETHER ALLEGED ENTRY 800 ASIATICS WITHOUT PERMITS OR [WITH] STOLEN PERMITS. NO ANALYSIS GIVEN. PROBABLY REPORT MEANS THESE ENTRIES DURING FIVE YEARS. SHOWS ALLEGATIONS ANTI-ASIATICS BASELESS. ALSO COMMUNITY GENERALLY NOT INVOLVED. AS FIGURES GIVEN MANY CONVICTED BANISHED. RAND DAILY MAIL COMMENTING SAYS REPORT DOES NOT PROVE NECESSITY NEW BILL. IT PROVES CLEARLY PRESENT MACHINERY QUITE GOOD. INDIAN DEPUTATION WAITED COLONIAL SECRETARY PLACED COMPROMISE BEFORE HIM. REPLY INDECISIVE. SYMPATHETIC INFLUENCES WORKING.

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Colonial Office Records: C.O. 291/122

329. MEETING OF NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

[*April 8, 1907*]

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY FOR TRANSVAAL INDIANS

A largely attended meeting of the Natal Indian Congress was

[1] This was forwarded to the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies by L. W. Ritch on April 9.

[2] *Vide* "Chamney's Report",13-4-1907.

held on Monday the 8th at about 8.30 p.m. under the chairmanship of Mr. Dawad Mahomed. Many members were present. After the minutes of the last meeting and the accounts, etc., had been passed, a resolu-tion, moved by Mr. Motilal Dewan and seconded by Mr. Peeran Mahomed, was passed expressing the sympathy of the Natal Indian Congress for the Transvaal Indians in their campaign against the Asiatic [Registration] Bill and appealing to the Imperial Government to accord adequate protection to the Indian community. The Secretaries were asked to cable the resolution to the Imperial Government.

OMAR HAJI AMOD ZAVERI'S RESIGNATION

After this, the resignation of Mr. Omar Haji Amod Zaveri, who intends to go to India, was placed before the Congress for consideration. Mr. Gandhi, who was present at the meeting, said that the Congress had no alternative but to accept Mr. Zaveri's resignation, and added that, though there was no other Indian who could fill the void, the best solution was to appoint Mr. Dada Osman as Joint Secretary.

Mr. Abdul Kadir was of the opinion that Mr. Zaveri's resignation should be accepted with effect from the date of his departure and that it would be only right to hold another meeting to consider his resignation and the appointment of another Secretary.

Mr. Peeran Mahomed also supported Mr. Abdul Kadir's view and the subject of the resignation and appointment [of a successor] was postponed till the next meeting.

Mr. Lawrence's letter suggesting the admission of young persons [to membership of the Congress] at reduced rates of subscription was then taken up for consideration. After some deliberation, a resolution moved by Mr. Gandhi and seconded by Mr. Abdul Kadir was unanimously passed, appointing a committee consisting of Mr. Dawad Mahomed, the two Secretaries, Mr. Peeran Mahomed, Mr. Abdul Kadir, Mr. Abdul Haji Adam, Mr. Ismail Gora Mahomed and Mr. Gandhi to meet Mr. Lawrence and his friends [in this connection]. The committee was asked to suggest the necessary changes in the rules, regulations and the constitution of the Congress. The meeting then dispersed.

After the scheduled meeting was over, Mr. Gandhi made a short speech. He pointed out that malaria appeared to have broken out in epidemic form among the Indians on the east coast of Umgeni,[1] and

[1] *Vide* "Malaria and Duty of Indians", 23-3-1907.

it was necessary for the community to help them to the utmost. Young men who could spare the time should attend to the poor patients. Dr. Nanji had offered all possible help, and if volunteers came forward to tend the sick, much useful work could be done. It would redound to the fair name of the community and the volunteers would earn the gratitude of poor patients. Even a single individual could do much. The main thing to do was to go to the river bank, find the patients, inquire about their condition and report to the Congress Secretaries and to Dr. Nanji. Many young men had already come forward to do this work with zeal.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-4-1907

330. LETTER TO "THE NATAL ADVERTISER"[1]

MARITZBURG,
April 9, 1907

[TO
THE EDITOR
NATAL ADVERTISER
DURBAN]

SIR,

You, as well as your contemporary The *Natal Mercury*, have commented adversely upon Reuter's telegram regarding the report of the Registrar of Asiatics, published in the Transvaal, on the working of the permit system. If the facts as you state were true, every word stated by you would be justified, and in order to deserve the credit for honesty, which you have been good enough to give me, I should undoubtedly have to recall all I have said in public in opposition to the allegations as to illegal Asiatic influx into the Transvaal on a wholesale basis. Happily for the cause I have the privilege of serving, it is not necessary for me to withdraw anything I have hitherto said, for the simple reason that Reuter's agency has been instrument all quite unwittingly—in telegraphing an utter mis-statement. It will now be difficult to entirely undo the mischief created. Reuter's telegram

[1] The Editor, *The Natal Advertiser*, replied as follows: "...As we are not in possession as yet of the report itself, we are unable to decide between Mr. Gandhi's interpretation of it and Reuter's..."

stated that out of 12,543 registrations only 4,144 were accepted as valid. This is a condensation of a statement in the report which I have before me, and the condensation gives a meaning opposite to the one intended by the writer of the report. Allow me to state the position as briefly as I can. Registration is not to be mixed up with the taking out of permits. In 1903 there were 12,543 Asiatics at least in theTransvaal with lawful authority. Lord Milner some time during the year issued instructions to enforce Law 3 of 1885 and to exact £3 from those Asiatics who had not paid the amount to the late Boer Government, and in order to establish a uniform system of registration, he advised the Indian community to take out new certificates, both for those who had taken out £3 certificates before and those who had not.

This position the Indian community voluntarily accepted in order to please His Lordship. What Mr. Chamney says in his report is that out of 12,543 men who presented themselves for registration, 4,144 were able to make good their claim for exemption from payment of £3. How many claimants were rejected is not stated, but the point is perfectly clear that this registration did not affect the validity of the permits already issued. As a matter of fact, registration was granted only in favour of those who were in possession of permits. The statement wired by Reuter, therefore, means that all but 4,144 had to pay the sum of £3 in order to take out registration certificates, which did not in any way replace the permits already issued, so that your inference that 8,000 have managed to enter the Colony illegally is quite wide of the mark. The fact that 144 Asiatics died, and only four of their permits were recovered proves nothing except that the dead men forgot to return their permits in anticipation. There is no law with reference to the return of these documents, and it should be remembered that the men died not in the Transvaal, but in India. The only paragraph, therefore, in the report under discussion, dealing with illegal influx, is that wherein 876 men are alleged to have been found without permits or with stolen permits. Assuming the accuracy of the figures given by Mr. Chamney, all that has been proved is that about fifty stragglers per month entered the Transvaal on false permits or without any. I will not trespass on your courtesy by entering into further discussion beyond stating, without meaning any disparagement to Mr. Chamney, that he, lacking the judicial spirit, has not been able to distinguish between suspicion and proof, and has made statements which do not bear a judicial scrutiny.

They are no more than assertions unsupported by facts, though, as I have already stated, even the one assertion made in support of an illegal influx is capable of being very much boiled down. There is, however, nothing in that report to prove that there has been any encouragement on the part of the Indian community as a whole to an illegal entry nor of illegal influx on a wholesale basis. No one has ever denied the existence altogether of illegal entries, but it is the wholesale basis that has been challenged, and Mr. Chamney's report, even taken as it is, without considering the natural defects I have drawn attention to, furnishes a complete vindication of the British Indian position. Incidentally, I might mention that your Johannesburg contemporary, *The Rand Daily Mail*, who had the opportunity of reading the report itself, has come to the conclusion opposite to yours, and it now asks whether, after all, the new Bill is any cure for the evil of illegal entries so far as they have been proved.

Yours, etc.

M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Advertiser, 11-4-1907

331. CHAMNEY'S REPORT

Our Johannesburg correspondent's summary of Mr. Chamney's Report is well worth the reading. It bears out three things: Mr. Chamney's hatred of the Indian community, his lack of a sense of justice and the validity of the facts stated by the Indian community.

Mr. Chamney's hatred is in evidence in every line he has written. He has made mountains out of molehills, and has at times made unfounded statements. He says that many people sell old registers for large sums of money but has not been able to adduce any evidence. He has mentioned 876 persons as having entered without permits, but does not indicate how they did it. He does not have the rights of a magistrate and cannot therefore say of a particular person that he has entered unlawfully. He can only express his suspicion of people having entered without permits. However, when he asserts that some persons have come in without permits, it only shows his animus and lack of a sense of justice. Again, he says that the many Indians who were sent back from Durban and others who entered surreptitiously and were arrested are not included in the 876

mentioned earlier. Not one of these facts has any relevance to establishing the number of people who have entered unlawfully. He has brought in these facts only to magnify the issue.

Despite this exaggerated statement of facts, it is not proved that the Indian community gets many persons to enter without permits or that many persons do in fact enter without them. Even if Mr. Chamney's figure is correct, it will only mean that 50 percent Indians have entered the Transvaal each month; it will be quite improper to term this an invasion. Again, Mr. Chamney's Report bears out the Indian community's statement that the new Bill is absolutely unnecessary. He points out that there is nothing in the existing law to compel a person to give his thumb-impression. This is not true, for the Indian community has never been unwilling to give thumb-impressions. Besides, if anyone refuses, he can be charged with staying on [in the Colony] without a permit and brought before a court, where he will have to give his thumb-impression. The new Bill, then, is superfluous if it is only for taking a thumb-impression. Now Mr. Chamney also says that the law as it stands is inadequate to prevent children from entering the Colony. If that were really so, then [how is it that] we do not find any restrictions in the new Bill on the entry of children accompanying their parents[?] This means that the new law does not provide that remedy and that the new Bill is therefore altogether useless. Even *The Rand Daily Mail* now admits this. Taking all this into consideration, we see that Mr. Chamney's Report cannot at all be taken seriously.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-4-1907

332. OMAR HAJI AMOD ZAVERI'S RESIGNATION

Mr. Omar Haji Amod Zaveri has, owing to some other very important work, resigned his office of Joint Secretary of the Natal Indian Congress. Mr. Omar Zaveri is unique and unrivalled not only in Natal, but in the whole of South Africa. It is, in our view, no exaggeration at all to say that there is no Indian who is his peer. He will be leaving [for India] very shortly. In honouring him we shall be honouring ourselves. The Congress will, of course, felicitate him. But we hope that other bodies also will honour him on their own to show their

appreciation of his equal regard for all. It is not necessary to hold separate functions. Other bodies besides the Congress can honour him [separately] at the same place and time; and that will only be proper.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-4-1907

333. TALE OF WOE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Many persons have suggested to us that we should publish an account of the hardships we suffer in South Africa. The book should include a translation of petitions, etc., up to date. There is no doubt that such a book[1], if published, would be useful and give much food for thought. It may perhaps run to a thousand pages andcannot be brought out at a low price; A copy will cost five shillings. We cannot venture on such a publication unless a sale of 500 copies is assured in advance. We shall be in a position to consider the matter further, if the gentlemen who wish to see the book in print write to us further about it.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-4-1907

334. EX-SUPERINTENDENT ALEXANDER

For a long time now, the discussion has gone on about presenting an address, on behalf of the Indian community, to Mr. Alexander, the retired Police Superintendent. Much time has elapsed since. The longer we take over it the more it reveals our fickleness. We therefore suggest to the leaders of the community that they fulfil without further delay the task undertaken by them.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-4-1907

335. PROFESSOR GOKHALE'S GREAT ENDEAVOUR

Prof. Gokhale is at present on a tour of India; [he is visiting] and making speeches at a number of places on the [political] situation in the country. The principal aim of this tour is to bring

[1] It was not, however, published.

Hindus and Muslims together. Wherever he goes, both the communities heartily welcome him. They entertain him at dinner parties—a thing which did not happen before. In the course of his tour he visited the Aligarh College, where the students welcomed him with great respect. In a speech on the occasion, he pointed out that, without self-help, we would not be rid of our miseries. He was the guest of Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk of the College. A magnificent banquet was given there in his honour. He also visited Allahabad, Lucknow, Lahore, Amritsar and other places, and through his speeches he has contributed towards awakening and unifying the people.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-4-1907

336. EDUCATION IN AFGHANISTAN

Dr. Abdul Gani, the Head of [the] Education [Department] in Afghanistan, is setting up schools in Kabul. He has divided Kabul into forty wards for that purpose. Besides, the work of translating good books for Habibia University is also going on. So is the task of imparting medical education. A programme of industrial education is likely to start this month. They are also thinking of sending out students for education in Europe and Japan at state expense.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-4-1907

337. INDIAN LANDOWNERS IN DURBAN

The following schedule gives the value of land [in pounds] in the possession of Indians during 1906-7.

WARD	INDIAN LAND	OTHER	TOTAL
1	14,480	1140,570	1155.050
2	26,600	1149,150	1475,750
3	19,690	1938,340	1958,030
4	340,790	1857,770	2198,560
5	45,920	1316,910	1362,830

6	105,680	907,530	1014,210[1]
7	28,380	932,620	951,000[2]
	532,540[3]	9542,890	10125,430[4]

One sees from the table that the value of land held by Indians is only 5 per cent. of the total value of the land in the country. In fact, it is likely that some of this land is mortgaged. The whites' fears are therefore unwarranted.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-4-1907

338. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

DEPUTATION TO SMUTS

I wrote last week that a deputation would wait upon Mr. Smuts and place before him the resolution passed at the mass meeting.[5] Mr. Smuts had fixed Thursday the 4th for the interview. Under a special arrangement with the General Manager of the Railways, Messrs Abdul Gani, Coovadia, Essop Mian, Haji Ojer Ally, Moonlight and Gandhi travelled from Johannesburg to Pretoria by the 8.35 express train. At Pretoria they were joined by Messrs Mahomed Haji Joosab and Gaurishankar Vyas. They reached the Colonial Office exactly at 12, where Mr. Chamney was also present.

Mr. Gandhi narrated all the facts to Mr. Smuts. He reminded Mr. Smuts that the Indian community had itself registered several times. He said that Mr. Chamney's Report supported the Indian contention and showed in other ways also that the Indians were trust worthy. It was with the help of the Indian community that officials of the Asiatic Office who took bribes had been arrested. Taking al] this into consideration, Mr. Gandhi said, the Government should, on this occasion, agree to the proposal of voluntary registration made in the Second Resolution passed by the mass meeting.

Then Mr. Haji Ojer Ally advanced further arguments to bear out what Mr. Gandhi had said and drew Mr. Smuts's attention to the loyalty of the Indian community. Messrs Abdul Gani and Essop

[1] Clealy, these figures contain printing errors.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*
[4] *ibid*
[5] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", before 4-4-1907.

Mian also used other arguments and pointed out the difficulties they had in bringing servants, etc. [from India].

Mr. Smuts listened to this carefully for more than three quarters of an hour. At the end he said that he had heard several things for the first time, and these he said he would inquire into and send a written reply[1]; but the deputation should not interpret this to mean that the Government would agree to the Second Resolution.

This reply means that a situation has now arisen which is similar to that which existed when the Deputation waited upon Lord Elgin, and that the Second Resolution might have some effect if a third party could explain the matter to Mr. Smuts. Accordingly, Mr. Polak saw Mr. Gregorowski on Friday, and the latter expressed sympathy. Much appears to depend on Mr. Chamney. If he says that he can, according to the Indian proposal, register people without legislation, Mr. Smuts will very probably accept it. Mr. Polak appears to have done very good work at Pretoria. He spent the whole of Friday meeting people. He saw the editors of the *Pretoria News* and The *Transvaal Advertiser*, and also Mr. De Vet. None of them had really understood the facts before, but they have now begun to do so and have moreover promised to give all possible help.

CHAMNEY'S REPORT[2]

Mr. Chamney's Report for the year 1906 has been published. It says that 12,899 permits had been issued to Asiatics till December 31, 1905. The Government's decision was to issue permits to those Asiatics who had been resident in the Transvaal before the war. It was difficult to ascertain who the old residents of the Transvaal were as the registers maintained before 1899 had been lost. Moreover, as receipts were issued [without names?] to those who paid the £3 tax, it was impossible to determine who had paid the amount [*sic*]. Many persons used to sell these certificates at high prices. Of the 12,543 permit holders, 4,144 had earlier paid £3 each. On some registers it was found that something had been over-written in Hindustani which would suggest that the registers must have originally belonged to other persons. In the issue of permits the concurrence of two authorities is at present necessary. The first is that of the Coast Agent

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 20-4-1907.

[2] *Vide* also "Chamney's Report", 13-4-1907

posted at Durban who investigates and the other of the Advisory Boards which have been set up at various places and include Europeans. At Johannesburg the investigation is made by the Police Commissioner, and no permit is issued to anyone who fails to produce satisfactory evidence. In all, 598 permits were issued from 1905 to December 1906; 3,286 applications for permits were rejected. Of these, 1,240 were Indian and 1,238 Chinese. In addition to these, there are many Asiatics in the Transvaal who have entered the Colony without a permit or with permits belonging to others. All these persons cannot be apprehended as they cannot all be forced to give their thumb-impressions. Such persons number 876. Of these, 215 have been prosecuted and sentenced. This figure does not include those who have infiltrated into the territory undetected. Nothing can be done against them. Nor does this number include the l41 who were turned back from Durban. The greatest difficulty is met with in the case of Asiatic boys. It is not clear from the Supreme Court's decision for what [categories of] boys a permit is obligatory. Because of this many Indian boys have come in. It was for this reason that the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance was introduced. According to the 1904 census, there were 1,774 Asiatic boys below the age of 15. It was found that 417 permits had been lost. The following is the classification of Asiatics according to occupations:

	JUNE 1905	JUNE 1906	INCREASE
General Dealers	1,054	1,105	51
Hawkers	3,086	3,587	501
Itinerant Traders	46	229	183
Agents	11	8	—
Bakers	6	5	—
Butchers	43	40	—
[Keepers of] Eating - houses	63	8	—
Washermen	32	60	28
Grocers	135	131	—
Milkmen	4	3	—
Fruiterers	19	11	—

In addition to all this [information] a list of the places where Indian Locations have been established is also given in the Report.

COMMENTS BY "THE RAND DAILY MAIL"

The Rand Daily Mail of Johannesburg has strongly criticized the Report. It says that Mr. Chamney has given the reasons for restricting Asiatic immigration; but he has not been able to show that anything more than the existing Act is necessary. Mr. Chamney's Report conclusively shows that the present procedure has failed. If that is so, that procedure is not likely to change under the new law. There is no reason to believe that any great change will be effected in the matter of taking ten finger-prints instead of the thumb-impression. What is now needed is therefore not a new law but a new procedure. If a new procedure is evolved in consultation with the leaders of the Indian community, it will be very convenient and avoid friction—which at present appears probable—with the Imperial Government. It would have been better if Mr. Chamney had, instead of merely pointing out the existing defects, shown the way for the future.

CABLES TO ENGLAND

After the Colonial Secretary had refused to forward the cablegram about the Asiatic Bill, the President of the [British Indian] Association inquired of Lord Selborne what was to be done.[1] The latter replied that he could not interfere with what the local Government had done. So last Saturday, the Association sent a long cablegram[2] directly to Lord Elgin. A brief cablegram[3] regarding the deputation was also sent to the South Africa British Indian Committee. These cablegrams cost £28.

FOR HAWKERS

The Chamber of Commerce has suggested the enactment of a special law for hawkers. One of the suggestions is that no hawker should be permitted to stop for business at the same spot for more than 20 minutes, that no hawker should visit a place twice the same day and that hawkers should be allowed to sell their wares on the main thoroughfares only. These suggestions have not yet been accepted. If they are, the plight of the hawkers will become very sad indeed.

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", before 4-4-1907.

[2] *Vide* "Cable to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 6-4-1907.

[3] *Vide* "Cable to S. A. B. I. Committee", 6-4-2907.

WARNING ABOUT PERMITS

It came to my knowledge from several sources that some persons, especially a white among them, have been selling permits to Indians. This is very likely true. Heavy sums are being paid for such permits by some Indians. I must tell them that such permits are of no use whatever. Those buying them would be committing an offence, which would be like paying for bringing trouble upon oneself. It should be easy to see that there will be no duplicates of false permits in the Permit Office and that permits of which no duplicates are available in the Permit Office will be considered faked.

CLARIFICATION OF MARCH 31 NOTICE

The Editor has forwarded to me a question raised by a correspondent from Johannesburg. The correspondent inquires whether the holder of a register who fails to get a permit before March 31 will be liable only to being served with a notice asking him to quit the Transvaal or if he will also be punished in some other way. The answer is that a person charged with staying in the Transvaal without a permit, will only get a notice.

SUGGESTION TO JOHANNESBURG CORRESPONDENTS

Immediate disposal of letters and other communications will be possible if correspondents in Johannesburg send them to the Johannes burg Office of the *Opinion*. For some time is wasted in having such papers redirected from Phoenix to Johannesburg. Communications should be addressed to P. O. Box 6522.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-4-1907

339. CABLE TO S. A. B. I. COMMITTEE[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before *April 19, 1907*]

[TO

SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE
LONDON]

CHINESE HAVE WRITTEN GOVERNMENT ACCEPTING INDIAN PROPOSAL

[1] This was forwarded by L. W. Ritch to the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies on April 19.

RAND DAILY MAIL ADVISES GOVERNMENT ACCEPT.[1]

[BIAS]

Colonial Office Records: C.O. 291/122

340. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,

Wednesday, [After *April 19, 1907*][2]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I had asked you a question about your health. I still await your answer. I am glad that you are better now.

It is likely that the money from Gaurishankar will be received here. As soon as it comes I shall send it on to you. If there are any dues outstanding from him please let me know.

If you have come across any reactions to the article about Hejaz[3] please let me know what the reactions were like and from whom.

The issue of *Al Islam* has been received. About Thakkar you should do as you think best. If you do as I suggested, you will be able gradually to bring him round. Keep me informed regularly so that the matter does not slip from my mind.

Mr. MacIntyre has left. But we can carry on without him. He is on the look-out for a job.

I have had some talk about Kalyandas. Please send him a reply.

I have received last month's account of the household expenses. Looking at it and the expenses of the current month I am afraid that, do what we will, we shall not be able to meet all the expenses. You should send me details as to how all this expenditure was incurred so that I can understand.

Chhabildas[4] told me as much about Chanchal[5] as he knew. I am

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 20-4-1907.

[2] From the reference to *Al Islam,* the first issue of which appeared on April 19, 1907; *vide* also the following item.

[3] Hejaz Railway; *vide* 11-5-1907.

[4] Chhabiladas B. Mehta

[5] Wife of Harilal Gandhi

awaiting a wire from Bombay. She seems to be a little restless in Bombay. I have sent a telegram that Chanchi should be sent here at once.

How was it that Lachchiram's name was omitted from the advertisement page of *Indian Opinion*? His name used to be there. Please write to him from there. I am also writing. Have you received the payment in cash from Anglia or is the work being done on credit? Have you received the balance due from Ismail Gora? It will be good if the work about *Ramayana* could be taken up.[1] Please see Anandlal and find a way of doing this.

Omar Sheth should have been sent five copies of the document. But now you may send him four. I have received the article about Madanjit. I have read the portion marked.

Now I think I have covered all the points in your letter.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 11160. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

341. DUTY OF TRANSVAAL INDIANS

We invite the attention of the Transvaal Indians to a summary of Mr. Tilak's speech printed elsewhere. On them rests a great responsibility; they have passed a resolution about going to gaol in case the new Bill becomes law. Whether or not we should take an oath or whether or not the September oath still binds us is no longer a question to be decided. The important thing is that we have declared to the world our determination not to submit to the law. It is on this basis that Mr. Ritch is carrying on the struggle. On that basis too, the Deputation went to England, and on that basis several whites have been helping us. The matter is so serious that it has set even Mr. Smuts thinking. It was because the resolution about gaol-going was passed that the Kimberley people as also the Natal Congress have sent telegrams. This is no time for fear. The Transvaal Indians have to adhere steadfastly to the gaol-going Resolution for the sake of their own honour and that of the entire Indian community.

[1] A selection from Tulsidas's *Ramacharitamanas; vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", before 18-3-1907.

Mr. Tilak's speech applies to us also. Our demand will not be accepted until we force them to do so. The unfailing remedy of gaol going is our [method of] boycott[1], our weapon. There can be no question of its failing. For how can there be defeat for one who has gone to gaol?

Once more we remind the Transvaal Indian community that it is because the Cape Coloureds opposed the Pass Act, refused to take out passes and went to gaol that the Cape Government does not any longer compel them to take out passes. Though the Pass Act applies to them, the Government is unable to enforce it. We should under no circumstances prove ourselves more timid than the Coloured persons. All our efforts will be in vain if we do not act up to the assurance which Mr. Ritch has given to Lord Ampthill. If the Indiancommunity remains firm in its resolution about gaol-going, we may as well take it that the new law has not been passed at all.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-4-1907

342. ENGLAND AND HER COLONIES

Nowadays the British welcome ministers from the Colonies. Dr. Jameson who once thought of capturing the land of the Boers is being greeted with loud acclamation. Wherever he and other ministers from the Colonies go, they are profusely honoured. Nobody thinks of their faults; their virtues alone are taken into account.

All this is as it should be. Only under such conditions can the people rise. The Colonies are like the children of the British. It is nothing surprising if a father meets his children with warmth and enthusiasm, unmindful of their faults and perceptive only of their virtues. Where such a relationship obtains, the family prospers; a people, similarly, thrives on such relationships. This is one of the potent causes of the prosperity of the British. They do not envy the rise of their kith and kin.

Again the ministers who receive so much honour are brave persons. They are not the sort of persons to be overawed by others and they will take any risks for their country. That is why the British welcome them with acclamation. The Southampton Municipality

[1] Boycott had become an important feature of politics in India at this time.

presented an address to General Botha soon after he landed there. Though not an Englishman, he possesses the virtues of one and is moreover a brave fighter. He said, "There was a time when during the war I was beleaguered by the British. Today I feel happy to be surrounded by them, yet have no misgivings. Rather, It shall feel the happier if more of you gather round me." He made this speech in Dutch to show his patriotism.

Knowing all this as we do, we must not envy them; on the contrary we should congratulate them. And, if we have any public spirit, we should, like them, engage in the work of public welfare and be prepared, like them, even to die for it.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-4-1907

343. LADYSMITH APPEALS

The outcome of the eleven Ladysmith appeals that were preferred to the Supreme Court has confirmed our expectations.Since the licensing court[1] gave judgement without taking any evidence, these cases cannot really be called appeals. The Supreme Court has on this ground set aside the judgement of the appellate court and ordered a re-hearing of these cases. The eleven applicants who have been refused licences can appeal again. And if, after taking evidence, the appellate court still refuses obstinately to issue a licence, there is nothing the applicants can do.

It is a bad thing that in this case the court has not allowed costs to the appellants, as it did in the Somnath Maharaj case. If costs had been allowed, the appellate court would have been a little more careful. We cannot regard the [result of the] appeals as a complete victory. The Licensing Act remains what it has always been. But since we did not expect any sensational result, there is no cause for despair. The Natal Indian Congress must persevere with the struggle. If adequate efforts are made, the licensing act will be repealed.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-4-1907

[1] Tribunal

344. CHANGES IN EGYPT

Lord Cromer has relinquished the post of British Comptroller General in Egypt, mentioning his ill-health as the reason. He introduced many reforms in Egypt. He gave the Egyptian people education, thus awakening in them a national consciousness. Now the same Egyptians have risen against Lord Cromer, because he wants to dispose of unlimited powers. Sir Eldon Gorst has been appointed in his place. It is said that Sir Eldon will adhere to the policy of Lord Cromer. However, the Liberal Press in England recognizes and desiresthat more power should be granted to the Egyptian people. The Egyptian Press also hopes that the change in the office will result in the devolution of more power to the people. In any case, it is clear that the members of the Liberal Party today desire that people all over the British Empire should enjoy a greater share of power [in government].

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 20-4-1907

345. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S REPLY

I have already reported on the deputation.[1] The following is the reply[2] received from Mr. Smuts.

1. I am obliged to the Indian community for your letter of the 30th and for the representation made to me during the Indian deputation's interview with me on the Asiatic Registration Act and other subjects. Objecting to the new Act the deputation said that it would only serve to harass the Indian community, that it was unnecessary in view of the community's willingness to take out new registers voluntarily, and that it was humiliating because it made registration compulsory. The deputation also pointed out that the [Indian] grievance regarding land rights under Law[3] of 1885was not being redressed, and that the difficulties experienced by those coming to

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 20-4-1907.

[2] Smuts had promised a written reply to the Indian deputation which met him in connection with the new Transvaal Asiatic Registration Act. *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 13-4-1907.

the Colony for a temporary stay should be remedied.

2. All this has been carefully considered and I have to point out that Section 17 of the new Act provides for the issue of a temporary permit.

3. As for land rights, I regret to say that the Government can grant no more relief than the specific reference in Section 21 to the land belonging to a particular person.[1]

4. As for the other grounds on which objections have been raised against the Act, I have to assure you that the Government intends no insult to the Asiatic community. At the same time, it cannot be deniedthat the question of marks which will make the identification of Asiatic people possible is full of difficulties. The main aim of the new Act is to adopt such means as will make it easy to identify persons of that community with a view to ascertaining who are entitled to reside here. The new Act is necessary to achieve this object. I regret to have to say that the suggestion made by the deputation about fresh registrationcannot be accepted. For doing so a proviso for compulsory registration is necessary. Moreover, I cannot see how you could say with certainty that your word would be binding on other Asiatic communities, and particularly on those residing without a permit.

5. There is no doubt that many whites hold that a number of Asiatics is infiltrating into this territory without permits. And they also find that people have been doing so because there is no adequate law in force to identify the [lawfully resident] Asiatics. It is not possible for the Government to ignore this feeling. Moreover, the Government has strong evidence of such unlawful infiltration. Considering this matter, I am sorry to find that, in your meeting and speeches, people have been advised to disobey the law by not registering themselves. In your own interests, I expect you will not advocate a course of action that will make it impossible for us to grant special concessions to your community. I sincerely hope therefore that your community, which has always had the privilege of being considered law-abiding, will maintain its reputation in the matter and that Indians will co-operate with the Government in every way by registering themselves lawfully, gracefully and expeditiously. The Act has been framed in the

[1] The reference is to the specific provision exempting the heirs of Abubaker Amod Zaveri from Law 3 of 1885 and other laws relating to ownership of land by Indians. Vide enclosure to "Letter to J. D. Rees", 6-11-1906, enclosure.

interests of both the Asiatics and the whites. If the Act were regarded as not binding, greater pressure would be brought on the Government as well as parliament to take more stringent measures to prevent Asiatics from entering without a permit.

REFLECTIONS ON REPLY

The reply is at once good and bad, timorous and threatening. I call it good because it is courteous. If the Government wanted to disregard the Indian community altogether, they could have disposed of the matter with a two-line reply, without giving reasons. The reason why I call it bad is that Mr. Smuts hesitates to accept even our most reasonable demands. It is timorous, because of the ideas [of Indians], [their] resolutions and speeches on the subject of gaol-going, the Government is afraid that the Indian community may [actually] display such strength, for then the Act may be proved ineffective. It is threatening, because the Government, being frightened as we have shown above, hold out the threat that, if we do not accept the law, more stringent measures will follow; they hope that they can avoid a difficult situation if, under the threat of severe consequences, we can be made to give up the idea of going to gaol.

Now what is to be done? The present is a crucial moment. If we are imbued with the right spirit and care for our honour, we shall win. We should certainly not be cowed down by the Government's threat, for what greater pain can they inflict on us than the law they have already passed? What greater harm can be done to a man than to divest him of his honour? On the one hand, we are being persuaded to help in enforcing the law and, on the other, they pass an act which proclaims that, in the whole Indian community, there is not a single person trustworthy enough to be exempted from holding a registration certificate, that is, a "thief pass". We are first made out to be thieves and our help is then sought in enforcing the law!

Nowhere is it stated [in Mr. Smuts's reply] that even a single right will be granted to us. The land right has been flatly denied. Locations still loom before our eyes. What further humiliation can be inflicted on those who have been degraded to the lowest depths? In the present age and according to European standards, there can be no love without fear. We have the example of Mr. Smuts's own people with whom the British Government argued in a similar fashion. They told President Kruger that it would be better to concede certain rights

to the British, else the Dutch would have to suffer. President Kruger paid no heed to such bland words. Nor was he afraid of the threat. He himself remained courageous and inspired bravery in his people, and thus immortalized them and himself. As a result, the people have today regained what was once theirs. Many Dutchmen died on the battle-field; their women and children were ruined. But the survivors rule today. Thus those who lost their lives are not dead, but have become immortal. We shall win only if we do the same, but somewhat differently. All the assurances that Mr. Smuts or others may offer are to he shunned like sugar-coated pills of poison. If we turn back now, we may be sure that we shall for ever remain entrapped. It was thoughts such as these that impelled the meeting of the Association on Thursday the 11th to send Mr. Smuts a letter over the signature of its Acting Chairman, Mr. Essop Mian. It is politely worded, but upholds our honour. A translation of it is given below:

ASSOCIATION'S REPLY

> I have received your letter of the 8th instant about the suggestion of the Indian community regarding the Asiatic Bill. My Association is very grateful to the Government for its detailed and sympathetic reply. However, I approach them with a request to reconsider the matter in the light of the following. The objections raised by the Indian community are so important, and the suggestion it has made so just and proper that my Association finds it necessary to persuade the Government to accept it.
>
> May I take the liberty of reminding you that, under Lord Milner's advice, the Indian community had agreed to registration on the same lines as now proposed, and that the Chinese community had also accepted it? My Association would humbly state that there is no need to make a promise, as the proposal is such that it could be immediately implemented. Moreover, it can be ascertained, without loss of time, how many Asiatics are agreeable to taking out the new registers in place of their present permits.
>
> Your Honour's letter raises the question of permitless persons. But that question does not arise from our suggestion or from the new Act. For in neither case will such men be able to obtain permits. When fresh registration is completed, it will

remain only to detect those without permits, and to serve them with 'quit' notices for unlawful residence in the Colony.

My Association admits that European residents are excited about many Indians entering the Colony without permits and it is for that very reason that my community has made the forego ing suggestion which provides for adequate means of our identification. And when the existing documents are withdrawn [after the issue of new registers,] there will be no difficulty about identification. However, I must say that, whatever the means for establishing identity, those bent on entering surreptitiously will continue todo so anyhow. I must also add that not many persons enter in this manner and that Mr. Chamney's Report is enough proof of it.

My Association therefore prays that the Government reconsider the matter, and hopes that, after doing so, they will come to entertain a better opinion of the Indian community's proposal.

You refer to the Resolutions about defying the law. We must point out in reply that there can be no question of defying the law at all. However, if, for any reason, Indians' respect for the law is put to a severe strain and if in that context the community seeks to vindicate its honour and prestige, the only way open to it will be to submit to the ultimate penalty prescribed by law, that is, to go to gaol. Such action cannot be construed as a desire on the part of the Indian community to disobey the law. However, the community desires humbly to point out that the new law gravely offends against its feelings. It implies that the Indian community wishes to defeat the objects of the law. On the contrary, through this suggestion, the community [seeks to] fulfil the intention of the law. My Association therefore humbly requests that the Indian proposal be given a trial before the law is enforced. It makes this suggestion in the conviction that all Asiatic communities will act according to it.

CONSEQUENCE OF REPLY

It cannot be predicted how the Government will react to this reply. But it is certain that it will set the Government thinking. They have themselves raised the question of gaol-going. If we retract now,

that will only serve to show up the abjectness of the community. The reply has in it neither bitterness nor threat. It is polite but firm, and reflects the courageous mood of the community.

CHINESE MOVE

The Chinese leaders met last Saturday at Mr. Gandhi's office and resolved to support the Indian community. The Chinese Consul has also given them similar advice. It is thus seen that we get support from all quarters.

ASIATIC EATING-HOUSES

Notwithstanding the Association's struggle against the regulations concerning Asiatic eating-houses, they have been passed and already published in the *Government Gazette*. Those who run eating-houses therefore must take out licences. It should be remembered that, if their kitchens and dining-rooms are not found absolutely clean, they will not be issued a licence.

RUMOUR OF ASSENT TO NEW LAW

A rumour was going the rounds here that Lord Elgin had approved the new law. On an enquiry by the Association it was learnt that no such thing had happened and that the rumour was unfounded.

WARNING

Great caution is necessary in this matter. In spite of the tremendous efforts being made, Lord Elgin may after all append his signature to the law. It is desirable therefore that those engaged in trade should take out a shopkeeper's or hawker's licence for the whole year. If they do that, their trade will not be affected at least this year even if the law should come into force. If in the meanwhile gaol-going is resorted to, the law cannot but be repealed ultimately.

CHINESE APPROVAL

The Chinese have sent a telegram to the Government saying that they are opposed to the law and that they approve of the Indian community's proposal.[1]

COMMENT BY "THE RAND DAILY MAIL"

On this, *The Rand Daily Mail* has made a good comment. It says that now that the Chinese have endorsed the Indian proposal, all

[1] *Vide* also "Cable to S. A. B. I. Committee",19-4-1907.

Asiatic communities can be said to have turned against the Act. It behoved the Government, therefore, to accept the Indian proposal. It was legitimate for the Indian community to object to the law, and its feelings should not be hurt.

REJOINDER TO CHAMNEY

The Rand Daily Mail has published a long rejoinder by the English editor of this paper to Mr. Report[1]. It has been printed in the column next to the leader. It will be published in two instalments.

OSMAN LATIEF'S LETTER

Mr. Oman under the pen-name of "British Indian", has written a letter to the local Press, in which he has pointed out that the Indian community has taken out registers several times, that the objection based on competition in trade is untenable, and that justice must be done to the Indian community, keeping in view Queen Victoria's assurances and those of others and the community's own readiness to share in the defence of the British Empire.

CABLE TO COMMITTEE

A cable has been sent to the South Africa British Indian Committee communicating the Chinese approval [of the Indian proposal] and the support of *The [Rand]* Daily Mail, and inquiring about the state of the movement in England.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-4-1907

346. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
April 20, 1907

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL

With reference to the £10 withdrawn by Harilal from your father at Rajkot, I am crediting the Press with £10 and debiting my private account, and, I take it, you will withdraw the £10 from the Press, unless you have done so already.

With reference to the entry of £4 re. Kaliandas, the book here

[1] *Vide* "Chamney's Report", p. 413 and "Johannesburg Letter", 13-4-1907.

seems to be in order. When the month was finished, £3 was debited to the Press and credited to Kaliandas, £4 debited to the Office and credited to Kaliandas. Evidently, it should have been £4 against the Press and £3 against the Office, which will now be done. Further, what has to be done here is to pass a debit against the Press of £1. These entries will be correct, if, at the time, you did not make any entries there, that is to say, if you did not credit Kaliandas independently of entries sent from here. If you did, you will now have to make cross-entries. I assume also that no moneys passed from you to Kaliandas, because, in my ledger £7 has been credited to him.

I have now received the household account. They seem to have spent money lavishly, and, yet, there is very little in detail I can take exception to. I notice also that the piano has not yet been debited to me, unless I have overlooked it in going through it hurriedly, so that the amount will be increased by another £10. Is that so?

I am intensely dissatisfied with Gokaldas' betrothal, for I understand that he has actually paid Rs. 2,000 in order to bring about the betrothal. I do not know whether I have understood the thing correctly. If it is in respect of jewellery, the matter is not so open to criticism. I have meagre details about it. If you know anything definite, I should like to know what has actually happened.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I am sending you 3 numbers of *The Times of India*. After you have seen and admired pictures I want you to cut out Gaekwar, the Jam, and the Cricket Team. We might one of these days want to reproduce these pictures as supplements, and it would be better for you also to file any other pictures you may come across and consider good enough for use.

From a photostat of the typewritten original: S. N. 4734

347. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS GANDHI

[About *April 20, 1907*][1]

RESPECTED SIR,

I have received your letter. I wish to answer it with the utmost calmness and as fully as possible. I shall first put my thoughts before you as they come to my mind, and then answer your questions.

I am afraid our outlooks differ widely and I see no possibility, for the present, of their being reconciled. You seek peace and happiness through money. I don't depend on money for my peace; and for the moment at any rate my mind is quite calm and able to stand any amount of suffering.

Like you, I too believe in the old traditions, but there is a difference in our beliefs. For you believe in age-old superstitions, while I not only do not but consider it sinful to believe in them.

You desire to attain *moksha*[2], so do I. Nevertheless, your notion of that state seems to be widely different from mine. Though I have the highest regard for you, untainted by any mean or selfish thought, you harbour hatred for me in your mind. The reason for this, as I see it, is that you are overcome by attachment and maintain relationships for selfish ends. Though you do this unconsciously, the result is practically the same as I have indicated. If you have really got to the stage ofstriving for moksha, you should remain calm and unperturbed and forget all about me, even if I am extremely sinful and may be deceiving you. But you are not able to do so because of your excessive attachment. This is what I believe; but if I am wrong in holding this belief, I prostrate myself at your feet and beg to be forgiven.

But whether or not you are overcome by greed and attachment, I am not worried. It does not affect my love for you. My regard for you does not decrease in the least, and I am ready to render you any service that I can and look upon it as my duty.

I fail to understand what you mean by the word "family". To

[1] The original carries no date; however, *vide* the preceding item where Gandhiji refers to Gokuldas's betrothal, while in this letter ('Letter to Lakshmidas Gandhi", 20-4-1907) he refers to the forthcoming marriage.

[2] Liberation as the goal of life

me, the family includes not only the two brothers but the sister as well. It also includes our cousins. Indeed, if I could say so without arrogance, I would say that my family comprises all living beings: the only difference being that those who are more dependent on me, because of blood relationship or other circumstances, get more help from me. Hence it was that I took out an insurance policy in my wife's favour. And this I did because of your bitter letters to me when I was in Bombay and in order to escape your imprecations in case the responsibility for [supporting] my wife and children fell on you, as I was at that time engaged in helping the plague-stricken. Though I am myself against insurance, I took out an insurance policy for these and other reasons. If by any chance you die before me, you may be sure that I shall myself [serve as] an insurance policy for your wife and children. I beseech you to feel secure on this account. I would cite the case of Raliatbehn in this context.

If Raliatbehn does not stay with you, I do not consider that to be due to any fault of mine, but hold your nature responsible. I would humbly remind you that mother was not happy with you, nor at any time were any of the other relatives.

If Gokuldas and Harilal have gone astray, I am not responsible. Gokuldas left me and was spoiled by the pernicious atmosphere there; the same thing happened with Harilal to some extent. Nevertheless, neither of them has become as corrupt as you think. They have better character than other boys. It is only when I judge them by a standard of my own that I find them lacking. Harilal has greatly profited by coming here and, if I mistake not, his character has improved. Since Harilal is already betrothed, I have nothing to say against it. At the same time I cannot say that I am pleased about it.

I consider it wrong too that Gokuldas is going to get married. That it has become necessary for the two brothers to get-married is due to the sensual atmosphere there. It is not any dislike for the country but the grief I feel for its present sorry plight that prompts me to say this.

Fortunately, Manio[1], Ramo[2] and Devo[3] are here, and are growing up in a healthy atmosphere. I do not therefore worry about their betrothal. To my way of thinking, it is necessary for many Indians to

[1] Manilal, Ramdas and Devdas, Sons of Gandhiji
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*

observe brahmacharya, even if they get married. If, therefore, all the three boys were to die unmarried, I shouldn't be sorry but should rejoice instead. However, if when they come of age they wish to marry, I am sure that they will find suitable brides. It would cause you great sorrow if I were to give my answer to the question, "What is to be done if no girl is to be had from our caste?"; so I would, with your permission, rather not answer this question. I repeat that it is the divine law that one gets fruits according to one's faith and therefore this problem does not arise in my mind at all.

Chhaganlal, Maganlal and Anandlal are members of our family, hence service done to them is service done to the family. They have become better men after coming to Phoenix and I see their moral sense developed.

As to your demand for a hundred rupees a month, I must say that I see neither the means at present nor the need of meeting it. I run the Phoenix Press with borrowed money. Moreover, I may have to go to gaol in the course of the struggle here against the new Ordinance. In that case I may become poorer still. This will come about in a month or two. I am therefore unable at present to do anything to satisfy you. If, however, the condition here improves during the next few months and I am free from trouble, I shall try to send you the money you have asked for by money order with the sole intention of pleasing you.

I do agree that you and Karsandas have [the right to] a share in my earnings. But I spend much less on my personal enjoyment than you do [on yours]. My earnings are what remains after meeting all the charges here. My object in staying here was not to make money but to serve the people; hence I deem it my duty to use for the benefit of the people whatever is left over after meeting the expen-diture on the family here. So please don't think that I am making money here. At this point I would remind you that between you two brothers I have already paid nearly Rs. 60,000. I cleared all the debts while I was there; and you told me that no more money was wanted. It was only after this that I began spending money here. I handed over all my savings in Natal to you; and I have not kept a penny for myself either from that amount or from my subsequent earnings. From this you will see that I have paid back much more than the Rs. 13,000 spent on me during my stay in England. In saying this I do not mean to suggest

that I have done you a favour. I only state the bare facts to pacify your anger.

What Mr. Fitzgerald told you about me only shows that he does not know the facts.

I shall now answer your questions [1]. These I return herewith.

1. The object of sending me to England was that we, all the three of us, might thereby maintain the status of our father more or less, be well off and enjoy the good things of life.

2. The risk was indeed great as we had decided to stake whatever we had on my education.

3. As those who had promised to help us did not keep their word, you worked hard, and even at the cost of your health, ungrudgingly gave me as much money as I asked for. This shows your magnanimity and your affection for a younger brother.

4. When we were reduced to the condition described in this question, I did feel—I vaguely recollect—that I would earn enough to satisfy you. and make you forget the hardships you underwent for my sake.

5. This I do not recollect, as father himself had started selling the property and we did the same after him.

6. This is but natural.

7. I must say with deep sorrow that, on account of your extravagant and thoughtless way of life, you have squandered a lot of money on pleasures and on pomp and show. You kept a horse and carriage, gave parties, and spent money on selfish friends; and some money was spent in what I consider immoral ways.

8. I remember to have sold them. I am not at all ashamed of it, neither do I regret it.

9. I do not remember to have sold them secretly without your knowledge; even if I had done so, I do not mind it.

10. Though I did not replace that jewellery, I have already paid its value in cash and much more besides. However, if I am required to do so [again], I shall certainly deposit the money in their names, that is, if I am able to save any. As for getting the jewellery made afresh, I will not do so, as I consider it a sin. When I refuse to get the jewellery

[1] Lakshmidas's letter containing the questions is not available.

made, it means that my ideas about such things have substantially changed.

11. I do not consider that I have obliged you by doing this. Even if nothing was done for me, whatever I have to do for my blood-brother I would do as a matter of duty. If then I do anything for one who spent a great deal on my account, it would be doubly my duty to do so.

12. I am not the master of my earnings, since I have dedicated my all to the people. I do not suffer from the illusion that it is I who earn; I simply believe that God gives me the money for making good use of it.

13. I do recognize your [right to a] share in all my earnings; but since there is no such thing as an income for me now, what can I send you?

14. I am not spending your share [on myself]; but I use all the money that God gives me for the public good. If anything is left over after what has been used for this purpose, I would like to send you all of it, not just your share of it.

15. I don't have the faintest recollection of having robbed you or anyone else. If I regard all living beings as equal both from the practical and the moral points of view, it is in the fitness of things that those who are more dependent on me have a greater claim on me. That is to say, I should help my wife and sons first and then those who are helpless and have therefore a claim on me. If, on the other hand, my wife and sons find their means of living independently of me, they may be left alone and others who are helpless anddepend on me will have precedence. This means that Goko[1], if he were not earning, would have a prior claim to Hariyo's[2] if the latter were earning. If all of them are earning and you are not, yours will be the first claim. Moreover, if all of you were working, but Purshottam was not and he were still with us, his would be the first claim. This claim pertains only to maintenance and not to the illusory worldly pleasures. Whatever other questions of a subsidiary nature arise out of the above, you will be able to answer for yourself. All this is written without any bad motive whatever.

16. The answer to this question is contained in the previous one.

[1] Gokuldas

[2] Harilal, Gandhiji's eldest son

17. I have no objection whatever to your showing this letter or any portion of it to anyone you like. I do not know who should judge as between us. I am at your command. I am in no way your equal and no one therefore can compare us and pronounce judgement. However, I shall hear what those to whom you show this letter have to say and shall reply to them according to my lights.

I revere you as you are my elder brother. Our religion bids us treat our elders with veneration. I implicitly believe in that injunction. But I have greater regard for truth. This too is taught by our religion. If you find anything objectionable in what I say, please accept my assurance that I have answered all your questions with the greatest regard for truth, and not in order to hurt you or be rude. Formerly, there was no difference of opinion or misunderstanding between us, hence you had affection for me. Now you have turned away from me because my views have changed, as I have said. Since you consider this change has been for the worse, I can quite understand that some of my answers will not be acceptable to you. But as the change in my ideas is due to my pursuit of truth, I am quite helpless. My devotion to you remains the same as before; it has simply assumed a new form. All this I shall explain to you most humbly and at length some day when we meet and if you want me to tell you about it. But I am unable to say when I can leave this country because of the peculiar circumstances and my several obligations here.

Do please believe me when I say that I have written all this with the best of intentions. If you do that, your displeasure will cease. Wherever you think that I am erring, please bear with me.

I have shared your letter with Hariyo, because, after all, whatever you may think, we both belong to the older generation, and though you write with extreme indignation . . .[1] it shows the true nature . . .[2] to leave me. And I am getting him to copy this letter so that you may have no difficulty in reading it and he may know how I have answered your angry letter and may learn whatever he can from it according to his *karma*[3].

From a photostat of the original Gujarati draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 9524

[1] These portions in the original, about half a line each, are undecipherable.
[2] These portions in the original, about half a line each, are undecipherable.
[3] Accumulated effect of all past actions

348. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[JOHANNESBURG,]
Sunday, [*April 21, 1907*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

In her letter received here today your aunt writes that your wife has had another son and that both mother and child are well. I should like to know, if possible, how much each of your two sons weighs. I would particularly advise you to see that the child's bed and other linen are quite clean. Do not allow the useless and wicked superstitions about untouchability to come in your way. Use a cradle in preference to a hammock. I would like your son to be as healthy as Mrs. Polak's.

Please ask Thakkar to translate the speech read by Mr. Fitzgerald on the occasion of Ranjit Singh's accession to the *gadi* and the latter's reply which are [both] reported in *The Times of India*. Please reproduce these in English also if possible. Both are good. There is an article about us in one of the issues of that paper; please get a cutting and send it to me. I forgot to take one myself.

Please let me know how you are faring there. How do you feel in your mind? How do you find yourself in relation to West? What do you think about your going [to England]?

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I am sending some Gujarati matter today. There must be some overflow matter from last week. I sent some on Saturday, that is, yesterday[2] and hope to send more tomorrow. You did well to send me the *Maratha*, but according to our arrangement, you ought to have passed it on to Thakkar for translation. However, if that is what you are already doing but have sent this particular issue to me for translation, I have nothing to say.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 4737

[1] The date of receipt is mentioned as April 24, 1907. The preceding Sunday was April 21.

[2] The original reads, ". . some on Saturday, some yesterday", etc.

349. LETTER TO KALYANDAS MEHTA

[JOHANNESBURG,]
April 23, 1907

MY DEAR KALIANDAS,

I have not heard from you at all for some time. Do wake up. I enclose herewith the Deed of Transfer No. 1287 of 1906 in favour of Foolmania[1]. There was a messenger from her yesterday saying that she was ill, and required the title deed. I am, therefore, sending it to you there, and, if there is a call for it, hand it over after taking a receipt. Inquire also why it is wanted.

Yours faithfully,

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4736

350. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
April 26, 1907

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. With reference to the Madressa, it is not possible for us to give any independent opinion. How can we? All we can do is to bring out the best points in the report, which I have done. I have given a note on *Al Islam*[2] also.

I suppose Apoo has asked for the money for the firm. I have not said anything . . .[3] because I wanted you to use your discretion.

I have telegraphed today saying that Kalyandas must prepare to leave immediately. I have a peremptory letter from his father. He should, therefore, go. You will perhaps read my letter to Mr. West, wherein I have suggested that Maganlal should replace Kalyandas. I am likely to be there before he leaves. All that I have said before regarding him is applicable today also.

I have received all the cuttings mentioned by you. I am sending under cover to you the *Jaina*. I want Harilal to read it and make

[1] Wife of Budrea, a client of Gandhiji
[2] *Vide* 29-4-1907.
[3] A word here is illegible.

selections, but I recommend it for your perusal also. It seems to me that it is a very ably edited paper. I have been receiving it regularly for the last twelve months, and each cursory glance through [it] made me think the more highly of it. You will see the manner in which news are condensed and given in its columns. I think that the language also is very good. I used to send it to the Indian Public Library directly, but, this time, there are so many things of importance in it that I send it for *Indian Opinion* use first, and then, if it is not cut about, you can send it to the library. Directions about taking some portions of it are given in my letter to Harilal.

Do you want me to write to D. Ebrahim Ismail regarding the fifty copies? For the present, as I have already suggested, even at the risk of having a few copies left unsold, it will be better to print extra copies, because one never knows when there will be a good demand, which we ought to be in a position to meet.

I have already suggested to you that you should read the *Islam Gazette* carefully, so that we may not duplicate the information. I remind you again, because I put that paper, also, in [as] fairly edited, though for condensation and choice of matter, it cannot stand comparison with the *Jaina*.

I am glad both the babies[1] and their mothers are progressing.[2]

Please read my letter to Mr. West, wherein I have written about inviting Omar Sheth. We should give him [a send-off] in the same style as we had given Rustomji Sheth.[3]

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: S.N. 4738

351. COLONIAL CONFERENCE AND INDIANS

Lord Milner has written an article about the Colonial Conference from which we publish elsewhere an extract relating to Indians. It is clear from this that there is commotion everywhere over the hardships of Indians in South Africa. To Lord Milner's way of thinking, India is more valuable than the Colonies, and if ever a

[1] Sons of Anandlal Gandhi and Chhaganlal Gandhi
[2] The following paragraph is translated from Gujarati.
[3] For an account of the farewell to Omar Haji Amod Zhaveri, *vide* 11-5-1907.

question arose as to whether the British should lose the Colonies or India, they would decide to give up the Colonies rather than India. But it is in our hands to decide when such an eventuality should arise. If we could rid ourselves of all our shortcomings, then such a situation can be said already to exist. So long as the officials can persuade [the British people] that we shall put up with any amount of suffering, they will believe in the Colonies and the burden on the Indian people will increase. This is the way of the world. The rich grow richer, the poor poorer. The burden on those who carry it increases and those who do not carry any go unscathed. The moral is that we have to let the Government know that we in the Colony will not stand any more burden.

Lord Milner also adds that India is vital to the entire English nation as well as the Colonies. Its value is immeasurable. Why should it not be so? Her revenues total £44 million (a million = 10 lakhs). Out of this £22 million are spent on the military depart-ment, that is, a major portion of this amount is spent in paying the salaries of the British soldiers and buying British goods. A third part of the £44 million, that is, about£15 million goes straight to England. Only the balance remains in India. This means that in the partnership between the British and the Indians 83 per cent. of the profit goes to the British and 17 per cent. to the Indians, but the entire capital comes from the Indians. Such a partnership is evidently advantageous to the British. Let us now turn to the Colonies. Here, all the capital is provided by the British but the profit is consumed by the Colonies. If anyone asks the reason of this one-sided justice, the only reply is that the Colonies being strong have the lion's share. They can stand up to England. If we become as strong as they, we too shall get justice. A closed mouth catches no flies; that is the policy of the British. But speaking does not mean mere shouting. It must be accompanied by kicking. The way we can kick in South Africa or in India is to go to gaol. If we do not help in the oppression that is being perpetrated on us, we shall be free. It is only when the axe is fitted with a wooden handle that it can cut wood.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-4-1907

352. MALARIA AROUND DURBAN[1]

Malaria is still raging among Indians. To deal with this, a committee has been formed with Dr. Nanji as Chairman and is being assisted by Indians. The daily average of patients is expected to be a hundred, and the daily expenditure £4, that is, less than a shilling per head. In view of the fact that, in addition to medicine, soup and other articles will have to be supplied to some of the patients, the expenditure of £4 a day cannot be considered excessive. It is necessary that the leaders help in this work sincerely. If requisite efforts are made, we are sure the disease can be wiped out in a short time.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-4-1907

353. PURITY OF THOUGHT

WHAT TRUE PATRIOTISM IS

There is far too much of self-centredness or selfishness in India today. Instead we should have concern for the nation, that is to say, be patriotic. But since we are out to improve existing conditions, we should bear in mind that concern for national interest does not imply hatred of others. Before we can hate others, we should get tothe stage of being able to safeguard our national interest. There is hardly any immediate fear therefore of our hating foreign countries. However, what Sir William Wedderburn has written on the subject is worth reading and reflecting on. We give below a summary of his article in *The Indian Review*.

> There are some people in India today who believe that they should not approach the British Government for the redress of their grievances, for they fear that, if by any chance the British do redress their grievances, it will tighten their hold over the country, which will endanger our patriotism. This is a mistaken idea. Those who offer such advice seek to take upon their heads the sins of the Englishmen, who, priding themselves upon the colour of their skin, oppress Indians. This [idea] is moreover

[1] *Vide* "Malaria and Duty of Indians", 23-3-1907 and "Meeting of Natal Indian Congress", 8-4-1907.

opposed to the movement afoot all over the world for peace and amity among mankind. Even if one replaced self-interest by the national interest, one would violate the highest morality. If a man wants to become virtuous and remain so, he will keep the highest morality in mind. And though he may not be able to act up to it, he must always aim high. He whose aim is not true will never hit his target. We should always try to climb higher in spite of our shortcomings. And this applies as much to a group or a community as to an individual Again, it applies with added force to India for, at present, she is considering what policy, what standard of conduct, she should adopt. To serve one's own interest is low indeed; to serve the interest of the nation is to rise a step higher. He who gives up his life for his nation is considered a great man; but when the interest of the world at large is made to suffer in the nation's interest, then [serving] the latter must be considered mean and degrading. If we wish to see peace and goodwill established throughout the world, we should remember that our personal and national interests are served by the well-being of the whole world. The Indian people have suffered a lot during the last few years because Englishmen who pride themselves on their patriotism pursued only their self-interest. Do Indian leaders wish to imitate these selfish English people? Do they hate the sinners but love the sin? They should not become the dupes of this temptation. The real enemies of freedom and prosperity are the autocratic and tyrannical powers; not the differences of race or colour. Though the Russians have their own government, it is oppressive and is as bad as that of India. The remedy for such a situation is the getting together of good and altruistic people, wherever they be in the world. It is therefore necessary to bring together the English reformers who are strong and Indian reformers who are weak. With the relations that prevail at present between England and India, such a meeting can easily be brought about. But the relations between the two countries have to be placed on a foundation of justice. The idea that the British are the masters and the Indians the servants must go. If this happens, England and India can stay together, befriend the world and work for the good of mankind.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-4-1907

354. FRENCH INDIA

Our readers may be aware that at one time the French also tried to establish their rule in India. They have held three bases in India since then, [together] known as French India. They are Chandranagore, Pondicherry and Calicut[1]. It is often said that the French have a very sympathetic attitude towards Indians. An example of this was seen recently when the Governor of Pondicherry addressed the following letter to the Indians there:

> Citizens, I shall soon be there to see you and your country. I shall inspect your farms and bunds and hear your petitions. You may come to me with full confidence. A representative of the Republic is bound to regard all [citizens] as equals and there is only one thing between us, viz., the laws. I will give you whatever [relief] I can under those laws; and Ishall explain their limitations to you quite clearly. Please do not ask me unnecessary or frivolous questions, for the time lost in answering them can be better used to solve more important problems.
>
> You are engaged in your agricultural work. I have also many jobs to attend to. So we have no time to meet in a grand hall and receive garlands of roses and jasmines. Believe me when I say that I shall come to see you without pomp or show. And I shall be glad if I meet you in simplicity. If I meet you while you are at work, I shall get to know you the better and be able to see for myself and redress your grievances.

How can a people which has such officials be unhappy?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-4-1907

355. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

CHINESE PETITION ON ASIATIC BILL

In reply to the Chinese Association's letter about the suggestions made by the Indian community, Mr. Smuts has written saying that the Government has not agreed, and cannot agree, to them. On

[1] Mahe is evidently meant.

receipt of this reply, it is learnt, the Chinese have sent a cable to their Ambassador in England. The Chinese too are quite determined. The Secretary of the Chinese Association told me that, if the law received Royal assent, they too would go to gaol.

COMMITTEE'S CABLE

To the last cable sent by the Association to the British Committee, a reply has been received It says that efforts are being made to see General Botha; a strong communication has been addressed to Lord Elgin; and a meeting of the Members of the House of Commons will take Place on Wednesday. This reply was received on Thursday the 18th. A cable in *The Rand Daily Mail* of Saturday the 20th says that General Botha has agreed to meet the Committee. This is the news received to date.

WHAT WILL BE OUTCOME?

Because of the foregoing and the Committee's letter, there is reason to believe that the Bill will receive assent. If this happens, it is clear that gaol-going will be the only remedy left. I hear, the gaol-going resolution was once being discussed in the presence of a white official, and he laughed and said, "I don't at all believe, the Indian community will act up to such resolutions." This rem-ark should be taken very seriously. There is no doubt at all that the Indian community has no reputation for bravery and that is why the whites dare to pass any laws they like with impunity. If the Bill becomes law and we give up the idea of gaol-going, the Indian comm-unity, we may take it, is doomed for ever.

The white official's derisive laugh shows that, if the whites had taken our gaol-going resolution seriously, they would never have introduced the Bill again. Now is the time to prove that we mean what we say. We have read about the boy who used to cry "wolf". People would rush to his help and, finding no wolf, go back irritated. When a wolf did appear, however much the boy shouted, his neighbours took it for a joke, refused to go to his help, and the boy was killed. It is now absolutely necessary to show that our cries are genuine.

SOME DOUBTS CLARIFIED

Though great efforts are being made to prevent the Bill becoming law, we have to be prepared on the assumption that it will

be passed. Questions have been asked from many quarters. I give below a clarification of the important questions raised.

It has to be borne in mind that the whole struggle is on behalf of those who hold genuine permits, and those who are not thus equipped should therefore certainly leave the Transvaal. The pre-war residents and others, who have come after the war but hold genuine permits, have to put up a fight. Nobody can do the boys any harm. This point clarified, the important thing to understand is how the struggle is to be waged. In this regard we would say [the following]:

1. It is improbable that all the persons [who do not take out permits] will be sent to gaol or that they will all be taken to gaol at once.

2. After the law is passed, an order will be published requiring permits to be renewed within a specified period.

3. No Indian should get his permit renewed within that period.

4. At the expiry of the period, the Government can arrest any person, if they choose, for residing in the Transvaal without a permit.

5. It cannot be said for certain who will be arrested and where.

6. Suppose, a poor Indian is arrested. If he holds a lawful permit, Mr. Gandhi, as he declared last September, will defend him in the court free of charge.

7. At the time Mr. Gandhi himself will say that he had advised the entire community not to take out permits as required by the new law but instead to go to gaol in all humility, and that was why his client had not taken out a fresh permit.

8. When the counsel himself says this, it is possible that the defaulter may be set free and the counsel arrested. That is, Mr. Gandhi will be arrested and his client let off. At that time, a similar deposition will! if possible, be made on behalf of the Association also.

9. However, it is possible that the arrested person may himself be sentenced. In that case, the first punishment may be that he will be asked to leave the Colony within a specified time.

10. At the expiry of the time-limit, the person will be re-arrested and sentenced to fine or imprisonment for disobeying the court's order.

11. As the person concerned will refuse to pay the fine, he will have to go to gaol.

12. If many persons are thus prosecuted and all of them go to gaol, the chances are that they will be soon released and the law amended

suitably.

13. It is possible that, if such a person does not leave the Colony after being released from gaol, he will be sent back to gaol.

14. The wife and children of a person so going to gaol will, if necessary, be maintained on subscriptions from the public.

This, in brief, is likely to be the position. In fact, the step [proposed] is not at all dangerous. AS shopkeepers and hawkers will have taken out their licences for the whole year, they will have no difficulty in carrying on their business. A shopkeeper can entrust his shop to any other person and himself enjoy life in gaol. For hawkers there will be no difficulty at all. I know from experience that many of them have been living such a miserable life that they will be much better off in gaol. There is no disgrace attached to going to gaol on this occasion; on the contrary, it will positively add to one's prestige. There is no need, therefore, for anyone to take fright or lose courage. As I said in an earlier letter[1], if anyone has any questions to ask in this matter, he should address them directly to the Editor, P.O. Box No. 6522, Johannesburg, so that the replies can be published in these columns. Meanwhile, I would appeal to all Indians to note that this gaol-going is a great adventure, and that no Indian must retract. Else it will be like losing a battle already won.

''HOW BAD THESE INDIANS ARE !''

With reference to the strong criticism of Mr. Chamney's Report made by the editor of this paper in *The Rand Daily Mail* a white from Leydenburg, under the pen-name "Just", has written an unjust letter, in which he says:

> All the seven days in the week are working days for the Indians and they work from sunrise to sunset. On Sundays they write up their account books and hawkers settle their accounts. Others either keep the shop open on holidays blatantly or station a man outside to smuggle customers in. Moreover, Indian merchants in rural areas examine samples brought by agents on Sundays so that the latter too can work all the days in the week. The Indians know nothing about making payments on time. It is the usual practice with them to turn a 90-day credit into one for 150 days. It is not unusual for them to settle a creditor's account by paying him only a part of his dues. There are countless

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 13-4-1907.

insolvent Indians carrying on business in their own names or in those of their relatives. The intelligence they show in the use of pleas while purchasing goods [on credit] is equalled only by the denseness they feign in explaining away their insolvency. Ninety-five percent of all Indian trade is corrupt. An Indian will not lose a customer and will sell him goods even at a loss, for the loss is to be suffered not by him, but by his creditor. Traders who deal with such Indians are of course no less to blame. Only if, follo-wing the example of the Orange River Colony, the Transvaal too closes down Indian shops with or without compensation, will clean trade be possible for European traders in towns such as Standerton, Heidelberg, Ermilom and Klerksdorp.

Referring to this letter, the editor of *The [Rand Daily] Mail* says that, if what "Just" says is all true, one fails to see how so many Europeans trade with Indians.

Thus the letter by "Just" has already been answered. But while some of his criticism is unduly exaggerated, it will only be fitting that we admit the force of much of it. We work day and night, do not rest even on Sundays, fail to keep promises and settle accounts by making only part-payments to creditors. There is no doubt we should effect improvements in these four matters. We need an innate sense of honour, and, as His Majesty the Amir advised, it is essential for us to have western education.[1] There are nowadays any number of associat-ions. If a well-known merchant founds an "Association for the Reform of the Trading Class" and brings about the much-needed reforms, many of our disabilities will disappear and the stringent licence regulations will also go.

DIVINE WRATH

These days the tram service in Johannesburg often becomes dislocated. Hardly a day passes without a break-down. There can be two reasons for this. The Indian community may persuade itself that it results from God's wrath on the municipality which prohibits Coloured persons from travelling by these trams. Another reason may be that those entrusted with the installation of electric motors have, for the sake of money, cheated and not done their work according to the contract.

[1] *Vide* "His Majesty Amir Habibullah at Aligarh College", 2-3-1907.

INDIAN ISSUE AT COLONIAL CONFERENCE

According to a cable received from England today, Mr. Morley has said that the Indian issue will be raised at the Conference.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-4-1907

356. "AL ISLAM"

The first issue of *Al Islam* was published on the 19th. Its proprietor is Mr. Osman Ahmed Effendi of whom we have written often. The journal will be issued weekly on Fridays. Its annual subscription is 12s for Durban, 12s 6d for other parts of the Colony and 17s 6d for places outside the Colony. The first issue has two very good photographs, one of King-Emperor Edward and the other of His Majesty the Sultan [of Turkey]. We wish *Al Islam* a long life.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-4-1907

357. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

[*April 28, 1907*]

REGISTRATION LAW

The Rand Daily Mail has—for the present at any rate—come to the rescue of Indians. Two leading articles appeared during the last week. Commenting upon Lord Milner's article in the *National Review*, *The Rand Daily Mail* pointed out that the Colonies could not carry on without the other parts of the British Empire. For example, the trade of New South Wales in Australia with India is valued at £1 million a year. Its trade with Ceylon is even larger. Its exports to India exceed her exports to New Zealand and her exports to Ceylon are larger than those to South Africa. The article shows that the Colonies cannot do without India. The liberation of India will come about as soon as Indians wake up and become conscious of their rights. As far as the Transvaal is concerned, the remedy lies in our own hands: it is to go to gaol if the registration law is passed.

The second article in *The Rand Daily Mail* has greater relevance to the registration law than the first one. The writer says that the

present Asiatic Office seems to serve no purpose. Its report shows that the Office has proved a failure. Though it has several clerks, inspectors and liveried peons, Indians can enter without permits. Though over £4,000 are paid by it every year on account of salaries, it is said that all the power is concentrated in the hands of a single Eurasian clerk. If this is so, one cannot see the point of spending £4,000 on the Asiatic Office; it would be better to entrust everything to that clerk. In fact, the permit problem is one of adequate police vigilance, not of enacting a new law.

The Rand Daily Mail has thus strongly criticised and roundly condemned the Asiatic Office. It would appear then that the Office is viewed' with disfavour by others as well.

MEETING IN ENGLAND

A cable received here states that the meeting[1] of the Members of the House of Commons took place on Wednesday, the 24th. Sir Henry Cotton took the chair. Mr. Cox and other Members spoke. It was decided to have interviews with Mr. Morley and General Botha. I am writing this on Sunday. More news is expected on Tuesday.

ASIATIC BAZAAR

The authority to control Asiatic Bazaars or Locations has been vested in the respective municipalities. For the present this has little significance, as there exists no law compelling Indians to go to Locations. But it should be remembered that, if the Indian community submits to the new law, another law will be passed immediately forcing Indians to Locations, and then the municipal authority will prove very troublesome.

MEETING OF SOUTH AFRICAN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

The twelfth annual meeting of the Chambers of Commerce of South Africa took place on the 24th at Pretoria, when Mr. Mackintosh of Port Elizabeth presided. Mr. Prady of Germiston moved a resolution to the effect that Asiatics should be prevented from coming [into the Colony] and their trade stopped. He said in his speech that great harm was done by Indian trade as the whites could not compete with Indian traders. The whites had struggled hard in South Africa for a hundred years. How could Indians be allowed to oust them?

[1] Vide "Johannesburg Letter", 27-4-1907.

Conditions in Standerton, Heidelberg, Potchefstroom and other places had deteriorated very much. If the influx of Indians could not be stopped forthwith, he said, they should be so heavily taxed that they could not afford to stay on. According to him, it would be better to drive out the existing traders, even after paying them compensation, if necessary.

Mr. Hobson of Maseru, who supported him, said that Indian traders had penetrated far into Basutoland and had captured most of the trade. However, according to him, Mr. Prady's resolution for winding up Indian business immediately was too drastic.

Sir William Van Hulsteyn said that all South Africa was opposed to Indians. But it was not proper to drive them out all at once or to discontinue their trade; it would be better to insist on their carrying on business in Bazaars only. The question of immigration did not concern the Chambers of Commerce, and hence they could not interfere in the matter. He moved an amendment to the effect that it was necessary immediately to frame laws on Asiatic trade for the whole of South Africa.

Mr. Quinn supported the amendment. Mr. Henderson of Natal said that the Indian merchants had brought ruin to Natal. In Ladysmith and other places the entire trade had passed into their hands. Like locusts they devoured Natal. They caused harm to the Kaffirs also for the latter were powerless against them.

Mr. Jagger of Cape Town said that he too was opposed to Indians, but that sudden and complete prohibition was a difficult task. The Imperial Government would never assent to such laws. He therefore moved that, since the presence of the Indian community was detrimental to [the interests of] South Africa, immediate legisla-tion was necessary to restrict their immigration and trade.

Mr. Ireland of Zoutpansburg said that Mr. Prady's resolution went too far. It was certainly necessary to adopt quick measures in the matter. The Asiatics were like the plague. Mr. Forest said that he shuddered to think of the number of Indians in Natal. Mr. Chappel of Pretoria supported the amendment. Mr. Burke suggested to Mr. Prady that he ought to withdraw his resolution so that the amendment, being unanimously passed, would carry due weight. Mr. Prady withdrew his resolution and the amended resolution was unanimously carried.

Then a discussion took place on the subject of the Dealers'

Licenses Act. It was resolved that all Colonies should pass laws similar to that in force in the Cape, with local variations as necessary.

"AKIKO" OF HASANMIAN'S SON

A son has been born to Sheth Hasanmian, a partner of the firm of Sheth Mahomed Cassim Camroodeen. *The akiko* ceremony took place on Sunday, when a grand feast was given. Guests came from far and near and a lavish dinner was cooked for nearly 500 persons. Mr. Abdul Kadir had specially come from Durban for the occasion; so had Mr. Haji Habib from Pretoria. The occasion was celebrated with great *eclat.*

Some [of our readers] may not know what *akiko* is. It is the ceremonial shaving of the head of the new-born child on the seventh day. According to their wealth and position, parents set aside gold, silver or copper equal in weight to the hair, and the value of the metal is spent on the feast.

ATTACK ON NEW CLARE WASHERMEN

A strong communication appears in *The Sunday Times* on the subject of washing places at New Clare. The writer says that the wholeland at New Clare stinks with putrid air. Indian washermen, according to him, have defiled the washing places; the water is dirty and stinks, so that clothes washed in it are as good as not washed at all. The writer is afraid that some day an epidemic is bound to break out because of clothes washed in that water. The Indian washermen have to be careful about this. The washing place should be drained each time and filled again with clean water. If this is not done, there is every fear of the washermen losing their livelihood, as the writer has suggested that the municipality should take effective measures.

"COOLIE MERCHANTS"

Under the above heading, a contributor has written bitterly for the Sunday Times. He alleges that it is only the Kaffirs and Indian hawkers who trade in gold pilfered from mines. It is only thus that they get rich. They melt the gold so stolen, make bracelets or armlets out of them and wear them on their persons. The detectives know this, but they do not, and sometimes cannot, arrest the offenders. The writer is certain of this, but good Indians and their English friends are not aware of this. He has, however, no doubt that Indians are carrying on smuggling on a huge scale.

No one knows how much of this is true. But it is necessary that those Indians who are in this business of smuggling should take the hint.

INCITEMENT BY "THE STAR"

The Star has reproduced in full Mr. Ritch's letter published in *The Morning Post* with its own comments. It says that the Indian community is vigilant and its friends in England are very powerful. There are no dissensions among Indians and they work well. They are very influential and they do not pause for breath even for a moment. The Imperial Government is greatly afraid of them. In the circumstances, says *The Star*, it will not be surprising if the new Bill is refused assent. The whites are sitting back without being interested in the Ordinance. *The Star*, therefore, suggests that the whites should hold big meetings and take steps to see that the Ordinance was passed. Otherwise Indian infiltration would increase to the detriment of the whites.

Clearly the whites are afraid that the law may not be approved. At this juncture it is necessary for us to exert all our strength. If this is done, a victory [for us] even now would be nothing surprising. . But I am wrong. Those who have accepted the gaol-going resolution have already won. For them there is victory either way.

DEPUTATION TO GENERAL BOTHA

A cable in *The Rand Daily Mail* indicates that a deputation on the subject of the Asiatic Registration Act, led by Lord Ampthill, has already met General Botha. The deputation included Sir Muncherji, Sir Henry Cotton, Mr. Harold Cox, Mr. Justice Ameer Ali, Mr. Ritch and others. Lord Ampthill said that no laws which humiliated the Indian community should be introduced. Indians, who are already in the Transvaal, should be enabled to live there honourably. In his reply General Botha said that there was no intention whatever of humiliating Indians, and that he would use his influence as practicable to preserve their honour. The members of the deputation told the Press representatives that General Botha's reply was satisfactory.

HAJI OJER ALLY

Mr. Haji Ojer Ally writes from Cape Town to say that the Cape Immigration Officer will not henceforth insist on a photograph being affixed to the pass. Mr. Ally saw Mr. Powell, the editor of *The Argus*,

who has promised to help. Mr. Ally is trying to obtain £50 from the Cape Association for the London Committee.

INDIANS GOING TO LOBITO BAY[1]

The local agent of the employer informs me that all the Natal Indians have reached Lobito Bay safely. The climate in that part of Lobito Bay is very good.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-5-1907

358. MR. GANDHI'S PLEDGE

JOHANNESBURG,
April 30, 1907

TO

THE EDITOR
INDIAN OPINION

SIR,

Many of our brethren have written to me to say that they will go to gaol in pursuance of the September Resolution, if the Registration Act of the Transvaal is passed. Every one of them deserves to be congratulated. From some of the letters, I find that a few are annoyed at the absence of such letters from leaders. Their not having written is, I am sure, no reason for doubting them. I do not think that they will come forward to take out the compulsory registers.

However, lest I should be guilty of this sin of omission, I hereby declare my Pledge that, should the new law come into force, I will never take out a permit or register under the law but will go to goal; and even if I am the only one left who has not taken a permit, my pledge shall stand for the following reasons:

1. I consider it a humiliation to submit to this law, and I prefer to go to gaol rather than submit to such humiliation;
2. I believe that my country is dearer to me than my person;
3. if, after having announced the September Resolution to the world, the Indian community submits to the law, it will lose everything;
4. I believe that prominent men who have been helping our cause in England rely upon the Fourth Resolution; if we shrink back, we shall

[1] *Vide* "Indians Going to Lobito Bay", 30-3-1907.

not only bring dishonour on them but forfeit their help for ever;

5. the remedy of gaol-going cannot be applied against other laws, but for this Act, it is an infallible remedy and it can be adopted by everyone, whether small or great;

6. if I now retract, I shall be deemed unfit to serve the Indian community;

7. I believe that Indians will rise in public esteem if all of them remain staunch in not submitting to the law, and that, moreover, it will evoke sympathy in India also for the cause of the Transvaal Indians.

Many other reasons can be adduced. In the end I appeal to every Transvaal Indian not to miss this occasion and not to turn back. I beg the Indians of Natal, the Cape and Delagoa Bay to encourage us, the Transvaal people, and render help when the need arises.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-5-1907

359. LETTER TO "THE STAR"[1]

BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG
April 30, 1907

TO
THE EDITOR
THE STAR
[JOHANNESBURG]

SIR,

You have raised the bogey of the "Indian Peril" and based it on Mr. Ritch's able letter to *The Morning Post*. Fortunately for the country, you have evidently mis-read Mr. Ritch's letter and ascribed to him a demand not made by him for political rights on behalf of British Indians. If you will be good enough to re-read the letter, you will find that instead of claiming any such rights, Mr. Ritch has

[1] This was in reply to an article in *The Star*, 29-4-1907.

repudiated the claim more than once. He says:

> In deference to the demand of the white colonist for protection against an unrestricted influx of Asiatics, the qualifications imposed by an Immigration Restriction Law, upon an educational basis, are assented to. He (the Indian) seeks no political power, and admits the right of municipalities to control the issuing of trading licences, with power of appeal to the judicial tribunals of the Colony against inequitable administration.

If words have any meaning, you have, in the above sentences in the letter you have printed, a complete denial of the charge made against the community.

The ground, therefore, being cleared as to the allegation of the British Indian wanting to have political power in South Africa, with your permission, I would venture to, draw your attention to the fact that you are creating animosity between two communities living under the same flag without the slightest occasion, and, in support of my statement, I ask you to read the compromise offered by the British Indian Association, whereby everything that will be done by the Registration Act can be done immediately and without Imperial sanction being necessary. Greater identification is the cry raised. British Indians have themselves offered to exchange their lawful documents for those bearing sufficient identification particulars as may be mutually agreed upon. Not that the present documents do not contain enough details to identify the holders. The compromise has been offered to soothe the agitated mind of the colonist. Moreover, the compromise, strange as it may appear, goes further than the Asiatic Act itself, in that the former includes the taking out of permits by minors who have reached the age of discretion, the same to be decided by the Colonial Secretary.

You may ask why, if the offer is sincere, should there be any fuss about the Act. The answer is obvious. British Indians do not wish to be classed as criminals, as they undoubtedly are by the Act. They repudiate totally the suggestion that there is any illegal influx on a wholesale scale, or that there is any countenance of such influx on the part of the leaders of the community. Repressive legislation is required when those to whom it applies are not compliant and do not do voluntarily what is asked of them. British Indians have always claimed to be law-abiding, and,therefore, object to the class legislation which is a denial of the claim. You may call this sentiment, if you will. Still, it is one which is very real for the community I have the honour to represent, and it is hardly necessary for me to give you illustrations of sentiment having ruled men's actions from the time of Adam.

The suggested compromise can cost little. If there is any doubt as to its effectiveness, why not give it a trial while the Act isconsidered? Will it not be better and more Imperialistic for you to advocate the adoption of the compromise than unnecessarily to inflame the populace against harmless subjects of the Crown?

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Star, 30-4-1907

360. LETTER TO RAND PIONEERS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before May 2, 1907][2]

[SIR,]

In connection with the action proposed to be taken by the Rand Pioneers and the Transvaal Municipal Association regarding the Asiatic Registration Act, I venture, on behalf of my Association, to draw your Committee's attention to the compromise offered by the British Indians, and to the fact that it completely meets every requirement of the Registration Act and hastens the fulfilment of the object your Committee has in view.

My Association has always held the opinion that, as a matter of fact, there is very little difference between what is required by the white colonists and what has been accepted by British Indians. The latter ask for no political rights and, as against the repeal of Law 3 of 1885, they consent to municipal control, subject to review by the Supreme Court, over trading licences, and to restriction on immigration along the Natal or the Cape basis.

My Association is firmly of opinion that much of the agita-tion is due entirely to a misunderstanding of the mutual position.

[1] This letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was addressed to the Rand Pioneers and the Transvaal Municipal Association, who had announced their intention of agitating in order to bring about the early enforcement of the Asiatic Registration Act.

[2] The letter, undated and unsigned, was published in The Rand Daily Mail, 2-5-1907.

My Association, therefore, ventures to suggest that, if your Committee will be prepared to meet a deputation of my Association, a great deal of friction can be removed and a solution of the que-stion can be locally arrived at without the weaker party having to seek Imperial protection.

My Association has no doubt that your Committee is not actuated by any vindictive motives in its agitation my Association for consultation will be accepted in the spirit in against Coloured people. It is, therefore, hoped that the suggestion made by which it is offered. If your Committee accepts the proposal, any date after the 8th instant will suit my Association.[1]

[ACTING CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION]

Indian Opinion, 4-5-1907

361. LETTER TO "THE STAR"[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,
After May 2, 1907]

[TO
THE EDITOR
THE STAR
JOHANNESBURG

SIR,]

May I once more take the liberty of correcting you? I fear you have not yet understood the compromise. The cry is not "Trust the Indians", as you have put it. The cry is trust the Indians in the interim, and see whether the trust is not justified. Under the Registration Act, all Indians have to be compulsorily registered. Under the Indian offer they can be voluntarily registered, and that now. But, supposing that the lowest class of Indians, as you have been pleased to classify some Indians, who enter the Colony, do not accept the proposal of the

[1] This meeting, however, did not take place; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 11-5-1907

[2] After addressing a letter to The Star, on April 30, "Letter to *The Star*", 30-4-1907, Gandhiji called on the editor of the paper and had a discussion with him. The Star commented again on the subject. The above was Gandhiji's reply. *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 11-5-1907.

British Indian Association, the key to the situation is in the hands of the Government. A bill can then be passed cancelling all permits save those issued under the compromise, unless they are exchanged within a certain time. The law will then reach the culprits and leave the innocent free. The Act at present punishes the vast majority of the innocent, self-respecting people, for the sake of the guilty few. You dismiss the objections of the Indian community by describing them as super sensitive. You dismiss Lord Ampthill and his friends equally unceremoniously by ascribing to them what you, I suppose, would call the "Oriental taint", and depriving them of the possession of a spirit of wider Imperialism. I can only remind you that Lord Milner, whom you will not classify with Lord Ampthill, in his article in *The National Review*, in reminding the colonists of wider Imperialism, places before them their responsibilities to British dependencies, and especially British India.

[I am, etc.,.

M. K. GANDHI]

Indian Opinion, 11-5-1907

362. KLERKSDORP INDIANS AND SMUTS

We publish elsewhere a summary of the address presented to Mr. Smuts, Acting Prime Minister of the Transvaal, by the Klerksdorp Indians, and of his reply. It is clear from the reply that Mr. Smuts himself fears that his law, even if assented to, will be rendered ineffective if the Indian community sticks to the resolution on gaol-going. He therefore tries to persuade everyone that the Association's agitation against the Act is pointless. This much even Mr. Smuts seems to admit, that the law punishes, as it were, the whole Indian community just because there have been a few fresh cases of infiltration into the Transvaal. He adds that it may happen for a time that the police will question people in every nook and corner. Only Mr. Smuts can tell what is meant by "for a time". There is absolutely no doubt that the Indian community should under no circumstances submit to such a law Mr. Smuts's speech should be treated as a provocation to Indians. He seems to hold that the Indian community can be ill-treated with impunity. It looks as if it will now get a chance to open his eyes [to the truth].

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-5-1907

363. CAPE INDIANS

The Immigration Act of the Cape is so complicated that its implications cannot be realized just yet, but by and by the adverse effects will follow. One clause is especially mischievous: if any Indian leaves the Cape without a permit, his right to return will lapse. This means that, if 3 leading Indian businessman of the Cape leaves without the annual permit, he will not be able to return. Even if his business in the Cape continues and his family stays on there, that will not help him. We do not mean to suggest that the law will in fact hit the businessman so hard, but such are the implications of the Act. The result will be that all poor Indians will have to leave the Cape. And if a few Indians stay behind, what influence can they have? The Indian businessmen in the Cape should heed this warning and see to it that no Indian leaves the Cape without a permit. We hope that those Cape Indians who happen to read this will bring it to the notice of the others and explain it to them.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-5-1907

364. RIOTS IN THE PUNJAB

Cables giving startling news have been published in *The Rand Daily Mail* and *The Leader* of Johannesburg. We give their substance below:

> The people in the Punjab appear to be preparing for a revolt. This is the first upheaval of the kind seen in India after 1857. The Native Press has been inciting the people both openly and secretly. It was not right that [the editor of] the *Punjabi* should have been prosecuted. What only a few men knew is now known to the whole of India. The journal has become more powerful. People have ceased to be afraid of the repressive measures of the Government. Similar consequences followed the prosecution of the [editors of] Bombay papers. The officials have become panicky. In the Punjab, judges have enlisted themselves as volunteers and taken up arms. In the circumstances, the idea of staging a 'siege of Delhi' was abandoned. But

people's minds do not yet seem to have been set at rest.

So go on the cables. It is our request that all of us should pray to Khuda or Ishwar for the good of India. The present is a critical time for India as indeed it is for us here in South Africa. We have to do our duty here. If ever manliness and courage were needed in the country's cause, it is now.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-5-1907

365. INTERVIEW TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"

[*May 7, 1907*]

Mr. M. K. Gandhi was yesterday interviewed by a Mercury representative concerning the suggestion put forward by Mr. Lionel Curtis in *The Times*—a reference to which was contained in our telegraphic news columns on Monday—that the tropical possessions of Great Britain should be reserved for Indian colonization. Mr. Gandhi rejects the proposal.

As long as Indians have domicile rights in the Colonies, whether in South Africa or elsewhere, Mr. Gandhi objects, such a suggestion is not practicable, and would certainly not be acceptable to the British Indians. As he has so often asserted, the entire motive which is animating the cause he has taken up on behalf of the South African Asiatic is to protect what he designates the Indians' "vested rights" in this country; and to deprive them of the title of domicile, which many of them now possess, would, of course, in his view, be to subvert those vested rights. Mr. Gandhi said that the rights of domicile were the main strength of the Indians' position, and he assented to the suggestion that they intended to make the most of it.

It was pointed out to Mr. Gandhi that the proposal seemed to be that the tropical Colonies should be reserved for immigration of the future, not necessarily contemplating the removal of Indians already possessing domicile rights, and he was asked what his view of that idea would be.

Mr, Gandhi denied that there was any pressure of population in India leading to the necessity of emigration, and pointed to the fact that the Indians who were brought over as indentured labourers did not offer themselves, but had to be persuaded to come —that, moreover, recruiting was becoming increasingly difficult. The same applied to the recruiting for other places in which Indian labour was wanted, and he advanced this to show that India had no real surplus population, and needed no outlet. The idea of reserving any territory outside India at all for exclusive colonization by Indians

was therefore a gratuitous and unnecessary one. He did not believe that the resources of India had become too exhausted to support its people or the natural increase of its population. There was room for what he called "internal" emigration within India itself, but no need of any territorial provision outside.

He had often been asked, Mr. Gandhi proceeded, why, if this were so, Indians were found emigrating in such numbers to South Africa. The explanation was that South Africa had itself made the mischief by adopting the practice of indentured immigration—a system which, Mr. Gandhi said, nearly every Indian in South Africa would sign a petition against, and ask that it should cease.

[REPORTER:] But the trouble arises, Mr. Gandhi, not so much from the indentured Indian as from the free merchant class, and from whom the demand for equal trading rights mostly comes.

[GANDHIJI:] The Indian merchant follows the other Indians, to whom he looks for his business. If the indentured man was not here, the merchant would not be here. As it is, many of the better-class Indian merchants, who have large interests, remain in their own country, where they have scope for their business, and where every Indian tradesman would have scope if he preferred to stay instead of coming to the Colonies. As long as there remain opportunities for business among his own countrymen, there the Indian merchant will be found.

. . .Mr. Gandhi instanced the case of Zanzibar. There was, in fact, no need to reserve tropical Colonies for Indian occupation, for East Africa was already open.

Mr. Gandhi went on to refer to the Registration Ordinance in the Transvaal, and referred in disappointed terms to the decision of the Imperial Government to allow its sanction to the measure. Its effect was, he said, to place the Transvaal Indian in the position of a ticket-of-leave man. If they were to be dealt with along these lines it was better that the Indians should be undeceived at once. Mr. Gandhi said he foresaw the possibility of a position in which Great Britain would have to decide between losing the Colonies or leasing India, for the people's self- respect was involved, and their existence under such conditions as in the Transvaal would become intolerable. The Indian was perfectly capable of realizing both sides of the question. and, he thought, did so, but the Asiatic problem was not to be solved by measures such as the Transvaal Ordinance. Asked whether he regarded the passing of the Ordinance as a weakening of the Indians' position in South Africa, Mr. Gandhi asserted that it undoubtedly was so, but he believed that the disappointment of their hopes would in the end result advantageously, if the Indians would abide by their resolve to resist. There would be said Mr. Gandhi, no resistance by force, but passive

resistance; and if the Indian people carried out their determination to undergo imprisonment rather than conform to the Ordinance, he thought well enough of the Colonial white to believe that such a demonstration of courage for the sake of a principle would be met with administration and, in the end, sympathy.

The Natal Mercury, 8-5-1907

366. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI [1]

[*Before May 11, 1907*][2]

...Send Kalyandas to outlying places after the work in Durban is over.

Ask Harilal to write most of the letters, but you must sign them. Harilal should do all the work under your supervision. You will be considered the Chief Editor of the Gujarati section, though for the present mere supervision should suffice. If Harilal cannot cope with both proofs, you will yourself have to take up the Gujarati proofs.

However, I would advise you to take on, for the present, as little burden as possible of other work besides account books.

When the books are brought up to date and the balance-sheet drawn up, you...books...

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 6080

367. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[Before *May* 11, 1907][3]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I said nothing about the figures in the balance-sheet you sent me because, as you wrote, the final figures you

[1] Only pages five and six of the letter are available. From the contents, however, it is clear that it was addressed to Chhaganlal Gandhi at Phoenix.

[2] Kalyandas was in Durban on April 23, 1907, doing Phoenix work; (*Vide* "Letter to Kalyandas Mehta", (23-4-1907). This letter was clearly written on or after that date. He left South Africa by the same boat as Omar Haji Amod Zaveri (*Vide* "Kalyandas Jagmohandas [Mehta]", 11-5-1907); this must have been between May 6, when many farewell parties were given in honour of Zaveri, and May 11, when the note on Kalyandas was published *Indian Opinion*.

[3] The letter was evidently written before Kalyandas left South Africa, i.e., before May 11, 1907; *vide* "Kalyandas Jagmohandas [Mehta], 11-5-1907.

were yet to send. Your provisional figures reveal a profit of £ 20! If that is really the position, it seems your going to England will certainly have to be postponed. And now that Kalyandas is leaving, your going is out of the question. We must hope now for something to happen in March next year. Meanwhile, let us see how things develop. You are not afraid of the cold and so we may hope for something in November. Events are moving fast here. It looks as if I would have to go to jail. Very little office work could be done during this month. Much of the day is spent in public work.

Please send me an entire copy of *The Tribune.*

Let me know the names of the more important people among those whose advertisements have been withdrawn. Most probably I shall leave here on the 5th. I am sending some matter today.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Please make a scribbling-pad immediately and send it to me.

If I go there next week, I shall collect it myself. But it should be ready.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 4789

368. WILL INDIANS BE SLAVES?

The Transvaal Act has received [Royal] assent earlier than we expected. The Imperial Government has chosen to take the first step of binding the Indian community with chains. It now remains to be seen whether the community will carry this yoke.

We know of a young student from Japan who once went to a lawyer in Johannesburg for some personal work. As the lawyer could not see him immediately, the student waited outside. Meanwhile, an English official came to meet the lawyer. As he was about to enter the lawyer's office after knocking, the young Japanese held him by the sleeve and said to him spiritedly: "You cannot go in just yet. I have a prior right." Being a gentleman, the officer at once saw the point, and requested the young man's permission to go in first, as he had urgent work. The student was as polite as he had been bold. For, when the official asked his leave, he readily allowed him to go in. This anecdote

should be engraved on the mind of every Indian, for it gives an exact idea of our bond of slavery. The young Japanese did not allow his self-respect to be flouted. When every one in Japan, the rich as well as the poor, came to believe in self-respect, the country became free. She could give Russia a slap in the face, and today Japan's flag flies very high in the world. Though her people wear a yellow skin, Japan enjoys friendship with white England as between equals. In the same way we too need to feel the spirit of self-respect. Having remained in bondage for a long time like a caged parrot, we cannot realize what honour and freedom are Furthermore, like the parrot which is pleased when bound with a golden string and made to perform, we too are elated and blush pink at the thought of our imagined happiness, when our masters, whether white or Coloured, feign affection for us only in order to bind us with the golden thread and make us forget our real condition. To remind us of that condition, this irksome law has been sanctioned. Shall we now obey it and become slaves? Our Johannes burg correspondent says that the regulations under the new law will be lenient and considerate. That is to say, Lord Elgin may bind us with a golden thread. Shall we allow ourselves to be deluded thus? We, for our part, can only reply in the negative to both these questions.

A great deal of effort is required to get this law repealed, and in no case must we turn back. Let us give this matter a little thought. A huge meeting was held in September, and we proclaimed that the Indian community would go to gaol rather than submit to the proposed Act.[1] While doing so, every Indian took an oath in the name of Ishwar or Khuda. Though that law was disallowed, the one now passed is exactly of the same nature. All the arguments that could be advanced against such an act then can be put forward now, and in fact many more. For we have worked hard against it and shouted our protests from house-tops. Moreover, we thought the Bill so objectionable that we raised big subscriptions with which to send the Deputation to England; it cost us £700. In the presence of high officials, the Deputation told Lord Elgin:

> We should also place before Your Lordship one more fact and that is the Fourth Resolution passed by the mass meeting. That Resolution, which was unanimously approved by the

[1] Fourth Resolution; *vide* "The Mass Meeting", 11-9-1906.

meeting in all humility and firmness and affirmed with an oath, said that, if ever the Imperial Government should approve the Act, the Indian community would go to gaol rather than suffer the great indignity inflicted on it by the Act. So deep was the feeling of the community. We have submitted to much suffering till now. But the disgrace of this act is unbearable, and that is why we have travelled six thousand miles to make an appeal to you. With this Act we have reached the utmost limit.

As though this were not enough, and as if there was the slightest doubt in anyone's mind about the gaol-going resolution, the South Africa British Indian Committee was formed, and many prominent men joined it. Now if, under any pretext, the Indian community should cancel the gaol-going resolution, what would be the result? Only that the South Africa British Indian Committee would have become futile. The Deputation's labours would have been in vain. .All the fame that the Indian community has now gained would turn into disgrace. The Government would henceforth put no trust in the Indian community's word. We would be classed with the lowest and meanest. If this should happen, the Imperial Government would give ready assent to all the laws directed against the Indians in South Africa. And in the end those who are not content to live a dog's life or that of a crow will have to leave South Africa. Moreover, if things should come to such a pass, there would be repercussions in India too, and the whole country might look down upon us with well-deserved contempt. Such are the force and the usefulness of the Fourth Resolution, and so serious its implications. It is therefore our earnest hope that the Indian community will not swerve from it. Whether or not all of us are agreed, those who realize how things stand must not fail in their duty.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-5-1907

369. LICENCE CASE IN LADYSMITH

A second appeal has been preferred in this case. The licensing court has decided not to issue the licence. Though this is regrettable, we congratulate the Indian community. For it is only when such blatant injustice is done that we wake up, and also rouse the Imperial

Government. There is no need, however, for any Indian shopkeeper to close down his business. There is so much pressure on our space this time that we cannot consider this matter in detail just now. We intend to do so next week.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-5-1907

370. INDENTURED INDIANS

As a result of the Durban Corporation's decision to reduce the rice ration, the indentured Indians employed by them have struck work, and have got ready to go to gaol. They did this earlier also. On that occasion, the Magistrate was kind. He observed that, even though it was legal to give them maize instead of rice, it would be cruel to insist on the [letter of the] law. He therefore let the men off and advised the Corporation to give them rice as usual, even if it was dearer. The same situation has arisen today, but the Magistrate is Mr. Beans. He has given judgement strictly according to the law and sentenced many workers to a fine of £1 each. We hope Indian lawyers will look into the matter and do something about it.

If we think of the Transvaal Ordinance in this context, we can see that, when laws are found to be harsher, even poor indentured workers can muster enough courage to rise against them and get ready to go to gaol. We have seen from the case of the indentured men that such remedies often secure justice. If indentured labourers can do so much in self-interest, who will deny that the Indian community in the Transvaal ought to do no less?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-5-1907

371. OMAR HABI AMOD ZAVERI

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Elsewhere in this number we publish an account of a meeting[2] held in honour of Mr. Omar Zaveri. Since our readers must be eager to learn about his career, here is a biographical sketch Mr. Omar

[1] *Vide* "Ladysmith Struggle", p. 482.

[2] *Vide* "Farewell to Omar Haji Amod Zaveri", 11-5-1907.

Zaveri was born at Porbunder in 1872. He set out for Africa at the early age of twelve with his brother, the late renowned Mr. Aboobaker Zaveri[1]. While on the ship he began his education, and learnt Gujarati. For four years he studied privately and at the Government School in Durban. His studies were cut short by the death of Aboobaker in 1887. In 1890 he joined the firm of his guardian, Mr. Abdulla Haji Adam, as an apprentice. Then he satisfied, to some extent, his keen desire to learn Arabic and Persian. In 1897 he took part in public activities for the first time and was made Joint Honorary Secretary of the Durban Anjuman [-e-] Islam. Omar was interested in horticulture, and as fruit was scarce in Porbunder, he experimented with fruit-growing as a result of which some fruits are now to be had there in plenty. For six months during 1904, he toured Egypt, Italy, Switzerland, France, England and America and obtained valuable experience.[2] At this time, he had with him a barrister as a tutor-companion. It was meant to be an educational tour.

While in London, he met Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Sir Muncherji Bhownaggree and others, and returned to Durban the same year. He was then made Joint Honorary Secretary of the Natal Indian Congress, along with Mr. Adamji Miankhan. The work he has done since then is well known to the Indian community. His wealth, his servants, his house, his time and his education—all these have been entirely at the disposal of the community. During the Transvaal Deputation's visit to England and again during the agitation against the Dealers' Licenses Act, Mr. Omar Zaveri worked very hard along with Mr. Anglia. Mr. Zaveri also took a leading part in founding the Memon Committee. The Durban Library has received many gifts of books from him and he himself visited it almost daily. Impelled by a kind nature, he has always attempted to bring about private settle-ment of disputes among members of the Indian community. People hold such a high opinion of his integrity that he has had with him a general power of attorney from a number of people. In the course of all this work, Mr. Omar realized the need for further education and intends to become a barrister after passing the Matriculation examina-tion. As an instance of his humility and simplicity, it may be mentioned that he himself teaches his servants and children at home whenever he has the leisure.

[1] Aboobaker Amod Zaveri
[2] *Vide* "A Good Example", 1-10-1904.

Mr. Omar Haji Amod Zaveri possesses all the qualities denoted by his name[1]. He is still young in years. If hispresent ideas keep growing, he is sure to prove himself invaluable in India also.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-5-1907

372. KALYANDAS JAGMOHANDAS [MEHTA]

Another gentleman who, by virtue of his qualities is a *zaveri*—although his name is Kalyandas—has sailed home by the same boat as Mr. Omar Haji Amod Zaveri. Mr. Zaveri's function was to lead, that of Mr. Kalyandas to work silently for a good cause remaining in the background. In years he is still a child, but in our experience we have seldom come across a youth so tender of heart, so scornful of money, so regardless of his own body but at the same time so solicitous of the welfare of others. Johannesburg Indians are aware of the work done by Kalyandas during the terrible outbreak of plague in that city. We do not know of anyone having had occasion to be displeased with him at any time. India's chains would snap this day, if in that country captains like Mr. Omar Haji Amod Zaveri and soldiers like Kalyandas came forward in large numbers. Rarely does one come across heroes who would ceaselessly, and always with a cheerful smile, quietly give themselves over to public service in pursuance of duty, that is, in the name of Khuda, seeking neither money nor honours, and never even creaming of leadership. Kalyandases are rare indeed.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-5-1907

373. FAREWELL TO OMAR HAJI AMOD ZAVERI[2]

Many gentlemen gave parties in honour of the well-known and popular Mr. Omar Haji Amod Zaveri, the Joint Honorary Secretary of

[1] Zaveri means ''jeweller''.

[2] This-was published as a "Special Report for *Indian Opinion*", presumably by Gandhiji, who was present at some of the farewell parties.

the Natal Indian Congress, on the eve of his departure for India [last week]. Finally a meeting of the Natal Indian Congress was held on the evening of the 6th at Dawad Mahomed's Hall in Pyne Street. Those who gave parties to Mr. Zaveri include Mr. Dada Osman, Mr. Ahmed Osman, Mr. Tayob Moosa, Mr. Peeran Mahomed, members of the staff of *Indian Opinion*, Mr. Dada Abdulla, Mr. G. H. Miankhan, Mr. M. C. Anglia, Mr. Mahomed Cassim Camroodeen and Mr. Parsee Rustomjee. At each of these parties the number of invitees ranged from 40 to 100, and to some of them gentlemen from all the Indian communities Hindu, Muslim, Parsi, Christian—were invited. At all these functions the qualities of Mr. Omar Haji Amod Zaveri were extolled in various ways. The hope was expressed that, during his absence [from the Transvaal], Mr. Zaveri might be able to go on the Haj pilgrimage and also realize his desire of becoming a barrister. At one of the functions Mr. Ismail Gora expressed the hope that Mr. Zaveri would take advantage of his visit to Porbunder to resolve the dispute going on there about the Madressa. At the party given by Mr. Peeran Mahomed Mr. Gandhi was present, having come from the Transvaal for the occasion. As the news about the passing of the [Asiatic Registration] Act was received that day, the matter was also discussed at the party. Many speakers pointed out that Mr. Zaveri would be truly honoured if the spirit of patriotism he possessed could be inculcated in Indians, and if all of them supported the Transvaal Indians and exhorted them to adhere to the gaol-going resolution. Mr. Rustomjee had returned from Bombay on the same day on which a party was given at his place. He was much satisfied with the work of Mr. Zaveri who held his general power of attorney during his absence. He said that he felt happy and proud to be present on the occasion. A gold watch, a gold chain and a pencil case were then presented to Mr. Zaveri.

The party by the members of the staff of *Indian Opinion* was given at Phoenix. Twelve gentlemen from Durban, who out of regard for Mr. Zaveri did not mind the inconvenience of a journey to Phoenix, had accepted the invitation. The following address was presented to Mr. Zaveri by members of the staff:

We, the undersigned, representing the staff of *Indian Opinion*, beg to express our thanks to you for the interest you have always taken in our Settlement, and in the political work which this journal is

trying to do for the benefit of British Indians in South Africa.

We trust that you will have a pleasant and safe voyage to India and that, while there, you will not slacken your efforts in trying to alleviate the sufferings and disabilities of your countrymen in the South African Colonies.

We appreciate the interest you have taken in our work at Phoenix during your frequent visits, and we sincerely hope that you will soon return and be amongst us again.

MEETING OF CONGRESS

The hall was tightly packed for the Congress meeting on Monday. It was well decorated, the credit for which goes to Mr. Paul. At this meeting Mr. Dada Osman was elected Joint Secretary in place of Mr. Zaveri.

Before the address was read out, the President, Mr. Dawad Mahomed, made the following speech:

> The primary reason for Mr. Omar Haji Amod Zaveri's popularity is that he is not partial to any community. He regards Hindu, Muslim, Parsi as well as Christian as his brothers. He looks upon his wealth [as something] to be used for the benefit of the community. Wealth that is not put to good use is useless. Mr. Zaveri, having come to feel that the glory of learning is greater than that of riches, has decided to pursue his studies further. If anyone thinks that education is impossible at this age, I would point out that Shaikh Saadi started his studies after the age of forty. Mr. Zaveri has freely used his men for Congress work. [For instance] Mr. Chhabildas rendered very good help [for that body].

ASIATIC ORDINANCE

Speaking on the passing of the Asiatic Act Mr. Dawad Mahomed said:

> I am very sorry indeed about the Act that has been passed in the Transvaal. I shuddered when I read the telegram announcing the passing of the Act. It is very humiliating to us. Every Indian has a stake in opposing it. I have felt very strongly indeed that we should not submit to the law even if we have to lose our entire fortune [by opposing it]. I therefore hope that the Indian community in the Transvaal will firmly oppose the

measure and be prepared to go to gaol, if that becomes necessary. Gaol, if one is sent to it for a cause like this, would be a garden. It adds to one's fame; there is nothing humilia-ting about it. I also hope that no one will have any dealings-with the Permit Office in Durban. If we do not muster adequate strength for opposing this law, the time for our departure will eventually come and bad laws will begin to be enacted in all parts of South Africa.

CONGRESS ADDRESS

We, the undersigned, on behalf of the Natal Indian Congress, wish to record our appreciation of the great and noble work you have performed for the Indian community during your term of office as [Joint Honorary] Secretary of the Natal Indian Congress, for Which office your recent travels in Europe and America excellently fitted you.

By your unremitting zeal, great patience, and patriotism, you have kept your Indian work ever in the forefront and have rendered invaluable assistance to the public cause. Your sweet, sympathetic disposition, and your unswerving rectitude have endeared you to all, and it will be difficult to fill the gap [created] by your absence. You have lived up to the traditions handed down by your late lamented brother, Aboobaker. Your hospitality has become proverbial. Your house has been open to rich and poor alike.

Your efforts in the cause of education, of which your encouragement of the Indian Public Library is only an instance among others, have been characterized by the same unflagging zeal that has pervaded all your public work. We know that it is your intention, in order that you may better serve your country, to improve your educational qualifications, and we sincerely trust that your desire will be fulfilled by the grace of the Almighty.

We wish you a pleasant voyage, a happy time in your home country, and a safe return.

Presenting the address, Mr. Anglia said that, if he himself had been able to do any public work, it was thanks to Mr. Zaveri for it was his zeal and patriotism that had inspired the speaker. Mr. Zaveri used to do a great deal of work himself. Besides, he made his men also

work for the Congress, prominent among whom was Mr. Chhabildas Mehta. He helped a great deal. It was impossible to fill the gap caused by Mr. Zaveri's departure, but it was hoped that Mr. Dada Osman would more or less make up the loss. It was a matter of pleasure that Mr. Rustomjee should have arrived at the right moment. The Secretaries were sure to get much assistance from him. Mr. Anglia expressed the wish that Mr. Zaveri would become a barrister. Speaking about the Asiatic Registration Act, Mr. Anglia said that he had thought of going [to India] on a temporary permit but, as the law had now been passed, he had decided not to apply for a permit in order to show his disapproval of the measure. He hoped that the Transvaal Indians would stick to the gaol-going resolution and that no Indian would have any relations with the Permit Office.

ADDRESS BY MEMON [FUND] COMMITTEE

Mr. Peeran Mahomed, the Joint Secretary of the Memon Committee, read an address on behalf of that organization. Here is a translation of it

We the members of the Memon Committee—which was formed to raise funds for helping poor Memons in every possible manner—wish to thank you most heartily for your exertions. Indeed, you are the founder of the fund, the organizer [of this Committee]. We can say without the slightest exaggeration that it owes its competence entirely to your devotion to the community, of which you are such an ornament. We can hope that, during your temporary absence, we shall be able to keep up the vitality of the Committee and hand it over to your charge when you return.

ADDRESS BY INDIAN LIBRARY

Mr. Osman Ahmed Effendi read an address on behalf of the Indian Library. The following is a translation:

> We the undersigned, representing the Committee of the Indian Public Library and the visitors to that Library, hereby place on record our deep sense of obligation to you for the very great and tangible help rendered by you to the Library. Your love of knowledge is well known, and it was in keeping with it that you rendered so much assistance to this humble institution.
>
> We trust that you will continue to show goodwill for the Library, and we hope that you will soon return to resume your

multifarious activities in Natal for public causes.

ADDRESS BY HINDU COMMUNITY

Mr. R. R. Moodley read the address of the Hindu community. Here is a summary of it:

> We consider it to be our duty to thank you especially on the eve of your departure for India. Though a thoroughly religious person, you have never made any distinction between Hindus and Muslims and have thereby won the hearts of both the communities. You have endeared yourself to all by your compassionate nature, truthfulness and regard for all. You have left us deeply obliged to you by your actions and have created an example worth following. We hope that you may reach India safely and, after your safe return, take up your work here again. Mr. Paul then garlanded Mr. Zaveri on behalf of the Literary Society and Mr. Ambaram Maharaj on behalf of the Sanatan Dharma Sabha.

MR. GANDHI'S SPEECH

Mr. Gandhi, who then spoke, said:

It is only right that we should present addresses to Mr. Zaveri. But Mr. Zaveri will accept our compliments as sincere only if we imitate him in his good qualities which we have praised in the course of our addresses. Mr. Zaveri has, however, done nothing for the sake of praise. He does not hunger for it and has rendered services to the community out of a sense of duty. He has shown by example what true wealth and education consist in. By using his wealth mostly in the service of the community, he has shown us the right use for it. He thinks that all the education he has acquired is for the sake of the country and uses it for that purpose. This is real education. Mr. Omar Zaveri believes that the most important means of overcoming India's misfortunes is unity among Hindus and Muslims. Even in India one will rarely find a person who has done as much as Mr. Zaveri to bring about this unity. Moreover, Mr. Zaveri possesses the quality of truthfulness, which, besides strengthening each of these three qualities, makes them more attractive and weaves them into a harmonious whole. It is only for this reason that we regard him as a true helmsman. We can be said truly to have honoured him only if we follow his example. It will be difficult for the new Secretary, Mr. Dada

Osman, to fill the gap, but he is Mr. Zaveri's partner and Mr. Zaveri has unhesitatingly recommended his name to the Congress. There is thus reason to believe that Mr. Dada Osman will bring credit to his office. Mr. Anglia's and Mr. Dada Osman's is thus an exacting burden. He can be no ordinary person who can take Mr. Zaveri's place. We hope that these two gentlemen will faithfully follow Mr. Zaveri in his good qualities.

Mr. Parsee Rustomjee, who returned that day from India, compared Mr. Omar Zaveri with Sir Pherozeshah Mehta.

Mr. Abdulla Haji Adam Zaveri said that, as Omar was a close relative of his, he could not but observe that Omar had brought honour to their family. He hoped that the Transvaal Indians would never submit to the Transvaal Ordinance. He was followed by Dr. Nanji.

PEERAN MAHOMED'S SPEECH

Mr. Peeran Mahomed said:

I was Mr. Omar Zaveri's neighbour. No amount of praise will be enough [to express our gratitude towards him]. I regard the Transvaal Ordinance as very oppressive. If a similar Ordinance comes into force here [in Natal], I say on oath with God as witness that I will never submit to it but go to gaol instead. I hope that the Transvaal Indians will do likewise. I agree with Mr. Anglia about Mr. Chhabildas Mehta. He has served the Congress very ably indeed.

ISMAIL GORA'S SPEECH

Mr. Ismail Gora said:

> I endorse everything that has been said about Mr. Omar Haji Amod Zaveri. He has served the community very well. As Mr. Rustomjee has returned from India, the work of the Congress will now go on smoothly. We have to put up a stiff fight against the Asiatic [Registration] Act. The Transvaal Indians can never go back on the Fourth Resolution of September. If they do, it will do us much harm. The funds of the Natal Indian Congress are exhausted. We are in debt to the Bank. I therefore hope that the Secretaries will make adequate efforts and collect funds.

Mr. Chhabildas Mehta said that he could serve the community only because he had an employer such as Mr. Omar Haji Amod Zaveri. He had done no more than his duty.

DADA OSMAN'S SPEECH

Mr. Dada Osman said:

> Omar is to me a brother and I cannot say much about him. But I do wish that many more persons like Omar were born in the Indian community. I am thankful to the Congress for the honour they have done me by appointing me [a Joint Secretary]. Of course, the Congress has yet to see—as I have yet to see—how well I serve. I shall do my best. I am heartened by Mr. Rustomjee's arrival and I shall be proud of working with Mr. Anglia.

ZAVERI'S REPLY

Mr. Zaveri gave a brief but impressive reply to all the addresses. He said:

> The Indian community has overwhelmed me today by giving me a number of parties and presenting me addresses. I have not served so well that I deserve all this. I did all that I could, as a matter of duty. I thank the community for the address presented by the Congress and say that I shall constantly think of [public] service. Many gentlemen have expressed their good wishes that I may return from my Haj pilgrimage soon. God willing, I shall perform that duty soon indeed. I thank the Memon Committee for their address. I have done nothing much for them. I do not deserve an address from the Library at all. It really functions owing to Mr. Motilal Dewan's efforts A man following a straight path never loses his way. I have endeavoured to serve my community in this manner and hope to do so in the future.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-5-1907

374. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

''THE PLAGUE''

A calamity as great as plague has now befallen the Indian community. On Friday—after my last letter was sent—a cable was received saying that the Imperial Government had assented to the act, which will mean slavery for Indians. Every one is asking: what can

avail us now? But patriotic Indians, as they put the question, immediately realize that this is not an Act designed for our enslavement, but for the loosening of our chains. For we must not submit to it, but go to gaol instead. Looking at things this way, we should treat it as a blessing that the Act has been passed.

ENCOUNTER WITH "THE STAR"

Just as a dying {lame burns the brighter, there ensued a duel with *The Star* when the Act was about to be passed. *The Star* published an article inciting the people against Indians, which was replied to by Mr. Gandhi.[1] Afterwards he met the editor of the paper and had a long talk with him. *The Star* then wrote another article which can be considered very polite, but the paper did not drop the quarrel. It said that Indians wanted the Government to trust them, and this could not be done. Mr. Gandhi wrote once again in reply[2], saying that there was no question of trusting the Indian community for all time. It asked to be trusted only this once, and that for a brief period. He made many other points besides. But there may not be enough space in *Indian Opinion* this week to publish translations of all of them. I would, therefore, recommend the interested reader to read them in full in the English section; the entire letter is good and worth the reading. A vivid picture can be had from it of the kind of struggle going on between the whites and Indians, and of its significance. It clearly shows that, while the Indian community wants to preserve its self-respect, the British say that we wish to kick them down. *The Star'*s campaign was obviously on behalf of the local Government and at its instance. Though we had very politely asked for interviews with the Rand Pioneers and the Transvaal [Municipal] Association,[3] they were refused. What does this signify? Only that they treat us like dogs and care little for what we say, which they treat as mere barking. No one can now say that the Indians have not done all that was necessary for fulfilling the purpose behind the permit [legislation]. It is like pretending to be asleep while being wide awake. They know very well that the British Indian Association's proposal of voluntary registration does fulfil the objective of the Act in relation to permits. In fact, that

[1] *Vide* "Letter to *The Star*", 30-4-1907.

[2] *Vide* ''Letter to *The Star*", 2-5-1907.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Rand Pioneers", 2-5-1907.

objective is no longer there, but the thought now uppermost in their mind is how to humiliate the Indian community. The story of the wolf and the lamb fits this Act. When the strong wolf resolved to eat up the poor lamb, he began looking for a pretext for doing so. He blamed the lamb for muddying the water which he, the wolf, was to drink. When the lamb pointed out that he had really been drinking the water down stream, the wolf replied, "If it is not you, then it must have been your father who did that." So saying, he ate up the lamb. There is not the slightest difference between our plight and that of the lamb in the fable. They wish somehow to show that, even outside the field of politics, we are not their equals. That is why they have got this law passed. Lord Elgin's fear has proved a stronger motive than his inclination to do justice. Out of fear of the whites, he has done injustice to the Indians. But who can harm one whom Rama protects? I see signs that the Indian community will adhere to its gaol-going resolution, and the sight fills my heart with joy. For the present, at any rate, I feel that the passing of the law has been for us a stroke of luck. On all sides people appear filled with enthusiasm at the thought of going to gaol and making themselves happy there as in a palace.

CURTIS

Something else has transpired which lends much support to these views. Mr. Curtis, a sitting member of the local Legislative Assembly, is said to be the sole author of this law. He has written to *The Times* to say that the law should be regarded as having been passed to establish the doctrine that there can be no equality between the whites and the Indians. All British subjects should not be regarded as equal. In other words, they want to demonstrate our slavery by means of this law. They want to prove by it that they have the authority and the right to deal with us in any way they choose, without caring to think whether we like it or not. In the measure in which they have obtained self-government and become free, they want to make slaves of us. The difference between slavery and freedom consists in the manner in which others deal with us. If, for the sake of a friend, master or father, I willingly perform the meanest job, I shall win greater respect, my master will think of me as a very loyal servant, and my father will regard me with affection. But if I do the same thing under compulsion, men will spit at me, think me a coward and ask why I did not kill myself instead of submitting to such slavery. The difference between our condition as it is without the law and what it

would be under the law is of comparable magnitude. We may put up with being unable to enjoy any rights in regard to land, with having our trade restricted, and with the denial of certain other rights, for there is no use of actual force against us in these matters. But the law in question seeks physically to bring compulsion to bear on our persons. Just as in India some of us oppress the *bhangis* and force them to dress in some particular fashion and use obsequious language lest we be polluted by their proximity [*sic*], it has fallen to our lot to be treated like *bhangis* here in the Transvaal. To remind us perpetually of this status, we are to be obliged to carry permits on our persons. When the Pope sent a similar order to the great Luther of Germany through an envoy, he consigned it to the flames in the presence of the envoy and said, "Go, tell the Pope that Luther is free from now on. Tell him of the fate of his bull." Since that day Luther has remained immortal. Millions may want to do what Luther did, but not every one can succeed.

REMEDY

After reading this news-letter, many readers will want to know what we are to do now. The answer has already been supplied by Luther. We have now earned the freedom to burn old permits, together with the new ones. Not a single person must enter the Permit Office, for the situation is really all that hopeless. Anyone asking for a permit can do so only under the new law. But if the new law is not acceptable to us, we simply cannot apply for a permit. The first thing to do therefore is to see that no Indian goes to or communicates with the Permit Office. For the rest, we are only to watch and see whatmeasures the Permit Office adopts to force us to take out new permits. They will not give Indians as yet the privilege of going to gaol. The permit regulations are yet to be framed. Then a final date will be fixed for taking out new permits. Only after that date can the doors of the prison-palace open for us. For the present, therefore, we should stay away from the Permit Office to show that we are firm and fearless and determined to implement our Resolution. Refugee Indians who are outside [the Colony] and do not hold permits should give up the idea of entering the Transvaal for the present. For the necessary permit can only be had under the new law and that no Indian should now ask for. I expect all Indians to have faith that the Almighty who rules over the earth has the power to grant us a living even outside the Transvaal; Further clarification can be had by

referring to *Indian Opinion*, No. 17, p. 216.

LORD ELGINS OINTMENT

After having inflicted a cruel wound on us, Lord Elgin now seeks to heal it with an ointment of his own make. Reuter has cabled that, while replying to a question concerning the Act, it was stated by Mr. Churchill that, during his discussions with General Botha, the latter had mentioned that the regulations under the new Act would be very liberal and would not hurt anyone's feelings. Reuter also adds that the Members of the House of Commons received the information with applause. Only a woman in labour knows the pangs of childbirth. The Members of the House of Commons doubtless play the midwife to us. Their applause shows that they were touched because our feelings had earlier been hurt. But they applauded without realizing the significance of Mr. Churchill's reply. Lord Elgin seems to be trying to win over children by humouring them. After the Act is passed, however liberal the regulations, our condition of slavery will remain unchanged. If we are yoked to a cart and the driver holds the reins loose, we do not for that reason cease to be cattle. What does it matter if, instead of impressions of all the ten fingers, only one finger-print were required, or even if only a signature were required instead of a fingerprint? Even so, for reasons which I have explained, we cannot submit to the Act. Though we may be given good food and comfort as slaves, these things ought not to turn our heads and make us forget our true state of slavery. We have in all humility to inform His Lordship that, as long as compulsory registration is to remain in force, we will not submit to the act, no matter what relief is granted.

SYMPATHY FROM DURBAN

Letters of sympathy from Indian leaders in Durban have been received at all places in the Transvaal. Our brethren in Natal have advised us to adhere to the gaol-going resolution. We should be grateful to them for this expression of sympathy. Accordingly, a telegram thanking them has already been sent in the name of the Association.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-5-1907

375. HEJAZ RAILWAY: SOME INTERESTING INFORMATION

The special correspondent of *The Times of India* at Istanbul has reported some interesting facts about the Hejaz Railway. Here is a summary of his report. The correspondent has passed severe strictures on the railway officials, and he advises all those who wish to give money not to pay so long as the extreme corruption in the railway is not ended. He has also sent the photographs of Mr. Kidwai and Mr. Abdul Kadir, the students who had gone to Istanbul with money. We have written to the two gentlemen in order to ascertain their views and shall publish their replies when received. We cannot say how much truth there is in this report, but *The Times of India* has given it wide publicity—which would suggest that there is an element of truth in it.

ORIGIN OF RAILWAY

The man who first mooted the idea of the Hejaz Railway was the notorious Izzet Pasha, who was responsible for the slaughter of Armenians. He is one of the self-seekers who surround His Majesty the Sultan. He hails from Damascus. Few people outside Istanbul know that the Sultan lives as a prisoner of the Syrian Pashas at Yildiz Kiosk[1]. Being a true Muslim, the Sultan readily approved the Hejaz Railway proposal when it was put before him. With a view to suiting everyone's convenience, he suggested that the proposed line should connect the harbours at Jidda and Yenbo with Medina and Mecca. But his suggestion was not accepted. Izzet Pasha persuaded the Sultan to believe that, if the line were started from Jidda, the British were sure to take advantage of it. They would set up their own man as Caliph. Izzet Pasha had made his own arrangements. He had even bought some land. He was being helped by Shaikh Abu Handa. It was accordingly decided to lay the track between Damascus and Medina.

FROM DAMASCUS TO MEDINA

The proposed track is to extend over about 1600 miles, of which 450 miles have been covered by now. Last year the profits from this venture amounted to only £61,900. Strenuous efforts are being made to raise subscriptions, but the people of Istanbul do not trust Izzet Pasha. No one therefore contributes any money. And though all the

[1] Palace of the Turkish Sultan

officials are required to contribute ten days' pay towards the expenditure on the railway, and 2d are collected on every official document also for this purpose, the result will depend entirely on collections made through appeals to the general public. It is said that Izzet Pasha has amassed much wealth. The Pasha exacts a private commission on all stores purchased. An American firm had to pay £3,000 as commission.

Though the laying of the first section of the line was started in 1901, even a fifth part of the track is not yet complete. Even where the line is already in use, no attention is paid to repairs, and, thanks to the inferior quality of the rails, things appear already to have fallen into a bad state. The line is altogether useless to Muslims coming from India and China. Even among the others very few use the Hejaz Railway, since no one wants to risk travelling on that line.

INDIAN DEPUTATION

Some time ago, a deputation of Indian students in Britain went [to Istanbul] with collections. They were well received by the Sultan. But they were not allowed to visit Damascus, although they wanted to. Their movements were watched by the secret police. And though they were awarded the Osmania medals and were otherwise well treated, the Pashas were all afraid [of them]. There are a few Indian Muslims who are in attendance on the Sultan, but they are not fully trusted. For the Pashas play upon the religious sentiments of the people for their own profit and do not want their fraud exposed.

WORKERS

All the work of laying the railway is done by soldiers, and yet the cost per mile [of track] has amounted to £3,720. Again, for want of sufficient equipment, the trains cannot run faster than twelve miles an hour. A former minister of the Sultan told me in the course of a conversation that no one believes that the railway will be useful. By the time the southern section is completed, the northern section will have gone out of repair; and one can reach Jidda by sea from Istanbul taking the same time as by train.

WHAT SHOULD INDIAN MUSLIMS DO?

The same minister told me further that my Indian friends should not pay a pie unless they can exercise the right of supervision through

their men and unless they are assured about the laying of a line from Jidda to Mecca. Just now there is so much corruption that there is little likelihood of the railway being completed. Many of the powerful Viceroys have told the Sultan that, in the name of the railway, regular embezzlement is going on. But the agents of Izzet Pasha do not allow anybody to [function] effectively. Of the hundreds of thousands of pounds received, nearly 25 per cent have gone into the pockets of corrupt officials. Letters are received from the travelling public, in which they complain of scarcity of water, of dearth of other amenities [on the train] and of acute discomfort. Fares are also excessively high. The third-class fare from Damascus to Tebuk is £4, which works out to an anna per mile. At present Izzet Pasha is planning to build a new office for the railway in Istanbul at a cost of £50,000. This expenditure is quite unnecessary since there already exist many vacant buildings, but no one gives thought to this chaos.

CONCLUSION

The collections have already amounted to £25,00,000. Soldiers are being made to work at nominal wages. In five years, only 432 miles of track have been laid. The train does not run faster than twelve miles an hour. There are 16 engines, two first-class and 24 third-class carriages only. For the rest, passengers are carried in open wagons. The passengers travelling in these experience much hardship. The railway has got into the hands of cheats and swindlers The Viceroy of Hejaz had sent a telegramto the Sultan, saying that nothing could be done as long as the railway remained in the hands of predatory officials. This has proved to be true. “Hence,” says the minister, “my request to the Muslims is that they should not send any contributions so long as the robbers remain at their posts and unless a guarantee is given about their removal”.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-5- 1 907

376. LETTER TO "THE STAR"[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
May 11, 1907

TO
THE EDITOR
THE STAR
[JOHANNESBURG]
SIR,

In your letterhead on Mr. Polak's letter regarding the Asiatic Registration Act, you state that "the most bitter opponents of the Asiatic trader would, probably, not be sorry if the proposed passive resistance movement resulted in the deportation of the most aggressive agitators". Unfortunately for the "bitter opponents", so far I have been able to see, there exists no such provision for compulsory deportation, as you seem to think there is. If, therefore, their wish is to be satisfied, a new Act will be necessary to drive out of the Colony by physical compulsion those Indians who, in their own opinion, are doing a service to their country and the Empire in their struggle to retain for their countrymen some degree of self-respect and manliness. You proceed to add:

> Freed from the domination of the latter, we believe the great bulk of British Indians lawfully domiciled in the Transvaal would soon learn to appreciate the greater security which the act confers upon them, and to recognize how much they have been misled as to the real effect of the new legislation.

One can quite understand your inability to enter into the feelings of British Indians. You have misread them entirely if you think that there is a single Indian who is likely, after the withdrawal of the domination (which does not exist), to appreciate the "greater security" conferred by the Act. In spite of my efforts to detect it, I have failed to trace any greater security. There can be no question of misleading the mass of the Indians as to the real effect of the new legislation. The issue is simple. Compulsory registration involves a special restriction on the personal liberty of the subject because of the colour of his skin. It has been put before the Indians in the Transvaal that such legislation amounts to a deep humiliation and a kind of

[1] This was reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 18-5-1907.

slavery. They have, therefore, been advised that they ought not to barter away their present comparative state of freedom for the state prescribed for them by the new legislation, no matter how tempting it may otherwise appear to be. The above is the position they will be reduced to, according to my view, under the new legislation.

In order to avert the degrading blow, I have ventured, also, to tell them, first, that it is their duty firmly and respectfully to decline to submit themselves to re-registration under the Act; secondly, that, seeing that the Transvaal is their adopted home and that they are without any voice in the choice of their legislators, the only effective way in which they can make themselves heard is to submit to the ultimate result of a breach of the conditions of the law, namely, to prefer gaol to either re-registration or leaving the country or paying the fine; and, thirdly, that, consistently with the above attitude, they should cease to have any communication with the Permit Department, and should ask their friends and other Indians who may wish to re-enter the Transvaal not to apply for permits, either temporary or permanent, under the new law.

If it be said that both the last-mentioned points distinctly advance the anti-Asiatic purpose, so be it. It merely proves what I have often said —that the struggle, on the Indian side, is not to grasp as much of the Transvaal trade as possible, but to remain in the country with dignity and self-respect, and not to sell their birthright for a mess of pottage.

I admit, and many English friends have told me, that my advice may not be widely followed. I shall still be content if the misgivings of such friends prove to be well-founded. And, if British Indians choose to submit to the serfdom which the legislation seeks to impose on them, I can only say that we shall have deserved the Registration Act. We are undoubtedly put upon our mettle, and it remains to be seen whether, as a body, we shall rise to the occasion. I consider that the attitude above sketched is unexceptionable, and I claim for it from the brave colonists not derision but praise. But derision or praise, it will be churlish and sinful for myself and my fellow-workers to turn aside from a course which has been dictated by a conscientious purpose.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Star, 14-5-1907

377. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[JOHANNESBURG,]
Sunday, May 12, 1907

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I had intended to write to you a very long letter, but was unable to do so owing to a very severe headache during the train journey. The condition continued yesterday, and today it is no better. My health seems to have been seriously affected by my exertions in Durban this time. However, I feel confident of regaining my health through sufficient rest, earth treatment, etc.

I have sent some matter today. I expect to write or dictate more tonight. When I heard about the balance-sheet, it immediately occurred to me that it was desirable—indeed it was our duty—to give Thakkar an increment without his asking for it. I believe he is very useful to us. Despite some of his bad habits, he is strong on two points: his determined patriotism and his celibacy. His work is on the whole satisfactory. I would therefore specially advise you to give him an increment immediately. When I discussed this with Maganlal, I had thought of giving him one pound, but now I think it would be enough if you gave him half a pound for the present. Maganlal had suggested to me that Miss West should also be paid something. I much appreciate that idea also and feel it better that the rest of you should think of doing so before the idea occurs to Mr. West. I would advise immediate action in regard to both these things. Do please read Ruskin's book'[1]. Always think about your teaching method while giving lessons to Anandlal and Harilal and make constant improvements in it. Please give Dada Sheth the boards that he has asked for. I hope you have sent the additional copies I wrote to you about yesterday.[2] Chi. Hemchand will probably leave by the end of June at the latest. He is thinking of passing through Delagoa Bay. Please send me the name and address of the person who is working for us in Delagoa Bay. The list of Hindi and Tamil books has not yet

[1] *Unto This Last*
[2] This letter is not available.

been received. I hope you have sent 25 copies to Omar Sheth. Send three copies to Jagmohandas[1] after marking them. Ask Omar Sheth if he wants more copies. Please write to him a courteous letter saying that the 25 copies are a present from the Press. Do always send a complimentary copy to the Volksrust Public Reading-Room. I am writing to Chi. Jayashanker asking him to have our name included in the Indian Directory.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 4743

378. CABLE TO S. A. B. I. COMMITTEE[2]

JOHANNESBURG,
May 14, 1907

[TO
SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE
LONDON]

DIGITS REQUIRED SOME CASES ACT NOT YET GAZETTED. DIGITS ONLY INCIDENT[AL]. ROOT OBJECTION COMPULSORY RE-REGISTRATION CLASS DIFFERENTIATION. SOFTER REGULATIONS NO REMEDY REPEAT ACT REQUIRED. STRUGGLE DEEPER THAN MERE REGISTRATION. VOLUNTARY RE-REGISTRATION STILL OFFERED. OVERWHELMING MAJORITY READY GAOL THAN SUBMIT COMPULSION.

[BIAS]

Colonial Office Records: C. O. 291/122

379. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

TELEPHONE NO. 1635,
TELEGRAMS "GANDHI",
JOHANNESBURG,
May 14, 1907

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. You can send £ 15 to your parents. I am not

[1] Father of Kalyandas. The copies were presumably of the *Indian Opinion* issue of May 11, 1907 which carried the article on Kalyandas by Gandhiji.

[2] A copy of the cable was forwarded by Ritch to the Colonial Office on May 21.

yet in a position to write to you at length. The headache has evidently come to stay for the time being.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From a copy: S.N. 4744

380. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
May 16, 1907

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I enclose herewith order for the Germiston Sanatan Dharma Sabha, Please give the equivalent of the Hindi in English, and Gujarati also. In order to make the letter-heads appear artistic, you will have to use your judgement as to how they should be printed. What I think is that you could have the English in the form of an arch, and underneath the arch you could have the Hindi and Gujarati equivalent[s] in parallel columns. This is with reference to the title of the Sabha. The address will follow in the three languages, one after the other. The top with the mystic syllable "*Om*" may appear only in Hindi. It should be on ruled paper, 500 foolscap and 500 Bank[1]. I have told them that it will be about 25/- for the whole order, but, if it is more, let it be more. Send your bill to the Sabha, Box 33, Germiston, at the same time that you send the letter-heads. In printing the addresses, you are not to give the box.

I have written to Osman Ahmed. I have not by me the extract from *The Times of India*, as I have sent it to London. The Malays of Johannesburg do speak Dutch, the same as of[2] Cachalia's order, but very few of them are capable of reading the language. Why do you want to know it?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[ENCLOSURE]

[1] Bank note paper
[2] "On" in the original

[PS.]

Please pay up the money due to Kalyandas and take a receipt. The £46 have been correctly credited to his account. It was no trouble bringing the parcels as the guard was known to me. He was no doubt critical.

Please continue the arrangement with Bhikhubhai for some time. I hope you have attended to Mr. Polak's telegram.

From a photostat of the typewritten original with a Gujarati postscript in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 4748

381. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 18, 1907

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I think I threw off the headache on Thursday, but, though I am feeling much better, I do not want to give myself over much work yet. The treatment I gave myself was two local earth bandages and two abdominal bandages, and rest up to seven o'clock in the morning, instead of six. The real thing was as much rest at night as possible.

I am glad you have decided to adopt my suggestion with regard to increase in extra copies. I shall ask Hemchand to send you a list of the number of copies sold this week. Many, I know, are still left, but that does not matter. How many extra copies did you sell on your side? Hemchand must go home, because I do not want to apply for an extension of his permit as it would fall under the new law; and as I have advised them to do likewise, to be consistent, I must not get an extension for Hemchand. Hemchand thinks he will save a little money by going through Delagoa Bay, and see the place also. At the same time, if there is any reason why he should go through Durban, he will do so.

With reference to the block, I propose to charge the Association for it. That being so, I have told you that copies of the supplement should not be sold by themselves, nor should you advertise them for sale, as you advertise other supplements. If we sell those supplements, we can only credit the Association with the amount, which is hardly

worth while. The *Advertiser* article is simply contemptible.

You know how to treat the vaccination marks. If not, you should look up Dr. Tribhowan's book, which is, I believe, with you.

I shall try to secure names for the Directory here. You may take out the advertisement of E. Ebrahim of Standerton. I do not despair of collecting the amount. I am glad you have written to Mr. Omar for his contributions. You may write again, offering niore copies if he needs them.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I am sending very little matter today.

From a photostat of the typewritten original with a Gujarati postscript in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 4751

382. ANOTHER SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN BARRISTER

We had occasion to congratulate Mr. Joseph Royeppen and his relatives on the former's having graduated at Cambridge. We have now the pleasure of congratulating them on Mr. Royeppen's having passed his Bar Final examination. He may now be in our midst any day. That would bring up the total of Indian barristers practising here to four. In our opinion, the usefulness of the liberal education received by them can be measured only in so far as they use it for the advancement of their countrymen. Of all the countries in the world, perhaps India today, whether within her own borders or outside, has the greatest need of the talents possessed by her sons, and we hold that, before Indians who have received a liberal education's can make such public use thereof, they will have to adopt voluntary poverty. Indeed, we are not sure that it is not the duty of every man to limit his personal pecuniary ambition. Whether, however, the larger proposition can be sufficiently proved or not, the smaller one we have already laid down is indisputable. Apart from the work of securing ordinary civil rights for their countrymen in South Africa, Indians like Mr. Royeppen can do a vast amount of useful and quiet work in the way of internal and social reform. We place before them the self-

sacrificing example of the late Mr. Manomohan Ghose and the late Mr. Kalicharan Banerji[1], both of them brilliant lawyers, who not only placed their legal ability at the disposal of their countrymen, but also their riches.

Indian Opinion, 18-5-1907

383. THE TRANSVAAL STRUGGLE

Forward ye all to battle, the bugles sound
Raise the cry and take the plunge, for victory's around.
There are deeds that may not be tarried,
Doubts, fears ever abound, and courage is harried;
They waste the days saying the time is not yet—
No such excuse ever did bring profit.
By plunging in and savouring success is strength found.
Raise the cry and take the plunge, for victory's around.
Through adventure did Columbus to the New World make his trip;
Through adventure did Napoleon have enemies in his grip;
Through adventure Martin Luther did the Pope defy;
Through adventure did Scott his debts re-pay;
Through adventure did Alexander have his name resound.
Raise the cry and take the plunge, for victory's around.

Thus sang the poet[2]. The song deserves to be learnt off by heart by every Indian, especially in the Transvaal. Let him grasp its meaning in full, and then plunge into the fight, regardless of consequences. The more we think about the Transvaal Act, the more we feel that it is to be shunned like a viper. The spirit of enterprise is essential for this. As the poet puts it, this matter brooks no delay, and fear is likely to sap our courage. Let us, then, have no fear. As the Gujarati saying has it, doubt is like a ghost and selfishness like a witch. Accordingly, if we go on having doubts, there will be no end to them.

[1] One of the pioneers of the Indians national movement
[2] Narmadashankar

Once free from doubt, we shall win resounding success in the end. Whatever the excuse offered by anyone, believe it to arise from fear. Let every Indian expel the witch of fear and resolve that, whatever others might do, he for his part would go to gaol rather than submit to the new Act. If that happens, we shall see in the end that no Indian will be cowardly enough to take out a new permit. Columbus kept up his courage even when his sailors, one and all, threatened his life. That is how he discovered America and became famous throughout the world. Napoleon, a youth from the island of Corsica, shook all Europe. Hundreds of thousands of men did his bidding. When the Pope sent Luther the bull of excommunication, he tore it up and became free. The great poet Scott proved himself a man of his word, despite old age, and went on writing, earning enough to pay off his debts. Everyone has heard of Alexander's Empire. With such examples before them, how can the Transvaal Indians lose heart even in the smallest degree? Letters have continued to pour in, which show that the writers would never go back on the pledge taken in September. However, if the Indian community breaks that pledge and retracts, this is what we think the future holds for us.

If the Indian community takes out the permits which are compulsory under the new Act, then in a short time

1. the trade licences in the Transvaal will be discontinued;

2. almost all the Indians will be required to live and carry on their trade in Locations;

3. the Malay Location will be lost to us and its present residents will be required to go to Klipspruit;

4. all hope of getting land rights will have to be given up;

5. the foot-path regulation will be applied to Indians;

6. many more of the trade licences in Natal will be cancelled next year; and

7. a Registration Act like the one in the Transvaal will be introduced throughout South Africa.

What Indian would care to live in South Africa under these circumstances?

We do not guarantee that all the rights referred to above will be secured if the new Act is opposed. There is, however, a possibility of at least some of them being granted. But whether we get them or not, the

world will certainly recognize that the Indian community has vindicated its honour and the Transvaal Government will realize that the Indian community cannot be insulted with impunity. One's good name must not be sacrificed, whatever the cost. The good name of the Indian community will then have been saved.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-5-1907

384. LADYSMITH STRUGGLE

There has been a fresh defeat for Indians in the matter of licences, and this calls for second thoughts. The Ladysmith struggle is to be treated as part of the struggle all over the Transvaal. We hope that no Indian will wind up his business. In the Transvaal an Indian not taking out a permit will go to gaol; but it is not so in Natal. For, according to the [Dealers'] Licenses Act, one can only be fined for carrying on business without a licence. There is no provision for imprisonment in default of fine. This appears confusing at first sight, in fact there is no confusion here. If the fine imposed under the Act for trading without a licence is not paid, the Government will have the right to recover it by attaching and selling the shopkeeper's stocks. This is not the time for people to be afraid of such things. Only when we allow our goods to be sold in this manner will the eyes of the Government be opened to the magnitude of the oppression inflicted on us. As for the situation in Ladysmith, we know that the Government itself is displeased with the Ladysmith regulation. Very likely no one will be prosecuted. But things will become difficult if what happened at Ladysmith today happens elsewhere. Just as we must show courage [at the prospect] of going to gaol, so must we show courage and face [a possible] confiscation of our goods. Here too we can point to the example of Englishmen themselves. When two years ago the Education Act was enforced in England, many people were reluctant to pay the Education Cess. There was only one way of collesting the tax from those who refused to pay it: that was to attach and sell their goods. Those who were displeased by the tax refused to pay it and allowed their goods to be sold, with the result that the Act is about to be repealed. In our opinion, the same course has to be taken if the licence menace becomes serious and no redress can be had by

other means. While adopting this course, we should ensure that the shops and houses of Indian traders and their account books are all kept in order. We also hold that, if the Indian community in the Transvaal makes good its pledge, it will have good results in Natal too.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-5-1907

385. GAME OF CHESS

When the news of the passing of the new Act was received, *The Star* published a forceful cartoon. It shows the whites and the Indians playing a game of chess. With the permission of *The Star*, we reproduce the cartoon elsewhere with our own cartoon in reply. According to *The Star*, the black king has mounted an attack on the Transvaal rook. The white knight; if it can enter the Ordinance square, will be in a position to check the black king. Now that the Bill has become law, the white knight can move into the Ordinance square and force the black king into the Indian square. The white knight is pleased.

In the cartoon which we publish in reply, it is shown that the square of the gaol-going resolution is occupied by a black pawn. The white knight in its hurry has overlooked the black pawn which guards the Ordinance square and the fact that it cannot move into the Ordinance square as long as the black pawn is on the gaol-square. It is further suggested that what in its blind hurry the white knight takes to be the black king is really not a king; it can only be a poor pawn.

The Star has attached so much importance to the Ordinance. It has charged the Indians with overrunning the Transvaal. All this shows that the new Act is not a trivial matter. We commend this drawing to every Indian for careful study.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-5-1907

386. BOYCOTTING PERMIT OFFICE

The boycott was first started by the Chinese last year. We have seen the effects it has had. The Transvaal Indians, and other Indians

wishing to enter the Transvaal, need not go to such lengths as the Chinese, but they should support the resolution on gaol-going, for implementing which it is necessary to suspend all business with the Permit Office. In Durban, no Indian should go to Mr. Burgess's office. In Pretoria likewise, no Indian should go to the Permit Office, or enter into any correspondence with it. It can be readily seen that, if we do not accept the new Ordinance, we cannot now go anywhere near the Permit Office, since all applications to the Permit Office made now will be treated as having been made under the new Act. We must not remain inactive on the ground that the new Act is not yet published in the *Gazette*. We were glad to learn that Mr. Mahomed Cassim Anglia, who had applied for a permit, intends to withdraw his application. Mr. Osman Ahmed intends to do the same. This news should fill us with enthusiasm. Every Indian should do the same. Now, considering the matter carefully, what can we gain by having anything to do with the Permit Office? What difference will it make [to our situation] if three or four Indians are able to enter the Transvaal [as a result of our dealings with the Permit Office]? And what harm will be done if they cannot? We hope that in view of the damage that is likely to be done to [the interests of the] entire Indian community if any business is done with that Office, every Indian will boycott it, as suggested by the British Indian Association.

On reflection, we think that young Indians, and others who have anything to do with the Permit Office, should break off all relations with it, and persuade others to do likewise. A couple of men can stand near the Office entrance by turns and if anyone wishes to go in, dissuade him from doing so.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-5-1907

387. WHAT IS EDUCATION?

In Western countries education is so highly valued that senior teachers are treated with much respect. There are at present in England schools that have been running for hundreds of years and have turned out many renowned men. One of these famous schools is Eton. A few months ago the Old Boys of Eton presented an address to the Head Master, Dr. Weir, who is well known throughout the British

Empire. Writing about the occasion, *The Pall Mall Gazette*, a well-known journal in England, has explained the nature of real education. Its comments deserve the attention of us all- The writer in *The Pall Mall Gazette* says:

> We hold that real education does not consist merely in acquainting oneself with ancient or modern books. It consists in the habits which one knowingly or unknowingly imbibes from the atmosphere, one's surroundings and the company one keeps and above all in work. It is all very well to acquire a stock of knowledge from good books or from other sources. But the more important thing is to learn humanity. The primary function of teachers is, therefore, not to teach the alphabet, but to inculcate humanity. Aristotle said that virtue is not learnt by reading big volumes. It is by doing good deeds that we learn virtue. Another great writer also says that it is well for one to know what isgood, but one will be considered a happy person only if one Acts upon that knowledge.

Judged by these standards, English schools will not be found wanting. If we think of English schools as places for turning out human beings, we shall see that they give us statesmen and administrators. Those educated in German schools may have greater knowledge, but if they become also men of action like the pupils of Eton, it is not by virtue of their training in the schools. Despite the defects that may exist in English schools, it is these that produce true men. They are men who are ever ready to meet an enemy threatening at the gates of England.

We can readily realize how a country that invests education with such a noble purpose becomes prosperous. India's star will shine bright when Indian children receive such education. Parents, teachers and pupils ought to ponder over the passage quoted above. It would not do merely to know it, it is necessary to Act upon it. That is to say, parents should provide for excellent education, teachers should discharge their responsibility and pupils should recognize that mere literacy is not education.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 18-5-1907

388. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

MIRACLE OF GAOL-GOING

In the Transvaal and, if I am not mistaken, all over South Africa, Indians are discussing the gaol-going resolution. They feel certain that the Transvaal Indians will court imprisonment. Some say that gaol is a palace; others look upon it as a beautiful garden. Yet others consider it paradise. Again there are some who think that gaol will prove to be a key which will unshackle the Indians. Some others hold that, through the gaol gates, we shall pass from our present bondage to freedom. Thus in their several ways, people have shown enthusiasm about going to gaol. There are also some who, when the enthusiasm wanes, start worrying about what will happen to this person or that, and get into a panic. I have received a few letters of this kind and the questions they raise do deserve not to be rejected out of hand. For if we are to achieve success in the end, we should provide for the difficulties that are being felt. *Indian Opinion* as well as the Association has received some letters to this effect. I reply to them all in this letter and, on behalf of the Association, I apologize to the writers for its inability to answer them individually. I do not refer to the writers by name as this is unnecessary.

WHAT SHOULD TRADERS DO?

An Indian writes that his shop is run by him and his son, and that he has debts to pay. What should they do if they are both arrested? To this question there can be many answers. First, let me give the one that comes readily to mind.

Reply 1. Going to gaol is a great adventure, which will benefit not only the person concerned; but all the Transvaal Indians and, in fact, the Indian community as a whole. To win such great benefits, one must put up with whatever loss may occur. I believe that going to gaol will please Khuda or Ishwar. The Creator always helps us in anything we do in fear of Him. We reap the fruit of our labour in proportion to our faith in Him. The Prophet Mahomed and his disciples were once in a cave. A whole army was marching towards them. The disciples cried out in fear: "O Prophet! We are only three, and the army consists of hundreds of men. How shall we save ourselves?" The Prophet replied, "We are not just three. God, Who is a match for all, is

also with us." It was owing to such superhuman faith that the Prophet succeeded in all that he attempted. The enemy could not do him the least harm. They passed the cave by; it did not occur to them even to look in. Likewise, if we turn to the Hindu scriptures, we find Prahlad, a steadfast devotee of God, who remained unharmed even when made to embrace a red-hot pillar, because he too had unshakable faith in God's help. In the same way, for an Indian who undertakes this adventure with Khuda as witness, there is nothing more to think about. The great God, the protector of the faithful and the preserver of their honour, is present everywhere and at all times. This reply implies reliance on fate. But, as we know, fate without human effort is of no avail. Hence, we need to think of other things too.

Reply 2. While thinking of human effort, we have always to bear the first reply in mind. For those who cannot fully and sincerely trust in God, there is a remedy indicated by Mr. Coovadia: that is, even if all the men working in a shop are arrested simultaneously, they should go to gaol. After returning from gaol, someone-—not the proprietor of the shop—might take out a permit (not with the intention of obeying the law, but with that of getting it repealed) and run the shop. Every person will thus come out of gaol well trained.

Reply 3. If anyone finds it difficult to Act up to Reply 2, permits for all persons other than the proprietor of the shop may be taken out on the last day fixed in the *Gazette* for the purpose.

Reply 4. The reader will remember what I said earlier: before it becomes necessary for an Indian to go to gaol, he will receive a notice to quit the Transvaal.[1] He will be arrested after the expiry of the notice period, then sentenced to pay a fine and to imprisonment in case of default. One must then go to gaol instead of paying the fine. It will thus be possible for the trader, during the notice-period, to make over his goods to his creditors. For the small trader this will be the best remedy. He is unlikely to find any difficulty in earning his daily bread after release from gaol.

WHAT OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN?

The Act gives [the Government] no power to arrest women, and children under sixteen. They will thus have to suffer nothing more

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 13-4-1907 and 27-4-1907.

than separation from husband or father. As for their maintenance, the answer has already been given that the Indian community will look after them. It is to be remembered that all the thirteen thousand Indians will not have to go to gaol at the same time. If, however, this should happen, our deliverance would be immediate. Since all the Indians will not be going to gaol at the same time, there will always be a few people outside to look after one another.

WHAT IS A VALID PERMIT?

A correspondent has raised a further query. Anyone who has obtained a permit after making a true affidavit and whose permit bears his signature or thumb-impression is the holder of a valid permit, irrespective of whether or not he is a refugee. Only these [that is, holders of valid permits] are to live on in the Transvaal and court imprisonment.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO MEN IN SMALL VILLAGES?

This question has been asked by a correspondent from Belfast. The answer to this is contained for the most part in the foregoing replies. If, however, the villages come in for attack first, Mr. Gandhi will very probably rush there. Even if he happens to be busy in another part of the Transvaal, the people need not at all be afraid. When an officer comes to investigate, whatever permit one holds should be shown to him. He should be told that taking out a new permit is humiliating to us and that it would never happen. If he asks for any finger-prints other than the thumb-impression, these should be flatly refused. If a notice is served on anyone, information should be immediately sent to the Association with particulars, such as name, address, etc. On the expiry of the notice period, he should appear before the court and accept whatever gaol sentence is awarded. If a fine is imposed, it should not be paid. It is necessary that every Indian everywhere should communicate these instructions to those who may not know about them.

BOYS OVER SIXTEEN

Questions on this subject have been asked from Petersburg. No boy, as long as he is under sixteen, will be arrested. Boys who are over sixteen, whether or not they hold permits or other documents, are in the same situation as the holders of valid permits.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO EXISTING PERMITS?

A correspondent from Lindleyspoort seeks to know what will happen to those who hold permits now, but go to India on business

while the struggle is on, and then wish to return. He asks whether their permits will hold good then. For those who are preparing to go to gaol, this question will not arise. For no one can tell what the end of the struggle will be. However, generally speaking, the reply to this question is that such a permit-holder will probably find no difficulty in returning.

HOW TO ACT DURING POLICE INVESTIGATION

A correspondent from Volkstroom asks: what are the police to be told when they come to investigate? What is to be done if the police forcibly take away the permits? The answer to these questions is only this: produce the permit when they come. If required, give one thumb impression only. If asked to take out new permits, refuse to do so, and say that you have no intention at all of taking out one, and that, if, for not doing so, the Government sends you to gaol, you will be ready for it. The police do not have the authority to take away permits by force. Therefore, if they threaten you in any way, reply boldly that you will not give up the permit. If any such thing happens, report it to the Association.

The same person also inquires what arrangements will be made for the dependants of those who go to gaol according to the Fourth Resolution, and whether the Association will pay the counsel's fees, etc. Answers to these questions have already been given above.

CURTIS'S LETTER

Mr. Curtis has addressed a letter to *The Times* of London. A comment on it has already appeared in this journal.[1] The whole letter is reproduced in *The Star*. It is not necessary to offer a translation of it, as most of the facts in it are a matter of history. There are, however, some points in the letter that deserve to be noted. For Mr. Curtis is a member of the Council, and importance will always be attached to his statements. Every Indian will therefore have to think about the matter. Mr. Curtis says:

(I) that Englishmen and Indians ought never to have equal rights;

(2) that the law which has been enacted lays down quite properly that their rights are not equal

(3) that this law is onlt the beginning of a series of many similar laws to come; and

[1] *Vide* "Interview to *The Natal Mercury*", 7-5-1907 and "Johannesburg Letter", 11-5-1907.

(4) that Lord Selborne's promise that no new Indian would be allowed into the Transvaal should be honoured.

Mr. Curtis goes on to make other points, but those mentioned above are sufficient to put the Indian community on its guard. The letter shows that the Transvaal Act is intended not merely to provide for registration, but to humiliate us also, to show that we are not their [the whites'] equals in any way, and to brand us as slaves. From the letter one thing at least becomes certain: if the Act comes into force, and if we submit to it, instead of fresh rights being granted to us, we shall be deprived of what little remains to us, not merely in the Transvaal, but all over South Africa. We shall, therefore, do well to remember what kind of law this is. It will be better for every worthy son of India to leave the Colony or commit suicide than to submit to a law with such dire consequences. Mr. Polak, the editor of this journal, has given Mr. Curtis a biting and powerful reply. There is no time for translating it here. But it may be read in the English section.

WELL DONE, STANDERTON!

The Indian community in Standerton has been carrying on a vigorous campaign against the new Act. A correspondent of *The Star* went there to interview the local leaders. They told him plainly that Indians thought nothing of the hardships of imprisonment as compared to those that would result from submission to the new Act. They were well prepared to resist it, and had even raised funds for the purpose; but they would never submit to it. I hope that, following the example of Standerton, every Indian everywhere will boldly give the same reply. Now that we are on the battle-field, we have nothing to fear and nothing to hide.

THREAT BY "THE STAR"

The editor of *The Star* was somewhat piqued that the Klerksdorp Indians should have held a meeting about gaol-going. Mr. Polak therefore replied to him that not only in Klerksdorp but in Germiston and other places also such meetings had been held and that news was coming in from all over concerning the gaol-going resolution. This has enraged the editor all the more. He has said in his comment that there were only a few leaders who were inciting the Indiancommunity, and that, if they were deported, the other Indians would not utter a word but would cheerfully accept the new Act. Mr. Gandhi has replied to him as follows:

GANDHI'S REPLY[1]

You say in your leaderette that those who oppose the Indians would not be sorry if their leaders were deported. But I ought to point out to such opponents that there is no law authorizing the Government forcibly to deport anyone. If that is to be done, another law will have to be passed. Then the Transvaal Government will be able to deport those Indians who are ready to serve their country and even the government. You say that, if the leaders are deported, the remaining Indians will obey the Act. They will then realize how the Act protects them and how they had been misled about it. It is readily seen that, in saying this, you cannot appreciate the feelings of Indians. You are mistaken if you think that there is a single Indian who takes the Act as being meant for his protection. I have repeatedly gone through the Act without coming across any section which might protect Indians. Moreover, there can be no question of misleading any Indians in this regard for what has been placed before them is a very simple matter: the new Act only insults Indians by branding them as slaves. In several ways the Act reduces Indians to the position of slaves since it is an attack on them as a community.

They have therefore been advised not to forego in any circumstances the existing rights by submitting to the new Act. If the new Act comes into force, I believe that the Indian community will be reduced to that position.

To ward off this deadly blow, I have advised people to do three things as under:

(1) They should not take out new registers.

(2) As the Indians residing in the Transvaal have no right to vote, the resolution about going to gaol is the only means they have to oppose any particular law. They should not take out a permit, nor leave the country, nor pay a fine; the only straightforward and effective course for them is to go to gaol.

(3) If they do this, they should have nothing to do with the Permit Office, and should also write to their friends to persuade them not to ask for new permits, whether temporary or permanent.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to *The Star*", 11-5-1907.

If anyone should say that, by doing so, they would be doing just what the whites wanted, let the whites think so. This will prove what I have always said, viz., that the Indian community is not out to save its trade in the Transvaal, but to stay here with honour. The Indian community will not sacrifice its good name just for the sake of a living.

Many English friends have told me—and I myself believe that—that not all Indians will perhaps accept this advice. Even so, I have no fear. I can only say that in that case we deserve the Act. It is certain that we are now being put to the test. It remains to be seen whether we stand it well or not.

I assert that no one can have anything to say against the position as set out above. Instead of looking down upon it, the brave colonists should admire our stand. But I think it to be a degrading and sinful thing to turn away from the path that we have chosen with true sincerity without caring whether others admire or condemn.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-5-1907

389. GAOL-SEEKERS OF GERMISTON

We have had many letters from Germiston stating that the correspondents are prepared to go to gaol. Everyone has used his own arguments to support the decision to court imprisonment. As there is not space enough to print all the letters, we give below only the names of the correspondents: Babu Lal Bahadur Singh, Sukharam, Gangadin Sardar, Soni Kanji, Hirachand, Soni Gordhan Kanji, Babu Gangadin, Kalyan Gopal Thakore, Babu Hazura Singh, and R. S. Pandit.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-5-1907

390. MEETING OF BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

A meeting of the [executive Committee of the] British Indian Association was held on Saturday the 11th. It was presided over by Mr. Essop Mian, and was attended by Mr. Coovadia, Mr. Kazi of Krugersdorp, Mr. Nagadi of Warmbaths, Mr. Suleman Ahmed, Imam

Abdul Kadir, Mr. A. A. Pillay, Mr. Bhikha Ratanji, Mr. A. M. Bhayat, Mr. A. M. Aswat, Mr. Ameeruddin, Mr. Suleman Ibrahim Bhayat of Rustenburg, Mr. Naidu, Mr. Cachalia of Pretoria, Mr. A. M. Gatu, Mr. Alibhai Akuji, Mr. Omarji Saleji, Mr. Thomas, Mr. Bomanshah and others.

Mr. Gandhi told the meeting of the help received from Durban and answered many questions. He then added: "The present time is so critical that every Indian, without depending on what others do and irrespective of it, must Act upon the resolution on gaol-going for the sake of his honour and for the sake of his country. In both Durban and Pretoria, no one should have anything to do with the Permit Office. No one should enter [the Colony] with a new permit.

> Mr. Coovadia made a powerful speech and moved the following resolution: The Honorary Secretary should write to people everywhere, asking them to stop having any dealings with the Permit Office Telegrams should be sent to Bombay and other places to say that those intending to go to the Transvaal should give up their plans for the time being. No one should give all the ten finger-impressions. Meetings should be held at all the places and people should be asked to refuse to submit to the new Ordinance.

The resolution was supported by Mr. Aswat and passed unanimously. Concluding the deliberations, Mr. Essop Mian said:

> No one should be afraid of acting upon the resolution on gaolgoing. Going to gaol is for us like receiving an honour. We should not become dupes of our temptation that, if we submit to the new Ordinance, we shall get a few rights in return. Lord Milner and other officials made many promises, none of which was kept. That shows that we can win nothing unless we exert ourselves and give proof of our courage.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-5-1907

391. THE TRANSVAAL STRUGGLE

Why should you suffer taunts, my brother?
To be cowardly is a disgrace.
Suffer not insult; death is far better.

The pain of death comes only once;
Disgrace brings unending pain,
And every finger will point at you.
Early death with fame is gain,
And this the noble soul doth love.
A base thing it is to live for long
A lingering life of pain and shame.
Wealth may return that once has gone;
Forever gone are honour and name.
The loss of honour brings in its train
Miseries untold and threefold pain.

Letters received by us prove that today the Indian community in the Transvaal can think of nothing to talk about but the new Act. This is a matter for rejoicing. True to this spirit, we too will continue our discussion of the subject. Last week we quoted a poem by the great heroic poet[1] of Gujarat. Another poem by him charged with the heroic spirit is printed above. The poet has shown vividly how it is a disgraceful thing to suffer taunts. Honour once lost cannot be recovered, as wealth or other things, if lost, can be. Moreover, the poet asserts that the loss of honour results in threefold suffering—of mind, of body, and poverty.

His Majesty Amir Habibullah has set an example of how respect can be won and maintained. His Majesty visited Lady Minto's fair, where he bought a few things. The person in charge of the sales was the daughter of a nobleman. In making the bill, she wrote "His Highness the Amir" against the buyer's name The Amir returned it to the lady, saying that there was a mistake in it. The poor lady wondered what it could be. She checked up the total and politely said that there was no mistake. The Amir shook his head and handed back the bill. Nervously, she went over the bill again and, finding nothing wrong, requested him to point out the mistake. The Amir informed her through his attendants, "The Amir is now not just 'His Highness', but 'His Majesty'."

This incident has an important lesson. It shows how the Amir

[1] Namadashankar; *vide* ''The Transvaal Struggle '', 18-5-1907.

had become conscious of his dignity and we can say that from that day the Afghan people came into light. To be sure, even in maintaining one's honour, one has to be careful. If a conceited upstart should seek undeserved honour, we would ignore him as an impertinent person. His Majesty seized the right occasion. It was at a function like Lady Minto's fair that he reminded the lady of his title. Thus all the world knew about it. The lady had styled him "His Highness" out of ignorance but now no person or nation can show disrespect to him, intentionally or unintentionally.

Similarly, the Indian community in the Transvaal is now faced with the question of its dignity. If it shows courage now, all it has suffered till today will be put down to its good sense. If it submits to the Act this time, it will no longer be taken as good manners, but as baseness and cowardice. For every nation, as for every individual, there are occasions when honour has to be fought for. The Transvaal Indians are now faced with such a situation. The whites were caught unawares but now wonder whether Indians have enough courage to face imprisonment. It is our repeated appeal to the Indian community that all the thirteen thousand Indians should with one voice proclaim the answer, "Yes, yes and yes." Cowards die many times, the valiant only once A cable from India says that, within six weeks, the plague took a toll of 4,51,892 lives. Instead of dying in such agony, what would it matter if an equal number had to die for the sake of their country? Is there anything that India could not achieve if Indians came forward in such large numbers to die for theircountry? But in the Transvaal, we are not faced with a comparable situation. All that needs to be done is to have courage to go to gaol and suffer a minor hardship. Is there any Indian who will shrink from this?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-5-1907

392. STRUGGLE FOR FRANCHISE IN ESTCOURT

Indians in Estcourt had claimed the right to vote at municipal elections, and the claim has been rejected by the Magistrate on the ground that, under the new [Natal] Municipal ACT, an Indian who does not enjoy the right to vote at political elections cannot have the municipal franchise either, that is, the rights of citizenship. This

judgement is altogether wrong. The Municipal Act has not yet been passed, and our fight against it is still going on. It is obvious that the Magistrate at Estcourt does not read this journal, although he gets it free. Otherwise he would not have given such a wrong judgement under an act which has not yet received the approval of the Imperial Government. It is now essential that Estcourt Indians make an appeal.

Having considered the matter carefully, we want to say that Estcourt Indians ought not to have taken this step without the approval of the Natal Indian Congress. This is not the time when any one section of the Indian community can act independently of the others. There are many grievances [Indians have] in Natal. It is imperative to put up a fight. If in the course of this struggle, a mistake is made even in one town, it may prove detrimental to the interests of the whole community. We believe that there was no need of such precipitate action in the matter of the municipal franchise. Efforts are being made to have the Bill—now being discussed in Britain—disallowed. The Estcourt case is likely to have an adverse effect [on our efforts]. We are now in a dilemma. If the case is dropped, we shall be disgraced; if on the other hand we go on with it and the final judgement is adverse, the act may receive [Imperial] assent. What difference does it make whether a few Indians get the vote or not? The right [to municipal franchise] must not be lost, because the loss of that right will degrade us. On the other hand, there is no indignity in desisting from the exercise of a right which we have. We hope that the Indian community, at all places in Natal, will profit from this incident and not take any steps without consulting the Congress. At the same time, we repeat that the appeal in the Estcourt case should be proceeded with. Natal Indians should remember that, if they wish to assert their claim to the municipal franchise, they should pay up the rates before the month is out.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-5-1907

393. CHURCHILL'S SPEECH

Speaking on the Colonial Conference, Mr. Churchill has declared that the people of South Africa have the freedom to make whatever laws they wish relating to Kaffirs and Asiatic immigration.

That means that the Colonies in South Africa have complete powers to regulate Asiatic immigration. All that will remain for the Imperial Government to do is occasionally to take a look at laws relating to Indians now residing in South Africa. But the new Transvaal Ordinance does not relate to immigration. And though it applies to the Indians already living there, the Imperial Government has given its assent to it. It follows from this that the local governments in South Africa will be able to attack the Indian community with impunity. The only weapon with which to ward off the attack is our resolution on gaol-going. As in the saying, 'there is no help like self-help, no water like that of rain', everything depends on our own strength and courage. Even by the road that we have taken we shall in the end arrive at the resolution on gaol-going; so far-sighted is the resolution and so obvious are its advantages.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-5-1907

394. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

NEW ACT

Last week I replied to a number of questions.[1] But more questions are being received. Most of these have been answered earlier. However, let me here answer them again, and I may be excused any repetition by those who have clearly followed earlier replies. The reader is requested to keep the previous number handy for reference.

WHAT DOES FREE DEFENCE BY GANDHI MEAN?

There have been many inquiries in this regard. Let me clarify the matter further. If anyone is prosecuted under the new Act, and if t he person concerned holds a valid permit or is otherwise entitled to reside in the Transvaal, Mr. Gandhi will defend him in the court free of charge. If the case is to be heard outside Johannesburg, the Association will pay Mr. Gandhi's railway fare; but if the place he is required to visit has made no contribution to the British Indian Association [funds] already, the Association will collect the dues. The

[1] *Vide* ''Johannesburg Letter", 18-5-1907.

defence will be in respect of the permit and the Government's refusal to issue a licence[1] when a new permit has not been taken out. That is, if a person does not hold a licence and is therefore arrested, he will not be defended free of charge. But a person who has been refused a licence for having failed to take out a new permit will be defended free of charge. The result of it will be that the person will ultimately have to go to gaol. Mr. Gandhi will not, with or without fees, defend those who do not desire a gaol sentence. A reference to the last number of *Indian Opinion*[2] will show in what manner the defence will be put forward. We recently heard that permits were being examined. If this is true, it is not being done under the new Act. If therefore anyone is arrested following such examination, he will not be defended free of charge. It has to be remembered that the case should fall under the new Act.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE BY PERSONS GOING TO DELAGOA BAY?

An Indian going to Delagoa Bay is required to obtain a pass from the Portuguese Consul and has often to visit even the Permit Office. The question has arisen whether such a person should seek the aid of the Permit Office. It is obvious that, even in this case, no one should do so. But no one can prevent a person from travelling to DeIagoa Bay. If at all the Portuguese Government should do so, he can always go *via* Durban, but he should not approach the Permit Office. However, the matter is being enquired into and I shall give more information later. Going to the Permit Office, however, is out of the question whatever happens.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE BY PERSONS RETURNING FROM DELAGOA BAY?

It is reported that, at Delagoa Bay, an Indian has to produce a pass from the British Consul before a railway ticket can be sold to him. I believe that this practice is illegal. The remedy lies in the hands of the Delagoa Bay Indians themselves. But what applies to Durban applies to Delagoa Bay also. That is to say, no one is at present to take

[1] The trader would naturally need to have a permit before his licence could be renewed.

[2] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 18-5-1907.

out new permits. Holders of old permits may come in only if they are prepared to go to gaol. Otherwise the best course will be not to enter the Transvaal for the present.

CAN ONE LEAVE THE TRANSVAAL?

A correspondent has asked whether an Indian who now leaves the Transvaal can return later, say, in June. According to the new Act, an Indian will, in this situation, have to take out a new permit. If he does not, he will have to go to gaol. Those, therefore, who have overcome the fear of imprisonment can boldly return. Those who are afraid had better stay out. If you are brave, you may come and go without fear.

WHEN ARE SHOPS TO BE CLOSED FOR THE DAY?

This question does not arise out of the Act. A letter from Machadodorp says that the police in the town require the Indian traders to close their shops early. If the police are doing this, it is illegal. But my advice to all Indian traders is that they should everywhere close their shops at the same time as the whites. We need not wait for legal compulsion. There is no doubt though that the necessary law will be passed in a few months. Municipalities have already been empowered to frame such bye-laws. Grace lies in doing a thing before we are forced to do it.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE ABOUT TEMPORARY PERMITS?

This question and a few others arising from it have been raised by a correspondent. I know that some temporary permits expire at the end of June. My advice is that the holders of temporary permits should leave the Transvaal before the expiry of the permit period. To the very end, it is essential to show that our struggle rests on truth alone. Those who are in the Transvaal by right ought to defend their honour stubbornly. I can think only of two exceptions in relation to this reply—the Imam of a mosque and the Hindu Shastri. These two have come in for imparting religious instruction. Had the new Act not come into force, they would have had no difficulty in getting permits for a further period. Now they cannot take out new permits, but they can prolong their stay after duly informing the Government—but only with the intention of going to gaol. They can argue that they neither carry on a trade nor have they a share in anyone's income and that their sole function is to impart religious instruction to their people. They cannot, therefore, leave. This argument does not,

however, apply to private persons who are here for business reasons. They may well be prepared to prove their courage by going to gaol, but I have to tell them respectfully that they may not enjoy the privilege of imprisonment.

Holders of temporary permits do not have the rights of refugees. They had come here for a temporary period and, at the end of it, are bound honestly to leave. If such temporary permit-holders desire to serve the country, they can remain outside the Transvaal, dedicate themselves to the service of the country, and go about telling other Indians of the miseries of the Transvaal Indians. They can thus render much service to the community as and when the occasion arises. He who wants to be of use will always have the opportunity, wherever he may be at the moment and in whatever condition.

AND OF OTHERS WHO ENTERED WITHOUT PERMITS AND OBTAINED THEM LATER

Some Indians entered without permits when in the beginning they were free to do so. Later, such persons were granted Resident passes, in exchange for which they eventually obtained permits. A correspondent inquires about the validity of these permits. The reply is that all such permits are valid. He also wants to know what orders will be passed in such cases. This question results from ignorance How can anyone order those who are determined to have nothing to do with the Permit Office? They are free and they will go to gaol to defend their freedom.

"GO TO GAOL"

I have received some letters containing exhortations to Indians to go to gaol. I am not sending these for publication. Today we need men who are themselves prepared to go to gaol. If they go to gaol themselves, there will be no need to advise others to do so; if one is not prepared to go to gaol, one's advice can have no effect on others. To those who have made this appeal my plea is that they should write and tell us what they propose to do themselves, so that their names can be published in the English and Gujarati sections of this journal.

WARNING TO HAWKERS

Regulations have been framed for hawkers all over the Transvaal, of which the following is a summary:

> A person carrying his goods in a wagon will be treated as a hawker, one who goes about on foot will be regarded as a

pedlar. The pedlar may have a wheelbarrow. The licence fee for a hawker is £5 10s and for a pedlar £5. In his application, every hawker should state his residential address and inform the authorities of any subsequent change in it. On his barrow or on his pack, the hawker or the pedlar, as the case may be, should display the words 'Licensed Hawker for Johannesburg Municipal Area'. Likewise, the room where the hawker's or pedlar's wares are stored should also display his name and the words [of the notice] If he issues any hand-bills, these too should bear these particulars No person can make over his licence to another, except when a servant who has been employed for hawking wares is relieved and another person engaged in his stead, the original license may, with the permission of the municipality, be made over to the new servant. A hawker may not stay at the same place for more than 20 minutes for purposes of his business, and he may not visit-the same place more than once in the course of a day. Hawking is prohibited on mining ground. A hawker cannot take his wares out of his barrow for display as in a shop. Garden produce can be sold by the grower or his servant without a licence, and in such a case the said regulations do not apply.

Regulations to this effect have been framed for the Johannes burg municipal area, and they will probably receive the Governor's sanction in a week or two. These regulations mean that no person with a hawking licence can stay at the same place. The President Street Market will henceforth be closed [to hawkers], that is, persons doing business there will need to have a shopkeeper's licence.

The regulations are of course harsh, but as they apply equally to whites and non-whites, nothing can be done about them. Similar regulations have been framed by the Krugersdorp municipality also. In effect, the municipality frankly says that, since most of the licence holders are Indians, there is no harm in making the regulations astringent as possible.

TRAMWAY REGULATIONS

At last, the tramway matter has been decided. The regulations which were opposed by the British Indian Association have now been passed and published in the *Gazette*. There are some good points about them. For example, the phrase "Coloured person" does not

include an Asiatic. The regulations cover other points besides, some of which are dealt with below:

The Town Council has the right to reserve any tram-car or any part of it for Europeans or Asiatics or Coloured persons. The Council has the authority to grant special permission to any person to travel by any tram-car. The servants accompanying white children can travel by all tram-cars. A servant is allowed to travel with his master by any tram-car that the master is authorized to use. The Council is bound to provide reasonable facilities for travellers of all classes.

Two points in these regulations deserve to be noted. One is that the servants of whites, however dark, can travel by the same car as their masters. The other is that, according to Section 20, dogs can be carried in the car meant for the whites, provide the conductor does not object. In other words, unlike dogs and black servants, a free Indian will not be free to travel by a tram-car of his choice unless a special permit has been obtained by him for that purpose. In reply to this, one may point out that the whites cannot travel in cars meant for the blacks either. The only difference, however is that, while the whites are ranked with the Queen Mother, Coloured persons and Indians are treated like the youngest housewife in the village. My advice is that, under such humiliating conditions, no one should ask for a permit. It all depends on us whether or not we continue to be treated as the youngest housewife in the village.

LOCATIONS

From the current issue of the *Gazette*, I find that the Locations at Christiana, Heidelberg, Potgietersrust, Rustenburg and Volkstroom have been made over to their respective municipalities. Locations at Roossenekal, Leysdorp, Amersfoort and other places have been closed down.

WASHERMEN AT NEW CLARE

The editor of this journal has sent to *The Sunday Times* a reply to its attack on the New Clare washermen.[1] The reply shows that the accusations made in *The Sunday Times* by "Mr. Volture" were all false. The editor claims that the water flowing from the spring is not dirty. The water used for washing is changed twice a day. Indian washermen do not get their work done on a contract basis. Their

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 28-4-1907.

houses are clean, and everything in them has been inspected by the municipality. Indian washermen hold certificates of efficiency from well-known Europeans. The editor has accordingly asked for an apology from the correspondent who wrote in *The Sunday Times*. In reply to this, the editor of *The Sunday Times* writes that the arguments of the editor of *Indian Opinion* are weighty and convincing. He wishes to publish a reply, but that "Mr. Volture" is ill and his reply may take a week or two. This shows that, for the present at any rate, *The Sunday Times* has suffered a defeat. For the information of those who may not know it, I should say that "Mr. Volture" is a pseudonym. It means vulture, the bird of prey. This human vulture had meant to eat up the Indian washermen, but it will not be wrong to say that for the present they have been rescued from its clutches by the editor of *Indian Opinion*.

BRAVE RITCH

A cable has been published in the newspapers here to say that Mr. Ritch has addressed a letter to the well-known paper, *The Times*. Therein he has smashed Mr: Curtis's argument[1]. He has put forward a strong argument in defence of the Indian community and shown how Mr. Chamney's Report is really in our favour. Mr. Ritch has been doing invaluable work. Day and night his mind is engaged in the same thought. He misses no opportunity of pleading our cause. Well-educated Indians should follow his example. It might be said that no one else would do as much work even if we paid him four times as much as Mr. Ritch receives from the Committee.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-5-1907

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 18-5-1907.

395. SPEECH AT MEETING OF CHINESE[1]

[JOHANNESBURG
May 26, 1907]

THE CHINESE AS PASSIVE RESISTERS

...On Sunday last, at the hall of the Transvaal Chinese Association, a large and representative meeting was held to consider the next step to be taken with regard to the new anti-Asiatic law. Mr. Quinn, Chairman of the Cantonese Club, presided, and the meeting was addressed by Mr. M. K. Gandhi, who had been specially invited to set forth the position. This he did, briefly and succinctly, pointing out that...the new law did not add to the security of those Asiatics [who were] rightly in the Transvaal, as had been so often alleged by the anti-Asiatic party and echoed by the uninformed general public, but really took away all their existing personal liberty, guaranteed under solemn Imperial pledges, substituting a restricted liberty, which no self-respecting subject of a civilized country could possibly accept...the only dignified defence of their rights that the Asiatics in the Transvaal could make was to ignore the compulsory clauses entailing re-registration, and submit themselves to the extreme penalty of the law, namely, liability to imprisonment; as also to boycott the Permit Office....[2]

Indian Opinion, 1-6-1907

396. LETTER TO "THE STAR"

JOHANNESBURG,
May 30, 1907

[TO
THE EDITOR
THE STAR
JOHANNESBURG]

SIR,

The arrival of General Botha and the fact that the Asiatic Registration Act, though it has received the Royal sanction, is still the subject-matter of correspondence between the Imperial Government

[1] This is extracted from "Johannesburg Jottings", which H. S. L. Polak, "Our Johannesburg Correspondent", contributed as a regular feature for *Indian Opinion*.

[2] The Chinese had pledged their support to the Fourth Resolution of the Indian mass meeting of September, 1906 and to the Second Resolution of the mass meeting of April, 1907 and also announced their intention of going to gaol if the Transvaal Asiatic Registration Act was enforced. *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 27-4-1907.

and the local Government, encourage me to appeal once more to your good sense and, through you, to that of the colonists. Now that the anti-Asiatic party has obtained what it wanted, is it impossible to arrive at a reasonable compromise and to save British Indians from being considered untrustworthy and feloniously inclined? the Act is not yet gazetted, and it need not be until the Government wishes to do so. I, therefore, suggest that, before it is gazetted, a form for new permits may be mutually agreed upon, and, in accordance with it, Indians and other Asiatics may be registered afresh in exchange for proper documents they may possess. If, then, all Asiatics thus voluntarily surrender their documents, there can be no occasion for submitting them to the degradation contemplated by the Act. If, however, there are Asiatics in the Colony who do not surrender their documents, the Act can be immediately gazetted, and be made applicable, by a short Bill, to them. Thus, those who are *bona fide* holders of permits and are honest will be automatically separated from those who are guilty.

I do not know whether you can see any flaw in this proposal, unless you think that the object of the legislation is not that illicit traffic in permits may be stopped, but that it is to, openly and boldly, put an unwarranted affront upon British Indians and other Asiatics. Let me remind you, before any such declaration is made, of Lord Ampthill's remarks:

> This is not a matter which only touches our honour. We are pledged to our fellow-citizens in India—pledged by the solemn declaration of the Sovereign, by the pronouncements of our statesmen, and by all that is implied in the whole method of our administration of that great dominion—to treat the people of India as fellow-citizens in every sense of the word. We invite them to be proud of their citizenship of the Empire. We tell them, again and again, that there is nothing to prevent their rising to the same positions as are held by Englishmen in India, and we imply, in all that we do for them and say to them, that, whenever they are under the British flag in any part of the world, they will be treated as British citizens.

Lord Lansdowne feels so keenly the humiliation in which British statesmen are placed by this Act that he questions whether to wound the susceptibilities of the whole Indian nation is not more injurious and imprudent than to allow the surreptitious entry of a few Indians into the country. But the proposal I have ventured to sketch above is just as effective against surreptitious: entry as may be by [*sic*] the Asiatic Act.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 8-6-1907

397. JURIES ON TRIAL

Ever since the birth of this journal, it has studiously restricted itself to questions affecting Indians in South Africa. We consider that, however desirable other questions may be from a journalistic standpoint, we must recognize our own limitations and not enter into questions of high policy, or questions that do not directly affect Indians in this country.

But there are exceptions to every rule. We feel we should be false to our profession, if we did not deal with the now celebrated Mtonga case[1], which has attracted so much attention. It rises from the platform of Native policy to that of humanity and, to a certain extent, the principle underlying it is applicable to Indians also. We, therefore, gladly make room for an extract from the extremely well-reasoned and humane leading article from the columns of *The Natal Mercury*. It constitutes an indictment of the jury system in particular when applicable to trials between whites and blacks. We join with our contemporary in its repudiation of the charge of the special ill-treatment of Natives levelled against Natal in some quarters and based on the abortion of justice in the Mtonga case. We believe that what happened in Natal is likely to happen, under similar circumsta-nces, in any part of South Africa, or in any country conditioned as South Africa is. Natal, no more than any other country, can claim a monopoly of jurymen fired with passion and prejudice, but the fact that instances like the Mtonga case happen in South Africa must waken the public conscience, and make those who are jealous of the reputation of South Africa seriously consider whether the time has not arrived to revise our ideas about the jury system. In a place like South Africa, where there is no leisured class and where people of all nationalities congregate, the jury system is about the worst that could be devised in connection with the administration of justice. The inherent condition of success of trial by jury is that the accused is tried by his equals. It is an insult to man's intelligence to contend that

[1] Mtonga, an African, was assaulted by certain persons on suspicion of having committed an offence. Tried later, he was fount guilty by the jury; but the Governor, convinced of his innocence, reprieved him.

there is any such trial in South Africa, when the question is as between whites and blacks.

When passions are roused, men who are not trained to examine facts and apply a well-balanced mind to the matters before them cannot possibly arrive at a just conclusion. Even in a well-settled and old place like Liverpool, possessing a homogeneous population with traditions to go by, it required a judge of the calibre of the late Justice Stephen to secure a verdict at the trial of Mrs. Haybrick. How is it possible, then, to get any satisfaction out of jurymen in a place like South Africa, where different nationalities are still in the melting pot, and a South African nation has yet to rise in the dim and distant future? We are no worshippers of the idol of equality, when there is no foundation for it. It is possible that any attempt to abolish the jury system, in cases where there are whites and blacks concerned, will be met by the cry of false equality. We hold that any Native or Coloured man who takes up a position of that description does not know real equality. All that can reasonably be claimed, today, by or for them is equality in the eye of the law. White people from different parts of Europe, who come to South Africa with no notion of Imperialism, cannot be expected either to think of Imperial obligations or other notions of justice and equal rights as between themselves and others whom they hold to be inferior, save from the dictates of whatever humanity there may be in them.

We hope, therefore, that no Coloured man or Asiatic, because our argument applies equally to Asiatics as to other Coloured people, will think of opposing the movement that the Natal Press has, from purely disinterested and just motives, inaugurated for the abolition of trial by jury in cases where there are European and Coloured people concerned. It would, indeed, be the best thing if trial by jury were abolished altogether, but it is such a time-honoured superstition that one can hardly expect public opinion to reject it altogether, nor will it be possible to make out a strong case against the institution so far as it may apply to whites only.

We believe that, if the matter is left where the Press has left it, no result will be achieved. The churches in South Africa are rightly supposed to be the custodians of the interests, we will not call them the rights, of the Natives in South Africa, and, though the immediate question has arisen in Natal, we feel that there should be among the

churches a simultaneous movement and a petition to the respective South African Governments for the complete abolition of trial by jury in cases as between white and Coloured men. We think, also, that such a movement on the part of the churches should be very widely supported by the Natives and the Coloured communities of South Africa.

Indian Opinion, 1-6-1907

398. WHAT SHOULD THE BRAVE DO?

March forward, losing no time;
Delay not, putting off the task from day to day.
The more you think, the greater will appear
The obstructions in the path.
"How can I break the loving bond of home?
What will happen to my people?"
So enslaved by domestic bonds,
How will he rush to battle?
As we pause and think, and think and pause,
All too suddenly the enemy descends on us.
Overwhelmed with fear and trembling,
To defend ourselves is a job.
Digging a well when the flames rage high—
This is but growing wise after the mischief is done,
To try and put up a bund when the floods begin.
How can it help?
Take up arms, and march together,
Spear in hand, roaring a challenge to the foe.

The new Transvaal law is still lowering and thundering. As the proverb goes, a thunderstorm seldom means rain and barking dogs seldom bite. But this new law will burst indeed, just as much as it thunders. It will be gazetted as soon as General Botha[1] returns from England. Let us, therefore, give further thought to the challenge that

[1] Premier of the Transvaal, 1907-10; of the Union of South Africa, 1910-9.

we have offered to that law through the gaol resolution[1].

We can see from the poem quoted at the top of this article that, when we are about to embark on an adventure; it is useless to go on thinking of the consequences. Those rushing to a battle-field do not think of what will happen to their family or business. The Indian people have always placed their trust in God alone. Before that God we took an oath and resolved not to submit to the new law. The proper time to think was before the Resolution was passed, and, indeed, we did think then. But now the time for thought is gone. Now is the time to be firm in our resolve. Sheikh Saadi[2] says in *Gulistan* that, if man were to think of the Giver of his daily bread quite as much as he does of his bread, his place in heaven would doubtless be higher even thanthat of the angels.In the same way, we have now to complete the task we have taken up, thinking not of our bread, our family and our business, but of Him who preserves all and is the cause of their progress. Even if everyone forsakes us, so long as we go on doing our work, trusting the Master who lives in the hearts of us all, He will never forsake us.

Let us take the example of our rulers. When the Boers crossed swords with the mighty British, the late Mr. Kruger[3] did not think of his family or wealth. General Joubert fell fighting. General Smuts[4], too, fought desperately. Dr. Krause[5] suffered imprisonment for two years and all his property at Johannesburg was ruined. Mr. De Villiers, who now heads the Department of Justice, was thrown into prison. He received bullet wounds in his leg. General Botha fought to the very last. The Boer women too endured many hardships with quiet strength and gave courage to their sons and husbands. The result is that now the Boers have secured what belongs to them.

We know what the English themselves have always done. John Hampden[6] freed the people from their hardships and was ruined

[1] The famous "Fourth Resolution" of September 1906; *vide* "The Mass Meeting", 11-9-1906.

[2] (*c.* 1184-1292), a Persian poet.

[3] (1825-1904), President of the Transvaal, 1883-1900. *Vide* also "The Late Mr. Kruger", 23-7-1904.

[4] (1870-1950), Colonial Secretary, 1907-10; Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa, 1919-24.

[5] Public Prosecutor, Johannesburg. Gandhiji refers to him and his brother, the State Attorney, in the *Autobiography*, Part II, Ch. XIII.

[6] (1594-1643), patriot and champion of parliamentary rights in England. *Vide*

in the process. Lord Colin Campbell[1] had just returned from China thoroughly worn out; but no sooner was an order given to him, in 1858, than he left again. He did not enjoy even an hour's rest. Eight near relatives of Lord George Hamilton[2] offered themselves for service in the Boer War. The son of the late Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury[3], was in Mafeking[4] during the siege. The only son of Lord Roberts[5] lost his life in the battle, and today Lord Roberts has no male heir.

As compared with these examples, the task before the Transvaal Indians is a small affair. They do not have to oppose a Government or to take up arms. They have only to go to gaol and put up with some trouble, or at the most suffer some loss of business. Shall we be afraid to do this? We on our part have been hoping that the Indian community will not be afraid of doing even more. "Fear God alone; then there is no need to fear anyone else"—this is what all the scriptures teach us.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 1-6-1907

399. A PRIZE OF £1

The title of this note is "A Prize", but the reader is not to think mainly of the prize. For Indians today it is the season of the new law and the gaol resolution. Hence, any Indian who sends us the finest poem in Gujarati or Hindustani (Urdu or Hindi) composed by him in support of the gaol resolution will be awarded a prize as above. We hope that no one who is used to writing poetry will fail to compete. The poem should be sent not so much for the prize as for the honour. The following are the conditions for the competition:

"Tyler, Hampden and Bunyan", 20-10-1906.

[1] (1792-1863), served in the Crimean War, 1853-6; took over as Commander-in-Chief of India in 1857. The references to China and 1858 appear to be slips for Crimea and 1857.

[2] Secretary of State for India, 1895-1903

[3] (1830-1903), Prime Minister of England, 1885-6, 1886-92 and 1895-1902.

[4] Town in Cape Province, besieged during the Boer War, 1899-1902; *vide* "Speech at Calcutta Meeting", 19-1-1902.

[5] (1832-1914), Commander-in-Chief in India, 1885-93; in South Africa, 1899-1900 and 1901-4.

(1) The poem should not exceed 20 lines.

(2) The words should be simple.

(3) Though there is no restriction on the *raga*[1], the metre *lavani*[2] is preferable as a medium for the heroic sentiment.

(4) The poem should be written in ink in a clear hand and on only one side of the sheet.

(5) The name and address of the writer should be given at the end of the poem.

(6) The poem should cite modern and ancient examples of bravery, Muslim as well as Hindu. Others too may be included.

(7) The poem should contain the weighty reasons that have been advanced from time to time for adhering to the gaol resolution.

(8) The poem should reach Phoenix not later than the morning of June 12 or our Johannesburg office (Post Box No. 6522) on June 14.

The result will be announced in our issue dated the 22nd. We hope that many will compete.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-6-1907

400. UNREST IN INDIA

Many exciting things are happening in all parts of the world. We hear people everywhere speaking of "Our Country". The people of Egypt proclaim, "Egypt for Egyptians". The Chinese have massacred many Europeans in Hong Kong. The negroes declare, "We should have our rights." Self-government has been established in Iran. Afghanistan has grown strong. And now India. There too we hear the thunderous cry of "India for Indians". Towards this end, efforts are in progress everywhere to bring together Hindus and Muslims. In the Punjab, a Muslim has started a paper named *Hindu-Muslim*, and he urges the two communities to become united. From the other side, agitation is being carried on by papers like *Bande Mataram* for ending British rule. The proceedings against the *Punjabee* led to

[1] Melody or tune

[2] A musical composition

riotous demonstrations in which prominent Indians took part. Some of them were arrested. Some will be deported from the country, and some will be imprisoned. Highly educated gentlemen like Lala Lajpat Rai[1] were among those involved. The question should naturally arise as to what we should do at such a time. Though we can do nothing, thoughtful men should consider what attitude they should adopt.

Should the British be thrown out of India? Can it be done, even if we wish to do so? To these two questions we can reply that we stand to lose by ending British rule and that, even if we wanted to, India is not in a position to end it. By this we do not suggest that the British Raj is very powerful and that India has had incalculable advantages from it, or that India could not, if it so willed, remove British rule. But we hold that, whatever the motives of the British in coming to India, we have much to learn from them. They are a brave and considerate people, and are on the whole honest. Blind where self-interest is concerned, they give unstinted admiration for bravery wherever found. They are a powerful nation, and India enjoys not a little protection under them. It is not, therefore, desirable that British rule in India should disappear.

Should we then repudiate such men as Lala Lajpat Rai? That, too, is not possible. In our view, the men of the Punjab and the others who carry on the agitation are brave men. They are patriots and endure hardships for the sake of the country. To that extent they command our respect. However, they appear to be in error in so far as they want to eliminate British rule. In pursuit of this end, they appear determined to suffer any punishment the law may inflict on them. We have nothing to blame them for. For, their sufferings will lead to India's happiness. They oppose British rule because of its drawbacks. Because of that rule, India is becoming poorer. To some extent, British rule is an important cause of even the plague in India. It adds to the ill-will between Hindus and Muslims. It is also because of that rule that we have been reduced to such a low state and live like cowards. Exasperated by these evils, some Indian leaders find fault with the entire British nation. Their revolt will probably remove these draw-backs to some extent. Moreover, since they are our own fellow-countrymen, we ought not to nurse ill feeling against them. Rather, we

[1] (1865-1928), Indian patriot and President, Indian National Congress, 1920, popularly known as "the Lion of the Punjab".

ought to admire their heroism.

The fault, in fact, lies with us. If we remove the fault, British rule, which is a cause of misery today, can become a source of happiness. Public spirit is not likely to grow among us without western education and contacts with the West. If that spirit grows, the British may grant our demands even without a fight, and may leave India if we want them to do so. The British colonies are what they are, not because the people there are white, but because they are brave and would take offence if their rights were not granted. That is why they are regarded as members of one family.

In short, we have no quarrel with British rule. We have to be proud of the courage of those who have been creating this unrest. Let us show the same courage ourselves, but instead of desiring the end of British rule, let us aspire to be as able and spirited as the Colonists are, and demand and secure the rights we want. And at the same time, let us learn and follow the good points of British rule, and so become more capable.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 1-6-1907

401. INDIAN PRINCES

His Majesty the late Amir Abdur Rahman[1] has said:

> During my visit I saw one sorry sight which affected my mind very much. The dress of the poor Indian princes resembled that of women. They had diamond pins in their hair, pendants in their ears, bands on their wrists, gold chains round their necks, and other ornaments such as women wear. Their trouserbelts were studded with jewels and the pendants, hanging from their waistribbons, almost reached their feet. Theyallowed in ignorance, indolence and luxury. They little knew what was happening in the world or what it contained. They passed their time in consuming wine and opium. They believed that their status would be lowered if they went on foot.

This is, for the most part, a true picture. It can be said that there

[1] (1844-1901), King of Afghanistan, 1881-1901.

are Indian princes who do not live in this manner. But we are not concerned with them at the moment. The fact is that the state of affairs described above is one powerful cause of our miserable plight.

It is not only the princes that live in such a base manner. Among the people also this state of things is seen often enough. Our comment mainly refers to the Hindus in India. The so-called big men and their children are mostly recognized by the marks vividly described by the late Amir. Luxuries, ornaments, garments of silk or brocade—these are seen to be quite common with them. If the so-called modern people do not wear ornaments, etc., they satisfy their desire in other ways. It is no use blaming any one section for this. Customs coming down from ancient times die hard.

But we Indians in South Africa have to learn the lesson that all of us, big or small, should free ourselves from these faults. The condition of our country and of ourselves is so unsatisfactory that, at present, we are in a state of continuous mourning. How can we enjoy comfort or pleasure, when every week thousands of our countrymen die of plague or starvation? We are convinced that it is necessary for every Indian to colour his mind with the yellow of a monk's robe. His outfit should display none of the evils of jewellery, silk, gold, etc.

KING OF ENGLAND

Our London Letter in this issue lends weighty support to what we have said above. King-Emperor Edward's grandson is 13 years old today. From now on he is being made to go through a rigorous training. The Prince is required to study at school with other boys and he will be served the same simple food that the others get. A people ruled over by such a King does what the King does. Is it any wonder that such a people are prosperous? We are not to envy them, but to become like them. Let it not be argued that they, too, have their pleasures and luxuries. Such a thought bespeaks indolence. They enjoy themselves after their work is done, and their luxuries become them well enough. Even so, we are not to imitate their weakness for a life of pleasure and comfort. Like the swan[1], we should separate good from evil.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-6-1907

[1] According to legend, the swan has the capacity to separate milk from water.

402. JOHANNESBURG LETTER[1]

NEW LAW: MORE QUESTIONS

Questions about this law are still coming in. I am glad of it, and all questions so received will be dealt with in this journal.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE BY THOSE HOLDING DUTCH REGISTERS?

According to the notice in the *Gazette*, an Indian has made an application to the Permit Office on the basis of his register[2]. In that connection, Mr. Mahomed Daoji Patel from Wakkerstroom makes the following enquiries:

(1) Can it be taken as a certainty that the application will be accepted by the Permit Office?

(2) If it is accepted, should the applicant withdraw it, since it violates the Fourth Resolution?

(3) In case the application is withdrawn, will the police arrest him?

(4) If he is arrested and the magistrate orders him to leave the Transvaal, what is he to do?

(5) If on his acting thus a case is instituted against him, will Mr. Gandhi come here to defend him?

The answers are: Neither this man nor anyone else in his situation need withdraw the application so long as the new law has not been gazetted. And it is also unnecessary now to proceed in the matter of the said application. The application will have to be withdrawn as soon as the new law is gazetted. If the matter comes up before the magistrate, the said applicant or others in his position who a rightful holders of registers will be defended by Mr. Gandhi. As for the nature of the defence, please refer to earlier news-letters. The boycott of the Permit Office means that henceforth we shall have nothing to do with that Office. The cases of the Transvaal residents that may be pending in that Office need not be withdrawn. That step is to be taken immediately after the law is gazetted.

[1] Literally, the tide reads "News-Letter". These despatches were published weekly in *Indian Opinion* as "From Our Johannesburg Representative". The first despatch appeared on March 3, 1906; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 26-2-1906.

[2] In Gujarati, registration certificate has been referred to as "register".

WHAT IF MR. GANDHI IS SENT TO GAOL FIRST?

A correspondent asks what is to be done for defence if Mr. Gandhi is imprisoned first. It is a relevant question. But one mustknow what the defence by Mr. Gandhi is going to be. The defence will only state that it was upon his advice that people had taken the firm decision to go to gaol, and that he (Mr. Gandhi), therefore, deserved to be sentenced first. If such a defence by him is rendered unnecessary and he is straight away taken to gaol first, the defence would have already been made. The main aim of Mr. Gandhi's presence is to keep up the courage of the accused. People will have nothing to fear if, fortunately for the community and for Mr. Gandhi, he is sent to gaol first. Even while in gaol, Mr. Gandhi can put up a defence, that is, he can pray to God to give courage to all Indians. At this stage, I should also add that it is mainly because the new law is humiliating that all Indians accept the gaol resolution. Thus, the only conclusion is that every Indian must maintain his self-respect.

WHERE ARE FUNDS TO SUPPORT WOMEN AND CHILDREN?

The person raising this question asks how maintenance can be provided when the Association's funds are meagre. The law has not yet been gazetted. As soon as it is, leaders will visit every place to explain matters to the people and raise contributions. Moreover, leaders in Natal and East London have already communicated their willingness to help. It has also been arranged that if Mr. Gandhi should be imprisoned, Mr. Polak, the editor of *Indian Opinion*, will go from place to place collecting funds, encouraging people and explaining the position to them. Some whites also have indicated their willingness to help.

GERMISTON LOCATION

Passes, like those of the Kaffirs[1], used to be issued to Indians at the Germiston Location. In this connection, the British Indian Association had addressed a letter to the local Government and to this a reply has been received stating that such passes would not be issued in future. Those living in the Locations may, therefore, get their passes framed and keep them as exhibits. If they are asked again to take out

[1] A term by which the native African Communities in South Africa were described. The Expression, however, is no longer in use .

such passes, it will be their duty not to do so; they can give a plain `no' in reply.

STRIKE OF MINE LABOURERS

We have been talking of boycotting the Permit Office and going to gaol. The white labourers in the mines have struck work with a view to getting higher wages. The result was that in about ten mines work came to a standstill. Everyone knows that these miners live from hand to mouth. Some of them are married. For the sake of their rights, they have walked out of the mines, giving up their present income, without bothering about their families and their means of livelihood. There is no question of their self-respect having been wounded. Yet, for the sake of what they believe to be their right, they have girded up theirloins against the authorities and the fabulously rich mine-owners. Whether their demands are reasonable or not need not be considered just now. On this occasion, it is their spirit and their daring that we are to think of and emulate.

ENCOURAGEMENT PROM EAST LONDON AND KIMBERLEY'S WRONG VIEW

The President of the Association has received a letter of sympathy from the Indians of East London. Mr. A. G. Ismail hopes that all Indians will remain firm in disobeying the law and will go to gaol. He also says that help will be sent from there. On the other hand, there is a telegram from Kimberley expressing sympathy but asking the Indian community to think well before taking the step of going to gaol. This is a wrong view. The Indian community believes in God, and will not trifle with Him. Moreover, it was after mature deliberation that the gaol resolution was passed in September. It is the duty of every Indian, therefore, to give us, residents of the Transvaal, full encouragement and to pray to God to sustain our courage at the time of our real test.

INDIANS IN GERMAN EAST AFRICA

The Star correspondent in England states in a cable that, at a meeting of the German Colonial Society in Germany, some members said that Indian merchants in German East Africa harmed the interests of small European traders. The Indians cheated the Kaffirs. It was they who incited the rebellion. Therefore, laws like those enacted against them in South Africa should be enacted in German East Africa, too. The Society's committee has reported that, though it was

possible to level some charges against the Indian traders, their presence in the land had on the whole proved to be an advantage. It was likely that any attempt to make a law for deporting them would lead to complications with England. Some other members who were acquainted with the situation prevailing in the Colony defended the Indian traders.

PENALTY FOR GIVING FALSE EVIDENCE

A washerman named Ponnusami was put up before Sir William Smith for giving false evidence. Ponnusami had made unfounded allegations against other Indians who, he knew, were innocent. The jury found Ponnusami guilty. The judge sentenced him to rigorous imprisonment for 18 months. Those Indians who are not afraid of giving false evidence should take a warning from this case.

MOVEMENT TO CLOSE SHOPS AT FIXED HOUR

A proposal for the closing of shops at a fixed hour was discussed in the Johannesburg Town Council on the 22nd [May]. Owing to the many divergent views expressed at the meeting, the members could not agree on a solution. They therefore decided thatthe whole matter should go to the Parliament for decision. The Council's proposal was also forwarded to the Parliament at the same time. The proposal provides in effect that ordinarily shops should close at 6 p.m., on Wednesdays at I p.m. and on Saturdays at .9 p.m. On holidays they should remain closed altogether. When shops are closed, the hawkers too should stop going on their rounds. The law to this effect has not yet been passed, but one may take it that it is about to be. The Indian who concedes the need for early closure of shops and acts accordingly of his own free will, will find himself at an advantage over others.

LAND TAX IN JOHANNESBURG

The tax on land is fixed this time at a penny and a quarter per £100. The tax will be calculated for the period from January 1, 1907 to June 30, 1907, and will be due on June 24, 1907. Those who fail to pay it by that date will have to pay interest at the monthly rate of one pound per £100.

CHINESE MEETING AND GAOL RESOLUTION

Last Sunday a meeting of the Chinese Association was held in its hall. About 300 Chinese, mostly merchants, were present. Mr. M. Quinn took the chair. Mr. Gandhi also attended by invitation.[1] Explaining the position, he said that the Chinese and the Indians had been classed together under the new law. The law humiliated the Asiatics and it should not therefore be accepted by the Chinese. The various questions that are answered in this letter were all raised and answered at the meeting. In the end, it was decided that every Chinese should declare on oath, in accordance with his religion, that in no case would he take out a new permit and that, if necessary, he would be prepared to face imprisonment.

PERMIT CASE

A permit case has been going on for some days past against an Indian named Lala. It came up for hearing on the 27th before Mr. Wenderburg. Superintendent Vernon deposed as follows:

> I have the power to ask for permits from people. It is also my duty to investigate the rights of people who want to enter with permits. On April 20, I saw Lala near my office, and he said to me, "I wish to work with you. Many men desire to take out permits. If you supply me information about them, both of us will make much money. I shall charge everyone £20 of which I shall give you £8. There are many Indians and Chinese here with false permits. If you get their permits set right, I shall pay you £20. Here is a permit; put yourinitials on it and pass it. That way you will earn £400 a month, and I £200. Mr. Harris too will get £200. My information is that irregular forms are current in Johannesburg and that many Indians are without permits." Then I asked him to come again the following day. He did come, and after some talk with him, I rang the bell and got him arrested. As he was being taken to the Charge Office, Lala said, "Sir, you have missed a golden opportunity of making money."

Constable Harris also deposed as above. Mr. Chamney[2], giving evidence,. said:

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Meeting of Chinese", 26-5-1907.

[2] Protector of Immigrants, later Registrar of Asiatics, *vide* "Johannesburg

My duty is to scrutinize all applications for permits. A permit would be very rarely granted if the police report were unfavourable. My decision in the matter would be final, though the Governor has the power to alter it. The applications of Indians are placed by me before the Colonial Secretary. Lala came to me twice. He said that some Indians had false permits. Once I had allowed him to come by rail without a ticket, as he said that he would give me some information. But he brought none.In his deposition, Lala said:

An Indian approached me for a permit I said "no" to him. Then he showed me a permit which was not in order. Thereupon, I went to Mr. Chamney and told him that the man had to pay £30 for the permit. Mr. Chamney asked me to take the man to his office. Then I went to Mr. Vernon and offered him money so as to be able to give information to Mr. Chamney. My intention was to know how false permits were being issued, for I was likely to get a reward for giving information about them. I am a loyal subject of His Majesty the King-Emperor and had hoped that for my loyalty I would get a Government job. No definite amount had been fixed. Harris had said that one Indian had agreed to pay £100. Before I had made up my mind, I was arrested.

The Public Prosecutor asked Lala questions about a letter received from Pretoria. Lala replied that the letter had not been correctly translated. Mr. Thompson, therefore, asked for a week's time again and the case was adjourned to June 4.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-6-1907

403. SERVANTS OF INDIA

An Indian savant has written in *The Indian Sociologist* proposing the establishment of a society of servants of India. We give here a summary of what he has said.

That India should become united and independent is an idea that many Indians now understand and cherish. But the moral energy needed to achieve this aim is wanting. Those who would serve their country should first realize that one's life is not to be spent in pampering oneself with easy living, but that it is to be used in doing

Letter", 26-6-1907.

one's duty. The population of India comprises one-fifth of the world's population. The task of promoting its uplift belongs to "the servants of India". These servants are the trustees of the Indian people. They should give up the desire for wealth, status and physical comforts, and dedicate their lives to India. Fear of every kind must be overcome. Such service should be regarded as part of one's religion. Men of such patriotism will be able to imbue the people with enthusiasm by their actions rather than by their words.

Besides ardour, knowledge and wisdom will also be required. Hence "the Servants of India" should know the history of India. They should understand what India needs now. They should also study the history of other countries.

This enthusiasm and knowledge cannot remain fresh for long in a man burdened with the responsibilities of a family. A true servant will need to observe total celibacy. Those who are married but wish to render service to the country can train the members of their families to take up the same kind of work. Indian women are ignorant. It is very necessary to awaken patriotism in them. But those, who are not married and wish to render service as explained above will find it best not to marry. The great patriot Mazzini[1] used to say that it was to his country that he was married.

In conclusion, he who wants to be a servant of the people needs faith. He should not worry as to where he would get his next meal from. God will provide for all His creatures.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 1-6-1907

404. TELEGRAM TO TAYOB

[JOHANNESBURG,]
June 1, 1907

TAYOB[2]
CARE GOOL
CAPE TOWN

WHY NO REPLY 21ST[3]? REPLY SHARP.

GANDHI

From the handwritten draft: S. N. 3835

[1] (1805-72), Italian patriot; *vide* "Joseph Mazzini", 22-7-1905.
[2] A leading Indian of Cape Town.
[3] This communication is not available.

405. LETTER TO PRIME MINISTER'S SECRETARY[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
June 1, 1907

THE SECRETARY TO
RIGHT HON'BLE THE PRIME MINISTER
PRETORIA

SIR,

As the Asiatic Registration Act is still the subject of correspondence between the Imperial Government and the local Government, I have been directed by my Association to seek an interview with the Prime Minister in order to submit to him a proposal which might obviate the necessity of gazetting the Act. In any case, my Association would be deeply grateful, should General Botha find time to receive the deputation on behalf of my Association before any further steps are taken in connection with the Act.

I shall, therefore, be obliged if you will kindly ascertain whether and when it will be suitable for the Prime Minister to receive a small deputation on behalf of my Association.[2]

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant
ESSOP ISMAIL MIA
ACTING CHAIRMAN,
B. I. A.[3]

Prime Minister's Archives, Pretoria: File 14/1/1907

406. HONEST VIEWS

We are glad that Mr. C. P. Robinson, M. L. A., has been telling his constituents some home truths, and has not hesitated to handle an unpopular subject in the right spirit. Mr. Robinson is of opinion that

[1] This was reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 22-6-1907.

[2] The Prime Minister, however, did not receive the deputation. *Vide* "Letter to Prime Minister's Secretary", 12-6-1907.

[3] British Indian Association, Johannesburg.

the practice of the Licensing Officers in discriminating between Indian applicants and others to the disadvantage of the former is reprehensible and unjust, especially when it is a matter of existing trade rights. Mr. Robinson also thinks that, if the Colony wishes to deal with the Indian question, it should do so in a straightforward, bold and honest manner. We congratulate him on having ranged himself so honourably on the side of justice and equity. If all our legislators would adopt the same bold attitude, the Colony would soon rid itself of a great deal of cant and hypocrisy.

Indian Opinion, 8-6-1907

407. THE CAPE IMMIGRATION ACT

We draw attention to the gruesome story a correspondent from Mafeking tells about the working of the Cape Immigration Restriction Act. According to our correspondent, Indians who have returned to India, leaving their businesses ten years old and having landed property at the Cape, find it difficult to return if they are not in possession of certificates of domicile taken out by them prior to their departure, and that, similarly, Indians having been resident for a number of years find it difficult to obtain such certificates, on leaving. He adds that when they are issued, they are tenable only for one year, so that if an Indian returns to his adopted home in the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope a day later than the period given in thecertificate, he would be a prohibited immigrant. A system such as this can only be described as a deliberate and cruel attempt to drive Indians out of the Cape without having to pay them any compensation whatsoever. The remedy is largely in the hands of the Cape Indians, and we warn the various associations there that they will be responsible to the community should the threatened disaster befall British Indians, and should they, five years hence, find that there are very few Indians to be found at the Cape. We would advise our correspondent to continually address the Indian associations at Cape Town until they are roused to action from their apparent lethargy.

Indian Opinion, 8-6-1907

408. THE ASIATIC REGISTRATION ACT[1]

A TERRIBLE CONTRAST

Whilst Indians are showing their firm determination not to submit to the Asiatic Registration Act, it is as well to understand their objection to it. I, therefore, propose to show in parallel columns the state that they are in now and that in which they would be under the new law.

NOW	UNDER THE NEW LAW
1. Malays are subject to Law 3 of 1885.	1. They are exempted from the new law. Many Indians have Malay wives and relatives. The position of such Indians when they meet their Malay relatives can be better imagined than described.
2. Every Asiatic in possession of a permit *bona fide* obtained is a full-fledged and lawful resident of the Transvaal.	2. He becomes dispossessed of this title and the burden of showing that the permit lawfully held by him was not fraudulently obtained is thrown on him to entitle him to receive the new registration certificate.
3. An Asiatic child born since the 31st day of May, 1902 in the Orange River Colony, is entitled to enter and remain in the Transvaal.	3. Such child is debarred.
4. Present permits held by Asiatics entitle them to enter and reside in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony. Whether these are of any use for going into the Orange River Colony is not the question.	4. This right, so far as the permit can give it, is taken away.
5. Asiatics holding permits	5. These are not allowed.

[1] This appeared as "Specially Contributed". For the text of the Act as it was finally passed, *vide* Appendix V.

to reside in the Orange River Colony are in a position to enter the Transvaal on the strength thereof.	
6. Present permits cannot be changed without the consent of the holders.	6. They are subject to alteration at the will of the Government.
7. Asiatic children are not required to take out permits.	7. The guardian of such child is bound, under heavy penalty, to have particulars of identification of: such child, no matter how young, endorsed on his registration. When the child reaches the age of 8 years, the guardian is bound to again approach the Registrar and take out registration for such child, furnishing further particulars as to identification, etc.
8. Minors who are at present in the Transvaal are entitled to remain without a permit, and are not liable to leave the country on attaining majority.	8. All such boys on reaching the age of 16 are liable to be deported unless they obtain from the Registrar registration certificates, the granting of which is at his discretion.
9. No Asiatic is bound to furnish particulars of identification	9. Even a Kafir policeman may demand production of certificate and particulars of identi fication, which may be fixed by regulation from time to tirne. Such policeman may, notwithstanding, take the Asiatic to the nearest police station, where the same inquiry may be repeated, and, if the Officer at the station is not satisfied, he may detain the Asiatic in the cell overnight.
10. An Asiatic can	10. No Asiatic may receive

demand a trade licence as a right against payment without production of permit.	such licence unless he produces his registration certificate and furnishes means of identification, as may be prescribed by regulation. If, there- fore, there are partners in any Asiatic firm, the Licensing Officer may insist upon the presence of all the parties and submit them to a humiliating examination before giving them their licence.
11. Any Asiatic is free to employ any other Asiatic.	11. Any Asiatic who brings into the Colony an Asiatic under the age of 16 (even his son!) without a permit for him, or who employs such child, is liable to be heavily fined or sent to gaol, and to have his own right to reside in the Transvaal cancelled.
12. The Registrar, at pre-sent, has fairly strong authority.	12. The Registrar practically becomes the master of Asiatics with almost unlimited power over their personal liberty.
13. Asiatics who come in possession of certificates belonging to others commit no crime.	13. Asiatics having such certificates (evidently a father having his son's register) are bound to deliver same by post under pain of being fined £50 or, in default, sent to gaol.

ADDITIONAL POINTS TO BE NOTED

l. The new law does not apply to Kaffirs, to Cape Boys, and Christian subjects of the Turkish Empire, whereas it applies to the Mahomedan subjects of that Empire, and it thus insults Indians and their religion in a cold-blooded manner. It reduces them to a state of serfdom although belonging to civilized countries. It reduces them to a position lower than that of the Kaffirs, Cape Boys and Malays.

2. It puts a premium on fraud. It might have occurred to the framers of the law that there is nothing to prevent an Asiatic

impersonating a Malay or Cape Boy.

3. It opens up a fertile field for permit agents to prey upon harmless Asiatics. It must be well known to the Permit authorities that Asiatics are not, as a rule, capable of filling in complicated applicationforms, being ignorant of the ways of Government departments and easily terrorized. At the very least, therefore, assuming that Indians and Chinese combined would make 12,000 applicants, they would be robbed of £36,000, counting the fee at £3 per head on an average.

Who, then, can wonder if Asiatics prefer gaol to submission to such an extraordinary law and to such extortion? Verily, the whole of the Transvaal would to them become, during their residence therein, a wretched gaol. It does, indeed, need the intoxication of power to blind one to the wretched state of misery to which the new law reduces Asiatics.

Indian Opinion, 8-6-1907

409. NEW OBNOXIOUS LAW

Futile is strength devoid of courage,

Doomed is a house divided;

Naught is wealth without knowledge,

And evil the use of learning by the wicked.

A summary of this Act was published in our issue of September 1[1906]. Even so, we give here a more detailed translation, so that people may form a correct judgment on the real nature of the Act. Between the summary of the Act published by us in September and the Act that has now been passed, there is some difference that is worth noting. The Act as it stands now is even more anti-Indian than the original version.

1. Law No. 3 of 1885 will remain in force with modifications that follow.
2. The term “Asiatic” will mean Indians, coolies, and Muslim subjects of Turkey. It will not include Malays and the Chinese who had come in as indentured labourers. (There are other definitions, of Registrar, etc., which are not given here.)
3. Every Asiatic lawfully residing in the Transvaal must

register himself. There will be no fee for such registration.

Asiatics of the following description will be deemed lawful residents of the Transvaal:

(a) Any Asiatic who holds a permit under the Permit Act, unless such permit was fraudulently obtained. (Temporary permits are not covered by this.)

(b) Any Asiatic resident and actually in the Transvaal on the 31st of May, 1902.

(c) Any Asiatic born in the Transvaal after the 31st of May, 1902.

4. Every Asiatic resident in the Transvaal at the date of the taking effect of this Act shall apply for registration to such officer, at such place and before such date as may be prescribed by the Colonial Secretary. Every Asiatic who enters the Transvaal after the date of the taking effect of this Act, who has not previously been registered thereunder, shall apply for registration within eight days of his entry.

(a) It is not necessary to make an application under this clause for a child under the age of eight years.

(b) For the registration of a child above eight years and under sixteen years, the application shall be made by his guardian and, if not so made, shall be made by such child within one month after attaining the age of sixteen years.

5. The Registrar shall consider the applications of Asiatics who are lawful residents, ‘and register every such applicant whose application may be approved by him.

If the Registrar rejects the application of any Asiatic, he will give to the person concerned at least fourteen days’ notice to appear before a magistrate. If he fails to appear at the time specified, or having appeared fails to satisfy the magistrate as to his right to remain in the Transvaal, the magistrate shall order such Asiatic to leave the Transvaal if he is above sixteen years of age. On the other hand, if the magistrate is satisfied that the Asiatic concerned is lawfully resident in the Transvaal, he shall order the Registrar to issue him the certificate of registration.

6. Any Asiatic who is the guardian of a child under eight shall, upon making application for registration on his own

behalf, supply to the Registrar such particulars and furnish such means of identification in respect of the child as may be prescribed by regulation. If the applicant is himself registered, such particulars shall be noted on the register. Within one year of the child attaining the age of eight, the guardian concerned shall make application for registration on behalf of the child at the office of the Resident Magistrate of the district in which he resides.

An Asiatic who is the guardian of a child born in the Transvaal shall apply for registration on behalf of the child within one year of the child reaching the age of eight.

(a) If the guardian does not apply as required above, he shall if required by the Registrar or the Resident Magistrate make such application at any later date.

(b) If the guardian does not apply, or if the application made by the guardian is rejected, the application for registration shall be made by the child within one month after reaching the age of sixteen. The Resident Magistrate at whose office such applica-tion is made shall cause the application along with the relevant documents to be forwarded to the Registrar who shall, if satis-fied that the same is in order, issue a certificate

7. of registration.When the guardian has not, as required above, furnished the particulars of a child under the age of eight years and has not made application for registration on behalf of the child after he had attained the age of eight years, the application shall be made by the child within one month after he attains the age of sixteen, and the Registrar may issue a certificate of registration in his discretion.

8. Any person who shall fail to make application for registration as required by this Act shall be liable to a fine not exceeding £100 and, in default of payment, to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period not exceeding three months.

Any person who brings into the Transvaal an Asiatic under the age of sixteen years not lawfully resident in the Transvaal, and any person who shall employ such child, shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable to the penalties mentioned above and to cancellation of his certificate of registration, in addition to which he will be ordered to leave the Transvaal. If he does not leave the Transvaal, he will be liable

to a fine or to imprisonment, as provided in the law.

Any Asiatic over the age of sixteen years who is found in the Transvaal without a registration certificate after such date as may be notified by the Colonial Secretary will be ordered to leave the Transvaal, and if he does not leave the Transvaal, shall be liable to a fine or to imprisonment.

If an Asiatic who has failed to make application for registration shall satisfy the magistrate that such failure was due to some good and sufficient cause, the magistrate may give him time to make such application. If the person fails to obtain registration within the appointed time, he shall again be ordered to leave the Transvaal, and if he fails to do so, shall be liable to the usual penalties.

9. Any member of the police force or any other person authorized thereto by the Colonial Secretary may require an Asiatic of the age of sixteen or over to produce his certificate of registration and supply such particulars and furnish such means of identification as may be prescribed by regulation.

With regard to an Asiatic under the age of sixteen years, the guardian of such child shall produce the certificate of registration and supply the particulars and furnish the means of identification required by this Act.

10. Any person holding a new certificate of registration issued to him under this Act shall be entitled to enter and to reside in the Transvaal.
11. Any person into whose hands shall come any certificate of registration or temporary permit of which he is not the lawful holder shall transmit the document immediately to the Registrar. If he fails to do so, he shall be liable to afine not exceeding £50 or to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period not exceeding one month.
12. Any person who loses his certificate of registration shall apply to the Registrar to have it renewed. The application shall contain such particulars as may be required under the rules, and it must have a 5s stamp affixed to it.
13. After a date to be notified in the Gazette, no Asiatic shall obtain a trading licence under the Revenue Licences

Ordinance or under any bye-law in force in a municipal area unless he produces his certificate of registration and supplies such particulars and furnishes such means of identification as may be prescribed by regulation.

14. Whenever the age of any Asiatic is in question, such Asiatic shall, unless and until the contrary be proved, be taken to be of the age which the Registrar shall certify to be in his opinion the apparent age of such Asiatic.

15. Any affidavit that may have to be made under this Act shall be exempt from stamp duty.

16. Any person who commits any fraudulent act in connection with an application for registration or for the purpose of obtaining a certificate of registration or makes a false statement, or incites or aids any person in such act or statement, or forges any certificate of registration, or uses as his certificate any certificate of registration of which he is not the lawful holder or any forged certificate, or causes such certificate to be used by others, shall be liable to a fine not exceeding £500 or to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a term not exceeding two years.

17. The Colonial Secretary may in his absolute discretion issue to any Asiatic a permit for a limited time only. The provisions of Section 9 shall apply to such permits, and temporary permits issued before the date of the taking effect of this Act shall also be governed by this Act. Any person who holds a temporary permit may be exempted from the restrictions on the use of liquor. The Colonial Secretary may also grant such exemption to an Asiatic who is not subject to the provisions of this Act.

18. The Governor may from time to time make or repeal regulations for any of the following purposes:

(1) Prescribing the form of the register to be kept under this Act;

(2) Prescribing the manner and form in which application shall be made for registration, the particulars to be supplied and the means of identification to be furnished;

(3) Prescribing the form of certificates of registration;

(4) Prescribing the particulars and the means of identification marks to be furnished by the guardian of a child under the age of eight years, by any Asiatic who may be required to produce his certificate of registration under Section 9, by any Asiatic applying for the renewal of any certificate of registration which has been lost or destroyed and by any Asiatic applying for a trading licence.

(5) Prescribing the form of permit to be. issued under Section 17 of the Act.

19. Any Asiatic or guardian of an Asiatic failing to comply with any requirement of this Act shall, except where otherwise specified, be liable to a fine not exceeding £100 or to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period not exceeding three months.

20. The Labour Importation Ordinance relating to the Chinese shall not apply to Asiatics.

21. If an Asiatic has acquired any land in his name before the taking effect of the Law [3] of 1885, his heir and successor will be entitled to that land.

22. This Act shall not come into force till such time as the Emperor is pleased to give his assent and his assent is notified in the *Gazette*.

IMPLICATIONS OF ACT

Fortunately for Indians, no Indian is found ready to accept this obnoxious law. Nevertheless, we show below how the condition to which Indians will now be reduced will be much worse than what they have suffered so far, so that those Indians who are firm may become stronger in their determination, and those who are wavering in their minds may give up their doubts, may of their own accord break away from the clutches of the Act, remain free and thus prove themselves to be brave men.

1. The new law does not apply to Malays, but applies to Indians.

2. It does not apply to Kaffirs and Cape Boys.

3. It does not apply to Turkish Christians, but does to

[Turkish] Muslims.

4. At present, every Indian in possession of a permit bearing his thumb-impression is a lawful resident. Under the new Act, he becomes dispossessed of this title, and, when applying for a new permit, such Indian will have to show how his earlier valid permit was obtained.

5. Present permits cannot be changed without the consent of the holders. The permits to be issued under the new Act are subject to alteration at the will of the Government.

6. The present permits held by Indians entitle them to enter and reside in the Orange River Colony. Whether these are of any use or not is not the question. Under this newAct, the name of the Orange River Colony is omitted from the permits.

7. At present, Indians holding permits to reside in the Orange River Colony are in a position to enter the Transvaal on the strength thereof. Under the new Act, they will not be able to do so.

8. At present, no Indian is bound to give his thumb-impression or his signature to obtain a permit. Under the new Act, by making or modifying rules from time to time at its pleasure, the Government can prescribe the giving of signature or thumb impression, or any other thing to be done, as compulsory.

9. At present, only the Permit Secretary is authorized to inspect a permit. Under the new Act, every Kaffir police constable can do so.

10. Under the new Act, a Kaffir police constable can ask [an Asiatic] for particulars of name and identity, and, if not satisfied, can take him to the police station. The Station Officer, if not satisfied with the particulars, may detain the Asiatic in a cell and produce him before a magistrate the next day. All this cannot be done under the present Act.

11. At present, no permit is required for a child one day old, and no one dare ask for particulars of name and identity in respect of such child. Under the new Act, the guardian of

such child is bound to have particulars of identification of such child, no matter how young, endorsed on his registration.

12. At present, an Asiatic child is free after reaching the age of eight. Under the new Act, even after having the required particulars endorsed as above, the guardian is bound again to approach the Registrar and take out registration for such child, furnishing further particulars as to identification, etc. In case he fails to do so, he will be liable to punishment.
13. Asiatic children who are at present in the Transvaal are entitled to remain without a permit, and are not liable to leave the country on attaining majority. Under the new Act, all such boys are liable to be deported unless they obtain from the Registrar registration certificates, the granting of which is at his discretion.
14. At present, an Asiatic is free to bring with him a child under the age of sixteen without a permit for him. Under the new Act, any Asiatic doing so is liable to imprisonment with hard labour, and to have his own registration cancelled.
15. At present, any Asiatic can obtain a trading licence without production of a permit. Under the new Act, he will have to produce his new register and furnish particulars of name, etc.,and means of identification. Which means that if there are partners in an Indian firm, the Licensing Officer may insist upon the presence of all the parties. In case they do not remain present, he can refuse to issue the licence.
16. At present, the authority of the Registrar is relatively limited. Under the new Act, if accepted by Indians, the Registrar will practically become their master.
17. Under the new Act, applying for registration is compulsory for every Indian. Indians who are in a position to apply for themselves are very rare. Permit agents have earned much but if the Indians submit to the new Act, those agents will have a fertile field opened up to them, money flowing into their hands like a swarm of serpents rushing out of a mound. At the very least, therefore, assuming that there will be 10,000 Indian applicants, they will be robbed of £ 30,000, counting the fee at £3 per head on an average.

18. Anyone submitting to such an oppressive law and obtaining registers, or causing others to obtain them, will be shedding the blood of Indians by robbing them as above.

Is there any Indian who is not roused to fury by such a law? We should very much like to know the Indian whose blood does not boil. And it is incredible to us that any Indian may want to submit to such legislation. This new Act is the extreme limit of slavery. And it is our earnest hope that no Indian will accept it, whatever the benefit he may get thereby, but that everyone will resist it at all cost. What Mr. Kallenbach[1] writes is quite true: that is, if we submit to such a law, we deserve it[2] Everyone will believe so. It is to be borne in mind that this Act not only insults Indians but casts a slur on the religion of both Hindus and Muslims. For, Hindus and Muslims who come from India are, as a matter of course, covered by it. But even the Muslims of Turkey (which is considered a part of Europe) are brought within the mischief of the Act, as if the Transvaal Government will be in danger if Muslims not belonging to India are excluded. Christians from that country are not touched.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-6-1907

410. COMMITTEE'S MISTAKE

The South Africa British Indian Committee's communication to General Botha is very good and covers every point. This Committee has done so much work and done it so well that we cannot thank Sir Muncherjee[3], Mr. Ritch[4] and other members well enough. Wetherefore feel some hesitation in pointing out one mistake the Committee has made in the communication. However, it is our duty to do so. The mistake does not diminish the value of the Committee. It only proves how every human being is liable to err. The mistake consists in the

[1] German architect who became a friend and associate of Gandhiji in his experiments in simple living; courted arrest during the passive resistance movement in South Africa. *Vide Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XXIII, XXXIII to XXXV.

[2] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 8-6-1907.

[3] (1851-1933), Indian barrister, Member of Parliament and of British Committee of the Indian National Congress.

[4] Secretary, South Africa British Indian Committee.

suggestion that the Indian community may, at its option, append photographs in place of finger-prints. Though it has been left to the Indians whether or not to append the photograph, we hold that even the suggestion should not have been made by the Committee. Moreover, the Committee's communication makes it appear as though the giving of finger-prints were the only or the greatest objection to the new law. In fact, finger-prints form but one of the objections. The crucial point is the compulsory registration under the law, which casts a slur on the community and brands it as unworthy.

However, the mistake is not likely to do any harm. No such mistake was made during the struggle against the Bill. After the Bill has become law, the Committee's suggestion is not likely to have any adverse effect. For now the matter rests in the hands of the Indian community. If the Indian community really disapproves of the law, it will not submit to it, no matter what calamities befall it; it will accept imprisonment for not submitting to it; and will feel happy doing so because its honour will have been preserved.

As Mr. Ritch says, some members may even leave the Committee, as Mr. Rees[1] did, on seeing the Indian community determined to disobey the law. It is likely that such members will advise us to submit to disgrace. Even so, we need not be afraid, for the Indian community holds it to be a virtue not to submit to the new law, and in doing a good deed we need not be afraid of anyone. Knowing that God always protects the righteous, the Transvaal Indians should keep to the straight path they have chosen for themselves.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-6-1907

411. INDIANS OF CAPE TOWN

It appears to us that the condition of Indians in Cape Town is likely to be very bad in days to come. We publish elsewhere in this issue a letter received from Mafeking and draw the attention of every Indian leader in Cape Town to it. The worst clause in the Cape Town Act is to the effect that an Indian who leaves Cape Town without a pass cannot return to it. Such a pass will be valid only for one year.

[1] J. D. Rees *vide* "Mass Meeting of Transvaal Indians", 6-4-1907.

There are hundreds of Indians who know nothing about taking out a pass. Even if a pass is taken out, it will not be possible for everyone to return with that pass within one year. As a result of this Act, it is likely that within five years Indians will have left Cape Town, bag and baggage. We earnestly hope that leading Indians in Cape Town will deeply ponder over this question and take suitable steps.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-6-1907

412. LATE MR. KARL BLIND

News has been received by cable that Mr. Karl Blind[1] is dead. This gentleman was a famous German. He was born in 1826. He suffered imprisonment five times, between 1847 and 1849, in the cause of freedom and for the rights of others. In this way he had to suffer imprisonment for opposing his Government. Once he was even sentenced to death for a public cause, but was saved. Later, he again suffered imprisonment for eight years, but in the end people got him released through pressure. This great man was a friend of Mazzini and Garibaldi[2]. He helped Japan against Russia. He was a very learned man. He has written many historical works. He was a lover of India. Such scholars who, making other people's sufferings their own, have served sentences of imprisonment and even faced the gallows provide a very useful example to us today.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-6-1907

413. WHAT CAN HINDU WIDOWS DO?

Everyone can see that in India a great deal of wealth is being wasted. This wealth includes many things. None takes care of the minerals. Our cotton is exported to foreign countries, and cloth is imported from there. Even a pin has to be imported from abroad.

[1] German revolutionary who settled in England and advocated political freedom.

[2] (1807-32), Italian patriot and soldier, who fought for the liberation of his country.

What happens to our material wealth seems to be happening to our human wealth also. Many *bavas* and *fakirs* maintain themselves by begging, but serve neither themselves nor the country. For going about begging in this manner, they will not be regarded as having attained true renunciation. In the same way, thousands of widows, mostly among Hindus, spend their whole life to no purpose. And to that extent the wealth of India is being wasted. To prevent this waste, the benevolent Prof. Karve[1] of Poona has dedicated his life to the country. He has been working in the Fergusson College only on a living wage. Not only that, but he has also been running for several years an institution in Poona for the education of widows. There, women are given training in midwifery and nursing. The work of the institution has been expanding. Because he is rendering honorary service himself, he is able to get similar assistance from others too. Mrs. Kashibai Deodhar, Mrs. Namjoshi, Mrs. Athavale and Mrs. Deshpande—all these ladies who have had very good English education have been giving honorary service to the institution. Moreover, he goes about from place to place collecting funds. There are so many things which can be done through sheer self-help and without Government aid. From every point of view, education is the most important thing for us.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-6-1907

414. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

NEW LAW

This law has not yet been published in the *Gazette*. Meanwhile, cables received from England indicate that the Imperial Government is still considering the matter. When Lord Ampthill[2] raised adiscussion in the House of Lords, Lord Lansdowne[3] said that wounding the susceptibilities of the whole Indian community would be more injurious and imprudent than the surreptitious entry of a few Indians

[1] D. K. Karve (1858-), founder of Women's University, Poona.

[2] (1869-1936), Governor of Madras, 1899-1906, acted as Viceroy and Governor-General of India, 1904. *Vide* also "Lord Ampthill", 29-6-1907.

[3] (1845-1927),. Viceroy and Governor-General of India, 1888-93; Foreign Secretary, 1900-5.

into the country. In his reply, Lord Elgin[1] said that he [also] did not like to put his signature to the Act. The lesson of this is that Indians should not submit to the law. It will be a great humiliation to the Indian community if it submits to a law which has raised such a heated controversy and has been so much condemned.

REPERCUSSIONS OF TRANSVAAL LAW

It is not as if the effects of this law will be felt only here. Already, its repercussions have reached even German East Africa. The Germans there wish to take full advantage of the Indian trader, without however allowing him any benefit in return. Some Germans expressed the fear that the British Government might intervene if the Indian traders were harassed. A member of the German Parliament replied by asking how the British Government, which did not intervene in the case of the Transvaal, could do so in respect of the Germans. This too points to the self-same lesson. As soon as the Indian community submits to the new law, it may be taken for granted that its foothold in all territories outside India will be lost. Thereafter, only those Indians will be able to reside in places outside India who will live on their labour? without any status.

ADVICE OF PROMINENT WHITE

I had a meeting with a prominent member of the Transvaal Parliament. On being asked about the gaol resolution, he immediately replied that if we went to prison, no further steps would be necessary. He had not expected that Indians would show so much courage and display such spirit for the sake of the community and for their honour. If we remained united and adhered to the gaol resolution, he promised to give us as much help as he could. Moreover, he added, the entire Liberal Party in England would come to our rescue and the new law would be repealed. He quoted Burke, the great English writer, who used to say that thousands of men could not be sent to the gallows, nor could they be kept confined behind prison-bars.

WHAT WHITE TRADER SAYS

A white merchant took upon himself to give prudent advice and said that the Indian community should submit to the law. He was asked if he thought that others were happy because he himself lived in

[1] Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1905-8.

comfort and happiness as a result of the struggle that his ancestors had put up. He could not answer the question. In the end I asked him, in the presence of a big customer, "Suppose your customer sacrifices hisall and goes to gaol for the sake of his community. Will he not, when he comes out, rise in your estimation? Will you not help him more liberally?" To this he replied, "Yes. That's right. But do your people have so much courage?" Ultimately, the thing comes to this: in the market the Indian cowrie is treated as a bad coin at present, and so the value of the Indian is the value of a bad coin.

LETTER TO "THE STAR"

As General Botha has returned and the Committee in England is still continuing its struggle against the law, Mr. Gandhi has addressed the following letter to *The Star*:[1]

The arrival of General Botha and the fact that the Asiatic Registration Act is still the subject matter of correspondence between the Imperial Government and the local Government, encourage me to appeal once more to your good sense and, through you, to that of the Colonists. Now that the anti-Asiatic party has obtained what it wanted, is it impossible to arrive at a reasonable compromise and to do away with a law under which Indians will be treated as criminals? The Act is not yet gazetted, and it need not be. I, therefore, suggest that a form for new permits may be mutually agreed upon, and, in accordance with it, Indians and other Asiatics may be registered afresh in exchange for proper documents they may posses. If, then, all Asiatics thus voluntarily surrender their documents, there can be no occasion for submitting them to any degradation. If, however, there are Asiatics in the Colony who do not surrender their documents, the Act can be immediately gazetted, and be made applicable, by a short Bill, to them. Thus, those who are *bona fide* holders of permits and are honest will be automatically separated from those who are guilty.

I do not know whether you can see any flaw in this proposal, unless you think that the object of the legislation is not that illicit traffic in permits may be stopped, but that it is to, openly and boldly, put an unwarranted affront upon British Indians and other Asiatics. Let me remind you, before any such declaration is made, of Lord Ampthill's remarks:

> This is not a matter which only touches our honour. We are pledged to our fellow-citizens in India—pledged by the solemn declaration of the Sovereign, by the pronouncements of our statesmen, and by all that is implied in the

[1] The text is given here with some alterations needed to bring it into conformity with the Gujarati version; *vide* "Letter to *The Star*", 30-5-1907.

whole method of our administration of that great dominion—to treat the people of India as fellow-citizens in every sense of the word. We invite them to be proud of their citizenship of the Empire. We tell them, again and again, that there is nothing to prevent their rising to the same positions as are held by Englishmen in India, and we imply, in all that we do for them and say to them, that wherever they are under the British flag in any part of the world, they will be treated as British citizens.

Lord Lansdowne feels so keenly humiliated by this Act, that he questions whether to wound the susceptibilities of the whole Indian nation is not a more important matter than the conditions in the Transvaal. But the proposal I have ventured to sketch above is just as effective against surreptitious entry as may be by the Asiatic Act.

If the Government does not accept the suggestion made in this letter, it would obviously mean that the new law had no other aim than that of humiliating the Indian community. Then the fable of the wolf and the lamb would apply. The wolf is bent on killing the lamb anyhow.

KALLENBACH'S HELP

Mr. Kallenbach is a well-known architect of Johannesburg. He has written the following letter to *The Star* in order to sustain the spirit of the Indian community and encourage it in its gaol-going resolve. This letter is also published along with Mr. Gandhi's:[1]

Although, for some reasons, I am not taking part in political matters, I have been following with interest the various stages of action among the Transvaal Indians in their struggle to defend their legitimate rights by that 'gaol resolution'.

I have read the various Press comments on the latter question, and also Mr. Gandhi's letter to *The Star*, in all of which the gaol resolution was discussed. I for one am of the opinion that the Asiatic Registration Ordinance imposes certain conditions which are degrading to any man of self-respect, and if this was not keenly felt by Asiatics, it would be a clear proof that they fully deserve the Registration Act. I think it most unfair to call those men, who are working in order to show to their countrymen the deep humiliation which the new legislation tries to impose upon them, "aggressive agitators". I believe it to be the duty of those Indians, who are able to grasp the conditions

[1] The text is given here with some alterations needed to bring it into conformity with the Gujarati version.

of the new legislation, to impart this knowledge to every one of their countrymen and to do their utmost to so raise and strengthen their self-respect that by united action those humiliating conditions are changed. I feel sure that the fear of the Indian storekeepers' competition has not deadened every "white man's" sense of justice, and that many of them—and I hope that their number is not small—cannot do otherwise than show their admiration and full sympathy for men who, rather than submit to humiliating legislative conditions, go to gaol, setting aside, in addition to the hardships of prison life which they are prepared to face, monetary losses too.

I have never overlooked the very keen competition existing between the various races, but I have found that it has been exaggerated on the European side. The suggestions and propositions made by the British Indian Association of Johannesburg appeared to me very reasonable and fair, and I feel certain that fuller knowledge of the Indian question in the Transvaal, by those men responsible for and dealing with the same, would have prevented the present acute state of affairs

In conclusion, I wish to say that I shall consider it a privilege to visit my Indian friends in the gaol and to do my utmost to redress the hardships of prison life which they are prepared to undergo....

Mr. Kallenbach deserves compliments for having written such a noble letter. It would not be surprising if more whites like him came forward. If already men like Mr. Kallenbach have come forward to express their sympathy even though we have nothing to show by way of action, many more will do so when we actually do something.

MEETING OF ASSOCIATION

At 4.30 p.m. on Saturday, a meeting of the Association took place to consider the question of a deputation to General Botha. Those present included the acting Chairman, Mr. Essop Mia, Messrs Abdool Gani[1], Coovadia, Naidoo, Omarji Sale, Alibhai Akuji, Pillay, Mahomed, Emam Abdool Cadir and other gentlemen. Mr. Hajee Habib[2] had come from Pretoria specially to attend this meeting. After certain points had been decided, it was resolved to send a deputation to General Botha, Mr. Hajee Habib moving and Mr. Coovadia seconding the resolution. It was also decided to submit a petition requesting the Government to accept the proposal contained in Mr.

[1] Chairman, British Indian Association, 1903-7.
[2] Secretary, Pretoria Committee of the British Indian Association.

Gandhi's letter to *The Star* referred to above, and that General Botha should be informed that, if that proposal was turned down by the Government and the desired changes were not made in the law, the Indian community would never accept the law and would adhere to the September Resolution. It was resolved that the deputation should consist of Messrs Essop Mia, Abdool Gani, Hajee Habib, Moonlight, and Gandhi. Accordingly, Mr. Essop Mia has asked General Botha for an appointment.[1] By the time this letter is published in *Indian Opinion*, the deputation may have already waited upon General Botha.

WHAT CAN GOVERNMENT DO BUT IMPRISON US?

It has been suggested that the Government may not prosecute any Indian for not taking out the new registers, but quietly wait till the end of the year when Indians will have to close down their businesses, since their trading licences will not be renewed. It is improbable that this will happen. For, in that case, the hundreds of Indians who hold no trading licences will never come within the sweep of the law. The employees of a trader will escape penalty. Adopting that course will render the law as good as non-existent. But supposing that the Government's intention is only to harass merchants, I have already given the reply that once we have discarded the fear of imprisonment, there is nothing for us to be afraid of. The Government itself will stand to lose if it does not grant licences. For, the merchant can carry on his trade without a licence. The risk in doing so will be just the same as the risk in not taking out the new register. If the new registeris not taken out, at the most one has to go to gaol. In the same way, for trading without a licence one may have to go to gaol. The only difference will be that only one man will be punished for trading without a licence, with the result that the shop can remain open and the employees can work in it. On the other hand, for not holding the new register everyone can be arrested.

CAN GOODS OF MERCHANT TRADING WITHOUT LICENCE BE AUCTIONED?

This question also has been raised. According to the Natal law the goods can be auctioned. But in the Transvaal, in case of non-

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Prime Minister's Secretary", 1-6-1907. The deputation, however, did not materialize.

payment of fine the defaulter has to go to gaol. Fine is not to be paid by anyone. If therefore the Government should want to exercise pressure on us through the trade licence, all shopkeepers and hawkers will start trading without a licence.

CAN SHOPS BE CLOSED DOWN?

It has been asked whether the Government can close down the shop of anyone trading without a licence. Nowhere in South Africa is there a law providing for the forcible closure of a shop. There is therefore no such danger.

WHAT CHANGES CAN BE MADE THROUGH REGULATIONS?

There has been an inquiry as to whether it will be possible for General Botha to give us relief in the regulations, and whether it will still be necessary for us to resist the law if we get all the relief asked for. In the first place, it is. essential to know what can be secured through regulations. These can only determine whether a thumb-impression or digit-impressions will be required or whether signatures will be enough. But such matters as registration of children,harassment by the police, showing of identification marks to the police, etc., which are the oppressive sections in this Act, cannot be changed by regulations. In brief, the slur that the law casts on us cannot be wiped out by regulations framed under it. Without amending the law therefore General Botha cannot give us the redress we seek. It is absolutely futile to hope that the law will be amended. The utmost that can be done is not to have the law gazetted for the present. By this the prestige of both parties will be maintained. If the law is so amended as to make it acceptable to us, the Government will lose face.

FREE INDIANS WORSE THAN DOGS

A huge agricultural exhibition is being held here just now. The Exhibition Committee has framed a regulation to the effect that free Asiatics or Natives who are not employees of whites cannot visit the exhibition. However, dogs are free to enter, and, what is more, good pedigree dogs are awarded prizes! In the opinion of this white Committee, a free Indian is worse than these dogs.

PERMIT OFFICE

A case appears to have just occurred which shows that we did very well in having boycotted the Permit Office. An Indian had

received a notice saying that a permit would be issued to him. He had only to go to the Office and receive it He was therefore advised that he might accept the permit if no mention of the new law was made. Accordingly, he went to the Permit Office. However, Mr. Chamney told him that the permit would be issued to him only if he gave an assurance that he would submit to the new law. The brave Indian refused to comply and left the Office without the permit. Every Indian should understand that the Permit Office is a trap for Indians.

WHAT INDIAN TRADERS CAN DO

Many Indian traders say that the Dutchmen are ready to send a petition to the Government stating that they are not against us. If this is the case, it is necessary for every Indian trader to obtain signatures of Dutchmen on such a petition. It is not necessary to make much fuss in the matter. If the traders wish to take it up, petition forms will be sent to them. Those in a position to obtain signatures should write to the Association.

REGULATIONS FOR HAWKERS

The Government has returned [to the Town Council] the regulations for hawkers, saying that the licence fee of £5 may be reduced to £3. The Council Committee has sent a reply stating that the rate of £5 should be retained, as a reduction would result in financial loss.

PERMIT CASE

Permit cases have been going on for some time. Two washermen were accused of using false permits and of staying without permits. In their defence, they stated that an Indian had taken them to Johannesburg, telling them that the Permit Officer visited the town and issued permit. The said Indian demanded from each of the washermen £30, which they agreed to pay. They went to the place of the Indian where they saw a disguised European. He gave them permits and they each paid £30. They were acquitted of the charge of having used false permits as they were not aware that the permits given by the European were false. But on the charge of having resided without a permit, they have been ordered to leave the Transvaal within seven days. It will be interesting to know who this officer may be, for there are various rumours current in the town.

A similar charge was brought against another Indian. It was

based on the affidavit of some Indian. In deposing before the magistrate, the Indian who had made the affidavit turned hostile to theprosecution. Thereupon the magistrate discharged the accused and sentenced the other Indian for giving false evidence. The case of this gentleman appears to prove the truth of the saying, "He who digs a pit will I himself fall into it."

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-6-1907

415. CONDITION OF MUSLIMS IN AFGHANISTAN

We published some time ago an article by Mr. Saiyed Ali, B.A., on Muslim administration. The second part of that article appeared in the *Indian Review* of March which we briefly summarize below.

We have considered Turkey and Iran. Let us now turn to Afghanistan, which has made big advances recently. It can safely be stated that before Amir Abdur Rahman ascended the throne, there was hardly any administration in Afghanistan, though, even then, there were councils called *Ulu* and *Malik*. Residents of the various localities in a village sent representatives to a council known as *Khel*, and the *Ulu* was elected from out of them. But in those times, owing to the difficult temper of the people, no one could maintain control over the administration. Then thieves had their arms cut off. If a slave tried to run away, he had his legs chopped off. The different provinces were governed by local chieftains and Sardars. Above the Sardars there were Amirs, but the Sardars showed little respect for their authority. The Pathan is by nature an adventurous individual, and so he was quite at home with such unsettled conditions. In those times, punishments such as those described above were the only effective ones. Once a Pathan told General Elphinstone[1] in reply to a question: "We are content to remain quarrelling; we are not afraid of dangers, and do not grow pale at the sight of blood. Come what may, we will not give up our freedom and submit ourselves to any Emperor."

After coming to the throne, Amir Abdur Rahman introduced important changes. He took the utmost advantage of the fact that his kingdom was a buffer State between Russia and England. Sometimes

[1] (1779-1859), statesman and historian, Lieutenant-Governor of Bombay, 1819-27.

he would lean towards Russia and sometimes towards England. He would not quarrel openly with either, and in the end, would side with England. This shrewdness of his won the admiration of European statesmen. He always had things to his advantage, but yielded nothing to others in return. In the internal affairs of the kingdom, too, he showed the highest ability, and broke the power of the local chieftains. He reformed the civil law. The annual tribute of twelve lakhs of rupees which he used to receive from the Government of India, later raised to eighteen lakhs, was put to wise use. He formed an army, stocke dammunition and expanded trade. Unnecessary faxes were removed, and a mint was established. The present ruler has raised the status of Afghanistan even further. He has established two councils, named *Darbar-e-Shahi* and *Kwajan Shahi*. Under such a political system even the temper of the Pathans has begun to change. If the present trend continues for long, the warlike Pathan will have established a strong kingdom in the East. All the same, it must be admitted that the people of Afghanistan do not interest themselves in political affairs. Amir Habibullah Khan is an Emperor. He is a brave soldier and a pious man. His Majesty never missed his prayers while in India. We cannot say for certain whether or not he will observe the agreement of 1905. The Amir is now accorded the status of an Emperor and receives a salute of thirty-one guns. He now enjoys the same power that the Shah of Iran does.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-6-1907

416. LETTER TO " THE STAR"[1]

P. O. BOX 3553,
[JOHANNESBURG,]
June 8, 1907

TO
THE EDITOR
THE STAR
[JOHANNESBURG]

SIR,

I have seen the *Gazette* notice today intimating that the Asiatic Law Amendment Act has received the Royal sanction, and that it will

[1] Presumably, this was drafted by Gandhiji. It was reproduced in *India Opinion* 15-6-1907.

come into force on a day to be appointed. I do not know what this means, but it leaves breathing space, and I, therefore, wish to place before the public a mercantile view of the Act. In order to do that, I am obliged to enter into a bit of autobiography. I have been settled in the Transvaal for the last 19 years, and have the honour to represent, as managing partner, the firm of Suliman Ismail Mia and Co. My firm has very large dealings with European wholesale houses, who have need I say, derived very considerable pecuniary profit from their transactions with the firm. It suffered severe reverses during the Jameson Raid[1], and yet its creditors were paid in full. It underwent asimilar ordeal during the Boer War; the creditors were still paid in full. And now, for the third time,complete ruin stares it in the face. In the two previous instances, the cause was beyond human, at any rate my firm's, control. Today, the cause will be of its own seeking, and why? For the simple reason that the Asiatic Law Amendment 'Act is considered by every Indian who has understood it as a mark of slavery pure and simple. It makes of the Transvaal a prison-house for every Indian, so far as I know my countrymen's mind. They have, therefore, decided not to submit to such an Act, but to suffer the consequence of such disobedience. It goes against the grain for an Indian to disobey any law, and yet the feeling aroused by this Act is so strong that disobedience is deemed a virtue and obedience a cowardly vice. The position that I, as an Indian merchant, am placed in is the position occupied by many like myself. Do you suppose that all such Indians do not realize the full force and effect of what they stand to lose from a worldly standpoint by disobeying the law? But we have learned at the feet of your countrymen that it is better to suffer such loss than to surrender personal freedom and accept humiliation. Why should I accept cancellation of my title-deeds, and have to go to the Permit Office, hat in hand, and beg for a new title-deed with many restrictions? Moreover, as a Mahomedan, I resent most bitterly that, whereas non Mahomedan subjects of the Turkish Empire are free from the galling yoke of the Act, Mahomedan subjects of that Empire are not. These are facts which I venture to ask you and the public to weigh well.

I should not have troubled you were it not for the fact that the Government have reserved to themselves yet the right to retire from what is, from the Indian standpoint, a false position. Let the offer of

[1] In 1895.

voluntary re-registration be accepted and, if it fails, a 'day may be fixed for the compulsory registration of those who have not abided by the voluntary offer. It is true that, under the voluntary offer, there will be no ear-marking of Indian babes, but I must frankly confess that no loss of the good things of this world will deter me from disobeying an Act which means that I shall have to supply identification particulars of a day-old son of mine, and be subject to the tacit assumption that the infant is a future criminal of the direst type. I have spoken to many European friends of mine. They all consider that our offer is very reasonable. I ask you, and them, to support us in our struggle for a respectable existence in the Transvaal. Jesus is as much a prophet of the Mahomedans as he is of the Christians. He has somewhere said: "Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you." May I ask the Christian Government to follow this wise saying?

I am, etc.,

ESSOP ISMAIL MIA

The Star, 11-6-1907

417. LETTER TO PRIME MINISTER'S SECRETARY

JOHANNESBURG,
June 12, 1907

THE ACTING SECRETARY TO
THE PRIME MINISTER
[PRETORIA]

SIR,

With reference to your letter of the 4th instant No. 14/1, I regret that the Prime Minister considers it unnecessary to receive a deputation on behalf of my Association in connection with the Asiatic Registration Act.[1]

In view, however, of the fact that the date of enforcing the Act has not yet been gazetted, my Association once more approaches the Government and respectfully suggests that the offer of voluntary re-registration may be accepted and that the Act may afterwards, by a short Bill, be made applicable to those who do not abide by the

[1] The Prime Minister felt that "no good purpose" would be served since the proclamation according assent to the Act had already been signed.

voluntary offer.

I have, etc.,
ESSOP ISMAIL MIA
ACTING CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 22-6-1907

418. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
June 12, 1907

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL[1],

We shall not be able to get anything extra from the Montague Estate for the addition made by them.

I am glad that difficulties act as a spur to further action and further activity. That, undoubtedly, is the proper meaning to give to them. For such people there is no holding back and no disappointment. You have reproduced the common saying that thosewho act according to the dictates of duty must succeed, and so they do. Only, we must guard against misinterpreting the word "success". Whereas many things that are not religion falsely pass as such, many things that we consider to be failures may, in reality, be successes. Whilst, therefore, we may accept the truth of the axiom, the eye should always be directed towards the work to be done, never to the result.

You may, so far as I am concerned, print Tamil, Hindi and Urdu translations of the Act[2] in *Indian Opinion*, and let me have separate leaflets also. The more of these we circulate, the better it will be. The Act furnishes its own condemnation, and such has been also the effect, I notice, on the people here. There are very few copies now left of the current issue, although you sent me 350. Vyas sent for 60 copies for Pretoria, and I have orders today from up-country for 15 copies.

I have absolutely no reply with reference to the Gujarati type. Gokaldas[3] wrote me saying that he would attend, but he has disappointed me in almost every respect. He has become lazy, indifferent and superstitious.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. G.

From a photostat of the typewritten original initialled by Gandhiji: S.N. 4754

[1] Son of Khushalchand Gandhi, Gandhiji's cousin; he was in charge of the Gujarati section of Indian Opinion and the printing press at Phoenix.

[2] Asiatic Registration Act.

[3] Son of Raliatbehn, Gandhiji's elder sister.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE

Copy of certificate:

Cert. No. No.

ASIATIC REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE

190. .

Name
Family
Caste
Father's name
Thumb Mark Height
Occupation
Address
Place of issue Age
Issuing Officer

Indian Opinion, 3-11-1906

APPENDIX 2

JOHANNESBURG,
October *23, 1906*

TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE EARL OF SELBORNE, P.C., G.C.M.G.
GOVERNOR OF THE TRANSVAAL COLONY AND THE ORANGE RIVER COLONY,
JOHANNESBURG

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

I have the honour to enclose the original as well as a copy of signatures of 60 British Indians of this town protesting against the cause of the Indians of this Colony being represented at the Colonial Office by Messrs M. K. Gandhi and H. O. Ally and to request that Your Excellency will be pleased to transmit same to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies on which subject a petition signed by many British Indians has already been sent by Dr. William Godfrey.

I have the honour, etc.,
C. M. PILLAY

Pretoria Archives: L.G. File: 1902-1906

APPENDIX 3

COMMON ROOM,
LINCOLN'S INN, W.C.,
[LONDON,
November 15, 1906]

[TO
THE TIMES
LONDON]
SIR,

We notice in your issue of yesterday's date a report to the effect that Mr. Churchill said that the names of the two Indians who petitioned Lord Elgin disclaiming Messrs Gandhi and Ally as their representatives in England to protest against the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance were Dr. William Godfrey and Mr. C. M. Pillay. As our names are already being confounded with that of our brother, we wish to state that we entirely disassociate ourselves from his views, his petition and the attitude he has taken up.

We repeat again our strong protest against the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance of the Transvaal which petition was sent to the Right Hon'ble the Earl of Elgin, His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, on the 3rd November. We entirely agree with Messrs Gandhi and Ally's protest in this connection and heartily co-operate with them in the work they are doing.

The line of conduct adopted by our brother is inexplicable, as we always saw him to be an enthusiastic champion of our countrymen's cause in South Africa.

The petition misrepresents Mr. Gandhi as a political agitator. We have had the pleasure of being associated with him and the Indian work for at least 15 years and from this intimate knowledge of things, we can take the responsibility of saying that his is purely a labour of love and not a means to a selfish end.

Yours, etc.,

GEO. V. GODFREY
JAS. W. GODFREY

Pretoria Archives: L.G. File: 1902-1906

APPENDIX 4

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION,
25/26, COURT CHAMBERS,
RISSIK STREET,
JOHANNESBURG,
November 12, 1906

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
HIS EXCELLENCY [THE] HIGH COMMISSIONER
JOHANNESBURG
SIR,

On behalf of my Association I have the honour to enclose herewith copies of Affidavits[1] now in possession of my Association which I have the honour to request you will transmit as soon as possible to the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

I have, etc.,

H. POLAK
Acting Honorary Secretary,
British Indian Association

Pretoria Archives: L.G. File: 1902-1906

APPENDIX5

THE ASIATIC LAW AMENDMENT ACT

TO AMEND LAW NO. 3 OF 1885

(*Assented to* [*on*] *22nd March, 1907*)

The following is the full official text published by the Transvaal Government:

[1] These affidavits, duly executed before a Justice of the Peace and corroborating each other, were signed by Candasamy Pillay, Samuel Vincent Thomas, Siva Lingham and Vadival Naidoo who all testified that Dr. William Godfrey had collected signatures on blank paper by the false use of the authority of the British Indian Association. The petition itself, which is summarized by Gandhiji in a statement on the subject addressed to Lord Elgin (pp. 196-202) and the real purpose of which Dr. Godfrey misrepresented to the signatories, was drafted later. When these facts became known, many of the signatures to Godfrey's petition were withdrawn.

Be it enacted by the King's Most Excellent Majesty by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly of the Transvaal as follows:

REPEAL

1. Sub-section (c) of Article two of Law No. 3 of 1885 as amended by Volksraad Resolutions, Article 1419 of the twelfth day of August 1886 and Article 128 of the sixteenth day of May 1890 shall be and is hereby repealed.

DEFINITIONS

2. In this Act unless inconsistent with the context:

"Asiatic" shall mean any such male person as is described in Article *one* of Law No. 3 of 1885 not being a Malay born and resident in any British Colony or possession in South Africa nor a person introduced into the Colony under the Labour Importation Ordinance 1904 and not being an officer in the Chinese Consular Service;

"register of Asiatics" shall mean the register to be kept under this Act as prescribed by Regulation;

"Registrar" shall mean the officer appointed by the Governor to keep the register of Asiatics and any person lawfully acting in such capacity;

"Resident Magistrate" shall include an Assistant Resident Magistrate;

"Regulation" shall mean any Regulation made under section *eighteen* of this Act;

"Guardian" shall mean the parent of an Asiatic under the age of sixteen or any other person under whose care or control such Asiatic is living for the time being or, failing any such person, the employer of such Asiatic;

"application for registration" shall mean an application to be placed on the register of Asiatics made in such manner and form as may be prescribed by Regulation and accompanied by the supplying of such particulars and the furnishing of such means of identification as may be required by this Act or by Regulation;

"applicant" shall mean any person who makes application for registration on his own behalf or any person on whose behalf application for registration is made by his guardian; "certificate of registration" shall mean a certificate of registration under this Act in the form prescribed by Regulation;

"lawful holder" as used in relation to any certificate of registration shall mean the person whose registration is thereby certified.

ALL ASIATICS LAWFULLY RESIDENT IN COLONY TO BE REGISTERED

3. (1) Every Asiatic lawfully resident in this Colony shall subject to the

exceptions hereinafter mentioned be registered in the register of Asiatics and shall there-upon be entitled to receive a certificate of registration and no charge shall be made for such registration or certificate save as in section twelve of this Act provided.

(2) The following shall be deemed for the purposes of this Act to be Asiatics lawfully resident in this Colony:

(i) Any Asiatic duly authorized to enter and reside in this Colony by a permit issued under the Indemnity and Peace Preservation Ordinance 1902 or any amendment thereof or issued between the first day of September 1900 and the date of the passing of the said Ordinance, unless such permit shall have been fraudulently obtained; provided that any permit expressed to authorize any Asiatic to remain in this Colony for a limited time only shall not be deemed to be a permit within the meaning of this sub-section.

(ii) Any Asiatic resident and actually in this Colony on the thirty-first day of May 1902.

(iii) Any Asiatic born in this Colony since the thirty-first day of May 1902 not being the child of any labourer introduced into this Colony under the Labour Importation Ordinance 1904.

ASIATICS TO APPLY FOR REGISTRATION WITHIN FIXED TIME

4. (1) Every Asiatic resident in this Colony at the date of the taking effect of this Act shall before such date or dates and at such place or places and to such person or persons as the Colonial Secretary may prescribe by notice in the *Gazette* make application for registration.

(2) Every Asiatic who enters this Colony after the date of the taking effect of this Act and who has not previously been registered thereunder shall within eight days after entering the Colony, unless he shall have entered under a permit granted under section seventeen, make application for registration to such person and at such place as may be so prescribed;
provided that

(a) no application shall be required to be made under this section on behalf of any Asiatic child who at the expiration of the time within which such application is required to be made is under the age of eight years;

(b) in the case of any Asiatic child who at the expiration of such time is eight years of age but under sixteen years of age, such application shall be made on such child's behalf by his guardian and if not so shallbe made by such child within one month after attaining the age of sixteen years.

REGISTRAR TO REGISTER APPLICANTS IF APPROVED AND IN CASE OF REFUSAL TO GIVE NOTICE

5. (1) The Registrar shall consider every application for registration made under the last preceding section and register every applicant who is lawfully resident in this Colony or whose application is approved by him and shall cause to be issued to such applicant or the guardian who made the application on his behalf a certificate of registration

(2) If it shall appear to the Registrar that any applicant is not lawfully resident in this Colony, he may refuse to register such applicant and in case of refusal where the applicant is of the age of sixteen years or over shall cause a notice of refusal to be sent by post to the applicant at the address given by him on the application and a copy of such notice shall be affixed to the principal door of the Magistrate's office of the District where such application was made and the Registrar shall by such notice direct such applicant to appear before the Resident Magistrate of the District at a time therein specified being not less than fourteen days from the date of such notice and shew cause why he should not be ordered to leave this Colony and if such applicant shall fail to appear at the time specified in such notice or having appeared shall fail to satisfy the Resident Magistrate that he is lawfully resident in the Colony, the Resident Magistrate if the applicant is of the age of sixteen years or over shall make an order in writing directing him to leave this Colony within a time to be specified in such order; provided always that if such order made in the absence of the applicant, such time shall run from the date of the service of the order upon him and such order shall be deemed to be an order made under section six of the Peace Preservation Ordinance 1903 and sections *seven* and *eight* of the said Ordinance shall apply accordingly; provided further that if the Resident Magistrate shall be satisfied that the applicant is lawfully resident within this Colony, such Magistrate shall make an order upon the Registrar requiring him to register such applicant and to issue to him a certificate of registration.

PROVISIONS AS TO PARTICULARS TO BE SUPPLIED AND APPLICATIONS TO BE MADE BY GUARDIANS

6. (1) Any Asiatic who is the guardian of an Asiatic child under the age of eight years shall upon making application for registration on his own behalf supply such particulars and furnish such means of identification in respect of such child as may be prescribed by Regulation and if such guardian is

himself registered, the particulars aforesaid which he has supplied shall be provisionally noted on the register and such guardian shall within one year after the child aforesaid attains the age of eight years make application for registration on such child's behalf at the office of the Resident Magistrate of the District in which he himself resides;

(2) The guardian of every Asiatic child born i1n this Colony after the date of the taking effect of this Act shall within one year after such child attains the age of eight years make application for registration on such child's behalf at the office of the Resident Magistrate of the District in which he himself resides; provided that

(a) where any guardian fails to make application for registration on behalf of any Asiatic child whose guardian he is within the time hereby prescribed for making the same, such guardian shall on being thereto required by the Registrar or any Resident Magistrate make such application at any later date;

(b) where any application which is required to be made under this section by the guardian of an Asiatic child is not made by such guardian or where such application is refused, application for registration shall be made by such Asiatic child at the office of the Resident Magistrate of the District within which he resides within one month after he attains the age of sixteen years.

The Resident Magistrate at whose office any application is made under this section shall cause the record of such application and all documents relating thereto to be forwarded to the Registrar, who shall if satisfied that the same is in order register the applicant and cause to be issued to him or his guardian a certificate of registration.

APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION BY ASIATICS ON ATTAINING AGE OF SIXTEEN WHOSE GUARDIANS HAVE FAILED TO SUPPLY PARTICULARS

7. Where particulars as to any Asiatic child under the age of eight years have not been provisionally noted on the register, as is in the last preceding section provided, by reason of the failure of his guardian to supply such particulars, application for registration shall nevertheless be made on behalf of such Asiatic child by the guardian within one year after he attains the age of eight years and if not so made shall be made by such Asiatic child within one month after he attains the age of sixteen years at the office of the Resident Magistrate of the District in which he resides and the record of such application and all documents relating thereto shall be forwarded to the Registrar, who may in his discretion register the applicant and issue to him or his guardian a certificate of registration.

PENALTIES FOR FAILING TO MAKE APPLICATION

8.(1) Any person who shall fail to make application for registration as required by this Act, either on his own behalf or as guardian on behalf of an Asiatic child, shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds and in default of payment to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period not exceeding three months.

(2) Any person who brings into this Colony an Asiatic under the age of sixteen years not lawfully resident therein and any person who shall employ suchchild in any trade or business shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on convictions to the following penalties

(a) to the penalties mentioned in sub-section (1) of this section; and,

(b) if such person is the holder of a certificate of registration, to cancellation of such certificate by the Registrar;

and thereupon the Colonial Secretary may issue an order directing such person to leave this Colony and such order shall be deemed to be an order issued under section six of the Peace Preservation Ordinance 1903 and sections *seven* and *eight* of the said Ordinance shall apply accordingly.

(3) Any Asiatic over the age of sixteen years who after such date as may be notified by the Colonial Secretary in the Gazette is found within the Colony and fails upon such demand as is here in after mentioned to produce a certificate of registration of which he is the lawful holder may be arrested without warrant and brought before a Resident Magistrate and if he fails to satisfy such Magistrate that he is the lawful holder of a certificate of registration or that the time within which he is required to make application for such certificate has not expired, the Magistrate shall, save as in the next succeeding sub-section provided, make an order in writing directing such Asiatic to leave this Colony within such time as may be specified in such order and such order shall be deemed to be an order made under section six of the Peace Preservation Ordinance 1903 and sections seven and eight of the said Ordinance shall apply accordingly.

(4) If an Asiatic who has failed to make application for registration within the time prescribed by this Act shall satisfy the Magistrate before whom he is brought that such failure was due to some good and sufficient cause, the Magistrate may instead of making such order as aforesaid direct such Asiatic forthwith to make application for registration and if such Asiatic shall comply with such direction his application shall be dealt with in all respects as if it had been made within the time within which it was required to be made by this Act and all the provisions of this Act which would have

applied if the application had been so made shall apply accordingly but if he shall fail to comply with such direction, the Magistrate shall make such order for removal as aforesaid in respect of such Asiatic.

REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE TO BE PRODUCED ON DEMAND

9. Every Asiatic of the age of sixteen years or over entering or residing in this Colony shall upon demand made upon him by any member of a police force lawfully established in this Colony or any other person authorized thereto by the Colonial Secretary produce the certificate of registration of which he is the lawful holder and shall also on like demand supply such particulars and furnish such means of identification as may be prescribed by Regulation.

Every guardian of an Asiatic child under the age of sixteen years shall produce on such demand as aforesaid any certificate of registration of which such child is the lawfulholder and supply any particulars and furnish any means of identification required by the Act or any Regulation in respect of such child.

EVIDENCE OF REGISTRATION CERTIFICATES

10. Every certificate of registration shall be accepted as conclusive evidence in all places that the lawful holder thereof notwithstanding anything in the Peace Preservation Ordinance 1903 contained is entitled to enter and reside in this Colony; provided always that this section shall not apply to persons who have under section ten of the Peace Preservation Ordinance 1903 been ordered to leave the Colony.

DUTY OF PERSON FINDING LOST CERTIFICATES

11. Any person into whose hands shall come any certificate of registration or any permit issued under section seventeen of which he is not the lawful holder shall forthwith deliver or transmit the same by post as soon as may be to the Registrar of Asiatics, Pretoria.

Any person who fails to comply with the requirements of this section shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding fifty pounds or in default of payment to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period not exceeding one month.

PROVISION WHERE REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE IS LOST OR DESTROYED

12. If at any time any certificate of registration is lost or destroyed, the person who was the lawful holder thereof shall apply forthwith to the Registrar to have the same renewed and the Registrar shall upon compliance by such person with the Regulations relating to applications for the renewal of certificates and upon payment of a fee of five shillings renew such certificate. The said fee shall be denoted by means of revenue stamps to be affixed to such application by the applicant for such renewal and shall be defaced by the officer who receives such application.

TRADING LICENSES NOT TO BE GRANTED TO ASIATICS EXCEPT UPON PRODUCTION OF CERTIFICATES

13. After such date as may be notified by the Colonial Secretary in the Gazette, no Asiatic shall obtain any trading license issued under the Revenue Licenses Ordinance 1905 or any amendment thereof or under any bye-law in force in a municipality unless he shall produce to the person appointed to issue such license a certificate of registration of which he is the lawful holder and supply such particulars and furnish such means of identification as may be prescribed by Regulation.

EVIDENCE AS TO AGE OF ASIATIC

14. Whenever in any prosecution or other proceeding under this Act the age of any Asiatic is in question, such Asiatic shall unless and until the contrary be proved be taken to be of the age which the Registrar shall in any certificate issued under his hand certify to be in his opinion the apparent age of such Asiatic.

EXEMPTION FROM STAMP DUTY OF AFFIDAVIT OR SWORN DECLARATION REQUIRED BY REGULATION

15. Any affidavit or sworn declaration which is required by Regulation to be made by any person who makes an application for registration either on his own behalf or on behalf of some other person shall be exempt from stamp duty.

OFFENCES RELATING TO APPLICATIONS FOR REGISTRATION AND TO REGISTRATION CERTIFICATES

16. Any person who

(i) for the purpose of or in connection with an application for registration or for the purpose of obtaining a certificate of registration commits any fraudulent act or makes any false statement or false pretence or incites any person to or aids or abets any person in such act, statement or pretence;

(ii) forges any certificate of registration;

(iii) uses or attempts to use as his certificate any certificate of registration of which he is not the lawful holder or any forged certificate of registration;

(iv) incites any person to use or aids and abets any person in using as such person's certificate any certificate of registration of which such person is not the lawful holder or any forged certificate of registration,

shall be liable to a fine not exceeding five hundred pounds or in default of payment to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a term not exceeding two years or to both such fine and such imprisonment.

POWER TO ISSUE PERMITS TO ASIATICS TO REMAIN IN COLONY FOR LIMITED PERIOD

17. (1) Notwithstanding anything in the Peace Preservation Ordinance 1903 contained a permit to enter this Colony may in the absolute discretion of

the Colonial Secretary be issued in the form prescribed by Regulation authorising an Asiatic to enter and remain in this Colony for any period named in such permit and after the expiry of such period the person authorized by such permit to enter this Colony shall be deemed to be a person not duly authorized to be in this Colony and if found may be arrested without warrant and the provisions of sections seven and eight of the said Ordinance shall apply to such person as if he were a person who at the date of such expiry had been ordered to leave this Colony under section six of the said Ordinance and had failed to comply with such order.

(2) The provisions of section nine of the said Ordinance shall in all cases apply to permits issued under this section.

(3) Any permit issued before the date of the taking effect of this Act to an Asiatic under the Indemnity and Peace Preservation Ordinance 1902 or any amendment thereof and expressed to authorize such Asiatic to remain in this Colony for a limited time only shall be deemed to be a permit issued under this section.

(4) The Colonial Secretary may in his discretion order that the person authorized by any permit issued under this section to enter and remain in this Colony shall not during the currency of such permit be deemed to be a coloured person for the purpose of the provisions of the Liquor Licensing Ordinance 1902 or any amendment thereof and such order shall be endorsed on such permit and shall be of full force and effect for such purposes.

(5) The Colonial Secretary may issue any such order as in the last preceding sub-section mentioned in respect of any person who is a member of an Asiatic race and is not subject to the provisions of this Act.

POWER TO MAKE REGULATIONS

18. The Governor in Council may from time to time make, alter and repeal Regulations for any of the following purposes:

(1) prescribing the form of the register to be kept under this Act;

(2) prescribing the manner and form in which application shall be made for registration, the particulars to be supplied and the means of identification to be furnished by any applicant or the guardian of any applicant for the purpose of or in connection with such application;

(3) prescribing the form of certificates of registration;

(4) prescribing the particulars to be supplied and the means of identification to be furnished:

(a) by the guardian of any Asiatic child under the age of eight years under section six of this Act;

(b) by any Asiatic upon such demand as is in section nine of this Act

mentioned;

(c) by any Asiatic applying for the renewal of any certificate of registration which has been lost or destroyed;

(d) by any Asiatic applying for a trading license;

(5) prescribing the form of permit to be issued under section *seventeen* of this Act.

GENERAL PENALTIES

19. Any Asiatic or the guardian of any Asiatic failing to comply with any requirement of this Act shall except where otherwise specified be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds or in default of payment to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period not exceeding three months.

PROVISIONS AS TO CERTAIN ASIATICS UNDER CONTRACTS OF SERVICE

20. Notwithstanding anything contained in the Labour Importation Ordinance 1904, no Asiatic who is the lawful holder of a certificate of registration and no Asiatic who was lawfully resident in this Colony or allowed to enter it under a proper permit before the date of the said Ordinance shall be prohibited from entering or residing in or being introduced into this Colony by reason of the fact that he is under a contract of service and has not entered into the contract referred to in section *eight* of the said Ordinance.

PROVISION AS TO HOLDING FIXED PROPERTY

21. Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (b) of Article *two* of Law No. 3 of 1885 as amended by Volksraad Resolution Article 1419 of the twelfth day ofAugust 1886, any fixed property in this Colony acquired by an Asiatic before the taking effect of such Law and registered in the name of such Asiatic whether before or after the taking effect of such Law may be transmitted by such Asiatic to another Asiatic by testamentary or other inheritance.

TITLE AND DATE OF TAKING EFFECT

22. This Act may be cited for all purposes as the Asiatic Law Amendment Act 1907 and shall not take effect unless and until the Governor shall proclaim in the Gazette that it is His Majesty's pleasure not to disallow the same and thereafter it shall take effect upon such date as the Governor shall notify by Proclamation.

PEACE PRESERVATION ORDINANCE

The following are the sections referred to in the above Act from the Peace Preservation Ordinance No. 5 of 1903:

PERSONS ARRESTED TO BE EXAMINED BY A MAGISTRATE

6. Every person so arrested shall with all convenient speed be brought before a

Magistrate and if he fails to satisfy the Magistrate that he is duly authorised to enter or reside in this Colony under the provisions of this Ordinance, the Magistrate may make an order in writing directing such person to leave this Colony within such time as may be specified in such order provided that if such person declares upon oath that he has already obtained a permit and gives satisfactory reasons for his inability to produce the same or if he declares upon oath that he can produce satisfactory evidence that he belongs to one of the classes exempted from the necessity of obtaining a permit by the provisions of section two hereof, he may be released upon entering into a recognisance with or without sureties to produce before any Magistrate named in such recognisance and within the time stated therein such permit or evidence, as the case may be. If such person fails to comply with the conditions of his recognisance, it shall be forfeited.

PENALTIES FOR NOT COMPLYING WITH THE ORDER TO LEAVE THE COLONY

7. Any person who may be ordered to leave this Colony and fails to do so within the time specified in the order and any person whose recognizance has been forfeited under the provisions of the last preceding section may be arrested without warrant and brought before a Magistrate and shall upon conviction be sentenced to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period of not less than one month and not more than six months and with or without a fine not exceeding five hundred pounds and in default of payment to a further term of imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months.

FURTHER PENALTIES FOR REMAINING IN THE COLONY

8. If any person imprisoned under the terms of the last preceding section shall remain in the Colony for a period of more than seven days after the expiration of his term of imprisonment or any subsequent term of imprisonment imposed under this section without obtaining permission in writing from the Colonial Secretary to remain in theColony the burden of proving which shall be upon him, he may be arrested without a warrant and brought before a Magistrate and shall on conviction be sentenced to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period of not less than six and not more than twelve months and with or without a fine not exceeding five hundred pounds and in default of payment to a further term of imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months.

FALSE PERMITS

9. Any person who

(1) obtains or attempts to obtain or incites any person to obtain or aids or abets any person in obtaining a permit by any fraud, misrepresentation, false pretence, falsehood or other improper means;

(2) uses or attempts to use or incites any person to use or aids or abets any person in using any permit so obtained;

(3) enters or attempts to enter this Colony on a permit so obtained or on a permit not issued to him by proper authority shall be liable to a fine not exceeding five hundred pounds or to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a term not exceeding two years or to both such fine and such imprisonment.

PERSONS DANGEROUS TO PEACE AND GOOD GOVERNMENT

10. It shall be lawful for the Lieutenant-Governor on its being shown to his satisfaction that there are reasonable grounds for believing that any person within this Colony is dangerous to the peace and good government of the country to issue an order under the hand of the Colonial Secretary to such person to leave the Colony within such time after service of such order as may be stated therein. If on the expiration of the said period such person shall be found within the Colony, he shall be proceeded against in manner prescribed in sections seven and eight of this Ordinance and shall be subject to penalties therein provided.

Indian Opinion, 30-11-1907

1. ROYAL ASSENT

The long-deferred Royal assent to the Registration Act has now been gazetted. General Botha, although he has assured Lord Elgin that he will consult the feelings of British Indians, has refused to receive a deputation of British Indians, saying that no good purpose could be served by receiving it as the Act was to be gazetted last week; but we notice that, although the Act is gazetted, the date of its enforcement has been indefinitely postponed. It may be fixed now or never. The letter[1] of Mr. Essop Mia, Acting Chairman of the British Indian Association, published in The Star and taken over by us, is, therefore, most timely. Mr. Essop Mia, who is a merchant of long standing, with very large interests at stake, tells the public that he feels the degradation of the Act so keenly, that he is prepared to sacrifice all, if that is the price he has to pay for non-submission to the Act. He then makes the most reasonable proposals, that the day for enforcing the Act may not be fixed for the time being, and that British Indians: and other Asiatics, in order to prove their *bona fides*, should be allowedto be voluntarily re-registered. If the experiment prove a failure, the Act shall be applied to those who have not adopted voluntary re-registration. We hope that the Transvaal Government will accept such an eminently reasonable suggestion. General Botha, in the name of the people of the Transvaal, more than once expressed profound gratitude to the Imperial Government for the liberal constitution granted to the Transvaal, and his concern for the Empire as a whole. If he includes India as a part of the Empire, there is reason to hope that he will, even at the last moment, by accepting the Indian compromise, avoid an exacerbation of the feelings of the British Indians in the Transvaal.

Indian Opinion, 15-6-1907

2. TYRANNY OF LAW

He who will ferry others across to the shore,
Will also take his boat to the port.
He who will let others go to the bottom,
Shall himself flounder.
No good to wield the sword or the axe,
The gun, the knife or the arrow,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to The Star" 8-6-1907

For you will but reap what you sow.

So sings the poet. "Reap as you sow" is a proverb known throughout the world. The principle of this proverb will not change for the benefit of the Indian community. A creeper yielding bitter fruit will never bear jasmines and the *palasha* will not yield mangoes. Likewise, it will never be that the Transvaal Indian community sows one thing and reaps another. It is only when the community proves its manliness that we shall be able to live like men. The community will enjoy respect if it deserves it. It will add to its honour if it keeps its word and fulfils what it has undertaken. If, on the other hand, the community forsakes its oath out of selfishness or fear or any other reason, it is certain that the rights of Indians in the Transvaal will be lost and that other Indians also will be crushed along with those in the Transvaal. So great is the task the Indian community in the Transvaal has undertaken.

The poet adds that it is also the law of the world, or nature, or God, that he who takes others safely across will himself reach the other shore. Likewise, if we serve others, our own needs will be provided for. As for looking after oneself, even birds and beasts do this. The chief difference between man and beast is that man is a benevolent creature. All live happily where one feels happy in the happiness of others. But where everyone looks after himself alone, all are lost. For, as the poet says, "He who will let others go to the bottom, shall himself flounder." This is an important idea and a little reflection will showthat it is true. A mother suffers discomfort to bring up her child. In the end such a mother finds herself happy. Where the members of a family share one another's burdens and give up individual interests, the whole family is well sustained. Members of a community individually suffer to save the group as a whole and are themselves saved too. Similarly, where men undergo suffering or die for their country's sake, they truly live and bring credit to the country. Is there any Indian who seeks happiness for himself by breaking this fundamental law? These examples clearly prove that the Transvaal Indians will be victorious if, for the sake of the Indian community and for the sake of their personal honour, they endure all sufferings and face all hardships to accomplish the task they have undertaken. They will then break their bonds and win immortal fame in history.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-6-1907

3. RHODESIA AND THE TRANSVAAL

It has been argued in the Rhodesian Assembly that, since a law has been passed in the Transvaal for Asiatics, a similar law should be passed in Rhodesia too to prevent further Indian immigration and to provide for the registration of those already there. All members spoke on the subject in strong terms. A full account of it appears in our English section. It can be seen from this that, if the Transvaal law remains on the Statute-book and if the Indian community submits to it, its example will be followed everywhere else. There is but one way now to help the Indians in Rhodesia, and that is for the Transvaal Indians to show their mettle.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-6-1907

4. INDENTURED INDIAN LABOURERS

At Thornville junction, a European cruelly beat up an Indian and the latter died. The European was prosecuted and fined £10. We publish this report in full elsewhere. This is a blood-curdling case. The Indian lost his life, but the European got off with a fine of £10. There is nothing in it to comfort us. But we are not to think of revenge. The European will have to answer to the Creator. Had he been punished with hard labour, that would not have restored life to the Indian and would not have saved other indentured labourers from getting similar treatment in future.

If we are to cure a disease, its cause must first be ascertained. Accordingly, if we look for the cause of this state of affairs, we shall find that indentured labour itself is an evil thing. If the system of indentured labour is put an end to, the kind of oppression described above will also stop. For in ordinary service one is not bound, as the indentured labourer is: if the service does not suit him, he is free to give it up.

Mr. Robinson has stated in his speech that the importation of Indians as indentured labourers must cease. We also hold the same view. It is necessary for the [Natal Indian] Congress to take steps towards that end. That Mr. Robinson's reasons and ours for ending the system of indentured labour are not the same is of no account.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-6-1907

5. *"THE WISDOM OF THE EAST"*

JALALUDDIN RUMI[1]

We have received for review two volumes of a series entitled *The Wisdom of the East* being published in Britain. The first is called *The Way of the Buddha* and the second, *Persian Mystics*, in which the author has assigned the first place to Jalaluddin Rumi. An informative account of Sufis is followed by a narrative of the life of Jalaluddin and translations of some of his poems. In the author's view, a Sufi is a lover of God. Above everything else, the Sufis aspire after a pure heart and love of God. Jalaluddin was once observed dancing with joy at a funeral, and on being questioned what he meant thereby, the saint replied, "When the human spirit, after years of imprisonment in the cage and dungeon of the body, is at length set free and wings its flight to the source whence it came, is it not an occasion for rejoicing?" We can see that, in the olden days, even women freely participated in such [Sufi way of] life. Rabia Bibi was a Sufi herself. When asked if she hated the devil, she retorted that "her love of God left her no time to hate anyone". According to the Sufi point of view, no religion based on morality can be considered to be false. In reply to a question Jalaluddin said, "The ways of God are as many as the number of souls of men." Elsewhere he says, "God's light is one but its rays are various in hue. . . . We can worship God along any path, provided it be with a true and sincere heart."

Referring to the nature of true knowledge, Jalaluddin says that "a blood-stain can be washed away with water, but the stain of ignorance can be washed clean only with the water of God's grace". And then again, "True knowledge is the knowledge of God." Whenasked where one could find God, the poet replied, "I saw the Cross and also Christians, but I did not find God on the Cross. I went to find Him in the temple, but in vain. I saw Him neither in Herat nor in Kandahar. He could be found neither on the hill nor in the cave. At last, I looked into my heart and found Him there, only there and nowhere else." This is an excellent book to read. We can endlessly go on quoting passages such as those above. We should like to recommend the book to everyone. It will be of profit to all, Hindus and Muslims alike. It costs two shillings in Britain. The same firm has also published *Gulistan* of Sheikh Saadi[2], priced at 1s. Then there is a

[1] (1207-73), Sufi poet of Persia.

[2] *Vide* "What Should the Brave Do?" 1-6-1907

book entitled *The Essence of the Koran*, costing ls. *The Way of the Buddha* is priced at 2s and *The Way of Zoroaster* also at 2s. Other books are to follow. If any of our readers wants one or more of these books, he should send us the amount of the price quoted above, and an extra 6d for every book. We shall procure the book for him. The extra 6d is for postage.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-6-1907

6. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

NEW LAW

General Botha has, as the saying goes, dug up a mountain to kill a mouse. He has informed the Association that no good purpose would be served by receiving deputation, since all preparations had been made to bring the law into effect. Everybody therefore got busy looking into the *Gazette*, watching for the date when the law would come into force and other particulars. But nothing of the kind was found in the *Gazette*. It only says that the law has received the assent of His Majesty. There is nothing new in this. Another piece of information the *Gazette* gives is that the date on which the Act will be brought into effect will be fixed later. What does this mean ? The only construction I can put upon it is that the Government has been set thinking as to what it should do to meet the gaol resolution of the Indian community and how to implement the provisions of the Act. This may or may not be the right meaning, but one thing is certain, namely, that the gaol resolution has posed a problem for the Government.

SOME QUESTIONS

Thus, things are still unsettled. The Indian community will do well to keep its weapons ready. Questions are still being asked, which is a good sign. One of them is:

IF OUR WELL-WISHERS IN ENGLAND DISAPPROVE GAOL-GOING?

This is a good question. The answer, too, is straight. The members' of the Committee or other gentlemen in England should be regarded as our well-wishers as long as they help us in preserving our self-respect and our rights. We may respect their views. But when their views go against our rights, we are not bound by them. Suppose someone compels us to become Christians. We shall oppose him. If those whom we considered till now our well-wishers advise us to embrace Christianity, I am sure that every Hindu and every Muslim

will agree with me that we should not accept the advice. This law too is much the same kind of thing. Clearly, it would make cowards of us. We can never follow the advice to be cowards. It is enough that we are in the right and God is on our side. In the end, truth alone will triumph.

WHAT SHOULD THOSE DO WHO HAVE RECEIVED LETTERS OF NOTIFICATION ?

A person from Natal writes that he has received an order allowing him to proceed to the Transvaal. Should he do so? Perhaps everyone knows that this order is not a permit. It is futile at present to enter the Transvaal on the basis of such an order. All contact with the Permit Office has been stopped by the community's resolution. Hence the said order can be of no use. It is essential that those not holding old permits should keep away from the Transvaal.

WHAT ABOUT LOST PERMITS ?

Under the old law, no one who had lost his permit could get a duplicate. The new Act provides for the issue of a duplicate. However, that refers to a duplicate copy of the new permit. No action need be taken by one who has lost his permit. He should await events without any fear, like other permit-holders.

CAN THOSE WITH LOST PERMITS ENTER ?

A certain individual, having lost his permit, obtained a certificate to that effect from the Permit Office. Can he re-enter the Transvaal on return from India? The answer is that he can, just like any other permit-holder. But he should remember that, in the end, he has to go to gaol. Those who are afraid of imprisonment are not to enter the Transvaal at present, whether they hold permits or not.

SHOULD MR. CHAMNEY'S SIGNATURE BE OBTAINED FOR A LICENCE?

A man in Boksburg applied for a licence, but the Licensing Officer asked him to obtain Mr. Chamney's signature. If the Officer said so, it was illegal. As long as the new law has not come into .force, no one is under obligation to show his permit, much less to obtain Mr. Chamney's permission.

While replying to questions about licences, I should also state that a correspondent of this journal writes that some persons are trading at present without a licence. The licence may be in the name of one person and trade is carried on by another person. The correspondent has given the names of such persons. I have not been able to verify the truth of his statement. But such men should beware. If the correspondent's information is correct, I would advise such men to

give up the evil practice, since the Indian community as a whole has to suffer for the wrongs of a few Indians and, sooner or later, the offending Indian will be punished.

CHINESE UNITY

I wrote earlier about the resolution passed by the Chinese not to submit to the new law. Not stopping there, they have signed a document stating that the signatories would not take out the new permits, but go to gaol and would shun taking food or water with those who should take out permits. Nearly 900 Chinese have appended their signatures to the document, and now only a hundred Chinese remain whose signatures are yet to be secured. The Chinese appear to be full of enthusiasm.[1]

A SUGGESTION

In connection with the proposal that, with a view to keeping the shop running, a permit may be taken out by one person in every shop on the last date fixed for the purpose, or after coming out of gaol, it is further suggested that those who so wish to continue business should contribute to the Law Fund the balance of their earnings after deducting all expenses. If the shopkeepers accept this suggestion, it will be regarded as a highly patriotic step.

CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS AGAINST WAITER

An Indian waiter is being tried at Pretoria for offering a bribe of £50 to the chief clerk of the Registrar. A critic asks if persons offering bribes to officers have cropped up only now. Did not people make such an attempt before now? If they did, why were no proceedings instituted against them before ?

CAUTION TO JOHANNESBURG RESIDENTS

The Police Commissioner has issued a notice to say that several cheats gain access to private houses by posing as Light Inspectors. No one should admit such men, unless they produce the pass issued by the Municipality.

REGULATIONS FOR HAWKERS

The dispute regarding regulations for hawkers still goes on. A contributor to *The Star* says that for a hawker to take out a licence for

[1] The Chinese Association later submitted a petition, protesting against the Act, to the Chinese Ambassador in London. *Vide* Appendix II.

every municipal area and for the area outside will mean paying up to £80 a year for business within a few miles. Such extortion will ruin the hawkers, and will, for the sake of the shopkeepers, deprive the public of the facility afforded by hawkers. No one should take it that the contributor favours Indians. There are also hawkers other than Indian. The Regulations apply to all of them, and the defence of hawkers in general includes that of Indians also. The point is that we are to oppose only such regulations as are made specially against us.

EDUCATION BILL

When the Parliament meets again this month, the new Government is to bring before it a Bill regarding education. The Bill contains a provision preventing black boys from attending schools meant for the whites. It means that, if one wants to start a private school to educate the whites and the blacks together, one cannot do so. Special schools for the blacks will be started if the Government so desires. This again is a new curiosity! The Education Bill indicates what will be gained by Indians if they accept the new law.

MALAY LOCATION

A person writes in The Star about insanitary conditions in the Malay Location. He states that it is not the Indians but the Municipality that is at fault here. For the Municipality does not provide drainage and taps for drinking water. To this the Municipality replies that there is regular drainage of sewage, and that there are taps for drinking water at many places. If the people are prepared to pay, taps will be provided elsewhere also. The Municipal Officer adds that it could not be claimed that the residents of the Malay Location were not dirty in their habits. Some of them had been prosecuted for insanitation. I, too, have to admit that we cannot deny the charge of insanitation. Many houses are full of filth, the windows are soiled, the fences creak and the state of the latrines is horrible. . The kitchens are very bad. In my view all this is sinful, and we have paid for this heavily and shall have to pay still more heavily. It will be to our great advantage if people learn the value of tidiness, free air and light.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-6-1907

7. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

[JOHANNESBURG,]
June 18, 1907

THE HON'BLE THE COLONIAL
SECRETARY PRETORIA

SIR,

The Acting Secretary to the Right Hon'ble the Prime Minister informs me that my letter of the 12th instant on the question of the Asiatic Registration Act has been transferred to your Department.

My Association ventures to hope that the matter therein referred to will receive your favourable consideration.

I have, etc.,
ESSOP ISMAIL MIA
ACTING CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 22-6-1907

8. PRIZE POEM ON NEW LAW

WINNER AMBARAM MANGALJI THAKAR

The response to our announcement[1] of a prize [for the best poem] on the subject of the new law may, on the whole, be considered satisfactory. There were 20 competitors. All of them state that they entered the competition, not with an eye on the prize money, but to express their enthusiasm and to serve the cause of patriotism. This spirit and enthusiasm deserve praise. Even so, we should point out that patriotism is implicit in writing for the prize. There is no need for anyone to be ashamed of accepting the prize; one should rather feel proud.

The poems of three competitors, out of the total of 20, seemed to have nearly equal merit, and it was somewhat of a problem to decide which poem should be placed first. Considering the terms of the competition, the poem of Mr. Ambaram Mangalji Thakar, the President of the Natal Sanatan Dharma Sabha, was ultimately found to be worthy of the first place and we have sent to him the sum of £1. We congratulate Mr. Ambaram Thakar and hope that he will set an example to others by acting up to the high ideal expressed in his

[1] *Vide* "A Prize of £1", 1-6-1907

poem and thereby serve the cause of the country. When devotionmerges into courage and courage into devotion, both are at their best. If we go on doing our duty, armed with both these weapons, we shall surmount every difficulty and come out victorious in the end.

Of the 20 competitors, some have not communicated even their names to us. Some of them sent in more than one entry. Those of the poems which in our opinion are noteworthy will be published one by one every week, with the author's name where it has been supplied. If the reader wishes to know the poems which we consider fit for publication and who their authors are, we counsel him patience.

Having said this, we should like to add that the poems could have been still better if their writers had taken more pains in composing them. None of the poems reveals any special poetic power or art. If the writers had searched more carefully, they could have found better words and illustrations. We appeal to our readers to work harder and reach a higher level of skill.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-6-1907

9. NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

The Natal Indian Congress started raising contributions, but we find that the work has slackened down. The notice issued by the Secretaries shows that the Congress is still in debt. We believe that the delay in raising funds is harmful. This is not the time when we can afford procrastination. The Congress has still to put up a big fight against the licensing laws, to oppose the Indentured Labour Act, and, when the time comes, to help the Transvaal Indians. All the three causes are important In the absence of trading licences, merchants will be put to trouble; hence, even from the point of view of self-interest, it is necessary that the Congress should have its coffers well filled. One of the main aims of the Congress, as laid down in 1894,[2] is to associate itself with the indentured labourers in their hardships. The Congress cannot therefore merely sit still after what has happened at Thornville.[3] In this land it costs money even to open one's mouth. The Congress has bound itself to help the Transvaal Indians, since it has advised them to keep up the struggle. Moreover, the Transvaal struggle involves the self-interest of every Indian. We therefore hope that the Congress leaders will bear in mind all these three aims and,

[1] Here followed in the original the text of the prize-winning poem.

[2] *Vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Assembly", 28-6-1894 & "Deputation of Natal Premier", 29-6-1894.

[3] *Vide* "Indentured Indian Labourers", 15-6-1907

girding up their loins, will soon get ready the weapons of fightin the form of money. This is a task not to be neglected by postponing it from day to day.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-6-1907

10. GAOL REGULATIONS OF NATAL

Our Natal legislators have passed a law which gives sweets to one and cactus to the other. From the Natal *Government Gezette* we gather that there are four classes of prisoners in Natal: white, Coloured, Indian and Kaffir. If any work is taken from the white or the Coloured prisoners, the Government will give them some reward. But the Indian or the Kaffir prisoners who do any work will get nothing. Moreover, the white and the Coloured prisoners are given a towel each, while the Indian and the Kaffir are not given even this as if they do not need it at all. The Government have, in this manner, created classes even among prisoners. The Coloured prisoners include the Cape Boy, the American Negro, the Hottentot and the like.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-6-1907

11. HEJAZ RAILWAY

When we gave a summary of the attack made by the correspondent of *The Times of India* on the working of the Hejaz Railway,[1] we had stated that further information had been called for from Mr. Kidwai and Mr. Kadir, referred to therein. Mr. Kadir has gone to India. Mr. Kidwai received our letter. We reproduce here the reply received from him. He is himself the Secretary of the Islamic Society[2]:

> I am thankful for your letter. At the moment I am with Mr. Ritch. He has given me the cutting from *The Times* that you sent. I shall peruse it and let you know how much of it is true. If there is any incorrect statement in it, I shall take steps to reply to it, and also let you know what I propose to do. I am grateful to you for all that you do in a matter which is of great interest to my co-religionists. It behoves us, Hindus and Muslims of India, to strive and help each other in matters concerning either of them.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-6-1907

[1] *Vide* "Hejaz Railway: Some interesting information" 11-5-1907

[2] Pan-lslamic Society, London.

12. YUSUF ALI AND WOMEN'S EDUCATION

Mr. Yusuf Ali's book on conditions prevailing in India is widely read. His views on the education of women as expressed therein are worth noting. He says that so long as Indian women do not get proper education, the condition of India is not likely to improve. Woman is known as the better half of man. If a half of one's body ceases to function, we call it paralysis and the person becomes unfit for any activity. Thus, if women in India are not employed as they should be, it can be said that the entire country suffers from paralysis. How is it surprising then that India is not able to keep pace with other countries? All parents should think of this in regard to their daughters, and all Indians should do likewise with regard to the womenfolk of India. We badly need thousands of women who can compare with Mirabai and Rabia Bibi.

[From Gurajati]

Indian Opinion, 22-6-1907

13. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

TRANSVAAL PARLIAMENT

The second session of the new Parliament began on the 14th. General Botha spoke on the policy the local Government proposed to pursue. The speech deserves the attention of the Indian community. I give below the main points.

CHINESE TO GO

The present indentured Chinese labourers will be repatriated on the expiry of their contract. No other indentured Chinese labourers will be imported to take their place. At this rate, 16,000 Chinese will have left the Transvaal by the end of the current year. The rest will go probably by the end of 1908[1].

WHO WILL REPLACE CHINESE?

There will be a shortage of mine labourers when the Chinese leave. One way of meeting the situation will be to get hold of Kaffirs from wherever possible, and have the work done by them. For this purpose, talks are in progress with the Portuguese Government. The alternative is to encourage white labourers to work in the mines, and in

[1] The original has 1907, evidently a slip; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 26-6-1907.

the end to make the Transvaal entirely white. To enable whitelabourers to work on lower wages, the Transvaal will get out of the Customs Agreement. If necessary, it will enter into another agreement. The purpose is to reduce very much the duty payable at present and bring down prices, so that in the end the whites should be able to live as cheaply as in Great Britain. Full encouragement will be given to agriculture so as to change the present position in which the Transvaal depends for its prosperity exclusively on the mines. A special bank will be started with a view to promoting agriculture and providing irrigation.

This bank will lend money to farmers. To finance the bank the Imperial Government will give the local Government a loan of £5,000,000.

CONSEQUENCES OF SPEECH

This speech has thrown the minds of mine-owners into confusion. They are not likely to get many Kaffirs as labourers. Therefore the condition of Johannesburg, it is feared, will for years continue to be what it is at present. But the most important consequence of this is that Indians may have to leave bag and baggage. It seems to be the firm determination of the local Government to allow no Coloured people except as labourers into the Transvaal. If the Indian community is found lacking in courage, the Government will not hesitate to drive it out. The Indian community is now placed in a situation where it must choose between extermination and counter-attack.

LABOUR PROTECTION ACT

My last comment appears to be supported by one more law that is to be passed during the present session. The *Gazette* has published a Bill to provide for payment of damages to workers and their families in case of disability suffered during performance of duty by workers employed in the various factories. This law is to apply to the whites only. If a white and an Indian labourer are working together in a mine or elsewhere, and if both should get their hand or foot crushed by being caught in a machine, the employer is bound by this law to maintain only the white labourer and his family. The Indian worker does not count at all. He would be doomed, if there were no God in Heaven above. Moreover, no one can suppose that even a penny will be advanced to an Indian by the proposed bank. The bank is solely for the white farmer. This is the marvellous fruit of General Botha's gallantry. The men of his community watered the soil of the Transvaal with Boer blood. No one has reason to wonder that, having thus

manured the land, they should now reap the golden harvest. If we can have even a trace of the Boers' courage, we too may roll in prosperity.

WEENEN'S LETTER

Mr. Kallenbach's admiration for the Indian community on the question of going to gaol seems to have proved infectious. The following is the substance of a letter[1] written to *The Star* by a white gentleman, Mr. Van Weenen.

> No one with a sense of justice will fail to endorse Mr. Kallenbach's letter on the subject of Indians. Will the Transvaal go to pieces if a few Indians quietly live and trade in it? It does not behove us to treat as criminals the descendants of a people enlightened long before western civilization blossomed forth. Registration for Indians? The whites who are themselves guilty may be wanting to put this noose round the Indians' neck. To me the fault of the Indians appears to be that they are diligent. The fact that indolent whites should want to oppress them can be understood. Shall we, however, blame Indians for speaking out against a law which will destroy their very self-esteem? Like Mr. Kallenbach, I too have found among the Indians men worthy of esteem. Mr. Gandhi's letter shows that the Indian demand is very reasonable. They deserve praise if they think of going to gaol rather than suffer humiliation in case their demand is rejected.

ESSOP MIA'S LETTER

Below I give the substance of the letter that Mr. Essop Mia has written to *The Star*:[2]

LETTER TO GENERAL BOTHA

On behalf of the British Indian Association, Mr. Essop Mia had addressed a letter[3] to General Botha. He had requested that, as the law had not been brought into effect, the Indian community's suggestion deserved to be accepted. General Botha replied that correspondence in the matter should be addressed to the Colonial Secretary. Thereupon a communication has been sent to the latter. His reply will perhaps have been received by the time this letter appears in print.

CONFUSION REGARDING THE "GAZETTE"

Some misunderstanding seems to have occurred regarding the

[1] The translation given here is collated with the original in English.

[2] Not reproduced here; *vide* "Letter to The Star",8-6-1907

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Prime. Minister's Secretary", 1-6-1907

notification to the effect that the King-Emperor has given assent to the law. Some believe that the law will not come into force for two years. This is a mistake. The notification states that the King-Emperor hasthe authority to veto any law within two years of its passing. On this law being placed before His Majesty, he intimated that he did not intend to veto it. This means that he has forgone the prerogative to veto the law within two years. In other words, it stands confirmed permanently. No, I should not say that. For the Indian who does not accept it, the law stands repealed despite the Royal assent.

VREDEDORP TRADERS

It appears that the time has come to taste the fruit of Mr. Ritch's struggle in England on this subject. The Corporation has appointed two merchants to ascertain the stocks in Indian shops. They have made a cursory inquiry. The Government will now consider all the figures collected. Meanwhile, something curious has happened. The Vrededorp Ordinance[1] is not to the liking of some whites. We shall perhaps be saved even as a result of this.

NO CHANGE IN NEW LAW

Sir George Farrar[2] wanted to know from General Botha what were the changes that he was reported to have suggested to the Imperial Government. In his reply General Botha said, "A deputation met me on behalf of Indians. The Imperial Government, too, had made some recommendations. I said in reply that the law would be so enforced as not to wound the feelings of the Indian community." Sir George said, "This is no reply to my question. Which particular hardship under the law is intended to be redressed?" "None," replied General Botha.

I said earlier that the British Indian Association had written to the Colonial Secretary.[3] General Botha's reply shows that it will be futile to expect any amendment of the law. But it is another matter as to when the law will come into force and whether the suggestion of the Indian community will be accepted. Let the Indian community keep in mind the saying, "Hope of help from others will always end in despair," and be ready to defend its honour in the Transvaal.

[From Gurajati]

Indian Opinion, 22-6-1907

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Lord Elgin", 8-10-1906

[2] Nominated member of the Transvaal Legislative Council.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 22-6-1907

14. PROPHET MAHOMED AND HIS CALIPHS

INTRODUCTION

In pursuance of our ideas, we commence this week a series of articles on the subject stated above. It will always be our aim to bring about and preserve unity between Hindus and Muslims. One of the ways of achieving this is to acquaint each with whatever is good in the other. Moreover, when occasion requires, Hindus and Muslims should serve each other without any reserve. The series that we are commencing is intended to serve both these aims.

It is also our object to spread education and culture among the Indian community. With this end in view, we had intended, and still intend, to publish a separate book. We intend to bring out a translation of Justice Ameer Ali's book on Islam and [another book giving] an account of the hardships of Indians in South Africa. But there is likely to be some delay since there are difficulties in the way which have not yet been overcome.

Meanwhile, we propose to give every week the biography of the Prophet written by a famous writer, Washington Irving. The biography deserves to be read by both Hindus and Muslims. Most Hindus are ignorant of the career of the Prophet. Most Muslims are ignorant of the researches made by Englishmen and of what they write about the Prophet. The history by Washington is likely to be of benefit to both these classes [of readers]. We do not give a full translation, but only the substance. Washington Irving's account is considered excellent, and though he has not written ill of Islam like other European writers, it is likely that occasionally his ideas may be such as may not appeal to our readers. A wise man would make himself acquainted even with such ideas. We advise our readers to go through the chapters that follow,[1] bearing in mind that the purpose of reading is to accept knowledge from everything that we read and to draw the right lesson from it.

WHO WAS WASHINGTON IRVING?

We must now answer this question. He was born in the city of New York in America in the year 1783. For many years he lived in Europe. He was one of the front-rank writers of America. He has

[1] These are not reproduced here. The instalments appeared in the successive issues of *Indian Opinion* between July 6 and August 17. The series was, however, discontinued after a part of chapter six had been published. *Vide* "Why Was *The Life of Prophet Mahomed* Discontinued?", 31-8-1907

written many books, one of which is about the Prophet. He wasconsidered to have an excellent gift for writing. His books have won wide fame. He was a man of character. After the death of the lady to whom he was engaged, he remained a bachelor for the rest of his life, cherishing her memory. He died in his home on November 28, 1859.

[From Gurajati]

Indian Opinion, 22-6-1907

15. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

[*June 26, 1907*]

NEW LAW

The Transvaal Government has sent an ugly reply. In answer to Mr. Essop Mia's letter it says that, as stated in an earlier reply, the suggestion made by Indians is not acceptable. That is, the Government is intent on enforcing the law. Now we have only to wait for the date. I have said that this is ugly news; but it can also be taken as good news. The courageous will treat it only as good news.

NEW APPOINTMENT

The *Government Gazette* announces that Mr. Chamney has been appointed Registrar under the new law. I hope the Indian community will see that he only sits and yawns. This correspondent's name will never be entered in the register. It is my constant prayer to God that the same may be true of every Indian.

UNTOUCHABILITY IN MARKET

Europeans in the Johannesburg market seem to feel polluted by the touch of Indians. The Municipality, therefore, has resolved to have separate sections for the Europeans and for the black people. It has also been decided to charge the Chinese rent for using the outer portion. Having a caste of untouchables in our own country, we have ourselves become untouchables here. And now with the permit label tied to our necks, we shall have been utterly disgraced. I remember that, in the market at Port Elizabeth, similar oppression of Indians was attempted. Thereupon, they stopped going to the market. If the Indian hawkers become equally bold, they can avoid being reduced to the status of untouchables. It will be better to leave the Colony than to stay on as contemptible creatures for the sake of a living.

QUESTION ABOUT DUTCH REGISTER

A correspondent from Lawley Station says that he has an old Dutch register and also a Dutch witness. If he still cannot obtain a permit,what is he to do? This correspondent does not seem to haveread *Indian Opinion*. I have already said that, after the law is brought into force, such an Indian may remain in the Transvaal only if he desires to taste the pleasures of going to gaol. He should otherwise leave the Transvaal.

LEONARD'S OPINION

Some Indians are afraid that the Government may forcibly deport Indians who do not take out new permits. Such a doubt had occurred to the Chinese also. They therefore sought Mr. Leonard's[1] opinion on the subject. Mr. Leonard gave his opinion as follows:[2]

> In answer to the question put to me, I have to advise that I can find nothing in the above Act or in any other statute providing for the deportation of individuals convicted of a breach of the provisions of the Act. Such deportation could not be enforced under any law that I know of. The only penalties prescribed appear to be those provided for by Sections 7 and 8 of Ordinance No. 5 of 1903.

(Articles 7 and 8 give power to imprison those who do not leave the country.)

This matter may therefore be taken as finally settled.

HEARSAY REPORT

There is a rumour that a notice will be published bringing the law into effect from July l. It means that, from that date, those who want it will be branded as slaves. Now on, things will grow more exciting.

INDIAN BAZAARS

A notice is published in the *Gazette* that the Indian Bazaar, that is to say, untouchables' quarters, has been now made over to the control of the Town Council. For the present the notice has no point, as no one has the authority to force Indians into that Location. All that revolves round the new law. A "sleeping sickness" will overtake the laws relating to the Location and other similar laws if the Indian community cancels the new. law, that is, treats it as cancelled.

ATTACK ON HAWKERS

The Chamber of Commerce wrote to the Government to take

[1] A barrister.

[2] This has been reproduced from the original in English.

steps to prevent Indian immigration. In reply, the Colonial Secretary says that in a few days the Immigration Bill will be published. Moreover, Indian trade will be very much reduced as stringent regulations have been framed for hawkers. One may observe from this what the fate will be of those wanting to be branded as thieves under the new law. If the Immigration Bill is published, I propose to give a translation of it next week. We are being pretty well encircled by a conflagration. I take all these as good omens. It is only when a disease becomes acute that its cure can be thought out.

CURTIS AND NEW LAW

The Potchefstroom Chamber expressed its thanks to Mr. Curtis[1] for his efforts in connection with the new law. In his reply, Mr. Curtis says.[2]

I am much obliged to your Chamber for your letter of May 11. It is inconceivable to me that anyone should not feel the paramount importance of this question. Personally I have no more quarrel with the Asiatic than with the European, but I am persuaded that the mixture of the white and the Asiatic in one society is a curse to both. Each race should in its own interest seek countries which suit them. Asiatic Immigration is only a commercial problem incidentally; in its essence it is a most important problem and ought to be dealt with as such.

> I do hope most earnestly that your Chamber will not consider that the first Act is completed by Mr. Winston Churchill's[3] announcement in the House of Commons. In the absence of any public announcement here to the effect that the formal sanction has been received in the Transvaal, it is always possible that pressure may be brought to modify the regulations to be made under the Act in such a way as to nullify its real effect. The object aimed at by the Act is to secure the complete registration of all Asiatics who have acquired the right to live and trade in the Transvaal coupled with a system of finger-prints such as will prevent the practice of personation.
>
> Don't let us think, however, that everything is finished by printing the law. Much still hangs upon the question as to whether the law is carried into effect. So far as I have been able to judge, the Government have left undone nothing which it was possible for them to do. It is to be hoped that the public, and more specially the Press, will help in the successful administration of this Act. It is the duty of the Press to support the officials who are carrying it out. The task is not an easy one and may very easily be rendered impossible

[1] Assistant Colonial Secretary.

[2] What follows is the original English text of the letter, with some changes needed to bring it into conformity with the Gujarati version.

[3] (1874-), British statesman and writer. Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1905-8, Prime Minister of Great Britain, 1940-5, 1951-5.

unless they enjoy a full measure of public confidence. I trust that any attempt to disturb the public confidence in the officers entrusted with these duties will be watched with the utmost jealousy. They have a most invidious duty, and they will incur much personal hostility. If they are attacked in public they cannot defend themselves, and no one, indeed, is in a position to judge their conduct rightly but their own official chief. If I may express an opinion on the subject, it is that no weight be attached to public attacks made on these officers, on the ground that if they are justified the Colonial Secretary will know it and deal with the matter. In a word, I hope that the public will make it clear that so long as the officers enjoy the confidence of the Colonial Secretary, they also will enjoy their own. While I was in charge of the office I had constantly to watch attempts to discredit the officers who were most diligent in the performance of their duties, and the public should be warned in their own interests to watch such attempts with care.

Mr. Curtis has put up a wonderful show indeed. First, he exerted himself strenuously to get the law passed. Now he gives advance warning to the public lest the officials enforcing the law should come into trouble. The suggestion is that the public should not bother—whatever the oppression practised by officials. Fortunately for the Indian community, the services of the officials will not now be needed at all. But supposing they had been needed, Mr. Curtis's letter suggests that, even if an official misbehaves, the public should do nothing to bring him to book as they did in the case of Jackson. For, the Colonial Secretary would know all about it. Mr. Curtis has forgotten that Sir Arthur Lawley[1] came to know about his officials only when repeated complaints were made to him.

CHINESE STRUGGLE

Mr. Kimming of the Chinese Association writes to *The Star* as under:[2]

> We are quite surprised to find that this shameful Ordinance is again to be forced upon us without even giving us fair consideration.
>
> What are we? We have to repeat our former decision, that we do not object to voluntary re-registration, but we certainly do not want to be made slaves of the whites. We will not suffer such kind of treatment. Although our life will be at their mercy for refusing to allow ourselves to be degraded by this disgraceful Ordinance, yet we will fight for our right of freedom as bone fide

[1] Lieutenant-Governor of the Transvaal, 1902-5, appointed Governor of Madras in 1905; *vide* "Address to Lieutenant-Governor", 18-5-1904 and "Sir Arthur Lawley as Governor of Madras", 2-12-1905

[2] What follows is the original English text with some changes needed to bring it into conformity with the Gujarati version.

residents, and fight we will to the bitter end. We ask for nothing unreasonable, but we ask only for fair play and fair treatment.

The British people are much respected by us in China for their fairness, but to force on us here by them such slavery treatment will not only be a great stain to their good name and respect but will make us and the whole of China entirely lose confidence in them.

MIDDELBURG LOCATION

The Middelburg Town Council states that the Indians there do not vacate the Location, and do not even pay rent for the stands used by them; moreover, they use the stands improperly. The Council has therefore decided to prosecute them. Indians residing in the Middelburg Location should ponder over this. If it is true that they are not paying rent, it will not be proper of them. We should not be in the wrong in any way.

COMMITTEE'S MISTAKE

A cable from the South Africa British Indian Committee has been received today (Wednesday). It expresses disapproval of gaol-going as a protest against the law. I trust no Indian will fall into a panic at this. It would have been good if we had won the Committee'sapproval. But the Committee's disapproval is underst-andable. Its chief members are well-known retired officials from India. It is possible that they may again hold such offices. It would be surprising if they advised us to oppose the law. It is not at all surprising that they should have asked us to submit to the law. The Committee's advice is to be treated as counsel's opinion. They would not ask us to disobey the law. Going to gaol is a step which he alone can understand and take responsibility for who has felt the pressure of circumstances. A meeting of the Association was held to apprise it of the contents of the telegram. The Association decided to send the following cable to the Committee:

> Leaving aside all other considerations, Indian community, if it were to submit to law, would be dishonouring its oath taken in name of God, and Committee ought not to advise such a course. It is hoped, therefore, that the Committee's sympathy for Indians will be continued.

It is good that such a cable has been sent. But the task undertaken by the Indian community should not be abandoned even if the Committee should break up. The true support of the Indian community is Khuda— Ishwar[1]. The Resolution was made with Him as witness and, with trust in Him, we shall swim across to the other shore.

[1] God.

CORRIGENDUM

In my last letter I said that the remaining Chinese would leave in 1907. A reader has drawn my attention to the mistake. I thank him and correct the error. It should be 1908 instead of 1907.

[From Gurajati]

Indian Opinion, 29-6-1907

16. INTERVIEW TO "RAND DAILY MAIL"[1]

[*June 28, 1907*]

. . . Forewarned of the announcements made above, a representative of the Mail yesterday afternoon interviewed Mr. M. K. Gandhi, the leading light of the Indian community, in regard to the probable attitude and action of the Transvaal Indians.

[GANDHIJI:] It is difficult to say, what will be the ultimate result of the enforcement of the law, but as far as I and my co-workers areconcerned, we are determined not to submit to the proposed registration, being prepared rather to undergo the last penalty provided.

In this attitude, we are not actuated by any disloyal motives, or by a simple spirit of opposition. It is merely dictated by a sense of self-respect.

In other words, he predicted a large passive resistance crusade, in which he calculated that at least half the British Indians of the Transvaal would take part.

Of course, it is extremely hard to forecast the result, because through years of disuse such a mode of showing resentment to legislation is new to my countrymen. At the same time, from letters which I have received from all parts of the Transvaal, and from letters sent to the editor of *Indian Opinion*, I am inclined to think that fully 50 per cent of British Indians in the Transvaal will remain firm in the policy of non-submission. I have not yet heard of a single Indian who has justified the law. Many feel that rather than bear the hardship of gaol, they would leave the country, but I do not know of one who has ever said he will take a new registration certificate under the law.

Indians, said Mr. Gandhi, were very indignant, and he calculated that 6,000 at least would refuse to register according to the new law.

[1] Interview took place after the announcement in the Government Gazete, 28-6-1907, that the Asiatic Law Amendment Act would take effect from July 1, 1907, and the publication of the Regulations made under the Act. The report in the Rand Daily Mail carried the headlines: "Will go to Jail: Indians on the Ordinance: 8,000 Passive Resisters: Law to take effect on Monday: Starting with Pretoria."

If the Government persists in prosecuting, these men will go to gaol. That will undoubtedly mean a great loss to them, for many of them have large interests. But they are prepared to sacrifice all in order to preserve their self-respect.

We feel that having absolutely no voice in the legislation of the country, even when it affects ourselves, the only way that we can resent legislation is by respectful non-submission. If, as a result of non-submission to the law, the Government persists in enforcing compulsory registration, it may be that the question of Indian residence in the Transvaal will be solved to the satisfaction of the colonists, that is to say, Indians may ultimately have to retire from the country. If so, personally I do not envy the colonists the pleasure so long as they profess to be members of the same Empire to which I have the honour to belong. Their attitude will be highly inconsistent with such professions, especially when it is borne in mind that Indians have proved themselves capable of acting according to any promise they have made to the Government.

Indians undertake to comply with voluntary registration, and that would be just as effective as compulsory registration. A great deal has been said about the law as being lenient and not containing anything hurtful to Asiatic susceptibilities, but I can only say that, having read all the restrictive legislation adopted in the Colonies, I know of nothing so degrading and insulting as the Registration Act.

Mr. Gandhi concluded by referring to the big meeting held in the old Empire Theatre. At that meeting, he said, 2,000 Indians were present according to theestimates of the Press, and they unanimously made a solemn declaration that they would not submit to forcible registration. That declaration, he felt, would be faithfully observed.[1]

Rand Daily Mail, 29-6-1907

17. LORD AMPTHILL

Lord Ampthill has earned the undying gratitude of British Indians in South Africa by his courageous and strenuous advocacy of a forlorn cause. The speech delivered by His Lordship during the debate he initiated on the Asiatic Registration Act, in the House of Lords, shows that to him, a British subject is a British subject all the world over, and the word of British statesmen, though given to races

[1] The report concluded with the note: "In the Transvaal there are, according to the last census, 9,986 Indians, of whom 8,647 were males. In Pretoria's municipal area, there were 1,681 Indians, of whom 1,445 were males. There were also 31 Chinese, all males."

that are not capable of resenting its breach, must be as good as a bond. Let us hope that His Lordship will be pleased to continue as he has begun, and not rest satisfied until he has placed this question of the first magnitude on a proper footing.

It is of such significance that even Sir George Farrar has to admit that it is infinitely more important than the question of terminating Chinese indentures in the Transvaal, or obtaining a loan from the Imperial Government for the development of agriculture in the Transvaal. The cuttings we have lately received from the Indian papers show that the events affecting Indians in South Africa have made a deep impression on the Indian public. It is a pity, therefore, that, on a question of such recognized weight, Lord Elgin, who is responsible for its proper handling, should not have troubled to take proper bearings. We are grieved to notice that His Lordship has accepted, perhaps unconsciously, the bait offered by the Transvaal Government, and confused the question of immigration with that of the treatment of Indians domiciled in the Transvaal. The British Indian Association has shown, we think conclusively, that the Asiatic Registration Act does not regulate the immigration of British Indians, and a near Act will have to be passed, and is, in fact, actually projected, if the Peace Preservation Ordinance is to be repealed, as Lord Selborne[1] has stated it should be. The Registration Act, without solving the immigration question in any shape or form, degrades British Indian residents of the Transvaal and its incidence changes the cherished maxim of the British Constitution, namely, that every man isto be presumed to be innocent until he is proved to be guilty, and that, rather than an innocent man should suffer, guilty ones should go unpunished. This Act presumes every Indian to be guilty, and throws on him the onus of proving that he is not so, that is to say) that he has entered the Transvaal in a *bona fide* manner. It, again, punishes the whole Asiatic community in the Transvaal in a brutal manner, in order that a few fraudulently inclined Asiatics may not steal into the Transvaal, and yet, the Act falls short of even this purpose, for registration will not prevent Asiatics who are so inclined from stealing into the country and remaining in it until they are found out. The Act is like locking up honourable men in cells, so that thieves may not steal.

Lord Elgin has, moreover, accepted the bare statement that there has been illicit traffic in permits. The British Indian Association has asked for production of proof, times without number, but this has

[1] High Commissioner in South Africa and Governor of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, 1905-10.

never been produced. Mr. Chimney's report, as we have shown, bears out the Asiatic contention to its fullest extent.[1] Thus, the Act imposes a double wrong upon the Asiatic community—it is based on a false charge against the community, and, in effect, is a punitive measure. No wonder, then, that both the Chinese and the Indian residents of the Transvaal have decided not to submit to compulsory registration and all that the Act connotes. If Asiatics really resent the Act, non-submission is the only straightforward course for them, no matter what it may cost them materially, and we trust that, in their struggle, they will receive the sympathy of Lord Ampthill and his co-workers in a cause which can bring them no renown or credit save the gratitude of poor, helpless people.

Indian Opinion, 29-6-1907

18. ANGADA'S MISSION OF PEACE[2]

It is said that, before Shri Ramachandra began his war with Ravana, he despatched Angada on a peace mission to him. In those times it was believed that true strength lay in affording the enemy, before starting a war against him, every opportunity to set right the wrong he had done. By all means, bow to the enemy, for there is no dishonour in doing so. If still the enemy refuses to come round, one may bring one's full strength into play and enforce one's will. In olden times people everywhere in the world followed this practice. Today also this is considered the best thing to do.

What Rama did with Ravana, the Indian community has done with the Transvaal Government. All possible civility has been shown, but the Transvaal Government will not feel happy until it enforces the new law against every Indian.

Rama sent Angada on the mission of peace. However much Angada tried, he could not make Ravana understand. And in the end, Ravana was defeated because he was in the wrong. To the Indian community's request to the Government through the British Indian Association, a final reply has been received from Mr. Smuts, to say that the voluntary re-registration suggested by the community is not acceptable to the Government. So now it remains for us to await notification of the date when the law will come into force. We can assume that the Government is busy making regulations under the

[1] *Vide* "Chamney's Report", 13-4-1907

[2] An episode from the Indian epic, the Ramayana.

Act. It may be that in the matter of taking digit-impressions some change will be made. But that will not meet the wishes of the Indian community in any way. The community has, therefore, only to prepare for the struggle. For this the community does not need much. It needs nothing more than firmness in adhering to the gaol resolution. The letters we have received indicate that the Indian community is already prepared for the task. If so, the Transvaal Government's rejection of our request is for us a matter of joy rather than disappointment. We shall now have a test of who is right and who is wrong.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-6-1907

19. FAMINE IN SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa is now passing through very hard times. Scarcity prevails everywhere. Both the whites and the Coloured people have been reduced to a precarious condition. The greatest difficulty is felt by landlords and traders At such a time, far-sighted men should think what is to be done. Business will be slacker still and land values fall further. How long can this last? The crisis in this country is not due to lack of rains or damage to crops. The land which was the source of money has ceased to be fruitful. We can see from this that there is no loss in agriculture as such. Our advice therefore is that, taking advantage of the opportunity, every Indian who can should devote his attention to agriculture. Indians, traders as well as others, can take to farming. This does not need much money, and there is no problem of taking out licences, etc. We are certain that, if the Indian community pays sufficient attention to agriculture, not only will it bring profit to itself but it may also help remove the prejudice prevailing against it in this country. The soil being virgin, there is scope here for crops of various kinds. If by any chance the produce does not sell here, it can be exported. The Dutch have been making efforts in the Transvaal to bring prosperity to the land through agriculture. A similar attempt isin progress in Natal. Every Indian should take a hint from this and turn his attention to agriculture.

[From Gurajati]

Indian Opinion, 29-6-1907

20. LORD AMPTHILL

The South Africa British Indian Committee is still carrying on agitation against the new law. Lord Ampthill, who has become Chairman of the Committee, is exerting himself strenuously. We draw attention to the speech[1] that he made in the House of Lords. That speech will show how feelings in England are running high on the question of the new law. Everyone feels that the Indian community is labouring under heavy oppression. To prove that it is so, the Indian community cannot but adhere to the gaol resolution.

[From Gurajati]

Indian Opinion, 29-6-1907

21. BRAVE WOMEN OF ENGLAND

The women of England want to secure the right to franchise.[2] An authorized report of their Association has been published, which shows that it spends nearly £100 every week on its activities, and that so far, that is during the last two years, the women sentenced to gaol for the rights of their sisters have suffered imprisonment for an aggregate period of six years. The lady who is Secretary of the Association states that £20,000 will yet be needed to carry on its work and requests every member to help in collecting the sum.

When so much has to be spent and such hardships have to be borne by English women for winning their rights from their own compatriots, let all Indians calculate by the rule of three how much the Indian community will have to spend and what hardships it will have to endure to win its rights from a foreign people. Let them consider in this way whether it would be, after all, such a mighty task if they had to spend £13,000 and 13,000 Indians had to go to gaol. Till now Indians have not spent even £2,000 all told, and no Indian has so far suffered imprisonment. And yet to believe that we could get our rightsis, it would seem, a patent mistake.

[From Gurajati]

Indian Opinion, 29-6-1907

[1] Not reproduced here.

[2] The reference is to the Women's Suffrage Movement for Parliamentary rights. Under the leadership of Mrs. Emmeline Pankhurst (1858-1928), the Suffragettes adopted militant tactics which included picketing, hunger-strike and courting imprisonment.

22. INDIA AND TRANSVAAL

The eyes of India are now fixed on the Transvaal. A meeting of ten thousand Indians at Madras passed a resolution that, in view of the hardships suffered by Indians in South Africa, the whites from the Colony should be debarred from service and other opportunities in India. *The Tribune* of Lahore writes that a great deal will be gained if the Indian community maintains its spirit till the end. The whole Indian Press continues to discuss the subject and everyone expresses sympathy. Officials like Lord Lansdowne have realized that the oppression of Indians [here] is having adverse effects in India. All these signs indicate that the Indian community has now an invaluable opportunity of proving its mettle.

[From Gurajati]

Indian Opinion, 29-6-1907

23. EDUCATION FOR GIRLS

The Muslim Zenana Normal Girls School was founded in Aligarh sometime ago and it is growing day by day. The Government has been requested to give aid to this school. A plot of land has been bought for the school and it is also intended to start a boarding house attached to it. Books have been specially prepared in Urdu on kindergarten lines. As no Muslim lady was available for appointment as Principal, a white lady has been appointed for the present on a salary of Rs. 200 per month. So far, Rs. 13,000 have been collected for this school.

[From Gurajati]

Indian Opinion, 29-6-1907

24. SPEECH AT PRETORIA MEETING[1]

PRETORIA,
June 30, 1907

After explaining the implications of the law, Mr. Gandhi said that every Indian, whether rich or poor, should become free. That the [Imperial] Governmenthas

[1] Gandhiji spoke at a meeting of Indians held to protest against the Regulations under the Asiatic Act. This is a brief report of his speech; *vide* also "Mass Meeting at Pretoria", 6-7-1907

given assent to this Act means nothing. It has yet to be accepted by the Indian community.

Until the Indian community accepts the law, it cannot be considered to have been passed. Even if some Indians, big or small, were to take out the title-deeds of slavery under the law, others would not follow their example. Those who are free will win in the end.

[From Gurajati]

Indian Opinion, 6-7-1907

25. LETTER TO "RAND DAILY MAIL"[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
July 1, 1907

TO

THE EDITOR

[*RAND DAILY MAIL*]

SIR,

It may appear ungrateful to have to criticize your moderate and well-meant leaderette on the so-called "passive resistance" to the Asiatic Registration Act. I call the passive resistance to be offered by the Indian community "so-called", because, in my opinion, it is really not resistance but a policy of communal suffering. Even after reading the Regulations, you consider it to be a matter of sentiment.

Is it sentiment, if I, as a father, would prefer to be shot down before I see my eight-year-old boy being subjected to the tyrannical process of having to give his digit-impressions, separately and then simultaneously, before an officer whom he may never have seen in his life-time, and for no crime of his own? Is it sentiment, when I decline to give the name of my mother and such particulars as the price of a precarious residence in this country?

Lord Elgin may certainly, sitting in his cushioned chair, see no distinction between making a mark with the thumb instead of with a pen, but I know that he belongs to that nation which would rise in rebellion from end to end to resent an attack on personal liberty, and that he would be the first person to cry out against even a forcible tracing of his signature. It is the compulsion that stings, not the digit-impression.

That in the mind of the Government there is no desire to

[1] This was reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 6-7-1917.

degrade is true only on the assumption that my countrymen are already sufficiently degraded to feel any further degradation in this land of freedom for people other than Asiatics. But this is not a time for argument. The brave rulers who know the value of action rather than of speech can only respond to bravery and practical action.

If, as you say, Pretoria is weak, and the Government, "with the wisdom of the serpent", with which you credit it, has chosen the weakest spot in order to break any opposition to it, and if I shall be the only one to have cried out against the Act, and possibly a few of my co-workers, even then we shall be able to say we had no part in the acceptance of degradation. But I do not share your opinion about Pretoria. I had the honour to be one of the speakers who, yesterday, addressed a large mass meeting of British Indians[1] on the premises of the local Secretary, Mr. Haji Habib, and I assure you that, if the sentiments expressed by my countrymen proceeded from the bottom of their hearts, as I believe they did, Indians in Pretoria will refuse to submit to compulsory re-registration to a man, irrespective of consequences.

You accuse the South Africa British Indian Committee, in blunt language, of gross exaggeration, if not falsehood, when it states that "the local Government lends colour to the suspicion that it is anxious to impose the most extreme measures, and thus to degrade and humiliate British Indians". Even at the risk of being guilty of gross exaggeration or falsehood, whichever it may be, I must repeat the statement and, in support, give you the latest illustration of studied humiliation that came to light at the Pretoria meeting. One of the religious preachers created a painful sensation when he produced a document[2] from the Central South African Railways saying that the concession to religious preachers as to railway travelling was confined to Christian and Jewish preachers. Is this new distinction also a necessary precaution against an influx of Asiatics?

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Rand Daily Mail, 2-7-1907

[1] *Vide* "Mass Meeting at Pretoria",6-7-1907

[2] *Vide* "Fat in the Fire",6-7-1907

26. LATE NEWS FROM JOHANNESBURG[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
Wednesday evening, [*July 3, 1907*]

The new Immigration Bill[2] has been introduced. According to this Bill, an English-knowing person can enter [the Transvaal] provided he is not an Indian. It appears that those who are covered by the obnoxious law will not be allowed to enter, irrespective of whether they know Englishor not. Moreover, under this Bill, the Government will be able to deport anyone whom it considers undesirable, and the expenses of deportation can be recovered from his property. Now, indeed, are the Indians pressed hard. I do not know whether the Bill will be passed or not. But there is not the slightest doubt that the Transvaal Government wants to drive out the Indians. I hope if Indians have to leave, they will do so honourably and not in disgrace.

ASIATIC EATING-HOUSES

The Johannesburg Municipality is thinking of compelling the proprietor of every Indian eating-house to engage a European manager.

MEETING IN VOLKSRUST

A meeting was held in Volksrust on Tuesday. Mr. Cachalia was in the chair. Mr. Gandhi, Mr. Bhatt, as also Messrs Kazi and Cachalia, addressed the meeting. Everyone agreed to adhere to the gaol resolution and a collection was started on the spot. About £20 were promised, and £11 paid.

PRETORIA

Pretoria Indians are going strong. So far, not a single Indian has applied for the new permit.

[From Gurajati]

Indian Opinion, 6-7-1907

[1] This was published as "From Our Representative at Johannesburg".
[2] For the text *vide* Appendix III.

27. LETTER TO "THE STAR"

JOHANNESBURG,
July 4, [*1907*]

TO

THE EDITOR

THE STAR

[JOHANNESBURG]

SIR,

You have, much to the surprise of the Indian community, informed your readers that Indians suffer from practically no disabilities, and that the question of giving digit-impressions is one to be dismissed from consideration, as the Indian sepoy voluntarily gives his thumb-mark before receiving his pension.

I wonder whether you would now support the Immigration Bill published yesterday, as being an innocuous measure so far as Indians are concerned. Asiatics have been credited with unfathomable subtlety, but that displayed by the framers of the Bill certainly, to use a vulgarexpression, takes the cake. It is, if my reading of Sub-section 4 of Section 2 be correct, I take it, an answer to "passive resisters" to the Asiatic Registration Act; and, in order to break the spirit of the last vestige of dignity that yet remains in Indians in the Transvaal, a system of State robbery is instituted. For the section in question makes an Asiatic who does not take out the new registration certificate a prohibited immigrant, and a prohibited immigrant is liable to suffer imprisonment and then to be physically deported, the expenses of deportation to be levied from the estate, found within the Colony, of the deported. Thus, the law manufactures a prohibited immigrant by a most circuitous method. A man who has made the Transvaal his home, but who, rightly or wrongly, protests against a law applicable to him, by way of suffering further penalty is to be treated as an outlaw in the country of his adoption. The section in question, moreover, can only refer to the Asiatic and Immorality Acts, that is to say, prostitutes, pimps, and Asiatics who refuse to surrender their self-respect are to be classed in the same category.

Moreover, to show the wantonness of the insult offered, I draw the attention of the public to the fact that if an Indian who may satisfy the most rigorous test, say, for instance, Sir Mancherji, wishes to enter the Transvaal, he must, perforce, take out a registration certificate for himself and his minor children, the latter also, if over eight years, to

give their separate and simultaneous digit-impressions, unless he wishes to be classed as a prohibited immigrant and to be deported. Now the Registration Act is intended, so it is said, to serve as a measure of identification only. Is there any meaning in identifying a man who, by reason of his possessing educational qualifications, can claim to remain in the Transvaal but for the Asiatic Act? Does he not carry marks of identification on his own person, seeing that he is liable to be examined as to his knowledge of a European language, at any time, whether within or without the Colony?

What becomes of the speeches of General Botha,[1] who showed so much anxiety, when in London, for the welfare of the Empire as a whole, who assured Lord Ampthill that there was no intention of imposing humiliation on Indian subjects of the Crown? Is self-government to mean a licence to deprive Asiatics, without check, of all liberty? Sir George Farrar, speaking on behalf of the Progressive Party, stated that the question underlying the Asiatic Registration Act was of the highest importance, that the passing of the Act inflamed millions of Indians unnecessarily against the British Empire. And yet, in order to assist the Government, Sir George, at the risk of wounding, at a most inopportune time, the susceptibilities of Indian subjects of King Edward, supported the Asiatic Registration Act. Is the Progressive Party to approve of the Immigration Bill withthe hideous clause to which I have drawn attention, in spite of its boast of Imperialism?

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Star, 5-7-1907

28. FAT IN THE FIRE

Our Pretoria Correspondent, in sending a report of the proceedings of the mass meeting at Pretoria, says that production by Mr. Moulvi Ahmed Mukhtiar of a letter from the C.S.A.R.[2] created quite a sensation. The letter we consider to be a very important document and it runs as follows:

> In reply to your letter of the 24th instant which has reference to the travelling expenses of a priest ministering to the religious needs of the Mahomedan community in the Transvaal, I desire to state that, as the concession accorded to Ministers of Religion over the C.S.A.R. is not

[1] *Vide* "Mr. Gandhi's Pledge", ", 30-4-1907 & "Hejaz Railway: Some Interesting Information", 11-5-1907.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to *Rand Daily Mail*" 1-7-1907

extended to religions other than the Christian or Jewish, I am unable to grant the special facilities asked for.

It is signed by no less a personage than the Chief Traffic Manager. It ends, in our opinion, all hopes of fair treatment promised by General Botha. The letter overrides the boast of the Empire that within it there are no religious distinctions. Racial distinctions we have, unfortunately, become used to. But the Asiatic Act has led the way by laying down a religious demarcation. And the lead has been followed by the Railway Department. Indians wishing to remain in the Transvaal know what they are to expect from the authorities. We wonder what justification Lord Elgin proposes to offer for this latest instance of wanton insult to the religious susceptibilities of a people whose rock is religion and who— both Hindus and Mahomedans—are easily moved by an attack on their religion.

Indian Opinion, 6-7-1907

29. POINT OF HONOUR

The Amir of Afghanistan has had his status raised from "His Highness" to "His Majesty".[1] This did not happen quite easily. It was when he made it a point of honour that he was accorded due respect by the British. Before visiting India, he had made it a condition that his status should be fully maintained and that the Government should make noreference to political matters. Lord Curzon[2] had also invited him to visit India. But he had then flatly declined the invitation. The reason for this has been disclosed by Mr. Morley[3] in his budget speech. Speaking at Kabul, His Majesty the Amir said: "This time the officers of the Indian Government maintained a discreet silence on political matters. As they kept their word, I referred to the subject myself of my own free will and they too did not misuse the reference. I accepted Lord Minto's[4] invitation as it was politely worded. Between the invitation at the time of the Delhi Durbar and the one by Lord Minto now there is a world of difference. I had therefore decided not to attend the Delhi Durbar. Rather than accept that unworthy invitation, I thought I would lose my crown, become a beggar and

[1] *Vide* "The Transvaal Struggle", 25-5-1907.

[2] (1859-1925), Viceroy and Governor-General of India, 1899-1905; *vide* "Lord Curzon", 26-8-1905.

[3] (1838-1923), Secretary of State for India, 1905-10.

[4] (1845-1914), Viceroy and Governor-General of India, 1905-10.

even suffer death." It was this sense of honour that secured respect for His Majesty and Lord Curzon was discomfited.

It is along these lines that the Transvaal Indian community also has to think. It is necessary to take the pledge that, even if we lose everything, we shall not submit to the new law. We publish in this number a translation of the Regulations that have been gazetted. They are harsher and more stringent than anyone could have even dreamt of. The sweet words spoken by General Botha in England have been washed away. We are very glad. If the poisonous pill of the new law had been wrapped up in the silver foil of mild regulations, some credulous Indians might have been misled. Now there is not a single Indian who will accept such a law and such regulations.

Let us for a moment consider what will be gained by the Indian who submits to the law. Firstly, he will have forsaken his God. Secondly, his honour will have been lost. Thirdly, he will have incurred the curse of all India. Fourthly, there will come a time when he will have to go to a Location and at last live a dog's life in the Transvaal. Is there any Indian who will gain such 'benefits' by submitting to the law? Now let us take the case of the Indian who does not submit. This Indian will have lived in fear of God and kept his covenant with Him. He will be regarded as a hero and acclaimed by all India. The gaol he enters will be considered a palace. The utmost that he will suffer is that he may lose all his possessions and may have ultimately to leave the Transvaal. If he has to leave the Transvaal and go elsewhere, is not God there also? The Lord who has given us teeth is ever present to give us something to chew. He needs no flattery. He whispers constantly into our ears, "Trust in Me alone." If we do not listen to. His sweet words, having earswe are deaf. If we do not see Him sitting by our side, having eyes we are blind.

If the Indian community adheres to its pledge, we reckon that no Indian will be ruined and that not only the Transvaal Indians, but also all Indians in South Africa will be freed. For the Indian people will come to know their own strength, and the brave Boers will recognize our courage.

Once there was a lion who had since birth grown up among lambs. He had forgotten his true self and had come to regard himself as a lamb. Seeing a herd of lions, he became somewhat aware of his true self. This applies to the Indian lion. We have forgotten ourselves for a long time and have been reduced to helplessness. Now the time

has come for us to realize our true self, and therefore,

Placing your trust in the Master,
Full and sincere,
Be glad in your heart
That to gaol you'll go, certainly to gaol you'll go.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 6-7-1907

30. S. A. B. I. COMMITTEE'S ADVICE

We have already published the Committee's cable about the Transvaal law.[2] It can be seen from Mr. Ritch's letter that we need not in the least be scared by the Committee's cable. Even if the Committee should disown us, we cannot retrace the step that, after mature consideration, we have taken about going to gaol. To a man setting out on an adventure, other people's advice is of no use.

When Dr. Jameson carried out his raid [on Johannesburg] in the Transvaal, he sought nobody's advice. The attack has now been forgotten, but his bravery is praised even today. He is now a friend of General Botha and runs the Government of the Cape.

English suffragettes were politely advised by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman the Prime Minister of England[3], to give up the method of seeking imprisonment. Among those ladies there was an aged sister of General French[4]. That prudent counsel was rejected by those brave women. How should Sir Henry know how much they suffer for being without franchise? When these courageous Englishwomen are carryingon a struggle for winning new rights, paying no heed to anyone's new rights, paying no heed to anyone's advice, how can the Indians in the Transvaal give up their struggle for safeguarding their existing rights and their freedom, though the Committee or any other big people may advise them to do so?

[From Gurajati]

Indian Opinion, 6-7-1907

[1]These lines are from the prize-poem, "Gaol-going".
[2] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 26-6-1907
[3] 1905-8.
[4] *Vide* "Cable to S.A.B.I. Committee", 22-2-1907.

31. WHAT A SAD PLIGHT!

If clouds have gathered in the Transvaal, Natal will not be left behind. The Coloured races are being constantly dominated by the Europeans. A Bill has now been introduced in the Natal Parliament providing that Indian landlords, who have been cultivating their lands themselves and who let them now to other Indians or Kaffirs, shall pay on those lands double the tax that the Europeans pay. Only the Europeans of South Africa are capable of such justice! But it has always been the way of the world to add humiliation to defeat. Therefore, the grievances of Indians will disappear only when they raise their heads and stand up to fight. Of course, it will be necessary for the Congress to make petitions, etc.

[From Gurajati]

Indian Opinion 6-7-1907

32. NATAL, ARE YOU AWAKE OR ASLEEP?

The Transvaal Indian knocks at the door of the Natal Indian and asks this question. He says, 'We shall stake everything and fight to the finish.' Will the Natal Indians come to the help of those fallen on the field or will they keep aloof? Every Indian in Natal has to make up his mind as to the answer to this question.

If the Natal Indians mean to help those in the Transvaal, they too should honour their pledge. It is true the Natal Indian leaders have given encouragement to the Transvaal Indians but that was through letters and telegrams. The time has now come to honour their word, both spoken and written. We therefore appeal to Indians in Natal to wake up, lest people should sing of them:

Men without honour promise more than they mean,

But never a single pledge do they keep.

[From Gurajati]

Indian Opinion, 6-7-1907

33. OBNOXIOUS LAW

ATROCIOUS REGULATIONS

The expected has happened. It has been notified in the Transvaal *Gazette* that the new law will come into force from July l. The Regulations framed under the Act are so oppressive, so obnoxious, that it seems impossible for any Indian to submit to them. We give below a full summary of those Regulations[1]:

l. This clause contains several definitions.

2. Shows how a Register of Asiatics is to be maintained.

3. Persons above the age of sixteen should apply in Form B. The application for a child under sixteen years and above eight years should be in Form C.

4. Every adult shall appear before such person as the Colonial Secretary may appoint, and furnish such person with the required particulars in Form B. and shall produce and surrender to such person his permit, the registration certificate obtained on payment of a fee of £3, and any other documents which he may desire to produce in support of his application.

   When making an application for a minor, the father or guardian of the minor shall appear with such minor, shall produce the documents referred to above, and furnish the particulars required in Form C.

   Every application for registration shall be made at such place as the Colonial Secretary may prescribe.

   The person appointed to receive applications shall, on completing the application, issue to the applicant a written acknowledgement of the receipt of the application, and thereafter transmit the application to the Registrar.

5. If the Registrar refuses to register any adult as above, he shall issue a notice of such refusal to the applicant and send a copy of the same to the [Resident] Magistrate.

6. The certificate of registration shall be in Form F.

7. Every adult shall, if required, supply the following particulars to the police, in addition to producing his certificate of registration:

[1] The translation given here has been collated with the English text of the Regulations, *vide* Appendix IV.

(1) his full name;
(2) his present residence;
(3) his residence at the date he made application for registration;
(4) his age;
(5) a specimen of his signature, if he is able to write;
(6) impressions of his thumbs and fingers.

8. The father or guardian of a minor shall, if required, supply the following particulars, in addition to producing the certificate of registration:
(1) his own name in full;
(2) his present residence;
(3) the name in full of the person who was guardian of the minor at the date on which the application was made, and the residence of such person at such date;
(4) the age of such minor;
(5) the impressions of the thumbs of such minor, or of his thumbs and fingers.

9. On making application for a certificate of registration for children under eight years of age, the father or guardian shall supply the following particulars:
(1) their full names;
(2) their respective ages;
(3) the relationship of each to the guardian;
(4) the birth-date of each[1];
(5) the date on which each entered the Transvaal.

10. Every Asiatic applying for a duplicate in case the original certificate is lost[2] shall supply the following particulars:
(1) the number of such registration certificate;
(2) his full name;
(3) his present residence;
(4) if the lost certificate was that of a child, the full name of such child;[3]

[1] The English text has the words "the birth-place of each".

[2] The Act, however, reads, "applying for the renewal of the certificate of registration".

[3] The English text has: "the full name and the age of the minor (if the application is made by a guardian on behalf of a minor)".

(5) impressions of his thumbs and fingers;

(6) if the application is on behalf of a minor, the impression of his guardian's [right] thumb, and the impressions of the thumbs and fingers of such minor.

11. When applying for a trading licence or any other kind of licence, the applicant shall, in addition to producing his certificate of registration, furnish impressions of all or such of his thumbs or fingers, as may be required by the officer.

12. Every Asiatic applying on behalf of another Asiatic, who is temporarily absent from the Transvaal, for a trading licence shall supply the following particulars to the officer:

(1) his own certificate of registration;

(2) the full name of the person on whose behalf the application is made;

(3) the present residence of such Asiatic;

(4) the power of attorney or other authority given by such person, bearing the impression of his right thumb;

(5) the impression of his own right thumb.

13. Permits for a limited period will be issued in Form G.

FORM B

FORM OF APPLICATION BY AN ADULT

Name in full . . . Race . . .

Caste or sect . . . Age . . . Height . . .

Residence . . . Occupation . . .

Physical description . . .

Place of birth . . .

Date of first arrival in the Transvaal . .,

Where resident on May 31, 1902 . . .

Father's name . . . Mother's name . . .

Wife's name . . . Residing at. . .

Names and ages of children under eight years of age, their residence, and relationship to the guardian . . .

Signature of applicant . . .

Signature of the person taking application...

Date . . . Office. . .

Right-hand impressions

Thumb	Index	Middle	Ring	Little
Separate impressions of the left-hand as above.				
Simultaneous impressions				
Left-hand—The four fingers			Right-hand—The four fingers	

Impressions of adult taken by . . .

Date . . .

FORM C

FORM OF APPLICATION FOR A MINOR

Particulars of Guardian

Name in full . . . Race . . .

Residence . . .

Relation of guardian to minor . . .

No. of certificate . . .

Particulars of Minor

Name in full . . . Race . . .

Caste or sect . . . Age . . .

Residence. .. Occupation.

Where resident on May 31, 1902 . . .

Father's name . . . Mother's name . . .

Physical description . . .

Place of birth . . .

Date of arrival in the Transvaal . . .

Right thumb-impression of guardian

Signature of guardian . . .

Signature of minor . . .

Signature of the person taking application...

Office . . .

Date . . .

Impressions of thumbs and fingers of the minor, both of the right and the left hand, as in Form B, and the signature of the officer taking the thumb-impressions and finger
prints . . .

FORM F

CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION

Name in full . . .

Race. . . Age Height .

Description . . .

Right thumb-impression

Registrar's signature . . .

Date . . .

Holder's signature . . .

FORM G[1]

Temporary Permit

NOTICE

It is notified in the *Gazette* that Asiatics residing in Pretoria must apply for the new register to Mr. Richard Terence Cody, at 70, Church Street, before July 31, 1907.

Mr. Cody will remain present at the place referred to above from Monday to Friday between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., and on Saturday up to 2 p.m.

EFFECT OF RULES

The Rules include the following additional points not anticipated earlier:

1. In India, Hindus and Muslims respect the mother so deeply that if anyone compels them to make a reference to her name, that may lead to murder. The name of the mother will have now to be entered in an application.
2. It was never dreamt that impressions of all fingers would be required from children. Now they will take eighteen such prints. It is the usual experience that delicate children of nine years will start crying if touched by a stranger. These delicate Indian children will now have contact with rough hands. Fathers will look on while impressions of their fingers are being taken.
3. Not only that impressions of all fingers will have to be given, but it will be done twice—together and separately.
4. The police have orders to take impressions—of children as well as of adults.
5. If a merchant goes out, and the application for licence is made by his partner, he will need to have with him the power of attorney from the merchant, bearing the

[1] Particulars in this form are as in form "F" above.

thumb-impression of his right-hand. This is insulting in the extreme. From now on, a signature will not be sufficient on the power of attorney by an Indian, but a thumb-impression will be required.

6. All applications will be prepared by officers. No one can have them prepared by a lawyer or agent.

At first sight it may appear that this rule will save expenditure. But looking at it more closely, we find that it is like being served with a sweet dish with a tiger in front. Even adult Indians become nervous in the presence of officers. What then can we expect of children?

[From Gurajati]

Indian Opinion, 6-7-1907

34. MASS MEETING AT PRETORIA[1]

In view of the fact that the new law was to come into force in Pretoria from July 1, there was a huge mass meeting on Sunday, June 30. Indians from Johannesburg went there specially at their own expense. Among those who attended were the Acting President, Mr. Essop Mia, Moulvi Saheb Ahmed Mukhtiar, and Messrs M. S. Coovadia, Emam Abdool Cadir, Omalji Sale, Makanji, Zinabhai, Gulabbhai Kikabhai, Morarji Desai, Gulabbhai Patel, Bhula, Ranchhod Nichhabhai, Nadirshaw Cama, Mahomed Essak, Khushal, Peter Moonlight, Naidoo, A. S. Pillay, Gandhi and others. From Pretoria nearly four hundred Indians attended, including, besides Mr. Hajee Habib, the Moulvi Saheb of the mosque at Pretoria, Mr. Hajee Cassim Jusab, Mr. Hajee Osman, Mr. Cachalia, Mr. Ally, Mr. Hajee Ibrahim, Mr. Gavarishankar Vyas, Mr. Prabhashankar Joshi, Mr. Mohanlal Joshi, Mr. Omarji and other gentlemen.

The delegates from Johannesburg were looked after by Mr. Hajee Habib and Mr. Vyas.

The meeting commenced punctually at 3 p.m. and continued up to 7 p.m. Welcoming them all, Mr. Hajee Habib said that the new law was barbarous. So long as the Regulations [under it] were not published, he had hoped that if they happened to be reasonable the law could perhaps be accepted. But after going through the Regulations, there could be no question of accepting the law. The Indian community must unitedly oppose the law. He proposed that

[1] The report in Gujarati carried the headlines: "Huge Mass Meeting of Pretoria Indians: Spirited Opposition to Obnoxious Law: Everyone Ready for Gaol" and was published as a "Special Report for *Indian Opinion*".

Mr. Essop Mia should take the chair.

Mr. Essop Mia thanked Mr. Hajee Habib for placing his house at their disposal. He asserted that the law being poisonous, they could not respect it. He showed himself ready to serve the community even at the cost of his personal affairs. He wanted all people to stand together. So far, they had remained submissive, but they could not remain so any longer. Nowhere in the world did they ask for the mother's name. Only on the Day of Judgement would they be identified by their mother's name. But now the Government would ask them to give the mother's name. The Indian community would never submit to such slavery.

Mr. Gandhi explained the implications of the law and said that it was necessary for every Indian, whether rich or poor, to be free. Thatthis law had been approved by the [Imperial] Government made no deference. It still remained to be approved by the Indian community.

Unless it was accepted by the Indian community, it could not be taken that the law had been passed. If any Indian, big or small, should accept the title-deed of slavery under the law, others would not follow his example. Those who kept themselves free would win in the end.

In a spirited speech, Moulvi Saheb Ahmed Mukhtiar pointed out that it was necessary for all of them to stand together. They alone were true Muslims who attended to the claims of worldly affairs as well as to those of religion. When Hazrat Yusuf Abesalam was placed in a distressing situation, he prayed to God that he might be sent to gaol instead. No Indian should submit to the oppressive law. He suggested that a committee should visit every place to educate public opinion. If such a committee was appointed, he would also be ready to join it.

Mr. Naidoo spoke in Tamil and asserted that, even if he were to die, he would not submit to the law.

Mr. Omarji Sale also made a speech and asked Indians to remain united and to boycott the Permit Office.

Mr. M. S. Coovadia supported the previous speaker. Mr. Cama said that the law was so bad that no Indian with self-respect could think of submitting to it. He would not submit to it, even if he were to lose everything, including his life.

Mr. Emam Abdool Cadir said that he could not submit to the law, whoever else among the Indians did. It inflicted a sentence of imprisonment worse than that of transportation for life. The Moulvi Saheb gave his support to the resolution and declared that he was ready for a tour of all places.

Mr. Makanji said that he had thought of accepting the law if it

afforded the slightest relief. But now it was his firm determination that he would not accept it, whoever else did so.

Mr. Hajee Ibrahim also spoke and said in conclusion that thelaw could not be accepted.

Mr. Noormahomed Ayub said that it was a golden opportunity for the Indians to show their spirit.

Messrs Ismail Jooma, Manji Nathu, Trimbaklal and Hajee Osman Haji Aba spoke in the same strain.

Mr. Cachalia said that he would give an assurance that 90 per cent. of Suratis would go to gaol.

Mr. Omarji gave the same assurance.

Mr. Gavarishankar Vyas pointed out that, to those who were true to their faith, the oath of September was sufficiently, binding.

Mr. Nimji Anandji exhorted them never to submit to the law.

Mr. Pillay also made an inspiring speech.

Messrs Gulab Rudra Desai Khushal Chhita, Gulam Mahomed and Musa Suleman said that they would persuade everyone found on his way to the Permit Office to return.

Mr. Haji Cassim said that the law could not be accepted by the Indian community in any circumstances.

Moulvi Saheb Ahmed Mukhtiar pointed out that the duty of the priest was not merely to lead prayers but also to share fully the hardships of the people. It is because the whites wanted to insult their religion that they made distinctions in regard to railway fares. The railway officials told them that Christian and Jewish priests were entitled to concession tickets for railway journeys, but not Indian Muslims. The Indian community would never acquiesce in such slavery.

In the course of his concluding speech, Mr. Essop Mia offered his shawl as a gift to Mr. Gulab Rudra Desai, in token of his appreciation of the latter's courage and said that he was ready to give up his personal work and devote himself to the service of the people. There was a heavy burden on his fellow-countrymen at Pretoria and he was convinced that they would shoulder it quite well. The whole Indian community was grateful to Mr. Hajee Habib for his hospitality.

The business was concluded on this note of enthusiasm, and the meeting came to an end at seven o'clock.

[From Gurajati]

Indian Opinion, 6-7-1907

35. INTERVIEW TO "RAND DAILY MAIL"

It has been notified in the Transvaal *Government Gazette* that the Asiatic Act will come into force on July 1. The Regulations framed under this new Act have been published and according to them impressions of all fingers will be taken simultaneously and singly. A representative of the *Rand Daily Mail* interviewed Mr. Gandhi with a view to obtaining the reactions of Indians to these Regulations. The following report was published in the issue of the *Rand Daily Mail* of the 29th [ultimo].[1]

My co-workers and I will undergo the extreme penalty prescribed by law rather than submit to the law for Asiatics that has been passed. No self-respecting Indian will submit to this Act. From the letters received by me and the editor of *Indian Opinion*, about fifty per cent of the Indian population in the Transvaal will resist the law. I have not met a single Indian so far who justifies it. Some assert that they will leave this country. But I have not come across a single person who even talks of applying for a register. Indians are very angry and at least 6,000 persons will refuse to apply for registers. If they are prosecuted by the Government, they will be ready to go to gaol. No doubt they will run into loss by doing so. But they are ready to sacrifice their all for the sake of their self-respect. Since we have no say even in regard to the making of laws that affect us, we feel that there is only one course left to us, and that is, not to submit to any law.

It has been said that the law is mild. But I must say that I have read the laws of many colonies, and in not a single colony have I come across a law so insulting and humiliating as this Act. Two thousand people were present at the meeting in the Empire Theatre, and they have solemnly resolved with one voice that they will not get registered under compulsion. I am confident that they will keep the oath.

[From Gurajati]

Indian Opinion, 6-7-1907

[1] What follows, however, is a summary. Vide "Interview to Rand Daily Mail", 28-6-1907

36. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

NEW LAW

The Regulations, which Indians had been awaiting for long, have now been published. A Gujarati proverb says, "As is the father, so is the son; as is the banyan tree, so is its fruit." Likewise, as is the Act, so are the Regulations. Those who had hoped for some leniency in the Regulations are disappointed. I for my part am very glad that the Regulations are unexpectedly stringent. This has made every Indian resolute. All Indians say that there is now no alternative to gaol-going.

SNAKES IN GRASS

There is a proverb in English that green grass sometimes harbours green snakes which remain invisible. Their presence is felt only when they bite. The same is true of these Regulations. Only now do I realize that there are some snakes hidden in them. When I first read them, I could not follow some of their implications. I had thought that no one was likely to be interrogated so long as the new permits or title-deeds of slavery had not been issued. Now, on second thoughts, I see that, according to the powers granted to the police under the Regulations, they can require any Indian to give his finger-prints and state his antecedents. Again, this may be required as often as the police choose. One has to beware of this snake. If the Government should choose to apply pressure by turning this screw, the Indian community will perhaps feel baffled. But the remedy is clear. Under no circumstances is any Indian to give his finger-prints. All these days we used to give the thumb-impression. But now that the thumb-impression has been made obligatory, we should refuse to give even that. What will be the consequence of this? The gaol, of course. The thought of gaol should be an ordinary matter to every Indian. According to the new law, the penalty for not furnishing the particulars or identity marks that the police may demand, is fine or imprisonment. In no case is the fine to be paid. Thus, only gaol remains. I also advise that no one coming from Volksrust should now give his thumb-impression or finger-prints to the police. When, in consequence, he is taken to a magistrate, he should prove [his right]. If the magistrate should still sentence him to gaol, he should undergo the sentence. Again, this struggle is only for those who have a true

case, that is, what is stated above applies only to those who hold a permit bearing their own thumb-impression. This needs a good deal of courage, but that courage we ought to have and will certainly have.

ANOTHER SNAKE

That was but one snake. Another snake relates to the question of licences. I thought the taking of finger-prints in connection with licences would commence in January. But I now find that it comes into force immediately. For finger-prints can be demanded of anyone seeking a licence. This matter may not have been noticed even by revenue officers. I hope therefore that Indians have already taken out their licences. But how long can we carry on like this? The Government has brought in the question of finger-prints everywhere. We have therefore to be particularly careful. I had believed that the provisions of the law would be duly complied with if one person in each big shop held a permit, but on reflection, I see that it is but following a mirage to keep on hoping that one person could carry on the trade. I ought, therefore, to say that it will be good for the merchants to give up, if necessary, all hopes of continuing trade. If we hold ourselves ready to sacrifice our business for the sake of the country and our self-respect, we shall not get panicky when the time comes. It does not, moreover, seem proper that one should, even for the sake of one's trade, give the finger-prints and be a bondsman. The best and the only course is to repose full trust in God and sacrifice everything for the good of the country. We shall surely need such unalloyed courage to achieve success.

PRETORIA'S OPPORTUNITY

Issuing of the title-deed of slavery has started with Pretoria. Hence a great responsibility has devolved on it. But it has also the opportunity of proving its mettle. All Indians wish and pray to God that Pretoria may act in a manner worthy of itself.

COMMENT BY "DAILY MAIL"

A correspondent of the [*Rand*] *Daily Mail saw* Mr. Gandhi on Friday last and obtained some information from him.[1] Mr. Gandhi told him that at least 6,000 Indians were certain to go to gaol. The Indian community would not swerve from the pledge taken in the name of God. There was no disloyalty involved in disobeying the law.

[1] *Vide* "Interview to *Rand Daily Mail*", 28-6-1907

In so doing, the Indian community sought only to preserve its honour and self-respect. One could not say how one would become free by thus opposing the law. But the brave colonists would be able to appreciate the courage of the Indians. Even if that did not happen, still by going to gaol, the Indian community would at least have shaken the Transvaal's dust off its feet instead of staying on there under conditions of slavery.

Commenting upon this interview, the *Daily Mail* expresses its sympathy, but says that the Indian community should accept the law because it was not the object of the Government to humiliate them. The Government's object in taking finger-prints was to prevent the entry of other Indians. The correspondent of the *Daily Mail* further states that the Government has purposely begun with Pretoria as it is the weakest of all. This being so, Pretoria Indians are certain to take out the new registers and the others will follow as a matter of course. I am sure Pretoria will give a fitting reply to this aspersion and show itself courageous.

REPLY TO RAND DAILY MAIL

To this letter in the *Daily Mail*, Mr. Gandhi has made the following reply:[1]

COMMENT BY "THE STAR"

The Star is also very critical, and, feeling alarmed, asserts that the Indian community has no grievance other than the giving of ten fingerprints. Indians would not be sent out of Vrededorp without compensation. It adds that Indians are also free to use the tram-cars. As for finger-prints, the Indian sepoys give them in India.

All this is patently false. Payment of compensation at Vrededorp is problematic. Indians are even now being pushed out of the trams. Only *The Star* can say that there is no difference between voluntary giving of finger-prints by Indians and taking them forcibly from merchants as if they were illiterate sepoys. However, it can be seen from the comments appearing in both the *Mail* and *The Star* that the Indian community'spreparation for a struggle has given rise to nervousness. What, then, may not be achieved if it actually acts with real courage?

[1] Here followed in the original a translation of "Letter to *Rand Daily Mail*", 1-7-1907

SYMPATHY FROM NATAL CONGRESS

A telegram has been received from the Natal Indian Congress exhorting the Indian community to adhere to the gaol resolution and promising monetary aid. This expression of sympathy is very useful. But the time is such that whatever monetary aid is intended to be given should be sent immediately. No doubt, money will be required in plenty if the Indian community ventures upon a really bold course.

[From Gurajati]

Indian Opinion, 6-7-1907

37. LETTER TO "RAND DAILY MAIL"[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
July 6, 1907

TO
THE EDITOR
[*RAND DAILY MAIL*]

SIR,

I trust I need not offer any apology for reverting to the Asiatic question. I did not say to your interviewer[2] that "passive resistance" was a new way to my compatriots. What I did say was that it was not possible for me to forecast the result, as we had been for generations unused to it, especially on a large scale. I, personally, feel proud to notice that the faculty of suffering for the common good has only lain dormant, and that, under stress of circumstances, it is being again quickened into life. Picketing is by no means a new thing to the Indian mind. The network of castes in India simply illustrates the use and value of that weapon, provided that it is rightly used. Ostracism and excommunication are the most powerful instruments resorted to today in India, in unfortunately trivial matters, and, if the Registration Act now enables my countrymen to realize the use of that terrible weapon for a higher purpose, both Lord Elgin and the Transvaal Government will have deserved their gratitude.

There is, of course, therefore, nothing strange in Indian pickets,

[1] This was published under the title "Indian Picketing" and reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 13-7-1907.

[2] *Vide* "Interview to *Rand Daily Mail*", 28-6-1907

with (for them) rare self-sacrifice and courage, endeavouring to show their ignorant or weakly brethren the path of duty. At the same time, there is just as much difference today between Western pickets and Eastern, or, rather, Indian, as there is, apparently, between West and East. We have no desire to terrorise. We do not wish to compel obedience to the wish of the majority, but, like the indomitable Salvation Army lasses, we do, in our humble manner, wish with all the persuasive power of which we may be capable to inform those who do not know of what is held to be the right view of the Asiatic Registration[1] Act. It is, then, left open to such men either to accept the advice that may be given by us, or to accept the degrading Act and to sell themselves for a miserable existence in this country. As I have said before, if the Colonists knew what the Act means, they would themselves call such Indians as obeyed it curs fit only to be kicked and despised.

You quote, I take it for the benefit of the Indian community, Mr. Henry's remarks on the use of finger-prints in India. Their use, however, has never been denied. It is the abuse of the system against which I have ventured, in common with my fellow-countrymen, to protest.

You hope that wiser counsels will prevail among my countrymen, and that they will submit to the Act. I, on the other hand, hope that, if my countrymen rise to the occasion and are prepared to sacrifice everything rather than their honour and self-respect, you will change your views and respect them as men of their word. Let me remind you that Indians have sworn before God that they will not submit to the law. Perjury before a Court of Law can be expiated by suffering punishment that may be awarded by a judge. What expiation is possible before the Judge of Judges, who never errs? If we perjured ourselves before Him, we would then indeed be unfit associates for any civilised body of men, and the ghettos of old will be our proper and deserved lot.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Rand Daily Mail, 9-7-1907

[1] The original has "Legislation".

38. LETTER TO "THE STAR"

P. O. BOX 57,
PRETORIA,
July 7, 1907

TO
THE EDITOR
THE STAR
[JOHANNSBURG]

SIR,

Your Pretoria correspondent has given the Indian community deserved credit by saying that "no serious troubles are anticipated" with reference to the struggle of British Indians in this Colony not to submit to the Asiatic Registration Act. The Attorney-General, too, paid us a compliment by saying that he did not expect the law-abiding Indians to resist the enforcement of the law. The only difference is that the lawabiding instinct, while it makes rioting and physical resistance impossible, does not involve acceptance of any measure, however distasteful. That instinct tells us that, if we cannot bear the yoke imposed by the law, we must suffer the consequences of its breach with quiet dignity and resignation.

Your correspondent threatens that, if my countrymen do not change their attitude, the penal clauses will be rigorously enforced and they will be deported. This threat was unnecessary, for we have counted the consequence of non-submission. Gaol has no terrors for us compared to the enforced slavery of the Registration Act, which puts on the whole community a brand of criminality. Deportation will be a welcome relief from the contemplation of a dog's life in what we have been taught to consider our own home. If the Act bears as heavily on us as we represent it to do, no sacrifice will be too great for us.

We are having a unique experience of Imperialism and the cosmopolitan nature of the Empire. The Imperial arm is presumed to cover the weak from the strong. Indians of the Transvaal are now waiting to see whether that arm is to protect the weak Indians from the strong whites—British and otherwise—or whether it is to be used to strengthen the hands of the tyrant to crush the weak and helpless. Pardon the use of the word, but is it not tyrannical to disregard every sentiment and our religions, for this is no question of regulating immigration? The principle of registration we have accepted; the manner of it we bitterly resent. But the Government wish to impose

studied humiliation. Are Indians to blame if, rather than suffer it, they are prepared to lose their earthly possessions? If the whole of the white Transvaal be against us, God is with us.

I am, etc.,

HAJEE HABIB

SECRETARY,

BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE, PRETORIA

The Star, 9-7-1907

39. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

Monday, [*July 8, 1907*]

WELL DONE, PRETORIA !

Pretoria has done exceedingly well. Especially those from whom courage was hardly expected have borne tremendous suffering and neglected their own business in order to be ready for public service. Indians are thinking of nothing but how their honour may be defended.

ALL PRAISE TO VOLUNTEERS

The volunteers, pickets or watchmen, or patriotic workers [what ever name we may use] have earned glory for themselves. Their names will go down for all time in the history of the Transvaal Indians. They devote all their time to keeping a watch. Their names are as under: Messrs A. M. Cachalia, Gavarishankar Pranshankar Vyas, Gulam Mahomed Abdul Rashid, Cassim Sidoo, Khushal Chhita, Memon Ebrahim Noor, Govind Prag, Hossen Biba, Mahomed Valli, Ardeshir Framji, Chaool Beg, Gulab Rudra Desai, Moosa Suliman and Ebrahim Noor. These patriots go round the Permit Office by turns throughout the day, and if they find any Indian going there, they persuade him courteously and stop him. At present they have given up their private business and plunged into the service of the motherland. They do not care for the dangers they may have to face. They are quite prepared to suffer what ever consequences may follow. It would not at all be surprising if such patriotism should lead to ultimate success.

LESSON FROM THEIR COURAGE

The work of these volunteers must be emulated everywhere in the Transvaal. Officials will shortly be appointed everywhere to receive applications for new registers. As at Pretoria, Indians at all the other places will then have to look for volunteers. I advise them to

build the bund in time before the coming of the flood, and keep volunteers ready. Those who can should visit Pretoria and see how thoroughly the work is being done there. If the boycott of the Permit Office is successful, the struggle to follow is likely to be easier.

SUGGESTION TO MERCHANTS

I am told that some merchants who have been importing goods from England and other places have stopped doing so on account of the new law. Such merchants deserve congratulations. It appears they are fully prepared for the worst hardship, that is, the hardship of imprisonment. If every merchant should write or send cables to his creditor to this effect, I think it may do much good. In the first place, the merchant who does so will himself feel bolder and, in the second place, the merchants in Europe will get alarmed and they themselves will begin working for us. All this can be done only by those merchants who are inspired with patriotism, who have a clear idea of the harm that may be done to us by the obnoxious law and have full faith in God.

IMMIGRATION BILL

On this Bill, Mr. Gandhi has written the following letter to *The Star:*[1]

REGULATIONS FOR HAWKERS

The Regulations concerning hawkers, which I mentioned earlier, have been passed. Johannesburg hawkers should therefore wake up before they get fined. For the Regulations, please refer to previous issues of this journal.

ARREST OF INDIAN

A telegram from Potchefstroom states that Hajee Omar of that place has been arrested on charges of fraud and burning his shop. The bail fixed for him is £1,500.

Tuesday

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OBNOXIOUS ACT

Lengthy articles have begun appearing in the *Rand Daily Mail* and the *Leader*. They state that Indians in Pretoria are not getting themselves registered because of pressure from Johannesburg Indians. The papers add that, during the last days of July, everyone will go to the Permit Office to give the finger-prints. We want Pretoria Indians to remain firm and prove thereby that this report is a libel. If, ultimately,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to *The Star*", 4-7-1907

people should invade the Pretoria Office like swarms of locusts, all the good work done will be undone.

REFLECTION ON THIS

The Indian community has now to exercise great caution. I hear from many places that, as soon as the leaders are arrested, the peoplewill get themselves registered out of fear. If that is to happen, it will be, as the Indian proverb has it, like the case of a woman who went in search of a son and lost her husband. This is no time for depending upon leaders or anyone else. Everyone is to rely on his own courage. In this situation, neither lawyers nor anyone else can be of any help. When we are all involved in the conflagration, it is no use looking to one another for help. I hear that the Government will be soon laying its hands on Mr. Gandhi and, perhaps, on some other leaders also. If this happens, instead of being put out by their going to gaol, the people should welcome it and be inspired to greater courage. The truth is that we are not sheep, but free men, and we would not depend upon other people for help. The confusion in our mind will disappear only if we are convinced that a gaol is not something to be afraid of. God is our only shield, and we should all bear in mind that we are to rush into the thick of the battle with this shield in hand.

"I SHALL TAKE IT OUT IF OTHERS DO"

Many whites have been offering advice to Indians. When the former ask 'What will you do?', many Indians say in reply, 'We shall do what our leaders do.' Some answer, 'We shall do what others do.' These are words of cowards, and they will do harm. Everyone should give the reply: 'I dislike the law and so I will never submit to it. Moreover, I will not submit to it also because I have taken an oath in the name of God. I would rather go to gaol than submit to the law which would make a slave of me.' He who cannot give this answer will never reach the other shore. None can swim with another's buoy. We are to swim with our own strength. Will the reader swallow dust because I choose to do so? Will he fall into a pit because I do so? Will he forsake his religion because I do so? I may stand my mother's humiliation, turn my sons into thieves, and have the fingers of myself and of my sons cut off; will the reader do likewise? Everyone will answer 'Never!' In a similar spirit, everyone should answer, 'I don't care what others do, but I for my part will not submit to the law.' All do not give such straightforward answers, and that is why the newspapers make this comment that, though we seem to be enthusiastic now, we shall in the end unhitch our waggons. Everyone has to think over all this. This is no time for fear or secrecy. We have

nothing to hide and keep silent about. We have to display our courage, as the sun does its splendour.

STRENGTH OF CHINESE

Last Sunday, the Chinese held a meeting, to which they invited Mr. Polak. After Mr. Polak had explained the position, they too reaffirmed their resolve that no Chinese would submit to the law, and anyone doing so would be excommunicated.

ASIATIC EATING-HOUSES

The Town Council of Johannesburg intends to make a regulation that only a white can become the manager of an Asiatic eating-house. Does this mean that, at Hindu and Muslim eating-houses in the Transvaal, the whites will serve and the Indians merely watch? All this will apply to those who accept the title-deed of slavery. No one will be able to lay his hands on those who refuse to touch it.

[From Gurajati]

Indian Opinion, 13-7-1907

40. PETITION TO TRANSVAAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

JOHANNESBURG,
July 9, 1907

TO

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE TRANSVAAL

THE PETITION OF THE ACTING CHAIRMAN OF THE BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF THE TRANSVAAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT:

1. Your Petitioner has been desired by the Committee of the British Indian Association to approach this Hon'ble House in connection with the Immigration Restriction Bill now under consideration.

2. While the said Association ventures to approve of the principle of the measure, in its humble opinion, from an Indian standpoint, some of its features are open to serious objection, namely:

(a) The Bill in question does not recognize Indian languages, which have a vast literature.

(b) It does not recognize the claim of those who have been formerly domiciled in the Transvaal. (Many British Indians

who paid £3, under Law 3 of 1885 as amended in 1886, before 1899, for settling in the country, but who are now out of the Colony and who have not received permits under the Peace Preservation Ordinance, are by the Bill in question prohibited from re-entering the country, unless they possess the educational qualifications contemplated by the Bill.)

(c) Clause 4 of Section 2, as it has been interpreted to the said Association, makes it practically impossible even for British Indians with high educational attainments to enter the Transvaal, unless they comply with the terms of the Asiatic Registration Act. (In the humble opinion of the Association, those who pass the education test imposed by the Bill need hardly furnish further identification for purposes of immigration.)

(d) As interpreted to the Association, the said Clause 4 ranks British Indians with people affected by the Immorality Ordinance, and is therefore considered by the British Indian community to be highly offensive.[1]

(e) The Bill in question, contrary to expectation, perpetuates the Asiatic Registration Act.

3. The said Association humbly ventures to draw the attention of this Hon'ble House to the fact that British Indians are not represented therein, and that, therefore, they may respectfully claim additional consideration from this Hon'ble House.

4. In conclusion, the said Association trusts that the petition will receive due consideration, and that such relief will be granted as may be possible in the circumstances. And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioner, as in duty bound, shall for ever, etc.

MOOSA ISMAIL MIA
ACTING CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Colonial Office Records: C. O. 291/122

[1] In the petition actually presented, this paragraph was deleted by William Hosken, a member of the Transvaal Legislative Assembly, through whom it was submitted. *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 15-7-1907

41. NEW TRANSVAAL IMMIGRATION BILL

[Before *July 11, 1907*]

This Bill has not yet become an Act. But it can be seen from the Bill what the Government's intentions are; we therefore give below a summary of it:

(1) The Permit Act [the Peace Preservation Ordinance, 1903] is repealed, provided that such repeal shall not affect or abridge any of the powers conferred under the Asiatic Registration Act.

(2) After the taking effect of the Bill, the following classes of persons will be treated as prohibited immigrants:

(a) Any person without a good knowledge of a European language.

(b) Any person who has not in his possession or at his disposal means to support himself.

(c) Any prostitute or person procuring women for immoral purposes.

(d) Any person who under any law in force at the date of his entering or attempting to enter the Transvaal will be liable, if found therein, to be removed therefrom for failure to comply with its provisions.

(e) Lunatics or lepers or those suffering from such contagious diseases.

(f) Any person about whom a report may have been received from the Imperial Government or from any other official source that he is undesirable.

(g) Any person who in the opinion of the Government is dangerous to the peace, order and good government of the Colony.

(h) This Bill will not apply to the wife or minor child of any person who is not a prohibited immigrant, and it will also not apply to Kaffirs and to European workers

(3) For administering this law, an Immigration Department will be set up.

(4) For enforcing this law, the Governor will have the authority to enter into agreement with the Government of any Colony.

(5) Every prohibited immigrant entering or found within this Colony shall be liable to a fine not exceeding £100 or imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months, and to be removed at any time from the Colony.

(6) Any person who violates the Immorality Ordinance [1903] or who may be deemed to be dangerous to the peace, order and good government of the Colony may be arrested and removed from the Colony.

(7) Anyone who aids or abets a prohibited immigrant in entering the Colony will be liable to a fine not exceeding £100 or to imprisonment not exceeding six months.

(8) No prohibited immigrant will be entitled to obtain a licence or to acquire any interest in land in the Colony.

(9) Every person suspected to be a prohibited immigrant may be arrested without a warrant.

(10) Ignorance of this Act will be no defence.

(11) Any person ordered to be removed from this Colony shall be liable to pay all expenditure incurred by the Government in carrying out such removal, which may be recovered from the property of the person concerned.

(12) The name, permanent residence, place of birth, etc., of every person putting up at a hotel shall be recorded by the hotel-keeper, and the Government will have the authority to inspect the same.

(13) The burden of proving that he is not a prohibited immigrant shall lie upon the accused.

(14) Every magistrate shall have jurisdiction to impose the maximum penalties for all contraventions of this Act.

IMPLICATIONS OF BILL

This is a frightful Bill. The Imperial Government is likely to be deceived by it. Superficially viewed, the Bill is harmless, but on closer scrutiny it is found to be poisonous. The Bill entirely abolishes the rights of refugees without permits. Those who hold permits but go out of the Transvaal, without getting the permits exchanged under the new Act, lose their right to return.

The educated Indian is granted a right *with* one hand and deprived of it *with* the other. For, those entering on the strength of their knowledge of a European language will have, under this obnoxious Bill, to give their finger-prints within eight days of immigration and to take out a permit, failing which they will be deported.

Thus, the Indian is not likely to be benefited at all by this Bill.

The Bill will have to be sent to Lord Elgin for approval. In that case, the Indian community will have to put up a fight in England. More information about the Bill will be available between the writing

of this and the date of its publication, i.e., on Thursday, the 11th instant. We shall be able to publish it in the next issue.

[From Gurajati]

Indian Opinion, 13-7-1907

42. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before July 11, 1907][1]

[MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,]

I have your letter. I note what you say about Kajee. Mr. Polak has just returned from Pretoria. He has done exceedingly well there. I have written to Mr. West[2] about jobs. The Customs Forms, as I have said to Mr. West, are to be sent to the address in your possession of Ebrahim Mahomed. He is one of the subscribers.

I am certain that it is a short-sighted policy not to print Hindi. We are really not even using our capital. *Ramayana is* bound to sell, and, in my opinion, it will be a work of very considerable merit, for the simple reason that thousands of people who cannot possibly study the whole work will gladly avail themselves of the condensation. If, therefore, a good man is available, you should certainly not hesitate to incur the expense. The reasoning which tells you that, according to the expenses here, the book will be dear is faulty to a degree. It should be plain to us that, if the expenses are high, the prices charged are correspondingly high. The term *high*, therefore, is merely relative. The *Bhagavad-Gita*[3], which we would issue in India for one anna, we charge one shilling for, because the expenses were comparatively high. I am perfectly certain that whenever we think of having things done cheaply outside the country of our adoption, we bring into play the ordinary weakness, namely, to drive the hardest bargain possible, and it is for that reason that I have condemned in my mind the idea of having the South African book[4] printed in Bombay, and I feel this so

[1] This was obviously written prior to his letter of July 11; *vide* the following item in which Gandhiji refers to the printing of the *Ramayana*.

[2] Printer of *Indian Opinion* and inmate of Phoenix Ashram. *Vide* "Our Trial", 31-12-1904. *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XXIII, XLVII and *Autobiography*, Part IV Ch. XVI, XVIII, et *seq.*

[3] The reference is to the edition with Mrs. Besant's English translation published in 1905. *Vide* "Letter to Annie Besant", 13-5-1905.

[4] It was suggested that *Indian Opinion* should bring out a book on the hardships of Indians in South Africa; *vide* "Omar Haji Amod Zaveri's Resignation", 13-4-1907.

keenly, that I have not yet summoned up sufficient zeal for writing out the book. I would ask you to reason this thing out for yourself. Never mind whether we employ an extra hand or not and whether we publish the book or not; that is a matter of detail. The first thing is to lay down the principle. If we cannot enforce it, or if we have not sufficient courage to do it, then we cease to worry about it, and cease to think of enlarging the scope of our work. If you need money, please let me know in time.

Yours sincerely

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4674

43. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
July 11, 1907

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I enclose herewith Pragji Khandubhai Desai's letter. I suggest your taking him, if he is at all a desirable person, on probation at £3, and putting him on the Gujarati case, so that you can go on with *Ramayana*. We are certainly short-handed in the Gujarati department. However, I simply throw out the suggestion. It may be totally impracticable. You should, therefore, do what you think is best.

Yours sincerely,

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Please let me know how you find Mr. Cordes[1] and other things.

From a photostat of the typewritten original signed in Gujarati with a Gujarati postscript in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 4757

44. MEASURE OF INDIAN STRENGTH

Till now the strength of the Indian community has not been tested. It has remained a secret hidden in a closed fist, as it were, and no one has taken its measure. The prevailing idea is that Indians are cowardly and lacking in spirit.

But, by good fortune, the community's strength is now being tested in the Transvaal. This opportunity is given to us by Lord Elgin

[1] A German theosophist who was attached to Gandhiji and was for some time in charge of the school at Phoenix; he died at Sevagram in 1960.

tested in the Transvaal. This opportunity is given to us by Lord Elgin and General Botha and their friends. In this trial of strength the community has proved its superiority, up to the time of writing this, at any rate. The news-letters published by us show that Pretoria, which hitherto the whites had thought to be weak, has all of a sudden shown itself to be quite strong, not a single Indian there taking out the obnoxious permit. A Madrasi went to the Permit Office, but when he found that finger-prints were required, he threw away his application and said that he would not give his finger-prints on any account. The Madrasi Postmaster preferred to resign his post rather than take out the new permit. We hear that Mr. Chamney's Punjabi attendant flatly refused to take out the new permit. All this shows that the Indian people would not be found wanting when weighed in the balance.

Who can harm one whom God protects? The Indian people are religious-minded. They believe in God. He will easily bring success in any work we undertake with full faith in Him. It is said that, because of his faith in God, Narasinha Mehta[1] could fulfil his social obligation on the occasion of the first pregnancy of his daughter, though he had no money of his own.[2] With God's help, Prophet Mahomed came through greathardships and subdued his opponents. The same Creator will help the Indian community.

The eyes of Indians everywhere are at present fixed on their countrymen in the Transvaal. They are all eager to know whether the community will succeed in the challenge that they have taken up. Pretoria's answer is that the Indian community shall never turn back.

[From Gurajati]

Indian Opinion, 13-7-1907

45. DUTY OF DURBAN

Is there any Indian who will not be thrilled with joy at Pretoria's performance and at the courage of Indian pickets there? It is easy to offer congratulations. But true congratulation consists in doing likewise. Durban should begin a boycott of the Permit Office like the one that is going on in the Transvaal. Even a single Indian now

[1] Saint-poet of Gujarat.

[2] Presents are given by parents to their daughter at a religious ceremony during the seventh month of her first pregnancy. A legend has it that God came to the poet's help in the guise of a merchant.

entering the Transvaal from Durban will be like a microbe getting into milk. This is a time when the Transvaal Indians ought to sacrifice all their worldly possessions. If any Indian is specially keen on going to the Transvaal, it will not be with a view to offering help, but only on personal business. Such Indians will demoralize others by going to the Transvaal, rather than add to their strength. Moreover, these Indians can enter the Transvaal only by going to the Durban Permit Office. That will mean a break-down of the boycott. But if no Indian at all goes to the Durban Permit Office for a permit, the Office cannot run. It is therefore essential that Durban Indians follow the example of Pretoria.

The Natal Indian Congress has intimated its offer of monetary aid to their brethren in the Transvaal. It held a mass meeting which has infused spirit into them. It has also taken up the question of raising contributions. This is certainly admirable. But in addition, it is necessary to take up the question of boycotting the Durban Permit Office. There are three ways of doing it. First, pickets should be posted at the Durban Office to prevent Indians from going there. Second, a watch should be kept on the Indians proceeding by train to the Transvaal, and if any such Indian is going there with a new permit, or with an old permit without at the same time being ready to go to gaol, he should be dissuaded from going further. Third, it should be seen that no Indian gives his finger-prints on board a steamer. By doing all this, Durban will have given very good help and brought our deliverance nearer.

[From Gurajati]

Indian Opinion, 13-7-1907

46. "THE WISDOM OF THE EAST" SERIES[1]

These books have been recently published in English. No one has translated them into Gujarati. But from time to time we shall give

[1] This was Gandhiji's reply to the following letter dated June 19 from M. H. Ugat, Norwood, referring to *"The Wisdom of the East"* (15-6-1907): "In your issue of the 15th ultimo, you drew attention to books like *The Wisdom of the East, Jalaluddin Rumi, The Essence of the Koran, The Way of the Buddha* and *The Way of Zoroaster*, and advised people to buy them, which was a good thing. But our community being more or less familiar with Gujarati, I believe these books will sell to some extent if they are available in Gujarati. I hope you will give some information on the point."

short summaries of such books. We have started giving the Life of the Prophet[1] with the same view. Meanwhile, those who know English can order the books referred to above.

EDITOR,
Indian Opinion

[From Gurajati]
Indian Opinion, 13-7-1907

47. SPEECH AT HAMIDIA ISLAMIC SOCIETY[2]

JOHANNESBURG,
July 14, 1907

Mr. Gandhi gave a brief resume of the position of affairs to date, and once more exhorted his hearers to resist the inequitous provisions of the new law to the last, and under no circumstances to re-register under compulsion.

Indian Opinion, 20-7-1907

48. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

Monday, [July 15, 1907]

PRETORIA'S HONOUR

Pretoria is still going strong. Its honour has been preserved, and it has come out unscathed through the second week. Mr. Cody, the Permit Officer, has had "a holiday" for another week, and the brave watchmen, i.e., the volunteers, have earned glory for themselves. Thewhites have been taken aback and wonder what it all means. They ask whether Indians, who used to take insults lying down, will now stand up twirling their moustaches. Some English ladies inquired of Indian hawkers selling vegetables whether they would take out permits. The brave hawkers invariably gave an emphatic "no" in reply. If this spirit is maintained to the very end, Indian prestige will go up, and the new law will receive a knock-over. Everyone will agree that the credit for it should go to Pretoria Indians and the pickets.

WHITE'S MISCHIEF

I hear that an agent of Mr. Stephen Frazer has been specially touring the country and telling things to Indians which might frighten

[1] *Vide* "Prophet Mahomed and His Caliphs", 22-6-1907

[2] Gandhiji spoke at a meeting of the Hamidia Islamic Society held in the Indian Location. This is a brief report of his speech.

them. To the Pietersburg Indians he held out the threat that, if the Indian community followed Mr. Gandhi's advice and refused to submit to the new law, it would be ruined and the property of the persons concerned confiscated by the Government. As the last date approaches, there will doubtless be more such frauds practised on us by hostile or selfish whites. I should point out that it is the duty of every Indian to give a smashing reply to such people. Indians do not have even time to listen to cowardly advice. To say that the Government will confiscate property is an utter lie. There is no authority under which it can do so. As for being ruined, we know that Mr. Hajee Habib has already written about it to *The Star*. He has made the point that, though we may be ruined, we shall have saved our honour and earned the reputation of being true to our pledge. The truth therefore is that we are opposing the law not because of Mr. Gandhi's advice, but because we mean to defend our manhood. If we have that, we shall create wealth out of nothing. If on the contrary, we behave like women, though being men, we shall find it difficult to preserve what we have, and shall have no peace of mind to enjoy what we save. Richard III, a former king of England, came to the throne after killing his kinsmen. But he could not enjoy it in peace. He shook with fear whenever he held in his hand the sword stained with the blood of his kinsmen. In the end, he died a cruel and unnatural death. What Indian is there who will, out of greed, injure the interest of all, unmindful of the humiliation of his brethren? If there is any such person, he will but die like King Richard in anguish and remorse. I wish that the Indian community will, in this crisis, spurn such advisers with white faces and black hearts.

TWO OTHER WHITES

If Mr. Stephen Frazer's agent talked disgracefully as above, two other whites, who are respectable merchants carrying on a large busi-ness with Indians, speak reasonably and admit that, for the sake of its good name, the Indian community ought to stand by its resolve to go to gaol and that, if all remain firm in it, they will undoubtedly succeed. Some might say that this "if" is a big thing. But the "if" is big only for a coward. The courageous will take others to be courageous too and they will only believe that the Indian community will fully keep its pledge on this occasion.

JOHANNESBURG MEETING

A very large meeting was held last Sunday in the hall of the Hamidia Islamic Society. The meeting was to begin at 2.30 p.m., but the hall was fully packed before that hour. Those who could not get in stood outside. Many had come from Germiston also. Haffejee Abdul

Samad took the chair. After Mr. Fancy had read out the minutes, Mr. Gandhi explained the position about the obnoxious law. Then Mr. Ram Sundar Pundit from Germiston made an eloquent and impassioned speech. He said that at Germiston the people were in high spirits. Volunteers were also ready and Germiston would do exactly what Pretoria had done. In Pretoria volunteers had displayed fine patriotism. Mr. Emam Abdool Cadir said that no Asiatic whatever could submit to the law in question. He also described the fervour he had himself witnessed at the Pretoria meeting. Mr. Nawab Khan said that no Indian, whatever his position, could accept the law. If the women of England were strong enough to go to gaol, would the men among the Indian people be scared by having to go to gaol or by having to suffer other losses? Mr. Abdur Rehman said that the Indian community at Potchefstroom was very firm. They had been told by Mr. Stephen Frazer's agent that goods would be supplied to them on credit only if they promised to submit to the law. To that Mr. Rehman had given the answer that the slavery of the law was unacceptable to Indians, even if a thousand Stephen Frazers should stop giving them goods on credit. He added that the Potchefstroom traders would put up with any amount of loss, but would not submit to the obnoxious law.

In a very forceful speech, Mr. Omarji quoted the Gujarati verse beginning, "O true one! Swerve not from the path of truth." Thereafter, Messrs Shahboodeen and Cama put some questions. The meeting then terminated. There was no one at the meeting who appeared to have the slightest intention of submitting to the law. Mr. Polak also addressed the meeting and praised the volunteers whom he had seen at Pretoria.

MEETING OF WAITERS

At the Ebenezer School, Mr. David Ernest had convened a meeting of the members of the Transvaal Football Association. About 50 waiters attended it. The meeting took place on Monday at 3.30 p.m. Mr. Gandhi explained the position about the law. Mr. Naidoo interpreted in Tamil. Finally Mr. Polak spoke. He told a story. Once upon a time there was an animal. It had this peculiar characteristic, that if its head was cut off, two would growl in its place. Thus, whenever its head was cut off, it would be left with double the number of heads. When people came to know of this, they stopped troubling the animal. The Indian community had to behave in a similar manner. There should be no waiting for anybody's leadership. It should be assumed that everyone was a leader. In the place of one Indian gaoled or deported, two should come out to take up leadership and brave the

sentence of gaol or deportation. If this happened, the Government could not but be defeated. The waiters should realize that they were men first and servants next, and accordingly they must oppose the law firmly without being afraid of losing their employment.

Mr. David, who is a Government interpreter, said that he had given a flat refusal when the Government asked him to get himself registered,

Then, on Mr. Gandhi putting it to the meeting, everyone stood up and replied that he would not seek registration, even if that meant losing his job. The meeting terminated at 4.45 p.m.

GERMISTON MEETING

The Indians at Germiston are in high spirits. Pundit Ram Sundar Maharaj has placed himself at their head, working fearlessly, and exhorting the people. They held a special meeting and resolved that, no matter what risks awaited them, they would not submit to the law. More than 200 men signed the resolution, and some brave men came forward to serve as volunteers, as had happened at Pretoria.

IMMIGRATION BILL

The second reading of the Immigration Bill is over. Mr. Smuts clarified the aims of the Bill. Messrs Hosken, Lindsay, Wybergh[1], Neser and Whiteside participated in the discussion. Mr. Hosken, speaking on the Indian side, said that the new Bill would be appropriate only in Russia. The Bill contained some provisions which ought to have no place under British rule.

ASSOCIATION'S PETITION

The Association has submitted a petition[2] against this Bill. This has already been printed in our English section. Below is a summary of it:

Though this Association is not opposed to the principle of restricting immigration, it respectfully submits the following objections: (a) The Bill does not recognize any Indian language. (b) It does not protect the rights of those who have been residents of the Transvaal for a long time. For instance, many Indians had paid £3 to the Boer Government for the right of settling in the Transvaal. Some of them have not received permits. The rights of such persons would be annulled in case they did not know one of the European languages. (c) Under sub-section 4 of Section 2, even those Asiatics

[1] Commissioner of *Mines* for the Transvaal.

[2] *Vide* "Petition to Transvaal Legislative Assembly", 9-7-1907

who may pass the educational test and are not otherwise prohibited are subjected to the operation of the new Asiatic law. No purpose is served by applying the law in this manner, as Indians of educational attainments do not require further identification. (d) Under the same section, moreover, the Indian community is bracketed with prostitutes and their touts. (e) Contrary to former assurances, this Bill confirms the provisions of the Asiatic Registration Act.

Parliament should remember that the Asiatic communities are not represented on it. It is therefore its special duty to pay attention to the petition of the community. The Association therefore prays and hopes that its petition will receive full consideration and relief will be granted.

The petition was presented by Mr. Hosken. The Bill will be examined by the Select Committee on Wednesday. I am writing this letter on Monday, and it will be known before this issue is published if any changes are made in it.

WILL NEWSPAPERS BE AVAILABLE IN PRISON?

This question has been asked by a correspondent. The answer is that it all depends on the kind of gaol sentence given. If it is a sentence of rigorous imprisonment, no newspaper will be provided, but every prisoner will be allowed to be visited by his friends once a month. I would advise such visitors to carry in their mind the information published in *Indian Opinion* and convey it to the prisoner himself in the gaol-palace.

DISMISSED UNCEREMONIOUSLY

A few Indian friends at Pretoria thought that, if they placed some demands before the Colonial Government and if the demands were granted, they would be saved from the trouble of going to gaol. But God means to test us to the utmost. Hence, nothing came out of the demands. The following demands were placed before Mr. Smuts by these Indians:

(1) They should not be required to give ten digit-impressions,

(2) The mother's name should not be required,

(3) Registration should be required only in the case of grown-up children, the younger ones being spared the harassment.

(4) The Kaffir police should not have the power to examine [the permits].

(5) The distinction made between the Christians and the Muslims of Turkey should be dropped.

(6) The name of the Orange River Colony should continue to be mentioned in the permit.

(7) The determination of the age of a minor should not be left to the arbitrary decision of the Registrar, but should be left to the court.

(8) Temporary permits should be freely available for the entry of merchants' employees.

(9) An assurance should be given that this legislation is now final.

Mr. Smuts has sent a long reply. It is very ingenious. If we could be killed with sweet words, he would kill us. He says that the obligation to give one's mother's name will be withdrawn if all Indians get themselves registered. The Kaffir police will not ask for finger-prints (which means that they may ask for the permit). Whether this law will be the last of its kind or not depends on the Indian community itself. If the community carries out the provisions of the law faithfully, there will perhaps be, says Mr. Smuts, no further legislation.

BLOOD BOILS

As I summarize this reply, my blood boils. What is meant by saying that there would be no further restrictions if we behaved well? After reducing us to a living death under the obnoxious law, could there be a fresh amendment in order to kick at the dead? It should be noted that on no single point has Mr. Smuts given up his obstinacy. For he does not say categorically that the mention of the mother's name will not be required. If all Indians agree to registration, it will be left to our discretion whether that sacred name should be mentioned or not. The Native police will not ask for the finger-prints, that is, they may certainly ask for permits. If we submitted to the new law, we would never be able to escape the music of "Your pass, please."

IT IS ALSO GOOD

But it is also good that we have been given such a stunning blow with a stick wrapped in silk. Now the Indian community will become still more determined. Just as the Regulations under a cruel law were bound to be cruel, the reply had also to be cruel. The cruel Regulations have inflamed the Indians. This cruel reply will make them inflexible. With God as our witness, we have pledged opposition to the law. With the same God as witness, let us prove our courage.

CORRECTION

I thank the correspondent who has pointed out that I made a

mistake in giving the name of the volunteer who was awarded a shawl by Mr. Essop Mia. It was to Gulam Mahomed that the shawl was awarded. I apologize to Mr. Gulam Mahomed for the mistake.

TRANSVAAL IMMIGRATION BILL[1]

The Immigration Restriction Bill passed the second reading in the Committee. And on Thursday it passed the third reading.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-7-1907

49. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

25 & 26, COURT CHAMBERS,
RISSIK STREET,
JOHANNESBURG,
[*July 16, 1907*][2]

TO

THE HON'BLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY

PRETORIA

SIR,

I am desired by the Committee of my Association to draw the attention of the Government to the petition[3] of the Association submitted to the Hon'ble the Legislative [Assembly on the subject of the][4] Immigration Restriction Bill. The points raised therein are, in the humble opinion of my Association, of the utmost importance to the community represented by my Association. If relief were granted as prayed, my Association ventures to think that the principle of the Bill would still remain intact.

My Association fails to see any reason for requiring well-educated Indians to comply with the Registration Act, and it seems a very serious injustice to deprive British Indians, who have paid £3 for the purpose of settling in the Transvaal, but who have not received permits under the Peace Preservation Ordinance, of the right of returning to the country of their adoption.

[1] This was sent by "special telegram".

[2] The letter as published in *Indian Opinion* is undated, but official records in the archives of the Transvaal Legislative Assembly point to this date.

[3] *Vide* "Petition to Transvaal Legislative Assembly'', 9-7-1907

[4] The words in square brackets are missing in the original.

My Association, therefore, trusts that the Government will be pleased to give a favourable consideration to the prayer of my Association.

I have, etc.,

MOOSA ISMAIL MIA
ACTING CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 20-7-1907

50. A GROSS LIBEL

Further correspondence on the Asiatic Act of the Transvaal, placed on the Table at the instance of Lord Ampthill, has now come to hand. Lord Selborne, in pressing the measure on the attention of Lord Elgin, allowed himself to make the following remarks:

> I hope that it may be possible for you to inform me at an early date that His Majesty will not be advised to exercise his power of disallowance in respect of this Act, so that it may be possible to bring it into force at once, and so *to check the illicit unauthorized influx of Asiatics into the Transvaal which is at present proceeding at an alarming rate.*

The italics are Ours.

We have no hesitation in saying that the emphatic pronouncement made by Lord Selborne as to the illicit influx is a libel, pure and simple. Here there is no qualification. His Lordship has accepted the statements placed before him as to the unauthorized influx of Asiatics without any reservation whatsoever, and yet these statements could only have been one-sided. Indians have denied any such influx and they have challenged investigation.[1] None has been made; still, Lord Selborne has seen fit, in spite of the tremendous responsibility resting on his shoulders, to give the imprimatur of his authority to an unproved charge.

This charge is inherently untrue. If such an influx has been proceeding demonstrably, why have the entrants been allowed to remain in the Colony? Either His Lordship's informants knew of the men who had so entered, or they did not. If they knew, the Peace Preservation Ordinance supplied all the machinery necessary to bring

[1] *Vide* "Cable to "India", 28-8-1906 & "The Mass Meeting", 11-9-1906 "Interview to "the Tribune", 20-10-1906, "Interview to "the Morning Leader", 20-10-1906 & "Letter to the Timess", 22-10-1906 "Presentation to Lord Elgin", 31-10-1906.

them to justice. Lord Selborne's libel, therefore, shows how difficult, if not impossible, it is for Asiatics to get even a fair hearing in South Africa, except in courts of justice. In a matter such as this the courts are not open to them, so they have to sit still, and grin and bear their troubles as best they may.

When we come to examine Lord Elgin's reply, it is sufficient to fill British Indians with dismay. The Secretary of State for the Colonies has sanctioned the measure, not because he believes it to be just, but because there is behind it the weight of white authority. So it comes to this, that any Act of a Colonial Parliament, if it is unanimous, will bind the Imperial Government, irrespective of the merits of that Act, and if this proposition be unimpeachable, Lord Elgin's statement, that "His Majesty's Government adhere to the opinion as to the desirability of recasting the restrictions to which Asiatics are at present subject", is a pious wish by which British Indians cannot set much store. It may never fructify, whilst the Act stands before Asiatics in the Transvaal as a stern reality, to fight against which they have staked their all. General Botha's promises to revise the Regulations do not affect Indians very much, but incidentally it may be remarked, as a symptom of the very strong prejudice permeating the local Government, that the General has not been able to fulfil those promises. Indian sentiment counts for little in the deliberations of the Colonial Government.

Indian Opinion, 20-7-1907

51. THE TRANSVAAL IMMIGRATION BILL DEBATE

The debate that took place on the second reading of the Immigration Restriction Bill in the Transvaal Assembly is in many respects an eye-opener. Mr. Smuts introduced the Bill to the House in a most summary manner. Points that affect British Indians were hardly touched by the Honourable Gentleman. He did not even consider them sufficiently interesting for the members of the public. He took it as a settled fact that the Asiatic Registration Act should be a permanent feature of the Transvaal laws, and that, contrary to what Mr. Duncan said[1] at the time of introducing that measure, the Immigration Bill is not to supersede it but to supplement it in its harshness, so far as the Asiatic communities are concerned. He did not trouble to inform the Members that Law 3 of 1885, which guaranteed

[1] *Vide* "Letter to *The Times*", 12-11-1906 Patrick Duncan was Colonial Secretary from 1903 to 1906.

residential protection to Asiatics who paid £3 to the Boer Government, is to be overridden by the Bill, and he saw nothing untoward in the clause which makes an Asiatic a prohibited immigrant if, in spite of the possession by him of high educational attainments, he fails, on entering the Colony, to undergo the ordeal prescribed by the Asiatic Registration Act.

In reply to Mr. Neser's gentle suggestion that the clause in the Bill giving extraordinary powers to the Government to eject, at his own expense, any person from the Colony, without a trial, was rather a dangerous thing, Mr. Wybergh showed the greatest resentment. The latter'sremarks, however, we can only characterize as foolishness due to self-forgetfulness. In any other person, it would be grossest impertinence. In discussing the clause and in asking the Government to hold on to it, he cited recent events in India. We do not wish to enter into the merits of the controversy, but we do expect a responsible politician like Mr. Wybergh not to speak from his seat in the Legislative Assembly to the South African public in a most irresponsible manner. Unless he has made Indian questions a special study, it is evident that he can only know what the cabled summaries of events have let the world know, and unless he believes in the inherent infallibility of all governments, he had no right to consider that the action of the authorities in deporting Indian leaders was either in itself good or that it had produced a sobering effect. We may, perhaps, claim to know a little more than the Honourable Member, and yet, not being in close touch with what is happening in that part of the British Empire, we have deemed it wise not to comment.

To add to the folly, Mr. Wybergh went on to deduce from the events in India that the powers given by the clause might be useful for sending out Indian inciters to passive resistance in the Transvaal. Herein he betrayed a lack of all perspective. Happenings in India have received the colour of an insurrection, and they have been interpreted to mean a revolt against the British Raj. The crusade of the Indians in the Transvaal has not the slightest resemblance to an insurrectionary movement. It simply means an offer on the part of the community to suffer much physical hardship rather than allow its moral sense to be atrophied. It is, on the part of Indians in the Transvaal, an endeavour to follow the precept of the Prophet of Nazareth, "Resist not Evil".

Of course, it matters not in the slightest degree that Mr. Wybergh should incite the House against British Indians. They are not likely to be turned away from their duty by any threats. They have anticipated the worst. Theirs is courage born of purity of motive and resolution not to tarnish their honour. We deal with Mr. Wybergh's remarks only because we believe him to be a sincere, though misguided, man, and to

illustrate how an atmosphere of prejudice can taint even a wellbalanced mind. Of all the members of the Assembly, Mr. Hosken was the only one who strongly disapproved of the vindictive spirit that underlay Mr. Wybergh's speech. Mr. Hosken had no hesitation in saying that the Bill was possible only in Russian or German territories, not on British soil. Little does Mr Wybergh know how arbitrary powers undertaken to repress a certain class of people recoil on those who are not even dreamt of. But we hope that in his calmer moments he has repented of his indiscretion.

Indian Opinion ,20-7-1907

52. IDENTURED IMMIGRATION

We are enabled this week to publish an important communication addressed by the Secretary of the Indian Immigration Trust Board to the employers of indentured Indians, giving information as to the cost of the introduction of such labour into Natal. The document is well worth the perusal of Messrs Evans and Robinson[1], who, after mature consideration, have come to the conclusion that indentured immigration into Natal should cease. Knowing, as we do, Mr. Haggar, we cannot mention him in the same category. Although we happen to agree with him in the attempt to end indentured Indian immigration, our motives are not the same, and the Indian community can have very little to do with a member who does not hesitate to libel it, and, when challenged to prove his statements, has not the manliness either to do so or to apologize. Mr. Rycroft's letter is, from the European standpoint, almost a complete justification for stopping the labour. It is evident that the employers are scarcely able to cope with the expenses of introduction. Compulsory repatriation would for them be much worse, even if the Indian Government, surrendering its guardianship, were to agree to any such condition. It appears that, in 1905, whereas the employers contributed only £20 towards the cost of introduction, the actual cost was £31.10.9 per male adult, and, as more and more Indians avail themselves of the free passage back to India, owing to the burden of the £3 tax, the cost will be on the increase. It would thus appear that the sooner, from a purely economic standpoint, indentured labour is stopped, the better it will be for all parties.

Indian Opinion, 20-7-1907

[1] Barristers.

53. GENERAL SMUTS OBDURATE

Indians in Pretoria gave another opportunity to the Government to withdraw from the false position in which it has placed itself by reason of the Asiatic Registration Act. The correspondence is lengthy and, unfortunately, we are unable to find space for it in this issue. The attorneys for the Indians in question made very reasonable suggestions as to the most obnoxious clauses of the Registration Act. The Colonial Secretary has returned a categorical refusal to almost every one of the requests. We frankly confess that the Government could not have done otherwise. In our opinion, it had a right to interpret the letter to mean that Indians were not strong enough to carry out the jail resolution. The eminently reasonable letter, therefore, has been evidently misread by the Government. It has passed regulations in keeping with the Act itself and its reply to the Indian petitioners of Pretoria simply follows out that policy. The correspondence will have done some good in that it will have strengthened the Indian community in its resolve to undergo the sufferings consequent upon non-submission to compulsory registration.

Indian Opinion, 20-7-1907

54. S. A. B. I. COMMITTEE'S WORK

The South Africa British Indian Committee is still working very hard. The questions put in Parliament a few days ago by Sir William Bull and Dr. Rutherford show that no adverse effect has followed the Indian community's rejection of the Committee's advice not to oppose the Transvaal law. The Committee carries on its work and that is as it should be. The Indian community is not bound to accept every piece of advice the Committee offers. The members of the Committee are large-hearted men, and they are going on with their work.

Sir Muncherji Bhownaggree is such a cautious and far-sighted gentleman that, with him as President, the Committee is not likely to give up the Indian cause. Moreover, Mr. Ritch, as his letter to Lord Ampthill shows, does not hesitate to put correctly the Indian standpoint before the Committee.

DELAGOA BAY

From Sir William Bull's questions, the Delagoa Bay Indians will

see that their case is also not forgotten. Acting upon Mr. Kothari's letter *in Indian Opinion,* Sir William Bull immediately complained about the hardships suffered by the Indians there. We should mention in this connection that the Committee has received no contributions from the Delagoa Bay Indians. We think they ought to contribute to the Committee's expenditure though they do not suffer much hardship at present.

RHODESIA

Like Delagoa Bay, Rhodesia too has not been forgotten. Our readers may recall that it was about the same time that we had published the Rhodesian Council's views on the question of Indians. Mr. Ritch made use of the information as soon as it reached England, and it is not likely now that very rigorous laws will be passed in Rhodesia. On reflection, everyone will have to admit that the honour of the Indians in both places, whether in Rhodesia or Delagoa Bay, depends really upon the struggle of the Transvaal Indians. It is they alone who will, if at all, save the honour of Indians. Failing that, neither the Committee nor any one else will be in a position to help.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-7-1907

55. LOBITO BAY

Our correspondent had reported that the condition of Indians in Lobito Bay was very bad. Hence we made inquiries through the agent of Messrs Griffith. He has replied as follows:

> The report utterly without foundation. Medical attendance ample. Field Hospital fully equipped. Doctor specially appointed to attend coolies. If you think it advisable communicate with Natal Government ask them to send Inspector satisfy themselves. Reports utterly without foundation. Coolies are satisfied. Water supply good, plenty food.

This report is at variance with the report of our correspondent. Our correspondent is a very exact and disinterested person. Hence his report is not to be set aside. Putting the two reports together we conclude that, when the labourers reached there, they were put to much hardship. This news reached our correspondent. Now their condition is not as bad as it had been. The labourers must be reasonably happy. Even then, it is obvious that it is not worth while just now for any Indian to take the risk of going there. There is no

doubt that there is much hardship before one reaches Benguella. Even after reaching there, a free man will not be able to take up any profession there in the present condition.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-7-1907

56. NATAL BILL REGARDING LICENCES AND STAMPS

The Natal *Government Gazette* of July 12 publishes a Bill introducing certain changes in the matter of revenue licences. Below we give its main provisions:

(1) The Trading Act of 1897 will henceforth apply to Kaffir eating-houses.

(2) A hawking licence issued for one magisterial district shall not be valid in another district

(3) No hawker shall remain at a single farm for more than 12 hours or return to it during the following four days.

(4) An extra stamp of the value of 10 per cent of the municipal licence fee shall be affixed to the licence. The said 10 per cent will be paid by the licensee and go to the Government.

(5) The agents of a foreign firm will be required to take out a licence. An auctioneer selling foreign goods by auction will also have to take out a licence.

(6) At the time of taking out a trading licence, anyone possessing an agency is bound to disclose the fact to the Licensing Officer.

(7) Rent receipts will be issued to Natives or to Indians from a special book numbered and with counterfoils bearing embossed stamps. It will not do to affix stamps.

This Bill has not yet become law, but it may be taken for granted that it will be passed. Some changes may be made in it, but they will be of a minor character. The Bill is applicable to all. It is therefore difficult to oppose it. The idea behind the Bill is to raise money from every possible source at a time when the Colony is facing financial stringency. An angry potter twists the ear of his donkey.[1] Likewise the Government, being in need of money, has started harassing poor people like the hawkers. In short, the whole of South Africa is now impoverished. Every Government is therefore hunting for money in all directions. We do not reproduce here the different

[1] A Gujarati proverb.

rates. If the Bill is passed, we shall also give, if necessary, the rates for licences. Of all the above clauses, the one regarding rent receipts is terrible. It ought to be resisted.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-7-1907

57. INDENTURED INDIAN LABOURERS

The Secretary of the Indian Immigration Trust Board, Mr. Rycroft, has addressed a letter to the employers of indentured Indian labourers, which we publish in full in our English section. It will be seen from that letter that the employers find the cost of importing indentured Indian labourers too heavy to bear, and if the Indian labourers are to be repatriated on the expiry of the period of contract, the expenditure will be very much heavier still. From this Mr. Rycroft concludes that legislation for the compulsory repatriation of labourers will mean heavy losses for employers.

Because of this the employers of indentured labourers are on the horns of a dilemma. If they let the labourers return, their backs will be broken. If they keep them, and afterwards there is legislation for their repatriation to India, they will be involved in much too heavy an expenditure. It is a problem as to what should be done in this difficult situation. The Indian labourers are not likely to gain anything from thiscontroversy. Neither those who hold that there should be no further importation of indentured labourers, nor those who hold that it should continue, have any concern for the interests of Indians. If Indian labourers accept still lower wages, no one will protest, even if the labourers are to be repatriated on the expiry of the period of contract. Both sides will be happy. There is only one thing which can be of benefit to the Indian community, that is, the recruitment of indentured labourers should cease altogether. If any labourers come, they can gain nothing in conditions of slavery and circumstances will not permit them to live as free men. We are happy to observe that the whole Indian community takes offence at the hardships inflicted on the indentured labourers. This is a sign of our awakening. If we take a step forward and can have their importation ended, the enslavement of Indians will cease and those Indians who are already in South Africa will have some relief.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-7-1907

58. SPEECH AT NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS[1]

DURBAN,
July 20, 1907

Of all the struggles during the last 13 years, the present is the most critical. Therefore its consequences are bound to be equally momentous The effect of the law will be felt uniformly throughout South Africa. Not only are Rhodesia and German [East] Africa affected by it, but even in India it cannot but have a bad effect. Natal Indians have special reason to be concerned. (At this point a few examples similar to those in *Indian Opinion* of May 18 and July 6 were given.) Indian servants are all right, but we do not want free Indians—that is what the whites say. Again, genuine cases are lumped together with bogus ones. I can recall the case of a poor man, Mr. Hasam from Porbunder. Being deprived of his ancestral land worth about Rs. 100, he came to me in Bombay. I advised him not to risk Rs. 500 in an attempt to get back land worth only Rs.100. "It is my ancestral land," he replied. "I shall recover it at any cost. I shall never allow the title-deed to be nullified." But, in the Transvaal, the title-deed refers to our person. The Government wants to snatch away the one that we have and to give another instead, just as it likes. Moreover, while issuing the document it asks the Indian for the names of his mother, father, wife and others as we saw in the play[2] and demands impressions, first, of ten fingers and then of eight fingers. After getting these, it says that it will issue the documents if and as it likes. Who will submit to such slavery? A man who earns £3 or £4 can make his living anywhere with the slightest effort. Why would he, for this pittance, invite disgrace by remaining in the Transvaal? Again, a man earning £400 loves his honour more than money. The rich and the poor may perhaps, by shutting their ears, suffer themselves to be insulted, but they will not tolerate the harassment of their eight and ten year old children. The Boers are a brave people and we may not be able to oppose them. But we can resist if they ask us to submit to unjust orders and become slaves. We are looked upon as bad cowries. The present is an occasion to prove ourselves to be good cowries. If we pass the test, Indians in all parts of the world will reap the benefit. Today India gets the kind of justice that the cats got from the monkey in the well-known fable. The Government succeeds by setting the two

[1] A general meeting of the Natal Indian Congress was held on Saturday, with Dawad Mahomed in the chair. Gandhiji spoke on the implications of the Asiatic Act.

[2] A farce staged in the Victoria Indian Theatre, Durban, on July 13, 1907.

cats—Hindus and Muslims—against each other. Here it is not so. Both the communities here are united, hence our courage will bear fruit. After considering all these points, I advised gaol-going at the mass meeting in September.[1] All those present raised their hands and took a solemn oath, with God as witness, to go to gaol. What has happened since then is known to all. If we do not keep our pledge now, we shall be false to God. Moreover, new laws will be passed one after another. We shall be called cowards. We shall then be left only to live a dog's life. Once a white woman asked me, "What does the hawker, who is used to being kicked, know about honour or dishonour?" "Once he sees that it is humiliating," I replied, "he will not get himself registered, even if he has to face death." To assure herself of this, she used to ask the hawkers going to her door if they would take out new registers. She always got a negative reply. Now she has come to realize that Indians have become courageous. And so she says that, when they go to gaol, she would keep inquiring about their health and bring them whatever relief she could. Mr. Hosken says that if all Indians go to gaol, the Government dare not raise a finger against them. We should realize from this that, if we stand by our pledge, bright days are in store for us. Since we have the reputation today of being noisy but ineffective grumblers, our petition against the Immigration Act has been consigned to the waste-paper basket. The reason why I place all these things before you is that you may take a lesson from this example and be prepared You [in Natal] and we [in the Transvaal] are one and it will be nothing remarkable if you join usin our sufferings. It is not enough that you help us by talking, that is, bypassing resolutions and writing letters. It will be the most valuable help if you give what I have come to beg of you. When all Indians in the Transvaal are prepared to suffer any loss in the struggle, you should not lag behind in giving monetary help. In giving such help, you will not be doing anything really big; you will only be doing your duty. You will have to maintain those that are left behind, if a large number of people go to gaol. You should therefore make the necessary arrangement to meet the difficult situation. I am sure that you will help.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-7-1907

[1] *Vide* "The Mass Meeting", 11-9-1906.

59. PETITION TO TRANSVAAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
July 22, 1907

THE HON' BLE THE PRESIDENT AND THE MEMBERS OF
THE HON'BLE THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF THE TRANSVAAL

THE PETITION OF ESSOP ISMAIL MIA, IN HIS CAPACITY AS ACTING CHAIRMAN
OF THE BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF THE TRANSVAAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT:

1. Your petitioner is the Acting Chairman of the British Indian Association of the Transvaal.

2. The Association abovenamed respectfully approaches this Hon'ble House with regard to the Bill to place restrictions on immigration into this Colony to provide for the removal therefrom of prohibited immigrants and other persons and to establish and maintain an "Immigration Department" now or shortly to be before this Hon'ble House for consideration.

3. While the petitioning Association endorses the principle of restricting immigration, it respectfully draws the attention of this Hon'ble House to the following:

(a) The Bill perpetuates the Asiatic Law Amendment Act.

(b) It does not recognise any of the great Indian languages.

(c) It sets aside the rights of those British Indians who, before the late war, paid £3 for the right of settling in the Transvaal, and who, being refugees, have not received permits under the Peace Preservation Ordinance.

(d)By Sub-Clause D of Clause 2 thereof, it subjects even those Indians, who may pass the educational test and are not otherwise prohibited, to the operation of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act. (It is respectfully submitted that Indians of educational attainments do not require further identification.)

4. The petitioning Association humbly submits that the objections above enumerated are worthy of consideration by this Hon'ble House.

5. The petitioning Association respectfully reminds this

[1] A copy of this was forwarded by L. W. Ritch to the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies on August 14. It was also appended to the "Petition to Secretary of State for Colonies", 23-8-1907

Hon'ble House of its special function to protect the interests of those communities which are not represented in the Parliament of this Colony, and the petitioning Association represents such a community.

6. The petitioning Association therefore respectfully prays that this Hon'ble House will grant such relief as to it may appear fit; and for this act, etc., etc.

[*I have, etc.,*

ESSOP ISMAIL MIA]
ACTING CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Colonial Office Records: C. O. 291/122

60. PETITION NATAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

DURBAN,
July 25, 1907

TO

THE HON' BLE THE SPEAKER AND THE MEMBERS OF
THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE COLONY OF NATAL

PIETERMARITZBURG

THE PETITION OF THE CHAIRMAN AND JOINT SECRETARIES
REPRESENTING THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT:

1. Your Petitioners represent the Natal Indian Congress in their capacities as Chairman and Joint Secretaries of that body.

2. Your Petitioners have read the Bill to impose a tax in respect of land, published in the *Government Gazette* dated June 25 last.

3. Your Petitioners approach this Hon'ble House in connection with it, and protest against the distinction sought to be drawn, in the measure, between European and Indian tenants, so far as the rate of taxation is concerned.

4. In the humble opinion of your Petitioners, the distinction sought to be drawn imposes an unnecessary hardship on British Indians in addition to putting upon them an affront by reason of drawing a racial distinction.

5. Your Petitioners, therefore, humbly pray that this Hon'ble House will so amend the measure as to remove the hardship above

complained of; and for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners, as in duty bound, for ever pray, etc.

DAWAD MAHOMED
DADA OSMAN
M. C. ANGLIA

Natal Archives, Pietermaritzburg: Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly, 1907

61. POSTER FOR PERMIT OFFICE BOYCOTT[1]

[PRETORIA,
Before *July 26, 1907*]

BOYCOTT, BOYCOTT PERMIT OFFICE! BY GOING TO GAOL WE DO NOT RESIST, BUT SUFFER FOR OUR COMMON GOOD AND SELF-RESPECT. LOYALTY TO THE KING DEMANDS LOYALITY TO THE KING OF KINGS.

INDIANS BE FREE!

Indian Opinion, 27-7-1907

62. STRUGGLE IN PRETORIA[2]

JOHANNESBURG,
2 p. m., Friday,
[*July 26, 1907*]

The latest available news shows that not a single application for registration has been made so far at the Permit Office; it is rumoured, however, that the Permit authorities have started receiving applications at night in a private building.

A meeting of Indians was called on Thursday afternoon. It was stated there that, though every effort would be made lawfully to induce people not to submit to the Act, everyone was free to do as he liked. It is a disgraceful thing for people to give applications at night in a private building, and for the authorities to behave in such a manner. Those present at the meeting were firm on the question of

[1] Posters bearing this message appeared in Pretoria during the Passive Resistance campaign. The Government had them removed from prominent places and made inquiries as to their authorship. Gandhiji accepted responsibility for them. *Vide* the following item.

[2] This was published under the title "Latest News by Special Telegram".

going to gaol, and are working most enthusiastically.

The Government has removed from prominent places in the town the posters[1] advocating boycott. Much amusement was caused by the poster on the door of the Permit Office. On the Government inquiring into the authorship of the notice, Mr. Gandhi took upon himself full responsibility for it.

There will be a mass meeting on the 31st. All business is to stop. Notices are being issued. A strong committee has been set up for the purpose. The stores are not to be closed for four days, as announced earlier. As the time-limit for registration is nearing its end, tension is mounting every moment. It is likely that interesting developments may take place before the end of the month.

Piles of telegrams have been received from our sympathetic friends at Durban, offering encouragement and assistance.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-7-1907

63. "STAGGERING HUMANITY"

The late President Kruger[2] is said to have "staggered humanity" by engaging in an unequal struggle with a mighty empire. It is in his late country—though now nominally British—that history is to repeat itself through Indians in the Transvaal. But the parallel is not exact. The late President fought in a bloody war. Indians in the Transvaal will stagger humanity without shedding a drop of blood. Indians are about to do more, if we may say so without disrespect, than the late President did. For the sake of their honour a mere sentiment, as some say—they are preparing to sacrifice their all. Theirs, indeed, will be the widow's mite.

Many friends tell them that the local Government are determined to enforce the Asiatic Act at all cost and that they are likely to have their worst fears realised. The Indians retort that they are prepared for the eventuality. Send them to prison? They are ready. Deport them forcibly? They are ready also. Anything, even death, would be better than that they should labour under the ban of criminality and that they should be traitors to their God.

It may be that they are misguided and that theirs is not intrinsically a right cause. If so, they again appeal to the parallel cited

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] (1825-1904), President of the Transvaal, 1883-1900.

by us and reply that, although many consider that the late President Kruger was ill-advised in hurling defiance at the British Government, everybody admires him for the courage of his convictions. It is enough that he fought for a cause he considered to be just. But the President fought under the inspirationof the old Testament and after the pattern of the heroes of that venerable book. Indians who migrated to this country in search of an honest livelihood, and who find themselves face to face with civic and social extinction, are fighting under the inspiration of the New Testament. Gentle Jesus, the greatest passive resister the world has seen, is their pattern. What matters it to them if the rulers of the Transvaal reject their advances, if their overlord King Edward declare himself, like Mahomed of Ghazni[1], to be unable to protect them. Was not Jesus rejected and yet did He not resist the blasphemy that His persecutors would have Him utter on pain of suffering what was, in their estimation, an inglorious death, side by side with thieves and robbers? But the crown of thorns today sits better on that bleeding head than a crown bedecked with diamonds of the purest water on any sovereign. He died indeed, yet He lives in the memory of all true sons of God, and with Him live also the thieves who accepted the humble Nazarene and His teaching.

So, too, will Indians of the Transvaal, if they remain true to their God, live in the memory of their children and their countrymen who will be able to say, after they have left this transient world, 'Our forefathers did not betray us for a mess of pottage.'

Indian Opinion, 27-7-1907

64. MR. PARSEE RUSTOMJEE'S GENEROSITY

Mr. Rustomjee[2], whose name has become a household word among Indians in South Africa, has written to us a characteristic letter in Gujarati of which we give the following rendering:

> Although I have often publicly expressed my sentiments regarding the position of our countrymen in the Transvaal, you will, perhaps, allow me to voice them through your columns. Every Indian in South Africa will partake of the result of the struggle in which Indians in the Transvaal are engaged. We who are outside that country cannot possibly take any share in their

[1] Invaded India 17 times since his succession to the throne of Ghazni in 997 A.D., but could not consolidate his victories; *vide* "Petition to Natal Council", 11-7-1903.

[2] Leading Indian merchant of Natal

physical sufferings. They will not only undergo the hardships of prison life but many of them will also have to lose all they have. If we cannot go to gaol, we can at least follow their noble example in sacrificing our possessions for the common good. I, therefore, with all humility and in the name of God, hereby inform my fellow-countrymen in the Transvaal, as an earnest of my intense desire to share their sorrows, that henceforth everything I possess in this world is held by me in trust for my countrymen in the Transvaal until the struggle is over. I have no doubt that many of my friends in South Africa are prepared as a matter of duty to render similar pecuniary help to the Transvaal Indians. Pretoria has, indeed, filled our hearts with hope. Let us trust that our countrymen there, as also in other parts of the Transvaal, will carry out their resolution to the end.

This letter speaks for itself. We only add by way of comment that those who know Mr. Rustomjee know what very substantial help this promise means. It is a letter which should fill every Indian with fresh courage and hope.

Indian Opinion , 27-7-1907

65. DEATH OF MR. ADAMJEE MIANKHAN[1]

Mr. Adamjee Miankhan of the firm of G. H. Miankhan & Co., Durban, and Vice-President of the Natal Indian Congress, died at Ahmedabad, India, on the 20th instant, at the comparatively early age of 41. Mr. Adamjee went on a visit to India in February last, and his brother in Durban has been receiving regular letters, but no serious illness was complained of. Mr. Adamjee has rendered very great service to the Indian community in Natal, and his able and willing help in all matters relating to their welfare will be much missed. Born of a well-known family of lace merchants in the capital of Gujarat, Mr. Adamjee Miankhan, with his father and his brother, Mr. Goolam Hoosen, migrated, when he was yet 18, to South Africa, in the year 1884. His knowledge of the English language was of the greatest service to him in making his mark as well among Indians as among his many European friends. It was not, however, before 1896 that he became intimately connected with Indian public affairs. On the temporary withdrawal of the then Secretary of the Congress, Mr. Adamjee, on account of his work and sterling qualities, was unanimously elected by the Congress to act as Honorary Secretary.

[1] *Vide* also the following item.

During his tenure of office, he was ably supported by Mr. Abdul Karim Hajee Adam Jhaveri. Mr. Adamjee turned the credit balance of the Congress from £100 into that of £1,100, and during the latter part of 1896 and the beginning of 1897, when the now famous anti-Indian demonstration took place in Durban, Mr. Adamjee, by his patience, calmness and perseverance, was instrumental in confronting the serious difficulties of the community.

Indian Opinion, 27-7-1907

66. SAD DEATH OF ADAMJEE MIANKHAN

Inscrutable are the ways of God. It is only five months since our well-known leader, Mr. Adamjee Miankhan, returned home to India. And now comes the news of his sudden death on the 23rd[1] at Ahmedabad after an illness of 20 days which caused him bed-sores. Those who have heard of him and of his work in Natal and other parts of South Africa, cannot but feel grieved at this sad news. Gradually the time is coming in South Africa when patriotic workers will be needed in still larger numbers. At such a time it is difficult to fill the gap created by the premature death of an able and conscientious leader like Mr. Adamjee Miankhan. His patriotism and other valuable qualities of character are well known. Traits of character such as intelligence, patience, quickness of grasp, and readinesss for self-sacrifice, which he showed as Acting Secretary of the Congress and during his subsequent public career, deserve emulation. His popularity was evident on the occasion of the farewell party at the time of his departure. Even in India it was his intention to conduct a campaign against the hardships [of Indians] in South Africa. It is but natural that the death of such a benevolent gentleman at the early age of 41 should cause grief. We offer our condolences to the family of the departed, and urge his admirers to emulate his great virtues.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-7-1907

67. DIVINE LAW

The time to test the strength of the obnoxious law is approaching. All Indians will be anxiously watching what the Government does on August 1. To speek the truth, however, we should wait with courage, not with anxiety. Any pain we suffer in order to

[1] This is at variance with the preceding item which has “20th”.

save ourselves from the obnoxious law must be counted as pleasure. Every Indian should pray, "let me be the first to go to gaol, so that my brothers are spared the pain."

We have already examined the various reasons why we ought not to submit to the obnoxious law. It should be noted that in defying this murderous law we obey the divine law. To submit to the unjust law will be a sin. Likewise, it will be a sin to violate the divine law. Hewho abides by the divine law will win bliss in this world, as also in the next. What is this divine law? It is that one has to suffer pain before enjoying pleasure and that one's true self-interest consists in the good of all, which means that we should die—suffer—for others. Let us take a few examples.

When a lump of earth is broken into dust, it mixes with water and nourishes plant life. It is by sacrificing themselves that plants sustain every kind of animal life. Animals sacrifice themselves for the good of their progeny. The mother suffers unbearable pain at the time of child-birth, but feels only happy in that suffering. Both the mother and the father undergo hardships in bringing up their children. Wherever communities and nations exist, individual members of those communities or nations have endured hardships for the common good. In the sixth century B. C., Lord Buddha, after wandering from forest to forest, braving the extremes of heat and cold and suffering many privations, attained self-realization and spread ideas of spiritual welfare among the people. Nineteen hundred years ago, Jesus Christ, according to the Christian belief, dedicated his life to the people and suffered many insults and hardships. The prophet Mahomed suffered much. People had prepared themselves for an attack on his life. He paid no heed to it. These great and holy men obeyed the law stated above and brought happiness to mankind. They did not think of their personal interest but found their own happiness in the happiness of others.

The same thing happens in political matters too. Hampden, Tyler, Cromwell and other Englishmen were prepared to sacrifice their all for the people and did not feel concerned at being robbed of all their possessions. Nor did they feel anxious when their lives were in danger. That is why the British people today rule over a large empire. The rulers of the Transvaal enjoy power because they suffered great hardships before our very eyes. Mazzini suffered banishment for the sake of his country. Today he is being revered. He is regarded as the father of Italian unity. By suffering endless hardships, George Washington made America what it is today. This again shows that one must pass through suffering before tasting happiness. For public good, men have to suffer hardships even to the point of death.

Let us go further. It is a sin to violate one's pledge—to betray manhood with which we are endowed. To save himself from the sin of incest, Yusoof Abesalam suffered gaol. Imam Hasan[1] and Hussein[1] refused to acknowledge the authority of Yazid[2], for it would have been wrong to do so. For this reason, that is, in order to preserve their honour, they becamemartyrs. For the sake of honour, God's devotee, Prahlad, boldly embraced the red-hot pillar, and the child Sudhanva threw himself into the frying pan without any hesitation. For the sake of truth, Harishchandra allowed himself to be sold to a low-caste man; he gave up his throne and suffered separation from his wife and son. For the sake of his father's word, Ramachandra went into the forest. And for the sake of their right, the Pandavas left their kingdom and wandered in the forest for 14 years.

Today it has fallen to the lot of the Indian community in the Transvaal to submit to this great divine law. So persuaded, we congratulate our countrymen. They have the opportunity now to see the Indian community throughout South Africa gaining its freedom through them. How could such great happiness come to us without our going through equally great suffering? Our petition is no longer addressed to man, but to God Himself. Day and night He listens to our plaints. We do not have to seek an appointment with Him for the hearing of our petition. He hears the petitions of all at the same time. With the purest heart therefore we pray to God that our brothers in the Transvaal may be prepared to suffer fearlessly anything that may befall them in August, placing their trust in Him alone, and with only His name on their lips.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-7-1907

68. ALLY'S MISTAKE

Mr. Ritch's letter this week and the letter, received along with it, addressed by Mr. Ally to Justice Ameer Ali, both deserve careful consideration. We had some doubt whether these letters should be published. On reflection, however, we decided in the end that, in the interest of the country, we certainly ought to publish them. At such a critical time, we cannot afford to think of the effect they may have on the minds of certain individuals. We have only to think, of what would

[1] Sons of Ali by his wife Fatima, daughter of Prophet.

[2] Caliph, 680-3. Hussein revolted against him, but was defeated and killed at Karbala.

lead to the common good.

Mr. Ally, in our opinion, acted hastily in writing to Justice Ameer Ali. It was a mistake to have written such a letter. It becomes clear now why a letter was received from the Committee advising us against taking the struggle to the point of going to gaol. Mr. Ally's letter led the Committee to think that there were differences among us. If such differences do exist, a person having incomplete information will only advise us that we should give up the idea of carrying on the struggle by going to gaol. In fact, no differences existed and there was therefore no need for Mr. Ally to write the letter he did to Justice Ameer Ali. Moreover, no one was reluctant to meet General Botha. On the Contrary, the British Indian Association made all-out efforts to meet him. In spite of these efforts, General Botha refused to grant an interview. When the interview was refused, a written petition was submitted to him stating that the demands of the Indian community should be accepted.

To say that every Indian merchant is a Muslim and every hawker a Hindu is, we believe, a poisonous comment. We take it as a disgrace to the Indian community that Mr. Ally should have penned such words. The Transvaal struggle affects Hindus and Muslims alike. The rights of both would vanish; moreover, it is obvious on reflection that the struggle would lack even dignity if the merchants did not join. The more respectable the man, the greater would be the harm—such is the effect of the deadly law. To a man with a greater sense of self-respect, the law ought to be all the more abhorrent. The question of such distinctions as Hindus and Muslims therefore does not arise at all. Moreover, the relations between Indians in South Africa professing the two religions are not in the least strained. By and large, all live in peace and amity. That in these circumstances such a letter should have been addressed to the Committee portends, in our view, a very unfavourable issue for the Indian community. Hence, we publish this letter along with our comments on it, to warn all Indians that, when the time of our deliverance is at hand, no one should imagine that differences exist between Hindus and Muslims or dream of creating any.

We do not wish to hurt Mr. Ally in any way by discussing the matter in public. Those who disagree with him need not be angry with him; rather, they should pity him for his mistake. The main point to be learnt from this is that every person engaged in public work should take a vow that he would not, under any circumstances, act in a way that might harm public interests. We would advise Mr. Ally to correct his mistake.

We can also see from the above correspondence that, if Mr. Ally had not written the letter, the Committee perhaps would not have sent us a cable to dissuade us[from going to gaol]. However, it should be clearly borne in mind that the Committee's advice is of no use to us at the present moment. Those rushing into the field of battle cannot listen to the advice of men who keep themselves at home. We have now to go on fighting, relying only on our own strength. If we feel that submitting to the obnoxious law is sinful, we shall not commit the sin just because the Committee or someone else advises us to do so. We have to give an account to God, not to the Committee.

[From (Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-7-1907

69. INDIANS IN CAPE

Fresh elections to the Cape Parliament are likely to take place soon. It is being asked how the black and brown peoples of the Cape will use their votes. The discussion is going on not only in the Cape, but also in other parts of South Africa. What we have to say is particularly for the Indian voters.

We think the Indian voters in the Cape have missed many opportunities of improving the conditions of the Indian community there and elsewhere. There is no point in having the franchise if at the appropriate time it is not properly utilized. If the natives and the Indians of the Cape realize the value of the vote, they can still bring about many changes.

The first thing to remember is that it is not absolutely necessary that the votes of the Kaffirs and the Asiatics should always be cast on the same side. The rights they have to secure are different. Their struggles are of different types. For example, the Cape Immigration Act is a hardship to the Indian community; it has little effect on the Kaffirs. Again, the Licences Act affects only the Indians. Moreover, as South Africa is their mother-country, they have a better right here than we have. But the Indians can demand their rights with greater force on the strength of the Proclamation of 1858 and in view of their being an ancient nation. Each has thus some advantages over the other. The Indian community therefore should think independently as to which way it should cast its vote.

Another thing to remember is that a voter is under no obligation to vote for the one or the other side. Sometimes, a very powerful effect can be produced by abstaining from exercising the franchise. We know that once the few Indians of Durban who had votes resolved

to refrain from voting. The effect was that a high officer sent for them and made certain promises which were later carried out.

Bearing these two things in mind, let us consider the conditions in the Cape. There are two parties in the Cape: Bond[1] or Dutch; Progressive or British and "Foreign". We must admit that just now these two parties are in the condition of the pot calling the kettle black. They are both tarred with the same brush. Neither of them overflows with love for the blacks. The Progressive party has violated the word of the late Mr. Rhodes[2]. We would advise the Indian community in the Cape to ask the leaders of both the parties in writing whether certain amendments can be madeto the Immigration Act and the Licences Act. Votes should be cast in favour of the party which boldly and honestly gives favourable replies. If, however, both hesitate to give a straight reply, say one thing privately and another publicly, no encouragement should be given to such deceitful men. They should be plainly told that in such circumstances the Indian community would vote for neither.

We are sure the prestige of the Indian community will rise by so doing. And if not this time, next time one of the two parties will make certain definite promises. We appeal to the Cape Indians to act this time only in the interests of the community. No consideration should be shown to any whites either because they are friends or because they promise some benefits to a few Indians. Some other time we shall consider what and how much to ask for.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-7-1907

70. ATTACK ON RELIGION

We are taught at school that, under British rule:
Gone are the passions of hatred and the furies of revenge,
And gone are the blood-thirsty oppressors;
Smooth is the flow of life, with peace
Among all the castes and creeds.
Look, none dares to catch the poor goat by the ear,
As she moves leisurely by.
Know this to be the kindness of God,
And be thou glad at heart, O India.

[1] Afrikander Bond.
[2] (1853-1902), Prime Minister of Cape Colony, 1890-6.

But now we may change the verse and sing:

Stronger are the passions of hatred and the furies of revenge,

And more numerous the blood-thirsty oppressors;

Full of strife is this life, and full of discords all the castes and creeds.

Look, every passerby seizes the poor goat by the ear.

Think of this, and act thou with courage to seek relief, O India.

This thought occurred to us on reading the letter of the General Manager of the Natal Railway. He has stated that while railway tickets at concession rates are available to English or European priests, such concessions will not henceforth be available to Indian Christian priests. This means that Hindu, Muslim and Christian priests, if they are Indians, will not get tickets at concession rates.

This is going one step further than they have done in the Transvaal. Now Indian Christians, too, are being distinguished from European Christians. We take this to be a good sign. For, through such hardships and humiliation, we Indians shall gradually come closer together and cling to one another for survival.

From one point of view, Mr. Ross's letter is mere trifle. What does it matter whether or not a few Indian Christian priests get tickets at concession rates? From another point of view it is a serious matter. As an instance of the planned effort to humiliate Indians in South Africa in every way, his letter ought to be seriously challenged. The Europeans here think it no serious matter to insult the Indian community or the religions of India.

We are glad to see that the President of the Mahomedan Association, Mr. Peeran Mahomed, has written to Mr. Ross on this issue, and has taken necessary steps. There is a possibility of getting a satisfactory reply from Mr. Ross. If there is such a reply, that will be nothing for us to gloat over.

The key to the freedom of South African Indians is in the hands of the Transvaal Indians. If they keep their word and fight, Mr. Ross and others will stop insulting them.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-7-1907

71. WARNING TO EAST LONDON

The British Press has published a cable regarding the work of the deputation sent to the Cape by East London Indians. It states that the Indian community concedes that laws should be framed to control

"coolie Indians", but calls for regulations which grant special concessions to respectable Indians. It adds, moreover, that exemption certificates should be granted to some Indians on the lines of those granted to the Kaffirs.

We do not believe that East London Indians have made any such demand. Our enemies are only waiting for us to make such a mistake. For if we demand a law introducing such distinctions, we shall be striking at our feet with our own axe. There is and will always be the distinction between good men and bad men. But no law can lay down the dividing line between the good and the bad, or the high and the low, or the noble and the mean. One who is a hawker today may become a merchant tomorrow. A merchant may be rendered poor and be obliged to seek service. Such things have always been happening. Now, who is to be termed a "coolie"? How can there be any such distinction? Who can make such a distinction? Who will go to a white officer to receive at his hands a badge of "high" or "low"? We are sure the law cannot make any such distinction enabling a few Indians to get the exemption certificates. To ask for such a law is only to invite slavery.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-7-1907

72. RUSSIA'S EXAMPLE

Our readers are aware that the Czar of Russia has set up a Duma[1], that is, a Parliament. Recently, the English Press published the news that most members of the Duma have been to gaol or suffered banishment in the country's cause. Therefore, the Parliament is also given the nick name of "an assembly of convicts". These members who have been to gaol and have been chosen by the people in the elections to the Duma are not mere illiterates or peasants, but are highly educated people. Some of them are eminent lawyers or doctors. There is one member, Mr. Gobernov who had even been sentenced to death. Another member, Mr. Cymbersuck, had been banished to Siberia for several years. The Russian rulers are often unhappy over the election of such men. But neither the members nor the voters care for their displeasure. There is a member, named Dimitriy Perlashin, who comes from a noble family. He had suffered imprisonment for two years. We can cite many such names. But what

[1] Established in 1905, consisting of representatives elected on a restricted franchise. It was abolished in 1917.

has been said is enough to give the reader some idea. Further, it should be remembered that a Russian prison is a veritable dungeon. No amenities are provided. Again, Russia is an extremely cold country. The gaolers are cruel. All these hardships are endured by these brave heroes for the good of the people. They are not deterred by the severities of weather. They do not bother whether their Emperor is pleased or displeased, but fearlessly go on doing what they consider to be in the country's interests. They do not lose heart though the people of Russia are still not free, but continue to do their duty. They do so because they think that, if not they, at least those who come after them will ultimately reap the benefit of their sufferings and their country will be free.

We wish that, with the example of such staunch patriots before them, and with faces turned to God and His name inscribed forever in their hearts, the Transvaal Indians will swim across the current of the obnoxious law.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-7-1907

73. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

OBNOXIOUS LAW

Only four days of July will be left when this issue is published. For the next issue I hope to send a telegram to Phoenix to say that the Government has begun arresting Indians for not taking out the new registers. But it will not be wrong to believe that, while I look forward to it, some others may be afraid of it.

APPEAL TO PRETORIA

Meanwhile, I appeal to our countrymen in Pretoria to maintain to the end their own honour and that of the Indian community, as they have done so far. I am sure there is not one Indian in Pretoria who will defile himself by a visit, on the last day, to the hell of the Permit office. I think it will be fully realized that by going there nothing will be gained except disgrace, and so I hope the thought of such a visit will not occur to anyone even in a dream.

WHAT NEXT?

I have on various occasions given a reply to this question. However, I think it right to give it again. The courage that we have displayed in July is of one kind. That required in August is of a different kind. In July, we had to show the courage of remaining at

home. NOW, in August we shall be dragged to a magistrate in a court, where we shall have to give a bold answer. The mere mention of a law court strikes fear in our hearts. What will happen then, when we are produced before a magistrate? It will be more difficult to maintain courage this time, but it is needed in full measure.

POLICE WILL ARREST

In the first place, on August I it will be open to the police to arrest any or all of the Indians for not applying for a fresh register. Our firmness in keeping the pledge will then be tested.

DO NOT OFFER BAIL

Every Indian should remember that at that time no arrested person is to offer bail and that none should stand bail for him. Then will begin our training for a stay in the prison-palace. The arrested Indian will be produced before a magistrate the same day or the next.

QUESTION OF DEFENCE

Probably he will be charged with failure to apply for fresh registration. At this stage, provided the arrested person holds a valid permit or is a minor for whom no permit is necessary, Mr. Gandhi will appear for his defence gratis and Messrs Essop Mia and Gandhi will depose that the Indian community has been bound, by oath and by a resolution, not to submit to the new law, that the accused has accepted the said resolution, and that, if for such action a sentence has to be passed, it should first be passed on the office-bearers of the Association. Thereafter, if a deposition by the accused is considered necessary, he will state that not only has he acted in obedience to the community's Resolution, but that he personally disapproves the Act, that he does not, therefore, intend to take out a new register and that, if sentenced, he will go to gaol, but pay no fine.

CONSEQUENCE

As a result of such a defence Messrs Essop Mia and Gandhi may be arrested first, and the accused may be let off. If, however, this does not happen, the Court is bound to pass a sentence on the accused. The Court has the power to impose a fine and may therefore sentence the accused to a fine, on the non-payment of which, he will be sent to gaol.

NO FINE TO BE PAID

It must be distinctly remembered then that one is to go to gaol, not to pay the fine. I recommend that, on and from August l, no Indian whatever should carry any money with him and certainly not

gold in any case. Temptation is a very bad thing. Not being used to the idea of gaol, on hearing the sentence of fine, the accused may find his hands unconsciously straying into his pocket or he may cast an imploring glance at his friends. When this happens, he should mentally ask for God's forgiveness, remove his hand [from the pocket], stand erect and, clearing his throat, declare that he will not pay the fine but go to gaol. He should remember at the same time how in England women, both young and old, have refused to pay the fine of half a crown and preferred to go to gaol for the sake of their right.

WHAT WILL OTHERS DO?

We assume that ordinarily all the Indians will not be arrested simultaneously. What will be the duty then of those who remain outside? The answer is easy. They should congratulate the brother who has shown courage and sought gaol, and help his relatives; as for themselves, they should not get panicky and apply for registration. On the contrary, everyone should pray that his should be the next turn to go to gaol.

WHAT IF MR. GANDHI IS ARRESTED FIRST?

If this happens, there will be no defence to make. Everything will be made clear at the time of Mr. Gandhi's trial. There will be a quick solution of the matter, if, after he is sent to gaol or deported, the Indian community courageously adheres to its resolution. The struggle carried on so far will be worth while only if the Indian community remains firm, no matter who is imprisoned or deported.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF REGISTERS ARE TAKEN OUT?

But, if out of fear Indians apply for registers or pay the fine, or seek release on bail, the struggle waged so far will come to nought. It will be proved that we had no real courage. It will be believed that it was all mere incitement by the leaders. It will be said that the splendid show made so far was only external glitter. The gilt will come off and we shall be shown up to be base copper rather than gold, and we shall indeed have proved ourselves worthless.

GOVERNMENT'S OTHER WEAPONS

As I have pointed out above, the Government can take steps other than charging us with failure to take out a fresh register. For, all the present registers and permits stand cancelled. The people can therefore be charged with staying without a permit. As I said in earlier letters, if such a charge is made the person will be given a notice at the first trial to leave the country within a specific period. If he does not

leave the country within that period, he can be sentenced to a minimum imprisonment of one month. Even if the trial proceeds on these lines, the defence will be the same. On receipt of a notice after such trial, one should not leave, but should get arrested and go to gaol at the expiry of the notice period.

ANY FEAR FOR MERCHANTS?

Persons with a large business need not have any fear. It is unlikely that all the men in an establishment will be simultaneously arrested. The shops are certainly not going to be looted. The utmost loss that may be caused is that the shops will remain closed for a few days. Nothing more than this is likely to happen. But it will be wise for all merchants to take stock, etc. The only object of doing so is that, in case the creditors become impatient, one may be able to settle accounts immediately.

DUTY OF ASSOCIATION

At a time like this, it is the duty of public bodies in the Transvaal and elsewhere like the British Indian Association and the Natal Indian Congress to pass and publish resolutions of sympathy. They should send monetary aid for the maintenance of the dependants of those arrested, and should have the matter discussed in public as much as possible both at home and abroad.

QUERY BY "THE SUNDAY TIMES"

Commenting on the law, the editor of *The Sunday Times* asks what steps the Government contemplates for putting into prison those Indians who may not have taken out new registers in August. Will they build new prisons for them? The question is asked in a jesting tone, but it clearly shows that the Indian struggle has made them nervous.

MIDDELBURG INDIANS

The Town Council of Middelburg has again passed a resolution to oust Indians from the Location. The intention is to make a test case against an Indian and ascertain if the Town Council has the right to do so.

WARNING

Some Indians think that, if even a single Indian takes out the new register, it will be difficult for others to keep back. It can be said that those who think in this strain have not correctly understood the nature of the struggle. If one of them jumps into a well or does something wrong, will the whole Indian community follow him and do likewise? If not, how can it do so in the case of the sinister and

wicked law which is more dreadful than any well? On the other hand, it will be too much to assume that not even one Indian will choose to become a slave. If the community had so much spirit, how could it be today in such a low state in South Africa or anywhere else? In this struggle it should be remembered that every Indian is to decide for himself independently of others. One need not look to others. The new register is not such a delicacy that, if one tastes it, others will forthwith pounce upon it. We should have it firmly impressed on our mind that we shall never win so long as we do not understand this. To those Indians who, out of cowardice, weakness or ignorance, cannot refrain from taking out new registers, I shall say that the only proper thing for them to do is to admit their weakness and advise others not to follow their example.

PRETORIA MEETING

A special meeting was held at Pretoria on Tuesday evening. Mr. Roos, advocate, was also present. He said that General Smuts was anxious to know what effect his letter had, and that he (General Smuts) had a suspicion that the Indian leaders had not given publicity to his letter. It would be well, therefore, Mr. Roos said, if the opinion of the meeting was expressed. Mr. Gandhi handed to Mr. Roos a copy of *Indian Opinion* and told him that the substance of General Smuts' letter had been already placed before every Indian. Mr. Roos promised to show it to Mr. Smuts. Besides Mr. Gandhi, Mr. Essop Mia and Mr. Omarji Sale of Johannesburg also attended the meeting.

Mr. Gandhi translated Mr. Smuts' letter and advised the meeting in no case to submit to the new law.

Mr. Hajee Habib moved a resolution to the effect that if General Smuts did not accept the demands made in the letter of Mr. Roos, there could be no submission to the law. Moreover, the correspondence with General Smuts should be made public. Mr. Hajee Habib's resolution was seconded by Mr. Suj. Mr. Ayub Beg Mahomed and Mr. Omarji also supported it. Mr. Roos said that the law should be accepted and then whatever demands we wished to make should be made constitutionally. In spite of this, Mr. Hajee Habib's resolution was unanimously carried.

Though the meeting has acted with so much spirit, the situation is getting somewhat critical as the actual time draws near. Doubts are expressed whether the whole community will remain firm to the very end;

At the present juncture every Indian should remember one

thing— that, whatever the number of people who take out new permits, those who have the courage must certainly not do so.

SMUTS INTENTIONS

In his reply, Mr. Smuts has stated that a coastal Permit Office was necessary. The old Dutch laws could not be enforced since, so far, the British Government used to intervene. But now that the British Government is not likely to interfere, it was necessary to have the Coast Office so as to ensure that a coolie, once going out, never returns. What could be worse if, in spite of such replies, the Indian community should submit to the new law?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-7-1907

74. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY[1]

PRETORIA,
July 27, 1907

TO

THE HON'BLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY

PRETORIA

SIR,

My Committee have learnt with regret that applications for registration of Asiatics are being received by officials late at night and in private stores or other places. My Committee have also learnt that this method has been adopted on the strength of representations made to the Government to the effect that British Indians desiring to make application under the Act are threatened with physical injury, etc.

My Committee disclaim all knowledge of any such threats having been used by any responsible member of the community. The activityof the Committee has been confined to vigorous propaganda work in the way of showing the degradation and disadvantage involved in accepting the provisions of the Act.

The volunteers, it will be admitted, have simply performed missionary work. My committee have publicly and emphatically informed British Indians that any member wishing to make his application will not only be left unharmed but that he will, if so desired by him, be escorted to the Registration Office.

In the humble opinion of my Committee, those Indians who

[1] This was presumably drafted by Gandhiji.

have applied secretly and at night time have done so in order to conceal from British Indians what they, too, in common with other members of the community, have believed to be an act derogatory to their honour.

In the humble opinion of my Committee, secret registration after office hours and in private stores, even if it be not illegal, can hardly be considered a dignified proceeding. In any event, my Committee beg respectfully to assure the Government that the Indian community in what is to it a life-and-death struggle has no intention to resort to intimidation or methods which may in any way be considered even reprehensible.

I have, etc.,

HAJEE HABIB

HONORARY SECRETARY,

BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE

Indian Opinion, 3-8-1907

75. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

[*July 29, 1907*]

NEW LAW — GHASTLY BETRAYAL

None of my letters so far has been written, I think, with so much grief as this one. Whether I ought to publish this news at all is itself a difficult question to decide. However, I feel that I ought to take notice of the incident that took place among the Indian community at Pretoria, if we mean to be truthful and courageous.

For the Indian community in South Africa the last week of July will prove memorable. Just when we were hoping with confidence that the hour of our victory was at hand, there was treachery in the community and our success became doubtful. The conspiracy came to light by accident at the Pretoria Railway Station after 10 p. m. on Wednesday, July 24. Messrs Cachalia, Vyas, Beg and other Indians were present there to receive Mr. Gandhi. They learnt that something suspicious was going on in Mr. Khamisa's shop. There were a few white men inside, and some detectives near the shop. On receipt of this information, these gentlemen thought thatthey would knock at the door of Mr. Khamisa's shop, and if the door should be opened and some move to submit to the new law should be found afoot, they would dissuade the persons concerned. Mr Gandhi knocked at the door, and so did Mr. Vyas. A man came out and inquired who they were. Mr. Gandhi answered him, and asked his permission to go

inside. No one opened the door. Meanwhile, a detective came and started asking questions. Mr. Beg gave a bold reply. Then Mr. Gandhi spoke to the detective. Thereupon the latter said, "You know the law, do what is proper", and went away. A few minutes later he and two other officers came there. Meanwhile, Mr. Vyas had gone to call Mr. Hajee Habib. Taking each member of the above party by hand, the detective asked him to move away. They all left. Everyone thought that a conspiracy must have been in the hatching in Mr. Khamisa's shop.

Many Indians kept awake the whole night. On the morning of Thursday, the entire Indian community became agitated. Letters and telegrams were despatched to all the towns. It is said that at Mr. Khamisa's shop that night, at the stroke of twelve, some 20 men blackened their hands and faces, and brought a slur on the good name of the Indian community.

WHO IS GUILTY HERE?

This question will arise in the mind of every Indian. I myself feel that we cannot absolve those who applied for registration. None could have blamed them if, convinced that the new law was good and that there was no humiliation in submitting to it, they had, in broad daylight, gone to the Permit Office to apply for their title-deed of slavery. But they believed it to be a shameful thing and that is why they decided to take out permits secretly at night. This proves that they knew their guilt and hence they should be considered to have committed an offence against the Indian community. The Permit Officers can be held to be as much at fault as the Indian culprits and even more. Going to people's shops at night to receive in secret applications for new permits shows that they have been straining every nerve to make people submit to the new law. For they are afraid that their prestige will suffer if the people do not submit to it. If the Government stoops so low, what wonder is there that people are tempted? :

AS IF THIS WAS NOT ENOUGH

For such secret registration the pretext is found to have been put forward that the Indian community has held out threats that those who take out new registers will be made to suffer. This accusation is entirely false. Trying to hide his own shame in taking out the register, the traitor has levelled false charges against the whole community, and invented lies.

HAJEE HABIB'S LETTER

As it is impossible to tolerate such an accusation, Mr. Hajee Habib has addressed the following letter to the Colonial Secretary:[1]

BUT GOOD COMES OUT OF EVIL

The fight of the Indian community being righteous, the treachery appears to have led only to a good result. Among those secretly taking out permits was an innocent Indian, named Abdul Karim Jamal. Out of fear and temptation he applied for a permit, but, as he did not belong to the treacherous group, he was arrested on a charge of giving false information in the application. He has been released on a bail of £100 and awaits trial. This has shocked all Pretoria. For, the Indians have found that, in applying for a permit under the new law, the fear was not only that the permit might not be granted, but also that 'one might have to suffer imprisonment like a criminal. Whether or not Mr. Abdul Karim Jamal is guilty is a separate question. It is obvious that even an innocent person might all of a sudden find himself dragged to the court, so dreadful is this law. Both one's honour and safety lie in keeping away from the new law. This case should serve as a warning to all. There is no guarantee that even by seeking the title-deed of slavery one can have the right of settling in the Transvaal.

"COMPASSION IS THE SOURCE OF RELIGION"

One should remember this famous line of verse[2], and have compassion on those who have betrayed the Indian community. It is natural that we should feel angry. But we should suppress our anger and believe that it is out of ignorance that they sought disgrace. It should also be remembered that the entire struggle would suffer if, in the course of it, any Indian used violence against another Indian or did him other harm. In this connection I have regretfully to say that Mr. Khamisa sent word to each of his Indian customers that, if they did not apply for the new title-deed of slavery by Monday morning, they should pay up all his dues, failing which he would have summons taken out against them. This created a great stir. But Messrs Essop Mia, Aswat and Omarji persuaded Mr. Khamisa to withdraw the notice given by him.

TELEGRAMS OF SYMPATHY POUR IN

Telegrams are being received continuously by the leaders in

[1] Here follows in the original the text of the letter. *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] A couplet by the Hindi poet, Tulsidas.

Pretoria. Some of them strongly denounce the treachery. Congratulatory telegrams have been sent to each of the pickets by Mr. Parsee Rustomjee and the volunteers of Durban. Barbers have received telegrams fromother barbers, advising them to remain firm. Telegrams have also been pouring in from several gentlemen and from such places as Blair, Tongaat, Delagoa Bay, Dundee, Ladysmith, Estcourt and Cape Town.

Till this evening (Monday), not one Indian has taken out a permit from the Permit Office.

HAMIDIA MEETING

A huge meeting took place on Sunday in the hall of the Hamidia Islamic Society of Johannesburg amidst great enthusiasm. Mr. Polak explained the position to date. Emam Abdool Cadir Bawazeer presided. Moulvi Hajee Abdul Mukhtiar made a long and effective speech. The action of those who had taken out the register was vehemently denounced at the meeting as a snare. Mr. Polak said that now it would probably be the turn of the Johannesburg District, and that it was therefore necessary to recruit volunteers. He called for the names of those who were ready to enlist as volunteers. Nawab Khan Jamadar was the first to offer himself. He made an impassioned speech. The following were the other names enlisted:

Messrs Mahomed Hussain, Mir Afzulkhan (Kabuli), Nuruddin, Imamdin, Jamashah, Sahebdin, Musa Mahomed, Alibhai Mahomed, Isap Dasu, Alibhai Ismail, Omar Hasan, Musa Anandji, Ramlagan, Ali Omar, Ismail Mahomedshah, Mahomed Ismail, Suleman Amad Surti.

After these names were received, it was announced that no more were needed. Great enthusiasm prevailed at the meeting.

MEETING OF SOUTH INDIANS

The same evening the South Indians held a meeting. Mr. Polak explained the position fully also to them. The people are full of enthusiasm and spirit. Everyone says that he himself will not invite disgrace by taking out the permit, no matter what others do. At the meeting the following offered to enlist as volunteers:

Messrs P. K. Naidoo, W. J. R. Naidoo, S. Matthews, S. Lingham, D. N. Naidoo, S. Kumaraswami, S. Virasamy, Thambi Naidoo, S. P Padiachy, R. K. Naidoo, R. Thandapani, K. K. Samy, K. N. Dadlani, J. K. Desai and others.

WARNING TO THOSE COMING VIA DURBAN

A correspondent from Volksrust writes to say that the Officer takes away the register and the permit of those coming from Natal,

telling them that the same should be obtained later from the Pretoria Permit Office. This is obviously improper; it puts people to expense and obliges them to go to the Permit Office. All Indians therefore should take the warning and refrain from going to the Transvaal altogether at the present time. This, too, follows from the new law. It should make us realize the subtlety of the new law.

VREDEDORP INDIANS

It has now been decided that the Vrededorp Ordinance will not be put into effect for the time being. From this one need not believe that Indians have specially benefited. The truth is that the whites do not approve of the Ordinance. They are not satisfied with the rights granted by it. They demand more. The Government has agreed to grant them what they want. Accordingly, a new Ordinance will now be framed. Therein, too, the rights of Indian merchants will not be protected. There is no one to listen to the feeble voice of a reed. The Dutch of Vrededorp, though poor, have the right of vote, and they are brave fighters. For them everything will be done. Indians have no vote. As for the sword, perhaps they have not even seen it. If, however, they take courage in both hands and burn the obnoxious Asiatic Act with the fire of gaol-going, that will prove their mettle all right. Otherwise, I for one have no doubt at all that Indians' rights will vanish for ever.

ASIATIC ACT IN HOUSE OF COMMONS

Local papers publish a cablegram stating that Sir William Bull asked a question in the Imperial Parliament about the Transvaal Indians. In his reply, Mr. Churchill stated that it was found that there was no alternative to finger-prints for registration. Lord Elgin expressed regret for the attitude taken by the Transvaal Government, but stated that, after the Transvaal's explanation that there was nothing objectionable in this manner of identification, he did not think he could press for a reconsideration of the matter.

That Lord Elgin expressed regret clearly shows that he himself regards the Act to be oppressive. So, when Indians go to gaol, his sympathy is bound to be with them.

HARASSMENT BY RAILWAYS

The following letter has been sent to the railway authorities over the signature of Mr. Polak, the Acting Secretary of the British Indian Association:

> I have the honour to draw your attention to the fact that yesterday after- noon, Mr. Abdool Gani, the late Chairman of my Association, and Mr.

Goolam Mahomed were refused tickets to travel by the 4.40 train to Pretoria, although they were obliged to go on urgent business, having been telegraphed for.

May I ask you to be good enough to investigate this matter, as my Association is anxious to be assured that the Administration has no intention to place further restrictions upon the community represented by my Association in regard to its public rights.

This recent example of harassment by the railways clearly shows that no Indian should lose the opportunity of going to gaol so as to open theeyes of the authorities. All these hardships, instead of diminishing, are likely to go on increasing till the Indian community proves its spirit by going to gaol.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 3-8-1907

76. SPEECH AT PRETORIA[1]

[PRETORIA,
July 31, 1907]

Mr. Gandhi said that Mr. Hosken had been explaining a great many things in connection with the Ordinance,[2] and he had expressed his sympathy with them in their trouble, but he thought that, although their struggle proceeded from a right mind, they were misguided, and that they ought to submit to the Ordinance, namely, to the compulsion that underlay the Ordinance as also to the ten finger-impressions. He had advanced many arguments in favour of this submission, one of which was that they ought to submit to the inevitable. He (Mr. Gandhi) wanted to take up this argument of the inevitable.[3] He thought and felt most deeply that neither Mr. Hosken nor any member of a Western race, and he said this with all humility, was capable of understanding what an Eastern mind understood by the inevitable. Mr. Hosken had told them that the Asiatic Registration Act had behind it the force of white public opinion, and that for that reason it could not be overridden but must be submitted to. He (Mr. Gandhi) did not call this the inevitable. To him the inevitable was that British Indians who were voteless in this country, who had absolutely no voice in this country, whose petitions were flung into the wastepaper basket, for whom not a

[1] On July 31, the last day for filing applications under the Asiatic Registration Act, a meeting of British Indians from all over the Transvaal was held at Pretoria. A telegraphic report of the speech appeared in *Indian Opinion*, 3-8-1907. This is a fuller report.

[2] Attending the meeting at the instance of General Botha, Hosken had informed Indians that the Government was firm in its policy in regard to the Act.

[3] *Vide* "Mr. Hosken's Inevitable", 10-8-1907

single voice was raised in the popular Assembly, for whom even Mr. Hosken had not been able to say one word of sympathy there because he felt that he would have to meet a solid phalanx of opposition, should oppose the Law. Under these circumstances, the inevitable they had to submit to was the will of God. If it was His will that every one of the 13,000 Indians should sacrifice everything, should give up whatever he had of monetary wealth accruing to him in this material world, then he must resign himself to the inevitable, and not accept the insult and the degradation that this Law involved. He thought, with all respect, that Mr. Hosken was not in a position to change his skin, nor was he in a position to advise them in a matter of life and death to every Indian who resided in the country.

He had lived in this country, and had served his fellow-countrymen for thirteen years. (Cheers.) He claimed to be one of the most peaceable men in South Africa, and he had not embarked upon this crusade, he had not embarked upon this advice to his countrymen, without mature thought and deliberation. He had read every sectionof the Asiatic Act and had read almost all Colonial legislation, and he had come deliberately to that conclusion, which he did not think he was likely to alter, that if the Asiatics who resided in the Transvaal submitted to that Law, theirs would be a state of slavery and nothing less.

And why? He had given a simple illustration to Mr. Hosken's countrymen when he had been in London. He had said: "Everyone who goes in the street wears a chimney-pot, a silk hat. Supposing that in London they were to pass legislation making it compulsory for every Englishman to wear the silk hat, would not the whole of London go hatless?" This was the position he had put to those friends—only it was absolutely trivial. There, it would be merely a question of hats, yet Englishmen prized their liberty so highly that they would resist in their own country a law which put such compulsion on them, whatever its objects. Here it was not a question of hats, but the badge of slavery on arm and forehead. He asked them not to wear that badge.

He took the sole responsibility for the advice he had given to his countrymen, but he would also couple that admission with the statement that his countrymen had felt far more severely the degradation involved in that Act than he could ever feel because he knew the loopholes that this Act contained for his countrymen. He knew also that, living in a country like this, they had to make allowance for a certain amount of prejudice, so they had put up with some indignities, some insults, but now the cup was filled to overflowing, and British Indians recognized that it was not possible for them to suffer the degradation involved in the Act and to live in this country. They had deliberately and of their own accord come to the conclusion that it was not possible for them to live in this country. If these were not the feelings of his countrymen in regard to that Act, he would be the first to own his mistake, and he would be the first to comply with the Law and to publicly admit that he had been mistaken and that they had deserved that Ordinance.

Mr. Essop Mia had placed graphically before them the position. He had shown the difference between the Act and voluntary registration. They had before their

mind's eye, and they could picture to themselves, the position in which they would be under voluntary registration and that in which they would be under compulsory registration. It was not for him now to examine the Act in detail, but the Moulvi had drawn one or two comparisons for their edification. Mr. Hosken, not understanding the language, had thought that the Moulvi was resenting a personal grievance, but those who served the community could not afford to have any such personal grievances. What the Moulvi had said was that the Act was despicable, and he (Mr. Gandhi) would say with emphasis, and in all humility, that the Act was so despicable and so wantonly insulting that it even made distinctions between Mahomedans and Christians, it brought Turkish Mahomedans within the provisions of the Act but left Turkish Christians and Jews free. He did not know of any Turkish Mahomedan who had a quarrel to pick with the Turkish Christian or the Turkish Jew, but they had found it hard to swallow this bitter pill, to swallow this insult.

And if, in order to eke out a miserable existence in this country, they submitted to all these things, what warranty, after all, had they that their position would be changed for the better and that there would be restored to them any of the rights of which they had already been deprived? A few unimportant alterations would be made, but they would still have to submit to the deprivation of ownership of property, to segregation in locations and he knew nor what else. This was the position they had to face, and for that reason he had taken the responsibility of advising his countrymen that they ought not to submit to this Act.

Indian Opinion, 10-8-1907

77. RESOLUTIONS AT PRETORIA MASS MEETING[1]

[PRETORIA,
July 31, 1907]

Resolution 1: This Mass Meeting of British Indians assembled • in Pretoria hereby notes with deepest regret that there have been found in the community some Indians who have so far forgotten themselves and their traditions as to first secretly, and then openly, well knowing the disgrace attached to submission to the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, apply for certificates of registration under it.

Resolution 2: This Mass Meeting of British Indians assembled in Pretoria congratulates the vast majority of the Indian inhabitants of Pretoria upon having refrained from bringing themselves under the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, and upon braving the serious consequences of non-submission thereto, and also congratulates, the courageous Indians who, by acting as missionaries to spread a true

[1] Though the resolutions were moved and supported by other spokesmen of the Indian community, they were presumably drawn up by Gandhiji.

knowledge of the provisions of the Act amongst the members of the community, have made possible so noteworthy a stand against injustice and oppression.

Resolution 3: This Mass Meeting of British Indians assembled in Pretoria respectfully prays that the Government may be pleased to spare the community the suffering involved in non-submission to the Act by accepting the offer of voluntary re-registration outlined in the Chairman's address, in view of the fact that, in the humble opinion of this Meeting, the Act is unnecessary for the purpose for which it is intended.

Resolution 4: This Mass Meeting of British Indians assembled in Pretoria hereby authorizes the Chairman to forward copies of the first three resolutions to the Government.

Indian Opinion, 3-8-1907

78. INTERVIEW TO "RAND DAILY MAIL"[1]

[PRETORIA,
July 31,1907

... If the Government should be willing to give a period of, say, two months for voluntary registration, the majority of Indians would accept these terms, though there might still remain the difficulty of the finger-print system. He admitted that this was aserious stumbling-block, and in his opinion they would only get terms after they, or many of them, had suffered under the Ordinance.

Rand Daily Mail, 1-8-1907

79. STRUGGLE IN TRANSVAAL

The month of July has ended. It will remain memorable in the history of the Transvaal Indians, perhaps in the history of the Indians in the Colony of South Africa. The mass meeting on July 31 marked a fitting conclusion to an eventful month. We are happy to find that a meeting attended by delegates from all parts of the Transvaal has once again condemned the Ordinance unanimously. That means, the whole of the Transvaal stands united in its eagerness to court imprisonment. However, some persons, not realizing the importance of a struggle which will affect the future of Indians in the whole of South Africa,

[1] At the close of the meeting, Gandhiji gave an interview of which this is a brief report.

have betrayed the community. Their conduct is tantamount to high treason against the motherland. But the number of such persons is very small. Moreover, many of them feel sorry for what they have done. Taking a warning from this, and from the miserable condition of one or two persons whose valid permits were declared to be false, people everywhere in the Transvaal who are still wavering will, we hope, make up their minds to be firm. It is the turn now of Pietersburg and other districts to do what Pretoria has done, and do one better. If this happens, our struggle can have only one result, and that is success. For the present, we only wish to tell the brave friends in Pretoria that, in keeping with the spirit they have shown in July, they hold themselves ready fearlessly for simple or rigorous imprisonment, or for exile, if the Government so chooses; in a word, for any hardship. We are now in the thick of a battle. There is no question of looking back. Our fight is for justice, so that we have the great Creator of the world Himself on our side. In the course of the struggle so far, the Government has climbed down frequently enough. This success is the result of our firmness. We cannot put a limit to what can be done. We offer our sincere congratulations to Pretoria for what it has been able to do, and pray to God that He may always bring succour to those who may be in gaol.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 3-8-1907

80. AWAKENING AMONG NATAL INDIANS

Time and again we have warned Natal Indians to keep awake. Now we can say with pleasure that they do not seem to be asleep. They are working hard to give help to the Transvaal Indians in every possible manner. While Messrs Dawad Mahomed, Parsee Rustomjee, Dada Osman, Ismail Gora, Dr. Nanji, Dr. Hiramanek and others among the Congress leaders are working hard to raise contributions in Durban, Messrs M. C. Anglia, Abdool Cadir and Peeran Mahomed visited Maritzburg with Mr. Tayob Moosa, and raised a good amount in only a couple of days. Following this example, all the Indians in Natal should collect as much as they can in their respective districts. If the Congress leaders have been thus active, the rank and file of Indians have not lagged behind. In addition to the three volunteers keeping a watch over passengers travelling to Johannesburg, Messrs

Hoosen Dawad (son of Mr. Dawad Mahomed), U. M. Shelat, Chhabildas B. Mehta, Ruknuddin and D. K. Gupte have given all their time to Congress work. For several days past telegrams have been sent constantly from here to Pretoria and telegrams from there are being anxiously awaited. From the sympathy thus evinced by Natal Indians, the Transvaal Indians should realize that they are no longer alone in their struggle, but that Indians outside stand by them fearlessly, ready to help in all possible ways.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 3-8-1907

81. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

[*August 5, 1907*]

SPECTRE AT PIETERSBURG

The spectre of the Permit Office has now shifted to Pietersburg, and by the time this letter appears in print, it will have been known whether the Indians are lions or lambs. Though I am writing this as early as Monday, I think I can say they are lions. On learning that the Permit Office will go to Pietersburg some time between the 7th and the 10th to issue the title-deeds of slavery, the local leaders immediately went to Pretoria. Mr. Hajee Habib, the very shrewd and energetic Secretary, who had been to Johannesburg on business, soon returned to Pretoria to help maintain the confidence of the Pietersburg leaders. They have taken up the challenge, ensuring a total boycott of the Permit Office at Pietersburg.

WHY DID SPECTRE GO TO PIETERSBURG?

This question will strike everyone. I have to say with regret that the blame for this lies with Pietersburg Indians. They did not attend the famous mass meeting on July 31. Their telegram was lukewarm, and the Indian shops at Pietersburg remained open that day, though other shops throughout the Transvaal, including even that of Mr. Khamisa, were closed. This naturally led the Government to infer that the Pietersburg Indians would be quite ready to wear the chain of slavery and accept the registration document which is almost like a warrant of death. Moreover, since Mr. Khamisa and Mr. Hajee Ibrahim had tarnished the name of the Memons, who form the bulk of the Indian community at Pietersburg, the Government thought that its ammunition would prove effective against Pietersburg and that the fort of Indian freedom would fall there.

But the Government has made a mistake in thinking that the Pietersburg Memon community will follow the example of Mr. Khamisa and Mr. Hajee Ibrahim. I believe that both these Indians are also repenting now. Their new registers have proved too much of a liability to them. Though no Indian has been avoiding these gentlemen or doing them any harm, they remain isolated and have to put up with bitter public criticism. No Indian, therefore, will make bold to do what they have done. Moreover, in public at least they have been saying that, though they had themselves soiled their hands and tarnished their faces, let no other Indian do like them.

CONCESSION TO PRETORIA?

In its Notice from Pietersburg the Government has now announced that the Pretoria Indians will be free to take out new registers at Pietersburg. I for one take this to be a kind of bondage. Temptation is an evil thing. I consider that taking out of new registers is a crime. To tempt them to commit that crime, the Government has only opened another door for the Pretoria Indians. It will be wrong to regard it as a concession. It is just a snare. For my part, I am convinced that no Indian from Pretoria will succumb to the temptation.

KARIM JAMAL'S CASE

Thanks to Karim Jamal's case[1], Indians have become more strongly confirmed in their opposition to the new law. To submit to it, they have seen, is to go in for a bad bargain.[2] The case against Mr. Karim Jamal has been withdrawn. The public prosecutor admitted that there had been a mistake in instituting the case. How does this help Mr. Karim Jamal? He had to suffer inconvenience and incur monetary loss. Disgusted with the heavy loss and damage, he has withdrawn his application for a register. (See his letter to the Registrar on the subject printed elsewhere.)[3]

This letter should be a warning to all Indians as to how this law can subject a poor man to hardship.

WHITE STANDS UP AGAINST FINGER-PRINTS

A white man has been arrested on a charge of theft. Under the

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 29-7-1907

[2] The Gujarati phrase literally means: to exchange sleep for wakefulness.

[3] Not reproduced here.

gaol regulations, the police have the authority to require finger-prints of a person sent to gaol. In exercise of that authority, the police demanded this man's finger-prints in the gaol. He refused to give them, and was brought before a magistrate; even then he emphatically refused to give the impressions. As for obtaining impressions by force, there is no authority for it under the law. The magistrate, therefore, sentenced the white to solitary confinement for three days. He bravely suffered the sentence, but refused to give finger-prints.

MONETARY AID FOR STRUGGLE

Mr. Bhatt writes to the Association from Waschbank to say that the Indians there are in high spirits and are raising a fund. He has offered whatever help may be necessary when people go to gaol. This is very good news. In this connection I must point out that whatever money is raised in Natal should be forwarded to the Congress Secretary. Likewise, the money collected at other places should be made over to the local associations. If anyone keeps the money with him or if the money raised at a place remains with the local leaders, it will be difficult to send it when needed. It should be so arranged that the demands from the Transvaal are addressed to only one source. This is no time for anyone to think of his importance. All have to do only their duty.

MASS MEETING

The mass meeting at Pretoria proved a huge success; one can say that the mass meetings at the Empire Theatre and the Gaiety Theatre were nothing compared to this. Moreover, it is a happy augury for our ultimate success that the meeting was held in the premises of a building as sacred as a mosque. The editor of *Pretoria News* personally attended this meeting, while the other meetings were attended by reporters only. At the two earlier mass meetings the local Members of Parliament were not present.

HOSKEN'S PRESENCE

This meeting was attended by Mr. Hosken, a prominent Member of Parliament. Mr. Hosken's speech should add to our strength. He cannot, of course, give any different advice from what he did. He came under instructions from General Botha, General Smuts and Mr. Hull. This shows that our work in the month of July has had its effect on the Government. When two parties are engaged in a struggle, it is usual for each to maintain an extreme position to the very last. Of the two, the party which has right on its side and remains firm till the end will win. It is no wonder, therefore, that the Government should send a message to say that the law would in no case be amended and that

voluntary registration would not be accepted. No one listened to us hitherto, but now the Government is anxious to find out what we want. Let us regard this as the first step towards success.

OTHER GOOD OMENS

Just as I regard the holding of the meeting in a mosque and the presence of Mr. Hosken at the meeting as a happy augury, so also the news which Mr. Hajee Cassim brought to the meeting, that the Government would not send anyone to gaol for the immediate present, may be taken by some as a good omen. In reality this is bad news, for the sooner the Government took the offensive against us, the quicker would be the solution. But I take it as a favourable circumstance that the news was received on the very day of the meeting. The happiest sign is the cablegram from England received on the morning of July 31 to say that the South Africa British [Indian] Committee had been trying for an interview with Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. This cablegram gladdened the hearts of all. All were gratified to think that they were not going to be entirely forsaken by the Committee.

CABLEGRAM TO REUTER

After the meeting was over, the Pretoria Committee sent a long cablegram to Reuter, and another directly to the Committee. This meant an expense of £7. The Committee's reply to this cablegram states that our question will be discussed in the House of Commons. The question will come up in connection with the loan of £5,000,000 requested by the Transvaal. If this happens, we may expect to gain something. However, no one should depend much on such support. We should not be surprised if we are disappointed in this. The important thing is that everything depends on our own strength. It may be taken for certain that there is no deliverance for us before we come out of the gaol gates.

MORE AID

Mr. Motilal Diwan says in a letter that he is prepared to make a personal sacrifice to save the cause of the Transvaal Indians. He is ready to look after the wife and children of any Indian going to gaol, and to proceed to Charlestown to receive them. Such examples are of great help to us.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 10-8-1907

82. TELEGRAM TO C. BIRD

MERCURY LANE,
[DURBAN,]
August 8, 1907

C. BIRD, C.M.G.[1]
P. M. BURG[2]
BEG TO TENDER CONGRATULATIONS ON THE HONOUR[3] CONFERRED ON YOU BY HIS MAJESTY THE KING EMPEROR.

GANDHI

From the handwritten office copy: S. N. 3877

83. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO GENERAL SMUTS

JOHANNESBURG,
August 8, 1907

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO GENERAL SMUTS
PRETORIA
SIR,

I have heard from more sources than one that, in the opinion of General Smuts, I am responsible for the agitation against the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, and that my action is strongly disapproved of by him. If the imputation means that my countrymen do not resent the Act at all but that I unnecessarily inflame them, I venture to repudiate it altogether. On the other hand, if it means that I have voiced their sentiments and that I have endeavoured, to the best of my ability, to place before them accurately what the Law means, I beg to accept the entire responsibility. I feel that, my parents having given me a liberal education, and [I] having studied to a certain extent modern history, I should be false to myself and my country if I did less.

Relying upon past professional connection with Mr. De Villiers, I sought a private interview with him, and requested his unofficial intervention with a view to finding a solution of the difficulty. He

[1] Private Secretary to the Colonial Secretary, Transvaal.
[2] Pietermaritzburg.
[3] Companionship of St. Michael and St. George.

promised to see General Smuts and let me know. He did so. I was, however, unable to see him personally again. He left a message with his Secretary to the effect that I should approach General Smuts directly, though there was little chance of relief being granted in the direction suggested by me.

I believe that I am as anxious to serve the Government as I am to serve my countrymen and I feel that the question is one of very serious and Imperial importance. I, therefore, venture to enclose herewith a hurriedly-drawn draft amendment to the Immigration Restriction Bill. In my humble opinion, it meets the view of the Government entirely, and it removes the stigma which, rightly or wrongly, my countrymen think attaches to them by submission to the Asiatic Law Amendment Act.

I have seen a cabled summary of General Smuts' reply to the South Africa British Indian Committee. He has been pleased to remark that co-operation with the leaders of the Indian community is not possible, as they have taken up an attitude of defiance. With deference, I must say that there is hardly any defiance about the attitude, but complete resignation to the will of the Almighty, in whose name they have sworn not to surrender their manliness and self-respect, which, in their opinion, are seriously attacked by the Registration Act.

I hope that the proposal submitted herewith will be received in the spirit in which it is offered.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

[Enclosure]

PROPOSAL TO MEET DIFFICULTY REGARDING
ASIATIC REGISTRATION ACT

It is submitted that the Immigration Restriction Bill, which can still be recalled and amended, can meet the whole difficulty, as follows:

l. In Section 1 of the Bill, to omit from "provided" to "Act".

2. The following addition to be made to Section 2: The term "prohibited immigrant" shall not include and mean male Asiatics falling under Clauses (a), (b), (c) and (d) hereof, notwithstanding that they cannot comply with the requirements of sub-section 1:

(a) Any Asiatic duly authorized to enter and reside in this Colony by a permit issued under the Indemnity and Peace

Preservation Ordinance, 1902, or any amendment thereof, or issued between the 1st day of September, 1900, and the date of the passing of the said Ordinance, unless such permit shall have been fraudulently obtained, provided that any such permit expressed to authorize any Asiatic to remain in this Colony for a limited time only shall not be deemed to be a permit within the amendment of this sub-section;

(b) Any Asiatic resident and actually in this Colony on the 31st day of May, 1902;

(c) Any Asiatic born in this Colony since the 31st day of May, 1902, not being the child of any labourer introduced into this Colony under the Labour Importation Ordinance, 1904;

(d) Any Asiatic who, before the 11th day of October, 1899, paid the sum of £3 in terms of Law 3 of 1885 as amended in 1886.

Provided that such Asiatic shall before a date to be fixed by the Colonial Secretary take out a domicile certificate as per form prescribed by regulation, and provided further that children up to the age of 16 years shall be exempt from the operation of this Clause, after attaining which they shall be obliged to take out certificates of domicile to enable them to claim the exemption before mentioned.

3. The term "Asiatic" shall mean any such male person as described in Article 1 of Law 3 of 1885, not being a person intro-duced into the Colony under the Labour Importation Ordinance, 1904.

4. Sub-section (c) of Article 2 of Law 3 of 1885 as amended by Volksraad resolution, Article 1419 of the 12th day of August, 1886, Article 128 of the 10th [day of] May, 1890, and the Asiatic Law Amendment Act are hereby repealed.

5. To add to sub-section 15: Also prescribing the form of certificates of domicile under sub-section and the manner of applying therefore and the period within which Asiatic children under the age of 16 shall make application for certificates of domicile on completing 16 years[1].

Indian Opinion, 24-8-1907

[1] In the Gujarati columns of *Indian Opinion*, 24-8-1907, a translation of the correspondence appeared under the title "Exchange of Letters", along with the following summary of the proposal:

It is submitted that the Immigration Restriction Bill, which can be amended, can meet the whole difficulty as follows:

(1) The new Act should be repealed.

84. TELEGRAM TO PRETORIA COMMITTEE[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
[Before *August 10, 1907*]

[PRETORIA COMMITTEE
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION
PRETORIA]

MEETING COMMITTEE ASSOCIATION, ALSO REPRESENTATIVES HEIDELBERG, POTCHEFSTROOM, VEREENIGING, MIDDELBURG, KRUGERSDORP, OTHER TOWNS, EXPRESSED ABHORRENCE ALL THOUGHT APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATES OF SLAVERY, AND URGENTLY IMPLORE PRETORIA INDIANS BE STRONG AND FAITHFUL TILL END LEST THEIR COUNTRY AND BRETHREN BE BETRAYED BY COWARDICE AND SELFISHNESS. IF ALL STRONG, WE HAVE WON. PRETORIA MUST SET INSPIRING EXAMPLE ALL INDIANS.

[BIAS]

Indian Opinion, 10-8-1907

(2) The term "Prohibited Immigrant" shall not include persons, who hold valid permits and who get those permits exchanged for others within a prescribed time-limit.

(3) Any Asiatic who does not hold any permit, but who had paid *£3* to the Dutch Government before 11th of October 1899, provided that such Asiatic shall obtain before a date to be fixed by the Colonial Secretary, take out a domicile certificate as per form prescribed by regulations.

(4) This obligation to get their permits exchanged should not apply to children under the age of 16. They may be required to obtain the domicile certificate when they reach the age of 16.

(5) The word 'Asiatic' should include all Asiatics.

(6) The clause regarding payment of £3 should be deleted.

(7) The Government should have the power to prescribe the form of certificates of domicile and the manner of applying therefor.

[1] This was sent by the British Indian Association and was presumably drafted by Gandhiji.

85. MR. HOSKEN'S "INEVITABLE"

Mr. Hosken is known all over South Africa to be the friend of the non-white races. He is one of the few men in South Africa who have the courage of their convictions. His exhortations to the historic Mass Meeting of Indians at Pretoria, therefore, deserve most careful attention.

Let us then analyse the doctrine he laid down, namely, that Indians as an Eastern people, should recognize and bow to the inevitable. By the term, Mr. Hosken meant to convey that the Act, having been demanded by the white people of the Transvaal, and unanimously sanctioned by the local Parliament, was in the nature of an act of God. We are constrained to take exception to the proposition laid down by Mr. Hosken. The honourable gentleman admitted that he himself did not like the Act, and that he would himself, if he could, grant the Indian request. He also admitted that "passive resistance" was a legitimate method of securing redress of a felt grievance. On his own showing, therefore, Mr. Hosken's contention that the Act is in the nature of an act of God falls to the ground. We, however, go further. No action of a human being is considered by the Eastern mind as a divine dispensation, unless it is intrinsically justifiable. And when an Eastern submits to the apparently inevitable, there is always traceable behind such submission, not a recognition of the Divine hand, but of base selfishness. The spirit is then willing, but the flesh is weak.

And what is it that Mr. Hosken will have the Transvaal Indians to do? To accept the enslaving Act in order that they [may] be able to exist in that country! In other words, Mr. Hosken, a man of God, advises Indians, for their material good, to forswear their solemn oath and their honour. We answer, in the words of his Master, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and everything shall be added unto you." We believe that, in resisting the wretched Act, Indians would be seeking the "Kingdom of God".

Mr. Hosken says the oath is not binding, because it was ill-taken. But the solemn declaration was made by Indians with due deliberation. And it was not only for their own self-respect, but for that of their dear ones and their country, that they resolved upon resisting the Act and facing imprisonment or worse.

We, therefore, trust that Mr. Hosken will, with his accustomed

zeal for forlorn causes, study the Asiatic question, and we promise that he will accept the whole contention of the Indian community. He went to the meeting as a messenger of peace from the Government. He will, we doubt not, fulfil the functions of a true mediator, if he will only understand carefully the Indian standpoint.

Indian Opinion, 10-8-1907

86. MR. ALLY'S PROTEST[1]

We commend to the attention of the Transvaal Government the letter Mr. Ally has addressed to the Press. Mr. Ally, it will be remembered, was a delegate to wait on Lord Elgin in connection with the Asiatic Ordinance. The *Rand Daily Mail* calls it a bitter protest, and so it is. Mr. Ally's is perhaps an extreme case, but it shows most vividly, as nothing else can show, the suffering the Act is going to cost the community. The objection of the Indian community has been set down as mere sentiment. Mr. Duncan, not knowing what the Act meant, was good enough to say that the Asiatic objection should be overborne, but we ask whether it is sentiment that has dictated the course adopted by Mr. Ally. Will the Indian community be told that Mr. Ally is probably facing starvation for a foolish sentiment, or will it dawn on Lord Elgin that, after all, even though an Indian, a British subject may be entitled to personal freedom and security wherever the British flag flies?

Indian Opinion, 10-8-1907

87. THE TRANSVAAL INDIANS

The Pietersburg notice issued by the Government is undoubtedly a feeler, and it seems that the Government are still uncertain whether the feeling of resentment against the Asiatic Act is general and permeates the masses, or whether it is confined to a few "agitators" only. Taken in that light, the Pietersburg notice is justifiable. The reply returned by the Pietersburg Indians should set at rest any doubt lingering in General Smuts, mind. The Pietersburg Indians view the sending of the Registration Office to their town as an infliction to be avoided. We congratulate them on their boldness in having sent the petition to the Government, but we must warn them, as also all other Transvaal Indians, that the struggle before them may be bitter and prolonged before they make a breach in the almost

[1] *Vide* "Ally's Letter", 10-8-1907

impregnable wall of prejudice that the Government have erected in front of them. There is no remission of sin without shedding of blood. This may be paraphrased for British Indians to mean that there is to be no freedom for British Indians without their suffering imprisonment, even banishment. They must prove themselves worthy of the relief they are fighting for, before they will get it.

Indian Opinion, 10-8-1907

88. WHAT NEXT

The mass meeting[1] passed off very well. Pretoria acted bravely. Several days of August have passed. No one has so far been arrested. What will happen next? We often hear people asking this question. It appears that the Government has no intention of taking any steps on the basis of the Pretoria notice. The intention of the Government appears to be to start arresting people only after all the Indians in the Transvaal have had the opportunity of taking out the title-deed of slavery. The boycott at Pietersburg is now likely to succeed. If therefore an office is now to be opened, the probability is that it will be opened at Johannesburg, where, after the expiry of the notice period, the attack will begin. From the reports received, it appears that the Government intends to arrest the leaders first. Such a decision will indeed be realistic. If the Government suspects that the new law is being opposed by the people merely because of incitement by the leaders, the suspicion can be proved baseless if the Indian community remains firm even after the leaders are arrested.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 10-8-1907

89. COMMITTEE'S FIGHT

The South Africa British Indian Committee has resumed the constitutional fight. There is no doubt at all that it is a result of the mass meeting. Replying to a question by Mr Robertson, Mr. Churchill stated that the Imperial Government considered the situation to have become very serious and that they had instructed Lord Selborne to keep them constantly informed by cablegram. He also indicated that they would do all in their power, short of encroaching upon the rights of a self-governing colony.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Pretoria", 31-7-1907

Moreover, Mr. Cox[1] has given notice of his intention to move that the assistance to the Transvaal in the form of a loan of £5,000,000 should not be given unless the rights of Indians are duly protected.

These events indicate that the Imperial Government will not let down the Transvaal Indians, provided, of course, that the Transvaal Indians, on their part, do not let themselves down. Everything depends on the strength they show by going to gaol.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 10-8-1907

90. GENERAL SMUTS' REPLY

The South Africa British Indian committee wrote a letter to General Botha, to which General Smuts has sent a reply. A telegraphic summary of the reply has appeared in *The Star* and other newspapers. This reply is a month old, and hence not much weight is to be attached to it. Since then much has happened the effects of which cannot be judged. But the reply sent by General Smuts a month ago shows that, if he can help it, he will not permit a single Indian to remain here. Rights in regard to ownership of land are not to be conceded, finger-prints will remain necessary, and tram regulations are in the interests of Indians! The same about railways. What else remains? And yet he argues that, since Indian leaders do not wish to submit to the law, he does not intend to consult them. In other words, he knows well enough himself what needs to be done to reduce the Indian community to slavery.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 10-8-1907

91. ALLY'S LETTER

We think Mr. Ally has taken the right step in having written a letter to newspapers. Mr. Ally has a strong case. It cannot but have some effect in England as well as in South Africa. The harm done by his letter[2] to the Committee is partly undone by this letter. Mr. Ally is to go to Cape Town. If he wants, he can render patriotic service there. The Indians of Cape Town have started taking part in the struggle in

[1] Member of British Parliament. *Vide* "Telegram to Ameer Ali", 25-10-1906

[2] *Vide* "Ally's Mistake", 27-7-1907

the Transvaal. Mr. Ally can infuse vigour into this movement. We earnestly hope that he will give a good fight in Cape Town and that our Indian brethren there will seek his help. In this connection we have to point out that those who wish to help must support the gaol resolution, strengthen the spirit of the Transvaal Indians, and give financial help to those who suffer. Anything else that may be done will do harm rather than good.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 10-8-1907

92. OUR DUTY

In the current issue we publish two letters which mention the names of those who did not close their stores on July 31. We also publish the names we have received of those in Pretoria who have made applications for the title-deed of slavery. It is with exceeding regret that we publish these, but we hold that it is not proper for us to conceal the names of defaulters at a time when a great fight is being put up. We do not entertain any feeling of anger or ill-will against any one of them. However, we believe that by publishing the names in this manner we are rendering patriotic service. This is a time when Indians must cultivate the utmost strength and abjure all selfishness. Such being the case, we publish the names of weak persons, and hope that this will give strength to the others. We shall publish any statement that the persons concerned may have to make, provided it is briefly worded. We shall also publish letters of regret that those who realize their mistake may send us. We only wish them well, considering that they too are our countrymen. We expect that our readers also will have a similar feeling towards them. Anger, malice, arrogance, selfishness, violence—all these are not only useless in our fight—they are positively harmful.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 10-8-1907

93. CAPE INDIANS

In our issue of July 27, we said that we would consider later what demands the Cape Indians should put up.[1] We do so now.

Among the hardships experienced in the Cape, one relates to the

[1] *Vide* "Indians in Cape", 27-7-1907

Immigration Law. It obliges an Indian going out of the Cape to take out a temporary pass tenable for a year. If one does not take out such pass and does not know English, one cannot return. In our view such a law is excessively harsh. It is not for a free man to take out such a "ticket of leave". Those who have earned the right of residence in the Cape should have their pass valid for all time once they take it out. If an Indian merchant stays away for more than a year, should it be impossible for him to return to the Cape to look after his business? The section prescribing such a time-limit should be repealed.

Moreover, a photograph is required of anyone taking out a temporary pass. In our view, it is more disgraceful to furnish a photograph than to give finger-prints. Such regulations ought to be abolished.

Another law concerns trading licences. In this matter one should have the right of appeal to the Supreme Court against the decision of the Licensing Officer. Also, the obligation on the hawkers to take out separate licences for each locality should be cancelled.

Amendments should be suggested to the special regulations pertaining to foot-paths and Locations now in force in East London. Also, a move should be made to have adequate educational facilities provided for the Indian community.

We hold that votes should be cast in favour of those candidates only who furnish satisfactory answers concerning these matters, and that, in the absence of such candidates, it is a matter of honour and duty for the Indian community not to exercise the vote at all.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 10-8-1907

94. ESTCOURT APPEAL

We congratulate Estcourt Indians on their winning the appeal in regard to the question of municipal franchise. It has been ruled in this appeal that the Indian community has the right to vote at Local Board elections in Estcourt. The only question that remains is whether the petitioners own property of the requisite value. This success is nothing to make much of, for the Municipal Bill is still under consideration in Britain. But it appears that the Bill will not receive the approval of the Home Government, thanks to the efforts of the Committee. Even then, those who have applied should get their names enrolled in the voters' *list.* We do not think taking any further step will be desirable.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 10-8-1907

95. ROSS'S LETTER

Mr. Ross, the General Manager of the Natal Railways, has sent a blunt refusal to the Indian community. We congratulate the community on receiving such a letter. For, the more they insult our religions and the more they despise the colour of our skin, the stronger will be our fight, provided we are in the right. A letter such as Mr. Ross's shows to what a miserable plight we have been reduced in South Africa. If we do not get our reasonable rights, we shall feel crushed by our own wealth. To a sensible man, money without honour is like a thorn. In the Sahara Desert, anyone with goldbars in his pocket will find them like poison if he can get no drop of water anywhere. Similarly, in this country money without self-respect is likely to be veritable poison. We see no need just at present to take any steps on the letter of Mr. Ross. According to us, the solution of such problems depends on the outcome of the Transvaal struggle. If we beg for them often enough, our Moulvis and Christian and Hindu priests may probably get concession tickets at half rates. However, it is not a material question whether concession tickets are available or not. The real point is that, in the eyes of the whites, we are persons of no consequence and it is precisely this that causes all the mischief. In order that we may count [in their eyes], the only course for the Transvaal Indians is to fight desperately to the last—even unto death—and win glory. We shall then be the equals of those who have votes, though actually we may have none.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 10-8-1907

96. MEANNESS OF DURBAN AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

An Indian merchant contributing to our English section states that the Exhibition Committee has excluded Indians from participation in the Durban Exhibition. This is a very bad thing. We know that the whites are afraid of the industry of Indians. They seem to be afraid of Indian skill also. Thus they appear to be imitating the dog in the manger: they neither eat themselves nor let others do so. This behaviour of the Committee shows that we have only one duty now to win respect and dignity for ourselves. And that is, for the present at least, in the hands of the Transvaal Indians.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 10-8-1907

97. OMAR HAJI AMOD ZAVERI

It appears from *Akhbar-e-Saudagar*[1] of June 18, that no sooner had Mr. Omar Zaveri[2] landed at Bombay than he started working for the Indian cause. Mr. Jagmohandas Shamaldas held a party at his bungalow in honour of Mr. Zaveri, where the latter gave a vivid account of the condition of Indians in South Africa. The same paper also publishes his interview to its reporter, covering three columns. It gives a clear picture of the hardships experienced by us here and, by way of remedy, points out that the Indians in South Africa depend on the help of the 30 crores of Indians in India. In his speech Mr. Omar Zaveri once more declared his intention of becoming a barrister so as to be able to serve the country.

Commenting on all this, the editor of *Akebar-e-Saudagar* supports the plea made by Mr. Omar Zaveri and appeals to the Indian community to extend help.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 10-8-1907

98. PARSI LADY'S COURAGE

Mrs. Bhicaiji Rustomji K. R. Cama has written a letter in *The Sociologist* which is quoted by *Jam-e-Jamshed* We draw the attention of our readers in the Transvaal to the following powerful words reproduced from it:

> Men and women of India! Listen to what I am saying and oppose this wicked Act. There is an old proverb that those who lose their freedom lose half their virtues. Therefore, come forward to fight for freedom, justice and truth. People of India! Resolve in your mind that it will be far better for the whole nation to die rather than live in such slavery. Fearless Rajputs, Sikhs, Pathans, Gurkhas, patriotic Marathas and Bengalees, spirited Parsis and brave Mahomedans, and last, you mild Jains and patient Hindus, children of a great nation, why do you not live as befits your ancient history? Why do you live thus in slavery? March ahead!

Mrs. Bhicaiji Cama has more than 20 years' experience of

[1] A Gujarati journal published from Bombay.

[2] Former Joint Honorary Secretary, Natal Indian Congress. *Vide* "Omar Haji Amod Zaveri", 11-5-1907

political life. At present she lives in Paris. She is full of patriotic fervour. Her words are addressed to India, but they also apply at present to Indians in the Transvaal.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 10-8-1907

99. SPEECH AT HAMIDIA ISLAMIC SOCIETY[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
August 11, 1907

The Hamidia Islamic Society has been instilling courage and enthusiasm into the people by holding weekly meetings for the last two months or so. At the time of the mass meeting in Pretoria, it arranged to send 600 men by special train to help the residents of Pretoria. By this the Society has laid the community under obligation. We hope the Society will carry on its useful work. Although some people in Pretoria have registered themselves, they now regret having done so. Our plans have not been upset by this. The people in Pretoria have maintained our reputation, and those in Pietersburg have done even better. It is a matter for congratulation that not a single gentleman there has registered himself. Wherever the Government finds a weak spot, it opens a Registration office[2]. I think Mr. Chamney might have even been told that the people at Pietersburg were weak and that they did not even attend the mass meeting. So the Government opened an office there. But, fortunately, Mr. Jusab Haji Vali and others got together and emphatically refused to submit, saying that they would accept only voluntary registration. They said that they would not submit to the poisonous law even if the Government deported them or sent them to gaol. The Government is now betraying signs of weakness. For, the two men who were in the Pietersburg gaol were induced somehow to give their finger-prints. This too is a disgraceful thing.

The Zoutpansberg Review points out that the Indian community is shrewd and capable, and it should be dealt with carefully. Our London Committee has also been very active these days. All this is the result of the mass meeting. We have thus begun to receive help from all sides. Even so, we must bear in mind that some of us will have to

[1] At a meeting of the Hamidia Islamic Society, Gandhiji gave an account of the struggle against the Registration Act. This is a report of his speech.

[2] This has been referred to as Permit Office also.

go to gaol. In that case, it is probable that I shall be the first to be arrested. The same is true of other leaders. But we are bound to win if you sustain the courage you have so far shown, even though they should lay hands on me and on the other leaders. They threaten us about the licences. But they are making a mistake. We can carry on business without licences. For this they may impose a fine on us and, if we do not pay it, they can send us to prison. But there is nothing in the Licensing Act to authorize them to deport us. So, let us notbe afraid on this score either. Now the Registration Office will be moved to Potchefstroom and Klerksdorp. We shall go there, if invited. Otherwise, there is no need to do so.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 17-8-1907

100. TELEGRAM TO PIETERSBURG INDIANS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
August 11, 1907]

SOCIETY CONGRATULATES PIETERSBURG INDIANS ON SPLENDIDLY CLEAN RECORD AND BRAVE STAND MADE. IF WE REMAIN FIRM TO THE END GOD WILL GRANT US SUCCESS.

[HAMIDIA ISLAMIC SOCIETY]

Indian Opinion, 17-8-1907

101. TELEGRAM TO POTCHEFSTROOM INDIANS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
August 11, 1907]

HOPE INDIANS THERE WILL AVOID PERMIT OFFICE PLAGUE. ITS TOUCH DEFILES OUR NATIONALITY AND VIOLATES OUR RELIGION.

[HAMIDIA ISLAMIC SOCIETY]

Indian Opinion, 17-8-1907

[1] Gandhiji addressed a meeting of the Hamidia Islamic Society held on August 11 at which it was decided to send telegrams to Pietersburg and Potchefstroom Indians. Presumably, he was responsible for the drafting of these telegrams.

102. LETTER TO "RAND DAILY MAIL"

JOHANNESBURG,

August 12, 1907

TO

THE EDITOR

[*RAND DAILY MAIL*]

SIR,

You have commenced your special article on the Asiatic Act with the inflammatory heading, "Indians Will Not Pay Debts". The restrained language in this article shows that it is not ill meant. At thesame time, it would certainly have been better and more serviceable to your readers if you had refrained from giving currency to what appears to be a fiction, until you had seen the leaders of the British Indian community, whose opinion, evidently, you did not know.

I may now be allowed to state that there is not, so far as I am aware, a single Indian of standing who has ever made a statement to the effect that every Indian "who is thrown into prison for passive resistance or loses his trading or hawking licence shall refuse to pay his debts". This would be quite contrary to the spirit of our struggle. We have undertaken it with a view to suffering ourselves, placing our sole reliance upon God. It would, therefore, be wicked if we were to cherish the thought and to repudiate our just debts. It is our belief, whether we be Mahomedans or Hindus, that all debts that are not paid in our present life will have to be liquidated with severe penalty in our next. On the great Judgment Day, we shall have to answer for our delinquencies, non-payment of debts not being the least of them.

We do want to exert pressure from every side. We undoubtedly want Imperial protection no less than the sympathy of the Colonists and even the Government, but we have no desire to do so by means that cannot be called scrupulously clean and honest. Our one and only weapon of defence against what we consider to be an unwarrantable attack on our personal freedom and honour is to show the people of South Africa and the citizens of the great Empire, of which we claim to be members equally with the whites, that we are men enough to suffer for what we conscientiously believe to be a great wrong.

I have seen as many of my fellow-merchants as I hurriedly could. They are Messrs M. C. Camroodeen and Co., M. S. Coovadia,

M. A. Karodia, A. F. Camay and Co., Amod Moosajee and Co., M. P. Fancy, Mahomed Oosen and Co., and Jussab Ebrahim, and between us we have paid, during the last month and up to today, roughly speaking, £18,000 to the European wholesale houses whether here or in London. Some of us, in order to prepare for contingencies, have even paid our debts before maturity. It is true that many of us have cancelled orders in view of the struggle. This is only fair to the wholesale houses and to ourselves. We are sorry that, by our so doing, the latter have to suffer in common with us, but that is inevitable.

I AM, ETC.,

ESSOP ISMAIL MIA,

MANAGING PARTNER OF SULIMAN ISMAIL MIA AND CO.,

AND ACTING CHAIRMAN,

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Rand Daily Mail, 13-8-1907

103. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO GENERAL SMUTS

JOHANNESBURG ,

August 15, 1907

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO GENERAL SMUTS

PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th instant in reply to mine of the 8th instant in connection with the Asiatic Law Amendment Act. I beg to tender my thanks to General Smuts for having frankly stated his views[1] about the Act in question.

In my humble opinion, the amendments suggested by me would carry out the essential spirit of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, namely, the identification of every Asiatic entitled to remain in the

[1] The Private Secretary to General Smuts had written, *inter alias: ". . .* I instructed to inform you that Mr. Smuts is unable to entertain the amendments put forward by you to the Immigrants' Restriction Bill, as such amendments of that Bill would, if they were possible, altogether nullify the provisions of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, 1907, and further because their adoption at this stage of the Bill is impossible. . . .The Colonial Secretary will carry out in full the provisions of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act and if the resistance of the Indians residing in this country leads to results which they do not seriously face at present, they will have only themselves and their leaders to blame."

Colony.

I offer no apology for drawing the General's attention to the solemn declaration of British Indians with reference to the Act. So far as I am in a position to advise my countrymen, it is not possible for me, be the consequences what they may, to tell them to deviate from such a deliberate declaration, and, if, even at the eleventh hour, it is possible for General Smuts to respect that declaration without infringing upon the scope of the Act, I venture to request his sympathy and assistance. I have never blinded myself to the probable results of my countrymen's following the advice given to them by me, namely, that every Indian is liable to undergo imprisonment, and traders and hawkers are liable to be deprived of their trade licences, and leaders to be deported, should the Immigrants' Restriction Bill be placed on the Statute-book of the Colony. But, with deference, I beg to state that the compliance with the Act would be far worse than anything that could happen to them by non-compliance.

This correspondence, on my part, is in the nature of a personal appeal to General Smuts, and is private, but, as I am anxious that the intentions of the Government should be as widely and accurately placed before my countrymen as possible, if General Smuts has no objection, I would like to publish this correspondence.[1]

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 24-8-1907

104. IMPLICATIONS OF INDIAN OFFER

The Permit Office has been perambulating in the Transvaal. Like touts, officers move from house to house trying to mislead the people and persuading them to take out the registers according to the new law. Moreover, they cross-examine people to know what our demands are. It is therefore necessary for every Indian to know what voluntary registration means. We are glad to see that the common people are being thus put to the test. The new law is such that it is necessary for every Indian to know clearly what it means and judge it independently for himself. It is not surprising that the people are

[1] This appeared in *Indian Opinion*, 24-8-1907; *vide* "Letter to *Indian Opinion*",17-8-1907

being tested. If we fail to give proper replies, that will, no doubt, be surprising. Let us therefore consider the implications of voluntary registration.

In so far as the law is concerned, the Government can compel people to take out new registers. Not only that; it can also insist on their being renewed from time to time. Moreover, people may be required to give their finger-prints at any time. Children's finger-prints may also be demanded. Finger-prints may be required at the time of taking out a licence. Briefly, the Government has been empowered to enforce all the obnoxious provisions of the new law and of the Regulations made under it. This is not acceptable to us. Instead, we say that we are willing, with a view to removing the suspicion of the Government, to exchange our present permits for new ones. The new law should not apply to those who get their permits voluntarily exchanged in this manner. None of its provisions should apply to us. That is, we should not be required to give finger-prints at any and every stage. If every Indian thus voluntarily takes out the new register, the obnoxious law will be altogether nullified. It will apply only to an Indian who, through inadvertence or on purpose, fails to get his permit exchanged. There is thus a very great difference between our demand and the law of the Government. To submit to the Government law is like riding an ass. If the Indiancommunity does so, it will invite public ridicule. Our demand means riding an elephant and will bring us honour and regal dignity.

Apart from this demand, some gentlemen from Pretoria have, through a lawyer, addressed a letter to Mr. Smuts which we may now consider. They have placed before Mr. Smuts a demand for some amendments to the law. We think this is only trifling with the problem. If one is suffering from fistula but treats it as an ordinary abscess, some external application may bring about a superficial healing. And so it happens, sometimes, that a person suffering from fistula believes that he has been radically cured of the disease, but in fact the disease is active under the surface that has healed up. The deluded patient is shocked to find in a few days a fresh abscess appearing at another place. As long as he does not take the treatment for fistula, abscesses go on appearing and subsiding. Similar, we think, is the case with the letter referred to above. The new law, which is like fistula, cannot be treated by a letter which asks for the deletion of two or three things. It is only a palliative and in the long run will do harm. Every Indian should realize that there is no effective treatment for this fistula-like law other than a major Operation with the surgical knife. Hence, whenever questions are asked regarding the new law, we have to state categorically that our demand is nothing short of the repeal of the

entire law. To show that, in case the law is repealed, we have no intention of sheltering liars, we are willing to take out voluntary registers. But after they are taken out, we do not want the constant pinpricks of the law.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 17-8-1907

105. CONGRATULATIONS TO PIETERSBURG

Pretoria put up a good show. But Pietersburg was beyond praise. Not a single black sheep was found there. The boycott of the Permit Office proved one hundred per cent successful. The Permit Office was sent back as hungry as it had come. Moreover, to prevent that spectre from having a foothold in Pietersburg, they had sent a petition to the Government in advance, stating that they did not want that office there. No town can do more than this. No town should do less.

It does not in the least detract from the honour of Pietersburg that permits were forced on two prisoners. When there is a famine in the country, starving people eat all kinds of things to satisfy hunger. A starving dog will not spare even refuse. In like manner, the officers of the murderous Act, deprived of their prey, behaved like starving men by forcing permits on prisoners; it can be seen from this that there isno self-respect in the new permits, only humiliation. We congratulate Pietersburg. The people of Pietersburg committed a great crime in not closing their shops on the last day of July; they have now atoned for that, thereby rejoining the ranks of other brave Indians. In this hour of glory, they must remember that the real struggle is yet to come. The time is drawing near when people will have to go to gaol and show that their country is dearer to them than wealth and position. At that time, too, we trust Pietersburg will respond bravely.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 17-8-1907

106. HANUMAN'S TAIL

It is said that when Hanuman [the Monkey-God of the *Ramayana*,] desired to set Lanka on fire, his tail grew heavier in weight as he went further.[1] Similarly, the Office for new registers, as it travels further, carries a greater and greater burden with it. When the

[1] According to the *Ramayana*, his tail became longer and longer.

Pretoria Notice was issued, all Indians at Pretoria were required to register themselves. When the Office went to Pietersburg, the right to register there was extended to the residents of Pretoria also. At Potchefstroom, besides local Indians, Indians of Pretoria and Pietersburg too were allowed to register themselves. At Klerksdorp, Indians from all the three places mentioned above will have the opportunity of taking out the title-deed of slavery. Thus, the tail of the Permit Office is growing longer and longer. We express sympathy for our Indian brethren at Pretoria, for Pretoria will not be let off even when the Office has shifted to the last place. Can it be that this punishment is inflicted on Pretoria just because a somewhat larger number of black sheep were found there? But between the case of Hanuman and that of this Office there is a great difference. The more rags they wound round Hanuman's tail and the more oil they poured on it, the greater was the fire in the city of Lanka, though Hanuman did not feel its heat. But the task of the Permit Office is to enforce the obnoxious law, and therefore, it will probably happen that both the law and the Office will be burnt to ashes by the travels of the Office. For, it will not be possible to destroy by fire the Lanka of the Indian community. The community is guiltless. The culprit is the incendiary law itself.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 17-8-1907

107. WARNING TO NATAL MERCHANTS

The Natal *Government Gazette* has published a Bill which, if passed, will require every merchant intending to sell his business or shop to give a fortnight's notice through the *Gazette* and a local newspaper. A similar notice will also have to be published by anyone desiring to take out a new licence. Both these provisions are harsh, but it will not be possible for the Indian community to oppose them as they apply to all. The same Bill also includes another provision to the effect that, unless a special contract exists, it will not be competent for a court of law to allow more than eight per cent interest on time-barred debts. A contract will not be nullified on the ground that the merchant concerned has charged exorbitantly for a particular commodity. This is an official Bill and is likely to be passed.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 17-8-1907

108. IS THERE TREACHERY?

After we had almost finished writing for this issue, we heard that the list of the Pretoria black sheep given by us was not complete. The names in the last issue included some Memons and one Hindu.[1] We have now come to know that some Konkanis are also among them. The following are their names:[2]

We have also heard that at Pietersburg the two Indians undergoing gaol sentences are not the only ones to have registered themselves; there are about four more. If true, this is very regrettable. There are, it appears, some men in the community who show misguided courage and blacken their faces. At Pretoria the Konkanis have emphatically declared that none of them has applied for the new permit. In Pietersburg, on the other hand, the four men referred to above are also among the signatories to the petition submitted to the Colonial Secretary Both these acts of treachery are very grave. That such traitors are very few is a matter for congratulation. However, the presence of such people in the community should serve as a serious warning to good men. All this reminds one of the story of the axe and its handle. The harm done by the obnoxious law or by the Government could not be so great as that done by such men. A person who openly takes out the new register may be credited with some sort of courage. But what simile shall we use to describe the man who takes out the register stealthily and then parades as respectable?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 17-8-1907

109. CONFLAGRATION IN MOROCCO

There is a fierce fire raging in Morocco at present. Raisooli has created terror there. At Tangier there are plunder and rapine. A number of men have been killed. Two hundred women are under arrest. Raping too is going on. The Jews have suffered the most. In Casablanca there is complete anarchy. Such is the news given by Reuter. Reuter further adds that the Sultan of Morocco has stated that, if a European army went there, even the few clans now under his control would get out of hand. We are not in a position to find out how much of this is true. It is said that Sir Harry Maclean has now

[1] *Vide* "Our Duty", 10-8-1907

[2] Nine names given in the original are not reproduced here.

been released by Raisooli. A German, writing of Raisooli, describes him as a brave and handsome soldier. As a child he fell into the habit of cattle-lifting. For some time he was appointed Governor of Tangier. But, for some years past, he has been living as an outlaw or dacoit. He had many whites captured. He lives always ready for death, certain that he will meet a violent death at someone's hands. Attempts to kill Raisooli were made by many, but he is so alert and quick that he eludes everyone. We hope to give later an account of the reasons why such chaos reigns in Morocco and of such other things, so that our readers may be able to judge better what is happening there.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 17-8-1907

110. HAGGAR'S NEW STEP

Mr. Haggar has been assiduously after Indians. He is always up to something or other. Now he wants to throw out of job the poor Indians working on engines for their livelihood. His new idea is to bring up before the Parliament a Bill preventing any Indian from working except under a European supervisor. If such a law comes into force, it is likely to deprive some Indians of their means of livelihood. But it may be hoped that the Bill will not be passed.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 17-8-1907

111. ACT TO PREVENT JUVENILE SMOKING

This Act was recently passed by the Natal Parliament. We give below the substance of each section.

(1) It will be unlawful for any person under 16 years of age to smoke tobacco, a cigar, or a cigarette. If any tobacco, tobacco-pipe, cigar, cigarette or cigarette-holder is found [on such person], a white police officer may take possession of the same and hand it over to the Government.

(2) If any school-going boy is found with a cigarette or any of the other things mentioned above, the school-teacher shall take them away and hand them over to the guardian of the boy. If any students are found smoking tobacco, they will be considered guilty of breach of school discipline and will be liable to be punished accordingly.

(3) No one should supply or sell tobacco, a cigar or a cigarette to a person under 16 years of age without a note from parents, the guardian or the employer. The note or order should state that the

cigarette, etc., is for the use of a person above 16 years of age and that it will be delivered into the hands of the signatory. It will be unlawful to supply or sell cigarettes, etc., to a person under 16 years of age in the absence of such a note. Anyone violating this section will be liable to be punished with a fine up to £5 or imprisonment extending to one month for every offence.

(4) Any person, not being a parent or guardian or employer, who sends a person under 16 years of age to buy cigarettes, etc., will be liable to be punished with a fine up to £5 or imprisonment extending to one month.

(5) If in connection with this Act there arises any doubt regarding the age of a person, the apparent age of such person as determined by the court will be taken as correct in the absence of satisfactory evidence to the contrary.

(6) This Act will be known as the Prevention of Smoking Act of 1907.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 17-8-1907

112. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

PIETERSBURG IN FULL SPLENDOUR

Pietersburg's bravery is being praised everywhere. Now the raid will be on Potchefstroom and Klerksdorp. They cannot do better than Pietersburg. None is to do less than Pietersburg. Both the Press and the public have been stirred by the spirit shown by Pietersburg. The mercury in the Indian barometer has indeed risen. Pietersburg has brought our success a little nearer. At Pietersburg, as at Pretoria, volunteers were enlisted. The following are their names:

Messrs Hansraj, A. Gakel, D. H. Jooma, Tayob N. Mahomed, Cassim Suleman, A. Desai, Goolab and the Head Volunteer, Mr. Hasim Mahomed Kala.

These heroes deserve praise.

"WITHOUT BREAKFAST"

Telegrams of encouragement were received by many Indians, one of whom sent an immediate reply that the Permit Office would have to leave Pietersburg "without breakfast". That is, Indians are the game the Office is seeking. If no Indians registered themselves, the Office would be considered to have starved. The fast would not be broken, and the Office would therefore have left "without breakfast".

The applications for registration made by prisoners must be, of course, left out of account.

TELEGRAM TO PIETERSBURG

A congratulatory telegram has been despatched by the Association and the Hamidia Society. In its message of congratulations, the Society says, "If we remain firm to the end, God will grant us success."[1]

POTCHEFSTROOM AND KLERKSDORP

By the end of this week the Office will have shifted to both these places. The Hamidia Society has therefore sent to them the following telegram:[2]

From both these places immediate replies were received, saying that both were very firm. None was likely to take out new registers. The people there say: "We need no help from Johannesburg. We areloyal to the oath we took at the Empire Theatre." I wish all Indians would maintain such courage to the end.

EFFECT OF OUR STRUGGLE

So far, it may be said, our struggle has had a good effect. It is stated in the *Rand Daily Mail* that Indians are in debt to the whites, and that if Indians went to gaol or did not get licences, they would not pay their debts. The writer in the *Mail* has picked up such a rumour, and he says further that there was no knowing the minds of the Indian leaders. The white merchants seem to have been scared by such news. This should be taken as a good result. Now they do not ridicule us but recognize that the situation is delicate. Moreover, the writer in the *Mail* adds that the Indians are being helped by very influential men in England. He says that Mr. Ritch has been working in their behalf, and that a hundred Members of parliament have expressed their intention to oppose the loan of £5,000,000 to the Transvaal if Indian grievances are not redressed.

ESSOP MIA'S REPLY

To the above mentioned article, Mr. Essop Mia has replied as under:[3]

COMMENT BY "THE STAR"

[1] For the text, *vide* "Telegram to Pietersburg Indians", 11-8-1907

[2] For the text, *vide* "Telegram to Potchefstroom Indians", 11-8-1907

[3] Here followed "Letter to *Rand Daily Mail*", 12-8-1907

Immediately, *The Star* published a long note on the *Daily Mail* article. It is given below:[1]

> The passive resistance movement initiated by the British Indian Association has so far been effective, and the leaders of the Indians are sanguine that the Act will not be enforced: to its final issue—the imprisonment and expulsion of those who have not complied with compulsory registration. It is held that the methods resorted to in the capital to induce the Indians to comply with the new law resulted in only about 70 registering. The Indians in Pietersburg and Zoutpansberg refused to register. Their brethren of Potchefstroom and Klerksdorp have notified their intention of falling into line. The Indians in Johannesburg are numerous, and in many instances wealthy, and they have resolved to resist the law. A good deal of speculation is being indulged in among Indians as to whether the Government will extend the operation of the Act to Johannesburg. The Government is proceeding gradually, and when Mr. Chamney, of the Indian Registration Office, reports, some definite action will be taken, So far there is no indication that the Government will hesitate in requiring the Indians in Johannesburg to register.
>
> Indian merchants arc gradually preparing for the eventuality that may require their leaving the country. Mr. Chamnay, a Parsee, and a senior partner in Chamnay & Co., wholesale merchants, informed a Star representative: today that he has cancelled his oversea orders, and is reducing his stock to such dimensions that it can be easily handled. His example is being generally followed. At the same time the Indian merchants give an emphatic denial to the statement published by a contemporary that they are refusing to pay their debts or contemplate doing so. One merchant paid bills this morning aggregating ,£437, and last week he met accounts standing at £681. Another paid £700 this morning. No such advice has been tendered to any class of Indians by the Association, and the executive were astonished at the suggestion.
>
> Mr. M. K. Gandhi, the well-known Indian barrister, is the leader of the passive resistance movement. He has certainly marshalled his forces well, and the Indians as a rule are prepared to follow him to the extreme.

All this proves that the strength displayed by Indians is now bearing fruit.

VREDEDORP ORDINANCE

The problem of this Ordinance is now over. The original [Bill] has been dropped and a new one passed. According to this, it will not be possible to oust Indians for four years, and after that period compensation will be allowed for damages suffered by Indians. As a notice of four years is given, the compensation will include not the

[1] The text is reproduced from the English section of *Indian Opinion.*

loss of trade or dues, but the value of buildings constructed. Therefore, Vrededorp Indian merchants should now take it that they have been given four years' respite. The credit for this success goes to Mr. Ritch. This is the fruit of his persevering work in England. The provision that, after four years, no Coloured person will be able to stay except as a servant has been retained. That provision will not be removed. This is shown by Mr. Smuts' reply. But four years is a long period. "If the Indian heroes go to the gaol-palace,"[1] Indians may be able to stay on at Vrededorp also. That would be an extra gain, of course, a gift in addition to the salver of pearls.

M. S. COOVADIA

News is received from home that the wife of Mr. M. S. Coovadia, the Treasurer of the Association, has passed away. I am grieved to give this information and condole with Mr. Coovadia in his bereavement.

MAHOMED ESSOP SHAHERI

Mr. Mahomed Essop Shaheri, who is a member of the Hamidia Islamic Society, is going on a pilgrimage to Mecca towards the end of this month. I wish him success in his undertaking.

HAMIDIA MEETING

The Hamidia Islamic Society has been exerting itself with full vigour in the matter of the new law. Every week it holds meetings which Indians of all communities attend. At the meeting held last Sunday, Emam Abdool Cadir took the chair. Mr. Gandhi explained the position. He was followed by Mr. Essop Mia. He said that people must maintain all their courage even if Mr. Gandhi were to be gaoled or deported this time. Money also was needed, and those who had it ought to give it. Thereafter the meeting was addressed by Moulvi Saheb Ahmed Mukhtiar and Maharaj Ram Sundar Pundit. After a short speech by Mr. Amod Coovadia, praising the efforts of Mr. Polak, the Chairman declared the meeting closed.

WHAT ABOUT DEPENDANTS OF THOSE GOING TO GAOL?

The reply to this question has been given several times in these columns. But the question is asked again and hence I repeat the reply. As I understand the matter, those who are ready to go to gaol will have

[1] This appears to be quoted from one of the poems submitted for the prize competition, *vide* "Prize Poem on New Law", 22-6-1907

made all possible arrangements. The responsibility to be borne by the community will therefore be limited. It will not happen that all the men in an establishment or a locality are arrested at the same time. If this assumption is right, the families and property of those who are arrested will be looked after by their friends and relatives. We know that this is what happens when a person is arrested under some other law. However, that is not enough. The Association will indeed look after the affairs of anyone arrested for defying the new law. Where his family lives, what its condition is, and whether there is anyone to look after it—the Association will make all these inquiries. In case the family is poor, arrangements for its maintenance will be made. In other words, the man arrested under the new law stands the chance of double aid: his shop and family will be looked after to his satisfaction, and if the occasion requires it, he will have the benefit of the donations that may be received as a result of the offers made by brave men like Mr. Parsee Rustomjee. In this struggle we are to sacrifice ourselves for the sake of truth. Hence, at every step, we shall receive God's help. Such help He does not Himself give by coming down into this world in person. Rather, living in the hearts of men, He inspires them to do deeds of benefaction. The fact that questions such as the above are raised shows that this is the first time that we have undertaken public work of such magnitude. There is, therefore, some reason for fear. But a little reflection will make it plain to all that there is no reason for losing one's nerve. The question has also been asked as to what will happen if all the 13,000 Indians are sent to gaol simultaneously, Who willthen look after the children? This question results from sheer fear. Such a question will never occur to anyone with the slightest faith in God. How should it then be raised by the Indian, who always lives in fear of God? We shall not have the good fortune of 13,000 Indians being arrested simultaneously; and in case this happens, let us all remember that there is the Almighty to look after those that may be left behind. If such a question can be asked, one may as well ask who will look after the dependants if, with an earthquake, all the 13,000 Indians were to disappear. What great crime have the arrested persons committed that their children or their property alone should go uncared for? But supposing they have to suffer this, why should we not render that much patriotic service? If we do not, how shall we command respect and honour? How shall we be regarded as patriots? Therefore:

If the lamp of love is lighted in the heart,
Love dearer than life,
On the side of courage will the Almighty be,

It's ever so, my friends.

BRAVE INDIAN

Having been asked at the Permit Office to give his finger prints, Bakhtawar, an Indian from Calcutta, refused to comply. Then he was asked to apply under the new law. This too he refused to do. Every Indian ought to have such courage.

EFFORTS IN LONDON

A vigorous agitation is being carried on in London against the obnoxious law. Questions are constantly being asked by many Members [in Parliament]. In reply to one question, Mr. Churchill said that the Imperial Government could not interfere with the implementation of the law. I find that people have been a little scared by such a reply. But there is no reason for being scared. For, in the first place, we are relying on our own courage in carrying on the fight. Whether the Imperial Government intervenes or not, we shall not do what we believe to be evil. In the second place, though the Government may not interfere with the enactment of the law, it cannot but do so if the law results in oppression. If it does not, its prestige will be lost and ultimately the British Empire will come to an end. The only interpretation I can put on Mr. Churchill's reply is that, whatever his public utterances, it will be impossible for him to avoid intervention at the right time. That right time will come after we go to gaol.

NEED FOR CAUTION

The case against Mr. Suleman Wadi of Krugersdorp for selling liquor to a Native was heard on Wednesday. Two white and two Native detectives deposed that he had sold half a bottle of liquor. Mr. Stegmann and Mr. Gandhi appeared on his behalf. They tried hard. It was said in evidence that the sale of liquor was against religion. The bank accountant and other whites deposed in their evidence that Mr. Wadi was a very respectable person. The fact appears to be that the case against Mr. Wadi has been concocted and that he is innocent. However, the magistrate found him guilty and sentenced him to six months' imprisonment. Mr. Wadi has gone in appeal. The result cannot be predicted. But every Indian has to be cautious. The whites as well as the Natives will not be afraid of trapping other people to serve their own interest. As Mr. Wadi is innocent, he has nothing to be ashamed of. Shame lies not in being gaoled, but in committing a crime. It is true that he has been put to unnecessary expense and that people not knowing the facts may think ill of him.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 17-8-1907

113. LETTER TO "INDIAN OPINION"

JOHANNESBURG,
August 17, 1907

THE EDITOR
INDIAN OPINION

SIR,

I beg to enclose herewith for publication copy of the correspondence[1] that has passed between General Smuts and myself regarding the Asiatic Law Amendment Act. The question, in my humble opinion, has assumed more than parochial importance. Up to the last moment, I shall continue to believe that the humanity of the Colonists will get the upper hand of their prejudice and that, if my countrymen undergo the suffering they seem to have resolved upon doing, the justice of their claims will be recognised. But, whether this is so or not, I can only give one advice, and that is to prefer fearlessly the fulfilment of their solemn declaration to serving their self-interest.

It is, therefore, necessary that my countrymen should know the emphatic warning[2] given by General Smuts in his letter. It is also, perhaps, necessary for the public, in whose name the Act has been passedand is being administered, to know that the alternative I have humbly ventured to offer completely meets the difficulty. It identifies every Asiatic resident in the Colony and, unlike the Asiatic Act, it determines once for all the number of Asiatics who (except those few who may be able to take advantage of the educational clause of the Immigration Bill) will be entitled to remain in the Colony. The bedrock question, therefore, so far as I am in a position to see, is not one of finger-prints or other details, but it is, broadly, whether the Government should at all meet Indian sentiment, unrepresented though Indians are at the polls, or whether, if the Government do not, Indians, to be true to their God and themselves, will sacrifice all.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 24-8-1907

[1] *Vide* letters to Private Secretary to General Smuts, 8-8-1907 ; 15-8-1907
[2] *Vide* footnote to "Letter to Private Secretary to General Smuts", 15-8-1907

114. LETTER TO "THE STAR"[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
August 19, 1907

TO
THE EDITOR
THE STAR
[JOHANNESBURG]

SIR,

In honouring by a leaderette what you please to call my "scheme"[2] with reference to the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, you have done it and me less than justice by studying it superficially. By admitting the clauses, as per my draft, into the Immigration Bill, the Government get the legal right to recall every permit and, in place thereof, to issue certificates of domicile to every *bona fide* Asiatic resident of the Transvaal. What form such certificates should take has, if you will re-read my draft, been left to the Government to fix by regulation. The question, therefore, of finger-prints is not made an issue at all nor, so far as I am concerned, has it ever been a fundamental point, the main objection being against the compulsion and the odour of criminality about the Act. The draft submitted by me would enable the Government to ascertain the exact number of Asiatics entitled to claim domiciliary rights in the Colony andsuch Asiatics would be completely identified. What the draft does leave out are the elaborate machinery and the penalties provided in the Asiatic Registration Act, and it leaves children under the age of 16 free from molestation, and avoids the pin-prick inspection, with the power to take, at every street corner, identification particulars contemplated by the Registration Act. But I submit that any surreptitious entry on the part of children is completely checked by reason of the provision that, on attaining the age of 16 years, they must also take out certificates of domicile, and by stating on the certificates of domicile the number of children under 16 years. But, if my scheme be considered faulty, the principle of embodying identification legislation in the Immigration

[1] This was reproduced in Indian Opinion, 24-8-1907.

[2] The reference is to the proposal submitted with "Letter to Private Secretary to General Smuts", 8-8-1907

Bill can hardly be so considered, and any defects that I may have overlooked can be remedied. The question, therefore, still remains whether the public will take sufficient interest in the welfare of Indian subjects of His Majesty to seriously study the alternative proposed.

With reference to the other portion of your leaderette[1], I can only say that, if an honourable status be [not][2] guaranteed to my countrymen, no matter how humble they may be, imprisonment, deportation, and any other similar calamity would be comparatively a boon as against a surrender of their self-respect and a reversal of their solemn declaration. Of one thing I can give an emphatic assurance, namely, that there is not a single Indian who does not dislike the Act from the bottom of his heart. I know most of those who have accepted registration under the Act in Pretoria, and I know this that they admit having committed a crime against their nationality and their God, but they have done so because, in their own words, they prized their pockets more than their honour.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Star, 20-8-1907

115. APPEAL TO INDIAN MUSLIMS[3]

JOHANNESBURG,
August 19, 1907

We, the undersigned Mahomedan merchants, and being Chairman, Secretary, and members of the Hamidia Islamic Society of

[1] This read: ". . . The grave blunder that Mr. Gandhi and his fellow-leaders have made has been in supposing that there was no limit to the length to which British Liberals could be induced to go in support of tactics borrowed from the English Radical Nonconformists. Now that he has discovered his mistake, we trust he will retire from an untenable position, or at any rate leave the uncultured section of his countrymen to determine their future course of action according to their own common sense. Should the majority of them decide to set the law at defiance and bear the consequence—including the surrender of their trading rights—the Transvaal Government will be legally and morally guiltless. . . ."

[2] This is in the *Indian Opinion* version, obviously an omission here.

[3] Presumably, this was drafted by Gandhiji who wanted it to be circulated in India; *vide* "Suggestion to Readers", 24-8-1907 and "Hamidia Islamic Society's Letter", 24-8-1907.

the Transvaal, hereby bring to your notice the state to which Mahomedan Indians will be reduced under the Asiatic Law Amendment Act. We presume that you have acquainted yourself with the principal objections to the Act. But we will draw your attention to one especially which affects us as Moslems. It is the section which applies the Act to Turkish Mahomedans, whereas it exempts Turkish Christians and Jews.

The Act, indeed, applies to all Indians and, therefore, the whole of the Indian public is concerned with it. But it applies with double rigour to the Mahomedans in that it specially insults our religion and hurts the self-respect of Mahomedan Indians more than others in that they form the wealthier and more respectable portion of the community.

We may state that, fortunately, in South Africa, there is no antipathy between Mahomedans and Hindus. We all live together in peace and friendship as Indians, and associate together with freedom and carry on a joint battle against prejudice and oppression against us. If, therefore, we lay stress upon the grievance as it affects us, we do so only in order to draw the attention of Mahomedans all over India to our precarious position, in order that we secure your most active assistance in our struggle. And we venture to ask you, as Mahomedans and Indians, to extend to us your sympathy by pleading our case before the Government and in any other manner you may consider desirable. Whilst we are receiving much help from England, even the white Colonists who sympathise with us ask what India, our Motherland, is doing for us.

We remain,

EMAM ABDOOL CADIR SALIM BAWAZEER, CHAIRMAN
M. P. FANCY, SECRETARY
EBRAHIM SALEJEE COOVADIA, TREASURER
ESSOP ISMAIL MIS, PATRON
ABDOOL GANI, OF M. C. CAMROODEEN & CO., PATRON
[AND 33 OTHERS]

Indian Opinion, 31-8-1907

116. LETTER TO "THE STAR"[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
August 20, 1907

TO
THE EDITOR
THE STAR
[JOHANNESBURG]

SIR,

I am obliged once more reluctantly to trespass upon your courtesy. May I say that you have still not fully read the draft[2]? What I have suggested is not a repeal of some of the provisions of the Asiatic Act, and thus having a little of that and more of the Immigration Bill, but a total repeal of the former, holding, as I do, that my proposal gives everything to the Colonists without giving serious offence to my countrymen. It is not possible for me to burden you with long extracts from what has been written by my fellow-workers and myself to show that, though the question of finger-prints has always been treated as a very serious incident in a highly objectionable Act, it has never been as one of paramount importance *per se*, except when it was intended to operate as a compulsory requirement. You will further easily recollect the fact that we voluntarily attached finger-prints to the permits that were issued under Lord Milner's advice.[3] Then it was a matter of doing it voluntarily and then, too, of giving [impression of] only one thumb. In the Asiatic Act, it is a question of giving ten finger-prints, and that, also, not once but as often as the authorities wish to exact them. Even if I advised my countrymen to give ten finger-prints voluntarily, I feel my advice will be summarily rejected. I need not, however, go further. I am sorry that the Indian side of the question cannot yet be studied seriously and dispassionately. My countrymen can only say that, though the whole of the white Transvaal be against us, God is still with us.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Star, 21-8-1907

[1] This was reproduced *in Indian Opinion*, 24-8-1907.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to General Smuts", 8-8-1907
[3] *Vide* "The British Indian Association and Lord Milner", 11-6-1903.

117. LETTER TO "RAND DAILY MAIL"

[JOHANNESBURG,]
August 20, 1907

TO

THE EDITOR
RAND DAILY MAIL
[JOHANNESBURG]

SIR,

In the leaderette with which you have honoured my proposal submitted to General Smuts, you advise the Asiatic population to "think better of a resolve made in a moment of enthusiasm and probably without a full realisation of the seriousness of offering organised resistance to the law in a country with a large semi-savage native population". It is strange that you should consider a resolve adhered to for the last ten months as one "made in a moment of enthusiasm".

The reason, however, that I write these few lines is to ascertain whether it is possible for you to inform the public as to the connection between the "seriousness of offering organised resistance to the law" and a "large semi-savage native population". I wonder whether that population is to be set upon British Indians because they cannot bring themselves to accept a law whose effect is to unman them!

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Rand Daily Mail, 22-8-1907

118. PETITION TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COLONIES[1]

P. O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
August 23, 1907

TO
THE RIGHT HON'BLE THE SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR THE COLONIES
LONDON

THE PETITION OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF THE TRANSVAAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT:

The Committee of the British Indian Association of the Transvaal respectfully approaches His Majesty's Government regarding the Immigrants' Restriction Bill passed by the Transvaal Parliament.

The said Committee humbly approached both Houses of the said Parliament with respect to the measure, as will more fully appear on reference to copies of the petitions[2] presented to the said Houses and annexed hereto, marked A and B.

The said Committee respectfully submits that the said Bill is open to objection on the following grounds, in that:

(1) It gives permanence to the Asiatic Law Amendment Act.

(2) It disregards the right of residence of those British Indians who settled in the Transvaal before the war and, in many cases, even paid £3 as the price of their residence in virtue of Law 3 of 1885, but who have not been able to return to the Transvaal either because they, having applied, have not received permits to return, or because they have not yet applied for such permits under the Peace Preservation Ordinance.

(3) It does not recognise any of the Indian languages as part of the educational test required by the Bill.

(4) Sub-section 4 of Section 2[3] of the Bill requires even Indians

[1] This was published in *Indian Opinion*, 31-8-1907 and a Gujarati version of it in the issue of 24-8-1907.

[2] *Vide* "Petition to Transvaal Legislative Assembly", 9-7-1907 and "Petition to Transvaal Legislative Council", 22-7-1907

[3] *Vide* Appendix C to the petition, 23-8-1907

who may pass the education test prescribed by the Bill to be subject to the Asiatic Law Amendment Act.

(5) It makes no provision for facilities to the Indian merchants already settled in the Transvaal for temporarily importing confidential clerks and assistants or domestic servants.

(6) Sub-section C of Section 6 of the Bill gives the power for physical and forcible deportation of those affected by the Asiatic Law Amendment Act.

ARGUMENT ON THE ABOVE

The said Committee would now crave leave to discuss seriatim the aforementioned grounds of objection.

FIRST GROUND

As His Majesty's Government is aware, the Asiatic Law Amendment Act continues to cause the greatest irritation to the British Indian community residing in the Transvaal. Its provisions are felt to be so insulting and injurious to the self-respect of that community, that many of its members, rather than accept registration under it, are prepared humbly to suffer the penalty of non-registration, even at the risk of losing all their worldly prospects. The measure, when it was first introduced, was meant to be of a temporary nature, and was resorted to in order not to anticipate the verdict of a popularly elected Assembly on Asiatic Immigration, and in the absence of any other law like the Bill under discussion. The very first section of the Bill renders the Asiatic Law Amendment Act permanent, and retains the provisions also of the Peace Preservation Ordinance, in so far as they may be necessary for the administration of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act.

SECOND GROUND

It is common knowledge that many British Indians who left the Transvaal at the outbreak of hostilities have not yet returned to the country of their adoption. Many of them paid £3 to the old Dutch Government for the purpose of settling in the country. Owing to the serious obstacles placed in the way of their getting permits under the Peace Preservation Ordinance—although European aliens received them practically for the asking—they have not yet been able to return to the Transvaal. Some of them have not even applied. These refugees would, under the Bill, become prohibited immigrants for want of knowledge of some European language. The prohibition will operate very harshly against deserving British subjects possessing vested rights. In thus cancelling the right of domicile, the Bill goes further than similar legislation in [the] Cape Colony.

THIRD GROUND

In refusing to recognise Indian languages, the Bill draws an invidious and unjustifiable distinction.

FOURTH GROUND

In the humble opinion of the said Committee, Sub-section 4 of Section 2 is very vague and difficult of interpretation. It is, however, evident that it aims, amongst other things, at Indians of attainments. By requiring them to comply with the terms of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, it takes away with the other hand what it gives with the one, for it is hardly conceivable that any Indian, having received a liberal education, will ever accept the terms of that Act. Nor is it possible to see any reason for subjecting such Indians to the Act, whose object is to identify Indian residents in the Transvaal, for such Indians, by reason of their knowledge of a European language, carry on their own persons marks of identification. The Asiatic Law Amendment Act is supposed to be necessary because of the illiteracy of the majority of Asiatics residing in the Colony. To require educated Indians to comply with the Act is, in the humble opinion of the said Committee, a wanton insult, and an indirect mode of depriving Indians of the benefit of the educational clause of the Bill.

FIFTH GROUND

It cannot be denied that want of facilities to Indians entitled to reside in the Transvaal to import temporary assistance would be a serious grievance.

SIXTH GROUND

Sub-section (c) of Section 6 did not appear in the original draft. As has been pointed out above, Indians in the Transvaal at carrying on a life-and-death struggle in respect of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act. It is surmised that thousands of Indians are prepared to suffer the hardships of imprisonment rather than submit to the said Act. To many the Transvaal is their home, where they earn an honest livelihood. For them to be turned out of the country is to make them, perhaps, face starvation, certainly to ruin their prospects in life. Whilst the Asiatic Law Amendment Act provides for a notice of removal from the Colony for failure to take out the registration certificate required to be taken out by the Act, disregard of such notice renders the delinquent liable to be imprisoned. Sub-section (c) above referred to gives the local Government *power to physically and forcibly deport at his own expense* any person disregarding notice of removal under

the Asiatic Law Amendment Act. Thus, it is humbly submitted that the sub-section in question is not only a cruel provision in itself, but it is also extremely unfair, in that it indirectly amends the Asiatic Law Amendment Act very greatly to the disadvantage of those affected by it. The said Committee feels sure that, had such an amendment been made in the Act itself, it would not have received the Royal sanction. The said Committee, therefore, trusts that the method adopted under the said sub-section to take extraordinary powers under the said Act will be considered by His Majesty's Government to be much more objectionable. Moreover, the effect of forcible deportation would amount to a confiscation of the property of the deported, and there seems to be no place provided to deport persons to. The Cape and Natal will not receive such persons. These would, therefore, be forcibly sent back to India to face starvation. This deportation for a venial offence (if it be an offence at all) will, therefore, be much worse than deportation for heinous offences, for, in the latter, the persons condemned are at least housed and fed.

GENERAL REMARKS

The said Committee is humbly of opinion that, since the British occupation of the country, His Majesty's Government have neglected or disregarded the interests of British Indians, as being the weaker party, in deference to the clamours of interested persons, because they happened to be strong, and this in despite of repeated promises and assurances made and given to the Indians. The said Committee, moreover, respectfully draws the attention of His Majesty's Government to the fact that Indians are totally unrepresented in the House of Assembly, that not a word was said by any member thereof in favour of the petition presented on its behalf to that Honourable House, and that a similar fate overtook a similar petition presented to the Honourable the Legislative Council, although that Honourable House has been constituted for, among other things, the protection of interests not represented in the Lower and Elected House. Under the circumstances, the said Committee respectfully submits that British Indians have a right to receive special protection from His Majesty's Government as the central power in the Empire.

PRAYER

The said Committee, therefore, respectfully prays that the said Bill may be disallowed and that the good offices of His Majesty's

Government be used to secure such an amendment of the Bill as to relieve the present tension adversely affecting Indian subjects of His Majesty the King-Emperor owing to the Asiatic Law Amendment Act.

But, if His Majesty's Government find it impossible to secure relief for the community represented by the said Committee, in its humble opinion, it were better for them and for the sake of peace within the Empire that Indian subjects of the Crown were withdrawn from the Transvaal and fully compensated for dispossession of vested and acquired rights, either from the local or the Imperial Exchequer.

And for this act of justice and mercy, the petitioner shall as in duty bound for ever pray, etc.

[*I have, etc.*,]

ESSOP ISMAIL MIA,
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

APPENDIX C

Extracts from the Bill dealt with in the foregoing Petition:

Section 1. The Peace Preservation Ordinance, 1903, shall. be and is hereby repealed; provided that no such repeal shall affect or abridge any powers or jurisdiction by the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, 1907, conferred for the purpose of carrying out such Act; but the said Ordinance shall for all the purposes of such Act be deemed to remain of full force and effect.

Section 2. Sub-sections I and 4. "Prohibited immigrant" shall mean and include any of the following classes of persons desiring to enter or entering this Colony after the date of the taking effect of this Act:

(1) Any person who when asked whether within or outside this Colony by a duly authorised officer shall be unable through deficient education to write out (from dictation or otherwise) and sign in the characters of an European language an application for permission to enter this Colony or such other document as such officer may require; provided that for the purposes of this Sub-section, Yiddish shall be accepted as an European language.

(2) Any person who at the date of his entering or attempting to enter this Colony is subject or would if he entered this Colony be subject to the provisions of any law in force at such date which might render him liable either at such date or thereafter if found therein to be removed from or to be ordered to leave this Colony whether on conviction of an offence against such law or for failure to comply with its provisions or otherwise in accordance with its provisions; provided that such conviction be not the result of the commission by such person elsewhere than in this

Colony of an offence for which he has received a free pardon.

Section 6. Any person who

(a) is convicted after the date of the taking effect of this Act of a contravention of sections *three, thirteen* [and] or *twenty-one* of the Immorality Ordinance, 1903, or any amendment of such sections; or

(b) is deemed by the Minister on reasonable grounds to be dangerous to the peace, order and good government of this Colony if he remain therein; or

(c) having been ordered under any law to leave this Colony fail[s] to comply with the terms of such order; may be arrested and removed from this Colony by warrant under the hand of the Minister and pending removal may be detained in such custody as may be prescribed by regulation; provided that no such person as is in paragraph (b) hereof described shall be removed from this Colony, except on the order of the Governor, provided further that every such person arrested shall be discharged from custody unless an order be made by the Governor for his removal from this Colony within ten days after his arrest.

Section 11. Any person ordered to be removed from this Colony under this Act and any other person who shall have been convicted under section *seven* of aiding or abetting him in entering or remaining in the Colony in contravention of this Act shall be liable to pay all expenditure incurred by the Government in carrying out such removal whether from the Colony or South Africa or in the detention within the Colony or elsewhere of any person pending his removal; and the amount of such expenditure on production to the Sheriff of the certificate of an officer of the department stating the items and total amount of such expenditure shall be recovered by execution levied on the property within the Colony of the person so liable in manner provided for execution levied under a judgement of the Supreme Court; and the proceeds of such execution shall be paid by the Sheriff to the Treasurer who, after deduction of the amount of expenditure aforesaid and the costs of execution, shall remit the balance to the person so liable or to any person appointed by him to receive same.

Colonial Office Records: C. O. 291/122

119. CABLE TO S.A.B.I. COMMITTEE[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
After *August 23, 1907*]

TO
THE SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE
[LONDON]

IMMIGRATION BILL SENT ROYAL SANCTION. PETITION[2] FORWARDED. BILL AFFECTS DOMICILED INDIANS. PHYSICAL DEPORTATION PASSIVE RESISTERS SPECIALLY INSERTED. PRAYER DISALLOWANCE OR COMPENSATION IMPERIAL EXCHEQUER.

[BIAS]

Colonial Office Records: C. O. 291/122

120. THE SUGGESTED COMPROMISE

We publish in another column correspondence that has passed between the Transvaal Colonial Secretary and Mr. Gandhi.[3] It is a great pity that General Smuts has not accepted the suggestion made by Mr. Gandhi. Although it is not made in the name of the community, we think that it affords either party a safe way out of a serious difficulty. General Smuts relies upon his ability to enforce the law in full and, therefore, rejects Mr. Gandhi's proposal. We cannot help remarking that the rejection of so reasonable a solution shows in what low esteem Indians in the Transvaal are held by General Smuts. Accordingly, we consider that it is now more than ever the dutyof Indians in the Transvaal to prosecute their campaign of non-submission to the law to the uttermost end. The fixed determination of the Transvaal Government can do no harm to those Indians who are already reconciled to sacrifice, no matter how great. Neither imprisonment nor deportation need occasion the slightest fear in the minds of those Indians who place their honour above everything else.

Mr. Gandhi has raised, in submitting his draft, one main issue, namely, whether the local Government will condescend to consult the wishes and sentiments of the Indian community in carrying out their

[1] This was forwarded to the Colonial Office by L. W. Ritch on August 31.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] *Vide* letters to Private Secretary to General Smuts, 8-8-1907 and ; 15-8-1907

intention of identifying those Indians who are entitled to reside in the Transvaal. General Smuts says no. It is now for Indians to give their answer. It is open to them to lead a life of utter degradation in the Transvaal, or to make a supreme effort to be counted as human beings and citizens of the British Empire.

Indian Opinion, 24-8-1907

121. OUTSPOKEN SYMPATHY

The Friend, of Bloemfontein, has performed a public service and has earned the sincere gratitude of British Indians by the warm-hearted way in which it has approved of the manner whereby our Transvaal brethren have shown their abhorrence of a measure repugnant to their self-respect. *The Friend* has demonstrated its courage and public spirit by devoting a series of leading articles to a consideration of the subject from which it concludes that British Indians are perfectly justified in protesting, by means of "passive resistance", against a humiliating law. We commend The *Friend's* remarks[1], which appear elsewhere, to the notice of our Transvaal contemporaries.

Indian Opinion, 24-8-1907

122. SUGGESTION TO READERS

In our opinion, the Gujarati section of *Indian Opinion is* at present rendering invaluable service. This claim will probably appear exaggerated. However, the statement is justified. The Transvaal Indians are at present carrying on a heroic struggle and this paper is engaged in furthering that struggle in every possible manner. We therefore deem it to be the duty of every Indian to read every line of it pertaining to the struggle. Whatever is read is afterwards to be acted upon, and the issue, after being read, is to be preserved and not thrownaway.We recommend that certain articles and translations should be read and re-read. Moreover, our cause needs to be discussed in every home in India. Our readers can do much to bring this about. They can send the required number of copies of *Indian Opinion* to their friends and, advising them to read them, seek all possible help from them. The present issue includes a letter addressed

[1] Not reproduced here. *Vide* also "True Friend", 24-8-1907.

by the Hamidia Islamic Society to Indian Muslims.[1] We think it necessary that hundreds of copies of this number should be sent out to India.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 24-8-1907

123. SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE

This Committee has been working very hard. It was only through its efforts that the Vrededorp Indians were saved from ruin. The Committee is still continuing its helpful work. Mr. Ritch is indefatigable. Obviously the Committee needs more money for its work. Considerable monetary aid has been sent from the Transvaal. More help from that source should not be expected at present. The Transvaal fight is a fight for the whole of South Africa. We therefore urge the Natal Indian Congress to send more money. Our brethren in the Cape have not at all done their duty in this matter. It will not be out of place for them and for the friends in Delagoa Bay to raise contributions and send some money. That will prove that they too are ready to help.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 24-8-1907

124. MR. GANDHI'S SUGGESTION

The letter addressed by Mr. Gandhi to General Smuts and the reply and the counter-reply[2] that followed have been commented upon in the *Leader, The Star* and the [*Rand*] *Daily Mail.* General Smuts' letter is a downright threat. It proves that it is quite a difficult thing to implement the law. One can send a score or two to prison. But however brave, General Smuts cannot have the courage to punish thousands of men. He therefore asserts that the law will be fully enforced. If that is so, why has he been sitting still so long? Why are changes being made in the immigration law? Why are his officersso anxious to issue new registers? There is a big difference between the courage he professes and his actual deeds. He could not have given a reply other than the one he has. For, the battle is on at present, and for the time being he has got to keep up appearances. It remains to be seen what he can actually do if the Indian community remains

[1] *Vide* "Appeal to Indian Muslims", 19-8-1907
[2] *Vide* letters to Private Secretary to General Smuts, 8-8-1907 and ; 15-8-1907

unshaken at the critical moment.

The Press comments also show that their strategy has now shifted from abuse and ridicule to threats. The papers are now trying to persuade us that General Smuts will not yield his point, and therefore the Indian community had better forsake its God and submit to General Smuts' enslaving law. The *Daily Mail* goes so far as to ask the Indians, by way of threat, to remember that the Transvaal is inhabited by a large number of barbarous Kaffirs.[1] We call this senility. The whites may be said to have grown grey implementing the law, but their object has not been attained so far. They have therefore grown delirious. What otherwise is the connection between our struggle and the Kaffirs? Do they mean to incite them to attack us? Only a man lying ill in bed will utter such words.

However, in the light of General Smuts' reply, we are to be particularly careful to remember one thing, viz., that success will be ours only if the Transvaal Indians remain really firm, forsaking their wealth, suffering hardships of gaol life, and taking pride in being deported. All this sacrifice is possible only if one has living faith in God. Everything depends, in the last resort, on each Indian's faith, be he a Mahomedan or a Hindu. Every misfortune can be conquered with the weapon of faith. That faith is to be proved not by words, but by deeds.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 24-8-1907

125. CAN WE MOVE PRIVY COUNCIL?

Sir Raymond West has written a letter to Mr. Ritch which is worth reading. Sir Raymond was a Judge of the Bombay High Court. He is a renowned lawyer. He is of opinion that the Indian community can raise the issue that the new law is null and void inasmuch as it is repugnant to British principles. If this can be done, the step is doubtless worth taking. But we are sorry to have to say that it will lead to nothing. Eminent lawyers in the Transvaal are against such a move. We can therefore build no hopes on Sir Raymond's opinion. The real Privy Council of Indians is the courage of the community. And Godis the only Judge who will redress our grievances. Trust in Him is like a great counsel whose pleading will never go in vain. All the same, for the satisfaction of the community a suggestion has been made to the Committee to seek the advice of some prominent counsel in England.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to *Rand Daily Mail*", 20-8-1907

This will need money. Accordingly, if aid is sent to the Committee, as requested by us, it will be possible to ascertain whether a test case can be preferred or not.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 24-8-1907

126. CAN OBNOXIOUS LAW BE ENACTED IN NATAL?

In reply to Mr. Haggar, Mr. Moore stated that the Natal Government would consider the introduction of a law in Natal similar to that in the Transvaal. That is the beauty of the obnoxious law. Its stink does not fill the Transvaal alone, but spreads all round like that of a decaying corpse. This move shows

(1) that a great responsibility rests on the Transvaal Indians;
(2) that, if the Transvaal Indians falter, the law will be enacted everywhere; and
(3) that the Transvaal question is the question of the whole of South Africa.

The Transvaal Indians therefore ought to remain firm despite any possible calamities and the other Indians ought to regard this question as their own and render utmost help.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 24-8-1907

127. TRUE FRIEND[1]

We give a translation of an article in *The Friend of* Bloemfontein, which we recommend everyone to read with close attention. The name of the paper is *The Friend,* and it has acted like a friend of the Indian community. It is not likely that any particular good will result from the article. However, the journal wields a large influence. The impression that has been made on the mind of its editor has also been made on the minds of thousands of white men. But they will not speak out yet. They will do it when we begin playing our true part. From the article in *The Friend* one should know that, if the Indian community now retraces its steps in the least, the Indian nation will beput to shame and its three hundred millions judged by what the

[1] *Vide* "Outspoken Sympathy", 24-8-1907

13,000 do here. The question of paying compensation, which the *Friend* has raised, is likely to be raised still more forcefully.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 24-8-1907

128. HAMIDIA ISLAMIC SOCIETY'S LETTER

The Hamidia Islamic Society of the Transvaal has addressed a very important letter to Muslim individuals and organizations in India.[1] We invite the attention of journals and leaders in India to the same. The Transvaal Indians are at present engaged in such a serious struggle that they need help from every nook and corner of India. The aid so far received, in our opinion, is not enough. Our countrymen are so much occupied with problems at home that they have little time to devote to other things. However, we hope that they will give some of their time to our cause.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 24-8-1907

129. ESTCOURT APPEAL[2]

The Supreme Court has poured cold water over the intention of the Estcourt Local Board to appeal to the Privy Council. The necessary permission for appeal having been refused by the Supreme Court, the Local Board feels crest-fallen. We offer congratulations to the Indians of Estcourt.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 24-8-1907

130. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

POTCHEFSTROOM AND KLERKSDORP

From these two places the Permit Office returned without securing any application for registration. The Potchefstroom papers say that the registration officers spent all their time smoking. Not even a prisoner could be got to register himself. The volunteers at Potchefstroom had already been active. Pietersburg did better than Pretoria; Potchefstroom surpassed Pietersburg; but Klerksdorp

[1] *Vide* "Appeal to Indian Muslims", 19-8-1907
[2] *Vide* "Estcourt Appeal",10-8-1907

excelled them all. For, the Indians at Klerksdorp did not even keep volunteers. They sought no outside help. They did not avail themselves of the help offered, and every Indian there of his own accord boycotted the Permit Office. Thus Klerksdorp stands above them all. Now, which place will the remaining towns excel? And how will they do it? Both these places had received telegrams[1] and they have answered them. Mr. E. N. Patel, an old resident of Potchefstroom, had run up to both places.

COMMENTS ON LETTER TO SMUTS

The *Leader* and *The Star* have commented on Mr. Gandhi's letter to General Smuts which has been published. Both papers say that Mr. Gandhi should advise the Indian community to submit to the law, considering General Smuts' reply to be final, for otherwise the Indian community would come to grief. The advice is all right as far as it goes. But those offering it forget that the Indian community does not depend on General Smuts. It is under the protection of God and not of General Smuts or the whites of the Transvaal. Their eagerness to make us submit to the law shows that they are inwardly afraid of the resistance offered by the Indian community.

GENERAL SMUTS' REPLY

The reply of General Smuts also is the sort of threat of which Indians need not in the least be afraid. His object is to make us accept the law at any cost. That is why he has been threatening us in various ways. He says that the law will be fully enforced. What does that mean? No one imagines that it will not be fully enforced. Everyone knows that not a single article of the law is going to be deleted. But the point is how a law can be enforced against those who will not submit to it. By sentencing them? If so, the Indians. say they fear neither gaol nor deportation. Of course, it will be possible to enforce it against those who are afraid. Such persons are to be taken as lost to us. We know that the law will be enforced against them, and thatis why we have been pleading with Indians not to submit to it. But one thing I can say with certainty: neither General Smuts nor anybody else will find it possible to imprison or deport 13,000 Indians. This is the general rule: a law can be enforced only where a large majority of people are willing to submit to it. I may point out that a law against stealing cannot work where all men are thieves. For example, men called thugs in certain parts of India, who practise thugging or cheating have not been subdued by any law. If it is thus possible for

[1] *Vide* telegrams to Pietersburg and Potchefstroom Indians, 11-8-1907

criminals to remain at large, what can be done to innocent people like the Indian community?

POSITION OF MERCHANTS

Some Indian merchants feel concerned, and many people are doubtful whether or not the former will hold out to the last. This is an occasion when a person who has more wealth will feel more anxious [than others]. The question is: How is one to cast off the yoke of money? Another trouble is that white merchants have discontinued supplying goods [on credit]. To me this is a welcome sign. So long the whites used only to take us lightly and believed that the Indians would not go to gaol. Now they are realizing, that we mean what we say. However, one has to consider what the Indian merchants themselves think in the matter. What if the white merchants stop supplying goods? This is one question. The simple answer to this is only to ask: What shall we do if, even after our submitting to the law, they do not supply goods? No one will ask such a question then. If so, it should not arise even today. It will not be surprising if they do not supply goods and one's business has to be closed down or curtailed. If any Indian thinks that the law may be repealed, or that there may be some gain to us, without our suffering any hardships for the sake of the community, he will be making a great mistake. We have prepared ourselves to suffer hardships. If we do not bear them willingly, we shall be obliged to suffer humiliation by the law, and to put up with the resulting disgrace. Anyone feeling anxious on this account shows that he has not yet understood the significance of the oath. How can those who are prepared for gaol feel concerned at not being able to get any supply of goods? The right thing for them to do is from this very day to stop buying goods of their own accord, so that they may not feel any difficulty later and may not run short of funds for paying their creditors with. We can win no honour without suffering loss of money, and there can be no relief in future unless we put up with these hardships. As days pass, we shall go through a variety of interesting experiences. We shall receive numerous threats. There will be heavy losses also. One has to die before one can go to paradise.[1] Similarly, it will be impossible to get the new law repealed unless we suffer loss of money, and the hardships of imprisonment and even of deportation.

MUNNIK'S REPRESENTATION

Mr. Munnik made a representation to Mr. Smuts to the effect

[1] A Gujarati saying.

that a law should be enacted to remove Indian traders to Locations and to limit their trade. Mr. Smuts replied that it was not possible to say what other laws should be made before the effect of the new law was known. But I can give a reply myself. Suppose all Indians leave the Transvaal, with only a few black sheep left behind. If that happens, those who remain will be treated as people unworthy of any respect, and allowed to stay on in some way or other. They will certainly not be permitted to bring other persons to live with them. That is, they will be allowed to live a dog's life here, and in a few years they will lose their foothold in the ordinary course of things. Now suppose most Indians hold their wealth dear and submit to the law. Then, they will certainly be doomed to the Locations. Who will then be able to oppose a law sending Indians to Locations? If some do so, who will listen to the frail voice of that reed? If many Indians oppose this law, they will doubtless be able to carry on their trade wherever they like and reasonable laws, applicable equally to all merchants—white or Coloured—will be enacted, and the Indian merchants will be able to stay on here with great honour and respect.

LAW OF DEPORTATION

The Immigration Bill has been passed by both Houses of Parliament. It is likely to be published in the *Gazette* on Friday. It will not come into force immediately, as it will be sent to England for approval. We now find in it one article under which the Government will be able to deport forcibly those who may be sentenced under the new law to leave the Transvaal. This is a new clause, and under it the Government will be able to effect forcible deportation of any Indian served with a notice. This is a fresh hardship. One cannot be definite whether this law will or will not be approved in England. If it is approved, however, the provision of deportation will apply to all. But it means nothing. If the Transvaal Government has the courage to imprison Indians, it will as well have the courage to deport them forcibly. Looking at the situation realistically, it can be presumed that the provision will be applied to the leaders only. A petition against the law is being sent to England by the British Indian Association,[1] and will have been probably despatched even before this letter appears in print.

FROM RUSTENBURG

From Rustenburg there is a telegram to say that, by God's grace, all Indians are firm in their opposition to registration.

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Secretary of State for Colonies", 23-8-1907

LETTER TO "THE STAR"

Mr. Gandhi has written the following letter[1] in reply to *The Star's* comment.

"THE STAR"

The Star has strongly criticized this letter of Mr. Gandhi asking why, if the giving of finger-prints was not the chief objection, so much emphasis was laid on the question till now. It adds that Mr. Gandhi's proposal cannot be considered practicable since, if children are not registered, and the police have no authority to make inquiries wherever they like and take finger-prints, there may be an influx of Indians on a large scale. To this Mr. Gandhi has again sent a rejoinder[2] to say that, though finger-prints are not the chief point, they certainly are one of the objectionable points. Moreover, there can be no compulsion to give finger-prints. In Lord Milner's time, the Indian community had agreed to give the thumb-impression voluntarily. Even voluntarily, Indians will not give ten-finger prints. The *Star* has not read the proposal carefully. But even if every white is against Indians, God is with them and that is enough.

MEETING OF ASSOCIATION

A meeting of the Association took place on Wednesday. Those present were Messrs Essop Mia, Abdool Gani, Naidoo, Shahaboodeen, Aswat, Malim Mahomed, Emam Abdool Cadir, Omarji Sale, Gulam Mahomed, M. P. Fancy, Kadodia, Musa Essakji, I. A. Kazi, Ameeroodeen, Vallabhram, Ambaidas and others. Mr. Gandhi read out the petition pertaining to the Immigration Bill, and sought permission to despatch it and to send telegrams[3] in connection with it. On Mr. Shahaboodeen's proposal, seconded by Mr. Fancy, permission was given by the meeting. On the proposal of Mr. Mahomed Shahaboodeen, seconded by Mr. Coovadia, Mr. Essop Mia's appointment as Chairman was confirmed. Mr. Polak was elected Assistant Honorary Secretary on the proposal of Mr. Emam Abdool Cadir, supported by Mr. Naidoo.

On Mr. Fancy's proposal, seconded by Mr. Omarji Sale, it was resolved to publish the accounts of the Association every month in *Indian Opinion*.

[1] For the text, *vide* "Letter to *The Star*",19-8-1907

[2] *Vide* "Letter to *The Star*", 20-8-1907.

[3] *Vide* "Cable to S.A.B.I. Committee", 23-8-1907

The proposal before the House of Commons to grant a loan to the Transvaal has been passed. But, while criticising it, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Lyttelton, Mr. Cox and other members spoke at length on the hardships suffered by Indians. Mr. Lyttelton, a former Secretary, said that it was the duty of the Imperial Government to protect the rights of Indians before the loan was sanctioned. The Government had failed in that duty. Mr. Cox suggested that it was necessary for the Imperial Government to recommend to the Dutch Government to pay, out of the loan of £5,000,000, damages to such Indians as might be deported from the Transvaal. These moves show that the Indian cause will receive support in England in proportion to the strength that the Indians display here.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 24-8-1907

131. LETTER TO JOHANNESBURG MUNICIPALITY

[JOHANNESBURG,
August 28, 1907]

[THE TOWN CLERK
JOHANNESBURG
SIR,]

The Committee of my Association has noticed in the papers the proposal of the General Purposes Committee that the Traffic By-laws may be so amended as to prevent British Indians, among others, from using first-class cabs. My Committee ventures to point out that such a by-law would draw an invidious distinction against British Indians, and would be an unnecessary insult to the community represented by my Association. I venture, therefore, to trust that the Town Council will be pleased not to accept the recommendation of the General Purposes Committee.

[*Yours, etc.,*
ESSOP ISMAIL MIA]
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 31-8-1907

132. THE IMMIGRATION PETITION

The British Indian Association of the Transvaal has lost no time in petitioning Lord Elgin[1] regarding the Immigrants' Restriction Bill of the Transvaal, which was gazetted as an Act on the 26th instant, containing the reservation clause that "it shall not take effect unless and until the Governor shall proclaim in the *Gazette* that it is His Majesty's pleasure not to disallow the same". It is of no force until the Royal pleasure becomes known. Lord Elgin, therefore, has now an opportunity of retrieving what we consider was an Imperial blunder in his having advised His Majesty to sanction the Asiatic Registration Act. Mr. Essop Ismail Mia, in the petition, has dealt with every point arising out of the Act. For the present, however, we propose to confine ourselves to the Act as it affects Indians domiciled in the Transvaal.

We recollect Mr. Duncan having stated emphatically that the Asiatic Registration Act was considered necessary because there was no Immigration Ordinance in force at the time, and that it was to be treated merely as a temporary step. It was also, undoubtedly, panic legislation to stop the so-called inflowing tide of Asiatic immigration at the rate, the Honourable Mr. Curtis told us, of at least 200 per month. It is a curious commentary on Mr. Duncan's statement[2], as also [on] Mr. Curtis', that a year after the introductory speech by the then Colonial Secretary, registration has not yet been effected, and that the Asiatic Registration Act is still practically of no force, except for the fact that registering officers perambulate the Colony in search of Asiatic applicants for the benefits which, Lord Selborne states, the Registration Act confers upon them. And it is this very Act which the measure under consideration makes permanent, and thus, whilst it frees the white inhabitants of the Transvaal from the Peace Preservation Ordinance, it draws the noose tighter round the necks of Asiatics.

Asiatics, then, find that a grant of greater liberty to white British subjects corresponds with a greater restraint on that of Asiatic British subjects. Unlike other and older self-governing Colonies, this new pet child of the Empire is to be allowed to set aside rights of British Indians who are already domiciled in the Transvaal, by reason of their having paid £3 to the old Dutch Government, for, under the Immigration Act, as the British Indian Association points out, only those Asiatics who are registered in the terms of the Asiatic Act are

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Secretary of State for Colonies", 23-8-1907

[2] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 4-8-1906

allowed to retain their domicile.

The last point dealt with by the Association outdoes the other two mentioned by us in severity. It provides for the physical deportation of those British Indians who fail to take out registration certificates under the new Act. Now the taking out of the certificate is, after all, a formality invested with many incidents of slavery. It is not as if the people who fail to take out registration certificates are not residents of the Transvaal. Indeed, most of the Indians, who are making a brave stand against the Asiatic Act, are old respectable inhabitants of that Colony, some of them, like the Chairman himself, of 20 years' standing, having all their earthly possessions in that Colony, having there even their families, places of worship and everything they hold dear in the world. It is these men who, because they decline to take out a degrading document, are to be forcibly turned out from their home; and this deportation is to take place at the expense of the deported, and it is to create no obligation on the part of the Transvaal Government even to feed and house them! Well may Mr. Mia declare that this deportation will be much worse than deportation for heinous offences.

We shall be painfully astonished if Lord Elgin, with his declared sympathies and with his past Viceregal career before him, advises His Majesty to sanction a measure of this description. He has more than once stated that he does not like the Asiatic Act. He has now thrown into his hands a golden opportunity of treating with the Transvaal Government, with a view to having the Asiatic Act repealed, and the principle of re-registration being embodied in a modified form in the Immigration Act.

Indian Opinion, 31-8-1907

133. CAPE INDIANS[1]

The Cape Town British Indian League is to be congratulated on submitting a well-reasoned representation to the Cape Parliament, in connection with the working of the Immigration Act and the Dealers' Licences Act of that Colony. The points raised in the memorial have been raised none too soon, and, as the memorialists rightly point out, their prayer has been considered by many prominent Cape politicians as reasonable and just. It is, for instance, impossible to justify the practice of issuing temporary permits to British Indians who have occasion to leave the Peninsula, failure to return within the period fixed in the letter of permission costing them their domicile. This

[1] *Vide* "Cape Town Indians", 31-8-1907

makes them ticket-of-leave men, and puts an utterly unjustifiable and undue restraint on their personal liberty. Nor can the practice of depriving old Indian hawkers of their licences, without cause, be justified in any way. We trust that the memorial presented by the British Indians will receive the earnest consideration of the Cape Government.

Indian Opinion, 31-8-1907

134. THE LADYSMITH TRADERS[1]

Ladysmith Chamber of Commerce is again on the track of British Indians who have been unjustly deprived by the Ladysmith Board of their licences to trade in the Klip River District, and who have the temerity to continue to earn their livelihood by plying their trade without licences. When we say it is the Ladysmith Chamber of Commerce which is after these poor Indians, it simply means that the European merchants who are jealous of their rivals are endeavouring to hound the latter out of the district. There seems to have been some sort of an understanding on the part of the Government that they would mark their disapproval of the conduct of the Ladysmith Board by refusing to sanction the prosecution of innocent men, but it is quite evident that the Chamber has coerced the Government into action, for it appears that the Attorney-General has authorised the Crown Prosecutor to institute proceedings against these men, should they still continue to trade without licences. Such is the working of the Dealers' Licences Act of Natal, from which the Imperial Government has avowed itself practically powerless to grant relief. The Indian Government, which certainly is all-powerful, refuses to make use of the only and effective remedy at its disposal, namely, to stop indentured Indian immigration, if the free Indian population of Natal is denied bare justice.

Indian Opinion, 31-8-1907

135. DADABHAI'S BIRTHDAY

The birthday of Dadabhai Naoroji, the Grand Old Man of India, falls on September 4. He is nearing the end of his days on the earth. As time passes, the light of the Grand Old Man is growing brighter. London to him is a wilderness. He has taken residence in this wilderness like a hermit for the sake of his country. Those who have

[1] *Vide* also "Licences in Ladysmith", 31-8-1907

seen his office in England know that it does not in any way differ from a hermitage. Hardly two people can sit in it. Sitting there, he shoulders the burden of the sufferings of the vast millions of India. Though he has reached an advanced age, he is capable of harder work than an Indian youth. We wish him a long life, and pray to the Creator to give us, and to all those connected with this journal, a heart as pure as his. We advise our readers to emulate his patriotism, that being the only right way to cherish the name of this [Grand] Old Man who is a grandfather indeed. The Indians of the Transvaal should bear in mind that they have to be faithful to their resolve as the immortal Dadabhai has been to his for our sake. We believe all associations of Indians will hold meetings on that day and send telegrams of congratulations. It is our intention to give a photograph of the [Grand] Old Man on every birthday of his. Accordingly, we shall publish next week, that is, at the earliest opportunity after the birthday, a photograph of his which, we recommend, should be got framed and preserved by everyone.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 31-8-1907

136. NEED FOR GREAT CAUTION

All eyes are at present turned on the Transvaal Indians. Just at such a time, we have received news of some weakness in the Indian community. At the present juncture whatever is unhealthy in the community is to be exposed; it cannot be suppressed. It will be, we think, an act of treason to suppress it.

The Indian community comprises mainly Surti, Memon and Konkani Muslims, Parsis and Hindus. We hear that a large proportion of Memons and Konkanis have become impatient with the struggle against the law. It is said that they are now prepared to yield, but, before yielding, desire the Government to make some changes. We have seen the draft petition seeking the amendments. We feel humiliated even to print it. The draft, in our judgment, is a document inviting slavery for ourselves. The concessions desired therein are no concessions. The language in which the request is made is so cringing that it can only mean that most of the leaders of the Indian community were never opposed to the new law. The giving of finger-prints is accepted. No objection is taken to the humiliation of Turkish Muslims. The only demand is for the appointment of special

officers to inspect the permits of respectable Indians and for obtaining their finger-prints in private. Moreover, if the holders of old licences are able to give their signatures, the Licensing Officer should not demand finger-prints. The temporary permits should continue to be issued as at present, and children's finger-prints taken after they have attained the age of 16.

Among these demands there is not one to concede which any change in the Regulations may be necessary, let alone the law. "Very well," can be General Smuts' reply to such a letter. In that case, those who feel pleased with the letter may immediately take out the title-deed of slavery, i.e., the register. The draft moreover states that Indians are wax in the hands of law. We hold that such a statement does not lie well in the mouth of anyone who believes in the existence of God. For man is like wax in the hands of God alone.

We are glad to say that the letter referred to above has not been despatched to General Smuts. Nor do we mean to say that the letter was approved by Memons, Konkanis or any others. Our only reason for making this matter public is that, though this blow was warded off in time, there can be no certainty that such an attempt will not be repeated. A frightened man will clutch at anything. Is there anyone who will not try to get hold of the dry stumps while rolling down the slope of a hill? Some Indians in the Transvaal are in a similar plight. We would advise such Indians to submit to the law immediately and take out registers instead of meddling with the question of the law. That will not lay them open to much blame. But, if they have such letters written which tarnish the fair name of the community, they will be regarded to have done, and will have actually done, very much more harm than what Mr. Haji Ebrahim and Mr. Khamisa have done. Mr. Haji Ebrahim and his comrades put themselves to shame out of fear, being unable to keep up courage. But those addressing letters such as the above will drag down the community while they blacken their own faces. They will have proved that the struggle of the Indians was not against the law as such, but only for slight changes in it. The draft petition referred to above also states that, barring some men intent on mischief, Indians are eager to get themselves registered. How amusing this is !

Moreover, if such a petition is sent to General Smuts on behalf of the Indians, the petition that has been submitted concerning the Immigration Bill will also receive a set-back. The fight that is

being put up by the South Africa British Indian Committee will have been in vain, and the Indian community will have been robbed in broad daylight. It is our particular request, therefore, that any individual or group that desires to take out the register is free to do so. Only, they should not drag others along with them. Why should all Memons or all Konkanis or all Hindus have their faces besmirched just because some Memons, or some Konkanis, or some Hindus or Surtis or Parsis do so? Is there among the Memons no brave man who will courageously declare: "Even if other Memons should go, I certainly will not." Why can a Konkani not speak out to the same effect? Why will Indians follow the example of others in doing evil? If, like sheep, we are still ready to follow one another into a ditch, it should be taken for certain that we shall be doomed to have the obnoxious law with us for ever.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 31-8-1907

137. LICENCES IN LADYSMITH

Clouds are gathering again over those Indians in Ladysmith who have not received licences. They carry on trade without a licence. The Chamber of Commerce has therefore recommended that they should be prosecuted. Mr. Labistour has replied that if they continue to do so, action will be taken against them. An assurance was given to the leaders of the Congress that those who traded without a licence would not be harassed. This promise was given out of a sense of justice. Now that the Europeans are bringing pressure, this sense of justice has collapsed and the Government, submitting to the pressure, wants the shops to be closed down. This gives the clearest picture of the shape of things to come in the nature of hardships for Indians. There are three ways to scatter these clouds:

(1) To prefer an appeal to the Privy Council.

(2) If such an appeal is not to be filed, the President of the Congress should meet the Imperial Government. This step can be taken along with the first.

(3) To have courage and keep the shops open. In case of prosecution, not to pay the fine, but allow the goods to be auctioned.

The first way can be adopted only when the Congress has a fund of £1,000. The second step must be taken in any case. It will not solve the difficulties for ever. The third way is the easiest of all and the best.

But it is a way that the brave alone can take. It does not depend on anybody's advice. One must have courage oneself. If this is there, everything can be done. There is no provision in this Act for a sentence of imprisonment. Only a fine can be imposed. If the fine is not paid, it can be collected by auction of goods. We urge Indians to adopt that way. Men like Dr. Rutherford have adopted it, and we, too, can do likewise. But in such matters, prompting by others is of no avail. The necessary urge has to come from within.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 31-8-1907

138. WHY WAS " THE LIFE OF PROPHET MAHOMED" DISCONTINUED?

We feel sad in answering this question. In utter good faith and out of great regard [for Islam], we started publishing a translation [of Irving's book], with a view to serving the Indian community and, in particular, the Muslim brethren. Among the biographies written by white men, Washington Irving's work is regarded as excellent. On the whole, he has shown the wonderful greatness of the Prophet, and has presented the good teachings of Islam in shining colours. Whether this is so or not, we believe it is the duty of every Muslim to know what the whites write about Islam and its Founder. In translating the book, our object was to help them perform this duty. While the translation was being given, some of our readers were pained to read the account of the Prophet's marriage in chapter V, and suggested that we should stop publishing the life. Our aim is to show as far as possible that this journal belongs to the whole of the Indian community. We have no desire to injure needlessly the feelings of anyone in any way. Therefore we have stopped publishing the "Life"[1] and feel sorry that

[1] Mahadev Desai, Gandhiji's Secretary, records in his *Diary*, under July 29, 1932: "Bapu . . . described his own experience in South Africa. He read Washington Irving's *Life of the Prophet* and began to publish a simple translation of it in *Indian Opinion* for the benefit of its Muslim readers. Hardly a chapter or two had appeared when the Muslims entered an emphatic protest against the publication. The offending chapters only dealt with the idol-worship, superstition and evil customs prevalent in Arabia before the Prophet was born. Even this was too much for them. Bapu tried to explain that this was only prefatory and intended to show the gigantic evils which the Prophet was born to combat and vanquish, but no one would listen. `We do not want any such life of the Prophet,' said the Muslims. The later chapters had been written and set in type but had to be cancelled." (*The Diary of Mahadev Desai*, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 1953, Vol. "Letter to The Natal Mercury", 30-9-1895.) *Vide* also "Prophet Mahomed and His Caliphs",22-6-1907

we had to do so. For, we took great pains over the translation, and our readers will not have the opportunity of appreciating the excellent work of Irving. Moreover, we hear that many persons are displeased that we have discontinued the "Life". To them we have only to say that those who want the translation of the biography may write to us. If many readers express the desire, we shall try to meet the wishes of such devout men by bringing it out separately in book-form when convenient to the Press.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 31-8-1907

139. CAPE TOWN INDIANS

We published last week the representation made by the British Indian League. It covers almost all the important demands. We congratulate the League. We hope that it will spare no effort to pursue the matter, and will bring it to a happy conclusion. The Indians of Cape Town have more opportunities than others to win [their] rights and safeguard them. We also hope that the Indians of Mafeking and East London will co-operate with the League and the Association and that together they will raise a large fund.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 31-8-1907

140. WHAT IS BRAVERY?

There is a report in the Press that the Moors (who are Muslims) have shown excellent bravery in Casablanca.

> Shouting their war cries, the Moorish spearmen made a gallop-charge on the French gunmen. They paid no heed to the shower of bullets and shell-splinters raining on them. Many fell wounded. Those who survived advanced to the very mouths of the cannon before they returned.

The reader may ask how one can return from the mouths of cannons. But that is the wonderful thing about bravery.

> So great was their fervour that the French gunners did not have the heart to fire on such brave warriors. They greeted these brave ones with cries of "Hurrah!" and clapped their hands in admiration. These brave warriors then saluted them and turned back.

Such brave people may be emulated by the whole world. All can sing their praises. Our Muslim readers specially have to take a lesson from them. Without doubt the Transvaal Indians will win if there is in them a hundredth part of the bravery of these Moors who are regarded as uncivilized. Here no one has to die. No one has to kill. Only money is to be sacrificed.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 31-8-1907

141. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

NYLSTROOM AND RUSTENBURG

From both these localities the Permit Office returned, as it had gone, empty-handed! The Nylstroom Indians even closed their shops for a day. No person got himself registered. Telegrams of congratulation were despatched to both places by the British Indian Association and the Hamidia Islamic Society. All this is very good. But we should not get elated at this. The boycott of the Permit Office has become an easy thing. There is not much risk involved in the boycott as people are allowed to register themselves at any place. But it remains to be seen whether they will not rush about in panic when the last place is named and the last date fixed. Already, doubts are being raised whether people will maintain their courage then, and, if they do, whether it will last when the time comes to go to gaol.

RAILWAY HARDSHIPS

Mr. Abdool Gani and Mr. Goolam Mahomed were not allowed to board the 4.40 evening train at Johannesburg when they wished to go to Pretoria. The correspondence carried on by the Association on that question has come to a close. The Chief Traffic Manager has expressed regret, but says that there was no room even in the guard's carriage and that is why they were not allowed to travel. General Smuts says that all these hardships are for the good of Indians. This fight cannot be carried further at present. For the Indian community is now on the anvil. If it turns out to be real gold as a result of hammering, the hardships in regard to railways, etc., will automatically disappear. If it is proved to be base metal, what does it matter whether

one is entitled to a railway ticket or not?

SEND-OFF TO ALLY

On Saturday, Mr. Haji Ojer Ally left for the Cape with his family. He was seen off by Messrs Abdool Gani, Shahaboodeen Hasan, Ameeroodeen, Goolam Mahomed, Mahomed Shahaboodeen, Chapman, Polak, Gandhi and others. There were tears in the eyes of Mr. and Mrs. Ally. Mr. Ally's words of farewell deserve to be remembered. He said, "Leave aside the question whether I have erred or not. For, to err is human. But it will be enough if other Indians do as much as I am doing." Truly, these words are memorable. He has left the Transvaal rather than submit to the law; this is a step on which, condoning his mistake, we should congratulate him. We shall succeed in the end if many Indians stand up to do even as much.

SENTENCED FOR INSOLVENCY FRAUD

Ismail Isa, an insolvent debtor, was accused of fraud. His case was heard by Mr. De Villiers at Pretoria. The charge against him was that, though he knew that he was about to be declared insolvent, he had purchased tobacco from Ernest Ebbert & Co. Being found guilty, he was sentenced to three months' imprisonment. This is a case which will bring shame to the Indian community. There must not be a single case of insolvency among us. We ought to have that much sense of honour. But here we find fraud along with insolvency. Indians certainly ought to keep away from such acts.

LETTER FROM RUSTENBURG

A letter has been received by the Association from Rustenburg about the success achieved by the community there. It says that Captain Chamney there approached Indians with a view to persuading them. But everyone gave a firm reply that he would not take out the register. Mr. Chamney also approached them and returned with the same reply. Messrs Bapu Desai, Rahimbhoy, Vakharia, Madhi and M. E. Kazi enlisted themselves as volunteers. The shops remained closed for half a day. Mr. Cody approached Mr. de Souza, a Portuguese Indian, who also flatly refused to be registered.

LETTERS FROM VOLKSRUST AND WAKKERSTROOM

There are letters from Volksrust and Wakkerstroom in which the leaders state that not a single Indian will take out the permit. All are quite determined.

ANOTHER HUMILIATION

There is a move in the Johannesburg Municipality to prevent the

Indians, the Chinese and other black people from riding in first-class horse-carriages. The Association has sent a letter objecting to the proposal.[1] But there is little probability of its carrying any weight at present. The only trumpet sounding these days is that of the Registration law. Everything depends on the kind of sound that it will make in the end.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 31-8-1907

142. LETTER TO JOHANNESBURG MUNICIPALITY

[JOHANNESBURG,

Before September 1, 1907][2]

[THE TOWN CLERK

JOHANNESBURG

SIR,]

In continuation of my letter[3] of the 28th instant regarding the proposed amendment of the Traffic By-Laws with reference to first class cabs, I have noticed that it is the intention of the Council to exempt professional men from the disqualification to use first-class cabs even though they may be Coloured men.

My Association respectfully submits that such an exemption would, instead of being appreciated, add insult to injury because, apart from a person's dress and general behaviour, it is difficult to see how a cabdriver is to distinguish between professional men and others, and my Association feels certain that no self-respecting man can possibly avail himself of a right which his compatriots equally respectable could not exercise. My Association, therefore, ventures to hope that the Town Council will be pleased not to proceed with the amendment referred to in my correspondence.

I have, etc.,

ESSOP ISMAIL MIA

CHAIRMAN,

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 7-9-1907

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Johannesburg Municipality", 28-8-1907

[2] The reference to the "letter of the 28th instant" shows that this letter was written in August.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Johannesburg Municipality", 28-8-1907

143. CABLE TO DADABHAI NAOROJI[1]

[DURBAN,
September 4, 1907]

NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS WISHES INDIA'S GRAND OLD MAN MANY HAPPY RETURNS DAY. PRAYS GOD SPARE INDIAN CHAMPION MANY YEARS.

Indian Opinion, 7-9-1907

144. SPEECH AT DURBAN[2]

[DURBAN,
September 4, 1907]

. . . Mr. Gandhi suggested that Indians throughout South Africa and outside the Transvaal could render substantial assistance by collecting and holding funds ready for any emergency that might arise in the Transvaal.

. . . The speaker explained the meaning of the offer of the Indian community for voluntary registration, as also the meaning of his own letter to General Smuts.[3]

Indian Opinion, 7-9-1907

145. SPEECH AT CONGRESS MEETING[4]

DURBAN,
September 4, 1907

The struggle which we have launched is a momentous one, and so its results will be equally important. If we succeed, the condition of Indians will improve to a large extent, in the Transvaal certainly, but also in Natal, the Cape, and even in India. If we retreat, however, the result will be equally disastrous. In Natal, one Mr. Haggar

[1] This was sent on Dadabhai Naoroji's 83rd birthday; *vide* "Speech at Congress Meeting",4-9-1907

[2] A meeting of the Natal Indian Congress was specially convened during Gandhiji's visit to Durban. Requested by the chairman, Dawad Mahomed, Gandhiji explained the latest position regarding the Transvaal struggle. These are extracts from a report of the meeting.

[3] *Vide* the following item for a more comprehensive report from Gujarati.

[4] This was published under the title, "Further Elucidations".

has raised a question in the Parliament about introducing there an Act similar to the Transvaal Registration Act; in the Cape licensed hawkers and shopkeepers have to put up with hardships; new laws are being passed and new restrictions imposed in Delagoa Bay; even in Rhodesia special legislation is being enacted against Indians, and in German [East] Africa, too, proposals humiliating to Indians are being canvassed. All these things can stop if we show our mettle. Whatever needs to be done in the Transvaal at the present moment is already being done. The Committee in London is also working with utmost energy. Natal, too, has rendered some help. The telegrams sent to Pretoria on July 31 and those despatched from time to time to the various associations and merchants in other places have had a very good effect. The Transvaal Indians and I are thankful to you for this. I am also aware that a sum of £100 has been sent from here to the Committee in England. That is in the fitness of things. But apart from this, Natal has still much to do. More money can be collected here. I do not suggest that you should make the collections in the places mentioned earlier and send them to the Transvaal; the funds collected locally may be kept on hand here, so that they can be drawn upon in case of need. The people in the Transvaal are also collecting a fund and contributing their due share. The British Indian Association has already spent about £1,500 in this struggle, but there is need for more expenditure yet. They have at present only a balance of £100. I am often asked the question: Being so poor, how will the Association be able to support the families of those who will go to gaol? Some other questions, too, are asked. To all such questions I have but one reply: Since we have faith in God, how can we ask what will happen to the members of our family? Still, we should do our duty in the matter. We should move from house to house in every village to collect contributions. We should acquaint the people with the present situation, so that they may willingly contribute and also realize to what plight the new law seeks to reduce us. That is, we must do all we can. Then can we place our entire trust in God. We are doing all that is needed. At the same time, we have also to pray to God with all our heart, and beg of Him: "Oh God! if our grievances are not heard in this world, we have at least full confidence in You, that in Your court no injustice will be tolerated." At the Hamidia Society [meeting] last Sunday, Moulvi Ahmed Mukhtiar, too, gave the same advice, namely, that we had to send our deputation now only to the court of God. The same opinion was also expressed at Germiston last Sunday during the festival of

Lord Krishna's birth anniversary. All of us can pray likewise.

In reply to a question, Mr. Gandhi said:

With regard to the opportunity that has offered itself to us in Ladysmith, three alternatives were suggested in the last issue of *Indian Opinion*.[1] Any one of these should be followed. The present case differs from the one in which we had appealed to the Privy Council. In the present case, we can proceed against the Board. If the case is decided against us, we can then appeal to the Privy Council. But that will need a lot of money. I think it is better that the shops be kept boldly open. This fight, once started, should be kept up to the last. The shopkeepers should not pay fines, but allow their goods to be auctioned again and again. Other merchants who have been granted licences for the current year should write to the Government that, in view of the injustice that was being done to their brother-traders, they too would keep their shops openwithout licences next year. If in this manner we make a heavy sacrifice of money with courage and determination, we are bound to win. The money we have already earned or that we may earn in future will have value only if we win, otherwise we shall lead a dog's life here.

The taking of thumb-impressions in the Immigration Office at the Point is against the law. The Act certainly does not empower the Immigration Office to demand thumb-impressions. If we fight with patience and firmness, the taking of thumb-impressions will stop. It is necessary that this practice which has been newly started should be nipped in the bud.

Asked about some people in the Transvaal wanting to come to a compromise and get themselves registered, Mr. Gandhi said:

Some Memons in Pretoria wish to come to an understanding with the Government and register themselves. This compromise is not at all advantageous, but is on the contrary harmful to us. Those who have understood the real nature of our struggle will not be satisfied with such a compromise. The draft agreement sent by the Association is the only right one. It will be better for those who are satisfied with a nominal compromise to take out registers just now. That will not cripple the struggle of the community.

Giving an explanation about the news item that had appeared in that day's papers about Lord Elgin having refused to give assent to the Municipal Franchise Act, Mr. Gandhi said:

[1] *Vide* "Licences in Ladysmith", 31-8-1907

The credit for this success goes to the Committee in London. The Act had been forwarded to the Imperial Government for Royal assent a long time ago, and it had remained under consideration all this time. Hence, there was a possibility that the Act would be rejected. However, if the Committee had not protested and exerted itself as it did to oppose it, the result we see today would not probably have come about. I hope that everyone will avail himself of the right of franchise that we now possess.

Explaining the position about the reported intention of the Estcourt Board to seek permission to appeal to the Privy Council against the decision of the Supreme Court in Mr. Haffejee's case, Mr. Gandhi said:

It is not probable that the Board will seek permission to appeal. For, that will involve a lot of expenditure and there will be no gain. However, we should not oppose their effort to seek permission to appeal to the Privy Council.

After these clarifications, Mr. Gandhi informed the meeting about the cablegram[1] that had been dispatched in the morning in connection with the birthday of Dadabhai Naoroji that was being celebrated that day.

On this occasion, the Indians of Tongaat had sent a telegram wishing long life to the Grand Old Man. Thereafter, everyone stood up and, wishing long life to Dadabhai, called for three cheers. The meeting came to an end at 10 p.m.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-9-1907

146. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before September 7, 1907]

[THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PRETORIA

SIR,]

My Association has been credibly informed that the Government, before entertaining belated applications for registration under the Asiatic Registration Act, has been taking from the applicants affidavits to the effect that they have hitherto not made them because of the undue pressure exercised by some members of the Association.

[1] *Vide* "Cable to Dadabhai Naoroji",4-9-1907

If the information received by my Association is correct, I have the honour to state that, so far as I am aware, no such pressure has ever been exercised by any member of the Association and my Association humbly requests that, if any such charge has been brought by any person, it may be duly brought home to the party so charged.

[I have, etc.,

ESSOP ISMAIL MIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION]

Indian Opinion, 7-9-1907

147. ON THE DUTY OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE[1]

It would seem as if the action of both Houses of Parliament in passing the Bill to legalise the marriage with a deceased wife's sister will convert the clergy of the Established Church into passive resisters of sorts. The Archbishop of Canterbury today issued a message in which he requested the clergy not to celebrate marriages with a deceased wife's sister although such unions are now recognised as legal by the law of the land.

The Daily Press

We have no desire to enter into the controversy as to whether marriage with a deceased wife's sister is a reform in the right direction or not. We have quoted the above mentioned cablegram in order to show that passive resistance is one of the most approved methods of securing redress in given circumstances, and that it is the only course law-abiding and peaceful men can adopt without doing violence to their conscience. Indeed, it would appear that it is a method they must adopt if they. have a conscience, and it revolts against particular legislation. It may be retorted that, between the passive resistance offered by British Indians in the Transvaal and that advised by the Archbishop of Canterbury, there is no resemblance. We demur and claim that, if it is lawful for the Archbishop of Canterbury to disregard the deceased wife's sister relief legislation, it is much more so for British Indians to withhold submission to the Asiatic Registration Act. If there is no penalty provided by law to punish the clergy who may

[1] In writing this and subsequent articles on the subject, Gandhiji drew on the essay "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience" by Henry David Thoreau (1817-62), the American philosopher, naturalist and writer. The essay first appeared in 1849 under the title "Resistance to Civil Government".

not recognise it, by refusing to perform a marriage ceremony, it should be doubly their duty to accept the law. But the Archbishop, in deliberately giving contrary advice, has brought into play a higher law, and that is the law dictated by conscience. Rightly or wrongly, His Grace believes that there is no warrant for such unions in the Bible and that, therefore, the Legislature has committed a breach of God's law, which it would be irreligious for the clergy to countenance. In other words, he has recognised what Thoreau has said, that we should be men before we are subjects, and that there is no obligation imposed upon us by our conscience to give blind submission to any law, no matter what force or majority backs it.

Such is also the position of British Indians in the Transvaal. Law abiding they are, and it will take away nothing from the certificate they have enjoyed so long by their now refusing to accept registration underthe Asiatic Law, which their conscience rejects as degrading to their manhood and offensive to their religion. It is possible to carry the doctrine of passive resistance too far, but it is equally so with reference to the doctrine of obedience to law. We cannot give the dividing line in words more appropriate than those of Thoreau when, speaking of the American Government, he says:

> If one were to tell me that this was a bad Government because it taxed certain foreign commodities brought to its ports, it is most probable that I should not make any ado about it, for I can do without them. All machines have friction, and possibly this does enough good to counterbalance the evil. At any rate, it is a great evil to make a stir about it. But, when the friction comes to have its machine, and oppression and robbery are paramount, I say let us not have any such machine any longer.

In the Asiatic Registration Act, British Indians have not only a law which has some evil in it, that is to say, using Thoreau's words, a machine with friction in it, but it is evil legalised, or it represents friction with machinery provided for it. Resistance to such an evil is a divine duty which no human being can with impunity disregard, and, as in the case of the Archbishop of Canterbury, so in that of British Indians, it is their conscience that must decide, as it has already decided, whether to submit to the Asiatic Act or not, cost what it may.

Indian Opinion, 7-9-1907

148. SUPPLEMENT TO "INDIAN OPINION"

We said in our last issue that we would give in this issue a photograph of the Hon'ble Dadabhai Naoroji in honour of his birthday. The reader will accordingly find the photograph in this

issue. It was taken when India's Grand Old Man visited India last year, and was published in *India.* We appeal to all our readers to have the photograph framed. But the true framing of it, in our opinion, would only be to engrave it in our hearts. To adorn and preserve a piece of paper without giving the least thought to what it stands for—this is, it may be said, exactly what idolatry means. The only purpose of keeping the photograph in our room is that, by seeing it, we should call to mind our duty afresh every day. Our present condition in South Africa as well as in India is such that, even if hundreds of heroes like Dadabhai came forward, they would be far too few. And unless such men do come forward, there will be no improvement in our political condition or in other affairs of worldly life.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-9-1907

149. WELCOME

The new Governor of Natal, Sir Mathew Nathan, has already arrived. His Excellency is 45 years of age, and is unmarried. His Excellency is a Jew, the first member of the race to be appointed Governor in South Africa. It is said that His Excellency is a very kind and hard-working person, with wide experience. At Hong Kong, he won the hearts of all communities. Natal is in a bad plight today. At this juncture, though he cannot interfere actively in a self-governing Colony, he can certainly help much by his advice as a gentleman and by his personal example. We hope that the expectations that have been raised about him will be fulfilled. His Excellency is accompanied by his sister, Miss Nathan. She attends to his social engagements and takes the place of hostess at social functions.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-9-1907

150. BENEFITS OF PASSIVE RESISTANCE

NOTABLE INSTANCE

Nowadays the people of Ireland are striving hard for their rights. Some Irish leaders are convinced that the people of Ireland suffer because they live in a particular country, just as Indians suffer because of the colour of their skin. In other words, the Indian people suffer many hardships both in India and outside and are treated as

inferior to Englishmen. The Irish people count for nothing in their own land and are oppressed by their English rulers. But no sooner do they go out of Ireland than they enjoy rights quite similar to those of Englishmen. There are about 86 members in the House of Commons representing Ireland. But the British Members of the House, blinded by their self-interest, do all they can to prevent the Irish from succeeding in their efforts. For this reason, some Irish leaders now wish to adopt a different line of action to have their grievances redressed. That movement is called *Sinn Fein*[1], which, literally translated into Gujarati, means exactly our *Swadeshi* movement. Day by day, the *Sinn Fein* party is growing stronger. In their struggle, passive resistance is one of the main weapons. Till now, Irishmen favoured violent action. While theIrish people are tenants, the landlords are British who are foreigners there. As a remedy, the tenants often resorted to violence against their foreign landlords. Now it has been decided to educate the people for gradually withdrawing the Irish Members from the British Parliament, refraining from taking disputes between Irish parties to the law courts established in Ireland, and boycotting British goods even at the cost of hardship to themselves. Through such measures they would raise the resounding cry of *Swadeshi* or *Sinn Fein*, so that without any violent struggle taking place the British would ultimately be obliged, or might agree, to grant Home Rule to Ireland, or would quit Ireland, and the Irish people would have an absolutely independent government.

This movement had its roots in Austria-Hungary in the south of Europe. Austria and Hungary were two separate countries. But Hungary was under the rule of Austria and was always exploited by it. To discomfit Austria, a Hungarian named Dick taught the people that they should not pay any taxes to Austria, should not serve any Austrian officers, and even forget the very name of Austria. Though the Hungarians were very weak, this kind of spirit enabled them in the end to assert themselves against Austria. Now Hungary is not regarded as subject to Austria, but claims parity with it.

These instances deserve to be emulated by the Transvaal Indians. They clearly prove that what is known to have happened earlier in history must also happen in the case of Indians in the

[1] Irish for "ourselves alone". It was an Irish nationalist movement founded in 1905 which developed into a mass republican party and succeeded in establishing the Irish Free State,

Transvaal. That is to say, none can imprison thousands of men or deport them. But every Indian ought to be prepared to be imprisoned or deported; and to prove that Indians are so ready, some of them shall indeed have to suffer imprisonment, even deportation. The Indian who may be called upon to suffer deportation or imprisonment will be said to have truly lived and won the battle of life. His name will be immortal, and he will have fully met the claim of the motherland on him.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-9-1907

151. PRIME MINISTER'S VIEWS

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman has replied to Mr. Ritch that he will not receive the deputation of the South Africa British Indian Committee. Reuter has cabled a summary of his reply. According to the cable, the Prime Minister has stated that he has already written to the Transvaal Government to say that the new law is bad. But the Transvaal now enjoys self-government, and hence he cannot interfere in the implementation of the Act, nor is he in a position to exert much pressure on the Transvaal just now. Sir Henry seems to have taken nearly twenty days to send such a reply. We infer from this that the Imperial Government has received information from the Transvaal that the Indian community will, in the end, accept registration without the use of force. We think General Smuts has been encouraged to say this by the fact that some persons have taken out registration certificates and others are about to do so. If our inference is correct, there is no cause for disappointment at Sir Henry's reply. The time for Sir Henry to intervene will come when the real struggle begins, and Indians, even when sent to gaol or deported, remain firm and do not submit to the law. If even at that time he does not intervene, we shall believe that the sun of the British Empire is about to set. For, if the Imperial Government does not protect innocent people when they are being oppressed, commonsense tells us that God will deprive it of its power. How can he be called a king who does not protect?

But the struggle of the Indians has little to do with whether Sir Henry intervenes or not. The struggle this time is a test of our own strength. We shall not submit to the law which we condemn at present, only because we find the Imperial Government weak. If the Imperial Government merely looks on with folded hands while we are being

ruined, Indians will have to depend on their own strength to stay on in the Colonies. And if they are averse to face imprisonment, etc., they will be ruined in the Colonies and meet a miserable end, for we believe that living a dog's life is worse than death.

Commenting on Sir Henry's letter, an influential British journal called the *Pall Mall Gazette* has stated that Sir Henry has displayed cowardice and baseness in allowing the rights of Indians to be abrogated, and that the Home Government will have to pay for this cowardice. A cable to this effect is published in *The Sunday Times* of Johannesburg. We can assume from this that the struggle in England is not over.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-9-1907

152. NATAL MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE ACT

There has been a long argument whether Indians in Natal should have the municipal franchise or not. But so far it was impossible to determine what the result would be. Now we find from Press reports that Lord Elgin has disapproved the Bill. The reason given is that in the matter of licences the Natal Government has failed to satisfy the Imperial Government. There is no doubt that this is the result of the existence of the South Africa British Indian Committee and the vigorous fight put upby it. Our readers will recall that on numerous occasions Mr. Ritchwrote to Lord Elgin in connection with the Bill on behalf of the Committee. But we need not be particularly elated by this success. We ourselves do not attach much weight to municipal rights. They sometimes prove to be burdensome, unless one has the knowledge and the strength to use them. Though in the eyes of the law the white skin and the brown skin may have equal rights, we can see that in America at present they alone will make a mark who have more energy, are better educated, and are more intelligent and public-spirited. It is the same in the Cape Colony. Here Indians, Kaffirs and whites, all the three have equal rights of vote; yet the Indian community has been steadily losing ground. The weapon of franchise has been rusting, and such laws about trade licences as suit the whim of white merchants are being enacted. In our view, the first lesson of this is that the Indian, whether poor or rich, ought to have in him a spirited sense of his manhood. He must make himself strong enough to fight or make sacrifices in other ways for the rights of the community. The part the Transvaal Indians play will show whether this is the time when we shall acquire these qualities or whether we shall have to wait for them for many years yet.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-9-1907

153. PAMPHLET BY DR. NUNDY

Dr. Nundy[1] has published a pamphlet on the new law. It is priced 1s. He has made in it a slanderous attack on Lord Selborne, Mr. Curtis, Mr. Chamney, Mr. Cody and others, and made similar comments on Mr. Gandhi, too. I do not think it necessary to reproduce here the substance of all those comments. He has made a suggestion in the pamphlet that the new law should be repealed and a Commission appointed to ascertain the rights of Indians, and afterwards new registers should be issued to them. There is no difference between this suggestion and the offer of voluntary registration. To that extent Dr. Nundy's pamphlet can prove helpful to us. But whether the pamphlet means that the law might remain in force and only the registers should be modified is not made clear. However, it does not appear to us likely that any weight will be attached to this pamphlet since we see nothing in it which is new. I also do not think that Mr. Chamney and Mr. Cody will suffer any harm on account of the attacks made on them. Dr. Nundy admits in the pamphlet that the gaol resolution is the only thing that will benefit the Indian community. He has relied on the *Rand Daily Mail* in asserting that a suggestion was made to exempteducated people from giving finger-prints. But such a suggestion had never been made. And even if it were made, the struggle against the law would not come to an end. Apart from this, we find other [suggestions][2] too.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-9-1907

154. . DUTY OF DISOBEYING LAWS[3] *[1]*

Many years ago, there lived in America a great man named Henry David Thoreau. His writings are read and pondered over by millions of people. Some of them put his ideas into practice. Much importance is attached to his writings because Thoreau himself was a man who practised what he preached. Impelled by a sense of duty, he

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. E. Nundy", 26-9-1906 ; 27-9-1907.

[2] The exact word used by Gandhiji is not decipherable in the copy of *Indian Opinion* available.

[3] In this and the second article dated 14-9-1907 Gandhiji has presented a simplified version of Thoreau's ideas. The words in square brackets have been supplied from Thoreau's essay.

wrote much against his own country, America. He considered it a great sin that the Americans held many persons in the bonds of slavery. He did not rest content with saying this, but took all other necessary steps to put a stop to this trade. One of those steps consisted in not paying any taxes to the State in which the slave trade was being carried on. He was imprisoned when he stopped paying the taxes due from him. The thoughts which occurred to him during this imprisonment were boldly original and were published in the form of a book. The title of this article conveys the general sense of the English title of his book. Historians say that the chief cause of the abolition of slavery in America was Thoreau's imprisonment and the publication by him of the above mentioned book after his release. Both his example and writings are at present exactly applicable to the Indians in the Transvaal. We, therefore, give below a summary of these [writings]:

I accept that that government is best which governs least. That is, government is a kind of disease and the greater the freedom the people enjoy from it, the more admirable is the government.

Many persons say that it would be good if America had no [standing] army or had only a small one. What they say is quite right [as far as it goes], but those who hold such a view base it on a false premise. They say that the State is beneficial; it is only the army that is harmful. These eminent men do not realize that an army is but the arm of the Stateand without it the State cannot exist for a moment. But wecannot see this because we are ourselves intoxicated with the power of the State. Really speaking, it is we, the subjects, who are responsible for the existence of both the State and the army.

Thus we see that we are deceiving ourselves. It is not the government of America that keeps the people free, or educates them. The [achievements of] government that we observe are, in some small measure, the result of the inherent character of the American people. In other words, though we are educated and intelligent, we are somewhat less so than we could have been if it were not for the government.

But, I do not ask for no government at once, but at once for a better government. This is the duty of every citizen. It is a great error to believe that nothing but justice prevails in a country in which everything is decided by a majority vote. Much injustice continues to be perpetrated because this error is not recognized. It is a mere superstition to believe that what is done by a multitude is bound to be right. Can there not be a government in which majorities do not decide right and wrong, but conscience? Must the citizen always

resign his conscience to the legislators? I would say that we are men first and subjects afterwards. It is not necessary to cultivate a respect for the law so much as for the right. The only obligation which I have a right to assume is to do at any time what I think right. Law never made man a whit more just. But I have seen and I do see that even ordinarily well-disposed persons become, through their simplicity, the instruments of injustice. One result of an undue respect for law is that we may see people taking to soldiering and, like monkeys, mechanically carrying out the orders of their superiors unquestioningly. Many people thus take to it [soldiering] as their profession. They have no doubt that it is a damnable business in which they are concerned; yet they rush to join it. Are they men, or axes in the hands of butchers ? Such men are on a level with wood and earth and stones. How can that kind of men command any respect? How can they be valued better than dogs or cats? Then some others become advocates, ambassadors or lawyers. They imagine that they serve the State with their heads. But I find that, unintentionally and unconsciously, they also serve Satan. Those who obey their sense of justice while holding the reins of government are always found to be in conflict with the State.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-9-1907

155. DANGER OF FINGER-PRINTS AT DURBAN

For some days past, people have been talking about the Immigration Officer taking thumb-impressions of witnesses when a domicile certificate is issued to an Indian going home *via* Durban. Some people even say that the Congress should put up a fight in this matter. There is no law yet for such thumb-impressions to be taken, but we believe that this procedure is the first step in the making of such a law. In such matters, the individuals themselves have to do much more than any help that the Congress can give. The Congress can do nothing about men who, for serving their personal ends, give the thumb-impressions when demanded. What evidence is to be considered sufficient for the purpose of issuing a domicile certificate is left to be determined by the Immigration Officer. The Officer can, without asking for the fingerprints, refuse to issue the certificate; and when a man goes begging for such a certificate with entreaties, the Officer may exploit the man's need and make him give the thumb-impression. We are not suggesting that this method is either proper or just. Nor do we deny that it may be possible to fight this

legally under certain conditions. Though in putting up such a fight we may ultimately win our point, it is also probable that we may lose. Such hardships are bound to continue so long as some Indians make false affidavits and want to obtain domicile certificates by improper means. But we see no need at present to draw attention to this. We are certain that if we win the Transvaal fight, that is, if the Indian community adheres to its pledge, suffering hardships of all kinds, rather than submit to the obnoxious law, the tree of aggression against our community that has been planted in the Transvaal will not be allowed to grow. And then, we believe, no other Colony will be able to enact a law of this kind. The Imperial Government is at present faced with an impossible situation.[1] If, therefore, we fight to the last in the Transvaal, Lord Elgin will never think again of advising the King-Emperor to give assent to such a law.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-9-1907

156. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

The plague of the Permit Office went to a certain village, but disappeared without being able to infect a single person. Not even an Indian prisoner got the infection. The anti-plague squad of physicians—the volunteers—was ready, but wherever the people had a strong physique, the physicians were not needed.

Such a report has now become a common thing. Hence I do not write at length to give congratulations to Standerton, Heidelberg and Volksrust. We have now got used to this plague. The remedy for it has also been discovered. The same remedy is being supplied to all from Durban. Who is to be singled out for congratulation when all maintain good health, with or without the use of medicine? Who is to be praised where all work in harmony? Hence I for one shall now praise God alone Who has all along given the right inspiration to the people everywhere, with the result that all have unitedly and courageously stuck to their duty. But I must say repeatedly that, though the work referred to above was necessary, the more important work is yet to be done. It would be a great mistake for anyone to imagine that we would succeed only by boycotting [the Permit Office] and without

[1] In the original Gujarati, Gandhiji has used a proverb which refers to the dilemma of a snake trying to swallow a shrew-mouse. Whether it swallows or ejects the shrew-mouse, it comes to grief.

any hardships, without being imprisoned or deported. We ought to remember that "Happiness comes if we suffer."[1] Moreover, without the experience of suffering, the true value of happiness cannot be known. How can he value sunshine who has not braved cold? If every pebble were a diamond, who would touch a diamond?

HAMIDIA SOCIETY

This Society has been working with extraordinary courage. I can see that the struggle we are engaged in is a righteous war. We are faced with the question of our faith. Prayers are being offered in the mosques: "Oh God! Help us if we are right." Only this choice is now being placed before the people—either the law or the faith. A forceful speech in this strain was made last Sunday by Moulvi Saheb Ahmed Mukhtiar. Quoting verses from the *Koran*, he proved that "the Muslims had but one duty, which was that now their petition should be placed before God alone. The true deputation is to wait upon Him alone. That Great Judge is not influenced by anyone. He does not yield to anyone's pressure, and the colour of the skin does not count with Him. He scrutinizes onlythe colour of our hearts. With Him on one's side one willnever suffer defeat." I advise all my Indian brethren to have these words of the Moulvi Saheb firmly engraved in their minds.

MEETING AT GERMISTON

The Sanatan Veda Dharma Sabha organized a meeting in celebration of the birth anniversary of Lord Krishna. There, too, the same note was to be heard. Many Hindus were present. Mr. Gandhi, Mr. Polak and Mr. MacIntyre were also there. Maharaj Ram Sundar Pundit explained how a Hindu who believed in God would never submit to the Asiatic Act. Contributions were received at this meeting from the Khatris, from Babu Talevant Singh, and from Mr. Khanderia.

SOME TIMID INDIANS

Some timid Indians have addressed a letter to General Smuts through a lawyer in Pretoria.[2] It states that if only a little relief is promised by the Government, these gentlemen are willing to yield. I ought to say that such letters weaken our struggle. But I do not believe that there will be any harm in the end. For, if many Indians remain firm in their pledge, we are bound ultimately to win. But I would also add that we would have to go through more suffering on account of

[1] A Gujarati proverb.

[2] The reference is to the letter addressed by Messrs Stegmann, Esselen and Roos; *vide* "Monster Petition",Before 21-9-1907

such timid representations. Moreover, by making trivial demands we show that we do not understand the real nature of our struggle. That struggle is for maintaining the prestige of the Indian community, for preserving our honour. We may call it our bread, and the timid letter referred to above would mean our being satisfied with dust in place of bread. It would not mean that we had won honour or that our honour had been saved merely because the police would not inspect our permits in public or would ask for our signature in place of ten finger-prints. For, the humiliating law would even in that case certainly remain. It would mean that instead of iron fetters, they would put on us fetters of some lighter metal. Our struggle is to break the fetters and smash them to pieces.

MY REQUEST

The letter in question has already been dispatched. But it is my request to the gentlemen who sent it and to the other Indians that, if they cannot keep their patience, if they cannot overcome the greed for money, they should please submit to the law without putting in any applications. In doing so, they will do less harm to the community andwill be considered to be lesser cowards. And my advice will be the same if, by chance, all Indians lose their good sense and become timid.

HOW TO MITIGATE EFFECT OF LETTER

Let us consider how to minimize or counteract the harm done by this letter. It suggests that all Indians are not behind the struggle being carried on by the British Indian Association. In point of fact, too, this is correct. It, therefore, became the duty of the Association to show how many Indians there were who accepted its views. Of course, when the proper time comes the difference between the earthen pot and the metal pot will be discovered. But the truthful man never needs to hide his truthfulness. Thinking along these lines, Mr. Gandhi suggested to the Hamidia Islamic Society that a short petition should be prepared in the different languages to the effect that the signatories were strongly opposed to the law and did not accept it, and the signatures of all Indians should be obtained on it. It cannot be doubted that such action will greatly strengthen our struggle. This suggestion was accepted by the Moulvi Saheb, Mr. Omarji Sale and other gentlemen. But Mr. M. S. Coovadia having expressed himself against it, its consideration was postponed to next Sunday. I expect that it will be passed unanimously then. On that assumption, I make the following suggestions for all. If the proposal is accepted:

l. Copies of the petition will be sent to every town.

2. Signatures should be obtained on two copies, with the signatory's name, occupation and residence.
3. The person obtaining signatures should sign his name at the corner of the petition, which means that he is a witness.
4. No signature should be taken before the person signing has properly read it.
5. Copies of the petition should be kept clean, and as the signatures in duplicate are obtained, the copies should be passed on to the Association.
6. Signatures to the petition should be obtained within ten days.
7. It is necessary to keep volunteers ready for obtaining signatures, so that there may be no loss of time.
8. The person signing should do so only if he is firm and is prepared to fight to the end.
9. If the signatures obtained are very few, the petition will certainly not be despatched to the Government.
10. It will be a good thing, and will save time if, on reading this, people in every town communicate to the Association by telegram or letter the strength of the Indian population in it.

Even if this petition is not sent to the Government, by obtaining the signatures we shall have known the measure of truth and courage in the people. If most of us are not true and sincere, we shall certainly not win. But at the same time I also agree that if, after once taking up the idea of this petition, we are not able to send it, to that extent our weakness will have been exposed. But those who depend on God are glad, rather than frightened, when a weakness is exposed. It is wisdom to sort out the bad coins from a mixed heap of good and bad coins. So much the less would be the burden for us to carry. All these ideas are simple enough to be immediately understood.

VICE AMONG US

What I observed at the last meeting of the Hamidia Society had led me to think that whatever vices we have will be swept away along with our cowardice. It cannot be that we shall continue to be deceitful and cunning after having placed our trust in God on the question of the new law. So pure is our present struggle! There is a Hindu in Pretoria who, it is said, cruelly beat up another Indian, having been intoxicated with drink. The latter became unconscious. The assailant has not yet been prosecuted. I do not know what the result will be. But it appears to be widely known that he has committed the assault. In

Johannesburg some Indians are charged with robbing a poor Indian. There is no doubt that the Indian was robbed. It is positively asserted that the accused are innocent. Yet another Indian who has been arrested is charged with minting counterfeit coins. All these cases show that there are vices among some of us. Speaking at the Society meeting, Mr. Essop Mia stated that such cases should not at all occur. And in case there are civil suits or disputes, they should be settled privately among the parties without filling the coffers of lawyers and the Government. I believe this suggestion deserves to be carefully considered and acted upon. If in consequence of our present struggle we forget the differences between Hindus and Muslims, give up internal quarrels and, in case they occur, settle them privately, and also give up other vices, the thirteen thousand Indians will earn the admiration of the entire world, and their names will be recorded for all time in God's book. It is an act of no small meanness that one Indian should falsely accuse another through malice or blackmail him. That one man should assault another is not merely petty cruelty. It is no little shame that an Indian should take liquor. With a little effort, these evil habits can be eradicated. To smash the new law, I believe it is necessary also to stamp out these evils.

FIRST-CLASS CAB

The Johannesburg Municipality contemplates a regulation debarring Indians from using a first-class cab. Mr. Essop Mia has addressed a strong protest against this.[1] And now it is proposed to amend the regulation so as to enable an Indian lawyer or doctor to use such a cab. Is it intended that an Indian lawyer or doctor desiring to hire such a cab should carry a signboard on his person? How else will the "cabbie" recognize a doctor or a lawyer? A lawyer in rags can hire a first-class cab, but a well-dressed Indian who is not a lawyer or doctor cannot do so! Mr. Essop Mia has sent another letter of protest[2] against such an absurd amendment, saying that such an amendment will amount to adding insult to injury. The Indian community therefore does not want this amendment. This proposal of the refuse-removing Municipality should be a shock to those taking out new registers.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-9-1907

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Johannesburg Municipality", 28-8-1907

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Johannesburg Municipality", Before 1-9-1907

157. LETTER TO REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
September 11, 1907]

[THE REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS
PRETORIA]
SIR,

Messrs Mahomed Ebrahim, Boosa Kara, Kara Vally and Issa Asmail each received, on the 27th ultimo, 14 days' notice, under the Peace Preservation Ordinance, to quit the Colony. My clients accordingly, on the 2nd instant, took out third-class tickets to Delagoa Bay and thus proceeded to comply with the terms of the notices. At Komatipoort, however, they were detained and prevented from entering the Portuguese territories. The sergeant at the Transvaal Border endeavoured to secure for them entry into Delagoa Bay, but to no purpose. My clients were subsequently detained at the gaol in Komatipoort for, as they state, five days. The sergeant then bought for them tickets for Durban. On their applying for embarkation passes to pass through Durban, they are required to deposit £11 as also to buy their passage in Johannesburg. My clients inform me that they are too poor to either deposit the money or buy their passage in Johannesburg. I am in possession of their railway tickets. I shall be obliged if you willkindly let me know what my clients are now to do. They are quitewilling to leave the country, if provision can be made for them. I have also the honour to enquire why my clients were detained at the gaol in Komatipoort.[2]

[I have. etc.,

M. K. GANDHI]

Colonial Office Records: C. O. 291/121

[1] This was published in *Indian Opinion* 14-9-1907. A copy of the letter was forwarded by L. W. Ritch on October 7 to the Under-Secretary of State for India.

[2] To this the Registrar replied that the men were permitted to use the police cell as "they knew of no place where they could reside" and that the action of the police was solely in the Indians' interest. The necessary provision having been made, the men left later for Durban; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 5-10-1907

158. FROM PILLAR TO POST

We reproduce in another column a letter[1] addressed to the Registrar of Asiatics regarding certain Indians who, having received notice to quit the Transvaal, and having attempted to cross over to Delagoa Bay, were turned out. These men, staying in the Transvaal, run the risk of being imprisoned for at least one month. They state that they are too poor to deposit monies for embarkation passes to Natal. What are they to do? We await the Government's answer before commenting on the facts. In the meanwhile, the facts brought up show what the Asiatic Registration Act means to Indians.

Indian Opinion, 14-9-1907

159. WHAT BITTER SUFFERING !

The communication received from Mr. Ritch this week will explain to everyone what bitter suffering will follow if the Indian helmsmen, after having put in a strenuous effort, desert the ship of their gaol-going struggle at the sight of the angry waves. All the same, let us consider why it will be so.

The South Africa British Indian Committee has come to place its trust in us. The Committee therefore openly expresses its sympathy. Mr. Ritch has written a letter[2] to the Prime Minister on behalf of the Committee in which he gives a correct account of what we want. This is not a struggle for securing petty concessions. We would not spend so extravagantly merely to have our iron shackles gilded. Mr. Ritch makes a categorical demand that the law must be repealed. The reader should go through the letter carefully to see what other demands have been made. If the Indian pilots now abandon the ship that is nearing theshore, what curses will not descend upon They are the custodians of the good name of India—of the honour of Indians. They have been wrestling with fire, and it is nothing to be afraid of if they receive a few burns. He who is afraid will be destroyed.

Consider what the editor of *The Saturday Review* says. It is a journal of standing and carries considerable weight. It belongs to the Conservative Party, yet it asserts forcefully that the Indian community is right in having resolved not to submit to the law but to go to gaol

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* Appendix V.

instead. If the British Government should leave Indians in the lurch, it would be a disgrace. Having achieved so much, will the Indian leaders now prove that the struggle was a sham? Blind in their greed of money, will they plunge spears into the bowels of thousands? Will they prove the whole nation to be cowardly and abject?

The Nation is said to be a very independent journal. It wields great influence with the Liberal Party. An Englishman writing under well-known initials states therein that no other event has created so much stir and displeasure in India as the oppression now being inflicted on Indians in the Transvaal. This shows that, if in the present fight Indians lose heart they will do much harm to India. The resolve which the Transvaal Indians have made, and which has received so much publicity, is without parallel even in India. It is, therefore, imperative that Indian leaders realize their responsibility.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-9-1907

160. "WAX IN THE HANDS OF LAW"

It is with a sense of extreme shame and regret that we publish in this issue the petition[1] that has been made by ''leading Indians" from cities like Pretoria. We consider this to be a base step, and lay the blame for it chiefly on Mr. Hajee Cassim. His name is mentioned in every meeting of Indians; hence we feel no hesitation in making it public. We consider it our duty to do so. Though we blame Mr. Hajee Cassim, we realize that it is not possible for us to say that other Indians in his position would never have done what he has done. Therefore, we regard his disgrace as the disgrace of us all.

The language of the petition is abject and worthy of a slave. In using the words "we are wax in the hands of law", they have sinned against God, who alone holds sway over us. Why then should we use towards oppressive rulers language which is appropriate in regard to Him alone?

The demands made are pointless. They prove that we have not at all understood the real significance of the struggle. We have stated this even earlier.[2]

Now we only ask Mr. Hajee Cassim and his supporters whether they do not realize that their disgraceful petition lowers the prestige of Indians and does harm to the cause to which they are wedded. If this

[1] Not reproduced here.

[2] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter",7-9-1907

is so, what will be the use of the wealth saved by such means? Therefore, if there is still time, we beg of them that they sacrifice themselves for the good of the community. Just as the Government pays no attention to the petitions of Indians, will Mr. Hajee Cassim's "government" act in the same manner ?

In that case, we tell Mr. Hajee Cassim's "subjects", Indians who hang upon his words, that instead of looking up to others they are at present only to depend on their own courage and on God. We are all to be on the side, not of any Indian, but of God. They should plunge themselves into the struggle, putting their honour into His hands. We hope that every Indian will think for himself.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-9-1907

161. RITCH'S LABOURS

Mr. Ritch has surpassed all expectations. He is indefatigable. We publish elsewhere a translation[1] of the cabled summary of his letter to *The Times* of London. It deserves careful reading.

On the one hand, some Indians are giving up the struggle and betraying signs of weakness. On the other, Mr. Ritch and the Committee are working very hard on our behalf. *The Times* of London has lashed out at the Transvaal Government while commenting on the letter of Mr. Ritch; this is bound to have some effect. When such a fine struggle is being carried on in England, Indians, for their part, must remain united and act upon their resolution with courage, placing their trust in God. This reckoning stands to reason. We want that no Indian should ignore it.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-9-190

162. HARASSMENT OF INDIANS

Four Indians were ordered to leave the Transvaal. While on their way to Delagoa Bay, they were stopped at the Transvaal border, taken into custody and subjected to much harassment. Mr. Gandhi has written a letter[2] to the Registrar in this connection which we publish

[1] Not reproduced here.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Registrar of Asiatics", 11-9-1907

elsewhere. Though these people are willing to leave the Transvaal, they cannot do so. If they remain in the Transvaal, they will be liable to a month's imprisonment. What are they to do then? What does this all show except that the Government simply wants to harass the Indians, taking them to be a harmless lot? This case fully exposes the intentions of the Government in enforcing the Asiatic Registration Act. Will Indians go on tamely submitting to all this?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-9-1907

163. DUTY OF DISOBEYING LAWS [2]

We have already given some portion of Thoreau's essay on this subject.[1] The rest is given below.[2]

A wise person will only be useful as a man, and will not submit himself to be [treated as] clay. He who associates himself with the America of today is as good as a coward. I cannot recognize that government to be my government which is the slave's government also. Mankind has the right to refuse allegiance to and resist the government when its tyranny becomes unendurable. Some people say that such is not the case now. That is, the attack is not on them; if others are attacked, those who hold this opinion are unconcerned with it.

All machines have their friction, and the same is true of every State. Perhaps it may not be necessary to oppose [the State] in order to free it of such friction. But when the friction comes to have its machine, when tyranny takes the form of law, such a State cannot be tolerated by true men.

One must do justice and maintain truth, cost what it may. If I have unjustly wrested a plank from a drowning man, I should restore it to him though I may be drowned myself. In the same way, we must cease to hold slaves though it cost the existence of the American State.

We are accustomed to say that the mass of men are unprepared; but improvement is slow because the few who desire it do not have enough courage. It is not so important that many should be as good as you as that there be some absolute goodness somewhere; for that will leaven the whole lump. There are thousands who in opinion are opposed to slavery, but act contrary to their view. They, esteeming themselves children of Washington, sit down with their hands in their

[1] *Vide* "Duty of Disobeying Laws[1]", 7-9-1907

[2] The translation given here has been collated with the original in English.

pockets and say that they know not what to do, and do nothing. At the most they give lectures and send petitions.

There are nine hundred and ninety nine persons who profess virtue to one virtuous man. Yet he who acts virtuously, though he be the only one, is of far greater worth than those who only profess it. There may be many warders of a treasure, but none of them can give away a single farthing from it. The owner of the treasure may be only one, yet he can give away everything from it.

Voting for the right is not the same thing as doing the right. When the majority shall at length vote for the abolition of slavery, it will be because there is but little slavery left to be abolished. That is, the foundation for the [formal] abolition was [already] laid by the men who abolished it in practice.

I do not say that it is a man's duty, as a matter of course, to eradicate a wrong wherever he finds it; but it is his duty, at least, not to give it practically his support. How can a man be satisfied to entertain an opinion merely, and enjoy it ?

If someone steals my goods, I do not rest satisfied with saying that it was not a good thing that I was robbed, but I take effectual steps to recover what was stolen, and see that I am not robbed again. He who acts on his principles becomes a different kind of man. Such a man cares neither for his country nor for his relatives nor his friends. But, serving truth, he serves all of them.

We admit that unjust laws exist. Do we transgress them at once? Men generally say that these laws will be repealed when a majority of people disapprove them. They think that if they should resist, the remedy would be worse than the evil. But it is the fault of the government itself that the remedy is worse than the evil, not of those who resist it.

I do not hesitate to say that even if there is only one man in Massachusetts who is opposed to slavery, he should effectually withdraw his support from the government, both in person and property, without waiting till there is a majority on his side. For, he is not alone. God is ever on his side. Any man more right than his neighbours constitutes a majority of one already. I meet the American government directly and face to face once a year in the person of its tax-gatherer. At that time, It must definitely refuse to pay the tax.

I know this well that even if only one *honest* man in this State of Massachusetts refuses to pay taxes in order to oppose slavery, and is locked up in gaol therefor, it would be the abolition of slavery in America. What is once well done is done for ever. But we love better

to talk about it; that we say is our mission. There are many newspapers in the service of the movement for abolition of slavery, but not one man.

Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison. Hence, the proper place today for good people in Massachusetts is in her prisons. In a slave State prison is the only house in which a free man can abide with honour. If they think that in that case their influence will be lost and none will be left to fight injustice, they do not know how to fight evil. They do not know how much stronger truth is than error. Those who are in gaol, suffering the tyranny of injustice, can combat injustice more effectively from there than from outside. So long as a minority conforms to the majority, it is not even a minority. They must throw in their whole weight in the opposite direction.

When talking with my neighbours, I find that they dread the consequences of disobedience to the government to their property and family. For my own part, I would find it depressing to think that I ever rely on the protection of the State.

I think it is disgraceful to submit to a tyrannical State. It is easy and good to oppose it. I have paid no poll-tax for six years. I was put into gaol once on this account for one night. As I stood considering the walls of the prison and its iron gates, I could not help being struck with the foolishness of the State. For, those who had imprisoned me must have thought that I was made of flesh and bones only. Those fools did not know that though confined within walls, I was freer than others. I did not feel that I was in a prison. Rather, I thought that those who were outside were the real prisoners. As they could not reach me, they punished my body. In consequence, I became more free, and my ideas in regard to the State became more dangerous. I have seen that, when small children can do nothing to a person, they abuse his dog. In the same way, the State hurts my body as it can do nothing to me.

I also found that the State was afraid of hurting my body. So I lost all my remaining respect for it.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-9-1907

[1] This was followed by the editorial note: "This article, published in the last and the current issues, will be brought out next week in the form of a pamphlet priced 6d, with postage 7d."

164. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

WRETCHED INDIA

Everywhere the Indian is in a sad plight. Now comes a report from America that Indian labourers in Washington were belaboured by cowardly whites and that four of them were wounded. The rest of the labourers are running away in panic. These white assailants I regard as cowards, for it was not particularly brave for a thousand of them to have attacked the innocent labourers. They are cowards who oppress those weaker than themselves. There is a proverb among us that an angry potter will twist the ears of his donkey.[1] Similarly, these cowardly whites assault the employees, because they can do nothing to the whites who employ Indians. The truly brave are those who use their strength against persons stronger than themselves.

The Mayor of Washington has assured the Indian labourers that he will protect them and that they are welcome to return to their jobs. He has engaged a special police force to protect them. This fact does credit to the Mayor. There is a Press report that the Foreign Office in England is also looking after them.

The lesson to be drawn from this assault seems to be that Indians will be able to hold their own in foreign countries only if they cultivate courage. If the whites kick us every day, no protection can be given by the Imperial Government or any other Government. God does not help those who live like cowards. Living amidst tigers and wolves, we can do only two things. True courage lies in absence of fear of wild animals. Tigers and wolves too have been created by God, and we should view them without any ill-will. This can be practised only by saints or true devotees after a long period of devotion to God. There is a second type of courage which consists in facing tigers and wolves with weapons. This also involves risk to one's person. Such is the plight of those living in the midst of whites. A saint will not go to distant lands seeking a livelihood. Ordinarily, therefore, we need courage of the second kind. To have that courage we need to be brave in facing physical dangers and to discipline the body. According to Mrs. Besant[2], all Indians, high and low, should learn wrestling and other physical exercises to train all parts of the body. All this will

[1] The actual proverb is, "The potter, unable to punish his wife, twists the ears of his donkey."

[2] (1847-1933), Theosophist leader, President of the Indian National Congress, 1917, author of *The Religious Problem in India* (1902) and other books.

be possible only if we feel the urge of self-respect and cultivate a sense of manliness.

POLAK'S LETTER

An Englishman writing in *The Star* says that, on the whole and comparatively speaking, Indian merchants are honest. That is why the white merchants give them credit. However, the writer adds that, since the money earned by the Indian merchants does not circulate in the Transvaal, they should be turned out. Mr. Polak has replied to this in a long letter saying that Indian money does not circulate much in the Transvaal only because Indians have no rights of land or those of any other kind. He has mentioned the instance of the Indian offer of help when contributions were raised for fire relief in Potchefstroom, and has [otherwise] discussed the whole Indian question quite well.

PERMIT OFFICE

The Permit Office goes on with its perambulations. There is no need now to congratulate the remaining places. Everywhere the same thing happens. All have been boycotting the Permit Office. We have found it easy to take this line of action, and it does not require much courage. Congratulations will be deserved by those who remain true at the right moment.

RUMOURS

Every day strange rumours are afloat. Some say that the Memons have taken out registers, others that the Konkanis are losing courage. Yet others say that among the Surtis[1] and Hindus of Pretoria, there is a move to submit to the disgrace. As the critical hour approaches, such rumours are bound to gain currency. Cowards infect others too with the contagion of their own fear.

ABSURD THREATS

It is found that there are some "brave". Indians who, when piqued against a fellow-Indian, say that they will get themselves registered if the friend does not do a particular thing. Such a threat causes both amusement and sorrow. "If you do not do this, I shall jump into a ditch." One cannot understand what the other person will lose thereby. Hence, those who receive such threats should give an unhesitating reply to these braves: 'The gates of the slavery office are always open. I for my part wish that those who have lost their manliness should get themselves registered."The test of the genuine ones will prove their worth a hundred per cent. *The Friend* of Bloemfontein was not wrong when it said that the poisonousTransvaal

[1] Residents of Surat, town in Gujarat.

law would draw out the brave to risk their heads in fighting, leaving the cowards behind. We read in the prize poem on gaol-going:

"Shall we live as thieves and informers,
As cheats and robbers?"

Such a time is fast approaching. I am sorry to have to say that those submitting to the law will be reduced merely to that level.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-9-1907

165. LETTER TO W. V. HULSTEYN

[JOHANNESBURG,]
September 17, 1907

SIR WILLEM VAN HULSTEYN, M. L. A.
P. O. BOX 46
JOHANNESBURG

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th instant regarding the letter addressed to you by the Assistant Honorary Secretary of the British Indian Association on the 14th instant.

You have been pleased to advise the community represented by my Association to assist in carrying out the laws of this Colony. I beg to draw your attention to the fact that, hitherto, the community has always done so, and it will continue to do so, whenever such laws do not put on the community an unwarranted affront and do not wound its religious susceptibilities. To the Asiatic Registration Act, British Indians have undoubtedly been advised by my Association not to submit, because, in my humble opinion, it is their duty first to submit to a higher law, namely, that which dictates to mankind an idea of self-respect and respect for declarations solemnly and sincerely made. To accept the Registration Act, in my humble opinion, takes away every vestige of manliness from Indians and would make them godless, and it was in order to invite your attention to this fundamental issue that the letter of the 14th instant was addressed to you. It would be childish for any responsible British Indian to advise the community to enter upon a life-and-death struggle and to be prepared to sacrifice all their material wealth for the sake of avoiding finger impressions.

My Association is quite aware of the threat you have seen fit to use in your address—the subject-matter of this correspondence—and

to repeat in your letter under reply, but I hope you will pardon me for saying that it loses its force on those who have never concealed from themselves the fact that the Government is not only strong enough to enforce the Law but that it has declared its intention so to do. Whether such enforcement of the Law will redound to its credit, or whether, if my countrymen remain firm, all the credit will be due to them for undergoing unmerited suffering is a question which can safely be left to posterity to decide.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

M. K. GANDHI
HONORARY SECRETARY,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 28-9-1907

166. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before *September 21, 1907*]

[G. K. GOKHALE[1]
CALCUTTA]

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION TENDERS THANKS CABLE[2] GREATLY ENCOURAGED. WILL FIGHT BITTER END FOR HONOUR, RELIGION AND SOLEMN DECLARATION. NEED ALL SYMPATHY WE CAN GET. CLAIM UNANIMOUS APPROVAL SUPPORT ALL PARTIES. STRUGGLE NOT UNRESTRICTED INFLUX BUT SELF-RESPECT THOSE ENTITLED REMAIN ENTER.

Indian Opinion, 21-9-1907

[1] (1866-1915), distinguished Indian statesman
[2] *Vide* "Help from India", 21-9-1907

167. MONSTER PETITION[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before *September 21, 1907*]

TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PRETORIA
SIR,

We, the undersigned British Indians residing in this Colony, hereby beg to dissociate ourselves entirely from the letter addressed to you onbehalf of some leading Indians of Pretoria, Pietersburg, Standerton and Middelburg by Messrs Stegmann, Esselen and Roos, and dated the 30th day of August, 1907, regarding the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, No. 2 of 1907.

We respectfully submit that nothing short of total repeal of the Act can meet the difficult situation that has arisen. In our humble opinion the Act is degrading to our self-respect, offensive to our religions, and in its incidence it is such as can be thought of only in connection with dangerous criminals. Moreover, the solemn declaration made by us renders it imperative for us, as honest citizens of the Empire and God-fearing men, not to submit to the provisions of the Act, irrespective of any consequences which we may have to suffer, and which we understand to be imprisonment, banishment and/or loss or confiscation of our property.

In making the above statement, we do not desire to shirk an enquiry into the allegations as to surreptitious entry by British Indians on a wholesale scale, or to refuse to hold documents that in the opinion of the Government may sufficiently identify us.

We therefore respectfully pray that the Government will be pleased to recognise British Indians in the Transvaal as men and worthy citizens in this free and self-governing Colony.

We have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servants,

INSTRUCTIONS WITH REFERENCE TO THE TAKING OF SIGNATURES FOR

[1] It appears the petition was circulated for signatures in Hindi, Gujarati, Tamil and English. It was actually presented on November 1 after the signatures of 4,522 Indians were obtained; *vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 1-11-1907

THE ABOVE PETITION:

1. All signatures should be in ink.
2. Every sheet provides for 50 signatures. No more than 50 signatures should, therefore, be taken on each sheet.
3. Signatures should be taken in duplicate.
4. In the address column should be given the number of Street, as well as the Stand wherever possible. The name of the town in which the signatures are taken may be given only once
5. Great care should be taken not to soil the sheets.
6. So far as possible signatures should be given legibly. Where they are not in English, the person taking them should give the English equivalent; and, where the signatory puts only a cross, the cross should be witnessed by the person taking the signatures.
7. In no case should signatures be taken without the person signing reading the petition and if he cannot read any of the languages, it should be read over to him.
8. The person taking the signatures should sign at the foot on the line reserved for the purpose.
9. Duplicate sheets should be sent to the Secretary, British Indian Association, Box 6522, Johannesburg, as early as possible.
10. All signatures should be returned, at the latest, by the 30th September.
11. No pressure whatsoever should be put upon the people, and no one need sign who is not prepared to carry out the resolve of non-submission to the bitterest end.
12. The sheets should not be folded but kept rolled, and should be sent also rolled.

Indian Opinion, 21-9-1907

168. A MONSTER PETITION

The Transvaal Indians are to be congratulated on having organised a monster petition to the Government. It forms a complete answer to the document we had the misfortune to reproduce last week.[1] The petitioners have, once for all, placed on record, in the

[1] The reference is to the letter of Messrs Stegmann, Esselen and Roos; *vide* the preceding item.

briefest terms possible, the main issue. The petitioners, in frank but respectful language, inform the local Government that nothing short of total repeal of the Asiatic Registration Act can possibly meet the emergency. They couple the statement with another to the effect that, in asking for a repeal, they do not shirk any inquiry into the allegation of a surreptitious influx of Asiatics, nor do they decline to exchange the permits at present held by them. The fundamental issue, therefore, is—are Indians or are they not to be recognised as self-respecting citizens of the Empire? Our contemporary, *The Star*, the other day twitted Indians on having misled their friends in England as to the real cause of the struggle, and it credited British Indians with fighting against ten digit imprints only. Almost at the time *The Star* wrote, Mr. Ritch, the indefatigable Secretary of the South Africa British Indian Committee, was writing to the *Lancashire Daily Post*, from which we take the following:

> It is, of course, true that the Asiatic Registration Act requires British Indians as well as alien Asiatics 'to submit to a registration for identity', and that the regulations for administration of the Act include the taking of the ten digit imprints, a precaution associated almost entirely with criminality. But to rightly understand the full measure of the burden of disability borne by our Indian fellow-subjects in the Transvaal, it is necessary to recognise that thishumiliation is but an incident, and unimportant compared with the larger particular principle involved in the question of the right of the Transvaal British Indian community to treatment as civilised subjects of the Empire, and as such to protection by their overlord from their invasion and dispossession of that most elementary right.

The case for Indians could not be put more clearly.

Indian Opinion, 21-9-1907

169. THE WEENEN LICENSING APPEAL

It is not often that we find ourselves in agreement with decisions of trade-licensing officers and licensing boards, but hard as Mr. Bhayat's case[1] was, we are bound to admit that, on principle, the decision of the Licensing Officer, as also of the Board, was free from reproach. The Licensing Officer, Mr. Ingram, gave full and luminous reasons for his decision, and we believe him when he states that, had the position been reversed as to race, his decision would have been the same. In view of the prejudice that exists in the Colony, our

[1] *Vide* "an Important Permit Case" 23-6-1906& "Johannesburg Letter", 23-6-1906.

countrymen must make up their minds that unrestricted trade is impossible in Natal, if not in South Africa. The minimum that must be guaranteed, and that, in our opinion, must be insisted upon at any cost, is that existing licences shall be sacredly guarded, but with reference to new applications, as we understand Mr. Bhayat's was, local opinion, distribution of licences, and the requirements of supply and demand must largely guide Licensing Officers. Indeed, without the aid of the law, it is open to any community to boycott any class or number of traders or others whom it may not want. It is only when the assistance of the law is invoked, in order to feed the fire of prejudice, that the latter becomes insufferable, and a stronger hand is necessary to undo the mischief. At the same time, cases like Mr. Bhayat's cannot but evoke sympathy. Here is a man, who is evidently respected by all classes, is an able merchant of long standing, has rendered assistance to the British Government in the very Division in which he wants a licence to trade, and there is no moral or economic ground on which his application can be rejected, but these hard cases will always occur wherever clashing interests crop up, and where self-interest is allowed largely to dictate a particular policy. So it is prudent for the victims to recognise facts as they stand, and to so marshal their forces as to oppose them all to a deprivation of existing rights and their self-respect.

Indian Opinion, 21-9-1907

170. TRANSVAAL STRUGGLE

In this issue we publish a translation of the papers sent by Mr. Ritch, to which every reader should pay very close attention. A battle royal is going on in England on the subject of the new law. The struggle is entirely the result of the courage of Indians. Prominent leaders in England are getting convinced that Indians will do what they say. We have never seen such a discussion of the Indian question as the one that took place in connection with the Loan Bill. We do not exaggerate when we say that this is the first instance in the last fifty years of such vehement argument from both sides. Mr. Lyttelton is the leader of the Conservative Party. He was once Colonial Secretary. He supported our rights with great force. Sir Charles Dilke is a well-known Liberal Member, and at one time there was a probability of his becoming Prime Minister. He categorically stated that it was the duty of the Imperial Government to intervene. Apart from this, other members like Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Cox and Mr. O'Grady also made speeches all of which were encouraging to us.

If we take newspapers into account, we find that journals such as *The Times* of London, the *Yorkshire Post, The Observer* and the *Pall Mall Gazette* have written strongly in our favour. Sir Charles Bruce, above all, is beyond praise. He has given a hard slap to the Imperial Government.

If this is the result merely of the Indian community having boycotted the Registration Office, is it not likely that the whole of Britain will be aroused when Indians are cruelly imprisoned? Moreover, if we think of Sir Henry's reply, it is obvious that he has not altogether declined to intervene. He has only pointed out that this is not an opportune time to do so. It only means that, if the Indian community remains firm to the last and suffers imprisonment or deportation, the Imperial Government will not remain silent. If our eyes are not opened even by these signs, which he who runs may read, and if we do not take courage from them, we shall deserve all the humiliation that can be inflicted on us. At the same time, it should also be borne in mind that if we give up the struggle now, the forces which are acting in our favour will turn against us. We see the hand of God in this. God always helps through men or other means. Therefore, Indians, be vigilant!

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 21-9-1907

171. LICENSING ACT OF NATAL

We are sorry that, in Weenen, Mr. Bhayat has lost the appeal[1] for a licence which he had made to the Licensing Board. Mr. Bhayat had a very strong case. He is an influential businessman; he had helped the Government during the war, and he is wealthy. It can never be that a man like him will be refused a licence under any law with a moral basis.

Nevertheless, we have to admit that, in the present circumstances, the decision of the Board cannot be considered unjust. We should remember that, in Natal or South Africa, complete freedom of trade is impossible for the Indian community. The Licensing Officer may or may not issue a licence, having regard to the local feelings and the number of merchants in the area, and it will be futile in the present circumstances to protest against his decisions. It behoves a wise man to give due thought to the circumstances before taking any step, and to

[1] *Vide* "The Weenen Licensing Appeal", 21-9-1907

pay attention to what is happening around him. Many hardships are being inflicted on the Indian community. We have to make up our mind in advance as to which one of these is to be given the utmost weight. Our foremost need today is to preserve our status and self-respect. If we have these, the rest will follow as a matter of course. Whatever rights we enjoy today with self-respect should be preserved. That means that we must cling to the licences which are being withdrawn, and try to retain at any cost, even by going to gaol, the licences which we hold. We are convinced that if the Indian community can do this much, the problem of the new licences will solve itself. We are sure that so long as we are taken to be cowards, our efforts will bear no fruit. We do not mean to say that new licences will not be issued in any case. Wherever the Licensing Officer is kind, or where there is no opposition from the Europeans, new licences will no doubt continue to be issued. It only means that there can be no friendship and love where one side looks down upon the other. Hence our first aim should be to preserve our self-respect, and win regard as a brave people.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 21-9-1907

172. INDIAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Mr. Shelat has resigned to take up an appointment elsewhere, after attending to the Library with great diligence, though for a brief period. His vacancy is filled by Mr. Tarmahomed Sumar, and Mr. Jusab Osman has agreed to help. We offer congratulations to both of them. It is very necessary that members of the community should come forward for public work in large numbers. It is a sign of weakness on our part to ask, whenever someone leaves, how his place can be filled. Anyone will find it difficult to fill the place of Mr. Diwan in so far as hard work and regularity are concerned. However, we are confident that Mr. Tarmahomed and Mr.Jusab Osman will with utmost diligence complete the task that they have undertaken.

A library is an indication of education. There is no need to prove that it confers many benefits. It is, therefore, the duty of every Indian to help maintain this library.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 21-9-1907

173. HELP FROM INDIA

CABLE FROM HON'BLE PROF. GOKHALE

The following cable has been received by the British Indian Association, Johannesburg, from the Hon'ble Prof. Gokhale, and sent to us for publication:[1]

> Following struggle closely. Anxious interest. Deepest sympathy. Admiration. Trust securely Divine Will.

The Hon'ble Prof. Gokhale is known to every patriotic Indian. He is a member of the Central Indian Legislature. His cable ought to raise the spirit of every Indian to the highest degree of courage. That Prof. Gokhale has sent the cable means that the whole of India will now be aroused, and will run to our rescue.

REPLY TO GABLE

A meeting of the British Indian Association was convened as soon as the cable was received. The meeting was attended by Messrs Essop Mia, Coovadia, Ahmed Moosaji, Fancy, Omarji Sale, Emam Abdool Cadir, Mahomed Adamji, Ali Omar, Ahmed Halim, Cassim Moosa, Alibhai Akuji, Shah, Moosaji Ahmed, Daud Ismail, Ahmed Ise, Ismail Suleman, Dahya Rama, Cama and Momniyat. It was resolved unanimously to send the following cable:[2]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 21-9-1907

[1] *Vide* "Cable to G. K. Gokhale", Before 21-9-1907

[2] Here follows in the original a translation of "Cable to G. K. Gokhale", *vide* Before 21-9-1907

174. LAW ON THUMB-IMPRESSIONS

There is as great a difference between this and the Transvaal law as between a horse and an elephant.[1]

EDITOR,
Indian Opinion

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 21-9-1907

175. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

NEW LAW

Krugersdorp and Zeerust did just what other places had done. I was about to say that they have displayed the same courage. If, however, we call the present boycott an act of courage, what word shall we use for the real boycott when the time for it comes? We all know that a man who does not receive the "stamp of slavery" in one place

[1] Gandhiji made this observation while reproducing the following from *Sanj Vartman*, a Gujarati daily evening newspaper of Bombay:

Thumb-impressions in Bombay

The complaint which was made in the Readers' Views column of *The Bombay Gazette,* and which we reproduced in this paper, that a new law had come into force requiring thumb-impressions from all persons other than Europeans for the purposes of the Registration Department of the High Court, appears to have been unfounded. This is seen from the copy of the new law placed by the Government on the table in answer to a question in the Legislative Council by Mr. O. P. Dixit. Under that law, if any person wants to get a document of any kind registered in the Department, he will have to affix the impression of his right-hand thumb on that document, as also on the Government register recording thumb-impressions. The following rules have been framed in this connection:

(1) When the person registering a document is an educated man and is personally known to the Registrar, he will not be required to give his thumb-impression.

(2) No thumb-impression will be required also if the person registering a document is a European Iady or gentleman or any other respectable person about whose identity there can be no doubt.

(3) Persons whose right-hand thumbs cannot be used for any reason will be required to give the impression of their left-hand thumb, or, if that is not possible, of any of the other fingers.

(4) The impression will be taken in the presence of the Registrar.

can get it in another. It is not likely that anyone will be enamoured of the black mark of shame. All are therefore able to sit back and watch what Johannesburg does. If a large number of people are waiting like this, the pot of our evil will certainly burst, and Indians will be crushed under it.[1] We should feel satisfied only when those who have kept their courage so far keep it till the end, regardless of what Johannesburg does. Hence, while Krugersdorp and Zeerust do deserve to be congratulated on their firmness, the time of real test for them and for all others is yet to come.

WHICH PLACES HAVE NOT BEEN VISITED?

The Office will be at Boksburg on the 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th, at Germiston on the 24th, 25th, 26th and 27th and at Benoni on the 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th. These places seem to have received the Government's special favour. For, the Indians at each of these places have been allowed four days to take out their documents of slavery. But the Indians there are firm and it appears that no one will go to take out the obnoxious title-deed [of slavery]. Meetings have already been held at Boksburg and Germiston and all are resisting the soiling of their hands. Hence the "officers' holiday" is unlikely to have a break yet.

HAS WIND CHANGED?

Till now it was Mr. Chamney, Mr. James Cody, Mr. Richard Cody and Mr. Sweet who went about enjoying fresh air. Hereafter it will not be the same band. Bloemhof, Wolmeransstad, Lichtenburg, Piet Retief, Ermilo, Carolina and Bethal will not be visited by these gentlemen. For these places other officers have been appointed. At each of them, new officers will be present on the 17th, 18th and 19th. Mr. Hull is appointed for Bloemhof, Mr. Hog for Wolmeransstad, Mr. Juta for Lichtenburg, Mr. Levi for Piet Retief, Mr. Keyresville for Ermilo, Mr. John for Carolinaand Mr. Bangley for Bethal. I do not want to guess why this change hasbeen made. On the face of it, the reason appears to be that there are not many Indians at these places and that, these places being scattered wide apart from one another, the attack on Johannesburg cannot take place in October if the band mentioned above were moved from one place to the other.

JOHANNESBURG IN TIGHT GRIP

The attack on Johannesburg will begin on October 1. A trio has been appointed here, the two Codys and Mr. Sweet. Hence the time is

[1] The Gujarati idiom used here means: "Inevitable is the coming of nemesis when the evil accumulates beyond a limit."

drawing near when the boasts which Johannesburg has always been making will be tested. At Pretoria, Mr. Gandhi had boasted that it would have been a good thing if the Office had first gone to Johannesburg.[1] Mr. Essop Mia and Mr. Coovadia also had spoken in the same strain. Moreover, Mr. Essop Mia had written a strong letter to Mr. Roos to say that the Association and particularly Johannesburg had nothing to do with the absurd draft prepared by Mr. Roos on behalf of the "leaders". Johannesburg is the headquarters of the Association. Indians there have spoken strongly against the law. It was there that the two meetings, the one at the Empire Theatre and the other at the Gaiety Theatre, took place.[2] In spite of all this, will Johannesburg yield? But there is time yet. They have got a whole month. At Pretoria, it was in the very last days that men soiled their hands. It is probable, therefore, that the first three weeks of October at Johannesburg will pass off well. But what if Johannesburg goes through the fourth week, too, without even one Indian so much as looking at the Permit Office? It is a little difficult to answer this question. But why should we count our chickens before they are hatched?[3] However, I can guess one thing, namely, that if Johannesburg can stage a complete boycott, the Government will be convinced that we are determined to fight to death. It should be fully realized that this struggle is intended to demonstrate that we mean what we say. Neither the Government nor anyone else is convinced that we have real courage to fight. And how can that conviction come so long as we have among us such men as Mr. Sheikh Mahomed Essak who keep on changing sides?[4]

"THE BRAVES OF PIETERSBURG

Now that I have mentioned Mr. Sheikh Mahomed Essak, let me give the reader some other news I have received. At Pietersburg, four "brave" Indians have gone in for the title-deed of slavery.[5] I have also been told that these four gentlemen had signed the application made from Pietersburg over the signatures of 86 Indians. So long as such things happen, how can any Indian be trusted by the Government? How can it be believed that what we say in our petitions is true? It is also said that some affidavits have been obtained from

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Pretoria", 31-7-1907

[2] *Vide* "Mass Meeting of Transvaal Indians", 6-4-1907.

[3] The Gujarati proverb literally says, " When the buffalo is still in the fields, how can there be any talk of striking a deal?"

[4] The Gujarati proverb speaks of men "who beat the drum on both sides".

[5] Here followed in the original four names.

these gentlemen. There are all sorts of rumours in circulation. It is said that they have stated that they had not applied for the title-deed of slavery earlier, because Mr. Gandhi had prevented them from doing so. Others say that they had not applied for fear of being disgraced in the eyes of the community. If these things are true, those who have made the affidavits should ask themselves whether they do not feel that fear and shame now. All the same, there is nothing wrong in those who are timid going over to the opposite camp. This struggle is such that it will sift out the timid from the brave. Then, we shall know the true nature of the disease we suffer from. The thermometer used so far did not reveal the correct degree of our fever. When the gaol thermometer is used, everyone's correct temperature will be known.

I am greatly pained to have to give all these names and make this comment. For, I share the shame of my brethren. I do suffer in reputation if my brethren commit a theft. It is for the faults of our own people that we have been suffering in the whole of South Africa. Because some Indians are dirty, all Indians are subjected to hardship. Because some are miserly, all come to be charged with the fault. Because some people entered illegally, the new law has been enacted and all have to suffer the consequences. The present is so serious an occasion that it will be a sin to conceal our faults. Our problems will be solved only when what is rotten within comes to the surface. We are like sweetened water being boiled into a syrup. In this process, the dirt within is bound to come out. If we cover up the dirt, our being boiled will have been in vain. I, therefore, beg to be excused by those whose names I am giving and who on that account may get angry with me. I must do my duty, all the same.

The four gentlemen of Pietersburg having, as it were, stormed a castle in taking out their title-deed of slavery, Mr. Cassim Hajee Tar of Mafeking thought that he was left behind. Accordingly, he too has melted. What then to talk of Lazarus (Tamil) and Joseph (Tamil) of Durban? These two Tamil gentlemen have also received the brand of registration.

UNEASINESS AT PERMIT OFFICE

Since few Indians go to receive the stamp of slavery, the Permit Office is getting impatient. An Indian at Barberton held a permit wrongfully issued to him by a former officer. He was therefore arrested. He is now undergoing a gaol sentence of six months. Intent on not leavingBarberton empty-handed, they have obtained an application from this prisoner. We may ask what purpose will be served by taking an application from such a person. Is it intended to issue registers by accepting the applications of those who hold no

permits and have no right to live here? Or, as *The Friend* of Bloemfontein says, will the Government keep in the Transvaal Indians now in gaol and oust the rightful old residents? Let us see how the Transvaal Government takes away the rights of the lawful residents.

NEW FINGER-PRINT REGULATION

In the current *Gazette*, a regulation has been published, empowering the authorities, at their option, to take a photograph, finger-prints, physical measurements, etc., of any person in gaol, provided that such person is not a detained witness or a civil debtor. The Regulation is in consequence of a suit that was heard in the local court. This does not particularly concern Indians. But it shows that such regulations can be applied to people guilty of criminal offences.

CAN WOMEN BE ASKED TO GIVE FINGER-PRINTS?

Mr. Moosa Ebrahim Mansoor writes from Volksrust to say that the police demanded the permit from an Indian woman. She produced it. They then asked her to give the thumb-impression, which she did on the order of her master. One cannot understand how she produced the permit. The police had not the slightest authority to ask for the thumb-impression. It was decided in the Punia case[1] that even a permit was not necessary for women. I see no need to take any other step in the matter. But where such things happen, it is necessary to give a warning.

"HOW CAN WE PUT UP WITH LOSSES?"

I have been asked how people can put up with losses likely to occur in the course of the struggle against the new law. In the first place, what one takes to be a loss is not a loss, but a gain. If we buy a carriage for a hundred rupees, we do not think it to be a loss of money, but take it as a proper return for our money. In just the same way, we have to buy our rights by forgoing our money. One who feels assured that the rights will certainly be won should not be afraid of forgoing the money. For he is sure of getting a return for it. It is true that some people may not feel certain in their minds that they will get the rights. Even such men will forgo the money now in the hope of getting the rights [later]. We always take such risks in business. Because we occasionally lose money in a speculative transaction, we do not close down our business. If we fight with this as ourguiding principle, we shall stop talking of losses. The important thing is that

[1] *Vide* "The Punia Case", 29-9-1906 and "Deputation to Lord Elgin", 8-11-1906.

the struggle for our rights is a struggle for the community. But being narrow-minded, we do not realize that a gain to the community is a gain to us. If we consider this thing closely, we shall realize that Indians lost money at the time of the Jameson Raid[1] and the same thing happened during the War.[2] But we gave no thought to it because we were helpless. Shall we give up fighting for the good of the community, apprehensive that perhaps there may be some loss of money ?

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE WITH COPIES OF THIS JOURNAL AFTER READING THEM?

I have been asked to answer this question also. My advice at any rate is that the *Opinion* is so important that everyone should maintain a file of its issues. But those who are not particular about maintaining a file or feel too lazy to do so should immediately after reading an issue post it to a friend in India. It is necessary to do this; for, it is the easiest and cheapest way to publicise in India the facts of our struggle here.

CONTENTS OF AFFIDAVITS

Affidavits are being obtained from those "brave" ones who now go to the Permit Office at Pretoria to "play on the piano" [i.e., to give finger-prints]. The substance of the affidavit has come to my hand. It includes the following words: "Owing to the attitude instigated by Mr. M. K. Gandhi and taken up by the Asiatics, I was afraid to present myself at the Permit Office in Pretoria during the month of July. I therefore request now that I may be registered." One cannot understand how any Indian could have the face to put his signature to a document of this kind. One cannot know even what the Permit Office gains thereby. Be that as it may, has the fear of the person concerned disappeared now? Mr. Gandhi's advice even today is the same, and he says it will remain the same till his death. The Indian community also stands unshaken in its resolve. But why argue with a person bent on taking out the title-deed of slavery?

MONSTER PETITION

A copy of the monster petition[3] and a set of instructions are being sent herewith. The petition must be dispatched quite soon, so that the affidavits in question may lose all their force. Those who have

[1] In December 1895
[2] The Boer War, 1899-1902
[3] *Vide* "Monster Petition",Before 21-9-1907

not got copies of the petition for their signature should obtain them from theSecretary. I may here mention an earlier instance that occurs to me. When the Franchise Bill was introduced in Natal in 1894, a petition signed by 10,000 Indians was sent to Lord Ripon,[1] and consequently the Bill was dropped. That is one thing to be remembered. Another thing is that leading men came forward to obtain the signatures, which were secured within 15 days. It was later found that signatures in duplicate were necessary. Accordingly, 30 volunteers worked for a whole night and prepared a copy. The Natal struggle was nothing compared to the present one. To obtain signatures on this petition, we certainly need the energetic support of leading men and, also, volunteers. I think it will be of advantage if copies of the petition with signatures reach here before the 30th. I earnestly hope that at least 10,000 Indians will sign the petition.

At the meeting of the Association convened to consider the Hon. Prof. Gokhale's cablegram, it was also resolved to send out to all towns the monster petition for signature. In addition to the Chairman, Mr. Coovadia, Mr. Cama, Mr. Fancy, Mr. Emam Abdool Cadir and Mr. Shah addressed the meeting.

LETTER FROM WELL-KNOWN ENGLISHWOMAN

There is a well-known lady[2] connected with the Ethical Society of England who writes as follows:

> I have just been reading *Indian Opinion* for July 27th and I can forbear no longer sending to you a few words to express sympathy with you, which I have felt over and over again when reading your paper—sympathy with the stress and strain of your struggle, sympathy with the holy nature of your cause, and, above all, sympathy with the spirit in which you are writing, speaking and acting all the time. I want to send you congratulations also in that you have been able to carry on the struggle so strenuously.

FORGOTTEN VOLUNTEER

Mr. Mohamed Ismail Kanmia writes that, though he had given his name to the Hamidia Society, it did not appear in the *Indian Opinion.* He feels sorry about it. It is for the Editor or the reporter to say how this name came to be omitted. When everyone is working under great stress, such an omission should be excused. However, Mr. Mahomed Ismail deserves praise for his vigilance. I hope others too will show similar zeal. Let all Indians remember that the worth of their enthusiasm will be tested when the time for action comes.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 21-9-1907

[1] *Vide* "Guide to London" (Appendix-A), [1893-94].

[2] Florence Winterbottom.

176. LETTER TO PRIME MINISTER'S SECRETARY

JOHANNESBURG,
September 21, 1907

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
THE RIGHT HON'BLE THE PRIME MINISTER
PRETORIA
SIR,

The Committee of my Association desires me to draw the Prime Minister's attention to the following report in the papers:

> He regretted that Asiatics were objecting to registration on such a flimsy excuse as that of the taking of finger impressions. It was enforced for white people, and he did not see that anyone suffered from the rule.

If the report referred to is correct, I venture to draw the Right Hon'ble gentleman's attention to the fact that finger impressions themselves have never been a primary cause of the opposition to the Registration Act. While they undoubtedly constitute a serious item among many others, my Association is free to admit that, by themselves, they would never justify the very great and intense irritation that the Act has caused. I take the liberty to quote from the grounds of objections framed:

1. It is manifestly in conflict with the past declarations of His Majesty's representatives;
2. It recognises no distinction between British and alien Asiatics;
3. It reduces British Indians to a status lower than that of the aboriginal races of South Africa and coloured people;
4. It renders the position of British Indians in the Transvaal much worse than under Law 3 of 1885, and therefore, than under the Boer regime;
5. It sets up a system of passes and espionage unknown in any other British territory;
6. It brands the communities to which it is applied as criminals or suspects;
7. The alleged influx of unauthorised British Indians is denied;
8. If such a denial is not accepted, a judicial, open, and British inquiry should be instituted before such drastic and uncalled for legislation is enforced;

9. The measure is otherwise un-British, and unduly restricts the liberty of inoffensive British subjects, and constitutes a compulsory invitation to British Indians in the Transvaal to leave the country.

Thus, it will be seen that, when the Law was first introduced last year, the main objections did not contain even so much as a reference to finger prints. The whole flavour about the Act is, in my humble opinion, that of criminality, and submission to it would make the lives of British Indians in the Transvaal intolerable.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ESSOP ISMAIL MIA,
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 28-9-1907

177. LETTER TO J. A. NESER

[JOHANNESBURG,
September 24, 1907]

[J. A. NESER, ESQ., M. L. A.
P. O. BOX 22
KLERKSDORP]

DEAR SIR,

You are reported to have made the following observations regarding the Asiatic Act:

> The Law, said Mr. Neser, regarding Asiatics was highly necessary. He could not understand the objections raised by the Indians with regard to the taking of fingerprints, in which there was nothing degrading whatever, and the only reason he could see was that the Indians were endeavouring to shield those of their fraternity who had come and were still coming into the Transvaal in an illegal way.

My Association regrets that you have not taken the trouble to understand the objections of the Indian community to the Asiatic Act. I beg to invite your attention to the letter addressed by my Association to General Botha,[1] and to add that, in the opinion of my Association,

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

the Act not only wounds every manly sentiment but it insults the great religions of India.

My Association is surprised that you should consider it fit to charge the community represented by my Association with a desire to shield those who have entered the Colony illegally. I am sure you do not consider that British Indians are ready to sacrifice all that they hold dear forthe sake of covering the guilty. Moreover, the fact that British Indians have accepted the principle of voluntary registration shows that it is not possible for the Indian community to screen offenders.

[*I have, etc.,*

ESSOP ISMAIL MIA,

CHAIRMAN,

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION]

Indian Opinion, 28-9-1907

178. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

[*September 25, 1907*]

"PLAGUE OFFICE' ON TOUR

The Permit Office—I forget, it should be "Plague Office"—went round Boksburg, but obtained no other prey than an Indian prisoner. The reporters of the *Leader* and the [*Rand*] *Daily Mail* state that the morale of the Indians there was very high. Their pickets were firm and appealed to every Indian who wished to go to the Permit Office. Some Indians had reached as far as the Office, but when they saw what was in store for them, they returned without surrendering their honour. By the time this letter appears in print, the Office will also have moved to Germiston. There is not the slightest probability of any Indian applying for a permit there.

HAMIDIA MEETING

As days pass, the time draws near for the "Plague" to visit Johannesburg. The Hamidia Islamic Society therefore held a large meeting on Sunday. The hall was packed to the full. Mr. Emam Abdool Cadir took the chair. Mr. Gandhi read out the cablegram[1] received from Babu Surendranath Banerjea[2] and explained the

[1] *Vide* "Cable to Surendranath Banerjea", After 25-9-1907

[2] (1848-1925), orator and politician, President of the Indian National Congress, 1895 and 1902.

situation. [He said that] signatures on the monster petition should be obtained with the utmost speed. For this purpose, volunteers should be enlisted. The volunteers appointed to picket the Permit Office should do their work with great care and patience. It will not be proper. for them to shout at anyone or handle anyone roughly. Then Mr. Essop Mia gave an account of the interview he had with Mr. Gibson, and said that they were not to depend at all on his advice or on that of other whites. In an impassioned speech, Moulvi Saheb Ahmed Mukhtiar quoted versesfrom the *Koran,* which said that the faithful should not put their trust in God's enemies or in their own. At the present time, the whites were playing the part of enemies and they should not be trusted when they advised them to get registered, etc. Further, he said that a person like the Prophet Moses along with his community of 1,00,000 men had to undergo hardships for 12 years. Only then did happiness come to him. Similarly, the Indian community would have happiness only after it passed through suffering. Moreover, the Prophet Moses led an attack on Pharaoh relying on God alone. Likewise, the Indian community was to stick to its pledge with faith in God. What if one had to lose all one's wealth for the sake of one's name, reputation and faith? Then the Chairman addressed the meeting and said that, just now as they were receiving encouraging cablegrams from such great men as Prof. Gokhale and Babu Surendranath Banerjea in India, so would they slave to face the indignation of the whole of India if they threw up the game at the critical moment. It was also stated at the meeting that the Muslim subjects of Turkey in the Transvaal were thinking of sending a petition. Mr. Nawab Khan[1] spoke about volunteers. Mr. Patel from Klerksdorp, who was present, gave the assurance that signatures from his place would be obtained in time. Mr. Aswat pointed out that the month of Ramzan would coincide with the month for permits. It should not therefore be allowed to happen that Muslims observed the holy fast on the one hand and forsook their faith on the other by blackening their hands and faces.

GOVERNMENT'S KEENNESS

The Government appears very keen on getting the Indian community to register itself. This is a matter of concern to us; at the same time, it should give us courage. We should be concerned because we are not to do what the Government is so keen that we should; it should give us courage because the Government's keenness also reveals its fear. However hard of heart it may be, it is improbable that

[1] The original has "Nawabdakh".

it will deport all Indians or deprive them of their licences. Mr. Saleji sends a copy of the letter the Government has addressed to the magistrate at Belfast. It shows that the magistrates have been asked to inform every Indian that those who have not registered themselves so far can go to Johannesburg in October and take out their title-deed of slavery there. What can be more indicative of fear than this?

GENERAL BOTHA'S MISUNDERSTANDING

General Botha says that the Indian community is not being reasonable in carrying on so much agitation against finger-prints. This also shows that the Government itself does not know what it will do if the Indians remain firm. However, to remove the wrong impres-sion, Mr. Essop Mia has addressed the following letter on behalf of the Association: [1]

BABU SURENDRANATH'S CABLEGRAM

The following is the cablegram sent by Babu Surendranath Banerjea from Calcutta:

> Bengal's warmest sympathy your trials, struggles. Wish success.

This cablegram has caused great joy. Babu Surendranath is adored by Bengali students. For the last 25 years, he has been fighting the battle of Indians. He was probably the first Indian to enter the I. C. S. He is the head of the Ripon College and proprietor of the famous journal, *Bengalee.* For many years, he has been the Secretary of the British Indian Association, Calcutta. He presided over the sessions of the Indian National Congress at Poona and Ahmedabad. There are very few orators of his ability in India. He has a voice so powerful that in an assembly of 10,000 men it can be heard even at the farthest end. He has played a big part in the *Swadeshi* movement. It can be taken as a very good omen that such cablegrams have started coming from India.

FLOCK OF BLACK SHEEP

The number of black sheep continues to increase slowly. Messrs . . . [2] have received the consecration. These men, I think, ought to dress themselves like women.

STOKEINSTROOM

Speaking at Heidelberg, Mr. Stokeinstroom said that no licences would be issued to Indians if they did not register themselves. The mask has now been torn off. At first they talked of gaol sentences.

[1] Here follows in the original a translation of "Letter to Prime Minister's Secretary", 21-9-1907

[2] Here followed in the original five names.

Gaol gave place to deportation. Now they are talking of licences. What will Mr. Botha do when the Indian community gives up the fear of losing their licences?

NESER

Mr. Neser spoke at Klerksdorp in the same strain as Mr. Stokeinstroom. Denouncing the fight against finger-prints, he said that the Indian community was fighting to shield men who had immigrated illegally. He added that, if the community went on fighting, the Government would stop issuing trade licences. We are unconcerned at the threat. For, knowing that barking dogs seldom bite, the Indian community grows the more fearless the more it is threatened. But we should give some thought to the ignorance of men like Mr. Neser, for somehow the misunderstanding still persists that we have been fighting only against finger-prints. Mr. Essop Mia has therefore sent the following reply. After quoting Mr. Neser's speech, Mr. Essop Mia says:[1]

WILLEM VAN HULSTEYN

In a speech, Sir Willem Van Hulsteyn had said that the Indians were fighting only against finger-prints. Drawing the attention of the gentleman to this, the Secretary of the British Indian Association has written to this effect:[2]

The Indian fight is against the whole of the law, and not merely against the finger-prints. Indians believe that acceptance of the law under compulsion will amount to slavery. They are, therefore, prepared to lose their all rather than have slavery; it is not merely a question of not giving finger-prints. We are quite aware of the penalties with which the Government has begun threatening us. It is still to be seen whether a rigorous enforcement of the law will redound to the credit of the Government, or the credit will be due to the Indians for undergoing unmerited suffering.

A CORRECTION

With reference to my comment on the "brave ones" of Pietersburg, a prominent gentleman from the place says that the well-known Pietersburg application did not contain the signatures of the persons named by me. For they were out of station at the time. I am sorry for the mistake made by me. However, it is not possible to excuse the fault of the gentlemen who have blackened their hands.

[1] Here follows in the original a translation of "Letter to J. A. Neser", 24-9-1907

[2] For the original *vide* "Letter to W. V. Hulsteyn", 17-9-1907

Only, the fault is not so big as it seemed. I may be permitted to infer from the said letter that those who have signed the application will never touch the title-deed of slavery.

BATTLE AT GERMISTON

The Permit Office has encamped at Germiston. The Indians there have therefore become excited. Till today (Wednesday) they have stayed away from business and have started working as volunteers. Not one man from Germiston has applied. Even the hotel waiters have refused to apply. Only one Madrasi from Pretoria, named Cassim, disregarded the advice of the pickets and registered himself. Five Memons went there, but allowed themselves to be dissuaded by the pickets and gave up the idea of playing on the piano [i. e., of registering themselves]. The enthusiasm of the volunteers at Germiston being excessive, it was necessary to restrain them. Now, only as many as are required there work there and, that too, with courtesy and patience.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-9-1907

179. CABLE TO SURENDRANATH BANERJEA[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
After *September 25, 1907*]

INDIANS TENDER THANKS. WILL DO DUTY.

[BIAS]

Indian Opinion, 28-9-1907

180. INDIA'S HELP

The Hon'ble Professor Gokhale has been quickly followed by the Hon'ble Surendranath Banerjea in sympathising with Indians in the Transvaal in their death struggle. It is no small thing to receive cables from these trusted representatives of the people of India. Both of them have dedicated their lives to the Indian cause, and both command unrivalled influence in India. It is, therefore, reasonable to suppose that the Indian question in the Transvaal will soon occupy a most prominent place in Indian politics. Lord Ampthill truly said the other day that nothing has wounded so deeply Indian sentiment as the

[1] This was in reply to Surendranath Banerjea's cable; "Johannesburg Letter", 25-9-1907.

grievances of British Indians in South Africa. We need the encouragement received from India. On this question, there are no parties in India, there is no division of opinion, all—Hindu, Mahomedan, Parsee and Christian—alike realise the very painful and humiliating position occupied by Indians in the Transvaal. Anglo-Indian opinion is just as solid as Indian opinion; no one has spoken so strongly against the treatment as *The Englishman* in Calcutta and *The Times of India* in Bombay. All, therefore, that is needed is to focus the energy of the different associationsand organs of opinion in India, and to bring the weight of this solid influence to bear on Lord Minto; then the Indian question cannot but be solved in accordance with principles of justice and humanity.

Indian Opinion, 28-9-1907

181. PICKETS DUTY

Johannesburg Indians will soon be put upon their mettle, and there can be little doubt that the ultimate course of action as to the Asiatic Act will be largely determined by the result of the attempt of the Registration Office to register Asiatics in Johannesburg. Johannesburg contains nearly one-half of the Asiatic population of the Transvaal—all the different Asiatic races, too, are largely represented on the Rand—and, if they remain firm in their opposition to the Asiatic Act, it must give the local Government some food for serious reflection. The building of a jail, no matter what threats may be held out, is not a joke in these times when the money-market is so tight. Deportation of thousands of inoffensive people is not a matter of practical politics, because it is likely to appal the conscience of even Generals Botha and Smuts. We have, therefore, arrived at threats as to the stopping of Asiatic licences, but, were such a thing possible, the Government will be stultifying themselves in that they will have left the largest number of Asiatics untouched. Whatever action, therefore, the Johannesburg Asiatics take will very largely decide the issue. The responsibility, therefore, on the shoulders of leading Indians and other leading Asiatics in Johannesburg is very grave and very great.

There is no denying the fact that, hitherto, the boycott of the Registration Office has been so successful, because of the work of the Indian pickets or missionaries. They have done their work calmly, deliberately and unobtrusively. There are many disturbing elements in Johannesburg. Those who have volunteered to do the missionary work are, some of them, fiery spirits. Indians in Johannesburg, too, are drawn from all classes. We, therefore, warn the Indian volunteers against any haste or any display of ill temper. Physical violence must

be absolutely eschewed, and so must strong language. Those who are anxious to avoid the yoke of the Asiatic Act should be equally anxious not to put a more terrible yoke in the shape of ignorant brow-beating and intimidation. If Indians are satisfied that the Act imposes degradation on them and takes away their manliness, all that they need do is to place that view before those who do not know it. Once they have done so, their duty is finished, and they should leave itopen to the would-be applicant for registration to make his choice. It is his loss, not the community's, if he elects to accept the enslaving conditions of the Act.

Indian Opinion, 28-9-1907

182. GENERAL B0THA AND THE ASIATIC ACT

It is disconcerting to find that the Premier of the Transvaal, who had no hesitation in speaking sweetly and softly to the deputation that waited on him at the Hotel Cecil during his memorable visit to London, does not know even up to now what the real struggle of the Asiatics hinges on. He thinks, and rightly so, that there can be no excuse for the tremendous agitation carried on by the Asiatics of the Transvaal, over the question of finger-prints merely, but the belief of General Botha that the agitation is based on the objection to finger-prints only shows how helplessly ignorant he is as to the Indian attitude. The British Indian Association has promptly forwarded to General Botha some of the objections[1] that were framed against the Act when it was first mooted in 1906. The gallant General has not even taken the trouble to ascertain whether it was at all possible for the British Indians of the Transvaal to engage world-wide sympathy, if their objections were confined to the giving of digit-impressions. It may be convenient for the statesmen of the Transvaal to disregard the very serious points raised by the Indian community as to their religious feelings, their status, and degrading class-legislation, but such habitual disregard can only end in more intense irritation and in stiffening the backs of the Asiatics. Theirs is now the courage of desperation. They have accustomed themselves to the idea of their all being taken away from them. It would, therefore, be wise and prudent if the Transvaal Government were, at least, to examine the Indian objections on their merits, and not shut their eyes against them.

Indian Opinion, 28-9-1907

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Prime Minister's Secretary", 21-9-1907

183. THE BATTLE AGAINST INDIAN HAWKERS

The debate in the Legislative Assembly of Natal on the proposal to raise the licence fee payable by hawkers is very enlightening. No one minded the exorbitant increase in the fee payable by the Natal hawker, because hawking is largely in the hands of Asiatics, and because, as the Minister of Justice put it, "Hawking was not a fit pursuit for white men in this country." Quite on a par with this method of dealing with questions affecting non-whites is the proposal made by that arch anti-Asiatic, Mr. Haggar, that "it is in the public interest undesirable to employ Asiatics on the N.G.R.[1] in positions usually filled by white men". Strictly speaking, the great M.L.A. should have said "in the white interest", instead of "in the public interest". The motion, let it be said, was accepted by the Minister of Railways and Harbours and he said that, if he could not kick out "coolies", as he described Indian pointsmen, it was because he had a mandate about retrenchment from the members of the House. In both these cases, therefore, there was not even so much as an examination of the claims that Indian hawkers and Indian pointsmen might presumably have. The "British subjects" theory has evidently been played out so far as the Colonies are concerned—they will have all the advantages that their association with the ancient flag may secure to them, but they will have none of the inconveniences or the responsibilities that the bearers of the flag must necessarily carry with it.

Indian Opinion, 28-9-1907

184. OUR SUPPLEMENT

We are publishing along with this issue a photograph of the brave volunteers of Pretoria. Out of deference to the views of some gentlemen, we did not so far issue the supplement. But in doing so, we believe, we have been unjust to some extent to the pickets at Pretoria. We are definitely of opinion that had these volunteers not come forward and set an example of patience, gentleness and courage, the fight would not have progressed so far.

Now it is the turn of Johannesburg. We take it to be our duty to issue the supplement on this occasion. If Johannesburg follows

[1] Natal Government Railway

theexample of these young men and deals with people with patience and humility, we shall believe that the end of our struggle is drawing near.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-9-1907

185. DUTY OF VOLUNTEERS

We saw during the Transvaal struggle that excellent work was done by the "volunteers" or "pickets" or "missionaries" or "watchmen", or whatever other name is used for them. Without their help, nothing could have been achieved. The real credit for the struggle goes to the "pickets" in Pretoria. The example that they set by their patience, gentleness and courage is being followed everywhere else.

There is a problem only in Johannesburg. There are Indians of every sort living in this town. Among them there may even be some who have no sense of shame. It should not be surprising if such persons prepare themselves to apply for registration. Moreover, people from outside may also go there with the same disgraceful aim. How should "the pickets" manage all such persons? Ordinarily, we shall feel contempt for any Indian seeking to soil his hands. But it will be better to show pity rather than contempt.

A watchman's duty is to watch, not to assault. We have not the slightest hesitation in saying that if anyone in Johannesburg seeking registration is assaulted, our success will turn into failure just at the last moment, like a ship sinking when about to reach the harbour. Our whole struggle is based on our submitting ourselves to hardships, not inflicting them on anyone else, be he an Indian or European. This point must be borne in mind very carefully by every "watchman". Our duty is to reason with those who are doing wrong, to entreat them, to beg of them. If in spite of this they wish to court slavery, they ought to have the freedom to do so. For, we do not see any gain in saving them from the yoke of the law in order to subject them to our own yoke. It is our duty to extend to others the same freedom that we want for ourselves.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-9-1907

186. IS INDIA AROUSED?[1]

The cables from the Hon'ble Prof. Gokhale and the Hon'ble Babu Surendranath Banerjea have proved very inspiring to us. These gentlemen are not likely to remain content with merely sending messages of sympathy. Their cables indicate that we shall get full support from India. This can have a very important meaning. The Transvaal question will not be treated as a small matter. It will receive world-wide publicity. We have now reason to believe that urgent representations will be made from India and meetings will be held there that case, the Imperial Government can no longer remain indifferent. Lord Ampthill has already said that no other question has hurt the feelings of Indians as much as the Transvaal question his. Trouble is brewing everywhere. At such a time, how can the [Imperial] Government permit such a potent cause for discontent in India?

There is only one reason why we have won such support and that is our courage. The strength that we have displayed so far by our unity has had a powerful effect. We have won great honour. It is in the hands of the Transvaal Indians to preserve it. And the eyes of the Transvaal Indians are on Johannesburg.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-9-1907

187. "THE CRUSHING OF TREES"

We have a proverb in Gujarati that, when mighty bulls fight, trees get uprooted. Two parties of whites in Natal have been wrangling, and the poor Indian labourers bear the consequences. Mr. Haggar and his friends say that, in place of the Indian watchmen at railway crossings, whites should be appointed, and the former discharged. There is no reason to believe that in making such a move Mr. Haggar is actuated by a particularly benevolent motive. His intention is only somehow to attract public notice. The Natal Government is aware that it will be improper to engage highly-paid whites and kick Indians out of their jobs. But the Government is shy of showing such honesty publicly. Hence it says that Indian workers

[1] *Vide* "India's Help" 28-9-1907

will be relieved wherever possible. Neither party cares for the consequences of carrying out this intention. They call this "civilization" If this is what education and culture mean, we wish Indians will save themselves from this spectre.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-9-1907

188. MOVEMENT FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT IN EGYPT

A letter in the *Rand Daily Mail* shows that the movement for self-government in Egypt has suddenly assumed importance. It is said to be the effect of Mustafa Kemal Pasha's[1] activities. There are members of the aristocracy on the Egyptian Council, of whom about 116 are reported to have resolved to demand self-government. They say that they do not reject British help. But they wish to take the reins of Government into their own hands. They desire that the Department of Public Education should be entirely in the people's charge. Mustafa Kemal Pasha asserts that, if the British Government does not grant this peacefully and in a friendly manner, the people of Egypt will rather get it by fighting than let Egypt remain a dependent State.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-9-1907

189. LETTER TO J. A NESER

[JOHANNESBURG,]

September 28, 1907

J. A. NESER, ESQ., M.L.A.

P. O. BOX 22

KLERKSDORP

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th instant, and to tender to you the thanks of my Association for your very courteous, frank and full letter. The greatest stumbling-block in the way of a proper solution of the Indian question has been, undoubtedly, a great deal of apathy on the part of public men and consequent want of knowledge about the question.

[1] (1874-1908), who, in December 1907, founded the Nationalist Party in Egypt

I am deeply thankful for the sympathy you express for my countrymen who have vested interests in this Colony, and it is because the fight is entirely for the protection of such interests that I see in your attitude a common meeting-ground.

Not only does my Association sympathise with the objection to wholesale immigration from India, but it has recognised its validity, in view of the very general prejudice against such immigration, and has always offered to co-operate with the Government in attaining the object.

The ground is now clear for an examination of the Asiatic Act on its merits. I venture to draw your attention to the fact that, when, in the September of 1906, objections against the draft Ordinance, as the Act then was, were framed, finger-prints were not even so much as mentioned, although it was understood that the Government intended to insist on finger-prints. The attitude of my Association would not, therefore, have been in any way altered, had signature been substituted for finger-prints. It is the sting of compulsion running throughout the Act that offends and bears so heavily on the community. The finger-prints do not offend any religious susceptibility but the exception made in the Act in favour of Turkish Christians. Turkish Jews does most emphatically wound religious feelings.

The Act bristles with severe penalties for breaches of the requirements thereof, but it is not the fact of the penalty that is resented, but the underlying assumption that Johannesburg as a class, are capable of impersonation, fraudulent transfers of permits, and fraudulently bringing unauthorised immigrants into the country that is most strongly and, I think, rightly objected to. Whenever in a country exceptional penalties are provided for a particular offence, the general existence of such an offence in that country is, as you are aware, presumed. Knowing well that British Indians, as a class, have not been guilty of the practices above described, they manfully struggle to avoid the presumption which the Act has made tacitly and which the framers of the Law publicly declare as their conviction. It should, moreover, be borne in mind that this Law is a class measure of an obnoxious type, and is calculated to degrade British Indians in the estimation of Malays, with whom many of them are nearly related, Cape Coloured men, with whom they come in close contact, and the Kaffir races, who are largely employed by them as their servants. While all these three are, in common with the other inhabitants of the Colony, exempt from any such restrictions on their personal liberty, Asiatics have been especially singled out.

The obvious answer to the last objection is, naturally, that it is the competition of the Asiatics that is feared and not that of the Coloured races, and it is because my Association recognises this that voluntary identification or registration has been suggested in place of the compulsory measure. Such voluntary registration will not insult Indians by separating them from the rest of the community, will satisfy the European objection wholly, and will protect vested rights. You seem to think that voluntary registration will leave untouched dishonest Indians, whose existence I do not deny, but that is, I beg to state, a mistake. Under the voluntary offer, it has been submitted to the Government that by a short Bill, passed by consent, the Act can be made applicable to those who do not comply with the offer. Indeed, at a stated period, all Indians or Asiatics may be examined simultaneously, and those who are found to be without the new identification certificates may be bundled out of the Colony under the Peace Preservation Ordinance or under a General Immigration Law that may be passed, in the place of the Peace Preservation Ordinance.

I will not trespass further upon your time, but will conclude by saying that, while my countrymen have honestly endeavoured to examine and meet reasonable objections raised by Europeans, the latter have, as a body, entirely failed to reciprocate, but have simply persevered in their policy of prejudiced opposition without caring to examine the Indian position. As you have been, in your professional capacity, very largely connected with British Indians, I may not be wrong in asking you to step into our shoes and look at the whole position from our standpoint, and see whether a reasonable compromise is not possible by the exercise of a little patience and some co-operation.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ESSOP ISMAIL MIA

CHAIRMAN,

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 5-10-1907

190. LETTER TO "RAND" DAILY MAIL" [1]

[GERMISTON,]
September 28, [*1907*]

TO
THE EDITOR
[*RAND DAILY MAIL*
JOHANNESBURG]

SIR,

The Reporter has informed the public that in Germiston it was the intimidation of British Indian pickets that many Indians refrained from registering themselves. I, as chief picket, beg tostate that the information given to you is absolutely incorrect. I may inform you that, as a matter of fact, for two days the whole Indian population of Germiston was picketing because they all stopped work. Such was their enthusiasm and opposition to the law. It was only after the appointed pickets persuaded the other Indians that they recommenced their work.

But it is quite true that some of the Indians from different other places came to Germiston to get registered, and they listened to the expostulations and arguments advanced by the Germiston pickets and returned without compromising themselves or their community. But, where such reasonable argument failed, strict instructions were given that those who wished to accept the slavery imposed by the law should be personally escorted, and this was done in the instance of an Indian named Joseph Bahadur who came from Boksburg.

In our fight we do not need intimidation. Those who understand the Act and all the consequences of it refrain, except when they are blinded to a sense of their own dignity by their selfishness, of their own accord from accepting the yoke. I may state for the information of your numerous readers that even hospital attendants and labourers refused to register themselves under threat of being dismissed from their employment, and their dignified refusal had such marked effect on their employers that the threats were withdrawn.

I am, etc.,

RAM SUNDAR PUNDIT
CHIEF OF THE GERMISTON PICKETS

Rand Daily Mail, 3-10-1907

[1] was presumably drafted by Gandhiji.

191. SPEECH AT HAMIDIA ISLAMIC SOCIETY

JOHANNESBURG,
[*September 29, 1907*]

I am attending the Society's meeting today, but I have nothing special to say. A letter has been received from Mr. Beg. He has offered help as a picket, if necessary. Indians of Johannesburg must take a lesson from the courage shown by their brethren in Germiston. Mr. Ram Sundar Pundit will tell you about it. The pickets here have to perform their duty carefully. We must reason with the people to the best of our ability. No force should be used against anyone. If any persons come from outside, we should be patient in dealing with them.

About the application submitted from Pretoria, I have so far learnt that the Government will appoint inspectors to examine the permits. Mr. Cody has held out a threat that the people will have to leave theTransvaal, but Mr. Pundit is very firm. It would be good if they arrested Mr. Pundit himself. It is necessary to expedite the taking of signatures in Johannesburg.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-10-1907

192. REPRESENTATION TO TURKISH CONSUL-GENERAL[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before *October 5, 1907*]

SIR,

We, the undersigned, residents of Johannesburg and faithful Mahomedan subjects of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan of Turkey, hereby beg to draw your attention to the Asiatic Registration Act, which requires Mahomedan subjects of the Turkish Empire to be registered under it. In our humble opinion, the Act is humiliating, and it specially insults Mahomedans coming from Turkey, in that it distinguishes between Mahomedan and non-Mahomedan subjects of the Turkish Empire to the detriment of the former. We, therefore, trust that you will be pleased to make the necessary representations to the

[1] This was presumably drafted by Gandhiji; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 5-10-1907

local Government and forward copy of this representation to be laid before His Imperial Majesty.

We have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servants,

SYED MUSTAFA AHMED JELL

[AND 19 OTHER TURKISH MAHOMEDANS]

Indian Opinion, 5-10-1907

193. MR. GEORGE GODFREY

Mr. Subhan Godfrey and Mrs. Godfrey have further reason for congratulation in the return of their third son from England after having received a liberal education. Any parents would be proud to have two barristers and one doctor as their sons, not to mention others still undergoing school education. Mr. George Godfrey[1], too, may well congratulate himself upon his safe return after completing his studies without a break and his reception by his friends and fellow-countrymen, but we are not in the mood to exaggerate the possession of educational qualifications. For the public, it is much more to the point to know whether such a splendid asset is to be used for self-glorification and enriching oneself or whether it is to be devoted to national uses. We shall [a]wait an answer to this pertinent query not in Mr. Godfrey's promises but in his career.

Indian Opinion, 5-10-1907

194. POOR BUT BRAVE 1NDIANS

There are some poor Indians who were prepared to give up their jobs and become beggars rather than submit to the obnoxious law. We have mentioned this fact in our Germiston report. Just because these men who defied the law are poor, people do not run to embrace them. But we call these poor men heroes among men. For, if we succeed on the question of this law, much of the credit will go to such poor people. We ask those among the merchants who are getting nervous to remember that it is because of trade jealousy that the whole Indian community has to suffer. It is they especially who ought to feel

[1] *Vide* "Address to G.V. Godfrey", 18-3-1898.

humiliated by the law. It, therefore, behoves them to keep their pledge for the sake of the country, if not for their own prestige.

The question is being repeatedly asked as to what the merchants are to do without licences. But what will happen to Indians who lose their jobs is a more dreadful thing to contemplate. It is important, in our view, that they should be saved. However, we must say that it is far better for people in service to lose their jobs and starve than to submit to the law.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-10-1907

195. INDIAN VOTERS

We give in this issue a letter from an Indian contributor who signs himself "Voter". The question raised by "Voter" appears reasonable on a superficial view. The argument that the members of the municipality would not have deprived Indians of their licences if Indians had a vote in Ladysmith or Durban is valid only under one condition. *That* is that, in using their franchise, Indians should prove themselves the equal of whites. We must say that the Indians are unable to do so, because they lack the urge for freedom. There are many Indian voters in the Cape, but they have not used their power properly. Our readerswill remember that even in a city like Bombay there was the farce of a caucus. What, then, can we expect in Natal? We are convinced that as long as Indians have not imbibed true western education, they will not have any such spirit and that the franchise will not be a useful weapon to them till then. This is not to say that we should allow ourselves to be deprived of the right to vote. We have put up a strong fight against the move to deprive us of the franchise, and will continue to do so in future. But we also know that the use of the franchise carries with it some risk. However, if it is preserved, we may be able to use it when occasion requires. The weapon had better remain sheathed for the present. But the easiest and best step against the licence trouble in Ladysmith is to carry on trade without a licence. Till the people get that much spirit, we think it is pointless to talk of voting rights.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-10-1907

196. ASSOCIATION IN CAPE

The Association in the Cape under Mr. Nuruddin's presidentship appears to be growing stronger. An account[1] of its meeting published elsewhere is worth reading. If public work were to be done with the same spirit with which this Association is run, it would work wonders. This is the time not to enjoy authority but to render public service. The leaders must never lose sight of this. Then only will the fire raging round us be extinguished.

In the Cape there are two organizations in the same place—the League and the Association. We observe that there is some unhealthy rivalry between the two. It is our advice to both that they ought to work together.

We remind the Association that it has still not done its duty by the Committee in London. The Cape was expected to contribute £50, but the sum has not yet been received. The Committee has been doing excellent work. But, then, work of any kind is bound to involve proportionate expenditure. It is the duty of all Indians in South Africa to help meet that expenditure. We hope the Association will take up this work.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-10-1907

197. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

GENERAL BOTHA'S BIRTHDAY

On the occasion of General Botha's birthday on Friday last, the Association and the Hamidia Islamic Society sent him greetings by telegram. The whites gave him rich presents. It was a sign of courtesy on the part of the Indian community to have sent the telegrams. They prove that, irrespective of whether General Botha does or does not attend to our representations, we do not forget our good manners.

HAMIDIA SOCIETY'S MEETING

As usual, a meeting of this Society took place on Sunday last. The hall was fully packed. If our struggle against the law comes off successfully, the credit for that will go largely to the Society. No one should be alarmed because I use the word "if". I use it because, generally, doubts are felt whether in this big fight the Indian

[1] Not reproduced here

community will remain united to the end and disobey the law. For, this is a new kind of step for us in the present age. There is a deep-rooted superstition that a law cannot be disobeyed. It would be no small step forward for the community if this superstition were rooted out. When we shall have resisted the law to the last, we shall be regarded as so many Thoreaus in miniature. By this time the readers of the *Opinion* must be aware of who Thoreau was.

Let us return to the meeting. Mr. Emam Abdool Cadir took the chair. Moulvi Saheb Ahmed Mukhtiar made a powerful speech, reciting forceful verses applicable to all Indians. Then Mr. Ram Sundar Pundit spoke, giving an account of the struggle in Germiston. He said that his permit was expiring on the 30th, but he had, as desired by the people, agreed to stay on. Even if the Government did not extend his permit, he would stay on and go to gaol. He would not swerve from his duty. He also added that the Germiston pickets were prepared to help at Johannesburg. Mr. Gandhi stated that there was a letter from Mr. Beg of Pretoria, offering assistance of pickets. Mr. Omarji Sale vehemently asserted that there should be no yielding to the new law, no matter what the cost. Mr. Ebrahim Coovadia read out from the *Gujarati*[1] an article on the subject of the new law. Mr. Vallabhbhai said that from among the Kanabis[2] no Hindu would turn back, and that most of the Hindus had put their signatures to the petition. Mr. Nawab Khan also spoke. The Chairman expressed thanks for the offers made by Messrs Beg andRam Sundar Pundit, and also for the enthusiasm shown by the latter. An appeal was made to the leaders to complete the work of obtaining signatures on the [monster] petition; the meeting then terminated.

CHINESE MEETING

A meeting of the Chinese Association also took place the same Sunday. There, too, the hall was fully packed. Mr. Quinn took the chair. Mr. Gandhi explained the position to date in regard to the law, and the Chinese expressed firm resolve not to submit to the law.

CASE UNDER NEW LAW

A Madrasi named Illumuthu had applied for the title-deed of slavery under the new law. As his application was not in order, the Registrar, as required by the law, has exhibited a notice at the Magistrate's Court in Pretoria to the effect that the new register would not be issued to the applicant and that he should appear before the Magistrate to submit his statement. The timid among us should note to what

[1] A weekly published in Bombay

[2] A caste in Gujarat, consisting mostly of farmers

plight applicants for new registers might be reduced.

'BOYCOTT INDIANS'

The Women's Association at Pretoria is raising such a cry. These women have passed a resolution to the effect "that the delegates would once more' ask the members of the Branch to support white traders as against Indians". It is such movements that we should really fear rather than the new law. If the whites discontinue dealings with Indians, the latter will have to quit even without a law. There is only one way of preventing this from happening, and that is for the Indians to be industrious and to maintain perfect honesty. I even go so far as to say that women who have been pleased with the courage we are now showing will continue to buy [from us]. If we prove cowards, however, even they will look down on us and drive us out. This will be confirmed by those hawkers who might have had experience of this.

INDIANS WHO HAVE RETURNED FROM KOMATIPOORT

Mr. Chamney has sent the following reply to the letter[1] addressed to him in regard to these four Indians:

The four Indians in question, Mahomed Ebrahim, Moosa Kara, Kara Vally and Issa Asmail, were stopped because they had entered [the Transvaal] from Portuguese territory. They were not allowed to proceed to Delagoa Bay because they were not in possession of steamer tickets. Since they knew of no place where they could reside while their case was being investigated, they were permitted to make use of oneof the police cells. The action was taken solely in their interests. These men had no right to enter the Transvaal. They must leave, therefore, otherwise they will be prosecuted.

The four "heroes" have bought tickets for Durban and are not likely to trouble Mr. Chamney. It is needless to offer further comment.

TURKISH SUBJECTS

Some Muslims of Turkey, living in Johannesburg have sent a petition to the Turkish consul with the help of Moulvi Saheb Ahmed Mukhtiar. It is signed by 20 persons. The following is a translation:[2] Twenty Turkish Muslims have appended their signatures to this petition.

NESER'S LETTER

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Registrar of Asiatics",11-9-1907

[2] For the text, *vide* "Representation to Turkish Consul-General", Before 5-10-1907

Below is Mr. Neser's reply to Mr. Essop Mia's letter to him:

The report of my speech referred to by you is [substantially][1] correct and I adhere to every word I said on the subject. I feel considerable sympathy with Asiatic people who have legitimately obtained vested interests in this country. I have fought their cause before in the Courts here and I am prepared to continue fighting it in future on every possible occasion, but I am not prepared to allow further Asiatic immigration [into the Transvaal if I can prevent it] and I am quite determined to assist in every possible way to obstruct and render such immigration impossible. It is only a matter of self-preservation and nothing else. [For the life of me] I cannot understand what objection any man can have to finger-prints. [It is certainly the safest way of identifying anybody and] I, personally, would have no objection to be so identified. In what respect fingerprints could wound the religious susceptibilities of any person I fail to understand. You make a good deal of voluntary registration. Now what is the difference between voluntary and compulsory registration? Will you be good enough to tell me ? In my opinion voluntary registration would be a mere waste of time. Honest people would comply with it [or perhaps suffer under such a system] whereas the dishonest man would score every time and I do not think that you can claim absolute honesty for every one of your co-religionists any more than I pretend to do so for Europeans or people of European descent.

ESSOP MIA'S REPLY

Mr. Essop Mia has thereupon sent the following reply:[2]

I have the honour to tender to you the thanks of my Association for your very courteous, frank, and full letter. The greatest stumbling-block in the way ofa proper solution of the Indian question has been, undoubtedly, the fact that public men among the whites are not well-informed about the question.

I am deeply thankful for the sympathy you express for my countrymen who have vested interests in this Colony, and it is because the fight is entirely for the protection of such interests that I see in your attitude a common meeting-ground.

Not only does my Association sympathise with the objection to wholesale immigration from India, but it has recognised its validity, in view of the very general prejudice against such immigration, and has always offered to co-operate with the Government in attaining the object.

The ground is now clear for an examination of the Asiatic Act on its

[1] The matter in square brackets has been supplied from the original in English which appeared in *Indian Opinion*, 5-10-1907.

[2] The translation given here has been collated with the original in English; *vide* "Letter to J. A. Neser", 28-9-1907

merits. When, in the September of 1906, the Asiatic Act was drafted, fingerprints were not even so much as mentioned. The attitude of my Association would not, therefore, have been in any way altered, had signatures been substituted for finger-prints. It is the sting of compulsion running throughout the Act that offends and bears so heavily on the community. The finger-prints do not offend any religious susceptibility, but the exception made in the Act in favour of Turkish Christians and Turkish Jews does most emphatically wound religious feelings.

The Act bristles with severe penalties for breaches of the varied requirements thereof, but it is the underlying assumption that Indians, as a class, are capable of impersonation, fraudulent transfers of permits, and fraudulently bringing unauthorised immigrants into the country that is most strongly and, I think, rightly objected to. Whenever in a country exceptional penalties are provided for a particular offence, the general existence of such an offence in that country is, as you are aware, presumed. Knowing well that British Indians, as a class, have not been guilty of the practices above described, they manfully struggle to avoid the presumption which the Act has made tacitly. It should, moreover, be borne in mind that this Law is a class measure of an obnoxious type, and is calculated to degrade British Indians in the estimation of Malays, with whom many of them are nearly related, Cape Coloured men, with whom they come in close contact, and the Kaffir races, who are largely employed by them as their servants. While all these are, in common with the other inhabitants of the Colony, exempt from any such restrictions on their personal liberty, Asiatics have been especially singled out.

The obvious answer to the last objection is, naturally, that it is the competition of the Asiatics that is feared, and it is because my Association recognizes this that voluntary identification or registration has been suggested. Such voluntary registration will not insult Indians, will satisfy the European objection wholly, and will protect vested rights. You seem to think that voluntary registration will leave untouched dishonest Indians, whose existence I do not deny, but that is, I beg to state, a mistake. Under the voluntary offer, it has been submitted to the Government that by a short Bill, passed by consent, the Act can be made applicable to those who do not comply with the offer. Indeed, at a stated period, all Indians or Asiatics may be examined simultaneously, and those who are found to be without the new identification certificates may be bundled out of the Colony under a General Immigration Law.

I will conclude by saying that, while my countrymen have honestly endeavoured to examine and meet reasonable objections raised by Europeans, the latter have, as a body, entirely failed to reciprocate, but have simply persevered in their policy of prejudiced opposition without caring to examine the Indian position. As you have been, in your professional capacity, very

largely connected with British Indians, I may not be wrong in asking you to step into our shoes and look at the whole position from our standpoint, and see whether a reasonable compromise is not possible by the exercise of a little patience and some co-operation.

WARNING TO WITNESSES GIVING FALSE EVIDENCE

Five Indians were being tried for robbery before Mr. Wenderburg at Johannesburg. The magistrate thought that the evidence given by the complainant and some other Indians was false. He rebuked the witnesses. Finding the evidence weak, he discharged the accused without examining them. In the crowded court, he told the many Indians who were present that these days there were many faked cases among them, and that, if such cases occurred in future, the witnesses would be prosecuted for giving false evidence. I feel sorry to give publicity to this fact. But I think it necessary to bring it to the notice of all. The Indian community loses its good name on account of such cases, and we suffer humiliation. I understand that the witnesses were merely pawns in the hands of some schemers, and it was these schemers who were the real culprits. I must tell them that it is not proper for them to ruin poor people for a little gain to themselves, and to bring the community as well as themselves into contempt. There are many ways of earning money other than getting up false cases.

WHAT TO DO IF PERMIT IS LOST?

A correspondent asks this question. The remedy is simple: go about without a permit. Since the fear of gaol has disappeared, one should boldly appear before a magistrate, if required. When the case is investigated, such a man will be released. When the final notice is published, even permits held will be as good as lost. For no one will be released on production of the old permit. Therefore, those who wish to defy the new law have no reason to be afraid of the loss of permits.

NEW SPECTRE

There is a case at present which may mean that trade licences will not be issued under the “Gold Law”. I believe the Government is wrong in having brought up this case. The matter is likely to go up to the Supreme Court, and so, further comment is not necessary. The Government’s intention to apply the “Gold Law” shows that there is going to be no peace or rest for those submitting to the new law. If, however, the obnoxious law is repealed, the “Gold Law”, in my opinion, will crumble to the ground as a matter of course.

To the petition for slavery sent by some gentlemen of Pretoria Mr. Smuts has sent a reply[1] such as will be deserved by slaves. He says that if people comply with the provisions of the Asiatic Act, their chains will be inspected by the whites, and not by the Kaffirs. The other demands will not be granted. If possible, I shall give next week a full translation of this reply. It is worth reading. Along with it, I also hope to give some important news relating to the struggle at Johannseburg.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-10-1907

198. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[JOHANNESBURG,]
October 6, 1907

MY DEAR MAGANLAL,

I have not traced Mr. Budrea's[2] papers. The property bought by him from Mr. Logan is already registered and I have the deed of transfer. Is that what he means? Please ascertain and let me know.

Yours sincerely,

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4767

199. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

JOHANNESBURG,
October 7, 1907

THE HON'BLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PRETORIA

SIR,

I have been directed by the Committee of my Association humbly to address a few remarks on your speech delivered to your constituents and containing reference to the Asiatic Law Amendment Act. If the report published in the papers be correct, it contains, in my humble opinion, many misstatements of facts.

My Association feels deeply grieved that from your responsible position you should give currency to the popular inaccuracy as to the cause of the depression. Those who are engaged in business havestated emphatically that the cause of the terrible depression is to

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 12-10-1907

[2] A client of Gandhiji; *vide* "Letter to Kalyandas Mehta", 23-4-1907.

be sought elsewhere. In any case, it has affected Indians just as much as Europeans.

My Association totally denies the statement that there are 15,000 Indians at present in the Colony. An analysis of the figures which have been received by my Association will shortly be submitted to you which go[es] to show that there are at present not more than 7,000 Indians in the Transvaal.

You have been pleased to state that certificates issued under the old Law have been fraudulently duplicated and sold, and that, in Bombay, Johannesburg and Durban, there are known to be places where these manufactured certificates could be bought by Indians for so much cash. My Association repudiates the statement entirely and respectfully invites a public inquiry into the matter, but my Association is aware that there was in the Registration Office a clerk who carried on a traffic in forged permits and undoubtedly used as his tools some Indians who had no notion either of their nationality or their honour. That, however, is totally different from what you have been pleased to place before the public.

You have, again, been pleased to state that the Indians have objected to this Act because of the fingerprints; My Association has very often submitted to the Government that the fingerprints are not a primary cause of the Indian opposition, but the principle of compulsion and the whole object of the legislation which stamps British Indians as criminals. When the objections against the measure were first framed, fingerprints were not even so much as mentioned. At the same time, I take the liberty of pointing out that the Indians who have come to the Transvaal have never been called upon to give either their finger-impressions or even their thumb-impressions in India. While thumb-prints are undoubtedly taken in India, in some cases not connected with criminality, the digit-impressions are taken only from criminals or those who are in any way connected with crimes, and, even thumb-impressions are taken, the rule applies in cases of illiterates only.

My Association has always been aware of the intention of the Government to enforce the Act strictly and rigorously, but I may be permitted to mention once more that the most rigorous enforcement of the Law would be as nothing compared to the degradation involved in submission to it and violation of the community's solemn and deliberate undertaking not to accept the Law. My Association feels that, although you have declared that you have especially studied the Indian point of view of the question, the whole spirit of the opposition as also the most important points raised by my Association have been

entirely missed by you. In conclusion, I beg to repeat that my Association has always appreciated the objection against a wholesale influx of British Indians and against unrestricted competition in trade, and, with a view of showing the *bona fides* of the community, has come forward with humble suggestions which would completely meet the two objections, but it is impossible for British Indians to surrender what little self-respect may be left to them by accepting a measure which was conceived in ignorance of the true state of things, which is oppressive to a degree in its incidents, and which hurts the religious susceptibilities of the community represented by my Association.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
ESSOP ISMAIL MIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 12-10-1907

200. LETTER TO "RAND DAILY MAIL"

JOHANNESBURG,
October 9, [*1907*]

TO
THE EDITOR
[*RAND DAILY MAIL*
JOHANNESBURG]
SIR,

As you were good enough to warmly take up the case of Mr. Suliman Manga[1] and an Indian woman named Punia[2], who were both grossly ill-treated, I take the liberty of inviting your attention to a third case that has come under my observation, which equals, if it does not surpass, the other two in wanton insult.

Mr. Anthony Peters, a born Indian Christian, and an old civil servant of Natal, at present Interpreter at the Chief Magistrate's Court, Pietermaritzburg, was on his way to Johannesburg on Sunday and was a passenger by the Johannesburg Mail which left Pietermaritzburg on Saturday. He held a concession ticket and a certificate from the Railways in which his official position was described. At Volksrust, the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 5-2-1903 and "Indian Position in New Colonies", 16-3-1903.
[2] *ibid.*

Examining Constable put him through a searching cross-examination. Mr. Peters produced his permit, which was issued to him at a time when the Indian community had not voluntarily given thumb impressions. This did not satisfy the Constable. Mr. Peters, therefore, produced the concession ticket referred to by me and offered to give his signature, but all to no avail, the Constable insulting him by saying that he might have got somebody else's concession ticket. Mr. Peters, therefore, went so far as to produce his walking-stick, which bore his initials, and his shirt, which bore his full name. Even this was not satisfactory. He then offered to deposit money to ensure his return after three days, but the Constable ordered a Kaffir policeman to literally drag Mr. Peters out of the compartment. Sergeant Mansfield, before whom Mr. Peters was taken, realised the terrible mistake, apologised to Mr. Peters, and let him go. That, however, was small comfort. Added to the insult was weary waiting at Volksrust, where he knew nobody, and a large slice taken out of his all too brief holiday of three days. Mr. Peters returns to his duty tonight. I need hardly comment upon this episode, beyond saying that this is a sample of what many a respectable Indian has to suffer in even visiting this country. Here there is no question of general legislation, no question of an Asiatic influx, but a question of simple courtesy and justice between man and man. Or is the wearing of a coloured skin to be, in the words of Mrs. Vogl who wrote the other day to the Glasgow *Herald*, a crime against the white people of the Transvaal?

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Rand Daily Mail, 10-10-1907

201. INDIANS AT THE CAPE

Though somewhat late in the day, we reproduce in another column the report[1] from the *Cape Times* of an important test case heard before the Cape Supreme Court and arising out of the Immigration Law. We have before now expressed our great regret for the lethargy of the leading Cape Indians when the immigration measure was passing through the Cape Parliament. We feel sure that a law of that description would undoubtedly have been considerably modified, had representations been made. Though the facts of the case are fully dealt with in the report, they will bear repetition here. A certain Indian domiciled at the Cape, having landed property there,

[1] Not reproduced here

and being a general dealer since 1897, intended to visit India and, in order to avoid inconvenience at the time of his return, wanted a permit to absent himself from the Colony for a period to be fixed by him. The Immigration Officer refused to do so, offering a permit whose period was to be decided by himself. Whether the Immigration Officer's offer was reasonable or not is not the question, because on the one hand there was an attempt to get the right, on the other hand an attempt to deny the right. The Immigration Officer said the granting of a permit to an Asiatic to absent himself was a concession. The Asiatic said he demanded it as a matter of right. The Supreme Court has now decided that, in accordance with the law, there was no inherent right in the Asiatic to receive a permit of absence. In the abstract, the thing is simply farcical, in that it reduces Asiatics to a state of slavery, for which no one is to blame but the leading Indians themselves. The most interesting point, however, raised in the course of the argument was left undecided. The first section of the Immigration Act seems to preserve the rights created under the Immigration Act of 1902 repealed by the Act in question. It states that:

> Such repeal shall not affect any acts or things done or commenced, any rights, privileges, or protection acquired, any penalties or liabilities incurred, any disability or disqualification existing, ally offences committed or any proceedings taken at the commencement of this Act.

Now Act 47 of 1902 safeguarded the rights of Asiatics among others who were domiciled in South Africa. It would appear, then, that the rights of Indians who were settled before 1902 at the Cape or even in South Africa are not detrimentally affected by the Act of 1906. Justice Maasdorp clearly stated that the point could only be raised and decided on an Indian, domiciled at the Cape before 1902, leaving, it and returning without having taken out the permit of absence. It is very simple, and we trust that the Indians at the Cape will lose no time in having the right tested. The custom of issuing permits of absence is extremely oppressive, and undoubtedly interferes with the freedom of movement that every independent man must claim.

Indian Opinion, 12-10-1907

202. ABOUT "INDIAN OPINION"

Our readers must have noticed that originally we gave four pages to the Gujarati section, but later increased them to eight and then again to 12. For some weeks past the number has gone up to 13, 14 and even 15. Now we intend to give 16 pages every time. Owing to

several difficulties, it may occasionally happen that we cannot give so many pages. Such an increase involves additional expenditure to us, though that will not deter us, for our aim is to earn our bread through public service. Service is the principal object. Earning a livelihood takes the second place. From the time that *Indian Opinion* was founded[1] till today, no one has thought of making money out of it, and no one will ever think of it in future. Hence we intend to give to the reader greater benefits in proportion to the rise in income. If and when there remains any balance after the salaries of those connected with the journal reach a certain level, all of it will be spent on public work.

We are convinced that an increased circulation of *Indian Opinion* will mean growth of education and patriotism among us. The journal has at present only 1,100 subscribers, though the number of readers is much larger. If all readers buy their copies, *Indian Opinion* can render three times better service than it does today. We hope it will not be considered unreasonable of us if we expect encouragement in proportion to the increase in the number of our pages. If those who fully realize the value of the service rendered by this paper secure even one additional subscriber each, we shall feel heartened thereby and get some help in meeting the increased expenditure consequent upon the increase in the number of pages.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-10-1907

203. SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE

This Committee is about a year old now.[2] Whether it should be continued or not for another year depends on the Indians of South Africa. This question has been raised by Mr. Ritch. We draw the attention of every Indian to his letter.

The Committee has put in a tremendous amount of work which, as every Indian can see, has borne excellent fruit. Today our ship is atmid-sea, and to dissolve the Committee at this juncture will, we think, amount to scuttling it.

It is not the Transvaal alone that profits by the services of the Committee but the whole of South Africa. Johannesburg is not alone

[1] In June 1903; *vide* "Ourselves", 4-6-1903.

[2] It was formed in November 1906; *vide* "Letter to Lord Reay", (Enclosure), 24-11-1906.,

in having gained some benefits in regard to the question of the Vrededorp Ordinance. It should be considered an advantage to all that the Ordinance has been amended, and that an impression was created on the public. If the struggle against the new law succeeds, every Indian will stand to gain. This is not all the achievement of the Committee. The Natal Municipal Act is as good as repealed and the credit for it can go only to the Committee. The Committee is still fighting the question of licences. With regard to the question of Delagoa Bay, we think it was the Committee's correspondence that produced an effect. If the Cape Indians were to wake up from their slumber, the Committee in England could also put up a fight against the law concerning them.

The Committee includes many renowned men. Without, however, the services of Mr. Ritch, it could not function at all. Sir Mancherji Bhownaggree puts in much effort, but this is only one of his many activities. As for Mr. Ritch, all his time is taken up by the work of the Committee. For the present, therefore, the Committee cannot function without him. Mr. Ritch is now due to return to South Africa, but he appears to be willing to continue there.

Let us now consider the question of expense. When the Committee was founded, the minimum expenditure was estimated at £300 per year. But the work turned out to be so heavy that the sum of £500 already sent to the Committee was found to be insufficient. That the Committee could manage with so little expenditure means that Mr. Ritch received only a nominal salary. Even that he would not have accepted. But it was not possible for him to maintain himself there without it. From now, all the expenses of Mr. Ritch should be met by us. According to his estimate, the total expenditure for one year will come to £1,000. If the Committee works at full speed for one year, we should put down its requirements at £500. Add to this the £500 to be paid to Mr. Ritch. The total will thus come to £1,000. We can make adjustment in the miscellaneous items of expenditure, but not in the expenses to be allowed to Mr. Ritch. For, his expenditure in England will easily amount to so much.

This is a problem that needs careful thought from every Indian; and it has to be taken up by every association. Every part of South Africa ought to contribute to the Committee's expenses.

It should not be too much for the Cape, Rhodesia, Delagoa Bay, Natal and the Transvaal combined to bear this expenditure. Even at so much expense, it is not ordinarily possible to have such a Committee

and to get such work. It is only because Mr. Ritch is not a paid servant but looks after the work as if it were his own, that he can manage with the sum mentioned above.

We shall publish our readers' views on this subject if they are sent in brief letters. We shall also receive contributions which any persons may desire to make, and in due course they will get receipts from the Association.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-10-1907

204. SMUTS' SPEECH

A full translation of the speech delivered by Mr. Smuts in Pretoria appears in our Johannesburg newsletter. It deserves careful reading and attention. Mr. Smuts has spoken in his pride, but God does not allow a man's pride to last long. The same thing will probably happen to Mr. Smuts' pride.

The arrogance of this gentleman can be equalled only by his ignorance. We are happy to note that Mr. Essop Mia has already sent a fitting reply to this gentleman.

Mr. Smuts speaks as if the British Government counts for nothing with him. It is also likely that the Liberal Party might go against him as a result of such speeches. It is immaterial to us whether or not that Party opposes him.

Let us take some instances of Mr. Smuts' ignorance. He says that it is only against finger-prints that we are fighting. This is absolutely absurd. Though[the giving of] finger-prints is one of the questions, our struggle is not based on that question. The chief reason for the fight is that the law stamps us as criminals and liars, and attacks our community and humiliates us in the eyes of the whites and the Coloured peoples and wants to crush us as if we are altogether worthless. Ignoring all these considerations, Mr. Smuts lays stress only upon the question of finger-prints and so makes fun of us to amuse the white people. Mr. Essop Mia has already sent him a stinging reply to these lies and to the other accusations. It is a grave charge that he makes when he says that there are places in Johannesburg, Bombay and Durban where permits are fraudulently duplicated.

But Mr. Smuts' views deserve more attention than his falsehoods. From what Mr. Smuts says, it can be seen that his whole

attack is on businessmen. The Indian businessman has become the special object of his dislike. He openly says that he will send the businessmen to the Location. At any cost, he wants to reserve the Transvaal exclusively for the whites. He blames the present slump on the Indian businessman. And he will not rest so long as he does not uproot him. He thinks that if we accept the law, he will be able to do whatever he likes. If after starting a big struggle and taking oaths, we go to sleep, it will be quite easy [for him] to give us kicks. The Indian businessmen must especially realize from this that, if they get registered, they will suffer a double loss. They will lose face, they will be condemned by Indians and even after soiling their hands and faces, they will have to go to the Locations and be ruined. If they remain firm and fight, their prestige will be maintained. Prestige alone is real money; not only that, there is every possibility that by remaining firm we may win the fight. That means, their business will be saved. There is only one way of saving ourselves, and that is to fight against the law. Otherwise, we are as good as dead from this very moment.

Besides, we take Mr. Smuts' speech to be merely a form of threat. The man of action does not speak much. Barking dogs seldom bite. The hooded serpent does not bite, but only hisses. On the one hand, Mr. Smuts says that every Indian will be deported in December; on the other hand, that in January licences will be cancelled and the stores closed down. What is the truth ? If all are to be driven out in December, then whose shops will be closed down? Such words are spoken only by a man mad with rage. Moreover, the authority to deport is not yet given to him. He has started holding out threats of deportation even before that. We take this to be merely a children's play. Finally, how can the man who holds his good name dear to himself fear deportation or imprisonment? The Indian community, which has placed its trust in God, is not likely to be afraid of a thousand Smutses.

Mr. Smuts goes on repeating the same thing; on the other hand, we see that in England our strength is increasing. It is learnt from the telegrams received on Tuesday that the Aborigines Protection Society and the Union of Ethical Societies have passed a joint resolution saying that the Asiatic Act is bad, and that therefore the Indian Government, the Colonial Office and the Transvaal Government ought to be considerate. All these associations and the newspapers of the world are with us. In view of this, whatever his strength and whatever his pride, what can Mr. Smuts do? Where is the man who can do any harm to those whom God protects?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-10-1907

205. WYBERGH'S SPEECH

We give elsewhere the substance of a speech delivered by Mr. Wybergh in Bloemfontein.[1] Mr. Wybergh has shown that, if the whites want to progress, the blacks should be entirely segregated so that the former might not have the fast association with them. There is no need to say that the segregation of black people will also include that of the Asiatics. Such is the implication of Mr. Wybergh's words. Indians are not less civilized than the whites. On the contrary, they claim a more ancient civilization than that of the whites, of which Mr. Wybergh in his selfishness has no idea. In plain words, it means that, if Mr. Wybergh could have his own way, he would pack Indians off the very next day to live by themselves. Whether or not he and his other associates will be able to do this depends very much on the strength which the Indians are able to show at present. We already hear the first rumblings of a warning that, if Indians beat a retreat in the present struggle, the whites will regard them as worthless and drive them away to live in segregation. Will not the Indians realize this and be on their guard? On the one hand, Mr. Smuts has given threats as to what he will do if we do not submit to the law. On the other, Mr. Wybergh has already given us to understand, though indirectly, that once we submit to the law (that is, convince them that we are stuffless), no time will be lost before we are driven away to live in segregation. If anyone is frightened by Mr. Smuts' threats, then Mr. Wybergh's words are no less worthy of attention. There is only one remedy and that is for the Indians to remain firm in the present struggle and prove their mettle.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-10-1907 .

206. CAPE INDIANS

The more we read about the Cape Immigration Act, the more we blame the Indian leaders. We think the case fought on behalf of Mr. Dharsey of Vryburg was an important one. We have reported it in full in English and have also offered our comments on it.[2] We give here such of the facts of the case as can be easily understood.

Mr. Dharsey has been doing business in the Cape since 1897. He asked for a temporary permit for 18 months to go to India. The officer refused to give such a permit, and offered to give a permit for

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] *Vide* "Indians at the Cape" 12-10-1907.

one year. Mr. Dharsey asked for the permit as a matter of right. The officer said he had no such right; it was the officer's discretion whether or not to grant a permit. There upon Mr. Dharsey took the matter to the court. The Supreme Court dismissed his application and held that an Indian could not compel an officer to give [him] a permit.

This judgment means that, if an Indian leaves the Cape without permission, he cannot return. As the power of giving a permit rests with the officer, the Indians are for ever imprisoned in the Cape. That permits are at present being given to all means nothing at all, but that a permit should have to be asked for is itself tyrannical. There is no such law anywhere else. In Natal, once a certificate is issued, it is valid for ever. In the Transvaal, too, the certificate intended to be issued will be a permanent one. In the Cape, when an Indian wants to go out, he must take a "ticket of leave". If he does not take it and if he does not know English, he cannot return. We hold this to be a very oppressive measure. Besides, for such a 'ticket of leave", a fee of £l has to be paid. There is not much difference between this and slavery. Why cannot one leave the Cape without a "ticket of leave" ?

There are remedies yet. One is that the Cape leaders should put up a big fight and get the law amended. The other is that they should show their strength at the Cape election. There is also another sting in the law which is worth noting. Every Indian is compelled to give his photograph. That some people are not asked to show the photograph need not flatter anyone. If influential people are excluded from this, what benefit does it mean to the Indian community? That will not preserve our honour in any way.

There is a third way which we may think of. In the course of the argument in the above-mentioned case, it was submitted that the Act of 1906 was not applicable to those Indians who had been living in the Cape since before 1902. As this question was not one of the points for decision in the case, the Court did not give a ruling on it, and declared that it would consider the question as and when such a case arose. According to the Act of 1902, any Indian living in South Africa had the right to enter the Cape. From this it is assumed that the Act of 1906 cannot be applied to Indians living there since before 1902. If this argument is correct, then such Indians do not require "tickets of leave". In order to raise such a case in a court of law, an Indian residing there from before 1902 should go out of the Cape and try to return. If the Immigration Officer prevents him, then the question can be raised in the Supreme Court. There is no doubt at all

that this question is worth raising. These are the three steps which the Cape Indians can take, and we hope they will take all of them.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-10-1907

207. JOHANNESBURG LETTER.

SMUTS REPLY TO DISGRACEFUL LETTER

I said earlier that Mr. Smuts had replied to the petition submitted to him by Mr. Roos on behalf of certain Indian leaders. Here is a translation of the reply:[1]

> I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 30th August last on the subject of the regulations framed under the Asiatic Law Amendment Act (No. 2 of 1907) and to inform you as follows:
>
> 1. If Asiatics who are residing in the Transvaal submit to the provisions of the law in question, the Government is prepared to accede to their request that special authority be granted empowering certain selected officers, who shall be white persons, to call for the production of certificates from Indians except in cases of suspicion or crime.
>
> 2. Clerks who issue trading licences will not be empowered to investigate the *bona fides* of applicants. Such licence will be issued on the presentation by its lawful holder of a certificate of registration and all that will be further required from the applicant in this respect is the furnishing of an impression of his right hand thumb. This impression will be forwarded for verification to the Registrar of Asiatics, Pretoria, and, if found to be correct, no further investigation or action will be necessary.
>
> 3. With regard to the proposed importation of Asiatic clerks under temporary permits, the earlier decision cannot be altered.
>
> 4. There is no question of removing children from the care of their parents or guardians, and no order to leave the Colony will be made in respect of Asiatics under the age of 16 years.
>
> The requirement that parents and guardians shall on making application for registration supply the particulars of

[1] The translation given here has been collated with the original in English which appeared in *Indian Opinion*, 5-10-1907.

their male children and wards must be carried out.

5. Apart from the Chinese Consul and others from whom it is not the practice to demand finger-prints, it is not possible to exempt other Asiatics from the requirement of furnishing their finger-impressions.

AS THE GIFTS, SO THE SONGS[1]

Accordingly, the gentlemen on whose behalf the petition was addressed have received the reply that they deserve. This reply shows that Mr. Smuts has not conceded even a single point. The demand that the permits should be inspected by white officers would not be granted if the applicants alone got themselves specially registered, but only if all Indians submitted to the law. If I were at all to have my hands blackened, I for one would say that it would make no difference whether my register was inspected by a white or a black. If the black inspects it, he may be a little polite. Readers may inform me if there is any instance of a white officer having been polite to slaves. I shall then do my best to make the name of such white officer immortal through this paper.

As for the remaining demands, Mr. Smuts has given a flat refusal, and that too in language deserved by those who would make themselves slaves. He has also shown how some of the demands were pointless. For instance, the one pertaining to boys. Even if Mr. Smuts desired to do so, he could not lay hands on boys under 16 years without amending the new law. If a child does not give its finger-prints, it cannot be punished, but the father who fails to teach his child the alphabet of slavery will be punished! How can the Government afford to have sons of slaves grow up in a spirit of independence? The sons of Englishmen learn drill and know how to handle a gun from the age of eight. We, however, have been branded as slaves; hence our sons can only have an education for slavery. "Like father, like son": this has always been so. What further comment on the reply should I make? It will be enough to say just this: If the cruel blow dealt by this letter should in some degree rouse the spirit of our brethren at Pretoria, they might yet give up their attachment to money and make bold to send a fitting reply to Mr. Smuts, and retrieving their mistake, heartily join the fight that is being waged by the Indian community. Indeed, Mr. Smuts' letter should provoke every Indian. It should lead every Indian lion to this decision: "I shall have nothing to do with the Transvaal, if Mr. Smuts

[1] A Gujarati proverb implying that one gets what one deserves

will let me stay here only on the terms mentioned in his letter. There is the great God to provide for us. A mere crumb of bread He will give at any other place as well." Once we are inspired by such a spirit, people will see how glorious our struggle can be. Such persons, like the brave Thoreau, will find gaol to be a palace, and the cry of challenge from Indians in prison shall pierce Mr. Smuts through and through.

HAJEE CASSIM'S EXPLANATION

The responsibility for Mr. Roos's letter is placed on Mr. Hajee Cassim. He, therefore, believes that injustice has been done to him, and offers the following explanation, which I place before the community. Mr. Hajee Cassim writes:

> The petition submitted to the Colonial Secretary was made jointly by certain gentlemen. Again, it was couched in humble language not at my instance but on the advice of the counsel. We, too, thought it proper to apply to the Government in humble terms. People had joined in making that application, thinking that a humble petition would induce the Government to grant our demands. They all gave their consent. It is not true that it was especially I who got the application made. *Indian Opinion* wrongly lays the blame at my door. It is wholly undeserved. To get registered or not depends on one's own will. Someone seems to have supplied you with false information. It is not proper to rely upon it and wrongly mention my name in the paper. From the very first, I have publicly told the leaders of the British Indian Association that, as long as God kept up my courage, I would go along with my brethren and that, even if I were to lose courage in the end, I would do whatever might be necessary on their advice and with their assistance.
>
> It is quite a different matter if the charge against me is that of joining the other gentlemen in sending the petition. I have always been a person of mild temper, and I joined [them] thinking that those seeking a compromise with the Government were doing a wise thing. For, like the rest I also thought that the law would not be repealed and the better course would be only to seek amendments through an understanding with the Government and thus handle the situation in a spirit of compromise. The struggle put up by the British Indian Association is just, I have full sympathy with it, and I wish it godspeed.

Mr. Smuts made a speech[1] at a meeting in his constituency, in which he also touched upon the question of the new law. I give below a translation of his speech:[2]

> There is yet another Asiatic question—namely, the Indians and the Chinese living in the country. These people are detrimentalto the everlasting prosperity of South Africa. Under the old law, Indians could not remain in the country unless they allowed themselves to be registered and paid a certain sum of money. Under that law, all Indians were registered. However, on account of the severe competition from the Indians, the Volksraad passed a law whereby Indians could only trade in Bazaars. But the British Government stepped in, and said that these people were their subjects, and according to the London Convention, all their subjects are to be treated alike. The law thus became impracticable, and the result was that the Indians carried on trade all over the country. They carried on business without a licence, and they were thereby even better off than the white traders. This position, however intolerable, was kept up by the British Government till the war broke out. The result may now be studied in Prinsloo Street, Pretoria, Pietersburg, Potchefstroom and other centres, where trade is largely in the hands of the Indian storekeepers. And yet people persist in asking—Whence this depression? Why all this poverty ?
>
> Indian trade is one of the causes thereof. The Indians have tried to get the same hold here as they have done in Natal. They want to have all trade in their hands. The Government has tackled the question. We have passed a law unanimously, making it compulsory for Indians to register. I think it highly desirable that the public should know the exact details of the law, as I expect that there may be trouble over it. The law has been made severe because of the large number of Indians we have to deal with, there being no fewer than 15,000 Indians and 1,200 Chinese storekeepers in the Colony. Certificates issued under the old law have been fraudulently duplicated and sold. In Bombay, Johannesburg and Durban there are known to be places where these manufactured certificates can be bought by Indians for so

[1] *Vide* "Smuts' Speech", 12-10-1907

[2] The text given here is from the report in English as reproduced in *Indian Opinion,* 12-10-1907, with some changes needed to bring it into conformity with the Gujarati version.

much cash, and as one Indian cannot be well distinguished from another, the Government has decided to have the finger-print system. The Indians object to this on the plea that it is too degrading. (Laughter.) A deputation of Indians went to England and interviewed the Government, but the latter sanctioned the law. I have personally investigated the pleading of the Indians. What do I find? I find that these self-same people have to make their finger impressions before they leave India, where the system is in vogue for several objects. Any person being an ex-official or ex-soldier in India entitled to a pension must put his finger-prints down, otherwise he cannot draw his pension. All these things came to light when the Indians sent a deputation to England. The Indians think that they can fool the present Government, but they will soon find out their mistake.

The Indians have been given time to register. The Government has found that pickets of coolies have been placed near the Registration Office, with the result that only a few registrations have taken place, but I may just remind them that all things have an end. The law will be rigidly enforced, and any Indian who has not registered himself after expiry of the period for registration will be put across the border. A new notice has been issued that on December 31 no traders' licences will be issued unless registration has taken place. The Indians have to register now. This is their last chance, as after the date given no registration will be allowed. The result will be that no licences will be issued, and all Indian stores will be closed down. (Loud applause.) The Indians evidently think that the Government will give in, but I assure you that the Government does not contemplate any such course. I warn the Indians that the Government will insist on the strict enforcement of the law, and I trust that the newspapers will make it fairly plain that on December 31 the doors will be closed against them for ever. I have no quarrel with the Indians; the object is not persecution, but a stoppage of the influx of Indians. We have made up our mind to make this a white man's country, and, however difficult the task before us in this matter, we have put our foot down, and shall keep it there. (Loud applause.)

ESSOP MIA'S REJOINDER

Mr. Essop Mia has given a reply to this speech which I translate

below:[1]

ASSOCIATION MEETING

With the permission of the Hamidia Islamic Society, a meeting of the Association took place at the Society's hall last Sunday. Mr. Essop Mia took the chair. The hall was packed to capacity. Mr. Quinn, President of the Chinese Association, and other Chinese were also present. After Mr. Essop Mia's speech, Mr. Gandhi said with reference to the pickets that it was necessary for them to use utmost courtesy. They should not stand in a group at any one place. They were in the position of soldiers. The soldier's duty was to carry out orders, maintain discipline and never leave the place of duty. Soldiers had a leader over them, and he should also be obeyed. If any of the pickets whose names were with Mr. Gandhi were arrested while they were doing their duty, he (Mr. Gandhi) would defend them. If, however, they should be sentenced to a fine, they were not to pay it, but must go to gaol instead. Pickets who misbehaved or went in for violentquarrels would not be defended in any way. Then Mr. Gandhi went on to explain the need to continue the South Africa British Indian Committee, and referred to Mr. Ritch's letter in detail. Afterwards the meeting was addressed by Messrs Emam Abdool Cadir, T. Naidoo, Abdul Rahman (of Potchefstroom), Nawab Khan, Coovadia, Ali Mahomed, Joseph, Omarji Sale and others. They pointed out that the Committee must be maintained. Mr. Joseph asked what was to be done for those losing their jobs. In reply, Mr. Gandhi said that all of them had to suffer every hardship that might befall, including that of going to gaol. If those in service cared for their honour, they would not care for their jobs. If a person lost his job, he could get another. But honour once lost could never be regained. If a job were lost for the sake of the country, what would it matter? In regard to licence notices, Mr. Gandhi said in reply to a question by Mr. Coovadia that, if no licence was issued, the only proper thing would be to go to gaol. But there would be no difficulty in trading without a licence. If, however, the Indian community felt afraid, a test case could be made. That would, of course, need money.

MEETING OF PICKETS

A separate meeting of pickets was held prior to the meeting

[1] For the text, *vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 7-10-1907

referred to above. Every question was tackled with great courage. Men were appointed to watch every station and the Von Brandis Square. Badges have been prepared for everyone, so that a picket can be easily identified. The list of pickets has undergone some change, but I do not intend to give any names now. For, it is probable that there may be still further changes. At the end of the month, I shall give the names of those who will have worked as pickets. Among the names given in the last issue, two identical names were printed. They should be read as Narotam Amthabhai Patel (of Vanz) and Naranji Karsanji Desai (of Chhina).

SUGGESTION TO KRUGERSDORP INDIANS

I find that Krugersdorp Indians are still working through the reporter of the *Rand Daily Mail.* They have given excessive emphasis to [finger-]prints. But it is necessary to realize that we refuse to submit to the law because it singles us out as its target and thereby brands us as criminals. Such Indians ought to go through the past numbers of *Indian Opinion* and acquaint themselves with all the facts.

CASES AGAINST HAWKERS

Some cases against hawkers were heard at Boksburg. The magistrate is to decide whether it is an offence for a hawker to remain in a private building for more than 20 minutes. Being sympathetically inclined towards one of the hawkers, the magistrate let him off. The same thing may happen in connection with the new law, too.

PICKET ARRESTED

The police arrested a picket named Mr. Bhana Chhania on a charge of obstructing pedestrians by standing on the footpath. The case was heard by Mr. Cross. Mr. Gandhi defended the accused free of charge, and the Magistrate discharged him. It was arranged that he should go to gaol if he was fined. One should not take this to mean that one can keep standing on any footpath. The reason for his discharge was that no pedestrian was likely to be obstructed by reason of Mr. Bhana's standing there. When the police object to anyone standing at a particular spot, the best course is to move on to another place.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-10-1907

208. COMMUNICATION TO S.A.B.I. COMMITTEE[1]

[JOHANNESBURG ,
Before *October 14, 1907*]

You may officially intimate that the letter to Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman accurately represents the views of the community here and that if the leave sought is granted, Indians will certainly feel that they are being treated as part of the Empire. To-day they undoubtedly feel that they are step-children.

[M. K. GANDHI]

[L. W. RITCH, ESQ.
28, QUEEN ANNE'S CHAMBERS
BROADWAY, WESTMINSTER
LONDON, S. W.]

Colonial Office Records: C.O. 291/122

209. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[JOHANNESBURG,]
October 14, 1907

MY DEAR MAGANLAL,

I have your letter. Please tell Mr. Budrea that I have noted all fees with the utmost care. As he was absent, many letters I wrote have not been charged for at all. Still, tell him that he can strike off any fees charged by me and I shall accept his decision. With reference to his papers, I am looking into the matter. You can be very plain to him with reference to my bill. I should feel sorry for him to think that I could ever betray the trust reposed by him in me and charge fees in an unwarranted manner. I would like him to go through every item

[1] In regard to the Asiatic Registration Act, L.W. Ritch, Secretary, South Africa British Indian Committee, had addressed a letter on August 14 to the British Prime Minister, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, *vide* Appendix V. The official reply, *interalia*, stated: "The Prime Minister does not know whether the position taken up by the British Indians of the Transvaal themselves is exactly represented by these propositions." Evidently, this was communicated to Gandhiji. Ritch in his letter of October 14 to the Prime Minister quoted the above as "a communication from the Honorary Secretary, the Transvaal British Indian Association". The original is not available.

and put his cross against everything he considers objectionable.

I have received Mrs. Doman's account of distribution.

Yours sincerely

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4769

210. LETTER TO COMMISSIONER OF POLICE[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]

October 15, 1907

THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

JOHANNESBURG

SIR,

I happened to be in court when Mr. Alexander mentioned, on behalf of two Indian clients of his, that they were frightened of the "pickets" in Von Brandis Square and that it was for that reason that they had not made their application for registration certificates. I repudiated the statement then, and I do so now. Some Indians are undoubtedly watching entrants to the Registration Office with a view to explaining to them the position they would be in owing to submission to the Asiatic Law Amendment Act and using their influence to prevent them from attending the office, but, should anyone intend to go to the office in spite of such persuasion, he is left totally unmolested. Such a case happened while Mr. Alexander was making his statement to the Magistrate. A young Indian lad wanted to be registered. He was with his mistress; and nobody prevented him. Another Indian, also, similarly went to the Registration Office in Von Brandis Square some time ago. I bring these facts to your notice, as it was suggested by Mr. Alexander that his clients should receive police protection, and, as a matter of fact, I now understand they did receive police escort.

On behalf of my Association, I venture to give the assurance that no intimidation will be countenanced by the British Indian Association, and every effort will be used by my Association to see that no one who may wish to go to the Registration Office is molested by anyone connected with the Association. So far as I am aware, I am certain that Mr. Alexander was misinformed by his clients, who were

[1] This was first published in *The Star,* 16-10-1907.

more afraid of Indian public opinion than of any bodily harm.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI
HONORARY SECRETARY,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 19-10-1907

211. LETTER TO "THE STAR"[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
October 18, 1907

TO

THE EDITOR
THE STAR
JOHANNESBURG]
SIR,

Whilst the totally inoffensive Indian pickets are being charged, without an iota of proof, with intimidation of those who may wish to take out registration certificates, you will, perhaps, be so good as to allow me to draw public attention to the hollowness of the charge, as also to counter-intimidation, which is a reality.

A case happened yesterday in which three Indians from Pietersburg were actually offered escort by the pickets, but it was refused. The fact is that an attempt is being made to discredit the pickets by feigning terror, and by asking for police protection. We, too, have our "national scouts". They undoubtedly wish to increase their number, and allegation of intimidation is one of the methods adopted. If there is any truth in the charge, why has not anyone been prosecuted? It must be theeasiest thing to prove, because intimidation is supposed to take place in broad daylight in Von Brandis Square in the presence of hundreds of passers-by.

As to counter-intimidation, many Indians believe that Indians possessing permits issued by either Capt. Hamilton-Fowle or Mr. Chamney are, under quasi-official pressure, being dismissed for not having submitted to the Registration Act. Whether such pressure exists

[1] This was reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 26-10-1907.

or not, I have before me a letter from the chief ganger at Germiston, confirming the information received that nine Indians were dismissed because they would not apply to be registered under the new Act. It causes little wonder, seeing that General Smuts himself has led the way. He has threatened all kinds of punishment—deportation and deprivation of licences at the same time for the same persons. How both can take place I do not know. Physical deportation is not even possible without the immigration measure, which has still to receive Royal sanction. Indians do not mind a fair fight, and, so far as I can see, they are prepared even for an unfair fight, though it will be strictly un-British. Why should the assistance of European employers be called in to force Indians to take out certificates of slavery? That many employers have up to now resisted any such pressure and positively declined to dismiss Indians in their employ redounds to the credit of both—of the employers because they will not take part in the process of hitting below the belt, of the Indians because they are too valuable and faithful servants to be dismissed.

I have just learned that the four Indians on whose behalf it was stated that they were intimidated, and who were admittedly without any permits, have to-day been discharged and assured in the open Court that they will receive registration certificates. No doubt slaves deserve their badge. In my opinion, those who possess old Dutch passes, as these men are alleged to do, should be treated in the same way as those who have received permits under the Peace Preservation Ordinance, but it is a matter of public knowledge that Mr. Jordan had to perform the painful duty of giving all such persons notice to quit the Colony. One such man received notice the same day that the four men above-named stated they would apply for new registration certificates. General Smuts is thus, indeed, finding out the lawful residents from the unlawful ones. The latter will become, under the Registration Act, the chosen people, because they will have applied for certificates under it, and the former, because they value their manliness more than worldly riches, will be turned into unlawful residents.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Star, 19-10-1907

212. MR. RITCH'S SERVICES

A member of the South Africa British Indian Committee writes of Mr. Ritch in the following strain:

The Indian community can never be sufficiently grateful [for] or appreciative

of the Herculean work and devotion of this able, capable, self-sacrificing man.

Not only do Indians in South Africa endorse every adjective used above, but they realize that at no time can his services be so valuable as now. The Indians in the Transvaal are fighting a struggle the like of which will not recur in this generation. It is, therefore, imperative that Lord Ampthill, in his endeavour to secure redress for the Transvaal Indians, should be assisted by the ever-vigilant and indefatigable Mr. Ritch

Indian Opinion, 19-10-1907

213. GENERAL BOTHA'S EXAMPLE

Though the Indian community is fighting heroically in the Transvaal, there is a secret anxiety as to what will happen in the end. Anyone who feels such anxiety must have very little faith in truth and in God. To those who feel concerned for this or any other reason, we hold up the example of the present rulers of the Transvaal. Readers will remember that, before the whites of the Transvaal were granted self-government, Mr. Lyttelton had offered them partial self-government, on the advice of Lord Milner. General Botha, General Smuts and others could have joined it. But such rights appearing insufficient, General Botha wrote to Lord Milner to say that they would not participate in his Government and that they were not satisfied with the constitution which was offered to them. This piqued Lord Milner. There was a huge meeting at the Wanderers' Hall. Speaking at the meeting, Lord Milner held out the threat to General Botha that if the Boers did not join in running the government, it would be carried on without them. The threat did not move General Botha. The result now is that the Boers have complete self-government. Here is an example of a great boycott. Botha carried out a boycott and won.

It should be noted in regard to this instance that the Boers prepared themselves for a boycott because they did not get the additional rights they had demanded. We are not asking for more rights, but are opposing the yoke of slavery that is being imposed upon us. What is there for us to be afraid of in doing so? Botha's boycott succeeded because he had full confidence, and because he convinced Lord Milner that it was not merely an empty threat he was holding out of not participating in the government, but that he meant what he said. In our struggle, Mr. Smuts is still not convinced that the Indians are really strong enough. We hope the Indian community will take a lesson from General Botha's example and hold out to the last.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-10-1907

214. LESSON FROM PETERS CASE

Why did Mr. Peters have to suffer in Volksrust? This question ought to arise in the mind of every Indian. If a well-dressed European travels in a first or second-class carriage, he will be presumed to be a respectable man. In fact he may be a great criminal. In the case of a person with black skin, it will be presumed that he is a rogue, though in fact he may be a respectable man. This is what happened to Mr. Peters. The examining constable took it for granted that Mr. Peters had a false permit. The officer is not much to blame in this. The blame lies with the Government. They have passed the obnoxious law on the assumption that Indians are liars and the examining constable acted on it. Thus it is that the Indian is not respected today. If the Indian community were now to submit to the obnoxious law, how could it be surprising if the whites, apart from respecting an Indian, never even talked to him without first giving him a kick? It is for these strong reasons that the Indian is opposing the law, not on account of any one section in it, or because of finger-prints. If the root of the law is bad, what is the use of quarrelling with its twigs? It is necessary to lay the axe at the root. And that axe is the courage and manliness of Indians.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-10-1907

215. RITCH'S SERVICES

The services rendered to the Indian community by Mr. Ritch are beyond praise. One of the members of the Committee writes:

> When I speak of the London Committee, you should take it to mean Mr. Ritch. The Indian community can never be sufficiently grateful [for] or appreciative of the Herculean work and devotion of this able, capable, self-sacrificing man. I believe it will help you very much if you continue to maintain the Committee and let Mr. Ritch remain in London for the present. I am quite convinced that the existence of the Committee has shaken the confidence of the Transvaal Government. If the Committee is allowed to spend more, it can do a lot more.

We do not believe there is any exaggeration in these words. We must see to it that we do not lose such valuable services for want of money.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-10-1907

216. REGULATIONS ABOUT CLOSING HOURS FOR SHOPS IN TRANSVAAL

Everyone knew that as in Natal, so in the Transvaal, a law would be passed to fix closing hours for shops. These regulations have now been passed and published. We give elsewhere a translation of the important provisions. We advise the Transvaal Indian traders and hawkers to read them very carefully; Indian business will suffer a little on account of these regulations, but the loss should be put up with. We suggest that every trader and hawker should fully respect them. It is because Indians break such laws that they attract unfavourable notice, and our enemies are provided with weapons against us. Where all are required to close the shops at the same time, there should be no need for anyone to keep his shop open longer.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-10-1907

217. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

HAMIDIA MEETING

This Society is growing in strength. The spirit of the people is also rising and both Hindus and Muslims shout with one voice that the law should be wrecked. On Sunday Mr. Emam Abdool Cadir took the chair. The Moulvi Saheb and the Dervish Saheb spoke at great length. Messrs Coovadia, Omarji Sale and others also spoke. Mr. H. A. Coovadia and others argued that since Mr. S. Haloo had soiled his hands and face and had applied for registration, he be boycotted. The suggestion was hailed by the whole meeting. The Society has recommended that all contacts with Mr. Haloo should be cut off, his employees should give notice and quit his service, and that other Indians should have no business dealings with him. Then a member of the Society, Mr. Dawji Patel of Klerksdorp, who was proceeding to India, paid all the arrears of subscription and also paid another ten shillings with a view to retaining his membership of the Society while he was away in India. The Society presented to him a silver medal. There were complimentary speeches by some gentlemen. Mr. Dawji Patel has already left for India.

Next day (Monday) Mr. Haloo himself went to Mr. Gandhi's office to express regret for having made the application to register himself. The pickets immediately came to know of this and sent a

notice to Mr. Gandhi: "Please note that if Mr. Haloo visits your office again, you too will be boycotted."

In reply to the notice, Mr. Gandhi thanked the pickets and complimented them on having done their duty. I want all Indians to have the same burning enthusiasm always. Having such enthusiasm is unconnected with the question whether, if Mr. Haloo should offer a formal apology to the Society and express regret, his apology should be accepted or not. What is to be noted and acted upon is that a pledge once given must be observed and that the duty assigned to us must be carried out. It was the duty of the pickets to act as they did, so long as Mr. Haloo's action had not been condoned.

RAM SUNDAR PUNDIT'S CASE

Mr. Ram Sundar Pundit has been receiving telegrams of congratulation from every place on his courage. He is full of confidence and the Indians at Germiston are keeping up his spirit. He has not been arrested so far. It will not be surprising if they are not able to arrest him, just as they could not arrest Abdul Kadir Kokati. I shall send a telegram before Friday to say what happens in this matter.

PETERS CASE

The ill-treatment to which Mr. Anthony Peters was subjected is still being discussed. The constable who was responsible for it has now gone back on his statement and denied having done anything to Mr. Peters. Now they have asked for Mr. Peters' affidavit. The case is to continue.

ILLUMUTHU'S CASE

Illumuthu's case is worth studying. I give below Mr. Vyas's convincing letter on the subject:

> The magistrate has ordered Illumuthu to leave the country within two days. In 1897, Illumuthu had gone to Bulawayo. Before the war, he had been working on Cook's Farm at Johannesburg. For a month he worked in Robinson Mine. At Bulawayo, he was kept for a short time in a mental hospital. The doctor sent him to a hospital here for change of climate. The warder of the hospital, on the orders of the Registrar, took him to the Registrar's Office. There they asked for his particulars, which he gave as above. Ultimately, the Registrar served him with a notice to leave the country, with the result mentioned above. Illumuthu is still out of his mind. He has nothing with him except three rags. The Registrar did not offer him a pie by way of travelling expenses. The magistrate says that it is none of his concern. From the asylum, too, he has

been given the discharge certificate.

This is a harrowing case. Illumuthu is a pauper. He is an old resident of the place. If he had not applied for registration, no one would have concerned himself with him. But he was made to apply and has now been served with a notice to leave the country. Where should he go ? Where could he get the money from? Why should he go ? The Indian who submits to such an oppressive law will be called to account both by the Indian community and by God. Those who, being without permits, apply for registration will be reduced to the plight of Illumuthu, and they will deserve it. Their safety lies not in rubbing their fingers [i.e., giving finger-prints] but in leaving the Transvaal and, if their case is strong, in going to gaol. The gaol is now the place for honest and truthful men.

CHINESE UNITY

Messrs Harvin and Paterson, a prominent business firm here, have a large business with the Chinese. They supply them on credit goods worth about £500 every month. The firm gave notice to the Chinese that further credit would be stopped if they did not take out the new registers. The Chinese, instead of being intimidated by this, became bolder. In reply, they asked the amount of the debit entries against them in the firm's books, offering immediate payment, and declining to do any further business with the firm.

Mr. Harvin was silenced by this reply, apologized to the Chinese and agreed not to refer any more to the registers or to their accounts. Our merchants, when threatened by white merchants, get scared and become ready to take out registers as if they were slaves. They then forget the oath they had taken not to submit to the law.

PICKETS' WORK

The pickets have been exerting themselves a great deal. There is no doubt that their exertion has prevented many weak-kneed Indians from going to the Registration Office. Pickets have been posted at Park, Fordsburg, Bramfontein, Doornfontein and at Jeppe stations, as also round the Permit Office. As a result of these arrangements, three Indian workmen coming from Roodepoort were intercepted. They had been compelled by their master to go in for registration. Since they chanced to come upon the pickets, the latter reasoned with them, with the result that they went away, promising that they would lose their jobs rather than take out the new registers.

Much anger and resentment are felt by the community because Mr. Imam Kamali is misguiding the people and interfering [with their affairs]. Imam Kamali is not an Indian, but a Malay. Everyone feels

that, being a Malay, he ought not to interfere.

MONSTER PETITION[1]

This petition has not yet been sent to the Government. It has been held up, pending receipt of the completed forms from one or two places. Signatures of most of the leading Indians have already been obtained. Among the signatories are Messrs Abdool Gani, Hajee Habib, Essop Mia, Dadabhai, Coovadia and other gentlemen. I hope to give more information next week.

CAN TIME BE GRANTED FOR LEAVING ?

A question has been asked: If the attack begins in December and people are produced before a magistrate, will they be allowed time [for leaving]? When a person is produced before a magistrate for not taking out the new register, he can ask for time, and it will be for the magistrate to decide what time to give. That is, he may grant anything between one hour and one year. I do not say that a long time will necessarily be allowed, but there is no doubt that the magistrate has the power to allow whatever time he thinks fit. I think asking for time will be humiliating and I shall not advise anybody to do so. Still, those who get frightened of gaol and desire to wind up their affairs can ask for time, and I don't think the magistrate will refuse to grant it altogether. Everything will depend on the merits of each case, on the magistrate and on the circumstances.

ESSOP MIA'S BEREAVEMENT

On Friday night Mr. Essop Mia's wife passed away in child-bed. This has caused deep sorrow. Mr. Essop Mia wanted to go on a pilgrimage to Mecca with his wife, but was kept back on account of the struggle against the obnoxious law. Meanwhile, this sad event has occurred, which has affected him all the more. I pray to God that He may give fortitude of mind to Mr. Essop Mia.

BEG'S LETTER

Mr. Beg continues to write strongly in newspapers. He has written a long letter to *Pretoria News* in reply to Mr. Smuts' speech, in which he shows up the unreasonableness of Mr. Smuts. Mr. Brittlebank too has written a letter to the same paper, in which he condemns the Transvaal Government. Another letter from Mr. Beg also appears in the *Leader*.

[1] *Vide* "Monster Petition",Before 21-9-1907

"THE SUNDAY TIMES"

Since the Passive Resistance movement [was mooted], The *Sunday Times* has been publishing cartoons every week. The cartoon published this week shows the office of the Registration Officers who draw their salaries without doing any work. In his note, the editor asserts that the Government certainly ought to drive out the "coolies".

HAJEE HABIB

Mr. Hajee Habib has arrived at Pretoria from Durban.

WHY IS WHOLE OF NOVEMBER KEPT BLANK ?

Some people have asked me whether the Government is so hungry that it will eat up the whole of November. If Indians are to be prosecuted, why should it not start on the first of November? Those who ask this question have not been reading *Indian Opinion* carefully. Otherwise, my explanation of the notice did include this point. I request the reader to read *Indian Opinion* henceforth with great care. It will not take many days to do so. Rather, I am convinced that the reader will find in it something worth knowing. After saying this, I reply to the question. The notice issued says that those without new registers on or after December 1 will be prosecuted. The month of October will all be taken up in receiving applications for registers. The Registrar does not give his decision immediately on receipt of an application. He has the authority to order further investigation after receiving it. He is bound to take some time for such investigation. The Government has allowed the month of November to Mr. Chamney for scrutiny of applications. During this period, it will be decided whether those who have made the slavish application should be rewarded with slavery or not. Hence everyone can have the register in December. Some may ask why one whole month is allowed for this in spite of the boycott by the Indian community. The answer is that the Government cannot take notice of the boycott. In case a very large number of applicants turn up on 31st October and flood the Registration Office with applications, the Registrar has to be allowed enough time to decide on them. For this reason, there is unfortunately a gap in November.

ATTACK ON PICKETS

Mr. Alexander, advocate, and Mr. De Villiers, advocate, had each two Konkanis as clients on Tuesday. The Konkanis were charged with staying on without a permit. Both the counsels told Mr. Jordan that the said Konkanis were intimidated by pickets, and therefore could not go to the Registration Office. They were ready to go. Mr.

Alexander suggested that the court should order the pickets to be removed. Thereupon Mr. Gandhi who was present, said that the pickets gave no threats, andthat he himself would take the Konkanis to the Registration Office, if they desired to go there. The matter is now likely to go to the Police Commissioner. Hence the Secretary of the Association has addressed the following letter to him.[1]

From this incident, the pickets should learn to be careful and do their work with utmost patience. They are to do nothing more than reason with people. When any persons are accompanied by the police, the pickets should not interfere at all. Those who would be slaves need not be obstructed by anyone. It makes me feel ashamed that there are Indians who accuse the pickets of using threats; I feel that it is our misfortune. It has been made clear to every Indian that if he wishes to give his finger-prints, the pickets themselves will conduct him [to the Office]. There will still be twelve days of October left when this letter appears in print. Many interesting things will happen during those days. Every Indian and every picket at Johannesburg has to show courage' and, at the same time, patience, gentleness and sweetness. What the people are to do is to avoid the Registration Office; the leaders are to explain things to keep up the people's courage and to put up with monetary loss, and the pickets are to do their duty with patience. There is no need of pressure by pickets. What is required is their presence. There should be a picket at every station and at every point from where an Indian might approach the Office. If the Government should attack the pickets, they must not feel afraid. And it should be remembered that, if anyone is arrested while picketing, he is not to offer bail, and if convicted, he is to go to gaol instead of paying the fine.

GAVE UP JOB, BUT DID NOT SOIL HANDS

Messrs Murugan, Armugum, Harry, Venkatapen and Muthu were employed in a pottery. They were asked to leave their jobs if they did not take out registers. They gave up the jobs, but did not have their hands soiled. Every Indian ought to show such spirit. I regard these men as heroes.

COWARDS PUT ON VEIL

Four cowards came from somewhere. They reached the Registration Office unnoticed in a curtained carriage and had their finger-impressions taken. That is how four men honoured the Johannesburg

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Commissioner of Police", 15-10-1907

Office on Wednesday last and applied for the title-deed of slavery.

NOTE ! NOTE ! NOTE !

I hope every Indian will realize why the Registration Office is anxious to get the Indians registered by every possible method.

Mr. Smuts knows that, if the Indians remained firm, it would be impossible to compel them to be registered by sending them to gaol. Nor could he harass thousands of Indians with regard to licences. In the end, he would certainly have to repeal the law. Let every Indian note this and be careful to keep up his courage.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-10-1907

218. LETTER TO "THE STAR"[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
October 24, 1907

TO

THE EDITOR
THE STAR
[JOHANNESBURG]

SIR,

I regret that I have to trespass upon your courtesy again with reference to the Asiatic Registration Act. Your report of today's happenings on Von Brandis Square bears evident traces of inspiration.

I pass by the description of Indian pickets as "pickets of coolies" as merely an ignorant description of inoffensive and honourable men.

I still maintain that neither the pickets nor any other Indians have exceeded the limits of moral persuasion in preventing registration. The Indian referred to by your reporter was in the witness-box today, and certainly said that there was no molestation. He was taken hold of by the arm, and, when he said that he wanted to go to the registration office, he was allowed to go. That was his own evidence, corroborated by his co-registrant and the accused. I do not know whether this can by any stretch of imagination be described as "roughly collared outside the office". The men—there were two Indians—who were met by the accused Indian, who, by the way, was

[1] This was reproduced in *lndian Opinion,* 2-11-1907.

not a picket, did not know what the law was. All they knew was that they got a letter from their master to go to some office in Johannesburg to sign. Why should any exception be taken to people at least informing such men of the trap into which they were about to fall? The opinion of the registration officer that Dr. Mathey's client must have been intimidated because he did not appear to register may, perhaps, be counter-balanced by another and more probable opinion—that the client has listened to the remonstrances of his friends, and not been intimidated. I am free to admit that there are many Indians who, but for the pickets, would allowthemselves to be registered. The real thing they fear is not intimidation but Indian public opinion. These are men who know the law to be bad, but who cannot rise superior to their worldly ambition, and they would undoubtedly register if there were no pickets. To mention the priest case in connection with the matter betrays either very great ignorance or equally great prejudice on the part of your reporter, because that case was entirely a religious quarrel, and the priest who was assaulted, in giving his evidence, himself expressed exceeding regret that he had ever filed his affidavit. I do not wish to defend the Dervish who committed the assault, but I fancy that all communities have such men and all are proud of them. They do not live for a nationality but for a principle.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Star, 25-10-1907

219. LETTER TO "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"

JOHANNESBURG,
Before *October 26, 1907*]

[THE EDITOR
THE TRANSVAAL LEADER
JOHANNESBURG]

SIR,

My Association is grateful to you for your temperate leaderette with reference to alleged intimidation by Asiatic passive resisters. We can have no hesitation in endorsing every word of what you have said against any violence being used in the Indian movement. Our aim in connection with the Asiatic Act has always been to secure redress by suffering ourselves, not by imposing suffering on others.

The paragraph in your columns is evidently inspired. I have no

hesitation in denying the existence of a reign of terror, unless the very strong feeling against the Act permeating the whole mass of Indians in the Transvaal acts as a reign of terror among those who want to cut themselves adrift from the community and take out certificates under the Act, not because they like the process, but because they hold their pockets to be superior to their honour. I admit the fact that several Asiatics who had left their places of employment with the distinct intention of registering decided not to do so on being accosted by the watchful pickets, who used the effective argument of placing before the registrants the true state of the Law and disabused their minds of the subtle inducements that had been held out to them as a reward for registering. The public can haveno knowledge of the Herculean efforts being put forth by the Government to induce the community to register. The pickets have never used threats, and constant watch is being kept by the responsible members of the community on the doings of the pickets.

The information about a Mahomedan priest being assaulted is, unfortunately, true, but he was. not assaulted by a number of Indians. The facts are these: The priest in question is not an Indian, but a Malay. We have in our midst a Dervish, who is a devout follower of the Prophet. He passes all his time in one of the three mosques, and earns his bread, whenever he thinks it worthwhile, by accepting the work of breaking stones on one of the mines. He listens to no one, and is perhaps the most independent-spirited man going in South Africa. Everyone who has seen him and his simple life respects him. When he heard that the Malay priest incited Indians, especially Indian Mahomedans, to violate the sanctity of their solemn oath and to submit to the Law, he was enraged. He deliberately walked to the Malay Mosque, met the priest, and entered into an argument with him. He cited a text from the *Koran* to convince the priest that he, of all the people, should have desisted, especially as he was not an Indian, from interfering with Indian matters and from inducing people to violate the Koranic precepts. Warm words followed, and the unfortunate assault was the result. To charge Indians with responsibility in the matter would, you will admit, be strictly unfair. Many of us have reasoned with the Dervish and have implored him to restrain himself, but he recognises no intervention between himself and his God. To him, needless to say, his home and the jailyard are one and the same thing, and, when reasoned with, he said he was quite willing to appear before the Court and justify his action.

As to the poisoning of the dog, the charge is wicked. I have

made very careful inquiry, and I can trace no connection between the poisoning and the registration of the master of the dog. Many dogs belonging to Indians have of late been poisoned. It is generally believed that this is done by thieves intending to avoid being detected by the barking of these dogs. It will be terrible if every evil occurrence happening to an Indian blackleg were to be debited to Indian passive resisters. No, Sir, we have no desire to resort to questionable methods in order to compel obedience to the wish of the majority of Indians on the part of the minority. How can we who wish to be free as to our movements and, therefore, refuse to submit to the Asiatic Act put restraint upon others who do not think with us? Claiming independence and self-respect for ourselves, we would be false to our ideal if we denied the same measure of independence to others.

As to the Hindu priest in the reef town mentioned by your reporter, there was certainly no fracas in Germiston. It is perfectly true that the priest has interested himself, like every other Indian priest, whether Hinduor Mahomedan in the Colony, in a question which affects the welfare of the whole Indian community. No Indian prizing his religion can do otherwise. Cannot a priest ask his congregation to look up to God rather than to Mammon in a matter in which there is a choice between God and Mammon?

[*I am, etc.,*

ESSOP ISMAIL MIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION]

Indian Opinion, 26-10-1907

220. THE LATE MR. ALEXANDER

The news of the death of the late Chief Constable[1] of Durban has come upon the whole Durban community as a painful shock. When he left for Jersey, Mr. Alexander was in the full possession of health, and it was hoped that he would be spared for many a long year and enjoy well-earned rest. It is most painful to recall the fact that the purse presented to the late Superintendent of Police for the Borough of Durban just came in time to enable him to go home. He had

[1] *Vide* "Superintendent Alexander", 5-1-1907 and "Ex-Superintendent Alexander", 13-4-1907

endeared himself so much to the cosmopolitan community of Durban that he will live long in their memory. We tender to the widow our heartfelt sympathy in her loss, which is also the loss of the community.

Indian Opinion, 26-10-1907

221. FOR PASSIVE RESISTERS[1]

> The principle of State necessity can bind only those men to disobey God's law who, for the sake of worldly advantages, try to reconcile the irreconcilable; but a Christian, who sincerely believes that the fulfilment of Jesus' teaching shall bring him salvation, cannot attach any importance to this principle.—Tolstoy

David Thoreau was a great writer, philosopher, poet, and withal a most practical man, that is, he taught nothing he was not prepared to practise in himself. He was one of the greatest and most moral men America has produced. At the time of the abolition of slavery movement, he wrote his famous essay "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience". He went to gaol for the sake of his principles and suffering humanity. His essay has, therefore, been sanctified by suffering. Moreover, it is written for all time. Its incisive logic is unanswerable. During the last week of October —a month of sore temptation to Asiatic passive resisters, whose silent suffering has now reached the whole civilised world—we present the following extracts from Thoreau's essay. The original occupies a little over thirty pages of a pocket book and has been published by Mr. Arthur C. Fifield of 44 Fleet Street, London, in his beautiful "Simple Life" series, at 3d.

THE EXTRACTS

> I heartily accept the motto: "That government is best which governs least"; and I should like to see it acted up to more rapidly and systematically. Carried out, it finally amounts to this, which also I believe: "That government is best which governs not at all"; and when men are prepared for it, that will be the kind of government which they will have. Government is at best but an expedient; but most governments are usually, and all governments are sometimes, inexpedient.
>
> After all, the practical reason why, when the power is once in the hands of the people, a majority are permitted, and for a long period continue, to rule is not because they are most likely to be in the right nor because this

[1] Gandhiji's interest in the concept of Passive Resistance found expression in a subsequent announcement in *Indian Opinion* inviting essays on the subject, *Vide* Appendix VI.

seems fairest to the minority, but because they are physically the strongest. But a government in which the majority rule in all cases cannot be based on justice, even as far as men understand it.

Indian Opinion, 26-10-1907

222. THE G. O. M.

Our readers will be sorry to learn that Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji was unable to attend the magnificent farewell party that was arranged in his honour, owing to sudden illness. The party was attended, as appears from the full report given in *India* to hand, by politicians representing all shades of opinion. The absence of any cable news shows that the Grand Old Man has regained his health, and that his abstinent, austere, and temperate life, so eloquently described by Sir Mancherji, has stood him in good stead. We hope that he will long be spared to the country he loves so well.

Indian Opinion, 26-10-1907

223. PERVERSITY OF MEMONS

There is a saying among us to the effect that those who are about to be destroyed grow perverse first. That is what has happened to the Memons in the Transvaal. Only a very few of them must have remained without the title-deed of slavery. Those who have remained so we hold to be lions. We are not writing this with the intention of giving pain to the persons who have made the evil choice but in the hope that other Indians will take a lesson from their evil deed.

There is no need for the other communities to get nervous because the Memons have taken out registers. Fear is a sign of cowardice. None need imagine that the Memons, having taken out permits under the obnoxious law, will be able to carry on their business in the Transvaal without let or hindrance and mint money and that other Indians will have to run away. In fact, though some Memons have become slaves, hundreds of Indians have remained free and for this we must offer prayers of thanks to God. We hold that only an ignorant man will expect the Memons to be able to carry on their business in peace though they might have taken out the title-deed of slavery. If the other Indians have at all to quit the Transvaal, the whites at least will witness the kicks that the Memons will get. We shudder to think of the fate awaiting them.

However, we believe that, if most of the remaining Indians continue to be firm and are prepared to court arrest, no one will be required to leave the Transvaal. All Indians who have the right to settle in the Transvaal will be able to do so in peace, and the new law will be wrecked. We take it that those who think that it will not be wrecked have no faith in God's truth and in His most holy justice. We, therefore, entreat the other Indians to hold the honour of India high and to suffer all hardships rather than submit to the new law. We give below a Gujarati version of the English translation of what is said in the last section of the *Holy Koran:*

Say: I submit my self to God who is the King of the whole world. He will save me from the clutches of Satan, of the wicked and of men.

Let every Indian inscribe these words in his heart. This is the time to save ourselves from the clutches of timid men. The verse quoted above applies to all, be they Hindus, Muslims, Parsis or Christians. For there is only one Truth. And likewise, there is the same God over all. "Gold will always be gold, though it takes on different names when it is made into ornaments."[1]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-10-1907

224. DUTY OF TRANSVAAL INDIANS

We have often written in the past under this title, and may have to write many times again. We advise every Indian in the Transvaal to read the translation we have given of Mr. Ritch's letter and of the other papers accompanying it. Every member of the Committee is now with Mr. Ritch. The Hamidia Islamic Society's letter was brought to the notice even of Mr. Morley. It is being discussed in England. Sir George Birdwood is an old and prominent Indian civil servant of outstanding ability. He has served for many years on the India Council. He has stated that the fight of the Indians is justified. Mr. Ritch feels puzzled when he finds some of us Indians yielding. In other words, the Committee desires that we fight to the last. If, after our giving so much publicity to the struggle, any Indian submits to

[1] From a poem by the medieval Gujarati poet, Narsinh Mehta. One of his poems "Vaishnav Jana to", describing the character of the true devotee of God, was Gandhiji's favourite hymn.

the obnoxious law out of fear, being selfish or greedy of money, we shall take him to be an enemy both of himself and of the country.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-10-1907

225. INDIAN MERCHANTS OF LADYSMITH

Twelve Indian stores in Ladysmith district have been closed down. We think this is very bad news indeed. These merchants had applied again for licences. No licences were issued to them, but they were served with notice that, if the stores were not closed down, they would be prosecuted. Frightened by this notice, the merchants have closed down their stores. We would like to urge them to be bold and open their stores for business. Let the Government, if it so desires, prosecute them for carrying on trade without a licence. After being tried, they will be fined, and when the fine is not paid, their goods will be auctioned. We would particularly advise that they should allow the goods to be sold thus. That will need courage. Who will show that courage, if not brave people? Some may say that, if the goods are auctioned, the people will be ruined. Will not the people be ruined if the stores are closed down? The Government will auction the goods once. Can it do so every time? It may prosecute one trader. Will it prosecute twelve? Supposing it does, will not the Imperial Government intervene? It cannot but do so. If, indeed, it does not, that also will be worth being sure about. If the Indian community unites to give a fight, we are sure that the Natal Dealers' Licences Act will be wrecked. We advise the leaders of Durban that they should join hands with the merchants of Ladysmith to present a united front. We are convinced that doing this requires courage rather than money. He who is bold enough to give such a fight must remember (1) that the fight can be about old stores, (2) that the stores should be clean, and that (3) the proprietor should have an unblemished record. If such storekeepers give a concerted fight, they cannot but win in the end.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-10-1907

226. INDIA'S GRAND OLD MAN

The revered Dadabhai Naoroji is at present in England. In view of his very old age and his poor health, he had intended to pass the latter part of his life in his own country. Hence, a very big reception was held in London in his honour. Unfortunately, he fell ill on the very day. He could not attend the reception and his [plan of] returning to his country had also to be given up. This news came from England by the last mail, and almost a month has elapsed since then. Till now no telegram has been received, which gives us reasons to believe that India's Grand Old Man is still safe, and that in all probability he is in good health. More news ought to come by the next mail. Meanwhile, we must all pray to God to give "the Grandfather"[1] a long life.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-10-1907

227. LATE SUPERINTENDENT ALEXANDER

There is a telegram in the papers announcing Superintendent Alexander's death. We are much grieved at this and believe that every Indian will feel similarly grieved. Superintendent Alexander was always kindly disposed to the Indians. At this time, we may recall that the purse he received from the Indian community had proved very useful for his departure for England. Mr. Alexander leaves his widow behind him. We offer our condolences to her.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-10-1907

228. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

MEETING OF HAMIDIA SOCIETY

As usual, a meeting of the Hamidia Islamic Society took place last Sunday. The hall was packed to the full, and people were in high spirits. Mr. Emam Abdool Cadir presided. Mr. Ram Sundar Pundit made an eloquent speech and gave an account of his meeting with the Indian employees of the Railway. Quoting verses from the holy

[1] "Dada" in Gujarati means grandfather.

Koran, Moulvi Saheb Ahmed Mukhtiar showed that, having taken an oath in the name of God, Muslims could never submit to the law. He said that if Mr. Haloo's servants encouraged him, they too ought to be boycotted. No member of the community could allow it to be demoralized in any way.

Mr. Gandhi read out Mr. Hajee Habib's letter from Pretoria and also the letter received from Klerksdorp. He then pointed out that no one should talk of boycott. But once boycott was decided upon, it should be carried out.

Mr. Alibhai Akuji said that, if it was decided to boycott all blacklegs, he would arrange to withdraw the Kanmia employees of Mr. Haloo. Mr. M. S. Coovadia said that Mr. Hajee Habib spoke in his letter of some leaders in Johannesburg having secretly got themselves registered. Mr. Coovadia was quite sure that this was not true. He was in favour of boycotting all blacklegs. He said that he had flatly refused to buy flour from Mr. S. Butcher, though he would have gained £50 by doing so, because the latter had conveyed to him that he would supply flour only if Mr. Coovadia got himself registered. Mr. Coovadia had thus chosen to suffer a loss.

Mr. Omarji Sale supported the boycott. Mr. Ebrahim Coovadia read out the article and poem on "Permit Piano" that had appeared in *Al Islam*. Speaking again, the Moulvi Saheb proposed that the Hamidia Islamic Society should write to the President of the Indian National Congress about the struggle against the law. Something should be done by the community about the refusal of the German Lines to issue first, second and third class tickets for their steamers on the European route. Boycott would be a simple remedy.

Mr. Ebrahim Coovadia supported the Moulvi Saheb's proposal to write to the Congress. The meeting was then addressed by some other gentlemen, after which the President made his concluding remarks and terminated the meeting.

MEETING OF MADRASIS

The Madrasis held a meeting in Market Street. About a hundred men were present. Mr. Gandhi explained the whole position to them. They all resolved to oppose the law firmly till the end.

REPORT IN "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"

It has been reported in *The Transvaal Leader* of last Saturday that the Indian community must have been losing strength, for some Indians beat up an Imam[1] for having escorted an Indian to the Permit

[1] Muslim priest

Office and also poisoned the dog of the Indian who had taken out the permit; and at Germiston, a Hindu priest started a brawl. Commenting upon the report, the *Leader* says that no Indian leader might have been a party to the assault, etc. Even then if any Indian took to violence, there would be no sympathy left for the Indian community, and damage would be done to it.

ESSOP MIA'S LETTER

In reply to this, Mr. Essop Mia has addressed the following letter[1]:

Sir,

> My Association is grateful to you for your temperate leaderette with reference to alleged intimidation by passive resisters.
>
> The paragraph in your columns is evidently inspired. I have no hesitation in denying the existence of a reign of terror, unless the very strong feeling against the Act permeating the whole mass of Indians in the Transvaal acts as a reign of terror among those who want to cut themselves adrift from the community and take out certificates under the Act, not because they like the process, but because they hold their pockets to be superior to their honour. I admit the fact that several Asiatics who had left their places of employment with the intention of registering decided not to do so on being accosted by the watchful pickets, who placed before the registrants the true state of the law and disabused their minds of the subtle inducements that had been held out to them. The public can have no knowledge of the Herculean efforts being put forth by the Government to induce the community to register. The pickets have never used threats, and constant watch is being kept by the responsible members of the community on the doings of the pickets.
>
> The information about a Mahomedan priest having been assaulted is, unfortunately, true, but he was not assaulted by a number of Indians. The facts are these:
>
> The priest in question is not an Indian, but a Malay. We have in our midst a Dervish, who is a devout follower of the Prophet. He passes all his time in a mosque and earns his bread, whenever he thinks it worth while, by accepting the work of

[1] For the original, *vide* "Letter to *The Transvaal Leader*", pp. 302-4. In what follows, the text has been altered at some places so as to bring it into conformity with the Gujarati version.

breaking stones in one of the mines. He listens to no one, and is perhaps the most independent-spirited man going in South Africa. Everyone who has seen him and his simple life respects him. When he heard that the Malay priest incited Indians, especially Indian Mahomedans, to violate the sanctity of their solemn oath and to submit to the law, he was enraged. He deliberately walked to the Malay Mosque, met the priest, and entered into an argument with him. He cited a text from the *Koran* to convince the priest that he, of all people, should have desisted, especially as he was not an Indian, from interfering with Indian matters and from inducing people to violate the Koranic precepts. Hot words followed, and the unfortunate assault was the result. To charge Indians with responsibility in the matter would be strictly unfair. Many of us have reasoned with the Dervish and have implored him to restrain himself, but he recognizes no intervention between himself and his God. To him, needless to say, his home and the gaolyard are one and the same thing, and, when reasoned with, he said he was quite willing to appear before the court and justify his action.

As to the poisoning of the dog, the charge is wicked. I have made very careful inquiry, and I can trace no connection between the poisoning and the registration of the master of the dog. It is generally believed that this is done by thieves intending to avoid being detected by the barking of these dogs. It will be terrible if every evil occurrence happening to an Indian blackleg were to be debited to Indian passive resisters. No, Sir, we have no desire to resort to questionable methods in order to compel obedience to the wish of the majority of Indians on the part of the minority. How can we who wish to be free as to our movements and, therefore, refuse to submit to the Asiatic Act put restraint upon others who do not think with us?

As to the Hindu priest mentioned by your reporter, there was certainly no fracas in Germiston. It is perfectly true that the priest has interested himself, like every other Indian priest, whether Hindu or Mahomedan, in the Colony, in a question which affects the welfare of the whole Indian community. No Indian prizing his religion can do otherwise. Cannot a priest ask his congregation to look up toGod rather than to Mammon in a matter in which there is a choice between God and Mammon?

COMMENTS ON INCIDENT

This incident deserves serious reflection. There is no doubt that Imam Kamali and Mr. Haloo have made exaggerated and false

statements to the Registration Officers. Mr. Essop Mia states that it was not true that he was assaulted by a number of Indians. It is obviously unfair to charge the whole Indian community with responsibility for the assault by one Dervish. It is quite improbable that an Indian will poison Mr. Haloo's dog. We must realize from this incident that there can be no violence at any stage in our struggle. We cannot win by using force. Those who fight with trust in God do not need to resort to violence or similar methods. I for one will never believe that truth can be defeated. The case of Indians is perfectly just, and hence we need not fear the outcome. Those who submit to the obnoxious law will find the new permits reacting of their own on the bodies of the Indians like a medically impure compound of mercury; they will then, indeed, soil their hands.

POLICE COMMISSIONER'S LETTER REGARDING PICKETS

Readers will recall that a letter was written to the Police Commissioner, saying that the pickets had not used any force. The following reply has been received from him:[1]

> I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th instant, in respect to the pickets placed on the Registration Office, Von Brandis Square, and I am gratified to receive your assurance that no intimidation of intending applicants will be countenanced by your Association, and I trust that your efforts to see that no molestation occurs will be continued.

This letter makes it clear that there is nothing wrong in posting pickets. It is only their using force or offering threats that is wrong.

NO LICENCES IN JANUARY?

A notice has been published in the *Gazette* that no licences will be issued in January to those who might not have taken out the new registers. Even then, a notice in writing is being given to individual, leading Indians in every town that if they do not apply for registration before October 31, they will not be able to do so later and no licences will be issued to them in January. A written receipt is also obtained when such a notice is served. What does this mean? It is obvious that the Government is afraid that, if the Indian community does not submit to the law, no action can be taken against it. They are, therefore, getting restless now, and they want to get the people to apply for the title-deeds of slavery by holding out boththreats and inducements. In spite of these visible signs, there are some Indians

[1] What follows is the original letter published in the English section of *Indian Opinion,* 26-10-1907.

who do not take the warning but, weighed down by their greed of money, throw themselves like moths on the flame of the obnoxious law, and get burnt to death. I hope the other Indians will take careful note of these signs and remain firm to the last.

GERMAN EAST AFRICA LINE[1]

The information which the Moulvi Saheb gave at the Hamidia meeting, that no tickets other than deck tickets are issued to Indians on steamers plying on the European route should not be treated lightly. It has been causing much friction for some time. As the Moulvi Saheb pointed out, it is chiefly the pilgrims to Mecca who feel the hardship the most. The remedy is very straight and simple. In the first place, the Line has at different places Indian agents who can make careful arrangements. The other remedy is that of a straight boycott. The Line has a very large Indian clientele. This income can be stopped if the Indian passengers are treated as mere cattle. This requires a big effort among Indians. It will be possible to make arrangements with the British India Steam Navigation Company and other companies. Moreover, the Mogul Line can be got to ply its steamers on this route, as before. There are many such remedies.

LETTER TO "THE STAR"

The charge against Indian pickets of using threats is obviously false; it is true, however, that at the instance of Government officials, some whites have been harassing Indians and using threats to make them take out the title-deed of slavery. On this, Mr. Gandhi has written the following letter to *The Star:*[2]

Sir—Since the totally inoffensive Indian pickets are being charged, without an iota of proof, with intimidation of those who may wish to take out registration certificates, may I draw public attention to the hollowness of the charge, as also to counter-intimidation, which is a reality?

A case happened yesterday in which three Indians from Pietersburg were actually offered escort by the pickets, but it was refused. The fact is that an attempt is being made to discredit the pickets by feigning terror, and by asking for police protection. If there is any truth in the charge, why has not anyone been prosecuted? It must be the easiest thing to prove because intimidation is supposed

[1] *Vide* also "German East Africa Line", 14-12-1907

[2] For the original, *vide* "Letter to *The Star*",18-10-1907. In what follows, the text has been altered at some places so as to bring it into conformity with the Gujarati version.

to take place in broad daylight in Von Brandis Square in the presence of hundreds of passers-by.

As to counter-intimidation, many Indians believe that Indians possessing permits issued by either Capt. Hamilton Fowle or Mr. Chamney are, under quasi-official pressure, being dismissed for not having submitted to the Registration Act. Whether such pressure exists or not can be seen from a letter from the chief ganger at Germiston, confirming the information received that Indians were dismissed because they would not apply to be registered under the new Act. It causes little wonder, seeing that General Smuts himself has led the way. He has threatened all kinds of punishment—deportation and deprivation of licences at the same time for the same persons. How both can take place I do not know. Physical deportation is not even possible without the immigration measure, which has still to receive Royal sanction. Indians do not mind a fair fight, and, so far as I can see, they are prepared even for an unfair fight, though it will be strictly un-British. Why should the assistance of European employers be called in to force Indians to take out certificates of slavery? That many employers have up to now resisted any such pressure and positively declined to dismiss Indians in their employ, redounds to the credit of both—of the employers because they will not take part in the process of hitting below the belt, of the Indians because they are too valuable and faithful servants to be dismissed.

I have just learned that the four Indians on whose behalf it was stated that they were intimidated, and who were admittedly without any permits, have today been discharged and assured in the open court that they will receive registration certificates. No doubt slaves deserve their badge in the form of the new registration certificates. In my opinion, those who possess old Dutch passes, as these men are alleged to do, should be treated in the same way as those who have received permits under the Peace Preservation Ordinance, but it is a matter of public knowledge that Mr. Jordan gave all such persons notice to quit the Colony. One such man received notice the same day that the four men above-named stated they would apply for new registration certificates. General Smuts is thus, indeed, finding out the lawful residents from the unlawful ones.

AID FROM CHINDE

The Indians of Chinde have sent a telegram of sympathy; not only that, but they have also sent some money along with it. Mr. Ebrahim Hajee Suleman of Chinde writes to the Association as under:[1]

[1] The original letter was published in the English section *of Indian Opinion,* 26-10-1907. It is reproduced here with some changes to bring it into conformity with the Gujarati version.

Confirming our wire of the 22nd August 1907, offering our sincere sympathy in the trials of our countrymen in the Transvaal and stronglyrecommending them to be firm in pursuing their resistance policy, we beg to impress upon them the entire necessity of sticking to the same to the last.

Without detailing to you the proceedings of our meeting held on the 21st August, I would briefly inform our friends there that the proceedings were enthusiastic and the meeting was very well attended.

When the request was made for drawing up a subscription list, everyone without exception paid according to his means, and the list amounted to £33.15.9, which amount, small as it is, we beg to remit you, and to request you to acknowledge same.

A list of subscribers is attached hereto, and many of them desire the list to be published in *Indian Opinion*, not because they want to see their names published in the paper, but in the hope that, by seeing the published list, others may also be induced to come forward with help.

It is impossible to turn down this request. I am, therefore, gladly sending the list for publication. The following are the names of the contributors:[1]

A letter of thanks has been sent to the Chinde Association.

DOG'S COURAGE

The pickets here have bought a picture by a well-known painter. It is very striking and is such as will inspire every Indian with courage. It shows a dog and two girls. The two girls have removed their shoes and one of them is pulling the dog with a string round its neck, and the other is pushing it from behind. But the brave animal does not budge an inch from the place. That is passive resistance. The painter has also named his picture "Passive Resister". The picture shows the dog strong enough to bite the girls, if it wants to. Though obstinate, the girls are mere children. But the dog merely does not want to move from its place. It says, as it were: 'I shall never be your slave. I shall not move just because you pull me with a string or push me from behind. If I go with you of my own free will, that will be a different matter. But you will not succeed with force. Likewise, I too shall not use force against you.' Such is the nature of the Indian struggle. We do not need to use force against anyone. But we shall not give up the pledge we have taken.

[1] Here followed in the original a list of 46 names.

LIST OF BLACKLEGS

I give below an up to-date list that has come into my hands of blacklegs, or black-faces or "piano players", call them what you will:[1]

I feel ashamed to give the list, but do so from a sense of duty, suppressing the feeling of shame. Mr. Hasam Mamad named here was chief picket at Pietersburg. It is a matter of no small regret that he allowed himself to be stamped with a black mark and accepted slavery. They say it was Mr. Abou Aiyab who took the initiative, but he was nomore than a pawn in Mr. Khamisa's game of chess. Why therefore blame him? These gentlemen felt so ashamed that they were reluctant to accept the register with number 1. Thereupon, the Registrar gave No. 137 to the first. That Indians, even in spite of such absurdities should feel afraid, is in itself a sign of our degradation. It can be seen from the list that the large majority of them are Memons, some Konkanis, and the rest—a Gujarati Hindu and two or three Madrasis. The list does not include Mr. Haloo and about five Konkanis who have applied at Johannesburg. Not many days are now left. Everything will be public in due course.[2] This list has been obtained with much difficulty. It was supplied to the Pretoria Chamber of Trade as a matter of favour. But once a secret passes from one person to another, it soon spreads everywhere. What wonder, then, that the written list supplied to the Chamber was passed on to others? And if it could be given to others, why should poor *Indian Opinion* be excluded? If anyone were to suppose from this that I got the names from the Chamber, it would be an error. Those who want to know how I got [the names] have to go unsatisfied[3] for the time being at least.

KLERKSDORP JOURNAL

This journal makes an amusing comment on the law. How is it, the paper asks, the concern of a mischief-monger like Mr. Gandhi? So far as he is concerned, he will pick his briefcase and go elsewhere. But those who hold property should certainly become slaves. For the Government had already declared that Indians would be deported, and that no licences would be issued. The editor of the Klerksdorp paper gives this advice as an impartial observer. He has forgotten that people acquire wealth not to be slaves, but to enjoy freedom. Hanging from the belt, the sword is an ornament; but thrust into the chest, it will cause death. Similarly, wealth brings honour to men of reputation and

[1] Here followed in the original a list of 74 names.

[2] The Gujarati proverb used by Gandhiji means literally: The procession will soon reach the place of reception, accompanied by music and drums.

[3] The original literally translated means, "feed on empty air".

status, but to slaves it is like a sword thrust into the chest. Those who have earned wealth have the right to part with it, and that is the right which the Indian community is using. The whites who offer such wise counsel have themselves often sacrificed their possessions for the sake of their country and their honour, and have earned it again with equal ease. What wonder then that for the sake of its honour and its religion, the Indian community should kick off its wealth?

VERY IMPORTANT CASE

I referred earlier to the licence case against Mr. Dulabh Vira at Roodepoort. The magistrate showed sympathy for Mr. Dulabh Vira, but gave his judgment against him. There were cases against two persons. One was against his servant and the other was against himself. Mr. Dulabh Vira did not hold a licence. The servant was also prosecuted because he had sold the goods. The magistrate held that though Mr. Dubabh Vira was entitled to a licence, he had no right to keep the shop running since the Receiver had not issued a licence to him. The servant was also held guilty because he had sold the goods and so he was considered to have carried on trade. He was not sentenced. Mr. Dulabh Vira was fined ls.

In the appeal to the Supreme Court, the following grounds were advanced:

(1) In selling the goods, the employee has committed no offence. The employer alone can be found guilty under the law.

(2) Since it cannot be held to be the fault of Mr. Dulabh Vira that the Receiver had not issued the licence to him, though he had applied for it and was entitled to it, no sentence should have been passed against him. In deciding the appeal, the Court held that the law could punish the owner of a shop trading without a licence, but not his employee. The employee is therefore free, and nothing can be done to him.

Mr. Dulabh Vira [according to the Court] had no right to run the shop without a licence. He was asked to apply to the Receiver again, and if the Court found that the Receiver was deliberately refusing the licence to him, it would award costs against the Receiver and also damages to the appellant.

This is a very important judgment. It opens up many possibilities. It is a judgment which will hearten the people engaged in the Transvaal struggle. Many Indians were afraid that, in the absence of licences in January, their shops would have to be closed down. But that fear is now dispelled. Only the owner of an establishment is liable to be sentenced. The law does not provide for forcible closure of a

shop and the servants can continue to work in it. There is therefore no question of closing down. Only the owner of the store will have to suffer the hardship—according to me, the privilege—of being gaoled. I think this is a very valuable judgment.

It is very encouraging that damages and costs can be awarded against the Receiver.

If, after this decision, even a single Indian merchant is to yield, it can only be said that we deserve the obnoxious law.

SHAHJI SAHEB FINED

Imam Kamali had filed a complaint against Shahji Saheb for assault, which came up for hearing on Wednesday. In giving evidence, Imam Kamali stated that he was sorry for having made the affidavit. There was a dispute between the two on a religious point in connection with the question of law, during which Shahji Saheb dealt him a blow with a stick. The Imam for his part did not now desire any sentence to be passed [on Shahji Saheb]. In his deposition, Shahji Saheb admitted having dealt a blow, as stated above. The court-room was packed to capacity. The magistrate sentenced Shahji Saheb to a fine of £5 or imprisonment for seven days. The latter flatly refused to pay the fine, but, much against his desire, Mr. Gulam Mahomed Kadodia paid the fine on his behalf.

MEETING OF BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION'S COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Association and the Anti-Indian-Law Fund took place at 12 noon on Wednesday. Mr. Essop Mia presided. Mr. Gandhi said that Mr. Dulabh Vira's case should now be taken up by the community; that arrangement should be made to maintain the South Africa British Indian Committee; and that, in view of the uncertain situation facing the community, it would be better to vest the moneys of the Anti-Indian-Law Fund under his (Mr. Gandhi's) control. After Messrs Omarji, Naidoo, Ahmed Moosaji and Fancy had spoken on the subject, it was unanimously resolved that:

(1) The South Africa British Indian Committee be maintained for one year, and that Natal be requested to help meet the expenditure for the first six months.

(2) Mr. Dulabh Vira's case be taken up by the Association and expenses incurred up to £20.

(3) The account in the name of the Anti-Indian-Law Fund be closed, and the Fund be placed under Mr. Gandhi's control.

. . . . [1] and party have applied for registration. I feel sorry to give this information.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-10-1907

229. LETTER TO SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before *October 31, 1907*]

TO

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN

CHAIRMAN

BRITISH COMMITTEE OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

LONDON

[SIR,]

I beg to draw your attention to the crisis that is being approached here in connection with the Asiatic Registration Act. The last day for registration is the 31st instant, after which date, except in special cases, the Government will not entertain applications for registration certificates under the law. With the exception of the Memon community, Indians, as a rule, have refrained from going to the Registration Office and, out of 13,000 permit-holders, only 250 have applied to come under the law. This shows the strength of feeling. The mode of seeking redress is for us to suffer all the consequences of a breach of the law. Some who are very large merchants are likely to lose everything they possess. Many have begun to feel the pinch already, as European wholesale houses have ceased to give credit unless Indian merchants can produce registration certificates. Poor Indians have lost their employment, and, yet, there is the same firmness and opposition against the law.

In the opinion of my Association, the question is of first-class Imperial importance and national importance for India. My Association, therefore, hopes that the matter will be warmly taken up at the forthcoming Congress, and will also receive that general attention in India which it deserves; and with this end in view, my Association respectfully requests your active sympathy and encouragement. My Association feels that, apart from your official position, every Indian looks up to you as one of the greatest

[1] The original mentions four names here.

well-wishers of India, and I hope that in our present struggle, too, you will guide Indian thought in India as to what may appear desirable.

[*I have, etc.*,

ESSOP ISMAIL MIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION]

Indian Opinion, 2-11-1907

230. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
November 1, 1907

TO

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to forward, by parcel post, the petition of the British Indians throughout the Transvaal, in connection with the Asiatic Registration Act, and herewith a copy of the instructions[2] issued to the canvassers.

When the forms were distributed through the Colony, the letter addressed to the Government on behalf of certain Indians asking for a modification of the regulations framed under the Act, was still unanswered and the letter not withdrawn. But though since then Messrs Stegmann, Esselen, and Roos' clients have not received a reply to their satisfaction, and although they have therefore withdrawn the letter, the committee of my Association desires me to forward the petition, as it embodies the sentiments of those who have signed it. In the humble opinion of my Association, the petition forms a complete vindication of the attitude adopted by it, and shows that it is representative of the vast majority of Indians in the Colony. The petition has been ready for some time, but my Association delayed its presentation, in order to test the action of the community during the period that the Registration Office remained open in Johannesburg.

There are 4,522 signatories to the petition, and they are drawn from 29 towns, villages, and districts in the Transvaal. The following is the analysis according to the centres: Johannesburg, 2,085; Newclare,

[1] A summary of the letter appeared in *lndian Opinion*, 2-11-1907.

[2] *Vide* "Monster Petition",Before 21-9-1907

108; Roodepoort, 136; Krugersdorp, 179; Germiston, 300; Boksburg, 129; Benoni, 91; Modderfontein, 51; Pretoria, 577; Pietersburg and Spelonken, 90; Vereeniging, 73; Heidelberg, 66; Balfour, 14; Stander ton, 123; Volksrust, 36; Wakkerstroom, 12; Piet Retief, 3; Bethal, 18; Middelburg, 29; Belfast, Machadodorp, and Waterval, 21; Barberton, 68; Potchefstroom, 114; Ventersdorp, 12; Klerksdorp, 41; Christiana, 24; Lichtenburg, 7; Zeerust, 59; Rustenburg, 54; Ermilo, 2.

There are in the Transvaal Hindus, Mahomedans, Christians, and Parsees from India, and the Mahomedans are divided into three sections, i.e., Surtis, Konkanis, and Memons; the Hindus into Gujarati, Madrassi, and Northerners, commonly called Calcutta people. In order to avoid a separate classification for the Sikhs and the Pathans, they have been included among the Northerners, if Hindus, and among the Surtis, if Mahomedans. The Christians have not been separately classified as they are nearly all Madrassis, and are not more than 200 in all. The following, then, is the religious and provincial classification: Surtis, l,476; Konkanis, 141; Memons, 140; Gujarati Hindus, l,600; Madrassis, 991; Northerners, 157; Parsees, 17.

I may mention that, with the exception of the Memons, there are hardly any abstentions, but the task of reaching every Indian in the isolated parts of the Transvaal—as, for instance, farms, etc.—has been beyond my Association during the time that was allotted for the canvassing of signatures. Canvassers, who were in all cases responsible and representative men, have reported that a large number of Indians have already left the Transvaal, owing to the struggle that the community is passing through. It is common knowledge that nearly 13,000 permits have been issued to British Indians under the Peace Preservation Ordinance, and approximately that number of Indians were resident in the Transvaal when unfortunately the struggle commenced in September of last year. To-day the British Indian population of the Transvaal, according to the information at the disposal of my Association, does not at the outside exceed 8,000, but it is probably nearer 7,000 than 8,000. My Association is aware that, owing to pressure having been exerted by wholesale merchants or other similar causes, a few of the Memons and others, not exceeding 30 signatories, have recanted, and applied for registration under the Act. Moreover, according to the information received by my Association, no more than 350 Indians have applied for registration throughout the Transvaal during the period that the registration has been proceeding, namely, July 1 to October 31, and that 95 per cent of these applicants are drawn from the Memon section.

In conclusion, my Association begs to draw the attention of the Government to the intensity of the feeling of the community

represented by my Association against the Asiatic Law Amendment Act. In taking up the attitude the community has felt called upon to adopt, there has been no intention of defying either the Government or the laws of the country, but a sense of the wrong done to the community by the Act and all it implies has compelled British Indians to prepare for undergoing a course of suffering which passive resistance, as understood by British Indians, involves.

[*I have, etc.,*

ESSOP ISMAIL MIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION]

The Transvaal Leader, 2-11-1907

231. LETTER TO "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"

[JOHANNESBURG,]
November 1, [*1907*]

[THE EDITOR
THE TRANSVAAL LEADER
JOHANNESBURG]
SIR,

In your leading article in today's issue on the Asiatic Registration Act, you have imputed to the British Indian Association a statement to the effect that nearly the whole of the 400 men said to have been registered had no right to be in the Transvaal. I am not aware of any such statement having been made by any official of the Association. I know that some of our pickets did make some such statement, but that was mere bravado. The chief picket, Mr. Naidoo, immediately corrected it, but the correction did not appear in your report. The official statement made by the Association is that four men at least, who, according to the interpretation of the law put upon it by the Government, have no right to be in the country, have applied for and probably received registration certificates. The Association does not even consider these men to be not entitled to their certificates.

If the Government keep the office open for receiving applications, I must respectfully decline to consider it as a graceful concession, as it would be, in the opinion of the majority of Indians, a confession of weakness on the part of the Government. The British Indian Association, in all humility and in obedience to a higher call, has challenged the Government to do its worst. We do not require the

registration pin-pricks, and, if the vigilance of the pickets has kept Indians away from what they consider a plague-spot, the same vigilance will be exercised in Pretoria also.

You ask what can be gained by the Indian opposition in the teeth of General Smuts, threat and the refusal of intervention by the Imperial Government. So far as I am aware, in the last resort, Indians have not pinned their faith either to intervention from Downing Street or to recognition of the principles of humanity by General Smuts. Though the effort now being made by the Indian community is undoubtedly calculated, if successful, to give them a status in the colony, they are fully aware that they may lose their all in the struggle. But, if that happens, which I do not believe, they will at least have gained a soul, and put that gain in one scale and all that General Smuts and his Act can give to the Indian community in the other, and I have no hesitation in asking my countrymen to reject at all costs the latter. You will then see that, while we take advantage of all that the law may give us, the sanctioning of the Immigration Restriction Bill or any other harsher measure will not turn the community from the straight and narrow path. If it does— and I do not say that it will not—then every Indian knows that there is a precipice on either side.

I, am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Transvaal Leader, 2-11-1907

232. LETTER TO SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN

[JOHANNESBURG
Before *November 2, 1907*]

TO
SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN
CHAIRMAN
BRITISH COMMITTEE OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
LONDON

[SIR,]

My Society has been moving very actively in connection with the Asiatic Registration Act. It is hardly necessary for me to state that in South Africa we have no racial differences. Hindus, Mahomedans, Parsis, Christians, belonging to the different Provinces, join hands and work for the common good. In some respects the Asiatic Registration Act peculiarly affects Indian Mussulmans. We have appealed to all parties and all sections, and my Society, therefore, ventures to appeal

to you as the mouthpiece in England of the Indian National Congress, and trusts that the question of the Transvaal Registration Act will be put in the forefront of the subjects to be dealt with by the Congress, as distinguished from the general South African question. As you are aware, we are adopting what may, perhaps, be termed heroic measures, in order to meet the special difficulty in the Transvaal. The other legislation in South Africa can be lived down and has been, so far, tolerated, but the Transvaal Act is intolerable. Under the other South African legislation, Indians have not felt called upon, by way of protest, to lose all rather than submit, but, under the Transvaal Act, that step has been considered and rendered absolutely necessary. The other South African legislation deprives us, as a rule, of the avenues to wealth; the Transvaal Registration Act deprives us of our manhood and reduces us to a status almost of slavery. And, in so much as this question affects Mahomedans specially, it will, perhaps, be graceful on the part of the National Congress to give the matter of the Transvaal special prominence. By the end of December, probably, many Indians may have even suffered imprisonment for a principle, so that a very acute stage will have been reached by the time the Congress meets.

[*I have, etc.,*

EMAM ABDOOL CADIR SALIM BAWAZEER
ACTING CHAIRMAN,
HAMIDIA ISLAMIC SOCIETY]

Indian Opinion, 2-11-1907

233. SMUTS' BRAVERY(?)

Many Indians, like women, are unnerved at the thought that General Smuts is a man who will always do what he says he will. We stated last week that that gentleman withdrew the Regulations pertaining to the closure of shops no sooner than these were published. During the week the Regulations remained gazetted, many white shopkeepers put up a fight against them. General Smuts cooled down and withdrew them within ten days of their publication. In the same way, that gentleman withdrew the Beer Bill and the Kaffir Law. The Shop Regulations were withdrawn for fear of the Transvaal whites, and the other two laws were withdrawn because of the strong opinion against them in England.

These three instances deserve to be carefully noted by Indian friends. They indicate that General Smuts is certainly afraid of brave people; but as some effeminate husbands are brave only in respect of

their wives, so General Smuts shows himself brave in respect of those who panic before him, that is, to those who are like women. He has to fear the white businessmen because the power he holds depends on them. Why should he fear the Indians? Indians change their attitudes ten times a day, like women changing their dress. The same Indian may be a picket and yet accept the title-deed of slavery; the same Indian may accept a presidentship to oppose the law, and then sign an affidavit and wear the slavish sari; the same Indian taking an oath in the name of God will put down his signature with one pen that he will not submit to the law, and then with a second pen say that he must have slavery. Now, say, why should General Smuts be afraid? It is still possible under one condition, namely, that those who are yet not involved should continue fighting against General Smuts till the end, even to the point of being ruined. Then we shall see if the obnoxious law does not go the way of the Beer Bill! Never and nowhere in this world was spectacular success achieved without a struggle.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-11-1907

234. TRUE FRIENDSHIP

That *The Friend* of Bloemfontein bears true friendship towards us is beyond doubt. In *The Friend* of the 24th instant[1], the editor has strongly criticized the Asiatic Act, and showed that those Indians who have opposed it deserve congratulations. If some Indians register themselves out of fear, that does not mean anything. But those who oppose the law or quit the country show up that the law is bad.

The editor of *The Friend* advises the Transvaal Government to act only after due deliberation. It is but proper that, if the Asiatics are to be made to leave, they should be compensated. We request our readers to read the whole article.[2]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-11-1907

[1] It appears that this article was written in October.
[2] *Vide* the following item.

235. "THE FRIEND" OF BLOEMFONTEIN ONCE AGAIN TO SUCCOUR OF TRANSVAAL INDIANS

"THE LAW IS UNWISE AND UNJUST"

In *The Friend* of Bloemfontein of the 24th instant, there is a leader in support of the Transvaal Indians which runs as follows:[1]

From Pretoria comes the report that the resistance of the British Indians to the Registration Act is believed by the authorities to be weakening. The grounds for the belief are stated to be that some 48 Indians, a few of them prominent members of their community, have applied to be registered in Pretoria. At Johannesburg, however, where the mass of the British Indians resides, there have been only 16 applications, of which but one was made by a local Indian, the others coming from the outside districts. To our mind, the above figures are not nearly so significant as the fact, stated further on in the report, that 100 Indians, presumably from the Transvaal, were to embark tomorrow from Durban for India. *The British Indians in South Africa might be expected* like any other community, whether white or coloured, to develop under pressure of persecution *their own percentage of cowards*. What claims our notice is the fact not that two or three scores of them have submitted weakly to a law which they consider degrading and unjust, but that a large number prefer to keep their self-respect at the price of leaving the country. The action of the Transvaal Government in this matter has been morally wrong and diplomatically foolish. Those British Indians who have protested against the Registration Ordinance are British Indians who possess a full and admitted legal right to live in the Transvaal, a right derived from long previous residence. The Government has decided, without the slightest justification so far as we can see, to make their further enjoyment of that right conditional on their submission to a law which stigmatises them *as serfs or felons. It is* the simple fact that the finger-print method of registration has hitherto been confined in the Transvaal to convicts and indentured Chinamen. Some may think that the race inferiority of the British Indians makes it excusable to treat them in this fashion. If they were an inferior race, we have no right to mark our superiority by oppressing them, but *is it so sure that they are inferior*? We have Indian regiments which rank in their soldierly qualities with the flower of our army. Our universities frequently see

[1] The translation given here has been collated with the original in English. Words underlined in the Gujarati are given in italics.

their best prizes carried off by Indian students. In capacity for abstract thought and insight into the mystery of things, the Westerns still sit as children at the feet of the Easterns. If capacity for trade and commerce be made the test, it is generally admitted that the average white man has in these no chance against the competition of the average Asiatic. In this last fact we have unquestionably the true reason for the way in which the British Indians in the Transvaal are being treated. No doubt, we possess as a white race the military advantage over the Asiatics, but one of the anxious questions which agitate the minds of European statesmen is the question *how long that advantage is going to last*. Possibly the Asiatic myriads will within a few years wake from their torpor of centuries and overwhelm the West as they have done more than once before. Should they not do so, it will not be because the Transvaal Government is not helping to arouse them. Every British Indian sent back to his own country by the injustice of the Transvaal Government will take with him an ineradicable sense of wrong, and it is odds if he becomes an agitator and foments dislike of the white man's rule. We know that the last thing the Transvaal Government wished to do was to add to the anxieties of the Imperial Government. Yet the fact is it is getting rid of its own share of the Asiatic problem in a manner which complicates and increases the Imperial Government's share. For this reason we consider the Registration Act *unwise as well as unjust*. We do not suppose that under pressure from India the British Government will bring pressure to bear on the Transvaal Government, demanding the revision of Asiatic legislation in that colony, or, perhaps (as some fear) the opening of our doors to the entrance of British Indians. The old country is exceedingly patient of the procedure of her colonies and leaves them to their own way, even when her own interests are hurt thereby, nor does she absolve herself of the liability of defending them with her fleet at her own cost. All this the Transvaal Government recognizes. General Botha's Cabinet is personally the friends of the Imperial Government but yet, by means of its Asiatic measure, it is getting their friends into trouble. *Surely there was a better way*?

Having written thus much, let us suggest the proper alternative. This would have been to pass in the first place a law forbidding the future immigration of Asiatics, no matter under what pretexts. In the second place, it would have been proper to lay down rules to which all Asiatics in the Colony would have to conform as the condition of their continued residence therein. But if there were any Asiatics who preferred to leave rather than submit to these rules, and could prove that they suffered damage by leaving, they should receive liberal compensation. Suppose the whole Indian population of the Transvaal

had asked the Government to buy it out, the cost would have been cheap compared to that of an Indian mutiny, and, perhaps the Imperial Government, as interested in a just solution of the difficulty, would have consented to share the cost. To some extent the Imperial Government is responsible as having made the case of the Indians in the Transvaal a pretext for the late war. Unquestionably, the Asiatic problem is one which a federated South Africa will have to take up as a whole. Natal is even more vitally interested than the Transvaal, since she cannot do without Indian labour. Her solution of the difficulty may be, as we have several times suggested, to mark off a portion of her territory as an Indian pale, within which all British Asiatics will have equal rights with Europeans, but outside which their presence will not be permitted in South Africa. We have the most perfect right to keep our country for ourselves and to decline to be ousted by alien races. We have no right to inflict insult or loss on individual members of those races.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-11-1907

236. MEETING OF LONDON MUSLIMS

There is interesting news in the papers that Muslims in London are meeting to pass a resolution protesting against the new law. They comprise many communities and belong to different nations. They include Europeans, too. Their meeting cannot but have some effect. Our Muslim brethren should realize from this that they need to become more alert and carry on the Transvaal struggle with greater courage.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-11-1907

237. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

LAST WEEK

Only a few days of October are left. By the time this letter appears in print, the "Plague Office" will have left this place. Indians have remained strong at least up to the time of writing this. Except for the Memons and some Konkanis, everyone has maintained his spirit. I said "the Memons", but there is reason to hope that five or six Memons at Pietersburg and two or three at Piet Retief will partly save the honour of their community. As for the rest, even at places where

there were only one or two who had kept back, they ran about feverishly, and showing little concern for the community, for their honour or for their pledge, filed affidavits, true or false, and made themselves safe by donning the prize-cloak of slavery, which makes them feel like princes. There is a proverb among us that when the sky itself goes to pieces, no mending is possible. When the President of Pietersburg himself chooses to become a slave and advises others to do likewise, whom among the Memons can we blame?

Then there is Mr. Hajee Cassim who has adopted a novel course. He felt that it would be a great sin to make an affidavit that he had not applied for the permit out of fear. He therefore wrote to General Smuts, saying that they had expected that some modifications would be made by him, and that, since that was not done, they now wished to register themselves, for which they sought the General's permission. General Smuts has not yet got enough slaves and he cannot do without them so, by way of favour, he has ordered that Mr. Hajee Cassim and his friends may be registered without an affidavit. That brings the chapter of the Memons to a close. It remains to be seen what happens to other Indians.

HAMIDIA ISLAMIC SOCIETY

A meeting of the Society took place as usual. Moulvi Saheb Ahmed Mukhtiar made a speech that brought tears to the eyes of some. Citing many instances from the *Koran*, he showed that submission to the law would mean betrayal of their faith. Mr. Gandhi gave a brief account of his interview with the Police Commissioner and suggested that they should take the pickets off for one day so that the Government might be convinced [that no force was being used]. Speaking again, Moulvi Saheb suggested that one person should spe-cially go to India to rouse the country. Mr. Coovadia stated that the police had taken the fingerprints of Mr. Saleji's Malay wife and their child of two years, and that at Durban Mr. Burgess had torn off the permits of so-me Hindus. Mr. Omarji pointed out that in November the leaders sho-uld tour every village and explain the whole situation to the people.

ASIATIC EATING-HOUSES

The Municipality has framed Regulations for Indian and Kaffir eating-houses. These Regulations contained a clause requiring the nomination of European deputies in the event of the owners being absent. The British Indian Association has protested against this and has addressed the following letter to the Government:[1]

[1] What follows is the original English text reproduced from *Indian Opinion*, 2-11-1907.

> My Association has noticed in the Municipal Minutes Bye-Laws with reference to Asiatic eating-howes, one clause of which requires the owners of these Asiatic eating-houses to appoint as their deputies white men only. A general notice, too, has been issued to owners of these eating-houses by the Municipality, informing them that "as it is probable that the nomination of a deputy will be required by the Committee in every case, applicants should forward to the undersigned, without delay, the name of such deputy." The notice shows that it is the intention of the Municipal Council to insist on a white deputy being appointed in each case.
>
> Asiatic eating-houses are very few in number, and both Mahomedans and Hindus would have religious objections to a European deputy having anything to do with their foodstuff. Moreover, these eating-houses have hardly more than ten customers on an average per day, and it is not possible for them to afford the expense of European or other deputies.
>
> In the humble opinion of my Association, the proposed Bye-Law will impose a very great hardship on the few Asiatic eating-house keepers. My Association, therefore, ventures to trust that sanction for the Bye-Law will be withheld.

There is reason to fear that this law will be passed. It means that Hindus and Muslims will be served by the whites. This is the utmost limit of oppression. I for one cannot help thinking that, if we accept defeat in our struggle against the new law, Indians will lose their religion and dignity and everything else.

SOME RUMOURS

A rumour has been spread that Mr. Gandhi has got several leaders of Johannesburg registered in secret and that he has also registered himself. The reader can decide for himself what weight to attach to this rumour. They go to the extent of even saying that this has been encouraged by General Smuts. If that is so we can say that General Smuts, having grown nervous, is now clutching at a straw.

There is another rumour that General Smuts will definitely have all those without registers in December packed off by train. He has arranged with a Minister of Natal to have such persons carried by train to the Point and from there they will be directly forced into the steamer and deported to India. This story is without any foundation, for it is false. No law has been passed yet for forcible expulsion. Mr. Leonard has stated his opinion that there is no law in the Transvaal under which an Asiatic who does not take out a register can be expelled by force. Moreover, it should be realized that, if any such authority had been provided for in the obnoxious law, the Government would never have gone out of its way to include such a clause in the Immigration Bill. It is certain that the Government has no

authority to use force for expulsion. Besides, who can force anyone into a steamer if he has the right to remain in Natal?

There is a third rumour that the majority of Indians in Johannesburg have already got themselves registered. Leaders from Ermilo, Klerksdorp and Potchefstroom have arrived here to inquire if this is true. They found the real situation to be quite encouraging. Except for Mr. Haloo, Mr. Mahomed Shahboodeen, Mr. Abdul Gafur and two or three others, no one in Johannesburg has got himself registered and, even from outside, only fifteen persons came to get their faces blackened. The leaders were quite reassured to find this.

PRETORIA IS WEAK

The earlier fear that Pretoria was the weakest of all has now been justified. Mostly it is there that people have got themselves registered. Almost all Memons having been registered, other communities have also become restless. They are thinking what the remaining people should do. But one fails to understand what there is to think about. It should be enough for everyone that the law is bad and that we have taken an oath to resist it.

REGRETTABLE INCIDENT

The incident of Shahji Saheb's attack on Imam Kamali is yet fresh in memory. And now he has attacked Mr. Mahomed Shahboodeen. On Monday, at 10 o'clock in the morning Mr. Mahomed Shahboodeen was in the Market Square, when Shahji Saheb went up to him and rebuked and assaulted him for having got himself registered. One of his fingers was seriously injured. Some of the Jews who were present intervened; otherwise the injury would have been more serious. People have been very much upset by this. Everyone feels sorry. Mr. Essop Mia and Mr. Gandhi went to Mr. Shahboodeen to express their regret. Mr. Mahomed Shahboodeen does not intend to take out proceedings against Shahji Saheb. However, as soon as the Police Commissioner heard of this, he made enquiries. He has called for a statement from Mr. Shahboodeen which he has refused to submit. The leaders are remonstrating with Shahji Saheb. Everyone has felt sad at this incident.

I have stated more than once in these columns that, if any violence is used by the community in this struggle, we shall find it difficult to win. Use of force has no place in this struggle. Those who play on the piano[1] cannot be defended. There is no doubt that such persons are traitors. But they are to be won over by persuasion and

[1] A phrase sarcastically describing the act of giving finger-prints.

argument. Even if they remain obstinate, we cannot afford to use force against them. It will do us much harm if we do so. No one can argue with Shahji Saheb. His is an exceptional case. But all Indians must realize that our object can be attained only by their acting with courage but never by violence. What will it matter if those who do not feel humiliated by the law get themselves registered? I at least believe that so long as the majority remain firm, no harm will have been done.

SOME QUESTIONS

It has been asked whether, in the absence of the proprietor, the manager can get a licence or not. The question has been answered by the Supreme Court in the case of Rama Makan: the answer is that he can get the licence. There is another question, namely, whether it is necessary for Indians here to give a thumb-impression in a power of attorney. It is obvious that in this case the thumb-impression has to be given. All these questions have meaning for those who wish to submit to the law. Those who do not submit to the law will fight it by carrying on trade without a licence, and in the end will get the law repealed.

MORE BLACKLEGS

There have been some additions to the list given by me last time, which I publish here with regret:

[27 names] from Pretoria, [21] from Pietersburg, [12] from Potchefstroom, [4] from Middelburg, [5] from Johannesburg and [1 each] from Louis Trichardt, Zeerust, Mafeking and Christiana.

LETTER TO LONDON COMMITTEE OF INDIAN CONGRESS

Sir William Wedderburn is Chairman of the British Committee of the Congress. Mr. Essop Mia and Emam Cadir have written[1] to him to request that the question of the new law should be taken up seriously at the next session of the Congress.

BRAVE MULTANI MERCHANT

The Star has published the following advertisement:

PASSIVE RESISTER (WON' T REGISTER) Unreserved sale of Maltese

Lace, Teneriffe Goods, Japanese and Indian Silks, etc., etc.

This advertisement has been inserted by a brave Multani trader. He prefers imprisonment to registration. He has taken this step to wind up his business and hold himself ready for anything that the Government may do.

[1] *Vide* letters to Sir William Wedderburn, Before 31-10-1907 ; Before 2-11-1907.

The officers are now reduced to making such desperate efforts to secure applications that their conduct becomes ridiculous. One instance of this is provided by the case of two Chinese pickets arrested last week. It was stated in evidence before the court that one police constable (acting as a tool in the hands of the Registration Officer) had abused a Chinese picket on two different occasions, and that he had also tried to manhandle him. The magistrate acquitted the accused, and set them free. As a result of the conduct of the whites and the courage of the Chinese as revealed in this case, many whites found themselves being drawn in their hearts to the side of the passive resisters.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-11-1907

238. LETTER TO INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

JOHANNESBURG,
November 4, 1907

[SHRI RASH BEHARI GHOSH
PRESIDENT-ELECT[1]
INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
SIR,]

I beg to draw your attention and that of the Congress to the present critical position of British Indians in the Transvaal in connection with the Asiatic Registration Act. British Indians have been informed that the last day for receiving applications for registration under that obnoxious measure is the 30th instant, whereafter the Government will not entertain applications for registration, except in special cases. You will, probably, already have learnt that, with the exception of a very small section of the community, practically the entire Indian population has refused to register under the new law. My Association claims that, to date, there have not been more than 350 applications for registration out of a total of 13,000 permit-holders. From this you will be able to gauge the intensity of the feeling in this matter.

You will have learnt that our method of endeavouring to redress the wrong that has been done us is that of passive resistance. We haveresolved to suffer all the consequences of a breach of the law. Many of us have already lost heavily, many more stand to lose everything they possess. Several European wholesale houses have even

[1] Of the 23rd session of the Indian National Congress held at Surat in 1907.

gone so far as to stop credit unless Indian merchants can produce registration certificates issued under the new law. Many Indians employed as servants or labourers have accepted dismissal at the hands of their employers rather than register themselves.

As you will be well aware, the British Indian community in the Transvaal is composed of Mahomedans, Hindus, Christians and Parsis; Madrassis, Gujaratis, Sikhs, Pathans, Hindi men, and men from Calcutta, all of whom have combined in the great work of resisting an iniquitous law which threatens to rob every Indian of his material wealth and to destroy that self-respect which he has snatched from the ruin with which he has been threatened by previous oppressive legislation.

My Association approaches the Congress at this moment in the hope that the Transvaal Registration Act will be put in the forefront of the subjects to be dealt with by the Congress and made the main plank of its platform as distinguished from the general South African question. Today, there is no other South African question than the awful position of the British Indians in the Transvaal. What happens to us today will happen to our brethren everywhere in South Africa tomorrow. Nay, we consider that ours is a question of first-class importance to the Empire and of national importance to India; for what the South African Colonies succeed in enforcing against us here, other dominions of the Empire will practise against our brethren elsewhere. It may be said that we are adopting heroic measures in order to meet a special difficulty in the Transvaal; but we regard ourselves as the representatives, in this country, of our Motherland, and it is impossible for us, as patriotic Indians, to keep silence under an insult that is levied against our race and our national honour. No other legislation in South Africa has attacked us so fiercely on these points, but the Transvaal Asiatic Registration Act is intolerable. All other South African legislations deprive us, as a rule, of the avenues to wealth. The Transvaal Registration Act deprives us of our manhood and reduces us to the status of slavery. By the end of December, probably many Indians may have even suffered imprisonment for a principle, whilst the 1st of January will witness a general refusal to issue trade licences to Indians who have refused to register under the new law, so that a very acute stage will have been reached by the time the Congress meets. We hold that our movement of passive resistance merits the approval of all religious men, of all true patriots, of all men of commonsense and integrity. It is a movement so potent as to compel the respect of our adversaries by virtue of our very non-resistance,

of our willingness to suffer; and we are the more firm in our determination to offer this opposition, because we consider that our example, on a small scale in this Colony, whether successful or unsuccessful, may well be adopted by every oppressed people, by every oppressed individual, as being a more reliable and more honourable instrument for securing the redress of wrongs than any which has heretofore been adopted.

[*I have etc.,*
ESSOP ISMIL MIA
CHAIRMAN
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION]

Indian Opinion, 9-11-1907

239. LETTER TO THE PRESS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
November 6, 1907]

[SIR,]

You publish in today's issue of your paper what purports to be an authorised explanation given to your Pretoria correspondent of the present position of the Government in regard to the administration of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act. My Association regrets to find, however, that that report is so strangely full of misapprehensions and misstatements, that a doubt must arise as to whether your representative has not failed to grasp the details of the apologia that has been issued from the Colonial Secretary's Office. With your permission, I will, on behalf of my Association, proceed to examine certain facts alleged therein.

In the first place, it is stated that representations have been addressed to the Colonial Secretary on behalf of the Indian community with a view to obtaining certain modifications of the regulations. My Association denies the statement absolutely. The facts are these: On the 30th August, a petition was addressed by Messrs Stegmann, Esselen & Roos, on behalf of "some leading Indian people of Pretoria, Standerton, Pietersburg, and Middelburg", to the Honourable the Colonial Secretary to secure some modification of the regulations. The intention of Messrs Stegmann, Esselen & Roos, clients was to show that they spoke for quite a number of representative Indians, and immediately these facts became known to my Association, my Association addressed a letter to the Pretoria

[1] This was addressed to *The Transvaal leader* and *The Star*.

solicitors, repudiating the right of these people to speak on behalf of the Indian community and, therefore, of my Association. The wording of the letter which I have quoted above suffices to show that the representations made to the Government were made on behalf of certain individuals acting in their private capacity, and most of whom are now registered. In reply to these representations, the Honourable the Colonial Secretary informed his petitioners that he was unable to comply with their requests but made some trifling modifications of practically no value. The persons on whose behalf the Pretoria solicitors acted were so dissatisfied with this reply, that they returned, through Messrs Stegmann, Esselen & Roos, an answer to the effect that they desired to withdraw their request as set forth in their letter of the 30th August, leaving the Honourable the Colonial Secretary at liberty to withdraw such concessions as he might have been able to make. It will thus be seen that the Indian community made no representations to the Honourable the Colonial Secretary in the matter of the regulations, but that whatever representations were made came from certain individuals, who have since withdrawn their request, the letter of withdrawal being dated the 12th ultimo.

May I be allowed to say here, on behalf of my Association, that it is utterly false to allege that it is only now that the British Indian community has taken up a position which it did not venture to take up during the earlier stages of the agitation? The Colonial Secretary's Department must be singularly ill-informed, if it is unaware of the fact that passive resistance to the law has existed since September, 1906. The oath of passive resistance was taken at the Mass Meeting held in Johannesburg in that month, at which the Registrar of Asiatics himself was present. My Association has consistently declined to enter at all into the question of regulations framed under the Act. Having from the first declined to recognise the validity of the Act itself, it would have been undignified in the extreme had my Association entered into minor details. My Association, having ignored the existence of these regulations, cannot by any stretch of imagination be said to have repudiated the modifications alleged to have been made in favour of British Indians by the Honourable the Colonial Secretary at the alleged request of the community. It is a mistake altogether to suppose that the passive resistance movement entered into by my Association and by the Indian community commenced in July last when registration was announced. The total repeal of the Act has been demanded from the very commencement of the struggle last year.

A side issue has been raised in connection with the petition recently forwarded by my Association to the Honourable the Colonial Secretary. This petition sets forth, amongst other things, that the

signatories thereto dissociate themselves entirely from the letter addressed to the Honourable the Colonial Secretary by Messrs Stegmann, Esselen & Roos on behalf of their clients; and the signatories respectfully submitted that nothing short of a total repeal of the Act could meet the difficult situation that had been created. There was nothing new in this. The official informant of your correspondent would make it appear that, consequent upon the Honourable the Colonial Secretary's slight modifications of the regulations which were contained in a letter forwarded about the end of September last, the Indian community took advantage of an alleged act of leniency to circulate the petition in order to take further advantage of what will doubtless have been considered to be an act of grace. In point of fact, immediately that it was known to my Association that Messrs Stegmann, Esselen & Roos' letter of the 30th August had been dispatched to the Colonial Secretary, my Association issued forms of the petition in five different languages and circulated these all over the Colony. This was at the beginning of September. By the end of September, when the Honourable the Colonial Secretary's reply was received by the Pretoria solicitors, practically all these forms had been returned to my Association duly completed. As, however, Johannesburg was to be the last place where registrations were to be effected and October was to be [the] last month for effecting them, my Association decided to hold over the petition until the end of last month, in order to demonstrate to the Government the solidity of the British Indian community in its opposition to the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, and this notwithstanding the withdrawal of their letter of Messrs Stegmann, Esselen & Roos' clients on the 12th ultimo.

I will now pass briefly to the question of the extension of the period of registration to the end of November. My Association asserts emphatically that this decision has taken place at the last moment, and the statements made by no less than three Cabinet Ministers support my Association's contention. If any further confirmation be needed, it will be found in a circular issued to Resident Magistrates throughout the Colony from the Colonial Secretary's Office on the 16th ultimo and signed by the Registrar of Asiatics, stating that Resident Magistrates should inform Asiatics that "it has been decided that the period for applications for registration, which expires on the 31st instant, cannot be extended", and that all Asiatics resident in the different districts should be instructed to apply for registration on or before that day at the Old Dutch Church, Von Brandis Square, Johannesburg. There is no questioning the definiteness of these instructions, and it is quite obvious that the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, finding that the number of applications made at

Johannesburg from the whole [of the] Transvaal did not exceed 25, decided, at the last moment, to extend the time for another month. It will thus be seen that Government Notice No. 1907 published in the *Gazette* of the 4th ultimo made no provision whatever for an extension of time during which Asiatics who had not previously registered could make application under the new law.

One last matter to which my Association desires to draw attention is that, so far from each town having the time marked out for Asiatic residents therein alone to make application, it was advertised that all Asiatics in towns previously visited by the Registration Officers could make application at the town newly advertised, if they had not previously done so, and, whilst Johannesburg was the last place advertised where Asiatics from all over the Transvaal should register and nowhere else, my Association charges the officials of the Registrar's Office with receiving clandestine applications at Pretoria from a few cowards who furnished affidavits fraudulently and falsely representing that they had been prevented from making application before owing to intimidation on the part of certain unnamed persons. My Association desires to make it known once more that, in this struggle, British Indians are fighting with open hands. There is no need for them to resort to subterfuge or mendacity. It has been urged against British Indians that they, like all other Eastern peoples, suffer from a duplicity that has been termed "oriental". It is difficult indeed to characterise the strange distortion of facts contained in your correspondent's telegram.

[*I am, etc.,*

ESSOP ISMAIL MIA

CHAIRMAN,

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION]

Indian Opinion, 9-11-1907

240. MR. LABISTOUR

Mr. Labistour's sad disappearance from our midst leaves Natal the poorer on that account. The Natal Bar has lost in him a clever and genial member, the Government a faithful servant, and Indians a true friend. The tribute paid by the Bench was well deserved. The Indians cannot but recall with gratitude the brave stand Mr. Labistour took up regarding the Dealers' Licenses Act, when he was a Town Councillor.[1]

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Chamberlain", 31-12-1898 & "The Dealers Licenses Act Redivivus: II", 17-9-1907

And it may be added that, though the public are not aware of it, it was Mr. Labistour who, whilst he was firm in his policy as to regulation of Indian immigration, by his tactfulness saved many an Indian trader from ruin by declining to prosecute those Indians who, although they were old traders, were by reason of trade jealousy deprived of their licences.

Indian Opinion, 9-11-1907

241. "ID" GREETINGS

We offer *Id* greetings to our Muslim readers. Man hopes for many things, but he cannot get everything he wants. In like manner, though we wish a happy *Id* to all our Muslim brethren, so far as we know, it is the divine law that the *Id* will bring prosperity only to those who have observed the Ramzan month properly. We have gathered that merely keeping the fast cannot be considered sufficient for a proper observance of the Ramzan. The fast is a discipline of the mind as well as of the body. That means that, if not all through the year, at least during the Ramzan month, all the rules of morality should be fully obeyed, truth practised and every trace of anger suppressed. We assume that our greetings will bear fruit particularly in the case of those who have done all this.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-11-1907

242. HAPPY NEW YEAR

Just as we wish a happy Id to out Muslim brethren, we also wish that the New Year may bring prosperity to our Hindu readers. This is our first issue after the New Year Day. We observe that in the Transvaal, in fact in the whole of South Africa, Indians suffer many hardships. As their spirit of patriotism has grown stronger in consequence of these hardships, they have come to pay more attention to their country, and to some extent their thoughts are also running in the direction of religion.

The Hindu is seen to be more deeply absorbed in Hindu religion, and likewise the Muslim in Islam, and other Indians in their own religions, which is the only right thing. It is our firm belief that, if India is to prosper, it can only be along this path. If the people of different religions grasp the real significance of their own religion, they will never hate the people of any religion other than their own. As Jalaluddin Rumi has said, or as Shri Krishna said to Arjun, there

are many rivers, and they appear different from one another, but they all meet in the ocean. In the same manner, there may be many religions, but the true aim of all is the same, and that is to help one to see *Khuda* or *Ishvar*. Hence, if we look to the aim, there is no difference among religions. We said above that the New Year might bring prosperity to the Hindus. But just as it is obvious that the Id will bring prosperity only if a certain condition is fulfilled, so also can the New Year benefit a man only when a particular condition is satisfied. After saying all this, there is no need to point out what those conditions are.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-11-1907

243. A WORD TO THE WISE

There is a proverb among us that a word to the wise is enough. The signs that we see on every side indicate that, if we fight to the last, we shall win. Even today we have as good as won. But we shall succeed in being able to live in the Transvaal with honour. We saw the comments of *The Friend*.[1] We know that the time-limit has been extended to cover November. This shows the weakness of the Government. Those whites who rarely referred to the Indian question now talk only about that. A journal like *The Leader* warns the Government that it should exercise patience, bear in mind British principles, realize its responsibility and do justice to Indians.

While, on the one hand, we see these encouraging signs, on the other, the time is approaching for a real test of Indians. It is said that we are only clever at talking. It is also charged against us that we show all our enthusiasm in the beginning. It now remains to be seen how we behave at the critical moment. If we do not exert ourselves to the utmost during the last stage, all that we have done so far will have been in vain. The struggle that has offered itself to the Indians, unasked, will not come again. If we fail to take advantage of such a rare opportunity,[2] we shall never get it again in future. The struggle both does and does not involve a risk. Those who cling to money will

[1] *Vide* " *The Friend* of Bloemfontein Once Again to Succour of Transvaal Indians", 2-11-1907

[2] The Gujarati proverb used by Gandhiji refers to the foolishness of a person going away to wash his face when Lakshmi (the Goddess of wealth) approaches him to place the auspicious red mark on his forehead as a token of her favour.

naturally see a risk. But those who are servants of the country, who are true to their word, will not see the slightest risk. The law does not exist for such persons. They will not have been defeated just because the law is not repealed in spite of their fighting it. They will prove their worth a hundred per cent. They will enjoy the same esteem wherever they go. Unless we maintain such a spirit, there can be no success. They alone who go out to fight, determined to stake everything, return victorious. In this struggle, the real source of strength is *Khuda—Ishvar*. No one can make any conditions with Him. We cannot place trust [in Him] conditionally. We pray to God that the Indian community may fully realize this and remain true to its word till the end.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-11-1907

244. EXTENSION OF TIME LIMIT

Why has the Transvaal Government extended the time-limit for playing on the piano? The *Government Gazette* itself contains the answer to this question. It has been reported to the Government that Indians have not been able to apply for registration because of fear and for other reasons. That is why the time-limit has been extended. What can we say to an Indian making such a petition to the Government? Can he be called an Indian? Can he be called a man? Those who have made the application know that they have stated a big lie in it. No one uses threats. If threats were used in the past, have they stopped now? Pickets will continue to do their work. Those who have been pleading with the people will go on doing so. If anyone was deterred by fear in October, how will he be able to go [to the Permit Office] in November? If an extension of time-limit was desired, it could have been asked for in a straightforward manner. Even if the time-limit were not extended, those who wished to blacken their faces could have done so. However, it is useless to argue about this. One crime always leads to another. Once there is a breach in the embankment of a reservoir of water, it goes on increasing in size. Everyone who applies for registration knows that it is a crime to do so. Hence he is not ashamed or afraid of committing other crimes. Such is the degradation of those who submit to the obnoxious law.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-11-1907

245. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

HAMIDIA ISLAMIC SOCIETY

As usual, a meeting of the Hamidia Islamic Society took place on Sunday. Quite a large number of people were present. Mr. Emam Abdool Cadir was in the chair. Mr. Mahomed Khan read out the letter from Mr. Hajee Habib. It was on behalf of the Anjuman at Pretoria and offered congratulations to the Society on its work and to the pickets on their courage. Then Messrs Gandhi, Omarji Sale and M. S. Coovadia explained a few points. The meeting considered a suggestion that everyone should write to his friends all over the Colony that no one should go toPretoria during November and that, if at all it was necessary to visit it on business, none should go to the Permit Office in any case; the suggestion was accepted by all.

MEETING OF CHINESE

The Chinese hold their meeting every Sunday. This time the Chinese Consul was present. Mr. Gandhi was specially invited. He explained what had happened in November and the meeting decided to post Chinese pickets in Pretoria.

"PLAGUE" IN NOVEMBER

We saw in *Indian Opinion* of last week that the people's fear that the "plague" in the form of the Permit Office might continue in November was justified. The Government has thus, by keeping the Office open, unmistakably admitted its weakness. If General Smuts had the strength to deport Indians, he would never have extended the time limit so as to allow applications for registration to be made in November. What has happened to the notice given in October that no one would be registered after the 31st of that month? What has happened to the intimation sent everywhere that October gave the last opportunity to apply? We are asked—persuaded—to believe that General Smuts never yields. But the editor [of *Indian Opinion*] has proved to us that General Smuts has yielded under pressure on three points. The extension of time-limit beyond October is the fourth point on which he has yielded. Someone may ask what there was for General Smuts to be afraid of on this occasion. The answer to this question is quite simple. The Imperial Government must have impressed upon him confidentially that he would not be able to touch any Indian. If this inference is not correct, General Smuts must have been afraid of loss of prestige. An elephant must think a hundred times before trampling upon an ant. General Smuts believes himself to be an elephant, and we are the ants. Hence he feels ashamed to

trample upon ants.

ANOTHER INSTANCE OF WEAKNESS

I referred last week to a widespread rumour to the effect that Mr. Gandhi would be the first to be attacked, and that preparations were going on to deport everyone. I have now with me a letter bearing on this question.

CACHALIA'S CONVERSATION WITH ROOS

Mr. Cachalia writes as under:

> I had a talk with Mr. Roos, in the course of which he informed me that the Natal Government had agreed that, when people were deported from the Transvaal, they would be put on steamers directly from the train at the Point, as arranged by the Transvaal Government. It was especially emphasized that the Government had already made the decision in any case to deport Mr. Gandhi.
>
> Who would be more fortunate than Mr. Gandhi if he should be the first to be deported? If that happens, the Indian community will only feel a fresh accession of courage rather than get demoralized. But so far the Transvaal has not acquired any such authority for deporting anyone, and it will be some time before it gets it. It is obvious that the words of Mr. Roos only reflect the Government's desperation.

WHAT IS DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PRISONER AND PERSON ACCEPTING TITLE-DEED OF SLAVERY?

It is reported that papers with eighteen finger-prints do not remain in the Registrar's Office, but are handed over to the police. The book which maintains the record of criminals will also maintain the record of these "brave" Indians. Hence, those who submit to the law come to be treated as criminals in every way. The only difference is that, while the thief comes to be treated as a criminal for stealing something, the Indian who takes out the title-deed of slavery allows himself to be treated as a criminal just out of cowardice. Which of the two is worse off may be decided by the reader himself. As we think of the eighteen finger prints, we remember a poem that we learnt in our childhood. All the eighteen limbs of the camel are crooked and bent; how can they ever be kept hidden? The Indian who gives eighteen finger-prints appears to be reduced to a similar plight.

WITHOUT ANY FUSS

In India, when the rains are heavy, the prices of vegetables go

down. Similarly, the Registrar's Office is having heavy rains, with the result that the Registrar's price has fallen. It is said that the Registrar issues registers to children without asking any questions. I see nothing wrong in this. Nowhere else is it difficult to take out a title-deed of slavery. But we must note that all this is a net to catch the prey with, and we must keep away from it. There should be no need to make any such comment. But I sometimes hear it said: Mr. So-and-so has served himself well, having managed to get himself registered. Such a thought will occur only to a person who does not understand the law and our struggle against it. If it is to our advantage to get ourselves registered under the law, then our struggle is unjustified, and it should be our duty to take out the registers. Getting oneself registered is harmful; it is sinful; it is to be shunned in obedience to our oath. That is why we do not get ourselves registered. How then can we say that one has served oneself well by gettingoneself registered? We are fighting to become men and to live as men. If someone should behave as a woman, why should we regard it as "serving himself well"? We should keep a firm hold of the idea that those who have not registered themselves are free and will remain free; they will continue in the Transvaal only if they can do so with honour. On the contrary, those who have got themselves registered have accepted permanent slavery.

"THE TRANSVAAL LEADER" TO OUR AID

There are indications that the newspapers in the Transvaal will come to our aid just as *The Friend* from Bloemfontein has done. There are many whites who even show their sympathy. Whether the newspapers come to our aid or not, the comments of the *Leader* in its issue of Monday should give us courage. I summarize them below:[1]

HOW?

The Government, in compliance with the requests of certain Asiatics, has extended the period of registration by a month. It is not known on what lines the Government intends to proceed at the end of that time. The decision to extend the period must have been taken at a late stage, since, only on the previous day, Mr. Solomon had scouted the notion of anything of the sort being done. Was nothing known of these requests for extension until the eleventh hour? Were the requests forwarded in a body on Friday? If the Government has received any acknowledgements of its action in extending the period from any of the leaders of the Asiatics, it will be wise to publish their names, so as to influence the others. As far as the public knows, there is no hint of such acknowledgement, and no modification of attitude on the part of

[1] The translation given here has been collated with the original in English.

the leading personalities. On the contrary, they assert that there is no power of deportation which can be applied against them, and in support of their view they quote the opinion of Mr. Leonard.

Even an intelligent person like Sir Raymond West holds that the law is contrary to British principles. But there remain the powers conferred by the Immigration Act. Is it beyond doubt that action taken under that Act will be unchallenged by Indians before the Privy Council? If the Government possess the power of deportation and decide to exercise it, it must deport them to the country of their origin. Will not the Government of India intervene in that case? Practically every public man with the exception of Mr. Hosken seems to be opposed to the Indians. But, looking at the question more closely, we find that the public refrains from taking an obvious way of driving the Asiatics out, namely, by not supporting them; that there is no harassment of Asiaticservants by employers; and that there are no signs that the white population in general is opposed to the Indians. The onlooker is not immediately successful in reconciling all these facts and statements. The position bristles with difficulties, and if it be necessary to consider it afresh, it is hardly necessary to say that it is the duty of all leaders to deal with it from a non-party standpoint. General Smuts and Mr. Gandhi are called upon to deal with a very complex question. Facilities of travel and other features of what we regard as civilisation have profoundly changed the relationships of East and West. The Asiatic, who formerly never dreamed of going abroad, has started doing so. He is thrifty, courteous and economical to a point the European apparently cannot attain to. We go into his countries but in dozens for his thousands; and where he can, he stops the dozens. Indeed, it is admitted by the Asiatic himself that the Transvaal is not to be called upon to permit an unchecked irruption. It is the general profession of our European population that they wish to deal fairly by the Asiatics who are already here. All that is at issue is the method. The Asiatics protest that the method adopted by the Government is unfair and degrading. Has the Government considered every alternative method? Will not photographs, signatures, etc., prove effective? Has it taken counsel with those who know the Indian character? If it needs assistance at any point, we feel certain that quite a large number of men will render it. If any steps have to be retraced, it is to be hoped that no unworthy consideration will deter the Government from doing so. The Europeans of the Colony want to prevent further Asiatic inroads, but also wish to bear in mind our responsibilities as a State of the Empire and above all the traditions common to all our nationalities, which will make intensely repugnant to us, and in the end defeat, any policy lacking justice or even chivalry

towards a weak and inoffensive people.

This excellent account contains only one error, namely, that the writer has taken for granted that our fight is only with regard to fingerprints. That error does not matter much. That a journal like the *Leader* advises the Government to retrace its steps and do justice indicates that the ship is about to change the direction. The only question is whether the Indians will exert themselves now as much as they must.

WARNING TO BARBERS

The Johannesburg Municipality has decided to make regulations for barbers; since the regulations are likely to be passed, I summarize them below:

l. The barber should keep his saloon perfectly clean and arrange for proper ventilation in it.

2. The clippers, scissors, razors, combs, brushes, etc., should always be kept clean.

3. While shaving or giving a hair-cut, the barber should put on a robe reaching up to the neck. He should have his hands properly washed.

4. In case a barber or any of his assistants suffers from a skin disease or any other contagious disease, he should not shave anyone or give anyone a hair-cut.

5. After January 1, every barber's saloon should be registered. It will be registered by the Council without any fee.

6. A sanitary inspector or physician is entitled to enter any saloon.

A copy of these regulations should be displayed in every saloon. The Council has made the following recommendations:

1. Every shelf or table should be covered with glass, marble slab, slate or tin sheet.

2. A fresh towel should be used for every customer and the neck rest should be covered every time with a fresh napkin or piece of paper.

3. Two brushes should be kept for use in shaving each one being placed in a disinfectant solution and then taken out for use by turns.

4. Soap water, soap powder or a soap stick should be used.

5. The razor should be wiped on clean paper. After use, the razor and other instruments should be kept in a disinfectant solution for four or five minutes. The disinfectant solution should be made by

mixing two teaspoonfuls of Celive[1] or Carol[1] in a quart of water or three teaspoonfuls of Eusoll in an equal quantity of water.

6. After shave, instead of an alum stick, a water spray should be used or clean cotton soaked in water.

7. A sponge should not be used at all. Cotton or some such thing should be used in its place.

8. Cotton should be used instead of rags for powdering.

9. The hair-brush should be white, and it should be washed once every day with water, soap and soda bicarb.

10. When giving a close hair-cut, the hair dropping on the neck should not be blown off by the mouth, but an air-propeller should be used.

11. The bits of hair fallen on the ground should be collected into a covered utensil instead of being swept into a corner.

The regulations and suggestions given above should be noted by every barber. It is not merely that anyone ignoring the regulations will be fined; it should be admitted that it is the duty of the barber to observe such cleanliness. In India, owing to the carelessness of barbers or their lack of cleanliness, people get infected with eczema, scabies, etc. It will be of advantage to the barbers to observe the regulations givenabove they will then be regarded to have received an education that is real and useful. All this requires no expenditure, one has only to be keen on it.

OFFICIAL EXPLANATION

The Government has given an explanation why the time-limit was extended to November. The explanation itself proves the Government's guilt. If it had not felt concerned, where was the need to extend the time-limit to November? The Government has given the reason that, since there was no other work in November, a favour was done to the Asiatics [by extending the time-limit]. This is pointless. For, the Government knew that there were to be no arrests in November. Moreover, if what the Government says is true, why were police constables sent to every house? It is also to be noticed that the Government has now stopped talking about the application by Indians. This absurd explanation is intended to answer the criticism in the *Leader*. The *Leader* had asked for the names of the leading men who had made the application. But there are no such names. How, then, can they be supplied by the Government? The Government concludes the explanation by saying that the Act will definitely be

[1] These appear to be trade names of disinfectants.

enforced from December onwards. How often will it give this warning? Like the shepherds [in the fable], the Indian community has stopped being afraid of the all-too-frequent cry of "tiger". It is true that, when the real tiger came, no one believed it. But there will be no need to be afraid even when the Government-tiger does in fact come. For, the Indian community has torn to pieces and devoured the tiger in the form of imprisonment or deportation. Let the Government-tiger come as often as it wants.

WHITES ARE YIELDING

The *Rand Daily Mail* reports that it was made emphatically clear by Mr. Gandhi and other Indians at the time of the mass meeting in Pretoria that the Indian community would never agree to give finger-prints. This fact should add to the courage of Indians; for, both the Government and the whites are now seriously considering how this knotty question can be resolved, and hence they are trying to understand what we want. Though we have expressed strong resentment at having to give finger-prints, and the compulsion to give finger-prints has given an impetus to our struggle, we must all emphasize, while talking to everyone, that this struggle is not about giving or not giving finger-prints but that it is a struggle for the honour and dignity of the Indian community. The Government wants to knock us down, and we do not want to be knocked down. It has passed a law to enslave us, and we shall not submit. to it so long as we are alive; such is the meaning of this struggle.

REGRET AT PIETERSBURG

Mr. Gani Ismail and Mr. Hasan Mahomed Kala write from Pietersburg that both of them feel extremely sorry for having made the application for new registers in Johannesburg, that their remorse knows no bounds, and that the thought of their plight when the law comes into force gives them a stab in the heart. These are the words that both these Indians have used. Besides, they say that they have got only the receipt, but not the title-deed of slavery. They want to know if there is any way of withdrawing the application. If they really wish to do so, I can tell both the gentlemen that it is a very simple matter. Just as Mr. Chang Tong (a registered Chinese) had flung back the register issued to him, so also should the application that has been made be withdrawn. If one does not wish to accept the deadly register, there is a very simple way [of rejecting it]. To get the register, they will have to travel again to Pretoria, and give a thumb-impression on the register. The two gentlemen can refuse to do either of these things. They will then remain free. They are not bound to go to receive the

register. If they do not go, they will as a matter of course remain without the title-deed of slavery. I very much hope that their remorse is real, and not merely a superficial boiling-over. If it is in fact real, other Indians, too, will take courage from it. I advise both of them to remember the example of Mr. Sheikh Mahomed Essak.[1]

COWRARD'S FRIEND SHIP IS HARMFUL

I hear that, in July, Mr. Ismail Hajee Amad Kodtha had sent telegrams to the Memons from Mafeking to remain firm and not to submit to disgrace, and encouraged them to be bold. The same gentleman went to Pretoria and, having taken out the title-deed of slavery, attained immortality in this paper. If such a braggart goes on sending brave telegrams, who will be inspired by such telegrams, and how? This instance deserves to be noted by every Indian in the mofussil areas. One must always keep in mind what Mr. Ali Khamisa used to say before he became a slave. Whenever anyone from outside Pretoria advised us to have courage, Mr. Khamisa would quote the sentence: "Those who are not involved in the struggle, pose to be brave people." Persons sending telegrams from Durban should learn this proverb by heart: let them take care that *clay*[2] does not turn into dust.

STRONG REPLY BY ESSOP MIA

Mr. Essop Mia has written a strong letter to the *Leader* and *The Star* in connection with General Smuts' explanation. I shall give a translation of it next week. He has proved in it that the lies of the Government have exceeded all limits.

SERVED RIGHT!

From among those who had applied for the title-deed of slavery in Johannesburg, one Konkani and one Madrasi have already received notices to leave the country.

SENTENCE OF IMPRISONMENT ON DAYALJI AND APPEAL AGAINST IT

There was a case against Dayalji Pragji Desai for assaulting Govind in which judgment has now been given by the magistrate of the court at Pretoria. Mr. Desai has been sentenced to four months' imprisonment with hard labour. He has filed an appeal against it.

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter",21-9-1907.

[2] Here a pun has been made on a Gujarati word which means clay or earth and also a brave man.

BLACKLEGS

Names of persons registered up to Saturday last: [30] from Pretoria, [16] from Pietersburg, [3] from Louis Trichardt, [3] from Middelburg, [4] from Potchefstroom, [5] from Standerton, and [l] from Johannesburg.

PITIABLE CASE

A Portuguese Indian, named Miranda, was found to have been without a permit and ordered to leave the Transvaal before October 10. The period of notice having expired, he was again produced in court last Saturday. The accused stated that he had no money for leaving the Transvaal and so he could not go away. The magistrate held him guilty and sentenced him to one month's rigorous imprisonment, and told him to leave the Transvaal within seven days of his coming out of gaol, failing which, he was threatened with a further sentence of six months' rigorous imprisonment. This is indeed a pitiable case. Now, he should defy the Government and go to gaol again and again. Then alone will the Government come to its senses. Needless to say that, if we do not defeat the Government by remaining firm in this struggle till the end, the Indians in the Transvaal will be doomed for ever to such hardships.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-11-1907

246. LETTER TO "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"

The *Leader* of Johannesburg has published the following letter from Mr. Gandhi:[1]

Sir,

In your leading article, in today's issue, on the Asiatic Registration Act, you have imputed to the British Indian Association a statement to the effect that nearly the whole of the four hundred men said to have been registered had no right to be in the Transvaal. I am not aware of any such statement having been made by any official of the Association. I know that some of our pickets did make some such statement, but that was mere bravado. The chief picket, Mr. Naidoo, immediately corrected it, but the correction did not appear in your report. The official statement made by the Association is that four men at least who, according to the interpretation of the law put upon it

[1] For the original letter in English, *vide* "Letter to *The Transvaal Leader*", 1-11-1907 with which the translation given here has been collated.

by the Government, have no right to be in the country have applied for and probably received registration certificates. The Association does not even consider these men to be not entitled to their certificates.

If the Government keep the Office open for receiving applications, I must respectfully decline to consider it as a graceful concession, as it would be, in the opinion of the majority of Indians, a confession of weakness on the part of the Government. The British Indian Association, in all humility and in obedience to a higher call, has challenged the Government to do its worst. We do not require the registration pin-pricks. It has been stated that the pickets kept Indians away from the plague-spot; (and that was the reason why the time-limit was extended) the pickets, however, will continue to exercise the same vigilance in Pretoria also.

You ask what can be gained by the Indian opposition in the teeth of General Smuts' threat and the refusal of intervention by the Imperial Government. So far as I am aware, in the last resort, Indians have not pinned their faith either to intervention from the Imperial Government or to recognition of the principles of humanity by General Smuts. Though the effort now being made by the Indian community is undoubtedly calculated, if successful, to give them a status in the Colony, they are fully aware that they may lose their all in the struggle. But, if that happens, which I do not believe, Indians will shine with a new light, like gold tested in fire, which will be a gain in itself. As between that gain and allthat General Smuts and his Act can give to the Indian community, I have no hesitation in asking my countrymen to prefer the former at all costs. You will then see that the sanctioning of the Immigration Restriction Bill or any other harsher measure will not turn the community from the straight and narrow path. If it does, and I do not say that it will not, then every Indian knows that there is a precipice on either side.

The following is the substance of the article in the *Leader* of November 1:

> Though October is over, only about 400 persons out of a total of 8,000 have registered. According to the British Indian Association, nearly the whole of this 400 are men who have no right to be in the Transvaal. There are 1,100 Chinese in the Transvaal, out of whom only two have registered, and these two are also half-caste. The Government is quite firm in spite of such a large number of persons having refused to register. In view of the difficulties in the way of registration, such as intimidation by pickets, it was both wise and kind to have

extended the time-limit. Since, rightly or wrongly, the Act is on the Statute-book, we think it will be better if the Indians submit to it. In view of the Prime Minister's reply in Parliament refusing to intervene, and the known attitude of General Smuts on the question, what does the Indian community expect to gain by continuing its resistance?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-11-1907

247. LETTER TO GENERAL SMUTS

The monster petition, along with the forms containing the signatures, has been dispatched to the Colonial Secretary, with a forwarding letter by the Chairman of the British Indian Association, Mr. Essop Mia, a summary of which was reproduced under "Late News" in the last issue. We now give the letter in full:[1]

Sir,

I have the honour to forward, by parcel post, the petition of the British Indians throughout the Transvaal, in connection with the Asiatic Registration Act, and herewith a copy of the instructions issued to the canvassers.

When the forms were distributed through the Colony, the letter addressed to the Government on behalf of certain Indians, asking for a modification of the regulations framed under the Act, was still unanswered and the letter not withdrawn. But though since then Messrs Stegmann, Esselen and Roos' clients have not received a reply to their satisfaction, and although they have therefore withdrawn the letter, the committee of my Association desires me to forward the petition, as it embodies the sentiments of those who have signed it. In the humble opinion of my Association, the petition forms a complete vindication of the attitude adopted by it, and shows that it is representative of the vast majority of Indians in the Colony. The petition has been ready for some time, but my Association delayed its presentation, in order to test the action of the community during the period that the Registration Office remained open in Johannesburg.

There are 4,522 signatories to the petition, and they are drawn from 29 towns, villages and districts in the Transvaal. The following is the analysis according to the centres: Johannesburg, 2,085; Newclare,

[1] For the original letter in English, *vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 1-11-1907. It is reproduced here with some changes needed to bring the text into conformity with the Gujarati version.

108; Roodepoort, 136; Krugersdorp, 179; Germiston, 300; Boksburg, 129; Benoni, 91; Modderfontein, 51; Pretoria, 577; Pietersburg and Spelonken, 90; Vereeniging, 73; Heidelberg, 66; Balfour, 14; Standerton 123; Volksrust, 36; Wakkerstroom, 12; Piet Retief, 3; Bethal, 18; Middelburg, 29; Belfast, Machadodorp, and Waterval, 21; Barberton, 68; Potchefstroom, 114; Ventersdorp, 12; Klerksdorp, 4l; Christiana, 24; Lichtenburg, 7; Zeerust, 59; Rustenburg, 54; Ermilo, 2.

The following, then, is the religious and provincial classification: Surtis, l,474; Konkanis, 141; Memons, 140; Gujarati Hindus, 1,600; Madrassis, 991; Northerners, 157; Parsees, 17. In order to avoid a separate classification for the Sikhs and the Pathans, they have been included among the Gujaratis, if Hindus, and among the Surtis, if Mahomedans. The Christians have not been separately classified as they are nearly all Madrassis, and are not more than 200 in all.

With the exception of the Memons, there are hardly any abstentions, but the task of reaching every Indian in the isolated parts of the Transvaal—as, for instance, farms, etc.—has been beyond my Association during the time that was allotted for the canvassing of signatures. Canvassers, who were in all cases responsible and representative men, have reported that a large number of Indians have already left the Transvaal. It is common knowledge that nearly 13,000 permits had been issued to British Indians before the struggle commenced in September, 1906. Today the British Indian population of the Transvaal, according to the information at the disposal of my Association, does not at the outside exceed 8,000, but it is probably nearer 7,000 than 8,000, the rest having preferred to leave the country rather than be reduced to slavery. My Association is aware thatpressure was brought to bear by white employers on most of those who have registered, excepting a few Memons. Moreover, according to the information received by my Association, no more than 350 Indians have applied for registration throughout the Transvaal during the period from July l to October 3l, and that 95 per cent of these applicants are drawn from the Memon section.

In conclusion, my Association begs to draw the attention of the Government to the intensity of the feeling of the community represented by my Association against the Asiatic Law Amendment Act. In taking up the attitude the community has felt called upon to adopt, there has been no intention of defying the Government; rather, it is a proof of the community's intense sense of the wrong done to it. This sense of injury is so deep that the community has felt compelled to prepare for undergoing a course of suffering which passive resistance, as understood by British Indians, involves.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-11-1907

248. TRIAL OF RAM SUNDAR PUNDIT[1]

[GERMISTON,
November 11, 1907]

Mr. Gandhi said that, whilst he did not wish to oppose the application for a remand, he informed the Court that, so far as Mr. Pundit was concerned, there was no defence to be offered, but that facts in justification only were to be brought to the notice of the Court. The Pundit would admit that he was in the Colony without a permit. His client was most anxious that the case should be finished without delay. In any case, he had already been in custody for four days and, although scores of Indians had offered to bail him out, the Pundit refused to be bailed out. If, therefore, the case was remanded, Mr. Gandhi suggested that the Pundit should be released on his own recognisance. To this the Court agreed.

Indian Opinion, 16-11-1907

[1] Ram Sundar Pundit was the first Indian to be prosecuted under the Asiatic Act. He was arrested on November 8 for "unlawfully entering and remaining in the Transvaal", after the expiry of his temporary permit. It was suggested to the Asiatic Department that his arrest would produce a salutary effect on Indians. This was the first case to be instituted under the Asiatic Law Amendment Act and was brought before the Assistant Resident Magistrate. The Public Prosecutor having asked for "a remand" to enable him to summon the Registrar of Asiatics, Gandhiji put in this plea. *Vide* also *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XVIII.

The Transvaal Ieader, 12-11-1907, reported Gandhiji as having said that Ram Sundar Pundit "considered himself innocent of any offence and was prepared to fight the case and therefore would duly appear when called upon to do so".

249. INTERVIEW TO "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"[1]

[GERMISTON,
November 11, 1907]

Mr. Gandhi informed me that it[2] was against the religion of Indians—Mohamedans especially—because it took away the personal liberty of every Asiatic coming within the meaning of the Act, the result being that, instead of his being the creature of God only, he became the creature of any official appointed under the Act, and a man believing in God would never even dream of submitting to an Act which really enslaved him.

Now, religion comes more into play because all Indians are bound by a solemn oath not to accept the Registration Act, as it is opposed to their religion, and every Indian, therefore, would be doing violence to his conscience if he now, for any material advantage he might gain, were to accept the Act. Consequently, the priest has actively interested himself in seeing that the people do not register, and that rather than look to the things on earth, they look to those from above. This accounts for his (Ram Sundar Pundit) having acted as chief picket when the Asiatic Registration Office was [kept] open in Germiston, picketing having been a purely persuasive act.

The Transvaal Leader, 12-11-1907

250. TRIAL OF RAM SUNDAR PUNDIT[3]

[GERMISTON,
November 14, 1907]

Cross-examined by Mr. Gandhi, the witness[4] said that the date of the accused's understanding was the 28th August, 1906, since when several extensions of his permit had been granted, because witness was assured, and believed, that the accused was only here to pursue the office in respect of which he was allowed to remain in the Colony.

[GANDHIJI:] Have you any reason to doubt that he is, and has continued to be, a priest?

[WITNESS:] There are priests and priests and priests preach. Whether a priest is

[1] Gandhiji was interviewed by a correspondent of *The Transvaal Leader*, after Ram Sundar Pundit's release at the conclusion of the first hearing of the case.

[2] The reference is to registration.

[3] *Vide* "Trial of Ram Sundar Pundit", 11-11-1907

[4] Montford Chamney, Registrar of Asiatics

a Christian, Mahomedan, Hindu or belongs to any other persuasion, I consider he is a desirable, so long as he continues to preach his doctrine; but when he preachesother doctrines—I will not say sedition—and resorts to methods for inciting his people to violence, he becomes a person other than the one I understood I was allowing to enter this Colony.

WHAT HE PREACHED

Have you any proof that he has preached anything but his religious doctrine?

I believe he has, and it is because of that belief that I refused to renew the permit.

You say you believe he has acted other[wise] than as a priest?

I did not say that.

You have just said that you had grounds for believing that he was preaching other than religious doctrines. Have you sufficient grounds for that belief?

I have had complaints both from white and coloured people.

Have you ever warned him with reference to these complaints?

Certainly not

When did you receive the complaints?

I cannot remember the exact dates, but it was in respect of the registration of Asiatics.

Can you produce the complaints?

I certainly will not.

Then, Mr. Chamney, you positively decline to produce the complaints?

I positively decline to disclose to you the names of the persons who have complained.

In response to the request made by Mr. Gandhi, witness produced a petition, dated the 28th September last, which he had received from the Indians of Germiston, asking him to extend the accuser's permit, which was about to expire, and stating that the accused devoted himself solely to the work of the temple and his religious duties.

You did not consider that petition to be sufficient inducement to extend the permit?

No, I did not, in view of the reports I had in my possession.

You admit the accused bought the Hindu Temple at Germiston?

I don't know anything about it. He came on a few weeks' permit, and we extended that permit for over a year, and I don't know what he did.

And you would probably have extended to the end of all time but for this new Act?

Very probably.

When you talk of "sedition", what do you mean?

I specially said that I did not refer to sedition.

Then, what did you mean by your reference to his departure from his religious duties? Did you mean his preaching to the people not to submit to the Registration Act?

I cannot answer hypothetical questions.

You know he has preached against submission to the Asiatic Act. Has that been an ingredient?

The answer is "Yes", but I qualify it.

Have Mahomedan priests received extensions of their permit?

Yes, and Christians and others, too.

You mean Asiatics?

When I speak of Christians, you must understand, Mr. Gandhi, that I mean Assyrians.

The Magistrate remarked that it was not so much a question of what Mr. Gandhi understood, but of what the Court understood.

MR. CHAMNEY'S METHODS

Witness explained that, when a priest applied for a permit to enter the Transvaal to preach the Gospel, he (witness) never put any difficulties in his way; but Assyrians and Mahomedans came in such numbers that he had been requested to restrict the granting of permits. The Government had no objection to grant temporary permits to such priests, provided they carried out the conditions under which they were granted.

Have you received any complaint about him from the Germiston Indians?

I understand by "Germiston Indians" you mean the Indians of Germiston?

Yes.

Then I have.

Have you investigated the complaints?

Certainly.

Have you ever heard the accused in answer to these complaints?

No, certainly not.

So that you have condemned him unheard?

I have got his letter. Do not forget that!

Then produce it.

I have already done so.

But that letter is not in answer to any complaints?

I did not say it was.

Then it is as I say, you have condemned him unheard?

I allowed him to enter the Transvaal under certain conditions, which he has failed to carry out.

Have you ever informed him of that?

I tell him now.

After he is hanged?

No, not after he is hanged. I do not like that remark.

The witness then read a letter, dated the 9th October last, which he had written to the accused, notifying to him that he must leave the Colony immediately.

Mr. Gandhi: That does not answer my question at all.

It is my answer.

This closed the case for the prosecution . . .

THE DEFENCE

. . .PUBLIC PROSECUTOR: The accused had not had anything to do with the pickets?

MR. GANDHI: I admit he was the chief picket....

. . . Mr. Gandhi then addressed the Court. He admitted that a conviction, as the law stood, was bound to follow, but he urged that this was one of the cases in which an expression from the Bench was necessary. He cited the case of Rex *vs*. Bhabha, in which the Supreme Court had expressed strong opinion against the manner of administering the Peace Preservation Ordinance. His client was not prosecuted because he did not hold a permit, but, as was quite evident, because he had dared to hold strong views about the Asiatic Act and had not hesitated to place them before his countrymen. If that was a crime, then the majority of Indians were guilty equally with the accused. Ram Sunder Pundit, rightly or wrongly, believed that it was a part of his duty as a preacher to place the real facts about the Act before his countrymen. The religious objection went far beyond finger-prints and giving the wife's name. The Pundit had preached, because, in his opinion, as in the opinion of every self-respecting Indian, the Act took away all manliness from Indians if they submitted to it. He considered that, in view of what the priest had done, instead of deserving censure, he was entitled to praise. He asked the Court to believe the accused when he said that there was no truth in the complaints which had never seen the light of day, and of the nature of which, even to the day of trial, the accused knew nothing. The accused knew the consequences of disobedience to the Registrar's order, but, in his own words, he had a call of higher duty in obedience to which he was before the Court to suffer imprisonment or worse.[1]

Indian Opinion, 23-11-1907

[1] Ram Sundar Pundit was sentenced to one month's imprisonment.

251. RESOLUTION AT MASS MEETING[1]

[GERMISTON,]
November 14, 1907]

Impromptu Mass Meeting British Indians held Germiston after sentence against Ram Sundar Pundit, only Hindu priest, under Asiatic Registration Act, resolved approach. His Majesty King-Emperor grant protection against oppression under which innocent Indians groaning. Pundit has preferred gaol to sacrifice of principle. Thousands ready do likewise.

Indian Opinion, 23-11-1907

252. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

JOHANNESBURG,
November 14, 1907

DEAR PROFESSOR GOKHALE

This will serve to introduce to you Mr. Ameeroodeen Mahomed Hoosen Fajandar[2], who has been appointed, together with four other Indians, as a delegate to represent the Transvaal Indians at the forthcoming session of the National Congress. Mr. Fajandar is a well-known merchant of the Transvaal and of long standing. I trust that you will be good enough to secure for him every facility for placing our case before the Congress and to give him the benefit of your advice and guidance.

I am,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten original signed by Gandhiji: G.N. 4108

[1] Gandhiji addressed a mass meeting after Ram Sundar Pundit's trial was over. The resolution, drafted in the form of a cable evidently to be sent to the S.A.B.I. Committee, was presumably drawn up by Gandhiji. It was also resolved to send congratulatory telegrams to the Pundit's family and to close stores and suspend all business the next day.

[2] The original has "Vazindar".

253. TRIAL OF PICKETS

[PRETORIA,
November 15, 1907]

Gavarishanker Vyas, Sharfoodeen, Govind Prag and Frank Lutchman were charged on the 15th instant with the crime of assault, or inciting to the commission of an offence in that upon (or about) the 13th day of November 1907, and at (or near) Pretoria in the said District, the accused did each and all or one or other of them wrongfully and unlawfully assault one Lutchman, an Indian there residing and did then and there gather round him and arrest his progress, thereby preventing him from proceeding to the Indian Registration Office as desired by him (or alternately). At the same time and place, the said accused did each and all or one or other of them wrongfully and unlawfully incite the said Lutchman to refrain from applying for registration as required by Sections 1, 2 and 8 of Act 2/1907[1], by threatening the said Lutchman that if he did register, he would be assaulted and have his face blackened. The accused pleaded not guilty, and were defended by Mr. Gandhi. Mr. Graham conducted the prosecution. The Court was crowded with Indians and many could not gain admission.

The complainant said that the accused spoke to him outside the Registration Office, and said that their people were not taking out permits and advising him to consult those who were wiser than himself. The accused had never assaulted him.

Mr. Graham asked that the witness I [Lutchman] be treated as a hostile witness, but Mr. Gandhi objected. The objection was noted, and the witness said that he was taken to the Charge Office and there he was asked by Mr. Cody if the accused had assaulted him, and he said, "No". Mr. Cody said that he had arrested the accused, and when the witness asked, "Why?" he was told that it had been his (witness') wish. Witness said that was not so. He said "They are of my nationality and ought not to be arrested. I came for a pass, and when I get it I shall go. They did not assault me."

BY MR. GANDHI: He came to Pretoria to get a pass because he had been told by a white man that he would be sent away if he did not. The white man had taken his documents and sent them to Mr. Cody. He was a washerman at Witbank. He was afraid of the Government in his heart, and that was why he came here. He was taken to the Registration Office by two white men who met him at the station...

Cross-examined by Mr. Gandhi, witness[2] said he was instructed by

[1] The original has "Act 20/1907".

[2] Alfred Anderson, Warder, Central Convict Prison. He had deposed that, on instructions from the Governor of the gaol, he had gone to the railway station and met the complainant who had told him that he had come to register, but the accused had threatened to punch him.

Superintendent Betts to meet Lutchman at the station and escort him to the Registry Office, and if he (Lutchman) was molested to report the matter. Witness knew Hindustani well. He saw no assault take place.

Mr. Graham closed his case, and Mr. Gandhi at once asked for the discharge of the accused. Mr. Graham had said that he could not support the assault charge and must rely on the incitement charge. Mr. Gandhi said he had no case to meet.

MR. MELLOR[1] (smiling): Do you support this charge, Mr. Graham?

MR. GRAHAM: As a matter of fact I don't press the charge. I don't think the case is strong enough.

MR. MELLOR: Tell them they are discharged.[2]

Indian Opinion, 23-11-1907

254. LETTER TO "INDIAN OPINION"[3]

JOHENNESBURG,
November 15, 1907

TO

THE EDITOR

INDIAN OPINION

SIR,

May I be allowed to bring to the notice of the public some very painful facts which came to light during the course of Ram Sundar Pundit's trial[4] on Thursday?

The Registrar of Asiatics admitted that it was a rule of his Office to issue temporary permits to priests, the tacit understanding being that, so long as they only restricted themselves to the priestly vocation, the permits should be extended, in the Registrar's words, "to the end of time". He then stated that the Hindu priest had added something to the priestly vocation, which in the Registrar's estimation, disqualified him for the right to extension. It was with difficulty that I was able to ascertain that that "some thing" included the priest's preaching against the Asiatic Act. His other misdemeanour was darkly hinted at, but the Registrar point-blank refused to disclose the nature of the complaints or the names of the complainants. He admitted that the

[1] Assistant Resident Magistrate

[2] Later the pickets were garlanded and taken in a procession to Vyas's house where A. M. Cachalia, M. L. Desai, chief picket, Gandhiji and others spoke in praise of the brave stand taken by the pickets.

[3] A Gujarati translation of this appeared in *Indian Opinion*, 23-11-1907.

[4] *Vide* "Trial of Ram Sundar Pundit", 14-11-1907

priest was never given the opportunity of facing his unknown traducers or answering the complaints; in other words, he was condemned unheard. I am not aware of any precedent, except during war-time, of any such high-handed, unjust and tyrannical action. One man, who, as he admitted in the witness-box, has not the slightest knowledge of law, is utterly incapable of weighing evidence, and who can scarcely distinguish between sedition and respectful and manly opposition to a particular law touching personal liberty, possesses under the Act extreme powers over the persons of free and inoffensive British subjects. He can dictate terms on which he would allow religious preachers to remain in the country, and, if he is displeased with them, he has the power almost summarily to close temples and deprive communities of religious consolation.

And yet, Asiatics are often asked why they should object to a very simple law, whose only purpose is to identify those that are in the Colony !

Mr. Leung Quinn has brought to the public notice one tragedy. The other that was enacted at Germiston on Thursday was great enoughfor the Magistrate to remark that he could not withhold sympathy from the accused, but the court was helpless, and an innocent man had to be sacrificed on the altar of prejudice, ignorance, incompetence; and insolence of office—attributes un-British enough, surely!

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 23-11-1907

255. THE CAXT0N HALL MEETING

Mr. Ameer Ali and the Moslem residents of the United Kingdom deserve the gratitude of the Indian community in the Transvaal for their having championed their cause. It was a happy thought on the part of the Hamidia Islamic Society to send out a general letter[1] to the Indian Mussulmans. The cablegrams show that the proceedings were enthusiastic, and that the meeting was attended by many prominent Europeans. It is a curious coincidence that the meeting should have taken place on the 9th of November, the birthday of the King-Emperor. What would have been the feeling of Mr. Ameer Ali and his audience, had they known that, whilst they were pleading for justice and humanity on behalf of the

[1] *Vide* "Appeal to Indian Muslims", 19-8-1907.

down-trodden Indians in the Transvaal, that Government had already laid violent hands on an Indian priest? We are informed by Reuter that the speeches in denunciation of the Asiatic Act were punctuated by cries of "shame" and "disgraceful". One way of dismissing this important meeting from consideration is to vote it down as the opinion of ignorant people knowing nothing of the local situation. Another way is to accept this opinion as being typical of the great dissatisfaction that permeates thousands upon thousands of Indians. Interpreted in the latter sense, the resolution passed by the meeting should command the earnest and sympathetic attention of the Transvaal Government. And, yet, we feel that, unless the Imperial Government makes effective representations, the authorities in the Transvaal will turn a deaf ear to anything that may be said by Indians, no matter how influential and well-informed they may be. Be that, however, as it may, one thing the meeting has undoubtedly done, namely, that the Mussulmans from all parts of the world feel that they should not sympathise and work only for their co-religionists, but that they should also extend the scope of their activity to the Hindus. This is a good sign and it shows that we are fast approaching a time when men will work for men, irrespective of nationality or religion.

Indian Opinion, 16-11-1907

256. LAJPAT RAI'S RELEASE

LESSON FOR TRANSVAAL INDIANS

Lala Lajpat Rai and his lieutenant Ajit Singh have been released. It is true that they had to suffer banishment, but they also succeeded in getting the [Punjab Lands] Act repealed. This success is a strong proof of the effectiveness of passive resistance. Does any Indian in the Transvaal have now reason for hesitation in the face of this recent example? We hope not. On the contrary, even those who have applied, if they can grasp the significance of Lajpat Rai's success, will take the step, in case they have still the opportunity, of withdrawing their applications, i.e., of not going to receive the register. For, everyone admits that the Asiatic Act is bad. Those who have registered themselves have been trapped into slavery merely out of blind self-interest and fear of imprisonment. Lajpat's success proves that those who entertain any fears are cowardly and as good as defeated; and that those who fight are heroes and as good as victorious. The signs that we see these days also point to the same conclusion, namely, that those who are fighting have as good as won. There is only one condition, that the fight should be continued to the last, even at the

cost of imprisonment or deportation, which is also what Lajpat's example points to. Therefore, we have not the slightest hesitation in saying that, if the Transvaal Indians draw the lesson which ought to be drawn from the banishment of India's Lala and prepare themselves boldly to act accordingly, they are bound to win.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-11-1907

257. KING-EMPEROR'S BIRTHDAY

We think it was proper that telegrams of birthday greetings were sent to His Majesty King Edward. We are an ancient people. Courtesy runs in our blood. If the telegrams had not been sent, we would have been found wanting in courtesy. We have not sent the greetings specially by way of flattery, or in the hope of gaining anything in connection with the question of the [new] law. We sent the greetings because we thought that it was our duty to do so.

Even so, why should such a telegram be sent? We received three gifts on the birthday. Ram Sundar Pundit was arrested without any reason. This was an attack on religion. Though he is a Hindu, the whole community has felt shocked. Passports have been refused for pilgrimage to Mecca. Licences were refused in Johannesburg and other places. It is as if, while others are enjoying themselves, the Indian community is to be in mourning. Should we, even then, send the telegrams of greetings?

This question occurred to three former Presidents of the Natal Indian Congress, and quite justifiably. They felt that if we did want to send a telegram, we should also mention our grievances. The objection that they raised is not to be set aside lightly. It indicates how much our feelings have been hurt. Even then, it is a sign of anger. It is not the fault of the Emperor that we suffer. The remedy lies in our hands. Since we feel the pinch, a remedy will be found. That remedy is in the hands of the Transvaal Indians.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-11-1907

258. MEETING OF LONDON MUSLIMS

This meeting, which the newspapers report as having taken place on November 9 in London, was no ordinary event. Justice Ameer Ali was in the chair. Many whites were present. Even if the new law does

not confer any other benefit, there are at least signs that Hindus and Muslims will definitely come closer to one another. It was categorically stated at the meeting that the Muslims would insist on the rights of the Hindus too. The Muslims who attended the meeting were not all of them Indians. If the Muslims of India ask the right of the Hindus to be granted, it is after all their duty to do so. For, they are both children of India. But it is a matter for rejoicing that Muslims of other lands present in Britain should join in asking for these rights.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-11-1907

259. CONTRIBUTIONS FOR INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

Every year we collect contributions for the Congress. This is to be done this year too. Now that we are sending delegates to represent us, we expect that many Indians will send contributions to the Congress Fund. We shall acknowledge receipt of the same. Already, a sum of about £25 has been raised at Johannesburg. We shall publish the list of names next week.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-11-1907

260. MEMONS WHO HAVE ESCAPED

About a hundred Memons—40 from Pretoria, 27 from Pietersburg, 20 from Potchefstroom and three from Piet Retief—have escaped [disgrace]. We look upon them as great heroes. It is our request to them in brief that, without losing courage now, they should save the honour of the Memons and the Indians.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-11-1907

261. LIFE-SKETCH OF PUNDITJI

All Indians must be eager to learn the history of the Indian who has raised such a storm. We publish his photograph in this issue. Ram Sundar Pundit is 30 years of age. His father's name is Kalka Prasad. He was a priest by profession. Punditji was born in Banaras. He studied Hindi and Sanskrit in the Banaras Sanskrit Pathshala. For the last nine years he has been working as a priest in South Africa. He has

married in Natal. He has two children, a son, two-and-a-half years old, and a daughter, one year old. His family lives in Grey Town. Punditji came to the Transvaal in the year 1905. A temple was built in Germiston as a result of his efforts and the Sanatan Dharma Sabha was established. Everyone knows about his work relating to the Asiatic Law. Finally, we only wish that Punditji may live for many years and continue to render uninterrupted service to the community. [From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-11-1907

262. WHAT DID INDIA'S LALA DO?

We believe that Lala Lajpat Rai, in exile, is on a picnic. For, his object has been achieved. It was against the Punjab Lands Act that he gave a battle, and not merely for his own pleasure. That law is wrecked; then, what does it matter to Lalaji whether he lives in Mandalay or in Lahore? Many know how to be wise and discreet in speech, but people do not pay attention to all that they say. But the man who follows up his words with deeds, who abides by his promise, will be listened to by everyone, though his words may be like the words of a mad man. For this reason, we give below the substance of a speech by Lala Lajpat Rai. There are noparticularly new thoughts in it, yet they are the thoughts of a patriot suffering exile. Therefore, they are worth our attention:

> Brothers, the Government says that this land (in the Punjab) is given by it; therefore, we must acknowledge its rights. The question is: whence did the Government obtain this land? This land and the sky above have been there since the beginning [of time]. Its first occupants were the Hindus; then the Muslims came and settled there. We Hindus and Muslims are the heirs of both these. That being so, let the Government show how it can appropriate that land. It belongs to God. He has given it to us. There may be an emperor (ruling) over it; but it certainly does not belong to the emperor's servant. High-salaried officers are not our kings, but our servants. They are paid by us.
>
> We are like a sleeping lion. Finding us slumbering, some may pull our tail; some may spit upon us; but if we are conscious of our worth, then there is none who can harass us. Our enemies wish to create animosity between Hindus and Muslims; they wish to divide the Sikhs and the Hindus. Their greatest weapon is to keep us divided against one another. Everything has its own characteristic property. Water cools; fire

burns; so the property of foreign rulers is, by keeping us divided, to perpetuate their power over us. Our property must be to counteract this aim of theirs. Our first duty is that, if there is among us an Indian who is a traitor, then he should be excommunicated. We should go to the Viceroy. It is also desirable to go to England. And if we sincerely believe that, when fighting for our rights, dying and living are the same to us, then the officers will immediately say: "Yes, that land is certainly yours."

There is no other remedy for this disease. We must unite and live together; that is all. If the Government seizes anyone's land, and wishes to give it to another who is prepared to submit to the new Lands Act and if anyone from among us comes forward to buy the land by submitting to the law, then we must treat him as an enemy of the country and a traitor. If the Government seizes anyone's land, then we should take an oath not to buy that land. Let us be men; let us not become women. *If you remain firm in your oaths, you will not have to make petitions. When you swear by your scriptures or the Koran, and remain loyal to one another, there will be none in this world who will dare insult you.*

The land of India is to the Hindu a heaven; to the Muslim it is a paradise. We raise millions of tons of foodgrains; yet every day seven crores of the sons and daughters of India go hungry.

The best remedy for this disease is that we should defend our self respect and dignity. Every day thousands of people die of the plague; but he dies a true death who lays down his life for another, whether it be in gaol or outside.

We shall publish next week a letter written by Lalaji from Mandalay which is worth reading. We request our readers to go through the article given above repeatedly and apply it to the situation in South Africa.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-11-1907

263. RAM SUNDAR PUNDIT'S TRIAL IN COURT

HUGE MEETING IN GERMISTON

We have already reported in "Late News" last week that Ram Sundar Pundit was arrested on Friday, the 8th, for living in the

Transvaal without a permit. That morning, he was standing near the court in Germiston when a detective inquired his name and asked for his permit. He said he had no permit. Thereupon the detective arrested him on the spot. As soon as Mr. Polak heard of this, he went to Germiston. He saw Mr. Pundit in gaol. On being asked, he replied *that he did not at all want to be released on bail, and that he would prefer to remain in goal.*

In the gaol, the gaoler also urged Punditji to offer bail, but he refused to do so, saying that, for the sake of his community and religion, he would rather remain in gaol.

CONDITION IN GAOL

He was quite comfortable in gaol. He had all the facilities, such as a living-room, a bathroom, etc. As he himself says, he had fever when he went there. Now he is all right. Arrangements for his meals have been made by the community, and milk and fruits are being supplied to him every day. He did not wish to take anything else.

SHOWER OF TELEGRAMS

He received a number of telegrams in gaol, offering him congratulations and asking him to have courage. They were sent by the Natal Indian Congress, the Durban Anjuman-e-Islam, the Durban Memon Committee, the Hindu Dharma Sabha (Durban), the Parsi Committee (Durban), Mr. Vyas (Pretoria), and the Surat Hindu Association (Durban). In all the telegrams, Punditji was congratulated on going to gaol for the sake of religion and for the struggle of the Indian community.

CASE ON MONDAY

Expecting that the case would come up for hearing on Monday, leaders from various places had arrived. Among the gentlemen who had come, there were, from Johannesburg, Moulvi Saheb Ahmed Mukhtiar, Messrs Essop Mia, Emam Abdool Cadir, Omarji Sale, M. S. Coovadia, Jusab Ebrahim, Ahmad Moosaji, Thambi Naidoo, Polak, Mahomed Khan, Gulabbhai, Bhatt, Naranji, Nawab Khan, and Alibhai Akuji; from Pretoria, Messrs Cachalia, Pillay, Vyas and Manibhai; from Krugersdorp, Mr. Vaja; and from Vereeniging, Mr. Aswat. About 150 Indians had already collected at the entrance to the court before the case was called up. Many of them had brought garlands and bouquets with them. Mr. Gandhi had brought news at half-past ten that the case would be adjourned but that Mr. Ram Sundar Pundit was likely to be released without bail. In view of this, people were eagerly waiting on the road to receive Punditji.

Exactly at eleven o'clock, Punditji was brought into the court room. As soon as he came, the court became crowded with Indians. The Public Prosecutor asked for adjournment with a view to enabling Mr. Chamney to come from Pretoria. Mr. Gandhi said:

My client has been in custody for four days. He does not want to be released on bail. He is not going to leave the Colony. Rather, he will submit to the penalty prescribed by law. Hence, the case can proceed even today. There is no need for any witnesses from Pretoria. However, I shall raise no objection if it is desired to adjourn the case. Only, my client should be released on his personal recognizance.

The Public Prosecutor said that, since he did not know all the facts of the case, he could not agree with the suggestion that the accused might be released without bail. Mr. Gandhi said that Mr. Pundit was not a man who would abscond. It was the Government that wanted him to run away. What bail could there be for a man who would not leave the Transvaal for the sake of the community, because he had the right to remain there, even though the Government might want to drive him out?

The magistrate accepted this argument and released Punditji on his personal recognizance.

CRIES OF "HURRAH!"

Punditji received an ovation as soon as he came out. There was a shower of flowers. All shook hands [with him]. It was then decided to hold a meeting in the Location and, accordingly, everybody went towards the building of the Sanatan Dharma Sabha.

MEETING

On the proposal of Mr. Lal Bahadur Singh, Moulvi Saheb Ahmed Mukhtiar took the chair. Accommodating the guests inside the hall, the residents of Germiston themselves stood outside. Moulvi Saheb made a speech and said that Punditji deserved congratulations. He had served the whole Indian community. He had proved that gaol was indeed a palace. When the time came, he (Moulvi Saheb) too would be ready to go to gaol. It was the duty of Moulvis and priests to take the lead in such times of difficulty.

Mr. Emam Abdool Cadir said that Ram Sundar Pundit's example should put courage into the heart of everyone.

Mr. Essop Mia said that no one should in the least be afraid of the Government.

Mr. Gandhi said that, though it was just the beginning of the struggle, there was already a big gain in that Hindus and Muslims were

fighting unitedly for a public cause.

Mr. Ahmad Moosaji paid compliments to Punditji and said that he, too, would not get himself registered as long as he lived.

Mr. Manibhai proposed a vote of thanks on behalf of the Pretoria Hindu Dharma Sabha.

Mr. Thambi Naidoo said that the fight would become more exciting only when Punditji went to gaol.

Mr. Coovadia said that he had no fear whatsoever. It did not appear likely that the Government would do anything to Punditji.

Mr. Mahomed Khan said that he was proud of those who had carried on picketing, since he was himself one of the pickets.

Mr. Omarji quoted the following Gujarati verse:

"A woman should give birth to three kinds of men only, one who is generous in donations, one who is a devotee of God, and one who is brave in battle; otherwise, she better remain barren rather than have her light be dimmed."

According to this, it was a matter of credit to his mother that Punditji was a brave son.

Mr. Aswat said that everybody should realize from the example of Punditji that the Registrar's Office was a raging fire. No one should touch it.

Mr. Cachalia thanked Punditji and said that those of them at Pretoria who had not yet registered themselves would never do so.

Mr. Alibhai said that, if Kanmia pickets were not prepared to go to Pretoria, he himself would specially do so.

Mr. Vyas said that Punditji had courage enough to be prepared for anything. He had agreed to stay on in Pretoria.

Mr. Lal Bahadur Singh thanked everyone. Mr. Polak hoped that, after Mr. Pundit, it would be the turn of Moulvi Saheb.

Then, after a few more remarks, Moulvi Saheb dissolved the meeting.

Refreshments consisting of bananas and oranges, with tea and lemonade, were then served to all.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-11-1907

264. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

BRAVE TAILORS AND WHITE MERCHANT

Some of the facts of the hardships of tailors here have already been published in this paper. But the case is so important that I give a more detailed account. Mr. T. Allbret had addressed the following letter to tailors:

> It appears from the latest speech of the Colonial Secretary that those Indians who do not conform to the provisions of the new law of the Transvaal Government in respect of Indians will not be given licences and will be arrested and imprisoned, as provided for in the law. We should like, with your assistance, to avoid getting involved in any complications, and we very much regret to have to request you therefore to arrange for cash payment in respect of future transactions between us, and to settle the outstanding bills before December.
>
> It is hoped that no ulterior motive will be attributed to us. God willing, if your present uncertain condition is brought to a successful end, we shall be quite happy to have the normal business between us resumed.
>
> We tender our thanks to you for the satisfaction you have given us in your business dealings and financial transactions with us.

This is a very polite letter. Though it is not rude, it only means that those who do not get themselves registered will get no credit. Hence, the tailors were annoyed. Had they been cowards, they would have been impelled by fear to get themselves registered. Being brave, they flung back to him all his samples and wrote the following letter with 21 signatures:

> We are in receipt of your notice in Gujarati. We are very sorry to inform you that with effect from today, i.e., November 7, 1907, we do not wish to maintain any account with you. Moreover, we shall not buy goods worth even a single penny from you, for we have taken an oath not to get ourselves registered. We do notwish to violate it in any circumstances, whatever the cost. We shall pay off your outstanding credits to us at our earliest convenience.

Mr. Allbret got into a fright at this. The boycott was complete. A picket was posted at his shop to watch if anyone bought cloth from there, for, the tailors would refuse an order for stitching if such cloth

was brought to them. Thereupon, Mr. Allbret pleaded with the people and offered the following apology:

> The notice that we issued in English and Gujarati to our clients has been interpreted to mean that we want them to register, and that we would withhold credit in case they failed to do so. They have accordingly felt offended, and have called for our boycott.
>
> We need hardly say that nothing could have been further from our intention than to offend the sentiments of our customers, and we can naturally understand resentment at any pressure being put upon anyone with reference to compliance or non-compliance with the laws of the Colony. Under our Constitution, we have always believed that everyone is entitled to his own opinion. We, therefore, unreservedly withdraw the letter in question and we can only reiterate our hope that Indians will come out of their terrible struggle successfully and that they will be treated by the Government of the Colony with fairness and justice; and, as an earnest of our good faith and as a token of the good relations that have hitherto subsisted between them and ourselves, we hereby send you a cheque for £25 to help the Indian cause.
>
> With reference to the boycott, we can only trust that it will be removed, but it depends entirely upon our customers whether to deal with us or not. If they do, we shall be glad to do our best for them and to sell on the usual terms, but we state that our letter has absolutely nothing to do with the boycott. We simply wish to place ourselves right in the matter, and to show that in writing the letter we did not intend to offend anybody.

We have never heard of such a letter of apology having been written by a white. I think it is a sufficiently polite letter. This incident should raise the prestige of the tailors, and others ought to take a lesson from it. If we are not afraid of the whites, they are not likely to stop credit to us. How can they do so? Do they not want to earn [money]? I have also heard that this firm has had a business of £60,000 with Indians during the last five years, in the course of which it has lost so far only £23. If Indians are honest, they will get credit without asking for it.

MOOSA ISMAIL MIA

Mr. Moosa Ismail Mia has gone on pilgrimage to Mecca. I offer him greetings. His elder brother, Mr. Essop Mia, is engaged in the holy work of serving the community. In my view, it can be said that both brothers look after the affairs of this world and also attend to the

claims of the other world. May they always remain devoutly religious and continue to serve the community! What they are doing is far more valuable than earning millions.

TREACHERY STILL?

We hear that registers are being secretly issued in Mr. Khamisa's shop. Nine such registers were given. No applications are received, but those who have applied are given the registers.

LAW DESTROYS LIFE

A Chinese, after taking out the register, committed suicide out of shame. This has produced a feeling of revulsion. The President of the Chinese Association, Mr. Quinn, has sent the following letter to the newspapers:

> The Press has reported a Chinese suicide; Before I read the news in the morning papers, I had by our caretaker a letter placed in my hands written in Chinese and signed by the deceased. I give below a translation of the letter:[1]
>
> From Chow Kwai to the Chairman, the Chinese Association, November 10, 1907:
>
> > I am going to leave the world, but I must give a public explanation why I intend to commit suicide. Since I came to South Africa I have only been in domestic service. My dialect is quite different from that of the rest of my countrymen, with whom I have very seldom associated. My employer advised me to re-register. At first, I refused to do so, but I was informed that I would be dismissed from my employment. I thought that I should have to lose my situation. Therefore, I was obliged to re-register, but I did not know the degradation that would follow until my friend talked to me about the registration matter and showed me the translation of the law. I found that I would be treated as a slave, which would be a disgrace to myself and my nation. I was not aware of all this before. Now it is too late for me to repent. I cannot look my countrymen in the face. I hope all my countrymen will take warning from my error.
>
> Mr. Quinn comments on the letter as follows:
>
> You can well imagine my feelings on reading the letter. I immediately took up the papers and saw that the threat was carried out. My Association immediately applied for the body,

[1] The translation given here has been collated with the original in English.

and I havejust returned after performing the funeral rites. The cortege was followed by nearly 70 members of the Chinese Association.

I dismiss with utter contempt the allegation that any threat was held out to the deceased member of my community. But what is the moral of this, to us, tremendous tragedy? I must call a spade a spade. This is not an occasion when I can possibly use soft words: and I do deliberately charge the Transvaal Government with the murder of an innocent man, and this only because he was an Asiatic. The Asiatic Act has placed us in a difficult situation. It has now exacted blood. Will the humanity of the whites of the Transvaal tolerate an Act which has necessitated the tragedy I have described? Or will the public still continue to believe that the Asiatic Act is all for the best, that it is necessary for the protection of the white men of the Transvaal, and that, therefore, if the Asiatics, stupidly in their opinion, take to heart the insult that is offered by the Act, it is not their concern? Such is not the lesson that we would learn from Western civilization.

SHAHJI SAHEB

Shahji Saheb's case came up for hearing on Wednesday. Hundreds of Indians were present. Mr. Mahomed Shahboodeen tried hard to have the case withdrawn, but that could not be done. Deposing, he said that he did not want to lodge any complaint. Shahji Saheb had assaulted [him] for violating religion, and he had regarded the assault as a chastisement of a son by a father. Thereupon, the court let off Shahji Saheb with a warning.

ARREST OF VYAS AND OTHER PICKETS

Mr. Gavarishanker Vyas, Mr. Lutchman and Mr. Sharfoodeen were arrested while picketing. They have all been released without bail. They had refused to offer it. The case will be heard on the 15th. There is great excitement in Pretoria. Everyone is in high spirits. Telegrams have been sent to congratulate them.

STIR AMONG WHITES

The whites are now feeling concerned. Some of them wish to lead a deputation to the Government. It is hoped that we shall be able to give further information later.

DELEGATES TO CONGRESS

A meeting of the British Indian Association was held on Wednesday under the chairmanship of Mr. Essop Mia. Many

members were present. Messrs Fancy, Coovadia, Cachalia, Ahmad Moosaji, Moulvi Saheb Ahmed Mukhtiar, Emam Abdool Cadir and Gandhi were amongthose who spoke. Then Messrs Omar Hajee Amod Zaveri, Ameeroodeen Mahomed Hoosen Fajandar, Hajee Ebrahim Ahmed Dindar, Ahmed Saleji Coovadia, Suliman M. Cassim and Peeran Mahomed were elected delegates to the [Indian National] Congress to be held in Surat. Collection of contributions to the Congress was started at the same time. Mr. Ameeroodeen made a speech, urging a vigorous effort.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 16-11-1907

265. DIWALI CELEBRATIONS IN DURBAN

A gathering of Hindus was arranged in the building of Mr. Abdool Latif in Grey Street to celebrate Diwali[1]. The building was beautifully adorned with illuminations, etc. Music, too, was provided. After the ceremonial worship of Saraswati at the auspicious hour, Mr. Keshavlal Maharaj read out a sermon on the significance of Diwali. Ambaramji recited benedictory verses. Afterwards, a deputation of the gathering went to receive Mr. Gandhi at the station. He arrived at about 7.30 p.m. He was accompanied by Sheth Abdool Karim, Sheth Rustomjee, Sheth Dada Osman and others. Shriyut[2] Ambaramji made a powerful speech on service to the motherland. Mr. Gandhi gave an account of the condition of Indians in the Transvaal and said that, that day, it was the day of Holi[3] for the Hindus, and that there would be occasion for Diwali celebrations only when they had won the struggle. The audience was very much affected by the detailed account that Mr. Gandhi gave of the conditions of Indians in the Transvaal. The gathering was then addressed by Sheth Abdool Karim, Mr. Parsee Rustomjee and others. A collection plate was then sent round to receive contributions for the Transvaal [struggle] and a sum of more

[1] The Hindu festival of lights, celebrated at the end of the autumn harvest, with ceremonial worship of Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, and in parts of India, also of Saraswati, the goddess of learning

[2] Literally, “the prosperous one”, an equivalent of “Mr.”

[3] The full-moon day at the commencement of spring, observed with the lighting of bonfires to commemorate the miraculous escape of Prahlad whom his father, a wicked king, had sought to burn alive. In Gujarati, Holi is associated with the threatened destruction of what one cherishes. Hence the contrast between Diwali and Holi.

than £5 collected. After the distribution of prasad[1], there was some music and the gathering then dispersed.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-11-1907

266. SPEECH AT HAMIDIA ISLAMIC SOCIETY

[JOHANNESBURG,
November 17,1907]

Then, after reading out Mr. Hajee Habib's letter from Durban in which he had advised people to have courage, Mr. Gandhi gave some information about going to gaol, the strike of newspaper-vendors, and Lutchman, who was involved in the case against the pickets at Pretoria, and added that Mr. Hosken, who had attended the Pretoria meeting to argue with them, was now trying persuasion with the Government. The people in Natal were helping them, and would continue to do so. Even Sheth Peeran Mahomed of Durban would not be able to take a steamer to India. Mr. Ritch was working hard in England; he should be allowed personal expenses. Everyone should offer his contribution to the Fund that Mr. Fancy was raising for the Indian National Congress. The case of Punditji was being re-examined by General Smuts. That showed how much the Government was scared.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-11-1907

267. LETTER TO VICEROY OF INDIA

DURBAN,
November 18, 1907

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY [OF INDIA

YOUR LORDSHIP,]

We beg, with your permission, to enclose herewith copies of resolutions and a cablegram unanimously passed and adopted at a Mass Meeting held at the Congress Hall, Pine Street, Durban, Natal, sympathising with Ram Sundar Pundit, a Hindu priest, who has been sentenced to one month's simple imprisonment at Germiston, Transvaal, under the new Asiatic Ordinance.

The iniquity of this prosecution is apparent to Your Lordship and, being confident of Your Lordship's personal sympathy, we beg

[1] Offerings to God distributed to devotees after ceremonial worship

respectfully that the Government of India will extend its protection and support to British Indians in South Africa who are being subjected to humiliation and degradation. We trust that our application will be harkened to.

We have, etc.,

DADA OSMAN

M. ANGLIA

JOINT HONORARY SECRETARIES,

NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS[1]

[ENCLOSURES]

The following resolutions were passed at a Mass Meeting of Indians held under the auspices of the Natal Indian Congress on the evening of Thursday, the 14th day of November, l 907 .

The copy of the cablegram below was also passed and adopted, the meeting resolving that copies of the same be sent to His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Honourable the Colonial Secretary, Transvaal:

Resolution No. l: That this meeting of Indians, representing the Indian population of Natal, has heard with deep regret of the injustice and hardship the Transvaal Legislature are meting out to loyal British Indians.

Resolution No. 2: That this meeting resolves to send letters and telegrams of sympathy to Ram Sundar Pundit and his family, and to congratulate him upon the stand he has made to secure for himself the right of a priest to minister to the spiritual needs of his congregation. It is further resolved to suspend business [for] one day throughout Natal; this to be effected by the closing of all Indian shops and places of business on Saturday, the 16th instant, in order to more practically place on record the disabilities of the Indians in the Transvaal. This meeting also extends to the Hindu congregation its heartfelt sympathy upon being deprived of a spiritual leader and guide, and grieves to think that any Government should be so unreasonable as to indirectly interfere with the due performance of religious rites and ceremonies by depriving the Hindus of a religious guide and that copies of these resolutions be sent to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Transvaal Government, and the English and Indian Press.

Cablegram—Natal Indians respectfully protest against arrest and sentence of Ram Sundar Pundit as being undue interference with the personal liberty and religion of British Indians in a British Colony. Request intervention by Home Government for sake of Empire.

India Office Records: J. & P. 598/08

[1] In the original, the signatures appear below the enclosures.

268. SUGGESTION TO INDIANS IN TRANSVAAL

JOHANNESBURG,
BOX 6522,
November 19, 1907

Every Indian must have observed from the accounts of the Association[1] that it has very little money at present. This is a big struggle. Though much of the work is done without being paid for, some expenditure has to be incurred, and is incurred, in fact. Telegrams are sent, hundreds of letters are written, a lot of typing is done, things are printed and newspapers have to be paid for. All these are small items of expenditure but when we think of the total, it amounts to a big figure.

There have been some collections in most places, but these have not been remitted to the Association. Those who have collected contributions, and other Indians too, are required to remit the money to the Association as early as possible. A receipt will be duly sent to everyone. We expect that no one will be tardy in this matter. Contributions sent by individuals will also be accepted.

ESSOP ISMAIL MIA, CHAIRMAN,
COOVADIA, TREASURER,
M. K. GANDHI, SECRETARY

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-11-1907

269. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
November 21, 1907

MY DEAR MANILAL,

I do not think that I have ever before written you in English. Today, I must perforce do so, instead of writing in Gujarati. I am sending the *Ramayana* and verified[2] *Gita* to-day. Please have the *Ramayana* properly bound. See that it is not afterwards damaged. You should learn to use books, as well as everything[3] you have, with

[1] *Vide* "British Indian Association, Johannesburg", 26-10-1907.

[2] Versified?

[3] The original has "easy thing".

satis-faction. You should know most of the gaol verses[1] by heart. Maganlal should really coach a choir. There should be no difficulty in giving a short time now and then to such work. You can suggest it to him. Read this letter to him. Please let me know what use you are going to make of the *Ramayana*. Who is going to explain the meaning, or do you propose[2] to read the verses without understanding them?

Yours sincerely,
MOHANDAS

From the typewritten original signed by Gandhiji: C. W. 82 Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

270. LETTER TO G.K. GOKHALE

JOHANNESBURG,
November 22, 1907

DEAR PROFESSOR GOKHALE,

I have sent a letter[3] addressed to you through Mr. Ameeroodeen Fajandar, one of the delegates from the Transvaal who will attend the Congress at Surat. May I draw your attention to the fact that the struggle we are undergoing here has resulted in making us feel that we are Indians first and Hindus, Mahomedans, Tamils, Parsees, etc. afterwards. You will notice, too, that all our delegates are Mahomedans. I am personally glad of the fact. And it may also happen that there will be many Mahomedans, having South African connections, attending the Congress. May I ask you to interest yourself in them and make them feel perfectly at home? A Hindu-Mahomedan compact may even become a special feature of this Congress. The rest of the struggle you know from the papers.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the type written original signed by Gandhiji: G.N. 4109

[1] Published in Gujarati under the title *jail-na kavyo*
[2] The original has "your purpose".
[3] *Vide* "Letter to G. K. Gokhale",14-11-1907

271. LETTER TO "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before *November 23, 1907*]

[THE EDITOR
THE TRANSVAAL LEADER
JOHANNESBURG
SIR,]

I had the privilege of being present at the trial of my co-priest Ram Sundar Pundit. A thought struck me most forcibly, that there must be something radically wrong in the laws of the Transvaal. As everyone now knows, I struck Imam Kamali in the heat of the moment for what I considered was a breach of the Koranic injunctions. I was fined £5 for it, with the option of imprisonment. An unkind friend, who is good enough to describe himself as my disciple, paid the fine, and I escaped gaol. I struck again Mahomed Shahboodeen, who, in his evidence, admitted he had broken his oath on the *Koran*, and said my striking him was as from father to son. An indulgent court, therefore, let me off with the warning that I may at any time be required to come up for sentence.

Ram Sundar Pundit, who has, so far as I am aware, and I know something of him, never hurt anybody, was sentenced to be imprisoned for one month, because he did not hold a piece of paper authorising him, a British subject, to cater for the religious wants of his fellow-countrymen in a British Colony.

According to what I have always understood, if any man deserved gaol, it was I, and yet it was possible for somebody to buy what he thought would be freedom for me; whereas Ram Sundar Pundit must be shut out for one month practically from all intercourse with those whom he has been in the habit of meeting every day, and cut off from his religious work. The thought shakes me to the marrow. I feel that I am in gaol and Ram Sundar Pundit is free. May God give him peace and courage.

[*I am, etc.,*

MAHOMED SHAH]

Indian Opinion, 23-11-1907

272. PUNDITJI'S PATRIOTIC SERVICE

The service that Ram Sundar Pundit has rendered by going to gaol is such that no service by any other Indian remaining outside can equal it, however great that Indian may be. Punditji has opened the gates of our freedom. All of us can enter by that gate. The Congress President is right in saying that by going to gaol, Punditji has sanctified it. All innocent people who go to gaol make it holy.

We think Punditji and his family are fortunate. His fame has spread throughout South Africa. It will spread in India too. This is the result of real service. It is a real service, we think, that Punditji has rendered by unhesitatingly offering himself as sacrifice for the sake of the country.

What will the community do now? This question can have only one answer. If, after sending Punditji to gaol, any Indian submits to the obnoxious law, we do not think he deserves the name of man. The fight that we have taken up is not a children's game. There can be no immediate fruits of success to enjoy. What we wish to achieve is no ordinary thing. We shall have to undergo sacrifices worthy of it. We shall have to go to gaol in such numbers and till such time as may be necessary to convince the Government that we are in earnest and not merely making an outward show.

This case has proved that the Government's talk of being able to deport [people] was baseless. Weak-kneed Indians need particularly to bear this fact in mind.

The biggest gain that we see from Punditji's case is that Hindus and Muslims have become completely united. Both have realized that this work concerns all Indians. We shall be content if it is said that this has been the only gain of this struggle and of this case.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-11-1907

273. TRIAL OF PICKETS

In the case of the pickets arrested in Pretoria, we have won an unexpected success. No one had expected that they would not even be examined. During the trial, the witness for prosecution himself admitted that no one had assaulted Lutchman. This case shows that the

Government has lost its strength. It has therefore grown desperate. It is laughed at by its own newspapers.

We earnestly hope that the courage shown by the pickets will be shown by others as well.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-11-1907

274. DELEGATES TO CONGRESS

The resolution passed by the Transvaal British Indian Association to send delegates to the [Indian National] Congress deserves to be welcomed. The strong appeal that will be made at the Congress by the five prominent businessmen from here attending it cannot but have some good effect. That appeal will have been made at the right time, that is, when many Indians in the Transvaal will be enjoying the luxury of gaol.

There is a heavy responsibility on the delegates. They should carry on a vigorous campaign throughout India. Mr. Ameeroodeen, who goes after having seen things for himself here, has the heaviest responsibility. Even after the Congress is over, they will have much work to do.

We intend to publish a photograph of Mr. Ameeroodeen in the next issue.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-11-1907

275. WHEN WILL CAPE INDIANS WAKE UP?

We have repeatedly said that there is an urgent need for Indians in the Cape to wake up. We gave an account in the last issue of the efforts being made there to prevent licences being issued to Indians. In view of this, we ask the Cape Indians once again how long they will remain asleep. Only a little while ago, we were obliged to point out that the Indians must thank their own indifference for the tyranny of the Cape Immigration Act. After that, there were some signs of awakening but it seems the awakening has again subsided. In the result, while the hardships of immigration yet remain to be overcome, they find the problem of licences staring them in the face. We must say that, even for the loss of the right of appeal to the Supreme Court, Indians themselves are for the most part responsible. On that question it was necessary for the people in the Cape to take a lesson from the

conditions in Natal and put up a strong fight. But it is to be regretted that this was not done. They remained altogether indifferent while the Bill was before the Parliament. It needs to be dinned into the minds of Indians in South Africa that, having come to this country, they cannot afford to be asleep all the time. We are living here surrounded by an armed camp. All people are against us. If we remain idle and do not look after the interests of our community, we and our descendants will very likely be reduced to a miserable plight in future. Hence, we again ask our brethren in the Cape to be alert on this question from today, lest the enemies who have been giving them pin-pricks every now and then and are determined to uproot them altogether reduce them to the condition now prevailing in the Transvaal.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-11-1907

276. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

RAM SUNDAR PUNDIT'S CASE

A question has been raised whether this case was tried under the new law or the old one, but it is quite easy to decide this. The summons issued to him itself quoted Section 17 of the new law, and if that Section were not applicable, Punditji could have been defended along another line. Moreover, the readers of this paper know that, even in the letter which Punditji wrote, he had stated that he was also unable to take out a temporary permit under the new law. Hence, in my judgment, this case falls under the new law. Not only that, it is a case which very much strengthens our hands. For, it has covered many legal points. There was an attack on religion! Moreover, it has been shown how absurd was the reason for not extending the permit. And, in any case, Punditji is considered to be one of the leaders which means that they have laid hands on a leader. Besides, he is a priest and, therefore, not likely to have interfered with anyone. In view of all these facts, the case can obviously be regarded as a very strong one. That is the impression made on the minds of the whites, too.

COMMENT IN "PRETORIA NEWS"

Commenting on this, *Pretoria News* says:[1]

> There seems to be no very good reason for suddenly declining to permit the Hindus the ministrations and consolations of their religion. By all

[1] The text given here is from the original English as reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 23-11-1907.

> accounts, if Mr. Smuts carries out his threat to enforce the law, they will need these consolations to fortify them in the difficult time through which they will have to pass. It seems to us that the Government has blundered. It is a mistake to make martyrs, especially religious martyrs, and Mr. Pundit today is a religious martyr upheld by a conscientious belief that he is doing right, and supported by theapplause and admiration of his countrymen and co-religionists. Quite what the Government has gained is difficult to see.

We see now that as a result of the case against the Pundit, the sympathies of the whites, too, have been drawn towards Indians. The case is considered so important that the local newspapers have devoted much space to it.

MORE SYMPATHY

There is a letter in the newspapers by Mr. Phillips, who is a prominent personality in Johannesburg, is himself a priest and President of the Association of Clergymen; the letter is worthy of note. He welcomes the offer of voluntary registration by Indians and recommends its acceptance by the Government. We reproduce the letter[1] elsewhere.

Further, Mr. MacIntyre writes in the *Leader* that here only criminals are required to give ten finger-prints, and that if the Government were to abandon the idea of ten finger-prints, there would be an annual gain to it of £500. Thus, we are receiving support from all sides. If voluntary registration is accepted and the taking of ten finger-prints is dropped, we get all that we ask for.

CASE AGAINST PRETORIA PICKETS

Commenting on this case, *Pretoria News* writes as under:

> The Government scored nothing over the case of Ram Sundar Pundit, and it scored less over the arrest of certain pickets in Pretoria on Thursday. This case has proved beyond any doubt that it is not the pickets who use threats; rather, it is the Government that uses intimidation to get people to register.

If, in spite of these signs, there is any Indian who blackens his face, he will definitely not deserve the name of Indian.

STRIKE

When Punditji was sentenced to gaol, shops everywhere in the Transvaal remained closed. The hawkers stopped going on their rounds. Newspaper boys stopped selling newspapers, unmindful of loss. The news agency refused to give them copies the next day. This

[1] Not reproduced here

made the subscribers angry. The news paper boys had to write letters of apology to their patrons, and even now their difficulties have not come to an end. While, on the one hand, the whole body of people was prepared to suffer loss, on the other hand, there was a businessman in Offerton, Mr. Kamalkhan by name; who kept his shop open. Likewise in Heidelberg, Messrs Khota, Abou Mian Camroodeen and Adam Mamuji kept their shops open. This has caused resentment in the whole of the Indian community.

CONGRATULATIONS TO BLACKLEGS

I have had to write bitter things about Mr. Khamisa and his friends. I am glad that I have now got an opportunity to give them compliments. Mr. Khamisa and all others who had their hands and faces blackened kept their shops closed for the sake of the community. Everyone did the same in Pietersburg. This fact proves that a mass of water cannot be divided into two by striking at it with a stick. It can never happen that the people of the same country will be altogether divided against one another. When the poison of self-interest disappears, the bond of sympathy for the community cannot but assert itself.

CHAMNEY'S PRANKS

There are people who cannot do anything good. At present, Mr. Chamney is in such a state of mind. By harassing us under some pretext or other, that gentleman wants to make us take out registers. His latest performance is that he has made arrangements with the blind Portuguese Government to have those who do not take out permits subjected to harassment. A notice is displayed in the office of the Portuguese Consul to the effect that an Indian wishing to go to India via Delagoa Bay will be given a permit to enter Delagoa Bay only if he produces the new register and, in case he does not do so, only if he declares in writing that he does not intend returning to the Transvaal. This is mere harassment. It shows that they want to make Indians take out the new registers by holding out all kinds of inducements. There is nothing else, by way of compulsion, that is likely to succeed. The Indian community will not get frightened if permits for Delagoa Bay are not issued. Those who wish to go to India by some other route will be able to do so. Even then, efforts are being made for this.

SUGGESTION BY "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"

The Transvaal Leader suggests that the Government should meet the leaders of the Indian community and find a compromise on the question of the law in consultation with them. The Government will regret it later if it does not arrive at such a compromise. The

SHAHJI SAHEB'S BRAVERY

Shahji Saheb has felt much concerned at Punditji's imprisonment and he has therefore written the following letter[1] to the newspapers:

Sir,

I was present at the trial of my co-priest Ram Sundar Pundit. A thought struck me most forcibly, that there must be something radically wrong in thelaws of the Transvaal. As everyone now knows, I struck Imam Kamali in the heat of the moment for what I considered was a breach of the Koranic injunctions. I was fined £5 for it, with the option of imprisonment. An unkind friend, who is good enough to describe himself as my disciple, paid the fine, and I escaped gaol. I struck again Mahomed Shahboodeen, who, in his evidence, admitted he had broken his oath on the *Koran*, and said my striking him was as from father to son. An indulgent court, therefore, let me off with the warning that I may at any time be required to come up for sentence.

Ram Sundar Pundit, who has, so far as I am aware, and I know something of him, never hurt anybody, was sentenced to be imprisoned for one month, because he did not hold a piece of paper authorising him, a British subject, to cater for the religious wants of his fellow-countrymen in a British Colony.

According to what I have always understood, if any man deserved gaol, it was I, and yet it was possible for somebody to buy what he thought would be freedom for me; whereas Ram Sundar Pundit must be shut out for one month practically from all intercourse with those whom he has been in the habit of meeting every day, and cut off from his religious work. The thought shakes me to the marrow. I feel that I am in gaol and Ram Sundar Pundit is free. May God give him peace and courage.

SYMPATHY FROM CAPE TOWN

The African Indian Association at Cape Town has sent a telegram to the [British Indian] Association expressing its concern and sympathy, and has also sent a telegram to the High Commissioner saying that he should intervene, that the grievances of Indians should be redressed and that Ram Sundar Pundit should be released. Such telegrams have been received from many places and I intend to give the names of the places and the contents of the telegrams next week.

[1] For the original text, *vide"Letter to The Transvaal Leader"*, Before 23-11-1907 . with which the translation given here has been collated.

Mr. Ameeroodeen's partner, Mr. Abdool Gafoor, has sent the following telegram to him:

> Your responsibility is great. Do your duty with courage. Build high hopes on you. India's prestige depends on the struggle here. Do not rest till we become free and the freedom of our descendants is assured.

DESPERATE EFFORTS OF REGISTRATION OFFICE

Lutchman, who gave evidence in the case against the pickets, was arrested for giving false evidence. In fact, there was no case. Hence he was let off. But Lutchman's case shows that any Indian who goes to take out a register will bring disgrace to his community and will put his fellow-countrymen into trouble, and yet he himself may not be saved. This case has turned out to be exactly like that of Karim Jamal.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-11-1907

277. SPEECH AT HAMIDIA SOCIETY MEETING

[JOHANNESBURG,
November 24, 1907]

Mr. Gandhi spoke about the ability of the delegates.[1] He said that since there would be other speakers at the session, there was no need at present to incur further expenditure. Because of the paucity of funds, the question of nominating additional delegates would have to be dropped. Time was also short. As regards the Punjabis and the Pathans, a communication would soon be addressed to Lord Selborne. Mr. Gandhi exhorted the Turks to remain steadfast. The whites had held a meeting and it appeared from a report of it that the Government was getting exhausted. If the community remained firm, every white would come over to their side. The deputation of whites would leave in December. The Government doubted whether the Indians would definitely hold out to the end. But Mr. Gandhi argued that those who worked with courage and faith in God were bound to succeed. Then, speaking of the courage of the Pretoria pickets, he said that Major Fuge continued seeing the pickets every day. Mr. Cody tried to dissuade him from doing so, but he would not listen to anyone. And so on.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-11-1907

[1] To the forthcoming session of the Indian National Congress

278. PETITION TO GAEKWAR[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
November 25, 1907

TO

HIS HIGHNESS THE GAEKWAR [OF BARODA]

1. Your Petitioners are Your Highness' subjects, and have migrated to the Transvaal for earning an honest livelihood.

2. Your Petitioners have most of them a large stake in the Transvaal.

3. Your Petitioners venture respectfully to draw Your Highness' attention to the Asiatic Law Amendment Act passed by the Transvaal Parliament.

4. As protected British subjects and in common with other British Indians in the Transvaal, your Petitioners have, as perhaps Your Highness may be aware, already approached the Imperial Government.

5. Your Petitioners attach hereto copy of the submission made to the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State for the Colonies in connection with the Act, wherein are set forth all the objections.

6. As Imperial intervention has been directly refused and as the law in question is considered exceptionally humiliating and insulting and as your Petitioners are bound by a solemn oath not to submit to the Act, they have entered upon what has been termed a passive resistance crusade and have risked the loss of all their belongings. The Local Government have threatened imprisonment, deportation and other penalties, all [of] which your Petitioners consider are bearable and worth suffering in preference to bearing the yoke imposed by the Act above mentioned.

7. In the humble opinion of your Petitioners, it will strengthen the hands of the Imperial Government as also the Indian Government and it will encourage your Petitioners very greatly to receive Your Highness' sympathy and active intervention.

8. Your Petitioners, therefore, respectfully trust that Your Highness will extend to them your protection in any manner that may be considered desirable, and for this act of justice and mercy your Petitioners shall, as in duty bound, for ever pray, etc.

Colonial Office Records: C.O. 291/122

[1] This was sent by "the subjects of His Highness the Gaekwar. . .residing in the Transvaal" and was published in *Indian Opinion*, 30-11-1907. A copy of the petition was forwarded by L. W. Ritch to the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies on December 23, 1907.

279. PETITION TO HIGH COMMISSIONER[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before *November 26, 1907*]

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR SOUTH AFRICA

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT:

1. Your Petitioners are old Indian soldiers, and represent 43 Panjabi Mahomedans, 13 Sikhs, and 54 Pathans.

2. Your Petitioners are all British subjects, and were most of them brought to the Colony in connection with the Transport Corps raised at the time of the late war. When your Petitioners came to South Africa, they were told by their officers that it would be possible for them, at the end of the war, to settle in any part of South Africa and to receive honourable employment.

3. Some of your Petitioners have fought under the British flag during the Chitral Expedition[2], the Tirah Campaign[3], and other expeditions.

4. Your Petitioners are mostly holders of permits and registration certificates issued to them under the Peace Preservation Ordinance and Law 3 of 1885. Your Petitioners are not pre-war residents of the Transvaal, but were granted permits in exchange for discharge certificates issued by their respective officers.

5. With the exception of a few, all are at present without employment, largely because of the struggle against the Asiatic Registration Act. In some cases, their employers have dismissed them for non-registration, and, in other cases, on application for employment, your Petitioners have been told that they could get it, if they allowed themselves to be registered under the new Act.

6. In the humble opinion of your Petitioners, it is not possible for them to submit to the Asiatic Act, inasmuch as it subjects them to humiliation never experienced by them in India, and reduces them to a state which is incompatible with their self-respect and dignity as soldiers.

[1] On behalf of 115 Indian ex-soldiers, Gandhiji sent this with the "Letter to High Commissioner" Before 7-12-1907. A copy of the petition was forwarded by L. W. Ritch to the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies on December 23, 1907.

[2] In 1895

[3] In 1897-8

7. Your Petitioners are quite willing before any officer who may be appointed to give evidence as to their having, as loyal British subjects, served the Empire.

8. Your Petitioners cannot return to India and find the wherewithal to support themselves.

9. Your Petitioners now venture respectfully to claim Your Excellency's protection in your capacity as High Commissioner and trustee of Imperial interests in South Africa.

10. Your Petitioners, therefore, respectfully pray that Your Excellency will be pleased to secure them such relief as may be possible under the circumstances, and for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners shall, as in duty bound, for ever pray.

[*We have, etc.,*
NAWAB KHAN
FAZALI ILAHI]

Colonial Office Records: C. O. 291/122

280. LETTER TO ALL-INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE PRESIDENT

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before *November 26, 1907*]

[THE PRESIDENT
ALL INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE
CALCUTTA

SIR,]

I have been asked by my Society to approach you with reference to the struggle, in which my Society, in common with other Indian associations in the Transvaal, is engaged, in connection with the Asiatic Registration Act.

I have no doubt that you have seen the circular letter[1] addressed to Indian Mahomedans by the Hamidia Islamic Society. We have approached all Indian associations without regard to their local political colour. On the question of the status of British Indians in the Transvaal under the Asiatic Act, there is no difference of opinion; and it is felt that there should be a united and emphatic protest against the humiliating treatment to which we are subjected.

My Society, therefore ventures to trust that you will be good

[1] *Vide* "Appeal to Indian Muslims", 19-8-1907.

it is felt that there should be a united and emphatic protest against the humiliating treatment to which we are subjected.

My Society, therefore ventures to trust that you will be good enough to move the League in favour of British Indians in the Transvaal.

[*Yours, etc.,*

EMAM ABDOOL CADIR SALIM BAWAZEER
ACTING CHAIRMAN,
HAMIDIA ISLAMIC SOCIETY]

Indian Opinion, 30-11-1902

281. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

[*Tuesday, November 26, 1907*]

ACCOUNTS OF ASSOCIATION

These accounts[1] are published along with the advertisements, and I bring them to the notice of every Indian in the Transvaal. It can be seen from them that the Association is now left with a sum of £140.18.1 only. Moreover, £95 out of this was given by Mr. Allbret. The Association has undertaken a Hereulean task. Compared to that task, the money is very little. We do not know of any other body working economically as this Association. Its recurring expenditure is under £10. But now there will be increased expenditure on account of telegrams, etc. There is no expenditure on account of rent. Mostly, the burden of expenditure is being borne by Johannesburg. If the example of Rustenburg is followed by other places, even that will bring a little relief to the Association. Only recently, a sum of £15 was received from Rustenburg. Its example deserves to be emulated by other towns.

HOW THEY BESIEGE US

I have already pointed out how Mr. Chamney has seen to it that we find it difficult to go to Delagoa Bay. It appears that now there is a threat at Volksrust. We hear it suggested that the Indian who wants to pass through Natal should have his permit examined at Volksrust or Charlestown. His thumb-impression should be taken before he is allowed to proceed. The object behind this is that a record can be

[1] *Vide* "British Indian Association, Johannesburg", 26-10-1907.

is not to be given. Neither of these things is objectionable in itself. But if the Government wants to harass us, it should not be allowed to do so. All these annoyances are incidental to a struggle. They need not frighten us. The question as to what will happen now ought not to occur to us at all.

EXAMPLE OF HEROISM

Mr. Mahomed Moosa Parekh writes from Newcastle that he will take up residence at Wakkerstroom before December next specially with the object of defying the law. He adds:

What would it matter even if a thousand such [Registration] Offices were set up? No one who has sincerely taken an oath once in the name of God, and with faith in the truth of his Prophet, will ever carry the burden of slavery on his head.

I wish Mr. Parekh and all other Indians maintain such spirit till the end.

ASIATIC EATING-HOUSES

The reader will remember that the Municipality had framed regulations on this subject requiring the appointment of a white deputy. The Association had made a representation against this. The Government has now ordered the regulations to be amended and the Municipality has agreed to do so.

REGULATIONS CONCERNING CABS

It was being talked about for a long time that a regulation should be made prohibiting a black person from riding in a first-class cab. Now the Municipality has passed such a regulation. It provides that a black barrister or physician can use such a cab. This means that a black barrister in rags or one who is drunk can ride in a first-class cab, but a wealthy and well-dressed, Indian merchant cannot! Moreover, a barrister may ride in it, but not his wife and children. There is no limit to the stupidity of the people who make such laws. The Association has sent a representation to the Government against this regulation.

RESOLUTION OF STANGER INDIANS

Meetings have been held and resolutions passed at many places in connection with Ram Sundar Pundit's imprisonment. This happened in Stanger, too. The Association has received telegrams of sympathy under the signatures of Mr. Dawad Mahomed Sidaat, Mr. Ahmed Moosa Metar, Mr. Manilal Chaturbhai Patel and Mr. Ahmed Mitha.

The Association has not been able to send letters of thanks to all those who have sent telegrams and passed resolutions, for it was impossible to do so. Moreover, where people do a certain thing as a matter of duty and with a patriotic motive, no thanks are necessary. This is not the time for mutual compliments or expression of thanks. Recognition of duty done itself amounts to thanks.

KHOLWAD MADRESSA

Mr. Gulam Mahomed Ajam writes from Bombay that he has received a sum of £92l.10.0. He is looking about for a building to be purchased with that money. But he finds the sum too small to buy a good house with. He has also received the deed of trust and power of attorney.

LICENCES IN MINING AREA

The Government had refused, under the Gold Law, to issue licences at Johannesburg and other places, and a situation had arisen in which it would have been necessary to take the matter to a court of law. But now another communication has been received from the Government saying that in view of the struggle against the new law, it does not want to fight on that question, and that a licence will be issued to anyone who applies for it. This reply is noteworthy. The Government is afraid of incurring odium by launching such cases. Will it not be afraid of incurring odium when putting 7,000 people into gaol?

MEETING OF KONKANIS

A meeting of Konkanis was held on Sunday last to find out if they were all firm. They met in the Hamidia Hall. Mr. Malim Mahomedtook the chair on the occasion. Mr. Abdool Gani said in his speech that he was determined not to yield till the last. He would not break the oath which he had joined in administering to others. Speeches were made at the meeting by Mr. Ismail Khan, Mr. Shahboodeen Hasan, Mr. Hasan Mian (of Roodepoort), Mr. Abdul Gafur and others, and they all expressed the same view that they should not submit to the law, whatever the cost. Even in regard to the question that was raised whether everyone working in a shop should get himself registered or not, the previous decision was reiterated, namely, that it was not at all necessary to do so.

COLLECTING FUNDS FOR CONGRESS

The collections here for the [Indian] National Congress have exceeded £50. There may be still further contributions. I shall send

the list next week. Out of the sum mentioned above, £25 is sent to Mr. Ameeroodeen for the present. If more were needed, it was resolved to send up to £50. Some expenditure was also incurred in sending cables from here to India about the delegation. All these accounts will be published.

APATHY OF DELAGOA BAY INDIANS

I see from the newspapers here that, if the Indian community at Delagoa Bay does not become alert, it will be reduced to a miserable plight. The Chamber there has resolved that henceforth Indians will not be allowed to vote. If the Indians there continue to put up with all this without any protest, it will be a great disgrace. Moreover, efforts are being made to put obstacles in the path of Indians going there from the Transvaal. It would be good if these things put a little courage into Delagoa Bay Indians. We strongly urge all Indians having contacts with wealthy people there to go on writing to them.

PETITION TO GAEKWAR

The subjects of His Highness the Gaekwar have submitted the following petition to him in connection with the new law, signed by nearly 150 persons.[1]

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE IN DECEMBER?

Many of our readers will be eager to read the answer to this question. I have reserved the question for the last place in my letter, but it would have deserved the first.

WHAT CAN BE DONE

Before deciding what should be done, let us consider what can be done. We have seen that the Government has no authority to expelus with physical force. The only thing that remains is putting us into gaol. Under Section 8 of the Act, the police can demand the new register from every Indian. If he does not have it, he can be produced before a magistrate. There he will get a notice to leave the country within a specified period. When the order is disregarded, the person will be arrested again, and can be sentenced to imprisonment for up to six months. When a person is tried under this Section, the magistrate has no power to impose a fine. If we read the Act, we shall find that the court can order anyone to apply for the register. Instead of trying a person in this manner, the Government can also prosecute him for

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Gaekwar", 25-11-1907

not making such application. The penalty for the offence of not making an application is a fine of £100 or imprisonment. The Government can deal with every Indian in this manner, which means that every Indian can be put into gaol. But there is a great difference between being able to do something and actually doing it. I dismiss as impossible the idea that the Government can arrest every Indian and put him into gaol.

SOME ARRESTS CERTAIN

But some Indians will definitely be arrested. I believe that the first round of arrests will include a hundred people at the most.

TESTING OUR METTLE

It is likely that a few Indians will be arrested at every place with a view to testing our mettle. If that happens, our struggle will come to an end earlier. If there are simultaneous arrests at every place, people should not get into a panic. If such arrests take place, it will not be possible for Mr. Gandhi to go everywhere. There will be no need for him to do so. Immediately a person is arrested, a telegram should be sent to the Association (BIAS) at Johannesburg.

NO APPLICATION FOR BAIL

The arrested person must not offer bail. A lawyer is also not to be engaged. When he attends the court on the day of hearing, he should state:

I oppose the law. I am a *bona fide* resident of the Transvaal. I hold a genuine permit. Under this law we cease to be human beings. We also lose our religion. I will not therefore submit to it. Our whole community is against it. If the Government serves me with a notice to leave, that also will not be complied with. Hence, whatever penalty is to be inflicted on me may be inflicted just now. If a notice has to be given, it may please be as short as possible.

This should be said by the person himself through an interpreter.

NOTICE WILL BE SERVED

Thereupon, the chances are that a notice will be served. Even after the expiry of the period of notice, no lawyer will be needed. The person concerned will remain free till the notice-period expires. During that time, he may make whatever arrangements he thinks

necessary concerning his personal affairs.

AFTER EXPIRY OF NOTICE-PERIOD

After the expiry of the notice-period, he will be arrested again. No further statement is to be made on this occasion. He should only say: I have nothing to add to what I stated earlier. He should then go through whatever sentence is inflicted. People who remain outside should immediately send a telegram about the sentence given. The telegram should contain particulars of whether the person has a family, where it lives, whether he has left it to the community to provide for its maintenance or whether he has resources of his own, etc.

It should be remembered that, wherever necessary, the dependants [of the arrested person] will be maintained by the community till the day of his release from gaol. The best thing will be for every place to assume responsibility for its own people, just as the responsibility for the family of Ram Sundar Pundit was assumed by the Indians of Germiston. But if this is not possible the Association will certainly make some arrangements,

If they do not strike at Johannesburg and, consequently, Mr. Gandhi is not occupied there, he will run up to any place where Indians (*bona fide* residents) may have been arrested and he will not charge fees [for their defence]. It will be proper for the place concerned to meet his travelling expenses. Even if this is not done, the Association will pay them and Mr. Gandhi will make himself available at that place.

There is no need to say anything about the business of a person sent to gaol. He will have made arrangements in advance for it. The Government will not be able to force anyone to close down his shop. Nor can it auction his goods to recover the fine. It also does not appear likely that all the persons in a shop will be arrested at the same time. Even while in gaol, one can look after one's business: one may write letters or send messages.

WHAT SHOULD THOSE WHO REMAIN OUTSIDE DO?

After one or more fellow Indians are taken to gaol, those left behind should mark time outside. That is the best way. If anyone gets into a fright and runs of to get himself registered lest he himself be attacked, he will have proved himself an enemy of the country and

brought disgrace to the Indian community.

REAL TEST

This will come only when the people, instead of growing nervous on account of the leaders having been arrested, will be further emboldened to defy the law. It should be distinctly remembered that only when this is proved beyond doubt will the law be repealed.

ON DECEMBER 2

On December 2 Indians need not keep themselves confined within the four walls of their houses. Hawkers need not get frightened and stop going on their rounds; they must come out fearlessly to attend to their business. On that day and on the days following, people must go on with their work as usual as if nothing has happened. This is a struggle for freedom. Hence courage will be required at every step. Without courage, then, there can be no success.

HALOO'S TURN-ABOUT

Mr. Haloo has apologized [at a meeting] in a mosque for having blackened his face and has sent the following letter[1] to the Registrar:

SIR,

I beg respectfully to return herewith the registration certificate granted to me on the 12th day of October, 1907. In doing so, I am quite aware that it is not possible for me to cast off the yoke of the Act I have undertaken to bear; but that is, under the circumstances in which I am placed, the least I can do. Indeed, when I went to your temporary office in Von Brandis Square, Johannesburg, I had conflicting emotions—on the one hand was my creditor pressing me to submit to the Act or threatening to sell me out, on the other was the shame I would have to incur by reason of my submission. But I did not then realize the magnitude of the shame; I yielded to the threat.

I now see that my existence has become intolerable. I am shunned by my countrymen and my co-religionists. My sister and my other relations write to me disowning me entirely and telling me that, in breaking my oath that I had solemnly taken, I have become an unfit member of my family. Even if I should retain my possessions, I see that they would be more a burden to me than anything else, with all those who have associated with me and with whom I had the privilege of associating putting me outside their pale. I was one of those who at the mass meeting at Pretoria on the 31st July last inveighed against the weakkneed Memons for having yielded to worldly

[1] The original has been reproduced here from the English section of *Indian Opinion*, 30-11-1907,

temptation and broken their solemn obligation and accepted the slavery of the Act. When the same trial stared me in the face, I yielded. The result of it I cannot undo, but in returning this certificate, I derive the satisfaction of having regained to a certain extent my conscience.

I only trust that my example will be a warning to my other countrymen, and that they will never even look at your Office, so long as it is the Registration Act which you may administer.

Moreover, while sending this letter to the newspapers, Mr. Haloo has also stated that the report that had appeared in some of them about his dog having been poisoned was false.

HAMIDIA ISLAMIC SOCIETY'S LETTER

This Society has addressed the following letter to the President of the All-India Muslim League:[1]

My Society invites your attention to the question of the Asiatic Act. You must have seen the circular letter addressed to Indian Mahomedans by the Hamidia Islamic Society. We have approached all Indian associations without regard to their local political colour. On this question there is no difference of opinion, and it is felt that there should be a united and emphatic protest in this connection. My Society, therefore, trusts that the All India Muslim League will protest against the Act.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO DEPUTATION OF WHITES?

I have already reported that some whites intended taking a deputation to the Government. The deputation has not gone till now, which has made some Indians impatient. I must say that this impatience is a sign of fear. What difference will it make whether the deputation is taken or not? We depend on our own strength. But, with a view to reassuring the timid, I may state that preparations for the deputation are going on. They are only eager to know what stuff we are made of. That cannot be known before December; that is why the deputation has not gone yet. However, one should not be surprised if those who depend only on outside help are disappointed.

CASE AGAINST PICKET

Mr. P. K. Naidoo, who was a picket, had a violent altercation with another Madrasi about registration. The Madrasi was beaten up because he had taken out a register. Mr. Naidoo's case came up for hearing today (Tuesday). He was fined £10. The fine was paid by his

[1] What follows, however, is a summary. For the original, *vide* "Letter to All-India Muslim League President", Before 26-11-1907.

friends. Commenting on this, the magistrate said that since the case related to the question of registration, he should in fact have been sentenced to imprisonment instead of a fine. My own sympathies are not in the least with Mr. Naidoo. Such cases only do harm to us. There is no place in this struggle for the use of force. Besides, paying a fine for getting released was still worse; that the fine was paid by friends involves them also in disgrace. Those who want to prevent people by force from getting themselves registered do not understand the nature of this grand, religious-cum-patriotic struggle.

PETITION BY PUNJABIS

The Punjabis have addressed a petition to Lord Selborne which we translate below:[1]

> Your Petitioners are old Indian soldiers, and represent 43 Punjabi Mahomedans, 13 Sikhs, and 54 Pathans.
>
> Your Petitioners are all British subjects, and were most of them brought to the Colony in connection with the Transport Corps raised at the time of the late war. When your Petitioners came to South Africa, they were told by their officers that it would be possible for them, at the end of the war, to settle in any part of South Africa.
>
> Some of your Petitioners have fought under the British flag during the Chitral Expedition, the Tirah Campaign, and other expeditions.
>
> With the exception of a few, all are at present without employment, largely because of the struggle against the Asiatic Registration Act. In some cases, their employers have dismissed them for non-registration, and, in other cases, your Petitioners have been told that they could get employment if they allowed themselves to be registered under the new Act.
>
> In the humble opinion of your Petitioners, it is not possible for them to submit to the Asiatic Act, inasmuch as it subjects them to humiliation never experienced by them in India. How could they sacrifice their self-respect and dignity as soldiers?
>
> Your Petitioners cannot return to India and find the wherewithal to support themselves.
>
> Your Petitioners now venture respectfully to claim Your Excellency's protection in your capacity as High Commissioner and trustee of Imperial interests in South Africa.
>
> Your Petitioners, therefore, respectfully pray that Your Excellency will be pleased to secure them such relief as may be possible under the circumstances.

[1] For the original, *vide* "Petition to High Commissioner", Before 26-11-1907 It has been given here with some changes needed to bring it into conformity with the Gujarati version.

MEMORIAL MEETING OF CHINESE [*Wednesday*]

The Chinese Association held a memorial meeting today (Wednesday) to commemorate the Chinaman who had committed suicide. No one present at the meeting could help feeling admiration for the Chinese. Their beautiful hall was adorned with black cloth. On one side in the hall there was a photograph of the Chinaman who had died. In the centre were standing all those who had served as pickets. Surrounding them on all sides were chairs which were occupied by invitees. About a thousand Chinese, with flowers in their hands, gently passed by the photograph, praying for the soul of the departed one, and went out through the door opposite. All these men were neatly dressed. Then they sang dirges in Chinese, after which there was a meeting in another hall. The hall was packed to capacity and the chairman, Mr. Quinn, made a speech in Chineseand English. He was followed by Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Polak who commented upon the law. The meeting was then dissolved. Their unity, neatness and courage—all these three things deserve to be emulated by us.

ASSAULT IN PRETORIA

A case is going on against a Pathan, named Banutkhan, for having assaulted Mr. Hajee Ebrahim, who is a blackleg Full reports about it have not yet arrived. But it appears that Banutkhan dealt a blow with a stick to Mr. Ebrahim for having taken out a register and broken the oath. Hajee Ebrahim tossed him to the ground and pressed him down. To get free from his clutches, Banutkhan bit Ebrahim on the cheek. At first the amount of bail for Banutkhan was fixed at £100, for Mr. Chamney had reported that Banutkhan had threatened him too. Half-way through the proceedings, the amount of bail was reduced to £50. The magistrate fined Banutkhan £20 and he has paid the amount.

LETTER FROM MANILAL DESAI

Mr. Manilal Desai, the chief picket at Pretoria, has sent a letter to the newspapers stating that the pickets do not at all assault people or use force, but only explain the subtle implications of the law with gentleness and in a friendly manner, and point out the hardships caused by it.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-11-1907

282. SPEECH AT CHINESE ASSOCIATION[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
November 27, 1907]

He said that it seemed like profanity to discuss the Act on such an occasion; yet, as the Chairman had set the example,[2] he could not but follow it, especially as the ceremony at which they had so recently assisted was so intimately connected with the Act. He had often heard it remarked that the Chinese people did not value human life as other people did, but if he at any time had any illusions on that point, they were set at rest after what he had seen that afternoon. He wished General Smuts could have attended the gathering to witness the great ceremonial through which they had passed. He thought, in that case, that General Smuts would have thought twice before saying he had put his foot down and was going to keep it there. He (Mr. Gandhi) had taken upon himself the responsibilityof advising the fighting of the Asiatic Act, and he still felt he was doing what was right, proper and just. He gave that advice to his countrymen and he had no hesitation in giving the same advice to them as fellow Asiatics. He tried hard, and for a long time, to draw a line between British subjects and non-British subjects. He pleaded hard with the Government here and with the Imperial Government that at least there should be a discrimination between British subjects and other Asiatics. "No," was the emphatic answer both from the Imperial Government and the local Government, and although he claimed for his countrymen and himself all the rights that should properly belong to British subjects, that claim was summarily rejected and British Indians and other Asiatics were classed alike.

Adversity had made them strange bed-fellows in this struggle. It was perfectly true that in spite of the position, British Indians still, somehow or other, clung to the British-subject idea, and they felt that some day or other, they would be able to make good the plea. So far as that was concerned, the Chinese fight was different to the British Indian fight, but so far as the incidence of this wretched legislation was concerned, the Chinese fight was identical with that of the British Indians, and it was because the law pressed equally heavily on both that both were fighting it. If any justification were to be sought for repealing the Asiatic Act, he thought there were two instances. The first in importance was undoubtedly the death of a countryman of his Chinese audience. Their countryman had sacrificed himself for what he thought

[1] A memorial service was held for Chow Kwai, a Chinese who, feeling the degradation of having submitted to registration, had committed suicide. Gandhiji was invited by Mr. Quinn, Chairman of the Chinese Association, to address the gathering.

[2] He had exhorted the audience to resist imposition of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act.

was a mistake. A miserable attempt had been made to show that the man had given his life for other reasons, but the fact stood out prominently that the man had given his life for the sake of this wretched, miserable Asiatic Act. The other instance he referred to was among his (the speaker's) own countrymen. A man perfectly guiltless and striving to live his life as he best knew how, serving the spiritual needs of his countrymen, had been sent to jail, and was today in default in Johannesburg simply because of this Asiatic Act.[1] All sorts of charges had been made against him, and there was not an iota of proof of the seditious charges. He (Mr. Gandhi) could only say that an Act which had exacted already this heavy price could never be submitted to, either by [the] Chinese or by British Indians, if they were true to themselves, if they were true to their countrymen, and if they valued their honour above anything else. The struggle was a moral and religious one. He reminded them that virtue was its own reward, and said if this was a question of conflicting rights between Europeans and Asiatics, he could understand the position taken up by the Government. But he felt convinced that this was not a struggle between Europeans and Asiatics. General Smuts was reputed to be very strong, and so he was; but so far as the Asiatics were concerned, that strength remained to be proved. He submitted that they were violating the consciences of thirteen thousand British Indians and thirteen hundred Chinese, and that they had chosen the rottenest way of doing a thing which could have been done in a better way long enough ago. After the 2nd December, their freedom was not their own, but, whether arrested or not, they would keep before their minds the spirit of the dead man and remember in this struggle that virtue was its own reward.

Indian Opinion, 7-12-1907

[1] The reference is to Ram Sundar Pundit; vide " Trial of Ram Sundar Pundit", 11-11-1907; 14-11-1907

283. WHY WE OPPOSE

During the past fifteen months, hardly a week has passed but these pages have contained some statement against the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, and yet there is no denying the fact that the majority of Europeans and even many Indians will not be able to say why there should be such bitter and sustained opposition to a mere registration law. Some say that the Act is objectionable because it requires Asiatics and their children over eight years to give digit impressions; others, again, because this law gives unlimited power to harass Asiatics. Whilst we do not minimise the importance of these objections, we do not hesitate to admit that, by themselves, they would be trivial, at any rate, certainly not worth the sacrifice that British Indians have pledged themselves to make.

Why, then, this strenuous struggle? The answer is because the Act, read in conjunction with the events that preceded it and produced it, is one that takes away the very manhood from British Indians, who claim to be just as civilised as the law-givers themselves, in all the essentials of life. The Act constitutes, on the one hand, an assertion of a right on the part of the Government of the Transvaal to treat British Indians as they please, and without reference to the latter's opinion or feelings. On the other, there is a denial of any such inherent right in the Government, especially when their act involves a curtailment of or an attack on personal liberty.

If we were asked to point out in which Section of the Act is to be seen any such intention or assertion on the part of the Government, it would, perhaps, be difficult to lay our finger on any particular Section without exposing ourselves to the charge of sentimentality. Just as it is not possible to say in what particular grain of opium lies the poison, so, perhaps, is it not possible to point to the venom in the Act. But the whole of it is, undoubtedly, rank poison to a self-respecting Asiatic, and the trivialities mentioned above are, taken together, sure indications of the fact. The general effect of the Act can only be felt but cannot be expressed; hence it is that the people at large have used symbols to represent the deadly spirit they have always sensed sub-consciously yet not the less really. What has happened during the attempted administration of the Act—the futile prosecution of Carim Jamal, the secret examination of applicants, the startling revelations at the trial of the Indian priest[1]—furnishes a terrible confirmation and a

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburgg Letter", 29-7-1907, ; 5-8-1907 and "Trial of Ram Sundar Pundit", 14-11-1907

complete justification of the view held by the Indian community.

After what we have stated above, it is, perhaps, hardly necessary to show wherein lies the religious objection, but a little closer examination is possibly necessary, as even well-meaning friends have asked the question. Judging from the highest standpoint, we will not use the very effective argument drawn from the wantonly invidious distinction made between Turkish Mahomedans and other Turkish subjects, but for men of religion we would venture to put our argument in the form of a simple question: If it be a fact that Indians conscientiously consider that the Act unmans them, degrades them, practically enslaves them, can those who are less than men ever worship God; can men who, well knowing the injurious consequences of a particular measure, accept it from base, because purely selfish and worldly, motives ever serve God?

Viewed in this light, it is clear that the struggle is of paramount importance. A handful of men, usually accounted as not particularly brave, are crossing swords with a comparatively mighty Government with unrestricted power. Can they succeed? We say, emphatically, "Yes" —provided that they are, as they have hitherto shown themselves to be, willing and ready to sacrifice commensurately with the result to be obtained.

Indian Opinion, 30-11-1907

284. WHY DO WE OPPOSE LAW?

For the past twelve months, we have been writing something or other in this journal in reply to this question. In spite of that, the cause behind the struggle, we are afraid, has remained obscure to most Indians. We can hope that the game will start in right earnest now. We expect that, though the Government is afraid, it will surely lay hands on about a hundred Indians at least. If it does not, we shall be really sorry. Superficially, it may not appear proper to talk in this strain; yet, we think that what we have said is right. For, the time for our test has arrived. The people are in high spirits. If the Government denies us the opportunity of being tested, it will not come again. As warriors on the battle-field feel sorely disappointed when they return without fighting, so is the condition of the Transvaal Indians just now. Only if a hundred Indians, at least, went to gaol, could it be said that a fight was given. This journal will be in the hands of the Transvaal readers just on the 1st or 2nd of December. At that time, the brave will be eagerly waiting to be the first on the battle-field, that is, to be arrested without having committed any crime. The cowards, frightened to

death, will be hiding in their houses, terrified at the thought of being arrested. And as for those who have blackened their faces, how can they have the good fortune of such an occasion of patriotic service? Whether cowards or heroes, for both we consider December 2 to be a grand occasion. We congratulate even the cowards because, though panicky, for the sake of the country they have not submitted to registration.

Why do we write thus? What heavy task is the Indian community facing? Why are we opposing the law? Let us now consider the answer. To many it appears that there is a fight because of the objection to giving ten finger-prints , to some, the only objectionable thing is submitting the names of mother and wife ; while others say that it is painful to think of the police making a house-to-house search. It is true that all these things are rather humiliating. Only thieves submit ten fingerprints; reference to the sacred name of the mother, by way of insult, has called forth daggers from waist-bands; when the police have asked for passes from people, presuming them to be suspects, they have had from the persons, enraged by the insult, a blow with the fist which sent them staggering to the ground. In spite of this, if someone asks for finger-prints courteously, and without compulsion, and we comply, no serious resentment is felt. It is with great joy that we take the name of the mother in the same manner as we utter the name of *Ishwar* or *Khuda* while saying prayers with the rosary. That is to say, the things referred to above are objectionable because they have been introduced with a view to insulting us. Not all yellow people suffer from jaundice. But, generally speaking, if we see an emaciated body which is yellow, we shall take it for granted that the person has got that disease. A physician will not treat the person for being yellow. He will treat him for jaundice.

We have to spot out, then, the jaundice in the law. It is this: that the white people, by introducing this law, wish to show that the Asiatics are not men but beasts; not free men, but slaves; not their equals, but their inferiors; that they are born to endure whatever is inflicted on them, that they have no right to protest; that they are not men, but cowards. [Taking of] finger-prints, etc., is only a symptom of this condition, this jaundice. Whatever the law wants us to do, it wants us to do under compulsion. The Indian, who is a man of credit, is assumed to be a thief. Assuming that we are thieves, they also consider our children to be thieves, and strike fear in them by unworthy attacks on them. In our country the words, “A European is coming”, arouse terror in children from infancy. So here also this law is intended to terrorize them. If we were asked to point out in which section of the law all this occurs, it would be difficult to reply. No one can point to

the flower of Deadly Nightshade and say which part of it contains the poison. The proof of the poison is in eating [its berries]; and the same is true of this law. If this law is read and fully understood by a proud and self-respecting man, it cannot but send a shudder through his body. It deprives the Indian of the very spirit of manliness in him. And just as a blunted sword becomes useless, so the Indian who submits to this law ceases to be a human being.

After this, who will ask where the objection from the point of view of religion lies. Leaving aside the fact that in Turkey, it applies to the Muslims but that the Christians and the Jews are excluded, if this law exists to insult us and to treat us like animals, we want to know whether animals know God or understand religion.

In fact, this law amounts to a war between the Asiatics and the white people. The latter declare: 'We shall keep the Asiatics merely as machines to slave for us.' The Indians opposing the law in the Transvaal say: 'If we stay, we shall stay as free men and as equals in everyday affairs.' That is the true significance of the law. To challenge a strong enemy to a struggle like this and to win is difficult as well as easy. It is difficult because we have to invite trouble; easy in the sense that the man feels happy in suffering loss while serving the community with a view to securing the welfare of the country.

A match for the mighty in every respect, in wealth, physical strength and such are the white people; then, how will a handful of Indians prevail against them? To the man who asks such a question, we shall not hesitate to reply that he has little faith in God. How can we forget:

He who is born must die;
Yield not to despair;
The Almighty is with you,
The merciful God.

Moreover, we are told what happens when a person, though strong, takes to oppression: "I am myself God," so declared Mansur to the entire world. [But] he mounted the gallows—so full of difficulties is this life.

In this struggle, only one condition is required for our success, and that is that our courage must be real. Our sword, in the form of our capacity to suffer, must be made not of wood, but of tempered steel.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-11-1907

285. OUR SUPPLEMENT

The question of a delegation to the [Indian National] Congress came up only because Mr. Ameeroodeen Fajandar happened to be going to India. He has from the first shown unflinching opposition to the law. Therefore, when he was to go to India, several of his friends asked him whether he would like to go as a delegate. Mr. Ameeroodeen instantly took up the challenge. That would be the first thing he would attend to in India; that was the assurance he gave before leaving. We publish that gentleman's photograph in this issue.

Mr. Ameeroodeen is 36 years old. His parents belonged to a family of Zamindars, which is the reason why his surname is Fajandar. He belongs to the famous Zatam family. When he first came to the Transvaal in the year 1888, he joined the well-known firm of Sheth Mahomed Cassim Camroodeen as a clerk. He served there till 1893, when he started his own business. The name of his firm is Messrs Mahomed Hussain & Co. Many whites tried to get him to apply for registration by threatening to withhold credit, but he stuck to his resolution.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-11-1907

286. OBNOXIOUS LAW AND REGULATIONS MADE UNDER IT

We give in this issue the English text of the new law and the regulations made under it, and a Gujarati translation of the same. We also gave a Gujarati translation earlier.[1] There are some changes in the translation that is being given herewith. We also give the relevant sections of the Peace Preservation Ordinance. Apart from this, there are also other important items in this issue. We therefore advise every Indian to read this issue carefully and then preserve it. Since we know that the new law and the regulations made under it provide the most effective arguments against themselves, we intend to publish the law and the regulations in the form of a booklet, both in English and Gujarati. It will be priced at 6d. We are convinced that this issue. and the booklet on the law deserve to find a place in every home in India.

l. Law No. 3 of 1885 will remain in force with the modifications that follow.

[1] *Vide* "New Obnoxious Law", 8-6-1907 and "Obnoxious Law", 6-7-1907

2. The term "Asiatics" will mean Indians, coolies and Muslim subjects of Turkey. It will not include Malays and the Chinese who had come in as indentured labourers. (There are other definitions of Registrar, etc., which are not given here.)

3. Every Asiatic lawfully residing in the Transvaal must register himself. There will be no fee for such registration.

Asiatics of the following description will be deemed lawful residents of the Transvaal:

(a) Any Asiatic who holds a permit under the Permit Act, unless such permit was fraudulently obtained. (Temporary permits are not covered by this).

(b) Any Asiatic resident and actually in the Transvaal on May 31, 1902.

(c) Any Asiatic born in the Transvaal after May 31, 1902.

4. Every Asiatic resident in the Transvaal at the date of the taking effect of this Act shall apply for registration to such officer, at such place and before such date as may be prescribed by the Colonial Secretary. Every Asiatic who enters the Transvaal after the date of the taking effect of this Act and who has not previously been registered thereunder shall apply for registration within eight days of his entry.

(a) It is not necessary to make an application under this clause for a child under the age of eight years.

(b) For the registration of a child above eight years and under sixteen years, the application shall be made by his guardian and if not so made shall be made by such child within one month after attaining the age of 16 years.

5. The Registrar shall consider the applications of Asiatics who are lawful residents, and register every such applicant whose application may be approved by him.

If the Registrar rejects the application of any Asiatic, he will give to the person concerned at least 14 days' notice to appear before a magistrate. If he fails to appear at the time specified or, having appeared, fails to satisfy the magistrate as to his right to remain in the Transvaal, the magistrate shall order such Asiatic to leave the Transvaal if he is above 16 years of age, and sections 6, 7 and 8 of the Peace Preservation Ordinance, 1903 shall apply to such order.

6. Any Asiatic who is the guardian of a child under eight shall upon making application for registration on his own behalf supply to the Registrar such particulars and furnish such means

of identification in respect of the child as may be prescribed by regulation. If the applicant is himself registered, such particulars shall be noted on the register. Within one year of the child attaining the age of eight, the guardian concerned shall make application for registration on behalf of the child at the office of the Resident Magistrate of the district in which he resides.

An Asiatic who is the guardian of a child born in the Transvaal shall apply for registration on behalf of the child within one year of the child reaching the age of eight.

(a) If the guardian does not apply as required above, he shall if required by the Registrar or the Resident Magistrate make such application at any later date.

(b) If the guardian does not apply, or if the application made by the guardian is rejected, the application for registration shall be made by the child within one month after reaching the age of sixteen. The Resident Magistrate at whose office such application is made shall cause the application along with the relevant documents to be forwarded to the Registrar who shall if satisfied that the same is in order issue a certificate of registration.

7. When the guardian has not, as required above, furnished the particulars of a child under the age of eight years and has not made application for registration on behalf of the child after he attained the age of eight years, the application shall be made by the child within one month after he attains the age of 16; and the Registrar may issue a certificate of registration at his discretion.

8. Any person who shall fail to make application for registration as required by this Act shall be liable to a fine not exceeding £100 and in default of payment to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period not exceeding three months.

Any person who brings into the Transvaal an Asiatic under the age of sixteen years not lawfully resident in the Transvaal, and any person who shall employ such child, shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable to penalties mentioned above and to cancellation of the certificate of registration, in addition to which he will be ordered to leave the Transvaal. If he does not leave the Transvaal, he will be liable to a fine or to imprisonment as provided for in the law, sections 6, 7 and 3 of the Peace Preservation Ordinance being applicable to such order.

Any Asiatic over the age of sixteen years who is found in the Transvaal without a registration certificate after such date as may be notified by the Colonial Secretary will be ordered to leavethe Transvaal, and if he does not leave the Transvaal shall be liable to a fine or to imprisonment.

If an Asiatic who has failed, to make application for registration shall satisfy the Magistrate that such failure was due to some good and sufficient cause, the Magistrate may give him time to ma-ke such application. If the person fails to obtain registration within the appointed time, he shall again be ordered to leave the Transvaal, and if he fails to do so, he shall be liable to the usual penalties.

9. Any member of the police force or any other person authorized thereto by the Colonial Secretary may require an Asiatic of the age of sixteen or over to produce his certificate of registration and supply such particulars and furnish such means of identification as may be prescribed by Regulation.

With regard to an Asiatic under the age of 16 years, the guardian of such child shall produce the certificate of registration and supply the particulars and furnish the means of identification required by this Act.

10. Any person holding a new certificate of registration issued to him under this Act shall be entitled to enter and to reside in the Transvaal, provided he has not been ordered [to leave the Colony] under section 10 of the Peace Preservation Ordinance.

11. Any person into whose hands shall come any certificate of registration or temporary permit of which he is not the lawful holder shall transmit the document immediately to the Registrar. If he fails to do so, he will be liable to a fine not exceeding £50 or to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period not exceeding one month.

12. Any person who loses his certificate of registration shall apply to the Registrar to have it renewed. The application shall contain such particulars as may be required under the rules, and it must have a stamp of 5s affixed to it.

13. After a date to be notified in the *Gazette,* no Asiatic shall obtain a trading licence under the Revenue Licences Ordinance or under any bye-law in force in a municipality unless he shall produce his certificate of registration and supply such particulars and furnish such means of identification as may be prescribed by Regulation.

14. Whenever the age of any Asiatic is in question, such Asiatic shall

unless and until the contrary be proved be taken to be of the age which the Registrar shall certify to be in his opinion the apparent age of such Asiatic.

15. Any affidavit that may have to be made under this Act shall be exempt from stamp duty.

16. Any person, who commits any fraudulent act in connection with an application for registration or for the purpose of obtaining a certificate of registration or makes a false statement, or incites or aids any person in such act or statement, or forges any certificate of registration, or uses as his certificate any certificate of registration of which he is not the lawful holder or any forged certificate, or causes such certificate to be used by others, shall be liable to a fine not exceeding £500 or to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a term not exceeding two years.

17. The Colonial Secretary may in his absolute discretion issue to any Asiatic a permit for a limited period only and after the expiry of such period such person shall be deemed to be a person not duly authorized to be in this Colony and if found may be arrested without warrant and the provisions of sections 7, 8 and 9 of the Peace Preservation Ordinance shall apply to such person who shall be liable to the penalties provided therein as if he were a person who had been ordered to leave the Colony under the said Ordinance. Temporary permits issued before the date of the taking effect of this Act shall also be governed by this Act. Any person who holds a temporary permit may be exempted from the restrictions on the use of liquor. The Colonial Secretary may also grant such exemption to an Asiatic who is not subject to the provisions of this Act.

18. The Governor may from time to time make or repeal Regulations for any of the following purposes:

    (1) Prescribing the form of the register to be kept under this Act;

    (2) Prescribing the manner and form in which application shall be made for registration, the particulars to be supplied and the means of identification to be furnished;

    (3) Prescribing the form of certificates of registration;

    (4) Prescribing the particulars and the means of identification marks to be furnished by the guardian of a child under the age of eight years by any Asiatic who may be required to produce his certificate of registration under section 9, by any Asiatic applying for the renewal of any certificate of registration which has been lost or destro-

yed and by any Asiatic applying for a trading licence;

(5) Prescribing the form of permit to be issued under section 17 of the Act.

19. Any Asiatic or guardian of an Asiatic failing to comply with any requirement of this Act shall, except where otherwise specified, be liable to a fine not exceeding £100 or to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period not exceeding three months.

20. The Labour Importation Ordinance relating to the Chinese shall not apply to Asiatics.

21. If an Asiatic has acquired any land in his name before the taking effect of the Act of 1885, his heir and successor will be entitled to that land.

22. This Act shall not come into force till such time as the Emperor is pleased to give his assent thereto and his assent is notified in the *Gazette.*

SOME SECTIONS OF PEACE PRESERVATION ORDINANCE OF 1903 REFERRED TO IN NEW LAW:

6. Every person so arrested shall with all convenient speed be brought before a magistrate and if he fails to satisfy the magistrate that he is duly authorized to enter or reside in this Colony under the provisions of this Ordinance, the magistrate may make an order in writing, directing such person to leave this Colony within such time as may be specified in such order, provided that if such person declares upon oath that he has already obtained a permit and gives satisfactory reasons for his inability to produce the same or if he declares upon oath that he can produce satisfactory evidence that he belongs to one of the classes exempted from the necessity of obtaining a permit by the provisions of Section 2 hereof, he may be released upon entering into a recognizance with or without sureties to produce before any magistrate named in such recognizance and within the time stated therein such permit or evidence, as the case may be. If such person fails to comply with the conditions of his recognizance, it shall be forfeited.

7. Any person who may be ordered to leave this Colony and fails to do so within the time specified in the order and any person whose recognizance has been forfeited under the provisions of the last preceding Section may be arrested without warrant and brought before a magistrate and shall upon conviction be sentenced to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a

period of not less than one month and not more than six months and with or without a fine not exceeding £500 and in default of payment to a further term of imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months.

8. If any person imprisoned under the terms of the last preceding Section shall remain in the Colony for a period of more than seven days after the expiry of his term of imprisonment [without obtaining permission in writing from the Colonial Secretary][1], he may be arrested without a warrant and brought before a magistrate and shall on conviction be sentenced to imprison-ment with or without hard labour for a period of not less than six and not more than twelve months and with or without a fine not exceeding £500 and in default of payment to a further term of imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months.

9. Any person who

   (1) obtains or attempts to obtain or incites any person to obtain or aids or abets any person in obtaining a permit by any fraud, misrepresentation, false pretence, falsehood or other improper means;

   (2) uses or attempts to use or incites any person to use or aids or abets any person in using any permit so obtained;

   (3) enters or attempts to enter this Colony on a permit so obtained or on a permit not issued to him by proper authority

   shall be liable to a fine not exceeding £500 or to imprison-ment with or without hard labour for a term not exceeding two years or to both such fine and such imprisonment.

10. It shall be lawful for the Lieutenant-Governor on its being shown to his satisfaction that there are reasonable grounds for believing that any person within this Colony is dangerous to the peace and good government of the country to issue an order to such person to leave the Colony within such time as may be stated therein. If on the expiry of the said period such person shall be found within the Colony, he shall be proceed-ed against in the manner prescribed in Sections 7 and 8 of this Ordinance and shall be subject to penalties therein provided.

[1] The words in square brackets have been supplied from the English text.

This law has been published in the form of a booklet. Price 6d. Postage half a penny.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-11-1907

287. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO HIGH COMMISSIONER

21-24 COURT CHAMBERS,
CORNER RISSIK & ANDERSON STREETS,
P. O. BOX 6522,
JOHANNESBURG,
December 3, 1907

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE HIGH COMMISSIONER
JOHANNESBURG

SIR,

Mr. David Pollock has just brought me a message from Mr. Hosken suggesting to me that I should approach His Excellency privately in connection with the serious situation that has arisen regarding the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, and to place before His Excellency what I consider would be acceptable to the Asiatic communities and would, at the same time, meet the main object of the Government.

I need hardly preface what I am about to say with the statement that, in the position I have felt called upon to take up in this matter, my desire has been to serve the Government equally with my countrymen. It is because I consider myself to be a lover of the Empire for what I have learned to be its beauties that, seeing, rightly or wrongly, in the Asiatic Law Amendment Act seeds of danger to it, I have advised my countrymen at all costs to resist the Act in the most peaceful and, shall I add, Christian manner.

The object of the Government being to identify every Indian entitled to remain in and enter the Colony, in my humble opinion, it can be met by amending the Immigration Restriction Act, which still awaits the Royal sanction, and which, I trust, will not receive the Royal sanction in its present form. In my humble opinion, the offer for voluntary registration will not, in view of the prospective repeal of the Peace Preservation Ordinance, be of much use, because any

[1] Here followed in the original the Regulations framed under the Act, *vide* "Obnoxious Law", 6-7-1907 and Appendix IV.

registration certificates that might be taken out would be of no avail without the Peace Preservation Ordinance. I, therefore, venture to suggest as follows:

(a) to withdraw the notices in the *Government Gazette* regarding registration under the Act;

(b) to amend the Immigration Restriction Act at the next session of Parliament so as to provide for the issue of certificates of domicile to those Indians who may be entitled to remain in orenter the Colony the Peace by Preservation Ordinance, and those who may hold £3 registration certificates under Law 3 of 1885, who can establish their claim to the certificates. Certificates of domicile will take the place of registration certificates, and will contain full identification particulars. This does not contemplate certificates for the minor children of domiciled Asiatics, but, in order to prevent any fraud, children, with their names and ages, will be described in certificates of domicile; so that, at the utmost, what may happen can never be an unlawful increase in the number of Asiatic children in the Colony, but, possibly, in the rarest cases, personation, which can be dealt with stringently under the Immigration Restriction Act. The amendment does also not contemplate certificates of domicile for Asiatics who will be able to pass the education test, which, under the clause as it at present stands, is sufficiently heavy and, therefore, provides complete identification by itself. The amendment will also repeal the Asiatic Act.

Seeing that fifteen months have passed by without any registration, perhaps three or four more would not matter; but, if the Government think otherwise, it is respectfully submitted that they may, after the withdrawal of the notices, issue registration certificates in place of the existing documents, if only in order to test the *bona fides* of the community. These may, at the time of amending the Immigration Act, be recognised as certificates of domicile.

In my opinion, the chief reason for passing the Asiatic Act was the charge of surreptitious entry *on a wholesale basis*[1]. I have always felt most strongly about it, as I have always known intimately the working of the Asiatic Department under successive officers. The evidence that led Captain Hamilton Fowle to suppose that there was little surreptitious entry was the evidence that was used by Mr. Chamney to report unfavourably. I still believe that Mr. Chamney is entirely incompetent for the office he holds, in having no legal ability

[1] These words are underlined in the original.

to sift evidence. I have nothing against him personally. He is affable and above suspicion, but these two qualities do not make up for the want of a further qualification which is indispensable to an office such as he holds. I, therefore, as an alternative to the exchange of existing certificates, venture to suggest the appointment of a judge of the Supreme Court, the Chief Magistrate for the Witwatersrand District, or some such high official with legal knowledge to investigate the charge of surreptitious entry. He will be able to report upon anything that the Asiatic Officers may have to place before him; and, if the inquiry made is open to the public, and witnesses are publicly examined, it will allay the anxiety of the people of the Transvaal, and any report that might be made could not bequestioned by any people and would, perhaps, pave the way for the amendment suggested in this letter.

I purposely refrain from examining the methods of identification and considering the question of finger-prints, which is only a secondary matter. If the idea of repealing the Asiatic Act and seeking the co-operation of the Indian community be entertained, other difficulties can, I have no doubt, be overcome.

If required, I shall be prepared to submit in legal phraseology amendments to the Immigration Restriction Act that would, in my humble opinion, completely fulfil the object of the Asiatic Act so far as identification is concerned, without in any way wounding the susceptibilities of British Indians.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

M. K. GANDHI

Transvaal Governor's Archives, Pretoria: File 53/11/1907

288. TRIAL OF MAHOMED ESSAK

[VOLKSRUST,
December 6, 1907]

Mr. Gandhi, who represented accused[1], thought that the indecision of the Law Department should not prejudice his client, especially as he was under detention and refused to be bailed out. If a definite charge could not be framed against him, he should be immediately discharged. It would even then be open to the Government to re-arrest him, as his client had no desire to leave the country, but, on the contrary, to assert his right to remain in it.[2]

Indian Opinion, 14-12-1907

289. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

JOHANNESBURG,
Before *December 7, 1907*

TO

THE HON'BLE THE COLONIAL
SECRETARY
[PRETORIA

SIR,]

I have been directed by my Association to draw your attention to the amendment of the Traffic Bye-Laws with reference to first-class

[1] Mahomed Essak, a cook by profession, was arrested at Volksrust on his return from India. He had been in the Transvaal for four years before the Boer War and had been granted a permit and a registration certificate under the Peace Preservation Ordinance and Law 3 of 1885. He was produced before Mr. De Villiers, Assistant Resident Magistrate, and refused to be bailed out. The Public Prosecutor, Mr. Mentz, however, was still awaiting instructions as to the charge to be framed against the accused.

[2] After further argument, the magistrate remanded the case to Johannesburg in order to avoid expense and delay, and allowed Mahomed Essak to be released on his own recognizance. When the case came up for hearing before Mr. Jordan at Johannesburg on December 11, Essak was charged under the same section as the 37 Indians tried on December 9; *vide* "Trial of Indians", 9-12-1907. The evidence tendered was of the same nature. *Indian Opinion*, 14-12-1907, reported: "Mr. Gandhi, without calling any evidence for the accused, asked for his discharge. Mr. Jordan delivered a considered judgment, giving a full interpretation of the Sections of the Peace Preservation Ordinance that bore on the case, and discharged the accused. The court was crowded with Indians."

cabs passed by the Johannesburg Municipality.[1] The amendment, if approved of by the Government, will prevent British Indians from making use of first-class cabs. My Association submits that the distinction will be totally unnecessary and invidious.

The exception made in favour of Asiatic members of the professions is taken by the community rather in the nature of an insult than anything else. Incidentally, my Association draws your attention to the fact that, whilst members of any of the liberal professions may use first class cabs, their wives and children evidently may not.

My Association ventures to trust that the Government will be pleased, in justice to the community represented by my Association, to reject the amendment.

[*I have, etc.,*

ESSOP ISMAIL MIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION]

Indian Opinion, 7-12-1907

290. LETTER TO HIGH COMMISSIONER

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before *December 7, 1907*]

[THE HIGH COMMISSIONER
PRETORIA

SIR,]

At the request of the Punjabis, Pathans and Sikhs, being British subjects resident in the Transvaal, I have the honour to enclose here with for His Excellency's consideration a memorial[2] signed by Jamadar Nawab Khan and Fazali Ilahi on behalf of the others whom they represent, and whose names are given in the list attached to the memorial

In forwarding the petition, I am aware of the fact that His Excellency's intervention can, if at all, only with difficulty be enlisted, but I need hardly point out how serious the situation is so far as regards the memorialists, who are old soldiers and who have fought, as they are undoubtedly now ready to do, for and under the British banner. Whether protection is afforded to them by the local Govern-ment or the Imperial Government, in my humble opinion, it is neces-sary that some steps should be taken to allay the grievances under which they are labouring.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Johannesburg Municipality", Before 1-9-1907
[2] *Vide* "Petition to High Commissioner", Before 26-11-1907.

It was with great hesitation that I undertook to draft the petition for them, but I felt that, as a lover of the Empire to which I belong, I owed it as a duty to give suitable expression to their feelings. Some of them were, and still are, anxious to lay their grievances personally before the highest representative of their Sovereign in South Africa. I have, however, pointed out to them that such a request was hardly likely to be acceded to, owing not only to the pressure of work that is entailed upon His Excellency but also, perhaps, to the impropriety of any such request by the memorialists.

[*I have, etc.,*

M. K. GANDHI]

Indian Opinion, 7-12-1907

291. RITCH'S SERVICES

Not all Indians, perhaps, have a full idea of the tireless pains taken by Mr. Ritch in England for their benefit. Recently, he has placed the Indians under a further obligation by publishing a brief pamphlet[1] which gives a vivid account of the hardships of Indians in the Transvaal. Every Indian knows that Mr. Ritch's services are invaluable. He has compressed the whole account into a pamphlet of twenty-three pages(octavo size); it is a succinct statement, covering the whole ground and giving the history as from 1885. It is not only through the efforts of Mr. Ritch that we stand to gain; his position also counts. That is to say, a veteran white colonist of eighteen years standing like Mr. Ritch taking up the struggle on behalf of the rights of Indians can have a more powerful effect on the white people. It is for this reason that he has referred to this fact in the preface to his pamphlet. The vast amount of information which he has compressed into such a small pamphlet shows the anxious labour bestowed on his work by Mr. Ritch.

Mr. Ritch has done the right thing in recalling the promises given to the Indian community by Lord Milner in the year 1903. Lord Milner had said then:

> Once on the register, their position is established and no further registration is necessary, nor is a fresh permit required. That registration gives you a right to be here, and a right to come and go.[2]

Mr. Ritch has compared compulsory and voluntary registration in order to point out the difference between the two. Voluntary regist-

[1] *Vide* "British Indians and the Transvall", 7-11-1907.

[2] *Vide* "The British Indian Association and Lord Milner", 11-6-1903.

ration would be devoid of the sting of compulsion, and would constitute an act of grace performed by the Asiatic community in deference to white sentiment. If registration is made compulsory, there will be no difference between Indians and Kaffirs, and the neighbouring Colony will be tempted to adopt it as a precedent. It may also turn out to be a prelude to compulsory segregation in Coloured Locations.

Mr. Ritch has not endeavoured to argue the question, but has relied upon facts, which he has marshalled so as to lead the reader to the irresistible conclusion that the Indian case is just. As has been pointed out by Mr. Ritch at the end of the pamphlet, the inconsistency between prewar promises and post-war performance exposes the Government's perfidy. In Mr. Ritch's own words:[1]

> Apart from the duty, of the Transvaal Government to protect the interests of a wholly unrepresented minority, there is the obligation of the Transvaal to subordinate merely local interests to the welfare of the Empire at large. Let the whites only consider to what extent the authority and prestige of the Imperial Government have been endangered by their heaping of indignity upon indignity upon representatives of the three hundred millions of Indians for the sake of a quarter of a million whites.

Mr. Ritch's pamphlet will enable the whites in England and elsewhere to consider the Indian point of view on the Transvaal question. That will be a very important gain for the Indian community.

We are thus putting up a strong fight, and it seems that even negotiations for a compromise have started; in view of this, it should hardly be necessary for us to add that we expect every Indian to remain firm and, guarding himself against any trap that the Government may lay, boldly to hold himself ready for imprisonment.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-12-1907

292. WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THOSE WHO SUBMIT TO LAW?

This question has often been answered by us. Now Mr. Hill has answered it. Mr. Hill is one of the leading figures among those opposed to the Asiatics. We give elsewhere the summary[2] of a letter written by him. Everyone ought to read it. Mr. Hill remarks that the new law is only a beginning; in the end, the Asiatics are to be driven out altogether. Other laws will certainly follow. Hence, the challenge

[1] The translation given here has been collated with the original in English.

[2] Not reproduced here

of the Indian struggle against the new law must be met squarely by the Government. In other words, the law should be enforced in its entirety and the Asiatics should be crushed. After that is done, the whites will be able to do whatever they want. Is there anyone who will believe, in the face of such a letter, that he can live in peace after submitting to the new law?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-12-1907

293. RAM SUNDAR PUNDIT

We have received letters asking some questions about Punditji. We do not intend to publish them, for the people who wrote them have been altogether misinformed. One of the questions raised in the letters will be answered here. Someone wants to know how the community can gain anything by Punditji's staying on here after the expiry of his temporary permit and being imprisoned for that. It is quite wrong to raise such a doubt. All persons holding temporary permits are not in a position to fight as Punditji did. Such persons are bound to leave the Transvaal on the expiry of the period but those working as priests are in a position to stay on even if an extension is not granted to them. That is the reason why he stayed on, as desired by the community. The [Indian] residents of Germiston had written [to the authorities] on this subject. And in the trial which took place, he was charged under section 17 of the new Act. We are convinced that the case against him has done much good to the community. Everyone feels bolder as a result of Punditji's going to gaol. At a time like this, nothing but good can be done by any Indian going to gaol in the course of the struggle against the law. For, this is our first experience. The imprisonment of a man like Punditji is bound to have a very powerful effect; in fact, there has been such an effect. It is because of that effect that Shahji Saheb and others did their utmost to follow him to gaol, and that a meeting was held in Germiston attended by hundreds of Indians, where Punditji was complimented on his courage. Everyone can talk, but, so far, only Punditji has shown himself capable of action. It is enough for us that he has sacrificed himself for the benefit of the community, and is prepared to make still further sacrifices after coming out of gaol.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-12-1907

294. VOLUNTEERS FOR NATAL

There is again a rebellion of Kaffirs in Zululand. In view of this, hundreds of white troops have been dispatched. The Indian community must come forward at such a time without, however, thinking of securing any rights thereby. They must consider only the duty of the community. It is a common observation that when we attend to our duty, rights follow as a matter of course. It will be only proper for the Indian community to make the offer that was made last year.[1] There is a move at present to levy a tax on those who do not enlist. The burden of this levy will fall on Indians alone; even though paying the tax, they will get no credit. We are, therefore, convinced in our minds that the Indian community should repeat its offer. We assume that there are many Indians now who will welcome such work enthusiastically. Those who went to the front last year can do so again. Most of them are seasoned people and familiar with the nature of the work. We very much hope that this work will be taken in hand without any delay.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-12-1907

295. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

HUGE MASS MEETING

There is no end to mass meetings of Indians. And each such meeting is better than the preceding one. The last meeting held in Pretoria was much larger than the one held earlier. The meeting held on Sunday last at Johannesburg[2] surpassed even the one at Pretoria, so impressive were the spirit of the people and the size of the crowd. Nowadays people attend the meetings on their own and everyone is filled with enthusiasm. Everywhere there is evidence of a burning desire for patriotic service at any cost.

MORE THAN TWO THOUSAND

This meeting was attended by more than 2,000 people. There were delegates from many places. There were nearly 40 from Pretoria, 16 from Potchefstroom, and so on from every place.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Congress Meeting", 24-4-1906,to "Interview to The Natal Mercury", 26-4-1906.

[2] The meeting was held in Fordsburg, a suburb of Johannesburg.

MEETING IN SURATI MOSQUE

The meeting was held in the compound of the Surati mosque. There were men sitting everywhere, on the verandah of the mosque, its terrace and roof. Originally, it was intended to hold the meeting in Mr. Essop Mia's new house. But quite a large number of men had collected there even before the meeting commenced, and since it was impossible to accommodate all of them in that building, it was decided on the spot to hold the meeting in the open.

ESSOP MIA

Mr. Essop Mia took the chair, though, in view of the situation obtaining then, he and most others from Johannesburg kept standing all the time. He welcomed the delegates who had assembled, and thanked the pickets for their work.

SUBSTANCE OF OTHER SPEECHES

Mr. Gandhi explained what was likely to happen in December, and referred to the growing feeling of sympathy on the part of the whites. This was the time for Indians to win their freedom and they were not, therefore, to keep on looking to the leaders all the time. Everyone was to look upon himself as a leader and boldly face imprisonment or any other hardship that might be inflicted on him. Our petition no longer lay with an earthly ruler; it was to be addressed to the Creator.

Mr. Emam Abdool Cadir showed that those who had faith in God had no cause for fear. He was a picket, and he would be glad if the Government laid hands on him first.

Mr. Manibhai Desai (from Pretoria) said that if the Government came down on the pickets first, he would be very happy to bear the brunt of the attack.

One Kanmia picket, whose name I do not know, said that he would not be in the least afraid.

Mr. Abdool Gani said that in this struggle God was on their side, since their cause was just. They were not in the least afraid of going to gaol.

Mr. Naidoo spoke in Tamil and explained the position.

Mr. Shahji Saheb, after referring to what Hazrat Imam Hussein had suffered, said that what had happened to Ram Sundar Pundit might also happen to a Muslim priest. Unable to bear this thought, he had forced himself to be prepared to follow the Pundit to gaol.

Mr. Omarji Sale said that he would have no fear of gaol.

Mr. Coovadia said that it would not matter if the Government

attacked businessmen and forced them to close down the shops. That would bring our freedom very near.

Mr. Khurshedji Desai (from Krugersdorp) described the difficulties of the Kaffirs in obtaining the passes which they were required to carry.

Mr. Abdul Rahman (from Potchefstroom) said that Potchefstroom was quite strong and that all people there were prepared to go to gaol.

Mr. Osman Latief (from Potchefstroom) said that he was prepared to go to gaol, leaving his wife and children behind.

Mr. Quinn (President of the Chinese Association) spoke in English and said that this was a struggle to secure the freedom of Asiatics. All the Chinese were ready to fight unto death.

Mr. Ebrahim Aswat said that if the Indian community yielded now and took out registers through fear, it would be called to account before God by the Chinaman who had committed suicide, for it was the Indians who had exhorted the Chinese to fight.

Mr. Nawab Khan said that it was the duty of every Indian to fight to the last for the benefit of the community and for the sake of religion.

Mr. Hajee Habib, in his speech, expressed regret that Memons had taken out registers, and advised them to remain firm.

Mr. Polak said that it was only now that the time of real test had drawn near. After Mr. Gandhi's imprisonment, he would not spare himself in carrying out whatever fell to his lot.

In reply to some questions, Mr. Gandhi said that if, after being arrested, anyone was required in gaol to give digit-impressions, he should give them. This was a struggle for freedom from slavery, not against digit-impressions. In gaol, the rule for taking ten finger-prints applied to everyone. They need not oppose it. If, however, anyone asked them in gaol to get themselves registered, that must not be done. In case he himself was arrested, Mr. Polak would be able to attend to all work, such as sending telegrams, etc. No one was to engage a lawyer when arrested for not taking out a new register.

Mr. Manji Lakhani (from Pretoria) said that some played "Codys", and some smoked "Chamneys".[1] Speaking for himself, he said he would rather become a beggar than take out the new register.

Mr. Cachalia said that, irrespective of whether the leaders

[1] The speaker was punning on the names "Cody" (cowries) and "Chamney" (chimneys).

remained firm or not, those who did not want slavery would continue to fight. The editor of *The Transvaal Leader,* Mr. Cartwright, having heard of the meeting, went there specially as an observer. He had much sympathy for the Indians. He is an eminent man and has himself been to gaol for his powerful writings. He is a very capable man, who is not afraid of defending truth.

MESSAGE FROM RAM SUNDAR PUNDIT

On Monday, Mr. Gandhi had an interview with Ram Sundar Pundit, having obtained special permission for it. Since the Governor had ordered that they should talk in English, the whole interview took place in English in the presence of the Chief Warder. Punditji spoke of many things, of which I reproduce here only the essential part:

> Please tell everyone that I am happy here. It would have been better if the Government had awarded me hard labour. After my release, I shall be prepared to go to gaol again for the sake of the community. While here, I have read all the poems on gaol-going. I have been deeply moved by them, especially by the poems of Mr. Mehtab. When I come out, I hope to see a copy of these poems in the hands of every Indian in Germiston. How is it that other Indians have not been arrested, though it is already December? We shall gain freedom only when that happens. Please tell everyone that there is no hardship in gaol. I see even women here. No one should feel anxious on my account. I feel as if I am in a palace. I only wish that no Indian submits to the law. The Governor and the Chief Warder look after me very well.

I have felt much hesitation in reproducing what Punditji said about the poems on gaol-going. But I have given the message as a matter of duty because he was very particular about it. No one, however, should imagine that any monetary interest of those working with *Indian Opinion is* involved in this. The paper is brought out with great difficulty, and even now those who are working on it do not make any profit worth the name.

PETITION BY PUNJABIS

Last week I gave a translation of the petition made by the Punjabis. Mr. Gandhi has addressed the following letter[1] to Lord Selborne to accompany the petition.

[1] For the text of the letter, *vide* "Letter to High Commissioner", Before 7-12-1907. The first paragraph was omitted in the Gujarati version.

BLACKLEGS IN NOVEMBER

Daring the month of November, pickets worked at Pretoria as well as they had done at Johannesburg. Thanks to their alertness, very few Indians got themselves registered, and not a single one, it can be claimed, from Pretoria itself. But there were a few here and there in the Colony. Heidelberg gave the lead. Mr. Ratilal, who is counted among the educated people, was the first. He was followed by some of Mr. Abu Mian Camroodeen's men, and last came Mr. Khota's men. Everyone felt sorry that Mr. Khota's men had applied. The Surati community feels humiliated by the action of these men. The Gujarati Hindus are very much upset on account of Mr. Ratilal's application. It was observed that the Gujarati Hindus had so far remained clean. Mr. Ratilal has disproved the general belief that, apart from Mr. Lakshmi Chand, no one else would apply. As regards the servants of Mr. Khota, he writes to say that it was not their fault. It was because of his pressure on them that they went. They were quite disinclined to go, but went because of his pressure. Mr. Khota is now sorry and feels ashamed. He adds that he was very much afraid, for he owned four shops. As for himself, he would not now apply under any circumstances, but would rather go to gaol. Since Mr. Khota does not defend his conduct, there is no more comment to be made. But it should be a matter of regret to everyone that he was overcome by fear. It would have been a fine thing if he had not faltered. I very much hope that no one will follow Mr. Khota's example.

Other blacklegs include some poor men from Madras and Calcutta. No weight is to be attached to them because they are quite unknown here and have been living almost as slaves. The argument that some leaders wanted registration to continue in November is thus proved to be baseless.

"THE SUNDAY TIMES"

The Sunday Times has remarked that, if the former permit officers had not proved corrupt, there could have been no need for the new law. It is thus proved that the Government is punishing the Indian community for the fault of its own officers.

OTHER NEWSPAPERS

The comments appearing in other newspapers are amusing. None of them considers it likely that the Government could send anybody to gaol. *The Star* even goes to the extent of saying that there should be no need to send anyone to gaol. By merely withholding licences, they could apply a gradually increasing pressure and compel the people to take out registers. It openly says that, when any Indian is

produced before a magistrate, the latter, instead of sending the Indian to gaol, should merely give him further time to apply for a register.

BE ON GUARD

The statement in *The Star* appears to be inspired by the Government and hence every Indian should be on his guard. If any Indian produced before a magistrate proves to be a coward, the result will be anything but good. The magistrate, instead of giving notice to such an Indian to leave the country, will only advise him to apply for a register. If the Government thus wants to lay a trap, it is necessary for the Indians to be watchful. A plain refusal will solve all difficulties. Everyone should utter only an emphatic 'no' in reply. There is no limit now to the weakness of the Government. It is frightened of the very fact of its being tyrannical. Where is the threat of General Smuts? What has happened to his talk of deportation? Though the Government is betraying so much weakness, there are Indians who continue to harbour fear in their hearts.

ANOTHER WARNING

If anyone should present himself at the house of an Indian as a detective in plain clothes, and ask for his permit or want the shop to be closed down, no one should listen to him. It is likely that some persons may go about posing as detectives.

MOVE FOR COMPROMISE

Many eminent whites have started a move for a compromise. Meetings have been taking place between Sir Percy Fitzpatrick and others. The indications at present are that the Government will not arrest anyone and that a compromise will be reached peacefully. If that happens, the credit for it will go to Ram Sundar Pundit and to the Chinaman who committed suicide. That incident produced a feeling of revulsion everywhere and strengthened the case of the Asiatics. The time has not yet come to make public all the facts about the move that has been initiated; hence I feel obliged to stop here. All newspapers now report that the Government will not enforce the present Act. Something will be done in January. The Government is thus climbing down step by step. No one, either black or white, even mentions now that all people can be sent to gaol.

WELL DESERVED!

Some people from Calcutta and Madras, who got themselves registered under threats or for fear of losing their jobs, have now lost their jobs. The reason for this is not known. But it is worth noting that, though they were inoculated against the plague, they could not

save themselves. They are now very sorry. They have lost their jobs as well astheir honour. Another instance has also come to my knowledge. One or two Indians got themselves registered in the hope of being able to obtain credit. Now they have handed over their books of account to the dealers [who gave them credit] ! No one can fathom the ways of God.

KONKANI PASSIVE RESISTER

A Konkani named Mahomed Essak holds an old register and permit. In spite of this, he was arrested under the new law while on his way from Natal to Volksrust. He has refused to offer bail. Mr. Gandhi has sent a telegram to the Public Prosecutor that they had no authority to arrest the man. And if he was detained without trial, he would himself take up the case. It is not possible to prosecute this man. For, he has only recently entered the Transvaal from Natal. The Government had no power to arrest him until after eight days. This is the line along which this case should be fought. For, it is necessary that people coming from outside should have an opportunity to remain free in this manner for eight days. In that case, the trial can take place only in Johannesburg, and passive resistance will gain strength. I congratulate the Konkanis on the fact that this passive resister is a Konkani. The case will be taken up on Friday. The magistrate has fixed the bail at £10. But no one has offered it. There is a telegram from Volksrust stating that Mr. Mahomed Essak remains brave and fearless.

ABOUT COMPROMISE

Negotiations for a compromise are continuing. People are in such a strong position that now they wish even to back out of voluntary registration, and assert that there should be no compromise with the Government at all, that the fight should continue, and that they should retain whatever documents they hold and merely mark time. This spirit is quite admirable. [But] the time has now come for the community to show some prudence. What is being offered by way of compromise all these twelve months cannot be withdrawn now. There was a meeting on Wednesday in the Hamidia Hall. But, at that meeting, it was strongly urged by many people that we should only cling to the old documents, and that there should be no voluntary exchange of these documents. I hope that this enthusiasm will subside and that the people, having calmed down, will put forward reasonable demands. I consider it a great victory that the law should be defeated. And it is bound to be defeated if people remain firm in their attitude. But, at the same time, it is necessary to prove that we are reasonable and that we honour our word. Just as we think it criminal to violate an

oath, so also it is disgraceful for us to back out of the promise of voluntary registration given by us.

MEETING ON SUNDAY

A meeting is to take place on Sunday to consider the matter further. If, in the end, the community acts with moderation, the present wave of excitement will be taken in a good light.

PUNDIT

Mr. Ram Sundar Pundit will be released from Johannesburg prison on the 13th at 9 o'clock in the morning. A large number of Johannesburg Indians are expected to turn up to receive him at that time. It is intended to hold a meeting here after receiving him.[1] It will be in the fitness of things if people outside send telegrams offering congratulations and exhorting [him] to show himself brave enough to go to gaol again, if necessary.

PUNJABIS

A European has addressed a letter to Lord Selborne recommending that the Punjabis and others should be enlisted for the Zulu War. Lord Selborne has replied to the petition of the Punjabis that it has been forwarded to the local Government.

CORRIGENDUM

When I wrote last week, the amount under consideration for being sent to our delegates to the [Indian National] Congress was £25 only. Later it was decided to send £35. Accordingly, a cheque for £35 has been dispatched to Mr. Ameeroodeen.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-12-1907

[1] *Vide* "Ram Sundar Pundit", 21-12-1907.

296. TRIAL OF INDIANS[1]

[VOLKSRUST,
December 9, 1907]

In cross-examination, the witness admitted that the permits produced by the men had hitherto been accepted under instructions as sufficient authority for Asiatics to enter or re-enter. The witness did not know whether re-entry was in accordance withthe permits or the Peace Preservation Ordinance. He allowed Asiatics to re-enter, such being his instructions.

[GANDHIJI:] What are your instructions now?

[WITNESS:] My instructions are to detain and arrest all male Asiatics above 16 years who could not produce registration certificates under the Asiatic Act, or who did not produce temporary authorisation allowing them to re-enter the Colony.

Do these instructions apply even to Asiatics whom you may know to be old residents, who may have produced permits, and who may have only recently left the Colony?

Yes, because such is my duty under the instructions. I am to detain all Asiatics without distinction, if they cannot produce authority under the new Act.

In answer to farther questions, Sergeant Mansfield produced the permits and registration certificates and said that they were taken out under Law 3 of 1885. This closed the case for the Crown.

Mr. Gandhi urged that Crown witness had proved his clients' case. The question before the Court was purely one as to whether his clients possessed permits issued under the Peace Preservation Ordinance. These permits were produced by Sergeant Mansfield who admitted that they were in order.

MR. DE VILLIERS: Then you argue that the matter is purely one of argument of law?

MR. GANDHI: Precisely, Your Worship.

Mr. Mentz then argued that the permits held by the men were authority only to enter and reside in the Colony, but not to leave it and re-enter. It was contended that once the men left the Colony, the permits stood cancelled.

Mr. Gandhi, in reply, said that the question was not even that of re-entry. The Court had to keep within the four corners of the indictment, which charged his clients

[1] On December 6, twenty Indians and, during the next two days, another 17 Indians were arrested on arrival at Volksrust. They were tried in the court of the Assistant Resident Magistrate, Mr. De Villiers. The case of the 20 Indians was taken up first. Examined by the Public Prosecutor, Mr. Mentz, Sergeant Mansfield deposed that all the accused held permits and registration certificates under the Peace Preservation Ordinance, their thumb-impressions were in order and their permits authorized them to enter, but not to re-enter, the Colony. The accused had told him that they did not wish to submit to the Asiatic Act. Gandhiji cross-examined him.

with having entered the Colony without permits under Section 5 of the Peace Preservation Ordinance. The evidence before the Court conclusively proved that his clients were actually in possession of their permits on entering. They had all, moreover, paid £3 under Law 3 of 1885. Nor could the Public Prosecutor's contention be justified. The Supreme Court had decided in the case of Bhabha vs. Rex that a permit to enter the Colony included permission to leave it and to re-enter. These were almost the exact words used by Justice Bristowe in that case. Whichever way, therefore, the case was looked at, his clients were entitled to a discharge. The Court had nothing to do with instructions from the Law Department or the construction that it might have placed upon Section 5 of the Peace Preservation Ordinance. The proper course would certainly, in his opinion, have been for the Asiatic Office, if his clients had committed a breach of the new Act, to have charged them under it.[1]

Indian Opinion, 14-12-1907

297. LETTER TO "INDIAN OPINION"

JOHANNESBURG,
December 12, 1907

TO

THE EDITOR
INDIAN OPINION

SIR,

Perhaps you will allow me the hospitality of your columns to draw the attention of the public to the lesson of the thirty-eight prosecutions[2] of British Indians, seemingly under the Peace Preservation Ordinance but really under the Asiatic Registration Act.

The lesson is that the proceedings of the Asiatic Office are all secret. It required the arrest of Punia to learn that illegal instructions were given to arrest Indian women though they may be wives accompanying their husbands duly authorised to enter the Colony, unless the women themselves held permits.

It required the prosecution of a lad of twelve to learn that secret and illegal instructions were issued that innocent children should hold separate permits.

It required the incarceration of Ram Sundar Pundit[3] to learn that

[1] The Court upheld Gandhiji's contention and discharged the accused. The other 17 men were then brought before the Court, but the charge against them was withdrawn.

[2] *Vide* "Trial of Mahomed Essak", 6-12-1907 and the preceding item.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to *Indian Opinion*", 15-11-1907.

the Asiatic Office was not governed by ordinary and known rules for investigation into charges against Asiatics.

Lastly, it required the arrest of thirty-eight Indians and their detention from two to four days to learn that the Asiatic Office had suddenly, after five years' practice to the contrary, discovered that permits issued under the Peace Preservation Ordinance did not cover temporary withdrawal from and return to the Colony. Instructions as to the new reading of the law were given secretly and without the Indians having been previously informed. The public do not know that these self-same men were actually examined by the Transvaal Asiatic Officer posted at Durban and passed by him. Thirty-six of these men were return passengers by the *Sultan*. The Asiatic Office took, I am told, three days to examine these men.

And yet Mr. Lindsay, who as a lawyer ought to know better, glibly talks of surreptitious entry without, I dare say, having taken the trouble of ever even thinking that there might possibly be an Indian side to the story.

Passive resisters depend upon creating public opinion, though they are not turned from their conscientious purpose if they cannot create it in their favour. It will not be denied that their suffering has at last made some public men in this Colony think. May I ask them and others who still continue to disregard the Indian standpoint whether it is not the sacred duty of Indians to refuse to submit to an Act which concentrates arbitrary powers in the hands of a single man who carries on inquiries in secrecy, issues instructions under secrecy, and condemns men without hearing them? Even Dinuzulu[1], who is suspected of rebellious designs, is not condemned on suspicion and without getting a hearing, although Colonel McKenzie[2] has received absolute powers under the proclamation of Martial Law in Zululand. Why should Indians be expected to labour uncomplainingly under the foul charge of organised fraudulent entry and to submit to non-judicial investigation under the Asiatic Act of their title to remain in the country? If their repudiation of the charge were hollow, would they not rather that the whole matter were hushed up than that, as they have repeatedly asked, it should be inquired into openly and judiciously?

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 21-12-1907

[1] Zulu Chief, who was tried for alleged complicity in the poll-tax rebellion

[2] A missionary, who was appointed Commissioner of Bechuanaland in 1884

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

PETITION TO CHINESE AMBASSADOR

JOHANNESBURG,
October 14, 1907

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE ENVOY-EXTRAORDINARY
AND MINISTER-PLENIPOTENTIARY OF

HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY THE EMPEROR OF CHINA
LONDON

THE PETITION OF LEUNG QUINN IN HIS CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN OF THE CHINESE ASSOCIATION OF THEIR TRANSVAAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT:

1. Your Petitioner is the Chairman of the Chinese Association established in Johannesburg four years ago to represent the free Chinese population of the Transvaal.

2. The free Chinese population is at present estimated at over 1,100, the majority of whom are settled in Johannesburg.

3. The majority of the Chinese in the Transvaal are storekeepers of good standing and are all old residents of the Colony.

4. Your Petitioner invites Your Excellency's attention to the Asiatic Law Amendment Act passed by the Transvaal Legislature, copy whereof is hereto attached.

5. The said measure was first passed during the latter part of last year, and it was so deeply resented by the Chinese community of the Transvaal that it was considered advisable to send a special representative to London to plead the cause of the Chinese before Your Excellency's predecessor, so that proper representations might be made to the British Government, and your Petitioner is glad to be able to say that, as a result of the efforts made by Your Excellency's predecessor, the measure was suspended by His Majesty's Government.

6. It was then re-passed unanimously with very great haste by the newly-elected Transvaal Parliament.

7. In the humble opinion of the Chinese Association, the measure fails totally to recognise our ancient civilisation and the fact of our being an independent sovereign nation.

8. It places Chinese subjects on the same level as British subjects coming from India. While it may be proper for the British Government to treat its Indian

subjects as it pleases, your Petitioner respectfully submits that subjects of the Chinese Empire should not be treated in a manner derogatory to the dignity of the Empire to which Your Excellency's Petitioner has the honour to belong, especially in view of the fact that China is a State in alliance with Great Britain and that the subjects of Great Britain receive the most-favoured-nation treatment in China.

9. The Asiatic Act requires, under insulting and heavy penalties, every Chinaman, among others, resident in the Transvaal to take out a new registration certificate in place of the documents already held by him. It subjects [the] Chinese to a system of inspection which is utterly degrading. It requires even children under 16 to be registered by their parents in a most humiliating manner. It requires adult male Chinese and their children to give 18 finger-prints, a requirement which is insisted upon only in connection with habitual criminals. The legislation proceeds upon the assumption, totally denied by the Chinese Association, that many of the Chinese are capable of fraudulent representations. It reduces [the] Chinese to a level lower than that of the natives of South Africa and other coloured people. In short, it is such legislation as can be accepted only by slaves, not free men.

10. The feeling of the Chinese community being as above described, it has decided not to submit to the Act and to suffer any consequences that may follow such breach of the law. The community understands that total material ruin may follow passive resistance to the law and that every Chinaman may even be deported. Over 900 members of the community have signed a solemn declaration not to accept the degrading Act.

11. The Chinese Association recognises that immigration into the Transvaal should be regulated and that an effective check should be placed upon illicit entry into the Transvaal Colony and, in order to assist the Local Government in so doing, the Chinese Association has offered to submit to voluntary re-registration as a test merely of the bona fides of the Chinese community, and not by way of admission that any such re-registration is necessary. It is the compulsion in a matter of this kind which your Petitioner's Association resents.

12. If the voluntary offer cannot be accepted and substantial relief cannot be granted, in the opinion of the Chinese Association, strong representations should be made to the British Government that every Chinaman should be sent back to China, subject to full compensation being paid to him for deprivation of vested rights as to trade, residence, etc.

13. In conclusion, your Petitioner respectfully trusts that the rights of the Chinese subjects resident in the Transvaal will be fully protected by Your Excellency; and for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioner shall, as in duty bound, for ever pray, etc.

[*I have, etc.*,]

LEUNG QUINN
CHAIRMAN,
TRANSVAAL CHINESE ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 26-10-1907

APPENDIX II

TRANSVAAL IMMIGRATION RESTRICTION BILL

The following is the text of a Bill, published in the. Transvaal *Government Gazette*, "to place restrictions on immigration into this Colony, to provide for the removal therefrom of prohibited immigrants and other persons and to establish and maintain an Immigration Department":

Be it enacted by the King's Most Excellent Majesty by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly of the Transvaal as follows:

1. The Peace Preservation Ordinance 1903 shall be and is hereby repealed; provided that no such repeal shall affect or abridge any powers or jurisdiction by the Asiatic Law Amendment Act 1907 conferred for the purpose of carrying out such Act.

2. In this Act and in any regulation made thereunder unless inconsistent with the context:

"department" shall mean the Immigration Department established and maintained under the provisions of this Act;

"Governor" shall mean the officer for the time being administering the government of this Colony acting by and with the advice of the Executive Council;

"imprisonment" shall mean imprisonment with or without hard labour, as the court sentencing an offender to imprisonment may direct;

"magistrate" shall include a resident magistrate and an assistant resident magistrate of any district of the Colony;

"Minister" shall mean the Colonial Secretary or such other Minister to whom the Governor may from time to time assign the carrying out of this Act; "minor" shall mean any person under the age of sixteen years;

"police officer" shall mean any member of a police force lawfully established in this Colony;

"prohibited immigrant" shall mean and include any of the following classes of persons desiring to enter or entering this Colony after the date of the taking effect of this Act:

(1) any person who when asked whether within or outside this Colony by a duly authorized officer shall be unable through deficient education to write out and sign in the characters of an European language an application for permission to enter this Colony or such other documents as such officer may require; provided that for the purposes of this sub-section, Yiddish shall be accepted as an European language; provided further that

(a) if the Minister publish a notice in the Gazette that arrangements have been made with the government of any country for regulating the admission to this Colony of the subjects or citizens of such

country, such subjects or citizens shall not while such notice is in force be required to comply with the provisions of this sub-section;

(b) the Minister shall not issue any such notice unless such arrangements have been sanctioned by resolution of both Houses of Parliament;

(c) any such notice shall cease to have effect as it is cancelled by further notice of the Minister in the *Gazette*;

(2) any person who has not in his possession or at his disposal means to support himself for a reasonable time within this Colony or who is likely to become a public charge if he were allowed to enter therein;

(3) any prostitute or person living on the earnings of prostitution or procuring women for immoral purposes;

(4) any person who under any law in force at the date of his entering or attempting to enter this Colony would be liable if found therein to be removed from or to be ordered to leave the Colony whether on conviction of an offence against such law or for failure to comply with its provisions or otherwise; provided that such conviction be not the result of the commission by such person elsewhere than in this Colony of an offence for which he has received a free pardon;

(5) any person who is a lunatic within the meaning of the Lunacy proclamation 1902 or any amendment thereof;

(6) any person who is a leper or is suffering from such infectious or contagious disease of a loathsome or dangerous character as may from time to time be prescribed by regulation;

(7) any person who, owing to information officially received by the Minister from any Secretary of State or from a member of any colonial government (whether British or foreign) or through diplomatic channels from an officer of any foreign state, is deemed by the Minister to be an undesirable;

(8) any person who the Minister has reasonable grounds for believing would be dangerous to the peace, order and good government of this Colony if he entered therein;

but shall not include

(a) members of His Majesty's regular forces; (b) the officers and crew of any public ship of a foreign state;

(c) any person who is duly accredited to this Colony by or under the authority of His Majesty or of the government of a foreign state together with his wife, family and servants;

(d) any person who has served in any of His majesty's volunteer forces in South Africa and has received a good discharge and who does not come within the scope of sub-section (3), (4), (5), (6), (7) or (8) of the definition of prohibited immigrant;

(e) the wife or minor child of any person who is not a prohibited immigrant;

(f) descendants of the aboriginal races of Africa south of the Equator who do not come within the scope of sub-section (3), (4), (6), (7) or (8) of the definition of prohibited immigrant;

(g) European persons who are agricultural or domestic servants, skilled artisans, mechanics, workmen or miners who are able to produce acertificate signed by the Agent General of this Colony in England or by an officer in England or elsewhere appointed for the purpose by the Governor to the effect that the person named therein has been engaged to serve immediately on arrival in this Colony an employer therein of repute at an adequate remuneration and for a reasonable period of time;

"regulation" shall mean any regulation made under section *fifteen* of this Act.

3. (1) The Governor may establish and maintain out of moneys voted by Parliament for the purpose a department to be known as the "Immigration Department", which shall be under the control of the Minister and in charge of such officer as he may from time to time appoint.

(2) The function of the department shall be the performance of all work whether within or outside this Colony necessary for or incidental to the prevention of the entrance into the Colony of prohibited immigrants or their removal therefrom and the carrying out of any powers or duties that may be specially conferred or imposed on it by this Act or by regulation.

(3) The Governor may from time to time appoint and remove such officers as he may think necessary or expedient to assist in the administration of the department who shall have such powers and perform such duties within or outside this Colony as may be conferred upon them by this Act or by regulation.

4. The Governor may from time to time enter into agreement with the government of any colony or territory in South Africa for the doing of such acts or things as are necessary or expedient for the carrying out of the objects and purposes of this Act.

5. Every prohibited immigrant entering into or found within this Colony shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction

(1) to a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds or in default of payment to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months or to both such fine and such imprisonment; and

(2) to be removed at any time from the Colony by warrant under the hand of the Minister and pending such removal to be detained in such custody as may by regulation be prescribed; provided that

(a) such prohibited immigrant may be discharged from such detention if he find two approved sureties in this Colony (each in the sum of

one hundred pounds) for his leaving the Colony within one month;

(b) if such prohibited immigrant be sentenced to imprisonment, such imprisonment shall terminate as soon as he is removed from the Colony.

(6) Any person convicted after the date of the taking effect of this Act of a contravention of section *three, thirteen* or *twenty-one* of the Immorality Ordinance 1903 or any amendment of such sections and any person who may be deemed by the Minister on reasonable grounds to be dangerous to the peace, order and good government of this Colony if he remain therein may be arrested and removed from the Colony bywarrant under the hand of the Minister and pending removal may be detained in such custody as may be prescribed by regulation.

7. Any person who

(1) wilfully aids or abets a prohibited immigrant in entering or remaining in this Colony; or

(2) wilfully aids or abets a person ordered to be removed under section six in remaining in this Colony; or

(3) enters into or purports to enter into a contract as employer with any person outside this Colony with intent that the provisions of this Act be evaded or at the time of entering into or purporting to enter into such contract shall be unable to fulfil his part thereof or has no reasonable expectation of being so able

shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds or in default of payment to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months or to both such fine and such imprisonment.

8. No prohibited immigrant shall be entitled to obtain a licence to carry on in this Colony any trade or calling or to acquire therein any interest in land whether leasehold, freehold or other interest; and any such licence (if obtained) or any contract deed or other document by which such interest is acquired in contravention of this section shall on conviction of such immigrant under section five of this Act be null and void.

9. Every person found in this Colony who is reasonably suspected of being a prohibited immigrant may be arrested without warrant by any magistrate, justice of the peace, police officer or officer of the department and shall as soon as possible be brought before a court of resident magistrate to be dealt with according to law.

10. No prohibited immigrant shall be exempt from the provisions of this Act or allowed to remain in this Colony by reason only that he had not been informed that he could not enter the Colony or that he may have been allowed to enter through oversight or owing to the fact being undiscovered that he was a prohibited immigrant.

11. Any person ordered to be removed from this Colony under this Act and any other person who shall have been convicted under section seven of aiding or abetting him in entering or remaining in the Colony in contravention of this Act shall be liable to pay all expenditure incurred by the Government in carrying out such

removal whether from the Colony or South Africa or in the detention within the Colony or elsewhere of any person pending his removal; and the amount of such expenditure on production to the Sheriff of the certificate of an officer of the department stating the items and total amount of such expenditure shall be recovered by execution levied on the property within the Colony of the person so liable in manner provided for execution levied under a judgment of the Supreme Court; and the proceeds of such execution shall be paid by the Sheriff to the Colonial Treasurer who after deduction of the amount of expenditure aforesaid and the costs of execution shall remit the balance to the person so liable or to any person appointed by him to receive the same.

12. (1) It shall be the duty of every keeper or person having the management of a place used as an hotel, boarding-house, lodging-house or otherplace wherein persons receive sleeping accommodation for money or valuable consideration to cause to be kept a book in which every person immediately he first receives such accommodation shall enter his name, permanent residence, place of birth and place from which he last came.

(2) Every such book shall be open to the inspection of any police officer or officer of the department at all reasonable times.

(3) Any person failing to comply with the requirements of this section or obstructing or preventing any such officer in carrying out his powers thereunder or making any false entry in such book shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding twenty pounds or in default of payment to imprisonment not exceeding one month or to both such fine and such imprisonment.

13. The burden of proving that a person has not entered or remained in this Colony in contravention of this Act or any regulation shall in any prosecution for such contravention lie upon the accused person.

14. Every court of resident magistrate shall have jurisdiction to impose the maximum penalties for all contraventions of this Act or of any regulation.

15. The Governor may from time to time make, alter or rescind regulations not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act for all or any of the following purposes:

(a) Prescribing the powers and duties of officers of the department,

(b) For preventing the entrance of prohibited immigrants into this Colony,

(c) For the removal from this Colony of persons ordered under this Act to be removed therefrom,

(d) For the detention pending removal of persons ordered under this Act to be removed from the Colony,

(e) Prescribing the diseases which are infectious or contagious diseases for the purposes of sub-section (6) of the definition of prohibited

immigrant,

(f) Prescribing the forms of (i) the certificate mentioned in sub-section (g) of the classes of persons excluded from the definition of prohibited immigrant; (ii) the warrants to be issued by the Minister under sections *five* and *Six*; (iii) the book to be kept under section *twelve*,

(g) Prescribing the conditions under which prohibited immigrants may be allowed to pass through this Colony while journeying to a place outside the same,

(h) Generally for the better carrying out of the objects and purposes of this Act,

and may by any such regulations prescribe penalties for contraventions thereof not exceeding a fine of one hundred pounds or in default of payment imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months or both such fine and such imprisonment.

16. This Act may be cited for all purposes as the Immigrants Restriction Act 1907 and shall take effect on such date as may be declared by proclamation of the Governor in the *Gazette*.

Indian Opinion, 13-7-1907

APPENDIX III

REGULATIONS

MADE UNDER SECTION 18 OF THE ASIATIC LAW AMENDMENT ACT OF 1907

I. In these Regulations, unless inconsistent with the context

"Act" shall mean the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, 1907;

"Adult,' shall mean a male Asiatic of the age of sixteen years or over;

"applicant" shall mean any person who makes application for registration on his own behalf or any person on whose behalf application for registration is made by his guardian;

"application for registration" shall mean an application to be placed on the register of Asiatics, made in such manner and form and accompanied by the supplying of such particulars and the furnishing of such means of identification as are required by Regulation No. 3;

"area" shall mean a magisterial district or such portion thereof as the Colonial Secretary may appoint by notice in the *Gazette*, under sub-section (1) of section *four* of the Act;

"Asiatic" shall mean any such male person as is described in Article *one* of Law No. 3 of 1885, not being a Malay born and resident in any British Colony or possession in South Africa, not a person introduced into the Colony under the Labour--Importation Ordinance, 1904, and not being an officer in the Chinese Consular Service;

"certificate of registration" shall mean a certificate of registration issued under

sub section (I) of section *three* of the Act;

"guardian" shall mean the parent of an Asiatic under the age of sixteen or any other person under whose care or control such Asiatic is Living for the time being or failing any such person the employer of such Asiatic;

"lawful holder" as used in relation to any certificate of registration shall mean the person whose registration is thereby certified;

"minor" hall mean a male Asiatic over the age of eight and under the age of sixteen years;

"police force" shall mean a police force lawfully established in this Colony;

"police officer" shall mean any member of a police force;

"Registrar" shall mean the officer appointed by the Governor to keep the register of Asiatics and any person lawfully acting in such capacity;

"Resident Magistrate" shall include an assistant resident magistrate.

2. The form of the register of Asiatics shall be that set forth in Schedule "A" hereto.

3. The form of application for registration hall be:

(1) for an adult applicant the form set forth in Schedule "B" hereto;

(2) for minor applicant the form set forth in Schedule "C" hereto.

4. (a) Every adult making application for registration on his own behalf shall appear before such person as the Colonial Secretary may by notice in the *Gazette* appoint for the area in which such applicant is resident and shall furnish such person with the particulars required by the form of application set forth in Schedule "B" hereto, and shall produce and surrender to such person:

(1) any permit to enter and reside in the Transvaal issued to him under the provisions of the Indemnity and Peace Preservation Ordinance of 1902, or any amendment thereof;

(2) any certificate of registration or receipts for payment of the fee prescribed for registration under the provisions of Law No. 3 of 1885 as subsequently amended;

(3) any other documents in his possession which he may desire to produce in support of his application for registration.

(b) Every guardian making application for registration on behalf of a minor shall appear before such person as aforesaid with such minor, and shall furnish such person with the particulars regarding himself and such minor as are required by the form set forth in Schedule "C" hereto, and shall produce and surrender to such person such documents relating to such minor as are in the preceding sub-section described.

(c) Every application for registration shall be made at such place and before such date as the Colonial Secretary may for any area prescribe by notice in the *Gazette*.

(d) Every person appointed to receive application for registration as aforesaid shall, immediately the form of application in respect of any applicant is completed, issue to the applicant or guardian a written acknowledgement under his hand of the receipt of the application for registration and of the documents produced and surrendered in support of such application. Such acknowledgement shall be in duplicate in the form set forth in Schedule "D" hereto, and the duplicate copy thereof shall forthwith be transmitted by such person to the Registrar with the form of application and any documents produced in support thereof.

5. If, acting in accordance with sub-section (2) of section five of the Act, the Registrar refuses to register any adult, the notice of refusal sent to the applicant in accordance with such sub-section and the copy sent to the Resident Magistrate for the purpose of being affixed on the principal door of the Magistrate's office, shall be in the form set forth in Schedule "E" hereto.

6. The certificate of registration shall be in the form set forth in Schedule "F" hereto.

7. Every adult required by a police officer or by any person duly authorised thereto by the Colonial Secretary to produce the certificate of registration of which he is the lawful holder shall, in addition to producing such certificate, supply on the demand of such police officer or other person aforesaid the following particulars:

(1) his name in full;
(2) his present residence;
(3) his residence at the date he made application for registration;
(4) his age;

and shall furnish to and in the presence of such police officer or other person aforesaid:

(1) a specimen of his signature, if he is able to write;
(2) impressions of his thumbs or of his thumbs and his fingers.

8. Every guardian of a minor required by such police officer or other person aforesaid to produce the certificate of registration of which such minor is the lawful holder shall, in addition to producing such certificate, supply on such demand as aforesaid the following particulars:

(1) his own name in full;
(2) his present residence;
(3) the name in full of the person who was guardian of the minor at the date on which application was made for a certificate of registration on behalf of such minor and the residence of such person at such date;
(4) the age of such minor;

and shall furnish to and in the presence of such police officer or other person aforesaid the impressions of the thumbs of such minor or of the thumbs and the fingers.

9. Every guardian of Asiatic children under the age of eight years shall on

making application for a certificate of registration supply the following particulars regarding all such children:

(1) their full names;

(2) their respective ages;

(3) the relationship of each to the guardian;

(4) the birth-place of each;

(5) the date on which each entered the Transvaal, if born elsewhere.

10. Any Asiatic applying for the renewal of the certificate of registration of which he, or a minor of whom he is the guardian, was the lawful holder, and which has been lost or destroyed, shall supply to the Registrar the following particulars:

(1) the number of such registration certificate;

(2) his full name;

(3) his present residence;

(4) the full name and the age of the minor (if the application is made by a guardian on behalf of a minor);

and shall furnish to and in the presence of the Registrar or such other person as the Registrar may for the purpose appoint:

(1) impressions of his thumbs and fingers; or

(2) if the application is made by a guardian on behalf of a minor, the number of his own registration certificate, impression of his own right thumb, and the impressions of the thumbs and fingers of such minor.

11. Every Asiatic applying on his own behalf for any trading licence issued under the Revenue Licenses Ordinance, 1905, or any amendment thereof, or under any bye-law in force in a Municipality, shall, in addition to producing to the person appointed to issue such license the certificate of registration of which he is the lawful holder, furnish to and in the presence of such person impressions of all or such of his thumbs or fingers as such person may require.

12. Every Asiatic applying on behalf of another Asiatic, who is temporarily absent from the Transvaal, for such trading license as aforesaid shall supply to the person appointed to issue such license:

(1) his own certificate of registration;

(2) the full name of the Asiatic on whose behalf the application is made;

(3) the present residence of such Asiatic;

(4) the power of attorney or other authority under which he is authorised to apply for such licence or to carry on the trade of the absentee, and such power or other authority shall bear a clear impression of the right thumb of such absentee and shall furnish to and in the presence of such person, if so required, the impression of his own right thumb.

13. The permit to enter and remain in the Colony for a limited period mentioned in section *seventeen* of the Act shall be in the form set forth in Schedule "G" hereto.

SCHEDULE "A"

REGISTER OF ASIATICS

Registration Certificate No.	Date of Issue	Name in Full	Race	Caste or sect	Particulars of Family residing in the Transvaal			Classification	Duplicate Certificate	Remarks or Issued on
					Names of Wives	Sons or Male Wards under 8 years				
						Names	Age	Relationship to Guardian		
1.										

[FACE]

SCHEDULE "B"

APPLICATION MADE FOR REGISTRATION ON BEHALF OF AN ASIATIC MINOR

Name in full.....Race.....
Caste or Sect.....Age.....Height.....
Residence.....Occupation.....
Physical Description.....
....
....
Place of birth..... .....
Date of first arrival in the Transvaal..... .....
Where resident on 31st May, 1902..... .....
Father's name.....Mother's name.....
Wife's name.....Residing at.....
Sons and Male Wards under the age of 8 years

Name	Age	Residence	Relationship to Guardian

Signature of Applicant.... .....
Signature of person taking application..... .....
Date.....Office..... .....

[BACK]

Name..... .....

RIGHT HAND IMPRESSIONS

Thumb	Index	Middle	Ring	Little

LEFT HAND IMPRESSIONS

Thumb	Index	Middle	Ring	Little

SIMULTANEOUS IMPRESSIONS

Left Hand	The four fingers	Right Hand	The four fingers

Impressions of Adult taken by.....Date.....

[FACE]

SCHEDULE "C"

APPLICATION MADE FOR REGISTRATION ON BEHALF OF AN ASIATIC MINOR

PARTICULARS OF GUARDIAN

Name in full.....Race.....
Residence..... .....
Relation of Guardian to Minor..... .....
No. of Certificate..... .....

PARTICULARS OF MINOR

Name in full.....Race.....
Caste or Sect.....Age.....
Residence.....Occupation.....
Where resident on 31st May, 1902..... .....
Father's name.....Mother's name.....
Physical description..... .....
....
....
Place of birth..... .....
Date of arrival in Transvaal..... .....

Right thumb
impression
of Guardian

Signature of Guardian..... .....
Signature of Minor..... .....
Signature of person..... .....
taking application..... .....
Office..... .....
Date..... .....

[BACK]

Name.....

RIGHT HAND IMPRESSIONS

Thumb	Index	Middle	Ring	Little

LEFT HAND IMPRESSION

Thumb	Index	Middle	Ring	Little

SIMULTANEOUS IMPRESSIONS

Left Hand	The four fingers	Right Hand	The four fingers

Impressions of Minor taken by.....Date.....

SCHEDULE "D"

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF APPLICATION

.....190.....

To

.....

.....

.....

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of the application for registration under the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, 1907, made by you on behalf of .... and the documents produced in support of such application as described below.

Signature..... .....

Office..... .....

Description of Documents:

SCHEDULE "E"

NOTICE OF REFUSAL OF APPLICATION

.....190.....

To

.....

.....

.....

Whereas you on the ..... day of ..... at ..... made application to be placed on the register of Asiatics, lawfully resident in the Transvaal;

And whereas after due consideration of such application, it appears to me that you are not lawfully resident in the Transvaal;

You are hereby notified that I refuse to register you as being lawfully resident in the Transvaal, and direct you in terms of sub-section (2) of section *five* of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, 1907, to appear before the ..... Resident Magistrate at ..... on the ..... day of ..... 190 ..... at 10 o'clock in the forenoon to show cause why you should not be ordered to leave this Colony.

Signature
.....
Registrar of Asiatics

SCHEDULE "F"

CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION

Name in full..... .....
Race.....Age.....Height.....
Description..... .....
....
....

Registrar of Asiatics

Right thumb impression

Date of Issue..... .....
Holder's Signature..... .....

No alternations or endorsements are to be made on the face of this certificate except by the Registrar of Asiatics.

SCHEDULE "G"

TEMPORARY PERMIT

Permission is hereby granted to..... .....
whose description is given below, to enter and reside in the Transvaal for a period of.....commencing from the.....

DESCRIPTION

Race.....Caste or Sect.....
Place of birth.....Age.....Height.....
Residence..... .....
Town or place in the Transvaal to which proceeding..... .....
Physical description..... .....
....
....

Signature..... .....
Right thumb impression

Signature .....
Registrar of Asiatics
Impression taken by.....
At..... .....
Date..... .....

APPENDIX IV

SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE

28 QUEEN ANNE'S CHAMBERS, BROADWAY,
WESTMINSTER, S.W.,
August 14, 1907

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, G.C.B., P.C., &C.
PRIME MINISTER

SIR,

A deputation of my Committee, a list of whose names I have the honour to enclose herewith, is desirous of waiting upon you for the purpose of respectfully placing before you their views upon the position and treatment of their Indian fellow-subjects in the Transvaal Colony.

By way of introduction, they have desired me to submit to you the following facts:

The British Indian population of this Colony which, as will later be shown is practically stationary, is, according to recent census returns, about 10,000. The majority belong to the trading class and are shopkeepers and hawkers. The remainder are marked gardeners, native jewellery artificers, tailors, &c. There are virtually no Indian coolies, miners, or mechanics.

You will be aware that "Asiatics" (including British Indians) were subjected by the late Transvaal Government to certain disabilities in addition to those shared by non-Asiatic aliens, and that Law 3 of 1885, while not restricting Asiatic immigration into the State, imposed a £3 registration fee, denied the right to acquire Burghership, prohibited registration of fixed property in their names, and made them liable to be relegated to certain streets, wards and locations. These disabilities, particularly the deprivation of the right to acquire Burghership, were undoubtedly largely due to colour prejudice. Under the old Grondwet, the line between white and coloured was distinctly drawn. It is there laid down that "there shall be no equality between coloured and white".

Against this differential legislation numerous representations and protests were from time to time made to the Transvaal Government by His Majesty's Ministers, notably Lord Derby and Mr. Chamberlain. These are well summarised in the words of a despatch of July 20th, 1904, from the Right Honourable Alfred Lyttelton to the High Commissioner:

"Up to the outbreak of war, therefore, the British Government had steadily maintained, at first as a matter of right and, subsequent to the Award of 1895 by diplomatic persuasion, the interest of British Indians resident in the Transvaal, and the treatment of those fellow subjects formed part of the British case against the late South African Republic."

It is doubtless also unnecessary to remind you of the important hospital and other services voluntarily rendered during the war by British Indians domiciled in South Africa. Not unnaturally those of the Transvaal confidently expected that incorporation of the Transvaal territory within the Empire would see the prompt removal of their disabilities, and their restoration to equality with their fellow subjects. Although, however, annexation of the Transvaal was followed by the prompt repeal of very many of the old statutes of the Republic, Law 3 of 1885 was, to their unspeakable disappointment, retained on the Statute Book of the new Colony. Moreover, immigration was restricted to the return of pre-war residents, the Peace Preservation Ordinance, passed by the new Government for the purpose of excluding enemies of the new State, being applied to keep out would-be Asiatic newcomers. A special department was, for the first time, established to regulate and supervise the return of domiciled Asiatics, who experienced numerous and grievous delays in obtaining permits to return to their homes and businesses. In 1903, the High Commissioner decided to strictly enforce the provisions of Law 3 of 1885, which, owing to representations by His Majesty's Government, had to a great extent remained a dead letter under the Boer regime. All Asiatics who could not satisfy the authorities that they had already paid the £3 registration fee were compelled to disburse. Five thousand and sixty-six Indians and five hundred and fifteen Chinese paid a total of £9,059. The whole character of the registration was altered. Under the Republic, this, when required at all, had merely consisted in the passing to the payer of the receipt for the £3. The Registrar of Asiatics reported in 1904 that, with three exceptions, no Asiatic registers or records compiled by the late Boer Government (if such records ever were kept) were found in any district. Re-registration now for the first time assumed the character of identification. Instead of being mere receipts for the £3 fee, the certificates issued contained names of holders, their wives, number of children, the age of the holders, and their distinctive marks and thumb prints. Protestations by the British Indian community against the step proposed, on the ground that having already complied with the requirements of the law they were not compellable to re-register, were met by the recommendation of the High Commissioner to acquiesce in the new requirement, His Lordship assuring them:

"I think that registration is a protection to them. To that registration there is attached a £3 tax. It is only asked for once, those who have paid it to the old

Government have only to prove that they have done so, and they have not to pay it again. Again, once on the register, their position is established and no further registration is necessary, nor is a fresh permit required. That registration gives you a right to be here and a right to come and go:"

The British Indian community thereupon voluntarily assented to the new re-registration and without statutory or other compulsion, one and all took out the passes required. These passes bearing the identification particulars previously described are to-day held by every resident British Indian practically without exception.

Virtually no relaxation has taken place in the old restrictions against the holding of fixed property.

During 1902 and 1903, considerable correspondence passed between His Majesty's Government and the Government of the Transvaal Colony on the subject of segregation of Asiatics (including British Indians) in bazaars or locations specially set apart for them, and also with a view to curtailing their right to demand licences to trade where they chose in the Colony.

A refusal in 1904 to issue renewal of a shop licence to Habib Motan, of Pretoria and Pietersburg, resulted in a Supreme Court judgment vindicating their right to trade outside locations.

In 1903, correspondence passed between the Transvaal Government and the Government of India on the subject of coolie labour for the Transvaal mines. Negotiations proved abortive, the Government of India insisting upon the removal of certain disabilities suffered by the resident Indian mercantile community of the Colony as a necessary condition to its assent, the Transvaal Government finding itself unable to agree.

In the same year, certain proposed legislation was submitted to His Majesty's Government by the Government of the Transvaal, under which such rights as still remained to the Asiatic community were threatened with still further curtailment, to which His Majesty's Government replied in the following terms:

"But an apprehended trade competition from the British Indians now in the country, whose number is now comparatively small and will, under the proposed restrictions upon immigrants, be in a diminishing proportion, cannot be accepted as sufficient reason for the legislation proposed. His Majesty's Government have steadily declined to allow this fear to influence their views in the past. On the contrary for many years they repeatedly protested before the Empire and the civilized world against the policy and laws of the late South African Republic in relation to this subject.

"These laws were indeed only partially enforced, while His Majesty's Government is now asked not merely to sanction their strict enforcement, but to set aside by legislation a judgment of the Supreme Court, which has given to the British Indian rights for which His Majesty's Government have strenuously contended.

"His Majesty's Government cannot believe that the British community in the

Transvaal appreciate the true nature of the proposition which some of its members are pressing upon you. They as Britons are as jealous of the honour of the British name as ourselves and, even if a material sacrifice were necessary to vindicate that honour, I feel assured that they would cheerfully make it. *His Majesty's Government hold that it is derogatory to national honour to impose on resident British subjects disabilities against which we had remonstrated, and to which even the law of the late South African Republic, rightly interpreted, did not subject them,* and they do not doubt that when this is perceived, the public opinion of the Colony will not any longer support the demand which has been put forward."

With the advent to office of the present Government, British Indians in the Transvaal entertained the utmost confidence that, even if no removal of existing disabilities followed, the community would at least be firmly protected from any further encroachments upon their remaining rights.

You will recall the circumstances attending the disallowance in 1906 of the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance, and you will likewise be aware that, despite numerous appeals and protests, identically the same measure has been passed with the sanction of His Majesty's Government by the present Responsible Government of the Transvaal.

Representations by my Committee to His Majesty's Government and to General Botha in person were received with assurances that the law in question would be administered by the Transvaal Government in the mildest and least irksome manner. Unhappily, that Government has apparently not seen its way to temper the severity which characterised the original Ordinance, sanction to which was refused, nor yet the Regulations under which it is to be administered.

The new Act has aroused the utmost indignation throughout the British Indian community, and has stirred this ordinarily docile and law-abiding people in a wholly unprecedented manner. They protest against it chiefly on the following grounds:

(1) It violates the assurances of the High Commissioner given to them in 1903, when they voluntarily assented to re-registration.

(2) It nullifies their present title to be in the country, and at a stroke invalidates existing permits and certificates, throwing upon the holders the burden of proving their title to them.

(3) In place of voluntary registration assented to in deference to white colonial prejudice and suspicion, it imposes compulsory registration under most humiliating and, to sensitive British Indians, revolting conditions and degrades them as a community to the level of the South African savage. They become a people branded by law with the bar-sinister of inferiority.

(4) It is, they fear, but a prelude to still further restrictions upon their liberties, and to the enactment of similar legislation in other South African Colonies.

(5) It presupposes a criminal complicity in a conspiracy, of which they have been accused, to flood the country with Asiatics, but which they have persistently denied, and in regard to which they have repeatedly called for a Commission of

Enquiry.

(6) It is reactionary legislation and opposed to the best British traditions.

The objection of the community is thus not to re-registration per se, which indeed they have offered to again voluntarily undergo. It is to the communal humiliation and degradation felt by them to result from such differential class legislation.

Mass meetings attended by[1] as many as 2,000 British Indians have recently been held, at which shopkeepers of position and importance, as well as smaller traders and hawkers, solemnly pledged themselves to submit to the last penalties of the law, and sacrifice not only personal liberty, but every worldly possession, rather than re-register in terms of the new Act. The Asiatics of Pretoria were notified that they must apply for the new certificates before the beginning of the present month. They have preferred to incur liability to heavy fine and deportation and have held severely aloof.

Besides the representations of my Committee, British Indians themselves have made numerous appeals to the Transvaal Government, praying for a consideration of the matter from their point of view, but without avail.

My Committee now feel that the time has arrived for intercession by the Imperial Government, and they would respectfully urge that, in their humble opinion, British Indians of the Transvaal have not been restored to those rights to which, as civilized subjects of the Empire, they are entitled, nor yet have received the protection due to them from His Majesty's Government from the imposition of further disabilities since the annexation.

The claims of the British Indians are most modest:

(1) Repeal of the new law requiring compulsory re-registration and, as an alternative, acceptance of their offer to re-register voluntarily; existing certificates to be surrendered for a new document to be mutually agreed upon, failures to voluntarily register, should any such occur (which is most unlikely), to be met by a subsequent short Act empowering expulsion of Asiatics not in possession of the new certificate;

(2) Repeal of Law 3 of 1885 as far as it applies to British Indians. But:

(A) The right of the European colonists to limit the influx of Asiatic is admitted. Such restriction is now effected under the Peace Preservation Ordinance, and an Immigration Restriction Bill is already *gazetted* to still further limit such immigration;

(B) The principle of control of the issue of trading licenses by Licensing Boards (with power of appeal from their decision to the Supreme Court) is likewise accepted;

(C) In deference to existing prejudices of the white colonists, neither political nor municipal power is demanded.

[1] The original has "Mass meetings numbering..."

It is perhaps superfluous to add that this matter is not one touching merely the domestic concerns of the Colony but is one of highest Imperial importance, and far-reaching in its consequences.

It is confidently anticipated that friendly representations by His Majesty's Government to the Government of the Transvaal on behalf of the British Indians in question would have the desired effect.

I am desired to add that should you signify your willingness to receive the deputation, you will kindly name alternative dates, as some members of my Committee have numerous engagements which they might find it impossible to postpone.

I have, &c.,

L. W. RITCH

SECRETARY

India Office Records: J. & P. 3927/07

APPENDIX V

A PRIZE OF TEN GUINEAS

For an Essay on "The Ethics of Passive Resistance"

As this journal has, in a humble way, led the battle of passive resistance now being offered by the Indians in the Transvaal against an Act which, in their opinion, does violence to their consciences and as the controllers of the policy of this journal are desirous of showing the general utility of the doctrine of passive resistance, the management have decided to offer, as they now do, a prize of ten guineas for the best essay on "The Ethics of Passive Resistance". The doctrine, religiously construed, means a fulfilment of Jesus' famous saying, "Resist not evil". As such, it is of eternal and universal application, and if it were practised largely, it would replace, to a great extent if not entirely, brute force and other kindred methods for securing redress of grievances or inauguration of reforms. The management, therefore, trust that the best men in South Africa, having leisure, will compete for the prize, not for its monetary value, but with a view to an elucidation of [a] principle of life which, although it has the sanction of the best minds of the world, is still little understood and less practised.

The terms of competition are as follows:

(1) The essay should be written clearly, on side of the paper only, or preferably typed. The competitor's name should not appear on the manuscript.

(2) It may be divided into four chapters and should not cover more than ten columns of *Indian Opinion*.

(3) It should contain an examination of Thoreau's classic, "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience", Tolstoy's works—more especially "The Kingdom of Heaven is Within You"—and it should give Biblical and other religious authorities and

illustrations; and also the application of the "Apology of Socrates" to the question. The essay should give illustrations from modern history in support of the doctrine.

(4) It should be addressed: The Editor, *Indian Opinion*, Phoenix, Natal, and should reach not later than the 30th instant.

(5) The management reserve to themselves the right to publish and translate any of the contributions received, and to reject all if none is considered suitable.[1]

Indian Opinion, 9-11-1907

APPENDIX VI

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION, JOHANNESBURG

SUMMARY OF ACCOUNT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE FROM MARCH, 1906 TO AUGUST, 1907

	£	s.	d.		£,	s.	
	d.						
To Cash London Committee	280	6	6	By Cash from Naidoo	18	0	0
,, ,, Telegrams	27	10	11	,, ,, ,, The Tamil Community	20	0	0
,, ,, Cables	192	1	9	,, ,, ,, The Hindu Society	25	0	0
,, ,, Lichtenstein & Blake Tram Case, etc.	88	16	10	,, ,, ,, The Rander Committee	20	0	0
,, ,, Stationery	1	3	6	,, ,, ,, Hamidia Islamic Society	14	0	0
,, ,, Papers including daily Cape *Gazette* and supply of 30 copies [of] *Indian Opinion* weekly to London Committee	16	14	11	,, ,, Refund by C.S.A.R.	1	8	2
,, ,, Typist	47	10	0	,, ,, Refund by Reuter	1	2	6
,, ,, Printing petitions,				,, ,, Refund re: West End Hall	1	10	0
				,, ,, from the Gujarat Hindu Society	224	10	9

[1] The above announcement was repeated in *Indian Opinion*, 30-11-1907 with the following addition: "Rev. Dr. J. Landau, Ph.D. (Vienna), M.A. (Cape), has kindly consented to act as judge, the time allowed having been extended until the 31st December instead of 30th November, as previously announced. Dr. Landau desires it to be clearly understood that, in so doing, he in no way enters into the merits of the political application of the principle of 'passive resistance'. His functions are entirely confined to the judging of the literary and intrinsic worth of the essays sent in."

He, however, having declined, the Rev. J. J. Doke, minister of the Central Baptist Church, judged the essays and gave his award on January 17, 1908; *vide Indian Opinion*, 25-1-1908.

		£	s.	d.
	etc.	41	11	4
,, ,,	Hire of halls for meetings	24	16	6
,, ,,	Stamps	4	7	4
,, ,,	Fares (Railway for several Deputations)	29	2	2
,, ,,	Press telegrams	2	2	3
,, ,,	Alexander	0	10	6
,, ,,	Sundries, including advertisements, etc.	24	8	3
		£781	2	9

		£	s.	d.
,, ,,	Collection by Alibhai Akojee	17	0	0
,, ,,	Collection by Naidoo & Co.	1	4	0
,, ,,	from M.E. Gatu	0	8	0
,, ,,	Balance from Deputation a/c	167	9	6
,, ,,	from C.M. Valab	39	10	0
,, ,,	Collected at meeting	30	10	0
,, ,,	from A.A. Pillay	1	0	0
,, ,,	I. V. Thomas	0	10	0
,, ,,	from Suliman I. Mia & Co.	1	10	0
,, ,,	from Nanji Ghela	7	0	0
,, ,,	Collection at Spelonken	10	0	0
,, ,,	from Vyas	0	2	4
,,	Amount previously acknowledged	108	10	7
,,	Balance available	94	17	5
		£781	2	9

Indian Opinion, 26-10-1907

SUMMARY OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE

FROM [1ST] SEPTEMBER TO 23RD NOVEMBER, 1907

		£	s.	d.
To	Advertisement re: Deputation and Association's a/c	4	l5	0
”	Cables, Immigration Bill, Dadabhai's birthday, Professor Gokhale, S. Banerjea, King's birthday	15	7	6
,,	Fares to Germiston and Pretoria	3	7	8
,,	Advocate Gregorowski for opinion re: Sinha Vassa Rangasamy	2	2	0
”	Papers — Cape *Govern-*			

		£	s.	d.
By	Balance from last account	94	17	5
,,	Cash collection by Kunbies per Dulab Bhaga	11	0	0
,,	Cheque not cashed by con doctor	0	10	0
,,	Cash from Chinde Indians	33	15	9
,,	Cash from Allbret & Co. (donation)	25	0	0
,,	Cash from G. P. Vyas re: Pretoria fare	1	0	0
,,	Cash withdrawn from Association Account	18	15	0
,,	Sale of chairs [to] Hindu			

	ment Gaztte, Leader, Mail, supply of 30 copies [of] *lndian Opinion* weekly [to] London Committee	10	1	0
”	Printing—K. Dickinson & Co., printing and binding petition	14	1	6
”	Stamps	3	4	8
”	Sundries	0	15	5
”	Telegrams re: Pundit’s trial, etc.	8	12	4
”	Typist September and November	10	0	0
”	Balance	140	18	1
		£ 213	5	2

Indian Opinion, 30-11-1907

Society	13	5	9
,, United Assembly, Rustenburg	15	1	3
	£213	5	2

APPENDIX VII

BRITISH INDIANS AND THE TRANSVAAL

L. W. RITCH

PREFACE

Frequent requests for a concise statement of the Transvaal British Indian grievances suggested the writing of a short history of the matter. The following is an attempt to place the facts, briefly, before an increasingly interested public.

The author is indebted to Blue Books for as much of the history as preceded his own advent [in]to the Transvaal. The facts of the last eighteen years fall within his own experience.

This little work has no pretensions to literary merit. An advance plea of “guilty” is entered in respect of its doubtless numerous defects of style and diction. It is to the facts that attention is respectfully directed.

28, Queen Anne’s Chambers, S.W.

7-11-07

The history of the disabilities under which British Indians labour in the Transvaal dates back to the controversy of 1885 between His Majesty's Government and the Government of the Transvaal Republic about what time the latter was pressed to legislate against so-called Arab traders, many of whom were really British Indians, by rival European storekeepers, many of whom were neither Transvaal burghers nor yet British subjects.

ARTICLE 14 OF THE LONDON CONVENTION had provided that *all persons, other than natives*, conforming themselves to the laws of the South African Republic:

(a) Should have full liberty with their families to enter, travel, or reside

in any part of the South African Republic;

(b) Should be entitled to hire or possess houses, manufactories, warehouses, shops, and premises,

(c) Might carry on their commerce either in person or by any agents whom

they might think fit to employ.

In 1885 the State Secretary of the Transvaal communicated to Lord Derby (then Secretary of State for the Colonies) the proposal of his Government to legislate for the regulation of the Orientals (mostly shopkeepers) who had settled in the Republic, and asked for anexpression of the opinion of his Majesty's Government as to whether, under Article 14 referred to, such legislation would be considered *intravires*.

Sir Hercules Robinson, then High Commissioner, endorsed the State Secretary's letter with a recommendation that Article 14 aforesaid should be amended by the substitution for the word "natives" of the *words "African natives or Chinese coolie immigrants"*, the idea being to Safeguard the interests of the "Arab" traders already established, leaving the Republic free to legislate for Asiatics of an inferior class such as coolie immigrants. Eventually, the South African Republic passed LAW 3 or 1885, SUBSEQUENTLY AMENDED IN 1886, which applied to "the persons belonging to one of the aboriginal races of Asia", they being thereby:

(a) Required to pay a fee of £3 for the privilege of trading or residing in the Republic;

(b) Precluded [from] the exercise of burger rights;

(c) Forbidden to hold fixed property registered in their names;

(d) Liable to reside only in such streets, wards, and locations as might be indicated.

Soon complaints were heard from the British Indian trading community, the South African Republic claiming to apply the law to all Asiatics within the Republic *without distinction*. It is practically certain that there has never been any of Indian coolies proper into the Transvaal. Law 3 of 1885 could, therefore, only have been conceived with an eye to its application to the "Arab" trader, and it becomes evident that, in assenting to the above proposal of January 6, the Imperial Government and

the Government of the Republic were not *ad idem.*

Representations by the Imperial Government that the interpretation of Law 3 constituted a violation of the agreement under which the Imperial Government had assented to the passing of the law, as well as a contravention of the London Convention, resulted in compromise, the words "for sanitary purposes" being added as a qualification of the clause referring to the residence in streets, wards, and locations, and the right to hold fixed property in such streets, &c., so appointed, "for sanitary purposes", being conceded. *But here, again, "His Majesty's Government understood that the law, even as amended, was a sanitary measure, and consequently would not apply to traders and other persons of a superior mode of life, but to coolies only*."* They accordingly accepted the amended law, and waived the point about the contravention of Article 14 of the London Convention.

The Government of the Republic maintained, however, that the law should apply to *all Asiatics alike,* and, therefore, interpreted the phrase " residence" to include trade as well as private dwellings. Further negotiations between the two Governments resulted in a reference to arbitration, the outcome of which was an Award, deciding that the government of the Republic was entitled to give full force and effect to the law under discussion, "subject to sole and exclusive interpretation in the ordinary course by the tribunals of the country". This Award was accepted, in so far as it was taken to have "closed the legal andinternational question in dispute" between the two Governments. But Mr. Chamberlain expressly reserved to himself the liberty to make friendly representations to the Government of the Republic on behalf of the Indian traders, with whom he expressed sympathy, and possibly to invite the Government of the Republic

> "To consider whether...it would not be wise to review the situation from a new point of view, and decide whether it would not be better, in the interest of its own burghers, to treat the Indians more generously, and to free itself from even the appearance of countenancing a trade jealousy, which he had some reasons to believe did not emanate from the governing class in the Republic."*

In 1898 the Supreme Court of the Transvaal interpreted "residence" to include trade, Tajob Hadji Mahomed Khan, a British Indian, receiving notice to leave Pretoria as a residence and place of business, and this, by implication, applying to all British Indians without distinction.

Further correspondence passed between the two Governments, the efforts of the Transvaal Government being obviously directed towards legislation based upon considerations of colour, as indicated by the proposal to include in the operation of Law 3 "Cape coloured persons as well as Asiatics", those of the Imperial Government being characterised by a desire to preserve from the degrading effects of the law all who were not mere coolies. In the words of Mr. Lyttelton:

* Mr. Lyttelton to Viscount Milner, July 20, 1904, C.D. 2, 239

"Up to the outbreak of war, therefore, the British Government had steadily maintained, at first as a matter of right, and subsequently to the Award of 1895 by diplomatic persuasion, the interests of British Indians resident in the Transvaal, and the treatment of these fellow-subjects formed part of the British case against the late South African Republic."*

The manner in which the differential legislation against the resident British Indian community of the Transvaal was regarded by other prominent statesmen may be gathered from the now historic utterances of Lords Lansdowne and Selborne. In view of more recent legislation in the new Transvaal Colony, the words may well bear repetition. Speaking at Sheffield in 1899, the Marquis of Lansdowne said:

"A considerable number of the Queen's Indian subjects are to be found in the Transvaal, and among the many misdeeds of the South African Republic. I do not know that any fills me with more indignation than its treatment of those Indians. And the harm is not confined to the sufferers on the spot; for what do you imagine would be the effect produced in India when these poor people return to their country to report to their friends that the Government of the Empress, so mighty and irresistible in India, with its population of three hundred millions, is powerless to secure redress at the hands of a small South African State?"

Lord Selborne's views are no less impressive:

"Was it, or was it not," asked his Lordship, "our duty to see that our dusky fellow-subjects in the Transvaal, where they had a perfect right to go, should be treated as the Queen in our name had promised they should be treated? If they agreed with him, and admitted that these were questions which we had to answer, as trustees before our fellow-countrymen and before history, then they would agree with him also that the path of duty was to be ruled, not by sentiment, but by plain facts....We were trustees for our brothers all over the world....Trustees also for our fellow-subjects of different races and different colours....For all these, and the unborn children of these. Therefore the test we had to apply in an emergency like this was the simple test of duty. Was it, or was it not, our duty to see that the rights and the future interests of those he had named should be maintained ?. . . Was the British Government going to make its name respected, and to have the pledges given by it faithfully observed ? Was it going to see that the British subject, wherever he went all over the world, whether he were white or black, was to have the rights which his Queen had secured for him?"

It should, however, be borne in mind that under the Government of the Republic Law 3 was so mildly administered as to be virtually inoperative. Where the £3 fee was tendered, a receipt was, of course, given, and "registration" consisted in recording such payment, but no serious effort was made *to enforce* it. In any event, it was required only from traders, and not even in all cases from them. Most important,

* Mr. Lyttelton to Viscount Milner, Previously cited

however, especially in view of the present "registration" controversy, is the fact that although the term "registration" was used in regard to the payment and receipt of this £3 fee, the transaction in no wise partook of the nature of personal identification, which is an entirely new development, arisen only since the annexation. There was, moreover, no restriction upon Asiatic immigration save this loosely imposed £3 payment. In this connection the report of Captain Hamilton Fowle, Registrar of Asiatics in 1903, is instructive. The report states:

> "That, with three exceptions, no Asiatic registers or records compiled by the late Boer Government (if such records ever were kept) were found in any district."

It is not surprising that Transvaal British Indians, the majority of whom were, of course, compelled to leave the country during the war, confidently looked forward to the repeal of Law 3 as soon as the British flag should float over Pretoria. True, the fact of their British citizenship had operated to protect them against many of the logical consequences of the Boer legislation, but Law 3 nevertheless irked, because it branded them as inferiors, and reduced them, if only theoretically, to a status lower than that enjoyed by them in the neighbouring colonies of the Cape and Natal, whence many of them had come. Whilst the section of Law 3 of 1885 precluding Indians from acquiring burger rights was, of course, rigidly adhered to, their liability to relegation to such streets, wards, and locations as might be indicated was under the Government of the Republic never enforced.

SINCE THE ANNEXATION

The earliest consequences to British Indians of the annexation of the Transvaal were the exclusion of Asiatic immigrants who could not satisfy the authorities that they were *bona fide* pre-war residents. In 1902, a measure styled the Peace Preservation Ordinance (38 of 1902 amended by 5 of 1903) was enacted by the new Government for the "maintenance of good order and government and public safety". Martial law had been withdrawn, and the new Ordinance was directed against sedition and treason. The amendment in 1903 required permits to be held by all entrants to the colony. The stipulation that such permits were not to be granted to burghers failing to take the oath of allegiance sufficiently indicates the purpose of the Ordinance. The new law was applied, however, as an Indian Immigration Restriction Act. For the first time in the history of the country, an Asiatic department was established. Abuse and corruption in the issue of permits resulting in the trial of two chief officials were followed by the abolition of the Asiatic department, the transfer of its business to the Chief Secretary for Permits, and the eventual appointment of an officer styled Protector of Asiatics. In 1902 the High Commissioner telegraphed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies certain formal proposals of the Government of the Transvaal, which included the taking out of a certificate of registration by all Asiatics, whether then resident in the Transvaal or subsequently entering it, which certificate should be annually renewable at a charge of £3; relegation of such registered Asiatics to special locations set apart for them for

purposes of trade and residence (unless living with a European employer); the exemption from registration in the case of educated and civilised Asiatics; the right of Asiatics to acquire and hold real property in town areas. To these proposals the Secretary of State for the Colonies replied that:

> "It was impossible to defend what would practically be a continuance of the system of the South African Republic, against which His Majesty's Government had so strongly and repeatedly protested."*

In 1903 certain proposals were made by the Government of the Transvaal for the importation of 10,000 coolies from India, to which the Government of India promised acquiescence, provided that existing disabilities affecting Indians already resident in the Transvaal were removed.

In the same year a further dispatch was sent by the High Commissioner to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, enclosing a copy of the Government Notice, to the effect that the Government had resolved to put into practice that section of the Boer Law 3 of 1885 dealing with the relegation of Asiatics to special streets, wards, and locations in which alone Asiatics might reside and trade; that licences to trade elsewhere than in such locations should be refused Asiatics; that Asiatics who had held licences for trade outside bazaars at the beginning of the war might be granted renewals of such licences under the same conditions during their residence in the colony, *but the licences should not be transferable*; "that the educated and respectable Asiatics should be exempted from all such restrictions". These modifications of existing disabilities were obviously directed towards satisfying the Indian Government, and inducing the latter to assent to the importation of the coolie labour required for the Transvaal public works. The Transvaal Government further proposed that immigration should be regulated by a law similar to those in force in the Cape and Natal, and to admit Indian as well as European languages in the education test to be imposed under the Act. This suggestion emanated from the Indian Government. On further consideration, however, the Government of the Transvaal retracted, and eventually opposed, the last proposal. They suggested by way of [an] alternative:

> (a) An Immigration Restriction Law on the lines of the similar Cape and Natal Acts, providing, inter alia, an education test for would-be immigrants, for the purposes of which Indian languages should not be accepted;
>
> (b) A measure dealing with Indians on the lines of the Government Notice (No. 356 of 1903), above referred to, providing:
>
> > (1) Those Asiatics who satisfied the Colonial Secretary of the Colony that their mode of living is in accordance with European ideas should be allowed to live with their servants, outside locations, but not to trade outside locations unless they fall under (2);
> >
> > (2) That those Asiatics who had established business outside locations before the war should not be disturbed;

* Mr. Lyttelton to Viscount Milner, previously cited

(3) That with the two exceptions mentioned above, all Asiatics should be required to live and trade in locations, and should be prohibited from holding land outside. This provision not to apply to land now set aside and used for religious purposes;

(4) All Asiatics entering the Transvaal, unless specially exempted, to take out a certificate of registration at a charge of £3;

(5) No restriction to be put on the issue of hawkers' licences, provided that the Immigration Law referred to above is passed.

In reply, the Secretary of State for the Colonies drew a distinction between those British Indians already resident in the Transvaal and would-be immigrants. He deprecated all save rational precautions for the safeguarding of public health and pointed out that:

> "An apprehended trade competition from the British Indians now in the country, whose number is now comparatively small, and will, under the proposed restrictions on immigration, be in a diminishing proportion, cannot be accepted as sufficient reason for the legislation proposed. His Majesty's Government have steadily declined to allow this fear to influence their views in the past. On the contrary, for many years they repeatedly protested before the Empire and the civilised world against the policy and laws of the late South African Republic in relation to this subject. Those laws were, indeed, only partially enforced, while His Majesty's Government is now asked not merely to sanction their strict enforcement, but to set aside by legislation the judgment of the Supreme Court, which has given to the British Indian rights for which His Majesty's Government have strenuously contended....His Majesty's Government hold that it is derogatory to national honour to impose on resident British subjects disabilities against which we had remonstrated, and to which even the law of the late South African Republic, rightly interpreted, did not subject them, and they do not doubt that when this is perceived, the public opinion of the colony will not any longer support the demand which has been put forward.
>
> "The second Ordinance proposed, which will take the place of Law 3 of 1885, should, therefore, not interfere with the rights of those now in the country to obtain licences to trade outside locations.... With regard to the question of the holding of land, British Indians who are entitled to reside outside locations must at least have the right to acquire property on the premises which they occupy for business purposes."

With respect to the second—future immigrants—he added:

> "His Majesty's Government, deeply as they regret the necessity of hindering the free movements of British Indians within the Empire, feel that they are unable to withdraw their sanction to the immediate introduction into the Legislative Council of the Transvaal of a measure restricting immigration on the lines of those Acts.... It seems certain that those who

still come in under the proposed Immigration Restriction Ordinance, and they should be very few, will not be Asiatics of a low class, and will not, therefore, be such persons as might properly be required, for sanitary reasons, to reside in a special location. I am of opinion that until it is proved that the Immigration Restriction Ordinance has failed to limit the influx to a minimum as it is expected to do, and in view of the absence of any legislation of the kind in the Cape Colony or Natal, the Ordinance to be passed in the present session should not limit the right of newcomers in respect of trade."*

It may be necessary to explain that towards the end of 1903 Habib Motan, a Pretoria merchant, had successfully contested the construction that had previously been placed upon Law 3 of 1885 in respect of the term "residence". The effect of the new decision was to entitle Asiatics to trade (but not reside) outside of locations.

In the same year the Government of the Transvaal decided to strictly enforce the section of Law 3 of 1885 requiring the payment of he £3 entrance fee, with the result that £16,743 were collected from 5,066 Indians and 515 Chinese, who were unable to satisfy the authorities that they had previously paid the fee to the Government of the Republic. Re-registration of the whole Asiatic community was likewise determined upon, against which, however, British Indians protested, claiming that they had already fulfilled the requirements of the law. The High Commissioner advised them, however, not to press their objections. He assured them that registration was a protection to them, and added that:

"Once on the register, their position was established, and that no further registration would be necessary, nor a fresh permit required. That registration gives you a right to be here, and a right to come and go."

Always anxious to conciliate, and with characteristic trust in the pledge of so high an authority, the British Indian community complied. The new certificates issued contained the names of the holders, place of birth and occupation, last address and signature, their wives, number of children, age of the holders, their distinctive marks and thumb prints.

Thus "registration" now first became a device for the identification of Asiatics, including British Indians, but it was as yet voluntary registration, and not imposed by differential legislation, as has since been done in the form of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act of 1907.

The Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance (No. 29 of 1906), subsequently re-enacted by the Responsible Government of the Transvaal, was the next step towards the reduction of the British Indian status. Under it, sub-section C of Article 2 of the Boer Law 3 of 1885, dealing with the registration of Asiatics, is repealed. This section had required only such "Asiatics"—being persons belonging to any of the native races of Asia, including the so-called coolies, Arabs, Malays, and Mahomedan

* Mr. Lyttelton to Viscount Milner, previously cited

subjects of the Turkish dominion—to "register" as chose to "settle in the Republic for the purpose of carrying on any trade or otherwise", such "registration" to be effected within eight days after arrival, and to be effected free of charge in the case of those persons who settled in the Republic before the coming into operation of this law. There was thus no restriction upon "Asiatic" immigration, but merely a requirement, if the immigrant decided to settle, to pay a £3 fee, and so "enregister". The repeal of this sub-section disposed of the implied right of Asiatics to enter the Transvaal in consideration of such payment. The Peace Preservation Ordinance, it may be remembered, had, since British occupation, been effectually employed to exclude Asiatic immigrants as undesirables.

The Act of 1907 now compels every Asiatic lawfully resident in the colony to present himself afresh for registration, to satisfy the Registrar of Asiatics of his title to be in the colony, and, if successful, to submit to a personal examination prescribed under the regulations appended to the law of a character so offensive in detail as to have precipitated this hitherto submissive people into open revolt. An applicant is required to give his full name, race, caste or sect, age, physical description, residence, occupation, place of birth, date of first arrival in the Transvaal, where resident on May 31, 1902, father's and mother's name, wife's name, sons and male wards under the age of eight years, their names, age, and relationship with their guardian. In addition, he is required to give the impressions of his thumb, index, middle, ring, and little fingers of both hands, and simultaneous impressions of the four fingers on each hand. It follows that existing titles of Asiatic residents obtained under the Transvaal Government, and reassured in 1903 by Lord Milner, are summarily invalidated, and the burden of re-establishing them is thrown upon their holders. Registration certificates *voluntarily* taken out under advice of the High Commissioner must be surrendered in exchange for other certificates, which must be carried on the person of every Asiatic of the age of sixteen years or over, and must be produced on demand made upon him by any member of a police force lawfully established in the colony or by any other person authorised by the Colonial Secretary. Registration is compulsory in respect of all lawfully resident Asiatics from eight years of age upwards, and failure on the part of the guardian of every such child under sixteen involves liability to a fine of £100, or three months' imprisonment, with hard labour. The British Indians of the colony complain that the reduction of status suffered by them through the differential legislation of the Government of the Transvaal Republic was as nothing compared with the degradation to whichthey are now subjected under this law enacted in a British Colony. They point out that it brands them for all time as inferiors, as undesirables, and as being so untrustworthy as to require the identification and supervision peculiar to suspects and criminals. Be it remembered that the Act applies to "Asiatics" *lawfully resident in the colony*, and that only such Asiatics as were established in the Transvaal before the annexation are "lawful residents". The measure was explained by its framers as necessary on the ground of an alleged considerable unlawful influx of Indians into the country. No satisfactory evidence of any such considerable influx has so far been adduced. When

towards the close of 1903 the then Registrar of Asiatics, Captain Hamilton Fowle, was formally interpellated as to such alleged unlawful influx, he replied that "there is no reason to believe that Asiatics are entering the colony without authority". He further pointed out that while early in 1903 a large number of Asiatics did succeed in entering the colony without the necessary authority, they were soon arrested and sent over the border, and added, "it is practically impossible for any unauthorised Asiatic to remain in the colony for any length of time without being detected". The more recent Chamney report consists of vague and unconvincing allegations of surreptitious entry, and is transparently inspired with a view to justifying the introduction about that time of the Ordinance. Shortly, it indicates that "during the year ending December 31, 1906, 876 male Asiatics entered or were found in the colony without permits legally held by them". It is not denied that these "unlawful immigrants" may have entered at any time during the four years since 1902, and it is significant that only 215 of such cases were charged and convicted before the magistrates.

The outcry of "considerable unlawful influx", supplemented by charges of collusion between resident Asiatics and others desirous of smuggling [themselves] into the country, was met by repeated appeals from the leaders of the Indian community to appoint a Commission of Enquiry, and thereby once and for all to set any actual doubts at rest. For some unexplained reason this very sensible suggestion has been persistently ignored.

In judging of the necessity and adequacy of the new Registration Act, it must be remembered that the Peace Preservation Ordinance, by means of which Captain Hamilton Fowle was enabled to effectually exclude fresh Asiatic immigration, is still in operation, and heavily penalises trespassers. Asiatic applicants for re-admission are detained outside the colony pending the strictest investigation of their right to re-renter. If, for argument's sake, there have been any such considerable infiltration as alleged, the new Registration Act provides no additional machinery for intercepting it. The Act concerns itself with the branding only of lawfully resident Asiatics. The utmost extent to which it can possibly affect the unauthorised entrant is to discover him after he has smuggled [himself] into the country; but this assumes that the delinquent will respond to the invitation to present himself for identification. If he should fail so to do, the Registration Act is no more capable of detecting him than was the Peace Preservation Ordinance, and the only weapon then left is the refusal of trading licences to non-holders of the new registration certificate. Thus it will be seen that the body of the lawfully resident Indians—merchants, small traders, laundrymen, &c.—of good reputation and long standing in the country are to be branded with the bar sinister of inferiority and reduced to the status of ticket-of-leave criminals, ostensibly in order that a few smugglers may be unearthed. The innocent are to suffer to facilitate the discovery of suspected guilt.

The prominence given to the humiliating regulations appended to the Act by way of illustrating its true character has been used to distract attention from the main British Indian contention. Ridicule has been cast upon an exaggerated

sentimentalism which takes umbrage at a mere requirement to impress digit imprints upon a sheet of paper. Whilst lawyers, doctors, merchants of repute and long standing, and, for that matter, hawkers of good character might not unreasonably regard identification of so offensively minute and personal a character as casting the gravest aspersion upon their honesty and good fame, it cannot be made too clear that the regulations themselves, however repugnant, are regarded merely as an incidental, and that the root of the objection taken by British Indians is not to the details of its administration, but to the Act itself. As previously stated, submission to the Act is regarded by the Indians as involving communal degradation arising out of the compulsory statutory branding of this one particular section of the British community. Mr. Essop Ismail Mia, Chairman of the Transvaal British Indian Association, thus concisely states the case:

> "The attitude of my Association would not have been in any way altered had signatures been substituted for finger-prints. It is the sting of compulsion running throughout the Act that offends and bears so heavily on the community. . . . It is not the fact of the penalty or the severity of it that is resented, but the *underlying assumption that Indians as a class are capable of impersonation and fraudulently bringing unauthorised immigrants into the country that* is most strongly, and I think rightly, objected to ... knowing well that British Indians as a class have not been guilty of the practices above described, they manfully struggle to avoid the presumption which the Act has made tacitly, and which the framers of the law publicly declare as their conviction."

It is in defence of this principle—in order to preserve their individual and communal self-respect—that practically 13,000 loyal subjects of His Imperial Majesty stand solemnly pledged to go to gaol and submit to the loss of worldly possessions, and even liberty itself. Could any more eloquent reply be returned to the taunt so often flung, that the Indian has no soul above his shop and his profits?

THE IMMIGRATION RESTRICTION BILL constitutes the latest Transvaal product in the way of anti-Asiatic legislation. The incongruity of retaining the Peace Preservation Ordinance, enacted for the "maintenance of good order and government and public safety in view of the withdrawal of martial law", on the Statute Book of a British colony now ruled by Ministers, who but recently were in arms against us, necessitated its early repeal. This is effected by section (I) of the Immigrants' Restriction Bill, but the section concludes with the following significant proviso:

> "No such repeal shall affect or abridge any powers or jurisdiction by the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, 1907, conferred for the purpose of carrying out such Act, but the said Ordinance shall for all the purposes of such Act be deemed to remain of full force and effect."

In other words, the terms of the Peace Preservation Ordinance are preserved for exclusive application to Asiatics.

The Bill gives permanence to the Registration Law. It disregards the right of residence of those British Indians who settled in the Transvaal before the war, and in

many cases even paid £3 as the price of such residence under Law 3 of 1885, but who have for some reason or other not yet returned to the country.

In defining the qualifications for immigration into the country, it excludes by way of educational test all save European languages and Yiddish.

It requires even Indian applicants for admission who may pass the test prescribed by the Bill to enregister in terms of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, the registration regulations of which were ostensibly framed because of the assumed illiteracy of the majority of the Asiatics residing in the colony.

It is argued with no little reason by the opponents of the Bill that Indians with a sufficient knowledge of a European language to pass the educational test carry on their persons sufficient marks of identification, and that since it is hardly conceivable that any Indian of liberal education will ever accept its terms, this requirement is but an indirect mode of depriving Indians of the benefit of the education clause of the Bill, and thus of barring their admittance into the country.

The Bill makes no provision for facilities to Indian merchants already settled in the Transvaal for importing clerks, assistants, and servants necessary for the conduct of their business and households. Sub-section (C) of section (6) is remarkable as constituting a subtle attempt to indirectly amend the Asiatic Law Amendment Act. The latter provides for the fine and imprisonment of recalcitrant Asiatics, followed by notice to remove from the colony. Similarly, the Peace Preservation Ordinance empowers the issue of such notice to leave. Sub-section (C) of this Bill takes an important step in advance of either. It confers upon the local Government power to *physically and forcibly deport* at his own expense any person disregarding the notice of removal under the Asiatic Law Amendment Act. Due appreciation of the character of this measure would be impossible without a brief notice of the definition of the term in the Bill, "prohibited immigrant". Asiatics incapable of writing from dictation or otherwise in a *European language* are classed among illiterates, paupers, prostitutes, and similar characters, as well as any person who, did he enter the colony, "would be liable to any law in force at such date which might render him liable if found therein to be removed from, or to be ordered to leave the colony, whether on conviction of an offence against such law or *for failure to comply with its provisions or otherwise"*. Finally, section (6) of the Bill makes a "prohibited immigrant", and, as such, liable to forcible deportation, "any person who is deemed by the Minister on reasonable grounds to be dangerous to the peace, order and good government of the colony, if he remain therein".

It is objected, not without some show of reason, that the last-mentioned provisions are directed against passive resisters of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act and their leaders.

It is prudently provided that the victims of this measure shall be liable to pay all expenditure incurred by the Government in carrying out such removal, whether from the colony or South Africa, or in the detention in the colony or elsewhere of any person pending his removal, the amount of such expenditure, on production to the Sheriff of the certificate of an officer of the Department setting out the items and total

amount of such expenditure, to be recoverable by execution levied on the property in the colony of the person so liable, in manner provided for execution levied under a judgment of the Supreme Court.

THE *Raison D'etre*

If it be asked what is the motive force behind this rabid antagonism towards respectable British Asiatics, there can be but one reply. A survey of the legislation from 1885 to date, and of all that has been said and written on the subject, must make it abundantly clear that the outcry is first and foremost an ebullition of trade jealousy. It will have been observed that, right along, the point of attack has been the trading licences. The legislators of the Republic were prompted to enact Law 3 of 1885 by European shopkeepers anxious to be rid of defenceless rivals. High above all the clamour of the "White Leaguers" of Boksburg, Krugersdorp, Potchefstroom, and similar dorps resounds the cry of "no coolie licences!" The attempt during 1903 to relegate Asiatics to bazaars was virtually abandoned, after the test case of Habib Motan v. the Transvaal Government had established the right of Asiatics to trade outside of bazaars and locations. The new Registration Act threatens non-renewal of trading licences to Asiatics failing to comply with its provisions.

Trade rivalry, however, might in itself have proved insufficient to move the Legislature to action. Colour prejudice, seemingly indigenous to South Africa, has, therefore, been appealed to. Colonial imagination has been inflamed by hinting at the danger of complicating an already difficult situation by the presence of a permanent Asiatic element in addition to the existing coloured population. This argument has apparently sufficed to justify the jettisoning of pre-war pledges and obligations, and the consequent immolation of the small British Indian population upon the altar of a cheap expediency. A voiceless minority numbering less than 5 per cent. of the white population of the Transvaal, unrepresented either municipally or politically, their modest claim to reasonable treatment as civilised citizens of the Empire has been ruthlessly disregarded. The hopes and promises held out to them in the pre-war days by professed champions of their cause are, according to Sir Arthur Lawley, now more righteously broken than kept.

It has been urged in extenuation of the anti-Indian legislation that it has the unanimous assent of the whole white population. The assertion is, however, open to serious question. It is submitted, on the other side, that only those who for selfish reasons are themselves interested in the riddance of the Indian competitor have committed themselves to any definite expression of opinion. Some have refrained from a desire to be on the winning side—the great majority, the mining and mechanic classes, from sheer indifference. But even granting such unanimous consent, can it be seriously contended that the pre-war pledges and promises, express and implied, to which this country stands committed, are to be incontinently abandoned, and that one section of the Transvaal community—the weaker—is, under the protection of our own flag, to beruthlessly down-trodden and stripped of every vestige of status at the behest of the other and stronger ?

A detailed examination of the allegations made by those who clamour for the expulsion of the Asiatic would be interesting, were it possible within the scope of this small work. They include such pleas as “the reduction of the standard of living” and “unfair competition”; that “the Asiatic does not blend with the European colonists, and consequently can never be built into the body of the nation”. It may be briefly remarked, as to the former, that the British Indian does not compete with the labouring classes of the Transvaal, nor are there any Indian coolies in this colony. The shopkeepers and traders who comprise the majority of the Asiatic population, 88_ per cent of whom are British Indians, are, it is true shrewd business men, patient, persevering, and industrious; it, like their white rivals, they have rent and taxes to pay; they circulate the bulk of their receipts locally among the wholesale importers (Europeans), and not infrequently engage the services of medical men, lawyers, mechanics, &c. True, they are abstemious, especially in the matter of liquor, live a comparatively retired life, and do not dissipate their substance. Their trade lies chiefly with the poorer section of the community, and it is admitted that their competition has had the effect of keeping down the cost of the necessaries of life.

That the Indian lives meanly is a foolish misunderstanding, due to the inability of the average Western to appreciate the niceties of Oriental dietary. Comparisons in such matters are particularly odious, and not infrequently dangerous to those venturing to draw them. A more intimate acquaintance with the Acts would show that Indian feeding is anything but inexpensive. One might, perhaps, fairly enquire whether the standard of comfort of even the humblest Indian hawker is inferior to that of the unhappily large body of poor whites, bijwoners, and of Syrians, and raw Russians, the latter of whom are not inconsiderable competitors of the older white traders. Nor can it be denied that Indian stores compare favourably in every way with those of their European neighbours. The integrity and high standing of the Indian with the merchants with whom he trades are admittedly unassailable. His habits have been attacked as unsanitary. The author has enjoyed exceptional opportunities of convincing himself of the falsehood of this aspersion. During the plague of 1903-4 this cry was raised with especial vehemence, and in sheer self-protection it became necessary to obtain impartial inspection by independent medical experts. Their certificates proved conclusively that the structure and general arrangement of Indians’ shops and dwellings were, if anything, superior to the average. True, the old location on the fringe of Johannesburg, since destroyed, had been so shamefully neglected in the matter of sanitary service by the responsible authorities, that it had indeed become a veritable plague spot. The eradication of the plague was, however, very largely due to the untiring efforts, the sacrifices, and the co-operation of the Indians resident therein.

As to the plea that the Indian will not blend with the rest of the community, what is this but a re-statement of the old fable of the boy who stoned the toad as a punishment for its being a toad? The Indian of the Transvaal a branded a pariah by statute; he is treated as such in practice; regardless of the obvious terminological inexactitude, he is indiscriminately dubbed “coolie”. One hears even in official

circles such expressions as “coolie lawyer”, “coolie doctor”, “coolie merchant”. His women are “coolie Marys”. As has been already shown, he is accorded no place in the scheme of things, save on sufferance. He may not even own fixed property, although, curiously, he may be a mortgagee of such. He is even denied the not always obvious privilege of riding in the same municipal tramcars and Government railway carriages as his white fellow-colonists. His children are afforded no facilities for education except they attend the schools set apart for Kaffirs. Could there be less encouragement for the Indian “to blend” and to associate himself more closely with the larger life of the community ?

It is difficult to escape from the conclusion that the head and front of [the]Indian offending lies in the fact that he possesses a superabundance of those characteristics which, if found in his detractors, would be regarded as virtues to be extolled and emulated. Unhappily for his peace and safety, the Indian in South Africa is not content to remain the mere hewer of wood and drawer of water. Even despite the disadvantages of his environment, he succeeds in raising himself from lowly beginnings to ‘comparative affluence. Not infrequently he is able to send his sons to our Universities. Here, then, are the real elements of his offending. He presumes beyond his station. Were he but content to furnish unskilled labour, or to earn dividends, for his white fellow-colonist, spending his earnings so that his labour would remain a continuing quantity, not only would his presence be welcome, but no praise would be too high to be lavished upon him. If this be doubted, observe how, in the neighbouring colony of Natal, while the outcry against the better class Indians grows in volume, the Government of the colony steadily declines to abolish the importation of Indian coolie labour.

Compared with the claims urged on their behalf by responsible English Ministers against the Government of the Transvaal Republic, the demands on this handful of our Indian fellow-subjects established in the Transvaal colony are pathetically modest. In deference to the prejudices of their white fellow-colonists, they do not press for either the municipal or political franchise. With a breadth of view worthy of more sympathetic appreciation, the Indian recognises the difficulties incidental to the Government by a small white minority of a vast native population. He is consequently agreeable to leave the control of the colony to white heads and hands. All that the Indian asks for is to be treated with the respect and consideration due to a civilised, albeit coloured, citizen of the Empire, to be protected from insult, humiliation, and spoliation. He does not claim that a young colony should throw its doors open to an indiscriminate Asiatic influx. He contends, however, that the educational test imposed upon prospective immigrants should be reasonable, and not pointedly directed against Indians. He claims, for instance, that *Hindustani* and Gujarati should be placed on at least an equal footing with Yiddish. He does, however, demand as an elementary right that lawfully resident Indians should be preserved from differential legislation based upon a presupposition of their inherent inferiority, and even criminality. He concedes the right of municipalities to regulate and restrict the issue of trading licences, and to impose the most stringent sanitary regulations, but

he asks on what ground should his inability to become the owner of fixed property be perpetuated? Why, for instance, may he not purchase the premises in which his business is conducted ? Tramway and railway regulations excluding him from the use of cars and carriages used by whites, byelaws denying him the use of sidewalks, are surely unworthy of a British colony. Even in the matter of registration, the Indian has, with characteristic willingness to conciliate, proffered a compromise. Since so much importance has been attached by the Transvaal Government to re-registration of its Asiatic population, and in order to prove bona fides, the Indian community have offered to come forward and re-register voluntarily. They are prepared to surrender the titles they hold in exchange for other certificates, and even to give the all-important digit imprints. They further suggest that the Government might subsequently pass a short Act recognising the validity only of such new certificates as have been issued in this way.

The difference between this suggested compromise and re-registration in terms of the Act cannot but be sufficiently obvious. Voluntary registration would be devoid of the sting of compulsion, and would constitute an act of grace, performed by the Asiatic community in deference to white sentiment, which in course of time might undergo conversion. Compulsory registration is recognised as signifying nothing less than the reduction of British Indians to the status of the Kaffir; as being more than likely of adoption as a precedent for anti-Indian legislation by the neighbouring colonies; and as a probable prelude to compulsory segregation in coloured locations.

A brief *resume*, in the form of a table of comparisons between the British Indian position under the Boer Republic and since the annexation, may not be out of place, and cannot but be instructive.

UNDER THE BOER *Regime*	SINCE BRITISH ANNEXATION
Asiatics might freely enter the Republic and subsequent to 1885 might reside and trade on payment of a £3 tax.	Only such Asiatics as could prove pre-war residence have been readmitted.
"Registration" required by Law 3 of 1885 (amended in 1886) did not include identification particulars. It consisted merely of the payment of the £3 fee and the holding of the receipt therefore.	"Registration" voluntarily assented to by Asiatics in 1903, under advice of Lord Milner, included very full identification particulars.
	Re-registration under the Act of 1907 *is compulsory* and additionally humiliating in details. It applies to all children from eight years of age upwards. Failure to re-register entails fine, imprisonment, and explusion
Asiatics were denied burger rights.	Asiatics, including British Indians, are excluded from both political and municipal privileges.
Asiatics might not own fixed	

property.

Asiatics were liable to be relegated to streets, wards, and locations specially set apart that purpose.

Whereas Law 3 imposing the above disabilities was virtually inoperative British Indians being protected by His Majesty's Government.

Responsible English Ministers claimed for British Indians the equal rights or civilised subjects of the Empire. The British Government virtually pledged itself to the reinstatement in their just rights of Transvaal British Indians.

British Indian protests against the Boer law were supported by the Imperial Government, and the insistence by the Republic of its right to legislate indiscriminately against Asiatics within its borders figured prominently in the causes that led up to the war.

Generally, while theoretically British Indians were placed under the above disabilities, in practice the law was not strictly enforced.

This is still the case.

Asitics, including British indians, are still so liable, and are already theatened with such segregation.

Since the annexation, and more especially since the grant of responsible Government, British Indians have failed to secure such Imperial protection.

The British Government has apparently abandoned the self-same Indians who resided in the colony prior to its annexation to the tyranny of trade rivals, and of a Government largely composed of legislators who were responsible for the Boer Law 3 of 1885.

The passive resistance by British Indians to the new Registration Act will, according to the threats of the Colonial Government, result in their expulsion from the colony. The Immigrants' Restriction Act will confer the necessary powers.

The restrictions upon the freedom of British Indians have been enforced with the utmost rigour, and the absence of a penalty clause to Law 3 of 1885 has alone saved the Indians from its worst consequences.

In conclusion, the temptation to point a moral and to reflect upon the inconsistency of pre-war promises with post-war performances will readily be appreciated. Apart from the duty of a Government enjoying a powerful majority to protect the interests of a wholly unrepresented coloured minority, there arises the seductive question of the obligation of every member of the Imperial family to subordinate merely local interests, not to say predilections or prejudices, to the welfare of the Empire at large. It must, however, suffice here to point out how far such considerations have apparently failed to occupy any place in the policy of the Transvaal, which, with a population of barely a quarter of a million whites, has not hesitated to endanger Imperial authority and prestige by heaping indignity upon indignity upon representatives of the three hundred millions of India.

India Office Records: J. &. P. 3927/07

1. LATE MR. ARATHOON

The mail last week brought the sad news of Mr. Arathoon's death. Mr. Arathoon in his capacity as the honorary secretary of the East India Association served it for a number of years faithfully and well. As Editor of *The Asiatic Quarterly Review,* his work is known to all who have any connection with India. But he is best known to Indians in South Africa for his very great sympathy for them and the constant attention he gave to the question in connection with the Association, with which he was so closely identified. He never missed an opportunity of bringing it to the notice of the Association, and thereby to that of the authorities. He rendered very valuable assistance to the deputation last year by his whole-hearted co-operation. We tender our condolences to Mr. Arathoon's family.

Indian Opinion, 14-12-1907

2. VOLKSRUST CASES

The cases instituted in Volksrust against Mr. Mahomed Essak and other Indians deserve attention. Originally, it was the intention of the Government to frame the charge under the new law, but it lost nerve at the last moment and the case was brought up under the Peace Preservation Ordinance. Mr. Mahomed Essak having taken the lead, others too could follow. He has saved the honour of the Konkanis. No one would now be justified in blaming the Konkanis. The magistrate discharged Mr. Mahomed Essak, holding that he was entitled under his permit to reside in the Colony.

These cases have brought out the courage of the people. It was good that no bail was offered. It was also good that those arrested included people from all communities.

This case reveals the extreme weakness of the Government. The Government is demoralized. It does not know what to do. Its condition is like that of an angry man who has started raving. It would be to our advantage if there were still more cases like this.

If the Government were really strong, it would arrest the people in the Transvaal who are opposing the law. That it is not able to do. Hence it is trying desperately to stop the people from coming from outside. The Government cannot but be defeated in such an attempt. For, there is a big loophole in the new law.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-12-1907

3. NATAL LICENSING ACT

Under this Act, the Government has made new regulations which include three remarkable sections. First, from now on the application for a licence will have to be published in a newspaper. The officer will have the right to take a thumb-impression on the application. Finally, one will have to pay £12.10.0 when making an appeal. All this is bad, but one must consider on what point relief is possible. It does not appear likely that the requirement to have the application published in a newspaper will be cancelled. There is such a law in the Cape. Taking of a thumb-impression is left to the discretion of the officer. This can be interpreted to mean that those who can sign will not be required to give thumb-impressions. We cannot advise making any petition to the Government on either of these two points, for it will be useless to do so. The obligation to pay £12.10.0 is not a new thing. There is only one remedy against it: when anyone has an occasion to file an appeal, he must refuse to pay the sum and fight out the point. We believe that the fee is illegal; that is what the ruling of the court will probably be. The best course is to ignore the law and violate it. Wherever licences are refused in large numbers, people must trade without licences, rather than think of disposing of their stocks. For all such ailments, passive resistance is the best cure.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-12-1907

4. LATE NAWAB MOHSIN-UL-MULK

We have already reported[1] the news of the passing away of this gentleman. In this issue, we give a brief sketch of his life. Every Indian, especially every Muslim, should take a lesson from his services in the field of education. He placed education above politics. That was on the whole a realistic attitude, especially in his time. The community can derive the highest benefits from education provided that, along with it, the people acquire truthful conduct and moral life. But education is a dangerous thing in the absence of lofty conduct and morality. It can be compared to a creeper unable to climb without the

[1] Not reproduced here

support of a hedge. It is such education accompanied by moral training that everyone should receive; that is what we can learn from the life of the late Nawab.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-12-1907

5. GERMAN EAST AFRICA LINE

A new spirit of self-respect and dignity is in the air these days among Indians. At such a time, the incident that has occurred involving Mr. Peeran Mahomed calls for notice. He asked for a first class ticket on a Europe-bound steamer belonging to the [German East Africa] Line and it was refused to him. We think this was a highly insulting thing to do. It does not befit the German Company. The Company derives a big income from Indian passengers. Ignoring all this, it refuses to issue a first-class ticket when demanded by an Indian passenger. This ought to make us feel sorry for ourselves. They know our ways. They insult us becausewe are not likely to do anything about it. They dare not do such a thing to a white passenger. There are three remedies for this to be adopted simultaneously:

(1) A strong protest should be made to the Company.

(2) Their agent, Mr. Osman Ahmad, should bring to the notice of the Company the loss that it might suffer.

(3) Passengers should be dissuaded from using the steamers of this Line.

The third step is the best. The other two will have some effect only if the third is taken. We have acquired new strength, which should be used on every occasion. It is not enough that we oppose the Transvaal law. That is to be treated only as a beginning.

Look at the example of Japan. After coming into light, that nation has been paying attention to its education, its trade and its honour. We, too, should work for progress in every field.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-12-1907

6. ATTACK ON INDIANS[1]

The air is thick with the excitement of the new law. There is no doubt that people are now eagerly waiting to be arrested. Nine Indians arrived from Durban on the morning of Friday last. Eleven others came on the evening of the same day, and 17 on Saturday and Sunday. All of them had their permits or registers with them. Thirty-five of them had arrived by the *Sultan*. Of the remaining two, one was a Madrasi who was going to Johannesburg on business, and one was a Gujarati who had gone to Durban in October and was returning to Johannesburg. At first, it was reported that all these persons were arrested for being without permits under the new law. Mr. Gandhi presented himself at the court on Friday. These men were not produced in the court on that day, since the police were awaiting orders from Pretoria. They were produced on Saturday, and the case was adjourned till Monday. Mr. Gandhi went to Johannesburg again on Monday. The police wanted to bring up the case under the new law. But there was an order from Pretoria that it should be proceeded with under the Peace Preservation Ordinance. Hence they were prosecuted under Section 5 of the Peace Preservation Ordinance on a charge of being without permits.

DEPOSITION BY SERGEANT MANSFIELD[2]

I arrested these Indians in accordance with instructions from Pretoria. They all held valid permits, which, however, did not authorize them to return. They were arrested because they did not have permits under the new law.

CROSS EXAMINATION

Q.—Did you examine the permits of these men?

A.—Yes. I found on examination that they contained their thumb-impressions.

Q.—Do they also have with them registers taken out under the law of 1885?

A.—They all have such registers.

Q.—What are your orders from Pretoria?

A.—I have orders to arrest every Indian coming from outside if

[1] This was published with the sub-titles, "Proceeding from Natal to the Transvaal, Thirty-seven Persons Arrested, Released by Court".

[2] The translation has been collated with the English report of the trial; *vide* "trial of Indians", 9-12-1907.

he is without a permit under the new law or any other authority.

Q.—Do these instructions also apply to Indians whom you may know personally?

A.—Yes, it will be my duty to arrest everyone.

Q.—Is it true that, under the permits which you saw with the accused, Indians enjoyed complete freedom of movement till now?

A.—Yes, I had instructions so far that those permits were sufficient authority.

The Public Prosecutor closed the case here. Mr. Gandhi demanded that the accused should be set free for want of evidence.

The Public Prosecutor admitted that his case was weak, but that he had drafted the summons under orders from the Government. Under the permits produced before the court, people were entitled to enter and reside [in the Transvaal] but not to leave and return.

Mr. Gandhi stated that the Crown witness himself had proved his clients' case. The authority for the clients to enter [the Transvaal] was the permit which the Crown witness had produced before the court. In the summons, they were charged with entering without permits. That charge had not been proved. It had been held by the court in the case of Bhabha that a permit to enter the Colony included permission to leave it and to return. His clients should therefore be discharged. Many of them had suffered for four days by that time.

The magistrate upheld this contention and discharged all of them. The following are the names of those who were prosecuted:

Omar Yusuf, Nathu Govind, Madha Galal, Lala Madhav, Govind Dadi [Daji?], Ratanji Maharaj, Kunvarji Manor, Kala Pema, Nagar Bhavan, Morar Bhikha, Samandarkhan, Kana Gopal, Nana Vallabh, Babu Sukha, Prabhu Narain, Jasmat Fakir, Fakir Lakha, Hari Daji, Pema Bhana, Parbhu Chhana, Lallu Khushal, Ramasami Chokkalinga Pillay, Mani Dahya, Bhima Vasan, Zina Kidia, Dahya Pancha, Vallabh Govind, Dhana Hira, Hari Bhikh, Dayal Vallabh, Makan Morar, Madhav Jivan, Govind Dahya, Budhiya Lala, Daji Bhana, Ranchhod Gopal and Bhikha Ratanji.

I am glad to observe that there are here persons from all communities, one Pathan, one Konkani, one Madrasi, and the rest Gujarati Hindus.

MAHOMED ESSAK'S CASE

This case was heard on Friday in Volksrust. The Public Prosecutor said that he did not know on what charge Mr. Essak was to

be prosecuted. He could say that only after hearing from the Government. After argument, the magistrate agreed to transfer the case to Johannesburg and ordered the case to be heard there on Wednesday.

Mr. Mahomed Essak and other Indians had refused to offer bail. They were therefore released unconditionally. In the court, the Government was being ridiculed for these cases.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-12-1907

7. REGULATIONS FOR MAKING APPLICATIONS FOR LICENCES IN NATAL

We give below a summary of all the important sections of the Regulations published in the Natal *Gazette* for making applications for the issue, renewal or transfer of licences or appeals in respect of them:

Section 2. The application, in the prescribed form, should be addressed to the magistrate duly authorized for the purpose or to the Town Office, and the applicant shall publish a copy of the application at least one day in each week for at least two weeks in a local newspaper.

4. Upon receipt of an application, the Licensing Officer shall be at liberty to obtain from the Health Officer or the Sanitary Inspector a report in respect to the sanitary arrangements on the premises proposed to be licenced.

5. If required, the applicant shall appear personally and produce to the Licensing Officer his books of accounts, or such other documents as may be necessary, to show to the satisfaction of that Officer that he is able to fulfil the conditions laid down by Section 7 in regard to keeping books of accounts in the English language.

6. The Licensing Officer shall endorse upon each application his decision as regards the issue or refusal of a licence.

8. A licence shall not be issued until the necessary stamps are affixed or the money paid.

9. The Licensing Officer may require an applicant, when issuing a licence to him, to give his signature or impressions of his thumb or fingers.

REGULATIONS CONCERNING APPEALS

10. An applicant intending to file an appeal may give notice

within two weeks of the decision to the Clerk of the Board or the Council of his intention to appeal against the decision of the Licensing Officer. With the notice of appeal shall be deposited a sum of £ 12. 10.0 towards the expenses of the members of the Board. If there are more applicants than one, the expenses of the Appeal Board shall be divided equally among them.

11. A notice of the day fixed for the hearing of appeals, together with a list of appeals, shall be fixed to the door of the Court House or Town Office for at least five days before the appointed date.

13. The proceedings of the Board shall be open to the public.

16. The appellant, and any interested person, shall be entitled to be heard upon the appeal by himself or by any person acting under his written authority, and also to bring forward evidence in support of the appeal. The person opposing the appeal shall be entitled to the same rights.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-12-1907

8. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

PUNJABIS' PETITION

The reply to this petition is still under the consideration of the Government. But the world has already given the reply, which has turned the sympathies of many Englishmen in favour of the Punjabis. Everyone says that they should get justice. The discussion on the petition is still going on. We have already referred to the very strong criticism that has appeared in *The Daily Graphic* of England.

I WITHDRAW

I wrote about Mr. Parekh's spirit.[1] I find that it was written in haste, and hence I withdraw my remarks. At the time of writing this, Mr. Parekh is still in Newcastle. Whether he will be there or not when this is published, I cannot say. But to have called him especially brave and to have advised others to follow his example—that itself was an error. A brave man will take the lead in battle. Mr. Parekh is still outside the Transvaal, hence the implied suggestion in my statement that he was braver than all of us does not stand.

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 26-11-1907

FALSEHOOD

Mr. Hasan Mahomed Kala made a public statement that he regretted having made the application for registration and that he wished to withdraw it. I now find that, on the very day that he wrote this letter declaring his intention to withdraw his application, he wrote another private letter to a friend of his saying that he would be glad if the title deed of slavery were issued to him immediately, and expressing concern at the delay. I expose this duplicity merely as a matter of duty with a view to preventing a recurrence of such instances among us. I am very sorry that Mr. Kala was one of the pickets at Pietersburg, which gave occasion to Mr. Chamney to assert that even pickets had applied for registers.

WHAT DOES VOLUNTARY REGISTRATION MEAN?

This question has often been discussed in this paper, but I find that there are still many Indians who do not understand the meaning of voluntary registration. The whites did not understand what the new law meant till the time [for its enforcement] came; we are in the same position. The main point of difference between voluntary registration and registration under the law is that the law confers upon us the status of slaves, whereas voluntary registration gives us human dignity. To submit to registration under pressure by the Government is like riding an ass. To register ourselves voluntarily is like riding an elephant. Even though in voluntary registration we may have to supply the same particulars as under compulsory registration, the former is to be preferred; on the contrary, compulsory registration will not cease to be slavery even if the specific indications of slavery are removed therefrom. It is a very harsh law, and that is the reason why the local Government clings to it like leeches, and we have been striving for these fifteen months to prevent their sticking on to us. In other words, we wish to be on a footing of equality with the whites, and the whites want to degrade us. The law will involve violation of our oath and bring us lasting disgrace. If anyone asks why even voluntarily we should have our documents exchanged, the question can be easily and simply answered:

(1) Just as we have taken an oath against the law, so also have we offered to have our documents exchanged voluntarily. If now we refuse to do so, we shall have gone back on our word and proved ourselves liars.

(2) Indians are charged by many people with entering [the Transvaal] under false permits or without permits. By voluntary registration we can disprove the charge; it is our

duty to do so, and it is because we have shown ourselves ready for it that we have been able to win the sympathies of people everywhere.

(3) To resist voluntary registration is to admit that we have been in the wrong.

(4) By voluntary registration we shall win still greater prestige than we have gained so far. It should be remembered that as a general rule, it is only when people refuse to do a particular thing of their own free will, i.e., prove their weakness, that the law intervenes and exercises compulsion. There are many Kaffirs who do not of their own accord stop drinking, hence wherever it is found necessary to use compulsion against them, legislative measures are resorted to to stop them from drinking. The man who stops drinking under compulsion by law, and not as a matter of duty, cannot be called a virtuous man. It is the man who of his own free will avoids drinking that is really virtuous. There is the same difference between compulsory and voluntary registration.

(5) Voluntary registration will always keep us free. For, under it no one can bind us more than we bind ourselves of our own accord. A volunteer enlists himself for war only when he chooses to do so. A mercenary who is driven by necessity to enlist himself is bound to fight whenever called upon to do so.

We can enumerate many such advantages of voluntary registration. For the present, these arc enough. No reference is made here to finger-prints, etc. For, that will be a matter of our own free will. But we shall consider next week the difference, from a scientific point of view, between ten finger-prints, and two thumb-impressions. For the present, what is necessary is to understand the exact meaning of voluntary registration.

OBJECTION

In view of the possibility of a compromise at any time now, the Association has started giving thought to the question of voluntary registration. An objection has been raised to this by some Gentlemen, who want to know why all people are not being consulted. The objection has no force. If the question of voluntary registration were a new proposal, it would have been undoubtedly necessary to invite delegates from all places, but the resolution concerning voluntary registration was passed at the mass meeting in the Empire Theatre by delegates representing all the places, and they had fully acquainted

themselves with all facts relating tovoluntary registration. Hence, there is no further need to consult delegates from all places. Moreover, there is no time for it. All the same, every Indian can express his opinion at any time. We want that this struggle should lead us to a better understanding of political matters. We also want to learn how meetings are conducted, how other associations are run and how public work is organized. We have been fighting a strenuous battle to get the new law repealed, claiming that we are really a civilized people; if so, a proper understanding of the points referred to above is a mark of being truly civilized.

WHY TEST CASE SHOULD NOT BE MADE

Some gentlemen have been arguing why we should not make a test case against the new law. I have expressed myself against this for two reasons.

First, we are not fighting to make a test case, but to prove our strength by going to gaol. There is nothing as effective as one's own strength. If we proceed to make a test case, our struggle will get into a mess and we shall invite ridicule. The whites will immediately say: "What happened to those who were to go to gaol?" Hence, making a test case will amount to an admission of weakness.

Second, the Privy Council will hardly be able to invalidate the new law or any other laws of the Colony. An opinion has already been expressed against us by Mr. Leonard, Mr. Esselen, Mr. Gregorowski, Mr. Duxbury, Mr. Ward and Mr. De Villiers. The Supreme Court has pronounced many judgments which go against us. If the Privy Council were to invalidate the new law, that would mean that the laws passed against Kaffirs would also be *ultra vires.* This can never happen. If, by any chance, this did happen, immediately new laws would be passed to set matters right. In the end we would only be where we were to start with. We have called for [legal] opinion from England, which Mr. Ritch has not been able to send so far. For, no one except Sir Raymond West is prepared to give it. It should also be remembered that Sir Raymond West had advised us to make a test case instead of opposing the law. Now, that gentleman has come over to the side of passive resisters. How can a test case be made, then? Moreover, no one should forget that a test case will mean an expense of £ 1,000. Who will be able to raise such a sum? At the same time, let us be careful not to assume that the Government will not harass people while the test case is pending. The law cannot remain suspended in the meantime.

HAMIDIA SOCIETY MEETING

A large meeting was held again on Sunday. So many people had collected that it was impossible to accommodate them in the hall. Hence the meeting was held in the open ground outside. Messrs Cachalia, Suj, Manibhai Desai, Pillay, Gopal, Beg and Vyas had comedown specially from Pretoria. Mr. Emam Abdool Cadir was in the chair. The meeting was addressed by him, and by Messrs Beg, Suj, Cachalia, Naidoo, Hajura Singh, Ahmed Khan, Alibhai Akuji and other gentlemen. Mr. Gandhi explained the situation. Mr. Moulvi Ahmed Mukhtiar, who had returned from Delagoa Bay where he had gone to attend to some work, explained [the situation] to the people and, in the end, it was agreed that voluntary registration must be accepted; there were, however, two Punjabi gentlemen who were against giving thumb-impressions. Others argued that there was no objection to giving them voluntarily. This spirit of the people deserves admiration. It shows that people are not afraid of expressing their views, and that they speak out with courage. Those who did not understand anything about the law six months ago now understand something of it. All this is the result of our trying to depend on our own strength. I think everyone will come round in the end for, there is no humiliation in giving two thumb-impressions. It is humiliating to do so under compulsion. Once the law is defeated, we can claim to be free.

PATHETIC CONDITION OF DELAGOA BAY

Moulvi Saheb reports about Delagoa Bay that, at a time when throughout South Africa the Indian community is awake and fighting for its honour, the leaders there are sunk in lethargy. They silently endure whatever harsh treatment the Government chooses to mete out to them. People do not care for their honour. They look upon money as their God. And with the Government they behave like submissive courtiers. Will not the Indians of Delagoa Bay rouse themselves from this pitiable condition?

STRENGTH OF INDIANS

The Government is betraying more signs of weakness every day on the question of the new law. Even the whites see this. Two amusing cartoons (comic drawings which carry some meaning) are published in the *Rand Daily Mail* and *The Sunday Times*. One of them shows General Smuts firing the pistol of the new law at the Indians. The Indian says: “Do your worst. We shall never submit to the law.” General Smuts then explains: “Don’t say so, pal. My blooming gun is out of order.” In the other cartoon, General Smuts and some

Government officers want to cut off the heads of the Indian leaders with spears. But the horses are altogether exhausted with the effort, and the riders themselves have become breathless; and still the heads of the leaders are intact. Both these cartoons reveal the state of mind of the whites. The editor of this paper is trying to secure the two cartoons for the readers of *Indian Opinion;* hence I don't write more about them.

SUCCESS OF ASSOCIATION

The Municipality has passed a regulation prohibiting Indians from riding in a first-class carriage. The readers will recall the letter[1] that Mr. Essop Mia wrote against it. Now General Smuts has written to say that the law will not be approved by the Government. Is it that General Smuts has also changed a little? This shows that it will do nothing but good to the Indian community if it asserts itself.

NO PASSPORTS

A representation was made to Lord Selborne against the refusal of passports to Mr. Moosa Ismail and Mr. Davaji, in reply to which Lord Selborne has said that, if the Government did so, that would be tantamount to admitting the right of Indians to return even without having been registered. This matter is not likely to rest here. Mr. Gandhi has addressed another letter[2] to Lord Selborne on the question. If this decision remains final, it will prove that Indians are not British subjects at all. All right, let that be so. Our struggle will gain more strength.

ONE SECTION OF NEW LAW

One of the sections of the new law was considered to be in favour of the heirs of the late Mr. Aboobaker. It was made much of by Lord Selborne, Lord Elgin and everyone else. Now even that is gone. General Smuts raised an objection to transferring land to the heirs under that section, saying that it could not apply to this case since the land was already transferred to the name of a white. The objection was upheld by the court, though it expressed sympathy [for the heirs]. But what is the use of such sympathy? This means that in the present case, even that one section of the law is proved to be of no avail. This matter, too, is not likely to rest here. The heirs are thinking of proceeding to obtain relief. Meanwhile, the adverse decision in this case has given one more argument against the law. And correspondence on the subject has commenced.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", Before 7-12-1907.
[2] Not available

VICTIM OF LAW

The new law, like the god of destruction, goes on devouring new victims. The monster is fond of Indian blood. Many waiters have lost their jobs, and labourers are out of employment. We know of the protest made by the soldiers. Now Mr. Mohanlal Joshi is in trouble. He had a well-paid job as an interpreter in the court at Pretoria. He is relieved of his post by the Government for failing to take out a register. This is nothing but extreme tyranny. Though a man with a family, Mr. Joshi sacrificed his job for the sake of the country and upheld the honour of the community, on which I offer him my congratulations. It is the duty of Indians to find jobs for those who are thus thrown out of employment. If any Indian needs a clerk, I would strongly urge him to employ Mr. Joshi or others like him who become unemployed.

CONDOLENCES

Mr. Dadabhai, the well-known businessman here, has had news from home that his eldest son has died of the plague. He is very much depressed by the news. I join all those who have offered their condolences to him.

CASE AGAINST ESSAK

This case came up for hearing on Wednesday before Mr. Jordan.[1] The charge against Mr. Mahomed Essak was the same as that against 37 other Indians. Mr. Chamney was also present. The officer who gave evidence against him, repeated what he had said in the case of the other thirty-seven people. Mr. Gandhi, without giving any evidence for the accused, asked for his discharge. Giving a long judgment, Mr. Jordan held that Mr. Mahomed Essak had the full right to reside [in the Transvaal] under his [old] permit, and that he could not at all be deported under the Peace Preservation Ordinance. He was therefore discharged.

LINDSAY'S SPEECH

Mr. Lindsay is one of the leaders of the Progressive Party. He said in a speech that the Government would not be harsh with the Indians. The Immigration Law was not intended to be used against them. There was only one way of expelling the Indians, and that was to stop issuing licences to them. That would be done from January. I treat this as mere raving. First, it was Imprisonment. Then they started talking of deportation. Now they have come to licences. And so, gradually the law will vanish altogether if the Indian community keeps

[1] *Vide* "Trial of Mahomed Essak", 2-12-1907

up its courage and remains united till the end.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-12-1907

9. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

[JOHANNESBURG,
December 14, 1907]

[THE HON'BLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PRETORIA
SIR,]

I have the honour to state that I was discharged yesterday from the Johannesburg gaol. I was sentenced to be imprisoned for one month under the Peace Preservation Ordinance and the Asiatic Law Amendment Act for remaining in the Colony without a permit, my permit having expired on the 30th day of September last. The reasons for my having disobeyed the order of the Registrar of Asiatics that I should leave the Colony are set forth in the letter addressed to him by me. The Hindu temple at Germiston, in its present form, owes its existence to me. I was, and still am, the only priest in charge. On proceeding to the temple yesterday, I found it in a desolate condition. The temple had remained closed for the whole of the month. I cannot here describe adequately the state of my feelings on seeing the condition of the temple yesterday.

I am aware that now, in accordance with the laws of the Colony, I should leave it within 7 days if I wish to escape imprisonment. But a law higher than the laws of the Colony dictates to me another course that, as a British subject, and as a preacher of religion in charge of the Hindu temple at Germiston, I should adhere to my duty, irrespective of all consequences. With due submission and in all humility, and consistently also with my duty to the Imperial Government and to the local Government, I beg now to inform you that it is not my intention to leave the Colony. The Hindu congregation at Germiston and I myself would appreciate the strength of the Government in allowing me to continue my duty to my temple and congregation by issuing to me a permit, for which I hereby apply.

In this connection; I cannot help stating that the charges, of which I still know nothing, hinted at by the Registrar of Asiatics and which were given as the reason for refusing to extend my permit, were, so far as I have guessed them, unfounded. If there are any charges

against me, I request that they may be formulated and I may be put on my trial; and, if I have, in anything I have done, departed from my religion, as I know it, or from my avocation of priest, I should immediately and voluntarily leave the Colony. If the charges are such that they cannot be brought against me legally, even then I should be preparedto answer them before any impartial person with a legal training who might be specially appointed by the Government for the purpose. This is the least that I venture to claim from a civilised and Christian Government.

[*I have, etc.*,

RAM SUNDAR PUNDIT]

Indian Opinion, 21-12-1907

10. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

JOHANNESBURG,
December 18, 1907

THE HON'BLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
[PRETORIA]
SIR,

RE: ESTATE [OF] LATE ABOOBAKER AMOD

As the Government is aware, Clause 17 of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act was inserted in order to give relief to the heirs of this Estate and to enable them to hold Erf 373 in Church Street, Pretoria, purchased by the late Mr. Aboobaker Amod before Law 3 of 1885 was passed. Before the Clause was drafted last year, the circumstances under which the property was transferred in favour of Mr. Polak were placed before the then Attorney-General and it was understood that the Clause was drawn up in order to meet the case. A Deed of Transfer was duly framed to register the Erf in favour of the heirs, who are British Indians, and submitted to the Registrar of Deeds. He, however, threw out the transfer, because in his opinion the case was not covered by the Clause in question. The matter then went before Mr. Justice Wessels in Chambers, who upheld the Registrar's contention. The Clause in question has thus proved ineffectual for giving relief to the heirs. May I venture to trust that the Government will grant relief to the heirs? In my humble opinion, the most expeditious method of doing this would be to declare that portion of the street capable of

being held by British Indians.[1]

I have, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 1-2-1908

11. LETTER TO GENERAL MANAGER, C.S.A.R.

[JOHANNESBURG,]
December 20, 1907

THE GENERAL MANAGER
C.S.A.R.
JOHANNESBURG

SIR,

The matter of the Standerton Indians in the employ of the C.S.A.R., about which I had the honour of speaking to you through the telephone, seems, the more I think of it, of such serious importance that it will be the duty of my Association to thrash it out as a question of public morality and also, if need be, of law. My Association, however, is most anxious to avoid a legal struggle, and I, therefore, venture to ask you, if you can see your way to do so, to pay the men a month's wage in lieu of notice. In my humble opinion, that is the least consideration to which the men are entitled. I should, perhaps, state that I have telegraphed to the Standerton Committee asking them to advise the men to accept whatever may be paid to them, subject to their right to claim wages in lieu of a month's notice.

I have, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI
HONORARY SECRETARY,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 28-12-1907

12. IMPATIENCE

We observe that some Indians in the Transvaal are getting impatient to see the end of the struggle. But the end is not in sight just yet. Great things are not achieved in a day. Everywhere in South Africa people know that this is a struggle for the honour of Indians. It

[1] This was, however, declined by the authorities.

is intended to prove that we are a nation, that we ought to have our rights, that we are free. What is the point of being hasty when fighting for such big stakes? The end will come only after a large number of persons become seasoned in gaol, the others remaining unbending, meanwhile.

It will be seen from our Johannesburg Letter this week that General Smuts is in no mood to yield. It will appear from this that he has been privately informed that the Indians will give in at last. He has yet the weapon of Licences which he can use. Why should he abandon oppressive measures against the Indians before he has tried out every means? W. Warriors on the battle-field yield only is a last resort. No one should imagine that our struggle is not a battle because it involves no bloodshed or use of real ammunition. Ours also is a battle, with this difference, that in it, the right being on our side, there can be only one result. If we become impatient, that will mean that to that extent we are less in the right. Truth is to win, it can be only in the fulness of time. In fact it wins soon enough, but when we look at the matter superficially, we get an impression of long delay. Those who are prepared to defend their oath and honour at any cost as they would defend their life have nothing to lose if the result is slow in conning.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 21-12-1907

13. RAM SUNDAR PUNDIT

Punditji has been released. And he may have been also rearrested by the time this issue reaches the hands of our readers. His life is no longer his own, it belongs to the public. He has placed himself at the disposal of the community. It is not possible for him now to retreat. His spirit deserves admiration. There is a heavy responsibility on him. He is a priest and also a preacher. We hope to see in him the spirit of renunciation. Such men ought to be without any attachments, and naturally modest, gentle, truthful and free from greed. Till there is a large number of such men, it will not even be possible for India to be free. Punditji has taken a big step. We hope and pray that he will retain the honour that he has won.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 21-12-1907

14. HAJEE HABIB

Mr. Hajee Habib has now left the Transvaal to settle in Durban. There was, therefore, a farewell party in his honour at Pretoria, which we report in this issue. The community is passing through such difficult times at present that we can hardly give attention to arranging a function in honour of anyone, otherwise Mr. Hajee Habib would not have left Pretoria with nothing more than a party. He has had a long record of [public] service. It is impossible to make a proper return for all that he has done for hundreds of men. While doing all this, Mr. Hajee Habib never gave a thought to his own interests. He always held himself ready for public work. He was as able as he was keen. White officers found it difficult to enter into argument with him. We hope that Mr. Hajee Habib will render the same service in Durban that he did in the Transvaal, and take full part in public activities.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 21-12-1907

15. RAM SUNDAR PUNDIT[1]

Mr. Ram Sundar Pundit was released from gaol on the 13th. A large number of Indians were present to give him a fitting reception. They included Mr. Essop Mia, the Moulvi Saheb, Messrs Fancy, Thambi Naidoo, Gandhi and others. From Pretoria, there were Messrs Cachalia, Pillay and Gopal. He came out of the prison exactly at half-past eight. The Chinese Association was represented by Mr. Quinn and others. Punditji was enthusiastically received with garlands and bouquets.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 21-12-1907

16. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

ADDITIONS TO BLACKLEGS

For once, the Asiatic Office has proved to be right. It says that, in all, 511 Indians have applied for registration as slaves. According to Indian estimates, only 399 persons had applied. But I realize from reliable information received by me that the correct figure is 511.

[1] This was published as "A Special Report".

Besides, there is the more painful information that gentlemen like Mr. Hasan Mia Camroodeen Zatam, of the firm of Sheth M. C. Camroodeen, Mr. Gulam Mahomed Hurzug, the Treasurer of the Anti-Indian-Law Fund, Mr. Hajee Cassim, Mr. Haji Jusab of Pretoria and Mr. Ally Habib have had their faces blackened. I shall not say anything about Mr. Hasan Mia. I think he has lost his balance of mind in connection with this law. Mr. Gulam Mahomed's case is very much to be regretted. It appears that they performed the black deed in great secrecy. The have been rumours about them for quite some time, but I did not [so far] attach any weight to them. I feel ashamed to find that therumours have proved true. Mr. Hajee Cassim and Mr. Ally also appear to have registered themselves quite secretly. Their words come back to me even as I write this. There is no point in reproducing them. But I think it is at any rate my duty to say that, if persons like Mr. Hajee Cassim and Mr. Ally wanted to get themselves registered, they should have come out boldly in the open to do so. I see their names at the end of the list. That shows that they got their hands soiled at the very last minute. They will feel hurt by what I write. I assure them that they could not feel more hurt than I did when I heard of their cowardice. I am obliged to publish these names, hoping that the community will thus be rid of false personal considerations, groundless fears and corruption. In addition, I also see the names of Khoja Velsi Keshavji. and Khoja Manji Keshavji. There are other names with me, but I shall publish them later. This time I have given only the more prominent ones.

APPEAL TO BLACK LEGS AND SUGGESTION

People's memories being short, I assume that in the course of time we shall forget the black deeds of the black-faced ones. We shall remember that, notwithstanding their acts of treachery against the community, they are Indians. If they feel really ashamed and desire the good of the community, they can take part in the struggle that will commence in January. They will have to produce the title-deeds of slavery when applying for licences. If they do not produce them, they will have the privilege of bearing the hardships which will be inflicted on the other Indians who have not accepted slavery. Any blackleg who regrets what he has done can act in this manner. I hope that there will be at least a few who will show such courage.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN JANUARY?

The suggestion made above immediately raises the question about January. We should think of January as we thought of December. The Government did not—could not—show its strength in December; I think the same will be true of January. That no one

would be arrested in December could not, however, be anticipated. I don't believe that no one will be harassed likewise in January. It must be distinctly remembered that those who cannot produce the title-deed of slavery will not get licences. The Government will have no need to yield on that point. Since a notice has been issued to that effect, it is bound to be acted upon. What, then, should be done? The reply has been given several times in the past; it is, that we should trade without a licence. If arrested and fined, *one should not pay the fine but go to gaol instead.* Gaol-going is the only unfailing remedy. The different kinds of licences are not all issued by the Government. Licences for Kaffir eating-houses and for hawkers are issued by the municipalities. The Government has no power to arrest men who are concerned only with such licences. The municipalities will decide what should be done. It is probable, therefore, that some of these at least will make an attack. For instance, the Boksburg Municipality. There is no need to get frightened on this account; rather, one should be glad of it. I don't agree that it is good that the Government has not started the attack yet. It is up to us to wrest our freedom, such is the present struggle. That being so, we shall not acquire real courage till a large number of us have gone through the hardship of imprisonment. It has already been declared that Mr. Gandhi will run down to those who are arrested in connection with this struggle. "To defend" here means "to see the brave one off to gaol". I am sorry that, in the matter of licences, there is provision for a sentence of fine and imprisonment in case of default. Temptation is a bad thing. Great harm will be done if anyone succumbs to the temptation and pays the fine I hope therefore that every Indian will pledge himself never to pay any fine in this matter, either in his own case or on behalf of someone else.

WHAT ABOUT COMPROMISE?

Thinking of January, we are naturally led to ask what happened to the move for a compromise. I point out in reply that I for one had taken into account every eventuality. Efforts for a compromise are continuing. But I feel that there will be no compromise till the Government has tried out the weapon that will be available to it in January. Meanwhile, everyone can see that the Indians have grown very much stronger. An increasing number of newspapers controlled by the whites condemn the Government and wish success to the Indians. If anyone had expressed himself in favour of us three months ago, he would have been laughed at. But just as the newspapers controlled by the whites have now started writing in our favour, so also will the whites themselves get up when in January they find a large number of Indians in prison, and will ask the Government to release

them. It is just in a manner of speaking that we use the word "compromise". Its strings are in our hands. When we have proved our worth, our manliness, people will come seeking compromise with us, so irresistible are manliness and truth.

CARTOON IN "THE CRITIC"

The Critic has published an amusing cartoon this time. It shows an Indian flourishing a placard, with the words "No Power of Deportation", and General Botha and his ministers running away from him. There have been so far three cartoons on "passive resistance", including this one.

GOVERNMENT'S OBSTINACY

It appears that General Smuts has given a blunt refusal to those who were seeking a compromise. He declares that he has not the slightest intention of repealing the law or withdrawing the notice. These threats of General Smuts need not frighten anyone. He is in the habit of talking whatever comes into his head. He will grow wiser when he begins to carry out his threats.

AID FROM UITENHAGE

Indians at Uitenhage have sent contributions in aid of the struggle, for which the Association has offered them thanks. I hope that others will follow the example of these friends. If the Indians at Port Elizabeth have raised a fund they should send it [to the Association].

AID FOR SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE

A sum of £16.8.6. has been received from the Hindus of Potchefstroom through Mr. Ratanji Lakhmidas and £5 from Mr. Nanaji Ghela for the Committee. If similar contributions are received from other Indians, the Committee will probably be free from its difficulties. It should be remembered that the expenditure that Mr. Ritch has had to incur on account of the serious illness of Mrs. Ritch is being met out of the funds of the Committee.

BHIKHA NARAN

Some information abut this person has already been given. He was working as a servant with Mr. Dell Lace. He feels extremely sorry now. He has handed over to the Association the acknowledgement for his application. He has left for India without taking out the title-deed of slavery. His relatives were very much annoyed with him for his having disgraced himself and were thinking of declaring him an outcast. But they appear to have calmed down after he had left for India. Here is an instance to prove that a slave cannot be happy even

in his dreams. It happens quite often that being the servant of a white turns a man into a coward. Bhikha Naran was engaged by Mr. Lace to look after his washing.

POLICE IN PRETORIA MOSQUE

After the incident of Banutkhan and Haji Ebrahim, police are posted at the mosque in Pretoria every Friday to prevent a breach of the peace. The presence of the police brings disgrace to the community. It implies that the trustees of the mosque are weak. I hope that they will take immediate steps to stop the posting of the police, if they have not done so already.

NEW INDIAN ADVOCATE

Mr. George Godfrey was enrolled as an attorney in the Supreme Court on the 13th. Most probably he will practise in Johannesburg. I offer him my congratulations. Mr. George Godfrey is the third son of Mr. Subhan Godfrey to have received education in England. They are now preparing to send the fourth son for medical studies.

ASIATIC OFFICE

Mr. Burgess has been informed that his services will not be required after January 31 [1908]. Similarly three clerks (whose names I shall report later) have been relieved in Pretoria.

DELEGATES TO CONGRESS

A cable has been received from Mr. Ameeroodeen Fajandar to say that he reached Bombay safely on the 17th.

EUROPEAN CHAMBER OF TRADE AT JOHANNESBURG

A meeting of the Chamber was held during this week, at which a resolution was passed expressing the hope that the Government would enforce the provisions of the new law. One of the speakers asserted that there was considerable pressure from the Imperial government on this question. It was therefore necessary for the people of Johannesburg to support the Government.

ASIATIC OFFICE

The clerks in the Asiatic Office who have been relieved along with Mr. Burgess are Mr. Dobson, Mr. Barker, Mr. Valks and Mr. Sweet.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 21-12-1907

17. LETTER TO GENERAL MANAGER, C.S.A.R.

[JOHANNESBURG,]
December 21, 1907

THE GENERAL MANAGER
C.S.A.R.
JOHANNESBURG
SIR,

This morning I received from the local Indian Committee at Standerton a letter of which the free translation is as follows:

> The balance of the month's rations that were given to the railway employees in the beginning of the month was all taken away from them, and the rooms that were occupied by them wereunroofed yesterday (19th inst.). Therefore, all have come here. The Committee has arranged for their accommodation. They worked until noon yesterday, but they were not paid anything for that day. They implored that they might be allowed to go to town to find accommodation, and then take away their wives and children, but even the children have been put out.

You were pleased to give me your assurance, and I notice the same assurance repeated in your communication to the press, namely, that there is no desire on the part of your Department "to act harshly or to take advantage in any way of its rights". If, therefore, there is any truth in the above communication, the officials who were carrying out the instructions have evidently been guilty of a grave dereliction of duty. May I ask you kindly to make the necessary inquiries, and let me know?

I have, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI
HONORARY SECRETARY,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 28-12-1907

18. SPEECH AT HAMIDIA ISLAMIC SOCIETY

[JOHANNESBURG,
December 22, 1907]

We should not be overjoyed at this victory.[1] At the time of the Boer War, the Dutch at first pretended to withdraw and then attacked the British. In the same way, the Government may, perhaps, pretend to have been defeated and may strike later. Therefore, we should only think that our struggle has just started. If they withhold the licences, we must carry on trade without them and, on being arrested, should go to gaol rather than pay the fine. Further, we must build a Hall of Unity. It can be done with a small amount. We can thereby provide employment to the Indians who have lost their jobs. We should again call a mass meeting to explain to the people the position about the licences.

As Moulvi Mukhtiar Saheb's permit was due to expire, Mr. Gandhi discussed some points connected with that and with the struggle.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-12-1907

[1] The reference is to Ram Sundar Pundit's release. *Vide* "Ram Sundar Pundit", 21-12-1907

19. SPEECH AT HAMIDIA ISLAMIC SOCIETY[1]

[VREDEDORP,
December 27, 1907]

Mr. Gandhi said, when he read the announcement with reference to the Immigration Restriction Act that morning, the first thing that voluntarily came to his lips was that Lord Elgin had put an undue strain on Indian loyalty. Lord Elgin, an ex-Viceroy of India, had forgotten altogether Indian tradition. When he advised His Majesty to sanction this legislation, he forgot altogether that he was trustee for the millions of India. He forgot altogether that India was today on the brink of a departure which had been unknown in Indian annals. India has never been revoluntionary, but today they found that the revolutionary spirit had crept into the minds of some Indians. It would be a bad day for India when that forcible revolutionary spirit gained a substantial footing, but he could not help saying that Lord Elgin had sown the seed. If this had been confined to the student world, it would probably never grow in Indian soil, but he found today that the merchant, who did not know a word of English, was steeped in the new spirit with reference to the Act and its evil. He felt proud of the fact that he had taken so much part in the matter. But he coupled with that the statement that his thoughts had been their thoughts, and in expressing them he had, if anything, moderated them. It was for this reason that he expressed the feeling that Lord Elgin had put an undue strain on Indian loyalty by sanctioning this Immigration Restriction Act. That Act, to his mind, was a barbarous Act. It was the savage Act of a civilized Government, of a Government that dared to call itself Christian. If Jesus Christ came to Johannesburg and Pretoria and examined the hearts of General Botha, General Smuts and the others, he thought he would notice something strange, something quite strange to the Christian spirit. He (Mr. Gandhi) recognized that in proceeding under the Act, General Smuts had selected those men who had been in the public eye, and had not laid his hands on the poor people. And he had not the slightest doubt that if those men who had to appear before the magistrate were imprisoned or deported, those who remained behind would be firm in opposition

[1] Gandhiji addressed a crowded meeting in the Hamidia Islamic Society hall in the evening. Earlier that morning, Gandhiji had received a telephone message from Mr. H.F.D. Papenfus, Acting Commissioner of Police for the Transvaal, asking him to call on him. Upon arriving there, he was informed that arrests had been ordered of himself, Thambi Naidoo (chief picket, Johannesburg), P.K. Naidoo (picket, Johannesburg), C.M. Pillay, Jamadar Nawab Khan (pickets, Johannesburg), Karwa (ex-soldier, Johannesburg), Leung Quinn (Chairman, Chinese Association, Johannesburg), John Fortoen (Chinese picket), Martin Easton (Johannesburg), Ram Sundar Pundit (Germiston), G.P. Vyas (Pretoria), A.F.C. Beg (Pretoria), M.I. Desai (chief picket, Pretoria), A.M. Cachalia (Pretoria), Ismail Suliman Suj (Pretoria), Goolam Mahomed Abdool Rashid (Pretoria), B. Gangaram (Pretoria), V.U. Sheth (Pretoria), Ismail Jooma (Pretoria), Rahmat Khan (Pretoria), M.M. Khanderia (Pietersburg), Amershi Gokul (Pietersburg) and Ambalal (Pietersburg). Gandhiji gave his word that all would appear before the respective magistrates at 10 a.m. the next day, Saturday, December 28. Mr. Papenfus accepted this guarantee. *Vide Indian Opinion*, 4-1-1908.

tothis Registration Act. gave powers which would press hard[1] on the poor husbands. They might be taken away from their families, and he instanced the case of Mr. Naidoo, who had shone brilliantly throughout the campaign. He had a wife and five children who had been in the Colony for five years. What was to happen if he were deported, and who was going to take care of his wife and children? He could not find a single section in the Act which was to protect the families of those deported. What was it the Government wanted to do? Why had it not the honesty to tell the Indians they were not wanted in the country? And why this indirect method of enforcing its powers? He had called some sections of the Act savage, and he said they were only worthy of an uncivilized Government. If those powers were so used and if all of them were deported or imprisoned, that were an honour for them rather than that they should forsake their solemn obligations and bid good-bye to their manhood and self-respect only because they were earning a few miserable pence or pounds. He would never be sorry for the advice he had given them, and he also said, with reference to their 15 months' fight,[2] that it was well done. This was legislation which no self-respecting nation and no self-respecting man could accept—not because of its regulations, but because it was class legislation of the worst type, based on entire distrust of the community and based on charges flung against them without any proof. They had asked Lord Selborne and General Smuts that these charges should be proved before an impartial tribunal. They were brought by a man steeped in prejudice and incapable of judging facts. Why should the Government not acknowledge that the least due to them was a fair trial? He did not dwell on the fact that the Indians had no representation, but he did dwell on the fact that the Government should be so callous in reference to the feelings of the people who had no representative. It seemed to him that they had come to the parting of the ways. The Imperial Government must hesitate if it meant to retain its hold on the people of India through their affections and not at the point of the bayonet. England might have to choose between India and the Colonies. It might not be today or tomorrow, but he felt the seeds had been sown by Lord Elgin's action. It had not been possible for him to choose soft words or to strain his comment when he found the Asiatic Act with the Immigration Act super-added. There was a story of how Mahomed and two[3] fellows were sheltering in a cave, being pursued by a large hostile force. His companions began to quail, and asked what they three could do against such heavy odds. "You say 'We three'," said Mahomed, "I say 'We four', for God is with us, and with Him on our side we shall prevail." God was with them, and so long as their cause was good, he did not mind a bit what powers the Government were given or how savagely those powers were used. Even then he would give the same advice that he had ventured to give them for the last 15 months.[4]

Indian Opinion, 4-1-1908

[1] The original has "hardly".

[2] The struggle was launched in September 1906; *vide* "Speech on the Black ACT", Before 9-11-1906 to "The Mass Meeting", 11-11-1906

[3] The original has "three".

[4] The meeting unanimously adopted a resolution protesting against the Immigration Restriction Act, a copy of which was to be forwarded to the Imperial Government through the High Commissioner.

20. INDIANS IN DELAGOA BAY[1]

We publish in another column the full text of the remarkable regulations framed by the local Government at Delagoa Bay to restrict Asiatic immigration. The regulations deal with three kinds of immigrants; or, rather, Asiatic visitors: (l) those who may leave Delagoa Bay; (2) those who may enter Delagoa Bay from outside districts; (3) Asiatics from Portuguese possessions in Asia. They have decidedly a Transvaal flavour about them. The Asiatics at Delagoa Bay, who have approached the Governor-General, have been told that the regulations are necessary because "the province is threatened with a large influx of Asiatic immigrants from the neighbouring colonies, and that they are of a merely temporary nature". We trust that the British Indians at Delagoa Bay will not rest satisfied with the explanation given by the Governor-General. As a matter of fact, there is absolutely no influx into Portuguese territory from the Transvaal, and, even if there were, there would be little justification for harassing the domiciled British Indians in that Province. Why, for instance, should they possess a special going-out permit? We understand that permanent documents have already been issued to them. Why cannot British Indians leave Delagoa Bay without a licence and without proving that they are neither criminals nor bankrupts? Under given circumstances, probably such a precaution may be in the interests of public justice, but Asiatics have by no means a monopoly of crime and bankruptcy. Europeans leave Delagoa Bay as often as they please without having to prove that they have not criminally broken the laws of the country, or become insolvent. The only redeeming feature of these harsh regulations is that the Portuguese Government, unlike Colonial British Governments, have recognised the necessity of drawing a broad distinction between Asiatics who are their own subjects and those who are not. We trust that, as Delagoa Bay is a foreign country, Lord Elgin will find it possible to secure some measure of relief from these vexatious restrictions.

Indian Opinion, 28-12-1907

[1] Not reproduced here, *vide* also "Indians of Delagoa Bay", 28-12-1907

21. WHAT TO DO FOR THOSE THROWN OUT OF EMPLOYMENT?

The reader will gather from this issue that the Indian railway workers at Standerton and Heidelberg have lost their jobs for refusing to submit to the obnoxious law. What should be done if a large number of people become unemployed in this manner? This question ought to engage the attention of every Indian. We have repeatedly stated that, if anyone suffers monetary loss before he is imprisoned, he will have to bear the loss himself. The community can offer no help in such a case. But it will be cruel to remain indifferent when hundreds of people face starvation. We are told, besides, that starvation may drive a man to the meanest of jobs.[1] In India, people in famine-stricken areas are driven by hunger to sell their children. It should not then be surprising if such ignoble hunger drives men to take out registers. If therefore a large number of men are thrown out of employment, it will be necessary to provide aid to them. Every Indian must think of this problem and send whatever he can to the Association at Johannesburg. The next question to consider is what should be done after money has been collected. If doles or allowances are paid to people for days on end without taking any work from them, that will only encourage vice and harm the recipients. We are therefore of the view that the services of such people should be utilized for some public work project. Mr. Gandhi has suggested the construction of a big hall. It is a difficult undertaking, but worth taking up, and will be very easy to carry out if there is a large number of Indians to help. It will serve three purposes. The community will have a big building in the Transvaal for political purposes; jobless Indians will be provided with means of livelihood and the Indian struggle will get wide publicity through the construction of such a big building. Indians outside the Transvaal ought not to be tight-fisted, taking the view that, in case the Transvaal Indians build a hall, they alone will get the benefit of it. Whether the hall is built or not, aid has to be provided to the jobless. It is a problem that should engage the attention of every Indian. If a hall is built, most of the expenditure will have to be borne by the Transvaal Indians themselves.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-12-1907

[1] The Gujarati proverb quoted here literally means: Hunger will drive a man to hard manual work, even to join a musical band.

22. BRAVE WOMEN[1]

Women in England have surpassed all expectations. When the Indian community started the struggle against the obnoxious law in the Transvaal, the suffragette movement in England was many months old. They are still continuing the struggle undaunted. The struggle of the Transvaal Indians is nothing when compared with the courage and the tenacity of these women. Moreover, they have to face opposition from many women. There is a much larger number of women against than in favour of franchise for themselves. Though a mere handful, these women do not admit defeat. The more they are repressed, the more the resistance they offer. Many of them have been to gaol. They have borne being kicked and stoned by base and cowardly men. There was a cable last week that they had resolved to intensify their struggle still further. There are taxes to be paid to the Government by these women or their husbands. If they do not pay the taxes, whatever things they possess can be auctioned. They may even be imprisoned. The women have now resolved that they will not pay any taxes or levies till they get their rights, but will rather allow their possessions to be auctioned, and they themselves will suffer imprisonment. This courage and tenacity deserves to be emulated by the Transvaal Indians, in fact, by the whole Indian community. The Natal Indians think it much of a hardship if their goods are to be auctioned for trading without a licence. These people do not realize that the Government cannot auction the goods of a large number of people. But what would it matter if it did ? If women can sacrifice their possessions for a matter like franchise, cannot we put up with a similar hardship while fighting for our livelihood? The movement of the suffragettes will go on for a long time, and they will keep up the agitation, resolute and tireless. They fight on with faith in truth, persuaded that, though they will not be there to enjoy the rights, if only the succeeding generations enjoy them, it will be as good as if they had themselves done so. Indians have to fight with the same spirit.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-12-1907

[1]*Vide* "Brave Women of England", 26-6-1907

23. INDIANS OF DELAGOA BAY

We publish elsewhere in this issue the full text of the Regulations for Registration of Indians in Delagoa Bay. These Regulations are quite harsh. It appears that Indians have already seen the Governor in this connection, but so far they have received no satisfactory reply. If these Regulations come to stay, even the most princely Indian will need a permit accompanied with his photograph while going to Delagoa Bay. A person on his way from the Transvaal can have a permit only if he establishes his right to return to the Transvaal. All this mischief has originated in Pretoria. Even if an Indian wishes to leave Delagoa Bay for good, he cannot do so without a permit. He can leave only when he proves that he has never committed a crime, and that he is not an insolvent. This is a new kind of oppression that is being introduced. The Portuguese subjects of India are exempted from this law.

Are the Indians of Delagoa Bay going to submit to such a law? When Moulvi Saheb Ahmed Mukhtiar returned from Delagoa Bay, he gave a fine account of the lethargy and indifference of the Indians there. If the Indian community at Delagoa Bay does not shake off its lethargy even now and do what is required, it will deserve the scorn of every Indian.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-12-1907

24. CONGRATULATIONS TO DAWAD MAHOMED

Last week, we gave a brief report of the marriage of Mr. Dawad Mahomed's daughter, Ashabibi, with his nephew, Mr. Gulam Hoosen. We extend our congratulations to Mr. Dawad Mahomed, his daughter and his son-in-law, and wish the couple a long and happy married life. But it is the simplicity which Mr. Dawad Mahomed observed in the celebration and the donations he made on the occasion on which he really deserves congratulations. If a person observes the common religious ceremonies, that will make him happy, ensure simplicity and save him unnecessary expenditure. Mr. Dawad Mahomed had the marriage solemnized according to the injunctions of the holy *Koran*, with the result that there was no ostentation or false show on the occasion. This is an example for everyone to follow, an example of how a marriage can be celebrated with due religious rites, but withoutfollowing any harmful customs. We think equally highly of

the donations Mr. Dawad Mahomedannounced on the occasion of the wedding. If everyone followed his example, the various religious or political bodies would not have to face the shortage of funds that they experience at present.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-12-1907

25. SOME ENGLISH TERMS

To respect our own language, speak it well and use in it as few foreign words as possible—this is also a part of patriotism. We have been using some English terms just as they are, since we cannot find exact Gujarati equivalents for them. Some of these terms are given below, which we place before our readers. We shall publish in this journal the name of the person who supplies Gujarati equivalents for them which may be found acceptable. We shall also present him with 10 copies of the booklet we have published on the new law, which may be circulated by him among friends. The book is not offered by way of inducement, but to honour the recipient and spread information about the obnoxious law. We hope that our readers will take the trouble of suggesting suitable equivalents not for the sake of the prize but out of patriotism. The following are the terms in question: Passive Resistance; Passive Resister; Cartoon; Civil Disobedience. There are other words too, but we shall think of them some other time. It should be noted that we do not want translations of these English terms, but terms with equivalent connotations. There will be no objection if the words are derived from Sanskrit or Urdu.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-12-1907

26. INDIA'S PLIGHT

The news of the death of the eldest son of Mr. Dadabhai of Johannesburg has set us thinking about many things. Such deaths occur in India by hundreds of thousands every year. Whole villages have been wiped out by the plague. Families have been destroyed. Very often we read newspaper reports of all the members of a family, parents and children, having perished.

Why is it that, though the plague occurs elsewhere, too, it does not destroy as many people as it does in India? I am sure no lover of India can help asking this question. The answer to it, we believe,

includes everything connected with the welfare of India. It is easy to ask the question, but difficult to find the answer. It is still more difficult, when the answer is found, to convince others that it is the right answer.

However, we think it worth while to make an attempt to give a partial answer to this question. After careful thought, we have come to the conclusion that, if the plague, starvation, etc., have become more widespread in India, it is because of the sinfulness of the people. If anyone wants to attribute it to the wickedness of the Government, we shall agree with him. It is a common experience that people suffer when the rulers are wicked. But it needs to be borne in mind that it is only a sinful people who have wicked rulers. Besides, it is as a rule more profitable to examine our own faults than to blame others.

Disunity and enmity between Hindus and Muslims are sins. But they are not fundamental sins. If disunity disappears and the two communities live in peace and amity, foreign rule may go or the ways of the rulers may change. But there is no reason to believe that when that happens, the plague and famines will disappear as a matter of course.

The chief sin is the untruthfulness of the people of India. During the plague, we deceive the Government and deceive ourselves. We make an outward show of cleanliness, but do not really observe it. If anything is to be fumigated, we only make a show of doing it. If we can do so with impunity, we avoid carrying out our obligations by bribing the police, if possible. We are used to this state of affairs from our childhood. They teach something at school. The pupils readily accept it. Returning home, they do exactly the contrary. Parents acquiesce in such conduct. Rules are given as to how cleanliness should be maintained. Whether they are such as should be observed or not is a different question. There can be a difference of opinion on that point. What we want to prove is that we base our conduct on falsehood. In most matters we only make an outward show. That has a debilitating effect on our nerves. Our blood becomes poisoned with the impurities of sinfulness and succumbs to germs of any kind. It is observed that certain castes or communities are not affected by the plague. The reason is that they do not make any false pretences with regard to cleanliness or any other matter. They do not show themselves better than they are. To that extent, we think they are superior to those who make a false show. We do not imply by this that all people behave in this manner. But by and large that is what happens.There is another dreadful habit, born of this very sin, which has spread among all classes of people. And that is the sensuality—adultery —prevalent among us. This matter can be touched upon only

in brief. Ordinarily, people fight shy of discussing this question. We, too, feel some hesitation. However, we think it our duty to place our views beforethe readers. Adultery does not consist merely in sexual intercourse with another man's wife. We are taught by every religion that there can be adultery even in intercourse with one's own wife. Sexual intercourse is justified only when it is the result of a desire for offspring. Ordinarily, it is observed that sexual intercourse is the result of passion, the birth of a child following merely as a consequence. India, in our judgment, is in such a miserable state that it is necessary at present for births to be reduced to a minimum. Therefore, whatever sexual intercourse takes place will for the most part be in the nature of adultery.

If this view is correct, it is the duty of every thoughtful Indian not to marry. In case he is helpless in regard to marriage, he should abstain from sexual intercourse with his wife. All this is quite difficult to practise. But there is no escape from it.

Otherwise we shall find it necessary to imitate the people of the West. They adopt monstrous methods to control child-birth. They start wars and allow large numbers of people to be destroyed and, having abandoned their faith in God, they only seek means of surrounding themselves with material comforts and luxuries. By following them, the Indians, too, can in course of time win freedom from the plague, etc. But we do not think the evil tendencies of the West can have a foothold in India.

That means that India will either keep herself free from sinful ways of living, with her eyes fixed on God, and so win happiness, or will ever remain in a state of death-in-life, enduring never-ending slavery, cowardly and fearful of death, rotting with the plague or such other inflictions.

Some people will find these ideas strange, or ridiculous, or as born of ignorance. But we make bold to assert that every thoughtful Indian ought to give them his fullest consideration. Such as they are, these thoughts are the result of this writer's deep experience of life. In any case, there will be no harm in putting them into practice. No one will lose anything by observing truth and celibacy. And it need not be asked what the people will gain if just a few persons follow this way of life. If anyone asks such a question, he will be taken for an ignorant person.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-12-1907

27. ARAB WISDOM

We discussed in previous issues some books in the series *The Wisdom of the East*[1]. The same writers have brought out a book on the subject noted above and have sent us a copy for review. It is hardly necessary to say that the book is in English. It is priced at one shilling only. It contains extracts from the holy *Koran*, and reproduces the sayings of Arab thinkers on different matters. For instance, with reference to nobility, it is said that "He who disregards his own honour gets no good from an honourable lineage . . . . Learning and high principles cover the shame of low origin."[2] The book is full of rich thoughts having a bearing on our struggle for honour. The poet says: "Men see no fault in one who respects himself." Then again: "Be ashamed in your own sight more than in the sight of men." Once more: "He who respects not himself can have no respect for others." And elsewhere it is said: "Life has no worth and this world has no happiness for a man who has lost his self-respect and abandoned himself to shamelessness." Under Character, we have: "A man is truly religious when he is truly good." Under Knowledge, we have: "A man without education is like a brave man without arms." "Kings govern men and learned men govern kings." "A wise man is not he who considers how he may get out of an evil, but he who sees to it that he does not fall into it." On Truthfulness, it is said: "No man's religion can be right unless his heart becomes right, nor can his heart become right unless his tongue is right. . . . That man is a hypocrite who prays and fasts, but is untruthful in what he says, false to his word, and unfaithful in discharging a trust." Such are the golden sayings contained in this little book. We advise everyone who can read English to buy this book.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-12-1907

[1] *Vide* "The Wisdom of the East", 15-6-1907 and "The Wisdom of the East Series", 13-7-1907

[2] The extracts quoted here have been collated with an English review published in *Indian Opinion*.

28. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

MASS MEETING

A mass meeting of Indians will be held in front of the Surati mosque on Wednesday, January l, at 4 p.m. to consider the struggle regarding licences from January onwards. It is hoped that the meeting will be attended by Indians from all parts.

SOME THOUGHTS ON QUESTION OF LICENCES

We considered some aspects of the question last week, but it is necessary that we should give it further thought. There is reason to believe that the real struggle will centre on this question. It will certainly be necessary to trade without licences. I find that there will be no need to produce registers when making applications for licences in respect of every kind of business. The words used in the law are "trading licences", which denote licences for business. Such licences do not include licences for washermen or for bicycles. That means that washermen will get their licences without having to produce registers. It is the merchants and hawkers who will feel the need most. If both these classes of Indians behave like men, the community will be free soon enough. Also, on looking into the law, I find it doubtful whether Indians can be prosecuted in the month of January. No person can be prosecuted for failure to take out a licence until after a month is over. It appears therefore that prosecutions will take place in the month of February. If any merchant is nervous, he can take out a licence in the name of his wife, in case he is married. He can save himself from imprisonment by doing so. But we are fighting to be, and to prove ourselves, men of courage. I cannot therefore advise playing for safety. I ask every Indian to apply for a licence for the sake of formality. There is no need to spend anything on a lawyer for the purpose of making an application. All that has to be done is to make an application and, after tendering the fee, mark time.

MOULVI SAHEB

The temporary permit of Moulvi Saheb Ahmed Mukhtiar expires on December 31. He has therefore applied for its extension. I very much hope that this will not be granted and that the Moulvi Saheb will have been installed in prison. But I see that my hope is in vain. The Government does not have that much courage. In view of the critical situation, it may even grant extension. If not, he will be allowed to go free.

REPLY TO PUNDITJI

General Smuts has replied to the letter concerning Punditji. He writes that Punditji will not be given a permit. He does not say anything more. I conclude from this that neither will a permit be given to him nor will he be arrested.

INDIANS OF STANDERTON

The Indian railway workers at Standerton were dismissed for having failed to apply for registers. There are about forty of them. No notice was given to them. Mr. Patel writes to say that they were not even paid for the day on which they were dismissed. The balance of the month's rations that was given to them was taken away from them. Turning a deaf ear to the entreaties of the workers on behalf of their womenfolk and children, they removed the roofs of their rooms that very day with a view to driving them out. The matter has been taken up with the General Manager. He has ordered payment of wages up to the end of the month. The Association has demanded a month's wages in lieu of notice. This is a case which will infuriate every Indian. The Government is afraid of Indians who are independent and strong, and therefore seeks: to intimidate the weak. This is the limit of tyranny. These poor workers have lost their jobs, relying on merchants and other leading Indians. If those merchants and leaders now yield at the last moment and embrace slavery out of fear of imprisonment or monetary loss, they will earn the curses of the poor Indians and their families.

INDIAN LABOURERS AT HEIDELBERG

At Heidelberg, Indian labourers were intimidated and taken to a magistrate. On hearing rumours that they had expressed their readiness before the magistrate to take out registers, Punditji and Mr. Naidoo ran up to the place. They saw the people. Their leader, a Pathan named Abdool, assured them with great confidence that not one of them would get himself registered. Punditji and Mr. Naidoo then went to Forchew and, spending the night at Mr. Mogalia's, started work in the morning. They were on their feet the whole day, acquainting the labourers with the nature of the law. At several places they had to ford streams, etc., and go through much hardship. These labourers also will be—or by now must have been—dismissed. Probably more information will be available next week. Thus, after his release from imprisonment, Punditji has not had a moment's rest.

CARTOON IN "THE SUNDAY TIMES"

The Sunday Times has been giving much publicity to our

struggle. It pokes a little fun at the law and at Mr. Smuts under the title "Mr. Gandhi's Dream". One of the figures in the cartoon is Mr. Smuts. Leaning his head upon his hands, with the elbows resting on the table, he is musing:

"Registration" is a great bother;

And "Resistance" greater than that;

The old C.B. worries me a lot,

And Gandhi drives me mad.

This is what Mr. Smuts is muttering to himself. "C.B." refers to the Prime Minister of England, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman. In the second cartoon, Mr. Gandhi is shown with armour on. It is covered all over with pointed nails. There is a notice above the picture, "Do not touch me", and it is signed below, "Yours passively, Gandhi". What is being suggested is this: Why does he sign himself "Yours passively", when touching any part of his body would give sharp pricks? The point is that when the law is pricked with the thorns of passive resistance, it loses all its force.

ATTACK ON GERMISTON INDIANS

A meeting of the Germiston Municipality was held. It discussed a motion that Indians should not be allowed any rights in the Market Square. Mr. Preddy spoke against it. Others, especially Mr. White, spoke in favour of it.

LIST OF BLACKLEGS

I give below the list which I promised last week. The names given there are repeated in this list. These are the names of persons registered since October 19. I have also their addresses with me. I am sorry that I do not have the [serial] numbers, but they are not needed, for the list is authentic. It does not contain names of any persons from Madras and Calcutta, but there are very few of them.

Blacklegs from Pretoria: [a list of 84 names]; from Johannesburg : [10]; from Pietersburg: [35]; from Louis Trichardt: [8] from Hartswater : [1]; from Christiana: [2]; from Potchefstroom: [11]; from Standerton: [5]; from Middleburg: [8]; from Ermilo: [1]; from Lydenburg: [2]; from Heidelberg: [8]

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN IMPRESSIONS OF FINGERS AND THUMBS

I had promised to discuss this matter some time,[1] and I do so now. Thumb-impressions are widely used in civil matters in India. In England they have become a rage. Friends send their thumb-

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 14-12-1907

impressions to one another. Pensioners and others are required to give impressions of thumbson receipts. In Natal it is the practice to have thumb-impressions on promissory notes. Thumb-impressions are thus taken because they make it easy to identify a person. Impressions of two thumbs are taken, rather than of one, in order that, in case the impression of one of the thumbs is not clear, or is defaced, or has any other defect, the other impression can serve the purpose. Apart from these, no impressions of fingers are required for the purpose of identification. Digit-impressions are taken from criminals because the person who is a criminal wants to evade being identified. He always wants to remain unrecognized. A person who has been required to give impressions of all fingers and thumbs can be identified by means of these impressions even if he has not given his correct name. Research workers have prepared an index by means of which persons can be classified into different categories according to the impressions of their fingers and thumbs. Hence, it is possible to prepare an index with the help of impressions. Any person who has given his name as Ramji, which is not available on the records of the Government, can however be traced with the help of the index of impressions, if the impressions of his fingers and thumbs are available. In this way many crimes have been detected in India and elsewhere. This means that impressions of all fingers and thumbs are taken from criminals.

The Indian, on the other hand, wants himself to be identified. If he does not describe himself correctly, he cannot live in this country; hence his interest will be in supplying correct particulars of his name, etc. If his name is not on the records of the Government, he cannot live here. It is therefore useless to demand digit-impressions from him. It can be proved to the Government with this convincing argument that taking ten impressions serves no purpose and involves unnecessary expenditure. The argument has a scientific basis. Hence, even after the new law is defeated, the Indian community can argue with the Government against ten impressions without fear of being called childish. There is no such argument against the impressions of two thumbs. Every struggle must have some substantial ground, otherwise public opinion will be against us.

JAPANESE GENTLEMAN

A Japanese student of science named Mr. Nakamura is here. He carried with him a letter from Lord Elgin, in spite of which he was harassed by the Permit Officer. He has been making a study of mines in every part of the world. He had an interview with Mr. Palak, which

we report in the English section.[1] He has promised to inform his Government about the obnoxious law.

CORRECTION

A correspondent informs me that the names of Mr. Ise Ali and Mr. Bagas Amiji did not appear in the list of those who had attended the last mass meeting at Pretoria, though they were present. I give the names now.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-12-1907

29. TRIAL AT JOHANNESBURG[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,
December 28, 1907]

. . .Sharp at 10 a.m. on Saturday last, all the Johannesburg men attended at the B. Criminal Court, where Mr. H. H. Jordan sits. They were asked by Superintendent Vernon whether they held duly issued registration certificates under Law 2 of 1907, and upon receiving replies in the negative, they were all promptly arrested, and charged under Section 8 sub-section 2 of Act 2 of 1907, in that they were in the Transvaal without a registration certificate issued under the Act. The Court was crowded to excess and it seemed as if, at one time, the barrier would be overthrown.

Among those present were Mr. George Godfrey, Dr. M. A. Pereira, the Editor of *Indian Opinion*, and many other friends of and sympathisers with the accused.

Mr. P. J. Schuurman prosecuted on behalf of the Crown.

Mr. M. K. Gandhi, Attorney, Barrister-at-Law of the Inner Temple, Honorary Secretary of the British Indian Association of the Transvaal, was the first of the accused to be dealt with.

Superintendent Vernon, of the T.T.P., gave evidence as to the arrest. He said the accused was an Asiatic over 16 years of age, resident in the Transvaal. At 10 a.m. that morning he called on Mr. Gandhi to produce his registration certificate, but he failed to do so, and said he had not got one.

Mr. Gandhi asked no questions, but went into the box, prepared to make a statement. He said [that] what he was about to state was not evidence, but he hoped the Court would grant him indulgence to make a short explanation, seeing that he was an officer of that Court. He wished to say why he had not submitted to this.

MR. JORDAN: I don't think that has anything to do with it. The law is there,

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] This was Gandhiji's first trial in a court of law. This report was published under the title "Mr. Gandhi Ordered to Leave the Transvaal".

and you have disobeyed it. I don't want any political speeches made.

MR. GANDHI: I don't want to make any political speeches.

MR. JORDAN: The question is, have you registered or not? If you have not registered, there is an end of the case. If you have an explanation to offer *ad misericordiam* as regards the order I am going to make, that is another story. There is the law, which has been passed by the Transvaal legislature and sanctioned by the Imperial Government. All I have to do and all I can do is to administer that law as it stands.

Mr. Gandhi said he did not wish to give any evidence in extenuation, and he knew that legally he could not give evidence at all.

MR. JORDAN: All I have to deal with is legal evidence. What you want to say, I suppose is that you do not approve of the law and you conscientiously resist it.

MR. GANDHI: That is perfectly true.

MR. JORDAN: I will take the evidence if you say you conscientiously object.

Mr. Gandhi was proceeding to state when he came to the Transvaal and the fact that he was secretary to the British Indian Association when Mr. Jordan said he did not see how that affected the case.

MR. GANDHI: I said that before. I simply asked the indulgence of the Court for five minutes.

MR. JORDAN: I don't think this is a case in which the Court should grant any indulgence. You have defied the law.

MR. GANDHI: Very well, sir, then I have nothing more to say.

Mr. Schuurman pointed out that the accused as well as all other Asiatics had been given ample time in which to register. It appeared that the accused did not intend to register, and, therefore, he did not think the Court should give him any long time in which to leave the country. He must apply for an order for accused to leave the country in 48 hours.

. . .Mr. Jordan, in giving his decision, said the Government had been extremely lenient and yet it appeared that none of these people had registered. They had set the law of the Colony at defiance with the result that the Government had taken that step. He had power under the Asiatic Registration Act, the Peace Preservation Ordinance, and the Immigration Act to order the accused to leave the Colony within a certain number of days. He had no wish to be harsh in the matter, and he did not intend to adopt the suggestion of Mr. Schuurman in regard to 48 hours. He should make reasonable orders. He must give Mr. Gandhi and the others time to collect their goods and chattels. At the same time, he need not point out to Mr. Gandhi that under the law certain penalties were provided. The minimum sentence, if the order were not complied with, was one month with or without hard labour; and if the offenders were found in the Colony seven days after that sentence expired, the minimum sentence which could be inflicted was six months. He did hope that a little common sense would be shown in these matters, and that the Asiatic population of

the Colony would realize that they could not trifle and play with the Government. If they did, they would find that when an individual set himself up against the will of the State, the State was stronger than the individual, and the individual suffered and not the State. . . . Mr. Gandhi, interrupting the Magistrate, asked him to make the order for 48 hours. If they could get it shorter even than that, they would be more satisfied.

MR. JORDAN: If that is the case, I should be the last person in the world to disappoint you. Leave the Colony within 48 hours is my order.

Indian Opinion, 4-1-1908

30. TRIAL OF P.K. NAIDOO AND OTHERS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
December 28, 1907]

[GANDHIJI:] Are you a British subject?

[WITNESS:] I am.

Were you in the Transvaal before the war?

Yes; since 1888.

Did you pay the Dutch Government £3?

I paid nothing.

You have not taken out a registration certificate under the law?

No. Not under any law.

Why not?

I thought it was not fit for me to take out a permit under that law, it would be very degrading. . . .

MR. JORDAN: Why?

If I had the Act in front of me, I would point out some of the processes which I think it is not right for a British subject to submit to. The law clearly says that we should give our ten fingers' impression and then our eight fingers' impression separately, and besides that our thumb impressions. Then we have to give our father's and mother's and children's names.. . .

Cross-examined by Mr. Schuurman: How long have you been here?

Since 1888. I left in 1899, in October 18, and came back in 1902. I went to Natal and returned in July of 1907.

You have held meetings in reference to this Act?

After I came back, there were meetings held.

Have you persuaded the Indians not to register?

[1] After his own trial, *vide* the preceding item, Gandhiji defended the other accused, the first to be examined being P.K. Naidoo.

I took an oath not to register.

Where?

It was taken at a meeting at Burghersdorp, in the Independent School, if I am not mistaken.

You do not intend to register?

I do not.

MR. JORDAN: Had you a permit to enter the country?

No, I had an authorization from the Registrar of Asiatics.

Mr. Schuurman asked for the same order, which Mr. Jordan granted.

The cases of Nawab Khan and Samandar Khan were postponed till January 3, because there was no interpreter present.

The case of C.M. Pillay was next taken. He stated that he came to the Transvaal in 1883, and previous to the war he was Inspector of Asiatic passes and licences. During the war, he was a commissariat officer and messenger of the Court.

MR. GANDHI: Why do you not register?

I consider that any self-respecting man would not comply with the provisions of the Act, as it simply places our liberty in the hands of the Registrar of Asiatics who, in my humble opinion, is not a fit and proper person to hold this post. . .

The Magistrate interrupted, and said he would not listen to nonsense of that kind....He thought it was a piece of gross impertinence for a person to come there and abuse an official of the Government in that way. He was not going to have his time wasted and the dignity of the Court lowered in that way. It was most improper.

Mr. Gandhi said that he agreed with the Magistrate as to the impropriety of the accused's remarks. And he had no intention of leading evidence as to the Registrar's fitness for his position.

(TO ACCUSED): Do you object to the officer or to the Act?

Mainly to the Act.

A similar order was made at the request of the Prosecutor.

Thambi Naidoo objected to registration as it placed him lower than a Kaffir, and it was against his religion. He was a married man with five children, the eldest of whom was 13, and the youngest about 18 months. He carried on business as a cartage contractor.

Mr. Gandhi asked that 48 hours' notice only should be given. That was all accused wanted. . .

Mr. Jordan said that it was not what the accused wanted but what he (the Magistrate) wanted. The accused was a man of business, and the period would be fixed at 14 days.

Karwa stated that he had been in the Transvaal since 1888, and during the war was a military contractor, being with Sir George White at Ladysmith. He had entered the Transvaal with a military column by way of Harrismith. He had just placed a

thumb impression on a registration certificate under Law 3 of 1885. He refused to give his finger impressions as it was against his religion. . .

THE MAGISTRATE: But you have put on one ?

ACCUSED (waving his hand deprecatingly): One is all right, but ten is against my religion. (Laughter.)

THE MAGISTRATE: As a matter of fact, I suppose you don't care whether you put on ten or five. You only have to be told to do it.

Mr. Easton, the first of the Chinese accused, said that he was a British subject from Hong Kong. He had also been here before the war and had paid his £3 to the Dutch Government for his certificate. By occupation he was a store assistant, and objected to registration because it was too degrading and was against his religion. He was not permitted by his religion Taoism to give any impressions. He was ordered to leave within 48 hours.

Leung Quinn, Chairman of the Chinese Association, stated that he was not a British subject, but had come to the Transvaal in 1896, and obtained a permit from the Dutch Government. In 1901 he left and returned in 1903, obtaining a permit under the Peace Preservation Ordinance. He was a storekeeper. He did not take out a permit because it was a law that was disgraceful to himself and his nation. He had translated the law to his countrymen and had been expecting some such prosecution all the time. He would be quite contented with 48 hours' notice; he had made all his preparations. . . .

The Magistrate insisted on giving Quinn, as he had given the Indian storekeeper, 14 days' notice.

John Fortoen, the last of the accused to go into the witness box, stated that he had been in the Transvaal for about 13 years before the war, having arrived in the Transvaal with his uncle as a child. He did not know where his uncle was, nor whether his parents were alive or not. He was a student, and had just come back from the Hankey Institution (near Humansdorp) in Cape Colony, where he had been since 1904. He considered that South Africa was his home, and he knew no one in China. He did not want to take out the registration certificate because it was degrading to his country and his honour. His age was 21.

Mr. Gandhi, pointing out that this would be his last opportunity of addressing the Court, said that he would like to make a few general remarks. He had deliberately advised all his clients to plead not guilty, so that the Court could hear from their own lips what they had to say. They had all said something more or less with reference to the finger-print system. He asked the Court to dismiss from its mind the idea that these men did not know what they were doing. He knew that what he was about to say could not affect the decision of the Court, but he thought it his duty to himself and his clients to make this explanation. There were certain things in this world which one could not explain, and there were certain things in this law which men felt but could not express, and he left it to the Court to interpret the feelings of the accused with regard to the finger-print system. . .

Mr. Jordan, in the course of his reply, pointed out that a deputation of Indians had gone home to the Imperial Government on the very matter before them. That deputation had, however, been in vain. The Act to which such exception was taken had been passed by the present Legislative Assembly of the Transvaal, and the King's assent had been obtained. And, all sentimentality apart, he had nothing to do but to administer the law, which he had sworn to do to the best of his ability. These people (the accused) had deliberately defied the Government and had taken up a very serious position—one which he was sorry to see any resident in this country adopt. It had been a mistake, he had no doubt, which had been copied from the passive resisters at Home in connection with the Education Bill, and that was an attitude which had never appealed to him in any shape at all. The laws of a country must be complied with by the people resident there, and if they could not do that, there was but one alternative— such people must go somewhere else. He could not, however, for the life of him understand, if a man put his thumb print on a registration certificate—as had been done in years past—where the offence against his religion came in when he had to put the print of the four fingers of each hand on this certificate.

Proceeding, he referred to the practice under the Peace Preservation Ordinance, and urged that had they objected then to the thumb print, their position would have been stronger at the present time. The registration certificates which required the thumb print had been the only mode they had for identification. That was in the days of [the] old yellow pass which had been issued by the former Government; but all at once, when it came about that they had to register in the new form, the Asiatics simply defied the law. Mr. Gandhi must be aware that he (Mr. Jordan) had more experience under the Peace Preservation Ordinance in the Transvaal than any other magistrate, and Mr. Gandhi must know also the big traffic that was done by the sale of the yellow certificates which rendered it difficult to trace the owner and caused an enormous amount of trouble and expense. Coming back to the case of the youth then before the Court, he would make an order that he (the accused) must leave the Colony in seven days.

In a brief reply, Mr. Gandhi said that a distinction had always been drawn between the thumb print on the old permit and finger-print under the new law. The one was compulsory and the other was a voluntary act. The Court, he said, was well aware that in cases where a clear thumb impression was taken, the man could be spotted and trafficking in permits had been [made] impossible.

He thanked the Court, the public prosecutor and the police for the courtesy which had been shown throughout the trials.

Indian Opinion, 4-1-1908

31. SPEECH IN GOVERNMENT SQUARE[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
December 28, 1907]

. . .They were going on with the struggle, no matter what happened to him or to anyone else. He would certainly not change his views, and he urged the Asiatic communities to strive against the Registration Act even if it meant deportation from the Colony. He might have been mistaken all along. Or they might afterwards curse him. At the present time, he held no other views but those that he had indicated. If God's message came to him that he had erred, he would be the first to acknowledge his fault and beg their forgiveness. But he did not think that he would ever receive that message. He held that it was better to leave the Colony than to lose their self-respect and honour by remaining as slaves. This was a religious struggle, and he gave them the advice he had always given them—to fight to the bitter end.

Indian Opinion, 4-1-1908

32. LETTER TO "THE STAR"[2]

JOHANNESBURG,
December 30, 1907

TO
THE EDITOR
THE STAR
[JOHANNESBURG]

SIR,

The Government are to be congratulated on boldly and honestly taking proceedings mainly against those only who have led the passive resistance movement against the Asiatic Act. That, indeed, is the only method of testing the reality and universality of Asiatic feeling. But among those arrested are some who have never taken an active part in the agitation, and there are also remarkable omissions. Both these facts tell their own tale. Some have even suggested that one or two arrests are dueto private grudge. However, it is not my purpose, in trespassing

[1] At the conclusion of the trial, Gandhiji addressed a large gathering of Indians, Chinese and Europeans in Government Square. Speaking first in Hindustani, he narrated what had happened at the trial. This is a report of what he said in English to the Europeans.

[2] This appeared in *Indian Opinion*, 4-1-1908, as a "Letter to the Press".

on your courtesy, to deal with this phase of the question.

The arrests have synchronised with the announcement of the Royal Assent to the Immigration Act. This shows that the Government intend to use their newly-acquired power. They have now three strings to their bow, viz., imprisonment, the stopping of trade licences, and deportation. All these powers have been taken or given in order to enable the Government, not to stop an influx of Asiatics, because no one wants it, and the Registration Act cannot stop it; not to avoid trade competition, because every Indian submitting to the Act can have as many licences as and where he wants; but to enable them to bend Indians to their will, to force them to do violence to their conscience, in short, by delivering a crushing blow, to unman them, so that they may become as wax in their hands.

Do the colonists know that deportation under the Immigration Act is worse than ordinary deportation? If I committed murder and were sentenced to transportation for life, I should be sent to a place where I should be housed and fed even as the few native rebels sent from Natal to St. Helena are. But if I do not submit to the Asiatic Act I am deported, that is, put across the border or sent to India without a penny on me, if I do not possess private property, to shift for myself as best I can, the cost of deportation to be paid by me. And if I have a family in the Transvaal, so far as the Government are concerned, they will be allowed to die of starvation. And this, mind, is to happen to men to whom the Transvaal is their adopted home and India a foreign country for purposes of earning a livelihood. Some of the Indians arrested are traders of nearly fifteen years' standing, with wives born in South Africa and living in the Transvaal. One Chinaman came to South Africa a mere lad, knows China only in name. He was born and bred in Western institutions. All the Asiatics arrested are lawful residents in possession of documents entitling them to remain in the country. These men, because they do not violate their conscience, but violate the Asiatic Act, may not only be imprisoned, but deported, in the above fashion under a warrant signed by the Colonial Secretary! I do not say that those who do not comply with the law, even when non-compliance is due to the dictates of the conscience, should not be punished at all, but I do say that when the punishment is disproportionate to the offence, it savours strongly of barbarism. And if the powers under the Immigration Act are exercised in respect of the Asiatic Law, an act of barbarism will have been committed in the name of the electors of the Transvaal. Will the people of this country

chuckle with delight over such ruination of a whole people? What will the Guild of Loyal Women say regarding wives being kept without their natural protectors? I consider myself a lover of theBritish Empire, a citizen (though voteless) of the Transvaal, prepared to take my full share in promoting the general well-being of the country. And I claim it to be perfectly honourable, and consistent with the above profession, to advise my countrymen not to submit to the Asiatic Act as being derogatory to their manhood and offensive to their religion. And I claim, too, that the method of passive resistance adopted to combat the mischief is the cleanest and the safest, because, if the cause is not true, it is the resisters, and they alone, who suffer. I am perfectly aware of the danger to good government, in a country inhabited by many races unequally developed, in an honest citizen advising resistance to a law of the land. But I refuse to believe in the infallibility of legislators. I do believe that they are not always guided by generous or even just sentiments in their dealings with unrepresented classes. I venture to say that, if passive resistance is generally accepted, it will once and for ever avoid the contingency of a terrible death struggle and bloodshed in the event (not impossible) of the natives becoming exasperated by a stupid mistake of our legislators.

It has been said that those who do not like the law may leave the country. This is all very well, spoken from a cushioned chair, but it is neither possible nor becoming for men to leave their homes because they do not subscribe to certain laws enacted against them. The uitlanders of the Boer regime complained of harsh laws; they, too, were told that if they did not like them, they could retire from the country, but they thought better and did not go. Are Indians, who are fighting for their self-respect, to slink away from the country for fear of suffering imprisonment or worse?

No, Sir, if I could help it, nothing would remove Indians from the country save brute force. It is no part of a citizen's duty to pay blind obedience to the laws imposed on him. And if my countrymen believe in God and the existence of the soul, then, while they may admit that their bodies belong to the State to be imprisoned and deported, their minds, their wills and their souls must ever remain free like the birds of the air, and are beyond the reach of the swiftest arrow. General Smuts, who puts trust in the tyrannical laws sanctioned by an obliging Secretary of State, forgets that those Asiatics who are

fighting for conscience sake will not be bent by any machinery he may put in force. If, when the leaders are withdrawn, my countrymen succumb, we shall have deserved the law. Then, too, the cleanness of passive resistance, that is Jesus' teaching "resist not evil", will have been justified.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Star, 30-12-1907

33. SPEECH AT CHINESE ASSOCIATION[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
December 30, 1907]

All who considered [that] this was not a religious struggle, that this was not a religious cause, did not know what religion meant. He believed he had acquired some knowledge of most religions, and every religion taught that if a man did anything that degraded his manhood, there was no religion in him. If religion meant communing with God, trusting in God, then he had no hesitation in saying that it was absolutely irreligious to degrade themselves in order that they might be able to earn a few pounds or pence in the Transvaal. Even then they considered the position was not right, and proper and just. If the Asiatics of the country had blindly followed their leaders and, immediately the leaders were withdrawn, they were going to accept the Act, then he believed they would have deserved the Act. The key to the situation, therefore, lay in their own hands. If they believed in the righteousness of their cause, and if they believed they were going forward, no matter what happened, nothing that General Smuts might do in this Colony—nothing that the Imperial Government might sanction in the name of His Majesty—could deter them one little bit from the step they had already taken.

In his own mind, he had great doubts as to the ability of the Government to put domiciled Asiatics across the border, but he was now fortified in that belief by a well reasoned opinion from the best lawyer[2] in the Transvaal.

But once more I request you not to pin your faith to Mr. Leonard's opinion, or any other legal opinion that may be obtained. In this struggle, the only opinion to which you can possibly pin your faith is that of your own conscience and communion with your God.

[1] The meeting was convened to thank Gandhiji for the services rendered by him in the crisis which faced the Asiatic communities in the Transvaal. It was attended, among others, by about 400 permanent Chinese residents; the Acting Chairman of the Chinese Association, Mr. J. L. Wengsee, presided.

[2] J.W. Leonard

If you rely upon any other thing whatsoever, you will be relying upon a broken reed.

Indian Opinion, 4-1-1908

34. INTERVIEW TO REUTER[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
December 30, 1907]

. . . The Indians had all along offered to aid the Government in the matter of identification, but the Government had ignored their offers of assistance. The Indians had always agreed that the Transvaal had the right to regulate and control future immigration. What most concerned them was the position of the Indians now lawfully resident in the Transvaal.

Mr. Gandhi denied the imputation that the Indians had insulted the Government by putting the most offensive construction upon the Government's Acts. They would warmly welcome a reference of their case to the Imperial Conference, feeling assured that the result would be a humane and satisfactory arrangement which both sides would abide by. Mr. Gandhi complained of the excessive power given to the Government by the Immigration Restriction Act in dealing with passive resisters—a power which he considered altogether disproportionate to the offence. He anticipated that Indians who declined to register would have their trading licences refused on January 1, with the result that they would continue to trade without licences.

Mr. Gandhi mentioned that the Indians here have received telegrams from the Indian National Congress at Surat and from other quarters expressing sympathy and promising support.—*Reuter*.

India, 3-1-1908

[1] Gandhiji gave this interview commenting on Sir Raymond West's remarks made in London that both sides had gone "too far"—the Transvaal Government had "cynically" ignored the susceptibilities of the Indians and the Indians had put "the most, instead of the least, insulting construction" on the Acts of that Government. He suggested a compromise. The Indians should offer to aid the work of identification by "inoffensive means", and tender co-operation in regulating immigration on terms of "inoffensive registration" of residents in the country. "A joint committee should be constituted, and the Indian leaders should be made responsible. Failing an arrangement, the Indians should, as British subjects, claim from the King the protection against ill-usage which His Majesty would be bound to afford them in a foreign country."

35. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

Tuesday, [*December 31, 1907*]

SIMULTANEOUS ARRESTS

The Government did not permit Pretoria, Pietersburg, Johannesburg and Germiston to have a quiet December. Warrants of arrest were issued—12 in Pretoria, nine in Johannesburg, three in Pietersburg and one in Germiston. In Pretoria, summons were received by Messrs Suliman Suj, A. M. Cachalia, Ardeshir Beg, Gavarishanker Vyas, Goolam Mahomed Rashid, Ismail Jooma, Rahmat Khan, Chunilal Sheth, Tulsi, Gangadeen and Manilal Desai; in Johannesburg, by Messrs Gandhi, Thambi Naidoo, C. M. Pillay, Nawab khan, Samandar Khan, Karwa, Quinn, Easton, and Fortoen; in Pietersburg, by Messrs Mohanlal Khanderia, Amershi Gokul, and Ambalal; and in Germiston by Ram Sundar Pundit. Of these, Rahmat Khan being out of station was not arrested. Mr. Cachalia, as soon as he heard the news, ran down from Volksrust to Pretoria to attend the summons, leaving his work unfinished. On the other hand, Ram Sundar made himself scarce. Messrs Chunilal and Tulsi had their cases postponed.

It is necessary to relate the story of Ram Sundar. That gentleman was present in Mr. Gandhi's office when the Police Commissioner's notice was received on Friday, and promised to attend the court on Saturday. But after reaching Germiston, he called one or two of his disciples and told them that he was thinking of running away, since he could not face a second term of imprisonment. The disciples expostulated with him but he was overcome with fear. Turning a deaf ear to all that they said and without informing anyone, he quietly took the train to Natal. Thus, his fall was as sudden as his rise. I have written at great length about him in this paper. All that has turned out to be mistaken. The poems about him have been meaningless. A bad coin will always remain a bad coin. This is a struggle such as will expose everyone in his true colours. So far as the community is concerned, Ram Sundar is dead henceforth. We are to forget him.

All the others appear to be firm. Those arrested include persons from all communities. There are four Surati Muslims, one Memon, two Pathans, one Parsi, one Brahmin, three Banias, one Hindu from Calcutta, one Sikh, two Desais, one Lohana, three Hindus from Madras and three Chinese, making a total of 23 Asiatics who have been arrested. From among these, Messrs Suj, Desai, was, Khanderia and

Naidoo have their families in the Transvaal. Some of them are businessmen and some are servants. Thus, every community has reason to congratulate itself.

WHY WERE MORE BUSINESSMEN NOT ARRESTED?

This question has been raised. I think Mr. Essop Mia and others have not been touched for the time being because, perhaps, it is intended to harass them on the question of licences. It is also likely that they are left untouched because some businessmen have informed the Government that they were prepared to conform to the law if pickets and other mischief-mongers were removed from their path. It appears that businessmen have not been arrested for this reason. There are some among those arrested who have taken no part in the struggle. It is not necessary to go into the reasons for this just now.

WHY DID IMMIGRATION ACT RECEIVE ROYAL ASSENT?

Owing to the sudden arrests, the fact of the Immigration Act having received [Royal] assent has receded into the background, and people have lost their fear about it. I think we have ourselves provided the grounds for the assent to that law. As I said earlier, some businessmen submitted a representation to say that they would submit to the law if certain individuals ceased interfering with the affair. And still others approached the Registrar with exaggerated reports. All this was perhaps transmitted to Lord Elgin in a distorted form so as to give him the impression that, if the Immigration Act were passed, everyone would register. Is it anything to wonder at that, with such information reaching Lord Elgin, the Act should have received the assent? It is, however, gratifying to observe that the Act appears to have left the Indian community altogether unconcerned.

SOME COWARDS

All the same, a few at least have shown themselves to be cowards. There are among them some Memons of Pietersburg who had not applied so far, but who have now sent in a petition to say that they are ready to "soil" their hands. I hold on to my belief that, with increasing pressure, we would find the impurities separating out, leaving pure gold behind. It is only those of proved worth who will pilot the ship to the haven. It is not to be expected that those who merely protest their courage out of fear of public ridicule, but are timid at heart, will stand their ground till the end.

NO REASON FOR FEAR

But their fear is groundless. Thousands of men cannot be deported. As for those who submit, the whites know what is in store

for them in the Transvaal.

IMMIGRATION REGULATIONS

The editor will give elsewhere a translation of the Regulations under this Act which have been published. For the present, I point to one thing which will cause surprise. It is obligatory to give 10 fingerprints on the permits, passes, etc., to be issued under the Act. The Regulations are applicable to all, whites as well as blacks. White servants from England will be allowed into the Transvaal only if they possess such passes. It will be realized now that the struggle against the obnoxious law is not based on the question of finger-prints. It is aimed against its implicit offensiveness. There is nothing in the Immigration Regulations which we can complain of. For the present, the Act can be of little profit to us. Its provisions can be availed of only by those who have submitted to the obnoxious law. We areonly concerned with the section relating to deportation. But the point made above deserves attention. Even if the requirement of finger-prints were deleted, the obnoxious law would remain totally unacceptable. It is in its very nature a poisonous law, and cannot be compared at all with any other piece of legislation.

WHO WILL TAKE MR. GANDHI'S PLACE?

A question has been raised as to who will work in Mr. Gandhi's absence. I know that Mr. Polak has dedicated his life to the Indian community. He has gone deep into this question. He comes of a cultured family. He weilds a powerful pen and writes excellent English. He has come into contact with most of the whites, and is himself known to every Indian. He will be of help in many ways. There is no doubt about it. Hence letters addressed to the British Indian Association will also be attended to by him. It is desirable that, as far as possible, all communications addressed to him should be in English.

PUBLICITY TO PASSIVE RESISTANCE

The cases against Indians are reported extensively in the newspaper and every paper appears to be distinctly inclined in our favour. There are many whites who now feel ashamed of General Smuts. *The Transvaal Leader* has commented sympathetically on the Indian side in regard to the recent cases.

WHAT IS LIKELY TO HAPPEN NOW ?

There are indications of an early end to the struggle. It does not appear that any further arrest will be made. The Government will

watch the effects of withholding licences and of the absence of Mr. Gandhi and the others. If inspite of this, the community remains firm, it is likely that a settlement will be reached in March. The game is entirely in our hands.

WHO CAN HARM THOSE WHOM GOD PROTECTS?

General Smuts had had to draw in the net which he had spread for the Indians. Today (Tuesday) morning, Messrs Naidoo, Pillay, Easton, Karwa and Gandhi were to be installed in the gaol-palace. But there was 3 telephone message before 10 a.m. to the effect that they need not go to the court at all until further notice. For the present, then, these brave Indians will not be able to taste the joys of imprisonment. This is, of course, no cause for exultation. Every Indian must have realized by now that this is going to be a hard fight. There is no escape from imprisonment. This at least is certain. It must be assumed that those who are not arrested now will be arrested later.

Now everyone is to hold himself in readiness, weapon in hand. We are to follow the example of General Crongi and his army whoon one occasion held themselves in battle position with armour on for 24 hours at a stretch. People were carried away by a wave of joy at the news that there were to be no arrests. Mr. Gandhi's office was besieged and speeches were made. The meeting which was proceeding on the public road was interrupted by a constable who informed them that no such meeting could be held without the permission of the Town Council. Thereupon the people dispersed. For the present, at least, it appears that Indians are going strong.

DEPORTATION OUT OF QUESTION

Mr. Leonard has given his opinion on the section of the Immigration Act relating to deportation; it is entirely in our favour, indicating that deportation of Indians is quite impossible. If they think of it, we shall give a fight. If Indians have patience enough to do nothing but remain at home and put up with whatever losses may occur, everything will end well.

HOSKEN'S SYMPATHY

On Tuesday, Mr. Hosken went over specially to Mr. Gandhi's office and expressed his sympathies with deep feeling. He was convinced that ours was a religious struggle. Many prominent whites are expressing the same view among themselves. Now most of our well-wishers among the whites advise us to hold out firmly.

TREACHEROUS INDIANS

Reports have been received from Delagoa Bay that two self-

seeking Indians have reached there from the Transvaal. They promise to arrange for Mr. Chamney to visit Delagoa Bay and issue permits there, on payment of £12.10s per head. I am sure the men are telling a lie. Mr. Chamney cannot register anyone in that manner. I advise every Indian to beware of such persons. It is not merely that they cannot secure any permit, but rather that they do more harm to the community than the Government does.

FOUL PLAY BY GOVERNMENT AT DURBAN

There is a telegram that people arriving from India are given the title-deed of slavery in Durban itself before they proceed to the Transvaal. Indians at Durban send many telegrams and talk a great deal. I have very often suggested that they should arrange for someone to meet every person arriving from India and explain the position about the law. But it appears that no one is attending to such a simple task. What, then, is the use of sending messages of encouragement to the Transvaal ? I sincerely hope that there will be at least one Indian in Durban who will meet Indians as they disembarkthere and make enquiries [about their plans. If necessary, such persons should be contacted even in Delagoa Bay.

PORT ELIZABETH

The Association at Port Elizabeth has contributed £25 to the British Indian Association, which has accepted it with thanks.

MEETING OF INDIANS

On Friday evening, there was a mass meeting in the hall of the Hamidia Society. About a thousand people were present, all full of enthusiasm. A resolution of protest against the Immigration Act was cabled to England.

MEETING OF CHINESE

The same evening, there was a meeting of the Chinese. In view of the possibility of his deportation, Mr. Quinn proposed the appointment of Mr. Polak as Acting Chairman of the Association.[1] The proposal was accepted. Mr. Polak addressed the meeting. Great enthusiasm was evinced as also an earnest determination to pursue the

[1] This is at variance with the report in the English section of *Indian Opinion* of the same date, which says that Mr. Quinn announced the appointment of an acting Chairman during his absence, and that Mr. H. S. L. Polak was appointed Honorary Adviser to the Chinese Association.

struggle to the bitter end.

MORE MEETINGS

Meetings were held at several places in Johannesburg. On Monday evening, there was a meeting of the Chinese which was followed by a meeting of Madrasis. Great enthusiasm and courage were in evidence at both the meetings. Mr. Gandhi was present. On Monday evening, there was a huge meeting of Indians, which was attended by representatives of the Chinese. Mr. Essop Mia made a speech asking people to remain firm and advising them to take the places of their leaders [who might be imprisoned or deported].

MEETING IN PRETORIA

There was a meeting in Pretoria on Monday which was attended by 300 people. Mr. Hajee Habib was in the chair. Mr. Gandhi and four Chinese leaders had specially gone there to attend the meeting. Speaking at the meeting Mr. Gandhi pointed to the unity of the Chinese as worthy of emulation. If they went on doing their duty, no harm would come to them even if the Transvaal Government or the whole Empire were pitted against them. He was confident of victory. The real struggle had just then started. Mr. Suj declared that he would not submit to the law, whatever the consequences. Mr. Desai said that he would welcome deportation. Mr. Beg pointed to the lessons of history and said that success could be achieved only through sacrifices. Mr. Manji and others from among the audience also spoke. Mr. Hajee Habib said that it was the last time that they would hear Mr. Gandhi speak. However, they might be able to get him back if they remained firm after his deportation. They ought not to be afraid of deportation or deprivation of licences.

It appears the white newspapers did not fail to notice that the meeting was not very well attended.

"STAND" CASE IN PRETORIA

An application was made on behalf of Mr. Ratanji Makan for the lease of a 'Stand' in the Asiatic Bazaar. In reply, the Town Clerk had stated that since the applicant had not registered, he was considered an unlawful immigrant. This is how they want to tighten the ring round the opponents of the Asiatic Act. All these are indications of our degradation. The Transvaal Indians cannot but be roused by them to a still stronger determination to break their chains.

KENDALL'S LETTER

In reply to the comments made by Mr. Jordan in the course of

his judgment, Mr. Kendall writes in *The Transvaal Leader* to the effect that previously Indians used to give one thumb-impression, and that, too, voluntarily. They were now being asked to give 18 impressions and this as a matter of compulsion. Indians are justified in objecting to this on grounds of religion. An orthodox Muslim would never consent to give all his finger-prints, as that would amount to tracing an image, which was prohibited in his religion.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-1-1908

36. LETTER TO REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS

[JOHANNESBURG,]
December 31, 1907

TO
THE REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS
[PRETORIA

SIR,]

I have just received a letter from Delagoa Bay informing me that certain two Indians from the Transvaal are at present in Delagoa Bay representing to the people that you will be prepared to grant to thoseIndians who may want permits to enter the Transvaal such permits at Delagoa Bay, on payment to these men of £12.10s per head.

I need hardly say that I consider the Above statement to be a libel so far as you are concerned; but it is certain that the Indians in question have been making such statements with a view to preying upon gullible people. May I, therefore, ask you kindly to inform the British Indians in Delagoa Bay, in any manner you consider fit, that they are not to accept statements made by any such people, and that permits or certificates are obtainable only at your office at Pretoria? On my part, I have taken every precaution to warn the people through the columns of *Indian Opinion* and other channels.

[*I have, etc.,*

M. K. GANDHI]

Indian Opinion, 4-1-1908

37. TRIAL OF EX-SOLDIERS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,

January 3 1908]

...two Indians, whose cases were postponed when Mr. Gandhi and the others were dealt with first, were brought up and charged with contravening the Asiatic Regis-tration Ordinance by not being in possession of a certificate of registration.... Some-thing like a thousand or 1,500 of Mr. Gandhi's compatriots assembled in and around the Court, and a subdued murmur of many voices, perfectly audible in Court, testified to the interest taken in the proceedings.

... Nawab Khan[2], an ex-soldier of the Indian Army, was charged.

... Mr. Gandhi did not ask any questions, and he put the accused in the witness-box. He examined him as follows:

[GANDHIJI:] You are a Jamadar?

[ACCUSED:] Yes.

You came to the Transvaal at the time of the War?

Yes, during the War.

Attached to the transport corps?

Yes.

What expeditions have you served in?

Burmah, Chitral, Black Hill, Tirah Expedition (1897), and the Transvaal War.

And you were wounded three times?

Twice I was shot, and once I was cut over the eye.

[1] These cases had been postponed on December 28, 1907, when Gandhiji and some other Indians were tried. *Vide* "Trial at Johannesburg", 28-12-1907 & Trial of P.K. Naidoo and Others", 28-12-1907

[2] For his petition to the High Commissioner, *vide* "Petition to High Commissioner", Before 6-11-1907

Your father was attached to Lord Roberts'[1] staff when: he went to Kandahar?

Yes, he was Subadar Major.

Witness said he was in charge of the Native police on the C.S.A. Railways[2].

The Magistrate said the evidence did not affect the position.

MR. GANDHI: You have refused to take out a registration certificate under the new Act?

I will not take it out under the new Act.

Will you explain your reasons?

[ACCUSED :] Because it would ruin me altogether if I did so.

Mr. Jordan, in giving his decision, said the accused was not registered, and he must register. Since the hearing of the last cases on the 28th he had been approached by both Indians and Chinese, and they had informed him that this question of the finger-prints had nothing at all to do with their religion, absolutely nothing.... Mr. Jordan added that the accused was a different class of man to the ordinary coolies, the basketwallahs, and he ought to know better than to refuse to register; he ought to register. Accused would have to leave the Colony within 14 days.

Accused, in reply to what the Magistrate had said as to his being a different class to some of his compatriots, said in this matter they were all united. They would leave the country and go to gaol together.

CAME WITH LORD ROBERTS

Sumandar Khan, a Pathan, an ex-soldier of the Indian Army, who had also at least one wound to show, was next charged with the same offence.

... In reply to questions by Mr. Gandhi, Sumandar Khan said he came to this Colony with Lord Roberts. He had previously served 30 years in the Indian Army. He was present at the engagement at Paardekop and received a bullet wound in the right thigh. He was orderly at the Asiatic Office at Pretoria.

[GANDHIJI:] You don' t want to submit to this Act?

[ACCUSED:] No.

[1] Frederick Sleigh Roberts of Kandahar, Pretoria and Water ford (1832-1914); Field Marshal and Commander-in-Chief, India, 1885-93; C-in-C, South Africa, 1899-1900; Colonel-in-Chief, Overseas and Indian Forces in Europe, during World War I, 1914; author of *Forty-one Years in India*. During the Boer War, Gandhiji's Natal Indian Ambulance Corps carried his son's body from the field; *vide Autobiography*, Part III, Ch. X. After the War, Roberts was in charge of the occupation forces in the Transvaal; Gandhiji mentions his pro-Indian sympathies during this period; *vide* "The British Indian Association and Lord Milner", 11-6-1903. For message of congratulations on his relief of Kimberley, *vide* "Congratulations to British Generals", Prior to 26-3-1900

[2] Central South African Railways

Have you been frightened by anyone?

No, who will frighten me? If I am even hanged I won't register.

You have just paid a visit to India?

Yes.

And have just returned?

Yes, about two weeks.

MR. JORDAN: Can you write?

[ACCUSED:] No.

How did you get your pay in India?

I used to make a mark.

Did you not put your finger-print?

No.

This concluded the evidence.

Mr. Gandhi said the remarks that had fallen from the Bench came as somewhat of a surprise to him. His Worship had stated that some Indians and Chinese had approached him and stated they were afraid to register. Fortunately, or unfortunately, the Court had before it two soldiers who were not likely to be frightened by anybody at all, and in fact the last witness had said that he was not likely to be frightened.

MAGISTRATE: You know perfectly well, Mr. Gandhi, there is a great deal of difference between the plain tribes and hill tribes; this man belongs to the hill tribes.

Mr. Gandhi said there was a very great difference, but there was no question of fright at all, and if there were any question of fright the arm of the law was long enough and strong enough to protect the meanest subject in the country.

MR. JORDAN: I have no doubt it will be.

Mr. Gandhi said he did think it was futile to suggest that anyone had been frightened into not taking out a registration certificate and, as one of the witnesses had said, there was absolutely no question of thumb-impression or finger-prints. It was a question that touched the vitals of the community. It was a question of compulsion or a voluntary act.

Mr. Jordan said if Mr. Gandhi liked to hold a meeting outside, he could do so.

MR. GANDHI: The Bench has led the way or otherwise I would have held my peace.

MR. JORDAN: I won't allow any more. It has nothing to do with the case.

MR. GANDHI: I do not wish the public to leave the Court under the impression that the whole of this fight is in connection with the thumb andfinger-impressions. The whole of the fight is a struggle for liberty.

Mr. Jordan said that both Indians and Chinese had come to him and alleged they were intimidated and were frightened to go and register by a number of people and that was the reason they have for not registering.

An order was made that the accused should leave the Colony within 14 days.

Indian Opinion, 11-1-1908

38. RAM SUNDER "PUNDIT"

Ram Sundar is no longer a "pundit", and so we have had that part of his name set up in smaller type. "Pundit" was a title he himself had assumed. But now that he has lost the qualities of one, he should no longer be known by that name.

We apologize to our readers for earlier having showered praises on Ram Sundar in this journal, for having used grand epithets to describe him and held up his attitude to the law as an example.[1] We are guiltless for we were misled; we were unaware of the facts. We have a saying that no one can divine what lies in the heart of a man or in the hollow of a drum. We could not peer into Ram Sundar's heart. We believed his professions and thought him brave. We will continue to do so with others in future. That is the only way for man to live in society. It will be to claim omniscience to suspect one who is apparently sincere, or to shun his company. God alone knows the hearts of men. We can only know people through their actions. We admired Ram Sundar's conduct, and it was our duty to hold it up before the people. Now that the hypocrite has been unmasked, we have no hesitation in exposing him to our readers. That is our way of atoning for an unwitting error. As far as the community is concerned, Ram Sundar is dead as from today. He lives to no purpose. He has poisoned himself by his own hand. Physical death is to be preferred to such social death. He would have enjoyed undying fame if he had beenkilled in an accident at Germiston before the critical moment when he entrained for Natal. But fate decreed otherwise. Having meanly betrayed the people of Germiston, his community, himself and his family, he has fled like a coward in fear of imprisonment. Even now we pray to God to show him the right path.

We have used bitter words, but in our heart there is compassion for him. It would be cruel to hide his fault. There would have been no need to publicize his faults if we had not extolled his virtues.

We still need to retain the image of Ram Sundar before our eyes. With that image before us, we should pray constantly,'O Khuda-Ishwar, save us from Ram Sundar's fate. Do not give us only the semblance of courage. Keep us on the right path till the end.' Whenever anyone has unworthy thoughts, let the memory of Ram Sundar startle him into self-contempt and let him turn to God in prayer.We frighten children saying, "Look! Demon!" We should think of Ram

[1] *Vide* "Memons who have escaped", 16-11-1907, "Punditji's Patriotic Service", 23-11-1907 & "Ram Sundar Pandit", 7-12-1907

Sundar as a demon, and guard ourselves against being possessed by it.

Indians have a long way to go yet. It has been given to us to witness the farce by Ram Sundar early in the campaign. We ought to be grateful to him for that.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-1-1908

39. THE DYE HAS SET[1]

In the Transvaal the campaign has now begun. So far the two sides have only been storing up ammunition. The bugle has sounded, calling Indians to wake up and mount a ceaseless vigil. This is a struggle which the gods themselves may well come down to watch. For we believe the Indian cause to be God's own, and the Government's that of the Devil. Ramchandraji could defeat the ten-headed Ravan with an army of monkeys because he had right on his side. The Indians are in the right; we therefore pledge our word that they will defeat the many-headed monster which the Government is, provided, of course, they remain truthful, courageous and united.

Only cowards will take fright at the thought of what will happen because the Imperial Government has approved the Immigration Act. We had hoped, it is true, for support from the Imperial Government. In fact, we may still do so. But our prayer is to God alone. Let us see if He forsakes us. History provides no instance of God having ever forsaken anyone; we need not then fear any such contingency.

Does it matter that the Immigration Bill has been passed? [The penalty of] deportation has been added to [that of] imprisonment. The two are first cousins. If one is prepared to stay in gaol for any length of time, will one not be deported? In prison, one is confined within four walls and feels like a caged lion. On deportation, the roaring lion can fill the wilderness with his roars. It is not as if God dwelt only in the Transvaal prisons. He is with us everywhere. Why, then, fear? We have grown used to the idea of going to gaol. We have overcome fear in that measure. When we become used to the idea of deportation, we shall find it preferable [to imprisonment].

There are people who are afraid that the Government may even recover the cost of deportation from those deported. This argument

[1] A literal rendering of the Gujarati expression which would here mean that events are poised for a climax

betrays a lack of understanding. If we accept loss in money by going to gaol, why not by deportation? We have accepted such loss as inevitable. We cannot make the best of both worlds. Honour and money, spiritual well-being and [the pleasures of] the body, happiness and misery are the opposite of each other. The Indian community is out to accomplish a formidable task; we hope therefore that the question of money will not enter into its calculations.

The Indians of Johannesburg, Pretoria and Pietersburg were arrested about the time when news of the Immigration Bill having been passed came in. It was a happy augury. The persons who were arrested had been hand-picked [earlier], most of them being fearless individuals who put up a stiff fight against the law. We offer them all our congratulations. We want them to remain unyielding till the last, and keep in view the [admonitory] image of Ram Sundar[1]. Let them face imprisonment. Let them face deportation. By the time this appears in print, they will very likely have been enthroned in gaol already.

Everything depends on a satisfactory answer to the question as to what the others will do. General Smuts deserves to be congratulatedon the step that he has taken [of arresting the leaders]. We shall face our real test now. If people at all set any store by their pledge, if their honour is dear to them, there can be no greater misfortune for them than submission to the new law. We should have nothing to do with it whatever happens.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-1-1908

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

40. LETTER TO RECEIVER OF REVENUES[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
January 4, 1908][2]

[F. C. BIGGAR, ESQ.
THE RECEIVER OF REVENUES
JOHANNESBURG]

SIR,

My Association has seen the notice in the Gazette to the effect that trading licences will not be issued to British Indians unless they can produce registration certificates under the Asiatic Law Amendment Act No. 2 of 1907, and undergo certain other formalities.

My Association understands, too, that several British Indians have applied for licences and formally tendered the licence fee, but that their licences have not been granted, because of the above notice.

On behalf of my Association, therefore, I beg formally to inform you that, as the large majority of British Indians have for conscientious reasons declined to submit to the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, and as it is not possible for Indian traders or hawkers to earn their living otherwise than as traders or hawkers, they are reluctantly compelled to continue their trade without proper licences. I may further add that, should the notice regarding licences be withdrawn, andshould you be pleased to grant licences, on a notification from you, the licence fee will be immediately paid and licences taken out

[1] This was very likely drafted by Gandhiji.

[2] The date of this letter is mentioned in the reply sent by the Receiver of Revenues, who said: "In reply I beg to point out to you that Indian traders who are disposed to contravene the law in the manner indicated render themselves liable to the provisions of the Revenue Licence Ordinance, 1905, which imposes heavy penalties on any persons carrying on any trade or business without being in possession of a licence, irrespective of whether the persons are offenders against the requirements of any other statute or not.

"The Press notice on the subject of renewal of licences, 1908, is not of a statutory character, but merely an advisory notice inserted in the papers for the infor. and guidance of the business community. Its publication or withdrawal has no force or effect on the question at issue".

"I need scarcely reiterate what it now so well understood, namely, that my action in refusing to issue licences to Asoatoc traders without production of their certificates of registration is governed by the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, 1907, Section 13,"

by British Indian traders and hawkers.

I have etc.,
[ESSOP MIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION]

The Star, 6-1-1908
Indian Opinion, 11-1-1908

41. REPLY TO "THE STAR"

[JOHANNESBURG]

[THE EDITOR
THE STAR
JOHANNESBURG]

SIR,

In your survey of the Asiatic question you say:

> It is the possible effect on the native races, who live under differential legislation themselves which makes it impossible in our opinion for the Government to yield to agitation without loss of prestige now that things have gone as far as they have.

May one infer from this that "if things had not gone as far as they have" the Asiatic case would, in your opinion, be strong enough to require reconsideration? However, whether the inference is justified or not, with your permission, I would merely deal with the religious aspect of the question.

I beg to remind you that the matter wore a religious aspect at the first mass meeting[1], at the old Empire Theatre, in the September of 1906, when the now famous solemn covenant not to submit to the Asiatic Act was, after due deliberation, made by British Indians. The disqualification against Turkish Mahomedans on the ground of religion was then present in the Bill and has always been pointed out as a ground of complaint.[2] In my humble opinion, the solemn obligation by itself constitutes sufficient religious objection against the Act. And a State that overbears such an objection on the part of its inhabitants fails to fulfil its primary duty to respect conscientious scruples.

I shall now endeavour to place before the public the general religious objection. A and B are resident in the same state. B is charged

[1] *Vide* "The Mass Meeting", 11-11-1906

[2] *Vide* "Deputation Notes -II", 17-11-1906 & "Deputation to Morley", 22-11-1906.

with having committed a fraud. Although both A and B have demanded a public inquiry into the charges, the fraud has never been proved; yet A and his children over the age of eight years, in common with B. are called upon to submit to a punitive measure on account of B's alleged fraud. If A accept that measure, and, for that matter evenB, either does violence to his religion,because he surrenders his manhood and his conscience through fear of personal inconvenience or loss. The position of A and B is that of every Asiatic in the Colony. This would be the essential religious objection, even if there were no binding oath and no discrimination against a particular religion.

If it be true that Asiatic feeling has been intensely roused, a concession to that feeling instead of producing an injurious effect on the Native mind, would produce a reassuring effect, in that, if the sentiments of one unrepresented class are respected, those of another such class also, it will be argued, are likely to be respected. Prestige is a high horse which, under conceivable circumstances, may bring down the rider, if he do not take care.

I am etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Star, 4-1-1908

42. INTERVIEW TO "THE STAR"[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
January 6, 1908]

Mr. Gandhi, interviewed by a *Star* representative this morning on the situation in general and on the statement made by the Colonial Secretary at Pretoria in particular, said :[2]

Probably General Smuts has no notion of how difficult it made the position of Indians like myself who want to serve both the local Government and the Indian community, when he talks of all Asiatics as coolies. Instead of trying to bridge the gulf, by such language he is only widening it.

LAW 3 OF 1885 AND PEACE PRESERVATION ORDINANCE

General Smuts has evidently mixed up Law No. 3 of 1885 with the Peace Preservation Ordinance. Law 3 of 1885 never stopped the immigration of Asiatics; it merely penalized Indian traders to the extent of £3. If I may go into history a bit, originally this tax upon

[1] This and the following item are both reports of the same interview.
[2] *Vide* "General Smuts' Speech", Before 10-1-1908

Indian traders was to be prohibitive, that is to say, £25. Lord Derby protested against it, and it was reduced to £3 in the amending law. This showed that the late Mr. Kruger's Government never aimed at prohibition of Asiatic immigration. As a matter of fact, I well remember the late President having told an Indian traders' deputation that he did not mind Indians coming into the country so long as they helped his; farmers to sell their produce and he did not want Indians to remain in the country on a basis of equality.

FIRST ATTEMPT AT RESTRICTION

The restriction of immigration was only thought of after the British Government was established and the Peace Preservation Ordinance, which was designed only to cope with disloyal people and criminals, was adroitly and effectively used to restrict Indian immigration. It is necessary to bear this distinction in mind because the Asiatic Registration Act is improperly called an amendment of Law 3 of 1885. It inaugurates a new policy altogether so far as British Colonies are concerned and particularly the Transvaal. Before the introduction of the Registration Act there was no question of identification at all except in the Peace Preservation Ordinance. If the identifcation under the Peace Preservation Ordinance was incomplete a more complete system could have been devised without any new legislation at all as was done by Captain Hamilton Fowle[1]. but when there was talk of having a more systematic identification a suggestion was made that the Peace Preservation Ordinance should be amended, and a draft Bill was actually sent by Mr. Duncan[2] to Lord Elgin. That Bill appears in the last Asiatic Blue book. To that no one took any exception at all.

INCEPTION OF REGISTRATION ACT

Subsequently it appears Mr. Lionel Curtis[3] came on the scene,

[1] Permit Officer

[2] Patrick Duncan, former Colonial Secretary in the Transvaal Government; member of the Legislative Council

[3] Town Clerk of Johannesburg, 1909-3; Assistant Colonial Secretary for Urban Affairs in the Transvaal, 1903-6 and later nominated member of new Transvaal Legislative Council; a pioneer of the Closer Union Movement; had a passion for "scientific method" and "is now known to fame as the missionary for diarchy in India"; *vide Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. X; "sole author" of Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance, designed because equality, according to him, was impossible as between whites and Indians; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 11-5-1907. *The Progressive Weekly* described him as "one of the rising hopes of the stern and unbending Progressives".

and he rejected the amendment of the Peace Preservation Ordinance, and drafted the present Registration Bill, which deals with the Asiatics as such, and treats them as a class apart. It is this which has so irritated the Indian community. It is perfectly true that there has been some class legislation before, but never of such a drastic type.

ALLEGED INFLUX OF ASIATICS

As regards the influx of British Indians we have always denied it so far as any organized illegal influx is concerned. A little knowledge of the working of the Asiatic Offices ought to show that the forging of permits, after the permits adopted by Captain Fowle came into operation, was well nigh impossible. What actually happened was that sometimes wrong men received permits, because they successfully bribed the Asiatic officers in Johannesburg. It was after the British Indian Asso-ciation had repeatedly brought this corruption to the notice of Sir Arthur Lawley[1] that these officers were removed. When I speak of wrong men I do not mean men who were not entitled to permits, but men who had not the prior right. I know several old refugees who were obliged to make these payments before they could get their permits. All the same such documents were *bona-fide* documents and held by the persons described in them. It was the touts of these officers who handled the enormous sums of money.

A DENIAL

I do deny that "thousands of Indians" who had no right to enter the country have so entered.

The interviewer drew Mr. Gandhi's attention to Mr. Smuts' statement that 5,000 Indians had gone out of the country rather than register, and the latter replied that the majority of these had every right to remain—their right could not be questioned—but they were not strong enough to face the trouble.

The prosecutions, numbering 1,500 during a period of five years, go to show that the Indian contention is correct, namely, that whenever an attempt has been made the Peace Preservation Ordinance has been sufficient to cope with it. It should also be remembered that most of these prosecutions were at the border in connection with men who were trying to enter but failed. It may be as well to mention that 563 convictions took place between November 15, 1902, and February 28, 1903. It should be within the recollection of the public that immediately after peace was declared, although there was a Peace Preservation Ordinance, people came in freely. So did Indians and they were not molested at all. When a large number of refugees began to

[1] Sometime Lieut-Governor of the Transvaal

pour in instructions were sent that no Indians should be allowed to enter without permits. This accounts for the prosecutions during that period. It is quite apparent therefore that there was no fraud but mere ignorance on the part of poor Indians. In any case the number of Indians resident before the war was 15,000. Thirteen thousand permits have been issued under the Peace Preservation Ordinance to British Indians, so we have not reached the number who were in the country before the war.

THE FINGER-PRINTS

Asked had he any further remarks to make on the finger-print, Mr. Gandhi said:

General Smuts has been less than unfair in his allusion to the system. He knew that the fingerprints had never been an essential objection. All digit-impressions will undoubtedly form a bone of contention, be-cause, according to Henry's book, on which General Smuts has relied, digit-impressions are required only from criminals who continually hid[e] their identity, and, therefore, necessitate classification. As is clearly shown in the book, thumb-impressions are quite enough to identify. An Indian, if he dared to hide his identity, would imme-diately be a prohibited immigrant, because his name will not appear in the immigrants' list. It is to the advantage of the immi-grant to afford every facility to show that he is the proper person.

THE CHIEF OBJECTIONS

The chief objections to the Act are that it is based on an un-proved charge. It is an attempt to have class legislation of a degrading type, and the Indian community have rightly or wrongly, after theutmost deliberation, bound themselves by a solemn oath[1] not tosub-mit to it. All these things clearly show that there is a complete mis-understanding between the Government and the community affected by the Registration Act. We deny the charges made against us. We have often humbly approached the Government for a judicial inq-uiry.[2] Surely even now it is not too late to prove the charges if they are capable of being substantiated. Why, for instance, should not a Judge of the High Court or the Chief Magistrate of Johannesburg be appo-inted to take evidence on the following points: (1) Has there been a surreptitious entry on an organized scale? (2) Is the Peace Preser-vation Ordinance sufficient to meet any attempt at fraud?

[1] The reference is to Resolution IV passed at mass meeting of September, 1906; *vide* "The Mass Meeting", 11-11-1906

[2] *Vide* "*Interview to the Tribune*", 20-10-1906, "*Interview to the Morning Leader*", 20-10-1906, "*Letter to the Times*", 22-10-1906,"Representation to Lord Elgin",31-10-1906 & "Deputation to Lord Elgin", 8-11-1906

(3) Are ten finger-prints req-uired for complete identification? (4) Is it not possible to have a com-plete identification by slightly amending the Immigration Restriction Act?

With regard to the fourth point, he pointed out that they could not have the Peace Preservation Ordinance permanently on the Statute-book, but the Immigration Restriction Act could be easily amended so as to enable the Government to issue certificates of domicile to all Asiatics, who would otherwise be prohibited immigrants. Such an amendment would avoid the sting of compulsion and unnecessary class legislation and would certainly be considered protective legislation.

INTIMIDATION

Continuing, Mr. Gandhi said:

With regard to intimidation, I can only say that there has been no physical violence whatsoever; ostracism and boycotting, yes ! But so long as the Indians remain passive resisters I see no escape from such a course. I speak from personal experience when I state that even Indians who have registered have done so because they have not been able to rise superior to their desire to remain in the Colony at any cost, and it is not because they like the Act that they have registered. One of the first registrants has written a long letter to *Indian Opinion* regretting that he had to register, and encouraging the community in general to go on with the struggle, and wishing it success. I hold several of such letters privately written by those who have already registered, and in boycotting have we not taken a leaf out of the Boer book? I do not think we have gone so far as the Boers did in connection with the National Scouts.

GENERAL SMUTS' STATEMENT

Mr. Gandhi further said:

With regard to the leaders having deceived the community, I regret that General Smuts has made such a statement. I can say without fear of contradiction that the law has been [ac] curately and widely dis-tributed among the people. That translation by itself has proved a most powerful argument. Every attempt has been made to place before the British Indians what the leaders have considered a true stat-ement regarding the law. If by urging the people to rely on Imperial protection, we have misled, I plead guilty; but I fear that I shall always ask my countrymen to rely on that protection until Lord Elgin proves by actual action that when our handful of British Indians cry for protection against an indignity made in the name of the King and Emperor they are to be thrown overboard without a finger being lifted in order to save them. It may be superstition, but I propose to cherish it. My idea—and even in bringing this statement before my

country-men I have always coupled it with another—is that our ultimate reli-ance should be on God. It may be that I have misread my country-men. I certainly welcome the prosecution against some of the leaders of the movement. It will show General Smuts, the public, and even myself whether the opposition to the law is general or whether it is continued only through the influence of two or three Indians. The Indians do not want victory for the sake of it. No matter what may be said against them, they simply call themselves a law-abiding people. All they want is that their solemn covenant should be respected. They want to help the Government, and they would still humbly approach the Government, if only the Government would have more regard for their sentiments.

The Star, 6-1-1908

43. INTERVIEW TO "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"

[JOHANNESBURG,
January 6, 1908]

A representative of *The Leader* waited upon Mr. Gandhi yesterday and sought from him an expression of opinion upon General Smuts' speech at Mayville on Saturday last[1].

Mr. Gandhi in expressing his willingness to discuss the matter, said:

I wish to make it clear that Indians have no desire to oppose General Smuts or any Colonist, or to place any obstacles in the way of an honourable compromise. The Indians recognize that the only condition on which they can remain in the country is to work smoothly and amicably, and to understand their limitations also. They have always, I venture to think, worked on that basis, and, no matter what may be now said to the contrary, they still remain law-abiding residents of the Transvaal.

[1] January 4, 1908. General Smuts had made the following points among others: (I) Mr. Gandhi had argued that the Asiatic Act was class legislation "but the whole subject had been dealt with as class legislation since 1885, and the Indians had submitted to it"; (2) "the law had not been passed for chasing the Asiatics out of the country who had been there for 10, 15 or 20 years" but "to recognize all Asiatics who were in the country before the war" and to "stop further immigration"; (3) "no parliament in the country was capable of repealing the Act"; (4) they had the British Government with them and he saw no reason why it should not continue to assist the Transvaal; (5) if the Indians did not submit to the law they must take the consequences. They could be refused licences, placed in prison (about 9,500 of them) which would not be very effectual, or put over the border. The Indians had been misled by their leaders and the Government had arrested these. If they came forward not as individuals but as a whole to be registered then the opportunity would be given them. However, he was not expressing the opinion of the Government but his own.

[INTERVIEWER:] How does that agree with their present attitude of 'passive resistance'?

[GANDHIJI:] Passive resistance is merely a respectable protest against what they, rightly or wrongly, consider to be a degradation and an offence to religious feeling. The whole speech of General Smuts unfortunately shows that there is absolutely no desire on his part to consult or to reconcile Indian sentiment. I say without hesitation that he has not mastered his facts. For instance, he talks of the oft-denied influx of Asiatics into the country on an organized scale. Speaking for British Indians, I deny it *in toto*. This does not mean that some Indians have not surreptitiously entered this country, but all these can be effectively dealt with, even today, under the Peace Preservation Ordinance. Those who remain in the country without permits, or with false permits, can only be hiding themselves in nooks and corners, and those will never be reached by the Asiatic Law Amendment Act. It is not likely that those who have no permits or those who hold docu-ments which are not permits at all, will go to the Registrar in order to receive notice to quit.

THE SURREPTITIOUS INFLUX

The allegation as to the surreptitious entering is based on the report[1] that was published last year. That report condemns itself, and, if any-thing, proves the contrary; 1,500 prosecutions during live years show the effective working of the Peace Preservation Ordinance, and that was the deduction drawn from it by Captain Hamilton Fowle in his report to Lord Milner. Any Indian found without a permit in the Colony can be almost summarily removed, and, if he does not leave the Colony, soon finds himself in gaol. Most of the prosecutions, however, were in connection with Indians who were trying to enter the country, who were successfully prevented from so doing by strict inspection at the border towns. Nor were those Indians necessarily endeavouring to enter fraudulently. They were, in the initial stages, trying to do so under the false belief, shared by many Europeans, that under the British flag there could be no difficulty in them [*sic*] entering, or rather re-entering, the Transvaal, for most of those were Indian refugees waiting at the coast towns for an opportunity of re-entering.

General Smuts talks of forged permits, and in the same breath says it is difficult to say when a permit is forged and when it is genuine. This is preposterous. The permit officials always had counterfoils containing the same numbers as given on the permits issued to applicants, so that a forgery could always be detected. I know that a

[1] *Vide* "Chamney's Report", 13-4-1907 & "Johannesburg Letter", 13-4-1907

few months ago an official from the present Registrar's Office circulated some documents which he called permits. The dupes were never able to use those documents at all. They not only lost their money, but their honour. That official is now no longer in the country, but, I believe, left it after he had sufficiently fleeced the people, and after he saw that the fraud was likely to be found out. There never was an office either in Bombay or Delagoa Bay, or in any other place, where the traffic alleged by General Smuts could possibly take place. Touts there undoubtedly were, not in India, but in South Africa, who gave real permits from the Asiatic Office in Johannesburg to refugees, and, in some instances, others who wanted to enter the country.

THE PERMIT FRAUD

The fraud was committed in this way. The Asiatic officials in Johannesburg submitted the names to the Colonial Secretary as proper applicants for permits. The Colonial Secretary sanctioned the granting of such permits. These names, however, were often faked, though the permits were properly issued and bore proper thumb-impressions, or signatures. In such manner men who were entitled to enter the country had to pay large sums before they could come in, or before their claims were considered. This was three times brought to the notice of Sir Arthur Lawley, who, at last, ordered a prosecution, which proved abortive, but the officials concerned were dismissed, because the charge was proved against them, so far as the department was concerned. But these things show how effective the Peace Preservation Ordinance was. It confuses the issue to talk about Law 3 of 1885 in connection with the influx, and to describe it as inadequate. That law was never intended to control Asiatic immigration. It simply says, 'Those who settle in the Republic for the purpose of carrying on any trade or otherwise shall be bound to have their names entered in a register." Thus it was merely to exact a poll-tax from those who wished to trade in the Transvaal, for Indians were not even bound to register or pay anything. Asiatic immigration was as free as European immigration. The question of restricting such immigration was raised after peace was declared, and the Peace Preservation Ordinance was then utilized, quite improperly) to check Asiatic entry. For some reason or other it was suggested that the Peace Preservation Ordinance should be amended. The Draft Amendment appears at page 9 of the Blue book, *Legislation affecting Asiatics in the Transvaal*, published last[1] year. That would have been quite proper, and British Indians could not have complained. A Draft Amendment of Law 3 of 1885 was also suggested at the same time.

[1] Actually, it was published in January 1908; *vide* "Blue Book",29-2-1908

POLICY SUDDENLY CHANGED

It was quite of a mild type, but suddenly the whole thing was changed, and I believe it was Mr. Lionel Curtis who, after all, changed the whole scope and tenor of such legislation, and who sprung upon the community the draft of the Asiatic Amendment Ordinance, now sanctioned as an Act. It is a misnomer to call it an Amendment of Law 3 of 1885; it really makes a change in the whole Asiatic policy. Class legislation affecting Asiatics has been passed before now, and not much has been heard against it, but the Asiatic Registration Act is absolutely a novel thing, and, based as it is on the false charge above referred to, can never be accepted by the Indian community, more so as the community is bound by a solemn declaration.

It is surprising to me that General Smuts has persistently ignored these things, and asked British Indians to violate their consciences. One would have thought that he, as representing a very strong Government and an overwhelmingly large number of Europeans, would have sufficient grace and condescension to respect Indian sentiment, so long as he got the essential thing—viz., identification of every Indian or m Asiatic residing in the Colony. These he could have had six months ago, and can have even now.

But, Mr. Gandhi, the assertions of General Smuts are very different from yours.

Quite so. I may be told that mine are merely counter-assertions, and that General Smuts must be saying what he knows to be true. I do not ask that the assertions made by the Indian community should be, *ipso facto*, accepted, but I do say that what I have stated above furnishes sufficient ground for a judicial and open enquiry. No reasonable Colonist can take exception to it, and if in the course of that enquiry, it is found that the charges of an influx and statements as to the inadequacy of the Peace Preservation Ordinance are proved there will be something to be said for the Asiatic Registration Act. If, however, the finding of such a commission is in favour of the Indian contention, why should not a strong Government, which also claims to deal with British Indians fairly and justly, acknowledge its mistake and retrace its steps?

FINGER-PRINTS

In reply to a question as to what was the real objection to finger-prints, Mr. Gandhi remarked that a lot of good ink and paper had been devoted to this subject, but it had never formed an impossible barrier. As a matter of fact, thumb-impressions have been given voluntarily.

There is, however, a very serious objection to simultaneous digit impressions, because they have the ring of criminality. According to

E. R. Henry's book, simultaneous digit-impressions are required only for classifying criminals; thumb-prints are asked for from illiterates in several departments in India. But the deadlock is created by the Asiatic Act itself. Objections were raised before the regulations were published and promulgated.

Asked to give a statement upon General Smuts' references to intimidations Mr. Gandhi said the intimidation simply resolved itself into social ostracism against those Indians who had taken out registration certificates, and he very much feared that such ostracism could not be prevented. Asiatics who had registered themselves had acknowledged more than once that they had done an improper act. It was fear that dictated the course, and not their respect for the law.

General Smuts' remark as to deception by the leaders was unfortunate. So far as I am aware, no leader has misled any Indians. The Asiatic law has been translated and distributed broadcast. The protection of the Imperial Government has certainly been placed before the Indian community, and so long as I retain my faith in the Imperial Government and British justice, I shall continue to place it before my countrymen until I find that the whole of the Indian community has been entirely abandoned by the King-Emperor, in spite of previous promises to the contrary. General Smuts has seen fit to describe our respectable community as a community of coolies. It must not be supposed that Indians do not know these things, or that they do not feel them. Every word that General Smuts has said has been greedily devoured by British Indians, and those who could not read have listened to the translations[1]. Needless to say, those remarks naturally offended them, and so long as he holds British Indians so cheap and denies them the full status of British subjects, so far as their possible freedom and personal movements are concerned, so long must Indians rest content with imprisonment or deportation.

THE LEADERS

I cannot help congratulating him upon having laid his hands upon the leaders. He will then find out for himself whether the Indian opposition is real or false. The question is: Will he do justice alter he finds out the guilty, or will he then put forth the enormous strength he possesses in order to crush a handful of Indians who have never done any harm to any portion of the Transvaal community? Talking of leaders, I must deny that all those who have been arrested have taken a leading part in the agitation. Some of them have never been known to have done anything in connection with the Act, and why should those who are in the employ of the Government be intimidated into

[1] *Vide* "General Smuts' Speech",Before 10-1-1908

registering, on pain of being dismissed [?] I am proud to say that most of the Indian employees of the Government—some of them of long standing—have accepted dismissal rather than register. But if it is true that the agitation has been kept up only by the leaders, why has this extreme procedure been adopted of dismissing even the Indian labourers working on the railways?

THE "IRREVOCABLE LAW"

Mr. Gandhi then drew attention to General Smuts' concluding remarks, and said he had there laid down a proposition which, if it were to hold good generally, would mean the end of all agitation, healthy or otherwise. General Smuts [had] said that no law could be altered owing to agitation.

Without taking into consideration general laws, affecting all com-munities, I can cite the instance of the Natal Franchise Law having to be altered on reasonable opposition by the Indian community and on representations by the then Colonial Secretary, and this after Natal received self-government. The Natal Municipal Act still awaits Imperial sanctions[1] In my humble opinion the real strength of the British Empire lies in honourable compromise and in paying regard to the rights and complaintsof minorities, especially when those minorities are weak or unrepresented. At the time of introducing the Transvaal Municipal Ordinance, Sir Richard Solomon cited the instance of the Coloured people having rejected the Pass Law. That law, so far as I am aware, has never been enforced against them.

What of the numerous interviews the leaders of the Indian community have had with General Smuts? Could you come to no friendly understanding?

There have not been numerous interviews, so far as I am aware. I only know of one[2], but I do know that he has repeatedly rejected all advances from British Indians. It is perfectly true that each time an approach has been made it has been with a view to a repeal of the Asiatic Act. There can be no other course possible for Indians who believe in God, and who are bound by their solemn declaration taken after having had everything placed before them.

THE WAY OUT

Is there no honourable way out of the present difficulty?

Yes, Indians have always offered to fulfil the essential object of the Act, viz., to give every facility to the Government for complete identification of British Indians entitled to remain in the Colony. This

[1] *Vide* "Natal Municipal Bill", 23-2-1907
[2] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 13-4-1907

could have been done voluntarily under the Peace Preservation Ordinance. Now that that Ordinance is virtually repealed, and must be totally repealed if the Asiatic Act is also repealed, the only practical way out of the difficulty is to amend, during the next session of Parliament, the Immigration Restriction Act, so as to embody the necessary clauses for identification, regard being had to the statements always made by the Indian community with reference to minors under 16, and with reference to those who can pass the education test under the Act, which is severe enough.

Asked to elaborate his proposal, Mr. Gandhi said the Immigration Restriction Act, which contains the drastic power of deportation under the hand of the Minister, is ample for every purpose. Let the Asiatic Law Amendment Act of 1907 be entirely withdrawn, and the Immigration Restriction Act be slightly amended so that every Asiatic would become a "prohibited immigrant". That was to say, he would then have to prove that he was entitled to remain in the Colony. If he could produce his certificate issued to him under the Peace Preservation Ordinance, or under Law 3 of 1885, he would be given a certificate of domicile, which would take the place of his former certificate, and other documents at present held, and this new certificate of domicile should contain ample proofs of the identity of the holder. Children under the age of 16 should not be required to take out certificates of domicile, but a complete enumeration of such children would be detailed, together with their names, on the certificates of domicile issued to their parents and guardians. The Immigration Act already contains sufficiently drastic provisions against trafficking in these certificates of domicile. This scheme, Mr. Gandhi contended, would give the Govern-ment all that they reasonably required—viz., it would prevent any further immi-gration of Asiatics, and would ensure complete identification and registration of all Indians and Asiatics entitled to remain here. Thus the wishes of the Government and the people of the Transvaal would be fully met without putting any unnecessary affront upon the Indians.

It has been often said that the Transvaal, being an inland Colony, cannot have an Immigration Act like the Cape or Natal. That, in my opinion, is a mistake. What is meant is that the Immigration Act of the Transvaal should provide for stricter identification than the Natal Act. According to the Natal Act, any Indian can at any time prove his domicile and demand entry. Under the amendment suggested by me, every Indian would have to prove his domicile, or his right of resi-dence in the Transvaal, within a stipulated time, after which he would be for ever stopped. Surely nothing more than this can be required?

The Transvaal Leader, 7-1-1908

44. INTERVIEW TO REUTER[1]

[JOHANNESBURG]
January 8, 1908]

Mr. Gandhi declared today that he would undertake, if the operation of the Asiatic Registration Act were suspended, that every Indian in the country would be registered in a month's time, in accordance with a form to be mutually agreed upon. The Act would then be unnecessary, and could be withdrawn.

If his promise were not faithfully carried out, he would undertake to assist the Government in the strict enforcement of the present Act. The main object of the Indian leaders was to eliminate the element of compulsion. The compromise suggested was the only one the Indians were prepared to accept, and an effort would probably be made to arrange for a discussion of its terms with the Government. The Indian community considered that his suggestion that a High Court Judge should hold an enquiry into the surreptitious entry of Indians into the Transvaal and the question of identification would give the Government an opportunity of reviewing the situation.

India, 10-1-1908

45. GENERAL SMUTS' SPEECH[2]

[Before *January 10, 1908*][3]

General Smuts has spoken at length. *The Star* and [*The Transvaal*] *Leader* have published an interview[4] with Mr. Gandhi by way of a reply. We print elsewhere a translation of that reply. It is a remarkable speech. The aggressive spirit that General Smuts showed four months ago has now disappeared. In the course of the speech, he asks at one point how thousands of Indians can be imprisoned. Where are the gaols [in requisite number]—he asks—and how can so many persons be deported either? At another place, he asserts that, if the Indians do not register, the Government may even adopt the measure [of deporting them] as a last resort. General Smuts Is not sure whether the Imperial Government will continue to be as obliging as it has been. He adds, however, that these are his personal views. He does not know what the colonial Government will do. A speech such as this is merely

[1] This was published under the title "Mr. Gandhi Suggests A Compromise".

[2] His Mayville speech of January 4; *vide* 1st footnote of "Interview to *The Transvaal Leader*", 6-1-1908.

[3] This article and the two others that follow were written clearly before January 10, when Gandhiji was tried and sentenced.

[4] *Vide* "Interview to *The Star*", 6-1-1908 and "Interview to *The Transvaal Leader*", 6-1-1908

the raving of a madman. General Smuts is an angry man. Not being in his right mind, he says whatever comes into his head.

He shows open contempt for the Indians, referring to them as "coolies". He says that we are British subjects "only to a certain extent". This is something new. Till today we were British subjects, but now we are British subjects only to a certain extent. He declares, furthermore, that till now the Imperial Government had stood in the way of our being relegated to Locations. Now he hopes that it will be easier to send Indians to Locations. And he adds that, after Mr. Gandhi's arrest[1], many Indians told him that they were prepared to take out registers [under the law].

What does all this mean? It is evident that the Indian community has given General Smuts a few surprises. The gentleman admits that he had not imagined in March last that the Indian community would offer such determined resistance as it has done. He still believes that the community has been misled by a handful of leaders. The leaders are of course prepared for imprisonment. But will the Indian community be unmanned? If Indians do not give way to fear, that is, if they show courage, he who runs may read[2] that there is nothing General Smuts can do. He himself adds that the remedy lies in the hands of the Indians. That is indeed true—with this difference: according to Mr. Smuts, the remedy lies in our accepting the bonds of our slavery forthwith, whereas in our view the Indians can don the fragrant garland strung together with freedom, honour, good name, independence and fear of Khuda-Ishwar. Lakshmi is at our doorstep ready to mark our foreheads with the sign of her grace.[3] How can Indians avert their faces? This is the point. No one should even dream of registration, or fight shy of trading without licences. If, in consequence, we are imprisoned, that should be welcome; even deportation should be welcome. If we take up this attitude, we need fear neither of the two evils. In any case, it is better to face out one of these than be haunted by the spectre of registration.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-1-1908

[1] On December 27, 1907; *vide* 1st footnote of "Speech at Hamida Islamic Society", 27-12-1907.

[2] Literally, "the blind can see and the deaf can hear".

[3] A Gujarati saying. This image is based on the Indian custom of applying a *tilak* of vermilion on the forehead. Lakshmi is the Hindu goddess of wealth.

46. RAM SUNDAR[1]

[Before *January 10, 1908*]

We hear many things said about the honour once accorded to Ram Sundar. We have even received some letters on the subject. Some people say that he was an indentured labourer, others that he has cheated a number of people. There are those who argue that, because such respect was lavished on a person like him, the Indian community is unlikely to listen to any of its leaders again. It was, they argue, a great mistake to have closed their shops for a man of his type, and no one should now expect shops to be closed for any Indian, whoever he may be. There are yet others who have been eagerly waiting for an opportunity to drive a wedge between Hindus and Muslims. We think all these people are in the wrong. If Ram Sundar was an indentured labourer and if, knowing this, the Indian community had eulogized him for his genuine courage, that would have been all the more creditable. Poverty is nothing to be ashamed of, nor is indenture. Indians ought especially to be proud of an indentured labourer who shows great courage. For that may lead to better placed persons coming forward to display greater courage. In any case, the community had no information about Ram Sundar having been an indentured labourer or about his debts. At that time the community gave no thought to the matter. The work that he did and the speeches that he made invited praise. It was not Ram Sundar who was honoured in royal fashion, but the person who suffered a month's imprisonment. The shops were closed not for the sake of Ram Sundar, but tangibly to show that we were grieved at the wrongful imprisonment of an Indian and to bring home to the others the fact of our unity. The Indian community has already reaped the benefits of the closing' of shops and of the homage [done to Ram Sundar]. What Ram Sundar gained, he has thrown away. The honour that we accorded was not to an individual, but to the qualities of truth and courage which we attributed to him. What happened in Ram Sundar's case was only fit and proper. Now that we have seen through his duplicity, we pour scorn on him. That again is natural. Such has always been the way of the world. Mr. Arbuthnot[2] of Madras was held in esteem both by the Government and people so

[1] *Vide* "Ram Sundar 'Pundit",4-1-1908

[2] Sir George Arbuthnot; prominent banker, six times a member of the Legislative Council at Fort St. George and seven times elected chairman of the Madras Chamber of Commerce; filed an insolvency petition after his bank had crashed. Early in May, 1907, he was charged with cheating and breach of trust.

long as he was thought to be honest. On being exposed as a fraud, he had to face prosecution and imprisonment. If people are to think well of us, we must always distinguish between truth and falsehood in every matter. If we do so, we shall carry our point every time. We do not want to say anything further on the question of Hindu-Muslim differences that has been raised in this context. There is not the slightest doubt, however, that the question has been raised through sheer want of sense. It altogether passes our understanding why people should talk of Hindu-Muslim differences over questions of common interest which do not involve any religious issues.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 11-1-1908

47. JOHANNESBURG LETTER[1]

[Before *January 10, 1908*]

PASSIVE RESISTANCE

The editor had invited [suggestions from readers for] a Gujarati equivalent for "passive resistance".[2] I have received one which is not bad, though it does not render the original in its full connotation. I shall, however, use it for the present. The word is *sadagraha*. I think *satyagraha* is better than *sadagraha*. "Resistance" means determined opposition to anything. The correspondent has rendered it as *agraha*[3]. *Agraha* in a right cause is *sat* or *satya*[4] *agraha*. The correspondent therefore has rendered "passive resistance" as firmness in a good cause. Though the phrase does not exhaust the connotation of the word "passive", we shall use *satyagraha* till a word is available which deserves the prize.

Satyagraha, then, is at high tide at present. The Indian *satyagrahi*[5] is getting world-wide publicity. Not only that; we also find everyone speaking out in our favour. It has been said that the question affects the whole of the British Empire. In South Africa, newspapers such as *The Friend* of Bloemfontein, *The Transvaal Leader, Pretoria news, The Cape Times, The Natal Mercury*, etc., advise the Government

[1] Literally, the title reads "News-letter". These despatches were published weekly in *Indian Opinion* as "From Our Johannesburg Representative". The first despatch appeared on March 3, 1906; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 26-2-1906

[2] *Vide* "Some English Terms", 28-12-1907

[3] Firmness, insistence

[4] Truth

[5] One who offers satyagraha

in plain words that it ought to amend the law and arrive at a settlement with the Indians. They all assert that, if the Government does not reach a settlement, it will do injury to the British Empire and rouse Indians. The word "rouse" may startle Indians. That India will be roused is, however, beyond any doubt—if the [Transvaal] Indian community can bear the final burden.

Newspapers like *The Star* which were hostile to us at the outset are now taking a middle course. They respect the courage of the Indians, acknowledging in them unsuspected qualities of shining worth.One after another, correspondents come out in our favour in the readers' columns of Johannesburg newspapers. Among them are pro-minent people who assert that the local Government is bound to seek a settlement. There is a growing feeling among clergymen that the reli-gious sentiments of the Indians ought not to be hurt.

IN ENGLAND

How can opinion in England be less favourable? Almost every newspaper has advocated the Indian cause. Mr. Ritch has kindled enthusiasm all over England. The views expressed there are cabled here by Reuter. *The Times* calls upon the Imperial Government to do everything in its power to secure justice for the Indians. Such is the miraculous power of *satya agraha*. As I write this, I seem to hear it whispered in my ear that God is always the friend and protector of truth. Our success in bringing this campaign to this stage is a triumph for truth. If we were to fail now, that would in no way detract from the power of truth. It is only because of our untruth, insincerity and disunity that we may lose, if at all. The present indications, however, do not point to defeat. The Indian community is displaying fine strength. Meetings are being held one after another. Hundreds of people, who attend them, go on reiterating that they will face impri-sonment and deportation, but will not submit to the Act. I cannot believe that all these men are just acting a part as Ram Sundar was.

HUGE MASS MEETING

The huge mass meeting which took place on the 1st was attended by at least 2,500 persons. They were all full of enthusiasm. The editor will publish a full report of the meeting elsewhere. I shall only mention that Mr. David Pollock[1] (not to be mistaken for our editor), the assistant editor of *Rand Daily Mail*, their cartoonist and a few other Europeans who were present at the meeting went there

[1] Reporter of London *Daily Telegraph* and a J.P. of the Transvaal; an active sympathizer of the Indian cause, sometime Secretary for Lands in the Transvaal, Honorary Secretary, Native Affairs Society, Transvaal

especially to watch the proceedings. There were also many Indians from outside [the Transvaal].

MISS SCHLESIN'S SPEECH

Miss Schlesin[1] is an unmarried girl of twenty. Very few Indians know how hard she has worked for the community. She works indeed not for a salary, but because of her deep sympathy [for the Indian cause]. She attends cheerfully to everything that is entrusted to her. She asked to speak at the recent mass meeting. What follows is a translation of her thoughts. She had obtained her parents' permission for making a speech. This girl has passed her matriculation examination, and she can be said to have had an excellent education. Her speech was read out by Mr. Gandhi:[2]

> Now that the struggle has reached its culminating point, I, who have followed it with the closest attention almost from its inception, would fain say a few words of sympathy, of heartfelt sympathy, in the sufferings which you have already undergone, in the sufferings still before you, of which the former are but aforetaste. But I implore you not to flinch from the hardships which now confront you, not to falter at the shoals ahead, but to continue steadfastin your heroic resolve to give up all, aye very life itself, for the noble cause of country and religion. Let me remind you of a similar crusade now being waged by my sisters in England. I refer to the suffragettes. For the sake of a principle, they are prepared to lose their all, to brave innumerable trials. Many have already suffered imprisonment, more are ready, nay eager, to do so. If delicately nurtured women can do this, will hardy men, inured to toil, do less? Do not swerve from the course upon which you have entered, be true to the ideal before you; and 'heart within and God o'erhead', proceed to conquer or to die. And, if you do that, if you adhere to your solemn covenant with God, if you prove yourselves resolute in deed, as you have already shown yourselves gentle in method, then it will not be to die! Success then is assured, victory is yours, is ours.

It is a young girl who addresses this sincere exhortation to us. If, after all this, we accept loss of face out of a cowardly fear of gaol, we are sure to repent it much.

[1] Sonja Schlesin; a Jewish girl with "a character as clear as crystal and courage that would shame a warrior"; joined Gandhiji as a steno-typist at the age of 16; made herself very useful to *Indian Opinion*; was ardently interested in the Indian cause. "Thousands of stalwart Indians looked up to her for guidance. When during the satyagraha days almost everyone was in jail, she led the movement single-handed. She had the management of thousands, a tremendous amount of correspondence, and *Indian Opinion* on her hands, but she never wearied." *Vide* also *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XXIII, and *Autobiography*, Part IV, Ch. XII.

[2] What follows here is the English version of Miss Schlesin's speech taken from *Indian Opinion*, 11-1-1908.

DEPORTATION IMPOSSIBLE

The Immigrants' Act provided good fun for a day. It is being admitted on all hands that no one can be deported. This is not only Mr. Leonard's[1] opinion; a correspondent writing specially for [*Rand*] *Daily Mail* has advanced several arguments to show that deportation of Indians would be unlawful. If that is so, the Royal assent given to the Immigrants' Act only shows that the Imperial Government is reluctant to throw in its weight on our side. But was there any reason to expect anything else? For some of us write anonymous letters to the Registrar to inform him that they are prepared to register but that they hold back only for fear of public opinion, and request the Registrar to note their names. It is again our own people who write to the Registrar to defame Ram Sundar. However unworthy Ram Sundar may be, writing anonymous letters to run him down demeans us in the eyes of others. We show ourselves to be cowards. These anonymous letters damage our cause by undoing the good impression that our courage has created. For these letters would be confidentially forwarded to Lord Elgin. He would take them into his reckoning; and why indeed should he not? Mixed with a grain of truth that such letters may contain, there must be a great proportion of falsehood which will gain wider currency. As a result we are bound to be treated as bad cowrie. When we gain acceptance as good cowrie, when our bones softened by long years of slavery grow strong again, when we desist from dark, furtive dealings, we shall certainly get our due from the Imperial Government, however imperial it may be. When we ourselves lack courage, how can we blame the Imperial Government?

COWARDLY STUFF

As soon as the Immigration Bill was signed, people at Pietersburg sent telegrams to say that they were leaving at once to report at the registration office. And these doughty persons arrived in Pretoria forthwith. Then they paid court to "His Lordship" Cha-mney. He said he was unable to grant them the title-deed of their slavery, and wanted them to produce an order from a magistrate. They then approached the Magistrate at Pretoria, who told them that he had no authority to act in the matter. Now (before Sunday), the right royal procession has returned to Pietersburg. When they receive an order from the Magistrate there, they will again troop off to Pretoria. I know the names of these brave ones. I am not sure whether the foregoing account is correct or whether slavery has not already been conferred on them. I am only reporting what I have been told.

[1] A well-known Johannesburg barrister

APPEAL TO THE BRAVE

I hear that even the few brave Memons at Pietersburg who have, along with the Suratis and Hindus of that town, shown great determination so far, are beginning to lose heart; they have caught the infection from the "black-faced" ones and are trembling with fear. If this is so, they have my fullest sympathy. Where cowards are in a majority, even the assurance of the courageous is likely to be shaken. However, I appeal to them all, and especially to the Memons, not to allow the ship to go down just when we are about to sight land. If all the Memons become deserters, that will be a blot on Porbandar, Bhanvad and Ranavav. We may be able to ignore the cowards, or succeed, later, in infusing courage into them. But the entire community would go down in dishonour if there was not even one Memon who remained truthful. If even one of them survives, he will save the others. Let me therefore earnestly appeal to Mr. Abdool Latief and others who have really held out. To Suratis and Hindus I say only: 'Please, in the name of God, do not let yourselves drown. If only you will show a little courage, the fight is easy enough. You should not lose heart because so many persons from Pietersburg have deserted. Indians all over the Transvaal are courageously holding out. And those in Pietersburg who remain unyielding till the last will deserve to be complimented for genuine courage. For there is more at stake there.'

TRAITORS IN DELAGOA BAY

A letter has been addressed to the Registrar concerning two treacherous and self-seeking Indians at Delagoa Bay. The Registrar has asked for their names; these, however, cannot be supplied. For I have been informed that one of them has been arrested and the other has disappeared. There was a white person with them who posed as Registrar. When shall we be rid of such enemies of Indians? It appears that some persons cannot End other means of making money. If that is what it is, the only thing to do is for us to keep our distance from such evil men. I hope that at Delagoa Bay and elsewhere Indians will warn everyone [against such persons]. In this big battle we must not tolerate falsehood anywhere. We must try to improve ourselves. We ought not merely to act a part, as Ram Sundar did.

SYMPATHY FROM WHITES

The struggle has assumed impressive proportions and has evoked expressions of sympathy from many whites. The meeting[1]

[1] Held on December 28, 1907;*vide* "Speech in Government Square", 28-12-1907

held in front of the Court and the one in front of Mr. Gandhi's office were both attended by nearly a hundred whites. Apparently all of them sympathized with the Indian cause. Mr. Hosken[1], who earlier used to advise us to accept the title-deed of slavery, has now begun to offer us encouragement. Such is the fruit of truth and courage.

TRADE LICENCES

Since store-keepers and hawkers are to carry on trade without licences and risk imprisonment, Mr. Essop Mia has addressed a letter[2] to the Receiver [of Revenues] to inform him that the Indian community will rather carry on business without licences than take out registers. They will willingly face all incidental risks. Indians, he has said, will, however, be prepared to pay the licence fee if the Government is disposed to accept it.

The Receiver has said in reply that under the Asiatic [Registration] Act licences cannot be issued to Indians without registers, and that those who carry on trade without licences will incur penalties under the Revenue Licence Ordinance. No Indian is likely to be frightened now by the words "incur penalties". The store-keepers and hawkers are prepared to carry on their business at the risk of such penalties. The Association has addressed in all 72 letters to various persons in different towns suggesting that they should carry on trade without licences. It no longer makes any difference [to the traders]. The courage shown by Indians, however, does make a difference. Business must go on meanwhile; and in the event of prosecution for unlicensed trade, one should submit to imprisonment rather than pay the fine. The assistants who stay behind will be free to run the shops. They cannot be prosecuted, and the Government has no authority forcibly to close down businesses.

HINDUS AND MUSLIMS

I find occasional references made to the Hindu-Muslim question in connection with Ram Sundar's case.[3] And now there are telegrams

[1] William Hosken; rich and prominent member of Transvaal Legislative Assembly; chairman of Committee of European Sympathizers which mediated between the satyagrahis and the Government in the 1908 campaign; had subsequently to give up his political career because of "his negrophile tendencies". *Vide Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XIII and XVI, and "*Mr. Hosken's Inevitable*", 10-8-1907 .

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Receiver of Revenues", p. 6; and for his reply, *vide* 2nd footnote of "Letter to Receiver of Revenues", 4-1-1908 .

[3] *Vide* also "Ram Sundar", Before 10-1-1908

from Natal reporting that a pointed reference has been made to it in the *Mercury*. Mr. Dawad Mahomed[1] and Mr. Peeran Mahomed have issued an effective rejoinder which more than meets the point. However, I must say that the person responsible for the report in the *Mercury* is an enemy of the community. At a time when the Indian community is engaged in a gigantic task, anyone suggesting that differences exist between Hindus and Muslims is lying to serve his own ends. I would advise people to shun these traitors to community and country like poison It is obvious that neither of the communities stands to gain anything from an insistence on differences.

CARTOON IN "THE SUNDAY TIMES"

Though the editor of *The Sunday Times* writes against Indians, their cartoonist is doing a great service to the cause. He has portrayed the Indian community as an elephant, with its feet firmly planted on the ground. Mr. Smuts is forcing him forward with a steam-roller from the rear. The elephant remarks: "Stop your tickling, Jan!" The point of the cartoon is that the steam-roller has been unable to budge the elephant. In the event, the cartoon has only served to publicize our cause widely and has occasioned some merriment at General Smuts' expense.

CARTOON IN "RAND DAILY MAIL"

Daily Mail presents Mr. Gandhi in the guise of a martyr of olden times. He is tied to a stake, surrounded by stacks of hay. There are three drums full of oil above, labelled "The Permit Act", "The Asiatic Registration Act" and "The Immigration Act". Oil is dripping from all the three drums on to the stacks of hay. Mr. Smuts is holding a lighted torch. [Protruding] from underneath his dress can be seen the point of his scabbard with a sword in it. "St." Gandhi is saying, "You certainly look fierce. And you are taking very long. Why don't you apply the torch? Be quick and have done with it." But General Smuts is standing with his back turned, afraid to light the fire.

POTCHEFSTROOM INDIANS

The Potchefstroom Indians were accused of having lost their nerve. They have replied to this through *The Star* asserting that they all remain firm and that only a few Memons have disgraced themselves. Mr. Abdool Rehman, the Secretary, has also been accused of

[1] Chairman, Natal Indian Congress. An old Transvaal resident, he crossed over into the Colony in July 1908 and refused to give his thumb-impression at the border under Act 2 of 1907. He thus courted arrest to establish the right of entry of old Transvaal Indian residents which Smuts was later to question.

having registered himself. He has written a letter to deny this, offering to pay £50 to charities if anyone can prove the allegation.

MEETING ON SUNDAY

Another meeting was held in front of the Mosque last Sunday. Many speeches were made and it was resolved that store-keepers and hawkers should carry on trade without licences. There is much enthusiasm in evidence at the moment.

COMMENTS IN "THE [TRANSVAAL] LEADER"

Commenting on General Smuts' speech, *The Transvaal Leader* writes as follows:[1]

> General Smuts' latest speech appears more statesmanlike than his previous utterances. He has hinted at the reasons for the change in his attitude. It would have been better if he had stated at the same time whether he desired the Opposition to join him in achieving the end that he had in view. If the Government wishes them to give an assurance that they are not opposed to the modification, it is for the Government to say so. It is not easy to understand how it is that officials can state that 5,000 Asiatics have crossed the border and yet are unable to check the Asiatic influx along that border. Mr. Smuts dismisses the plan of sending [everyone] to gaol as a waste of effort. It cannot be argued that the continued stay of the Asiatics in the Transvaal will put the Government to as much expense as the adoption of this course would. Even if the Government has the necessary authority, deporting [Indians] does not appear to be a practicable course. The Colonial Secretary has therefore decided to deal vigorously with the leaders, certain that this will end the trouble. The argument that a whole community is held by two or three men in the hollow of their hand is one that we distrust, but time and events will prove whether it is applicable. The action of theChinese in declining to register, despite disapproval by the Chinese Consul, does not bear out General Smuts' contention. General Smuts seems to fear the effect upon the Kaffirs of the success of a campaign of passive resistance. But how is it that laws were modified before? And, after all, is it not something to the good that Kaffirs should feel that, in any differences with the white race, there are milder arguments than the rifle and assegai?

[1] The translation here has been collated and brought in line with the English text in *Indian Opinion*, 11-1-1908.

MORE BLACKLEGS

. . .[1][1] from Potchefstroom

. . .[3] from Pietersburg

. . .[3] from Pretoria.

MAULVI SAHEB AHMED MUKHTIAR

The Maulvi Saheb was informed by the Registrar that his permit would be extended provided he gave his word that he would leave on the expiry of the extended time-limit. He has pointed out in reply that the Registrar had promised to extend the permits every six months, once in the presence of Mr. Hajee Habib and again in the presence of Mr. Nagadi and Mr. Munga. It was on the strength of this promise that he had started the work in connection with the Madrasah while con-tinuing his duties at the Mosque and his work for the Hamidia Soci-ety. He also has, he says, to tell the people about the religious aspect of the law. This was his duty, and he meant to continue doing so.

CASES AT PRETORIA

The cases of Mr. Tulsi and Mr. Sheth came up for hearing on the 7th. Mr. Sheth was served with a notice to leave before the 21st and Mr. Tulsi before the 12th.

SYMPATHY FROM COLOURED PERSONS

A resolution expressing sympathy for the Indians was passed at a conference of the African Political Organization. A telegram was sent to the Association to this effect by Dr. Abdurrahman.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-1-1908

48. INTERVIEW TO "THE STAR"

[JOHANNESBURG,
January 10, 1908]

Mr. Gandhi insisted upon the elimination of the element of compulsion of the Act and the consequent withdrawal of the notices regarding the issue of licences and registration. In return he undertook that every Indian in the country would be registered in a month's time according to a form to be mutually agreed upon which would be issued to those Indians entitled to remain in the Colony or who were otherwise approved.

[1] The names are not reproduced here and the figures in square brackets indicate the number of persons from each town.

If voluntary registration were faithfully carried out, the Registration Act would become useless, and the Indian community would look for its withdrawal during the next session of Parliament. If on the other hand the undertaking of the leaders were not fulfilled, Mr. Gandhi said he would welcome the enforcement of the Act against those who had not complied.

He was prepared to go further, evidently with the view of meeting the prejudice against the Indian trader, and was anxious that the Government and the various municipalities should frame by-laws governing the issue of trading licences, so that only Indians with suitable premises and with the means of keeping a proper system of accounts should be licensed to trade.

Indian Opinion, 18-1-1908

49. LAST MESSAGE TO SOUTH AFRICAN INDIANS

[JOHANNESBURG,
January 10, 1908]

TO TRANSVAAL INDIANS

It must be borne in mind that success in the struggle will depend on what the Transvaal Indians do while those arrested remain in gaol. It is well therefore that the Government has arrested some persons. It will be a testing time for the others.

Cowards will spread panic. Blacklegs will say all manner of things. It is my appeal to all my brave fellow-countrymen to remain undaunted by these, and be ever mindful of their pledge and keep up their courage.

At the very beginning of the campaign we had resolved not to compromise our honour by submitting to the obnoxious law, whateverthe cost. We find hundreds of examples, among the British, of persons sacrificing their all for honour and country. It is only when we do likewise that we shall become esteemed men and retain that esteem. I therefore take it that Indians will remain unshaken, whether or not they get licences, whether or not they are allowed credit, and that they will only become confirmed in their resolve to endure imprisonment or deportation. If only they will prepare themselves in their own minds, they will find that gaol is not something to be frightened of.

Let no one look to the others; let each depend on his own strength, so that even if in fear a few Indians submit to the outrageous law, the others will not be tempted to do likewise.

You will, in this manner, serve your interests as well as those of the country. If you make the mistake of registering, you will throw

away success just as it has come within reach.

Not only does this righteous campaign call for courage; but it is also based on truth. Large numbers [of Indians] must be faced with the prospect of starvation. It will be necessary to provide for their relief. This will call for honesty of the highest degree. Contributions will be received from various towns, and these will have to be utilized to good purpose. Let no one ask for aid unless in need. Those in charge of distributing aid should act with the utmost scrupulousness in utilizing whatever funds or food-grains are placed at their disposal.

This struggle will test the strength of all the elements of character and lay bare all our weaknesses. Let us be careful, then, after sending so many people to gaol not to throw away this opportunity by panicking and submitting to the law.

We should bear no grudge against those who have taken out registers or may do so hereafter. If you are convinced that their action is not right, you will not feel the slightest temptation to follow their example. Those who have the courage to fight till the last will be able to earn a livelihood anywhere in the world.

TO OTHER INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The Transvaal Indians put up with hardships of every description—physical, mental, financial. You are asked to make sacrifices only of money. Do not therefore fall behind. Money will be needed in plenty. Your congratulations are welcome; they are of some use. But they will have meaning only if you follow them up with financial aid. This is a campaign that concerns not only the Transvaal Indians, but the entire Indian community. Your interests, too, are atstake. It is in your power to give financial aid; equally, you can help by holding meetings and passing resolutions.

TO ALL INDIANS

Success will never be ours if we do not at all costs keep Hindu-Muslim differences out of matters of common interest. Let everyone accept this as a guiding principle. We shall succeed only when we feel a strong urge that all of us, Hindus and Muslims alike, belong to the Same land and are children of the same mother.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-1-1908

50. SPEECH AT NEWTOWN MOSQUE[1]

[JOHANNESBURG
January 10,1908]

There was considerable commotion among the Indian community this morning, says *The Star* (Johannesburg) of Saturday last, when it became known that Mr. Gandhi and the other Indians and Chinese who were ordered to leave the Colony within 48 hours a fortnight ago were called upon to attend Court for sentence. There was a large gathering outside B Court at ten o'clock, and before the doors were opened word was circulated that the proceedings against the defaulters would not be taken until the afternoon. Mr. Gandhi availed himself of the opportunity the few hours' postponement allowed to address his countrymen. It was to be a valedictory exhortation to the rank and file of the Indians to stand firm during the incarceration of the leaders of the passive resisters' movement. The meeting was held in the Mosque grounds, Newtown, at 11 o'clock, and despite the short notice of the meeting there was a large gathering. For the purpose of such [a] meeting a platform had been erected in the grounds, and seating accommodation was provided by means of the serviceable paraffin tins which were strewn about in thousands. On the platform were Essop Ismail Mia, Chairman of the British Indian Association, an Indian priest in an artistic Oriental garb, and Mr. Gandhi. A few introductory remarks were made by Mr. Mia, and then Mr. Gandhi spoke. He was listened to with the greatest intentness. Every eye was fixed upon the slim central figure of Mr. Gandhi, and the meeting gave an indication of the hold he has upon his countrymen.

After his speech [2] in Hindustani Mr. Gandhi spoke in English. He said he could not detain them for any length of time. The telephone message he had received that morning was that those who were under notice and whose period of notice had expired had to appear before the Court at 10 o'clock. Just as they were about to leave for the Court, Superintendent Vernon came to inform them that they were to appear at two o'clock. He believed that those who had to go to gaol today were not at all afraid. On the contrary, they considered that it was a fit opportunity given them by the Government to serve their country and to show that they weremen, not dogs. All the same, he was superstitious enough to believe that when these things were postponed from time to time, even though they might ultimately happen, they showed which way the wind was blowing, and they showed also that God was with them.

FREE HOSPITALITY

He thought he would not have had that opportunity of addressing his countrymen before accepting the free hospitality of His Majesty. But God had willed

[1] This is the *Star* report as reproduced in *Indian Opinion* under the title "Mr. Gandhi's Valediction: Leaders Imprisoned".

[2] This is not available.

otherwise, and he was there to give them the last word probably for a month, it might be for two months, it might be for six months, and the word he had to place before them was "Do not deceive yourselves; do not deceive the Government; do not deceive your humble servant." He believed sincerely that that struggle had been undertaken at their desire; that when he placed before them the true position of the law, all of them said that it was not possible for them to submit to the law—that rather than submit to a law of that nature they would suffer imprisonment, be banished from the country, lose everything that they possessed, rather than submit to the law.

THE STING OF THE ACT

That law, he repeated for the thousandth time, was not a question of giving a wife's name or a mother's name, or giving one thumb-impression or ten digit impressions, although all those things were undoubtedly to be considered when they were compelled to give these things, but the sting lay in the spirit itself. Jesus Christ had said that no man had seen God because He was a spirit. Similarly it was not possible to describe in words the underlying spirit of the Act. Every Indian felt that spirit, and having felt it shunned it as he would shun Satan. The law was based upon the condemnation of the whole of the Indian community, and it did not matter a bit whether General Smuts said that he wished to treat them justly and fairly. Judgment should be pronounced upon his acts and not upon his words. What they saw was that by reason of false dignity the Government would not have what they wanted to give freely, but wanted to compel them to give as if they were slaves. Compulsion was possible in a matter of personal freedom only when it was slaves who were to be dealt with.

THE DOG'S COLLAR

He well recalled an incident that happened when with Mr. Ally he went to England as their servant. A gentleman on board said, "I see you are going to London in order to get rid of the dog's collar." Precisely; it was because they did not want to wear a dog's collar that they had put up that fight. They were willing to sacrifice everything for sentiment, but it was a noble sentiment. It was a sentiment that had to be cherished as a religious sentiment. It was a sentiment that bound people together; it was a sentiment that bound creatures to the Creator. That was the sentiment for which he had asked them, advised them, if necessary, to die. Their action would be reflected throughout the British dominions, through the length and breadth of India, and they were now upon their trial.

GENERAL SMUTS' ACTION

He did consider General Smuts had performed an honourable action in arresting them and wishing to lodge them in gaol. He (General Smuts) was quite justified in believing, because of the reports he had read, that the whole of this agitation depended upon a few Indians. If it depended upon a few Indians only, and if the whole of his countrymen had not been acting together throughout the past sixteen months, then he thought they had proved that they deserved the Act. But if, after he and his

colleagues were safely out of harm's way, they remained firm, stuck together, and were prepared to suffer every inconvenience and to lose all, then he had not the slightest doubt that they would gain all, gain the estimation of all the reasonable Colonists whose estimation was worth prizing. If they submitted to the Act it was true that they would be able to live a dog's life, and had [*sic*] earned the Colonists' kicks. The gates of the Registration Office [—] it was highly probable [—] would be flung open once more immediately he and his colleagues had retired from the scene, but he did hope that whatever they had said in public, whatever they had prayed for in secrecy before their God, they would carry out to the bitter end. He hoped that no terrorism, no intimidation, no amount of meetings held by their fellow-subjects, if he might call them so, held by European British subjects would deter them from the action that they had embarked upon. There was no terror and no fear for a man who believed in God.

"A Struggle for Religious Liberty"

No matter what might be said he would always repeat that that was a struggle for religious liberty. By religion he did not mean formal religion, or customary religion, but that religion which underlay all religions, which brought them face to face with their Maker. If they ceased to be men, if on taking a deliberate vow they broke that vow in order that they might remain in the Transvaal without physical inconvenience, they undoubtedly forsook their God. To repeat again the words of the Jew of Nazareth, those who would follow God had to leave the world, and he had called upon his countrymen in that particular instance to leave the world and cling to God as a child would cling to the mother's breast. If they did that he had not the slightest doubt that this struggle could have but one issue.

A Month Hence

It did not matter what General Smuts thought today, but it would matter what he thought a month hence, when they had shown, every one of them, that they were men. He had not the slightest doubt that General Smuts had sufficient humanity in him to recognize the sincerity of purpose, the real feeling that underlay the community, and if they showed to him that the majority of Indians were not going to accept the Act, but would rather suffer imprisonment and degradation, forfeiture of all their goods, then General Smuts, without anybody going to him, would say, 'Yes, these are the people I shall prize as my citizens; these are the people whom I shall prize as fellow citizens with me and who will be of service to the State.' But if they did not take up that position, then General Smuts would certainly also say, 'Yes, 10,000 Indians may remain in the Colony. We can keep them as dogs and allow them todie their natural death.' Their natural deaths they would die far outside the Transvaal, wherever there was a piece of earth given them, but if they would die a noble death, a man's death, there was only one course open to them. If, perchance, even after they had taken that course it came to pass that every one of them had to leave the Transvaal, then was it not better that they should leave as men than remain as cowards

who had gone back upon their sacred resolution taken at the old Empire Theatre? He thought the whole of the Colony would rise and tell General Smuts, if the Colony was convinced that they were sincere, willing to suffer for their cause and country, religion and honour, then the Colonists would tell General Smuts he had not received a mandate to expel these people from the country. They did not want future immigration, they did not want to remain there and set up undue competition with white people. People who were capable of putting up a fight like that would not offer undue competition, but would fall in with any legislation that might be devised for the common good of all, but certainly not for the good of only a handful of store-keepers. If it were necessary that stores should be regulated for the common good of the country, why, they had offered it times without number. They did not want to flood the Colony with Indians, but the handful of Indians who had a right to remain in the Transvaal should be allowed to remain as worthy citizens of a mighty Empire, but should not remain as beasts so long as he could help it. (Applause.)

Indian Opinion, 18-1-1908

51. TRIAL AT JOHANNESBURG[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
January 10, 1908]

The eastern side of Government Square presented an extraordinary scene of excitement this afternoon. All through the lunch hour there was a big gathering of Indians, and at two o'clock precisely a continuous stream of Indians indicated the approach of the leaders. Mr. Gandhi was the first to appear. It was drizzling, and his ardent admirers sheltered him with umbrellas as he walked along slowly reading the first edition of *The Star*. The Indians kept pouring on to the Square, and the public entrance to the Court was blocked. The Magistrate, Mr. Jordan, was seen walking through the crowd, and of course he attracted considerable attention. At ten minutes past two the lock was heard in the door, and the press outside became greater. The doors were flung open and the crowd was met by Captain Potter, Superintendent Vernon, and two police. The officer ordered the entrance to be cleared and considerable confusion followed. The dense mass swayed backward, and when it was possible for egress to be obtained by a few people at a time, people were allowed to pass in. The Indians continued to force their way, and attempted to rush the police at the door. The Commissioner of Police, who was in the Court, saw that the force at the door was strengthened, and the entrance was again cleared. Another disturbance

[1] In October 1908, the Rev. Joseph J. Doke wrote about this occasion of Gandhiji's first imprisonment as follows: "There is the trial in the B Criminal Court, a great mass of the excited Asiatics crushed in at the door, and spreading to a great crowd outside. The cynical Magistrate with his face flushed, presiding at the Bench; the horse-shoe of legal offices below". *Vide M.K. Gandhi: An Indian Patriot in South Africa*.

occurred and the police made three arrests. When the part of the Court reserved for the public was filled, further admission was denied, and a few minutes afterwards the Magistrate entered the Court.

"Silence" was called, and M. K. Gandhi was called.

A regular cordon of police was formed by mounted and foot police around the entrance to the Court.

Mr. M. K. Gandhi was first called,[1] and he pleaded guilty to the charge, which was one of disobeying the order of the Court to leave the Colony within 48 hours.

Mr. Fred Klette, clerk in B Court, went into the witness-box and produced the records in the case *Rex* v. *Gandhi* heard in that Court on the 28th of December. Defendant was on that occasion ordered to leave the Colony within 48 hours.[2] Witness served a written order personally on the accused.

On being asked by the Magistrate if he had any questions to ask, Mr. Gandhi replied:

No, Sir.

Superintendent Vernon, B Division, said that at 2 p.m. that afternoon he arrested the accused for failing to comply with the order. He had seen the accused repeatedly from the date the order was made until today.

Mr. Gandhi had again no questions to ask.

Mr. Schuurman intimated that this was the case.

Mr. Gandhi asked leave to make a short statement, and, having obtained it, he said he thought there should be a distinction made between his case and those who [*sic*] were to follow. He had just received a message from Pretoria stating that his compatriots had been tried there and had been sentenced to three months' imprisonment with hard labour; and they had been fined a heavy amount, in lieu of payment of which they would receive a further period of three months' hard labour. If these men had committed an offence, he had committed a greater offence, and he asked the Magistrate to impose upon him the heaviest penalty.

MR. JORDAN: You asked for the heaviest penalty which the law authorizes?

MR. GANDHI: Yes, Sir.

MR. JORDAN: I must say I do not feel inclined to accede to your request of passing the heaviest sentence, which is six months' hard labour with a fine of £500. That appears to me to be totally out of proportion to the offence which you have committed. The offence practically is contempt of Court in having disobeyed the order of December 28. This is more or less a political offence, and if it had not been for the defiance setto the law I should have thought it my duty to pass the lowest

[1] *Rand Daily Mail* in its account of the trial also mentions John Fortoen, C. M. Pillay, P. K. Naidoo, M. Easton and M. E. Cadwa [Karwa], who were charged along with Gandhiji under the Asiatic Registration Act.

[2] *Vide* "Trial at Johannesburg", 28-12-1907

sentence which I am authorized by the Act. Under the circumstances, I think a fair sentence to meet the case would be two months' imprisonment without hard labour. Mr. Gandhi was then removed in custody.[1]

Indian Opinion, 18-1-1908

52. MESSAGE TO "RAND DAILY MAIL"

[JOHANNESBURG,
January 10, 1908]

Asked for a final message previous to his incarceration, Mr. Gandhi gave the following to a *Rand Daily Mail* representative:

I have undertaken this struggle prayerfully and in all humility believing in the entire righteousness of the cause, and I hope that one day the Colonists will do justice to my countrymen. So far as my countrymen are concerned, I can only hope that they will remain firm in their sacred and solemn resolution. By doing so they have nothing to lose. Even though they may have to lose their all they can only gain in the esteem of their fellow-men by being resolute. I sincerely state that in effecting my arrest General Smuts has done a very honourable act. He believes that my countrymen have been misled by me. I am not conscious of having done so, but I may have been misled myself. In any case removing me from the arena will show whether the position is real or unreal. The position therefore is absolutely in our own hands.

Rand Daily Mail, 11-1-1908

[1] Gandhiji was "somewhat agitated", as he recorded some years later; being alone in custody, he "fell into deep thought". "Home, the Courts where I practised, the public meeting,—all these passed away like a dream, and I was now a prisoner." If the people failed to fill the prisons, "two months would be as tedious as an age". But these thoughts soon filled him with "shame". And he recalled how he had asked people to look upon prisons as "His Majesty's hotels". "This second train of thought acted upon" him as "a bracing tonic". *Vide Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XX.

53. PETITION TO DIRECTOR OF PRISONS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG GAOL,
January 21, 1908][2]

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED BEING AT PRESENT PRISONERS IN HIS MAJESTY 'S GAOL AT JOHANNESBURG

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT

The Petitioners are all Asiatics, in all twenty-one. Eighteen of the Petitioners are British Indians and three are Chinese. The eighteen British Indians get mealie meal for breakfast. Of the other fourteen meals seven consist of rice and ghee, three of beans and four of mealie meal. On Saturdays potatoes and on Sundays vegetables are: added to the mealie meal. For religious reasons all the above are vegetarians—some only because they cannot get religiously killed meat or proper meat. The Chinese get whole mealies and fat in place of rice and ghee. All the Petitioners have been either in the habit of taking European food or mostly so—their staple consisting either of bread or some preparation of flour. None of your Petitioners has been used to taking mealie meal. They are most of them suffering from constipation, probably due to the eating of mealie meal. Seven of the Petitioners have gone without breakfast ever since their incarceration except that some Chinese witnesses, knowing their plight, once parted with one loaf which was divided among them. This was only brought to the notice of the Governor, who said the witnesses ought not to have done so. In the Petitioners' humble opinion, the diet above referred to is totally unsuitable for them. The Petitioners, therefore, humbly pray that the diet according to European scale with the exception of mealie meal may be prescribed for them, or such other diet as may be considered suitable to keep body and soul together and may be consistent with their national habits, or habits formed by prolonged residence in South Africa.

As the matter is one of extreme emergency, the Petitioners crave

[1] This is taken from "My Gaol Experiences[-II]",21-3-1908 and was drafted by Gandhiji; "My Experience in Gaol [-III]"21-3-1908

[2] This petition was drafted and sent on the day on which the 76 new-comers joined Gandhiji and his fellow-satyagrahis in jail that is, on January 21, 1908; *vide* "My Experience in Gaol[-II]", p. 142 and "My Experience in Gaol[-III]'',21-3-1908

a telegraphic reply. Since writing above, about seventy more men have come in. They have not taken any breakfast at all and have strong objection to taking it.

[*We are,*
Yours etc.,
M. K. GANDHI
AND OTHERS]

Indian Opinion, 21-3-1908

54. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY[1]

JOHANNESBURG GAOL,
January 28, 1908[2]

TO
THE HON'BLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY OF THE TRANSVAAL

SIR,

As representatives of the Indian and the Chinese communities[3] who have taken a prominent part in the opposition to the Asiatic Registration Amendment Act, we have the honour to lay the following considerations before you:

Our opposition has never been directed so much against the fingerprint requirements of the Regulations under the Act—in so far as such finger-prints were deemed necessary for the identification of Asiatics who could not very well be otherwise identified—as against the element of compulsion contained in the Act itself. On that ground we have repeatedly offered to undergo voluntary registration if the Act were repealed. And even now at this late hour we would urge on the Government the adoption as far as possible of the course more than once proposed by us.

We recognize that it is not possible during the Parliamentary recess to repeal the Act, and we have noted your repeated public declarations that there is no likelihood of the Act being repealed. We

[1] This letter as well as the draft Cartwright brought to Gandhiji in jail were published in *Indian Opinion*, 11-7-1908. The draft was either prepared or approved by General Smuts; *vide Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XXI and "Johannesburg Letter", p. 66. There exist four sources for this letter: the Pretoria Archives; the records of the Colonial Office to whom a copy of this letter was sent by the Transvaal Government; an office copy of the Cartwright draft together with handwritten changes made at Gandhiji's instance (S. N. 4907); and *Indian Opinion*.

[2] The *Indian Opinion* version, however, is dated January 29, 1908.

[3] The Cartwright draft has only "the Indian community".

would however point out that the periods fixed for registration under the Act by the various Government Notices have expired and that therefore anyregistration at present would necessarily have to be of that voluntary nature which we originally prayed the Government to concede[1].

Under these circumstances we would once more respectfully suggest to the Government that all Asiatics over the age of sixteen years[2] should be allowed within a certain limited period, say three months, to register themselves, and that to all who so register, the Act[3] be not applied, and that the Government take whatever steps they deem advisable to legalize such registration. Such mode of registration should apply to those also who being out of the Colony may return and otherwise possess the rights of re-entry.[4]

In taking the registration of Asiatics we do not object that the requirements of the Act and the regulations be as nearly as possible[5] complied with, provided the registration officials do not press for any information which offends the religious sense of the applicants, and receive discretion to dispense with the finger-print requirement in the case of those applicants who by reason of their education or property or public character are well known or can be easily identified otherwise. In those cases we urge that the officials should have discretion to accept the signature of the applicant as a sufficient identification.

Should the Government agree to these suggestions and accept[6] registration on these terms, we assume that all further prosecutions or punishments under the Act will be suspended during the period set aside for registration. We on our part again would undertake to use all our influence to induce our compatriots to register and withdraw all

[1] The offer of voluntary registration, which was an alternative to compulsory registration of all Asiatics envisaged by the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance, was first made at the Transvaal Indian mass meeting of March 29, 1907. *Vide* "Mass Meeting of Transvaal Indians", 6-4-1907.

[2] The words "over the age of sixteen years" do not occur in Cartwright's draft. Gandhiji added the words "over the age of 16". The additional word "years" found in the Pretoria Archives version would suggest that the Cartwright draft together with Gandhiji's substantial emendations on it (S. N. 4907) was re-typed and minor changes of a purely verbal character made on a subsequent draft which is not available.

[3] The draft has "the penalties of the Act be not applied" from which Gandhiji deleted the words "penalties of the".

[4] This sentence does not exist in the draft and was added by Gandhiji.

[5] Underlined in the Pretoria Archives version but not in the draft nor in the *Indian Opinion* version

[6] "reopen" in draft instead of "accept"

countenance from those who refuse to register or are not legally entitled to register.

We put forward the above suggestions because we are sincerely anxious to prove to the Government that we are loyal and law-abiding, and that we are willing to adopt any course which will lead out of thepresent difficulty without violating our consciences[1], inflicting any indignity or casting[2] any stigma on us.

We have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servants,
M. K. GANDHI
LEUNG QUINN[3]
T. NAIDOO[4]

Pretoria Archives; also a photostat of the typewritten office copy with handwritten changes: S. N. 4907 and Colonial Office Records: 291/127

55. INTERVIEW TO "RAND DAILY MAIL"

[JOHANNESBURG,
January 30, 1908]

Mr. Gandhi on his return [from Pretoria] was seen by a Mail representative...

Many questions regarding the compromise were immediately levelled at his head....

[REPORTER:] Honourable to both sides, Mr. Gandhi?

[GANDHIJI:] Perfectly. The honour of the Colony has not been affected in the least, while the feelings and scruples of the Asiatics have received the fullest consideration.

Then it is no climb-down?

Absolutely not. We have merely made an arrangement by which the whole question has been satisfactorily settled—satisfactory to all parties concerned.

[1] "violating our consciences" added by Gandhiji. The Pretoria Archives version has, however, "conscience" in the singular.

[2] The draft had "cast" which Gandhiji changed to "casting".

[3] "Leader of the Chinese residents of Johannesburg"; chairman of the Chinese Association and the Cantonese Club.

[4] Thambi Naidoo; a Tamil businessman from Mauritius whom Gandhiji described as "lion-like"; who but for his rashness of temper would have "assumed leadership of the Transvaal Indian community"; had a flair for languages and cooking; passive resister and later chairman of the Tamil Benefit Society. *Vide also Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XX.

Anything more?

Mr. Gandhi drew the line here and intimated that the time was not opportune to say anything further regarding the negotiations.

Our representative then noticed that Mr. Gandhi's head was closely cropped and that his moustache was cut. He was asked whether he had been subjected to the regulations usually applied to criminals.

No, this is all my own doing. As you know prisoners are not allowed the use of combs and brushes, so from hygienic motives I applied to the Governor of the Fort to be allowed to have myself cropped. He demurred at first but finally consented and—now look at me

How were you treated while in the Fort?

With as much consideration as the Governor could possibly allow me under the regulations. I must express my appreciation of the manner in which we were treated by the officials there, but their powers in this direction are limited.

And the food?

The usual diet.

In what part of the prison were you placed?

In the Native section.

This was all the conversation that could be had during the short journey to the Mosque at Fordsburg. At the latter gathering place Mr. Gandhi met a number of his compatriots—although the hour was past midnight. To these faithful henchmen he briefly explained what had led to his release.

The impression gained during the conversation given above was that Mr. Gandhi was in no way inclined to consider his release from gaol as a victory to the participants m the passive resistance movement. On the other hand he seemed keenly pleased that a settlement had been come to by which neither side had suffered in honour, integrity or prestige

The remaining Asiatics will be liberated from the Fort this morning.

Rand Daily Mail, 31-1-1908

56. INTERVIEW TO "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
January 30, 1908]

Yesterday morning some Indian hawkers saw, as they believed, Mr. Gandhi proceed to the Railway Station in company with another gentleman, who proved to be Superintendent Vernon, who is in charge of the Fordsburg Police Station. There

[1] This was republished with minor variations in *Indian Opinion*, 8-2-1908.

was, however, no certainty that it was Mr. Gandhi, and the fact of his having been seen was the basis of an interesting rumour only. As a fact, the Indians referred to were quite correct in their conjecture, for about a quarter past eleven Mr. Gandhi left the Port for Park Station, whither he proceeded with Superintendent Vernon to Pretoria. But Mr. Gandhi's release—it technically takes place only today—came as a great surprise to his compatriots last night. Mr. Gandhi returned from Pretoria at 10 o'clock, and there was no one to meet him except the Chairman of the British Indian Association— Mr. Essop Mia—so well had the secret of the whole position been kept. A *Leader* representative sought an interview with Mr. Gandhi after his arrival. In general health he seemed none the worse for his recent experiences, and was quite cheerful.

PRISON TREATMENT

Asked as to the treatment meted out to him in prison, Mr. Gandhi replied that he and his fellow-prisoners could not be sufficiently grateful to the Governor and all the other officials for the kindness and consideration shown to them within the four corners of the prison regulations. But he added there was much to be said with respect to those regulations, and the accommodation and diet provided for Asiatics, who, to all intents and purposes, with one or two exceptions, were classed with Natives. Mr. Gandhi, however, preferred to explain the position more fully at a later stage.

THE COMPROMISE

Replying to questions on the larger issue, Mr. Gandhi remarked:

The compromise arrived at is largely the same that was offered by the Asiatic communities before proceedings under the Registration Act were commenced. This compromise will give complete identification of every Asiatic over the age of 16 years in the Colony, and those who may be entitled to remain in or re-enter it. The main distinction between the Act and the identification under the offer will consist in the sting of compulsion being removed. The compromise puts Asiatics on their honour and responsibility, and if it is not carried out faithfully by my countrymen I have no doubt that our position will deservedly be worse than it would have been under the Act. But I do not anticipate any difficulty. With reference to the wholesale arrests that have taken place during the last three weeks, I do not think that Asiatics can have any cause to grumble; that procedure was necessary in order to test the intensity—as also the reality—of our feeling about the Act. I may state that we who were at the Fort were allowed to petition the Government offering once more voluntary registration, and the course adopted by the Government was in response to that petition[1]. In my humble opinion the Government have shown real

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 28-1-1908.

strength in acceding to the request. I would further and at this stage say that the leaders of the Asiatic communities, so far as I am aware, will loyally abide by the decision of the Colonists to avoid further immigration of Asiatics not entitled to enter by reason of previous domicile.

PRISONS TO BE EMPTIED TODAY

Last night a representative of the *Leader* gathered that today the incarcerated Indians, numbering some 220, will be set at liberty. As far as Johannesburg is concerned, there is no intention of holding anything in the nature of a demonstration, and the next few days will be devoted by the leaders of the Asiatics to the quiet instruction oftheir compatriots as to the new position of affairs. The leaders have every confidence that the compromise will be faithfully carried out.

The Transvaal Leader, 31-1-1908

57. LETTER TO "INDIAN OPINION"[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
After January 30, 1908]

THE EDITOR,
INDIAN OPINION
SIR,

My fellow-prisoners and I have been inundated with telegrams of congratulation on what the senders have considered a victory for the Indian cause. We can only consider it a victory for Truth. In any case may I on behalf of my associates and myself, through the columns of this journal, thank the numerous senders of wires and writers of letters for their kindly thought. It has not been possible to write to individuals, for which omission, being unavoidable, I trust they will excuse us.

I hope and pray to the Almighty that, should the occasion arise again, we will all be prepared to undergo imprisonment or any other hardship —if such it may be called—for the sake of Truth, Honour and Self-respect.

I am etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 15-2-1908

[1] The Gujarati version of this letter (p. 55) is dated February 2, 1908. The English letter was presumably written between January 30 and February 2, 1908.

58. SPEECH AT MEETING OF BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
January 31, 1908]

It is God in whom I placed my trust while launching on this struggle and advising the people to do likewise; it is He who has given us this unexpected victory, and it is to Him therefore that we must give our thanks. It is because I have always believed that God helps the cause of truth that I started this movement in His name. The success we have achieved is there for all of us to see. What has made the Government remit the sentences and open the prison gates and let the people out? Surely our truthfulness and strength. I used to say that, if we scrupulously followed the path of truth, the white Colonists themselves would veer to our side, and that is exactly what has happened. We are also thankful to the whites for the pains they took to further our just cause. They did so because they were inspired by God within to have sympathy for His oppressed devotees, and to fight on their behalf.

I need not refer to the remark General Smuts made in the course of a speech[2] that it was impossible to send everyone to gaol. All these things indicate that, if the [Indian] community remains united, it will always win through. We will now register voluntarily for purposes of identification and the scrutiny [of our rights of domicile] and the Government has accepted this [offer]. That means that the obnoxious law will die altogether. The stigma that attached to us under the law will now disappear. Under the proposed arrangement, the Government will accept signatures by educated persons and by owners of property, but unlettered people have to give ten finger-prints on the application forms. Though I am against this myself and will strive with the Government to the best of my ability to have the requirement waived, I see nothing wrong in having to give finger-impressions if the Government does not come round. For after all we shall be giving them of our own free choice. They must not be given if they are made compulsory. And the Government has allowed us a period of three

[1] On the evening of the day of his release, Gandhiji explained the terms of "the compromise" to fellow-Indians at a public meeting held under the auspices of the British Indian Association. The text of this speech was published only in the Gujarati section under the title "The Settlement Explained".

[2] His Mayville speech; *vide* 1st footnote of "Inter to the Transvaal Leader", 6-1-1908

months for the matter to be settled. I will therefore strive to obtain the best [terms] that I can for the Indian community.

Under the law, the Government wanted the compulsory registration of children, and this [provision] too, has now been dropped. The question of amending the law suitably will be taken up when Parliament meets in Pretoria. For the present, however, the sentences of imprisonment against us have been set aside, and it is now up to us to prove that we are honourable men. It will be no use having anything in writing from the Government, since the final authority is that of Parliament. We have thus to depend only on what Parliament does. Just as Lord Roberts and others used to make promises to us on behalf of the Imperial Parliament, so has the Colonial Secretary set us free in anticipation of Parliament's approval. When Parliament meets, we shall be delivered from this law[1]. That is, the Act will be repealed and theImmigration Bill will be suitably amended. The object of the Government will thus be secured, and we shall get the freedom that we have been demanding.

The reason why we have won is that people went to gaol,—150 from Johannesburg, 25 from Pretoria and many persons from other towns as well. Women did their true duty. The pickets in particular displayed unsurpassed skill which even the Government could not help admiring; the selfsame Government [which had resisted our demands earlier] came round clearly because it perceived the strength of the community. A campaign that is carried on in the name of God cannot but end in success. I am hopeful that I shall succeed in the matter of fingerprints also.

We have, however, no reason to feel triumphant over the measure of success that we have achieved, neither have the whites any cause to complain against the Government. Even God is won over by humility. It is, therefore, humility which will ensure our success in a just struggle. We must not play foul with the Government; rather, by adopting the highest standard of conduct for ourselves, we must convince the Government and the white Colonists that we do respect laws which uphold our dignity. If, through an oversight on the part of the Government, the door is left open and there is scope for some kind of fraud, our duty will be to shut that door. The Government will see for itself that we do not practise deception. When we have thuscreated a [favourable] impression on the minds of the Colonists by acquitting ourselves as befits us, the redress of our grievances is

[1] Asiatic Registration Act

bound to follow.

Equally, the Government will be unable to go back on its commitment to us, for we have the great weapon of passive resistance. That was the weapon with which we brought the Government to its senses. Whatever the Government does now, it will do with the consent of our people. As long as we are ready to go to gaol and fight on, we shall wield sufficient power over the Government to make it do the right thing.

Whatever we plan to do now must be kept wholly confidential. Should anyone among us be found carrying information to the Government or some other party, he will have proved himself a veritable traitor. Nothing can be gained by playing the spy to the Government; on the contrary, it will be of advantage to remain with the community. Even those who have taken out registers[1] under the new law may gain their freedom if they take out registers under the proposed arrangement. We must also prove ourselves to be as good as our word, and thus furnish an earnest of our sincerity. As soon as Parliament meets, the [AsiaticRegistration] Act will be repealed and the immigration law amended. That is to say, domicile certificates will be issued as they are in Durban.

We have to thank those who gave us real help. We should pass a resolution expressing our gratitude to Mr. Polak[2], Mr. Ritch[3], and

[1] In the Gujarati Gandhiji uses "register" for "registration certificate".

[2] Harry Solomon Leon Polak ; assistant editor of *The Transvaal Critic* who joined *Indian Opinion* ("Our Trial", 31-12-1904) after Gandhiji had struck up a "casual" acquaintance with him in the Johannesburg vegetarian restaurant; "had a wonderful faculty of translating into practice anything that appealed to his intellect"; he took to life in Phoenix "like a duck takes to water" and "we began to live like blood brothers", says Gandhiji who was also best man at his wedding. Became Editor, *Indian Opinion* in 1906 during Gandhiji's absence in England and a full-fledged attorney in 1908 after having served an apprenticeship with Gandhiji; was arrested after the "Great March" into the Transvaal in 1913; visited India and England to help African Indian cause *Vide Autobiography*, Part IV, Ch. XVIII, XXI & XXII and *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XXIII & XLV.

[3] L. W. Ritch; Theosophist and manager of a Johannesburg commercial firm before he joined Gandhiji as an articled clerk; passed his Bar examination in London (*vide* "Letter to A.H. West", 2-11-1906 & "The Deputation's Voyage—V", 1-12-1906); Secretary, South Africa British Indian Committee ("Letter to Lord Reay", 24-11-1906) of which he eventually became the "moving spirit". *Vide Autobiography*, Part IV, Ch. IV & XIII and *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XIV & XXIII. For his pamphlet on British Indians in South Africa, *vide* Vol. VII, Appendix.

Mr. Cartwright[1], the editor of *The* [*Transvaal*] *Leader*, as also to the others who joined the struggle.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 8-2-1908

59. INTERVIEW TO REUTER

JOHANNESBURG,
January 31, 1908

Mr. Gandhi interviewed said that those who proved their right to a domicile should not only be left in the Colony unmolested, but should be given every encouragement, so that instead of remaining a festering sore, they might as far as possible be assimilated and form part of the future South African nation. The dominant race should look forward to the time when the lower races should be raised higher in the scale of civilization. Mr. Gandhi agreed with General Smuts that the system of indentured labour in Natal should be stopped at any sacrifice.

India, 7-2-1908

60. CABLE TO S.A.B.I. COMMITTEE[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
February 1, 1908

[AFRICALIA[3]
LONDON]

COMPROMISE CONTEMPLATES REPEAL ACT AND SAME AS VOLUNTARY OFFER BEFORE.

[GANDHI]

India Office, Judicial and Public Records: 3722/08

[1] Albert Cartwright ; editor of *The Transvaal Leader*; was "as broad-minded as he was able" and "always supported the Indian cause in his columns"; the "Angel of Peace" who mediated between Transvaal Indians and Smuts in the controversy regarding the Asiatic Registration Act. Gandhiji describes him as "deeply shocked" at Smuts' failure to keep his promise. *Vide Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XXI & XXV.

[2] This is extracted from a precise of events in the Transvaal sent by Ritch to the Colonial Office, which was subsequently printed. The cable was republished in *Indian Opinion*, 7-11-1908.

[3] Telegraphic address of the South Africa British Indian Committee, London

61. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO S.A.B.I. COMMITTEE[1]

February 1, 1908

. . . At the end of three months if the registration is not satisfactory, the law can be made to apply against those who have not registered. On the other hand, it is understood that if we fulfil our contract the law will be repealed by amending legislation. A Bill will be introduced at the next session of Parliament legalizing what has been done. . . .

India Office, Judicial and Public Records: 3722/08

62. LETTER TO GENERAL SMUTS[2]

JOHANNESBURG,
February 1, 1908

DEAR MR. SMUTS,

After the conversation that Mr. Chamney had with me on Thursday, I sought an interview with you again, and Mr. Lane[3] told me thatI would be able to see you before I went. I was not, however, fortunate enough to do so.

The conversation with Mr. Chamney made me a little uncomfortable, because he still harped away on the Asiatic Act. Indeed, from him I gathered that the registration that will now proceed will be legalized under that Act. At the interview with you, I did not understand any such thing at all, and the joint letter[4] of Messrs Quinn, Naidoo and myself, too, makes it clear. I am most anxious to see this business finished without the slightest difficulty and with perfect satisfaction to yourself. I am, therefore, naturally most anxious to avoid any misunderstanding. Pray believe me also when I say that I shall leave no stone unturned to remove the difficulties in your path owing to the clamour of anti-Asiatic agitators. May I, therefore, ask you to

[1] This is part of a precise of events in the Transvaal Ritch enclosed with his letter to the Colonial Office, dated October 6, 1908.

[2] The entire Gandhi-Smuts correspondence between February 1, 1908 and June 13, 1908 was reproduced in *Indian Opinion* under the title "Was Repeal Promised? Complete Correspondence". A copy of this letter was sent by Ritch as an annexure to his letter of July 27, 1908 to the Colonial Office.

[3] 'Smuts' Private Secretary

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 28-1-1908

be good enough to re-assure me on the point? To legalize voluntary registration under the Asiatic Act would be to re-open the question at the sorest point. You were good enough to tell me that the method of legalization[1] will be discussed later on as between us. I have already suggested that the best way to do so would be under the Immigrants' Restriction Act by amending it in so far as may be necessary.

I take it, too, that the form of application and registration will be settled in consultation with the leaders of the community, and that this will be done as quickly as possible, so that registration may proceed.

I left a message, too, with Mr. Lane with reference to the ten finger-prints. I discussed this with Mr. Chamney, and he could show absolutely no justification for the ten finger-prints. Indeed he admitted that, for identification, one thumb-impression was quite sufficient. While to me, personally, it is immaterial whether thumb-prints or digit-impressions be given, there are many amongst the Asiatics to whom the latter present an impassable difficulty, and, as I know you want only effective identification, I do hope you will accept thumb-impressions. In answer to my inquiry, I have now received telegrams from the Protector of Indentured Immigrants and the Principal Immigration Restriction Officer in Natal. The Protector says:

> The system of taking ten finger-impressions from indentured Indians on arrival commenced in April 1903, on being found desirable.

The Immigration Restriction Officer who controls the immigration of free Asiatics has replied as follows:

> Referring yours of date both thumb-impressions only required for certificates issued in this Department.

You will now see that the information given to you by Captain (?) Clarke is incorrect. The distinction observed by the Immigration Department and the Protector's Department, too, is most valuable testimony in favour of my contention. The Protector has to deal with a class of Asiatics who have every temptation to hide their identity. Classification in their case is, therefore, necessary. The Immigration Department has to deal with a class of Asiatics and others who have always to prove their identity in order to make good their claim to enter or remain in Natal. Hence that Department requires only thumb impressions. Does not this show conclusively that you do not need digit-impressions at all? And, as my expert adviser tells me, the system

[1] The version available in India Office Records has "legislation".

of classification, besides being totally unnecessary, is costly compared to the system of identification merely. At the Cape, too, only thumb-prints are required. And, in this connection, I do wish to impress upon you the fact that the question of discretion is an element which will lead to favouritism and even fraud ultimately. A man who may be perfectly wealthy, I need hardly point out, is not necessarily an honest man, and yet, because he may be known otherwise, his signature alone will be accepted. To my mind, the only exception that should be made in the case of those who may be able to pass the education test prescribed by the Immigration Act. These, of course, carry identification on their own persons, but with reference to the others, speaking from experience, I urge that the discretion be dropped; but if you insist on ten finger-prints there will be applications wholesale for the exercise of discretion, and I am positive, armed as I am with expert opinion on finger-impressions, that you do not need ten finger-prints for identification.

I also venture to suggest that the open permission to Indians to trade without licences will give rise to bickerings amongst the Colonists. Do you not think it will be better either to issue licences or to take from them deposit of licence fee against provisional receipts?

I hope I have done the proper thing in adopting a familiar tone in writing this letter, which is purely personal and confidential, and your reply will be also so treated. If in any of the public statements I have been making you think that I have been at all indiscreet, pray correct me.

I am,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

GENERAL J. C. SMUTS
PRETORIA

Indian Opinion, 4-7-1908

Also India Office, Judicial and Public Records: 2896/08

63. LETTER TO THE VOGLS

JOHANNESBURG,
February 1, 1908

DEAR MR. AND MRS. VOGL[1],

Kindly accept my thanks for your congratulations[2]. I do indeed believe that your good wishes are an expression of the Heart and not merely a formal one.

Mahomed Khan[3] told me yesterday that Mrs. Vogl was keeping indifferent health. I was sorry to hear it. I wish I could come over to see her as also to thank you both personally, but just at present I must know no rest. The work of destruction is finished, that of construction has commenced—a far more difficult one, but, seeing that I have not relied upon my own strength but on the strength of Truth, otherwise spelt God, I am quite at ease.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the typewritten original: C. W. 4407. Courtesy: Arun Gandhi

64. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[4]

[JOHANNESBURG,
February 1, 1908]

. . . This campaign has undoubtedly shown one thing, if it has shown anything—that Indians in the Transvaal are deserving of self-respect and of being classed as men. The charge has often been brought against them that they are incapable of acting in concert for the com-mon good. I think I can fairly claim for my countrymen that they have shown unexampled self-sacrifice. Hundreds of poor hawkers, rather than pay the small fines that were inflicted on them by the magistrate, underwent the hardships of prison life, simply for the sake of principle. In the course of my practice I have not noticed many clients who have been willing to go to gaol when there has been the option of a fine. They have been willing to pay the heaviest fines

[1] Vogl was a draper. He and his wife sympathized with the Indian campaign. Mrs. Vogl took a keen interest in Indian women and conducted classes for them.

[2] On Gandhiji's release from jail

[3] An employee of Gandhiji, and a satyagrahi

[4] This was published in *Indian Opinion* under the title "Mr. Gandhi Interviewed: Playing the Game". As for the date of the interview, *vide* 1st footnote of "Interview to the Press", 1-2-1908.

if thereby they could avoid imprisonment. I must say that, to a certain extent, the cohesion that has been shown by the poorest Indians in the Colony has been an eye opener even to me, and I have no doubt it has been to the Colonists. I think it might also, therefore, be claimed that if the compromise that has now been arrived at is honourable to Indians, as it undoubtedly is to the Government, Indians have figuratively bled for it. It is not possible to give an adequate idea of the sacrifice made by hundreds of Indians, and in this category I includethose Indians who left the Colony because they did not consider themselves strong enough to brave the struggle. Merchants with large stocks in the Colony were perfectly resigned to any consequences, but they would not submit to a law which in their estimation degraded them. It was necessary, I think, for British Indians to show as much as they have, before they could claim to be trusted, and in accepting the petition the Government have done nothing more than give British Indians three months' grace. We are now put upon our mettle. To my mind the real work commences only now. We have to play the game.

We have to show to the Government and to the Colonists that Indians as a body have nothing to do with surreptitious entry—that although there is no legal obligation we recognize a moral obligation to give the Government complete identification of every Asiatic who is entitled to remain in the Colony or to re-enter it, and if we succeed in doing that I think that the bitterest opponent of British Indians will have to admit that those who prove their right to domicile and give the Government full particulars as to identification should not only be left in the Colony unmolested, but that they should have every encouragement, so that instead of remaining in the Colony as a festering sore they may so far as possible be assimilated and form part of the future South African nation. I do think that the highest statesmanship in South Africa consists not in treating any class of its inhabitants as almost animals or pariahs, but it consists in treating them as men, and raising them to a higher level. The question of unfair competition and such other questions crop up only because sometimes one notices cases of unfair competition, but all these matters can certainly be remedied if the different races living in South Africa were to be educated up to a proper sense of citizenship. By proper citizenship I don't for one moment claim that all the races should be clothed with the franchise, but I do claim that the dominant race should look forward to a time when those lower races will be raised higher in the scale. Looking at the whole question in that light, I for one have no hesitation in agreeing entirely with General Smuts' remarks with reference to the indentured Indians in Natal. As a matter of fact, the British

Indian population there has always submitted that indentured labour should be stopped, no matter at what sacrifice. Indians—that is,free Indians—have never countenanced nor wanted the system of indentured labour, and I admit that, but for the system of indentured labour Natal, the Asiatic question would not have caused the trouble it has. I certainly believe that, so long as Natal continues to import indentured labour, so long will there be some trouble or other in connection with Asiatics. But I don't wish, in making this statement, to be understood as saying that indentured Indians, after regaining their freedom, have been flooding the Transvaal. I know such statements have been made before now, but I am positive there is absolutely no foundation for them, if only for the reason that the supervision over indentured Indians is very strict, and no Indian from India is allowed to leave the Colony unless he has received his free pass. The Immigration Department of Natal is practically in a position to trace every indentured Indian.

Questioned with regard to his experiences in the Fort, Mr. Gandhi said:

So far as the gaol authorities are concerned, they could not have been more considerate. The Governor and all other officials were most kind and courteous. The Governor paid a visit every day, and regularly enquired whether we had any complaints or requests to make, and, if there were any, they were promptly remedied. Any request that could be granted within the regulations was immediately granted. Facilities were given for taking out books from the Prison Library and for receiving books from outside.

Mr. Gandhi added that, lest a remark in yesterday's *Transvaal Leader*[1] should be misunderstood, he desired to state that the gaol premises, so far as he was concerned, were kept scrupulously clean, the only exception being a place where prisoners who

[1]This is presumably a reference to the following in a *Transvaal Leader* news-item announcing Gandhiji's release and the terms of the settlement between the British Indians and General Smuts. "...The relief with which the Asiatics themselves will once more breathe free air will scarcely exceed that of the prison officials at getting rid of involuntary guests who, owing to their number, the peculiarities of their diet and their non-criminal character have tried the resources of several of the public gaols to their utmost. The sufferings of the prisoners have been acute. In one little yard in the Johannesburg Prison, the capacity of which is 45, over 150 men had to pass their days during this trying weather. Two of the Indians dropped down in the ranks, fainting on account of the heat. The Asiatics complain bitterly that the room at the Johannesburg Prison, in which they were taken to have their clothing changed on entering the prison, had its roof and sides so full of vermin that it was impossible to keep their clothes or hair free from the pest—a state of things due to the age and rottenness of the wood...." This news-item appeared in *The Transvaal Leader*, 31-1-1908 and this interview therefore took place on February 1, 1908.

could not be sent to their respective cells had to wait. This place was full of bugs, which came, however, from the woodwork, and its condition was not the fault of the gaol officials, but was due to the cramped space at their disposal.

Indian Opinion, 8-2-1908

65. LETTER TO "INDIAN OPINION"

JOHANNESBURG,
February 2,1908

THE EDITOR
INDIAN OPINION

SIR,

The Association, my fellow-prisoners and I have been flooded with telegrams of congratulations. Many letters have also been received. There is no time to send individual replies. May I, therefore, on behalf of my associates and myself convey, through the columns of this journal, our thanks to all those who sent telegrams and letters. I request to be excused for not sending individual replies. Moreover, I hope and pray to the Almighty that, should the occasion arise again, the Indians who went to prison this time, as also other Indians, will do what the former did for the sake of Truth and for the sake of our motherland.

I remain etc.,
MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 8-2-1908

66. SPEECH AT MEETING OF BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION[1]

[JOHANNESBURG]

I have worked and will continue to work as a passive resister, which means that I must fear no one but God. Some persons are threatening to resort to violence if the community agrees to give the ten finger prints. I must tell these persons that I myself gave my finger-prints twice while in gaol. If violence is to be used against anyone, let it be first used against me. I will not lodge a complaint with the magistrate on that score. Rather, I shall thank the person who assaults me, grateful for the blow from one of my brethren and feel honoured by it. The responsibility for whatever has happened is mine as it will be for whatever happens in the future. No one therefore but

[1] Held at Johannesburg on February 2, 1908 with Essop Mia in the chair

myself is to be blamed for any of the things [that have happened]. I wish not to be proud of being the leader of the community nor do I claim any credit for that; I wish only to remain a servant. I shall feel joy in rendering whatever service I can do the community. It is my duty to make public the true state of affairs; that is what I have always done. If, under the new law, I were asked to take out the register by only signing my name, I would have refused to do so. Once the new law is withdrawn, I hold that it will be in keeping with our dignity to take out the register voluntarily. Our pledge has been honoured and the demand that we insisted upon has been conceded which means that we shall be treated as men. No one else knows about the law as much as I do and can explain it as well as I. I do not say this out of pride; only because whatever explanation I give, will be correct to the best of my judgment. I am thoroughly familiar with all that has happened since 1903. There is only one task we have accomplished through the fight, and that is to have prepared the ground. What remains now is to construct a building on it. We have now to decide what kind of a building we shall construct and how. It is not yet settled that digit-impressions will have to be given. However, it is only through our own free choice that we will give them, if at all. I am doing my best in this matter as I said on an earlier occasion as well. I wish to repeat that whatever we do now is to be kept private; we must not make a fuss in public about all this. We stand to lose to the extent that we do. We must behave with the utmost humility. The courage we have shown in joining the movement against the Government is bound to be rewarded. And we must continue to act with the same courage. I am doing nothing for the community for the sake of reward or fame. Everything I do is as a matter of duty, and I shall continue to do so in future. If anyone wants legal advice, my office is always open. And I shall give the best advice I can. You may accept or reject it as you think best. I am always with the community. I have explained the question about the law, but further elucidation will appear in the *Opinion*, which may be referred to.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-2-1908

67. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
February 5, 1908

MY DEAR MAGANLAL,

I had intended to write to you in Gujarati, but I cannot. I have seen your letter. It was good that you sent a full account. It was your duty. [These] things cannot affect me, at any rate seriously, as they will affect you, for two reasons: (1) because I am [much inured] and sea-soned; (2) because being at a distance I can take a proper perspective. The discontent in Durban does not affect me or disturb me in the slightest degree. I did not expect it in such vehe[mence]; but neither is it unexpected, if you could perceive the difference between the two expressions. I am fully prepared for it, for the simple and sole reason that, while I have utilized all the help received and promised, I have never placed unflinching reliance on any such helps. At best, I have treated them as so many instruments through which God, otherwise Truth, has worked. Have I not noticed times without number that particular men have been [faithful] only in so far as it was necessary for them to serve Truth unconsciously [for] not having had it in them they have fallen away as scales do from trees as soon as their protective [function is] finished. In so far as you al[low] these events to beat you to the extent [they] have, you have not assimil[ated them] and you have not understood [the chasten]ing effect of suffering.

What does it matter . . .to me if even the few who un[derstand] the real struggle were to turn round. . . I not say[2] on the establishment . . . settlement that a time might come when every vestige of support might [be] withdrawn from us? Even then, we [will] continue to do our duty unflinchingly, undismayed, and without being morose. That time has not come, but those who are prepared for the worst can always philosophically take the intermediate stages. You should, therefore, hear these things and let them pass away from your minds as water from a duck's back. I know you do not need replies to several of these questions raised by the people there. [There is] not one which I have not cons[idered] which I did not provide for to the [best of] my ability. I hope this will [find you all] right.

I wish I could pay a visit to Phoenix and see you all, but that cannot be yet. However, I might be able to do so in a month's time.

[1] This letter is demaged at places.
[2] "and not stay"?

Never omit to give me full details of everything that may go on there even if it may be simple.

Yours sincerely,

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Share this letter with the others. Ask me about what you cannot follow.

From the handwritten original signed by Gandhiji with a Gujarati postscript in his hand: S.N. 4794. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

68. HUMILITY

There is an Indian proverb that "the more the mango tree flourishes, the more it droops". There can be no gainsaying the fact that Indians in the Transvaal have come out of their struggle with honour, and, what is more, without their sacred resolution having been broken. The suffering that they have gone through must be taken as a necessary process of purification.

The compromise contemplates the ultimate repeal of the Act, which was the soul of the objection. The voluntary registration which has been offered often has now been accepted, and the condition stated in the dignified, yet humble, letter written by Messrs Gandhi, Quinn and Naidoo is that the Act is not to apply to those who voluntarily register themselves. The Government receive all they wanted in the way of identification, so that each party gets the substance it was striving for. Looked at in that light, the compromise reflects credit alike on the Government and on the Indian community. The Government have shown their strength in having even at the eleventh hour recognized the necessity of consulting Indian sentiment. The much-discussed finger-prints remain, though in an elastic manner, and their acceptance by the Indian community shows not only its prudence, but it shows that the Indian objection has never centred round finger-prints.

We must decline to call this compromise a victory for Indians. That were an abuse of terms, but, if it be at all applicable in this connection, the victory is for Truth. Indians have always stated, and rightly so, that this was a religious fight. People who only give a superficial meaning to the word religion, have failed to see any in the Indian struggle, but Indians themselves have thought otherwise. They undertook it in the name of God, and they have to humble themselvesbefore Him for having received sufficient strength to come through the ordeal.

Moreover, Indians have little reason to glory over the compromise, but every incentive to walk humbly, because the work of a different and higher type has only just commenced. The community has, of its own asking, been put upon its trial. Instead of the law requiring it on pain of suffering the penalties, they have incurred a moral and, therefore, a higher obligation by offering the Government every facility for identifying all Indians entitled to reside in the Transvaal. It is, therefore, now constructive work, and, whilst the community has proved itself capable of carrying on in an orderly, peaceful and perfectly courteous manner, the necessary work of destruction, it has now to show that it is capable of solid and substantial constructive work. When it has proved itself worthy of the confidence reposed in it, the Indian community may have reason to congratulate itself, and will certainly have risen very high indeed in the estimation of all thoughtful men.

Indian Opinion, 8-2-1908

69. VOLUNTARY REGISTRATION

We have been informed that the work of voluntary registration for all the Indians in the Transvaal and which has been accepted by the Government commences in right earnest on Monday next, the 10th instants Johannesburg, in the Old Dutch Church, Von Brandis Square, from 9 o'clock in the morning, except on the first day, when it will be from 10 o'clock. Due information will be given with reference to registration in other places, and it is stated that, except in Pretoria and Johannesburg, the receiving of applications will be left in the hands of the magistrates in the different parts.

The form of registration certificate and the form of application have been considerably changed, in order to suit the new situation. Every adult male Indian should present himself for registration, and all those who are entitled to receive the certificate will be registered. Roughly, those who are in possession of permits *bona fide* issued to them, and those who are in possession of old Dutch registration certificates, being their property, and all children who entered the country openly when they were under the age of 16 years will be registered. The following may be, to all intents and purposes, laid down as the rule regarding the methods of identification:

(a) At the discretion of the Registrar, signatures, that is to say signatures well formed, bearing the impress of the signatory and not a mere tracing of letters, will be accepted in place of finger-prints from those who may possess property qualifications, or may be otherwise known as residents of the Transvaal.

(b) Signatures in place of finger-prints will be accepted from those who possess educational qualification sufficient to satisfy the test under the Immigrants' Restriction Act.

(c) Those who have any real or conscientious objections to giving ten finger-prints, and who do not fall under either of the above clauses, may be allowed to give thumb-prints instead of digit-impressions.

Whilst all these are very liberal concessions, in our opinion, it will be more becoming of the Indian community not to take advantage of them. The main point having been secured, we are of opinion that everyone should give digit-impressions without the slightest hesitation. In any case, the leaders who have a right not to give finger-prints should be the first to waive it and offer to give those impressions, so as to facilitate the workof identification, and make the process easier for the Government. We believe that the Indian community will show its real dignity by making as limited a use of the concession as possible. We understand that Messrs Essop Mia, Gandhi, and others who have been closely identified with the struggle, have decided not to claim the concession.

Indian Opinion, 8-2-1908

70. TRIUMPH OF TRUTH

"With an even mind face happiness and unhappiness, gain and loss, victory and defeat, and so join battle, thou son of Prithu; thou shalt incur no sin thereby."[1]

The Transvaal Indians, we believe, have emerged completely victorious. They struggled for 16 months. All the sections [of the Indian community] have become united. Indians all over South Africa were roused. Their pledge about gaol-going has been fulfilled. And the settlement followed with unexpected speed. It is a miracle that the prison doors opened before the term of imprisonment had expired. We shall not come across many instances of this kind in world history. The Government has placed great confidence in the Indian community and an equally heavy measure of responsibility. The demand of the Indian community has been accepted, namely, that the law should not apply to them. The words, "the law should not apply to them", need to be carefully understood. An oath was taken in September 1906 not to submit to the law. Submission to the law was the only issue at that time. The regulations made under it in July [1907] did

[1] *Bhagavad Gita,* Ch. II *v.* 38

not then exist.[1] The Government has now promised not to apply the law to Indians on the condition that the objective of the law should be secured by the Indians themselves acting of their free will, that is, without the compulsion of that law. This condition means voluntary registration. The Indian community has time and again offered to register on its own. The Government has now at last accepted the proposal and agreed not to apply the new law to those who register voluntarily. This means that the law will remain valid only for the blacklegs; alternatively there may be another law applicable to all.

When the movement started, there were quite a few weak-minded Indians who argued, "The laws of the State are inviolable"; "It is like running one's head against a wall"; "It will do if the Government makes a few changes in the law"; "It is madness to resist the Government" and so on. Those who argued in this manner showed little faith in Khuda-Ishwar, swayed as they were by greed for money or other unworthytemptations. The selfsame law is now about to fall apart. It has not gone yet, but the Indians who were imprisoned have been released with the assurance that it will go. All the newspapers, without an exception, are astonished. The whites are dumbfounded and wonder how all this came about.

We consider this a victory for truth. We do not claim that every Indian adhered to truth in the course of the struggle. Nor do we claim that no one thought of his own interests during the campaign. We do, however, assert that this was a fight on behalf of truth, and that most of the leaders fought with scrupulous regard for truth. That is why there has been such a wonderful result. Truth is God, or God is nothing but Truth. We come across this idea in every religion. It is a divine law that he who serves that Truth—that God will never suffer defeat. Sometimes men of truth appear to have failed, but that is no more than a fleeting appearance. In reality they are not defeated. When the result is not as we wanted it to be, we tend to think we have failed. But that which appears a defeat to us is often but victory itself. There are thousands of such instances [in history]. If, with some measure of truth on our side, we strive for a certain result and fail, the blame does not lie with truth but with us. If a particular result does not serve our good, God will not grant it, however much we may desire it. That is why we quote above a verse from the *Gita*, which says that we must fight on, with an equal mind, through happiness and unhappiness, gain and loss. If we do so, we shall incur no sin. This is a time- honoured solution. With that key, we shall be able to open the most unyiel-

[1]*Vide* "Interview to Rand Daily Mail", 6-7-1907 & "Johannesburg Letter", 6-7-1907

ding of locks. He who fights in this manner will fight only in the name of God. He will give no thought to success or failure. He is pledged only to the great task of serving Truth, doing his duty in the name of God. The outcome itself is in the hands of the Lord Almighty.

If this is a victory for truth, it is also a victory for satyagraha. Every Indian should by now be convinced that satyagraha, or passive resistance, is an infallible remedy. It can cure the most dangerous of ailments. Our success should lead at least to one result, namely, that we make full use of satyagraha. Only it should be used on proper occasions, and the people should remain united. It must also be realized that there are evils to which satyagraha cannot be applied. It can be effective only in situations where we are required to act positively. For instance, if the Government does not allow us to acquire land, satyagraha will be of no avail. If, however, it forbids us from walking along a certain foot-path, or asks us to shift to Locations, or seeks to prevent us from carrying on trade, we can resort to satyagraha. That is, if we are required to do anything which violates our religion or insults our manhood, we can administer the invaluable physic of satyagraha. There is one condition, however, to be observed, if the remedy is to be effective: we should be prepared collectively to accept hardships.

Some persons may well feel that all this is empty talk. What victory has there been to talk about? Here we are yielding on the question of giving digit-impressions. I am afraid that those who argue like this do not know the true position. This was not a struggle against digit impressions. Once the law is gone, there is no harm in our having to give the ten finger-prints. The giving of finger-prints is not in itself a disgraceful thing. But under the new law giving anything whatever is objectionable. There is no humiliation in polishing a friend's shoes as a gesture or of our free will. But polishing shoes out of fear, when ordered to do so, would amount to demeaning ourselves as menials. In other words, whether a particular thing is good or bad depends on the context. We know that there are many Indians who have mistakenly assumed that our campaign is against the giving of ten finger-prints. But such Indians should realize that there is no humiliation in giving ten finger-prints when not compelled by the law. Doing so certainly does not amount to a violation of our pledge. At the moment of writing it is not finally settled that the digit-impressions will be asked for. Every effort is being made to ensure that they will not be. But it is

our duty to place the matter before the people in the proper perspective. Digit impressions whether or not they are required should not lead to any difficulty. It is essential to present a correct idea of the object of this campaign.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-2-1908

71. TO THOSE WHO SUBMITTED TO THE OBNOXIOUS LAW

We have been describing blacklegs as black-faced people. That was done deliberately and without anger. It was our duty to do so. We did not, however, use that description with any ill-will, only we felt grieved because of our love for them.

The time to call anyone a black-faced person is now over. It was necessary to draw public attention to their conduct by way of warning. Now that the struggle is at an end, it will be improper to use any such description. We shall therefore stop writing in that manner and also advise the people who remained free not to feel angry with those who submitted to the outrageous law, and, forgetting their lapse, to put an end to the estrangement that has grown. They are brothers of other Indians, belong to the same land and have the same blood as other Indians have. [A block of] water cannot be cloven as under by the stroke of a stick; similarly we cannot be separated from one another.

To those who accepted the outrageous law, we would suggest that they admit their mistake in all humility and be reconciled with the community. They should pray to God to forgive them their mistake, and should such an occasion recur, act with strength.

The suggestion about building a Federation Hall has been revived. If such a hall is built, these persons can offer much help. While the whole community has suffered hardships and heavy losses, those who submitted to the outrageous law have made money. In any case, they submitted to the law for the sake of money. It is therefore only proper that they should offer a large and adequate subscription towards the cost of the Federation Hall.

This suggestion of ours is not to be forced on them. That will not bring about any sincere repentance. Their donation will have grace only if they offer it with sincere concern for the benefit of the community or the country. We hope that the Memons who behaved with courage and upheld the honour of the community and the Memons from outside the Transvaal will explain to others who have submitted to the law what their duty is; and similarly persons belonging to the other communities who took out the registers [under the

compulsion of the law] should also be approached by members of their respective communities as also by other Indians.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 8-2-1908

72. RITCH'S GREAT ACHIEVEMENT

It is impossible to evaluate Mr. Ritch's services, but it can be asserted that we would not have been successful but for his help and that of others. We suggest that the Indian community should adequately express its appreciation of his work. Indeed it is the duty of the community to do so. At the present moment Mr. Ritch's duty is really by Mrs. Ritch's bedside. He has instead remained at his post without a moment's respite. The value of such self-sacrifice cannot be exaggerated. Mr. Ritch being a poor person, we think the best way would be to offer him a cash present.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 8-2-1908

73. WHY NOT IN GOLDEN LETTERS?

We earlier commented on a letter from "Rasik" saying that, when Indians returned from their pilgrimage to the "gaol-palace" and success had been won, we would think of printing *Indian Opinion* in golden letters. Now the question has been raised again by some of our readers, [but] we do not think that our victory is yet complete. From one point of view, of course, it has been a real victory. That is, the conditions of satyagraha have been fulfilled, the gaol gates have opened and an agreement has been reached for registration outside the framework of the law, which, if carried out, would mean the end of the law. Two things therefore remain for the future. We need not be unduly flattered by the fact that the Government has trusted us; the real victory will be ours when Indians prove themselves worthy of the trust. We have done good spade-work, namely, the clearing of the ground and the digging for the foundations. It remains to be seen what kind of super structure we can build. The Government has placed in our hands the key to the repeal of the law. We shall have achieved complete success when we use that key and when the law has in fact been repealed. It is only now that we are faced with the really difficult work. It will call for strenuous effort. There will be need for greater patience and the utmost honesty. Let us see whether or not we are capable of these. Some Indians ask whether the Government may

not in spite of all refuse to repeal the law even after we have registered ourselves voluntarily. We think this doubt needless. For, what if Indians do not honour their word? That is in fact the more important question to ask. We have to go through voluntary registration in the manner prescribed by the rules. Everyone should think, not of self-interest, but the interests of the community as a whole, and register as quickly as possible. Furthermore, only those who are really entitled to do so should take out registers. No one should attempt to gain any illegitimate advantage [out of the situation]. We sincerely wish to see that no Indian is proved dishonest and that all the applications for registration are passed without exception. The glorious success that Indians will achieve then, the hosts of heaven will come down to watch. The law will then automatically stand cancelled, and that will be the time to accept the suggestion for printing *Indian Opinion* in golden letters.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-2-1908

74. JOHANNESBURG LETTER[1]

WHAT DOES COMPROMISE MEAN?

On January 29, Mr. Gandhi, Mr. Naidoo and Mr. Quinn addressed a letter[2] to General Smuts from the Johannesburg Gaol.

REPLY FROM GENERAL SMUTS[3]

PRETORIA,
January 30, 1908

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday's date addressed to the Colonial Secretary in which you tender voluntary registration of all Indians and Chinese legally resident in the Transvaal and entitled to register. The Colonial Secretary instructs me to say that he appreciates the wisdom of the step you have taken in response to his repeated public declarations that if the Asiatics in the Transvaal volunteer to register in a body an opportunity for registration should be given them. You have correctly set out the legal position in your letter and in default of

[1] Two items under this title dated January 18 and 25, 1908 are not by Gandhiji, as he wa in jail during the period, and these have not been reproduced in the volume.

[2] For the English text of the letter, *vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 28-2-1908

[3] This is reproduced from the English section of *Indian Opinion*, 11-7-1908.

registration under the Act which is no longer possible after the expiration of the notices the Colonial Secretary can only accept registration in a form similar to that prescribed by the Act and subject, as regards the regulations, to the small alterations you mention, and lay the matter before Parliament at its next session. In the meantime the penalties of the Act will not be enforced against those who do register, and the Colonial Secretary accepts your assurance that you will use your influence with your compatriots to make this registration effective and final.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,
E. M. GORGES,
ACTING ASSISTANT COLONIAL SECRETARY

WHAT LETTERS MEAN

Both of them are political documents. It was due to the efforts of Mr. Cartwright, editor of *The Transvaal Leader* [that these letters were exchanged]. Mr. Cartwright has himself suffered imprisonment for reasons of conscience. That is why he has since remained indefatigable in his support of the Indian cause. He obtained special permission from the Governmentto meet Mr. Gandhi in gaol and visited him twice. The first meeting took place on Tuesday, the 21st. In the course of that meeting it was agreed between the two that the new law should be repealed during the following session of Parliament and that the Indian community should immediately take out registers voluntarily. The agreement was also put down in writing. Mr. Cartwright then met the leaders of the Progressive Party. While accepting the suggestion, they asked that the Indians should write a letter from gaol volunteering to register. Mr. Cartwright himself drafted a letter to that effect and brought it to gaol on the 28th.[1] The draft petition did not, however, say categorically that the new law would not apply to those who registered voluntarily, and it was moreover on behalf of the Indians alone. It did not furthermore safeguard the interests of those who are outside the Transvaal at present, and included children under the age of sixteen [for purposes of voluntary registration]. Mr. Gandhi therefore proposed changes on both these points. On Mr. Cartwright appearing hesitant, Mr. Gandhi told him that, if these were not accepted, Indians would prefer to continue in gaol. Visibly touched, Mr. Cartwright said, "Well, you must make whatever changes you want. You are fighting for truth. The changes you propose are reasonable, and necessary for your self-respect. If Mr. Smuts does not accept

[1] Cf. *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XXI, where Gandhiji says that the compromise letter was either "drafted or approved of by General Smuts".

them, I shall myself oppose him, and I also hope to turn the Progressive Party against him." After these changes had been made, Mr. Quinn and Mr. Naidoo, who had done excellent work [for the campaign], were called in. They both approved the letter[1] and signed it. It was signed at 12-30 p.m. Mr. Cartwright left with the letter for Pretoria by the 2-30 train on the same day. At five in the afternoon he rang up to say that General Smuts had accepted [the terms of] the letter. He had asked for permission to alter one word, which was given. It seemed obvious then that Indians would be released soon.

OTHER CONDITIONS

There are some things that can be put down in writing, and for others one has to rely on oral understanding. That is what has happened in regard to this compromise. It was conveyed to the Government through Mr. Cartwright that efforts should be made to reinstate all the Indians who had been relieved of their posts in the Government and that the Indian community should be consulted about the form of the new registration certificate. Mr. Cartwright informed us over the telephone that General Smuts would not commit himself on the question of [reinstating] the Government servants but that he had agreed to do his best; as for the form of the register, he agreed to consult [the Indian community]. The proposed registration would not be under the law, and the Indian community would also be consulted as to how it should be legalized.

VISIT TO PRETORIA

On Thursday, the 30th, the Governor of the prison received an order to arrange for Mr. Gandhi to be taken to Pretoria. He was accordingly escorted to Pretoria by Superintendent Vernon. The Government had made the necessary arrangement for his meal on the way. Everything was to be confidential. The train was therefore stopped before it actually reached Pretoria for Mr. Gandhi to alight lest he should be noticed by the ever-vigilant pickets at Pretoria. Mr. Gandhi went to the Colonial Office, accompanied by Mr. Lane and Superintendent Bates. It should be remembered that he was still a prisoner. The meeting with General Smuts took place exactly at 12 noon. General Smuts said: "Personally I have nothing against the Indian community. The demands you have made in your letter are rather excessive, but the Government proposes to accept them. What the form of the registration certificate should be and how the registration should be legalized will be considered later. Of course, this registration will be outside the new law. But I suggest that your

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 28-1-1908

people do not discuss this matter in public. If you do, you yourself will stand to lose. For my people will turn against me." When Mr. Gandhi referred to the question of finger-impressions, he said: "If finger-impressions are found necessary, you will have to give them. You have already said that your resistance is not directed against these. However, of this too, we shall talk later." He then added: "My second suggestion is that you should not harass the blacklegs." Mr. Gandhi replied: "It should not be necessary for you to make any recommendation on this point. We are convinced that they have made a mistake; however, they are our brethren, our own flesh and blood. It cannot be the wish of any decent Indian to harass them. [On the contrary] it will be the duty of every thoughtful Indian to restrain those who are over-enthusiastic in this regard." There were other things that were discussed besides, but these need not be reported here. A meeting of the Cabinet was then called, and the draft reply reproduced above in translation was given to Mr. Gandhi after it had been approved by the Cabinet, and Mr. Gandhi was then set free.

IMPLICATION

This compromise implies that the offer of voluntary registration made by the Indian community has been accepted in full. This registration will not be under the law; it will be outside that law, which will therefore not apply to such registration. There is no need to withdraw the *Gazette* notice regarding the registration for, since the time-limit is over, the notice is already invalid.

WHAT ABOUT LICENCES?

The notice about licences stands, and it has therefore been agreed that, except the blacklegs, all Indians may carry on trade without licences for the time being. They will get licences after the new registration is legalized, and meanwhile no one will be prosecuted for trading without a licence.

WHAT ABOUT FINGER-IMPRESSIONS?

"Ten impressions if you give, humbled will your manhood be." Will Mr. Gandhi, forgetting the songs that were then sung, now advise the giving of finger-impressions? Mr. Gandhi has answered this, and repeats the reply, "Yes, I do give such advice. Our campaign is not against finger-prints but against the law. It is enough that we will not have to submit to the law. It will be disgraceful to give signatures under the law, but as long as we do not submit to it, we may give fingerprints, and more, without disgrace. The song above was about the law. Finger-impressions and suchlike were only symbols of that

law. A prisoner is recognized by the dress he wears. In a ditty about that prisoner we may describe his shirt; but the same dress, donned by a gentleman because he chooses to or by an Englishman at a fancy-dress ball, does not make either of them a prisoner."

Mr. Gandhi and other Indians deserve credit for having given 18 digit-impressions while in gaol. They did no wrong in giving them. In fact, it would have been wrong of them to have refused to give them. The paper on which the impressions were given, if available, would be worth framing. For going to gaol amounted to opening the door for the eventual freedom of Indians. Whatever happened in gaol should therefore be welcomed, if it was otherwise reasonable. A silken cord can be used to hang a man. When it is so used it will become an object of fear. But the same cord can be used for stringing a necklace, and then it becomes an ornament.

It is not yet finally settled that ten finger-prints will have to be given. The matter is still under discussion. If, however, we are required to give them in return for the repeal of the law, it would be childish to fight against the provision. It would be like running after a fire-fly in preference to the sun.

Moreover, [the system of] ten finger-prints has now been introduced for the whites also under the immigration law, and one cannot stress the point. It should normally have been needless to go into all this. But then the matter is being discussed by several persons. Hence these detailed explanations.

EDUCATED PERSONS AND PERSONS OF STANDING

The discretion vested in officials to accept signatures by educated persons and persons of standing, such as businessmen, is an additional point about [this system of] voluntary registration. This was not added at Mr. Gandhi's instance, but was included in the draft put before him. As it was not considered desirable to forgo this [benefit], it was allowed to remain. It appears reasonable that educated persons should be allowed to sign their names [for purposes of identification]; because the decision as to who is educated cannot be made at the discretion of the official. But allowing a man of standing to sign, even if he is uneducated, is quite improper. The fact that the decision as to who is a man. of standing will be made by the official carries with it a suggestion of slavery. I therefore advise people not to avail themselves of this concession. Whatever we get as a matter of right is welcome, but it is wrong to accept anything as a favour. I do not mean to say

that there should be no distinction between good and bad, between the poor and the rich, but such distinctions should not be left to the discretion of an official.

THE END

On leaving the Colonial Office, Mr. Gandhi was allowed to go to Johannesburg. The watchful pickets, having come to know of this, had surrounded the Colonial Office. They were told by Superintendent Bates that Mr. Gandhi had left. But they refused to believe that Mr. Gandhi could have left without their knowledge, for they had been guarding all the exits. And thus it happened that Mr. Gandhi met the pickets as soon as he came out. He informed them that every Indian would be set free on Friday and asked them to convey the information to the others.

MIDNIGHT MEETING

Mr. Abdulla sent a telegram to Mr. Essop Mia asking him and Mr. Polak to receive Mr. Gandhi who was arriving at Park Station by the last train. Only Mr. Essop Mia and Mr. Aswat were there to receive him, most of the other Indians having gone to the Indian mosque. A meeting was held in the precincts at midnight attended by about a thousand people. Mr. Gandhi told them to go about their work quietly without noisy demonstrations or processions. The reporter of the *Leader,* who was present, promised not to publish a report of the meeting. Everyone agreed that they were only concerned with the result, and that there was no need for any celebrations. People felt extremely happy.

PRISON GATES OPEN

The prison gates opened at 12 noon on Friday. All over the Transvaal, Indians who had been arrested in connection with the law or for carrying on trade without licences have been released. Almost all that happened was reported in the newspapers. Everyone was surprised and the whites, too, were happy. Telegrams were sent to the Association congratulating the [released] prisoners. There must have been more than a hundred of them. There is no need to reproduce their names here. In any case, there is hardly any space for them. These telegrams included one each from Porbandar, Aden and England. Some of these were from whites, and a large number of them called in person at the Office [of the Association] to offer congratu-

lations to the Indian community.

CONSENT OF PROGRESSIVE PARTY

Before accepting this compromise, Mr. Smuts had obtained the consent of the Progressive Party. He wrote the following letter[1] to Sir George Farrar[2] on the 27th:

DEAR SIR GEORGE FARRAR,

Will you kindly consult your friends to see whether there would be any objection to registration being re-opened for Asiatics and the chance being given them to register voluntarily, as they desire to do, and to dispense with finger prints in the case of educated or well-known Indians? It is probable that Parliamentary ratification of such registration will have to take place, and in the meantime the penalties under the Act will not be enforced against those who register voluntarily. I understand that Asiatics may be willing to make such an offer to Government, and before closing with it we should like to have your concurrence in so doing.

Yours sincerely,
J. C. SMUTS

In reply, Sir George Farrar wrote on the 30th as follows:[3]

DEAR MR. SMUTS,

I am in receipt of your letter of January 27, and have communicated its contents to my friends.

From it we extract certain questions or suggestions, which I append together with our replies.

QUESTION NO. 1: Is there any objection to Registration being re-opened for Asiatics and the chance being given them to register voluntarily as they desire to do?

ANSWER: No, provided time is limited.

QUESTION NO. 2: Is there any objection to dispense with finger-prints in the case of educated or well-known Indians?

ANSWER: No, provided that other adequate evidence of identity be forth coming.

QUESTION NO. 3: Is there any objection to the penalties not being enforced in the meantime against those who voluntarily register?

[1] Both the letter and the reply are reproduced from the English section of *Indian Opinion,* 8-2-1908.

[2] Sir George Herbert Farrar (1859-1915); Chairman, East Rand Proprietary Mines; Member of the Transvaal Legislative Council both before and after Responsible Government

[3] Both the letter and the reply are reproduced from the English section of *Indian Opinion,* 8-2-1908.

ANSWER: NO.

Am I to understand from the concluding sentence of your letter that the Government do not intend to make the above concessions unless they are satisfied that the Asiatic community is prepared to accept the new position?

I desire to make our position in this matter perfectly clear.

We agreed to the law and adhere to it, and its objects must be secured. We would, however, point out that as the present regulations were not submitted to us before promulgation the Government must accept all responsibility in regard to them.

We feel it essential to success that the law be administered with the least possible friction, and as far as possible, with due consideration for the responsibilities and difficulties of the Imperial Government. Believe me,

Yours sincerely,
GEORGE FARRAR

MEANING OF THESE LETTERS

These letters show that the Progressive Party is not opposed to us. If one argues that some of these letters do not say categorically that the new law would be repealed or that it would not apply to those who volunteer to take out registers, one would not be wholly wrong. But then the letters have been so drafted as not to shock the whites. However, the question has been raised as to what would happen if the Government were to play foul and retain the law in its present form. The question is easily answered. It is obvious that we are not taking out new registers under the law. We shall not therefore be bound by it in any way if the Government does not repeal it. And if it is not repealed, we shall fight afresh, and the strength that we shall have gained over these three months will stand us in good stead. Besides, the Government will be further disgraced, and in that measure ourcase will gain in strength. This is the marvellous beauty of voluntary registration and satyagraha; the initiative rests with us instead of with the Government.

COMPLETE UNDERSTANDING

After the foregoing account of the compromise had been written, there took place another meeting with General Smuts at which all points were satisfactorily settled.

1. If the Indian community takes out registers voluntarily, the new law will be repealed.

2. Voluntary registration will be legalized by a new Bill.

3. Voluntary registration will not apply to children under sixteen years of age.

4. There will be new forms of application for voluntary registration and for registration certificates. The register will mention the names of husband, wife and children and their respective ages.

In the application form for voluntary registration the name of the mother need not be mentioned but those of children and minors will be necessary. Children under sixteen years of age will accompany their parents [to the Registration Office] if they can, so that their ages and facial marks of identification can be noted down. Those whose children are outside the Transvaal need only furnish the name and age of each. If parents ask for separate registers also for their children under sixteen years of age, these will be granted. It should be remembered therefore that children who are in the Transvaal must accompany their parents, if they possibly can, when the latter go to apply for registers.

CONCERNING FINGER-PRINTS

(i) Those who know English well will not be required to give either finger-prints or thumb-impressions.

(ii) Men of standing and those who own property can be exempted from the giving of finger-prints or thumb-impressions.

(iii) Those who strongly object [on grounds of conscience] to giving ten finger-prints will be allowed to give thumb-impressions.

(iv) The rest will have to give the ten finger-impressions.

These concessions appear satisfactory. To ask for more will seem unworthy of the Indian community. Always the respect that a man enjoys depends on his self-restraint. Even if a thoughtless demand is conceded, it would be better not to accept the concession. I therefore advise every Indian not to avail himself of the exemption allowed on grounds of education or ownership of property. Within reasonable limits, whatever we do under [this scheme of] voluntary registration will be a sign of our goodness rather than of disgrace. For instance, we will be helping the Government to ensure identification of Indians; we will be giving all the requisite information and more. We can be sure that by doing so, we shall rise in the esteem of others. That being so, Mr. Essop Mia, Mr. Gandhi and other *satyagrahis* have decided to give digit-impressions. By doing so they will not forfeit their rights; a right can be kept in reserve. There are rights which, if not enjoyed, add grace like jewellery, but prove harmful when exercised. A perfect analogy occurs to me, which I mention here to explain the object of our struggle. The secret of the law, that is, its essence, can be described as its soul. The regulations prescribing finger-prints, etc., can be compared to its body. The soul of the law being

evil, we have been struggling for months to destroy it. We have succeeded in achieving that result. That the body survives does not concern us. If the same body be dwelt in by a good soul instead of an evil one, we shall not oppose it. Now that the body is to be inhabited by a good soul in the form of voluntary registration, we shall have no quarrel with the body. More, we shall even honour that body. The writer (of this article) means this comparison seriously. This analogy leads to other thoughts besides. By further elaborating it we can prove beyond doubt that ours was in fact a holy and religious movement, and a thoughtful person will easily see that we have achieved full success with unexpected speed.

WHO CAN BE REGISTERD?

(i) Those who possess valid permits, that is, those whose permits bear their own thumb-impressions.

(ii) Those who were in the Transvaal on May 31, 1902, whether or not they hold permits.

(iii) Those who hold the Dutch Register obtained by payment of the £3-tax and who reside at present in the Transvaal.

(iv) All children who entered the country lawfully when they were under the age of sixteen. Persons possessing proofs in respect of these will find no difficulty in obtaining voluntary registers.

WARNING

I have just read two letters published in *The Star* which are very critical of the Government. One of them is by one Phillip Hammond.He says that the Government has yielded to the Indian community on every point, and therefore Mr. Smuts has no claim to be called a strong man. Mr. Hammond believes that Indians ought to have been kept in gaol long enough [to break down their resistance]. The other person, a white named Mr. Hyman Levy, claims that he cast his vote for candidates from Mr. Smuts' party. Angered by the settlement of the Indian question, he has criticized Mr. Smuts in very strong language. These letters suggest that, when Parliament meets, Mr. Smuts will find himself in an awkward position. It would be well for the Indian community to give careful thought to all this and go through the registration as quickly as possible in order to convince everyone that we are playing the game. What the condition of the community will be in future depends on what they do during the ensuing three months. I therefore hope that every Indian will think of the interests of the community as a whole and not only of his own.

WHEN WILL OFFICE OPEN?

An office will be opened for voluntary registration on Monday

next in Old Church in Von Brandis Square. Those who want to take out registers voluntarily should present themselves there with the utmost despatch. It is our duty to finish this operation with speed. It has been arranged that there would be no *Gazette* notice about this, since it was thought that that would be more in keeping with our dignity. It is likely that in all the towns except Pretoria registration will be carried out through magistrates. We have been given three months, but it will be better if we finish it within a month-and-a-half.

SHOWER OF TELEGRAMS

There has been a veritable shower of telegrams about the release of prisoners. Telegrams have been received from every part of South Africa. In all, 150 of them appear to have been received. On Friday and Saturday, it was observed that the messenger came with a telegram every five minutes. Telegrams also arrived from Aden and India: from Mr. Kekobad at Aden, from Mr. Hajee Ismail Zaveri at Porbandar, and from the Bombay Presidency Association under the signature of Sir Pherozeshah Mehta. Sir Pherozeshah has sent a long telegram, offering his warmest congratulations to the community and expressing admiration of its patience, courage and capacity for self-sacrifice.

HELP FROM WHITES

The help received from whites in the Transvaal campaign has been beyond all expectations. Valuable help was given by prominent whites, such as Mr. Cartwright, Mr. David Pollock, Mr. Phillips[1], Mr. Doke[2] and Mr. Stent, editor of *Pretoria News.* Some of them were prepared to go with us to the very end. There were hundreds of other whites who wanted to help, though we did not hear anything of them. The increased support for our cause in England shows that there were persons in that country also, who were prepared to fight for truth. The Indian community must bear this in mind and give up its anger against the whites. We are often thoughtless enough to say that the whites can have nothing good in them. But this is patent folly. Mankind is

[1] Rev. Charles Phillips; Congregational minister. *Vide Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XXIII.

[2] Rev. Joseph J. Doke (1861-1913); minister of Johannesburg Baptist Church; was willing to resign if his pro-Indian sympathies were unacceptable to his congregation; edited *Indian Opinion* during Gandhiji's and Polak's absence in jail in 1911; "died in the pursuit of his holy callig in Rhodesia". *Vide Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XXII.

one, and even if a few whites make the mistake of considering themselves different from us, we must not follow them in that error.

FEDERATION HALL

A meeting of the [British Indian] Association was held on Wednes- day and it was resolved to raise a fund for meeting the cost of the Federation Hall and for other expenditure. It was decided to print tickets of ten shillings each and to request everyone to contribute at least that much. Those who can afford it should of course give more. I shall write of this at greater length next week. I hope that every one will help as best he can.

CARTOON ON VICTORY

In our issue of the 11th, we reproduced a cartoon from the *Sunday Times* representing the Transvaal Government as a steam-roller which was up against an elephant—the Indian community. The paper has now published a sequel showing the wrecked steam-roller, and General Smuts, lying on the ground amidst the ruins of his chair, miserable, looking unhappily at the elephant. He is wearing a convict's cap. The elephant seems pleased with himself as he surveys the wreckage and, with his trunk raised to General Smuts, inquires, "Everybody happy?" Mr. Gandhi, as *mahout,* has his digits extendedfan-wise at the extremity of his nose, as much as to ask General Smuts, "So you have had a taste of digit-impressions?" Underneath the cartoon is the caption: "Picture of Colonial Secretary Receiving Mr. Gandhi's Digit-impressions".

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-2-1908

75. LETTER TO FRIENDS

JOHANNESBURG,
February 10, 1908

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

I am well in the brotherly and sisterly hands of Mr. and Mrs. Doke. I hope to take up my duty shortly.

Those who have committed the act did not know what they were doing. They thought that I was doing what was wrong. They have had their redress in the only manner they know. I, therefore, request that no steps be taken against them.

Seeing that the assault was committed by a Mahomedan or Mahomedans, the Hindus might probably feel hurt. If so, they would

put themselves in the wrong before the world and their Maker. Rather let the blood spilt today cement the two communities indissolubly—such is my heartfelt prayer. May God grant it.

Assault or no assault, my advice remains the same. The large majority of Asiatics ought to give finger-prints. Those who have real conscientious scruples will be exempted by the Government. To ask for more would he to show ourselves as children. The spirit of passive resistance, rightly understood, should make the people fear none and nothing but God—no cowardly fear, therefore, should deter the vast majority of sober-minded Indians from doing their duty. The promise of repeal of the Act against voluntary registration having been given, it is the sacred duty of every good Indian to help the Government and the Colony to the uttermost.

I am,
Your faithful friend and servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 15-2-1908

76. A DIALOGUE ON THE COMPROMISE

We find many questions being asked about the compromise that has been arrived at. People are saying all kinds of things and some ignorant persons even refer to what is obviously a triumph as if it were a defeat. It is our considered opinion that the Transvaal Indians' victory goes so deep that every Indian should understand its real significance. We therefore answer most of the questions [sent to us] in the form of a dialogue. There are two kinds of readers: first, those who pretend to be asleep, that is to say, those who read not indeed to be enlightened but with malicious intent and in order to pick holes; the other kind are those who really fail to see the point and are therefore truly asleep. This dialogue is addressed only to the second kind. We can wake up those who are asleep. As for the others who feign sleep nothing can be done. The imaginary dialogue is between a reader and the editor. We advise every reader to read through it carefully several times over.

PREFACE

READER: Mr. Editor, I want to ask you some questions about your articles on the compromise. May I?

EDITOR: By all means, do. It is our duty to instruct and enlighten our readers to the best of our understanding. Our object is to serve the community, and this we can do only if we clear up readers' doubts to

their satisfaction.

I should like to remind you of one thing before you ask any questions. An answer, they say, has no meaning except for one who is equipped to understand it. For instance, if anyone asks a question about multiplication and division while knowing nothing of addition and subtraction, he is not equipped to understand the answer. In the same way you should have the following qualifications for asking questions: you should ask them in the presence of God, with sincere and patriotic intention. If you do, you will have no difficulty in following the answers. This condition applies to us no less. In fact, ours is the greater responsibility, and we are obliged to observe those conditions the more scrupulously. That is, whatever you ask us we will answer sincerely with a patriotic regard for the country's welfare and in the presence of God. Now you may ask your questions.

HOW CAN IT BE CALLED VICTORY?

READER: You say that the Transvaal Indians have won a complete victory and also that they have got more than they demanded. I do not follow this very well.

EDITOR: You will have to go through some of the back numbers of *Indian Opinion*. If you look into them carefully, you will find that the Indians demanded the annulment of the law and, in return, offered voluntarily to register themselves. The monster petition which carried five thousand[1] signatures put forward the same condition. There was no question at any time of setting our face against voluntary registration even if it were to take the form prescribed under the law. Now the Government has accepted the offer of voluntary registration in writing, saying that the law will be repealed if we register on our own initiative. We feel that this, by itself, would have been a complete victory for us. According to the terms of the compromise, however, due account will be taken of the status of educated persons and of men of standing who register on their own. Moreover, [the right to] voluntary registration will also be allowed to future Indian immigrants into the Transvaal. And finally, those who have been relieved of their posts in the Government will most probably be reinstated.

VOLUNTARY VERSUS COMPULSORY REGISTRATION

READER: I am still confused about the difference between voluntary and compulsory registration. And I know that there are also others who see no difference. Do please explain.

[1]Actually the number was 4,522. *Vide* "Letter to colonial secretary", 1-11-1907

EDITOR: I am not surprised at your being unable to understand this. The law brought compulsion to bear on us to make us register; that washumiliating. So much for compulsory registration. But if we take out the same kind of register of our own free will, that will save us the dishonour and even show that we are magnanimous. To take an example. If, by way of service to a friend, I wash his feet or carry his bed-pan, that will strengthen our friendship, give me an inner satisfaction and win for me the good opinion of others. Another, although he dislikes such work and thinks it derogatory, may yet do the same thing either under duress or for the sake of money. We shall think him base [for that reason] and regard him as a slave. We shall call him mean. He will himself feel ashamed of his job. If anyone finds him engaged in that work, he will try to hide himself. He is in reality a sinner and will never feel happy in himself. The difference between voluntary and compulsory registration is much the same.

READER: I see the point now, though only partly. For I still think that your analogy does not quite hold because it appears that the law will be enforced if we do not take out registers on our own. That is to say, we shall be taking out the registers voluntarily under an inducement. What you call voluntary therefore appears to me to be tainted both with compulsion and self-interest.

EDITOR: I think you are wrong. It is true that, if we do not take out registers voluntarily, we shall be subjected to the [process of the] law. But there is no compulsion here. If the Government were to say to us, 'Either you take out the registers, or we shall enforce the law', that would certainly be compulsion. But in this case it is we who offered to take out the registers and told the Government that they could enforce the law if we did not. We do not make this offer in fear of the sanction [of the law] but as an earnest of our sincerity and because we do not think there is any humiliation in voluntary registration. Moreover, being respectable people, we want, through voluntary registration, to dispel the suspicion that the Government harbours about us. There is thus no question here of any compulsion. If we had been moved at any time by fear, we could not have held out against the Government for 16 months[1] as we have done. Afraid of our power the power of our truth—the Government has accepted [our offer of] voluntary registration.

Furthermore, your view that our offer is tainted with self-interest is rather ill-considered. In fact, every act is motivated by some kind of self-interest. Even in my example, there is an element of self-interest in the service which I render to a friend. My self-interest lies in the

[1] September 1906 to January 1908

inner happiness which I seek. It is the will of God that I should work for such happiness. Knowing this as I do, whatever I do to obey that command is in fact inspired by self-interest, if of the best kind. If I did it so that my friend mightlove me the more, that also would be self-interest, albeit of a lower kind. In voluntary registration, there is undoubtedly such an element of self-interest. If a man living as a servant of God devotes himself wholly to the service of men or of all living creatures, he is also impelled by self-interest in seeking to be in the presence of God, [that is] to work for *nirvana.* We revere such a man. If there were many such in this world, we should find in it holiness, prosperity, peace, happiness and unity instead of the wickedness, suffering, misery, starvation and disease which we see in it today.

TEN FINGER [-IMPRESSION]S

READER: I think I now understand the difference between voluntary and compulsory registration. But I see that in any case we are condemned to give the ten finger-impressions. It appears that the educated and the rich have had their interests protected at the expense of the poor. If you accept [the system of] finger-impressions now, why did you earlier write so much against them?

EDITOR: This is indeed a good question, although, if you have really grasped the distinction, the answer to your question is contained in [an earlier] answer. However, let us consider your question afresh.

First, it is not true to say that finger-impressions have been retained. Under the law the finger-impressions were to be given by all the members of the community and that meant we were being stigmatized because of the colour of our skin. Now the finger-impressions remain only as marks of identification.

Secondly, it is not true to say that the educated and the rich have got off easily. Educated persons and men of means and standing can be identified by the knowledge they possess and by their appearance. It is humiliating to them even to be asked to give finger-impressions. Looking at it thus, it does not appear wrong that illiterate persons who are not otherwise known should have to give their finger-impressions. On the contrary these would ensure the fullest protection for them. For instance, not everyone in Durban has to take out domicile certificates. Men of standing can leave Durban without taking out such certificates. But an illiterate person or one otherwise not known would come to grief by following their example. He would find it difficult to return.

Thirdly, it was essential in the past to write all that much against the system of finger-impressions. We were therefore very glad of it

when, after nine months of struggle,[1] we had definite information in June about finger-impression.[2] We read everything available on the subject and placed it before the community. We were glad that the Satanic, death-like law had acquired a body—the regulations prescribing finger-impressions, etc. We knew then that people would be able to see the law for what it was, and that is exactly what happened. It was only after the regulations were published that the struggle became really exciting. We told the people that in India finger-prints were taken only of criminals.

We published rousing songs about them. Verses, such as

> Of fingers ten,
> Those Who give impressions
> Forsaking their pledge to God,

still echo in our ears.

We do not withdraw anything we said then. We would still use these verses against those who agreed even to sign their names under the law, let alone give their finger-prints.

READER: Well, a thumb-impression is one thing, but you now advise that finger-impressions be given. What about that?

EDITOR: Because we were against finger-impressions only so long as they were a body inhabited by that Satanic law. Now that the Satanic soul has left the body, we have no particular quarrel with it, that is, the finger-impressions. We think it is honourable, not dishonourable, now to give our finger-impressions.

READER: I am afraid I am getting confused. It is too much to believe that finger-impressions, which were objectionable before, have suddenly become acceptable. I need more light.

EDITOR: It is only natural that you should feel confused. We have given a great deal of thought to this question, so that everything appears quite simple to us. You are confronted with these ideas for the first time, and they are bound to sound abstruse. The illustration that we gave earlier of friendship and slavery is relevant here also. Let us take another example. In this country we wear jackets, which is not thought undignified. But in India, it would be undignified if we wore short jackets leaving the lower part of the body uncovered by them. That means that there are things that may be proper at one place but improper at another. In India, it is under compulsion that criminals give their ten finger-impressions. Here, the same was true of all of us [law-abiding Asiatics] under the outrageous law. Now we are to give

[1] September 1906 to June 1907

[2] *Vide "Letter to Rand Daily Mail"*, 1-7-1907

them on our own and not under compulsion. This point should be carefully noted, for we have been advising people to do this [as a voluntary act] all the time, and will continue to do so in future. It will reflect credit on our judgment if we appreciate this distinction. When it was proposed in the Transvaal that people should be obliged to produce their photographs, the community did right in opposing the proposal. Hindus and Muslims do get themselves photographed [but that is] to please themselves or for other reasons. You will therefore see that many things are undignified or dignified according to the Object in view.

READER: I think I see your point. But I feel like asking whether all things are like this, good at one time and bad at another.

EDITOR: No, that certainly cannot be so. What is true of our campaign is not true of everything else. There are things which are always and everywhere bad or good. It is good always and everywhere to pray to God. Adultery is always and everywhere bad. Generally, the above rule can apply only to things which are not in themselves wicked or evil.

READER: I can see that from our own point of view there is nothing objectionable about the finger-impressions. But the whites jeer at us saying: 'Well, what about finger-impressions now?' 'You don't mind playing on the piano now, do you?'[1] 'You talked so big about religion. What has happened to all that now?' They ply us with mocking questions. [*The Transvaal*] *Critic* has even published a cartoon[2]. Educated persons and businessmen are shown as having been spared offence to their religious susceptibilities, but not so the rest. It represents Mr. Gandhi seated on a chair in great dignity and signing his name, while other Indians, miserable creatures, keep standing as they give their finger-impressions with large drops of black ink dripping from their fingers. How can one bear this? How are we to face this?

EDITOR: This question is a sign of false pride. We shall not lose our honour because of the whites' taunts. We placed our trust in God so that we need only think of what He will say to us. There are many whites who have not understood the significance of our campaign. Many of them still do not understand that the law which we opposed

[1] Those who did not join in the satyagraha campaign, that is, the "blacklegs", who went to the Registration Office for affixing their finger-impressions on their applications for fresh registration certificates under the new law, had earlier been satirized by the satyagrahis. The blacklegs had gone to the Registration Office, they mocked, "to play on the piano"

[2] *Vide* illustration opposite.

will be repealed if we honour our pledge. Their eyes will be opened when that time comes. Moreover, not every white says these things. Newspapers all over England pay us compliments and describe this as a victory for us. *Rand Daily Mail* of Johannesburg has in fact taken the Government to task for having given in on every point to the Indians. *The Sunday Times* has published a cartoon in which a steam-roller driven by General Smuts has been reduced to a mere wreckage, and the Indian elephant is turning on him with a threatening look. Many thoughtful whites, and almost everyone outside the Transvaal, have hailed the victory of the Indians. Even if this had not been so, we should remember that we have our interests to look after. Let others say what they like. Let us recall the saying that the person whose self-interest is at stake will find the truth hidden inside a small dish, but the neighbour will not notice it even if it were all over the wide sky.

TEN FINGERS VERSUS TWO THUMBS:

READER: It is now clear why there should be no objection to finger-impressions. But as I see it, it was still unnecessary to have agreed to finger-impressions at all. How did it come about that thumb-impressions were not thought sufficient?

EDITOR: That is worth considering. Generally we observe in the world that those who are really brave and noble, fight only for a chosen objective, give their lives for it. When they have achieved their purpose, they give in on other points. They thus rise in the estimation of others. The [stem of the] castor oil plant becomes hollow inside as it grows and will break as soon as it begins to bend a little. A banyan tree on the other hand becomes stronger as it grows, and throws out branches groundward, which root themselves and spread out in all directions. No one goes to a castor oil plant looking for shelter. But thousands of persons can and do find shelter under the banyan tree. The Indian community has acted in this manner in accepting the compromise. The target of the struggle was the law. Now that it has gone, it will be magna-nimous of us to yield on the other points. The Government argues: 'You were not fighting against finger-impressions. Why then are you so obstinate?' We have really no answer to this question. A person like Mr. Essop Mia will rise in stature by giving his ten finger-impressions. Mr. Smuts said as much in a public speech. Besides, there is much we have to get from the Government yet. We should not conclude that we have got all we wanted because the law is gone. We need not fawn upon the Government, but it is our duty to keep it in good humour if we can do so without loss of self-esteem. The law will go of course, but what will

take its place? What will be the nature of future laws? This depends on how the Indians conduct themselves during the three months to come. For this reason, it will be wise to give the ten finger-impressions. It will not be necessary for everyone to do so. Even those who do not will be able to take out registers if they are *bona-fide* residents. But in this context honour consists in giving them. We have accordingly advised people to do so. We even go to the extent of saying that Indians who obstinately refuse to give the ten finger-impressions will, in the eyes of others, lack common sense. In fact, under the immigration law, women will have to give finger- impressions. That being so, we shall only fall in the estimation of others by going on arguing about thumb-impressions and finger-prints. Already we arc being thought childish.

READER: That sounds all right. But Indians outside the Transvaal, who have done much to help us, complain that we have secured our own interests without realizing that finger-impressions might be introduced in other Colonies where no one had so far thought of them.[1] When a man like Mr. Gandhi, they argue, gives his finger-impressions readily, how can anyone else expect his protest to be taken seriously? Tile Transvaal Indians, they assert, have brought total ruin on the others. How shall we answer these charges?

EDITOR: It is altogether wrong of people outside the Transvaal to complain in this manner. They ought to have understood the nature of the campaign. Look at it like this: if the Transvaal Indians give finger impressions of their own accord, why should they become compulsory elsewhere? Are people outside the Transvaal women wearing bangles that they could be compelled to give finger-impressions? On the contrary, by fighting against the law, the Transvaal has helped the cause of the weak not only in South Africa but all over the world, and thus given them strength.

The [*Natal*] *Mercury* says:[2] All that has been decided is the principle of respecting the rights and feelings of an unenfranchised section of the population, and paying regard to Imperial responsibilities.

This is [all but] literally true. The Indian people who hitherto had no franchise have now, so to speak, been enfranchised. To argue that, following this, finger-prints may be introduced in other Colonies is as ridiculous as to complain about a side-dish in the menu and ignore the excellence of the main course.

[1] In fact, this happened in Rhodesia.

[2] This passage is taken from the English version of *The Natal Mercury's* comment.

Let us also add that finger-impressions are likely to be introduced everywhere sooner or later. For, from a scientific point of view, they are the most effective means of identification. They cannot offend anyone's religious susceptibilities. This method of identification was introduced in Natal in 1903 for indentured labourers. It applies to a large number of whites in the Transvaal. There is therefore no harm in giving finger-impressions of our own free choice as we have agreed to do; on the contrary there are a number of advantages to be gained by doing so.

It must be borne in mind that at other places, such as the Cape, Delagoa Bay, etc., photographs are required, compared to which finger impressions are a thousand times better.[1] Please also remember that, in the Transvaal, the finger-prints will figure in the application form and not in the certificate.

WHY CLASS DISTINCTIONS?

READER: I shall not say anything more on the question of finger-prints; but I must say that I do not understand why *Indian Opinion,* which was till now opposed to any class distinctions, writes in favour of those that have now been made. I have not forgotten the harsh things you said when the Pretoria Memons requested in their petition that men of standing be exempted from giving finger -impressions. Now you argue that class distinctions may be accepted. Will you explain this inconsistency?

EDITOR: That is a good question. Strictly speaking the question of inconsistency would have arisen if this demand had been made by Mr. Gandhi. What happened was that the suggestion about this matter came as it were from the Government. It would have been improper to reject what in effect the Government offered us as a right. There is a great deal of difference between our asking for special privileges for men of standing and the Government offering them on its own.

Moreover, the distinction that has been made as between classes will also favour educated persons. We have never opposed any distinction being made in their favour. For education—true education—will always enjoy respect. If even educated persons are required to give finger-impressions for purposes of identification, then they cease to be a means of identification and take on a racial aspect. Distinctions based on education are nothing unusual.

There are natural distinctions of class which no one can oppose. Our fight is against artificial class distinctions. If a distinction is made

[1] *Vide* "Cape Immigration Act", 2-3-1907 & "New Immigration Act in the Cape", 2-3-1907.

on grounds which leave the official the sole judge, we feel such a distinction spells slavery for us. It is true that the class distinction that has been accepted as part of the compromise will leave something to the discretion of the officer. But the distinction will remain valid only for a temporary period, and we therefore see no objection to it, provided, of course, that the leaders do not avail themselves of the concession. As long as resort is not had to the concession, it will retain the dignity of an ornament. We think it will become useless, positively harmful, if a large number of Indians avail themselves of it.

The distinction that the Memons had asked for was of a different nature. Having agreed to submit to the law, they asked for a trivial distinction to be made in respect of finger-impressions. Besides, it is not as if this demand was made at the instance of the Government. That is why they went down on their knees, and were repulsed. It will thus be clear that there is a great difference between their request and the distinction that is to be made now. If the leaders behave sensibly, this distinction will redound to the advantage of the poor. The important thing is that well-placed persons should regard themselves as trustees of the poor.

WHY WERE PEOPLE NOT CONSULTED?

READER: I think all my doubts have been answered, though, of course, I shall have to think again. But one thing continues to trouble me. Why did Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Naidoo sign on their own authority? They are said to be prudent men, but was it wise on their part to have committed the community without consulting it? If they had left things to the community, I might not have even thought of the points I have raised. How can we be sure that they have not made a mistake?

EDITOR: That this doubt should occur to you is itself an indication that you have not fully understood our answers. We told you at the outset that the community was already agreed on voluntary registration. As the Government agreed to the same thing, there was nothing left to consult the community about.

READER: But surely the community had not agreed to the giving of finger-impressions?

EDITOR: Are you raising the question of finger-impressions all over again? It is these which appear to worry you. Why do you forget that the struggle was not against finger-impressions? Why should there be any need to consult [the community] on a point that was not at issue? Moreover, how can you argue that finger-impressions have now been accepted? They [Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Naidoo] have not accepted finger-impressions in the manner envisaged by the law. Instead they

have left it to the community to give the finger-impressions of its own accord. Those who insist on giving only two thumb-impressions can still do so and have the register. Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Naidoo merely suggest to the community that it will be a magnanimous gesture if Indians give their finger-impressions on their own and add that they themselves will do so.

You will agree moreover that those who are accepted as leaders must have a certain freedom [of action] in crises. We do not admit having availed ourselves of any such freedom in arriving at this compromise but on an occasion like this we would be justified in saying a few words on people's duty to the leaders. Great care should be exercised in choosing leaders. But once they are chosen, it may prove harmful if on occasion they are not allowed any freedom of action. If they are required to consult the others every now and again, that will suggest lack of confidence in them. In the absence of such confidence work will suffer. Confidence in the leaders is a sign of unity, of generosity and of an unflagging spirit among the people. No people can progress if its leaders are not honest and if they are not trusted. Leaders do sometimes make honest mistakes. They are not to be blamed on that account. There is only one test—that of sincerity. And the best way is that those who are sincere should be trusted.

CONCLUSION

READER: I cannot think of any more questions now. What do you think will be the outcome of this campaign?

EDITOR: We hope and pray to God that you and the others who may read the replies will profit by them. The final result depends on us. If we always show the courage that we have done this time, there will be no obnoxious laws directed against us in future. Everyone knows that the Indian community has risen considerably in public esteem. That is the important thing. Our object in this campaign was to win increased respect for ourselves. If we do no more than gather in our gains, that should be good enough. Satyagraha should become a common practice; the Indian community can then be assured of success in all fields.

Nothing can detract from the perfect success of our satyagraha campaign [regardless even of] whether or not the Indian community conducts itself well in the coming three months, whether or not it keeps its word about voluntary registration. Even supposing that giving in on the question of finger-impressions was a mistake, satyagraha re-

mains unsullied. Its success is complete. You may, if you wish, blame those who gave in on the question of finger-impressions. But truth has emerged victorious. Let there be no doubt of that.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-2-1908

77. NATAL LICENCES

No trading licences have been issued in Estcourt. Mr. Kazi's store in Stanger has come in for trouble. There will be similar trouble at other places as well. How will the Indian store-keepers be able to carry on business in Natal under these conditions?

There are two ways. One is to take the matter to the court, as the late Mr. Labistour advised. That will mean filing a suit against one of the municipalities and going to a great deal of expense and trouble. Besides, there is no assurance of success.

The other way is at once easy and difficult, depending on how one looks at it. This is the way of satyagraha. [It is easy because] in this case satyagraha will not involve going to gaol. Those who carry on trade without licences can only be fined, and in default [the penalty] will be, not imprisonment, but the auctioning of goods. It also follows that anyonewhose goods have been once auctioned will not be able to carry on business for the rest of the year. There can be repeated auctioning of goods. That will mean ruin. But every great task is bound to involve a heavy sacrifice. As a devotee has said, "to live a life of constant devotion to God one must pledge one's life; so difficult is the journey ahead of us". Satyagraha does call for devotion—devotion to one's country. It does require us to pledge our life [to the cause]. It can be resorted to only for the common good, not for mere self advancement.

Traders in Natal may find such a struggle a little more difficult than those in the Transvaal had found it. It should be, truly speaking, easy. It is difficult, because people can take cover behind the argument that they are prepared for imprisonment but not for the loss of goods. Moreover, the entire community will not be able to join in the struggle, so that it will be left to a few individuals only to fight it out. It should [on the contrary], be easy for the reason that, in our experience, Indians, and other communities as well, generally fight shy of going to gaol but do not much mind auctioning of their goods. Besides, no great risk is involved in allowing the goods to be auctioned. A clever man can hold out against [the Government] through skilful tactics. The main thing is for everyone to carry on

trade without a licence, if a single person is refused a licence without valid reasons. If the Government cannot throw everyone into prison, it cannot possibly auction everyone's goods either. Unity is absolutely essential. We do not mean to suggest that all businessmen—all over Natal, that is—should trade without licences; only the businessmen of the town or division concerned need do so.

Licences may well be refused to some individuals after they have been issued to all the others. In that case, those traders who do not get licences can continue their business and let the Government do its worst. This will require intelligence and presence of mind. Another way out is to rent premises for the store furnished with the landlord's benches, etc. The store should be stocked light so that the saleable goods may be disposed of from day to day or transferred to another person at short notice. If we follow these tactics the Government's policy of imposing a fine each time will be defeated. When a fine is imposed, a meeting should be called to make it known to the Government that the entire community approves of the person concerned carrying on unlicensed trade. This will tire out the Government. But this [course] is only for the brave and patriotic. Those who live merely for themselves are no better than stone. They cannot muster the kind of courage which comes only when one fights for the rights of all. It is simple for hawkers to hold out against the Government, which will then proceed to amend the law of its own accord. Let there be no mistake about this: the Transvaal campaign has won more respect for Indians, and the Government is bound to feel alarmed.

This step should only be taken publicly; that is why meetings should be held for the purpose; resolutions should be forwarded to the Government, and then alone should the actual campaign be begun. All the steps taken in the Transvaal should be followed, beginning with the first.

There are precedents for this kind of action. Englishmen let their goods be auctioned rather than pay the education cess. Now no one troubles them. The late Mr. Bradlaugh[1] had his own way of making himself feared by the entire British nation. How he did that we shall explain another time.

[1] Charles Bradlaugh (1833-91); English free-thinker and politician; for many years associate of Annie Besant and editor of *National Reformer*. In 1880, he was elected M.P. from Northampton but could enter Parliament only in 1886 after six years of wrangling over oath-taking which he wanted to do by affirming under the Parliamentary Oaths Act and not on the Bible. An atheist and "iconoclast", he was a natural leader in causes which had society against them.

Let the gentlemen in Natal, if they wish to start a campaign, call a big meeting for the purpose; let them, standing united, embark on this course cool-headedly with God as witness. They should note that,once the first step is taken, there must be no turning back. It may be wise in the first instance not to make a beginning. Wisdom consists in not retreating once a beginning has been made.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-2-1908

78. FUND FOR RITCH[1]

We wrote about Mr. Ritch last week. Everyone, we think, feels that something should be done for Mr. Ritch as a mark of our appreciation of his work. He has worked for all South Africa and is still doing so. We therefore believe that every Indian should join in the effort. No sum that we collect can be too large. It would not be extravagant even if we engaged Mr. Ritch at 1,000 per annum. We have been paying him just enough for his bare needs. Ever since we heard of Mrs. Ritch's illness, he has been allowed to draw enough money to meet his needs at home. Formerly, he was paid only £15 per month. That is, we have not paid him more than £25 a month on an average. We do not think it would be too much if we presented him a purse of, say, £300 at the least. It would certainly not be wrong to send more. By honouring Mr. Ritch we honour ourselves. Doing this may also win others over to our side. Not, certainly, that people will be attracted by money, but because they will realize that we have [a tradition of] nobility. If someone offers to help in hope of profit, he should be kept at arm's length. As for Mr. Ritch, he does not even dream of monetary gain. He will cease to be useful the moment he begins to think of such gain. We are starting a collection for this purpose, and hope that a large number of Indians will contribute to it. That will be a handsome [gesture] and no one individual will feel the burden. If our readers, several hundreds of them, make up their minds, the collections can be concluded soon. All contributions will be acknowledged in *Indian Opinion.* Let everyone remember that contributions for Dr. Booth[2] came mostly from the poor. A sum of

[1] *Vide* "Rich's great Achievement", 8-2-1908

[2] Rev. Canon Booth; Dean of St. John's in Durban; managed the Indian section of the Church of England Mission for the education of children of indentured Indians; also Medical Officer to Natal Indian Ambulance Corps, worked in honorary capacity in the Indian Hospital in Durban. The fund was really not for Dr. Booth but for this hospital. *Vide* "An Appeal for Funds", 11-4-1900; also *Autobiography,* Part III, Ch. X, & Part IV, Ch. XXIV.

£100 was collected then and Dr. Booth was presented with a purse and an address. We can say, without meaning to slight Dr. Booth, that we have rarely come across a white the equal of Mr. Ritch.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-2-1908

79. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

The British Indian Association of the Transvaal has started collections for a large fund. It has been decided not to accept less than 10s from anyone and that everyone should pay the most he can. The main object of the collection is to build a large hall in Johannesburg. There is no building anywhere in South Africa that would do credit to the Indian community. This is a drawback. Surely it would be a good idea to put up such a building in Johannesburg. Every prominent community has a hall similar to the one proposed. That we do not have one is a matter for shame. Truly speaking, there should be a hall of this kind in every city, such as Cape Town, Durban, Maritzburg, etc. It is a sign of our backwardness that there is not one. People in the Transvaal have therefore decided to build such a hall in Johannesburg.

It is also intended to present handsome addresses to Lord Ampthill[1] and Sir Muncherjee Bhownaggree[2] for the invaluable work they have done. There is also a proposal to express, in a concrete form, our appreciation of the services rendered by Mr. Polak, Miss Schlesin who has taxed herself to her utmost by labouring day and night, and other whites who have put themselves out equally. The expenditure on all these things is to be met from the fund that is now being raised.

The ten-shilling receipts bear Mr. Essop Mia's signature

[1] Arthur Oliver Villiers Russell, Second Baron of Ampthill (1869-1935); a founder of the National Party, 1918; Governor of Madras, 1899-1906; Viceroy and Governor General of India (*pro tem.*), 1904; wrote foreword to Doke's biography of Gandhiji.

[2] Sir Muncherjee Merwanjee Bhownaggree (1851-1933); Parsi barrister settled in England. As a Member of Parliament for over ten years, elected on the Unionist Party ticket, and as a member of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress in London, he helped considerably in educating public opinion in England in regard to the grievances of Indians in South Africa.

reproduced [in facsimile]. On the left there is space for the signature of the person who receives the contribution. Receipt books have been despatched to a number of towns. Everyone must pass on the money, as soon as it is collected, to the Secretary of the Association. On the counterfoil the name of the donor should be entered in full, and no contributor should pay except against a receipt. The collections should be concluded and the amounts forwarded as soon as possible. I advise everyone to preserve the receipt as a memento of the campaign. Also, it can be shown to others who may come asking for contributions. If a large number of persons take up the work of collection, it can be finished before the voluntary registration is over.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-2-1908

80. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO S.A.B.I. COMMITTEE[1]

February 15,1908

. . . The repeal of the Act was the fixed goal undertaken in the name of God; so far as I am aware, in making for that goal we have never swerved from that path, and have we not reached the goal in the least possible time and with the fewest scratches?...

India Office, Judicial and Public Records: 3722/08

81. SECRET OF SATYAGRAHA

There appears to have been a good deal of misunderstanding following the Transvaal Indians' failure to comprehend the secret of satyagraha. It is therefore necessary to give a little more thought to satyagraha in the context of our victory against the obnoxious law. Those who know the real meaning of satyagraha should not have the slightest doubt as to what the victory means.

A satyagrahi enjoys a degree of freedom not possible for others, for he becomes a truly fearless person. Once his mind is rid of fear, he will never agree to be another's slave. Having achieved this state of mind, he will never submit to any arbitrary action.

Such satyagraha can be, ought to be, practised not only against a Government but against society as well [if need be]. It can oftenhappen that a society is as wrong as a government. It becomes one's duty then to use satyagraha against society. The late

[1] This is taken from a precise of events in the Transvaal sent by Ritch along with his letter of October 6, 1908 to the Colonial Office.

Mr. Thoreau, whose book[1] we have already summarized, thought that his country-men did wrong in carrying on slave-trade. He therefore ranged him-self against his people. The great Luther defied his people single- handed and it is thanks to him that Germany enjoys freedom today. And there was Galileo who opposed society. The people were resolved to kill him. Undaunted, he told them that they could kill him if they wanted to, but that it was nevertheless true that the earth revolved [round the sun]. Today, we all know that the earth is round and that it rotates round its axis once every 24 hours. Columbus acted like a true satyagrahi when facing his sailors. Exhausted [by the long voyage], they declared, "We will never get to America. Let us turn back, else we will kill you." Unperturbed, Columbus answered, "I am not afraid of being killed, but I think we ought to go on for a few days more." They did discover America, and Columbus won everlasting fame.

Such a wonderful remedy is this satyagraha. When we ask in fear what will happen if the Government does not repeal the Act, we only betray the deficiency of our satyagraha or talk as if we had been unmanned, having lost the weapon of satyagraha. But our satyagraha prompts us to become free and feel independent. We have therefore nothing to fear. 'All this is idle talk. Whatever you do, you cannot start the campaign again. Once has been quite enough.' There are persons who talk thus. If it is true that we cannot resume the struggle, it will have been in vain that we started it at all.

Let us justify this view of ours. It is a matter of common observation that what we have won can be retained only by the same means through which it was got. What is won by force can be retained by force alone. A tiger seizes its prey by force, and retains it through force. Those who are forcibly locked up in gaol are kept there by force. The territories acquired by emperors by use of force are retained by force. In the same manner, what is gained by love can be retained only by love. The mother feels great love for the child in her womb and rears it with the same love afterwards. Its punishment while yet a child should not be interpreted as use of force. There are also instances where a mother has lost a child altogether because she stopped loving it for some reason. Similarly what we have gained by satyagraha can be retained only through satyagraha. When satyagraha is given up, we may be sure that the gains will also be lost. Moreover, it is unlikely that one will succeed in retaining through physical force what one gained by satyagraha. Suppose Indians wish to retain by

[1] The reference is to Thoreau's essay on "The Duty of Civil Disobedience". *Vide* "Duty of Disobeying Laws", 7-9-1907 ; 14-9-1907

force the fruits of victory won through satyagraha. Even a child can see that, if Indians resort to force, they can be crushed within the minute. Likewise, if we abandon satyagraha and go on as we did before, what we have gained may be lost.

These examples serve to show that satyagraha is really an attitude of mind. He who has attained to the satyagrahic state of mind will remain ever victorious, at all times and places and under all conditions irrespective of whether it is a government or a people that he opposes, whether they be strangers, friends or relatives.

It is only because we do not appreciate the marvel of satyagraha that we live in India as a poor and cowardly race, not only in our relations with the Government but in our personal relations as well. Certain customs which are palpably evil are kept alive in our country mainly because we lack in [the spirit of] satyagraha. Though well aware that certain customs are bad, we do very little to end them either because of fear, laziness or undue regard for others.

Before concluding, let me refer to the latest instance. When the whites held an anti-Indian meeting in Pretoria Town Hall, there were only four whites to speak in our favour. They were thus four against a thousand. But the four were brave enough to express their views in the face of a chorus of abuse from the crowd. In the event, their satyagraha considerably detracted from the importance of the meeting and turned it into a menagerie. We urge every Indian to follow these ideas carefully. Those who do will learn the true nature of our success and find themselves equal to the tasks which the Indian community has to face.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-2-1908

82. MY REWARD[1]

BEGINNING

For my part, I am not in the least surprised that I was assaulted. I had declared even on the 9th that, in view of the promise about the repeal of the law, I did not see any dishonour in giving finger impressions outside the law. On the contrary, I thought it was honourable togive them. When, in the meeting in front of the Mosque, there' was strong opposition to the idea of Indians voluntarily giving their finger-impressions, I asked myself what I would do if I had the real spirit of satyagraha in me, and then I declared my resolution that, if I

[1] This was published as "From Mr. Gandhi".

was alive on Monday, I would positively give my finger-impressions. I still do not regret having done so; rather, I think that I did my duty to my God and my community. When at a quarter to ten on Monday morning I set out towards the Registration Office in the company of Mr. Essop Mia, Mr. Naidoo and a few other Indians, I did feel that there might be an attack on me. In fact, I had spotted two of the assailants near the office. They walked alongside of us. I then became surer. But I decided that I should not, as I had declared earlier, mind being assaulted by my own brethren.

Some way ahead, one of the men asked, "Where are you all going?" Mr. Essop Mia was about to answer, when I interrupted saying, "I am going [to the Registration Office] to give my finger-impressions. The others, too, will do the same. If you want to give your thumb impressions [only], you can do that." My only recollection of what followed is that I received very severe blows.

I took severe blows on my left ribs. Even now I find breathing difficult. My upper lip has a cut on one side. I have a bruise above the left eye and a wound on the forehead. In addition, there are minor injuries on my right hand and left knee. I do not remember the manner of the assault, but people say that I fell down unconscious with the first blow which was delivered with a stick. Then my assailants struck me with an iron pipe and a stick, and they also kicked me. Thinking me dead, they stopped. I only remember having been beaten up. I have an impression that, as the blows started, I uttered the words *'He Rama!'*. Mr. Thambi Naidoo and Mr. Essop Mia intervened. Mr. Naidoo was hit as a result and injured on the ear. Mr. Essop Mia received a slight injury on a finger. As I came to, I got up with a smile. In my mind there was not the slightest anger or hatred for the assailants.

On reflection, I feel that we fear death needlessly. I believe that I have not known such fear for a long time now. And I have grown more fearless after this incident. If I had not regained consciousness, I would not have felt the suffering that I went through later. We can thus see that there is suffering only as long as the soul is in intimate union with the body. I became aware of the suffering only when the soul's union with the body was restored.

NO ONE TO BLAME

I do not blame anyone for the assault.[1] Those who attacked me

[1] Gandhiji in fact wired to the Attorney-General to say that his assailants were not guilty; *vide Satyagraha in South Africa,* Ch. XXII. The telegram itself, however, is not available.

would have at one time greeted me and welcomed me enthusiastically. When they assaulted me, it was in the belief that I had done them and the community harm. Some people thought I had sold the community by having agreed to [the system of] finger-impressions [in our compromise] with the Government. If that is what they thought, is it surprising that they attacked me? If they had had some education, they would, instead of assaulting me, have adopted other means of venting their dislike of me. In either case, they would have had the same reason. Experience tells me that some people know of only one way of expressing disapproval. For them physical strength is the one supreme thing. How then could I be angry? What point would there be in having them prosecuted? My real duty consists in disproving their charge against me. That will take time. Meanwhile, as is the way of the world, people will persist in the methods of violence. In this situation, the duty of the wise man is only to bear the suffering in patience. I think of myself as a wise person. I have therefore no choice but to endure the suffering inflicted on me. My religion teaches me to have no fear save of God. If I had any such fear, I should be violating a divine command. Why then should I be afraid of suffering? I therefore ask of God that I may remain fearless till the last. I ask my well-wishers to say the same prayer.

NURSING

When I came to somewhat, I was taken to Mr. Gibson's office, oppo-site which I had been attacked. I was attended to by Mr. Lew[1] and Mr. Gibson Junior. A doctor washed the wounds. They were thinking of removing me to hospital. Mr. Doke, a clergyman, who did a great deal of work for us during the later stages [of our campaign], hurried to the spot on hearing news of the assault; he suggested that I should be taken to his place. After some deliberation, I agreed to his suggestion. Mr. Doke is a Baptist and nearly forty-six years old. He has travelled widely in New Zealand, India, Wellestown[2] and other countries. He came here from Grahamstown three months ago. Judging from the way he looked after me and from his nature and that of his family, he must be a godly person indeed. He is not exactly a friend. I had met him barely three or four times before then, and that in connection with the campaign in order to explain the position to him. It was thus a stranger whom he took into his house. All the

[1] Yuk Lin Lew; Chinese Consul-General in the Transvaal; *vide* also "Letter to Sir George Birdwood", 25-10-1906.

[2] This appears to be an error for Palestine.

members of his family remained in constant attendance on me. His son's room was put at my disposal, and the son himself slept on the floor in the library. While I was ill, Mr. Doke would not allow the slightest noise anywhere in the house. Even the children moved about very quietly. Mr. Doke took the sanitary part of the duties on himself, while I looked helplessly on. The work of bandaging me, of washing the bandages, etc., was taken on by Mrs. Doke. They would not allow me to do even what I could have well done myself. Both husband and wife sat up [at my bedside] through the first night. They came into the room every now and again to see if I wanted anything. In the mornings Mr. Doke was busy receiving people who came to inquire after me. Every day nearly 50 Indians called. So long as he was in the house, he would take every Indian, whether he appeared clean or otherwise, into his drawing-room, offer him a seat and then bring him to me. He would also gently remind everyone that I should not be disturbed much. This is how he looked after me. He did more than attend on me and attend to all those who came to see me. He also did whatever he could about the difficulties of the community. Besides, he would call on Mr. Cartwright, Mr. Phillips and others, carry messages from me and do of his own accord whatever appeared necessary.

It is small wonder that a nation which produces such men should march forward. And how can one say that a religion to which such gentle, kind-hearted and really noble persons belong is false in any way? His only object in doing all this was to please God. He also, as was his wont, prayed nightly sitting by my bed. In his daily life, too, he always said grace before and after a meal. His children were also made to take turns at reading from the Bible. I at any rate could see no selfish motive in him; in his conduct and in the education of the children, all that one could see was truth. I saw no touch of insincerity in anything that he did, neither did I feel that anything was done to Please others. It is not often we come across such single-mindedness and nobility in Hindu or Muslim priests and *grihasthas*[1]. These are not common even in Englishmen. Some nations have more of these [qualities], others have less. Without entering into a discussion of that point, I would only pray that there might be hundreds of Indian families like Mr. Doke's.

TREATMENT

Both the blows and the injuries I received were severe, but in the opinion of the doctor not many patients were known to recover as

[1] Householders

speedily as I did. Though I was under the care of a physician, the treatment consisted entirely of home-cure methods. For the first two days I had nothing to eat or drink. That had the effect of keeping the fever down. On the third day I had no temperature. I started on a diet of a quarter pound of milk, and gradually added to it grapes, pears and other fruit. Then I began taking bread dunked in milk once a day. I am still on that diet. On account of an injury to three of the upper teeth, I shall not be able to eat anything hard for several days to come. Apart from the wounds, my mouth was swollen and so was my forehead. A poultice of clean earth was put on these, and the swelling has now subsided. I had been badly hit in the ribs, and here again the recovery is nearly complete thanks to a large poultice of earth The doctor was afraid that the application of earthen poultice on wounds might cause sepsis. But I had them put on my own responsibility. The doctor is now, however, convinced that the earthen poultice has done much good. Normally wounds which have to be stitched up rarely escape becoming septic. I am emphatically of the view that with an earthen poultice wounds heal without becoming septic. And that is what has happened. I have used many remedies involving the use of earth. I think, if earth is judiciously used, it can be a useful remedy in many ailments. I hope later to be able to tell readers of *Indian Opinion* [more about] my experiences.

LESSON

My object in writing this account is not merely to tell a story or to fill the pages of this journal, but only that my experience may be of use to others. The lesson that every servant of India is to draw from the assault is this: if anyone wants to serve the community, and always do the right by it, he must be prepared for physical assaults. If we do not take these things to heart, we shall have more peace of mind and happiness and, to that extent, more strength to serve the community. Such assaults should really be looked upon as rewards. Mr. Doke's conduct shows us all the path of goodness and the home remedies described here are worth noting. Mr. Doke received nearly 40 telegrams of thanks from different parts [of the Colony] and some Indians sent him fruits and other gifts as a mark of their gratitude.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-2-1908

83. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

DREW' S LETTER

Mr. Drew[1], who is the editor of *The Friend* of Bloemfontein and a Member of Parliament in the Orange River Colony, says in a letter:

I thought it was an easy victory you had achieved with a brief term of imprisonment. But I see now that you were not to be let off so lightly. However, I hope that your community will accept the very excellent and honourable compromise that has been reached. If it does not, the Indians will not retain the sympathies even of a single European.

Mr. Drew's words deserve to be pondered over. Readers of *Indian Opinion* know that, when others were against us, Mr. Drew's sympathies were with us. He has also been of great help in a private capacity. When a person like him writes in this manner, we should infer that things have come to a pretty pass indeed.

HOW LONG WILL REGISTRATION OFFICE REMAIN OPEN?

Many persons have asked this question. The reply is, "As long as necessary". There can be no exact time-limit to voluntary registration. But, since about a thousand people register every week and assumming the population [of Indians in Johannesburg] to be five thousand, it appears probable that [the Office] will remain open for five weeks.

WILL POLICE DEMAND [REGISTERS]?

The person asking this question has not understood the compromise. Those who take out registers voluntarily will not be subject in any way to the obnoxious law or to the regulations made under it. There exists a written assurance to that effect. The question above does not therefore arise. I do not mean by this that the police will never question anyone. After registers have been taken out voluntarily, there is bound to be a new law of some kind. It will contain some sections providing for interrogation [by the police]. Whatthese sections will be and what form the new law will take depends on how

[1] Rev. Dewdney Drew. In *Satyagraha in South Africa,* Gandhiji describes him as "one of the best speakers in South Africa". He supported the Indian cause in the teeth of European opposition. Earlier, he had given up orders to take up the editorship of *The Friend.*

the Indian community conducts itself during the next three months. By refusing to understand a very minor point and by their childish insistence [on not giving finger-impressions], the Pathans have created an unfavourable impression on the Government. If, in spite of this, the Government is convinced that the other members of the Indian community are sensible, honest and well behaved, the law that is to be enacted may well be worthy of such a people. Let it be noted, therefore, that every Indian now bears a heavy responsibility. We will have to deal with the local authorities at every step. The Imperial Government will not interfere in these dealings. Indeed, it cannot. Bearing in mind then, that, in matters which do not detract from our self-esteem, we must exercise judgment and care in dealing with the Government, I give below some rules [for the readers' guidance] during the next three months and indeed for all time:

1. Every Indian should disregard self-interest and think only in terms of the interests of the community as a whole.

2. No one should use a false permit or encourage another to do so.

3. No one should even think of arranging illegal entry for his relatives and friends.

4. Correct particulars about names and ages of children should be furnished.

5. The temptation to see a large number of Indians come in should be resisted.

6. One must not be rude to the officials. Not that we need flatter, but we must show respect.

7. We should assume that all Indians will take out registers promptly.

8. Most of the Indians should give their finger-impressions in the conviction that there is no disgrace in doing so. If these rules are observed, I make bold to say that whatever law is enacted will be mild and bearable enough and will be in keeping with our dignity.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-2-1908

84. A BRIEF EXPLANATION[1]

Everyone knows that this paper contains a good deal of my writing though a reader will normally be unable to say which articles are mine and which are by others. I print this one under my signature so that the views put forward here may be specifically known to be mine.

The controversy over the compromise with the Government has now largely subsided. There is a better appreciation of it among the people and, to that extent, they appear to have been pacified. However, controversies continue. I have received some deprecatory letters from Natal. Some of them pour abuse on me, and this only shows the pitiable state we are in. The abuse has not had the slightest effect on my mind, but it indicates the extent to which feelings have been roused.

I also see that the objections some persons have to the compromise are only a pretext, their real intention being to set the Hindus and the Muslims at variance with each other. I believe I have equal regard for the two communities. In public service, Hindus and Muslims have stood together as a united people. It is not, I have noticed, the Hindus who have blamed me; they are presumably satisfied that the compromise is a reasonable one. The condemnatory letters that I have received are all from Muslims. It is necessary to go into the reason. I am reluctant even to write of this matter, but it would not be proper to keep back [from the readers] what is on the lips of many and has become a subject of talk. Not only that; it may prove positively harmful to suppress the incident.

When the passive resistance movement was at its height, Mr. Ally[2] could not continue to trust me fully because I was a Hindu.

[1] This was published in *Indian Opinion* under the title "A Letter from Mr. Gandhi".

[2] Haji Ojeer Ally; born in Mauritius in 1853 of Indian and Malay parents; spoke Dutch, English and Hindustani fluently (*vide Satyagraha in South Africa,* Ch. XIV); came to South Africa in 1884 and devoted himself whole-heartedly to the Indian cause; took notable part in the agitation against Cape Franchise Law Amendment Act; elected Chairman, Cape Coloured People's Organization in 1892; founder-President, Hamidia Islamic Society and member, along with Gandhiji, of the Transvaal Indian Deputation to England in 1906 (*vide* Vol. VI). Unable to join satyagraha campaign and unwilling, at the same time, to submit to the Asiatic Registration Act, he left the Transvaal in 1907, leaving behind large interests; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 31-8-1907

He therefore sent a telegram to Ameer Ali[1]. On this occasion, a few Muslims thought of sending a telegram to Mr. Jinnah, and the Pathans eventually sent one. I do not blame Mr. Ally for what he did. Again, I do not blame the Pathans for what they have done now. I have known Mr. Ameer Ali. I asked for his help on behalf of the community and it was given. I have also known Mr. Jinnah. I regard them both with respect. I do not therefore write to complain but only to point to these things as symptoms of our mental state.

The symptom is this: I occasionally observe some lack of trust [in me] though I have worked hard to bring the two communities together. This is a sign of our weakness. It makes me unhappy. I have heard some Muslim brethren say in arguments about the compromise, "Gandhi has totally ruined the Muslims and has been doing so for the last fifteen years." It is most regrettable that any Indian should utter these words. I am sure those who say this themselves know that I have never even dreamt of harming anyone.

The entire campaign was intended to preserve the status of the well-to-do Indians. Muslims are better placed in South Africa and it was chiefly a businessmen's campaign. Had it not been for the massive effort of the Hamidia Islamic Society, we would never have won. Also, had not a large number of Muslims worked hard for it, there would have been no victory. How can it be said then that I have brought utter ruin on the Muslims?

I know that there are only a few persons who say these things. Most of the Muslims realize that in South Africa Hindus and Muslims make up a single [community] and ought to live together as one. If I have done anyone harm, it must be to the community as a whole and not to the Muslims alone. And I do not see that any harm has been done. Yet people go on arguing. I therefore wish to warn my Muslim brethren against those who are out to set people at variance with each other by saying these things; they ought to be treated as enemies of the community, and no one should take any notice of what they say.

[1] Syed Ameer Ali (1849-1928); Member, Judicial Committee of the Privy Council; Judge of Calcutta High Court, 1890-1904; author of *Islam* and books on Mahomedan Law, etc. In July 1907, H.O. Ally wrote a letter to Ameer Ali, a member also of the South Africa British Indian Committee, expressing his opposition to Gandhiji's continued campaign against the Asiatic Registration Act, for, he said, that would ruin "thousands of my co-religionists who are all traders while the Hindus are mostly hawkers". He sought the intervention of the Committee against the satyagraha movement. *Vide* "Ally's Mistake", 27-7-1907

I would tell those who take pleasure in creating dissensions that they bring ruin not only upon themselves, but on the whole community. They must stop this. Let them give up considerations of mere self-interest and turn their minds to doing good.

To the Hindu brethren I would say that all of us must live together as one people, regardless of the things a few Muslims who are enemies of the community may say. Looking at the matter in that light, they should give no thought to others' mistakes. They must not answer back. There can be no quarrel unless both the sides are at fault. Let them be careful, therefore, not to be in the wrong even partly.

In South Africa, I have only one duty: to bring the Hindus and the Muslims together and serve them as a single community. Some questions have arisen in this connection. We shall consider them next week. Meanwhile I request every Indian to read this patiently several times over.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 22-2-1908

85. LETTER TO GENERAL SMUTS[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
February 22, 1908

DEAR MR. SMUTS,

In accordance with the permission given by you, I now take the opportunity of sending you a draft Bill[2] to amend Immigration Restriction Act No. 15 of 1907. The draft, in my opinion, meets the situation entirely. The time is ripe for me to submit it, inasmuch as there is every evidence now of the Asiatics loyally accepting the compromise.

You will see that some of the rights given by the Asiatic Act have not been availed of by the draft; for instance, Asiatics who were in the Transvaal on the 31st day of May, 1902 are, under the Act to be repealed, entitled to registration, whereas, under the draft now submitted, they are not. I have omitted them advisedly, because it exposes Asiatics to temptation. I have assumed that those who were in the Colony on the 31st day of May, 1902 must have by the time voluntary registration is completed availed themselves of it. There could not be many outside the Colony who were in it on that day and have not yet returned. If, however, there are any exceptional cases, they can bedealt with under the last clause of the amendment of Paragraph g. On the other hand, I have ventured to specifically protect Asiatics who paid £3 to the old Government before the war, because, although they are not mentioned in Act 2 of 1907, it always was the intention to protect them, and holders of such certificates who are without the Colony cannot now number more than one hundred.

The clause about temporary permits has been taken over from Act 2 of 1907. I have ventured to import into the draft Bill a section dealing with the Church Street property[3] held by the late Aboobaker Amod. As you are aware, the section in Act 2 of 1907 proved abortive. A section of that description may not appear in its place in an Immigration Bill but, as the law repeals the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, the relief sought to be granted under that Act might well be

[1] A copy of this letter to Smuts was also sent by Ritch as an annexure to his letter of July 27 to the Colonial Office. In his reply dated March 12 (S. N. 4798), Lane wrote that General Smuts had his "hands pretty full of other matters" just then and had "not yet had time to go into the question".

[2] *Vide* enclosure, 4-7-1908

[3] *Vide* "The Land Act in the Transvaal", 7-4-1906 & "Deputation to Lord Elgin", 8-11-1906.

granted in a repealing Bill. I am sure that you would be pleased to restore to the heirs ownership of their inheritance. As you may be aware, the property is leased to a European firm and is being entirely used by Europeans and the building thereon is in every way a credit to the principal street of Pretoria.

I have omitted to take over from the Asiatic Act the section supposed to give relief with reference to liquor. I, personally, think that it is perfectly useless and should never have formed part of the Act.[1]

I know that you are going to amend Section 6 also of the Immigration Restriction Act[2]. I was almost going to submit a draft amendment, but, on second thoughts, I considered that it was not my place to do so. May I, however, suggest that the power of removal be changed into authority to the Magistrate to convict persons who may disobey the order to leave and to imprison them until they would leave the Colony of their own accord and at their own expense. I think that that is the utmost that a civilized Government can possibly do. If Section 6 is amended in the manner above indicated, Section 11 and Sub-Section f of Section 15 will require corresponding amendment.

There now remains for me to point out that, according to my reading of the Immigration Restriction Act, Malays and Cape Coloured people become prohibited immigrants. I hardly think that such was the intention of the Government. I should imagine that they would be protected the same as descendants of the aboriginal races of Africa, as per clause h of Section 2.

In my opinion, no further amendments would be necessary in order to carry out the main purpose of the Asiatic Act in the way of inspection and in the way of restriction of licences only to those who are not prohibited immigrants, because both these are already more than provided for under the Immigration Restriction Act. Every person applying for a licence will have to prove that he is not a prohibited immigrant and the officers appointed under the Immigration Restriction Act will have the power to put to proof any person suspected of being a prohibited immigrant.

If there are any Asiatics who do not avail themselves of the voluntary offer, I do not think, in view of the amendment suggested by me, that you require the use of the Asiatic Act to deal with them, because they will *ipso facto* become prohibited immigrants and would, therefore, be liable to an expulsion order. Those who are outside the

[1] *Vide* "Deputation to Lord Elgin", 8-11-1906.

[2] For provisions of Immigration Restriction Bill, *vide* Appendix III and for the Immigrants' Restriction Act, *vide* Appendix I of this Volume.

Colony and are because of their former domicile entitled to re-enter, although they may not possess educational qualifications, are as you will notice, under the draft submitted by me, required to take out a registration certificate according to the voluntary form within seven days of their arrival.

I remain,
Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

GENERAL J. C. SMUTS
COLONIAL OFFICE
PRETORIA

[ENCLOSURE]

DRAFT IMMIGRATION RESTRICTION BILL TO AMEND

ACT NO. 15 OF 1907

1. Section one of said Act is hereby repealed and replaced as follows: "The Peace Preservation Ordinance, 1903, the Asiatic Law Amendment Act No. 2 of l907, and Sub-Section (c) of Article two of Law No. 3 of 1885 as amended by Volksraad Resolutions Article 1419 of the 12th day of August, 1886, and Article 128 of the 16th day of May, 1890 are hereby repealed, provided that nothing done under the said Ordinance, Act, or Law, before such repeal shall be affected by such repeal."

2. Paragraph (g) of Sub-Section one of Section two is hereby repealed and replaced by the following: "Any Asiatic who has obtained a certificate of registration under the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, 1907, or any Asiatic who has obtained before the . . . day of . . . a certificate as per form hereto attached and described in Schedule A, or any Asiatic who, not being within the Colony, is in possession of a permit or registration certificate lawfully issued to him and of which he is proved to the satisfaction of the Immigration Officer to be the lawful possessor and who shall within seven days after entering the Colony apply for a certificate as per Schedule A, or any Asiatic who is considered by the Minister as eligible for such certificate and who does not come within the scope of Sub-Sections 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, or 8 of the definition of 'prohibited immigrant' as in the said Act 15 of 1907."

3. The Minister shall have the power from time to time to issue temporary permits to enter and remain in the Colony to any "prohibited immigrant".

4. Portion of Erf No. 373 Church Street, Pretoria, which was registered in the name of the late Aboobaker Amod and which is at

present registered in the name of Henry Solomon Leon Polak may be transferred in favour of the heirs of the late Aboobaker Amod notwithstanding anything to the contrary in Law 3 of 1885 as amended by Volksraad Resolutions Article 1419 of the 12th day of August, 1886 and without payment of further transfer duty.

Indian Opinion, 4-7-1908

Also India Office, Judicial and Public Records: 2896/08

86. BLUE BOOK

The Blue book published by Lord Elgin[1] in January is now available in South Africa. It is called a Blue book, though it should really be called a black book. Anyone who reads this Blue book and follows it will soon realize that the Indians' success was in spite of the Imperial Government, which had ranged itself on the other side; it was won entirely on the strength of truth. It appears that, until January 10, the attitude of the Imperial Government was a feeble one. We have seen how it changed after that date. But we do not have to be grateful to the Imperial Government for that. For them it was a good deed done under the stress [of circumstances]. We see from the Blue book that, if the Immigrants'[Restriction] Act remains in its present form, sub- section 4 of section 2 of the Act[2], as interpreted by the Government, will preclude the entry of any Indian residing outside the Transvaal. If this interpretation of the Act is correct, it is all the more clear how valuable has been our success. At the same time we must realize that, if the Government's interpretation of the immigration Act is correct, even Indians who pass the education test cannot enter. If the Indian community acquits itself well during the [next] three months, this fear will very likely prove to have been without basis. For the present, however, the first comment we have to make on the Blue book is this: though the immigration Act admitted of this insidious interpretation, Lord Elgin acquiesced in it. Likewise, he also acquiesced in section 6, which provides for the deportation of Indians on the plea of the Asiatic [Registration] Act having received Royal

[1] Lord Elgin (1849-1917); Viceroy of India, 1894-99; nominated, on his return, chairman of a Royal Commission to investigate the conduct of the South African War; became in 1905 Secretary of State for the Colonies in Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's Cabinet. For report of his interview to Transvaal Indian Deputation, *vide* "Deputation to Lord Elgin", 8-11-1906

[2] *Vide* Appendices III

assent. The Colonial Government should, therefore, be granted the powers required to enforce that Act and to deport the satyagrahis. Mr. Morley[1], too, acquiesced in this after some hesitation, being satisfied with Mr. Smuts' assurance given him and Lord Elgin that [Indian] Princes and other [dignitaries] would be given the necessary permits for visits. The whole affair is as much a disgrace to the Indian community as it is to the British Empire. The British rulers take us to be so lowly and ignorant that they assume that, like the Kaffirs[2] who can be pleased with toys and pins, we can also be fobbed off with trinkets. It is a tribute to the marvellous power of truth—be it noted by the Indians—that our rulers who thought us despicable were forced to change their opinion when they saw 200 Indians in gaol. We also learn from the same Blue book that the Chinese Consul, having raised the question of finger-impressions, found it necessary to withdraw it in view of the petition by the Chinese Association, and to tell Sir Edward Grey later that the [Chinese] objection was really to the Act itself [and not just to the finger-impressions]. We earnestly hope that the Indian community will not throw away, through a mistaken step or sheer thoughtlessness, the success that has been gained after such strenuouseffort. When we have more time, we shall place before our readers the translations of relevant portions of this Blue book so that they may have the same picture of it as we have in our mind. Meanwhile, the only request we make is that they should remember that the movement has a long way to go yet and that these three months have been granted to us for finalizing our preparations and sharpening our weapons. If we make the mistake of supposing that we cannot again put up the same kind of fight, we shall to our regret lose even that which we have gained. Those who wish India well must ponder over this. They ought not toallow their character patience, endurance, generosity, industrious-ness, etc.—to desert them.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-2-1908

[1] John Morley (1838-1923); English statesman, writer and philosopher; ardent advocate of Home Rule for Ireland; Secretary for Ireland in Gladstone's Cabinet; Secretary of State for India, 1905-10; became Viscount Morley of Blackburn in 1908 and Member of the House of Lords; later devoted himself to introducing representative element in Indian Government. For report of his interview to Transvaal Indian Deputation, *vide* "Deputation to Morley", 22-11-1906

[2] "A term by which the Native African Communities in South Africa were described. The expression, however, is no longer in use."

87. RITCH'S WORK: AN APPRECIATION[1]

We must do something for Mr. Ritch without losing time. He has done invaluable work. We think it will be a great sin if the community fails in doing its duty by him. There are very few [persons] to be found even among Indians, let alone the whites, who have Mr. Ritch's perseverance and single-mindedness. We hope both the poor and the rich will contribute to the best of their means. We will publish the name of every contributor. No one should take cover behind what another does. We must not wait for another to make a beginning. In matters like these everyone should be ready to make a beginning himself. Nowadays we do not publish translations of letters from Mr. Ritch often enough although they are now particularly long. We already know the results of the developments he mentions. Attaching as we do more importance to other current matters, we either omit his letters or abridge them.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-2-1908

88. BAD HABIT

A reader from Durban writes to say that many of us are in the habit of referring to Indians from Calcutta or Madras, in public as well as in private, as "coolya" or "coolie". The complaint appears to be justified. We have often heard well-bred Indians use such terms. We are annoyed when Mr. Smuts or other whites use the word "coolie", but ourselves frequently use the same word deliberately or unwittingly, referring to persons from Calcutta or Madras who may not be labourers. The correspondent informs us that he once heard an Indian businessman refer to a person from Calcutta as a "coolie" in the presence of a lawyer. We hope that every Indian who has this habit will give it up, if only because such behaviour stands in the way of bringing all the Indians together.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-2-1908

[1] *Vide* "Ritch's Great Achievement",8-2-1908 and "Fund for Ritch",15-2-1908

89. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

REGISTRATION

Registration is going on apace. The officials are not able to attend to all the Indians who turn up. They cannot manage more than 200 applications a day. Since all the officials are fully occupied in Johannesburg, it has not been possible to move the office to other towns. But it is likely that by the middle of March the office will have visited all the other towns.

THE CHINESE

There arose a further misunderstanding about registration certificates for the Chinese. Mr. Chamney told Mr. Quinn that it was not right that all the Chinese should give their thumb-impressions only. Mr. Gandhi then found it necessary to intervene, and it was eventually agreed that the Chinese who reported might give their thumb- impressions only. The more the Chinese persist in such childish obstinacy, the more they lose their good name. The Indians readily go to the Office and furnish their finger-impressions, and this wins for them an increasing appreciation of their nobility and gentleness. About 95 per cent. of the Indians have already given their finger-impressions. About five per cent. probably gave only their thumb-impressions. True bravery implies humility and gentleness. We find the most fearless per-sons appear calm and gentle. The famous General Gordon[1] was ordinarily mild as a lamb, kind-hearted and gentle in his dealings,and alto-gether without a trace of rudeness about him. Even children could talk to him freely. The same person roared like a lion when his honour was at stake.

STORY OF FINGER-IMPRESSIONS

I feel ashamed for the community that I should still have to write about finger-impressions. The point is so simple that it is difficult to understand why it is still being argued. But the late Professor Max Muller said that as long as truth is not effectively impressed on the mind of the other, there is nothing wrong in repeating the same thing over and over again in different words. It is indeed necessary to do so. Besides, there are some mischief-mongers among us who want

[1] Charles George Gordon (1833-85); British soldier and administrator; served in the Crimean War and later with distinction in China (hence "Chinese Gordon") and Egypt; was Governor-General of the Sudan; died defending Khartoum against the Mahdi's forces.

to see troublein the community. In order to counter the arguments of such persons from time to time and thus prevent sincere but simpleminded Indians from wavering, it is necessary to put down every idea that occurs to one. I can see indications that in the end digit-impressions will be introduced all over South Africa—maybe ten, maybe eighteen of them—although, of course, I do not see why that should frighten us. The immigration Act has been in force in the Transvaal since January 1. It has not yet been possible to enforce it against Indians, for their campaign has been directed against registration itself. Under that law, there are four different kinds of passes to be taken out.

In the first place, under the law, even a person who, by virtue of being an old resident, is entitled to return to the Colony [after temporary absence] is required to have a pass; he may, however, find it difficult to return for want of proficiency in a European language. Such passes will rarely be necessary for Indians as they will have their registration certificates with them. But they will be required of whites —Jews and others—belonging to the working class, for it may happen that they do not know English and that some of them do not have £20 in cash. On one side this pass will carry particulars about the holder, such as his name, address, and on the other his ten finger-impressions. That is, the position is for them the same as that obtaining for Indians today. The only difference is that the Indians have to affix their finger-impressions on the application only, not on their passes. But the [other kind of] passes referred to earlier will bear the ten finger-impressions [of the holder] and will have to be produced often.

The second kind of pass is meant for new immigrants under the same law. It is intended mostly for Jews, for they will not be able to take the test at Volksrust easily. Moreover, there are no Yiddish-knowing officials at the border. Arrangements have been made for issuingpasses to such persons at the port or in England itself. This pass, like the first, will bear impressions of all the ten fingers.

The third kind of pass is in the nature of a permit which may be issued to anyone for a limited period. It will also bear ten finger- impressions.

The fourth is meant for witnesses who may be allowed into the Transvaal but who cannot take the test. This will also bear ten finger-impressions.

There are thus four kinds of passes [to be had against] varying fees, of which two categories are such as will most likely apply only to the whites. [The system of] finger-impressions has been introduced for these passes. How can the Indian community then protest against

finger-impressions? It is to be observed moreover that the whites do not oppose these regulations at all. The reason is worth noting. The whites are free and independent. They do not get scared unnecessarily, neither do they see humiliation where in fact there is none. And for the same reason they do not feel that finger-impressions by themselves imply criminality. The fact is that for the identification [of pass-holders] and for the prevention of fraud, digit-impressions offer a simple, effective and scientific means. It is true that this method was at first applied only to criminals. That is the reason why, when the method was sought to be applied particularly to Indians under compulsion, we opposed it and were justified in doing so. But there is no reason to oppose it now. Many reforms have been adopted after they were first tried out on criminals; for instance, vaccination with cow-pox serum. When Mr. Jenner discovered this method of vaccination, he first tried it on prisoners. It was introduced among the rest of the population after the experiment had proved successful. No one could argue that the free population was thereby humiliated.

If anyone wants to know why all these arguments were not advanced earlier, it is easy to answer the question. Formerly, finger-prints were a part of an enslaving law and therefore a symbol of our slavery. It was thus our duty to draw attention to the humiliating aspect of [giving] finger-impressions. It was then no part of this journal's intention to help [the Government] to dress the Indian community in a cloak of slavery by arguing that finger-impressions were bound to be introduced in the end, or that the method had advantages from a scientific point of view. There was no need, therefore, at that time to argue that in a certain context it would become necessary to give finger-impressions, or that there should be no objection to [giving] them. That was at a time when it was necessary to present a strong case against the law. All the arguments advanced at that time either in my news-letters or elsewhere in this paper were valid. Even today, given an identical situation, they would be absolutely valid. If anywhere in the world they should introduce the [system of] compulsory finger- impressions, or even a thumb-impression for the Indian community alone, with the object of stigmatizing it for the colour of its skin, this journal will again take up the banner and repeat the arguments used in the past. Besides, everyone must know that we have always said that our campaign was not directed against finger-impressions as such but against the law. The repeal of the law being assured, the Indian sword returned, on its own as it were, to the scabbard.

ABOUT LICENCES

For a variety of reasons it has now been arranged that those who

have taken out registration certificates of their own accord should have licences issued to them even before a new law is passed. It will be stated on the licences that they are being issued subject to the approval by Parliament of [the principle of] voluntary registration. This is a more satisfactory arrangement than the issuing of conditional receipts, and is an earnest of the Government's intention fully to honour its commitment to the Indian community.

MAY 31, 1902

Questions have often been raised about the column in the application form calling for information about the applicant's whereabouts on May 31 [1902]. It is in the interests of the Indian community that this information is sought, for those who were in the Transvaal on May 31, 1902 can be registered even in the absence of a permit or other similar evidence.[1]

WILL VOLUNTARY REGISTRANTS BE SUBJECT TO EXISTING LAW ?

There should have been no need to ask this question. There exists a written understanding with General Smuts that those who take out registers of their own accord will not be subject to the law, even if there should be a few such Indians.

NEW ENTRANTS

A question has also been asked whether fresh entrants into the Transvaal will be allowed in. I think those who pass the education test under the immigration law should be able to come in. However, the Blue book received from England recently shows that, according to the interpretation put upon sub-section 4 of section 2 of the immigration Act, even educated people cannot enter.[2] I do not myself accept this view, neither does Mr. Gregorowski[3]. If the proposed law incorporates amendments which I should like, it will no longer be possible to argue that sub-section 4 admits of two interpretations. Whatever the correct interpretation, I would strongly advise the intending Indian immigrants and permitless refugee Indians not to think of entering the Transvaal for the present. The first duty of the Indian community is to prove its worth and its honesty whithin three months. We shall see about the other things afterwards. If any educated persons or refugees want to enter the Transvaal at present, I am sure that it will only harm [the cause of] the community. Durban has been of great help in this struggle, and I hope that it will continue working

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to General Smuts",22-2-1908

[2] *Vide* "Letter to General Smuts", [Enclosure], 4-7-1908

[3] A Johannesburg barrister

hard for some time more to prevent the entry of permitless Indians into the Transvaal.

VOLKSRUST INDIANS

In January, the Volksrust Committee sent the Association a sum of £7 telegraphically which was made up of contributions from thefollowing persons: Mr. Mahomed Suleman, £3; Messrs Hoosen Suleman & Co. (Parakh) 2 Messrs Suleman Moosaji Mungera, Ebrahim Mahomed Jadavat and Moosa Suleman, 10s each; Messrs Asmal Ahmed of Kanam and Ahmed Ebrahim Hasrod, 5s each; total £7. This should have been reported earlier, and I am sorry that it could not be.

NEW REGISTER

The new registration certificate will contain the following particulars: name, community, age, height, external mark of identification, the Registrar's signature, date of [issue of] the certificate, signature of the person registered, and the right thumb-impression. Then follow below name of wife, address, and the names, ages, address and relationship [to applicant] of children under sixteen years of age and of minors of the same age. This register is altogether different from the one issued under the new law. The wife's name found a place in the old register[1], and harassment of women can be obviated if the name is mentioned. This register makes no reference to the new law. Registers taken out voluntarily will be numbered serially beginning with one.

FINGER-PRINTS FROM WOMEN

It is reported from Volksrust that officials demand thumb-impressions of Indian women, and the latter give these. What is more, the women give thumb-impressions and refuse to lodge complaints. We have thus lost many rights through fear. For myself I would rather that women were not subjected to such harassment. Even white women have to give their finger-impressions, to say nothing of thumb- impressions. There is good reason for this: a large number of white women of questionable reputation come in. No such charge has been made against Indian women in the Transvaal. I believe, therefore, that, if the Indian community shows some pluck in dealing with the matter, Indian women may be spared the harassment of interrogation. I hope that this point will be borne in mind and that all such cases will be reported without fail to the Association.

[1] Issued under Law 3 of 1885

PIETERSBURG GAOL

Writing about the experiences of Indians who went to gaol in Pietersburg in connection with the law, Mr. Khanderia tells us that they were all kept together in gaol. The arrangements were good. The meals consisted of pulses, rice, vegetables and ghee. The Magistrate being very kind, the prisoners were permitted to write letters. Once a week they could also have a visitor [each] in connection with their business. The gaoler, too, was kind. Mr. Bhayat's manager and Mr. Abdool Latief visited the gaol once.

I had always thought that Indians would not have difficulties in mofussil gaols, for the freedom that one has in a village gaol can never be had in city gaols, such as those in Johannesburg, Pretoria, etc. If we hope to achieve much in the future, we shall have frequent occasions to go to gaol. It is therefore necessary to note such facts.

MEETING OF ASSOCIATION

A meeting of the British Indian Association took place on Friday, the 21st. A large number of Indians were present. After some discussion, it was resolved, at the instance of Mr. Imam Abdool Kadir, who was supported by Mr. Thambi Naidoo, to try and send Mr. Ritch a sum of £300 at the least as a mark of our appreciation for his work, and if necessary, to draw upon the funds of the Association for this purpose to the extent of £100.[1] [It was further resolved] to send addresses to Lord Ampthill and Sir Muncherjee Bhownaggree at a cost of up to £25, to give a gift of about £50 in value to Mr. Polak, £10 or more to Miss Schlesin, 10 to Mr. Isaac[2], £10 to Mr. Curtis and also [send gifts] to others who had rendered appreciable help in furthering the movement. It was also decided at the same meeting to give a dinner to Mr. Cartwright, Mr. Phillips, Mr. Doke and a few others. Tickets priced at two guineas each will be issued for the dinner. It is hoped that about 30 Indians will buy tickets. The proceeds will be spent on the dinner, to which 20 whites will be invited. If the idea works, this will perhaps be the first instance in South Africa of so many Indians and whites coming together at a party.

In passing the resolution about expressing, in concrete terms, our appreciation [of the help received], I think the Indian community

[1] *Vide* "Ritch's Great Achievement", 8-2-1908, "Fund for Ritch", 15-2-1908 & "Ritch's Work: An Appreciation", 29-2-1908

[2] Gabriel I. Isaac; English Jew and jeweller; a practising vegetarian associated with the Johannesburg vegetarian restaurant; sometime member of Phoenix Settlement, travelled collecting subscriptions and advertisements for *Indian Opinion* and was ever ready to be of use to the journal and to Gandhiji; later became a satyagrahi.

has only done its duty. The whites who helped did so sincerely, without any expectation of reward. The Chinese Association, too, will pass a similar resolution. As for Mr. Ritch, I hope that a tidy amount will be collected exclusively for him and that the reserve fund of the Association will not have to be drawn upon. Mr. Ritch's services have been such that no Indian should hesitate to contribute his mite.

SUGGESTION

At present there is such heavy pressure on the Registration Office from the Johannesburg Indians alone that preferably only those Indiansfrom outside the city, who are in a hurry to leave for India, should come here [for purposes of registration]; the rest will have time enough later.

HAWKERS AND PEDLARS

Many of them do not understand the difference between a hawker and a pedlar, and needlessly pay more money to take out a hawker's licence. Anyone who plies his goods in a horse-drawn carriage is a hawker and anyone who uses a barrow or a basket is a pedlar. The pedlar's licence costs only £3, whereas a hawker's licence costs £5.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-2-1908

90. FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS[1]

I wrote last week of the real issues underlying the controversy that is raging over the compromise.[2] I promised then to write again. Even an emperor cannot bring round those who are bent on mischief directed against the community. How then can I, a poor man, hope to do so? My effort is directed only towards those who harbour no mischievous intent, but who are likely to be misled by others.

WHY DID I NOT CONSULT OTHERS ?

This question is often raised, and I have already answered it. The letter[3] which I am said to have signed without consulting others was not explicit on the question of finger-impressions. My meeting with General Smuts was followed by a largely attended meeting[4] of

[1] This was published under the title "Another Letter from Mr. Gandhi".

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Friends",10-2-1908 and "A Brief Explanation", 22-2-1908

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 28-1-1908

[4] The Press refrained, at the instance of the conveners, from publishing reports of this meeting.

Indians at midnight. I put the question of finger-prints before the meeting, and all the Indian leaders who were present authorized me to agree to the proposal. Shahji was the only one who opposed it. When I met Mr. Smuts the following Monday, I was thus fully aware of the people's views. I had also in mind the messages I had received from the leaders while I was in gaol. I had kept myself fully informed of the real difficulties of the people and the state of their mind.

I DID NOT SHOW PATIENCE

Some persons believe that since I was in gaol I was not posted with the developments in England. It would have been, they argue, a very good thing if I had waited a little longer. This again is not true. While in gaol I was kept posted with all the information. Even if I had notbeen, I had already predicted what would happen in England. I have not therefore acted in ignorance. We stood to gain nothing by waiting longer than we did, for it is not as if we had agreed to finger-impressions under pressure. It was because of our offer of voluntary registration that we received support in England. If I had lost any time when the offer came from the Government, it would have cost us the sympathy we got in England. Let us remember that there were elderlyand respectable businessmen who were to go to gaol the day following that of the compromise. The thought was gnawing at my heart. I saw that it was my duty to prevent this from happening if I could. It is therefore wrong to speak of undue haste on my part.

Moreover, those who followed me to gaol had rather discouraging reports to give. They told me that people were losing courage. The hawkers, they told me, had stopped going their rounds. They wanted me to bring about a compromise as early as possible. Those who went to gaol lost their nerve in a few days, and some of them hinted that they would not go to gaol again. General Smuts told me much the same thing when I met him: that I did not have the slightest idea of the number of people who had wanted to submit to the law. A few people had already sent applications to him in secret. I even know the names of some of them. All these things could not just be ignored by a person who had been deeply involved in the struggle for 16 months. However, if I had seen any objection to finger-impressions, or if I had even known that Indians in the Transvaal would be extremely unhappy about having to give their finger-impressions, there would perhaps have been some reason for further deliberation. But, as far as I could judge, there was no objection to the voluntary provision of finger-impressions just as there was none to voluntary registration;

and I knew that sensible persons in the Transvaal were not opposed to the idea, for they had no objection to finger-impressions as such, but only to the manner in which they were [required] to give them under the law. Since that situation no longer obtained, finger-impressions in themselves had become innocuous.

DID I LOSE COURAGE IN GAOL?

People who accuse me [thus] do not know me at all. If there was one person who enjoyed being in gaol, it was I. I did not find anyone else as content to be in gaol as I was. I should welcome gaol again if the occasion demanded it; so sure am I of myself.

POINT IN GIVING FINGER-IMPRESSIONS

Some people want to know what I mean when I say that it is advantageous for us to give our finger-impressions. Let me mention some of the reasons.

l. By agreeing to give our finger-impressions we have only shown our good sense and proved that the campaign was not against these.

2. I thought it wise to satisfy the Government on a matter such as this. Experience has confirmed the view.

3. If we had not agreed now to give the finger-impressions, we would have later been compelled to give them. Whether or not we would have given them then is another question.

4. Several clauses of the immigration Act provide for the taking of whites' finger-impressions.

5. I think I acted honestly in giving my finger-impressions. I have therefore made good my pledge and shown that I was not cowed down by the Pathans' assault. I have also forestalled the charge that I had so contrived things as not to have to give my own finger-impressions.

6. This [arrangement] safeguards the interests of many poor people.

7. It has added to the prestige of the Indian community, and several whites have now become ardent friends of the community.

HOW CHINESE MANAGED TO ESCAPE

Some people argue that the Chinese fought and so managed things that they had to give no more than a thumb-impression. This is a mistaken view. It is the British Indian Association that is responsible for having had them exempted. I intervened in the matter and sent a message to Mr. Smuts from bed. It is therefore a part of the compro-

mise that the Chinese will give their thumb-impressions only. We could have done what the Chinese have done. But, by their obstinacy, the Chinese have lost their good name with the Government, whereas we have retained ours. Not only that; a situation has arisen in which, if the Indian community wanted it, the Government might single out the Chinese [for differential treatment]. We are not the people to attempt anything of the kind. The thoughtful among the Chinese realize this, and that is why they have been voluntarily giving their finger-impressions. Mr. Quinn has already given his.

VOLUNTARY VERSUS COMPULSORY

In this connection, a patriotic worker has cited an excellent analogy for the benefit of our Muslim brethren. According to the Koran it is permissible to eat the flesh of an animal slaughtered in the name of God, but not otherwise. Similarly, it is legitimate to give finger-impressions voluntarily, but it was not so when they were compulsory.

HAVE EDUCATED FOUND IT PROFITABLE ARRANGEMENT ?

This question can only come from sheer lack of understanding. Those who are really educated are bound always to have an advantageover others. If that were not so, there should be no need of education. Those who have not themselves had any education should realize that, if the educated prosper, the entire community stands to gain. It may be that the educated persons do not always prove themselves worthy. Besides, what do we mean when we speak of a "profitable arrangement"? What special advantage is to be had from either giving or not giving finger-impressions? The educated persons may sign their names while the uneducated only put a cross. What is the special advantage in either arrangement ? In fact our object should be to safeguard the rights of as many as possible. It is degrading to feel envious without cause; indeed it is cowardly. Let us remember that only if there is water in the well will there be any in the trough, and in that belief, we should encourage education. [Instead of envying others,] we should aspire for the same thing for ourselves. We should realize the value of education and help it to spread.

REAL SIGNIFICANCE OF LAW

What is the really objectionable feature of the law? If someone asked me this question, I should first say that it was a mystery which could not be easily explained. We feel the air through its effects but cannot see it. We smell the fragrance of flowers, but cannot see it. Having called on someone, I can only say whether I was treated courteously or discourteously, but often cannot point to anything specific

indicating either. There may be two pearls, one genuine and the other false. Only an expert can tell between the two, and we would respect his judgment. I think experience has made me something of an expert about laws. When I read this outrageous law, my hair stood on end, and I felt there was something wrong about it. The law was so drafted as to make slaves of us. It was to be the harbinger of other disabilities to come. If the law had come to stay, it would have ruined us everywhere. They passed the law in spite of our protest, treating the entire community as criminally inclined. Even if we had stood to gain hundreds of thousands of rupees by deferring to the law, it would have been contemptible of us to have taken the money. If people outside this country read the law, they would suppose that those who submitted to it were slaves. The law would have made cowards of us all. It would have put an especial affront upon our religion. It also sought to stigmatize our children. If it had been enforced, we would have been doomed to Locations for ever. There is no reference anywhere in these arguments to finger-impressions. There are bound to be some who, I know, will despair of this enigma. But having lived in enslavement for so many years, we cannot recognize freedom whenwe see it. When, after a long period of confinement in a dark room, La Touche [?][1] was taken out, he was dazzled by sunlight and [asked] to be sent back to his cell. In the same way, having remained in a dark room for so long, we cannot bear the light.

WILL FINGER-IMPRESSIONS BE INTRODUCED ELSEWHERE ?

For my part, I believe that finger-impressions will be introduced in many Colonies. Nor do I see anything objectionable in this. It all depends upon the manner in which they are introduced. Shall I refuse to act out of my free choice for fear that the action may be made compulsory in future ? Would it be wrong to serve a friend who is ill, fearing that in future he might exact this service from me? While in gaol I cleaned latrines of my own accord. That did not lead anyone to force me [to do so again]. If the officials had tried to, they would have got a ready retort. I take it to be cowardice to refuse to do something good in itself for fear that it might become compulsory in future.

This should be enough. All these arguments have been advanced earlier, if not in this form, in some other form. They should be studied closely, and we must resolve in our own minds that Hindus

[1] साटूस in original

and Muslims will always stick together. They ought not always to be suspicious [of one another]. We will take every step warily. We will not be foolhardy. Only if we conduct ourselves in this manner shall we become a single people, and go forward; otherwise we shall he blown apart, like a cloud, by the gentlest breath of wind.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 29-2-1908

91. LETTER TO "INDIAN OPINION"[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
March 3, 1908

THE EDITOR,
INDIAN OPINION

SIR,

The honour of the Indian community has been vindicated and a great victory won. It has earned the admiration of the world and gained more prestige. During the early stages of the struggle the whitepopulation of the Transvaal and South Africa laughed at the commu-nity, and it was only after the movement had gathered momentum that thoseamong the whites who valued truth and were men of conscience came forward to help us. In England, the brave Ritch, neglecting his dear, bed-ridden wife and his children, rushed about working like a convict under a sentence of hard labour. He roused public opinion throughout England. His impassioned eloquence touched every heart [and evoked] the sympathy of the nobility, the rich and the poor alike. The spark [that he struck] broke forth into a warm burning flame in the hearts of the Transvaal Ministers. Indian prisoners were set free as a result and their offer of [voluntary registration] was acce-pted. Indeed, God has saved the community's honour.

The Indians' success is the first example of its kind. Its value cannot be exaggerated. Every Indian ought to be proud of it. If one adheres to truth, succour from God or His servants will follow inevitably. If we are to keep alive the memory of that divine succour in the minds of our descendants, every Indian will agree that the Federation Hall is a necessity. All those who have Indian blood in their veins will work sincerely to promote the cause in every possible manner. Since the hall will serve as a memorial, both the poor and the

[1] Judging from the contents, it appears likely that Gandhiji drafted this.

rich must help in every way, financial and other.

It has been decided to build the hall in Johannesburg. The collection will start in a few days. Every Transvaal Indian must pay 10s at the least and a receipt will be issued to him under the signature of the Chairman of the British Indian Association. Businessmen, property-owners and other well placed Indians must contribute more than 10s each—the most they can. Any Indian who misleads the people on this issue or indulges in scheming will be an enemy to the country and truth. I want to make a special appeal to every Indian to keep clear of the net that such persons may spread for us and, holding God and truth dear, to come forward and help in every way possible. It is hoped that the rich will contribute anything between £50 and £100 at the least. Those who have registered under the old law are in no way distinct from us. Here is an occasion for them to do their duty and make themselves really useful.[1] We hope that they will contribute a handsome amount.

It is especially needful on this occasion to express our appreciation of Mr. Ritch, the brave man who has worked tirelessly in England as the truest soldier of this campaign at all stages. The Association has resolved to offer him only £300 on behalf of [Indians in] South Africa—a paltry amount indeed since, owing to other pressing demands, it will be unable to send a larger sum just now. It is essential that this money be raised as quickly as possible. Indian leaders all over the South AfricanColonies should collect contributions and send them in time to the British Indian Association at Johannesburg.

Yours etc.,
ESSOP ISMAIL MIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 14-3-1908

92. MY GAOL EXPERIENCES[*-I*] [2]

Many friends have asked me to reduce to writing my experiences of the gaol life, all too brief though it was. There were certain things that came under my observation which might be of advantage if they were put in a more or less permanent form. Believing as I do

[1] *Vide* also "To Those Who Submitted to the Obnoxious Law",8-2-1908

[2] This appeared in two instalments in the English section under Gandhiji's name as "Special to *Indian Opinion*".

firmly that incarceration may often be the means of opening the gateway to freedom, liberty, and reform, the experiences I am about to relate may not be profitless to those who do not mind, for the sake of a principle, suffering some inconvenience, or, at any rate, restraint on their personal liberty.

It was on the 10th of January, 1908, in the afternoon of a Friday, that Messrs P. K. Naidoo, C. M. Pillay, Karwa, Easton and Fortoen (the latter two Chinese) and I were sentenced to be imprisoned for two months, without hard labour, for the crime of not having taken out our registration certificates under the Asiatic Law Amendment Act[1]. I was the first to be tried at Johannesburg, and, after receiving my sentence, and after having been detained for a few minutes at the prisoners' yard attached to the Magistrate's Court, I was asked to get into a cab, to which I was stealthily taken in order to evade the enormous crowd that was waiting outside the Court House, and was quickly driven to the Fort. Many were the thoughts that came surging through my mind as I was being driven. Was I to be specially treated as a purely political prisoner? Was I to be separated from my fellow-prisoners? Was I to be taken to the Johannesburg gaol at all? To my very great relief I was soon disillusioned. I was not to be separated from Mr. Naidoo and others who were tried with me, nor were we to receive any special treatment. At the same time I was a little unprepared for what followed. We were all first taken to the reception room, as the room which is used for measuring and dressing prisoners is called. There we were weighed and totally undressed. We were given non-labour clothes to wear, consisting of trousers, shirt, jumper, cap, socks, and a pair of closed sandals. We were all required to give our digit-impressions, and at about four o'clock marched to our cell with eight ounces of bread for our evening meal.

CLASSIFICATION OF ASIATICS WITH NATIVES

The cell was situated in the Native quarters and we were housed in one that was labelled "For Coloured Debtors". It was this experience for which we were perhaps all unprepared. We had fondly imagined that we would have suitable quarters apart from the Natives. As it was, perhaps, it was well that we were classed with the Natives. We would now be able to study the life of Native prisoners, their customs and manners. I felt, too, that passive resistance had not been undertaken too soon by the Indian community. Degradation underlay the classing of Indians with Natives. The Asiatic Act seemed to me to be the summit of our degradation. It did appear to me, as I think it would

[1] Asiatic Registration Act

appear to any unprejudiced reader, that it would have been simple humanity if we were given special quarters. The fault did not lie with the gaol authorities. It was the fault of the law that has made no provision for the special treatment of Asiatic prisoners. Indeed, the Governor of the gaol tried to make us as comfortable as he could within the regulations. The chief warder, as also the head warder, who was in immediate charge of us, completely fell in with the spirit that actuated the Governor. But he was powerless to accommodate us beyond the horrible din and the yells of the Native prisoners throughout the day and partly at night also. Many of the Native prisoners are only one degree removed from the animal and often created rows and fought among themselves in their cells. The Governor could not separate the very few Indian prisoners (It speaks volumes for Indians that among several hundred there were hardly half a dozen Indian prisoners.) from the cells occupied by the Native prisoners. And yet it is quite clear that separation is a physical necessity. So much was the classification of Indians and other Asiatics with the Natives insisted upon that our jumpers, which being new were not fully marked, had to be labelled "N", meaning Natives. How this thoughtless classification has resulted in the Indians being partly starved will be clearer when we come to consider the question of food.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CELL

The cell in which we were placed was legally capable of holding thirteen prisoners, so that there was, naturally, sufficient accommodation to start with. It was a novel sensation to be locked up at half-past five. The cell was a galvanized-iron construction, fairly strong, though none too strong for prisoners bent on escaping. There was, perhaps, fair ventilation. But two small windows at the top, half open, and apertures in the opposite wall hardly reach modern requirements, though I was assured that these cells were the best ventilated of all the prisons in the Transvaal. There was electric light in the cell, but the only lamp in it was not strong enough to do any reading with any degree of comfort. The light was switched off at eight o'clock in the evening and was spasmodically switched on and off during the night. A bucket of water and a tin tumbler was our ration of water for the night. For natural convenience a bucket in a tray with disinfectant fluid in it was placed in a corner. Our bedding consisted of wooden planks fixed to three-inch legs, two blankets, an apology for a pillow, and matting. At our request the Governor ordered a table and two benches to be placed in the room for writing purposes.

THE MEALS

The cell was opened at six o'clock, and with the day began our

first meal. For the first week we were served with twelve ounces of mealie pap. Most of us had more of the spoon than of the porridge for the first breakfast. Neither the Chinese nor the Indians were at all in the habit of taking mealie porridge, especially as it was without any milk or sugar. The following is the scale for non-labour Native prisoners for the first week: breakfast daily, twelve ounces of mealie porridge; dinner, Monday, Wednesday and Friday, twelve ounces of beans; Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday, one quart of mealie porridge; supper daily, four ounces of crushed mealies and one ounce of fat. Indian prisoners, however, get instead of crushed mealies, four ounces of rice and one ounce of ghee (clarified butter). This diet was hardly satisfactory not because it was not palatable but because it was not a diet at all suitable for the Asiatic constitution. The Chinese fared worse because they had the entire Native scale and therefore no rice. For the first few days, for most of us, it meant practically starvation. Even when we got over the natural repugnance, it was a diet that constipated some of us and gave diarrhoea to the others; but we weredetermined to go through it and not to ask for any favours or concessions. We felt that it was for the Governor to move and see that a more suitable diet was issued to us. When, therefore, the Governor enquired whether we had anything to say regarding diet, we simply stated that we did not wish to ask for any concessions, though the diet was not suitable. For the second week the scale was a little relieved by the addition of eight ounces of potatoes or vegetables to the dinner when it consisted of mealie porridge, and on Sunday twelve ounces of meat were also added; but, as most of us were either vegetarians or could not take the meat as it was not religiously cut, we had one pound of vegetables. This diet, however, did not last long.

Indian Opinion, 7-3-1908

93. EXTRACTS FROM BLUE BOOK

"Heavenly" means "blue" and it also means "that which is above". The book from which we promised last time to publish extracts is called a Blue book,[1] but it has no reference to the [heaven] above. We have therefore called it a black book, and it has a hellish look. It runs into 88 pages of foolscap size. The first letter in it is dated April 4, 1907. We shall omit most of the letters sent by the Indian community from time to time and the letters and representations addressed [to the Imperial Government] by the South Africa

[1] *Vide* "Blue Book", 29-2-1908.

British Indian Committee. The document contains [the text of] the "obnoxious Act", the immigration Act and other similar [legislation]; we shall omit these also. In a cablegram dated July 11, Lord Selborne requested Lord Elgin to issue telegraphic advice of [Royal] assent to the Immigration Bill which the Transvaal Parliament wanted to pass; the cable also contained the substance of the Bill. Lord Elgin replied on July 16, saying that "it does not appear possible to deal with it by telegraph". He had realized from experience that cabling the sanction to such laws led to difficulties [later].

LORD SELBORNE'S LETTER

Replying to Lord Elgin on the question of the Asiatic [Registration] Act, Lord Selborne wrote on July 27:

> The Colonial Government are not in a position to accept Your Lordship's suggestion about the finger-impressions. Mr. Henry's book has revealed that finger-impressions have been in extensive use in India. I am surprised to see that Sir Lepel Griffin[1], who has had experience of conditions in India, has taken exception to them. For my part, I am convinced that the Asiatics who are lawfully settled in the Transvaal will not object to finger-impressions. It is certain, however, that those who have been carrying on a traffic in faked permits or have made huge profits by helping illegal immigration will go out of business. Similarly, in view of the requirement regarding finger-impressions, Indians who have entered unlawfully will find it impossible to stay on [in the Transvaal]. The magnitude of the traffic, the size of the profits made and the extent of the corruption can be judged from the encloseddocuments. Your Lordship may please note that only those cases have been included in the accompanying notes of which the Transvaal Government has had definite information. But there must have been many more instances which never came to the notice of the Transvaal Government. I wish the officials to keep clear of the kind of temptations which were held out to Superintendent Vernon and Constable Harris by an Indian named Lala. The only reason why some Indians have protested against the new Act is that it puts an end to their lucrative business and to the ease with which they have carried it on.

[1] Sir Lepel Henry Griffin (1838-1908); Anglo-Indian administrator, generally sympathetic to Indians; vigorously espoused their cause in the Transvaal and elsewhere in South Africa; headed the Transvaal Indian Deputation which met Lord Elgin and Morley in connection with the grievances of South African Indians. *Vide* Vol. VI.

Mr. Chamney's report covers more than seven pages of the Blue book. All of this long report is taken up with factual accounts of cases of faked permits, illicit immigration, corruption, substitution of thumb-impressions on permits, furnishing wrong information about age and other fraudulent practices relating to permits. About 100 persons are stated to have been arrested for one or the other of these offences between February 1906 and June 24, 1907. About ten of these were Chinamen and the rest Indians. The facts in some of these cases are reported by Mr. Chamney as under.

> In May 1907, an Indian named Fateh Mahomed obtained the address of Mr. Cody of the Asiatic Office through a Sikh servant. He went to Mr. Cody's place and offered a bribe of $50 for permits for two boys from Delagoa Bay.
>
> In May 1906, a man named Shivabux approached the Asiatic Office with the request that his son, Chandman, be expelled from the Transvaal. It transpired later that Chandman was not his son, but had been brought in fraudulently. Chandman wanted later to murder Shivabux; hence the latter's request.
>
> In April 1906, two Indians at Delagoa Bay applied for permits. Before the permits were issued, they entered [the Transvaal] with faked permits. It transpired during the trial that they had obtained these permits in Delagoa Bay. A notebook found on one of these individuals contained information on questions usually put to the applicants for permits when they are examined [by the permit authority]: for example, English, Kaffir and Dutch words in commercial use, a brief description of Johannesburg with particulars of the Indian Location, the Post Office, the Magistrate's Court, the railway station, etc. The men also stated that 13 others had entered Johannesburg in the samemanner.
>
> A Chinaman had applied for a permit. When he was examined, it was found that he had entered the Transvaal under three different names at different times and had been thrice convicted for felony and deported.
>
> In August, 1906, one Arabi Isa was sentenced to six months' hard labour for attempting to bribe [the authorities] in Komatipoort to secure the release of a prisoner.
>
> In the same month, Dahyabhai Shankarbhai, an Indian, offered to help Sergeant MacDougal earn between £100 and 150 every month if the latter would abet unauthorized immigration.

A Portuguese detective in the employ of the British Consul at Delagoa Bay wrote in December 1906 that a person named Lala had offered him a bribe of £17 for smuggling two boys into the Transvaal.

In January 1907, a Chinaman named He yi-yang was arrested for erasing the thumb-impression on a permit and affixing another in its place. He declared on oath in the Court that he had bought that permit in Delagoa Bay for £40 and that there were 18 other Chinese who had done the same thing.

In May 1907, one Morar Lala, who had applied for a permit, was arrested. At a searching cross-examination, he broke into tears and admitted that his name was Zina Lala, and that Morar Lala was his brother who had died after returning to India.

In March 1907, four Indians entered the Transvaal. Their thumb-impressions closely resembled those on [their] permits. On investigation it was found that the duplicates of four permits had been missing from the [Permit] Office, and that these four persons had erased the thumb-impressions and affixed their own instead. They are absconding, and the police are still trying to trace them.

Other cases are on record of persons who were subsequently found to have entered on faked permits but whose whereabouts are still unknown to the police.

[Two] Indians named Dulabh and Jivan Govind stated in May 1907 that they had bought permits from an Indian and a white respectively for £22 each at Delagoa Bay.

Some time around June 1907, one Lala Bava stated that he had paid £30 for a permit.

In Johannesburg, in June 1907, one Kaka Hira said that he had purchased a permit from a person named Kanji Morar for £30.

A letter addressed by one Indian to another fell into the hands of the police. It said: ‘My respects to you. This is to inform you that eight to ten Indians have arrived in Johannesburg. If permits can be secured for all of them, I will pay £15 per head. This is a fine opportunity for you to earn some money, if you know how to use it.’

Some time in March 1907, an application for a permit was received from one Shaikh Ahmed. [While investigating his claim] Superintendent Vernon discovered that an Indian had offered another £75 for making a false deposition to secure the

entry of three Indians.

In May 1907, a person named M. Lala was produced in a court of law. He had offered 168 to Superintendent Vernon for every person who was allowed to enter the Colony with a faked permit. He added that if Superintendent Vernon took up this business, he could make £400 a month and Constable Harris another £200.[1]

LAND RIGHTS

On August 17, Lord Elgin told the Transvaal Government that, as suggested by Mr. Cox[2], Indians should be given the right to own land at their places of business, to which the Transvaal Government gave a firm reply in the negative.

DE VILLIERS'S NOTE ON IMMIGRATION ACT

Mr. De Villiers, Attorney-General of the Transvaal, comments as follows :[3]

Till now, the restrictions on the entry of persons [into the Transvaal] were enforced by means of the permit system [under the Peace Preservation Ordinance] which was administered through the office of the High Commissioner. After the granting of self-rule to the Transvaal, the High Commissioner refused to carry on with the administration of the Ordinance. The need was felt therefore of passing an immigration Act on the lines of the Acts of Natal and the Cape Colony. The term 'prohibited immigrants' includes those Indians to whom the Asiatic Registration Act is also applicable, that is, even those who possess knowledge of a European language. In the same manner, those Asiatics who have temporarily left the Colony in order to evade compliance with that Act are also covered by the term 'prohibited immigrants'. That means that only those Asiatics who are in the Colony and who have complied with the provisions of the new Asiatic Act can remain in the Transvaal. Besides, section 6 confers authority [on the Government] to deport those Indians who refuse to obey the law. Itis considered necessary to confer such

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 1-6-1907.

[2] Harold Cox (1859-1936); Professor of Mathematics, Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College, Aligarh, 1885-7; economist and journalist; Member of Parliament, 1906-9. *Vide* also Vol. VI.

[3] The translation that follows has been collated with the English original in *Indian Opinion*, 7-3-1908.

authority, for the Asiatic population has openly declared its intention of defying the law. It is the Government's intention therefore to deports at any rate, the ringleaders of the agitation, and so avoid the expense and inconvenience incurred in maintaining them in the prisons of the Colony. The power conferred will be used by the Government with great discretion.

LORD ELGIN'S LETTER TO MORLEY

Lord Elgin shows little concern for the interests of Indians whom he treats as cowardly, timid and deserving of slavery. Forwarding a letter from the South Africa British Indian Committee to Mr. Morley, he writes :[1]

> Lord Elgin requests to be favoured with the views of Mr. Morley with regard to section 2(4) and section 6(c). The practical effect of section 2(4) will be to prevent further immigration into the Transvaal of British Indian or other Asiatics. As Mr. Morley is aware, His Majesty's Government have practically limited themselves to endeavouring to secure more favourable treatment for those Asiatics who have already acquired a right to reside in the Colony, and have not raised objections to similar legislation in other Colonies. He wishes to draw Mr. Morley's attention to Mr. Lyttelton's earlier despatch and adds that he does not therefore propose to raise any objection to that section [2(4)].[2] Section 6(c) must be considered in connection with the recent Asiatic Law Amendment Act. Under that Act, Asiatics failing to register may be ordered to leave the Colony; and failure to comply with such an order is punishable by imprisonment. The object of this section is to enable the Government to deport Asiatics who fail to register under the Asiatic Registration Act. While the Colonial Secretary feels that the free exercise of so drastic a power is greatly to be deprecated, he doubts whether His Majesty's Government can consistently object to a provision the object of which is to enable the Colonial Government to enforce the observance of the Asiatic Registration Act, which His Majesty's Government have allowed to become law, and to which the British Indian community appears at present to be

[1] The translation that follows has been collated with the English original in *Indian Opinion,* 7-3-1908.

[2] "Because," the English original goes on to say, "in the interests of the British Indians themselves, it is probably desirable, in view of the state of Colonial feeling, that further immigration should be restricted".

disposed to offer an organized resistance. He therefore proposes, subject to any representation which Mr. Morley may wish to make, to accept this provision also. Lord Elgin feels thatit will be necessary to press for some amendment of section 6(b) of the Act (which does not especially concern British Indian subjects) and he is accordingly communicating with the Foreign Office.

WHAT THIS MEANS

Lord Elgin's letter is a very disappointing one. His interpretation of the Act makes it much harsher than the Acts of the Cape Colony or Natal. Under the Acts of the Cape Colony and Natal, Indians with some knowledge of English are considered eligible, but under the Transvaal Act there is an implied restriction on [the immigration of] such Indians. In spite of this, Lord Elgin asserts that there is nothing new in the Act. Besides, section 6(c) relates to deportation of Indians in particular, and this also Lord Elgin appears to approve. It follows from this that, if Indians refused to obey a particular law, Lord Elgin would assent to any measure, including the death penalty, to enforce submission to that law. Where there is a question of complications with foreign governments, Lord Elgin wants amendment of the section concerned, and he has already obtained an assurance from General Smuts about this amendment. How can anyone assert, after reading Lord Elgin's letter, that the Indian community would not have been utterly ruined if it had not put up a fight, relying on God and its own strength. Look at the concern he feels for subjects of foreign governments. There is a saying among us, "Where there is no fear, there is no love". We do not believe that this is true on all occasions, but it is certainly true in Lord Elgin's case.

LORD ELGIN'S LETTER TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Lord Elgin requests to be favoured with the views of Sir Edward Grey with regard to section 6(b). This sub-section empowers the Colonial Government to remove from the Colony any person whom it deems dangerous to the peace, order and good government of the Colony. It appears to confer a danger-ously wide power over British subjects as well as over foreign subjects. It is true that such power has been conferred in British Bechuanaland and elsewhere, where the laws in question were passed under abnormal conditions and at the end of a war. No precedent exists for such legislation in a Colony under responsible government. The Privy Council has also objected strongly to such measures. Also, the Peace Preservation Ordinance did not confer powers for summary expulsion of anyone. Further-more,

the late President Kruger's Government had passed a law for the expulsion of aliens, which His Majesty's Government got repealed. Lord Elgin is therefore disposed to make the non-disallowance of the Act conditional on the amendment of this section.

What a difference between this letter and the one addressed to Mr. Morley! If Lord Elgin had been afraid of the Indian community, he would have advanced much stronger arguments in its favour. For example, if it is true that the Imperial Government had protested against President Kruger's law of 1896, it protested even more vigorously about the status of the Indian community [under that regime]. How, then, can the Government now enact laws which it could not do in President Kruger's time? The reply to this has been given above. Since the Indian community is without any influence, why should Lord Elgin care for it?

MORLEY'S REPLY[1]

Mr. Morley regrets that he does not agree with the view that the Act in question is similar to the legislation in other Colonies. He does not object to education tests which obtain in other Colonies. But section 2(4) introduces a principle to which no parallel can be found in previous legislation. This clause perpetuates an arrangement introduced in very special circumstances and will debar from entry into the Transvaal even such Indians as have received education in Europe. Furthermore, British Indians who had before 1902 acquired domicile in the Transvaal may also be debarred. But they[2] recognize that the Imperial Government must decide the question by considerations other than the interests of British Indian subjects. If the Asiatic Registration Act of 1907 preserves the rights possessed by Indians under the Peace Preservation Ordinance, 1903, they do not desire to offer criticism on the details of the Immigrants' Restriction Bill. In view of the earlier history of the question, Mr. Morley considers it necessary to accept the sub-sections of sections 2 and 6. Since the Asiatic Registration Act has received [Royal] sanction, the Transvaal Government must be granted the additional powers it requires to enforce that Act. But the effect of section 4[3] will be to exclude perpetually all British Indian subjects, however high their social status or educational attainments. The Act is therefore harsher than similar laws in other Colonies. It is true that under the Act of 1907 temporary

[1] This is in reply to Lord Elgin's letter above.

[2] The Government of India, whose views on the question are quoted in the letter for Lord Elgin's information

[3] This is an error for "2(4)".

permits may be granted. Mr. Morley presumes that this power will be used to facilitate the entry of prominentIndians. But he thinks it necessary to obtain a definite assurance from the Transvaal Government on this point. It is unnecessary to point out to Lord Elgin the unfortunate effect upon public opinion in India which must be produced by the present Bill. When the Act of 1907 was sanctioned, Mr. Morley had not imagined that itwould be a permanent measure. He therefore trusts that Lord Elgin will write strongly to the Transvaal Government about subsection 4.

COMMENT

On this Lord Elgin wrote to General Smuts that the Bill would be sanctioned if an assurance was given that permits would be granted to [Indian] chiefs and other [prominent] persons and if the section dealing with the deportation of aliens was suitably amended. The Transvaal Government agreed to this, and Lord Elgin put his signature on the Bill.

The Blue book gives a full account of the case of Ram Sundar. As for land rights, the Transvaal Government told Lord Elgin plainly that no such rights would be granted. However, we are equally emphatic that the Indian community will enjoy land rights as well in a few years if Indians do not prove to be self-seeking and conduct themselves in a manner worthy of their tradition.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 7-3-1908

94. WHEREIN LIES VICTORY

We have been assured that the law will be annulled, and [the principle of] voluntary registration has been accepted. That this is a victory, everyone will grant. But in this article we want to approach the question from a rather different point of view. On reflection we find that in this world what people take to be success is in most cases not real success. Sometimes that may signify failure rather than success. We do not exaggerate when we say this. If someone sets out from home with the intention of committing a robbery, and after much effort gains his end, it may be a success from his point of view. On second thoughts we realize that his success was in fact a defeat for him. If he had failed, that would have been true success. This is an obvious example, for it is easy to understand in this context. There are hundreds of occasions in a man's life when he is unable to distinguish easily between right and wrong. It is therefore difficult to determine whether the achievement of one's aim is truly failure or triumph. It follows from this that success and failure do not essentially depend on the result. Besides, the result is not in one's hands. Whenever success

makes a manvain, he behaves like the fly on the wheel which imagines that it is making the wheel go round. Man's duty is to do the best he can in a given situation. What he achieves then will, in fact, be true success. The physician's duty is not to save the patient, for that does not lie in his hands, but to use all his skill in a sincere effort to save him. If he does that, he will have succeeded well enough. What happens to the patient—whether he lives or dies—will not detract from, or add to, the physician's success.

We are certain that, if we could have had the law repealed without much effort, that would have satisfied us. But then there would have been no question of victory or defeat. There would have been no occasion for us to take out a procession [in celebration], neither would the Indians' victory be hailed as it is today the world over. This would suggest that the Indians' victory does not lie so much in the expectations that the law will be annulled as in their exertions to bring about that result. Even if the repeal of the law had not come about, the Indians courage would have been admired in every home. We can call many similar instances to mind. A well-known example occurs to me just now. A handful of Spartans once stood guarding the pass at Thermopylae and defended it against the enemy to the last man.[1] In the end the pass was taken by the enemy. But the world knows today that it was the brave Spartans who won. Even today, if anyone in Europe shows great courage, it is referred to as Spartan courage. As for the Indians, though we cannot claim that they did all they ought to have done, they nevertheless did much. They did exert themselves and to that extent we look upon the result, such as it has been, as a triumph. The Indian community, it must be noted, will have to go on fighting indefinitely in this spirit. For we here want a great many things. We want [to own] land; we want to be free to ride in carriages. To achieve all this, we shall have to exert ourselves as strenuously as we did on this occasion. If we do, it is easy to see that every step forward is in itself a victory. For we will be doing our duty at every turn. No one will be inflated with success if he looks at it in this light. He will never make a mistake and will not even be concerned about the outcome of his labours, for he will not assume the responsibility [for the result]. The Creator alone must bear that responsibility. It is there fore sheer ignorance for one to be impatient to do things like the dog [under a moving cart] who fancied he was drawing the cart.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 7-3-1908

[1] The mention of Thermopylae soon after he had proposed the building of a Federation Hall (p.118) is significant. This monument to Spartan courage bears an inscription of Leonidas's famous order, "Breakfast here; supper in Hades".

95. GUJARATI EQUIVALENTS FOR PASSIVE RESISTANCE, ETC.

In response to our offer[1] of a prize for the best Gujarati equivalents for certain English words, we have received some entries, almost all of which, we are sorry to say, are useless. Only four persons took the trouble of sending in suggestions, and it would thus appear that our readers take little interest in the language used in *Indian Opinion or* in Gujarati. One of them says that "passive resistance" can be rendered as *pratyupaya.* He explains the word as connoting [the state of] being passive to whatever happens and taking all possible remedial measures. The word and the explanation are both worthless. *Pratyupaya* means counter-measure. Opposing good to evil will then be *pratyupaya,* but so will be the use of force to solve a problem. Passive resistance means resistance of evil with inner force instead of physical force. The explanation offered betrays ignorance. A passive resister cannot remain passive to everything that happens. In other words, he will always pit his inner strength against everything evil. Another equivalent that has been received is *kashtadhin prativartan*[2]. Here the word *prati is* superfluous and suggestive of antipathy. It betrays an ignorance of language. *Kashtadhin vartan* has in it a suggestion of the significance of passive resistance. But it is a big word and does not convey the full meaning. The third term is *dridha pratipaksha*[3]. Like *pratyupaya,* this too cannot he used to convey the meaning we attach to passive resistance. The person who sent in that word has also sent us an equivalent for "civil disobedience". It appears to have been sent in without much thought. The word suggested is *satyanadar.* The meaning here is the contrary. It means "disobedience to truth", that is, resistance to truth.[4] Civil disobedience is disobe-dience to untruth, and it becomes "civil" if it is "truthful" in its manner. The word [civil] also includes the meaning of passive. We have therefore only one word available to us for the present, and that is *satyagraha.* The person[5] who suggested this word would not like his

[1] *Vide* "Some English Terms", 28-12-1907

[2] *Prativartan* resistance; *kashtadhin prativartan* resistance through submission to hardship

[3] *Dridha pratipaksha* firmness in resistance

[4] The correspondent may have intended it to mean "truthful disregard" of laws, using सत्य as an adjective. Literally, however, it could mean, as Gandhiji assumed, "disobedience to truth".

[5] This was Maganlal Gandhi; he had suggested *Satyagraha* as an equivalent for passive resistance, which Gandhiji changed into satyagraha. *Vide Satyagraha in South Africa,* Ch. XII.

name published, neither does he want the prize. Not that he means any slight to theprize, but being in a way connected with this paper, he does not want it awarded to himself.

We have made these comments with a purpose. Those who sent in suggestions for the competition ought to have given careful thought to the meanings of the words they coined. It was also necessary for them to understand the meaning of passive resistance. To suggest any word that comes into one's head is an insult to one's language; it is to invite ridicule upon oneself. Moreover by thus acting [thoughtlessly] in this matter of finding an equivalent for passive resistance, we violate the very principle underlying the movement which we have called satyagraha. How can we put up with that? We hope that in future these three competitors, and our other readers as well, will take more pains in their ventures and win recognition both for themselves and for the tasks they undertake.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 7-3-1908

96 . JOHANNESBURG LETTER

REGISTRATION

The Permit Office does not have a moment's respite. No one now hesitates to give his finger-impressions. The number [of registered persons] has already exceeded 4,000. We can confidently hope then that everything will be over soon.

The Pathans have started registering. If they could do that today, they could have as well done it earlier. However, late as it is, they are to be congratulated on having shown wisdom.

SOME LETTERS FROM ENGLAND

When the details of the compromise were published in London, the South Africa British Indian Committee was flooded with letters and telegrams. Mr. Ritch has sent us some of these and we think it worth while to summarize them here.

Sir Charles Bruce[1] writes to say that he was happy to read the

[1] (1836-1920); Colonial Secretary, Mauritius, 1882; later Governor, 1897-1904; also Lt.-Governor, British Guiana, 1885-93; author of several books on the Empire and Imperial policy

cables. The courage and restraint shown by the Indian community deserved admiration. It is rarely, he says, that one comes across anything like this in modern history.

Sir Lepel Griffin congratulates Mr. Ritch and others who stood by the community on the compromise about registration. He refers to thediscussion in the House of Lords and points out that the question of equal rights for Indians is pending. In course of time, he believes, the Colonists will realize that the Indian community will not be denied its rights any longer. Meanwhile, he advises Indians to go to East Africa, Uganda, Borneo, New Guinea, Jamaica, Burma and other countries, where they would be welcome.

Dr. Thornton[1], a former judge of the Punjab, says that the wonderful outcome is the result of the Indians' firmness and humility in the face of heavy odds; of the powerful but restrained writing in *Indian Opinion*, of the Indians conducting the campaign in the same spirit [which is in evidence in their writings]. He offers [us all] warm congratulations.

Sir Roper Lethbridge[2], who is the proprietor of the well-known Calcutta paper, *The Englishman*, sent the following telegram: "My warmest congratulations. Compromise reached is honourable to Indian community."

Mr. M. Shakir Ali, Secretary of the London Indian Society, writes :[3]

> The London Indian Society compliments you on what you and your co-workers have achieved in the Transvaal. The people of India will never forget the invaluable work that you have been doing for your fellow-countrymen or the satyagraha movement that you have conducted against the law in the Transvaal. The commendable courage shown by you and your co-workers, the manner in which you have faced hardships and the excellent example that you set by yourself going to gaol are all exceedingly admirable. You have proved that you were fighting for truth and convinced the Imperial Government that, whenever the honour of Indians is at stake, they will fight as one man, however weak and helpless they may otherwise be. Please convey these sentiments of the Society to your fellow-sufferers.

[1] Thomas Henry Thornton, C.S.I., (1832-1913); Chief Secretary to the Punjab Government, 1864-76; Acting Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, 1876-7; author of books on India; *vide* also Vol. VI.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to H. Cox ", 12-11-1906

[3] The letter was presumably addressed to Gandhiji.

TO INTENDING IMMIGRANTS INTO THE TRANSVAAL

I have heard that there are some Indians who are trying, as though they were India's enemies, to enter the Transvaal by unfair means. It is thanks mostly to persons such as these that the Indian community has had to submit to all these tribulations over the past 16 months, and it is such men who will injure the interests of the community again. I urge every thinking person to take notice of all such attempts at unlawful entry into the Transvaal and reason with the persons concernedand dissuade them from their evil design. We must remember that we have bound ourselves with the Government to do all this.

A PIECE OF NEWS

I have been informed that those who have already received new registers will get their licences very soon. The persons concerned should act immediately in the matter. Efforts are being made to see that licences are issued to all traders, whether or not they hold registers. I hope to have more news on the subject next week.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-3-1908

97. MY EXPERIENCE IN GAOL[-I] [1]

Though the imprisonment that the Indian [satyagrahis] and I suffered for a righteous cause was all too brief, I propose to describe my gaol experiences in these columns, having been asked to do so by a number of persons. Also, I think it may be useful to others. It is also my belief that there are many [other] rights that the Indian community is yet to win by courting imprisonment. It is therefore necessary for everyone to have an idea of the hardships of gaol life. Often we imagine hardships where in fact there are none. Clearly, nothing but good can result from a knowledge of the true state of affairs.

After two [earlier] attempts by the Government to arrest and imprison me it happened at last at 2 p.m. on January 10. Before my colleagues and I received our sentences a telegram was received from Pretoria, which reported that the Indians arrested there for not complying with the Act had received [sentences of] three months' hard labour and fines in addition, with a further term of three months'

[1] This and the subsequent articles in this series were published as "From Mr. Gandhi".

hard labour in default of payment. I was upset by the news, and asked the Magistrate to give me the maximum penalty, but this was not done.[1]

And so we were all awarded two months' simple imprisonment each. Messrs P. K. Naidoo, C. M. Pillay, Karwa, Easton and Fortoen were my fellow-prisoners. The two last named are from China. After the sentence I was detained for a few minutes in the Prisoners' Yard behind the Court. Then I was secretly led to a cab. Many were the thoughts that surged in my mind. Was I to be given a separate cell and treated as a political prisoner? Was I to be isolated from my fellow-prisoners? Was I to be taken out of Johannesburg? These were the thoughts runningthrough my mind. I was accompanied by a detective, who was apologetic. I told him that he had no reason to be, as he was only doing his duty in taking me to gaol.

All that I had imagined was soon falsified. I was taken to where all prisoners are kept, and was soon joined by my fellow-prisoners. First, all of us were weighed. Then we were asked to give our finger-impressions. After being stripped we were given prison uniforms to wear, consisting of black trousers, a shirt, a jumper, a cap and socks. We were given a bag each to pack away our own clothes in. Before being led off to our ward, we were each given eight ounces of bread. We were then marched off to a prison intended for Kaffirs.

INDIANS ON PAR WITH KAFFIRS

There, our garments were stamped with the letter "N", which meant that we were being classed with the Natives. We were all prepared for hardships, but not quite for this experience. We could understand not being classed with the whites, but to be placed on the same level with the Natives seemed too much to put up with. I then felt that Indians had not launched on passive resistance too soon. Here was further proof that the obnoxious law was intended to emasculate the Indians.

It was, however, as well that we were classed with the Natives. It was a welcome opportunity to study the treatment meted out to Natives, their conditions [of life in gaol] and their habits. Looked at from another point of view, it did not seem right to feel bad about being bracketed with them. At the same time, it is indubitably right that Indians should have separate cells. The cells for Kaffirs were adjacent to ours. They used to make a frightful din in their cells as also in the adjoining yard. We were given a separate ward because we were sentenced to simple imprisonment; otherwise we would have

[1] *Vide* "Trial at Johannesburg", 10-1-1908

been in the same ward [with the Kaffirs]. Indians sentenced to hard labour are in fact kept with the Kaffirs.

Apart from whether or not this implies degradation, I must say it is rather dangerous. Kaffirs are as a rule uncivilised—the convicts even more so. They are troublesome, very dirty and live almost like animals. Each ward contains nearly 50 to 60 of them. They often started rows and fought among themselves. The reader can easily imagine the plight of the poor Indian thrown into such company!

OTHER INDIAN PRISONERS

Apart from us, there were hardly three or four Indian prisoners in the whole gaol. They were locked up with the Kaffirs and, to that extent, they were worse off than we. However, I noticed that they were quite cheerful and enjoyed better health than when they were outside. They had earned the favour of the Chief Warder. Being quick at their work and well informed, as compared with the Kaffirs, they were given respectable work to do inside the gaol. That is, they supervised the work on the machines in the store or did similar jobs which were not strenuous or did not seem unclean. They were particularly helpful to us.

WARD

We were kept in a ward[1] which had room for 13 persons. It was labelled "For Coloured Debtors"; that is, for the most part it was used for Coloured persons who were imprisoned for civil offences. For ventilation, the ward had two small windows with a strong iron grilling which, I thought, did not let in enough air. Galvanized iron sheets served for walls with glazed apertures at three places, half an inch in diameter, through which the gaolers could watch the prisoners whileremaining unobserved themselves. The ward next to ours had Kaffir prisoners in it. In the wards beyond, there were Kaffirs, Chinese and Cape Boys—all witnesses—who had been locked up in gaol lest they should abscond.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-3-1908

[1] It is not clear whether ÀùËÍí, used in this series of articles, refers, in any given context, to a cell or a ward. It would, however, appear that the satyagrahis, about 50 of them, were lodged together in a large room.

98. THE LATE DR. POPE

The late Dr. G. U. Pope[1], whose biography in *The Times* we reproduce elsewhere, was one of the few Anglo-Indians carrying forward today the traditions of fifty years ago. His erudition and scholarship need no other outward token than the monument of works with which his name will always be associated. There have been few Englishmen for whom the people of Madras should bear greater reverence and deeper respect than Dr. Pope. His example is a shining light to the educated classes of Madras leading them along the path of investigation and explanation so that the world may know something of that great past which only recently was sunk in oblivion, that the treasures of literature, philology, philosophy, and theology may be brought to light, and that the people may receive some indication of their line of growth for the future. The demise of Dr. Pope is a loss to Indian and European scholarship alike. His memory will be ever dear to all who love Indiaand those who have worked for India's enlightenment in a spirit of sympathy for the people among whom they have spent a lifetime of toil.

Indian Opinion, 14-3-1908

99. THE LATE SIR LEPEL GRIFFIN

The death of Sir Lepel Henry Griffin removes from the Anglo-Indian world a most interesting figure. Sir Lepel was a long[-] and well-tried administrator. He was a learned man and a good financier. He never broke off his relations with India, and as President of the East India Association, he often appeared before the public in connection with Indian affairs. Sir Lepel rendered the Indianco-mmunity in South Africa great help by heading the deputation that waited on Lord Elgin. And Sir Lepel never ceased to take interest in the Indian struggle to the end. He allowed himself to be nominated as Vice-President of the South Africa British Indian Committee, and, as such, gave the Committee the benefit of his advice and guidance. We

[1] George Uglow Pope (1820-1908); did missionary work in South India, 1839-81, and took holy orders in Madras in 1845; University lecturer in Tamil and Telugu at Oxford, 1884-96; author of *First Lessons in Tamil, A Handbook of the Ordinary Dialect of the Tamil Language, A Textbook of Indian History,* and translations of *Kural* and Tiruvachagam.

tender to Sir Lepel's family our respectful condolences.

Indian Opinion, 14-3-1908

100. LICENCES AT ESTCOURT

The Estcourt appeal deserves to be noted and pondered over.[1] We think the decision of the Court is like rat-bite, which does not disturb onein sleep. By granting a little respite, however, it is likely to lull the Indians into a false sense of security. If that should be the result, the decision of the Court will prove harmful to the interests of the Indian community. On the other hand, it is possible that this same decision may turn out to be advantageous to us. The community must avail itself of the interregnum to press forward with its efforts to meet the situation. The time will then have been put to good use. Colonel Greene's powerful address had no effect on the Court, which shows

[1] On March 2 and 3, 1908, the Estcourt Local Board met to consider appeals from five Indians against the decision of the Licensing Officer refusing the renewal of their licences for 1908. The Licensing Officer's objections to the renewal of A. M. Patel's licence were that (a) his books had been kept in an unsatisfactory manner and that individual entries were incorrect and (b) the books were not of first entry but were written up from verbal information given by the applicant to the book-keeper. On cross-examination of the Licensing Officer by Colonel Greene, it transpired that (a) he had renewed the appellant's licence the previous year although the books had been kept in an identical manner and (b) he had not given any notice to the applicant that they were to be kept any differently in the future. The alleged errors in accounting, it was also discovered, were those of G.R. Beattie, a European accountant employed by the appellant. Appearing as a witness, Beattie, the Accountant, testified that Hellet, a European shopkeeper, also employed him as book-keeper and that he kept books for him in much the same manner. By a majority of five to one the Board, however, decided that after a notice period of six months Patel was to liquidate his business.

Colonel Greene, counsel for appellants then addressed the Board. "...the [other] shopkeepers kept note of their transactions in Gujarati and their book-keeper ascertained from them their cash sales and counted up their totals for each day. The books were perfectly well kept, indeed remarkably well kept." He added that they were satisfied that the rough books which were kept in Gujarati were not part of the usual books of account kept by a merchant, and they came to this decision after hearing the expert evidence of two well-known accountants. They were further satisfied that the Gujarati books had been kept at the special instigation of the previous Licensing Officer and that he had been satisfied with their method of keeping these books. Under those circumstances he thought the appeals should very properly be allowed.

Colonel Greene had concluded an earlier address to the Board saying, "It had never been intended by the law that any dirty work of this sort should be done by a Local Board of this sort and upon my soul if you refuse this application, I think it will make us all feel like worms." The Local Board ordered the conditional renewal of two of the five licences.

that the object of the Court is to see the Indians driven out of Estcourt, bag and baggage. His address to the Court leads one to expect that he will also help the Indian cause in Parliament. Whether or not he does so, the duty of the Indian community is clear. It is necessary that this question should be taken up for strong agitation in England. A petition should be addressed to the Imperial Government. The speeches of Lord Ampthill and Lord Curzon[1] in the House of Lords, which we summarized last week, show that they have grasped the point of the Transvaal campaign. It was hinted that the situation resulting from this should be turned to account for finding a solution of the Natal problem; the hint ought to be followed up. If in the result we get no redress, we should decide to resort to satyagraha.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-3-1908

101. MY EXPERIENCE IN GAOL[*-II*]

In front of the cell [s] there was a small yard in which we could move about during the day. It was [however] too small for the purpose. There is a rule that prisoners in this ward may not go out of the enclosed space without permission, since the bath, urinals and latrines are all located within the yard. For bathing there were two large stone basins and two spouts which served for a shower. There were buckets for defecation and two more for urine. There was no provision for privacy in the bath or latrine. Also, the Gaol Regulations forbade the provision of separate latrines which would allow the prisoners privacy. It often happened, therefore, that two or three prisoners sat down in a row. The arrangements for bathing were similar. The buckets for urine, too, stood in the open. This may well cause a feeling of revulsion; some would be offended by it. But on reflection one realizes that a gaol cannot provide for privacy and that no feeling of shame should attach to the performing of these functions in public. It is, therefore, necessary patiently to form the required habits without being squeamish or annoyed at the public nature of these arrangements.

For sleeping, there were hard wooden planks [mounted on] legs only three inches high. Each prisoner had two rugs, a small pillow and a coir mat large enough to roll them up in. Sometimes three rugs were

[1] George Nathaniel Curzon of Kedleston, 1st Marquess (1859-1925); Under-Secretary of State for India, 1891-2; Viceroy and Governor-General of India, 18991905; Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1919-24; author of *British Government in India, Problems of the Far East* and other books

allowed to a prisoner but only as a favour. Some were put out at the thought of [sleeping on] a hard bench. Those used to soft mattresses cannot easily take to hard bedding. According to medical science, hard bedding is to be preferred. If we, therefore, adopt the practice of using hard bedding at home, we will not find it difficult to get used to the kind of bedding available in gaol. A bucket of water was provided in the cell, and another bucket placed on a large tray served for a chamber-pot, for no prisoner was allowed to leave the cell at night. Everyone was provided, according to his needs, with a little soap, a homespun towel and a wooden spoon.

SANITATION

I must say that sanitation in the gaol was excellent. Every day, the floor of the cell was washed with a disinfectant and the edges of the floor [skirting the wall] lime-washed. The cell therefore always looked fresh. The bathroom and the commodes were also washed with soap and disinfectant. I believe, I am myself very particular about sanitation. Therefore, when, towards the end, a large number of our people joined us, I myself used to wash the commodes with disinfectant fluid. To remove the stool, a few Chinese prisoners turned up every morning at nine o'clock. Afterwards, whenever it was necessary to clean up or wash, we had to do it ourselves. The planks of the beds were washed every day with sand and water. The only inconvenience was that, as it happened, the pillows and rugs changed hands among the hundreds of prisoners. Though there was a rule that required the rugs to be aired in the sun every day, it was hardly ever observed.

SOME RULES

There are some gaol rules which everyone should know. The prisoners are locked up at half-past five in the afternoon. They read or converse in the cell up to eight in the evening. At eight, everyone must go to bed, meaning that even if one cannot sleep, one must get into bed. Talking among prisoners after eight constitutes a breach of Gaol Regulations. The Kaffir prisoners do not observe this rule too strictly. The warders on night duty, therefore, try to silence them by knocking against the walls with their truncheons and shouting, *"Thula! thula!"* Prisoners are strictly forbidden to smoke—a rule which is enforced scrupulously. But I saw that the confirmed smokers among the prisoners broke the rule on the sly. A bell is rung at half-past five in the morning to wake up the prisoners. Everyone must then get up, roll up his bedding and wash. The door of the cell is opened at six when each prisoner must stand up with his arms crossed and his bedding rolled up beside him. A sentry then calls the roll. By

a similar rule, every prisoner is required to stand beside his bed, while he is being locked up [at night]. The prisoners may not have anything else in their possession except what is given them by the gaol authorities. Except clothes, they are forbidden to keep anything without the Governor's permission. One of the buttons on every prisoner's shirt has sewn on to it a small pocket which contains a card bearing his number, his name, the particulars of his sentence, etc. Normally the prisoners may not stay in the cell during the day. Those sentenced to hard labour cannot do so in any case, since they are engaged in their work, but even the others are not allowed to stay in. They must remain in the yard outside the cell. The Governor had allowed us a table and two benches in the ward, and these were very useful.

There is a rule that every prisoner sentenced to two months [or more] must have his hair cropped close and the moustache shaved off. In the case of Indians the rule is not enforced rigorously. Should a prisoner object, his moustache is spared. In this connection I had an amusing experience. I knew very well that prisoners had to have their hair cropped. I also knew that the rule about having the prisoner's hair and moustache removed was really for his own convenience and not to humiliate him. Personally, I believe that it is a very useful rule. In gaol thereare no combs or other means for keeping the hair tidy. If the hair is not groomed, there is the risk of scabies. On hot days, hair makes one feel extremely uncomfortable. Moreover, the prisoners are not given a looking-glass. There is the danger, therefore, of the moustache remaining unclean. As there is no serviette for use at meals and the wooden spoon is rather awkward to handle, food is apt to stick in the moustache. It was my intention to go through all the experiences of a prisoner. I therefore asked the Chief Warder to have my hair cropped and my moustache shaved off. He told me the Governor had strictly forbidden that. I said, I knew that he did not wish to force me [to observe this rule], but that I myself wanted it. He suggested that I might apply to the Governor. The next day, permission was received from him. But he said that, since two days out of my two-month period had elapsed, he had now no right to order the cropping of my hair and moustache. I said, I knew the rule but wanted this of my own free will and for my own convenience. He smilingly demurred. I learnt later that the Governor had felt a little apprehensive. So I offered to state in writing that I had myself requested the cropping [of my hair]. This allayed the Governor's suspicion, and he ordered the Chief Warder to give me clippers and a pair of scissors. My fellow-prisoner, Mr. P. K. Naidoo, was a master of the tonsorial art. I, too, know something of it. When the others saw me cropping my hair and moustache, they saw the point of it, and followed suit. Some of them

had only their hair cropped. Mr. Naidoo and I, between us, spent two hours each day clipping the Indians' hair. I believe, this made for better health and convenience. The prisoners looked the smarter for it. The use of the razor is strictly forbidden in gaol. Only clippers and scissors are allowed.

INSPECTION

When the officials come to inspect the prisoners, the latter have all to line up. As the official approaches, they must take off their caps and salute him. All the prisoners wore caps, and it was not difficult to take them off, for there was a rule that they must be taken off, and this was only proper. The order to line up was given by shouting the command "fall in" whenever an official came. The words "fall in" therefore became our daily diet. They meant that the prisoners should fall in line and stand to attention. This happened four or five times a day. One of these officials, who bore the designation of Assistant Chief Warder, was somewhat strict. The Indian prisoners therefore nicknamed him "General Smuts". He often came early in the morning, and sometimes in the afternoon as well. The doctor came at half-past nine. He appeared to be a kind and well-meaning person. He made solicitous inquiries about our health. Under the Gaol Regulations, every prisoner must undress himself in public for examination by the doctor. But the doctor did not insist on the observance of this rule. Moreover, when the number of Indian prisoners increased, he asked them if anyone had eczema or similar infection, so that he might examine the person in private. The Governor and the Chief Warder used to come at half-past ten or eleven. The Governor appeared to be firm, fair-minded and quiet-tempered. He always had the same questions to ask: "Are you all well? Is there anything you want? Have you any complaints?" He listened to a request or a complaint patiently and granted every request which was reasonable; if there was a [genuine] grievance, he set matters right. I shall discuss some of the complaints and demands later. The Deputy Governor also came sometimes. He, too, was a kindly person. But the kindest among them all, the most gentle and sympathetic, was the official known as the Chief Warder, who was especially charged with looking after us. He is a very devout man; we were not the only ones to whom he was nice and courteous in every way; [for] the other prisoners were also very warm in their praises of him. He was anxious to respect prisoners' rights. He would condone any minor offence on their part. He was particularly kind to us because he thought that we had not really committed any offence. Often he talked with us and even expressed sympathy.

I mentioned earlier that we were five satyagrahi prisoners to begin with. On Tuesday, January 14, we were joined by Mr. Thambi Naidoo, the Chief Picket, and Mr. Quinn, Chairman of the Chinese Association. All of us were happy to see them. On January 16, 14 others came, Samunder Khan being one of them. He had been sentenced to a two-month term. The remaining 13 included Madrasis, Kanamias and Gujarati Hindus. All of them had been arrested for hawking without licences and fined £2 each with 14 days' imprisonment in default of payment. They had had courage enough to refuse payment of the fine and to prefer imprisonment. On Tuesday, January 21, another 76 persons joined us. Among them, only Nawab Khan had been sentenced to two months, the rest having been fined £2 each with 14 days' imprisonment in default of payment. Most of them were Gujarati Hindus, the rest Kanamias and Madrasis. On Wednesday, January 22, there was a further addition of 35 persons. On the 23rd, three more arrived, one on the 24th, two on the 25th, six on the 28th, and, on the evening of the same day, four more. On the 29th, there were again four arrivals, all of them Kanamias. That made a total of 155 up to January 29. On Thursday, that is, on the 30th, I was taken to Pretoria. But I remember, on that day also, five or six more prisoners arrived.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-3-1908

102. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

Registration is in progress. There are, however, some persons who appear to be bent on working against the community's interests; they recognize only self-interest. They furnish false information in their applications. All this will do us harm. There are others who imagine that, as a result of the movement, it should be possible to save even those who have no right to be here. It is difficult to understand how a movement conducted in defence of right can also serve wrong. If the sun shines by virtue of the truth of the truthful, it warms the untruthful as well; so it may also be possible legitimately to safeguard the interests of a few persons living here unlawfully, provided a majority of the Indians are truthful. We may then be able to request the Government not to harass those who are here without permits. They have, however, undeniably committed an offence in law. But theirs is not an offence calling for rigorous punishment. If these persons argue their case properly and tell the Government how they

came in, I believe it will overlook [their offence] and order registration certificates to be issued to them. But before this can be done, the Indian community must get over its eagerness to have all that it wants. It is essential to furnish correct information in the applications, and one must think twice about bringing new persons in [unlawfully]. One should bear in mind that greed always begets sin.

DINNER TO FRIENDS OF INDIANS

Mr. Cartwright, [Rev.] Mr. Phillips, Mr. Doke and other eminent Englishmen who have helped us a great deal have been invited to a dinner on Saturday; some Indians will also be present. We can claim that this is perhaps the first occasion of its kind in South Africa. I shall send a detailed report next week.

SIR LEPEL GRIFFIN

The British Indian Association has sent, through the South Africa British Indian Committee, a telegram of condolence to the late Sir Lepel Griffin's family.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-3-1908

103. LETTER TO F. H. TATHAM

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 14, 1908

F. H. TATHAM, ESQ.
ADVOCATE
PIETERMARITZBURG

DEAR SIR,

I understand that you have been retained by Mr. Labistour in connection with a certain case pending before the Supreme Court against Budrea and others. Mr. Budrea is an old client of mine. I held his General Power of Attorney also during his absence, and he wanted me to explain the case to him. I shall, therefore, be obliged if you will kindly let me have the papers[2], so that I may know what the case is about. I shall return the papers immediately after perusal.

Yours faithfully,

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4799

[1] *Vide* also "The Late Sir Lepel Griffin", 14-3-1908
[2] Plaint and defendant's plea; *vide* S. N. 4797.

104. LETTER TO C. A. DE R. LABISTOUR

[JOHANNESBURG,]

March 18, 1908

C. A. DE R. LABISTOUR, ESQ.
SOLICITOR
DUNDEE

SIR,

Re. Budrea and Others and Vawda & Co.

I have to thank you for the telegram you were good enough to send me at Phoenix regarding this matter. I applied to Mr. Tatham for a loan of the papers in this matter, as I want to explain the position to Budrea, whose General Power of Attorney, as you know, I held during his absence. Mr. Tatham, as you will see from the letter herewith, refers me to you. Will you kindly, therefore, let me have the papers, which I shall return immediately after perusal.

Yours faithfully,

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4800

105. MY GAOL EXPERIENCES [*-II*]

CHANGE IN THE DIET

On the 14th of January came Messrs Thambi Naidoo and Quinn. That, however, did not affect the situation much, as they were quite willing to rough it, but on the 18th, fourteen more came. With the exception of one, these were hawkers who were sentenced to pay two pounds fine or to suffer fourteen days' imprisonment. It was not possible to expect these men to accommodate themselves all of a sudden to a diet to which they were never used. Consequently it was a matter of grave anxiety. It was duly brought to the notice of the Governor who professed helplessness by regulation. He was quite willing to respect any religious objections but where it was a matter merely of likes and dislikes, he could not help. Prison life was prison life and people's tastes could not be respected. All this would be true, if it were merely a matter of tastes. Unfortunately it was a matter of habit. And the scale having been fixed without due regard for national habits of Asiatics, the system broke down under the stress. just as it would be foolish for Indians to expect national food adjuncts, such as curries, etc., it was foolish for the authorities to have prescribed a diet-however nutritious it might be medically that was unsuitable for Indians. Boiled beef or mutton would be just as useless for Indians as mealie pap. They could live on wheaten and rice preparations, no matter how simple they might be. But they could not live on what might be African delicacies. So that the new batch of prisoners faced starvation. They went without breakfast. And rice they received for dinner, i.e., four ounces with one ounce of ghee insufficient as it was even with the breakfast was much more so for people who broke their fast on the above quantity of rice.

A PETITION IN PRISON

The following petition[1] was, therefore, forwarded through the Governor to the Director of Prisons.

Owing to the arrival, as stated at the foot of the petition, of about seventy more passive resisters, I requested the Governor either to telegraph or to telephone its contents and to apply for prompt instructions. This he kindly did and orders were given immediately, pendingfurther consideration, to replace mealie pap for breakfast by four ounces of bread and to do the same thing for supper by issuing

[1] For the text, *vide* "Petition to Director of Prisons",21-1-1908

eight ounces ofbread. Whilst the matter was being further considered, the compromise supervened and we were all discharged.

A CONTRAST

Yet it must be clear to the reader that this question of food for Asiatic Prisoners is too important to be given up. It is only because there are ordinarily very few Indian presoners in the Transvaal gaols that the matter has not attracted attention before now. The change ordered by the Director removed the most four ounces of bread even for non-labour Prisoners is a mere morsel. And although the medical officer stated that the addition of cocoa or butter or *dholl* would be considered a relish and therefore not allowed as a prison diet, I venture to think that some such addition is absolutely necessary to make bread eatable. Now let us for a moment glance at the scale for non-labour European Prisoners. They get for breakfast one pint of porridge and four ounces of bread; for dinner eight ounces of bread daily, together with meat or soup or beans, potatoes or vegetables; for supper they get eight ounces of bread and one pint of porridge. I understand that they also get cocoa or some such drink. Now it does not seem clear why the Europeans should get porridge *and* four ounces of bread whereas Indians should get four ounces of bread *in place of* porridge. Have the former a greater appetite than Indians? Then again, why should Indians get only twelve ounces of beans when Europeans get the same quantity of beans *and* eight ounces of bread? This is an anomaly which is most difficult to understand. It may be possible to reconcile oneself to the Europeans getting a greater variety of superior or more expensive food; but it is not possible to do so with regard to the quantity of foods. It is obvious, therefore that the Indian dietary needs a great deal of modification. Then again, the fact that the Colonial Secretary never troubled himself about the food provided for men who could not be classed as ordinary Prisoners betray in my opinion callous contempt for the Indian community. In vie of the compromise effected, one does not wish to say much on this Painful phase of the question.

Indian Opinion, 21-3-1908

106. SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE

Mr. Ritch continues to write his weekly letters, though we do not think there is need to publish them at present. Most of his news, sincewe already know of it from cables, appears old. In his last letter, however, he has inquired if the Committee is to be continued. We reproduce below a portion of the letter:

At the meeting on Tuesday, the Committee discussed the question of its future. Lord Ampthill was present. Others who attended were Sir Muncherjee, Mr. T.J. Bennett[1], Sir William Wedderburn[2], Dr. Thornton and Mr. [J. H.] Polak[3].

Lord Ampthill told the Committee that its work had only just begun. Others were also of the view that it would be wrong to wind up the Committee. You must have noticed how Lord Ampthill still persists in his efforts. Some of the members are so enthusiastic about the Committee's work that they want the work continued at any cost. I have been asked by the Committee to ascertain your views in the matter. I need not tell the Association anything about the members and the work they have been doing. Everyone will admit that, once the Committee ceases to function, it will be difficult to revive it. Again, I need not say anything about the problems of the Transvaal and Natal which still await solution. There was a communication from the Natal [Indian] Congress about the harassment of Indians under the [Dealers'] Licenses Act. This is a question of great importance. If it is to be taken up for agitation, the Indian community there, it is hoped, will not mind the spending of some money.

In view of Mrs. Ritch's illness, it is necessary for me to stay on here for at least a few months. She has had to be operated upon a second time. She has been reduced to a state in which she has to have two nurses to attend on her. In the circumstances, I am unable to leave this place. If I can start my own practice here, the Committee will have less to spend on my account. If, in addition, I can have an office for myself, that will save the Committee rent. These are the lines along which I have been thinking. Mr. Jinnah, Bar-at-Law, showed me a telegram from Mr. Mahomed Shah of President Street, which says that about 700 Muslims are displeased with the compromise and that they are determined not to apply for registration. I have suggested a Mr. Jinnah to say in reply that he was happy to learn from the cables that all the people tin the Transvaal] were

[1] Of Bennett Coleman & Co., publishers of *The Times of India,* and member of the South Africa British Indian Committee

[2] Member of the Bombay Civil Service; became on retirement Member of Parliament. Chairman of British Committee of Indian National Congress, 1893; President of the Congress, 1910.

[3] Henry Polak's father who took a prominent part in the formation of the South Africa British Indian Committee in London, of which he was also member; *vide* Vol. VI.

united. Kindly let me know the correct position.

It is for the Indian community to decide what it wants to do about the Committee. The need to continue the Committee is obvious. Had it not been for Mrs. Ritch's illness, the Committee's expenses would have been much less. It is, however, a matter for some satisfaction that the Committee was able to function as economically as it has done. We believe therefore that all [branch] Associations and individual Indians will try and ensure that the Committee is enabled to continue its work. This will be easy if a large number of persons interest themselves in the question. We hope that every Indian will help in every possible way and all the Associations will express their views.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 21-3-1908

107. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

INDIANS' DINNER TO EUROPEANS

The Indian community fulfilled one of its many obligations on Saturday last, the 14th. Some Europeans have helped us a great deal in the satyagraha movement. It was but proper that the community should do something to show its regard for them. It was eventually decided to arrange a banquet and to issue tickets for the purpose. The tickets were to be priced and the proceeds spent on meeting the expenses of the banquet. This would show whether or not the Indian leaders were willing to loosen their purse-strings. The Association would not have to bear the expense, and we would be enabled to come into closer contact with the whites. The suggestion was approved by all. A date was fixed for the banquet. The Masonic Hall was secured through the good offices of Mr. Kallenbach[1], and the Secretary of the Hall volunteered to make the necessary arrangements for the banquet. The tickets were priced at two guineas each. The management of the Masonic Hall charged us ten shillings per head, and some money was

[1] Herman Kallenbach; a prosperous German architect of Johannesburg with "a vein of other-worldliness" who, when challenged to a duel by a Volksrust European for his Indian sympathies, declined, saying that he had "accepted the religion of peace"; himself a satyagrahi, he gave his 1100-acre "Tolstoy Farm" near Johannesburg for the maintenance of satyagrahis' families; taught on his farm carpentry, gardening and sandal-making, the last of which he had learnt at a Trappist monastery; associated in dietetic experiments with Gandhiji who describes him as "a man of strong feelings, wide sympathies and childlike simplicity". *Vide* also *satyagraha in South Africa* and *Autobiography*.

spent on the printing of cards, etc. The whites invited were Mr. Hosken, Member of Transvaal Parliament, Mr. and Mrs. Phillips, Mr. and Mrs. Doke, Mr. Cartwright, editor of *The* [*Transvaal*] *Leader*, Mr. David Pollock, Mr. and Mrs. Vogl, Mr. Isaac, Mr. Brittlebank, the Rev. Mr. Perry[1], Mr. Kallenbach, Mr. McIntyre[2], Miss Schlesin, Mr. and Mrs. Polak, Mr. Brown[3] and Mr. Proctor, the Reuter agent. Mr. Stent, editor of *Pretoria News*, Mr. Edwards, Mr. Lichtenstein[4], Mr. Lewis, Mr. Hofmeyr[5], and Mr. Howard Pim were among the other invitees. They did not attend, but most of them sent their good wishes for the occa-sion. Mr. Stent sent a telegram. Mr. Pim, in a letter, expressed regret at not being able to attend owing to other engagements. It was his sincere hope, he added, that our problem would be satisfactorily solved and that the goodwill that existed between the Government and the Indian community would endure. The President of the Chinese Association, Mr. Quinn, was present. There were about 40 Indians at the function.

Mr. Essop Mia presided. Mr. Mia, Mr. Imam Abdool Kadir, Mr. Cama and Mr. Gandhi thanked the whites who had been of help. They were followed by Mr. Hosken, who replied on behalf of the whites. In the course of his speech he said:[6]

> I feel ashamed now to think that in July [1907] I had advised the Indian community to accept the law. I meant well. I felt it would prove to be futile to resist the Boer Government. But Mr. Gandhi told me that they did not depend on human help for their movement. They depended on divine aid. They were sure of help from Him in Whose name they had embarked on the movement. I see his words have come true. The courage shown by the Indian community has won for it increased sympathy from the whites. The Indian community has taught the whites a great deal. I was glad to receive your invitation. Whites and Coloured persons ought to live together amicably. The Indian community deserves praise for the unity, patience and humility it has shown.

[1] Baptist Minister and Pastor of Troyville Baptist Church, Johannesburg

[2] J. W. McIntyre; Scottish Theosophist and solicitor's clerk articled to Gandhiji

[3] F. H. Brown; representative of The *Times of India* in London and a member of the deputations which met Lord Elgin and Morley in connection with Transvaal Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance in 1906; *vide* Vol. VI.

[4] A Johannesburg lawyer

[5] A Johannesburg lawyer

[6] What follows, however, appears to be a free summary.

Mr. Cartwright said that he was sorry he had not been able to do more. The Indian community, he thought, had gained immenselyin respect through its courage. The example it had set was well worth following.

Mr. Phillips said:

> I associate myself with what Mr. Hosken has said. The Asiatics have shown true faith in God. The Chinese have set a worthy example by donating £105 to an association in aid of the poor among the whites. It is no small matter for the Chinese to have helped the same Association that refuses help to any Coloured person and the very whites who have harassed them so much. I am indeed glad that we have assembled here today in this manner. There are some persons who are afraid that the Government may play foul, but it will be unable to do so now. If it does, a large number of whites will come forward to oppose it.

Mr. Doke said in his speech that satyagraha was a true battle that the Indians had fought. He hoped that they would preserve the good name that they had earned.

Mr. Proctor said:

> Reuter's duty is no more than to disseminate news. If Mr. Polak had not supplied the required information, Reuter would not have been able to do what it did.

He was followed by Mr. D. Pollock who said:

> The Indian community has opened the gates of freedom to the entire Coloured population. It has taught what true Imperialism means. It has, by its work, brought the blacks and the whites closer together.

There was then a brief speech by Mr. Polak, which was followed by God *Save the King*. The meeting then dispersed at 11 p.m.

The menu-card had the following printed on it: "This dinner is arranged as an expression of gratitude to those whites who fought for truth and justice during the satyagraha campaign."

The menu consisted of 24 dishes. Meat being excluded, the courses were so chosen that they would be acceptable to everyone and could be liked equally by the whites and our people. The drinks served were lime juice, soda-water, etc.

It is said that this was the first gathering of its kind in South Africa. The dinner was not publicized so as to avoid needless provocation to the feelings of any whites. It was kept strictly private.

DINNER BY CHINESE

The Chinese have arranged a meeting on Friday to present addresses, and on the same day, to give a dinner, similar to ours. I shall report it next week.

REGISTRATION OFFICE

Registration will come to an end here and in Pretoria on Friday next. More than 5,000 applications were received in Johannesburg. No one appears to have been left out. The office will open in Pietersburg on the 30th. Some persons have registered at Spelonken. In Germiston, the office will open on the 23rd. Offices have already been set up at Zeerust, Lichtenburg, and Vereeniging. In Zeerust and Lichtenburg the officials, through some misunderstanding, insisted on everyone giving his digit-impressions or filing an affidavit. The Association sent telegrams immediately with the result that proper arrangements have now been made.

LICENCES

Licences are now available without difficulty. Many persons have already got them.

TREACHERY

There are Indians who still furnish wrong information to the Registrar. Names of children are either mis-stated or more names are furnished than there are children. All this will redound to their disadvantage. They should be mindful of what they do.

WOMEN'S FINGER-IMPRESSIONS

In Volksrust, women were asked to give their finger-impressions. However, the matter has now been settled to our satisfaction and finger-impressions of Indian women are no longer asked for.

SUGGESTION ABOUT LICENCES

The Receiver of Revenues has issued a special announcement that Indians will now be granted licences. It is unnecessary even to produce the permit. In spite of this, there are very few traders who have taken out licences. Anyone who does not now take out a licence immediately will be prosecuted for trading without one. It is therefore essential for all Indian businessmen and hawkers to get their licences.

JUSTICE AMEER ALI

The members of the British Indian Association have resolved to send an address to Mr. Justice Ameer Ali, and it will be sent simultaneously with a similar one to Lord Ampthill.

Also, the Hamidia Islamic Society has decided to send addresses

by post to persons in all outlying places, who participated in the campaign. I expect to publish the names of persons to whom such letters are sent,

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 21-3-1908

108. MY EXPERIENCE IN GAOL [*-III*]

Diet is a subject which most of us have to think about some time or other in our lives. In particular, prisoners' food requires the most careful consideration. Their well-being depends a great deal on a good diet. The rule about food in gaol is that one must accept what is offered and take nothing from any other source. Soldiers, too, must eat what is given them. But there is a great difference between soldiers and prisoners. Friends may send gifts of food to soldiers, which they may accept. Prisoners, on the other hand, are forbidden to accept [gifts of] food. Difficulty in regard to food is one important feature of prison life. Even in casual conversation we hear gaol authorities saying that there can be no question of preferences in gaol. When I met the gaol doctor, I asked that bread should be served with tea or ghee. He replied: "You want to indulge your taste. That is not possible in gaol."

Let us now consider the regulation food in gaol. Indians get the following items of food during the first week: in the morning, twelve ounces of mealie pap without sugar or ghee; for the midday meal, four ounces of rice with an ounce of ghee; in the evening, twelve ounces of mealie pap on four days and boiled beans with salt on three days.

This scale is drawn up on the basis of what the Kaffir prisoners get, with this difference that the Kaffirs are given pounded maize and fat in the evening, instead of which Indians get rice [for their midday meal]. From the second week onward, along with mealie meal, they get boiled potatoes on two days and vegetables, such as cabbage, pumpkin, on the other two. To those who eat it, meat is also served with vegetables every Sunday from the second week onward.

The prisoners who were the first to arrive had decided not to ask for any favours from the Government but to make do with whatever food was allowed them, provided it was acceptable [from the religious standpoint]. In point of fact, the scale described above was neither adequate for Indians nor suited to them. It may be that dietetically the food was sufficiently nutritious. Mealie meal is the staple of Kaffir diet, so that this scale suits them very well and they thrive on it. But nothing except rice is acceptable to Indians; hardly any of them eat

mealie pap. Indians are not used to eating beans as a course in itself and do not find the vegetarian dishes [cooked in gaol] agreeable. The vegetables are not washed, neither are they dressed with spices. Moreover, the vegetables served to the Kaffir prisoners consist mostly of the leftovers and peelings from the vegetables cooked for the whites. Nothing except salt is allowed by way of condiment. Of sugar one may not even dream. Everyone was therefore bothered by the problem of food. Even so, we resolved that 3S satyagrahis we should not ask for anything from the gaol authorities nor seek a favour So we carried on with the food described above.

When the Governor enquired [about the amenities], we told him that our food was unsatisfactory, but that we did not wish to ask for a favour from the Government. It was for the Government to consider whether they should make changes. Otherwise, we would make do with whatever the regulations allowed.

This attitude could not be kept up for long. When others joined us, we agreed that it would not be proper for us to compel them to accept this inconvenience as we did. That they had come to gaol was [sacrifice] enough. It would be proper, we thought, to demand from the Government special treatment for these people. To that end webroached the subject with the Governor. We told him that, though we accepted whatever was given to us, those who came after us would not be able to do so. The Governor thought the matter over and answered that he could [permit] cooking to meet any religious scruples, but that the food itself should remain the same. It was not within his power to effect any changes in it.

Meanwhile, as mentioned earlier,[1] 14 other Indians joined us. Some of them plainly refused to eat mealie pap. They starved. I went through the gaol regulations, and discovered that a petition on this subject could be addressed to the Director of Prisons. We therefore asked for the Governor's permission to address a petition, and the following petition[2] was forwarded.

This petition was signed by 21 of us. After it had been signed and was about to be submitted, we were joined by another 76 Indians, who also disliked mealie pap. We therefore added at the end of the petition that the 76 persons do had come in also felt the same difficulty, and that immediate orders should therefore be issued. I requested the Governor to telegraph the contents of this petition. He

[1] *Vide* "My Experience in Gaol [-II]", 14-3-1908

[2] This has not been re-translated; for English text, *vide* "Petition to Director of Prisons", 21-1-1908. The last two sentences from it are, however, missing in the Gujarati translation.

consented and, after obtaining the permission of the Director on telephone, ordered mealie pap to be replaced by four ounces of bread [for each prisoner]. All of us were happy. From the 22nd, therefore, we got four ounces of bread in the morning, as also in the evening, [that is,] on mealie-pap days. In the evening eight ounces of bread was provided, that is, half a loaf. This arrangement was only provisional, pending further orders. The Governor had meanwhile appointed a committee to go into thisquestion. In the end, it was proposed to allow us flour, ghee, rice and pulses. Nothing further happened and we were released soon after.

When, in the beginning, we were only eight, none of us did any cooking. The rice was not well cooked and in their turn, the green vegetables, too, were cooked badly. Therefore, we also obtained permission to cook our own meals. On the first day, Mr. Karwa offered to cook. He was then replaced by Mr. Thambi Naidoo and Mr. Jivan. During the last few days they cooked for 150 persons and had to cook once a day. Two days in the week, however, that is, on the green-vege table days, they had to go twice a day [to cook]. Mr. Thambi Naidoo did an admirable job of work, and I looked after the serving.

The readers will observe from the foregoing petition that it is drafted so as to present a case not for preferential treatment for ourselves alone, but for a modification of the food scale for all Indian prisoners. It was in the same light that the matter was placed before the Governor, and he concurred. There is still hope that the ration for Indian prisoners in gaols will be modified.

Moreover, the three Chinese were given something else in place of the rice that we got and were thus the only ones to be refused rice. This caused some heart-burning. It appeared as though the Chinese were being discriminated against as a class inferior to us. I therefore wrote out a petition[1] on their behalf to the Governor and to Mr. Playford. The order was finally passed that the Chinese should get the same food as the Indians.

While on the subject of food, it will be instructive to compare [the Indian] with the European scale. For breakfast, they get porridge with eight ounces of bread. For dinner, again, bread, together with *soup* or meat with potatoes or green vegetables, and for supper, bread and porridge. That is, Europeans get bread thrice a day, so that it makes no difference whether or not they get porridge. Moreover, they are served either meat or soup as an additional item every day. Over and above these they are given tea or cocoa every afternoon. It is thus

[1] Not available

clear that both Kaffirs and Europeans get food suited to their tastes. The poor Indians—nobody bothers about them! They cannot get the food they want. If they are given European diet, the whites will feel insulted. In any case, why should the gaol authorities bother to find out the normal Indian fare? There is nothing for it but to let ourselves be classed with the Kaffirs and starve.

That this state of affairs has gone on till today points, in my view, to a deficiency in our satyagraha. Some Indian prisoners get extra food from without surreptitiously. They, therefore, suffer no inconvenience on this account. There are other Indian prisoners who make do with whateverthey are given, and [afterwards] feel ashamed of mentioning their misfortunes or do not care enough for others [to take up the issue]. People outside remain in the dark [about what happens in goal]. If we were all devoted to truth and remonstrated whenever there was injustice, we would never have to suffer these inconveniences. If we think more of others than of ourselves, it will be easy to find solutions for these problems.

If it is necessary to find remedies for these problems, it is also necessary to bear another consideration in mind. A prisoner must submit to certain hardships. If there were no hardships, what would be the point of being imprisoned? Those who can control their minds can find happiness even amidst hardships and enjoy being in gaol. Such persons, however, will not forget the hardships [of gaol life], and, for the sake of others, they ought not to. Moreover, we should give up clinging so tenaciously to our customs and habits. Everyone has heard of the saying, “As the country, so the attire”. Since we live in South Africa we must accustom ourselves to whatever is wholesome in the food of the people here. Mealie pap, like wheat, is good, simple and cheap food. Neither can it be said to be tasteless. In fact, for some purposes, mealie pap is better than wheat. I also believe that, out of regard for the country in which we live, we must accept the food grown in the soil of that country, provided of course it is not unwholesome. Many whites have mealie pap for breakfast every day because they like it. With milk, sugar or ghee, it can be made palatable. Bearing these considerations in mind, and also because there may be many occasions yet for us to go to gaol, we should all get used to mealie pap. If we do that, eating mealie pap with only salt will not appear so much of an ordeal. There are some habits of ours which we must not hesitate to give up in the interests of our country. The

nations which have progressed are those which have given in on inessential matters. The members of the Salvation Army win over the hearts of the people among whom they work by adopting their customs, dress, etc.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 21-3-1908

109. INTERVIEW TO D. A. REES[1]

[Before *March 26, 1908*][2]

Q. What number of Indians are there in the Transvaal and from what parts of India do they chiefly come?

A. There are about 13,000. At present the number resident here is only about 8,000; the remaining 5,000 have left in consequence of the Registration Act. Some are in Natal and some in Cape Town but the majority have returned to India. Probably most of them will now return. Those who are resident here have come chiefly from Bombay and Madras, and are mostly general traders or hawkers.

Q. What is the history of the settlement of Indians in the Transvaal?

A. In 1843, indentured labour was first introduced into Natal. Afterwards it was suspended. Then the prosperity of the Colony declined and in 1853 indentured labour was again resorted to. There was a large Indian settlement in Mauritius, and one of the Bombay Indians there, hearing that Indians did well in Natal, came there, bringing with him a large number of his relatives and fellow caste-men. He prospered, and other Indians hearing of this, came on the scene and so Indian traders multiplied. When the Transvaal mines were opened up, these traders came over from Natal and soon became prosperous. They found that they could trade not only with their own countrymen, but also with the Kafirs and the Dutch. They found the Dutch trade specially remunerative, and so the number of Indian traders increased.

Q. I have heard it said that you have made special efforts to increase the Indian trading community and to bring in Indian artisans. Is this true?

A. There is not a vestige of truth in it. I first came into the country in 1893, when things were much as they are now. There were then fully eight or nine thousand Indians in the country. The increase which has since taken place is small, and I have done absolutely

[1] A Methodist missionary

[2] The report of the interview, corrected by Gandhiji, was returned with a covering letter dated March 26, 1908.

nothing to increase the community.

Q. Before the recent Registration Law was brought into force, what was the system of registration adopted?

A. There was no registration of the present kind in existence. In 1885, the Dutch Government passed a law[1] dealing with immigration, but that law was not intended to restrict the immigration of Indians but it was meant to place a bar upon their trading. At one time President Kruger passed a law imposing a prohibitive fee of £ 25 on every Indian who wished to trade in the country. The technical wording of the Law was that any Indian desiring to trade should be registered and take out a receipt for £ 25. In consequence of representations made by the British Government the amount of the fee was subsequently reduced to £3. It will be seen that this Law simply imposed a trade tax on Indian traders, and was not a registration act applicable to Indians as a class.

A. But is not the present Act stated to be an amendment of the old Dutch Law to which you refer?

A. Yes, but my conviction is that this was done with a view to hoodwink the British public. As a matter of fact the present Act differs *in toto* from the old Dutch Law. That applied only to traders and did not touch the community as a class, this Act embraces all, without distinction, and aims not simply at registration but also at identification. The old Dutch Law did not aim at preventing Indian immigration, neither did it concern itself with identification. It merely required that all traders should register and contribute to the revenue by paying a specified fee.

Q. What is the system of permits and how long has it been in force?

A. After the conclusion of peace, an ordinance was passed to take the place of the procedure adopted under martial law, when every resident was more or less under supervision. To replace martial law an ordinance called "the Peace Preservation Ordinance" was passed. The preamble states that it was passed to check the entry of people of a dangerous character, who would be a menace to peace and good government, that is to say, it was aimed at disloyalists. But later when a cry was raised against the immigration of Indians this Ordinance was effectively applied to that end.

When the Ordinance was passed it was designed to guard against the influx of undesirable people, but permits were granted freely to any British subject of whose good character they were satisfied, and to foreigners who could produce certificates from their Consuls. But

[1] Law 3 of 1885

since this agitation against Indians has arisen, they have been singled out for exceptional treatment and required to give elaborate proof that they were in the country before the War, before a permit is granted.

Q. It has been stated that there had arisen a widespread traffic in the permits issued to Indians, and that there was an illicit influx of Asiatics on an organized scale which alarmed the authorities and necessitated the introduction of this severe measure. Is this true?

A. This charge was made against our community and we approached the authorities and asked them for proofs.[1] This they could not or would not give. I admit that there was some traffic in permits going on, but behind the traffic, and regulating and profiting by it, were the officials of the Government. The real facts are these —after the conclusion of peace a considerable number of Europeans from the Volunteers were taken on by the Government and placed in positions of trust and responsibility. It is not surprising that many proved themselves utterly unfitted for positions for which they had no previous training, and that some proved utterly untrustworthy, Several men of this class were appointed as supervisors of Asiatics. They were given tremendous powers and they held the physical destiny of Indians in their hands. They did not scruple to take full advantage of their positions for their own enrichment. They inaugurated a regular system of traffic in permits, and either granted or transferred them at rates varying from £ 10 to £ 30. Where the carcass is, there the crows will gather, and when it became known that permits could be obtained for a consideration, Indians came to the Transvaal from Durban, Port Elizabeth, Cape Town and elsewhere. Many of these had a perfect right to re-enter but had to buy their permits.

Q. But why did not the respectable leaders of your community endeavour to stop the traffic?

A. They did. When I returned from India in 1902 I found the traffic in full swing. I then warned my fellow-countrymen of what could be the results if the traffic was not stopped. I came from India at that time specially to meet Mr. Joseph Chamberlain. I brought the matter to the notice of Sir Arthur Lawley[2] but he would not listen, for he trusted his officers. Three times I approached him with a view to stopping this abuse and on the third occasion I produced such proof that an enquiry was made and two officials were discharged on a technicality, but the evidence before Government was so clear that both officers were dismissed from service. This illicit traffic had to be stopped, but it could have been done effectively without the legislation

[1] *Vide* " Triumph of Truth", 8-2-1908

[2] Lieutenant-Governor at the time

recently introduced. The authors of the malpractice, the active agents in carrying it out, and those who profited by it were these corrupt officials, but instead of using the power which existing laws placed at their disposal for dealing with the evil, the Government introduced an act directed against the whole Indian community.

Q. I gather then that you regard this Registration Act as unnecessary and based on assumptions which are untrue.

A. Certainly. It proceeds on the assumption that every Indian has entered the country fraudulently, and treats his permits as invalid untilhe rehabilitates himself by producing before the Registrar evidence of his *bonafides,* which he can accept. It invalidatestotally the Dutch registration certificates, for which a fee of £3 was paid, although it professes to be in harmony with the Law under which those certificates were granted. It assumes that Turkish Mahomedans are less trustworthy than Turkish Christians and Jews, for it exempts the two latter classes from the provisions of the Act. Thus, for these and other reasons, it has deeply offended both Hindus and Mahomedans.

Q. What other objections have you to urge against the Act?

A. First, it curtails our liberty in such a manner that no self-respecting man, who has faith in God, could submit to it. A man may, voluntarily and for the benefit of his community, submit to many restrictions, but in this case, the community gains nothing. If any man submitted, it would be solely for the sake of gaining money. Secondly, the distinction made between Turkish Mahomedans and Turkish Christians and Jews is most invidious. They all come from the same social class and in many cases the Christians and Jews from Turkey are far lower in the social scale, yet they are exempted from the provisions of the Act. Is it to be wondered at that the Mahomedans feel aggrieved? Throughout the history of Colonial Government legislation, the Government have set their face firmly against class legislation except under very extraordinary circumstances. The Australian Immigration Act was vetoed by Mr. Chamberlain because it was class legislation. He would not allow the late Mr. Escombe, the Premier of Natal, to pass an act against Asiatics and he advised the Natal Ministry to introduce a general act, dealing with the evil they sought to remove not on the basis of colour, or religion, but on general grounds. Yet the Imperial Government agreed to this Act which I regard as class legislation of a most virulent type.

Other objectionable features of the Act are the following. Children under eight years have to be registered by their parents under a heavy penalty. Those over eight years have to be taken before the

Registrar and made to give all identification particulars required of them. On attaining the age of 16, they have to appear again before the Registrar and take out certificates. I can only describe this as scientific torture.

Again, the method of identification adopted is the one pursued for the identification of criminals in this country. No absolutely free men have ever been required to submit to such a process hitherto. I may mention that probably in order to remove the objection which we Indians feel digit impressions have been made of general application under the Immigration Act. This it is said will apply to Europeans as well as others, but this is manifestly an aftert hought and I doubt if it will be largely enforced.

You will not therefore be surprised that when the Act was passed, the Indians met and took a solemn oath that they would not submit to such a Law.[1]

Q. What steps were taken to make the authorities acquainted with your objections to the Act?

A. The measure was published only a few days before it was to come up for discussion. Immediately representatives of the Indian community sought an interview with Mr. Patrick Duncan, the Colonial Secretary[2], and I personally saw Sir Richard Solomon. Mr. Duncan informed the deputation that they could discuss with him the details of the measure but not the principles, as the Government were committed to them. The Indians then presented a petition to the Legislative Assembly. That was pigeon-holed and the Law was passed as it stood, with one important alteration. The draft measure applied to Indian women as well as men. This will show you how far they were prepared to go and how little those who drafted the Act understood Indian sentiment.

The measure was passed; then came the meeting in the Empire Theatre, when the community took an oath of passive resistance.[3] A deputation was appointed to go to London to interview Lord Elgin[4]. When they reached London they met with much sympathy from Anglo-Indians, and the Press, including *The Times*, supported their cause. Lord Elgin was alarmed, and said that after hearing all the facts he could not agree to the Act as it then stood, and accordingly it was then vetoed. Then responsible government was granted, and their first

[1] *Vide* "Mass Meeting at Pretoria",6-7-1907 & Interview to "Rand Daily Mail", 6-7-1907

[2] On September 1, 1906; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 8-9-1906

[3] *Ibid*

[4] Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1905- 8.

act was to reintroduce this measure word for word. The passing of the measure through both the Houses of the Legislature occupied about 48 hours.[1] We Indians again petitioned, appealed by telegraph to the Home authorities,[2] interviewed General Smuts[3] but all was of no avail. The measure received the Royal Assent.[4] The Indian community again met and reaffirmed their vow of non-compliance, and since then passive resistance has been going on.[5] The registration offices were opened but only 500 Indians[6] submitted.

Q. What was the next step taken by Government?

A. The Government then passed the Immigrants Restriction Act.[7] This act was of general application, but two clauses were incorporated in order to meet passive resisters. Under the Registration Act Indians who did not submit to its requirements could be sent to jail for two years with hard labour, but under the Immigration Act, all Indians who did not submit to registration could be physically deported at their own cost, their chattels, if any, being sold to defray expenses. The second clause provided that those Indians who were resident here, but did not submit to the Law, no matter of what standing they were, became "prohibited immigrants" and therefore subject to deportation.

This measure, instead of unmanning the Indians, nerved them for further struggle and they informed the Government that they would suffer deportation and confiscation of property but would not violate their conscience and break their oath. Those Indians who could not stand the stress of the struggle went out of the country. Many sold cut their businesses, others who remained here countermanded their orders for further supplies of goods, while yet others sold out and remained, living on their capital, in order to carry on the struggle. The Government resorted to all kinds of methods to influence the Indians into compliance. They dismissed their Indian employees in the post offices, railways, and other departments, and these in nearly every case accepted their dismissal rather than comply

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 30-3-1907

[2] *Ibid*

[3] On April 4, 1907

[4] On May 7, 1907

[5] On July 31, 1907 a meeting was held at Pretoria; *vide* "Speech at Pretoria", 31-7-1907 & "Resolutions at Preetoria mass meeting", 31-7-1907.

[6] Out of 13,000 Indians only 511 had registered.

[7] *Vide* "Speech at Hamida Islamic Society", 22-12-1907 & Speech at Hamidia Islamic Society", 27-12-1907.

with the Act. Then followed imprisonment[1] and nearly 200 Indians including myself and most of the leaders were put in jail,[2] and the licences of traders were stopped. The utmost firmness was manifested by all classes of the community and even women came forward andheld meetings and informed Government that they were fully prepared to follow their husbands.

Q. What kind of treatment did you receive in prison?

A. The jail authorities did their best for us, but the treatment can only be described as inhuman. We were treated as common felons and were put on a diet to which Indians are altogether unaccustomed, with the result that we were practically starved. For breakfast we were given mealie meal, which is a porridge, all right for the natives of this country who have always been used to it, but to us it was most distasteful. Many refused it altogether, others who took it rather than starve suffered from dysentery, etc. In response to a petition, we were allowed four ounces of bread in lieu of the meal.[3] This we had to eat without tea or coffee, only water was allowed. For dinner we had four ounces of rice and one ounce of ghee. For supper we were given eight ounces of bread three times a week, and three times we had haricot beans, without any accompaniment. On Sundays we could have had meat if we desired, but as Hindus do not eat meat and Mahomedans cannot eat it unless the animals have been slain according to their own formula, the meat was not accepted. In place of this we were allowed a double quantity of vegetables. Asiatic prisoners are classed with Natives. I do not object to this, but I claim that they should be supplied with food according to their customs.

The accommodation also was very bad. The jail where we were housed has provision for only 51 prisoners, but when I was there, 151[4] had to be dealt with. Tents were erected in an open space which provided sleeping accommodation for one hundred, but during the day-time the whole 151 were crowded into a small yard, with the result that almost every day som e fainted away at the time of inspection.[5]

Q. What is the nature of the compromise ultimately effected?

[1] *Vide* Trial at Johannesburg", 28-12-1907, "Trial of P.K. Naidoo & Others", 28-12-1907 and "Johannesburg Letter", 30-12-1907.

[2] Gandhiji was sentenced to two months' simple imprisonment, on January 10, 1908; *vide* "Trial at Johannesburg", 10-1-1908.

[3] *Ibid*

[4] Actually 161

[5] For details of Gandhiji's prison experiences, *vide* Vol. VIII.

A. The Government accepted our offer of voluntary registration according to a form ultimately agreed to.[1] This offer had been made before[2] the Act was brought into operation and if it had been accepted then, all subsequent evil might have been avoided.

By mutual agreement, the form of registration has been altered. If any man has scruples against giving his ten digits, he may give only his thumb mark. The Pathans have done this and most of the Chinese. Personally, I have registered and given the prints ofmy ten digits. I did this for the sake of example and to show that while I would voluntarily do anything not intrinsically bad I would do nothing by coercion. The whole objection was against the spirit of the Act.

We have received the distinct assurance of Government that if the bulk of the Indian community voluntarily register the Act will be repealed. There are sections of the Act which apply to Indians subsequent to their registration; these will become a dead letter.

Registration on these terms is now going on rapidly and I anticipate that nearly all our community will comply.

Q. How was the settlement brought about?

A. The settlement was bought about largely through the intervention of Mr. Cartwright[3], the editor of *The Transvaal Leader*. He knew me personally in London and was in touch with General Smuts. Having reason to believe that Government would be open to accept the original offer of voluntary registration, he came to me in the jail, and asked if we were still prepared to abide by our original proposal. We said we were. He then produced a draft letter which he had written to General Smuts embodying the proposal, and this letter with a few corrections I signed.[4] After consultation with the leaders of the Progressive Party, and obtaining their consent, General Smuts sent for me[5]. I left the jail, under police escort for Pretoria and there discussed the whole matter with General Smuts. I returned the same day at 10.45 p.m. and at a meeting of our community held at midnight, I informed them of the settlement offered and strongly

[1] For details of Gandhiji's prison experiences, *vide* Vol. VIII.

[2] In March 1907; *vide* "Mass meeting of Tranwvaal Indians", 6-4-1907.

[3] Albert Cartwright

[4] *Vide* "Letter to colonial secretary", 28-1-1908

[5] On January 30, 1908; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 8-2-1908 and "satyagraha in South Africa", (Chapter XXI)

urged them to accept it.[1] The finger-prints was an open question and all authorized me to accept the finger-prints in the modified form. All accepted it except the Pathans, about one hundred and fifty in number. The next day all the prisoners were released.

Q. What led to the murderous assault upon you?

A. I have already stated that at the meeting held after my return from Pretoria the Pathans refused to agree to the finger-prints. At a meeting held subsequently[2] they still protested and used threats. I endeavoured to show them that the compromise was an honourable one. We did not object to registration but to coercion and I expressed my determination to be the first to present myself at the registration office. The Pathans threatened that the first Indian who attended for registration and to give finger-prints would be killed. Disregarding this threat many others and I set out[3] for the registration office and on the way, I was set upon by some Pathans, who aimed a blow at me, which was intended to be fatal. It missed its mark but I received a severe gash on my face, and was rendered unconscious. When I recovered I refused to bring a charge against my assailants, but the Government took the case up and two Pathans received three months' imprisonment with hard labour. Since then the Pathans themselves have registered, giving their single thumb-prints, and I believe that everything will now work harmoniously. I do not blame the Pathans. To them finger-prints was the Law. They could, as they did, register without finger-prints. Suspicious by nature they could not understand why I should give ten-digit prints.

From a copy: C.W. 10767. Courtesy: Paul Hockings

110. LETTER TO D. A. REES

21-24 COURT CHAMBERS,
JOHANNESBURG,
March 26, 1908

DEAR MR. REES[4],

I now return the Ms.[5] left by you. I have made some altera-tions

[1] *Vide* "Speech at meeting of British Indian Association", 31-1-1908

[2] On February 2, 1908; *vide* "Speech at meeting of British Indian Association", 8-2-1908

[3] On February 10, 1908; *vide* "My Reward", 22-2-1908.

[4] Methodist missionary

[5] *Vide* "Guidee to London", (Introduction), [1893-94]

when I thought they were necessary. I hope you will be able to decipher them. It gives a fairly complete summary of the situation.

If I do not have the pleasure of seeing you again, I wish you a happy time in England. I send you the latest number of *Indian opinion*, and, if you will care to keep yourself in touch with the Indians in South Africa, I shall be pleased to place your name on thecomplimentary list. Will you, then, kindly let me know your perma-nent address?

I am,
Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

REV. MR. REES
ESQ. C/O T. R. PRICE, ESQ.
BYRNTIRION
BEREA

From a copy : Duncan Papers. Courtesy : University Library,

111. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 26, 1908

MY DEAR MAGANLAL[1],

I have your letter. I hope you will keep in constant touch with Mr. Polak. I should like to see the cuttings from the Indian news-papers in connection with the compromise. I hope you gave Hassan a treat before he left.[2]

Please tell Mr. Budrea that the money has been redeposited [sic], and that the interest his been placed to his credit. I have received the papers regarding the Danhauser property from Mr. Labistour and I am now going through them.[3] I shall then write to Mr. Budrea further in the matter. I do not quite understand what you mean with reference to the C,21. Was it received by the Press from Mr. Budrea?

Yours sincerely,

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4804

[1] Maganlal Gandhi (1883-1928); second son of Khushalchand Gandhi, Gandhiji's cousin; manager of the Phoenix settlement after Chhaganlal Gandhi's departure for India on his way to England, and later of the Satyagraha Ashram at Sabarmati

[2] The reference is to a farewell party given to Hassan Mia, son of Dawad Mahomed, President of natal Indian Congress, on the eve of his departure for England. Hassan Mia was leaving for England to study for the bar.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to C. A. De R. Labistour", 18-3-1908

112. FIVE CRORES STARVING

Cables from India report Lord Minto as having said in a speech that, owing to the famine in Central India, five crores of people were faced with the prospect of starvation, and that if no relief was provided, they would simply die off [for want of food-grains]. Is there any Indian who did not shudder at this news or whose heart did not cry out? However, some of us may have felt that there is nothing that we can do from this distance. Others may have thought that, in a situation such as this, they could not have helped matters much even if they had been in India. Since the calamity is the result of a goddess's wrath, they feel helpless. There must also be some who blame this on the British Government. We think that all these persons are wrong. It is a common habit to point to the faults of others and not to see one's own. Others' mistakes attract ready attention. Let us, however, go deeper into the question.

We are convinced that, though this condition is undoubtedly the result of divine will, the blame lies with us, our chief fault being that we have very little truth in us. It is generally from experience that the whites accuse us of untruthfulness Not all of them accuse us out of malice. We are annoyed by the charge. It instead of feeling annoyed, we look at the matter in the right perspective and ponder over it, we may derive much profit.

The Indians here are not very different from those at home. If we take examples from the Transvaal or Natal, we shall find that untruthfulness is spreading among us. This untruthfulness does us dramage. Instead of getting rid of the habit we fight the Government and inveigh against it When the Government adopts extreme measures, we are Admittedly left with no choice but to fight. But fighting the Government will not by itself bring us happiness

It is necessary that we fight ourselves. We must overcome this habit of deceitfulness. In our private lives we behave as we do with the Government. The result is that we become cowardly and, in order to cover up our cowardice, we resort to deception and hypocrisy at every turn.

In Natal, we spend any amount of money to obtain trading licences by underhand means, but we will not observe cleanniness, which is the thing necessary. There are very few Indians who deserve trading licences on merits.

In the Transvaal everyone thinks only of self-interest They must have a permit by Sir means or but As many children as possible must

be brought into the Colony. This avidity [to have all one wants] X, to be sure, a source of evil. These are examples which are easy to follow. Many other instances of falsehood can be cited.

Some readers may wonder what the connection is between fraudulent practice in relation to permits in the Transvaal and trading licences in Natal on the one hand and famine on the other. That we do not perceive this connection is in itself an error.

Our examples are only symptoms of a chronic disease within us. We are sure that, as long as they remain addicted to cheating and deception, Indians will never be rid of their troubles. It would be a great and true help indeed it instead of sending money from here or being useful. in some other way, a reformed ourselves and learnt to be truthful. If the Indians here observe truth in word and deed and behave with courage, that cannot but have some effect in India. Pain in any part of the body is felt by the mind. The healthy condition of a part Was a benign effect [on the whole]. Similarly, good or bad actions of individuals have a corresponding effect on a whole people. We believe this to be a divine law, and if our readers agree that it is so, we think the only real help the kind-hearted among the Indians can render to their country is to take the path of truthfulness immediately after reading the heart-rending account of starvation among five crores of Indians. This is admittedly a difficult step to take. But it is also a very effective one. After a little reflection, anyone will realize that this is the only solution.

[From Gujrati]

Indian Opinion, 28-3-1908

113. MY EXPERIENCE IN GOAL [*-IV*]

PATIENTS

It would have been surprising if not one among 150 of us had been taken ill. The first casualty was Samunder Khan. He was ill even when he came to gaol and so was removed to hospital the day after his arrival. Mr. Karwa had an attack of rheumatism. for some the doctor treated him with ointment, etc., in the gaol. But later, he, too, was admitted to hospital. Two other prisoners fell sick and were removed to hospital. Since it was hot and the prisoners were exposed to the sun outside some of them fell sick occasionally. They were treated as well as they could be [in goal]. Towards the end, Mr. Nawab Khan was also taken ill and, the day of his release, he had to be helped to walk. He

improved after the doctor permitted him to drink milk. However, on the whole, the satyagrahi prisoners kept well.

LACK OF SPACE

I mentioned earlier that our ward could accommodate 51 prisoners. The yard in front had the same capacity. When, towards the end, our number increased beyond 151, we experienced acute inconvenience The Governor ordered tents to be pitched outside, and some of us were shifted to these. During the last few days, a hundred prisoners had to sleep outside. But they were brought back every morning, with the result that the yard turned out to be too small, and it was with great difficulty that room could be found for all the prisoners. On top of this, when we indulged in our vice of spitting were, there was danger of the place becoming dirty and infected. Fortunately, people were amenable to persuasion and helped keep the yard clean. That how they managed to avoid illness. Anyone will admit that it was the Governments fault that so many prisoners were confined in so small a space. If the space was insufficient the Government ought not to have sent so many prisoners [to this gaol]. Had the movement continued, the Government would have found it impossible to accommodate any more.

READING

I mentioned earlier that the Governor had allowed us a table.[1] We were also given pens and an ink-pot. The gaol has a library which lends books to prisoners. I borrowed some of Carlyle's works and the Bible. From a Chinese interpreter who used to visit the place I borrowed a copy of the Koran in English, Huxley's lectures, Carlyle's biographies of Burns, Johnson and Scott, and Bacon's essays on civil and moral counsel. I also had some books of my own; these included an edition of the *Gita* with a commentary by Manilal Nabhubhai[2], some Tamil books, an Urdu book presented by Maulvi Saheb, the writings of Tolstoy, Ruskin and Socrates[3]. Most of these books I either read [for the first time] or re-read during my stay in gaol. I used to study Tamil regularly. In the morning I read the *Gita* and in the afternoon portions of the Koran. In the evening I used to explain the Bible to Mr. Fortoen, a Chinese Christian. As he wished to learn

[1] *Vide* "My Experience in Gaol[-II]", 14-3-1908

[2] Manilal Nabhubhai Dwivedi (1858-98); Sanskrit scholar, Gujarati poet, writer and journalist; author of several books on Indian philosophy; attended the Parliament of Religions along with Vivekananda.

[3] Plato's Dialogues evidently, for it must have been about this time that Gandhiji started writing his Gujarati series, "Story of a Soldier of Truth".

English, I taught it to him through the Bible. If I was going to serve my full term of two months in gaol, I had intended to complete the translation of one of Carlyle's books and another[1] of Ruskin. I believe these books would have kept me wholly occupied. If I had been awarded an even longer term, not only would I not have found it irksome, but I could have added usefully to my knowledge. I would have been quite contented. I believe that anyone who enjoys reading good books can easily bear to be alone anywhere.

Among my fellow-prisoners, Mr. C. M. Pillay, Mr. Naidoo and a few Chinese were in the habit of reading. Both the Naidoos had started learning Gujarati. During the last days a few books of Gujarati songs arrived, and many of us read these. But I do not call this reading.

DRILL

In gaol we cannot spend the whole day reading. Even if it were possible, we know that it is harmful in the long run. We therefore managed, with some difficulty, to obtain the Governor's permission to learn the [P. T.] drill from the warder. A very kind man, he was only too happy to drill us morning and evening. It did us a lot of good too. If we could have continued it sufficiently long, it would have done us all good. But the warder's work increased with the increase in the number of Indians, and the yard proved too small for the purpose. The drill was, therefore, given up. However, we had Nawab Khan with us, and a drill of sorts was continued under his direction.

We also obtained the Governor's permission to work on the sewing machine. We tried to learn sewing pockets on to prisoners' [uniforms]. Mr. T. Naidoo and Mr. Easton, as they had an aptitude for the work, learnt it very quickly. It took me longer to pick it up. Before I had learnt it properly, there was a sudden increase in the number of prisoners and I had to leave off. The reader can thus see that given the will anyone can transform [even] a desert into a paradise. [Had our imprisonment continued,] we could have thus kept ourselves occupied with some work or the other, and no prisoner would have found his confinement irksome; on the contrary, he would have come out a better informed and abler man. There have been instances of conscientious men who achieved great things while in gaol. John Bunion bore up with prison life and wrote *The Pilgrim's Progress*, which proved an immortal work. The British rank it next to the Bible. Mr. Till wrote his *Orison* during his nine-month imprisonment in Bombay. Whether weare happy or miserable, whether we become good or bad in gaol or

[1] *Unto This Last*

elsewhere depends entirely on our own mental attitudes.

VISITORS

Some Englishmen came to visit us in gaol. As a general rule, no prisoner is allowed visitors during the first month. Thereafter, each prisoner is allowed a visitor once a month, who must come on a Sunday[1]. The rule is relaxable in special circumstances. Mr. Phillips took advantage of this provision. The day after our arrival, he sought, and was granted, permission to visit Mr. Fortune, the Chinese Christian. He also met the rest of us. He spoke a word of cheer to each of us, and then prayed, as was his wont. He managed to see us thrice. Another clergyman, Rev. Advise, also took advantage of the same provision to visit us.

By special I permission Mr. Polak and Mr. Coven[2], too, came to see us once. He[3] was permitted to come only about [my] office work. Thewarder is always present during a visit and all conversation must take place in his presence.

Mr. Cartwright, the editor of *The Transvaal Leader*, came thrice-by special permission each time. He came only with the object of bringing about a settlement. He was therefore permitted to see us in private [that is, without the warder being present]. At his first meeting he formed an impression of what the Indian community would accept. On the next occasion he brought with him the draft which he and other prominent Englishmen had prepared. After some alterations, it was signed by Mr. Quinn, Mr. Nadir and myself. This letter and the compromise having been dealt with at length elsewhere,[4] no more need be said about them here.

The Chief Magistrate, Mr. Playford, also visited us once. He was entitled to come at will. And it was not especially to see us that he came. But it is believed that he found time to come because we were all in gaol.

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

It is now the practice in all western countries to provide religious instruction for prisoners. Accordingly, the Johannesburg Gaol has a chapel for Christians. But only white prisoners are allowed to worship

[1] It is not clear from the Gujarati whether a prisoner was allowed only one visitor a month or whether it was the visitor who might not meet more than one prisoner during a visit.

[2] Ritch's father-in-law

[3] Polak

[4] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 8-2-1908

there. I asked for special permission for myself and Mr. Fortoen, but I was told by the Governor that the church was open only to white Christians. They go to church every Sunday. They listen to sermons from clergymen of different denominations by turns. Some clergymen obtain special permission to preach to the Kaffirs too. They have, however, no chapel of their own. They therefore sit in the gaol compound. The Jews have a rabbi to visit them.

But there is no corresponding arrangement for Hindus or Muslims. But then, there are not many Indian prisoners. All the same, it is rather humiliating that the religious needs of the Indian community should be ignored in gaol. Leaders of the two communities should give thought to this matter and arrange for instruction in both religions even if there should be only one Indian [in gaol]. The Maulvis and Hindu priests chosen for this work should be sincere men, otherwise their instruction is likely to be something of an infliction.

CONCLUSION

Much of what is worth knowing [about gaol life] has been discussed. It is necessary to give further thought to the fact of Indians being classed with Kaffirs in gaol. White prisoners are given a small bed each, a tooth-brush and, in addition to a towel, a handkerchief. We must ask to know why Indian prisoners also may not have these things.

One should not feel that these things are not worth bothering about. As the saying goes, drop by drop the lake fills. Similarly little things enhance or lower our prestige in the eyes of others. We read in the book Arab Wisdom that he who enjoys no respect has no religion.[1] It is by defending their honour over a long period of time that nations achieve greatness. Honour does not mean arrogance; real honour consists in a state of mind that does not countenance the loss of a right, and in action flowing from such a state of mind. He alone can attain to such honour who really trusts—depends on—God. I am convinced that it is impossible for a man without sincere faith to discern the truth in every situation and act on it.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-3-1908

[1] *Vide* also "Arab Wisdom", 28-12-1907

114. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

CHINESE MEETING

The Chinese have done something remarkable. They have surpassed us in unity, cleanliness, culture and generosity.

On Friday, the 20th, they sent out two sorts of invitations. One was to a function where addresses were to be presented to those who had helped their cause. The other was to a dinner. The [first] function was scheduled for three o'clock. It was in their own hall. Invitations were sent to Englishmen and a few Indians. Their hall is incomparably superior to ours. It was elegantly decorated. At the function a noble tribute was paid to Mr. Phillips in an address which carried beautiful drawings. It thanked him for his exertions.

Another address was presented to Mr. Doke. He was thanked for his work and for looking after Mr. Gandhi. Mrs. Doke was presented with a beautiful oaken desk, also for looking after Mr. Gandhi. Mr. Cartwright was given a gold watch costing £27. Mr. David Pollock was given a purse of £20 Mr. Polak was presented with an address in which he was thanked for the excellent work he had done for the community. It said:

We cannot measure your work in terms of money. Though you consider the satisfaction your derive to be sufficient reward, we hope you will accept what we think is our duty to offer you and to Mrs. Polak. Mrs. Polak was given a gold necklace and a cutlery set costing about £28, and Mr. Polak was given a purse of £50.

The address sent to Mr. Ritch in England was read out at the meeting. It said:

> But for your unremitting efforts, this excellent settlement would have been impossible. There is admiration all round for what you have done. It was entirely due to your efforts that a strong fight was put up in England. We shall never forget your good work.

Along with this they sent Mr. Ritch a purse of £60. To Miss Schlesin, a gold watch costing £l was given as a gift.

Mr. Gandhi was presented with an address which said:

> It was thanks to your political acumen that this excellent settlement was effected. You were the only one who could have achieved this, and we are very grateful to you for what you have done. But for you, we would have lost. But we revere you especially for your good qualities of character, which, we believe, en-

nobled our campaign, with the result that Asiatic communities are treated today with respect. You combine courage with courtesy and humility, on account of which all of us bear you love and want to seek your guidance.

Mr. Hosken was present at the banquet. He made an excellent speech.

At the dinner table covers were laid for 92 persons. Thirty of them were guests and the remaining 62 Chinese. There was a band in attendance. There were three Chinese ladies at the dinner and the Chinese Consul was present. Dinner over, Mr. Quinn proposed a toast to the [Chinese] Emperor and said in the course of a speech:

> We are able to live in freedom in the British Empire, and therefore wish it prosperity. We are Chinese subjects, and it is accordingly our duty to wish prosperity to the Chinese Emperor. The Secretary of the Chinese Association said in his speech:
>
> European gentlemen helped the Indian cause because Indians are British subjects. They have no such bond with us, yet they helped us and this could only be ascribed to their sense of justice. It is in appreciation of that that we give this dinner, although it is not very much.
>
> Mr. Hosken then rose to reply. He said:
>
> There is very little I have done. I make no distinction between Coloured persons and whites. The Asiatics have taught us a lesson. I think both your courage and your success are worthy of the highest admiration.
>
> Mr. Phillips said:
>
> Everything that has been said about the courage of the Asiatics is true. I shall certainly continue to do all I can.

Mr. Doke spoke in the same strain. He was followed by Mr. Cartwright and Mr. Polak. Mr. Polak said:

> This struggle has been profitable to every Asiatic. I think the credit for defeating the Boer Government should really go to the Asiatics.
>
> Mr. Gandhi said:
>
> It would be a good thing for the Asiatics not to be flattered by these compliments. There are Yet many tasks ahead. If we fail in these, there will be a set-back. It is necessary we maintain the utmost courtesy, humility and truth. We cannot do so unless we are pure in our hearts.
>
> Mr. Essop Mia said in his speech:
>
> The Chinese have outdone the Indians. In many respects they

have excelled them. It was a good thing that the Indians and the Chinese presented a united front during the campaign. I was very near being disillusioned with British rule. But I see now that justice is done under it, if those who want justice are diligent and have a genuine case.

The meeting dispersed at eleven after, *God Save the King.*

EDUCATION IN KRUGERSDORP

In Krugersdorp there is a school for Coloured children to which some Cape Coloureds go. Indians do not either go to this school at all, or very few of them do. In view of this, there is a danger of the Government closing it down. Indian parents who have children of school-going age should therefore send them there. I advise Indian parents to avail themselves of the facilities provided by it, following the [Gujarati] maxim: "It is better to have an uncle who squints than none at all." I am told that some Madrasi boys go to this school.

ABOUT LICENCES

I wrote about licences last time. The Association has since received a telegram from the Receiver at Pretoria, saying that so far very few Indians have taken out licences and that if they do not do so immediately, those without licences will be Prosecuted. Because of our success in the campaign, some Indians appear to think that nothing can happen to them now. If there are really any persons who argue in this manner they make a great mistake and will do the community harm. Whatever we are able to do now is in virtue of our good reputation. Once we lose that reputation, we shall lose all that we have won. Those who wish well to the community ought to bear this in mind and to explain it to others. Even about thumb-impressions, the complaints continue. Some people appear to think that they can be exempted from giving their finger-impressions without their having to give any reasons. This is an erroneous idea. It should be remembered that one can be exempted from giving one's finger-impressions only on the ground of education, status or religious [or conscientious] objection. It is not enough, then, just to go to the Registrar and inform him that you do not wish to give your finger-impressions. I earnestly hope that Indians will remember these points about licences and finger-impressions.

ROODEPOORT INDIANS

At Roodepoort the whites are becoming envious of the Indians. They have discovered that there are some Indians in the town who buy land in the names of whites and themselves enjoy the rights of own-

ership. They have complained to the Colonial Secretary and have suggested that the law should be so amended as to make it impossible for whites to hold land for Indians and for Indians to accept any land bonds from the whites. Indians should take note of this warning and realize that the whites have not yet sheathed their swords. If meanwhile the Indians, out of overweening pride at their success or for any other reason, forfeit the good name that they have earned for themselves, they will regret it later.

BAILEY'S SPEECH

Mr. Abe Bailey is a leading member of the Transvaal Parliament. He is a leading member of the Progressive Party and a mine-owner.: Last Saturday in Krugersdorp he made a speech in which he referred too the obnoxious law[1] (We print this speech elsewhere). There are two points to be noted in Mr. Bailey's speech. First, whatever the Indians may believe, the whites at least know that the Government has lost and has had to climb down. And secondly, it may still be necessary for us to: put up a fight against the whites. The Indian community therefore must ever remain vigilant. If we are caught napping, we shall be ruined. Truth and unity, our two weapons, must ever lie ready to hand.

FEDERATION HALL

Mr. Essop Mia has received the following letter:

Sir,

We have read the appeal published in Gujarati under your signature in the issue of the 14th in connection with the Federation Hall Fund. Your words 'All those who have Indian blood in their veins will sincerely promote this cause' are so true and have stirred us. Be kind enough to accept these small amounts: Manaji Nathubhai Ghelani, £1; Vithaldas Manaji, 10s; and Mohanlal Manaji, 10s; total £2.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-3-1908

[1] Abe Bailey spoke sneeringly of the "climb-down" by General Smuts on the subject of the Asiatic Registration Act under pressure from the Imperial Government. He noted with pleasure the continued awareness of the Asiatic issue among the Krugersdorp whites and the anti-Asiatic campaign of the White Hawkers' League. He also appealed to all the whites in the town, particularly the women, for their support —presumably in the boycott of Indian hawkers—in order to ensure success.

115. EGYPT'S FAMOUS LEADER [*-I*]

THE LATE MUSTAFA KAMAL PASHA

Mustafa Kamal Pasha, the famous leader, died in February last in Cairo at the early age of 33. We publish below his life-sketch culled from Egyptian newspapers.

He was born in 1874. His education started at the age of six. After a few years' study [at home], he joined a school in Cairo, established in the memory of the well-known Abbas Pasha. His father, Ali Effendi Mahomed, who was Chief Engineer to the Government, died about this time. Mustafa Kamal Pasha passed the primary school examination at the age of ten, standing first. Four years later, he passed the secondary school examination, distinguishing himself as a gifted and intelligent student. At the age of 15, he started studying law and French. The seeds of his political career were sown about this time. Soon after, he went to France for further studies, and obtained a degree in law at the age of 19.

On the strength of his knowledge of law, he bravely plunged into politics, young as he was, and started a great movement, doing his utmost for it by way of speech and writing till his death. He was associated with several public bodies in Cairo, and by his speeches inspired their members to political activity. The letter which he addressed to the French Chamber at Toulouse in France was the first notable step in his political career. In that letter he described Egypt's problems and difficulties. This courageous and far-sighted act gave him his first opportunity for a political speech in public. He was then invited to address prominent leaders in Toulouse.

Only those who have heard Mustafa Kamal Pasha can have an idea of the powerful impression he could make on the audience by his command of language. People were delighted to hear him talk, both in private and in public, especially on the conditions in his country. His orations, imbued as they were with patriotic fervour, could rouse people almost to a frenzy and endeared him to them. His political philosophy was highly nationalistic like that of the extremists in India. People from all classes ofsociety, from prince to pauper, thronged to hear him speak; and Mustafa Kamal Pasha preached brotherhood to them all. He made a number of speeches to the people of Cairo and Alexandria between 1895 and 1907. These speeches were prepared with great thought and skill and always went down very well.

People looked upon Mustafa Kamal Pasha as their guardian and saviour. There are many touching stories of their love for him. When-

ever any section of society had a grievance against the [British] Government, they would besiege the offices of *Luwa* (Mustafa Kamal Pasha's paper) and clamour for his intervention or guidance. The Pasha would tell them what to do and advise them to act with firmness and courage and to adhere unflinchingly to truth and duty. He became well known for these virtues of his.

The Pasha used proudly to narrate an instance of how much the people loved him. Once, he hired an *arbagi* to carry him to the hall where he was to speak, and detained the driver there for more than an hour. When, on his return, he offered the driver his fare, the latter emphatically refused it, saying that he was happy and proud to have been of service to the nation's leader. There are many other instances which show the hold he had over the hearts of the people. His words inspired them to fanatical zeal in facing their tasks and serving the cause of Egypt's progress.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-3-1908

116. LETTER TO C.A. DE R. LABISTOUR[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 28, 1908

C. A. DE R. LABISTOUR, ESQ.
DUNDEE

DEAR SIR,

Re. Budrea and Others

I have gone through all the papers in this matter. If the averments in the plea, in paragraphs 6 and 7, are true, that is to say, if the land sought to be transferred to Vawda is not the land contemplated by the contract, the case is easily ours; but it seems to me to be too good to be true, because it would be almost fraudulent for Vawda. I therefore hope that you have made yourself absolutely certain of the facts and not merely relied upon whatGoordeen might have had to say, because, in his enthusiasm, he might have made some mis-statements.

Yours faithfully,

From the typewritten office copy; S. N. 4805

[1] *Vide* "Letter to C. A. De R. Labistour",18-3-1908

117. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 28, 1908

MY DEAR MAGANLAL,

Please tell Mr. Budrea I have gone through his papers most carefully. I have read the agreement that was signed by Mr. Anderson from Newcastle. I have read the reply to Vawda's summons. There are two things which certainly should give Mr. Budrea complete success. Paragraphs 6 and 7 of the reply state that the land wanted by Vawda is not the land described in the contract, and that the land surveyed by the surveyor includes land which is not covered by the contract, according to which the summons is issued. If these two things can be proved, Mr. Budrea must win, but I am very much afraid that there may be some mistake in the reply given. He must, therefore, be very careful, because, if he loses, the action in the Supreme Court will costhim probably £100 or more. The Solicitor at Dundee, Mr. Labistour, has sent me the papers. He is very hopeful, but I should myself like to be absolutely certain that the land required by Vawda is not the land described in the contract. You must therefore have every emphatic and conclusive evidence regarding it. You should explain this letter to Mr. Budrea thoroughly. If he wants to put more questions, I am in a position now to answer them, because I have all the papers, I think, before me and, what is more, I have studied them. Please also tell Mr. Budrea that after the last account that was rendered to him and about which he said something, I have not charged any fees at all, and I am not charging any fees without his concurrence with reference to the work I am now doing. Please ask him what his own opinion is in the matter, and whether I should charge a fee. Tell him, that although it is not the usual thing, I wish to be guided entirely by him in the matter of fees, as he has reposed so complete [a] trust in me.

You may leave this letter at Mr. Jitanmia's, if you do not find Mr. Budrea.

Yours sincerely,

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4806

118. LORD SELBORNE'S VIEW

Lord Selborne's speech at Klerksdorp on the Indian question deserves to be pondered by every Indian. We print a translation of it elsewhere.

The burden of Lord Selborne's speech is that Indians and other Asiatic races should be kept out from areas reserved for whites. They may settle in districts to be specially set apart for them. As to how they can be prevented from settling in areas reserved for whites, he suggests that, since Indians are British subjects and a cowardly [people], they can be treated as one pleases. But there remain the Japanese and the Chinese. The British Navy ought to be strengthened to keep these out.

Among countries to be reserved for the whites, Lord Selborne mentions South Africa, Australia, America, New Zealand, etc. He concedes that the Indians should be allowed facilities for colonization, and suggestion gests that Colonies in East Africa may be set apart for them.[1] them. On reflection we see that this would mean perpetual slavery for Indians, for, if Indians settle in regions such as East Africa, even there the whites will have the upper hand. The whites will have found a new training-ground or stepping-stone. Moreover, Indians are in capable of settling by themselves in a country and developing it along modern lines. The suggestion therefore that certain areas be earmarked for Indians is without point altogether. Lord Selborne's speech also implies that no regions where the climate is congenial to white settlers should be reserved for Indians. In other words, Indians should only be allotted swampy and malarial regions. Lord Selborne will not mind Indians languishing in these areas.

We regard Lord Selborne's speech as utterly selfish and dangerous. If he had his way, not a single Indian would be left in South Africa. He believes that East and West can never meet. If this view is correct, India can have a place in the British Empire only as a subject country. No other way is open to her. We do not subscribe to this view. If it is proved that the British people share this view and that there can be no alternative to it, we shall be compelled to raise our banner against British rule. It will then be necessary to adopt, and to help others adopt, the means to free India totally from British rule. But we believe that we can still enjoy freedom by continuing to live under the British flag. The Boers live under the British flag, and are none the less free for that.

[1] Lionel Curtis made a similar suggestion in 1906; *vide* "Interview to The Natal Mercury", 7-5-1907

We should therefore consider what measures to be adopted to counter [the influence of] Lord Selborne's ideas. The remedy, we believe, lies in our own hands. We find that in this world we generally get what we demand and deserve. If we really want to settle in diverse regions of the world and prosper, we shall find the necessary means. Three measures appear imperative: (1) that every Indian should faithfully follow his religion; (2) that Hindus and Muslims should remain united; and (3) that Indians should acquire the right kind of education.

If the first condition is realized, the remaining two will be fulfilled as a matter of course. We believe all the great religions of the world to be true. If, therefore, every community follows its religion diligently, it will come to have faith in and consequently to cherish nothing but truth. If we practise our own religion in its proper spirit, we shall not squabble among ourselves, but remain united. Further more, those who would follow the path of religion sincerely cannot choose to remain uneducated and ignorant. They will find it impossible to remain idle and, if there is no idleness, everyone, whether child or adult, will be busy learning.

We invite the attention of every Indian to these thoughts. We are living through times which enjoin us to be alert and wide awake.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-4-1908

119. NATAL INDIANS

An attack on the Natal Indians is imminent. There are some who want that no trading licences should be given them, and others who would that every Indian was expelled from Natal. The Colonial Secretary, Dr. Gubbins, has now granted an interview to *The* [*Natal*] *Mercury.* Apparently, the Government intends to introduce legislation to control the immigration of indentured Indian tabour and withhold issue of trading licences to Indians. They intend to prohibit the immigration of indentured tabour after a fixed date. With that end in view, the Agency at Calcutta has been closed. The issue of trading licences is to be stopped after ten years, and if any Indian traders still remain, it is proposed to force them to close down their businesses and compensate them for the loss.

The proposal to stop immigration of indentured labour deserves our support. So long as such immigration continues, the Indian community will have no peace.

We cannot say much about the Bill in regard to trading licences

till it is published. But there will be no scope for comment if they pass a law allowing for a time-limit of ten years and providing for payment of compensation thereafter. Indians, however, must not think of accepting compensation and running away. Those Indians who have settled in Natal must learn to look upon the Colony as their second home and settle there. If anyone wants to drive them out of Natal, they must not oblige. Indians must learn to feel that Natal is as much their country as it is of the whites, and be proud of working for its prosperity.

We should not therefore approve of the proposal to fix a time-limit of ten years. On the other hand, it may not be possible for us to prevent such legislation. But during the period of ten years we can so enhance our power and status that the whites themselves will think in terms of retaining us rather than driving us out. It is within the power of Indians to bring this about.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-4-1908

120. HASSAN MIA'S DEPARTURE

Mr. Hassan Mia, Mr. Dawad Mahomed's son, whose going to England for further studies had been under discussion for some time past, left for that country last week. This shows that people rejoice when they see something good being done and commend it. Hassan Mia is young. He has yet to see and learn a great deal. We wish him long life, health and prosperity. He is the first Natal Indian of his social position to go to England. We congratulate Mr. Dawad Mahomed on his courage.

The Indian community has a moral to learn from this case. Without the right kind of education, the community will not only remain backward, but become increasingly so. Education in England, the study of English, world history and of the sciences-all these are essential in the world of today. Without them one is crippled. It is also necessary to learn how to put the knowledge thus acquired to proper use. In itself knowledge is only a means. It can be employed for good, for making money, and in the service of public causes. Knowledge is justified only when it is put to good use and employed in the public cause. Otherwise, as we pointed out once earlier and as everyone will readily admit, it is like poison.

We hope that Mr. Hassan Mia's[1] spirit of adventure will be

[1] This is clearly an error for "Dawad Mahomed's"

emulated by other parents.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-4-1908

121. TO OUR CORRESPONDENTS

We have published several comments on the settlement. In an earlier issue we published a great deal in favour of it. In the current issue we publish as much as we can from the unfavourable comments which we have received. We think it is time we gave up arguing about the settlement. The community must turn to other tasks and enterprises. It is not yet in a position to sit back. Those who are anxious always to march forward do not think of sitting back. Now on we shall not publish comments on the settlement from local correspondents, whether for or against. We shall only publish communications from India or England for [our] future guidance. Many of the correspondents whose views we publish in this issue appear to us to be palpably wrong. But so much has already been said on this subject by us and by others that we see no need of writing further or correcting any misconceptions. In every movement there is bound to occur-and remain-a certain amount of misunderstanding. It is not always possible to clear this up. Time finds answers for all. We therefore appeal to our readers to forget all about the controversy regarding the settlement. It will be enough if they bear in mind that the glory of satyagraha, which we have witnessed, cannot be dimmed.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-4-1908

122. STORY OF A SOLDIER OF TRUTH [*-I*]

PREFACE

The heroic Socrates, an extraordinary person with a fine moral character, was born in 471 B.C. A Greek, he lived a virtuous and benevolent life. Unable to bear his moral excellence and his virtue, some envious person made false accusations against him. Socrates lived in fear of God[1] and cared little for the obloquy of men. He had no fear of death. A reformer, he strove to cleanse Athens, the capital

[1] Gandhiji's Gujarati summaries of important works had often a contemporary relevance or practical purpose and were not intended to be historical. Here, for example, he renders the Greek "gods" as Khuda in Gujarati. Elsewhere he refers to God as Khuda-Ishwar.

of Greece [sic], of the evil which had entered its [political] life and thus came in contact with a large number of persons. He made a powerful impression on the minds of the young who followed him about in crowds. [Socrates' teaching] had theresult of Putting an end to the unconscionable gains made by persons [with predatory tendencies]. It came in the way of those who lived by exploiting others.

In Athens it was an offence to disregard the traditional religion of the *polis* or encourage others to do so. The offence, if proved, was punishable with death. Socrates adhered to the traditional religion, but called upon the people to fight the corrut elements [associated with its observance]. He himself would have nothing to do with them.

Under the law of Athens, such offences were tried before a popular assembly. Socrates was charged with violating the religion of the state and teaching others to do likewise and was tried before an assembly of elders. Many members of the assembly had suffered as a result of Socrates' teaching. Because of this, they bore him a grudge. They wrongfully declared him guilty and condemned him to die by taking poison. A prisoner sentenced might be put to death in any one of a number of ways. Socrates was condemned to death by poisoning.

This brave man took poison by his own hand and died. On the day of his death he discoursed to his friend and companion on the perishable nature of the human body and the immortality of the soul. It is said that up to the very last moment Socrates showed no fear, and that he took the poison smilingly. As he finished the last sentence of his discourse, he drank the poison from the cup as eagerly as we might drink sherbet from a glass.

Today the world cherishes Socrates' memory. His teaching has benefited millions. His accusers and his judges stand condemned by the world. Socrates has gained immortality and Greece stands in high esteem because of him and others like him.

Socrates' speech in his own defence was committed to writing by his companion, the celebrated Plato. It has been translated into many languages. The defence is excellent and imbued with moral fervour. We, therefore, wish to translate it, but rather than render it literally, we print only a summary of it.

We have much to struggle for, not only in South Africa but in India as well. Only when we succeed in these [tasks] can India be rid of its many afflictions. We must learn to live and die like Socrates. He was, moreover, a great Satyagrahai. He adopted Satyagraha against his own people. As a result the Greeks became a great people. if, through cowardice or fear of dishonour or death, we fail to realize or examine our shortcomings and fail to draw the people's attention to them, we

shall do no good to India's cause, notwithstanding the number of external remedies we may adopt, notwithstanding the Congress sessions [we may hold], not even by becoming extremists. India's good does not lie along that direction. When the disease is diagnosed and its true nature revealed in public, and when, through suitable remedies, the body [politic] of India is cured and cleansed both within and without, it will become immune to the germs of the disease, that is, to the oppression by the British and the others. If, however, the body itself is in a state of decay, then if we destroy one kind of germs, it will be attacked by another, and this will ruin the body [politic] India herself.

We argued thus and saw in the words of a great soul like Socrates the qualities of an elixir. We wanted our readers, therefore, to imbibe a deep draught of it, so that they might be able to fight—and to help others fight- the disease. It is with this objective in mind that we summarize Socrates's speech.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-4-1908

123. EGYPT'S FAMOUS LEADER [*-II*]

The Pasha enjoyed extraordinary popularity among students. It was once noted by a scholar that all students were his supporters. When he returned from Europe, the students and the common people took out a long procession in his honour such as had never been seen before in honour of another Egyptian.

Besides being a great orator, Mustafa Kamal Pasha was a great writer. According to the *Daily News* of England, he was one of the world's ablest Muslim journalists. While still in school, he wrote a book entitled Roman Slavery and another called *The Life of Nations.* Besides some poetry, he wrote *The Conquest of Andalusia,* historical novel. He possessed an unflagging imagination and an infinite capacity for taking pains. While yet under twenty, he started Al *Madresa,* a magazine which became famous for its trenchant and original writing. In 1900 he started the journal *Luwa*. Earlier he had written for Egyptian and foreign periodicals. Thanks to his perfect mastery of French, he found invaluable opportunities for placing the Egyptian case before the European peoples. Later in life, notwithstanding the pressure of work, which had increased considerably, he found time to write a book on Japan.

Most of his European friends were Frenchmen, who are bound to be shocked to hear of the Pasha's death. His fine qualities of character had won him a large number of friends. People found his man-

ners and his gentle speech irresistible, and joined his (Nationalist) Party. Madame Juliet Adam, who was a lifelong friend, writes in the foreword to the French edition of his speeches that "in the course of his extensive travels in Europe he had made many friends among statesmen and journalists". These friendships stood him in good stead in his work for the country's welfare.

Mustafa Kamal Pasha's efforts were addressed to the task of stemming the tide of blind contempt for Egyptians, which had risen in the wake of British rule. His success in this endeavour was unquestionable. If today the French have a high opinion of the Egyptians in every field and are sympathetically inclined towards them, it is because of Mustafa Kamal Pasha's great campaign. His speeches, his conversation, his writings, all showed that he spared no effort to ensure the progress of his country. His writings and speeches appear to be inspired by the principles of the great Italian patriot, Mazzini. We often notice in them a conviction, similar to Mazzini's, that truth and justice will triumph in the end. The evils of apathy, lack of patriotism and cowardice, he considered to be the arch enemies of his country and in his attempt to rid Egypt of them became involved in serious conflict.

He was convinced that Egypt could not make any real progress in the absence of intellectual resources like those that the West commanded. He missed no opportunity of emphasizing the need for more intimate contacts between the peoples of the West and the East. He remained, however, a faithful follower of Islam. He had unbounded enthusiasm for religious reform. His connection with Turkey was well known. Piqued by it, some whites called him a Turkophile. It was one of his political convictions that Turkey would not stand in the way of Egypt's independence. His political views won him the Sultan's respect and he was awarded the titles of "Majidia of the Second Order" and "Ratba-ul-Saftani".

His activities during the closing years of his life were widely known throughout Egypt. Each year he undertook more and more work. He was a fearless man and would not give up his campaign. The occupation of the Sudan by the British and other similar events dealt a cruel blow to [the hopes of] Egyptian independence. But the Pasha remained undaunted. As his supporters forsook him in increasing numbers and timid friends gave up their advocacy of [the cause of] Egypt, Mustafa Kamal Pasha became the bolder and exerted himself all the more.

His last great act was the founding of the Nationalist Party of

Egypt in the December of 1906. Thousands of people were moved to a high pitch of enthusiasm when he stepped out from his death-bed to make a speech; they acclaimed it with thunderous applause, and the pledge that they took on the occasion to adhere to the principles of the Nationalist Party will be remembered as Mustafa Kamal Pasha's legacy to his compatriots.

His delicate health was undermined by the severe strain of the work he did in connection with the founding of his party, so much so that he was never himself again. He continued to work for the movement from hisdeath-bed, and wrote to the Prime Minister [of England] and to Sir Edward Grey in reply to the charge that Egyptians lacked ability and did not deserve an independent government. On February 10, the sixth day after this, his earthly career came to an end, and he gave up his mortal body.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-4-1908

124. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

HAMIDIA SOCIETY'S LETTER

The Hamidia [Islamic] Society has sent an address of thanks to several persons abroad who helped in the struggle against the law. The address is printed in gold, red and yellow on thick card of superior quality with the edges trimmed decoratively. About 200 copies will be posted. It is signed by Imam Abdool Kadir. Fancy and Mr. Coovadia. Here is a translation of the address[1]:

DEAR SIR,

On behalf of the Hamidia Islamic Society, we beg to tender you our best thanks for the very warm interest you have taken in the British Indian cause in the Transvaal, and for the prompt response you have always made to our Society's appeal for help. We have no doubt that your advocacy contributed materially to the happy issue of the struggle which taxed the utmost resources of the community. The Asiatic Act specially affected the Mahomedan community in that it deliberately insulted Islam by distinguishing against Turkish Mahomedans and in favour of other Turkish subjects. It was, therefore, natural that this Society should have made a special effort to secure the repeal of the Act, and it has been to our Society a matter of very great satisfaction that our appeal made to Mahomedans and others has been so favourably received.

[1] The English text is from *Indian Opinion* 18-4-1908.

THREE ADDRESSES

The addresses to Lord Ampthill, Syed Ameer Ali and Sir Muncherjee Bhownaggree are ready. They will be posted to Mr. Ritch next week. He will present them in person to the three gentlemen on behalf of the community. The addresses express our thanks to them.

"THE GOLD LAW"

The Government has published a draft Bill for a law about mines in the Transvaal. The law is commonly known as "The Gold Law". The Government intends to get it passed during the next session of Parliament. The draft Bill has reference to the existing Gold Law but some of thesections bearing on Coloured persons, which were ambiguous, will now bear a construction unfavourable to them. The Government had, under the present law, refused to issue licences in Johannesburg and other cities. The readers of *Indian Opinion* may recall the case at Roodepoort. Owing to the ambiguity the law] the Government did not persist in its stand. If the draft Bill referred to above is passed, it will prevent Indians not only from obtaining licences in mining areas but also from residing in them. That is to say, in the mining areas, Indians and other Coloured races can live only in the Location. The noteworthy sections in the Bill. I am sending a summary There are other noteworthy for the English section. But the point most worthy of note is the one I have mentioned. It will be necessary for the Indian community to put up a stiff fight against this law. A journal in England has already come out in our favour. But the opposition [to the law] will inspire respect only when we do all that is required of us. The Indian community will continue to be the target of such attacks. The more we fight back the more shall we succeed and the stronger shall we become.

PERFECT JUSTICE

Some Kaffirs have bought land in their own names in Sophiatown and settled there. The sites are situated within municipal limits. According to the municipal regulations, no Kaffir can live outside the Location without permission. These Kaffirs were prosecuted by the municipality under the regulations. The Magistrate fined them. The Kaffirs went in appeal, and won. The Supreme Court has held that it *is ultra vires* of the municipality to frame a regulation for Kaffirs.[1] In

[1] In fact, one of the judges remarked that, while the law might be on the side of the municipality, the equities were all on the side of the appellants. The Court, however, gave no ruling on this point and set aside the conviction on the ground that "the resolution fixing the date was never promulgated by publication in the *Gazette* or in any other way".

the course of his judgment, justice Wessels condemned the action of the municipality as tyrannical and stated that in a civilized country vested rights ought not to be disturbed. It is a happy thought that the Supreme Court has always dispensed perfect justice, as it has on this occasion.

REGISTRATION

Registration is going on. In Pretoria, Mr. Chamney had refused to consider the objection raised by several Indians who were strongly opposed to giving finger-prints. The question has now been settled. The office at Pretoria will be kept open to enable these persons in particular to register. It will also open in Johannesburg for a short period with a viewto giving another chance to those who had not applied earlier. At the moment, it is going round Pietersburg, Potchefstroom and other towns and it is expected that, by April 10, the submission of applications will have been completed. It is assumed that it will then take about a month to issue the registers.

IMPATIENT INDIANS

We find that many Indians outside are impatient to enter the Transvaal. Some of them manage to get in surreptitiously. I must warn all such Indians that they do the community great harm. There is no objection to the entry of those who hold valid permits obtained after the war, but others would do well to wait for the present.

WHITE HAWKERS

The white hawkers have been much emboldened by Mr. Bailey's speech[1] "It Krugersdorp. They have asked for help to the tune of C200, of which Mr. Bailey has promised to give 1'50. They want to compete with the Indian hawkers and beat them at their trade. The movement does not appear to be particularly strong. At the same time, however there can be no doubt that, if such a movement is kept alive and we do nothing about it we shall suffer. Let the Indian community remember that it has to deal with an enemy who is not likely to give in without a struggle. He is brave and will return to the attack again and again. Indian hawkers should be especially careful to keep their wares clean, be honest in their dealings and avoid being rude.

[1] *Vide 1st* footnote of "Johannesburg letter", 28-3-1908.

OUDTSHOORN INDIANS

The Association received a telegram from Oudtshoorn (Cape Colony) in which the Chairman, Mr. Mahamed Khan, has stated that a meeting attended by about 40 Indians was held at which a fund was raised to help the Association in its work. The proceeds, he said, would be forwarded [to the Association] during the following week. The week is out and the money is expected any moment now.

LATE NEWS ABOUT REGISTRATION

Up to March 30, 7,262 applications for registration had been made, and 4,096 certificates passed and signed. The office has visited all the places in the Colony, and everywhere people have begun registering.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-4-1908

125. THE NATAL DIRECT-LINE INDIAN ROUTE

We are publishing in our Gujarati columns abstract[1] from two letters from correspondents complaining of inadequate accommodation and other inconveniences on the Natal Direct liners bound for India. The passengers complain that latrines are bad and insanitary, deck space is limited and uncomfortable, the holds too small to contain the passengers accepted. There are other complaints into which we need not enter at present. We draw the attention of the agents and the owners of these vessels to the facts alleged, and trust that the complaints of the deck-passengers will be thoroughly investigated and relief granted, if the complaints are found to be true.

Indian Opinion, 11-4-1908

126. LEPERS' BLESSINGS

Let us not assume that the British are happy only because they rule. There are many other reasons for concluding that the British are happy. We have often discussed why they are happy and why they rule.[2] We have again been led to give thought to this question by an account we have received of a lepers' hospital. India has a large number of lepers. We usually shun them, and keep them at a distance.

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] *Vide* "The Deputations' Voyage —II", 11-11-1906, "The Deputation's Voyage—III", Before 20-10-1906 and "England and her Colonies", 20-4-1907

There may be some who do not behave in this way. But we do not hear of anyone from among us coming forward to give them medical treatment or to build hospitals for them. The task of bringing medical aid to these people appears to have been left to the whites. The Hindus have among them a whole class of people whom they may not even touch. Members of this class are subjected to severe privations and hardly ever treated as human beings. Here again, it is the Europeans who go to their rescue.

There is a place called Chandkuri in India. There, Christian missionaries have established a lepers' hospital to which they admit any Indian leper. According to pre-1900 census figures, there were at least 100,000 lepers in India. Missionaries have established 50 hospitals in which they not only treat them, but also educate them and look after their children, providing them food and clothing. They also arrange for their schooling. Europeans go out from various countries to take up this work, giving up their own pursuits. They are convinced that this is the best way of servinghumanity. They look upon it as holy work, which will bring prosperity to them and their people. Mr. Anderson, a Canadian millionaire, has gone to work in these hospitals.

How are these hospitals financed? If anyone wants to know, he will find the information in the pamphlet from which we have taken the foregoing. The expenses are met from funds raised in England. We in India pay only a small part of the expenditure.

What is the object behind this work? The question is simply answered. Their aim is, undoubtedly, to convert to Christianity the victims of the disease who go to them. But no one is sent away for refusing to be converted. Their constant objective is to treat these people, whatever happens.

Is there any reason why people, who so nobly serve humanity and from among whom thousands come forward for such work, should not prosper? Why indeed should they not rule?

How can Indians expect to prosper if they refuse to shoulder their own burdens of this sort and forsake what is clearly their own duty? How can they expect to have *swaraj?* And what will they gain from *swaraj?* It is not as if there were no lepers in England, or other deserving causes [for their money]. But the British do not depend on others for such work. They attend to their tasks themselves. We do not accept our own responsibilities, let alone help others.

We must give thought to these matters. We look at the question only superficially, curse the British for denying us our rights and feel triumphant when we have started an agitation to drive them out. But this way we only do ourselves harm. We forget the real cause.

It may well be that the British preside over an empire and prosper because of the blessings of these lepers while we live in misery because of their curses.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-4-1908

127. CAPE TOWN INDIANS

The Cape Argus of Cape Town writes as follows:

> At a time when hundreds of whites are leaving South Africa owing to the lack of employment opportunities, it behoves the authorities to check further immigration. It would be highly absurd if, while there was a continuous exodus of white men, there should also be a corresponding influx of Asiatics. It appears from letter we have received that there is ground at least for suspicion that the Act is not being implemented with the necessary thoroughness. This maybe due to defects in the law. Our correspondent statesthat 200 Asiatics have landed claiming to be under sixteen; they say that their fathers are here but that their mothers are in India. This is too significant to be passed over.

These remarks of *The Cape Argus* should be taken seriously. It should be remembered that *The Cape is* not normally hostile to Indians. How is it then that it writes in this vein? Can it be that we have been at fault? When anything is said or done against us, it is a golden rule first to look for faults in ourselves.

We do not know whether any unlawful practices are employed in connection with the immigration of Indians. We have no personal experience to go by. But we can infer from what is happening in Natal and elsewhere that, to some extent, we must be at fault. If there is any truth in the above allegation, it should give the Cape Indians food for thought. The present situation, in South Africa does not conduce to the immigration of Indians in large numbers. It is essential that such immigration should not be allowed to go on.

Similar complaints are being received from the Transvaal also. It is said that people have been entering the country surreptitiously.

How can this be prevented? It is a difficult question to answer. But it must be realized that the honour of the Indian community depends on a solution being found for this problem.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-4-1908

128. LICENCE CASE AT DUNDEE

The refusal of a licence to Mr. Cassim Ghulam in Dundee is a grave injustice. It is stated that the ground for this refusal is that he has thrice compromised with his creditors. Even if a person seeks settlement with his creditors thirty times, why should that create any difficulty about issuing a licence to him? Only those devoid of any sense of justice would give such a judgment. When the lion in the fable wanted to kill the lamb, he charged him with muddying the water in the river. The hapless lamb replied that he was drinking down stream while the lion was up stream. The prince of a lion roared, "If not you, your father must have done that," saying which he ate up the lamb. Some of the licensing officers and the Licensing Board itself have been behaving in much the same manner. When the Indians cease to be lambs and become lions, the licensing officers will have a hard time of it. For, as usually happens, the pupil will go one better than the teacher. Will the Indian lion wake up?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-4-1908

129. HARDSHIPS ON STEAMERS[1]

In this issue we publish two letters which complain of severe hardships to passengers on Natal Direct Line steamers. The letters do give the impression that the inconveniences are real. We take it to be a good sign that Indian passengers have begun to complain about them. The only reason why white passengers get so many facilities on steamers is that they do not put up with inconveniences without demur. We draw the attention of the agents of the Line to the two letters. It is their duty to investigate the complaints thoroughly and set matters right.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-4-1908

130. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

DISHONESTY AT BORDER

There is a rumour that permitless Indians are crossing over into the Transvaal from all directions. If there are any Indians thus

[1] *Vide* also "The Natal Direct-Line Indian Route", 11-4-1908

entering the Transvaal unlawfully, they will doubtless suffer in the end and other Indians along with them. Those who want to come in unlawfully had better be careful of what they do. If, earlier, there had been no dishonesty in this matter, the Asiatic Act would never have been called into existence. Since, however, the leaders are not behind such activities and do not want to play foul with the Government, the Acting Chairman, Mr. Coovadia, has sent the following letter to the Government:

> My Association has received information that a few Asiatics enter the Transvaal without permits, some of them on foot. My Association does not know what checks exist at the border. But since it is my Association's intention to assist the Government in preventing the entry of unauthorized persons, it suggests that strict watch be kept at the border and on the trains. My Association believes that this can be done without being harsh on anyone. Prosecution of those entering the Transvaal without permits or similar authority will not imply any breach of the compromise. My Association believes that these persons can be prosecuted under the immigration Act.

ASIATIC BAZAAR

The Klerksdorp Chaber has resolved to send the Asiatics to Locations and to confine their trade within those Locations. The Chamber wrote to the Potchefstroom Chamber seeking As support on this question, but the latter did not endorse the resolution, arguing that the Indians could not be sent to Locations unless they were paid compensation. The [Potchefstroom] Chamber has accordingly refused to write to the Government.

FREEDOM FOR BLACKS TO DRINK

There is a movement in Pretoria against prohibition among Coloured persons. According to newspaper reports, there is a person named Cassi who plays a leading part in this movement. Meetings have been held at Pretoria on this question. A petition to the Transvaal Government has been drafted. The petition argues that Coloured persons can get liquor despite the prohibidon. A large number of whites exploit the situation to fleece the people. Since Coloured persons do in any case drink on the sly, it would be better to let them do so openly. Being obliged to drink surreptitiously, they gulp down whatever they can lay hands on and get drunk. The petitioners argue that, instead of all in this to continue, everyone may be permitted to drink. A large number of natures are being obtained from Coloured persons. They cannot get any Indians to sign it, and I hope that no

Indian ill. I see the hand of whites behind this petition. The Dutch rulers are inclined to allow the Coloured persons some freedom to drink.[1] If there had been no agitation in England against such a move, a Bill to this effect would have been passed during the last session of Parliament. I know that some Indians buy liquor illegally, and drink it too. Even those who drink know that it is a bad habit, but they do not give it up. They think it is a habit which cannot be broken. They do not realize that they show little spirit in holding on to this believe If they take their courage in both hands and get rid of the habit, they will do themselves as well as their community a lot of good.

CONCEALED KNIFE

Not only does the Government attack us with unsheathed swords, but it also has concealed knives in its armoury. Last year a law was passed about the keeping of dogs as pets. Normally one would not read such a law. I did not read it myself. It is only when they enforce the law that we discover that it subjects us to further harassment. Some Indians residing out the municipal limits keep dogs. The Government says that they should pay ten shillings ayear for keeping one. The whites can register their dogs without paying a fee, while Indians and other Coloured persons are required to pay it. Indians in mofussil areas are seriously concerned as to what they should do about it. Some of them are preparing to take the matter to court. I think this law cannot be enforced, for it does not contain any clause about Royal assent. It is necessary for all laws entailing racial discrimination to have such a clause. Mr. Nagadi has taken up the question. Further information can be had from him.

ADMIRATION FOR INDIANS

Pretoria News has a long article on registration which says that the Indians and the Chinese have assisted the authorities and have behaved satisfactorily. Registration has so far gone on without difficulty. There have been very few cases in which objections could be raised.

ADVOCATE POLAK

The editor of this journal, Mr. Polak, was enrolled as an Attorney last Monday. The reader will recall that Mr. Polak has been busy with his legal studies during the last three years. He has taken the London Matriculation Examination and passed other examinations as well. He knows French nearly as well as he does English. In the course of the last three years, he passed the law examinations in the

[1] They did not have this freedom at the time of writing.

Transvaal. Having completed three years with Mr. Gandhi on March 1 last, he became entitled to apply for enrolment as an Attorney. The Supreme Court received and accepted his application last Monday.

LICENCE

Indians who have not taken out licences had better do so expeditiously. Those who hold new registers will get a licence for the whole year on the production of their registers. Those who do not have the registers will get licences [which will be valid] up to June 30. But applications for these should be made before the 30th of this month. Anyone who fails to do so is likely to be prosecuted in May. It is therefore essential that every Indian [trader] hurries up and gets himself a licence.

REGISTRATION

The total number of applications made up to the 8th is 7,607, and the number of certificates issued up to that date is 4,590. For the moment, applications are being received in Warmbaths and Lydenburg. In Benoni, applications will be received on the 13th, 14th and 15th; in Volksrust, on the 13th and 14th; in Potchefstroom and Krugersdorp, on the 16th, 17th and 18th.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-4-1908

131. STORY OF A SOLDIER OF TRUTH [-II]

"I cannot tell, O Athenians, how far you have been carried away by my accusers' words. For my own part, they nearly made me forget who I was, so plausible were they. But I say that their arguments are a lie. Among their falsehoods there was one which astonished me most. They asked you not to be misled by my eloquence. It is they who are rhetorical. I have no skill in the art of speaking. If by rhetoric they mean truth, I admit that I possess it. However, if they allow that I am a. truthful person, I am not an orator in their sense of the word. For they have spoken with dazzling effect, but there is nothing of truth in their words. For my part, I shall place before you the whole truth and nothing but the truth. I have not come to you with a prepared speech. I am an old man. It is not for me to speak before you eloquently or in brilliant words. Do not be surprised, therefore, if I speak as simply as I am used to. I am now more than seventy years old, and this is my first experience of a law court. I am thus a stranger to the dignified ways of a court and to the manner of speech appropriate to it. Do not therefore mind my style. As judges, your duty is to consider whether

or not what I say is just. My duty is to place before you nothing but the truth.

"My accusers are many in number. One of the charges is that I inquire into all things and make the worse appear the better reason, and so mislead the people. Those who accuse me thus are powerful persons. They say that I do not adhere to the religion of our forefathers. Moreover, they made these accusations when I was not there and it was therefore impossible for me to defend myself. I hope that your hearts will be freed from the bias created by their malicious or cunning reports. Nevertheless, I know that my task is a difficult one. I shall say what is needful, be the issue as God wills it.

I mentioned a while ago the substance of their charge against me. They also lampoon me in plays[1] and show me as trying to walk on air. I have not even thought about these things. I do not mean to suggest that it is impossible to walk on air. If anyone can do so, let him try by all means. For my part I have no knowledge of these matters, yet Meletus has made a charge against me to that effect. Many of you here in this assembly have known me for a long time. You may consult among yourselves and find out whether I have ever talked to anyone on these matters. If all of you agree that I have not, you will see that the other charges against me must be equally false.

"My accusers say, moreover, that I undertake to educate men and demand payment of money in return. This, again, is false. Even if it were true, I see nothing wrong in it. There are many teachers among us who ask to be paid for their work. If they do their teaching welland are paid for it, I see no dishonour in that. If we owned an animal, we would engage a man to train it and pay him for his work. Why then should we not teach our children to be good, to do their duty as citizens? And if we found a teacher who might lead them along the right path, why should we not pay him? But, speaking for myself, I have not had the opportunity to be such a teacher.

"You may well ask me, 'If you have no faults, why is it that so many accusations are brought against you? If you have done nothing to mislead the people why are these accusations made against you and not against someone else?' This would not be an unfair question to ask. I shall endeavour to show why these charges have been brought against me. Perhaps you think that I am jesting. Be assured, however, that I speak nothing but the truth. The reason for their accusations is that I possess a certain wisdom. If you ask, 'What kind of wisdom?' I

[1] In Aristophanes's play, *Clouds*, Socrates was made out to be a subverter of the *Polis*. He "walked on air, contemplated the sun.... paddled about the streets of Athens -like a waterfowl" and ran "a thinking-school".

can only say that, although it be but human wisdom, even the oracle[1] has said that I have more of it than others.

"Though these are the words of the oracle, I did not readily believe them. Accordingly, I went to one reputed to be the wisest among us. I asked him a few questions and discovered that his was only a pretence to knowledge. I make no such claim. To that extent, therefore, I must be wiser than he is. For he who knows the extent of his own ignorance is wiser than another who does not. But when I proved his ignorance to that learned man, he came to bear me a grudge. Then I went to another person of learning. He also laid claim to knowledge which was only a cover for his ignorance. I proved the truth to him and thus made an enemy of him. I approached a large number of men in this manner, and all of them tried to shield their ignorance. I showed to each one of them how ignorant he was and so incurred his displeasure. I observed that the greater the pretence to knowledge the greater in fact the darkness. I also came to realize that true knowledge consists in being aware of how utterly ignorant one is.

"I went to many a poet and many an artisan. I found that a large number of poets could not explain the meaning of their compositions. The artisans were certainly superior [to me] in virtue of their skill, but out of pride in their skill, they assumed themselves to be wiser than others in other matters as well. All of them are really steeped in ignorance withoutknowing it. I learnt that I was more fully aware than any of them of the true state of our ignorance."

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-4-1908

132. EGYPT'S FAMOUS LEADER [*-III*]

The following account appeared in the Egyptian Press of the people's grief at the death of Mustafa Kamal Pasha.

As the news spread of Mustafa Kamal Pasha's death a deep gloom fell [over Cairo] and people collected in large numbers in front of the offices of Luwa Old men broke into wails of childlike grief. The young and the middle-aged cried aloud. It was an altogether mournful scene, such that even a heart of stone could not but be moved.

All through the day crowds thronged in front of the offices of *Luwa*. A tent which had been put up there was filled to overflowing with people overcome with grief. The lamentation that rose when the

[1] Of Delphi

bier left Mustafa Kamal Pasha's house is impossible to describe. Tears flowed freely from the eyes of [even] the most self-controlled of men. The air became thick with the cries of women and others. The bier was covered with the Egyptian flag. On reaching the high road, people formed a procession and followed [the bier] solemnly. At the head were the students of Mustafa Kamal Pasha's school. The students of the Khedive's schools of law and medicine carried black flags. Students of other schools, too, joined the procession, all carrying different symbols of mourning. Along with the other mourners, the procession was more than a hundred thousand strong. It is said that this huge procession extended over three miles.

Because of the crowds, vehicular traffic had been suspended on the roads along the route of the procession. At some places the crowds were so dense that people found it difficult even to walk. There were tears in the eyes of the policemen who patrolled [the roads] to prevent accidents and maintain law and order. Along the route, every window, every terrace was crowded with humanity and all round one saw men, women and children weeping bitterly for their beloved leader. It was an agonizing scene.

Moving slowly, the procession first made for the Casoun Mosque, from where it resumed its course after a twenty minutes' prayer. As it approached its destination, one could see wave upon wave of griefstricken humanity advancing from all directions. For some time the people could not bring themselves to lower the coffin into the grave. The burial took place to the accompaniment of a dirge composed by Ismail Pasha Sabri, Head of the Department of Justice. People were so deeply moved by the dirge that their grief found vent in bitter sobbing. The following are some of the verses from the dirge.

> O grave, offer respectful welcome to yourguest. The Egyptian people had put their hopes in him.
>
> That a great patriot like you, with a heart so noble, should have passed away in the prime of his life, is a grief too heavy to bear. You showed us the path of success. We shall defend the edifice of national progress that you have raised. You never encouraged indulgence in tears of grief, but permit us this day to drown in grief. From the morrow, firm as a rock, we shall resume the work that you have left behind.

The funeral was attended by a large number of prominent persons.

February 10 was a day of mourning for those who aspire for a free Egypt. In the entire history of Cairo, there had been no instance

of such deep mourning. It is said that those who were in the funeral procession will not forget the day for a long time to come.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-4-1908

133. BRITISH WOMEN AS SATYAGRAHIS

We have always compared the Indian satyagraha movement with that of the British suffragettes.[1] The brave women of England are continuing their campaign. They started their movement earlier than we did ours, and no one can say when it will end. But their courage and their capacity for suffering are inexhaustible. Many women have been to gaol for their rights. One of them has narrated her experiences in a newspaper and these ought to shame us and inspire us to greater courage. Our sufferings are as nothing compared to what she has had to go through. She writes:

> After we were led out of the quadrangle where we were first detained, we were asked to give our names, ages, addresses, etc. We look upon these questions as a form of popular welcome to those who have arrived to enjoy the hospitality of gaol. After such particulars as our names, etc., had been noted, we went in to don our prison uniforms of coarse cloth. First, we were required to stand barefooted, with just a kind of gown over each of us,
>
> while they made an inventory of our personal clothes, jewellery, etc. After we had been weighed, our hair was undone and examinedfor infection. For a few minutes, we were required to immerse our feet in warm water, after which we put on the rest of the prison uniform. Over the dress was a belt with the prisoner's number on it. A piece of cloth was given to each of us for handkerchief. There being no pockets, it was loosely pinned on to the dress. We were not permitted to wash it oftener than once in eight days, no allowance being made for the possibility of the public guest (the prisoner) catching cold.

We were given stockings similar to cycling stockings, which did not reach up to the knees. There were no garters either, and when we were taken out on a walk round the gaol lasting half an hour, the stockings would slip down, which was very embarrassing. The shoes provided were made of the coarsest hide. What with numerous patches and stitches, they had become very heavy. The nails from the soles

[1] *Vide* "Deeds Better than words", 26-10-1906, "The Deputation's voyage—V", 3-11-1906 & "Duty of cape and Natal [Indians], 30-3-1907.

protruded so much that soon our feet and stockings were heavily pierced. When we complained about this to the wardress, she dumped a pile of old shoes before us and asked us to choose the pairs with the fewest nails protruding.

At night, we were locked up in our basement [cell]. We slept on wooden boards covered with coir mattresses and were given a thin blanket each to cover ourselves with. Sleep, of course, there was none. At six on winter mornings, when it was still dark, a bell was sounded to call us out of bed. Sometimes, after getting up, I put on the day-clothing over the night-dress. I was compelled to do this as the nights were very cold. We then washed in a tin basin and did our hair as well as we could without a looking-glass. It would be time by then for the doors to open, and we were asked to go and fetch water.

We then had bread and cocoa—I do not know what the latter tastes like, never having taken it myself—after which we washed the cell. This practice, which appeared to me to be altogether absurd and foolish, has come down from old times.

After we had washed the cell and had replaced the wooden spoons and prayer-books on the shelves, we were called upon to sew canvas bags for use in post-offices. Then we said our prayers for half-an-hour—30 to 40 of us together—with the wardress in front watching lest we should talk among ourselves.

After half-an-hour's exercise, we were locked up in the cell forthe day, everyone being set some very hard task. Lunch came to the accompaniment of jingling of keys and creaking of doors. The few courses included potato, which was the only thing I ate.

For dinner, we had bread with tea or cocoa. They would then take away the scissors which had been given us for cutting thestrong string used in sewing the. mail-bags, the object being, probably, to leave no means to tempt anyone to commit suicide because of the extreme cold at night. I was told later that garters were not supplied for the same reason.

Prisoners are not allowed to receive letters, nor to send out any. If a letter arrived for any prisoner the authorities read it and returned it to the sender with the remark that prisoners were not entitled to receive letters.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-4-1908

134. NATAL GOVERNOR AND INDIANS

For the first time after assuming office the Natal Governor has spoken on the Indian question. Speaking at the annual conference of the Natal Agricultural Union, he suggested that they should depend more on Kaffir than on Indian labour; otherwise, he added, it would not be possible to treat the Asiatics already in the country with that fairness which it was in the white man's nature to extend to other, weaker races.

This speech gives rise to two thoughts. Examining its implications we see that [ultimately] it is in the interests of the Indians that the Governor has spoken. He has warned the whites that, if the Indian immigration continues, Natal will eventually come to be dominated by them. Let us thank Sir Mathew Nathan for wanting to do justice by the Indians.

But duty demands that we look at both sides of a question, the good and the bad, and weigh the two. We must not be elated and swept off our feet by the good that we may expect to find. Equally, we must not give way to despair and anger. Looking at the Indian question from this point of view, we find that the concluding words of the Governor's speech are not justified by facts. He says that it is in the nature of the whites to deal fairly with other, weaker races. This implies that Indians are weak and will remain so, at least for some time to come. The whites have always done justice and will go on doing it, for the present at any rate. We shall not blame him for assuming the Indians to be weak, for we have become weak and are content to remain so. People are bound to point their [accusing] finger at us. But the Governor had no right to place such views before the whites. It was unbecoming of him to have done so. We have been further degraded in their eyes. The remedy, however, is in our own hands. We were weak but are not so any longer, and even if we are, we must resolve not to remain weak. Being strong, we shall fight for our rights and our honour.

When we think in this vein, we must not imagine that strong means "physically strong" or that "fight" means "fight with swords and guns". It is indeed necessary to be physically strong. If the Indians want to learn the use of fire-arms and swords, by all means let them do so. But they will always remain strong if they have the weapon of truth in their hands, and will succeed even against those who have guns at their command. The most important reason why we should not assume that it is because of our frail physique that we are

thought weak is that the Kaffirs are thought weak by the whites despite their superior physical strength. They are intellectually backward. They are unlettered and have no arts. We can say that, despite the whites' physical strength, their arts, their industry and their education, we will be able to defeat them if we are truthful. Whatever education and other things are needful will come to us as a matter of course. We can find hundreds of instances of their having come in this manner [to a people].

But we shall soon find that, if we want to be accepted as strong by cultivating truth, we must concur in the Colony's view that there is a large enough population of Indians here for the present. There should be no objection to the entry of those who have a legal right to come in. But we must put an end to the illicit immigration and welcome the prohibition on the immigration of indentured labour. If the Indians already settled here can win the respect and status due to them, other disabilities will disappear.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-4-1908

135. DELAGOA BAY INDIANS

It is essential that the Delagoa Bay Indians wake up and become vigilant. We draw their attention to the regulations for Asiatics whichhave been published in that Colony. They were published a long time ago. We have already commented on them earlier.[1] We find it neces-sary to repeat the warning. If the regulations remain in force for any length of time, it will be difficult to challenge them afterwards. Tho-ugh the Portuguese subjects are fully protected under these regula-tions, a large number of Indians who are not Portuguese subjects will forfeit their rights. The regulations require that Indians carry a num-ber of passes when they move about. There are many other hardships also.

From a telegram we have received we learn that the Chinese are putting up a strong fight against the regulations. It is for this reason that the Chairman of the Chinese [Association in the Transvaal] has left for Delagoa Bay. As we write, a move is afoot to send Mr. Polak with him. We hope that, if Mr. Polak does go, the Indian leaders will help him in doing everything necessary to resist the law. Also, we take

[1] *Vide* "Indians in Delagoa Bay", 28-12-1907 ; 28-12-1907

it that, even if Mr. Polak is unable to visit the Colony, they will still fight the law.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-4-1908

136. DUTY OF NATAL CONGRESS

We print elsewhere a heart-rending account of the condition of Lobito Bay Indian.[1] They are in Natal, a stone's throw from Durban. It appears that the Government has put them in quarantine with the intention ultimately of sending them back to India.

It is said that these Indians do not even have any clothes to wear. It is only right that Mr. Dawad Mahomed, Mr. Dada Osman, Mr. Anglia and others start immediate relief measures. The work should be taken up by men like Mr. Parsee Rustomjee, who occupy leading positions but are not office-bearers of the Congress. This is what should be done. With the permission of the authorities, they should meet these people and hear their story. If employment can be found for any of them, a petition should be addressed [to the authorities] with a view to securing permission for them to stay on in Natal. If they do not have food to eat, a fund should be raised for feeding them. If they are without clothes, they should be given clothes to cover themselves with. It is not as if this work was the exclusive responsibility of the Congress. It should be attended to by everyIndian who can spare the time. With a little effort one will be able to render a great public service. For the Congress, at any rate, this is a matter of duty. The Congress workers, who are trustees of the Indians, will find that it is

[1] In 1906, an English engineer named Stone recruited some Natal Indians to work on the Benguella Railway at Lobito Bay in Portuguese Africa. According to reports in *Indian Opinion* of that time, the conditions of work were trying. There was no fresh water and only small quantities of foul and oily water were available for drinking. They were given white rice and bad *dhal,* with the result that about half the number of labourers died within three months of their arrival. After about 11 months they started leaving the place in batches—500 arriving in Natal in March, and 429 in April, 1908. The latter were put in quarantine at Bluff before being sent back to India and their condition was miserable indeed. Dawad Mahomed of the Natal Indian Congress visited them at the Bluff Quarantine Camp and in April, the Congress telegraphed the Colonial Secretary at Maritzburg to inquire what arrangements had been made for them in India. Congress officials attempted to see them again but permission was refused. *Vide* also "Indians Going to Lobito Bay", 30-3-1907 and "Lobito Bay", 20-7-1907

only through the blessings of the poor that they will prosper. We hope that there will be no delay in this matter.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-4-1908

137. IMPORTANT CASE AT THE CAPE

Impelled by the reports in newspapers of the case against four Indian boys in the Cape, we called for a special report through Reuter. The following is the substance of the telegram we have received. We believe our readers will be happy to read this correct version. Often English papers do not report the full news in such cases. Calling for a special message puts us to some extra expense but we thereby discover important facts. We therefore intend in future to follow this practice whenever necessary.

The Reuter message says that the authorities refused the four boys permission to land. Their case was that, since their parents were domiciled in the Cape and since they themselves were under sixteen, they were entitled to be admitted. Four doctors testified that the boys were above sixteen. Seven doctors-Dr. Curry among them—deposed that they were under sixteen. Dr. Curry said in his evidence that he had had a good deal of experience [of conditions] in India. The Mahomedans in the area to which the boys belonged were known to possess a good physique. The doctor therefore concluded that, the boys being Mahomedans, they had the sort of physique one would expect of boys under sixteen. The Supreme Court accepted this evidence and ordered that the boys be permitted to land.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-4-1908

138. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

INDIAN SATYAGRAHIS

Mr. Coovadia, Treasurer to the Association, has left for India. He will very probably not return. He has spent a third of his life in South Africa. We can therefore appreciate his desire to spend the rest of his days in India, in prayer and in the promotion of public welfare. The Hamidia Society gave him an excellent farewell party on Sunday. On the same day, Mr. Coovadia also gave a dinner at his place [to friends].

Mr. Coovadia did fine work during the satyagraha campaign.

He kept his nerve till the end, persuaded those whom he could to remain firm and kept up enthusiasm among the people through his speeches. Though he had a large business, [and so had more to lose,] he cheerfully risked losses along with other businessmen. He also went round, during the movement, collecting contributions. I pray that he may be granted a long life and be enabled to devote himself to good works.

Like Mr. Coovadia, Mr. Alibhai Akuji and Mr. Alibhai Mahomed played a splendid role in the movement. These two gentlemen are also leaving for India. Had it not been for Mr. Alibhai Akuji's efforts and those of other leaders from Kanam[1], it would have been difficult to persuade the people from that area [to join the movement]. I know that Mr. Alibhai Akuji had wanted for some time to return to India, and also that he stayed behind especially because of the movement. I pray to God that Mr. Alibhai Akuji and Mr. Alibhai Mahomed may be blessed with long life and that they be enabled, too, to devote themselves to the service of the community and other good works.

"TRISUL"

In India the wound inflicted by a trident is believed to be very painful. The Town Council here wants to strike the Indians with just such a weapon. Despite the utter defeat it has suffered in the case against the Kaffirs of Sophiatown, it is shameless.[2] There is a saying among us, however, that the shameless have no face[3] to lose and that appears to be the case with this Town Council. Moreover, they say in English that a municipality has no soul; so how can a soulless thing have self-respect or honour? The Town Council proposes to approach the local Government with three demands [as under]:

> the introduction of such measures as may secure the enforcement of regulations having the object of preventing Natives and Coloured persons from occupying premises in localities other than those approved by the Council; of prohibiting the acquisition by lease, purchase or otherwise by Natives and Coloured persons of property in localities other than such as may be approved by the Council; and the regulation of the use of streets and sidewalks by Native.[4]

I do not see any possibility of such powers being granted to the Town Council. All the same, it is remarkable that the biggest Town Council in the Transvaal should in all seriousness entertain such a

[1] In Broach District, Gujarat

[2] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 4-4-1908

[3] Literally, nose

[4] The English text of the resolution has been taken from *Indian Opinion*, 18-4-1908.

proposal .Half the battle is won when we know our enemies. We must not therefore lose sight of the Town Council's intentions in this regard. If I say that such a law is impossible, it is because of the confidence I have in our community. A community which has only recently won a great victory, that is to say, which has conducted the satyagraha movement over a period of 16 months, is not likely to shrink from battle. Whatever, therefore, the intentions of the Johannesburg Town Council, they will only remain intentions. A community which has the trident aimed at it had better be on the look-out. That is the path of wisdom for us, and success for us lies along that way.

LICENCE

By the time this article is in the hands of the readers, it will be the 19th or 20th. Indians who have not by that date taken out trade licences will have only 11 days left. I advise them with all the emphasis at my command to take out licences during that period. I cannot assert that under no condition will a licence be issued after that date. But it is our duty faithfully to carry out our part of the bargain. It should be remembered that even those who have not taken out registers voluntarily will be entitled to licences which will be valid up to June 30.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 18-4-1908

139. SATYAGRAHA

PRIZE-WINNING ESSAY

PREFACE

During the days of the Transvaal campaign, we invited [entries for a prize] essay on the ethics of passive resistance. The reader will recall that we had offered a prize of £10 for it. There were only four competitors—two whites and two Indians. The decision as to who among them deserved the prize was left to Mr. Doke. He did not know the names [of the competitors] when he read the essays. He decided in favour of Mr. Maurice. Accordingly, a sum of £10 has been sent to him.

We have not so far been able to publish the essay for want of space. We do so now, since we have both the time and the space for it. The reader can read the original essay in the English section. Here, we

publish a translation.[1]

We were a little disappointed that not many persons had come forward to write. We do not think Mr. Maurice's essay is a particularly impressive piece of writing, or that it has depth. But his was undoubtedly the best of the four. We can also say that it is on the whole a readable essay. It should make us happy that we have found in South Africa an Indian who could write like that. Being an Indian Christian, it is natural that Mr. Maurice should draw most of his illustrations from Christian sources. We hope that a perusal of Mr. Maurice's essay will stimulate greater interest in satyagraha among the people and make them more familiar with a campaign of this kind.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-4-1908

140. STORY OF A SOLDIER OF TRUTH[*-III*]

SOCRATES'S DEFENCE

"You will now understand why I have so many accusers. I have been so busy bringing home to the people how ignorant we are and how very limited our knowledge is that I have taken no part in other public affairs. I have neglected my own affairs and have remained very poor. But I thought that I was serving God by opening the eyes of men totheir own ignorance. It is because I chose to do this that people are enraged.

"Some young men who have little work to do follow me about and imitate me in cross-examining half-baked persons. The persons who are thus cross-examined and exposed as frauds become angry with me. Being unable to bring any other charge against me, they say that I look into things far too closely, that I disbelieve in the gods and make the worse appear the better reason. Intent on covering up their own ignorance, they fill your ears with calumnies against me. Such are Meletus and a few others. Meletus says that I corrupt the youth of Athens. I shall now examine Meletus himself."

SOCRATES: Meletus, do you not think that young men should be trained to be virtuous in every possible manner?

MELETUS: I do.

S: Who is it then who makes them virtuous?

M: The laws.

[1] Here follows the Gujarati translation of the essay. For the English text, *vide* Appendix III.

S: That is not the answer to my question. What I asked was, 'Which man improves them?'

M: It is the judges who do so.

S: Do you mean to say that those who occupy the seats of justice are able to teach them virtue?

M: Certainly.

S: All of them? Or only some of them?

M: All of them.

S: That is well said. Now I ask you whether the listeners here can [also] improve the young or not.

M: They can, too.

S: You mean then that all the Athenians can instruct them in virtue while I alone corrupt them.

M: Most certainly, you do. Yes, that is what I mean.

S: You have made a serious charge against me. What you say probably holds good in the case of horses, too. Will you say that one man does them harm and everyone else improves them? On the contrary, is it not that only a very few are skilled in the art of training horses and the rest are ignorant? Surely you will admit that the same rule applies in the case of other animals? I think you cannot help doing so, for, of course, it does. And in saying that the case stands differently with men, you have given no thought, as far as I can see, to your charge against me. Besides, won't you admit that those who spend much time in the company of bad persons come under their evil influence?

M: I must admit that it is true.

S: Would you then say that anyone would want to injure himself intentionally?

M: That I cannot say.

S: Now tell me, do I corrupt the young intentionally or unintentionally?

M: I say you corrupt them intentionally.

S: How can you say that? You are young. I am an old man. Do you really believe that I do not realize how, by corrupting others, I would myself become the worse for it? You have yourself admitted that this is what would happen. For we saw that those who keep company with the bad themselves become bad.[1] No one will believe it

[1] Socrates had argued earlier that "bad citizens do their neighbours harm", and from this he drew the conclusion that "if I make any of my companions a rogue, he will probably injure me in some way". This step in the argument is omitted in Gandhiji's summary.

likely that I want to be hurt. If my argument is correct, your charge that I corrupt the young intentionally falls to the ground. Now let us suppose that I corrupt them unintentionally. In that case, it was your duty to show me how I did this. You have not even tried to correct my error. You would have nothing to do with me. You only brought me up [here] for punishment.[1] It is thus clear from what Meletus has said that he has never given the slightest thought to any serious matter. Now let us consider how I corrupt the young. Meletus, you say that I corrupt them by teaching them not to believe in the gods of the city?

M: Yes, most certainly, I mean that.

S: What do you imply by that? Do I teach [them] to disbelieve in the gods of the city, or to believe in some other gods?

M: I mean that you do not believe in any gods at all.

S: Bravo Meletus! You say that I believe neither the sun nor the moon to be a god, as the rest of the city does.

M: Yes, I do say that you believe the sun to be stone and the moon to be earth.

S: Who will believe you? No one will believe your charge. If I tried to teach any such thing, everyone would know that there was nothing new in that. These are others' idea.[2] I myself do not believe in what they say. However, since you accuse me thus about the sun and the moon, you will also say, I suppose, that I wholly disbelieve in the existence of God.

M: I do most certainly assert that you deny the existence of God.

S: You are then deliberately asserting something impossible. How can I say that there is no God? Can anyone assert the existence of man's attributes but deny the existence of man? Or assert the existence of things pertaining to horses but deny the existence of horses? Or assert the existence of things pertaining to angels but deny the existence of angels?

M: The existence of what pertains to a thing implies the existence of the thing itself

S: You admit that I talk of things pertaining to gods; you must admit therefore that I grant the existence of gods.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-4-1908

[1] What follows was addressed to the Assembly.

[2] Thales of Miletus and, in particular, Anaxagoras

141. EGYPT'S FAMOUS LEADER [*-IV*]

Here are some of the facts about the Nationalist Party founded by Mustafa Kamal Pasha.

A huge meeting was held in December last, attended by about a thousand sympathizers, to found the Nationalist Party. Of the resolutions passed at the meeting, the first appointed Mustafa Kamal Pasha the leader of the party during his lifetime. Provision was made for a meeting to be held within ten days of his death for the purpose of electing a new leader. Also a congress of the members of the Nationalist Party was to be held annually, at which an executive committee was to be elected. A sub-committee of eight members elected from it was to meet weekly.

The Party's views have spread throughout the Nile valley thanks to newspapers and speeches. The more well-to-do members of the Party have started schools at their own expense, which widely disseminate the party's principles. The object of the Party is to secure the establishment of an Egyptian Parliament. It will continue to hold a general congress every year till this object is achieved and will moreover do all it can to enable the people to defend their rights and to advance themselves.

The British Government cannot stop the Nationalist Party because the party is wise enough not to encourage acts of violence.

Addressing a 6,000-strong meeting Mustafa Kamal Pasha declared that his party would work to open the eyes of the Egyptian people to their present conditions, foster political consciousness in them and promote peace and unity between the two sections of Egyptian. society. The main object of the Nationalist Party was to see that the administration was entrusted to the people's representatives, who would be responsible to a sovereign parliament constituted on the European model; also, Egypt should enjoy complete freedom (from British control) in its internal administration.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-4-1908

142. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before *April 25, 1908*]

THE HON'BLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PRETORIA

SIR,

I have been desired by the Committee of my Association to approach the Government regarding the Draft Gold Law which the Government intend to introduce during the forthcoming session of Parliament

In the humble opinion of my Committee, the Draft [law] imposes on British Indians disabilities graver than those found in the existing law. My Committee had hoped, as it still hopes, that the legal disabilities of the community represented by it would be lightened by the Government instead of their being increased.

My Committee desired me specifically to draw the attention of the Government to the following:

1. The Draft retains in the definition of the term "Coloured person" the word "coolie" which, as applied to the present Indian population of the Colony, is an offensive term, there being in the Transvaal very few, if any, coolies in the proper sense of the term. Moreover, the bracketing together African natives and Asiatics, British subjects and non-British subject[2], is to ignore the peculiar position occupied by British Indian.

2. The retention of the original law as to dealing in unwrou-ght gold, in so far as it specially affects Coloured people besides their coming tinder the general prohibitions of the law, assumes that Coloured people are the greater offenders in respect of dealing in unwrought gold, whereas in the opinion of my Association the contrary is the fact in so far as British Indians are concerned.

3. Moreover, the definition of unwrought gold probably prevents Indian goldsmiths from carrying on their business of manufacturing jewellery even out of gold bars prepared in and imported from England. This, it will be readily admitted, is a grievous hardship for the goldsmiths in question.

[1] This letter was republished in *Indian Opinion,* 25-4-1908, under the title "The Draft Gold Law of the Transvaal: An Important -Letter of Protest".

[2] Residents of the Transvaal who were not subjects of the British Empire

4. Section 127 of the draft law is, it is submitted, rather vague and seems to contemplate entire prohibition of acquisition by Coloured people of any rights under it. The prohibition, under the same section, to holders of rights acquired previous to the draft law, to transfer or sub-let such right[s] to a Coloured person makes the law retrospective in its effect.

5. Finally, section 128 which contemplates the compulsory segrega-tion of Coloured people residing within proclaimed areas, would, if carried, make it impossible for a large majority of British Indians even to remain in the country.

In this connection, my Committee begs respectfully to remind the Government that my Association represents a people who claim to belong to a cultured stock in the human family, and trading and other interests which are sufficiently large to warrant the statement that the segregation of the Indian community means utter ruination to it from sheer inability to protect those interests in Bazaars, Locations or Compounds. My Com-mittee further reminds the Government that the majority of British Indians domiciled in the Transvaal live within the mining areas. My Committee therefore respectfully trusts that the clauses complained of will be with-drawn by the Government or will be so amended as to give the desired relief to the British Indian community residing in the Transvaal.

I [*am*] *etc.*,
ESSOP ISMAIL MIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Pretoria Archives; also Colonial Office Records: 291/132

143. FINE ON INDIANS

On an earlier occasion we wrote about the Report[1] of the Natal Immigration Department. We now have with us a copy of the full report. As we read it, other thoughts occur to us.

Last year, Indians paid a sum of £2,666.1.0 to the Natal Treasury [as fees] for domicile certificates, etc. Of this amount, £979.10.0 was for domicile passes, £631 for visiting passes and £l,036 for embarkation passes. In addition, £120 was forfeited for breach of the conditions under which visiting passes are issued. Last year a large amount was collected in this manner from a small number of Indians.

[1] For a summary of the Report.

Most of thepasses cost £1 each. We may therefore take it that this sum was realized from about 2,500 Indians. What can we do to avoid such loss of money? It is important that we ask ourselves this question and try to find a solution. One way out is for Indians to be bold enough to disregard the laws and do without passes altogether. This course is open only to those domiciled [in Natal]. What about those who want to come in for a temporary stay? This question is rather more difficult to answer. But human ingenuity can find a way out of any difficulty. It is necessary to keep on at the Government about this subject. The Government should be told that a large enough revenue accrues to it from the railways on account of the immigrants. Next, businessmen may begin educating themselves as well as they can. If they become conversant with the English language, they will gradually be able to spare themselves the expense discussed above. And lastly, the practice of cheating the Government should be given up. This last remedy is the most honest and efficacious.

The Report also reveals that 3,236 Asiatics were refused permission to land and compelled to return. Not all of them had arrived by the sea route [from India]. Some of them came through the Transvaal. Much money, therefore, must have been wasted in trying to enter the Transvaal. The remedy for this state of affairs at any rate lies in our hands alone. If we spend on education even a tenth of what we spend on questionable transactions, the prejudice that we find in South Africa against the black skin will disappear.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-4-1908

144. INDIAN LABOURERS IN LOBITO BAY

We wrote about these unfortunate Indians last week.[1] We congratulate the [Natal] Congress leaders for having moved in the matter and paid them a visit. It is gratifying to learn that they are all well cared for and properly fed. It is, however, regrettable that the poor men are being sent back to India. We think it might have been possible to arrange for them to stay on in Natal if action had been taken earlier.

We can think of something that can still be done. The Natal Government should be asked to state what arrangements it has made for these people when they arrive in India. At the same time, a telegram shouldbe sent to the South Africa British Indian Committee req-

[1]*Vide* "Duty of Natal Congress", 18-4-1908 also "Indians going to Lobito Bay", 30-3-1907 ; 20-7-1907

uesting it to enquire what steps the Imperial Government proposes to take in the matter. It will bring them some relief if they are provided for in India in some manner or the other. We must remember that in this world success comes to those who succour the dumb—those too dumb even to express gratitude. This is as true of institutions as of individuals.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-4-1908

145. NATAL FARMERS

A heated controversy is raging among the Natal farmers over the question of ending immigration of indentured Indian labour. The white farmers are agitated over the attitude of the Durban whites who are opposed to such immigration. The farmers have passed a resolution at a conference which they held recently, saying that the supply of indentured Indian labour should not be stopped until Native labour becomes available. Let us see what attitude the Natal Government will take up in this tug-of-war. We must be on our guard and make sure that this contest between two buffaloes, that is, the Durban whites and the white farmers, does not uproot the Indian tree.[1]

One of the farmers also argued at the conference that it was not the indentured labourers with whom the Durban whites were aggrieved. They only wanted to stop the Indian trader, but they could not differentiate between the traders and indentured Indians. These pronouncements show that it is not because the white farmers are enamoured of Indian labourers that they prefer them. Theirs is an attachment arising only from self-interest. We should note that, in the pursuit of their common interests, the white traders and the white farmers will not hesitate to ruin the Indian trader. By fighting the system of indenture, the Indian community will serve the Indian trader and ensure, at the same time, freedom from slavery for indentured labourers. We must not acquiesce in the coming of Indians to work as slaves.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-4-1908

[1] A Gujarati saying has it that, when two buffaloes fight, it is the tree that gets uprooted.

146. CAPE IMMIGRATION ACT[1]

Last week we wrote on the case in the Cape. We have now received a full report of it, which we publish in the English section. Another case, a more important one, under the Immigration Act, was also heard in the same Court. In the first case the Court did not give its ruling on the point of law [that was raised]. In the second it did, and its judgment applies to all Indians in the Cape. The following is a summary [of the case].

An Indian[2] was prohibited from disembarking and he moved the Supreme Court. Under the Immigration Act of 1902, Indians domiciled in South Africa were free to enter the Cape; this Indian came under that category. Under the Act of 1906, however, only those Indians who are domiciled in the Cape can settle there. On the other hand, whites anywhere from South Africa are free [to enter]. But there is a loop-hole in the Act of 1906, namely, that an Indian who leaves the Cape must if he is entitled to return, carry with him a pass for exit and re-entry.[3] It was the contention of the prosecution that the Indian in question had not taken out such a pass and had accordingly forfeited his right. The contention was accepted by the Supreme Court. While delivering the judgment, the Court expressed sympathy with the Indian and recommended that the Government deal with the case leniently for the reason that he had failed to take out the pass for re-entry out of ignorance and that the lapse might therefore be condoned.[4] The consideration shown by the Court is to be welcomed. However, what the Indian community wants is not leniency under an unjust law; the leniency should be incorporated in the law itself. [No,] it is not even lenient laws that the community asks for; it will suffice if the laws are just.

It is imperative that the law should be amended. It will be well if the Cape leaders take this stand and work accordingly. We are sure that, if the leaders wrote to the South Africa British Indian Committee in England, they would receive excellent help. The Committee cannot

[1] *Vide* "Important Case at the Cape", 18-4-1908

[2] Bapu

[3] *Vide* "Cape Immigration Act", 2-3-1907

[4] The original judgment says: "But this seems to be a case in which the Minister might well consider whether some indulgence might not be granted on the ground of misunderstanding, or negligence through illness on the part of the applicant."

exert itself with any effect unless it is approached [for help]. The Committee['s action] can carry weight only if it acts at our instance. We hope the Cape Indians will take immediate steps in this matter.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 25-4-1908

147. SUGGESTIONS TO CAPE INDIANS

The South African News has published a report of a meeting of the Cape Town British Indian League.[1] We find someone has sent us a cutting for publication in the English [section]. We have decided not to publish it, for we do not see that its publication will be of any advantage to the community. We know that the English section is read by a large number of decent whites. That report is not likely to make a very good impression on their minds. The headline under which the League report is published in *The South African News* says that it is not the journal's own report, but was sent to it by someone and was being pub-lished at his request. The report deals with an attack [by the League] on the South Africa British Indian Association. We have no knowledge of how the affairs of the Association are conducted, whether or not there is anything wrong with it. The discussion at the League meeting may or may not have any basis in fact. The point we wish to make is that by publicizing these matters in English journals we shall not promote the interests of the community but shall only create bad blood. They also create a misleading impression in the minds of those who are prejudi-ced against the Indians, and serve to strengthen their prejudice. Indians have no time for bickering among themselves. The task before the community is to fight its permanent enemy, and to bend all its energies to that end.

It is to be welcomed that the League has taken steps against the immigration law. It is the League's duty to do all that needs to be do-ne in this matter. But in doing so it will not be proper for the League to make public attacks on the Association there or on other bodies.

[1] The meeting, held on April 12, was called to consider the complaints of some Kanamia Muslims who were dissatisfied with the affairs of the South Africa British Indian Association in the Cape. The Association had asked that Urdu be recognized as the only language for the purposes of the Cape Immigration Act. The League advocated the recognition of Urdu, Tamil, Bengali and Gujarati for this purpose.

We have received a special report[1] of the League meeting in Gujarati which we publish elsewhere.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-4-1908

148. INDIANS IN CANADA

The condition of Indians in Canada deserves notice. There is no special legislation in that country designed to drive them out. Most of the Indians there are Punjabis, who are all referred to as Sikhs[2]. But from our experience here we can infer that it is unlikely that they should all be Sikhs. Most of the Indians domiciled there are workers. For the time being the authorities have resorted to some lacuna in the law to refuse admission to some [Indians] who came *via* Hong Kong, on the ground that they did not come directly from India.[3] Canada has allowed Japanese to settle there, but is doing its utmost to keep Indians out. What is the reason? First, the Japanese settled in that country are brave people. The whites who tried to intimidate them were beaten back.[4] The Japanese moreover have an independent government [at home] which protects its citizens' interests. Their Government is free because the people have an independent disposition. As against this, the Indians in Canada shut themselves up in their rooms when there was a riot in that country. Also, India can do nothing effective. It has no government which can fight for the interests of the country [and its nationals abroad]. Indians are a subject people. The

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] Discussing the Indian immigrants in a newspaper article about the same time, Rudyard Kipling points out that they were mostly Sikhs, Muzbis and Jats from the Punjab who worked in the lumber mills and were found useful.

[3] On January 8, 146 Hindus, the majority of whom had arrived from the Orient by the steamer *Monteagle,* were ordered to be deported by an Order-in-Council of the Dominion Government because they had not come directly by continuous passage from the land of their birth. They were, however, released on March 24 on writs of *habeas corpus* after the Supreme Court had pronounced their deportation altogether illegal.

[4] The Colonists' objection was really to the Japanese who had monopolized the local fishing trade at Vancouver. Again, Kipling says, "When attacked, the Japanese defend themselves with asperity...The Indians are not understood of course; but they are not hated...." On this occasion "the Japanese barricaded their quarters and flocked out, a broken bottle held by the neck in either hand which they jabbed in the faces of the demonstrators. It is perhaps easier to haze and hammer bewildered Hindus and Tamils as is being done across the Border than to stampede the men of the Yalu . . ."

reason for this state of affairs does not lie in British rule or the British flag. We are the reason for that rule. We do not, of course, see any advantage in bringing that rule to an end. We can, however, change theways of the present Government. We are the subjects of others because we do not have the spirit of independence. If we can regain that spirit and then demand justice, we shall get it for the asking. Among the numerous Indians in Canada, we do not find a single well-educated person.

We must look upon these hardships caused by the movement against the Coloured persons in Canada and elsewhere as being beneficial [to us in the long run]. We are being trained [to resist injustice] and the eyes of the British are being opened.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-4-1908

149. SIR HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN

Newspapers have reported the death of Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman, one time Prime Minister of Britain. Only a few days ago, we read the news of his resignation from office due to illness. He never recovered from it.

Sir Henry was a prominent businessman in Glasgow. But, while in business, he also educated himself. Anxious to devote himself to public service instead of spending all his time in business, he entered politics. Many Englishmen do this. Mr. Chamberlain has been a businessman, and still is.

Sir Henry was a man of kind nature and noble mind. His sympathies were not confined to his own people. Wherever he saw oppression, his heart brimmed over with sympathy [for the victims]. Even while he held office as Prime Minister, he did not hesitate to express himself in strong terms in favour of the Russian people and against the Czar.

His policies have always been sound. When he saw the Boers being wantonly attacked, he did not hesitate to declare himself against his own people. He made a very strong speech at the time against the British soldiery. Soon after he became Prime Minister, he granted self-government to the Transvaal.

When the [Transvaal] Indian deputation visited England in connection with the campaign against the law, he was very sympathetic [to the Indian case]. It is said that he had played some part in bringing pressure on Lord Elgin [to veto the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordin-

ance].[1]Sir Henry was nearly seventy-two. Despite his age, he suffered from no weakness of body or mind. Even at that ripe old age, he chose to continue in office and work for the public good. We ought to learn from his example. People in India do not enjoy such longevity, and even those who live long will not give their time for public service till the end. We think we are old at forty; if meanwhile we have done anything worth while, we become conceited, and imagine that there is no more to be done, andspend the rest of our days in ease and luxury. [If we looked around,] we would find hundreds of such instances yet we often express our resentment at not being granted self -Government. When India comes to have hundreds of men like Sir Henry, she will gain her freedom in no time. It will then matter little which flag flies over the palace.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-4-1908

150. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

GOLD LAW

The following letter[2] about the Gold Law has been sent to the Colonial Secretary on behalf of the Association

> The draft Gold Law which is to be introduced during the forthcoming session of Parliament imposes on British Indians disabilities graver than those found in the existing law. The Committee had hoped, as it still does, that the disabilities of the Indian community would be lightened [by the Government] instead of being increased. My Committee draws the attention of the Government to the following.
>
> In the draft [Law] the definition of the term 'Coloured person' contains the word 'coolie' which is offensive to the Indian community as there are in the Transvaal very few, if any, coolies in the proper sense of the word. Moreover, to bracket together African Natives and Asiatics, British subjects and others who are not British subjects is to ignore the fact of Indians being British subjects.
>
> The retention of the original law as to dealing in unwrought gold, in so far as it affects Coloured persons, not only brings them under the general prohibitions of the law, but assumes thatin dealings in unwrought gold Coloured persons are the

[1] *Vide* "Deputation Notes -IV", Before 8-12-1906

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", Before 25-4-1908

greater offenders whereas in my Association's view the very opposite is the case [at least] in so far as British Indians are concerned.

Moreover, the definition of unwrought gold is likely to prove defective. It will probably prevent Indian goldsmiths from carrying on their business of making jewellery even from gold bars made in and imported from England.

Section 127 of the draft Law is vague and would seem completely to bar acquisidon by Coloured persons of any rights whatever. The section also prohibits holders of rights acquired previous to the draft law from transferring or sub-letting such rights to a Coloured person. A law should have effect from the date of the draft, but according to this section the draft law will be retroactive.

The last objection is to the provision in Section 128 for the removal of Coloured persons from the mining areas, proclaimed as such, to Locations. If carried, the section will make it impossible for a large majority of British Indians to continue in the country. In this connection, my Association begs to remind the Government that the Indians are a cultured people, with trading and other interests sufficiently large to warrant the statement that the segregation of the community in Locations will result in its utter ruin as it will be unable to protect those interests in Bazaars, Locations or Compounds.

My Association further reminds the Government that the majority of British Indians domiciled in the Transvaal live in mining areas. My Association therefore trusts that the clauses complained of will be withdrawn by the Government or will be so amended as to give the desired relief to the British Indian community residing in the Transvaal.

WHAT IS VOLUNTARY [REGISTRATION]?

Some Indians are still in a quandary about voluntary and compulsory [registration], with the Permit Office adding to their confusion. A correspondent informs us that officials insist on 18 digit-impressions. My advice to everyone concerned is, "Give them". Since the giving of finger-impressions is voluntary, I see nothing wrong in doing so. But those whose objections are genuine need not. They can still refuse. When the giving of finger-impressions was compulsory, anyone refusing to do so would have been liable to prosecution. Now that it is voluntary, one need not be concerned if the official refuses toentertain one's application. Those who object to the finger-impressions need not give them, regardless of what the officials say. It is our

duty to apply for registration of our own accord. If difficulties are created in the performance of that duty, we cannot then be brought within the scope of the law. Only those who supply wrong information or those whose permits are not valid will have reason for fear. The fear, moreover, will only be of being refused permits, for they will not be prosecuted. The best course for anyone who objects to finger-impressions is to refuse to give them and then inform the Secretary of the Association. Having done so, he may set his mind at rest. But he must not panic and go back to offer his finger-impressions. Only those who feel that the satyagraha campaign has transformed them from lambs into lions can lay claim to success.

ROODEPOORT CHAMBER

The Roodepoort Chamber [of Commerce] wants an end to the practice of Indians holding land in the names of whites. Indians [it thinks] should be sent to Locations and the municipalities should have the power to refuse them licences. The Chamber has addressed a long letter to General Smuts to place this demand before him. The South African whites will allow Indians no rest. They are bent on keeping us on our mettle all the time. This, I think, is excellent training [for us]. We shall discover that, if we do not fear our enemy and do not show temper with him, he becomes our friend, for he then serves us like one. Our vigilance will serve India well. If we do become vigilant, that will be thanks to the likes of Roodepoort whites.

NEW ANTI-INDIAN PARTY

A new party called the South Africa Forward Party has been formed in Johannesburg. It has published its manifesto. Its object is [to secure] the reservation of South Africa exclusively for white settlers. With that end in view, it has proposed the political and territorial segregation of Coloured persons. It also wants that they should never be given the franchise, that their immigration into South Africa should be prohibited altogether and that those who are already there be progressively driven out. There is no reason to expect that this party can achieve anything. All the same, persons with such ideas carry on a campaign against Coloured persons. We have to exert ourselves far more vigorously than they do if we are to retain our foothold in South Africa.

LIMIT OF SELFISHNESS

While on the one hand, the whites demand the expulsion of Indians from South Africa, on the other, they also want to exploit Indians as much as they can. Mr. Wall, the Chief Engineer of Railways in the Transvaal, thinks that the Transvaal has a surplus of coal and suggests

that it be dumped on India. It does not occur to him that, if any such attempt is made, the Indians may want to put forward their own terms. He assumes that Indians are cowards who can do nothing, as though they were born only to carry the burdens of others.

WICKED CIVILIZATION

Australia has recently furnished a wicked instance of the extreme selfishness that I mentioned earlier. There, they are after the Chinese. Chinese sometimes manage to stow away to Australia. A ship is like a small settlement. It is often difficult to find a person [hiding] in the hold. To ensure that no one remains undetected, the Australian Government hasordered the hold of every steamer to be sulphurated so that the Chinese stow away is forced to come out or choke to death. Several persons have already died in this manner. The shameless and hard-hearted officials, blinded by selfishness, instead of being moved to pity by these things, gloat over them and pat themselves on the back for having so cleverly hunted out the Chinese. If anyon esuggests that fumigation with sulphur be discontinued, it is not because they are anxious to save innocent lives, but because they are concerned at possible damage to the cargo. How can we accept these things about the West as civilized? Such incidents have set many whites thinking. They ask themselves whether the western peoples are in fact more civilized than those in the East. It is only right that they should ponder over this question. We, on our part, ought to resist the fascination that western civilization has for us in view of these features that we observe. At the same time we should remember that eastern peoples have not been free from comparable cruelty. In fact, we find in the East examples of greater cruelty than in the West. The only lesson to be learnt is that East and West are no more than names. Human beings are the same everywhere.[1] He who wants to will conduct himself with decency. There is no people to whom the moral life is a special mission. Everything depends on the individual himself. One can pursue the principles of morality at any place, in any environment or condition of life.

SIR PERCY FITZPATRICK[2]

This gentleman is one of the leaders of the Progressive Party. He has declared in a speech that, since South Africa is a preserve of the whites, Asiatics ought to be denied any share in it. He would be happier still if something could be done about the Kaffirs too. If we ask

[1] Literally, "the chula is made of earth everywhere"—a Gujarati saying.

[2] Sir James Percy Fitzpatrick (1862-1931); President, Witwatersrand Chamber of Mines; Member for Pretoria East in Union Parliament, 1910-20; author of several books on South Africa

him whether India, too, is a preserve of the whites, what will he have to say in reply? Instead of asking Sir Percy this, however, if every Indian put that question to himself, all his difficulties would vanish in no time. Last year's campaign was calculated to test our mettle, and if we have stood the test, I have no doubt in my mind that we shall be able to live on [here] in freedom and with self-respect, whatever Sir Percy may say. But we can retain our freedom and self-esteem only if we are in the right and speak the truth. If our only anxiety is to see as many Indians as possible admitted into South Africa by fair means or foul, then good-bye to self-respect and honour!

BOYCOTT BY CHINESE

We gather from the newspapers here that the Chinese want to use the weapon of boycott against the Japanese. It appears that Japanese officials tyrannize over the Chinese in Korea. The Chinese feel that they are not strong enough for an armed encounter, but they know that Japan cannot stay on in Korea or anywhere in China except with their help. Japan has a large trade with China, and that gives the Chinese immense power. Conscious of that power, they have decided to boycott Japanese goods if Japan does not behave, and have already proceeded to act on the decision. This has frightened Japan. Such is the power of boycott, and boycott is only one aspect of satyagraha. If by itself it can be so much stronger than hundreds of guns, what may we not expect of satyagraha? India, too, recently provided a fine example of boycott. The telegraph operators went on strike in desperation and created a scare in one day. Lord Minto sent telegraphic instructions that a compromise should be reached with the telegraph operators. Some foolish persons suggested that white operators alone should be employed without realizing that thousands of men cannot thus be replaced at a moment's notice.

DRIVING COLOURED PERSONS TO LOCATIONS: DISCUSSION

At the annual meeting of Het Volk, a Dutch society in the Trans-vaal, General Smuts declared that a municipal Bill, which, he hoped, would solve the question of Coloured persons living among whites, would be introduced during the next session of Parliament. He did not elaborate the point further. The others, too, did not argue further about the question. True satyagrahis need not be frightened at such moves; only, they must remain vigilant. This should serve as a warning particularly to those who feel that satyagraha once has been enough.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-4-1908

151. STORY OF A SOLDIER OF TRUTH [*-IV*]

"I have nothing more to say about Meletus's charge. I believe, moreover, that most of the people here are opposed to me. You will condemn me not on the basis of what Meletus and others say, but because of the prejudice and suspicion of the multitude. But many a good man has suffered in this way and many more will suffer thus in future.

"Someone may well ask: 'Are you not ashamed, Socrates, of pursuing studies which are likely to lead to your death?' I should answer such a man with perfect justice: 'You are wrong. Even a man of slight worthmust be prepared for death. He must think only of one thing when embarking on any course of action, namely, whether he is acting rightly or wrongly, whether the action is worthy of a good man or not, It as you imply, an act which involves the risk of death is a bad act, all the great warriors who fell in the battle at Troy, while doing their duty, must be deemed very bad men indeed. Patroclus was warned by his mother that if he killed Hector, his own death would follow close upon Hector's.[1] Patroclus replied that it was a thousand times to be preferred that he should die for killing Hector to that he should live on as a coward. Patroclus was not frightened of death. The right thing for a man is not to desert his post even if he has to run the risk of being killed or any other risk, whether he has chosen the post of his own will or has been put there by a superior.

"Consider, moreover, that when I was in the service of this State, I remained at the post where my commander had placed me and ran the risk of death. How strange would it be if, when my heart bade me seek a certain wisdom, I did not follow its bidding or failed to speak out for fear of death? If I should fear death, that would be contrary to my belief that I am an ignorant man. If I think myself wise, without being wise, I would certainly deserve to be brought to trial. To fear death is to presume knowledge. For who has discovered for certain that death is a thing to be afraid of?Why should we not believe that death is the greatest good that can happen to men? Men fear it as though they knew very well that it was the greatest of evils! What greater ignorance can there be than this of assuming that we know what we do not know ? On these matters I think differently from others. If I have any wisdom, it is this: I claim to know nothing about

[1] The warning was given not to Patroclus, but to his comrade, who was eager to kill Hector and avenge the death of Patroclus.

and therefore make no attempt to conceal my ignorance. But I do well know that it is evil to do wrong and to disobey my superior. I will therefore never shrink in fear from what I hold to be right. If you were, therefore, to say to me without listening to my accusers' argument, 'Socrates, this time we will spare you, but on the condition that you cease this quest of yours; if you are found engaged in these pursuits again, you shall die,' I should say in reply, 'Athenians, I hold you in the highest regard and love; but I will obey God rather than you. As long as I have breath and strength, I will not give up philosophy, or exhorting everyone I meet and those who would listen to me, saying,"O excellent Athenians! You are citizens of famous city. You are known to be men of strength and wisdom. Yet you are so keen on making money that you give little thought to the means you employ for the purpose. You are eager for positions of honour and for reputation. Are you not ashamed of these things? You show little concern for your soul, for wisdom and truth. You take no thought for the perfection of your soul." It in reply, someone were to say that he did care for his soul and sought truth, I would not let it go at that. I would ask him in what way he cared for all these things. I would test him before I let him go. If in the course of the enquiry I found that he had no truth in him, I would reproach him with setting the lower value on the more important things and the higher value on those that are of less account. This I should do with everyone—citizen or stranger, young or old—but more especially with you, since I am better known among you and more nearly akin to you. Be assured that it is the command of God that I should speak thus. I even go so far as to claim that the commands of God are very dear to me and that this fact is in itself conducive to the highest good of the city.[1] I have only one interest To all, the young and the old, I say only one thing, namely, that you should care less for wealth and more for the soul; that you should strive for As perfection Virtue does not come from wealth, but wealth, and all other things of this world, will come to you if you have virtue. If anyone says that I corrupt the people of this city by teaching them this, it would mean that virtue is vice. But if any man says that I teach anything else, he is trying to mislead you."

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-4-1908

[1] An English version has, "And I think that no better piece of fortune has ever befallen you in Athens than my service to God."

152. LICENCES IN NATAL

Indian traders have been debating on what to do about the Natal Dealers' [Licenses] Act. Everyone agrees that something must be done. Everyone believes that, if effective action is not taken, the Indian trader will lose his foothold in Natal. The whites are out to ruin the Indians. They want gradually to eliminate the Indians altogether. All the Indians know this. They ought to, at any rate. It is more difficult however, to devise a remedy. We can think of only one.

All the misfortunes of the Indian community are due primarily to the fact that the community has ceased to be respected. It is necessary for it to act with courage; only then will it command the respect of the Government. What is to be done? Two courses are open to the Indians. One is to fight with the sword. Our sword of steel has lost its edgethrough rust. It is well that it should ever remain so. For that which is gained by the sword can be retained only by the sword.[1] The other course is to fight with the sword of Satyagraha. This sword never rusts. There is no need of a whetstone to sharpen it. It is whetted with our hearts and burnished bright. To be tempered it does not need to be heated. It acquires its finish when tempered in the fire of truth—a finish so perfect that it is never lost and the sword shines the brighter the longer it is used. To fight with that sword is the second course the right one.

How to set about it? It is easily done. When even a single trader, who has the right to a licence is refused it, all the others should stand by him, refuse to accept licences and tell the Government so, proclaiming this refusal from the roof-tops. All traders must take an oath that they will swim or sink together.

If this is done, we make bold to say that the Dealers' [Licenses] Act will be repealed, or suitably amended.

We attach the greatest importance to the Estcourt case.[2] There is a similar case at Stanger against Mr. Kazi.[3] These cases, we feel, can be made the test cases for the entire movement, but then sacrifices will be necessary. We Will have to dash to pieces the bangles that we have been wearing.[4] We must gird up our loins like brave men. Will the

[1] For the same idea dealt with at length, *vide* Secret of Satyagraha", 22-2-1908

[2] *Vide* " Licences at Estcourt", 14-3-1908

[3] *Vide* "Natal Licences",15-2-1908

[4] The reference is to a popular Indian saying which describes an effeminate or cowardly man as wearing bangles. Cf. "Indian Princes", 1-6-1907

Natal Indians do this? They will reap as they sow. We shall give further attention to this question later. Meanwhile, we advise India's well-wishers to give these suggestions due consideration.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-5-1908

153. EDUCATION AMONG INDIANS

We find Indians' enthusiasm for education increasing. This to be welcomed. We have to announce that, like Mr. Hassan Mia,[1] another young man is now preparing to go abroad for studies. We are glad of this. At the same time, we must warn parents that it is no good making every Indian a bar-at-law or a lawyer. There are many other profes-sions, and young Indians must train for these too. We have a sufficient number of barristers. We givelittle thought to industries and crafts. It is essential, we think, to turn our attention to these.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-5-1908

154. INDENTURED LABOURERS IN DELAGOA BAY

A move is afoot to import indentured Indian labour into Delagoa Bay and other parts of the Province of Mozambique. It is urgently necessary to oppose this move. Delagoa Bay Indians need to be vigilant. Else, it is possible that they will be reduced to a sorry plight. There should be a public body in Delagoa Bay to take up such questions.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-5-1908

155. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

"HAPPY ARE THOSE WHO ARE EVER AWAKE"[2]

This saying has a striking relevance to Indians. At the meeting of one of the Chambers it was proposed that Indians should be made to leave South Africa and be sent away to those parts of East Africa which are unsuitable for the whites to settle in. After some fruitless discussion, the matter was dropped. But the fact that such proposals

[1] *Vide* "Hassan Mia's Departure",4-4-1908

[2] A Gujarati saying

are put forward again and again should serve as a serious warning to us. Even in England newspapers are being misled by these ideas. We ought to explain [the matter] properly to them. I observe that Mr. Ritch is doing his best not to let such views, when they are published in newspapers, go unchallenged.

TRUE!

An Indian resident of Durban points out that the accounts of the British Indian Association show a sum of £50 as [contribution] from Natal, and that this may be interpreted by an outsider to mean that Natal had contributed £50 only. This will bring Natal discredit. He draws attention to the fact that Natal sent the British Indian Committee more than £250, and that this should be noticed [in the accounts]. This is correct. Even for the Satyagraha campaign, Natal's contribution has been invaluable. How can one forget that, besides the amounts remitted to the Committee, it spent money like water on telegrams and other things?

REGISTRATION

Voluntary registration continues. There has been some difficulty at Krugersdorp and Standerton. In these towns the authorities have demanded ten finger-impressions, and this has annoyed people. There is no reason to be annoyed. Anyone who wants to can claim exemption from the ten finger-impressions after stating his reasons. He cannot get into trouble for that, and he may therefore rest secure on that account. But no one should imagine, on the other hand, that he can avoid giving the ten impressions without reason. He must state the reason, such as religious scruple or [his right to] exemption on grounds of education or status.

There are others who are reluctant to give even the thumb-impressions. This is improper. I think the thumb-impressions must be given, if demanded. I, however, advise those who have raised a sincere objection against the ten impressions to remain firm.

WHITE HAWKER'S RIGHT

A white hawker was making his rounds in the Germiston Location, which is where he lives. According to a by-law in force in Germiston, no white can live in the Location or do business in it as a hawker. He challenged this by-law and the case went to a court. The Magistrate fined him. An appeal was then preferred in the Supreme Court which ruled that the municipality was authorized to make such a

regulation, and accordingly upheld the sentence. This is an important decision. There are many points about it which deserve to be noted.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-5-l908

156. STORY OF A SOLDIER OF TRUTH [*-V*]

"And therefore I say to you: whether or not you believe the accusation, whether or not you acquit me, be sure that I will not forsake the path I have chosen for myself even if I have to die for it many times.

"Please do not be angry with me for what I say. Pay heed to my words. I think you will profit by them. What I am about to say now will perhaps make you angry. But listen carefully without anger. Since I am what I am, if you put me to death, you will do more harm to yourselves than to me. Meletus and others can do me no harm for it is not in their power to do so. *It is impossible that a good man can injured by a lesser person.* As a consequence of his charge against me, I may be put to death, or exiled, or deprived of my rights as a citizen. You imagine that thesethings will be a great punishment for me. But I do not think of them as such. Rather, a person who tries to put another to death unjustly only harms himself. Do not therefore feel that I am arguing in my defence. I stand here to tell you what is in your own interest. I want to save you from the wrong of violating the divine command. If you put me to death, you will not easily find another man to fill my place. It is, of course, not for me to say this, but I cannot help pointing it out. As a strong horse needs reins, you need rein reins.[1] Since you are also strong, I think it is the will of God that I should serve as your reins, and if you take my advice, you will spare me. But it is likely that you will thoughtlessly order my death, being vexed with me as one sleeping is vexed with another who wakes him from his sleep and rushes at him ready to strike. And then you will drop off to sleep again, unless you have another man to fill my place. I strive for your good, having been sent by God for that purpose. You can see that I have neglected my own affairs, busying myself unceasingly for your good, counselling each one of you like a father or an elder brother and striving to lead you along the right path. You would have had some reason to doubt me if I had asked to be paid for what I was doing or made money thereby. But my accusers have not charged

[1] An English translation uses a different simile. Athens is compared to a sluggish horse "which needs to be aroused by a gad-fly" and, Socrates says, "I think I am the gad-fly that God has sent to the city to arouse it."

me with demanding money. And I have, in my poverty, the most convincing evidence that I have not accepted or demanded any payment of money.

"Perhaps you will ask me, why, if I go on exhorting people to virtue, moving from house to house, I do not take part in the political affairs of the city and strive for its welfare. I have often given my reason for that. I think I hear a divine voice whispering into my ear, telling me not to take part in politics. And I think it well that this has been so. If I had attempted to take part in politics, I should have perished long ago, without doing either you or myself any good. Do not be angry with me for speaking the truth. No man would be free from danger to his life, if he opposed the misrule prevailing in the city and tried to prevent injustice. He who would approach every question from the standpoint of justice had better stay out of the bother and bustle of politics.

"Let me give examples to prove this. You will see then that even the fear of death cannot force me to do what I consider to be wrong. But you will also see from them that, if I had busied myself in political affairs, I would have perished long ago. You may perhaps find that what I am about to tell you interests you but little. Nevertheless, it istrue. I was at one time a member of our Assembly.[1] It happened once that you resolved to sentenceten generals to death. I alone of all the member[2] opposed the proposal. All of you then cried out for my death. But I stood firm; I thought that I ought to face death or imprisonment rather than join you in your unjust proposal. This happened in the days of democracy.

"When democracy had yielded place to oligarchy in this city, a person named Lyson[3] was ordered to be brought over, so that he could be put to death as sentenced. I was among those who received this order. I Knew that the sentence of death against Lyson had been pas-sed unjustly.[4] I ran the risk of death if I refused to go and bring him over. I did not fear death; I refused to go. If that Government had not been overthrown soon afterward,[5] I would certainly have been put to death.

"You will now see that if I had taken part in public affairs and

[1] Socrates was a member of the Commission of Thirty.

[2] An English translation has "presidents".

[3] An English translation has "Leon".

[4] This incident, which marked the beginning of Plato's disillusionment, is discussed in his Seventh Letter.

[5] This refers to the resumption of democratic government in Athens after a succession of oligarchies.

had always upheld the cause of justice, (Justice being the breath of my life, I could not have done otherwise.) I could not have remained alive all these years. Throughout my whole life I have done no one an injustice, in private or in public; I have never acted in violation of justice. I have never presumed to be a teacher. But I never refused to answer anyone's questions, if he sought me out to learn from me. Moreover, I pay the same attention to the questions of both the poor and the rich, answering each one to the best of my ability. If, in spite of this, anyone has failed to learn goodness from my words, I am not to be blamed. If anyone among you asserts that I taught one thing to one man and something else to another, be sure he does not speak the truth.

"It has been asked why so many persons want to spend their time in my company; you know the reason why. If there are persons who think that they are wise while they are not, other persons delight to hear them cross-examined. It is certainly very amusing to listen to that. I think it is a duty enjoined upon me by a god that I should examine people. I have done nothing wrong thereby. If it is true that Ihave corrupted the young by my teaching, those of them who are now grown up and are in a position to understand their true interests would have come forward to accuse me in your presence. Or even if they did not do so, their kinsmen would have come forward to do so. I see some of these young men and their kinsmen here in this assembly. Why has Meletus not called any of them as witnesses? If heand my other accusers have forgotten to summon them, I would permit them to do so even now. Let their evidence be taken. Instead of deposing against me, they will testify that their children have benefited by my company. They will have no reason, save a love of justice, to speak in my favour, and they have nothing to gain by so doing.

"I have said most of what I had to say in my defence. It generally happens that the relatives of the accused come to the Court and entreat the judges for mercy, and the prisoner himself sheds tears. I have done none of these things, neither have I any intention of doing them. This again will perhaps make some of you angry. I have kinsmen too. I have three sons—one of them is grown up and the other two are still small. But I do not want to bring any of them before you. If I refrain from doing so, it is not because I mean to slight you. Do not impute it to my arrogance either. Let us [also] put on one side the fact that I have no fear of death. But I think it would be a discredit to me, and to you, if, at this age and with my reputation, such as it is, I had my kinsmen to shed tears before you. It would be unworthy of me. Everyone admits that in some way Socrates is different from the mass of mankind. If there should be among you any persons who

excel the others and if they were to be prosecuted as I am being prosecuted, it would be shameful of them, from fear of death, to make anyone cry before you. If death were a misfortune, or if it were true that having once escaped death one would become immortal, an appeal to the sentiments of pity through one's relatives could possibly be justified. When our eminent men, although virtuous, begin to entertain such fear of death, foreigners are bound to scoff at us. They will say: 'Even those Athenians who are chosen for high office because of their superior virtue behave no better than women. How poor in spirit then must the other Athenians be!' I believe therefore that no good man should enact such a farce. If anyone attempts it, you ought to disallow it for the sake of the city's reputation. Whatever your sentence, it is the duty of the persons concerned to endure it in patience. And your duty is to despise those who give way to such pitiful melodrama.

"But, leaving aside all talk of credit or discredit, I do not think it is proper for the accused to plead for mercy. His duty is to ask for justice and to do so by stating facts and arguing from them. The duty of the judge is not to show favour but to dispense justice impartially. And therefore it behoves you and us that we should none of us forswear ourselves.

"If I were to entreat you to break your oath, it would amount to proving Meletus's charge against me, namely, that I do not believe in God. If anyone who believes in God teaches someone to violate his oath, then that will amount to teaching him to disobey God. Such a person does not believe in God. But I believe in God more firmly than anyone among you isever likely to, and therefore, trusting in Him, I leave my case in your hands without fear."

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-5-1908

157. NATAL BILLS

The "Indian" Bills foreshadowed by the Colonial Secretary are now a gazetted fact, and, if the Bills go through, after the 30th June, 1911, there should be no more indentured Indians introduced into Natal. The second Bill will put a stop to any new "Indian or Arab" licences after the 31st December, 1908. The third Bill provides for the total extinction of Indian licences after 10 years, subject to compensation being paid to the extent of three years' purchase on the profits of the business.

The first Bill will be welcomed by every Indian in the Colony,

and we trust that it will pass the two Houses unanimously. The pity is that indenture cannot be stopped even earlier. The other two Bills will spread consternation amongst Indian traders. The Bills are as ignorant as they are tyrannical. Those who are responsible for drafting them still talk of "Indians or Arabs", forgetting that there are no "Arabs" in Natal who are not also Indians, and that the term "Arab" is an exploded myth, so far as the Indians are concerned. If the first of these two Bills becomes law and receives the Royal sanction, it does not require a particularly shrewd man to see that the second Bill is not even necessary. In ten years' time, there will be no Indian traders to compensate; for, we fancy that new trading licences include transfer from one person to another, as also from one place to another. What are Indians, who are born traders, who have been traders before, butwho are today either in partnership with some other Indians or in the service of such Indians, to do ? Why should they not receive trading licences in common with other Indians? Why should the mere fact of one Indian having taken out a trading licence and another serving him and, in fact, carrying on the trade, prevent that other from doing an independent business? And, in ten years' time, is there to be no Indian trader to trade even among Indians ? We do not advocate an indiscri-minate issue of licences, but we do maintain that those who are traders by instinct should have every facility given to them for carrying on their trade; and that is the only way in which any country can take the best out of its inhabitants. To many Indians, there are only two cou-rses open—honest trade or dishonesty and fraud. Surely the Natal Ministers do not wish to manufacture fraud and dishonesty in the Col-ony. Moreover, we think that they are mistaken if they consider that the Indian community will have nothing to say in the matter, or that it will allow itself to be extinguished without making a supreme effort.

Indian Opinion, 9-5-1908

158. VOLUNTARY REGISTRATION IN THE TRANSVAAL

The period for voluntary registration of Asiatics in the Transvaal closes today[1]. Roughly speaking, almost every Asiatic has applied for voluntary registration; in other words, he has allowed himself to be identified afresh. of the eight thousand odd applications made, six thousand have already been approved and passed. This is a creditable record on either side. The Asiatics have, therefore, fulfilled their

[1] May 9; *vide*, however, "Johannesburg Letter", 9-5-1908

obligation, both in the spirit and the letter. It now remains for the Government to complete the performance of its duty, namely, to repeal the Asiatic Act, and to legalize voluntary registration in a manner acceptable to the Asiatics and satisfactory from the Colonial standpoint, which is to restrict the authorized influx of new-comers. Tile Colonial principle has been accepted by the Indian community. There need, therefore, be no further cause for friction.

Indian Opinion, 9-5-1908

159. THREE NATAL BILLS

Dr. Gubbins has been as good as his word. Three Bills have been published in the *Government Gazette*. One of them seeks to prohibit the importation of indentured Indian labour after June 30, 1911. This should be welcomed by every Indian. There is not much difference between indenture and slavery. We think it is far better that Indians do not come here at all than that they should come under these conditions.

The other two Bills are directed against the Indian trader. According to one of them, no Indian businessman will get a new licence next year onward and, according to the other, an Indian will not get a licence at all after ten years. After ten years, Indians who are still here will receive compensation to the extent of three years' profits.

The first of the two Bills is really the more objectionable, for it means that, beginning from next year, no Indian can sell his business to another or shift his shop. That being the case, how many Indians will be left here after ten years to claim compensation? Moreover, payingthree years' profits as compensation is paying no compensation at all. The Indian's business will be ruined, and he will be swept out of existence.

Bills of this kind are unlikely to go through. But one must not rest complacent on this assumption. It is essential to try and bring pressure on the Natal Government so that it does not even entertain such proposals.

We have already mentioned the remedies,[1] and later we shall have more to say about them. It is imperative that every Indian should be extremely vigilant.

[1] *Vide* "Natal Licences", 15-2-1908 and "Licences in Natal", 2-5-1908

It is not easy for one who has been in business to take to other work. If business is undermined, dishonesty will increase. It is the duty of every Indian to prevent this turn of events.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-5-1908

160. TURMOIL IN INDIA

India, it would appear, is in turmoil these days. We learn from the cablegrams which we have translated that there has been a revolt of no small magnitude in the [North-west] Frontier [Province]. It appears, 20,000 Afghans have taken the field. At the same time, the unrestis spreading all over India. A white woman was killed by an explosion. The cablegram suggests that the intention [of the assailant] was to kill a magistrate But an error on his part led to the death of an innocent woman.[1]

That two persons should have been killed is a horrifying thought, but it is nothing extraordinary in India's history. Rather, it is the lesson to be drawn from this incident that is frightening. We have no reason to rejoice at the introduction of Russian methods in India. The Indian people will not win their freedom through these methods. We have no reason to believe that what is effective in Russia will be efficacious for India too.

It is likely that these incidents will distract people from their duty; the easy and straightforward methods of campaigning for one's rights will be gradually eschewed and, in the end, the methods which we imagine wewould use only against foreigners will be used against ourselves. This has ever been so.

There is therefore not the slightest reason for Indians to gloat over this incident. At the same time, the Government, too, cannot be absolved wholly from blame. Had there been no oppression, the people would not have even dreamt of using dynamite.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-5-1908

[1] At Muzaffarpur, on April 30, 1908, Khudiram Bose flung a bomb at Kingsford, the District judge, as an act of political reprisal. The bomb, however, hit a coach carrying two Englishwomen, Mrs. and Miss Kennedy. Both the women and the syce were fatally wounded. Khudiram Bose was subsequently sentenced to death.

161. INDIANS IN CANADA[1]

In Canada Indians have raised a storm of protest which deserves attention. We learn from newspapers sent us by a friend from Winnipeg that Indians abroad are becoming more public-spirited everywhere. Those who held the [protest] meeting were not concerned with any grievance of their own. Some Indians reached [Canada] by way of Hong Kong. They were not allowed to land by the Canadian Government, and this led to a [protest] meeting by Indian settlers in Canada. Most of the participants were Sikhs[2]. They met in a Sikhtemple and showed great spirit [in the meeting that ensued]. The meeting passed a resolution asserting that it would injure the cause of the British Empire if these Indians were forced to return. They also argued that this would encourage those who opposed British rule [in India]. Resolutions [to that effect] were then passed. The newspaper correspondent adds that fiery speeches were made at the meeting.[3]

Such meetings and this unity emerging among Indians [abroad] augur well for India's future.

The British Government is in a difficult situation. It will have to act with great circumspection. On the one hand, it has to please the Colony; on the other, it must protect Indian rights. Mr. Morley is being put to a severe test.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 9-5-1908

162. CAPE IMMIGRATION ACT

The Cape Supreme Court has ruled in a case against a white that there is no provision in the Cape [Immigration] Act for deporting anyone. Accordingly the order of deportation has been cancelled and the man set free. The decision is not of great importance, but is worth

[1] *Vide* "Indians in Canada", 25-4-1908 and also "Rhodesia Indians", 30-5-1908

[2] According to the Winnipeg *Free Press* report, the 500 persons who held the meeting were Hindus.

[3] The meeting also sent a cable to John Morley, Secretary of State for India, seeking the protection of the Imperial Government and pointing out that its neglect of this problem would cause resentment in India.

noting all the same. It can be inferred from the judgment of the Court that fresh [enabling] laws will be passed.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-5-1908

163. HAMID GOOL

Mr. Hamid Gool, son of Mr. Yusuf Gool of Cape Town, has been pursuing medical studies in England for some time now. It would appear he has put his time to good use. We gather from his latest letters that he has passed the examination with distinction and has been awarded a prize of £10. We offer our congratulations to both the Gools.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-5-1908

164. SUGGESTION FOR INTRODUCTION OF REGISTRATION IN DELAGOA BAY[1]

We understand that the Portuguese Government has withdrawn the provisional regulations regarding Asiatics in the Province of Mozambique which had been notified [in the *Gazette*] earlier. It is also understood that an attempt will be made shortly to introduce fresh legislation for the registration of Asiatics which will make provision for the payment of an annual fee [by the registrant]. We once again advise the Delagoa Bay Indians, as we have so often done in the past, to remain vigilant.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-5-1908

165. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

REGISTRATION

This is the last week for voluntary registration. Those intending to apply [for registration certificates] will have done so before the 9th. It does not appear likely that applications will be accepted after that date. It seems the Registrar has also sent round notices to that effect. Every Indian, therefore, who considers himself eligible, must apply

[1] *Vide* "Indians in Delagoa Bay", 28-12-1907and "Delagoa Bay Indians", 18-4-1908

without delay. This paper will probably not reach the readers before Monday. By then the time-limit will have expired. However, I give this warning in the belief that Monday may really be the last day.

About 8,700 applications for registration have been made and 6,000 applicants have already received their certificates. The remaining applications are still under consideration. Apparently, they include applications on behalf of children, applications of persons holding the old Dutch registers and those of others about whose thumb-impressions there may be some doubt. What happens to the applications of persons holding Dutch registers will depend on the number of cases in which the thumb-impressions are suspect. The remaining 2,000 also include a large number of *bona-fide* certificate-holders. Further information is likely to become available in a week or two.

INTER-COLONIAL CONFERENCE

A conference of all South African Colonies designated as above is now in session in Pretoria, with Mr. Moore, a Natal Minister[1], as President. Among many others, the Asiatic question finds a place on the agenda. It is likely to be discussed at length. According to reports, the sessions are to be held *in camera*.

A very important resolution was passed at the Inter-Colonial Conference. It has bee resolved, on a proposal from Mr. Smuts, seconded by Mr. Merriman[2], that steps be taken by all concerned to bring about a union of all the Colonies. Commenting on this, newspapers favouring the Progressive Party point out that the Dutch are in a dominant position at present, especially because they are in power in the Orange River Colony, the Transvaal and the Cape; that is why they are disposed to talkof unification. They want thereby to weaken the influence of British settlers in the Colonies.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-5-1908

[1] Moore was then Prime Minister of Natal.

[2] Rt. Hon. John Xavier Merriman (1841-1926); Privy Councillor; surveyor and farmer; Member of Cape Parliament; joined Molteno ministry, 1875-8; Prime Minister and Treasurer-General, 1908-10; Member of Union Legislative Assembly, 1910-19; described in *Indian Opinion* as "a consistent champion of fair play to Indians"

166. STORY OF A SOLDIER OF TRUTH [*-V1*]

It was by mistake, we [the editor] announced last week that this series was concluded. Socrates ended his defence. He was then found guilty by a majority vote. Socrates spoke as follows on the question of the punishment to be awarded to him.[1]

> I am not vexed at your finding me guilty. Your decision is not an unexpected one. I am surprised rather at the large number of votes in my favour. I had thought the majority against me would be an overwhelming one. Instead, I find the margin is narrow. If three[2] more had voted in my favour, I would have escaped [punishment]. I find, moreover, that I have been absolved of the charge of not believing in the gods.
>
> You can now sentence me to death. What can I say about it? What do I deserve to pay or suffer for having given up offices and political appointments and gone from house to house to teach virtue? If in the gymnasium someone keeps you amused and gives you the illusion of happiness, you will maintain him at public expense. I taught you the way to real happiness, not merely to the semblance of it. If, therefore, I am entitled to ask for anything, it is that in my old age you should maintain me at public expense.
>
> Perhaps you will think me arrogant for talking in this way after having been pronounced guilty, for demanding a reward instead of punishment. But it would not be true. Though you have found me guilty, I believe myself innocent. I have wronged no one. You have not been able to understand this, for my examination lasted only a day. How much can I explain to you in so short a time? If I had had more time with you, perhaps, I could have persuaded you to better effect. Since I am innocent, I do not propose any penalty for myself. Shall I propose imprisonment? That will not be right. Shall I pay a fine? I

[1] "If the offence was one for which the law laid down no precise penalty, then . . .the prosecutor, if he won his case, proposed one penalty, the accused proposed an alternative, and the jury [a section of the Assembly, since there were no judges] had to choose one of the two. . . When Socrates had been condemned, the prosecution demanded the death penalty, but Socrates, first suggesting the Freedom of the City as the alternative, formally proposed, not exile, which the jury would gladly have accepted, but an almost derisory fine." H. D. F. Kitto: *The Greeks*. It was Plato who persuaded Socrates to raise the fine he was to propose from one to thirty minae.

[2] This should be "thirty".

do not have the money for it. Shall I propose exile? How can I do that? I do not hold my life so dear as to want to pass the rest of my days wandering from place to place, continually haunted by fear.

Someone may well suggest that I should retire into solitude and hold my peace. I cannot do that either. I believe I am commanded by the gods to discourse to people on what I hold to be virtue. I am also commanded by the gods to look unceasingly for principles of moral conduct. I do not think these are matters which you understand. But that is no reason why I should hold my peace.

Socrates was then awarded the death penalty by the Court. Un-perturbed, the great Socrates immediately addressed the assembly as follows:

In any case, I have only a few years left to live. You could not be troubled to wait and you have earned an evil name for yourselves by condemning an innocent man to death. If you had waited a while, I would have died in the course of nature, for I am an old man, far advanced in years. If I had used ignoble arguments before you and adopted the course common on such occasions, I would have escaped the death penalty. But that would have been inconsistent with my duty. I am sure a free man will never do anything unworthy of himself to save himself from death or other danger. One ought not to try to save oneself from death by any and every means. In battle, a man can save himself by laying down his arms and surrendering to the enemy. But we think such a man a coward. In the same way, anyone who resorts to unscrupulous means to save himself from death is an unworthy person. I think it is more difficult to save oneself from wickedness than from death, for wickedness is swifter than death. Being impatient and rash, you have taken a step which spells wickedness—wickedness which is so swift in its advance. You have sentenced me to death. I shall now leave this world. My opponents will be looked upon as men who betrayed truth and perpetrated an injustice. I will suffer my punishment. But they will [also] suffer the penalty for their [evil] deeds. This is what always happens. Perhaps it is just as well that it should be so.

And now, before I die, I wish to address a few words to you. I am sure that after I die you will come to suffer greatly.

You must not believe that, by getting rid of me, you will be able to go your wicked ways undisturbed. Do not assume that there will be no one toreproach you. Before I am taken to the place of execution, I shall address a few remarks to those who trust my words. So, those who wish to hear what I have to say may please stay on. I want to explain to you the meaning of death as I see it. Believe that what has happened to me is a good thing and that those who believe that death is an evil must be mistaken. Death may mean one of two things. Either the dead man wholly ceases to be and loses all sensation or the soul migrates to another abode. If the first belief is true and there is an end to all sensation, death is but the highest form of sleep. We look uponsleep as a blessing. If that is so, death, being the highest kind of sleep, must be a still greater blessing. If, on the other hand, we believe that death is a journey to another place, I shall only join those who have preceded me. In their presence, I shall get pure justice. There is no evil in this. If I have to go where Homer has gone, and other great souls with him, I shall deem it a great good fortune. I count it a high honour that I should join the souls of those who were victims of unjust punishment.

Believe it as a truth that no good man can come by evil either in life or after death. Such a man is never forsaken by God. And you may be sure that the man of truth is always happy. Therefore I am not unhappy that I am to die today and be released from these mortal coils. And so I am not angry with the judges or with my accusers. If they have wanted to do me evil, they deserve to be censured for that, but their intention can have no evil effect on me.

Now my last request: if, when my sons grow up, they begin to care for riches or for any other thing before virtue, if they think they are something when they are nothing at all, warn them, censure them, punish them just in the same manner as I have warned you against these things and reproached you with the love of them. If you can do this, I shall consider that you have been kind to me and my sons.

Now the time has come, and we must go hence: I to die, and you to live. God alone can tell which is the better state, mine or yours.

This is a historical event, that is, an event that actually occurred. We pray to God, and want our readers also to pray, that they, and we

too, may have the moral strength which enabled Socrates to follow virtue to the end and to embrace death as if it were his beloved. We advise everyone to turn his mind again and again to Socrates's words and conduct.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-5-1908

167. LETTER TO GENERAL SMUTS[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
May 12, 1908

DEAR MR. SMUTS,

I ventured to send a telephone message to you with reference to a telegram I have received from Mr. Chamney saying that all Asiatics who at the time of the compromise were outside the Colony and who are now coming in and who have arrived after the 9th instant should under the Act. I am sure you do not mean this at all, in the face of[2] the clear statement in the letter addressed by me from the jail. It has created almost a panic. I venture to hope that the necessary instructions will be issued, and that voluntary registration will be accepted from those who may now come in.

Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

GENERAL J. C. SMUTS
COLONIAL OFFICE
PRETORIA

India Office, judicial and Public Records: 2896/08; also a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4811

[1] This letter was published in *Indian Opinion*, 4-7-1908, and a copy of it was sent by Ritch as an annexure to his letter of July 27, 1908 to the Colonial Office.

[2] The words "the face of" do not occur in the office copy and were presumably added in the letter.

168. LETTER TO A. CARTWRIGHT

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 14, 1908

Personal

DEAR MR. CARTWRIGHT,

Perhaps the Angel of Peace will again have to be requisitioned. The accompanying copies[1] will tell their own tale. I do not think it is necessary for you to move just yet, but the situation that has arisenshows the danger of trusting suspiciously. The letter[2] you brought was after thestyle of Delphic oracles. You will recollect I expressed my views then, and told you that a document of that nature I could only sign because you were in it.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

A. CARTWRIGHT, ESP.
JOHANNESBURG

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4814

169. LETTER TO E.F.C. LANE[3]

JOHANNESBURG,
May 14, 1908

DEAR MR. LANE,

I have your letter of the 13th instant, for which I beg to tender my thanks to Mr. Smuts. The letter, in my opinion, raises a tremendous question, and gives rise to a very great misunderstanding. When the negotiations were going on, I could never have dreamed of accepting a compromise which would mean a differential treatment of Asiatics entering after the period of three month.[4] Had such been the

[1] Of the correspondence with General Smuts

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 28-1-1908

[3] This letter was published in *Indian Opinion*, 4-7-1908, and a copy of it was sent of July 27, by Ritch as an annexure to his letter of July 27, 1908, to the Colonial Office.

[4] In Lane's letter of May 13, 1908, General Smuts had argued that the same "mode of registration" was to apply to this category of persons as to all other Asiatic residents in the Transvaal who were to register voluntarily within the three-month period. That is to say, those returning to the Colony after May 9 would be treated under the law in exactly the same way as those Asiatics in the. Colony who had refused to register voluntarily. *Vide* S. N. 4812,

understanding, steps would certainly have been then taken to inform Indians even in India and that could only have been done by cablegrams, in order to enable the people to return to the Transvaal within three months, and even then I do not know that it would have been at all a just thing to expect Indians from India within that period in order to exchange their documents. The limitation only applied to those who were then resident in the Transvaal. General Smuts will, on a perusal of the letter signed by me and my fellow-prisoners, see that the sentence "Such mode of registration should apply to those also who, being out of the Colony, may return and otherwise possess the right of re-entry" was added by me to the letter brought by Mr. Cartwright, as were certain other words. It was never contemplated that to such Asiatics the tentative period of three months should apply. Nor was the alternative course of keeping voluntary registration open for an indefinite period ever thought of by me, andI do not suggest any such course now. But the essence of the compromise is that, the undertaking of the Indian community being fulfilled, as I claim it has been, the Act should be repealed. Voluntary registration should go on in connection with those who may arrive until the Act is repealed. As will be noticed from the Draft submitted by me, provision is made for the identification of those who may arrive after the passing of the Draft Bill. So that there is no question of keeping voluntary registration open for an indefinite period.

Of course, if it is desired by General Smuts that no registration should take place now, but that it should await the passing of the new legislation, I do not mind; but to require Indians who may enter now to come under the Act will only accentuate the suspicion that is still lurking in the minds of some of my countrymen. In order to make good my word, as also to assist the Government, it is within the General's knowledge that I very nearly lost my life, and this arose because, in the opinion of some of my countrymen, I had sold them, by reason of having agreed to the principle of ten finger-prints. Were the proposed registration under the Act of new arrivals persisted in, not only will suspicion be accentuated, but it will be justified, and I cannot help saying that those who may feel irritated against me will be entitled to my life. I should consider myself totally unworthy of the trust reposed in me by my countrymen, and to hold the position that they have allowed me to hold for such a long time, were I ever to consent to the Act being applied to new-comers. If the Act was bad, as I respectfully contend it was, it was so for all, except for those who, owing

to their fraud or obstinacy, would not voluntarily provide facility to the Government for their identification. I am, therefore, sure that General Smuts will reconsider the matter, and not only not ask me to use whatever influence I may possess with my countrymen in the direction desired by him, but that he will assist me to make good my word to them, by either accepting voluntary registration of new arrivals or informing them that they need not be identified until after the passing of the new legislation, especially as the purpose of identification is equally well served under the compromise.

As the matter is exceedingly urgent, may I ask that a telegraphic reply be sent to me?

Yours truly,

India Office, Judicial and Public Records: 2896/08; also a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4813

170. LETTER TO MEGHJIBHAI GANDHI AND KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 14, 1908

RESPECTED MEGHJIBHAI[2] AND KHUSHALBHAI[3]

Your letter to hand. I have given expression to some of my thoughts in my letter[4] to Raliatbehn[5], which is enclosed herewith. Please read it yourself, ponder over it and also read it out to her. If she is staying with Karsandas[6], please forward it to her and let me know her state of mind [after her bereavement[7]].

Gokaldas is gone. We are helpless. Our relations were such that I feel like crying even as I write this; but the ideas that I have been excogitating for a long time have now become stronger and more

[1] The first paragraph of this letter and the first two sentences of the last have been translated from the hindi version as they are missing in the gujarati source.

[2] Gandhiji's cousins, the former the son of a paternal aunt

[3] Not available

[4] Not available

[5] Gandhiji's sister

[6] Gandhiji's brother

[7] The death had occurred of her son, Gokaldas, who spent a few years with Gandhiji in South Africa; *vide* also Vol. VI.

emphatic at this moment. I find that we are all engrossed overmuch in the affairs of this world. I see that the whole country is in the same predicament in which our family finds itself. I express here only those ideas which are now uppermost in my mind.

Out of a false sense of prestige or mistaken notions of affection, we think of marrying off our boys and girls at a very early age. We spend a lot of money doing so and then look on sadly at the young widows. I do not suggest that people should not marry at all. But surely we should observe some limits. We marry off little boys and girls and make them miserable. They have children and get into difficulties.Sexual intercourse is allowed by our shastras only for the purpose of progeny. For the rest it is sheer indulgence.

I do not see that we follow this path in the least. If what I say is true, by marrying off our children as early as we ourselves were married, we only make them sensual; and thus the tree of lust flourishes. I do not think this is religion whatever others may say.

I shall say no more. You have given me the news from your end, but what answer can I give you? I only express these thoughts as they occur to me, and, though younger than you, place them before the entire family through you. This is the service I can render to the family. If youconsider this presumptuous, please forgive me. I put these thoughts of mine before you on this occasion after fourteen years of study and contemplation and seven years of practice.

Respects from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati: *Mahatma Gandhijina Patro,* ed. by D. M. Patel, Sevak Karyalaya, Ahmedabad; 1921, and from the Hindi: Prabhudas Gandhi: *Jivan-Prabhat;* Sasta Sahitya Mandal, New Delhi; 1954

171. INTERVIEW TO "THE STAR"

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before May 16, 1908]

As the leading member of the community most concerned, Mr. M. K. Gandhi, the Johannesburg lawyer, is entitled to a very considerable audience on the subject of the legislation which Natal proposes regarding its Indians. . . .

With reference to the first Bill that is to stop indentured immigration, so far as I am aware every Indian will welcome it. The only regret will be that the stopping did not come sooner, and that it is still not to come for two years. Had indentured labour from India not

been imported, there would have been no Indian question in South Africa. Of course, the reason for Indian satisfaction may not be, and is not, the same as that for European satisfaction. Indians consider that the system of indentures is of little, if any, benefit to India as a wholeor to the Indians concerned. It does not tend to the elevation or pro-gress of the indentured people, and in the words of the late Sir William Wilson Hunter[1], the official historian of India, it is a state of semi- slavery.

As to the two other Bills, they are open to very serious objection. I have never heard of such legislation in any British Colony. The first of these two licensing Bills contemplates the stopping of all new licences in Natal. This means the stopping of the removal of the same business from one place to another, because as soon as a trader remo-ves to another place, it is considered to be a new business and a further licence is necessary. This Bill, if it becomes law, must mean ruin, practically, to Indian traders. Why should not the partner of a man who holds a licence in his own name, as soon as he severs his connection with the partnership, be able to take out a licence for himself? And yet prohibition to trade will be the effect of this Bill. There aremany other points in the Bill which must strike at decent Indian existence in Natal.

Some of the Indians, who are born traders, cannot take up any other employment or pursuit. To them, Natal is their home. What are they to do if they may not trade? It will be simply encouragement for fraud if the Bill is persisted in. It is perfectly true that the position of the Indian trader under the present licensing law is not much better. He is always in a state of uncertainty, but that does not mean that the present Bill can be justified. Moreover, even with reference to the existing licensing law, the position has become very critical and during my last visit to Natal I noticed that Indian traders had become very uncomfortable and were considering what could be done to obtain amelioration. The recent cable from Home also shows that the Colonial Office is still reasoning with the Natal Government with a view to the amendment or repeal of the Dealers' Licenses Act of Natal. The second licensing Bill is, in truth, a confiscation of what rights there may be left after the full effect has been produced by the operation of the first Bill. Thus the second Bill gives ten years' notice

[1] (1840-1900); wrote a number of books on India and the Empire, including *Indian Empire*; compiled the *Imperial Gazetteer of India* in 14 volumes; member of the Legislative Council, 1881- 7; on retirement, Viceroy's Council, 188 1-7 ; on retirement, became member of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress in London, and from 1890, contributed to *The Times* on Indian affairs.

to the Indian traders to quit. If there are any left at the end of that period, they are to receive compensation on a basis of three years'profits. This is ridiculous. How can such compensation be an adequate return for confiscating a growing business? This compensation can never enable the Indian to live on the interest thereof for the rest of his lifetime. I assume of course that such an Indian will not, except in rare cases, carry on his trade elsewhere.

I know that an attempt has been made to justify the second Bill by comparing it with the liquor licensing legislation at Home. The two, however, can hardly be compared. In the other case the restriction of the liquor trade is necessary for the moral well-being of the whole community. No such argument can be advanced in connection with the Indian traders. Whatever their defects may be, no one has been able to impute more dishonesty to them than to other traders, and Indian trade, *per se*, is not held to be harmful as the liquor trade undoubtedly is.

I do not anticipate that such legislation will be passed, but the very fact that responsible Ministers in South Africa can contemplate with equanimity the passing of such legislation is a most deplorable one, and saps the foundations of Imperial statesmanship and Imperial federation. Many Imperialists in England include India also as part of Imperial federation and I do not know that it is possible to have at all a British Empire, leaving India out, seeing that, according to Lord Curzon, India is the dome of the Imperial edifice and that it is India which makes the term Empire possible.

Indian Opinion, 16-5-1908

172. NATAL BILLS

The more one examines the Natal Licensing Bills, the greater is the feeling of dissatisfaction over them. The Bills are an open challenge to the Imperial Government. They frankly and openly attack Indians, not Asiatics generally. They attack not Coloured people but Indians only. A Chinaman may, therefore, freely trade in Natal, save for the restrictions provided by Act 18 of 1896, but an Indian may not. The Zulu, very properly, we think, is unhampered, but the Indian, whether born in Natal or not, must not trade after a certain date. The *Mercury* pertinently asks whether an Indian may carry on the trade of a barber. And if he may, why should the European grocer and the general dealer alone be protected?

But to examine the details of the proposed legislation is not to understand it. In order to understand it properly, it is necessary tolook

beneath the surface. The Natal Government, then, by bringing forward the Bills, state their Indian policy. In their opinion, the Colony has a perfect right to drive away Indians, not to recognize them as British subjects and to do as they choose with them without regard to Imperial obligations. In Kipling's words, the Servant is to be the Master. It is not enough that Natal is to be Mistress in her own, but it is to dictate terms to the Imperial Government. For we brush aside the idea that the proposed treatment of Indians can ever be part of the powers of self-governing colonies. And what Natal wishes to do is, after all, what most British Colonies would also like to copy.

What will India do? The Indian Government, if they would faithfully discharge their trust, have a clear duty before them. They cannot see Indian emigrants being ruined and sacrificed on the altar of prejudice. But whether they realize their duty or not, it is clearly for the people of India to wake up and assert their right of protecting the interests of their "cousins across the sea". Every hamlet in India should express its abhorrence of the cruel injustice that is dealt out to their brethren who have emigrated to the Colonies.

Indian Opinion, 16-5-1908

173. NEW NATAL BILLS

The more closely one examines the Natal Government's new licensing Bills, the more wicked one finds them—so wicked indeed that most South African newspapers have denounced them. In Natal, the *Mercury* and *The Times of Natal* have opposed the Bills. Among the Johannesburg' newspapers, even *The Star* has been writing strongly against them. The *Leader,* too, has spoken out. *Rand Daily Mail* alone appears to be favourably disposed towards the Government.

That the Bills have been condemned in this manner does not mean that the Indian community may look on, a silent spectator. Though many of the newspapers have condemned the Bills, they approve of their object. They would be happy to see Indian trade ruined. They are convinced that the presence of the Indians in South Africa does not conduce to the Colony's interests. They only point out that such Bills are without precedent in British rule, and that the Imperial Government may not assent to them. If the whites could give up all pretence to decency or had no fear of the Imperial Government, all of them in South Africa would jump at the first chance of throwing the Indians out with the utmost despatch.

As long as the whites entertain such ideas, the Indians in South

Africa, or in the other Colonies for that matter, cannot afford to be complacent. That the local newspapers have taken up a favourable attitude should not give rise to any illusions. The lamb will not feel secure merely because the lion is in the cage and can do him no harm. He will ever go about cautiously and in fear of the lion. We are in the same plight as the lamb. It is not that the common whites here are in love with us. They merely desist from acting to our detriment in matters in which they are helpless. They have the lion's nature which they cannot transform into that of a lamb. We are lambs who must, however, become lions. When we succeed in that, mutual regard will come as a matter of course. It is the law of this world—not a divine law—that there can be love or friendship only among equals. Princes befriend princes. In a king there can be nothing but condescension towards his subjects. That is why some persons want republics. There is no love lost between master and servant. This is found to be true in every sphere. Wherever we find a relationship contrary to this rule that is, friendship even in the absence of equality—we know that the superior party is actuated by some self-interest, or that he is an exceptionally good person. The whites look upon us as a subject race. As long as they persist in this attitude there can be no mutual regard. In the absence of mutualregard, the cause of Indian discontent is bound to remain. The Indian community will therefore be able to exercise its rights only when it develops a lion-like nature.

The beauty of the Natal Bills is that they do not apply to the Chinese, let alone the Kaffirs. If the Bills are passed, it will make out Indians to be the lowliest [among the Coloured persons]. We believe the Natal Government's object in bringing forward these Bills is to ascertain white reaction and test Indian strength. They seem to think that, if the Indian community does not protest in this case or does so only perfunctorily, it may be possible to bring greater pressure to bear on it on future occasions.

It will not be enough, therefore, that the Natal Indians merely resist these Bills; they should challenge the very principle underlying them. They must wake up from their sleep. No one, whether businessman or not, should imagine that trade is all that matters; it is also necessary to acquire true education. Having acquired that for oneself, one must educate one's children. It is only when the Indian community thus cultivates its talents in every way that it will learn tobe vigilant. He who becomes vigilant may become leonine. The remedy

is in our hands. "[But then,] you cannot sell your berries unless you shout your wares."[1]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-5-1908

174. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

INTER-COLONIAL CONFERENCE[2]

A number of resolutions are believed to have been passed at this conference, though its proceedings were kept strictly confidential. It is believed, moreover, that this was done at the instance of the Natal politicians, who did not want the question of federation to be discussed in public for the time being. There are also reports of a serious rift among the Council members on the question of customs duties.

REGISTRATION

Voluntary registration ended on the 9th. New applications are not accepted any longer. That is to say, those who have not so far applied [for registration certificates] will be left out. Indians with permits are now entitled to enter the Transvaal and also voluntarily to apply for registration. In spite of this, Mr. Chamney has issued an order that since the time-limitfor voluntary registration has expired, new-comers have perforce to take out registers under the law. This order shows two things: first that voluntary registration is of great value; secondly, that the Registration Office has erred again—as it has so often in the past—in issuing this order. General Smuts is seized of the matter, and there has been an exchange of messages by telegraph and over the telephone. The final decision can only be that the new entrants into the Transvaal are entitled to seek registration voluntarily and that such persons will also be exempt from the law. Eligible Indians who enter the Transvaal from now on must be patient and remain unconcerned. It is probable that by the time this letter goes into print this order will have been withdrawn. If, however, it is not, the foregoing suggestion should be kept in mind. If the officials violatethe terms of the settlement, it will be possible to set matters right. Because the officials act contrary to its terms, the compromise

[1] A Gujarati saying which means that one cannot attract attention unless one speaks out.

[2] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 9-5-1908

itself should not be blamed.

"EXPEL THE INDIAN!"

The cry continues to be heard here and all over South Africa. Captain Cooke, who some time ago sponsored a resolution for the expulsion of Indians at a meeting of the Progressive Party and whose resolution was rejected, has now written a letter to *The Star*. He points out that the proposed legislation for this purpose in Natal is unnecessary. What is needed is to find a colony for Indians which is climatically unsuitable for white settlement. Captain Cooke suggests that Indians be settled there and adds that there would be justice in such a course.[1] *The Star* has supported the proposal to some extent, but this journal has been writing strongly against the projected Natal legislation.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-5-1908

175. SARVODAYA [*-I*][2]

PREFACE

People in the West generally hold that it is man's duty to promote the happiness—prosperity, that is—of the greatest number.[3] Happiness is taken to mean material happiness exclusively, that is, economic prosperity. If, in the pursuit of this happiness moral, laws are violated, it does not matter much. Again, as the object is the happiness of the greatest number, people in the West do not believe it to be wrong if it is secured at the cost of the minority. The consequences of this attitude are in evidence in all western countries.

The exclusive quest for the physical and material happiness of the majority has no sanction in divine law. In fact, some thoughtful persons in the West have pointed out that it is contrary to divine law to

[1] *Vide* also "Lord Selborne's View", 4-4-1908 and "Johannesburg Letter", 2-5-1908

[2] The Advancement of All

[3] The reference is to Bentham's maxim of "the greatest good of the greatest number". Gandhiji opposed it on moral grounds; *vide* "The Pietersburg Claptrap", 13-8-1904. Ruskin, too, criticized the construction of a "science" of economics on the Newtonain model from which "social affections" had been wholly abstracted. Ruskin argued that the greatest art or science was that which aroused "the greatest number of the greatest ideas".

pursue happiness in violation of moral principles. The late John Ruskin[1] was foremost among these. He was an Englishman of great learning. He has written numerous books on art and crafts. He has also written a great deal on ethical questions. One of these books, a small one, Ruskin himself believed to be his best. It is read widely wherever English is spoken. In the book, he has effectively countered these arguments and shown that the well-being of the people at large consists in conforming to the moral law.

We in India are much given nowadays to imitation of the West. We do grant that it is necessary to imitate the West in certain respects. At the same time there is no doubt that many western ideas are wrong. It will be admitted on all hands that what is bad must be eschewed. The condition of Indians in South Africa is pitiable. We go out to distant lands to make money. We are so taken up with this that we become oblivious of morality and of God. We become engrossed in the pursuit of self-interest. In the sequel, we find that going abroad does us more harm than good, or does not profit us as much as it ought to. All religions presuppose the moral law, but even if we disregard religion as such, its observance is necessary on grounds of common sense also. Our happiness consists in observing it. This is what John Ruskin has established. He has opened the eyes of the western people to this, and today, we see a large number of Europeans modelling their conduct on his teaching. In order that Indians may profit by his ideas, we have decided to present extracts from his book, in a manner intelligible to Indians who do not know English.

Socrates gave us some idea of man's duty. He practised his precepts. It can be argued that Ruskin's ideas are an elaboration of Socrates's. Ruskin has described vividly how one who wants to live by Socrates's ideas should acquit himself in the different vocations. The

[1] (1819-1900); a Scotsman and author of many books on architecture, painting, social and industrial problems, the place of women in society, etc; Slade Professor of Art in Oxford for some time; later became opposed to vivisection and usury and interested in workers' education and co-operative industrial settlements. Together with *Munera Pulveris*, *Unto This Last,* which was published as a series of articles in *Cornhill Magazine*, expounds Ruskin's social utopia. Gandhiji describes Ruskin as "one of the three moderns. . .who made a deep impress on me". *Unto This Last* "brought about an instantaneous and practical transformation. . . .I arose with the dawn, ready to reduce these principles to practice". Polak commended this book to Gandhiji who read it on the train journey between Johannesburg and Durban. *Vide Autobiography*, Part IV, Ch. XVIII.

summary of his work which we offer here is not really a translation. If we translated it, the common reader might be unable to follow some of the Biblical allusions, etc. We present therefore only the substance of Ruskin's work. We do not even explain what the title of the book means, for it be understood only by a person who has read the Bible in English.[1] But since the object which the book works towards is the welfare of all—that is, the advancement of all and not merely of the greatest number we have entitled these articles "Sarvodaya".

ROOTS OF TRUTH[2]

Man suffers from many delusions; but none so great as his attempt to formulate laws for the conduct of other men disregarding the effects of social affection, as if they were only machines at work. That we cherish such an illusion does us no credit. Like other forms of error, the laws of political economy also contain an element of plausibility. Political economists assert that social affections are to be looked upon as accidental and disturbing elements in human nature; but avarice and the desire for progress are constant elements. Let us eliminate the inconstants and, considering man merely as a money-making machine, examine by what laws of labour, purchase and sale, the greatest amount of wealth can be accumulated. Those laws once determined, it will be for each individual afterwards to introduce as much of the disturbing affectional elements as he chooses.

This would be a convincing argument if the social affections were of the same nature as the laws of demand and supply. Man's affections constitute an inner force. The laws of demand and supply are formulations concerning the external world. The two, therefore, are not of the same nature. If a moving body is acted upon by a constant force from one direction and a varying force from another, we would first measure the constant force and then the inconstant. We will be able to determine the velocity of the body by comparing the two forces. We can do this because the constant and the inconstant forces are of the same kind. But in social dealings the constant force of the laws of demand and supply and the accidental force of social affection are forces that differ in kind. Affection has a different kind of effect on man and acts in a different manner. It changes

[1] *Vide* the parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard, *St. Matthew,* Ch. XX, *v.* 14. "I will give unto this last, even as unto thee."

[2] "Roots of Honour" in *Unto This Last*

man'snature, so that we cannot measure its effect with the help of laws of addition and subtraction, as we can the effects of different forces on the velocity of a body. A knowledge of the laws of exchange is of no help in determining the effects of man's social affections.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-5-1908

176. SPEECH AT Y.M.C.A.

[JOHANNESBURG,
May 18, 1908]

The following address was given by Mr. M. K. Gandhi, Bar-at-Law, before the Y.M.C.A., Johannesburg, in moving the negative in a debate on the question, "Are Asiatics and the Coloured races a menace to the Empire?"

It seems to me somewhat remarkable that a question of this description should arise at all, or that there should be any debate whatsoever as to whether Coloured races are a menace to the Empire. I think that a question of that description could arise only in the Colonies or, better still, only in some of the Colonies. In a well-ordered society industrious and intelligent men can never be a menace. If they have any defects, the very order of the society corrects them. At the same time, we, as practical men and women living in this very practical age, have to face facts as they are and, seeing that questions of this description arise in the Colonies, it is undoubtedly well that we should discuss them and debate upon them; and, to my mind, it is a very happy augury for the future that your humble servant can be called upon to give his views on the question before an audience like this, and I think it is also a happy augury that this hall is so well filled, showing the keen interest taken in the subject.

By the term "Coloured people" generally, I think we understand only offspring of mixed marriages, but in connection with the question before us this evening, the term "Coloured people" has been taken more comprehensively, and has been made to include the Coloured people proper—the Africans and the Asiatics. My own observations and experience, as you know, are confined very largely to British Indians, my own fellow-countrymen, but in studying the Indian question, I have endeavoured to study the question as it affects the Africans and the Chinese. It seems to me that both the Africans and the Asiatics have advanced the Empire as a whole; we can hardly think of South Africa without the African races. And who can think of the British Empire without India? South Africa would probably be a howling wilderness without the Africans. I do not think that the white

man would have come to South Africa at all if there had been no Native races.

This brings me to the White Man's Burden as Kipling has called it. His writings, to my mind, have been very much misunderstood. We know now also that he himself has very considerably, with extended experience, revised his views, and he no longer thinks that the Coloured people are a menace to the Empire, or that the white man may not coexist with the Coloured man. Be that as it may, he has certainly shown in some of his writings that it was really a responsibility thrown on the white people, more particularly on the British people, to act as trustees for the Coloured races. But have the white people acted as trustees? Would you consider that your own wards were a menace to yourselves? The majority of people in South Africa, the majority of people in most of the Colonies, have become impatient of colour, and it behoves every right-minded man and woman to think twice before he or she jumps to the conclusion that the Coloured people are a menace and that, therefore, they ought to be got rid of with the greatest possible despatch.

We hear nowadays a great deal of the segregation policy, as if it were possible to put people in water-tight compartments. Captain Cooke has written to the papers[1] and has taken the trouble of discussing the same question with me, and has propounded a policy of segregation. I had no hesitation in telling him that, in my own opinion, based now on 14 years' observation and study, such a scheme, if it was meant to people some portions of East Africa with Coloured people only or, better still, with Asiatics only, was not possible of fulfilment. How are you going to restrict Asiatics to some parts of the earth only? Will they be content to have those portions of the earth which may be apportioned to them and which are unfit for white occupation? I have certainly never been able to find any justification for the colourbarrier. In the words of Mr. Chamberlain, it is possible to make distinctions on the ground of want of education, on the ground of criminality, or some such ground. Then there will be no cry of segregation. But from the present civilisation, or, rather, from western civilization, there flow two propositions which have almost become maxims to live by—I call them fallacious maxims. They are "might is right" and "survival of the fittest". Those whohave propounded these two maxims have given a meaning to them. I am not going into the meaning that might be attached in our minds to them, but they have said undoubtedly, by [saying] "might is right", that physical might is right, that physical strength is right and

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 16-5-1908

supreme. Some of them have also combined intellectual strength with physical strength, but I would replace both these with heart-strength, and I say that nobody with merely physical might and intellectual might can everenjoy that strength that can proceed from the heart. It never can be that mere intellectual or mere physical strength can ever supersede the heart-strength or, as Ruskin would say, social affections. A quickening and quickened soul responds only to the springs of the heart.

That[1] is the difference between western and eastern civilization? I know that I am treading on very dangerous and delicate ground. We had the distinction given to us by so great an authority as Lord Selborne only a short time ago, and I have very humbly and very respectfully to differ from His Excellency's views.[2] It appears that western civilization is destructive, eastern civilisation is constructive. Western civilization is centrifugal, eastern civilization is centripetal. Western civilisation, therefore, is naturally disruptive, whereas eastern civilization combines. I believe also that western civilization is without a goal, eastern civilization has always had the goal before it. I do not mix up or confuse western civilization with Christian progress. I decline to believe that it is a symbol of Christian progress that we have covered a large part of the globe with the telegraph system, that we have got telephones and ocean greyhounds, and that we have trains running at a velocity of 50 or even 60 miles per hour. I refuse to believe that all this activity connotes Christian progress, but it does connote western civilization. I think western civilization also represents tremendous activity, eastern civilization represents contemplativeness, but it also sometimes represents lethargy. The people in India, the people in China—I leave Japan for the time being—having been sunk in their contemplative mood, have forgotten the essence of the thing, they have forgotten that, in transferring their activity from one sphere of life to another sphere of life, they had not to be idle, they had not to be lazy. The result is that immediately they find an obstacle in their way, they simply sit down. It is necessary that that civilization should come in contact with that of the West, it is necessary that thatcivilization should be quickened with the western spirit. Immediately that fact is accomplished, I have no doubt also that the eastern civilization will become predominant, because it has a goal. I think you will see easily that a civilization or a condition in which all the forces fly away from the centre must necessarily be without a goal, whereas those which converge to a point have always a goal. It is then

[1] Misprint for "What"?

[2] *Vide* "Lord Selborne's View",4-4-1908

necessary for these two civilizations to meet and we shall have a different force altogether, by no means a menacing force, by no means a force that disunites, but a force that unites. The two forces are undoubtedly opposing forces, but perhaps in the economy of nature both are necessary. Only we, as intelligent human beings with heart and soul, have to see what those forces are, and have to use them, not blindly but intelligently, not anyhow and haphazard, but with a goal in view. Immediately that is done, there is no difficulty whatsoever in [the] two civilizations meeting and meeting for a good purpose.

I have said that the African races have undoubtedly served the Empire, and I believe so have the Asiatic races or, rather, British Indians. Have not the British Indians fought on many a battle-field? A people, moreover, who have religion as the basis of life, cannot be a menace. And how can the African races be a menace? They are still in the history of the world's learners. Able-bodied and intelligent men as they are, they cannot but be an asset to the Empire. I believe with Mr. Creswell that they ought not to be protected. We do not want protection for them in any shape or form, but I do believe this—that they are entitled to justice, a fair field and no favour. Immediately you give that to them, you will find no difficulty. Whilst, therefore, Asiatics and other Coloured people cannot be a menace, Asiatics at least have been made a menace in some Colonies. We have been told that Natal and Mauritius are awful examples to every white man throughout the world. I do not know that they are such awful countries, but I, at the same time, believe that, if what happened in Natal had not happened, it would have been different—whether better or worse, we are not for the present discussing; but, if these countries have been ruined, they have been ruined purposely by white men, or, rather, by a few of them who were in a hurry to get rich. If they had only bided their time and opportunity, no such thing need, would, have happened. They did not hesitate to import indentured labour, which might be called semislave labour, from India. Posterity has to pay for it. If, therefore, Natal or Mauritius has suffered, it has suffered not from Asiatics as such, but from a system of labour of which Asiatics happened to form part. Had there been white indentured labour instead, the result would have beenthe same. It is not the free Indian population that can ever do any harm whatsoever to the Colonies.

But I do also admit that there are some reasonable complaints with reference to British Indians. I venture, however, to submit that these complaints have no real basis. It is complained that they live in dirty hovels. Yes, some of them do. They are said to live very cheaply. But if you were to examine these complaints, I think, you would come to the conclusion that they could be dealt with very easily and very

effectively by municipal regulations. There are many complaints against the people living in the East End of London by the people living in the West End, but no one has suggested that, therefore, the people in the East End should be swept away. Sweep away the rack-rent and the conditions prevailing in the East End, and its inhabitants will be just as good as those in the West End. Similarly also, sweep away the conditions under which British Indians are called upon to live, sweep away the condition that they cannot own a patch of land which they can call their own, that they cannot live, and move, and have their being on God's earth in South Africa with any degree of freedom, self-respect and manliness, and they will realize that in Rome they must live as the Romans do, and will respond to every real and reasonable call that can be made upon them by the white man; but I ask you to be patient with them just as you would be patient with any fellow-man. Treat him as a real, live human being, and you will have no such thing as the Indian question in the country. Please do not forget I do not advocate that there should be absolutely free immigration. On the contrary, I have always said, and British Indians admit, that there may be regulation of immigration, but never based on colour. Anyone who is accepted as an immigrant ought to be entitled to all the rights that a man who lives in the country should possess. Whether he should have political rights or not is another question. I am not here today to discuss the political question at all. But there should be no two opinions as to whether he may live freely without being restricted, move freely without being restricted, own land, or trade honestly.[1] British Indians and Englishmen have come together by Divine Providence. I may add, and I believe it is true, that, when the British occupied India, it was not owing to humanitarian grounds, but that the act was selfish and often tinged with dishonesty. But Nature's ways are inscrutable. She often unmakes what man makes and produces good out of evil. Such is, in my opinion, the casewith the British connection with India. I believe that the two races, the British and the Indian, have been brought together, not only for their own mutual advantage, but to leave an impress on the history of the world. Believing that, I also believe that it is well for me to be a loyal subject of the Empire, but not I hope a member of a subject race. I trust it is the mission of the English race, even where there are subject races, to raise them to equality with themselves, to give them free institutions and make them absolutely free men. If that be the mission of the Empire, the mission of the British race, then is it not as well that the millions of human beings should be trained for

[1] *Vide* "Letter to the Press", 30-11-1906

self-government? If we look into the future, is it not a heritage we have to leave to post-erity, that all the different races commingle and produce a civilization that perhaps the world has not yet seen? There are difficulties and misunderstandings, but I do believe, in the words of the sacred hymn, "We shall know each other better when the mists have rolled away."

Indian Opinion, 6-6-1908
13-6-1908

177. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

[*May 16, 1908*]

FOUL PLAY

This news-letter deserves serious attention. I said last week that the Government here wants to issue registers to fresh Indian entrants only under the obnoxious law.[1] When I wrote that, I was quite sure that the Government would resile from its earlier position and allow the voluntary registration of Indians who, though they held permits, arrived after the 9th. I find that my calculation has gone wrong. Mr. Gandhi and General Smuts have been in correspondence, General Smuts categorically declaring in the end that Indians arriving after May 9 will be governed by the provisions of the obnoxious Act.

It was Hajee Habib who sent news from Pretoria that they intended to apply the obnoxious law [to fresh Indian entrants also]. Immediately on receipt of the information, a telegram was despatched, to which the following reply was received.

MESSAGE FROM GENERAL SMUTS

> [I[2] am directed by the Government] to inform you by telegram that, since the persons who entered the Transvaal during the three-month period were allowed to apply for voluntary registration, the terms of the settlement have been fulfilled. Those who arrive after the period of three months will be obliged to take out registers under the law.

Mr. Gandhi then wrote the following letter[3] to General Smuts.

> I sent you a telegram[4] with reference to a telegram from

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 16-5-1908

[2] Registrar of Asiatics

[3] This has not been translated. For the text, *vide* "Letter to General Smuts", 12-5-1908

[4] The English original has "telephone message".

Mr. Chamney. I am sure you will be able to see from the letter addressed to you from gaol[1] that anyone coming in [after the expiry of the period of three months] should be entitled [to apply] for voluntary registration, provided he is otherwise eligible.

Mr. Chamney's refusal to permit voluntary registration [of this category of persons] has created a panic. I hope that you will issue the necessary instructions, and permit voluntary registration of those who may now come in.

GENERAL SMUTS' REPLY

General Smuts sent the following reply[2] to this:

Your letter was duly received. General Smuts does not agree with your interpretation of the terms of the settlement. Indians who may come in now must apply for registration [under the law]. General Smuts hopes, therefore, that you will use your influence to persuade fresh Indian entrants to apply for registration accordingly.

REPLY

In reply to this, Mr. Gandhi wrote as follows:[3]

FURTHER REPLY FROM GENERAL SMUTS

This is as under:[4]

Your letter was duly received. Even after further consideration, General Smuts is unable to depart from the position he has taken.

This is a frightful reply, and suggests foul play. It is not in itself a serious matter that a score or so of Indians who have recently returned from home are not allowed to take out certificates voluntarily. That would not be a sufficient cause for panic. What causes apprehension is that the roots of this go much deeper. The obnoxious law has to be repealed now. It must be repealed. If it is not, the consequences are likely to be unpleasant. We shall remain where we were. Mr. Gandhi wrote very frankly to General Smuts. The brief reply to this letter merely announced that his demand would not be accepted. Nothing was said about whether or not the law would be repealed.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 28-1-1908

[2] These letters were from the Private Secretary to General Smuts.

[3] For text of the letter, *vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 14-5-1908

[4] These letters were from the Private Secretary to General Smuts.

INTERVIEW WITH CARTWRIGHT

Mr. Cartwright has been at every stage associated with the settlement as a mediator, so that there is no need to be apprehensive [on his score]. Since Mr. Cartwright is an honest man, we may depend on his doing his best. What if, in spite of all, General Smuts does not come round? The Transvaal Indians must answer this question to themselves courageously. Mr. Gandhi has had an interview with Mr. Cartwright and the two of them intend to see General Smuts.[1] Everything will depend on the result of the interview.

WHAT IS THIS SETTLEMENT?

If, however, it is established that the Government has in fact played foul, one may ask what kind of a settlement this is. But those who understand the meaning of satyagraha have no call to ask such a question. In any settlement, whenever one of the parties proves untrue to its word, the fight has to be resumed. The Indian community may thus have to resume the campaign—with this difference that we have now had three months' respite [before doing that]. I believe we can fight now with increased strength and [therefore] more effectively. The same satyagraha that yielded the settlement can also force its implementation.

TEST OF SATYAGRAHA

If the struggle is revived, satyagraha will be put to the test [again]. It will be all the more impressive and, if the Indian community proves resolute, a wonderful spectacle to watch.

This is no occasion for cowards, only for the brave. One must be prepared to stake one's life on the campaign. One must not look only to self-interest, but should instead strive for the common good. What do we own? What did we bring with us [when we came into this world]? What will we take back with us? I, for one, wish to assert without reservation that we must look at the matter in this light, dedicate our all to truth and draw once again the sword that has been returned to the scabbard. Let us understand this and not blame the compromise. After all, men do repudiate the written word and fight one another. This is what has happened on this occasion. There can be no guarantee against foul play. Nor on that account can it be argued that we must never trust anyone for fear of being betrayed.

Moreover, when the gaol doors were thrown open, we could not

[4] The original here is not clear on whether Cartwright was also to meet General Smuts. In fact, he was not present at the meeting between Gandhiji and General Smuts which took place on June 6, 1908; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 13-6-1908

have got more than we did.

I place all these thoughts before *Indian Opinion* readers to alert everyone. They will also know the difficulties that are being encountered and at the same time realize the value of voluntary registration. I do not believe it will be necessary to resume the campaign. [I believe] General Smuts will rectify his error and the Act will be repealed. But we must prepare to act in case it is not repealed. Let us note that the first warning has come from General Smuts himself.

The foregoing was written on Saturday. I hope to be able to cover, in this news-letter, further developments up to Wednesday.

[Before *May 20, 1908*]

REGRET

Our only regret is that some Indians who have recently arrived from India have already submitted to the new law and taken out registration certificates. They ought not to have been in such a hurry. It is rather disheartening that there are Indians who, even after the big fight that was put up, have not learnt their duty.

WARNING

But I hope that no Indian will henceforth go to the Registration Office to take out certificates under the law.

MUNICIPAL BILL

The draft Municipal [Consolidation] Bill published in the *Gazette* confers the following powers on municipalities.

1. To lay out Locations for Asiatics, and to transfer them from one site to another as may be deemed fit. In case of such trans-fer, compensation must be paid for losses on account of buildings.

2. Municipalities may refuse to grant any licence which it is within their power to grant. If a licence is refused, the applicant shall be entitled to appeal to a magistrate. Licences can be withheld if the premises are unsatisfactory or the applicant has been previously convicted [three times within the three years immediately preceding his application].[1]

3. It will be entirely within the discretion of a municipality to grant or refuse a licence to a hawker. In the event of refusal, there shall be no appeal against the decision of the municipality. This means that hawkers will be at the mercy of the municipalities.

4. If this Bill is approved, it will mean the complete elimination

[1] From the text of the Bill in *Indian Opinion*, 23-5-1908

of Indians from the Transvaal. The Association intends to make a representation on this question. I hope to give a translation of the petition next week.[1]

ASSAULT ON ESSOP MIA

At 2 P.M. on Sunday, Mr. Essop Mia, Chairman of the British Indian Association, was proceeding to the Location to attend a dinner party when a Pathan struck him on the back with a heavy stick. He turned round and was hit on the face, the blow breaking the bridge of the nose. Blood gushed out. Mr. Essop Mia became unconscious and fell down. Mr. Moosa Ebrahim Patel and Mr. Cachalia tried to seize the Pathan, the former receiving injuries in the attempt. Meanwhile, Mr. Essop Mia got on his feet and took hold of the assailant. Mr. Camay happened to come [on the scene] and whistled for the police, who rushed to the spot and arrested the assailant. The other Pathans, who had struggled free, ran away.

Mr. Essop Mia was in severe pain. He was bleeding. Nevertheless, he went straight to the Police Station and then to Dr. Gilchrist. The doctor bandaged him. The nasal bone has been set, and it is expected that the setting will be successful. The injury on the back, too, is severe. The front teeth are shaky, but there is no reason to fear loss of the teeth. Mr. Essop Mia has borne his pain with great courage. Because of the injured nose, the upper part of his face is in bandage. The mouth being left uncovered, he can talk a little. A large number of persons called on him on Sunday.

The assault appears to have had something to do with the compromise. The Pathans are believed to have picked on Mr. Essop Mia also for attack on account of the prominent part he played in that regard. It is said, moreover, that the Pathans wished to be revenged on Mr. Essop Mia --and did so-- for having given evidence about the attack on Mr. Gandhi.

If this is true, it is very much to be regretted. It shows cowardice on the part of those among the Pathans who are the real instigators, who remain behind the scenes and operate through others. Moreover, attacking a man for giving true evidence in the cause of justice betrays want of manliness.

I hope that all the Pathans do not subscribe to this way of thinking. The wise among them owe it to themselves to pacify those inclined to mischief. I do not think it particularly brave to raise one's

[1] This does not appear to have been done.

hand against an innocent person.

The Pathans are famous as soldiers. They are known for their strong physique. A soldier and a man of strength ought not to attack an unarmed person; on the contrary, he should defend such a one. This much is plain. Pitting oneself against an equal shows courage, but everyone will admit that it is not brave to attack from behind.

If the Pathans believe that they can terrorize the poor Indians, they are mistaken. In the near future, if not today, the Indian community will learn to be courageous and defend itself. It is possible to defend oneself in two ways. The better way is not to defend oneself at all and to accept blows with courage. We see everywhere that the force we exert will be wasted if it does not meet with any resistance at all. We know that, if we [try to] punch at the air, the arm will only feel a wrench. No force is needed to bend a piece of string. If we mistake it for a stick and use the same force as we would to bend the stick, we will only feel some discomfort in the arm. If someone swears at me and I do not swear back, he will soon become silent, having exhausted himself. The same is true of a man who uses violence to attack another. It is my belief that this attitude and [the requisite] endurance cannot be cultivated in a day. I think it requires more courage to bear up with violence to one's person [than to retaliate].

Till one acquires this kind of courage, it is necessary to cultivate the strength to defend oneself. It is not difficult to defend oneself with a stick or in some other suitable fashion. The important thing is to be fearless. One must not live in fear of attack, and if one receives a blow,one must have the strength to strike back in self-defence. This calls for presence ofmind rather than strength. We in India have become cowardly. It is not courage to let ourselves be beaten up because of fear. We do not even dare to raise the stick. This is not right at all, and as long as this cowardice is not overcome, we shall not develop courage. It is therefore my considered advice that, if we can develop real courage, we may suffer assault rather than turn away from our duty out of fear of violence. If, however, such courage is beyond our reach, we must learn to keep the stick with us and be prepared to defend ourselves with it.

This is also part of satyagraha. A satyagrahi will adhere to truth to the last. If we want to be satyagrahis, we must have the courage to range ourselves against the Government or our own community, if necessary, and courage consists in being fearless. We must be fearless

about everything. We must have no fear of violence to our person or of loss of money. We may even lose the good opinion of others. We may let everything go. But we must not allow truth to forsake us. This and this alone is fearlessness.

I know for certain that a large number of Pathans do not approve of acts of violence. But they do not declare this in public, holding back again for fear of being themselves assaulted. If these Pathans chance to read what I have written, I suggest to them that they also show true courage and declare in public that they do not approve of these things.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-5-1908

178. LETTER TO REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 21, 1908

THE REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS
PRETORIA

SIR,

Re. Mahomed Balim E/7512

These papers have been sent by Mr. Mahomed Balim to me. I see that you have declined to consider the case on the strength of Acts 2 and 15 of 1907. May I, however, venture to place the special circumstances of the case before you. Mr. Mahomed Balim has been trying practically ever since 1905 to get permission to enter the Colony. He is one of the very few British Indians who paid £25 as the price of his residence in the Transvaal before Law 3 of 1885 was amended. He is very well known in theTransvaal and he can produce excellent references. Under the circumstances, may I ask you to reconsider this very special case?

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5561

179. LETTER TO GENERAL SMUTS

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 21, 1908

DEAR MR. SMUTS,

I understand that you will be leaving for Cape Town on Saturday. I hardly think that you realize the gravity of the situation so far as the Indian community is concerned. Your decision[1] not to register under the compromise those Indians who have been entering the Colony on *bona-fide* permits after the 9th of this month has created a turmoil amongst the Indians. You have heard, I take it, that the Chairman of the Association has been already assaulted.[2] Many more may be assaulted in the near future. I daily receive indignant letters saying that I have entirely misled the people as to the compromise and that the law is not going to be repealed at all. Can I not ask you, for the sake of those who have helped the Government, to do a very simple thing--to announce immediately that the Act will be repealed and that new arrivals may be voluntarily registered?[3]

The most violent member of the Pathan community, who has remained behind the scenes but who has been an active agent in having the assaults committed, has been arrested today on a charge of inspiring to do harm. If it is at all possible, I certainly think that this man should be deported.[4] In my opinion he is more or less a maniac and many dissatisfiedIndians simply hang around him. The delay in making the announcement about the repeal of the Act and the decision not to accept voluntary registration have simply strengthened the hands of these men. You will add to the peace of mind of well-behaved Indians by giving the assurance about the Act, accepting voluntary registration from those who now arrive, and by dealing with

[1] Lane had said that, after full consideration of Gandhiji's request contained in his letter of May 14, Smuts could not agree to it. ". . .the period of three months granted for voluntary registration having lapsed, further applications can only be received under the law". *Vide* S. N. 4815.

[2] *Vide"* "Johannesburg Letter", 16-5-1908 and "Essop Mia", 23-5-1908

[3] General Smuts did not agree to this; *vide* S.N. 4817.

[4] In his reply (S. N. 4817), Lane said, ". . .for reasons which Mr. Chamney has explained to you it is not possible to deal with him in the way you suggest", and added that General Smuts earnestly hoped that, if Gandhiji feared danger to his person, he should immediately avail himself of police protection.

the fanatic I have mentioned either by way of deportation or by treating him as a prohibited immigrant under the Immigrants' Restriction Act. I believe he possesses no documents.

This letter I have ventured to make very personal and absolutely frank. May I ask you to reciprocate the frankness? I have been naturally talking to Mr. Cartwright, who has acted as the intermediary, and Mr. Cartwright has been passing along messages, but the gravity of the situation makes it imperative that I should make this very personal appeal to you.

Yours etc.,

J. C. SMUTS, ESQ.
COLONIAL SECRETARY
PRETORIA

From a photostat of the handwritten office copy: S. N. 4816

180. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 21, 1908

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have received your letter. You need not worry about me. I think I shall have to sacrifice myself. I do not believe that Smuts can play foul to the end. But it gives an opportunity to those who have reached the limits of their patience and are ready to strike at me. If that should happen, we need not be unhappy. If I have to give my life for a cause which I consider to be good, what better death can there be?

If God found it fit to take away Gokaldas, why should the ideaof death make us sorrowful? This world is transient. If, therefore, I leave this world, why should one be worried on that account? It should be enough to wish that nothing improper is done by me as long as I live. We should of course be careful that we do nothing improper even by mistake. True, I have not yet reached the stage when I can attain liberation but I do believe that if I leave this body while treading the path along which my thoughtsare nowadays running, I shall be reborn and speedily attain to *moksha* at the end of that life.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati: *Mahatma Gandhijina Patro,* ed. D. M. Patel, Sevak Karyalaya, Ahmedabad; 1921

181. TRANSVAAL MUNICIPAL CONSOLIDATION BILL

The Transvaal Government have published a Draft Bill regulating the Municipalities of the Transvaal. General Smuts has fulfilled the promise he made at a meeting recently held, and to which reference has been made in these columns, that Municipalities will be armed with powers to deal with Asiatic traders. There are sections in the Bill dealing with traders. One section gives authority to the Municipalities to refuse trading licences on the grounds of insanitation, unsuitability of premises, and for other similar reasons, the decision being subject to revision by a Resident Magistrate. Another section empowers Municipalities to refuse, among others, licences to hawkers, the refusal in these cases being in the absolute discretion of the Municipalities, no appeal being allowed. The first section is not open to much objection, and Asiatics must take the consequences of the prevailing prejudices, except in so far as they may be met by appeal to magistrates. But the second section is absolutely unjust, and is aimed at the large number of Asiatic hawkers. Why there should be no appeal to the magistrates with reference to the licences covered by this section, it is difficult to understand. Lord Elgin, when he occupied the position of Colonial Secretary, said that he would not allow the present rights of Asiatics to be infringed. If, however, the Draft Bill goes through, and receives the Royal sanction, Asiatic trade must be ruined. It is well to bear in mind that the livelihood of 5,000 Asiatic hawkers is at stake, as also of over 500 Asiatic store-keepers. Another section gives the Municipalities power to lay out Locations for Asiatics, which may be shifted from time to time, subject to compensation being paid to the residents for improvements made by them. A further section gives the Municipalities power to regulate movement on foot-paths. Thus, the Bill would give the Municipalities a threefold power. Asiatics should ultimately go to Locations. They must not be allowed to walk on footpaths, and they must not continue their trade unhampered. We trust that the Imperial Government, having had enough experience now during the last 16 months, will not allow such arbitrary powers to rest in the hands of the Transvaal Municipalities.

Indian Opinion, 23-5-1908

182. ESSOP MIA

Indians everywhere in South Africa will be shocked at the brutal assault on Mr. Essop Mia. If we look for the reason for the assault, we find it has hardly any significance. The assailant appears to be an

altogether illiterate person. The assault will bring discredit on the Indian community. It proves that we are politically immature. It is a sign of barbarism to resort to force in order to settle accounts.

We extend our sympathy to Mr. Essop Mia. He has rendered the community great service. The assault on him has added to the value of his service. It is not surprising that such things should happen, for we are still novices. We should learn to submit to violence for the sake of the community and truth. We will have to learn even to die for it. There may even be murders in the community. But without such incidents, the community will not develop mettle; it will make no progress. The tie of blood is a strong one indeed. The man who dies for truth does not forsake service [of the cause] even at the moment of death, for it is our firm conviction that even after death his soul continues to serve. It is according to this line of reasoning that we congratulate Mr. Essop Mia on his courage.

As for the misunderstanding that persists among the Pathans, we may point out to them that they have been overdoing things. It will be well if there can be an end to this.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-5-1908

183. SARVODAYA [*-II*]

ROOTS OF TRUTH

I do not doubt the conclusions of the science of economics [if its premises are accepted]. If a gymnast formulated laws on the assumption that man is made only of flesh without a skeleton, those laws might well be valid, but they would not apply to man, since man has a skeleton. In the same way, the laws of political economy may be valid but they cannot apply to man, who is subject to affections. A physical-culture expert may suggest that man's flesh be detached [from the skeleton], rolled into pellets, and then drawn out into cables. He may then say that the re-insertion of the skeleton will cause little inconvenience. We should describe such a man as a madcap, for the laws of physical culture cannot be based on the separation of the skeleton from the flesh. In the same manner, the laws of political economy which exclude human affections are of no use to man. And yet the political economists of today behave exactly like the gymnastic instructor. According to their mode of reasoning, man is a mere body—a machine—and they base their laws on this assumption.

Though aware that man has a soul, they do not take it into account. How can such a science apply to man, in whom the soul is the predominant element?

Every time there is a strike, we have a clean proof that economics is not a science, that it is worse than useless. In such situations, the employers take one view of the matter, the workers another. [Here] we cannot apply the laws of supply and demand. Men rack their brains to prove that the interests of the employers and the employees are identical. These men know nothing of such matters. In fact, it does not always follow that because their worldly interests—economic interests—are at variance men must be antagonistic to each other. Let us suppose that the members of a family are starving. The family consists of a mother and her children. They have only one crust of bread between them. All of them are hungry. Here, the interests of the two—of the mother on the one hand, and the children on the other—are mutually opposed. If the mother eats, the children will starve; if the children are fed, the mother will go hungry. There is no hostility between the mother and the children for that reason; they are not antagonistic to one another. Though the mother is the stronger, she does not eat up the bread. The same is true of men's relations with one another.

Let us suppose that there is no difference between men and animals, and that we must fight like animals in pursuit of our respective interests[1]. Even so we can lay down no general rule either way on whether or not the employer and the employee will always remain hostile to each other. Their attitudes change with circumstances. For instance, it is in the interest of both that work should be well and properly done and a just price obtained for it. But in the division of profits, the gain of the one may or may not be the loss of the other. It does not serve the employer's interests to pay wages so low as to leave his men sickly and depressed. Nor does it serve the worker's interests to demand a high wage irrespective of whether the factory pays its way or not. If the owner does not have enough money to keep the engine-wheels in repair, it will obviously be wrong for the worker to demand full wages or to demand any wages at all.

We can thus see that we are not likely to succeed in constructing a science on the basis of the principle of supply and demand. It was

[1] The Gujarati has "common interests".

never God's intention that the affairs of men should be conducted on the principle of profit and loss. Justice must provide the basis. Man must give up, therefore, all thought of advancing his interests by following expediency regardless of moral considerations. It is not always possible to predict with certainty the outcome of a given line of conduct. But in most cases we can determine whether a certain act is just or unjust. We can also assert that the result of moral conduct is bound to be good. We cannot predict what that result will be, or how it will come about.

Justice includes affection. The relation between master and operative depends on this element of affection. Let us assume that the master wants to exact the utmost amount of work from his servant. He allows him no time for rest, pays him a low wage, and lodges him in a garret. In brief, he pays him a bare subsistence wage. It may be argued that there is no injustice in all this. The servant has placed all his time; at the master's disposal in return for a given wage, and the latter avails himself of it. He determines the limits of hardship in exacting work by reference to what others do. If the servant can get a better place, he is free to take it. This is called economics by those who formulate the laws of supply and demand. They assert that it isprofitable to the master thus to exact the maximum amount of work for the minimum wage. In the long run, the entire society will benefit by it and, through the society, the servant himself.

But on reflection we find that this is not quite true. This method of calculation would have been valid if the employee were a mere machine which required some kind of force to drive it. But in this case the motive power of the servant is his soul, and soul-force contradicts and falsifies all the calculations of the economists. The machine that is man cannot be driven by the money-fuel to do the maximum amount of work. Man will give of his best only when his affections are brought into play. The master-servant nexus must not be a pecuniary one, but one of love.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-5-1908

184. LETTER TO M. CHAMNEY[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 23, 1908

[M. CHAMNEY, ESQ.
REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS
PRETORIA]

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. E/2698/7 of the 22nd instant with reference to the introduction of minors. If you will be good enough to let me have the names of the persons who have introduced minors, my Association will make careful inquiry and assist the Government to the utmost. But I respectfully beg to point out that in so far as the British Indian community is concerned and in so far as the Asiatic Act quoted by you is concerned, in view of the fact that the part of the compact between the Government and the British Indian community that was applicable to the latter has been fulfilled, the Act is considered a dead letter and the British Indian community will consider it a breach of the compromise if the Act is enforced. This does not mean that my Association wishes to encourage the entry of Asiatic minors who may have no right whatsoever to be in the country. All that my Associationrespectfully submits is that Act 2 of 1907 cannot operate on the British Indian community, but that a new Act of a general character should cover attempts of the nature described in your letter.

[ESSOP ISMAIL MIA]
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 30-5-1908

[1] Published in *Indian Opinion* under the title "The Registration Act Again: Prompt Repudiation". This was presumably drafted by Gandhiji.

185. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 26, 1908

THE HON'BLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PRETORIA

SIR,

Mr. Gandhi has just explained to me that it is the intention of the Government to legalize voluntary registration under the Asiatic Act and to make it applicable to Asiatics who have voluntarily registered, save for the penalties for non-registration under it hitherto. I beg to state that Mr. Gandhi, when, after the interviews with you, he explained the compromise to the British Indian community, gave a totally different version. He declared emphatically before vast audiences that, if the community represented by my Association accepted voluntary registration, the Asiatic Act would be repealed. The news now given by Mr. Gandhi, therefore, comes to the British Indian community as a most disagreeable surprise. The documents exchanged between you and Mr. Gandhi, in my humble opinion, also bear out the version given by the latter.

In this connection, I wish to draw the attention of the Government to the fact that the leaders of the Asiatic community, with much personal risk to themselves, endeavoured throughout the last three months un-ceasingly to help the Government to identify the British Indians resident in the Transvaal. The least, therefore, that my Association had a right to expect was a scrupulous regard for the part of the compact to be carried out by the Government. But, as I understand from Mr. Gandhi, you have irrevocably taken the step and stated that the new legislation that is to be passed will be merely to legalize registration under the Asiatic Act.

It will be the duty of my Association, therefore, again most reluctantly to take up the position that it occupied three months ago. My Association is advising British Indians in the Transvaal to withdraw their applications for voluntary registration and all documents lodged with Mr. Chamney. This was an act done by the community as a matter of grace and in order to show the Government its complete *bona fides*. It is impossible for the community to do otherwise than what I have above indicated, for the simple reason that it was never the intention to submit to an Act which the community was bound by a solemn obligation not to accept and moreover to strive to resist.

In conclusion, I venture respectfully to point out that the depar-

ture by the Government from the original intention and undertaking given to the Asiatic community through Mr. Gandhi and his co-signatories is a most unfortunate event and likely to intensify the feelings of suspicion among the Asiatic races inhabiting the Colony, and, as I deem myself a citizen of this country, it hurts me to think that those who are in authority and who govern this country in my name should have little regard for solemn obligations.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
ESSOP ISMAIL MIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 30-5-1908

186. LETTER TO M. CHAMNEY

P. O. BOX 4736,
JOHANNESBURG,
May 26, 1908

M. CHAMNEY, ESQ.
COLONIAL OFFICE
PRETORIA

DEAR SIR,

I beg to apply formally for a return of my application for voluntary registration and all the papers given by me to you in connection with the matter, for the following reasons.

I have just learnt that it is the definite intention of the Government to legalize voluntary registration under the Asiatic Act making the Act applicable to such Asiatics in every other respect. This I consider to be a distinct breach of the compact arrived at between the Government and the Asiatic communities of the Transvaal.

General Smuts told me at the interview at which you were present that, if the compact on the part of the Asiatic communities was carried out, he would repeal the Act. This, as you are aware, was in answer to my letter[1] of the 1st February last, asking for a definite assurance on the matter. I claim that the Asiatics have more than fulfilled their part of the contract. It was, therefore, the Government's duty to declare their intention to repeal the Act. Moreover, the letter

[1] *Vide* "Letter to General Smuts", 1-2-1908

accepted by General Smuts shows clearly that the Act was in no case to apply to those who might be voluntarily registered. Thedraft letter placed before the prisoners read that "to all who so register the penalties of the Act be not applied".[1] Knowing what I was doing, I deliberately struck off the words "the penalties of" in order that, even if the bulk of the Asiatics did not accept the compromise, those who did so might in any case be exempted from it entirely.[2] In proposing to legalize voluntary registration under the Act, therefore, General Smuts not only departs from the promise made by him to me but also from his acceptance of the letter above quoted.

The decision of the Government not to accept voluntary registration from the domiciled Asiatics now returning from Asia also means, in my opinion, a breach of the spirit of the compromise if not of its letter. This unfortunate decision shows that the General has failed entirely to appreciate the essence of the late struggle now about to be revived. It was never to obtain individual rights but to preserve and assert the communal rights and self-respect of Asiatics.

Under the circumstances, there is no course left open to me but the one I have now adopted. I am once more prepared, as a loyal citizen, to submit to the punishments involved in non-submission to the Asiatic Act. The compromise was never accepted by me or my fellow-workers to escape personal hardships but to show the reasonableness of our struggle. I propose to ask my brother Asiatics to follow the same course that I have adopted.

You will, I have no doubt, perceive the gravity of the situation and comply with my request on or before Friday next.[3] This gives you time, should you desire it, to consult General Smuts by wire as to my letter. I am sure you will see that you have no legal right to the documents, including the application, possessed by you and which were given to you only as a matter of grace, and not in virtue of any law.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 30-5-1908

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary",28-1-1908

[2] That is, exempted from Act 2 of 1907 entirely

[3] Chamney did not reply at once. Gandhiji sent Smuts a telegram asking for the immediate return of his registration papers. This, however, is not available. *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 146-1908.

187. LETTER TO M. CHAMNEY[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]

May 26, 1908

M. CHAMNEY, ESQ.
COLONIAL OFFICE
PRETORIA

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Gandhi has informed me that it is the intention of the Government to legalize voluntary registration under the Asiatic Act and to apply that Act to voluntary registrants in every respect, except that they will not be subject to the penalty for not having complied with it hitherto.

That is not how the compromise was explained to me and my Society by Mr. Gandhi. He, on returning from General Smuts on Thursday night, the 30th January last, and on returning from General Smuts on the 3rd February last, emphatically assured huge audiences of Indians that, if the Asiatic communities carried out their part of the contract of voluntarily offering to register, the Asiatic Act would be repealed.[2] I, for one, would never have accepted a compromise on any other basis, much less that of having to submit to the Asiatic Act under any conceivable circumstances. I was bound before the compromise, as I am bound now, by a solemn obligation not to submit to the Act for reasons I need not now go into, except one—that I, as Chairman of the Hamidia Islamic Society, would be totally unworthy to retain that position if I ever accepted an Act which puts an unwarranted affront on Turkish Mahomedans.

I must, therefore, ask you kindly to return to me my voluntary registration application form filled in by me and other documents in your possession. I have read the letter[2] addressed to you by Mr. Gandhi, and I associate myself entirely with the contents thereof. Should the Government at any time wish to carry out both to the letter and in the spiritthe compact with the Asiatic communities, I will be pleased to return the documents.

[1] This latter as well as Quinn's, which follows, was presumably drafted by Gandhiji.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

Till then I propose to keep them myself.

I am,
Yours faithfully,
IMAM A. K. BAWAZEER
CHAIRMAN,
HAMIDIA ISLAMIC SOCIETY

Indian Opinion, 30-5-1908

188. LETTER TO M. CHAMNEY[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 26, 1908

M. CHAMNEY, ESQ.
COLONIAL OFFICE
PRETORIA

DEAR SIR,

I understand from Mr. Gandhi that it is the intention of the Government not to carry out the contract come to with the Asiatic communities. I am fully aware of the contents of the letter signed by me in conjunction with Messrs Gandhi and Naidoo, and it was explained sufficiently that the Act was never to apply to those who registered themselves voluntarily. The only reason we accepted the compromise was in order to bring about the repeal of the Asiatic Act, and of that I and my fellow-prisoners were sure, because we were sure of the honesty of the community to which I have the honour to belong and, therefore, also that voluntary registration would be gladly accepted by the people.

I have now to ask you to be kind enough to return my voluntary application form as also other documents in your possession; and, should the Government ever intend to carry out the compact come to with the Asiatic communities through General Smuts, I shall be pleased to return the documents. I have read Mr. Gandhi's letter addressed to you, and I associate myself entirely with the sentiments expressed therein.

I am,
Yours faithfully,
LEUNG QUINN
CHAIRMAN,
TRANSVAAL CHINESE ASSOCIATION

IndianOpinion, 30-5-1908

[1] An identical letter, also presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was sent on the same day to Chamney by Naidoo.

189. RHODESIA INDIANS

The reader should think about the letter from Mr. Shakur Ismail of Rhodesia which we published last week.[1] The Colonial Government wants to enact a law similar to the one in the Transvaal. If it does, that will be a frightful thing indeed! The Indians in Rhodesia must offer battle. They are justified in expecting help from other quarters in case they are forced to fight, and we are convinced that, if they resort to satyagraha, they will also get help from all the Colonies [as the Transvaal Indians did]. Let us hope that they will not have to take that step.

However, whether or not a new law is passed, their problems deserve some attention. Even educated persons are refused entry [into that Colony] if they are unemployed. If they can produce evidence of having found employment, the excuse is then advanced that the employment is unsatisfactory. In the result, the Indians are deprived of the benefits under the existing law. It is possible to fight against this [state of affairs] by legal means. To be able to do that, they should consult a good lawyer in Rhodesia.

Apparently, difficulties also exist as regards trading licences. It must be borne in mind, however, that not many Indians will be able to enter [any of the South African] Colonies in the immediate future. Licences will not be issued freely. In the long run, however, Indians may be able to migrate to all the Colonies and also carry on trade. How soon this will happen will depend on Indians settled abroad. For this purpose, it is necessary that they should remain honest and observe sanitary and other regulations. It is also necessary that they hold up their heads as free men and do not submit to anything which may betoken cowardice. Translations[2] of articles, which we publish [this

[1] In his letter to the British Indian Association, Ismail, President of the Association of Rhodesia Indians, appealed for help. The letter mentions the following disabilities of Indians in Southern Rhodesia: (1) Although the immigration rules entitled educated Asiatics who could give satisfactory evidence of employment to enter the Colony, their employment was in practice held unsatisfactory; (2) no legal provision existed to safeguard the rights of those already resident in Rhodesia or those who wished to return after a temporary absence. A deputation to the Administrator at Salisbury failed to secure relief. A draft Ordinance, which was largely similar to the Transvaal legislation and sought to restrict Asiatic immigration, had been published in the *Gazette.* Simultaneously, another Ordinance to regulate the trade of general dealers and hawkers was published. This vested the power to grant licences in municipalities and sanitary boards. Licences could be issued only to those holding certificates under the Registration Ordinance.

[2] Not reproduced here

week] from *Free India*, a journal of recent origin, are relevant in this context. The same harsh treatment that is our lot here is being meted out to Indians in Canada. Most of the Indians who have settled in Canada hail from the Punjab. They have started this journal in order to seek redress of their grievances. Their writings evidence great courage.

Thus, Indians in different parts of the world are waking up. If they cultivate unity, real courage and truthfulness, they may be assured of easy success. However, impatience will not make the mango tree put forth its fruit sooner.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-5-1908

190. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

BEGINNING OF SATYAGRAHA

I said last week that General Smuts might play foul. It has now been proved that there has been foul play. It is known for certain that he has no intention of repealing the obnoxious Act. The Government has not yet made the news public, but it has spread in the Indian community, and everyone's blood is up. It would appear that the campaign has had a good beginning. We shall now get to know all about voluntary and compulsory [registration]. Mr. Essop Mia has addressed the following letter[2] to the Government.

LETTER TO CHAMNEY

Mr. Gandhi has written the following letter[3] to Mr. Chamney.

IMAM ABDOOL KADIR'S LETTER

Mr. Imam Abdool Kadir Bawazeer has written to Mr. Chamney as follows:[4]

> Mr. Gandhi has informed [me] that it is the Government's intention to legalize voluntary registration under the Asiatic [Registration] Act. While explaining the compromise Mr. Gandhi had stated emphatically that, if the Indian community took out registers voluntarily, the Government would repeal the

[1] A Gujarati saying

[2] For the English text of the letter, *vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 26-5-1908

[3] For the English text of this communication, *vide* "Letter to M. Chamney", 26-5-1908

[4] *Vide* also "Letter to M. Chamney", 26-5-1908

Act. Since the Act will now not be repealed, it is impossible for me to submit to it. If I submit to a law which I am bound by a solemn obligation tooppose and which puts an affront upon Turkish Mahomedans, I shall be totally unworthy of the position I hold. Kindly, therefore, return the application form filled in by me immediately along with the other documents. I have read Mr. Gandhi's letter[1] [to you] and I associate myself entirely with its contents.

In addition to this, Mr. Naidoo and Mr. Quinn have supported Mr. Gandhi's stand on the compromise as stated in his letter, and asked for the return of their documents. About a hundred other Indians have also written to Mr. Chamney asking him to return their applications and other documents to the Secretary of the Association.

WHAT THIS MEANS

I think this decision to withdraw the [earlier] applications is likely to make a strong impression on Mr. Smuts. If the Government refuses to return the documents, I think it should be possible to take legal action. General Smuts will find it extremely difficult to returnthe documents. It will not do to refuse them. Equally, to return them will mean loss of face [for the Government]. But this will enable us to realize how much voluntary registration really means. If it had been a case of compulsory registration, it would have been impossible to ask for the applications to be returned.

I feel that the campaign will lead to a decision within a few days. Meanwhile, no Indian must so much as mention the Permit Office—for the present at any rate.

Those who wish to enter the Transvaal should postpone their plans for the present. It may be necessary to hold meetings in other parts of South Africa with a view to helping the Transvaal Indians.

Whether the good offices of Sir George Farrar and other gentlemen should be sought is being considered. This issue is likely to be raised in the English papers next week. We ought to wait for the reply to the notices mentioned above before discussing the subject in public. Now that the struggle has been resumed, every Indian must realize that it is directed against the Act, and that all the emphasis should accordingly be on this point. We use the argument about finger-impressions and thumb-impressions [to explain our campaign], but that only subserves the issue of the law itself. Just now, we should

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. Chamney", 26-5-1908

not even affix our signatures even under the law.

WHAT SHOULD WE DEMAND NOW ?

If the Government gives a non-committal reply to these notices thus nullifying voluntary registration, and if all the Indians take the field again as satyagrahis, in any settlement that may follow, we shall not be bound by anything that we undertook to do earlier. Earlier we had bound ourselvesto register voluntarily. We made the offer of voluntary registration to prove our *bona fides*. Now these have been established for the most part. We can therefore raise our demands when a fresh settlement is negotiated. To my mind we shall be justified in advancing the following demands:

(1) Those who hold valid registers from the Dutch period should be entitled to register voluntarily.

(2) Those who have entered openly, but with permits, and have lived here for some time should be entitled to registration certificates.

(3) Those who can prove to the satisfaction of a court that they are refugees should be permitted to enter.

(4) No laws should be enacted to deprive a subject of his personal liberty exclusively on the basis of the colour of his skin.

(5) Educated Indians should be allowed to come in even if they are fresh entrants.

I do not think our campaign will reach a stage when we will be able to put forward these demands. Be that as it may, the struggle that has now been resumed cannot but be advantageous to the Indian community.

MEETING OF BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Committee was held on Wednesday. Mr. Gandhi's office was crowded to capacity. Mr. Essop Mia attended the meeting with a gum plaster on his nose and took the chair. Mr. Gandhi explained the position at length.[1] The steps already taken as indicated above were approved. Everyone agreed that the satyagraha campaign should be resumed.

CIRCULAR LETTER

The following letter has been circulated to all [the Town committees] in the Transvaal.

> It is now certain that the Government will go back on its word about voluntary registration and the new law. Ignoring his

[1] The text of Gandhiji's speech at this meeting is not available.

written assurance, General Smuts has stated that the proposed Bill will only legalize voluntary registration that has taken place under the new Act. To exploit voluntary registration in this manner is plainly foul play. General Smuts now wants to gull us by putting a wrong construction on the promise which he gave in writing.

We need not be alarmed by this double-crossing. Since our cause is just, we have reason to believe that this double-crossing can only be to our advantage, if anything. It is necessary now to resort to satyagraha. As a first step in the campaign, every Indian should write a letter requesting that the application made by him voluntarily be returned. He should ask for the application and the other documents to be returned to him, or sent to the Association. I attach herewith a specimen letter[1].

Here, everyone is in high spirits and prepared to resume the fight.

Ask everyone there to keep up their courage. For the present, no one must correspond with the Permit Office or even ask for registers[2], etc. Those without licences should continue their business fearlessly after tendering the licence fee.

Those who are prosecuted under the new law will be defended by Mr. Gandhi free of charge, exactly as was done earlier.[3]

It should be assumed that all of us are again without registers.

ESSOP MIA

Mr. Essop Mia is improving rapidly. He can now sit up in a chair. He has a gum plaster on his nose and the wound troubles him a little. The arm and other parts of the body where he was injured still hurt. A large number of persons call on him every day to ask after his health. He is now able to converse with them fairly comfortably. Mr. Phillips and Mr. Doke have been to see him a few times. He has also been receiving letters of sympathy from a number of towns.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-5-1908

[1] This is not available.

[2] The reference here may be to applications for voluntary registration.

[3] Gandhiji first announced his resolve to defend satyagrahis in a court of law free of charge in September, 1906. *Vide* "Some Questions", 20-10-1906

191. SARVODAYA [*-III*]

ROOTS OF TRUTH

It usually happens that, if the master is a man of sense and energy, the servant works hard enough, under pressure; it also happens that, if the master is indolent and weak, the performance of the servant is not of the best in quality or quantity. But the true law is that, if we compare two masters of equal intelligence, the servant of the one who is sympathetically inclined will work better than that of the other who is not so inclined.

It may be argued that this principle does not quite hold, since kindness and indulgence are sometimes rewarded with their opposites. The servant becomes unmanageable. But the argument is nevertheless invalid. A servant who rewards kindness with negligence will become vengeful when treated harshly. A servant who is dishonest to a liberal master will be injurious to an unjust one.

Therefore, in any case and with any person, this unselfish treatment will yield the most effective return. We are here considering affections only as a motive power. That we should be kind because kindness is good is quite another consideration. We are not thinking of that for the present. We only want to point out here that not only are the ordinary laws of economics, which we considered above, rendered nugatory by the motive power of kindness—sympathy—but also that affection, being a power of an altogether different kind, is inconsonant with the laws of economics and can survive only if those laws are ignored. If the master is a calculating person who shows kindness only in expectation of a return, he will probably be disappointed. Kindness should be exercised for the sake of kindness; the reward will then come unsought. It is said that he who loses his life shall find it, and he who finds it shall lose it.[1]

Let us take the example of a regiment and its commander. If a general seeks to get his troops to work in accordance with the principles of economics, he will fail. There are many instances of generals cultivating direct, personal relations with their men, treating them with kindness, sharing their joys and hardships, ensuring their safety—in brief, treating them with sympathy. A general of this kind will be able to exact the most arduous work from his troops. If we look into history, we shall rarely find a battle won where the troops had no love for their general. Thus the bond of sympathy between the

[1] *St. Matthew*, Ch. X, *v.* 39.

general and his troops is the truest force. Even a band of robbers has the utmost affection for its leader. And yet we find no such intimate relation between the employer and the employees in textile mills and other factories. One reason for this is that, in these factories, the wages of the employees are determined by the laws of supply and demand. Between the employer and the employee there obtains, therefore, the relation of disaffection rather than of affection, and instead of sympathy between them we find antagonism. We have then to consider two questions: one, how far the rate of wages may be so regulated as not to vary with the demand for labour; second, how far workmen can be maintained in factories, without any change in their numbers irrespective of the state of trade, with the same bond [between workmen and employer] as obtains between servants and master in an old family, or between soldiers and their commander.

Let us consider the first question. It is surprising why economists do nothing to make it possible for standards of payment for factoryworkers to be fixed. We see, on the other hand, that the office of the Prime Minister of England is not put up to auction, but that whoever the incumbent, the remuneration remains the same. Nor do we offer the job of a priest to anyone who agrees to accept the lowest salary. With physicians and lawyers, too, we do not generally deal in this manner. Thus we observe that in these instances a certain standard of payment is fixed. It may be asked, however, whether a good workman and a bad one must both be paid the same wage. In fact, that is as it should be. In the result, the rate of wages for all workers being the same, we shall engage only a good bricklayer or carpenter as we go only to a good physician or lawyer—the fees of all physicians or lawyers being the same. That is the proper reward of the good workman—to be chosen. Therefore, the right system respecting all labour is that it should be paid at fixed rates. Where a bad workman finds it possible to deceive employers by accepting a low wage, the eventual outcome cannot but be bad.

Let us now consider the second point. It is that, whatever the state of trade, the factories must maintain the same number of workers in employment. When there is no security of employment, the workers are obliged to ask for higher wages. If, however, they can be assured of continued employment for life, they will be prepared to work for very low wages. It is clear therefore that the employer who assures security of employment to his workers will find it profitable in the long run. The employees also stand to gain if they continue steadily in the

same job. Large profits are not possible in factories run on these lines. Big risks cannot be taken. Gambling on a large scale will not be possible. The soldier is ready to lay down his life for the sake of his commander. That is why the work of a soldier is considered more honourable than that of an ordinary worker. The soldier's trade is really, not slaying, but being slain in defence of others. Anyone who enlists as a soldier holds his life at the service of the state. This is true also of the lawyer, the physician and the priest. That is why we look up to them with respect. A lawyer must do justice even at the cost of his life. The physician must treat his patients at the cost of inconvenience to himself. And the clergyman must instruct his congregation and direct it along the right path, regardless of consequences.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-5-1908

192. LETTER TO "INDIAN OPINION"[1]

[JOHANNESBURG]

THE EDITOR

INDIAN OPINION

SIR,

Though everyone knows that I write a great deal for the Gujarati section of this journal, it is rarely that I do so under my signature. Here is another occasion for me to write under my name.[2]

When I saw Mr. Cartwright last Saturday, he showed me Mr. Smuts' letter in which he has said that the proposed Bill was intended only to legalize voluntary registration. The Bill will provide for Indians who have taken out registers voluntarily to be exempted from the penalties in the new law for breach of its provisions. For all the other purposes, they too will be subject to that law. This is double-crossing, pure and simple. Though not dead yet, we are as good as dead. This need not be so, however, if our cause is just.

'The law, it was said, was sure to be annulled. What has happened to all that talk? What has come of Mr. Gandhi's words? What will he have to say for himself now? How will he face the Indians?' I hear

[1] This was published under the title "From A Correspondent: Mr. Gandhi's Letter".

[2] For an earlier letter in the same strain, *vide* "A Brief Explanation", 22-2-1908

those questions echoing in my ears.

Even now I say that the law will be repealed, provided the Indian community carries through the satyagraha campaign. I stand by my words. There is no reason for me to feel so ashamed that I cannot face my brethren. I need be ashamed if I myself betray the cause. There is nothing that can be gained through deception. Neither will Mr. Smuts gain anything thereby. It is undoubtedly true, as I said earlier, that there exists a written document.[1] If Mr. Smuts chooses to give a perverse reply about this letter, that does not prove that I was to blame [for having agreed to the compromise in the first instance].

I remember the warning given by a large number of Indians and whites. They told me not to trust General Smuts. I trusted him up to a point. There is nothing else one could have done. That is how political affairs always have been, and will be, conducted. When the two parties to a settlement know their strength, foul play can avail little. I believe the strength of the Indian community consists in its truth. General Smuts' falsehood will prove unavailing in the face of that truth.

To those who blame me, I have only this to say: 'If you were sincere in your reproaches, you should join the satyagraha movement again. It was because I put my trust [in General Smuts] that I advised voluntary registration. We took a pledge to see to it that the law would be repealed; you and I have fought together to fulfil that pledge and let us now continue to do so. It will suffice if you do this. You deserve to be congratulated in that your suspicions have been justified. If, in the sequel, my trust turns out to have been ill-placed, I do not hold myself responsible, for I had no alternative then. Even if you think otherwise, the Indian community has lost nothing for having trusted [General Smuts]. For we shall gain more now if we stand together.'

To those who were pleased with me on account of the settlement, and who approved of it, I should say: 'If General Smuts is bent on playing foul, it does not follow that the settlement itself deserves to be condemned. It has been nothing if not beneficial. If our strength is real, we will not retreat an inch. On the contrary, the more the other side attempts foul play, the better to advantage will our truth be set off. Diamonds shine the brighter for being strewn among stones. Learn to think of truth in this way.' Whether or not those who have been angry with me or those who approved of my action join the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 28-1-1908

satyagraha campaign, my pledge stands. I will never submit to the obnoxious Act. I will fight it unto death, even if I should be the only one to do so. I hope Khuda-Ishwar will inspire the same thought in every Indian.

I remain your satyagrahi,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-5-1908

193. LETTER TO E.F.C. LANE

JOHANNESBURG,
May 30, 1908

DEAR MR. LANE,

Will you kindly let me know whether I may publish my letters of the 1st February and the 22nd February last and replies thereto.

With reference to your last note, I wish to state that I never asked for or desired any protection for myself from the Government, nor do I desire any now.[1]

I am,

Yours truly,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4818

194. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

[Before *May 30, 1908*]

HAWKERS, LOOK OUT !

There is a journal called *De Transvaaler* published in English and Dutch from Johannesburg. It has attacked Indians hawking vegetables. I give below an extract from the journal's comments:

> White women continue to patronize Indian hawkers selling vegetables. This is detrimental to white interests. Seven Indians were fined in February for storing their vegetables in bedrooms. The municipality did not confiscate the stocks, though it had the right to. In Jubilee Street, there are three latrines in front of Nathanson's house, one of which is used as a urinal, another as a lavatory and the third for stocking vegetables. Will any woman

[1] *Vide* "Letter to General Smuts", 21-5-1908 and footnote 4 on that page.

who knows of this and values cleanliness buy these vegetables? Moreover, there are two municipal stables which the coolies use for sleeping in and for storing their vegetables. Inspectors should go round at night to detect the offenders.

This is what the journal says. True, much of it is exaggeration. But it is undoubtedly true that some hawkers live in unclean surroundings, are dirty of person and store the vegetables in dirty places. If they do not improve, it may be taken for granted that in course of time no Indian hawkers will be left in this country. These reports of our uncleanliness come at a time when proposals are being mooted for legislation on hawkers' licences. I have earlier suggested that, if they stop issuing licences to hawkers, the latter can successfully resort to satyagraha. But in satyagraha, it must be remembered, truth must not be forsaken. I think it unfair that the hawkers do not adhere to [proper standards of] cleanliness or that they store vegetables in unclean places; and what is unfair is contrary to truth.

Monday [*June 1, 1908*]

SATYAGRAHA CAMPAIGN

This campaign cannot yet be said to have really started. But it may be claimed the foundations have been laid. In reply to Mr. Gandhi's notice[1], Mr. Chamney wrote that a reply to the request for the return of the applications would be sent after General Smuts' return from the Cape. Mr. Gandhi sent a telegram[2] saying that this was not a matter that couldwait, and that the documents should be returned without delay. The telegram was despatched on Friday. On Saturday, a telegram was received [in reply] stating that the draft Bill[3] submitted by Mr. Gandhi having been misplaced, another copy should be forwarded. Copies were then sent of Mr. Gandhi's letter[4] of February 22 and the draft of the proposed Bill. On Monday, a telephone message was received to the effect that General Smuts had called a meeting of the Cabinet and that a reply would be sent on Tuesday. This is where matters stand as I write this news-letter on Monday evening.

CARTWRIGHT'S EFFORTS

All this while, Mr. Cartwright has been exerting himself a

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. Chamney",26-5-1908
[2] Not available
[3] *Vide* enclosure to "Letter to General Smuts", 22-2-1908
[4] *Vide* "Letter to General Smuts", 22-2-1908

greatdeal. He arranged [for Mr. Gandhi] to meet Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, Mr. Chaplin and Mr. Lindsay. All these persons admit that the outrageous Act ought not to apply to those who have taken out registers volun-tarily or may do so in future. The last word in the matter clearly rests with the Indian community.

Since the negotiations are now going on in private, no other steps are called for, which is why a mass meeting has not been held. If a fight becomes inevitable, it will be necessary to hold one.

It was decided not to publicize the letters sent to the Government, but *Pretoria News* has already reproduced them from *Indian Opinion.*

Notices demanding the return of applications continue to be served on Mr. Chamney. Hopes of a settlement have, however, induced some slackness in this regard. Circular letters [from the British Indian Association] have been sent round to [committees in] all the towns. Everyone will send the notice.[1]

Tuesday [*June 2, 1908*]

Mr. Hosken, Mr. Doke, Mr. Phillips, Mr. Polak, Mr. Perry and others met at Mr. Hosken's office. At this meeting, they reaffirmed their decision to lend assistance to the Indian community. There has been no news so far from Pretoria.

CEMETERY

For some time the local Town Council has had an eye on the Muslim section of the cemetery. It is obviously much too large. But it is the view of the Moulvis that, since the place has been used as a Muslim cemetery, non-Muslims may not be buried there. The Hamidia Islamic Societyhas accordingly written to say that non-Muslims must not be buried there. On Friday, a deputation in this connection waited on the Chairman of the Park Committee near the cemetery. It consisted of Moulvi Ahmed Mukhtiar, Imam Kamali, Imam Abdool Kadir, Mr. Abdul Gani[2], Mr. Shahabuddin and Mr. Gandhi. The deputation met the Park Committee on Monday at half-past three. This time, it included Mr. Abdul Gani, Imam Kamali, Imam Abdool Kadir and Mr. Gandhi. They placed the whole position before the [entire] Committee and requested it to consider the matter.

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter",30-5-1908

[2] A businessman who was for some time chairman of the British Indian Association

Mr. Polak had received a gift of £50 from the British Indian Association in connection with the last campaign. Instead of spending the money on themselves, Mr. Polak and Mr. Isaac [who received a similar gift] decided to use it for the [benefit of the] Indian community. Accordingly, Mr. Polak has sent the amount as a gift to Joseph[1] who is passing through a difficult time in England and has had to stop his work due to lack of funds. Mr. Isaac decided to spend the sum received by him to further the cause of Indian education, and has done so. I have already referred to the gifts received by Mr. Doke and Mr. David Pollock.[2] They have decided to use them in the cause of Asiatic education. This way of using one's gifts clearly deserves to be admired and emulated.

Wednesday [*June 3, 1908*]

News has been received today that, most probably, General Smuts will repeal the Act. There has so far been no intimation from the Government. But all the white leaders are still discussing the question.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 6-6-1908

195. LETTER TO E. F. C. LANE

JOHANNESBURG,
June 3, 1908

DEAR MR. LANE,

I wrote to you on Saturday,[3] asking for General Smuts' permission[4] to publish correspondence that has passed between us and was

[1] Joseph Royeppen; born in Natal of indentured Indian parents; barrister-at-law and graduate of Cambridge University; was one of the five student-signatories to a representation to Lord Elgin against the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance and generally helped the Transvaal Indian Deputation during its stay in England; *vide* "Representation to Lord Elgin", 3-11-1906 "Deputation Notes—IV", Before 18-12-1906. Later became satyagrahi and went to gaol as unlicensed hawker; *vide Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XXX.

[2] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 28-3-1908

[3] *Vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 30-5-1908

[4] Lane wrote to Gandhiji on the 4th refusing this permission on the ground that, since these letters had been confidential and personal, the Colonial Secretary had not replied at any length to, or controverted, statements contained in Gandhiji's letters, and "the publication of this correspondence therefore would throw an incorrect light upon the whole matter". S. N. 4821.

marked "confidential" in connection with the Asiatic Act. May I now have a reply?

I am,

Yours truly,

ERNEST F. C. LANE, ESQ.
PRETORIA

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4819

196. LETTER TO GENERAL SMUTS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
June 6, 1908]

[DEAR MR. SMUTS,]

I hope you will pardon me for writing you about the interview[2] that took place today between you and me. While I appreciate your desire to abide by the compromise, I cannot help saying that the interview was not satisfactory. You still hesitate about repeal of the Act, and you are emphatic that, if the Act is not repealed, it is under it that Asiatics who arrived after the 9th ultimo and who had a right to enter the country should be registered. The repeal of the Act, as I havealways said, was the goal of the Asiatics, and they have done much and surrendered much, in order to reach the goal. I have gathered also that you admit the Asiatic Act to be wholly bad, and that amendment of the Immigrants' Restriction Act is not an undesirable way of solving the problem. I once more remind you of what you told me at the interviews on the subject: that, if the Asiatics carried out their part of the compromise, you would repeal the Act. I know you added also that if there was one recalcitrant Asiatic who obstinately refused to take out a voluntary registration certificate you would enforce the Act against that Asiatic. As a matter of fact, within my knowledge, there is no such recalcitrant Asiatic left. But, if there were, I have taken the above expression to be purely theatrical to emphasize the fact that the vast majority of the Asiatics then resident in the Colony should abide by the compromise. This they have done.

Time is of the essence of the contract at the present moment,

[1] A copy of this letter was sent by Ritch as an annexure to his letter of July 27, 1908 to the Colonial Office.

[2] In a letter written on behalf of General Smuts on June 4, 1908, Lane had asked Gandhiji for an interview to discuss the "draft Asiatic Bill" for the retrospective validation of voluntary registration; *vide* S. N. 4822.

and I do hope that you will let me make a definite statement that the Act is to be repealed. Otherwise, I shall be reluctantly compelled to fall back upon my letter[1] to Mr. Chamney as to withdrawal of the application form. I am most anxious to avoid a situation of that character, but it is impossible to wait for the assurance till the first week of the opening of Parliament. If, therefore, you cannot give the assurance, and if you cannot return the application forms to those[2] who have written for their return, an application must be made to the Supreme Court for an order compelling the return of the documents.[3]

In an amendment of the Immigrants' Restriction Act, I venture to suggest that it will not at all satisfy the Asiatics if the question of people to remain in or enter the country is left to the discretion of an Administrative Officer. That, as in every other Colony, should be decided judicially.

The right of those who have paid a £3 fee to the old Dutch Government, I need hardly say, should be respected. There are many such already in the Transvaal with vested interests. They have also applied. These were contemplated, I am sure, by Mr. Patrick Duncan, when he first introduced his Bill, and their claim, in my opinion, ought not to be disregarded.

Mr. Lane wrote to me on Friday[4], saying that the letters of the 1st and 22nd February last addressed by me to you, being confidential, should not be published. As they constitute proof positive of my contention that you promised to repeal the Act, should you withdraw from that position, and should you controvert the statement made by me, I hope you will not bind me to one-sided confidence.

[*Yours etc.*,

M. K. GANDHI]

[GENERAL J. C. SMUTS
COLONIAL OFFICE
PRETORIA]

Indian Opinion, 4-7-1908

Also India Office, judicial and Public Records: 2896/08

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. Chamney", 26-5-1908

[2] Bawazeer, Quinn, Naidoo and others; *vide* "Letter to M. Chamney", 22-5-1908 ; 26-5-1908 and "Johannesburg Letter", 30-5-1908

[3] This was done on June 23, 1908.

[4] Lane, in fact, wrote on June 4. 1908, which was a Thursday.

197. LETTER TO A. CARTWRIGHT

[JOHANNESBURG,]
June 6, 1908

DEAR MR. CARTWRIGHT,

Following the precedent you have allowed me to adopt, I send on to you copy of my letter[1] to General Smuts. The interview was both satisfactory and unsatisfactory—unsatisfactory because the situation required consideration *de novo* and therefore, I had to return without a definite assurance of repeal. But what I have gathered is that if the Progressive Party does not place any obstacles in the way, the Act will be repealed, and what I also gathered was that, if we remain true to our principles to resist, there is absolutely no escape from it. He realizes that he cannot have two laws on the Statute-book for the same purpose. He has departed absolutely from the position that voluntary registrants should have their status defined under the Asiatic Act, so that if we did not remain firm and the Progressive Party put obstacles in this[2] way, we might have the ludicrous position of 6,000 to 7,000 Asiatics practically lawless, shall I say?

I shall take an early opportunity of seeing you. Meantime, may I rely upon you to continue the role of Angel of Peace, and to sufficiently change the Progressive mind in favour of Justice and Righteousness?

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the handwritten office copy: S. N. 4823 (a)

198. CRIME WAVE IN NATAL

A correspondent draws our attention to the frequency of the recent murders in Natal. There have been, he says, seven murders within two weeks: one in Tongaat, two in Cato Manor, one in Springfield, one in Northdene and two in Durban. The correspondent adds that only in one of the seven cases have the police been able to apprehend the murderer. And that because the culprit gave himself up. The correspondent also reports an increase in the number of thefts.

This matter deserves attention. A people that aspires to the

[1] The preceding item
[2] An error for "his"?

privileges of freedom must have the strength to defend itself. There are two ways of doing this. The first—a simple and straightforward though difficult way—is to reform ourselves, to avoid the creation of circumstances that occasion murder, not to hoard wealth, and to reform those with criminal propensities. Till the criminal improves, he must be allowed to commit as many murders as he likes. He will give up when he wearies of killing. Clearly, this is at once a divine and a natural law. As a people, however, we are not yet free to follow this course of not punishing a murderer. We shall not assert that a time will never come when all of us acquire enough courage to become indifferent to life and property, but only that it is improbable that this state of affairs will ever come about. History records no instance of this ever having happened among any people. However, instances are known of individuals who have acted in that manner.

If we cannot adopt this course, there is another which we, as a people aspiring to be free, ought to know about—that of countering force with force. We should become strong enough to defend life and property. Of course, protection is provided by the Natal Government. But whites do not look on helplessly [when attacked by anyone]. They equip themselves with the means of self-defence. If anyone counters by saying that we are not allowed to keep arms or that we cannot have them when we need them, those excuses will not be valid. We can defend ourselves without weapons. It is a matter of training one's body and of skill. When we were attacked by the whites in America, we hid ourselves. When they attacked the Japanese, the latter armed themselves with sticks and bottles.[1] Many whites are able to defend themselves without so much as a revolver. Indians must learn to do likewise. This of course cannot happen in a day. 'While a fire is raging, what is the use of advising one ever so wisely that one should start digging a well?' This would be a well-deserved taunt. But we wish to suggest a measure that can be adopted immediately and will forestall this taunt. Primarily our duty is to search out the hidden causes and suggest permanent remedies. It is quackery to apply ointment on a boil; the infection should be traced to its source and effectively treated.

The immediate thing for the Indian community to do is to petition the Government asking for stricter police protection in localities where murders are frequent. There is little possibility of the Government being able to provide such protection in outlying areas. The residents of these localities or regions should act collectively and

[1] The incident referred to took place in Canada; *vide* "Indians in Canada", 25-4-1908

employ their own watchmen. Alternatively, the people in sparsely populated areas should shift to more thickly populated ones. Acting collectively in these matters is an essential characteristic of nationhood. We are about to become a nation. But Indians must bear in mind that they are not yet a nation in the modern sense of the term. We cannot become something by imagining we are that.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 6-6-1908

199. SARVODAYA [*-IV*]

ROOTS OF TRUTH

If this can happen in the professions mentioned, why not in trade and commerce? Why is it that trade is always associated with unscrupulousness? We shall see on reflection that it is always assumed that the merchant is moved [solely] by self-interest. Even though he has a socially useful function, we take it for granted that his object is to fill his own coffers. Even the laws are so drafted as to enable the merchant to amass wealth with the utmost speed. It is also accepted as a principle that the buyer must offer the lowest possible price and the seller must demand and accept the highest. The trader has thus been encouraged in this habit, yet the public themselves look down on him for his dishonesty. This principle must be abandoned. It is not right that the merchant should look only to self-interest and amass wealth. This is not trade, but robbery. The soldier lays down his life for the state and the trader ought to suffer [a comparable] loss, ought even to lose his life in the interests of society. In all states the soldier's profession is to defend the people; the pastor's to teach it; the physician's to keep it in health; the lawyer's to enforce pure justice in it; and the merchant's to provide for it. And it is the duty of each on due occasion to die for the people. The soldier must be prepared to die at his post of duty rather than desert it. During a plague epidemic, the physician must not run away [from his task] but instead attend to the patients even at the risk of infection. The priest must lead people from error to truth even if they should kill him for it. The lawyer must ensure, even at the cost of his life, that justice prevails.[1]

[1] Ruskin found Beauty in "the appearance of felicitous fulfilment of function in living things, more especially of the joyful and right exertion of perfect life in man". (*Modern Painters*, Vol. II, Part III, Sec. I, Ch. 3.) Gandhiji, too, speaks of the beauty (धूणी)) of satyagraha, which is "suffering undergone to exemplify Truth". To see Truth is to assent to it, and thus it helps Reason as a means of ordering social relations.

We pointed out above the proper occasions for members of the professions to lay down their lives. What, then, is the proper occasion for the merchant to lay down his life? This is a question which all, the merchant included, must ask themselves. The man who does not know when to die does not know how to live. We have seen that the merchant's function is to provide for the people. Just as the clergyman's function is not to earn a stipend but to instruct, so the merchant's function is not to make profits but to provide for the people. The clergyman who devotes himself to preaching has his needs provided for, and in the same manner the merchant will have his profits. But neither of them must have an eye only on the main chance. Both have work to do—each a duty to perform—irrespective of whether or not they get the stipend or the profit. If this proposition is true, the merchant deserves the highest honour. For his duty is to procure commodities of high quality and distribute them at a price which people can afford. It also becomes his duty at the same time to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the hundreds or thousands of men working under him. This requires a great deal of patience, kindness and intelligence. Also, in discharging these several functions he is bound, as others are bound, to give up his life, if need be. Such a trader would not sell adulterated goods or cheat anyone, whatever his difficulties or even if he was going to be reduced to utter poverty. Moreover, he will treat the men under him with the utmost kindness. Very often a young man taking up a situation with a big factory or commercial house travels a long way from home, so that the master has to accept the role of his parents. If the master is indifferent, the young man will be like an orphan. At every step, therefore, the merchant or the master must ask himself this question, 'Do I deal with my servants as I do with my sons?'

Suppose a ship's captain places his son among the common sailors under his command. The captain's duty is to treat all sailors as he would treat his son. In the same manner, a merchant may ask his son to work alongside of those under him. He must always treat the workers as he would then treat his son. This is the true meaning of economics. And as the captain is bound to be the last man to leave his ship in case of shipwreck, so in the event of famine or other calamities, the trader is bound to safeguard the interests of his men before his own. All this may sound strange. But the really strange thing about the modern age is that it should so sound. For anyone who applies his mind to it will be able to see that the true principle is as we have stated

it. Any other standard is impossible for a progressive nation. If the British have survived so long, it is not because they have lived up to the maxims of economics, but because they have had many heroes who have questioned them and followed instead these principles of moral conduct. The harm that results from the violation of these principles and the nation's consequent decline from greatness, we shall consider on another occasion.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 6-6-1908

200. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

[*Monday, June 8, 1908*]

WAS SETTLEMENT IN WRITING?

This question has been raised in many quarters. I therefore give here again a translation of the letters on the basis of which the settlement was reached. I say "again" because these were translated or summarized[1] in February. The genesis of the letter [to Smuts,] written from gaol, must be remembered. Mr. Cartwright met us in gaol on behalf of the Government and presented a letter to Mr. Gandhi for signature. Some alterations were made in the draft, and the amended letter was taken to General Smuts. The following is a translation of the letter[2].

WHAT WERE THE CHANGES?

This is the letter that was sent. The original draft Act had the following features:

1. it did not refer to the Chinese;
2. even children under sixteen were to take out registers voluntarily;
3. it was provided that the voluntary registrants should not be subject to the penalties of the Act;
4. no provision was made for Indians who might return to the Colony after the date of the settlement;
5. the Registration Office was to be re-opened;
6. no reference was made to religious susceptibilities.

In the letter mentioned above,

[1] They were translated and paraphrased in the process. *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 30-1-1908

[2] This has not been translated; for English text, *vide* :Letter to Colonial Secretary", 28-1-1908

1. the Chinese were included;

2. it was provided that children under sixteen should not have to take out the new registers even on a voluntary basis;

3. it was provided that the Act would not apply to voluntary registrants; (The reader should note that there is a great deal of difference between "the Act would not apply [to those who register voluntarily]" and "[they] would not be subject to the penalties of the Act".)

4. those who came after the date of the settlement were also given the right to apply for voluntary registration;

5. the "reopening of the Registration Office"[1] was capable of two interpretations. We therefore wrote "[in order] to accept" registration;

6. reference was made to religious susceptibilities to point out that they must be respected.

If now we remember that, since the number of those who have applied for voluntary registration is very large, the Act ceases to have any meaning, it will be noted that the repeal of the Act was implied [in our letter].

REPLY FROM GENERAL SMUTS

General Smuts sent the following reply to this:[2]

WHAT THIS MEANS

In this letter General Smuts accepted unconditionally [the terms contained in] the prisoners' letter. It therefore implied acceptance of the condition that the voluntary registrants would not come within the scope of the law, from which it is clear that, if all the Indians or a majority of them took out these registers, the law would have to be repealed.

Moreover, after his meeting with General Smuts on February 1, Mr. Gandhi wrote to him. He was then invited to [go to] Pretoria on the 3rd. On this occasion, too, the repeal of the Act was discussed and later, on the 22nd, Mr. Gandhi sent a draft Bill[3] in this connection to General Smuts. All this is probably known to the reader. There is no doubt therefore that there exists a written commitment about the

[1] What Gandhiji actually did was to change "reopen registration" into "accept registration"; *vide* footnote 6 of "Letter to Colonial Secrettary", 28-1-1908

[2] As the English text of this letter, which was from the Acting Assistant Colonial Secretary, is reproduced in full earlier ("Johannesburg Letter", 30-1-1908), it has not been retranslated here.

[3] *Vide* enclosure to "Letter to General Smuts", 22-2-1908

repeal of the Act. General Smuts wanted to goback on it, but we can see now that he will not be able to do so. Of course, we cannot take it for granted that he will not do so. What he does will depend entirely on our courage.

INTERVIEW WITH GENERAL SMUTS

As a result of the notices sent by Indians withdrawing their applications and the good offices of friends like Mr. Cartwright, a letter was received from General Smuts last Friday [inviting Mr. Gandhi] for a discussion on the proposed Bill. A meeting of the Committee [of the British Indian Association] was immediately held. Mr. Essop Mia also attended. It was resolved at the meeting to send a reply to General Smuts to say that Mr. Gandhi would see him in order to acquaint himself with the nature of the Bill and he would then report to the Committee on the interview. Mr. Gandhi was instructed not to commit himself in any way to General Smuts. He was only to reiterate the demand for the repeal of the outrageous Act.

The interview with General Smuts took place on Saturday. Mr. Mathews, who had drafted the Bill, Mr. Gorges[1] and Mr. Chamney were present at the meeting. In the course of the talk they discussed the question of amending the immigration Act and repealing the [Asiatic Registration] Act. General Smuts admitted that the Asiatic Act served no useful purpose. Mr. Lane's letter to Mr. Cartwright was the result of a mistake. He added that, whatever the nature of the Bill that was ultimately passed, the voluntary registrants would certainly not be subject to the Asiatic Registration Act. No clarification was, however, offered about the status of those who had not taken out registers [voluntarily], neither was any assurance given about the repeal of the Act; it was merely stated that the Bill was yet to be drafted. That is to say, General Smuts means to keep at least one of his three promises, and voluntary registrants will not therefore come within the scope of the law. [But] fulfilling this promise implies the fulfilment of the two others as well. For it cannot happen that one half of the Indian community is governed by one law and the other half by another. That is, the law will be repealed. It has to be. The new Bill must also make provision for those who may enter the Colony hereafter.

LETTER TO SMUTS[2]

But it is felt that General Smuts may do [the Asiatics] justice only because of his fear of satyagraha and because he is afraid that

[1] Then Acting Assistant Colonial Secretary, Transvaal

[2] The letter is not reproduced here; *vide* "Letter to General Smuts", 6-6-1908

otherwisehe will have to return the applications [for voluntary registration]. Mr. Gandhi wrote the following letter to him on Saturday.

That is the position up to Monday evening.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-6-1908

201. LETTER TO H. L. PAUL

JOHANNESBURG,
June 11, 1908

DEAR MR. PAUL,

Mr. Louis Joseph[1] writes to me that you are now interesting yourself in Joseph Royeppen. If you can make a collection, it will be rather good, because Joseph will certainly want some more money. Collection here is still going on. What is more, if the collection is made, it can be handed to Mr. Polak, because Mr. Polak has not irrevocably given the £50.[2] He expects Joseph to return it, so that the money can be used again for a useful purpose.

Ward Angie[3] has evidently forgotten her guardian entirely. She perhaps thinks she is no longer fit to be a ward, but tell her not to forget that it was not long ago when she had to be carried on the joint arms of Mr. Isaac and myself a good distance.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. L. PAUL, ESQ,4
CHIEF MAGISTRATE'S OFFICE
DURBAN

From a copy of the original: C.W. 4547. Courtesy: Eugene Joseph Paul, Pietermaritzburg

[1] Brother-in-law of Joseph Royeppen
[2] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter",Before 30-5-1908
[3] The addressee's daughter
[4] An Indian interpreter in Magistrates' Courts in South Africa

202. NATAL LICENSING ACT

We hope that the successful outcome of Mr. Kazi's[1] appeal will not lead any Indian to expect that the trouble about licences is over. All that this case shows is that only those persons whose interests are affected have a right to be heard in an appeal. This appeal should be treated as similar to the case of Somnath Maharaj. As long as the licensing Act continues to be in force and the final authority rests with the [Licensing] Officer, the Indian trader will continue to run a serious risk. What is worse, the threatened legislation is like a red-hot brand held against an already blistered skin.

At a time when the community is faced with these problems, we find some persons engaged in a dispute about the rights of the Main Line Indians. We do not see any conflict between the interests of the Main Line Indians and those of the others, so the question as to who the trustee is does not arise. If the affairs of the Congress are conducted honestly, there is nothing more to be said. Many persons from among the Main Line Indians hold the office of Vice-President. If it is possible for them to visit Durban occasionally, they can also get themselves included in the Managing Committee. This is not impossible. But the work of the Committee should not later have to be held up because these persons do not attend [meetings]. The best course for the Main Line Indians would be to nominate some representatives in Durban, in whom they have confidence, and ask them to attend every meeting.

But compared to the danger that threatens, this is an insignificant dispute. What is needed is for all of us to join hands in opposing the Government. A great flood is approaching; and it must be stemmed. All available hands are needed. How can this [task] be achi-

[1] On Kazi's behalf, one Hillier filed an appeal in the Natal Supreme Court against a decision of the Licensing Board of the Mapumulo Division, which had refused to confirm a renewal of licence granted him by the Licensing Officer. The ground of appeal was that, since Mr. Carter, a member of the Board who was also a store-keeper in the same Division, was an interested party, he was not a fit and proper person to deal with the case. In his judgment the Chief justice ruled that Mr. Carter had no such interest that disqualified him from sitting on the Board. As for Mr. Whittaker, who was only an employee in a store and who had appealed before the Board against the renewal of Kazi's licence at the Board hearing, the Chief Justice observed that his interest was not sufficient to justify his opposing the grant of a licence. No person, he said, was entitled to appeal unless he had a direct, personal and substantial interest. The Court quashed the proceedings of the Licensing Board.

eved? Satyagraha provides the proper remedy against both the existing and the proposed legislation, and in satyagraha, unity is imperative. Every Indian must, therefore, don armour in order to join battle.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-6-1908

203. OBNOXIOUS ACT IN RHODESIA

Dark clouds lour upon the Rhodesia Indians. New laws are about to be passed. For one thing, [there will follow] harassment of the Indian businessman and, for another, a Registration Act similar to the one in the Transvaal [is about to be enacted]. The intention thus seems to be to close in on the Indians from all sides. In Rhodesia also, it is essential that Indians should resort to satyagraha. Whether they can do this will depend upon their relations with the whites in that Colony, the number of Indians settled there,[1] what sort of people they are and other relevant factors.

It is also necessary that the Rhodesia Indians write to the South Africa British Indian Committee and contribute towards its funds. All of us have seen the invaluable work it has been doing.

We have seen a copy of the proposed Bill, which is modelled on the Transvaal measure. It is worse than the Transvaal Act, since it applies to women also. It lays down, moreover, that Indians will only have a period of six months after its promulgation in which to register themselves. We hear that Rhodesia Indians have decided to oppose this Bill. Even copies of a petition are ready. If they bring sufficient pressure to bear [on the authorities], the Bill will never be passed. It is their duty to act firmly.

This instance shows that we did well to fight in the Transvaal and that Indians should persevere in their campaign. The world over, the Asiatic and the European are engaged in a conflict. In this struggle, victory will go to the party that has right on its side. At the moment, truth appears to be on the side of the Asiatic.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-6-1908

[1] An *Indian Opinion* editorial of the same date estimated this number at less than 500.

204. SARVODAYA [*-V*]

VEINS OF WEALTH

Economists may reply in the following manner to what we said earlier concerning "roots of truth": 'It is true that certain advantages flow from social affection. But economists do not take these advantages into their reckoning. The science with which they are concerned is the science of getting rich. Far from being fallacious, it has in experience been found to be effective. Those who follow it do become rich, and those who disregard it become poor. All the millionaires of Europe have acquired their wealth by following the laws of this science. It is futile to seek to controvert this. Every man of the world knows how money is made and how it is lost.'

This is not quite true. Men of business do indeed make money but they do not know whether they make it by fair means and if their money-making contributes to the national weal. Very often they do not even know the meaning of the word "rich". They do not realize that, if there are rich men, there must also be poor men. People sometimes believe, mistakenly, that by following certain precepts it is possible for everybody to become rich. But the true position can be compared to a water-wheel where one [bucket] empties out as another fills. The power of the rupee you possess depends on another going without it. If no one wants it, it will be useless to you. The power it possesses depends on your neighbour's lack of it. There can be wealth only where there is scarcity. This means that, in order to be rich, one must keep another poor.

Political economy consists in the production, preservation and distribution, at the fittest time and place, of useful and pleasurable things. The farmer who reaps his harvest at the right time, the builder who lays bricks properly, the carpenter who attends to woodwork with care, the woman who runs her kitchen efficiently are all true political economists. All of them add to the national income. A science that teaches the opposite of this is not "political". Its only concern is with individuals merely accumulating a certain metal and putting it to profitable use by keeping others in want of it. Those who do this estimate their wealth—the value of their farms and cattle—by the number of rupees they can get for them, rather than the value of their rupees by the number of cattle and farms they can buy with them. Furthermore, men who thus accumulate metal—rupees—think [in terms] of the number of workmen whose services they can command. Let us suppose that a certain individual possesses gold, silver, corn, etc.

This person will require a servant. And if none of his neighbours is in need of gold, silver or corn, he will find it difficult to get one. He will then have to bake his bread, make his clothes and plough his field all by himself. This man will find his gold to be of no greater value than the yellow pebbles on his estate. His hoard of corn will rot. For he cannot consume more than his neighbour. He must therefore maintain himself by hard labour as other men do. Most people will not want to accumulate gold or silver on these terms. Careful reflection will show that what we really desire through acquisition of wealth is power over other men—[power] to acquire for our advantage the labour of a servant, a tradesman or an artisan. And the power we can thus acquire will be in direct proportion to the poverty of others. If there is only one person [in a position] to employ a carpenter, the latter will accept whatever wage is offered. If there are three or four persons who need his services, he will work for the person who offers him the highest wage. So that growing rich means contriving that as large a number of men as possible shall have less than we have. Economists generally assume that it is of advantage to the nation as a whole if the mass of people are thus kept in want. Equality among men is certainly not possible. But conditions of scarcity, unjustly created, injure the nation. Scarcity and abundance arising naturally make, and keep, the nation happy.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-6-1908

205. LETTER TO GENERAL SMUTS[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
June 13, 1908

DEAR MR. SMUTS,

With reference to the interview I had with you today, I trust you will excuse my trespassing upon your time and attention yet awhile. Until the Asiatic question, as far as it arises out of the Asiatic Act, is settled, I am obliged to approach you.

You doubt my full representative capacity, or, better still, the full representative character of the views submitted by me. I admit it only in so far as it affects those who, whilst the passive resistance struggle was going on, accepted the Asiatic Act. Even they do not differ from my views, but they, like the national scouts, intend to save their faces.

[1] This was republished in *Indian Opinion*, 4-7-1908, and a copy was sent by Ritch as an annexure to his letter of July 27, 1908 to the Colonial Office.

But I hope, with your assistance, to have even them side by side with the other membersof the community. I clearly consider that they have erred from fear, but every endeavour is being made to win them over, and, should they not—why, they represent but a microscopic minority. Some of them have had many conversations with me, and they are, undoubtedly, as anxious as the rest of the community that the Asiatic Act should be repealed.

With reference to the amendment of the Immigration Act, I wish to make the Asiatic position perfectly clear with reference to the following:

1. No position will ever be accepted by the Asiatic communities that does not put those who have not yet entered the country but are entitled to do so on a level with Asiatics who have voluntarily registered. They will, therefore, exchange their documents under the amended Act, and take out certificates in the same form as the voluntary form.

2. Refugees who have not yet received permits under the Peace Preservation Ordinance should be protected. There will be no objection to defining who may be termed a refugee—I suggest residence in the Transvaal for two years prior to the 11th day of October, 1899—and a period may be fixed within which these applications may be received, say one year, and they should be entitled to prove their claim before a court of law.

3. Those who hold £3 Dutch Registration Certificates should also be protected, the onus being on them to prove that they are *bona-fide* holders thereof.

4. Those who hold Peace Preservation Ordinance permits or permits issued by Asiatic Officers should be protected.

5. Those who possess educational qualifications, whatever the test may be, should be free like the European immigrants.

6. There are applications being made which have not been yet decided by Mr. Chamney, or which he has refused. These should be decided finally before a court of law.

You told me that you did not want to give any rights of domicile beyond those given by the Asiatic Act. You will see that in the above, with the exception of holders of £3 Dutch registration certificates, all are provided for under the Asiatic Act, and I have told you that, in my opinion, and according to Mr. Duncan's speech, even the holders of £3 Dutch registration certificates are protected under the discretionary clause. Only I have suggested that they should be recognized as a matter of right, provided, of course, that they prove their *bona fides*.

I need hardly point out that refugees are protected by the

Asiatic Act, because the Peace Preservation Ordinance permits were still to be issued. They have only lately been stopped, under your instructions and by virtue of the Immigrants' Restriction Act, but I am sure you could never have intended that those who are still outside the Colony and who can beincontestably proved to be old residents should not have their claims considered. The definition of a refugee and the time limit provide against possible frauds.

I ask you to recognize the very great service rendered by the Indian community in giving finger-prints in the face of enormous odds, and to recognize also that the resident portion of the community did not avail themselves of the discretionary clause of the compromise, with reference to education and property qualifications. This was done in order to protect those few who were to come in future, and to show what grace, if I may use the term, Asiatic peoples are capable of. But I may state that they will never accept, so far as I am aware, anything in the nature of compulsion, when they can be otherwise completely identified. The idea is that ignorance or such other thing should be the basis of disqualification, and not race or colour.

The great principle that the Colonists have laid down, namely, that, in future, Asiatic immigration should be limited only to those who possess educational qualifications of a high order has been admitted. But those who are entitled to reside in the country will not accept the bar sinister[1]. And, if the question cannot be satisfactorily settled on the above, as I consider it, most reasonable basis, it is better that it is not settled at all.

I take it that, as you have promised, you will let me see the draft Bill before it is published.

I have informed the Committee of the Association that you have definitely promised to settle the matter next week. The Committee has, therefore, authorized me to postpone the filing of the affidavits[2] in the meanwhile.

I am,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

GENERAL J. C. SMUTS
PRETORIA

India Office, Judicial and Public Records: 2896/08; also a photostat of the handwritten office copy: S. N. 4827(a)

[1] *Vide* "Deputation to Morley", 22-11-1906 & "Deputation Notes-III", 23-11-1906

[2] These were filed on June 23, 1908.

206. PETITION TO TRANSVAAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
June 15, 1908

TO
THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF
THE HON'BLE THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE TRANSVAAL
PRETORIA

THE PETITION OF ESSOP ISMAIL MIA IN HIS CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN
OF THE BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF THE TRANSVAAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT

1. Your Petitioner has read with alarm Sections 3, 104, 113, 114, 127, 128 of the Bill2 to amend the Gold Law of the Colony, recently published in the Government Gazette.

2. Your Petitioner humbly submits that the above-mentioned Sections, if they are approved by this Hon'ble House, will impose upon British Indians resident in the Transvaal disabilities graver than those contemplated by the existing Gold Law, thereby inflicting grave loss to and threatening with ruin a community admitted to be peaceable and law-abiding.

3. Your Petitioner ventures to draw the attention of this Hon'ble House to the following specific objections[3] on the part of the British Indians resident in this Colony:

(a) The Bill retains in the definition of the term "Coloured person" the word "coolie", which, as this Hon'ble House is doubtless aware, when applied to the present British Indian population of the Colony, is an offensive term, there being in the Transvaal very few, if any, "coolies" in the proper sense of the term. Moreover, the bracketing together of African aboriginal Natives and Asiatics, British subjects and non-British subjects, is to ignore the peculiar position occupied by British Indian subjects of the Crown.

(b) In your Petitioner's humble opinion, the definition of "unwrought gold" is calculated to prevent Indian goldsmiths from plying their trade of manufacturing goldware and jewellery even out of gold bars prepared in and imported from

[1] This appeared in *Indian Opinion*, 20-6-1908, under the title "Transvaal Gold Law: British Indian Protest".

[2] For the relevant sections of the Draft Gold Law.

[3] *Vide* also "Letter to Colonial Secretary", Before 25-4-1908.

England, and, it is submitted, this would be a grievous hardship for the goldsmiths in question.

(c) The retention of the original law as to dealing in unwrought gold, in so far as it specially affects Coloured people, besides their coming under the general prohibitions of the law, assumes that Coloured people are the greater offenders in respect of this crime, whereas, in the humble opinion of the petitioning Association, the contrary is the fact, in so far as British Indians are concerned.

(d) Your Petitioner ventures to assert that Section 127 of the Bill is vaguely drawn and seems to contemplate entire prohibition of acquisition by British Indians of any rights under it. The prohibition, under the same Section, to holders of rights acquired previously to the Bill to transfer or sub-let such rights to a Coloured person makes the proposed law retrospective in its effect.

(e) Section 128 contemplates the compulsory segregation of British Indians residing within certain proclaimed areas, to wit, the entire Witwatersrand District, and, if approved by this Hon'ble House, would make it impossible for a very large number of British Indians even to remain in the Colony. Your Petitioner would remind this Hon'ble House that the large majority of British Indians resident in the Transvaal are to be found in the above-mentioned areas, whilst the principle of compulsory segregation of British Indians under penalty is a direct extension of existing disabilities by indirect means, which disabilities the petitioning Association has consistently protested against.

4. Your Petitioner ventures to assert that, inasmuch as these Sections are based upon race and class distinctions, they can never give satisfaction to the British Indian community. Moreover, such distinctions cast an undeserved slur upon the community that your Petitioner has the honour to represent, as they must inevitably raise in the minds of the white Colonists of the Transvaal, feelings of contempt and scorn towards British Indians, thus increasing the difficulties unfortunately standing in the way of a better understanding between the two communities.

5. In your Petitioner's humble opinion, restrictions of the kind above referred to obviously confer absolutely no privileges upon British Indians, but, on the contrary, deprive them of many rights and much esteem that they at present possess.

6. Your Petitioner further ventures to remind this Hon'ble

House that the imposition of further disabilities upon the resident British Indian population of the Transvaal will enormously intensify the irritation and bitterness of feeling already existing in the minds of many millions of His Majesty's subjects in India.

7. Wherefore your Petitioner humbly prays that this Hon'ble House will be pleased to reject the provisions hereinbefore referred to, or togrant such other relief as to this Hon'ble House may seem meet; and for this act, etc., etc.

ESSOP ISMAIL MIA,

[CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION]

Archives of the Legislative Assembly, Pretoria; also Colonial Office Records: 291/132

207. PETITION TO TRANASVAAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
June 15, 1908

TO
THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE
TRANSVAAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
PRETORIA

THE PETITION OF ESSOP ISMAIL MIA, IN HIS CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN OF THE BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF THE TRANSVAAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT

1. Your Petitioner has read with grave concern Sections 68, 93, 94 and 172 of the Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to Municipal Government, recently published in the *Government Gazette* of this Colony.

2. In your Petitioner's humble opinion, the above-mentioned Sections, if they are approved by this Hon'ble House, will impose very great hardship and loss upon the British Indian community resident in the Transvaal, will ruin many peaceable and law-abiding citizens, and break up many an Indian home.

3. Your Petitioner ventures to assert that, inasmuch as these Sections are based upon race and class distinctions, they can never give satisfaction to the British Indian community. Moreover, such

[1] This was published under the title "Transvaal Municipal Consolidation Bill: British Indian Protest".

distinctions cast an undeserved slur upon the community that your Petitioner has the honour to represent, as they must inevitably raise in the minds of the white Colonists of the Transvaal feelings of contempt and scorn towards British Indians, thus increasing the difficulties unfortunately standing in the way of a better understanding between the two communities.

4. In your Petitioner's humble opinion, the above provisions are open to serious objection on the ground that they are restrictive of the liberty of the subject, in that thereby it is sought to empower the municipalities:

(a) to set apart new Asiatic Bazaars, thus reasserting the principle of segregation of British Indians, a principle against which the petitioning Association [has] consistently protested;

(b) to close existing Asiatic Bazaars without consulting the convenience of those who may be thereby affected and without guaranteeing to them fresh sites equally valuable and convenient (such uncertainty of tenure, as this Hon' ble House will easily perceive, cannot but militate seriously against a settled and decent mode of life, and the erection of permanent and solid residential premises, by British Indians);

(c) to arbitrarily refuse certain licences, including hawkers' and pedlars' licences, without the right of appeal from their decisions, thus striking a deadly blow at the long established businesses of Indian merchants, traders, hawkers, pedlars, and others, threatening them with immediate ruin; the licences which come under this last provision, may, under the Bill, be arbitrarily refused to those who, today, have the right of appeal from the adverse decisions of municipalities;

(d) to indicate certain trades and businesses from which British Indians are excluded in any capacity, whether as would-be licensees or as employees, thus restricting their means of earning an honest livelihood;

(e) to frame regulations prohibiting British Indians respectably dressed and well conducted from travelling upon municipal tram-cars, thus imposing humiliation upon a highly civilized community and debasing it to the level of the aboriginal native of the country.

5. In your Petitioner's humble opinion, restrictions of the kind above referred to obviously confer absolutely no privileges upon

British Indians, but, on the contrary, deprive them of many rights and much esteem that they at present possess.

6. Your Petitioner further ventures to remind this Hon'ble House that the imposition of further disabilities upon the resident British Indian population of the Transvaal will enormously intensify the irritation and bitterness of feeling already existing in the minds of many millions of His Majesty's subjects in India.

7. Wherefore, your Petitioner humbly prays that this Hon'ble House will be pleased to reject the provisions hereinbefore referred to, or to grant such other relief as to this Hon'ble House may seem meet; and for this act, etc., etc.

ESSOP ISMAIL MIA
[CHAIR MAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION]

Indian Opinion, 20-6-1908

208. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

Sunday [*June 16, 1908*]

GENERAL SMUTS

The collapse of the settlement is drawing nearer each day. But the situation has reached such a critical point that all that I write now may have lost its point or alternatively [my predictions] may have come to pass by the time this is published.

After Mr. Gandhi wrote the letter[1] to General Smuts, an attempt was made to arrange an interview with Mr. Leonard, but he was not available. He is busy in connection with an important commission, so it appears he does not see anyone at present. Having thus waited and received no reply from General Smuts, on Friday the 12th, Mr. Gandhi met Mr. Ward, who is a very able barrister, though not of the same calibre as Mr. Leonard. Mr. Ward took the same view as Mr. Leonard, namely, that the Government had no alternative but to return the applications. Mr. Gandhi then sent a telegram[2] to General Smuts saying that, if no reply was received from him, the case would be taken to the Supreme Court and that this was also the view of an eminent counsel. While, on the one hand, the telegram was being sent, drafts were being prepared on the other for affidavits[3] by Mr. Ebra-

[1] *Vide* "Letter to General Smuts", 6-6-1908

[2] This has not been traced.

[3] *Vide* "Petition on to Transvaal Supreme Court", 23-6-1908 and for Essop Mia's and Gandhiji's affidavits, *vide* "Essop Mia's Affidavit", 23-6-1908 "Affidavit", 23-6-1908.

him Ismail Aswat, Mr. Essop Mia and Mr. Gandhi, and preparations for the case went ahead. Meanwhile, a telegram was received from Mr. Smuts inviting [Mr. Gandhi] for an interview on Saturday the 13th, at 9-45 a.m. at Winchester House. In view of this, it was decided not to send the affidavits to Pretoria.

At the interview, General Smuts said that the new law would certainly be repealed and the Immigrants' [Restriction] Act amended. But he had still to consult his draftsmen in the legal department. He therefore advised [Mr. Gandhi] to wait for a week. He said, moreover, that the British Indian Association did not represent the entire Indian community, and that he had received a petition from [some] Indians requesting that the law be retained.

The Committee [of the British Indian Association] met on the same day at 11 o'clock. It was resolved at the meeting to wait for a week. The meeting was attended by Mr. Essop Mia, Chairman, and a large number of other Indians. It was also resolved that, if no final reply was received from General Smuts, a meeting should be held on Sunday, to which all the Indian [delegates] from outside Johannesburg should also be invited and that the matter should then be made public.

LETTER TO SMUTS

After the meeting, Mr. Gandhi wrote the following letter to General Smuts.[1]

How many of the demands made in this letter will be conceded depends on the community's courage.

Wednesday [*June 16, 1908*]

DISCUSSION ON ACT IN ENGLAND

There is a cable in today's papers saying that this question is being discussed in England, and another to the effect that it has been decided to repeal the obnoxious Act, and that committees have been set up in India to work for the protection of rights of Indians abroad. Sir Richard Solomon gave an incomplete reply [to a question] on this subject and said that the Asiatic Act would be amended, not repealed. I, for one, attach no importance to this reply.

The lesson to be drawn from the foregoing cable is that satyagraha has struck deep roots and will daily grow in strength. It also suggests that Mr. Ritch is ever active in England in the service of duty, without a moment's respite.

[1] This letter has not been re-translated. For the English text, *vide* "Letter to General Smuts", 13-6-1908

"PRETORIA NEWS"

Pretoria News says:[1]

> We understand that, according to General Smuts' promise to Mr. Gandhi, the Act will be repealed and that voluntary registration will be legalized under the Immigrants' [Restriction] Act. It will also contain a provision for appeal to a court of law. This amendment is to be made in response to suggestions from the Imperial Government.

This paragraph appears in the news columns. Commenting on it, the editor says:

> The Governor's speech very wisely says little about Asiatics. The surrender by the Government in that connection, as we have shown in another column, is complete; not only are they going to legalize voluntary registration, but they are going to repeal the Asiatic Act and recast the immigration Act. In view of the Colonial Secretary's intention to repeal the Act, we advise Mr. Gandhi not to resume the satyagraha movement. It is very clear that the Indian community has good friends in the Liberal Party.

SIR GEORGE FARRAR

Speaking in Parliament, Sir George said:

> The Progressive Party wants the Government to consult it. There are precedents for that. When the Government had trouble with the Asiatic law, they approached the Progressive Party for its help.[2] They knew what happened in the case of the Indians. Why would not the Government do in the case of the policemen what they did to the Indians? Will they treat the policemen worse than they treated the Indians?

We thus see that the satyagrahis' cases are being referred to on every occasion. The same thing happened at a meeting of the Native Affairs Society on Tuesday evening when they cited the example of the Indian campaign.

CEMETERY[3]

It appears that this dispute has been settled—for the present at

[1] The translations that follow have been collated with the English texts in *Indian Opinion*, 20-6-1908.

[2] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 8-2-1908

[3] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter",Before 30-5-1908

any rate. There was a telephone message from the Town Clerk that non-Muslims would not be buried in this cemetery. No written reply has, however, been received from the Town Council yet.

SHAHJI'S CASE

The case of Shahji and Maulabux came up on Friday. But owing to the pressure of other business, the hearing was adjourned to the 24th. When the case came up, Mr. Jordan said that he had received a threatening anonymous letter.[1] He gave, a warning to persons writing such letters. Shahji's lawyer, Mr. Van Diggelen stated that the letter in question was certainly not written by his clients. Some hot-heads among the Pathans were probably the authors. In any case, the writing of anonymous letters is a bad habit and is a sure sign of weakness. If this finds its way towriters of anonymous letters, let them note that they are bringing disgrace on the Indian community.

HARASSMENT IN VOLKSRUST

Syed Mahomed, an Indian, was returning last week from Durban. He had with him the receipt for his application for voluntary registration. Since it did not have his thumb-impression, he was asked to detrain at Volksrust. Corporal Cameron fixed his bail at £10. But when he was taken to the sergeant, the latter refused him bail. Since it was a holiday, he had to remain in gaol for three days. He was then released. But who is to be held responsible for this harassment for three days? This question has a point for every Indian. The easiest and simplest way out of this is for Indians to take their courage in both hands and protest against every inconvenience they are put to. It is said that there was an Indian behind this ill-treatment meted out to Mr. Syed Mahomed. If this is true, it only bears out the saying that the axe cannot chop wood unless it has a wooden handle.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-6-1908

[1] Shahji was charged before Magistrate Jordan with incitement to commit grievous bodily harm, and the other with committing an assault on Essop Mia. The anonymous letter purported to be from a Pathan who threatened to kill the Magistrate if he gave a judgment adverse to the accused.

209. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO COLONIAL SECRETARY[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
June 19, 1908]

[PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
COLONIAL SECRETARY
PRETORIA]

YES

[GANDHI]

From a photostat of a draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 4828

210. CAUSE OF MURDERS IN NATAL

Following upon our article[2] on the murders committed among the Natal Indians, a correspondent states that the growing prevalence of adultery among Indians is the cause of these murders. He observes that [the cause of] most of these murders can be traced to women. This is regrettable, if true. What we write now is unlikely to fall into the hands of those who are busy committing murders or others who are the cause of them. But the readers of this journal must think [this matter over]. Every thoughtful person can help in solving these problems. If it is true that adultery is on the increase among the Indian youth, that is a sign of our degeneracy.

We are in the habit of comparing our vices with those of the whites and if we have some in common, we take no further notice of them. This attitude reveals how depraved we are. Following that line of thinking, we conclude that the whites are superior to us and that they have attained the acme of virtue. In fact, the whites are generally not superior to us. It is equally false that we cannot become more virtuous.

There is no more fallacious argument than that we may indulge in adultery because the whites do so. Their adultery is a different sort of thing, and even in their case, a strenuous effort is being made by their priests and reformers to eradicate the vice.

[1] This was sent at 7.40 p.m. to Smuts' Private Secretary in reply to the latter's telegram which said: "Can you please be at the Railway offices at 9.40 tomorrow to meet Mr. Smuts for a few minutes."

[2] *Vide* "Crime Wave in Natal",6-6-1908

But the whites can afford to do what they are doing. We cannot. We have fallen very low indeed. We have to uplift ourselves. We therefore need an enterprising spirit. It is a fact of experience that the habit of adultery daily undermines the strength of people among whom it is widespread. The Indian youth, therefore, need to give this problem their earnest attention.

If we observe [conditions among] whites for purposes of comparison, we shall find that Purity Societies are being set up among them. Their priests are working actively to prevent the young people from going astray. We know that in Bombay the Salvation Army is active. In the Cape, the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal, the Rev. Mr. Myer has been exhorting the young with the same end in view. These societies do not require funds. They only require the services of devoted men, who are virtuous in thought and deed. Let it be remembered that Rome, Greece and the other nations that fell were destroyed mainly because of the prevalence of adultery [in those societies].

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-6-1908

211. LAWS AFFECTING CAPE INDIANS

The Cape Parliament is in session. The Immigration Act and the Cape Licenses Act are oppressive measures. The Cape Indians are in a better position to secure redress in respect of these laws than are the Indians in the other Colonies [in the matter of their grievances]. For they have franchise. If they try hard enough, they can get both. these Acts amended. The Immigration Regulations have been published again in the *Gazette.* Many of the conditions that the laws stipulate are difficult to fulfil. It is the duty of the Cape Indians to fight against these laws. The same is true of the General Dealers' Act. If the Indian community in South Africa wants to live respectably, it should be prepared for suffering. In order to fight the hardships imposed on it by the Government, it should be prepared to accept [further self-imposed][1] hardships, or if it is content to live in ignorance—and filth—it should then accept oppression by the Government. One must be prepared to die in order to be able to live. And in order to win one's rights, one must do one's duty.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-6-1908

[1] Here, a word in the original is indistinct.

212. MEMORIAL COLUMN IN JOHANNESBURG

We publish alongside of this, as a supplement to today's issue, a photograph[1] a memorial column erected in Johannesburg. It was erected by public subscription at the end of the Boer War. At the moment, it is the only symbol in South Africa [that] perpetuates the memory of Indians there.

The first one is a close view of the column and the inscription on it. The second affords a view of the column amidst As surroundings. The photograph thus serves to give an idea of the elevation at which the column is built. Visible at some distance from the column is the boundary of Sir George Farrar's farm.

The column is of carved stone set in cement. It is fenced in with iron palings so as to avoid risk of damage to the inscription on the marble tablet set in it. The column is located near the Johannesburg Observatory (the department which studies atmospheric phenomena). That is to say, it stands atop the highest eminence in Johannesburg thanks to the concerted efforts of the people.

The large marble slab is set on the eastern face of the column. It carries the following inscription:

To the sacred memory of British officers and other ranks and

Indian sepoys who lid down their lives on the fields of battle in

South Africa between 1899-1902.

These lines are inscribed in Hindi, Urdu and English. A marble slab has been set on each of the other three faces of the column. Thefollowing words are inscribed on them in this order: Mussalman; Christian-Zoroastrian; Hindu-Sikh.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-6-1908

213. SARVODAYA[*-VI*]

VEINS OF WEALTH

Thus the circulation of wealth among a people resembles the circulation of blood in the body. When circulation of blood is rapid, it may indicate any of these things: robust health, [effects of] exercise,or a feeling of shame or fever. There is a flush of the body which is

[1] This should be "two photographs".

indicative of health, and another which is a sign of gangrene. Further more, the concentration of blood at one spot is harmful to the body and, similarly, concentration of wealth at one place proves to be the nation's undoing.

Let us suppose that two sailors are shipwrecked on an uninhabited coast They are then obliged to produce food and other necessaries of life through their own labour. If they both keep good health and work in amity, they may build a good house, till the land and lay by something for the future. All these things would constitute real wealth. If both of them work equally well they will have equal shares. Therefore, all that [economic] science would have to say about their case is that they had acquired a right to an equal share in the fruits of their labour. Let us suppose now that after a while one of them feels dis-contented. So they divide the land and each one works on his land by himself and on his own account. Let us suppose that at a critical time one of them falls ill. He would then approach the other for help. The latter might reply: 'I shall do this work for you, but on condition that you do the same amount of work for me when required. You must undertake in writing to work on my field when required for the same number of hours that I work [for you now].' Suppose further that the disabled man's illness continues and that every time he has to give a written promise to the other, healthy person. What will be the position of the reduced to utter poverty. For, during the time that the invalid was laid up, his labour was unavailable. Even assuming that the friend was very hard-working, it is obvious that the time which he devoted to the ailing man's land was at the expense of work on his own. This means that the combined property of the two would be less than it would have been otherwise.

Also, the relation in which the two stood to each other has altered. The sick man becomes a debtor, and can only offer his labour [as payment towards the debt]. Suppose now that the healthy man decided to make use of the documents in his possession. He would then find it possible wholly to abstain, from work—that is, be idle. If he chose, he could exact further pledges[1] from the man who has recovered. No one can attribute any illegality to such a transaction. If now a stranger were to arrive on the scene, he would find that one of the two men had become wealthy and the other had lost his well-being. He would also see one of them passing his days in idle luxury and the other in want, though labouring hard. The reader will note from this that claiming the fruits of another's labour as of right

[1] Pledges of bonded labour in return for the provision of the debtor's current needs

leads to a diminution of real wealth.

Let us consider another illustration. [Suppose that] three men established a kingdom[1] and then they all lived separately. Each of them raised a different crop which the others could also avail themselves of. Suppose, further, that one of them, in order to save the time of all the three, gave up farming and undertook to arrange the transfer of commodities from one to the other, receiving in return a quantity of food-grains. If this man provided the [required] commodity[2] at the right time, all of them would prosper. Now suppose that he kept back some of the grain he was to transfer. Then suppose there set in a period of scarcity, and the middleman offered the stolen corn at an exorbitant price. In this way he could reduce both the farmers to poverty and employ them as labourers.

This would be a case of obvious injustice. This is, however, the way the merchants of today manage their affairs. We can also see that in consequence of this fraudulent practice the wealth of the three, taken collectively, will be less than it would have been if the [middle]man had behaved honestly. The other two farmers have done less work [than they could have]. Because they could not obtain the supplies they wanted, their labour did not fructify to the fullest, and the stolen commodities[3] the hands of the dishonest middleman were not put to the most effective use.

We can therefore reckon with mathematical accuracy how far the estimate of a nation's wealth depends on the manner in which that wealth has been acquired. We cannot estimate a nation's wealth on the basis of the quantity of cash it possesses. Cash in the hands of an individual may be a token of perseverance, skill and prosperity, or of harmful luxuries, merciless tyranny and chicanery. Our way of estimating wealth not only takes into account the moral attributes [of thedifferent modes of acquiring it] but is also sound mathematically. One stock of money is such that it has created ten times as much in the gathering of it. Another is such that it has annihilated ten times as much in the gathering of it.

To lay down directions for the making of money without regardto moral considerations is therefore a pursuit that bespeaks of man's insolence. There is nothing more disgraceful to man than the

[1] "Republic" in *Unto This Last*

[2] Farming implements, seeds, etc.

[3] The food-grains and farming implements withheld by the middleman

principle "buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest". Buy in the cheapest market? Yes, but what made your market cheap? Charcoal may be cheap among roof timbers after a fire and the bricks of buildings brought down by an earthquake may be cheap. But no one therefore will make bold to assert that fire and earthquake redound to the nation's benefit. Again, sell in the dearest market? Yes, but what made your market dear? You made good profit today from the sale of your bread. But was it by extorting the last cowrie from a dying man? Or, did you sell it to a rich man who will tomorrow appropriate all that you have? Or did you give it to a bandit on his way to pillaging your bank? Probably you will not be able to answer any of these questions, for you do not know. But there is one question you can answer, namely, whether you sold it justly and at a reasonable price. And justice is all that matters. It is your duty to act so that no one suffers through your actions.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-6-1908

214. TELEGRAM TO JOHANNESBURG OFFICE

PRETORIA,
June 22, 1908

TO
GANDHI
JOHANNESBURG

INTERVIEW UNSATISFACTORY. IMMIGRATION AMENDMENT DRASTIC. REJECTS EDUCATION TEST OLD DUTCH CERTIFICATES. CALL MEETING FIVE EVENING. GET AFFIDAVITS ASWAT ESSOP MIAN SIGNED BRING MINE STATION.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the original as delivered: S. N. 4829

215. LETTER TO THE PRESS[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
June 22, 1908

Various statements have appeared in the Press regarding the charge of breach by the Colonial Secretary of the compromise between the Government and the Asiatic communities. Hitherto, owing to the delicate nature of the negotiations that were going on between the Government and the Asiatic communities, it has not been possible to state the case before the public.

I am sorry to say that the negotiations came to an abrupt and unsatisfactory end today. I use the term unsatisfactory as applicable not merely to the Asiatics, but to the whole Empire. General Smuts was willing to repeal the offending Asiatic Act, which has cost the Asiatics treasures of money and much trouble, including incarceration of over two hundred innocent Asiatics, mostly British. This shows that General Smuts was, and still is, under promise to repeal the Act.

But if he was willing to carry out the letter of the compromise, he wanted to break the spirit of it. For it will not be argued that the material position of the Asiatics was, under and after the compromise, to be lower than under the Asiatic Act. Yet such was General Smuts' draft which I was today pained to study and, so far as I was concerned, to reject.

The draft measure proposed to treat the following as prohibited immigrants:

(a) Asiatics possessing educational qualifications prescribed by the Immigrants' Restriction Act.

(b) Asiatics, whether in or out of the Colony, holding Dutch registration certificates under Law 3 of 1885, for which they paid £3.

(c) Other Asiatics who were residents of the Transvaal before the war, and who could prove before a court of law their previous domicile.

(d) Those Asiatics whose claims have been rejected by Mr. Chamney. (For these it is contended only that they

[1] This was published in *Indian Opinion*, 27-6-1908, under the title "Mr. Gandhi Speaks". It was also published in *The Star* among other papers. The *Star* version is, however, unavailable. Ritch forwarded a copy of the letter to the India Office. He described it as a "circular letter" which set out the "issues between the Transvaal Government and the British Indians".

should have the right to have their claims investigated by a judicial tribunal, not finally disposed of by an administrative official.)

In rejecting these claims for consideration and adjudication, not for admission *ipso facto*, General Smuts has misread the passive resistance struggle. It was undertaken, not for selfish purposes, but for the benefit of the Asiatics as a whole, and, shall I add, even the Empire. Moreover, he has wrecked a whole compromise to avoid the possible accession to the Asiatic population of the Colony of two thousand Asiatics as an outside figure. I call these people an "accession", but, in fact, they are already domiciled residents of the Colony, though General Smuts' draft ignored their rights.

The position of the Asiatics is simple. They must revert to the condition that prevailed in January last in this matter, and they have been advised to withdraw their voluntary application forms.[1] General Smuts has declined to return them. If he had the courage to face the passive resisters, he would return them without much ado.

Asiatics were labouring under a cloud of suspicion up to January last. Mr. Duncan had levelled the charge and it was repeated, even in the highest places, that there was an organized illicit entry of Asiatics.[2] The fact that over 7,600 out of 9,000 have already proved their *bona fides* disposes of the charge. It was in order to refute that foul charge that voluntary registration was tendered, and for no other reason. The Asiatics, therefore, approach the public with clean hands. Moreover, they have shown by their sufferings that they have a right to command sympathy from a humanitarian public.

Lastly, they have shown, by some of their leaders being severely assaulted by their own countrymen, that they are just as eager to serve the Government as they are to serve their countrymen.

General Smuts' Act will be that of the Government and the Government's will be the white men's—mostly British. When I explained the compromise to my countrymen, the less thinking among them said: "Do not trust the white man. Repeal of the Act should precede voluntary registration and not succeed it." I told them that that was not a dignified position to take up.

In tampering with the compromise, I venture to say that General Smuts does not know what he is doing. Will the Englishmen in the

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 30-5-1908

[2] *Vide* "Deputation to Morley", 22-11-1906

Colony tolerate the position, when their main intention is granted that future immigration of Asiatics should be effectively controlled?

Yours etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

India Office, Judicial and Public Records: 2896/08

216. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO S. A. B. I. COMMITTEE[1]

June 22, 1908

. . .Smuts will repeal the Act but on conditions I cannot accept. The conditions he makes are:

Dutch certificates not to be recognized.

Pre-war refugees, who have not Peace Preservation certificates, cannot enter.

Those voluntary applications that have been rejected not to be considered by a court of law.

Those possessing educational qualifications are not to be recognized. (Smuts thinks they are disqualified under the present Act. I think that is not the case.)

It is not possible to accept the above conditions because I consider that they miss the spirit of the compromise. . .

India Office, Judicial and Public Records: 3722/08

217. INTERVIEW TO "THE STAR"[2]

[PRETORIA,
June 22, 1908]

We regret to announce that all efforts to avoid a breach of the settlement, arrived at last January between the Government and the Transvaal Asiatics, have proved unsuccessful. . .

At the request of the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Gandhi waited on him this morning and was permitted to peruse the draft amendment to the Immigration Restriction Act proposed by the Government. General Smuts intimated that it was the intention of the Government to repeal the Asiatic Registration Act.

[1] This is taken from a precis of events in the Transvaal sent by Ritch along with his letter of October 6, 1908 to the Colonial Office.

[2] This was republished in *Indian Opinion* under the title "The Transvaal Trouble: General Smuts Plays False".

After perusing the Act, Mr. Gandhi had an interview with the Colonial Secretary, and raised the following points: (a) The position of the Asiatics who had made voluntary application for registration, having given their finger-prints, and who for some reason or other have not received their permits. Mr. Gandhi asked that, in case[s] where permits were refused, an application or appeal should lie from the Registrar of Asiatics to some judicial officer; (b) he also asked that those Indians outside South Africa, whoare in possession of residential passports issued by the Republican Government in return for the registration fee of £3, should be permitted on returning from India to register voluntarily; (c) that the educational exemption should be maintained in the new Act as it was in the old; (d) that genuine refugees domiciled in the Transvaal before the war, now in India or elsewhere, who were in possession of the Republican passport or not, be permitted, on producing evidence, to return and register voluntarily.

With regard to the education exemption, General Smuts argued that they had no exemption under the original law. He declined to make provisions for appeal from the Registrar of Asiatics in cases where voluntary registration had been refused. He also declined to offer facilities for the return of Asiatics at present out of the country, who were genuine refugees, or possessed the Republican residential passport.

The interview was a brief one, and the Colonial Secretary, we understand, intimated to Mr. Gandhi that if he, as leader of the Indian community, was prepared to accept the proposed amendments to the Immigration Restriction Act, the Asiatic Law Amendment Act would be withdrawn. The Colonial Secretary would proceed to introduce a Bill legalizing the registration in the existing Registration Act.[1]

Mr. Gandhi then withdrew, and during the course of an interview gave a representative of this paper authority to make the above statement. He stated that he would immediately apply to the Supreme Court for an order calling on Mr. Chamney

[1] *Indian Opinion* published the following report of a statement by General Smuts: "In connection with Mr. Gandhi's statement, we have received a statement from the Colonial Secretary to the effect that the repeal of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act was not part of the arrangement with the Asiatics, as was apparent from letters constituting the arrangements. The Colonial Secretary was willing to meet the Indian community and repeal Act 2 of 1907 and to treat Indians in future coming into the Transvaal as prohibited Indians under the Immigrants'Restriction Act if the leaders of the Asiatic community would agree to the amendment of the Act which the Colonial Secretary proposed. These proposed amendments were submitted to Mr. Gandhi, and they did not at all satisfy him for various reasons, which he advanced, and therefore he was informed that nothing remained to be done but to abide by the agreed terms of the compromise, as the Colonial Secretary was unwilling to repeal Act 2 of 1907 and then to find an agitation started afresh against the Immigrants'Act. Voluntary registration would not be legalized under Act 2 of 1907 but under a separate measure, according to the compromise."

(the Registrar) turn the finger-impressions and other documents voluntarily tendered by the Asiatics.[1]

Indian Opinion, 27-6-1908

218. INTERVIEW TO "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"

[JOHANNESBURG,
June 22, 1908]

Mr. Gandhi was seen last night by a representative of *The Transvaal Leader*, and, asked to state what course it is now intended to adopt, Mr. Gandhi said:

Throughout the negotiations the leaders of the Indian community have been kept informed, as also, indeed, the general body of the community, of what was going on. Though, therefore, the decision of General Smuts has come to them as a painful surprise, they have not been taken altogether unawares. When it first became known that there was no likelihood of the Act being repealed, many Indians wrote to Mr. Chamney asking him to return their application forms and other documents filed with him voluntarily. These documents have not been returned. The Supreme Court will be approached immediately, and if the documents are returned, that at once places the Indian community in the position in which it was before the compromise —that is to say, every Indian is liable to be prosecuted, under the Asiatic Act, for non-registration; but if the action were unsuccessful, even then so far as I am aware, it is not the intention of the Asiatics to allow voluntary registration to be legalized anyhow.

Immediately on my return from Pretoria, a meeting of the committee was held, and the members were very enthusiastic. They realized that the whole of the passive resistance will have to be gone through all over again, and they seem to me to be ready for it.

We are holding on Wednesday next at three o'clock, in front of the Hamidia Mosque, a mass meeting of British Indians throughout the Colony,[2] Delegates have been invited by telegram from all parts of the Colony. A series of resolutions will be passed at the meeting.

[1] In the same issue of *Indian Opinion*, it was reported that Mr. Ebrahim Aswat had applied to the Supreme Court, supported by affidavits from Essop Ismail Mia and Gandhiji (pp. 313-6) for a return of their application forms for voluntary registration. The application had been set down for Friday, July 3, at 11 o'clock,

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting", 24-6-1908

I cannot help saying that, having yielded on the principle of the repeal of the Act, General Smuts is very unreasonable in refusing to recognize what I consider to be the very moderate and just suggestions.

Indian Opinion, 27-6-1908

219. LETTER TO M. CHAMNEY

JOHANNESBURG,
[Before *June 23, 1908*][1]

M. CHAMNEY, ESQ.
COLONIAL OFFICE
PRETORIA

DEAR SIR,

I have been informed by the British Indian Association that it is the intention of the Government to legalize under the Asiatic Act No. 2 of 1907 the voluntary registration taken out by me. As, when I accepted the compromise with the Government, it never was my intention to accept legalization under the Asiatic Act, I beg to apply for a return of my application and other documents possessed by you. The documents I ask may be sent to the Secretary, British Indian Association, P. O. Box 6522, Johannesburg.

I am, etc.,
EBRAHIM ISMAIL ASWAT

Indian Opinion, 11-7-1908

[1] Clearly, this was written before the following item wherein this letter is cited. It is likely that Gandhiji drafted both the letter and the petition to the Supreme Court for Aswat who was for some time an office-bearer of the British Indian Association.

220. PETITION TO TRANSVAAL SUPREME COURT[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
June 23, 1908]

PETITION OF EBRAHIM ISMAIL ASWAT OF VEREENIGING
FOR THE RETURN OF PAPERS AND DOCUMENTS GIVEN TO
MONTFORD CHAMNEY OF PRETORIA

Ebrahim Ismail Aswat of Vereeniging humbly submits to Their Lordships the hon'ble Judges of the Supreme Court that

(1) he is a wholesale and retail Indian trader of Vereeniging;

(2) he has been resident in the Transvaal for the last 19 years;

(3) he attended some of the meetings[2] of the British Indian Association at Johannesburg held in January and February last;

(4) it was stated at these meetings that a compromise had been arrived at between the Indian community and the Government in regard to the agitation against the Asiatic Law Amendment Act;

(5) the terms of the compromise were explained by Mr. M. K. Gandhi, Honorary Secretary, British Indian Association, as follows:

(a) residents of the Transvaal would apply voluntarily, within a period of three months, for registration certificates in a form to be agreed upon between the leaders of the Indian community and the Government;

(b) those who were outside the Transvaal but had domiciliary rights in the Colony and possessed the right of re-entry, would also be eligible for voluntary registration;

(c) on the fulfilment by Asiatics of their obligations in accordance with the terms of the compromise, the Government would repeal the Act; and those Asiatics who had registered voluntarily would not in any way be subject to the operation of the Asiatic Registration Act.

(6) As far as he is aware, most Indians had applied for voluntary reg-istration.

(7) In view of the assurances referred to above, he made his appli-

[1] This was drafted about the same time as Gandhiji's and Essop Mia's affidavits; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 14-6-1908. It is likely that Gandhiji himself drafted it after consulting Barrister Ward. In any case, it was filed in the court before that of Gandhiji who mentions it in his affidavit; *vide* "Affidavit", 23-6-1908. It was published in *Indian Opinion* as "specially reported" for that journal.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Meeting of British Indian Association", 31-1-1908; 8-2-1908.

cation to Mr. Chamney in the month of March, 1908, in the form[1] attached herewith, which bore his signature and his finger-prints.

(8) He, along with hundreds of other Indians, had thus fulfilled all the requirements in the application, ignoring the risk involved in doing so in view of the dissatisfaction that arose among certain Indians following the compromise.

(9) He had done his best to assist the Government to carry out the terms of the compromise in so far as the Indian part of it was concerned.

(10) He is now informed by the Chairman of the British Indian Association that the Government does not intend to introduce any Bill to repeal the Act, nor will it allow those Asiatics who are outside the Colony to apply for voluntary registration.

(11) For these reasons, he does not wish to accept a certificate of voluntary registration and has asked Mr. Chamney to return his application referred to above, the permit issued to him under the Peace Preservation Ordinance and his certificate of registration under the Act of 1885 which he gave to Mr. Chamney when making his application.

(12) Mr. Chamney has not returned the said application and other documents.

(13) It was not under the Asiatic Law Amendment Act that he had made the application for registration; he had done that of his own free will.

(14) The last date appointed by the Government for receiving applications was November 30, 1907, as can be ascertained by reference to the *Government Gazette* of November 1.

(15) He has not received the certificate of registration as per his application referred to above and in the circumstances stated above he does not wish to accept such certificate.

(16) He therefore prays for an order on Mr. Chamney directing to return his application, or for any other relief that the hon'ble Court may deem fit to grant.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-7-1908

[1] Not reproduced here

221. ESSOP MIA'S AFFIDAVIT[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
June 23, 1908

I, Essop Ismail Mia of Johannesburg, Merchant, do hereby solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:

1. I am Managing Partner of the firm of Suliman Ismail Mia & Co. of Johannesburg, and Chairman of the British Indian Association.

2. I have read the Petition[2] Ebrahim Ismail Aswat of Vereeniging, dated the 23rd day of June, 1908.

3. At the several meetings of the British Indian Association referred to in the said petition I presided, and some of these meetings were attended by several thousand Indians.

4. As the British Indian Association has been informed by M. K. Gandhi of Johannesburg, As Honorary Secretary, to the effect that the Government may not repeal the Asiatic Act No. 2 of 1907, the British Indian Association has decided to advise all British Indians to withdraw their voluntary applications for registration and other documents handed to Montford Chamney of Pretoria.

5. I have also applied for the return of my application and documents, but they have not yet been returned.

6. It was at very great personal risk that I and my fellow-countrymen have assisted the Government to carry out the terms of the compromise referred to in the said petition so far as the Indian part of it was concerned.

7. By reason of so doing I was very severely assaulted on the 17th day of May last. The assault was so severe that I was laid up in bed for nearly a fortnight, and I very nearly lost a portion of my nose.

[ESSOP ISMAIL MIA]

Indian Opinion, 11-7-1908

[1] It is very likely that this was drafted by Gandhiji

[2] *Vide* preceding item.

222. AFFIDAVIT

JOHANNESBURG,
June 23, 1908

I, M. K. Gandhi of Johannesburg, Attorney, [and] Honorary Secretary of the British Indian Association, do hereby solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:

1. I have read the Petition[1] Ebrahim Ismail Aswat of Vereeniging, dated the 23rd day of June, 1908, and the Affidavit[2] Essop Ismail Mia, the Chairman of the British Indian Association, dated the 23rd day of June, 1908.

2. The statement made by the said Ebrahim Ismail Aswat, in his Petition, with reference to the compromise, is correct.

3. I was sentenced, together with many other Indians, to be imprisoned for not having complied with the Asiatic Law Amendment Act No. 2 of 1907, which I believed, and do still believe, to be contrary to my independence as a free man, and my conscience.

4. While I was undergoing sentence of Imprisonment in the month of January, 1908, negotiations were put forward, I believe by the Government, for a compromise with the Indian community.

5. A letter[3] placed before me for my signature, copy of which is hereto attached.

6. As that letter was not considered by me to be satisfactory, and as it left the question of the inapplicability of the Asiatic Act to those who voluntarily registered open, I made certain alterations[4]. Copy of the letter as altered by me is also hereto attached. The saidletter was then signed by Leung Quinn, Chairman of the Chinese Association, and Thambi Naidoo, a British Indian, both of whom were my fellow-prisoners, and myself.

7. On Thursday, the 30th January, I was taken to Pretoria, under escort, to call on the Colonial Secretary.

8. At the interview I had with the Colonial Secretary, the repeal of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act was discussed, and the promise given definitely there and then that, if the Asiatics applied for voluntary registration, the Act would be repealed. At the same time, a formal reply to the said letter was handed to me, copy where of is

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Transvaal Supreme Court", 23-6-1908

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] For the draft brought by Cartwright and the alterations made in it by Gandhiji, *vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 28-1-1908

[4] *ibid*

hereto attached.

9. After the said interview, my fellow-prisoners and myself were discharged

10. On the 3rd day of February, I had another interview with the Colonial Secretary, and the repeal of the Act, as well as other matters, was discussed, and the promise made to me and referred to above was repeated; though, at the said interview, the Colonial Secretary, at the time I took leave, added, "Remember, if there is a single recalcitrant Asiatic who does not take out voluntary registration, I shall enforce the Act against that man", or some words to that effect, which I took to mean that the vast majority of the Asiatics then resident in the Colony would have to take out voluntary registration certificates to bring about the repeal of Ass Act

11. After that, correspondence passed between the Colonial Secretary and myself confirming the question of repeal.

12. To my surprise, however, I saw a letter[1] signed by the Private Secretary to the Colonial Secretary, stating that even voluntary registrants would be brought under the said Act.

13. I have since ascertained that it is the intention of the Government not to Apply the said Act to those who have voluntary registered, but they decline to give any assurance with reference to the repeal of the Act.

14. This news has created a great commotion amongst the Asiatics, and they have demanded the return of their voluntary applications for registration and documents handed to Montford Chamney of Pretoria.

15. When the compromise was completed, it gavedissatisfaction to a certain section of the Indian community, by reason of my having accepted, under authority of public meetings held at the time, the principle of identification by digit-impressions; and, in my desire to carry out the compact with the Government, I proceeded to the said Montford Chamney, on Monday the 10th February last to make myapplication, and I was very severely assaulted by those who were dissatisfied with the compromise.

16. It is within my knowledge that many Indians, in order to carry out the compromise and to help the Government, had to suffer much inconvenience and undertook great personal risk.

[1] Lane's letter of May 13, 1908; *vide* S. N. 4812.

17. The vast majority of Asiatics have accepted voluntary registration.

[M. K. GANDHI]

Indian Opinion, 11-7-1908

223. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

Tuesday [*June 24, 1908*]

SETTLEMENT?

"Man proposes, God disposes" should be inscribed in everyone's memory. It was hoped that Monday would see the end of the law. On that very day it was made known that the law would stay—for the present at any rate.

Mr. Smuts told Mr. Gandhi on Saturday: 'Please see me on Monday. One or two minor points remain to be considered. All else is settled.'[*The Transvaal*] *Leader* wrote editorially on Monday that it had been decided to repeal the Act.

Mr. Gandhi met Mr. Smuts on Monday. He was shown a printed draft of the proposed Bill repealing the Act. If the Indian community approved the draft, the Bill would be passed and the Act repealed. The temptation was great. It was an excellent Bill from the point of view of those who had registered voluntarily or might do so in future. It did not contain any of the objectionable provisions of the obnoxious Act. There was, however, a "but" about the Bill. Accepting it meant forgoing rights as under:

(1) Even educated persons would not be allowed to enter [except on a temporary visit].

(2) Even those who hold £3 Dutch registers may not enter.

(3) Other [Asiatic] refugees [from the Boer War] may not enter.

(4) If the applications now being examined by Mr. Chamney rejected, there is no appeal against his [administrative] decision.[1]

If we agreed to forgo these rights, the Immigrants'[Restriction] Act would be amended and the obnoxious Act repealed.

[1] In effect, the points made by Gandhiji in his letter to Smuts of June 13 were not acceded to. Addressing the mass meeting of June 24, Essop Mia, Chairman, made the following points: (a) the evidence about the claims to domicile in the Transvaal should be taken from voluntary registrants in a public and judicial manner, so that the reasons for any official decision could not be kept secret; and (b) they would not sell the rights of would-be educated Indian immigrants in return for some questionable advantages given to Indians already in the Colony.

The obnoxious law may or may not be repealed; how can we, on that account, agree to forgo anyone's legitimate rights? Mr. Gandhi therefore did not approve of the Bill and all further correspondence towards a final settlement came to a stop. General Smuts said in effect: 'Since you do not accept this Bill, we will not repeal this Act, but will legalize voluntary registration in the manner we think best.' Mr. Gandhi again asked that his application for voluntary registration be returned. Mr. Smuts replied that we could fight out the issue in court. The Pretoria Indians were immediately informed and a telegram[1] was sent to arrange a meeting of the Committee [of the British Indian Association] in Johannesburg.

The meeting was held on Monday afternoon at half-past five. Those present displayed a magnificent spirit. In a "do or die" mood they resolved to put up a fight. It was decided to fight a test case for the withdrawal of an application [for registration]. A mass meeting was fixed for Wednesday.[2] On Tuesday, telegrams were despatched to announce the mass meeting.

WHITE FRIENDS

Mr. Hosken, Mr. Cartwright, Mr. Stent and others have promised to help. [*The Transvaal*] *Leader* has published the report of an interview[3] with Mr. Gandhi. He has also addressed letter to the Press, which appears in today's papers. It is as under.[4]

Reuter has cabled the news to England. If the community keeps up its present resolve, the law is bound to be repealed and the four points will also be settled to our satisfaction. We have a right to both. It is a legitimate right. Truth always prevails. That is the law of this world.

ASWAT'S AFFIDAVIT

A case for the withdrawal of his application will be filed in the Supreme Court on Mr. Aswat's behalf. If his case and that of Mr. Sorabji are both decided in our favour, the struggle will be over in a short time. Even Otherwise

Even if these two cases are not decided in our favour, what difference will it make? Losing them will not mean defeat for us. The

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Johannesburg Office",22-6-1908

[2] For Gandhiji's speech, *vide* "speech at Mass Meeting", 24-6-1908 and for resolutions passed at the meeting, *vide* Appendix V.

[3] *Vide* "Interview to *The Transvaal Leader*", 22-6-1908

[4] This is not reproduced here. For the English text, *vide* "Letter to the Press", 22-6-1908

real Supreme Court is within us, and the true judge, God above us all. If we go on striving with faith, fate will never turn against us. Should the two cases be decided against us, no one need be alarmed. Everything will be all right as long as our own courage does not run out. A satyagraha campaign depends on the satyagrahi, not on others.

TEST CASE

General Smuts claims that even the Immigrants'[Restriction] Act does not guarantee any rights to educated persons. If this is true, we have nothing more to say, neither can we hope ever to obtain these rights. Mr. Gandhi suggested that the matter be left to the Supreme Court for a decision, but Mr. Smuts was not agreeable. A test case has now become inevitable. Mr. Sorabji Shapurji, who has passed several Bombay examinations in English and who lives in Charlestown, has agreed to be the defendant in a test case. He will attempt to enter Volksrust on Wednesday. Mr. Chamney has also been informed telegraphically so that he can stop him if he wishes to. By the time this appears in print, the matter will perhaps have been decided in a magistrate's court.

Wednesday [*June 24, 1908*]

Mr. Sorabji entered the Transvaal on Wednesday. Contrary to expectations, he was not stopped at the border, and he has arrived in Johannesburg. His movements are, however, being watched by the police. This [surveillance] is likely to continue for some time. This shows there is some confusion in the Government ranks. Its legal advisers are possibly of the view that Mr. Sorabji cannot be touched under the immigration Act. Even so, it is likely that he will be arrested soon.

LAW-MAKERS OF THE TRANSVAAL!

General Smuts has given notice in Parliament [of a motion] to withdraw the Transvaal Municipal [Consolidation] Bill. *Indian Opinion* readers will recall the strong protest of the Indian community against the Bill.[1] *The Transvaal Leader* has recently published a report that the Government intends to withdraw the Bill relating to the Gold Law. [According to the report] it was to be replaced by a shorter Bill, but the Government has denied this.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-6-1908

[1]*Vide* "Petition to Transvaal Legislative Assembly", 15-6-1908

224. SPEECH AT MASS MEETING[1]

JOHANNESBURG
June 24, 1908]

The receipt of so many telegrams shows the unanimity with which the object of this meeting has been received, but though I have read these telegrams to you, it is due to this meeting, due to the executive of the British Indian Association, and due to the Transvaal public to state also that there is, at this meeting, electric; in the air, and these telegrams by no means demonstrate the whole truth. The whole truth is that there is, even in this meeting, a number of Indians who are seething with discontent over what the leaders have done, and over what especially I myself have done, in connection with the compromise. There is a number of Indians in this meeting who believe, as the Chairman has stated in his speech, that the whole Indian community has been sold for selfish purposes. The Chairman has repudiated the charge, and so do I, but I do not blame my countrymen who bring that charge against me especially.[2]

Some of my countrymen tell me and, perhaps, with some justification that I did not take them into confidence, when I approached General Smuts on the strength of the letter that was placed before me in the gaol-yard, and it is better that I myself should voice their complaint I believe that, in seeing General Smuts As I saw him, I acted correctly and in accordance with my conscience, but time has shown that they were right, time has shown also that I need not have gone to General Smuts as I did. What I did was simply and solely to accept voluntary registration that was placed before him for over a year by the whole Indian community. I felt that I was yielding nothing, not a single new principle, not a single concession, in accepting this voluntary compromise. I believed that I had full instructions from my countrymen to do so, but I believed too much. I did not know what was to

[1] The meeting, which was held under the auspices of the British Indian Association at 3.45 p m. to discuss the situation arising out of the "breach", by the Transvaal Government, of "the spirit of the compromise" of January 30, 1908, was attended by delegates from all over the Transvaal. For resolutions passed at the meeting, *vide* Appendix V.

[2] The Chairman had said: "They who assaulted the Chairman and the Secretary distrusted the Government. In their opinion, we had misled them, and, when the proper time came, we had sold the community to the Government. Whilst I emphatically repudiate any such suggestion, it is impossible for me to deny that the Government have, by their recent conduct, lent colour to the suspicion and distrust."

come after. I did not know that there was to be repudiation of the emphatic promise that was made in connection with the repeal of the Act. I know now that the compromise is not to be respected by the Government.

General Smuts says that he never made any promise of repeal but there are documents, which the world will see, which will show, at least that there was a talk and a conversation with reference to the repeal of the Act. There are witnesses also in connection with it but as the Chairman has rightly said, that is left for the lawyers to decide.[1] The Indian community only knows that the repeal of the Act was the object, and that was the object which was to be gained by undergoing voluntary registration, but today the Indian community finds that voluntary registration has not sufficed [for] the purpose. It finds also that it has become necessary to hold this Mass Meeting again, and it has become necessary again, perchance, if it is the will of God, to undergo the same measure of suffering, only far more bitterly.

If, therefore, you find there is electricity in the air, I do plead guilty. I am responsible for it responsible because I had too great faith in the statesmanship of General Smuts, in his honesty, and in his integrity. If Any countrymen today believe that I have sold them, they have good reason to believe so, although [there is] no justification for it, in my own estimation. They can only judge me by the results obtained. They cannot judge, the world is not today so constituted that it will judge men by the motives they ascribe to themselves, but by the result of their actions; and they judge me by the result of my action, the result of having foisted the compromise on the whole of the Indian community, and I include also the Chinese community, because although there were two other gentlemen who signed the letter that was addressed to General Smuts they did so fully believing in my own good faithfully believing that what I was doing was what they were all working for, namely, the repeal of the Act not only in word but in deed, not indeed, to secure a revised edition of the Act, but to obliterate the Act and all its consequences, if the Indian community and the Chinese community voluntarily proved that they were capable of being trusted without any legal restraint. If they proved that the large majority of the Asiatics had entered the Transvaal with

[1] The Chairman again: "We went to prison to buy liberty of conscience and freedom from molestation and restraint, and we did not come out of the prison gates in order to submit to a law, or a revised edition of it, which was calculated to take away those priceless possessions. We want to no bandying of legal phrases and subtleties of lawyers. We, as common-sense men, want our honour to be respected, and it is for that this great meeting has come to plead."

perfect right, and if they proved that the documents that they held were correct documents and were properlyobtained by them, and were not fraudulent documents, then they undoubtedly believed that the Act would be repealed, that their position was to be much better than it would have been under the Asiatic Act. They believed also that they had fought for 16 months, not merely to secure a nominal repeal of the Act, but to secure recognition for themselves as human beings, to secure a voice in the management of their own affairs, to secure a voice in the legislation that may be passed so far as they are concerned; not a voting paper by any means a voting paper for the Indians or the Asiatics may not be worth the paper on which the signature might be put but they wanted a real voting paper, they wanted to be consulted before any legislation was passed.

And what did they find? They found that there was a Gold Law, they found that there was a Municipal kill, both these Bills still further curtailing the rights of those having a right to remain in this country. Have they not every reason to believe that Gandhi has misled them? Have they not every reason to believe that they have no longer any business to suffer because Gandhi advises them to suffer?

I see before me a warrior, a military man, who was my fellow-prisoner. He tells me "How shall I trust you? You have misled your countrymen, you have given 18 finger-impressions. I have not. I hold my medals, and that is my registration."

Another of his fellow-religionists, or A fellow-Pathan, has assaulted me. He deserves every thanks for having assaulted me, because he believed that I was selling the community. He had no grudge against me, he was my client. He had a perfect right to do what he did, as I find now from the consequences that have been entailed on the whole of the Asiatic communities.

Gentlemen, those who are here and whose influence reaches far beyond the four corners of this building, go away from this meeting knowing full well what the consequence of General Smuts' act will be General Smuts'act undertaken in the name of the white communities. I may understand, I may distinguish, but, just as my fellow-countrymen could not distinguish and they only had the remedy of assaulting me, another had the remedy of telling me that I had sold my countrymen; similarly it is not possible for them to distinguish between one white man's word and another white man's word, especially when that word happens to be the word of almost the highest man in the State.

I state most emphatically and definitely that General Smuts did promise that he was going, to repeal the Act, in the presence of the Registrar of Asiatics, if the Asiatic communities abided fully, frankly,

and freely by the terms of the compromise, if the Asiatic communities enabled General Smuts to identify every Asiatic in the country, and if the Asiatic communities enabled General Smuts to see to it that there wasno Asiatic who could surreptitiously enter into the country and not be found out by his Police. These terms the Asiatic communities have fulfilled, and yet we find today, we meet this afternoon to find out, that this Act is not to be repealed as it should be repealed, and that the promise of repeal is hedged in on all sides by such restrictions as could never be accepted by any self-respecting man.

The passive resistance movement has been undertaken only to gain rights for the whole of the Asiatics who have a right to remain in this country and not for a chosen few, and if—there is one man, whom I can recall, who is in Ladysmith, who came to the country in 1885 and paid £25 to the Boer Government for remaining in this country, carried on a trade, and possesses European credentials—if he cannot enter this country, I, for one, do not wish to remain in this country, if my countrymen before that time do not remove this head which seems to have done grievous wrong to them.

Indian Opinion, 4-7-1908

225. REVIVAL OF PASSIVE RESISTANCE

It is a thousand pities that General Smuts has, while yielding on the question of the repeal of the Asiatic Act, taken up an obstinate no position on mere matters of detail and of no significance from a Colonial standpoint. General Smuts' attitude savours very much of straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel. He has taken all the grace away from his offer to repeal the Act by robbing it of all advantage to the Asiatics of the Transvaal, and it is hardly to be wondered at that British Indians have summarily rejected an offer which, in effect, places them, as a body, in a worse position than they occupied before the struggle. It is true that the bait was held out by the General in the shape of easing the position of those who were included by him in the repealing Bill. To the credit of the communities, let it be said that they have not taken the bait. As passive resisters, they could not, in order to gain a position for themselves, barter away the rights of others who were just as much entitled to remain in or enter the Transvaal as they themselves. The proceedings of the Mass Meeting show unmistakbly that Indians are just as much determined as ever to see the fight to the

finish, and this time they will command far greater sympathy and help, and, if General Smuts has the slightest regard for the Empire to which he belongs, he will still, while there is yet time, refrain from unnecessarily wounding Indian feeling.

Indian Opinion, 27-6-1908

226. SATYAGRAHA AGAIN

General Smuts has offered to repeal the [Asiatic Registration] Act, but on certain conditions [which are unacceptable]. That a further battle remained to be fought in the Indian war in the Transvaal has now become clear. In every great war, more than one battle has to be fought. The Russo-Japanese war lasted for over a year. In the course of that war, four or five well-known battles were fought, at Port Arthur, Mukden, etc. The Boer War also lasted for two or three years and came to an end only after several battles had been fought. The war of the Transvaal Indians is not an armed conflict as these were. Save for that, this, too, is a war. For, if we think of the consequences, this war [waged] through satyagraha is no whit less of a war than those fought with [gun and] powder. Victory or defeat in this war will have Far-reaching consequences for Indians in other Colonies. No otherconsequence can be more important than this.[1] Looking at it thus, we can unhesitatingly compare this fight by a handful of Indians in the Transvaal to the great campaigns mentioned above.

A number of battles may be won in the course of a war, but all the gains are wiped out if the final battle is lost. The same is true of the Transvaal Indians' satyagraha. The first battle was fought in 1906.[2] It was waged in the arena of British politics, and the Deputation returned victorious. This was followed by a series of encounters in which the Indian community showed fine mettle it earned for itself a name as a brave community which, though a mere handful, compelled the Boers to yield by sheer dint of courage and truth. As it happened, however, a large number of Indians were dissatisfied with the settlement, which means that in their dew, the fight had not been carried far

[1] No other consequence of satyagraha, such as loss of property or personal inconvenience suffered by satyagrahis, can be more important than that which bears on the conditions of Indians everywhere.

[2] The reference is to the Transvaal Indian Deputation that visited England. *Vide* Vol. VI.

enough. General Smuts has now provided the opportunity to complete what was prematurely abandoned. We believe therefore that satyagrahis Indians, instead of feeling unhappy at the resumption of the campaign, will shout back an eager response to the [war] cry. Those who were angry with the leaders for having prematurely called off the campaign have now an opportunity to prove their sincerity. They must make common cause with the others and boldly declare that they are ready to lay down their lives for the sake of the honour and rights of Indians. If the Indian community evinces this spirit forthe last time—for the present at any rate—we have no doubt that we will win a resounding victory.

This is the last battle in this war we have been talking of, and it must be won. The condition of South African Indians will depend a great deal on the issue of this battle. On the one hand, the clouds are louring upon Natal.[1] the other, a law regarding registration has already been passed in Rhodesia.[2] A Member of Parliament in that Colony pointed out in passing that the Transvaal law had not yet been repealed. The Transvaal Indians should take a cue from this and carry the dead law to the crematorium and dispose of it properly. They must gird up their loins—for their own sake and for the sake of all South African Indians. Indeed, it appears from a report of the mass meeting that they are thus prepared. We congratulate them on this, and urge them to mount a vigorous attack and, for once, let the enemy have a taste of their strength. The sword of satyagraha is far superior to the steel sword. Truth and justice provide its point; divine help is the hilt that adorns it. One who has the use of this sword has no cause to fear defeat. Therefore, brave Indians, arise, and without ado, draw the sword of satyagraha and fight unto victory! When Japan's brave heroes forced the Russians to bite the dust of the battle-field, the sun rose in the east. And it now shines on all the nations of Asia. The people of the East will never, never again submit to insult from the insolent whites.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-6-1908

[1]*Vide* "Natal Licensing Act", 13-6-1908

[2]*Vide* Rhodesia Indians", 30-5-1908

227. SARVODAYA [*-VII*]

VEINS OF WEALTH

We saw that the value of money consists in its power to command the labour of men. If that labour could be had without payment, there should be no further need of money. Instances are known where human labour can be had without payment. We have considered examples which show that moral power is more effective than the power of money. We also saw that man's goodness can do what money cannot do. There exist men in many parts of England who cannot be beguiled with money.

Moreover, if we admit that wealth carries with it the power to direct labour, we shall also see that the more intelligent and moral men are, the greater is the wealth amassed. It may even appear on a fullerconsideration that the persons themselves constitute the wealth, not gold and silver. We must search for wealth not in the bowels of the earth, but in the hearts of men. If this is correct, the true law of economics is that men must be maintained in the best possible health, both of body and mind, and in the highest state of honour. A time may also come when England, instead of adorning the turbans of its slaves with diamonds from Golkonda and thus sporting her wealth, may be able to point to her great men of virtue, saying, in the words of a truly eminent Greek, "This is my wealth."

EVEN-HANDED JUSTICE[1]

Some centuries before Christ there lived a Jewish merchant, Solomon[2] name. He had made a large fortune and earned great fame. His maxims are remembered in Europe even today. He was so beloved of the Venetians that they erected a statue in the city to his memory. Though his maxims are known by rote, very few persons actually practise them. He says: "Those who make money through lies are afflicted with pride, and that is a sign of their death." At another place, he adds: "Treasures of wickedness profit nothing. It is truth which delivers from death."[3] In both these maxims Solomon asserts that death is the outcome of wealth unjustly acquired. Nowadays,

[1] This corresponds to Ruskin's chapter "*Qui Judicatis Terram*". "Ye that be judges of the earth, [love righteousness]."

[2] (993-953 B.C.); believed in Ruskin's day to have been the author of *Proverbs* in the Old Testament

[3] Cf. *Proverbs*, Ch. XXI, *v*. 6 and Ch. X, *v*. 2

people tell lies or perpetrate injustice so cleverly that we cannot find them out. For there are misleading advertisements. Things bear attractive labels, and so on.

Again the wise man says: "He that oppresseth the poor to multiply his riches shall surely come to want." And he adds: "Rob not the poor because he is poor. Oppress not the afflicted in the place of business. For God[1] will corrupt the soul of those that torment them." At present, however, it is the practice in business to administer kicks to those who are already dead. We are eager to take advantage of a needy man. The highwayman robs the rich, but the trader robs the poor.

Solomon says further: "The rich and the poor are equal. God is their maker. God gives them knowledge."[2] The rich and the poor cannot live, the one without the other. They always need each other.Neither of them can be regarded as superior or inferior to the other. But evil consequences follow when the two forget that they are equal, and that God is their light.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-6-1908

228. MUSTAFA KAMAL PASHA'S SPEECH[3]

Only a few months before Mustafa Kamal Pasha died, he delivered a spirited address in Alexandria. It is a remarkable speech from which all of us can learn something. We therefore print a translation of it here.[4]

The speech was delivered in the Jijinia Theatre on October 22, 1907. It is said that more than 6,000 people heard this address.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-6-1908

[1] The Gujarati has "Khuda".

[2] Cf. *Proverbs*, Ch. XXII, *v*. 2: "The rich and poor meet together: the Lord is the maker of them all" and *Proverbs*, Ch. XXIX, *v*. 13: "The poor and the deceitful man meet together: the Lord lighteneth both their eyes." Ruskin himself used the Vulgate.

[3] For a life-sketch of Mustafa Kamal Pasha, *vide* "Egypt's Famous Leader", 28-3-1908 & "Egypt's famous leader [-II]", 4-4-1908.

[4] Not reproduced here

229. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER[1]

[Before *June 29, 1908*][2]

It will take a few days more for complete recovery. You get plenty of exercise and open air there, so I need not suggest these to you.

Do mix freely with Mrs. and Miss Pywell. Please let me know your reactions to them.

The Government have raised an objection about the cremation ground. I consider this very derogatory to the Hindus. You may spread this [information] and discuss it all round. We can put up a good fight over this issue. Many whites, too, are likely to help. See Motilal[3] find out all the details from him.

Do not worry about matters at this end. In all probability a settlement will be reached without a tussle.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 6084

230. E. I. ASWAT'S REPLYING AFFIDAVIT[4]

[JOHANNESBURG,
June 29, 1908]

I, Ebrahim Ismail Aswat of Vereeniging, do hereby solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:

1. I have read the affidavits of Mr. Montford Chamney of Pretoria, dated at Pretoria on the 25th day of June, and on the 26th day of June 1908, and the affidavit of Mr. J. C. Smuts of Pretoria, Colonial Secretary, dated the 26th June, 1908.

2. I attach hereto copy of my letter[5] to the said Montford Chamney for the return of the documents therein mentioned.

[1] Judging from the contents, it would appear that the letter was addressed to Chhaganlal or Maganlal Gandhi at Phoenix.

[2] Ada Pywell referred to in the letter had just arrived in South Africa and her marriage with West took place on June 29, 1908.

[3] Motilal M. Diwan, a Durban Indian leader

[4] Filed before Harry H. Jordan, Justice of the Peace. This was presumably drafted by Gandhiji.

[5] *Vide* "Letter to M. Chamney",Before 23-6-1908

3. The said Montford Chamney has never offered to return the permit and registration certificate referred to in Paragraph 4 of his said affidavit.

4. I am willing and prepared to pay the price of the Government paper on which I made my voluntary application, and which it is now my desire to recall.

EBRAHIM ISMAIL ASWAT

Indian Opinion, 11-7-1908

231. REPLYING AFFIDAVIT[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
June 29, 1908]

I, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi of Johannesburg, do hereby solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:

1. I have read the affidavits Mr. Montford Chamney of Pretoria, dated at Pretoria on the 25th day of June and on the 26th day of June 1908, the affidavit of Mr. J. C. Smuts of Protoria, Colonial Secretary, dated the 26th June, 1908, and the affidavit[2] of Mr. Ebrahim Ismail Aswat of Vereeniging, dated at Johannesburg the 29th day of June, 1908 and copy of the letter[3] addressed by him to Mr. Montford Chamney.

2. As Secretary to the British Indian Association, I never received any letter from the said Montford Chamney, offering to return the permit and registration certificate of the said Ebrahim Ismail Aswat.

3. I adhere to my statement that a promise of repeal of Act 2 of 1907 was made by Mr. Smuts, but I am advised that the question of repeal is not germane to the issue before this Hon'ble Court. I, therefore, refrain from adducing further proof in respect of my statement.

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 11-7-1908

[1] Filed before Harry H. Jordan, Justice of the Peace
[2] *Vide* preceding item.
[3] *Vide* "Letter to M. Chamney", Before 23-6-1908

232. LETTER TO H. L. PAUL

JOHANNESBURG,
July 1, 1908

DEAR MR. PAUL,

I have been, indeed, too busy to write to you in reply to your letter. I do not think Mr. Rustomjee need be troubled at present, because I have collected just enough to pay Joseph's passage[1], and I have authorized Mr. Ritch to pay that amount to him that is to say, I have, £20. If the few pounds that are already collected by Brian Gabriel[2] and Lawrence[3] can be sent him, he will not want anything more. If you could collect a little more, it would ease him a bit, and that is all.

I am glad my ward[4] not forgotten me entirely. I am glad, too, that she is making such splendid progress in music. I have her, as also your, promise that she is to use her talents for the benefit of Phoenix and, through Phoenix, I take it, of the whole community. It is, therefore, in my opinion, a good asset.

I hope you are all keeping in good health. The struggle here may be prolonged, or it may end in a few days. The result can only be one, if the people remain firm.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a typewritten copy of the original: C.W. 4548. Courtesy: E. J. Paul, Pietermaritzburg

[1] Royeppen's passage to South Africa; *vide* "Letter to H. L. Paul",11-6-1908
[2] Photographer; a member of the Phoenix settlement for some time
[3] V. Lawrence; a Durban Indian leader
[4] Angie, the addressee's daughter

233. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

[Before *July 2, 1908*][1]

SATYAGRAHA IN FULL BLOOM

The satyagraha campaign has been revived. Indians have evinced a spirit of sterling worth and everyone appears to be full of courage.

WHAT CAMPAIGN IS ABOUT

It necessary to understand this well. The fight, then, is not for the repeal of the Act, for General Smuts was quite prepared to do that. The Act is bound to be repealed. It is in any case as good as repealed for those who do not intend to submit to it.

Neither is it a fight against [the giving of]finger-impressions. They are not of the least importance. They will not be insisted upon in Rhodesia,[2] but it will be none the less disgraceful for that. When it is a matter of preserving self-respect and resisting the imposition of slavery, why should there be so much fuss about finger-impressions?

The fight is for [the rights of] those who hold the £3 Dutch registration certificates, for those who are outside the Transvaal at present, but are in a position to prove that they are old residents of the Transvaal. It is also for the sake of the educated Indians. Every Indian must be clear about this.

At the time of compromise, this issue could not have been settled. The important thing then was to prove the *bona fides* of the Indian community. Till that was done, it was impossible for us to protest. No decision could then be taken about those holding the £3 [registration certificates], about the other refugees and about the educated [Asiatic immigrants]. It was not possible therefore to have the matter settled.

Now that, while repealing the [Asiatic Registration] Act, General Smuts wants to define the position to their disadvantage and to exclude them, the Indians can insist upon their own view of the matter.

One should not blame all this on the compromise. It is because of the compromise, because of the demonstration of its strength

[1] This news-letter was drafted before the Supreme Court had pronounced on Aswat'a affidavit asking for the return of his application form for voluntary registration. The case was heard on July 2.

[2] *Vide* "Rhodesia Indians",30-5-1908

by the Indian community that we have got thus far.

REMEDY

There is only one remedy. And that lies in our hands. We should ignore the Government's law and act as follows:

(1) When necessary, we should burn the certificates of voluntary registration.

(2) We must refuse to affix our finger-impressions or signatures [on any documents] or to give our names when asked for these by the police.

(3) We should tender the licence fee, but if the licence is refused, should carry on trade without one.

If, as a consequence of any of these actions, we have to suffer imprisonment, we must accept it. If we do that the day of our freedom will be hastened. Even otherwise, people have so far fought, if only for their own rights. Henceforth, those who have received certificates of voluntary registration will fight especially for the sake of the others referred to above.

And if we refuse to fight, we cannot claim that ours is true satyagraha. It is not as if the sword of satyagraha can be used only once and becomes useless afterwards. If we have discovered its real worth, we can use it each time we have to fight. It is more effective than a sword of steel. All that is required is the capacity to endure suffering. We should not fight shy of imprisonment. We must not imagine that eating mealie pap will do us any harm.

HOW THEN CAN WE LEAVE COLONY?

This question has been raked by a number of persons. If people burn their certificates, what authority will they have for returning to the Transvaal after leaving the Colony once? That the question has at all been asked suggest an inadequacy in our concept of satyagraha. My reply is : a resident of the Transvaal would only need authority if it was necessary for him to have any authority for going to India. Indian residents of the Transvaal should undoubtedly enter [the Colony] even if they are without registers. The only risk in doing so is that one may be put in gaol. Let them imprison [us]. But bail [money] must not be paid. We do not want to be let out on bail. The fine must not be paid either. Even defence which would make a lawyer necessary must not be offered. Whatever defence is needed will be provided by Mr. Gandhi, free of charge as usual, the only condition being that the person concerned should be a true satyagrahi, that he should have

a valid case, and that the case should promote the community's interests.

SUPREME COURT

Those who wish to adopt this course are not in any wise with the case in the Supreme Court It will be well and good it as a result of it, application forms [for voluntary registration] are returned. The end will come sooner in that case. But if the forms are not returned, that should not matter. What is necessary is that we ourselves should remain strong. If the forms are returned, that would have the effect of instantaneously invalidating the registers. Burning them also comes to the same thing. One should not assume that the registers will remain valid even after the forms have been returned. Registers without applications are like revolvers without cartridges. The only object of asking for the return of application forms is to ensure that the registers are invalidated immediately. Burning them will not quite render them invalid for there are copies with the Government and the applications contain all the particulars.

What we are afraid of is that, even if we do burn the registers, the Government may not prosecute us. We want to go to gaol. The Government does not want to send us to gaol. The best way, therefore, to arrive in gaol is to get our applications back.

Mr. Smuts has said that the Government itself wants to act like a passive resister. I shall not admit this to be satyagraha, for that will be mere unreasonable obstinacy on its part. By refusing to return our applications, the Government wants to avoid being obliged to send us to gaol. Its motives in doing so are unworthy. It is afraid of the 7,000 voluntary registrants, who are full of courage. They are capable of fighting it out. The Government does not wish to do anything which may provoke them.

All this is easy to understand. Let everyone think it over and then ask himself whether it would have been possible to put up such a fight three months ago.

Was the Government afraid of us then? Is there any doubt that if we fight we shall win?

FAKE REGISTERS

The community's enemies persist in their mischievous activities. There is a barber named Jaymal who has been arrested for selling faked permits. He is said to have sold a faked permit to a Khoja[1], whopaid £20 for it. The Khoja fell into the hands of Mr. Ali Khamisa

[1] Member of the Ismaili sect of Muslims

who had him arrested. The Khoja has now become a Crown witness. (Anyone who, acting as a special witness, supplies information to the Government and helps discover the truth is known as the King's witness or a Crown witness.) The information supplied by him has led to the arrest of Jaymal. If this information which I have received is correct, I congratulate Mr. Ali Khamisa. He has rendered the community a service. Indians like Jaymal are enemies of the community. One should see to it that they are punished. The community has sufferedon their account, and will Yet suffer. They will continue so to do harm. Those who buy faked permits only walk into 3 trap. It instead of resorting to such questionable methods, they were to adhere to the path of satyagraha, that would sooner or later enable every Indian with a rightful claim, every *bona-fide* refugee—that is, a refugee who was resident in the Transvaal for some length of time to enter. Intending immigrants who are altogether new to the place should not even entertain any thought of coming in.

GENERAL SMUTS' AFFIDAVIT

General Smuts and Mr. Chamney have submitted affidavits to say that the former never made the promise to repeal the Act. The affidavits were submitted on the day on which the case came up for hearing. The affidavit were not submitted on the first day, which is enough to show that they are not telling the truth. Most of the documents bearing on this matter have been published in the English [section]. In Gujarati [we will publish them] the next time. At the moment, a number of interesting developments are taking place.

SORABJI'S CASE

They have not laid hands on Mr. Sorabji yet Mr. Vernon often comes to see him. He was asked to report himself at the police station, and this he has flatly refused to do. Mr. Sorabji is prepared for imprisonment, but will not leave the Transvaal of submit to the obnoxious Act. His case will greatly help the Indian community. He is eagerly waiting for the Government to arrest him.

HAWKERS

[A number of] Indian hawkers ask [us] how they are to carry on without licences. They have their permits with them, but not the certificates of voluntary registration, for they entered the Colony after the dispute with the Government had started. They do not want to take out registration certificates which are compulsory under the Asiatic Registration Act. Two such Indians, Mr. Ismail Amod and Mr. Ibrahim Marolia, have started trading without licences. Mr. Gandhi

has furnished them with a written statement that they are hawking without a licence on the advice of the Association. they are prepared to go to gaol. If they are arrested, they will be defended by Mr. Gandhi. We hope that other hawkers will have the same courage to carry on the fight. No one need discontinue his business altogether.

ESSOP MIA'S LETTER

Mr. Essop Mia has addressed letters to the Government and the Municipality saying that these Indians are not prepared to starve, andthat they must continue business. They will therefore trade without licences, since the Municipality has refused to issue them these. They are still prepared to take them out if the Government agrees to issue them.

The campaign for burning certificates of voluntary registration is gathering way. For one thing, there is the agitation [by way of mass meetings, etc.]. For another, hawkers and others are trading without licences. Thirdly, there is Mr. Sorabji's case. Let us see now if General Smuts can find any way out of this [situation]. I, for do not believe that he can bear to behold the light of satyagraha. Everything depends on the spirit of unity among Indians and their courage.

CAPE CONFERENCE

The Hamidia Islamic Society sent a telegram to the Cape Conference. This has been telegraphically acknowledged with thanks, and the reply states further that a resolution has been passed recommending the merger of 311 [Indian] Associations.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-7-1908

234. LETTER TO THE PRESS

JOHANNESBURG,
July 2, 1908

SIR

The Supreme Court has decided that Asiatics have no right torecall voluntary registration applications.[1] The object of going to Court was for voluntar[il]y registered Asiatics to place themselves on the same footing as their unregistered brethren who, they contend, have a right to be placed on a par with them but who, General Smuts contends, ought to be banished out of the country or, being absent, should not be allowed to return to the country of their domicile.

[1] For details of the judgment, *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 7-7-1908

The questionable victory gained by General Smuts on a highly technical point of law will not thwart the purpose of the Asiatics to become disregistered, provided that they have sufficient courage and spirit of self-sacrifice.

The application to the Supreme Court had to have a legal as also a moral basis. The legal basis consisted in the ability on either side to treat the compromise as a nullity without getting any relief from theCourt. The moral basis consisted in showing that Asiatics wished to treat it as a nullity, because of its breach by General Smuts.

The breach is twofold. General Smuts will not repeal the Act without imposing unacceptable conditions, and he will not take voluntary registration in terms of the compromise from those who are now entering the country and who are entitled to enter it. General Smuts denies having promised to repeal the Act, and interprets the compromise to mean that those who entered the country after the lapse of three months after the date of the compromise should register under the Act. Let the public judge the meaning of the following:

> Under these circumstances, we would once more respectfully suggest to the Government that all Asiatics over the age of 16 should be allowed within a certain limited period, say three months, to register themselves, and that to all who so register the Act be not applied, and that the Government take whatever steps they deem advisable to legalize such registration. *Such mode of registration* should apply to those also who being out of the Colony may return and otherwise possess the right of re-entry.[1]

General Smuts says that the men who were out of the Colony should have returned within the three months in order to entitle them to come under the compromise. I ask whether it was possible ever to inform Asiatics throughout the world of the existence of the compromise, or for them to return within that period.

As to the promise of repeal, I beg to ask your indulgence for publication of the enclosed correspondence[2] and to leave it to the public to judge whether the repeal was promised or not. I would draw attention to the fact that, in answer to my letter of the 22nd February detailing the legislation to repeal and replace the Asiatic Act, there is not one word of repudiation of the promised repeal. Of my allusions to the promise in the correspondence that took place after suspicions were roused, there is no repudiation. My pointed questions are evaded. I add to this the statement that, immediately after the assault committed on me, as a result of my acceptance of the compromise,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 28-1-1908

[2] Gandhiji-Smuts correspondence

Mr. Chamney saw me at Mr. Doke's house, and he and I drew up a notice for publication in Asiatic languages that, the Asiatics complying with the compromise, the Act would be repealed. This notice Mr. Chamney said would be taken to General Smuts and then published. He returned the next day or the day after and informed me that Asiatics were registering and inquired whether, in view of that fact, it was necessary to publish the notice. I, never dreaming of recantation on General Smuts' part, said it need not be published. I challenge him to produce the original draft, if it is still in existence. I add, further, that Mr. Chamney, not once, but often, told me that General Smuts would keep his promise and repeal the Act and that not much over a month ago, I met him by appointment at Winchester House, where he actually discussed the draft submitted by me, and, in the main, approved of it. He has, on oath, denied that General Smuts promised repeal in his presence. He may similarly deny the statements I am now making. But Truth is superior to General Smuts, him, and me.

The path before my countrymen is clear. They must be prepared again to suffer. Through their sufferings the public will see do was right.

Let me reiterate the points of dispute. Though promise of repeal is denied, General Smuts is ready to repeal the Act if we would submit to the rights of domiciled Asiatics, and educated Asiatics who are entitled under the immigrants' Restriction Act to enter the country, being taken away.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 11-7-1908

235. SELF-SACRIFICE

It is necessary that every Indian should understand the nature of the campaign in the Transvaal. We have earlier explained the meaning of satyagraha through many examples.[1] Time has now come to realize that meaning through action. Satyagraha and self-interest do not go together. Satyagraha always calls for sacrifice of self. The rights of Indians holding permits have been secured; the Government is prepared to exempt them from the obnoxious Act However, the situation demands that it the permit-holders should sacrifice their interests for the sake of those holding the £3 Dutch registration certificates and the educated. We rejoice in this opportunity [for

[1]*Vide* "Secret of Satyagraha", 22-2-1908, and "Licences in Natal", 2-5-1908

sacrifice] as though it were a nuptial occasion, and want every Indian to do the same. Satyagraha will reveal its real meaning now. The Government is agreeable to repeal of the Act. But no action is being taken because the Indian community will not accept the conditions for the repeal. This is no mean achievement, for the community is being treated as 3 worthy opponent by the Government. It was obliged to consult the community in drafting the Bill. It is satyagraha which has brought this about.

Earlier, there was an element of self-interest in the campaign. Every Indian who fought in the Transvaal was defending his rights as well asthose of the community. The Indians who join the campaign now will be defending the rights of their brethren. That is the beauty of it.

The Indian community will achieve an undying name for itself if it succeeds in this selfless task. It will ensure its own happiness and of others, and thus win the admiration of all India. We hope, therefore, that the Indian community will remain steadfast.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-7-1908

236. RHODESIA INDIANS[1]

A law similar to the one in the Transvaal has been enacted in Rhodesia. It remains to be seen whether it will receive [Royal] assent. The chances are that it will not. The South Africa British Indian Committee has put up a strong fight on the issue. This has been the subject, too, of Reuter cables. The Rhodesia Indians have acted wisely in submitting a petition. Since they are scattered all over [the Colony], they have not been able to do much. Bhimji Nayak appears to have taken great pains.

There is a point as regards the struggle in Rhodesia that is worth nothing. When the Chartered Company[2] in England was approached by Reuter, As agent replied that there was no intention to insult the Indians, but that it was necessary to place restrictions on the community. The finger-print system would not, however, be adopted. As if it was only the finger-print system to which exception was taken!

[1] *Vide* also "Rhodesia Indians",30-5-1908

[2] The British South Africa Company, which received its charter in October 1889, administered Rhodesia till September 1923, when the Colony was formally annexed to the British Crown. Cecil Rhodes was general manager and its guiding spirit.

What does it matter if after imposing slavery on the community in the form of the law, they do or do not ask for finger-prints? The important thing is that this law should go, instead of which they want to retain the law and add that the finger-prints will not be insisted upon. We suggest to the reader that he should carefully note from this instance the distinction between the law as such and the [system of] finger-impressions. We have no hesitation in advising the Rhodesia Indians to give their finger-impressions if, by doing so, they can have this legislation withdrawn. The law means perpetual slavery. The giving of finger-prints may be a means of avoiding that enslavement. Of course, we do not suggest that they should offer to give their finger-impressions right away. They should wait for the reply from England. But we hope that, if the reply is unfavourable, they will resort to satyagraha and refuse to submit to the law. Also, they should send a petition to England.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-7-1908

237. SARVODAYA [-*VIII*].

Wealth is like a river. A river always flows towards the sea, that is, down an incline. So, as a general rule must wealth go where it is needed. But the flow of wealth, like the course of a river, can be regulated. Most of the rivers run out their courses unregulated, their marshy banks poisoning the wind. If dams are built across these rivers to direct the water flow as required, they will irrigate the soil and keep the atmosphere pure. Similarly the uncontrolled use of wealth will multiply vices among men and cause starvation; in brief, such wealth will act like a poison. But the selfsame wealth, if its circulation is regulated and its use controlled, can, like a river whose stream has been properly harnessed, promote prosperity.

The principle of regulating the circulation of wealth is ignored altogether by economists. Theirs is merely the science of getting rich. But there are many different ways of getting rich. There was a time in Europe when people sought to acquire wealth by poisoning owners of large estates and appropriating their possessions. Nowadays, merchants adulterate the food sold to the poor, for example, milk with borax, [wheat] flour with potato flour, coffee with chicory, butter with fat and so on. This is on the same level as getting rich by poisoning others. Can we call this either an art or a science of getting rich?

Let us not, however, assume that by “getting rich” economists merely mean “getting rich by robbing others”. They should point

out that theirs is a science of getting rich by legal or just means. It happens these days that many things which are legal are not just. The only right way, therefore, to acquire wealth is to do so justly. And if this is true, we must know what is just. It is not enough to live by the laws of demand and supply. Fish, wolves and rats subsist in that manner. Bigger fish prey on smaller ones, rats swallow insects and wolves devour even human beings. That for them is the law [of Nature]; they know no better. But God has endowed man with understanding, with a sense of justice. He must follow these and not think of growing rich by devouring others—by cheating others and reducing them to beggary.

Let us examine what then the laws of justice regarding payment of labour are.

As we stated earlier, a just wage for a worker will be that which will secure him the same labour, when he needs it, as he has put in forustoday. If we give him a lower wage, he will be underpaid, and if more, overpaid.

[Suppose] a man wants to engage a worker. Two persons offer their services. If the man who offers to accept a lower wage is engaged, he will be underpaid. If there is a large number of employers and only one worker, he will get his own terms and will very likely be overpaid. The just wage lies between these two points.

If someone lends me money which I have to repay after a time, I shall pay him interest. Similarly, if someone gives me his labour today, I must return him an identical quantity of labour and something more by way of interest. If someone gives me an hour [of labour] today, I should promise to give him an hour and five minutes or more. This is true of every kind of worker.

If, now, of two men who offer me their services, I engage the one who accepts the lower wage, the result will be that he will be half starved while the other man will remain unemployed. Even otherwise, if I pay full wages to the workman whom I employ, the other man will be unemployed. But the former will not starve, and I shall have made just use of my money. Starvation really occurs only when the due wages are not paid. If I pay due wages, surplus wealth will not accumulate in my hands. I shall not waste money on luxuries and add to the poverty. The workman whom I pay justly will in turn learn to pay others justly. Thus the stream of justice will not dry up; instead it will gather speed as it flows. And the nation which has such a sense of justice will grow happy and prosper in the right direction.

According to this line of reasoning, economists are found to be wrong. They argue that increased competition means growing

prosperity for a nation. This is not true in fact. Competition is desired because it reduces the rate of wages. The rich become richer thereby and the poor poorer. Such competition is likely to ruin a nation in the long run. The right law of demand and supply should ensure the payment of a just wage to a workman according to his worth. This, too, will mean competition, but the result will be that people will be happy and skilful, for, instead of being obliged to underbid one another, they will have to acquire [new] skills to secure employment. It is for this reason that men are drawn to government service. There, salaries are fixed according to the gradation of posts. The competition is only with regard to ability. A candidate does not offer to accept a lower salary but claims that he is abler than others. The same is the case with the Army and the Navy, and that is why there is much lesscorruption in these services. But only in trade and commerce is there unhealthy competition, as a result of which corrupt practices, such as fraud, chicanery, theft, have increased. Furthermore, goods of poor quality are manufactured. The manufacturer wants a lion's share [of the price] for himself, the workman to throw dust in the eyes of others and the consumer to exploit the situation to his own advantage. This poisons all human intercourse, there is starvation all round, strikes multiply, manufacturers become rogues and consumers disregard ethical considerations. One injustice leads to numerous others, and in the end the employer, the operative and the customer are all unhappy and meet with ruin. A people among whom these [corrupt] practices prevail comes to grief in the end. Its very wealth acts like a poison.

This is why men of wisdom have held that where Mammon is God, no one worships the true God. Wealth cannot be reconciled with God. God lives only in the homes of the poor. This is what the British profess, but in practice they place wealth above everything else, estimate the prosperity of the nation by the number of its rich, and their economists formulate precepts for everyone to get rich quickly. True economics is the economics of justice. That people alone will be happy which learns how to do justice and be righteous under all conditions of life. All else is vain, a kind of moral perversity that presages doom. To teach the people to get rich at any cost is to teach them an evil lesson.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-7-1908

238. LETTER TO "THE STAR"[1]

[JOHANNESBURG]

[THE EDITOR
THE STAR
SIR,]

Mr. Duncan's letter with reference to the charge, which, with all deference to him, I must still continue to describe as "foul", as to an organized illicit entry of Asiatics enables me to explain the position more fully to the public.

It is the charge of *organized* illicit entry that Asiatics have always denied, and which only it was in their power to deny. One swallow does not make a summer, nor can isolated cases of unlawful entry be used to condemn a whole community. The charge was threefold:

(1) that Asiatics entered on permits which were not their *bona-fide* property;

(2) that they entered on permits fraudulently obtained;

(3) that they entered on forged permits.

And it A was in order to test whether the documents held by Asiatic communities at the time were so tainted or not that the Bill was brought in.

With reference to the 9,000 applications, it is admitted in the Governor's Speech that almost all the Asiatics in the Colony have tendered voluntary registration.[2] I, therefore, assume that, in January last there were 9,000 Asiatics in the Colony. They have all tendered their documents, and, on the strength thereof, 7,600 have already been proved to have been legitimate residents of the Transvaal. As a matter or fact, the balance of the applications have not yet been rejected. On the contrary, most of them will probably be able to establish their *bona fides*. Their claims are still under consideration only because of the deadlock that has ensued, that is to say, they are holders of Dutch registration certificates, which General Smuts has declined to recognize as sufficient tide to residence in the Colony.

[1] This was published in *Indian Opinion* under the title "Rejoinder to Mr. Duncan".

[2] In the course of his address to Parliament on June 15, on the occasion of its reopening, the Governor had said, "Practically the whole of the Asiatic population of this Colony to the number of 9, 072 have tendered voluntary registration and provisional registration certificates have already been issued to 7,617 Asiatics. . ."

I may add that, according to the figures supplied by the Registrar of Asiatics, over 13,000 permits have been issued and are now in circulation. of these, under voluntary registration, 8,500 (assuming 500 are represented by Dutch registration certificates) have been called in and, it out of 8,500, 7,000 have established their tide, will Mr. Duncan allow me to claim that there was no *organized* illicit entry?

With reference to the 4,500 outstanding permits (and they outstanding because those Asiatics are outside the Colony). I make bold to say that it will be found that very few of these permits are tainted.

The Indian community has never endeavoured to challenge the statement that there was *some* illicit immigration of Asiatics. All that was stated in 1906, and I make bold to repeat, is that the evidence adduced was not, and is not now, sufficient to establish the charge of *wholesale* fraudulent entry. The Peace Preservation Ordinance was enough to deal with isolated cases. The compulsory measure was brought in because of, and was based upon, the assumption that Asiatics would not voluntarily allow their claims to be examined because they were largely tainted with fraud. Hence the offer of voluntary registration and hence also my statement that the result of voluntary registration has disposed of the foul charge of an organized illicit entry of Asiatics.

[*I am, etc.*,
M.K. GANDHI]

Indian Opinion, 4-7-1908

239. LETTER TO "INDIAN OPINION"

JOHANNESBURG,
July 4, 1908

EDITOR
INDIAN OPINION

SIR,

The test case brought against Mr. Sorabji, a Parsi gentleman of culture and English education, who has entered the Colony under the Immigrants' Restriction Act, marks another stage in the Asiatic struggle. Mr. Sorabji, who holds splendid testimonials from the Chairman of the Charlestown Local Board and other prominent Europeans, is now to be tried not under the Immigrants' Restriction Act but under the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, for being an Asiatic without registration under the Act. I say nothing with reference to the trial under

the Asiatic Act because it is *sub judice*: but the Act of the case being brought under the Asiatic Act proves the point I have ventured to raise before General Smuts that educated Asiatics were free to enter under the Immigrants Restriction Act. That they become liable to a removal order if they do not accept Asiatic Act has been known all along, and that was why the petition[1] against the Immigrants' Restriction Act stated that what the Government gave with the one hand, they took away with the other. Could Mr. Sorabji bring himself to accept degradation under the Asiatic Act, he would not be a prohibited immigrant. What General Smuts asks Asiatics to give against repeal of the Asiatic Act is that they should surrender the rights of, say, Sir Mancherji Bhownaggree.

It will now be seen clearly that Asiatics are not asking for anything they are not entitled to by law. The anomalous position before the Colony in view of the arrest of an alleged permit-forger at Pretoria today is that those who are rightful residents and who helped the Government can be kept on tenter-hooks, whereas those Indians who are dishonest and steal into the country, by forgery or otherwise, may remain in it without molestation, because they would never approach the Government officials for identification, licence, or otherwise.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 11-7-1908

240. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
July 6, 1908

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PRETORIA

SIR,

A mass meeting[3] over eight hundred British Indians was held yesterday at the Hamidia Mosque to consider the Indian position as it is affected by the Supreme Court decision on the application for the return of the voluntary registration applications. My Association still

[1] *Vide*"Petition to Secretary of State for Colonies", 23-8-1907

[2] This appeared in *Indian Opinion* the title "The Ultimatum" and was part of the precis forwarded by the Colonial Office along with his letter of July 22, 1908.

[3] At this meeting, Sorabji Shapurji declared his determination not to submit to the registration law. He also claimed as an educated man free right of entry into the Transvaal.

respectfully trusts that these forms may be returned. The mass meeting decided to hold another next Sunday for the purpose of burning voluntary registration certificates, in order that, in the event of the claims of domiciled British Indians and others not being considered by the Government, they may range themselves alongside of suchIndians and suffer with them. My Association is most anxious to avoid such a drastic step and, therefore, once more humbly approaches the Government for assistance.

My Association reminds you of the speech delivered by you at Richmond[1] just the compromise, and reported in *The Star* of the 6th February last. In that speech, you are reported to have stated as follows: "He had told them, that is the Asiatics, that the law would not be repealed so long as there was an Asiatic in the country who had not registered." And again, "until every Indian in the country had registered, the law would not be repealed. This shows that the only condition of repeal was complete registration. My Association need hardly say that practically every Asiatic in the Colony has made voluntary application in terms of the compromise. But now my Association understands that the Government, in exchange for repeal, ask British Indians to consent to the following:

(a) That British Indians holding Dutch registration certificates, for which they have paid either £3 or £25, should become prohibited immigrants, whether they are within the Colony or outside the Colony.

(b) That pre-war Indian refugees, who have not yet returned to the Transvaal, should become prohibited immigrants.

(c) That the voluntary applications which are now under consideration by the Registrar of Asiatics should be finally decided by the Registrar without the right of appeal to the Supreme Court.

(d) That British Indians who can pass the severe test under the Immigrants' Restriction Act should also be treated as prohibited immigrants.

My Association ventures respectfully to submit that it is highly unfair to ask the British Indian community of the Transvaal to consent to a deprivation of the rights of some, in whose name the community cannot even speak With any effect. It would be one thing for the Government to pass legislation independently of the community affected thereby, and another thing to ask the community to consent to such legislation restrictive of the liberty of a portion of that class.

With reference to (a) and (b), my Association ventures to state that their claims have never been summarily rejected, as it is now

[1] On February 6, 1908

proposed, but that pre-war refugees have received more or less consideration and have been granted permits to return. The repeated declarations of responsible officials after British occupation have made it perfectly clear that the domiciliary rights of pre-war Asiatic residents would be respected. In wishing to treat such people now as prohibited immigrants, a most novel and, for British Indians, painful, position is sought to be created. My Association is quite willing that the burden of proving *bona-fide* ownership of registration certificates should be thrown on the holders, and that the claims of those pre-war residents who do not hold registration certificates should be limited to residence for a fixed period of, say, two years, such residence to be proved to the satisfaction of a court of law, always with the right of appeal to the Supreme Court so as to bring decisions of different lower courts into harmony. My Association further, in order to prevent any possible frauds, is prepared to accept a reasonable period within which all these outstanding claims should be submitted. It is within the knowledge of my Association that at least one Indian is outside the Colony who paid, in 1885, the sum of £25 to purchase his domicile in terms of Law 3 of 1885 before it was amended, and who holds European credentials, and has not yet been allowed to return. There are several such cases, though not of payment of £25 but of £3. My Association invites your attention to the following clause in Law 3 of 1885, which shows clearly that the fee of £3 was imposed to entitle the payer to settlement in the country:

> Those who settle in the Republic for the purposed carrying on any wade or otherwise shall be bound to have their names entered in a register to be separately kept for the purpose by the Landdrosts of the various districts, in accordance with a form to be prescribed by the Government. On suchregistration, which shall be effected within eight days after arrival, a sum of £25 sterling (subsequently £3) shall be paid.

With reference to (c), it would be manifestly unfair to deprive those Indians who have already applied for voluntary registration of the right of having their claims examined judicially, when the claims of those who are entitled to return may be judicially examined, My Association fails to see any reason for such a differential treatment between Indians having similar claims.

With reference to (d), my Association cannot help feeling that the proposal that Indians domiciled in the Transvaal should be consenting parties to the deprivation of the rights of Indians with high educational attainments, professional men, to whom British Indians in general are always prone to look up for assistance, is extraordinary. My Association respectfully contends that the interpretation of the

Immigrants' Restriction Act leaves it open for Indians with European education to enter the country, and the fact that Mr. Sorabji, who has entered the country to test such interpretation, is now to be tried under the Asiatic Act for failing to produce a registration certificate, seems to uphold the contention of my Association and to show that the Government have abandoned their interpretation of the Immigrants' Restriction Act. My Association thinks that, so far as the European Colonists are concerned, in this question there is no substantial point involved, whereas it is one of deeply cherished sentiment to British Indians. In effect, the vast majority of even educated Indians will be shut out of the Colony because of the stringency of the test, and my Association does not object to any reasonable stringency, so long as education of a real type is respected and recognized as much in an Indian as in a European. In Natal, where the test is by no means so severe as in the Transvaal, according to the last Immigration Report, only a few Indians[1] entered under the test[2] Australia, which has also a similar education test, has successfully solved the problem of Asiatic immigration. My Association, therefore, ventures to trust that the Transvaal will not be an exception, and that the Government will be pleased to spare the natural feelings of British Indians in the matter.

My Association, in conclusion, respectfully trusts that the Government will take into serious consideration the above representation, and finally close the Asiatic question so far as it is affected by the Asiatic Law Amendment Act; and thus, not only fulfil its part of the compromise, but give the lawful Asiatic residents of the Colony the rest and peace to which their conduct during the recent trouble has, by universal acknowledgement, entitled them; and, last but not least, to save the British Indians from the step to which they are committed, as above mentioned, in the event of the Government's unfavourable decision.

I have etc.,

ESSOP ISMAIL MIA

CHAIRMAN,

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 11-7-1908

Also India Office, Judicial and Public Records: 2896/08

[1] The India Office source mentions the figure 81.

[2] *Vide* "Natal Immigration Department's Report", Appendix IV.

241. TRIAL OF SORABJI SHAPURJI-I

[JOHANNESBURG,
July 8, 1908]

The first case called was that of Sorabji, charged under Act No. 2 of 1907 with being in the Colony without a permit.

THE MAGISTRATE: What do you plead ?

ACCUSED: [in a clear voice] I am not guilty.

Superintendent Vernon stated that he arrested the accused on the 4th instant.[1] He called upon him to produce a registration certificate under the Act[2] his authority to enter or reside in the Colony. He replied: "I have no authority or registration certificate." Witness then charged him under section 8, sub-section 3 of the Act. Accused entered the Colony on June 24 last at 6.09 p.m. He saw accused every day up to the date of his arrest.

[SUPERINTENDENT VERNON:] (Cross-examined by Mr. Gandhi) Accused knows English. He knows it well enough to understand what I said to him.

[GANDHIJI:] And well enough to comply with the Immigration Restriction Act?

[VERNON:] I have nothing to do with that. I cannot give any opinion.

Mr. Chamney, Registrar of Asiatics, said he did not know accused, but a man of the same name applied through the Magistrate's office at Volksrust on April 22, 1908 for a permit. He applied for registration and not for a certificate of registration under the Act. Witness considered the claims of the applicant and found that he was not entitled to registration and he informed the Magistrate of Volksrust accordingly. Witness conveyed the instructions to the police to arrest the accused, though the instructions did not originate with him.

Cross-examined, [he said that] the application made by the defendant was for voluntary registration in accordance with the compromise with the Government.

Witness explained that he did not know how the defendant came to be in Volksrust. The compromise was intended for those in the Colony or those who hadthe right to return within three months. Accompanying the application were a number of certificates of character.

Mr. Gandhi asked witness to read the certificates. The Public Prosecutor objected.[3] Mr. Gandhi argued that the papers were part of the record.

[1] The *Transvaal Leader* version of the trial has "the 3rd July, 1908" while *Indian Opinion* does not mention the date.

[2] Act 2 of 1907

[3] At this stage of the proceedings, Chamney consulted the Crown Prosecutor and again later through Superintendent Vernon—to which Gandhiji objected.

THE MAGISTRATE: You want to set up a defence that he is brought under the wrong Act. You want to bring him under the Immigration Ordinance.

MR. GANDHI: I do, Sir.

THE MAGISTRATE: I quite understand.

The Public Prosecutor argued that the documents must be proved in the ordinary way. Mr. Gandhi retorted that he could not prove if the witness did not produce them. They were the property of his client, and he had served notice on witness to produce them. The Public Prosecutor persisted in his objection, and eventually the Magistrate looked at the documents. He said they bore the headline South African Constabulary, and apparently belonged to them.

Mr. Gandhi proceeded with the cross-examination of witness, who stated he was Chief Immigration Officer also. He had received a telegram from Mr. Gandhi telling him that the defendant was to entrain and that he possessed the necessary qualifications under the Immigration Act and had sufficient means.

[GANDHIJI:] Did your officers [at Volksrust] examine the defendant as to his educational abilities?

[CHAMNEY:] No.

Will you admit he has sufficient educational attainments?

I know nothing about it.

Will you admit he has sufficient means ?

I know nothing about it. This charge has nothing to do with it.

Did you allow any other Asiatic to pass?

I have.

Unchallenged?

Not unchallenged; he was not unchallenged.[1]

What was done to him?

I am not able to say. I decline absolutely to answer that question. I dare say you will know in full time.

Why was he allowed to pass?

I will not reply to that. He came in here in conflict with the law, and the consequence is he is now there accused.The Magistrate again intervened and said Mr. Gandhi was referring to the Immigration Act, while the accused was charged under the Asiatic Act.

MR. GANDHI: It is a most unfortunate position you place me in. You have not heard my defence. As Chief Immigration Officer, would you pass an Asiatic who possesses educational attainments under the

[1] A Gujarati report of the trial in *Indian Opinion,* 18-7-1908, mentions that Chamney admitted to having examined the accused at the time of his entry for purposes of establishing his identity.

Immigrants, Act?

[CHAMNEY:] Certainly not.

Why not?

He is a prohibited immigrant.[1]

This closed the case for the Crown.

A TECHNICAL POINT

Mr. Gandhi asked for discharge of his client under sub-section 3 of section 8, under which he was charged, on the ground that the sub-section laid down that any Asiatic found in the Colony "after such a date as may be notified in the *Gazette* [etc.]." That notice had not been proved, and the Court had not the notice in the Gazette in its possession.[2]

After argument, Mr. Gandhi said he knew it was a technical error, but it paid the defence to take such action.

THE MAGISTRATE: And bring him up again, and give as much trouble as possible.

MR. GANDHI: That's the point.

The Magistrate said he would look up some other cases, and give his decision next morning.[3]

The Star, 8-7-1908

242 JOHANNESBURG LETTER

Tuesday [*July 7, 1908*]

THE CAMPAIGN

We have lost in the Supreme Court. Mr. Justice Solomon heldthat Mr. Smuts' application [*sic*] had no relevance to the compromise.[4]

[1] The Gujarati report mentions that, on further cross-examination by Gandhiji, Chamney admitted to having allowed this "prohibited immigrant" to enter.

[2] Gandhiji, according to the Gujarati report, had further argued that oral evidence was not enough to establish that the time-limit of registration had expired.

[3] The following news-item appeared in *Indian Opinion*, 11-7-1908, bearing the date July 9: "Mr. Sorabji Shapurji's case came before the Court today; the Magistrate upheld Mr. Gandhi's contention and discharged the accused, finding him not guilty. Mr. Sorabji immediately received warning to appear before the Court tomorrow (Friday) to answer to a similar charge, on instructions from the Magistrate. . . ."

[4] From the judgment in reported speech:

". . .Certainly no such promise [regarding repeal] was contained in the letters, nor anything to show that such was the intention of the Colonial Secretary. It seemed

He also observed that the letter addressed [to General Smuts] from gaol and Mr. Smuts' reply to it did not throw any light on the repeal of the Act. The return of the application for voluntary registration could not be demanded since it was a kind of letter. Under the law, a letter belongs to the person to whom it is addressed. By the same token the application belonged to the Government. At the same time the Judge conceded the right to withdraw [the request contained in] the application. Only, the application form itself need not be returned. If one wanted to withdraw one's application, the Judge said, all that one had to do was not to accept the registration certificate. The Government were bound to return the permit and the old register. Since, however, the case had been instituted for the return of the application, the costs were also awarded against the Indian community. Mr. Smuts filed an affidavit to the effect that he had never promised to repeal the Act. Mr. Chamney filed a similar affidavit. Mr. Ward fought hard and advanced a number of well-reasoned arguments. But the Judge had got it into his head that an application is a kind of letter.

The judgment has disheartened many Indians. A satyagrahi can never have reason to lose heart. Khuda is the ultimate court of appeal for a satyagrahi, and in that court false evidence does not avail. Moreover, our object in demanding that the applications be returned was to make certain that we were arrested as early as possible. We must achieve the same object now by burning the registers. This will appear a little difficult, but in fact it can be done easily. Anyone who is sensible enough will see that it is better to burn the register than to have the application returned.

The Act, it appears, is a good as repealed. In a speech[1] on February 6 in Johannesburg, General Smuts said: "I have told the Asiatics that the Act will be repealed if all of them take out registers

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extremely improbable that the Colonial Secretary would have agreed to repeal the Act, and, in a letter by the Asiatics to the Colonial Secretary, they said: `We recognize that it is not possible during the Parliamentary recess to repeal the Act, and we have noted your repeated public declarations that there is no likelihood of the Act being repealed,' [cf. pp. 40-2] from which it would appear that they accepted the position that the Act would not be repealed. . . .But, having handed it over the Registrar of Asiatics, with the intention. . .that the latter should retain the document, . . and the document then became the property of the Registrar of Asiatics. . . The application would therefore be refused with costs." *Indian Opinion,* 11-7-1908

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary",6-7-1908

voluntarily. It will not be repealed unless this is done." The reference to the repeal of the Act cannot be plainer.

The day after the Supreme Court delivered its judgment, the entire correspondence [between General Smuts and] Mr. Gandhi was released to the Press. Along with that, Mr. Gandhi addressed a letter[1] to the Press on the 2nd [of July], to which no one has replied [so far].

HELP FROM WHITES

Meanwhile, the whites[2] who have been helping us have started making fresh efforts [towards a compromise]. General Smuts has let it be known that he is prepared to concede the right of those who hold the £3 [certificates]. He is also prepared to allow appeals against Mr. Chamney's decisions. He wants Indians to agree only to the exclusion of educated persons [from the Colony in the future]. This the Indians refuse to do. A meeting[3] was accordingly held on Sunday. About 800 persons assembled at the Hamidia Mosque. The meeting was addressed by Messrs Essop Mia, Imam Abdool Kadir, Cama, Gulabbhai, Cachalia, Polak, Gandhi, Khurshedji and others. It was decided in the end to hold a mass meeting the following Sunday and at that meeting to [burn the registration certificates].

BURN REGISTERS

This will be done only if [meanwhile] the Government does not concede all our four demands.

ESSOP MIA'S LETTER

After the meeting [held last Sunday] Mr. Essop Mia wrote to Mr. Smuts, asking him explicitly to declare that the Government did not intend to concede the Indians, demands, if that was in fact its intention, for in that case [the Indian community] had resolved to hold a meeting on the following Sunday and burn the certificates.[4] (This letter will be found elsewhere in this issue.) If a favourable reply is received, and the Government agrees to repeal the Act unconditionally, nothing more will remain to be done, and there will be no need to burn the registers.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to the Press", 2-7-1908
[2] Cartwright, Hosken and Chaplin
[3] The mass meeting of July 5
[4] *Vide* also "Letter to Colonial Secretary",6-7-1908

DOKE'S LETTER

The Transvaal Leader has published a letter from Mr. Doke. It is a spirited letter, worth reading, in which he has adduced very effective arguments to show that the Indian community is fully justified in its campaign [against the Act]. That letter has won many whites over to our side, and their number is thus increasing daily.

"THE FRIEND" OF BLOEMFONTEIN

The Friend of Bloemfontein has again begun to write in our favour. It advises General Smuts not to carry the dispute further.

Mr. Smuts' fort is thus being beleaguered. The vessel of his sins is about to burst. The end is perhaps not far off. But a satyagrahi mustexpend no thought on whether the struggle will be a long or a short one. For him his truth is the dearest of all things.

SORABJI'S CASE

Mr. Sorabji has been arrested, and released without bail. The hearing of the case was fixed for Saturday, but has been adjourned to Wednesday. Mr. Sorabji is now charged not under the Immigrants' Act, but under the obnoxious Act. This shows that no action can be taken against him under the former. MR. Sorabji does not want to submit to the obnoxious Act nor to leave the Transvaal. If, therefore, he is given notice to leave, he will disregard it and court imprisonment. Mr. Sorabji also addressed the meeting on Sunday, and everyone was happy with his decision to go to gaol.[1] Mr. Gandhi has addressed a letter[2] to the Press regarding Sorabji's case

LETTER TO THE PRESS

The following letter[2] from Mr. Gandhi appeared in the Transvaal Press on the 4th.

JAYMAL'S CASE

Jaymal's case is likely to lead to other similar cases. A tailor named Dahya, who came to Johannesburg with a permit obtained from one Jaymal, has been arrested. He is believed to have obtained the permit under a genuine misconception. He is, therefore, likely to

[1] *Vide 2n* footnote of "Letter to Colonial Secretary",6-7-1908

[2] This is not reproduced here. For the English text, *vide* "Letter to *Indian Opinion*",4-7-1908

be acquitted. Indians must take this case as a warning that any attempt to secure a permit by irregular means is likely to harm the individual himself as also the community.

Wednesday [*July 8, 1908*]

Mr. Sorabji's case was heard in Mr. Jordan's court on Wednesday.[1] Giving evidence, Mr. Chamney admitted that Mr. Sorabji was not, and could not be, arrested under the Immigrants' Act. He said there was an important reason why Mr. Sorabji had not been arrested [earlier]. There was a heated exchange of arguments in the Court. The court room was overflowing with Indians. Mr. Gandhi asked for Mr. Sorabji's discharge on a technical point of law. The Magistrate has promised a ruling on Friday. Be that as it may. That will not decide the fundamental issue. But it is desirable on such occasions to take advantage of other technical flaws of a legal nature [which may not have a direct bearing on the main issue].

SAD EVENT

On Saturday, July 4, Mr. Suleman Mia, Mr. Essop Mia's younger brother, lost his child, who was a little over ten months old. I feel sad at this unhappy event.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 11-7-1908

[1] *Vide* "Trial of Sorabji Shapurji-I",8-7-1908

243. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

[JOHANNESBURG,]
July 9, 1908

THE HON'BLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY

PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th instant[1] in reply to mine of the 1st instant[2] regarding Asiatic licences. My Association has taken the extreme step after very great and due deliberation, and with much regret, and only when there was no other way possible. My Association is still most anxious to avoid what may develop into a very bitter struggle, and to avoid any defiance of the laws of the land they live in, but, when it becomes a matter of choosing between respect for laws and one's conscience, there can be, in my humble opinion, no hesitation about the choice to be made. My Association is still most willing to advise the people to tender the licence fee.

My Association understands that thumb-impressions under the Asiatic Act are now being asked for from Asiatic applicants for licences. This, again, in my humble opinion, is a breach of the compromise, within the meaning given to it by my Association, namely, that the Act should not apply to those who have made voluntary application for registration.

With reference to the letter[3] of my Association dated the 6th instant, many European friends have advised that the mass meeting for the burning of the voluntary registration certificates should be postponed, pending the final decision of the Government. My Association has also heardthat the Government are prepared to waive the first three points mentioned in my letter, but that the education testis the stumbling-block. If so, and if it is not too late, my Association hopes that the difficulty will be overcome by providing

[1] In this, Gorges, the Assistant Colonial Secretary, had said that Asiatics failing to produce certificates of registration were not entitled to receive licences. He regretted the Association's extreme step of advising Transvaal Indians to carry on trade in conflict with the law.

[2] Not available

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 6-7-1908

for sufficient stringency of the test.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
ESSOP ISMAIL MIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 18-7-1908

244. LETTER TO A. CARTWRIGHT

[JOHANNESBURG,]
July 9, 1908

DEAR MR. CARTWRIGHT,

I am very much obliged to you for your note and for the great interest you are taking in the troubles of my countrymen. I would lose much rather than the sympathy of public men in the Transvaal. The burning of the certificates next Sunday will, therefore, be postponed. I take it that you are closely following the development of the struggle.

Mr. Sorabji, as you Known, is not now to be tried under the Immigrants' Restriction Act at all.[1] Indeed, to secure conviction under that Act will, in the case of an educated Asiatic, be, I am sure, impossible, without the instrumentality of the Asiatic Act. It just proves my contention. Owing to the stupidity of the Prosecution and the greater stupidity of Mr. Chamney, I was able to take advantage of a flaw in the evidence for the Crown, and Mr. Sorabji was discharged. To show the vindictiveness on the part of Superintendent Vernon and Mr. Chamney, he was re-arrested immediately, Mr. Vernon saying the re-arrest was being effected under instructions from Mr. Chamney. As luck would have it, I went over with Mr. Sorabji to Marshall Square Police Station and saw Deputy Commissioner Potter, who, I believe, perceived the mistake that had been made, and almost immediately after I had seen him, ordered Mr. Sorabji's discharge from custody. I do not know what will happen tomorrow. I am half inclined to think that there will be a bungle again. If so, I propose to take advantage of it and secure a discharge again. Ultimately, of course, Mr. Sorabji, unless some settlement is arrived at, must pay the penalty for wearing a brown skin and go to gaol. He seems to me to be a determined young man, and wishes to offer himself as a sacrifice on behalf of his edu-

[1] *Vide* "Trial of Sorabji Shapurji-I", 8-7-1908

cated brethren.

I enclose for your perusal a letter that has been signed by Mr. Hosken, Mr. Phillips, Mr. Doke, Mr. Perry, Mr. David Pollock and Mr. Kallenbach. It will be forwarded to General Smuts today. You have, I dare say, seen the letter[1] addressed by Mr. Essop Mia. Another is being addressed today, in, informing him of the postponement of the mass meeting of which, too, I send you copy herewith.[2]

I hope you will pardon me for inflicting all this upon you, but, as you are there, amid your many activities, doing the Asiatic work also, I thought I should pass on to you all the information in my possession.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

A. CARTWRIGHT, ESQ.
PRETORIA CLUB
PRETORIA

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4832

245. LETTER TO "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"[3]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
July 10, 1908

[THE EDITOR
THE TRANSVAAL LEADER
SIR,]

You advise Asiatics to do nothing rash and to await developments regarding the renewal of the Asiatic struggle. It is, therefore, with much regret that I have to draw your attention to a circular letter addressed to the Town Clerks in the Transvaal, over the signature of theRegistrar of Asiatics, and dated as recently as the 7th instant, which

[1] *Vide* " Letter to Colonial Secretary", 6-7-1908.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 9-8-1908

[3] This was in reply to the *Leader*'s editorial of July 10, 1908, which was reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 18-7-1908, under the title "The Transvaal Trouble: How Government Promises Are Fulfilled". The *Leader* had expressed the hope that the Asiatics would not "take steps of a sensational -nature in pursuance of their contention with the Government" for that might put Parliament, then in session, in its "sternest mood". Adverting to a comment on the situation by *The Friend* of Bloemfontein, the *Leader* further said that the advice that the compromise should be redeemed could be given "to both sides", but urged Asiatics to recognize that in no circumstances would the Colony's Europeans open the door to fresh immigration.

runs as follows:

> I have the honour to inform you that it has been decided that Act No. 2 of 1907 is to remain on the Statute-book; consequently all Asiatics applying for licences to trade must be required to produce a registration certificate issued under the Act, or in the form of the voluntary certificate, a specimen of which is attached, and to furnish a clear impression of their right-hand thumb for examination in this Office. Any Asiatic who fails to carry out these requirements is not entitled to the issue or renewal of any trading licence.
>
> The thumb-impression should be forwarded as soon as possible to this office, together with the name of the applicant, and the number of the registration certificate held by him.

You will notice that the circular states the decision of the Government to retain Act 2 of 1907 on the Statute-book, and evidently to legalize voluntary registration under it. If so, can Asiatics have any patience, and can they have any trust in the promise, written or verbal, of the Government? The circular, if it correctly sets forth the Government's decision, is a tremendous eye-opener. However, the mass meeting advertised for the burning of registration certificates remains postponed, and every Asiatic awaits publication of the Government's declarations. The only reason for drawing public attention to the circular which I have been able to secure is to show that, when Asiatics take any irrevocable step, it will not be without the gravest provocation.

[*Yours etc.*,

M. K. GANDHI]

Indian Opinion, 18-7-1908

246. TRIAL OF SORABJI SHAPURJI-II

[JOHANNESBURG,
July 10, 1908]

On Friday, the 10th instant, before Mr. Jordan, in B Court, Mr. Sorabji Shapurji, the Parsi gentleman, who had already been acquitted of a similar charge,[1] was charged, in terms of Section 8, Sub-Section 3 of Act 2 of 1907, with having failed to produce a registration certificate issued under the Act, when the same was demanded of him by Superintendent Vernon, on the 9th instant. Mr. Cramer prosecuted for the Crown, and Mr. Gandhi appeared for the defence.

Before replying generally to the indictment, Mr. Gandhi raised the plea

[1] For earlier judgment, *vide* 3rd *n* footnote of "Johannesburg Letter", 7-7-1908.

of *autre fois acquit* claiming that the accused had already been discharged in regard to the same offence.

THE MAGISSTRATE: It is a continuous offence.

Mr. Gandhi replied that he was aware of that, but claimed that, although the date in the indictment was given as July 9th, the accused should have been given eight clear days before being again brought before the Court and charged with the same offence. If the acquittal was worth anything to the accused, he should not be called upon to appear before the Court for another week. He did not for one moment, say that, for the purpose of his case, he required eight days. At the same time, there was that legal defence, and he was not justified in abandoning it. He claimed that the accused should have had a new lease of life from the preceding day, in accordance with the law. As it was, the accused was ruthlessly carried away from the Court Rude hands had been laid upon him, and he had not even been given the opportunity of leaving the Colony, if he had so desired, on the previous day.

The Magistrate overruled the plea, and said that he would make a note of it.

Superintendent Vernon gave formal evidence of arrest. He produced notices published in the *Government Gazette* containing official notifications by the Colonial Secretary that the time for registration under the Act expired on October 31, 1907, and the extension thereof on November 30, 1907.

CROSS EXAMINED

Witness was in Court the previous day, when accused was discharged. He had beckoned to him to come outside, and had arrested him outside the Court. It was a fact that between the time of accused's discharge and his getting to the door of the Court he had not much time.

Montford Chamney sated that he was Registrar of Asiatics. The accused had not applied for a certificate of registration under the Act 2 of 1907, nor had he been granted such a certificate. An application had been made for registration outside the provisions of the Act, but, upon consideration, witness found that accused was not entitled to registration. Witness proceeded that, under the Immigrants' Restriction Act, the accused was not eligible to obtain such a certificate of registration.

Mr. Gandhi objected to this statement on the ground that witness's opinion as to the interpretation of the clause did not go for Anything, as he was not a judicial officer but merely an administrative officer. The Magistrate upheld the objection.

Cross-examined, witness stated that he had not examined the accused with reference to his educational qualifications.

This closed the case for the prosecution.

Mr. Gandhi immediately applied for the discharge of the accused, because, although notices had been proved, the proper notice had not been proved. The Notice that should have been proved before the Court was one notifying that persons found within the Colony after a certain date would be called upon to produce registration certificates. The notices produced only referred to application for registration, and had absolutely no bearing whatever on the case. After all, November 30 had already passed, and his client had never applied for registration. The Notice contemplated in the section of the Act on which the charge was based was a notice authorizing the police to demand registration certificates, and it was only under such a notice that registration certificates could be demanded. This had not been proved. A lengthy argument resulted in Mr. Gandhi producing the required Notice. He would help the prosecution to that extent in regard to the third prosecution of the accused, but not in the present, holding that it was impossible for the Crown to obtain a conviction in the present case. He read the Notice. It set forth that the Government had appointed November 30, 1907 as the date after which any Asiatic over the age of sixteen who was found within the Colony and failed upon demand by any duly authorized person to produce a certificate of registration of which he was the lawful holder might be arrested and dealt with as provided. That Notice had never been put in.

THE MAGISSTRATE: The question is whether the putting in of the *Gazette is* not sufficient notice in itself.

Mr. Gandhi said that he felt it very keenly that such an argument should be adduced, after he had shown that his contention was correct. He still argued that the two notices produced by the Crown did not apply to the case at all. It was not his fault that he had over-argued the case. The notice required had not been put in by the Crown and had not even been cited in the indictment.

Mr. Jordan then adjourned the Court for luncheon, and intimated that he would give his decision upon resuming.

When the Court resumed, the Public Prosecutor said that it appeared to be absolutely essential that the *Gazette* containing the notice should be produced in Court. Mr. Gandhi had taken advantage, and rightly so from his point of view, of a purely technical point, and he asked His Worship to allow him also to take advantage of a technicality. He asked His Worship to take it that the production of the Gazette and the reading of the notices by Mr. Gandhi was sufficient publication for the purposes of the case.

In reply, Mr. Gandhi contended that he had not put in the Gazette. The Notice had never been put in at all. He had simply produced it as he would produce a law-book to carry conviction to the Court as he was in the unfortunate position of not being able to make himself otherwise understood, but it would be unfair to penalize him for having helped the Court. In point of fact, so far as the evidence was concerned, the notice required by the law was

not within the judicial cognizance of the Court.

The Magistrate said that he would take judicial notice of Mr. Gandhi's argument, but overruled him.

The accused was then called, and stated, in examination, that he had been in South Africa for six years, in Durban for a year and a half, and in Charlestown for four-and-a-half years. He was book-keeper and manager of the store of Mr. Hajee Hassam, of Charlestown, Natal. He received his English education at the Surat High School in the Bombay Presidency. He had received seven years' education through the medium of the English language, and before that, seven years in the vernacular. He had entered the Transvaal under the Immigrants' Restriction Act.

THE MAGISSTRATE: How can he ?

Mr. Gandhi said that that was for him to show. It was for him to argue that accused was entitled to enter, after he had put the facts before the Court, but it was not possible for the Court to decide that question before the facts had been placed before it and properly argued when the right time came.

The Magistrate stated that Mr. Gandhi had to show that his client was one of those exempted.

Mr. Gandhi argued that as his client was educated and had means, he was entitled to enter the Transvaal under the Immigrants' Restriction Act.

THE MAGISSTRATE: Do you mean to say that every Asiatic who can read and write in a European language can come into this Colony?

MR. GANDHI: I do, Sir, and I am going to try and argue that before the Court, if I get the opportunity.

Proceeding, witness stated that, when he entered the country, he had sufficient means. He was asked by Sergeant Mansfield of the South African Constabulary, the officer in charge of the Immigration Department at Volksrust, how much money he had. He had made an application for voluntary registration on the 22nd April last, having received written permission from Sergeant Mansfield to enter the Colony and make application. He held several testimonials from prominent townsmen, and some of these had been sent to Mr. Chamney in connection with his application. He had been discharged on the previous day on a similar charge to that whereon he was now brought

before the Court.[1] He had no wish to apply under the Registration Act No. 2 of 1907.

CROSS-EXAMINED

He was fully conversant with the provisions of that Act. He knew what steps should be taken for obtaining a registration certificate. He had never applied for registration under the Act, and had no desire to apply. He would

[1] *Vide* Trial of Sorabji Shapurji-I", 8-7-1908

never apply or have anything to do with such an un-British and disgraceful Act, and associated himself with his brethren in opposition to the Act. He had not come only for the purpose of making this a test case, but in order to make the Transvaal his home. He had come to reside in the Transvaal. Charlestown was his last place of residence, and he had never resided in the Transvaal before. It was his own intention to come to the Transvaal; he had never come by anyone's advice, but of his own accord. He had, however, asked Mr. Gandhi's opinion in a legal capacity first. The application that he made through the Magistrate's Office at Volksrust had been refused. Since he came to Johannesburg, he lived in the Malay Location with Mr. Cama. It was not a fact that, prior to his entering the Transvaal, he had been in constant communication with the British Indian Association.

Re-examined, he stated that he was a British subject, and a Parsi.

This closed the case for the defence.

Mr. Gandhi argued his case at length. He first submitted that his client was not a prohibited immigrant under the Immigrants' Restriction Act, in as much as he had shown that he had sufficient means and educational attainments, and if he chose to apply under the Asiatic Act he would not be a prohibited immigrant. He proceeded to argue that the Asiatic Act referred only to Asiatics who were in the Colony, and who resided in the Colony before the Act was passed, and, whatever the intention of the framers of the Immigrants' Restriction Act, it left the door open for Asiatic immigration—undoubtedly of a very modified type.

The Magistrate referred to Mr. Gandhi's argument as very subtle and very able. He dealt with the points raised, and said that the accused had not made application for registration, but he gloried in the fact, and had set the Government at defiance. He ordered him to leave the Colony within seven days.

Indian Opinion, 18-7-1908

247. HINDU CREMATION GROUND

It is known the world over that the Hindus cremate their dead. A request was made to the Government that cremation facilities similarto those available in Durban be provided for the Colony as a whole, and to this Mr. Diwan has received a very discouraging reply. The Government has said, without assigning any reasons, that the arrangements asked for cannot be made. Admittedly, there have been numerous instances of Hindus burying their dead, but we cannot put up with peremptory interference with a religious practice. We may argue that the Hindus themselves are to blame for not having always insisted on cremating their dead because of the inconvenience in

doing so or for other reasons. But it was of their own volition that they earlier did not do so. Since it is the Government which now wants to stop the practice, it is imperative that we protest.

A petition signed by all the Hindus should be submitted to the Government. If it is signed by thousands of persons, there is hope of its being looked into. Muslims, Christians, Parsis can all help in this matter. Today one of our religions is under attack; tomorrow it may be the turn of another. We hope therefore that not only will the Hindus take up this issue, but also that the other communities will help.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-7-1908

248. MURDER IN SYDENHAM

The murder of Mr. Banu and his wife in Sydenham bears out our observations made some time ago.[1] We do not yet know the motive for the murder. It is [of course] necessary to write to the Government regarding police protection in Sydenham and other towns. But the real remedy lies in our own hands. Moreover, the difficulties which were experienced in having Mr. Banu's body buried should be a matter of shame to the Government. It was not right that the body was left unburied for two days. It is believed that officials were to blame for this. The Congress did well in writing to the Government about this as well. It is necessary that the Congress should write forcefully to the Government on these matters.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-7-1908

249. FOR INFORMATION OF NATAL FRUITERERS

Fruiterers of Natal who carry on trade with the Transvaal must be careful when sending fruit such as *nachis*[2] *to* the Colony. If more than five per cent of the fruit in a crate has dark spots, the whole crate is rejected by the Transvaal authorities and the entire consignment condemned. The best way is to pack the fruit after careful examination. If this is not done, considerable loss may result.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-7-1908

[1] *Vide* "Crime Wave in Natal", 6-6-1908 and "Cause of Murders in Natal", 20-6-1908

[2] A citrus fruit with a tight jacket

250. WOMEN PRISONERS' HAIR

A satisfactory reply has been received from the Natal Government to the representation of the Congress regarding the shearing of women prisoners' hair.

The Government has ordered that their hair shall not be cut in future.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-7-1908

251. TODAY'S CARTOON

The *Rand Daily Mail* of the 25th has published a cartoon about the movement, which we reproduce in the English section. General Smuts is shown as a snake-charmer and the Indian community as a cobra. The caption in English under the drawing explains that the snake-charmer is playing hard on his flute to charm the cobra. But the cobra remains undeceived.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-7-1908

252. LETTER TO A. CARTWRIGHT

[JOHANNESBURG,]
July 11, 1908

DEAR MR. CARTWRIGHT,

I am sending you the questions[1] as promised. I am not framing any further questions at all. After I left you, I saw Mr. Hosken, andMr. Hosken, too, has promised to see General Smuts, because in a letter addressed to Mr. Hosken it is stated that those who have ta[ken][2] out voluntary registration certificates will not have their certificates legalized under the Act. This letter is written in General Smuts' own handwriting, so that there can be no mistake about it. However, perhaps both you and Mr. Hosken will be able to obtain some definite information on Monday. If you do, may I ask you kindly to

[1] *Vide* Enclosure.
[2] Illegible

telephone? My number is 1635.

I am,

Yours truly,

[ENCLOSURE]
A. CARTWRIGHT, ESQ.
JOHANNESBURG

[ENCLOSURE]

DRAFT QUESTIONS ON ASIATIC REGISTRATION ACT

[*July 11, 1908*]

l. Reading the letter addressed from the gaol on the compromise, by itself, the Act is not to apply to those who are voluntarily registered. What, then, is the meaning of the circular[1], dated the 7th instant, purporting to have been addressed by Mr. Chamney to the Municipalities, and published in the *Leader*?

2. Is there any truth in the rumour that the Government are willing to recognize the domiciliary rights of *bona-fide* holders of £3 registration certificates, whether within or without the Colony, and refugees who do not possess certificates but who can establish their claim to pre-War domicile?

3. Is there any truth in the statement generally made that the Government are willing to concede the right of appeal to the Supreme Court of those whose applications for voluntary registration are rejected by Mr. Chamney?

From photostats of the typewritten office copies: S. N. 4835 & 4836

253. LETTER TO A. CARTWRIGHT[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
July 14, 1908

DEAR MR. CARTWRIGHT,

This is what I have understood from the telephonic conversation you had with me this morning. General Smuts is willing to recognize the validity of Dutch £3 registration certificates, provided that proof substantiate the *bona* is otherwise given to substantiate the *bona-fide* ownership of such certificates, and that this proof should, if possible, be European proof. General Smuts thinks that there may be 15,000 registration certificates. These cannot be accepted on mere produc-

[1] *Vide* Trial of Sorabji Shapurji—II, 10-7-1908.

[2] This letter is damaged and indistinct at several places.

tion. With reference to this matter, I have always contended that the burden of proving ownership should rest upon the person producing the certificate. Proof will have to be given to the satisfaction of a court of law, unless the Registrar is satisfied therewith. The same thing will apply to those who do not hold registration certificates, but are *bona-fide* refugees of standing. It is impossible to vouch for Euro-pean proof in each case. I am positive that there are not 15,000[1] registration certificates out. If there were, it will be open to General Smuts to bring forward new legislation to stop any such influx. What with the refugees apart from certificate-holders and certificate-holders themselves, I do not think that, at the outside, there can possibly be more than a thousand immigrants. Proof of the pudding will be in the eating. I have suggested that a limited period be fixed within which all such applications should be made; so that there need be no difficulty at all about this. The right of appeal is restricted to the Magistrates' court in connection With any such men. . .[2] I had the conversation with General Smuts. . .[3] same treatment. . .[4] Hindus, Mahomedans Christians. . .[5]

Now I come to the question. . .[6] point, so far as I can see it, from the Government's standpoint, of utter insignificance, from an Indian standpoint, of paramount importance. I do not quarrel with any legislation that General Smuts may choose to bring, but I do emphatically protest against Indians being made consenting parties to any such legislation. They must have the right to protest and to carry on any agitation they choose to, in connection with it. If he is willing to concede, as I understood this morning he was, the points referred to above, then the Immigrants' Restriction Amendment Bill shown to me may be brought with the necessary alterations, and he may, if he chooses, insert a clause prohibiting the immigration of educated Asiatics. The result will be a petition to Parliament against that clause, a petition to the Imperial Government, and, if I can carry my countrymen with me, undoubtedly passive resistance. Whether I can carry them with me or not I am not in a position yet to tell you definitely. My endeavour is undoubtedly, as it must be, to persuade them to do so. I told you through the telephone that I found Mr. Essop Mia, last night, to be weak on the question. He thought that, if the three points were yielded, we should be satisfied. I ventured to differ from him. When your

[1] The original has " 15,00" —obviously an error.
[2] A word here is illegible.
[3] A whole line here is illegible.
[4] A few words are missing.
[5] *ibid*
[6] Half a line is missing here.

message was received, he was at the office, and I discussed the point with him. He now stands aghast at his opinion, and he thinks that the handful of Indians in the Transvaal will merit the curse of the whole of India, if they *consented* to the educational disqualifications. I repeat again: it is the *consent* that [is] all, and not independent legislation that General Smuts may choose to bring. He must not only [sic] before us and say. . .[1] repealing the Act, that was placed before me, he will notice my query also against this section; but I am quite satisfied that appeal to the Supreme Court should be on questions of law and not on questions of fact.

The appeal, however, that I have asked for is from Mr. Chamney's decision, in connection with pending applications. That was what General Smuts refused at the interview. I take it that now he is willing to concede the right. The matter is, to my mind, self-evident.

General Smuts mentioned that I had received from Maho-medans £2 apiece per voluntary registration certificate. This I stigma-tized as a damnable lie, and I repeat it. It has been propagated, eviden-tly, by some enemy of the Indian community. What I have done is to charge a fee of two guineas for legal work done for voluntary regis-tration ap-plications, whether I made them on behalf of Hindus or Mahomedans. I asked the book-keeper to give me the number of such applications made by me, and it does not exceed 235. These applications involve more than two guineas worth of work. I had to examine the case of each individual applicant, then to fill in the form, to send a clerk with the man, and, in many cases to carry on voluminous correspondence with the Registration Office. This was work strictly within my province, and I have worked like any other Attorney. But, as I held the office of Secretary of the British Indian Association also, I informed Mr. Chamney that, if individual Indians came to me and wanted me to prosecute their claims before him, I charged a fee of two guineas, and asked him to convey that information to General Smuts also. This, you will see, is totally different from his statement. . .[2] that I have charged £2 from every Mahomedan for a voluntary registration certificate. . .[3] application question, passive resistance may prove a farce [sic] can only speak for myself and say that I should deserve severest condemnation even from General Smuts and all my European friends, if I, a barrister having received a liberal education, were to say that my fellow-barristers should not enter the Transvaal or any other Colony, because they were Indians. Let the education test be as severe

[1] Three lines are missing here.

[2] A word is missing here.

[3] Two lines missing

as General Smuts chooses to make it. I, for one, would today undertake to see Mr. Sorabji away and accept a test that would admit professional men, but a racial test I can never accept. What my countrymen will do in the Transvaal may be known tomorrow, or as time passes. This is the position as it stands at half past four today. I have done nothing else than discussed this question with most prominent Asiatics, and I can conclude by hoping that General Smuts will show sufficient statesmanship by not making this matter a stumbling-block. A unified South Africa is an admirable dream, but dis. . .[1] Empire, without India, is, in my opinion, an abomination, if the policy of excluding British Indian[s] from South Africa at any cost is persisted in, it can only end in disaster.

May I ask you please to read this letter carefully. If I am vague on any point, kindly ask me to explain. If you think that my presence is needed, wire for me. I [believe] that you and Mr. Hosken can bring this difficult question to a satisfactory end.

If I can [make] my meaning absolutely clear, I need not offer any apology for the length of this [letter].

I remain,
Yours truly,

A. CARTWRIGHT, ESQ.
PRETORIA CLUB
PRETORIA

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4842

254. REPLY TO "THE STAR"[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
July 16, 1908

THE EDITOR
THE STAR
SIR,

You published in your notes yesterday the statement that a settlement of the Asiatic question is probable, and you state very properly that the point (that is, of education) would not appear to be essential to the general principles involved, as educated Indians could not, outside of their own community, make an adequate pittance. I hope that the news published by you is correct.

[1] Some words missing

[2] This appeared in *Indian Opinion,* 25-7-1908, under the title "Mr. Essop Mia's Explanation".

What, however, I understand to be the situation is that, whilst the Government are willing now to repeal the Act and recognize the rights of Asiatics domiciled in the Colony before the war, they insist upon British Indians accepting total prohibition of the entry of Indians, no matter what educational attainments they may possess. This is not in the law today, as Mr. Sorabji's case has made clear. In asking us, therefore, to accept the above disqualification, the Government ask us to commit communal suicide. If the resident Asiatic population is to be fully protected, and is to be allowed to remain in the country in a becoming manner, it must be apparent to every Colonist that they will need the assistance and guidance of their educated brethren. By education I do not mean a mere knowledge of the elements of the English or any other European language, but I mean a very high degree of culture. Does anyone suppose that Indians in the Colony, the majority of whom are traders, can live with any degree of comfort, if they have not amongst them such men as I have described above ? There is not a British Colony in the world, with a resident Asiatic population, which has legislation of the kind to which our consent is now required as a condition precedent to the granting of simple justice to pre-war Indians. If the Government think that they can carry their drastic policy of exclusion, let them do so and let them at the same time recognize the other rights. If justice is on our side on the question of education, and if we have sufficient strength in us, we will win.

But, as the position stands at present, it seems to me that I and other Indians have armed ourselves with voluntary registration certificates and also yearly licences, and have placed ourselves in a better position than our other countrymen who have an equal right with us to live and trade in this Colony; and, as their position is in jeopardy, in view of the entire disregard by General Smuts of the solemn obligations undertaken by him, I feel I have erred in having been the first to take out my voluntary registration certificate and my annual licence. I, as well as other British Indians, who have taken a prominent part hitherto in the passive resistance campaign and since the compromise, have helped the Government to the best of our ability, have therefore decided, by way of protest and penance, ourselves to become hawkers and give ourselves the privilege of hawking without a licence. If, therefore, the people of Johannesburg see strange Indian faces with baskets of fruit and vegetables, they should understand that they have become unlicensed hawkers by way of protest against injustice. In taking this step with deliberation, my compatriots have no desire willingly to defy the laws of the land. It is because we have so great a respect for the laws of the country in which

we live that we have undertaken to break certain statutes, which are miscalled laws, but which can be more properly described as engines of tyranny. It is nobody's duty to submit to tyranny. The step that has now been taken is, therefore, I hold, a perfectly lawful and just one.

I am, etc.,
ESSOP ISMAIL MIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

The Star, 18-7-1908

255. WHAT WAS, AND IS, THE CAMPAIGN ABOUT?

The Transvaal campaign is likely to teach the Indians a great many lessons. It did not, and does not, aim merely at securing the repeal of the Act. It is possible to get the Act repealed. But there exist loopholes which present difficulties, so that though General Smuts is prepared to repeal the Act we are unable to give our consent.

The movement was never directed against finger-impressions as such.[1] Now, when they demand the thumb-impression on [traders']licences, under the law, the community refuses to give them. It says to the Government: "We will not agree to anything under compulsion." It would not agree even to names being signed on the applications for licences under the obnoxious Act.

What, then, does disobedience of the obnoxious law mean? That is exactly what needs to be understood. If the law is repealed and replaced by another another even worse, we shall have gained nothing. The point is that the obnoxious law puts us in fetters, and they must be broken. It fetters us because if we submit to it, we must endure all manner of harassment by the Government. How can we put up with that? Once the fetters are broken, the Government will cease enacting unwanted laws affecting us, and will consult us beforehand. Does it bind itself so to consult us? Both yes and no. It will undertake to consult us— it has done so before—so long as we are prepared to fight against it with the sword of satyagraha. It will cease to remain so bound the moment we abandon satyagraha.

The Government is prepared to safeguard the rights of those who hold the £3 registers. It also offers the right of appeal to the Supreme Court.

But it will not allow educated Indians to enter. What does this

[1] *Vide* "A Dialogue on the Compromise", 15-2-1908

mean? Many people imagine that the term "educated Indians" denotes clerks. This is a mistake. Whether or not clerks are able to come in is another question. But forbidding the entry of lawyers, physicians, etc., is an intolerable situation. The true significance of all this is that the authorities first want to please the Indians by repealing the Act and then to finish them off.

A lawyer or a physician is not worth more than a businessman or a farmer. But a trader is concerned with trade. A lawyer's duty is to fight and help others fight. There is no country in the world where the people have progressed without lawyers or physicians. Businessmen, landlords and farmers are like the torso, but lawyers and other [professional men] are like the arms of the community. The torso is the main thing. But it will be useless without the arms. The question of educated Indians, therefore, deserves serious attention. It can be asserted that the campaign that is to follow [will be launched] only on their account. That is so, indeed. How can the community ever assure the Government that it will give up the fight if educated Indians are kept out? If the community made such a mistake, it would invite scorn from India. If, on the other hand, it fights out that issue, it will win the admiration of all Indians.

This struggle is thus not aimed merely at securing the repeal of the Act. It is a conflict between the whites and the Coloured persons. The whites want to ride roughshod over us, to keep us down always as slaves. We want to be their equals.

This is the significance of the campaign and satyagraha will prove equal to its name only when every Indian has it impressed deep in his mind. The sword of satyagraha is not to be used for cutting dung cakes which is what the domiciliary rights of a handful of Transvaal Indians really are, but to pierce the violent, rock-like hatred in the hearts of the whites. This is a task which cannot be achieved Even if the Transvaal throws up a few brave Indians they will fulfil this task and cover themselves with undying glory.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-7-1908

256. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

EBB AND FLOW

The fortunes of movement are sometimes at high tide; at other they ebb. Good news alternates with bad. One moment we hear of an impending settlement the next that nothing will happen after all. On

Friday last, it was reported that the government had decided to enforce the obnoxious law. Mr. Gandhi therefore wrote the following letter[1] to the *Leader*.

Mr. Chamney notice suggests that the Government wants to bring the voluntary registrants also within the scope of the law.

If that is done, all the conditions of the compromise will be violated. Both the written agreement and the oral understanding will be undone. Alarmed at the prospect, Mr. Cartwright and Mr. Hosken have had an interview with General Smuts. It is gathered from what transpired at the interview that the rights of those who hold the £3 [Dutch registration certificates] and the other refugees[2] can be saved. The right of appeal may also be allowed, but the rights of educated persons cannot be saved. The obnoxious Act will not apply to voluntary registrants. This is what has been reported. But one need not base any hopes on this report. All we can depend on ultimately is our own strength. *The* [*Transvaal*] *Leader* of Monday reported that, since the law was to be enforced, the municipalities had been asked to send to the Colonial Secretary the names of traders or hawkers who were doing business without licences, so that these persons might be prosecuted.

This threw the Indians into a panic and they swarmed to the municipal office like locusts. Thumb-impressions were asked for, and they gave these readily. They felt so exultant when they received the licences that one would have thought they had achieved something really remarkable. Their pledge not to submit to the Act was completely forgotten. For the thumb-impressions were given under the Act. In reply to arguments by the pickets at the gate they said: "Gandhi made the people give 18 digit-impressions; what is wrong with our giving two thumb-impressions,?" For there were now 16 impressions less! Many persons reasoned with these men, but to no avail. Thus were [at once] exemplified the ignorance about and the beauty of satyagraha. Ignorance, because people compared the giving of 18 digit-impressions voluntarily with the giving of two thumb-impressions [compulsorily] under the law. Beauty, because satyagraha can be waged continuously. That some persons have abandoned it should not come in the way of the others who have not forsaken it. Though many Indians have given their thumb-impressions, there are many others who are unyielding. They know that it is wrong to give thumb-imp-

[1] This is not reproduced here; for the English text of the letter, *vide* "Letter to *The Transvaal Leader*", 10-7-1908

[2] Should refer Only to those who left the Colony during the Boer War and later wanted to return, for not all holders of *£3* Dutch registration certificates were refugees.

ressions. Even [one's] signature should not be given under the law. In fact, many persons, having gone to the municipality, returned [without giving thumb-impressions]. A number of them continue boldly to trade without licences, holding themselves in readiness for gaol [life].

Thus those who are now ready to go to gaol are true satyagrahis for it is in the interests of others that they are offering satyagraha.

And who are these others? (1) Those who are in possession of £3 registers; (2) refugees; (3) those whose applications Chamney is still holding up; and (4) educated Indians.

EDUCATED INDIANS

The fight now is really on behalf of the educated Indians. And it is a just cause to fight for. It is General Smuts' intention to reduce the Indians to slavery by keeping out the educated among them. How can this be allowed? How can the Indian community agree to this wrongful denial of the rights of educated [Asiatics to enter the Colony]? Everyone assents to this argument and admits that it wouldbe a dishonour for the Indians to do so.

The proposed movement can be carried on even if Indians do not join it in their thousands. If 500 Indians of true mettle, prepared for the worst, take the field, Indian honour will be vindicated. There was a suggestion that Mr. Jinnah, Bar-at-Law, be invited to join [the campaign]. Should the Indian community now agree [to the Act], as he may not be allowed to come? Mr. Dawad Mahomed's son is in England for his studies. Should he not be able to return after completing them? Must it only be through Mr. Smuts' grace that he should be able to come back? Mr. Joseph Royeppen is due to return in a few days. He was born in South Africa but he cannot come in either. How can the Indian community countenance all this? It should be borne in mind that it is being asked to assent to all these restrictions. It would be a different matter if they were to pass a law to this effect on their own. We could then fight against it, if possible. But what Indian can say that he will not mind, that he is agreeable to, the enactment of such a law?

INDIANS' ENEMIES

But why is it that such difficulties arise constantly? The answer is that there are certain Indians who have become enemies of the community. They tell General Smuts that the Indian community has no fight left in it, that everyone will submit to the Act, that the talk of burning [The registers] is mere bragging, that everyone will take out licences and give thumb-impressions, that it is Mr. Gandhi and a few other Indians who are the cause of the mischief, that the others have

no grievances. These reports are welcome to General Smuts; he believes them, with the result that Indians suffer. If all the Indians are in fact prepared to submit to the Act, it is only right that the law should apply to them.

But I believe that there are only a few Indians who accept the Act. Letters continue to come in from many towns, such as Barberton, Christiana, Volksrust, Vereeniging, Nylstroom, Heidelberg, Germiston, to say that Indians are steadfast and will fight for these rights. There are many Indians in these towns who have not taken out licences and do not mean to. So long as this spirit persists, Indians will not suffer defeat. What is reported to General Smuts, and by whom, will make no difference.

SORABJI

Sorabji has been wonderful. He has come all the way from Charlestown just to go to gaol. By the time people have a copy of this paper he may already have been installed in gaol. Let every Indian understand that, after sending him to gaol, the Indian community should not forgo any of the rights we have discussed above.

MASS MEETING

A mass meeting will be held on Sunday. Registers will not be burnt at this meeting, not yet. Many rumours are current, so that the wisest course will be to wait till General Smuts publishes his draft Bill and then to burn the registers, and meanwhile to prepare for any eventuality. There is no reason to fear that he will play foul if we wait. That is not how deceit is practised. For double-crossing can have no effect on a satyagrahi, as he does not depend on others in his fight. After the draft Bill is published, we can make a bonfire of the certificates and warm ourselves by it. The Bill has first to appear in the *Gazette* be discussed in Parliament and receive Royal assent in England before it can come into force. In the meantime, we can try and cope with the situation. But all those Indians who are firm in their determination [to resist the Act] had better send in their registers immediately to the British Indian Association.

LACK OF FUNDS

This movement does not require much money. But a small sum will certainly be necessary. The Association's reserves have been badly. depleted, with the result that cables cannot be sent to England or India as often as desired. It is, therefore, necessary for every Committee and every Indian to send in as much money as possible. Barberton Indians have sent letters and telegrams of encouragement

and also remitted £10 by draft.

ESSOP MIA AS HAWKER

On Tuesday evening, Mr. Essop Mia called a meeting, asking Mr. Gandhi to stay away. It was attended by nearly 200 Indians. The meeting decided most emphatically that Indians should never agree to the exclusion of educated Indians from the Transvaal. Mr. Essop Mia applied for a hawker's licence to give a stimulus to the movement and to forgo the protection afforded him by his voluntary registration certificate and trade licence. Since he refused to give thumb-impressions, he was not issued the licence he had asked for. Mr. Essop Mia will now make his rounds as a hawker without a licence and visit the houses of prominent whites to sell them fruit. He will carry a small basket with him. He thus wants to challenge the Government to arrest him. His spirit has infected numerous other Indians. The Chairman of the Hamidia Islamic Society and other Indian leaders will follow suit. Some educated Indians have also decided to do the same. If the spirit is maintained, the fight will have an early end. A community that has such brave men will never have to give in. A new spirit is abroad in the community, and the great significance of the movement is being realized in increasing measure.

PICKETS READY AGAIN

The following Indians have volunteered to picket and dissuade people from going to the municipality to take out licences after giving their thumb-impressions: Messrs Bhaiji Ebrahim, Ali Ismail, Mulji G. Patel, Ali Umar, Ranchhod Mitha, Bagas Bapu and others.

LATE NEWS

The Star has reported that the Government will seek a settlement even in regard to educated persons.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-7-1908

257. SARVODAYA [*-IX*]

WHAT IS JUST?

We saw in the three preceding chapters that the generally accepted principles of economics are invalid. If acted upon, they will make individuals and nations unhappy. The poor will become poorer and the rich richer; neither will be any the happier for it.

Economists do not take men's conduct into account but

estimate prosperity from the amount of wealth accumulated and so conclude that the happiness of nations depends upon their wealth alone. Hence they advocate greater accumulation of wealth through more and more work in factories. In England and elsewhere factories have multiplied because of the spread of these ideas. Large numbers of men leave their farms and concentrate in cities. They give up the pure and fresh air of the countryside and feel happy breathing the foul air of factories. As a result, the nation grows weaker, and avarice and immorality increase, and if someone suggests measures for eradicating vice, the so-called wise men argue that vice cannot be eliminated, that the ignorant cannot be educated all at once and that it is best to let things alone. While advancing this argument, they forget that it is the rich who are responsible for the immorality of the poor. The wretched workers slave for them day and night so that they may be kept supplied with their luxuries. They have not a moment to themselves for self-improvement. Thinking about the rich, they also want to be rich. When they fail in this, they become angry and resentful. They then forget themselves [in their anger], and having failed to gather wealth by honest means, turn in desperation to fraud. Both wealth and labour are thus wasted, else they are utilized for promoting fraud.

Labour, in the real sense of the term, is that which produces useful articles. Useful articles are those which support human life. Supporting human life means provision of food, clothing, etc., so as to enable men to live a moral life and to do good while they live. For this purpose, large-scale industrial undertakings would appear to be useless. To seek to acquire wealth by establishing big factories is likely to lead to sin. Many people amass wealth but few make good use of it. If the making of money is likely to lead a nation to its destruction, that money is useless. On the contrary, present-day capitalists are responsible for widespread and unjust wars. Most of the wars of our times spring from greed for money.

We hear people say that it is impossible to educate others so as to improve them, and the best course would be to live as well as one could and accumulate wealth. Those he hold these views show little concern for ethical principles. For the person who values ethical principles and does not yield to avarice has a disciplined mind; he does not tray from the right path, and influences others merely by his example. If the individuals who constitute a nation do not observe moral principles of conduct how can the nation become moral? If we behave as we choose and then point the accusing finger at an errant neighbour, how can the result [of our actions] be good?

We thus see that money no more than a means which may make

for happiness or misery. In the hands of a good man, it can be used for cultivating land and raising crops. Cultivators will find contentment in innocent labour and the nation will be happy. In the hands of bad men, it is used for the production, say, of gun-powder and bringing utter ruin on the people. Both those who manufacture gunpowder and those who fall victims to it suffer in consequence. We thus see that there is no wealth besides life. That nation is wealthy Which is moral. This not the time for self-indulgence. Everyone must work according to his ability. As we saw in the illustrations earlier, if one man remains idle another has to labour twice as hard.[1] This is at the root of the starvation prevalent in England. There are men who do little useful work themselves because of the wealth that has accumulated in their hands, and so force others to labour for them. This kind of labour, being unproductive, is not beneficial to the worker. In consequence, the income suffers diminution. Though all men appear to be employed, we find on closer scrutiny that a large number are idle perforce. Moreover, envy is aroused, discontent takes root and, in the end, the rich and the poor, the employer and the workman violate the bounds of decency [in their mutual relations]. As the cat and the mouse are always at variance with each other, so the rich and the poor, the employer and the workman become hostile to one another, and man, ceasing to be man, is reduced to the level of beasts.

CONCLUSION

Our summary of the great Ruskin's book is now concluded. Though some may have been bored by it, we advise those who have read the articles once to read them again. It will be too much to expect that all the readers of *Indian Opinion* will ponder over them and act on them. But even if a law readers make a careful study of the summary and grasp the central idea, we shall deem our labour to have been amply rewarded. Even if that does not happen, the reward [of labour], as Ruskin says in the last chapter, consists in having done one's duty and that should satisfy one.

What Ruskin wrote for his countrymen, the British, is a thousand times more applicable to Indians. New ideas are spreading in India. The advent of a new spirit among the young who have received western education is of course to be welcomed. But the outcome will be beneficial only if that spirit is canalized properly; if it is not, it is bound to be harmful. From one side we hear the cry for swarajya; from another, for the quick accumulation of wealth by setting up factories like those in Britain.

[1] *Vide* "Sarvodaya [-VI]", 20-6-1908

Our people hardly understand what swarajya means. Natal enjoys swarajya, but we would say that, if we were to imitate Natal, swarajya would be no better than hell. [The Natal whites] tyrannize over the Kaffirs, hound out the Indians, and in their blindness give free rein to selfishness. If, by chance, Kaffirs and Indians were to leave Natal, they would destroy themselves in a civil war.

Shall we, then, hanker after the kind of swarajya which obtains in the Transvaal? General Smuts is one of their leading figures. He does not keep any promise, oral or written. He says one thing, does another. The British are disgusted with him. Under the guise of effecting economy, he has deprived British soldiers of livelihood and has been replacing them with Dutchmen. We do not believe that in the long run this will make even the Dutch happy. Those who serve only their own interests will be ready to rob their own-people after they have done with robbing others.

If we observe happenings all over the world, we shall be able to see that what people call swarajya is not enough [to secure] the nation's prosperity and happiness. We can perceive this by means of a simple example. All of us can visualize what would happen if a band of robbers were to enjoy swarajya. In the long run they would be happy only if they were placed under the control of men who were not themselves robbers. America, France and England are all great States. But there is no reason to think that they are really happy.

Real swarajya consists in restraint. He alone is capable of this who leads a moral life, does not cheat anyone, does not forsake truth and does his duty to his parents, his wife, his children, his servant and his neighbour. Such a man will enjoy swarajya wherever he may happen to live. A nation that has many such men always enjoys swarajya.

It is wrong normally for one nation to rule over another. British rule in India is an evil but we need not believe that any very great advantage would accrue to the Indians if the British were to leave India. The reason why they rule over us is to be found in ourselves; that reason is our disunity, our immorality and our ignorance.[1]

If these three things were to disappear, not only would the British leave India without the rustling of a leaf, but it would be real swarajya that we would enjoy.

Many people exult at the explosion of bombs.[2] This only shows

[1] *Vide* "The Deputation's Voyage—II", 11-10-1906

[2] Gandhiji may have been thinking of the Muzaffarpur bomb incident; *vide* "Turmoil in India",9-5-1908

ignorance and lack of understanding. If all the British were to be killed, those who kill them would become the masters of India, and as a result India would continue in a state of slavery. The bombs with which the British will have been killed will fall on India after the British leave. The man who killed the President of the French Republic was himself a Frenchman and the assassin of President Cleveland of America was an American.[1] We ought to be careful, therefore, not to be hasty and thoughtlessly to imitate the people of the West.

Just as we cannot achieve real swarajya, by following the path of evil—that is by killing the British—so also will it not be possible for us to achieve it by establishing big factories in India. Accumulation of gold and silver will not bring swarajya. This has been convincingly proved by Ruskin.

Let it be remembered that western civilization is only a hundred years old, or to be more precise, fifty. Within this short span the western people appear to have been reduced to a state of cultural anarchy. We pray that India may never be reduced to the same state as Europe. The western nations are impatient to fall upon one another, and are restrained only by the accumulation of armaments all round. When [the situation] flares up, we will witness a veritable hell let loose in Europe. All [white] nations look upon the black races as their legitimate prey. This is inevitable when money is the only thing that matters. Wherever they find any territory, they swoop down on it like crows upon carrion. There are reasons to suggest that this is the outcome of their large industrial undertakings.

To conclude, the demand of swarajya is the demand of every Indian, and it is a just demand. But swarajya is to be achieved by righteous means. It must be real swarajya. It cannot be achieved by violent methods or by setting up factories. We must have industry, but of the right kind. India was once looked upon as a golden land, because Indians then were people of sterling worth. The land is still the same but the people have changed and that is why it has become arid. To transform it into a golden land again we must transmute ourselves into gold by leading a life of virtue. The philosophers' stone which can bring this about consists of two syllables: *satya*. If,

[1] President Cleveland died a natural death. Gandhiji may have had Lincoln in mind; *vide* "Abraham Lincoln", 26-8-1905

therefore, every Indian makes it a point to follow truth always, India will achieve swarajya as a matter of course.

This is the substance of Ruskin's book.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-7-1908

258. LETTER TO "THE STAR"[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
July 18, 1908

THE EDITOR,
THE STAR
SIR,

With your informant, who states that the Mahomedans of the Transvaal will not, in order to revive the Asiatic struggle, follow the advice that may be tendered to destroy or refrain from using trading licences already issued, in common with others of their compatriots, the wish seems to have been father to the thought.

I have the honour to represent the Hamidia Islamic Society of the Transvaal, and I am not aware of a Mahomedan dissentient. They hold the honour of India and their educated countrymen just as dearly as any Indian. In point of fact, my co-religionists have stronger objections to the Asiatic Act than the other Indians, for the simple reason that it constitutes a direct attack on Mahomedanism, and offers a deliberate insult to the Caliph of the Faithful, His Imperial Majesty the Sultan of Turkey, who is the spiritual head of Islam, as His Majesty the King-Emperor is the temporal head of the citizens of the British Empire.

That three Mahomedans gave thumb-impressions to the Licensing Officer means nothing, except that they did not know what they were doing. The Government have not sufficiently appreciated the service rendered by the Indian community when they gave finger-impressions voluntarily; and now the people take time before they understand that the giving of thumb-impressions to the Licensing Officer is not the same thing as giving finger-impressions under the voluntary arrangement. The act performed before the Licensing Officer is a symbol of the Act which we have forsworn. And it is beca-

[1] This was presumably drafted by Gandhiji and was republished in *lndian Opinion,* 25-7-1908, under the title "The Mahomedans' Position".

use we wish to lodge a tangible protest against the Government's action in dealing dishonestly with us, that 1, as well as others of my countrymen, whether Mahomedans, Hindus, or Christians, have taken up hawking without licences as a privilege, unused though we are to the occupation.

I am, etc.,
IMAM A. K. BAWAZEER
CHAIRMAN,
HAMIDIA ISLAMIC SOCIETY

The Star, 18-7-1908

259. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO CHAPLIN[1]

July 20, 1908

. . . The Indians did not ask for anything new at all under the Immigrants' Restriction Act. Indians with educational attainments can enter not as a matter of form, but as a matter of right. It is General Smuts who now asks Indians to consent to an alteration of that law so as to make such Indians prohibited immigrants. . .

India Office, judicial and Public Records: 3722/08

260. TRIAL OF SORABJI SHAPURJI-III

[JOHANNESBURG,
July 20, 1908]

In B Court, on Monday last, the 20th instant, before Mr. H. H. Jordan, Mr. Sorabji Shapurji appeared charged with failing to obey the Magistrate's order to leave the Colony within seven days of the 10th instant, under Section 7 of the Peace Preservation Ordinance. Mr. Cramer prosecuted, and Mr. M. K. Gandhi appeared for the defence. The accused pleaded not guilty. . . .

Superintendent J. G. Vernon stated that he arrested the accused at 7 a.m. on the 20th instant in the Malay Location. He arrested him for not producing a certificate or authority to reside in the Colony after the warning received from the Court to leave within seven days from the 10th instant. The accused replied that he did not intend to leave. Witness handed in a number of copies of the *Gazette* containing the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, the regulations thereunder, and notices regarding its enforcement.

Cross-examined, [he said that] a letter had been sent by Mr. Gandhi to the

[1] This is taken from a precis of events in the Transvaal sent by Ritch along with his letter of October 6, 1908 to the Colonial Office.

Deputy Commissioner of Police stating that the accused was prepared to attend the Court at any time his presence was required. Asked why then accused had been arrested, witness replied that he did not accept instructions from anyone except his superior officers. He had received instructions to arrest the accused and had used

his own discretion in arresting him that morning at 7 a.m., which was the time most convenient to witness. Accused had been kept in custody ever since. This closed the case for the Crown.

The accused, giving evidence on his own behalf, stated that, after receiving the notice to leave the Colony, he had remained in the Colony and had told Superin-tendent Vernon that it was not his desire to leave. He did not now wish to leave the Colony, and he was there to suffer the penalties for disobeying the order of the Court. He was a British subject, and as long as he shared the full responsibility as a subject of the British Empire he considered that he had every right to remain in the Transvaal.

Cross-examined [he said] he had disobeyed the order of the Court, and all along intended to disobey it.

This closed the case for the defence.

Addressing the Court, Mr. Gandhi said he wished to draw His Worship's attention to the fact that that was going to be a very terrible struggle for British Indians in the Transvaal, and in connection with that trial several Indians who were waiting outside to enter the Court House were hustled about and were assaulted also.[1]

THE MAGISSTRATE: I know nothing about that, and I cannot take an. *ex parte* statement. There are quite enough in the Court now to make it uncomfortable.

MR. GANDHI: That is so, but there are a lot outside.

THE MAGISSTRATE: The Court can only hold a certain number.

MR. GANDHI: It is a question of handling the thing properly. The Court House is within Your Worship's jurisdiction, and I think I might be allowed to make a statement about the matter.

THE MAGISSTRATE: All I can say is that the Court is uncomfortably full.

Mr. Gandhi then proceeded to refer to the case, which, he stated, was very Simple. (THE MAGISSTRATE: "Very simple.") He only wished to draw His Worship's attention to the fact that his client, rightly or wrongly, believed that it was a matter of principle to remain in the Colony, and he claimed his right to remain in the Colony under the Immigrants' Restriction Act. His client had felt aggrieved that he had been called upon to accept the Asiatic Amendment Act. He had failed to leave the Colony, and he had told the Court that he could not possibly obey an order that was

[1] Indians wishing to enter the Court were brutally ill-treated by the Police "without any provocation", according to a special report in *Indian Opinion, 25*-7-1908. A constable, whose name was being taken down by G. K. Desai, struck the latter a heavy blow on the face. Affidavits about the Police assault were filed with the Police Commissioner by H. S. L. Polak, Attorney of the Supreme Court, among others.

issued under the Asiatic Amendment Act. The accused wished to suffer for the sake of principle. He had chosen between his conscience and the order of the Court, and lie had chosen by his conscience.

THE MAGISSTRATE: One month with hard labour.

Indian Opinion, 25-7-1908

261. SPEECH IN JOHANNESBURG

[*July 20, 1908*]

. . . At the conclusion of the Court proceeding[1], Mr. Gandhi addressed the crowd outside his office.

Mr. Sorabji, he pointed out, had gone to gaol because of a principle and not to open the gates of the Transvaal to the unrestricted immigration of Asiatics. He had come in under the Immigration Act in order to pass the educational test of that Act which made no distinction as to race, class or colour. He had studied English for seven years, but he now found that all his English was of no avail, notwithstanding that the Immigration Act was general in its application and that he was a British subject in a British Colony.

The next step, continued Mr. Gandhi, was for those Indians who possessed licences to return them and stand the consequence of being arrested for trading without licences and going to gaol; also for them to return their certificates. It was only by showing that they were willing to undergo communal suffering and not to avail themselves of any present privileges that they could bring conviction to the minds of the European community that they were fighting for principle. He repeated that the Colonial Secretary had promised unconditionally to repeal the Asiatic Act provided the Asiatics registered voluntarily, but this promise had not been kept.

Before the Indians broke up, some handed over their trading licences and several their registration certificates, and it is expected that this example will be largely followed. The Indians, we Understand, are indignant at the manner in which the police cleared them away from the entrance to the Police Court during the after noon, and also at the sentence passed on Mr. Sorabji, contending that hard labour should not have been given for what they consider a political offence.

Indian Opinion, 25-7-1908

[1] In the case of Sorabji Shapurji earlier in the afternoon

262. CABLE TO S.A.B.I. COMMITTEE

JOHANNESBURG,
July 20, 1908

[AFRICALIA
LONDON]

SORABJI SHAPURJI SENTENCED MONTH HARD LABOUR DISOBEYING ORDER LEAVE COLONY. ENTERED UNDER IMMIGRATION ACT HAVING EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS. CHARGED NOT REGISTERING UNDER ASIATIC ACT. WAS WILLING VOLUNTARILY REGISTER. COMMUNITY CONSIDERS PROCEEDINGS HARSH REACTIONARY. HAWKERS ARRESTED TRADING WITHOUT LICENSES WHICH COULD NOT GET BECAUSE WOULD NOT ACCEPT ASIATIC ACT. CHAIRMAN ASSOCIATION OTHER PROMINENT INDIANS AS PROTEST NOW HAWKING WITHOUT LICENSES. COMMUNITY REQUIRES NO MORE THAN PROTECTION PRE-WAR REFUGEES AND RECOGNITION HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS. GOVERNMENT SAY WE SHOULD ABANDON THESE AGAINST REPEAL ACT. INDIANS DETERMINED SUFFER PENALTIES UNTIL REDRESS SECURED.

M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records : 291/132

263. LETTER TO A. CARTWRIGHT

[JOHANNESBURG,]
July 20, 1908

DEAR MR. CARTWRIGHT,

This is just to tell you that prosecutions have now started. Mr. Sorabji was sentenced to one month's imprisonment *with hard labour* virtually for non-submission to the Asiatic Act. Several hawkers nave been arrested for hawking without licences. They will, so far as I am aware, elect to go to gaol.

I hope you will not resent my troubling you with my letters.

Yours sincerely,

ALBERT CARTWRIGHT, ESQ.
PRETORIA CLUB
PRETORIA

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 4846

264. TRIAL OF EBRAHIM ISMAIL AND SULIMAN BAGAS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
July *20, 1908*]

On Monday last, Ebrahim Ismail and Suliman Bagas were brought before Mr. P. C. Dalmahoy in D Court, Johannesburg, charged with hawking without licences. Mr. Shaw prosecuted, and Mr. Gandhi appeared for the defence.

The first accused did not appear, and his bail was estreated, though Mr. Gandhi asked that the case might be remanded so that the accused might appear the following day.

Suliman Bagas pleaded not guilty. Police evidence was led to the effect that, at 3-30 p.m. on the 18th instant, accused was exposing fruit for sale on the Village Main Reef property. There were several Natives about. Accused was selling fruit from a basket. Witness saw accused sell bananas and oranges. He watched accused for 25 minutes. He asked accused for his licence, and the latter produced one that had expired on June 30, but he did not have one for the current quarter. He was hawking within the municipal area.

Cross-examined, [he said] he had received instructions to arrest all such men. He did not know whether accused had already applied for a licence.

This closed the case for the Prosecution.

Accused, giving evidence on his behalf, stated that he had applied for a renewal of the licence, but he had been asked to give his thumb-impression under the Registration Act, and as he had refused to do so, he had not been able to obtain a licence.

Mr. Gandhi then stated that he wished to give evidence. It would not be political, but would be entirely relevant to the matter before the Court. His client had not received a licence because instructions had been issued to the Municipality that all Asiatics applying for licences should undergo the formalities prescribed under the Asiatic Law Amendment Act. In the month of January there was a settlement arrived at between the Government and the Asiatic communities whereby those who voluntarily registered were not to come under the Asiatic Act. His client had voluntarily registered, and because he had now been called upon to accept the Asiatic Act, under a resolution passed by the British Indian Association, accused, in common with other Indians, had tendered the licence fee but had declined to accept the formalities of the Act.

The Magistrate inquired of the Prosecutor whether he had received any

[1] This was published in *Indian Opinion* under the title "Hawkers Arrested: They Go to Gaol".

instructions in these cases. Mr. Shaw replied in the negative. There were some, some months ago.

The Magistrate ordered that the case should be put back until Wednesday, pending inquiry.

Indian Opinion, 25-7-1908

265. SPEECH AT MASS MEETING

[JOHANNESBURG,
July 20, 1908]

We have been informed through Mr. Cartwright that the Government Will agree to a settlement if we do not insist on the rights of educated [Asiatics]. But all of you resolved at a previous meetingthat you would agitate for the cause of the educated. Your decision is commendable. We certainly cannot agree to the abolition of the rights of educated Asiatics. Notices were published by the Government in newspapers to the effect that the [Asiatic Registration] Act would stay, and also that those who refused to take out licences would be puni-shed in accordance with that law. We cannot take out licences at this juncture, for the Government demands thumb-impressions from us under the law. If they had been asked for outside the law, that is, an a voluntary basis, I myself would have advised [that they should be given]. But under the law I cannot advise anyone to give even his signature. There are many persons who allege that I have charged a fee of two guineas each from Hindus as well as Muslims. Can anyone at this meeting [come forward and] tell me if I have accepted fees from any of them? The Government blames me for needlessly inciting the people. Whatever the Government may say, my duty is to place the facts as they are before my brethren. So I go on doing my duty, regardless of the Government's accusations. To those who were frightened by the Government notices into taking out licences, I must say that they should not make use of them but court arrest and thereby fill the gaols as they did in January. By doing so they will humble the Government. Many have sought to dissuade the Chairman[1] from going the rounds as a hawker. That was not a nice thing to have done. Those who assume the garb of hawkers-not indeed in the service of self-interest but for the sake of others' interests-ought to be proud rather than ashamed of themselves. I am

[1] Essop Mia

proud to have such a Chairman. I am sure you are too. We have now no alternative but to go to gaol. The leaders of all communities must go round collecting licences and registers. The burning of registers has been postponed for the time being, but their collection need not be. As for the issue of the educated Asiatics, I must repeat that we must fight it out. If we do not fight for men like Mr. Jinnah, Bar-at-Law, Mr. justice Ameer Ali or Prince Ranjit Singh, or others equally well educated, we will be at Mr. Chamney's mercy. I leave [the decision in] this matter to your own inclination. This fight requires only courage. Courage by itself constitutes an assurance of victory. All that need be done now is for everyone to take the plunge, armed only with courage. We must thus prove ourselves to be brave men. If we do so, our demands are bound to be conceded.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-7-1908

266. TRIAL OF ISMAIL AKOOJEE AND OTHERS

[JOHANNESBURG,
July 21, 1908]

On Tuesday, the 21st instant, in the same Court [before Mr. P. C. Dalmahoy in D Court], Ismail Akoojee was charged with trading without a licence. He pleaded not guilty. Mr. Gandhi appeared for the defence.

J. B. Barret stated that he was a Licensing Inspector under the Johannesburg Municipality. On the previous day, on the Market Square, within the Municipal area, he had seen accused exposing fruit for sale. He had asked accused for his licence, but the latter had replied that he did not have one.

Cross-examined, [he said] he did not know anything about Government instructions.

T. H. Jefferson stated that he was Chief Licensing Inspector of the Municipality of Johannesburg. He produced *Government Gazettes* containing the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, the regulations thereunder, and the notices thereunder authorizing him to prosecute. He had seen a letter addressed to the Town Clerk by the Registrar of Asiatics, dated the 7th instant, stating that the Asiatic Law Amendment Act was to remain on the Statute-book, and that no licences were to be renewed or issued except to Asiatics who produced registration certificates and gave thumb-prints under the Act.

Cross-examined, he recollected that, in January last, several prosecutions took place, and that Asiatics were then sentenced.

In the month of February the Government had issued instructions to him to

issue licences to all Asiatics who produced a letter from the Registrar of Asiatics acknowledging having received an application for voluntary registration. Such Asiatics were not called upon to give any thumb-impressions at all. It was competent then for him to give licences for the quarter ended March 31, and afterwards he was authorized to issue licences to the quarter ended June 30. He did not think that any licences had been issued from his Department for the whole year. The instructions contained in the letter of the 7th instant were the revised and most recent ones. He admitted that many Asiatics had produced voluntary registration certificates but had declined to give thumb-impressions.

[MAGISSTRATE:] If thumb-impressions are refused?

JEFFERSON: I refuse to give licences. The registration certificate must be produced.

Witness did not think that there had been any refusal to produce registration certificates. Registration certificates had not been produced only by those who had not received them.

In reply to the Magistrate, witness stated that it was unnecessary up to the end of June to give thumb-impressions. There had been no intimation thereafter of that requirement until Asiatics came to apply for licences. There was nothing in the *Gazette* as to not giving thumb-marks up to the end of June. That appeared to be an act of grace on the part of the Government.

This closed the case for the Crown.

Accused giving evidence on his own behalf stated that he had applied for a licence during the current month. He had offered the licence-fee. The licence was refused to him because they wanted his thumb-impression under the Act which he had refused to give. He had the licence up to the end of June and also a voluntary registration certificate.

Cross-examined, [he said] he was not hawking without a licence at the time stated, but was walking along with his fruit in a basket on his way to the fruit store. He was not looking for customers. He admitted, however, that he had been hawking in the morning without a licence. This closed the case for the defence.

Mr. Gandhi, addressing the Court said that he really had very little more to say than what he had said in evidence the previous afternoon. It appeared that the Government had first issued one set of instructions and afterwards another and the position was that the Indians did not know where they were. If the Government wished to proceed, they should proceed against those who Were the leaders and not against men like the accused.

Accused was sentenced to pay a fine of 10s or to go to gaol [for] four days with hard labour.

Similar sentences were imposed on Moosa Essop, Hari Bhikha, Dyah Parag, Saleji Bemath, Ismail Ebrahim, Keshav Goolab, and Nagar Morar, who were also defended by Mr. Gandhi.

Ahmed Essop Dowd was also similarly charged, but did not answer to his name when called, and his bail was estreated. A few minutes afterwards he entered the Court and stated that he had not heard his name called. Mr. Gandhi asked that his bail might be refunded, but the Magistrate stated that he did not have the power to do this.

Indian Opinion, 25-7-1908

267. CABLE TO S.A.B.I. COMMITTEE

[JOHANNESBURG,
July 21, 1908][1]

[AFRICALIA
LONDON]

FOUR MAHOMEDAN FOUR HINDU HAWKERS ELECTED TO GO GAOL HARD LABOUR TRADING WITHOUT LICENSES. THESE TENDERED LICENSE FEE BUT REFUSED COMPLY FORMALITIES ASIATIC ACT. CHAIRMAN HAMIDIA SOCIETY FIVE OTHER PROMINENT INDIANS ARRESTED SIMILAR CHARGE REFUSED BEING BAILED. CHAIRMAN BELONGS MAHOMEDAN PRIESTLY CLASS. PROFOUND SENSATION.

M. K. GANDHI

India Office, judicial and Public Records: 2896/08

268. SUMMARY OF LETTER TO GENERAL SMUTS[2]

July 21, 1908

Mr. Gandhi, in a letter to General Smuts, points out that, while so many of the rank and file of the community are suffering imprisonment under the Registration Act, he himself, who has also not taken out a certificate, and is the chief instrument in his countrymen having done what they have, is still at large. He asks, "Is it courageous to leave me alone and to harass poor Indians?" He reasserts his eagerness to serve the people of the Transvaal generally as to serve his own countrymen.

India Office, judicial and Public Records: 3722/08

[1] It was on Tuesday, July 21, 1908, that Bawazeer was arrested. This cable was sent as an annexure to Ritch's letter of July 22, 1908 to the India Office.

[2] The passage above is from a precis of events Ritch sent to the Colonial office as an annexure to his letter of October 6, 1908. The original letter itself is not available.

269. LETTER TO A. CARTWRIGHT

[JOHANNESBURG,]
July 21, 1908

DEAR MR. CARTWRIGHT,

Eight Indian hawkers, four Mahomedans and four Hindus, have gone to gaol today for four days' imprisonment for hawking without licences.[1] The imprisonment was with hard labour. Mr. Imam Abdul Cader, Chairman of the Hamidia Islamic Society, Mr. T. Naidoo, co-signatory with me to the letter sent from the gaol, and four others have also been arrested for hawking without licences. These last are all gentlemen who, in the ordinary walk of life, are not hawkers, but they have taken. to it by way of protest. The arrest of Imam Abdul Cader will create a sensation, not only in South Africa, but throughout India. The word "Imam" means "priest". His vocation was, and still is very often, that of priest at the Mosque, and the position of Chairman of the Hamidia Islamic Society is also a very responsible one.

I am,
Yours sincerely,

ALBERT CARTWRIGHT, ESQ.
PRETORIA

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 4853

270. TRIAL OF BAWAZEER, NAIDOO AND OTHERS

[JOHANNESBURG,
July 21, 1908]

Early on Tuesday morning Mr. Thambi Naidoo, a member of the Committee of the British Indian Association, and on Tuesday afternoon, Mr. Imam Abdool Cadir Bawazeer, Chairman of the Hamidia Islamic Society, Messrs G. P. Vyas, Mahomed Ebrahim Kunkey, M. G. Patel and G. K. Desai were arrested for hawking without a licence. They refused to be bailed out and were brought before the Court on Wednesday. There were charged with trading without having proper licences.

J. B. Barnett[2],Inspector of Licences, stated he arrested the accused at 2-30 P.M. yesterday[3] at the corner of Market and Simmonds Streets. They stated they had not taken out licences.

Mr. Gandhi, who defended, called Imam Abdool Cadir Bawazeer, who said, in

[1] *Vide* "Trial of Ismail Akoojee and Others", 21-7-1908
[2] "Barnett"?
[3] July 21, 1908, the day before the trial

reply to his question, that he was chairman of the Hamidia Islamic Society and the Assistant Priest of the Indian Mosque. He had lately taken to hawking.

[GANDHIJI:] Will you explain to the Court why?

[BAWAZEER:] Because there was a compromise between General Smuts and some of the Indian leaders . . . .

The Crown Prosecutor intervened, and asked if the witness knew this of his own knowledge.

THE MAGISSTRATE: Has he got permission from the Colonial Secretary to hawk without a licence?

MR. GANDHI : No.

Continuing, Mr. Gandhi said the reason why he wanted to lead evidence was just the same as that he gave yesterday. The Court had a right to know, he thought, why a gentleman occupying the position of the accused had taken to hawking.

The Magistrate said it was not a matter which concerned the Court.

Mr. Gandhi replied that, if that was not a question of interest, it was a question of justice.

Witness, continuing, said that when the compromise was effected he assisted in fulfilling it, but he now found that the compromise, so far as the Government was concerned, was not being properly fulfilled, and as a protest he took to hawking without a licence.

The Magistrate asked : Was he one of the 14 people exempted?

Mr. Gandhi said he did not know of any exemptions. If there were people exempted, they were in a most fortunate position.

The Crown Prosecutor said there were a certain number of exemptions, and witness would probably know if he was exempt.

Mr. Gandhi said he had not the slightest information of any exemption. His position was that his client felt aggrieved and decided to suffer with his poorer countrymen because they were suddenly called upon to submit to the Asiatic Act, having complied with voluntary registration. They thought they would not be called upon to do so.

THE MAGISSTRATE: You took to hawking lately to put yourself in the same position as the hawkers?

ACCUSED : I took to hawking to defend my people.

MR. GANDHI: You are one of the people who assisted the Government in carrying out the compromise?

[ACCUSED:] Yes; I endeavoured to explain to my own people what the compromise was, and I told them if they complied with voluntary registration, they would not be called upon to submit.

[GANDHIJI:] And the members of the Society you represent followed your advice and took out voluntary registration certificates?

[ACCUSED :] Yes.

In further examination, the witness said he had seen a circular in connection with hawkers who did not comply with the Act. He was married and had a wife and children residing in Johannesburg, and he had resided there himself for 13 years.

THE EXEMPTIONS

Mr. T. H. Jefferson, Chief Inspector of Licences, called by Mr. Gandhi, stated he had got a list of names of people who were exempted from having to comply with the terms of the Act. They were not compelled to give thumb-impressions. He could not recall the names and he only got the list yesterday. He did not know if any of the accused were exempt.

Mr. Gandhi, in his address to the Court, said the only point he would deal with was the question of exemptions. He asked the Court to take note of the arbitrary proceedings on the part of the Government. He had absolutely no knowledge that there were any exemptions, but he wished to point out that in the Asiatic Act there was absolutely no authority given to the Government to grant exemptions, and was the Court going to countenance an arbitrary administration of the Act?

The Magistrate said the charge was admitted and that was all he had got to do with it. He sentenced the accused to pay a fine of 10 s or [undergo] imprisonment for four days with hard labour.

Mahomed Ebrahim Kunkey, Moosa Bagas, Mahomed Ebrahim, Ahmed Mahomed Motara and S. Bagas were similarly sentenced after formal evidence.

Thambi Naidoo was also charged with hawking without a licence, and after formal evidence of arrest the accused gave evidence. He stated he was a cartage contractor and had taken to hawking since last Friday. He went to gaol in January last for non-compliance with the Registration Act. He was one of the signatories to the letter addressed to General Smuts in connection with the compromise, and in trying to carry out the Indian part of the compromise, he suffered assault.

A similar sentence to [sic] the others was passed.

Indian Opinion, 25-7-1908

271. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

[*July 21, 1908*]

THE COMBAT DEEPENS

Mr. Sorabji is in gaol. He got one month's hard labour. It has now become the duty of every Indian to volunteer for imprisonment. Mr. Sorabji was arrested and taken to prison at seven on Monday in the extreme cold of morning. There was no need to have done this. Mr. Gandhi had sent a notice [to the authorities] saying that Mr. Sorabji would present himself whenever required, and this was ignored.

Hundreds of Indians had turned up to hear the case. Only a few were allowed to enter. The number of whites admitted was, however, quite large. The Indians who remained outside were treated in a mosthigh-handed fashion. Mr. Gulabbhai Kikabhai [Desai], Mr. Cursetji Desai and others were beaten up. Quite a few were insulted. The matter was reported to the Magistrate, who, however, took no notice.[1]

There was hardly any evidence to be offered in the case. Mr. Sorabji had to choose between two things: his honour and patriotism, and the order of the Court. Mr. Sorabji chose patriotism rather than the order of the Court.

The Magistrate passed the sentence. But Mr. Sorabji welcomed it as though it were a great honour.

The Magistrate will have to answer for his high-handedness. The Association moved [for action] against the constables who assaulted [the Indian].[2] We are not concerned with whether or not the police or the Court takes cognizance of the complaint.

All this tyranny is the consequence of our being thought an unworthy people. When the authorities realize our strength, they themselves will feel humbled.

SENTENCES ON HAWKERS

Messrs Ismail Akoojee, Moosa Essop, Dahya Prag, Hari Bhikha, Saleji Bemat, Ismail Ibrahim, Keshav Gulab, and Nagaji Morar, all hawkers, have been arrested. Their case was heard on Tuesday.[3] After evidence had been tendered in their cases, Mr. Gandhi pointed out that arresting these men amounted to an attack on the poor. They were not criminals. He asked why the Indian leaders who had openly

[1] *Vide* " Trial of Sorabji Shapurji-III", 20-7-1908

[2] Gulabbhai Kikabhai Desai, Cursetji Hormasji Desai and Polak filed affidavits regarding this incident with the Commissioner of Police, asking that the constables concerned should be proceeded against. According to Polak's affidavit, since only one side of the folding doors of the Court was opened, there was a rush of Indians endeavouring to enter. "Constable B 99 from the open space outside the Court made a rush at the crowd, using his fists and shoulders entirely without provocation. I found Gulabbhai Kikabhai Desai with the right side of his face inflamed and his right eye suffused with blood. He told me that Constable B 60 had just given him a violent blow. Although he remonstrated strongly to Superintendent Vernon, the latter took no notice . . . ."

[3] *Vide* "Trial of Ismail Akoojee and Others", 21-7-1908

defied the law were not touched. The Government had issued licences independently of the [Asiatic Registration] Act in February. Why did it now insist on issuing them only under the Act?

The Magistrate sentenced these Indians to a fine of 10s each or, in default, four days' imprisonment. The brave Indians have offered to go to gaol, refusing to pay the fine.

IMAM SAHEB ARRESTED

On Tuesday afternoon, Imam Abdool Bawazeer and Messrs Gavarishankar Vyas, Mulji Patel and Gulabbhai Kikabhai Desai were arrested. They were hawking in Market Square. Mr. Thambi Naidoo was arrested on Tuesday morning. He was arrested on the same charge. Mr. Gavarishankar Vyas and Mr. Thambi Naidoo, too, were in gaol in January. All of them refused to bail out. Is there any Indian who does not both weep and smile on reading this? One cannot but weep at the thought of these Indians, used to a life of comfort, undergoing so much suffering for the sake of their motherland. One must smile at the thought that there are men of such rare courage in the Indian community, who will be the means of its deliverance.

Mr. Abdool Kadir Bawazeer is an Imam. He is Chairman of the Hamidia Islamic Society. I would say that, on the day on which he is gaoled, Indians throughout South Africa should go on a strike.

Wednesday [*July 22, 1908*]

After sending off the above report yesterday, I heard that Mr. Ebrahim Kunkey had been arrested.

Mr. Imam Abdool Kadir and others whose names I have already mentioned and Mr. Kunkey refused to offer bail and remained in gaol for the night. Plenty of food was sent to them in gaol. Each of them was given three light blankets for a bedding.

Their case came up for hearing today, Wednesday, at eleven o'clock.[1]

Deposing, Imam Saheb said that he had taken to hawking in the interests of others. He had helped the Government with the settlement. He could not bear to think that he was free while his brethren who were obliged to take out trade licences were in gaol. He had therefore decided to hawk without a licence. This is what Imam Saheb said.

Deposing in the same case, Mr. Jefferson, the Chief Inspector of

[1] *Vide* "Trial of Bawazeer, Naidoo and Others", 22-7-1908

Licences, said that the Government had forwarded to him names of 14 persons of whom thumb-impressions were not to be demanded.

The Magistrate sentenced them to a fine of 10 s each or, in default, to four days' imprisonment. All of them chose to go to gaol.

OTHER CASES

In addition, the cases of Mr. Moosa Bagas, Mr. Suliman Bagas[1], Mr. Mahomed Ibrahim and Mr. Ahmed Mahomed Motara were also heard. They were also sentenced as above, and have taken up residence in gaol. By Saturday, all of them will have come out free men. I hope that they will all take up the basket again for the sake of their country and start on their rounds, and thus be re-installed in gaol.

Along with Imam Abdool Kadir, Mr. Vyas and Mr. Naidoo have also gone to gaol. These two have already been to gaol once. It is needless, I think, to speak [again] of their services [to the Indian cause].

Mr. Mahomed Ebrahim Kunkey, the other person who has gone to gaol, had closed down his shop and taken to hawking. His courage, too, is boundless. He is a Konkani[2] and has brought credit to his community by thus going to gaol. Mr. Kunkey has also been very active at meetings and has inspired a number of persons with courage.

Mr. Mulji Patel has only recently come from India. He has had experience of [addressing] meetings in Bombay. He, too, volunteered to go to gaol for the sake of the country.

Mr. Gulabbhai Kikabhai Desai has not only gone to gaol but has also suffered the experience of being manhandled near the Court entrance.

That those who have never been hawkers have taken to hawking is a great thing, credit for which must go to Mr. Essop Mia. He was the first to do this. He set out on his rounds with two baskets slung about his neck. At a critical moment, Mr. Essop Mia thus rendered the community great service. He has wealth, intelligence, courage. And he has also a well-trained body. At the moment, he is using all these in the service of the community. He placed his time at its disposal. He suffered violence to his person. And now he has taken to hawking for the sake of the community. It will not be surprising if he is also sent to gaol in a few days.

[1] *Vide* "Trial of Ebrahim Ismail and Suliman Bagas", 20-7-1908

[2] Resident of Konkan in Maharashtra, on the western coast of India

TWO INDIANS OF BOKSBURG

One of them, Mr. Adam, and the other, Mr. Mangalsingh, were both arrested for hawking without licences. Mr. Polak went to defend them—I mean to see them off to gaol—Mr. Gandhi being occupied in Johannesburg with the cases mentioned above. Mr. Adam Moosa was sentenced to a fine of £1 or, in default, seven days' simple imprisonment. Mr. Adam Moosa chose gaol. Mr. Mangalsingh proved himself unworthy of his name[1]. Outside the Court [before the trial], he talked big, assuring everyone that he would choose gaol. But in the Court, hefaltered even while making his deposition. The Magistrate therefore sentenced him to pay a fine of £2 or, in default, undergo eight days' rigorous imprisonment. Mr. (A)mangalsingh[2] chose to pay the fine rather than go to gaol.

CLOSING OF SHOPS

After Imam Abdool Kadir had been marched off to prison, a meeting attended by hundreds of Indians was held in an open space near the Court. It was resolved at the meeting that on Thursday all [Indian] shops should be closed and all work suspended [by Indians] all over South Africa, and telegrams to this effect have been sent to all towns.

REUTER CABLEGRAMS

Reuter has reported this by cablegram; the Hamidia Islamic Society and the Association have also sent telegrams [reporting this]. The following is the telegram sent by the Hamidia Islamic Society:[3]

> Chairman Hamidia Islamic Society and priest and other prominent Indians imprisoned hard labour non-compliance Asiatic Act. All Indian businesses South Africa closed symbol mourning. Society fighting India's honour.[4] Government offer repeal Act if we accept prohibition entry eminent Indians. Indians reject this.

This telegram has been sent to the *anjumans*[5] of Calcutta, Madras, the Punjab, Bombay and Lahore and to the All India Muslim

[1] "Mangal" means "auspicious".
[2] "Amangal" means "inauspicious".
[3] The original English text reproduced from *Indian Opinions* 25-7-1908
[4] This sentence is missing in the Gujarati version.
[5] Organizations of Muslims

League in Aligarh and to Justice Ameer Ali in England.[1]

WHO HAVE TAKEN OUT LICENCES?

I have received a report today (an authoritative one) to the effect that out of the 800 Indian hawkers in Johannesburg, 700 have taken out licences. Three hundred have taken them outside the law. The rest have taken them under the law, that is, by giving thumb-impressions. I hope that those who have taken the licences will burn them, or lock them up in a trunk and go to gaol for not producing them [when required]. The remaining 100, 1 hope, will not take out licences under any circumstances.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 25-7-1908

[1] An English news-item in *Indian Opinion* mentions that copies of this telegram were also sent to the Muslim League, Lahore and to His Highness the Aga Khan.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

IMMIGRANTS' RESTRICTION ACT

A Notice in the Government Gazette of the Transvaal dated the 27th ultimo announces, in regard to the Immigrants' Restriction Act No. 15 of 1907, "that it is His Majesy's pleasure not to disallow the same". A further Notice proclaims that the Act was to take effect on the 1st instant. It is, therefore, already in force. Mr. Montford Chamney has been appointed Chief Immigration Restriction Officer under the Act. We extract the following sections which apply to Asiatics:

EXTRACTS FROM THE ACT

1. The Peace Preservation Ordinance, 1903, shall be and is hereby repealed; provided that no such repeal shall affect or abridge any powers or jurisdiction by the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, 1907, conferred for the purpose of carrying out such Act; but the said Ordinance shall for all the purposes of such Act be deemed to remain of full force and effect.

2. In this Act and in any regulation made thereunder, unless inconsistent with the context, "prohibited immigrant" shall mean and include any of the following classes of persons desiring to enter or entering this Colony after the date of the taking effect of this Act:

(i) any person who when asked, whether within or outside this Colony, by a duly authorized officer, shall be unable through deficient education to write out (from dictation or otherwise) and sign in the characters of an European language an application for permission to enter this Colony or such other document as such officer may require; provided that for the purposes of this sub-section Yiddish shall be accepted as an European language;

(iv) any person who at the date of his entering or attempting to enter this Colony is subject or would, if he entered this Colony, be subject to the provisions of any law in force at such date which might render him liable either at such date or thereafter if found therein to be removed from or to be ordered to leave this Colony whether on conviction of an offence against such law or for failure to comply with its provisions or otherwise in accordance with its provisions; provided that such conviction be not the result of the commission by such person elsewhere than in this Colony of an offence for which he has received a free pardon;

(viii) any person who the Minister has reasonable grounds for believing would be dangerous to the peace, order and good government of this Colony if he entered therein; but shall not include

(e) the wife or minor child of any person who is not a "prohibited immigrant";

(g) any Asiatic who is eligible for or has obtained a certificate of

registration under the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, 1907, and who does not
come within the scope of sub-sections (3), (4), (5), (6), (7) or (8) of the definition of "prohibited immigrant".

4. The Governor may from time to time enter into agreement with the government of any colony or territory in South Africa for the doing of such acts or things as are necessary or expedient for the carrying out of the objects and purposes of this Act.

5. Every prohibited immigrant entering into or found within this Colony shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction

(i) to a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds or in default of payment to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months or to both such fine and such imprisonment; and

(ii) to be removed at any time from the Colony by warrant under the hand of the Minister and pending such removal, to be detained in such custody as may by regulation be prescribed; provided that

(a) such prohibited immigrant may be discharged from such detention if he find two approved sureties in this Colony (each in the sum of one hundred pounds) for his leaving the Colony within one month;

(b) if such prohibited immigrant be sentenced to imprisonment such imprison-ment shall terminate as soon as he is removed from the Colony.

6. Any person who

(a) is convicted after the date of the taking effect of this Act of a contravention of sections three, thirteen or twenty-one of the Immorality Ordinance, 1903, or any amendment of such sections; or

(b) is deemed by the Minister on reasonable grounds to be dangerous to the peace, order and good government of this Colony if he remain therein; or

(c) having been ordered under any law to leave this Colony fails to comply with the terms of such order

may be arrested and removed from this Colony by warrant under the hand of the Minister and pending removal may be detained in such custody as may be prescribed by regulation; provided that no such person as is in paragraph (b) hereof described shall be removed from this Colony except on the order of the Governor; provided further that every such person arrested shall be discharged from custody unless an order be made by the Governor for his removal from this Colony within ten days after the date of his arrest.

7. Any person who

(1) wilfully aids or abets a prohibited immigrant in entering or remaining in this Colony; or

(2) wilfully aids or abets a person ordered to be removed under section six in

remaining in this Colony; or

(3) enters into, or purports to enter into, a contract as employer with any person outside this Colony with intent that the provisions of this Act be evaded or at the time of entering or purporting to enter into such contract shall be unable to fulfil his part thereof or has no reasonable expectation of being so able; or

(4) uses or attempts to use any certificate issued under paragraph (i) of the classes of persons excluded from the definition of "prohibited immigrant" unless he be the lawful holder of such certificate; or

(5) forges or uses knowing the same to be forged any document purporting to be such certificate

shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds or in default of payment to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months or to both such fine and such imprisonment.

8. No prohibited immigrant shall be entitled to obtain a licence to carry on in this Colony any trade or calling or to acquire therein any interest in land whether lease-hold, free-hold, or other interest; and any such licence (if obtained) or any contract, deed or other document by which such interest is acquired in contravention of this section shall, on conviction of such immigrant under section five of this Act, be null and void.

9. Every person found in this Colony who is reasonably suspected of being a prohibited immigrant may be arrested without warrant by any magistrate, justice of the peace, police officer, or officer of the department and shall as soon as possible be brought before the court of a resident magistrate to be dealt with according to law.

10. No prohibited immigrant shall be exempt from the provisions of this Act or allowed to remain in this Colony by reason only that he had not been informed that he could not enter this Colony or that he may have been allowed to enter through oversight or owing to the fact being undiscovered that he was a prohibited immigrant.

11. Any person ordered to be removed from this Colony under this Act and any other person who shall have been convicted, under section seven, of aiding or abetting him in entering or remaining in the Colony in contravention of this Act shall be liable to pay all expenditure incurred by the Government in carrying out such removal whether from the Colony or South Africa or in the detention within the Colony or elsewhere of any person pending his removal; and the amount of such expenditure on production to the Sheriff of the certificate of an officer of the department stating the items and total amount of such expenditure shall be recovered by execution levied on the property within the Colony of the person so liable in manner provided for execution levied under a judgment of the Supreme Court; and the proceeds of such execution shall be paid by the Sheriff to the Treasurer who, after deduction of the amount of expenditure aforesaid and the costs of execution shall remit the balance to the person so liable or to any person appointed by him to receive same.

13. The burden of proving that a person has not entered or remained in this Colony in contravention of this Act or any regulation shall in any prosecution for such contravention lie upon the accused person.

14. Every court of resident magistrate shall have jurisdiction to impose the maximum penalties for all contraventions of this Act or of any regulation.

Indian Opinion, 4-1-1908

APPENDIX II

THE DRAFT GOLD LAW IN THE TRANSVAAL[1]

EXTRAORDINARY PROVISIONS

A Transvaal *Government Gazette Extraordinary* was issued on the 30th ultimo, containing "a Bill to consolidate and amend the Law relating to prospecting and mining for precious and base metals and to provide for matters incidental thereto". The draft Bill contains 137 sections, and occupies 23 pages of the *Gazette.* We take from this Bill the portions relating to Coloured persons. Section 3 contains, amongst others, the following definitions:

"Coloured person" shall mean any African or Asiatic Native or coloured American person, coolie or Chinaman.

"Mining District" shall mean one of the districts into which the Colony is for the time being divided in accordance with this Act; and, when used in reference to land, shall mean the mining district in which such land is situate.

"Proclaimed Field" shall include all proclaimed land, and so much of any unproclaimed land as may be declared portion of a proclaimed field under this Act or is at the commencement thereof a portion of a proclaimed field.

"Proclaimed Land" shall mean land proclaimed a Public Digging under this Act or Law No. 15 of 1898 or a prior law, provided it has not been lawfully deproclaimed.

SECTION 24. When land, being a Native Location, or portion of a Native Location, is proclaimed a Public Digging, the following provisions shall apply:

(1) The chief and tribe occupying the Location shall retain the right to graze their stock thereon in so far as such right does not interfere with prospecting and mining. (2) All kraals, and such lands as were habitually under cultivation and irrigation for two years prior to the date of the notice of intention to proclaim, shall be reserved for the use of such chief and tribe, unless they consent to the reservation not being made.

(3) Sufficient water shall be reserved for the domestic purposes, and for watering the stock of such chief and tribe.

(4) If such Location be Crown land, there shall be granted to the Chief and tribe as compensation for the land, of the use of which they have been deprived by the grant of discoverers' rights or by the Location being proclaimed a Public Digging,

[1] This summary is by Gandhiji; *vide* " Johannesburg Letter", 4-4-1908.

the use of an equal area of other land.

(5) If such Location belong to such chief and tribe, any person who has become the holder of the mineral rights, may, in addition to any rights which he may obtain as a discoverer, select a mynpacht of a size to be fixed by the Minister for Native Affairs in consultation with the Minister, but not exceeding one-fifth of the extent of the land over which such mineral rights are held. The moneys or other consideration (if any) payable to the chief and tribe for the acquisition of such mineral rights, together with one-half the moneys derived from time to time from mining titles or other rights on the land, shall be paid to the Minister for Native Affairs, and shall be held by him in trust for the chief and tribe, and applied for such purposes as they may desire, subject to the approval of the Governor.

SECTION 104. "Unwrought precious metal" shall include precious metal in any form whatever, which, though smelted, is not manufactured or made up into any article of commerce, and shall include amalgam, slimes, and scrapings of unrefined precious metal.

SECTION 113. Any person who shall receive from a Coloured person any unwrought precious metal by way of purchase, barter, pledge, or gift, shall be guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding one thousand pounds, or to imprisonment without the option of a fine, for a period not exceeding five years or to both such fine and imprisonment.

SECTION 114. Any Coloured person who shall sell, barter, pledge, or otherwise dispose of any unwrought precious metal, or who shall obtain by purchase, barter, or pledge, or shall be in possession of any precious unwrought metal, shall be guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to imprisonment for a period not exceeding five years; provided that nothing in this section contained shall apply to a Coloured person handling unwrought precious metal in fulfilment of any contract of service with a person excepted under sub-section (1) of Section 105.

SECTION 122. Whenever it shall appear expedient in the public interest, the Government may, by proclamation in the *Gazette*, declare any land adjoining, enclosed by, or situate in the neighbourhood of proclaimed land, to be portion of a proclaimed field.

SECTION 127. (1) Save as is provided in section twenty-four, no right may be acquired under this Act by a Coloured person; and the holder of a right acquired under Law No. 15 of 1898 or a prior law or under this Act shall not transfer, or sub-let, or permit to be transferred or sub-let, any portion of such right to a Coloured person, nor permit any Coloured person (other than his *bond-fide* servant) to reside on or occupy ground held under such right.

(2) Any person contravening this section shall be guilty of an offence, and liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding fifty pounds, and in the case of a continuing contravention to a fine not exceeding five pounds for every day during which such contravention is continued.

SECTION 128. (1) No Coloured person shall be permitted to reside on

proclaimed fields in districts comprised in Class A, except in Bazaars, Locations, mining compounds, and such other places as the Mining Commissioner may permit.

(2) Any Coloured person contravening this section shall be liable on conviction to imprisonment for a period not exceeding one month and upon such conviction the Mining Commissioner may cause any structures occupied by or erected for the use of such Coloured person to be removed.

(3) Nothing in this section shall apply to Coloured persons in the employ of a white person in so far as they live on the premises where they are so employed.

Indian Opinion, 4-4-1908

APPENDIX III

THE ETHICS OF PASSIVE RESISTANCE

PRIZE ESSAY

M. S. Maurice

I

Nineteen centuries ago one of the greatest moralists of the world laid down his life in passive resistance to constituted authority in what was then a great centre of spiritual activity. The ground for the resistance was unquestionably valid, as it has continued down to this day a memorable and living example of loyal submission to human law, where such submission was not in direct conflict with the higher law of conscience. The resistance had reference to an injunction that a living faith in a superhuman or divine power was to be abjured, and a claim to spiritual kingship over a certain race of people was to be renounced in favour of the temporal power then existing. "We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ, a King." To Pilate's question, after asking him whether he put the question of himself, Jesus said: "My Kingdom is not of this world: if My Kingdom were of this world then would My servants fight." His death on the cross has ever been a unique episode in the world's history—a magnificent example of what disobedience to the law really meant. There was no question as to the doubtful character of the authority which sought to enforce the decree of death by crucifixion. The illegal nature of the punishment was not in itself a matter of dispute. It was harsh; it was unjust; it was rigorous in the extreme; it was wholly unmerited. But he who found himself placed in subjection to the law as it then operated, and to the authority which asserted itself in carrying out that law, deemed it within his right, in obedience to his conscience, to resist both, but in a passive manner: there was no idea of resisting it by force. A combination of his servants and followers against the law would have been a direct condemnation of his faith. A concerted action to enforce his claim by physical means would have been derogatory to his moral character and to his high mission. And so the man who had the most powerful force behind him, by virtue of his transcendent moral sway—a force irresistible in its inherent strength, and overwhelming in its ultimate result, if put into effect—preferred to resist the law

by submitting to the dread decree pronounced against him for breaking the laws' (to him) unlawful demand.

During the same epoch of Christian history, and but a few months after the consummation of Christ, a holy man met martyrdom at the hands of his adversaries. His offence was "speaking blasphemous words against Moses and against God". He, however, proved a passive resister. His detractors proceeded to open violence. He was dragged out of the city and stoned to death. Upon the removal of Stephen a general persecution was raised against the Church people at Jerusalem. Men and women were haled and committed to prison. Thus passive resistance obtained Divine sanction, and men had recourse to it as the only effective weapon against tyranny and injustice and oppression. As martyrdom was a penalty of self-consciousness, born of the deepest convictions in religious life, so in civil life those whose minds and whose consciences revolt against oppressive laws, against laws which seek to take away the best of manhood and to degrade humanity, adopt passive resistance as the most effectual salve to their outraged consciences.

II

> What kind of Society is it which, at this period, has for its base, in equality and injustice? The hell of the poor makes the paradise of the rich. Not only has happiness not come, but honour has fled.

We should be sorry to think with Victor Hugo that this is so. And yet Tolstoy and Hugo shine as two of the greatest minds which have probed into the deeps of humanity in our time. Thoreau, one of the greatest of American moralists, the author of *The Duty of Civil Disobedience*, was a martyr to his principles—principles dictated by the highest sense of duty to the State, as well as obedience to conscience. Human convictions may be right or wrong, but there is always a limit to human endurance in the fulfilment of human law. No man today will pretend to deny to a modern Japanese the highest form of personal courage and the severest form of moral rectitude. They have been apparent to us of late years in many ways. To us his "Bushido" may seem a blind fetish, but its true meaning, its deep significance, is understood and appreciated by the deepest thinkers of our day. They know it touches the deep chords of humanity. When we have grasped the true moral side of Japanese ethics, and realize to ourselves what a changed being a cultured Japanese has become under the law of evolution, it will be easy for us to understand why at moments of great trial when the spirit of patriotism and family relationship is in the ascendant—he passively resists the admonitions of the inner monitor, refuses to save his life, and creates for himself a moral injunction as it were for physical extinction so as to reach up to a spiritual life of national redemption and regeneration.

Passive resistance as a political weapon and a moral action has, therefore, the fullest possible justification behind it. To offer physical force against recognized authority which seeks to enforce any law, good or bad, would be morally wrong. When you however resist the law, not actively but passively, you thereby imply that what is good and just law to some may be bad to others. While human institutions

continue, imperfect men of strong conscience and rational ideas will adopt this mode of expressing their protest against iniquitous ordinances.

Under any form of government power is relegated to a group of men to judge in righteousness and to rule with equity and justice. It does not follow that, because men are called to power and are invested with authority to enact laws, they must be considered immaculate or infallible. Too often the best men—the most humane, the most just, the most practical, the most considerate—remain subjects, and do not become rulers or framers of laws for their fellow-men. Similarly, too often those who attain to power are inconsiderate, tyrannical, unjust. If proof were needed, it will be found ready to hand from almost every country and from every age. To take a recent case in point from a nation in the front rank, I would cite the passive resistance offered by a large section of highly educated people in England against the last Education Act. Here we have a form of government which has undergone a purifying process during centuries of civilization—a government which, by common admission, has reached almost the highest limit of advanced democracy, in which power is attained by a just and equitable process—by sheer force of intellect and reason—a government which bears on the face of it every element of moral right and expediency. Yet we see a law promulgated apparently in the best interests of the whole community, but which proves in its operation, directly antagonistic to, and unacceptable by a large, intelligent and otherwise obedient section of that community. Numerous laws are in operation to which it gives willing and unquestioned obedience, but, owing to reasons which have swayed humanity in all ages, it finds that its conscience revolts against the new measure. The new enactment caused a serious conflict in their minds: it warred against their sense of right. It therefore simply declined to do the law's bidding and accepted the consequent penalties.

Laws are said to be made for the safety, the security and the protection of the interests of the people: they are not made to chastise and oppress. They must be guided by reason, necessity, expediency in the interests of all. They must injure none: they must not remorselessly override the domain of reason and conscience. They must act with justice and circumspection. "Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's" does not mean that men should resign themselves body and soul to the law, at the law's bidding. Three times within my knowledge has a high-minded, law-abiding and intelligent citizen met the laws' injunctions by paying the required fine instead of complying with the law which demanded that he should have his child vaccinated. On moral grounds he was right not to set aside his conscientious scruples. To salve his conscience he became a passive resister. In the words of Thoreau, this man was a man first and a subject afterwards. He obeyed the law of conscience before blindly complying with the alternative of man-made law. "It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for the law so much as for the right. The only obligation which I

have a right to assume is to do at any time what I think right."

III

Passive resistance is indeed an extreme course with an honest man; he is generally driven to that course by the stress of physical power, and hence his action is not unjustifiable on moral grounds. If passive resistance on the part of a minority in a state becomes an imperative necessity, then the majority cannot continue strong for long; it is bound to weaken and become effete as to its action in the matter of enforcing its power or its authority against that minority. And passive resistance of subjects, who are not even legal units of a lawful or legally constituted Government, has all the more reason for its action, in a given case, since such a Government cannot justly impose burdens or restrictions on units which had no voice in its creation. Such imposition of burdens on one particular section of a community would be tyrannical, and must ultimately tend to endanger the political fabric of that community. The very *raison d'etre of* the Government would, in these circumstances, become open to question.

There is so much force in what Thoreau has written on the ethics of passive resistance that I make no apology for introducing here some of the relevant passages bearing on the subject of civil disobedience.

> Unjust laws exist: shall we be content to obey them, or shall we endeavour to amend them, and obey them until we have succeeded, or shall we transgress them at once? Men generally, under such a government as this, (United States) think that they ought to wait until they have persuaded the majority to alter them. They think that, *if* they should resist, the remedy would be worse than the evil. But it is the fault of the government itself that the remedy is worse than the evil. It makes it worse. Why is it not more apt to anticipate and provide for reform? Why does it not cherish its wise minority? Why does it cry and resist before it is hurt ? Why does it not encourage its citizens to be on the alert to point out its faults, and do better than it would have [by] them?
>
> Action from principle, the perception and performance of right, changes things and relations; it is essentially revolutionary, and does not consist wholly with anything which was. It not only divides states and churches, it divides families: ay, it divides the individual, separating the diabolical in him from the divine.

Speaking of the inconsistent side of the aggregate intelligence placed in authority and power, he says:

> After all, the practical reason why, when the power is once in the hands of the people, a majority are permitted, and for a long period continue, to rule, is not because they are most likely to be in the right, not because this seems fairest to the minority, but because they are physically the strongest. But a Government in which the majority rule in all cases cannot be based on justice, even as far as men understand it.

Again:

> I think that it is enough if they have God on their side without waiting for that other one. Moreover, any man more right than his neighbours constitutes a majority of one already. . . Under a government which imprisons any unjustly the true place for a just man is also prison.

Modern conditions have altered the whole face of State administration. The voting system under a party government often, however, places an illiberal group of men in place and power. To meet conditions of this kind, Thoreau exhorts all honest men in this wise:

> Cast your whole vote, not a strip of paper merely, but your whole influence. A minority is powerless while it conforms to the majority; it is not even a minority then; but it is irresistible when it clogs by its whole weight.

IV

Upwards of four centuries before the advent of Christ, Socrates, of' Greece, was reputed to be the wisest moralist of his age. His unflinching integrity made him many enemies. The State, or rather those in power in the State, accused him of corrupting the Athenian youth and of despising the national gods. He was indicted in a regular manner. His chief offence consisted in his heeding the divine voice or inward monitor, which people in those times did not comprehend as clearly as he did. He declared that his *demon* rebuked him for misconduct, and commended him for every good word and work. He was in advance of his times. And for his originality, integrity and wisdom be was condemned to death. When one of his disciples exclaimed "How shameful to condemn a man so innocent!" Socrates asked if his friends would think it less shameful if he were guilty. Here was a man who, abandoning all speculations as regards the material world, fearlessly taught "that the proper study of mankind was man", was derided, reviled and then condemned to undergo the extreme penalty of the law. The law of conscience was accounted nothing in those days as it is still considered of little account in reference to human laws and administrative enactments, under our present forms of civilized government. The Delphic Oracle pronounced Socrates the wisest of men. To this he made a characteristic declaration: "Whereas other men thought they knew something, he alone had attained to this element of true knowledge, he knew that he knew nothing."

Passive resistance is emphatically submission to physical force under protest. "Resist not evil," said Jesus of Nazareth, and Socrates, by drinking the poison, refrained from resisting what he had adjudged in his own mind as evil. How far this consorts with the philosophy of Plato, another brilliant heathen sage, will be apparent from the following prophetic picture of the Man of Sorrows whom the western world has defined:

> A man perfectly good, virtuous and just; not one who wishes to appear so before his fellows, but one who is really and sincerely so. We strip him of his good name . . . deprive him of everything except his intrinsic goodness. Without doing wrong, we will suppose him to be accounted an evil doer, that his virtue may be tried so as by fire. . . . Neither infamy nor ill usage, neither

poverty nor distress, neither the malignity of persecution nor the pain of cruel torture can make him swerve from the path of duty. Death stares him in the face, but he remains unshaken; branded as a sinner, he is still a saint . . . . To complete the picture, we will suppose this godly man to be beaten with bats, scourged with whips, put to the torture, laden with chains, nailed to a cross, numbered with transgressors, and yet without sin.

Plato wrote thus, three centuries before the advent of Christ. His further definition of a modern passive resister is almost inspired:

A bad man is wretched amidst every earthly advantage; a good man—troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.

Most men of our day account Count Tolstoy a paradox. By common admission, however, he is a great thinker, if not quite a seer. He has certainly probed into the deeps of humanity. He has laid bare many of the human follies and foibles. Upon war as upon capital punishment, he looks with the deepest horror. An extremist he may be, yet he is a realist—a rationalist. Passive resistance is almost a fetish with him.

We can suffer, we might not break the law. Men do far more harm and inflict far more injury on one another by attempting to prevent evil by violence than if they endured evil patiently. Besides, have you ever considered that it is only by suffering pain, torture, misery and death that you are able to convert men? Do you think Christianity made its way in the world by preaching? Bah! No such thing. No one was ever converted by preaching. What converts men is not preaching but martyrdom. It is only when men see other men—weak, sensitive, comfort-loving men like themselves—taking joyfully the spoiling of their goods, rejoicing in persecution, and going gladly to death for their faith, that they begin to believe there is something in it. No one ever believes in the truth of anything till he sees that someone is willing to die for it. The prison, the stake, the gallows—these are the great arguments which convince men. And if you refuse to submit to these punishments, you destroy your only chance of converting men to your faith.

Count Tolstoy explicitly lays it down that all punishments are in their nature persecution.

If you say a man is a trouble and a nuisance to his neighbours, remember that the best of men have been so regarded. Do you think that Christ was not considered as a great nuisance and a trouble by his brothers? The household went on quietly until he began to make a stir.

Tolstoy and Thoreau appear to agree in the matter of civil disobedience: they seem to be at one in regard to the claim of conscience on the individual soul. Yet far be it from me to claim human perfection for either of them: they are merely men of advanced thought in the domain of reason; their intellectual pre-eminence claims respect from us for their ideas. Tolstoy holds peculiar views with regard to

Christianity. There is much in them which we may discard as inconsistent with his own writings. Still we must admit that there is wisdom in most things he has said. Christianity to him is a broad humanitarianism: Christ a supreme Rationalist; he subordinated everything to the inner light "the light that is in you" that is, the light of reason. This is the deduction upon which all philosophers and moralists base their passive resistance to constituted authority—the conflict of reason with the surrender of conscience.

I think I have now made it clear that passive resistance, as an honourable weapon *in extremis* to those who are subject to physical force, has high, if not divine,
sanction for its exercise. Its ethics in governments and communities of men are plain and unmistakable. I have referred to Socrates and Plato, to Christ and to modern morality. Going further back to antiquity we find Confucius indicating in his moral code the dividing line between active disobedience and passive resistance in simple and homely words:

> At first my way with men was to hear their words and give them credit for their conduct. Now my way is to hear their words and look at their conduct. . . . To see what is right and not to do it is want of courage.

I will conclude in the words of Macaulay, so eloquent and so pregnant with meaning:

> The sceptre may pass away from us. Unforeseen accidents may derange our most profound schemes of policy. Victory may be inconstant to our arms. But there are triumphs which are followed by no reverse. There is an empire exempt from all natural causes of decay. Those triumphs are the pacific triumphs of reason over barbarism; that empire is the imperishable empire of our arts and our morals, our literature and our laws. . . But let not us, mistaking her character and her interests, fight the battle of truth with the weapons of error and endeavour to support by oppression that religion which first taught the human race the great lesson of universal charity.

Indian Opinion, 18-4-1908

APPENDIX IV

REPORT OF NATAL IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT

The report of the Natal Immigration Department for the year *1907* has been published by its head, Mr. Harry Smith. Below are some interesting facts from it.

The revenues of the department for the year 1907 exceeded those for 1906 by £178.4.8. Revenues from embarkation pass fees increased by £58 [during the same period]. While other departments have to be financed by the Government, the Immigration Department pays its way.

During the year under review, 27,522 passengers arrived, of whom 15,958 were British, 2,262 Chinese and 8,171 Indians. The number of indentured Indians was

6,489, of whom 3,942 were men, 1,641 women and 906 children. In all 5,206 were detained [for verification of claims]. Of these 323 were Arabs, 256 Chinese, *2,459* Indians, 317 Sinhalese and 1,407 from Zanzibar, other miscellaneous groups accounting for the rest. While in 1906 nine certificates were issued to persons who passed the education test, *59* such certificates were issued in 1907.

A total of 11,425 domicile certificates was issued in 1906 and 12,483 in 1907. Seventy-nine certificates were confiscated as they were found to be in possession of persons other than those to whom they were issued. Of those who were detained [for the verification of their claims] four persons—one white and three Asiatic escaped. The white was later apprehended and sent back. From among thosewere detained, although they had passes, 12 escaped. In all 16 persons, some of whom were notorious white criminals or women of ill repute, were deported. When the applicants for domicile certificates were examined, it was found that 90 percent. of them were married; 50 per cent. had not seen their wives [in Natal] for periods varying from 10 to 15 and even 20 years. Of the Asiatics who entered the Colony in 1903, 51 were women and 209 children; in 1904, 42 women and 134 children; in 1905, 48 women and 195 children; in 1906, 69 women and 237 children and in 1907, 71 women and 139 children.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-2-1908

APPENDIX V

RESOLUTIONS AT MASS MEETING

[JOHANNESBURG,
June 24, 1908]

The following resolutions were passed at the mass meeting:

RESOLUTION I

This Mass Meeting of British Indians domiciled in the Transvaal deplores the fact that the Government intend to depart from the spirit of the compromise entered into by them with the Asiatic communities of the Transvaal last January, in that they make it a condition of repeal of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act that rights of certain Asiatics domiciled in the Transvaal before the War are surrendered, and that the Asiatic communities should consent to an insult being offered to Asiatics of educational attainments.

This resolution was proposed by Moulvi Ahmed Mukhtar.

RESOLUTION 2

By reason of the decision of the Government not to carry out their part of the compromise, and regard being had to the fact that the Asiatics in the Transvaal have, almost without exception, made application for voluntary registration, this Mass Meeting hereby resolves to withdraw all the applications so made, and reaffirms the

solemn declaration made on the 11th day of September, 1906, not to submit to the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, but to suffer, as loyal citizens and conscientious men, all the penalties consequent upon non-submission thereto.

This was proposed by Imam Abdool Cadir Bawazeer.

RESOLUTION 3

This Mass Meeting tenders its respectful thanks to all those, whether in South Africa, England, or India, who have helped and sympathized with the British Indian Community of the Transvaal during its struggle for legitimate freedom and to retain its self-respect, and earnestly trusts that they will continue to assist with their sympathy and support until justice is fully vindicated.

RESOLUTION 4

This Mass Meeting hereby authorizes and instructs the Chairman of the British Indian Association to forward copies of the preceding resolutions to the Hon'ble the Colonial Secretary, and to His Excellency the Governor of the Transvaal, for transmission to the Imperial Secretaries of State for the Colonies and India.

This resolution was proposed by Mr. Mulji G. Patel.

Indian Opinion, 27-6-1908

APPENDIX VI

CHAMNEY'S AFFIDAVIT

[PRETORIA,]
June 25, 1908

1, Montford Chamney of Pretoria, Registrar of' Asiatics make oath and say:

1. That I have read the Petition of the above named applicant[1] with affidavits annexed served on me as Registrar of Asiatics.

2. 1 respectfully submit that the allegations set out in paras. 31 41 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 14 of applicant's affidavit[2] and in the affidavits[3] of Essop Ismail Mia and Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi are irrelevant to the issue in this action. However, in regard to the allegations made, the letter[4] dated 29th January, 1908 addressed to the Colonial Secretary by Mr. Gandhi and others and the reply[5] dated 30th January, 1908, of the Colonial Secretary set out the whole position.

3. Ad. Para. 7 of the Petition I say that agreeably to the aforesaid letter of the 30th of January, 1908, 1 accepted from applicant a written application for

[1] E. I. Aswat

[2] The full text of Aswat's affidavit is not available; for his "Petition to the Transvaaal Supreme Court", 23-6-1908.

[3] *Vide* "Essop Mia Affidavit", 23-6-1908

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 28-1-1908

[5] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 30-1-1908

registration.

4. Ad. Para. 11: the application made by the Applicant was on a Government from and is filed on record in my office, and I am unable to part with or return the same.

With regard to the documents submitted with that application, viz., the Petitioner's Permit issued under the Peace Preservation Ordinance, and his registration certificate issued under Law No. 3 of 1885, there is no objection and has never been any to the return of the same to the Applicant, immediately all necessary identification enquiries have been made.

Owing to the large number of applicants and the necessity of dealing with their applications in different batches, the Vereeniging applications, among which is that of the applicant, have only lately been taken in hand.

5. Ad. Para. 15: The Petitioner's Registration Certificate had already been signed before he filed the Petition in this matter and in the ordinary course would (together with the documents which accompanied his application) be delivered to him within about seven days from this day by a responsible officer instructed to see that the papers got into the hands of the right person.

6. The promise made by the Colonial Secretary in his letter of 30th January, 1908 to lay the matter before Parliament at its next session is being fulfilled.

M. CHAMNEY

Sworn before me at Pretoria, this 25th June, 1908.

J. H. L. FINDLAY
Justice of the Peace

CHAMNEY'S ADDITIONAL AFFIDAVIT

[PRETORIA,]
June 26, 1908

1, Montford Chamney of Pretoria, Registrar of Asiatics, make oath and say:

1. That the Petition in the above matter served on me on the 24th instant was not complete as to all the Annexures referred to therein, the Annexures having only been handed to the Government Attorney yesterday morning.

2. 1 was present during the whole of the interview of 3rd February, 1908, referred to by Mr. Gandhi in para. 10 of his affidavit, and heard all that passed; no promise to repeal Act No. 2 of 1907 was given at that interview.

3. Under Departmental instructions a licence to trade was issued to the Petitioner's firm at Vereeniging in March, 1908, as a result of his Application for Registration.

M. CHAMNEY

Sworn before me at Pretoria, this 26th day of June, 1908.

J. H. L. FINDLAY

Justice of the Peace

SMUTS' AFFIDAVIT

[PRETORIA,]
June 26, 1908

I, Jan Christiaan Smuts of Pretoria, Colonial Secretary, make oath and say:

1. 1 made no promise to Mr. M. K. Gandhi either on the 30th January or on the 3rd February, 1908 that Act No. 2 of 1907 would be repealed.

2. The Letter of the 30th January, 1908, copy of which is attached to the Petition in this matter, sets out all that I agreed to.

3. The matter is being laid before Parliament as stated in that letter.

J. C. SMUTS

Sworn before me at Pretoria, this 26th day of June, 1908.

J. H. L. FINDLAY

Justice of the Peace

Indian Opinion, 11-7-1908

APPENDIX VII

REV. J. J. DOKE'S LETTER TO "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"

[*July 4, 1908*]

[THE EDITOR

THE TRANSVAAL LEADER

SIR,]

We all deplore the reappearance of the Asiatic difficulty. When passive resistance came to an end five months ago, we earnestly hoped that the trouble would never recur in such a form. It dislocated trade; it filled our prisons with men who, as General Smuts said, were "not criminals", it embarrassed the Government, and made us all feel extremely wretched. The resuscitation of this would be indeed a calamity. We still hope it may be averted. It behoves us to work for this end, "with both hands earnestly". But at present the outlook is very serious, and those who should know best say passive resistance is once more inevitable.

My apology for writing is that I have some knowledge of the subject as it appears from the Asiatic point of view, and that a re-statement of it may be of some value at this crisis.

The Colonial Secretary has at last agreed to repeal the objectionable Asiatic Law Amendment Act. This, I believe, is inevitable to any just and hopeful settlement. When the compromise was being effected, circumstances placed me at the very focus of the trouble, and I am convinced from personal knowledge that the Asiatics did not doubt that the repeal of the Act was an essential part of the agreement. The Colonial

Secretary himself fostered this conviction in his speech[1] at Richmond, published in the Press of February 6, when he said: "He had told them (i.e., the Asiatics) that the law would not be repealed so long as there was an Asiatic in the country who had not registered'. And again: "Until every Indian in the country had registered the law would not be repealed". This prospective repeal was thus evidently made an incentive to obtain the registration of all the Asiatics. This is simply to show that these men had good ground for believing what is now so emphatically denied. But the Colonial Secretary has now agreed to repeal the Act[;] only unfortunately in offering this concession, he has attached conditions to it which the Asiatics deem themselves unable to accept. These conditions are new to the subject. The idea has apparently been promulgated that the Asiatics have brought forward new claims. This is untrue. The conditions insisted on by General Smuts are new claims, not one of them having been contemplated in the compromise.

Briefly, they amounted to this:

(1) That the Immigration Restriction Act shall not be regarded as applying to Asiatics in respect of admitting educated men to residence here. This has always been the interpretation which General Smuts has given to this Act. He has said repeatedly: "It is a law that completely and finally shuts the door from India." The Asiatic leaders have never accepted his interpretation, but they have always professed themselves willing to accept this very drastic Act according to its interpretation by the Supreme Court. And their position is unchanged. But now apparently, not being quite sure that his reading is the right one, General Smuts requires the Asiatic leaders to accept an amendment of this Immigration Restriction Act, incorporating his interpretation of it. The effect would be that they would consent to the exclusion of the most cultured of their brethren from entering the Colony, though they might be able to pass the most vigorous educational test enforced by the Act. The Asiatics reply: 'You cannot expect us to accept this new amendment. We have not understood the Act in the sense you have given to it, but we may be wrong. We are willing to stand or fall by the decision of the Supreme Court; only do not force us to decide the matter ourselves.' But General Smuts answers, in effect: 'You must take my interpretation or have no repeal!'

The singular part of the whole affair is that a few weeks ago the Colonial Secretary himself granted an educated Indian full registration, at the instance of Mr. Gandhi, on this ground, among others, that he fulfilled the requirements of the Immigrants' Restriction Act!

2. The second and third points at issue are also entirely new conditions. The leaders are asked to consider all Asiatics, whether in the Colony or out of it, who hold Dutch registration certificates under Law 3 of 1885, for which they paid from £3 to £25, as prohibited persons. Also, that all Asiatics who were residents in the Transvaal before the war, and who can prove their previous domicile in any court of law, but who had not returned to the Colony during the three months allowed by the

[1] *Vide* , "General Smuts' Speech in Richmond", 5-2-1908.

compromise, and do not hold the "peace preservation permits", shall be counted as prohibited persons. This is a distinct contravention of the compromise. It means that those Asiatics who have established their right to be here, through long residence, and by costly registration under the old Dutch law, shall be refused their rights, and be turned out of the Colony while the Asiatics, who were so far from home that they could not return within the three months of grace, and who probably did not know of the compromise within that time, shall be prohibited from entering the Colony, unless they have "peace preservation permits". These measures would probably affect 600 men!

3. But the last new claim is perhaps the worst of all, because of the principle involved. General Smuts demands that all those Asiatics who have applied voluntarily for registration, but who have been, or shall be, rejected by Mr. Chamney, shall be regarded as prohibited persons, without any right of appeal from Mr. Chamney's judgment! Surely this is monstrous. A rejected Asiatic is to be allowed no right to have his case properly tried! He may not even know why he is rejected! Even Mr. Chamney is not infallible, and may blunder like the rest of us; but if the Registrar says he is not satisfied, the poor Asiatic must leave his home and go, without any right of appeal! This is not common humanity, and I do not wonder that the Asiatics refuse to buy the promised "repeal" at such a price.

It is well to have a clear perception of the principle at stake. In these "terms" the spirit of autocracy is dominant. The Asiatics claim simply the interpretation and protection of the Supreme Court. They do not resent the "Immigration Restriction Act". They only claim that it be not interpreted by any official, however exalted he may be, but by the recognized Court, and by that judgment they will stand. They do not resent the rejection of Asiatics by Mr. Chamney, and their deportation, but they claim that no official shall be made supreme. They ask for the right of appeal in such cases to the well-balanced judgment of a properly constituted tribunal. It is a protest against new claims not contemplated in the compromise, and against the spirit of autocracy which dominates them. But surely, while these points are of supreme moment to the sufferers, they are not, after all, vital matters, so far as our Government is concerned. There can be no inrush of Asiatics under the stringent tests possible by enforcing the Immigration Restriction Act, and there can be no loss of prestige in acting justly. To these men the new conditions involve so much that I understand they are prepared to return to the position in which the compromise found them, and that passive resistance will be commenced again in a few days! Cannot something be done even now to effect a settlement without suffering such a calamity? We recognize that whatever is done must be a real settlement this time. I trust a patchwork will be tolerated by no one. But we may rest assured of this, that there will be no such thing as final settlement unless justice and good faith are alike satisfied.

[*Yours etc.*,

J. J. DOKE]

Indian Opinion, 11-7-1908

1. SPEECH AT MASS MEETING

[JOHANNESBURG,
July 23, 1908]

On the 23rd ultimo, all Indian business throughout the Transvaal ceased for the day, as a mark of respect towards the Chairman of the Hamidia Islamic Society, Imam Abdul Kadir Bawazeer, and the other Indian leaders who had been sentenced to imprisonment with hard labour for hawking' without licences, as a protest against the Transvaal Government's breach of faith. Indian hawkers and pedlars ceased their rounds, much to the discomfort of those European housewives who depend so entirely upon the services of these men.

A large and enthusiastic meeting of over 1,500 persons[1] assembled in the precincts of the Hamidia Mosque, Fordsburg, and listened intently to the addresses delivered by Mr. Gandhi and other speakers. A few delegates from Reef towns attended though none were specially invited. Mr. Essop Ismail Mia presided. . . . The following is the full text of Mr. Gandhi's speech:

I shall read to you telegrams that have been received from several parts of South Africa in reply to the request of the British Indian Association and the Hamidia Islamic Society that all our brothers throughout South Africa should close all Indian business—stores as well as hawking—out of regard for the Chairman of the Hamidia Islamic Society, who is also the Assistant Priest of this very Mosque under whose shadow we are standing this afternoon. The response received has been most generous, and it shows how well the different portions of the Indian community in South Africa have been knit together. I think we may congratulate and thank the Government upon having, perhaps unconsciously, assisted us in doing this wonderful thing. I think that a new spirit has been infused into Indians throughout South Africa, and if that spirit continues, I think that we shall have to thank the Government for it. Last January, when we embarked upon the passive resistance struggle in earnest, the ground had been prepared for close upon 16 months, but it was only in the month of January last that General Smuts and his co-Ministers were able to test the reality of the feeling that underlay the whole Indian agitation against the Asiatic Act, which, rightly or wrongly, Indians considered constituted an attack on their self-respect, their honour and their religion, but perhaps the finishing touch was not put upon the whole thing when the prisoners were suddenly discharged owing to

[1] The *Transvaal Leader* report mentions that some Chinese, too, were present in the gathering, the strength of which its correspondent estimated at 500.

the compromise. That finishing touch, in my opinion, is being placed upon the whole thing on this occasion. Evidently, General Smuts has been in-formed by some enemies from out of our own camp that the agitation last year and during the month of January was mostly manufactured and that I was principally instrumental in keeping the fire up. I think that General Smuts has now, by this time, come to understand that the agitation was not manufactured, that the movement was absolutely sincere and spontaneous, and, if I had any part in connection with the movement, the part that I played was that of a humble interpreter bet-ween the Government and my own countrymen. I was undoubtedly the first man to inform the community of what the Asiatic Act meant. I was the first one undoubtedly to point out that it bristled with objections, religious, and on the score of the community's Honour, but, having done that, I claim to have done everything that it was my duty to do. It was the Indians themselves who recognized the importance of the obje-ctions that I ventured to place before them, and they decided solemnly and sincerely not to accept the Act. And here we are today in order to emphasize our objections, and we find also that one of the best men in South Africa among our own countrymen, the respected Chairman of the Hamidia Islamic Society, has chosen to go to gaol rather than enjoy the liberty that he had received owing to his having received the volu-ntary registration certificate. He chose to suffer with his humbler coun-trymen, the hawkers, and he felt that he himself would place himself in the same category and suffer imprisonment for the sake of the honour of India, for the sake of the hawkers themselves, whom the Government wanted to have in their grip; and we have assembled this afternoon to do honour to that beloved fellow-countryman of ours, as also the others who have gone with him to share the miseries of a gaol life. It is true that the imprisonment is to last only four days—but is it only? Indians, who have not been used to a gaol life, who have never been able to accommodate themselves to the hardships of life, to them even a day's imprisonment is a great thing, and does not sentiment count for some-thing in matters of this sort? We and the European Colonists have known all along that Indians would rather pay large sums of money in fines than go to prison. That feeling has been shared universally by the Indians in South Africa, and, yet, today we find the respected Cha-irman of the Hamidia Islamic Society, we find other prominent Ind-ians, willingly going to gaol, not because there is artificial agitation, but because they think sincerely that India's honour is at stake, they feel that their self-respect is going to be lost, if they do not stand up and give a proper fight, and that fight not a fight with any weapons but the cleanest. The cleanest weapon that we have

discovered in self- defence is the weapon of passive resistance, is the acceptance of a gaol life or whatever the Government may choose to impose upon us for a breach of its laws which we cannot, as human beings, accept. The tele-grams that the British Indian Association and the Hamidia Islamic Society have received are from Pretoria, Durban, Fortuna, Warmbaths, Volksrust, Ermelo, Potchefstroom, Zeerust, Klerksdorp, Standerton, Middelburg, Salisbury, Christiana, Rustenburg, Kimberley, Nylstroom, Roodepoort, Lichtenburg, Lydenburg, Vereeniging, Pietersburg, Ven-tersdorp, Heidelberg, Cape Town and Springs. I dare say there are more telegrams still lying at the office. I shall venture to read a few of these telegrams. The purport of all is sympathy and support to the cause of the British Indians, and decision to close all business throug-hout these places.

[Mr. Gandhi then read the telegrams.]

These telegrams show that the Indians are absolutely unanimous in the Transvaal, and the incarceration of the Chairman shows also that there is absolutely no difference of opinion between Mahomedans and Hindus, that all the different races of India who are in South Africa have met in a common cause and well have they met, seeing that the difficulties that surround one portion of the community surr-ound all the other portions of that community. Gentlemen, our own position is absolutely clear. Our friends have advised us and told us that we should wait, that we should not take strong measures, and that we should not take any step that might be irrevocable. I do not quite understand the meaning of this advice. I do know this, that the ques-tion of the burning of the registration certificates should not be defi-nitely decided Until we know exactly the legislation that the Govern-ment intend to pass. That we have done. Beyond that it is impossible for the Indian community to go. The Government have put a barrier between those who have taken out voluntary registration certificates and those who are now coming into the country, and who are entitled to come in. The Government ask them to submit to the law. It is im-possible for these men to do any such thing at all, especially when their rights have been safeguarded under the compromise. What are these men to do? Are they not to trade until they have received their registration certificates? Are they to live upon the charity of their fellow-countrymen? I think that it is utterly impossible. Then these men must honestly earn their livelihood, and the only advice that it was possible for the British Indian Association to give these men was to trade in spite of the refusal to issue licences on the part of the Lic-ensing Officer.[1] The hawkers and store-keepers whose licences ended

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", Before 2-7-1908.

on the 30th day of June are also in a similar plight. They are now called upon by the Government to submit to the Asiatic Act so far as licences are concerned, before licences can be issued to them. Are they then to sit still? Are they not to trade until it pleases the Government to bring forward their legislation? It is not we who are waiting, or who can afford to wait. It is utterly impossible for us to take up any such position. We are taking no irrevocable step, but we are taking every step that we must take in self-defence. If we are to live in this country as honest citizens, if we are to earn our livelihood honestly, then it is absolutely necessary that we carry on our usual occupations, and for these occupations are required licences, and, if the Government will not issue these licences, it is necessary for us to trade without them. Some hawkers have already taken out licences. I understand that 300 have had licences issued to them without submission to the Asiatic Act. Four hundred have taken out licences by giving thumb-impressions. They did not know what they were doing. They did not know that they were submitting to the Asiatic Act by giving thumb-impressions. The balance have now come to know what the Government intend to do. Are they, again I ask, to sit still and not carry on their occupation? It is utterly impossible. It might be asked why should prominent Indians go and take up hawking and force matters. The answer is obvious and very simple—it is not possible for these men to sit still and remain in their homes, when they see poor hawkers, who perhaps do not understand the position just as well as the leaders do, suffering. I think that the leaders would have failed in their duty if they had not come forward and taken up hawking for themselves, in order that they might be able to direct their poorer countrymen, in order that they might be able to explain the real position to their poorer countrymen.

I understand that, this afternoon, Superintendent Vernon and a detective went amongst some of the Tamil members of the Indian community. He asked these men to produce their registration certificates, and I understand also that there was hard swearing indulged in by one or other of the officials. I understand that it was Superintendent Vernon who used an expression unbecoming for me even to repeat. I will not repeat that expression. I do say this that, if my countrymen have the courage of their convictions, not a single Indian will show his voluntary registration certificate. The British Indian Association has called in all these registration certificates, in order that the poorer, the humbler, members of the community might be protected, and if they have to go to gaol for non-production of registration certificates, I do hope that they will go to gaol, and thus teach a lesson in civility to the police. I shall never forget the scene that was enacted

before the Court House when Mr. Sorabji was sentenced to be imprisoned with hard labour for one month. I cannot easily forget the hustling that took place, the assaults that took place in front of the Court House, under the nose of the Magistrate as it were.[1] I cannot easily forget how the constables, without the slightest provocation, without any warning being given to the British Indians, assaulted them, how they roughly handled them, and how they roughly shoved them from the verandah of the Court House. That shows what a bitter struggle is before us. That shows also how cheaply we are held in the estimation of the police, if not in the estimation of the citizens of the Transvaal and of South Africa. It is necessary then for British Indians to show in quiet, in dignity, in perfect calmness, in a perfectly law-abiding spirit, to show that they are not here to suffer such indignities, that they are not here to have their liberties trampled underfoot, and that if all these things are done in the name of His Majesty the King-Emperor, we are here also humbly to protest, and we are here also as British citizens to suffer for it, and to show the whole world what things are possible and done even in the British Empire, even under the British flag. We have been nurtured in British traditions. We have been told that [in the British Empire] even a lamb is free. "The lamb can go with the lion," is a literal translation of a verse I was taught when I was a youth, when I was of school-going age. That verse has not yet been effaced from my memory. I do say here such a thing is not possible, that British Indians, because they are docile, because they are humble, because they do not want to tread upon anybody else's corns, are being spat upon, are being ill-treated, and now we have got the Asiatic Ordinance to fight, which is intended to take away the very last vestige of self-respect from us. It is because we feel these things that we have met here to honour our countrymen who have gone to gaol, that those who are here may also have that courage, may also have sufficient self-respect in them to go to gaol, to suffer the same hardships, and if you do that, as surely as I am standing here today, a day will come when we shall regain our liberty, when we shall regain the full rights attached to British citizenship, when we will be respected even in theTransvaal as men, as human beings, and will not be treated as dogs.[2]

Indian Opinion, 1-8-1908

[1]*Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 2nd footnote of "Johannesburg Letter", 21-7-1908 and "Trial of Sorabji Shapurji-III", 20-7-1908.

[2] Following this, Gandhiji made another speech in Gujarati, the text of which is not available.

2. LETTER TO "INDIAN OPINION"[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
July 24, 1908

THE EDITOR
INDIAN OPINION

SIR,

I wish to draw public attention to the case of *R. Lalloo v. Rex*, reported in the Press.[2] The case, which, fortunately, has been now considered by the Supreme Court, shows most clearly that the Immigrants' Restriction Act does not prohibit the entry of those Asiatics who can comply with the education test. The summons issued against Lalloo charged him with contravening Section 25 of the Immigrants' Restriction Act, in that he, being unable to write in European characters, having insufficient means to support himself, and being the minor child of a prohibited immigrant, was himself a prohibited immigrant. Had he, then, been able to satisfy the education test, assuming that he had sufficient means to support himself, he would not have been prevented from entering the country. Sir William Solomon, in giving judgment, said:

> His (Sergeant Mansfield's) evidence was that the prisoner could not write any document in a European language, and there was no denial of it. Sergeant Mansfield could only have obtained the information either by asking the accused to write or the accused telling him that he could not write, in which case, it would have been a farce to call upon him to write a document in English characters.

It will, therefore, be seen that, according to the learned Judge, the Immigrants' Restriction Act does not debar Asiatics possessing educational qualifications from entering the country. In the light of this judgment, the British Indian contention is absolutely upheld and strengthened by the incarceration of Mr. Sorabji, who lawfully entered under the Immigrants' Restriction Act, but became a criminal because he would not submit to the Asiatic Act.

There is, therefore, nothing new in the claim brought forward by the British Indian community in insisting on the retention of the right of entry on the part of educated Asiatics under the Immigrants' Res-

[1] This was published under the title "The Immigration Question".
[2] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 1-8-1908.

triction Act. It is General Smuts who demands from British Indians their consent to an abrogation of that right, which Indians are in honour bound to resist.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 1-8-1908

3. LETTER TO DIRECTOR OF PRISONS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
July 24, 1908

[THE DIRECTOR OF PRISONS
PRETORIA

SIR,]

Eight British Indian prisoners, who were imprisoned for hawking without licences, were discharged today, and they have reported to my Association that, at the Johannesburg Gaol, for the morning meal, they were offered mealie pap, which they did not take at all, never having been accustomed to it. Consequently, they had to be satisfied with only rice at noon, and beans, if beans were available, for supper. These men were hard labour prisoners.

My Association begs to draw your attention to the fact that British Indians, as a body, are not used to mealie pap at all, and it is most difficult for them all of a sudden to take to that diet. In view of many more Indians suffering imprisonment in connection with the Asiatic struggle, I think it is but right for my Association to ask you to change the diet scale for British Indians. My Association does not ask for any favours, but simply for a substitute which will be in keeping with the habits of British Indians. As the matter is rather urgent, my Association will be obliged if you will be good enough to give it immediate attention.

[ESSOP MIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION]

Indian Opinion, 1-8-1908

Also Colonial Office Records: 291/132

[1] This was presumably drafted by Gandhiji.

4. SORABJI SHAPURJI OF ADAJAN

Mr. Sorabji Shapurji AdaJania has been sentenced to a month's hard labour.[1] We take this to be the conferment of an honour on him. A time is coming when, to ascertain the number of titles a man holds, we shall have to inquire of him how often he has been to gaol. Sorabji's case is different from those of the others and such as brings him greater credit. Other Indians went to gaol in defence of their own rights as well as those of others. They were all, however, residents of the Transvaal. Sorabji is not domiciled in the Colony. He did not have to defend any rights of his own. Sorabji has gone to gaol exclusively for his country's sake, and in defence of educated Indians' [rights]. Other Indians were not awarded hard labour, but Sorabji has been. He and his family deserve to be complimented on all this. But the best compliment Indians can pay Sorabji will be to remain very firm, to achieve the objective which he has sought to serve by going to gaol, and to follow him there. That would be the right way of congratulating him.

We will not commiserate with him or his family. Imprisonment is our destiny. It contains the seeds of our freedom, so that there is no call to console those who are gaoled.

The hardships of gaol must be looked upon as comforts. Only when we are inspired with such courage and such ideals shall we be able to fulfil our tasks.

We print a photograph of Sorabji in this issue. Everyone will admire his courage. Few indeed are the heroes who join the fray from no Other motive than the [pleasure of] battle.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-7-1908

5. INDIAN TRADERS IN NATAL

The case Mr. Haffejee of Richmond only confirms what we wrote earlier.[2] Influenced by the whites, the Licensing Court has cancelled his licences. There is only one way out for Natal Indians, or for Indians in any Colony for that matter: to resort to satyagraha. As long as that is not done, Natal Indians will not be able to rest in peace.

Most of the members who took part in a recent debate in Natal

[1] *Vide* "Trial of Sorabji Shapurji-III", 20-7-1908.

[2] *Vide* "Natal Licences",15-2-1908 and " Natal Licensing Act", 13-6-1908.

Parliament said that the Indian traders should be turned out. Mr. Wylie[1] also expressed the same view. To send a petition to such a Parliament will be worth while only as an act of courtesy. But the petition should be treated as the first step in satyagraha. It will be effective only if it is backed up by the power of the satyagrahic gun.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-7-1908

6. LETTER TO J. J. DOKE

[JOHANNESBURG]

DEAR MR. DOKE,

The questions[2] you have asked me are very pertinent and very seasonable. If only the public can be induced to take sufficient interest in the Asiatic question to understand what it is that we want, half the difficulty will be over.

Speaking from a British Indian standpoint, British Indians have long since accepted the position that Asiatic immigration should be severely restricted; but, if the Colonists demand that even the most highly educated Indians shall not enter the Colony, they require not only the severe restriction of immigration, but total prohibition. What British Indians have offered is, in effect, equivalent to total prohibition, and yet it is not quite that. Underlying the total prohibition is the desire, I understand, that trade competition on the part of British Indians should be confined only to those who are domiciled in the Colony. If that be so, the desire is entirely met by confining the entry of educated Asiatics only to those possessing education of a very high order; in other words, in practice it may be limited to professional men. I need hardly point out that a free and healthy Asiatic commu-

[1] Wylie, K.C.; lawyer and legislator; was "part author of the Dealers' Licenses Act"; took notable part in suppressing the Zulu rebellion in Natal; as leading counsel in Goga's case ("Indians in Potchefstroom", 28-1-1905), he argued that "even an Indian is entitled to justice and fair play".

[2] In his letter Rev. Joseph Doke had asked three questions: (I) ". . . [most Colonists] are afraid that, should the Immigration Restriction Law be applied to Asiatics, . . . a number of educated men might still be admitted . . . is there any way in which you can meet this objection[?] (2) "Is it true that your chief objection is . . . that by claiming your consent to the closed door before repealing the Asiatic Law Amendment Act [General Smuts] [I] is asking you to be a party to the absolute exclusion of your educated brethren [?] (3) ". . . would it not be easy for Government to introduce legislation . . . to close the door absolutely? If so, what action would be taken by the Asiatics?"

nity in the Transvaal would be impossible without, say, a few lawyers, a few doctors, a few teachers, and, it may be, a few preachers amongst them who are their own kith and kin. These should not come to the country on sufferance, but as a matter of right. These can never enter into competition with the Europeans; but, assuming that they would be men of the right stamp, they can promote the progressive growth of the Indian community in the Transvaal, and can only be of very great assistance to it, and, indeed, to the Colonists. The only reasonable way in which this can be done is by leaving the immigration law as it is, without making the principle of the Asiatic Act applicable to such cases, for the simple reason that no identification can be necessary for men of education. To ask us to consent to an alteration of the law so as to bring about absolute exclusion of educated Indians is not only an additional objection, but, in my opinion, an insuperable one. Of course, the Parliament of the Colony can at any time bring forward prohibitory legislation independent of our consent. I should personally strain every nerve to oppose absolute prohibition, and should ask my countrymen to offer passive resistance to such law. Whether I would be able to carry them with me or not in such a case, it is difficult for me to judge at present, and passive resistance in connection with any such legislation can only mean that Indians would far rather leave the country than live in it deprived of the natural assistance of educated men such as I have described above. Passive resistance, in my opinion, means self-imposed suffering of an acute type, intended to prove the justice of the cause, and thus to bring conviction home to the minds of the Colonists. I hope that I have made the position clear.

I am,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 25-7-1908

7. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
July 26, 1908

REVERED KHUSHALBHAI,

I write this letter in the middle of the night. There is no time to write at length. You ask me to look after "myself", but we have been taught that the self[1] does not die, neither does it kill nor cause anyone to be killed. If you mean by "self" the body and ask me to take care

[1] *Atman*

of it, would then point out to you that this has been dubbed *moha*[1] by the Lord[2]. What then shall I look after? I shall take care of the self only, that is, I shall try my utmost to realize it. One must cultivate the strength to sacrifice one's body in the process if need be.

I feel obliged to write this because, after much thought, I find some of our sayings and current precepts irreligious. The very book that we consider the supreme scripture[3], we reject altogether in practice. I therefore propose to use all the strength at my command against this way of living.

Respects from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 4840. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

8. SPEECH AT MASS MEETING IN JOHANNESBURG

[*July 26, 1908*][4]

Our Chairman has correctly explained why we have assembled here today. We have gathered here to honour the gentlemen who have been to gaol. They are prepared to go to gaol again. All the others should show the same resolution. Once we show that courage and fill all the cells in the gaols, the Government will have to yield. Going to gaol is the key which will open the locks of our disabilities. It is necessary that every Indian should be prepared for this. But not everyone here is sufficiently resolute. Perhaps [further] sentences may be for longer terms of imprisonment. What we need is courage. All the traders in Vereeniging have started going the rounds hawking. The Government has served them with a written notice to the effect that those who hawk without licences will be arrested. Going to gaol is the only course by which we can avert the hardships that lie in store. We should therefore always keep our eyes fixed only on gaol. The Government's offer to exempt the voluntary registrants from the law, while enforcing it against the others, is a sort of bait. The Indian community must realize that even among the Indians the Government has created two classes. This is unjust. I would advise every Indian to

[1] Infatuation

[2] Lord Krishna of the *Gita*

[3] The reference is again to the *Gita*.

[4] This meeting was held primarily to felicitate Imam Bawazeer and others on their release which took place on Saturday, July 25, 1908; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 1-8-1908.

fight unto death if the Asiatic law is retained. Licences and registers have not yet been received in sufficiently large numbers from the people. These should be handed over. I would also advise people to refuse thumb-impressions at Volksrust. Now we shall be deemed to have truly honoured those who have been to gaol only if we ourselves—all of us—go to gaol.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-8-1908

9. LETTER TO A. CARTWRIGHT

[JOHANNESBURG,]
July 27, 1908

DEAR MR. CARTWRIGHT,

Mr. Hosken very kindly showed me the Asiatic Voluntary Registration Bill that General Smuts intends to bring in. I need hardly say that it will never be accepted by the Indian community, if I know its temper well. It indirectly puts voluntary registrants in the same category as those who have accepted the Act. I draw your attention to the fact that it takes no note of pre-war refugees, whether holding [£]3 Dutch registration certificates or not. It rejects even the claims of those who hold Peace Preservation Ordinance permits and have thus a right to demand entry, and makes them liable to take out registration under the Asiatic Act. The Bill is, to my mind, a wanton insult to the intelligence of the Asiatics, whom it evidently assumes to be a lot of children who can be pleased by a little bit of gilding on the pill.

I know that the Progressive Party has appointed a committee to consider this Bill, and then to confer with General Smuts. This party, therefore, evidently holds the trump cards. Will it play them in keeping with the title it has arrogated to itself, or will it throw British Indians overboard? Although Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, Mr. Chaplin, and Mr. Lindsay, as you are aware, at the meeting at which you were present, admitted the justice of the contention that those who re-entered after the late compromise and had the right to do so should be treated the same as those who were in the Transvaal on that date, and that the rights of pre-war residents should be recognized. Now the Bill before me overrides all these things. It is a very subtle Bill, but it is also, I hope you will allow me to use the term, a fraudulent Bill. It will enable General, smuts to say that he does not take away the rights which he contends[1] are reserved by the Asiatic Act. Here lies the fraud

[1] The source has "have contende".

because he knows too well that Asiatics do not wish to receive any benefits under that Act.

I am sending you a copy of a communication[1] which I am addressing to the chief members of the Progressive Party.

I am,
Yours truly,

ALBERT CARTWRIGHT, ESQ.
PRETORIA CLUB
PRETORIA

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4852

10. SUMMARY OF LETTER TO CHAPLIN[2]

July 27, 1908

. . . Further letter from Mr. Gandhi to Mr. Chaplin. Complains of the inadequacy of the draft Validation Bill. Refers to the Immigrants' Restriction Act Amendment Bill, which he was invited to Pretoria to discuss, and which was printed by General Smuts. Urges the adoption of his original suggestion that validation should take place by amendment of the Immigration Restriction Act. . . .

India Office, Judicial and Public Records: 3722/08

11. TRIAL OF RAMASWAMY AND OTHERS

[JOHANNESBURG,
July 27, 1908]

In D court yesterday [July 27], Mr. P. C. Dalmahoy disposed of another batch of cases in which Indians were charged with hawking without licences. Mr. Cramer prosecuted, Mr. Gandhi appearing for the defence.

The first case to be taken was that of an Indian named Ramaswamy.

After formal evidence had been given for the prosecution, Mr. Gandhi called Mr. L. H. Jefferson, Chief Licence Inspector to the Johannesburg Municipality.

MR. GANDHI: You have received a list of exemptions?

[JEFFERSON:] Fourteen.

MR. GANDHI: Will you produce that list?

The Magistrate and the Public Prosecutor both interposed and objected to its production.

MR. CRAMER: I have no objection to Mr. Gandhi asking if the accused's name

[1] Not available

[2] This is from a precis of events in the Transvaal sent by Ritch along with his letter of October 6, 1908 to the Colonial Office.

is on the list.

MR. JEFFERSON: It is not on the list.

MR. GANDHI: Does this mean that I cannot see the document?

THE MAGISSTRATE (to Mr. Jefferson): Are you permitted to show the document?

[JEFFERSON:] No, Sir.

MR. GANDHI: But it must be a public document. Have you been prevented by the authorities?

THE MAGISSTRATE: (interrupting) I m not going to allow it, Mr. Gandhi; that is final.

MR. GANDHI: Have you been prevented by the authorities?

THE MAGISSTRATE: Mr. Gandhi, for the last time, I will not allow this. Are you disputing my authority?

MR. GANDHI: I am not disputing your authority, but my clients are poor men, and it means a loss of 10s to them every time Mr. Jefferson is subpoenaed.

THE MAGISSTRATE: I'll note your objection.

In answer to the Magistrate, the witness said that he had received the list from the Town Clerk, who had received it from the Registrar of Asiatics.

Mr. Gandhi further asked whether the witness had been prevented by the authorities from giving the list.

THE WITNESS: I have been told not to publish the list. These are my general instructions.

Addressing the Court, Mr. Gandhi said that he held it was a most curious position that here they had a list which applied to the whole community, and which could not be produced. He thought it very remarkable that they were not allowed to see it. He had to subpoena Mr. Jefferson at the expense of his clients in every case, to ascertain if their names appeared on the document. He thought it within the jurisdiction of the Court to say whether Mr. Jefferson should produce the document.

THE MAGISSTRATE: (to the accused) You have had plenty of warning to get a licence, and you will not do it. You are fined £1 or seven days' imprisonment with hard labour.

OTHER CASES

Another Indian hawker was then charged with a similar offence, and Mr. Gandhi put Mr. Jefferson in the box and made another unsuccessful endeavour to have the list put in. He asked that the Magistrate would note his request that the list should be produced.

The accused was fined £1 or seven days' imprisonment with hard labour.

A third hawker was then placed in the dock, and Mr. Gandhi again called Mr. Jefferson.

Mr. Gandhi said that he did not wish to speak disrespectfully to the Court, but

it was a matter of very serious importance and expense to his clients to call Mr. Jefferson for every case.

The Public Prosecutor suggested that the Crown might call Mr. Jefferson.

Mr. Gandhi said that, even if Mr. Jefferson was called by the Crown, it would still be very unfair to his clients, as the names of Asiatics were very frequently mixed up. He also wished to refer to the fact that the penalty had been increased although the cases were exactly on all fours with the previous cases.

The Magistrate imposed a fine of £1, or seven days' imprisonment with hard labour.

In each case the accused elected to go to prison.

The Transvaal Leader, 28-7-1908

12. TRIAL OF HARILAL GANDHI AND OTHERS

[JOHANNESBURG,
July 28, 1908]

Six more Indian hawkers[1] appeared in D Court before Mr. P. C. Dalmahoy yesterday [July 28], charged with hawking without licences. These included Thambi Naidoo, who went to prison in January last with Mr. Gandhi, and who was sentenced to four days' imprisonment on Tuesday of last week for hawking without a licence, and Harilal Gandhi, eldest son of Mr. M. K. Gandhi, who was arrested some days ago at Volksrust [for failing to register] and warned to appear at Pretoria to apply for a registration certificate.[2] Young Gandhi came to Johannesburg, and immediately commenced hawking fruit, when he was arrested.

Mr. Cramer prosecuted, Mr. Gandhi appearing for the defence.

The first to be charged was an Indian named Hera Mariji.

Formal evidence as to accused's having been hawking within the municipality without a licence was given, and the accused, who pleaded guilty, was fined £1, with the alternative of seven days' imprisonment with hard labour. The next to be placed in the dock were Harilal Mohandas Gandhi (son of Mr. M. K. Gandhi), Thambi Naidoo and Govindasamy Kistnasamy, who were all described as Indian hawkers. They pleaded guilty.

A sergeant of police gave evidence that he had arrested the accused, who were hawking fruit in Bellevue East without licence.

[1] Naidoo, Harilal Gandhi, Hera Mariji, (Mawji in *Indian Opinion)* Kistnasamy, Pillay and Naiker. *Indian Opinion* also mentions one Charlie Singli who was similarly charged and sentenced.

[2] *The Transvaal Leader*, 28-7-1908, mentions that Gandhiji had written to the Registrar of Asiatics that his son did not intend to apply for a registration certificate at Pretoria. This letter, however, is not available.

Mr. Gandhi said he did not propose to call witnesses, but wished to make a few remarks. He hadbeen weak enough on the previous day to protest against the increase of penalty[1], but in this instance he had a long conference with the prisoners at the gaol, and he had been requested to ask for the severest penalty. The accused had acted as they had done with deliberation. Naidoo had been in gaol last week, having been sentenced to four days' imprisonment for hawking without a licence.

THE MAGISTRATE: There is a previous conviction against Naidoo.

MR. GANDHI: Two previous convictions under this Act; one for hawking without a licence.

Continuing, Mr. Gandhi said that the two others had also asked him to ask for a severe sentence. If a light sentence was imposed, as soon as they came out, they intended to repeat the action. It would be a saving of time to give them a long sentence, and it would be better for the sake of their health if they had a sustained term.

Naidoo was fined £2, with the alternative of 14 days' imprisonment with hard labour, and Gandhi and Kistnasamy were fined £l [each], or seven days' imprisonment, with hard labour.

Two other British Indians, named Sinnappa Rangasamy Pillay and Soopa Veerasamy Naiker, were then charged.

They pleaded guilty, and were fined £l, or seven days' imprisonment, with hard labour.

In each case the accused elected to go to prison.

The Transvaal Leader, 29-7-1908

13. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[After *July 28, 1908*][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I get no time these days to write to you or to anyone else. I know that you want to join the struggle. But you need not think as if you were doing nothing by remaining there. It was necessary for Harilal alone to come over. I think he did a very good thing by coming here and going to jail. Since I could not go, I could be happy only if Harilal went.[3] I think it has been a very good experience for Harilal himself.

Let me know what you did to dispose of the groundnut stock.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The date is inferred from the reference to Harilal Gandhi's arrest. He was sentenced to seven days' hard labour on July 28, 1908. *vide* "Trial of Harilal Gandhi and others", 28-7-1908.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Indian Opinion", 8-8-1908.

It seems everything there is in confusion. Give me some idea at your convenience. You must have seen the letter to Chhaganlal.

I think your English is still very poor. It will improve with long practice. It is necessary to have your mistakes corrected from time to time. If you keep up a correspondence with Miss Schelsin[1] and ask her to return your letters, duly corrected, she will be glad to do so. She does have some time to spare.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 5911

14. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

RECEPTION FOR PRISONERS

Imam Abdool Kadir and other satyagrahis who had been sentenced to four days' imprisonment have now been released; some were released on Friday and the others on Saturday[2]. No one went to receive those released on Friday since people were under the impression that they were not being let off that day.

When people went to receive those who were being released on Saturday, they discovered that the satyagrahis had been released at 7 o'clock though according to rules they should have been released only at nine. This was done in order to forestall their reception by a procession. But Mr. Coovadia[3], having set out early for the gaol, met and greeted the prisoners, and escorted them back towards the gaol. Meanwhile, the other Indians arrived. Those present included Mr. Essop Mia, Moulvi Mukhtiar Saheb, and Messrs Osman Ahmed Effendi, Kallenbach, Polak and Doke. Imam Saheb and others were garlanded, and then they all proceeded to Mr. Essop Mia's house where they were served tea and biscuits. Many complimentary speeches were made. In reply, Imam Saheb and the others said that four days' imprisonment had meant no hardship whatsoever for them. They were ready for a second, longer term of imprisonment.

BETTER RECEPTION ON SUNDAY

A big mass meeting was held on Sunday in front of the Hamidia Mosque to honour the prisoners. Here they were accorded greater

[1] Sonja Schlesin, Gandhiji's typist

[2] July 25, 1908

[3] Honorary Treasurer, Hamidia Islamic Society

honours and many more speeches were made.[1] A great many persons handed over their registers to the Association. All present showed themselves full of courage.

This was followed by tea and a concert organized by some Hindus. It was attended by the prisoners and some select guests. The table was laid for nearly 50 persons. The Chairman of the Chinese [Association] was also present. Mr. Essop Mia took the chair with Imam Saheb on one side of him and Mr. Quinn on the other. Speaking on the occasion Mr. Essop Mia said that such gatherings served to strengthen the bond between Hindus and Muslims. Among other things, fresh fruit, cakes, *mesul*[2] jelly and roasted *pauva*[3] were served with tea.

MASS MEETING ON THURSDAY

Latterly, there has been no end of mass meetings. Imam Saheb went to gaol on Wednesday and there was a mass meeting[4] Thursday. Telegrams were sent to all the towns to request that Indian shops be closed and business stopped [as a mark of respect to the Imam Saheb]. Telegrams were received in reply from all the towns to say that shops would be closed as required.

News was received that Mr. Khota, Mr. Gin and Mr. Aboo Mia Camroodeen of Heidelberg, Mr. Aba Varinde of Middelburg and most of the Indian businessmen of Krugersdorp did not act upon the Association's suggestions. On the other hand, even at Salisbury in far-away Rhodesia, shops were closed in honour of the Imam Saheb.

All these honours were accorded not to Mr. Bawazeer as an individual but to the position that he occupies, that is, to the Chairman of the Hamidia Islamic Society.

It is a great thing indeed that the Imam of a mosque should spend even an hour in gaol in defence of a [political] right. Even most of those who have submitted to the obnoxious law had closed their shops. This shows the unity in the community.

The same day a huge mass meeting was held at which spirited speeches were made.

POLICE TYRANNY

The police misbehaved on the day on which Mr. Sorabji was

[1] For Gandhiji's speech on the occasion, *vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting in Johannesburg", 26-7-1908.

[2] A sweet made from gram flour

[3] Rice parched and beaten flat

[4] Of July 23, 1908; *vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting", 23-7-1908.

sentenced. While the matter was still being pursued, Mr. Vernon used foul language while speaking to some Tamils and frightened them out of their wits. This came in for strong criticism at the mass meeting.[1] If the Indians remain strong, it is clear that the tyranny of the police will come to an end.

ARREST AGAIN

On Saturday, Messrs Ramaswamy, Ali Mian, Gor Mian and Kanji Morar were arrested. They have been sentenced to seven days' imprisonment.[2] The Magistrate even appeared hostile but this did not dishearten the people. On the other hand, they have only become more determined.

WHO ARE THOSE FOURTEEN?

In a previous case[3] the Licensing Inspector had deposed that he had been instructed not to demand thumb-impressions from 14 [specified] persons. Mr. Gandhi immediately pointed out that he did not even know of one such person. The Government, he said, ought not to be afraid of sending them to gaol. On the contrary, it ought to arrest all of them. Mr. Jefferson was summoned as a witness to ascertain who these 14 persons were. But the Magistrate, who was already prejudiced, ruled immediately that there was no need of producing the letter [containing the instructions].[4] This led to a heated exchange between the Magistrate and Mr. Gandhi. It was decided in the end to call in Mr. Jefferson as a witness in all the cases. He is asked [on each occasion] whether any of the defendants are in his list. The tempo of the campaign is thus steadily rising.

FRESH ARRESTS

On Monday, a large number of Indians had set out with a basket each in the hope of being arrested. Those who were not arrested were, however, disappointed, there being no one to arrest them. The Chairman of the Chinese [Association], along with a few other Chinese, had joined them in their rounds. No one arrested them.

Mr. Thambi Naidoo, who was released only last Saturday, has been re-arrested. Since he was not arrested at one spot, he went on to another. At last, he was arrested two miles [from where he had started].

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting", 23-8-1908.

[2] *Vide* "Trial of Ramaswamy and Others", 27-7-1908.

[3] *Vide* "Trial of Bawazeer, Naidoo and Others" 22-7-1908.

[4] This, however, happened in another case; *vide* "Trial of Ramaswamy and Others", 27-7-1908.

The persons arrested, besides Mr. Thambi Naidoo, were Charlie Singli, Veerasamy Naidoo, Kurumuttu Pillay and Harilal Gandhi. All of them have refused to accept release on bail.

CONDITIONS IN PRISON

The conditions in gaol described by Imam Saheb and others deserve to be noted. Every prisoner is given a pair of sandals and woollen socks. Two woollen shirts and two of coarse cloth are also issued. At night, one is given three blankets to cover oneself with, and a hard wooden bed with hessian spread on it, so that one does not feel cold. Thrice a week, rice is served at lunch, and in the evening beans, potatoes and mealie pap. Since Indians do not like mealie pap for breakfast every day, a petition[1] has been submitted to the Director of Prisons, and it is hoped that proper arrangements for food will be made in a few days. One does not get shoes and socks immediately on arrival in prison, and the prisoners had to suffer the cold for a few hours, with the result that the Imam Saheb and others felt benumbed in the feet. They were otherwise very comfortable. The rice was cooked by the prisoners themselves, and Mr. Naidoo attended to this. The tasks assigned to the prisoners were not excessive. The prisoner is required to carry loads of gravel from one place to another. This being so,[2] people [outside] remain full of courage and are not worried by [the prospect of] imprisonment. My own view is that it will be useful to accustom oneself to mealie pap. It is not at all becoming of us to ask favours from one whom we consider an enemy. However, as long as Indians are incapable of putting up with these privations, we will continue to voice our demands [to the prison authorities on their behalf].

SORABJI'S CONDITION

Fellow-prisoners reported that, during the first few days, Mr. Sorabji was feeling rather depressed. After the others had joined him, however, he cheered up. He is now in high spirits. Mr. Sorabji has been assigned the task of sewing buttons on to shirts.

The Governor and the Chief Warder of the prison are very kind to the prisoners.

WHITES' SYMPATHY

Mr. Littmann Brown contributed £10 to the Indian cause once

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Director of Prisons", 24-7-1908.

[2] As the tasks assigned to prisoners sentenced to hard labour are thus not so strenuous or exacting

before now. He has done so again. and sent a cheque for ten guineas along with a letter of sympathy wishing us success. We must be grateful to such whites. A letter of thanks has already been sent to him on behalf of the Association. He is a white businessman of Johannesburg. The Indian community should patronize him as much as possible.

A sum of £25 has been received from Vereeniging, £9.10.0 from the Khatri community here, £7.15.0 from the Indian Market and £5 from Roodepoort. There is need for more money, and it is hoped that every town will send its contribution to the Association.

MEETING OF KONKANIS

The mass meeting of last Sunday was preceded by a meeting of the Konkani community. It was attended by a large number of Konkanis. Mr. Abdool Gani was in the chair, and everyone evinced great spirit. Many Konkani gentlemen offered to go out hawking. It was also decided to collect licences [from those who were willing to surrender them] and to raise funds.

The Kanamia community also held a meeting and displayed much enthusiasm.

MUCH REGRETTED

I reported earlier that Mr. Adam Moosa of Boksburg had gone to gaol.[1] But it transpired that the gentleman had paid up the fine [instead]. He has thus descended to the same depths as (A)mangal singh,[2] Such Indians are really enemies of the community. If someone declares at the outset that he will not go to gaol, one must accept that. But it is most reprehensible not to go to gaol after having declared one's readiness to do so.

CASE OF RATANJI LALLOO

Ratanji Lalloo, an Indian boy, came [to the Transvaal] with his uncle.[3][3] His father held a permit but since he had a mental breakdown, he stayed behind at Mombasa. Ratanji entered [the Colony] by himself. He was arrested and sentenced. In appeal, the Court upheld the sentence. It was ruled that the boy could come in only with his father. There were other points [about the judgment] but these do not call for attention now. But the conclusion to be drawn from this case is that a boy cannot enter [the Colony] unless accompanied by his father.

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 21-7-1908.

[2] *ibid*

[3] *Vide* "Letter to *Indian Opinion*", 24-7-1908.

KRUGERSDORP INDIANS

Newspapers here report that the Krugersdorp hawkers held a meeting in the Location, and passed a resolution to the effect that they would abide by whatever the Government decided. It is a matter for regret that the community has such enemies. From a letter Mr. Cursetji Desai has written to me, it appears that the number of Indians who profess this view is not very large; there are only three or four [of them]. I further hope that there are not many Indians elsewhere who show the same lack of understanding.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN NOW?

This question is difficult to answer. Of one thing, however, we can be sure: the answer will depend on us. If we are not strong, the struggle may be a prolonged one. For the fact that it has been so long drawn out, we have ourselves to thank, for, in Johannesburg, a large number of Indians have taken out licences and the Government has already received their licence fees. The fees have not, however, been paid by about a hundred persons; the Government may well forgo the money and do nothing about these persons for six months in the hope that the Indians will have cooled off by that time. I, on the other hand, think that we shall have grown stronger. If no one is arrested for [being without] licences, there will be no cause left for anxiety. But be alone can take this view who is ever ready to resist tyranny and to defy the law.

If the Government behaves as suggested above, it may also be under the impression that refugees will not enter at all and that Permit-holders outside [the Colony] now will submit to the obnoxious law after entering.

KEY

The key, therefore, lies with us. Hawkers and store-keepers should do without licences. If someone comes to inspect licences, they should refuse to Produce them. If the Government introduces a Bill of which we do not approve, we should immediately proceed to burn up the certificates and licences, and those (1) who hold the Dutch passes in their own names, or (2) who can produce strong evidence to prove that they have been residents of the Transvaal from pre-war times, [or] (3) who have received a good education in English should enter the Transvaal all at a time. If 50 or 100 men enter in this manner, the Government will be obliged to send them to gaol. We know, however, that it is difficult to send so many persons to gaol. We will embark on this plan only after the Government's intentions are known for certain. Meanwhile, educated Indians and others must wait patiently.

From this very instant, no Indian should give his thumb-imp-

ression when entering the Transvaal. All Indians should bluntly refuse to give them. We should have the requisite courage; we may then take it that the law is as good as repealed.

Among those whose names I mentioned above, Mr. Ali Mian and Mr. Kanji Morar were licence-holders, yet they refused to produce their licences and chose to go to gaol. That is real courage.

Tuesday [*July 28, 1908*]

MORE CASES

I have already mentioned above the names of Mr. Thambi Naidoo and others. In addition to these, another Indian named Hera Mawji was also arrested. They were all tried today.[1] Mr. Gandhi went out of his way to demand the maximum penalty on their behalf, but the Magistrate awarded only seven days' hard labour to each of them, except in the case of Mr. Thambi Naidoo. Mr. Naidoo was in gaol for the same offence but last week, and he was [therefore] awarded 14 days.

THAMBI NAIDOO

There are few Indians who can touch Mr. Thambi Naidoo for courage. He is so poor that he lives from hand to mouth. His wife is expecting a baby shortly. Disregarding all this, he has returned to gaol soon after his release. Also, his conduct in the gaol has been so good that all the [gaol] officials are pleased with him. He does not, however, flatter anyone. As Chief Picket, too, he worked with the utmost tact. I wish the Indian community would produce more heroes like him.

ROODEPOORT

In Roodepoort, Mr. Fakir Rupa has been arrested. The hearing of his case has been fixed for tomorrow (Wednesday). Mr. Polak will be present to see him off to gaol.

FAKE PERMITS

A Jew named Schmulian is being tried in Pretoria on a charge of printing counterfeit permits. His case is similar to jaymal's.

Here, Daya Lala is being tried.[2] The police allege that he entered with a faked register. Evidence has been led to prove that he bought it for £14. For the present, it appears that the case will be transferred to Pretoria, and from there it will be referred back to the Magistrate [at Johannesburg].

[1] *Vide* "Trial of Harilal Gandhi and Others",28-7-1908.

[2] *Vide* "Trial of Daya Lala", 27-29-8-1908

Wednesday [*July 29, 1908*]

The person who was arrested at Roodepoort has been sentenced to seven days' imprisonment. He is in gaol. Mr. Polak had gone there to defend him.

KRUGERSDORP

An Indian is reported to have been arrested in Krugersdorp. Mr. Polak will be present to see him off to gaol.

DORABJI

Mr. Parsi Dorabji[1], who was on his way from Natal [to the Transvaal,] was asked to detrain at Volksrust for refusing to give his thumb- impression. Mr. Dorabji acted with great courage in so refusing. Local newspapers have discussed his case at length and have commented favourably. Mr. Dorabji is an old resident of the Transvaal, and enjoyed the respect even of President Kruger. All these facts have come to public notice [after the arrest]. In the end, Mr. Dorabji was allowed to proceed to the Transvaal.

TWELVE MORE INDIANS

Twelve more Indians have been arrested for refusing to give thumb-impressions. Most of them are poor hawkers, but it appears that they are very brave. It is reported that they will be tried. However, no news is officially available.

WARNING

Every Indian should remember not to give his thumb-impression when entering the Transvaal from Natal. Of course, Indians will have to suffer imprisonment in consequence of such resistance, but all the same it is necessary. Only then shall we become really free.

CARTOON IN "DAILY MAIL"

A cartoon has appeared in *Rand Daily Mail*. In it is quoted a remark from General Botha's letter to the Prime Minister of Canada: "There are two ways of governing—by consent or by force". General Botha implied by this remark that he himself governed by consent. The *Daily Mail* cartoonist has featured Sir George Farrar, Mr.

[1] Parsi Dorabji; the first Parsi to come, in 188 1, to the Transvaal; established a number of hotels and stores in the Colony. When asked to detrain at Volksrust while presumably returning to the Colony after a temporary absence, he refused to give his thumb-impression under Act 2 of 1907. He pointed out—according to a contemporary newspaper report-that, under the Kruger regime, Parsis were treated on par with whites and claimed on that ground the right to be treated differently from other Asiatics.

Gandhi, and a police constable, each wondering, chin in hand, whether General Botha's Government ruled with consent in the case of the miners, the Indians, and the police [as the case may be]. The expressions on all the three faces suggest that General Botha says one thing and does another, and that his Government is based exclusively on force.

ARRESTS IN BOOYSENS

We have just heard that in Booysens three Indians have been arrested for being without licences.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-8-1908

15. TRIAL OF DAYA LALA

[JOHANNESBURG,

Monday-Wednesday, July 27-29, 1908]

The much discussed Act 2 of 1907 also figured in B Court yesterday, this time, however, in a different class of criminal charge, and one having an intimate connection with the offending finger-print clauses, when Daya Lala, an Indian, appeared before Mr. Jordan, charged with having entered the Colony by means of a forged certificate of registration.

Mr. Schuurman prosecuted, Mr. Gandhi appearing for the accused.

Superintendent J. G. Vernon gave evidence that he was authorized to inspect permits under Act 2 of 1907. He arrested the accused outside Mr. Gandhi's office on July 2. Witness asked him to produce his registration certificate under Act 2 of 1907 and he replied that Mr. Gandhi had it. Witness went into the office and saw Mr. McIntyre, an employee of Mr. Gandhi. He told Mr. McIntyre what the accused had said, and asked to see the certificate. Mr. McIntyre opened the safe, took out a certificate and showed it to witness. Witness refused to take it, and said, "Give it to the man to whom it belongs". McIntyre handed the certificate to the accused, who handed it to witness. He then saw the document was a forgery, and arrested the accused. Witness took the accused in a cab to the latter's house at 168, Market Street, and the house was searched, and a number of letters written in Hindustani were seized. While being taken to the Charge Office, the accused said, "I bought the paper" (referring to the certificate) "from Jaymal for £14. I paid £7 in Durban and £7 after I arrived here. I gave the paper to Gandhi yesterday." The accused was then charged at Marshall Square. The witness here put in a number of Government proclamations and notices dealing with Act 2 of 1907. Continuing, the witness stated that he visited Mr. Gandhi's office continually between June 29 and July 2, and nothing was told him or other members of the police of a forged certificate.

MR. GANDHI: You will admit that it is a clear forgery?

[VERNON:] Yes; it is a fair forgery. It would pass anyone who did not know

Mr. Chamney's signature. Mr. Chamney, Registrar of Asiatics, said that he did not know the accused. The signature on the registration certificate was not his, but was a forgery. There was a slight difference in the printing, in the number, and in the size of the document as compared with the registration certificates issued by the Government. Witness received no notification from Mr. Gandhi that the accused was in possession of a forged certificate. Witness reported the existence of the forged certificate to the police. All registration certificates were signed by him only. No one in Natal had authority to issue permits.

MR. GANDHI: Is the forged document a fair imitation of the official document?

[CHAMNEY:] The document is certainly a fair imitation; my signature is not.

Superintendent Vernon, recalled, stated that on searching the accused at the Charge Office he found a certificate of domicile under the Immigration Restriction Act No. 13 of 1903, also a number of poll-tax receipts. On the domicile certificate were two thumb-impressions, and the certificate was in the name of Daya Lala. On searching the accused's house Police Constable Henry was present, and saw witness recover the documents.

Mr. Schuurman asked for the purposes of the case that the finger-impressions of the accused should be taken. He would have to call expert evidence on the matter.

Mr. Gandhi said he would raise no objection, and the case was remanded.[1]

[Tuesday, July 28, 1908]

. . . On Tuesday William James McIntyre stated [in the remanded case of Daya Lala] that he was a book-keeper in Mr. Gandhi's employ. On the afternoon of accused's arrest, Superintendent Vernon had called at Mr. Gandhi's office and had asked for the accused's registration certificate. He opened the office safe and found the certificate inside. He handed it to the accused who, he believed, handed it to Superintendent Vernon.

Cross-examined, [he said] he was in charge of the safe. He had one key and Mr. Polak had another. Mr. Polak was an attorney and a clerk in Mr. Gandhi's employ.

Mr. Gandhi was then called by the Crown to give evidence. About 5 o'clock in the afternoon of the day before the arrest, accused had come to his office and said that some men were after him on account of his permit. He (Mr. Gandhi) asked him to bring his permit and, upon inspecting it, said at once that it was a forgery. He told accused so, and accused seemed surprised. He gave the certificate to Mr. Polak to put into the safe, telling accused that he need not leave the Colony. It was then late and he was leaving the office, and going next morning to Pretoria. Upon his return he would communicate with the police authorities.

W. F. Passman[2] stated that he was Record Clerk in the Criminal Investigation Department, and had examined finger-prints, purporting to belong to the accused,

[1] The report of the first day's trial is from *The Transvaal Leader ;* for the second and third days of the trial, the *Indian Opinion* version has been used.

[2] *The Transvaal Leader* version has "Passmore".

handed to him by Superintendent Vernon.

He had compared the right thumb-print thereof with the thumb-prints on the Natal Domicile Certificate and the alleged forged certificate, and found them the same.

L. H. Bradford stated that he was a detective probationer. He had taken accused's finger-prints the previous morning. They were those produced. This closed the case for the prosecution.

Mr. Gandhi intimated that the defence would be reserved, and the case was remanded until the following morning, in order to formally read over the evidence to the accused.

[Wednesday, July 29, 1908]

Daya Lala was on Wednesday committed for trial by Mr. Jordan, bail being maintained at £100.[1]

The Transvaal Leader, 28-7-1908

Indian Opinion, 8-8-1908

16. IMAM ABDOOL KADIR BAWAZEER

We print a photograph of Imam Saheb in a supplement to this issue. Indian traders throughout South Africa have earned credit for themselves by closing their shops in Imam Saheb's honour.[2] That honour was not given to Mr. Bawazeer [as a person], but to the Chairman of the Hamidia Islamic Society, and Assistant Priest of the Hamidia Mosque. Everyone knows of the valuable work done by the Hamidia Society and Mr. Bawazeer's role in it. He assumed the office of Chairman about the time that the satyagraha campaign started in right earnest. Those familiar with [the history of] the movement know the difficulties he has had to encounter in continuing in that office. From every point of view, therefore, Mr. Bawazeer deserved the honour accorded him. He wants to go to gaol again. We hope that his wish will be fulfilled. We do not believe that it is wrong to court imprisonment but are in fact convinced that it is the best course.

Mr. Bawazeer comes from a great family of Arabia. His father left Arabia many years ago to settle in India. He is the chief Imam of the Jumma Masjid of Bombay and his[3] mother is a resident of Konkan. Mr. Bawazeer has been in South Africa for many years now. He has also married in this country. We pray to God that he may always be inspired with patriotic zeal and continue to work for the honour of the motherland and of the community.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-8-1908

[1] No report of the further proceedings in Jordan's B Court is available.

[2] *The hartal* was on July 23; *vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting", 23-7-1908.

[3] Presumably Bawazeer's

17. SENTENCE ON THE GREAT TILAK

The sentence passed on Mr. Tilak, the great patriot, is terrible.[1] The few days' imprisonment which the Transvaal Indians suffer is as nothing compared to transportation for six years.

The sentence is not so much surprising as terrible. At the same time it is nothing to be unhappy about.

It is not surprising that a Government we seek to defy should inflict oppressive measures on us. Mr. Tilak is so great a man and scholar that it would be impertinent, in this country, to write of his work. He deserves to be adored for his work in the service of the motherland. His simplicity is extraordinary; but the light of his scholarship has reached even Europe.

Yet we should not blindly follow the policies of those whom we regard as great. It would be casting a reflection on Mr. Tilak's greatness to argue that his writings had no bitterness in them or to offer some such defence. Pungent, bitter and penetrating writing was his objective. He aimed at inciting Indians against British rule. To attempt to minimize this would be to detract from Mr. Tilak's greatness.

The rulers are justified, from their point of view, in taking action against such a man. We would do the same in their place. If we look at the matter thus, we realize that we need not feel bitter towards them.

Mr. Tilak, however, deserves our congratulations. He has, by his suffering, attained undying fame and laid the foundations of India's freedom.

If the people, instead of being overawed at the sentence passed on Mr. Tilak or being intimidated by it, rejoice at it and keep up their courage, the sentence will in the sequel prove to have been a blessing. What we need to consider is whether Indians should accept the views of Mr. Tilak and his party. We submit, after great deliberation, that Mr. Tilak's views should be rejected.

[1] Shortly after the Muzaffarpur incident (*vide* "Turmoil in India", 9-5-1908), Tilak wrote two articles in his journal, *Kesari*, praising the enthusiasm of the Bengal revolutionaries without, however, endorsing their violent methods. Self-rule, he said, was the only lasting solution to the problem. He also warned the Government against suppressing public opinion through the Newspapers Act. On June 24, he was arrested on a charge of sedition on two separate warrants, one for each of his two articles. Tilak was found guilty by the jury by a seven-to-two vote and was sentenced to six years' deportation. The majority of the jury were Anglo-Indians, the two dissentients being Indians.

India's welfare does not consist in merely uprooting British rule. It will be harmful, even useless, to use force or violence for uprooting that rule. Freedom gained through violence would not endure. And the sufferings to which the people of Europe submit would also become our lot then. As for the masses, they would merely pass from one form of slavery to another. No one will gain this way and almost everyone will lose—that is what the result will be.

We believe that the easiest way to make British rule beneficent is to adopt the way of satyagraha. If British rule becomes tyrannical, it will come to an end as soon as the British Government attempts to resist satyagraha. If the same workers who went on strike in protest against the sentence on Mr. Tilak were to become satyagrahis, they would be able to get the Government to agree to any reasonable demands.

What is our duty in this context? Though Mr. Tilak and other great Indians like him differ from us, we should continue to hold them in the highest esteem. We must emulate them in their capacity to suffer. Since they are great patriots, we must consider no honour too great for them, and act in the same spirit of patriotism. Their object is the same as ours, namely, to serve the motherland and to work for its prosperity. Compared to what they have been doing to secure that end, the course we have chosen is not in the least difficult. But we are convinced that the outcome of our exertions will be a thousand times better.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-8-1908

18. TROUBLE AMONG CAPE INDIANS[1]

There are two public bodies in the Cape. They seem to be working at cross-purposes. From time to time we read reports of their disputes even in the English papers. We advise the two bodies to realize that we in this land have no time for mutual recriminations. The third party will exploit this to our disadvantage, and we shall be reduced to an abject state. The dispute between the two bodies probably relates to insignificant issues. It will improve matters a great deal if all Indians aspire to be known as servants of the community rather than as leaders. A servant does not insist on privileges. He is only mindful of his own duty. Similarly, it is possible for us to remain

[1] *Vide* "Suggestions to Cape Indians", 25-4-1908.

servants of the Indian people and do our duty. A person who seeks to do his duty will have no occasion to quarrel with others. Similarly, if both the bodies in the Cape busy themselves with their duties, all their disputes will come to an end. They should both think of serving the community without expectation of reward.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-8-1908

19. PARLIAMENT FOR TURKEY

Reports have appeared in newspapers that the Young Party[1] in Turkey has brought about reforms in the Government. The people are pleased, a cablegram reports, because the Sultan has adopted a constitution for the governance of the country, and the occasion is being celebrated everywhere. The news agency also reports that Turkey will soon have a Parliament similar to the British Parliament.

If the report is true, it is indeed an epoch-making development. Turkey has among its common people and nobility men of such [remarkable] stature that, when she comes to have a Parliament, they can put her on par with the great European states, and indeed make her a world power. The country is so situated that it can achieve a commanding position.

Thus, the world over, we hear the cry of swarajya. However, those who demand it hardly understand what real swarajya means. The Transvaal struggle involves Turkey's honour as much as India's. It is obviously the duty of Muslims to carry on that fight till the end. It is the duty of Hindus to join it, as they are brothers of the Muslims. For they are [both] sons of the same Mother India. Also, although voteless, they have both to win swarajya in the Transvaal and they have an opportunity of doing that without much effort.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-8-1908

[1] Presumably, a reference to the "Young Turks" who worked, through secret societies and publications, for resumption of parliamentary government. On July 23, 1908, Abdul Hamid II was forced to agree to the restoration of the constitution.

20. LETTER TO H. L. PAUL

JOHANNESBURG,
August 4, 1908

DEAR MR. PAUL,

I have your note of the 30th ultimo. I have sent Joseph £20.[1] It is not possible for me to collect any more or to send more. Every penny is now wanted for the struggle. With kind regards all round,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a typewritten copy of the original: C.W. 4549. Courtesy: E. J. Paul

21. TRIAL OF MULJIBHAI G. PATEL - I

[*Tuesday, August 4, 1908*]

On Monday afternoon Mr. Muljibhai G. Patel, a member of the Committee of the British Indian Association, was arrested for being in the Transvaal without a registration certificate. He was admitted to £10 bail, but he refused to be bailed out, and was detained in the cells overnight....

He was brought before Mr. H. H. Jordan in B Court on Tuesday afternoon charged under section 8, sub-section 3, of Act 2 of 1907. He pleaded guilty. Mr. Gandhi defended and Mr. Cramer prosecuted.

Superintendent Vernon of the Transvaal Police stated that he was an Inspector appointed under the Registration Act to demand from Asiatics their registration certificates. The accused had stated to him that he had no certificates, that his Association had told him not to register, that he had refused to register under the Act, and would continue to do so. He produced a Peace Preservation Ordinance permit and a registration certificate, taken out on Lord Milner's advice[2].

Cross-examined [he said] he had received instructions on Thursday to effect this arrest. There were a good many like accused in the Transvaal who had entered and were not registered under the Act—at least 200. He would get instructions with regard to these directly, he hoped.

For the defence, the accused stated that he was a general agent, and had been in the Transvaal for about nine years. He took out his permit and registration certificate in 1903. Last year he paid a visit to India and returned to the Transvaal on 25th May last. He had not applied for a registration certificate under the Registration Act, nor had he any wish so to apply. His reason was that, according to last January's com-

[1] *Vide* letters to H. L. Paul, 11-6-1908 ; 1-7-1908

[2] *Vide* "The British Indian Association and Lord Milner", 11-6-1903.

promise, the law was to be repealed. He would take out a voluntary registration certificate, but not a compulsory one.

Cross-examined [he said] he had learnt of the terms of the compromise through the columns of *Indian Opinion*. He was a member of the British Indian Association.

Mr. Cramer put in a previous conviction against the accused for hawking without a licence. This was admitted.

Addressing the Court, Mr. Gandhi said that he had really nothing to add, except that he was afraid that these things would continue till the struggle was over. The accused was ordered to leave the Colony within 7 days. He will refuse to obey this order.

Indian Opinion, 8-8-1908

22. TRIAL OF TWELVE "HAWKERS"

[JOHANNESBURG,
August 4, 1908]

In D Court, in the afternoon, before Mr. H. H. Hopkins, 12 British Indian hawkers were charged with having traded as hawkers without licences, or, alternatively, with not having their names painted on their trading receptacles.

Mr. Shaw prosecuted, Mr. Gandhi appearing for the accused.

In almost every case the accused stated that they had applied for licences, which were refused because they would not give thumb-impressions.

In the first case Mr. Gandhi asked Mr. Barrett, the Licence Inspector, whether he had hitherto taken any notice of the fact that hawkers did not have their names on their trading receptacles.

The witness replied that he had not. He stated that the accused told him that Mr. Gandhi had his licence.

MR. SHAW: He did not say whether he had 'let, hired, or lent' his licence to Mr. Gandhi?

[BARRETT:] No.

All of the accused were fined £1 [each], with the alternative of seven days' imprisonment with hard labour, with one exception. In this case Mr. Gandhi said that there were two previous convictions.

Mr. Shaw said that the accused was one of those sentenced last month for hawking without a licence, and was sentenced to pay a fine of £1, or four days' imprisonment with hard labour.

Mr. Gandhi said that the accused had been also sentenced in January last, and sentence was remitted because of the compromise.

The accused was fined £2, with the alternative of 14 days' imprisonment.

The Transvaal Leader, 4-8-1908

23. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

NAIDOO'S SACRIFICE

Monday [*August 5, 1908*]

I am pained to have to report that Mr. Thambi Naidoo's wife has had a miscarriage. The child was buried today. Mr. Naidoo does not know this. But the community's obligation to him is mounting. He left his wife's side at a difficult time and deliberately went to gaol for the sake of the community, and this is what has happened meanwhile. Mr. Naidoo is still in gaol.

It is probable that this happened because of Mr. Naidoo's having gone to gaol. I saw Mrs. Naidoo on the same day on which he went to gaol. She was, as described by Mr. Doke, in a pathetic state. There is hardly another woman so spirited who would face with courage a second term of imprisonment for her husband. In any case that cannot be expected of a woman in Mrs. Naidoo's condition.

There is no doubt that the guilt for this death must attach to the Transvaal Government. It is because of its injustices that Indians have to suffer in this fashion.

NAIDOO'S ASSOCIATES RELEASED

The five Indians who went to gaol along with Mr. Naidoo and whose names were reported earlier have been released. Mr. Essop Mia and several other leaders were present [at the gaol gates] to receive them. Later they were treated to tea and biscuits at Mr. Essop Mia's. Fruiterers sent [gifts of] bananas and oranges for the occasion. Speeches were made by Mr. Essop Mia, the Moulvi Saheb, Imam Saheb and others.

SYMPATHY FOR TILAK'S FAMILY

It was decided at this same meeting to send Mr. Tilak's family a telegram of sympathy.[1]

RITCH'S EFFORTS

Mr. Ritch has been working hard in England. A cablegram to the effect that he has had an interview with Lord Crewe has been received. He also states that he came away satisfied with the interview. It appears from this that interest [in the Transvaal Indian problem] has now been aroused in England.

[1] *Vide* "Sentence on the Great Tilak", 1-8-1908.

LORD SELBORNE'S SPEECH

At his speech at Vereeniging, Lord Selborne said that no difficu-lties should be put in the way of Asiatics who were entitled to live in the Transvaal and that the Imperial Government should intervene to protect their rights. As to whether fresh immigration should be permitted or not rested entirely with the Colonial Government. It appears from this that the rights of educated persons may be difficult to safeguard. The remedy lies in their own hands. What the remedy is, we shall consider when that is the only outstanding question.

WHEN WILL IT END?

People go on asking when the fight will end. The Parliament here closes on the 21st. If there is no settlement before that, it may be taken that it will not come before January next. Whatever happens, it is certain that we have nothing to lose.

SORABJI'S MESSAGE

Mr. Sorabji is enjoying himself in gaol.[1] Whatever the inconveniences are, he puts up with them for the sake of the community. He has sent a message through the prisoners released today that he will return to gaol after release, but will not leave the Transvaal.

Tuesday [*August 4, 1908*]

MULJIBHAI GIRDHARLAL PATEL

Mr. Patel has been seized. He was arrested yesterday for failure to take out a register under the law. Only recently Muljibhai was in gaol for four days for hawking [without a licence].[2] He will go to gaol again. Mr. Patel refused to be bailed out, so that he had to remain in the [charge] office last night. Mr. Patel was tried today and was served with a notice to leave the Colony within seven days.[3]

POLAK IN VOLKSRUST

Mr. Polak has gone to Volksrust to help Indians who might arrive there and to defend those who might be prosecuted for not giving thumb-impressions; he will stay there for some time. I hope Indians holding permits will go to Volksrust in large numbers and court imprisonment by refusing to give thumb-impressions. Mr. Polak's address in Volksrust will be: Care of Mr. Essop Suleman, Box

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 1-8-1908.

[2] *Vide* "Trial of Bawazeer, Naidoo and Others", 22-8-1908.

[3] *Vide* "Trial of Muljibhai G. Patel-I",4-8-1908.

45. Anyone who wants to consult him should write to him in English. Mr. Polak is unlikely to stay there for more than two weeks.

Wednesday [*August 5, 1908*]

FROM INDIAN COMMITTEE AT PAARL[1]

Mr. Osman and other Indians write as under:

> What is needed most now is unity, as the task you had undertaken earlier was accomplished through unity. In satya-graha truth alone triumphs. We see from past examples that truth has always triumphed in the end. We know for instance that truthful men like Harishchandra and Haman enjoy imm-ortal fame to this day. Can there be anyone, then, who will fail to see that the Transvaal Government has given us this opportunity to win for ourselves comparable fame and not want to join this righteous campaign on behalf of his countrymen? The chief thing necessary, therefore, is that we remain united. Once that is done, the Government will no longer stand in our way; rather, it will open the gates of its own accord. Our Committee therefore urges patience and firm adherence to truth in the face of suff-ering.

These are excellent sentiments which Mr. Osman and others have expressed. Their words of courage are of course welcome. I must tell them, [however,] that it is by contributing to the funds of the Association that they can show sincere sympathy. Money is needed for the campaign, and contributing funds is the least that outsiders can do.

USE OF WORD "COOLIE"

Mr. Neser, Member of the local Parliament, referred to the Indians as "coolies" in one of his speeches. Mr. Polak therefore sent him a letter of protest. Mr. Neser has said in reply that he did not mean the word "coolie" to be an insult. He used it because it was generally applied to Indians.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE ABOUT INDIANS?

Mr. Alfred Barker is a white advocate here. He has written about us in a magazine called *The African Monthly*. He has suggested that Indians should be sent to Locations, that their trade should be restricted to these areas, that they should not be allowed to hold land outside Locations and that they should be registered throughout South Africa. That, according to Mr. Barker, is the only way to ensure the total eviction of the Indians from this country.

All these efforts of whites are in vain. They cannot go to this

[1] Near Cape Town

extent everywhere in South Africa. There is a lesson, however, we must learn from this, namely, that, like the whites who are tenacious in seeing through whatever they start, we should also remain unremitting in our efforts in defence of our honour and our status.

WELL DONE STANDERTON!

Reports have been received of the arrest of Mr. C. L. Patel, Mr. Ismail Mahomed Dindar and Mr. Ismail Bhabha in Standerton.[1] They were charged with trading without licences. Mr. Polak rushed over to help them. They were sentenced to a fine of £3 each, or, in default, fourteen days' hard labour. They chose to go to gaol rather than pay the fine. Mr. Abdool Haq reported over the telephone that later ten more Indians had been arrested. These have also gone to gaol.

Standerton has been wonderful. It is being severely tested. I had been told that Standerton, Potchefstroom and Klerksdorp were weak, and that we should leave them out of account for purposes of our campaign. Standerton has not only disproved this report but shown the highest courage. In the same way, I believe klerksdorp and Potchefstroom will also prove their mettle when the time comes. It has been my experience in this campaign that no one should be assumed to be weak and so left out of it, neither should anyone be assumed to be strong and therefore depended upon. This undertaking of ours is so novel that no one can be sure of himself. They alone can act bravely who feel the presence of God within inspiring them to acts of courage.

Let us all pray that everyone be given the same courage as Standerton.

THREE RELEASED

Mr. Govind Behchar, Mr. Lallu Ghela and Mr. Gokal Deva went to gaol last week, thereby serving both the community and themselves. They were released today. They were received by Imam Saheb Abdool Kadir Bawazeer, Mr. Gandhi and other gentlemen. They say that they are prepared to go to gaol again.

WHOSE LICENCES ARE ILLEGAL?

Some Indians here own rickshaws. There must be about 70 rickshaws in their possession. These Indians were asked by the Municipality to give their thumb-impressions. A notice was served on the Municipality last Saturday to the effect that licences for [plying] vehicles could not properly be called trade licences and did not as such fall within the scope of the obnoxious law. If, therefore, the Municipality did not issue licences without demanding thumb-impres-

[1] *Vide* also "Brave Indians of Standerton", 8-8-1908.

sions, it would be required to pay damages. I heard today that the Municipality has accepted this contention and decided to issue licences for rickshaws, etc., without insisting upon compliance with the provisions of the obnoxious law. Those who are entitled to these licences should accept them, and contrive othermeans of going to gaol. At the moment, that can be done by hawking without licences.

GAOL DIET

No reply has yet been received to the Association's letter requesting the replacement of mealie pap by some other food in the case of Indian prisoner.[1] This gives rise to the suspicion that the Government wants to wear us down. Very likely, the Government is labouring under a mistaken notion that its refusal to order changes in the diet may deter us from going to gaol. But I am confident that Indians who are out to show their mettle will not retreat merely out of fear of [an uncongenial] diet. Hunger and thirst, cold and heat: all these must be endured. When a great war is on, one must not hope to have a bed of roses or delicious food. How can one expect a favour from an enemy? Indeed, we only stand to benefit from his harshness.

SORABJI ADAJANIA

A large number of persons are anxious to offer Mr. Sorabji their congratulations and therefore ask for his gaol address. The address, of course, is The Fort, Johannesburg. But neither a letter nor for that matter anything else can be sent to him [in gaol]. If there is anything people wish to be handed over to him on his release, they may forward it to Box 6522. I would suggest that letters of congratulation be sent to his relatives. His wife's name is Kunvarbai Sorabji. His brother's name is Mr. Cowasji Shapurji. His sister's name is Manekbai Shapurji. Their address is: care of Mr. Palanji Edalji Plumber, Khetwadi, 6th Lane, Bombay.

CARTOON IN "SPORTING STAR"

There is a weekly here named *Sporting Star*. It has a cartoon on the campaign. In one corner, there are the words: "Gaol in J. B. A good hotel and health resort". Below are some Indians. Underneath the gaol gate is the legend: "Mr. Gandhi asked the Magistrate to award the maximum penalty to the accused in the interests of their health".[2]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-8-1908

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Director of Prisons",24-7-1908

[2] *Vide* "Trial of Harilal Gandhi and Others", 28-7-1908

24. LETTER TO W. HOSKEN

[JOHANNESBURG,]
August 5, 1908

DEAR MR. HOSKEN,

Thirteen Indian merchants were today arrested at Standerton for trading without licences. They were all sentenced to paying a fine of [£]3 or to go to gaol for fourteen days with hard labour. They all selected to go to gaol[1] They are all *bona-fide* residents of the Transvaal, and held, I believe, licences up to the 30th June last. On their application for renewals, they were called upon to give thumb-impressions under the Asiatic Act, which they declined to do. Hence their trading without licences and hence also the prosecutions. Whatever the Progressive Party may wish to do, do you not think that, as an independent member, you should ask General Smuts a question in the House of Assembly?

One thing more. As you know, the British Indian Association has approached the Director of Prisons for giving Indian prisoners more humane diet[2]. Europeans get food suitable for them, Cape Boys get European food, and Natives get their own national diet. Indians, who are classed with Natives, are therefore entirely neglected, except that, for one meal, they get a small quantity of rice and fat. For breakfast, therefore, most Indian prisoners have to starve, as they cannot accommodate themselves to mealie pap. I am afraid that perhaps the Authorities out of sheer vindictiveness will not alter the scale for Indian prisoners, if only to harass them. Even so, I think that my countrymen will not flinch but will accept the additional brutality. But can you not put questions in the House and otherwise move actively in the matter, and bring about a reform that is just[?] General Smuts, when he was anxious to have everything from Indians at the time of the compromise, smilingly told me that he would listen to me with reference to the special hardships of Indians in the Transvaal gaols.

Those days are now gone, but I hope the days are not gone, when[3] a man like you would simply insist on some decency being observed, or at least dissociate himself from the inhumanity practised

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter",3-8-1908 and "Brave Indians of Standerton", 8-8-1908.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Director of Prisons", 24-7-1908

[3] "gone. When" in the original

in the name of the people of the Transvaal.

I am,
Yours truly,

Wm. HOSKEN, ESQ., M.L.A.
HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
PRETORIA

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4854

25. LETTER TO A. CARTWRIGHT[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
August 5, 1908

DEAR MR. CARTWRIGHT,

I enclose herewith copy of my letter to Mr. [Hosken.][2] Comment is superfluous. I have used therein strong [expres]sions because I was unable to use stronger ones. I have written exactly as I feel. While I take pride in the fa[ct] of so many of my countrymen going to gaol, and suffering even unnecessary hardships, I cannot help feeling the situation most keenly, especially when I, who am chiefly responsible for all these things, have to remain unhurt. I do think that, subject to correction by you, it is time for you now to move editorially and give the Transvaal Press a lead.[3]

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4855

26. DUTY OF THE EDUCATED

Some educated Indians, or those who regard themselves as educated, are impatient to enter the Transvaal and join Mr. Sorabji in gaol. This shows their patriotism. But we cannot always express our devotion to a cause as we want to. It will not be true devotion if we insist on doing so. If everyone wants to be a soldier and die on the battle-field, that cannot happen. For some, not being at the front is an important duty. That is true of educated Indians in this case. It is

[1] This letter is damaged and indistinct at places.

[2] The note-paper is torn here. This must be the "Letter to W. Hosken", the preceding item.

[3] Later, Gandhiji himself wrote a letter to the editor of *The Transvaal Leader*, and an editorial on the communication appeared on the same day. *Vide* 2nd footnoteof "Letter to The Transvaal Leader", 8-8-1908.

enough that there is at present one educated person who has been arrested under the immigration law—Mr Sorabji. Meanwhile, educated Indians in Natal and elsewhere should don the monk's saffron robes and also dye their hearts in that hue. They must use their education in the service of the country and educate those who are entitled to enter the Transvaal in order to prepare them [to exercise their right]. Those who hold the £3 Dutch registers, those who, though without registers, had stayed long periods in the Transvaal before the war, and those Who hold permits or registers taken out after the war—these are the persons who have the right to enter. But their rights should be genuine. We do not want impostors. If people come in without a legitimate right to do so, we shall lose the battle. These Indians, especially those who belong to the last category, that is, those who hold permits or registers taken out after the war, should be encouraged to enter the Transvaal and told that, when they cross over into the Colony, they will be asked at the border to give their thumb-impressions, which they must refuse. They will then be asked to get of [the train]. They should get down, refuse to be bailed out, and remain in the police station. They should present themselves for trial. They will either be fined or imprisoned. They should not pay the fine, and cheerfully accept the imprisonment. This is what has to be explained to Indians who are entitled to enter. Indians who are ready for this should send in their names to the British Indian Association, who should be informed when any Indian with a legitimate right leaves [for the Transvaal] by train.

Educated Indians who are patriotic should watch these trains for any Indian [immigrants] travelling by them, and properly acquaint them with the position as above. The Association should then be informed.

Every Indian should realize that the Transvaal campaign involves the interests of Indians all over South Africa. If they lose the battle in the Transvaal, they will suffer a severe set-back elsewhere. In no other part of the world have Indians done anything comparable to what has happened in the Transvaal so far. Even in India a similar battle has not been fought. The Transvaal campaign is a clear and pure one and furthers the interests of both the rulers and the ruled.

That is the point of the campaign. All Indians, high or low, should understand what their freedom really consists in. Indians who feel the urge to be free and learn to have no fear of privations in gaol or of any suffering will achieve swarajya this day. They become free

from then on. As a consequence the laws [directed against them] will be repealed, the whites will respect them more, and they will not be sent off to Locations, etc. This is a point which ought to be properly grasped and carefully borne in mind.

Those who wish to serve India must give up all thought of serving their own interests.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-8-1908

27. BRAVE INDIANS OF STANDERTON[1]

For the sake of their honour and their community and because of their pledge, 13 traders of Standerton have gone to gaol where they will serve a sentence of 14 days' hard labour. We congratulate them on this. Standerton Indians ought to be proud of what has happened. These cases are different from the earlier ones. The sentence, too, is harsh[er]. In this second phase of our struggle, it is Standerton alone which has furnished an instance of 13 simultaneous arrests. If all Transvaal Indians show as much strength as Standerton, it will not be long before we become free. Let every Indian remember that, if the Indian community, after sending so many of its members to gaol, merely looks on helplessly or surrenders to the Government, it will only invite disgrace upon itself and be visited by the curses of those who have gone to gaol.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-8-1908

28. NATAL STRUGGLE[2]

The Natal Licensing Bill is fearful. It is essential for the Indian community to do something about it immediately. There is no reason to believe that the Bill will be approved by the Imperial Government. But, as the saying goes, those who are vigilant are ever happy, and we must wake up from today. The Bill may not go through this time. It is bound, however, to leave behind a trail of after effects. Mr. Taylor has said that, if the Bill is disallowed once, it should be sent back to England again, the process being repeated till the Bill is finally

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter",3-8-1908.

[2] *Vide* "Natal Bills" and "New Natal Bills", 16-5-1908 & "New Natal Bills", 16-5-1908.

approved. There is only one course which can effectively prevent this from happening. And that is satyagraha. Everyone knows that [Indian] licences are dwindling in number from year to year. In the circumstances, if the Indians do not bestir themselves, they will be unable to live on in peace. It will be useless merely to go on depending on the Imperial Government without doing anything ourselves. The only way of petitioning the Imperial Government is through satyagraha; it can be followed up with actual petitions, etc. The time is approaching when we shall find out whether or not Indians have the requisite courage for this. We do hope that Indian businessmen will prepare themselves to manifest this bravery.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-8-1908

29. LETTER TO "INDIAN OPINION"[1]

THE EDITOR

INDIAN OPINION

SIR,

I have received inquiries from many quarters as to why I sent Harilal, my son, to gaol.[2] I give some reasons below:

1. I have advised every Indian to take up hawking. I am afraid I cannot join myself since I am enrolled as an attorney. I therefore thought it right to advise my son to make his rounds as a hawker. I hesitate to ask others to do things which I cannot do myself. I think whatever my son does at my instance can be taken to have been done by me.

2. It will be a part of Harilal's education to go to gaol for the sake of the country.

3. I have always been telling people that satyagraha is easy for those who can understand it well. When I go to defend those who have been arrested, I do not, strictly speaking, defend them but only send them to gaol. If we have acquired real courage, there should be no need for me to present myself in Court. I thought it only proper that I should make this experiment in the first instance with my son. Accordingly, no arrangements were made for him at Volksrust, and he was left to fall back on his own strength. Since there were others with him in Johannesburg, I attended the Court, but asked for the maxi-

[1] This was published in *Indian Opinion* under the title: "Why He Sent His Son to Gaol: Mr. Gandhi's Explanation".

[2] *Vide* "Trial of Harilal Gandhi and Others", 28-7-1908

mum penalty for him and for his associates. It was their misfortune that they did not get it.

4. 1 have often advised that no one should give his thumb-impression on arriving at Volksrust. People have not followed this advice. I have not insisted on the point, but the time has now come for me to insist on it. Thumb-impressions are now asked for at Volksrust under the obnoxious law, and they should not, therefore, be given. This [object] also, I thought, I could easily achieve through Harilal.

I want every Indian to do what Harilal has done. Harilal is only a child. He may have merely deferred to his father's wishes in acting in this manner. It is essential that every Indian should act on his own as Harilal did [at my instance] and I wish everyone would do so. Satyagraha can be claimed to have been perfectly successful only if we do so. I repeat that

(1) those who are prepared for imprisonment should go to gaol without depending upon a lawyer or myself. That is not to say that I go back on my promise of defending Indian satyagrahis arrested in connection with the campaign against the law. I shall go wherever I find my presence is needed. But the best way is to have no lawyer and go to gaol straight away and undergo whatever sentence is passed;

(2) every Indian, whatever his status, must go to gaol for the sake of his country without giving much thought to what the others do;

(3) no Indian should give his thumb-impression or finger-prints on entering the Transvaal. Not doing so will mean imprisonment for Indians. They must accept it rather than give thumb-impressions or finger-prints or even signatures as signifying [compliance with the provisions of] the law.

I remain,
Satyagrahi

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-8-1908

30. LETTER TO "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
August 8, 1908

[THE EDITOR
THE TRANSVAAL LEADER]

SIR,

May I, through your columns, place before those of your readers who are interested in justice being done to all the inhabitants of the Transvaal a phase of the Asiatic question?[2]

I read in your impression of today's date a brief report of the two cases of Indians who were alleged to have been connected with forged certificates. One of the men secured his discharge by becoming King's evidence. The man against whom he became King's evidence has also been discharged. The public know how far one party, according to his own confession, was involved in the forgery traffic. The evidence against the other was undoubtedly, according to the newspaper reports, too weak to sustain a conviction. Thus those who are connected with the forgery are largely free. The Asiatic Law Amendment Act does not, and did not, touch them. They were not charged under it either, and I frankly admit that no Asiatic Act could deal with such cases. Wherever there is restriction on personal liberty, there will be found people ready enough to resort to a variety of practices to shirk such restriction. It is worthy of note that Indians were not the only parties connected with the traffic. Europeans are

[1] This was reproduced in *Indian Opinion,* 15-8-1908, under the title "The Indian Struggle in the Transvaal".

[2] *The Transvaal Leader* commented editorially on this letter as follows: ". . .he asserts that Asiatics sent to gaol under the present Tom-fool administration of the Asiatic Act are being half-starved, owing to their not being given the kind of food they are accustomed to, and to their inability to consume that which is supplied to them. These men are political prisoners; it is unjust if they are put to hard labour or made to wear prison clothing; it is infamously unjust if they are treated dietetically as Mr. Gandhi says they are. We thought that countries professing themselves civilized had abolished torture. We seem to be an exception. Surely the medical authorities of the prisons are recommending the prisoners food which they can take? Are the medical officials' instructions obeyed, as it is the duty of everybody connected with the Prisons Department, from the Colonial Secretary downwards, to obey them? Are the medical officers' views being set aside? It is not as if there were any cooking difficulties. There is no food more easily prepared than rice.

If Mr. Gandhi's accusation be well founded, we are acting in a way which would disgrace a Turkish province, let alone one of the British Imperial States."

also alleged to have been engaged in it.

Now, let your readers turn to the other side of the picture. Indians who have entered the Colony openly, who have proved their pre-war residence, who have always conformed to its laws, and who have recently, by universal acknowledgement, helped the Government completely to identify such persons, are being harassed on all sides, and subjected, to use Lord Milner's historic expression, to "pinpricks". Inoffensive Indians—in many instances Indians belonging to the highest strata of the Indian community—are being imprisoned, not because they have committed any heinous offence, but because their conscience does not approve of what they consider to be irritating and insulting legislation. Standerton is at present practically denuded of its chief Indian store-keepers, who are now serving a term of 14 days' imprisonment, with hard labour.

As if this were not in itself sufficient harassment, no relief has yet been granted regarding the food of these Indian prisoners. European prisoners get that food to which they are generally accustomed; Cape Boys receive European food; Natives get a diet to which they are accustomed; Indian prisoners get practically Native diet, and, therefore, are half-starved. They get mealie pap for breakfast every day and mealie pap for supper three times per week. Mealie pap, I know, to those who are accustomed to it, or who can by a long course of training habituate themselves to it, is good. Unfortunately, my countrymen do not take mealie pap. The result is that in the Transvaal gaols they have to suffer partial starvation. The authorities have been approached for relief,[1] but up to the time of writing there has been no response. My countrymen draw the conclusion, probably unjustifiably, that relief has been withheld in order to exasperate the Indians into submission. If so, let the authorities take care that they do not exasperate them into bitterest opposition to the Government and their measures.

Asiatics, having fulfilled their part of the contract, are now endeavouring to keep General Smuts to his part of that contract, which, according to *The Transvaal Leader,* he publicly declared to be as follows: "He had told them (the Asiatics) that the law would not be repealed so long as there was an Asiatic in the country who had not registered";[2] and, again, "Until every Indian in the country had registered the law would not be repealed". It is admitted that all

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Director of Prisons", 24-7-1908

[2] Smuts said this in his Richmond speech; *vide* Appendix VIII.

Asiatics who had the opportunity of making application for voluntary registration have done so. Asiatics now ask, "Why, then, has the Act not yet been repealed, and why was the offer to repeal the Act made under impossible conditions?"

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Transvaal Leader, 10-8-1908

31. TRIAL OF HARILAL GANDHI-II[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
August 10, 1908]

An unusually large crowd of Indians assembled in B Court yesterday afternoon [August 10] to hear the case of Harilal Mohandas Gandhi, a son of Mr. M. K. Gandhi, aged 20, and described as a student, who was brought before Mr. H. H. Jordan on a charge of contravening the Asiatic Amendment Act by failing to be in possession of a registration certificate.

The accused pleaded guilty, and was defended by his father. Mr. A. Cramer prosecuted. Superintendent Vernon, of B Division, gave evidence of arrest, and further stated that he called upon the accused to produce his certificate of registration, who, however, failed to do so, saying that he did not possess one.

Mr. Gandhi, on behalf of the accused, said that the latter had no desire to leave the Colony, but nevertheless he was desirous that the Court should make an order for the accused to leave the Colony within 24 hours. He made the request because two other Indians whose time under the Act would expire on Wednesday would be ready to go to gaol. He (Mr. Gandhi) hoped His Worship would adopt this course, as the accused's affairs were in his hands.

Mr. Jordan ordered the accused to leave the Colony within seven days.

The Transvaal Leader, 11-8-1908

32. SPEECH AT MASS MEETING

[JOHANNESBURG,
August 10, 1908]

Immediately after the case in which Harilal Gandhi was charged with being in the Colony without a registration certificate yesterday [August 10, 1908,] a mass meeting of Indians was held in an open space near the Court buildings. Mr. M. K. Gandhi addressed the meeting in English, and said that he had just received a telegram

[1] Harilal Gandhi was earlier tried on July 28, 1908; *vide* "Trial of Harilal Gandhi and Others", 28-7-1908.

from Vereeniging to the effect that several Indian store-keepers who were arrested for hawking or trading without licences had been given by the Magistrate no option of imprisonment, but had been fined £2. 7s. 6d each, and had to pay the fines within 24 hours, or elect to have their goods sold by the Court. This introduced a new phase into the struggle, but he had no doubt that British Indians would not be baffled by this. He did not know whether the Magistrate had received instructions from the Law Department to put into force the provisions of the law for certain exceptional cases, or whether the Magistrate had done this on his own initiative, but it showed to them that they were going to receive no quarter from General Smuts, nor did it behove them to ask for quarter. They were carrying on a fight in order that General Smuts might be compelled to carry out his promise to repeal the Act— a promise which was published in an account of a meeting held at Richmond, when he said that when all had registered he would repeal the Act.[1] There was one incident in connection with the matter which he (Mr. Gandhi) wished to recall. When he was lying in Mr. Doke's house, the Registrar of Asiatics came to him and said that it appeared that the Chinese and some Indians would not come forward, as they were suspicious of the intentions of the Government, and wanted something in black and white to confirm the promises made. A notice was drafted there and then, which was to be published in all the Indian languages and in the Chinese language, stating that, if the Asiatic communities carried out their compact, the Act would be repealed during the next session.

"FORTUNATELY"

Unfortunately—no, he would say fortunately, because they were now in a position to know with whom they were dealing—fortunately, the next day Mr. Chamney brought the news that all the Asiatics were coming in, and that the Chinese had withdrawn their objections, and asked whether he (Mr. Gandhi) thought it necessary that the notice should be published. They had then no reason to doubt the honesty of Mr. Smuts or Mr. Chamney, and he replied that there was no reason for the publication of the notice. He would only say that when Mr. Smuts made the statement at Richmond he must have had in his thoughts some such difficulty cropping up with the Asiatics as that which Mr. Chamney spoke to him of, and it was for this reason that he made the declaration. Today they found that General Smuts had offered to repeal the Act on certain conditions, which could not be accepted—conditions which were not imposed on them when they agreed to take out voluntary registration certificates.[2]

PURE ADMINISTRATION AND THE EMPIRE'S PEACE

The Asiatics were helping the Government against themselves, and helping Mr. Smuts to keep to his word, and maintaining the purity of administration within the colony and peace within the Empire. If they found that the statesmen who were

[1] *Vide* Appendix VIII.

[2] For the conditions, *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 23-6-1908

controlling the Government in South Africa had no notion of ordinary honesty and that, when it suited them, they withdrew from their promises, and tried to break these promises, the British Indians should compel them to keep their promises, and by so doing they would be rendering a signal service not only to the Colony but to the Empire. It did not therefore baffle them when they stood face to face with suffering imprisonment, with being half-starved, and going barefooted in the prisons, and it did not baffle them when they stood face to face with having their goods confiscated. He could only characterize this as organized robbery—legalized robbery. They were now brought under a section of a law which was only designed for exceptional purposes.

DECLINE TO PAY

He hoped that his countrymen had sufficient self-sacrifice to decline to pay their fines, and have their goods sold under their noses. He had no doubt that the Colonists themselves, when they saw that the British Indians would suffer this, they would ask General Smuts to stay his hand and keep his promises, and to repeal the Act on the conditions he had agreed upon. They had to suffer in order that they might give complete identification to the compact made by General Smuts with them. The Chairman of the British Indian Association had his nose broken because he stood up for the Government in keeping his compact with them,[1] and the reward of the Government for this was a broken promise—a breach of faith. He had no hesitation in repeating anywhere that this was the solemn promise made by General Smuts. They found that not only was the Act not repealed, but all kinds of vexatious regulations were being passed through Parliament affecting those who came from British India.

PARTNERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

He said that this country was as much the British Indian's as the white man's. They were partners and the white men were predominant partners, but they were only partners. The Indians only wanted justice and fair play, and if they could not get that they should show that they were prepared to suffer. His opinion was that no man who called himself a subject of King Edward should allow his rights to be taken away from him, but should suffer if necessary in order to prevent this. In this country, because they had committed the crime of having a coloured skin, they were as nothing, their feelings should be set aside, their sentiments disregarded, and their consciences set at naught. Let them show that they had sufficient of the spirit of self-sacrifice to suffer the confiscation of their property in order to compel the Government to keep its part of a compact which the Asiatics had honourably fulfilled. Mr. Naidoo had only come out of gaol that day. He (Mr. Gandhi) had declared before that Mr. Smuts was responsible for the death of the Chinaman who had committed suicide.[2] Mr. Smuts was responsible for this, and he was now responsible for the murder of young Mr. Naidoo.

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter",16-5-1908 and "Essop Mia",23-5-1908

[2] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 16-11-1907 & "Speech at Chinese Association", 27-11-1907.

Mrs. Naidoo was in pain when Mr. Naidoo went to gaol, and Mrs. Naidoo had given birth to a still-born child. Who was responsible for this if not Mr. Smuts? He (Mr. Gandhi) was certain that all these pains would have to be accounted for, if not now, then hereafter. Mr. Smuts was a Christian, and believed, as they all believed, in a hereafter, and he would have to answer for these things just as they would have to answer for their actions.

Mr. Gandhi concluded with a further appeal to British Indians to suffer whatever might be necessary for what they considered was right and just, and then proceeded to speak in Gujarati.[1]

The Transvaal Leader, 11-8-1908

33. TRIAL OF THREE HAWKERS

[JOHANNESBURG,
August 11, 1908]

. . . Three Indian hawkers were charged before Mr. H. H. Hopkins in D Court yesterday morning [August 11] with trading as hawkers without licences, or, alternatively, with failing to produce their licences when called upon. Mr. Shaw prosecuted, Mr. Gandhi appearing for the defence.

While giving evidence in one case, Mr. French, Municipal Licence Inspector, said that one of the accused had told him that his licence was in the possession of Mr. Gandhi. Witness went to Mr. Gandhi's office, and was there told that they did not have the licence.

Mr. Gandhi went into the witness-box, and said that with reference to what the accused was alleged to have said, witness held several licences, probably two or three hundred, which had been deposited with him, and also held probably a thousand registration certificates, which had also been deposited with him by British Indians, who had made up their minds not to make use of these certificates or licences. He had not searched his records to see whether he had this particular licence or not, as the Inspector had not asked him to do so.

Two of the accused said that they had not taken out licences, as they were required to give their thumb-impressions before licences were issued.

Replying to the Magistrate, Mr. Shaw said that the extreme penalty for the offence was a fine of £20, or three months' imprisonment.

All of the accused were found guilty, and sentenced to pay a fine of £1, or go to prison for seven days with hard labour.

They all elected to go to gaol. . . .

The Transvaal Leader, 12-8-1908

[1] No report is available of the Gujarati speech.

34. TRIAL OF QAZI HASSAN AND OTHERS

[JOHANNESBURG,

August 11, 1908]

Before Mr. Cross in C Court in the afternoon, five other British Indians were charged with hawking without licences, or, alternatively, with failing to produce their licences when called upon, and also with not having their names printed on their trading receptacles.

Mr. Gandhi appeared for the accused.

Qazi Hassan, the first to be charged, pleaded not guilty, and said that he had shown his certificate to the Inspector.

Mr. French, a Municipal Licence Inspector, gave evidence as to having seen the accused exposing goods for sale. When called upon to produce his licence, he did not do so. Later on, at the Charge Office, he produced his licence.

Mr. Gandhi said that he now understood why the accused had pleaded not guilty. He had a licence, but in common with the others had declined to produce it when the Inspector spoke to him.

THE MAGISTRATE: I am satisfied that he has produced his licence.

The Magistrate found the accused not guilty on the first two counts, but guilty of not having his name painted on his basket. He was cautioned and discharged.

Ahmed Essop was then charged, and pleaded guilty to failing to produce his licence when called upon.

Mr. Gandhi remarked that it was evident the accused's licence was in good hands.

THE MAGISTRATE: Are those your hands, Mr. Gandhi?

MR. GANDHI: I am afraid so, Sir.

The accused was fined £l or seven days' imprisonment with hard labour.

A hawker named Packiry was then charged, and was also fined £l or seven days' imprisonment with hard labour.

The last to be charged were Ebrahim Maravin and Ismail Ahmed.

Mr. Barrett, Municipal Licence Inspector, in giving evidence, said that he wished to mention that Mr. Gandhi had some two or three hundred licences belonging to hawkers.

MR. GANDHI: I gave that in evidence this morning.[1]

The witness said that when hawkers were called upon to produce their licences, they said that they were in the possession of Mr. Gandhi.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

THE MAGISTRATE: If they hand their licences over to Mr. Gandhi, Mr. Gandhi can hardly be blamed for that.

Mr. Gandhi said that the hawkers had surrendered these licences because they thought they had no right to make use of licences which others could not get. They were in possession of licences when the Government issued secret instructions in regard to issuing licences, and as the other Indians could not obtain licences, these men who had them had handed them over to the British Indian Association.

The accused were fined £1, with the alternative of seven days' imprisonment with hard labour.

They elected to go to gaol.

The Transvaal Leader, 12-8-1908

35. TRIAL OF MULJIBHAI G. PATEL-II

[JOHANNESBURG,
August 12, 1908]

In B Court yesterday [August 12] before Mr. H.H. Jordan, an Indian named Mulji Girdharlal Patel was charged with having failed to leave the Colony after having been ordered to do so by the Court. The accused was charged at the Court about a week ago for failing to produce a registration certificate, and was ordered to leave the Colony within seven day.[1]

Mr. Cramer prosecuted, and Mr. Gandhi appeared for the accused, who pleaded guilty.

Superintendent Vernon gave evidence that he arrested the accused at 6-10 yesterday morning on a charge of having failed to leave the Colony, or register, when ordered to do so.

In reply to Mr. Gandhi, the witness said that the accused had no authority to remain in the Colony.

MR. GANDHI: You say he has no authority to reside in the country. Is that so?

[VERNON:] Yes.

[GANDHIJI:] Does he not hold a permit under the Peace Preservation Ordinance?

Yes.

Does not that permit entitle the holder to enter and reside in the country?

Yes; but the Peace Preservation Ordinance is now repealed.

Do you suggest that the repeal of the Peace Preservation Ordinance cancels permits issued under it?

[1] *Vide* "Trial of Muljibhai G. Patel-I", 4-8-1908

Yes.

Do you then hold that all permits issued under the Peace Preservation Ordinance have become invalid? Yes.

MR. GANDHI: I am afraid that the Court will not hold with your contention.

The accused was sentenced to one month's imprisonment with hard labour.

The accused has been resident in the Transvaal for nearly 10 years, and is an educated man, possessing considerable influence, particularly with one section, a division of the Bombay Hindus. He possesses a Peace Preservation Ordinance certificate issued under the agreement made with Lord Milner.[1]

The Transvaal Leader, 13-8-1908

36. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

Monday [*August 12, 1908*]

NAIDOO RELEASED

Mr. Thambi Naidoo was released at nine this morning. He was received [at the gaol gate] by Mr. Essop Mia, Mr. Imam Abdool Kadir Bawazeer, Mr. Coovadia, Mr. Kunkey, Mr. Gandhi and some Chinese. Mr. Naidoo's health has suffered somewhat. His courage, however, has doubled. He says he will court a fourth term of imprisonment.

He had to see Mrs. Naidoo without delay. He and the Indians who had gone to receive him then proceeded to his house. Mr. Essop Mia and others made short speeches and the meeting came to an end after Mr. Naidoo had replied.

Mrs. Naidoo is progressing. Earlier, she had been down with fever for two days. A social gathering of Tamils is due to take place this evening in Mr. Naidoo's honour. There is also a move to fete him in public on behalf of all the [Indian] communities.

HARILAL GANDHI'S CASE

They swooped down on Harilal Gandhi today. He was arrested on the charge of being in the Transvaal without a register. The case was heard at 2 o'clock.[2] Mr. Gandhi asked for twenty-four hours' notice since he [Harilal] had no preparations to make and had made up his mind to go to gaol. But the Magistrate gave him seven days' notice. I hope that after seven days we shall find him engaged in hard

[1] The *Indian Opinion* (15-8-1908) report of the trial adds: "There are over 200 Indians in the same position as Patel, who are all pre-war residents of the Transvaal and holders of permits and registration certificates".

[2] *Vide* "Trial of Harilal Gandhi-II", 10-8-1908

physical labour in gaol. Gaol life is good education for anyone who accepts it in full knowledge of what it means. It is an important part of children's training that they should be taught to bear hardships from their earliest years.

Mr. George Godfrey, who has only recently started practice, has announced that he will not charge any fees for appearing in any case which serves the community as a whole. This offer deserves commendation and Mr. Godfrey must be given credit for putting his education to the best use.

HOSKEN BRINGS BAD NEWS

Mr. Hosken has brought the news that the Progressive Party will oppose the repeal of the [Asiatic] Act. [However,] no one is now likely to be alarmed by it. In January, that party was opposed [to us][1]: so were the others, yet we fought and won. It would not be surprising if this were to happen again. Our opponents will be confounded by the real strength of Indians, when they behold it. Like the owl which, dazzled by the sunlight, retreats into the obscurity of the shade, the treachery in General Smuts and the opposition of the Progressive Party will flinch before the light of Indian truth. However, what is essential is that the truth of the Indians must shine forth.

STENT'S SPEECH

In the course of a speech in Pretoria, Mr. Stent, a Progressive and editor of *Pretoria News,* said:

> General Smuts has lowered the prestige of the Colony by his handling of the Asiatic question. He introduced the unjust Asiatic law. Whatever attitude the Colonists may take up, they cannot but admit that the Government has made a mess of the whole matter. On the one hand, it incited the whites against Indians. On the other, General Smuts entered into negotiations with the Indians for a compromise. On the one hand, he held out threats against Indians. On the other, he surrendered on the Asiatics' own terms.
>
> Mr. Smuts has started another controversy with Mr. Gandhi. I am certain he will be beaten again. The Asiatics will not always remain passive resisters. They will go further and insist actively upon equal rights; and you will have to give them equal

[1] For the attitude of the Progressive Party to the compromise and to voluntary registration, *vide* the Smuts-Farrar correspondence summarized in "Johannesburg Letter", 30-1-01908. Gandhiji, however, concluded at the time that "the Progressive Party is not opposed to us".

rights not because you believe they are justly entitled but because you are too weak to refuse them.

This speech of Mr. Stent deserves attention. He understands that Mr. Smuts has played foul, that he is in the wrong and that Indians are in the right. Falsehood is always weaker than truth. If the Indian community would only fulfil the one Condition of remaining truthful, it is bound to win.

Tuesday [*August 11, 1908*]

NAIDOO HONOURED

The Tamils held a meeting at 6 p.m. yesterday in Market Street in honour of Mr. Thambi Naidoo. Messrs Essop Mia, Imam Abdool Kadir, Coovadia and others were present. A number of speeches praising Mr. Naidoo's courage were made, and he was garlanded and cheered. The meeting went on up to 8 o'clock.

HAWKERS ARRESTED

The following Indians have been arrested for trading without licences: Mr. Ahmed Essop, Mr. Valli Hoosen[1], Mr. Kara Odhav, Mr. Ebrahim Maravia, Mr. Ismail Ahmed, Mr. Jivan Bhikha, and Mr. Suleman Moosa. Among these, Mr. Valli Hoosen held a licence but refused to produce it. It was stated in the course of the evidence that he was later found to be in possession of a licence; he was then released. All the others were sentenced to a fine of £1, or, in default, seven days' imprisonment. They have chosen to undergo imprisonment rather than pay the fine. In this case, there was some difficulty in obtaining the sentence of imprisonment, for, in view of the bail money [that had been paid], it was feared that only a fine might be imposed as at Vereeniging. But before this could happen, Mr. Gandhi had withdrawn the bail on behalf of those accused in whose cases there was reason to fear some such development.

WARNING

One must heed this warning and not pay bail money. If it is at all necessary to offer bail-money, it must be done by other persons. The police cannot demand [payment of] bail-money. Even those who have money in their pockets must courageously refuse to offer bail.

PATEL AND NAIDOO

Mr. Patel and Mr. P. K. Naidoo, who had received seven days' notice [to leave the Colony], may be arrested any day.[2]

[1] Qazi Hassan? *Vide* "Trial of Qazi Hassan and Others", 11-8-1908

[2] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 3-8-1908

SORABJI

Mr. Sorabji will be released on Wednesday next, the 18th. I hope that there will be hundreds of Indians to greet and welcome him. There is a move to accord fitting honours to Mr. Sorabji.

Wednesday [*August 12, 1908*]

MULJIBHAI PATEL

Mr. Patel was arrested today at 6 a.m. The case came up at ten o'clock.[1] Mr. Gandhi attended. Mr. Patel offered no evidence. There was a mild exchange between Mr. Vernon [and Mr. Gandhi] in the course of [the former's] cross-examination. Mr. Patel was sentenced to a month's hard labour. He is full of courage, and was quite cheerful. As more and more of these men go to gaol, the community's responsibility increases correspondingly. Having thus sent them off to gaol, the community ought not to yield.

TWO HAWKERS

Mr. Odhav Bhikha and Mr. M. Sivalingam Pillay were tried for trading without [a] hawking [licence]. Each was sentenced to a fine of £1 or [in default] seven days' imprisonment. Both these brave men chose to go to gaol rather than pay the fine.

IN GERMISTON

An Indian named Nana was to be tried. He did not attend [the Court at the appointed time], and so his bail was estreated. Mr. Godfrey was to go to defend him. Such men do a great deal of harm to the community.

IN KLERKSDORP

There was a similar case against an Indian named Abdool Ahmed. He courageously defended himself and stated in evidence that he would not give a thumb-impression under any circumstances. He was sentenced to four days' imprisonment or a fine of £1. To be sure, the gentleman went to gaol, but the next day he paid the fine! This incident was reported in the newspapers here, but for which we could not even have known about it.

HOW TO PUT UP A FIGHT

Mr. Imam Abdool Kadir Bawazeer, Mr. Fancy, Mr. Ibrahim Coovadia, Mr. Omarji Sale, Mr. Dildar Khan, Mr. Ahmed Moosaji and

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

Mr. Mohanlal Goshalia—all these Indians left for Charlestown today. They will return and refuse to give their finger-prints [at the border while re-entering]. They will also refuse to produce their registers and thus go to gaol.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-8-1908

37. LETTER TO "THE STAR"[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
August 12, 1908]

[THE EDITOR
THE STAR]

SIR,

You will, I hope, allow me to correct you with regard to the question of educated Indians, touched upon in your leader of yesterday on the Asiatic struggle.[2] British Indians do not ask for the opening of the door to educated Indians. They ask that the door should be left open as it is at present under the Immigrants' Restriction Act. You assume that a demand is being made for admitting English-speaking lads. The truth is that Indians have declared that they would be satisfied with an education test, no matter how severe, so long as the door is kept open (not now to be opened) for those possessing the highest educational attainments.

You say that General Smuts will be justified in withdrawing from any promise he may have made, in view of the above alleged fresh demand. From the facts stated by me, you can verify for yourself that

[1] This was republished in *Indian Opinion* under the title "The Indian Struggle in the Transvaal".

[2] *The Star*, 11-8-1908, had commented editorially as follows: ".. .Mr. Gandhi accuses the Colonial Secretary of a flagrant breach of promise in that he declines to repeal the Asiatic Act, while on the other hand Mr. Smuts insists that the Asiatic leader now demands new concessions....But his [Mr. Gandhi's] testimony...is certainly not conclusive....When Mr. Gandhi goes so far as to accuse Mr. Smuts of 'murder' and 'organized robbery', even those who are not unsympathetic must feel sceptical of his trustworthiness in questions of fact....Mr. Smuts is the servant of Parliament and any promise he may have made to Mr. Gandhi was necessarily subject to the ratification of the legislature.... [Accepting Mr. Gandhi's proposal would involve] the unrestricted admission.. .of the thousands of Indian lads who have been or are being educated in the schools of Natal [or India]....Whatever hardships the Asiatics have suffered they owe entirely to the recalcitrancy and folly of their leaders...they cannot complain when they are called upon to bear the consequences...."

no fresh demand has been made. But, supposing that it was made, would it justify General Smuts in breaking a promise which was to be fulfilled on the condition of voluntary registration being gone through by Asiatics, even though that condition had been fulfilled? Moreover, if Asiatics ask for anything new, he has undoubtedly a right to refuse it, but surely not on that account to break his promise. What Asiatics grieve over is the fact of the General making the acceptance of educational disqualification a conditionof repeal of the Asiatic Act. Will it not be an honourable course for him to give what he has promised, and then throw the onus on the Asiatics of accepting or rejecting it?

You seem to imagine that, by repeal of the Act, Asiatics desire that there should be nothing of the Asiatic Act retained in any shape or form. So far is this from being true, that, in the draft Immigration Bill repealing the Act and shown to me by the Colonial Secretary, such provisions of the Asiatic Act as were necessary for properly checking certificates already issued and such other things were taken over from it. Asiatics do not oppose supervision, but they do oppose an Act which is based on charges of fraud and which contains many clauses of an objectionable character.

As to the promise of repeal, you reported General Smuts to have stated on the 6th day of February last that "he had told the Asiatics that he would not repeal the Act until every Asiatic was registered". I interpret this to amount to a public confirmation of the promise made by him to me on the 30th day of January and repeated on the 3rd day of February last. If the declaration has any other meaning, I confess I do not understand it.

You resent my having accused General Smuts of the murder of Mr. Naidoo's child and my having used the expression "legalized robbery" in connection with the Magistrate's order at Vereeniging to seize the goods of the Indians charged, in lieu of the payment of the fines imposed upon them,[1] I witnessed the scene enacted in Mrs. Naidoo's room immediately after her husband's third incarceration. I cannot forget it. Six days after, I heard that she had a still-born son. Mr. Naidoo had committed no offence save that, first, of helping General Smuts out of an awkward dilemma, and then of preferring his conscience to everything else. Although you may wonder, I must repeat that the death of the child must be laid at the door of General Smuts. Lastly, if a private individual were to take away my goods by violence, the law would call it robbery. When the legal machinery itself is utilized to confiscate my goods and thus to compel me to

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting", 10-8-1908

surrender my conscience, I may be pardoned for calling the process "legalized robbery". And yet that is what a forced sale of the goods of those who have done no wrong means to most Indians.

[*Yours etc.,*
M. K. GANDHI]

Indian Opinion, 22-8- 1 908

38. INTERVIEW TO "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"

[JOHANNESBURG,
August 12, 1908]

A number of the leading Transvaal Indian[1] left for Charlestown yesterday [August 12] with the intention of crossing the border into the Transvaal without giving evidence of identity....All of these are domiciled in the Transvaal, and all but one possess voluntary registration certificates. They will decline to produce their registration certificates, which must be demanded in accordance with the Asiatic Act.... On their refusal to supply particulars required by the Government, these men will be arrested. In that event they will plead guilty to the charge of refusing to comply with the provisions of the Asiatic Act in order that they may be imprisoned....

A number of other Indians who are qualified to enter the Transvaal under the Immigrants' Restriction Act, but not under the Asiatic Amendment Act, will also probably try to enter the Transvaal within the next few days....

Mr. Gandhi said that the Bill will not satisfy the Asiatic communities, because they hold that it breaks the terms of the promises made by General Smuts when the compromise was arrived at, and that it sets up two kinds of legislation for the same class of people. The Bill does not protect Asiatics who they hold are entitled to enter the country, and have entered after the expiry of the three months appointed for voluntary registration, and also those Asiatics who were resident in the Transvaal on the date of the compromise, but did not take out voluntary registration certificates. These Asiatics have, in accordance with the new Bill, to be registered under the Asiatic Act. The result in some cases would be peculiar for the Asiatics. There are cases in which sons have taken out voluntary registration certificates, and fathers who were not in the Colony during the three months have not done so, and would therefore be called upon to register under the old Act. The Bill, they hold, only nominally exempts Asiatics who have voluntarily registered from the provisions of the Act. The Asiatics hold that there are two conditions to be fulfilled by the Govern-ment under the compromise. The one is that to all those who registered voluntarily the Act should not be applied. The other is that the voluntary mode of registration should apply to those who entered the Transvaal under the terms of the compromise. Both of

[1] For the names,*vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 15-8-1906

these conditions, they say, are disregarded. Again, no provision has been made for prewar Asiatic residents who have not yet returned to the Transvaal; such old residents, if they chose to accept the old Asiatic Act, could, under the discre-tionary clause, take out certificates of registration. As such Asiatics will not comply with the terms of the old Act, they will be debarred from entering. The same remarks apply to educated Indians who could enter the Colony under the Immigrants' Restri-ction Act, but who would become "unregistered" by reason of their non-compliance with the Asiatic Act. "This," remarked Mr. Gandhi, "is an adroit move, but hardly an honourable one." The new Bill the Indians hold to provide separate legislation for one class of people, as it regulates the movements of those Indians who have taken out voluntary registration certificates and the old Asiatic Act, the move-ments of the others.

The Transvaal Leader, 13-8-1908

39. PETITION TO TRANSVAAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY[1]

TO
THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE
HON'BLE THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE TRANSVAAL
PRETORIA

JOHANNESBURG,
August 13, 1908[2]

THE PETITION OF ESSOP ISMAIL MIA, IN HIS CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN,
AND M. K. GANDHI, IN HIS CAPACITY AS HONORARY SECRETARY
OF THE BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT

1. The British Indian Association represents the British Indian residents of the Transvaal.

2. The members of the Association have read with much concern the Bill published in the *Government Gazette*, entitled "to validate the voluntary registration of certain Asiatics who failed to comply with the provisions of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, *1907"*.

3. When British Indians undertook to take out voluntary registration, they never had any intention of submitting to the Asiatic Law Amendment Act of 1907.

4. Whilst, nominally, the Bill before this Hon'ble House does not make British Indians submit to the said Act, in reality, there is no

[1] This was published in *Indian Opinion,* 22-8-1908, under the title, "A Petition to Parliament".

[2] Although the petition was drafted on this date, it was not submitted until after August 14; *vide* the following item, "Letter to General Smuts", 14-8-1908

distinction between the incidents of voluntary registration to be legalized under the said Bill and registration under the Asiatic Act.

5. The terms of the compromise as embodied in the letters that passed between the Hon'ble the Colonial Secretary and the Honorary Secretary of the British Indian Association and the other co-signatories were:

(a) all Asiatics resident in the Colony at the time of the compromise should take out voluntary registration certificates "say within three months" from the date of the compromise.

(b) Children under 16 years were to be exempt from any registration.

(c) Such mode of registration was to be applicable to those who were entitled to enter the Transvaal but who were not in the Transvaal at the time of the compromise.

(d) To those who submitted to voluntary registration, Act No. 2 of 1907 was not to be applied.

(e) The voluntary registration was to be legalized in any other manner that the Government considered proper.[1]

6. These were supplemented by conversations that took place at interviews granted by the Hon'ble the Colonial Secretary to the Honorary Secretary of the British Indian Association.

7. At these interviews, the question of mode of legalization was discussed, and the Hon'ble the Colonial Secretary definitely promised that, if all the Asiatics in the Transvaal submitted to voluntary registration, the said Act would be repealed.

8. The said promise was referred to by the Hon'ble the Colonial Secretary in one of his speeches[2] delivered at Richmond soon after the compromise.

9. The Petitioners respectfully invite the attention of this Hon'ble House to the fact that all the Asiatics who had an opportunity of submitting to voluntary registration have done so, and that the others have been always ready to do so, but voluntary registration after the 9th of May has been refused.

10. The Bill before this Hon'ble House, therefore, is in conflict with the compromise in the following particulars:

(a) It does not repeal the said Act No. 2 of 1907.

(b) Whilst it seemingly validates voluntary registration under a

[1] *Vide"* Letter to Colonial Secretary", 28-1-1908

[2] *Vide* Appendix VIII.

separate measure, it does not definitely and unequivocally except voluntary registrants from the operation of the said Act.

(c) It does not exempt from registration the children under the age of 16 years of holders of voluntary registration certificates.

(d) It does not leave any opportunity for voluntary registration for Asiatics referred to in Sub-Paragraph (c) of Paragraph 5 hereof.

11. The Bill is, therefore, in the humble opinion of the Petitioning Association, in breach of the terms that were to be fulfilled by the Government.

12. The community represented by the Petitioning Association has no desire to take advantage of the voluntary registration certificates that were taken out by it in good faith.

13. The Petitioning Association respectfully invites the attention of this Hon'ble House to the fact that, at much personal sacrifice and even at the risk of their lives,[1] leading members of the Indian community fulfilled their part of the compromise.

14. The Petitioning Association feels that the Bill before this Hon'ble House disregards the admittedly valuable help rendered to the Govern-ment of the Colony by the Association in connection with the compro-mise.

15. Your Petitioners, therefore, humbly pray that this Hon'ble House will reject the Bill, or grant such other relief as to it may seem fit and proper. And for this act of justice and mercy, etc., etc.

ESSOP ISMAIL MIA
CHAIRMAN
M. K. GANDHI
HONORARY SECRETARY

Archives of Legislative Assembly, Pretoria; also Colonial Office Records: 291/132

[1] The reference is to the assault on Gandhiji and Essop Mia. *Vide* "My Reward", 22-2-1908, "Johannesburg Letter",23-5-1908 and "Essop Mia", 23-5-1908.

40. LETTER TO GENERAL SMUTS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
August 14, 1908

DEAR SIR,

I deem it to be my duty to approach you, at the eve of what promises, for Indians, to be an interminable struggle. Nearly sixty Indians are now undergoing imprisonment with hard labour at the Johannesburg Gaol. Over thirty have suffered imprisonment and been discharged since the renewal of the struggle. Thirteen Indian merchants are at present undergoing imprisonment at Standerton.

On Sunday[2], we meet to burn registration certificates. The return of these certificates up to the time of writing is about[3]. . . .They are still pouring in, and, by Sunday, it is highly probable that we will have at least fifteen hundred. I do not know that all those are true men [who] would fight to the last and suffer every form of hardship. The giving of their certificates is an earnest.

The Chairman[4] the Natal Indian Congress Durban, the Chairman[5] of the British Indian League, Cape Town, the Vice President[6] of the Natal In-dian Congress and the Joint Secretary[7] of the Natal Indian Congress, each representing a different faith or clan of India, accompanied by a few indentured Indian and a few who claim pre-war residence are today at the border either to be arrested and impresoned, or to be passed unchal-lenged.

In my opinion, these facts represent strong, [gen]uine and invincible opposition to the Asiatic Act, and I am right in assuming that you do not intend to deal unjustly by those who are entitled to reside in the Transvaal. The[8] difference between you, as representing the Government, and the British Indians is very small indeed. I appeal to you once more, therefore, to revert to the draft Immigrants'

[1] This letter is damaged and indistinct at places.

[2] 3 August 16. The date earlier fixed for burning these certificates was Sunday, July 12, but it was postponed in deference to Cartwright's suggestion; *vide* "Letter to A. Cartwright", 9-7-1908 The certificates were ultimately burnt at the mass meeting of August 16.

[3] A word is missing here.

[4] Dawad Mahomed

[5] Adam Hajee Gool Mahomed

[6] Parsee Rustomjee

[7] M.C. Anglia

[8] The source has "...Transvaal, the...".

Restriction Bill that was shown to me, and to accept the amendments suggested by me, leaving the question of educated Indians open, unless you can bring yourself to so amend the Act as to keep the door open for educated Indians being professional or University men. I ask you to study carefully the petition[1] to be presented to the House, and to answer to yourself whether the Bill published does not break the compromise in almost every particular. I ask you, then, to go back to the interviews we had before voluntary registration started, and to what you used to say. I ask you further to accept my assurance that there is absolutely no wish on my part or on the pat of the leaders of the Indian community to seek for anything more than fair treatment of those who are *bona-fide* residents of the country.

If the proposal above made by me is not acceptable to you, I venture to suggest that you see a few Indian leaders and come to an acceptable arrangement which will carry out the spirit of the compromise and end a painful situation. If you cannot do either, I am afraid that the resolve to burn the certificates at the Mass Meeting on Sunday must be carried out. The sole responsibility for the advice rests on my shoulders.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

GENERAL J.C. SMUTS
PRETORIA

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4857

41. SUMMARY OF LETTER TO SIR GEORGE FARRAR[2]

August 14, 1908

Mr. Gandhi to Sir George Farrar writes, on the eve of another opening of a very fierce struggle, because he considers it his duty to lay before the leader of the Opposition, the gravity of the position; to set out the points of his objection to the Validation Bill, and requests consideration of them.

India Office, Judicial and Public Records: 3722/08

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] This is from a precis of events in the Transvaal sent by Ritch along with his letter of October 6, 1908 to the Colonial Office.

42. WHAT IF GOODS ARE AUCTIONED

Vereeniging Indians were not sentenced to imprisonment but were only asked to pay a fine. The Magistrate ordered the recovery of the fine, if not paid, by the auctioning of their goods. There is no provision in the Licences Act for this [procedure] but the Magistrate has this power under another law.

What pleases one is that Indians have not been alarmed by this order; on the contrary, they have been able to see that what has happened is better.

This suggests that real wealth consists in poverty, for the rich cannot hold out against the Government as well as the poor can. The rich will be afraid. We congratulate the Vereeniging Indians on their informing the Magistrate that they would rather have their goods auctioned than pay the fine. We do not think the slightest harm will befall them if their goods are auctioned. To be sure, the goods of some traders will be so auctioned. But we certainly cannot argue that there will be no loss of money in case of imprisonment. We should not therefore be afraid of similar loss through auctioning of goods. The fact is that, as hundreds of men cannot be imprisoned, equally, the goods of hundreds of traders cannot be auctioned. The Government does not have the requisite facilities. It would lose its prestige if it did so and might even be ousted from power.

Moreover, there is nothing that the Government can get out of hawkers. No Indian is bound to produce his goods for auction. The Government may, if it wants, search for a person's goods. It will grow tired of doing so and then hawkers will be absolutely free to go about their business without licences. The Government will find itself in the position of the woman who went out in search of her son and lost her husband. Coveting the goods, the Government will even miss the opportunity of sending people to gaol, with the result that Indians will grow more determined. This being the case, no Indian need be alarmed. When the Government seeks a settlement, Indians, if they have the courage, can demand compensation for those whose goods were auctioned.

This campaign in the Transvaal is of the greatest importance to Indians. Natal should watch it carefully. The Natal Act does not provide for imprisonment in the matter of licences. Only goods can be auctioned. From [the events in] the Transvaal, Natal Indians will see that the campaign has been made much easier by the auctioning of goods. If hawkers really hold out against the Government, they can

compel it to yield. That is why true poverty means true wealth. What true poverty is, we shall consider on another occasion. For the present, Indians must bear in mind the need to endure the hardships, whatever they be.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-8-1908

43. NEW BILL

The following Bill has been published in the Transvaal *Government Gazette* of August 11:[1]

BILL TO VALIDATE VOLUNTARY REGISTRATION OF CERTAIN ASIATICS WHO FAILED TO COMPLY WITH PROVISIONS OF ASIATIC LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1907

1. Every person
   (a) who is an Asiatic as defined by the Asiatic Law Amendment Act [2 of] 1907; and
   (b) by whom an application for such voluntary registration as aforesaid was on the tenth day of February [1908], or on any day subsequent thereto up till the tenth day of May 1908, made to the Registrar of Asiatics or other duly authorized officials; and
   (c) to whom a certificate in the form set forth in the Schedule to this Act was issued by such Registrar

shall be deemed to be the lawful holder of a certificate entitling him to enter and reside in the Colony.

2. Every Asiatic as is described in section l who enters or is residing in this Colony shall, upon demand made upon him by any member of the police force or by any other official authorized thereto, shall producehis certificate [of registration] and shall also on like demand supply such particulars and furnish such means of identification as the Colonial Secretary may by notice in the Gazette prescribe. Any Asiatic who fails to produce [such certificate] shall be liable to be dealt with under Act 2 of 1907—the obnoxious Act—in the manner provided by section 8 thereof. Any Asiatic who fails to supply such particulars and furnish such means of identification as may be prescribed shall be liable to a fine not exceeding £10, or in default of payment, to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a

[1] The translation has been collated with the English text of the Act found in *Indian Opinion*, 5-9-1908.

period not exceeding 14 days.

3. Any person who has lost his certificate shall apply to the Registrar for a new certificate and supply him such particulars and furnish such means of identification as may be prescribed. Any person into whose hands shall have come any such certificate shall, unless he is the person to whom it was issued, forthwith deliver or transmit the same as soon as may be to the Registrar of Asiatics, failing which he shall be liable to a fine not exceeding £50 or in default of payment to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period not exceeding 14 days.

4. No Asiatic shall obtain any trading licence under the Revenue Licences Ordinance of 1905, unless he is the [lawful] holder of a certificate [of registration] issued under the Asiatic [Law] Amendment Act of 1907 or under section 1 of this Act and supplies such particulars and furnishes such means of identification as the Colonial Secretary may prescribe. Any [trading] licence issued .

5. Any person who forges or attempts to forge any document in the form set forth in the Schedule to this Act, or aids another person in doing the same shall be liable to a fine not exceeding 500 or in default of payment to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period not exceeding two years, or both.

6. This Act shall be known as the "Asitic Voluntary Registration Validation Act"[1], and shall not come into force till such time as it receives Royal assent and such assent is notified in the *Gazette*.

The registration certificate under this Act requires the following particulars: name, race, description, name of wife, place of residence, right thumb-impression, Registrar's signature, date and signature of the person to whom the certificate is issued; in the case of a child under sixteen or a ward, the name, age, address and relationship to the guardian.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-8-1908

[1] "Asitics" Voluntary Registration Validation Bill", withdrawn and replaced by Smuts, introducing Asiatics Registration Amendment Bill on August 21, recommended by a Select Committee of the Transvaal Legislative Assembly as an alternative.

44. SPEECH AT MASS MEETING[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
August 16, 1908]

Last Sunday [August 16] afternoon witnessed such a scene as, it is to be hoped, may never need to be re-enacted in this country. Some three thousand British Indians gathered together purposefully. . . intent only upon consigning [the registration certificates] to the flames. . .The whole of the space looking westwards from the Fordsburg Mosque within the fence was packed with members of the Indian community. . . . It was a wonderful display of national unity, and one that the mother country might well be proud of....

On the platform were the Congress leaders. . . various prominent Transvaal Indians . . . . Mr. Leung Quinn, Chairman of the Chinese Association, and Mr. Gandhi . . . Mr. Essop Ismail Mia presided over this vast gathering. . . beyond that, a sea of upturned and expectant faces, with determination and a bitter merriment stamped deep. . . . In the front row a dozen representative Chinese leaders grimly sat, awaiting the fateful moment. Briefly, the Chairman, first in Gujarati, and then, through the medium of Mr. N.A. Cama, detailed in measured accents the reason for calling the meeting together . . . . Then Mr. Gandhi addressed the gathering, after which the voluntary registration certificates were thrown into a large cauldron, saturated with paraffin, and set ablaze by Mr. Essop Mia in the name of the community.[2] Mr. S. Haloo who, it will be remembered, registered under the Act, now publicly burnt his badge of slavery, and poured oil upon the flames. . . .

MR. GANDHI'S SPEECH

The responsibility that devolves upon me this afternoon is a very serious responsibility. I have been taken to task, in connection with the advice that I have been giving to my fellow-countrymen for some length of time, by friends. I have been ridiculed by those who do not profess to be friends, and, yet, after due consideration, and, shall I say,

[1] This report has been collated with another from *The Transvaal Leader*, 17-8-1908, and any additional information from it has been suitably incorporated in this item. For the resolutions passed at this meeting, *vide* Appendix IX.

[2] *The Transvaal Leader* describes this stage of the proceedings as follows: "A large three-legged pot was then filled with the registration certificates, about 1,300 in all, and about 500 trading licences. Paraffin was then poured in, and the certificates set on fire, amid a scene of the wildest enthusiasm. The crowd hurrahed and shouted themselves hoarse; hats were thrown in the air, and whistles blown. One Indian, said to have been a leading blackleg, walked on to the platform, and, setting alight his certificate, held it aloft. The Chinese then mounted the platform, and put their certificates in with the others. . . ."

prayer also, the advice that I ventured to give to my fellow-countrymen 1 am going to repeat this afternoon, and that advice is that, as events have taken the turn that you know in connection with our struggle, we must burn our certificates. [Applause.] I am told that I may be instrumental in imposing on my countrymen untold suffering because of the advice that I have given, if they follow that advice. I know that well, but I do know this also, that, if the burning of the certificates will impose untold suffering on you, the keeping of these certificates and submission to the Asiatic Act or to the Validation Bill that is to be read a second time tomorrow will impose on my countrymen untold indignity, and I say with the greatest emphasis at my command that I would far rather that my countrymen suffered all they have to suffer than that they imposed on themselves indignity. Further, my countrymen here in the Transvaal have taken a solemn oath not to submit to the Asiatic Act. The solemn oath was taken not merely to be fulfilled to the letter but in spirit also, and if you were so ill advised by me, or by anybody else, that you may accept the Voluntary Asiatic Registration Validation Bill and flatter yourselves with the belief that you have escaped the Asiatic Act, I should call myself a traitor to my countrymen, a traitor to God, a traitor to my oath. I shall do no such thing, no matter what suffering may be imposed on you by reason of burning your certificates, but, if you do burn your certificates, please bear in mind that you are not to take advantage of the certificates at any time whatsoever until a proper and just and honourable settlement has been arrived at. It is open to you to take copies tomorrow of the certificates that may be burned to ashes today by paying 5 s, I dare say that the Government will give you copies of these certificates even free of charge because the Bill has not yet become law, but, if there is any Indian in this vast assemblage who wants to take out a copy of that certificate, and today wishes to burn the certificate either out of shame or false modesty or any other reason of a similar nature, then I say emphatically let him step forward and say he does not want his certificate to be burned, but if it is your solemn resolution that you will not go to the Government to ask for a copy of the certificate, then I say, you have well done. Before this resolution was arrived at at the Committee meeting of the British Indian Association, you had already sent to gaol several Indians. Mr. Sorabjee, all honour to him, came from Charlestown to fight your battle. ('Hear! hear !') Several Indians, humble folks amongst us, went to Johannesburg Fort in order that they might serve their countrymen, in order that their suffering might appeal to the Government, in order that we might be able to live in this Colony with self-respect and dignity. Does it behove any of us to keep the voluntary registration

certificates, to sit tight on those certificates, and allow our poorer countrymen or those of our countrymen who happened to enter the country after the expiry of the three months to go to gaol or to expect them to accept the Asiatic Act? I say emphatically, no. I did not come out of the gaol before my time was up in order that I might leave the hardships that I was suffering there—personally, I was not undergoing any hardships whatever. It would be a far greater hardship to me to have to submit to indignity or to see a fellow-countryman trampled underfoot or his bread, to which he is justly entitled, taken away from him. I would pass the whole of my lifetime in gaol, and I say that in the House of God, in the House of Prayer, and I repeat it that I would far rather pass the whole of my lifetime in gaol and be perfectly happy than see my fellow- countrymen subjected to indignity and I should come out of the gaol. No, gentlemen, the servant who stands before you this afternoon is not made of that stuff, and it is because I ask you to suffer everything that may be necessary than break your oath, it is because I expect this of my country-men, that they will be, above all, true to their God, that I ask you this afternoon to burn all these certificates. (Cries of 'we are ready to burn them'.) I have been told that the statement I have made lately with reference to the position of British Indians in this Colony has been misconstrued. I have read some remarks that have been passed upon that statement, and it is this: that I claim that this country belongs to British Indians just as much as it belongs to the Europeans—and I claim that claim, but what does that claim mean? I do not, therefore, mean that it is open to us to have an unchecked influx of Asiatics into this country. No, I claim to be a Colonist, I claim to have passed a fair measure of my life in this country, and if this country, the welfare of this country, demands that Asiatic immigration should not proceed unchecked, then I should be the first man to say, let that be so. If the majority of the inhabitants of this country demand that Asiatic immigration should cease—mind, I lay stress upon the term immigration—if Asiatic immigration should be under well-ordered control, then I say that I should also accept that position, but having accepted that position, I should claim that this country is just as much mine as any other Colonist's, and it is in that sense that I put forward that claim on behalf of my countrymen and I say also that it behoves the Colonists to recognize that claim. It cannot benefit the Colonists to have British Indians in the Transvaal who are not men but who may be treated as cattle even though it may be showcattle. It will not do the Colonists any good, it will not do British Indians any good, and if that is the position that the Colonists or the British Indians take in this Colony, it will be far better that Indians are hunted out of this Colony and sent to

India to carry their tale of woe to India rather than that they should remain in this Colony in the most humiliating position. It is in that sense that I claim that this country is just as much the British Indian's as it is the European's. What is this fight that we are engaged upon? What is its significance? To my mind, its significance did not commence with a demand for the repeal of the Asiatic Act, nor does it end with the repeal of the Asiatic Act. I know full well that it is open to the Government of the Colony to give a repeal of this legislation today, to throw dust into our eyes and then embark upon other legislation, far harsher, far more humiliating, but the lesson that I wanted to learn myself, the lesson I would have my countrymen to learn from this struggle is this: that unenfran-chised though we are, unrepresented though we are in the Transvaal, it is open to us to clothe ourselves with an undying franchise, and this consists in recognizing our humanity, in recognizing that we are part and parcel of the great universal whole, that there is the Maker of us all ruling over the destinies of mankind and that our trust should be in Him rather than in earthly kings, and if my countrymen recognize that position I say that no matter what legislation is passed over our heads, if that legislation is in conflict with our ideas of right and wrong, if it is in conflict with our conscience, if it is in conflict with our religion, then we can say we shall not submit to that legislation. We use no physical force, but we accept the sanction that the legislature provides, we accept the penalties that the legislature provides. I refuse to call this defiance, but I consider that it is a perfectly respectful attitude, for a man, for a human being who calls himself man. And it is because it was necessary that British Indians should learn that lesson that the heads of the community gathered together and assembled together and said to themselves that this is the struggle, this is the method of struggle that they would place before their countrymen. It can do no harm whatsoever to the Government of the Colony, it can do no harm to those who are engaged in this struggle; it simply tests them and, if they are true, then they can only win; if they are not true, then they simply get what they deserve. One thing more and I shall soon ask you whether you propose that Mr. Essop Mia, your Chairman, should set fire to these registration certificates; and it is this: I have been hitherto refraining from making any personal attack whatsoever. I did make a slight attack at the time of the trial of Ram Sundar, and that was in connection with the head of the Registration Department, Mr. Chamney.[1] I feel bound in the inter-ests of the Colonists, in the interests of the Indian community, and for the honour of the Colony,

[1] *Vide "Letter to Indian Opinion"*, 15-11-1907.

to make this remark, that, so long as Mr. Chamney reigns supreme in the Registration Department, there will be no peace so far as the Asiatics are concerned.[1] I accused Mr. Chamney of hopeless incompetence and ignorance after so much experience. Again, after the charge was made, I repeat it. When I come to contrast what he has been doing with what Captain Hamilton Fowle[2] did I can only say that, had Captain Hamilton Fowle been at the helm of affairs, we would not be face to face with a difficulty of this nature which not only stares the Indian community in the face but which stares the Government also in the face. Mr. Chamney is an estimable man, as I have often stated. He is above suspicion, but that is not all that is required in the head of a Department. The head of a Department has to know his work, he has to know the law that he wishes to administer, or the administration of which is given to him, and he has also to keep a cool head, and he has to be competent in the proper discharge of his duties. Mr. Chamney has been tried, and has been found wanting, and no matter how much attached General Smuts may be to Mr. Chamney, this is the charge that I can bring against him after very close acquaintance with the working of his Department. I cannot go into the illustration of the proposition that I lay down, but I do say that, unless Mr. Chamney is removed from that Department—I have no desire that anybody's bread should be taken away from his mouth—but, unless he is removed from this Department, there will be no peace. But what is more, Mr. Chamney has been less than a man in putting his signature before a justice of the Peace to an affidavit that was made on oath to the effect that he was present on the interview on the 3rd day of February and General Smuts never promised repeal of the Act. I say that that affidavit is untrue. He not only listened to the promise made by General Smuts as to the repeal of the Act, but he repeated that promise to me; he mentioned that promise to me, if once, twelve times, and each time he said that General Smuts was going to play the game, that he was going to repeal the Act. There was once an occasion when I believe there was a fellow-countryman of mine in my company and he said, 'But remember that General Smuts also said that so long as there is a single Asiatic in the Colony who has not made a voluntary registration application that Act will be enforced against him'. Today the position is that there is no Asiatic, so far as I know, none to talk of, who has not made his application for voluntary registration. I now ask

[1] The criticism appeared to be directed against Montford Chamney's appointment as Chief Immigration Restriction Officer under the Immigrants' Restriction Act which was gazetted on January 27, 1908.

[2] Permit Officer

for a fulfilment of that promise, and if Mr. Chamney has made that affidavit, as he has made it, why, he has added some other disqualification to the disqualifications I have named, and I say again that unless Mr. Chamney is removed from that Department there cannot be any peace whatsoever. [Applause.][1]

Indian Opinion, 22-8-1908

45. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

Wednesday [*August 19, 1908*]

NEGOTIATIONS FOR SETTLEMENT

I apologize to the readers for writing a short letter this time. There is plenty to say, but I cannot spare even a moment. I, therefore, give the latest news first.

Mr. Gandhi was informed at 11 p.m. on Monday that he was wanted by General Smuts. He accordingly went to see the General on Tuesday morning. Mr. Cartwright and Mr. Quinn were also called. There was a discussion for three hours with General Botha, General Smuts, Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, Sir George Farrar, Mr. Lindsay, Mr. Hosken and Mr. Chaplin participating. In the end the Government agreed to the following terms.

1. The Act shall not be applicable to Turkish Mahomedans.
2. Those who can prove that they had resided in the Transvaal for three years before the [Boer] War shall be permitted to enter.
3. For children under sixteen years registration shall not be necessary.
4. When taking out a licence, either a well-formed signature or a thumb-impression shall be given.
5. An appeal can be made to a magistrate [against the decision of the Registrar of Asiatics] and to the Supreme Court against the magistrate's decision.
6. The Section[2] relating to intoxicating drinks shall be deleted.
7. The obnoxious law will be retained, but only as a dead letter and it shall not apply to voluntary registrants or to those who may register

[1] Gandhiji then addressed the meeting in Gujarati. The text of this speech is, how-ever, not available.

[2] Section 17(4) of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act; *vide* "The Asiatic Law Amendment Act", (Appendix -I).

of their own accord in future.

8. The deficiency[1] in section 21 shall be rectified.

9. Those who have taken out registers under the obnoxious law shall be allowed to apply for new ones.

A meeting was held on Tuesday evening to consider these points.

A large number of persons were present. It was decided in the end to convene a meeting[2] on Thursday, and invite persons from all parts [of the Colony] to it.

STANDERTON HEROES

They were released this morning. Mr. Essop Mia, Mr. Bawazeer and others went from here to receive them [at the gaol gate]. A meeting was held after their release. Resolutions were passed at the meeting to the effect that the campaign should be continued to the bitter end, whatever the cost. A large number of certificates were collected at the meeting and sent to the Association for being burnt. Leaders from Heidelberg, Vereeni-ging, Krugersdorp and other places also took part in the proceedings.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-8-1908

[1] The reference is to the Church Street property of Aboobaker Ahmed which was held in trust by H. S. L. Polak. This section of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act recognizes the right of an Asiatic to transmit to another Asiatic, by testamentary or other inheritance, any fixed property acquired by him and registered in his name before Law No. 3 of 1885 came into force. *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 14-12-1907 & "Letter to Colonial Secretary".

[2] No report of this meeting is available. *Vide*, however, the following item.

46. LETTER TO E. F.C. LANE[1]

PRIVATE

JOHANNESBURG,
August 20, 1908

DEAR MR. LANE,

Mr. Cartwright told me that I should write to you what I told

[1] This letter was published with the following introduction: "Owing to the manner in which the Transvaal Colonial Secretary made public use of a private letter in such a way as to induce in the minds of members of the Assembly a belief that the Indian community had forwarded an ultimatum on the question of a settlement, Mr. Gandhi, in his speech last Sunday, explained the circumstances fully. In view of General Smuts' breach of etiquette, we publish below the full text of Mr. Gandhi's letter, of which unauthorized extracts have already appeared."

Writing of these events from Yeravda jail some 15 years later, Gandhiji perhaps mistook his letter of August 14, 1908 to General Smuts ("Letter to General Smuts", 14-8-1908) for this letter, and the mass meeting of August 16 ("Speech at Mass Meeting", 16-8-1908) for that held on August 23 ("Speech at Mass Meeting", 23-8-1908). The following excerpts from Chapters XXVI and XXVII of *Satyagraha in South Africa* compared with extracts from contemporary statements or reports (in square brackets below), may throw some light on the genesis of this confusion.

"The weekly diary in *Indian Opinion,* asked [Indians] to hold themselves in readiness to burn the certificates if the Black Act was not repealed. [cf. "Johannesburg Letter", 18-7-1908. "A mass meeting will be held on Sunday" (July 19, 1908). "Registers will not be burnt, not yet...the wisest course will be to wait till General Smuts publishes his draft bill". The draft bill was published on August 11; *vide* "New Bill", 15-8-1908]. The bill was about to pass through the Legislature to which a petition [dated August 13, 1908, "Petition to Transvaal Legislative Assembly", 13-8-1908] was presented...in vain. At last an ultimatum was sent to the Government by the satyagrahis. The word was not the satyagrahis' but of General Smuts who thus chose to style the letter. . . [Gandhiji himself preferred to call it an "Asiatic submission" rather than an "Asiatic ultimatum"("Interview to "The Transvaal Leader", 21-8-1908).The word "ultimatum" is not found in the text of General Smuts' speech in the Transvaal Legislative Assembly of August 21 as reported in *Indian Opinion.* He did, however, mention the letter which, he said, disappointed his hopes of a settlement. For an abbreviated text of speech, *vide* Appendix X. This word was used in *Indian Opinion* as a title for Essop Mia's letter to the Colonial Secretary of July 6, 1908 ("Letter to Colonial Secretary", 6-7-1908) and later to describe this letter of August 20.] One reason why this letter was held to be an ultimatum was that it prescribed a time-limit for a reply. [Neither the letter of August 14 ("Letter to General Smuts", 14-8-1908) which Gandhi speaks as the "ultimatum", nor the letter of August 20 which appeared in *Indian Opinion* under the title "What Is an Ultimatum?"

him as to the decision of the meeting today, and to give my impressions also.

I placed before the meeting[1], for the third time today, the terms that I told them the Government were prepared to offer, and I told them further that these would form an acceptable compromise, if some provision was made for highly educated Indians and Mr. Sorabjee's re-instatement; but the meeting would not listen to anything short of repeal of the Asiatic Act and the recognition of highly educated Indians under the general clause of the Immigrants' Restriction Act. All I could persuade them to accept was that, the statutory right being recognized, there would be no objection to an administrative discrimination against educated Indians so that only the most highly educated Indians could enter. The meeting was most enthusiastic, and what was intended to be a meeting for a few delegates only became a general mass meeting. It was attended by three of the most eminent Indians[2] in South Africa, who have, as you know, come over from Natal, but who were pre-war residents and who had a large stake in the country before the war. Most of the influential Indians from Pretoria who have submitted to the Act also came and sympathized. After much difficulty, I was able to persuade the meeting to unanimously agree to the following:

1. Mr. Sorabjee to be re-instated, with full residential rights.
2. All prisoners to be discharged.
3. The Asiatic Act to be repealed.
4. A general education test, with discretionary power as to its severity regarding educated Indians.

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prescribes any time-limit. Was there a further letter by the satyagrahis, which has not been traced?]...The ultimatum was to expire on the same day the bill was to be carried through the Legislature. [The first reading of the Asiatics' Voluntary Registration Validation Bill in the Legislative Assembly was on August 13. This Bill was, according to *Indian Opinion,* subsequently dropped and an amended Bill, which made further concessions to the Asiatics, was passed finally by the Legislative Council on August 22.] A meeting had been called some two hours after the expiry of the time-limit to hold the public ceremony of burning the certificates. [Registration certificates were burnt at both the mass meetings of August 16 and 23, 1908.] We had all reached the place of meeting early and arranged for the Government's reply by wire... the meeting was held at 4 o'clock on the grounds of the Hamidia Mosque at Johannesburg (August 16, 1908) .... A volunteer arrived with a telegram from the Government in which they... announced their inability to change their line of action."

[1] No report of this meeting is available. The proceedings, like this letter, may well have been intended to be private.

[2] Dawad Mahomed, Parsee Rustomjee and M. C. Anglia

5. The terms as per [Sir] Percy's[1] notes to be embodied with the necessary changes in the new Bill.

6. Free re-issue of burnt certificates.

7. The essential clauses of the Asiatic Act, in so far as they may be necessary for a proper check over the Asiatic population and for prevention of fraud, to be re-enacted in the new Bill.

8. The draft Bill to be shown to the Committee of the Association for suggestions as to details.

It will be seen that this submission does not materially alter the terms as per Sir Percy's notes. I cannot see any difficulty in showing the Parliament and the country that repeal of the Act is simply a graceful act to soothe an unrepresented community in the Colony, without in any way relaxing the hold of the legislature on that class.

The Sorabjee incident raised the enthusiasm of the people to a white heat. It caused intense irritation. I assure you that the meeting as a whole went much further than I should ever care to go under the present circumstances, but it was by my deliberate promise to lead them in passive resistance if the promised repeal was not granted that I could persuade them to restrict the community to the above terms. I was disinclined to impose on my countrymen further suffering and was, therefore, prepared to waive a substantial repeal of the Act, so far as it became inoperative against all save those who had accepted it; but I am glad to say they would not listen to it, and they said they were prepared to suffer to the uttermost. I hope, therefore, that the Government will be pleased to accept the above terms and close the controversy. If they do, 1, for one, shall refuse to go any further so far as the Asiatic Act is concerned.

One thing more one speaker actually got up and suggested that the terms should include a clause asking for Mr. Chamney's removal. It was, however, not embodied in the terms; but I cannot help recording my opinion that Mr. Chamney is ignorant and hopelessly incompetent. This I say in the interests of the Colony at large. I have personally nothing against him. I have always received courtesy from him, but in spite of all my efforts to the contrary, I have not been able to see any competence in him for the office he holds. I am sure that he never knows from one hour to another what his decision should be, and the largest amount of irritation was caused in the initial stages of the working of voluntary registration purely through his vacillation and ill-considered decisions. I could give several instances, but I do

[1] Sir Percy Fitzpatrick

not think it is necessary. In my opinion, what is required is a man of judicial talent and wide sympathies. If this suggestion is not accepted, I fear that there will always be irritation and consequent difficulty in the administration of any Act however well devised.

I am sending copies to the Progressive leaders.

I remain,

Yours truly,

ERNEST F. C. LANE, ESQ.
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO GENERAL SMUTS
COLONIAL OFFICE
PRETORIA

Indian Opinion, 29-8-1908

Also a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4859

47. SPEECH AT CLOSER UNION SOCIETY

[JOHANNESBURG,
August 20, 1908]

The first meeting of the Transvaal Closer Union Society was held in the Congre-gational Church Hall, Bree Street, last night [August 20], Mr. Edward Nathan presiding. The subject of debate was "The Asiatic Question in Relation to Closer Union", Mr. Alfred Barker's papers, which appeared in the *Leader* on Monday and Tuesday last, forming the basis of discussion.

After Mr. Barker had read his papers, Mr. M. K. Gandhi said he thought it was com-mon ground between both Europeans and Asiatics in South Africa that Asiatic immigration should be controlled or restricted, and it was so controlled or restricted. In the Gape Colony and in Natal there was a law with this object, and in the Transvaal, too, there was a closed door. Rhodesia had already an Immigration Restriction Law, and her legislators were now endeavouring to place an Asiatic Registration law on the Statute-book.[1] Personally, he did not think they needed that law at all; they had achieved their object by passing the immigration law. That narrowed the question down very materially, and one had now to consider the effect of the residence of Asiatics on Closer Union, and not the effect of the immigration of Asiatics.

THE IMMIGRATION LAW

The immigration law of the Cape and of Natal allowed the entry of Asiatics who could pass the same education test that was imposed on others who might enter the country. The object of that legislation was principally to guard against the influx of Asiatics. In 1896, the late Mr. Escombe first approached Mr. Chamberlain for

[1] *Vide* "Rhodesia Indians", 30-5-1908; 4-7-1908.

permis-sion to pass an Asiatic Exclusion Bill, and Mr. Chamberlain laid down the policy, for the guidance of all the Colonies, that the basis of distinction should not be colour, but education or some such qualification. That policy had been hitherto followed. At the Conference of Prime Ministers, Mr. Chamberlain placed that view before them for their acceptance. Very few Asiatics had been able to enter Natal under the education test, not because India did not possess a large number of educated Indians, but because the educated Asiatics had ample scope for their abilities in India, China, and Japan; but there were some who undoubtedly must follow the traders, hawkers, and other classes of Asiatics. If they could not come to South Africa, and if the door was effectually shut even against them, the solution of the question would be far more difficult than it would otherwise be. If it were admitted that those Asiatics who had been domiciled in South Africa should remain in South Africa and should obtain fair treatment, it was natural that those who could lead them and who could act as interpreters between the races must also be allowed to come. What was to be the position of those Asiatics who were allowed to remain in South Africa? The people who had settled in South Africa had laid down certain conditions under which the nation that was now forming had to live. Was it possible, then, to eradicate from one's mind the problem of Asiatic residence? It was a very interesting and instructive study; but it passed his comprehension that in all the papers he had read from the pens of those who had made South Africa their home they had never taken into consideration what the feelings of the Asiatics or of the Natives themselves might be. What would they have to say to any solution that was suggested for their acceptance? Was it suggested that the Asiatics or the Coloured races must perforce accept any solution which was found for their treatment by the predominant race—the European race? He ventured to suggest that if they ever adopted that policy it was doomed to failure. It was possible, perhaps, for one, two, or three years to follow a policy of that nature; but he was certain they would find that both the Asiatics and the Natives would demand to be consulted with reference to their disposition. It was impossible to conceive that those races would ever allow the predominant race to dispose of them just as they chose.

INDENTURED LABOUR

Mr. Barker had first of all discussed the question of indentured immigration. The speaker observed:

There we are absolutely on common ground. I have said in season and out of season, whenever I have had the opportunity, that it is undoubtedly the introduction of indentured labour into Natal that has made the Asiatic question in South Africa possible at all. It was the introduction of indentured labour that was followed by free emigration of Asiatics from India. It was because Natal committed a very serious blunder in admitting indentured labour that posterity has to suffer, if it has to suffer. But the solution does not lie in compulsory repatriation. To my mind, it offends the feelings of

humanity to suggest that a body of people should be allowed to enter a particular Colony to which they should give the best years of their then be sent back to a place which has become comparatively strange to them. The people who have been invited to go to Natal under indenture are drawn from the poorer classes. They break off all connection with India when they emigrate to Natal. They are told that they will have all comforts and convenience; they believe that they will be able to pass their time in comparative ease, that they will be able, after slaving away for the Colonies for five years, to work for themselves independently. If those men were invited, or were even told in India that at the end of five years they should go back to India, it is possible that they, not knowing the conditions, might accept those conditions, but I do not call that an equitable contract. If those men, knowing the conditions, came to Natal, I would even suggest that it would be inhuman to expect them to go back, or to repatriate them.

FOR THE PLANTERS' BENEFIT

The better policy would be to stop indentured labour entirely; and three years should be the period fixed. If I were an autocrat in Natal, I would fix not even three years, but stop it entirely. This kind of labour has not done any good whatsoever to the Indians who have emigrated under those conditions to Natal, or to the Colonies themselves. It has undoubt-edly benefited a few planters but they have benefited at the expense of the Colonists, and in the Colonists I venture to include my own countrymen also. If the Colony persists in that policy, I should admire General Smuts or anyone else using the steamroller[1] (Laughter.) and compelling Natal to stop indentured immigration. That is a question of practical politics, a question of humanity, and a question upon which you will have a consen-sus of opinion not only among Europeans, but you will have every assistance possible from the Indians themselves. The question of traders who are domiciled in South Africa and the question of industrial Indians who have risen to the training point become comparatively easy of solution. The bugbear of an Asiatic influence will then have vanished.

Continuing, Mr. Gandhi alluded to Mr. Barker's proposal to confine Asiatic traders to Bazaars, and maintained that that would not solve the difficulty. If the Asiatics would not consent to have their trading activity thus restricted, what remedy could Mr. Barker suggest? He was certain that the people of South Africa had no desire to treat British Indians as if they were less than human beings. They must take the Indians into their confidence. As to the franchise, personally he did not wish to

[1] The allusion is presumably to the cartoons.

receive it until the barrier of prejudice was broken down. The solution of the difficulty, to his mind, lay in the fact that the Indians should first of all be recognized as human beings, as fellow-subjects. Europeans should consider it their duty to raise those men and not level them down. (Applause.) It was not fair to treat South Africa as a white South Africa. There could be no question of segregation or restriction of their trading activities if they were to be treated as a Christian nation would treat them. The only solution was the one he had suggested.

Other speakers followed.

The Transvaal Leader, 21-8-1908

48. SPEECH AT MEETING OF INDIANS[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
August 20, 1908

Mr. Gandhi addressed the conference briefly in English. He detailed what had happened to Sorabji,[2] and also announced that another Indian had been sentenced to one month's hard labour at Christiania for trading without a licence.

Mr. Gandhi mentioned that Sorabji had telegraphed as follows: "Had solitary confinement yesterday." (Cries of "Shame".) "Pushed out by Vernon on the Natal border."

He stated that he could not divulge anything regarding the compromise.[3]

The Natal Mercury, 21-8-1908

[1] A meeting of about 200 representative Indians from all over the Transvaal was held to consider the modified version of the Asiatics Registration Validation Bill as proposed at a meeting with General Smuts, General Botha and others on August 18, 1908. For the provisions of the Bill, *vide* "New Bill", 15-8-1908 & "Petition to Transvaal Legislative Assembly", 13-8-1908.

[2] Sorabji Shapurji Adajania had entered the Transvaal on June 24, claiming right of residence under the Transvaal Immigrants Restriction Act, being an educated Asiatic. He was sentenced to one month's rigorous imprisonment for not registering under the Asiatic Act. He was released on the night of August 19 and deported to the Volksrust border; *vide* also"Trial of Sorabji Shapurji—I", 8-7-1908, "Trial of Sorabji Shapurji—II", 10-7-1908 & "Sorabji Shapurji of Adajan", 25-7-1908.

[3] For the terms of the compromise, *vide* "Letter to E.F.C. Lane", 20-8-1908. The proceedings were then conducted in Hindi, no report of which is available.

49. INTERVIEW TO "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"

[JOHANNESBURG,

Before *August 21, 1908*][1]

There is a great deal of misunderstanding regarding the Indian position on the question of the admission of educated Indians. We contend that the Immigrants' Restriction Law, as it stands, does not debar educated Indians from entering the country, but nothing can be further from the Indian thought[*sic*] than that hundreds of Indian youth should be able to come into the country. All that we want is that the colour of the skin should not act as a 'bar sinister', and that professional Indians, who are necessarily required for the organic growth of the community, should be allowed to enter. This may not be even at the rate of one per year, because there will be no scope for many such men. They certainly cannot compete in trade, and, after all is said and done, the Asiatic question is very largely a trade question. What is, however, lost sight of is that it is not the Indians who have raised the education question, but it is General Smuts who wishes them to accept his reading of the law. He does not care to consult Indians when he wishes to pass any offensive legislation concer-ning them, but when it is a matter of fulfilling the Government's part of the compromise he, in effect, says, 'I shall fulfil the compromise if you accept this additional disability in the shape of a prohibition of the entry of educated Indians, no matter what their qualifications may be.' It is quite open to him to fulfil the promise of repeal of the Act, and at the same time in disregard of our sentiments to bring in the educational disqualification, and we will fight that question on its own merits. He has not consulted us with reference to the present Bill, which, to my mind, is a breach of the compromise on the part of the government, and yet he refuses to pass a Bill which he had actually drafted repealing the Act because we object to a clause in it which, among others, disqualifies educated Indians.

Indian Opinion, 22-8-1908

[1] This interview to *The Transvaal Leader*, of which the original source is not available and which was republished in *Indian Opinion*, 22-8-1908, must clearly come before "Interview to *The Transvaal Leader*" of August 21 ("Interview to "The Transvaal Leader", 21-8-1908) which was republished in *Indian Opinion*, 29-8-1908.

50. INTERVIEW TO "THE STAR"[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
August 21, 1908]

The Asiatic community of the Transvaal will not accept the new Bill concerning voluntary registration introduced by the Colonial Secretary yesterday. Passive resistance must, therefore, continue.

This policy was laid down in a statement made by Mr. M. K. Gandhi, the spokesman of the community, in an interview with a representative of *The Star* today.

The new Bill, save for two things, would have been considered fairly satisfactory to my countrymen, but the non-repeal of the Asiatic Act of 1907 and the absence of provision for highly educated Asiatics to reside in the Transvaal are vital to its acceptance by the Asiatics. The question of the repeal is a very important one from the Indians' standpoint. They claim that repeal was promised and that a point of honour should have been granted. As a question of practical politics, having studied the new Bill, I can see no reason for keeping on the Statute-book the Asiatic Act as a perfect dead letter. It will give rise to many a humorous situation. If my reading of the Bill is correct, an Asiatic has the option of applying under the old Act or under the new Bill. If he wishes to take advantage—if advantage it be—of the old Act and enter the Colony before making his application, no one can prevent him. But under the new Bill he cannot apply for registration except from a place outside the Transvaal in South Africa. This strikes me as being ludicrous, and it opens the door to fraudulent practices which all parties want to prevent.

A SUPREME QUESTION

The question of the introduction of highly educated Indians is also of supreme importance to us but, as far as I can see, of none to the Europeans. It must not be forgotten that British Indians were absolutely free to enter the Colony before the war. After the war the entry of educated Asiatics was not prohibited, but they were subject to the Peace Preservation Ordinance just as any European was. The Asiatic Act of 1907 dealt only with domiciled Asiatics. It did not regulate Asiatic immigration, as General Smuts himself admitted. The Immigration Act does not, even now, prohibit the entry of Asiatics who can pass the education test. Prohibition, therefore, has been

[1] This was republished in *Indian Opinion* under the title "No Surrender" and the sub-titles "The Asiatic Attitude: Submission, Not Ultimatum: Passive Resistance to Continue".

brought about by the presence of the Asiatic Act to which British Indians will not submit.

Surely then if we are restricting ourselves to the entry of highly educated Indians, it is we who give up something and not the legislature that will give us a new privilege. It is, therefore, preposterous to say that we are setting forth a new demand. The other points, in what has been called the Asiatic Ultimatum[1], and what I would call the Asiatic submission, are really not matters of law but of administrative act. The recall of Sorabjee, we have humbly maintained, is a matter on which the Government should have yielded. The other points are too insignificant to be dealt with. All I feel is that for these small matters an otherwise admirable Bill will be wrecked, so far as I can judge. My countrymen will not accept the benefit of the provisions of the new Bill until the wrong I have referred to has been redressed and passive resistance will, therefore, unfortunately, have to go on. I have been advised not to lead the passive resistance trouble, but I cannot possibly as one who prefers, or tries to prefer, his conscience to everything else-accept the advice, no matter what the consequences may be.

Indian Opinion, 29-8-1908

51. INTERVIEW TO "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"

[JOHANNESBURG,
August 21, 1908]

Interviewed yesterday [August 21] in regard to the new Bill, Mr. Gandhi said:

The Bill, I must admit, is a vast improvement on the Validating Bill, which would undoubtedly have been a violation of almost all the terms of the compromise. It embodies, from a cursory glance at the summary published in *The Star*, the points which were discussed at the interview with the meeting of Het Volk and Progressive leaders. 1 am afraid, however, that it falls short of the terms proposed by the Asiatic Conference. It is a most unfortunate thing that the Government have not seen their way to grant the very limited concessions asked for by the Conference-namely, repeal of the Asiatic Amendment Act, and admission of highly educated Indians. The two points are most important for British Indians, but in my opinion of little importance from the Colonists' standpoint. Personally, knowing the law and its effect, I could reconcile myself to the present Bill standing side by

[1] *Vide* "Letter to-General Smuts", 14-8-1908 "Letter to E.F.C. Lane", 20-8-1908 and 1st footnote of "Letter to E.F.C. Lane", 20-8-1908.

side with the Asiatic Act of 1907 as a mere dead letter, but my countrymen cannot understand the intricate distinction. To them no law is a dead letter, and the fervour with which they spoke on the point at the Conference on Thursday last demonstrated to me the depth of feeling regarding the Bill. When, therefore, we offer that the essential clauses of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act so far as they might be necessary for a proper check on the Asiatic population might be re-enacted, I certainly cannot see any reason for not granting the repeal of the Act. It is true that as there has been so much controversy over the Act the Colonists may demand its retention on the Statute-book with just as much pressure as my countrymen demand its repeal, but the representatives of the European Colonists are enlightened enough to see without difficulty that, if the purposes of the Colony can be served equally well by repeal of the Act, they should have no objection to such repeal.

The question of recognizing the rights of highly educated Indians is also equally simple. There is no demand for an unrestricted influx even of educated Indians. British Indians think that fullest discretionary powers should be reserved to the Colonial Secretary as to the administration of the Act, but do say, and I think with perfect justice, that between Europeans and Asiatics of high attainments there should be no distinction.

It would be a thousand pities to wreck an otherwise good Bill and to keep up Asiatic discontent for the sake of these minor points.

The other matters are really matters of detail and not touching the Bill itself. It would be, in my opinion, highly unjust to expect my countrymen to sacrifice Mr. Sorabji, who has suffered for his country, but the Government have made it a matter of principle that Mr. Sorabji, having entered in defiance of the law, should suffer the penalty. He has suffered the penalty by being imprisoned for a month, but—to follow it up with a deportation—if Mr. Sorabji should be sent out of the country because he was under a removal order, so was I and many another Indian, but the Government have been pleased not to touch us.

I notice a statement to the effect that we are daily growing more and more impudent in our requests. This is rather a nice way of emphasizing what is contrary to fact. The request for repeal of the Act is as old as the Act itself, and if I personally was prepared to place before my countrymen the question of another Bill provided that the Act became a dead letter, surely that cannot be described as impudent; for my countrymen's rejection of any such proposal was in that they have all through fought for repeal of the Act. A general education test

has become necessary, because of the interpretation placed upon the Immigration Restriction Act by the Colonial Secretary, and he knows well that repeal of the Asiatic Act makes the entry of educated Indians perfectly possible under the Immigrants' Restriction Act. I therefore fail to see any impudence at all. On the con-trary, I make bold to say that the legislature have first of all stripped us naked, and then propose to dole out what they call concessions little by little, still refusing to return what to us is the main thing, and then exclaim, 'How magnanimous!' If, therefore, the very moderate request of my country[men] is not embodied in the new Bill, I very much fear, though I am very sorry, that the passive resistance will be resumed. General Smuts calls it a state of anarchy, lawlessness, and a declaration of war.[1] We call it a state of suffering, and pray to our Maker, our reliance being entirely on Him. It is indeed a declaration of war on the part of General Smuts against British Indians.

The Transvaal Leader, 22-8-1908

52. NATAL'S BRAVERY

Whom shall we single out for praise now? The Indians' star appears to be in the ascendant as they have been excelling one another. Natal has reached the apogee. The sight of Mr. Dawad Mahomed, Mr. Parsee Rustomjee and Mr. M. C. Anglia setting out for gaol, followed by young Indians, and of hundreds of persons going to the station to see them off, will strike terror in the heart of the enemy. How can anyone bear those ill-will, who come forward to act in this manner? Mr. Dawad Mahomed is an old man. He left his wife in the later stages of her pregnancy and went off in the service of the motherland. Mr. Parsee Rustomjee took only a few hours [to make up his mind] and then indicated his readiness to go to gaol. Mr. Anglia gave up his business to go to gaol. Which of them shall we praise? Which of them shall we congratulate on his courage? When all of them are brave, Indians are beginning to wonder if there is any need to compliment [any individual]. Let us hope things will always go on in this fashion.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-8-1908

[1] "It is a movement which is really tantamount to an act of war and really amounts to a state of anarchy," said Smuts, moving the first reading of the Asiatics' Registration Amendment Bill on August 21.

53. SPEECH AT MASS MEETING[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
August 23, 1908]

Last Sunday [August 23], unfortunately, as the Chairman of the Association sorrow-fully remarked, found it necessary to hold another large Mass Meeting of protest. The members, if anything, exceeded those of the crowd that massed within the Mosque grounds the week before. General Smuts had brought forward his new Bill, but as it did not repeal the Asiatic Act, and as it made no provision for the freedom and rights of highly educated Asiatics, it was not possible to accept the new measure. Hence Sunday's Meeting. A dramatic note was struck when the Pathan leaders admitted their previous errors[2] and declared their intentions of joining the fight until the end. Amongst those present who gave encouragement to the people, were the Durban leaders, anxious only for the time when they should be summoned before the Court to pay the penalty of their patriotism ... It is only necessary to add that the meeting broke up when some *525* more certificates had been consigned to the flames amidst loud cheers, Mr. S. Haloo and Mr. U.M. Shelat assuming the role of stokers....

MR. GANDHI'S SPEECH[3]

[Gandhiji, who spoke after Mr. Essop Mia, said:]

I think that it is necessary for me to make a few remarks in connection with what has happened during the last few days in connection with the Asiatic community resident in the Transvaal. I have had to take the responsibility again, in spite of the Validation Bill having gone through both Houses practically unanimously, of advising my country-men still to continue to burn their registration certificates, and to show to the Government that they are as determined as ever to suffer until full redress is given with reference to the demands made by the British Indian community. Mr. Chairman[4] has explained to you that we have made no new demand. We have never shifted the

[1] The introductory remarks in small type are taken from *Indian Opinion*, 29-8-1908, while Gandhiji's speech itself is from the issue of 12-9-1908.

[2] The reference is presumably to Mir Alam and his fellow-Pathans. Evidently, Gandhiji's advice to the Pathan community *(vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 16-5-1908) had had effect. Gandhiji, however, recalls that it was in the meeting of August 16 that Mir Alam confessed to having done wrong in assaulting Gandhiji and gave up his certificate for being burnt. *Vide satyagraha in South Africa* Ch. XXVII.

[3] The following has been collated with the report of Gandhiji's speech which appeared in *The Transvaal Leader*, 24-8-1908.

[4] Essop Mia

ground, but we have been com-pelled, inch by inch, to regain the whole of the lost ground by undergoing sufferings heaped one upon another. It required the incarceration of over 200 Indians before we could gain the admission from General Smuts that his law was bad, that it was unworkable, and that it would be removed from the Statute-book. It again required the incarceration of nearly 100 Indians before we could gain what we have through the Validation Bill, and I have no hesitation in making this admission, that the Validation Bill, is a vast improvement on the old Asiatic Act, much of the irritating clauses have been removed, the great religious objection has been removed, our oath has been preserved, and, for this, all honour to the Government, all honour to the Progrcssive Party, and I am now in a position to tell my countrymen, that if they do not choose to fight for a principle but if they have wished to demonstrate to the world that they were fighting only that they might be able to keep their solemn obligation but not that they might be able to keep their own status in the country, I can freely advise them to accept the Validation Act, but if it is their desire, as I hope it ever was their desire, that we have undertaken this battle not merely for our personal benefits, but in order to fight for a principle or a bundle of principles, then I have no hesitation in asking my countrymen to undergo further suffering, but, whether they do so or not in a body, whether the majority of the Asiatics choose to accept the benefits that the Government have so liberally given, as they put it, it is open to them to do so; but so long as I remain in this country, it is my desire to oppose the measures of the Government until we get the redress to which we are entitled, until the promise that I still declare General Smuts made in connection with the repeal of the Act is fulfilled, and until the status of highly educated Asiatics is placed on a firm footing. These are no new demands. The Colonists or the Government, by giving us a little, inch by inch, make the Colonists believe that they are conceding what they need not have conceded, but I deny that position absolutely. I take the position that the Chairman has taken, and it is only when these two things have been fulfilled that we shall have got what was our own or what should have been our own. I draw your attention to this fact, that General Smuts himself has told us now and told the world that the natives of South Africa, the Zulus and Bantus, get treated the same as the Europeans, if they possess the same educational qualifications as the Europeans, but the poor Indian and the poor Chinaman cannot do that. [Cries of “shame!”] If the natives

of South Africa may not have the colour bar, why should the British Indian, why should the Chinaman, have the colour bar? Why should the Indian and Chinaman be subjected to the colour bar, have to labour under this colour disability? It is quite enough that we consent to the influx from British India being stopped entirely; but the stopping of that influx does not mean—it never meant—that educated Indians were to be shut out of this country or that they could enter it only on a permit granted by the Governor-in-Council and which might be revoked at pleasure. That is not the position for which we have been fighting so long, and that is not a position which can ever be accepted by us if we wish to be called men. When we take up this position, it is not a position of defiance; and I am very sorry indeed that Sir Percy has thought it desirable to hint, although very distantly, that there might be in this Colony a racial conflict. A racial conflict is now going on. I do not know what the meaning of any further racial conflict may be, but I do know this, that if it covers any threat of physical violence, I standing here before this multitude of my countrymen shall ask you to suffer even that physical injury. I see before me today my fellow-countrymen, the Tamil gentlemen. Their sore backs I have seen. They have never been used to carry[ing] sandbags, but they were called upon to carry sandbags in the gaol [“Shame !” and groans.]—these were the Gaol Regulations, but they have suffered, all the same, physical injury under the Gaol Regulations. It has not pleased General Smuts in fighting this battle with a weak people, with a people who have no voice, it has not pleased General Smuts to order the gaol authorities to give no hard labour to these prisoners or to give them hard labour which they could bear; but, no, we have to drink the cup of difficulty up to the brim, and I ask my countrymen to drink that cup if they wish to fight for a principle. I do declare that our fight, my fight, has always been for a principle, and it shall be for a principle. General Smuts has been saying that we claim partnership.[1] We do claim partnership I claim it now, but I claim it as a younger brother. Their Christianity teaches them that every human being is a brother. The British Constitution teaches us, it taught me when yet a child, that every British subject was to be treated on a footing of equality in the eye of the law, and I do demand that equality in the eye of the law in the Transvaal also. So

[1] For the relevant portion of General Smuts’ speech of August 21 in the Transvaal Legislative Assembly, *vide* Appendix X.

may be allowed to remain in this Colony, so long must I continue that agitation until British Indians have equality in the eye of the law; it is purely and simply a question of time, but that equality must be given. It may not be given, then we may be driven out of the country and I should be quite content. If that is the position that the British Government have taken up, if that is the position that the Transvaal Government also have taken up, I am quite willing to take up the position that Parliament has taken up, namely, that the white Colonists, that Parliament should occupy the fiduciary position, because we are vassals, because we have no representation in Parliament. I accept that position. What is the duty of a trustee, if not to make his ward fit for everything that the trustee has been doing for the ward? Are the Government fitting us, their wards, for full citizenship? Do they hold out any such hope at all? And if they do why is there so much resentment, why should there be sustained cheering in the House of Parliament when General Smuts derides the idea of partnership? Yes, partnership undoubtedly. British Indians will not remain in this country or in any country under the British flag as slaves. They will demand to remain in this country, as also in any part of the British Dominions, as men, and so long as we do not claim this, I think that we do not deserve British citizenship, and, seeing that it is my intense prayer to the Almighty that my countrymen live as full British citizens, so long must we continue to work that we may have given to us these rights. (Applause.)[1]

General Smuts had called what was really a private letter "an ultimatum". (Iaughter.) It was nonsense; there was no such intention. He [Gandhiji] asked the Government and the Colonists to trust them [the Indians]; to believe that "we shall play the game", and to recognize the very just demands of the Indian community with reference to the repeal of the Act and the status of the highly educated Indians should be preserved. Let them not be called upon to wear the bar sinister. He believed that Sorabji was entitled to remain in the country under the Immigration Restriction Act, for the point was still unchallenged. Those who remained in this country and those who would come after must be treated as men and not as dogs.

Indian Opinion, 29-8-1908

The Transvaal Leader, 24-8-1908

[1] The following paragraph, which is not found in *Indian Opinion, is* from *The Transvaal Leader*.

54. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
August 24, 1908

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to enclose herewith a report of the proceedings that took place yesterday, and the Resolutions passed at the Mass Meeting[2]. The Meeting was attended by over 3,000 Indians. The feeling of those who were present at the Meeting, so far as I have been able to gauge it, is unmistakable.

I venture to submit that, in the very humble prayer of the Meeting, there is nothing new. What the Meeting requests is, moreover, reasonable, and, on the eve of what promises to be a fierce struggle, I once more ask for the relief sought by the Meeting. I beg to assure the Government that there is no desire, on the part of the Indian community, to wilfully embarrass the Government or to place ourselves outside the laws of the country.

My Association, therefore, respectfully trusts that Colonial statesmanship will still find a way out of the difficulty, and close the struggle that has now gone on for nearly two years, and has cost the community represented by my Association very heavily in every respect.

[*I have the honour to be,*
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
ESSOP ISMAIL MIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION]

Indian Opinion, 29-8-1908

[1] This was published under the title "A Last Appeal".

[2] Of August 23, 1908; *vide* the preceding item. For Resolutions, *vide* Appendix XI.

55. LETTER TO "RAND DAILY MAIL"[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
August 25, 1908

THE EDITOR
[*RAND DAILY MAIL*]

SIR,

It is wonderful how every demand made by British Indians is being misunderstood. When my countrymen recognize that the Bill[2] just passed by the local Parliament is better than the Asiatic Act, they do not admit that their position of serfs is removed. The very fact that the status of educated Indians hangs fire shows that there is no desire to treat them otherwise. Was not my claim to partnership resented? Was not its repudiation by General Smuts received with sustained cheers in the popular House? And, yet, what is strange in the claim put forward by me? You, Sir, know well that we are taught in the public schools in India the doctrine of partnership and equality in the eye of the law, and yet, these are expressions one may not even whisper in the Colony without being laughed out of court.

You have drawn a parallel between Mr. Sauer's remarks on the Dealers' Act at the Cape and a general education test in an immigration Act, which would have the effect of preventing an unrestricted influx of Asiatics into a British Colony. May I remind you that Mr. Sauer has dealt with a farcical Court of Appeal consisting of prejudiced persons? I, too, should agree with the hon'ble Member, and even go further than he has done, when fellow-traders are appointed a Court of Appeal for the question of a licence being granted to one of themselves. It is not only hypocrisy[3] and humbug[4] but downright injustice. I, however, see nothing wrong in an Immigration Act which provides against an indiscriminate entry of a class of people, the distinction being based not on their race or colour but on an educational qualification. If what my countrymen claim is a quibble, surely the Parliament of the Colony should have sufficient magnanimity to concede a quibble. The fact is that it is not a quibble. The Colony wishes to establish a new principle and to draw a sharp colour line. It wishes to override the late Mr. Rhodes' formula of equal rights for all civilized men south of the Zambesi, and it wishes

[1] This appeared in *Indian Opinion* under the title "Mr. Gandhi and the *Mail*".

[2] Asiatics' Registration Amendment Bill

[3] These words were used by Sauer in the Cape Legislative Assembly.

[4] *ibid*

also to fundamentally change the British policy. We would be less than men if, after having suffered for nearly two years, we were to quietly accept such a violent departure from British traditions, without making a supreme effort and without showing to the world that, although our own status can be made a little more bearable under the new Bill, we would reject the benefits thereunder, if we cannot successfully oppose the new departure.

You seem to think that Mr. Sorabjee's deportation is the last word on the interpretation of the Immigrants' Restriction Act. The future will show whether it is so. In the meanwhile, may I remind you that Mr. Sorabjee was convicted not under the Immigrants' Restriction Act as a "prohibited immigrant" but under the Asiatic Act for being an unregistered Indian. He entered under the Immigrants' Restriction Act, but he came under the disability imposed on him by the Asiatic Act, which Mr. Sorabjee would not accept.[1]

[*I am, etc.,*

M. K. GANDHI]

Rand Daily Mail, 26-8-1908

56. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI[2]

JOHANNESBURG,
August 25, 1908

[MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,]

I have your letter. I am not affected by what is happening there regarding educated Indians. I shall deal with the thing, I hope, in the Gujarati columns.[3]

Mr. Cordes[4] writes to me saying that you are unbusinesslike. He has not given me any concrete instances. I, therefore, do not know on what he bases his conclusion. However, you should talk to him, listen to him, and do exactly as he may suggest. You should give him all the help you can, so that he may do justice to the position he is now occupying. He is very methodical, and it may be that you will learn a great deal from him.

[1] *Vide* "Trial of Sorabji Shapurji-II", 10-7-1908 and "Trial of Sorabji Shapurji-III", 20-7-1908.

[2] The document being torn, the addressee's name is missing. As the letter deals with affairs at Phoenix, it is taken to have been addressed to Chhaganlal Gandhi.

[3] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 26-8-1908

[4] A German Theosophist in charge of the Phoenix School; came to India and joined Gandhiji at Sevagram, where he died in 1960.

Some Indians saw Harilal yesterday. They tell me that he was looking perfectly healthy. He walked with a firm step, and, on seeing them, he smiled several times which shows that he is not languishing.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4864

57. TRIAL OF BHIKHABHAI D. MALIHA[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
August 26, 1908]

n B Court, Johannesburg, on Wednesday, before Mr. H.H. Jordan, Mr. Bhikhabhai D. Maliha was charged under section 8, sub-section 3 of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act No. 2 of 1907 for failing to produce a registration certificate issued under the Act on demand. Mr. Gandhi defended. Superintendent Vernon, who gave evidence as to the arrest, stated that he had arrested the accused on instructions. He knew that there were many Indians today in Johannesburg who had permits and old registration certificates, but he was not instructed to take action against them. The accused, giving evidence on his own behalf, stated that he was an old resident of the Transvaal and that he had a Peace Preservation Ordinance Permit and a registration certificate under Law 3 of 1885, both of which documents were produced before the Court.

Addressing the Court, Mr. Gandhi remarked upon the strangeness of the proceedings. Here was a man arrested and convicted under the Asiatic Act, whose rights were fully safeguarded under the Act[2] that had just been passed. Either the Government intended to stick to their new measure or they did not. In view of the delicate relations that existed at the present time he had specially asked that this case should be remanded until next Monday, but whilst the Prosecution was willing to meet him in this, instructions had been received by the latter from Pretoria to proceed. It certainly reflected upon Pretoria methods of administration.[3]

Indian Opinion, 29-8-1908

[1] This appeared in *Indian Opinion* under the title "A Tactless Prosecution".

[2] Asiatics' Registration Amendment Act, 1908

[3] A report of the subsequent proceedings is not available; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 26-8-1908,

58. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

Wednesday [*August 26, 1908*]

WHAT HAVE WE GAINED THROUGH NEW BILL?

Again, this time, I will have to discuss the latest news first. The new Bill was passed by both the Houses within 24 hours. This only shows that they still do not give our feelings due consideration.

The Bill contains almost everything [we wanted]. I have no time for a detailed explanation. But the Bill obviates the objections regarding the Turkish Muslims. Voluntary registrants will not come within the scope of the Act as also others who may [voluntarily] register themselves in future. This will enable the community to keep its pledge inviolate. But there are two things which the Bill does not contain. The obnoxious law will be repealed in effect; but it will remain as a dead letter. The Indian community has every right to oppose this [proposal]. Mr. Smuts made a promise [to repeal it]. But, what is more important, [the rights of] the educated have not been safeguarded. I am afraid that there is going to be a long-drawn-out struggle over this issue. It is the duty of the Indian community to put up a fight.

WHO SHOULD BE TREATED AS EDUCATED?

This question is often discussed. What the Indian community wants is that all educated persons should have equal rights under the law. But though rights may remain equal in theory, Indians may in practice be subjected to a more severe test than the whites. This is what happens in Natal and the Cape. The test for Indians [in these Colonies] is very severe. We have said that we shall not object to an even severer test in the Transvaal. In consequence, only barristers and others of equal [attainments] will be able to enter the Transvaal. I do not see that we can do anything more. What is important is that the educated should not be kept out altogether. As for those with a lower standard of education who may want to come in for business or professional reasons, the section which allows them to come in with a temporary permit remains. In fact, there is no real difficulty about these persons.

SNAG

There is, however, a snag in this Bill. Those who enter the Transvaal henceforth must, if they do not have a permit, prove that they had resided in the Colony for at least three years before the [Boer] War.

This section will also apply to those who are already in the Transvaal. I feel it may be possible to find a way out of this. [That is,] if there is a settlement, a solution does appear possible.

RESIDENTS OF NATAL

Mr. Dawad Mahomed, Mr. Parsee Rustomjee, Mr. M. C. Anglia and Mr. Randeria have been on a round of visits to Krugersdorp, Potche-fstroom and Klerksdorp. They were received with honours at all the towns, and people readily handed over their registers to them [for being burnt]. They were first given a party by Mr. Essop Mia and later another by Mr. Fancy[1]. They are putting up with Mr. Cama. These worthy gentlemen have put the Indian community under a deepdebt of obligation.

At Volksrust and Charles town, Mr. Essop Suleman and Mr. Mullan are shouldering the burden of the community's affairs. They have a large number of Indians staying with them, but undeterred by this, they continue to help. All this augurs well for India.

Mr. Shelat has collected certificates from Pretoria. Here, Mr. Joshi, Mr. Medh and Mr. Killawala go round [collecting them].

BHIKHUBHAI MALIHA

Mr. Bhikhubhai Dayalji Maliha's case was heard today.[2] Though he held a permit, he has been given seven days' notice [to leave the Colony] for not submitting to the new law. This case conclusively shows that the obnoxious Act must be repealed.

OTHER NEWS

Mr. Ibrahim and Mr. Hassan Mia, both butchers, went to gaol on Tuesday to serve a sentence of eight days' imprisonment for trading without a licence.

Mr. Ahmed Motara, who has been thrice imprisoned for offering satyagraha, was released today (Wednesday). His courage deserves to be followed by everyone.

In Pietersburg, Mr. Taiyab Moosa Memon has gone to gaol.

In Pretoria, a large number of Indians have gone to gaol. I hope to be able to mention their names later. They all deserve to be con gratulated. A telegram says that one of them was manhandled by the police in Court. The matter is being inquired into. Even if one has to

[1] Honorary Secretary, Hamidia Islamic Society

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

suffer violence to one's person, that must be borne for the sake of one's country.

Mr. Nadirsha Cama is likely to lose his job for having spoken at the last meeting. But this does not bother him. He had made up his I mind to fight for the community. I

Mr. Sorabji Shapurji Adajania has been wanting to enter the Transvaal again. It is only because the Association has restrained him that he has not done so already.

An unsatisfactory reply has been received from the Government about food [in gaol]. The matter is being pursued further.

I must tell the large number of persons who are impatient to come in that, for the present, only those who hold genuine permits may do so. Others may not come. They should not become restive about this.

The Chinese Association had asked the Durban gentlemen over yesterday (Tuesday). They have a very fine club of their own. The Indians are without one. Altogether there are probably only a thousand Chinese [in the Transvaal]. We are here in our thousands. It is humiliating that even so we do not have a comparable club of our own.

In England, Mr. Ritch has been taking great pains[1]. A large meeting of Indians has been called in London to protest against the deportation of Sorabji.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-8-1908

59. LETTER TO ATTORNEY GENERAL[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,
August 28, 1908]

THE HON'BLE THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
PRETORIA

SIR,

My Association has been informed that, at the trial of an Indian named Gopal Chhiba, on the 25th instant, for trading without a licence, immediately after the sentence was pronounced against him, Constable No. 50 violently dragged him from the dock.

[1] Keeping sympathizers and the Imperial authorities informed of the problems of Trans-vaal Indians

[2] These were presumably drafted by Gandhiji.

My Association is informed that this was witnessed by several British Indians. My Association will be obliged if you will kindly investigate this matter and take such steps as may be necessary in order to protect British Indian prisoners from molestation.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ESSOP ISMAIL MIA

CHAIRMAN,

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 12-9-1908

60. LETTER TO DIRECTOR OF PRISONS[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
August 28, 1908

THE DIRECTOR OF PRISONS
PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 24th instant with reference to the diet scale laid down for British Indian prisoners in the Transvaal Gaols.

My Association begs to point out that a change in the diet scale has been asked for not because the food supplied is medically improper but because it is not suited to the habits of British Indian prisoners. My Association, therefore, ventures to submit that it is hardly a question for medical opinion, but it is one for investigating the habits of British Indians as to food.

My Association admits that mealie meal forms part of the diet scale for Indian prisoners in the Natal gaols, but my Association does not agree with the inference drawn therefrom that mealie meal is suitable for Indian prisoners. Happily, throughout South Africa, very few Indians are incarcerated and, therefore, the question of the diet scale has not hitherto occupied the attention of Indian public bodies, but now, in view of the unusual position that has been created in the Transvaal, the question has become one of very great importance, and, unless the authorities intend to disregard Indian habits and sentiments entirely, my Association submits that an investigation in the manner suggested by me is absolutely necessary.

I venture also to point out to you that you have omitted to mention that the Natal scale, whilst it retains mealie meal as part of the

diet for British Indians, provides for bread also, thus enabling Indians at least to fall back upon four ounces of bread. I beg also to point out that, according to the Natal scale, for prisoners undergoing a sentence beyond 42 days, treacle is added to the ration of mealie meal, and that for others the scale is fairly liberal, much more so than the Transvaal scale. My Association, therefore, respectfully trusts that the matter will be reconsidered.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
ESSOP ISMAIL MIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 12-9-1908

61. COMMENTS ON TRANSVAAL INDIAN CAMPAIGN

[*August 29, 1908*][1]

"THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"

Under an article entitled "Mistakes", the *Leader* points out that, perhaps due to heavy pressure of work, the Colonial Secretary is unaware of how the law is being administered in relation to the Asiatics. An Indian, who could not register voluntarily, as he happened to be away in a remote district, was arrested last Wednesday. He had not taken any part in the campaign. He was arrested even though protection for such Indians is ensured in the new Bill. It is thus clear that the obnoxious Act lives on. It is easy to see that such incidents make it difficult for us to explain to the innocent and illiterate people that the old law has really become a dead letter and that the repeal of the Act is therefore unnecessary. This is a grave error. The place (Anjuman Islam) where some leading Muslims were arrested yesterday is sacred to Muslims. They had not the least intention of evading arrest. The incidents in Turkey have angered the majority of Muslims. They form a considerable part of the population of the British Empire. Tilak and many others like him may exploit these incidents to embarrass the British administration and unite

[1] Dawad Mahomed and the other Natal businessmen were arrested on August 27; *The Transvaal Leader* commented on this event in its issue of August 28. From what follows it is clear that Gandhiji's summary of the Press comments on the campaign was made soon after.

Hindus and Muslims into an “Extremist Party”.

“PRETORIA NEWS”

In its editorial of the 25th instant, *Pretoria News* writes that, as it had earlier called upon General Smuts to carry out the terms of the compromise, so does it now urge that the Asiatics who have not registered should do so. The Government has fulfilled its promise and it is now for the Asiatics also to fulfil theirs. It will not be unreasonable [to insist] that the immigration issue should be taken up for consideration after this has been done.

In another article following this, under the heading “Immigration”, the paper says that Asiatics are shabbily treated and that it fully sympathizes with them. According to existing laws, low-class Russians or Poles or other [Europeans] who speak Greek or have a smattering of one of the Levantine languages can enter the country at will and enjoy full citizenship rights. For this purpose, Yiddish and European languages are treated on par, though Yiddish is not a European language. Justice demands that there should be an equally difficult qualifying test for all those who enter the Colony. The officials of the Immigration Department should be armed with wide powers, and they should be persons of intelligence and integrity. They should be paid good salaries so that they are not tempted into taking bribes. They should have a clear idea as to [the category of persons] who may not enter the colony. In short, we suggest that the door which is now closed on the Asiatics should be closed lawfully. This country cannot accommodate any more Asiatics. We wholly agree with this. But we go further and assert that some of the Europeans who are entering the country [unlawfully] may prove more dangerous than Asiatics. The Asiatics’ standard of living is very low and they are [thus] able to compete to their advantage [with Europeans] in trade. But they do not add to the crime in the country, whereas the Europeans roam the country for their bread. Latterly, their number has increased markedly. Their coming in has added to the incidence of theft and the smuggling of gold and diamonds, has encouraged [the growth of] liquor shops. [Because of them,] panders and money-lenders flourish and other similar crimes are on the increase. We have decisively closed the door on the Asiatics but it should be closed also to this refuse [from Europe]. By doing so we will make it clear that in the matter of entry into this country, we do not discriminate against the black and the yellow traces] because of their colour. Those who want to make this country truly “European” will agree that our Natives and law-abiding Asiatics are preferable to this garbage [from Europe]. We want peasants who will raise crops,

diligent workers who will man the industries and thereby add to the Colony's prosperity. There are already too many traders and speculators in this Colony.

REPLY

Mr. Gandhi has addressed a long letter[1] to the editor of *Pretoria* News in reply to the above, arguing that the Government cannot be held to have fulfilled its promise. It is true that the new Bill grants some measure of relief, and the obnoxious Act is reduced to a dead letter. But the Government has not allowed his [Indian] brethren to derive any satisfaction from this. Prosecutions have been going on under the obnoxious Act. It was promised that the Act would be repealed, and the promise must be carried out. On the issue of immigration also, he [Mr. Gandhi] said that educated Asiatics should have equal rights with others.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-9-1908

62. SPEECH AT MEETING IN HAMIDIA MOSQUE

[JOHANNESBURG,
August 30, 1908]

Mr. Gandhi addressed a meeting of Indians at the Mosque, Fordsburg, yesterday afternoon, when he made special reference to the deportation of the Natal leaders. The audience expressed whole-hearted approval of the plan of campaign and the announcement that the deported leaders would cross the borders on their return journey probably that night was received with great enthusiasm. Mr. Gandhi also announced that five more Natal Indians would be arrested at nine o'clock this morning, and would be deported.

The Transvaal Leader, 31-8-1908

[1] Not available

63. JOHANNESBURG LETTER[1]

Monday [*August 31, 1908*]

HOW TO WAGE CAMPAIGN?

Things will become clearer to the reader if we answer this question before reporting the news. Considering all the circumstances, we feel that the coming struggle may be a bitter and extended one. The Government will adopt sterner measures. It does not appear probable that the Indians will make a concerted effort. We have not received an adequate number of certificates for being burnt. All told, 2,300 certificates have been burnt. The number is not insignificant. But it is too small if we look forward to an early end of the movement.

We also learn that people have been visiting the Registration Office to apply for certificates. In Johannesburg 25 Indians went there on Friday last. The Government will now be justified in concluding that a large number of Indians will submit to the Act.

There can be no question now of obeying the obnoxious Act[2], but the success of this last phase of the struggle depends on our refusal to submit to the new law[3]. The new Bill has not yet become law. It has not yet received Royal assent. But it is necessary to disobey it even if it receives it.

We may assume that those who have not handed over their registers to be burnt will not join the movement, so that it is only on the 2,300 Indians that it must depend. We may take it that some of these will back out. We can also assume that those who have not got their certificates will join the movement. We can therefore assume that 2,000 Indians will continue to fight. The Tamil-speaking people alone make up a fourth of this number. They have been most commendable. We need not be depressed by these figures. In fact, 2,000 Indians can achieve momentous results. But I cannot believe that all the two thousand of them will turn out to be true fighters. Burning a certificate really means that the Indian who throws it into the flames does not care to keep it. He is willing to forgo the benefits

[1] Literally, the title reads: "News-letter". These despatches were published weekly in *Indian Opinion* as "From Our Johannesburg Representative". The first despatch appeared on March 3, 1906; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 26-2-1906.

[2] The Asiatic Law Amendment Act, also known as the Transvaal Asiatic Registration Act; *vide* "New Obnoxious Law", 8-6-1907, "Obnoxious Law", 6-7-1907, "Obnoxious Law & Regulations made under it", 30-11-1907 and Appendix I.

[3] The Transvaal Asiatic Registration Amendment Act (1908); for the text, *vide* Appendix I.

which a certificate confers. He will not produce his licence or take out one. He will not respect the Govern-ment's law in any way and will, on the contrary, do his best to get him-self imprisoned.

Now, I know that these 2.000 Indians are not all such brave men. Some of them have already taken out licences, which they have been us-ing. They produce them whenever demanded by an official. I think these men might as well not have burnt their certificates. I consider it necessary therefore further to reduce the 2,000 by a thousand. Let us now consider what the remaining thousand can do. The answer is that they can frighten the Government into doing justice. Their campaign will ensure the repeal of the obnoxious Act. The doors will remain open for the well-educated. The rights of those who are already in the Transvaal but possess no certificates will be preserved, provided their claims are genuine. But will the one thousand hold out till the last even after the others have yielded ? I believe they will. Those who fight to the bitter end are always a few in number. They are not influenced by what others do. They fight on, stak-ing their all, without taking thought as to what others do, because they believe their cause to be just and therefore think it their duty to fight.

These thousand persons will have to be prepared for much suffering indeed. What does it matter if there is loss of money, if people are imprisoned or deported, or even if they are assaulted ? They may lose everything, but not their honour. They may be forsaken by everyone, but will not be forsaken by God.

The annoying practice of auctioning the goods of those who refuse to pay the fine is becoming common. It was adopted in Pretoria, in Hei-delberg, and also in Vereeniging. If all the storekeepers did without licences, there would have been no difficulty, no need for concern about the auctioning of goods. But Indians have not yet developed the strength to face losses as isolated individuals. Admittedly this strength cannot be acq-uired all at once. Many Indians hold licences for the whole year. We have therefore only to consider a few cases. The best course for these persons is to sell their shops nominally—but through a proper legal transac-tion—to whites and carry on trade in the name of these whites. Mr. Gab-riel Isaac is prepared for this.[1] The auctioning of goods can be prevented in this manner. It may be argued that there will then be hardly any fight-ing left to be done by Indian traders. They will escape the privations and it will be the poor hawkers who will be ruined. In order to forestall this

[1] That is, to hold the shops in his name

charge, those storekeepers who trade in the name of whites should go out hawking and thus court imprisonment. Those who hold licences in their own names should prepare a servant or a relative to go to gaol. It is only right that the storekeepers should do this. But it would, however, be improper for hawkers to argue in this fashion. For it should not be supposed that a person who goes to gaol is like one dead. On the con-trary he is very much alive. He should think himself fortunate that he is in gaol. Indeed, one who cannot go to gaol is an unfortunate person. Moreover, a storekeeper can help the movement through contributions. Our object is to tire out the Government. This is to be achieved by going to gaol, which can be done in two ways. The first is for the hawkers to get arrested by going on their rounds without a licence. Since there can be no question of a hawker's goods being auctioned, he will only be fined. The second is to court arrest and imprisonment by refusing to give thumb-impressions or finger-prints or signatures at the border. No one should go about with a lot of money in his pocket. One should not even carry jewellery on one's person. They [the authorities] have started prosecutions against those who refuse to give thumb-impressions. It is easy therefore to get arrested. Only those who hold genuine permits may, however, enter the Transvaal now. Holders of Dutch passes, etc., must not come in for the present. Educated persons may not come in either—not just yet.

If we carry on the fight in this manner, the climax may be reached in October. The end may come even earlier if we pull with all our strength. If not, it may come in October. By then, the hawking licences of many Indians will have expired. We may expect that a large number of Indians will refuse to apply for the renewal of their licences. The Government will then have no option but to arrest them. Those persons whose certificates have been burnt will not get licences at all. I hope that these Indians accordingly will choose to go without licences.

NATAL BUSINESSMEN

Mr. Dawad Mahomed, Mr. Parsee Rustomjee and Mr. Anglia have been extremely active. They were not arrested in Johannesburg on Thursday[1] the 26th [August], so they proceeded to Pretoria by the 12 o'clock train after sending a wire. They were accompanied by Mr. Randeria. They were in the Anjuman-e-Islam Hall discussing arrangements for collecting certificates when Superintendent Betts served a

[1] This should be Wednesday.

warrant on them and arrested all the four.[1] They were refused bail. News was received later that a warrant had been issue for their deportation. Mr. Gandhi went to Pretoria by the last train. Through Advocate Blake the police were served with a notice to the effect that the Government had no authority thus to issue a warrant for their deportation.[2] The intention in serving this notice was not to take the case to the supreme Court, but only to expose the high-handedness of the Government. The notice, by the morning however, appeared to have had not effect. The men were taken to Natal train. Nothing was kept secret. Anyone who wished to see them was allowed to do so. Many Indians were present at the station to see them off.

A meeting was held in the Anjuman-e-Islam Hall at midnight when the question of collecting the certificates was discussed. Mr. Hajee Cassim said that whether or not the Memons were willing to hand over their certificates would be announced on Sunday after due consideration. The others resolved to hand them over immediately.

MASS MEETING

A mass meeting was held in Pretoria on Friday. Mr. Bagas was in the chair. The meeting was very well attended and great enthusiasm was evinced. Though a large number of certificates were burnt, I must say that the number received was not so large as it should have been. In Pretoria, only 60 certificates were received—this number is exclusive of those from the Madrasis—and this is not nearly enough. A report of the meeting will appear elsewhere and so I do not give it here.

MEETING OF MADRASIS

A separate meeting of Tamil Indians was held on Sunday, to which Mr. Gandhi was invited. Madrasis have surpassed all expectations. We find that nearly a fourth of them have been to gaol. They were extremely enthusiastic and declared that, whatever the others did, they would carry on the fight. They also resolved to collect funds.

TWO KONKANIS RELEASED

Both the Konkani butchers who were gaoled last week have been released. From their reports it would appear that the gaol warders do not harass prisoners any longer. They say Mulji Patel and Harilal

[1] *Vide* "Comments on Transvaal Indian Campaign", 28-8-1908.
[2] For the order of deportation, *vide* Appendix II.

Gandhi[1] are in good health.

ZAVER RANDERI

Mr. Zaver Randeri Soni, who, though his temporary permit has expired, did not leave the Transvaal, has been awarded a month's imprisonment. He deposed that he had Intended on the expiry of his term to leave the Colony and re-enter afterwards as an educated person, but that, meanwhile, he had been arrested. "This is my good fortune," Mr. Randeri said is his evidence.

DEPORTATION OF TWELVE MEN

Mr. Shelat, Mr. Joshi, Mr. Killawala, Mr. Medh, Mr. Ibrahim Hussein and others have been arrested and ordered to be deported. All of them will re-enter. They do not get any food [in gaol] from members of the community or friends. they themselves asked to be given gaol food. They get bread, potatoes, etc. They will be taken to Volksrust tonight.

EBRAHIM OSMAN

People here are glad that Mr. Ebrahim Osman has gone to gaol. He can be regarded as one of the leaders of the Memon community. His courageous act does that community great credit. He had plainly refused to give his thumb-impression on the train as also at the Charge Office. The policeman admitted while giving evidence that he knew Ebrahim. Mr. Polak gave evidence that it was through him that Ebrahim had obtained a permit. Ebrahim's identity therefore was not in question. The only offence was his refusal to give his thumb-impression. This is no ordinary tyranny. But I hope that, in view of cases like these, no Indian will give his thumb-impression till a settlement is reached.

NADIRSHA CAMA

Mr. Nadirsha Cama has been dismissed by the Government. On reflection, we shall see that this is no common occurrence. Mr. Cama felt so strongly on the subject that he attended the last mass meeting. The Government then asked him for an explanation. Since it was a fact that Mr. Cama had taken part in the proceedings, he was dismissed. And he has welcomed his dismissal. He acted as he did mainly for the sake of the campaign for the rights of the educated. Mr. Cama having been sacrificed in this manner, the educated should

[1] Gandhiji's eldest son. *Vide* "Trial of Harilal Gandhi & Others", 28-7-1908, also "Trial of Harilal Gandhi & Others", 28-7-1908 , Trial of Harilal Gandhi—II", 10-8-1908 & "Johannesburg Letter", 10-8-1908.

feel inspired tenfold. The community as a whole has been a party to Mr. Cama's dismissal, and it cannot therefore back out. Let me congratulate Mr. Cama. He sets little store by the pittance he was earning by slaving for the Government. This is an example worthy of emulation.

MESSAGE FROM NATAL

Mr. Dawad Mahomed and his companions, on reaching Charlestown after their deportation, sent the following telegram to various towns:

> Spent last night in prisoners' cell Pretoria with full trust in God. Sooner or later we shall be in gaol-palace in Transvaal thus doing our duty to motherland in some measure.[1] Hope every Indian will do his duty at all costs. We send this message to our brethren before we go to gaol.

We hope every Indian will remember this advice.

MEMORABLE TELEGRAM

When Mr. Dawad Mahomed and other Natal leaders reached Volksrust, Mr. Osman Ahmed sent them the following telegram:[2]

> Congratulate you all. Trust in God. Pray to Him. Obey Him who saved Noah from deluge, Moosa from Pharaohs, Abraham from fire, Joseph from the well, Ayoob from sickness, Enoos inside a whale, and our Prophet when he was in the cave. He is with us and He is ever just.

This is a very inspiring telegram. I urge Mr. Osman Ahmed himself to have the same heroic courage which he wants the businessmen to be infused with. Examples similar to the above will be found in all the scriptures. This is an age in which we treat the teachings of the scriptures as mere platitudes which do not have to be acted upon. We only pay lip service to such examples. We feel God to be so far away from us that we hardly allow these teachings to influence our conduct. This is an occasion for Indians to act rather than talk. If all the Indians were to fight with sincere faith in God, freedom would be won within 24 hours.

PRISONERS ON FRONT

I have not so far been able to give the names of the Madrasis who went to gaol on August 14 for the sake of their country. I give them below:

[1] That is, their intention was to re-enter the Colony in defiance of the deportation order and thus court imprisonment.

[2] The English text reproduced here is from *Indian Opinion*, 5-9-1908.

Messrs Kangasami Pillay, Saveri Pillay, R. Packrey Moodaley, Rajoo Naidoo, Subrayaloo Naidoo, S. Pavaday Naidoo, Muthramoothoo Pather, M. Nadason, Candasami, Moonsami Naidoo, V. Vurthen, S. Rangasami Naidoo, Venkatsami Appoodoo, Ranga Padiachy, R. Jameson, S. Vallu Padiachy, S. Moothramoothoo Pillay, V. Govindsami Padiachy, C. Canda Moodaley, Narasoomulloo, Ranga Padiachy, Nayana Naidoo, Rama, Nagappan Naidoo.

Most of these persons held licences, yet they went out hawking without using them.

Some of them were treated cruelly by the gaolers, who worked them so hard that they had inflammation on their backs. Regardless of this, they are ready to go to gaol again. Six affidavits in this connection have been forwarded to the Chief Gaoler. Probably the gaolers will not behave in the same way again. Even if they do, what does it matter ? The more we suffer, the earlier we shall be free.

IN CHRISTIANA

Mr. Ismail Essop Belim was sentenced to a fine of £15 for trading without a licence or, in default of payment, to a month's imprisonment. Mr. Belim chose to go to gaol. As if this was not enough, they have now arrested Mr. Ibrahim Adamji Limda, his servant. It does not appear likely that he will be convicted, for it has been ruled by the Court that a servant cannot be prosecuted on a charge of trading without a licence.

E. M. PATEL

His goods were auctioned in Vereeniging. He was fined £1.7.6, to recover which they sold goods worth £20, and awarded £6.5.6 to the messenger[1] as his expenses. Here is an instance of a crone not worth a pice whose head it costs two pice to shave.[2] I congratulate Mr. Patel. We shall be free only when people everywhere accept such losses. Who can now assert that General Smuts is not the leader of a band of robbers ?[3]

Tuesday [*September 1, 1908*]

[1] Bailiff

[2] A Gujarati saying

[3] Gandhiji had described the Court's attachment of the goods of Vereeniging Indian traders as "legalized robbery"; *vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting", 10-8-1908, "Letter to "The Star", 12-8-1908 & "What if goods are auctioned", 15-8-1908.

ELEVEN MORE FROM NATAL

Further reports have been received about the gentlemen from Natal. Those eleven persons who were to set out last night were taken away by Mr. Vernon. They were seen off at the Park Station by a few persons. Others went to Jeppe. These persons would not accept any food from outside. They only took gaol food. All of them had left Charlestown early in the morning and walked to the Charge Office at Volksrust, where they were arrested. Traders and educated persons have now joined hands again. All of them have resolved to stay on in gaol. Even in the matter of food, they eat what is given to them in gaol. My advice is that they should ask for the gaol uniform also. It has not yet been decided when they will be tried. The Government has yet to consider what they should be charged with. True fighters will not offer bail money, will not ask for food from outside and will submit to any harassment by the Government. I would also advise my brethren not to ask for anything to be brought to them surreptitiously. If they are addicted to smoking, they must give up the habit. Freedom from such addiction will benefit the body as well as the mind. Even if we do not take that into account, it is only proper to give up these addictions for the sake of one's country.

MEETING OF HAMIDIA ISLAMIC SOCIETY

His Majesty the Sultan [of Turkey] completed 32 years of his reign on August 31, and on the same day the Al Madina[1] Hejaz Railway was inaugurated. The [Hamidia] Islamic Society held a mass meeting to celebrate the event. A large number of Muslims were present. Invitations had been sent out to some whites. Among those present were Mr. Wolfgang, the Turkish Consul, and his friend, Mr. P. F. Crown. who has served in Turkey and was awarded the Order of Turkey, Class II. Mr. Kallenbach and Mr. Isaac were also present. Among the others present were Mr. Godfrey, Mr. Vyas, Mr. Cama, Mr. Naidoo and Mr. Gandhi.

The proceedings were conducted with the utmost efficiency amidst great enthusiasm. Six resolutions were passed. A fund for the Hejaz Railway was started on the spot. Mr. Hajee Habib put his name down for £10. The barbers collected more than £9 from amongst themselves. Mr. Nawab Khan paid one pound on the spot, and a cabman paid, amid applause, his earnings for the day—five shillings. Telegrams were received from many towns. Everywhere Muslim shops were closed [for the day]. Among these telegrams Mr. Nagadi's deserves mention. It reported that sweets and gifts were distributed

[1]The original has "Hamidia".

among white and Zulu children. This was an excellent idea; it shows the nobility of the Indian people, rather, of all Eastern peoples. The action of Warmbaths Indians in distributing sweets to white children, though the whites always behave like enemies, is noteworthy and ought to be emulated. In this town, Osman Ahmed led a procession. There were children's sports at which prizes were awarded. In the evening, there were fireworks. Everyone felt that the Hamidia Society's hall was rather small. I hope the Muslims will add more storeys and build a hall so big and fine that it will be both pleasing and useful.

Wednesday [*September 2, 1908*]

GOD'S WILL BE DONE

Mr. Dawad Mahomed and other gentlemen were deported but, as ordained, they have re-entered. Further, Mr. Dawad Mahomed, Mr. Parsee Rustomjee and Mr. Anglia have reached Johannesburg and started work again. Other friends are enjoying the fine air of the Volksrust gaol, which only means that they need not come to Johannesburg. They were all to be tried on Tuesday. But the Government itself fixed Tuesday next, the 7th, for their trial. Taking advantage of this opportunity, the three businessmen have come down to Johannesburg. Everyone is doing his duty. The businessmen's presence is needed in Johannesburg. Others are doing their duty by staying in gaol.

WHAT ABOUT SORABJI?

It is being asked why Sorabji, who was due to return, has not yet done so. I must point out that he himself is anxious to re-enter. But his duty consists in staying on in Charlestown for the present. This way he renders greater service. It is the Association which has restrained him. There has been no reply from the Government to the Association's resolution about him. This is one reason, among others, why he is not being called back. He will also enter when his time comes. Everyone cannot have the same duty to perform. Everyone[, however,] must attend to his or her duty. Sorabji's duty consists in restraining his enthusiasm and waiting.

MOOSA ESSOP ADIA

Mr. Moosa Essop Adia was fined £1 in Pretoria; While attaching his goods, the messenger also closed down his store. This is illegal. He had no authority to do this. The Association has therefore advised Mr. Adia to reopen the store and serve a notice on the messenger.

DILDAR KHAN

Mr. Dildar Khan who was employed as a servant by a white has been dismissed for taking part in the movement against the law. Yesterday, moreover, he had asked for leave to attend the Hejaz Railway [celebrations]. I congratulate Mr. Dildar Khan on his courage.

COLLECTIONS

Mr. Dawad Mahomed, Mr. Rustomjee and Mr. Anglia have been active from the moment they arrived. They went round soliciting contri-butions. I hope to give next week the names of those who have promised to pay.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-9-1908

64. IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT'S VIEWS

Among the speeches in the Imperial Parliament reported in our English section, the one by Colonel Seely, Deputy Secretary of State for the Colonies, is particularly worth reading. He says that negotiations are in progress with the Transvaal Government. The speech also indicates that those who have a right to be in the Colonies should be accorded equal rights with the whites, and must be accepted as full-fledged citizens. We can argue from this that, in the interests of those already in the Colony, educated Indians must be allowed to enter. We can also see from Colonel Seely's speech that, if we exert ourselves enough, the Imperial Government may help us. The key [to the situation] is with us. Satyagraha is all that is required of us.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-9-1908

65. RITCH'S CONDITION

We continue to receive letters from Mr. Ritch[1] which make us very sad. There is much else the community does, but nothing to show its appreciation [of Ritch's work]. Few whites or Indians can do what Mr. Ritch has been doing. He does not care for the salary, It is a

[1] L. W. Ritch, Secretary, South Africa British Indian Committee, London, founded in 1906 "to secure fair and just treatment to British Indian settlers in South Africa"; *vide* "Letter to Lord Reay", 24-11-1906 . Also *vide* "South Africa British Indian Committee", 12-10-1907, "Rithc's Services", 7-12-1907 and "Ritch's Great Achievements", 8-2-1908 & "Ritch's work : An Appreciation", 29-2-1908.

shame to keep such a person always in want.

There was a proposal earlier to send £300 to Mr. Ritch, of which only £100 have so far been sent. Now, even the money for his household expenses is not being remitted, let alone the balance of £200. What is more, it is becoming difficult for him even to meet the office expenses. In postponing things, as we are inclined to do , we are not being thoughtful about the difficulties of others. It is impossible for the Committee to continue its work under these conditions. It is therefore the duty of every Indian to do the most he can. Those who imagine that a great struggle like ours can be carried on without money are mistaken. We hope the community will make the necessary provision for Mr. Ritch. Else the Committee will collapse before long and we shall have reason to regret our helplessness afterwards.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-9-1908

66. THE G. O. M.'S BIRTHDAY[1]

It is again our privilege to join with our brethren throughout India and the Colonies on the occasion of the birthday of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, the greatest living Indian. Yesterday[2] he entered upon his eighty-fourth year. His life has been a strenuous one, devoted to his people and his beloved country. Now the aged patriot is living in quiet retire-ment in India, enjoying the rest which he has so nobly earned. Indians in South Africa, and especially those in Transvaal, may take courage for the fight by remembering that Mr. Dadabhai has spent practically the whole of his life fighting for the rights and freedom of his fellow-countrymen. Therefore, the greatest honour we in South Africa can do him is to follow his example, never flinching from the struggle until we have gained for ourselves, and for the generations to follow, that complete freedom which is the right of every subject of the King-Emperor.

Indian Opinion, 5-9-1908

[1] *Vide* also the succeeding item.
[2] September 4

67. DADABHAI'S BIRTHDAY

Yesterday was the birthday of the Grand Old Man of India, Dadabhai Naoroji. He has entered on his eighty-fourth year. In India, his birthday is an occasion of public celebrations all over the country Enthusiastic meetings are held by the public bodies in the country and messages are sent wishing him a long life. The messages sent to him by associations in South Africa have been given elsewhere in this issue. They have done their duty in sending these. We wish him a long life and pray to our Maker to grant us, and others associated with this journal, hearts as pure as his. We urge our readers to emulate the spirit of patriotism of this Dada[1] —he is indeed a veritable grandfather— which is the right way of cherishing his name. The Transvaal Indians must see to it that they honour their pledge as the immortal Dadabhai has honoured his for our sake. Our present campaign in South Africa is such that it would not be enough even if hundreds of heroes like Dadabhai were to come forward to join it. And so long as they do not come forward, we can make no progress in our political life or in any other field of activity.

As announced last year,[2] we give in this issue a photograph of the Grand Old Man.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-9-1908

68. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

Monday [*September 7, 1908*]

DUNCAN'S SPEECH

Mr. Duncan, former Colonial Secretary[3] expressed the view in the course of a speech that in the long run there was no option but to allow the Coloured races a share in the Government. If this was not done, both the whites and the Coloured races would suffer. That such views are expressed by whites who have held high posts points to the

[1] "Dada" in Gujarati means a grandfather.

[2] *Vide* "Need for Great Caution", 31-8-1907.

[3] Patrick Duncan held this office from 1903 to 1906. For the text of his speech, *vide* Appendix III.

coming of far-reaching changes in South Africa in a few years.

STALLARD'S VIEWS

Mr. Stallard is reputed to be a very able lawyer. Though he has no particular regard for us, he said that every time General Smuts had entered into a controversy with the Indian community, he had lost. And that is, in fact, what has happened. He is bound to lose again in this last phase of the struggle if we exert ourselves to our utmost.

BHANA RAMJI

Mr. Bhana Ramji was arrested on Saturday for not complying with the notice to leave the Colony. No one had any news about his case. He therefore conducted his own defence. He simply refused to leave the Colony and accepted the sentence of a month's hard labour which the Magistrate awarded him. He is now installed in gaol. It is our good fortune that Indians have learnt to go to gaol with such ease.

GOSHALIA'S TELEGRAM

Mr. Goshalia, who is imprisoned in Volksrust along with other Indians, has sent a telegram to say that Indian prisoners there have been going without breakfast, since they find mealie pap disagreeable. That Mr. Goshalia, as also others, should nonetheless not think of leaving the gaol but stay on where they are is some indication of their patriotism. The question of diet is still the subject of correspondence with the Government. Those who cannot bear these privations should call to mind Mr. Tilak's case.[1] How will he spend six years on a plain fare? He is old. Had he been a European, he would now be occupying a position of authority. I say this without any ill-will towards the whites. Rather than perpetrate evil as they have done in order to hold political power, it is far better that the Indians should make do with a crust of bread. Anyway, the point is, what we are going through is nothing when compared to the great Mr. Tilak's sufferings.

Tuesday [*September 8, 1908*]

NATAL BUSINESSMEN'S ACTIVITIES

Mr. Dawad Mahomed, Mr. Parsee Rustomjee and Mr. Anglia have not been idle since their return from Volksrust. They started collecting contributions in Johannesburg, and raised more than £ 200. They went round to all the places and were everywhere given contributions by every-one. They were accompanied by Imam Saheb Abdool Kadir Bawazeer, Mr. Cachalia, Mr. Vyas, Mr. Cama and

[1] The reference is to Bal Gangadhar Tilak, *vide* "Sentence on the Great Tilak", 1-8-1908.

others. On Friday after *namaz*, they went to Krugersdorp, and Mr. Cama was with them. Within three hours, they obtained promises of contributions to the value of £ 64 and collected another £ 60 in cash. They returned from Krugersdorp at night.

On Saturday, they left for Heidelberg by the morning train. There Mr. Bhayat gave a bold lead by [contributing] £ 16, with the result that a sum of £ 45 was soon raised. They left Heidelberg the same night by train for Standerton. The party included Mr. Cachalia and Mr. Bhayat, Mr. Cama also joined them on the same train. Though the train arrived at Standerton at two in the morning, a large number of citizens were present to receive them. My referring to Indians as citizens should not cause surprise. Indians are no longer slaves, but citizens. We have a right to be treated as partners [in the governance of the Colony], and have been fighting for that right.[1] A sum of about £ 53 was raised in Standerton.

Having done all this, these men had a right to rest before the trial began. However, they decided to take the plunge in Pretoria. They left for Pretoria on Sunday by the night train. Having arrived there they lost no time and started collecting contributions on Monday morning. They were looked after by Mr. A. M. Suleman. After breakfast, they went to the city from the Location, and started the collections among the Memons first. Mr. Hajee Cassim gave £ 5. Mr. Gandhi went to Pretoria at 2 p.m. and the work of collection continued till evening. Mr. Hajee Cassim and others also joined the party.

At four, there was a meeting in the Location with Mr. Bagas in the chair. His welcome address was followed by a suitable reply from the businessmen. There was no time [left] for collections in the Location. But local Indians have promised to take up the work. More than £ 26 were collected in Pretoria.

Considering Pretoria's resources, this is too small a sum. But the fact that Memon gentlemen contributed funds and extended their co-operation shows that to that extent they, too, are with the community in its opposition to the law. Their help is bound to produce some

[1] Indians were not citizens since they had no right of franchise. Their representation, such as it was, in the Transvaal legislature was in the nature of "trusteeship". Gandhiji had earlier been at pains to emphasize that the Transvaal Indians did not want political rights; *vide* "Deputation to Morley", 22-11-1906. He did, however, demand what he called civil rights by which he meant the right to property, locomotion and trade; *vide* "Letter to the Press", 30-11-1906.

effect on the Government as well. It will realize that a mass of water cannot be cloven asunder by the stroke of a stick, and that Indians are like a mass of water—they are of the same blood.

The businessmen took the evening train for Durban from the Location. Imam Saheb, Mr. Coovadia, Mr. Fancy, Jivanji, Mr. Omarji Sale, Mr. Vyas and others were present to receive them at Germiston, and to see them off as well. There is a halt of nearly 45 minutes at Germiston. Advantage was taken of this to entertain them at a party arranged in the restaurant. The restaurant-keeper was a good man, and made no trouble. The blinds in the room were lowered so that others outside might not notice the proceedings. The Volksrust train started amid shouts of "hurrah", and the businessmen left to embrace imprisonment. Is it conceivable that a community, the leaders of which evince such courage, patriotism and enthusiasm, can ever be defeated?

STORY OF KRUGERSDORP

Among the Krugersdorp Indians there appears to be a trivial rift, which the authorities intend to exploit. Local newspapers have reported that Indian traders in Krugersdorp used violence to compel the hawkers to surrender their certificates. The victims have lodged complaints and the offending traders will now be prosecuted.

This incident is said to have occurred when the Natal businessmen visited Krugersdorp before their deportation. The businessmen, when asked about it, said that no Indian had been harassed or treated violently. An altercation was all that took place and that—on one occasion. If that is so, why do Indians show themselves to be so shortsighted as to become a tool in the hands of the Government to be used against them-selves? Since the case is without any basis, the Government will lose.

But such rumours may serve to prolong the sufferings of the Indians somewhat. Let every Indian imprint it on his mind that this campaign does not depend on the use of force. There should be neither violence nor threats of violence. Force may be used neither against the Government nor against one's own fellows.

This campaign is based on spiritual force. Hence it has a divine sanction. We know that intellectual force is superior to physical force, and spiritual force superior to intellectual force. That is the highest force. We accept this view but do not act upon it. Only to the extent that we are unaware of the soul can there be misery and suffering for us.

STANDERTON LICENCES

The Licensing Officer asked the Indian traders at Standerton why they had refused to give their thumb-impressions. In reply, the Committee has said that

(i) since thumb-impressions are demanded under the obnoxious Act, the Indians will not give them;

(ii) the Act is obnoxious because it offends religious susceptibilities and is a symbol of the Indian's inferior status;

(iii) even if thumb-impressions were demanded—for licensing purposes—outside the Act, they would be refused by those who could sign their names. For, giving one's thumb-impression when one can easily sign one's name will amount to a stigma on oneself for the colour of one's skin. There is a difference between a thumb impression given in lieu of a signature and that given when the person can sign his name.

At 3 p.m.

We have just received a telegram to say that the three businessmen and Mr. Randeria have been awarded three months' hard labour each. The remaining eleven received a sentence of six weeks' imprisonment each with hard labour. I am glad over this report, yet it brings tears to my eyes. I am glad because the greater the suffering inflicted on Indians, the happier they will be in the end and the sooner will come the day of deliverance. I shed tears because they are elderly Indians who are thus made to suffer.

MORE PRISONERS

Suleman Hassan, a Krugersdorp hawker, has been sentenced to a fine of 5s or a day's imprisonment for hawking without a licence. He has elected to go to gaol.

Mr. Ali Essopji has been arrested for being found in the Colony without a permit. His case will be heard on the 11th.

In Christiana, Mr. Ibrahim Linda[1] has been sentenced to a fine of £ 15 or six weeks' imprisonment for carrying on trade [without a licence], and Mr. Cassim to a fine of £ 3 or six weeks' imprisonment for hawking [without a licence]. Both these brave men have chosen gaol. They have both been sentences to simple imprisonment.

MEETING OF BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE

A special meeting of the Committee was held on Monday. Mr.

[1] The original has "Limbado".

Essop Mia being absent, Mr. Coovadia took the chair. Mr. Fancy, Imam Saheb, Mr. Chettiar, Mr. Naidoo, Mr. Godfrey, Mr. Vyas, Mr. Omarji Sale, Mr. Adam Moosaji, Mr. Kunake and others were present. It was resolved to go round soliciting contributions from people and many names were put down on the list. A resolution was passed that £ 100 should be remitted to Mr. Ritch. Since Mr. Gandhi has suspended his practice for the time being, he asked for provision to be made for the payment of rent for the Association's office, for permission to defray Mr. Polak's expenses and to spend £ 10 per month, for the duration of the crisis, to meet the deficit on *Indian Opinion* resulting from the heavy increase in the quantity of printed matter. No decision was reached on Monday on this item and its consideration was postponed.

On receipt of information about the imprisonment of the Natal businessmen, another meeting of the Committee was held on Tuesday which was attended by Mr. Essop Mia. Most of those who had attended the previous meeting were present. It was resolved to hold a mass meeting on the following Thursday and to close shops and suspend business on that day out of regard for the Natal leaders. It was also decided to send cables to England, India, Zanzibar, Aden, etc.

Mr. Essop Mia has announced his intention to resign [from the chairmanship of the British Indian Association] as he wishes to go on a pilgrimage to Mecca. He will take the chair at the mass meeting for the last time—for the present at any rate.

The meeting has resolved to entrust the chairmanship to Mr. Adam Mahomed Cachalia in succession to Mr. Essop Mia.

There is no time now to speak at length about this. Mr. Essop Mia's services to the community have been massive. We owe so much to his courage. The community cannot honour him enough. It is hoped that the community will do its duty [by him] before he boards the ship and leaves on his pilgrimage on the 6th.

The position that has been offered to Cachalia is a very important one. He has of course done his utmost for the community. He is popular. Also, he has been to gaol. He is thus very well qualified. He was at first extremely reluctant to accept the chairmanship, but accepted the office under great pressure. Mr. Ibrahim Coovadia's name was also suggested, but he expressed his preference for Mr. Cachalia, who, he thought, could serve better.

Mr. Cachalia's responsibilities are great. It is not an easy thing to take on the captaincy of a ship in mid-ocean. But Mr. Cachalia is

sure to do full justice to the office he has accepted if he always acts with faith in God.

I hope to write at greater length next week of Mr. Essop Mia and Mr. Cachalia.

VOLUNTEERS

Since Mr. Gandhi has practically suspended his legal practice and Mr. Mahomed Khan has joined business, Mr. James Dorasamy has started attending the Association office to do honorary work. I hope others, too, following Mr. Dorasamy's example, will come forward to offer their services and thus help the Association's work. If the community is determined to secure the early release of the Natal heroes, there will be work for as many volunteers as may be forthcoming.

NYLSTROOM

Mr. Moti Ragha Patel of Nylstroom has been sentenced to four days' hard labour for hawking without a licence. A summons is about to be served on Mr. Nagadi.

ARRESTS IN KRUGERSDORP

In Krugersdorp warrants have been issued against Mr. Ismail Kazi, Mr. Pandor, Mr. Vaja, Mr. Vania, Mr. Khurshedji Desai, Mr. Dadlani, Mr. Mahomed Mamuji Dadoo and Mr. Parsee Rustomjee on the aforementioned charges.[1] All of them, except Mr. Rustomjee, have been released on bail. Since Mr. Rustomjee is already installed in the gaol-palace, it remains to be seen what happens to him.

Wednesday [*September 9, 1908*]

SORABJI

He [Mr. Sorabji] entered the Transvaal yesterday (Tuesday) evening. His case will come up on the 15th. Mr. Sorabji has already left for Johannesburg in the company of Mr. Cama.

ABDOOL GANI

A telegram has been received saying that Mr. Abdool Gani gave his thumb-impression on his return to Volksrust. If true, that is extremely regrettable.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-9-1908

[1] These have not been mentioned before. *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 7-9-1908.

69. PETITION TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COLONIES[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
September 9, 1908

TO

THE RT. HON'BLE THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
LONDON

THE PETITION OF THE BRITISH INDIAN
ASSOCIATION OF THE TRANSVAAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT

PRELIMINARY

1. The British Indian Association approach His Majesty's Government in connection with the British Indian struggle that has now gone on for the past two years in the Transvaal, more particularly in connection with the Asiatic Registration Amendment Act, gazetted in the Transvaal *Gazette*, dated the 2nd instant.

2. The Association represent the British Indian community residing in the Transvaal.

3 As His Majesty's Government are well aware, the Asiatic Law Amendment Act passed last year by the Transvaal legislature has caused much misery to the British Indians in the Transvaal, and has involved loss of money and the incarceration of over 350 Indians, who have suffered imprisonment for conscience' sake.

HASTY LEGISLATION

4. The Act that has now been gazetted was, in the form of a Bill, read a first time on the 20th August, and it passed all the stages through both the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council on the 21st August. The bill was never published in the *Gazette* and it was only after it was gazetted as an Act that it was available to the community represented by the petitioning Association. By the courtesy of a member of the Legislative Assembly, a few Indians were able to see the Bill after it had passed through all the stages and the other members of the community had, up to the 2nd instant, to remain satisfied with a summary published in the Transvaal Press.

[1] This was published in *Indian Opinion*, 19-9-1908, under the title "Transvaal Indians' Petition: To The Imperial Government: The Full Text".

THE ACT GENERALLY ACCEPTABLE

5. The petitioning Association are free to admit that the Act under discussion is a very great advance upon the Asiatic Law Amendment Act No. 2 of 1907, though it is defective, in that it requires proof of pre-war residence for 3 years from those Asiatics who are in the Transvaal but who have not yet received registration certificates. Most of these men have entered the country in *bona fide* manner, and have acquired vested rights. There are instances of Asiatics having already received registration certificates, although their residence in the Transvaal before the war did not go beyond even one year. It is respectfully contended that the Asiatics who have not yet received registration certificates but who are in the Transvaal should not be treated according to the arbitrary and inflexible limit of three years' pre-war residence, which is applicable to Asiatics who are still outside the Transvaal.

6. The clause as to the granting of licences will depend for smooth working only on a liberal administration as to thumb-print requirements.

FINGER-PRINTS

7. In moving the second reading of the Bill, the Colonial Secretary was pleased to say that finger-impressions or thumb-impressions were not a matter of objection. In the humble opinion of the petitioning Association, in making this statement, the Hon'ble Minister was less than fair to the Indian community; for he knew well that a very violent agitation was raised against finger-prints by many Asiatics, after the compromise of last January. Whilst it is true that finger-prints were never treated as a fundamental objection by the leading members of the Indian community, they undoubtedly formed, as they even now do, an insupe-rable objection to many Asiatics, especially the Pathans, of whom there are probably over 150 residing in the Colony. Finger-impressions or thumb-impressions were given voluntarily under the compromise, only in order to enable the Government to have a scientific classification, and to show the *bona fides* of the community, as also its willingness to help the Government. This voluntary act has cost the community very dear. Both the Chairman and the Secretary had to suffer grievous bodily harm at the hands of their fellow-countrymen,[1] by reason of the above help given to the Government. After considerable experience, the petitioning Association assure His Majesty's Government that the compulsory

[1] Gandhiji was assaulted on February 10, 1908; *vide* "Letter to Friends", 10-2-1908 & "My Reward", 22-2-1908.

taking of finger-impressions on any large scale from Asiatics only is bound to give rise to such trouble. Nor are they to any extent necessary, the majority of British Indians having once given them to the authorities. In any case, a very great amount of latitude will be necessary for the smooth working of that part of the administrative machinery.

ON REPEAL OF ACT 2 OF 1907

8. However acceptable the measure may be in comparison with the Asiatic Act of 1907, as has already been submitted to the local Government, the community represented by the petitioning Association is unable to accept the benefits of the measure until Act 2 to 1907 is removed from the Statute-book, and the status of educated Asiatics properly and equitably defined. In the humble opinion of the petitioning Association, repeal of the Act is necessary, if only for the honour of the Government.

PROMISE OF REPEAL

9. It is respectfully contended that the Hon'ble the Colonial Secretary had definitely promised repeal on condition that the Asiatic part of the compromise was carried out by the Asiatic communities. It is admitted that the Asiatics have more than fulfilled their obligation under the compromise.

10. But it has been argued that Justice Solomon, in the course of his judgement[1] on the application for the return of a voluntary registration application, stated that promise of repeal was not proved, and that, therefore, it was not given. The petitioning Association venture to draw the attention of His Majesty's Government to the fact that the question of repeal was not before the Court and the decision did not turn upon that question at all. It was definitely stated before the Court that all the evidence in the possession of the applicant with reference to the repeal was not brought before the Court. Sufficient was stated on that subject in the affidavits[2] supporting the application, in order to provide a moral basis, the applicant intending to show that his desire to withdraw his application for voluntary registration was not based on caprice but on what he believed to be a breach of faith by the local Government.

11. That repeal of the Act was the goal of the signatories to the letter[3] addressed to the Colonial Secretary, and dated the 29th January, can be inferred from the letter itself, [a] portion of which reads as

[1] *Vide* 4th footnote of "Johannesburg Letter", 7-7-1908.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*

follows:

> Under these circumstances, we would once more respectfully suggest to the Government that all Asiatics over the age of 16 should be allowed within a certain limited period, say three months, to register themselves, and that to all who so register *the Act be not applied.*

The original draft placed before the signatories had the expression "the penalties of" before the words "the Act". This was struck out, the idea being that, if the Act did not apply to all who voluntarily registered, and if all Asiatics voluntarily registered, there would be no occasion to retain the Act on the Statute-book, the necessary provision for separating authorized Asiatic residents from unauthorized residents being taken over in any legalizing Bill that might be passed.

12. This, however, was not all. The second signatory hereto, who was also one of the signatories to the letter in question, was summoned to Pretoria, and had an interview with the Hon'ble the Colonial Secretary and at the interview he was given to understand that, if the Asiatics honourably fulfilled their obligation, the Act would be repealed.[1] This was on the 30th January. On discussion with the Registrar of Asiatics which took place after the interview with the Colonial Secretary, the second signatory's suspicion was aroused as to the Asiatic Act being repealed. He, therefore, addressed to the Colonial Secretary, on the 1st February last, a letter showing his suspicion.[2]

On the 3rd February, upon receipt of a telegraphic message asking him to wait on the Colonial Secretary, he did so, and, in the presence of the Registrar of Asiatics, as he has already stated in his affidavit before the Supreme Court, the Colonial Secretary made the promise of repeal; and, within the knowledge of the first signatory to this petition, this promise was brought to the notice of vast audiences of British Indians, at several meetings just after the interviews hereinbefore referred to.

13. On the 5th day of February last, the Colonial Secretary spoke as follows at a meeting at Richmond: "He had told them that the law could not be repealed so long as there was an Asiatic in the country who had not registered." And again, "Until every Indian in

[1] *Vide* "Interview to "The Transvaal Leader", 30-1-1908 & "Speech at meeting of British Indian Association", 31-1-1908.

[2] *ibid.*

the country had registered, the law would not be repealed." The above extract has been taken from *The Star* of the 6th February last. The same remark was also reported in *The Transvaal Leader* of the same date.

14. On his way to the Registration Office, on the 10th day of February last, the second signatory hereto was very severely assaulted, because he was going to give his digit-impressions. For the time being, registration came practically to a standstill. The Asiatics were frightened; they were suspicious as to the intentions of the Government, and their suspicious were strengthened by reason of receipts for the few applications that were made having been given on old forms, which had reference to the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, No. 2 of 1907. In order to allay such suspicions, the Registrar declared to several prominent Asiatics, as also to the Assistant Hon. Secretary[1] of the British Indian Association, who is also an Attorney of the Supreme Court of the Transvaal, that, voluntary registration being completed, the Act would be repealed. In order further to popularize voluntary registration, the Registrar of Asiatics was willing to publish a notice in the *Gazette* that, Asiatics undergoing voluntary registration, the Act would be repealed. This notice was brought before the second signatory hereto by the Registrar, whilst he was still in bed, and, after some amendments, it was agreed between the Registrar and him that the notice should be published in the *Gazette*. In the meanwhile, the verbal assurances given by the Registrar had their desired effect, and registration was going on smoothly. The Registrar, therefore, on again visiting the second signatory hereto inquired whether it was still necessary to publish the notice, and the second signatory, on learning that registration was going on smoothly, replied in the negative.

15. On the 22nd day of February, the second signatory hereto submitted, for the Colonial Secretary's approval, and with his permission, a draft Bill[2] , amending the Immigrants' Restriction Act and repealing the Asiatic Act. This letter was duly acknowledged, but there was no repudiation of the reference to repeal of that Act.

16. Lastly, whilst the Colonial Secretary has stated, in his affidavit[3] before the Supreme Court, that he never promised repeal of the Act, and whilst the Registrar of Asiatics had supported that affidavit, the Colonial Secretary does not, as will appear from his speech on the second reading of the Bill, seriously repudiate the

[1] H. S. L. Polak
[2] *Vide* "Letter to General Smuts", (Enclosure), 22-2-1908
[3] *ibid*

promise, and, at any rate, admits having freely discussed with the second signatory hereto the question of repeal.

17. Several statements made by British Indians, to whom the assurance as to repeal was given by the Registrar of Asiatics, are attached hereto.[1]

18. Moreover, the petitioning Association draw the attention of His Majesty's Government to the fact that a repealing Bill was actually drawn [up] and ordered to be printed for private circulation by the Colonial Secretary, and was shown to the second signatory, and was only withdrawn, because the second signatory hereto requested that certain amendments should be made therein, all of which, with some modifications, have now been embodied in the Act under discussion, with the exception of that affecting the status of educated Asiatics.

RETENTION OF ACT UNNECESSARY

19. Apart, however, from the promise made by the Colonial Secretary, the retention of two parallel enactments dealing with the same matter cannot but lead to harassing and unfortunate results. It has been stated that the intention of the Government is to treat Act 2 of 1907 as a dead letter. But it is impossible for the community represented by the petitioning Association to remain in a state of uncertainty after a prolonged and bitter struggle. The powers given by the two measures may, in the hands of ignorant, incapable, or prejudiced officials, be used against British Indians with deadly results.

20. The petitioning Association may be permitted to remark that the later measure in no way neutralizes the effect of Act 2 of 1907. Either may, at the option of the Government, be used against the Asiatic communities. Similarly, it is open to Asiatics to take advantage, if there by any, of either enactment.

21. For instance, whilst, under the new measure, Turkish Mahomedans are free from the irksome process of registration, a Turkish Mahomedan entering the Transvaal may be dealt with under Act 2 of 1907. One of the main objections, therefore, of the British Indian community still remains without redress. The remarks made by the colonial Secretary that

> they (the Asiatics) put the difficulties in this way—that, under Act 2 of 1907, the definition given of *Asiatic* in the old Volksraad Act No. 3, 1885, was maintained, and in that definition Turkish Mahomedans, subjects of the Turkish Empire, were excluded from this country. It was urged that that was not

[1] *Vide* "Report of Natal Immigration Department", 22-2-1908

> a provision intended to keep Turks out of the country, but was simply casting a slur and a stigma on the Mahomedan religion, which no white person or the Government has the slightest intention of doing. The number of Turks here has always been small, and I am told that there are none now, and in any case there is no danger of any influx from Turkey to this country. The only kind of Turkish subjects who do come here are Christians, and they are Syrians and other Levantines, against whom certain hon. members have strong objection. But they are Christians, and Mahomedan subjects of the Turkish Empire have never threatened, and are never likely to threaten, to invade this country. That objection, which was based on sentimental grounds, and which there was no difficulty on material grounds in meeting, we have met, and hon. members will see that the Bill now before the House strikes out that restriction which was placed against the immigration of a man simply because he was a Mahomedan subject of the Turkish Empire.

are wide of the mark.

22. Again, whilst the Act under discussion frees minors from personal registration, Act 2 of 1907 can conceivably be used against such minors, and can give rise to endless trouble.

23. The offensive liquor clause finds no place in the new measure, but it is open to an Asiatic to apply for a permit of exemption under the old Act. It will, perhaps, be said that this is manifestly an advantage. But, in the humble opinion of the petitioning Association, the implied insult still disfigures the Statute-book of the Colony.[1]

24. It would be open to the Government to deal with an unregistered Asiatic under either Act, and thus subject such an Asiatic to pinpricks at every turn.

25. The retention of the old Act opens the way for frauds by un-scrupulous Asiatics. Whilst the new Act provides for application for registration being made from a place in South Africa outside the Colony, there is nothing to prevent an Asiatic from entering the Colony and claiming to remain in it for seven days, under the Act, and, during that time, merging into the community beyond recognition.

26. Illustrations like the foregoing can be multiplied. But the above, it is trusted, will sufficiently show how precarious the position of British Indians will be rendered, if the old enactment be allowed to remain on the Statute-book of the Colony.

27. Even whilst the new Act is under consideration by His Majesty's Government, the local Government have commenced prosecutions against those who are covered and protected by it. Thus, a

[1] *Vide* "Deputation to Lord Elgin", 8-11-1906.

British Indian[1] possessing good educational qualifications and, therefore, easily recognizable, and moreover, possessing a Peace Preservation Ordinance permit and a certificate voluntarily taken out under Lord Milner's advice,[2] was arrested, after the passing of the new measure, and tried under the old Act, for being an unregistered Asiatic. The Magistrate, although he expressed surprise, had no option but to give him notice to quit the Colony within seven days. Thus, it is possible to denude the Colony of many lawfully resident Asiatics by prosecuting them under the old Act, although they are protected by the new Act.

28. Another Indian, well known to the authorities, a merchant of Piet Retief, holding residential certificates, has just been tried under the old Act, and sentenced to pay a fine or go to gaol for 14 days without hard labour, not because he is not entitled to reside in the Colony, but because he has refused to give his thumb-impression. During his trial, the principal witness for the Crown admitted that he knew the merchant to be a resident of the Transvaal, and the solicitor who had accompanied him when he obtained his permit also gave evidence to identify him. Mr. Ebrahim Osman (that is the merchant's name), rather than pay a fine which he deemed to be an extortion, has elected to suffer imprisonment, and is now serving his term at His Majesty's gaol at Volksrust.[3] Mr. Ebrahim Osman can read and write English and can give a well-formed signature in the Roman character[s].

29. Under the circumstances, the petitioning Association trust that His Majesty's Government will secure repeal of the old Act before sanctioning the new Act.

STATUS OF EDUCATED INDIANS

30. If the old Act were removed from the Statute-book, it would seem that there would be no hindrance to educated Asiatics being placed on the same footing as His Majesty's other subjects, so far as immigration is concerned.

31. The Immigrants' Restriction Act 15 of 1907 imposes a general education test, and, under it, any Asiatic who can pass the education test is not otherwise prohibited and may enter the Colony. He then becomes subject to registration under the Asiatic Act, and, if he fails to comply with it, he becomes an unregistered Asiatic, though

[1] This was Muljibhai G. Patel; *vide* "Trial of Muljibhai G. Patel—I", 4-8-1908.

[2] *Vide* "The British Indian Association and Lord Milner", 11-6-1903.

[3] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 31-8-1908.

not yet a prohibited immigrant. Thus, Mr. Sorabji Shapurji entered the Colony under the Immigrants' Restriction Act. He was allowed to pass through unchallenged. After seven days' residence in the Colony, he was prosecuted for being unregistered under Act 2 of 1907.[1] Mr. Sorabji had applied for voluntary registration. That was refused. He was not prepared to submit to Act 2 of 1907. He held excellent testimonials from the Town Clerk of Charlestown and other prominent officials of that town. The Magistrate at Volksrust had recommended his application. He is educated up to the seventh standard of the Surat High School, and has often acted as Interpreter at the Court at Charlestown. On being tried under the Asiatic Act, he received notice to quit the Colony.[1] This notice he, as a British subject, declined to comply with. He was thereupon prosecuted, and sentenced to imprisonment with hard labour for one month, without the option of a fine.[3] Mr. Sorabji served his term, and, on the last day of his imprisonment, was secretly deported.

32. The petitioning Association venture respectfully to submit that such method of dealing with inoffensive British subjects in a British Colony is without precedent.

33. Mr. Sorabji's case shows that the Immigrants' Restriction Act does not create a colour bar. The above view seems to be borne out by the case of *Rex v. Lalloo* heard in the Supreme Court of the Transvaal on the 22nd July last.[4]

34. It is the Asiatic Act, which is ostensibly only intended to identify those who could not otherwise be easily identified, that stands in the way of educated Indians.

35. The petitioning Association respectfully claim that as in the other Colonies, educated Asiatics should have the right of free entry, subject only to general education test applicable to all. It would be unreasonable and highly insulting and degrading to expect such Asiatics to undergo processes of identification and carry certificates for which there can never be the slightest necessity.

36. The petitioning Association invite the attention of His Majesty's Government to the fact that foreigners, if they are Europeans, and the natives of South Africa, provided they pass the education test, can enter the Transvaal. Educated British Indians are, therefore, placed lower than either of the two classes above named.

37. It is right that the Malays, who are inhabitants of South

[1] *Vide* "Trial of Sorabji Shapurji—I", 8-7-1908.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*
[4] *Vide* "Letter to "Indian Opinion", 24-7-1908.

Africa, should be free to enter the Transvaal, but the petitioning Association fail to see why Indians born in South Africa should not be placed in the same category. There are many Indian youths to whom South Africa is their only home, and India a foreign land.

38. It has been stated that the keeping of the door open for the entry of educated Indians would flood the Colony with "half-educated Indian lads", who would compete with the general body of the Europeans in the Colony. The petitioning Association have never raised any such contention. The severity of the education test will not be questioned. It is the class and colour distinction in the laws even with regard to educated Indians that is respectfully resented. Natal admits very few Indians per year under the education test.

39. What the petitioning Association desire is that educated Indians of high culture, professional men, men with University degrees, should be able to enter the Colony as of right. Such men are naturally required for the wants of the resident community.

40. Further, it has been suggested that relief for educated Indians is obtainable under Section 16 of the new Act, as it is under the old Act. But such is not the case. That section contemplates only a temporary permit and does not enable the holder to follow any independent calling. That section, the petitioning Association understand, is intended to provide for the temporary sojourn in the Colony of Asiatics, whether they are educated or not, and contemplated the giving of facility to merchants to import, under temporary permits, clerks and other employees for their wants.

41. The relief sought by the petitioning Association is different in kind. Educated Indians who can pass a test, no matter how severe, should come under the general immigration law, and should not be subjected to registration, etc.

42. If the educated Indians who are already in the Colony have sub-mitted to registration, they have done so only to set an example and assist the Government, and to free those few who may be allowed to enter the Colony from galling and needless restrictions on their personal freedom.

43. It may be remarked that the immigration of Asiatics was free before the war. After the conclusion of peace, it was generally controlled under the Peace Preservation Ordinance. The Asiatic Act of 1907 did not regulate immigration of Asiatics but it provided for the registration of Asiatics already domiciled in the Colony. It was still open to Asiatics to receive permits the same as Europeans under the Peace Preservation Ordinance, and, as a matter of fact, serveral did receive such permits. Then followed the Immigrants' Restriction

Act[1] which replaced the Peace Preservation Ordinance, and laid down a general education test for newcomers. Thus, but for the Asiatic Act, there never has been a legal interruption of the entry of educated Asiatics into the Colony. It is, therefore, not true, as has been locally stated, that British Indians are raising any new contention. The question was first raised by the Hon'ble the Colonial Secretary when, in his repealing Bill, herein before referred to, he wished so to amend the Immigrants' Restriction Act as to prohibit the immigration of all educated Asiatics.

PASSIVE RESISTANCE

44. The petitioning Association feel aggrieved that His Majesty's Government were pleased not to listen to the prayer of the Association and the Deputation that was sent to London in 1906[2] and that Act 2 of 1907 was sanctioned.

45. The petitioning Association draw the attention of His Majesty's Government to the fact that the Deputation placed before them the fourth Resolution of the Mass Meeting of British Indians held at the Empire Theatre in the September of 1906.[3] The resolution runs as follows:

> In the event of the Legislative Council, the local Government, and the Imperial authorities rejecting the humble prayer of the British Indian community of the Transvaal in connection with the Draft Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance, this Mass Meeting of British Indians here assembled solemnly and regretfully resolves that, rather than submit to the galling, tyrannous, and un-British requirements laid down in the above Draft Ordinance, every British Indian in the Transvaal shall submit himself to imprisonment and shall continue so to do until it shall please His Most Gracious Majesty the King-Emperor to grant relief.

46. The Resolution evidently carried very little weight with His Majesty's Government. But what has happened since has demonstrated the earnestness of the meeting.

47. The following passage occurs in a general petition[4] presented to the local Government in 1907:

> Nothing short of total repeal of the Act can meet the difficult situation that has arisen. In our humble opinion, the Act is degrading to our self-respect, offensive to our religions, and in its incidence it is such as can be thought of only in connection with dangerous criminals. Moreover, the solemn

[1] For text of the Act, *vide* Vol. VII, Appendix III.
[2] *Vide* "Deputation to Lord Elgin", 8-11-1906.
[3] *Vide* "The Mass Meeting", 11-11-1906.
[4] *Vide* "Monster Petition", Before 21-9-1907.

declaration made by us renders it imperative for us, as honest citizens of the Empire and God-fearing men, not to submit to the provisions of the Act, irrespective of any consequences which we may have to suffer, and which we understand to be imprisonment, banishment, and/or loss or confiscation of our property.

48. In order to secure the object, over 350 Indians have suffered imprisonment. Several have allowed their goods to be sold. Some have accepted dismissal from Government or private employ, rather than stifle the voice of conscience. And almost all have suffered much pecuniary loss, some having been actually reduced to poverty.

49. The petitioning Association have chosen this method of drawing attention to the grievous wrong suffered by them as being the method most consistent with their status as British subjects, and with their self-respect as men.

50. The movement has been described as passive resistance for want of a better term. But it amounts to respectful protest against legisla-tion which British Indians resent, and in framing which they had no voice.

51. It is respectfully submitted that there can be no notion of resistance, as the word is ordinarily understood, in a body of men undergoing personal suffering.

52. The petitioning Association have learnt from experience that, within the British Empire, at any rate, subjects of the King-Emperor get real redress of grievances only when they show that they are ready and willing to suffer for the sake of obtaining relief.

53. British Indians have been taught from their childhood that, in the eye of the law, under the British Constitution, all subjects are equal. When, however, they dare to claim such equality in the Colony, they are jeered at or considered impudent.

54. British Indians have no franchise and, in the present state of public feeling, they desire none. The only remedy left to them, therefore, is to petition the rulers and, as a measure of their earnestness, be prepared to suffer for their opinions.

55. So far as the petitioning Association have been able to ascertain the Indian feeling, the determination of the great majority of them is humbly to continue to suffer and refuse to accept the benefits under the new Act, until elementary justice requested by the Indians has been granted.

CONCLUSION

56. In conclusion, the petitioning Association respectfully submit and pray that, if His Majesty's Government cannot secure justice for British Indians residing in the Colony by securing repeal of Act 2 of 1907 and by having the status of educated Indians established, in consonance with the Principles of the British Constitution, the terms of the gracious Proclamation of 1858[1] may be withdrawn, and they may be told that, for them, the expression "British subject" is to bear a meaning different to what it possesses for Europeans. And for this act, etc., etc.

ESSOP ISMAIL MIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION
M. K. GANDHI
SECRETARY,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Colonial Office Records: 291/128

70. CABLE TO S. A. B. I. COMMITTEE[2]

JOHANNESBURG,
September 9, 1908

FIFTEEN DEPORTED BRITISH INDIANS ON RE-ENTERING WERE HEAVILY SENTENCED. DAWAD, RUSTOMJEE, ANGLIA, RANDERIA, THREE MONTHS HARD LABOUR, ALTERNATIVELY £50. OTHERS SIX WEEKS HARD LABOUR OR £25. ALL CLAIM RIGHT TO ENTER TRANSVAAL AS EITHER PRE-WAR RESIDENTS OR EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS. PRISONERS INCLUDE THREE SERGEANTS RECENT ZULU CAMPAIGN, SEVEN MAHOMEDANS, TWO PARSEES, SIX HINDUS. PROFOUND SENSATION. SINCE RENEWAL OF STRUGGLE 175 IMPRISONED ALL CLASSES FROM ALL PARTS. SUCH EXTREME SUFFERING ALL ON ACCOUNT OF RETAINING ON THE STATUTE-BOOK A LAW WHICH THE GOVERNMENT DECLARED DEAD LETTER AND PROHIBITION AGAINST RE-ENTRY OF FEW HIGHLY EDUCATED INDIANS TOTALLY NEEDLESS AND UN-BRITISH. HOPE THAT LORD AMPTHILL AND OTHERS WILL DO UTMOST TO SECURE RELIEF. INDIANS SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO DESPAIR OF SIMPLE JUSTICE.

[M. K. GANDHI]

Colonial Office Records: 291/132

[1] The original has "1857".

[2] Copies of this cable and another of the same date from the Gujarat Indian Association, Kimberley, were forwarded by L. W. Ritch to the Secretary of State for the Colonies on September 10.

71. INTERVIEW TO "THE STAR"

[JOHANNESBURG,]
September 9, 1908

The sentence of three months' hard labour passed by the Volksrust Magistrate yesterday on the Indians who were deported and who re-entered the Colony has, according to the Indian method of reasoning, considerably helped their cause, and it is apparent that they hope that such incidents in the campaign will force the Imperial Government to intervene on their behalf. There was quite a feeling of optimism pervading Mr. Gandhi's office today when a reporter of *The Star* called on him. The leader of the passive resistance movement said:

While it is true that we Indians have got what we asked for, it does not reflect any credit on the Government, which makes it almost imperative on the courts to impose such heavy sentences on men who, after all, are political opponents. I consider this to be a wicked abuse of power placed in the hands of the Government over an unrepresented class. I think that these sentences mean the end of the deportation farce, but if the farce is to be continued, and if I know the temper of my countrymen correctly, they will certainly continue to re-enter and demand their rights as British subjects. When I talk of equality of treatment in the eye of the law the idea is jeered at, but I am in good company, as Col. Seely himself has advanced the same plea.[1] To my mind, it is the only thing that binds the Empire together. Immediately the idea of legal inequality is introduced, you sap the foundation of the Empire. By this idea I do not mean that the Colonies should not have the right to restrict immigration. The late Sir Henry Parke's remarks cannot be questioned, but once you admit people into the Colony, they must enjoy equality of treatment before the law. Otherwise, as Mr. Duncan has only recently stated, you create a state of slavery, the result being that the slave-owners, that is the governing class, must in the end be much worse off than the slaves.[2]

[1] Col. John Edward Bernard Seely, Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, had spoken in the House of Commons on July 31 to the effect that: (i) if persons were admitted, they must be given civil rights; (ii) if anyone was admitted under the British flag, he must be a potential citizen and must, sooner or later, be given equal rights with all other men; (iii) those we have with us we must treat well, generously and fairly. *India*, 7-8-1908. *Vide* "Imperial Government's views", 5-9-1908.

[2] Patrick Duncan, speaking at the Rosebank Branch of the League of Women, said: "It was a very difficult matter in a country where there was supposed to be political freedom to have the largest section of the population entirely deprived of political rights—it was practically a condition of slavery . . . . It was bad for the superior race just as much as for the inferior."

History does not show an instance of people having become a free nation and yet remaining slave-owners. If we are not to be treated as slaves, then we want men whose presence would conduce to our free growth. These men are undoubtedly those who have culture and education, and it is for an infinitesimal number of this class that we are pleading for free ingress.

Asked if the principle were conceded, would the Indians be prepared to submit to a severe education test, Mr. Gandhi said:

If the test in the present Immigrants' Restriction Law does not admit of a proper stiff test being laid down, which I deny, it can be amended, even as it has been in Australia. Under the Immigrants' Restriction Act there will then be legal equality, but in administering that Act it will be open to the officials to alter the severity of the test as circumstances may require. For instance, in Natal today Europeans are almost passed unchallenged, while Indians are subjected to a rigorous test. That administrative difference must continue so long as the prejudice continues.

On it being pointed out that Mr. Gandhi's statement did not advance the situation, he replied that he took his stand on Lord Milner's Kimberley speech[1] ,

Let there be no more pinpricks for the Uitlander,

and, added Mr. Gandhi:

We are now the Uitlanders, strangers in our own home.

The Star, 9-9-1908

72. SPEECH AT MASS MEETING[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,
September 10, 1908]

Mr. Gandhi in the course of a brief address referred to a telegram from the Volksrust Indians in support of the meeting. The information in this telegram was that their leaders were breaking stones in the public streets and refusing to eat the raw meat supplied to them as prison food. He (Mr. Gandhi) considered that what seemed degrading work was really an honour. (Applause.) The reason for their suffering made him proud of his countrymen. It was a disgrace, however, that their Government should act thus—it reflected no credit on the local or the British or the Indian Government which found no power to protect the people that had left its borders. Further, a telegram from Boksburg announced that a pedlar had been sentenced to six

[1] *Vide* "The Natal Municipal Corporations Bill", 18-3-1905.

[2] The meeting attended by several hundred Indians was held under the auspices of the British Indian Association to express sympathy with the Indian satyagrahis. Essop Ismail Mia presided.

weeks' hard labour for trading without a licence. Six weeks would be the minimum sentence in future. Mr. Sorabjee had said that he was willing to suffer twelve months' hard labour, but it depended on the firm attitude to those who remained outside how long the time would be for those inside. (Applause.)

Indian Opinion, 19-9-1908

73. RESOLUTIONS AT MASS MEETING[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,

September 10, 1908]

[RESOLUTION III:][2] This Meeting of British Indians places on record its deep sense of the valuable services rendered by Mr. Essop Mia, who has held the position of Chairmen of the British Indian Association at a time of the greatest crisis among British Indians residing in this Colony, and who has now resigned his position by reason of his projected pilgrimage to the Holy City of Mecca; and prays to the Almighty that the proposed pilgrimage may be successfully accomplished, and that he may return to work among and for his countrymen, as early as possible.

[RESOLUTION IV:][3] This Meeting endorses the action of the Committee of the Association in appointing Mr. Ahmed Mahomed Cachalia to be President of the British Indian Association; and congratulates Mr. Cachalia on the unique honour conferred upon him and the confidence reposed in his ability to steer the community through the storm which is raging around it.

Indian Opinion, 19-9-1908

[1] Of the five resolutions moved at the Mass Meeting of September 10, resolutions 3 and 4 were seconded by Gandhiji, and were presumably drafted by him. For the first, second and fifth resolutions, *vide* Appendix V.

[2] This was proposed by M.P. Fancy, seconded by G.P. Vyas, and supported by Amod Moosajee, A. E. Aswat and Gandhiji.

[3] This was proposed by Ebrahim Coovadia, seconded by Imam Abdul Kadir Bawazeer, and supported by N.V. Shah and Gandhiji.

74. TRIAL OF RANDAREE[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before *September 12, 1908*]

In B Court today before Mr. H. H. Jordan, an Indian. named Randaree was charged with remaining in the Colony after the expiry of his temporary permit to stay, and after being warned to leave by the authorities.

He pleaded not guilty, and was defended by Mr. Gandhi.

Superintendent J.G. Vernon said that on August 15 he called upon the accused to produce his authority for remaining in the transvaal after being warned by the Registrar of Asiatics to quit. He replied that he had no authority, but had made a further application to remain. On instructions, witness arrested accused.

James Cody, in the office of the Registrar of Asiatics, Pretoria, said a temporary permit to reside in the Transvaal was granted by the Registrar of Asiatics on the 10th March last for three months. Accused applied for an extension on the 9th of June, and this was refused on the 24th July by letter.

THE MAGISTRATE: You allowed him to stay until then?

WITNESS: He gave certain reasons for wishing to stay. We investigated these reasons, and decided that the permit should be refused.

MR. GANDHI: Are you aware that the accused's father is in Johannesburg?

WITNESS: I cannot say for certain.

Randaree went into the box.

[GANDHIJI:] I understand that you intended to leave after the expiry of your permit and re-enter the Transvaal under the Immigration Restriction Act?

[ACCUSED:] Yes, but fortunately I happened to be arrested here.

The accused asked leave to make a short statement, but the Magistrate pointed out that he had a very able solicitor defending him.

[GANDHIJI:] It does not matter.

And the accused went back to the prisoner's box.

The Prosecutor said the position with regard to the accused was as if the Court had ordered him to leave the Colony within seven days and he had refused to do so.

The Magistrate sentenced the accused to one month's hard labour.

Indian Opinion, 12-9-1908

[1] This is based on a report in *Indian Opinion* reproduced from *The Star*.

75. NATAL MEETINGS

Mass meetings are being held in Natal. Also, resolutions are passed at these meetings. Petitions will be sent to the Government. This is all very well. It was necessary to adopt these measures. But Natal Indians must realize that petitions are useless unless backed by sanction. This is what one learns from experience everywhere.

And satyagraha is our sanction. For Natal, satyagraha means that every Indian should make up his mind to carry on trade without a licence. We know of course that the new Bills[1] will not go through. But it is necessary to have the old law[2]—the Act of 1897—repealed. If it is true that the Indian community has grown in strength, it must petition the Government to the following effect: "We propose to carry on trade without licences as long as the Act of 1897 does not provide for appeal [to the Supreme Court], as long as old licences are not protected and as long as the £ 3 poll-tax[3] on indentured labourers is not repealed."

This will serve two interests: one's own as well as those of others. One's own because there will be an end to the harassment over licences. Other's interests in that the poll-tax on the long-suffering indentured labourers will disappear, and they will be sincerely grateful. A pledge by the Indian community that it will not sit back until the hardships of the indentured labourers are ended, that it will suffer with them, will have a profound import. If the Indian community takes this pledge sincerely, it is as good as a kingdom won. It will mean *swarajya*.

Everyone will see that there is no alternative. But it may be asked whether concerted action will ever be possible, whether we can ever hope to win. It will be folly to ask this question. In any great venture, the number of those that take the lead is invariably small. At first the Prophet strove aided only by a handful; Jesus had a very small band of followers to begin with. Hampden[4] was alone in refusing to pay the ship-money. It did not even occur to him to consider whether or not others would follow him. The late Mr. Bradlaugh[5]

[1] The Natal Licensing Bills; *vide* "Natal Bills", 16-5-1908 & "New Natal Bills", 16-5-1908.

[2] Dealers' Licenses Act

[3] This was imposed on indentured Indians when they became free men.

[4] Gandhiji has often referred to Hampden as a model civil resister; *vide* "Tyler, Hampden and Bunyan", 20-10-1906.

[5] *Vide* 1st footnote of "Natal Licences", 15-2-1908.

awed an entire House of Commons into submission. The Grand Old Man of India—Dadabhai—was a lone figure fifty years ago. During the early years, he fought on with inexhaustible energy. Very few joined him in showing up the defects of British rule in India. Today the people of India enjoy the fruit of his labours. Now others want to go even farther than he did.[1]

Natal Indians should call these examples to mind, and not cling meekly to the illusion that something can be achieved only if all of them act in unison. Rather, all traders and hawkers who can act with courage should take the pledge.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-9-1908

76. SMILES OR TEARS?

Mr. Dawad Mahomed, Mr. Parsee Rustomjee and Mr. Anglia—these three are serving a sentence of three months' hard labour for the sake of their motherland. There are also other Indians with them—all of them educated persons. What does this signify? If this had come to pass before January last, it would have raised a storm of indignation in the Indian community. It could just not have happened then. Times have changed since, and the thing has happened. Even so, the incident causes a painful wound.

It will make every Indian weep to think of the wives, children and relatives of these brave ones, or of their sufferings. It will make every Indian miserable. We send our sympathies to their families.

However, these fifteen heroes have gone to gaol for the country, for the sake of its honour. They went to gaol with a smile. This should make every Indian's face shine with joy. These men, their families as well as the Indian people, deserve congratulations on this heroism of theirs.

Let us not assume that the matter will end with tears and laughter. The duty of Indians who remain outside is becoming more difficult. It lies in our hands to bring about their early release. If people refuse to take out a licence, or to give a thumb-impression or any other mark of identification, if everyone remains courageous, they will be released very shortly, and no wonder. If that is not done, the Indian people will stand discredited. They will lose face. We hope

[1] The reference appears to be to Tilak; *vide* "Sentence on the Great Tilak", 1-8-1908.

that they will follow the example of these brave heroes and prepare for a determined effort.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-9-1908

77. SALUTE THE COURT

Sir Henry Bale has made some sharp remarks on saluting. He go the impression that a certain Indian who entered his court did no salute him as he came in. He therefore remarked that Indians, who were known to be a civilized people, should respect the dignity of the court. He added that Indians should show respect to the court by taking off their turbans or their shoes or by salaaming on entering the court-room. Those who failed to do any of these three things would invite punishment. Sir Henry addressed these remarks to all the Indians present and had them translated for their benefit. Every Indian must heed this warning. It will be a good practice anywhere to salute the court on entering it. Many Indians fail to do this through sheer carelessness. It is our duty to observe correct etiquette.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-9-1908

78. OUR HABIT OF SPEAKING UNTRUTH[1]

Sir Henry Bale's remarks in the Indian murder case deserve not to be brushed aside lightly. He observed that some Indians make many false statements in support of their plea.[2] This sometimes spoils a good case. This is often true. It will not be right for one to defend Indians by asking whether whites do not act similarly in support of their case. Of course, they do make false statements. But that is no reason why we should follow suit. Instead of worrying about winning or losing the case, we should resolve that we would speak nothing but the truth. The best way is not to have to knock at the doors of lawyers or courts. Why can we not ensure that civil or criminal cases involving Indians are not taken to court? All this should be possible through the satyagraha that we have adopted.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-9-1908

[1] *Vide* "Oriental ideal of Truth", 1-4-1905.

[2] On the subject of tendering false evidence by Indians, *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 1-6-1907.

79. PETITION TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COLONIES[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
September 14, 1908

[THE RIGHT HON'BLE THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES LONDON]

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED, REPRESENTING THE PATHANS AND THE PUNJABIS RESIDENT IN THE TRANSVAAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT

1. The Petitioners respectfully approach His Majesty's Government with reference to the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, and the reply given to the Petitioners on the 26th day of March, 1908 in connection with their humble representation, as follows:

> I have the honour, by direction, to inform you that the Petition enclosed in your letter of the 13th January respecting the position of yourself and others under the Asiatic Registration Act has been received by the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Lord Elgin has requested His Excellency Lord Selborne to inform you that he has perused the Petition with attention but that, especially in view of the recent settlement of the difficulties in connection with registration under the Act, it does not now appear to him to be necessary to take any action with regard to it.

2. In the Petition, to which the above reply was sent, the Petitioners [had] prayed as follows:

> His Majesty's Indian soldiers cannot, consistent with the dignity of a soldier, degrade themselves by being compelled to register in such a manner, and, should His Majesty's Government be unable to obtain just treatment for the King-Emperor's Indian soldiers in the Transvaal, then they ask as men and British Indian soldiers, who are proud to have risked their lives in the cause of the Empire and have braved the privations of war, to be spared the degradation of imprisonment or deportation, and further wish that the King-Emperor will command that they be shot by Generals Botha and Smuts on one of the battle-fields of South Africa, where they have been under fire whilst serving their King-Emperor and the British Empire.

3. As recent events have shown, the settlement to which the reply has reference has fallen through, and the whole of the Indian community is now making representations to His Majesty's Government for repeal of the Act, which repeal all Indians were given

[1] This was published under the caption "The Soldiers' Petition" and was presumably drafted by Gandhiji. *Vide* also "Petition to High Commissioner", Before 26-11-1907.

to understand was part of the compromise.

4. It was because the whole of the Indian community represented by your Petitioners distrusted the compromise, and felt greatly agitated as to the uncertainty as to the repeal, and because the principle of registration by finger-prints was accepted by the leaders of the Indian community, that some of the members of the section represented by your Petitioners showed their resentment of the action by resorting to physical violence. Whilst such method of showing resentment cannot be approved by your Petitioners, the suspicion entertained by them was evidently well grounded.

5. The position of your Petitioners is briefly as follows:

(a) Your Petitioners consider the whole spirit of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act No. 2 of 1907 to be degrading to anybody coming under it, much more so for soldiers who have been privileged to wear His Majesty's uniform, and who have bled for their Sovereign.

(b) Your Petitioners are bound by a solemn oath:

(i) not to accept the above-mentioned Act, and to secure its repeal;

(ii) never to give their digit-impressions in connection with their identification, irrespective of what other members of the Indian community may choose to do.

6. Your Petitioners, in obedience to the advice given by the then Commissioner of Police and other high officials, and on being told that the Act was to be repealed, underwent voluntary registration merely for the sake of peace. Further than this your Petitioners are unable to go. They consider that, by showing an unmanly attitude and by accepting degradation in order that they might be able to live in the Colony, they would be extremely unsoldier-like.

7. Your Petitioners venture to submit that their uniform and their discharges should be a sufficient passport in any part of the British Empire, and should constitute their complete identification.

8. Your Petitioners do not understand legal subtleties and legal quibbles. They have not studied the Asiatic Act. They are helpless, except when they are called upon to fight for their Sovereign. They do not understand English, but what little they have been able to gather about the Asiatic Act is sufficient to make them condemn the measure.

9. Your Petitioners, therefore, humbly pray that, in consonance with the assurance given, the Asiatic Act be repealed, and that they be not called upon to submit to any degradation in the way

of registration or otherwise. But, should His Majesty's Government be unable to secure such relief, they would repeat their prayer that they be shot by Generals Botha and Smuts on one of the battle-fields of South Africa, where they have been under fire, whilst serving their King-Emperor and the British Empire. And your Petitioners will ever pray, etc., etc.

JAMADAR NAWAB KHAN
NAKAB GOOL
MAHOMED SHAH
MIR ALLAM KHAN
NOORD ALI

Indian Opinion, 19-9-1908

80. TRIAL OF V. M. BAGAS AND OTHERS

[PRETORIA,
September 15, 1908]

Messrs Vally Mahomed Bagas, Ismail Juma, L. Vallabhdas, and Ismail Essopjee Adia appeared before Major Dixon at Pretoria, on the 15th instant, charged with a contravention of the Borough bye-laws in that they traded without a grocer's licence. Mr. Weavind prosecuted on behalf of the Municipality of Pretoria, and Messrs Gandhi and Lichtenstein defended.

Mr. Ismail Juma's case was first called. Mr. Gandhi took exception to the summons before pleading, that it disclosed no offence under Ordinance 58 of 1903, and that the Ordinance did not provide for the framing of a bye-law in regard to a general grocer's licence. The Magistrate overruled the objection. The plea was "not guilty". Mr. Thomas, the Licensing Officer, gave formal evidence as to the accused having carried on the business of a grocer. Mr. Gandhi did not call any evidence on behalf of the defence, stating that he rested his case on the legal objection raised. The accused was found guilty and fined 5s or three days' imprisonment with hard labour. Mr. Ismail Juma elected to go to gaol.

Mr. Vally Mahomed Bagas, who is Chairman of the Pretoria branch of the British Indian Association, was next tried. Mr. Bagas pleaded "not guilty". After evidence was given by Mr. Thomas, the Licensing Officer, Mr. Bagas gave evidence to the effect that he held a general dealer's licence for the whole year and that he had even tendered the fee for a grocer's licence, but it had been refused, as he had declined to give his thumb-impression. The Magistrate awarded the same penalty. There were two charges against Mr. Bagas in respect of two stores, the penalty in each case being the same. He, too, cheerfully went to gaol.

Mess Ismail Adia and L. Vallabhdas were also similarly tried, punished, and went to gaol.

A Chinese trader was called, but he did not appear, and, as he was bailed out, his bail was estreated to the extent of £ 1.

Indian Opinion, 19-9-1908

81. JOHANNESBURG LETTER[1]

ESSOP MIA

Mr. Essop Mia has resigned, and a vote of thanks for his services was passed at the mass meeting.[2] The appreciation of his services will grow with time. He assumed the captainship of the Indians' ship at a critical juncture. It was to help in the implementation of the gaol resolution[3] that he accepted the chairmanship. No one then was in a position to say what the Indian community would do. Much appeared then to depend on the Chairman's courage. Mr. Essop Mia evinced the requisite courage for conducting the affairs. He curtailed his business last year in order to join battle against the Government. This year he suffered an assault.[4] He kept himself ever in readiness for gaol. He took to hawking, with two baskets hanging from his shoulders like a gold neck-wear or a garland of flowers. It is difficult adequately to realize how his action aroused the community's enthusiasm. Through his courage, Mr. Essop Mia has enabled the community to arrive at a stage where the fulfilment of its pledge has become certain. What now remains to be done is very important—something that the Indian community cannot afford to ignore and which calls for massive resistance.

But one cannot blame Mr. Essop Mia for leaving the ship at this critical moment. Thrice he put off his plans for a pilgrimage in order to attend to three great tasks—the mosque, the madrasah and the campaign against the Government. He has now the right to leave. If other Indian chairmen can do as much as Mr. Essop Mia, the community's success is assured.

AHMED MAHOMED CACHALIA

Everyone hopes that Mr. Cachalia will prove Mr. Essop Mia's equal. He was not at all disposed to accept the chairmanship. The office has been thrust upon him, so to say. To me at least it appeared

[1] This despatch was begun on September 14 and completed on September 16.

[2] *Vide* "Resolutions at Mass Meeting", 10-9-1908.

[3] Of September 1906; *vide* "The Mass Meeting", 11-11-1906.

[4] On May 17; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 16-5-1908 "Essop Mia", 23-5-1908, "Sarvodaya [—III], 30-5-1908 & "Affidavit", 23-6-1908.

that everyone was agreed that no one but Mr. Cachalia should succeed Mr. Essop Mia.

Mr. Cachalia had been to gaol. I still seem to hear his words of July 31, 1907: "I will go to gaol," he had said, "Should they cut my throat for it, I will still not submit to the obnoxious law." He has been as good as his word. He has already been to gaol. He has always showed himself willing for work. He is extremely popular. He has unhesitatingly accepted financial ruin for himself. Mr. Cachalia is therefore assuming the chairmanship in propitious circumstances.

But the Indian ship is caught in a storm still at its fiercest. Nearer the coast, the storm poses a greater danger to the ship than in mid-ocean. Even if the voyage ahead is only a short one, the task is onerous. Maybe the sailors are tired. Columbus's mariners mutinied as he was about to reach America. But his courage rallied them, and he succeeded in discovering America. Similar is the case with the Indian ship. Though we are approaching our destination, the number of reefs is increasing. It requires a strong captain to steer the ship clear of these. I believe Mr. Cachalia will prove strong enough.

The chairman ought to be the best member of the community. For the community will be judged by his worth. Moreover, as chairman, he has to lead the satyagraha campaign and he must therefore remain truth-ful, repose trust in God and have courage till his dying moment. He must be prepared to sacrifice money, property and life in the service of the community and he must be entirely honest, fearless, pure, courteous and modest; these are the qualities which the chairman of the Indian community must have. Then alone can satyagraha blossom forth into perfect beauty and achieve success that will evoke the admiration of all the world.

I for one pray to *Khuda-Ishwar* to endow Mr. Cachalia with all these virtues, and I advise all Indians to offer the same prayer.

SAME OLD NEWS

There has been news which I could not report earlier owing to heavy pressure of work. I mention here whatever I have been able to discover on looking into my papers.

Mr. Ismail Moosa Gin and Mr. Essop Amod of Kanam were fined in Heidelberg; if the fines were not paid, their goods were to be auctioned. Mr. Gin has paid the fine, Mr. Essop Amod has not. He has informed the Government that it may sell his goods if it so desires. His goods have not, however, been auctioned yet.

In Vereeniging, Mr. Ibrahim Ismail's goods as also those of Mr. Patel have been auctioned. Here again, a large quantity of goods was

auctioned. Such is the confusion that prevails. At one place no one bothers much,[1] and at another goods are auctioned. It all sounds like the story of the crazy king and the city which he ruled so capriciously.[2]

KRUGERSDORP INDIANS

The Krugersdorp affair[3] is over. The trial took place on Friday. After the cases of Mr. Kazi and Mr. Pandor, the Public Prosecutor did not have the courage to proceed with the rest and therefore withdrew them. The cases of Mr. Kazi and Mr. Pandor took two hours. After hearing their depositions, the Magistrate remarked that the charge was without substance and accordingly found them "not guilty". Mr. Kazi deposed in English. The cases over, a meeting was held at Mr. Chhotabhai's, where Mr. Gandhi explained[4] the position regarding the campaign. An understanding has now been reached among all Indians. Mr. Dadlani entertained Mr. Gandhi at a luncheon. Twenty-five Indians were invited on the occasion.

KONKAN AND KANAM

On Thursday, as the mass meeting was drawing to a close, it was learnt that a skirmish was in progress outside, at which Mr. Polak rushed to the spot. Mr. Abdool Gani also left with him. They saw a fight going on with much cudgel-play and pelting of stones. Thanks to intervention by Mr. Polak, Mr. Gani and others, there were fewer injuries. Mr. Polak was about to be beaten up in the confusion that ensued. But two Parsee gentlemen, Mr. Sorabji and Mr. Nogama, interposed themselves so that they took the blows. Sorabji narrowly escaped being hurt in the eye, but was severely injured on the forehead. Two Konkanis were also seriously injured and two Kanamias sustained injuries. Mr. Polak received a slight injury on the wrist. It was a mere altercation among youth over a trifling matter which led to all this.

RECONCILIATION

A meeting of the leaders of the two communities was held at Hajee Habib's on Sunday with a view to reconciliation. Mr. Gandhi was asked to take the chair. Mr. Hajee Habib, the Moulvi Saheb, Mr. Cachalia, Mr. Abdool Gani, Mr. Bhaijee, Mr. Shahabuddin and others

[1] About implementing court orders

[2] The story goes that in the city of lawlessness, under an unwise king, everything had the same price, there being no discrimination in values.

[3] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 7-9-1908

[4] No report of this speech is available.

spoke on the occasion and the leaders of both the communities signed the following agreement.

DOCUMENT1[1]

> We, the leaders of the Konkani and Kanamia communities, express our regret in writing, with God as witness, at the quarrel that took place among some young men of the two communities, and tender our apologies to, and seek to be forgiven by, one another. We bind ourselves to restrain the young men of our respective communities and hold ourselves responsible for them. We suggest that the young men report the matter to us if any of them is insulted rather than fight among themselves.

I attach great importance to this document. Since the leaders know their responsibilities, some good is bound to accrue to someone in the end. It behoves the young men to see that they do not bicker among themselves and thus honour their leaders' pledge. If the Pathans, Konka-nis and Kanamias think themselves to be brave soldiers, their duty is to defend the Indian community and use their strength for that purpose. The leaders must remember that this document was signed with God as wit-ness, so that they bear a heavy responsibility. The young must always re-member not to enter into quarrels. I hope that when a Kanamia and a Konkani meet next, each will want to be the first to salute the other. When the meeting was over, Mr. Hajee Habib treated all of them to tea and biscuits and Mr. Osman Ahmed sang a few songs about the reconciliation.

MASS MEETING

A detailed report of the mass meeting is available elsewhere, but I shall only report the Abdool Gani episode[2] here. It has been proved that he did give the thumb-impression. He manifested his repentance by apologizing at the meeting. He said that he had not at all wanted to give his thumb-impression, but being in a hurry to get away, he had given it out of sheer nervousness. He promised not to repeat his mistake and to remain firm in his resistance while urging others to do likewise. In view of Mr. Abdool Gani's action, no one will now have anything more to say about the matter. I hope he will now take a leading part in carrying the campaign forward and thus serve the community.

[1] This document was signed by 12 persons and witnessed by eight others including Gandhiji.

[2] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 7-9-1908

ALI ESSOP

[He] was tried today. He was charged with being found without a register. Mr. Polak appeared in this case. Mr. Essop has received notice to leave the country within seven days.

MULJIBHAI PATEL

As Mr. Patel was to be released on Friday, a number of men had gone to the gaol to receive him. But it soon became known that Mr. Patel was to be deported. He was taken from Jeppe station, and brought to Charlestown on Saturday. Many Indians were present at Germiston to see him. Mr. Patel is doing well and is full of courage. He will re-enter shortly. He is prepared for further privations that may be in store for him. The police treated him well.

SORABJI SHAPURJI

Acting with great courage, Mr. Sorabji Shapurji left Johannesburg today by the morning train for Volksrust to undergo the sentence of imprisonment. Even at the mass meeting he had declared that he was prepared for imprisonment, however long it might be. His only regret was that the Association had not permitted him to court arrest earlier than the Natal businessmen, though he should have been allowed to do this as of right. Mr. Cachalia, Mr. Aswat, Mr. Vyas, Mr. Polak, Mr. Jivanji, Mr. Naidoo, Mr. Gandhi and others were present to see him off.

Mr. Ebrahim Osman arrived here on Saturday. Mr. Cachalia and others went to receive him. He will be Mr. Cachalia's guest.

NATAL BUSINESSMEN AS PRISONERS

Mr. Dawad Mahomed and the other leaders in gaol have surpassed all expectations. The Government wants to test them to the utmost. They are made to do hard work. They are brought out on the roads and made to break stones; they do this with zest. They say in a message that, until a settlement is reached, they will remain in gaol and put up with any suffering. I am not at all sorry that they have been given hard work to do. It is only when we suffer that we develop real worth. It is a soldier's duty to accept hardships. In any case that is the only lesson the soldier of satyagraha has to learn. He must constantly remind himself of it. If one is sincerely devoted to one's cause, one can enjoy even stone-breaking.

RUSTOMJEE'S LETTER

After he was sentenced, Mr. Rustomjee sent the following letter:

Four of us have been sentenced today to three months. We

are glad of this. Please ask everyone to have courage. Let no one have fear. Please declare in the open meeting that, if our brethren want to show their appreciation of our sense of duty, they should endeavour to raise a large fund.

HOW TO ENSURE EARLY RELEASE OF [NATAL] BUSINESSMEN

This question is on everyone's mind. The answer is easy.

(1) No one should utilize the licence [that he may already possess] to carry on trade.

(2) No one should take out a licence.

(3) Everyone should go to gaol when an opportunity presents itself.

(4) Those Natal Indians who, according to our belief, have the right [to settle in the Colony] should cross over.

(5) Incoming Indians should in no case give their thumb-impressions.

(6) One should disregard the auctioning of one's goods.

QUESTIONS OF PRESTIGE

I have noticed that some of those who enter the Transvaal to join the campaign are sensitive about how they are received. This is not the time to think much of one's status. Every Indian should put away his self-importance and come in as a servant of India. There is no time to arrange elaborate receptions. Those who are busy [with the cause] have no time to spare. When Sorabji [re-]entered the Colony, he certainly deserved to be shown every regard. But no one had the time for all that. Gaol-going has now become commonplace among us. If we are all servants [in the same cause], who is to honour whom? Such is our predicament today and well may it remain so for ever.

The homage we do to sincere and good men is in fact somewhat humiliating to the community as a whole—it only goes to show that there are so few of them that we shower honours on the ones that we have. Always a higher price is charged for a scarce commodity. If a time should come when the entire community is composed of good men, it would certainly be respected by the world at large, though it might not fete any of them in public. The British go crazy over a person who is strong. This may mean either of two things: they are either losing their true strength, or they admire sheer physical strength.

Duty, then, requires every Indian to be a good, truthful, patient and patriotic servant of his motherland. If this happens, there will be no cause for anyone to take offence. It will not even occur to anyone that he has not been treated with respect. One's worth consists entirely

in one's spending one's days in doing good, content with whatever one may get at any given moment and whatever it pleases the Creator to bestow on one.

Tuesday [September *15, 1908*]

MISUNDERSTANDING

Mr. Mahomed Khan's leaving Mr. Gandhi's office has been construed by some to mean that he has grown tired of honorary public work. This is not true. Mr. Mahomed Khan did offer his services free, and he need not have. An opportunity for earning a decent livelihood came his way, and he left on Mr. Gandhi's advice.[1] Mr. Dorasamy's offer of free work was accepted, for in any case he was not doing anything else. It is of course necessary for Indians to have an honest means of livelihood and make some money. Not everyone can give up his job and become a volunteer. Mr. Dorasamy has other sources from which to meet his daily needs, and that is how he is in a position to help the Association.

COMMITTEE MEETING

A meeting of the Committee of the British Indian Association was held on Wednesday the 9th, when, in the absence of Mr. Essop Mia, Mr. Ibrahim Coovadia took the chair. Mr. Imam Abdool Kadir, Mr. Fancy, Mr. Karodia, Mr. Omarji, Mr. Latchhiram, Mr. V. G. Maharaj and others were present. Since Mr. Gandhi has all but closed down his office and Mr. Polak is engaged wholly in public work, it has been resolved that the Association should bear his [Polak's] expenses and pay the rent for the office from August onwards.[2] This will, for the time being, involve a further expenditure of £ 35 monthly which is exclusive of the expenditure on the typist, etc. Mr. Gandhi's own expenses are paid by Mr. Kallenbach. Mr. Gandhi also stays with him.

AHMED ESSOP DAWAD

Mr. Ahmed Essop Dawad was charged some months ago with haw-king without a licence. He had left the Court [for a while] when his name was called out, with the result that the Magistrate cancelled his bail. Mr. Ahmed turned up later. But the Magistrate did not revise his order about the bail since he had no authority to do so. A petition was therefore sub-mitted to the Attorney- General. It was ordered that the bail money be returned, and the case proceeded with. It was heard

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 7-9-1908

[2] Discussion on this was postponed at the previous meeting; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 7-9-1908.

on Saturday (the 12th). But Mr. Cross dismissed the case on the ground that Mr. Ahmed had been hawking without having taken out a licence, whereas the charge against him was that he had failed to produce his licence on demand. The charge could not therefore be sustained. There is nothing remarkable about this case. The only fact to be noted is that Mr. Ahmed Dawad was anxious to be imprisoned. He tried, as we have shown above, to go to gaol, but did not succeed.

PRETORIA CASES

The municipality has launched prosecutions against Mr. Vally Mahomed Bagas, Mr. Ismail Adia, Mr. Ismail Juma, Mr. Lalshah Vallabhdas *alias* Mangalbhai Patel and a Chinese for trading as grocers without licences. Their cases[1] are to be heard today. Mr. Gandhi has gone to Pretoria in connection with these cases. Many of them hold a general dealer's licence valid for the whole year. But the municipality insists on their taking out the grocer's licences in addition. Most of them did have these licences for the preceding six-month period, but they did not renew them as they did not want to give their thumb-impressions. An objection will be raised in this case to the effect that the municipality has no right at all to insist on a grocer's licence; but it has the right to insist on a licence of a different kind. There is, however, no provision for this as yet in its bye-laws. It this argument is correct, the case must fail. Mr. Valli Mahomed has received two summonses as he owns two stores.

Wednesday [September *16, 1908*]

The Pretoria Indians' case was heard in Major Dixon's Court. Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Lichtenstein were present [as defence counsel]. The above-mentioned argument was put forward. That set the Magistrate thinking, but he eventually ruled that the municipality did have the right to insist on a grocer's licence. Mr. Ismail Juma's case was then the first to be heard. The objection had softened the Magistrate's attitude. Also, the municipal advocate was not very competent. The Indians were not therefore called in for evidence. As a result, the Magistrate imposed a fine of 5s, or three days' hard labour. Mr. Ismail Juma readily accepted the sentence and went to gaol. Then the Court took up the two cases against Valli Mahomed. The judgement in these cases was the same as in the first. Then it was Mr. Adia's turn, and he was followed by Mr. Lalshah Vallabhdas *alias* Mangalbhai Patel. All of them were awarded the same sentence, and went to gaol smiling. They were in fact sentenced to only a day's imprisonment. They went [to gaol] on Tuesday at 4 p.m., so that that

[1] *Vide* also the preceding item.

day need not be counted. They will be in gaol all Wednesday and will be released on Thursday morning.

Though these persons have welcomed gaol, it is being considered whether an appeal should not be preferred on the basis of the objection [raised by the defence counsel]. For something may come out of it. If it is held that grocer's licences have to be taken out, people can avoid taking them out for some time. If that is done, two purposes will have been served. People will have the advantage of going to gaol, and at the same time a technical excuse will have been provided by the law which can be exploited for a time. Mr. Valli Mahomed is the chairman in Pretoria. Though his term of imprisonment is a negligible one, a chairman going to gaol is no small matter. I congratulate Mr. Valli Mahomed and others in Pretoria on this.

The reader must have noted that it is for the second time that Mr. Ismail Juma has gone to gaol. And it was only recently that Mr. Adia was fined £1 and his goods were auctioned.

The only regret is that, while these persons went to gaol, there were other Indians who lost their nerve when the summonses were served on them.[1] They were afraid that their goods might be auctioned and therefore hastened to take out licences by giving thumb-impressions. It is said that there were 20 such persons. It is incidents of this kind that prolong the struggle. If all the Indians were courageous, it would be possible for us to secure the release of the Natal businessmen within a few days. When, again, shops were closed in Pretoria [as a mark of respect] for them, there were a few who did not join. This is tantamount to selfishness and most reprehensible. When persons who are regarded as the pillars of the Indian community went to gaol, why is it that some Indians could not close their shops for a day? I must say that we have a great many things to learn yet.

In Krugersdorp, two Madrasi washermen, Mr. Sangaran and Mr. Aicut, were arrested for carrying on their occupation without licences. They were tried, and the Magistrate imposed a fine of £1 each or three days' imprisonment. They preferred gaol. No one appeared in their defence. They went to gaol on their own.

EBRAHIM OSMAN

[He] has gone to Piet Retief where he owns a store, and expressed his readiness for arrest.

[1] It is not clear from the original against whom these were issued.

Mr. Polak met Mr. Dawad Mahomed and others [in gaol] on Tuesday. They are all doing well. Since they did not have gaol uniforms which would fit Mr. Dawad Mahomed and Mr. Rustomjee, new uniforms are being specially made for them. The rest are assigned work. All of them are in high spirits and full of courage. They have expressed the hope that all of us outside would strive hard.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-9-1908

82. INTERVIEW TO REUTER

JOHANNESBURG,
September 16, 1908

Mr. Gandhi, interviewed by Reuter's representative today, said that the Indians were prepared to accept an immigration law which should provide for an education test in a European language, and they were prepared to leave the severity of the test to the discretion of General Smuts. But once an Indian entered the Colony, he must enjoy legal equality. This implies the repeal of 1907 Act. Mr. Gandhi said that the Indians denied that they were raising any fresh point in connection with education.

India, 25-9-1908

83. LETTER TO DIRECTOR OF PRISONS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
September 17, 1908

THE DIRECTOR OF PRISONS

PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 667 of the 16th instant. My Association deeply regrets the fact that the point raised by it is still being missed.

My Association is aware, and admits, that, medically, mealie pap is a perfectly healthy diet, but the point raised by my Association is that it is not a diet suited to the habits of even poor-class Indians. Mealie pap is not the national diet of Indians. I have no doubt you are

[1] This and two other letters dated September 18 and 25 addressed to the Director of Prisons along with two letters to the Colonial Secretary dated September 21 and 28 were published in *Indian Opinion* under the caption: "Should Indians be Starved into Submission ? The Prison Dietary Again".

aware that, although it is medically suitable, bread is always added to mealie pap issued to European prisoners. Bread is certainly, from a medical standpoint, not more necessary for Europeans than for Indians. You are also aware that mealies are given to the Native prisoners for the midday meal. They are also, medically, a proper diet, and yet, with the knowledge that the Committee must have had at its disposal, mealies were replaced by rice for Indian prisoners in respect of the midday meal. The reason that actuated the Committee that framed the diet scale in prescribing rice instead of mealies for the midday meal for Indian prisoners is also the reason why my Association asks for a substitute for mealie pap for the morning meal.

If, hitherto, there has been no complaint made against the diet scale for Indian prisoners, the reason is that there have been very few Indian prisoners; but, on the present occasion, a complaint is justified, not only because the Transvaal prisons are crowded with Indians, but also because these Indians are not, strictly speaking, criminals, and belong, in the opinion of my Association, to the highest class among the Indian community in South Africa.

If the repeated representations of my Association have remained unheeded, the only conclusion the Indian community can come to is that the reasonable request of my Association is refused out of political considerations, and with a view to starve the Indian community into submission to an Act which is resented by it.

I venture to hope, therefore, that you will be pleased to remove any such suspicion by granting the relief requested.

I have, etc.,

A. M. CACHALIA

CHAIRMAN,

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 3-10-1908

84. LETTER TO "THE STAR"[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
September 17, 1908

TO
THE EDITOR
THE STAR

SIR,

You will perhaps allow me to state that your persistent misrepresentation of the Indian standpoint appears now to be wilful rather than unconscious. You state that I am "willing to accept any education test, however severe, provided it is applied impartially to Europeans and Asiatics". This is the exact reverse of what I have stated all along. My contention is that there should be a general education test in law, but that, in practice, it may be administered not impartially but differentially. The law gives the Minister full discretion, to be used by him as he chooses. If he does not possess the discretion, Indians are quite willing that the discretion be given.[2] This statement I have made before the public and to your representatives not once but very often. Nor, as you have stated in a previous leaderette, is there any question of a subterfuge. Administrative inequality must always exist so long as people who are

[1] This appeared in *Indian Opinion*, 26-9-1908, under the title "Mr. Gandhi's Reply". *The Star* had commented editorially as follows: "…we commend... this morning's *Times*.…It finds that the weight of the evidence is on the side of the Colonial Secretary and that the root of the present trouble lies in the endeavour of Mr. Gandhi…to secure concessions…not contemplated by Mr. Smuts when he entered into the compact of last January.…[Mr. Gandhi] is willing to accept any educational test, however severe, provided it is applied impartially to Europeans and Asiatics. But he insists that those admitted under the present or a new Immigration Restriction Act must be treated with absolute 'equality'. If we make the educational test very severe, we run the risk of excluding many Europeans…if we maintain the present standard and repeal the Asiatic Act of 1907, we throw open the portals to countless Asiatics…There is no room for compromise, especially [since] Mr. Gandhi scouts all idea of discriminatory legislation."

[2] *The Star*, replying to this later, wrote: "We emphatically repudiate the charge that we have wilfully misrepresented either Mr. Gandhi or his compatriots. …Our reply to the foregoing is that no regulation or ministerial decree can override the express terms of an Act of Parliament. Laws are made to be enforced. If the Government.…failed to enforce the provisions in this case,…it would be lending itself to a species of dishonesty unworthy of statesmen." To this Gandhiji sent a rejoinder; *vide* "Letter to *The Star*", 18-9-1908.

not of the same grade live under the same flag. All I claim is that the law should be no respecter of persons, especially with regard to educated Indians. You cite the authority of *The Times*, but, if you will pardon me saying so, *The Times* merely trumpets what has been passed on to it by or on behalf of General Smuts. *The Times* is not, at present, in possession of the full facts of the case.

I emphatically deny that a new question is now being raised by my countrymen. The following briefly are the facts: Before the war, the immigration of Indians was free. After the conclusion of peace, immigration generally was regulated under the Peace Preservation Ordinance, under which new educated Asiatics were allowed to enter the country. The Asiatic Act of 1907 simply provided for registration of those who were entitled to reside in the country, but, according to the admission made by General Smuts, did not regulate immigration. The Immigrants' Restriction Act replaced the Peace Preservation Ordinance, and laid down a general education test. The Asiatic [Registration] Act was then dishonestly, without even mentioning it, brought in to defraud Indians of their just rights, under sub-section 4 of section 2; but, as Indians have never accepted the Asiatic Act and have always steadily, persistently, and amid untold suffering, demanded its repeal, how can they be charged with having brought in a new point?

It was General Smuts who, in complete breach of his promise when the time came for him to repeal the Act, offered repeal on four conditions[1] , three of which he has, yielding to the force of passive resistance, and finding his administration of the law paralyzed, withdrawn. The fourth[2] he does not withdraw, and, until that is granted, in the estimation of British Indians and other Asiatics, he must stand guilty of the charge of dishonesty.

You and, I am sorry to say, the Progressive leaders, who profess to have Imperial interests at heart, and who profess to lead the party of progress, are allied on the side of dishonesty. May I draw a parallel? With reference to the Vereeniging Treaty, General Botha interpreted the word "native" to include Asiatics. Lord Milner and Sir Richard Solomon repudiated it, but they accepted the interpretation that General Botha put upon it, and Asiatics are today debarred from the municipal franchise because of such interpretation.[3] General Botha, again, said that his people were promised immediate self-government by Lord Kitchener. In order that British honour might remain

[1] *Vide* "Letter to the Press", 22-7-1908 & "Johannesburg Letter", 23-6-1908.

[2] About the entry of educated Indians

[3] *Vide* "Petition to Natal Legislature", 10-6-1903.

unstained, in this instance also his understanding of the promise was accepted by the Imperial Government. Is British honour or Colonial honour to be measured differently in connection with the repeal of the Asiatic Act and British Indians?

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Star, 17-9-1908

85. INTERVIEW TO "THE STAR"

[JOHANNESBURG,
September 17, 1908]

In the course of an interview, Mr. Gandhi told a representative of *The Star* that in deporting his son[1] [the authorities] had been harsh with him. He had been anxious to see his son the previous day. When he approached the official concerned for information about him, he told Mr. Gandhi that he had heard nothing till then, and promised to inform him the following morning as to what the authorities proposed to do [with his son]. When Mr. Gandhi presented himself at the gaol [the next day], he was informed that Mr. Harilal had been taken away [under escort] at seven o'clock.

Mr. Gandhi said that, if the Government had wanted him [Harilal Gandhi] to promise that there would be no demonstration, he would have done so as he had, indeed, several times in the past. Mr. Gandhi junior was in the train at Jeppe Station, but the carriage windows were shut. They were also kept shut at Germiston. People repeatedly remarked on this—which malicious onlookers found greatly interesting. Mr. Gandhi has telegraphed to his son to re-enter the Colony immediately.[2] He will receive the telegram at the border.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 19-9-1908

86. LETTER TO DIRECTOR OF PRISONS

[JOHANNESBURG,]
September 18, 1908

THE DIRECTOR OF PRISONS
PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your telegram No. 456 in connection with the diet scale for Indian prisoners. My Association will be obliged if you will kindly let me have a copy of

[1] Harilal Gandhi was deported on September 17.

[2] He re-entered the Colony on September 19 and was remanded till September when the case against him was withdrawn.

the authorized scale for short and long sentence Indian and other prisoners.

Further, I beg to draw your attention to the fact that I was myself in the Pretoria gaol in connection with the movement, and ghee was then allowed without any special request of the prisoners. I noticed, too, that ghee was allowed to Indian prisoners whom we found at the Pretoria gaol. The Johannesburg prisoners also state that they were allowed ghee from the very commencement, and that Indian prisoners who were already at the Johannesburg gaol when prosecutions under the Asiatic Act commenced were all allowed ghee. One of the prisoners states that he actually read the printed scale, which mentioned 4 oz. of rice and 1 oz. of ghee in place of crushed mealies and fat. My Association also states that [the] diet scale that was printed was so rigorously adhered to by the Gaol authorities at Johannesburg that the Chinese prisoners were given crushed mealies and fat, because they were not included in the rice scale that was fixed for Indian prisoners.[1] My Association will, therefore, be obliged if you will kindly inquire and authorize the necessary relief.

I once more draw your attention to the fact that no greater offence can be offered to a Mahomedan or a vegetarian Hindu than to introduce animal fat into his food. I beg, further, to add that even the prisoners who were discharged lately from the Johannesburg gaol informed my Association that they received 1 oz. of ghee with their ration of rice.

I have, etc.,

A. M. CACHALIA

CHAIRMAN,

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 3-10-1908

[1] *Vide* "My Experience in Gaol [—II] , 21-3-1908.

87. LETTER TO "THE STAR"[1]

JOHANNESBURG,

September 18, 1908

TO

THE EDITOR

THE STAR

SIR,

I am delighted that you emphatically repudiate my suggestion that you may have wilfully misrepresented me. Your repudiation fills me with hope that I may yet convince you of the justice of the Indian demand. I assume now that you would not mind an open door for highly educated Indians. If so, the question is not of "whether", but of "how".

You reject my solution to be "a species of dishonesty unworthy of statesmen". And yet it has been resorted to by statesmen all over the world. The Peace Preservation Ordinance gave absolute discretion to the Governor as to the issue of permits. White British subjects received them for the asking; other Europeans with little difficulty, but not with the same facility; British Indians after the greatest difficulty. The Governor went so far as to establish a separate department[2] for administering the same Ordinance for Indians. This was unfair, but not dishonest, because it was openly done. The Governor had the discretion and he chose to use it in this very partial manner, as he said, in the interests of the predominant race. Indians would not have cavilled at the differential administration, if the Department at one time had not been tainted with corruption and always most niggardly regarding the claims of *bona fide* refugees.

You have charged General Smuts with having used his discretion unfairly as to filling the vacancies in the Civil Service with Boers, but whether it is statesmanlike or not will depend upon results.

In Natal, the Immigration Officer has a discretion as to the education test. I will take my oath that Europeans as a rule are not even examined. Indians, as a rule, are examined and that, too, severely.

[1] This appeared in *Indian Opinion*, 26-9-1908, under the title "A Solution Possible".

[2] The Asiatic Office; this was closed down in 1903; *vide* "Better Late Than Never", 15-10-1903.

A Mr. Abdulla Browne[1] , an Irishman, was subjected to the test some years ago in Natal, because he wore the fez, whilst his other white fellow-passengers were not touched. Subsequently, the late Mr. Escombe and Mr. Browne had a hearty laugh over it. Mr. Browne felt the ludicrous position, but did not consider the examination to be dishonest.

The same thing is, today, done at the Cape.

The fact is that legal inequality would be an insult to the race. Administrative difference would be a concession to prejudice, and Indian acceptance of it would be a graceful and, shall I say, statesmanlike recog-nition of such prejudice, as also of the fact that, if we want to live in this country, we must submit to the predominance of the European races.

In any case, if you agree that a handful of educated Asiatics may safely be allowed to enter without molestation, surely the combined wisdom of the Government and the Progressive Party cannot fail to find a solution that will be acceptable to both Europeans and Indians and end a situation which cannot be viewed with unconcern by any lover of the Empire.

I am, etc.,

M. K. Gandhi

The Star, 18-9-1908

88. MR. ESSOP MIA AND HIS SUCCESSOR

The mass meeting of the 10th instant held at Johannesburg was notable for the resignation of Mr. Essop Mia as Chairman of the British Indian Association.[2] Mr. Essop Mia took up the helm at a most critical time. A weak chairman would have meant utter ruination and disaster to the Indian community. Mr. Essop Mia proved strong and unshakable. He practically wound up his business last year to fight the powers of darkness represented by the local Government. He postponed for the third time his pilgrimage to Mecca. He lost his wife; but he would not withdraw his hand from the helm. The whole world knows that he suffered grievous bodily harm at the hands of a countryman for the cause of truth.[3] And, by the compromise of

[1] Elected for third time as Mayor of Durban and Chief Magistrate of Borough in August 1904; *vide* "The Mayor of Durban", 13-8-1904; originator of the idea of the Bazaar Notice which sought to confine Asiatic trade in Natal to Locations.

[2] *Vide* "Resolutions at Mass Meeting", 10-9-1908

[3] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 16-5-1908 "Essop Mia", 23-5-1908.

January last and by the introduction of the new Registration Act, he has shown what pluck and firm faith in one's cause can do. Mr. Essop Mia deserves the thanks of the Indians not only of the Transvaal but of South Africa. His mantle has fallen on worthy shoulders. Mr. Cachalia is a seasoned soldier in Indian ranks. He has suffered imprisonment for the cause. He has worked whole-heartedly and was always an able lieutenant to Mr. Essop Mia. By universal acknowledgement, he is the best man to succeed Mr. Mia. Let us hope that he will fulfil the expectations of the community. His is a very difficult task. The Indian ship is still in troubled waters. And he will require all the energy, patience and calmness that may be in him, and all the support from the rank and file that he can command.

Indian Opinion, 19-9-1908

89. SITUATION IN NATAL

Natal Indians should act with due deliberation. Petitions and meetings will avail nothing. They must be backed up by sanctions.

The Newcastle licence case is noteworthy. As it served to show, municipalities are authorized to grant [only] certain kinds of licences.[1] Other [categories of] licences can be granted under the Act [18] of 1897.[2] But one can argue that this Act does not extend the powers of the municipalities. That is to say, they are limited. If this is true, there are certain advantages that we can derive from it.

Since this is the state of affairs, the Natal Government has drafted a new Bill which will, in consequence, nullify [the advantages] resulting from the Newcastle case. It is necessary staunchly to oppose this. The Natal Parliament will of course throw [any] petition [which we send] into the waste-paper basket. The Imperial Government will also not take any notice of it, which means that the time has arrived when, even if we win on the legal front, Parliament may neutralize our victory.[3]

There is only one way out of this: we must rely on our own strength and fight. That strength is the strength of satyagraha. Natal traders should trade without licences.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-9-1908

[1] Under Ordinance 3 of 1850

[2] Dealers' Licenses Act

[3] By enacting new laws

90. LETTER TO THE PRESS[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
September 19, 1908

TO

THE EDITOR

SIR,

I beg to send you herewith, for publication, a communication addressed by me to the Director of Prisons. The British Indian Association has voluntarily undertaken to suffer, and to advise British Indians to suffer; but I do not know whether treatment such as is described in the letter herewith enclosed square with the humanity of the Colonists. We do not ask to be treated as favoured prisoners, but we do ask that British Indian prisoners be treated with some degree of humanity in this enlightened country.

I am, etc.,
A. M. CACHALIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Rand Daily Mail, 21-9-1908

91. LETTER TO DIRECTOR OF PRISONS

[JOHANNESBURG,]
September 19, 1908

THE DIRECTOR OF PRISONS

PRETORIA

SIR,

My Association has received a letter in Gujarati from a British Indian named Syed Ali, who has just undergone imprisonment at Boksburg. I give below a free translation of the material portion of the letter. It is dated the 17th instant, and is written from Springs:

I write the following, God between us. On the 19th day of August, 1908, I was sentenced by the Magistrate to pay a fine of 10[s] or suffer imprisonment for seven days with hard labour for

[1] This was released to the Press with the "Letter to Director of Prisons", *vide* the following item. *Rand Daily Mail,* 21-9-1908, published them under the heading. "Life In Prison: An Indian's Complaints: Treated Worse Than Kaffirs". The correspondence was also published in *Indian opinion,* 26-9-1908.

trading without a licence. I accepted gaol. When I was admitted, a Kaffir came to me and asked me to strip myself naked. I did so. I was then made to walk, in that condition, barefoot, some distance. I was then kept, together with Kaffirs, in cold water, for twentyfive minutes. I was then taken out and taken to an office. I was then given some clothes to wear, but I did not get any sandals. I, therefore, asked the gaoler for some. At first, he said 'no', and then he gave me torn sandals. I asked for socks. and he used abusive language (untranslateable). I asked again, and he said 'Look here, I will sjambok[1] you.' I was then frightened and had I spoken again, he would certainly have struck me.

On the 20th August, the work given to me was that of carrying and emptying closet buckets. I complained to the gaoler about this work, and I received a kick and slaps. I still persisted in my complaint, and told him that I would be glad to break stones but would like to be relieved from the work of carrying and emptying these buckets. I was then kicked again. I became helpless and I had to carry those buckets.

On the 22nd August, Saturday, I was again kept in cold water for nearly half an hour. It was extremely cold. I was shivering. God knows how cold it was. I them became, feverish. My chest became bad. On the 25th, I was discharged. The gaoler, on discharging, said 'Your may come again, if you wish to die' and I retorted, 'All right, you may kill me if you can.' I then returned to Springs by the 11 o'clock train. And ever since I have been ill, and I have been discharging blood from the chest, and am under medical advice….

I was treated worse than Kaffir prisoners. Happily, I was the only Indian. I thank God that I was spared. All my book-debts have become bad, but I do not care. I hope the community will be able to preserve its self-respect.

My Association does not know how far the above statement is true, but, on the face of it, in my humble opinion, it calls for a thorough investigation, which I have no doubt you will make. In the meanwhile, I venture to inform the Government through you that, assuming the truth of the above statement, the advice given by my Association is, despite all difficulties, to continue to suffer for what it believes to be a principle.

[1] meaning "to flog with a whip of rhinoceros hide"

I may add that the correspondent, as his name implies, is a direct descendant of the Prophet, and I need hardly comment upon the resentment that would be bitterly felt by Mahomedans, when they understand that such a person has been called upon to perform the dirtiest work at the Boksburg gaol.

I have, etc.,
A. M. CACHALIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Rand Daily Mail, 21-9-1908

92. LETTER TO W. HOSKEN

JOHANNESBURG,
September 19, 1908

WILLIAM HOSKEN, ESQ., M.L.A.[1]
JOHANNESBURG

DEAR SIR,

We, the undersigned, are deeply grateful to you for the kindly interest you, as a lover of the Empire and a Christian gentleman, take in the present bitter struggle that Asiatics are engaged in.

You have told us, at the meeting called by you at your office to-day, and attended by Mr. Cartwright, Mr. Pollock, and ourselves, that General Smuts genuinely regrets the persecution which the Asiatic communities, the majority of whom are British subjects, are undergoing. We appreciate this sentiment. You also said that General Smuts thinks that there would be no insuperable difficulty in meeting our request. We, therefore, beg to state as follows:

A promise should be given by General Smuts and the leader of the Progressive Opposition[2] that the Asiatic Act will be repealed during the next session of Parliament, and that the status of highly educated Indians will be safeguarded in terms of the request made by the British Indian Association.

As to the latter question, in order to show our *bona fides*, we would be quite satisfied with the entry, per year, of, say, six such Indians. The great point, therefore, is that they should be able to enter under the general education test. There should be no legal distinction.

[1] Ex-President of the Association of Chambers of Commerce of South Africa. He was sympathetic to the cause of British Indians; *Vide* "The Transvaal Immigration Bill Debate", 20-7-1907, Johannesburg Letter", 31-12-1907 and"Johannesburgg Letter", Before 10-1-1908.

[2] Party in the Transvaal Parliament

We do not mind an administration of the law such that only the above number can enter. Precedent for such administration is not wanting. The Cape and Natal are doing so at present. In our opinion, such discretion is given under the Immigrants' Restriction Act, but if General Smuts holds otherwise, we have no objection to the Act being so amended as to give the widest discretion to him.

These are the two chief questions outstanding. As a matter of fact, the two are even one, because, if Act 2 of 1907 were repealed, the Immi-grants' Restriction Act would not come in the way of highly educated Indians entering the Colony. We separate the question, because we wish to show that we have no desire to take any undue advantage of the facility provided under the Immigrants' Restriction Act, but that we are quite sincere in our declaration that we have no desire to have unrestricted Asiatic immigration into the Colony. All we say is that, if the resident Asiatics are to be treated justly and if the whole Asiatic nations are not to be insulted, educated Asiatics should be treated under the general immigration law, and should not be called upon to submit to any registration Act.

The other questions, namely, those of restoring registration certificates to those who have burned them, and the reinstatement of Mr. Sorabjee are, in our opinion, administrative details, and can be easily arranged when the main points are solved.

We would mention that, whilst the new Act[1], which has just received the Royal sanction, is very reasonable, there are one or two flaws—for instance, in connection with the claims of those who are already in the Colony and who have entered *bona fide,* they cannot be called upon to submit to a three years' residence test, because some who have not given such proof have already been granted registration certificates. It is also felt that, unless the widest latitude is given in the regulations with reference to the giving of thumb-impressions on application for licences, that particular section would cause the greatest irritation.

We assume that all those who are now suffering imprisonment will be discharged simultaneously with a settlement going through, if

[1] Asiatics Registration Amendment Act (1908). Speaking on the Bill in the Transvaal Parliament, Hosken had said that, while he thought "the Bill provided for all points raised" and hoped that the Indian people would accept it, he differed on one point: the education test. He thought that not to give "residential permits either to teachers of religion or to any other qualified person" was such a narrow interpretation that he could not agree to it. He was, however, one of the members who supported the Bill.

such a fortunate result is attained.

In conclusion, we beg to mention that we have no desire to defy the Government, and we wish to remain in the country with peace and honour and in obedience to the general laws of the Colony. We have been obliged, most reluctantly and in obedience to a higher call, to oppose most strenuously the Asiatic Act. We need not, at this stage, go into the reasons for it, but we ask that our opposition to that Act may not be interpreted to mean defiance.

We beg to add that the leaders who are at present at the Volksrust gaol, and who represent the flower of the Indian community in South Africa, as soon as they were sentenced, sent us the message that they were prepared to suffer to the utmost, but that we should not mind their sufferings but continue the struggle until what we think we are justly entitled to is granted.

In accordance with your desire, we would treat this communication to be strictly confidential, and any message that you may convey to us will also be so regarded.

With our renewed thanks for your kindly interest and for the assurance conveyed by General Smuts.

We remain, etc.,
A. M. CACHALIA
ESSOP ISMAIL MIA
IMAM A. K. BAWAZIR
LEUNG QUINN
C. K. T. NAIDOO
FOO KIMSON
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten original: S. N. 4879

93. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

[JOHANNESBURG,]
September 21, 1908

THE HON'BLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
PRETORIA
SIR,

I have the honour to forward herewith a copy of a letter[1] addressed by me to the Director of Prisons, and copy of his reply. My

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Director of Prisons", 19-9-1908

Association will be obliged if you will kindly grant the request made in the letter addressed to the Director.

I have, etc.,
A. M. CACHALIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 3-10-1908

94. JOHANNESBURG LETTER[1]

HARDSHIPS IN GAOL

It is becoming more certain each day that we shall be made to drain the cup of misery to its dregs. Mr. Syed Ali, who has just returned from gaol after seven days' imprisonment at Boksburg, had no end of suffering to put up with. He had been sentenced to hard labour. He was made to carry closet buckets. He was made to stay in cold water for a long spell. He was kicked. How can one bear this? Mr. Cachalia has addressed a letter[2] to the Director of Prisons about Mr. Syed Ali. It will perhaps get a hearing, but whether or not it has any effect, we will carry buckets and suffer kicks. We will regard this as an expression of our nobility. Our bonds will be loosened [only] when we [learn to] enjoy carrying buckets. Only then may we claim that we understand the meaning of satyagraha. Satyagraha consists in not forsaking what we know to be truth, in enduring any suffering for its sake, no matter even if we die in the process. We should do no harm to anyone, for by harming others we violate truth. True victory will consist in cultivating the ability to bear with all this. Once we comprehend this basic principle, we shall surmount any obstacles the Government may set for us. I hope therefore that Indians will not be unnerved by [the report of] Mr. Syed Ali's suffering but will be ever ready for gaol should the occasion require it.

NATAL PRISONERS

The Natal prisoners are no longer being brought out on the roads to break stones. I for one feel disappointed at this. If they had to submit to the indignity of breaking stones, that would bring freedom nearer. They keep sending messages that no one need be anxious on their account. They are prepared for, and will indeed be happy with, [further] gaol terms of any duration. We must not [they

[1] This dispatch was commenced on September 20 and completed on September 23.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Director of Prisons",19-9-1908

insist] work for a hurried settlement because of them. For them it is the proper thing to say. And it will be right for us to ensure that they do not spend a minute longer in gaol than necessary; that others go to gaol without delay in order to secure their early release.

OCTOBER: TRYING PERIOD

Those who wish to secure the release of the brave leaders have a simple duty. October will test the mettle of many an Indian. By the end of September the licences of several hawkers will have expired. What will they do after that? It is their duty to refuse to take out licences, even if these are offered to them on their own terms—without their having to give thumb-impressions—as long as our demand is not accepted, and boldly to keep going their rounds without licences. The Government cannot afford this. Hence it is bound to throw the hawkers into prison. And if they show pluck, we shall be free soon. I would even make bold to say that should this happen, we would be rid of all this worry after the middle of October and succeed by then in securing the release of those who have gone to gaol for our sake.

HAWKERS' MOVEMENT

This is really a movement on behalf of the traders—especially the hawkers. The latter can also ensure its early success. By putting up a fight like this in this Colony, we can demonstrate that there is nothing undignified about hawking. True, hawkers are poor. [But] there is nobility in poverty. Viewing things in this light, hawkers should hold their heads high, educate themselves, live well and not quarrel among themselves. I want them to be truly educated men. It is within their power to become that. They have yet many things to do in South Africa. I want to convince them and the Indian community at large that this is a campaign from which they can gain regal dignity.

NEED FOR PICKETS

Hawkers acted very courageously in January. They have done the same this time. Yet we remain cowards. We need to be watched. This is not surprising. Pickets should therefore be appointed in every town. They must mount guard outside the Licensing Office and see that no one goes there to take out a licence. To ensure this, the leaders of every community should set themselves up as watchmen. If that is done, hardly anyone would go there to take out a licence.

PICKETS' DUTY

Pickets must remember not to employ violence against, nor attempt to intimidate, anyone. They must leave their *lathis* behind at

home. Our power comes from our tongue, which, too, should be used gently and inoffensively. With every Indian they must use gentle persuasion to point out his duty. The Krugersdorp case[1] must be borne in mind all the time. We must so behave as to make it impossible for anyone to accuse us, however unjustifiably, of intimidation.

Those who hold licences which are valid for the whole year ought not to use them but should surrender them to the Association.

Those who cannot risk going to gaol had better give up hawking for a few days instead of taking out licences.

MADRASIS AGAIN

Mr. Chokalingam was arrested for trading without a licence. Having refused to pay the fine, he went to gaol on Saturday to serve seven days' imprisonment. Mr. Godfrey appeared for the defence.

Mr. Essop Kanamia was charged with failure to take out the new register. He was served with seven days' notice [to leave to Colony]. His case was heard on Saturday, Mr. Godfrey attending.

PRISONERS' FOOD

Correspondence on the subject of prisoners' food is still going on. While the dispute about mealie pap has yet to be settled, we have information from the Director of Prisons that ghee was allowed in January only as a special concession and that there was in fact no provision for it in the rules. In Johannesburg, ghee is still served. But it is not in Volksrust, and that is how the question arose. Mr. Cachalia has written a strong letter[2] about this, and cables have also been sent to England. Let us see what happens now. Whether or not we are allowed good food makes no difference to us. If the Government inflicts this further cruelty on us, we should be determined enough to bear that too.

ISA HAJEE SUMAR

Mr. Isa Hajee Sumar, a Standerton trader of long standing, has returned from a trip to England. I hope that he will join the campaign and help whole-heartedly.

NEW BILL

The new Bill[3] has received Royal assent. The law has some

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 7-9-1908

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Director of Prisons", 18-9-1908

[3] Asiatics' Registration Amendment Bill

advantages for us. Just as we would not submit to the humiliation of the obnoxious Act, so do we not want to take advantage of this new Act, as long as two issues[1] remain unsettled. [Furthermore,] we cannot accept any advantage accruing from the new Act as long as those whom we have sent to gaol are not released.

KING-EMPEROR'S GUESTS

Mr. Magan Jivan, Mr. Gurunathan and Mr. Chetty Parag--these Indians entered Johannesburg Gaol today to serve a sentence of seven days' imprisonment. They were found trading without licences. All of them were defended by Mr. George Godfrey. A telegram has been received from the committee at Roodepoort to the effect that Mr. Dahya Ragha was also sentenced to seven days' imprisonment for hawking without a licence.

Regret

I have to report with regret that the Government has withdrawn the case against Mr. Muljibhai Patel and Mr. Harilal Gandhi.[2] Unfortunately for them, these two young men have been denied the opportunity to do homage to the brave Natal prisoners.

Further Regret

I have heard that Mr. Hassan Mia[3] gave his thumb-impression at Volksrust while returning from Durban.

Adam Mahomed Gool

The President of the British Indian League [of the Cape] is here on a visit. He has handed over his certificate to be burnt. The police did not ask him for his thumb-impression at Volksrust when he arrived there. Even if they had, he would have refused.

BELIM

Mr. Belim was released in Christiana on the 19th after he had served a sentence of a month's hard labour. He has received congratulatory telegrams. The reader wil recall that Mr. Belim's partner was also sentenced to a month's imprisonment. So he

[1] (a) Non-repeal of the Asiatic Registration Act known also as Act 2 of 1907 and (b) provision for the continued immigration of "highly educated Asiatics"

[2] *Vide* "Interview to *The Star*", 17-9-1908; also "Trial of Ramaswamy and others", 27-7-1908 and "Trial of Harilal Gandhi—II", 10-8-1908.

[3] Essop Mia's son

transferred [the ownership of his shop] nominally to a white and thus, instead of closing it down, kept it going.

MOVING LETTER

An Indian, who signs himself "A Poor Indian Harassed by the Law", writes as follows:

> Please do something about solving the [problem of this] law, so that we can somehow return to India safely [after the end of our stay here]. Otherwise we shall be as good as finished. In the existing situation, it is the middle classes that suffer most. The big businessmen who have a large capital are not refused credit. Whites who used to order goods on our behalf ranging in value from £200 to £500 now refuse credit even up to 5 s. They say that they will suspend dealings [with us] until a settlement is reached as regards the law. If something is done to effect a settlement which will safeguard the interests of us poor folk, we can breathe a sigh of relief. Please see to it that we do not have to suffer longer.

We cannot help sympathizing with the person who wrote this. I must say, all the same, that he is mistaken in what he says. It is a mistake to assume, as he has done, that the people who have the capital stand to lose nothing. The rich have had to suffer heavier losses, the poor, smaller. Every Indian soldier [in this campaign] has suffered thus. The whites may refuse to supply us goods on credit, but it is not as though they were the [only] hallowed men[1] [that we may not go to others]. We must of course be prepared for harassment by the whites. Financial loss suffered for the country's sake should not cause us distress. Having said this, I do admit that this letter expresses the views of a number of Indians. It is in accordance with these that the campaign is being waged. The leaders have ensured that the community carries only those burdens which it can bear. In view of this, not a single Indian should lose heart.

KRUGERSDORP

Adverting to the newspaper report about Krugersdorp hawkers not making their rounds, Mr. Khurshedji Desai writes that the charge is entirely false and [adds] that the Indian hawkers in that town are carrying on trade without licences.

[1] Literally, those bearing a *tilak* on their forehead

ABOUT NEW ACT

The new Act comes into force from today. A notice for taking out registers will not be issued under it. It is said that the notice period will extend up to November 30. Indians resident in the Transvaal have to take out permits within that period. As for those who are outside the Colony and do not hold the yellow permits, they have to apply within a year. There is nothing, let it be remembered, that either of these [categories of persons] need do yet. There is no need to hurry. Until a settlement is reached, it would not be meet to take advantage of this law. It will therefore be necessary to post pickets at the Permit Office. If this is done, and no licences are taken out, a settlement will soon be reached.

CONFUSION

A number of queries have been received following *The Transvaal Leader* report that the community would be content to have only six educated Indians admitted into the Colony every year.[1] Some say that this is a fight only for securing the admission of six men, others that this is a new issue altogether. There is some misunderstanding here. Our demand is that, in law, all educated persons should have equal rights. We have already agreed that once there is a single law [for all immigrants], the test can be as severe as [the authorities] wish, so that hardly a single Indian may actually qualify for entry. That is to say, those who pass the education test prescribed by law will be entitled to enter. We cannot then protest if they do not subject the whites to any test, or only to a very simple one, but give the Indians a severe test. If this is done, we will not object. The question has been asked as to how we stand to gain by this. To this we can reply that we do not want the humiliation of a legal bar, even with the provision for the entry of a limited number of Indians. It follows from this line of reasoning that not a single Indian may be admitted, instead of which the entry of six is being ensured [in the suggested compromise]. Our campaign is directed only against the closing of the door [to Asiatics] by law. If the door is closed by law, it will be difficult to re-open it. If it is closed in practice because the

[1] *Transvaal Weekly Illustrated* of September 12 had said: "… Mr. Gandhi has offered to bind himself and his community to rest content on this part of the case if the Government will permit the entry of not more than six educated Indians per year …… Even if the full number of six came every year, we doubt if that formidable invasion would ruin the Transvaal. This principle of limitation is almost the rule with other members of the Empire as to Asiatic immigration." *Vide* also "Letter to W. Kosken", 19-11-1908.

official who holds the test does not allow [the would-be immigrants] to pass, remedial measures can be found. Natal and the Cape have a law of this kind. The whites do not have to pass a test. The test for Indians grows more severe every year. A [similar] law is still in force in Australia; yet whites have been entering in their hundreds. The test for Indians is so severe that not a single Indian has been able to get in so far. However, when the prejudice among the Australian people dies down, or when the official in charge is considerate, Indians may be allowed to enter after a reasonable test. It is therefore to respect the Colonists' feelings and demonstrate the Indian community's reasonableness that a suggestion has been made for limiting the number to six. The law should be the same [for all], but it may be administered differentially; that is all that the demand means. There is thus no difference between this demand and the one that was put forward at the mass meeting and which was described by General Smuts as an ultimatum[1] (that is, a demand that implied the threa of war).

CHINESE HELP

On behalf of the Chinese Association, Mr. Quinn has offered £60 for being sent to the [S.A.B.I.] Committee in London. The reader will recall that on a previous occasion also an equal amount was presented to Mr. Ritch by the Chinese Association. It also contributed towards the expenditure incurred on the case in the Supreme Court field in the name of Mr. Aswat.[2]

HELP FROM CONGRESS

A telegram has been received from the [Natal Indian] Congress saying that a sum of £100 has been cabled to the London Committee. This should have been done earlier. However, even now it has not been too late.

Wednesday [September *23, 1908*]

VOLKSRUST PRISONERS

Mr. Harilal Gandhi has arrived here after his release from Volksrust. He spent three nights [in gaol] with the Natal busines-smen. He reports that the prisoners are keeping good health. They cheerfully carry out their allotted tasks. Now they are not brought out [to break stones on the roads] but are made to sweep the garden and do similar chores inside the gaol. Mr. Dawad Mahomed is happy as a

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E.F.C. Lane", 20-8-1908.

[2] About the return of voluntary registration papers

bird with the song constantly on his lips; "Rustom[1], the only one who became a benefactor equal to Vikram[2] ".

REGULATIONS UNDER NEW ACT

Regulations under the new Act have been published. I shall comment on them next week. At the moment I shall only observe that these regulations are far better than the earlier ones. They, however, present some difficulties which call for attention; these can be resolved when a settlement is arrived at. But I hope every Indian will show patience. No one need apply in a hurry.

TAMILS' EFFORTS

The Madrasis are doing excellent work. They keep going to gaol. Also, they are never found to be slack in collecting funds. They have given the Association a cheque for £82.1.0. We thus see that those who go to gaol are also generous in contributing money. Those who exert themselves in one sphere can do well in others also.

ESSOP ISMAIL BELIM[3]

[He] writes from Christiana to say that during the first week in gaol he was asked to cook. The following week he was given assorted chores and during the last week he was made to work outdoors on the roads. The food was much the same as elsewhere. The only thing which he minded was being asked to take his cap off during meals. He adds that is suffering privations for the sake of his country, he has done no more than his duty and that he would be ready to do so again if there was need.

SETTLEMENT?

A proposal for a settlement was made by Mr. Hosken. Mr. Smuts had a talk with him. Consequent upon this, Mr. Hosken invited Mr. Cachalia, Mr. Imam Abdool Kadir Bawazeer, Mr. Quinn, Mr. Kimson, Mr. Naidoo and Mr. Gandhi [for a discussion]. He also invited Mr. Cartwright and Mr. David Pollock. In the end, a letter[4] was despatched to Mr. Hosken reiterating the demand made earlier at the mass meeting. Mr. Hosken forwarded the letter to Mr. Smuts. A reply has been received from the latter today, in which he says that the

[1] Parsee Rustomjee

[2] Vikramaditya, a legendary king of Central India famous for his just and benevolent rule

[3] He was released on September 19; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 26-9-1908.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to W. Hosken", 19-9-1908

demand is the same as that made previously, and that it cannot be conceded. There is no reason to be disheartened by this. Mr. Smuts has a right to ascertain whether or not we will submit to the new Act. A solution will be found only when we pass that test [set by him] and are found prepared to renounce everything.

BRITISH NEWSPAPERS

Newspapers in Britain have been suggesting that we give in at this stage. They want us to submit to the new Act without raising [further] objections. This is fine advice indeed ! It cannot be accepted. It need not be. It is the same old story. For us there is only one duty. Our demand is just. We must therefore continue to fight till it is conceded. We must fill the gaols, and refuse to take advantage of the new Act.

VALLY MAHOMED

Mr. Vally Mahomed, who came out of Pretoria gaol after five days inside and was received with great enthusiasm, says that no one took the mealie pap served in gaol, because it was suspected to contain lard. Mr. Ismail Juma [he adds] was given kicks because he would not line up along with the other prisoners. When an opportunity for complaint to the Governor about this presented itself, the chief warder would not allow it. The prisoners were made to mop hospital floors, carry buckets full of garbage and wash clothes. Such privations notwithstanding, every Indian must keep himself ready to go to gaol. I congratulate the Indian prisoners in Pretoria on their having gone to gaol and suffered privations for their country's sake.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-9-1908

95. LETTER TO DIRECTOR OF PRISONS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
September 24, 1908

THE DIRECTOR OF PRISONS
PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1077/08/835 of the 23rd instant in reply to my letter of the 21st instant, and beg to thank you for the inquiry made as to the complaint.

I now have the honour to enclose herewith the complainant's affidavit.[2] As you will notice, he adheres to the statements made by him. It is undoubtedly most difficult for him to bring forward witnesses, but the fact that he has been, ever since his discharge, suffering from pneumonia shows that he must have contracted it during incarceration. It is within my experience and the experience of many British Indians who have recently suffered imprisonment that it is not an easy matter to complain to the Governor—firstly, because the prisoners are too frightened and, secondly, because they do not know English or do not know it sufficiently. If an official or public inquiry is held, the complainant states that he is quite willing to appear and give evidence.

I have, etc.,
A. M. CACHALIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 3-10-1908

[1] This was published in *Indian Opinion*, 3-10-1908, under the title "Shocking Allegations: Need for Inquiry".

[2] Syed Ali's affidavit which is not reproduced here; *vide* also "Letter to Director of Prisons", 19-9-1908.

96. LETTER TO DIRECTOR OF PRISONS

[JOHANNESBURG,]
September 25, 1908

THE DIRECTOR OF PRISONS
PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 24th instant in regard to the question of the scale of diet in force for Indian prisoners in the Transvaal prisons.

I learn for the first time that, instead of there being, as my Association supposed, one scale of diet throughout the Transvaal, there are a number of diet scales in force which vary according to the different prisons. My Association is of opinion that this principle of differentiation tends to impose great hardship upon those who are differentiated against, and will be glad to learn whether it is the intention of the Government to appoint a fixed scale of diet for Indian prisoners throughout the Transvaal; and this apart altogether from the question of the meagreness of the diet as exemplified in Johannesburg, to which my Association has already drawn repeated attention.

I would once more demur to the suggestion that the giving of ghee is an act of grace and not a matter of dietary regulation, as I know it to be a fact that ghee, in January last, figured on the printed dietscale at the Johannesburg Gaol. My Association will be glad to learn whether it is finally the intention of the authorities to substitute, in regard to Indian prisoners, ghee wherever fat is prescribed in the Regulations, in view of the religious objection existing to the eating of fat by Indians.

My Association regrets to find from your letter under reply that its suspicions are confirmed that it is the intention of the Government to starve Indians into submission by compelling them to accept a diet totally unsuited to their habits of life.

I have, etc.,
A. M. CACHALIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 3-10-1908

97. HOW NATAL CAN HELP

Natal greatly helped in the Transvaal campaign last year[1]. This time it has surpassed all expectations. The leading figures and the educated Indians in that Colony have gone to gaol of their own accord.

But this has involved Natal deeper in the campaign. It has now to bear the same burden as the Transvaal. It has become the duty of the Transvaal as much as it is of Natal to ensure the early release of the Natal prisoners[2]. What needs to be done by the Transvaal has been indicated in our Johannesburg Letter[3]. Let us therefore think to Natal [for the present].

One of Natal's duties is to remit money regularly in order to maintain the [S.A.B.I.] Committee in London. For that purpose, collections should be speeded up. It is a matter for satisfaction that steps are being taken towards this.[4]

Its second duty is that those of its remaining leaders, who were formerly residents of the Transvaal, and well-educated Indians, such as barristers and physicians, should enter the Transvaal and follow Mr. Dawad Mahomed. Also, those holding £3 registers or permits should be sent to the Transvaal. None of them should give his thumb-impression at the border, and they should thus fill the Transvaal gaols in order to secure the legitimate rights [of Indians]. If that is done, the agitation is bound soon to come to a successful conclusion, and many Indians will have had the opportunity to test their newlyacquired power.

In any case, there can be no doubt that steps such as these will benefit Natal greatly. It has many more battles to fight yet. It has to fight for the repeal of the law about trade, for the ending of the indentured labourers' disabilities and for the cancellation of the oppressive £3 poll-tax. If a large number of leaders put their new power to test, the experience will stand them in good stead when they attempt to achieve all these things. When the whites realize that we have acquired this power, they will think twice before they decide to harass us.

[1] *Vide* "Awakening among Natal Indians", 3-8-1907 & "Speech at Congress Meeting", 4-11-1907 .

[2] Dawad Mahomed, Parsee Rustomjee and Anglia

[3] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 26-9-1908.

[4] Natal Indian Congress had sent £100 to the S. A. B. I. Committee; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 7-9-1908.

A steamer from Bombay is due to call very shortly at a Natal port. Many of the Indians on board are bound for the Transvaal. It is the Natal Indians' duty to reason with them, to explain the situation to them and to ensure that they do not give their thumb-impressions under any circumstances while entering the Transvaal. It is essential to depute volunteers immediately for this purpose. We invite the attention of every Indian to these suggestions.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-9-1908

98. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY

[JOHANNESBURG,]
September 28, 1908

THE HON'BLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY

PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 9/E/4467 of the 24th instant, informing my Association that you are unable to interfere with the administration of the regula-tions governing the diet scale for prisoners in the Transvaal gaols.

Since my Association's letter[1] of the 21st instant, I have received a further letter from the Director of Prisons, informing my Association that "there are a number of diet-scales in force which vary according to the different prisons". In view of that statement, I shall be much obliged if you will kindly inform my Association as to the particular diet-scale to which reference is made in your letter under reply.

I have, etc.,
A. M. CACHALIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 3-10-1908

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 21-9-1908.

99. LETTER TO DIRECTOR OF PRISONS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
September 30, 1908

THE DIRECTOR OF PRISONS
PRETORIA

SIR,

I am informed by Mr. Vassan Ranchhod that he has just been released from the Germiston Gaol, where he was imprisoned for three days with hard labour. He informs my Association that the food supplied to him during that time was mealie pap for breakfast, mealies cooked in or mixed with fat for dinner, and mealie pap for supper. There was no alternative diet.

Should these allegations be found correct, my Association would be glad of an immediate assurance from you that ghee will be substituted for fat, wherever used. I need not remind you that to an orthodox Mahomedan or Hindu, food cooked with fat is religiously unclean. A Mahomedan may only eat fat from an animal ritually killed, a Hindu may not eat fat at all.

I have, etc.,
A. M. CACHALIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 10-10-1908

100. LETTER TO "INDIAN OPINION"[2]

JOHANNESBURG,
September 30, 1908

THE EDITOR
INDIAN OPINION

SIR,

My Association has received the following further communications from the Director of Prisons:

[1] This was published in *Indian Opinion*, 10-10-1908, under the title "Should Indians be Starved into Submission? Further Correspondence".

[2] This was published under the heading "Shocking Allegations: Need for Inquiry".

With reference to your letter[1] of the 24th Instant forwarding an affidavit by Syed Ali in respect of his treatment at the Boksburg Gaol, I have the honour to state that the matter has been investigated by the Governor of the East Rand Prisons, and I have obtained reports from him.

I am satisfied that Syed Ali was treated in accordance with the Gaol Regulations, and I do not propose to hold any further inquiry under present circumstances.

With reference to your further letter[2] of the 25th instant on the subject of the diet scales in force in the Transvaal for British Indians detained in Transvaal Prisons and Gaols, I have the honour to inform you that as at present advised I am not prepared to make any representation with a view to an alteration of the existing scales.

Apparently, Mr. Syed Ali's request[3] for an open judicial inquiry into his complaints is to be denied him. In regard to the subject of diet scales in force in the Transvaal Gaols for Indian prisoners, my Association must now be satisfied that it is the set policy of the Transvaal Government to starve Indian prisoners into submission, and, in this way, endeavour to coerce the British Indian community.

I am, etc.,

A. M. CACHALIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 3-10-1908

101. CABLE TO S. A. B. I. COMMITTEE

JOHANNESBURG,
September 30, 1908

YESTERDAY INDIAN SENTENCED MONTH'S LABOUR FAILING LEAVE COLONY; ANOTHER ORDERED LEAVE COLONY SEVEN DAYS; BOTH UNDER ASIATIC ACT NOTWITHSTANDING NEW VALIDATION ACT PROMULGATED TWENTYFIRST SEPTEMBER GIVING RIGHT TO APPLY FOR REGISTRATION DURING OCTOBER WITH RIGHT TO APPEAL AGAINST REGISTRAR'S DECISION. TODAY EDUCATED INDIAN WHO JUST COMPLETED MONTH'S IMPRISONMENT UNDER ASIATIC ACT RELEASED; RE-ARRESTED PRISON GATES UNDER ASIATIC ACT; COMMUNITY ASTOUNDED; UNDERSTOOD OLD ACT DEAD LETTER FOR ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES, VALIDATION ACT TO APPLY IN FUTURE. COMMUNITY INSIST REPEAL OLD ACT.

[M. K. GANDHI]

Colonial Office Records: 291/132

[1] *Vide* letters to Director of Prisons 24-9-1908; 25-9-1908
[2] *ibid*
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Director of Prisons", 19-11-1908.

102. INTERVIEW TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"

[DURBAN,
September 30, 1908]

Mr. M.K. Gandhi, the doughty champion of the Indians' cause in the Transvaal, is at present on a visit to Durban, and was interviewed yesterday by a representative of this journal.

Asked what his object was in coming to Durban at the present time, he said he was here in connection with the question of those Indians who had a right to return to the Transvaal owing to their having been pre-war residents; and, particularly, to see those Indians who were expected by the German steamer *Governer,* which was bringing a fair number of Indian passengers for the Transvaal.

In reply to a query as to the present position of Indians in the Transvaal, M. Gandhi said the fight resolved itself into this, that those who were entitled to be in the Transvaal shall be allowed to enter the Colony, but not give the Government any help with reference to identification, until the two outstanding questions were settled.

"How is this attitude reconciled with the law-abiding nature of British Indians?" queried the interviewer, and Mr. Gandhi replied that he held there was nothing defiant in the Indians' attitude. It should be remembered that British Indians were not represented in the Transvaal Parliament, and the only effective manner in which they could make themselves heard was to refuse submission to laws in the passing of which they had no hand, and which violated their conscience or their self-respect. The Indians, he said, held that General Smuts was in honour bound to repeal the Asiatic Act, but he said he would treat it as a "dead letter". The Indians said that [that] was not enough, and he (Mr. Gandhi) noticed that even now the old Act was by no means a dead latter. Under the circumstances, British Indians asked General Smuts to fulfil his promise by repealing the Act, and, until this was done, they had been advised not to accept the benefits accruing from the new Act. This, to Mr. Gandhi's mind, was an act of renunciation by the Indian community which should be appreciated by the Colonists throughout South Africa.

"But what as to the educational question?" was the next query, to which Mr. Gandhi replied that the answer was very simple. If the Act were repealed, the immigration law of the Transvaal would be almost the same as that of Natal. British Indians stated that the Transvaal should not be allowed by the Imperial Government, and by those who love the Empire, to lay down a new policy of exclusion based purely on race and colour. The present immigration law of the Transvaal, with the assistance of the old Asiatic Act brought about such a constitution. Indians, therefore, contended that such should not be the case.

The people of the Transvaal, he said, were frightened with the bogey of an invasion of half-educated youths from Natal, but this was due only to ignorance. Indians were not fighting for the rights of half-educated fellow-countrymen. They

were fighting for the honour of India, and for a principle--the same principle that was laid down by Mr. Chamberlain before the Conference of Colonial Premiers, viz., that restriction should be based on sensible grounds, and not on grounds of colour or race. Once, said Mr. Gandhi, the status of educated Indians was established on a footing of equality in the eye of the law, he personally had no quarrel about the severity of the education rest. The essential difference seemed to him to be this: The people in the Transvaal, as indeed in South Africa, tolerated British Indians as an evil; Indians, on the other hand, claimed that those who were domiciled in South Africa should form part of the future nation that was coming into being, and that they should be encouraged in every way to make progress towards refinement and culture. In making this statement, he was simply paraphrasing what Mr. Patrick Duncan said the other day—that was to say, that, in a free and self-governed South Africa, it would not be possible to contemplate a body of human beings living in a state of servility, or studied and legal inferiority.

In taking this stand against any such degradation, Mr. Gandhi claimed that his countrymen should receive the sympathy and assistance of all who loved South Africa as their home, and who wished well to it. He wanted to make one thing perfectly clear, which was that Indians had no desire to have further unrestricted immigration of Asiatics into any part of South Africa, nor did they wish that there should be no [*sic*] regulations on unenlightened lines of trade licences in general, but, after these two propositions were established, there should certainly be no differential legislation, otherwise he could only repeat what he had said so often, that in South Africa would be sown the seeds of disruption of the Empire. They could not have India as the brightest jewel in the British Crown, and yet use that jewel as a target from every point.

Mr. Gandhi next made the following statement, in reply to a question as to what he thought would be the effect of unification upon Indians in general: This was a question he had answered before a meeting of the Closer Union Society that had been formed in Johannesburg.[1] He there stated that a United South Africa meant for British Indians greater restriction of their liberty, unless a unified South Africa meant unification not only of the white races, but of all British subjects, whether Coloured or white, who had chosen South Africa as their permanent home. Under such unification, one would expect liberal principles guiding Indian legislation, but one heard often talk of disfranchisement at the Cape, and further disabilities in Natal. The goal of unification seemed to be the nearest approached by the Orange River Colony, so far as Asiatic legislation was concerned. In that Colony, Asiatics had absolutely no footing, except as domestic servants. It must be plain to anybody that Indians who has vested rights, who had children to educate, and families to rear, would not be satisfied with such a status, and that they would carry on a bitter struggle before they accepted a position such as he had described. He could not conceive how the Imperial Government could possibly look with approval upon a scheme of unification which

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Closer Union Society", 20-8-1908.

would mean the reduction of Asiatics and Natives to a state practically of slavery.

The next point touched upon was embraced in the following query: "What is the feeling of British Indians with reference to the local leaders who have been imprisoned in the Transvaal?"

Mr. Gandhi replied that, from what he could see, the feeling was very bitter. His countrymen failed to understand why, in a British Colony. British Indians should have to suffer imprisonment because they dared to enter the Transvaal. The situation would appear much more painful when he said that the three leaders were pre-war residents of the Transvaal. Three educated Indians were also suffering imprisonment with them who were stretcher-bearers, and held the rank of sergeants at the time of the Zulu rebellion.[1] It would be remembered that their services were so much valued that Sir Henry McCallum specia-lly recognized them, and, of course, those ex-sergeants were entitled to their medals, and would receive them on being released. It must appear strange to anybody that such men should be imprisoned, with hard labour, for merely daring to enter the Transvaal. One of the leaders imprisoned was known to every prominent Durbanite--Mr. Dawad Mahomed, the chairman of the Natal Indian Congress; the other, Mr. Parsee Rustomjee, was equally well known and the third, Mr. M.C. Anglia, besides being a prominent merchant, and secretary of the Congress, had received a very good education in English and French. The Indians of Durban, therefore, felt that they had to suffer in order that these leaders might be released before their time. They were, therefore, considering the advisability of sending up more Indians, who had a right to enter the Transvaal, to share the same fate as the leaders. It was quite evident that General Smuts had rendered an indirect service to British Indians throughout South Africa. They had been brought together as never before, and they had also begun to understand their own position, and to realize that they must work shoulder to shoulder, and undergo much suffering, if they were to be recognized as self-respecting men in South Africa.

The reports received from these leaders, through prisoners who had been discharged, were to the effect, said Mr. Gandhi, that they were perfectly cheerful, although the Government was simply starving them in regard to their diet, by reason of providing food which was not suited to Indian habits. The leaders stated that they would continue to be in gaol until the struggle was over, and the just rights of British Indians in the Transvaal were recognized. Most of them had already been sent out in the public roads to break stones. Most of the leaders, Mr. Gandhi added, were very delicate, and Mr. Dawad Mahomed was old, and could hardly life a weight, but such was his love for his country, he understood, that he performed the allotted task with the utmost cheerfulness.

"Do you think the trouble here produces any effect in India?" further queried the interviewer. Mr. Gandhi answered that he certainly thought it did. The meeting that was held last January in Bombay under the presidency of His Highness the Aga Khan was very widely attended. Anglo-Indians and Indians were absolutely united on this

[1] *Vide* "Indian Stretcher-Bearer Corps", Before 19-7-1906.

question, and so were Mahomedans, Hindoos, Christians, and Parsees. The protest male at the Bombay meeting was emphatic and unanimous. Advice[s] lately received also showed that the treatment in the Transvaal and consequent suffering had affected British India very deeply. Mr. T. J. Bennett, who was the proprietor of one of the leading newspapers of India, writing to the London *Times.* the other day, had said that during his recent travels in India he found that Indians, rich and poor, maharajahs and plebeians, resented the treatment very bitterly, and all wondered what the Imperial Government was doing to allow [*sic*] it. There was no doubt that Lord Morley was being pressed, in connection with this question, from many parts of India. Those in India who were the warmest friends of the Empire had been moving heaven and earth in order to secure fair treatment in the Transvaal, as, also, indeed, in South Africa.

Turning now to the local questions affecting Indians, our representative asked Mr. Gandhi what he thought of the Indian Bills passed during the last session.

To this query, he replied that he would be very much surprised indeed if these Indian Bills received the Royal assent. They laid down a principle, not of compensation, but of confiscation. An analogy had been drawn between liquor licensing legislation at Home and trade licences. Surely there should be no comparison between the two. Liquor licences were admitted to be an evil, and the cause of national degradation. Everyone wanted to see public-houses restricted, if not done away with altogether. Naturally, therefore, there would be, or must be, legislation with reference to these licences; indeed, with reference to them, the question was one of compensation or no compensation. All parties were agreed that many public-houses should be closed, but with reference to trading licences. Whatever might be the local prejudices, nobody could seriously contend that they should be treated on the same footing as liquor licences. To his mind, so long as the system of inducing indentured labour from India was continued, there certainly would be no rest in Natal, so far as Indians were concerned, Licensing legislation was merely a useless palliative. If indentured immigration were stopped, they would find that the Indian question would solve itself. There was scope enough for the present population of Natal, and the European population should certainly expand without taking the bread away from the mouths of the free Indian population. But if the system of indenture were continued, there must necessarily be a forced addition to the Indian population, and, consequently, agitation. Of course, some of the industries of Natal would, at the commencement, suffer, but he could not help thinking that it was much better that these industries should suffer than that they should have an eternal eyesore in the Colony. There might be even a way of compensating these particular industries, but indentured labour should be stopped at the earliest possible moment.

In this, concluded Mr. Gandhi, Indians could always be relied upon; they were just an anxious that the system should be stopped as any Colonist could be, and he only hoped that Mr. Evans, who had commenced his crusade against the system, would not rest satisfied until it was abolished.

The Natal Mercury, 1-10-1908

103. TELEGRAM TO COLONIAL SECRETARY[1]

[DURBAN,]
October 2, 1908

HON'BLE COLONIAL SECRETARY
P. M. BURG[2]

NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS LEARN SOME BRITISH INDIANS ARRIVED PER *Governeur*, THEY HOLD PROOF RESIDENCE TRANSVAAL. IMMIGRATION OFFICER DECLINES GRANT EMBARKATION PASSES. SOME PASSENGERS MINOR CHILDREN WHOSE PARENTS HAVE ARRIVED FROM TRANSVAAL FETCH THEM. OFFICER[3] DECLINES PERMISSION LEGAL ADVISERS SER PAS- SENGERS. CONGRESS CONSIDERS THIS UNJUST AND CRUEL. REQUEST[$] PERMISSION SEE PASSENGERS AND REQUEST[S] INSTRUCTIONS OFFICER ISSUE EMBARKATION PASSES. CONGRESS GUARANTEES THESE MEN PROCEEDING TRANSVAAL.

NICELY[4]

From a photostat of the original draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 4889

104. CABLE TO S. A. B. I. COMMITTEE[5]

DURBAN,
October 2, 1908

TO

THE SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE
LONDON

CONGRESS STAGGERED. OVER 80 ARRESTS KOMATIPOORT[6] . THIRTEEN INDIANS FROM BOMBAY INCLUDING MINOR CHILDREN HOLDING TRANSVAAL CERTIFICATES REFUSED TRANSIT PASSES PROCEED TRANSVAAL BECAUSE THEY WILL NOT ACCEPT NEW ACT. TRANSVAAL OFFICIAL THREATENING THEM. NATAL OFFICIALS HELPING HIM. LEGAL ADVISER REFUSED PERMISSION SEE

[1] The telegram was signed by Gandhiji "for sender". A copy of it was forwarded to the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies by L. W. Ritch on October 6.

[2] Pietermaritzburg

[3] The original has "officers".

[4] Telegraphic address of the Natal Indian Congress

[5] Of the original draft in Gandhiji's hand which is damaged, only the first page is available. It ends with the words "legal adviser". The telegram, however, is available in full in the Colonial Officer Records. A copy of it was forwarded by L. W. Ritch on October 3 to the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies.

[6] The original has "Komatiepoort".

THEM.[1] CONGRESS CONSIDERS THIS COERCION. RESULT WILL BE MEN DEPRIVED OPPORTUNITY CONTESTING RIGHT TRANSVAAL COURTS.

NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 4913; also Colonial Office Records: 291/132

105. DRAFT FOR MINISTERS OF RELIGION

[*October 2, 1908*][2]

We the undersigned Ministers of Religion resident in Johannesburg being horrified at the alleged treatment of a large number of Indians on their way from Delagoa Bay to their homes in the Transvaal *via* Komatipoort urgently appeal to the Transvaal Government in the names of Religion and Humanity to forthwith institute careful enquiries into these allegations and in accordance with the evidence obtained to take such action as will vindicate justice.

We also pray that the religious objections of the Asiatics to certain elements of prison diet may be respected and that another earnest effort may be made to effect a satisfactory settlement of the present difficulties.

DOKE
PHILLIPS
HOWARD
TITCOMBE
CANON BERRY
DR. HUNTER
BERRY
LENDER BLOP[3]

From the original draft in pencil: S. N. 4885

[1] Romer Robinson, a leading solicitor of Durban, wrote in his letter of October 2, 1908 to the Indian Immigration Restriction Officer: "I am told further that leave for me to visit these Indians as their legal adviser has been refused so that they are denied even the privilege of a criminal in gaol. Is this so? If not, please give me written permission to interview them."

[2] The draft appears to have been prepared at about the same time when Gandhiji sent the "Telegram to Colonial Secretary", 2-10-1908 and the preceding item.

[3] The names of the signatories are in Gandhiji's hand.

106. NATAL INDENTURED LABOURERS

The [*Natal*] *Advertiser*, of Durban, is a determined enemy of the Indian community. Even so, Its editor could not remain unmoved by the sufferings of the Indian indentured labourers. In a lengthy comment, he has shown that the condition of Indians under indenture is not far different from slavery. The members of the Immigration Trust, which administers the affairs of indentured labourers, are elected by their white employers. It is these members who appoint the physicians to look after indentured labourers. Whether the labourers are happy or not depends very largely on the physicians. If the latter in their turn depend for their livelihood on the employers of indentured labour, they are not generally free to express their own views. For instance, if a physician certifies that a certain Indian is physically unfit, the employer will not only be deprived of the benefit of his labour during the period of his illness, but will also be required to bear the expenses of his treatment. A physician who discharges his duty faithfully is thus likely to incur the displeasure of the employer. When there is conflict between duty and self-interest, most men prefer the latter. The *Advertiser* suggests therefore that the physicians should be free from the control of the employers. The Protector of Indians is almost in the same predicament as the physician. The Protector is a member of the Trust Board. Since many of the members of the Board are themselves employers of indentured labour, the Protector can make himself heard no more than a reed. The *Advertiser* states further that an indentured labourer who deserts work has to suffer imprisonment. Ordinarily, when a servant throws up his job, his employer can only file a civil suit against him. For the indentured labourer, on the other hand, no better lot is ordained than imprisonment. Pointing out that these conditions are the marks of slavery, the editor of the *Advertiser* urges the whites of the Colony to stop importation of indentured labour from India and to amend the regulations relating to indenture. This is a fine opportunity to secure some improvement in the conditions of indentured labourers. We believe, however, that no improvement of any real value is possible. The best way is to stop the system of indenture. Indian newspapers have published the experiences of an indentured labourer in Mauritius. We summarize these elsewhere.[1] Probably the reports are somewhat exaggerated. It is certain, however, that the condition of indentured labourers in utterly miserable. Indian indentured labourers

[1] Not reproduced here

are not found to be happy in any part of the world. A study of world history tells us that at first slaves were generally kept as a substitute for cattle and were treated as such, and that as soon as legalized slavery had disappeared, thanks to the powerful influence of the British people, it was reintroduced in other forms. In all such places, or in the neighbourhood of such places, where Indians or members of other communities are employed at present to work under a system of indenture, it was the practice formerly to employ slaves. It is natural for the rich to want to control others by force. The only way to prevent the suffering which may result from this tendency of theirs is to limit their powers by law. In other words, the method of exploiting human labour under a system of indenture should be prohibited by law. Therefore, the main duty of Natal Indians in this matter is to start an agitation on a big scale, to adopt satyagraha, if necessary, and bring the system of indenture to an end.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 3-10-1908

107. REAL EDUCATION

We have sometimes been told, orally and in writing, that the satyagraha campaign in the Transvaal, which we have been sponsoring and for which we have been making sacrifices, is all a vain effort. These advisers of ours argue, moreover, that there is no justification for such an effort for the sake of the handful of Indians who live in South Africa. And in any case, [they say,] Indians will have no choice in the end but to leave this country. It will then be found that we had been building on foundations of sand.

Such reflections have given rise to doubts in the minds of some of our readers. Let us consider this matter a little.

We have no hesitation in saying that the argument is entirely fallacious. Those who advance it do not understand the deep significance and the marvellous power of satyagraha. It is a counsel of despair to say that Indians will be forced to leave South Africa in the end. We visualize no such possibility. If the Indian community can practise satyagraha even in a small measure, there is no reason why it should have to leave this country.

But, even if it is obliged to leave the country, it will have already enjoyed the fruits of satyagraha. That one can secure one's rights through satyagraha is not the reason why it is practised. Securing one's rights is one of the results, but satyagraha can be offered

without thinking of the result. As for efforts of other kinds, we count them wasted if there are no results. For instance, if a man aims at seizing the property of another by killing him, and fails either to kill him or to get the property, he will feel frustrated and, maybe, will himself have to face death. In satyagraha, it makes no difference whether the result is achieved or not. For, there is no cause for frustration in the event of failure. In the case of the Transvaal agitation, even if the obnoxious law had continued to be in force, those who resorted to satyagraha would have ever remained victorious. Their efforts would have done the community no harm. Putting the same thing in another way, we can say that satyagraha is a kind of education in the real sense of the term. If we undergo education with a specific object in view, such as earning our livelihood, the education that has been received will not be wasted even though we fail to earn our livelihood through it. In like manner, the invaluable education--the benefit--received through the strengthening of will power which results from our adherence to truth and suffering hardships for its sake, is never lost. Those who became satyagrahis, and have remained so, will reap the benefits of satyagraha in any part of the world where they may go.

If, moreover, we look closely into the result of satyagraha, we shall find that it is always the same, that it is invariably good. If on any occasion we fail to discover such a result, it will not be because of any imperfection in satyagraha as such, but because people might not have been steadfast in their satyagraha.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 3-10-1908

108. OUR AIM

It is the object of those, both whites and Indians, who are engaged in publishing this paper, to serve the entire human race. There is an obvious reason why the first duty of the whites and of the Indians living in Phoenix is to serve the Indian community. Indians must, of course, serve India. If, instead of doing that, anyone were to claim that he was dedicated to the service of mankind as a whole, it would be nothing more than a pretence—it would be no service, or anything that could be called service. The whites who have joined us were formerly engaged in their own avocations. There was no need for them to offer their services to the white community. Wishing to renounce their selfish pursuits and to devote themselves to the service of others, they decided to join the journal. That is how we look at the

matter.

But we cannot be content with merely bringing out a paper. Those who have chosen to settle in Phoenix wish to educate themselves and to extend the benefits of their education to the entire Indian people. With this end in view, those members of the journal's staff who can teach devote a part of their time to the education of the children living in Phoenix. That arrangement has been in force for several months past. The members engaged in this teaching work neither receive nor expect payment.

The number of children at Phoenix is so small that it has not been found necessary to have a separate school building for them. Mr. Cordes[1] has offered the use of his building for the purpose.

Teaching is done through both Gujarati and English. Attention is paid to the simultaneous development of mind and body. Special emphasis is laid on strengthening the moral character of pupils.

We aim at making such education available to all Indian children. Our chief object is to provide education to those children only who may live in Phoenix. For, it is not good for children to have one standard of behaviour in the school and another at home.

Some who have heard of this school have expressed a desire to send their children to Phoenix. But we are not in a position to meet their request for want of residential and school accommo-dation facilities.

We do not have the resources for putting up the required buildings. The buildings need money. We therefore invite the views of those among our readers who believe that a school along the lines indicated above should be established. If they offer us monetary help, we shall be prepared to put up a building for the school as also a hostel. Trustees may be appointed to supervise the expenditure to be incurred and the accounts of all expenditure on construction of buildings may be published. This is a big undertaking and it is after long deliberation, therefore, that we place the matter before our readers.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 3-10-1908

[1] A German theosophist who was attached to Gandhiji and was for some time in charge of the school at Phoenix; he died at Sevagram in 1960.

109. JOHANNESBURG LETTER[1]

RUSTOMJEE'S MESSAGE

On behalf of the prisoners, Mr. Rustomjee has sent a message that "instead of taking any hasty step to seek a compromise, we should obtain everyone's signature". These are his own words. They show the prisoners' courage, and point out their duty to Indians.

WARNING

On receipt of a report that a steamer named Governeur was due to arrive in Durban with Indian passengers aboard, and that Mr. Chamney would receive applications from them on board the steamer, telegraphic instructions were sent to Mr. Ismail Manga, Mr. Ismail Halimbhai, Mr. Hormusji Edulji, Mr. Nanji Durlabh-adas and Mr. Vrijdas Lalchand that they should warn the Delagoa Bay passengers not to walk into the trap laid by the Government. They should be asked to disembark at Durban and proceed thence to the Transvaal to join the movement there. Owing to an error of a day in calculation, no one could be deputed specially for the purpose. Mr. Cama and Mr. Nagadi had got ready to go.

PRISONERS' DIET

The British Indian Association and the Government are still at odds with each other with regard to the prisoners' diet. There are now two complaints instead of one. As for mealie pap at breakfast, Mr. Cachalia has already taken up the issue [with the authorities]. But it is stated now by the Director of Prisons that food arrange-ments differ from prison to prison. The Government has been asked to supply copies of the different manuals on this subject.

"DAILY MAIL" COMMENT

Commenting on this in its issue of Saturday last, the [*Rand*] *Daily Mail* observes that there is no uniform scale for Indian prisoners throughout the Colony. This is quite surprising. In one of the prisons, Indians are allowed a diet to which they are used. Elsewhere they are given maize flour and animal fat which they can refuse only on pain of being starved. The complaint, the journal thinks, deserves to be attended to. An orthodox Hindu will prefer to die rather than touch to

[1] Gandhiji was in Durban during this period and could not have written about happenings in the Transvaal at the same time. Only those portions of the dispatch therefore which can be reasonably attributed to him are given here.

animal fat. When men are sentenced in this country, they are not sentenced to starvation. If a white prisoner, who happens to be a vegetarian, were asked to accept non-vegetarian diet or starve, or if a Jew were asked to accept animal fat or go without food, there would be an uproar; or, if whisky and soda were to be offered to those who never take them, on pain of their having to go thirsty if they did not accept them, there would be a big outcry. In whatever gaols Indian prisoners are lodged, they must get their rice and ghee.

CHAMNEY UNFIT?

Mr. Gandhi has often told General Smuts that Mr. Chamney is quite unfit for the post he is holding.[1] It was a good thing that Mr. Bhaiji was sentenced to a month's imprisonment. I congratulate him. But why should Mr. Bhaiji have been sentenced when Mr. Mulji Patel and Mr. Harilal Gandhi we discharged? Mr. Bhaiji, too, holds [both] the permit [and] the register. He is also, like the other two, entitled to apply under the new Act. That Mr. Bhaiji does not intend to apply is quite another matter. But the Government had in fact no power to arrest him for two months. Mr. Polak has criticized this case in very strong terms. If has brought us nothing but gain. However, my object in referring to this matter is [to show] that it may perhaps be necessary for the British Indian Association to petition for the removal of Mr. Chamney. I do not want Mr. Chamney to be deprived of his means of livelihood, but an officer who is altogether ignorant of his duty can do not good to the community.

Looking at the matter from another point of view, we feel that the Indian community has profited by Mr. Chamney's ignorance. Had he not been guilty of serious errors, we would not have won our freedom so soon in the measure that we have done. In regard to the issues still pending, we shall be free quite soon, thanks to Mr. Chamney's errors.

COURAGEOUS LETTER

"A Poor Indian Harassed by the Law", whose letter I gave earlier,[2] has now assumed the name, "A Dauntless Soldier of Satyagraha", and written to say that he did not write that letter in a defeatist mood. He had only given expression to the thoughts of many. As for himself, he will not allow his mind to be influenced by considerations of health or money. He would welcome whatever suffering might be

[1] *Vide* "Letter to The Natal Advertiser", 9-4-1907, "Letter to Indian Opinion", 15-11-1907 & "Letter to Private Secretary to High Commissioner", 3-12-1907.

[2] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 26-9-1908

inflicted [on him] in the faith that all that we do must be for the [common] good. Anyone [he goes on to say,] who clings to satyagraha with courage and faith in truth is bound to win.

I congratulate this satyagrahi, and hope that he will remain firm till the end.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 3-10-1908

110. CABLE TO S. A. B. I. COMMITTEE

JOHANNESBURG,
October 3, 1908

TO

THE SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE
[LONDON]

FIFTYEIGHT INDIANS PROSECUTED KOMATIPOORT[1]. IMMIGRA- TION ACT READ WITH NEW ACT ON ACCOUNT ENTERING COLONY WITHOUT MAKING APPLICATION OUTSIDE COLONY UNDER LATTER. ALL POSSESSED PEACE PRESERVATION PER- MITS MILNER REGISTRATIONS OR OTHER AUTHORITY TO ENTER. ALL LONG DOMICILED TRANSVAAL JUST RETURNED VISIT INDIA SENTENCED TWO MONTHS OR TWENTY POUNDS ADDITIONAL DEPORTATION ORDER NOTWITHSTANDING RIGHT UNDER UNREPEALED ASIATIC ACT TO APPLY REGIS- TRATION EIGHT DAYS AFTER ENTERING. SEVENTEEN MINORS AVERAGE AGE ELEVEN CHILDREN AFORESAID DETAINED. COMMUNITY INFUIRATED. OLD RESIDENTS THEIR CHILDREN TREATED AS PROHIBITED IMMIGRANTS. LARGE INTERESTS AT STAKE. PEOPLE OUGHT NOT BE DEPORTED. COMMUNITY FIRM ABOUT REPEAL OLD ACT, PROVISION FREE ENTRY CULTURED INDIANS UNDER STRICTEST ADMINISTRATIVE TEST. IMMENSE SUFFERING ANTICIPATED.

M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records: 291/132; also Governor's Office File: 18/1/1908—Part III and *Indian Opinion*, 10-10-1908.

[1] The original has "Komatiepoort".

111. CABLE TO S. A. B. I. COMMITTEE

JOHANNESBURG,
October 5, 1908

TO
THE SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE
LONDON

TRANSVAAL RETURNING INDIANS VIA DELAGOA BAY FROM VISIT INDIA WITH FAMILIES INCLUDING BROTHER LATE CHAIRMAN ASSOCIATION, WIFE, BABIES, MOTHER AGED 80 PARALYTIC.[1] 17 MINORS REMOVED TRAIN KOMATIPOORT[2] WHERE 80 MEN, WOMEN, CHILDREN HERDED SMALL FILTHY ROOM. WOMEN BABIES EXPOSED OPEN AIR WHOLE NIGHT AND DAY ALL FOODLESS TWO DAYS. WOMEN, BABIES ALLOWED PROCEED STARVING OWING MAHOMEDAN FAST. REMAINDER CONVEYED KAFIR TRUCKS, BARBERTON WHERE POLICE PREVENTED LOCAL INDIANS SUPPLYING FOOD. OBLIGED ENGAGE SOLICITOR. MINORS STILL DETAINED. ALTERNATIVES CHARITY LOCAL COMMUNITY GAOL. URGENTLY BEG IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT INTERVENE STOP BARBAROUS INHUMAN TREATMENT. RELIGIOUSLY UNCLEAN FOOD SUPPLIED SOME GAOLS CONSEQUENT PARTIAL STARVATION.

M. K. GHANDHI

Colonial Office Records: 291/132; also Governor's Office File: 18/1/1908—Part III

112. LETTER TO J. J. DOKE

KING EDWARD'S HOTEL,[3]
VOLKSRUST,
Thursday [October *8, 1908*]

DEAR MR. DOKE,

I received your note[4] at Phoenix. The expected has happened. I think it is well. I have arrived just in time. There were serious differences between two sections here. They are by no means over yet. You will say I have accepted the hospitality before the 'settings' were finished. I think it was better that I should do that than that the invitation should be rejected for the sake of the 'settings'. And after

[1] The original has a comma here.

[2] The original has "Komatiepoort".

[3] This was the name Gandhiji gave to the Volksrust prison, where he was interned on October 7, 1908.

[4] The reference is to Doke's letter of September 30; *vide* Appendix VI.

all I have done nothing.

For six days I may carry on correspondence. If you think I should answer any questions, you may write.

I must now stop as I have been called away to give digit impressions.

Please excuse me to Olive[1] for not writing.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 4093

Courtesy: C.M. Doke

113. WHY IS RELEASE OF BUSINESSMEN DELAYED?

Many Indians have been asking this question. The answer is that our satyagraha is imperfect. A satyagraha campaign obeys the rule of three. We can load a cart in proportion to its strength. If overloaded, the cart may give way. The same holds good in the case of the satyagraha cart. The businessmen have gone to gaol for the sake of the community. To be sure, the cart of their sufferings will carry the load of other Indians' happiness. But it will move forward rapidly if others put their hands to the wheel. If no men come forward for this, the cart will be stranded on the way. Not that it will break. But it may take time to reach the destination. Satyagraha is in no way to blame for this. The continued delay shows that the satyagraha is not as intensive as it should be. Because of this the cart has slowed down. If more men come forward to join satyagraha, the end will come quite soon. This is simple enough.

In Natal, hundreds of Indians went to see the businessmen off. Many of them expressed readiness to follow them. But now that the time has come, only 13 have come forward. Many showed themselves ready for work. Now that the time has arrived, they are not to be found anywhere. Everyone seems to ask what he himself would gain, forgetting that satyagraha can be offered only to advance the interests of others. One need not even be conscious that the interests of others include one's own. Natal has not acted in this manner, though it is not to blame for this. It only shows that we have not had enough experience, that we lack the capacity to suffer, that we lack knowledge.

[1] Doke's daughter, later a missionary in Northern Rhodesia, who, on September 30. has written to Gandhiji wishing him "very many returns" on his birthday, October 2.

We shall acquire these things in due course. Meanwhile, we need not grow impatient if there is delay in achieving the desired result in any particular case.

For the present, those who understand what satyagraha means should remain steadfast in it. Even if only one man is left, he can continue satyagraha. He will have done his whole duty. One can do no more.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 10-10-1908

114. SOME PROBLEMS OF NATAL

We think the condition of Natal Indians is deteriorating day by day. The present Government here is altogether bad, unsure of its ground and indifferent to Indians.

Traders will begin to experience hardships in regard to licences.

The poll-tax on labourers whose indenture has expired is an oppressive burden.

Those who are slaving under the system of indenture are treated harshly by their masters.

New restrictive laws continue to be enacted.

Grants-in-aid to schools have been reduced. Boys above the age of fourteen are not allowed to be admitted.

What should be done to remedy all this? should a petition be made? Will it do any good? What if it does not? If satyagraha is advised, should all of them act collectively or each group for itself?

We should patiently seek answers to all these questions. A petition must certainly be made. But it should have some sanctions behind it. These sanctions can be created by satyagraha.

But satyagraha can be offered only by a man who understands truth. If we knew what truth meant and acted accordingly, there would have been no such hardships as those mentioned above. How, then, can we offer satyagraha? The answer is that resistance through satyagraha itself implies that we gradually learn to follow truth. Our grievances will disappear in the measure in which we cultivate truthfulness.

We shall consider some time later how satyagraha can be offered in particular situations.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 10-10-1908

115. PRISONERS' CONDITION[1]

Saturday [October *10, 1908*]

Just as in January [1908] the Johannesburg prison had overflowed with Indians, this time it is Volksrust gaol which has overflowed. More Indians are coming in. Today there are 37 in gaol, from among whom the following 17 persons are serving sentences of imprisonment:

Messrs Dawad Mahomed, Parsee Rustomjee, M. C. Anglia, Shapurji Randeria, Sorabji Shapurji, Azam Sedu Patel—all these have been sentenced to three months each—and Messrs Kazi Kalamian Dadamian, Omar Osman, Mulji Uka Mayavasi, Ibrahim Hoosen, Ismail Essop, Vally Amodji Randerwala, Mohanlal Parmananddas Killawala, Harishanker Ishwar Joshi, Mohanlal Narbheram Goshalia, Surendrarai Bapubhai Medh and Umiyashanker Manchharam Shelat, each serving a six-week term.

The following 19 persons are awaiting trial. Instead of applying for bail, they are refreshing themselves in gaol:

Messrs Mavji Karsanji Kothari, Ratanshi Mulji Sodha, Khatri Damodar Durlabh Gandevi, Khatri Dahya Narasi, Zinabhai Vallabhbhai Ugi, Bhikhabhai Kalyanji Ugi, Lalbhai Nathubhai, Vasanji Lalbhai, Moonsami Elleri, Mulji Ratanji, Hira Mulji, Raghavji Ragunath Mehta, Ravikrishna Talevantsingh, Davji Ahmed, Karsan Jogi, Lakshman Vartachalan, Morar Makan, Pakiri Naidoo and M. K. Gandhi.

From among these, Mr. Mavji Karsanji Kothari got himself released on bail only today, with everyone's consent, and left for the town. The object is to have a close watch kept on the trains arriving from Durban. It appears that three Madrasis have applied in Charlestown for submission to the Act. Since it was felt necessary that such persons should be acquainted with the true position, it was decided to apply for bail for Mr. Mavji. After he is imprisoned, some other arrangement will have to be made.

[1] This appears to have been written from Volksrust lock-up where. Gandhiji, arrested on October 7, was awaiting trial. It was published as "From Our Special Representative" at Volksrust.

‘‘RAMZAN SHARIF’’

All the Muslim prisoners are duly observing the *Ramzan*[1] . Mr. Kazi brings them food specially prepared for the purpose. The Governor [of the prison] has granted special permission for this. Permission has also been granted for keeping a clock and a light in their cell. All of them are particular about the *namaz*[2] , and pass the time cheerfully.

WORK IN GAOL

Those who are observing *roza*[3] and other Indians as well are being given very little work for the present. Mr. Shelat and Mr. Medh work as cooks. The rest engage themselves in cleaning the cells or such other miscellaneous work, which they do not find hard or difficult in any way. If anyone is found to be ill, he is totally exempted from work. All the officers, including the gaoler, behave well. One need not take off one’s cap, but may only salute. This is a mere trifle. Taking off the head-gear is more convenient for those who wear a hat. But I am reporting this just to show that even in a matter like this, the officers do not harass anyone. Orders have been issued permitting the Parsees to wear their customary shirt and sacred thread as well as their own cap.

PRISON DIET

By way of food, one gets mealie pap in the morning, plenty of rice with a green vegetable (such as cabbage, etc.) for the midday meal, and rice in the same quantity with beans in the evening. Since food is cooked by the prisoners themselves, it is quite eatable. Apart from the nuisance of mealie pap, this diet can be considered deficient only in respect of ghee. The regulations here do not provide for any ghee or fat to Indians. A complaint has therefore been made to the physician, and he has promised to look into it. So there is reason to hope that the inclusion of ghee will be ordered. Most of the prisoners take mealie pap—some more, some less.

FASTING

Mr. Ratanshi Sodha, however, does not eat anything. He and the other Indians with him joined [us] on Wednesday. He ate something on the train on Wednesday, after which he had nothing, except a small

[1] The 9th month of the Muslim year *Hijr*, during which the Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset.

[2] Prayers offered by Muslims always facing the west

[3] Fast during *Ramzan*

quantity of groundnut once. He has been fasting thus just to please himself. He intends to miss a few more meals. He does not show that he dislikes the food served here. He is only making an experiment to find out how long he can fast.

GAOL BUILDING

Indians are so happy in gaol that one should think of it only as a palace. It is well built, too. It is constructed of stone. The cells are large. Ventilation is satisfactory. There is an open courtyard in the middle, with a flooring of black stone. For bathing there are three showers. Water pours out of these in large quantities, enabling one to have a very good bath. Under-trial prisoners are given bread and sugar in addition. The courtyard is covered with a barbed-wire netting. In spite of strict arrangements, two Negroes once escaped by breaking through the tin roof. Hence, there is now a strong iron ceiling.

DEPORTED

Messrs Zinabhai Vallabhbhai, Bhikha Kalyan and Mahomed Hoosen were ordered to be deported. Before they were deported yesterday, they were unnecessarily locked up in the gaol for 13 days. Of these, Mr. Zinabhai and Mr. Bhikhabhai returned as soon as they were put across the border. They spent the night yesterday in the Volksrust police station. They were welcomed here today. As for Mr. Mahomed Hoosen Konkani, he got cold feet and stuck to Charlestown.

SORABJI AND AZAM

These two have become seasoned with long terms of imprisonment. They were deported today at 3 o'clock, for no apparent reason. However, they were to return the moment they were put on the other side, so that the affair will turn out to be merely a joke on the part of the Government.

Sunday [October *11, 1908*]

Both these brave soldiers of India who have fought many a battle returned as soon as they reached the other side. The moment they were put across, they jumped over into the Transvaal without so much as a second's interval, were arrested by the same gentleman who had gone with them to put them across the border, and again entered King Edward's Hotel. All the Indians of Charlestown had turned up to receive them. They were disappointed. They did not even have the

opportunity to arrange a party for them. The poor Chinaman, who was deported along with Mr. Sorabji and Mr. Azam, was dragged away by a Charlestown officer. This shows that Indians have risen in the estimation of others. The whites do feel a little afraid of them. The court can do nothing to the Chinaman, and the Immigration Officer has no authority to restrain him.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 17-10-1908

116. PETITION TO RESIDENT MAGISTRATE[1]

VOLKSRUST GAOL,
October 11, 1908

THE RESIDENT MAGISTRATE
VOLKSRUST

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED PRISONERS AT

HIS MAJESTY'S GAOL AT VOLKSRUST

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT:

Your petitioners are prisoners at His Majesty's gaol at Volksrust either serving imprisonment or awaiting trial.

Your petitioners are British Indians.

Your petitioners find on perusing the diet scale for British Indians that no fat is at all supplied with their food.

The scale consists merely of mealie pap, vegetables and rice for convicted prisoners, bread being added to the above for prisoners awaiting trial.

Your petitioners find that natives are regularly supplied with fat and Europeans with meat which contains the requisite amount of fat.[2]

In the humble opinion of your petitioners, the diet supplied to British Indian prisoners is medically deficient by reason of the absence of fat in the Indian diet scale.

Moreover, your petitioners for religious reasons are unable to take animal food or fat prepared from meat,[3] and therefore, on meat

[1] Gandhiji drew up the petition originally in his hand and then evidently dictated a slightly modified draft which was later adopted. This was further revised before submission.

[2] The first draft here read: "Your petitioners find that Europeans and natives are regularly supplied with fat."

[3] The first draft did not have the words: "or fat prepared from meat".

days remain without or its substitute.[1]

Your petitioners have often complained of the above deficiency but owing to the advent of a large number of other Indians, the hardship has become serious.[2]

Your petitioners therefore pray that

(1) ghee may be added to the ordinary Indian scale and

(2) a vegetarian substitute in the shape of lentils or green vegetables may be authorised for meat on meat days.

Your petitioners further pray that should permission of the Director of Prisons be deemed necessary, you will be pleased to telegraph or telephone the contents hereof for the requested relief.

And for this act of justice, etc.

DAWAD MAHOMED
PARSEE RUSTOMJEE
M. C. ANGLIA
M. K. GANDHI
and 33 others[3]

From a photostat of the original handwritten office copy: S.N. 4893

117. TO SATYAGRAHIS AND OTHER INDIANS[4]

[VOLKSRUST GAOL,
October 13, 1908]

Since I shall have no opportunity of writing for *Indian Opinion* during the time I shall be serving a sentence of imprisonment, I take the liberty of addressing a few words to satyagrahis and other Indians.

[1] Here followed the paragraphs below, which were in both the drafts, but were finally omitted:

"Your petitioners who are Mahomedans have been graciously permitted during the past few days, it being their fasting month, to receive food from outside.

"Owing to the said permission, the hardship due to the absence of fat and a substitute for meat has been confined to a few.

"But now by reason of the advent of many more, the difficulty has become serious."

[2] This paragraph, not found in the first draft, was introduced in the second during revision.

[3] Of the 37 singnatories, 21 signed in English, 10 in Gujarati, one in Tamil and five affixed their thumb-impressions.

[4] This message was sent by Gandhiji on October 13 from the lock-up at Volksrust, before his trial on October 14.

Those who are outside carry a greater responsibility than those in gaol. In fact, the real trouble will have to be faced by those who want to serve sincerely from outside. The hardships of gaol life are mostly imaginary. Here I find everyone as happy as a bird the whole day long. The occasional harassment by inconsiderate officers can be remedied immediately. I hope therefore that no Indian will fight shy on going to gaol for the sake of the motherland.

Satyagraha is both easy and difficult. I think it should be easy by now for everyone to see that every grievance can be remedied if we make it a point to follow nothing but the truth. It is difficult to observe truth—to suffer in order to put an end to suffering. And yet, the more I think, the more I see that there is no other way than that of satyagraha for us to fight our ills and those of others. I even feel that the world has no other really effective remedy to offer. Be that as it may, we at least have realized that it is better to win through satyagraha. Consequently, I am hopeful that, if all the Indians persevere and carry through what they have begun, we shall have earned afresh the title of "brave pioneers"[1]

Let us constantly remind ourselves that all the nations that have risen high have braved extreme suffering. If we want to rise high, we must adopt the same means.

We must realize what a heavy responsibility we have assumed by sending the Natal businessmen to gaol. It is not too much that, following them, we should embrace poverty. They have not gone [to gaol] to serve their own interests.

Every Indian who goes to gaol must realize that he expects to serve no personal interests thereby. He should know that even after having been to gaol, he may not remain in the Transvaal. Everyone must sacrifice his own interests in order to safeguard those of the community, uphold its honour and its good name.

This campaign knows no distinctions of Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians, Bengalis, Madrasis, Gujaratis, Punjabis and others. All of us

[1] The original has *arambhe shoora*, meaning "brave beginners", a Gujarati phrase which is generally used by way of reproach, referring to those who begin a task bravely but leave it unfinished. Gandhiji, however, uses it here in a good sense.

are Indians, and are fighting for India. Those who do not realize this are not servants but enemies of the motherland.

I am,

M. K. GANDHI

Satyagrahi

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 17-10-1908

118. TULSIDASA'S "RAMAYANA"[1]

[Before *October 14, 1908*]

A SUMMARY

These days India's sons go abroad in large numbers. In a foreign country, not everyone can be conscious always of his particular religion. This is especially so in the case of Hindus. The present writer is of the view that it is the duty not merely of the Hindus alone but also of all Indians to acquaint themselves with the essentials of Hinduism in its common form.

Hinduism, in its general spirit, is a religion which everyone will find acceptable. It is essentially an ethical religion. From this point of view, it may be said that all religions are equally true, since there can be no religion divorced from ethics.

Be that as it may, the general spirit of Hinduism is most vividly reflected in the *Ramayana*. The original *Ramayana* is in Sanskrit. Few people read it. It has been translated into many languages of the world. The work [also] exists in all the *prakrits*[2] of India. If we examine all these translations, none can equal the Hindi *Ramayana* by Tulsidasa. Really speaking, Tulsidasa's work is not a translation. His devotion to God was so profound that instead of translating, he poured forth his own heart. Apart from Madras, there is hardly any part of India where we find a single Hindu totally ignorant of Tulsidasa's *Ramayana*. This wonderful work, however, is not read in

[1] This appeared among the advertisement columns of *Indian Opinion*. The notice was presumably drafted by Gandhiji. Evidently, this and the following two items were written by Gandhiji before October 14, when he was tried and sentenced to two months' imprisonment.

[2] Forms of Sanskrit representing a stage towards the evolution of the modern languages of Northern and Central India. Here the word is used for the regional languages of India

its entirety by everyone settled in a foreign land (not even by everyone in India). There is no time to do so. If such works are published in an abridged form, they may prove beneficial to the Indian people. With this idea in mind, it has been decided to bring out an abridgement to Tulsidasa's *Ramayna*. The first canto of the book will shortly be before the public. It is not our intention that this abridged version should be used as a substitute for the original *Ramayana* [of Tulsidasa]. The object rather is that, after reading the shorter version, those who have time on their hands and who are saturated with love of God may go on to the original. The abridgement does not leave out any portion of the main narrative. But interpolations, long descriptions and some portion from the subsidiary parts have been omitted.

We wish that every Indian goes devoutly through the summary which we are placing before the public, reflect over it, and assimilate the ethical principles so vividly set out in it. We shall consider our effort to have been duly rewarded if this abridged *Ramayana* is read in every Indian home in the evenings and during periods of leisure at other times.

The other cantos will be published as their printing proceeds. They can be got bound together in the end. The price has been deliberately kept as low as possible, with a view to placing the work within the reach of every Indian.

It is the duty of every Indian to know the Hindi script and language. There is hardly any other book as helpful as the *Ramayana* for a study of the general form of that language.

Price 1s. Postage ld.

International Printing Press, Phoenix, Natal.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 17-10-1908

119. THE STRUGGLE

[Before *October 14, 1908*]

It appears our struggle is drawing to a conclusion, for the Govern-ment is resorting to more oppressive measures. The deportation of Mr. Sorabji and Mr. Azam, their immediate return, the swiftness with which sentences were passed on them, the sentences of imprisonmentagainst 58 Indians in Barberton, their deportation—all this shows that the Government is coming to the end of its tether. Its

resources are getting exhau-sted. It is using up all its ammunition. But it should be remembered that things become very difficult as we near the end, and that the last stage is always hard to go through. All other difficulties can be borne, but they must be heroic souls indeed who can face the difficulties of the last stage. We therefore hope that Indians will not be deterred even by these.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 17-10-1908

120. TO SOME INDIANS

[Before *October 14, 1908*]

Some Indians in the Transvaal, Natal and other parts of South Africa have become confirmed addicts to drink. Not only is this against religion, but it has also a debilitating effect both on body and mind. It will be difficult for those who have formed this evil habit to join the satyagraha campaign. We do not wish to write about the evils of drinking. Much has been written about the subject already. We shall only say that those who have formed this harmful habit should strive to get rid of it. If not, they will bring unnecessary suffering to others; and very often they will find themselves unable to give their services to a good cause, however much they may wish.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 17-10-1908

121. LETTER TO J. J. DOKE

[VOLKSRUST,]

Wednesday [*October 14, 1908*]

DEAR MR. DOKE,

I am writing this from the Court House. I had hoped to be able to send you something[1] before I was fixed up. But I have been too busy otherwise. I thank you very much for your good wishes. My sole

[1] Doke, who was gathering material for his book, *M. K. Gandhi: An Indian Patriot in South Africa*, had written to Gandhiji on October 9, evidently in response to his letter of October 8: "If you are able to carry me forward from the Battle of Spion Kop, I shall be grateful. In your leisure moments from 'hard labour', try and note down all you can remember step by step. Even if you can do it during these few days of grace, it will be a great thing." *Vide* also Appendix VI.

trust is in God. I am therefore quite cheerful.[1]

I am,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 4092 Courtesy: C. M. Doke

122. MESSAGE TO INDIAN YOUTH[2]

[VOLKSRUST,
October 14, 1908][3]

I am not sure that I have any right to send a message to those with whom I have never come into personal contact, but it has been desired and I consent. These, then, are my thoughts:

The struggle in the Transvaal is not without its interest for India. We are engaged in raising men who will give a good account of themselves in any part of the world. We have undertaken the struggle on the following assumptions:

(1) Passive Resistance is always infinitely superior to physical force.

(2) There is no inherent barrier between Europeans and Indians anywhere.

(3) Whatever may have been the motives of the British rulers in India, there is a desire on the part of the nation at large to see that justice is done. It would be a calamity to break the connection between the British people and the people of India. If we are treated as, or assert our right to be treated as, free men, whether in India or elsewhere, the connection between the British people and the people of India can not only be mutually beneficial, but is calculated to be of enormous advantage to the world religiously, and, therefore, socially and politically. In my opinion, each nation is the complement of the other.

Passive Resistance in connection with the Transvaal struggle I should hold justifiable on the strength of any of these propositions. It

[1] In his book, Doke quotes the last two sentences as having been written just before the case against Gandhiji came up for hearing on October 14, 1908.

[2] While quoting this, Doke wrote: "I invited him to send a message through these pages to young men of his native land," and claimed to have received it in writing. *Vide M. K. Gandhi: An Indian Patriot in South Africa,* Ch. XX.

[3] In Doke's book, this message is assigned to "October 1908". It is likely that this was written on October 14, the day Gandhiji was sentenced.

may be a slow remedy, but I regard it as an absolutely sure remedy, not only for our ills in the Transvaal, but for all the political and other troubles from which our people suffer in India.

M. K. Gandhi: An Indian Patriot in South Africa

123. TRIAL OF DAWJEE AMOD AND OTHERS[1]

[VOLKSRUST,
October 14, 1908]

On Wednesday last, before Mr. De Villiers, A.R.M., Mr. Mentz prosecuting, Dawjee Amod was charged as a prohibited immigrant for entering the Colony without having previously made application under the new Registration Act (No. 36 of 1908) from outside the Colony. Mr. Gandhi defended, and pleaded not guilty. Accused had previously entered the Colony, producing a permit and registration certificate and had been arrested. He had afterwards promised to leave the Colony and apply for registration under the new Act from Natal, but when Corporal Cameron had shown him the form of application, he had refused to leave the Colony, and was re-arrested.

In cross-examination, Corporal Cameron admitted that the accused did not fall within sub-sections 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8 of section 2 of the Immigration Act, nor was there any removal order against him. He had no reason to suppose the documents produced were not the lawful property of the accused.

Mr. Gandhi said that accused could choose to enter under the unrepealed Asiatic Act, No. 2 of 1907, and that he could not be a prohibited immigrant when he produced his permit. He did not come under sub-section 4 of section 2 of the Immigration Act.

The Magistrate found the accused guilty, but said he appeared to have been influenced not to leave the Colony. Accused was sentenced to pay a fine of £15 or go to gaol with hard labour for one month.

Karson Jogi and eight others, including two minors, were similarly charged. They were similarly sentenced, except Hirji Mulji, a boy of about 12 years, who was sentenced to pay a fine of £5 or go to jail without hard labour for 14 days.

Ratanji Sodha, Mawji Karsonji, Ravikrishna Talwantsingh, and Ratanji Rugnath were also charged as prohibited immigrants, pleading not guilty. The first three claimed to enter the Colony under the education test, whilst the first two and Ratanji Rugnath claimed pre-war residence. Mawji Karsonji claimed also to enter as an ex-member of His Majesty's Volunteer Forces, holding a medal issued to him for services rendered during the Boer War. Ravikrishna was born in South Africa.

Giving evidence on behalf of the accused, Mr. Gandhi said he took the sole responsibility for having advised them to enter the Colony. They had largely been

[1] This was published along with the report of Gandhiji's trial, under the heading, "Volksrust Again: Mr. Gandhi Sentenced", as "Special to *Indian Opinion*". For the trial of Gandhiji, *vide* the following item.

influenced by his advice, though no doubt they had used their own judgment. He thought that, in giving that advice, he had consulted the best interests of the State.

Cross-examined: He asked accused to enter at a public meeting and individually. They probably, at that time, had no idea of entering the Colony, except, perhaps, one of them. He would certainly admit that he had assisted the accused to enter. He admitted aiding and abetting them to enter the Transvaal. He was quite prepared to suffer the consequences of his action, as he always had been.

The accused were found guilty, and sentenced to pay a fine of £20 or go to gaol with hard labour for six weeks.

Daya Narsi was then charged for refusing to give his thumb-print under the new Registration Act, though he had produced his permit. He had given his [finger-] impressions at the gaol (under the gaol regulations), where he had already been awaiting trial for a week. He was sentenced to a fine of £10 or imprisonment with hard labour for one month, as was Moonsamy Ellary, who was similarly charged.

Bhikhabhai and Jhinabhai, who had been deported on Friday and had returned at once, were charged as prohibited immigrants. They were sentenced to a fine of £20 or 6 weeks' hard labour.

Indian Opinion, 17-10-1908

124. TRIAL AT VOLKSRUST[1]

[VOLKSRUST,
October 14, 1908]

Mr. Gandhi himself was then charged with failing to give his thumb- and finger-impressions upon demand, under the new Act. He pleaded guilty. He produced no documents, and when asked to furnish means of identification as required by Regulation 9, he refused.

Giving evidence, Mr. Gandhi said:

In connection with my refusal to produce my registration certificate and to give thumb impressions or finger impressions, I think that, as an officer of this Court, I owe an explanation. There have been differences between the Government and British Indians whom I represent as Secretary of the British Indian. Association, over the Asiatic Act, No. 2 of 1907, and after due deliberation, I took upon myself the responsibility of advising my countrymen not to submit to the primary obligation imposed by the Act; but still, as law-abiding subjects of the State, to accept its sanctions Rightly or wrongly, in common with other Asiatics, I consider that the Act in question, among other things, offends our conscience, and the only way, I

[1] After the trial of Dawjee Amod and others, *vide* the preceding item, Gandhiji's case came up before the Court.

thought, as I still think, the Asiatics could show their feeling with regard to it was to incur its penalties. And in pursuance of that policy, I admit that I have advised the accused who have preceded me to refuse submission to the Act, as also the Act 36 of 1908, seeing that, in the opinion of British Indians, full relief that was promised by the Government has not been granted. I am now before the Court to suffer the penalties that may be awarded to me. I wish to thank the prosecution and the public for having extended to me the ordinary courtesies.

Mr. Mentz thought that a difference should be made in this case; as Mr. Gandhi had admitted his sin to be greater than that of the others, he asked that the heaviest penalty (£100 or three months with hard labour) should be awarded.

The Magistrate found Mr. Gandhi guilty. In giving judgment, he remarked that it was not for him to consider the question of religious objections. He had only to administer the law. There had been a general defiance of the law. He felt very sorry to see Mr. Gandhi in that position today, but he must make a difference between him and the others. He sentenced Mr. Gandhi to pay a fine of £25 or go to jail with hard labour for two months.

Of course, no fines have been paid, and all have smilingly gone to jail, Mr. Gandhi being especially happy.

Indian Opinion, 17-10-1908

125. MESSAGE TO INDIANS[1]

[VOLKSRUST,

October 14, 1908]

Keep absolutely firm to the end. Suffering is our only remedy. Victory is certain.

Indian Opinion, 24-10-1908

[1] This was issued by Gandhiji as his "last message prior to his incarceration at Volksrust". It was made the subject of an editorial entitled "Keep Firm" in *Indian Opinion.* The message, which also appeared in the Gujarati section, was read out at a mass meeting held in Johannesburg on October 18.

126. CABLE TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COLONIES[1]

VOLKSRUST,
November 7, 1908

TO
THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
[LONDON]

BRITISH INDIAN PRISONERS VOLKSRUST SEVENTY FIVE INCLUD- ING CHAIRMAN VICE PRESIDENT SECRETARY NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS PRESIDENT HAMIDIA ISLAMIC SOCIETY SECRETARY BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION TENDER LOYAL CONGRATULATIONS HIS GRACIOUS MAJESTY KING EMPEROR AND RESPECTFULLY ENVITE ATTENTION CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH THEY ARE SUFFERING IMPRISONMENT.

BRITISH INDIAN PRISONERS IN VOLKSRUST

Colonial Office Records: 291/132

127. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

NAME OF CONVICT/PRISONER M. K. GANDHI [VOLKSRUST] PRISON/GAOL

TRANSVAAL,
November 9, 1908

MY DEAR WEST,

Your telegram to hand. It cuts me but does not surprise me. It is impossible for me [to] leave here unless I pay the fine which I will not. When I embarked upon the struggle I counted the cost. If Mrs. Gandhi must leave me without even the consolation a devoted husband could afford, so be it.[2]

Please do what you all can for her. I am wiring[3] Harilal to go there. I expect from you or someone a daily bulletin—not that I can

[1] This was sent through the Secretary of State for India to King Edward VII in connection with his 57th birthday, which fell on November 9. Presumably, it was drafted by Gandhiji from Volksrust Prison where he was lodged. A similar message was cabled by Reuter on behalf of the "conscientious objectors" in Johannesburg Prison on November 9.

[2] Mrs. Kasturba Gandhi was suffering from haemorrhage and her condition was grave, She underwent an operation on January 10, 1909, as reported in *Indian's opinion*, 16-1-1909. *Vide* also *An Autobiography*, Part IV, Ch. XXVIII.

[3] This telegram is not available.

help thereby. Please let me know by wire what the disease is exactly. I am writing to her.[1] I hope she will be alive and conscious to receive and understand the letter. The authorities will allow me to receive the letters daily. The enclosed is for Mrs. Gandhi. Let Manilal read it to her.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

A. H. WEST, ESQ.
MANAGER
INDIAN OPINION
PHOENIX, NATAL

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 4409

Courtesy: A. H. West

128. LETTER TO MRS. KASTURBA GANDHI

[VOLKRUST GAOL,]
November 9, 1908

BELOVED KASTUR,

I have received Mr. West's telegram today about your illness. It cuts my heart. I am very much grieved but I am not in a position to go there to nurse you. I have offered my all to the satyagraha struggle. My coming there is out of the question. I can come only if I pay the fine, which I must not. If you keep courage and take the necessary nutrition, you will recover. If, however, my ill luck so has it that you pass away, I should only say that there would be nothing wrong in your doing so in your separation from me while I am still alive. I love you so dearly that even if you are dead, you will be alive to me. Your soul is deathless. I repeat what I have frequently told you and assure you that if you do succumb to your illness, I will not marry again. Time and again I have told you that you may quietly breathe your last with faith in God. If you die, even that death of yours will be a sacrifice to the cause of satyagraha. My struggle is not merely political. It is religious and therefore quite pure. It does not matter much whether one dies in it or lives. I hope and expect that you will also think likewise and not be unhappy. I ask this of you.

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, International Printing Press, Phoenix, 1948

[1] *Vide* the following item.

129. MESSAGE FROM GAOL[1]

My only desire is that everyone should remain steadfast and ever refuse to violate his pledge, however long the struggle lasts, whether eight days or eight months or eight years, or even longer. We ought not to bring any pressure on those who may yield and desert the movement. If anyone does, I shall believe that he does not understand the nature of the movement. If the struggle has become drawn out so long, we are ourselves the reason for that. If we make a conscious effort to remove the causes, everything can be over even today.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-12-1908

130. INTERVIEW AT GERMISTON STATION[2]

[GERMISTON,

December 12, 1908]

[Gandhiji:] I have heard about the allegation, but I shall say later whatever little I have to say about it. I enjoyed every minute in gaol.

[Replying to another question, he said:] I was very well treated in gaol. My complaint is against the gaol regulations. The officers only did their duty in enforcing the regulations.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-12-1908

[1] This was read out at a mass meeting of Indians held in Johannesburg the eve of the expiry of the time-limit for registration under the Asiatic Registration Amendment Act of 1908.

[2] On his way from Volksrust to Johannesburg on December 12 after his release from gaol, Gandhiji was interviewed about his ill-treatment in prison.

131. SPEECH AT JOHANNESBURG RECEPTION

[JOHANNESBURG,
December 12, 1908]

Mr. Chairman, delegates from Natal, My Tamil brethren and other friends,

I see you today after two months and ten days. I feel as if I was outside all the time and not in gaol. It is today that I think I have entered a prison. Those who are outside have a more important duty to discharge than those in gaol. So long as people who are outside do not exert themselves more vigorously, our bonds are not likely to snap. When the station-master at Volksrust congratulated me on my release, I told him also that it was really on that day that I found myself in prison, and that I was now facing much heavier tasks than those assigned to me while in gaol.

In a country where people suffer injustice and oppression and are denied their legitimate rights, their real duty lies in suffering imprisonment. And further, so 'long as the bonds that' bind us have not been snapped, I think it is better that we spend our days in gaol. This, I think, is the true meaning of religion for those who have faith in God.

I want to say a few words about the scene that was witnessed at the station today. My services have pleased the community. You have assembled today in such a large number because you wish to express your appreciation of my having worked for a day at breaking stones, of my having suffered imprisonment and of the other things that I did. Where there is God there is truth, and where there is truth there is God. I live in fear of God. I love truth only, and so God is with me. Even if the path of truth does not please the community, it pleases God. Therefore I will do what pleases God, even if the community should turn against me. The enthusiasm that was in evidence today was heartening enough. It shows that all of you, like others who could not be present, approve of the satyagraha campaign that we have launched. I have said at Standerton, Heidelberg and other places that the outcome of our campaign does not depend upon whether we win or lose in the Supreme Court. We should rather, if need be, bear separation from our families, sacrifice our property for the sake of truth, endure whatever other hardships we may encounter and thus make the voice of truth heard in the Divine Court. When the echoes of that voice strike the ears of General Smuts, his conscience will be stirred and he will acknowledge our rights, will see that we invite

suffering in order to secure them, that we have suffered more than enough. It is then that we shall get what we have been demanding. It is not the Imperial Government that will secure you your rights; you will get them only from God. If you fight truthfully with Him as witness, your bonds will be loosened in eight days according to your Chairman, but in less than 24 hours according to me. God is present everywhere; He sees and hears everything. I am sure that we shall be free when that God stirs their [our opponents'] conscience. We do not sacrifice as much as we should. The moment we do so, our fetters will fall away. I shall say more tomorrow. Today I have nothing more to say. I thank all the friends who have assembled here today. I want them to inscribe my words in their hearts and to pray to God that He may make everyone feel the same as I do.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-12-1908

132. SPEECH AT HAMIDIA ISLAMIC SOCIETY[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,

December 13, 1908]

I said yesterday that we had won. We have won because of the sufferings of our people. A community, 1,500 members of which have been to gaol, must certainly be considered to have emerged victorious. That out of a population of 7,000 as many as 1,500 have been to gaol must surely, I think, be counted as a victory. As things are reckoned in this world, it can be said that there has been no victory, because we have not yet secured what we demanded from the Government. The Chairman said that, as I was the leader of the community, you should do my bidding. But that is not right. It is my duty to place before you what I think and what I hear, and to do what you tell me. It is for you to decide whether or not to act upon my suggestions. We are still half-hearted about everything, and therefore never do anything in time. When we become punctual, we shall be able to attend to everything without loss of time. I place two things before you. The first phase of the struggle commenced with Ram

[1] Gandhiji then spoke in English. The report of his speech in English', however, is not available.

[2] A meeting of the Society was held in the Hamidia Mosque on December 13, to honour Gandhiji and Iman Abdool kadir Bawazeer on their release from gaol.

Sundar, the second with Sorabji.[1] What I wrote to Sorabji I wrote to others as well. The first reply I received was from Sorabji. I did not know him as well as I did Ram Sundar, and I was doubtful whether he would hold firm till the last moment. Personally, I take everyone at his word. The community knows what Sorabji has done. There were 75 prisoners with me in the Volksrust gaol; among them all I observed Sorabji to be the mildest, the most even-tempered and steadfast. He put up with everything that people said to him. Living with him, I have very well realized his worth.

Next, from among the Imam Saheb, Moosa Essakji and the two Madrasis who had received six weeks' imprisonment, I spent more time with the Imam Saheb. I used to feel concerned how he would be able, with his [poor] health and physique, to withstand the strain. But I saw that he endured all difficulties and performed every task. The Hamidia Islamic Society and the community are fortunate that the Society has a chairman like him. Once, when the gaoler asked for some men to go with him to mow grass, no one responded. Imam Saheb felt that it was our duty [to go]. When he got up, others started remonstrating with the gaoler, saying that he was an Imam and should not be put to work. They all rather felt ashamed on this occasion. Such habits of ours are also responsible for our struggle being prolonged. After the release of others, a few of us were left behind. Moosa Essakji took charge of cooking. The Emam Saheb agreed to help him. They used to get up at three o'clock in the morning and start the cooking. Because the community has such men among it, I believe that it has come out victorious. I strongly advise those who go to gaol that while there they must obey the gaol regulations. If everyone acts in the name of God, our fetters will fall away in no time. We are certainly not fighting on behalf of those who hold forged permits. The struggle is no longer what it was before. The fight is now only to uphold the honour of the millions who live in India. The Imperial Government is seeking ways and means of expelling Indians from South Africa. They want us to go and settle in regions with a bad climate. I therefore think it very important that we convince the Government of our courage. We are not to fight now for men who have no legitimate claims but we can live honourably if educated men, men who can teach us the right things. come in. So long as we do not understand even this, we cannot hope to win. I see that some men hanker after publicity. Why should they have such notions? To those

[1] *Vide* "Trial of Ram Sundar Pundit", 11-11-1907 "Trial of Sorabji Shapurji-I", 8-7-1908, "Trial of Sorabji Shapurji—II", 10-7-1908 & "Trial of Sorabji Shapurji—III", 20-7-1908.

who wish to serve, Who rely on God, what does it matter whether they get publicity or not? A true satyagrahi does not care for it. He merely works. The Natal gentlemen have promised me that they will be with us till the struggle comes to an end. I want the three leaders to reiterate that promise today. It has made me very happy to know that they have collected a very large amount and that all the gentlemen [approached by them] responded to their appeals without reserve. Of the four resolutions that were passed at the last mass meeting[1], the second was explained to everyone by Mr. Cama. I explain it again today. It was resolved, in the name of God, to continue the struggle till the Government did justice. If the pledge was taken after full deliberation, everyone may please raise his hand[2]. We are here in the sacred premises of a mosque. Please remember that you have raised your hands in such a place in the name of God. Sheth Rustomjee sent [me] a book on religion for reading in gaol. It says that the righteous are dear to God. The pledge you took on oath in the name of God you must have taken after full deliberation. Is there any reason, then why you should not win? The scriptures of all religions declare: "I give unto those that are with me all they ask for." The Government may take your wealth or imprison your body, but it cannot deprive you of your soul. If you do in the right spirit what I have asked you to do, you will get not merely the two things you have demanded, but whatever else you want. The echoes of this campaign have already been heard in India and in the rest of the world. See that the campaign is intensified.

[Gandhiji was then garlanded on behalf of the Hamidia Islamic Society. Speaking again. he said:]

I take this to be a diamond necklace, offered not out of respect merely but out of love. It is with that feeling that I thank you. Dawad Sheth's son, a mere child, writes from England to know why we are not united. The Hamidia Islamic Society is an institution of Muslims. I take it as a great honour that I have been garlanded on its behalf. If both the eyes, Hindus and Muslims, remain unharmed, you will prosper. If 13,000 Indians continue the fight in the name of God and if the two communities remain united, you will also be the masters of India. What is happening here will have its repercussions out there and all people will be united.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-12-1908

[1] This was held on November 29.

[2] Everyone present did so.

133. SPEECH AT TAMIL RECEPTION[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
December 14, 1908]

This garland[2] has in fact been earned by the Tamil community which has given such as excellent account of itself. Hence what you have offered to me I offer in turn to your Chairman. I have nothing more to say. If you feel that the Tamils have done very well, you should be worthy of the community. Should any of you fail, he would deserve all that might be said against him, and much more.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-12-1908

134. TRIAL OF THE NAIDOOS AND OTHERS[3]

[JOHANNESBURG,
December 18, 1908]

Upon several Indians, it is said, proceeding to the registration office on Von Brandis square yesterday morning (the 18th instant) in order to comply with Act 36 of 1908, the office was immediately picketed by " passive" resisters, says *The transvaal Leader*. The police were sent for, and soon after their arrival they arrested four members of the picket, amongst whom was C.K.T. Naidoo. The places of the four men were taken by four others, who, in turn, were arrested. A crowd of Indians collected; further arrests were made, and eventually about 27 Indians were charged with having refused to produce registration certificates and to give signatures and impressions of thumbs and fingers.

Later in the day, the arrested Indians were removed for trial to Government Square. The news of their detention had got abroad and, when Mr. Gandhi arrived to conduct the defence, he was escorted by about 200 compatriots.

The first quartette charged consisted of C.K.T. [Naidoo], L.R.[Naidoo] and L.D. Naidoo and A.V. Chetty. Pleas of " Not guilty" were entered.

Mr. Samuels, who prosecuted for the Crown, said that the charge was on the lines of that in the Randeria case. The circumstances were the same and the question was whether the Crown should proceed pending the result of Randeria's appeal.

[1] Gandhiji spoke at a reception held in honour of Imam Abdool Kadir Bawazeer, some Natal Indians and himself.

[2] Gandhiji was garlanded before he addressed the audience.

[3] The report of the trial of C. K. T. Naidoo, L. R. Naidoo, L. D. Naidoo and A. V. Chetty was published in *Indian Opinion* under the title: "Pickets Arrested—Leaders Before the Court."

MR. JORDAN: Why have they been arrested?

MR. SAMUELS: They have been arrested upon instructions received and, it is alleged, they have been acting as pickets and causing trouble amongst Asiatics who are desirous of complying with the law. I make this statement *ex-parte, a*nd possibly it is not correct.

Mr. Jordan said that such conduct, if report were true, was most serious. The statement seemed " to lend the colour of truth to statements upon oath made before me by Indians to the effect that they are frightened to register because of these pickets. Many of the men who have been charged before me have told me that they have been terrorised and now I begin to believe their stories."

MR. GANDHI: If these men in the dock have been terrorising Indians anxious to comply with the law, surely there is some section amongst the Statutes for the contravention of which they can be charged. But why charge them under this section 9 of Act 36 of 1908? The watching will go on so long as the struggle continues. If these men have been terrorising others, then they should be punished, but my learned friend, Mr. Samuels, says he hardly credits the story.

MR. JORDAN: Men upon oath have told me that they have been terrorised by compatriots.

MR. GANDHI: Some people will say anything.

MR. JORDAN: And I'm afraid it will continue so long as your friends are permitted to do what you glibly term " watching." (Laughter)

MR. GANDHI: Anyway, these four men can't be charged under this section, because there is no Registrar of Asiatics according to law.

MR. JORDAN: Oh! Then what's the use of your picketing if Indians cannot get registered?

MR. GANDHI: We only want to let those who forget their manhood know that there is such a thing as ostracism.

MR. JORDAN: I don't think it is ostracism. I think it is a wholesome fear of incurring grievous bodily harm.

MR. GANDHI: Then 500 would not have registered and been living upon the best of terms with the rest of the community and be supplying part of the sinews of war today.

MR. JORDAN: All right; the accused are remanded, *sine die.*

MR. GANDHI: If there is any terrorism brought into play, if it is brought to the notice of the officers of the Association, they will do all they can to help the Government.

The other Indians under arrest were similarly remanded.

Indian Opinion, 26-12-1908

135. MIGHTY STRUGGLE

It is growing clearer every day that this is indeed a mighty struggle that is being carried on in the Transvaal. The Act must, of course, be repealed. Undoubtedly, this is an important demand. But as time passes, we have the advantage of being able to understand the real nature of the conflict. We have stated earlier that the Transvaal Indians are not fighting merely against the Transvaal Government; they are fighting against the Imperial Government as well. We have also stated that it is not as if the Transvaal Indians were fighting for themselves alone; they are fighting on behalf of all Indians in South Africa, on behalf of all Indians abroad; in fact, they are fighting for the whole of India. We have recently received support for this view from England. We give elsewhere summaries of a speech by Colonel Seely and Mr. Ritch's reply to it. Colonel Seely's statements in that speech deserve notice. He says that Indians must not migrate to a region with a good climate. The Coloured peoples and the whites cannot mix with each other and both stand to suffer by such mix-ing. Indians [he says] are rice-eaters and the whites cannot successfully compete with them. These statements express the views of the Imperial Government. They mean only one thing, namely, that in their view Indians are good enough to work merely as slaves of whites. Colonel Seely went on to saw that Indians already settled in the Transvaal and in other Colonies should be allowed to live honourably, saying, in the same breath, that General Botha was right in the policy he was following. Colonel Seely is therefore hypocritical when he says that we should be treated honourably. His speech in fact implies that Indians residing in lands where whites had already settled should be gradually eliminated. The Transvaal Indians therefore have to shoulder a burden on behalf of the whole of India. We shall show later that they can easily do so, and they certainly will. Colonel Seely's views suggest a change [for the worse] in British policy. They represent a rather unworthy aspect of British policy and, if they gain currency, they will herald the decline of the Empire, Therefore, the Indians' resistance tends to the good of the British Empire, too. Colonel Seely's views will be endorsed only by those who wish that the British Empire should be destroyed, All the Colonists belong to that class. They are therefore enemies of the British Empire. Indian [passive] resisters, who have been opppsing this view and will continue to do so, may be said to be friends of the Empire.

If our readers consider the matter in this light, they will easily see that the Transvaal struggle is not merely for permits, of no value in

themselves, nor for the entry of a handful of Indians. It is a fight for a noble cause. It is a battle of principles. Indians have pitted themselves against a mighty force. Even so, we make bold to say that it is possible for us to win. No one should imagine that this is like hoping that a black ant will carry on its head a potful of jaggery. The men who say this do not understand the efficacy of satyagraha—the power of truth. What can-not be done by millions can be done by a handful of men. We come acro-ss such instances everywhere. This is also true of the Transvaal Indians. It is because the Indians here are few that they can put up a good fight. It may take time to explain the position to most Indians, to convince them of the beauty of satyagraha, to stop dissensions amongst them. If, how-ever, the seed of truth strikes root in a few men and blossoms forth, its branches can be planted elsewhere and the tree can thus be multiplied indefinitly. Let it not be imagined that mustard seeds cannot make a hill. This also is possible; in fact, it has often happened. That is the greatness of the Lord of this universe. The hill is made up of nothing but particles of earth. If one were to inquire how this came about, one would simply feel incredulous. And yet we know that the thing has happened. Not only do we believe that a few Indians can accomplish this task; we have also said that they can do so quite easily. Why do we say this? As the satya-graha campaign progresses, we see that it is the poor alone who can join it. The rich find the burden of their wealth too heavy; they are not able to carry the burden of truth. This means that the Transvaal Indians must embrace poverty. To think that this is impossible is to give up the effort in despair. In what way is this difficult? We can never rely on wealth. We may even be robbed of it. Therefore, let us ourselves renounce it and instead take the sword of truth in our hands. If we have the strength to think and act thus, we are bound to get what we have been demanding. We have already said that the fight will certainly be carried on. Is there any reason to believe that it will not be? We find that the community on the whole is united. Hundreds of Indians have been, as it were, sanctified through anointment in prisons, They have seen the beauty of gaol life and that are not likely to turn back. And most of the Transvaal Indians are in any case poor, so that the question of their retreating simply does not arise. We place Colonel Seely's speech before such Indians and beg of them not to be defrauded, while they live, of the glory of such a mighty battle, but win immortal fame for themselves—for India—throughout the world.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-12-1908

136. INSCRIPTION IN A BOOK[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
December 23, 1908

TO MR. G. NELSON

FOR HIS MANY KINDNESSES WITHIN THE LAW DURING HIS[2] INCARCERATION AT VOLKSRUST

M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand Courtesy; Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, New Delhi

137. BALANCE-SHEET

The year, according to the English calendar, is drawing to a close. In our present state, we attach less importance to our own than to the English calendar. We plan our affairs with reference to the English or European calendar. We do not wish to suggest that this state of affairs is deplorable in itself. But as things stand, it is a sign of our degradation. The same thing would hardly have been regarded as unusual if we were really free, Since we want to have good relations with all parts of the world, nothing will be wrong in our following the European calender for the convenience of all. However, this is a digression. The object of this article is to set out the balance-sheet for the year.

Examining conditions in Natal, we find that the Government of the Colony wanted to enact many laws directed against us. But the Imperial Government did not sanction them. A commission has been appointed to consider the question of the continued import of indentured labour, There is every possibility of some good coming out of it. But the disallowance of the Bills should give us no reason to be particularly happy. Considering its internal difficulties, the [Natal Indian] Congress has done well. But those who manage its affairs must give thought to its continued financial difficulties. There is not enough enthusiasm among the people. Trade is ruined. Owing to a fall in land prices, many Indians have been reduced to poverty. Even servants are put to hardship. Cases of murders among Indians are on

[1] Gandhiji wrote this on a copy of Tolstoy' *Kingdom of God Is within You* which he presented to a warder in Volksrust Gaol, where he had served his sentence.

[2] This should have been "my".

the increase. The police feel helpless and Indians appear incapable of self-defence. This is an illustration of the fact that Indians are not free, do not even deserve to be free, for they depend on others for the safety of their lives and property. There is lack of education for the mind. On the one hand, the Government is withdrawing the educational facilities; the higher-grade schools are in a bad way. On the other hand, we ourselves do nothing for our education. We do not even mind losing a library. The only happy feature in the midst of all this is that some young men have been sent by their parents to England for education. The parents at least have thus done their duty. But no one can say whether the final product will be an earthen pot or a brass pot. Just now, the potter's wheel is at work.

Things seem quiet in the Cape. Whatever opportunities Indians have there are being thrown away. There are two rival bodies, engaged in mutual bickerings. The situation is likely to be exploited for its own advantage by the third party, their common enemy. The trading law and the immigration law there bear hard [on the Indians]. There, too, the internal situation is rather pitiable.

Rhodesia was threatened with a law similar to the Transvaal Act. The threat has not disappeared altogether, but there is little possibility of the Imperial Government sanctioning such a law.

The condition of Delagoa Bay Indians is as bad as the climate there. The Indian community is slumbering. There is no one to challenge the laws enacted. People there seem to think that, so long as their business is good and they make money, nothing else matters.

There are no Indians in the Orange River Colony to speak of. There has been no change in the situation there. It depends on Indians when a change will come about.

The Transvaal appears to hold the cards for all. That the Natal and Rhodesian Bills were disallowed was due principally, it may be said, to the Transvaal campaign. The campaign has now assumed a form which has won for it the admiration of the entire world. The prestige of the Indian community has gone up. In India, meetings are being held in every town over the transvaal. A [public] discussion has been going on in England. Within the space of twelve months, nearly 2,000 Indians have gone to gaol. People have been display- ing great courage in facing hardships, and their campaign is being acclaimed one every side. They have found a new weapon and acquired a new strength. We have not yet fully realized the miraculous quality of this strength and this weapon. General Smuts played foul, but since the Indians were satyagrahis, his foul play has turned out to their advantage. Such is the marvellous power of truth. Falsehood pays

homage to truth, for falsehood cannot hold out against it. Moreover, as the struggle is being prolonged, people are growing more determined, [whereas] other modes of fighting have always the effect of wearying the people. Similarly, service of truth can never lead to weakness. The more one puts oneself in its service, the stronger one grows.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-12-1908

138. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Monday night [*December 28, 1908*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Your letters to hand. Jagatsingh's is a regrettable case. As I see it, it is more the fault of the Hindus. It was particularly their duty which they have failed to discharge.

One should not be carried away by Jagatsingh's *brahmacharya.* Lakshman and Indrajit were both celebates (*brahmacharis*) and had conquered sleep and were therefore equally valorous. But the valour of the former was divine, while that of the latter ungodly. This means that the vow of *brahmacharya* and other vows are holy and bring happiness only when they are taken as a spiritual discipline. If resorted to by a demon, they only add to misery. This is a very serious statement to make; but all the same, it is no doubt true. Lord Patanjali has shown this very clearly in his *Yogadarshan*[2]. This is the thing our religion teaches us. The phrase *madanugrahaya* —'for my favour'— deserves to be always borne in mind. If you do not follow what I say or if you have any doubt about it, please write to me.

I am not surprised at your losing control over yourself. As you dive deeper into yourself and have experience, your mind will become calm, your passion will cool down and you will be stronger spiritually. Think carefully of every step you take or a piece of work you do, analyze it, always applying to it this test, namely, "Will this promote my spiritual progress?" The question "Will this lead to the progress of the Hindu religion or of India?" is covered by it. The country cannot rise, religions cannot advance by a step that will not lead to spiritual growth.

This has been found to be the result of the Swami's[3] impatience.

[1] This letter was written sometime toward the end of 1908.

[2] Book of aphorisms on Yoga, one of the systems of Indian philosophy.

[3] Shankeranand, a Hindu missionary who toured South Africa in 1908-9.

It is very regrettable. It was because of such results that the venerable Kavi[1] often used to say that in modern times we should beware of religious teachers. Our experience also confirms his view. Everyone is obdurate and wants to see his own opinion prevail. If instead of such obduracy in regard to one's opinion one devotes one's energy to self-realization, one will do good to oneself as well as to others. Otherwise, both will face degradation.

Mrs. Polak will leave tomorrow. This letter also will reach you the same day, perhaps later, for you must have gone to Maritzburg.

More from other letters.

Blessings from

MOHANDA

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 4781

139. NEW YEAR

We examined the balance-sheet of the last year.[2] We were unhappy at the thought that we had to follow an alien calendar in making our cal-culations. No cause for unhappiness would remain if *swadeshi* were to replace everything foreign. We can easily attain happiness if we exert our-selves to that end during the year that has just commenced. *Swadeshi* car-ries a great and profound meaning. It does not mean merely the use of what is produced in one's own country. That meaning is certainly there in *swadeshi*. But there is another meaning implied in it which is far greater and much more important. *Swadeshi* means reliance on our own strength. We should also know what we mean by " reliance on our own strength." "Our strength" means the strength of our body, our mind and our soul. From among these, on which should we depend? The answer is brief. The soul is supreme, and therefore soul-force is the foundation on which man must build. Passive resistance or satyagraha is a mode of fighting which depends on such force. That, then, is the only real key[to success] for the Indians.

During this year a good deal will depend on the Transvaal and Natal. The Transvaal fight is continuing. In Natal, the issue of licences will come up. If the Indians in the Transvaal give up their fight, that will have an immediate adverse effect in Natal, because the course of events in Natal during the coming year will largely be determined by this movement. Nothing will be gained by submitting petitions to the

[1] Shrimad Rajachandra; *vide* "Guide to London", [1893-94]

[2] *Vide* "Balance-Sheet", 26-12-1908

Natal Government. How, then, may anything be gained? The Transvaal provides the answer to this. That is to say, the answer to the question as to what this year has in store for us will be provided by whether or not the Indians in the Transvaal fight to the last.

It may be hoped that a community from among which 2,000 men have been to gaol will never accept defeat, though there may be some traitors in it. Looking at the matter in this light, every Indian will find that what the new year will bring lies entirely in his own hands.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-1-1909

140. PHOENIX SCHOOL

We have received many requests from parents for admission of their children to this school. We are prepared to undertake their schooling. There are some financial difficulties, however, in providing residential facilities for them. We are trying our best to overcome them. We hope to give more details about this in our next issue.

In the meantime, those parents who want to send their children [to our school] may inform us accordingly. If they can also give as some idea of the monetary help they will be able to give, the matter will be settled soon.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-1-1909

141. NATAL-BOUND INDIAN PASSENGERS

Indian passengers arriving in Natal are facing more and more difficulties. The fault mainly is our own. Many of these people are rather impatient to enter [the Colony]. If they have no right to enter, that makes no difference to them. Others have to suffer in consequence. If the fault is ours, surely the remedy also lies with us. Only when and to the extent that we develop a sense of justice will there be an end to our troubles. Anything else that we may do will be of no avail. It will prove as ineffective as an attempt to stitch a patch on the sky.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-1-1909

[1] This is a Gujarati saying: If the sky were to get torn like a garment, it would be impossible to stitch a patch on it.

142. EXEMPLARY CASE OF SATYAGRAHA

In Maritzburg, there is a white named Mr. Green. He refused to pay the poll-tax. So he was produce before a magistrate. He declared bluntly that, as it was an unjust tax, he was not willing to pay it. The Magistrate has sentenced him to imprisonment. Mr. Green is at present undergoing the sentence. This is an unusual case. Mr. Green does not incite others. He feels that the poll-tax is an oppressive impost. He is not much of an orator. He, therefore, resolved in his mind that so far as he was concerned, he would never pay that tax. He does not mind the sentence of imprisonment imposed on him in consequence. This is satyagraha in the true sense of the term. Those who love truth never follow others blindly. They go on suffering for the sake of truth.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-1-1909

143 MY SECOND EXPERIENCE IN GAOL [-I][1]

INTRODUCTORY

I think my experience in gaol this time was better than in January 1908. It was good education for me personally, and I believe it will prove useful to other Indians.

A campaign of satyagraha can take many forms, but it is found that gaol-going is the most effective means of fighting political disabilities. We shall have to go to gaol often enough, I think; it is necessary not only during the present agitation, but is the only course that can be adopted in fighting future disabilities. It is the duty of every Indian, therefore, to know all that is worth knowing about gaol-life.

ARRESTED

When Mr. Sorabji was arrested, I wished what I could follow him to gaol, or that the agitation would end before he was due to be released. I was disappointed. The same desire came over me again more intensely, when the brave leaders of Natal went to gaol, and [this time] it was fulfilled. While returning from Durban, I was arrested at Volksrust Station on October 7 [1908] for being without my certificate of voluntary registration and refusing to give my finger-

[1] For articles on his first experience, *vide* Vol. VIII.

impressions.

My object in going to Durban was to bring [along with me] educated Indians living in Natal and other Indians who had been previously resident in the Transvaal. I had hoped that quite a large number of Indians in Natal would show readiness to follow their leaders [to gaol]. The Government also felt the same way. Accordingly, orders had been issued to the gaoler to make arrangements for the accommodation of more than a hundred Indians, and tents, blankets, utensils, etc., had been sent on from Pretoria. I also found, as I alighted at Volksrust accompanied by several Indians, that a large number of policemen were present. But all this labour proved superfluous. The gaoler and the police were disappointed, for only a small number of Indians from Natal had offered to accompany me. There were just six in that train. Eight more started from Durban by another train on the same day. In all, therefore, only fourteen Indians came. All of us were arrested and taken to the lock-up. The next day we were produced before the Magistrate, but the hearing of the case was postponed for seven days. We declined to offer bail. Two days later, Mr Mavji Karsanji Kothari, who had joined [us] in spite of the fact that he was suffering from piles, was asked to bail himself out, as his trouble had become aggravated and there was need for a picket in Volksrust.

SITUATION IN GAOL

There were in gaol, when we arrived there, Mr. Dawad Mahomed, Mr. Rustomjee, Mr. Anglia [and] Mr. Sorabji Adajania who had initiated the second phase of the movement, and about 25 other Indians. It being the *Ramzan* month, Muslim friend had been observing the *raza.* By special permission, food was sent to them in the evening by Mr. Essop Suleman Kazi. Due observance of the fast had thus been made possible. Though there is generally no provision for lighting in mofussil gaols, orders had been issued in view of the *Ramzan* to arrange for lights and provide a clock. Mr. Anglia led the *namaz.* Those who were observing the fast were subjected to hard labour during the first few days, but later on no hard labour was exacted from them.

As for the other Indians, permission had been granted for one of them to attend to the cooking. This was done by Mr. Umiyashanker Shelat and Mr. Surendrarai Medh, who were joined later by Mr. Joshi when the number of prisoners went up. When these gentlemen were deported, cooking was attended to by Mr. Ratanshi Sodha, Mr. Raghavji and Mr. Mavji Kothari, Later still, when the number rose very high, Mr. Lalbhai and Mr. Omar Osman also

joined. Those in charge of cooking had to get up at two or three in the morning and keep busy till five or six in the evening. When a considerable number of Indians had already been released, Mr. Moosa Essakji and Imam Saheb Bawazeer took charge of cooking. I count it as the good fortune of the Indians concerned that they were served food prepared by the Chairman of the Hamidia Islamic Society and a businessman who had in fact had no experience of cooking. When the Imam Saheb and his companions were released, they left the legacy of cooking to me. Since I knew something of it, I experienced no difficulty. The work remained under my charge only for four days. It is now (that is, up to the moment of writing) being looked after by Mr. Harilal Gandhi. Though the information as to who was in charge of cooking when we arrived in gaol does not fall under the heading [of this paragraph], I have given it here for the sake of convenience.

When we entered the gaol, Indians were lodged in three bedrooms. In this gaol, Indian and Kaffir prisoners were always lodged separately.

ARRANGEMENTS IN GAOLS

There are two wards in the prison for males; one for the whites and one for the Kaffirs—the gaol [also] accommodates other non-whites. Though they were free thus to lodge the Indians in the Kaffir ward, the gaoler had made provision for them in the ward for the whites.

There are small cells, each with arrangements to accommodate ten or fifteen or even more prisoners. The prison is built entirely of stone. The cell has a good height. The walls are plastered and the floor is washed so that it always stays very clean. Moreover, the walls are frequently whitewashed, so that they always appear fresh. The area in front is paved with black stone, and is washed every day. It has a water-spout which enables three men to bathe simultaneously. There are two lavatories, and also benches. Above, there is a barbedwire covering intended to prevent prisoners from escaping by climbing the walls. Every room is well lighted and properly ventilated. The prisoners are locked in at six in the evening, and let out at six in the morning. The cell is locked from outside during the night. This means that, if anyone has a call of nature to answer, he cannot go out of the cell, and hence commodes, filled with water treated with a germicide, are placed in the cell itself.

DIET

At the time of my imprisonment in Volksrust, the Indian

prisoners were served mealie pap in the morning, and rice, with some vegetable, for the midday and evening meals. The vegetable served was mostly potato. No ghee was allowed at all. Under-trial prisoners were allowed, in addition, an ounce of sugar with mealie pap in the morning, and half a pound of bread for the midday meal. Some of the under-trial prisoners used to share a portion of their bread and sugar with the prisoners undergoing sentences after conviction. Prisoners were entitled to meat twice [a week]; since, however, it was not given to either the Hindus or the Muslims, they were entitled to a substitute. We therefore made a joint petition[1] and as a result it was ordered that we should receive an ounce of ghee and, on meat days, half a pound of beans in place of meat. Moreover, there was some *tandalja* growing by itself in the gaol garden, and we were allowed to pluck its leaves. We were also permitted from time to time to gather onions from the garden. There remained, therefore, nothing to complain of about food after ghee and beans had been sanctioned. The diet in the Johannesburg Gaol is somewhat different. There, only ghee is supplied with rice; no vegetables are allowed. In the evenings, there are green vegetables and mealie pap twice in the week, beans on three days, and potatoes, with mealie pap, once.

Though this scale cannot be considered adequate, as judged by our habits, it is not bad in itself. Many Indians have a strong dislike of mealie pap and obstinately refuse to have it. But personally I think this is an error. Mealie pap is a sweet and strength-giving food. It can be taken in place of wheat in this country. It is very tasty when sugar is added to it, but even otherwise it tastes quite good when one is hungry. If one can get used to it, the foregoing scale will not prove inadequate nourishment; on the contrary, one may actually thrive on it. With some adjustments, it can be a perfect diet. But it is a matter of regret that we have grown so fond of good eating and have pampered ourselves into such habits that we are quick to lose our temper if we do not get the food we are used to. This was my experience in Volksrust, and it made me very unhappy. There was incessant grumbling about food, and very often there were such fretful scenes as if eating and living were the same thing, or as if we lived only to eat. Surely it does not become a satyagrahi to behave in this manner. It is our duty to try to get some changes made in the diet. If we fail, however, we must remain content with whatever is offered and thus demonstrate to the Government our determination not to yield; this also is our duty. There are some Indians who are afraid of going to gaol only because of the inconvenience in the matter of food. They

[1] *Vide* ''Petition to Resident Magistrate'', 11-10-1908

must make a conscious effort to overcome the craving for good food that might have enslaved them.

SENTENCED TO IMPRISONMENT

As I mentioned above, all our cases were postponed for seven days, so that they came up for hearing on the 14th, when some of us were sentenced to a month and others to six weeks with hard labour. There was a boy eleven years old who was sentenced to 14 days' simple imprison-ment. I was much worried lest the case against me should be withdrawn. The Magistrate retired for some time after the other cases had been disposed of, which made me all the more nervous. The view generally expressed earlier was that I would be charged with failure to produce my register and refusal to give my thumb-impression, and also with inciting other Indians to enter the Transvaal without any right. While I was grappling with the problem in my mind, the Magistrate returned to the court and my case was called out. I was then sentenced to a fine of Rs. 25 or to two months' hard labour. This made me very happy, and I congratulated myself on what I considered to be my good fortune in being allowed to join the others in gaol.

CLOTHES

After the sentence was passed, we were issued gaol uniforms. We were supplied each with a pair of short breeches, a shirt of coarse cloth, a jumper, a cap, a towel and a pair of socks and sandals. I think this is a very convenient dress for work. It is simple, and wears well. We should have nothing to complain about such a dress. We should not mind having it even for everyday wear. The dress given to the whites is somewhat different. They get a rimmed cap, stockings and handkerchief, in addition to two towels. Indians, too, need to be supplied with handkerchiefs.

(To be continued)

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-1-1909

144. INTERVIEW TO ''THE NATAL MERCURY''

[DURBAN,

January 5, 1909]

Mr. Gandhi, the well-known leader of the Natal Indians, who has taken a prominent part in the agitation amongst the Indians in the Transvaal during the past year, is at present on a visit to Durban, and yesterday he was interviewed by a

representative of *The Natal Mercury.*

Asked to give a sketch of the present position in the Transvaal, and more especially what has led up to the second stage—or ''Passive Resistance Movement'', as it is called—Mr. Gandhi said:

I have read the editorial notes in the *Mercury* lately, saying that we have not been conducting this campaign with the same grace and dignity with which we started it, and I should like to say that, when I read that I felt rather grieved, because I have always understood that, whether the *Mercury* differed from the Indians in their struggle or agreed with them, we always received credit for fair fighting and good intentions. I may at once state that there has been no falling away from grace and dignity in our struggle. When we commenced that struggle, we did so deliberately, with a desire to use the cleanest weapons possible, and we have not departed from the principles then laid down.

Asked to give a concise definition of these principles, Mr. Gandhi said:

Well, we have eschewed resorting to violence in any shape or form, and we are simply trying to show the Government, by our personal sufferings, that we will not submit to a law which, we consider, wounds our consciences, and is otherwise objectionable. This is called "passive resistance'' for want of a better term. To put it plainly, it is really fighting evil by patience, not returning evil for evil. In this struggle, therefore, there can be no question of violence or intimidation. At the same time, I am free to confess that some members of the Indian community, in their over-zeal for the cause, have not hesitated to use threats against those who have deserted [and decided] to submit to the law, but whenever such acts have come to the notice of the leaders, they have been promptly dealt with, and every effort has been made to dissociate ourselves from any such acts. The charge has also been brought against us that we have invited the Natal Indians to take part in the struggle. This is not true. The Natal Indians who have gone to the Transvaal have rights of residence there, and they have gone there because they felt that they could not reap the results of our sufferings without, a original residents of the Transvaal, taking their share in them. They had a right of access there, for under the new law any Indian who has lived in the Transvaal for a period of three years previous to the war is entitled to return. I notice it has also been suggested that we are trying, during this second stage of the struggle, to gain an advantage to which we were not entitled when we took up passive resistance, or at the time when the compromise of last January was effected. This, too, is wrong. The position at the time to the compromise was perfectly clear. The Indians were fighting for the

repeal of the Asiatic Act of 1907. This does not mean that we objected to the complete identification of every Asiatic who was entitled to remain in the country. What we objected to was the spirit of the Act of 1907, and some of the objectionable sections of that Act. It was the methods that we really objected to. For instance, with regard to the finger-prints question—for which I actually suffered physically—I never, at any stage of the struggle, said that the giving of finger-prints was objectionable as such. It was owing to the utter disregard of every representation made by the Indians, and of every sentiment which they cherished, that the struggle was really undertaken.

Proceeding, Mr. Gandhi dealt with the compromise entered into and said:

Whilst it is true, with regard to that compromise, that there was nothing written in so many words as to the repeal of the Asiatic Act of 1907, reading between the lines one can read even the repeal of the Act in the written terms of the compromise, but as I have said often, and repeat now, General Smuts deliberately, but verbally, promised to repeal the Act, if the British Indians fulfilled their part of the compromise, that is to say, underwent voluntary registration. As the whole of South Africa knows, we have done so. I might also point out that General Smuts repeated his promise in his speech[1] at Richmond three days after the compromise, and that speech, although it has been brought to his notice, he has never contradicted or qualified. If this Act had been repealed, there would certainly have been no agitation whatsoever, and there would have been no question either of the status of educated Indians, because, as has been shown by the latest decision of the Supreme Court of the Transvaal, an educated Indian is not a prohibited immigrant under the Immigration Act of the Transvaal, and his right to enter under that Act is affected and taken away only by means of the Asiatic Act of 1907. Therefore, the repeal of the Asiatic Act of 1907 would have meant the re-instatement of the educated Asiatics.

THE INTERVIEWER: You mean, of course, the new-comers?

MR. GANDHI: Yes; and let it be remembered that these educated Indians were not affected, either before the war or after the war, under the Peace Preservation Ordinance, so that the question of the educated Asiatic is in no sense of the term a new question. It is now mentioned prominently and separately, because of the controversy that has arisen over the repeal of the Act, and over the offer made by General Smuts to repeal that Act, and the fulfilment of certain other conditions which were not contemplated at the time of the January compromise, one of

[1] *Vide* "General Smuts' Speech in Richmond", 5-2-1908.

which was that we should forego the rights of educated Asiatics and allow them to be considered as prohibited immigrants under the Immigration Act of the Transvaal. I claim that no self-respecting Indian could accept a bargain of that nature. At the present moment the controversy has assumed, so far as the merits of the case are concerned, a purely academic shape. Everybody admits that the Act of 1907 is useless, if not actually harmful, even from the Colonial standpoint. The Supreme Court, in its two decisions given recently, has said as much. It is not required for the identification or registration of Indians. The new Act of last year brings about that satisfactorily. With reference to these educated Indians, it is admitted that we are entitled to a few highly educated Indians being allowed to enter the Transvaal for our wants, if we are to remain there as a progressive community. The only difficulty with reference to the educated Indians is that, whereas General Smuts states that they can only enter on sufferance on temporary permits, we maintain that they should be able to enter as a matter of right, provided that they pass an education rest, which may be imposed by the immigration officer, and we have further added that the test may be so severe as to allow of only six such men being able to enter the Transvaal during any one year. That this could be easily done is shown by the practice in Natal and the Cape, and even in Australia, which has not allowed, so far as I know, a single Asiatic to enter that Colony by means of the education test.

Continuing, Mr. Gandhi said:

The passive resisters are now told that whilst these two very reasonable demands might have been granted before passive resistance was taken up, they could not now be granted, because of the influence that any yielding to passive resistance might create on the native mind. Personally, I consider that that fear is totally groundless. In the first place, if our demands are just, they ought to be granted, whether we are passive resisters or not; and, in the second place, if the natives were to adopt our methods, and replace physical violence by passive resistance, it would be a positive gain to South Africa. Passive resisters, when they are in the wrong, do mischief only to themselves, When they are in the right, they succeed in spite of any odds. It is not difficult to see in Natal, that, if Bambata, instead of murdering Inspector Hunt, had simply taken up passive resistance, because he felt that the imposition of the poll-tax was unjustifiable, much bloodshed would have been avoided, and a great deal of money would have been saved; and, at the same time, if the natives as a body did not feel the imposition of the poll-tax, Bambata's passive resistance would have been in vain. If, on the other hand, the natives did, in any large body, resent the imposition of the tax, no amount of physical violence by

the Government could possibly have been enough to collect such a tax from people who simply sat still and would not pay it. So that the South African Colonists should, in my opinion, rather welcome passive resistance in place of physical violence; and, after all, is it not merely the supersession of the Mosaic law of a tooth for a tooth by Christian law of non-resistance of evil by evil?

THE INTERVIEWER: To narrow down the point, I take it that you are insisting upon the promise, if it was made, or whether it was made or not—you are insisting upon the repeal of the Asiatic Act of 1907, because you only want to establish the absolute right of the educated Indian to go into the Transvaal. Is that so?

MR. GANDHI: If he can pass the test, certainly.

THE INTERVIEWER: But the Imperial Government has taken up the attitude that a self-governing Colony can exclude whom it will; at least, broadly, that is the position which has been taken up. On the other hand, you claim a right which the Imperial Government says the self-governing Colony is entitled to exercise, and say that it cannot exclude a certain class.

MR. GANDHI: I don't think that the Imperial Government has at any stage taken up the attitude that self-governing Colonies have a perfect right to exclude whom they will; but, if that has been stated, then it is a departure from the Colonial policy hitherto followed. I don't think the Imperial Government would pass any such law. The Imperial Government made a mistake with reference to the Immigration Law of the Transvaal—that is to say, in no section was there any mention of Asiatics, except in the most indirect manner; but the Govern-ment of the Transvaal has placed an interpretation upon one section which brings about that result, and the Imperial Government, having accepted that, now finds it most difficult to intervene effectively. If the Imperial Government is now going to say that the self-governing Colonies have a perfect right to exclude whom they will, then that is an innovation in Colonial policy hitherto followed. You know that, in 1897, the late Mr. Escombe actually submitted to Mr. Chamberlain a draft law to exclude Asiatics from this Colony, and Mr. Chamberlain then said that he would not pass it, and suggested that any exclusion law should not be racial, but should be of a general character. That suggestion was adopted, and since then the Natal Act has been copied everywhere throughout the Colonies. But, with regard to what members of the Imperial Ministry have said as to the rights of the Colonies to exclusion of whom they will, I don't think you will find any definite pronouncement.

Asked what was the position to-day in the Transvaal, Mr. Gandhi said:

The position to-day is that the Indians have gone through the struggle for the last two years, and over 2,000 have gone through the prisons of the Transvaal—that is to say, nearly one-third of the actual resident Indian population of the Transvaal, and one-sixth of the possible Indian population of the Transvaal. This has also carried conviction amongst some representative Europeans, and, as a result, a small Committee has been formed, with Mr. W. Hosken as Chairman, which Committee has pledged itself to support the British Indians in their struggle, even to the extent of facing imprisonment, if need be, until the claims put forward by the Indians, which these friends consider to be just, are granted. The Government considers that it will be able to starve us into submission. It is perfectly true that some may become exhausted and yield, but I believe that we have amongst ourselves a very large and sufficient number to carry on the struggle, in the face of all odds. There are some who have al-ready sold out their businesses, given up everything, and are merely carry-ing on the struggle because they consider that a great principle is involv-ed, and if my estimate is true, I can only say that the conclusion can be but one, viz., that our demands will be granted. How early or how late that will come about will depend upon our own strength. Then, in England we have the South Africa British Indian Committee, with Lord Ampthill—sometime acting Viceroy of India—as chairman, also working for the same object, and that Committee has on it many influential An-glo-Indians of wide experience, and I think that, if we are patient enough we will be able to gain sympathy from all quarters. Meanwhile, the Transvaal Government has again begun to take active steps. I have a telegram saying that nearly 30 Indians have already been deported to Natal, and they have immediately re-entered the Transvaal, and now await trial there. This time, I understand, they will be charged under a different section, and will, therefore, suffer imprisonment. The Natal leaders and 33 others will be brought before the Magistrate, probably to-morrow. They will share the same fate, so that the process of filling the gaols of the Transvaal has now commenced, and it remains to be seen whether they are equal to the task or not. The Government evidently thinks that by these drastic measures, and by the magistrates imposing the fullest penalties provided by the law, the Indians will succumb and submit to it, but I do not think so.

THE INTERVIEWER: Has the law-abiding Indian, rightly in the Transvaal, any substantial grievance against the laws there as they stand today?

MR. GANDHI: Certainly. Although we are not now fighting on the ground of any such grievances, there are grievances, For instance, the most law-abiding Indian is deprived of the ownership of land, and can not possess a piece of land in the country, except in special Locations. That may be said to be a most tangible grievance. But that is apart from what we are fighting for. The principle involved in this struggle is, or was, at one time, religious, that is to say, the law of 1907 strikes at the religious sentiment of the people, but the principal object now is on account of the honour of the Indian race, for we are to be treated as an integral part of the Empire, or we are not.

THE INTERVIEWER: That is a very wide principle, but, as I understand it, the real crux of the whole thing is this question of the right of educated Indians to enter the Transvaal. In that case there is the statement already referred to as to the Imperial Government not being prepared to quarrel with a. self-governing Colony which denies that right of entry.

MR. GANDHI: Then, in that case, we fight both the local Government and the Imperial Government. But I still believe that the Imperial Government is with us.

THE INTERVIEWER: Well, it is a certain impasse just now. You are simply fighting to make the position so unbearable that some Imperial action will be taken.

MR. GANDHI: Well, I have so great a faith in the spirit of the struggle, that I feel that, before the Imperial Government, intervenes, all the Colonies in South Africa will say "No, we must grant those just demands." There are already signs of that in the Transvaal, and some prominent Europeans who had at first deprecated our entering on the second struggle are now strongly supporting us.

The Natal Mercury, 6-1-1909

145. SHOPKEEPERS VERSUS HAWKERS

STOMACH VERSUS LIMBS

Once upon a time a great quarrel arose between the stomach and the limbs of the body. The hands said, "We shall do no work. We are tired of working. We carry food to the mouth every time, but it is the stomach that eats it and wastes it. We get no help from the stomach." The legs said, "We shall not walk a step. We have fruitlessly slaved for the stomach. It is only the stomach that really enjoys itself. The stomach is honoured like the king. It has fallen to us to do the drudgery." The other limbs of the body also made similar

complaints. The stomach did a good deal of explaining, saying, “The work I put in is not visible. The hands merely carry the food to the mouth, and their work is then over. The legs enjoy rest after fetching the food. But I have to work twenty-four hours a day, though you may not be able to see it. If I take rest even for a minute, all of you stop working. You yourselves will be the first to suffer if you stop working. So far as I am concerned, I can carry on my work for some time, though, without you, I too shall have to die ultimately. But if you stop working, know for certain that you are virtually dead before I die.” However, the limbs were not convinced. They stopped working. In twenty-four hours, the hands, the feet and the other limbs of the body became weak. They repented. As the stomach did not receive any food, they became worried. In the end, they were convinced of the truth of what the stomach had said. They realized that the work done by the stomach was not inconsiderable, and that because the stomach worked for many limbs, [the benefit of] its work was spread all over, with the result that it could not be noticed by any particular limb. But when the limbs stopped working, they discovered that it was they who were the first victims.

We were reminded of this story by some letters which we have received. The correspondents accuse businessmen in a number of ways. Some have gone to the length of abusing them, while others hold out threats against them. Many of them put forward religion as the excuse, quite late in the day, for not going to gaol. As the limbs in the story became jealous of the stomach, all these persons have become envious of the shopkeepers. They charge the Transvaal shopkeepers with having betrayed the hawkers and ruined them. The businessmen are enjoying themselves [they say], having sent the hawkers to gaol. One of the correspondents, while he refers to hawkers in respectful terms on the one hand, states on the other that they cannot voice their views, freely at meetings because they are afraid of the shopkeepers. We have not published these letters, for they are not such as will enhance the prestige of the community. The reason for these charges is the fact that some traders have transferred their businesses to the names of their wives or of some whites. It behoves these traders to be generous, like the stomach, and reason with the hawkers gently. The community has submitted to slavery for a very long time and has never tasted independence. Now that we have reached the threshold of independence with the help of the weapon of satyagraha, and are being freed from slavery, everyone, great or small,

finds it difficult to adjust himself naturally to the new situation. We envy those whom we find to be superior to the rest. There is nothing surprising about this. Every nation which has attained freedom has passed through such a stage of heart-burning. Before a child is delivered, the mother suffers pangs which are like agonies of death. It is then that the child is born. In the same way, before we see the birth of freedom, not only shall we have to suffer the pangs inflicted by the Government, but also those of our own making. The charges against the traders mentioned above are ill-conceived. Those of them who have transferred their businesses to whites did so neither out of greed nor out of fear of going to gaol. Most of them are in fact ready to go to gaol. The only object of transferring businesses was to see that we did not ourselves place in the hands of the Government the ammunition that it might use against us. We must remind the hawkers that when hands were laid on Indians in January [1908], it was mainly the businessmen who were first attacked. Almost all the traders of Standerton have been to gaol. The Chairman of the Association, Mr. Cachalia, has been to gaol. Mr. Aswat and Mr. Nagadi, who had got themselves arrested with great difficulty, have completed their term of imprisonment and likewise Mr. Ebrahim Kazi is in gaol now; and he too got the opportunity only when he transferred his business to a white. Mr. Bhabha went to gaol in Middelburg, and Mr. Belim in Christiana. At present Mr. Mahomed Mia is in gaol. Thus, a large number of traders have suffered imprisonment. Those who came specially from Natal to help us are also leading merchants of the Colony. It is therefore not proper to accuse the traders. The hawkers ought to see that they do not envy the traders. They should be satisfied if the traders go to gaol. To say that the traders have ruined them suggests that they think they themselves made a mistake in going to gaol. In fact, we should believe that those who are responsible for sending us to gaol have done us good. Those who have gone to gaol have been the gainers. Those who have not gone to gaol have been the losers. Those who have sacrificed their wealth for the sake of their motherland have in reality earned it. Those who betrayed their country, their prestige and their pledge, and clung to their money are, really speaking, poor in spite of their riches, We hope therefore that those who have written letters to us and those who hold similar views will ponder over our words and will persist in the fight rather than, by abandoning it, lose the game that we are about to win.

If it behoves the hawkers to realize this, the traders too cannot be

let off. We cannot say that they are entirely blameless. No doubt there are some among them who are cowards, to whom their money is their God. Their heart is not in the movement. Some make big speeches and nothing more. All the traders should follow the example of the stomach. It gives more to the limbs than it keeps for itself of what it digests. Whereas the limbs work only for some time, the stomach slaves all the twenty-four hours, not for its own sake but for the sake of the limbs. In the same way, it is up to the traders to safeguard the interests of hawkers and their dependants. Though they are big men, they must learn to be humble and, though masters, they must act as servants. One may transfer one's business to another's name if it cannot be helped. But this is only the last resort, fit enough for half-cowards. We hope that those who are resolved to be lions, who are brave satyagrahis, will never take out licences in the names of third parties, but help the cause of the community by winding up their businesses and embracing poverty for the present. That is the only right way for a man who claims the privilege of social status, of wealth. We cannot say that the hawkers have had no reason to complain; no one would have any ground for complaint if every businessman did his duty and sacrificed self-interest for the common good. The Indians in South Africa have their eyes fixed at present on the Transvaal merchants. The hawkers have to fight their battle independently, but in case they give in, the traders will also share part of the blame for that. Day by day, the situation in the Transvaal is getting more delicate. We pray to God to show the right path to the traders, the hawkers and all other Indians, to keep them resolute, to give them the courage to bear all the hardships that their heroic undertaking may entail.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-1-1909

146. OTHER LEADERS OF NATAL

Every Indian will want to know what the leaders of Natal have been doing, apart from those who have sacrificed their all for the sake of the country and proceeded to the Transvaal. The question that our Johannes-burg correspondent has posed for Natal is worth pondering over. Every Indian in South Africa is morally bound to help the Transvaal struggle. Natal's obligation is twofold. But we regret to say that the leaders who have remained behind are not doing their full

duty. This ought to make all of us hang our heads in shame. The first duty of the leaders is to start raising contributions to the Congress fund. The Congress is running short of money. It is in debt. Mr. Robinson's Bill is hanging over us. When the brave heroes of Natal go to gaol, it will be the duty of the Congress to dispatch telegrams; what does it propose to do in that case? Where will it get the money from? Will not the Congress offer any help if it is found that the families of those imprisoned in the Transvaal are facing starvation? If it wants to help, what source will it draw upon?

Movements for raising contributions were initiated again and again. They never made any progress. This is not they way to conduct the affairs of a big public body.

The futile dispute with the Main Line [Indians] is dragging on merrily. On behalf of the Main Line leaders, Mr. Mahomed Ibrahim and Mr. Kharsani had a meeting with Mr. Dawad Mahomed in the Volksrust gaol. A settlement was almost reached, but it appears everything is in the melting-pot again. It is obviously the duty of the leaders of the Main Line Indians to offer monetary help rather than raise issues. If only they will see the point, the position is simple: their demand can be easily met, nay, it is almost as good as met. They want that a large number of Main Line Indians should be included in the Committee as of right. This right has always been there. All the same, they can demand an assurance that the right will be duly respected. The other point in dispute is that their consent should be necessary for every item of expenditure exceeding £25. Though this is a trivial matter, the Congress can pass a resolution to that effect. The Main Line Indians should realize that it is for themselves, not for others, to ensure that they enjoy these rights. The Congress certainly cannot stand in their way. But it is not in the least proper to hold up the work of collection just for this reason. We hope that the Main Line Indians will not fail in their duty.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-1-1909

147. HINDU-MUSLIM RIOTS

Reuter cables received here report violent Hindu-Muslim riots in Calcutta. It is believed that several persons were killed. Some Hindus attacked a mosque, which provoked the Muslims. They retaliated. The

Army was called in. It appears from the cables that order has not yet been restored. None of us can judge how far these reports are true. It is, however, apparent that the cause of the riots was a white officer. There appears to be no reason why Hindus and Muslims should fight among themselves. In their short-sightedness, the officers imagine that they stand to gain if the two communities fall out with each other. The situation in India is so critical at present that the Government, as also the officer—a large number of them—believe, can rest secure if the two communities fight with each other. One must consider what the duty of overseas Indians in this situation is. It is clear to us that, whether we are Hindus or Muslims, we must not support either side. We should feel sorry that a third party has provoked quarrels among us and pray to *Khuda-Ishwar* in mosques and in temples to grant that there might be an end to the disputes that frequently arise between our two communities. We are convinced that every patriotic Indian will see that this is the only way to ensure the progress of India.

The war of satyagraha that we have been waging can be effective in every situation, and we may rest confident that, in case disputes arise between the two communities, we can meet them with this same weapon.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-1-1909

148. VANCOUVER INDIANS

It appears the Indians of Vancouver, in Canada, are standing up to the Government with great courage. They refused to walk into the trap laid by the Government there for removing them to a malarial region. They will now remain in Vancouver, instead of migrating to the British Honduras. Two of their representatives who had gone on an inspection tour of the Honduras reported that it was not suitable for Indian settlement. They allege that inducements were held out to them to submit a false report. But they were not influenced. They only thought of the interest of their compatriots. Both these Indians deserve congratulations.

Vancouver Indians are not men who can be trifled with. Another Instance of this kind has come to our knowledge. From reports in newspapers published there, we find that a professor named Teja Sing, who has settled there and passed the M.A. examination, addressing a

meeting of thousands of Sikhs and other Indians, spoke as follows:

> As far as the present agitation in India is concerned, the country will put up a constitutional fight. But should redress be denied, an Indian will arise who, equipped with arms, will lead the people to fight with bombs and explosives.
>
> The uncontrolled powers which the white officers in India enjoy have made some of them totally incapable of understanding the people. The eyes of the Sikhs are being opened. They are beginning to understand things. India wants justice. Mr. Cunningham wrote some years ago in a book of history that if England failed to do justice, there would arise in India a great military leader who would seize all power in his hands. No State can be built on the foundation of bad faith.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-1-1909

149. PHOENIX SCHOOL

We hinted last week that we might write [more] about this school.[1] We are now in a position to report as under:

BOARDING

Those in Phoenix who live with their families can take in up to eight boarders. It is intended that the boys who may be accepted as boarders will be treated as one's own children. This practice prevailed in India in olden days, and it should be revived as far as possible. There is only one condition for a boy's admission, namely, he should be in sound health. Indians of any caste or community will be admitted. No distinctions will be made in such matters as food, etc. The boys will get the same food as the inmates, with certain modifications. It will be, in effect, as under:

Half a bottle of milk, two ounces of ghee, flour, mealie meal, pulse, rice, fresh fruit, green vegetables, sugar bread, nuts (mainly groundnut).

The diet will be provided regularly, spread over not less than three and not more than four meals as it may suit the boys. Which of these items should be included in which meal will be decided in the

[1] *Vide* "Phoenix School", 2-1-1909

light of our customary practice or in any other way that may be found to be best from experience.

The diet does not include tea, coffee or cocoa. It is our view, based on our knowledge and experience, that things such as tea are harmful even to adults, and much more so to children. Some medical men think that the introduction of tea, etc., has led to an increase in the incidence of ill-health.

Moreover, tea, coffee and cocoa are produced through the labour of men who work more or less in conditions of slavery. In Natal, for instance, it is the indentured labourers who work on tea and coffee plantations. Cocoa is produced in the Congo, where indentured Kaffirs are made to work beyond all limits of endurance. We think that slave labour is used even in the production of sugar. Though it is not possible to look too deeply into these matters, we are firmly of the view that these three things should be used as sparingly as possible.

Furthermore, if we claim to be fired with the spirit of *swadeshi* in Indian, we had better avoid these three things as far as possible. There is no need to go into these arguments, especially those against tea, in this place. Suffice it to say that boys do not need these things.

BOARDING CHARGES

We find that boarding charges come to not less than a guinea a month. The figure includes the barber's service charges. The provisions themselves amount to £1 [per head]. A shilling is added to this by way of washing charges. No separate charges for a barber's services are included since this work is mostly done by the inmates of Phoenix themselves and does not entail any expenditure.

LODGING

It will not be possible to provide lodging arrangements similar to the boarding tariff outlined above. There are not enough buildings to provide the requisite accommodation, nor can the boys be conveniently lodged with families. It will therefore be necessary to build a dormitory for them. We do not see any possibility of our being able to provide lodging for them before such a dormitory is built. To show that there will be no differential treatment as between the boys who may be admitted and the boys of the families which will provide board to them, it is intended that the two classes of boys will sleep in the same room. It is thus necessary to put up a building which

will provide sleeping accommodation to about 20 boys. The construction of such a building and of a reservoir to provide bathing facilities for the boys is estimated to cost £200. These arrangements for boys can materialize if those who want to have their boys admitted agree to raise this sum. The estimates have been prepared in consultation with the architect, Mr. Kallenbach, and an Indian carpenter. The ownership of the building will be vested in those who donate the money, provided they will have no rights so long as the school functions. If it ceases to functions, the donors may, if they choose, carry away the building. The necessary amount may either be provided by the parents who want to send their boys, or may be raised through donations from others. Those who donate money will be serving a public cause. The inmates of Phoenix are so busy these days that they are in no position to undertake the necessary effort to raise a fund.

DRESS

It is more convenient to prescribe a uniform dress for the boys. The following will be the requirements of dress according to us:

		£	s.	d.
1	Hair-brush		1	6
3	Half-length breeches		6	0
3	Shirts		6	0
4	Shorts		4	0
2	Pairs of sandals or shoes		6	0
1	Hat		2	0
2	Night dresses		4	0
2	Towels		2	0
2	Napkins		1	0
4	Pocket handkerchiefs		1	0
		1	13	6

The cap will be of the model customary in one's community. The hat mentioned above is merely for use when working in the sun. Whether such a dress should be provided for the boys or not will depend on their parents. If any parents do not want to incur this expenditure or are not anxious to teach the boys such simplicity, they may send with the boys materials for the items indicated above in a small bag or packet. If they ask us, we suggest that they send nothing

with the boys, but give us a sum of £1.13.6, with permission to have the required garments made and given them to the boys to wear. The requirements of dress indicated above are for one year.

BEDS

We do not intend to provide Indian-style beds to sleep on, but think of using planks of the kind in use in gaols. They appear to be more conducive to one's well-being. We think it is healthier for the boys to be made to sleep on blankets than to be allowed cotton mattresses. But we shall make necessary alterations in this regard as desired by parents. According to us, the boys will need the following things:

3	Blankets	10 s
1	Pillow	1 s
4	Bedsheets	4 s
2	Pillow-covers	1 s
		16 s

Parents may themselves send these materials; otherwise we shall be prepared to buy them. Leaving the expenditure on dress and blankets, etc., to the decision of the parents, we calculate that the other expenditure to be borne by them will amount to one guinea per month. It is proposed to charge admission fee at the rate of £1 for each boy. The sum is intended to be spent on buying the required books for him. It is not that books worth that amount will be necessarily bought. But the intention is to keep some provision for the miscellaneous expenditure on the boys that the school may find it necessary to incur. Books required for advanced boys will have to be provided by the parents.

TEACHERS

It will be observed from the account given above that we do not propose to charge any monthly fee. We are in a position to follow this course only because the teachers maintain themselves by their earnings from the [International Printing] Press. With the permission of the press, every teacher gives his services at certain hours. It is also planned to have a School Board which will consider methods of teaching, etc.

Among the teachers will be Purshottamdas Desai (Principal), Mr. West, Mr. Cordes, Miss West and others.

CURRICULUM

The main object of this school is to strengthen the pupils' character. It is said that real education consists in teaching the pupil the art of learning. In other words, a desire for knowledge should grow in him. knowledge, however, is of many kinds. There is some knowledge which is harmful. If, therefore, the boys' character is not formed well, they will acquire the wrong kind of knowledge. Because of lack of proper planning in education, we observe that some persons grow to be atheists and some, though highly educated, fall a prey to vices. It is therefore the main object of this school to assist in building the moral character of boys. We can see this aim realized in Mr. Hassan Mia and Mr. Ravikrishna. We can form some idea of what Mr. Hassan Mia has been doing in England. Mr. Ravikrishna is in gaol today for the sake of the country. Both these have gone out from the school at Phoenix.

Boys will be taught their own language, that is, Gujarati or Hindi and, if possible, Tamil, as also English, arithmetic, history, geography, botany and zoology. Advanced pupils will also be taught algebra and geometry. It is expected that they can be brought up to the matriculation level.

For purposes of religious instruction, parents will be allowed to send any religious teacher of their choice. Hindu boys will be taught the fundamentals of the Hindu religion in any manner that may be desired by their parents. Indian Christians will be taught the elements of the Christian religion by Mr. West and Mr. Cordes and the basis of the teachings of Theosophy. For boys of the Muslim faith, we want to arrange for a Moulvi, if possible. They will be permitted to go to Durban on Fridays. We believe that the education of any people is fruitless without religious instruction. Therefore, it is they duty of parents with a religious bent of mind to provide their children with both religious and secular education. We shall find on reflection that what we call secular education is also for strengthening the religious instinct. We think education imparted without any such aim is often harmful.

Boys will be taught the history of ancient and modern India so as to inculcate in them love of India and help them grow patriotic.

Apart from this, there is no other information to be given. We hope that those who want to send their boys will do so indeed. As for the difficulty about the building, it is the duty of the parents to

remove it. It is hardly necessary to mention that a report on the school and a statement of accounts will be published regularly.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-1-1909

150. HIGHER-GRADE SCHOOL

It is plainly the intention of the Government gradually to drive away Indian boys from higher-grade Indian schools and other Government schools. We have already shown that the remedy lies in having a school of our own, and have been saying this in connection with the Phoenix school[1]. All the same, it is necessary to fight the Government. There are two ways of fighting it and securing justice. One, through courts of law, and two, through petitions, etc. Whether we can obtain redress through the courts of law cannot be stated without careful study. We can come to no final conclusion from the fact that a suit was filed once and dismissed by the Supreme Court. Hence, a good lawyer may be consulted and, if advised by him, the matter should be fought out legally. If that is not possible, a petition may be made. The matter should be taken right up to the Imperial Government. Of course, we shall need to have sanctions behind all these moves. We can apply them through satyagraha. We need not at the moment go into the question of how this can be done. We can discuss it later. Meanwhile, it is necessary that the leaders take the steps outlined above as expeditiously as possible.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-1-1909

151. MY SECOND EXPERIENCE IN GAOL [– II]

WORK

The Government can exact nine hours' labour daily from those sentenced to rigorous imprisonment. The prisoners are locked in every day at six o'clock. At half-past five in the morning, there is a bell to wake them up, and the cell-doors open at six. The prisoners are counted when they are locked in and again when the are let out. In order that the counting may be orderly and speedy, every prisoner is

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

required to stand at attention near his bed. Each one must roll up his bedding, put it in its proper place and, after a wash, be ready before six. Then, at seven, work starts. The work assigned is of various kinds. On the first day, we had to dig up the soil in a field near the main road for purposes of cultivation.[1] About 30 Indians were there. No one was thus compelled to work if he was not fit enough. We were taken there along with the Kaffirs. The soil was very hard, and since it had to be dug up with spades, the labour involved was strenuous. The day was very hot. The place of work must have been at a distance of about one and a half miles from the gaol. All the Indians set to work with great energy. But only a few of them were used to hard work, so that we were all quite. exhausted with the exertion. Among us was Ravikrishna, son of Babu Talevantsingh. I was much disconcerted to see him work, and yet the energy with which he went about it gladdened my heart. As the day advanced, we found the task quite hard. The warder was rather sharp of temper. He shouted at the prisoners all the time to keep on working. The more he shouted, the more nervous the Indians became. I even saw some of them in tears. One, I noticed, had a swollen foot. I was sorely distressed at this. However, I went on urging everyone to ignore the warder and carry on as best he could. I too got exhausted. There were large blisters on the palms, the lymph oozing out of them. It was difficult to bend down, and the spade seemed to weight a maund. For myself, I was praying to God all the time to save my honour, so that I might not break down, and to give me strength to keep doing the work as well as I should. Placing my trust in Him, I went on with the work. The warder started rebuking me. He did so because I was resting. I told him that there was no need to shout at me, that I would do my best and work to the utmost limit of endurance. Just then, I observed Mr. Jhinabhai Desai fainting away. I paused a little, not being allowed to leave the place of work. The warder went to the spot. I found that I, too, must go, and I ran. Two other Indians also followed me. Water was sprinkled over Jhinabhai. He came to. The warder sent away the others to their work. I was allowed to remain by his side. After plenty of cold water had been poured over Jhinabhai's head, he felt somewhat better. I told the warder that Jhinabhai would not be able to walk down to the gaol. Hence a cab was sent for. I was ordered to take him in it to the gaol. As I splashed cold water over Jhinabhai's head, I thought to myself, "A great many Indians have been going to gaol at my word. What a sinner I would be if I had been giving wrong advice ! Am I the cause of all this suffering on the part of Indians?" As I

[1] Later, this became the subject of a controversy; v*ide* Appendix VII.

thought thus, I sighed deeply. I considered the matter afresh, with God as witness, and, after being plunged in reflection for some time, I collected myself with a smile. I felt I had given the right advice. If to bear suffering is in itself a kind of happiness, there is no need to be worried by it. This was only a case of fainting but even if it were to be death, I could have given no other advice Seeing that our sole duty was to break free from our fetters by enduring every hardship rather than remaining bound for life, I felt light in heart and tried to instil courage in Jhinabhai.

As soon as the cab arrived, Jhinabhai was made to lie down in it and was taken away. A complaint was made to the chief warder. After inquiry, the warder was reprimanded. Jhinabhai was not taken out for work at noon. Similarly, four other Indians were found too weak [to work]. All the others resumed work. One is required to work from twelve noon to one. At noon, supervision over us was assigned to a Kaffir warder instead of a white one. He proved a little better. He did not go on prodding us. Occasionally, he would shout a few words. Moreover, at noon Kaffirs and Indians were deployed in the same place, though at different spots. We were given softer soil to dig up.

I had a talk with the contractor. He said that the labour of Indian prisoners was likely to put him to some loss. He admitted that Indians could not all at once equal the Kaffirs in point of physical strength. I also told him that they were not likely to work [harder] for fear of the warder, that they would do as much—and only as much—as they possibly could for fear of God. But I found it necessary later to revise this idea altogether. Let us see how that happened.

We were taken out [again] the next day. But we were sent with a Kaffir warder instead of a white one. The Kaffir, moreover, was not the same one as on the previous day. He had been advised not to bother us at all about work.

(To be continued)

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-1-1909

152. LETTER TO "RAND DAILY MAIL" [1]

PHOENIX,
January 9, 1909

THE EDITOR
RAND DAILY MAIL
[JOHANNESBURG]

SIR,

I notice that there still exists some doubt as to what is wanted by my countrymen in the Transvaal, who have now been fighting against tremendous odds for the past two years. I will, therefore, with your per-mission, endeavour to state the Indian submission as briefly as possible.

What we want is the following:

(1) Repeal of Act 2 to 1907;

(2) Legal recognition of the right of highly educated Indians to enter the Transvaal like any other immigrant, under the education test provided by the Immigration Act of the Colony with such administrative severity in applying the education test as to exclude all but six highly educated Indians in one year.

Repeal of the old Act is necessary,

(1) for the honour of the country, because it is claimed that General Smuts is under promise to repeal the Act.

(2) Act 2 to 1907 is in conflict with the new Act of 1908, and, a recent decision of the Supreme Court has shown, the running together of the two dissimilar Acts having the same purpose may lead to dangerous results.

(3) Recent events have shown that Act 2 to 1907 is not meant, [as] was stated by General Smuts at one time, to be a dead letter.

(4) The Act, being still on the Statute-book of the Colony, constitutes an offence to the Turkish Mahomedans, and,

[1] This letter appears to have been addressed to *Rand Daily Mail.* It has the superscription scored out and the words "Statement for Mr. Cartwright" substituted. The office copy available is imperfect and words in square brackets have been supplied in some places by conjecture.

therefore, continues to offend the religious susceptibilities of Indian Mahomedans.

(5) It is open to the Government, if they wish to harass British Indians, to enforce the most objectionable clauses of the Act.

As to the educated British Indians, General Smuts [stated that there will be no] objection raised [to the entry] of such persons, if they apply under the Asiatic Registration Act. This is highly unsatisfactory, because

(1) the powers granted by the Asiatic Act refer only to temporary permits;

(2) such temporary permits, even though they may be of long duration, would still make the holders prohibited immigrants;

(3) the permits, therefore, would prevent the holders [from] carrying on their profession;

(4) temporary permits would leave their holders at the mercy of the Government.

What Indians want, in place of such makeshifts, is the retention of the undoubted right of highly educated Indians to enter the Transvaal as free immigrants, provided that they pass any education test that the authorities may impose.

If it be objected that there is no such power reserved in law as to enable the Minister to impose severe or discriminating tests—I deny that the present law is not enough for the purpose—my countrymen will offer no objection to administrative discrimination against them. Thus, power can be given to the Minister to set any education test, even different tests for different classes, the Minister's decision in such cases being final and not appealable to the Supreme Court. Under such a severe test, it will be competent for the Government to limit the entry of highly educated Indians to only six in any one year.

My countrymen resent a racial bar as regards educated Indians, it being deemed a national dishonour. Whilst, therefore, the matter with General Smuts is largely sentimental, with Indians it is one of vital principle.

Repeal of Act 2 of 1907 is necessary, whether we demand it or not. Amendment of the Immigration Act is necessary, because of the severe condemnation by the Supreme Court of its several clauses. Why not, then, at the time of amending it, free it from the taint of the

Asiatic Act, and alter it so as to give the Minister additional powers regarding the imposition of the education test? Indians on their part will undertake not to raise passive resistance over the administration of the education test, so long as six highly educated Indians are passed under the test during any single year.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4914

153. EDUCATION OF INDIANS IN NATAL

We wrote last week about the decision of the Government not to admit boys above the age of 14 to the higher-grade Indian schools.[1] Whatever steps it is proposed to take in this connection must be taken immediately. On further inquiry, we find that there are two ways of filing a suit. First, a suit may be fild against the refusal to admit an over-age boy, and second, for securing admission of Indian children into an English school. The second approach may perhaps succeed. There is less possibility of success in the first. Even then, it is worthwhile to file a case of that kind. It will expose the Government's intentions. In filing a case of the second kind, we need not think of sending our boys to an English school afterwards; only, if we win the case, boys may get more concessions in the higher-grade [school].

Both these suits will cost money. If Indian parents raise it something can be done.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-1-1909

154. IMMIGRATION COMMISSION

The Natal Immigration Commission commenced its sessions in Durban on Tuesday. Anyone who wants may give evidence before it. It is the duty of the Congress to give evidence on this issue. Individuals may also do so. According to us, there is only one thing which all Indians can say, and that is to ask for an end to the system of indenture. There is hardly any difference between indenture and slavery. We assume that Indians who have come over under the system

[1] *Vide* "High Gradee School", 9-1-1909

have stood to gain somewhat. But, in fact, by accepting slavery for the sake of pecuniary gain, they have only suffered a loss. Those who endure such slavery are as good as lost to the motherland. Their slavery is of no benefit to the country. So long as man is not able to work as an independent individual, the community derives no benefit from his work. Looking at the matter from other points of view, too, it appears necessary that the system of indenture should be stopped. This, therefore, is the evidence that should be tendered before the Commission.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-1-1909

155. MY SECOND EXPERIENCE IN GAOL [*–III*]

We were advised to make a sincere attempt to do our best. The work assigned to us was also light. We had to dig up pits and fill them on municipal land adjoining the main road. This allowed occasional rest. But I found from experience that, left to our conscience and our God, we are shirkers. For I observed that the men slackened in their work.

It is my confirmed belief that we get a bad name because of this habit of shirking work and also that this habit is one of the reasons why our struggle is being prolonged. Satyagraha is a difficult as well as an easy method Our *bona fides* must not be in doubt. We bear no ill will to the Government. We do not regard it as our enemy. If we are fighting it, it is with a view to correcting its errors and making it mend its ways. We would not be happy to see it in difficulties. We believe that even our resistance is for its good. It follows from this line of reasoning that we at any rate should work to the best of our ability in gaol. If we believe that we have no moral obligation to work [hard], it is not right that we put in the full amount of work in the presence of the warder. If it is not just that we should work, then we should not submit to the warder, but resist him rather and suffer any further term of imprisonment that may be awarded to us in consequence. But there is no Indian who holds such a view. If some of them do not work [hard enough], there is no more to it than mere laziness and desire to shirk work. It does not become us thus to be lazy or to shirk work. As satyagrahis, it is our duty to do whatever work is given to us; if we worked [as well as we could] without any fear of the warder, we would

be spared all harassment. There would then be no question of our being made to overwork ourselves. Because of the habit of shirking work, people were put to some difficulties in gaol.

After this digression, let us return to the main story. As days passed, our work became lighter, as I have pointed out above. The batch which included me was next assigned the task of maintaining cleanliness in the gaol garden and looking after its cultivation. Our work was mainly to sow maize seeds, clear the potato bed and dust the potato plants.

And then, for two days, they took us to dig a municipal tank. Our work there consisted of digging, piling up the earth and carrying it away in barrows. This again was hard work. We had a taste of it only for two days. I had a swollen wrist, which was cured when treated with earth.

The place being at a distance of four or five miles, we used to be taken there in a trolley. We had to cook our meal near the tank, so that we also carried with us the necessary provisions and fuel. Here, too, the contractor was not satisfied. We could not equal the Kaffirs. After making us work on the tank for two days, they gave us some other work. Hitherto they used to take out mostly such Indians as were strong enough for work. Now, however, they were formed into groups. Some of them were sent to dig out the weeds that had shot up round the soldiers' tombs. Others were sent to clean the graveyard. This arrangement continued for some time. Meanwhile, after the Barberton case, nearly 50 Indians were released.

During the remaining period, we were assigned work in the garden. This included digging, reaping, sweeping, etc. This cannot be considered to be heavy work; rather, it was conductive to vigour of health. One may at first get bored when engaged on such work for nine hours at a stretch, but one doesn't feel it after getting used to it.

Apart from the kind of work described above, it is the duty of the men in every cell to carry the bucket for urine, etc., placed in it. I observed that our people are unwilling to do such work. In fact, there is no reason why one should mind it. It is wrong to think of any work as humiliating or degrading. Moreover, those who have offered themselves for imprisonment cannot afford to stand on prestige thus. I saw that sometimes there was some argument as to who should carry the urine bucket. If we have understood the full meaning of satyagraha, we would compete with one another in offering to do such

work, instead of making difficulties about it, and one would feel honoured if the work fell to one's lot. That is to say, the honour would not consist in being required by the Government to work, but, since the work had in any case to be attended to, he who was the first to offer himself would deserve special honour.

Since we have resolved to bear all suffering, each one of us may as well come forward to suffer more than others, and he who suffers most should feel most honoured. An example of this was once set by Mr. Hassan Mirza. He has been suffering from a very bad disease of the lungs. He is delicate of health. All the same, he gladly took upon himself whatever work fell to his lot from day to day. Furthermore, he gave no thought to his health. Once, Kaffir warder asked him to clean the chief warder's privy, which he instantly started doing. As he had never done such work, he vomited. He was not upset by this. while he was cleaning another privy, I happened to come up and see him engaged upon the work. I was astonished. To be sure, I felt great affection for him. On inquiry, I learnt about the first privy. Another time, the same Kaffir warder was ordered by the chief [warder] to find two Indians to clean the latrines specially set apart for the Indians. The warder approached me about this and asked me to name two persons. I thought I was the best person for such work, and so I went myself.

Personally, I feel no shame in this kind of work. I think we should accustom ourselves to it. Because of the dislike we feel for such work, not only do we find the front of our houses and our lavatories generally dirty, but also originate, or spread, epidemics such as the plague, etc. We assume that lavatories are bound to be unclean, and thus we frequently invite the charge of being dirty. Once an Indian was sentenced to solitary confinement, that is to say, he was locked up in a cell by himself, for refusing to do such work. Of course, I see nothing wrong in our having to submit to any kind of sentence. But, in this particular case, the penalty could have been avoided. It is, moreover, not proper that we should hold ourselves back from such work. When I set out to attend to the work, the warder began to scold others and urged them to come forward. This spread the news about the order and forthwith Mr. Omar Osman and Mr. Rustomjee ran to my help; the work was very light, though. My object in narrating this story is to show that these men also felt honoured in doing such work when required by the Government. If we are hurt by the nature of the work assigned to us, we cannot take part in any fight worth the name.

I have given above an account of the work [assigned to us] in Vol-ksrust gaol. But I did not spend two full months in that gaol. I was suddenly sent away to Johannesburg for a few days. What happened there is worth recounting. I was taken there on October 25. The reason was that I was required to give evidence in the case of Dahya, the tailor. There were all kinds of speculations as to other possible reasons. Everyone was filled with hope and imagined that perhaps there might be an interview with General Smuts. It was found later that there was no such idea. A warder was specially sent from Johannesburg to fetch me. A railway compartment was placed at our disposal. We had second-class tickets, the only reason being that there were no third-class carriages in the train. It appears that prisoners are carried only in third-class compartments. I was in gaol uniform throughout the journey. I had some luggage with me, which I was made to carry myself. The distance from the gaol to the station had to be covered on foot. After arriving at Johannesburg, I had [again] to reach the gaol on foot, carrying the luggage myself. The incident provoked strong comments in newspapers. Questions were asked in the British Parliament. Many persons felt hurt. Everyone thought that, being a political prisoner, I should not have been made to walk the distance, dressed in gaol uniform and carrying a load.[1]

One can understand why this should have given offence to some people. When Mr. Anglia came to know how I was to go, there were tears in his eyes. Mr. Naidoo and Mr. Polak were at the station to see me, having received information [about my arrival]. They were also touched to see my condition. There is no reason why one should feel these things so much. It is not likely that in this country the Government will make any distinction between political and other prisoners. The greater the harassment we suffer, the earlier shall we win our release. Moreover, we shall find on reflection that it is not much of a hardship to have to wear a gaol uniform, or go on foot or carry one's luggage. But the world will always think of these things as hardships and that is why an outcry was raised in England.

I did not have the slightest trouble from the warder during the journey. I had resolved [while in Volksrust Gaol] that, unless openly allowed by the warder, I would not take any food other than what I

[1] *Vide* Treatment in prison : (a) marched in concict's farb, 31-10-1908.

was allowed in gaol. Hence I had carried on with the gaol diet all these days. But they had given me no food packet for the journey. The warder [accompanying me] allowed me to buy whatever food I wanted. The station master offered me some money. He was also very much upset [to observe my condition]. I thanked him, [but] declined his offer of money. I borrowed 10 s from Mr. Kazi, who was present at the station, and spent something from it to buy food for myself and for the warder on the train.

It was evening when we reached Johannesburg, so that I was not taken where I could be among other Indians. I was given a bed in a cell of the prison where there were mostly Kaffir prisoners who had been lying ill. I spent the night in his cell in grest misery and fear. I did not know that the very next day I would be taken among our own people, and, thinking that I would be kept in this place all the time, I became quite nervous. I felt extremely uneasy, but I resolved in my mind that my duty required me to bear every suffering. I read the *Bhagvad Gita* which I had carried with me. I read the verses which had a bearing on my situation and, meditating on them, managed to compose myself.

The reason why I felt so uneasy was that the Kaffir and Chinese prisoners appeared to be wild, murderous and given to immoral ways. I did not know their language. A Kaffir started putting question to me. I felt a hint of mockery even in this. I did not understand what it was. I returned no reply. He asked me in broken English why I had been brought there in that fashion. I gave a brief reply, and then I lapsed into silence. Then came a Chinese. He appeared to be worse. He came near the bed and looked closely at me. I kept still. Then he went to a Kaffir lying in bed. The two exchanged obscene jokes, uncovering each other's genitals. Both these prisoners had charges of murder and larceny against them. Knowing this, how could I possibly sleep? Thinking that I would bring this to the notice of the Governor the next day, I fell asleep for a while late in the night.

Real suffering lies in this. Carrying luggage and such other troubles are nothing very serious. Realizing that the experience I have had must also sometimes be that of other Indians, and that they too would feel the fear that I did, I was happy that I had suffered in the same way as others. The experience, I thought, would impel me to agitate against the Government all the more tenaciously, and I hoped that I might succeed in inducing prison reforms in regard to these

matters. All these are indirect benefits of satyagraha.

As soon as we rose the following day, I was taken to where the other prisoners were lodged, so that I had no chance to complain to the Governor about what had happened. I have, though, resolved in my mind on an agitation to ensure that Indian prisoners are not lodged with Kaffirs or others. When I arrived at the place, there were about 15 Indian prisoners. Except for three, all of them were satyagrahis. The three were charged with other offences. These prisoners were generally lodged with Kaffirs. When I reached there, the chief warder issued an order that all of us should be lodged in a separate room. I observed with regret that some Indians were happy to sleep in the same room as the Kaffirs, the reason being that they hoped there for a secret supply of tobacco, etc. This is a matter of shame to us. We may entertain no aversion to Kaffirs, but we cannot ignore the fact that there is no common ground between them and us in the daily affairs of life. Moreover, those who wish to sleep in the same room with them have ulterior motives for doing so. Obviously, we ought to abandon such notions if we want to make progress.

(To be continued)

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-1-1909

156. LETTER TO CHANCHALBEHN GANDHI

VOLKSRUST,
Saturday [*January 16, 1909*][1]

CHI. CHANCHAL[2],

I was arrested, deported, again arrested and am now released on bail. I shall now proceed to Johannesburg. You will know more from Manilal.

I feel unhappy that I was not able to have much talk, rather any talk, with you. But such is my plight.

I purposely dictated to you that day. I want to make you adept in such work. I would even keep you with me when Rami[3] is grown

[1] Gandhiji was arrested on this day at Volkrust on his way to Johannesburg after seeing Mrs. Gandhi, who was seriously ill at Phoenix.

[2] Wife of Harilal, Gandhiji's eldest son

[3] Addressee's infant daughter

up. Be sure that if you give up the idea of staying with Harilal for the present, it will do good to both of you. Harilal will grow by staying apart and will perform his other duties. Love for you does not consist only in staying with you. At times one has to live apart just for the sake of love. This is true in your case. From every side, I see that your separation is for your benefit. But it can be a source of happiness only if you do not become restless owing to separation. I think Harilal will have to stay at Johannesburg till the struggle is over.

Considering your stage of life, I do not intend to treat you as a child. I wish you and Manilal take charge of the household. You two have to look after everything in the house, keep Rama[1] and Deva[2] in proper form, take care of their belongings, and teach them to do so themselves, see that they are clean and their nails are well trimmed. None can say when Ba[3] will completely recover. Even when she is fully restored, your role will not be affected. You have to behave as mistress of the house. Do not forget that we are very poor.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 9526

157. LETTER TO "INDIAN OPINION"

TO

THE EDITOR

INDIAN OPINION

SIR,

By the time this week's issue of *Indian Opinion* is out, I shall perhaps find myself lodged in the gaol-palace. I, therefore, think it necessary to address a few words to the Indian community concerning the present situation.

There is no doubt that some Indians have weakened. Many of them have given up the fight. Others, it appears, are about to do so.

A letter has been published in *The Star*[4] over the signatures of [some] Pathans in which they state as under:

[1] Ramdas, Gandhiji's third son

[2] Devdas, Gandhiji's fourth and youngest son

[3] Mrs. Kasturba Gandhi

[4] Dated 18-1-1909; the letter was entitled "Revolt against Picketing".

> We, Pathans, wish to inform the Government and the public through your paper that the British Indian Association has raised a volunteer corps of pickets to keep a watch on the Asiatic Office and the Licensing Office. The pickets are dressed in *khaki* uniform, and wear bands like soldiers. We saw some of them smartly parading up and down the roads. These pickets have been posted with a view to defeating the intention of the Pathans to help the Government and inciting loyal Indians to resist it. And therefore we, Pathans, who have been loyal servants of the late Queen-Empress Victoria, and the present King-Emperor and Queen-Empress—may God save them—consider these volunteers of Gandhi and Polak as bullies. We pray to the Government not to oppose us in what we may do in this connection. Not only does Gandhi always make derogatory remarks about our religion and pass insulting remarks; against our Prophets, but he is ever disturbing the peace [of the land]. If the Government cannot remove him and his corps of volunteers from the Colony, we can do that much for the Government with all despatch. We shall be grateful to you if you give publicity to this letter.

I have said that the letter is over the signatures of Pathans. I cannot say that it was drafted by them. There was a time when the Pathans sent a petition to the Government to say that they would rather be blown up by its cannon than submit to the law. It is not likely that these very Pathans would submit to the same Act or help others submit to it. Should that happen, it would be a matter of shame for them and for us.

How, then, did this letter come to be written? I am sure that there is the hand of a well-known Indian behind it. Some whites have been indulging in intrigues against the community in order to protect their own interests. There are some Indians who, having burnt their own fingers, want others to do likewise and thus wish to drag down the entire Community. Both these classes of men want to use the Pathans as pawns in their game. The Pathans, being illiterate, are easily misled and induced to give their signatures. They ought to think before they do so. I should very much like some Indian to read out this letter to them in the right spirit. If the Pathans give their signatures to any sort of letter, without giving thought to its content, they will bedim the lustre of their swords. When a sword is used in the service of a wrong cause, I regard it merely as a piece of rusted iron.

The man who has written this letter or caused it to be written has held out a threat to the pickets. But the Pathans must realize that it is not proper for them to raise their hand against a single Indian.

I have not much to say about what has been said against me in the letter. The author of the letter wants to create dissensions among Hindus and Muslims. To charge me with insulting the Prophets of Islam betrays sheer ignorance. I have not even dreamt of such a thing. It is certainly not in the nature of true Hinduism to insult the religion of others. I believe myself to be a follower of that religion. Since my life is devoted to dis-covering the means of uniting Hindus and Muslims, how is it possible for me to insult the Prophets of Islam? But the enemies of the community, anxious to provoke dissensions, circulate all kinds of stories in order to break the bonds that have been forged, seeking to implicate the Pathans also.

The thoughtful members of the community, and those who want it to prosper, must be alert at a time like this. The first thing is not to be intimidated by threats from any quarter. The community is offering satyagraha against the Government, and it will do the same against any Indians who may act as their enemies. It is only *Khuda-Ishvar* that one must fear. Those who wish to harm the community must be pitied for their ignorance. But one must not be cowed down by them. The fight has been protracted—it will be prolonged still further. Everyone will see that we ourselves are the cause of its being prolonged. Likewise, it is in our own hands to hasten its end. The only way to achieve this is for those who know what the fight means to put their whole heart into it. They must not give way to panic or anger. Moreover, the greater the pressure on us, the more determined should our resis tance be. Accordingly, those who understand the meaning of the struggle should put up with greater losses and bear heavier suffering. It is of the essence of the fight that we should be fearless and rejoice in sacrificing our lives and allowing our property to be ruined, recognizing that only by acting in this manner can we serve our own interests and those of the community. Only thus will the fight be won.

The attack on Mr. Polak should fill us all with shame. I, at any rate, cannot truly estimate his services to the community. I do not know how to describe his goodness. There is perhaps no Indian who understands the meaning of our struggle so well as he does. The remarks made against such a man in the letter mentioned above show

that we have fallen on evil days.

I do not know the author of the letter or the man who instigated it. I only pray to God that He may show the right path to that man, to the Pathans and to all Indians, and also that the community may remain firm in the great task it has undertaken.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

SERVANT OF THE COMMUNITY AND SATYAGRAHA

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-1-1909

158. LETTER TO THE PRESS[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
January 20, 1909

[SIR,]

The Indian community is now entering upon the third and, perhaps, the final stage of the struggle, which has now been raging for the last two and a half years. Hitherto, it has not been necessary for the British Indian merchants to sacrifice their goods entirely, and to reduce themselves to poverty. They have, in order to free themselves for the struggle, largely contracted their businesses, but not given them up entirely. The saying that, under an unjust Government, only those who countenance and participate in their injustice can enrich themselves or retain their riches is about to be realised in the present case. In order further to circumvent us, and seeing that gaols have ceased to have any terrors for us, rules[2] have been framed under the Criminal Procedure Code, laying down the mode of selling the goods of those who may be fined by Magistrates without the alternative of imprisonment. This move is clearly aimed at Indian merchants. They have, therefore, to face voluntary poverty, enforced poverty, or disgrace, They have no desire to enrich what is to them an unjust

[1] This appeared in *Indian Opinion*, 23-1-1909. Gandhiji was present at the meeting of Cachalia's creditors on January 22 and presumably drafted this letter. *Vide* also "Letter to *Rand Daily Mail*", 22-1-1909.

[2] These rules framed by the Judges of the Supreme Court of the Transvaal under the provisions of Section 280 of Ordinance No. 1 of 1903 provided for the execution of a warrant for the levy of a fine as in civil cases, for the Crown to be in the position of the judgement creditor, for the bailiff to attach goods sufficient to cover the costs of execution as well as the amount of the warrant and for the term of imprisonment to be reduced in the proportion of the amount of fine realized. *Vide Indian Opinion, 9-1-1909.*

Government at the expense of their creditors or themselves. They have no desire to face disgrace. My advice, therefore, to my coutrymen, both as a merchant and as Chairman of the British Indian Association, is that they must all for the present cease to be merchants, and return the goods they have to their creditors, if any, or otherwise close down their stores. To set an example, I have myself decided to take the first step, and I am doing so with the greatest deliberation, though not without some hesitation. No formal vote of the Association will be or can be taken as to the momentous step. It is most difficult to expect all Indian storekeepers, who have remained hitherto true to the struggle, to sell their all and follow the narrow path chosen by some of us. If they cannot rise to the occasion, I think that, even then, they will have deserved well of their countrymen, if not of the Colonists, in that they have braved dangers and difficulties during the past thirty months. Yet, if we prize our principle better than our pockets, the only advice that I can tender to my countrymen is that they should rise to the occasion and take this final step. Then will the Colonists realise, if they cho[o]se to, that this is not, so far as the Indians are concerned, a struggle for retaining our hold of the trade we have, or for unfair competition, or for bringing into the country men who have no right to be in it. The only question, so far as we are concerned, is that of national honour and our conscience.[1] In other words, we are endeavouring to show that we are worthy to be citizens of South Africa. It is likely that many Indians, during the last stage of the struggle, may fall. We see, also, that the struggle will be prolonged. Attempts are being made by ill-disposed persons within our own ranks and by interested Europeans to sow dissensions in our own camp. All these things we expected, but they cannot deter us from the course we have adopted; and whether, after many have fallen, we are a small or a large body, our sufferings will continue until justice is satisfied.

I am, etc.,

A. M. CACHALIA

CHAIRMAN,

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 23-1-1909

[1] The European merchants reacted differently to this move. *The Natal Mercury*, January 21, in a special telegram reported, "Hitherto, it has to be remembered that the commercial community has been practically solid in supporting the Government on the Asiatic question. The stand which is being taken by the Chairman of the British Indian Association is, therefore, construed into an attempt by Mr. Gandhi and his fellow-agitators to force their hands."

159. LETTER TO CREDITORS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
January 20, 1909]

[GENTLEMEN,]

I regret to inform you that a meeting of my creditors will be called, at the Offices of the British Indian Association, 21-24 Court Chambers, Corner of Rissik and Anderson Streets, as 3 p.m., on Friday, the 22nd inst. My financial position is not the cause of calling this meeting, but I, as Chairman of the British Indian Association, in view of the determination of the Government to ruin the British Indian merchants who declined to accept the Asiatic Registration Act until the promise of General Smuts is redeemed, and until the status of the educated Indians is placed upon a firm footing, can no longer continue to carry on my trade with safety to my creditors or myself. I may state that, evidently on instructions from the Law Department, the magistrates are now imposing heavy fines upon merchants who trade without licences, without the alternative of imprisonment. Rules have been gazetted, laying down the manner in which goods are to be sold for these fines.

In saying this, I do not complain either about the magistrates imposing severe penalties or about the Government framing these rules. They are in their own estimation entitled to compel submission to their laws. I only claim that the British Indians are in their turn entitled to resist by their sufferings laws which they consider are in conflict with their national honour and conscience. Under these circumstances, so long as the struggle lasts, there is no course left open to me but to hand over what I possess to my creditors, rather than allow those possessions —which, after all, I hold in trust for them—to be sold. I am aware that I should also consider myself responsible to convert these goods into money, and pay my creditors in cash, but my private interests have to give way to the public interest, and seeing that I cannot sell my possessions by auction, to the advantage of my creditors, I have decided to call them together and place my position before them, and ask them to take over the goods and my other assets. Should the struggle happily come to an end in the near future, or

[1] Signed by A. M. Cachalia, Chairman, British Indian Association, it is possible that this and the preceding item were written at the same time.

whenever it ends, I should be pleased to take over the goods as they are, and sell them for the benefit of my creditors. But as to the disposal of my possessions at the forthcoming meeting, I shall place myself entirely in my creditors' hands.

Indian Opinion, 23-1-1909

160. INTERVIEW TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"

[JOHANNESBURG,
January 21, 1909]

Interviewed, Mr. Gandhi says that the step[1] involves such a large measure of self-sacrifice by the Indian community that, at the present early stage, it was difficult to say whether the Indian merchants, as a whole, would be prepared to adopt the idea, which occurred to him whilst he was in Natal. The creditors of the Indians consisted of wholesale British firms oversea [s], local wholesale and retail firms, banks, storekeepers, and firms in India. If unanimity could be secured among the Indians, the loss sustained by these would run into many thousands of pounds. Wholesale firms in England had supplied largely to the Indian merchants here. If the Indians surrendered their estates, wholesale firms here would be compelled either to cut their losses, or put Asiatic storekeepers in charge, as managers or clerks, which would enable them to trade, despite the registration laws. If creditors, of whatever kind, decided to sell up the Indians, the latter would be amashed, but the former would suffer severe loss. The success of the Indians, Mr. Gandhi said, depended upon unanimity. therefore the Transvaal Indians affected would all be circularised.

Indian Opinion, 23-1-1909

[1] It was suggested that Indians should return the goods they had to their creditors, if any, or otherwise close down their stores, *vide* "Letter to the Press". 20-1-1909

161. REPRESENTATION AT MEETING OF CACHALIA'S CREDITORS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,

January 22, 1909]

. . . Mr. Gandhi , who spoke for Cachalia, said that it was open to the creditors to take what action they thought fit. His client wished to return the confidence shown in him by the merchants. If they desired, they could use the assets to the best advantage by keeping the business running, or they could sell him out. He could not continue trading.

Eventually, the Chairman closed the meeting by stating that, as the representative of the majority of creditors, he was not prepared to make any composition, but he would give Cachalia till Monday next as noon to any 20s. in the pound.

Mr. Gandhi said that his client did not want time.[2]

Indian Opinion, 30-1-1909

[1] In pursuance of the letters to the Press and creditors, *vide* "Letter to the Press", 21-1-1909& "Letter to The Press", 21-1-1909, a meeting of A. M. Cachalia's creditors was held in the office of the British Indian Association. Hall of the Merchants' Trust presided. Cachalia produced his balance-sheet, roughly showing assets of £ 7,500 adn liabilities of £ 3,800. He said he could not pay his creditors in cash, whereas Hall demanded full payment. *Rand Daily Mail,* 23-1-1909, published a full report of the meeting.

Earlier in the day, the executive of the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce had endorsed the resolutions of their wholesale soft goods trade section that, should any Asiatic call "a meeting of his creditors with a view to handing over his assets to his creditors and if this is done as a part of the passive resistance movement, such creditors be advised to apply for the sequestration of the estate, unless all liabilities are fully satisfied".

[2] The other creditors did not oppose Hall's decision and the meeting was dissolved.

162. LETTER TO "RAND DAILY MAIL"[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
January 22, 1909

TO
THE EDITOR

SIR,

Perhaps you will allow me to pass a few comments upon your leaderette[2] and the remarks made upon what you are pleased to call the"latest move" of the British Indian community. I will not go into many side-issues that arise out of your remarks; but I venture to say that either you do not understand the spirit of the struggle that my countrymen have been carrying on, or you do not care to understand it. The latest move is not intended to coerce European merchants into taking action. Your interviewer received the replies to the questions he asked.[3] There are, therefore, many gaps to fill up. He took away from me only one side of the question.

In the latest move, Indian merchants do not desire that a single European merchant shall suffer. On the contrary, they have undertaken voluntarily to suffer even on behalf of their creditors. In giving the notice to his creditors, Mr. Cachalia has sinply informed the creditors of the danger in which the goods entrusted to his care have been placed by the action of the Government—you will perhaps add by the action of the British Indians as well. Mr. Cachalia presented to the meeting of his creditors[4] a balance-sheet of which any debtor would be proud, and he made a statement before his creditors which I hold to be perfectly honourable. He has shown not olny 20s in the £ on paper, but he has also stated that he does not desire to receive from his creditors a clean discharge against the handing over of his stock to them, but he added that he was willing, in the event of any loss being incurred on these assets, to make good the loss to the creditors out of his future earnings, if he is allowed to make any by the Government of the country of his adoption.

[1] This was published in *Indian Opinion*, 30-1-1909, under the title "Letter from Mr. Gandhi".

[2] *Vide* Comments by "Rand Daily Maily" 30-1-1909.

[3] The report of this interview is not available.

[4] *Vide* the preceding item.

Nor does the latest move consist in British Indian merchants simply calling a meeting of their creditors, and associating them by force of circumstances in their sufferings to some slight extent. All British Indian merchants are not debtors of Europeans only; perhaps 50% of Mr. Cachalia's creditors are Indian. In any case, British Indian merchants may be divided as follows: (a) those who have European as well as Indian creditors, (b) those who have European creditors only, (c) those who have no creditors. All these three classes have been advised to close down their businesses and dispose of their belogings. You will therefore see that only to a small extent will British Indians have to trouble their European creditors. The latest move, therefore, is not a matter of any coercion at all. If you imply that European creditors will now have to take greater interest in the question, I admit the charge; but it only means that the suffering of my countrymen have again told. Passive resistance consists purely and simply in the undergoing of every variety of suffering by passive resisters. To call this defiance is a prostitution of terms; and how can the surrendering of all their belongings, including their profits, by British Indian merchants, the consequent pecuniary loss, and the acceptance of voluntary poverty be called a degeneration!

You have also remarked upon picketing, and called it intimidation. Picketing, in the case of the Indians, will deserve to be called intimidation, when the missionary efforts of the Salvation Army and other such philanthropic bodies merit the term of open defiance, coercion and intimidation.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Rand Daily Mail, 23-1-1909

163. WHAT DOES THE STRUGGLE MEAN?

The Transvaal struggle can be said to have entered on its third phase. It will be observed from our news-letters that some Indians are now giving in. It also appears that there are rifts among them. This need not depress us. It is so in every conflict. It is very difficult to climb the last steps. There are very few horses in a race; even then, not all of them remain on the course till the end—they cannot. Some of them just stall. Some others get exhausted. Some die while running; only a few reach the destination. The same thing happens in the history of every community. There is, therefore, no cause for disappointment in the developments mentioned above. In a campaign which produced thousands of Indians who have held out with determination for two years, there are bound to be some who will reach the goal.

We have yet to secure the repeal of the obnoxious Act and to safeguard the rights of the educated. But that is not the only purpose of the struggle.

That we should get training in organizing a movement, learn to be resourceful and demonstrate that we are not cowards but men—this also is a part of the meaning of our struggle, but not the whole of it. The main object of this fight is that we should learn to be men, to be a nation, to cease being the goats that we are and be lions, and to show to the world that we are one people, that we are the children of India ready to lay down our lives for her.

The great Thoreau said that one sincere man is more than a hundred thousand insincere men. We want to know how many of us are sincere. This the fight will tell us. Thus, to learn to be sincere is far more difficult than to secure repeal of the Act. It is wrong for us to get demoralized when we see others giving in. It is such behaviour that is the true mark of cowardice.

The white nations taunt us with being brave enough to start with, but betraying lack of purpose at the critical moment. We want to prove that we are nothing of the kind. The all-too-powerful Government of the Transvaal will not succeed in proving that we are [pliable] like wax.

True religion consists in learning all this, and hence we are prepared to sacrifice our lives in this righteous war. To show that we

are so prepared is one of the objects of the struggle; in fact, that is the main object. As for other things, they will follow as a matter of course.

Success in such a big task will require an equally big effort. In what way? Businessmen are the most important Indians in the Transvaal. They must prove their worth and be prepared to embrace poverty in the process. It is only by embracing poverty that they can serve their own interests as well as those of the community. In a tyrannical state, only those who subserve its purposes can be happy or grow prosperous. In such a state, it is not straightforward men who can amass wealth. They can live in such a state only if they are prepared to suffer. That is the position of the Transvaal Indians. The Transvaal Government wants to rob the Indians of their honour and wealth. Why should they allow that? In former times, when in any part of the world the subjects rebelled against their oppressive rulers, before joining battle they would first kill their womenfolk in order to save them from dishonour. At the present moment, the Transvaal Indians are engaged in the battle of satyagraha. They will have to sacrifice their money, as women were sacrificed [in the olden days]. If not, they will be dishonoured and find their money as bitter as poison. No religion believes it possible to worship God and Mammon at the same time. Every religion teaches that if one wants to devote oneself to God, one must forsake wealth. Since we started this struggle with faith in God and with prayerful hearts, we must be prepared to renounce wealth. When we stand in need of wealth, that same God will see that we get it.

In Italy, 300,000 men were buried together with their possessions—such is divine Providence. Keeping that in view, let us always be mindful of our honour. To preserve our honour is in our hands. It is not so with regard to wealth. We hope that the Indians will sacrifice wealth and preserve their honour.

[From Gujarati]

Indian opinion, 23-1-1909

164. MY SECOND EXPERIENCE IN GAOL [-IV]

I had one further unpleasant experience in the Johannesburg Gaol. In this gaol, there are two different kinds of wards. One ward is for Kaffir and Indian prisoners sentenced to hard labour. The other is for prisoners who are called as witnesses and those who have been sentenced to imprisonment in civil proceedings. Prisoners sentenced to hard labour have no right to go into this second ward. We slept in it,

but we could not use its lavatory as of right. In the first ward, the number of prisoners wanting the use of the lavatory is so large that a visit to it is a great nuisance. Some Indians find this a source of great inconvenience. I was one of them. I was told by the warder that there would be no harm in my using a lavatory in the second ward. I therefore went to one of the lavatories in this ward. At these lavatories, too, there is usually a crowd. Moreover, the lavatories have open access. There are no doors. As soon as I had occupied one of them, there came along a strong, heavily-built, fearful-looking Kaffir. He asked me to get out and started abusing me. I said I would leave very soon. Instantly he lifted me up in his arms and threw me out. Fortunately, I caught hold of the door-frame, and saved myself from a fall. I was not in the least frightened by this. I smiled and walked away; but one or two Indian prisoners who saw what had happened started weeping. Since they could not offer any help in gaol, they felt helpless and miserable. I heard later that other Indians also had to go through similar tribulations. I acquainted the Governor with what had happened and told him there was urgent need for separate lavatories for Indians. I also told him that Indian prisoners should never be lodged with Kaffirs. The Governor immediately issued an order for a lavatory for Indians to be sent on from the Central Gaol. Thus, from the next day the difficulty about lavatories disappeared.[1] As for myself, I had no motions for four days, and hence I suffered in health somewhat.

While in Johannesburg, I was taken to the court three or four times. I was allowed to see Mr. Polak and my son there. Others also came sometimes. I was even free, when in the court, to have food brought to me from home and accordingly Mr. Kallenbach used to bring bread, cheese, etc., for me.

When I was in this gaol, the number of satyagrahi prisoners in it mounted very high. At one time, there were more than 50. Many of them were asked to pound gravel with a small hammer, sitting on a stone. About 10 men were employed in mending torn clothes. I was given the work of stitching caps with a [sewing] machine. I learnt sewing for the first time here. It was not difficult work and therefore I learnt it in no time.

Most of the Indians were employed in pounding gravel. I also asked for the same work. But the warder said that he had orders from

[1] The incident was later discussed in the Press; *vide* Appendix X.

the chief warder not to let me out, and accordingly he did not allow me to go out for pounding gravel. One day it so happened that I had no sewing work to do on the machine or other work. I therefore started to read. The rule is that every prisoner must do some work or other assigned to him in the gaol. The warder therefore called me and inquired whether I was ill.

I replied: No.

Q. Why are you then not doing any work?

A. I have finished the work assigned to me. I do not wish merely to pretend being busy with work. If you give me any work, I shall be glad to do it. Otherwise, what harm is there if I read, having nothing else to do?

Q. That is true, but it will be better it you remain in the store when the chief warder or the Governor comes round.

A. I don't like to do so. I am going to tell the Governor also that there isn't sufficient work in the store and that I should therefore be taken out to pound gravel.

Q. All right. I cannot on my own send you out for that.

A little later, the Governor came. I told him everything. He did not allow me to go out for pounding gravel, but informed me that it was not necessary either, since I was to be sent back to Volksrust the following day.

MEDICAL EXAMINATION — UNDRESSING OF PRISONERS

The freedom from some regulations which is permitted in the mofussil gaol of Volksrust is not possible in the Central Gaol of Johannesburg. For instance, in Volksrust Mr. Dawad Mahomed was allowed to have a shawi as head-dress, and breeches were allowed to others as well. Mr. Rustomjee, Mr. Sorabji and Mr. Shapurji were permitted to wear their own caps. This will not be easy in the Johannesburg Gaol. Similarly, when prisoners first come to gaol, they are examined by the physician. This is done in order to find out if any of them suffers from a contagious disease and, if anyone does, to give him treatment and isolate him from the others. For this reason, the prisoners are examined with great care. Some of the prisoners are found to suffer from diseases like syphilis, and therefore everyone of them has his genitals examined. For this purpose, the prisoners are totally undressed, while being examined. Unlike the others, Kaffirs are kept standing undressed for nearly 15 minutes so as to save the

physician's time. Indian prisoners are made to lower their breeches only when the physician approaches them. The other garments have to be removed in advance. Almost every Indian resents having to lower his breeches, but most of them do not create any difficulty in the interest of our movement, though at heart they feel ill at ease. I told the physician about this. As a special case, he examined some of the prisoners in the store but declined to adopt that as a practice. The Association has written about this,[1] and the matter is under correspondence. We are justified in making an issue of this. This is an old practice of these people,[2] which is not likely to be changed all at once. All the same, the matter deserves attention.

When in the presence of men only, there should be on need to conceal any parts of our anatomy. There is no reason to believe, moreover, that others will keep staring at the parts which we generally hide. We need not have any false sense of shame. If we are pure in our own minds, where is the need to be particular about hiding what is a part of our natural endowment? I know that these ideas will sound strange to every Indian, but I do feel that one must go deep into the matter and learn the right attitude to take. By raising difficulties of this nature, we harm our cause in the long run. Formerly, Indian prisoners were not examined by the physician at all. But once two or three Indians were interrogated. They replied that they had no disease. The physician examined them nevertheless, having felt somewhat suspicious, and found that they had not spoken the truth. He decided thenceforth to examine even Indian prisoners. We can thus see that whenever we are in some trouble, it is generally of our own making.

RETURN FROM JOHANNESBURG

As I said above, I was taken back to Volksrust on November 4. This time, too, I was accompanied by a warder. I was dressed in the prisoner's uniform, but on this occasion, instead of being made to

[1] In two letters, dated November 24 and December 1, 1908, the British Indian Association protested to the Governor of the Transvaal Gaol against the practice of keeping prisoners undressed for over an hour in public for medical examination. The Director of Prisons, replying to these representations, denied that the prisoners were kept in such condition longer than necessary for the check-up. This correspondence was published in *Indian Opinion*, 19-12-1908. The Transvaal Ministers, also, in a minute dated January 30, 1909 refuted the allegation.

[2] This might also have been intended to mean: the prejudice against undressing in public is an old sentiment of our people which cannot be given up all at once.

walk, I was taken in a cab. However, instead of second, third-class tickets were provided. By way of provisions for the journey, I was given half a pound of bread and bully-beef. I refused the latter, giving up my claim to it. On the way, I was permitted by the warder to buy some other food. When I reached the station, I found some Indian tailors present. They noticed me. Of course, talking was not allowed. Observing my dress, etc., some of them were filled with tears. Since I was not free even to tell them that I did not mind my dress or anything else, I merely remained a silent spectator. The two of us were assigned a separate compartment. There was a tailor travelling in the adjoining compartment, who passed on some of his food to me. At Heidelberg, Mr. Somabhai met me. He bought for me some eatables on the station. The woman from whom he bought them at first refused to accept any money, showing her sympathy for our cause. When Mr. Somabhai insisted on paying, she merely accepted a nominal sum of six pence. Since Mr. Somabhai had also sent a telegram to Standerton, several Indians had gone to the station there too, carrying some food with them. The warder and I had therefore more than our fill on the way.

As soon as we reached Volksrust, I was met by Mr. Nagadi and Mr. Kazi at the station. Both of them walked with me part of the way. They were permitted to walk at some distance from us. I was again made to walk the distance from the station [to the gaol], and carry my luggage. The matter even provoked much comment in newspapers.

All the Indians were happy to find me back in Volksrust. I was locked up in Mr. Dawad Mahomed's cell for the night, so that we kept awake till a late hour narrating our experiences to each other.

SITUATION OF INDIAN PRISONERS

When I returned to Volksrust, the situation of Indian prisoners had assumed a new aspect altogether. The number of prisoners had risen from about 30 to about 75. There was no way of accommodating such numbers in that gaol. Eight tents had therefore been pitched. For cooking, a special *chula* had been sent from Pretoria. Moreover, the prisoners were often allowed to go to a river nearby for a bath. The men looked like soldiers rather than prisoners. This was not a prison, but a camp of satyagrahis. What, then, did it matter whether we were treated well or ill by the warders? In fact, most of the warders were on the whole reasonable men. Mr. Dawad Mahomed had given a nick-name to every warder. One was called "

Oakly", another " Mafuto", and so on.

VISITORS

We used to get a good number of Indian visitors in Volksrust gaol. Mr. Kazi was always hanging around. He looked after the prisoners' affairs outside, putting his whole heart into the work, and seized every opportunity to visit us. Mr. Polak used to come almost every week on official work. Mr. Mahomed Ibrahim and Mr. Kharsani came specially from Natal in connection with contributions to the Congress funds by Main Line Indians. On *Id* day, about a hundred Indian businessmen from Natal must have paid us a visit. There was also a shower of telegrams on that day.

SOME OBSERVATIONS

Prisons are generally kept very clean. If this were not so, there would be epidemics before long. But there is also lack of cleanliness in some respects. Blankets are constantly interchanged. A blanket that has been used by the dirtiest of Kaffirs may later fall to an Indian's lot. Frequently, the blankets are found to be full of lice. They have a nasty smell. Under the rules, they must be exposed to sunlight for half an hour every day, if the sky is clear. But this is rarely done. The difficulty about blankets is not a trivial matter to a man of clean habits.

The same thing often happens about dress. The uniform worn by a prisoner is not always washed after he is released, but is given to another prisoner to wear in the same dirty condition. This is a disturbing state of affairs.

Moreover, there was considerable crowding of prisoners. In Johannesburg, where the accommodation was just sufficient for 200 prisoners, nearly 400 were lodged. Thus, twice the number of prisoners permitted under the rules was often lodged in a cell, and sometimes there were not enough blankets to go round. This was not an inconsiderable difficulty. But it is a law of nature that man adjusts himself to any situation in which he is placed by circumstances beyond his control. This happened with the Indian prisoners too. Even in the midst of the very real difficulties mentioned above, Mr. Dawad Mahomed, especially, remained in good spirits the whole day and kept the Indian prisoners amused all the time by his wit and humour.

There was an incident in the gaol which made one unhappy.

Once a Kaffir warder approached some Indians who were sitting in a group. He asked for two Indians to go with him and do some grass-mowing. No one spoke for some time. Mr. Imam Abdool Kadir then offered himself for the work. Even then,no one got ready to accompany him. On the contrary, they told the warder that Mr. Kadir was their priest and asked him not to set him any task. This made matters twice as bad. For one thing, everyone ought to have offered himself for the work, instead of which, when the Imam Saheb came forward, out of consideration for the good name of the community, they divulged his status. By indicating their unwillingness to take up the work even when the Imam Saheb was ready for it, they proved that we–the community as a whole–are a shameless lot.

(To be continued)

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 23-1-1909

165. LETTER TO CREDITORS[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
January 23, 1909

GENTLEMEN,

I have seen a report of the meeting of creditors[2] of Mr. A.M. Cachalia of Johannesburg, merchant. I may state that my position is very similar to Mr. Cachalia's. Owing to the action taken by the Government, and referred to by Mr. Cachalia, my stock is in jeopardy. It is not possible for me to take out a licence. The question, therefore, is what am I to do with the stock that is in my possession. My liabilities are roughly £2,000, and my assets £4,000. In view of the decision arrived at by the meeting of Mr. Cachalia's creditors, and in view also of the reported concerted action of European merchants regarding cases like Mr. Cachalia's, I am not calling a meeting of creditors, but I merely advise you of the position. I shall be pleased, if you so desire, to call a meeting, or to attend any meeting that you may wish to call, and shall be pleased also to place my position before the creditors. Any further information that you may desire can be obtained at the offices of the British Indian Association, 21-24 Court

[1] This letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, as in the case of Cachalia's communication, was signed and addressed to his creditors by E. M. Aswat; later, he became the Acting Chairman of the British Indian Association in place of Cachalia, who was imprisoned.

[2] *Vide* "Representation at Meeting of Cachalia's Creditors", 22-1-1909

Chambers, Corner of Rissik and Anderson Streets, and I shall esteem it a favour if any communication you may wish to make is addressed as above.

E. M. ASWAT

Indian Opinion, 30-1-1909

166. LETTER TO THE PRESS[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
January 23, 1909

[SIR,]

As one-time Secretary of the Indian Association, and as a merch-ant, I beg to congratulate Mr. A. M. Cachalia on the most self-sacrificing step he has tuken. In my opinion , he deserves the best thanks of the Bri-tish Indian community and, more especially, of the British Indian mer-chants, for having pointed the way out to them. The best manner in whi-ch I can express my approval of Mr. Cachalia's action is to follow him, and I have, therefore, placed myself in communication with my creditors.

I notice that the morality of the step taken by Mr. Cachalia has been questioned,[2] and that it has been construed into a desire on the part of the British Indian merchants to coerce European wholesale houses.[3] As to the morality or immorality of the step, it is largely a matter of opi-nion. According to the view taught by my religion, a merchant who does his best to pay his creditors 20/- in the £, and warns them of any danger in which their goods may be placed, is considered to have performed a meritorious act deserving of warm approbation from the community in which his lot is cast. With reference to coercion, I am sure that those who have used the term have done so hastily. It is quite clear that if [the] British Indian merchants do not take out licences to trade, they must be very properly prosecuted for trading without licences. The Government have every right, as they consider that their position is just, to impose every form of hardship on those traders who trade in disregard of the Licensing Law. What is an Indian debtor with a large stock on hand and with a conscience to keep to do? He has not cash enough to pay out his creditors immediately. He cannot, with any regard for his

[1] This was presumably drafted by Gandhiji and signed by E. M. Aswat.

[2] In a resolution of the Executive Committee of the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce on January 22

[3] *Vide* "Letter to *Rand Daily Mail*", 22-1-1909

creditors, and without their consent, sell his goods by auction. He finds he has assets enough to pay out his creditors. Apart from any political considerations, I cannot but think that the only honourable course for a debtor, placed in the position above described, is to take his creditors into his confidence, and place himself at their disposal, telling them that, short of compro-mising his conscience, he is willing to do everything that the creditors may consider desirable in their interests. That my action will bear a political interpretation is unavoidable, for the simple reason that it is based upon the situation created by the Government; but, speaking for myself, I can assure the public that the action that I have taken is irres-pective of whatever the European wholesale houses may do, so far as the political aspect is concerned. My desire is simply to protect my creditors, and certainly also to frustrate the design of the Government, in so far as they wish to receive monetary aid from me in order to bend me and my other countrymen to their wishes, which I hold to be unjust, immoral, and unrighteous.

Indian Opinion, 30-1-1909

167. INTERVIEW TO "RAND DAILY MAIL" [1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
January 25, 1909]

. . .He [Gandhiji] says that he has sufficient faith in the sense of justice of the Colonists to believe that, as soon as they are in full possession of all the facts, they will give the Asiatics "their rights".

The Indians,he said, in the course of conversation yesterday, had secured the Kaffir trade to a large extent, because they treated the Kaffir better and more courteously than the European. He denied that the Indians under-sold the European storekeepers, but admitted that the Indian storekeepers paid their employees less than the European did.

Replying to the popular reproach that the Indians had ruined Ladysmith and Potchefstroom for European traders, Mr. Gandhi said that Ladysmith was largely supported by the indentured Indian community, just as Verulam was, and it was only natural that Indian stores should spring up there.

[1] This was reported in *Rand Daily Mail,* 26-1-1909, with the prefatory remarks that 40 Indian merchants of standing had decided to follow Cachalia's example in closing down their business houses; *vide* "Letter to Creditors", pp. 155-6. The report said that conferences were to be held at Krugersdorp and Johannesburg to discuss the implications of the move. "Meanwhile, Mr. Gandhi gives the movement active support, and views with much apparent optimism the outcome of the struggle."

He concluded by saying that, if the European traders took up so definite and uncompromising an attitude as it was suggested they would do, and if they applied tor the sequestration of the Indians' estates, so that the latter were turned out of the country, then every Indian would go back to India and become a passive resister.

" I, personally," he concluded, " would endeavour to become a thorn in the side of the Indian Government, and I would not be satisfied until the Asiatic trader got his rights in South Africa, or until South Africa were declared no longer a British Colony."

Indian Opinion, 30-1-1909

168. LETTER TO SIR CHARLES BRUCE[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
January 27, 1909

DEAR SIR,

On behalf of the British Indian Association, I beg to thank you for your persistent advocacy of the British Indian cause in the Transvaal. The sympathy of distinguished members of the Empire gives my struggling countrymen a great deal of encouragement and nerves them for what sometimes appears to be an interminable fight. We all feel that we are fighting not only our own cause, but we are fighting for the good name of the Empire.

I remain, etc.,
A. M. CACHALIA
CHAIRMAN ,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

SIR CHARLES BRUCE, G.C.M.G.
LONDON

Indian Opinion, 6-2-1909

[1] (1836-1920); Governor of Mauritius, 1897-1904; author of several books on the Empire and Imperial policy; published in 1908 a pamphlet on the British Indian problem in the Transvaal based on articles in *Empirs Review;* wrote frequently on the subject in the Press. In a letter to the *Morning Post*, 4-11-1908, he had refuted the paper's argument that the terms of Queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858 did not cover the rights of British Indians outside the territorial limits of India. Quoting Lord Selborne's speech of 1897in support of his interpretation of the Proclamation, he declared that to exclude Indians outside India from the "obligations of duty" is the Proclamation would be "the direct negation of Empire".

169. LETTER TO LORD CURZON

[JOHANNESBURG,]
January 27,1909]

TO
THE RIGHT HON'BLE LORD CURZON[1]
JOHANNESBURG

MY LORD,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of Your Lordship's note[2] of the 26th instant, in reply to a wire[3] from my Association requesting Your Lordship to receive a deputation, in connection with the struggle that is at present unfortunately going no between the Government and the community represented by my Association.

My Association is deeply thankful to Your Lordship for taking so much interest in the position of British Indians in the Transvaal; and regrets that, owing to Your Lordship's brief stay, the Association will be deprived of the opportunity of sending a deputation to Your Lordship to pay its respects.

I now enclose herewith a very brief statement of the position as it stands at present, a pamphlet[4] published by Sir Charles Bruce, which fairly summarises the position, and the petition[5] of the Association submitted to His Majesty's Government through the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

As a Committee of some influential Europeans has been formed in the Transvaal to help the Association in this particular matter, I took the liberty of showing Your Lordship's note to its Chairman, Mr. Hosken[6], who, I understand, is also addressing a letter to Your

[1] (1859-1925); Viceroy and Governor-General of India, 1899-1905; British Foreign Secretary, 1919-1924

[2] Lord Curzon had written: "I have only just arrived in Johannesburg and have so short a time here being engaged all tomorrow, away all Thursday and leaving Friday morning, that I am afraid I cannot receive a deputation. If however your Association will give me as full a statement of their case as they can prepare before Thursday evening, I will study it on my way."

[3] Not available

[4] Not available. *Vide* also footnote to the preceding item.

[5] *Vide* "Petition to Secretary of State for Colonies", 9-11-1908

[6] As head of the European Committee, he had addressed a letter to *The Times*, London, on January 6, of which a copy was forwarded to the Secretary of State for the Colonies by L. W. Ritch. *Vide* Appendix XI.

Lordship.

If any further information is desired by Your Lordship, my Association will be pleased to furnish you with it.

In accordance with Your Lordship's wishes, all communications between Your Lordship and this Association will be kept private.

I beg to conclude with the hope that your intervention will result in a happy ending to the struggle.

I have, etc.,

[ENCLOSURE]

STATEMENT OF THE INDIAN POSITION

FOR SUBMISSION TO

THE RIGHT HON'BLE LORD CURZON

THE INDIAN CLAIM

Apart from matters of detail, the following are the two outstanding questions between the Local Government and British Indians:

1. Repeal of the Asiatic Act No. 2 of 1907.
2. The status of educated Indians.

ARGUMENT ON THE CLAIMS

As to the first, the Indian contention is that General Smuts was under promise to repeal the Asiatic Act. The promise was not reduced to writing, but, three days after the completion of the compromise of January, 1908,[1] General Smuts, in his speech[2] at Richmond, which has never been contradicted, stated as follows: "He had told them that the law would not be repealed so long as there was an Asiatic in the country who had not registered," and, again, "Until every Indian in the country had registered, the law would not be repealed."

Apart, however, from the promise, the above Act has been declared to be unworkable. The recent decisions of the Supreme Court have emphasised the opinion; and the Act of 1908, which was passed in partial fulfilment of the promise, in effect superseded the Asiatic Act 2 of 1907.

That the Indians understood that a promise had been made to

[1] *Vide* "Interview to "The Transvaal Leader", 30-1-1908.
[2] *Vide* "General Smut's speech in Richmond", 5-2-1908

repeal the Act as against voluntary registration can no longer be doubted, and it was in that faith that British Indians submitted to voluntary registration. The leading Indians, in their eagerness to carry out the Indian part of the compromise, did so at much personal risk, as even the voluntary giving of finger-impressions was resented by many Indians. The Secretary of the Association was, on his way to the Registration Office, brutally assaulted, and, later, the then Chairman of the Association was also assaulted for the same reason.

The giving of finger-impressions as such was never made a funda-mental objection. The objection was raised against the spirit of the Act, based, as it was, on a false charge of an organized entry, on a large scale, into the Transvaal of British Indians who had no right to be in the country.

As to the status of educated Indians, it is contended that General Smuts puts upon the Immigrants' Restriction Act of the Transvaal an interpretation whereby British Indians possessing the necessary educational qualifications become prohibited immigrants; and this prohibition is brought about by means of the Asiatic Act of 1907.

British Indians submit that such prohibition, based on racial lines, is a departure from the Imperial policy; that when the Immigrants' Restriction Act was sanctioned, such a departure was not intended; and that, in any case, British Indians hold that they cannot accept such racial desqualification involving, in the words of Mr. Chamberlain[1],"an affront upon millions of His Majesty's subjects".

British Indians state that, legal equality for Indians possessing educational qualifications being retained, they do not mind such an administration of the Law as would, under a strict examination test, prohibit the entry of all but six Indians of high educational attainments. Such administrative inequality is today in vogue at the Cape, [in] Natal and Australia; and British Indians, recognizing the prejudice, have submitted to it, but they claim that the importing of a racial difference in the matter of immigration would be intolerable.

PASSIVE RESISTANCE

In order to attain this end, British Indians have exhausted all their resources, by way of petitions and deputations. At one of their mass meetings,[2] they took a solemn oath not to submit to the Asiatic Act of 1907 and not to receive the benefits of the Act of 1908, until

[1] Joseph Chamberlain (1836-1914); Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1895-1903

[2] *Vide* "Mass Meeting at Pretoria", 6-7-1907.

the above redress was granted. Many Indians have, therefore, in virtue of the oath, suffered imprisonment. The struggle has lasted now for over two years; and over 2,000 Indians have undergone imprisonment, mostly with hard labour. Hundreds have been deported, only to-return immediately. Many families have been ruined pecuniarily. Many Indian merchants have suffered enormous loss. Some have even closed [down] their businesses. The Chairman of the Association, in order to avoid confiscation of his property by the Government under fines imposed for trading without licences, has accepted sequestr-ation of his estate.[1] Several Indian merchants are ready to follow his example. Some Indians have, no doubt, owing to their weakness accepted the Asiatic Acts, and more are likely to succumb; but, after a very careful examination, the Executive of the British Indian Association as a whole will remain solid in offering passive resistance until justice is done.[2]

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4916-7

170. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

Wednesday [*January 27, 1909*][3]

CHI. HARILAL,

Your letter to hand. I can see that you are unhappy. I have got to accept your opinion as to whether you would be happy or not on account of separation.[4] However, I see that you will have to undergo imprisonment for a long period. I would like to know what you think about it. Please write to me in detail. The struggle is likely to be a prolonged one. There are some indications of its being a short one also. There is a likelihood of Lord Curzon interceding. Let me know what arrangement should be made in regard to Chanchal during your absence. More when I have time.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Creditors", 20-1-1909

[2] Lord Curzon, in his reply of February 2, 1909, wrote that, in his discussions with Generals Botha and Smuts, he had been assured of their anxiety to treat the British Indians with liberality and justice. lord Curzon felt that the matter would be taken up as a broader issue later between the Union and Home Governments. *Vide* Appendix XII.

[3] The date is inferred from the reference to the probable intercession by Lord Curzon; *vide* "Letter to Lord Curzon", 27-1-1909 Lord Curzon finally wrote to Gandhiji on February 2 on the result of his talks with Smuts and Botha.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Mrs. Chanchalbehn Gandhi", 16-1-1909

I have not been able to follow what you say about taking a stone in exchange for a pie. In what context have you written that?

You may not have to come here before the 5th.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Was the *Bhagwat* read?

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 9533

171. LETTER TO MRS. CHANCHALBEHN GANDHI

Thursday [*January 28, 1909*][1]

CHI. CHANCHAL,

Your letter received after a long time. I am pained to see that your mind is restless. However, I would always want to know your inner feelings. Do not hide them thinking that I shall be unhappy.

It is not right that you should think you are away from your father's house. I consider you to be my daughter, not a daughter-in-law. Had I considered you as my daughter-in-law, I would have looked upon you as a child. I take you to be my daughter, and hence I do not want to accept that you are a child. You have not been able to understand that. Just as I do not consider Manilal a child, so also I would not consider you one. Had I kept up our relations as between father-in-law and daughter-in-law, that is, had I kept up such a distance between us, I would have, in accordance with my usual nature, first tried to win you over and would have taken work from you freely only when a sense of oneness with the family had developed in you. But I had taken it for granted that you would forget our relationship of father-in-law and daughter-in-law as I have fondled you in my lap as a daughter long before you marriage to Harilal.[2] You have not forgotten that. Try to forget it now.

I must on no account behave in a way that may cause any harm to you or make you unhappy. There have been innumerable women in India who saw their ultimate good in separation from their husbands. Damayanti became immortal on account of her separation

[1] This letter seems to have been written after the preceding one wherein Gandhiji refers to her separation from Harilal during the struggle.

[2] Addressee's father, Haridas Vora, and Gandhiji were great friends.

from Nala. Taramati separated from Harishchandra and that separation led to the good of both. Draupadi's separation from the Pandavas proved a blessing to them and the entire Hindu nation sings the praises of her resoluteness. Do not think that these instances have not taken place. Lord Buddha left his wife and became immortal and so did his wife. This is an extreme case. By these examples I only want to show you that your separation is not going to do you any harm. That it would cause you mental agony is quite natural. That is a sign of love. But that does not necessarily mean that it will do you harm. Weal and woe depend on the purpose behind separation. My separation from Ba was almost involuntary; that is, it was not of my choice and yet it proved to be a blessing to us both. By giving these examples, I do not want to impress upon your mind that you have to live in separation for ever. I write this so that you are not unhappy over your separation during the struggle. I shall hardly be a cause of your separation after the struggle is over. My effort, however, is to change your mental attitude. That also will be effected after you understand and get used to it.

Preserve this letter. Read it again and again. Ask me whatever you do not understand. Do both of you read it. My object in writing this is your welfare. I am always eager to promote it. But I do not insist that you should accept my ideas. My only desire is that both of you should grow with your own effort.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 9527

172. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[VOLKSRUST,]

January 29, 1909

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Received your letter. Please write to me what particular things you intend to say to me before I enter the gaol. Remember that my period [of bail] will be over on the 4th.[1]

Do keep seeing Camroodeen Sheth frequently. There is everything to gain by doing so. "Even hard black boulders are cut by a string." My enthusiasm is such that I may have to meet death in South Africa at the hands of my own countrymen. If that happens,

[1] Gandhiji was arrested at Volksrust on January 16, 1909 and was released on his own recognizance. Instead of February 4, he was tried on February 25 and sentenced to three months' imprisonment.

you should rejoice. It will unite the Hindus and the Mussalmans. In this struggle a twofold inner struggle is going on. One of them is to bring the Hindus and the Muslims together. The enemies of the community are constantly making efforts against such a unity. In such a great endeavour, someone will have to sacrifice his life. If I make that sacrifice, I shall regard myself, as well as you, my colleagues, fortunate.

I have written to you to see Mr. Subramanyam[1], who is a clergyman. I have on the whole found him to be a good man.

When you come to know who is making the effort about me, please let me know. For the present I shall not write to anyone about it.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 4918

173. CACHALIA'S SELF-SACRIFICE

The fact that each successive Chairman of the Transvaal [British Indian] Association has proved himself worthier than his predecessor is an indication that the Indian community's star is in the ascendant. Mr. Cachalia has been to gaol. He has now declared his intention to embrace poverty. His financial position is so sound that no one can argue that he had little to sacrifice. He is prepared to forgo a flourishing business. He does not mind being declared a bankrupt at the instance of his creditors. Rather he takes pride in that. This is what we can claim as wealth well earned. All this Mr. Cachalia suffers for the motherland. He wants to honour his pledge. This is real self-sacrifice. We offer our congratulations to him.

This excellent step is already proving infectious. Mr. Aswat has emulated Mr. Cachalia's courage. We congratulate him as well.

This is a moment which will test the businessmen. We have often defended them in the past. They have suffered losses. Some of them have also courted imprisonment. We have mentioned all such instances from time to time. But this is the time when the businessmen will be really tested. They have never staked their all, as the hawkers did; now is the time for them to do so. Mr. Cachalia and Mr. Aswat

[1] Minister of the Queen Street Wealeyan Indian church, Durban

have shown the way. It is to be seen what the other businessmen do. Nearly 40 of them have signed a statement that they will not take out licences, but close down their businesses instead. Those who are prepared for this had better come out in the, open in support of Mr. Cachalia's action. The next phase of the campaign depends upon the businessmen; it is they who will stand to suffer, should the movement be unduly prolonged.

Everyone realizes that Mr. Cachalia has not lost his honour by having been declared an insolvent; rather, it has been enhanced. The creditors also know that it is none of Mr. Cachalia's fault. He has brought distinction to the post of Chairman. Why, then, should the other businessmen feel timid? If at all, what they should fear is a retreat. When engaged in a battle, one can have nothing to fear in rushing forward.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-1-1909

174. ENGLISH INFLUENCES IN THE AIR

In these days of *swadeshi,* it is necessary to bear in mind a few simple things. We observe that some Indian youths, having acquired a smattering of English, use it even when it is not necessary to do so, as if they had forgotten their own language or wanted to suggest how much more difficult it was to speak English, or for some similar reason. When talking among themselves, they use broken English rather than pure Gujarati, Hindi or Urdu. They even carry on their correspondence in English. These young men emphasize their spirit of *swadeshi* by using difficult English words which they themselves do not understand, and then take pride in what they do. This is a simple, and yet, a grave fault. Any nation that cherishes its individuality must love its own language and feel proud of it.

Let us consider the example of the Boers themselves. We are not concerned with their moral principles. Their patriotism, at any rate, is wonderful. That is the only thing that calls for emulation. Though it is very useful for Dutch children to learn English, they are taught their own dialect, a local variety of Dutch called 'Taal'. There are very few books in this language. But they are confident that in the course of time they will enrich that language. It is possible to do so. It is because of this spirit of theirs that they have succeeded in gathering

the reins of government in their own hands.

The Jews love their language, Yiddish, very much, though not as much as the Dutch love theirs. Until a few years ago; that language was only an uncultivated dialect. Some eminent Jews believe that only when they cultivate a real love for Yiddish will they be united as a people.

In our case, we already have a language of our own; what is necessary is to cultivate respect for it. It is our duty to enrich it, to read a great many books written in it, to write books in it and also to encourage others to write them.

This does not mean that we need not learn English or can be indifferent to it. It is the language of the Government, and has also be come an international language, and hence it is necessary for everyone to learn it. One must learn to use it well, when it has to be used. One must learn to read and write in it with facility. But no useful purpose is served by behaving as some young men have been doing. There is no point in writing to another in English when that other person knows as little English as one does oneself. It would only lead to a total mis-understanding, apart from encouraging a bad habit. The right approach would be to use English [only] when the other person does not know our mother tongue. English may be learnt, but one's mother tongue must not be ignored. The learning of English must come second to learning one's mother tongue. Or, one may learn both the languages simultaneously, remembering, however, the general rule mentioned above. We do not believe that those who are not proud of their own language, who are not proficient in it, can have the true spirit of *swadeshi*. Gujarati, among the Indian languages, is a poorly-developed language, and we also observe that Gujaratis lag behind all the others [in India] in respect of the *swadeshi* spirit. It is for the Gujaratis to strive for the development of Gujarati. It is in that way that all of us can make ourselves true Indians.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-1-1909

175. EXAMPLE OF TURKEY

The moment a parliament was established in Turkey, the British became respectful. more than 300 members of the House of Commons sent a message of goodwill to the [Turkish] Parliament. Mr. Asquith, who is a minister, was also among the signatories. It is reported that all the members who were present gave their signatures. Newspapers are now reporting the names of those whose efforts for the establishment of the Parliament were thus crowned with success. In the conflict that Austria provoked with Turkey, the latter gave it a resounding slap in the face without unsheathing its sword, or firing a single shot. Readers will recall that the Turkish people organized a boycott of Austrian goods, which has not yet been relaxed, though Austria has climbed down somewhat. According to newspaper reports, Austrian estimates place the loss Austria has incurred in such a short time at £ 1,700,000. Turkish estimates place the figure at £ 3,000,000. When the ships carrying Austrian goods arrived [at the Turkish port], the Austrian Ambassador made frantic efforts[to have the cargoes unloaded], but the Turkish Government took no notice. Even the porters sacrificed their wages, and not a single Turk was found ready to unload the Austrian goods. The Austrian Government thereupon lodged a strong protest with His Majesty the Sultan. The Turkish people concluded from this the that Austria had received an unbearable blow; in the result, the boycott became more intense; First, the fez (the Turkish cap) and matches imported from Austria were boycotted. The boycott was then extended to other articles, as the people came to know what other goods were inported from Austria. Ahmed Reza Pasha, the well known leader of Young turkey, stated when questioned in Paris, that they had certainly boycotted Austria, and that the boycott would continue still. It was not their duty [he added] to think of the losses that Austria would suffer. They had acted in self-defence, only raising their hands to ward off a blow. Austria [he said] had struck the first blow. It might as well enjoy the fruit [of what it had done]. Newspapers report that it was because of this extensive boycott that negotiations started between Istambul and Vienna for a *rapprochement*.

This was a struggle for national honour, and neither the poor nor the rich gave a thought to their own losses in defence of that honour; that is the reason why Austria was brought to its knees so

easily. The Transvaal Indians ought to turn this example over and over again in their minds.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-1-1909

176. MY SECOND EXPERIENCE IN GAOL [–V]

MORAL DILEMMA

When I had completed about half the term of my imprisonment, there was a telegram from Phoenix saying that Mrs. Gandhi was seriously ill and asking me to go down immediately.[1] Everyone was unhappy at this. I had no doubt as to my duty. When the gaoler asked me whether I would agree to pay the fine to obtain my release, I replied without the slightest hesitation that I would never do so, and that it was implied in our movement that we should bear separation from out kith and kin. The gaoler smiled at this, but felt sorry too. On a superficial view of the matter, this attitude would appear to be rather harsh, but personally I am convinced that that is the only right attitude to adopt. I think of my love for the motherland as an aspect of my religion. It is, of course, not the whole of religion. But religion cannot be considered to be complete without it. If necessary, we should bear separation from our family in order to be able to follow the dictates of our religion. We may even have to lose them. Not only is there no cruelty in this but it is actually our duty to do so. If it is true that we have pledged ourselves to fight unto death, there is nothing further to think of. Lord Roberts lost his only son for a cause inferior to ours and, being on the front, could not even attend his funeral. This history of the world is full of such instances.

QUARRELS AMONG KAFFIRS

There are some dangerous murderers among the Kaffir prisoners in gaol. We find these prisoners constantly engaged in disputes. After they are locked up in the cell, they quarrel among themselves. Sometimes, they openly defy the warder. One warder was twice assaulted by the prisoners. Indian prisoners are obviously in danger when locked up in the same cell with these. So far, Indians have not been placed in such a situation. But so long as Indian

[1] *Vide* "Letter to A. H. West". 9-11-1908

prisoners are classed with the Kaffirs, the danger will remain.

ILLNESS IN GAOL

There was for the most part no serious illness among the prisoners. I have already mentioned Mr. Mavji's case. There was a Tamil named Mr. Raju, who had acute dysentery. He was very much pulled down. The reason he gave for this was that he used to take 30 cups of tea [every day], and he got dysentery because he did not get them. He asked for tea. Of course, the request was rejected. But he was given some medicine, and the medical officer in the gaol ordered two pounds of milk and bread [for him]. This restored him to full health. Mr. Ravikrishna Talevantsingh kept indifferent health till the end. Mr. Kazi and Mr. Bawazeer were ill all the time. Mr. Ratanshi Sodha was observing a religious vow for the four months of the rainy season, and therefore he had only one meal a day. Since the food was not quite satisfactory, he nearly starved himself and as a result got oedema. A part from these, there were other cases of minor illness.

On the whole, however, we found that even those Indians who fell ill were not broken in spirit. They were happy to bear this particular kind of hardship for the sake of the motherland.

SOME DIFFICULTIES

It was observed that the more irritating difficulties were those of our own making rather than those created by others. There were occasions in the gaol when one sensed in the air distinctions between Hindus and Muslims, between high and low castes. Indians of all communities and castes lived together in the gaol, which gave one an opportunity to observe how backward we are in the matter of self-government. It was also discovered, however, that we were not altogether incapable of self-government, for whatever difficulties cropped up were always overcome in the end.

Some Hindus said that they were not prepared to take food prepared by Muslims or by certain individuals. Men who hold such views should never stir out of India. I also observed that no objection was raised if any Kaffir or white touched our food. It so happened once that someone objected to sleeping near a certain person on the ground that the latter belonged to the scavenger caste. This again was humiliating to us. On probing deeper into the matter, it was found that the objection was raised not because the man [who had raised the objection] was himself particular about it, but because he was afraid of

being declared an outcaste should other members of his community in India come to hear of it. Thanks to these hypocritical distinctions of high and low and to the fear of subsequent caste tyranny, we have, I think, turned our back on truth and embraced falsehood. How can we be called satyagrahis if, knowing that it is wrong to despise the scavenger, we still do so out of an unreasonable fear of members of our caste or other men? I wish that Indians who join this movement also resort to satyagraha against their caste and their family and against evil wherever they find it. As for myself, I am convinced that it is because we do not act in this way that the successful outcome of our struggle is being delayed. If it is true that we are all Indians, how can we cling to false distinctions and so quarrel among ourselves and, at the same time, demand our rights? How can we hope to achieve success in our struggle if, out of fear of what may happen to us in India,we do not do what we believe to be right? It is the mark of a coward to shrink from anything out of mere fear, and Indians who are cowards will not hold out to the last in this great war that is being waged against the Government.

WHO CAN GO TO GAOL?

We see from these facts that those who are slaves to bad habits, who observe vain distinctions of caste and community, who are quarrel-some, who are not able to look on Hindus and Muslims with an equal eye and those who are diseased in body—such men cannot go to gaol or remain in gaol for any length of time. It follows therefore that those who want to go to gaol as a matter of honour and with a view to the welfare of the motherland must be healthy in body, mind and soul. An ailing man will find himself exhausted in the end; those who are conscious of Hindu-Muslim differences, who think themselves superior to others, who are slaves to bed habits, who are possessed by a craving for tea, smoking or such other things, are incapable of fighting till the bitter end.

WHAT I READ IN GAOL

Though the entire day is taken up with work, one can find time for some reading in the mornings and evenings, as also on Sundays and, since there is nothing else to tax one's attention in gaol, it is possible to read with a peaceful mind. Though I had limited time on my hand, I managed ot read two books by the great Ruskin, the essays of the great Thoreau, some portions of the Bible, life of Garibaldi (in

Gujarati), essays of Lord Bacon (in Gujarati), and two other books about India. We can find the doctrine of satyagraha in the writings of Ruskin and Thoreau. The Gujarati books were sent by Mr. Diwan for all of us to read. Apart from these works, I read the *Bhagavad Gita* almost every day. All this reading had the effect of confirming my belief in satyagraha, and I can say today that life in gaol is not in the least boring.

TWO ATTITUDES

We can take two different attitudes to what I have written above.

First, why should we bear such hardships, submit ourselves, for instance, to the restrictions of gaol life, wear coarse and ungainly dress, eat food which is hardly food, starve ourselves, suffer being kicked by the warder, live among the Kaffirs, do every kind of work, whether we like it or not, obey a warder who is only good enough to be our servant, be unable to receive any friends or write letters, go without things that we may need, and sleep in company with robbers and thieves? Better die than suffer this. Better pay the fine than go to gaol. Let no one be punished with gaol. Such an attitude will make a man quite weak and afraid of imprisonment, and he will achieve nothing good by being in gaol.

Alternatively, one may consider oneself fortunate to be in gaol in the cause of the motherland, in defence of one's honour and one's religion. Gaol life, one may think,involves no [real] suffering. Outside, one has to carry out the will of many, whereas one has only the warder to reckon with in gaol. One has no anxieties in gaol, no problem of earning one's livelihood, no worry about getting one's bread, for that is provided regularly by others. One's person is protected by the Government. None of these things has to be paid for. By way of exercise, one gets ample work to do and, without any effort on one's part, all of one's bad habits fall away. The mind enjoys a sense of freedom. One has ready to hand the benefit of being absorbed in devotions to God. The body is held in bondage, but the soul grows more free. One is in full enjoyment of the use of one's limbs. The body is looked after by those who hold it in bondage. Thus, from every point of view, one is free. One might, perhaps, be in difficulties, be manhandled by a wicked warder, but then one learns to be patient. One feels glad to have an opportunity of dissuading [him] from such behaviour. It is up to us to adopt such an attitude and think of gaol as a holy and happy place and to make it such. In short, happiness and

misery are states of the mind.

I hope that the reader, after reading this account of my second experience [in gaol], will resolve in his mind that his only happiness will be in going to gaol for the sake of the motherland or his religion, in submitting himself to the suffering involved in it, or bearing hardships in other ways.

(Concluded)

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-1-1909

177. THE TRANSVAAL STRUGGLE

The Transvaal campaign is now in full swing. The Chairman of the [British Indian] Association is in gaol. Almost all the leaders of the Madrasi community are installed there. Thus, Thoreau's statement that in a tyrannical state those who do not wish to submit to its tyranny have their place in gaol is proved true.

This time, the sentences of imprisonment are not just for a week or two.[1] Our Johannesburg correspondent reports that the other leaders will be arrested shortly. We think all this is as it should be. If we had gained our object by a mere pretence of suffering, by being in gaol for a few days, we would not have been able to retain what we had gained, or derive any benefit therefrom. As a rule, we can hold on to anything in the world by the same means by which we gain it. The commonest illustration of this is that of territories acquired by force, which can be retained only by force. Following this logic, some arrogant, power-drunk and thoughtless Englishmen believe that India, which was conquered with the power of the sword, can be held only with the same power. This is an obvious fallacy. We have mentioned it here only as an illustration of the general rule referred to above. We shall therefore say no more than this about it, that they conquered India—not with the power of the sword, but by employing the strength of our own people [against themselves], thanks to the disunity prevailing among them. Therefore, according to the rule mentioned above, India can be retained only by perpetuating that disunity and employing the strength of our people [against themselves]. And

[1] Gandhiji himself was sentenced to three months on February 25.

taking this line of argument a step further, we see that if Hindus and Muslims in India were to unite and refuse to hold down their own people, the country would not remain dependent. India could, even then, remain under the British flag. But that would be on a different basis and with the freely-given consent of the people. People's consent is there even today. But it is, as it were, forcibly obtained. We shall stop here with the story of India. We only want to draw from it the lesson to be applied to the Transvaal situation.

We see, then, that it is with those very means which we employ to force the Government to yield our demands that we can avail ourselves of those demands when conceded. If so, it follows as a matter of course that satyagraha should be employed with full regard for truth. Satyagraha must not be satyagraha only in name. This way of thinking will enable us to bring all our strength into play. That will be of benefit to us. At this moment, if we display real strength instead of being theatrical, that strength will stand us in good stead in future.

The campaign has now reached a stage when everything depends on the businessmen. That is as it should be. It is they whose interests are most heavily involved. They enjoy a higher status [than others]. Therefore it is they who especially feel the disgrace of the Act. Hence, the businessmen must be very careful now as to what they do. Our correspondent reports of numerous businessmen having yielded. Even these, if they have any iota of decency left in them, can join the movement. They can take to hawking in order to court imprisonment. If they mean it, the Government cannot but send them to gaol. Men like Mr. Cachalia and Mr. Aswat are rare in this world. If the Hindu businessmen display even half as much strength, they can serve the movement. Whether they do so or not, those who are already in gaol and those who aspire to be installed in the gaol-palace have a clear duty before them. They must go to gaol again and again till redress is ensured. Let them not mind if their goods are auctioned. If they have staked their lives for the cause, everything else must be accepted as a matter of course. We wish that God should show the right path to Indians. Would it not be a great misfortune for us if, after the publication in England of the letter[1] addressed by Mr. Hosken and other whites, the Indians were to give way to fear and admit defeat? In fact, that would be the utmost limit of disgrace for us. We are

[1] Addressed to *The Times*, London, January 6, 1909. *Vide* Appendix XI.

confident that Indians, who have held out for two years, will certainly not bring on such disgrace upon themselves.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 6-2-1909

178. MORE SACRIFICE BY CACHALIA

We saw that Mr. Cachalia accepted honourable insolvency for the sake of the community.[1] He is now serving a term of three months' imprisonment with hard labour in Johannesburg gaol. From among businessmen, Mr. Amod Moosaji and Mr. Maimy have joined him. The entire Indian community, the Muslims especially, should be proud of what Mr. Cachalia had done. There is nothing more he can do. He has gone to gaol a second time, and that, too, with a smiling face. The community in which there exist such persons will never give way. Even a few such men can save the community from ruin.

We hope hundreds of Indians will emulate the glorious example of Mr. Cachalia. The greater the number of such Indians who undergo hardships, the more onerous becomes the responsibility of the community. Every Indian should bear this fact in mind. Should the other Indians give in, while Mr. Cachalia and his associates are in gaol, it is not Mr. Cachalia who will lose his good name. It is the community that will be disgraced.

The Tamils have surpassed all expectations. All their leaders are now in gaol. Now-a-days, imprisonment is not merely for a week, but for three months, and it is not simple, but rigorous. Unbounded is the courage of those Indians who have gone to gaol, undeterred by such sentences. To secure their release before the term of their imprisonment expires is in the hands of the Indians outside. How that can be done is very well shown in our Johannesburg Letter.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 6-2-1909

[1] *Vide* "Cachalia's self-sacrifice", 30-1-1909

179. CONVENTION

The report of the Convention which met to evolve a single Government for South Africa has been published. It is divided into 10 parts, and contains 153 sections. The report will be presented to all the four Parliaments in South Africa on March 30. If it is approved, the Convention will meet again in May at Bloemfontein and present its final report in June, It will be approved by the Parliaments. Dele- gates will then take the report to England and the new Parliament of South Africa will meet within a year thereafter. To some extent, the whites can be proud of all this. We congratulate them on having display-ed a unity of purpose and sacrificed their individual interests. It should not be surprising that men who are capable of acting in this manner should succeed in their aims; whether or not, as a result of their action, others stand to suffer is a different question. In so far as the Convention itself is concerned, it has proved that men who unite for concerted action, for an unworthy or evil object, will always achieve some measure of success.

The Convention will lead to the establishment of a single Parliament and a single High Court for South Africa. Subordinate to the Parliament, there will be a council for each of the present Colonies for its internal affairs. The council will have power to enact ordinary laws. There will be uniform customs and a single railway. Pretoria will be the permanent capital, but one session of Parliament will be held in Cape Town. The new High Court will be located at Bloemfontein. There will be one Governor-General for South Africa. Parliament will have two Houses, the Senate and the Assembly. There will be 40 members in the Senate, of which eight will be nominated by the Government. The rest will be elected by the several provinces. The Assembly will have 121 members, 51 from the Cape, 17 from Natal, 36 from the Transvaal, and 17 from the Orange Free State.

The proposed Union has dangerous implications for Indians and other Coloured races. They will be left with no voting rights anywhere, and care has been taken to provide in the report that they should be deprived of whatever little measure of such rights they enjoy in the Cape. But franchise is a mere trifle. Where we are not allowed even standing room, voting rights can be of little avail. In a place where some are slaves and others masters of slaves, they may

have the same voting rights for the purpose of appointing supervisors over them both, the slave's vote will be of no use to him. Before the right can be of profit, the slave must be made free and educated to value his freedom. Otherwise, voting rights will hardly be worth the name. In this land, we are in a state of slavery. We have not even been educated to understand the meaning of freedom. We must have both at the same time. It is not likely that those who are our masters will break our bonds. Therefore, we have to educate ourselves and win freedom for ourselves by our own efforts. Till that is done, the franchise, in our opinion, will have no value. Let us therefore come to the other kinds of shackles [being forged for us] by the Convention.

The existing laws of the several provinces will remain intact, that is, whatever laws against us exist in the Orange River Colony, the Transvaal and elsewhere will remain unchanged. We shall be allowed no right of movement from one province to another; moreover, the new Parliament will be empowered to enact fresh legislation. The result will be that the harshest laws that exist in any of the Colonies or provinces will be taken as models elsewhere.

It is evident from the report of the Convention that it has not solved the Indian question in the Transvaal. And should the Indians remain inactive, they would be reduced to a miserable condition all over South Africa. Any Indian who would rather not live as a slave in South Africa must understand this and, if he belongs to the Transvaal, must join the fight, staking his head on it; if he is from outside the Transvaal, he must extend all possible support and encouragement to the Transvaal Indians.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-2-1909

180. TO THE FALLEN

Potchefstroom and Klerksdorp have fallen. It appears that Indians in other towns have also given in. Potchefstroom has even sent a report to newspapers to the effect that since that town, which has been so firm, has fallen, other towns are bound to follow suit and that [consequently] there will be no more of satyagraha.

To those who have fallen, we want to give some idea of the duty that they owe. They know of course that the movement is worth carrying on. They gave in because they could not bear the sacrifices it

involved. Those who have fallen in this way must not think of bringing down others. They can even inform the Government that they have surrendered owing to their weakness, that they wish success to those who are standing firm and that they will do everything they can to strengthen these. This much they can certainly do. If they do not, it will be assumed that they did not give in out of weakness, but that they deliberately turned enemies of the motherland. They can give statements in newspapers to say that, though they have themselves fallen, they do not want that others should do the same.

If they do not act in this manner, the campaign will certainly not be wound up for that reason. It will continue. But it will be prolonged if they range themselves on the opposite side. If they admit their weakness in having surrendered, to that extent they will have helped the cause. The campaign will be the shorter for that.

Moreover, even those who have fallen can go to gaol, if they choose. When, in Italy, the people had the spirit of patriotism flowing in every vein of theirs, those who did not join the fighting would not obstruct it but, admitting their weakness, remained aloof and even helped in many other ways. The Indians who have surrendered can do likewise. They ought to heed these suggestions. They ought to have thought of Mr. Dawad Mahomed and others and remained firm. Since they have not done so, they can at any rate act as suggested above and so refrain from adding to the sufferings of these men.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-2-1909

181 RANDERI APPEAL

We have lost Mr. Randeri's appeal.[1] This was not unexpected. It was evident from the attiude of the judges in Mr. Naidoo's case that this appeal, too, would be rejected. Both these appeals are a sort of hint to the satyagrahis that they must appeal to God alone. The courts of this world cannot help them. How can they? The courts of a blind king must also be blind. This does not mean that the officers of the court—the judges—were blind. But there can be no other result when the officers administer an unjust law. Therefore, a satyagrahi's appeal lies to his own strength, to his faith in God and his God-given strength. These will never fail him.

[1] For the first hearing of the case, *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 31-8-1908

Some Indians appear to have lost heart altogether because of [the outcome of] this appeal. They seem to have received a rude shock. These Indians should be taken to be cowards. "Ah misery! Nothing but deportation is left!" But what does "deportation" mean? When deported, one is to return. If one must choose between imprisonment and deportation, deportation is better in some ways, for a man who is deported can continue to fight. The rejection of the appeal does not mean that we have lost our rights. Rights will be lost only when we forgo [them]. Those who have made the Transvaal their home will not allow themselves to be driven out by the Government. They may leave of their own accord. We must therefore advise everyone to think no more about the Randeri appeal.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-2-1909

182. DUNCAN'S VIEWS

Mr. Patrick Duncan was Colonial Secretary in the Transvaal before it received self-goverment. Recently, he took a leading part in the Convention. *State* is an important monthly journal in South Africa. Only very prominent persons write for it. It is patronized by white millionaires.

To this monthly, Mr. Duncan has contributed an article on the Asiatic question that is of serious import and worth reading. They author, moreover, is a man of such vast influence that he can [if he chooses] get the Indian demands accepted.

Those who know English may read this article in that language. We do not have space enough to give a translation, nor is it necessary to do so. Much of it is past history, which is quite familiar to all Indians.

What is remarkable in the article is that is concedes that our demand is reasonable. It also shows conclusively that Mr. Smuts had entertained the thought of repealing the Act. It points out, further, that the Government felt heavily the pressure of satyagraha. In brief, the article offers conclusive proof that the Government cannot but yield to that pressure. All this is important. But the most important point is that the article shows why the Government has not yielded so far. Well, Mr. Duncan asserts categorically that the problem of [the immigration of] educated Indians is a serious one. Whether they should be given in

law the same freedom of immigration as the whites is the main issue. How can it be allowed? Mr. Duncan argues that if South Africa is to be settled by a predominantly white population, such freedom cannot be allowed. He says, moreover, that the problem is not limited to the Transvaal, but concerns the whole of South Africa, This realization led the Imperial Government to sanction the Immigration Law. It is the same realization which has led all the whites to resist [the Indian demand], and which accounts for the continuation of the [Indian] campaign. If the Transvaal Indians withdraw their campaign, there will be identical legislation in the Cape, Natal and Rhodesia. If the Transvaal Indians continue the struggle, it will not be possible to enact such a law for the whole of South Africa. Mr. Duncan has discussed these ideas at great length. One may infer from this that the solution of the Indian question will be found only after the Convention has concluded its labours.

However, before that stage is reached, we already hear people saying that the satyagraha has collapsed. If there is to be no more of satyagraha, why brother about the Convention? We are, of course, not bothered about the Convention, but satyagraha will not on that account be abandoned. All the Indians who fought for two years got a taste of this way of fighting. They realized something of its beauty. It is possible that they may give up fighting now. But evven if a majority of Indians give up the fight, that will not mean the end of the movement. It will go on so long as there is one single person to carry it on. It is, however, our duty to commend this article of Mr. Duncan's to the attention of those who have not yielded so far, and they, on their part, must note Mr. Duncan's words and carry on the fight.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-2-1909

183. DAWAD MAHOMED'S PATRIOTIC SERVICES

Mr. Dawad Mahomed, though nearing old age, has been rendering wonderful services to the community. They deport him, but he is not deterred. Imprisonment holds no terrors for him. "No matter at what point on the border the Government sets me free, [I shall go where I like, even as cattle do]". He has smilingly repeated this remark to a number of men. Serving repeated terms of imprisonmment and indifference to wealth are no longer rare among

Indians in South Africa. We have already written about the invaluable services of Sorabji, who opened the second stage of the stayagraha. He goes on doing his duty silently, whether inside the goal or outsidde it. But this time it is of Mr. Dawad Mahomed's services especially that we wish to write. A man's work may be appreciated in two ways. First, with reference to its intrinsic wortth, and second, with reference to the results, that is, by an asseessment of its likely effects on other men in future. From this second point of view, no one can equal the services of Mr. Dawad Mahomed. It is not merely that he is the President of the Natal Indian Congress. He is a resident of South Africa of long standing. There must be very few Indians in South Africa who are his equals in resourcefulness. He is so intelligent that, had he known English, he would be occupying a big position today. He has a remarkable power of raillery with which he can chaff a great many people with effortless ease. He has had a long experience. He has been free with his money in helping people. He has done good turns to a number of men, either by putting in a good word for them or by offering them monetary help. He is a staunch Muslim, and exerts a powerful influence on the Surati community. For these reasons, his activities have proved to be of immense value from the point of view of their effect. We do not believe that any Indian in South Africa can be content to leave Mr. Dawad Mahomed in gaol. His continued imprisonment has made it the duty of the Indian community to intensify the campaign. The reader will now see why it is that Mr. Dawad Mahomed's part [in the movement] should be considered so very important, and we hope that every reader will be of this view and do his best to help the struggle. If this is done, we believe that Mr. Dawad Mahomed and his associates will not have to complete the full term of six months' imprisonment. Even if they have to, and be imprisoned again thereafter, what will it matter? They will earn thereby all the more enduring fame, and we who remain outside shall have an evil name. What Indian is there who wants to avoid imprisonment at the price of inviting disgrace upon himself?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-2-1909

184. RHODESIA VICTORY

We give in this issue a report to the effect that the Asiatic law which had been passed in Rhodesia, Similar to the Transvaal measure, has been disallowed. This is not a small thing. We must remind readers that the petition which was submitted against the Bill had referred to the resolution of the Indians not to submit to it if it was approved. Everyone will be able to see that the Transvaal fight is the main reason for the disapproval of the Bill. The Imperial Government is forced by the newly-acquired strength of Indians to act very cautiously. We hope the Indians will not readily allow this strength to vanish.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-2-1909

185. DUTY OF INDIANS OUTSIDE THE TRANSVAAL

It appears that the Transvaal struggle will be prolonged and also that there will be very few Indians now to take part in it. It has become doubly obligatory upon the Indians outside the Transvaal to help them. They can do so by holding meetings and passing resolutions. This will serve two purposes. One, those who have not given in yet will feel encouraged, and those who have may join the battle again. Two, the rulers will realize from such meetings and the resolutions passes there that the Indians are united in continuing the fight. Besides passing resolu-tions, it is necesary to collect funds. How much money will be needed in the Transvaal cannot be judged. But it has become imperative to remit some money to Mr. Ritch in England. We don't here enter into the question whether the Committee should continue to be maintained or not, but at least six months will elapse before the Committee is wound up. There is no option but to maintain the Committee till then. The Transvaal sent money to Mr. Ritch only recently. It will be therefore difficult to spare more funds [just now] from the Transvaal. Hence it is the duty of Indians in the other Colonies to shoulder this burden. Our eyes turn especially to Natal. It has played its part till now in maintaining the Committee and so we hope that it will do its duty this time as well.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-2-1909

186. THE STRUGGLE

Readers of this journal will see from our columns this week that the Government have now begun to single out those passive resisters who have proved themselves strong, staunch and true. In this we think the Government deserve congratulations from all parties. At the rate the Government are going on, we should soon have most, if not all, of the passive resisters in gaol. We should find out the true from the false, and the Government will have provided a demonstration for themselves and also for the Colony that real passive resisters are not concerned with an Asiatic influx into the Colony. They are not concerned with bolstering up fraud. All they care for and all they are fighting for is the good name of the community to which they belong, and if it suits the Government to keep such men in gaol for the term of their physical lives, it will suit passive resisters also admirably. The honour of the community will be safe in their keeping, even though they may be in gaol. They will have kept their sacred oath. They will have lived up to the religion they professed. More cannot be expected of man. The Government may then, if they choose, pat themselves on the back for having put passive resisters out of harm's way, but the world will have then seen the righteousness of the struggle in a manner it could not have done otherwise.

There is no such word as defeat in the dictionary of passive resisters, for the simple reason that, in passive resistance, there is no trial of brute strength in which one must necessarily yield.

Indian Opinion, 20-2-1909

187. THE CONSTITUTION

The more the Draft Act of Union is examined, the less it appeals to us. It seems to be a document redolent of race-prejudice, reaction and weak compromise. The more we read it, the more it seems lacking in principle. An enormous effort was evidently made to deprive the Coloured voters at the Cape of their franchise rights, and even under the Constitution as it stands today, there is the chance, though it may be a remote one, that they will, in fact, be deprived of their electoral privileges. We understand that Section 35 has met with the approval in advance of the Imperial Government. That in no way surprises us,

after the lesson of the Transvaal. The Natal Coloured voter fot the future is actually disfranchised. His future privileges are specifically taken away by the Draft Act of Union, and he is left in the lurch. Then, again, although the Cape will get an increase in representation in the course of time, such an increase will be based only upon an increase in the European population. The Coloured population is again ignored, and this increase of membership for the Cape will, in due couse, be balanced by an increase of membership for the other Colonies on a similar basis, so that the Cape's advantage will have disappeared. Mr. Lyttelton knew well what he was talking about, when, in commentig upon the Constitu-tion, he urged that, in the consideration of it, the position of British Indians in the Transvaal should be regarded with care and sympathy. That seems to apply all round. Frankly, we would rather see Closer Union, however admirable in itself it may be, postponed indefinitely, than that it should be accomplished at such a cost to the Empire, It will be worse than building upon sand.

Indian Opinion, 20-2-1909

188. PARSEE BRAVERY

We have mentioned the Tamils' bravery. Besides Mr. Chettiar, a number of Tamils are at present in gaol, so that they have certainly not allowed the light of the community to be dimmed. Mr. Pillay, Chairman [of the Committee] at Pretoria, has also been sentenced to six months' imprisonment. Like the Tamils, the Parsees, too, have shown themselves to be brave. It is one of the supreme wonders of God that, though the Parsee community does not number more than a hundred thousand in the whole word, it has made a name for itself everywhere by virtue of its many illustrious qualities. It can be said that it is this community which holds power in India. Bombay is the real capital of India, [and] it owes its prosperity mainly to the Parsees. Examples of their charity are to be found everywhere. They lead in the political field and India has had so far only one "Grand Old Man", Dadabhai. It could not be that members of such a community should behave differently in South Africa. We can say about the Parsees, as about the Tamils, that they have been fighting to a man. They are very few in South Africa, but, as we look round, we do not find a single Parsee who has complied with the Government's senseless law. Out of the five to seven Parsees in Natal, as many as

three are installed in gaol in the Transvaal. Mr. Nadirshah Cama sacrificed his job and has now been arrested; we hope he will shortly be imprisoned. His brother, Mr. Ardeshir Cama, has also been arrested. Elsewhere, Mr. Mulla Bupu Feroze has also been arrested. The other Indians ought to take a lesson from this. We congratulate members of the Parsee community. Their prestige is the prestige of all Indians, for they too are Indians. Other Indians, Muslims and Gujarati Hindus should hang their heads in shame before the Tamils and the Parsees. When we have the example of these two communities in our midst, why shoud we cite examples from others in order to whip up the Indians' courage? The Tamils and the Parsees have achieved a great victory for themselves, and though, at the end of the struggle, the entire Indian community will benefit by it, the credit will be theirs alone. They will be the rulers. They alone will deserve that position. The rest of us will be looked upon as subjects.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 20-2-1909

189. WILL INDIANS YIELD?

Picking up some newspapers just now, we read how 500 men, who had gone to see a play in Mexico, were burnt to death in a fire in the theatre, and how 200 miners were buried [in a mine] in Durham in Britain owing to an explosion. It is only a few days ago that we read about the death of a large number of men when heavy rains caused the flooding of some mines near Johannesburg.

Though we receive such mysterious warnings from time to time, we turn back from the tasks that we may have resolved on. We fail to accomplish them either through fear of pecuniary loss, danger to our lives or other similar misfortunes. Day and night we are busy guarding out bodies from harm, though we cannot take their safety for granted even for an hour. For reasons such as these, the Transvaal Indians are turning back just when the ship is about to gain the shore; such behaviour brings no credit to Indians, is indeed unworthy of them. The greatest charge against us is that we lack the spirit of manliness, that we make a big effort for a while, but soon set tired of it, and that we do not put all our heart into anything that we do. It is one of the objects of the Trans-vaal movement that this charge should be disproved. From it is very nature, the movement will test most of the virtues of Indians or expose their faults. Naturally, therefore, a

number of things are involved in it.

Indians ought to realize that in this campaign no one is to wait for a lead from others [or] to point to others in justification of one's own lapses. Everyone must put his own courage to the test. We must remember that the people whom we are fighting have themselves passed through many sufferings. Only 300 year ago, they had heroes who preferred being burnt alive to betraying their principles. There was a white man of holy character, John Bunyan[1] by name, whom the whites adore today, but who in his life-time suffered much, having had to serve a harsh term of twelve year's imprisonment. In those days, gaols were veritable dungeons. It was only for his principles that John Bunyan suffered. In his time, men were put into prison if they did not attend a particular church. John Bunyan would not attend under compulsion even the most hallowed church. And for this he suffered imprisonment. He was as happy in gaol as if it were a palace. While there, he wrote a book which hundreds of thousands of whites read with great devotion. It is believed that there are very few books like it in other languages. This John Bunyan did not concern himself with what others did. All that mattered to him was his own principles; these he refused to betray, preferring to remain in gaol. He won, nevertheless. Even today, those who threw him into prison are despised by the world. Moreover, the imprisonment of a man like John Bunyan won freedom for his people. It is with the fellow-countrymen of such a man that we have to deal. We take that to be our good fortune. We cannot learn respect for a principle from a man who has much less of it than we have. In the company of a jackal, one can learn to be a jackal and nothing better, but in a lion's company one must learn to roar like a lion or face annihilation. We find ourselves thrown among such lion-like whites, who are extremely oppressive in their dealings with us. If we look at the matter in the right perspective, we shall succeed in holding our own against them, shall save ourselves from being reduced to slavery and live in freedom as their equals in the Transvaal. We have ventured through this campaign to claim equality with them, and success in the venture requires true knowledge and true education. True knowledge is not mere literacy, and true education, not mere reading of books. True knowledge and true education consist in knowing and understanding our true state, and in fashioning our lives and conduct in the light of that knowledge.

[1] *Vide*"Tyler, Hampden and Bunyan", 20-10-1906

It will be observed from our Johannesburg Letter that the Government has now started arresting men everywhere. It arrests everyone known to be strong. We congratulate those who are arrested. We pray to *Ishvar—Khuda* to keep up their courage till the end. Their daring will ensure a bright future for the Transvaal Indians, for the Indians of South Africa—in fact, for the whole of India. The fact that they are a small minority need not dishearten them. It is quite plain now that those who have not been arrested have yielded. We can generally assume that they have come to an understanding with the Government. It is true that there are several Indians, unyielding in their attitude, who have not been imprisoned. They will also find themselves arrested by and by. But a time is coming when almost all true satyagrahis will have been installed in gaol. It is therefore our emphatic advice to those who would strike with all their strength to come forward fearlessly and boldly [to court imprisonment]. Let them no be anxious as to who would attend to the work [outside] in their absence. God is present everywhere—behind, in front, to the right and the left, above and below. He is our only support. He will provide for everything. Why, then, depend upon the efforts of any human being? What can a human being do, after all? The brave Mr. Aswat will be in gaol in a few days. We hope that he will be followed by Chairman after Chairman, in a long line. We repeat once more that those Indians who have fallen can spring back again to their feet with a roar. All that they have to do to make themselves free is to tear off their licences, to make a bonfire of their certificates.

We have never known circumstances so favourable as in the Transvaal for giving a fight. How is it that Indians fail to notice this opportunity? If they have noticed it, it passes our understanding why they do not grasp it.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-2-1909

190. NEW WINDS BLOW

The newspapers have reported that Dar-e-salam Indians propose to do what Natal Indians could have done. They want to boycott the German East Africa Line[1] since it does not book Indian passengers in

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 26-10-1907 and "German East Africa Line", 14-12-1907.

the first class and refuses to accept responsibility for loss of luggage, etc. There is a Reuter telegram to this effect from Berlin. Traders have decided not to book their goods on the steamers of this Line. They have gone to the length of saying that they will commission their own steamers if the Company's officers do not behave respectfully and conduct themselves properly. We thus find that the winds of self-respect and patriotism are blowing on every side. Everyone feels that Indians will sink into utter insignificance or be squeezed out of existence like fleas if, at this time when the nations of the world are competing with one another, they do not wake up and assert themselves.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-2-1909

191. CABLE TO LORD AMPTHILL

[Before *February 25, 1909*][1]

LORD AMPTHILL

LONDON

VEREENIGING INDIANS PUBLIC MEETING ASSOCIATED THEMSELVES ACTION BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION. DETERMINED PASSIVE RESISTANCE AND CONGRATULATED BRAVE BROTHERS AND SISTERS NOW SUFFERING IMPRISONMENT INDIA'S HONOUR. TRUST UNION GOVERNMENT WILL GRANT RELIEF AND ENGLAND AND INDIA WILL HELP .

ASWAT

CHAIRMAN

From a photostat of the original: S.N. 5902

[1] E. M. Aswat was elected Chairman of the British Indian Association on February 1, 1909. The cable being in Gandhiji's hand must have been drafted before he was arrested on February 25, 1909.

192. TRIAL AT VOLKSRUST[1]

VOLKSRUST,

Thursday [*February 25, 1909*]

Today Messrs M. K. Gandhi, Somabhai Patel and six others were sentenced under the Regulations for refusing to produce certificates of registration and to give finger-prints or other means of identification, to a fine of fifty pounds or to undergo imprison-ment for three months with hard labour. All went to gaol.

Addressing the Court, Mr. Gandhi said:

It is my misfortune that I have to appear before the Court for the same offence the second time.[2] I am quite aware that my offence is deliberate and wilful. I have honestly desired to examine my conduct in the light of past experience and I maintain the conclusion that, no matter what my countrymen do or think, as a citizen of the State and as a man who respects conscience above everything, I must continue to incur the penalties so long as justice, as I conceive it, has not been rendered by the State to a portion of its citizens. I consider myself the greatest offen-der in the Asiatic struggle, if the conduct that I am pursuing is held to be reprehensible. I, therefore, regret that I am being tried under a clause which does not enable me to ask for a penalty which some of my fellow objectors received, but I ask you to impose on me the highest penalty. I desire to thank the Court and the Public Prosecutor for the courtesy exte-nded to me in granting so long a delay on account of my wife's illness.

The Magistrate, in passing sentence, said: As I stated before, it is a matter of opinion. You have your opinion. I can only act in accordance with the law. As you do not ask for different treatment, I shall treat you as I have treated others in the same position.

Indian Opinion, 27-2-1909

[1] The report of the trial was published as "From Our Own Correspondent" with the caption: "Mr. Gandhi Goes to Gaol—Three Months Hard Labour for Refusing to Degrade His Honour and Conscience."

[2] For the first trial at Volksrust, *vide* 14-10-1908.

193. MESSAGE TO INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
February 25, 1909]

I am happy that I am going to gaol again. The only regret is that I received only three months' imprisonment, whereas other satyagrahi patriots have received six months.

As I go to gaol, I see that many Indians have given in. It is left only to a few Indians to continue the campaign now. I am undeterred by this fact. In some ways, it can be more vigorous now.

Those who have fallen can rise again. They can [still] go to gaol. I hope they will rise.

Even if they cannot, they can offer monetary help, and send statements to newspapers to say that, though they have surrendered, they are in favour of the fight and wish it success.

Men of education outside the Transvaal can enter and be installed in gaol. If they do not do this, they can serve as volunteers at meetings wherever they are. It is the duty of all Indians in South Africa to hold meetings, pass resolutions and send telegrams.

This is a fight on behalf of religion, that is, on behalf of the [universal] religion which underlies all religions. Had I not believed so, I would never have advised the community to invite grievous suffering on itself, I believe that sacrificing one's all in a struggle like this should in no way be difficult. It is the duty of every Indian to forget all thought of relatives and friends, to sacrifice wealth and life, in this struggle. I pray to God, and beg of Indians that all of them fulfil this duty.

It lies in our own hands to shorten the campaign.

M. K. GANDHI

COMMUNITY'S SERVANT & SATYAGRAHI

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 6-3-1909

[1] This appears to have been written on February 25, when Gandhiji went to gaol. *Vide* also the following item.

194. MESSAGE TO TAMIL BRETHREN[1]

[VOLKSRUST,
February 25, 1909]

TO MY TAMIL BRETHREN

BEFORE GOING TO GAOL FOR THE THIRD TIME
IN OUR STRUGGLE

I have addressed a letter in Gujarati[2] to our countrymen, but, as I do not know the beautiful Tamil language sufficiently, I write to you in English, hoping that I may reach some of you. The struggle has not reached the most critical stage. Whilst the majority of the other sections of the community have fallen, being too weak, the majority of the Tamils and the Parsis have stood firm. The brunt of the battle must, therefore, fall upon their shoulders. I pray to God that He may give you sufficient strength to bear it. You have discharged yourselves brilliantly hitherto. Remember that we are descendants of Prahlad[3] and Sudhanva, both passive resisters of the purest type. They disregarded the dictates even of their parents, when they were asked to deny God. They suffered extreme torture rather than inflict suffering on their persecutors. We in the Transvaal are being called upon to deny God, in that we are required to deny our manhood, go back upon our oath, and accept an insult to our nation. Shall we in the present crisis do less than our forefathers?

M. K. GANDHI

Indian, Opinion, 6-3-1909

[1] *Indian Opinion,* 6-3-1909, published this message under the caption: "Message to the Madrassis: Mr. Gandhi's Last Exhortation'. *The African Chronicle* translated this into Tamil and published it as a supplement for free circulation through the British Indian Association, Transvaal

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] A child-saint, who resisted his father, King Hiranyakashipu, and affirmed his faith in God despite persecution.

195. LETTER TO CHANCHALBEHN GANDHI

VOLKSRUST PRISON,
TRANSVAAL,
February 26, 1909

CHI. CHANCHAL,

I am sorry not to have any letter from you. I see that Ba is getting better. Please read good writings and poems to her. Always write to me after consulting her and let the letters be signed by both Manilal and you. You may ask Ba what she has to say and let me know that also.

Let me know about your own health as well as the condition of your right ear, feet and cough.

The change that I made in your diet is to be adhered to as an order from me. Take sago and milk regularly. Feed Rami at the breast for a few days more. Take sufficient food after feeding her also. Your health will not improve so long as you do not get open air. I neet not write more.

Ask Willie[1] not to do any mischief at all. If Ramdas has a sore throat, apply an earth bandage.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Harilal and I are quite well. Be sure that we are happier here than you.

Please read out this letter to Ba.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 9525

196. M. A. EXAMINATION

Much is at stake in the Transvaal struggle, and therefore we have been writing on it frequently and at some length. That seems to be the only right thing to do. We submit to all Indians that the community will not chance upon such a struggle again. It is no small matter that the fight has reached the present stage.

[1] Cordes's son

But some Indians have been asking: “Hundreds have yielded. What is the point in continuing the fight?” We think this betrays lack of understanding. If some Indians have yielded, the same thing has been true of other armies. There is nothing unusual in that.

The fight in which we are engaged at present is a kind of examination which we are to take. We have been studying [as it were]. Everyone came forward to study. Thousands went through the first grade. Some got tired of their studies when they came to the second grade. They left off. In this manner, we reached the seventh grade.[1] Things became rather difficult. A large number gave up. Even so, a considerable number reached the matriculation stage. But only a few had the courage to venture beyond that, though the number was not very low.

And now we are on the last stage. We are to qualify ourselves for the M. A. degree. That surely cannot be done by people in their hundreds. Only a few will succeed. Can it be said that those who appear at this examination are defeated because the rest did not offer themselves for it? No; it cannot. Those who take the M.A. degree will certainly have emerged victorious; not only that, but those who lagged behind will also share in the glory.

Thus, we liken the satyagrahis who still remain staunch to candidates for the M.A. degree. They should not in the least feel disheartened; rather, they should be proud that they have remained steadfast so long. There can be only a few highly educated men in any community. But, though small in number, they are of the greatest help. That is the situation in the Transvaal. Maybe there are only a few Indians still who are left fighting; but the highest value should be attached to the part they are playing.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-2-1909

[1] The last stage of the High School course.

197. HELP FROM NATAL

We congratulate the [Natal Indian] Congress on having held a meeting in support of the Transvaal campaign. In our view, the meeting was rather thinly attended, not much enthusiasm having been in evidence, and it had not been called as expeditiously as it should have been, so that we rest content with the mere fact of the meeting having been held, on the principle that something is better than nothing.[1] All the same, the Natal leaders will be blamed for their lapse to the extent that they were found wanting.

We believe that they ought not to rest content merely with a meeting. The Government will arrest as many persons as it wants to, and then watch the fun. But Indians outside the Transvaal cannot afford to sit back.They must send frequent cable reports to India, revive the spirit of those in the Transvaal who have fallen and by such means focus public attention on the struggle all over the world. If that is done, the gods of heaven will descend to watch the battle that will ensue. If not, Indians will be ridiculed and lose their foothold in South Africa in the near future.

We spoke of a Natal meeting. Really speaking, it was only a Durban meeting. What has happened to Maritzburg and the other towns in Natal? Why should they not hold meetings? The main Line dispute has not yet been resolved. People are preoccupied with questions of prestige and dignity while their brethren are in gaol. This is not dignified behaviour. The Main Line dispute ought to be resolved. Even if it is not, work can be carried on in the other main towns of Natal.

What is Natal's duty is also the duty of the Cape, Delagoa Bay and other places. Cablegrams should be dispatched to England from all these places. Money too will be needed for such an agitation; for this regular provision should be made. It every Indian does his duty and performs the community's tasks in the same spirit that he does his own, it will not be surprising to see India being forged into a nation in South Africa.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-2-1909

[1] The Gujarati saying used here literally means, "A squint-eyed uncle is better than no uncle.'

198. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

PRETORIA PRISON,

TRANSVAAL,

March 4, 1909

MY DEAR WEST,

I am still left-handed. The right hand I can use only with difficulty.

The authorities will not grant permission for me to write to Mrs. Gandhi in Gujarati. I am sorry for her and Harilal's wife. I do not know whether wife would like me to write in English. I know that I can write nothing new. She wants to read my own writing. I feel that it is more dignified not to take advantage of a privilege grudgingly given. You may write to me, or Manilal may, in English how she progresses from day to day and also about Harilal's wife. If they wish to, they will let me have these letters and I shall know something about the health of the patient.

Please tell Mrs. G[andhi] that I am all right.[1] She knows that my happiness depends more upon my mental state than upon physical surroundings. Let her cherish this thought and not worry about me. For the sake of the children, she should help herself to get better. She should have the bandages regularly and add hip-baths if necessary. She should adhere to the diet that I used to give. She ought not to start [walking][2] till she is quite restored.

Harilal's wife has all the directions. I shall be glad to learn that she follows them. She ought on no account to omit sago and milk in the morning. Let Manilal watch that she takes it. Rami should have the breast yet for a month. She can only be gradually weaned.

I am told that even if a letter in Gujarati were passed, it would take quite ten days before it could be transmitted.

With regards all round,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[1] The original has "alright".
[2] Here the original is damaged.

[PS.]

Please get Manilal to translate this to wife.

I trust Mrs. West is getting on.

From the original in pencil in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4675 Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

199. DRAFT PETITION TO GAOL GOVERNOR[1]

[PRETORIA,
After *March 11, 1909*]

Your Petitioner is a British Indian, undergoing a sentence of three months' imprisonment with hard labour.

Your Petitioner received last week, as has been discovered, by mistake, one ounce of ghee every day with the rice that was issued to him for supper. Your Petitioner was admitted to this gaol on the 3rd instant.

Since last Sunday, the issue of ghee for supper as above has been stopped. Your Petitioner tried to take the rice without ghee on Sunday last but found it difficult.

Since Monday last, your Petitioner has had no supper at all, he having been obliged to return the rice issued to him.

Your Petitioner complained of the absence of ghee to the Chief Warder, who referred your Petitioner to the regulations and suggested that your Petitioner could see the Medical Officer if he so wished.

On the 11th instant, your Petitioner saw the Medical Officer who as a special concession was prepared to order a ration of bread for supper.

Your Petitioner, while appreciating the concession, has been unable to avail himself of it, not being desirous of receiving any special concession in regard to diet as apart from his Indian fellow-prisoners placed under similar circumstances.

Your Petitioner was shown the printed diet-scale which provides for one ounce of fat with rice as supper for Indian prisoners. The scale provides under Indian diet meat twice a week.

Your Petitioner has been informed that this scale has been changed and Indian prisoners now receive one [ounce] of rice without

[1] This was drawn up during Gandhiji's incarceration in Pretoria Gaol.

fat for supper and rice with one ounce of ghee in lieu of meat for dinner on meat-days.

Your Petitioner in common with the majority of Indians is prohibited by religion from taking meat or mutton fat or such other fat. Indian Mahomedans cannot take meat or fat not religiously killed. Indian Hindus with certain exceptions cannot at all take meat or fat.

In the humble opinion of your Petitioner, the change above referred to is a change for the worse. It is most difficult to take rice without some adjunct. Moreover, the scale is deficient in nutrition with only two ounces of ghee per week.

Your Petitioner has noticed that Natives receive one ounce of fat per day in addition to meat twice a week or at least once a week.

In the humble opinion of your Petitioner, reversion to the old scale with the substitution of ghee for fat and substitution of vegetables for meat on meat-days will meet the ends of justice.

If the above prayer is considered unreasonable, your Petitioner fears that he will suffer in health for want of sufficient nutrition.

Your Petitioner ventures to draw your attention to the fact that the change prayed for is in accordance with the scale at the Johannesburg gaol.

If the Governor is (not)[1] empowered in law to grant the petition, your Petitioner requests that the petition may be forwarded to the Director of Prisons for consideration.

And for this act, etc.

M. K. G.

From a typewritten copy Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

[1] The brackets seem to have been retained in the original by mistake.

200. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

NAME OF PRISONER: M. K. GANDHI

NUMBER (with Initial letter): 777

PRETORIA PRISON,
TRANSVAAL,
March 25, 1909

MY DEAR SON,

I have a right to write one letter per month and receive also one letter per month. It became a question with me as to whom I should write to . I thought of Mr. Ritch, Mr. Polak and you. I chose you, as you have been nearest my thoughts in all my reading.

As for myself I must not, I am not allowed to, say much. I am quite at peace and none need worry about me.

I hope mother is now quite well. I know several letters from you have been received but they have not been given to me. The Deputy Governor however was good enough to tell me that she was getting on well. Does she now walk about freely? I hope she and all of you would continue to take sago and milk in the morning.

And how is Chanchi[1]? Tell her I think of her everyday. I hope she has got rid of all the sores she had and that she and Rami are quite well. I was much struck by one passage in Nathuramji's[2] introduction to the *Upanishads*. He says that the *Brahmacharya* stage—i.e., the first stage—is like the last, i.e., the *Sanyasin* stage. This is true. Amusement only continues during the age of innocence, i.e., up to twelve years only. As soon as a boy reaches the age of discretion, he is taught to realise his responsibility. Every boy from such age onward should practise continence in thought and deed, truth likewise and the not taking of any life. This to him must not be an irksome learning and practice but it should be natural to him. It should be his enjoyment. I can recall to my mind several such boys in Rajkot. Let me tell you that when I was younger than you are, my keenest enjoyment was to nurse my father.[3] Of amusement after I was twelve, I had little or none. If you practise the three virtues[4], if they become

[1] Chanchalbehn Gandhi

[2] Pandit Nathuram Sharma of Saurashtra, a man of religion and student of Hindu Philosophy; translated the *Upanishads* into Gujarati.

[3] *Vide An Autobiography*, Part I, Ch. IX.

[4] Truth, *Ahinsa* and *Brahmacharya*.

part of your life, so far as I am concerned, you will have completed your education—your training. Armed with them, believe me, you will earn your bread in any part of the world and you will have paved the way to acquire a true knowledge of the soul, yourself and God. This does not mean that you should not receive instruction in letters. That you should and you are doing. But it is a thing over which you need not fret yourself. You have plenty of time for it and after all you are to receive such instruction in order that your training may be of use to the others.

Remember please that henceforth our lot is poverty. The more I think of it, the more I feel that it is more blessed to be poor than to be rich. The uses of poverty are far sweeter than those of riches.

You have taken the sacred thread. I want you to live up to it. It appears that leaving one's bed before sunrise is almost indispensable for proper worship. Do therefore try to keep regular hours. I have thought much over it and read something also. I respectfully disagree with the Swamiji in his propaganda. I think that the adoption of the sacred thread by those who have for ages given it up is a mistake. As it is, we have too much of the false division between *shudras* and others. The sacred thread is therefore today rather a hindrance than a help. I should like to elaborate this veiw but I cannot for the present. I am aware that I am expressing these views before one who has made a lifelong study of the subject. Yet I thought that I would pass on to the Swamiji what I have been thinking over. I have studied the *Gayatri*[1]. I like the words. I have also studied the book the Swamiji gave me. I have derived much benefit from its perusal. It makes me more inquisitive about the life of Swami Dayanand[2]. I see that the meaning given by Swami Dayanand to the *Gayatri* and several *mantras* of the *Vajasaneya Upanishad* is totally different from that given by the orthodox school—now which meaning is correct? I do not know. I hesitate straightway to accept the revolutionary method of interpretation suggested by S. Dayanand. I would much like to learn all this through the Swamiji's lips.I hope he will not leave before I am out, but if he does leave, will he kindly leave all the literature he can or send it from India? I should also like to know what the orthodox school has said about S. Dayanand's teaching. Please thank the Swamiji for the handmade socks and gloves he has sent me. And get

[1] A Vedic *mantra*, the metre of which is known by the same name

[2] Swami Dayanand Saraswati (1824-1883); founder of Arya Samaj

his address in India. Show the whole of this letter to the Swamiji and let me know what he says.

I have not yet thanked Bhatt Keshavram for presenting me with the *Upanishad*. The book has been simply invaluable. It has given me much solace. Write to him thanking him on my behalf and tell him what I have said above.

How is the school progressing? Have any other boys come? How are Ebrahim[1] and Manikam[2]? If the building is being constructed, Chhaganbhai[3] should see to it that four tanks are put at the four corners. Mr. Ismail Gora should be approached regarding it.

How is Mr. Cordes? Tell him I have not forgotten the scene enacted at Mr. Kallenbach's the day I left for Volksrust. I often think of him, sit and say to myself, "After all, how egotistical we all are!"

Mrs. West by this time must be out of the woods. Let me know how she, Mrs. Pywell[4] and Devibehn[5] are keeping. I trust Mrs. Pywell continues to act the mother of the settlement.

Has Thakar[6] arrived? If he has, where is he housed? How is he? How is his wife?

I hope Kababhai's[7] son is quite all right[8] now and that Dhoribhai[9] and Nagar[10][10] are now fixed up.

Let Mr. Polak please keep his eye on the finances of the office. Dada Abdulla & Co. should be approached and asked to pay a portion of the debt they owe. Mr. McIntyre[11], I hope, is looking after the business part of the office. What about Miss Schlesin's articles? I am entitled to receive one visitor during a month. Let Mr. Polak come. He has not yet sent the books I have asked for.

I received Purshotamdas'[12] letter. But I was not able to reply to it. He should have the verandah fenced. The other additions should, I

[1] Ward of Ismail Gora
[2] A Tamil student
[3] Chhaganlal Gandhi, a nephew of Gandhiji
[4] Mother-in-law of A. H West
[5] Miss West, sister of A. H West
[6] Harilal Valji Thakar, an inmate of Phoenix
[7] Compositors in the International Printing Press at Phoenix
[8] *ibid*
[9] *ibid*
[10] The original has "alright".
[11] An articled clerk with Gandhiji
[12] Purshottamdas Desai, in charge of Phoenix School

think, for the present, stay over unless they are absolutely required. I hope, tell him, he has well digested the conversation I had with him. He has raised in me great expectations to which he has to live up. How is poor Ani[1]? She must be loaded with work !

Please let me know how Messrs Sam, Behary, Muthu Rajcoomar, Ram and Mannering are getting on?[2] Remember me to them. I hope Mr. Mannering has not again got tired of the jungle life.

Remember me to Mr. West and ask him to recall the communion I had with him on the day of departure from Phoenix.

And now again, yourself. Do give ample work to gardening, actual digging, hoeing, etc. We have to live upon it in future. And you should be the expert gardener of the family. Keep your tools in their respective places and absolutely clean. I hape Ramdas and Devdas are keeping well, learning their lessons and not causing any worry. Has Ramdas got rid of his cough?

I trust you all treated Willie well while he was with us. Any balance of the foodstuff left by Mr. Cordes, I doubt not you have returned to him.

And now about yourself. How are you. Although I think that you are well able to bear all the burden I have placed on your shoulders and that you are doing it quite cheerfully, I have often felt that you required greater personal guidance that I have been able to give you. I know too that you have sometimes felt that your education was being neglected. Now I have read a great deal in the prison. I have been reading Emerson, Ruskin and Mazzini. I have also been reading the *Upanishads.* All confirm the view that education does not mean a knowledge of letters but it means character building, it means a knowledge of duty. Our own word literally means 'training'. If this be the true view and it is to my mind the only true view, you are receiving the best education—training—possible. What can be better than that you should have the opportunity of nursing mother and cheerfully bearing her ill temper, or than looking after Chanchi and anticipating her wants and behaving to her so as not to make her feel the want of Harilal or, again, than being guardian to Ramdas and Devdas? If you succeed in doing this well, you have received more than half your education. In your lessons you should give a great deal of attention to mathematics and Sanskrit. The latter is absolutely

[1] Purshottamdas Desai's wife
[2] The reference is to workers in the press.

necessary for you. Both these studies are difficult in after life. You will not neglect your music. You should make a selection of all the good passages, hymns and verses, whether in English, Gujarati or Hindi and write them out in your best hand in a book. The collection at the end of a year will be most valuable. All these things you can do easily it you are methodical, never get agitated and think you have too much to do and then worry over what to do first. This you will find out in practice if you are patient and take care of your minutes. I hope you are keeping an accu-rate account, as it should be kept, of every penny spent for the household.

Remind Anandlalbhai of his promise this time not to dis-continue his studies. I am more anxious that he should give a proper training to Vijia[1]. Has he secured the garden?

Please tell Maganlalbhai that I would advise him to read Emerson's essays. They can be had for nine pence in Durban. There is a cheap reprint out. Those essays are worth studying. He should read them, mark the important passages and then finally copy them out in a notebook. The essays to my mind contain the teaching of Indian wisdom in a Western garb. It is refreshing to see our own sometimes thus differently fashioned. He should also try to read Tolstoy's *Kingdom of God Is within You*. It is a most logical book. The English of the translation is very simple.What is more, Tolstoy practises what he preaches.

I hope the evening service continues and that you and all attend the Sunday service at Mr. West's.

You should copy this letter. Get the others to assist you and send a copy of it to Mr. Polak and a copy to Mr.Kallenbach, another to Swamiji. You should read my letter carefully and give me a detailed reply. You should wait for a reply from Mr. Polak so that you may tell me what he has to say. As soon as you have read and understood my letter, you may commence writing your reply. It should be [in] ink and neat. Let it be as long as you want to make it. It should not contain any information about the struggle. Then there would be no difficulty about my getting it. You may take your time about the reply. This will be in your hands perhaps on Tuesday. I shall wait a week from that date. You may even take longer if you like. You should await Swamiji's and Mr. Kallenbach's letters also before

[1] Anandlal's daughter

closing your letter. You may tell me what they have to say. You may write a little from day to day. What you cannot express in English, you should get Purshotamdas to translate for you. It you do not understand any portion of this letter, you should get it translated to you.

Please send me a copy of Algebra. Any edition will do.

And now I close with love to all and kisses to Ramdas, Devdas and Rami.

From

FATHER

MASTER MANILAL GANDHI
C/O *INDIAN OPINION*
PHOENIX
NATAL

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 4676 Courtesy: Louis Fischer

201. CABLE TO S. A. B. I. COMMITTEE

JOHANNESBURG[1],
April 7, 1909

TO
SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE
5 PUMP COURT, TEMPLE
[LONDON]

URGENT LETTER RECEIVED HEIDELBERG PRISONERS STATING CONDITION STARVATION IMPROPER DIET FILTHY SURROUNDINGS UTTER INSANITATION NO WASHING BATHING FACILITIES NOR CHANGE CLOTHING. INDIAN PASSIVE RESISTERS TREATED WORSE KAFFIR CONVICTS. MANY HOSPITAL DYSENTERY FEVER HYSTERIA. GAOL AUTHORITIES BRUTAL. GOVERNMENT ENDEAVOURING BREAK DOWN MOVEMENT BY TORTURE.

M. K. GANDHI

Colonial office Records: 291/141

[1] Gandhiji was in Pretoria Gaol at the time. It may be that this was dispatched from Johannesburg under his instructions.

202. INDIANS AND ALCOHOL[1]

[PRETORIA GAOL,
Before *April 10, 1909*]

I have seen your letter addressed to the British Indian Association regarding its evidence to be submitted to the Commission. I have not been able, my movement[s] having been uncertain, to submit my statement earlier. Nor has it been possible to call a meeting of the Association to consider the evidence to be given. The Chairman[2] and the Acting Chairman[3] of the Association are in gaol. The statement, therefore, that I am about to submit represents my personal views only.

I have been in South Africa now for the last fifteen years, and having, almost throughout that period, been officially connected with Indian public bodies, I have come in contact with all classes of Indians. Since 1903, I have been practising as an attorney in Johannesburg, and have held the office of Honorary Secretary of the British Indian Association.

The Transvaal has a population of not more than 13,000 adult male Indians. Indians actually resident in the Colony since the war have probably never been more than 10,000 at any time. At the present moment, owing to the Asiatic struggle, there are probably not more than 5,000 in the Colony. These are chiefly Mahomedans and Hindoos. For the purposes hereof, I do not consider the Christians and the Parsees, as they form, though an important, a numerically small section of the Indian community.

Both Mahomedans and Hindoos are prohibited by their respective religions from taking intoxicating liquors. The Mahomedan section has very largely conformed to the prohibition. The Hindoo section, I am sorry to say, contains an appreciable number who, in this Colony, have disregarded the prohibition of religion.

The method adopted by Indians who indulge in alcoholic drinks

[1] This statement was sent by Gandhiji from Pretoria Gaol by courtesy of the Governor as "written evidence" to the Transvaal Liquor Commission, Johannesburg. It was published with editorial comments, under the sub-title "Mr. Gandhi's Views", as "Special to *Indian Opinion*".

[2] A. M. Cachalia

[3] E. I. Aswat

is generally to secure the assistance of some unscrupulous whites. There are other methods, also, which I do not care to go into.

I am of opinion that the legal prohibition should continue. I think, however, that the prohibition has not succeeded in preventing Indians, who have wanted it, from obtaining liquor. The only use I see in continuing the prohibition is to let those of my countrymen, who indulge in it, retain the sense of shame they have in drinking liquor. They know that it is wrong for them both in religion and in law to obtain and drink liquor. This enables temperance workers to appeal to their law-abiding sentiment. I draw a fundamental distinction between wrongful law-breaking and a conscientious breach of man-made law in obedience to a higher law. Happily, those Indians who break the liquor law know that it is wrong for them to do so.

I am aware that some of my countrymen—themselves ardent temperance men—see in the liquor legislation one more disqualification based on the ground of colour. Superficially speaking, they would be right. But I believe that this legislation has little to do with colour. It is, in my opinion, a recognition on the part of the predominant race that the drink habit is an evil which, while they themselves are yet unable to get rid of, they do not want other races to contract. Viewing the position in this manner, I believe liquor prohibition among the Asiatic and Coloured races to be the forerunner of general prohibition.

Whether, however, general prohibition becomes an accomplished fact or not, so long as the predominant race continue to indulge in alcoholic drinks, be it ever so moderately, partial prohibition such as we now have cannot be of much practical use. This, it is submitted, is a forcible illustration of one of the evil incidents of contact between the European and other races. And unless those who preach abstinence are themselves ready to practise it, all liquor legislation must largely be a makeshift. I wish the Commission could see their way to point out to the electors of the Transvaal what a serious responsibility rests on their shoulders. They make it impossible for their representatives to pass legislation that is so desirable. It is they who must take the responsibility for the breaking up of many a home. I am writing under a full sense of my own responsibility. I know only too well how many Indian youths who never knew the taste of spirituous liquors have succumbed, after having come to South Africa or the Transvaal.

If the Commission desire me to answer any question, I shall be pleased to do so.

Indian Opinion, 10-4-1909

203. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK[1]

PRETORIA [GAOL,]
April 26, 1909

FROM
MR. GANDHI (CONVICT NO. 777)

MY DEAR HENRY,

Nothing has caused me so much worry as the financial question. I hate the idea of Phoenix being in debt; that is what the office debts mean. Besides the jewellery, then some of the law-books, i.e., the books I got out from England and the law-reports should be sacrificed, also the large safe in the office and the cyclopaedia in the revolving case. The law books may be placed before Playford, Benson, or Godfrey, if he is doing well. If none of them can take any or all up, you may circulate a list. They should go at cost price less 10 per cent. The safe should fetch at least £ 15. Godfrey owes £ 3 for the cyclopaedia (Curtis's). You know Curtis got £3 from me. This amount does not appear in the books. It might now be collected.

I had a long letter from Manilal, not badly constructed. I see that Mrs. Pywell is proud of her grand-daughter and considers her to be the …[2] be careful. Waldo[3], who may be claimed to be a Phoenixite *in posse*, is the pattern to be beaten. It is a hard feat. I should like to know how Cordes' lecture went off, and where it was given. Has Thakar brought any books and type from Bombay? I notice that the Thakars are staying with Chhaganlal. Now Chhaganlal Like Millie[4] has a habit of suffering mutely. But the suffering tells on both of them. They, therefore, make the friends' position embarrassing. I am, therefore, anxious that Chhaganlal should not overdo things. He is a man … as his mother puts it, of being baked even under the s[hade of a] leafy tree. I have found this trait in him ever [since I have] known

[1] The original having been damaged, missing words have been conjectured and supplied in square brackets wherever possible.
[2] Some words are missing here.
[3] Son of the addressee
[4] Millie Graham Polak, wife of the addressee

him as a grown-up boy. And I have seen no [reason to change] my opinion. Please, therefore, tell him that he must not tax himself. I do not know Mrs. Gandhi's intentions. [The Thakars] should have stayed with her. Purshotamdas and Cordes [have each] a boarder now. It is grand of Cordes to [take a boarder.] It is so like him. But I am sceptical about the advisability of P[urshottamdas] having taken up any boarder at all. He has hardly enough floor space. Ani has more than enough having to look after four kids. P[urshottamdas] wishes to do her reparation for past laches. He has not begun well in that direction. I should, therefore, very much like to know what he has done to lighten his poor wife's burdens. The message he has sent me is sweet. More I will not say at present. I should like all in Phoenix to read Tolstoy's *Life* and *My Confessions*. Both are soul-stirring books. They can be easily read in two days. The Gujaratis should also read Kavi's two volumes—the books I have got. Thakar may have brought them. They may give 10 minutes of the half-hour evening service and half hour of the hour's service on Sundays, which the Gujaratis have [for] themselves. The more I consider his life and his writings, the more I consider him to have been the best Indian of his times. Indeed, I put him much higher than Tolstoy in religious perception. The books I have read have afforded me the highest solace. They should be read over and over again. So far as English books are concerned, Tolstoy is incomparable in my opinion in chastity of thought. His definition of the purpose of life is unanswerable and easy to understand. Both Kavi and Tolstoy have lived as they have preached. Kavi writes from richer experience. Will you ask Chhaganlal to write Revashanker Jagjiwan & Co. to let me know what I owe them and what they advance monthly to my sister[1]? Manilal is naturally somewhat dissatisfied with his studies. But it is inevitable. We are in the experimental stage and the first students have to be the victims. However, let him learn well what is given to him. I hope one of these days to examine him. He was sure of his geometry lessons, but he was found wanting. Let him cultivate regular and studious habits, and learn to rely on himself in his studies. One of these days I may be able to undertake part of his tuition myself. [I] understand too his worry about gardening. He should be patient[, give the] best that is in him and then remain perfectly cheerful [without] anxiety or fretting. I wish the boys would talk [to Mani]kum in Tamil. I am glad Kitchin

[1] Raliatbehn, Gandhiji's elder sister

was at Phoenix for a day. Manilal does not mention whether he was pleased with his stay there. I hope everything was done to make him comfortable there. I suggest to Maganlal that now that he has learnt so many English pieces by heart he should commit to memory some Tamil sentences. Is Chanchi cheerful? Or does she brood over her separation from Harilal? Does Mrs. G[andhi] now take part in household work? Pray thank Dr. Nanji[1] for his attention to the Phoenix settlers. He is ever adding to the debt I am under to him. What is the progress of the school-building? I think Chhaganlal should represent to Mr. Gora on my behalf that he should consent to the boarding allowance to be raised so as to free the guardians from eternal worry about half-pennies. I am glad Swamiji is prolonging his stay. I hope to learn more from him about the sacred thread on meeting. I hope he received my letter[2] addressed to him at Pietermaritzburg, from the train. I am anxious that he should do everything he can to promote the goodwill existing between Hindus and Mahomedans. I expect Anandlal to keep to his promise not to abandon his studies and to make the garden smile. Please ask West to continue the Sunday services in spite of difficulties, if any. During Mrs. West's illness, they may be held elsewhere but so far as possible should not be omitted. Will you please have the Phoenix part copied and sent to West? Then all can read it, and let Chhaganlal give me a detailed reply embodying messages from all who have any to send. I would expect a letter from Chhaganlal at the latest on the 7th May. That would give him ample time.[3]

From a photostat of the typewritten copy: S. N. 4925

[1] An Indian medical practitioner of Durban and a leader of the Natal Indian community; often treated the sick in the Phoenix settlement including Mrs. Gandhi.

[2] This is not available.

[3] The letter appears to be incomplete and represents, perhaps, the part which was sent to West.

204. SPEECH AT PRETORIA MEETING[1]

[PRETORIA,
May 24, 1909]

I have no time to make a long speech. Having gone for breakfast, I was [as it were] locked up for some time. However, I will say a few words which I hope you will bear in mind. I can say from my experience of gaol that conditions of gaol life are satisfactory. We are bound to get what we have been asking for. I find on my release that those who are brave will stand firm. The Chairman said that this fight was being prolonged on account of disunity among us. But I do not think this is true. It is because our people have been cowed down that they do not fill the gaols. Those who are fearless do go to gaol, and will continue to do so. That is as it should be. Prisoners who have been released appear to be ready to go to gaol again at a moment's notice, notwithstanding the hardships that they have suffered there. He who has tasted the sweetness of gaol life will never shrink from it, but will welcome going there every time.

The Chief Warder told me at the time of my release that it was useless to advise me not to return to gaol, for he knew that I would not accept the advice. This shows what impression satyagraha has made on his mind. I find no happiness outside gaol. While in gaol, I could devote myself regularly to prayers. Now that I am out of it, I shall have no time for them. A lamp was lit at half past five in the morning in order to wake up the prisoners and enable them to roll up their beds and be ready, and it was put out after half an hour. In the darkness which followed, some prisoners engaged themselves in small talk, while I found it a good opportunity to pray to God. From tomorrow, I shall not get such opportunity and facility. Whatever you may think, I certainly do not subscribe to the view that life is difficult in gaol and happy outside. Those who are afraid of gaol have registered themselves, or are doing so. However, there is a duty that they also can perform. There can be no one who is opposed to us in the path of truth that we have been following, and if there is any such

[1] On completion of his sentence, Gandhiji was released on May 24, 1909 at 7.30 a.m. instead of at 9 a.m., the usual time, with a view to preventing a demonstration. Over a hundred Indians, however, had already assembled to greet him. Gandhiji marched at their head to the Mahomedan Mosque and later addressed a meeting there. Vally Mahomed presided.

man, he does not deserve to be called an Indian, but should rather be regarded as working for India's utter ruin. It was good that I had an opportunity for a talk with Mr. Hajee Cassim. If you ask him, he will tell you what should now be done and, if you act accordingly, that will be as good as helping the cause. I am not happy at being released; rather, I am unhappy. Mr. Vyas gave me sweetmeats for breakfast, but they were as bitter to me as poison. For, Mr. Dawad Mahomed, Mr. Rustomjee, Mr. Joshi and others, including, if I may be personal, my eldest son Harilal, are still in gaol, and they have more then two and a half months yet to serve. I would feel happy only if I were imprisoned [again] and released after them. I cannot say now how this can be brought about. As for me, all my pleasures and my happiness are in gaol. If we think of our pledge, going to gaol appears to be the only desirable course. I will try my best to see that I am imprisoned again and released after those others. But I cannot have my way as to how long I shall be in gaol. What I have to tell you or rather the request I have to make to you is this, that those who have the courage must go to-gaol. Others who cannot do so will do what I have advised Mr. Hajee Cassim to do. While in gaol, I learnt from Mr. Polak's letter that the British Indian Association has become bankrupt and the people have been financially ruined. Therefore, those who have been carrying on their businesses must lighten their pockets. I have heard that this is being done, but I do not think on an adequate scale. Please give more generously. Your generosity will be justified; it will also please God. I thank you for having assembled in such large numbers and I request you again to fill the gaols and not rest till our demands are conceded. You too can see for yourselves that there is no other course that I can advise. I am sure you agree with me.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-5-1909

[1] Gandhiji then spoke in English; *vide* the following item.

205. SPEECH AT PRETORIA MEETING[1]

[PRETORIA,
May 24, 1909]

…He said that he had been released from gaol, but he felt no pleasure at that, many of the stalwarts among his compatriots had still to serve their sentences, and his own son had six months to do, but for all that, the struggle must go on until the Government granted them relief to which they were entitled; their sufferings must continue until justice was done. Those Indians who could not bear the hardships of gaol should give what assistance they could in other ways, for he took it that no single Indian could possibly approve of the harsh measures of the Government or fail in sympathy of one sort or another with the struggle which was now proceeding. There could only be one end to the struggle, and that end would be hastened or delayed by the strength displayed by the British Indian community. They were now in the hottest part of the fight, and it was possible that they might not carry all their countrymen with them, but that only meant that the brunt of the battle would fall on the shoulders of the few, but, concluded Mr. Gandhi:

> whether our members be large or small, I earnestly pray God that He will give us strength to carry the burden until we have reached the goal.

Indian Opinion, 29-5-1909

206. INTERVIEW TO "PRETORIA NEWS"[2]

[PRETORIA,
May 24, 1909]

…Mr. Gandhi said that he had no desire at the present moment to make any statement in regard to his treatment in gaol; he had now done five months and three weeks, having served three sentences.

In regard to the deportation policy, Mr. Gandhi said that he would have to go into the matter carefully. He could not see how it was possible for the Transvaal Government to retain authority over British Indians long enough to deport them to India. In any case, the policy of deportation, he said, was a very foolish one, it was unnecessarily cruel and would merely transfer the struggle to a country where it might

[1] This report of his speech in English was reproduced in *Indian Opinion* from *Pretoria News*.

[2] Gandhiji gave this interview at the conclusion of the meeting at the Mahomedan Mosque, Pretoria; *vide* the preceding item.

take [on] a much more serious aspect. Mr. Gandhi said:

It cuts me to the quick, to hear of a lad of sixteen being deported to India, while his father remained in gaol at Volksrust. The Government are very much mistaken if they imagine that they will break the heart of the Indians by resorting to such cruel methods.[1]

Indian Opinion, 29-5-1909

207. SPEECH AT JOHANNESBURG MEETING[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,
May 24, 1909]

After so many months I have this opportunity to see you and to be with you. I am glad of it. But I am not happy at my release, for our leaders, and aged ones at that, are still in gaol. They have still more than two months to put in to complete their term of imprisonment. Among them, as you know, are Dawad Sheth, Mr. Parsee Rustomjee, Mr. Sorabji and others. Speaking of what touches me personally, I may say that my son Harilal is also in gaol. How can I then feel at ease? So long as we do not get what we want, we cannot feel happy at heart. God will grant what we have been demanding. But it is through the Government that we shall receive it. Why we do not get what we want has been explained by Mr. Cachalia. A task that needs a thousand men cannot be accomplished by ten, as it were. The struggle is being prolonged because not enough men join it. We at this moment are in the House of the Lord, where we took pledges on oath, raised our hands and declared that we would continue to fight till the law was repealed and the rights of the educated were conceded, and that we would not avail ourselves of the certificates [of registration]. We must go to gaol to carry out this pledge. I for one should very much like to run up to Natal and, returning, get arrested. That way I can join Dawad Sheth in gaol. My duty is to serve the community and its well-wishers. The right way of doing so for me is to join Dawad

[1] After the meeting, Gandhiji was escorted to the station by about two to three hundred Indians, and he left for Johannesburg by train.

[2] On arrival at Park Station from Pretoria, Gandhiji was given a hero's welcome. A gathering of about a thousand including Indians, Chinese and some European friends including Rev. J. J. Doke, received Gandhiji and his associates. Gandhiji was garlanded and escorted in a carriage to the Mosque grounds. A. M. Cachalia presided. Gandhiji addressed the assembly first in Gujarati and then in English.

Sheth in gaol. I was heralded today with the cry: "Salute the King of Hindus and Muslims." That was not right. I am a servant of the community, not its king. I pray to God to grant me the strength and the desire always to serve the community. My aspiration will be fulfilled only if I have to lay down my life in the very act of serving the community.[1] It is indeed my duty so to die. Those who have love for India and Indians must necessarily make themselves servants of the community. I did not, and do not, deserve the honour of a coach. I have not been able to serve as well as I ought to have done. For, there are others who are still in gaol as servants of the community. They return to it again and again, when they are released. The Chairman became a servant after sacrificing everything, and is still serving. My mind would be at ease only if I had to suffer imprisonment as others have to, and were released after they are released. Tomorrow, Mr. Omarji Sale, Chairman of the Hamidia Islamic Society, will be released. Mr. Vyas and Mr. David Ernest will be released from Diepkloof. Indians must go to receive them. I hope that Kanamias will show their highest spirit this time, and pull Mr. Omarji Sale's carriage. I am sure the old gentleman will prefer to court imprisonment yet again for the sake of the community. I pray for God's blessings on him so that he may be full of strength despite his old age. It is also the duty of others to act like him. People must take a carriage even to Diepkloof and bring [them] in it. I do not wish to say more for the present. If any Indian talks of defeat, that will mean that he himself is defeated. If a person going to gaol is firm in his resolve, he is ever victorious. It lies in God's hands as to when the obnoxious Act will be repealed and men of education allowed their rights; however, it is our faith in Him and the way we act that will determine the course of future events. God is with those who follow the right. Since we follow the right, victory is bound to be ours. When I arrived at Volksrust after two months' imprisonment, there was the same number of men present, as there is today. I should like to ask you whether you just come to say "yes" to everything I say, or want to join in shouldering the burden. Your duty is to bear the hardships of gaol life. Please bear that in mind. It is the same whether one is in gaol or outside. There were some Tamils with me in Volksrust [Gaol]. Mr. Naidoo writes to say that they remain unbending, and are ready to go to gaol at a moment's notice. We have a paper of our own, so that

[1] At this point, the report says, Gandhiji was overwhelmed with emotion.

we are able to carry on propaganda. There is no paper in the language of the Tamils, and yet what courage they have been displaying, and how well they have been doing their duty! They have faith in God. We ought to learn a lesson from them and follow in their footsteps. If we do, victory will be ours quite soon. I thank you all, and the Chinese as well, for having taken the trouble to come here to receive me. I am not in a position to say anything more at the moment without studying the community's mood. However, if you have any question to ask, I shall answer them at the office. We have had enough of taking of pledges and raising of hands. I do not want to have these things repeated. But it you are prepared unreservedly to go to gaol, all the ways are open to you. I shall, in that case, give the best advice I can. If you go to gaol, you will be assured of victory. There is still time. It will be enough if you do just this.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-5-1909

208. SPEECH AT JOHANNESBURG MEETING

[JOHANNESBURG,
May 24, 1909]

He [Gandhiji] said it was not with any degree of pleasure that he came out of gaol. The reason was obvious. Some of the best men in the Indian community were still in one or other of the Transvaal gaols, and some of them were elderly men. His own eldest son was also still in gaol. Some of them had still two to two-and-a-half months to do. Some of them had worked with him as friends, and some had gone to gaol simply out of love and regard for him. Could he, as a human being, derive any pleasure from his freedom when all those men had a restraint placed on their liberty? He could not be happy under such circumstances. So long as justice, which was their due, had not been done to them, they could not take food and rest. When that justice was to come, God only knew, but that it was bound to come they did know. He had considered and reconsidered the position during the past three memorable months, and, after looking over the past two-and-a-half years, he was still able to say that he withdrew nothing of the advice that he had given to his countrymen. (Applause.) He could not withdraw a single word of his condemnation of the Law of 1907, and he still adhered to his statement that General Smuts was bound by his promise to repeal the Act. They wanted absolute and pure justice. No Indian could sit still under the insult offered to the whole Indian nation. As long as the present state of affairs lasted, the

[1] Gandhiji then spoke in English; *vide* the following item.

only place of safety in the Transvaal was the gaol. He did not wish to say much about his treatment in gaol or about the struggle; in the latter case because he knew little of what had been going on of late. He had nothing to say against the prison officials who were in immediate charge of him. The section warders treated him with every courtesy and kindness, and so did the other officials. He would shortly put in writing a great deal more that he had to say to his countrymen. There was plenty of work for them to do, and they must realise their duty. He preferred to see them work for the cause to being dragged through the streets in a carriage. During the last three months, he had found much consolation in reading the book of the prophet Daniel in the Bible. Daniel was one of the greatest passive resisters that ever lived, and they must follow his example. The laws of Generals Botha and Smuts were not for them (Indians) if they were in conflict with their consciences. They must sit with their doors flung wide open and tell those gentlemen that whatever laws they passed were not for them unless those laws were from God. Let them be up and doing, and not waste words or energy. He regretted that some of them had broken their solemn oaths by accepting the law, but they could still recall their act and do the right thing. He informed the meeting that several prominent Indians would be released tomorrow, and he asked them to give them a fitting reception. He thanked them heartily for their presence, and he asked God to give them strength to carry out the real work that lay before them.[1]

Indian Opinion, 29-5-1909

209. LETTER TO THE PRESS[2]

JOHANNESBURG,
May 26, 1909

SIR,

As there has been much talk, during my last incarceration, regarding the treatment I underwent, I shall thank you to publish the following statement. When I was sentenced to undergo imprisonment for three months with hard labour at Volksrust, and taken to the gaol there, I found myself in the company of over fifty fellow-workers, including my son. This, in itself, was to me a great pleasure. The food supplied was nice and clean, and included 1 oz. of ghee (clarified butter) per day, and was cooked by Indian cooks. All Indian prisoners

[1] The meeting was later addressed by Rev. J. J. Doke and Chettiar, Chairman, Tamil Benefit Society.

[2] The letter was addressed generally to the Transvaal Press. It was published in *Indian Opinion* under the caption "Mr. Gandhi's Experiences in the Pretoria Gaol".

were completely separated from the Natives, and had separate sanitary accommodation also. Those who occupied cells had bed-boards, in addition to the usual supply of blankets, etc., and all had a pillow each issued to them. The work was out-door work, and consisted for about thirty of us in road-repair or weed-ing the school ground, either of which, so far as I was concerned, was very agreeable and healthy, I was sentenced on the 25th February last.

" ISOLATED"

On the 2nd March, I was ordered to be removed to Pretoria. I had to travel in a third-class compartment, and, as most of the travelling was done during the night, it was naturally cold, more so as no blankets are issued, evidently, to prisoners. Arriving at Pretoria on the 3rd March, I was, after the usual formalities had been gone through, locked up in a cell. For, I think, five days, I had to pass the whole of the time in the cell or the corridor, except when I was allowed out for bathing and for such other purposes. My cell-door was marked "isolated" and I found, too, that I was isolated along with four other prisoners, one of whom was convicted of having made an attempt to murder, two of having committed sodomy, and one bestiality. Here there was no pillow and no bed-board issued, and, for food, there was no ghee allowed except on Wednesdays and Sundays. The work given to me consisted in polishing the floor of my own cell and polishing the cell-doors in the corridor of the section in which I was accommodated, along with the Native prisoners. It was during this time that Mr. Lichtenstein[1] visited me, and I told him that I considered the treatment to be brutal, and that there was evidently an intention on the part of General Smuts to bend me, but that I was not likely to succumb. Subsequently, I was given half-hour's exercise twice a day, and the work was altered to that of blanket-quilting, or such other tailoring work.

ONE MEAL PER DAY

I went practically without any breakfast, because the mealie-meal was not cooked sufficiently for my taste. I made no complaint about it, as all the other prisoners, I noticed, took their porridge with relish. I went without supper, because the rice issued contained no ghee. I complained about the absence of ghee to the Chief Warder,

[1] Lawyer and a professional colleague of Gandhiji

but he pleaded helplessness, because the regulations did not provide for the issue of ghee to Indian prisoners. I may state, parenthetically, that 1 oz. of fat per day is given to all Native prisoners. I then approached the medical officer and submitted that the Indian diet-scale should include 1 oz. of ghee per day. He would not make the change, but, for me specially, ordered 8 oz . of bread, along with the rice. I told him that, while I appreciated it, I could not accept a special privilege, unless ghee was issued to all Indian prisoners, as I considered it to be absolutely necessary for their health. I then approached the Director of Prisons in the matter.[1] A fortnight after, an order was made that I was to have 1 oz. of ghee allowed with my rice. I took this for a day, believing that the order was generally applicable. When, however, I found that it was a concession only for me, I was obliged to revert to the original position, that is, one meal per day. I again drew the attention of the Director of Prisons to the fact that I was being partially starved, and a reply came, after I had served for a month and a half, that ghee would be issued, pending an alteration of the Indian diet-scale, wherever there was a body of Indian prisoners. I felt thankful for this, and had no hesitation thereafter in taking my supper. After this, absence of breakfast was no loss to me.

HEALTH IMPAIRED

The Director of Prisons paid a visit , and made kind inquiries about myself, and, when he asked me whether I had any complaints, I pointed to some of the facts I have already narrated; and a bed-board, felt-mattress, night-shirt and handkerchief were issued to me, and I was allowed the use of pencil and note-book, which had been hitherto denied to me. I would also mention here gratefully that I was allowed an unrestricted use of books, which to me were a source of the greatest consolation. The tailoring work in my cell, which required bending to it for nearly seven hours per day, began to tell upon my health. I, therefore, requested that I should have more active work, or, at least, that I should be allowed to do the tailoring in the open. Both the requests were at first rejected. I suffered, I believe, owing to this close confinement in the cell, from violent neuralgia for nearly ten days, and I developed symptoms, too,of chest disease. On repeating my request, I was allowed to do the tailoring work in the open air.

[1] *Vide* “Draft Petition to Gaol Governor”, After 11-3-1909

GOVERNMENT ALONE TO BLAME

The opinion I expressed to Mr. Lichtenstein about General Smuts underwent a change upon further observation, and I felt that he had directly nothing to do with the treatment described above. Indeed, I gratefully recall here the sending by him of two nice books for me to read, testifying, as I took it, to the fact that he entertained no personal ill will against me, and that he gave me credit for doing what I believed to be right. Nor do I blame any of the officials for what I had to undergo. They were all courteous and kind, and I cannot be sufficiently thankful to the section warders, who seemed to realise the peculiar position in which I was placed, and showed me every consideration. And yet I must adhere to the opinion that the treatment itself was brutal. My sentence was imprisonment with hard labour, but, for the larger part of the term, it was practically solitary confinement. The officials of the Prison Department could do no otherwise bacause, Indians being classed with Native prisoners, I could only be placed in the Native section. The same, however, can hardly be said of the Government, who, having so many Indian prisoners on hand, gave no thought to the matter. They must have known, when I was cruelly separated from my fellow-prisoners at Volksrust, that, at Pretoria, I would be obliged to undergo hardships not warranted by the sentence imposed upon me. I do not say that Indian prisoners should be classed with Europeans. Their lot would, then, probably, be much worse than it is now. But I do say that they should be separately classed and separately accommodated. I may be told that, having invited imprisonment for myself, I can hardly complain of the prison system with any justification. This taunt is inapplicable, because, I submit, avoidable misery was inflicted upon me, and, in any case, it is as well for the public, in whose name the Government is supposed to be acting, to know what is being done to Indian passive resisters.

OTHER PRISONERS

After my discharge I learnt that, if I fared somewhat ill, the majori-ty of the other passive resisters fared no better, if not worse; for the majo-rity of the Indian passive resisters at the Johannesburg Fort were removed to the penal settlement at Diepkloof, and the majority of those at Volksrust to Heidelberg, at both of which places, in the initial stages, they had to undergo hardships for which there was no

warrant. The Indian prisoner may not complain about the labour to which he is put so long as it is tolerable, but I think that he has every right to complain about improper, unsuitable, or insufficient diet. It is hardly any credit to the Colony that one of the bravest and the truest of Indians in the Colony, an Indian who has occupied the position of Acting Chairman of the British Indian Association, and who is a well-know merchant, has been made to carry slop-pails.

No amount of harassing that may be applied will turn those who have passed through their experience during the last few months from their purpose. Several have already again been imprisoned, one young man of nineteen for the fifth time. The public has no knowledge of the fact that an Indian is nearly every day arrested and imprisoned for three months with hard labour, at Vereeniging, for managing the store belonging to Mr. Aswat, who is himself locked up at Diepkloof. Eight such Indians have already been offered up as a sacrifice, and volunteers are still forthcoming to take charge of this store. Passive resistance is not then dead. It cannot die, because it represents truth.

Indian Opinion, 5-6-1909

210. WHO CAN OFFER SATYAGRAHA?

The satyagraha campaign in the Transvaal has lasted so long and has been so conducted that we have been able to see—learn—a great many things from it. Many have had personal experience of it. This much at least has been realized by everyone—that, in a struggle of this kind, there is no room for defeat. If, on any occasion, we fail, we shall discover that the failure was due to some deficiency in the satyagrahi and did not argue the inefficacy of satyagraha as such. The point needs to be carefully grasped. No such rule can be applied to physical fighting. When two armies engage in such fighting, defeat [of either] will not necessarily be the result of the inferior fighting quality of the troops. The combatants may have a high morale, and yet, insufficiency in other matters may lead to defeat. For instance , one side may have better arms than the other, or may be favourably placed in the battle-field, or may command superior technical skill.There are many such extraneous factors which account for the victory or defeat of the parties to a physical fight. But such factors offer no difficulties to those fighting the battle of satyagraha. Their deficiency alone can come in their way. Moreover, in the usual kind of fighting, all the members of the losing side should be deemed to have been defeated,

and in fact they do think that way. In satyagraha, the victory of a single member may be taken to mean the victory of all, but the defeat of the side as a whole does not spell defeat for the person who has not himself yielded. For instance, in the Transvaal fight, even if a majority of Indians were to submit to the obnoxious Act, he who remains unyielding will be victorious indeed, for the fact remains that he has not yielded.

That being so, it is necessary to inquire as to who can offer so admirable a battle—one which admits of no defeat—which can have only one result. The inquiry will enable us to understand some of the results of the Transvaal campaign, and to decide how and by whom a campaign of this kind can be fought elsewhere or on some other occasion.

If we inquire into the meaning of satyagraha, we find that the first condition is that anyone who wants to engage in this kind of fighting should show a special regard for truth—should have the strength that flows from truthfulness. That is to say, such a man should depend on truth alone. One cannot have the best of both worlds.[1] A man who attempts to have it so will be crushed under pressure of both kinds.[2] Satyagraha is not a carrot, to be played on as a pipe.[3] Anyone who thinks that it is, so that he may play on it if he can or bite it off if he cannot, will find himself lost in the end. It is absurd to suggest that satyagraha is being resorted to only by those who are deficient in physical strength or who, finding physical strength unavailing, can think of no alternative but satyagraha. Those who hold such a view, it may be said, do not know what this fight means. Satyagraha is more potent than physical strength, which is as worthless as straw when compared with the former. Essentially, physical strength means that a man of such strength fights on the battle-field with little regard for his body, that is to say, he knows no fear. A satyagrahi, on his part, gives no thought whatever to his body. Fear cannot touch him at all. That is why he does not arm himself with any material weapons, but continues resistance till the end without fear of death. This means that the satyagrahi should have more courage than the man who relies on physical strength. Thus, the first thing

[1] The Gujarati saying used here literally means, "One cannot have one foot in curds and the other in milk."

[2] Of physical strength and moral argument

[3] The reference is to a Gujarati saying, denoting a course of action that one expects to be profitable either way, whether one succeeds or fails.

necessary for a satyagrahi is pursuit of truth, faith in truth.

He must be indifferent to wealth. Wealth and truth have always been in conflict with each other, and will remain so till the end of time. We have found from many examples of Indians in the Transvaal that he who clings to wealth cannot be loyal to truth. This does not mean that a satyagrahi can have no wealth. He can, but he cannot make his wealth his God. Money is welcome if one can have it consistently with one's pursuit of truth; otherwise one must not hesitate even for a mo-ment to sacrifice it as if it were no more than dirt on one's hand. No one who has not cultivated such an attitude can practise satyagraha. Moreover, in a land where one is obliged to offer satyagraha against the rulers, it is not likely that the satyagrahi will be able to own wealth. The power of a king may be unavailing against an individual. But it can touch his pro-perty, or play on his fear of losing it. The king bends the subjects to his will by threatening them with loss of property or physical harm. There-fore, under the rule of a tyrannical king, for the most part, it is only those who make themselves accomplices in his tyranny can retain or amass wealth. Since a satyagrahi cannot allow himself to be an accomplice in tyranny, he must, in such circumstances, be content to think himself rich in his poverty. If he owns any wealth, he must hold it in some other country.

A satyagrahi is obliged to break away from family attachments. This is very difficult to do. But the practice of satyagraha, if satyagraha is to be worthy of its name, is like walking on the edge of a sword. In the long run, even the breaking away from family attachm-ents will prove beneficial to the family. For, the members of the family will come to feel the call for satyagraha, and those who have felt such a call will have no other desire left. When faced with suffering of any kind—loss of wealth or imprisonment—one need not be concerned about the future of one's family. He who has given us teeth will provide us with food to eat. If He provides for such dangerous creatures as the snake, the scorpion, the tiger and the wolf, He is not likely to be unmindful of mankind. It is not a pound of millets or a handful of corn that we hanker after, but the delights of the palate; not just the clothes that we need to enable us to bear cold, but garments of brocaded silk. If we abandon all this restless craving, there will hardly be any need for anxiety as to the means for maintaining one's family.

In this connection, it is worth while to bear in mind that many of these things have to be sacrificed even if physical force is resorted to. One is obliged to suffer hunger and thirst, to bear heat and cold, to sacrifice family bonds, to put up with pecuniary loss. The Boers went through all this when they resorted to physical force. The one great difference between the physical resistance that they offered and our resistance based on truth is that the game they played was in the nature of a gamble. Physical strength, moreover, has made them proud. Their partial success made them forgetful of their former condition. Having fought with deadly arms against a deadly enemy, they are bearing hard upon us as deadly tyrants. When a satyagrahi wins in battle, his success cannot but be beneficial to him and to others. A satyagrahi, if he is to remain loyal to truth, can never be a tyrant.

This inquiry, then, leads at last to the conclusion that he alone can offer satyagraha who has true faith in religion. "The name of Rama on the lips, and a dagger nuder the arm"[1]—that is no faith. It is no religion to speak in its name and to do exactly the opposite of what it teaches. But anyone who has true religion and faith in him can offer satyagraha. In other words, he who leaves everything to God can never know defeat in this world. Such men are not defeated in fact simply because people say that they are defeated. So also one cannot claim success simply because people believe that one has succeeded. [There can be no arguing about this;] if you know the difference, you know it, else you don't.

This is the real nature of satyagraha. The Transvaal Indians have partially understood it. Having done so, they have been faithful to it in practice, again partially. Even so, we have been able to taste its priceless sweetness. He who has sacrificed everything for satyagraha has gained everything, for he lives in contentment. Contentment is happiness. Who has ever known any happiness other than this? Every other kind of happiness is but a mirage. The nearer we approach it, the farther it recedes.

We hope that every Indian will think of the matter this way and make himself a satyagrahi. If we learn the use of the weapon of satyagraha, we can employ it to overcome all hardships originating from injustice. It is not here [in South Africa] alone that the weapon is useful; it will be more so in our home-country. Only we must know its true nature, which is easy to do, and yet difficult. Men of great physical strength are rare. Rarer still must be those who derive their strength from truth.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-5-1909

[1] A Hindi saying

211. MY THIRD EXPERIENCE IN GAOL [-I]

VOLKSRUST

When, on February 25, I was sentenced to three month's imprisonment with hard labour and I embraced my fellow-prisoners and my son in the Volksrust Gaol, I did not imagine that I would have much to say or write about this pilgrimage to gaol. But my expectation, like many other expectations of man, proved false. The experience I had this time was somethings new altogether. What I have learnt from this I would not have been able to learn even from years of study. I think these three months have been of inestimable value to me. In that brief period, I had many vivid experiences of satyagraha and I think I am a better satyagrahi today than I was three months ago. For all this, thanks are due to the local (the Transvaal) Government.

Some officers had sworn that I should in no circumstances get less than six months' imprisonment this time. My fellow-prisoners—elderly and prominent Indians—and my son—were all serving a six months'term each, so that I wanted the officers'wish to be fulfilled. However, since I had been charged under the Regulations framed under the Act,[1] I was afraid that three months would be the utmost I might get, and that is what happened .

After the sentence had been passed, it was a pleasure to join Mr. Dawad Mahomed, Mr. Rustomjee, Mr. Sorabji, Mr. Pillay, Mr. Hajurasingh, Mr. Lalbahadursingh and other veterans. Except ten of them, all were provided with beds in tents pitched on the ground in front of the gaol. The scene had therefore the appearance of an armed camp rather than a gaol. Everyone liked sleeping in a tent. Arrangements for food were satisfactory. As on previous occasions, cooking was in our own hands. It was therefore possible to prepare food to our taste. In all there were about 77 (satyagrahi) prisoners.

Those who were taken outside for work were set a rather difficult task. They had to build a road in front of the magistrate's court. This required quarrying out stone, digging into heaps of stones that had been piled up, and carrying them in loads. After the work on the road

[1] Gandhiji was charged with refusing to produce certificate of registration and to give finger-prints or other means of identification; *vide* 25-2-1909.

was over, they were set to uproot the grass in the school compound. But, on the whole , everyone worked cheerfully.

I also went with the gangs for three days to join in this work. There was a telegram meanwhile that I should not be taken for work outside. I was rather disappointed, for I liked going out. It improved my health and kept me fit. Ordinarily, I have two meals a day, but on account of this exercise, the stomach insisted on my having three meals while in Volksrust Gaol. I was now assigned only the work of sweeping. That kind of work, I thought, would do me no good. And then came a time when I was denied even this.

WHY WAS I MADE TO LEAVE VOLKSRUST?

On March 2, I heard that my removal to Pretoria had been ordered. I was asked to get ready the same day. It was raining, the roads were bad; despite this, my warder and I were obliged to leave, with my luggage on my head. I was taken by the evening train the same day in a third-class carriage.

Some thought that this might possibly mean a settlement; others felt that the intention was probably to harass me by isolating me from the rest. Some also thought that the object might be to keep me in Pretoria and give me more freedom and better facilities so as to prevent a discussion in the House of Commons.

I did not like leaving Volksrust. Happy during the day, the evenings too we passed in cheerful conversation. Mr. Hajurasingh and Mr. Joshi, especially, asked a number of questions, which were in no way flippant but were quite instructive. Which satyagrahi would like to leave a place where conditions were so happy and where the largest number of Indians were congregated?

But man would not be man if things always happened as he wished. And so I left. On the way, Mr. Kajee saluted me. The warder and I found ourselves huddled up in a compartment. It was cold, and it rained the whole night. I had my overcoat with me, which I was allowed to put on. I felt a little better after that. I had been given bread and cheese to eat on the way. I did not touch them, since I had had my meal before starting. They were consumed by the warder.

IN PRETORIA GAOL

I reached Pretoria on the 3rd. Everything appeared unfamiliar. Even the gaol is of recent construction. The men were strangers. They gave me something to eat, but I had no appetite. They placed before

me mealie meal porridge; I tasted a spoonful, and left it off. The warder was surprised. I told him that I was not hungry. He smiled. Then I passed on to the charge of another warder. He said: "Gandhi, take off your cap." I did so. He then asked me: "Are you Gandhi's son?" "No," I replied, "my son is serving six months in Volksrust." I was then locked up in a cell. I began pacing up and down. Before long, the warder peeped through the watch-hole, saw what I was doing and shouted: "Gandhi, stop walking about like that: my floor is being spoiled." I stopped, and stood in a corner. I had nothing even to read. I had not yet received my books. I must have been locked in at eight. At ten, I was taken to the physician. He asked me if I suffered from any contagious disease, and dismissed me. Was locked in again. At eleven, I was removed to another small cell. It was in this that I spent the rest of my term. It was a cell of the kind intended for one prisoner at a time. It measured, I believe, ten feet long and seven broad. The floor was covered with black pitch. The warders were constantly engaged in keeping it shining. For ventilation, it had a very small glass window, with iron bars. It was provided with an electric light for keeping a watch on the prisoner during the night. The light is not meant for the prisoner's use, for it is not powerful enough to read by. Standing close to it, I could read a book printed in large type. The light is put out exactly at eight. But it is switched on five or six times in the night when the warders have a look at the prisoner through the watch-hole mentioned above.

After eleven, the Deputy-Governor came. I asked for three things from him: books, permission to write to my wife who was ill, and a small bench to sit on. As to the first, the reply was: "I shall see"; as to the second: "Yes"; as to the third: "No." When, however, I wrote in Gujarati, the letter was returned to me with the remark that I should write in English. I said in reply that my wife did not know English, that my letters served as medicine for her, that they contained nothing of special significance. In spite of this, however, I did not get the permission. I refused to avail myself of the permission to write in English. The same evening my books were handed over to me.

When the midday meal arrived, I had to eat it in the cell standing, with the doors shut. At about three, I asked permission to take a bath. The sopt for bathing must have been at a distance of about 125 feet. The warder replied: "All right. Undress (make

yourself naked) and go." I asked him if this was necessary, suggesting that I could place my clothes on the screen. He then gave his permission, but asked me to be quick. While I had yet to wipe my body after bath, the gentleman shouted: "Are you ready, Gandhi?" I said I would not take long. I hardly ever got an opportunity to see an Indian face. When it was evening, I was given a blanket, with half a piece in addition, and a coir mat by way of bedding; there was no pillow or bed-board. Even when I went for evacuation, a warder stood by to keep watch. If by chance he did not know me, he would shout: "Sam, come out now." But Sam had the bad habit of taking a long time for evacuation; how could he get out so soon, and if he did, how would he feel easy in bowels afterwards? Sometimes a [white] warder, and sometimes a Kaffir, would thus stand by, and keep peeping over or shouting to the refrain of "Get up", "Get up".

The next day, I was given the work of polishing the floor and doors. The latter were made of varnished iron. What was the point of polishing them every day? I have often spent three hours at a stretch on polishing one door. But I could not observe the slightest difference. Yes, it did make some difference to the floor. There were some Kaffirs working with me. They would sometimes talk in broken English of how they had come to be imprisoned, and ask me questions about my imprisonment. One asked me whether I had committed theft, and another whether I had been imprisoned for selling liquor. When I explained the correct position to one of the intelligent Kaffirs, he exclaimed, "Quite right." "*Amlungu bad*" (The whites are bad). "Don't pay fine." My cell bore the description "isolated". I saw five other cells adjoining mine bearing the same description. My neighbour was a Kaffir who had been serving a term of imprisonment for attempted murder. The three next to him were convicted of sodomy. It was in the company of such men and in such surroundings that I commenced my experience in Pretoria Gaol.

DIET

The food was in keeping with the conditions described above. Mealie pap in the morning, mealie pap with potatoes and carrots thrice a week for the midday meal, beans on other three days and rice without ghee for the evening meal. On Wednesdays, I received beans and rice with ghee for the midday meal, and on Sundays, rice and ghee with mealie pap. It was difficult to eat rice in the absence of ghee. I dicided not to eat it till I was allowed ghee. The mealie pap

served at breakfast and for the midday meal was sometimes not well cooked, and sometimes it was cooked so as to taste like *rab*[1]. The beans were only half-cooked sometimes, [though] generally they were good. On the days for vegetables, only four small potatoes [were served], which counted towards the [prescribed] eight ounces and, if it was the turn for carrots, only three, and these too rather small-sized. Sometimes I would take four or five spoonfuls of mealie pap in the morning. But on the whole, I spent one and a half months on one meal of beans only at midday. My fellow-prisoners at Volksrust-should realize from this how wrong they were to be angry with our own men when they did not sometimes cook well or when there was occasionally an insufficient supply of a particular item. One may be angry to some purpose, when our own friends attend to the cooking. What could one do in the circumstances described above? It would be possible, of course, to express one's resentment. But I think it would not be proper for us to make any such complaints. How can we complain when there are hundreds of prisoners who accept these things? A complaint must have only one object—to secure relief for other prisoners. How would it mend matters if I were occasionally to complain to the warder about the small quantity of potatoes and so get him to serve me a little more? I once observed him giving me [an additional helping] from a portion meant for another, and thereafter gave up complaining altogether.

That no ghee was allowed with rice in the evening I knew before-hand, and I was determined to have the matter set right. I immediately brought it to the notice of the Chief Warder. He replied that ghee was allowed only with the midday meal on Wednesdays and Sundays in lieu of meat. He asked me to approach the physician if I wanted it oftener. The next day I asked for permission to see the physician. I was taken to him.

I asked him to order ghee for all Indian prisoners in lieu of fat. The Chief Warder was present. He said, "Gandhi's demand is not justified. Most of the Indians have been taking fat, and even meat. Those who refuse fat are given plain rice, which they readily accept. When there were satyagrahi prisoners here, they also accepted it. They were weighed when entering and again when leaving the gaol. It was found that they all weighed more when leaving." The physician asked me, "Come on, now, what do you say to this?" I said I could not

[1] A liquid preparation of wheat nour boiled in water, generally for invalids

believe it. And speaking for myself, I said, I would certainly suffer in health if I had to go without ghee. The physician said that in that case he would order bread for me. I thanked him, but told him that I had not approached him specially for myself. So long as ghee was not ordered for everyone, I could not accept bread. Whereupon he said, "Please don't blame me now."

What was I to do now? If the Chief Warder had not intervened, ghee would have been ordered. The same day, I was offered bread and rice. I was hungry. But, as matters stood, how could a satyagrahi accept the bread? I therefore refused both. The next day I asked for permission to make a petition to the Director of Prisons which was granted.[1] In the petition, I cited the instances of Johannesburg and Volksrust [gaols] and asked for ghee to be ordered for all prisoners. A reply to the petition was received after 15 days. It was to the effect that, pending the revision of the diet-scale for Indians, I should be given ghee with rice every day. Since I did not know the exact terms of the order, I readily accepted rice, ghee and bread on the first day. I pointed out that there was no need for bread, but was told that it had been ordered by the physician and so would continue to be supplied. Hence, I went on accepting that also for 15 days.[2] But my joy lasted no more than a day. I discovered the next day the terms of the order mentioned above, so that I again declined to accept rice, ghee and bread. I told the Chief Warder that I would not accept ghee so long as it was not ordered for every Indian. The Deputy-Governor, who was present, replied, "As you please."

I wrote again to the Director. I had been informed that the diet-scale would be modified so as to bring it in line with the one in force in Natal. I expressed dissatisfaction with this and stated the reasons why I could not accept ghee. In the end, after more than a month and a half in all had elapsed, I was informed that ghee had been ordered for Indian prisoners wherever there was a large number of them [in one gaol]. It may thus be said that I broke the self-denial (*roza*) nearly a month and a half after I had taken up the matter. During nearly the whole of the concluding month [of my term of imprisonment], I took rice, ghee and bread, but went without a meal in the morning; and even after I had started taking rice and bread,

[1] *Vide* "Draft Petition to Gaol Governor", After 11-3-1909

[2] This is contradictory to the sentence which follows; *vide* also "Letter to the Press", 26-5-1909.

whenever I was served mealie pap for the midday meal I would hardly take ten spoonfuls, fot it had a different taste every day. The bread and ghee, however, stood me in good stead, and I was restored to health.

I have said above that I was restored to health, for it had broken down during the time that I lived on only one meal a day. I had lost my strength and had severe neuralgic pain in the head for ten days, and had also developed symptoms of some affection in the lungs.

CHANGE OF WORK

There was another reason why the lungs had been affected. I said above that I was asked to polish the floor and doors. After ten days of this work, I was given two worn-out blankets to be sewn into one. This was rather intricate work. It required me to bend down the whole day towards the floor, and that, too, while sitting in the cell. This used to give me back-ache by evening, and my eyes also began to feel the strain. Besides, I had all along believed that the air in the cell was unwholesome. Once or twice I asked the Chief Warder to give me some work outside, such as digging, etc. If that was not possible, I asked to be allowed to work on the blankets in the open air. He rejected both requests. I brought this matter also to the notice of the Director. In the end, the physician passed the [necessary] order and I was allowed to sew the blankets in the open air. If that had not been done, I think I would have suffered still more in health. There were some other difficulties after the order was passed, which it is not necessary to describe here. It so happened, therefore, that I got permission to work in the open air at about the same time that a change in my diet was ordered. The resulting gain was twofold. When I was [first] given a blanket to sew, it was expected that it would take a week to finish it, so that my entire term would be taken up with that work. But, contrary to expectations, after the first blanket had been finished, I could manage to sew a pair into one in two days. So they found some other work for me, such as knitting a sweater, stitching purses for holding tickets, etc.

I had earlier told many satyagrahis that, if anyone came out of gaol with impaired health, that would be a reflection on his spirit of satyagraha, for it should be possible for us, given sufficient patience, to find remedies [for all difficulties in gaol]. Moreover, one might suffer in health through worry. The satyagrahi must learn to live in gaol as if it were a palace. Arguing thus, I used to feel anxious lest I

myself should have to leave gaol in poor health. The reader must remember that I had suffered in health in the course of satyagraha because I could not accept ghee which had been ordered for me alone. But this rule does not apply to others. Whenever there is a single [Indian] prisoner in gaol, he can represent his own grievances for redress. In Pretoria I had a special reason for not doing so, and that is why I was not in a position to accept ghee when ordered for me as a special case.

(To be continued)

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-5-1909

212. SPEECH AT RECEPTION TO ASWAT AND QUINN[1]

JOHANNESBURG
June 2, 1909

I am happy beyond words today that Indians and Chinese have as-sembled here together. Only yesterday I decided in consultation with the Chairman of the British Indian Association that Mr. Aswat should be invited here and entertained at Mr. Cachalia's. I did not think it even possible that my countrymen and the Chinese would come together in such large numbers. I am very happy that these two groups—the Chinese and the Indians—who took part in this struggle, have been brought to-gether. This manner of welcoming heroes like Mr. Quinn and Mr. Aswat deserves no small praise. Both of them are leaders of their respective communities and sincerely cherish their welfare. The more I think about the campaign, the more convinced I am that we are bound to win in the end if we fight with the weapons of goodness and virtue. Whatever the number of those who are continuing or may continue the fight, the two demands we have made will surely be conceded. If you think of the other things we have gained in this prolonged struggle, you will realize that we have been brought close together through self-sacrifice and mutual co-operation. We are keen on such co-operation. We have now learnt how to maintain our self-respect and how to respect others. There is something in me which tells me that we need not be disappointed even if we get nothing [more at present], for what we have gained so far is

[1] A meeting of Indians and Chinese was held in the West End Hall to welcome Messrs Quinn and Aswat on their release. Gandhiji spoke at the reception.

not insignificant, and we shall gain much more yet in future. It does not matter if the satyagrahis' army is a small one. History will tell you that real fighters are but few. In the war between England and Russia, the Light Brigade consisted of only a few men and yet it attained immortal fame. Similarly, satyagrahis will enjoy immortal fame, at least in South Africa. I humbly advise you to follow in the footsteps of Messrs Quinn and Aswat, and may you remain firm in that path till the end and so attain happiness.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-6-1909

213. SPEECH AT TEA PARTY[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
June 2, 1909]

It would not be proper if I did not speak in Gujarati on this occasion of Mr. Aswat's and Mr. Quinn's release. This is the least that we can do when Mr. Aswat is released. I mentioned this when Mr. Omarji Sale was released. I shall not say anything more about it. Men can have their way even if they are a few in number. There were thousands who applauded and showed themselves ready for gaol. But only a few come forward now. I am not dissatisfied with this. To any inquiry about his health today, Mr. Aswat says that he is all right; but, according to Mr. Vyas, that is not correct. This brave man [while in gaol] did not obtain tobacco, etc., as personal favour. I am proud of this. He has done all that he promised, and he will act in the same manner till the last. There are very few men who, without hankering after publicity, would act as he has done. To honour others is as good as honouring oneself, for that shows one's own worth. Yesterday, Messrs Manji, Fakir, Shah, and others whose names I do not remember, came. We could not go to receive them. And they too were not—and are not—hungry for honour. However, it is our bare duty to honour those whom we consider to be our seniors. Mr. Quinn is also the same to us as our two leaders and he has been reduced to much the same condition as theirs. He used to get mealie pap and maize in gaol and when the Governor offered to order rice for him, he said he would accept it only if it was ordered for all Chinese. As the Government did not agree, he firmly refused the rice, which was no small thing. Truly, Mr. Quinn is a pillar of satyagraha. The Acting Chair-

[1] After the reception, Messrs Aswat and Quinn had tea at Cachalia's residence; *vide* the preceding item.

man of their Association is now impatient to go to gaol. All these persons will have justice at least from God. I feel proud when I come across a man of his type during my experience of our sturggle. I am not disheartened by those who drop off. Be sure victory is ours.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-6-1909

214. WHO CAN GO TO GAOL?

Last week we briefly considered the question: Who can be a satyagrahi? In the Transvaal, satyagraha consists for the most part in going to gaol. But imprisonment is not the end of the matter. Satyagrahis have had to mount the gallows,[1] embrace a pillar of red-hot iron[2], suffer being rolled down a mountain, swim in boiling oil in a big frying pan,[3] walk through a blazing forest[4], suffer loss of a kingdom and be sold [as slave] in a low-born family[5] and stay in a lion's den. Thus, satyagrahis have had to pass through different ordeals in different parts of the world.

In the Transvaal, the ordeal for the satyagrahis consists merely in going to gaol. Hence, it will be useful to inquire as to who can go to gaol. Some Indians were willing to go to gaol, but did not do so—could not do so—owing to one reason or another. What could have been those reasons? This question will answer itself it we find out who can go to gaol.

Every person, then, who wants to go to gaol must have, in some measure, the qualities which, as we have seen, are essential in a satyagrahi. But, in addition, he should have the following strong points:

(1) Freedom from addiction to harmful things.
(2) A well-disciplined body.
(3) Disregard for comfortable seat or bed.
(4) Extreme simplicity in food habits.
(5) Total freedom from false sense of prestige or status.

[1] The reference probably is to the crucifixion of Jesus.

[2] These are references to legends of Prahlad, Sudhanva, Nala-Damayanti and Harishchandra, respectively.

[3] *ibid*

[4] *ibid*

[5] *ibid*

(6) Fortitude.

Friends who would go to gaol must particularly have these qualities, (which we may call the six forms of wealth in a prison.) Let us examine each of them. It was our experience that those prisoners who were addicted to smoking, drinking, betel-nuts or even tea found the strain of gaol life too much. In consequence, they either managed to get these things surreptitiously in gaol, that is, abandoned [the path of] truth, or gave up speaking of going to gaol again. One must therefore avoid every form of addiction. One addiction alone is permissible, and that is repeating the name of the Lord in prayer.

Cowards can never become satyagrahis. Likewise, a physical wreck will not generally be able to bear gaol life. There have been many cases of men who, though physically weak, have braved hardships through sheer will-power. These are exceptions. As a general rule, one must have a healthy and sound constitution; lacking this, some of the prisoners were unable to bear the strain [of gaol-life]. A satyagrahi knows that his body is [as it were] lent to him on hire. He should prove a worthy tenant by keeping it clean and glowing with health.

One can understand that a man who is accustomed to a spring cot with a soft mattress cannot all at once bring himself to sleep on the floor. One must therefore get rid of this pampering of the body.

Diet, it seems, has proved to be much the most important problem. That also is not surprising. He who has his tongue under control, being both sparing in speech and moderate in his taste for good food, must be reckoned to have achieved a great conquest. We hardly come across anyone who does not relish good food. Even the poor Kaffirs die with craving for good food. Of course, this is not a simple problem. However those who want to offer themselves for imprisonment in a public cause must learn to master their palate. The proper thing is to offer thanks to God for whatever we get. Every Indian must ponder over the fact that, in India, thirty million out of a population of three hundred million get only one meal a day, and that, too, nothing more than *roti* and salt. Compared to this, it is not much of a hardship to have to maintain oneself in gaol on three meals a day, each different from the other. Hunger accepts everything. Though one may not feel at ease for a few days, by and by one does come to like gaol food. Any Indian who wants to be a satyagrahi—a prisoner—must accustom himself to simple food as quickly as

possible.

A person with a false notion of prestige or status cannot afford to go to gaol. One is subjected there to the authority of the warder and is asked to do work which is thought rather degrading. If one refuses to do such work, considering it dishonourable, or on the ground that one has never done it before, the result will be unwelcome. Whether on thinks of anything as a mark of servitude or not depends entirely on one's mind. He who is free in his mind will feel as free as a king even when carrying buckets [of night-soil]. Rather than feel that carrying of buckets is a mark of servitude, such a man will consider it a matter of honour in the present circumstances.

And last, Lady Fortitude. Everyone starts counting days the moment he is in gaol, with the result that they appear to grow inordinately long. Years wore on while we were outside and were lost to us for ever. And yet we did not think much of that. In gaol, three days appeared to be as long as three years. Why? The answer is that we were not happy to be in gaol. Just as a mother takes pleasure in suffering for the sake of the child, so also must we take pleasure in suffering for the motherland—for truth. One must patiently serve out the full term of one's imprisonment, bearing always in mind that one could never have passed one's days outside in the same manner as in gaol and put the time to good use, that is, spent the days in devotion to God, in good thoughts, in self-examination. In this way, going along a single path one will have accomplished two tasks.

These six qualities, therefore, a [satyagrahi] prisoner must have. There may be other qualities which will suggest themselves to the reader. But we urge every reader to ponder, at any rate, the suggestions made above.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-6-1909

215. MY THIRD EXPERIENCE IN GAOL [–II]

OTHER CHANGES

As I mentioned above, the warder in charge of me was somewhat harsh in his behaviour. This did not last long. When he saw that with the Government itself I took up a fighting attitude about food, etc., but carried out all his orders his manner changed, and I was allowed to

do as I liked. Thus, the difficulties about lavatory, bath, etc., disappeared. Moreover, he never allowed me to feel that I was subject to his authority. His successor was a happy-go-lucky man. He was careful to provide me with all reasonable facilities. He used to say: "I love a man who fights for his people. I am myself something of a fighter. I do not regard you as a prisoner." Many a time he would console me with such talk.

Moreover, after a few days they used to let me out into the gaol-yard for half an hour's stroll in the mornings and similarly, in the evenings. This exercise was continued even after I was allowed to sit outside for work. The rule about exercise applies to all prisoners who have to do work sitting.

And then the bench which had been refused to me was later sent by the Chief Warder of his own accord. Meanwhile, I received from General Smuts two books on religion, and I inferred from this that it was not under his orders that I had been subjected to hardships, but that it was the result of his negligence and that of others, as also a consequence of the fact that we are equated with the Kaffirs. One thing appeared certain, that the only object of isolating me was to see that I had no opportunity of talking to anyone. With some effort, I could also secure a pencil and a note book.

DIRECTOR'S VISIT

Within a few days of my being brought to Pretoria, Mr. Lichtenstein came to see me with special permission. He had come on official business, but he made inquiries about my health, etc. I was reluctant to give a reply, but, being pressed, I said to him: "Without going into details, I shall only say that I am being subjected to brutal treatment. General Smuts wants to bend me, but I am not likely to succumb. I am prepared to suffer everything. My mind is at peace. Please do not make this public. I shall tell the world everything after my release". Mr. Lichtenstein conveyed this to Mr. Polak. The latter could not contain himself and talked about it to others. The result was that David Pollock wrote to Lord Selborne, and an inquiry was made. There was a visit by the Director, to whom I said exactly what I had said to Lichtenstein. In addition, I also pointed out the other discomforts which I mentioned in the beginning. As a result of this, they sent me ten days later a bedboard, a pillow, a night-shirt and a

handkerchief. I accepted them. In the statement[1] which I have submitted on this matter, I have pointed out that all the Indians [in gaol] stand in need of these things. In fact, Indians are more comfort-loving than whites in regard to sitting and sleeping. They find it difficult to do without a pillow.

Thus, simultaneously with improvement in diet and facilities for work in the open air, I was provided with better comfort for sleeping, as described above. But man can never escape his fate. The bed-board was full of bugs. I did not use it even for ten days. At last, the Chief Warder had it repaired and I started using it. Meanwhile, I had grown used to sleeping on a blanket spread out on the floor. The bed-board, therefore, appeared to have made no difference to me. In the absence of a pillow, I had been using my books for the purpose, so that even the provision of a pillow made little difference to me.

HANDCUFFED

The conclusion to which I had been led by my initial treatment [in Pretoria Gaol] was confirmed by the following incident. Four days later, I was summoned as a witness in Mrs. Pillay's case. I was, accordingly, taken to the court. I was handcuffed on the occasion.[2] Moreover, the warder locked up the handcuffs rather tight. I think he did this unintentionally. The Chief Warder saw this. I had obtained his permission to carry a book with me to read [on the way]. Thinking probably that I felt ashamed of the handcuffs, he asked me to hold the book with both hands, so that the handcuffs might not be seen. I was rather amused at this. To me the handcuffs were a matter of honour. It happened by chance that the title of the book which I was carrying, if rendered in Gujarati, would be: *Khuda-no Darbar Tara antar-man Chhe*.[3] I regarded this as a wonderful coincidence. Whatever the difficulties that pressed on me from outside, so long as I kept my heart worthy of God's presence in it, what need had I to mind anything else? I was taken on foot in this fashion. For the return journey, a truck was sent from the gaol. Indians must have come to know that I was to be brought [to the court]; some of them were, therefore, present there. From among them, Mr. Tryambaklal Vyas was able to see me through Mrs. Pillay's lawyer.

[1] This is not available.
[2] For official correspondence and other material on this subject, *vide* Appendix VIII.
[3] *The Kingdom of God Is within You* by Tolstoy

I was also taken to the court on another occasion, this time, too, in handcuffs. There was a truck to carry us to the court as also to bring us back.

MAGIC POWER OF SATYAGRAHA

Some of the facts which I have given above will appear rather trivial, but they have been described in such detail in order to show that satyagraha is feasible in every situation, serious or otherwise. The result of my having submitted to the physical hardships inflicted by the junior warder was that I could preserve my peace of mind. Not only that, the warders themselves removed all those hardships. If I had resisted, that would have distracted my energies from the bigger tasks on hand and the warders would have become my enemies.

On the question of food also, I remained firm in my principles and bore some hardships initially, with the result that this difficulty, too, disappeared. The same thing can also be seen [to have happened] in respect of the smaller difficulties.

The biggest gain, however, has been that I find myself, beyoud any shadow of doubt, to have grown in mental strength in consequence of having endured physical suffering. I believe that the last three months have been of great profit to me and I am ready today to bear much heavier suffering without flinching. I see that satyagraha is assured of divine help, and that in testing a satyagrahi the Creator imposes on him at every step only as much burden as he can bear.

MY READING

The story of my suffering or of my happiness, or rather of both, ends here. But I had a great many benefits in the course of these three months. One of the most important, to be sure, was that I got an opportunity for reading. I must admit that, during the earlier part [of my imprisonment], I often found myself lost in thought and felt dejected. The moment I had succeeded in withdrawing my mind from an unpleasant thought, it would again wander off like a monkey. In such circumstances, men often go mad. My books saved me. Thanks to them, I did not feel much the absence of contacts with Indian friends. Everyday I had three hours for reading. I had an hour to myself in the morning, which could be spared [for reading] because I went without a breakfast. It was the same about evening. At noon, I read while eating. Besides, in the evening, I continued reading even

after the light was switched on, if I was not too tired. On Saturdays and Sundays, I had plenty of time on land. I read over 30 books during this period, and reflected on some of them; among these, there were books in English, Hindi, Gujarati, Sanskrit and Tamil. Notable among the English books, I would say, were those by Tolstoy, Emerson and Carlyle. The first two were on religious subjects. Along with these, I also borrowed a copy of the Bible from the gaol. Tolstoy's writings are so good and simple that a man belonging to any religion can profit by them. Moreover, he tries to put into practice what he preaches, so that, by and large, they command greater confidence.

There is a forceful book by Carlyle on the French Revolution. I realized after reading it that it is not from the white nations that India can learn the way out of her present degradation. It is my belief that the French people have gained nothing of value through the Revolution. Mazzini also thought the same way. There is much difference of opinion on this subject. We cannot enter into a discussion on it here. I came across many instances of satyagraha even in this history.

The books in Gujarati, Hindi and Sanskrit which I read were *Veda-Shabda-Sangna,* sent by Swamiji, the *Upanishads* received from Bhatt Keshavram, the *Manusmriti* received form Mr. Motilal Diwan, the *Ramayana* printed in Phoenix, *Patanjal-Yoga-Darshan, Ahnika-Prakasha* prepared by Nathuramji, and *Sandhya-ni Gutika,* Given by Professor Parmanand, the *Gita* and the writings of the late worthy poet Raychand[1]. All of them gave me much food for thought. The *Upanishads* proved a great source of peace to me. One statement in them has made a deep impression on my mind; in substance, it means that everything one does must be done for the welfare of the soul. The thought is expressed in words of great beauty. There is much else in it worthy of attention.

But it was the writings of the poet Raychand which proved the most satisfying. So far as I can judge, they should appeal to all. His way of life was noble, like Tolstoy's. I memorized a portion of his writings and of the book on *Sandhya*. I would repeat them over and over again in my mind whenever I happened to wake up at night, and every morning I spent half an hour meditating on them. I would recite most of what I had memorized, and this kept me cheerful all the time. If ever I gave way to despair, I would smile with happiness again the

[1] Also known as Rajachandra; *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 28-12-1908

moment I went back in thought to what I had read, and would be filled with gratitude to God. On this subject, too, I have a great many thoughts which I should like to place before the readers. But this is not the occasion to do so. I shall only say this, that in these days good books partly make up for the absence of good men with whom we can cultivate contacts, and that, therefore, every Indian who wants to be happy in gaol must form the habit of reading good books.

STUDY OF TAMIL

No other Indians can equal the performance of the Tamils in this fight. It therefore occurred to me that I should read Tamil with close attention, if for no other reason than to tender sincere thanks to them at least mentally. Accordingly, the last one month was devoted mostly to the study of Tamil. The more I learn it, the better I appreciate the beauties of this language. It is a very fine and sweet language, and from its structure and from what I have read in it, I find that the Tamils have produced, and still produce, a large number of intelligent, thoughtful and wise men. Moreover, since India is going to be one country, some Indians outside Madras should also learn Tamil.

CONCLUSION

I wish that everyone who reads this account of experience should cultivate patriotism, if he does not have it, and learn satyagraha therefrom, and if he has it already, be more firm in it. I am growing more convinced every day that no one who does not know his religion can have true patriotism in him.

For the rest—

> The sky rings with the name of the Invisible,
> I sit rapt in the temple, my heart filled with gladness;
> Taking up an *asana*[1], they face immovable,
> I have pitched my tent in the abode of the Inscrutable.

Moreover—

> Take to the life of a fakir and yield not to despondency,
> Let the mind be always rapt with joy.

It is possible to practise renunciation while living in the world of men. And the last question is, how does one find *Khuda-Ishvar?*

The poet answers—

[1] Yogic posture for contemplation

When, smiling and playing my way through life,
I see [Him] revealed to me, a visible presence,
Then shall I consider my life to have attained its true end;
He who has seen Him even in a dream,
Will cease chasing the shadows in vain.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 5-6-1909

216. SPEECH AT GERMISTON[1]

[GERMISTON,
June 7, 1909]

Mr. Gandhi, who was well received, on rising, said that, although he had chosen passive resistance as his subject that evening, he did not wish to deal with the Indian question, except in so far as it might be necessary to illustrate any proposition. Passive resistance, the speaker proceeded, was a misnomer. But the expression had been accepted as it was popular and had been for a long time used by those who carried out in practice the idea denoted by the term. The idea was more completely and better expressed by the term "soul force". As such, it was as old as the human race. Active resistance was better expressd by the term "body force". Jesus Christ, Daniel and Socrates represented the purest form of passive resistance or soul force. All these teachers counted their bodies as nothing in comparison to their souls. Tolstoy was the best and brightest exponent of the doctrine. He not only expounded it, but lived according to it. In India, the doctrine was understood and commonly practised long before it came into vogue in Europe. It was easy to see that soul force was infinitely superior to body force. If people in order to secure redress of wrongs resorted to soul force, much of the present suffering would be avoided. In any case, the wielding of this force never caused suffering to others. So that, whenever it was misused, it only injured the users and not those against whom it was used. Like virtue, it was its own reward. There was no such thing as failure in the use of this kind of force. "Resist not evil" meant that evil was not to be repelled by evil but by good; in other words, physical force was to be opposed not by its like but by soul force. The same idea was expressed in Indian philosophy by the expression "freedom from injury to every living thing". The exercise of this doctrine involved physical suffering on the part of those who practised it. But it was a known fact that the sum of

[1] At the invitation of the Germiston Literary and Debating Society, Gandhiji spoke on "The Ethics of Passive Resistance" at the Council Chamber. Linton Jones, President of the Society, presided. The audience was representative of Germiston's leading citizens.The report appeared in *Indian Opinion* as. "From Our Own Reporter".

such suffering was greater rather than less in the world. That being so, all that was necessary for those who recognized the immeasurable power of soul force was to consciously and deliberately accept physical suffering as their lot, and, when this was done, the very suffering became a source of joy to the sufferer. It was quite plain that passive resistance, thus understood, was infinitely superior to physical force and that it required greater courage than the latter. No transition was, therefore, possible from passive resistance to active or physical resistance. The Colonists would, therefore, see that no exception could be taken to Indians making use of this force in order to obtain a redress of their grievances. Nor could such a wcapon, if used by the Natives, do the slightest harm. On the contrary, if the Natives could rise so high as to understand and utilize this force, there would probably be no native question left to be solved. The one condition of a successful use of this force was recognition of the existence of the soul as apart from the body, and its permanent and superior nature. And this recognition must amount to a living faith and not a mere intellectual grasp. The speaker illustrated his lecture with several modern illustrations.[1]

Indian Opinion, 12-6-1909

217. LETTER TO "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,
After *June 8, 1909*]

[THE EDITOR
THE TRANSVAAL LEADER
JOHANNESBURG]

SIR,

The Colonial Secretary has laid the Indian community under obli-gation, by returning a prompt and decisive reply to Mr. Munnik's charges against the British Indian community. The honourable Mr. Munnik says that Asiatic children about 12 year old, whose parents have never been in the country, have been entering the country and evading the law. If 59 Asiatics only have entered the

[1] At the conclusion of his address, Gandhiji answered questions put to him. A vote of thanks, moved by Mackay, the Town Clerk, was later passed with acclamation.

[2] Gandhiji wrote this with reference to an allegation made by G. G. Munnik in the Transvaal Parliament on June 8 that "double the number of Indians had entered [the Colony] during the last month than during any month…that their 'game' was to introduce children into the country whose parents had never been in this Colony." The Colonial Secretary replied: "…during this year 59 Asiatics have come into this country—nine *via* Natal and 50 *via* Mozambique". The letter was reproduced in *Indian Opinion,* 12-6-1909, under the title "Withdraw!".

Transvaal during the six months, and these are evidently all authorised entrants, it is evident that the libel uttered by Mr. Munnik against the whole community is groundless, and, unless the honourable gentlman has anything else to support the accusation, and unless it is placed before the public, it is in my opinion, due to the community that the honourable gentleman should withdraw the charges made by him.

I am etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Transvaal Leader, 12-6-1909

218. SOME SUGGESTIONS

Satyagraha will end some day, no matter when. But, meanwhile, we give below instances, without offering any argument, of the benefits the Indian community has already derived and the fruits it has tasted; every Indian should ponder over these:

(1) The Rhodesian law has been defeated.

(2) Lord Crewe has clearly stated that the [Rhodesian] Act has been disallowed because of the satyagraha campaign in the Transvaal.

(3) Lord Crewe has stated in the same communication that the Imperial Government did not feel happy in giving assent to the Transvaal Act.

(4) In the Blue-book recently issued, Lord Crewe has recommended that both demands of the Indians should be conceded.

(5) The Transvaal Government in its reply has not rejected the recommendation [outright], but has explicitly stated that the satyagraha campaign has for the most part collapsed and that, if Lord Crewe waited, the remaining Indians would also give in. (This is a clear indication that, if satyagraha had been continued by a large number of Indians, our demands would have been met long before this.)

(6) Many whites who knew nothing about Indians till now have not only come to know what they are, but have also been working for our cause.

Each of these instances will suggest a number of reflections. We

shall elaborate them some time later for the benefit of our readers. Meanwhile, we hope that many Indians will ponder over and derive fresh strength from them. It is clear, at any rate, that it depends on us whether or not we shall win. We fail, then, to understand why so many Indians have been disheartened.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-6-1909

219. INDIANS IN THE CAPE

Indians in the Cape have been slumbering. The Immigration Officer is wide awake. The immigration report of the Cape is worth reading and pondering over by every Indian in the Colony. Here we intend to emphasize only two points. Mr. Cousins (the Chief Officer) states that many Indians bring in others' children representing them as their own, and give wrong information about their ages. Under these circumstances, Mr. Cousins suggests that the law be so amended as to require every Indian to bring with him a (Government) certificate from India testifying to the boy's age and stating that the boy is his own son. The two facts are related to each other as cause and effect. It is because some Indians practise deception, as stated above, that Mr. Cousins has put forward a new suggestion. We are bound to suffer so long as we continue to resort to falsehood. It is always harmful to violate a law on the sly. Should we disapprove of any law, it would be to our advantage to violate it openly, if we have the courage to do so. We should know when to violate a law in this way. the Cape Indians need to act with great caution; first, to cast out the falsehood in us, should there be any, and, second, to represent to the Government without the slightest delay that Mr. Cousins' suggestion is improper. We shall give elsewhere the other facts mentioned in the report.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-6-1909

220. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

VISIT TO HOUTPOORT PRISONERS

Indian prisoners in Houtpoort Gaol, near Heidelberg, were visited by Mr. Gandhi, Mr. and Ms. Vyas and Mr. Shelat. All the prisoners were found to be in good health. It was also observed that, for some time past, the officers there have been behaving rather well.

Mr. Nanalal Shah is in this gaol. His being sentenced to six months' imprisonment, because he refrained from using his certificates, proves him to be a man of courage; likewise, his work and conduct in gaol have been excellent. He has endeared himself to everyone. He also gives to everyone portions from his own quota of food. All the prisoners released from the gaol testify to this. Mr. Manji Nathubhai, Mr. Khimchand Shah and Mr. Parbhu Kuber are unanimous in their praise of Mr. Nanalal Shah.

Though Mr. Bhayat is in gaol, prisoners continue to receive help from his store. Whenever a prisoner is released, a carriage is generally sent to receive him. I use the word "generally" because when Mr. Manji, Mr. Khimchand and Mr. Parbhu were released, no carriage was sent to receive them. Since Mr. Manji had been fasting and Mr. Khimchand was in poor health, they were put to considerable hardship. Moreover, as the telegram intimating their arrival in Johannesburg was not received in time, no one could go to the station to receive them. Such hardships need not frighten any satyagrahi. These too must be borne. Mistakes will always happen through oversight.

ASWAT'S GREATNESS

Mr. Aswat endured much suffering in the Diepkloof Gaol. He has lost about 30 pounds in weight. It seems he acted in perfect conformity with the spirit of satyagraha. He did not even so much as touch food other than what he got in gaol. He was a confirmed smoker, but he did not smoke even once during the three months [of his imprisonment]. Indifferent to his business, he has offered to go to gaol again. While I am writing about Mr. Aswat, it occurs to me that Mr. Thambi Naidoo has given up smoking, tea and coffee for ever, though, before he went to gaol, he could not do without any of these things even for an hour. He has, moreover, pledged himself not to

allow his moustache to grow so long as the struggle is on. So long as the community has such heroes among its members, the fight is bound to countinue and ultimate victory is assured.

THE MORAL

It has come to my knowledge that some of the satyagrahi prisoners have learnt to resort to underhand ways in gaol. Formerly they would not eat anything which was not openly available for all or which others could not get; now they do so. Those who were not used to chewing tobacco or smoking have now learnt to do so. Such prisoners should be ashamed of themselves, and ought to emulate the examples of Mr. Aswat and Mr. Naidoo. The more faithfully the community observes the spirit of satya-graha, the earlier will come the end, and the more indifferent it grows, the more will satyagraha be prolonged. The reasoning is simple enough.

DEPORTATION

Prompt steps are being taken about deportations to India. Mr. Isaac has been sent to Delagoa Bay in connection with that. I hope Delagoa Bay Indians will help him. At the same time, correspondence is also going on with the Government. Mr. Narottam Kalidas, who was sentenced to deportation, has been released and is enjoying himself in Johannesburg. However, there is no reason why we should be afraid even of deportation. Men with courage, even if deported, can continue the fight in the home-country as well. Telegrams have been sent to India to have proper arrangements made for those who, though they are satya-grahis, have nevertheless been deported or may be deported in future. Be-sides, Mr. Somabhai Patel, who was only recently released and has gone to India on some work, has decided to do his best about this in Bombay.

INDIAN WASHERMEN IN PRETORIA

The Pretoria Town Council has passed the following resolutions on the recommendation of its Health Committee:

(1) That the resolution of August 1907, which denied the use of the Municipal wash-houses to Indian laundrymen and required them to provide a proper water supply and washing accommodation at their own laundries, be rescinded.

(2) That the resolution of May 1908, to the effect that all

laundrymen be excluded from the Municipal wash-houses, be rescinded.

(3) That in future all Coloured persons, irrespective of nationality, be permitted to use the Municipal wash-houses.

(4) That instructions be issued to the caretakers of the wash-houses to exercise the strictest supervision to prevent waste of water.

RELEASED BECAUSE OF ILLNESS

Information has been received that Mr. Mahomed Mamuji Patel, of Mr. Bhayat's store, who was in Volksrust Gaol, has been released by the Government on account of ill-health.

MAHOMED AHMED BHABHA

Mr. Mahomed Ahmed Bhabha of Standerton, who was in the Hout-poort Gaol, was released on Saturday last. Mr. Bhayat's carriage was sent to fetch him, and he was entertained as a guest at Mr. Bhayat's. I hope Mr. Bhabha will be ready to court arrest again.

BHAYAT

He will be released on the day on which this issue is published, that is, June 12. It is believed that, after his release, other Indians of Heidelberg will come forward to court arrest.

TAILORS, KANBIS, ETC.

Some tailors, Kanbis[1] and others have been arrested. They do not all appear to be satyagrahis. Some of them have applied [for registration] under the new Act. It also appears that many of them deserve to be deported. If such Indians resort to satyagraha, they and the community will both stand to gain. By doing so, they may even escape deportation. Many Indians can be in gaol, if only they want to. Mr. Aswat's store offers one Indian as sacrifice every day. Many Indians can manage to be in gaol by offering themselves for the honour of being in charge of the store. So far, it is mostly the Tamil heroes who have done so. This is a matter of shame to other Indians. Under these circumstances, if those tailors, Kanbis and other Indians who are threatened elect to go to gaol, they will accomplish two things at a time. In doing this, however, it should be remembered that the

[1] A caste in Gujarat, consisting mostly of peasant farmers

Indians concerned should be men who are entitled to live in the Transvaal. I hope that readers will act upon these suggestions.

IMAM SAHEB

Imam Abdool Kadir Bawazeer, who is serving a third term of imprisonment for the community, will be released on the 15th. I hope that every Indian who knows his status, his calling as a priest, and his services, will be at the gaol on that day to do him honour.

TO BE RELEASED ON THURSDAY

Messrs E. S. Coovadia, M. P. Fancy, Ahmed Halim, Razak Nurbhai, Suleman Casmat, Vallabhram Chhanabhai, Narayansami Naidoo and Nayanah Francis will be released on Thursday next. Arrangements are being made to give them a fitting welcome. I hope that everyone will be present at the gaol on Thursday morning to receive them.

BRITISH INDIAN CONCILIATION COMMITTEE

A meeting of this Committee was held on Sunday last in the Hamidia Islamic Society's hall. Many Indians were present. From Standerton there was Mr. Hajee Ismail Amod, from Pretoria Mr. Khamisa, from Zeerust Mr. Hajee Cassim and from Krugersdorp Mr. Mahomed Kajee. Among the gentlemen from Johannesburg, there were Mr. Abdool Ganie, Mr. Halim Mahomed[1], Mr. George Godfrey, Mr. Dadabhai, Mr. Shahboodeen and others. The Committee has been set up to help the cause of the satyagrahis. Those who have found themselves unable to participate in the gaol-going and other programmes [of the satyagraha campaign] can join this Committee. Mr. Hajee Habib is the Chairman. Mr. George Godfrey is its Honorary Secretary. Mr. Gandhi attended the meeting by special invitation. Mr. Hajee Habib dealt with a great many points in his introductory remarks. He said that in regard to the struggle, Mr. Gandhi had acted hastily at the time of the settlement[2]. Had he not done so and had insisted on having everything in writing from General Smuts, the community would not have had to go through so much suffering. However, [he said] they were concerned at present with bringing about the end of the struggle itself. It was the duty of every Indian to help secure the release of their

[1] The original has "Maal", which appears to be a misprint.

[2] The reference is to the compromise arrived at between Transvaal Government and Asiatic communities in January 1908: *vide* "Interview to the Trransvaal Leader", 30-1-1908.

brethren who had courted imprisonment. It was not proper to call those who refused to go to gaol blacklegs. They must all live in harmony with one another. The Committee [he continued] would make a petition to General Smuts. Act No. 36 had failed to provide for several things. Many persons were deprived of their rights. Minors were subjected to harassment. One was not allowed to enter the Transvaal first and then make the application.[1] Finger-impressions were demanded from everyone. All these grievances [he said] called for redress. Real satyagraha, it might be claimed, was offered by Mir Alam alone. He declined even to show his permit and had been deported for that. *Indian Opinion* very often published tendentious articles and reports which, he thought, was not quite proper. A man like Mr. Khanderia used to encourage others to go to gaol, but he himself got cold feet when it was his turn to go to gaol, and paid the fine; yet, there was no comment on him in *Indian Opinion*, which was obviously unfair. He also believed that it was necessary to send a deputation to Europe.

The resolution to set up a Committee was proposed by Mr. Hajee Ojer Ally. Introducing the resolution, he said that the meeting was being held because Mr. Gandhi had suggested that those who had not gone to gaol or did not wish to, could also help the community. The resolution was supported by Mr. Halim Mahomed and passed unanimously. The second resolution was proposed by Mr. Essop Cachalia; it called for a petition to be made to the Colonial Secretary to press for the acceptance of the satyagrahis' demands. Moving it, he said that he had burnt his certificate and had not taken out a duplicate, so that he was, he thought, a full-fledged satyagrahi. However, he was introducing the resolution with the permission of the Chairman. If the demands were not accepted, all Indians would again be prepared to court imprisonment.

The resolution was supported by Mr. Abdool Ganie. Mr. Hajee Ojer Ally and Mr. Abdool Ganie pointed out that, if the demands were not accepted by the Government, the question of people not going to gaol would not arise. Their duty was to extend as much support as possible to those who went to gaol. Mr. Habib Motan then made a long speech. He pointed out several mistakes which [he believed] Mr.

[1] The Asiatics Registration Amendment Act of 1908 provided that Indians who were outside the Transvaal at the time the Act came into effect, but claimed the right of entry, could apply from any part in South Africa where they were resident on September 21, 1908.

Gandhi had made and asked [him] some questions. He expressed his happiness at the fact that Hindus and Muslims had sat at the same table on the occasion of the tea-party at Mr. Cachalia's in honour of Mr. Omarji Sale, and wished that the same thing would also happen in india. Mr. Ismail Amod of Standerton then made a short speech. He was followed by Mr. Khamisa and Mr. Ismail Patel.

Mr. George Godfrey made a statement in English. Mr. Gandhi gave a brief reply and said that, if the Committee worked sincerely and with despatch and energy, it would undoubtedly be of great help to the cause of satyagraha.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-6-1909

221. TRIAL OF NAIDOO AND OTHERS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
June 16, 1909]

Afterwards,[2] in open Court, Mr. Thambi Naidoo was charged under Section 9 of the Regulations, Mr. Gandhi appearing on his behalf. He pleaded guilty, and was sentenced in the usual manner to imprisonment with hard labour for three months, in default of paying the fine of £50. Messrs N. A. Cama and G. P. Vyas were afterwards brought before the Court, and charged similarly, On their behalf, Mr. Gandhi pointed out that his clients proposed to plead guilty but applied for a remand for 14 days, owing to the fact that each of the prisoners was responsible for the wellbeing of a near relative who was in a dangerously ill condition. The prosecution raised no objection, and a remand was granted.

Meanwhile, outside the Court, Messrs A. M. Cachalia, Chairman of the British Indian Association, and V. A. Chettiar, Chairman of the Tamil Benefit Society, had been arrested on similar charge. Mr. Cachalia complained of rough treatment after his arrest, both by the police officer taking him in charge and in the courtyard.

Mr. Gandhi strongly protested against this treatment, pointing out that it surely could not be any part of the punishment meted out to passive resisters.

[1] Thambi Naidoo, G. P. Vyas, N. A. Cama and U. M. Shelat were arrested on June 15. The first three were charged with refusing to produce their registration certificates and to give their signatures and thumb-impressions. Shelat was charged under Section 7 of Act 36 of 1908 for being in the Colony without a registration certificate. This report appeared under the title: "Foul Play, Delegates Arrested and Sentenced", as "Special to *Indian Opinion*".

[2] Earlier in the Magistrate's private office, on his admitting the offence and refusing to comply with the law, Shelat was ordered to leave the Colony.

Mr. Schuurman, the Magistrate, said that this was really a matter for the Commissioner of Police and not for himself to deal with, as he was able only to deal with the specific charge before him.

Mr. W. J. MacIntyre, by permission of the Court, stated that, as an officer of the Court, he felt it his duty to confirm the statements that had been made, as he had been an eye-witness to them. He thought that it was a great shame that such treatment should be used to inoffensive men. He had himself frequently seen similar treatment given to Indian passive resisters, even in the presence of the Magistrate, and respectfully protested against it.

The Magistrate said that he had never noticed such treatment himself. Had he done so, he would never have allowed it. He thought, however, that this was not a matter for him to deal with.

The prisoners pleading guilty were sentenced to three months' imprisonment with hard labour.

Mr. Gandhi, on behalf of Mr. Chettiar, explained that his client was a man of about 50 year of age, and suffering from diabetes.

Indian Opinion, 19-6-1909

222. SPEECH AT MASS MEETING[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
June 16, 1909]

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES, GENTLEMEN AND FRIENDS,

We have met here this afternoon under somewhat exceptional circumstances, but I cannot say that these circumstances were unexpected. For some weeks the chief members of the Indian community have been discussing among themselves the advisability of sending a deputation to England, in view of the approaching visit to England of Generals Botha and Smuts in connection with unification[2]. The European Committee that has been formed in the Transvaal, in order to sympathise with us and to help us in every legitimate way, has also advised that such a deputation should proceed to England. As

[1] A mass meeting of about 1,500 to 2,000 British Indians was held in the rounds of the Hamidia Mosque, Fordsburg, on June 16, to appoint delegates to go to England and to India to explain the present state of affairs in the Transvaal. Delegates from all over the Transvaal were present. E. S. Coovadia, Acting Chairman of the British Indian Asso-ciation, presided and made a few introductory remarks in Gujarati. Gandhiji spoke next.

[2] The reference is to the proposed Union of the four Colonies in South Africa.

you know, a large Committee meeting[1] was held last Sunday, and after much debate a resolution was come to by a large majority that a passive resistance deputation should proceed to London Next Monday. That Committee nominated Mr. Cachalia, the Chairman of the British Indian Association, Mr. Chettiar, representing the Tamil section and Chairman of the Tamil Benefit Society, Mr. Hajee Habib who, although he has not been able to see eye to eye with us up to now, declared himself a passive resister, was also nominated , and myself. There was also a submission made to the meeting that, simultaneously with the English deputation, a deputa-tion should proceed to India, in order that the true situation might be placed before the Indian public, and other names were submitted. Among them were the names of Mr. Polak, the Assistant Honorary Secretary of the British Indian Association, Mr. N. Gopal Naidoo, Mr. N. A. Cama, and a fourth name was not given then, but it will be submitted at this meeting, and that is, Mr. Coovadia. To-day we find that the Government have laid their hand upon Mr. Cachalia, and Mr. Cachalia is locked up in the Johannesburg Gaol. He has been sentenced to three months' impri-sonment with hard labour unless he paid a fine of £50. Mr. Cachalia is now in gaol in connection with this struggle for the fourth time. Mr. Chettiar also has been arrested, and he is undergoing imprisonment for three months. The brave Thambi Naidoo is also in gaol. Mr. Vyas was arrested yesterday. He has been released on bail because he has to meet perhaps a dying brother who is dangerously ill. His case is adjourned for a fortnight. Mr. Nadeshir Cama, who was to have proceeded to India if duly elected by this meeting, has also been arrested, and his case has been adjourned for similar reasons. Our worthy Chairman whose name is included in the Indian deputation, was arrested at 2 o'clock. His case has been remanded in order to enable him to wind up his business, but him also three months imprisonment stares in the face, and Omarji Sale, the Vice-Chairman of the British Indian Association, as also Mr. Dildar Khan has been arrested and they are released on bail, but them also the same punishment awaits. Such are the circumstances under which we have ass-embled here . I do not know what displeasure I have incurred that the Government have not arrested me yet, but I do declare that if this meeting chooses to pass the resolution with reference to the English deputation, the Government will find me

[1] For minutes of this meeting held on June 13, *vide* Appendix XIII.

gone on Monday next, unless they choose to extend [me] the hospitality in the Transvaal as they have done before now. My friends, the men who have gone to gaol to-day have left fami-lies behind them. I had the misfortune to see a weeping wife last evening but the last word that she told me was, "Whether I weep or do not weep, you will see that my husband will do his duty, and suffer imprisonment for the fifth time." It only remains for this meeting to say what the remaining Indians are capable of doing. I am fully aware that all the members of the community are not capable of undergoing the same measure of suf-fering, but, if you cannot do that, you can certainly help those who have now gone to gaol and can help the cause by showing your sympathy in many other respects, and I do hope that this meeting will not fail in its duty.

Indian Opinion, 19-6-1909

223. RESOLUTIONS AT MASS MEETING[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
June 16, 1909]

[RESOLUTION 1:] This mass meeting of Transvaal British Indians hereby confirms the appointment, made by the Committee of the British Indian Association of the Transvaal, of Messrs A. M. Cachalia, Hajee Habib, V. A. Chettiar, and M. K. Gandhi, as a deputation to proceed to England and place before the authorities and the British public the true situation with regard to the present Asiatic struggle and the British Indian view of the coming union of South Africa.

[RESOLUTION 2:] This mass meeting of British Indians hereby elects Messrs N. A. Cama, N. Gopal Naidoo, E. S. Coovadia, and H. S. L. Polak, as a deputation to proceed to India, and to place before the authorities and the Indian public the true situation with regard to the present Asiatic struggle in the Transvaal.

[RESOLUTION 3:] This meeting respectfully protests against the sudden and unwarranted arrest of Messrs Cachalia, Coovadia, Cama, and Chettiar who were, as the Government well knew, appointed or to

[1] The resolutions, moved by Imam Abdool Cadir Bawazeer, Chairman, Hamidia Islamic Society and seconded by Dildar Khan, were presumably drafted by Gandhiji. They were put to vote and passed, with six dissentients, their objection being mainly that the deputation was not representative of the large section of the community which comprised people who were not passive resisters, and that Polak, a European, should not be included.

be appointed as delegates in the deputation mentioned in the foregoing resolutions, and calls upon the Government to release them in order to fulfil their mission under approved security as to their return, after completion of their mission, to undergo the sentence passed upon them by the Court.

Indian Opinion, 19-6-1909

224. LETTER TO "THE STAR"[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
June 18, 1909

TO
THE EDITOR
THE STAR
JOHANNESBURG

SIR,

You have always generously opened your columns to a discussion of public questions, whether your views coincided with those of your correspondents or not. I know you will extend that generosity to those who are engaged in the Asiatic struggle, until,in the fulness of time, it is over, but I trust that you will see your way to give your opinion of the latest phase of it.

The Chairman of the British Indian mass meeting[2] of Wednesday telegraphed the purport of the resolutions passed at that meeting to the Honourable the Colonial Secretary, requesting suspension of the sentences passed upon and the abjourned cases of those who have been elected as delegates composing the English and Indian deputations. The following is the Colonial Secretary's reply:

> With reference to your telegram this morning, the Colonial Secretary desires me to state that when instructions were given for the arrest of the persons you name, for non-compliance with the registration provisions of the law, nothing was known of the likelihood of their being selected as delegates. While anxious not to interfere in any way with the freedom of action of members of the deputation,he regrets it is impossible for him to comply with your request and interfere with the course of the law.

[1] This was reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 26--6-1909 under the title: "Imprisonment of the Delegates: Government Refuses to Release Them".

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting", 16-6-1909 and also the preceding item.

The public do not know that the Government have dotted the Colony with their spies, who watch the movements of those who are actively engaged in the struggle. They have sent to them the reports of every meeting, public or private, that is held by British Indians. The names of the members who were elected last Wednesday have been before the Government for some time. The names of the delegates were finally fixed at a committee meeting last Sunday, which was attended by nearly three hundred Indians. The Press came to know of this appointment, and an inquiry was made at the offices of the Association on Monday. The names were published on Tuesday in the local Press. The four delegates,Messrs Cachalia, Coovadia, Cama and Chettiar were arrested on Wednesday. It is impossible therefore to believe that the Government knew nothing as to the selection of these delegates. The text of the Colonial Secretary's telegram, in the light of the facts given above, is quite clear. When he says "nothing was known of the likelihood of their being selected as delegates", he simply means that the mass meeting had not yet passed them, and he did not know whether it would confirm the nomination of the committee referred to above. One is justified in concluding that the Government did know that those names were to be submitted to the mass meeting, and that the nomination of three hundred Indians was not likely to be overridden by the mass meeting. Why did not the Government stop proceedings, or wait until the decision of the mass meeting was known? Every Indian believes that the Government intended that, at the time of discussing the South African Draft Act in London, there should be no Indian deputation; that they, by striking terror, into the hearts of British Indians, wished to make the mass meeting a fiasco, and that they have left free the remaining members of the deputation only because they got frightened of themselves. Not only have they arrested four of the Indian delegates out of seven, but they have also picked out some of the best workers and the staunchest men among the Indian community, making a total of seventeen men. Some of these have passed through the gaols of the Colony more than four times, are married, and have left behind them weeping wives and children. The refusal to suspend the sentences or the cases of the delegates is as heartless as the proceedings which were taken with such suddenness and in violation of the ordinary rules of fair play and decency.

My countrymen consider that Sir George Farrar, Sir Percy Fitzpatrick and other members of the Progressive Party are just as

responsible for the savage action as Generals Botha and Smuts. They, however, act in the name of the electors. I ask them, and I ask you, as representing the Press, and also as an elector,whether you and they, who are about to receive a liberal Constitution, will use the power which will be shortly given to you and to them in prosecuting men who are fellow-subjects with you and them, but who happen to wear a brown skin. Apart from the merits of the case, is it too much for the public to demand from the Government a release of the chosen leaders of the Indian people under the security offered?

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Star, 19-6-1909

225. DEPUTATION

The decision of the Transvaal Indians to send a deputation is a very important move. The significant thing is that it has been decided so send a deputation consisting of satyagrahis. It appears somewhat incongruous that those who have been defying laws should go to England to seek redress. Hence, one can understand why there was a difference of opinion on this point.

This deputation cannot be defended as being consistent with the principles of satyagraha. Satyagrahis must only suffer. They should depend on God alone. A satyagrahi's success consists in the very fact of his offering satyagraha. But all satyagrahis do not have the same spirit and the same trust in God. Moreover, many Indians have not been able to continue satyagraha. They are nonetheless with the satyagrahis. They want our struggle to come to an early conclusion. So long as Mr. Dawad Mahomed, Mr. Rustomjee and others are in gaol, they cannot rest in peace. The satyagrahis who have been released must also have something to do. The Government will not re-arrest them immediately. What, then, should they do? Thus considered, the deputation idea appears justified.

Sending deputations to both countries[1] cannot but bring some benefit. Our struggle is not properly understood either in England or in India. If it can be properly explained in both the countries, that by itself will surely mean much. It will lead to increased help from both

[1] England and India

countries, and to that extent the duration of the struggle may be shortened.

Moreover, since this movement is cited as a model, it is our duty to see that it is fully understood in India. From this point of view also, the idea of a deputation appears to be justified.

The deputation to India will prove immensely helpful to that going to England. It will compel even Lord Crewe to think, and force Lord Morley to realize his duty.

It is our view that the right persons have been elected as members of the deputation. It was a great thing that Mr. Hajee Habib declared himself ready to join satyagraha. Some members of the community had lost courage because of his having withdrawn from the struggle. Now that he has decided to throw in his weight, that may revive the strength of the other Indians too. Be that as it may, it was a matter of regret for many Indians that Mr. Hajee Habib, who had served the community over many years, had shown himself weak. Now that he is in full form again, the community feels happy. We pray to God to give him sufficient strength to carry on to the end, and to welcome imprisonment cheerfully should the need arise. About Mr. Cachalia, who is a member of the deputation, there is no need at all to say anything. The fact that there are Tamil members on both the deputations does honour to that community. The Tamils' performance has been so very good that no deputation can proceed unless they are represented on it.

The community is not unaware of the valuable services of Mr. Cama. Much work, indeed, awaits him in India, and there is no doubt that he will acquit himself well. It reflects credit on the community that it has thought of sending Mr. Polak to India. His services have not yet been fully appreciated by it. They will be—in due time. Mr. Polak's visit to India will open India's eyes somewhat. By sending him we can also prove that the Coloureds and the whites can work together and that, in the present circumstances, India can make better progress with the help of whites. One should know how to utilize such help.

After saying this about the deputation, we must ask the community not to build high hopes on it. It is on pure satyagraha that we should really depend. The sending of the deputation does not imply the end of satyagraha. It must continue. We hope that by the time the deputation reaches [its destination], quite a number of

Indians will have gone to gaol. The deputation's task is difficult and, should it return empty-handed, we must find comfort in the thought that the effort had been worth making.

The deputation will have some weight only if the community discharges its duty during the time that it is away. Meetings must be held all over South Africa to express support. The resolutions [passed in these meetings] should be forwarded directly to Lord Crewe.

Since this article was written, the Government has arrested some prominent Indian leaders, among them members of the deputation. Consequently, it appears likely that the struggle will be only intensified right here.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-6-1909

226. LETTER TO TRANSVAAL INDIANS

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before *June 21, 1909*][1]

TO
ALL TRANSVAAL INDIANS

I am also going as a member of the deputation to England. Two of the four delegates have already been arrested, and are now installed in gaol. Other Indians, too, who have suffered many a wound, have been arrested again. I do not at all like going to England in these circumstances. However, it is the opinion of all our European friends that I should go; the community desires it; the Committee in England is of the same opinion. I am therefore going along with Mr. Hajee Habib. But there is no guarantee that by going to England we shall succeed in getting our demands accepted—demands whose rejection has led already to hundreds of Indians going to gaol. It may also happen that Lord Crewe will refuse to receive the deputation, saying that he cannot meet men who have been defying the law. Those who are sending the deputation must realize that in sending a deputation, which will be in England at a time when all statesmen of South Africa will have assembled there, so that we may have no regrets later, we are

[1] This and the following three items were evidently written on or before June 21 when, along with Hajee Habib, Gandhiji left for Cape Town *an roule* to England on deputation.

only making an experiment. It will be wrong to build any hopes on it.

There is only one unfailing remedy—going to gaol. Even if a few Indians keep on going to gaol from time to time, we are bound to get in the end what we want. We shall get it even if there should be only one such Indian to fight to the last.

This is a war between truth and falsehood. Since truth is on the side of the Indian community, it must win[1]. It is the duty of every Indian to assist the deputation. There are some Indians who are bent upon creating dissension in the community. The Government has its spies among Indians. Efforts are continually made to mislead the Indian community through them. These efforts will be intensified during the visit of the deputation to England. It is the duty of every Indian to counteract all these. Those who are not strong enough for the hardships of gaol must keep at home. If one is approached for one's signature on any document, it should not be given without thorough inquiry.

It is necessary that meetings are held at every place to extend support to the deputation. Such meetings should not be confined to the Transvaal, but must be held all over South Africa. It should also be remembered that this deputation is not going on behalf of the satyagrahis. They put their faith in nothing but the truth. For them following truth is itself a victory. The deputation is going rather out of regard for the sentiments of those who have not been able to hold out till the last and, if possible, with a view to lightening the burden on the satyagrahis. The latter, therefore, need not pay any attention to the deputation. When the force of their truth grows stronger than the falsehood of the Transvaal Government, their trials will come to an end as a matter of course. Remembering this, the satyagrahi must continue to seek opportunities for imprisonment.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 26-6-1909

227. LATE MRS. GOOLBAI

[Before *June 21, 1909*]

The latest mail from India reports the sad news of the passing away at Versova[2] of Mrs.Goolbai, wife fo India's Grand Old Man, Dadabhai Naoroji, at the age of eighty. Indians all over the world

[1] The word *janma* (birth) in the original seems to be a misprint for *jays* (victory).
[2] Near Bombay

cannot but deeply sympathize with the revered old man in the loss of his life-long partner and friend. May the soul of the departed rest in peace. We pray to God to give courage and fortitude to Dadabhai, who is indeed looked upon as the *Dada*[1] of India's millions, to enable him to bear in his old age the burden of this latest loss.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-6-1909

228. JOHANNESBURG LETTER

[Before *June 21, 1909*]

BRITISH INDIAN CONCILIATION COMMITTEE

A deputation of this Committee, consisting of Messrs Abdool Ganie, Hajee Ojer Ally, Habib Motan, S. V. Thomas, Ally Khamisa, Jusab Ebrahim Gardi and George Godfrey, waited on General Smuts at 12 o'clock on Saturday. General Smuts gave nearly half an hour to the Committee. It submitted the following demands:

> That the obnoxious Act be repealed, that the educated [Indians] be granted the same rights of immigration as the whites, that, in case there are more partners than one [in a firm], all the partners should not be required to be present when applying for a licence, that educated persons should not be required to give thumb-impressions, that applications for registration should be permitted from within the Transvaal, that temporary permits should be issued freely, that those who do not hold permits should not be required to adduce proof of three years' domicile, that there should be provision for an appeal to the Supreme Court against the decision of a magistrate, etc.[2]

I understand that General Smuts has given the following reply to these demands:

> The obnoxious Act will not be repealed, though it will not be enforced; in deserving cases permission will be given to educated men to enter, as in the case of Mr. James Godfrey, but the law will not be amended; if it is true that there is delay in

[1] Literally, grandfather

[2] These demands were embodied in a petition presented to the Colonial Secretary on June 19.

issuing permits, permission [to enter] will be conveyed by telegram; all the partners of a firm will not be required to attend, and so on.

A written reply has been promised.[1] There will be no modification of the provision regarding three years' residence, since, as General Smuts claims, Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Quinn had agreed to its introduction.

If this is the whole of the reply, I must say that it takes us nowhere. This is only a repetition of what happened in 1907. General Smuts has refused to make any concessions on essential points, and offered tri-vial ones which it did not require a deputation to secure. It will hardly be necessary even to amend the Regulations in order to effect the changes [he has offered to make].

The Conciliation Committee was set up only with one object, namely, to secure the release of the Indian prisoners still serving their terms of imprisonment. This can be brought about only through the repeal of the obnoxious Act. That General Smuts has declined to consider. Conciliation means peace. Since this has not been secured, I for one would advise that the Committee be dissolved. It has become super-fluous, as it has no more work to do. Those who are anxious to hasten the end of the struggle but cannot bring themselves to court arrest should patiently help those who are in gaol. They can do this by contributing to funds and extending their support by holding meetings. Those who have joined the Committee in the hope of doing some good to the community should be careful that they do not, on the contrary, harm it.

Many persons seem to think that the provision regarding three years [domicile] introduced in the new law [of 1908] makes the position much worse than it was under the obnoxious Act [of 1907]. This is a misapprehension. Under the latter, those who held permits were alone eligible for registration. Whether or not others should be registered was entirely within the discretion of the Registrar. Under the new law, the right granted to those with three years' domicile is an additional provision. Why it should be three years and not two and why there should be any time-limit at all are separate questions. The

[1] This was received on June 23. In its acknowledgment of June 25, the Committee regretted "that the Hon'ble Colonial Secretary has not seen his way clear to grant any relief on the grievances…" The Committee forwarded to the Colonial Office resolutions to similar effect adopted at a meeting on June 24. The correspondence was published in *Indian Opinion*, 3-7-1909.

point was included in the Association's petition.[1] But the point to be noted is that, under the obnoxious Act, the rights of pre-war residents of the Transvaal were liquidated entirely, while the new law recognizes the rights of those with three years' domicile. Of course, we must ask for as many more rights as possible. But such rights cannot be secured as long as the basic demand has not been conceded. If our two demands are accepted, it will be easy to secure the rest. It should also be remembered that, if the obnoxious Act did in fact recognize the rights of Indians with pre-war residence, that Act is still on the Statute-book. Why is it that such Indians are not able to come in under that Act? If it is true that their rights are implied in that Act, we can as well fight to avail ourselves of them as long as the Act is in force. But anyone who looks into the Act will see that it recognizes no such rights.

Personally, I would advise those who are out to secure miscellaneous concessions to remember that, if the trunk is cut off, the branches will wither away as a matter of course, and hence they should apply themselves to the task of felling the trunk.

ARRESTS

I think the community's fortunes are taking a turn for the better. It is a matter for congratulation that gaols are being filled just when the deputation is about to proceed. Other Tamils, listed below, were arrested on Thursday:

Messrs N. K. Peter, Rome John, Moses Anthony, David Anthony, Gabriel Anthony, Peter Anthony, Harry Tamabrahm, Edward Varmale, S. Chetty, Chhana, Bhikha Kasan, Veerdoo, J. M. S. Cook, Raja Francis, K. Subia Naidoo, Pana Padiachy, Perumal Naidoo, B. Krishnasamy Naidoo, V. Mathurasamy Padiachy, V. N. Peter, Sami Nathan, Sahala Padiachy, V. Naidoo, P. Chetty, M. P. Padiachy, V. Mootia Naidoo, N Gopal, R. K. Padiachy, N. Chetty, S. Chetty, G. Padiachy, S. P. Naidoo and Appu Chetty.

The list includes Mr. Gopal also. On Friday, forty-one more were arrested, all of them Tamils. When twenty-one were arrested, the remain-ing Tamils informed the police that they too would welcome arrest. There are now hardly and Tamils left in the Pretoria Location. At the trial, it was suggested that the cases might be adjourned. In agreeing to the adjournment, the Public Prosecutor demanded bail

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Secretary of State of Colonies", 9-9-1908

amounts to be fixed, in reply to which Major Dixon [the Magistrate] remarked that there was no question of bail in the case of satyagrahis, for the Government itself wanted them to run away. This shows that wherever Indians are arrested in numbers, it is the Government that is likely to grow weary of the business.

GOVERNMENT LIE

In accordance with the resolution passed at the mass meeting on Wednesday, a telegram[1] was sent to the Government in the name of the Chairman asking it to release the members of the deputation who had been arrested, so that they might be able to join the deputation, and stat-ing that the community was prepared to stand security for their return. General Smuts immediately replied to the telegram, saying that, when instructions were given for their arrest, nothing was known of the like-lihood of their being selected as delegates. This is absolute falsehood. The Government is always posted with full information about saty-agrahis' movements and Indian meetings. It is obviously the intention of the Government to make it impossible for the deputation to leave. If Mr. Gandhi has not been arrested, it is only out of fear. And Mr. Hajee Habib has been spared because he has joined satyagraha only recently.

However, when the party that is in the wrong tries to harass the one that is in the right, it only succeeds in serving the interests of the latter. Everyone says that General Smuts has made a big mistake in arresting members of the deputation. The community has refused to elect alter-native members. Therefore, from our point of view, the imprisonment of those who have been elected is as good as their joining the deputation. Their places [as members of the deputation] will not be filled by any other Indians, but will remain vacant instead. I rather wish that Mr. Gandhi too were arrested. That would have straightaway exposed the intentions of the Government.

[1] This is not available. According to *India*, 25-6-1909, however, Reuter's telegram of June 19 from Johannesburg stated that "Mr. Gandhi has appealed to Mr. Smuts for the release of three members of the Indian deputation to India and England…on condition that they should serve their sentences when they return. The Colonial Secretary has replied that he was unaware at the time the men were arrested that they were members of the deputation. he could not, however, interfere with the law, and consequently refused the application." *Vide* also "Letter to *The Star*",18-6-1909

AID TO PRISONERS

The families of some of the Tamils who have been arrested are left without any means of maintenance. Arrangements have been made for such families. This burden should be borne by the Pretoria businessmen, and I hope that it will not fall on the Association. More than £12 have been spent in providing maintenance to the families of the Tamils who went to gaol on the last occasion, and the expenditure had to be borne by the Association. Such expenses continue to be incurred from time to time, and, therefore, everyone who can afford should come forward with financial assistance.

While on this subject, I remember that the Rev. Mr. Howard gave one pound to the Association, though he is a poor man. An Indian youth went to the Association's office last week and offered £ 3. It was with great difficulty that he could be made to give his name, and that, too, he did on condition that it should not be published. Hence, I do not give the young man's name. Such examples deserve to be emulated.

SHELAT'S CASE

Mr. Shelat's arrest has already been reported.[1] His case was heard in the Magistrate's chambers. At first, the Magistrate signed a blank warrant for his deportation. In other words, it was not specified in the warrant at what point he was to be deported. Subsequently, Mr. Gandhi approached the Magistrate and submitted to him that he had no authority to put his signature on a blank warrant for deportation. It was then ordered that Mr. Shelat be put across the Natal border. Afterwards, he was taken to Pretoria. There, Mr. Chamney tried to persuade him to apply for registration. Mr. Shelat gave a blunt refusal and displayed great courage.

JAMES GODFREY

I have referred above to the dispatch of a permit to Mr. James Godfrey. I am sorry that, while the struggle was in full swing, he applied for a permit and had it sent to him and that he proposes to submit to the Act. I hope that he will do nothing of the kind.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-6-1909

[1] *Vide* "Trial of Naidoo and Others", 16-6-1909.

229. LETTER TO HABIB MOTAN

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before *June 21, 1909*]

DEAR MR. HABIB MOTAN,

Here is my reply to your letter dated 17th June:[1]

I do not know exactly what the demands of the Muslim League are, for I was in gaol at the time, and I have not yet acquainted myself with what happened during my imprisonment. I think it reasonable that a Muslim should be appointed to the Viceroy's Council. If Lord Morley has ordered such an appointment, I think he is justified. I make no distinction between Hindus and Muslims. To me both are sons of Mother India. My personal view is that, since numerically Hindus are in a great majority, and are, as they themselves believe, better-placed education-ally, they should cheerfully concede to their Muslim brethren the utmost they can. As a satyagrahi, I am emphatically of the view that the Hindus should give to the Muslims whatever they ask for, and willingly accept whatever sacrifice this may involve. Unity will be brought about only through such mutual generosity. If Hindus and Muslims observe, in their dealings with one another, the same principles that govern the relations of blood-brothers, there will be unbroken harmony [between the two communities], and then alone will India prosper.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-6-1909

[1] In Habib Motan's letter, the following questions were raised: Were the demands put forward by the Muslim League deputation which waited on Lord Morley in London reasonable? Was the demand for the inclusion of a Muslim in the Viceroys' Council justi-fied and what was Gandhiji's reaction to Lord Morley's decision to concede it? Should a Hindu or a Muslim be appointed? How could Hindu-Muslim unity be achieved?

230. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
June 21, 1909

MY DEAR MANILAL,

I have no time to write to you in Gujarati to-day. I enclose Mr. Dada Osman's account. You should read it and forward your reply. Let mother also see it. Please remember that everything that you get from the East Indian Trading Co., adds to the debt. You should send your reply, not directly to me in England, but to Miss Schlesin[1], who will forward it to me, if I leave to-day. With reference to Purshottamdas, I hope that you will implicitly obey him, and remove from your mind the impression that you cannot learn there. You should do the best you can.

Yours sincerely,
MOHANDAS

From the typewritten original signed by Gandhiji: C. W. 83 Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

231. LETTER TO D. E. WACHHA[2]

June 23, 1909

DEAR MR. WACHHA[3],

This will serve to introduce to you my cousin Mr. C. K. Gandhi. He has given himself to public work. May I ask you to help him and introduce him to Sir Phirozeshah[4] and other leaders?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 4950 Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] Sonja Schlesin joined Gandhiji as steno-typist and later played an important role in the satyagraha struggle; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", Before 10-1-1908.

[2] This letter of introduction was, however, not used by the bearer, Chhaganlal Khushalchand Gandhi.

[3] Dinshaw Edulji Wachha; prominent Indian politician, President of the Indian National Congress, 1901;

[4] Sir Pherozeshah Mehta; one of the founders of the Indian National Congress.

232. INTERVIEW TO "CAPE TIMES"[1]

[CAPE TOWN,
June 23, 1909]

[GANDHIJI:] We are going to England particularly in connection with the Asiatic struggle which has been going on in the Transvaal. We consider this a most suitable opportunity for placing the whole of the situation before the Imperial Government and the British public. We also feel that this is essentially a matter in which mutual personal discussion can do a great deal.

[REPORTER:] Will you act in any way with the Native and Coloured deputations which are also proceeding to England?

It all depends, what opportunity offers itself, and in this connection we shall naturally be very largely guided by Lord Ampthill's[2] Committee in London.

What is your particular objection to the Act of Union?

Personally, I have no fault to find with the Constitution if the full liberties of British Indian subjects who are domiciled in South Africa are guaranteed. I hold that Union should not be merely a union of the white British subjects, but of all British subjects who are domiciled here. The great fear of British Indians is that under the Constitution, It will be a union of white races against British Indians

[1] Cape Town Indians held a reception for Gandhiji and Hajee Habib on board the *Kenilworth Castle* before they left on deputation to England. Gandhiji was interviewed by representatives of the *Cape Times* and the *Cape Argus.* The interviews, which were later reproduced in *Indian Opinion,* 3-7-1909, were substantially the same. The report in the *Cape Argus,* however, carried this introductory paragraph: "Interviewed by the *Argus,* just before leaving, Mr. Gandhi hinted that he had half expected to be arrested by the Transvaal authorities, but no obstacle had been placed in his way. He added that the actions of himself and his fellow-delegate, Hajee Habib, would be guided by the S. A. British Indian Committee in London. All that they wanted was to secure guarantees that their rights would be safeguarded. He was confident of a successful result of their mission."

[2] Arthur Oliver Villiers Russell, Second Baron of Ampthill (1869-1936); Governor of Madras, 1899-1906; acted as Viceroy and Governor-General of India in 1904: took active interest in Indian struggle in South Africa and was President of S.A.B.I. Committee. He wrote the introduction to Doke's biography of Gandhiji.

and the Coloured races,[1]

and if that happens, I think it will be a most unfortunate thing in every way, and it will be the duty of the British Indian deputation to leave no stone unturned to guard against any such Imperial calamity.

How about the restriction of the franchise in the Transvaal?

Personally, I am not laying any great deal of stress on the matter of the franchise. What I am now thinking of is the genesis of a situation which is undoubtedly against the Coloured races of South Africa. I have studied all that has been said about it; I have studied the Parliamentary discussions, and all these undoubtedly go to show that Union spells, perhaps, ruin to the Coloured races, especially the Asiatics, unless the Imperial Government obtained full guarantees with regard to these matters.

In what respect will they be worse off under Union?

In this way, for the simple reason that the Union Parliament will speak with the united voice of South Africa, and the Imperial Government would be very slow to object to any legislation passed by the Union Parliament. As it is, each individual Colony brings such tremendous power to bear upon the English Government that the latter rarely exercises its right of veto in connection with measures affecting the Coloured population and it would be still less inclined to do so when that legislation came with the sanction of a Union Parliament of South Africa.

Mr. Gandhi, who expects to be absent about three months, also referred to the arrest of Indians in the Transvaal, and said that he himself hardly expected to be allowed to cruss the border without arrest, but no obstacle was placed in his way. He arrived here by the mail train a couple of hours or so before the steamer left.

Cape Times, 24-6-1909

[1] Touching on this point of the interview, *Indian Opinion*, 3-7-1909, observed in an editorial note: "There exists a colour bar in the Draft Act of Union, and existing legislation concerning the movements of Indians within the Union is maintained unaltered, until such time as the Union Parliament may choose to interfere, and modify it either for the better or the worse. We have no doubt what the tendency will be. The last ten years have not shouted their warning for nothing in South Africa. And, under Union, the comparatively liberal-minded Cape members will be 'snowed under' by the large Transvaal, Orangia, and Natal contingent of Indophobes. Undoubtedly, the spirit of artificial race-segregation is in the air, and at the back of the Indian hostility to most of the South African Governments is the firm-rooted conviction that, sooner or later, the policy of confinement in latter-day ghettos or bazaars will be put into operation against British Indians, together with other Asiatics."

233. DEPUTATION'S VOYAGE [–I]

[After *June 23, 1909*]

A COMPARISON

When the Indian community sent a deputation to England in October 1906, the circumstances were different from what they are today.

In 1906, the Indian community had pledged itself to go to gaol, but no one was sure who would do so if there was no redress from the Government. Now we know of men who are saturated with [love of] gaol. In 1906, the Indian community did not realize its own latent strength. This time the whole world knows about it.

Nevertheless, the deputation's task in 1906 was comparatively easy. It is difficult this time. We have to secure the repeal of an Act which has already been sanctioned. In 1906, we did not know the Imperial Government's attitude. This time it has indicated this. Even then the deputation is proceeding, unconcerned. For we are to a great extent indifferent to what will happen in England. It is with our tried weapon of satyagraha that we are to fight.

PREPARATIONS

Preparations for the deputation had been under way for several days past. But the community is faced with a situation so difficult that till the very last day it was not certain whether the deputation would proceed or not. Sufficient funds had not been collected either. The tickets for the voyage were bought at eleven in the morning of the very day of departure (Monday, June 21). Even after that, it was not certain that it would leave. The Government was free, if it chose, to arrest the other members of the deputation. Some thought that the arrests might take place even as the members were about to board the train. All the same, the deputation started on its way. But it is mutilated, having lost one of its legs. Mr. Cachalia and Mr. Chettiar are the deputation's right leg. Both these friends are in gaol, while we two, Mr. Hajee Habib and I, are proceeding. Neither of us is happy over this. But I am sure that Mr. Cachalia and Mr. Chettiar will speak for us more eloquently from gaol than they could have done in England. They will be happier in gaol than we on our journey, though travelling first-class. A satyagrahi cannot even conceive otherwise. My

own experience proves the same thing, as I shall show more clearly afterwards.

AT THE STATION

Park Station was crowded with Indians. About 500 Indians must have assembled. Mr. Aswat and Mr. Nagadi, who had gone to Krugers- dorp to raise funds, had managed to reach the station. The police had made special arrangements. They were not seen shoving the people about. A number of Indians were made to stand quite at the back. There were many who had brought bouquets and garlands. This at least could be observed, that every face was lit up with the hope that the deputation might meet with success. Mr. Kallenbach, his partner Mr. Kennedy, Mr. MacIntyre, Miss Olive Doke, Miss Schlesin and Mr. Polak were also there. The train started exactly at 6-15 p.m.

ON THE WAY

At Vereeniging, almost the whole of the local Indian community had turned up at the station. They greeted the deputation with great warmth. They had brought for us a basketful of fruit, which is still not exhausted. Mr. Haffejee gave us a bottle of Indian scent.

At Worcester Station, there were many Indians who had come all the way from Robertson. They too had brought flowers and fruit. In Robertson, the Indian population consists mainly of Tamils. At Worce-ster, therefore, it was mainly the South Indian friends who were present.

On the way, Mr. Hajee Habib suffered from some infection in the left eye. It has been with him from before he left Johannesburg. The eye was a violent red and watered profusely. A wash with hot saline water gave him relief, but not much. We have had to consult the physician on board the ship. Even at the moment of writing, the pain has not subsided completely, though there is considerable relief. I put eye-drops every day twice or thrice, in addition to which ice-cold compresses are also being applied. The physician is very solicitous.

IN CAPE TOWN

The train reached Cape Town half an hour late. There were a few Indians at the station. The rest came on board the ship to meet us. A fare-well dinner had been arranged in honour of Mr. Anglia, who was leaving for Durban the same day. Many Indians were busy with the function. Here, too, the Indian community gave us a send-off with

fruit and flowers.

Mrs. Olive Schreiner, a prominent South African lady, and Mrs. Lewis came on board the ship specially to shake hands with us. Both the ladies appeared to have great sympathy for our cause. We saw that the satyagraha movement had won a place in their hearts.

CABLES RECEIVED ON STEAMER

Mr. Cachalia's cable is a rousing and stirring call to the deputation to do its duty. It reads as follows:

Happy to know both going. Suffering in gaol for country's sake preferable to going with you. Wish you success.

Mr. Ebrahim Coovadia sent the following telegram at the time of his arrest:

> On way to gaol, wish the deputation success. Can serve the community best through gaol.

I am touched to the quick as I translate these two telegrams. There can be nothing but empty bubbles where we are going. But those who are in gaol at the moment are assuredly serving the community. I am convinced that whatever the deputation may be able to achieve will be nothing as compared to the value of their service. Mr. Cachalia, Mr. Coovadia and other prisoners demonstrate the new spirit of the Indian community. The deputation only shows Indians' weakness. The prisoners prove to the world that the Indians have grown to be men. The deputation only proves that they are no quite men still, that as yet they are children who need the deputation to lean on, as a child needs the support of a *chalan-gadi*[1]. The prisoners are the strong limb of the Indian community, while the deputation is the debilitated one. Those who have gone to gaol have nothing to be disappointed about. Those who have pinned their hopes on the deputation will be disappointed, if it returns empty-handed. Therefore, I would advise everyone to expect nothing from the deputation. Help it—by going to gaol, by maintaining unity, by sending cables and by remaining strong there. Think of the deputation as a steam engine. Steam will be produced and the engine will move only if the coal needed for the purpose is supplied from there. The motive power lies [with you] there; the motion of the engine is but a visible manifestation [of that motive power]. This point must never be lost sight of. And so, the other telegrams that we received have also proved

[1] A small, four-wheeled cart by pushing which a child learns to walk

a source of encouragement to us.

The Hamidia Islamic Society cables:

> Good wishes of the faithful go with you. Trust you to uphold faith, honour and manliness. Will do our best to secure support for you here and in India.

The Imam Sahib has sent a separate cable to say:

> Will keep the flag flying. Wish you success.

The following telegram was received from the Potchefstroom Committee:

> Support your mission. Wish you success.

Robertson Indians sent this telegram:

> Wish you a happy voyage. Pray God crown your mission with success.

We left Cape Town fortified by these good wishes.

"DO SOMETHING REGARDING UNION"

Many Indian friends have urged the deputation not to forget the question of the Union. I must say that this request proceeds from igno-rance as to the implications of a Union, and so I shall make a few obser-vations on it here. On the ship, I have been able to give further thought to the subject, and discuss it [with others]. The Union Bill makes no refe-rence to us at all. The Act will unite all the Colonies. But the respective laws of the Colonies will remain intact. What can we say against this? We can do or say nothing against a Union of the Colonies of South Africa. If, after the Union is formed, they attempt any legislation against us, we can fight out the question then. Our rights will not be liquidated by the mere formation of the Union. No doubt, that will be one of the consequences of the Union. But we cannot oppose a Union merely on the ground that we might be ruined under it. The main point is that even the white population of the Colonies acts as our enemy. When the enemies are united, they are bound to increase their pressure [on us]. What can be done about this? We certainly can-not prevent them from being united.

No one comes forward to say that, as our enemies are uniting, so must we, the Indians. That is the real solution. Ignoring that, Indians have been begging for something to be brought to them from England [as a gift]. This shows our utter helplessness. The whites of the Colonies are the strong and favoured sons [of the Empire]. We are the weak and neglected ones. How can the neglected sons get a

hearing from the mother against the favoured ones? By petitioning? It is impossible. A petition can help us only when it is in the form of a command, which it will be when it has some sanction behind it. A petition should be taken to mean a polite command. Sanctions are of two kinds: one, physical force, and two, soul force— satyagraha. Physical force is nothing compared to the power of truth. If we cultivate this, we shall cease begging for something to be done about the Union.

Dr. Abdurrahman[1] is going to England entirely in connection with the question of the Union, and that is justified. For, under the Union Act, some of the rights of the black races will be abrogated right now. In such a contingency, an efffort must be made [to prevent this]. It is not the same with us. However, no one should suppose that the deputation will not raise the subject at all. It cannot but do so. It is because negotiations for a Union are in progress that the deputation is going. It will, moreover, urge in no uncertain terms that the Union should not be permitted if the Transvaal grievances are not redressed. And I say further that, if the Indians act with all their strength, the deputation cannot but gain its point. It will also raise the subject of the laws that have been enacted in the whole of South Africa. This does not mean that these laws will be repealed. Their repeal can be achieved only through satyagraha. But we may hope that discussion [of the question] will impe! the Imperial Government to seek an understanding from the Colonial Government. I presume that this clarification will satisfy all Indians. Everyone who reflects on this question will realize that the deputation will, of course, do all it can regarding the Union. This is a question involving legal subt-leties. How can they be fully understood without knowledge of the law?

FELLOW-PASSENGERS

With us are Mr. Merriman[2], Prime Minister of Cape Colony, and Mr. Sauer[3]. From Natal, there are Mr. Smythe and Mr. Green. From the Orange River Colony, there is Mr. Botha. The names of other English passengers need not be given.

[1] President of the African Political Organisation and member of the Cape Town Municipality; *vide* "Johannesburgg Letter", 17-3-1906 & "A Word to the Muslim Community in Heidelberg", 24-3-1906.

[2] John Xavier Merriman (1841-1926); Prime Minister of Cape Colony, 1908-10

[3] J. W. Sauer, M.L.A., later a member of the Union Cabinet; a "philanthropical radical"who refused knighthood

The deputation of the "Coloured people" is also sailing by this very ship. It consists of Dr. Abdurrahman, Mr. Frederick, Mr. Londors and Mr. Mavela. I am sorry to say that Dr. Abdurrahman and two of his companions are travelling second-class and Mr. Mavela third. This reflec-ts on the dignity of the deputation. It does not seem proper that they should travel in these conditions as representatives of the Coloured peo-ple. I see some worthless whites travelling first-class, while these repre-sentatives [of the Coloured people] are in the second and third classes. On inquiry I learn that the deputation is travelling thus because it was short of funds. Two more members of the deputation will follow by the next ship. Dr. Abdurrahman has told me some remarkable things about Mr. Schreiner, who has gone ahead on their behalf. Not only has Mr. Sch-reiner put their case strongly before [Cape] Parliament, but he has also gone to England specially to plead on their behalf. He had no other work there. Besides, he has gone at his own expense. He has not taken a farth-ing from the Coloured people. Though he has a lucrative practice at the Bar, he is not a rich man, for he spends a great deal on his large family and on philanthropic activities. He was engaged for over two months in the Dinuzulu case, but he has not received his fee as yet, and he does not care. Here is a lawyer worthy of the name. In former times, this was the attitude of all lawyers. They practised in order to serve others and not for money. What they received in return for their services was called "honorarium". No suit could lie in respect of such honorarium. Moreover, the fact that Mr. Schreiner is exerting himself so much for the Coloured people shows that there are great and philanthropic whites who include other communities within the scope of their philanthropic activities. It seems to me that we should Judge a community by its good men. Only then can different communities live together.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 31-7-1909

234. MR. POLAK AND HIS WORK

In view of the departure of Mr. H. S. L. Polak as a delegate on behalf of the Transvaal British Indians to proceed to India, in order to educate public opinion there, and to rouse India to a sense of her duty, our readers will be glad to have a short sketch of Mr. Polak's life. Mr. Henry Salomon Leon Polak was born just 27 years ago at

Dover, England, and is the son of Mr. J. H. Polak, J. P., who is a member of the South Africa British Indian Committee in London. Mr. Polak is an undergraduate of London University, and is the holder of many certificates, in literary and economic subjects, issued by the London Chamber of Commerce and other educational bodies. He completed his education at the Ecole de Commerce, Neuchatel, Switzerland, whereafter he was appointed Assistant Secretary of the Society of Chemical Industry, in London. For reasons of health, Mr. Polak came to South Africa, in the early part of 1903. Before he became identified with the Indian cause and accepted the editorship of this journal, which was and still is purely a labour of love, he was engaged in journalistic work. Desiring to realise some of his ideals, he left what might be termed a lucrative appointment, with promise of further pecuniary advancement and, in 1904, joined the phoenix scheme, under which the members receive only just enough to support themselves in the simplest manner possible. The scheme, as readers of this journal are aware, is intended to put into practice the essential teaching of Tolstoy and Ruskin, and, in its outward manifestation, to assist in removing the grievances of British Indians in South Africa. Owing to the exigencies of Indian public work in the Transvaal, and in order the better to enable him to carry on his duties in connection with this journal, Mr. Polak took articles with Mr. M. K. Gandhi in the year 1906 and, in 1908, was admitted as Attorney of the Supreme Court of the Transvaal.

Since the year 1906, he has acted as Assistant Hon. Secretary of the Transvaal British Indian Association—a period that has marked a most critical stage in the history of British Indians in South Africa, and which has demanded from those who, like Mr. Polak, have been intimately connected with the passive resistance movement, the most unremitting zeal and devotion. During the last three years, Mr. Polak has known no rest. He has, besides using his able pen freely for the cause, travelled throughout South Africa, either making collections in aid of the passive resistance struggle, or addressing public meetings and enlightening Indians in different parts of the sub-continent as to the nature of the struggle. His knowledge of the different questions affecting British Indian settlers and Asiatic legislation in South Africa is almost unrivalled. In his eagerness to possess himself with accurate knowledge, he has considered nothing too unimportant to study, and in order to have a proper perspective of the whole situation, during what leisure he has been able to find, he has studied also modern Indian history. Mr. Polak has kept himself in touch with the current

Indian thought by contributing to several leading newspapers and magazines in India. He, therefore, goes to India by no means unknown to the Indian public. The people of India will no doubt be glad to learn that, in order to know the inner side of Indian life and character, throughout his travels in South Africa, Mr. Polak has always lived with Indians in their homes like one of themselves. He has acquired such a hold on their affections that, during the incarceration of the Indian leaders, his advice was eagerly sought and implicitly followed.

Mr. Polak was married in 1905, and the Indian community in South Africa owes not a little to Mrs. Polak sharing her husband's self-sacrifice and public spirit. Latterly, she herself has taken up the organising of Indian women's meetings, and has thrown herself heart and soul into her work. Two children have been born to them in South Africa. Mr. Polak belongs to an ancient Jewish family and, being a member of a race which has undergone much oppression, considers it a privilege to help in alleviating the sufferings of British Indians in South Africa. When he was yet quite a youth, ethics had a fascinating attraction for him. With him religion and ethics are convertible terms. He, therefore, naturally attached himself to the South Place Ethical Society in London, of which he is still an associate, and it was from an ethical standpoint that he felt himself called upon to take up Indian work.

Indian Opinion, 3-7-1909

235. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

[R. M. S. *Kenilworth Castle*,]
July 7, 1909

CHI. RAMDAS,

I am on this steamer.

Blessings from

BAPU

MASTER RAMDAS GANDHI
INDIAN OPINION,
PHOENIX, NATAL

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand, written on a picture-postcard of the steamer: C. W. 84

Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

236. DEPUTATION'S VOYAGE [*-II*]

[Before *July 9, 1909*]

LIFE ON SHIP AND LIFE IN PRISON: A COMPARISON

As I have stated already, it is far better to be in prison than travel first-class on a ship. Mr. Bhikhubhai Dayalji Malia is travelling third-class. Both of us see him every day. That has given us some experience of what third-class travel means. I am of the opinion that the freedom and comfort available in the third-class are not to be found in the first-class. But even that cannot match what is available in gaol. The servants in a ship are happier—if only they knew it—than the passengers. First-class passengers are looked after by servants as though they were so many babies. There is something to eat every two hours. We cannot even lift a glass of water with our own hands. At the table it is considered beneath one's dignity to reach out one's hand for a spoon lying at some distance. Hands must be washed every now and then all through the day, on the ground that they must be kept clean. As for work, they have hardly any, so that they are growing altogether delicate and soft. It vexes me to observe the present state of my hands and compare it with what they were like in gaol. I envy the servants at their work. Here I have neither the peace nor the freedom I enjoyed in gaol. On the contrary, I have to live hedged in on all sides. My prayers here lack the depth, the serenity and concentration they had when I was in gaol.

I am not writing all this in a frivolous mood, but after deep reflec-tion. I think of these things every day. Whatever I have read and am read-ing I put to the test of experience. I have realized that those who wish to serve God cannot afford to pamper themselves or to run after luxury. Pra-yers do not come easily in an atmosphere of luxuries. Even if we do not ourselves share the luxuries, we cannot escape their natural influence. The energy that we spend in resisting that influence is at the cost of our devo-tional efforts. I am having a personal experience of this at the moment. I do not write this to suggest that I want myself or anyone else to spend all his days in gaol or that I consider travelling by first-class to be wrong always and in all circumstances. I write this only to point out that we would all profit from the kind of simplicity and solitude we find in gaol. I think it is better to travel by third-class than by first-class, except when we need

certain facilities or when there are some special reasons which make first-class travel necessary. In South Africa, however, there are several reasons why I would prefer Indians to travel first-class or second-class. We must rebut the charge of miserliness that is levelled against us. Moreover, we generally value simplicity in such matters, so that we are not likely to be puffed up with vanity if we travel first or second. For those who have amassed wealth, first- or second-class travel would appear to be necessary even for maintaining their status. All the same, at a time like this when we are engaged in a mighty fight, I would unhesitatingly ask all Indians to take the view that it is better for an Indian to be in gaol rather than be travelling in a class even higher than the first.

HOW WE LIVE

I have known Mr. Hajee Habib for the last fifteen years. But I never had any opportunity of living with him as I am doing today. Hajee Saheb is a man of strict religious principles. He keeps the *namaz* hours punctually. He carefully follows the religious injunctions about food and drink. He has often told me that he has no difficulty in doing so on this occasion. He allows me to decide for him the menu for every meal. I know what will prove acceptable to him. In the morning he has porridge, eggs and tea. At noon he has boiled potatoes, sometimes fish, a vege-table called lettuce, much like the *moola*, some variety of pudding, fruit and coffee, and in the evening some leafy vegetable, pudding, fruit and coffee, It is a constant thought with him how to make the deputation a success, and we frequently come together to apply our minds to the prob-lem. The ghee and pickles given to him [when he started], he has passed on to Mr. Bhikhubhai. The passengers on board the ship seem to think that we are brothers.

I have, as usual, two meals a day. I avoid pudding as it contains eggs. I also avoid tea and coffee as far as possible, since they are the produce of slave labour. In other respects, my diet is the same as above, except for fish. I am growing more convinced every day, as my body hardens, that I can do with still simpler food. On this voyage I do not feel a craving for delicacies as I did on the previous occasion.

Most of the day is spent in reading. The statement[1] to be submitted in England has already been drafted, and approved by Mr.

[1] *Vide* "Statement of the Transvaal Indian Case," 16-7-1909

Hajee Habib. He made some suggestions, which have been incorporated.

MEETING WITH MERRIMAN

There have been meetings with some of the whites on board ship. Mr,. Merriman was one of them. From what I gathered about his views in the course of a long discussion with him, I could see that our efforts against the Union were bound to fail. When I pointed out to him that the Transvaal problem did not have much connection with the question of unification, he studied it in greater detail and promised to do his best in regard to it. I found him full of sympathy for the satyagrahi prisoners. There was a meeting with Mr. Jagger also. He too appeared to hold views similar to Mr. Merriman's. The Union has come to stay. If the Transvaal problem can be solved without prejudice to the question of unification, he will also be prepared to help. He was filled with indignation when he was told of the sacrifices of Mr. Cachalia and Mr. Aswat, and he implied by his remarks that the dispute would have been settled by now it the other Indian businessmen had followed in their footsteps. He was sorry, as well as surprised, to hear that his own firm had acted against Mr. Cachalia.

When I spoke to these gentlemen about Mr. Dawad Mahomed and Mr. Parsee Rustomjee, they seemed both deeply impressed. They deplored it all and wanted that some kind of solution should be found. When they were told of our demands, both admitted that they were quite reasonable.

The subject of the Cape Immigration Act was raised with Mr. Jagger. He was surprised to hear that Indians resident in the Cape had to take out temporary permits when leaving it. Had the Cape Indians exerted themselves sufficiently, this clause would not have been retained in the law. It is still their duty to bestir themselves in regard to this. I am sure that most of the Cape members are entirely ignorant of this absurd clause.

I had also had a meeting with Mr. Sauer, who is a member of the Cape Cabinet. He was full of sympathy and has promised all possible help. He admitted that the demands of a community that undergoes voluntary suffering as we do can hardly be unreasonable and that it was the duty of every liberal-minded person to help that community.

I regard this also as one of the results of our satyagraha. Men like him would not have cared to listen to us had we not gone to gaol.

There is, moreover, another white with whom we have had frequent discussions. He is himself a passive resister. He is secretary of some association. According to him, we have far excelled the English passive resisters in our capacity to suffer. He has promised a letter of recommendation and also other help.

All these things are a testimony to the success of satyagraha. Everyone is touched by the story of the suffering which satyagraha has entailed. They are all amazed to hear that we have had no redress so far.

The sympathies of all these men spring from their conviction that our cause is just and that we are sincere. With Mr. Hajee Habib's help, I have been reading a book named *Kasassul Ambia*. In it I read how it was commanded of Azazil that should he fail, after 600,000 years of prayers to God, to bow to Him even on a single occasion, all his prayers would be as though they had never been. The point is, first, that it is what we do when we reach the last stage which will provide the test of our sincerity. Secondly, we can make no conditions with God. We must live as He may order us. If, having gone to gaol ten times, we refuse to do so on the eleventh occasion, the ten previous terms of imprisonment will have been in vain and we shall be laughed at.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-8-1909

237. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

UNION-CASTLE LINE,

R. M. S. *Kenilworth Castle*

July 9, 1909

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have written you a letter[1] from Madeira. This letter will be posted tonight. We shall reach London tomorrow; I am writing this without knowing the atmosphere prevailing there.

It would be nice if a Sanskrit class is started for the elders there. As I go deeper into the subject, I see the necessity for every Hindu to have a knowledge of that language. I am aware that the suggestions I

[1] This is not available.

make one after another increase your burden. But there is no other way. We have lost so much in the past that it will take some time and also a good deal of effort to regain and consolidate it. It has to be done sooner or later. If not in this life, then in the next. So long as the desires are there,we should better have altruistic ones only. From among these sug-gestions, you may act up to those that you can and bear in mind the rest.

Add the following to "Travel Notes"[1]:

"I had also had a meeting with Mr. Sauer who is a member of the Cape Cabinet. He was full of sympathy and has promised all possible help. He admitted that the demands of a community that undergoes voluntary suffering as we do can hardly be unreasonable and that it was the duty of every liberal-minded person to help that community. I regard this also as one of the results of our satyagraha. Men like him would not have cared to listen to us had we not gone to gaol."

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Talk to all the persons there about the Sanskrit class.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 4940

238. INTERVIEW TO REUTER[2]

[SOUTHAMPTON,
July 10, 1909]

Our deputation was to consist of four, but two are now in prison. Our movements depend largely upon the advice of Lord Ampthill and his Committee. We feel, we must take this opportunity when so many South African statesmen are in this country to see whether something cannot be done to relieve the very acute suffering which British Indians in the Transvaal have been undergoing for the past two and a half years. Our mission does not seriously affect the question of unification except that every Indian feels that the Imperial Government should take full guarantee regarding the status of British

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] On his arrival in England, with Hajee Habib, on July 10, Gandhiji was interviewed by Reuter.

Indians in South Africa under the Union. What we are chiefly concerned in is the settlement of outstanding questions between the Transvaal Government and the Indian community which, when boiled down, really means the question of the status of highly cultured Indians, and whether they may or may not enter the Transvaal under the general immigration law of the day. We contend that the present legislation insults the whole of India in that it creates a racial bar for the first time in the his-tory of Colonial legislation, and in order to remove this bar, hundreds of British Indians have suffered imprisonment. Even to-day some of the best Indians in the Transvaal are in gaol as conscientious objectors.

Indian Opinion, 7-8-1909

239. INTERVIEW TO PRESS AGENCY[1]

[LONDON,
July 10, 1909]

Mr. Gandhi, interviewed on his arrival in England to-day, stated that the object of his visit was to ensure that the grievances of the Asiatics in the Transvaal should be remedied under the unification, and the status of the King's Indian subjects in South Africa defined and embodied in the Union Constitution.

Indian Opinion, 17-7-1909

[1] The interview was given to South Africa Associated Press Agency. It was also reported in the Gujarati section of *Indian Opinion.*

240. DEPUTATION NOTES [–III][1]

[After *July 10, 1909*]

WE ARRIVE

I have reported what happened up to the time of our arrival at Madeira. We arrived at Southampton on the 10th. We were met by a Reuter representative.[2] We gave him a brief statement of facts, and the report has appeared in most newspapers. We reached London at about 10.30 a.m. But there was no one at the station. This was quite surprising. After conveying our luggage to Hotel Cecil, we went to see Mr. Ritch. We found him with Abdul Caadir[3]. They were both surprised. In the absence of any cable, Mr. Ritch had given up hopes of our arrival. What happened was that Reuter had cabled the news [about the deputation] from Johannesburg and it was expected to be published in the newspapers; hence no separate cable was sent to Mr. Ritch. Newspapers nowadays rarely publish Reuter cables on the Transvaal. The cable about the deputation having left was not published. The cable reporting the arrests of the delegates was [however] published. Mr. Ritch concluded from this that the idea of sending a deputation must have been given up for the moment. No one, therefore, expected our arrival.

WE SET TO WORK

Soon after we had seen Mr. Ritch, we set to work the moment we had had our lunch. We, the two brothers, accompanied by Mr. Abdul Caadir, Mr. Ritch and Mr. Hussain Dawad, who had run up to Mr. Ritch's office, called on Mr. Bhownaggree. After consulting among our-selves there, we wrote to Lord Ampthill, and so the round of interviews began. The whole day is taken up in interviewing people and writing let-ters, and we have to keep working even at night. Being free, Miss Polak[4] has been entrusted with typing work. She works very

[1] These weekly dispatches, though written from London, continued to be published in *Indian Opinion* under the original title "Deputation's Voyage".

[2] *Vide* "Interview to Reuter", 10-7-1909.

[3] Member of the Natal Indian deputation which had gone to England at this time to plead for the Natal Indians' interests under the Union Bill.

[4] Miss Maud Polak, H. S. L. Polak's sister

hard, regardless of the hour of the day or night. She also appears to have a good temper.

We have met Lord Ampthill, Sir Richard Solomon[1] Miss Winterbottom[2] Mr. Surendranath Banerjea[3] Mr. Cotton[4] Mr. Justice Ameer Ali[5] Dr. Abdool Majid, Mr. Azad and others. We have also had interviews with Sir William Lee-Warner[6]a member of India Office, and Mr. Morison[7]I am not in a position to give more information just yet. Private consultations are going on. They give some hopes. If they lead to nothing, there is little possibility of our achieving anything through other channels. Lord Ampthill is considering, besides, whether a deputation should be led at all, and whether it will be of any—benefit.

I have been able to see that everyone approves of our having courted imprisonment and that, if anything counts, it is the fact that so many Indians have gone and are still going to gaol.

We are deliberately refraining from giving any information to newspapers for the present. It is Lord Ampthill's advice that we should not.

This is a very bad time to seek interviews with public figures here. Everyone is out of town on a holiday, so that we are not likely to get help from many people. Moreover, the British people are preoccupied with their own affairs. The new budget has raised a storm in Parliament. Also, the visit of South African statesmen makes a heavy demand on [people's] time. Considering all this and looking at the circumstances around us, I am inclined to believe that, should the private moves that are under way at present fail, nothing is likely to be achieved by our visit.

[1] Lieut-Governor of the Transvaal, 1905-6

[2] Florence Winterbottom, Corresponding Secretary of the Union of Ethical Societies, London

[3] (1848-1925); orator and politician; President of the Indian National Congress, 1895 and 1902.

[4] H. E. A. Cotton, editor of *India*

[5] (1849-1928); eminent judge, later a member of the Privy Council, author of several books on Islam and Mahomedan law; *vide* "Telegram to Ameer Ali", 25-10-1906.

[6] (1846-1914); Anglo-Indian administrator, additional member of the Viceroy's Council, author of several books on India

[7] Theodore Morison; one-time Principal of the Mahomedan College at Aligarh; *vide* "Letter to W.H. Arathoon", 13-11-1906.

FIRST SACRIFICE

There have been a large number of cables about meetings in South Africa. This is something to be happy about. There is not a single cable from Natal. Mr. Nagappen's martyrdom[1] has made Mr. Hajee Habib and me very unhappy. This has been, even otherwise, a time of mourning for us, and it is all the more so now. However, there is no reason to be sad if we think of the community. We have known all along that we may have to make any sacrifice, including that of life, and that, too, cheerfully. This is exactly what we have to learn in this fight, that in the interest of the community we must bear every kind of suffering, and that only by doing so can we find a solution to our problems. As I get more experience here, I gradually come to see that the deputation which has been sent represents only our weakness. The energy and the time that are spent in seeing various people and in cultivating their goodwill would, if spent merely in suffering, ensure a very early solution. I can make no guess as to the result. But it will be enough if we learn from this struggle the lesson I have indicated above.

We have also had news of Mr. Dawad Mahomed's release on account of ill-health. Looking at the matter from his point of view, I feel sorry. But looking at it from the community's point of view, I congratulate him. We think nothing of inviting illness for ourselves through overindulgence and soft living, or by exerting ourselves overmuch in the pursuit of self-interest. It is, moreover, our own fault that we fall ill in this manner. If, then, anyone falls ill while doing his duty by the community, he surely deserves congratulations on that. That has been so, and will always be so. His example is being followed by Mr. Hussain Mia here. It should make one happy to observe his habits. Besides he has a noble regard for the community.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-8-1909

[1] The reference is to the death of a young passive resister, following exponuse and bad treatment during confinement in a gaol work-camp; *vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909

241. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

WESTMINSTER PALACE HOTEL,
4, VICTORIA STREET,
LONDON, S. W.,
July 14, 1909

MY DEAR HENRY,

You will be agreeably surprised to know that Maud has been assisting me and that this letter is being dictated to her. She has been out of work now for some time and you can easily imagine my surprise when I was told by Pater[1] that I could have Maud to assist me. Of course, I was naturally very pleased to avail myself of her assistance; at the same time, sorry that she was not working. She thinks, and I agree, that the enforced rest has perhaps done her a little good. It might have done her greater good, if she had the capacity for passing the time at her disposal as it might have been, but, as she tells me, she does not like her own company, which means a great deal. Mater[2] and Sally[3] are in Belgium; they return, I understand, next Sunday. Millie[4] will be here on the 24th. A cablegram was received advising about her departure. I saw your cablegram to Mr. Ritch, but the one I am referring to was received from Kallenbach yesterday. It also informs us of your departure for India.[1]

This may anticipate you, but the more I think about it, the more I feel and realize that your work over there is far more difficult than our work here. The terrible tragedy about Sir Curzon Wyllie and Dr. Lalcaca.[6] complicates the situation here, but it is nothing compared with the complications that must arise there. Please, however, do not worry if you do not see the work prospering there under you. You may have no meetings and the influential papers there may even

[1] Polak's father
[2] Polak's mother
[3] Another sister of Polak
[4] Polak's wife
[5] Polak had sailed on july 7 on a deputation to India.
[6] Sir William Curzon Wyllie, Political ADC to the Secretary of State for India, was shot dead by an Indian student, Madan Lal Dhingra, at a reception held by the National Indian Association at the Imperial Institute in South Kensington, London. Dr. Cawas Lalkaka, a Parsee doctor from Shanghai, was fatally wounded while trying to save Sir Curzon Wyllie.

boycott you. I do not anticipate any such dire result, but I am quite prepared for it and I should reconcile myself to it in time. All I care about is that you should be able to see most of the leading Anglo-Indians and Indians; that I know you will be able to do, but I am fully aware of the difficulties that beset you, even in this mission of having quiet chats with leaders. You will require all the patience and tact you can command. However, I am not in the slightest degree anxious. I write in this strain only to tell you that I realize your difficulties, and that, therefore, I shall not in any way at all feel disappointed if we do not get much out of the Indian mission. You should confine your attention for the time being to those whose names I have specially given to you, that is, the Editor of *The Times of India*, Professor Gokhale, Mr. Malbari[1].

The Aga Khan is in London; I have asked for an appointment. We have already seen Justice Ameer Ali. The mission commenced on board. I had a long chat with Mr. Merriman and Mr. Sauer. Both of them were very sympathetic; neither of them knew the situation accurately. Both expressed surprise that our demands, which they considered so reasonable, were not granted. We are, therefore, moving with a view to get together the South African statesmen and see whether they would not influence General Smuts in the right direction. I am already working under double pressure: have not yet been able to go to bed before one o'clock in the morning, and you know what that means to me. The legacy of a swollen leg, which I inherited from the Pretoria gaol, has not yet left me; this, however, by the way.

We are meeting Sir Richard Solomon who has given an appointment in response to our letter, as also Lord Ampthill, to-day. In order to give you detailed information, I am dictating this letter in advance, but hope to be able to bring it up to date to-morrow evening (Thursday). Justice Ameer Ali knows Sir Richard personally, and he has also promised to see him and discuss the situation with him. I sent a statement[2] which he wanted, copy of which I shall keep among the papers to be sent to you.

Miss Winterbottom is full of the Indian question; she has studied it very accurately. She still continues to read *Indian Opinion* very

[1] Behramji Merwanji Malbari (1854-1912); poet, journalist and social reformer

[2] *Vide* the following item.

regularly and entertains the same high regard as before. She never wrote again[1] to us, simply because, I fancy, she was too disgusted with the state of things in the Transvaal to trust herself to write calmly. Both Mr. Hajee Habib and I passed nearly an hour with her. She had some other members of her Society to meet us; among them is a lady journalist who appeared to be a very brilliant woman; she is married to a Dutchman who too is a journalist. She told me that she had seen General Botha very often and that she was making a point this time to tackle him on the Indian question. Miss Winterbottom had arranged to go to Cornwall for a change of air which she needs very badly, but she almost feels inclined to abandon her journey for the time being. I have implored her not to cancel her programme and have promised that I would send for her if I considered her presence in London necessary, but she is a woman of extremely high ideas and I could notice yesterday that it was a matter of very prayerful consideration for her whether she would go to Cornwall or not. The one thought that is supreme with her to-day is how she can assist in the struggle. She boiled with indignation when I informed her of poor Nagappen's death. His picture has been before me ever since the receipt of the cablegram and my work has been more or less mechanical since then. I cannot get him out of my mind; it has affected me very much. However, our attitude must remain unchanged and we have to confirm the advice to the people to face death and worse—if there were anything worse. I am sending you a copy of that cablegram so that, if you did not know of the news contained therein, the cablegram will supply you with the information.

Poor Dowd Mahomed must have keenly felt his discharge from the gaol, when Parsee Rustomjee was still in gaol. However, he has returned to Johannesburg, so that he is in the thick of the fight.

Mr. Abdul Caadir is here. He is often at the hotel but he is not living with us. When the balance of the deputation arrives from Durban, I think all will engage rooms at this hotel.

Mr. Hajee Habib has been working splendidly. He always keeps me up to the mark and does not let me forget anything at all. We are in perfect harmony. I worte[2] to you about his eye; it caused him trouble throughout the voyage, but now he is much better, though

[1] She had written to Gandhiji earlier in 1907, *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 21-9-1907.

[2] This letter is not available.

there is still a slight inflammation.

Mrs. Ritch has undergone a third operation, this time at the hands of a very great specialist, Sir Henry Morris; he has been exceedingly kind. I saw her on Sunday and there is every indication of complete recovery in a short time. Dr. Oldfield[1] has entirely fallen—even his supposed surgical skill is now no more. Ritch thinks that he bungled the whole thing and was too cowardly to own up to it. It hurts me to have to write of a man whom I have held in high estimation, but we have often to break our idols. I am only waiting for permission from Ritch, to be able to write to him straight or speak to him, but Mrs. Ritch is averse to any such thing being done until she has completely recovered.

Dr. Abdurrahman is working [with] might and main. Mr. Schreiner is a wonderful man. He is rendering very great assistance to the Doctor and is not at all without hope. Olive Schreiner and her sister, Mrs. Lewis, both came up to me when I left Cape Town, to shake hands. Dr. Abdurrahman tells me that Mr. Sauer tackled her and she, in her own charming and yet refined manner, told Mr. Sauer that she merely wanted to shake hands with me. She performed this ceremony most heartily in the presence of a huge crowd and both the sisters were quite for a few minutes with us. Fancy the author of "Dreams" paying a tribute to passive resistance, but the whole Schreiner family, from what I have learnt through Dr. Abdurrahman, seems to be perfectly exceptional.

Cablegrams[2] supporting the deputation have been received from

Cape Town,	Germiston,	Grahamstown,
Kimberley,	Lourenco Marques,	Lichtenburg,
Pietersburg,	Port Elizabeth,	Potchefstroom,
Rustenburg,	Standerton.	

Thursday

Mr. Hajee Habib and I had a very long and satisfactory interview with Sir Richard Solomon. he went through the whole of the legal aspect, seemed to be very sympathetic; would not commit himself, but has promised to see Mr. Smuts and do what he can. Then

[1] Dr. Josiah Oldfield, an old friend of Gandhiji and member of the Vegetarian Society. *Vide* "Letter to Dr. j. Oldfield", 26-10-1906.

[2] These were addressed to the S.A.B.I. Committee which forwarded copies to the Secretary of State for the Colonies on July 16.

followed a long interview with Lord Ampthill. Transparent honesty, courtesy and genuine humility were written on his face. He—an ex-Viceroy—did not want to take a single step without our agreeing to its being taken. His object is not in any way to advertise himself by his connection with the Committee, but to serve the cause which he is espousing. He did not know by what right he could ask Mr. Merriman and Mr. Sauer to see him. It seemed to be nothing to him that he has occupied the highest positions in India and occupies a fairly good position in public affairs here. In order that the cause may be served, he is going to see Lord Curzon and get him to take up the matter at the point he left it in South Africa[1] . Thus, you will see, our work will be entirely, for the time being, behind the scenes.

Sir William Lee-Warner is coming to the hotel to-morrow to see us. Mr. Ameer Ali has undertaken to see Sir Richard Solomon. I had a long chat with Cotton of *India* yesterday and he has definitely promised to refer to your mission in India in the columns of the ensuing number. I thought that this was necessary in order that the readers of *India* might realize the situation[2] .

I think you had seen Dr. Mehta's[3] letter, in which he referred to his impending departure for Europe, taking his son for education. He is now here and staying at the same hotel.

I forgot, I think, to give you a letter to Mr. Wadia, who you will remember, was going to form in Bombay a Committee in connection with the question. Do not fail to see him at the earliest opportunity.

If Chhaganlal is there, please show him this letter, as I have no time to write to him at length.

I have written to several Gujarati men, including Mr. Omer Haji Amod, Mr. Issa Hajee Soomer, Mr. Peerun Mahomed and Mr. M. S. Coovadia.[4]

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4942

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Curzon", 27-1-1909

[2] *India*, 16-7-1909, carried notes regarding the two deputations.

[3] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta, a friend of Gandhiji since his student days in London

[4] These letters are not available.

242. LETTER TO J. X. MERRIMAN

LONDON,
July 15, 1909

DEAR MR. MERRIMAN[1] ,

I have taken the liberty of speaking to Lord Ampthill[2] regarding the interest you have taken in our struggle, and his Lordship has promised to seek an interview with you. I hope that something will come out of your private effort. I need hardly say that the whole thing has been kept absolutely confidential.

We have just received a cablegram saying that the struggle has taken its first victim. A young Indian[3] who was serving imprisonment as a passive resister, was discharged in a dying condition and died six days after his discharge. There are at present about 100 Indians in the Transvaal gaols and during the struggle, over 2,500 Indians have passed through them.

The question as I have told you, is exceedingly simple. All we want is repeal of the Asiatic (Registration) Act, which is now considered no longer necessary by General Smuts: the repeal, placing the status of highly educated Indians on a footing of equality under the Immigration Law, leaving it open to the administration under the education test, to make it so severe as to debar from the Colony more than say six persons per year. What we bitterly resent is the racial bar, involving as it does a national insult.

I hope you will not mind my troubling you in this matter.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

J. X. MERRIMAN

REFORM CLUB, LONDON

The correspondence of John X. Merriman. pp. 139-40

[1] John Xavier Merriman (1841-1926): Prime Minister of Cape Colony, 1908-10.

[2] Arthur Oliver Villiers Russell, Second Baron of Ampthill (1869-1936); Governor of Madras, 1899-1906; acted as Viceroy and Governor-General of India in 1904; took active interest in the Indian struggle in South Africa and was President of the S. A. B. I Committee. He wrote the introduction to Doke's Biography of Gandhiji.

[3] Sammy Nagappen, who died on July 6, 1909; *vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Casee", 16-7-1909.

243. STATEMENT OF TRANSVAAL INDIAN CASE[1]

PRESENTED BY THE INDIAN DEPUTATION (JULY 1909)

LONDON,
July 16, 1909

APPOINTMENT OF DELEGATES

1. A mass meeting of the British Indians of the Transvaal was held on the 16th June last on the Hamidia Mosque ground at Johannes-burg.[2] The meeting was convened by the British Indian Association and was attended by nearly 1,500 Indians. The Rev. Canon Berry, the Rev. Mr. Perry, Mr. Kallenbach, Mr. and Mrs. Vogl, Mr. Dallow, and other European friends were present by invitation. Telegrams from most parts of the Transvaal were received from Indian Committees approving of the resolutions that were to be submitted to the meeting.

2. Two days[3] prior to the Mass Meeting a meeting of over 300 British Indians was held on the premises of the Chairman of the Associa-tion, the delegates for the Indian deputation finally nominated, and the names of delegates for a simultaneous Indian deputation discussed.[4]

3. Of late most Indian meetings have been attended by Government detectives.

4. The names of the delegates to be submitted to the mass meeting were published in *The Transvaal Leader* of the 15th June.

[1] The original draft of this statement, which—except for an unauthenticated fragment—is not available, was ready on board the ship; *vide* "Deputation's Voyage" [-II], p. 278. It was not sent for publication on arrival in London as Gandhiji was anxious not to publish it until it was known that the negotiations had failed. The draft underwent several alterations and additions, mainly at the instance of Lord Ampthill. Gandhiji sent him proofs of the statement on July 29. He modified and enlarged it in the light of suggestions made by Lord Ampthill, in his letter of August 3; *vide* Appendix XIV. Later he prepared a summary of this statement of which an earlier, incomplete draft is also available. Both the statement and the summary were subsequently printed in the form of a pamphlet: "A Concise Statement of the British Indian Case in the Transvaal", and finally released with the "Letter to the Press" on November 5, about a week before the deputation sailed for South Africa.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting", 16-6-1909.

[3] The meeting was held on June 13, three days before the mass meeting.

[4] *Vide* Appendix XIII.

5. Of these, Mr. Amad Mahomed Cachalia, Chairman of the Association, Mr. Ebrahim Salooji Coovadia, Acting Chairman of the Association, Mr. S. S. Chettiar, Chairman of the Tamil Benefit Society, and Mr. Nadirshaw Cama, together with other prominent Indians, were arrested on the 15th and 16th June, for failing to comply with the Asiatic Registration Act.

6. Messrs Cachalia and Chettiar were, on the very day of the meeting and before the advertised time, sentenced to three months' imprisonment with hard labour in default of payment of a fine of £ 50.

7. The mass meeting, however, took place. The following three resolutions[1] were submitted there and passed with six dissentients out of 1,500 people present:

(1) This mass meeting of Transvaal British Indians hereby confirms the appointment made by the Committee of the British Indian Association of the Transvaal, of Messrs A. M. Cachalia, Hajee Habib, V. A. Chettiar and M. K. Gandhi as a deputation to proceed to England and place before the authorities and the British public the true situation with regard to the present Asiatic struggle and the British Indian view of the coming Union of South Africa.

(2) This mass meeting of British Indians hereby elects Messrs N. A. Cama, N. Gopal Naidoo, E. S. Coovadia and H. S. L. Polak as a deputation to proceed to India and to place before the authorities and the Indian public the true situation with regard to the present Asiatic struggle in the Transvaal.

(3) This meeting respectfully protests against the sudden and unwarranted arrest of Messrs Cachalia, Coovadia, Cama and Chettiar, who were, as the Government well knew, appointed, or to be appointed, as delegates in the deputations mentioned in the foregoing resolutions, and calls upon the Government to release them in order to fulfil their mission, under approved security as to their return, after completion of their mission, to undergo the sentence passed upon them by the Court.

[1] *Vide* "Resolutions at Mass Meeting", 16-6-1909.

8. The purport of the resolutions was telegraphed to the Government, to which the Government replied that they had no knowledge, at the time of giving instructions for the arrests above referred to, that the delegates included in the list of the Indians to be arrested would be elected.

9. After the formal election by the mass meeting and on the 17th June last, however, Mr. Gopal Naidoo, one of the delegates of India, was also arrested, together with many other Tamil Indians. Thus, out of seven Indian delegates (the eighth, Mr. Polak, being an Englishman), five were arrested, and two only, the undersigned, were left free by the authorities to proceed on their mission.

WHO ARE THE DELEGATES?

10. Mr. Amad Mohamed Cachalia is a British Indian merchant of over 18 years' standing in the Transvaal, is married and is living in Johannesburg, together with his wife and children. He is one of the trustees of the Pretoria Mosque, as also of the Hamidia Mosque at Johannesburg, and of the Dabhel Madressa Trust. He has for the past nine months held the office of Chairman of the British Indian Association and is now, for the third time, serving imprisonment for conscience sake. When he found that the Government were selling the goods of Indian merchants for payment of fines imposed under the Asiatic Registration Act, he felt called upon to hand over to his creditors the goods which were bought by him on credit. The creditors, however, took a political view of the step and forcibly sequestrated his estate, although it was fully worth 20s in the £. Mr. Cachalia submitted to the process, and his estate has already paid his creditors in full, though a forced realization has left him practically penniless.

11. Mr. Chettiar is an old man over fifty, has been settled in Johannesburg with his family for over ten years. He is a Tamil (Madras) leader and is now in gaol for the second time in connection with the Indian struggle. His son, about nineteen years old, is also in one of the Transvaal gaols in the same cause—for the fifth time.

12. Mr. Hajee Habib migrated to South Africa twenty-nine years ago, and has been connected with important Indian businesses. He was married in the Transvaal and lives in Johannesburg with his children. He has held the office of the Honorary Secretary of the local Indian Committee at Pretoria for the last fifteen years and has been intimately connected with Indian public movements is the Transvaal during the

whole of that period. He is permanent Honorary Secretary of the Pretoria Mosque and President of the Pretoria Anjuman Islam. He is a member of that portion of the Indian community which, from the beginning, submitted to the Asiatic Registration Act, after having vainly attempted to obtain relief from the Government. But its submission was due largely to the inability or unwillingness of the community to undergo the heavy pecuniary losses that were involved in non-submission. His community has, however, never relaxed its efforts, in common with the other Indians, to obtain relief. But Mr. Hajee Habib is unable any longer to enjoy the security of life and property, when hundreds of his countrymen continue for the common good to suffer untold hardships. He has, therefore, bound himself, should the efforts of the deputation fail to secure relief, to throw in his lot with the other sufferers and no longer to make use of the registration certificate obtained by him. He was the founder and Chairman of the British Indian Conciliation Committee that was formed during the month of June to intercede between the Government and the active sufferers. The Committee was intended to bring about conciliation, by affording the Government an opportunity of gracefully conceding the very just demands of the Indian community. A petition was submitted to the Government and a deputation waited upon General Smuts on the 19th June last, but General Smuts stated that he could not grant the Indian prayer on the two main points hereinafter referred to.

13. Mr. Gandhi, the fourth delegate, has been settled in South Africa for the last sixteen years, is a Barrister of the Inner Temple, Advocate of the Supreme Court of Natal and Attorney of the Supreme Court of the Transvaal. He has resided and practised his profession in the Transvaal since 1903. He is Honorary Secretary of the British Indian Association of the Transvaal and has been identified with the Indian public work in South Africa since 1893. He served at the time of the late war as Assistant Superintendent of the Indian Volunteer Ambulance Corps[1] and was mentioned in General Buller's despatches. He also served with the Indian Stretcher Bearer Corps[2] raised by the Indian community at the time of the late Zulu rebellion and held the rank of Sergeant-Major. He was co-delegate to London with Mr. H.

[1] *Vide*"Indian Ambulance Corps", 18-4-1900 & "Letter to Leaders of Ambulance Corps", 20-4-1900.

[2] *Vide* Vol "Indian Stretcher-Bearer Corps", Before 19-7-1906 & "Indian Stretcher-Bearer Corps", Before 19-7-1906.

O. Ally in 1906 in connection with the Transvaal Indian struggle. He has suffered imprisonment three times in this cause. His son is now under-going six months' imprisonment, although he holds Lord Milner's certificate and is domiciled in the Transvaal. Mr. Gandhi, Junior, is now serving imprisonment for the third time. After the compromise of January, 1908, hereinafter referred to, whilst Mr. Gandhi was on his way to the Regis-tration Office to fulfil his part of the compact between the Government and the Indian community, he was severely assaulted by some of his countrymen, who distrusted the compromise and resented his action.

14. It is worthy of note that the delegation has been largely insisted upon by those British Indians who hitherto have been too weak to risk pecuniary loss and imprisonment, and therefore have been compelled to submit to the Asiatic Act, but that they have volunteered to pay the out- of-pocket expenses of the delegates shows how keenly they desire relief.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE STRUGGLE

15. It is generally recognised that the British Indian position before the War was better than it has been at any time since, as will more fully appear from Note A[1] . Since the advent of the British flag in the Transvaal, it has been steadily growing worse. Law 3 of 1885 (which requires every Asiatic entering the Transvaal to pay £ 3 and take out a receipt therefor; deprives Asiatics of the right to own landed property, save in locations; confines their residence to such locations; and disquali-fies them from becoming burghers), which was accepted by the Imperial Government under a misapprehension and when there were only about thirty Indians resident, was never fully enforced by the late Boer Govern-ment. Indian merchants were not interfered with in their business, and the location regulations were never carried out. Notices issued to Indians to remove to locations were, under the advice of British Agents, ignored or disregarded, and under the same advice, Indian merchants traded without licences. They were even arrested for so doing, but were discharged on the intervention of the British Agent. Indian immigration was unrestric-ted, except that those Indians who settled in the State for purposes of trade had to pay £3 once for all, and in this way get their names registered. This was in no way

[1] *Vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909 . This was added according to Lord Ampthill's suggestion, *vide* Appendix XIV.

intended *as a measure of identification.*

16. After British occupation all this was altered. A measure called the Peace Preservation Ordinance was passed in 1902 to prevent the entry of persons dangerous to the peace and good government of the Colony. This Ordinance made no distinction between Europeans and Asiatics. It was of general application. But in practice it was employed as an Indian Immigration Restriction measure. An attempt was made to enforce strictly the provisions of Law 3 of 1885. When Lord Roberts was approached for relief, he said that the Indian position would be ameliorated after the establishment of complete civil administration.[1] When the latter was initiated, Lord Milner was approached.[2] Several attempts were made by the Local Government to improve the position, but sufficient firmness was lacking to carry them into effect. The golden opportunity afforded by the new British occupation, of doing away with—among many other un-British laws—the equally un-British anti-Asiatic laws, was neglected or allowed to slip by. Every later attempt at amelioration, being unsuccessful, resulted in making the position of British Indians worse and worse.

17. Lord Milner (in 1904) changed the scope and intention of Law 3 of 1885 by using one of its clauses (*with the consent of the British Indians*) for the purpose of identifying every Asiatic in the Colony. Under this arrangement and under a *definite promise* in writing that *such identification was to be final,* almost every British Indian resident of the Colony took out a certificate containing his full description and his thumb-impression. Nevertheless, just before the grant of responsible Government, the then Colonial Secretary, Mr. Duncan, (in 1906) brought up a Bill[3] which ignored Lord Milner's promise, which nullified the certificates above referred to , and made it obligatory on every indian and on other Asiatics to take out another identification ticket. The measure contained many other extremely objectionable clauses which need not be here described. Indians were greatly agitated. They bound themselves not to conform to the measure should it be sanctioned.

18. A deputation came to England (in the latter part of 1906), waited upon Lord Elgin, and the Bill was disallowed.

[1] *Vide* "The British Indian Association and Lord Milner", 11-6-1903.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 4-8-1906.

19. Responsible Government followed (in the beginning of 1907). Almost the very first Act of the new Parliament was to restore the above measure, with one meaningless verbal alteration, not in any way affecting any of the objectionable clauses. In spite of Indian protests, it was hurried through Parliament and received the Royal assent on the 2nd March, 1907. When this legislation was introduced by Mr. Duncan, it was stated that it was to be temporary and to be replaced by an immigration measure.

20. When, however, an Immigration Bill was passed, as it was during the same session, it was found that it did not repeal the Asiatic Bill (now Act), but that, read together with the latter, the effect was to bring about, in a circuitous manner, the total prohibition of Indian immigration. The two measures together, therefore, for the first time in the history of Colonial legislation, create a colour or racial bar in respect of immigration. (As to how the total prohibition of Indian immigration has been brought about by the two Acts read together, see Note B.)[1]

21. During the January of 1908, active steps were taken to enforce the provisions of the Asiatic Act (Act 2 of 1907). The Indians, in accordance with their solemn pledge, declined to submit to it, and the leaders were prosecuted and imprisoned.

22. Through the intervention of Mr. Albert Cartwright, Editor of *The Transvaal Leader*, a compromise was effected. It was partly written and partly oral. Indians contend that General Smuts promised that, if they underwent identification voluntarily, the Asiatic Act should be repealed and their voluntary identification be legalised by means of another measure, preferably by amending the Immigration Bill which had now become law. (For fuller details of the compromise, see Note C.)[2] Indians have, admittedly, fulfilled their part of the compromise, and have asked for repeal of the Act.

23. General Smuts, on behalf of the Government, contends that he never made any promise of repeal, though he admits that the question of repeal was discussed between him and Mr. Gandhi and that there might have been a misunderstanding on Mr. Gandhi's part.

24. The facts proved and admitted are:

[1] *Vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909 This was inserted in accordance with Lord Ampthill's suggestion; *vide* Appendix XIV.

[2] *Vide* Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909 This was included as a result of Lord Ampthill's suggestion; *vide* Appendix XIV

(a) That Mr. Gandhi sent him (22nd February, 1908) a draft Bill[1] by his permission, one clause of which repealed the Act. This was acknowledged, and the proposal to repeal was never repudiated.

(b) That two days after the completion of the compromise, General Smuts stated at a public meeting (6th February, 1908) that "he had told them that the law would not be repealed so long as there was an Asiatic in the country who had not registered", and again that "until every Indian in the country had registered, the law would not be repealed".

(c) That General Smuts actually drafted and circulated an amendment of the Immigration Act (13th June, 1908) repealing the Asiatic Act, but imported therein four new conditions, one of which was that British Indians, no matter what their status might be, should be treated as prohibited immigrants. Acceptance of these new clauses by the Indian community he made a condition of carrying the amendment repealing the Asiatic Act. Indians would not accept the new conditions.

25. To resume. The Indians not accepting the new conditions, the repeal fell through. These new conditions were unacceptable to them because the first three took away the right of residence, in the Transvaal, of those British Indians who were at the time domiciled in the Colony, and the fourth condition, as stated above, constituted a national affront in that it prohibited the entry of British Indians, no matter how cultured they might be, *on the ground of race*. Thus it is clear that the repeal fell through, through no fault of the Indians. General Smuts went back even upon the written and manifest terms of the compromise. For, although in accordance with the written compromise (see Note C.), Act 2 of 1907 was clearly not to be applied to those persons who had been voluntarily identified, and although their identification was to be legalised by a separate Act, a Bill was published (11th August, 1908[2]) bringing such Indians under Act 2 of 1907[3].

26. In consequence of this double breach of the compromise on

[1] *Vide* "Letter to General Smuts", (Enclosure) 22-2-1908.

[2] The original has "7th August, 1909."

[3] *Vide* "Petition to Transvaal Legislative Asseembly", 13-8-1908 and "New Bill", 15-8-1908. This paragraph was re-drafted as suggested by Lord Ampthill; *vide* Appendix XIV.

the part of Mr. Smuts, Indians held a mass meeting (16th August, 1908), burned about 2,500 of the certificates they had voluntarily taken out, and so rendered themselves amenable to prosecution. This induced a con-ference (18th August 1908[1]) between the Executive, the Progressive lea-ders, and Messrs Gandhi and Quinn (the Chinese leader)—Mr. Essop Mia, Chairman of the Association, not being available owing to short notice.

27. As a result of the conference, a new Bill was brought in, placing voluntary registrants under a separate law. The question of repeal was discussed, but the Government would not listen to the proposal, saying that the Act would be treated as a dead letter. The question of the entry of highly educated Indians too was discussed, but no relief was promised under the Immigration Act, General Smuts only going so far as to say that temporary permits would be granted to such men.

28. Another mass meeting (20th August, 1908) was, therefore, held to consider the result of the conference, and the meeting decided not to accept the new Bill, unless Act 2 of 1907 was repealed and highly edu-cated Indians might enter as a matter *of right* after passing the educational and other tests, however severe, under the general immigration law[2].

29. The Government, however, carried their new Bill in spite of the Indian protests. The new Bill—which is otherwise generally acceptable—contains certain defects which need not be set out here and which were recounted in a petition submitted to the Imperial Government.[3]

THE OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS

30. Apart from minor points arising out of the new Bill, the outstanding questions between the Transvaal Government and the Indian community are:

(1) Repeal of Act 2 of 1907 and

(2) The status of highly educated Indians.

31. The Transvaal Government alleges that these two points are as good as granted, because—

[1] The original has "1909", which is a misprint. *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 19-8-1908.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to E.F.C. Lane", 20-8-1908.

[3] *Vide* "Petition to Secretary of State for Colonies", 9-11-1908

(1) Act 2 of 1907 is to be treated as a dead letter, and

(2) Highly educated Indians can receive temporary permits to be indefinitely prolonged under a clause of the new Asiatic Bill.

32. The Indians contend that

(1) If Act 2 of 1907 is to be treated as a dead letter, it can serve no useful purpose to retain it on the Statute-book of the Colony. The Indians have (by reason of broken promi-ses) grown suspicious and do not understand the meaning of a law being a dead letter and, yet, remaining part of the laws of the country. If the Act is merely retained to satisfy the electors, they, being more intelligent, ought to understand that a law that is a dead letter need not encumber the Statute-book of the Colony, and lastly, notwithstanding the fact that the Government had pronounced this Act to be a dead letter, *it has been—when it has suited the Government—put into active operation against the Indians, and there is nothing to bar its being put into effect at any time in future.*

(2) If the Transvaal Government are willing to admit highly educated Indians, they might as well admit them under the immigration law; unless the Government intend to insult the whole Indian people, it must be a matter of indifference to them whether educated Indians are admitted under the Asiatic Act or the Immigration Act; to the Indians it is a vital principle. The manner of admission is everything to them. They are more anxious that one educated Indian who enters the Colony should do so under the general immigration law and through the front door of right than that twenty or more Indians should enter the Colony through the back door of favouritism and as ticket-of-leave men, entitled to remain in the Transvaal only during the pleasure of the Government.

33. This question of educated Indians is the crux. There is no desire to flood the Transvaal with British Indians. Indians recognize that the British and Boer population should remain predominant in South Africa. But they contend that the Colony of the Transvaal should not be allowed to offer a national insult in carrying out that policy.

34. Moreover, Indians who are resident in the Transvaal, if they are to rise in the social and moral scale, require the help of their highly educated brethren. In order to prove their *bona fides,* they declare that they would not mind an administration of the Immigration Law so as to admit the fewest possible Indians (say six) in any one year. While they object to legal inequality and legal discrimination, they are prepared to put up with administrative discrimination. This very thing is now being done in Australia. It was done in the Transvaal under the Peace Preservation Ordinance previously referred to. They further submit that, if the present law does not confer sufficient administrative authority, the Act may be amended in the desired direction, but not so as to perpetuate a *racial* distinction.

UNDER THE NEW CONSTITUTION

35. Under the new Constitution, the position of British Indians requires careful safeguarding, unless they are ultimately to be driven out of, or extinguished in, South Africa. They are practically unrepresented. What little representation they have enjoyed at the Cape and Natal is to be of no effect under the new Constitution. The union of the Europeans in South Africa will, if the Imperial authority is not properly retained, spell disaster to vested Indian rights. In the Orange River Colony, Indians, save as menials, are not admitted. In the Transvaal, apart from the above-mentioned legislation, they are debarred the right of buying land except in locations specially set apart for them, and even this right is withheld. In Natal, Indian traders are being starved out under a one-sided and oppressive administration of the licensing law of the Colony. Minor grievances throughout South Africa are too numerous to set out in detail. They affect the daily life of the Indian and make it well-nigh intolerable, by continually reminding him that the wearing of a brown skin is a crime in the sub-continent. The unmistakable tendency of the legislation in South Africa is to impose restrictions on Indian liberty in the same proportion as the liberties of the European races are extended.

36. It is, therefore, a matter of paramount importance, both from an Imperial and an Indian standpoint, that the Transvaal Indian question be satisfactorily settled. It is an undoubted fact that the Transvaal is the predominant State in South Africa. It leads; the other States follow. If, therefore, the Transvaal Indian legislation is not first set on a firm and equitable basis, the Transvaal legislation is sure to be

copied under the Union, and then the Imperial Government will be powerless to afford relief.

THE INDIAN COVENANT

37. Moreover, the Indians are bound by a solemn covenant to secure the above relief, even though they may have to suffer imprisonment and worse, for an indefinite length of time. In virtue thereof, over 2,500 imprisonments, mostly with hard labour, have taken place during the two years and six months that the struggle has lasted. The prison life has been anything but tolerable. Indian prisoners are classed and accommodated with the South African Natives, and two-thirds of their food is the same as that of the Natives. There is no such thing as a political offence in the Transvaal. Indian prisoners, whom General Smuts himself has called conscientious objectors, are imprisoned with the worst criminals. The labour required of them is generally of a severe character. Indians who have never lifted a heavy weight or done any spadde work have been put to wheeling heavily loaded barrows, digging holes repairing roads, etc., side by side with Kaffir convicts of the worst type.

38. Many Indian families have been reduced to poverty. Many homes have been broken up. And several families whose wage-earners are now in the Transvaal gaols are dependent for their daily bread on public charity.

39. Latterly, the Government, by means of a secret arrangement with the Portuguese authorities, have taken to deporting to India those who do not comply with the provisions of the Asiatic Act and who can be dealt with under the deportation sections of that Act. Under this procedure children have been torn from their parents; boys born in South Africa, and to whom India is a foreign land, have been sent penniless to India. And, although Lord Crewe has denied that those who are domiciled in any of the South African Colonies outside the Transvaal are deported, at least one such case has undoubtedly happened of an Indian possessing educational attainments, and therefore capable of residing in Natal or the Cape, and possessing domicile in Delagoa Bay, being deported to India.

40. These are the means that the Government are using to bend the Indian covenanters to their will, and while they have partly succeeded, a sufficiently large number remains who show no signs of weakening. The most influential Mohammedan, and an undisputed leader of the Indians in South Africa, Mr. Dowd Mohmed, a resident

of many years' standing in the Transvaal, and a man over 50 years of age; Mr. Parsee Rustomjee, a most prominent Parsee—another recognised leader—a man who has spent hundreds of pounds in the cause of education (even of children belonging to a faith not his own)—are both undergoing six months' imprisonment with hard labour. Two ex-sergeants, who served during the late Zulu rebellion and who are holders of the rebellion medals, are also undergoing a like term of imprisonment. At the present time there are nearly one hundred objectors undergoing imprisonment, and most of these have been through the gaols more than once in the course of the struggle.

THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE

41. Actuated by sympathy with the Indians in their sufferings, and believing in the justice of their cause, certain leading Europeans of Johannesburg have formed themselves into a committee to secure relief. This committee is led by Mr. William Hosken, M.L.A., and has been working actively in the matter.

CONCLUSION

42. Apart from any promise made by General Smuts, it is submitted that the two indian demands are intrinsically just, that it is not difficult for the Government to grant them, and that, in order to have them granted, the Transvaal Indians have gone through a long course of sustained suffering. In the circumstances, they feel that their covenant should be respected, and that regard for the wishes of the self-governing Colonies should not debar the Imperial Government from protecting British subjects in the same way as it would protect them in foreign countries—the more so when such subjects are unrepresented, as in the present instance.[1]

M. K. GANDHI

HAJEE HABIB

FOOTNOTE TO THE STATEMENT

Since preparing the foregoing statement, the delegates have

[1] The original draft of this paragraph was amended on Lord Ampthill's suggestion. In his letter of August 4, he had advised: "It will not conciliate the Imperial Government to tell them that they have been 'shirking their duty' however true that may be, and we must conciliate them at this stage. How would it be to say that respect for Colonial Self-government does not debar the Imperial Government from protecting British subjects in the same way as it would protect them in foreign countries?"

received a telegram which shows that an Indian youth named Nagappen, who was sentenced on the 21st June last to be imprisoned for ten days with hard labour, in connection with the struggle, was discharged on the 30th June in a dying condition, and died on the 6th July. The allegations according to the cablegram are that it was bitterly cold, the blankets supplied ware insufficient, the native warders were brutal, and medical attendance was not forthcoming. The same cablegram adds that Mr. Dowd Mahomed, one of the foremost Indians in South Africa, over fifty years old, and who was suffering imprisonment for six months, was discharged owing to illness. The date of the cablegram is 12th July, and if he was discharged after the death of Nagappen, he had completed five months' imprisonment.

Note A

UNDER THE BOER *Regime*	SINCE BRITISH ANNEXATION
Asiatics could freely enter the Republic and, subsequent to 1885, could reside and trade on payment of a £3 tax.	Only such Asiatics as could prove pre-war residence have been re-admitted.
"Registration" required by Law 3 of 1885 (amended in 1886) did not include identification particulars. It consisted merely of the payment of the £3 fee and the holding of the receipt therefor.	"Registration" voluntarily assented to by Asiatics in 1903, under advice of Lord Milner, included very full indentification particulars. Re-registration under the Act of 1907 *is compulsory* and additionally humiliating in details. It applies to all children from eight years of age upwords. Failure to re-register entails fine, im-prisonment, and expulsion. (Since modified by Act 36 of 1908).
Asiatics were denied burgher rights.	Asiatics, including British Indians, are excluded from both political and municipal privileges.

Asiatics might not own fixed property, save in Asiatic locations.	This is still the case.
Asiatics were liable to be relegated to streets, wards, and locations specially set apart for that purpose.	Asiatics, including British Indians, are still so liable, and are threatened with such segregation.
Whereas Law 3 imposing the above disabilities was virtually inoperative, British Indians [were] being protected by His Majesty's Government.	Since the annexation, and more especially since the grant of responsible government, British Indians have failed to secure such Imperial protection.
Responsible English Ministers claimed for British Indians the equal rights of civilized subjects of the Empire. The British Government virtually pledged itself to the reinstatement in their just rights of Transvaal British Indians.	The British Government have apparently abandoned the self-same Indians, who resided in the Colony prior to its annexation, to the tyranny of trade rivals, and of a Government largely composed of legislators who were responsible for the Boer Law 3 of 1885.
British Indian protests agaist the Boer Law were supported by Imperial Government, and the insistence by the Republic of its right to legislate indiscriminately against Asiatics within its borders figured prominently in the causes that led up to the war.	Now, for want of effective Imperial protection, British Indians have been obliged to fall back on passive resistance, which has resulted in the imprisonment of 2,500 of their number, and other sufferings.
Generally, while theoretically British Indians were placed under the above disabilities, in practice the law was not strictly enforced.	The restrictions upon the freedom of British Indians have been enforced with the utmost rigour, and the absence of a penalty clause to Law 3 of 1885 has alone saved the Indians from its worst consequences.

NOTE B

The Asiatic Bill provides that every Asiatic in the Colony should take out an identification ticket, and it also defines an Asiatic eligible for receiving such ticket. The definition states that only an Asiatic who is domiciled in the Transvaal from before the passing of this measure shall be eligible. The Bill further provides that every Asiatic who is held to be ineligible is subject to a removal order from the Colony.

The Immigration Bill, among other provisions, makes a person who is subject to a removal order a prohibited immigrant. Now, an educated Indian who has not been domiciled in the Colony before the passing of the Asiatic Bill is ineligible for holding an identification ticket, and is therefore subject to a removal order, and thus, under the Immigration Bill, is a prohibited immigrant.

NOTE C

The written compromise was that—

1. British Indians should voluntarily identify themselves.

2. That Act 2 of 1907 should not be applied to such British Indians, and that the voluntary identification should be legalised by a separate measure.

These terms are embodied in a letter addressed by Messrs Gandhi, Quinn, and Naidoo to the Transvaal Colonial Secretary, and dated 28th January, 1908[1]. Two days after the receipt of the letter, Mr. Gandhi, who was then a prisoner, was taken to Pretoria to discuss the compromise with the Colonial Secretary (Mr. Smuts), and a further discussion took place subsequent thereto. At these interviews, according to Mr. Gandhi's statement, Mr. Smuts promised to repeal the Asiatic Act (2 of 1907) on the completion by the Asiatics of their part of the bargain, *i.e.*, voluntarily identifying themselves.[2]

From a photostat of a printed copy: S. N. 5180

[1] The original has "26th January, 1907" which is a misprint; *vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 28-1-1908.

[2] There was a further Note D, but this was not printed; *vide* "Letter to Lord Ampthill", 6-8-1909

244. LETTER TO J. X. MERRIMAN

4 VICTORIA STREET,
LONDON, S. W.,
July 16, 1909

DEAR MR. MERRIMAN,

I am much obliged to you for your courteous note.

Of course I have no claim upon your attention, save what your humanity may prompt you to allow me.

I take it in any case that you will see Lord Ampthill if he writes to you, and do what you reasonably can.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

THE RIGHT HON. J. X. MERRIMAN
REFORM CLUB
PALL MALL, S. W.

From a photostat: Gandhiji's Letters to Merriman. Courtesy: South African Library, Cape Town

245. LONDON

[After *July 16, 1909*]

CURZON WYLLIE'S ASSASSINATION

Under the heading "Deputation Notes", I have given all the information about the activities of the deputation that can be made public. Under the above heading, I give other news worth reporting.

The assassination of Sir Curzon Wyllie and Dr. Lalkaka was a terrible thing. Sir Curzon Wyllie served as an officer at several places in India. Here he was Lord Morley's aide-de-camp. Dr. Lalkaka was a Parsi physician and carried on business at Shanghai in China. He was here on a short visit only.

On July 2, there was a tea-meeting of the National Indian Association in the Jehangir Hall of the Imperial Institute. Such meetings are arranged with the object of bringing Indian students into contact with Englishmen, who therefore attend as the guests of Indians. Sir Curzon Wyllie was [thus] a guest of the assassin. From this

point of view, Mr. Madanlal Dhingra murdered his guest in his own house, and also killed Dr. Lalkaka who tried to interpose himself between them.

It is being said in defence of Sir Curzon Wyllie's assassination that it is the British who are responsible for India's ruin, and that, just as the British would kill every German if Germany invaded Britain, so too it is the right of any Indian to kill any Englishman.

Every Indian should reflect thoughtfully on this murder. It has done India much harm; the deputation's efforts have also received a setback. But that need not be taken into consideration. It is the ultimate result that we must think of. Mr. Dhingra's defence is inadmissible. In my view, he has acted like a coward. All the same, one can only pity the man. He was egged on to do this act by ill-digested reading of worthless writings. His defence of himself, too, appears to have been learnt by rote. It is those who incited him to this that deserve to be punished. In my view, Mr. Dhingra himself is innocent. The murder was committed in a state of intoxication. It is not merely wine or *bhang* that makes one drunk; a mad idea also can do so. That was the case with Mr. Dhingra. The analogy of Germans and Englishmen is fallacious. If the Germans were to invade [Britain], the British would kill only the invaders. They would not kill every German whom they met. Moreover, they would not kill an unsuspecting German, or Germans who are guests. If I kill someone in my own house without a warning—someone who has done me no harm—I cannot but be called a coward. There is an ancient custom among the Arabs that they would not kill anyone in their own house, even if the person be their enemy. They would kill him after he had left the house and after he had been given time to arm himself. Those who believe in violence would be brave men if they observe these rules when killing anyone. Otherwise, they must be looked upon as cowards. It may be said that what Mr. Dhingra did, publicly and knowing full well that he himself would have to die, argues courage of no mean order on his part. But as I have said above, men can do these things in a state of intoxication, and can also banish the fear of death. Whatever courage there is in this is the result of intoxication, not a quality of the man himself. A man's own courage consists in suffering deeply and over a long period. That alone is a brave act which is preceded by careful reflection.

I must say that those who believe and argue that such murders may do good to India are ignorant men indeed. No act of treachery can ever profit a nation. Even should the British leave in consequence of such murderous acts, who will rule in their place? The only answer

is: the murderers. Who will then be happy? Is the Englishman bad because he is an Englishmen? Is it that everyone with an Indian skin is good? If that is so, we can claim no rights in South Africa, nor should there be any angry protest against oppression by Indian princes. India can gain nothing from the rule of murderers—no matter whether they are black or white. Under such a rule, India will be utterly ruined and laid waste. This train of thought leads to a host of reflections, but I have no time to set them down here. I am afraid some Indians will commend this murder. I believe they will be guilty of a heinous sin. We ought to abandon such fanciful ideas. More about this later.

" SUFFRAGIST"

The British women who have been demanding the franchise are putting up a wonderful show. They are not deterred by any kind of suffering. Some of these ladies have suffered in health, but they do not give up the struggle. Every day a number of them keep standing the whole night near Parliament gate with the intention of handing in a petition of Mr. Asquith. This is no ordinary courage. What great faith they must have ! A great many women have been ruined, and more are being ruined, in this struggle, but they do not yield. Their campaign has gone on for a longer time than ours. We can learn quite a few things and draw much inspiration from it.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-8-1909

246. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD CREWE

LONDON,

July 20, 1909

PRIVATE SECRETARY TO

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

SIR,

Mr. Ritch, the Secretary to the South Africa British Indian Committee, has already reported to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies the arrival of a delegation on behalf of British Indians in the Transvaal.

It consists of Mr. Hajee Habib of Pretoria, merchant and President of the pretoria Anjuman Islam and myself, two other

delegates[1] having been arrested and imprisoned under the Asiatic Registration Act before their departure.

My colleague and I have purposely refrained from seeking an interview with His Lordship, because we are endeavouring at the present moment to secure a settlement of the difficult question that has brought us here, without having to trouble the Imperial Government, but as the Conference regarding the South African Draft Act commences to-day, we consider it desirable that we should draw His Lordship's attention to the fact that the Transvaal Indian question has involved untold suffering to British Indians in that Colony,and that it still continues to cause grave anxiety to the British Indian leaders.

At the present stage we are desirous of avoiding a public discussion of the question, so as to facilitate a private settlement. We shall, therefore, be deeply grateful to His Lordship if he will be pleased to grant us a private interview, so as to enable us to place the position to date before His Lordship.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records: 291/142; also, from a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4951

247. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]

July 21, 1909

MY LORD,

I am extremely obliged to Your Lordship for your letter of the 20th inst. I am very sorry for the proper address not being on my letter[2] . The fact is, I have a special index of addresses, which was prepared when the deputation was last here. Miss Polak, who is still new to the work, looked up the index book and took down from

[1] A. M. Cachalia and V. A. Chettiar; *vide* "Statement to the Press on Kheda situation", 28-3-1918

[2] Gandhiji had an interview with Lord Ampthill on July 14, and seems subsequently to have addressed him a letter which is not available.

among the three addresses given against your name the first one, which was put in there from a directory. The Bedford address was the third on the list, but as the work has been done somewhat under pressure, she hurriedly took the first, hence the mistake.

I agree with Your Lordship that Mr. Merriman's letter[1] is rather discouraging. At the same time, I respectfully venture to think that, if somehow or other you could come in personal contact with the South African politicians, it will be useful for future action in connection with the Imperial work that you, as President of the South Africa British Indian Committee, are engaged in.

There is no doubt that, under the Union , a great deal of trouble is in store for British Indians throughout South Africa.

The Hon'ble Mr. Sauer, to whom also I wrote,[2] has not said anything in reply, from which I assume he retains still the same position that he did on board.

I am obliged to Your Lordship for offering to see Sir W. Lee-Warner. I can well understand the pressure on your valuable time. It is therefore a matter for grateful satisfaction to all who know Your Lordship, as it is to my colleague and myself, that amid your many duties you find time to give so much attention to the British Indian question in the Transvaal and other parts of South Africa.

I have already addressed a letter[3] to the Private Secretary to the Earl of Crewe asking for a private interview, and a similar application[4] has gone forward to the Private Secretary to Lord Morley.

I beg to remain,

Your Lordship's obedient servant,

LORD AMPTHILL, G. C. S. I., G. C. I. E.
CURZON HOTEL
CURZON STREET, W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 4953

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 22-7-1909
[2] This letter is not available.
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Crewe", 20-7-1909
[4] This is not available.

248. LETTER TO "SOUTH AFRICA"

[LONDON,]
July 22, 1909

SIR,

In your leading article in the current number, you state that:

> Mr. Gandhi, of Natal and Transvaal fame, admits that the campaign of himself and his friends will be dictated by sympathisers in England, whose names by the way are unfortunately associated with the dangerous movement in India, which has been brought into such startling prominence of late.

Will you kindly allow me to say in reply that what I said to Reuter's Agent[1] was that our movements will be guided by the advice that may be given us by Lord Ampthill and his Committee.

I am not aware that Lord Ampthill or his colleagues are associated with what you call "the dangerous movement in India". Moreover, for passive resisters there can be no dictation save that of their consciences. They are under solemn obligation to secure what they are justly entitled to, and, in their endeavour to do so, they are resolved to undergo personal suffering to any extent, not even excluding death. The test of true passive resistance is sacrifice of self and not of others.

Indian Opinion, 21-8-1909

249. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

[LONDON,]
July 22, 1909

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have nothing very startling to report. Mr. Ameer Ali who saw Sir Richard, came over yesterday to the hotel and he seemed rather hopeful. Sir William Lee-Warner and Mr. Morison were also at the hotel, but they merely wanted to understand the true position.

I enclose herewith the copy of a letter from Lord Ampthill, which speaks for itself. I have applied for a private interview with the Colonial Secretary, as also with the Secretary of State for India. There appears in today's *Morning Post* a statement to the effect that the

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Reuter", 10-7-1909

control of differential Asiatic legislation will be in the hands of the Governor-General and Council and not in the hands of the Provincial Councils. I do not know what this means; it may mean much or it may mean little.

Mr. Merriman, to whose letter Lord Ampthill had made reference, states that, beyond expressing the wish that there should be no legislation repellent to the Liberal principles which the South African statesmen pretended to profess, he would not be able to do anything. We have seen Stead[1] who too has promised to see General Smuts. I need not worry you with the names of others whom we have seen. By the time this letter reaches you, the result of the private negotiations will have been known; I therefore do not want to forecast it.

I am certain that you will cable your arrival in India. It is a pity I do not know the name of the steamer by which you were to go to India. However, I am sending a cable[2] to Daphtary with a view to his making some arrangements in advance.

Millie will be here the day after to-morrow. Mater has already engaged apartments—two bedrooms and one sitting room for £1 per week. They will be fixed up there but will take their meals with Mater. This appears to me to be a very serviceable arrangement, and will give Millie complete rest. The weather just now is very fine and it ought to prove very suitable for the children.

I think I forgot to mention to you the name of Professor Bhandar-kar[3]. He is, as you know, one of the greatest Sanskrit scholars of the age. I am sure you will go to Poona; you should then make it a point to see him; you may even draw him out of his seclusion on this question, but, in any case, it would be better for you to come in contact with him. You should also see Mr. Nazar's[4] son. His address is Girgaum.

I am sending you a copy of the list of those who took part in the banquet to the Ottoman Parliament delegates. The function was brilliant but I came away from it much saddened. The banqueting hall

[1] W. T. Stead (1849-1912); eminent publicist and editor of *Review of Reviews.*

[2] This is not available.

[3] Dr. Ramakrishna Gopal Bhandarkar (1837-1925); orientalist, Sanskrit scholar and social reformer; author of several books on religion and history.

[4] Mansukhlal Hiralal Nazar, first editor of *Indian Opinion* and Gandhiji's colleague. He died in 1906; *vide* "Mansukhlal Hiralal Nazar", 27-1-1906

was crowded; the dinner took nearly three hours. The fumes from the wine-glasses and the smoke from the cigars or cigarettes, smoked by nearly three hundred guests, had a most depressing effect on the mind. I then involuntarily called it "refined savagery", and it reminded me of the scene described by poets at banquets held by Rakshasa.

The statement[1] of the case that was sent you last week has not yet been published. The summary[2] has been revised; I enclose copy herewith, as also copy of my letter[3] to Professor Gokhale.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4956

250. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

LONDON,

July 23, 1909

DEAR PROFESSOR GOKHALE,

By the time this reaches you, Mr. Polak will have been in India. Our work here is very difficult; this, however, will be no news to you. I merely mention it by way of introduction, in order to enable me to ask you if you can spare the time to give special attention to it.

I am most anxious that our leaders should realize the national importance of the struggle. Mr. Polak has been sent as a missionary to do this work. We will continue to suffer in the Transvaal until justice is granted, but we have a right to expect much more than we have yet received from the Motherland.

Mr. Polak's work is very difficult. I have asked him to place him-self unreservedly under your instructions and I know that you will not spare yourself in making his work as light as possible. We are endeavouring by private negotiations to arrive at a settlement, but I know Mr. Smuts too well to put much faith in these negotiations. In a week's time we may be obliged to take public action, and in that case it will be absolutely necessary for India to support our prayer, if we are to do anything at all. May I look to you to do whatever you may

[1] *Vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 28-3-1918.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to the Press", 5-11-1909

[3] This seems to have been dated and despatched the next day; *vide* the following items.

consider necessary?[4]

I enclose herewith a summary of a longer statement that we have prepared, and that will be published immediately the result of the negotiations is known—provided they are unsuccessful.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

THE HON'BLE PROFESSOR GOKHALE, M.L.C.
POONA

From a photostat of the typewritten original: G.N. 4110

251. LETTER TO MRS. VOGL

LONDON,
July 23, 1909

DEAR MRS. VOGL,[1]

Miss Schlesin tells me that you were present at an Indian Women's meeting. I was delighted to have the news. I know that you can impart your own enthusiasm to them and I know also how much they appreciate the sympathy of their European sisters.

Miss Schlesin will give you all the information about the work here. I will therefore close, with my thanks to you for your work and regard[s] to both you and Mr. Vogl.

Whenever you want more copies of *Indian Opinion,* you should simply ask for them at the office.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Mrs. Polak arrives today.

From the typewritten original signed by Gandhiji: C. W. 4408 Courtesy: Arun Gandhi

[4] Polak had a long talk with Gokhale, and in his letter of August 14 reported to Gandhiji: "He is not hopeful, but is putting the whole of his energies and organisation at my disposal. Agrees to necessity of meeting. Promises to work on Sir P[herozeshah] M[ehta] who is holding back. Maps out itinerary—Bombay, Poona, Surat, Baroda, Ahmedabad, Madras, Calcutta, U.P. etc., etc. Will arrange everything for the future. Wonderful man, has most accurate knowledge of facts and principles. Huge admirer of yours. Is worn out with overwork, worry and malaria fever."

[1] Mrs. Vogl conducted classes for Indian women an organized Indian Bazaars in Johannesburg. She, as also her husband, a draper, took keen interest in the cause of Indians.

252. LONDON

[*July 23, 1909*]

DR. ABDUL MAJID

A party was arranged in honour of Syed Abdul Majid, LL.D., who is proceeding to India in a few days. Mr. Hajee Habib and I attended it by invitation. An occasion offering itself, there was a discussion on the Transvaal problem. Dr. Syed Abdul Majid promised to work [for us] in India. Some whites were also present at the function. Mr. Ritch, too, attended.

OTTOMAN PARTY

Some members of the Turkish Parliament have arrived here specially with the intention of meeting prominent leaders of the British nation. A dinner was given in their honour in Hotel Cecil. Among the members, the chief is Mr. Tallat. Others include Mustafa Arif Bey, Jawad Bey, Dr. Reeza Taufik Bey, Mehmen Ali Bey, Zuberzade, Ahmed Pasha, Mighat Bey, Suleman Khustani, Nazim Mazalian Effendi, Sassoon Effendi and Fazal Arif Effendi.

The party must have been attended by nearly 300 persons. The Earl of Oslo was in the chair. Lord Curzon was also present. About 50 Indians attended. Among them were Mr. Justice Ameer Ali, Nawab Imd-ul-Mulk Syed Hussain Bilgrami, Major Syed Hussain, Sir Muncherji Bhownag-gree and others.

Lord Curzon was the principal speaker. Mr. Suleman Khustani, who replied on behalf of the Turkish members, is a Christian. He said that in the Turkish Empire all enjoyed equal rights.

DHINGRA CASE

Mr. Madanlal Dhingra's case came up for hearing today (the 23rd). We were no permitted not be present in the court. Since Mr. Dhingra did not put up any defence, the case did not take much time. He only stated that he had done the deed for the good of his country, and that he did not regard it as a crime. The presiding judge sentenced him to death. I have already given my views about this assassination.[1] Mr. Dhingra's statement, according to me, argues mere childishness or mental derangement. Those who incited him to this act will be called to account in God's court, and are also guilty in the eyes of the world.

[1] *Vide* "London", After 16-7-1909.

SHADOW OF DHINGRA CASE

Mr. Dhingra's case has led to Government action against *The Indian Sociologist.* The journal had published a categorical statement that homicide for the good of one's country was no murder. The printer, poor man, has been sentenced to four months' imprisonment for printing such a violent article. The man who has been sentenced is a poor, innocent Englishman, who was entirely ignorant [of what he was printing]. The authors are in Paris, and hence the Government is unable to get at them. Such acts will not advance the progress of the nation. So long as the people do not throw up men who will be prepared to invite the utmost suffering on themselves, India will never prosper.

NATAL DEPUTATION

The Natal deputation is due to arrive next week. By that time, the Union Act will have been passed. The conference over the Act is in session. It is not likely to propose any important modifications. It appears that amendment of the existing laws relating to the Coloured races will be kept within the jurisdiction of the Union Parliament. This means nothing. If not actual death, it is something very much like it. I am afraid the Natal deputation is arriving too late. Even otherwise, I do not think much could have been achieved.

DR. ABDURRAHMAN

Dr. Abdurrahman has been working very hard. He has had an interview even with Lord Crewe. But it does not seem likely that it will lead to anything. Mr. Schreiner has been striving hard. There will be a party in his honour on the 27th in the Hotel, from where I am writing this.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 21-8-1909

253. LETTER TO UNDER SECRETARY FOR COLONIES

LONDON,
July 24, 1909

TO
THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
COLONIAL OFFICE
WHITEHALL, S. W.

SIR,

With reference to your letter of the 23rd instant No. 24316/1909—I have the honour to state that my colleague and I, if received, will, in view of the approaching unification of South Africa, place before His Lordship the position of the British Indians in the Transvaal as it arises from, and is affected by, the voluntary suffering that the British Indians in the Transvaal have undergone and are still undergoing. It was the wish of the majority of those British Indians who, being too weak to put up with physical suffering or to risk pecuniary loss, have yielded obedience to the Asiatic Registration Act they nevertheless do not like, that we should proceed to London and, taking advantage of the presence in London of the chief members of the Transvaal Government, lay before His Lordship the Indian position in the hope of securing friendly intervention and thereby, if possible, ending a situation that has caused untold suffering to hundreds of innocent British Indians.

British Indians in the Transvaal have, for the past two years and six months, been moving the transvaal Government to repeal the Asiatic Registration Act of 1907, and so remove the humiliation it imposes upon them, and to respect the status of highly educated Indians desiring to enter the Transvaal in accordance with British traditions and in a manner similar to that obtaining in the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope and the other British Colonies.

I venture to hope that His Lordship will be pleased to give us an opportunity of laying the case before him personally, and so carry out the purpose for which we have been specially sent by the Indian community in the Transvaal.

I have, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records: 291/142; also, from a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4958

254. LETTER TO W. P. SCHREINER

July 24, 1909

DEAR SIR[1],

Mr. Hajee Habib, President of the Pretoria Anjuman-e-Islam and I, as you may be aware, are in London as a deputation on behalf of the Transvaal British Indians in connection with the struggle that has now gone on in that Colony for the last two years and a half.

We have heard a great deal about your noble and self-sacrificing work in connection with the welfare of the coloured races of South Africa under the Draft South Africa Act.[2]

If you would kindly appoint a time, my colleague and I would like to make your acquaintance and pay our respects to you

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

THE HON. W. P. SCHREINER
TRAFALGAR SQUARE
MORLEY'S HOTEL, W. C.

From a photostat: BC. 112 file 12 (3.1). Courtesy: University Library, Cape Town, South Africa.

255. DEPUTATION NOTES [–IV][3]

[*July 24, 1909*]

I think I reported last week that we met Sir William Lee-Warner and Mr. Morison in the hotel where we are staying. They expressed their sympathy. Afterwards we met Major Syed Hussain Bilgrami. He has agreed to do his best. We also saw, through the good offices of Miss Winterbottom, a lady named Mrs. Tedman. She has married a

[1] William Philip Schreiner (1857-1919); politician and barrister; High Commissioner for Union of South Africa in England, 1914; twice Attorney-General; Prime Minister of Cape Colony, 1898-1900.

[2] *Vide* "Deputation's Voyage[-I] After 23-6-1909, "Deputation Notes [—VIII] After 21-8-1909.

[3] In *Indian Opinion*, the title of this and the subsequent dispatches was changed from "Deputation's Voyage" to "English Deputation's Voyage", as another series entitled "Indian Deputation's Voyage" had commenced.

Dutchman. Mr. Tedman works for a Dutch newspaper there and knows General Botha and others. He has promised to see General Botha. We also called on a journalist named Mr. Brown, who had been helpful during the previous deputation [in 1906].

The Parsi Anjuman gave a dinner in honour of one Mr. Bhedwar, a Parsi barrister, with Sir Muncherji in the chair. We were invited to attend the function. [Several] Indians made speeches on that occasion promising to help us. We, too, as also Mr. Ritch, were given an opportunity to say a few words on the subject.

We had an interview with Mr. Stead, editor of the *Review of Reviews.* He is on good terms with General Smuts and has promised to see him.

We met Mr. Gupta and Nawab Imd-ul-Mulk Syed Hussain Bilgrami, members of the India Office. We have explained the entire position to them.

We had meetings with others also, but these, being unimportant, I am not reporting.

As advised by Lord Ampthill, we have requested Lord Crewe and Lord Morley to fix time for interviews with them. There has been a reply from Lord Crewe, asking us to give reasons why we want to see him. We have sent a reply.[1] Whether an interview will be granted or not will be known next week.

The more experience I have of meeting so-called big men or even men who are really great, the more disgusted I feel after every such meet-ing. All such efforts are no better than pounding chaff. Everyone appears preoccupied with his own affairs. Those who occupy positions of power show little inclination to do justice. Their only concern is to hold on to their positions. We have to spend a whole day in arranging for an interview with one or two persons. Write a letter to the person concerned, wait for his reply, acknowledge it and then go to his place. One may be living in the north and another in the south. Even after all this fuss, one cannot be very hopeful about the outcome. If considera-tions of justice had any appeal, we would have got [what we want] long before now. The only possibility is that some concessions may be granted through fear. It can give no pleasure to a satyagrahi to have to work in such conditions.

I think it will be far better to submit to still further suffering than exhaust ourselves in such efforts and waste so much money on them. If, in spite of the difficulties, our demands are conceded, I shall

[1] *Vide* the preceding item

conclude that we had suffered enough to have earned the concessions. If they are not conceded,I shall believe that still more sacrifices are called for. I can think of no course so wonderfully effective as voluntary suffering. Even the most powerful orators cannot protest as effectively as [such] suffering can. Suffering is bound to bring redress. Those who are pre- pared to suffer need not advertise their suffering. I believe, It will speak for itself. Accordingly. I advise every Indian to have suffering as his companion. Everything else is mere bubbles in water. Do not expect much from the deputation. Always bear in mind that there is no help like self-help, and ready for gaol. That way alone lies victory.

The cables received from other towns have been forwarded to the Colonial Office and the India Office.

INOPPORTUNE

Everyone believes that the deputation has arrived at an inopportune time. In no more than a few days, all the important men will have left London. They take a holiday in the month of August. It is therefore difficult to undertake any public activity. The situation is awkward, to be sure, but the circumstances would not have permitted sending the deputation at some other time. It was necessary that it should have been here just when the others from South Africa were here. And the upshot of it is that, if the private moves bear no fruit, there is precious little possibility of gaining anything through public representations.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 21-8-1909

256. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
July 26, 1909

MY LORD,

I am obliged to Your Lordship for your letter of the 24th instant.

I do not put the interpretation you have upon the absence of reply from Mr. Sauer,[1] for I simply informed him that Your Lordship

[1] Lord Ampthill had felt that they could not profitably work in that quarter.

would probably write to him. I am, therefore, rather inclined to think that he is still in the same receptive mood that I found him in on board. I told Your Lordship that Mr. Sauer was more enthusiastic than Mr. Merriman.

Mr. Hajee Habib and I have just returned from a private visit to Lord Morley. His Lordship gave us a very sympathetic consideration and said that he would write to Lord Crewe, and on my suggestion, agreed to discuss the question with Mr. Smuts. Lord Crewe has not yet sent an appointment, but he has asked us to reduce to writing the points we would discuss at the interview, if granted. The letter giving the points went forward on Saturday.[1]

Sir Richard Solomon has sent a confidential note saying that he has already discussed the whole question with Mr. Smuts, but that it might be some time before General Smuts decides, as he would be very busy with the conference work. As I know Mr. Smuts so very well, this delay is somewhat ominous, because he has more than once put off friends who have approached him on inconvenient matters. Should we, apart from an interview with Lord Morley and that with Lord Crewe—if it is granted, make a written submission, a short statement is quite ready.[2] I have refrained from having it printed for circulation because of the negotiations that are going on, but if the progress of the negotiations virtually enforce silence upon us, that can hardly apply to the friends of the cause. Would not the purpose be served if Your Lordship wrote, or several public men jointly wrote, to Lord Crewe urging him to use his good offices with the Transvaal ministers to signalize the advent of the Union, by granting the small concessions to British Indians in the Transvaal, who have suffered so

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Under Secretary for Colonies", 24-7-1909.

[2] Perhaps unaware of the fact that Gandhiji had already prepared a statement, Lord Ampthill, in his letter of July 24, had suggested to Gandhiji: "you should draw up a very brief and explicit statement of your demands for submission to the authorities of the Imperial and Colonial Governments and for the information of the public at large. Such a document must necessarily be very brief and, if I were to advise, I should say that the reasons which you give in support of your demand should mainly lay stress on the desirability of ending a quarrel which all must in their hearts deplore and of enabling His Majesty's Indian subjects in the Transvaal to share in the general rejoicing over the union of South Africa. You could then send this statement to His Majesty's Ministers, to the Colonial representatives in this country, and to the Press." *Vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909

much and so terribly for them.[1]

Your Lordship may have noticed that a deputation on behalf of the Aborigines' Protection Society was to have waited upon the South African Premiers and other public men, and that it did not so wait only because Sir Charles Dilke[1] , who was to have led the deputation, could not accept the time that was appointed by these gentlemen.

I cannot help feeling that, if Your Lordship were still to seek a dis-cussion with Mr. Merriman and Mr. Sauer or, failing them, with Messrs Botha and Smuts, it cannot but be good. May I also state that it is very largely within the power of Sir George Farrar[2] and Sir Percy Fitzpatrick[3] to bring about a settlement,and if Your Lordship could even see them, I am sure a way would be opened to a satisfactory solution.

I would venture to invite Your Lordship's special attention to the current number of *Indian Opinion*; it contains three remarkable petitions[4] and facts about the Indian deputation.

I hope that Your Lordship will pardon me for encroaching upon your time.

I am, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4960

[1] Replying to this in his letter of July 28, Lord Ampthill observed: "I think that I am right in saying that there is no question of altering the South Africa Bill which does not touch the problem at all. All that is wanted is that the passage of the Bill through Parliament should be signalized by an announcement on behalf of the Transvaal Government that they intend by a conspicuous act of grace to put an end to the difficulty and remove the Indian grievance."

[1] Sir Charles Wentworth Dilke (1843-1911); politician, writer, Member of Parliament and Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, 1880-2

[2] (1859-1915); a mine-owner an legislator of the Transvaal; served in the South African War, 1899-1900; a leading member of the Progressive Party

[3] (1862-1931); a mining magnate, author of several books on South Africa, a prominent member of the Progressive Party

[4] These were addressed by the Transvaal Indians to the Queen, Dadabhai Naoroji and the President of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce. *Vide* Appendix XV.

257. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD MORLEY

LONDON,
July 26, 1909

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
THE RIGHT HON'BLE THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA
WHITEHALL, S. W.

SIR,

I shall be obliged if you will place the following before Lord Morley:

At the private interview[1] that His Lordship was graciously pleased to grant to Mr. Hajee Habib and myself, I was unable, owing to want of time, to say all I had intended to . I wish, therefore, on behalf of my colleague and myself to state that the two outstanding questions between the Transvaal Government and the Indian community—namely, the repeal of the Asiatic Act and the guarding of the status of educated British Indians on a basis similar to that adopted in the other Colonies, are the questions which are of paramount importance, because of the solemn covenant undertaken by the community. This, however, does not mean that the British Indians do not feel aggrieved about the other disabilities in the Transvaal, such, for instance, as the prohibition to hold landed property, riding on the tramcars, etc.

We, however,feel that these questions are not those for which the community has suffered imprisonment or suffered such personal hardships as it has for the removal of those two grievances. British Indians will, however, continue to adopt the means they have hitherto adoptedfor the removal of the other disabilities. But the two grievances above. named have been separated from the others by reason of the terrible suffering that they have involved and will continue to involve until a proper settlement is arrived at.

My colleague and I trust that Lord Morley will be able to find time to give special attention to this matter and, by his friendly offices on behalf of those whose interests are in his keeping secure an honourable settlement.

I have, etc.,

M. K. Gandhi

Colonial Office Records: 291/142; also, from a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4961

[1] This had taken place earlier in the day; *vide* the preceding item.

258. DEPUTATION NOTES [*–V*]

[After *July* 26,1909]

There have been very few interviews during this week. Most of the time was spent in writing letters and meeting all sorts of people.

MOST IMPORTANT INTERVIEW

The most important interview[1] was with Lord Morley. The gentleman saw us in his private capacity. It is difficult to say whether his reply was satisfactory or not. I shall only say that he has promised to help.

Lord Ampthill has been striving hard. What he has been doing is completely private, so that I shall write nothing about it. He is fully confident that a settlement will be reached. We are in continuous correspondence with him. We must now await the outcome. I gather from his letter that something will be known next week. If so, the news will be conveyed through cable, so that perhaps the result will have been known by the time this article appears in print.

Should the outcome be satisfactory, it must not be attributed to any very strong pressure applied in England, but only to our gaol-going. Anyone here can easily see this. Every white who hears of our gaol-going is struck with admiration. Voluntary submission to suffering cannot but have a powerful effect. This has been my experience again and again.

Mr. Hajee Habib, Mr. Abdul Caadir and I were invited to Miss Smith's. Everyone there was talking about the same thing, namely, gaol-going The very mention of gaol-going impressed people. I see the time drawing nearer every day when no one, whether black or white, will suc-ceed in obtaining a hearing by merely making petitions. If I am rig-ht,then, no force in the world can compare with soul force, that is to say, with satyagraha. I therefore wish that Indians should fill the gaols if, by the time this letter is published, there has been no decision or solution.

On August 9, a number of Indian friends will have been released. It is my request to all of them to be fearless and go back to gaol. Let them not betray the pledge they have taken. Such is the

[1] This had taken place on July 26; *vide* "Letter to Lord Ampthill", 26-7-1909

prevailing wind all over the world; everyone, young or old, feels the call of patriotism. Much evil [often] results from this. Those who embrace satyagraha will alone be able to serve with the right kind of devotion.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-8-1909

259. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]

July 28, 1909

MY LORD,

Sir Muncherjee wrote privately to General Smuts requesting an interview. General Smuts has offered to send him an appointment after the pressure on his time is relieved. This may mean much or little, but, as it may also mean that General Smuts intends by delaying the matter to prevent a public discussion of our mission, I feel that the time has come to circulate our statement and let the authorities as also the British public know what our mission is. Sir Muncherjee not only agrees with this but is insistent on it, but, as in my letter of the 26th inst., I have expressed the contrary opinion, I consider it my duty to place the new phase before Your Lordship and request your opinion as to the desirability of publishing the statement. May I trouble you to send me a telegraphic reply.[1]

I have seen Mr. Ritch's letter about holding a Committee meeting. I venture to think that a Committee meeting is now necessary.[2]

I am, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4966

[1] Lord Ampthill sent a telegram next day to Gandhiji, reading: "Have written fully in reply to your letter of yesterday." In his letter, he deprecated publication of the statement; *vide* Appendix XVII.

[2] Lord Ampthill felt that a Committee meeting would serve no useful purpose at the moment. In his letter of July 28 to L. W. Ritch, he wrote: "I am giving hours of time to this business daily but I have no time for any unnecessary meeting; if the necessity for a meeting should arise I shall let you know at once. Mr. Gandhi's mere

260. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
July 29, 1909

MY LORD,

I am extremely obliged to Your Lordship for the very great trouble you are taking over the Indian cause in the Transvaal which you have made your own. Immediately on reading your letter[1], I telegraphed[2] saying that nothing would be done without consultation with Your Lordship and that I was writing this letter and sending the statement[3].

Perhaps I should explain that most of the letters, which I would otherwise like to write myself, are dictated, because I write, I am sorry to confess, a very indifferent and illegible hand.

My colleague and I are very pleased to find that you have been able to see the distinguished men whom you have mentioned in your letter.

I am enclosing statement in proof form because, in anticipation of Your Lordship's approval, it was sent to the printers yesterday, but it will not be published or submitted without consultation with Your Lordship .

If the Act of 1907 is repealed and a promise given that six Indians will be admitted to the Transvaal annually in the way I have proposed, I would certainly be contented . . . [4] similar question was put to me by Lord Morley also. May I [hope that the matter will be reconsidered by the][5] Transvaal Parliament or the Provincial Council as the case may be, and that the Immigration Law will be amended so as to leave it open for Indians of great culture to enter the Transvaal under the general education test. The number will be limited to six, not in the law itself, but it will be limited or regulated by administrative action, that is to say, by the imposing of a severe enough test so that the lmmigration Officer will pass only six Indians

[1] *Vide* "Lord Ampthill's Letter to Gandhiji, 28-7-1990.

[2] This telegram is not available.

[3] *Vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909

[4] The original being mutilated, some words are missing here.

[5] Here a line is missing. The words in square brackets have been conjectured in the light of the context.

in any one year. So far as immigration is con-cerned, such Indian immigrants will be free from any measure of regis-tration or identification, their identification being the examination, they will have to pass at the border. The whole position, I believe, I have clearly explained to Sir Richard Solomon and I believe, too, that he has understood it.

There undoubtedly are other grievances in the Transvaal, as for instance, the prohibition to hold landed property, to ride in the tramcars etc., and we will have to trouble the local authorities as also Your Lord-ship for assistance in the matter, but the distinction between the two grie-vances which have brought the deputation to London and the others is, that the former have entailed passive resistance involving untold suffering by us, and must continue to do, so long as I can help it, until the grieva-nces are redressed or every Indian perishes in the attempt to have them re-dressed. The latter grievances are of long standing; there is no solemn covenant to impose upon ourselves personal suffering in order to remove them and we can wait for public opinion to mature and prejudice to die out, without reducing ourselves to penury and filling the Transvaal gaols.

It is to me a test of Your Lordship's very great interest [in our struggle][1] as also, may I say, of your high-mindedness. . .[2] passive resistance. Will you excuse me for saying that I know of no Indian, whether here, in South Africa or in India, who had so steadily, even defiantly, set his face against sedition—as I understand it— as I have. It is part of my faith not to have anything to do with it, even at the risk of my life. Most people, that is most Indians And Anglo-Indians, express their detestation of bomb throwing and violence in words or in unreasonable action. The movement in the Transvaal, with which I have identified myself is an eloquent and standing protest in action against such methods. The test of passive resistance is self-suffering and not infliction of suffering on others. We have, therefore, not only never received a single farthing from " the party of sedition" in India or else-where, but even if there was any offer, we should, if we were true to our principles, decline to receive it. We have hitherto made it a point not to approach the Indian public in India for financial assistance. The accounts of the British Indian Association are open to the world. A statement of income and expenditure is published from

[1] The original is damaged here.
[2] Here a whole line is cut off.

time to time and is advertised in *Indian Opinion*.[1] Mr. Doke, Mr. Phillips[2], and other notable men who are working in the Transvaal for us, know this fact most intimately. May I add, too, that the idea of passive resistance originated in South Africa was independent of any movement in India and that we have sometimes been bitterly assailed by some of our Indian friends for pinning our faith to passive resistance pure and simple?

I hope Your Lordship will pardon me for introducing so much of the personal element, as also for the length of this letter, which was unavoidable.

If any further elucidation or information be necessary, you can only add to the debt of gratitude to me by commanding [me to furnish the same.][3]

Mr. Ritch points out that this explanation may not be quite clear to Your Lordship. He suggests my adding:

The Immigration Law imposes an educational test on all immigrants white or black. The severity of the test is left to the discretion of the Immigration Officer. There will not be, there is not now, the same test for all. The officer, therefore, will set one test for Europeans—and perhaps no test at all, as happens often in Natal—and another for Indians. The Courts will not interfere with such exercise of discretion.General Smuts has said that the present Immigration Law does not give so wide a discretion as this to the Immigration Officer . If that be so, the law can easily be altered to extend the measure of discretion to the necessary degree. I have already submitted through Mr. Dallow an amendment which, in my opinion, would satisfactorily effect this. Mr. Smuts did not reject my amendment, but said that he did not consider it desirable to alter the law during that session (June last). Armed with the necessary powers, the Immigration Officer need admit only six Indians under the educational test. If a seventh applied, he can plough him by imposing a test impossible for him to pass, just as is done in Australia.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4968

[1] *Vide* Vol. VII, Appendix VII.

[2] Charles Phillips, Congregational Minister in the Transvaal.

[3] The original is damaged here.

261. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

[LONDON,]
July 30, 1909

MY DEAR HENRY,

Not many visits have been paid during the last week and yet a very great deal of work has been done. Lord Ampthill has been doing very well; he was in touch with Sir George Farrar, General Smuts and Lord Selborne on the one hand and Lords Crewe, Morley, Lansdowne and Curzon on the other. He himself seems to be very hopeful. I send you copy of my long letter[1] to him.

Sir Muncherji, too, wrote asking for an interview with Smuts and he has promised to send him an appointment as soon as pressure upon his time has been removed. This interview was invited when it was unknown what definite action Lord Ampthill was taking. Arrangements were also made for beginning a public campaign on a gigantic scale. I have it sketched out in my mind, but, in view of Lord Ampthill's work, everything remains in suspension.[2]

We saw Lord Morley on Monday; he gave us about half-an-hour. Sir Charles Lyall[3] was present at the interview; it was private and informal. He wanted to know whether the feeling in India was keen on the matter. I told him it was and I told him also that the reason why a meeting had not been held in Bombay was that Sir Pherozeshah feared violence. No one could be prevented from attending the meeting or from making bitter speeches. The question, in my opinion, shows that he is not satisfied that the feeling in India is keen, or rather, invites an emphatic expression of opinion from all over India. However, he has promised to pass on the substance of the interview to Lord Crewe and even to see Smuts. You will be surprised to learn that he did not know that General Smuts was in London, and he had forgotten everything about objections to the Asiatic Act.

On your side, you should have meetings, if they will hold meetings; if not that, representations should[4] be sent from various bodies and, if you can get sufficient volunteers, you may have a brief petition

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* "Lord Ampthill's Letter to Gandhiji, 29-7-1990.

[3] (1845-1920); Anglo-Indian administrator

[4] The original has "to".

signed by thousands. I hope you have had the petitions[1] to Dadabhai Naoroji and the President of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce translated in the principal languages and widely distributed. In each place, if you are properly supported, you should be able to get volunteers. They should then take up these copies and distribute them. They can be posted near mosques, temples, theatres and such other places.

I expect a cablegram from you today, after which I will hope to send you a brief cable. If, however, I do not receive one from you to-day, I may cable independently either tomorrow or Monday. Mr. Anglia and the other two arrive tomorrow. Mr. Abdul Caadir is still staying at the same hotel with us. I hope you will secure Indian directories and a suitable English-into-Gujarati and Gujarati-into-English dictionary and other books of reference or study which are not obtainable in South Africa. You may also discuss our scheme of education with Professor Gokhale; he, being a very great educationalist, may give helpful hints. You ought to be able, with Chhaganlal,[2] to fix up an agency in Bombay, and you may be able to come to some definite understanding with Natesan[3] also for propagating our views and ideas.

Millie arrived on Saturday. Pater went to Southampton, but he did not return with them. They were received by Mater, Maud, Hajee Habib, Hoosen and myself. Sallie could not come because she had to attend to her business. Both Millie and Celia, as also Waldo and baby, were looking very nice. I think they look all the better for the voyage. They had a good time on board. Celia went to find Amy and then directly went to the apartments; Millie came to the hotel with baby, as the arrange-ment was that Celia should come with Amy to the hotel, but she, in her excitement, did not take in the name of the hotel where I am staying and went to Hotel Cecil and, afterwards, directly to the apartments. Waldo has a slight touch of cold, nothing serious about it.

There was an at-home at Miss Smith's; Millie and Maud were there. I think both of them enjoyed it; it was rather good and there

[1] *Vide* Appendix XV.

[2] Chhaganlal Gandhi was expected to have left for India at this time, *en routs* to England to study for the Bar, but was held up for a few months owing to A. H. West's illness.

[3] G. A. Natesan (1873-1949); politician and publisher; founder and editor of the *indian Review*

was good company. There were a few Indian ladies also. Millie became chummy with one of them—Mrs. Dube. She is Hindustani though she was partly brought up in Bombay; she speaks English very nicely. Millie will come into closer contact with her.

She does not like the apartments she is in and will probably take a small house partly furnished, either in Cricklewood or near Kew. I have suggested to her that she should have Hoosen with her; it would be mutually satisfactory. Hoosen is going on splendidly; a better youth it will be difficult to find, but he is somewhat dreamy, he has not the go that I should expect a youth of his age to have and does not give himself enough exercise, but, as he is not self-willed,he will easily accept a gentle guidance from Millie, with whom I have discussed what should be done for him. Amy is also staying with Millie. I understand that Amy has grown wonderfully, but she is not a steady girl and she causes some anxiety to Millie. I sent a cablegram[1] on Monday to Daphtary, Morality[2] and the Presidency Association[3] regarding you. I am curious to know whether the cablegrams were acted upon.

I attended a great suffragette meeting last night; met Mrs. Pankhurst[4] also. I am sending you their weekly *Votes for Women.* We have a great deal to learn from these ladies and their movement. I have other pamphlets which I thought I would send on to you, but, on second thoughts, I should send them to Johannesburg or Phoenix. I will get another set for you; you will then have it next week.

Mrs. Ritch's progress continues to be steady. This time I hardly think there can be any relapse.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4970

[1] This is not available.
[2] Telegraphic address of Revashanker Jhaveri & Co. of Bombay
[3] Of Bombay
[4] Mrs. Emmeline Pankhurst (1858-1928); *vide* "Lord Ampthill", 29-6-1907.

262. LONDON

Friday, July 30, 1909

NATAL DELEGATES

The Natal delegates will arrive here tomorrow morning. Some of us have made preparations to go and receive them.

SUFFRAGETTES

Mr. Abdul Caadir, Mr. Hajee Habib and I attended a suffragette meeting. The St. James' Hall was crowded to capacity by the women attending the meeting. According to Mr. Hajee Habib's estimate, there must have been about 1,500 persons, including men and women.

Such meetings are held almost every week. A collection is made at every meeting, and at least £50 are received. At yesterday's meeting, it was £100. The meeting was held to honour some ladies who had been released from gaol. There were fourteen of them. They were

presented silver medals. A dinner has also been arranged for them, for which tickets at one shilling each have been issued.

The meeting was presided over by a lady named Mrs. Lawrence. All the speakers were women. All the arrangements were also made by them.

Among those who had been to gaol, there were three or four who were mere girls of twenty or so. All of them had been arrested in the course of the campaign for the franchise. According to the practice here, the prisoners are placed in different classes. These women were awarded second class. It is their demand that they should be treated as firstclass prisoners. As the Government did not concede it, they resolved collecti-vely to disobey the gaol regulations. They broke the windows of prison cells and refused to submit to any of the regulations. In consequence, they were confined in dark cells. There, too, they disregarded the gaolers' orders. At last, all the women stopped taking food. One of them ate nothing for six days, some others for five days. In this way, everyone fasted. The Government felt helpless in the end and let them off. The women feel disappointed at this, and have declared that they will continue to go to gaol till all women like them are treated as first class prisoners. At this very meeting, the police served summonses on two of the women who had

been released, to answer a charge of having com-mitted an assault while in gaol. The serving of the summonses was received with thunderous applause in the Hall. When we consider the suffering and the courage of these women, how can the Indian satyagrahis stand comparison with them?

Their Association brings out a weekly of its own. It has a sale of 50,000, and a copy costs a penny. The contributors[1] are mostly women. Every week some women come forward as volunteers to go round selling copies. They receive no remuneration. Though all these ladies belong to good families, they are not ashamed of doing this work, but rather take pride in it. All of them turn out with ribbons on their shoulders bearing the words " Votes for Women" printed on them.

Besides bringing out this weekly, they have also published a number of other pamphlets. There are some women who, having offered their all in the service of this cause, now exert themselves physically. Some are highly educated women.

They collect £3,000 in a year. They aim at collecting a total of £20,000.

Their campaign has been going on for nearly five years. Its founda-tions were laid a good many years ago, but it is during the last five years that they have been going to gaol in order to exert pressure. During this period, nearly 500 women have suffered imprisonment. Some of them have been to gaol more than once. All the [Association's] office-bearers have been to gaol. They employ every means to get themselves imprisoned.

So many years have passed, but they do not yield. They grow stronger every day. They think out new ways of harassing the Government, and some of the women have dedicated themselves entirely to this cause. Some are ready to die. They have taken a pledge that they must win. They would meet death rather than betray the pledge, so great is their spirit of determination.

The systematic way in which they set about their work and their skill deserve the highest commendation. Their enthusiasm is unbounded. A great many men have been struck with admiration to see all this.

Let Indians ask themselves whether it is anything to wonder at

[1] The original has a word meaning "those who assemble" which appears to be a misprint for another word meaning "those who write"

that we, in the Transvaal, have to wait a long time [for redress], have to suffer, fall ill in gaol or go hungry, even face death, when the British women have failed to get redress for such a long time and have to go through such suffering. Mrs. Lawrence, who has contributed large amounts of money to this campaign and who has been to gaol herself, says: "There can be no building for progress unless—in the case of every reform or scheme of human good—some men do the building with their blood."

These words should be pondered over by every lover of India. If we want freedom, we shall not gain it by killing or injuring others (i.e.,by the use of brute force) but by dying or submitting ourselves to suffering (i.e., by the use of soul force). The Transvaal struggle is for the defence of our honour, that is, for freedom. To lay down one's life to achieve this is as good as remaining alive. To go on living without it is no better than being dead. We have much to learn from the suffragettes. No doubt we may find some faults in them, but we need not enlarge upon the matter here.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-8-1909

263. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
August 3, 1909

MY LORD,

In reply to your letter of the 29th ultimo, I sent a telegram[1] which, I hope, was duly received by Your Lordship.

I write this to draw your attention to this week's *Indian Opinion*[2], containing a petition to the Imperial Parliament from the Indian people of the Presidency of Madras and the affidavits[3] made in connection with the death of Nagappen, about whom, as you will recollect, a cablegram was received some time ago.

I remain, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4974

[1] This is not available.

[2] The issue of 10-7-1909

[3] Veera Muthoo and A. A. Moodaley had mentioned therein the cruel gaol treatment and other circumstances leading to the death of Sammy Nagappen; *vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909

264. LETTER TO "THE ENGLISHMAN"

LONDON,
August 3, 1909

THE EDITOR
THE ENGLISHMAN
[CALCUTTA]

SIR,

Your correspondent "South African" has packed so much ignora-nce into the letter published by you in your issue of the 21st ultimo, that he had need to conceal his identity,. May I correct a few of his misstatements?

Mr. L. W. Ritch, though he calls me his friend and colleague, is not—as your correspondent assumes—an Indian. He is an English Jew and is at present practising as a barrister.

The registration of Indians is a measure of identification, impugn-ing the honesty of Indians as a class. The pass system with reference to the Kaffirs is somewhat of a taxing measure and in no way insulting in the same sense that the Asiatic Registration Act of 1907 is. There is as much difference between the Asiatic Registration Act and the Continental Passport system as there is between chalk and cheese. The Continental Passport is a protection to the holder and the non-holding of it does not make him a criminal and liable to imprisonment with hard labour up to six months, whereas the non-holding of registration certificates under the Asiatic Act by British Indians has sent already 2,500 Indians to gaol in the Transvaal. There are no Indian coolies in the Transvaal.

The Indian trading community in Natal—notwithstanding your correspondent's statement to the contrary—had no part in shaping the legislation in connection with the introduction of indentured Indian labour into that Colony.

Your correspondent's fiction is that every Indian in Natal lives at a cost of 10/- per month and a hut made of old tin linings of cases, whereas the fact, according to the borough valuation of Durban, is that the Indians hold substantial properties in that place, valued at nearly a million pounds, and that this very fact has been used against them by their European competitors in trade.

In one thing, however, the Indians can join hands with your

correspondent, and that is in his denunciation of the existence of indentured labour in Natal or in any part of South Africa. British Indians have been,for the past fifteen years, agitating for abolition of that form of labour, which the late Sir William Wilson Hunter[1] described as perilously near to slavery.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 4-9-1909

265. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
August 4, 1909

MY LORD,

I have to thank you very much for your letter of the 3rd inst., and for the valuable suggestions made by you with reference to the statement[2]

I know how hard pressed the authorities are with work and, knowing that you lose no opportunity of bringing the question home to them, both Mr.Hajee Habib and I are content to wait.

Your Lordship's question was whether passive resistance was financed or fomented from India. As to the "fomenting", I did not go into details; I very nearly did so and then refrained for fear of making my letter too long and burdensome, but, as you have kindly invited me to express myself more fully, I gladly avail myself of the opportunity. I am fully aware of the allegation that we are acting in co-operation with the Extremist Party in India.[3] I however give Your Lordship the emphatic assurance that the charge is totally without foundation. Indian passive resistance in the Transvaal had its rise in that Colony and has been continued absolutely independent of anything that is being said or done in India; indeed, sometimes, even in defiance of what has been said or written to the contrary in India or elsewhere. Our movement is absolutely unconnected with any ex-[tremist movement in] India. I do not know the extremists per

[1] (1840-1900); Indian administrator and member of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress; *vide* and "Speech at London Farewell", 29-11-1906.

[2] *Vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909 also, Appendix XIV Lord Ampthill's suggestions.

[3] *Vide* "Lord Ampthill's letter to Gandhiji, 3-3-1909.

[sonally]…[1] is the …[2] Moslem League and some time Secretary in London of the Pan-Islamic Society, and this correspondence has been carried on with a view to interesting Indian opinion in our matter and arousing public sympathy. We are also in close touch with the Editor of *The Times of India* and I used to be in personal touch with the late Mr. Saunders[3] of *The Englishman* who, I may say, gave me most valuable assistance and advice when I first undertook public work in South Africa. Our complaint has always been that our countrymen in India have, as it might have appeared until recently, almost studiously ignored the question of its Imperial importance. The greatest prominence has been given to it by the suicidal action of General Smuts in having forcibly deported innocent Indians, in most cases penniless, from the Transvaal through the Portuguese territories to India. This has advertized the cause as perhaps nothing else has done, and now Mr. Henry S. L. Polak is in Bombay, from the Transvaal, in order to place the position before the Indian public. He has gone there with definite instructions not to come into touch with the Extremist Party, but to be guided largely by the Editor of *The Times of India,*Professor Gokhale and the Aga Khan.

What I mean by passive resistance will appear somewhat more clearly from the enclosed cutting[4] , which gives a summary of my address to the Germiston Literary and Debating Society.[5] Germiston, I may say, is seething with anti-Indian feeling. Yet the members of that society, including the Mayor of Germiston, were good enough to recognise that the fight we are carrying on is perfectly clean.

It would be improper for me not to add that I follow what is going on in India with the keenest interest and some of the [phases] of the [nat]ional movement with the gravest anxiety. With …[6] [sym] pathy, and by …[7] people and my countrymen is fraught with advantages to both and also to the world. I believe, too, that the fullest expansion of national sentiment is quite consistent with the stability of British rule in India and I further believe that much of what we suffer in India is easy of remedy by effort from within. I know that under

[1] The original is damaged. Some words are missing here.
[2] A line has been cut off here.
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Evans Goordon", 26-11-1906
[4] This is not available.
[5] *Vide* "Speech at Germiston", 7-6-1909
[6] A few words are cut off here.
[7] Here one line is missing.

the British constitution, British subjects, no matter to what race they belong, have never got and never can get their rights until they have performed their corresponding duties and until they are willing to fight for them. The fight takes the form either of physical violence, as in the case of the extremists in India, or of personal suffering by the fighters, as in the case of our passive resisters in the Transvaal. In my opinion, the first form of seeking redress is largely barbarous and, in any case, inconsistent with the genius of the people of India, no because they are physically too weak to take that course, but because their training has adapted them to the latter mode, and I am free to confess that passive resistance in the Transvaal is a practical demonstration to the party of violence in India that they are entirely on the wrong track and that, so long as they pin their faith to violence for obtaining relief of any kind whatsoever, so long are they beating the air.

I am quite aware that this exposition of my own view may not be of any use to Your Lordship and possibly is devoid of any interest whatsoever. The only reason why I mention it is to guard myself against being misunderstood.[1] I am most anxious not to withhold anything at all from Your Lordship and I am anxious also to retain, in any work that I undertake, the support of one who so loves the Empire and the country of my birth as yourself.

With many thanks for the deep interest you are taking in our troubles and with apologies for the unavoidable length of this letter.

I remain, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4976

[1] Acknowledging this letter on August 7, Lord Ampthill wrote about Gandhiji's categorical statement regarding the alleged connection between passive resistance in the Transvaal and the extremist movement in India: "Your answer is exactly what I expected, and while I have not failed hitherto to deny the charge indignantly from my own inward conviction, I shall now be able to do so armed with the certainty of your complete and candid explanation. I have never had a moment's doubt myself as to your freedom from complicity with conspirators in India, but I have found myself obliged to meet suggestions to that effect proceeding from high and responsible quarters."

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

GENERAL SMUTS' SPEECH IN RICHMOND

The following is a condensation of the speech.

[*February 5, 1908*]

In 1906, when the Government felt it right to put a stop to [the stream of immigrants,] . . . a law was introduced in the Legislative Council and passed. The object was to register in the most unmistakable way . . . every Asiatic who was legally entitled to be here. . . . to give a definite status to the Indians who were here before the war and to see that the rest of Asia was kept out of the country . . . the Home Government would not . . . assent to the law.

The first Parliament of the Transvaal met in March last and unanimously approved of [a similar bill and] it was assented to . . . .

The law[1] proposed that the Government should notify a period within which Asiatics [were to] register themselves.... Of the 10,000 Indians in the country only 500 registered. . . .

Three alternatives remained . . . put them over the border; . . . they could have sent them all to prison; . . . or [go] to Parliament again . . . It was not easy putting men over the border. It was not a question for the Transvaal alone [Natal, Orange River Colony and Rhodesia having refused to admit "coolies",] but an international question.... The next alternative was to put the Indians in prison. He had sent every leader to prison, and hundreds more and it had had no impression. The policy of imprisonment was a very good policy as a threat, but . . . he defied any government to take 10,000 men by the collar and put them in prison here. . . .

[Imprisonment] was a course which was not only physically but morally impossible, . . . because it would injure the reputation and prestige of the white people of the Transvaal . . . The law of 1885 [too had] become a dead letter, and the result was that from 1885 to 1899 the Asiatics . . . paid no [fees for] licences and they did not bother about the laws . . . He wanted, by hook or by crook, to carry out the object of the law. He held out the olive branch. He told them that the law had expired, but that the Government would take their voluntary registration and lay it before Parliament . . . [The Indian leaders] accepted the suggestion . . . voluntary registration was the only course open. So he said "All right", because there was nothing dishonourable to the Government in that . . . the position he took up from the start was that any means of identification for the Indian population of the Transvaal other than the 10 finger-prints was insufficient . . . The Indians said they

[1] Law 2 of 1907, also known as the Asiatic Registration Act

would never submit to that . . . they had now submitted, . . . they had learned more wisdom, and had seen that it was not criminal and not dishonourable . . . The Indians' second contention was that they would never register until the law had been repealed, that the law was an indignity and disgrace. He had told them that the law would not be repealed so long as there was an Asiatic in the country who had not registered, and like wise men the leaders of the Indian community had waived the question of repeal . . . What could never be done by the Republican Government had now been done by a little give and take on both sides, and he thought the settlement was honourable to both sides . . . They had passed two laws . . . One was to register all the Indians who were here legally; the other was to close the door finally on the others . . .

No Asiatic in future could come into this country unless he was a resident of the Transvaal before the war. The British Government had assented to this . . . it was the most drastic Asiatic Law that had ever been passed in the British Empire, . . . They knew that they belonged to a largely black Empire and that was a fact they must never forget . . .

Indian Opinion, 15-2-1908

APPENDIX II

RESOLUTIONS AT MASS MEETING

[JOHANNESBURG,
August 16, 1908]

RESOLUTION I

This Mass Meeting of British Indians hereby protests against the Asiatic Voluntary Registration Validation Bill now before the Parliament of the Transvaal, and endorses the Petition presented to the Hon'ble the Legislative Assembly on behalf of the British Indian Association.

Proposed by Mr. Dawad Mahomed (President, Natal Indian Congress)

Seconded by Mr. Adam H. Gool Mahomed (President, British Indian League, Cape town), and

Supported by Mr. Parsee Rustomjee (Vice-President, Natal Indian Congress),

Mr. M. C. Anglia (Joint Secretary, N. I. Congress), and

Mr. V. A. Chettiar (Chairman, Tamil Benefit Society).

RESOLUTION II

This Mass Meeting of British Indians solemnly, sincerely, and prayerfully reaffirms the Resolution of the British Indian community not to submit to the Asiatic Act, which it considers to be contrary to religion and their conscience.

proposed by Mr. Imam Abdool Kadir Bawazeer (Chairman, Hamidia Islamic Society),

Seconded by Mr. T. Naidoo and Maulvi Ahmed Mukhtar, and

Supported by Messrs Ebrahim Aswat, Dildar Khan, E. M. Cachalia, R. K. Padiachy (Pretoria), V. Chetty, P. K. Naidoo, and M. P. Fancy

RESOLUTION III

This Mass Meeting of British Indians is of opinion that the Asiatic Voluntary Registration Validation Bill above referred to is a breach of the compromise entered into by the Government with the Asiatic communities, and hopes that the Colonists will demand an honourable fulfilment of the terms entered into by General Smuts on behalf of the Government of the Colony and in the name of the Colonists.

Proposed fey Mr. Abdul Rahman (Potchefstroom)

Seconded by Mr. E. M. Patel (Vereeniging), and

S*upported by* Messrs R. S. Chokalingam Pillay, Harishankar Joshi (Durban), A.E. Chhotabhai (Krugersdorp), and Amod Suliman Khota (Heidelberg)

RESOLUTION IV

This Mass Meeting of British Indians hereby authorizes the Chairman to forward copies of these Resolutions to the proper quarters.

Indian Opinion, 22-8-1908

APPENDIX III

GENERAL SMUTS' SPEECH IN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY[1]

[PRETORIA,
August 21, 1908]

" . . . Hon. Members will remember that under the Crown Colony Government of 1906 a law was passed, which, however, failed to carry the assent of His Majesty the King and in March, 1907, the law . . . was passed without any alterations by the Legislature of the Transvaal. That law came into force last year. . . Different dates were proclaimed . . . under it for the registration of Asiatics in this country, but . . . the Asiatics organized a movement of passive resistance, and registration under that law proved . . . a failure. . . . not more than 600 had registered by the time that the dates for registration expired, which was June 30 of last year. . . . That was a very awkward and, in some senses, a very dangerous state of affairs. There is no more awkward position for a Government than a movement of passive resistance. It is a movement which is really tantamount to an act of war, and really amounts to a state of anarchy so far as the Government is concerned. In more primitive times one would have met it by simply issuing a declaration of war.... I did my best ... to carry out the law ... and as a result early this year many Asiatics were languishing in prisons . . . finally I met some of the leaders of the Asiatic community and discussed the question with them, and the result was that, pending the meeting of this House, temporary

[1] The Colonial Secretary was moving the second reading of the Asiatics' Registration Amendment Bill.

arrangements were made . . . that voluntary registration should take place of all Asiatics who are legally resident in the country, and that the matter should be brought for ratification before this House.... up to date practically every Asiatic in the country ... has made application for registration.... the applications numbered 9,158 . . . [Of these] 7,773 have been recognized as legal residents, and certificates of registration have been issued to them; 1,214 applications have been rejected .... The small number of 171 applications have not yet been decided. ... there has been no substantial objection to the giving of finger-prints. (Hear! hear!) . . . 7,010 gave finger-prints; 1,960 gave the two thumbs.... Only 70 declined to give finger-prints. . . . Hon. Members will accordingly see that the impression . . . that the principal difficulty centred around ... the finger-prints was not correct.... The principal objection was to the law itself.... charges have been levelled against me ... by prominent Indians that the terms of the compromise were not kept, that . . . there was a promise that the Act should be repealed, and that I have not kept that promise.... That compact has been carried out to the letter. The Asiatic leaders, in a letter of the 28th of January, issued from the Johannesburg Gaol, made the following offer in a petition. They say: "Our opposition has never been directed so much against the finger-print requirements. . . " Then there is some reference to the relaxation of the finger-prints. This offer was accepted by me, and from it two questions have arisen: the first whether the permission was given to repeal the Act. I do not think that any court of law could put such an interpretation on my promise. The consequence was that an Asiatic who registered voluntarily could do so under another Act, and not under Act 2 [of 1907]. The Asiatics took the matter to the [Supreme] Court, and Sir William Solomon took the view that the interpretation of the agreement was entirely different from the construction which the Asiatics placed upon it. Well, Sir, it was then stated that, although this correspondence contained no compromise to repeal tile Act, yet in interviews which I had with Mr. Gandhi, I promised to repeal it. That is not so, and the impression may be the result of a misconception.... The second difficulty arose in consequence of the provision that voluntary registration should also apply to those Asiatics who . . . were out of the Colony but who were entitled . . . to return . . . My answer . . . was that there was a compromise made for a specific period—three months—pending the meeting of Parliament. I could not promise that . . . at a future date Asiatics coming into this country should be left to register as they wished .... further difficulties arose on two points. One point was the entry of these people after the period of the compromise expired, and the other was the contention of the Asiatic leaders that under the Immigration Act as framed last year educated Asiatics were entitled to enter the country.... provision should be made whereby Asiatics who could pass a slight education test under the Immigration Act should be allowed to . . . enter the country. That is a view of the law and a policy that I could never admit. (Hear! hear!) . . . Large numbers of people who otherwise were undesirable would be free to enter the country, and that I would never allow. Then the passive resistance movement started once more. Meetings were held, speeches of an inflammatory character were made, certificates were burned . . . I think it was really unnecessary. I intended to stick to the letter of the arrangement I had made with the Asiatics, and in consequence a Bill was published . . . to validate these voluntary registrations . . . public feeling in the country was already very strong, and I consulted . . . with Hon. Members . . . of the House to see what would be the best way of arranging the

difficulties . . . the suggestion was made that we should come together with some prominent members of the Asiatic [community] and discuss the difficulties. We met them . . . and I think this Bill does fairly and reasonably meet every objection and every difficulty . . . with the exception of one—and that is the difficulty . . . in connection with the educated Asiatics. They put the difficulties in this way— that water Act 2, 1907 . . . Turkish Mahomedans, subjects of the Turkish Empire, were excluded from this country. It was urged that that was . . . casting a slur and stigma on the Mahomedan religion . . . That objection . . . we have met. . . . The next point refers to the Asiatics who were resident in the Transvaal before the war, but who do not fall within the terms of the law of last year, which mentioned two tests for Indians . . . Either they [were] required to have the Peace Preservation permit . . . or had to be in this country on May 31, 1902 . . . Hon. Members will see a provision in the Bill that, if Asiatics were residents in the country three years before the war, and they can prove that, then it is competent for them to apply within a year . . . for certificates of registration. . . . The third difficulty . . . referred to children. . . . it was necessary that not only the adult males, but also minors between the ages of eight years and sixteen years should register . . . The third innovation made in the Bill-that minors below the age of sixteen shall not be required to have certificates of registration, but shall be taken up in the certificates of their parent. The next point raised was in reference to the appeal . . . to the Magistrates in case the Registrar of Asiatics refused to recognize [claims] . . . The Asiatic leaders argued . . . that a different practice obtained in different courts of Resident Magistrates. . . . This had been met by another alteration in the Bill, . . . the Government will assign one special Magistrate to hear all cases of appeals. . . . One other point was raised ... when Asiatics make application for licences . . . [they] give their thumb-prints as a means of identification; but it has been pointed out [that] . . . some Asiatics are well known. . . . others well educated and can sign their names . . . and it is unnecessary to lay down a hard and fast rule. If the signature is a sufficient means of identification, let us accept the signature. If that is not sufficient, let us adopt such other measures as may be necessary to meet the case. Hon. Members will see that . . . that recommendation has been embodied in this Bill . . . a liquor clause . . . which exempted Asiatics from the Liquor Act [has at their instance] disappeared from this Bill. There is . . . provision for the transfer of certain property into the name of the heirs of an Indian . . . it was very strongly urged . . . that we should open the door . . . to the educated Asiatics . . . I have not felt . . . that any departure should be made . . . after all these points were urged upon us and we had met them fairly in this Bill, there was every ground to expect some settlement, or some abatement of this storm which is going on in this country; but my secretary has received today a letter from the leaders of the Asiatic Committee which shows that that hope, which was entirely reasonable, is very likely to be disappointed. . . . The other provisions are: All prisoners to be discharged; Asiatic Act to be repealed; general education test . . . with free issue of the burned certificates. (Laughter.) . . . Mr. Gandhi has referred to Indians being in partnership with the white population of this country. . . . It is a claim . . . which this white population will never allow. (Sustained cheers.) . . .

Indian Opinion, 29-8-1908

APPENDIX IV

RESOLUTIONS AT MASS MEETING

[*August 23, 1908*]

RESOLUTION I

Mr. Dawad Mahomed, Chairman of the Natal Indian Congress, moved:

This Mass Meeting of British Indians respectfully prays that the Government will be pleased to exercise the clemency of the Crown and allow Mr. Sorabjee Shapurjee, who was permitted to cross the border unchallenged under the Immigrants' Restriction Act and who was brought under the operation of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, to return, and trusts that the disputes outstanding between the Government and the British Indians will be amicably settled, and that the Government will be pleased to recognize the status of British Indians as part of the Empire, and give the community the rest and peace to which, in the humble opinion of this Meeting, it is entitled.

This was seconded by Mr. Parsee Rustomjee and carried.

RESOLUTION II

Mr. Geo. W. Godfrey moved:

This Mass Meeting of British Indians humbly prays that the Imperial Government will not sanction the Asiatic Voluntary Registration Validation Bill until the status of highly educated Asiatics and the repeal of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act of 1907 are secured.

Mr. N. A. Cama seconded and it was carried.

Indian Opinion, 29-8-1908

APPENDIX V

SPEECHES IN HOUSE OF LORDS ON TRANSVAAL INDIAN SITUATION BY LORDS AMPTHILL AND CURZON

The following are extracts from the Times report of Lord Ampthill's speech in a Debate in the House of Lords on February 4, 1908:

Lord Ampthill said he had given notice 'to call attention to the treatment of British Indians in the Transvaal, and to move for papers', and he thought that, in spite of the altered circumstances of the case, it was desirable that the compromise arrived at should not pass unnoticed in Parliament. He was sure the House would be willing to congratulate the Transvaal Government on their courageous and statesmanlike action... He thought they might also congratulate the Indian natives in the Transvaal, because the courage, unity and consistency with which they had

pursued their end were not less admirable than the moderation and modesty with which they had put forward their demands... No one ... acquainted with the subject could doubt that the Indians were reasonable in their objections to these regulations .... but he blamed His Majesty's Government for having allowed the situation to reach such an alarming pitch. . . Thus far the only explanation they had received from members of the Government was that it was impossible to interfere with a self-governing colony. He protested against the misuse of the word interfere; for if by interference was meant the insistence by the Mother Country on the rights of individual citizens of the Empire, we were as much justified in interfering with a self-governing colony as we were in interfering with foreign nations in such case, as we often did.. . why, then, was Indian slavery ignored? He used the term advisedly, for members of the Government and their supporters had defined as marks of slavery identification by finger-prints, inability to hold fixed property, and relegation to Compounds... Nobody denied the right of the Colonists to manage their own affairs, but they must remember that they were partners in a great Empire and that their interests must not be pursued in such a manner as to injure the other partners.

We had a right to insist that the Imperial point of view should be considered; and the Imperial point of view required that for the safety and honour of the Empire British citizens, whatever their colour, should be treated as such. British citizens ought not to be oppressed and degraded ... If the Colonies were inadvertently to get us into trouble with India, they would do us as much, or even more, harm than if they got us into trouble with foreign nations.. . Therefore, it was the business of Imperial statesmanship to explain these considerations to the Colonies. Why was this not done at the Imperial Conference last summer, when all the Colonial Premiers were here? .... As to the registration of finger-prints, why did not His Majesty's Government refer to the Indian Government and ask what system was adopted there? Instead of that, they allowed the Transvaal Government to tell them what they thought the practice was in India; and the Transvaal Government told them wrong ... In India the thumb and forefinger of the left hand only were registered; the ten-finger system was confined in India to criminals alone .... The attitude of His Majesty's Government was, first, timorous protest, and then reluctant assent to all that the Colonies did.

EXTRACTS FROM LORD CURZON'S SPEECH

The question came before us in India in a twofold aspect in relation both to Natal and the Transvaal. The Government of Natal...sent a deputation.... to ask us to agree to the repatriation of [indentured] labourers... We were willing..... provided we could. . . secure the relaxation of the hardships.... under which the free..... Indian population of Natal then laboured.... the Natal Government declined to accept our proposals....Your Lordships are all aware of the cruel and disabling restrictions... placed upon the Indian population in [the Transvaal]. They were one of the.. causes of the war. As soon as the war was over we felt it our duty....to address the then Secretary of State upon the subject .... A little later Lord Milner came to us with a request.... for 10,000 and afterwards.... 20,000 [Indians] to inaugurate railway labour in the new

possessions .... We agreed.. and once again.... used the position to endeavour to get better terms for the free Indians in the Transvaal. I am sorry to say that we failed.

.... [the compromise] is one that seems.... honourable to both parties....the Bluebook.... leaves a rather disagreeable taste in the mouth.... [The Transvaal Government] rushed through their anti-Indian legislation with...almost indecent speed. Secondly, there was failure....on the part of General Botha to act up to the undertaking....to find some method of identification superior to that of finger-impressions.... (Hear! Hear!) .... the system and method of finger-impressions that were proposed in the Transvaal were undoubtedly humiliating .... Then....there was a failure on the part of the Transvaal Government to distinguish....between.... Indians of good social status and refined education and the Indians of lower class.... whose competition really had to be feared. That is the charge.. which we are justified in bringing against the authorities in the Transvaal .... Well, we have now arrived at a settlement of the question; but I imagine that His Majesty's Government will be the last to argue that that temporary settlement is a final settlement of the question. I am sure that your lordships realize that this question is in reality about the most momentous and the most far-reaching which could possibly confront any body of statesmen.

Let me.... state to your lordships... the Indian point of view.... the Indian coolie. . .sees that [he is] invited and even encouraged by our Government to emigrate.... to a colony which he enriches by his labour, and then society there appears to turn round upon him and treat him as if he were a pariah dog. He is penalized there, not for his vices, but for his virtues.. . And then the Indian remembers that...he has fought for the British Empire.. and that it was largely owing to his efforts that Natal was saved .... Now...he claims the full rights of citizenship of the British Empire. I do not think it is for us to blame him for that . . . it is, after all, the only basis upon which you will expect the loyalty of an Asiatic population to an alien rule to be permanently developed or maintained. . . .

....The colonial point of view is entirely different .... I realize that.....in a way, it is quite unanswerable....if [the Colonist] is selfish it is only in the pursuit of....self- preservation .... He declines to acquiesce in any system which will mean... a permanent lowering of the standard of life, and he feels...the danger of being confronted with an enormous black problem...and...a great brown problem as well...it appears that you have two forces.. .pulling in opposite directions within the framework of the same Empire ....

In these circumstances what is the duty of the Government?...They can endeavour. . . to reconcile these opposing factors and principles. . . and anyhow . . . endeavour to work that there should be... no clash... between that .... In the first place they can so see. . . that fair terms are invariably secured for the labourer or the emigrant when he goes out...and, should his return be desired, for his return when it is to come about. It is for the Government to see that a good bargain is made for its own subjects. . .and . . . the bargain once made, to see that the terms are not hastily or rashly altered at a later date to the detriment of the man....Then...the Government

ought to see that the restrictions imposed upon Asiatics are made as little vexatious as possible....Then .. .they ought to see that nowhere shall occur the painful situation of Indian gentlemen ...of character, respectability, and education, being treated as if they were common coolies...and herded together...with men of very much lower *status* and occupation than themselves. (Cheers.) .... There is another suggestion which has been made—namely, that the Government should try to discover...some other field of emigration to which our Indian fellow-subjects may go, free from the disabilities and restrictions to which I have alluded.. .for my own part, it is one which I do not look upon with quite so much favour as some of the authorities who have taken it up. In any case I hope that the recent proceedings which have culminated in the victory...for our Indian fellow subjects . . . may read a lesson. . . both to the Government of the Colony and to the Government which sits on the bench—a lesson to the Government of the Colony that it cannot afford to treat without the utmost consideration the rights of these immigrants. ; a lesson to His Majesty's Government that they owe a duty just as great to the dusky millions of India as they owe to the white people of their own race in any colony of the British Crown. (Cheers.)

Indian Opinion, 7-3-1908

APPENDIX VI

SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE

REVISED LIST OF MEMBERS

PRESIDENT

Lord Ampthill, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., &c.

MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE

Ameer Ali, Esq., C.I.E.; Sir S. C. Bayley, K.C.S.I.; T.J. Bennett, Esq., C.I.E.; Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree, K.C.I.E.; Sir George Birdwood, K.C.I.E., C.S.I.; Sir Charles Bruce, G.C.M.C.; Sir William Bull, M.P.; Maj. Gen. Sir Owen T. Burne, G.C.I.E.; E. P. S. Counsel, Esq., LL.D.; Harold Cox, Esq., M.P.; Maj. Sir Wm. Evans Gordon; Sir Frederic Fryer, K.C.S.I.; Sir F. S. Lely, K.C.I.E., &c.; Sir Roper Lethbridge, K.C.I.E.; Ian Malcolm, Esq., J.P.; Sir William Markby, K.C.S.I.; Dadabhai Naoroji, Esq.; J. H. Polak, Esq. J.P.; L. W. Ritch, Esq.; J. M. Robertson, Esq., M.P.; Dr. V. H. Rutherford, M.P.; Sir Edward Sassoon, Bart., M.P.; Sir Chas. Schwann, Bart., M.P.; A. H. Scott, Esq., M.P.; T. Thornton, Esq., D.C.L., C.I.E.; Sir William Wedderburn, Bart.; Sir Raymond West, K.C.S.I.; The Rt. Rev. The Bishop of Southampton; The Rt. Rev. J. C. C. WeIldon, Dean of Manchester.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN: Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree, K.C.I.E.

MEMBERS: Ameer Ali, Esq., C.I.E.; Harold Cox, Esq., M.P.; J. H. Polak, Esq., J.P.; J. M. Robertson, Esq., M.P.; A. H. Scott, Esq., M.P.; Sir William Bull, M.P.; L. W. Ritch, Esq.

Indian Opinion, 15-8-1908

APPENDIX VII

ASIATICS REGISTRATION AMENDMENT ACT (1908)

FULL TEXT

We print below the full text of the Act "To validate the Voluntary Registration of certain Asiatics who failed to comply with the provisions of Act No. 2 of 1907 and to make further provision for the registration of Asiatics," recently passed by the Transvaal Parliament:

Be it enacted by the King's Most Excellent Majesty by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly of the Transvaal as follows:

1. In this Act unless inconsistent with the context:

"adult" shall mean of the age of sixteen years or over;

"application for registration" shall mean an application to be placed on the register of Asiatics made in the manner and form prescribed by regulation and accompanied by the particulars and means of identification required by regulation;

"Asiatic" shall mean any male person belonging to one of the native races of Asia and shall include a coolie, an Arab and a Malay but shall not include—

(a) a Malay born and resident in any British Colony or possession in South Africa; or

(b) a person introduced into this Colony under the Labour Importation Ordinance 1904; or

(c) an officer of any consular service;

"certificate of registration" shall mean a certificate of registration under Act No. 2 of 1907, or a certificate under this Act in the form set forth in the Schedule to this Act or as prescribed by regulation;

"commencement of this Act" shall mean the date on which Act came into operation;

"Governor" shall mean the officer for the time being administering theGovernment of this Colony acting by and with the advice and consent of the Executive Council thereof;

"guardian" shall mean the parent of a minor Asiatic or any other person under

whose care such minor is living for the time being, or failing any such person the employer of such minor;

"lawful holder" as used in relation to any certificate of registration shall mean the person (other than a minor named therein) whose registration is thereby certified;

"minor" shall mean under the age of sixteen years;

"register of Asiatics" shall mean the register to be kept for purposes of this

Act in manner prescribed by regulation;

"registrar" shall mean the officer appointed by the Governor to keep the register of Asiatics and any person lawfully acting in such capacity;

"regulation" shall mean any regulation made under Section *seventeen* of this Act;

"unregistered Asiatic" shall mean an adult Asiatic who is not the holder of a certificate of registration.

PART I

VALIDATION OF VOLUNTARY REGISTRATION

2. (1) Every person—

(a) who is an Asiatic as defined by Act No. 2 of 1907; and

(b) by or in respect of whom an application for registration was on the tenth day of February 1908, or on any day subsequent thereto up till the tenth day of May 1908, made to the registrar or other duly authorised officer; and

(c) to or in respect of whom a certificate in the form set forth in the Schedule to this Act was issued by the registrar;

shall, when in possession of such certificate, be deemed to be lawful holder of a certificate entitling him to enter and reside in the Colony.

(2) Every person who, having been the lawful holder of a certificate of registration under Act No. 2 of 1907, has been permitted to obtain a certificate in the form in the Schedule to this Act in substitution for such first-mentioned certificate, shall also be deemed to be the lawful holder of a certificate entitling him to enter and reside in this Colony.

(3) Every Asiatic who holds any certificate mentioned in this section shall be subject in all respects to the provisions of this Act and not to the provisions of Act No. 2 of 1907.

PART II

REGISTRATION OF ASIATICS AFTER THE COMMENCEMENT OF THIS ACT

3. An Asiatic shall be entitled to registration under this Act if—

(a) he satisfies the conditions described in sub-sections (2) or (3) of Section *four*, whether he was or was not in this Colony at the

commencement of this Act; or

(b) being the lawful holder of a certificate of registration issued under Act No. 2 of 1907, he desires to exchange such certificate for a certificate of registration under this Act; or

(c) having been a minor resident in this Colony at the commencement of this Act, he first entered the Colony with an adult Asiatic who was his guardian and who was registered under Law No. 3 of 1885 or any amendment thereof or is registered or entitled to registration under this Act; or

(d) he was born in any part of South Africa which was at the date of his birth within the boundaries of the Transvaal.

4. (1) Every unregistered adult Asiatic resident in this Colony at the commencement of this Act shall before such date or dates and at such place or places and to such person or persons as the Colonial Secretary may by notice in the *Gazette* prescribe for particular areas of this Colony, make application for registration, and the registrar shall, on being satisfied that such Asiatic is entitled to registration, issue to him a certificate of registration.

(2) Every unregistered adult Asiatic resident outside the Colony at the commencement of this Act, shall,

(a) if he was resident in the Transvaal for three years prior to the eleventh day of October 1899; and

(b) upon application for registration from a place in South Africa but outside the Colony within one year after the commencement of this Act; and

(c) upon satisfying the registrar of the facts mentioned in this sub-section: be entitled to obtain a certificate of registration.

(3) Every unregistered adult Asiatic resident outside this Colony at the commencment of this Act but who was—

(a) duly authorised to enter and reside in this Colony by a permit issued under the Indemnity and Peace Preservation Ordinance 1902 or any amendment thereof or issued between the first day of September 1900 and the date of the passing of the said Ordinance (unless such permit shall have been fraudulently obtained); or

(b) was resident and actually in this Colony on the thirty-first day of May 1902;

shall be entitled, upon satisfying the registrar of the fact set forth in paragraph (a) or (b) of this sub-section and upon application for registration from a place in South Africa but outside the Colony, to obtain a certificate of registration.

5. In respect of every unregistered minor Asiatic born in this Colony, not being the child of a labourer introduced into this Colony under the Labour Importation Ordinance 1904, the following provisions shall apply:

(1) If his guardian is an Asiatic, the minor's name, his age, his residence and his relationship to his guardian shall be included in the certificate of registration of his guardian.

(2) Within one month after such minor attains the age of sixteen years,he shall make application to the registrar for a certificate of registration; provided that, if he be absent from the Colony on attaining that age or one month thereafter, he may, from a place in South Africa but outside the Colony, make application to the registrar for registration and upon satisfying the registrar that he is entitled to registration, the registrar shall issue to him a certificate of registration, and his name shall thereupon be expunged from the register of Asiatics as a minor and shall be deemed to be no longer included in his guardian's certificate of registration.

6. (1) Whenever the registrar is satisfied that any Asiatic claiming to be entitled to registration under Section *three* is not so entitled, he shall refuse to issue to him a certificate of registration, and notice of the refusal shall be sent by post to such Asiatic at the address given upon his form of application.

(2) In every case of refusal by the registrar to issue a certificate of registration, an appeal may, within fourteen days of the date of the notice of refusal, he noted by letter addressed to the Colonial Secretary, and such appeal shall be heard by a magistrate specially assigned by the Governor to hear such appeals, and such magistrate shall be deemed, when hearing any such appeal, to be an inferior court within the meaning of Section *nineteen* of the Administration of Justice Proclamation 1902.

(3) In the case of an Asiatic who is in South Africa but outside this Colony, the officer in charge of the Immigration Department shall, as soon as the date has been fixed for the hearing of such appeal, send by post to the appellant at the address given upon his application for registration a temporary permit entitling him to enter and remain in the Colony until the appeal has been determined. If the appeal be dismissed, the said magistrate shall make an order in writing directing the appellant to be removed from the Colony, and every such order shall be deemed to be an order made under Section *six* of the Immigrants' Restriction Act 1907 or any amendment thereof.

(4) In the case of an adult Asiatic in the Colony who has not within a period prescribed by sub-section (2) of this section noted an appeal or whose appeal having been noted has not been proceeded with or has been dismissed, the said magistrate shall make an order in writing directing such Asiatic to be

removed from the Colony, and every such order shall be deemed to be an order made under Section *six* of the Immigrants' Restriction Act 1907 or any amendment thereof.

REMOVAL FROM THE COLONY

7. Any adult Asiatic who, after such date or dates as may be notified by the Colonial Secretary in the *Gazette,* is found within the Colony and fails, upon such demand as is mentioned in Section *nine,* to produce a certificate of registration of which he is the lawful holder, may be arrested without warrant and brought before a resident or assistant resident magistrate and if he fails to satisfy such magistrate that he is the lawful holder of a certificate of registration or that the time within which he is required to make application for such certificate has not expired the magistrate shall, save as in the next succeeding section is provided, make an order in writing directing him to be removed from this Colony and every order shall be deemed to be an order under Section *six* of the Immigrants' Restriction Act 1907 or any amendment thereof.

8. If an adult Asiatic who has failed to make application for registration in accordance with the provisions of sub-sections (1) of Section *four* shall satisfy the magistrate before whom he is brought that such failureness due to some good and sufficient cause, the magistrate may, instead of making such order as aforesaid, direct such Asiatic forthwith to make application for registration within eight days, and if such Asiatic shall comply with such direction, his application shall be dealt with in all respects as if it had been made in accordance with the provisions of the said sub-section and all the provisions of this Act which would have applied if the application had been so made shall apply accordingly, but, if he shall fail to comply with such directions, the magistrate shall make an order for removal as aforesaid in respect of such Asiatic and any such order shall be deemed to be an order made under Section *six* of the Immigrants' Restriction Act 1907 or any amendment thereof.

Part III

GENERAL AND MISCELLANEOUS

9. Every Asiatic who enters or is within this Colony shall, upon demand made upon him by any European member of a police force lawfully established therein or by any other European person authorised thereto by the Colonial Secretary, produce the certificate of registration of which he is the lawful holder, and shall also on like demand supply such particulars and furnish such means of identification as may be prescribed by regulation. Any Asiatic who fails upon lawful demand to produce such certificate shall, unless he is the lawful holder of a certificate of registration, be liable to be dealt with in manner mentioned in Section *eight.*

10. (1) If at any time any certificate of registration is lost or destroyed, the person to whom it was issued shall forthwith apply to the registrar to have the same renewed and the registrar shall, upon compliance by such person with

such procedure as is prescribed by regulation and upon payment of a fee of five shillings, renew the certificate. Such fee shall be denoted by means of revenue stamps to be affixed to the application for renewal and shall be defaced by the said registrar.

(2) Any person into whose hands shall have come any such certificate shall, unless he is the person to whom it was issued, forthwith deliver or transmit the same as soon as may be to the Registrar of Asiatics, Pretoria.

11. Every certificate of registration shall be accepted as conclusive evidence in all places that the lawful holder thereof is entitled to enter and reside in this Colony; provided that this section shall not apply to persons who have, under Section *five* or *six* of the Immigrants' Restriction Act 1907 or any amendment thereof, been removed from the Colony.

12. Whenever, in any prosecution or other proceeding under this Act the age of any Asiatic is in question such Asiatic shall unless and until the contrary be proved be taken to be of the age which the registrar shall in any certificate issued under his hand certify to be in his opinion the apparent age of such Asiatic.

13. Any affidavit or sworn declaration which is required by regulation to be made by any person who makes an application for registration shall be exempt from stamp duty.

TRADING LICENCES

14. (1) No Asiatic shall obtain any trading licence under the Revenue Licences Ordinance 1905 or any amendment thereof or under any bye-law or regulation in force within the jurisdiction of a local authority, unless he produce to the person appointed to issue the licence a certificate of registration of which he is the lawful holder and either give his signature in English or supply such other or additional particulars or furnish such means of identification as the Colonial Secretary may either generally or in particular cases prescribe.

(2) Any trading licences issued under such Ordinance or under any such bye-law or regulation Between the tenth day of February 1908 and the commencement of this Act to an Asiatic who made such application as is prescribed in sub-section (1) (b) of Section *two* of this Act shall, notwithstanding anything in Section *thirteen* of Act No. 2 of 1907 contained, be deemed to have been lawfully issued.

(3) Section *thirteen* of Act No. 2 of 1907 shall be and is hereby repealed.

THE PENALTIES

15. Any person who—

(a) for the purpose of or in connection with an application for registration or for the purpose of obtaining a certificate of registration, commits any

fraudulent act, or makes any false statement or false pretence;

(b) forges or prior to the commencement of this Act has forged any document in the form set forth in the Schedule to this Act or forges any certificate of regist-ration or utters any such document or certificate knowing the same to be forged; or

(c) uses or attempts to use as a certificate of registration any such forged document or any such certificate of which he is not the lawful holder;

shall be guilty of an offence and liable to a fine not exceeding five hundred pounds or, in default of payment, to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period not exceeding two years or to both such fine and imprisonment, and any person who incites to, or aids or abets any other person in, the commission of any such offence shall be liable to the like penalty.

TEMPORARY PERMITS

16. Notwithstanding anything in the Immigrants' Restriction Act 1907 or this Act contained, the Governor may approve the issue of a permit, in the form prescribed by regulation, authorising an Asiatic to enter and remain in the Colony for any period named in such permit, and after the expiry of such period the person in respect of whom such permit was issued shall be deemed to be a person not duly authorised to be in this Colony, and if found may be arrested without warrant and the provisions of Section *six* of the Immigrants' Restriction Act or any amendment thereof shall apply to such person as if he were a person mentioned in paragraph (c) thereof.

THE GOVERNOR'S POWERS

17. The Governor may from time to time make, alter, or rescind regulations for any of the following purposes:

(1) Prescribing the form of the register to be kept for the purposes of this Act.

(2) Prescribing the manner and form in which application shall be made for registration, the particulars to be supplied and the means of identification to be furnished by any applicant for the purpose of or in connection with such application.

(3) Prescribing the form of certificates of registration.

(4) Prescribing the particulars to be supplied and the means of identification to be furnished

(a) by any Asiatic upon such demand as is mentioned in Section *nine;*

(b) by any Asiatic applying for the renewal of any certificate of registration which has been lost or destroyed.

(5) Prescribing the procedure to be observed on or in connection with appeals to the magistrate mentioned in Section *six.*

(6) Prescribing the form of permit to be issued under Section *sixteen.*

(7) Generally for the better carrying out of the objects and purposes of this Act.

18. Any Asiatic or the guardian of any Asiatic failing to comply with any requirement of this Act or of the regulations shall, except where otherwise specified, be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds or in default of payment to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period not exceeding three months.

19. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in sub-section (b) of Law No. 3 of 1885 as amended by Volksraad Resolution Article 1419 of the twelfth day of August 1886 the portion of Erf No. 373 Church Street, Pretoria which was registered in the name of the late Aboobaker Amod and which at the commencement of this Act was registered in the name of Henry Salomon Leon Polak may be transferred into the name of the heirs of the said Aboobaker Amod.

20. This Act may be cited for all purposes as the Asiatics Registration Amendment Act 1908 and shall not come into operation unless and until the Governor shall have declared by proclamation in the *Gazette* that it is His Majesty's pleasure not to disallow the Act and thereafter it shall come into operation on such date as the Governor shall by like proclamation declare.

SCHEDULE

TRANSVAAL ASIATIC REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE

Name in full.....

Race.....Age.....Height.....

Discription.....

Right Thumb Impression

.....

Registrar of Asiatics

Date of Issue.....

Holder's Signature.....

Name of Wife.....Residence.....

SONS AND MALE WARDS UNDER THE AGE OF 16 YEARS

Names	Age	Residence	Relationship to Guardian

No alterations or endorsements are to be made on the face of this Certificate except by the Registrar of Asiatics.

Indian Opinion, 5-9-1908

APPENDIX VIII

WARRANT FOR REMOVAL OF A PERSON UNDER SECTION 6 OF IMMIGRANTS' RESTRICTION ACT 1907

Whereas . . . . . having been ordered to leave the Transvaal under Section 8, sub-section 3 of Act No. 2 of 1907 has failed to comply with the terms of such order, you are hereby ordered in His Majesty's name immediately to arrest the said . . . . . and remove him from the Colony and place him over the Transvaal Natal border at the point where the railway line between Volksrust and Charlestown crosses the said border.

(Sgd.) J. C. SMUTS

Indian Opinion, 5-9-1908

APPENDIX IX

P. DUNCAN ON COLOUR QUESTION

Mr. Patrick Duncan, C.M.G., spoke by invitation on the colour question at the annual meeting of the Rosebank branch of the League of Women. We take the following important extracts from the report of the speech given in *The Star* dated the 5th instant [September, 1908]:

It was a very difficult matter in a country where there was supposed to be political freedom to have the largest section of the population entirely deprived of political rights—it was practically a condition of slavery. No people had ever been able to survive for long who lived on an inferior race in what was practically a state of slavery. It was bad for the superior race just as much as for the inferior. If they looked into the cases where a small superior population lived on the work of the larger inferior population, giving them no political rights, that state of things did not exist for long. It was hardly possible in the present state of society's civilisation for them to say that, however educated a man might be, however he may have advanced in civilisation in every way, he was to be excluded from political rights if his skin was not of the finest white. If they tried to make colour the test for political rights, they would find the greatest difficulty in drawing the line. They would find they were inflicting great hardship on many people, to all intents and purposes as civilised, educated, and as responsible citizens as themselves. It was difficult, then, to maintain the colour distinction as a bar to the franchise without inflicting very serious injustice and injury on many people.

There was also the social side to this question. They ought to give to every man, whatever his colour might be, equal justice in the eyes of the law. They ought to give him a chance of improving his position. They ought not to look down on the ways in which he improved himself, however queer or awkward they may be. They could not benefit from his labour and refuse to give him every opportunity of raising

himself in the social scale. There was too much prejudice in this country against people on account of their colour. In applying the principle that the white man must be the predominant partner in this country, they must also allow the coloured man to live according to his rights, and make the best of what was in him, and not expect him to be a beast of burden and nothing else.

They must give him every opportunity of living in a cleaner and better way. Many of the so-called Locations found outside the towns in South Africa were a disgrace to civilisation. They could not expect the Native to be a decent citizen if they made him live in such hovels. When they complained that the he was a danger to society, they should remember, if they expected a man to live as a beast, he would be a beast, and, if they wanted him to be a man, they should treat him in a fitting way. They would not deter the Native from crime merely by savage punishment. Given the incentive to improve himself in social life in his own place, in that place they should respect him as a man. The question was a difficult one. Some people talked of segregation. That was impossible. Both people had to live side by side, and they had the white people in this country who were the trustees for the future of both races, and they had to think how they could live together for the common good of both.

Indian Opinion, 19-9-1908

APPENDIX X

AFFIDAVITS REGARDING REPEAL OF REGISTRATION ACT

(1) H. S. L. POLAK'S AFFIDAVIT

I, HENRY SALOMON LEON POLAK, of Johannesburg, do hereby solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:

I am a British subject, born in England, and domiciled in the Transvaal, of which Colony I am registered Parliamentary Voter. I am an Attorney of the Supreme Court of the Transvaal. I am also Assistant Honorary Secretary of the British Indian Association of the Transvaal. In this latter capacity, I had occasion frequently, during the early part of the voluntary registration of the Asiatic communities that commenced on the 10th February last, immediately, after the compromise had been effected, to discuss the situation with Mr. Chamney, Registrar of Asiatics, who told me, within the Registration Office, that, of course, the Law would be repealed immediately parliament met, if the voluntary registration had been satisfactorily completed. I have a distinct recollection also, although I did not take special note at the time, of hearing Mr. Chamney make similar statements to several persons who were at the Registration Office at different times during this period.

HENRY, S. L. POLAK

Before me,

CHAS H. SMITH

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

Declared at Johannesburg,
this 9th day of September, 1908

(2) P. K. NAIDOO'S AFFIDAVIT

I, P. K. NAIDOO of Johannesburg, do hereby solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:

On the day that Mr. Gandhi was assaulted in connection with the compromise, and a few hours after, I went over to the Registrar's Office, in order to protest against Asiatic Law Amendment Act receipt forms being issued in connection with voluntary registration applications, and told him that Indians would not submit to the Act, and that they were undergoing voluntary registration because they were assured that, on their doing so, the Act itself would be repealed. Mr. Nadir Cama was present at the time, and Mr. Chamney emphatically assured us that, voluntary registration being gone through, the Act would certainly be repealed, and that the Asiatic Law Amendment Act forms had been issued only by mistake. In order further to impress us, the Registrar had other typewritten copies made, in which there was no mention of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act.

P. K. NAIDOO

Before me,

Declared at Johannesburg, J. RILL

this 5th day of September, 1908 JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

(3) N. CAMA'S AFFIDAVIT

I, NADIR CAMA, of Johannesburg, do hereby solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:

I have read the affidavit of Mr. P. K. NAIDOO, of even date, and confirm the contents thereof. I was largely concerned with persuading the people to accept the compromise, and I had, besides the interview with Mr. Chamney in Mr. Naidoo's presence, many other interviews with the Registrar of Asiatics, and the latter very often repeated the assurance that the Act would be repealed, in order to strengthen my hands and to pacify the people.

NADIR CAMA

Before me,

Declared at Johannesburg, J. RILL

this 5th day of September, 1908 JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

(4) A. M. ANDREWS' AFFIDAVIT

I, A. M. ANDREWS of Johannesburg, do hereby solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:

On the second or third day of the opening of the Von Brandis Square Office for voluntary registration, I entered the Office to make my application. Mr. Chamney asked me to give my thumb-impression. This I declined to do, claiming exemption on the ground of educational qualifications, and also because I had some misgivings,

as, the previous day, I had seen receipts for voluntary registration applications issued on forms under the Asiatic Act. Mr. Chamney then pleaded with me, begging me to give the thumb-print in order to enable the Government to have some means of identification. He informed me that the leaders had given their finger impressions, that this was merely an act of grace on the part of the Asiatics and had no connection whatsoever with the Act, that the issuing of the receipts under the Act was merely a clerical error, and that, on the completion of voluntary registration, that Act would be removed from the Statute-book. Mr. Thambi Naidoo was also present at the time.

A. M. ANDREWS

Before me,

L. LIONEL GOLDSMID

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

Declared at Johannesburg,
this 9th day of September, 1908

(5) THAMBI NAIDOO'S AFFIDAVIT

I, THAMBI NAIDOO, of Johannesburg, do hereby solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:

I was one of the signatories to the letter addressed to the Colonial Secretary of the Transvaal in connection with the Asiatic Registration Act from the Johannesburg Gaol on the 29th January last.[1] When I sent the letter, I did so fully believing that, by Asiatics undergoing voluntary registration, the Act would be repealed. There was no definite mention made in the letter, in order to make the position of the Government as smooth as possible, but the intention, in stating that the Act be not applied to all those who volun-tarily register and in making the clause applicable to those who might enter at any future time after the expiry of the period of three months fixed for the voluntary registration of those Asiatics who were resident in the Transvaal on the date of the compromise, was that, the Asiatics having honourably fulfilled their obligations, Act 2 of 1907 could be of no use to the Government and would, therefore, be naturally repealed. But the actual promise as to repeal of the Act was reserved for discussion at the interview between the Colonial Secretary and Mr. Gandhi, the first signatory to the said letter. Two days after the letter was sent to the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Gandhi was summoned to Pretoria. On his return from Pretoria, all the prisoners were dis-charged, and a meeting of British Indians was addressed by him the same day in the afternoon, that is Friday, the 31st January.[2] At this meeting, Mr. Gandhi announced that General Smuts had promised to repeal the Act, if the Asiatics fulfilled their part of the compromise, namely, if the Asiatics made application for voluntary registration.

Subsequently, when the compromise was in working order, and when Mr. Gandhi was assaulted, together with Mr. Essop Mia, I was also assaulted while

[1] *Vide* "Rhodesia and the Transvaal", 15-6-1907.
[2] *ibid*

defending him from further injuries; and, in a bandaged condition, I attended the Registration Office and helped the authorities. The reason of the assault undoubtedly was suspicion, on the part of those who assualted, to the effect that Mr. Gandhi had not acted properly or that the Government would not carry out the promise of repeal, if such promise was given. Another reason for the assault was that the leaders had accepted the principle of registration by ten finger-prints, which, among others, the Pathan section of the community resented most bitterly. The task of prevailing upon the people to take out voluntary registration, and of assuring the people that the compromise was fair, and that the Act would be repealed, fell upon the shoulders of myself and my co-workers.

In connection with this, I several times discussed the situation with Mr. Chamney, Registrar of Asiatics, and Mr. Chamney definitely stated to me that, on voluntary registration being undergone by the Asiatics, the Act would be repealed. Mr. Chamney, I am aware, even took to Mr. Gandhi a draft notice that was to be published in the *Gazette* in connection with the repeal. The assurance given to me was conveyed by me to my countrymen; and I am certain that, but for such an assurance, the community would never have accepted the compromise.

C. K. THAMBI NAIDOO

Before me,

A. S. C. BARTROP

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

Declared at Johannesburg,
this 5th day of September, 1908

Colonial Office Records: 291/128

APPENDIX XI

RESOLUTIONS AT MASS MEETING

[JOHANNESBURG,
September 10, 1908]

"This Meeting of British Indians deplores the heavy sentences passed on the British Indians who were tried at Volksrust on Tuesday, the 8th instant, some of whom are the most distinguished among Indians in South Africa, and all of whom claim the right of entering the Transvaal. Despite the suffering that the Government imposes on British Indians, they hereby resolve to continue to suffer till the redress to which they are entitled is granted."

Proposed by Mr. Sorabji Shapurji, seconded by Mr. Chettiar (Chairman, Tamil Benefit Society) and supported by Messrs Abdul Gani, Imam Abdool Kadir Bawazeer (Chairman Hamidia Islamic Society), Khursetji Desai, and P. Lucheram.

"This Meeting implores His Majesty's Government to intervene, and end the state of uncertainty, anxiety, and very great suffering that British Indians in the Transvaal are undergoing."

Proposed by Mr. Ebrahim Coovadia, seconded by Mr. Nadirsha Cama, and

supported by Messrs Omarji Sale and P. K. Naidoo.

"This Meeting hereby authorises the Chairman to send the resolutions to the proper quarters."

Indian Opinion, 19-9-1908

APPENDIX XII

REV. J. J. DOKE'S LETTER TO GANDHIJI

11, SUTHERLAND AVENUE,
JOHANNESBURG,
September 30, 1908

DEAR FRIEND,

Your beautiful present of the *Song Celestial*. I appreciate very much. In every respect it [is] one of the choicest treasures which I have—dainty in appearance—fascinating in its contents—and of great value and a memento of a friendship which I shall always regard with gratitude. Yes, even if the darling wish of your heart is fulfilled and I get into prison for it.

By the way, I hope you won't attribute to me any selfish motive when I confess that I am just now hammering away with all my heart at Prison reform! Still who knows what may happen? Many thanks for this kindness. I am reading the *Bhagvad Gita* with intense interest—although I cannot say that the doctrine: "He who shall say—Lo! I have slain a man!' He who shall think 'Lo! I am slain'—those both know naught! 'Life cannot slay. Life is not slain!'" commands altogether my assent. But thereby hangs a long argument. The poetry and much of the teaching is beautiful! I went down to the Office this morning, in hope of seeing Quinn. But failed. I am afraid the poor fellow is in dire straits. The stupid prosecutions are going on as hitherto—one more glaring than another has just for a moment caught the public eyes—but only for a moment—[which] will be forgotten tomorrow. So shall we all be—and at last, even the Asiatic question will be settled. Cheer up my friend—all will yet be well.

Try and not get confiscated and deported or any thing of that kind—if you can help it just now. I have a thousand questions to ask—on any one of which—of course the welfare of the British Empire depends. I want to kmow why the Indians recalled you from India by cable.[1] I want to know whether the Durban people gave the Indian Stretcher-bearers a good send off when they went to Colenso and Spion Kop,[2] and did the work done on the battle fields make them more friendly to you? I want to know all that happened since, and especially I want a good cabinet photograph of yourself—

[1] This happened in 1902; *vide* "Letter to D.B. Shukla", 8-11-1902.
[2] *ibid*

without your hat. So don't get caught! With kind remem-brances from us all to Mrs. Gandhi and yourself,

Yours faithfully,

JOSEPH J. DOKE

[PS.] Olive tells me your birthday is near—many happy returns and God bless you!

From a photostat of the handwritten original: S. N. 4883

APPENDIX XIII

TREATMENT IN PRISON: HARD LABOUR

(1) EXTRACT FROM CABLE DATED OCTOBER 15, 1908 BY BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION, JOHANNESBURG, TO SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE, LONDON

" . . . Gandhi today working Public Square Volksrust. . . . "

Colonial Office Record: 179/251

(2) EXTRACT FROM CABLE DATED OCTOBER 15, 1908 BY NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS, DURBAN, TO L.W. RITCH, LONDON

". . . Gandhi and others working on Market Square: such treatment resented. . ."[1]

Colonial Office Record: 179/251

(3) TEXT OF L. W. RITCH'S LETTER DATED DECEMBER 1, 1908 TO COLONIAL OFFICE, LONDON

The attention of my Committee has been drawn to Colonel Seely's reply to the question put by Dr. Rutherford in the House of Commons yesterday to the effect that from a telegram received from the Governor of the Transvaal it would appear that Mr. Gandhi had never performed hard labour on the public streets.

I am desired to inform the Secretary of State that my Committee have this morning received a cablegram which states that:

"Colonel Seely is absolutely misinformed as to Gandhi's treatment. Forwarding affidavits."

I am also desired to point out that on October the 17th Reuter's Volksrust Correspondent cabled to the Johannesburg press as follows:

"The Indians who were sentenced yesterday including Mr. Gandhi were today working on the Market Square here at road making."

[1] Ritch forwarded copies of these cablegrams to the Colonial Office, London, on October 17.

Further, that in a letter addressed by the Rev. J.J. Doke to the Rev. F.B. Meyer on the 21st October, the writer states:

"Mr. Gandhi was sentenced last Wednesday to two months' imprisonment with hard labour and may now be seen in prison clothes with a pick-axe road making in Volksrust Market Place in company with the kaffir gang."

Colonial Office Record: 291/132

(4) EXTRACT FROM ROBERT SUTHERLAND'S LETTER TO "RAND DAILY MAIL."

. . . If President Kruger sent Mr. Gandhi and other high-class educated British Indians in prison garb to break stones on the public roads of the late Republic for no better reason than they have been convicted; if he treated Indian women and children with the inhumanity which an eye witness states he saw done at one of our frontier towns, and forced Hindus and Mussulman political prisoners to eat fat or starve; if he put men born and bred on the plains of India in ice-cold water on a winter's morning in this, to them, rigorous climate, and made them go for a full hour in *puris naturaubus*, it would lead to an ultimatum from the British Government, which would put a stop to it in twenty four hours. Yet this British Colony of eighteen months old, which has scarcely shed its political swaddling clothes, does it with impunity . . . . Mr. Gandhi's crime which he is expiating by breaking stones on the streets of Volksrust in a dress ornamented with broad arrows is practically a protest against these odious laws. There are in India gentlemen who rank much higher than the Prime Minister of Nepal; who has lately been the honoured guest of England, and there are several who take precedence at the Court of St. James, of any in this country, yet to the highest the Transvaal laws offer the same insult.

Mr. Gandhi, the convict of this country's laws, comes of the same class as the Prime Minister of Nepal, and his father when he died held the same rank, being Prime Minister of one of the States of Western India. Mr. Gandhi himself is a man of high educational attainments, a barrister of the Inns of Court and a man of high moral character and exemplary life. He was born a Hindoo, but he has taken for his guidance what is best in all religions, including Christianity, the essence of which he has practised more strictly than the majority of nominal Christians.

The Magistrate, when passing sentence, we are told, remarked that he was sorry to see a man who was an advocate of the Courts of this country in such a position, and, had he been in his private house instead of on the bench, he might, with equal appositeness, have added that he was ashamed of administering a law which compelled a highminded patriot to immolate himself in the interest and honour of his country and countrymen.

Indian Opinion, 7-11-1908

(5) EXTRACT FROM "NOTES ON THE TRANSVAAL STRUGGLE"

On Saturday, spans of Indian prisoners from 20 to 25 strong were sent to work on the Municipal Water Works, cleaning the cemetery, and tending the soldiers' graves. Mr. Gandhi was included. It must have been peculiar for him to contemplate

his present occupation, after having tended the sick and wounded during the Boer War and led the Stretcher-Bearer Corps during the recent Natal Rebellion,—*tempora mutantur*.

Indian Opinion, 21-11-1908

(6) R. M. SODHA'S AFFIDAVIT[1]

I, Ratanshi Mulji Sodha, of Natal, presently of Johannesburg, do hereby solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:

On the 14th day of October, Mr. Gandhi, a number of other Indians, and myself were sentenced to periods of imprisonment with hard labour at Volksrust. On the morning of the 15th Mr. Gandhi, I and 13 others, together with about 15 Natives,were taken out to work on the side of agricultural show ground close to the fence which divides the ground from the public road. Our work there was to dig and remove stones. We were quite close to the road, and anybody who passed could easily see us and here distinctly what was going on. A number of Europeans and Natives did pass by. The ground is within the Municipality of Volksrust, and the road is used by a number of people. The European warder who was in charge of the Indian prisoners kept on urging Mr. Gandhi to work harder and harder, though Mr. Gandhi was doing his best. All this might have been clearly heard by passers-by. The exact words used were "Come on, Gandhi; come on, Gandhi". Mr. Gandhi replied that he was doing his utmost, and was even trying to do more. The Warder kept urging Mr. Gandhi when he saw Mr. Gandhi stoop to pick up earth to rub on the palms of his hands, which were getting raw through blistering. When after nine hours' almost continuous work, with a delay of one hour between 12 and 1, Mr. Gandhi returned to the gaol, he was so stiff with pain and fatigue that he could scarcely move. At 12 o'clock on this day, one of the Indian prisoners who had fainted through over-strain, heat and lack of water, which the Warder did not allow him to get, was taken in a sanitary cart to the gaol. Mr. Gandhi accompanied him in this cart. On the afternoon of that day, we were under the charge of a Native Warder, who also kept urging Mr. Gandhi to go on working, although he was doing his best. The words used were "Come on, Gandhi; come on, Gandhi". Passers-by could easily hear and see this. On the next day we were taken to a piece of ground near the road-side, almost opposite Mr. Suliman Ahmed Cajee's store. Mr. Cajee who was standing in front of the store, could easily see and hear whatever was going on. This, of course, would be from the opposite side of the road, but passers-by could come quite close to us. We were digging holes for trees. and worked on this day as on the previous day, for nine hours.

(Signed) R. M. SODHA

Before me,

Declared at Johannesburg, (Signed) A. L. C. BARTROP

this 30th day of November 1908 JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

Colonial Office Record: 291/132

[1] Copies of this and three other affidavits were forwarded by Ritch to the Colonial Office.

(7) TRANSVAAL PRIME MINISTER'S MINUTE

[PRETORIA,
January 30, 1909]

Ministers have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of His Excellency the Gover-nor's Minute No. 15/1/08 of the 31st December last and His Excellency the Deputy- Governor's Minute No. 15/1/09 of the 14th instant covering respectively copies of despatches Nos. 424 and 451 from the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies on the subject of the treatment of Mr. Gandhi while undergoing imprisonment.

2. Information is apparently required on two points, namely, Mr, Gandhi's treatment in Volksrust and his journey from the Johannesburg railway station to the Gaol.

3. With regard to the first point, Ministers have the honour to confirm the telegram sent on the 3rd November last to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies in which it was stated that Mr. Gandhi, who always worked in the Indian gang of prisoners, was employed for two and half days in the Agricultural Show Ground at Volksrust digging holes for trees, and thereafter in the Municipal Plantation and Gaol Gardens. He never performed hard labour in public streets. Further enquiry also shows that Indian prisoners were treated with every consideration consistent with the Gaol Regulations. The work performed was of a very light nature and water was at no time refused when required. One of the prisoners fainted owing to the extreme heat and was conveyed back to the gaol in a "scotch", or ordinary transport cart, and not in a, sanitary cart as is alleged.

4. As regards the second point, Ministers have the honour to state that Mr. Gandhi was returned from Volksrust to Johannesburg Prison in his Prison clothes as prescribed by the Regulations. During the journey from Volksrust, the Warder in charge offered Mr. Gandhi to procure a cab for him at Johannesburg station and repeated his offer on arrival at the station. Mr. Gandhi, however, elected to walk to the Prison and carried his kit in accordance with the Regulations. On arrival at the Prison, Mr. Gandhi was received by the Chief Warder and informed him that he had no complaint to make. He was seen the following day by the Governor of the Prison to whom he made the same statement.

Colonial Office Records:291/136

APPENDIX XIV

TREATMENT IN PRISON: (a) MARCHED IN CONVICT'S GARB

(1) EXTRACT FROM H. S. L. POLAK'S LETTER TO THE PRESS ,OCTOBR 26, 1908

Mr. Gandhi has been sentenced to two months' hard labour for the offence of failing to give totally unnecessary finger-prints for identification purposes. He has been set to work upon the public streets at Volksrust. Nobody complains about that.

It is part of the punishment to be borne by people whom General Smuts calls conscientious objectors. But is there any excuse for bringing Mr. Gandhi from Volksrust to Johannesburg in convict garb, as happened yesterday, and marching him from Park Station to the Fort publicly? Doubtless it was all part of the regulations. I believe that, when the Spanish Inquisition desired to degrade its victims, among whom were probably ancestors of mine, it clothed them in bag shaped yellow garb and marched them in this fashion through the streets prior to despatching them at the customary *auto-da fe*. We, Transvaal Britishers, do not seem to have gone far beyond those mediaeval torturers in our desire to bring our victims to what, in our opinion, is a fitter frame of mind. Can you wonder that the Indian Community is getting more and more embittered and exasperated; and do you not marvel how, in spite of all these injuries and insults, they remain content to be passive resisters, suffering themselves rather than imposing suffering upon their European fellow-colonists? Contrast the Christian example shown by these non-Christian people with the Pagan cruelty of their Christian rulers. It makes one flush with shame to think of it all.

Indin Opinion, 31-10-1908

(2) "A SHOCKING SIGHT"[1]

On Sunday last, Mr. Gandhi was removed from Volksrust Gaol to the Fort, Johannesburg, he having been subpoenaed as a witness for the Crown in the case of Daya Lalla, who was charged with using a forged registration certificate, the case being now sent to the Criminal Sessions for trial. Mr. Gandhi was removed in convict dress, in charge of a warder, in whose company he travelled to Johannesburg. A few members of the Committee of the Association had got wind of the removal, and met the train upon its arrival at Park Station at six o'clock in the evening. Mr. Gandhi, carrying his bundle of clothes in a large bag marked with the broad arrow, a basket of books, and, of course, wearing the convict suit, was then marched in custody from Park Station to the Fort. It was then broad daylight, and the streets were filled with onlookers, some of whom recognized Mr. Gandhi, even in the hideous disguise that he wore. Mr. Gandhi, of course, wore the convict garb of coloured prisoners, a particularly conspicuous one. Doubtless all this happened in terms of the regulations, but it is typical of the anti-Asiatic policy of the Government that no instructions were issued that Mr. Gandhi should be transferred in civil dress, and taken to the Fort in a cab. So long as cultured Indian passive resisters and conscientious objectors are treated as though they were aboriginal native felons of the worst type, so long must this fight continue.

Indian Opinion, 31-10-1908

[1] This was published under the weekly feature: "Notes on the Transvaal Struggle: From Our Correspondent".

(3) H. S. L. POLAK'S AFFIDAVIT

I, Henry Salomon Leon Polak of Johannesburg do hereby solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:

I am a British subject, born in England. I am an Attorney of the Supreme Court of the Transvaal. I am Assisstant Honorary Secretary of the British Indian Association. I was present on the afternoon of Sunday the 25th October last, when Mr. Gandhi arrived by the Natal train from Volksrust. He was in custody and dressed in Convict suit. He carried a large bundle and a basket of books. The train arrived at the scheduled time 6.0 p.m. It was then broad daylight. The sun did not set until a considerable time afterwards. Mr. Gandhi was marched through the public streets from the Station to the Johannes- burg Gaol. This would take about twelve minutes. It would have been broad daylight all the time. I walked part of the way to the gaol at Mr. Gandhi's side. I left Mr. Gandhi half way to the Gaol. I then walked back for about ten minutes to catch my tram, and thereafter went home. When I arrived home it was still daylight approaching dusk. As Mr. Gandhi walked through the streets he was in full view of every passer-by who could distinguish him clearly and many people recognised him. The official sunset time on that afternoon was 6.17 p.m. I make this statement as it has been suggested that Mr. Gandhi was taken through the streets at dusk. This is not true. During the whole time that I was with Mr. Gandhi, it was broad daylight.[1]

(Signed) H. S. L. POLAK

Before me,

Declared at Johannesburg,
this 30th day of November, 1908

(Signed) A. L. C. BARTROP
JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

Colonial Office Records: 291/132

(b) *MARCHED IN HANDCUFFS*

(1) REV. J. J. DOKE'S LETTER TO "RAND DAILY MAIL"[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,
March 11, 1909]

TO
THE EDITOR
RAND DAILY MAIL

[1] A similar affidavit was made by Thambi Naidoo. These were among the affidavits copies of which were forwarded by L. W. Ritch to the Colonial Office on December 21, 1908.

[2] This and the following letter were reproduced in *Indian Opinion,* 20-3-1909. Also, its issue of March 27 carried an editorial on the subject entitled "Hand-cuffed !"

months' imprisonment with hard labour for failing to produce means of identification.

He has now been removed from Volksrust, and is now closely confined in the Central Prison, Pretoria.

Yesterday it was necessary that he should appear in some case in the Magistrate's Court. I understand he was brought there from the cells, dressed in civilian clothes, but handcuffed !

Of course, there may be amongst us those who will be glad to hear that indignities are being heaped on this great Indian leader; but I venture to hope that the great majority of our colonies will feel ashamed and angry that a man of the character and position of Mr. Gandhi should be needlessly insulted in this way.

He came voluntarily from Natal to be imprisoned. He has always shown the utmost chivalry in his dealings with the authorities. Why then should shameful indignity be put upon him?

Some will no doubt reply, "It is simply a prison regulation." Allow me to point out that there are no regulations scheduled for the class of prisoners represented by Mr. Gandhi; a class, not of criminals, but, as General Smuts termed them, of "conscientious objectors". Form Volksrust Gaol to Pretoria, it was not considered necessary to use handcuffs, neither were they employed in Johannesburg, surely in Pretoria this needless insult should have been avoided.

His Excellency the High Commissioner, speaking in Cape Town last week, in the course of a very fine address on the Native question, is reported to have reflected strongly on "the policy of pin-pricks" and its "cumulative effect".

It is that, "policy of pin-pricks" applied to the Asiatics here, not by irresponsible persons, but by officials of the Government, which increases the irritation in India and renders a settlement of this difficult business well nigh impossible.

I am, etc.,

JOSEPH J. DOKE

Rand Daily Mail, 12-3-1909

(2) EMILE NATHAN'S LETTER TO "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"

[JOHANNESBURG,
March 12, 1909]

SIR,

A few days ago rumour had it that Mr. Gandhi, now suffering three months' imprisonment for a cause which he rightly or wrongly espouses, when testifying as a witness in the Court at Pretoria was handcuffed. One could hardly believe the rumour to be correct, but in your issue this morning the Rev. J. J. Doke draws further attention to the rumour.

I am not aware that the prison regulations demand that a prisoner when giving

evidence in Court should in all circumstances be handcuffed. If it is a fact that a man like Mr. Gandhi—one of the quietest and most unassuming men going, highly educated, and a gentlemen to the tips of his fingers—was handcuffed and submitted to that unnecessary indignity, it seems to me monstrous, and nothing short of a shame and a disgrace.

I trust an enquiry will be held, and, if the rumour be true and the action unwarranted, that the wrong and insult administered will be redressed and the wrongdoer adequately punished.

I am, etc.,

EMILE NATHAN

The Transvaal Leader, 15-3-1909

(3) "AN EXPRESSION OF REGRET"[1]

While on the topic, we may express what we believe to be the general regret of the Natal public that certain Transvaal officials should have thought it necessary the other day to subject Mr. Gandhi to the indignity of handcuffing while being is the walked through the streets to give evidence in the Police Courts. This, we believe, is the prescribed procedure under the regulations, but Mr. Gandhi is at least a political prisoner, and as such deserves better treatment than that measured out to debased criminals. A regulation that subjects any man, no matter what the charge against him, to such treatment is monstrous, and in this particular instance should have been avoided, as it will only provide a weapon against the Transvaal regarding its attitude towards Asiatics.

Indian Opinion, 27-3-1909

(4) QUESTION IN HOUSE OF COMMONS

Mr. O'Grady asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he was aware that Mr. Gandhi, the Transvaal Indian leader, who was undergoing three months' hard labour under the Registration Laws, was, on March 10, marched from the Pretoria Gaol to the magistrate's court, where his attendance was required as a witness, handcuffed; whether he would enquire if this indignity upon Mr. Gandhi was intentionally imposed by the authorities, or occurred by mistake; and whether representations would be made to the Transvaal Government to treat British Indians, who were going to goal for what they consider to be conscience sake, less severely than convicted criminals?

Colonel Seely: There has been no suggestion that Mr. Gandhi has been subjected to any special disability. Mr Gandhi has been treated in every respect as any other prisoner would have been treated, and on a previous occasion he himself said he did not wish to be treated in any other way . . . . I am quite certain that I am correct in saying that Mr. Gandhi has not been subjected to any special indignity. . .

[1] This is from a report entitled: "Treatment of Mr. Gandhi".

. I am satisfied on the evidence laid before me that Mr. Gandhi has been subjected to no indignity beyond that suffered by any person of any colour in similar case.

Indian Opinion, 12-6-1909

(5) TRANSVAAL PRIME MINISTER'S MINUTE

PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE,

PRETORIA,

May 21, 1909

MINUTE NO. 223

Ministers have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of His Excellency the Deputy-Governor's Minute No. 15/1/09(2) of the 13th instant, covering copy of despatch No. 146 dated 24th April, from the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies on the subject of the treatment of Mr. M. K. Gandhi while undergoing imprisonment.

2. In reply, Ministers have the honour to inform His Excellency that the statement that M. K. Gandhi was marched handcuffed from the Pretoria Gaol to the Pretoria Magistrate's Court is correct. It is the universal rule to handcuff prisoners when so marchad and they are so marched when the prison van is not available, as happened in the case in point. The rule applies equally to European convicted prisoners and there was no reason therefore for exempting an Indian from its operation. Mr. Gandhi was however allowed to draw his sleeves over his handcuffs and to carry a book, which concealed the fact of his being handcuffed.

LOUIS BOTHA

Colonial Office Records: 291/137

APPENDIX XV

COMMENTS BY "RAND DAILY MAIL"

On the 21st instant, the *Rand Daily Mail* made the following editorial comments:

Though the scheme of the Asiatics in the Transvaal for closing their stores is undoubtedly a clever one, it will hardly popularise their cause in this country. It simply means that the so-called passive resistance has degenerated into coercion. There is no doubt that numbers of the Indians have been intimidated by their fellows, and are afraid to register or to take out trading licences; and now the scheme is to intimidate the European merchants and the Transvaal Government. We hope these methods commend themselves to Mr. Hosken and *The Transvaal Leader* and the other advocates of deliberate law-breaking in this Colony. But in the case of the majority of the people we feel sure that these tactics will destroy the last shred of sympathy with the Asiatic cause. Anyway we are convinced the Transvaal

Government will not be bullied into making concessions by such methods, and we hope that the wholesale traders affected will not allow themselves to be made the tools of law-breaking Indians. We do not think that many of the Asiatics will fall in with Mr. Gandhi's little plan, and ruin themselves completely to further the cause of passive resistance when it assumes such a new and startling form. We believe that a firm attitude will quickly make the plot a failure. And in the meantime the Government should pay a little more attention to the picketing system which is intimidating so many of the law-abiding Indians and preventing them fulfilling the letter of the law.

Indian Opinion, 30-1-1909

APPENDIX XVI

THE KAFFIR INCIDENT

(1) EXTRACT FROM REVIEW OF "A TRAGEDY OF EMPIRE" BY H. S. L. POLAK, IN "RAND DAILY MAIL", 5-11-1909:

". . . it is alleged that whilst in prison, Mr. Gandhi was "seized by a Kaffir, lifted high in the air and dashed violently to the ground. Had he not seized hold of a door-post as he fell, he would have undoubtedly had his skull split open!' "

(2) EXTRACT FROM REW. J. J. DOKE'S LETTER DATED OCTOBER 7 TO "RAND DAILY MAIL":

"In a sub-leader on the above subject published in your issue of Tuesday, I notice that you hesitate to accept Mr. Polak's statement that a brutal assault had been made by a Kaffir on Mr. Gandhi, while the latter gentleman was imprisoned in Johannesburg Gaol. You say: 'It is not stated whether Mr. Gandhi complained to the prison authorities and had the Kaffir punished' . . . and you add, 'in any case the attack does not seem to us to be one for which the Transvaal Government can be held responsible.'

It happens that I am able to supply part of the missing information. When I knew of the shameful assault, the details of which you naturally do not publish, I spoke of it personally to Mr. Roos, who expressed regret, and said that Mr. Gandhi had already told him of it. The Kaffir, I imagine, was not punished, as Mr. Gandhi would make it a point of conscience not to identify the man who had injured him. In similar circumstances, he refused to prosecute the Pathan by whom he had been assaulted.

Regarding the responsibility of the Government, I fail to agree with you. It is perfectly true that the Government had nothing immediately to do with the assault, and that great regret was privately expressed, and I have no doubt was felt, that this had happened, but the Government is nevertheless responsible for the system under which it was possible. The fact is that passive resistance Indians have been classed as 'Natives' and as criminals, and all attempts to get this altered, so far as I am aware, have failed. As a 'Native', Mr. Gandhi was locked up on one occasion in a cell with

Natives, and suffered a night of torture such as Mr. Polak describes. As a Native he was obliged to consort with Natives, and in that enforced contact the assault was committed. Efforts are made now and I believe successfully, to keep the Indians as much as possible to themselves. But so long as they are classed with Natives as criminals, and watched by Native warders, what happened to Mr. Gandhi in the Fort, to Nagappen at Yokeskei River Camp, and the others in different gaols may happen at any moment."

Indian Opinion, 16-10-1909

APPENDIX XVII

EUROPEANS' LETTER TO "THE TIMES"[1]

TO

THE EDITOR

THE TIMES

LONDON

SIR,

The signatories of this letter are, most of them, South African Colonists of many years' standing. One is a member of the Transvaal Legislative Assembly, others are clergymen of various Christian denominations, whilst others belong to one or other of the professions or are engaged in commercial pursuits. In addressing this letter to you, we are moved by feeling of concern regarding the present phases of what is known as the Transvaal Asiatic question. We frankly accept the position that the further immigration of Asiatics into this Colony shall be most stringently restricted. And the Asiatics themselves have publicly accepted that position.

But recent events have shown us that the welfare of the Empire, which we have at heart, may be endangered unless a speedy termination of the present state of affairs can be effected. The Transvaal-domiciled Indians to-day in India are likely to be a grave source of danger to the Empire, since they will have left this Colony with a feeling of bitterness in their hearts at the remembrance of their harsh treatment by their European fellow-subjects of the Crown, a feeling which they will not be slow to ventilate amidst the sympathetic surroundings of their native land.

It has been, perhaps too easily, assumed that the public opinion of the white population of the Transvaal is unitedly opposed to the Asiatic claims. We believe, however, that, whilst the number of European sympathisers with the Asiatics who will openly express their views is not great, there is an important body of sympathisers in the European section of the community who are grieved and hurt at the treatment being meted out to the Asiatics for no apparent useful purpose. We have carefully examined the claims put forth by them, and we have had opportunities

[1] This was dated "Johannesburg, November, 1908" and reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 6-2-1909.

of satisfying ourselves that they are legitimate and of such a degree of moderation as to be capable of being granted, without danger to the Colony. They are, in effect, two only. The first is that, at the next session of Parliament, the Government will introduce as a Government measure legislation repealing the obnoxious Asiatic Law Amendment Act, which the Colonial Secretary has declared to be unworkable. This law, which was passed unanimously by Parliament without consultation with the Asiatic leaders, and on the assumption that there was a considerable illicit influx of Asiatics into the Transvaal, has now been, for all practical purposes, replaced by the new Validation Act, which is generally acceptable to the Asiatics, and which removed the stigma under which they feel they labour so long as the old Act remains on the Statute-book. In a speech delivered at Richmond, Johannesburg, on February 5 last, General Smuts is reported to have said:

"The character of that law was that it should come into force once, and should have its effect once, and once for all. It was a very risky law, because, if the Asiatics did not come forward during that period, registration became impossible, and the law became a dead-letter. What happened? They were at a complete deadlock. That was the position into which they had drifted now. It was not by the fault of the Government, not by the fault of a party, because a law had been passed that required the co-operation of the Indian population. They did not give the co-operation; but they simply stood aside."

Thus, besides being declared by the Colonial Secretary to be unworkable, the old Asiatic Act has also been superseded by more recent and generally unobjectionable legislation, and is, consequently, no longer of any real value to anyone. The Asiatics have all along resented the imputations upon which the policy laid down in the old Act was based, and realise that so long as it remains their position is perilous. Undoubtedly, in our opinion, they undertook voluntary registration in the belief that the Act would be repealed, and they feel that their straightforward action in carrying out their voluntary obligations has not been reciprocated.

The second point is that the Asiatics request the recognition of the right of educated Indians to enter the Colony under the restrictions of the general Immigration Law of the Colony. It is admitted that the Immigration Act alone does not exclude educated Asiatics from entry into the Transvaal. On their side, the Asiatics are willing to allow the Government, by administrative methods, to restrict such immigration by raising the education test for Asiatic immigrants so as to make it impossible for others than professional men and university graduates to enter the Colony, and they have further publicly consented that the Government may administratively limit the number of these to six per annum. They urge, and we are at one with them in this, that the provision of temporary permits, renewable from time to time, is un-British and unsuited to their needs, for those to whom these permits would be granted would be allowed to enter the Colony as an act of grace and not as a matter of right, that they would be prohibited immigrants with the penalties suspended, and they would, consequently, be unable efficiently to practise their professions. We feel that the unhampered admission of this small number of cultured

Asiatics is a necessity to the welfare of the Asiatics themselves, and even more important to the European population. Without the means of communal development, the Asiatics must, in course of time, become a source of danger to the white Colonists, for, in the absence of their natural leaders, they would sink to a depth of degradation which we cannot contemplate with equanimity.

It is to secure these two points—all else being a matter of detail only—and easily capable of adjustment—that the Asiatics are prosecuting a resolute policy of passive resistance. They are the greatest sufferers by their acts, and, as they are an unrepresented and otherwise voiceless minority, whose views have been on almost every occasion ignored by the Legislature, it is difficult to discover any other course open to them, to secure redress of their grievances than that which they have adopted.

It has been suggested that the hardships of the present struggle, that the Asiatics have so vehemently protested against, are largely fictitious. We are unable to subscribe to that opinion. We consider that the Asiatics' complaints are, on the whole, justified. There has been an enormous amount of hardship and suffering inflicted as the result of this unfortunate misunderstanding. Since the new phase of the struggle commenced, some four months ago, nearly 900 sentences of imprisonment with hard labour have been imposed upon men whom General Smuts himself has called "conscientious objectors". They have been treated in gaol no better than aboriginal native felons, and the prison diet has been entirely unsuited to their national habits. Indeed, in some gaols, the food has been religiously "unclean", and, as a result, many of the Asiatic prisoners have been half-starved. There can be no doubt, too, of the immense financial loss that has befallen the Asiatic communities since the struggle first commenced, over two years ago, both by way of actual expenditure, and business loss due to restriction of trade. The mental anxiety of the Asiatic population, too, induced by the present unsettlement, has been intense, and this has reacted upon all sections of the population.

For ourselves, we are satisfied, from personal observation, of the earnestness and determination of the Asiatics in the prosecution of their struggle for what they believe is justly due to them. They have shown a degree of courage and self-sacrifice, and an honourable intention to abide by their obligations, that have evoked admiration. Many of their leaders, who are to-day in gaol for the sake of their compatriots, are cultured men who would be an honour to any community. They include professional men, wealthy merchants, priests and well-known traders. Those who are to-day in gaol include representatives of all sections of the Asiatic communities, from the hawker to the wholesale merchant, from the clerk to the professional man. All faiths and castes are represented, and the Asiatics have shown a unanimity that is as praiseworthy as it was unexpected. We feel that the prolongation of this struggle must have a most unfavourable effect upon the trade and commerce of this country, adding unnecessarily to the many difficulties with which it is faced in its efforts to achieve nationhood.

In these circumstances, we trust that a settlement on the lines above indicated will be sought by the Transvaal Government. In our opinion, there is nothing in the

Asiatic demands that cannot safely be conceded. These is a grave danger lest the British public be misled as to the real nature of the struggle now proceeding. It appears to us that it would be wise and prudent if, in future, legislation concerning the unrepresented sections of the people were not passed without previous consultation with their leaders. We wish it distinctly to be understood that we are in the fullest sympathy with all efforts of the Government to equalise conditions of European and Asiatic competition. To this end, it may be wise not only to apply existing municipal, sanitary, and other standards strictly, but even to raise such standards. But we respectfully submit that nothing could react more injuriously upon the European race than to deprive the Asiatics of all opportunity for development, and thus to diminish their wants instead of increasing them.

We are, etc.,

WM. HOSKEN, M.L.A.
H. KALLENBACH
JOSEPH J. DOKE
AND 24 OTHERS

The Times, 6-1-1909

APPENDIX XVIII

LORD CURZON'S LETTER TO GANDHIJI

GROOTE SCHUUR,
RONDEBOSCH,
February 2, 1909

DEAR SIR,

I am extremely sorry that owing to an alteration in my plans caused by illness, I was in Johannesburg for so short a time as to be unable to meet your Committee in person and discuss with them the circumstances of the case.

As it was, I endeavoured to make myself acquainted with both sides of it by personal enquiries and by a study of the papers with which I was provided by the courtesy of yourself and of others.

Upon my arrival here, H. E. Lord Selborne had arranged to meet me with General Botha and Mr. Smuts; and we had a prolonged and friendly conversation about the matter, in which every aspect of it was passed under review.

I had of course no authority to act upon your behalf. But my connection with India and the earlier history of the case, perhaps, gave me some title to express an opinion.

My own impression, in entering upon the discussion, was that it should not be impossible to find some solution of the present difficulty which should be equally honourable to all parties; and I received repeated assurances from General Botha and Mr. Smuts of their anxiety ot treat the British Indians in the Transvaal in a spirit of

liberality as well as justice.

How far it would have been possible, had I remained longer in the country, and been able to communicate personally with the principal parties concerned—to effect any settlement, it would be useless now to conjecture.

The main obstacle to such an arrangement at the moment appeared to be that, if the anticipations as to the formation of a single Government for South Africa are realised—as everyone hopes will be the case—the question will shortly be taken up again by a more powerful authority than the Government of any one State, and settled on wider grounds than those which affect the position of the Indians in the Transvaal alone.

As soon as unification is carried [out] in this country, there must be communications between the joint Government of South Africa and the Home Govt. on this as on other matters; and I should hope personally that these communications—which ought not now to be long delayed—may be made the occasion for a final and satisfactory settlement of this vexed problem.

If either then or at any other time, I can be of service to the Indian community in S. Africa, I shall be very happy.

I am,

Dear Sir,

Yours very faithfully,

CURZON

TO

THE HON. SEC., B. I. ASSOCIATION

JOHANNESBURG

From a photostat of a typewritten copy: S. N. 4920

APPENDIX XIX

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON JUNE 13, 1909

A Special Committee of British Indians has been appointed to decide the personnel of the delegation to England.

The members thereof are:

1. H. O. Ally, 2. M. K. Gandhi, 3. Hajee Habib, 4. A. M. Cachalia, 5. T. Naidoo 6. N. A. Cama, 7. Shaboodeen, 8. Omerjee Sale, 9. Kamissa, 10. Dadabhai, and 11. G. V. Godfrey.

Mr. Gandhi proposes that Messrs Cachalia, himself, with V. A. Chetty and Mr. H. Habib should go to England as the latter now declares himself as a passive resister.

Mr. Ally objects to this on the grounds: (1) that it is not sincere, (2) because the mandate is not on Unification, and (3) because V. A. Chetty is not competent.

the mandate is not on Unification, and (3) because V. A. Chetty is not competent.

Mr. Kamissa agrees with Mr. Ally. Mr. Cama might be preferred if elected.

Mr. G. V. godfrey objects to the proposition on the grounds, that: (1) some of the personnel will not be of any use in England on account of incompetency and, (2) the majority of Indians in the Transvaal will not agree to this one-sided proposition.

Mr. Dadabhai counter proposes that Mr. Cama, Mr. Gandhi and Habib should go.

Mr. Cama supports Mr. Gandhi's original proposition.

Mr. Naidoo explains that the meeting is mistaken about the abilities of Mr. Chetty and that he is quite able to address an English audience. Mr. Naidoo corrects this and says, that Mr. Chetty can explain himself as well as Mr. Habib or Mr. Cachalia. Mr. Shaboodeen proposes at this stage "that non-passive resisters should go and not passive resisters."

This proposition is put to the meeting and the following gentlemen vote for. *viz*: Mr. Ally, Godfrey, Shaboodeen, Kamissa and Hajee Habib, against Cama, Gandhi, Naidoo, Dadabhai, Cachalia and Omerjee Sale.

Mr. Gandhi moves his original proposition. It is put to the vote and carried by 6 against 3. The six voting for it are Mr. Gandhi, (mover) Mr. Omerjee Sale, (Seconder) Naidoo, Cama, Dadabhai, and Cachalia, against Mr. Ally, Godfrey, and Shaboodeen. Mr. Kamissa declines to vote.

Mr. Godfrey restores his objections to Mr. Gandhi's proposition. Mr. Ally does likewise.

Mr. Hajee Habib hereby declares himself a passive resister and on this condition he is to go in the delegation.

About 300 Indians present at the meeting.

From a photostat of the typewritten draft: S. N. 4938

APPENDIX XX

LORD AMPTHILL'S LETTER TO GANDHIJI

CONFIDENTIAL

MILTON ERNEST HALL,
BEDFORD,
August 3, 1909

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I take the opportunity afforded by an interval in the House of Lords to write you a few lines. In the first place, let me thank you for your letter of the 29th July and for the copy of your "Concise Statement", which you sent to me so promptly. I am also much obliged to you for the several telegrams in which you intimated that you would be guided by me for the present. I am afraid that it must seem to you that I am losing time but this is really not the case. The authorities are, of course, tremendously busy over the South Africa Bill and Imperial Defence, not to mention

convenience. Meanwhile, I am putting in a touch here and there by letter or by word of mouth wherever I see an opportunity. Now as regards your letter of the 29th: There is only one point on which I should be glad of a little further explanation, for the rest was quite clear and explicit. You tell me unequivocally that you receive no financial support from sedition-mongers in India but you do not answer my question (I think I put it) whether they are co-operating with you or advising you in any other way. I should like to be able to give a positive denial to that charge, which I do not myself believe, and to say that the continuance of your "Passive Resistance" is absolutely independent of anything that is being said or done in India. The contrary is alleged against you and I am naturally anxious to be able to repudiate the charge with proofs more effective than my own personal belief.

You marked the "Statment" as an "unrevised proof" and so I am encouraged to make a few suggestions.

PARA 15: With reference to the first two sentences, I suggest that you should add as an *appendix* Mr. Ritch's comparative statement of the position now and before the War. There ought to be some brief explanation of the effect of Law 3 of 1885.

PARA 17: Before the last sentence but one I would suggest a little amplification. It would be appropriate to explain that the five-finger method of identification, which in India is confined to criminals, was deliberately adopted although Sir E. Henry's report stated that thumb-impressions only were sufficient.

PARA 20: It seems to me advisable to explain exactly how the total prohibition was brought about by reading the Asiatic Law and Immigration Law together.

PARA 21: Surely "Act 2 of 1907" should be substituted for "Act 1908".

PARA 22: The terms of the compromise should be set forth.

After this paragraph a little connecting narrative seems to be wanting. You want to tell how the Indians found that the compromise was not what they honestly believed it would be.

PARA 25: This might be re-drafted so as to show that it was not the fault of the Indians that "repeal fell through". It would also be desirable to explain in what respect General Smuts "went back even upon the written and manifest terms of the compromise".

PARA 26: does not explain sufficiently clearly why the Indians burned their certificates. It should be remembered that this Statement, if it is used at all, will be for the instruction of persons who know nothing at all about this question.

PARA 29: I suggest that the petition referred to should be printed as an *appendix*.

PARA 30: (1) Is not "1908" again a misprint for "1907"? For the rest I think that you have wonderfully compressed the long story and brought out all the essential points. I hope that you will not mind my offering these few suggestions, for it seems to me that I am necessarily in a better position to appreciate what information is required by people in this country than you to whom the whole circumstances are so familiar.

Yours very faithfully,

AMPTHILL

From a photostat of the handwritten original: S. N. 4975

APPENDIX XXI

TRANSVAAL INDIANS' PETITIONS

(1) PETITION TO THE QUEEN[1]

THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY

LONDON

THE PETITION OF THE WIVES, THE MOTHERS, OR THE DAUGHTERS OF BRITISH INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL WHO HAVE PASSED THROUGH THE TRANSVAAL GAOLS DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS FOR CONSCIENCE'S SAKE

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT:

Your Petitioners are the wives, mothers or daughters of British Indians who have suffered or still are suffering imprisonment in the Transvaal in connection with the Asiatic struggle that has been unfortunately going on in the Transvaal.

Your Petitioners believe the struggle on the part of the British Indians to be righteous and for the honour of their race.

Your Petitioners are further aware that those Indians who have been continually courting imprisonment are bound by a solemn oath not to submit to the Asiatic Act of the Transvaal Parliament until the grievances which have dictated the oath are redressed.

Your Petitioners have felt bound to encourge their sons, husbands or fathers, as the case may be, in observing their obligation.

Owing to the above, Your Petitioners have in many cases been obliged to suffer not only the pangs of separation but [also] privation. Many Indian families have been reduced to poverty during the struggle.

Your Petitioners are aware that, under the British Constitution, Your Majesty cannot directly intervene on behalf of the sufferers. But Your Petitioners respectfully lay their case before Your Gracious Majesty in the hope that it may be possible for Your Majesty to use your influence unofficially, as mother or wife feeling for mothers or wives, and help to end a situation that has become most acute.

The points required by the sufferers are the repeal of a law which is no longer required by the Government and the removal of a racial bar in the immigration law of the Colony, so that it may be possible for the most highly educated Indians to enter the Colony on the same terms as any other immigrants.

Your Petitioners respectfully hope that their humble prayer will be taken into

[1] There is no evidence that this and the following two petitions were drafted by Gandhiji, but it is not unlikely that he had initiated the move to present them. They were ready for circulation, to secure signatures, before he left for England, and were published in *Indian opinion* with the remark that they were being extensively signed in the Transvaal.

consideration by Your Gracious Majesty.

And for this act of justice and mercy, Your Petitioners shall for ever pray, etc.

Indian Opinion, 3-7-1909

(2) PETITION TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

TO

THE HON'BLE DADABHAI NAOROJI

SIR,

We, the undersigned, British Indians residing in the Transvaal hereby approach you as the father of the Indian nation that is to be, with reference to the gigantic struggle in which we are engaged in this Colony. Through you we appeal to the whole of India.

We will not go into the history of the struggle, but will state the question as it stand today.

The Indian inhabitants of the Transvaal have asked for repeal of the Asiatic Registration Act of 1907, so that Indians possessing educational attainments, be they ever so few, even six per year, may enter the Transvaal on the same terms as the other immigrants. To-day, by reason of the Registration Act read together with the Immigration Act of the Colony, no British Indian can immigrate into the Colony unless he has been previously domiciled. The laws of the Colony, therefore constitute a colour bar. No other British Colony possesses such legislation. Indians have, therefore, publicly entered into a solemn covenant not to submit to the Registration Acts of the Colony but to suffer imprisonment and other hardships until the national insult is removed.

Under the covenant, during the past two years and six months, over 2,500 Indians have suffered imprisonment mostly with hard labour. Many homes have been broken up, many families have been ruined, in the struggle. Fathers and sons have gone to goal at the same time, leaving behind them weeping wives and mothers. Many families are being supported from charitable funds raised by us. At the present moment, nearly two hundred Indians are suffering imprisonment for conscience' sake.

The hardship felt has been so great that many have succumbed owing to sheer exhaustion. Others have left the Colony and are probably today starving. A resolute band of over 300 continues an active struggle. Some have passed through the Transvaal goals five times.

The covenanters are derived from all classes and strata of Indian society. Hindus, Mahomedans, Parsees, Sikhs and Christians are all fighting India's battle. Merchants who have never undergone physical exertion and have been brought up in the lap of luxury are breaking stones, or doing scavenger's work, or wheeling barrows of earth and living on coarse mealie meal and boiled potatoes or rice and ghee.

We ask India to come to the rescue and demand from the Indian Government a removal of the bar sinister. Until the racial taint from the Transvaal legislation is

removed, the little band of Indians referred to above will suffer unto death. We pray for relief.

Indian Opinion, 3-7-1909

(3) Petition to Bengal Chamber of Commerce

To
The President of the
Bengal Chamber of Commerce
Calcutta

Sir,

We, the undersigned, British Indians residing in the Transvaal, beg to approach you as the leader of Anglo-India. We approach you regarding the Asiatic struggle that has now been going on in this Colony for the past two years and a half.

We do not desire to trouble you with the history of the question. The point of dispute between the local Government and the British Indians is whether, as regard immigration, the laws of the Colony are to contain a racial disqualification. The local Parliament has passed two laws— one called the Asiatic Registration Act of 1907, and the other the Immigration Act of the same year—whereby a British Indian, no matter what his educational attainments may be, becomes upon entering the Colony, unless previously domiciled, a prohibited immigrant by reason of his Indian birth or extraction. This legislation is without parallel in British Colonies. We have, therefore, after other efforts had become vain, publicly entered into a solemn covenant not to submit to the Registration Law above-named and another passed in the year 1908, whilst the struggle was yet going on, until the Registration Act of 1907 is repealed so as to remove the racial taint.

By reason of the covenant, over 2,500 Indians, respresenting all races, classes, and religions, have undergone imprisonment. Many Indians domiciled in the Transvaal or in some other South African Colony have been, by arrangement with the Portuguese administration at the Province of Mozambique, deported direct to India, at a moment's notice, in some cases leaving families and businesses behind uncared for and unattended. Many homes have been ruined. Many merchants have been reduced to poverty. Many families are being supported out of charitable funds collected by the Indian community.

We do not desire unrestricted Indian immigration into the Colony. We accept the principle of white predominance in this sub-continent. All we claim is that the Transvaal cannot, unlike the other Colonies, impose a racial test and thus, in the words of Mr. Chamberlain, wound the susceptibilities of India's millions.

We have appealed to all parties—all British subjects. And we have received support from all of them. Even in the Transvaal, a small European Committee, composed of prominent members of the community, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Wm. Hosken, M.L.A., has been supporting us.

The honour of India, we doubt not, is as dear to Anglo-Indians as it must be to Indians. Through you, therefore, we ask the whole of Anglo-India to help us, in any

manner you may consider best, to end the unfortunate situation.

Owing to the almost unbearable severity of the struggle, many have succumbed. But the heroic band still continues to court imprisonment again and again. They are determined to fight unto death. The Transvaal gaols contain, at the time of addressing this appeal, nearly 200 Indian conscientious objectors. The Government have, for the purpose evidently of gagging us, arrested five such objectors, who were chosen as delegates to proceed to India and England. We pray for relief.

Indian Opinion, 3-7-1909

APPENDIX XXII

LORD AMPTHILL'S LETTER TO GANDHIJI

CONFIDENTIAL

July 29, 1909

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I have just returned home to find your letter of yesterday. I write hastily to reply in the midst of a local "tamasha".

Nothing would be more unfortunate than that Sir Mancherjee and I should be at cross purposes and that must be avoided at all costs.

I cannot "insist", as you tell me that Sir Mancherjee does; I can only advise. It is for you to choose between his advice and mine.

Your choice lies between the "diplomatic" and the "political" method.

If you choose the former, then you must leave the conduct of the business entirely to me just as the Cabinet leave their diplomacy entirely to Sir Edward Seely. Diplomacy is only possible through individual agency and by private action.

If, however, you choose the political method, then I will stand aside altogether so as to leave Sir Mancherjee a free hand. I could not take part in a course of action which seems to me inappropriate and erroneous at the present juncture.

As the result of the past ten days's work, I am in touch with Lord Crewe, Lord Morley, Lord Lansdowne and Lord Curzon on the one side and with Lord Selborne, General Smuts and Sir George Farrar on the other. I am to have a discussion with General Smuts next week, probably on Wednesday. All those I have named are open to a settlement.

My advice to you is that you should leave matters to me for the present seeing how far I have already gone, and that, if my negotiations should fail, you should then try Sir Mancherjee's suggested course of action.

Please let me know as soon as possible what you decide.

Yours very faithfully,

AMPTHILL

From a photostat of the handwritten original: S. N. 4967

APPENDIX XXIII

LORD AMPTHILL'S LETTER TO GANDHIJI

CONFIDENTIAL

July 28, 1909

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I am away from home and have only just received your letter of the 26th inst. I must reply hastily as it is past midnight and I am at the end of a long and tiring day, but as I am off again early tomorrow morning I shall lose much time if I do not write to you now. I have not been idle since I last wrote to you. I have had long talks with Lord Selborne, Lord Crewe, Sir George Farrar and I have also approached Lord Morley, General Smuts and others. Lord Curzon is working with me.

There is no fixed disinclination for a settlement on the part of any of the above-mentioned, but there is nothing to be gained by unduly pressing them or by any loud public action. Private negotiation is the only possible means.

In reply to your question, please let me see your "statement" and then I shall be better able to suggest what you should do with it. But I beg you not to *publish* or *circulate* anything without first consulting me. It would be fatal if any of the responsible statesmen were offended or put out at the present juncture. I may be too sanguine, but I really hope that they will agree upon a settlement if they are allowed to do so of their own accord. Now, I want an answer from you to this question:

If the Act of 1907 is repealed and if a promise is given that six Indians will be admitted to the Transvaal annually in the way you have proposed, will you be contented? Will that finally remove the sense of injustice and indignity under which the Indian community in the Transvaal is suffering?

Please let me know explicitly what I can say on this point, for the objection which I have to meet is the assertion that the Indians will never be contented, and that any concession will lead to fresh demands.

There is also much prejudice in high quarters on account of a belief that "Passive Resistance" in the Transvaal is being fomented and financed by the party of sedition in India who do not desire that the question should be settled. Please tell me how I am to meet this charge.

You may of course show this letter to your colleague and I should be obliged if you would show it to Mr. Ritch, as I have not time to write it all to him, but please do not show it to anyone else.

Yours very faithfully,

AMPTHILL

From a photostat of the handwritten original: S. N. 4965

1. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
August 5, 1909

MY LORD,

I beg to acknowledge your two letters of yesterday's date. I hope to send you copies[1] of your letters at the earliest opportunity. My letter[2] in reply to yours of the 3rd instant has already gone forward.

With reference to the allegation as to the question of educated Indians being a new question—I deal with it on a separate sheet of paper[3] in order to enable you to use it without having to refer to this letter. The terms of the proposed amendment to be submitted are also enclosed herewith.[4] I fully realise that the difficulty will be on the question of right. I have given many an anxious night to find out a solution without insisting on the "right", but I have failed because anything short of it, in my humble opinion, implies a record on the Statute-book of the Colony of racial inferiority, and this reply to your question is also the reply to Your Lordship's suggestion that, in the enumeration of demands, the status of educated Indians should be replaced by "the occasional admission of the few highly educated Indians" , etc. Any such substitution is not possible because the fight is not that of getting the few educated Indians admitted, but it is essentially that of having the potential or theoretical right recognised. Physicians, lawyers, etc., have been mentioned in connection with the question in order to emphasise the tangible consequences of a denial of the "right", and this became necessary in order to satisfy Mr. Cartwright's friends as …[5] [Colon]ial stand [point it] is necessary for them to know in a tangible form that our demand does not involve the admission of more than six such Indians into the Colony; as a matter

[1] Lord Ampthill had asked for copies of his letters to Gandhiji, as he had not retained any with him.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Ampthill", 4-8-1909.

[3] *Vide* enclosure 1.

[4] The original enclosure is not available. But the text of the amendment prepared by Gandhiji, which was forwarded by Lord Ampthill to General Smuts on August 10, is given here as enclosure 2. For the proviso later on added to it by Gandhiji, *vide* "Letter to Lord Ampthill",9-8-1909.

[5] Some words are missing here.

of fact, there may not be even two per year applying for such admission and, personally, I should want no assurance from the local Government that they would admit six or a smaller number. The principle being conceded, mere admission is a matter of detail and I frankly confess that , had it been purely a question of admitting a few such Indians, I should never have advised tremendous suffering on the part of my countrymen of the Transvaal.

I am much obliged to Your Lordship for your further and valuable suggestions as to improving the statement[1] . In concert with Mr. Ritch, I am attending to it directly. After the suggestions are incorporated, I will have a few copies struck and will forward them to you, but final order for printing them will not be given until I have received your approval and permission to circulate it.

I am, etc.,

[ENCLOSURE 1]

AS TO THE ALLEGATION THAT THE QUESTION OF EDUCATED INDIANS IS A NEW QUESTION

It is necessary to bear in mind that there were two conferences; the one in the January of 1908 when Mr. Gandhi was still in prison.[2] At that time the question of educated Indians was not mentioned because no such mention was necessary. This is so because the repeal of Act 2 of 1907, on condition of voluntary registration being gone through, would have automatically re-instated British Indians possessing educational attainments.

The second conference took place on the 20th August between the Executive Council and the leaders of the Progressive Party, Mr. Cartwright, Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Quinn. This is the meeting concerning which it is alleged that the question of educated Indians was not among the points discussed. This allegation received direct refutation in General Botha's despatch, No. 528, dated the 5th September 1908, at page 43, cd. 4327. General Botha says there: "The ninth subject of discussion was the fresh demand made for the immigration of Asiatics not claiming previous domicile in the Transvaal, but who could pass an education test." This is an admission that this subject was discussed at the conference, but, it is claimed by

[1] *Vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909.

[2] Gandhiji was sentenced to two months' imprisonment on January 10, 1908, but was released on January 30 following the settlement; *vide* "Trial at Johannesburg", 10-1-1908 and "Interview to "the Transvaal Leader", 30-1-1908.

General Botha, it was a fresh demand brought up there. But this is also wrong, as is shown from the correspondence between Mr. Smuts and Mr. Gandhi, commencing from the 22nd February 1908.[1] Indeed, as a matter of fact, the conference was brought about because the negotiations that were going on with General Smuts for repeal of the Act fell through, inasmuch as General Smuts imposed a fresh condition as to the prohibition of educated British Indians before he would repeal the Act. Moreover, in the … [2] [above quotation] a claim which ministers had previously decided was inadmissible and even had it been otherwise, it is difficult to see by what means a Bill providing for the immigration of Asiatics and the clause in question could be passed through either of the Houses of Parliament in view of the almost universal feeling of the white colonists on the subject." It may also be added that at this conference there was no agreement come to. The Asiatic leaders retired with distinct instructions from the members of the Executive Council and the Progressive Leaders that they were to put before their respective committees the points that were discussed at the conference and inform General Smuts of the decision of the committees. Accordingly and immediately, Asiatic meetings were held, and both Messrs Gandhi and Quinn reported to General Smuts. In the Blue-book above-mentioned, the whole of the letter written at the special request of the Private Secretary to Mr. Smuts is not given. The following are the opening sentences from the letter to Mr. Lane (Mr. Smuts' Private Secretary), dated the 20th August:[3]

Mr. Cartwright told me that I should write to you what I told him as to the decision of the meeting today, and to give my impressions also.

I placed before the meeting, for the third time today, the terms that I told them the Government were prepared to offer, and I told them further that these would form an Acceptable compromise, if some provision was made for highly educated Indians and Mr. Sorabjee's re-instatement; but the meeting would not listen to anything short of repeal of the Asiatic act and the recognition of highly educated Indians under the general clause of the Immigrants' Restriction Act. All I could persuade them to accept was that, the statutory right being recognised, there would be no objection to an administrative discrimination against educated Indians, so that only the most highly educated Indians could enter.[4]

[1] *Vide* "Letter to General Smuts", 22-2-1908.

[2] Some words are missing here.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to E.F.c.Lane", 20-8-1908.

[4] Lord Ampthill, acknowledging this letter on August 7, wrote that this memorandum seemed to be quite convincing and would be of immediate use to him.

[ENCLOSURE 2]

AMENDMENT

Part of sub-section 1 of Section 2 of the Immigrants' Restriction Act No. 15 of 1907 reads as follows:

"Any person who when asked whether within or outside this Colony by a duly authorised officer shall be unable through deficient education to write out (from dictation or otherwise) and sign in the characters of an European language an application for permission to enter this Colony or such other document as such officer may require; provided that for the purpose of this sub-section Yiddish shall be accepted as an European language; provided further that" (what follows is immaterial)

Proposed Amendment of sub-section 1. as follows:

"Any person who when asked whether within or outside this Colony by a duly authorised officer shall be unable through deficient education to pass an examination test in an European language that may be set; provided that for the purposes of this Section Yiddish shall be accepted as an European language and provided further that the Immigration Officer shall have full discretion as to the nature of the examination which may vary in respect of persons or classes and that the decision of the Immigration Officer in respect of the examination shall not be subject to review by or appeal to the Supreme Court or any other Courts of the Colony, and provided further that any Asiatic passing the examination test put to him by the Immigration Officer and not being otherwise in terms of this Act deemed a prohibited immigrant shall not be subject to the provisions of Act 36 of 1908, provided further that"

NOTES HEREON

1. If Act 2 of 1907 had been repealed and if there were no Act 36 of 1908, there would be no occasion for reference to Act 36 in the proposed amendment. But the reference has become necessary as Act

36 contains a removal clause, and as sub-section 4 of Section 2 of Act 15 provides that any person being subject to a removal order becomes a prohibited immigrant in spite of his passing the examination tests. Said sub-section 4 reads as follows:

> Any person who at the date of his entering or attempting to enter this Colony is subject or would if he entered this Colony be subject to the provisions of any law in force at such date which might render him liable either at such date or thereafter if found therein to be removed from or to be ordered to leave this Colony whether on conviction of any offence against such law or for failure to comply with its provision or otherwise in accordance with its provisions, provided that such conviction be not result of the commission by such person elsewhere than in this Colony of an offence for which he has received a free pardon.

2. The proposed amendment as to examination has been given in order to satisfy the objection raised by General Smuts that the present law may not contain sufficient discretion for the Immigration Officer, to warrant him putting one test before one immigrant and a different test before another.

Colonial Office Records : 291/142; also, from a photostat : of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 4980

2. LETTER TO UNDER SECRETARY FOR COLONIES

[LONDON,]
August 6, 1909

SIR,

I beg to acknowledge your letter of the 4th instant, in which you say that Lord Crewe will be willing to see my colleague and me on Tuesday the 10th instant at 3.30 p.m., in reference to the position of British Indians in the Transvaal. My colleague and I will wait upon. His Lordship at the time.

I remain, etc.

From the typewritten office copy : S. N. 4984

3. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
August 6, 1909

MY LORD,

I am now sending twenty copies of the statement[1]. Most of the suggestions made by you are embodied in it and I hope that the manner of carrying them out will commend itself to Your Lordship. In order not to make the statement technical, some of the explanations considered necessary by you have been given at the end of the statement in the form of notes. As already stated in a previous letter, the statement is still in proof form. If, therefore, any further amendment is required, it can be made.

Note D is the petition[2] referred to in paragraph 29. It has not yet been printed. But, for Your Lordship's perusal, I enclose copy herewith.

Your letters are being copied.

May I state that, if Sir George Farrar's approval of the demands can be secured, Mr. Smuts is not likely to raise any objections.

It may be that Mr. Smuts will excuse himself from doing anything, because, owing to the Union, there may be no more session

[1] *Vide* " Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909

[2] *Vide* "Petition to Secretary of State for Colonies", 9-9-1908. This, however, was not included in the statement.

of the Transvaal Parliament. If he takes up such a position, he can still promise to see to the two demands being granted at the first session of the Provincial Council under the Union, and, in the meanwhile, the Immigration Law may be administered as if the Asiatic Act did not exist. . .[1] Then passive. . .[2] efforts being successful, I take it that the passive resisters at present in the Transvaal gaols will be unconditionally released and that those who have been deported will be given the opportunity of applying for registration.

If, in Your Lordship's opinion, a conference between us is necessary, I am at your service.

Lord Crewe has now sent my colleague and me an appointment for Tuesday next.

I am, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 4982

4. LETTER TO H.S. L. POLAK

[LONDON,]
August 6, 1909

MY DEAR HENRY,

I am sending you a cable[3] today. It has not yet been sent because I want to save a few shillings by codifying one or two words. Although Millie told me that she had promised to send you a cable, I exercised discretion by not sending a direct cable and leaving you to infer their arrival from my cable[4] to Daphtary. As she will be writing to you fully about herself, I am not saying anything more in this letter. I enclose statement which has undergone many corrections and amendments. It is not yet in its final form nor is it intended to be for circulation. Lord Ampthill is most cautious about these things. Whilst the negotiations are going on, he does not want any public activity at this end. He will meet General Smuts next Monday ; we are to meet Lord Crewe next Tuesday. Next week, therefore, will definitely decide the course of action to be taken here. Your activity, however, need not be affected by what is going on here, unless a definite settlement is arrived at; but even if it is, I think you should take every advantage of

[1] The office copy is damaged and some words are missing here.
[2] *ibid*
[3] These are not available.
[4] *ibid*

your visit there to travel throughout India, see all the leaders and place the position before them. In the event of a settlement being arrived at, it would not be bad for you to publish a pamphlet giving a history of Indian grievances throughout South Africa.[1] It may be somewhat after my green pamphlet[2] which I dare say you have before you. No matter how things go, I gather from Millie that she would remain in London for about a year. Personally, I think it is as well that she should do so. I assume that you will be in India at least three months, and if necessary, you may stay for the session of the Congress. All this, however, may have to be altered as events ripen here. If there is no settlement, you can only concentrate your energy on the Transvaal question, and not divert the attention of the public by referring to other matters. I purposely refrained from sending you copies of letters from Lord Ampthill. I, however, send you copies of my letters to him. They will show you what is happening here and what charges are being brought against us.

Your cable has been duly received. I hope you are being well treated by those with whom you come in contact, and that they have found for you a suitable residence.

You should look up at the *Bombay Gazette* office, or at some of the libraries, the *Gazette* dated the 13th July. It has a long editorial on the struggle. The article almost seems to be inspired and is a personal appeal to me to restrict my activity, too, in certain quarters only.[3] It is a very sympathetic article and you should try to read it. Miss Smith showed it to me. The cutting I am sending to Johannesburg. By the way, whenever you get the time, you should try to see the public

[1] Polak wrote in his letter of August 21: "The S[outh] A[frica] grievances pam-phlet is already in MS. I wrote it in anticipation on board. Until a settlement, I am absolutely barring out anything but the Transvaal trouble." The pamphlet was published in October 1909 by G. A. Natesan, Madras, under the title : *The Indians of South Africa: Helots within the Empire and how they are treated.* Polak wrote another on the Transvaal problem entitled: *The Tragedy of Empire: The Treatment of British Indians in the Transvaal.*

[2] *The Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa: An Appeal to the Indian Public, Vide* 14-8-1896

[3] Commenting upon the Indian struggle in the Transvaal and adverting to Gandhiji, the journal had written that "if he gets in the hands of 'irresponsible degenerates', he had better have remained in South Africa… we trust he may be better advised than to throw in his lot with the class of agitator who now roams through Great Britain and advocates he knows not what". The article was reproduced in *Indian Opinion,* 11-9-1909.

libraries there, and make the acquaintance of Mr. Velinkar[1], the great educationalist, of whom I think I spoke to you. I am not sending you any note of introduction to him because I hardly think you need any now.

This is how Mr. Dallow refers to you in his letter to the *Yorkshire Daily Observer*: "Finding that all attempts to move the Imperial Govern-ment on grounds of justice to redress their grievances have failed, the Indian leaders have despatched one of their white sympathisers to India in the hope, thereby, of awakening the attention of the Indian people to their sufferings. The gentleman is an English Jew; an attorney by profession; in thought and habit a Hindu, and he is the only one appointed on the Indian deputation whom the Transvaal Government was unable to arrest." From one point of view, what a libel that you should be considered in thought and habit a Hindu! What would Kallenbach say to this? And yet, from another standpoint, it is undoubtedly a compliment. You may regard it as neither. Mr. Dallow has been writing, I know, in the same strain to one of the members of Parliament. As I am dictating this, I change my mind and will send the article to you instead of to Kallenbach. You will like to read the whole of it and it will be of no use in Johannesburg.

The Natal delegation is here, that is, Messrs Abdul Caadir, Anglia, Bhayat and Badat. I enclose herewith draft statement[2] prepared for the Natal delegates. I am not responsible for reversing the order in which the grievances should have appeared.

A splendid cablegram was received from Zanzibar by Sir Mancherjee supporting the Transvaal struggle.[3] Sir Mancherjee has sent copies both to the Colonial and India offices.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 4981

[1] Professor of English at Wilson College, Bombay, and later, at the Nizam's College, Hyderabad. He was a friend of Gokhale.

[2] This draft is not available. However, for the revised text bearing the signatures of the deputationists, *vide* "Statement of Natal Indian Grievances", 10-8-1909.

[3] Polak in his letter of August 21, ascribed this to his visit there.

5. LONDON

Friday, August 6, 1909

NATAL DEPUTATION

Messrs Amod Bhayat, H. M. Badat and M. C. Anglia arrived here safely on Saturday last. They were received by Mr. Ritch, Mr. Hajee Habib, Miss Polak, Mr. Azam Haffeji, Mr. Hussain Dawad, Mr. Abdul Caadir and Mr. Gandhi. They are staying in the same hotel as the Transvaal deputation. The delegates have met Sir Muncherjee, Nawab Saheb Major Syed Hussain Bilgrami and Mr. Gupta. They applied for interviews with Lord Crewe and Lord Morley; the former has already replied fixing Thursday, August 12, for the interview. They have prepared a statement [1]. I am afraid the deputation's visit will prove unavailing. For one thing, it is too late, and they have come to raise an issue which is a very old one. However, the experience they will carry with them may be of some benefit to the community. They are trying to see some other men who count. At this time [of the year], most of the leading men in British public life are generally on holiday and do not return till September. Mr. Justice Ameer Ali, also, is not present here; he has left for a distant place.

MRS. RITCH

Mrs. Ritch has suffered terribly through illness. The good lady has been in pain for the past two years. Her wound has had to be cut open four times, and she has been confined to bed. Mr. Ritch is quite buried under the expenses of [her] treatment. It is impossible to say when he will be able to shake off that burden. He has started practice at the Bar, where he has even made a mark for himself and won some important cases. But a new barrister does not earn much here. I advise Indians to address a letter of sympathy to Mr. Ritch. His address is : L. W. Ritch, Esq., 5 Pump Court, Temple, E. C., London. I am hopeful that Mrs. Ritch will eventually recover.

SUFFRAGETTES

The suffragettes have been straining every nerve. The more I see of their work, their skill in organization and their power of endurance, the more I feel that, compared to their effort, ours is of little worth.

[1] This was evidently drafted by Gandhiji himself; *vide* the preceding item.

They have a large number of volunteers who force themselves into ministers' meetings and so get arrested. In gaol, they take no food and so the autho-rities release them. They harass the latter in a number of ways; they have taken a pledge to allow themselves no rest till they get the franchise.

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

The Bill in regard to this has been passed by the House of Lords. It will be in the House of Commons in a few days. Mr. Schreiner is still exerting himself, but I do not see what good that can do. There has been plenty of discussion. Irrespective of the outcome, Mr. Schreiner's ability, his strenuous efforts and his philanthropic zeal deserve the highest commendation.

DHINGRA

Mr. Dhingra has been awarded the death penalty. He will probably be executed on the 10th. Some whites have been trying to secure remission of the death penalty. They argue that he acted out of foolishness. Moreover, they add, the act was not inspired by any personal motive and, therefore, should not be treated as ordinary murder. The white printer of *The Indian Sociologist* has been sentenced to four months' imprisonment for printing [the particular issue of] the journal. Being a very poor man, he is put to great loss. He had no knowledge whatever of the contents of the issue. But ignorance is no defence in law.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-9-1909

6. DEPUTATION NOTES [–VI]

[Before *August 7, 1909*]

I have no special information to give this week, as I had none last week, for everything is confidential. Lord Ampthill has himself been active. There is a slight hope that an amicable solution will be found. Even if that happens, I see no possibility of any other gain besides the repeal of the Act and the recognition of the rights of the educated. It should be understood that " the rights of the educated" mean those that have often been explained in *Indian Opinion.* That is, those Indians with the highest attainments will be allowed to come in and, from among such men, only six. Of course, in the law itself, there

will be no mention of "six", and no racial discrimination. The law will be the same, but it may be implemented in a different way. Provided the law is the same, there will be no humiliation. It will be there if the law itself makes distinctions. It should be noted by every Indian that, apart from these two points, other miscellaneous matters will not be included in the settlement. I hope to be able to give a little more information next week.

Sir Muncherji has also been taking great pains on this question. He wrote [to General Smuts] seeking an interview with him. A reply has been received saying that General Smuts will fix a time for interview after he is free from the pressure of engagements in connection with the Act of Union.

The deputation will meet Lord Crewe on Tuesday, the 9th[1]. That is the day on which a number of Indians are due to be released.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-9-1909

7. LETTER TO AMEER ALI

[LONDON,]
August 7, 1909

DEAR MR. AMEER ALI,

Mr. Abdul Caadir has shown me your letter of the 2nd instant. So far as the Transvaal question is concerned, negotiations are still going forward. We have privately seen Lord Morley and we are to see Lord Crewe, also, privately on Tuesday. It is yet too early to say what the result will be. We have a statement ready for publication and circulation, if necessary. No public activity has been undertaken on account of the negotiations. I think that a private note from you to Sir Richard reminding him about the question will keep the matter fresh in his mind and will show him that, even in your holidays, you do not forget the question. This will emphasise the belief that is gaining ground that India is not going to sit still over this question.

I hope that change and the bracing climate of the Swiss mountains have been doing you and Mrs. Ameer Ali a great deal of good.

[1] Tuesday, however, was the 10th, the date on which the interview took place. *Vide* also "Letter to Under Secretary for Colonies",6-8-1909.

Mr. Abdul Caadir asks me to thank you for your letter and to say that whatever he and Mr. Hajee Habib have given for the two institutions[1], has been given as a matter of duty, and may I express my concurrence in your statement that the activity of the two Associations should receive the support of all Indians.

As you may recall the fact, Mr. Abdul Caadir is one of the delegates for Natal. The Natal delegation is now complete, the other three members having arrived last Saturday. They have been specially comission [ed] to wait on you and seek your advice and be guided by it. They even telegraphed for your address and received it from Mr. Ahmed. They then went to Thos. Cook and Sons to find out how they could reach you, but, on learning that it was nearly three days' journey, they were reluctantly obliged to drop the idea of seeking an interview with you there. A statement for the Natal delegates has now been prepared, which I enclose herewith. If you have any suggestions to make, will you kindly telegraph? The Natal delegates have sought an interview with Lords Crewe and Morley; the former has appointed Thursday next for receiving the deputation. They are extremely disappointed that they will not have the benefit of your presence and guidance at the time. If, however, you could write a letter to be read before Lord Crewe, it will be valuable. They approached Sir Charles Bruce, inquiring whether he would lead the deputation. Sir Charles Bruce has sent a telegram saying he is not able to do so. Probably, now, Sir Mancherjee will lead it.

I remain,

Yours truly,

JUSTICE AMEER ALI, C. I. E.
ENGADIN
SWITZERLAND

From a Photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 4987

[1] The Natal Indian Congress and the Transvaal British Indian Association

8. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
August 9, 1909

MY LORD,

Before I write on the subject which to my colleague and myself is of the utmost importance, may I once more thank Your Lordship for the very great interest you have taken in the struggle? Whatever may be the ultimate result, my countrymen and I can never be sufficiently grateful for what you have done for us.

If I understood you correctly, in your opinion the entry as a matter of right will be recognised if the number were limited by the law itself. If that be so, it appears to me that the concession should be given coupled with repeal of the Act, without any bargaining with the passive resisters, but on thinking the matter over, if General Smuts is really desirous of meeting us, he should have no objection to accepting the amendment[1] I have submitted, together with the proviso I give hereunder. It should be read after "1908" and before " Provided further that"–

> "Provided that it shall be lawful for the Governor in Council to restrict by regulation the number of persons belonging to different nationalities (notwithstanding their having passed such examination) who may be allowed to enter the Colony as immigrants."

This amendment just—and only just—satisfies the Indian covenant. It still creates no disqualification on the Statute-book against British Indians as such. It completely, in my opinion, meets the objections raised by, or on behalf of, General Smuts.

In submitting this amendment, I recognise that I am becoming a party to a dangerous precedent in the history of Colonial legislation, but in deference to the views of Your Lordship and of other distinguished fri-ends of our cause, I am prepared to advise my countrymen to accept this further proviso, and if it is not accepted, it would be, I am sure, patent to you that there is no desire on the part of the Transvaal Government to offer an honourable settlement. With the

[1] *Vide* enclosure 2 to "Letter to Lord Ampthill",5-8-1909 The proviso was inserted by Lord Ampthill in the draft of the amendment which he sent to General Smuts.

knowledge—right or wrong—that I have of the methods of General Smuts, may I suggest that Your Lordship should not put this amendment as coming from me, but ask him independently—unless you have closed entirely the negotiations with him—whether he would be prepared to amend the Immigration Act in the direction above indicated? This proviso I am submitting because of my earnest desire to promote an immediate settlement and to avoid your long and arduous labours proving abortive; but if nothing comes of it, I should like Your Lordship to treat it as if it had never been suggested. The first amendment submitted by me is such, as I for one should advise my people to accept at any stage of the struggle, but the proviso I am now submitting does not fall under that category.

Kindly let me know whether you have any further suggestions with reference to the statement, of which I sent you twenty copies, and whether it may now be published and circulated.

I am, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4990

9. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
August 9, 1909

DEAR LORD AMPTHILL,

I have now received the somewhat delayed proof of the Rev. Mr. Doke's book[1], which I am very anxious to see published as early as possible. I might mention in passing that I have received a number of subscriptions from subscribers in advance.

I know you are very busy and I have hesitated to burden you further with the perusal of this proof and with the writing of the introduction, which you were good enough to promise, if the proof should meet with your approval. Nevertheless you will, I hope, find time—as I am sure you have the desire—to give this matter your very kind attention[2] .

I am forwarding the proof under separate cover.

I remain, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 4989

[1] *M. K. Gandhi: An Indian Patriot in South Africa*
[2] For Lord Ampthill's introduction to the book, *vide* Appendix XVIII.

10. STATEMENT OF NATAL INDIAN GRIEVANCES[1]

[LONDON,]
August 10, 1909

A SHORT STATEMENT OF THE
GRIEVANCES OF THE BRITISH INDIANS
IN NATAL
BY THE NATAL DELEGATION

The delegation consists of Messrs Abdul Caadir, Acting Chairman of the Natal Indian Congress; Amod Bayat, of pietermaritzburg, a merchant of twenty-five years' standing; Hoosen Mahomed Badat, a merchant of Pietermaritzburg and Richmond, of twenty-two years standing; and Mahomed Cassim Anglia, of Durban, merchant and Joint Honorary Secretary of the Natal Indian Congress.

The delegates were unanimously appointed at a British Indian meeting presided over by Mr. Abdoola Hajee Adam, Acting president, Natal Indian Congress, and held at Durban on the 7th day of July last, and have received numerous telegrams supporting the mission.

A petition[2] has been forwarded to the Colonial Office, a copy of which has since been received by the delegates.

The British Indians of Natal have suffered for a long time from a number of serious disabilities arising out of certain laws enacted by the Colonial Legislature and by reason of certain municipal laws.

The delegation desires respectfully to place on record its gratitude to His Majesty's Government for having refused Imperial sanction to the Municipal Corporations Act of 1906 and the Natal Licensing Acts of 1908, all of which measures threatened their community with still further disabilities.

The British Indians of Natal are practically unrepresented in the

[1] The draft of this statement, evidently drawn up by Gandhiji, was ready on August 6; *vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 6-8-1909. The statement was sent to the Colonial Office on August 11 by M. C. Anglia, who made a further statement at the interview with Lord Crewe on August 12; *vide* Appendix XIX. On the following day, the delegation issued the former representation to "responsible politicians … in the hope that they will render to the suffering British Indians in Natal whatever assistance they can to obtain redress and justice."

[2] Dated July 10, 1909, this petition was made on behalf of the Natal Indian Congress and other Natal Indian organizations, and covered grievances in respect of indenture, franchise, trade and other matters; *vide* "London", After 12-8-1909.

Natal Parliament, and are therefore obliged almost entirely to rely upon the protection of the Imperial Government. For them Self-Government has no special or beneficial meaning.

The delegates propose, however, to restrict their representations to three very serious and tangible grievances :

The Dealers' Licenses Act, 18 of 1897;

The Indentured Immigration Law of 1895 ; and

The policy with reference to the Education of Indian children.

THE DEALERS' LICENSES ACT, 1897

This Act is felt by the whole British Indian community to be extremely unjust and tyrannical. It affects the whole of the Indian mercantile population. In its wording it is of general application, but in practice it has been employed more and more extensively for depriving Indian traders of their licenses. The powers conferred by the Dealers' Licenses Act of 1897 were, it would appear, abused from the beginning. Mr. Chamberlain went as far as to intimate that, if its one-sided administration against Indian traders did not cease, he should be compelled to take serious action. The immediate effect would appear to have been that circulars were sent round to the different Municipalities by the Government of Natal (at Mr. Chamberlain's suggestion) to the effect that, although they had been given arbitrary powers, they were expected, on pain of being deprived thereof, to use them in a reasonable and general manner, and that in no case, if they wished to retain those powers, were they to touch vested interests.

Two cases of recent occurrence may be cited by way of illustration. Mr. M. A. Goga, a British Indian merchant of Ladysmith, long estab-lished and widely supported by Europeans both as sellers and customers, was, in June last, refused permission by the Licensing Officer, who is invested with almost autocratic powers in this matter, to take transfer of a license from another Indian in Ladysmith of equal standing. The premises in which the business was conducted were the property of Mr. Goga's mother. Appeal was made by Mr. Goga to the Licensing Board, which, however, declined to reverse the decision of their Licensing Officer.

In the course of an appeal to the Licensing Board from a refusal to renew another license of this applicant the previous year, Mr. Wyllie, K.C., M.L.A., remarked:

"You as a Council are not going to see injustice done even to an Indian. Take the license away and the business is at an end. You and the inhabitants of Ladysmith have enabled him to build up a business, and I submit that you cannot take that license away. If he comes today and asks for a new license, then you can refuse. He tells you that 95 per cent. of the business is with Europeans; therefore, it is a convenience to the burgesses of the town. It would be utterly impossible to come before you with a stronger case. I ask you to deal with it without bias as to anything that happened previous to entering this room, and with justice to the appellant." Commenting upon the recent decisions of the Klip River Licensing Board, *The Times of Natal* said:

"A SCANDALOUS INJUSTICE"

"A more arbitrary and unjust proceeding could not be imagined; and we have no hesitation in saying that had the Boer authorities, in the days of the South African Republic, been guilty of such conduct, they would have instantly been brought up with a round turn by the Imperial Government. Here we have a number of reputable Indian shopkeepers, who have built up business in which a large amount of capital is invested, suddenly and arbitrarily deprived of their trading licenses through alleged non-compliance with the law. They had complied with the law as far as it was in their power to do so, and those who could not write in English had their books made up in English at the end of each week by a competent book-keeper. They have done this for years past, and not a word has been said against the practice till now. We can only describe the decision of the Ladysmith Licensing Board as a scandalous injustice, and illegal as well; and if the applicants had the right of appeal—which, of course, under the law they have not—the Board's decision would imme-diately be quashed by the Supreme Court. We wish to be perfectly clear in this matter. We have no sympathy with Indian traders, and we should be glad to see an end of Indian trading. We would support the most drastic restrictions at the port of entry, and would go so far as to favour no fresh licenses being granted to Indian applicants. But to decline to renew a trading license in the case of Indians who have been allowed to settle in the country, who have been conducting their business in a perfectly legitimate manner for years past, and who have invested their capital in commercial enterprises on the strength of the license to trade, is to do something which conflicts with the laws of all civilised nations and with the most elementary notions of justice. We hope that stringent

instructions will be issued to all licensing officers in order to prevent a repeti-tion of the Ladysmith scandal; otherwise, Natal will gravely embarrass the Imperial Government in its relationships with the people of India."

In 1908, Col. Greene, M.L.A., appeared to support the appeals of a number of Estcourt Indian traders. He remarked as follows:

"Throughout his Parliamentary career he had maintained that it was undesirable that the Indian mercantile community should be allowed to increase, and it was with great surprise that he had been approached and asked to take up these appeals; but it was pointed out to him that in the House he had said that we, as a community, had to face the position like men, and that we had not to do any injustice, but that we had to take steps that would be perfectly just to the men whom we had encouraged and allowed to come into the country and obtain vested interests there. He said that they, as a superior race, had a duty to perform to the community, and that, if there was any dirty work to be done, it was for Parliament to face it, and to take the right steps. It had never been intended by the law that any dirty work of this sort should be done by local boards of this sort, and, upon my soul, if you refuse this application, I think it will make us all feel like worms."

The other case is that of one of the delegates, Mr. H. M. Badat of Pietermaritzburg and Richmond. Last year, a license granted to him in the latter place by the Licensing Officer for buildings owned by him was, at the instigation of a few European rivals, taken away by the Licensing Board. The Licensing Officer again granted it and again the Board overrode his decision.

In 1907, renewals of 11 Indian licenses were refused in the division of Klip River:

Ten renewals of licenses were refused in Inanda				
Two	,,	,,	,,	Alexandra
Five	,,	,,	,,	Victoria
Three	,,	,,	,,	Weenen

Last year there was a further crop of similar refusals.

The delegates desire to point out that this harsh and arbitrary conduct towards Indian traders is not adopted at the instance of the general European population of the Colony, but from the pressure of European trade rivals. The Licensing Boards which are the final courts of appeal in this matter consist largely of European storekeepers. The

Supreme Court has, on more than one occasion, commented upon the arbitrary powers conferred upon the Licensing Boards and has deplored its inability to interfere with their decisions. The Licensing Officers who, in the first instance, decide the fate of Indian merchants, are in most cases the appointees and servants of the Licensing Boards. They decide whether a license shall be granted, renewed or transferred. Very rarely are their decisions not upheld by the Licensing Boards. The declared policy is to reduce the movement of Indian traders, and the outcome of this policy is the almost complete failure on the part of British Indian traders to obtain common justice in the matter of new licenses, renewals or transfers. Proof of this could be adduced by citing numerous instances which have occurred during the twelve years that the Law has been in operation. Respectability and responsibility in the applicants or considerations of vested interests have hardly appeared to count if they have been Indian. For instance:

The second signatory hereto, in 1907, purchased a business in Wee-nen from a trustee. The Licensing Officer declined to transfer and license the business to him. On appeal to the Licensing Board, the latter upheld the decision of its officer. The Supreme Court, being moved, declared its powerlessness to grant relief. In 1906, the fourth signatory hereto was the transferee of a license of a business in Port Shepstone. The transfer of the license was duly allowed and renewed once. When next applied for, further renewal was refused at the instigation of trade rivals.

It is obviously merely a question of time—by no means remote—when the whole class of Indian traders in Natal will be extinguished, unless the Dealers' Licenses Act is so amended as to give the aggrieved party the right of appeal to the Supreme Court.

THE INDENTURED IMMIGRATION LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1895

During the last half century, Natal has relied for its labour and prosperity upon indentured Indian immigrants. The fact stands admitted by nearly every Natal statesman, past and present. Natal's chief industries have depended for their very existence almost entirely upon this class of labour, but the labourer, after he has given the Colony the best energies of the best years of his life, is now denied an opportunity to settle down and finish his years in the Colony as a respectable freeman. Every effort is made to compel him either to re-indenture or to leave the Colony. A prohibitive special annual tax of £ 3 per head is imposed upon him and upon his wife and his children—

a tax that presses so severely upon him that it has ruined many a freed Indian and has driven many more to questionable practices and moral degradation. The imposition of this tax has not been defended save on the grounds of political expediency. Thanks to the firm attitude of His Majesty's Government, the Government of the Colony has hitherto failed to carry into effect the desired and long-contemplated plan of repatriating the Indian indentured labourers upon completion of their indentures. The delegates respectfully submit, however, that His Majesty's Government should with equal propriety and justice have refused their sanction to the imposition of the iniquitous special annual tax, which very nearly produces the same result.

The delegates feel that, in the interests of the Colony, of the free Indian population, and even of the indentured labourers themselves, the whole system of indenture should be put an end to. They consider that the mere fact that these unhappy people are able, during the term of their indentures, to earn a little more money in Natal than in India , is a matter of relative unimportance. What material advantage thereby accrues to them is as nothing compared to the deterioration of their manhood and the vicious consequences that react upon the Colony as a whole.

If, however, the supply of indentured labour cannot suddenly be withdrawn without jeopardising the chief industries of Natal, the special tax above referred to should, in the humble opinion of the delegates, certainly be abolished.

THE EDUCATION OF INDIAN CHILDREN

The delegates feel keenly that a deliberate attempt is being made to starve the Natal British Indian community intellectually, by depriving them of even such limited facilities for educating their children as have hitherto existed. The Indian schools supported by the Government have never supplied British Indian children with any but very elementary education. The general schools of the Colony are, of course, closed altogether to Indian children. The Government higher grade school no longer permits Indian children to remain as pupils after completing the age of thirteen; consequently, such education as might be acquired in the upper standards, if the children were given the chance of reaching them, is no longer available to them. The effect of this policy has been to drive out a large number of Indian children, whose education was scarcely begun, from the Indian

schools. This lack of facilities for acquiring education operates as a very serious handicap upon, and causes the gravest anxiety to, the thoughtful members of the Indian community. They are deeply concerned for the future of their children.

The delegates respectfully submit that this important matter should be equally a matter of concern to the European Colonists themselves, inasmuch as the condemnation of a section of the population of the Colony to a condition of illiteracy is bound to affect the general intellectual and moral well-being of the State.

In view of the above facts, British Indians in Natal naturally approach the proposed Union of the South African Colonies in fear and trembling. It is generally recognised that an anti-Indian wave is passing over South Africa. Three of the four States of the proposed Union are admittedly hostile to British Indians. The Cape has already shown signs of joining the hostile movement, so that the Union will represent a combination of hostile forces which hitherto have been working independently of each other. British Indians feel, therefore, that the proposed Union in South Africa will mean further degradation of a class of loyal subjects of His Majesty domiciled in South Africa, who already labour under a double disability, viz, of being British Indians, and of classification with the so-called "coloured races".

It is submitted here that, whatever may be said in regard to the other Colonies in South Africa, the Imperial Government have, undoubtedly, facilities for securing justice to the British Indians of Natal. This Colony cannot take all and give nothing. It has, on its own admissions, to depend upon the goodwill of the Imperial Government for the development and retention of its industries. The least that Natal can be asked to do in return for the supply of indentured labour that is permitted to flow on to her lands is to grant common justice and fair treatment to those British Indians who have settled there, and who have thus acquired vested interests.

ABDUL CAADIR
AMOD BAYAT
H. M. BADAT
M. C. ANGLIA

Colonial Office Records : 179/255

11. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
August 10, 1909

MY LORD,

Mr. Hajee Habib and I have just returned from the interview with Lord Crewe. His Lordship was very sympathetic; he gave a patient hearing. I slightly sketched before him, as I saw that the opportunity was too great to be missed, the amendment that I sent to you last evening. I took the liberty of mentioning that we had discussed the question fully with Your Lordship. Lord Crewe nodded appreciatingly and said that you had taken great pains over the question. From what Lord Crewe said, I imagine that the negotiations still continue. I think he admits that the amendment that I have suggested is very reasonable and that he would press it upon General Smuts. I do not know what should now be done in the circumstances. I await Your Lordship's advice.[1]

I remain, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 4996

12. CABLE TO H. S. L. POLAK

[LONDON,
August 10, 1909]

POLAK
REUTER
BOMBAY

GOVERNMENT AGREE REPEAL. WANT INSERT LIMIT LAW. WE PROPOSED AMENDMENT AUTHORISING GOVERNOR MAKE REGULATIONS FIXING LIMIT NUMBERS ANY NATIONALITY JUST SATISFIES

[1] Discussions and correspondence on this subject among Lord Ampthill, General Smuts and Lord Crewe indicated a "divergence in principle" between Gandhiji and Smuts. *Vide* Appendix "Letters from Ampthill, Crewe and Smuts".

OATH. (WISH YOU COULD ADVERTISE DATE[1] MEETING).[2]

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 4999/2

13. CABLE TO BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

[LONDON,
August 10, 1909][3]

BIAS
JOHANNESBURG

NEGOTIATIONS PROCEEDING. GOVERNMENT AGREE REPEAL. WANT INSERT LIMIT IN LAW. WE PROPOSED GENERAL AMENDMENT AUTHORISING GOVERNOR MAKE REGULATIONS FIXING LIMIT ANY NATIONALITY. THIS MAKES LAW GENERALLY APPLICABLE JUST SATISFIES OATH. HOPE RUSTOMJEE HARILAL OTHERS REMAIN TRANSVAAL.[4] DOWD SHOULD RETURN.[5]

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand : S. N. 4998

[1] This referred to the meeting called by the Sheriff of Bombay; the date announced was August 31. *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Crewe", 24-8-1909.

[2] In his letter of August 14, Polak acknowledged receipt of this cable and stated that he had "dealt with it in the Press". The following extended version of the cable was published in *The Times of India,* 12-8-1909 and *The Hindu,* 19-8-1909 : "The Transvaal Government agree to repeal the Asiatic Act of 1907, but they desire to insert a clause in the Immigration Law limiting the annual number of Asiatic immigrants. The Indian deputation have declined to agree to legal differentiation upon racial lines, and have proposed that a clause may be inserted in the Immigration Law empowering the Government of the Transvaal to frame regulations fixing the number of immigrants of any nationality, thereby maintaining the principle of legal equality without interfering with existing powers of administrative differentiaton."

[3] This cable appears to have been sent on the same day as the preceding one.

[4] Harilal Gandhi and Parsee Rustomjee were released on August 9 and 10 respectively. Rustomjee was re-arrested the same day and sentenced on August 11.

[5] *Vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak",13-8-1909.

14. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[LONDON,]
August 10, 1909

CHI. MANILAL,

I have received your letter. There is little hope of any settlement; I am therefore writing this on Tuesday, for there is likely to be a greater pressure of work on me than before.

The words in your letters are sometimes incomplete. You will do better if you form the habit of reading the letters after writing them.

As regards having another tank, my advice is that you should carry on for the present without buying a new one. The rains will now set in and it will be possible to carry on with one tank. Meanwhile, I hope to be able to go there. We shall see to it then.

I am glad that you have given up worrying [about your studies]. The more I observe things here, the more I feel that there is no reason to believe that this place is particularly suited for any type of better educa-tion. I also see that some of the education imparted here is faulty. How-ever, there is a constant desire in my mind that each of you should be able to come and stay here for a while at least. If we go on doing our duty properly, we need not worry about the future. Your studying there ear-nestly would be your preparation for coming here. Mr. West's mother is just 150 miles away from London and yet she has never visited this city. The distance between London and Louth is only three and a half hours.

That there are more fruit trees on the land than we can look after shows our lack of competence. You should grow only so much as you can look after yourself.

Please let me know what made Anibehn ill, the nature of her illess and for how many days she has gone to Tongaat, and other news.

It is a matter of joy that Kababhai got a son. However, as you know my ideas in the matter, I feel sorry too. Thinking of the state of affairs in the country, I believe very few Indians need marry at the present time. The significance of marriage is also very deep. A person who marries in order to satisfy his carnal desire is lower than even the beast. For the married, it is considered proper to have sexual intercourse only for having progeny. The scriptures also say so. Thus considered, all the progeny that is born now is the issue of passion.

Hence it is that the children born are mean and faithless and continue to be so. I do not want to discuss these things further with you; for that one has to go deeper into them. But I want you to understand the purport of what I have said above; and, understanding it, conquer your senses. Do not be scared by this and think that I want to bind you not to marry even after the age of 25. I do not want to put undue pressure on you or on anyone whatever. I just want to give you advice. If you do not think of marriage even at the age of 25, I think it will be to your good. But in case you feel like marrying then, I would like to explain to you the meaning of marriage from Kababhai's example. I am putting this serious subject before you, though you are but a child, simply because I have a high opinion of your character. I would not place these thoughts before any other child of your age, for he would not understand them.

More you will know from my letters to Ba and others, which I shall write hereafter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the original Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand : C. W. 85

Courtesy : Sushilabehn Gandhi

15. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD CREWE

[LONDON,]
August 11, 1909

SIR,

In connection with the interview that the Earl of Crewe was pleased to grant Mr. Hajee Habib and me yesterday on the British Indian struggle in the Transvaal, I beg to mention that a cablegram[1] has been received by the South Africa British Indian Committee from Lorenco Marques, showing that probably a hundred British Indians—presumably passive resisters—are likely to be deported any day through that port to India. His Lordship is doubtless aware that this method of deportation has caused a great deal of misery and has formed a subject of repeated communications to the Colonial Office.

[1] L. W. Ritch wrote on the same day to the Foreign Office, quoting the cable which read: "Probably hundred deportees any day here. No reply intervention. Consul referred Imperial July sixteenth." The matter had been referred to the British Consul at Lorenco Marques, but no reply was forthcoming.

In view, however, of the negotiations that are going on for a settlement of the question, may I request His Lordship's intervention with a view at least of postponing any such deportation during negotiations.

I have, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records: 291/142; also, from a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5002

16. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
August 11, 1909

MY LORD,

I beg to thank you for your letter of the 10th instant.

I am glad that you are pleased with the proviso I have suggested.[1] May I say that the proviso does not, in my opinion, involve a sacrifice of any essential principle.[2]

As the negotiations are still to continue, it will be perhaps as well not to circulate the statement among the newspaper editors or amongst sympathisers. Newspaper editors as editors are hardly interested in anything that is not sent to them for publication, and I am chary of circulating the statement among sympathisers without taking them into confidence as to what is going on. Subject, therefore, to Your Lordship's confirmation, I shall hold over the circulation of the statement pending negotiations.[3]

Although I know that I am trespassing upon your time, as I am

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Ampthill",9-8-1909 Commenting on this Lord Ampthill had observed: "So far as I can judge, you would actually be securing a recognition of right, though of course a very limited one, if the law itself were to declare that six Indians per annum may be admitted annually as permanent residents. It would be the gain of a practical and positive, though limited, right as against the theoretical and unavailable right which you are contending. The 'proviso' which you suggest seems to me to be a clever solution of the difficulty and I shall at once try what can be done with it, but without letting it be known that it comes from you."

[2] This assertion has reference to Lord Ampthill's remark: "I am more glad than I can say to know that you are thus far prepared to make a sacrifice as, after our talk yesterday, I despaired of a settlement."

[3] Lord Ampthill had suggested that it might be helpful to give the "Statement" to newspaper editors only for their information and to sympathisers for their confidential use.

anxious that I should keep you informed of everything that is going on.

I enclose herewith copy of a letter[1] addressed by me to Lord Crewe, which I hope will meet with your approval.[2]

I remain, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5000

17. LONDON

[After *August 12, 1909*]

NATAL DEPUTATION

The Natal deputation had a meeting with Lord Crewe on Thursday. He gave a patient hearing. Mr. Anglia made a statement[3] and was followed by Mr. Abdul Caadir. Lord Crewe expressed his sympathy, but said that the existing laws would not be repealed. After unification, he said, conditions might improve under the Union Parliament. The deputation's petition referred to the issue of licences, the law relating to indentured labour, and education. Copies of the petition will now be distributed among all Members of Parliament. Preparations are going on for that. Two newspapers here have published a short summary of the petition which was forwarded from Durban. Mr. Ritch is thinking of sending copies to other places.

SUFFRAGETTES

The suffragettes are unremitting in their efforts. Meetings are being held all over. Everyone of the women posted at the Parliament gate keeps awake the whole night. Some of their ways of inviting suffering on themselves are, no doubt, highly commendable.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item. Lord Ampthill, commenting on the subject in his reply of August 12, observed that Gandhiji's communication was discreet and temperate, that the incident of deportation should favour their cause and that he regarded it as a powerful lever in the negotiations.

[2] Lord Ampthill informed Gandhiji that, as soon as he had received his letter suggesting the "proviso", he had written to both General Smuts and Lord Crewe, putting forward the suggestions as his own and urging its acceptance from a point of view which was also his own. *Vide* Appendix Letters from Ampthill, crewe and smuts"

[3] This was on August 12, 1909. For M. C. Anglia's statement, *vide* Appendix "Statement made on Behalf of of Natal Delegates".

DHINGRA

Mr. Dhingra, it is said, will be hanged on the 17th. But it is also likely that the death penalty will be commuted.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

There has been quite a row in the House of Commons about the budget proposals recently introduced. The sessions continue right through the night, with the result that half the number of members stretch themselves out for a nap right in the midst of all, wake up when it is time for voting and resume the nap as soon as the voting is over. Such is the condition of the greatest Parliament in the world. How, in these circumstances, they attend to the nation's business—readers may imagine for themselves. We find that most people are selfish. It will not be wrong to say that the sun of pure justice has set. Relatively, the British people behave somewhat better and that is why they outshine the other nations. However, it does not seem likely that Western civilization will survive much longer.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-9-1909

18. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

[LONDON,]
August 13, 1909

MY DEAR HENRY,

I hope you received my cablegram[1] about the negotiations and the new amendment. The enclosed copy[2] will give you all the information about the events of the week.

All I need add now is regarding your cablegram suggesting that Mr. Dowd should go to India. I feel sure that such is not your own opinion, but that you have merely transmitted the opinion of the Surat friends. You will remember the public declaration that Mr. Dowd made, that until the question was finished he would not leave the

[1] *Vide* "Cable to H. S. L. Polak10-8-1909.
[2] This is not available.

Transvaal, even at the risk of his life. It is therefore highly necessary for him, if for nothing else, for the sake of his honour, that he should return to the Transvaal and challenge the Government to re-imprison him, but other consi-derations, too, show that his presence is far more desirable in the Transvaal than in India. We want as many meetings there as possible. All these meetings are of use only if the fire of passive resistance is kept alive. You know as well as I do how effectively Mr. Dowd Mahomed can contribute to the process. Then, again, we can't wait for his arrival in Bombay before meetings are held. They should be convened now whilst the deputation is in London; they may be even after the deputation has returned to South Africa with empty hands, but we need not hurry Mr. Dowd to India in anticipation of so prolonged a struggle. Lastly, the negotiations are maturing hourly and there is every reason to hope that they will be successful. If so, Mr. Dowd Mahomed is not required in India for meetings in connection with the Transvaal. If he is required in connection with the general grievances, he can be sent after the Transvaal matter is closed. For that there is ample time. I shall therefore be cabling tomorrow[1] saying that Dowd Mahomed's place is in the Transvaal at the present time.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5007

19. DEPUTATION NOTES [-VII]

[*August 13, 1909*]

It always happens that, when negotiations are in progress, very little information can be divulged to the public. I had hoped last week to be able to give definite news this week. But I find that the week is over without there being any definite news. However, negotiations are proce-eding. We had an interview with Lord Ampthill on Monday. Mr. Hajee Habib, Mr.Ritch and I spent nearly an hour and a half with him, and had a long discussion. On Tuesday, we met Lord Crewe. I think his reply was very satisfactory. He has agreed to have a talk with General Smuts.

[1] It appears that the cable was actually sent on August 16; *vide* "Cable to H. S. L. Polak",16-8-1909.

While these negotiations were proceeding, there was a cable from Delagoa Bay to say that about a hundred Indians were likely to be deported. The information has been forwarded to Lord Crewe.[1] Everything possible is being done in the matter.

While I was writing this, I received a cable[2] from Johannesburg, reporting the release of satyagrahis and the immediate re-entry of Mr. Rustomjee. I also saw the cable reporting that he has been sentenced to six months' hard labour. Reading it, I felt happy and cried too. This is exactly what I had expected of Rustomjee. He has been beyond praise. It made me happy to think that there are such men among Indians. I cried because he had to suffer so much. It is only when leading Indians set such examples that the people will acquire a backbone. If everyone followed this example, Indians would have nothing to suffer. I see from experience that we have now plenty of brave Indians who are ready to go through extreme suffering for the sake of the motherland. If we have a settlement, so much the better; should there be none, however, my only prayer to Indians is this: "Do not betray your pledge. Suffering for a just cause brings more real happiness than what generally passes as such. At any rate, in the broken state that we are in, we have no right whatever to indulge in luxury. We shall get used to suffering after a little experience. Therefore, train yourself to endure suffering." I for one know of no other way.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-9-1909

20. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]

August 14, 1909

MY LORD,

I thank you for your letter of the 12th instant. It encourages me to send you a copy of letter[3] written by Mr. Ritch to Lord Crewe and

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Crewe", 11-8-1909.

[2] This was dated August 12. It reached London on August 13, the day this article was written.

[3] It requested for an inquiry into the allegation regarding food supply to prisoners and invited special attention to circumstances leading to Nagappen's death.

of the cablegram[1] attached to it. The cablegram, I am sure, will be painful reading to Your Lordship, as it is to me.[2]

I, am, etc.,

From the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5010

21. CABLE TO H. S. L. POLAK[3]

[LONDON,]
August 16, 1909

DOWD'S PLACE TRANSVAAL AMENDMENT INCLUDES GENERAL EDUCATION TEST AND POWER GOVERNOR MAKE REGU-LATION RESTRICTING NUMBER NATIONALITY PASSING TEST.

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5018

22. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD CREWE

[LONDON,]
August 16, 1909

SIR,

I beg to invite the attention of the Earl of Crewe to the enclosed extract translation of a letter received by me from a Mr. Mahomed Khan, who was for some time my clerk in Johannesburg. I have given a free rendering of the apposite portion of the letter. It is typical of many that were received by me whilst I was in Johannesburg.

It is possible that there is unconscious exaggeration in some parts of the letter, as for instance, as to the exact quantity of food

[1] The cable received from the Transvaal British Indian Association read: "Prisoners suffering severely, insufficient unsubstantial food. Ex-prisoners Johannesburg except Rustomjee, who straightway deported returned, six months' rigorous. Good mass meeting yesterday; resolutions, congratulation ex-prisoners; dissatisfaction Nagappen finding which arousing public indignation; published evidence completely substantiating Indian allegations; support deputations, respectful urgent appeal Imperial Government intervene this juncture. Arrests, deportation continuing."

[2] Lord Ampthill's reaction, indicated in his letter of August 16, was: "Painful and vexatious though it is that the persecution should continue and be augmented at the present moment, I cannot help thinking that the circumstances will further our cause."

[3] Though the draft does not bear Polak's name, it is clear from the contents that this cable was sent to him; *vide* "Deputation Notes[—VII]", 13-8-1909 and letters to H. S. L. Polak, 20-8-1909.

stolen, or the entire absence of bathing accommodation. In the main, however, the statement appears to me to be accurate.

I am sending the translation to show what avoidable hardships most British Indian political prisoners are undergoing in the Transvaal prisons. I deliberately use the adjective "political" . I am quite aware of the fact that there is no legal division of prisoners in the Transvaal. At the same time, there is no doubt that the Government recognise the fact that there are prisoners who are hardened criminals, and there are prisoners who have committed only technical breaches of the laws of the Colony. Unfortunately, this natural division is not only not recognized in favour of Indian passive resisters, but there seems to be a desire to treat them somewhat more harshly because they are passive resisters. The insufficiency and the unsuitability of food and the fact of Indian prisoners being classed with native prisoners are two very serious difficulties, causing a great deal of misery.

My colleague and I trust that His Lordship will be pleased to inquire into the matter and, if possible, secure some relief whilst some members of the Transvaal Government are in the metropolis.[1]

I have, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

[ENCLOSURE]

EXTRACT TRANSLATION FROM A LETTER RECEIVED BY MR. GANDHI FROM MR. MAHOMED KHAN AT JOHANNESBURG, DATED 19TH JULY, 1909

I was discharged on the 12th July last. The only regret I had was that I could not meet you in the gaol. The day I was admitted I asked the chief warder to let me see you, but he did not grant the permission.

I was kept in the 'reserve camp' which has been established only lately. There was much suffering there. The water supply was not sufficient. There was no bathing facility. I had hardly a bath during the two months I was in the prison. I complained to the officer. He said: "Are you blind? Do you not see that there is no bathroom here? " I then said: "What are prisoners to do if there is no bathroom for a year? " He then said: "They have to do without."

The food supply was also not enough. Moreover, on Saturdays, when the prisoners have to wash their towels, socks, etc., there was only one tank among 200. I received no ghee (clarified butter). They

[1] Acknowledging this letter on September 3, the Colonial Office informed Gandhiji that a copy of these papers had been sent to the Governor of the Transvaal for a report.

mixed fat with rice, which I did not eat. I complained about it, but my complaint went unheeded. I drew the attention of the chief warder to the fact that you had complained about absence of ghee, and the chief warder said that, as you were not able to eat enough because of the want of ghee, you were told that other Indian prisoners also would be supplied with ghee, in order to induce you to take your food. You know the disposition of the Governor of the gaol and the chief warder. When we have to complain, they do not tarry long enough to listen to it. Later, I received food according to the new scale. The latter also is not sufficient. Four ounces of bread were allowed, but I never felt that I had more than two ounces. Gruel is only gruel in name because it is all water, and, then, it is too little. From the bread, rice, vegetables etc., supplied, the Native prisoners working in the yard steal a great deal. The quantity of rice allowed was six ounces, but hardly three ounces were received by me. I believe that about fifteen dishes full of food are stolen by the Kaffirs and the warders say nothing. Moreover, the warders are abusive. I put up with all this silently.

The work was not extra heavy. I was taken with a span consisting of 32 men to Lord Selborne's bungalow. There we had to do grasscutting, roller-turning, digging, stone-breaking, cutting, trees, cleaning ground, and also watering trees. Of this work, digging alone was somewhat difficult, because it was all stony; the stone was, moreover, very hard. The garden was situated on a rise. We were locked up with the. Kaffirs. There was not a single European officer who described us as Indians. We were called " sammies" or "coolies". Most of the warders were Dutch; some of them were youngsters, who had no knowledge of the work.

At length came 74 Madras Indians. They were in very great distress; they are suffering much. Among them are five very old men, over perhaps sixty. They could not walk well. These also are sent out to work early in the morning in a shivering condition, and as the tramp is long, they, poor fellows, get tired, and yet they utter not a word of complaint. Therein lies their bravery.

The whole of the Pretoria Location is empty.[1]

Colonial Office Records: 291/142; also, from a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 4949 and 5015

[1] In their reply of September 30, the Transvaal Ministers pointed out to the Governor that "the allegation that the water supply in the Pretoria Prisoners Reserve Camp is not sufficient is absolutely untrue", that prisoners had ample bathing facilities, that the other allegations made in Khan's statement were without basis, that the Indian prisoners were invariably housed in cells by themselves and were treated humanely and that there was no desire on the part of the prison officers to treat them harshly because they were passive resisters.

23. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
August 16, 1909

MY LORD,

I beg to enclose herewith for your perusal copy of a letter[1] I have addressed to the Private Secretary to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, which I hope will meet with Your Lordship's approval.

I commend to Your Lordship's attention this week's *Indian Opinion*.[2] The inquiry about the death of the Indian Nagappen shows that the allegations made as to bad treatment have been substantially proved. *The Transvaal Leader* has made very severe strictures upon the conduct of the gaol authorities. Mr. Ritch has drawn Lord Crewe's attention to the proceedings.[3]

I remain, etc.,

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5016

24. LETTER TO W. P. SCHREINER

WESTMINSTER PALACE HOTEL,
4 VICTORIA STREET, S. W.,
August 17, 1909

DEAR MR. SCHREINER,

You have permitted me to write to you on that part of the Asiatic question which we discussed the other day. I have now time to avail myself of your permission.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] This was the issue of 17-7-1909, which reproduced from *The Transvaal Leader* of 8-7-1909 a dispatch from its Pretoria correspondent reporting the official enquiry into Sammy Nagappen's death. It was conducted by Mr. Bateman, Governor of the Johannesburg Fort. *Indian Opinion* published the *Leader's* critical editorial of July 10 on the prevailing prison system and the character of the enquiry, demanding a fresh judicial investigation of the case. The issue also contained similar comments by the *Pretoria News* and the *Jewish Chronicle* and letters addressed by a number of influential European ministers of religion to the Transvaal Press. The Government had to yield to public opinion, and commissioned Major F. J. Dixon, Assistant Resident Magistrate, Pretoria, to hold a public enquiry. *Vide* "Letter to *South Africa*", Before 16-10-1909.

[3] Ritch forwarded a copy of the report of the official inquiry to the Colonial Office on August 16.

You will recall the question. The present legislation of the Transvaal creates a racial distinction as to immigration–i.e., no new Asiatic, however cultured he may be, may enter the Transvaal because he is an Asiatic. Indians contend that this is a departure from the traditional colonial policy and that it is unnecessary. The Cape, Natal and Australia make good their policy of restricting Asiatic immigration by having an education test applicable to all, but varying in its severity. This policy cannot be described as dishonest because the scope of the Act is known to all. But to prohibit even a very limited immigration of Asiatics as such, is to put a deliberate affront on a whole race. Moreover the recognition of such a racial distinction cannot fail to reflect upon the resident Asiatic population and be used as a precedent for further disabling legislation. From the Colonial standpoint too there would seem to be no justification for the drastic policy underlying the Transvaal Act. British Indians accept the policy of virtual exclusion. The question is as to the manner of procuring it. The Transvaal manner importing the colour bar offends the self-respect of Asiatics. Hence the terrible suffering undergone by over 2,500 Indian passive resisters.

If you will give my colleague and me an appointment, we would wait upon you[1]. I am personally more concerned with our aspirations than with agitating for relief from the Imperial Government.

I am,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

THE HONOURABLE W. P. SCHREINER
MORLEY'S HOTEL
TRAFALGAR SQUARE, W. C.

From a photostat: BC. 112 file 12 (3.1). Courtesy: University Library, Cape Town, South Africa

[1] The meeting took place on August 21.

25. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

[LONDON,]
August 20, 1909

MY DEAR HENRY,

I was very pleased to receive your note written just before your landing. I fully expected that you would work away on board and prepare the two statements, but I had hoped that you would give yourself sufficient rest and not overdo it. I am looking forward to both the pamphlets[1], which Ritch re-christened "books".

After my last cablegram, I hope you have no difficulty in under-standing the scope of the new amendment. Anyhow my letters, giving you the first amendment as also the second, will be presently in your hands and you will be able to know exactly the position here. I am sorry to say, at the time of writing, we stand where we were last week. I had thought that we should know the result about the beginning of this week for certain. Such, however, was not to be the case. Lord Ampthill in his last letter[2] , however, says that he hourly expects a reply from Lord Crewe or General Smuts. We are seeing Mr. Schreiner tomorrow, to further discuss what you will find dealt with in the copy[3] which will be kept with this letter.

The Natal friends[4] have seen Mr. Bottomley, through the Acting Manager of the African Banking Corporation. Mr. Bottomley is certainly working very well. Through him they saw Colonel Seely also yesterday, and are likely to see him again. The matter will also be taken up by him in *John Bull*; thus there will be some fuss made, but I

[1] These were on the Transvaal problem and on Indian grievances in South Africa in general. Polak wrote to Gandhiji on August 21: "I have written a pamphlet on the Transvaal trouble and had hoped to send you advance copies by this mail. But that has not been possible. Mr. Gokhale has read it, thinks it good and, whilst, he considers it much too strong in parts (I have since toned it down somewhat), has passed it. Mr. Jehangir Petit has personally undertaken to charge himself with the cost of printing and publishing 20,000 copies. I have illustrated it from my own photos. There will be a block of Volksrust Gaol and another of Pretoria Gaol, with suitable letter press . . ." The pamphlet was entitled *A Tragedy of Empire: The treatment of British Indians in the Transvaal.* For the other pamphlet, *vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak",6-8-1909

[2] This was dated August 16.

[3] This is not available.

[4] Members of the Natal delegation

very much fear that nothing is going to come out of these interviews. If, however, our friends return convinced that they will get justice, not by praying for it, but by demanding it at the point of the passive resistance bayonet, their visit will have been of some use.

I was dictating this letter when I was interrupted by Millie and Waldo. Both of them are looking very well. Millie seems to be quite happy in her new and temporary home.

Dr. Mehta is staying at the hotel. Both he and I went to Louth last Sunday to put his son at Mr. Worral's Grammar School. He understands the struggle much better, and I think he has begun to see that passive resistance is a sovereign remedy for most of the ills of life. He bought for you and Millie yesterday a magnificent edition of *Omar Khayyam*. It is more an album than a book. The whole of it is lithographed; the pictures are splendid and so is the colouring. You know how well Arabic letters lend themselves to ornamenting. There is a great deal of Arabic or Persian writing in the book. I have never seen anything like it. The book, together with others, has been just delivered and Millie has seen it. Maud is so charmed with it that she is going to save her pennies to enable her to buy a copy. Dr. Mehta has given £10 to the poor passive Resisters' Fund opened in our columns; he offered £25, [but] I advised him to give £10 and the balance to the Phoenix School. Cordes wrote for some boods and other things, the result of which is that Dr. Mehta and I went over to a bookseller's yesterday, and the books as per list[1] herewith have been already bought. They will form part of the Phoenix library at the same time as they are used for the school.

You know that I have a Life Policy for about £660. It is with Mr. Rewashanker Mehta[2]. I would like you to get hold of the policy and see the Agent of the Company. It has been long preying upon my mind. I have no longer, I conceive, any use for it. If they would refund the premiums paid to them less whatever they may wish to charge, so long as the deduction is not unreasonable, I would like to give up the policy and receive back a large portion of the premiums paid.[3]

[1] This is not available.

[2] Revashanker J. Jhaveri, brother of Dr. P. J. Mehta

[3] For Gandhiji's views on insurance, *vide* "Letter to Lakshnidas Gandhi", About 20-4-1907.

I am looking forward to hearing from you everything about Kaliandas[1].

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5019

26. LONDON

[About *August 20, 1909*]

UNION BILL

The Union Bill has been passed. Mr. Schreiner, Dr. Abdurrahman and others strove very hard [to get it amended], but to no purpose. Their efforts may have made a good impression. Many members made long speeches. They were not happy with the taint [of racial discrimination], in the Act. They expressed their regret. To what purpose? Why do they not give up their office? They express regret, but their actions are just the same ! What should the Coloured people do now? The question should not arise. If they have courage[2] in them, let them, with Rama's name on their lips, sound a call for satyagraha; otherwise, they are surely as good as dead. To have come over here and made big speeches would avail them but little. The days are past, so it seems, when something could be gained by making speeches.

NATAL DEPUTATION

The Natal delegates are engaged in sending copies of the draft statement[3] on Natal all over the world. They have sent it everywhere. They have, moreover, met a Member of Parliament named Mr. Bottomley. He treats them very cordially. He offers them tea, and has also played host to them on other occasions. The meeting with Lord Crewe took place through his good offices. They will meet again. Mr. Bottomley has been of great help. But let everyone understand that it is through satyagraha alone that the Natal Indians will be free. Let us wait and see.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-9-1909

[1] Kaliandas Jagmohandas Mehta; *vide* "Kalyandas Jagmohandas [Mehta], 11-5-1907. In his letter of September 4, Polak reported: "Kaliandas is working best of all. … [He] is doing fairly well. He is a little more sober than before, but the same good-hearted shrewd youngster. I love him …"

[2] The original has "Rama" which, in Gujarati, figuratively means courage.

[3] *Vide* "Statement of Natal Indian Grievances", 10-8-1909

27. DEPUTATION NOTES [–VIII]

[After *August 21, 1909*]

This week I have very little news to give. Negotiations for a settlement are continuing. But so far there has been no result. From an article in *The Times* it appears that, perhaps, the result will be satisfactory. It gives the impression of having been written by someone in the know. He says that there are hopes of Mr. Smuts making a pronouncement that will take account of Indian susceptibilities.

We met Mr. Schreiner,[1] and had a long talk. The gentleman also feels that there should be no objection to the entry of six Indians as a matter of favour, but that they cannot enter as a matter of right. He is honest in his opinions. But, having been convinced over a long time that we are an inferior people, he cannot see that it is insulting to propose that Indians may enter as a matter of favour.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-9-1909

28. LETTER TO DR. ABDURRAHMAN

[LONDON,]

August 23, 1909

DEAR DR. ABDURRAHMAN,

Please accept my sympathy as also congratulations in connection with your mission ; my sympathy because you have got nothing substantially ; my congratulations because no deputation deserves success as yours did, on account alike of the inherent justice of your cause and the solid work that you put forth. Mr. Schreiner has undoubtedly worked sincerely and like a giant.

That no amendment would be made in the Draft Bill was a foregone conclusion. One may derive whatever satisfaction is to be had from the fact of almost every member having regretted the insertion of a racial bar in an Imperial Statute-book ; neither you nor I can live upon regrets. You are busy, so am I. Were I not busy, I should certainly have come down to you to offer what consolation I

[1] This meeting was to take place on August 21; *vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak" 20-8-1909.

could, and yet I know that real consolation has to come from within. I can but recall to you the conversation we had on board. You are disappointed (if you are) ; you expected something from the Parliament or the British public, but why should you expect anything from them, if you expect nothing from yourself.

I promised to send you Thoreau's *Duty of Civil Disobedience*. I have not been able to procure it ; I am writing for it to-day and hope to send it before you are off.

All I can add is a prayer that you may have the strength for it and ability to continue the work in South Africa along internal reform, and, therefore, passive resistance, even though, in the beginning, you may be only a handful.

If you can possibly look in, please do so. Come down tomorrow if you are free and we shall go then to the Vegetarian Restaurant together and talk away. You will also be introduced to Dr. Mehta of Rangoon, who is staying at this hotel. We shall wait for you until 5 minutes to one at the hotel.

Yours sincerely,

DR. ABDURRAHMAN
38, LONGRIDGE ROAD
EARLS COURT, S. W.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5024

29. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD CREWE

[LONDON,]
August 24, 1909

SIR,

I beg to invite Lord Crewe's attention to the fact that a cablegram has just been received from Mr. Polak, who is at present representing the Transvaal British Indians in India, to the effect that a public meeting is to be held at Bombay in connection with the Indian struggle on the 31st instant. The cablegram adds that two Indians have arrived in Bombay, having been deported by the Transvaal Government. One of them is a pre-war resident, and served the military authorities during the late war ; the other was born in Natal and subsequently domiciled in the Orange River Colony. The last case shows that even Indians who were domiciled in other parts of South Africa are, contrary to the assurance given by His Lordship in the

House of Lords, being deported to India.[1]

I have, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records : 291/142

30. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
August 24, 1909

MY LORD,

I beg to enclose copy of letter[2] I have sent to Lord Crewe regarding a cablegram just received from Bombay.

The letter will speak for itself, but I should like to add that these deportations are becoming more and more serious and unreasonable. Mr. Polak, who is the sender of the cablegram, reports in his letter received to-day that he is being guided by the acting editor of *The Times of India,* Sir Pherozeshah Mehta,and other leading men.[3]

I remain, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy signed by Gandhiji: S. N. 5025

[1] The colonial Office, acknowledging the letter on September 2, informed Gandhiji that a copy of it was being forwarded to the Governor of the Transvaal for the attention of the Ministers. In a reply dated September 29, Smuts denied the deportation to India, and pointed out that "Mr. Gandhi does not state whether the person claims (1) to have been resident here for three years prior to the 11th October 1899, (2) to have been in lawful possession of a permit to enter the Colony or (3) that he was resident and actually in the Transvaal on the 31st May, 1902." He added that, if Gandhiji would furnish the names of the Indians regarding whom his complaints were made, full particulars of the facts about their deportation could be supplied.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] Lord Ampthill, acknowledging this letter on August 25, observed that he had written to Lord Crewe an that, as soon as he had received a reply, he would be "in a better position to say whether the moment has arrived for abandoning our present attitude of reticence and expectation".

31. CABLE TO H. S. L. POLAK

[LONDON,]
August 25, 1909

PROGRESS CONTINUES VERY[1] UNCERTAIN. PRODUCE DEPORTEDS MEETING. RESOLUTION ADOPTING PICE SUBSCRIPTION AID STRUGGLE AS TANGIBLE EXPRESSION INDIA'S SYMPATHY SUG- GESTED. BOMANJEE KNOWS.

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand : S. N. 5029

32. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

[LONDON,]
August 26, 1909

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have your long and interesting letter as also the cuttings. I am delighted that you are pleased with the reception you are meeting with. I wonder whether there was anybody to receive you when you landed?

Have you seen Dr. Mehta's brother? I hope you will on no account miss doing so. He is of a very retiring nature and he may have felt diffident in calling on you, on finding you surrounded by all the big bugs of Bombay.

The cuttings you have sent make interesting reading and show the possibility of your being able to do very good and substantial work. I have your cablegram. I have sent a reply as follows:

> " Progress continues very uncertain. Produce deported meet-ing. Resolution adopting pice subscription aid struggle as tangible expression India's sympathy suggested. Bomanjee knows."

Sir Muncherji is very keen on the subscription idea. Ritch seems to have suggested it before at his instigation. Sir Muncherji thinks that it will carry very great weight, being a tangible expression of public feeling. The idea is not that we should get pecuniary assistance. We ought to be able to say that we should do without [it], but the idea is,

[1] The draft shows that the words "continues very" were added later; *vide* also the following item.

in their wishes to take part in the struggle by collecting this subscription, the value will consist in thousands having given their mite. I will not labour the point much, because by the time this reaches you, you will have either acted upon the suggestion or rejected it.[1]

Smuts is leaving this week for South Africa and yet there is no settlement and to reply from the Colonial Office. I am therefore prepared any day to receive an unfavourable reply. Lord Ampthill has written to Lord Crewe.

I have had further important chats with Dr. Mehta. I think he is convinced now that ours is the right plan.

I assume that you have placed yourself in correspondence with the leading men in the other parts of India also. Mr. Hajee Habib is most anxious that you should invite his brother, Mr. Hajee Mohamed, to take part in the struggle and assist you. He is at Porbunder. His full name is Hajee Mohamed Hajee Dada.

The Natal friends have sent their statement to all the Members of Parliament here, to the Press and the Indian papers and public men. You may do whatever you consider to be necessary on the Natal question.

It was very good of Mr. Jamsetji[2] to have offered to print 20,000 copies of the pamphlet. That would be a megnificent stroke.

Maud, Dr. Mehta, Hajee Habib and I went last Sunday to Whiteway. We left by the early morning train at one o'clock, reaching Stroud at 3.40. George Allen was at the station at receive us and we walked to Whiteway. It was a delightful walk,which you would have enjoyed. The country was charming. George Allen is all energy. He is a very fine specimen. I suppose ordinarily he would be considered to be uncultured. He is perfectly natural in everything he does and is brutally frank. His devotion to his wife, who does not share his ideas, seemed to me to be very great and the finest part of his character. His wife is suffering from a cancer of the breast and is only lingering on.

[1] In his letter of September 4, Polak informed Gandhiji that a resolution would be adopted at the public meeting on September 14 to set up a committee, presided over by Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, to collect subscription for the deportees. Writing on September 10, he reported, however, that Gokhale considered the suggestion impracticable, though a resolution could nominally be passed.

[2] This evidently is a slip for Jehangir Bomanjee Petit; *vide 1st* footnote of"Letter to H.S.L. Polak", 20-8-1909.

She has an utterly charming and open countenance. I had a fairly long chat with her. Allen has four children. The eldest is a daughter, a very strong and healthy girl, a splendid housekeeper. She looks after her younger brothers and practically the whole household. Allen does not believe in putting any restraint on his children ; I almost feel that he carries it to excess. The children squatted on the floor anyhow and ate in any way they liked. That, however, is a matter of detail. All his children were perfectly healthy. Whiteway was at one time a Tolstoyian Colony. The settlers have not been able to live up to the ideal. Some have gone, others are living there, but not carrying out the ideal. Allen seems to be the nearest approach. His ground is kept in a very good condition and he has brought it to its present condition singly and without having used any machinery whatsoever ; simple tools are all he uses. By profession, he was a shoe-maker. Dr. Mehta enjoyed his visit very well. He came with the greatest reluctance, because he does not believe in putting himself to any unnece-ssary trouble. Maud liked it very much. I was cruel enough to think that she could walk back. Mr. Hajee Habib saved me from that situation.

Some more books by Tolstoy and others belonging to the School. Life series have been bought for Phoenix out of the £15 given by Dr. Mehta.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5031

33. DEPUTATION · NOTES [–IX]

[*August 27, 1909*]

This week has been like the last: a settlement is nowhere in sight. It has also been reported that General Smuts may leave for the Transvaal in the course of the week. One does not know therefore what to say. It does not seem that there has been duplicity [on anyone's part]. Sir Muncherji has received a reply today, August 27, to the letter which he wrote to General Smuts seeking an interview. The reply says that, since private negotiations for a settlement are in progress, the [proposed] meeting has been postponed for the time being. This has led people to believe that, perhaps, a settlement will come about. On the other hand, it is also thought that the continued delay indicates some difficulty in getting our demands accepted. It is difficult to know what the true position is. Speaking for myself, I can

only say that we are little concerned with the outcome of the negotiations for a settlement; be that as it may. If one is prepared to suffer, what is there for one to fear or be anxious about ? I have no doubt whatever, nor should any satyagrahi have any, that our demands are bound to be accepted sooner or later. Lord Ampthill also has information that the negotiations are still proceeding.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-9-1909

34. LONDON

[After *August 27, 1909*]

NATAL DEPUTATION

The members are still busy dispatching copies of their statement to several people, and meeting public men. They have sent a large number of copies to India with a forwarding letter. The following is a summary of the letter[1] :

APPEAL TO INDIA

We are sending herewith a copy of the statement made before the Colonial Secretary regarding the condition of Indians in Natal.

We who have been specially deputed to see the authorities in London and to inform public opinion have already waited on the Secretary of State for the Colonies and other officials and have circulated very widely copies of the statement. We feel that, unless India helps us seriously, it is not likely that Lord Crewe and Lord Morley will be able to secure much relief.

British Indians in Natal form a very considerable portion of the inhabitants of Natal, have very large interests in that Colony and are drawn from all parts of India. They number over 100,000, of whom about 10,000 belong to the trading class, the rest are either indentured Indians or those who have once been under indenture and are now free. It is an acknowledged fact that the prosperity of Natal depends largely, if not entirely, on

[1] This was dated August 27, 1909. The English text of the letter is reproduced here from *Indian Opinion,* 25-9-1909, with some changes needed to bring it into conformity with the Gujarati version.

the help she receives from India in the shape of indentured labour. We have also spared no pains to help India. At the time of the last two famines, subscriptions were collected from rich and poor to the best of their means and forwarded to the famine funds. We ask for no pecuniary assistance, but we do feel that India can successfully alleviate by kindly assistance the very great distress we are suffering in Natal.

As will appear from the statement, we are being crushed out of existence in Natat in a threefold manner. Our trade is slowly being reduced by means of an unjust and tyrannical administration of a licensing law that leaves in the hands of the Licensing Officer and the Licensing Board—who are themselves our trade rivals—unlimited powers, without any check from the judicial tribunals of the Colony. Indian labourers are worked almost as slaves for the benefit of Natal, but, as soon as they have finished their service under the Natal planters of mine-owners, they, their wives and children are taxed exorbitantly, and thus prevented from settling in the Colony and earning an honest livelihood as free men, and our future progress is almost entirely prevented by depriving us of even ordinary facilities for giving a suitable education to our youth.

Unless, therefore, by means of meetings, memorials and such other ways continuously adopted, India insists on our grievances being redressed, it is only a question of time when we shall be slowly starved out of the Colony. There is a tangible remedy at the disposal of the Indian Government, and that is, to stop the supply of indentured labour that annually flows into it unless the Colony deals justly by the Indian traders and labourers. This course was adopted by Lord Curzon and he even sent a dispatch to the Natal Ministers almost threatening to take action unless redress was granted, especially to British Indian traders. We do not know what the result of those negotiations was, but, instead of any redress being vouchsafed to us, our condition ever since that time has become much worse owing to the stringency of the measures stated above and their almost remorseless enforcement. Our means of subsistence are curtailed every day, and our very existence in the Colony in the enjoyment even of the elementary rights of British citizenship is imperilled.

LETTER TO "THE TIMES"

A statement appeared in *The Times* to the effect that the deputation had given up the demand for the franchise. There were other incorrect statements also. A letter was, therefore, addressed over Mr. Anglia's signature, which I summarize below:[1]

> You say in your yesterday's issue that the British Indians have no grievance as regards the Parliamentary franchise. Although we do not lay great stress in the political franchise, we have never admitted it not to be a grievance. Our grievances are many, but the most pressing have been placed before Lord Crewe, so that his attention and our energy may be concentrated only upon them. Franchise and other rights will, be of no use to us if, by a simple "stroke of the pen" by the Licensing Officer, we are deprived of the facility for honestly earning our livelihood, no matter how large and long-acquired our vested right may be, and of the future generations' ability to utilize the right of vote, by being intellectually starved in the way of education, and if the best Indian labourers in the Colony may be condemned to servitude by a ruinous special tax.
>
> We have presented the British public with this trinity of grievances (and our requests have been universally admitted to be very moderate). They affect our physical and intellectual wants. The withholding of the franchise under democratic institutions will ever remain to the British Indians in Natal a serious grievance. In not pressing this point home at the present moment, we have bowed before the storm. We have shown our hereditary self-restraint and, in the very act, we are proving our fitness for political rights.
>
> You say that "the British Indians claim on racial and intellectual grounds a position of superiority to the Native races of South Africa". I submit with due respect that we do not want to lay any such claim, nor, in my opinion, is it necessary to make these fine distinctions with reference to the enjoyment of elementary rights that every civilized man should possess in civilized countries.

[1] This letter appeared in *The Times*, 27-8-1909. The text is reproduced here from *Indian Opinion*, 25-9-1909, with some changes needed to bring it into conformity with the Gujarati version.

LETTER TO VICEROY[1]

They have also addressed a special communication to the Viceroy, in which they have called for an embargo on the recruitment of Indians as indentured labourers if our trading rights are not respected.

INTERVIEWS

The gentlemen also met Sir Frederick Lely[2] who was at Surat. He gave them a patient hearing. At the same time, they have been in contact with Mr. Bottomley and Mr. Clerk of the Corporation Bank. They saw Colonel Seely once and will meet him again. Lord Morley has fixed September I for an interview. They had another meeting with Mr. Gupta, Nawab Saheb Bilgrami and others. Besides, they are in correspondence with the Aga Khan. They continue to meet Sir Muncherji from time to time. His helpfulness knows no limits.

POLAK'S WORK

Mr. Polak appears to be going ahead with his mission in India with great energy. He has sent some press cuttings which go to show that he has achieved a great deal in one week. We find reports in almost all the newspapers, both Gujarati and English. He has written to a number of men in Bombay. There is also a cable about a public meeting on the 31st. It remains to be seen what will happen now. He sends private cables regularly, so that we get all the information.

Sir Muncherji believes that India should help the Transvaal by raising a fund. A cable[3] has been sent to Mr. Polak in this connection. Let us see what happens at the meeting. The raising of such a fund is calculated to produce a strong effect and will also test india's sympathy.

" THE INDIAN SOCIOLOGIST"

This journal continues to be published though its original printer is in gaol. The new printer has also been arrested. He has taken this bold risk in order to assert the freedom of the Press. He says that there is no common ground between his views and those of Mr.

[1] *Vide* Appendix XXI.

[2] Formerly British Agent in the Porbunder State; *vide* "London Diary", 12-11-1888 and "Indian Vegetarians—II", 14-2-1891.

[3] *Vide* "Cable to H. S. L. Polak",25-8-1909

Shyamji. He has undertaken the work only out of regard for the freedom of the Press. We should note one thing at least about this, namely, that it is a white who has thus offered to take [the burden] upon himself; he has of his own accord undertaken the risk, so that Indians will be doing nothing specially admirable if they fight for the honour of their country.

JOSEPH ROYEPPEN

Mr. Joseph, Royeppen, who was called to the Bar a long time ago, was not able to return so far as he was short of money. Even a fund was raised in the Transvaal for him. Her is now sailing by the *Tintagel Castle*. He intends to live in poverty and offer his services to the motherland. I wish he remains firm in his idea. If necessary, he assures me categorically, he will even go to gaol in the Transvaal.

DETERMINED WOMEN

As in London, so in Liverpool, some seven women were arrested in connection with [the campaign for] the franchise. They went to gaol and embarked on a fast there. they ate nothing for six days, the result being that they were released before their time. It should not be imagined that I give publicity to these facts in order to suggest that we should imitate these women in everything they do. I only want people to note that there in no suffering which they will spare themselves.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 25-9-1909

35. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI

LONDON,
August 28, 1909
At 1.00 a. m.

CHI. KASHI[1],

Though it is very late now, I needs must write to you today. Every week I remember you and Santok[2] and put off writing. Though there is not particularly much work to do, I am always busy with

[1] Chhaganlal Gandhi's wife
[2] Maganlal Gandhi's wife

something or other.

What shall I write to you about your having given birth to a daughter? If I say that it is good, it would be a lie. If I express sorrow, it would be violence. According to my present ideas, I should remain indifferent. For that one must have the mental equipoise described in the *Gita*. That, no doubt, is very difficult to attain. However, my effort is in that direction. Meanwhile, I would only say and wish that you learn to control your senses in the right manner. I am having plenty of experience. As I go on observing, my ideas become firm. I do not see any reason to change them. I shall not write a separate letter to Santok. This is for you both.

I admit that I did not write any letters to you; but ask yourself why you did not write, and if you do not find any justification for not doing so, repent for it, for I am hungry for letters from you all.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a facsimile of the original Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand in *Jivan-nu Parodh*

36. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
August 30, 1909

MY LORD,

In order not to unnecessarily worry you, I have refrained from acknowledging your last two letters.[1]

May I invite your attention to the statement[2] made yesterday to Reuter's Agent on the Indian question by General Smuts ? What can be the meaning of the statement ? Does it mean that the General will decide after he has reached Pretoria, and if so, what is our duty ?

I remain, etc,.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5034

37. LETTER TO AMEER ALI

[LONDON,]
August 30, 1909

DEAR MR. AMEER ALI,

I have your postcard. I have purposely refrained from writing to you, in order that I may not interfere with your rest. Had there been anything striking, I should certainly have written. Moreover, I waited for the letter that you promised in your postcard. Not having had the letter, I concluded that you were too busy to write it.

The Transvaal matter is still the subject of negotiations. General Smuts left on Saturday and gave the following message to Reuter:

[1] In his letter of August 24, Lord Ampthill had expressed himself as disconcerted at the unexpected departure of General Smuts for South Africa without replying to his suggestions. He had also referred to a leading article in *The Times,* which gave a "distinct hint that there would be some settlement of the British Indian question". In his letter of August 26, he referred to Lord Crewe's reply that "the negotiations are still going on, so that there is yet hope of something being settled". Lord Ampthill decided not to raise the question in the House of Lords, as he had intended to. "I cannot think of anything," he added, "which we are leaving undone or which we could do with advantage at the present moment; we must still wait patiently."

[2] *Vide* the following item.

I hope it[1] is in a fair way to disappear from the horizon of Transvaal politics. The vast majority of Transvaal Indians are sick to death of the agitation carried on by some of their extreme representatives, and have quietly submitted to the law. I have had repeated conversations with Lord Crewe and other important leaders interested in this matter, and I think it will be possible now to find a solution of this vexed question which all reasonable men will consider right and fair.

And there the matter rests at present. There is some ground, there-fore, for hoping that a settlement will be arrived at. Lord Ampthill has worked wonderfully in the matter, but if the negotiations are protracted, it is now a question, in view of General Smuts' return to South Africa, whether Mr. Hajee Habib and I should stay here or whether our place is now in South Africa and, if necessary, in the Transvaal gaol.

As to the Natal deputation, Mr. Abdul Caadir and friends are moving heaven and earth. They are circulating the statement broadcast. They have seen Lord Crewe and they are seeing, this week, Lord Morley and Colonel Seely. They have also been in correspondence with the Aga Khan, who is in Paris undergoing medical treatment. Sir Muncherji is also in constant touch. A copy of their letter to the Indian public shows the remedy they are now concentrating their energy upon. They have sent you the statement. A letter has also been officially addressed to the Viceroy, asking him to adopt the remedy of suspending Indian immigration to Natal unless relief is granted. They are most anxious to pay their respects personally to you, especially as they have been spec-ially instructed to meet you and be guided by your advice . I would, there-fore, thank you to let me have an idea as to when you are likely to return.

I hope there has been no further hindrance to the cure you have been undergoing and that you will return thoroughly invigorated. I may mention that a public meeting will be held tomorrow in Bombay to protest against the Transvaal legislation.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

JUSTICE AMEER ALI, C. I. E.
HOTEL SCHWEIZERHOF
VULPERA TARASP
[SWITZERLAND]

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5035

[1] The Indian question

38. LETTER TO SWAMI SHANKERANAND

[LONDON,]
August 30, 1909

DEAR SWAMIJI,

Received your letter. I had read your speech earlier about Curzon Wyllie delivered at the Depot Road. I also read your letter on education. I am grieved at reading all the three. Your letter to me shows your views on Islam and the other two items show your behaviour towards the people of that faith. I do not say anything about your views on Islam. But your sarcastic remarks about Islam are, so far as I know, against the spirit of Hinduism. But even these I do not mind. What has particularly been painful to me is your expedient and immoral behaviour while making those remarks. In saying that the British are the defenders of the Hindu religion, you have shown our utter helplessness. If I myself am not able to protect my religion, how can a person of another faith do it ? Your ideas on education I consider as only causing a split between the Hindus and the Mussalmans. If it is necessary to keep so much distance between the Hindus and the Mussalmans, then, Hindustan deserves to remain slave. How, then, can one find fault with the foreigner ? And if that distance is insisted upon, Hinduism would just perish. Fortu-nately, Hinduism is sound and stable. I have firm faith that a religion that has maintained itself for thousands of years will not perish even at the hands of our priests. What shall I write to you? I have respect for your knowledge; but I am pained at your behaviour.

[From Gujarati]

Gandhiji-na Patro and Gandhiji-ni Sadhna

39. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[LONDON,
End of *August*,] *1909*

CHI. MANILAL,

Received your letter.

I shall consider myself fortunate if your mind is perfectly quiet, if you are thoroughly absorbed in your work and if you are doing your studies without any distractions. I do not think it necessary for you to come to this country in a hurry. People here appear to be very degenerate. We shall talk more about this when we meet.

That you are doing the work of teaching children is a very noble thing.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand : C. W. 86

Courtesy : Sushilabehn Gandhi

40. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
September 1, 1909

MY LORD,

I am exceedingly obliged to Your Lordship for your letter of the 31st ultimo.

If General Smuts' decision[1] be final, it is unfortunate. But I fear that it will not be possible for me to recede from the position as to the question of "right". In my opinion, nothing will be gained by his making the residence of a limited number of educated Indian immigrants permanent, if the "right" be not recognized. No Indian need enter the Transvaal if only the theoretical "right" remain inviolate. The origin of number six lies in Mr. Cartwright's anxiety that I should give some tangible proof of the community's declaration that, behind the question of the status of educated Indians, there was no intention to flood the Transvaal with British Indians. You

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Ampthill's Letters to Gandhiji and Crewe"..

will, therefore, see that the proposal of General Smuts does not in any degree satisfy the Indian requirement.

On the contrary it accentuates the racial insult, and our acceptance of it would simply mean that, after all, we were not fighting so much for a principle, as for the mere satisfaction of being able to import some educated Indians into the Transvaal for our own interests.

You may have noticed the cablegram in *The Times* of to-day's date, regarding the cancellation of a public meeting in Bombay, convened by the Sheriff on an influential requisition.[1] I very much fear that the action of the Government. . .[2] the Transvaal, in. . .[3] advocacy of the position taken up by us in the Transvaal.

I remain, etc.,

[PS.]

Mr. Hajee Habib and I are seriously considering whether it would not be advisable for us to go to India after finishing the work here and ask for a greater manifestation of public sympathy. This, however, we will discuss with Your Lordship after the expected interview with Lord Crewe has come off.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5037

41. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

LONDON,
September 1, 1909

CHI. MANILAL,

I get your letters regularly. I was again invited to dinner by Mrs. Freeth[4] this week. She enquired about you all. She also asked for a photograph of you all and also of the Phoenix settlement. Please send her whatever you may have of these. I have written[5] to Ba also. Mrs. Freeth is a good-natured lady and has much affection for me.

[1] The Government of Bombay considered it undesirable for the Sheriff to convene the meeting in his official capacity, after the passing of the South Africa Union Bill.

[2] The original is damaged and some words are missing.

[3] A line is missing here.

[4] Presumably, an acquaintance of Gandhiji from student days in England; *vide* also "Letter to Mrs. Freeth". 14-11-1906.

[5] This letter is not available.

There is little prospect of a settlement now. In that case I shall have no alternative but to fight. I will need help from you all; that help you will give me by remaining calm and doing your duty courageously.

I hope you keep your tools in proper trim. I also hope sufficient dust is being spread over night-soil. It is necessary to cultivate the habit of keeping all the surrounding area clean. Mr. Kallenbach writes that this time he had put up with us. I hope you attended to all his needs. Let me know what arrangements you had made for his bath and toilet. You must be realizing the necessity of keeping ready the lavatory which Kitchin used always. I am writing all this to you as you are the sanitary inspector of the house.

You have not written to me as to what you have learnt.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Please show this letter to Ba.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand : C. W. 87

Courtesy : Sushilabehn Gandhi

42. CABLE TO H. S. L. POLAK[1]

LONDON,
September 2, 1909

IT APPEARS SMUTS WILL GRANT PERMANENT PERMITS LIMITED NUMBER BUT NOT OF RIGHT. STILL NEGOTIAT ING. PUBLIC MEETING SHOULD BE HELD INDEPENDENTLY SHERIFF. MY CABLES NOT FOR PUBLICATION.

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand : S. N. 5039

[1] Though the draft does not bear Polak's name, it is clear from the contents that it was addressed to him.

43. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD CREWE

[LONDON,]
September 2, 1909

SIR,

I beg to draw the attention of the Earl of Crewe to the following cablegram received from the Chinese Association :

Reuters report interview Smuts indicates settlement Asiatic question. If so, why continued arrest Chinese ? Twenty-seven within week.

I have not received a copy of Reuter's report referred to in the above cable, and I do not know what truth there is in the settlement
indicated of the Transvaal Asiatic difficulty. Mr. Hajee Habib and I are awaiting a communication from His Lordship in the matter.

I may add that the arrests of Indians, too, have continued.

I remain, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records : 291/142; also, from a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5041

44. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
September 2, 1909

MY LORD,

The following cable has been received from the Chinese Association:

Reuters report interview Smuts indicates settlement Asiatic question. If so, why continued arrest Chinese? Twenty-seven within week.

I may add that several Indians have been similarly arrested. Perso-nally, I welcome this crusade against the Indians and the Chinese in the Transvaal. It puts them upon their mettle and enables the Government, as well as the passive resisters, to gauge the strength of passive resistance. I have not yet advised the British Indian Association at Johannesburg that Reuter's report may be misleading and that there may be, after all, no settlement at all.

Lord Crewe has not yet written as Your Lordship thought he

might. I am drawing his attention to the Chinese cable.[1]

I should perhaps mention that questions have been suggested to M.P.s, regarding the Bombay Government's action[2] about which I wrote to you yesterday. I hope this step will meet with your approval.[3]

I remain, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5044

45. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

[LONDON,]
September 2, 1909

DEAR HENRY,

I shall probably write two letters to you this week. The present one is in connection with Phoenix.

I have already told you that I had long chats with Dr. Mehta, and that he had given £15 for the school. I have got some books out of the £15 for the library; you have the list; some more have been bought. There is still a balance of about £12. There may be some books there of value, which might be purchased out of the balance left. You may consult Chhaganlal and others.

Dr. Mehta, however, has promised much more. He intends to give a scholarship that would cover the expenses of educating and boarding an Indian lad at Pheonix. I have told him what the expenses might be–anything from £1 to 25/- per month. He has also placed at my disposal the expenses of educating one Phoenixite in England. The idea arose from his desire to take over the training of one of my own boys. I told him that I could not accept any such thing, but I

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] A question on the subject was asked by James O'Grady, a member of South Africa British Indian Committee, in the House of Commons on September 7. Another question on the subject was asked by Sir Henry Cotton on September 9. On both occasions, the Under Secretary of State replied that the Imperial Government had not received any official information in the matter.

[3] Acknowledging this letter the following day, Lord Ampthill wrote : "Your view accords with that which I expressed to you when you first arrived in England, namely, that the continuance of resistance and repression in the Transvaal is helpful to our negotiations. I think you would do well to let the British Indian Association know that you are not yet aware of any settlement but that you are asking for another interview with Lord Crewe. I wrote to you last night advising you to do so if you had not heard from him. Please let me know what answers are given to the questions in the House of Commons. The Press, as you know, often omits to publish them."

would be pleased to accept the expenses, to be used for the best person in Phoenix, and that, if I considered that Manilal was the most suitable for the purpose, I should not hesitate to send him also. All this makes me think that you might do some such work there. Mr. Petit is a moneyed man. There are others also, if you could convince them that Phoenix is intended to be a nursery for producing the right men and right Indians. You might induce some of these men to give scholarships to be used either for use generally or restricting them to Indians only. We should accept them either way. They might also give us donations, earmarking them for buying books and other educational material. The chief thing would be for you to convince them that whatever energy is put forth in Phoenix is not so much taken away from India, but is so much given to India, and that, in some respects, Phoenix is a more suitable place for making experiments and gaining proper training. Whereas in India there may be undesirable restraints, there are no such undesirable restraints in Phoenix. For instance, Indian ladies would never have come out so boldly as they are doing in Phoenix. The rest of the social customs would have been too much for them.

I have here given you enough to enable you to enlarge upon the idea and do whatever you think is necessary. You may be able to get Adamji Peerbhai or his son to give a scholarship either for the Indian boys generally or for training Mahomedan boys. You may get them to give you prizes also. It will be well to collect prospectuses from the different educational institutions in India, for purposes of reference. Mr. Omar has the century dictionary and various other important books of which he has not the slightest use. In my letter[1] which I enclose herewith, I have asked him to let us have this dictionary and any other books he could spare. You may speak to him in the matter.

Your sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5042

[1] This is not available.

46. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

[LONDON,]
September 3, 1909

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have your letter and cuttings. The work you are doing is most admirable and I am delighted that you are receiving splendid support from all sides and that Mr. Jehangir Petit has been treating you so nicely.[1]

I noticed from the papers that you published the cablegram that I sent you regarding the offer to repeal the Act.[2] I was surprised. I felt that you would understand that the negotiations would be quite private and that you could not publish the information. Lord Ampthill has been very strict in the matter. Happily, no ill result has followed. However, in order to guard myself, in my last cablegram[3] I have asked you not to publish any of the cables that may be sent from here .

The cancellation of the Sheriff's meeting is a disgraceful affair. A cablegram appeared in *The Times* in connection with it. I take it that you keep yourself in touch with *India*. You will see the cable reproduced in it. Sir Henry Cotton, as also Mr. O'Grady, are asking questions in the matter. I wish there had been from the Presidency Association a private cable to the British Committee of the Congress. It is somewhat difficult for us to move effectively. It is primarily Bombay that should resent action of the Bombay Government, and not we. However, whatever was possible has been done. I now expect from you a cablegram any time, informing me of the date of a public meeting independently of the Sheriff.

Mr. Hajee Habib is anxious that you should ask Mr. Hajee Mahomed, his brother, who is at present in Porbunder, to co-operate with you. He says that if he were invited, he would gladly join you. Please correspond with him. Mr. Omar knows him well. I may even cable in the matter.

From copies of correspondence with Lord Ampthill you will see that, now, there is little chance of an acceptable settlement. I send you

[1] In his letter of August 14, Polak had furnished a diary-wise report of his meetings with a host of prominent people and their favourable reactions.

[2] *Vide* "Cable to H. S. L. Polak", 10-8-1909

[3] *Vide* "Cable to H. S. L. Polak", 2-9-1909

a cutting giving General Smuts' statement to Reuter, before he sailed from Southampton. It, however, now appears that what he wants to do is to repeal the Act and to give permanent certificates of residence to a limited number of educated Indians; thus, he does not want to recognise the "right" of entry. I am rather glad if he does this and makes a public declaration. The issue again narrows down to the one and only point, namely, the status of educated Indians and the self-respect of India. We then approach England and India on a clear cut proposition, and ask the Indians in the Transvaal also to continue the battle until that point is decided. You will see from my letter to Lord Ampthill how I view it. I almost feel, before we return to South Africa, we may visit India and then pay another visit to London and retrace our steps. I know, if General Smuts makes the public declaration in accordance with Lord Ampthill's letter, the fight here will be most difficult. However, that does not dismay me, though I question very much whether any useful purpose will be served by public meetings if any could be held, and canvassing of Members of Parliament, until further suffering has been gone through. I would far rather be in gaol than carry on what may prove to be almost a useless agitation. There may be in this dcsire to avoid it a touch of laziness; I hope not. I do not wish to shirk having to see people and address meetings, in so far as that may be necessary, but whenever I have a quiet moment to myself, I do continually ask myself as to whether I should be doing right in remaining here for the purpose of canvassing.

Wherever your meeting is held, I hope you will have succeeded in getting Mr. Armstrong and other Anglo-Indians to attend it. I hope you have been sending the Gujarati and English cuttings to Johannesburg also. In order not to disappoint people there, I have been, by way of double precaution, sending, to them the cuttings received by you.

You do not mind my not replying to your cables immediately, when you do not get one from me as early as you may expect it. Please under-stand that there is good reason for my not having replied. For instance, you have asked me whether there is any hope. I am delaying the reply,

as I am waiting for a call from Lord Crewe. I should then be able, somewhat definitely, to tell you whether there is or not. Just now, I should say there is none.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5049

47. DEPUTATION NOTES [–X]

[After *September 3, 1909*]

I am tired of reporting every time that I have no news to give about a settlement. But that is what I must say again. I know, of course, that those who are perfect satyagrahis will not weary of reading this, for they are not concerned whether or not a settlement is reached. They stand victorious in any case.

However, I am really in a position to give a little more information this time. We have been told that General Smuts will at least repeal the Act. But as regards the issue of educated Indians, he will grant permits for permanent residence to a limited number as a matter of favour. They will have the same rights as those who have been registered. But I see no advantage in this. They may not call us "dead", but use the expression "passed away"; yet, we shall be dead all the same. It is against the quick and living that we have to pit our strength. We must therefore continue the fight. I have no definite news, though. We shall know the truth in a few days. I do not think there will be any formal negotiations for a settlement this time. In due time, our demands will be conceded, and then alone shall we be in a position to hang up our weapons.

If, as I have suggested above, the Act is now repealed and permanent permits for six men are offered, that will give further impetus to the fight. Its real nature will come to be better understood. *Everyone will then realize that we have been fighting not for* [*the admission of*] *a particular number* [*of educated men*], *but for India's honour*.There must be legal equality with the whites; it will not matter then if, in practice, not even a single Indian is able to get in. We can bear that. But it would not serve our purpose even if permits are issued to 50 men, so long as the law itself is tainted. We are not fighting for ourselves, but for others. It is not a fight on behalf of the educated or the highly educated, but for India's honour, for our self-respect, for the fulfilment of our pledge. The more we suffer in this cause, the happier we shall be. Those who fight in this spirit are true satyagrahis—men with soulforce. I want to see every Indian join this beautiful, sublime struggle.

Readers must have noticed that the deputation has been acting all the time behind the scenes. They should know all the same that

nothing that needs to be done will be left undone. Our object is to get things done through the good offices of the Imperial Government. So long as that is happening, nothing else needs to be done here (in England). In attempting anything more, we may only damage the cause.

When the Imperial Government washes its hands of the business, we shall have to act publicly. Eight weeks have passed in negotiations. A little more time may yet elapse. We shall then work publicly as and when necessary. This is a time-consuming process. We shall need more time than we had supposed, but there is no escape. Moreover, when the Imperial Government declares its helplessness after having tried to help us, our work here will become extremely difficult. Not before we have gone through the ordeal of a bitter, intense and strenuous fight shall we be able to slay what Mr. Dawad Mahomed has termed an elephant.

The more I observe things, the more I realize that deputations, petitions, etc., are all in vain if there are no real sanctions behind them. I see from experience that it is better to be in gaol than to have to seek interviews. Mirabai has sung:

> Prepare not your draught from the twice-bitter *neem*,
> Shunning the sweetness of the sugar and the sugarcane;
> Give not your love to the glow-worm,
> Turning away from the light of sun and moon.

This saintly lady has told us that anyone who devotes himself entirely to love of God will find everything else bitter like *neem* juice and lustreless like the glow-worm's glitter. Likewise, anyone who has had experience of satyagraha—soul-force, who has found its spell irresistible, will have no pleasure in petitions and deputations. 'Why, then,' the reader must ask me, 'did you leave the happiness of gaol-life to join the deputation?' I have said in an earlier letter[1] that the deputation is a confession of the community's weakness. It became something of a duty to come [here] on behalf of the weak. But I can say from experience that the community can put us and other Indians to the best use by allowing us to be in gaol. Those who lead a deputation cannot make a more skilfully drafted petition than the one that satyagrahis make by the fact of their being in gaol. Men have now lost faith in such activities. Personally,I make bold to say that, if

[1] *Vide* "Deputation's Voyage [-I]", Afterr 23-6--1909

anyone here gives us a hearing, that is only because we are satyagrahis and we pin our faith on suffering.

In spite of these views of mine, I feel that, should there be no settlement after all, we should leave for India and, after doing everything necessary there, return to England to take any further steps that may be called for, and then go back to the Transvaal. For the moment, however, these are mere castles in the air. As yet, we cannot even say whether or not there will be a settlement. But I have set down these plans here, thinking as I do that it is better the community is told of them.

We see that Mr. Polak is making a big effort in Bombay. He has met a number of people, who have all agreed to help. He attended the meetings of the Bombay Presidency Association and the local Anjuman-e-Islam. A Bombay millionaire, Mr. Jehangir Petit, has put up Mr. Polak as his guest. He looks after him, and has offered to have copies of the pamphlet printed at his own cost. Likewise, the Anjuman-e-Islam has offered to arrange for the printing and distribution of copies of Mr. Polak's speech in English and Urdu.

We learn from a cable that the Sheriff of Bombay had called a big meeting for the 1st. The Bombay Government, acting in a high-handed manner, asked the Sheriff to cancel the meeting. There is now another cable to say that the Bombay Government has regretted its error and allowed the meeting to be held. The meeting will take place on September 11[1]. By the time this letter is published, you will have received a report of the meeting as well. I, therefore, do not know what to say. The reason which the Government gave for not permitting the meeting was that, since the Union was an accomplished fact, a Government officer like the Sheriff should not hold a [protest] meeting. This is doubly wrong. In the first place, the Transvaal struggle has nothing to do with the Union; secondly, the fact that a meeting was called by the Sheriff does not imply Government participation in it. In calling as meeting, the Sheriff only gives expression to the people's will. He does not even take part in it.

Before leaving, General Smuts told Reuter that a settlement would be reached which would satisfy the Indian community. He also added that the majority of Indians were sick of agitating, and only a few irreconcilables were left. This indicates that he has had a long discussion with Lord Crewe on the Indian problem. But the gentleman

[1] The meeting was actually held on September 14.

wants a partial settlement such as I have described above.

I would personally invite the community's attention to only one remark of his: he says that most of the Indians are sick [of agitating]. This suggests everything. It tells us why there has been such a long delay. Whether a settlement will be reached or not depends on our strength.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 2-10-1909

48. LONDON

[Before *September 4, 1909*]

NATAL DEPUTATION

This deputation had interviews with Colonel Seely and Lord Morley. Both the officers expressed the utmost sympathy. But Colonel Seely said that nothing could be done, and Lord Morley pointed out that the matter was within the province of the Colonial Office and not his. However, [he said] he had been doing his best, and would continue to do so. He reminded the deputation that they could not interfere in the affairs of self-governing Colonies. Colonel Seely has agreed, at the deputation's request, to give a written reply. The posting of copies of its statement continues. The members call on Sir Muncherji from time to time and receive his guidance.

MINISTERS LEAVE

Mr. Merriman, General Smuts, Mr. Moore and other ministers of South Africa left last week.

DR. ABDURRAHMAN

Dr. Abdurrahman and his colleagues will leave by the mail-ship which will carry this letter. The gentleman will keep up the struggle. Whether it will be in the nature of satyagraha or something else is not known as yet.

MORRIS

Mr. Morris, who was employed in the Cape Town Colonial Office, has been sent here by a section of the Coloured people.

THIS CRAZY CIVILIZATION

London has gone mad over Mr. Bleriot[1] who flew in the air in an aeroplane and Dr. Cook who claims to have reached the North Pole. Newspapers report their achievements in great detail. People, it appears,

throw away thousands of pounds after such things. Personally, I am un-able to see what miracles they have achieved. No one points out what good it will do to mankind if planes fly in the air. People go crazy over every impostor making a novel claim. To me at least it appears that life would grow intolerable if there were to be too many planes in the air. We have trains running underground; there are telegraph wires already hanging over us, and outside, on the roads, there is the deafening noise of trains. If you now have planes flying in the air, take it that people will be done to death. Looking at this land, I at any rate have grown disillusioned with Western civilization. The people whom you meet on the way seem half-crazy. They spend their days in luxury or in making a bare living and retire at night thoroughly exhausted. In this state of affairs, I cannot understand when they can devote themselves to prayers. Suppose Dr. Cook has, in fact, been to the North Pole, what then? People will not, on that account, get the slightest relief from their sufferings. While Western civilization is still young, we find things have come to such a pass that, unless its whole machinery is thrown over-board, people will destroy themselves like so many moths. Even today we can see that there are more and more cases of suicide every day. There are reasons why it may be advisable for people to come to England on some business or for education, but, generally speaking, I am definitely of the view that it is altogether undesirable for anyone to come or live here. We shall consider this point at greater length some other time.

JOSEPH ROYEPPEN

I have already reported his departure on Saturday.[2] I see indications that he will have no option but to go to gaol. I hope he will do so.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-10-1909

[1] Louis Bleriot (1872-1936); French pilot, the first to fly across the English Channel.

[2] *Vide* "London",After 27-8-1909.

49. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD CREWE

[LONDON,]
September 6, 1909

SIR,

Lord Ampthill informs Mr. Hajee Habib and me that the Earl of Crewe will presently ask us either to wait on His Lordship or depute some one we could see, and with whom we could discuss the Transvaal Indian question.[1]

I am aware that His Lordship is very busy with many matters of State. May I, however, remind you that Mr. Hajee Habib and I have been now in the metropolis for over eight weeks, and that great pressure is being put upon us from those who have sent us here to give the result of our mission? I need hardly mention that we have purposely avoided all public activity, in order not to prejudice the negotiations that His Lord-ship has been pleased to carry on with the Transvaal Ministers, with a view to bringing the struggle to an end.

My colleague and I will be obliged if you will place this letter before His Lordship, and let us know when our presence will be required.[2]

I remain, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records: 291/142; also, from a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5053

[1] This was conveyed in his letter to Gandhiji of September 5.

[2] Apropos of this letter, the Colonial Office minute of September 8 recorded that: "Colonial Secretary should see Mr. Gandhi and his colleague, and indicate the scope of the proposals of Mr. Smuts in general terms. If they are unwilling to abate their demands, the Transvaal Government may be less willing to push through the amendment of the law this year: but if the India Office accept the compromise, it would be politic to press the Transvaal Government to do so, irrespective of Mr. Gandhi." Gandhiji and Hajee Habib were given an appointment with Lord Crewe on September 16.

50. LETTER TO AMEER ALI

[LONDON,]
September 6, 1909

DEAR MR. AMEER ALI,

I am much obliged to you for your prompt reply to my letter[1] .

I am glad that His Highness the Aga Khan has sent Mr. Anglia's letter to you.

We shall all be looking forward to your return, so that we may receive the benefit of your guidance and advice. I entirely agree with you that, whatever differences there may be between the Mussulmans and the Hindoos in India, in this question of the grievances in South Africa there can be none.[2] In fact, my life is devoted to demonstrating that co-operation between the two is an indispensable condition of the salvation of India.

The Bombay Government have now apologized for having instructed the Sheriff to recall his notice of public meeting, which has been readvertised for the 11th instant.

The negotiations regarding the Transvaal matter are still progress-ing, though slowly.

With regards from us all,

I remain etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5055

[1] This was dated August 30; *vide* "Letter to Ameer Ali",30-8-1909.

[2] Ameer Ali had written: "…they can and ought to work on a common platform in endeavouring to secure justice to their countrymen who have taken up their abode in South Africa. And I do not think it can be difficult to devise some method of constitutional cooperation to attain that end."

51. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

LONDON,
September 7, 1909

RESPECTED KHUSHALBHAI,

Your letter to hand.

I am very glad to learn that you will not come in the way of Chhaganlal's public work and that you consider him to be wholly entrusted to me. I am sure that both the brothers[1] and their wives are elevating themselves by living in Phoenix. There is not much of Western influence in Phoenix. We do not hesitate in the least to take whatever Western we find worth acceptance. India is sure to profit by whatever good results accrue from this. The activities that are carried on in Phoenix are, I believe, all of them religious.

Chi. Narandas[2] has embarked upon a benevolent piece of work. Please give him your blessings and encouragement.

I, too, solicit blessings and encouragement in my work from the elders. It is possible that they might not appreciate some of my activities. Nonetheless, if they are convinced, which I hope they must be that in whatever I do I am impelled not by selfishness, but by a sense of duty and goodwill, I would be worthy of their blessings.

No settlement has yet been reached though negotiations for it are going on. Political matters are very intricate and difficult. I have come to realize that gaol-going is easier and more fruitful than trying to persuade people here. However, one's character is built by such things. Only under such complicated conditions does one realize how strong the passions of attachment and enmity in one's mind are.

Please give my respects to my Bhabhi[3] as well as to the other elders.

Respects from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 4894 Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Chhaganlal and Maganlal Gandhi
[2] Gandhiji's nephew and addressee's third son.
[3] Elder brother's wife; here, the addressee's

52. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

LONDON,
September 7, 1909

CHI. NARANDAS,

I was very glad to read your letter. That you thought of sharing the sufferings of Indians from there is, I believe, a meritorious act.[1] Please congratulate your co-workers also on my behalf.

You did a very good thing in getting Pandit Saheb[2] and Shukla Saheb[3] to subscribe to the fund.

I know that many educated men in India do not realize the significance of the struggle. This shows that the knowledge of soul-force that our forefathers had is lost in darkness. It will require patience and time to bring it back into light. But as they gradually understand its significance, they will realize its strength the better. The soul-force I am speaking of does not consist in outward ritual like temple-going, etc. Sometimes such ritual is opposed to it. All this you must have realized if you have read *Indian Opinion* carefully. Chhaganbhai will be able to tell you more. You can experiment upon that force from where you are. Cultivation of truth and fearlessness is the first lesson for it.

Please send what money you collect there to *Indian Opinion* over the signatures of you three. Moreover, send an account to those who have contributed money. Send also instructions through Chhaganbhai about publishing the names of leading subscribers in *Indian Opinion*. It would perhaps be better if Pandit Saheb or Shukla Saheb sent the amount with a forwarding letter of sympathy. Do as you all deem proper.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand : C. W. 4895 Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] The reference is to the collection of funds undertaken by the addressee for the satyagrahis in South Africa.

[2] Sitaram Pandit, a barrister of Rajkot.

[3] D. B. Shukla, a barrister of Rajkot and Gandhiji's friend

53. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI

ENGLAND,
September 7, 1909

CHI. KASHI,

I do not know definitely whether Santok also is there with you. I wrote you a letter[1] last week.

Please do not forget there whatever good things you learnt in Phoenix. Do not give them up for false shame. You will have done the right thing only when you, and other virtuous women like you, do what you consider proper—with humility, but with firmness and without fear. I wish you to do even in India whatever we have been doing in Phoenix thinking it to be good, with patience, with Chi. Chhaganlal's approval and with God's name on your lips. I have written this letter to tell you this.

I shall have to stay here for some time yet; if, therefore, you write a letter to me, it will reach me here.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand : C. W. 4896

Courtesy : Chhaganlal Gandhi

54. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

[LONDON,]
September 8, 1909

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have your letter and cuttings. Whatever possessed you to publish my cablegrams? If you could only read the Gujarati cuttings you have been sending me, you would laugh over the whole thing. The Gujarati writers have been proclaiming a great victory, and, naturally, our friends here have a laugh at your and my expense. I notice also, in the English columns, your effort to extract yourself from the difficulty, by claiming a partial victory and by going for the Boers. Happily, nobody takes any notice of the Indian Press here,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Kashi Gandhi", 28-8-1909

because our struggle is practically taboo. If these cuttings reach Neame[1], I can well imagine his doing us very great damage. I hope you do not think there is any agreement arrived at with reference to repeal·of the Act. I did not intend to convey any such impression through my cable. The odds are that nothing will be granted without a bargain that passive resistance should cease, and yet, your writings in the Bombay Press seem to show that you have taken the repeal of the Act for granted. I am interested to know how you are going to deal with the whole question at the forthcoming meeting. My letters, I hope, will have made everything clear to you. If they have not, I should never be able to forgive myself. Three years ago if any such premature publication had taken place and if a victory had been imputed to us when there was none, I should have probably torn my hair, as there would have been, then, no passive resistance to fall back upon. As it is, I assure you, I have not even given serious thought to this publication, nor have I worried over it, knowing that whenever we gain what we are fight [ing for, we shall have][2] gained because of passive resistance, . . .[3] I mention the publication of this cable, I do so in order to warn you for the future, and in order to let you know what our friends (you know whom I mean) are saying.

What a silly mistake on the part of the Bombay Government to have stopped the public meeting. I am looking forward to your graphic description of how and why the thing came about. It is a matter for great regret that Sir Pherozeshah still continues to hamper your progress.[4] However, I am fully expecting you to disarm him by the time you have finished with Bombay.

I quite agree with you that the statement[5] I sent to you would not do for Bombay at all; I never thought it could. A much more elaborate and detailed statement is required for India.

If you can induce Mr. Petit and others to defray the cost of the two deputations, it will be a great stroke and it will automatically solve

[1] L. E. Neame, author of *The Asiatic Danger in the Colonies,* a reply to which was published by the editor of *indian Opinion* in the form of a pamphlet.

[2] The original being damaged, words in square brackets have been conjectured.

[3] A few words are missing here.

[4] Polak had written in his letter of August 21 : "I am tugging away at the mass meeting. Sir P[herozeshah] M[ehta] is the stumbling block. He will not do anything except delay matters."

[5] *Vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case",16-7-1909

the difficulty we have been trying to grapple with for the past twelve months.

At the time of dictating, Lord Crewe has not sent an appointment. I do not know what this delay means.

I am very sorry to hear about Mr. Gokhale's health. What is the matter with him? Does his medical adviser give up hope, or does he mean that he should have a change?[1]

I would like to have your impression about Mr. Padshah, and whether it is the elder Padshah or the younger. Both are brilliant men, but I have always heard it said that the elder Padshah has a saintly character. The younger Padshah I know well; he was a co-student. He does not, or rather he did not, when I was in Bombay, ap [prove] of the idea of Indians emigrating at all, and he . . . [2] induced to take any interest in our. . .[3]

What are the medical students for the Vegetarian Examination? I am rather interested in this, because I have been told here that medical study is practically impossible without having to destroy life. Mr. Gool tells me that, in the course of his studies, he[4] must have killed about fifty frogs. An examination in physiology without this, he tells me, is not possible. If this is so, I have absolutely no desire to go in for medical studies. I would neither kill a frog, nor use one for dissecting, if it has been specially killed for the purpose of dissection.

I hope that you have made it clear to the friends there that our restricting the propaganda to the two demands regarding the Transvaal does not mean that we do not intend to fight for the other things, as occasion arises. That the two things only are being mentioned prominently at present is because passive resistance has been applied to them only, and that on that account they claim, as they ought to, the greatest attention. I mention this as the question was discussed with Lord Morley, as also Lord Crewe. The latter inquired what we proposed to do in reference to the other things, and I told him that we were going to work in the Transvaal to bring about the desired reforms, and I even hinted that passive resistance might have to be taken up in connection with them. Sir Muncherjee is very keen

[1] Polak had reported : "Mr. Gokhale is killing himself with overwork. His medical adviser has given him a most depressing report."

[2] Some words are missing in the original.

[3] *ibid*

[4] The original has "you".

on this statement being made because he thinks that otherwise the people over there may not work in future, thinking that they had done their duty in helping us to solve the present problem.

I notice that you remark in your letter that the [passage of] the Union Bill makes our position somewhat more. . .[1] however, think so, as we never raised any discussion on the Union itself. As a matter of fact, work done after the Union, so far as the negotiations are concerned, was more substantial than before.

I do not think I need, and yet perhaps I may, tone down your raptures over what you have seen in the India of Bombay. I know you know that you are seeing Westernized India and not real India, which I hope you may be able to do whilst you are there, though I question whether you will. I was reading last night a very illuminating work by Edward Carpenter—*Civilisation, Its Cause and Cure.*I finished the first part and, whilst I was reading it, I thought that I would issue the warning, which I have done. His analysis of the civilisation, as we know it, is very good. His condemnation though very severe is, in my opinion, entirely deserved. The cure suggested by him is good, but I note that he is afraid of his own logic, naturally because he is not certain of his ground. No man, in my opinion, will be able to give an accurate forecast of the future and describe a proper cure, unless he has seen the heart of India. Now you know in what direction my thoughts are driving me. If you have not read the book, and if it is not on your shelf, you will find it at Phoenix.

I have the following cablegram from Johannesburg:

> Magistrate rebuked Vernon for stating in court duty white men hunt Asiatics from country. *Leader, Star* strongly comment.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5056

[1] Some words are missing here. Polak had observed: “. . . the passage of the Act of Union handicaps you immensely now. It is one weapon the less in your armoury.”

55. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
September 9, 1909

MY LORD,

As suggested by Your Lordship,[1] I wrote to the Secretary to Lord Morley.[2] Enclosed is a copy of his reply.

I wrote to Lord Crewe on Saturday;[3] no reply has arrived as yet. I beg to enclose herewith copy of my letter to Lord Crewe.

I remain, etc.,

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5058

56. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[LONDON,]
September 9, 1909

CHI. MANILAL,

Received your letter. I am sorry that Mr. Kallenbach incurred the expenditure. But I know that he cannot be prevented from doing so. It would be better not to let him know our requirements when he inquires about them.

I am sorry that Chi. Harilal[4] is not with you; but I believe that his duty for the present is to stay in the Transvaal.

I have no information about your studies. As Mr. Cordes is having boils, I hope you are visiting him at his place and attending upon him.

[1] In his letter of September 3, Lord Ampthill had written to Gandhiji : "You should ask to see Lord Morley or his representative at the India Office. Lord Morley does not understand the question yet, but if there is anyone to whom this question ought to appeal, it is he. . . You might let fall a hint that you are thinking of going to India to explain it [the question of 'theoretical right'] there."

[2] This letter is not available.

[3] This letter was actually sent on Monday, September 6; *vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Crewe", 6-9-1909.

[4] Harilal Gandhi, who was released on August 9 after serving six months' imprisonment, did go to Durban to see Manilal who was ill, but returned to the Transvaal soon after in connection with the struggle. *Vide* also "Cable to British Indian Association",10-8-1909.

It was a mistake on the part of Purushottamdas not to have sent the letter.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I hope you have frequently visited Devibehn[1] and Mrs. Pywell[2] at their place.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 88

Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

57. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD CREWE

[LONDON,]

September 10, 1909

SIR,

The following cablegram has been received from Johannesburg:

> Magistrate rebuked Vernon for stating in court duty white men hunt Asiatics from country. *Leader, Star* strongly comment.

Mr. Vernon, who is referred to in the cablegram, is Superintendent Vernon, whom I know well and who, in my opinion, has given no end of trouble to passive resisters in Johannesburg. The manner of making his remark must have been offensive enough to have drawn from the bench a rebuke, and from *The Transvaal Leader* and the Johannesburg *Star* strong comments.

The cablegram is but an indication of what my countrymen have to undergo in the Transvaal in their self-imposed suffering. But my colleague and I can have no reason for complaining. At the same time, we feel that we ought to bring the cablegram to the notice of the Earl of Crewe. I do not know whether the Earl of Crewe saw the statement that was made by General Smuts to Reuter, before he embarked for South Africa. In it he made the following remark:

> The vast majority of Transvaal Indians are sick to death of the agitation carried on by some of their extreme representatives, and have quietly submitted to the law.

We have treated it as a rhetorical expression, and have allowed it

[1] Indian name given to Miss Ada West, sister of A. H. West

[2] Mother-in-law of A. H. West

to remain unchallenged in the public Press, in order to enable General Smuts to grant the British Indian prayer without any difficulty arising with his party, but if he has really meant what he said to Reuter's agent, may I state that information received from the Transvaal goes to prove the contrary, and that the strength of British Indian opposition still remains unabated ?

I remain, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records: 291/142 ; also, from a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5060

58. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD MORLEY

[LONDON,]
September 10, 1909

SIR,

I have your note of the 8th instant. I beg to enclose herewith, for Lord Morley's information, copy of letter addressed by me to the Private Secretary to the Earl of Crewe.[1]

Yours faithfully,

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5059

59. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
September 10, 1909

MY LORD,

The following cablegram was received last night from Johannesburg:

> Magistrate rebuked Vernon for stating in court duty white men hunt Asiatics from country. *Leader, Star* strongly comment.

The Mr. Vernon referred to in the cablegram, is Superintendent Vernon whom I know very well. He has given British Indians no end of trouble in the course of passive resistance. Even the magistrate, who as I know, often allowed much greater latitude to Mr. Vernon than he as a judicial officer, might have, was unable evidently to allow Mr.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

Vernon to proceed unchecked in his incitement of the white men against Asiatics. And the matter must have caused a sensation, to have called forth from *The Transvaal leader* and the Johannesburg *Star* strong comments. I am forwarding copy of the cablegram to the Colonial Office.[1]

I have not yet heard from Lord Crewe. I often ask myself whether my duty is not to be in the Transvaal and share the sufferings of my countrymen, rather than vegetate here in the hope of inducing the Imperial Government to do its duty. My faith in the efficacy of quiet but continued suffering is much greater than in negotiations and public agitation, though I am aware that both are part of the struggle, in so far as the struggle represents strong and weak parties alike. I need hardly assure Your Lordship that I am not impatient, and I am prepared cheerfully to wait so long as, in your opinion, it is necessary to do so.[2]

I remain, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5062

60. LONDON

[*September 10, 1909*]

NATAL DEPUTATION

The Natal deputation still continues sending copies of its statement to various persons. They have addressed a letter to the Press as under. It has appeared in *The Times* of today (September 10). The members of the deputation have requested a written reply from Colonel Seely. It is expected any day now.

LETTER TO "THE TIMES"[3]

We beg to invite your attention to a statement prepared by us

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Crewe", 20-7-1909

[2] Lord Ampthill wrote back on September 11 : "I cannot think that you will have to wait much longer for your answer from Lord Crewe and I should be very much surprised as well as pained if he declined to give you another hearing. If you have not received an answer by the time this reaches you, you could with perfect propriety send a reminder pointing out that your time is valuable and that you are anxious to arrange for your return to South Africa."

[3] The English text of the letter is reproduced here from *Indian Opinion*, 9-10-1909, with some changes needed to bring it into conformity with the Gujarati translation.

and circulated in connection with the grievances of British Indians in the Colony of Natal.

In order to concentrate public attention on only the most pressing of them, we have excluded mention of many that do not call for immediate redress. The position of Natal among the other South African Colonies is somewhat peculiar. Natal introduced indentured Indian labour when its prosperity hung in the balance. Now she wants to avoid some of its natural consequences. In other words, she wants all the advantages that this form of labour gives her without having in its midst a non-indentured and free Indian population.

Hence, first, its desire to starve out Indian merchants and traders by depriving them of their licences to trade. The officers appointed to grant these licences or their renewals or transfers from place to place, or from person to person, have absolute discretion to grant or refuse. This discretion has been used detrimentally to Indians. Hence, the right of appeal to the Supreme Court should be granted. Secondly, its desire to drive out of Natal those Indians who have finished their indentures by imposing a prohibitive annual tax upon them, their wives and their children. Thirdly, its desire to keep them in a state of perpetual ignorance by depriving Indians of what little facility they had for education.

In the course of a Press letter, it is not possible to give an adequate idea of our grievances. Domiciled Indians cannot even bring with them their children over a certain age or their female relatives who are dependent upon them. You will thus see that the Indian community in Natal is attacked from three dangerous positions. We have, therefore, come to the centre of the Empire in order to obtain justice, and although Natal is a self-governing Colony, and will now form part of the Union of South Africa, it is the duty of the Imperial Government to protect acquired rights. It ought not to fail in that duty. We have no voice in the making of Natal laws. Our remedy therefore is, and must continue to be, by means of Imperial protection. Indeed, so far as that Colony is concerned, the Imperial Government have a very tangible remedy, and that is to withdraw from Natal the assistance she receives from India in the shape of indentured labour, until she has granted justice to those Indians who are suffering from the above-mentioned threefold disabilities.

We trust that the Press of the United Kingdom will come to the rescue and insist upon the Imperial Government doing its duty.

ABDUL CAADIR
AMOD BHAYAT
H. M. BADAT
M. C. ANGLIA

DID THEY REACH NORTH POLE?

A childish argument has been going on between two American whites whether the North Pole has, in fact, been discovered or not, and if it has, then, by whom. One of them is Dr. Peary and the other, Dr. Cook. Both of them claim to have stood on the North Pole. Dr. Peary challenges Dr. Cook's claim, and the latter that of the former. Men have almost lost their heads over this argument. Newspapers are full of the controversy. Reports about it and reports of football and cricket fill all the space in them. It is beyond my understanding what good the discovery of the North Pole has done the world; but such things are regarded as important sign-posts of contemporary civilization. What exactly is their importance they alone can say who claim to understand these matters. I for one regard all these things as symptoms of mental derangement. That one should just fritter away one's time for want of a proper occupation, or, out of greed, cast about for ways of getting rich at any cost—I would not want even an enemy to be reduced to such a plight.

SUFFRAGETTES

Some of these ladies have grown impatient. It is, of course, an admirable thing that they should go to gaol. No one can have anything to say against their inviting suffering on themselves. But they go to the extent of breaking Mr. Asquith's windows because the franchise is not being conceded to them right now. They invade his leisure and his residence. There were three women who did this. They were caught hold of, but what could be done to them? They have not even been prose-cuted. All this is absurd. Being women, they escape punishment for their misconduct. The British people respect women, so that no one lays hands on them. Being aware of this, the women take undue advantage of it. That will not, of course, secure them the franchise. If the British women mean to fight in the spirit of satyagraha, they cannot adopt tactics like those mentioned above. There is no room for impatience in satya-graha. Those who

want the franchise are in a minority, whereas the ma-jority of women oppose the demand; so the minority has no option but to suffer for a long time. If demoralized by suffering, they take to extreme measures and resort to violence, they will lose whatever sympathy they have won and set the people against themselves. We must draw a lesson from this case. We ought never to forsake the sword of satyagraha and grow impatient. If we do so, we shall lose all the gains we have made so far. We have, therefore, great need to learn patience from the example of others. Those who are not satyagrahis have nothing to be impatient about. Those who are have no reason to give up patience, if they rely entirely on the strength that comes from truth. When we have enough of such strength, falsehood will disappear.

GUY ALFRED

This is the name of the man who printed the last issue of *The Indian Sociologist*. He is twenty-two. He is being prosecuted. There was, of course, no defence. The issue contained open praise for the murder. He has received 12 months' imprisonment.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-10-1909

61. DEPUTATION NOTES [–XI]

[Before *September 11, 1909*]

We are just where we were. This week also I have to say this. There has been no invitation from Lord Crewe so far. One cannot say when or whether it will ever come. Some papers have been sent to him. There was a cable from Johannesburg to say that, while giving evidence in court, Superintendent Vernon said that it was the duty of every white to hunt the Asiatics out of the country. The Magistrate, it is reported, took strong exception to this remark and *The Star* and *The* [*Transvaal*] *Leader* wrote strongly about it. A letter was immediately addressed to Lord Crewe about this matter. Every such instance of high-handed behaviour works in our favour. The Transvaal question has grown to be a grave problem for the [Imperial] Government. It is considering what it should do now. In these circumstances, the more we are made to suffer, the heavier grows the Government's responsibility. A cable was received from Mr. Quinn, saying that, though General Smuts had said that a settlement was about to be reached, arrests of Chinese were continuing. How to explain

this, he asks. I wrote last week about the kind of settlement General Smuts has in mind. Obviously, that does not satisfy us. Therefore, arrests are bound to continue. It is necessary that all—both Indians and Chinese—should remain strong. General Smuts has said that the spirit of the Indians is broken, and that a great many of them have accepted the Act. It is up to us to prove that this is a false charge.

The public meeting in Bombay will be held on the day on which this letter is posted.[1] It was good that the Bombay Government apologized in the end and allowed a meeting to be convened again. You will, of course, get a report of it.

I learn from a letter of Mr. Polak that there is a move to raise funds in Bombay for meeting the expenditure on both the deputations. We may not need money. But we certainly need the support which such a move extends to us by its expression of brotherly sympathy.

About our struggle, we have had discussions with Mrs. Saul Solomon, wife of a former Minister in the Cape, and with the daughter of the late Sir John Molteno. Though both these ladies are South Africans, they have much sympathy [for our cause] and are both enough to offer their help. I am not in a position to write more about this. Perhaps, Miss Molteno will shortly be in South Africa.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-10-1909

62. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
September 13, 1909

MY LORD,

I am exceedingly obliged to you for your letter of the 11th instant.[2] The letter[3] that I sent to Lord Morley was exactly as you suggested, and I now see that I might have written a better letter. My difficulty has always been as to what portion of the information you have given me should be used by me. I send you the office copy I have of my first letter to Lord Morley, and I send you draft copy of

[1] Gandhiji had expected the meeting to be held on September 11; *vide* "Deputation Notes [-X]", After 3-9-1909.

[2] *Vide* Appendix Lord Ampthill's Letter to Gandhiji".

[3] This is not available. It was dated September 6.

the letter I should now write.

I have now received an appointment from Lord Crewe fixed for the 16th instant. The appointment coincides with General Smuts' arrival in Pretoria. I do not know whether it is due to coincidence or deliberation.

I remain, etc.,

[ENCLOSURE]

DRAFT LETTER TO LORD MORLEY[1]

SIR,

On re-reading my letter of the 6th instant offering to wait on His Lordship, I see that I did not clearly put the position, so as to warrant the offer to wait on His Lordship.

Lord Ampthill, who has taken a deep interest in the sufferings of British Indians in the Transvaal, and has assisted us so very greatly, informs my colleague and me that, whilst General Smuts is prepared now to grant permanent certificates of residence to a limited number of educated and cultured British Indians, he will not recognize the right of such Indians to emigrate to the Transvaal, be it on ever so limited a scale. The Indian struggle has been undertaken on the question of 'right'. Whilst it is necessary for the domiciled Indians of the Transvaal to receive fresh immigrants from India possessing educa-tional attainments,in the opinion of the British Indian community, such a facility is not of so great an importance as the theoretical right of a British Indian, under a general immigration test, to emigrate to the Trans-vaal. But for the passing of another separate Asiatic Act, namely, Act 36 of 1908, mere repeal of Act 2 of 1907 would have been sufficient to guard the theoretical right above referred to, and thus to save the honour of India, but today the existence of that Act 36 of 1908 renders it neces-sary to mention the question of educated Indians separately, and slightly to amend the existing law of the Transvaal. It is in order to show the fundamental distinction between what General Smuts is now prepared to offer, and what has been and is still demanded by British Indians in the Transvaal, that I have offered, as I do again on behalf of my colleague and myself, to wait on His Lordship if he can spare the time.

As I doubt not Lord Morley is aware, the presence of Mr. Polak,

[1] The letter was sent on September 16 after making a few changes in the draft; *vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Morley",16-9-1909.

the delegate from the Transvaal, has stimulated very great interest in the struggle on the part of the Bombay public. Cuttings received by me weekly show that the papers representing all shades of opinion have been giving a large amount of space to the question. Mr. Polak has interviewed prominent Indians and Anglo-Indians, and has received very great encouragement from them. This activity in Bombay shows that, as it is quite proper, India is deeply hurt by the insult that is put upon her by the racial disqualification imported, for the first time, into colonial legislation, and is much moved for the sufferings that have been gone through by hundreds of British Indians in the Transvaal, for the sake of realizing an Imperial ideal.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5066-7

63. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD CREWE

[LONDON,]
September 14, 1909

SIR,

With reference to your letter of the 11th instant, Mr. Hajee Habib and I will wait on His Lordship on the 16th instant at 3.15 p.m.

I have, etc.,

From the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5072

64. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD MORLEY

[LONDON,]
September 16, 1909

SIR,

On re-reading my letter[1] of the 6th instant offering to wait on His Lordship, I see that I did not clearly put the position, so as to warrant the offer to wait on His Lordship.

Although my colleague and I have not yet received any official intimation of the results of the negotiations which took place between Lord Crewe and the Transvaal Ministers, rumours have reached us that concessions are to be made, but that those concessions will fall short of the one object for which we have struggled and suffered. That object is the restoration of the 'right' of immigration. We are willing

[1] This is not available.

that the right should be limited in practice to any extent which the Colonial Government may think necessary or desirable, but we cannot submit to the deprivation of the right in theory without being false to our oaths and accessories to the dishonour of India. Indians have enjoyed, and still enjoy, the theoretical right of entry to every part of the British Empire although that right is limited in practice in some of the Dominions. It is only in the Transvaal that they have been deprived of the right, and that—only within the past two years. We cannot believe that Lord Morley, who is regarded all over the world as the type of British Liberalism, would regard with indifference so reactionary and illiberal a policy as that which has been adopted by the Transvaal Government, if he had evidence of the startling fact.It is this evidence which we respectfully beg permission to give in person, for we venture to doubt whether His Majesty's Government have actually realised the situation. If they had, they would surely have taken steps to avert this, the first deliberate establishment of a 'colour-bar' within the Empire.[1]

As I doubt not Lord Morley is aware, the presence of Mr. Polak, the delegate from the Transvaal, has stimulated very great interest on the part of the Bombay public. Cuttings received by me weekly, show that the papers, representing all shades of opinion, have been giving a large amount of space to the question. Mr. Polak has interviewed prominent Indians and Anglo-Indians, and has received very great encouragement from them. This activity in Bombay shows that, as it is quite proper, India is deeply hurt by the insult that is put upon her by the racial dis-qualification imported for the first time into colonial legislation, and is much moved by the sufferings that have been gone through by hundreds of British Indians in the Transvaal,

[1] This paragraph was substituted by Lord Ampthill for the second paragraph in the draft Gandhiji had sent him on September 13. In his letter of September 15, Lord Ampthill observed : "The above is rather strong, but I want you to emphasize the startling nature of the illiberal and reactionary policy of the Transvaal Government. Your draft does not quite do this and your reference to the unprecedented nature of the deprivation of right is buried in the last paragraph where it might well escape notice. Keep all the details for an interview or for a further possible letter. The thing you want to do at present is to make Lord Morley aware that his Government are responsible for the most illiberal step that has ever disfigured Imperial policy. If you get scolded for the letter, it will be open to you to publish it eventually and to let the world judge of it and of the further proofs of your contention." *Vide* also the following item.

for the sake of realizing an Imperial ideal.[1]

I have, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5077

65. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
September 16, 1909

MY LORD,

I have to thank you for your kind letter of the 15th instant. I have now written to Lord Morley as per copy.[2] I have made only a slight verbal alteration in the opening words of the substituted paragraph. Instead of "we" I have inserted "my colleague and I". The rest is exactly as drafted by Your Lordship.

Lord Crewe we see today. I shall bear in mind the valuable advice[3] given by you and will give you the result of the interview.

I remain, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5079

[1] Acknowledging this letter on September 18, Lord Morley's Private Secretary wrote : ". . . the point which you wish to press upon Lord Morley is not new to him, and that while, on abstract and general grounds, his sympathies are with you in regard to it, he does not feel that any practical purpose would be served by a further elaboration of it to him, and he therefore regrets that he is unable to accord you another interview. But he presumes that you have laid your views fully before the Secretary of State for the Colonies."

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] Lord Ampthill had written : "I hope that, when you see Lord Crewe, you will lay stress on the real point in the manner which I have here suggested. Be ready to prove that the theoretical right does in fact exist everywhere else, for that is the point on which he will question you. Do not mention me more than you can help."

66. SUBSTANCE OF INTERVIEW WITH LORD CREWE[1]

[LONDON,
September 16, 1909]

PRESENT: LORD CREWE, HAJEE HABIB AND GANDHI

LORD CREWE COMMENCED BY SAYING: I suppose Lord Ampthill has been in touch with you, and has told you everything. I asked you to see me in order to tell you that there has been delay in the negotiations, because the Colonial Ministers had many other things to do. Both Colonel Seely and I had several interviews with General Smuts. He was reasonable and anxious to see a settlement. He proposes to repeal the Act but he was disinclined to accept Lord Ampthill's amendment. He, however, recognised that a limited number of British Indians should have permanent residential certificates, and, to that end, he said that he was willing to amend the existing legislation. He said that he did not like the fictitious equality. Can you not accept the substantial thing that General Smuts is willing to give?

GANDHI: I am afraid that it is impossible for the British Indian community to be satisfied with what General Smuts is willing to give; it still leaves the racial taint on the Statute-book.

LORD CREWE INTERVENED: But do you not think that the Australian policy of excluding by imposing ridiculous tests is not a satisfactory mode of dealing with the question?

GANDHI: I admit that it is unsatisfactory, but the fictitious equality is the lesser of the two evils. And after all, is not the British Constitution itself founded on many fictions? I have myself been nurtured in those traditions. As a students I learnt the value of this kind of fiction. Indeed, after mature consideration, I have come to the conclusion that there is a very reasonable basis for these so-called fictions and if General Smuts is really anxious to see a settlement, and wishes to live under the British flag, why will he deliberately interfere with the British Constitution, especially when what he wants can be had without departing from it? I should like to draw Your Lordship's

[1] After the interview, Gandhiji himself wrote down its substance; *vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 16-9-1909. For Lord Crewe's minute on the interview, *vide* Appendix Lord Crewe's Minute".

attention to the fact that the Immigration Act of the Colony was not a Crown Colony measure, that it is General Smuts' own production and he has undou-btedly relied on fiction there. The Act bristles with adventitious clauses.

LORD CREWE (intervening) : I share your views very largely. I think that what you say is quite just and proper, but General Smuts is not an Englishman and, therefore, does not like the idea even of theoretical equality.

GANDHI : If that is the case, it is all the greater reason for us to press for the removal of the racial taint from the Statute-book, and in offering this opposition, we think that we are rendering an Imperial service. As Your Lordship must have noticed, the struggle has been in its later stages entirely idealistic. We have no personal interests to serve, and I for one should feel very reluctant to impose so much suffering on my countrymen and advise them to continue the struggle, if it were only for the admission of a few cultured Indians, however desirable such admission may be for the well-being of the community. If I am not taking up your time unduly, I should like to give you the origin of the limitation in number. Mr. Cartwright, the editor of *The Transvaal Leader*, a friend of the Boers, as also a friend always of unrepresented classes and a special friend of mine, told me that the club talk was that, behind the theoretical equality, I had some ulterior motives, and that I had not really accepted the policy of virtual exclusion of Asiatics, and it was in order to enable Mr. Cartwright to satisfy those friends of his who talked to him at the clubs, I told him that, if that were so, he could announce to his friends that I would be prepared to advise the Indian community to accept a very rigid educational test, so rigid as to admit of only, say, six highly educated Indians into the country per year. You will, therefore, see that from the commencement of the struggle, we have never placed any importance on the admission of Indians, but that we have all along fought for legal equality.

LORD CREWE : But do not you think that General Smuts would find it difficult perhaps with his own people to get Lord Ampthill's amendment accepted?

GANDHI : I venture to think not. I do not think that he could have any difficulty with the Progressive Party. I can picture before my mind's eye Sir George Farrar, as we were discussing at the meeting of the Executive Council, after the burning of the certificates,

this very ques-tion, pleading with General Smuts to point a way out of the difficulty, and it was because General Smuts said he could not amend the Immigra-tion Act that the question of the status of educated Indians remained unsolved. The people in the Colonies undoubtedly want to see the exclusion of Asiatics generally, in order to avoid competition. This policy having been accepted, I cannot conceive their offering objection to theoretical equality.

MR. HAJEE HABIB: As a matter of fact, we have received cables from Bombay from the party controlled by Professor Gokhale and Sir Pherozeshah Mehta to the effect that we had gone further than we ought to have in offering to accept the second amendment, and that the matter was exciting a very great deal of commotion in India.

GANDHI : We had to naturally cable what has been going on here, and from the letter received from Mr. Polak, I gather that the racial insult is being very keenly resented in India, so that it could not be said that only the Transvaal Indians were offering opposition.

LORD CREWE : I quite agree, and I see the force of what you are saying, and let me assure you that, keenly as I feel the justification of the demands of the local Indians in the Transvaal, I placed the matter before General Smuts as an Imperial question. I am myself most anxious to see a settlement, but it occurs to me that General Smuts may also feel—though I do not wish to say that he has said to me any such thing—that if theoretical equality were kept up, it might be used for fresh agitation in order to increase the demands.

GANDHI : I can only say in reply to any such fear that it will be open, whenever the Ministers in the Transvaal thought that we were departing from our understanding, to pass more restrictive legislation. At the same time, I do not for one moment wish to suggest that, if our demands were granted, that will be the end of all agitation in the Transvaal. There are peculiar difficulties under which we are labouring and they may call forth fresh efforts.

LORD CREWE : I quite recognise that. There can be no finality in such matters. All I say is, that for a certain number of years at least, there should be some rest if the question is settled to your satisfaction.

GANDHI : I am prepared to go a step further. When I talked of fresh agitation, I referred to other difficulties than those of the question of the status of educated Indians. As to the question of immigration, we are prepared to give a written undertaking that, our demands being satisfied, we should not raise any further agitation. I

go so far as to say that, if there were any such unreasonable agitation, I should be prepared to become a passive resister against my own countrymen, even as I was just after the compromise.

LORD CREWE : Yes, I think that is quite reasonable and I shall now tell General Smuts what has happened at this meeting, and hope that there will be a settlement, but I do not hold out much hope. General Smuts may find it difficult to accept your proposition. If he does, will it perhaps not be as well to wait for the Union Parliament?

GANDHI: May I make the position a little clearer? Passive resistance in the meanwhile will have to continue, and that prolongs the agony for another six months, and if my reading of the amendment introduced at Your Lordship's instance in the South Africa Act is correct, I feel that the Union Parliament will have no jurisdiction to amend the Immigration Act, because by itself it imposes no racial disqualification. The amend-ment is aimed at the legislation which itself contains racial disabilities.

LORD CREWE : That is true, only I feel that the Union Parliament will not like to see such suffering prolonged, and I can assure you that even General Smuts does not like the prolongation of the struggle, and it is for that reason that I think that the Union Parliament may intervene and bring about a proper solution, but it is difficult to know what view the Union Parliament will take.

GANDHI : If we cannot get relief now, I know that we will have to wait, but we are prepared to wait indefinitely. If the negotiations are not successful, I shall go back feeling that we have not suffered enough and that therefore we ought to continue our sufferings.

LORD CREWE : Very well, I will then discuss the question with General Smuts.

GANDHI : As Your Lordship is aware, we have been here quite two months. Will it not be better to cable to General Smuts, so that we may know the result in good time?

LORD CREWE : I thought a dispatch would be better, but perhaps it will be as well to cable, I know you have had to remain here for a long time.

From a photostat of the typewritten copy: S. N. 4995

67. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
September 16, 1909

MY LORD,

Mr. Hajee Habib and I have just waited on Lord Crewe. His Lordship was very sympathetic. I think that he understands the question thoroughly, and I noticed too that every point I thought I had made, Lord Crewe interposed by saying he had heard it from you. I believe he feels too that there is a great deal to be said on behalf of our standpoint as to theoretical equality.

He has promised to cable to General Smuts the result of our interview, and press upon him acceptance of the amendment submitted by me through you.

We brought to his notice the intensity of feeling that has been roused in India, and he in reply admitted that it was an Imperial question and that it should be treated as such.[1]

I remain, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5078

68. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

[LONDON,]
September 16, 1909

MY DEAR HENRY,

I do not think you have yet received advice from Phoenix that West was suffering from a violent attack of pneumonia, so much so that he was at one time given up, and that Miss West was suffering from enteric fever.[2] Both were looked after by Dr. Nanji. The news was very disturbing. Manilal, however, told me that, if both of them were not well by the time their letter reached me, I would receive a cable, and as there was no cable, I take it that they are now both all right. However, these illnesses show that there is something irregular in the state of things at Phoenix. I am writing a long letter[3] asking

[1] For Lord Ampthill's reply, *vide* Appendix "Lord Ampthill's letter to Gandhij.

[2] Acknowledging this letter from Madras, Polak wrote: "I have heard all about the Phoenix disasters. Cordes sent me a living picture."

[3] This is not available.

West and Cordes to go into the matter thoroughly. According to letter received from Kallenbach, he was still in Durban. I notice that Chhaganlal and Manilal nursed West lovingly, and that they alternately kept watch during the night. Kallenbach speaks very enthusiastically about Manilal's nursing. All this shows that life at Phoenix has undoubtedly brought the best out of the settlers. Chhaganlal, naturally under the circumstances, postponed his departure, and he tells me that he will not leave now for some time, and asks me until further notice to correspond with ßhim at Phoenix, rather than write to him in India. I am sorry for you, because you will now be without a reliable and steady secretary. Still, Chhaganlal has undoub-tedly done the right thing.

I have your cablegram; there was a very good cable in *The Times* also. I send you a copy. Your meeting[1] was evidently a very great success, and that you surpassed yourself. I had expected nothing else. The meeting came off just before the appointment given by Lord Crewe. I am dictating this before seeing him. Today is Thursday and we are seeing him at 3.15. I shall, therefore, be able to give you a full description of the interview. I am glad that some subscription at least will be raised. It will nerve the people for the struggle in the Transvaal, and I am sure you have arranged for every steamer to be met and Indians deported to be received. I hope too that you have found Manji's [2] son, and others who reached India before your landing. If they have not all been traced, you should place yourself in correspondence with someone in Kathiawar and Surat, and get them to give you the names as also the condition of those who were deported.

Mr. Ali Imam of the All-India Moslem League is here. I have not yet met him; the Natal friends have. They speak enthusiastically of him[3]. He will probably have returned whilst you are there. He is a practising barrister in Patna. I trust you will get hold of him; even go to Patna if necessary, also Aligarh.

Whilst there may be joint action, you should get the Anjumans to move independently also, and lay stress upon the fact that Mahomedan interests are very much involved in South Africa.[4]

[1] The reference is to the public meeting at Bombay.

[2] Manji Nathubhai Ghelani, a passive resister

[3] Original has "them".

[4] Polak in his reply informed Gandhiji : "The Anjumans are certainly working independently and I have been laying special stress on Mahomedan grievances and interests. They have protested to the Viceroy re[garding] the Transvaal Prison authorities and *Ramzan.*"

Your interpretation of the latest amendment suggested by me is very accurate and I could not have explained it myself more clearly. Your description of the prize distribution ceremony is amusing. It is good that you survived the ordeal. The Gujarati papers, rather one of them, makes you describe me as Kavi. Do please insist on Kaliandas writing to me.

Millie has gone with Mater to Westcliff; she returns next Monday. I do not think you need have the slightest worry about Waldo. I have not considered the case to be serious enough to require medical advice. I hate stuffing children with medicines. Dr. Mehta, however, will be here shortly and if he has not the instruments, I shall procure them and have Waldo examined by him. I think I have told you my opinion of Dr. Mehta's ability, [which] is very great. Anyhow, he will tell me exactly what the matter is, and give a prescription also, if he thinks it advisable, which may be used in case of need. I am thinking of sending Celia and Amy to Westcliff for Sunday; they will return the same day. Millie and I went over to see Mrs. Ritch last Sunday. Sallie gave me a walk from the Hotel to Cricklewood—one hour and forty minutes taking it easy. I came a little nearer to Sallie; more of that when we meet. Mrs. Ritch is making only slow progress. You will see from copy of my letter[1] to Kallenbach sent last week what, in my opinion, should be done regarding Ritch. I do not think that we want a Committee costing £500 per year. If the weaker members want it, they can have it. I am revolving in my mind a scheme whereby we may have some work done in London much more cheaply, though it can never be so efficient as Ritch's. When I have sufficiently elaborated it and discussed it with you, I feel sure that you will like it very well.

Copies of correspondence with Lord Ampthill will tell you how thoroughly he is still working.

Dictated later—Friday [*September 17, 1909*]

We have now seen Lord Crewe. The result of the interview is embodied in a letter to Lord Ampthill,[2] copy of which you will find herewith. The agony, therefore, is now again prolonged.

I thought it would be better for me to reduce the purport of the interview with Lord Crewe to writing, and am therefore sending you a

[1] This is not available.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

copy of it, or rather, I will, if I am in time for the mail.

I do not know whether they sent you also duplicates of cables that are being sent to me. Anyhow, I give you copies of the cables received during the week. The first cable you will find in copy of letter addressed to Lord Crewe.[1] The second cable is from the Chinese Association, as follows :

> Eighty Chinese arrested, including Chairman. Increasingly determined passively resist utmost.

The second cablegram, dated 16th instant, reads :

> Meeting held yesterday enthusiastic, determined continue, resolutions congratulating released, reaffirming complete confidence delegates, efforts greatly appreciated, afresh pledging their support, protesting Vernon's statement, which until Government repudiates Asiatics interpret disclosure Government policy. Request imprisoned Mohammedans special meal *Ramzan* refused.

I am basing a letter on both these cablegrams to Lord Crewe.[2] I do not know that I could give you a copy of that letter also, it may be too late.

A paragraph from the letter received last week from Johannesburg runs as follows. I am passing it on to Lord Crewe, but only cautiously. If you make use of it, please be very careful; do not publish it, but the chief workers may know what is passing in the Transvaal gaols. The thing, in my opinion, is somewhat exaggerated, but that the Tamil in question must have been brutally handled I believe implicitly, from what I have seen myself. A native prisoner was almost done to death for a similar reason. He bled so copiously that I saw the blood marks in the whole of the passage. How the boy lived passes my comprehension.

> One day when it was bitterly cold, the men were ordered to bathe. One of them was disinclined to do so, and four native warders were then directed to scrub him. They accordingly got hold of him, plunged him into the bath and started rubbing him with a brush so vigorously that blood was drawn. A hospital orderly chancing to pass at the time, ordered the natives to cease and the man was taken to hospital and placed under medical treatment. This was received by K. K. Samy, but as the information was not officially authorized, we naturally cannot deal with it. I understand that the man lodged

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Crewe", 10-9-1909
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Crewe", 18-9-1909

complaint with the Governor of the gaol.

I have gone through your pamphlets fairly carefully. I want to write to you about them, but I do not think I shall be able to do so this week.

I am seriously thinking of advertising for the best essay on the "Ethics of Passive Resistance", just as we did in Johannesburg,[1] but I have to consult Dr. Mehta on the point. If he gives the prize, we shall have it. This will be done in the event of Lord Crewe's negotiations failing.

Mr. Doke's book is still unpublished; it is likely to be in the first week of October. For reasons I need not go into this week, I am thinking of buying out the whole of the edition, more for the sake of Mr. Doke than anything else. He will be very much cut up if there is a fiasco, and there might be. The publisher has not put his heart into it, and as many copies will have to be distributed free of charge, I thought I should pocket my own personal feelings and deal with the thing myself. I fancy that Dr. Mehta will guarantee any deficit. I have already corresponded with him in the matter. You may, therefore, be on the lookout for any bookseller who would care to take up the book. The best thing will be, perhaps, for Kaliandas or Chhaganlal's cousin, or both of them, to take the book personaly to many people. In any case, there should be no credit given to any booksellers on whom you cannot rely implicitly.[2]

I have cabled to you today.[3] I feel that, if persistent pressure is put from that side, it is possible to pull the negotiations through. There is no longer any ignorance of the question on the part of Lord Crewe, and if the Liberal Ministry does not go under within a short time, something may be done.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S.N. 5104.

[1] *Vide* "A prize of £ 1". 1-6-1907.

[2] Polak replied : "Natesan will take 250 copies for distribution here among booksellers for sale. When Chhaganlal comes here, he will make enquiries in Bombay. You may be sure that no credit will be given to unreliable booksellers."

[3] This cable is not available.

69. DEPUTATION NOTES [-XII]

[After *September 16, 1909*]

This time I cannot merely say that we are where we were. We had an interview with Lord Crewe on the 16th. He said that General Smuts was agreeable to the repeal of the Act and to the provision for permanent residence permits to the educated, but that he cannot reconcile himself to the idea that educated men should be able to enter as a matter of right after passing the test. We have, therefore, replied that, so long as the right is not conceded, the struggle will certainly continue. India's honour cannot be upheld if that right is not secured. The struggle was not intended to defend merely the rights of the Transvaal Indians as individuals but also India's honour. Once equal rights were conceded under the law, it would not matter if they were not allowed to be availed of. It would be possible to deal with such a situation. But denying the right under the law itself amounted to an attack on India's honour. After a long discussion, Lord Crewe admitted that we had no ulterior motive in our fight and wanted to maintain a theoretical right. He has agreed to send a cablegram to General Smuts. Let us wait for the reply. What more can we hope for than this? We have told Lord Crewe frankly that, should General Smuts refuse to accede to our demand ultimately, we would conclude that we have not as yet had our full measure of suffering. We were always prepared [we told him] for suffering.

In the course of this discussion, we also referred to the agitation in India. It appears that Mr. Polak's vigorous efforts in India are a source of great strength [to our cause]. A very fine cable-report of the Bombay mass meeting appeared in the local newspapers. It said that the meeting demanded that the recruitment of indentured labour for Natal should be stopped. People's feelings were roused to a high pitch by Mr. Polak's speech. They were also very much put out by the news of Nagappen's death. Moreover, a fund has been started in aid of those who have been deported. To be sure, it was a very successful meeting.

The cables about the arrests of the Chinese in Johannesburg, the refusal [by the authorities] to provide special facilities regarding food during *Ramzan* and the criticism of Mr. Vernon, also, make welcome reading. There is no doubt that the more we suffer, the tougher we

grow and the stronger becomes our cause. If Lord Crewe has been striving so hard, it is only because of our voluntary submission to suffering.

Lord Crewe also said that, if General Smuts did not concede [our demands], we should wait for the Union Parliament. This means that we should continue with our struggle even while we are waiting for that Parliament to meet. If the fight is abandoned, the fate of Indians all over South Africa will be sealed, and we shall have, in the words of Mr. Rustomjee, cut off India's nose with our own hands and proved ourselves cowards.

But I have not the slightest hesitation in believing that the Indians who are courageously holding out at present are men who will fight on till death. I earnestly hope that our friends who have been released will be only too ready to welcome imprisonment whenever the Government chooses to arrest them. It is my hope that, by the time this letter reaches there, Mr. Dawad Mahomed will have been installed in gaol again. It is better, in my view, to die in prison than to enjoy good health outside. Death in prison will uphold our honour and will serve the cause of India. This is the time not to grieve over anyone's suffering, but rather to offer congratulations on it. In a land where innocent men are reduced to slavery and sentenced to imprisonment, all good men should take pleasure in serving such sentences. Let every brave Indian allow this idea to take hold of his mind. I have stated before now that, if General Smuts' reply proves disappointing, we should, after spending some time here in holding pub-lic meetings, etc., hasten to South Africa and get lodged in gaol. The only thing that remains yet to be considered is whether or not to go to India. For myself, I am unable to reach any defininte decision on this point.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-10-1909

70. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[LONDON,]
September 17, 1909

CHI. MANILAL,

I was extremely glad to read your letter of the 21st [ultimo] about Mr. West. I read the letter twice. I felt proud of you and thanked God that I had such a son. I wish you to remain such for ever. To do good to others and serve them without any sense of egoism—this is real educa-tion. You will realize this more and more as you grow up. What better way of life can there be than serving the sick? Most of religion is covered by it.

We have to keep a detached mind about the chicken soup, etc., given to Mr. West. You know my ideas in the matter. I would have preferred Ba's passing away without the soup;[1] but would not have allowed it to be given to her without her consent. The body should not be dearer than the soul. He who knows the soul, and also knows that it is different from the body, will not try to protect his body by committing violence. All this is very difficult indeed; but he who has imbibed very noble ideas easily understands it and acts accordingly. The belief that the soul can do good or evil only when it is encased in a body is quite mistaken and terrible sins have been and are being committed owing to it. I want you to be free from it. There is no such law that the soul can be known only at an advanced age. Many old men pass away without knowing the soul, while persons like the late Raichandbhai have been able to realize the self even at the age of 8. Mistakes are made and sins committed despite such knowledge; but these can be eliminated after very careful thought. The body has been given to us for curbing it.

About the settlement nothing definite can be said. You will know more about it from my letter[2] to Chhaganbhai.

The above is written as the occasion offered itself. Please share it with the others.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand : C. W. 89 Courtesy: Sushila-behn Gandhi

[1] The reference is to Kasturba's serious-illness when Dr. Nanji gave her beef tea; *vide An Autobiography,* Part IV, Ch. XXVIII.

[2] This is not available.

71. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

LONDON,
September 17, 1909

CHI. NARANDAS,

I see from Chi. Chhaganlal's letter that he will not be able to go there at present as Mr. West has suddenly been taken very ill. We have to live as the Lord ordains. Why then should we be sorry or elated? Do keep writing to me. Negotiations for a settlement are still going on. What the outcome will be cannot be said.

My respects to Khushalbhai and Devbhabhi.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand : C. W. 4897

Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

72. DRAFT LETTER TO LONDON BRANCH OF INDIAN MOSLEM LEAGUE

[LONDON,
After *September 17, 1909*]

THE SECRETARY
ALL-INDIA MOSLEM LEAGUE
LONDON BRANCH

DEAR SIR,

The Transvaal deputation have received the following cablegram from Johannesburg :

> Meeting held yesterday enthusiastic, determined continue, resolutions congratulating released, reaffirming complete confidence delegates, efforts greatly appreciated, afresh pledging their support, protesting Vernon's statement which until Government repudiates Asiatics interpret disclosure Government policy. Request imprisoned Mohammedans special meal *Ramzan* refused.

I draw your particular attention to the last paragraph of the cablegram, which shows that the Transvaal Government have deeply hurt the religious susceptibilities of British Indian Mohammedans who have settled in the Transvaal, who have felt called upon, on religious

and conscientious grounds, to disregard what is known as the Asiatic Act and to suffer imprisonment for their so doing.

That under the British flag, which is supposed to respect all religions, Mohammedan passive resisters should be prevented from performing a religious observance of the highest importance is a very serious matter. I hope that the League will take prompt action.

I may point out that last year, at Volksrust, facilities were given to passive resisters during the month of *Ramzan*.

I remain, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten draft : S. N. 5179

73. LONDON

[Before *September 18, 1909*]

NATAL DEPUTATION

The Natal gentlemen met Mr. Ali Imam, Bar-at-Law, of the All-India Muslim League. He has promised to help. Next week Mr. Amir Imam will also be apprised of the situation in the Transvaal. Mr. Justice Ameer Ali, who had gone for a change of climate, has now returned. He too has promised every help. The deputation has received from Lord Crewe the written reply which it had requested. He says :

> The Imperial Government can only make a recommendation to the Natal Government but cannot effectively intervene in regard to the disabilities which flow from the existing legislation and which can be removed only by an amendment of such legislation. In case further disabilities are sought to be imposed through fresh legislation, the Imperial Government can disallow such legislation. Its sympathies are with the Indian community in the hardships which it experiences in Natal and, in the past, it has also made representations to the Natal Government about major grievances such as the denial of the right of appeal under the Dealers' Licenses Act. Moreover, Royal assent was withheld from the Bills which had been passed for curtailing [Indian] trade. As to the future, the Imperial Government hopes that the Union Parliament, which has been vested with powers of legislation regarding Indians and Coloured people, will follow a more liberal policy and give

relief of the Indian community.

This is a very disappointing reply. It contains no promise to write again to the Natal Government. The powers of the Union Parliament relate to legislation exclusively affecting the Coloured people, but the Dealers' Licenses Act applies nominally to everyone, so that most probably the Natal Government alone can amend it. The hope of action by the Union Parliament is, therefore, a mere bait. Besides, the reply says nothing about the demand for stopping the import of indentured Indian labour. The members of the deputation have, therefore, decided to write again to Lord Crewe, and have drafted a letter[1] along the above lines. They will send it after consulting Sir Muncherji, Mr. Justice Ameer Ali and others.

As the *Ramzan* has commenced, Mr. Hajee Habib and other gentlemen observe the *roza.* All of them have gone to stay with Dr. Abdurrahman's sister, and thus get every facility to observe the *Ramzan.*

PATETI AND PARSI SATYAGRAHIS

The Parsis' *Pateti*[2] fell on Monday, when leading Parsi ladies and gentlemen here arranged a party in a hotel on the bank of the Thames. Sir Muncherji Bhownaggree was asked to invite the Transvaal and Natal delegates to attend it. About 50 gentlemen were present. Sir Muncherji was in the chair. The gathering also included two grand-daughters of the Grand Old Man of India. When toasts were being proposed, Mr. Gandhi suggested that, in proposing one to the Parsi community, they should name, besides Sir Muncherji, Mr. Rustomjee, Mr. Sorabji Shapurji, Mr. Randeria and Mr. Nadirsha Cama. The suggestion was received by the meeting with great enthusiasm. Of the other delegates, Mr. Anglia alone was present. He also, speaking as befitted the occasion, thanked Sir Muncherji for the great pains he had taken. The tale of India's woes commanded everyone's interest and provoked resentment among all.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-10-1909

[1] *Vide* Appendix "M.C.Anglia's Letter to under Secretary for Colonies".

[2] New Year

74. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD CREWE

[LONDON,]
September 18, 1909

SIR,

The following cablegrams have been received from Johannesburg; the first from the Chinese Association and the second from the British Indian Association :

1ST CABLEGRAM

JOHANNESBURG,
September 16, 1909

Eighty Chinese arrested, including Chairman. Increasingly determined passively resist utmost.

CHINESE ASSOCIATION

2ND CABLEGRAM

JOHANNESBURG,
September 16, 1909

Meeting held yesterday enthusiastic, determined continue, resolutions congratulating released, reaffirming complete confidence delegates, efforts greatly appreciated, afresh pledging their support, protesting Vernon's statement which untill Government repudiate Asiatics interpret disclosure Government policy. Request imprisoned Mohammedans special meal *Ramzan* refused.

In the humble opinion of my colleague and myself, these cablegrams show that the British Indian community, as also evidently the Chinese community, in the Transvaal are determined in their opposition. I may state that, if the number of arrests sent by the Chinese Association be not a cable mistake, it is for the first time that the Government have seen fit to arrest such a large number of the Chinese. In the course of the campaign, I cannot recall even in the Indian community, so many as eighty Indians arrested in a single place at the same time. The cablegrams, however, make it clear that the measures adopted by the Government, instead of weakening Asiatics, have nerved them.

Non-repudiation by the Government of the statement made by

Mr. Vernon, and referred to in my letter[1] of the 10th September, to the effect that it was the duty of white men to hound Asiatics out of the country, is, I am sure the Earl of Crewe will agree, somewhat unfortunate, as is also the refusal of the request of Muslim prisoners for special facilities as to their meals, for religious observance of the fasting month. I venture to draw Lord Crewe's attention to the fact that when last year I was serving imprisonment at Volksrust, I noticed that, during the fasting month, special facilities were given to my fellow prisoners who were Muslims.

Will you kindly place this letter before His Lordship?

I remain, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records : 291/142; also, from a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5082

75. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD MORLEY

[LONDON,]

September 18, 1909

SIR,

I beg to enclose herewith copy of letter[2] addressed to the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and ask you to place it before Lord Morley.

I would venture particularly to draw His Lordship's attention to the refusal of the Transvaal authorities to afford facilities to Muslim prisoners as to religious observance of the fasting month. In my humble opinion, the method adopted by the Transvaal authorities to compel submission to their will is decidedly novel in that it means an attack on the prisoners through their religion.

I remain, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

India Office Records : 3602/09; also, from a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5083

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Crewe", 10-9-1909 a Colonial Office minute of September 23 recorded that copies of this correspondence needed to be sent to the Transvaal Governor to invite his opinion on the provisions regarding treatment of Muslim prisoners.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

76. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]

September 18, 1909

MY LORD,

Mr. Hajee Habib and I cannot sufficiently thank Your Lordship for all you have done and are doing for British Indians in the Transvaal.

Reluctant as I am to trouble Your Lordship at the time of your well-earned holiday, I feel that I am in duty bound to pass on to you a copy of the letter sent to Lord Crewe[1] as also the substance of the interview with Lord Crewe.[2] I thought it better to reduce it to writing.

If Sir George Farrar's active sympathy can be enlisted, I have no doubt that, even though General Smuts may send an unfavourable reply to Lord Crewe, he will have to listen to Sir George.

If the reply from General Smuts is unfavourable, I hardly think it will be possible for Mr. Hajee Habib and me to leave for South Africa. I feel that it will be necessary to take up some public activity here before our departure.

We hope that you will have an enjoyable holiday and that you will have the rest which I am sure you well deserve.

I remain, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5084

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Crewe", 18-9-1909

[2] *Vide* "Substance of Interview with Lord Crewe", 16-9-1909

77. LONDON[1]

[After *September 18, 1909*]

CIVILIZATION OR BARBARISM?

For some days now newspapers here have been writing about food. They point out that almost all processed foods are adulterated, some of them to the extent of 33 per cent. Sometimes the adulterant is of a harmful nature. Big factories preparing items like jelly engage expert chemists who are expected to give to inferior products the appearance of quality goods. This is done through suitable methods of chemical mixing which save costs. The conclusion to be drawn is that the producers have their eyes only on profit and never care what harm they do to people. These very men then donate a part of their ill-gotten wealth to public causes and so win respect for themselves. They earn reputation as good and virtuous men. In this civilization, therefore, immorality presents itself as morality. There is no doubt that most of the processed foods rely on the use of animal fat. For instance, it is used in cleansing or polishing rice in England. This is a frightful thing, but true all the same. It offends the religious susceptibilities of both Hindus and Muslims. Therefore, the only way out is not to use anything manufactured in the West. In any case, processed foods must never be used.

BRAVE JAPANESE SOLDIER

The newspapers here have reported the death of a brave Japanese, Marquess Ito[2] , as the result of a revolver-shot by a Korean. Korea is situated near Japan. The Japanese hold power in Korea as the British do in Egypt and India, enjoying the same rights and privileges. Of course, Japan is not in Korea to oblige her. But the Koreans are known to be a weak people. Were the country to pass under the rule of the Russians or the Chinese, that would pose a threat to Japan, and so Japan herself grabbed it. The Korean people were in

[1] This was published in *Indian Opinion,* 8-1-1910, with the prefatory remarks that these paragraphs had been omitted for want of space from an earlier dispatch from London.

[2] Prince Hirobumi Ito (1841-1909); Japanese statesman and reformer; was four times Prime Minister between 1886 and 1901. He was appointed Resident General in Korea in 1905 and in 1909 became President of the Privy Council of Japan. He was assassinated during a visit to Harbin.

no way pleased with this. They have always regarded Japan with hatred. Ito had been attacked twice before this. But Japan, having once tasted Russian blood, was certainly not likely to pull out of Korea so easily. Such is always the intoxication of power. Those who wield the sword generally perish by the sword, just as expert swimmers meet their death by water. The man who fired the revolver-shot bluntly admitted that he had killed Ito because he could not bear to see Japan ruling Korea. It is said that Japan has killed nearly 12,000 Koreans to teach a lesson to the people. This episode shows that power is an ugly thing and that, having once possessed oneself of a country, it is not possible to rest in peace. Some of our young men believe that the British can be driven out of India by killing [some of them]. Even if this is possible, it is not worth doing. Some things in Japan are commendable, but her imitation of Western ways does not deserve to be admired.

Why, then, have we described Ito as a brave man? This is a different matter. He had the spirit of patriotism in him from childhood. He was born in 1841. From the earliest time that he began to understand things, he had thoughts of working for Japan's uplift. He braved many hardships in pursuit of his idea. In the war against Russia, he displayed great courage. He was thus an expert in war; also in mathema-tics, education, administration, in short, in everything. He must, there-fore, be admitted to be a brave man. In subjugating Korea, he used his courage to a wrong end. But those who fall under the spell of the Western civilization cannot help doing so. If Japan is to rule, defend and expand herself through force, she has no option but to conquer the neighbouring lands. The conclusion to be drawn from this is that those who have the real welfare of the people at heart must lead them only along the path of satyagraha.

WHITE'S VIEWS ON INDIAN AWAKENING

Mr. G. K. Chesterton is one of the great writers here. He is an Englishman of a liberal temper. Such is the perfection of his style that his writings are read by millions with great avidity. To *The Illustrated London News* of September 18 he has contributed an article on Indian awakening, which is worth studying. I too believe that what he has said is reasonable. I give below the substance of that part of it which is of special interest :[1]

[1] The translation has been collated with the original article.

When young Indians talk of independence for India, I get a feeling that they do not understand what they are talking about. I admit that they who demand *swarajya* are fine fellows; most young idealists are fine fellows. I do not doubt that many of our officials are stupid and oppressive. Most of such officials are stupid and oppressive. But when I see the actual papers and know the views of Indian nationalists, I get bored and feel dubious about them. What they want is not very Indian and not very national. They talk about Herbert Spencer's[1] philosophy and other similar matters. What is the good of the Indian national spirit if they cannot protect themselves from Herbert Spencer? I am not fond of the philosophy of Buddhism, but it is not so shallow as Spencer's philosophy. It has some noble ideals, unlike the latter. One of their papers is called *The Indian Sociologist.* Do the Indian youths want to pollute their ancient villages and poison their kindly homes by introducing Spencer's philosophy into them?

There is a great difference between a people asking for its own ancient life and a people asking for things that have been wholly invented by somebody else. There is a difference between a conquered people demanding its own institutions and the same people demanding the institutions of the conqueror. Suppose an Indian said: "I wish India had always been free from white men and all their works. Everything has its own faults and we prefer our own. Had we our own institutions, there would have been dynastic wars; but I prefer dying in battle to dying in hospital. There would have been despotism; but I prefer one king whom I hardly even see to a hundred kings regulating my diet and my children. There would have been pestilence; but I would sooner die of the plague than live like a dead man, in constant fear of the plague. There would have been religious differences dangerous to public peace; but I think religion more important than peace. Life is very short; a man must live somehow and die somewhere; the amount of bodily comfort a peasant gets under your way of living is not so much more than mine. If you do not like our way of living, we never asked you to do. Go, and leave us with it."

[1] (1820-1903); English philosopher; author of *Principles of Psychology, Synthetic Philosophy* and *Principles of Sociology*

Suppose an Indian said that, I should call him an Indian nationalist. He would be an authentic Indian, and I think it would be very hard to answer him. But the Indian nationalists whose works I have read go on saying: "Give me a ballot box. Give us power, give me the judge's wig. I have a natural right to be Prime Minister. I have a right to introduce a Budget. My soul is starved if I am excluded from the editorship of the *Daily Mail*," or words to that effect. Now this is not so difficult to answer. Even the most sympathetic person may say in reply: "What you say is very fine, my good Indian, but it is we who invented all these things. If they are so good as you make out, you owe it to us that you have ever heard of them. If they are indeed natural rights, you would never even have thought of your natural rights but for us." If voting is such a very important thing (which I am inclined rather to doubt myself) then, certainly we have some of the authority that belongs to founders. When Indians take a haughty tone in demanding a vote, I imagine to myself the situation reversed. It seems to me very much as if I were to go into Tibet and demand of the Lama that I should be treated as a Mahatma. The Lama would in that case reply : "Our religion is either true or false; it is either worth having or not worth having. If you know better than we do, you do not want our religion. But if you think that our way of life is good, please remember that it is we who discovered and studied it, and we know whether a man is a Mahatma or not. If you want one of our peculiar privileges, you must accept our peculiar discipline and pass our peculiar standards, to get it."

Perhaps you think that in writing this I am opposing Indian nationalism. But that will be a mistake; I am only letting my mind play round the subject. This is desirable when there is a con-flict between two complete civilizations. I also admit the existence of natural rights. The right of a people to express itself, to be itself in action, is a genuine right. Indians have a right to be and to live as Indians. But Herbert Spencer is not Indian; his philosophy is not Indian philosophy; all this clatter about the science of education and other things is not Indian. I often wish it were not English either . But this is our first difficulty, that the Indian nationalist is not national.

Indians must reflect over these views of Mr. Chesterton and

consider what they should rightly demand. What is the way to make the Indian people happy? May it not be that we seek to advance our own interests in the name of the Indian people? Or, that we have been endeavouring to destroy what the Indian people have carefully nurtured through thousands of years? I, for one, was led by Mr. Chesterton's article to all these reflections and I place them before readers of *Indian Opinion*.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-1-1910

78. LETTER TO UNDER SECRETARY FOR COLONIES[1]

[LONDON,]
September 20, 1909

SIR,

A letter was received addressed to my colleague, Mr. Amod Bayat, in his absence, from the Natal Immigration Restriction Department in connection with his application for a temporary visiting pass for a priest to take charge of the Mosque in Pietermaritzburg and of a Madressa. This application was made on behalf of and in the name of the whole of the Mohammedan congregation in Pietermaritzburg I beg to enclose herewith copy of the letter above referred to.

I venture to think that the Earl of Crewe will be able to enter into the feelings of British Indian Mohammedans who, for the purpose of earning an honest livelihood, have settled in that Colony. My colleagues and I consider the letter of the Immigration Restriction Department to be highly offensive to our feelings as men, as British subjects and last but not least, as Mohammedans. A special assurance was given to the Immigration Officer that this priest was required solely for religious purposes and that he would not in any way compete in trade or any other business.

[1] Though the letter bears the signature of M. C. Anglia, there is evidence that the draft was Gandhiji's. In his letter of October 14, 1909, Polak wrote : "Your letter (through one of the Natal delegates) re: the PM Burg Moulvi is strong and excellent—but pardon me if I say the construction is wretched. They say lawyers write bad grammar. I hope I don't catch the complaint from you! I am appending the letter to my forthcoming book. It seems to be intended for publication, and no secrets are divulged . . . " Polak reproduced the letter as Appendix D to his pamphlet : *A Tregedy of Empire*. *Vide* also "Letter to Ameer Ali", 27-9-1909.

That the community should have to make Herculean efforts to have a simple application like the above granted, and that it should be granted in a manner so offensive to it, and that in a matter in no way touching the economic policy of the Colony, only shows under what trying, humiliating and difficult circumstances British Indians have to exist in Natal. Why a visiting pass should be granted for only a quarter, renewable quarterly and should carry with it a penalty of twenty shillings each time that it is renewed, passes comprehension. A policy such as this, in the humble opinion of the deputation, can only be considered as wantonly cruel. It puts an undue strain upon the patience of the Indian community and, whilst the deputation is still here, I venture to request very serious and earnest consideration by the Earl of Crewe of the anomalous position British Indians occupy in Natal. We consider that a position such as this, intolerable as it is, cannot and ought not to be prolonged with safety to the Empire to which it has hitherto been the pride of British Indians to belong. We would be unjust to ourselves, to the trust that is reposed in us by the community and to the Empire, if we did not assure His Lordship that the humiliating treatment in Natal is corroding the hearts of British Indians, and it is difficult for us to imagine all the consequences that may follow, when it has reached, as it may any day reach, the breaking point. I have written with the approval of my co-delegates somewhat strongly, but on more strongly than the occasion requires.

I have, etc.,

M. C. ANGLIA

Colonial Office Records : 179/255

79. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD CREWE

[LONDON,]
September 23, 1909

SIR,

May I know whether any reply has been received from General Smuts to the cablegram[1] that Mr. Hajee Habib and I understood the Earl of Crewe was to have sent him in connection with the negotiations that are going on for a settlement of the British Indian difficulty in the Transvaal?[2]

I have, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records : 291/142

80. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

[LONDON,]
September 23, 1909

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have your comparatively short letter. I sent the copy of the cablegram received from Johannesburg last week, regarding the refusal of the authorities to give facilities for the *Ramzan* month.

The enclosed is a copy of the cable sent by the London branch of the All-India Moslem League to the Central League there.[3] I hope that you are carrying on a correspondence with the Central League from Bombay. I quite agree with you that the cancellation of the

[1] Lord Crewe had promised to cable to General Smuts the result of his interview with Gandhiji and Hajee Habib and press upon him acceptance of the amendment submitted by Gandhiji through Lord Ampthill; *vide* "Substance of Interview with Lord Crewe", 16-9-1909; and Appendix "Lord Crewe's Minute".

[2] To this Gandhiji received a reply from the Colonial Office on October 4, that, ". . . there is no prospect of his being able to give you any further information for the present with regard to the negotiations respecting the British Indian question in the Transvaal. The Colonial Government must first decide, with the information before them, as to your attitude after your interview with His Lordship on the 16th ultimo, whether they are prepared to introduce legislation on the lines proposed by Mr. Smuts."

[3] This read: "Indian deputation received cablegram Transvaal Mahomedan passive resistance prisoners not allowed facilities *Ramzan.* Advise instant action."

meeting was a splendid advertisement for the movement, and an equally good advertisement of the folly of the authorities.[1]

The attack by *The Advocate of India* is simply stupid.[2] It can hurt nobody but the paper and the writer. If Mr. Wadia has dealt with it, well and good. If he has not, I do not think that it matters. In the two packets of cuttings, you will be surprised to learn that the cutting containing this attack was not to be found. I suppose Kaliandas, or whoever made the cuttings, must have considered that the paragraph was too contemptible even to be seen by us here.

I have not yet heard from Lord Crewe. I am sending a reminder.[3]

I can understand my letters to you being opened, but that Millie's letters to you are deliberately opened, passes my comprehension. Let us hope they are all the wiser for having read the letters, and also that they have learnt the meaning of wifely devotion. Her letters must have been quite an education for them.[3]

I am not likely to leave here—unless Smuts' reply is favourable—for yet a month. Mr. Meyer is now here. I have asked him for an appointment. Unless a dissolution comes soon, the season now is favourable for public activity.

I do not think I have told you that I am coming in touch with all the Indian ladies I can, and get from them letters in Gujarati addressed

[1] In his letter of September 4, Polak wrote: "The cancelled meeting has done much good to the cause. It has focussed attention on the Transvaal, brought round a number of half-hearted people, cleared the ground generally and brought over Sir P. M. He is now working enthusiastically. The meeting, which promises to be a greater success than ever, will be held after all, at the Town Hall, on the 14th. The Government have blundered through ignorance, but the Sheriff through stupidity. The whole story is one of blundering misunderstanding. The Government now realise their folly and the Sheriff's, and have tendered an apology (imagine it!) and let us have the Town Hall."

[2] In regard to this, Polak had written to Gandhiji on September 4, "Mr. Gokhale has cleared up a misunderstanding in the Governor's mind about myself. You will see it voiced in the personal attack on me by Gordon in *The Advocate of India.* It is particularly unfair as I had a personal letter to him from the G(eneral) M(anager) of Reuters. I hear that he is a most objectionable cad (Gordon, I mean) and I think H. A. Wadia will reply. I can't. " Gandhiji addressed a rejoinder to the paper; *vide* "Letter to *The Advocate of India*",28-9-1909

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

[4] Polak's comment on this, in his letter of October 14, was: "You take the opening of Millie's letters more philosophically than she and I do. I see that your days of writing love-letters are over! I am sorry for you! I haven't yet authorised Millie to start classes in marital devotion!"

to the Editor of *Indian Opinion*, encouraging the movement and applauding the devotion of the Indian women. You told me you were going to address a meeting of Indian women. You should get as many letters as you can from them. There is no reason why you should not get letters in English also. I have been getting them in Gujarati from Gujarati women, as I am anxious they should not disregard their mother tongue. One is from Mrs. Dube,[1] a most charming Hindustani lady, who has lived[2] in Bombay and can therefore read and write Gujarati. The other is from Mrs. K. C. Dinshaw,[3] who was for some time in Durban, and who is now travelling in Europe with her husband. You should get a letter from Mrs. Petit, Mrs. Ranade and others. Miss Winterbottom has returned from her holiday. I have suggested a letter of sympathy from English women,[4] and that they should also put down some small sub-scription for the relief of the suffering wives and daughters of passive resisters. I would suggest the same kind of thing over there. It is not the amount on which I should lay stress, but the fact of every cultured Indian woman having given even a pice for their sisters in the Transvaal, and I should obtain for it the widest publicity in India. There is no reason, too, why there should not be a women's meeting, only passing resolutions.[5]

I have been thinking of having a prize essay here on passive resistance, and a similar essay from India, along the lines of what we had in Johannesburg. I proposed to Dr. Mehta that he should give the prizes. He has considered it and he is willing to give them. I shall draw up the syllabus and send you a copy, but that will be next week. In the meanwhile, you may consider the following questions:

[1] A letter from Ram Kumari Dube appeared in *Indian Opinion,* 11-9-1909.

[2] The original has "oved", an obvious typing error.

[3] A letter from Khurshedbai Kekobad Cawasji Dinshaw appeared in *Indian Opinion,* 23-10-1909.

[4] A letter from Miss Florence Winterbottom was published in *Indian Opinion,* 25-12-1909, under the heading: "Message to the Wives of Passive Resisters". Another letter from Hilda Margaret Howsin was published in the issue of 11-12-1909, under the heading: "An English Women's Letter to the Wives of Passive Resisters".

[5] Polak wrote back: "I am glad you are in touch with the Indian ladies in London. I am trying to get a poem from Mrs. Sarojini Naidoo, through Natesan. Mrs. Ranade's ladies have passed a resolution of sympathy with the Transvaal women and it will be forwarded shortly. One or two of them will write at stated intervals for *I[ndian] O[pinion].* Mrs. Petit will send a letter with pleasure and I shall ask her to get others to write. The Seva Sadan, a ladies' organisation, have sent Rs. 50 to the Transvaal for the support of the women and they will send a further donation. It was not advisable to pass a resolution at the Bombay women's meeting as the wives of several officers were taking part."

1. Who should be the Judge or Judges for India.?
2. In whose name should the prize be offered?

The subject will have to be a little delicately handled, as it is evident that the people there, strange as it would appear, do not understand passive resistance at all, and any essay that we may have there to be worth anything must contain an examination of the bearing of passive resistance on public movements in India. You may discuss it with Professor Gokhale and others. The amount to be offered may be £50 on this side and £50 on yours, so that we should be able to attract good writers on either side. I am going to consult Mr. Meyer, Dr. Clifford and others. This prize essay, if any public activity has to be taken up here, will widely advertize the Transvaal cause.[1]

Of the Natal friends, Mr. H. M. Badat has left for Paris. His ultimate goal is Mecca.

I take it that Messrs Omar and Issa Hajee Soomar are still with you.

I have your cablegram with reference to the Surat meeting. I take it that the others have also come off well, and I assume, too, that all your resolutions are being forwarded to the Viceroy of India.

Dr. Mehta is here and will be for a few days. He leaves for Paris on Sunday and he sails from Marseilles for Rangoon on the 1st, reaching Rangoon on the 23rd October. Wherever you are, I think it will be better to go to Rangoon, after corresponding with Dr. Mehta. He will not be able to write to you before hearing from you, as he will not know your address. He thinks that it will be a good idea for you to go to Rangoon. A meeting can be held there, but in any case I am anxious that you should meet him and—he you. If Mr. Omar goes with you, it will be ever so much better. There are many public-spirited Memons and Suraties, and, of course, you will see our friend Mr. Madanjit[2] , and you will see there the freest women on earth.[3] From Calcutta it is three days, from Madras four days, so that you

[1] About this Polak wanted to consult Gokhale. He wondered if Prof. Bhandarkar would act as judge.

[2] Madanjit Vyavaharik, a co-worker of Gandhiji. He set up the International Printing Press in Durban, in 1898, at Gandhiji's suggestion and with his help started *Indian Opinion* in 1903, which Gandhiji took over in 1904. *Vide* "Letter to Madanjit", 3-6-1902.

[3] Polak's rejoinder to this was: "I am looking forward to 'seeing the freest women on earth'. I shall discuss them afterwards with Millie, as I did briefly yesterday at Adyar with Leadbeater. I shall try to go over to Malabar before I leave here, in order to see the Nair women, who, I am told, take one husband after another. That beats you all who take one wife after another ! I am inclined to think the women are right!"

may go to Rangoon from wherever you are. I do not think you could give more than a week to Rangoon, but if you are pressed for time, you may give less. Dr. Mehta's address is 14, Mogul Street, Rangoon.

Mr. Thaker suggests that we are so poor that we should save the guinea for the London letter,[1] and stop it at least for the time being. I feel like him and with him, and seeing that today the paper is being used for passive resistance principally, will it not be wise to stop it? Please let me have your opinion per return.[2]

The news from Phoenix with reference to West and Miss West was much more reassuring last week. Both are entirely out of danger.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5091

81. LONDON

[Before *September 25, 1909*]

NATAL DEPUTATION

There is nothing more to report about the activities of this deputation. Correspondence is going on. There was an interview with Mr. Justice Ameer Ali. He attaches great importance to the question of stopping the import of indentured labour. He has promised every help. A clergyman, Dr. Garnett by name, has also been coming to see [the delegates].

Mr. Badat has left for Paris this week. From there, it has been decided, he will proceed to Istanbul and further on to Jedda, and then to holy Mecca.

INDIAN'S BRAINS

There is a report in the *Daily News* here that a Parsi gentleman has made a discovery which will act as a severe check on forgery. According to the report, its efficacy will be publicly demonstrated in a few days.

ZANZIBAR INDIANS

A public meeting was held in Zanzibar in connection with the difficulties experienced by the Indians there. Cables were then

[1] *Indian Opinion* published a weekly dispatch from London by *Observer*.

[2] Polak replied : "I don't like the idea of stopping the London letter. It is the only non-p[assive] r[esistance] thing in the paper, keeping us in touch with the outside world. But do as you like. You are on the spot, and can discuss with Miss Smith."

received here. A cable was received by Sir Henry Cotton, which has been published in *India*. A question was also asked in the House of Commons regarding this. In reply, it was stated that Lord Crewe would make an inquiry after the petition mentioned in the cable was received. I hope the Zanzibar Indian Association has sent the petition. If not, it should do so immediately.

LORD KITCHENER'S OPPOSITION TO LORD CURZON

"Who indeed can put out a fire raging in the sea?" Such is the state of affairs between Lord Curzon and Lord Kitchener. Someone has discovered a speech by Lord Kitchener in the same strain, and nearly in the same words, as Lord Curzon's when he left India. Everyone concludes from this that Lord Kitchener has plagiarized Lord Curzon's ideas. The matter has given rise to much discussion in newspapers. If the so-called great men appropriate what does not belong to them, what else can we expect from smaller folk?

SUFFRAGETTES

The suffragettes are giving way to impatience. Some of them made an unjustifiable attack on the Prime Minister, and were arrested. They were prosecuted and sentenced. In gaol they went on hunger strike. They had hoped thereby that they would be released. But the authorities have outwitted them and resorted to forcible feeding. Indian satyagrahis must realize from this that the women are not satyagrahis, but are resort-ing to physical force. For a certainty, they will suffer a set-back now.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-10-1909

82. DEPUTATION NOTES [–XIII]

[Before *September 25, 1909*]

There has been no further reply from Lord Crewe so far. The probability is that his reply will be unsatisfactory. There is no reason to believe that General Smuts will hurry to reply that he accepts Lord Crewe's advice. But of this I am sure, that, if General Smuts does not accept the suggestion, the fault will be entirely ours. I am not in a position to write anything more this week.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-10-1909

83. CABLE TO BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

[LONDON,]

September 27, 1909

TO

BIAS

JOHANNESBURG

HAJI HABIB RECEIVED CABLE RETURN IMMEDIATELY. INQUIRE FULLY HIS PEOPLE REPLY.

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand : S. N. 5098 (2)

84. LETTER TO AMEER ALI

[LONDON,]

DEAR MR. AMEER ALI,

I thank you for your letter[1]. I have now made a fair copy of the draft letter sent by you, and it will be signed in the course of the day. Mr. Anglia will bring it to you tomorrow at the time appointed by you.

The facts of the case referred to in the letter[2] addressed to the Under-Secretary, are briefly as follows :

[1] Dated September 26, it read : "Thanks for the drafts. Will you kindly send me by return post full particulars of the case you refer to in your letter to the Colonial Under Secretary? . . . It will give me much pleasure if Mr. Anglia will come round to the Reform Club on Tuesday at 3.30 P.M. I am returning one of the drafts. Will you kindly get it typed and afterwards signed by the delegates and then send it to me?" The letter, however, is not available.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Under Secretary for Colonies", 20-9-1909.

A Moulvi was required for the Mosque in Pietermaritzburg, the capital of Natal. The Maulvi was to combine also the work of a Madressa teacher. This Moulvi was to replace the retiring one. According to the law of Natal, an intending immigrant must have a knowledge of one of the European languages. This Moulvi did not possess such a knowledge. The congregation of the Mosques, therefore, applied to the Government to grant to the Moulvi not the right of immigration, that is, permanent residence, but a certificate enabling him to reside in the Colony for three years. The applicants undertook to give security that the Moulvi, during his residence in Natal, would not carry on any commercial business and that the would leave Natal at the end of the period. After a great deal of waiting, the Government replied that they would grant permission on condition that the certificate was renewed every three months, and that each renewal bore a stamp fee of £1.

Mr. Anglia will show you the letter in question, and you will see from its tenor how insulting it is. In my opinion, we as self-respecting men cannot accept the offensive terms. The stipulation as to quarterly renewals bearing a fee of £1 is, in my opinion, an impudent exaction.

I remain, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S.N. 5096

85. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[LONDON,]
September 27, 1909

CHI. MANILAL,

I have received your letter.

You got nervous at the question, "What are you going to do?" If I were to answer on your behalf, I would say that you are going to do your duty. Your present duty is to serve your parents, to study as much as you can get the opportunity to do and to work in the fields. You need not worry about the future; your parents are doing that for you. You will take it upon yourself when they will be no more. You must be definite on this point at least—that you are not going to practise law or medicine. We are poor and want to remain so. Money is required only for maintenance. He who works with his hands and feet gets his livelihood. Our mission is to elevate Phoenix; for through it we can find our soul and serve our country. Be sure that I

am always thinking of you. The true occupation of man is to build his character. It is not quite necessary to learn something special for earning [one's livelihood]. He who does not leave the path of morality never starves, and is not afraid if such a contingency arises. Give up all worry; do whatever study you can there. While writing this I feel like meeting and embracing you; and tears come to my eyes as I am unable to do that. Be sure that Bapu will not be cruel to you. Whatever I do, I do it because I think it to be in your interest. You will never come to grief, for you are doing service to others.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand : C. W. 90

Courtesy : Sushilabehn Gandhi

86. LETTER TO "THE ADVOCATE OF INDIA"[1]

[LONDON,]
September 28, 1909

TO
THE EDITOR
THE ADVOCATE OF INDIA
[BOMBAY]

SIR,

Your footnote in the issue of the 9th instant to the letter of Mr. Jehangir Bomanjee Petit, regretting among other things your description of Mr. Henry S. L. Polak as a paid agent, encourages me to address this letter to you.

You say, "We have alluded to Mr. Polak as a paid agent and we

[1] The letter was apparently not published in *The Advocats of India*. J. B. Petit, however, had it published in the columns of *Gujarati*, 7-11-1909, under the caption "*The Advocate of India* and Mr. Polak", along with the following covering letter : "You will remember that some weeks ago *The Advocate of India* sought to discredit Mr. Polak's activity in this country on behalf of our suffering brethren in the Transvaal by representing him as a near 'paid agent'. On Mr. Polak protesting, the Editor made a half-hearted retraction, but he had neither the grace nor the candour to withdraw the imputation unreservedly. The unworthy attack having attracted Mr. Gandhi's attention, Mr. Gandhi addressed to the Editor the following letter on the 28th September. It is now nearly a fortnight since that letter must have been received in Bombay, but it is not yet published. . . Will you kindly publish this letter in your columns? Your contemporary's conduct in withholding the letter is in keeping with the rest of his behaviour in this not very creditable affair."

have said we think none the worse of him for that. If, however, that gentleman looks upon this as affecting his status and he can assure we are wrong, we are prepared to apologize to him". I hope that what follows will assure you that you are wrong and that you will apologize to the British Indians of the Transvaal, whom Mr. Polak represents, for the latter requires no apology. The wrong if any has been done, has been done to those whom he represents.

You say that you think none the worse of Mr. Polak even though he may be a paid agent, and yet the tone of your leading article, which I have read and re-read is undoubtedly calculated materially to discount Mr. Polak's efforts. I know him personally as a dear friend and brother. He came to the cause, embraced poverty and left the Assistant Editorship of a Johannesburg weekly, which might ultimately have proved much to him, if he had desired the goods of this world. For over four years he received not a farthing from the funds of the British Indian community because he needed nothing. During all that time he was working for the community.

The struggle in the Transvaal has meant for Mr. Polak, as it has meant for many Indians, the deprivation of even the means or rather the opportunity of earning a livelihood. Since then, Mr. Polak, who gives every minute of his time to the struggle, has received enough for his bread and butter from the common funds, and if I know him at all, if the community have not sufficient funds to feed its workers, Mr. Polak would remain at his post, and, if need be, perish in the attempt to obtain justice for those whose cause, in common with many others, he espouses.

You do not know, nor do the Bombay public, that ever since his marriage, Mr. Polak has given very little of his time to his wife who, in order the better to enable her husband to perform his self-imposed duty, has reconciled herself to a life of almost indefinitely prolonged separation.

I imagine that the term "paid agent" means an agent who names a price adequate to the work he does, and does the work well enough no doubt, in many cases, but does it nevertheless for the money he receives and not for the love of it. If a son in a joint family dying in the performance of his sonship may be described as a paid agent, because he is clothed and fed out of the family funds, then Mr. Polak is undoubtedly a paid agent, but not until then.

If, after a knowledge of the facts I have ventured to place before

you, you will still consider Mr. Polak as a paid agent, I am afraid that his co-delegates, who might have been with him if they had not been imprisoned before their departure by General Smuts, must be described as "paid agents" because their passage and hotel expenses would have been found by the Indian community.

I trust that, in fairness, you will be good enough to find room for this letter.

I am, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S.N. 5099

87. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD CREWE

[LONDON,]
September 29, 1909

SIR,

Mr. Polak cables from Kathore[1] to the effect that the following cablegram has been addressed by the President of a mass meeting held at Kathore on the 23rd instant to the authorities :

> Kathore,[2] Kholwad[3] Ghela district inhabitants mass meeting strongly protests persecution brethren Transvaal Government. Strongly urges Imperial authority seek immediate solution, prevent cotinuance misery, remove racial insult.

He also cables that excellent meetings were held at Ahmedabad and Surat, where two resolutions urging the Imperial Government to secure relief were passed.

I should be obliged if you would kindly bring this letter to the notice of the Earl of Crewe.

I remain, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records : 291/142

[1] Villages in the former Baroda State, now in the Surat District of Gujarat. The last name should be Ghalan.

[2] *ibid*

[3] *ibid*

88. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

[LONDON,]
September 29, 1909

MY DEAR HENRY,

At last I have decided about Dr. Mehta's offer of a scholarship for Manilal, of which I wrote to you, I think, some time ago. I told you, then, that I asked Dr. Mehta to let me use this scholarship for any other person belonging to Phoenix whom I chose. He accepted my proposal, but when he made the offer, I know he made it simply because he felt that he would like to undertake the education of at least one of my sons. Today, however, he is almost as good a passive resister as you and I, and he agrees with me entirely that he should defray the cost of educating some other Phoenixite.

I decided upon Chhaganlal, and I have already written[1] to him by the outgoing mail this week. I wrote to him last week a letters[2] embodying my suggestions, but that letter was sent to Phoenix. I subsequently learned that he was to have left for India on the 15th. By the time this reaches you, he will probably, therefore, be with you. I will not go into all the reasoning that has led me to the following conclusions. After having remained with you there for some time, he should come to London, say to reach here at the latest about the end of March. He should join one of the Inns of Court. The question whether he should actually be called to the Bar or not to be decided later (the odds are that, by that time, we would not want him to be called to the Bar at all). Simultaneously with his legal studies, he should join an English class in one of the institutions here. He should, before embarking, take a definite and formal vow of poverty. He should also take the vow that he will not use the learning acquired here as a means of livelihood, the latter being always found from Phoenix and that he should dedicate his life to a realization of the Phoenix, ideals. He should stay in some vegetarian family (I am finding out information about all available vegetarian families in and about London). He should live, if necessary, in a house in one of the suburbs and there do his own cooking and everything. If he feels confidence in himself at the end of the year, we should send one or more from phoenix at a time for training in London. These will be able to live with him in house, and he having formed a desirable circle

[1] These letters are not available.
[2] *ibid*

of friends and acquaintances, those who live with him will be able to get all the advantages of English associations, without having to live in English families, where the cost will be necessarily somewhat greater than if they were living with Chhaganlal. At the same time, if it were considered desirable, they could live in one of the families for just a short time. Chhaganlal should, during his stay, seek contact with every Indian student, in fact, force himself on their attention and, after insinuating himself in their favour, should present both in his life and by conversations, the Phoenix ideals to them. His being here would enable us to pass on, from week to week, correct information as to the progress of the struggle, and he would, in some very slight degree, fill in the gap that would be left by Ritch's withdrawal. I see nobody here who is capable of replacing Ritch, but there are some who, whilst they may do nothing without a spur, would be glad enough to assist a man like Chhaganlal. If we are not committed to Chhaganlal being called to the Bar, he need not even stay in London for a full three years, he might—if the exigencies of the situation require it—leave London temporarily.

There is no fixed scholarship to be taken from Dr. Mehta; he will simply defray the whole of the expense of Chhaganlal's stay. Chhaganlal, on his part, will naturally consider himself to be a trustee for the funds he will receive, and will be living a life of almost perfect simplicity. The cost therefore will be minimised.

I have placed all this before Chhaganlal. Please let him see this letter also. If he agrees to all the suggestions I have made, it rests largely with him and somewhat with you, whether he should come here in March or earlier. It is much better that he remains with you for some time, comes in touch with the people, knows them and studies the question a little more fully. He must bring with him a fair stock of Gujarati books, some Sanskrit books, a Urdu Primer and some English books, which may not be obtainable here or which may cost a great deal. He need not stint himself as to books, because the books will be of use to the other students here. In the choice of books you should consult Dr. Mehta also. I would like Chhaganlal to give Gujarati tuition to Dr. Mehta's son, as also Hoosen[1] and any other Gujaratis who may be in London.

Of course, the above will have to be sanctioned by the people in Phoenix.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5100

[1] Son of Dawad Mahomed

89. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD MORLEY

[LONDON,]
September 30, 1909

SIR,

I beg to enclose herewith for Lord Morley's information, copy of letter addressed by me to the Private Secretary to the Earl of Crewe.[1]

I remain, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

India Office Records : 3815/09; also, from a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5103

90. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK[2]

[LONDON,]
September 30, 1909

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have written to you separately about Chhaganlal. I do not know whether you admire the man who can show patience or whether you admire the man who cannot. The sentence in the letter reads both ways.[3] Maud and Ritch read it one way, [I] the other.

I have your cablegram about the meetings in Ahmedabad, Kathore and Surat. They will all carry.

I consider the writings of *The Advocate of India* very valuable. Even cads render us a signal service . . .[4] take what Gordon has

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Crewe", 29-9-1909

[2] This letter is damaged and indistinct at some places. Where possible, words in square brackets have been supplied by conjecture on the basis of the context provided by Polak's letters to Gandhiji.

[3] This was with reference to Polak's letter of September 10, in which he wrote : "Yours is splendid patience. I envy you. I see more and more the beauty of the *Gita* teaching—act, and don't worry about results. But I see more and more how difficult it is to do this, and admire the man who can !" The letter is in Polak's hand-writing and the exclamation mark is so joined with "can" that if casually seen, it can also be read as "can't".

[4] Here a word is cut off.

written, namely, that you have [ves]ted interest in the question. The remark is by no means unjustified. He has demonstrated the absolute necessity for having there a permanent Committee, with some one like Ritch working away day and night and keeping the pot boiling. I hope you will succeed in finding such a man. Have you seen N. V. Gokhale[1] of the *Gujarati* ? I do not wish to imply that he is the likely man. I can think of no one. He will have to be a lover of his work, without many irons in the fire, and with sufficient leisure to devote his attention almost solely to the South African question.

I do not at all share your view that you are receiving an honorarium, rather than a salary. If that were the only distinction, I would agree with Gordon that it is a fine distinction. You will see how I have dealt with it in my letter to the *Advocate*, copy of which I enclose.[2] The distinction, in my opinion, is fundamental. It is the manner of giving which makes that essential distinction. To the outside world, whether it can be called an honorarium or a salary, it is matter of little concern. They will look upon every payment with suspicion, they will look upon all work with suspicion and refuse to admit that people work without selfish motives or without great consideration. Everybody in Bombay has treated [the edit]or's [views] with the contempt they deserve, and you may have done likewise.[3] Dr. Mehta who has seen your [let]ter writes to me in Gujarati, of which I gave you a translation :

> He (that is you), has been affected by the writing in *The Advocate of India*, but it is too contemptible to be noticed.

[1] He was in charge of the English section of *Gujarati*.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to *The Advocate of India*", 28-9-1909

[3] In point of fact, Polak had not; this is what he reported to Gandhiji : "Nobody takes the attack seriously, except to arouse indignation against Gordon. I sent a short reply to the latest attack. It seemed called for. It will not appear until after the mail has left. He sent me a note today asking me to call upon him. I told him what I thought about the matter—that the expression gave people to understand that I was a paid agitator. I explained to him that I was a solicitor, etc., etc., and that I received a retainer for my legal work and that my expenses as a member of the deputation were paid. I told him that what I received from public funds did not pay my expenses—Millie will bear only too willing testimony to this! I did not conceal anything from him, and he wound up by telling me that he thought that it was 'a fine distinction'. Then I let fly. Afterwards I sent him my (your) biography from *I*[*ndian*] *O*[*pinion*]. But this only shows that it will be better to call my remuneration a retainer rather than a salary. It preserves the honorary nature of the work and after all, as a salary it is utterly inadequate, whereas as a retainer, it is fair. You and I understand all about it, but people like this think it is 'a fine distinction', and can't understand disinterested work. You might pass this on to South Africa."

Where there are no selfish motives, there is no occasion for being affected by an imputation of them. Why should one be touched by unjust criticism, when one is doing one's duty? On the contrary, one ought to know that such unjust criticism is due to ignorance on the part of the critic. When a public worker has no money of his own, it is the duty of those who have it to see to it that such a worker is properly maintained. Certainly, the arrangements made in South Africa about him (you) ought to have been made.

I am giving you a translation of Dr. Mehta's remarks, because he is such a sober man with an exceedingly balanced mind, and also because of the reasons you know, I want you to come in as close touch as possible with him.

I am writing to Mr. Petit also this week. Copy of the letter[1] to him herewith.

Among the cuttings received, I miss the verses com[posed about] you.[2] I have seen the translation you sent to me, [I want] to see the original. Nor have I received the [Pateti Number] of *Sanj Vartman*[3] .

[I am] delighted that you were able to see the G.O.M. Your [lines] are most pathetic.[4] I see too that you are now beginning to look beneath the bright surface that presented itself to you on your reaching Bombay.

[1] This letter is not available.

[2] On September 9, Polak had attended a meeting of the Indian Music Society where he was presented with a composition about himself.

[3] A Gujarati evening daily of Bombay. The issue carried Polak's photo and a special article by him.

[4] Polak had written : "On Saturday afternoon, his birthday, I saw the G.O.M. It was a touching spectacle to see the little old warrior taking his rest, prior to the final plunge. He was sitting in an armchair, when we arrived, looking out to sea. He welcomed us simply, thanking me earnestly for my work. I blushed to think of his thanking me when *he* had done so much for which he had received no thanks. He asked me to thank you for sending him *Indian opinion,* which he read regularly. He also desired me to tell you how much he admired your persistence and perseverance, and how right he thought you were. We did not remain long. He complained of mental and physical fatigue. He was 'simply living on'—it was all that there was left for him to do. He has, however, sent a letter to the Mass Meeting. When we left, the last we saw of him was sitting once more in his armchair, peacefully looking into the West again, gazing out to sea, as who should look for the soothing hand of Death. It was beautiful—but I felt humbled and subdued. As Mr. Gokhale says, when one goes to see Dadabhai, one performs a pilgrimage ·85 ! He may not last out another year. He is very frail."

I hope when Chhaganlal is with you, for his own sake you will use him mercilessly, and let him see and learn all there is to be seen and learnt. If the people do not realise thoroughly the spirit of passive resistance, I know that you will make at least the leaders see it. Dr. Mehta is most anxious that Mr. Gokhale should see the heart of it. I hope that Mr. Omar will travel with you wherever you go, but if Mr. Hajee Mohamed and others would travel also with you at their own expense, you should invite them to do so. Your mission will carry greater weight. Has anyone from there been sending detailed accounts in Gujarati for *Indian Opinion* ? If this has not been done, please attend to it. We have to prepare for a prolonged struggle, and it is for that reason that I am going into these details. If you find a thoroughly earnest man or men who want to give themselves entirely to public work, but on the principle mentioned by Dr. Mehta, if they need to be supported, you will recollect we have already discussed that we could consider the proposition.

There is no news yet from Lord Crewe. I am doing my best to speed him on, but the work is necessarily slow. I have seen Mr. Meyer and Dr. Clifford. Mr. Meyer was very good and he says that, if the reply from Lord Crewe is not satisfactory, he would call together influential men and take the necessary steps.[1] I send you a draft syllabus[2] for the competitors for the prize. Dr. Mehta's name is not to be mentioned as the prize giver. Dr. Clifford will be one of [the] judges. I am to see the edi-tor of *The British Weekly* and be guided by him in finally shaping the syllabus and discuss with him as to the best method of inviting competitors.

I am due to speak to the members of the Emerson Club on "Passive Resistance" on the 8th proximo and may speak at Hampstead Peace and Arbitration Society on the 13th or 14th proximo.[3] Both these meetings will deal with the struggle indirectly. It will be on the same lines as the Ger[miston] meeting.[4]

Please correspond with Dr. Mehta most regularly.

I think I told you last week that Dr. Mehta examined Millie.

[1] Rev. F. B. Meyer later arranged a meeting on November 12.

[2] This paper, setting down conditions for the essay on "Ethics of Passive Resistance", is not available.

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Emerson Club", 8-10-1909 and "Speech at Hampstead", 13-10-1909

[4] *Vide* "Speech at Germiston", 7-6-1909

Dr. Mehta thinks that there is nothing wrong so far as the chest is concerned. From his diagnosis after talking with Millie, he did not consider it necessary even to use the stethoscope. He said that the stethoscope could tell him no more. He thought that it was a . . .[1] ing and probably some irritation in the throat. . .[2] belief I have held now for a long time, and I suggested earth bandages for the throat some time ago. I have made my suggestion and I think he will now have these applied to the throat. Anyhow there is not the slightest danger. Can you secure a special portrait of the G.O.M. for the *Indian Opinion*? If one is available, well and good, or I hope he will exert himself to give a special sitting for the portrait. You may also collect portraits with photographs of those leaders whom you may consider to be good and really patriotic. You do not mention having seen Professor Velinkar.

Mr. Ali Imam of the All-India Moslem League is at present here. I have had a brief conversation with him. He appealed to me as a very nice man; he is quite informal. He is the leader of the Bar in Patna and a broad-minded man. A dinner is being given today to him; I send you a copy of the notices that were issued. He will be leaving in a fortnight's time for India. He has come here to put his sons at Oxford and, being here, he has been naturally seeing Lord Morley and others specially in connection with the Mahomedan representation. Will you please watch the papers and, as soon as he comes, then place yourself in communi-cation with him. He will be of very great assistance.

From the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5102

91. LETTER TO LEO TOLSTOY

LONDON,
October 1, 1909

SIR,

I take the liberty of inviting your attention to what has been going on in the Transvaal (South Africa) for nearly three years.

There is in that Colony a British Indian population of nearly 13,000. These Indians have, for several years, laboured under various legal disabilities. The prejudice against colour and in some respects

[1] Some words are missing here.
[2] *ibid*

against Asiatics is intense in that Colony. It is largely due, so far as Asiatics are concerned, to trade jealousy. The climax was reached three years ago, with a law[1] which I and many others considered to be degrad-ing and calculated to unman those to whom it was applicable. I felt that submission to a law of this nature was inconsistent with the spirit of true religion. I and some of my friends were and still are firm believers in the doctrine of non-resistance to evil. I had the privilege of studying your writings also, which left a deep impression on my mind. British Indians, before whom the position was fully explained, accepted the advice that we should not submit to the legislation, but that we should suffer imprisonment, or whatever other penalties the law may impose for its breach. The result has been that nearly one-half of the Indian popula-tion, that was unable to stand the heat of the struggle, to suffer the hard-ships of imprisonment, have withdrawn from the Transvaal rather than submit to [the] law which they have considered degrading. Of the other half, nearly 2,500 have for conscience's sake allowed themselves to be imprisoned, some as many as five times. The imprisonments have varied from four days to six months, in the majority of cases with hard labour. Many have been financially ruined. At present there are over a hundred passive resisters in the Transvaal gaols. Some of these have been very poor men, earning their livelihood from day to day. The result has been that their wives and children have had to be supported out of public con-tributions, also largely raised from passive resisters. This has put a severe strain upon British Indians, but, in my opinion, they have risen to the occasion. The struggle still-continues and one does not know when the end will come. This, however, some of us at least have seen most clearly, that passive resistance will and can succeed where brute force must fail. We also notice that, in so far as the struggle has been prolong-ed, it has been due largely to our weakness and, hence, to a belief having been engendered in the mind of the Government that we would not be able to stand continued suffering.

Together with a friend, I have come here to see the Imperial authorities and to place before them the position, with a view to seeking redress. Passive resisters have recognized that they should have nothing to do with pleading with the Government, but the deputation has come at the instance of the weaker members of the community, and it therefore represents their weakness rather than

[1] The Transvaal Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance.

their strength.

But, in the course of my observation here, I have felt that if a gene-ral competition for an eassy on the Ethics and Efficacy of Passive Resis-tance were invited, it would popularise the movement and make people think. A friend has raised the question of morality in connexion with the proposed competition. He thinks that such an invitation would be incon-sistent with the true spirit of passive resistance and that it would amount to buying opinion. May I ask you to favour me with your opinion on the subject of morality? And if you consider that there is nothing wrong in inviting contributions, I would ask you also to give me the names of those whom I should specially approach to write upon the subject.

There is one thing more with reference to which I would trespass upon your time. A copy of your letter addressed to a Hindu[1] on the present unrest in India has been placed in my hands by a friend. On the face of it, it appears to represent your views. It is the intention of my friend, at his own expense, to have 20,000 copies printed and distributed and to have it translated also. We have, however, not been able to secure the original, and we do not feel justified in printing it, unless we are sure of the accuracy of the copy and of the fact that it is your letter. I venture to enclose herewith a copy of the copy, and should esteem it a favour if you kindly let me know whether it is your letter, whether it is an accurate copy and whether you approve of its publication in the above manner. If you will add anything further to the letter, please do so. I would also venture to make a suggestion. In the concluding paragraph you seem to dissuade the reader from a belief in re-incarnation. I do not know whether (if it is not impertinent on my part to mention this) you have specially studied the question. Re-incarnation or transmigration is a cherished be-lief with millions in India, indeed, in China also. With many, one might almost say, it is a matter of experience, no longer a matter of academic acceptance. It explains reasonably the many mysteries of life. With some of the passive resisters who have gone through the gaols of the Trans-vaal, it has been their solace. My object in writing this is not to convin-ce you of the truth of the

[1] This was in reply to a letter addressed to Tolstoy by the editors of an underground journal named *Free Hindustan*, issued from Vancouver. Its chief editor was Tarak Nath Das. Tolstoy's letter was publised in *Indian Opinion*, 25-12-1909 and 1-1-1910, with a preface by Gandhiji. A Gujarati translation by him was also published, first, in *Indian Opinion* and, later, in the form of a book.

doctrine, but to ask you if you will please remove the word "re-incarnation" from the other things you have dissuad-ed your reader from.[1] In the letter in question, you have quoted largely from *Krishna*[2] and given reference to passages. I should thank you to give me the title of the book from which the quotations have been made.

I have wearied you with this letter. I am aware that those who honour you and endeavour to follow you have no right to trespass upon your time, but it is rather their duty to refrain from giving you trouble, so far as possible. I have, however, who am an utter stranger to you, taken the liberty of addressing this communication in the interests of truth, and in order to have your advice on problems the solution of which you have made your life-work.[3]

With respects,

I remain, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

[COUNT LEO TOLSTOY
YASNAYA POLYANA
RUSSIA]

Tolstoy and Gandhi

92. LONDON

[After *October 1, 1909*]

NATAL DEPUTATION

There is no further information to give, for the present at least, about the activities of this deputation. There has been no reply so far to the latest letter to Lord Crewe. It is quite possible that there will be none. Mr. Ali Imam has promised to help. The deputation had asked for a permit for the entry of a Moulvi to serve in the mosque at Maritzburg. The Natal Government has sent a reply to the request, against which a strong protest has been addressed to Lord Crewe. The Natal Government has replied to Mr. Amod Bhayat that they will issue a permit for the Moulvi which will be renewable every three months, a fee of £1 being payable at every renewal. This means paying an

[1] Tolstoy agreed to this.

[2] A booklet written in 1904 by a Bengali saint, Baba Premananda Bharati, then resident in California

[3] Tolstoy replied to this letter on October 7; *vide* Appendix "Tolstoy's Letter to Gandhiji".

annual tax of £4. The deputation, writing about this letter to Lord Crewe, has pointed out to him that the reply is an open insult and an offence to the community. How can the community possibly invite a Moulvi on such conditions? The matter has also been taken up by the Muslim League. Personally, I hope that the community will resort to satyagraha rather than submit to such wanton tyranny. First, a Moulvi must enter the Colony after giving due notice. If imprisonment follows, he must accept it. If deported, that, too, he must accept and then raise the banner in India. A satyagrahi must be afraid neither of imprisonment nor of deportation. He must neither mind even being reduced to poverty, nor be frightened, if it comes to that, of being mashed into pulp with a mortar and pestle. A satyagrahi will shine the brighter and grow the more courageous the more he is crushed. Then alone he deserves to be called a satyagrahi. The reply about the Moulvi is an attack on religion; so it appears to me at least. It only means that we are to be denied even religious facilities, so that we may ultimately leave the country is sheer desperation. If the Indians have any spirit in them, they will not leave the country and will follow their respective religious practices in every detail. We will not submit to any injustice that the Government may choose to inflict on us in its intoxication of power. Satyagraha is the only straightforward and simple method of fighting patent injustice, the one that will ensure the quickest redress.

SUFFRAGETTES

The suffragette movement has again come into prominence. I wrote earlier that some of the women had crossed the limit of propriety. They not only stoned the Prime Minister's car, but also attacked the guards. They had armed themselves [for the purpose]. There is no doubt of the women's courage, but they have used their courage to a wrong end. They are, it seems, serving notice that, should they be denied the franchise, they will resort to stone-throwing, or will go even further and commit arson or murder. If everyone does the same, that will simply mean that, whenever any claim to a right, legitimate or otherwise, is denied, even a murder can be justified. This will be the undoing of nations. These ladies are no longer prepared to submit to any suffering. They went on a hunger-strike with the intention of securing their immediate release.The Government has now resorted to forcible feeding. Food is passed through a tube inserted into the stomach. If the women resort to physical force, they will necessarily invite similar force against them. That will mean, in the end, that England will no longer be a land

worth living in. If these same ladies were to adhere to pure satyagraha, there would be no trouble of any kind. Maybe there will be some delay in their winning the franchise, but the whole social fabric will not be endangered through their activities. If they have been in the wrong, they are bound to suffer. As they have resorted to unruly methods, quite a few women have also turned against them. One of the letter has even gone to the length of saying that, if the franchise is to be won through murders and violence, she does not want it. The suffragettes argue that the present law-makers have grown to be an unscrupulous lot. If the women win power through violent means, that will give us no reason to believe that administration under them will register any very great improvement. I have already pointed out that their example should teach us to eschew violent methods. Another thing that we may learn from them is courage. The methods they have been resorting to these days are, of course, bad, but their determined spirit of resistance, the hardships they suffer, the funds they raise—all these things deserve to be emulated. Nothing ever dishear-tens them.They have pledged themselves not to rest till they have won the franchise. Faithful to that pledge, they sacrifice their property and their lives to gain their end. When the suffragettes have to put up such a fight against men of their own race in order to secure voting rights for themselves, why should it be surprising that Indian satyagrahis have to carry on a prolonged fight, suffering imprisonment, assaults and hunger?

TOLSTOY'S SATYAGRAHA

Count Tolstoy is a Russian nobleman. He was once a very wealthy man. He is a man of about eighty now, with wide experience of the world. He is considered to be the best among the writers of the West. He may be looked upon as the greatest of satyagrahis.

Acting upon his views, thousands of men have gone to gaol and are still doing so. The Russian Government stands in fear of him. His writings are very trenchant. He is fearless in advising the people not to obey the laws of the Russian Government, not to serve in the army, and so on. Though his writings are proscribed, a great many of them are, in fact, published. The Russian Government has therefore arrested his *shiras-tedar*[1] and sentenced him to imprisonment. Count Tolstoy's

[1] Literally, an official of the rank of a head clerk

comments[1] on this action being noteworthy, I give their substance below:

> The Russian Government has arrested many persons before my *shirastedar*, but the drama had a greater effect on me for being enacted in front of my very eyes. Really speaking, it is I that should have been arrested for they were but my writings which he circulated.
>
> When they carried off Gooseff I burst into tears,[2] but this was not out of pity for him and for his fate; there was no reason for me to feel sorry for him, for I knew that Gooseff trusted in his soul-force. No one who does that is ever affected by external circums-tances; such a man knows wherein lies his true welfare. They were tears of joy which I shed, for I saw that Gooseff appeared to be pleased that he was arrested and went away with a smile on his face. The man whom they have carried off is a kind and upright person who would harm no one. This man was seized in the night, locked up in a typhus-infected prison, and would be banished to a spot where one can hardly live.
>
> The authorities are afraid of arresting me. They do not like my telling the people that it is not good to kill anyone. If I were to be locked up for five or seven years, that would stop me from writing or speaking. But others in Europe do not think, as they do, that I am an empty-headed man. Hence, instead of arresting me they arrest my men.

But this high-handed action will have no effect. I consider that my views are true, and that it is my duty to propagate them. I am living on only for that purpose, and therefore, I shall continue to express them as long as I live. I shall now send out my writings through others as I used to do through Gooseff. There are many who are ready to take Gooseff's place. If they arrest everyone who comes to work with me, I shall myself send or give my writings to anyone who asks for them.

> I am not, however, writing this letter merely to speak for myself or for Gooseff. What about those who oppress, imprison or hang thousands of men? They will suffer under the curses which the victims of oppression in their suffering call down upon them. Perhaps, some of those who perpetrate this

[1] This letter, published in the *Daily News*, was addressed to L. W. Ritch.

[2] This happened on August 18, 1909.

oppression believe that by their actions they are serving the common good. I pity such men. They ought to wake up. They are squandering their God-given wealth of spiritual powers. They never get to taste real happiness. To be sure, what happens to Gooseff and me is of little consequence in itself. But I take this opportunity to tell the tyrannical officers : "Bethink you of yourselves and of your life. Look into your souls and have pity on yourselves."

A man who can write this, who has such thoughts and can act up to them has mastered the world, has conquered suffering and achieved his life's end. True freedom is to be found—only in such a life. That is the kind of freedom we want to achieve in the Transvaal. If India were to achieve such freedom, that indeed would be *swarajya*.

POLAK'S WORK

The work Mr. Polak has been doing in India will surely bear fruit one day. I can see from the letters which I receive from others that in Bombay they talk of nothing but our struggle. Mr. Polak has certainly captivated the hearts of the people of Bombay.

PETIT'S MUNIFICENCE

Mr. Polak has received very good help in his effort from Mr. Jehangir Bomanjee Petit. Now only is he staying with Mr. Petit, but 20,000 copies of a pamphlet by him were printed by the latter at his own cost. Mr. Petit spent Rs. 1,000/- on this.

These efforts should inspire the satyagrahis to exert themselves with redoubled determination.

MADNESS

A journal named *Bande Mataram* has recently started coming out in Switzerland, publication in India or England being impossible. It con-tains open incitement to violence, as if that would make India free this very moment! Even if India could be free that way, what would it do with that freedom? But this time I do not wish to emphasize the question of violence. Some young Indians, carried away by "progressive idea", pour inconsiderate abuse on those who have spent their lives in the service of India to this day, looking down upon them with contempt. Of course, they cannot by these means bring freedom to India. This *Bande Mataram* has attacked Mr. Gokhale and his fellow-workers. The author of the article refers

to them as mean and cowardly. He thinks he is serving the motherland by making such attacks. Personally, I think that the author of such an article must be puerile. Let us consider a little. It is possibly true that Mr. Gokhale, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta and others are not prepared to go as far as the young men would like to do. Does that mean that what they have done so far is of no value? Mr. Gokhale lived in poverty and for 18 years taught at the Fergusson College for no more than a subsistence wage. He is a man of such ability that he could have earned much more if he had wanted to. A large portion of what he gets at present as a member of the [Legislative] Council he spends on philanthropic activi-ties. When Mr. Gokhale lived thus [in poverty], there were very few men with any spirit [of self-sacrifice] in them. Everyone will admit that Mr. Gokhale's self-sacrifice was great. Sir Pherozeshah has worked for 30 years in the Bombay Corporation. At that time, there were few men who would work as he did. Shall we denounce these men because, in their views, they would not go as far as we do? It is their work which enables us to go further today. I do not want to enquire whether they are follow-ing a wrong course now. I only point out that, even if they are, it does us no credit to denounce them but rather betrays our unworthiness and proves that we have yet to learn the first lessons of freedom. Freedom does not mean licence. I may be free to enjoy what is my own. But it appears that we want to rob others of what is theirs. I have thought it necessary to set down these thoughts because I know that issues of this journal must be finding their way into the hands of readers of *Indian Opinion*. In the present context, it makes little difference to me whether any reader is an extremist or a moderate. It is the duty of both the extremists and moderates to see that they do not pull down the work of those who have been called the pillars of India; they are welcome to build further on it. Otherwise, they will be cutting off the very branch on which they are sitting. Humility, earnestness, thoughtfulness in conduct—these are the foundations of *swarajya*. To speak out what comes into one's head or to do whatever one likes is mere delirium.

DR. MEHTA

Only recently he contributed to the satyagraha fund. He has now gone to Rangoon.

AZAM HAFFEJI

I see it reported in *Indian Opinion* that Mr. Azam Haffeji has passed his examination. This is an error. Being short of money, Mr. Azam has not yet been able to secure admission to any school. How, then, could he have passed an examination?

SYED ALI IMAM

A dinner was given on October 1 in honour of Mr. Syed Ali Imam, president of the Bihar [branch of the] All-India Muslim League. It must have been attended by about a hundred men. Dr. Abdool Majid was in the chair. The Reception Committee comprised both Hindus and Muslims. Mr. Verma and Mr. Jaffer were the secretaries. Among the gentlemen present were Sir Henry Cotton, Dr. Rutherford, Mr. Upton, Sir Muncherji Bhownaggree, Mr. Nawab Saheb Syed Hussain Bilgrami, Major Syed Hussain, Mr. Ritch, Mr. [J. H.] Polak, Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal, Mr. Khaparde, Mr. Parikh, Mr. Chhotalal Parekh and others.

Mr. Ali Imam said in his speech that India could remain with England, not under it. Indians must have the same rights [as the British]. They must make a success of what Lord Morley had granted and then demand more. Hindus, Muslims and Parsis must learn to live as one nation. In Turkey, Muslims, Jews and Christians lived in amity, and that was why they commanded respect. In every part [of India] where Hindus were in a majority and the Muslims in a minority, the former should help the latter to gain special rights, and vice versa. If this were done, there would be no Hindu-Muslim problem. There were many reforms to be carried out in India. We must ensure the spread of education and respect for women's rights. We must not be backward where we have to act on our own. His prayer for good health was received by the gathering with applause.

He was followed by Sir Henry Cotton who said in a short speech that it was for the Indians to win their own rights.

Then Sir Muncherji Bhownaggree spoke. He appealed for good wishes for [the success of] the Transvaal and Natal deputations. Sir Muncherji pointed out in his speech that the problem in South Africa was a very serious one. It had brought two deputations which they ought to help. Our fellow-countrymen were passing through hard times in South Africa. This appeal was also received with great enthusiasm.

Mr. Gandhi then replied. He said that it was in South Africa

that the Indian nation was being formed. A nation, he said, could come into being only when people made sacrifices for the sake of freedom. Moreover, the Hindu-Muslim problem just did not arise in South Africa. There it was almost as good as solved. Mr. Imam was quite right when he said that the minorities should have special rights. That was the only way to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity.

The Transvaal Indians, [he said], were fighting—not for self-interest—but for India's honour. It was for that that Parsee Rustomjee was undergoing imprisonment. Some Sikhs had also gone to gaol. People would thus continue to go to gaol so long as men like Mr. Ali Imam were not free to enter to Transvaal as of right, and they would win that right.

In Natal they want to ruin the traders, exact an annual tax of £3 from poor Indians and prevent the boys from being educated. It was the duty of every Indian to fight such tyranny. The Nawab Saheb was a member of the India Council. It was his duty to press for justice and, if he failed, to resign [his membership].

Indians of the younger generation should examine the meaning of this problem. If they did, there would be a solution in no time.

Speaking next, Major Syed Hussain said that Hindus and Muslims should sit for dinner at the same table in India, just as they did in an English hotel.

Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal said in his speech that Hindus and Muslims could be and must be united. It was an excellent thing, [he said,] that Mr. Ali Imam was honoured by both Hindus and Muslims. Hindus would, of course, remain Hindus and Muslims Muslims, but they should be more proud of being Indians.

Speaking again, Mr. Ali Imam said that it was exactly because the South African problem was a very serious one that he had not referred to it in his speech. It was very much present in his mind and he would not forget it. He would, of course, do everything he could for the removal of Indians' disabilities.

Dr. Rutherford said that Mr. Gandhi's speech had inspired him with a new spirit. Indians were putting up a good fight in the Transvaal. Their example should be followed by everyone. He would, on his part, render every possible assistance.

Mr. Upton, a Member of Parliament, also spoke in a similar strain. He was followed by Mr. Parikh, and the gathering then dispersed. I need not say that the dinner was attended by members of

both the deputations.

Another function in honour of Mr. Ali Imam is to be held at 4 [p.m.] on Tuesday. It will be on behalf of the All-India Muslim League. The gentleman is proceeding to Istanbul, and will return thence to India.

GUJARATI MEETING

A conference is to be held in Kathiawar for the development of the Gujarati language. A meeting of Gujaratis is to be held on Tuesday,[1] under the chairmanship of Sir Muncherji Bhownaggree, to extend support to it. The meeting is being convened by Mr. Rustom Desai, Mr. Hussain Dawad Mahomed and Mr. Jethalal Parikh.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-10-1909

93. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

LONDON,

October 3, 1909

CHI. NARANDAS,

Again there is no letter from you. I hope your collection is going on. I wish you to go to South Africa if Chi. Chhaganlal decides to go to England. I would want you to go only if you also think likewise. Your going will automatically do good to your soul. In that case the first thing necessary is your father's permission. I am writting to respected Khushalbhai.[2] He will give this letter to you only if he thinks of sending you; or he will tell you what he thinks while giving you the letter. Let your reply come here on the assumption that I am here. If your going is decided upon, permission will have to be obtained from Phoenix. If you go there to court imprisonment, no permission would be required; for, in that case, you will have to go to Johannesburg. There is no misery in gaol; rather, there is happiness if one thinks that way. More you may discuss with Chi. Chhaganlal. The Gandhi family has done good deeds as well as bad ones. However, we are known for our good conduct. If we can add to it, that will be our real service to the family. That is why I am always

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Gujarati Meeting", 5-10-1909

[2] *Vide* the following item.

desirous of stealing away all the young men of character from our family.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand : C. W. 4898 Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

94. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

LONDON,
October 3, 1909

RESPECTED KHUSHALBHAI,

Once Chi. Chhaganlal had asked for your permission to let Narandas also be sacrificed for Phoenix. It was, however, not granted at that time. I remember that I, too, had written in that regard. The thing is again being considered here.

There would be nothing wrong, if you spare Narandas; it will be to his good.

It is quite natural to want to have all your sons near you in your old age; nevertheless, it is also infatuation. If, by staying away from you, they can do spiritual good to themselves and if one of them stays with you, why can the others not stay away? It is pure selfishness to keep one's sons always by one's side. Our religion preaches selflessness at all times. Therefore, when an occasion arises for them to follow the path of selflessness, it is but proper, as I see it, to let them go. If you can persuade yourself to accept this view, I would request you to permit Chi. Narandas [to join Phoenix].

Of course, the first thing to be considered in this connection is whether or not Narandas himself is inclined to do so. My request holds good only if he is. I do not recall if Narandas is married or not. If he is not married and not even betrothed, he will be, in my opinion, able to do much better work. I have given deep thought to this matter; and I have lived and am living accordingly. I shall not go deeper into it here. I am only putting my ideas before you; for I think and take for granted that among all the brothers you are the one who understands me to some extent.

Chi. Chhaganlal will tell you more. Please do what you think proper after hearing him.

Respects from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand : C. W. 4899 Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

95. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
October 5, 1909

MY LORD,

I beg to thank you for your letter of the 4th instant.[1] I hope that you enjoyed the short holiday you were able to give yourself. I purposely refrained from wearying you with any further information on the subject. I may now, however, state that Mr. Polak has been very active in India. The public meeting in Bombay was a very great success. Since then, meetings have been held at Surat, Ahmedabad and Kathore. The Indian Press has been discussing the question at much greater length than heretofore and certainly much more intelligently. It now recognises, as it did not do before, that the Transvaal Indians are suffering not for achieving a selfish purpose, but for removing national dishonour.

I gratefully note your advice as to Lord Morley's letter, and the information you gave me as to the question [2] you have on the Notice Paper of the House of Lords.

I have just received a reply[3] from Lord Crewe, copy of which and draft reply thereto I enclose herewith—the latter for your approval or amendment. The reply comes close on what appeared in *The Times* yesterday from its Johannesburg correspondent. Mr. Smuts spoke to the Rand Pioncers, and the correspondent giving the purport of his speech says :

> Mr. Smuts did not touch on current politics, although various efforts were made to draw him on such questions as, the views of the Government on the subject of coalition, and the rumoured change in the position taken up towards the Asiatic passive resisters. The latter still remains a rumour.

Lord Crewe's letter, in my opinion, is both satisfactory and highly unsatisfactory—unsatisfactory, because Lord Crewe evidently

[1] Gandhiji had written to Lord Ampthill on September 21 and 22, but the letters are not available. The latter's reply, however, throws some light on their contents; *vide* Appendix "Lord Ampthills' Letter to Gandhiji" .

[2] This was answered by Lord Crewe on November 16, when the House of Lords assembled for the winter session.

[3] This was dated October 4; *vide* the enclosure, 5-10-1909

fears Mr. Smuts unduly : satisfactory, because negot[iation]. . .[1]

I feel that Mr. Hajee Habib and I should not go away without undertaking some public activity. At first thought, this is what appears to be necessary. We should address, if it is possible, a meeting of the members of the House of Commons who would care to listen to us; we should invite assistance and co-operation from all part[ies;] we should place the position before representatives of various religious denomina-tions; we should circulate the short statement which has been approved by you, with a covering letter bringing the situation up to date; interview those editors who would permit us to see them and address a general letter to the Press.[2] This would probably mean our staying at least to the end of the month. I am also again considering whether it may not be wise for us to pay, subject to consent from the European and the Indian committees in Johannesburg, a brief visit to India and then return *via* London to South Africa. The first step, however, I take it, would be to send a letter to Lord Crewe, which I would do as soon as I have the draft returned by Your Lordship. With reference to the rest—at your discretion we might have a discussion[3] if you could spare the time and are coming to the city, or, in the absence thereof, I would value Your Lordship's advice.

I remain, etc.,

[ENCLOSURE]

DRAFT LETTER

[LONDON,]
October 5, 1909

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
COLONIAL OFFICE, S. W.

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant, in connection with the British Indian question in the Transvaal. Mr. Hajee Habib and I are grateful to the Earl of Crewe for the efforts His Lordship has made and will still make in order to bring about a satisfactory settlement, but my colleague and I feel that it is time for us to inform public opinion before our departure, which we are desirous not to indefinitely prolong. I assume that the Earl of

[1] A line is missing here.
[2] This was released on November 5, 1909.
[3] Gandhiji and Lord Ampthill met the next afternoon.

Crewe has no objection to our making public the net result of the negotiations, so far as they have progressed.[1]

I have, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S.N. 5111-2

96. SPEECH AT GUJARATI MEETING[2]

[LONDON,
October 5, 1909]

These days a new idea is in the air in India. Hindus, Muslims, Parsis—all are filled with the spirit of "my country" and "our country". We shall not on this occasion go into the political aspects of the matter. Thinking of it from the point of view of language, it requires little effort to see that we must cultivate pride in our language before we can speak of "our country" with genuine feeling. Turning to recent examples, we find that one strong reason why the Boers enjoy *swarajya* today is that they and their children mostly use their own language. General Botha uses the Boer language even when talking to Lord Crewe. His knowledge of English can be considered to be much superior to ours, but he uses the language of his motherland as a point of honour and also with the object of setting an example. We come across many other instances of the kind, but there is no need to cite them here.

Personally, therefore, I think it a welcome development that everyone in India, young or old, is beginning to turn his attention to his own language. We find a desire being expressed that the people of India should have one single language. That may, perhaps, happen in future. Everyone will admit that such a language must be an Indian language. But that stage is yet to come. As the basis of my pride as an Indian, I must have pride in myself as a Gujarati. Otherwise we shall be left without any moorings. The leaders in every province

[1] Gandhiji substituted a second draft for this, *vide* enclosure to "Letter to Lord Ampthill",6-10-1909 The communication finally sent, however, was different; *vide* "Letter to Under Secretary for Colonies", 8-10-1909

[2] Speaking at a meeting of Gujaratis held in London on October 5, to extend support to the third Gujarati Literary Conference which was to be held at Rajkot, Gandhiji moved the following resolution : "This meeting sends its congratulations to the third session of the Gujarati Literary Conference which is being held at Rajkot during the current month, and wishes it success." In *Indian Opinion* the report of the speech appeared under the heading "Some thoughts on Gujarati". For a report of the meeting, *vide* Appendix "Gujarati Meeting in London".

have no option but to learn the language of some other province. A Gujarati can learn Bengali, Marathi, Tamil, Hindi, etc., with great ease; there is nothing difficult in that. If only we make on Indian languages half the effort that we waste on English, thanks to certain notions of ours, the situation will change altogether. India's uplift is, to a very considerable extent, bound up with this. I had been under the sway of Macaulay's ideas on Indian education. Others, too, are. I have now been disillusioned. I wish that others should be. This is not the occasion, [however,] to dilate on this point. If this argument is correct, we may proceed to consider the case of Gujarati. One cannot help saying that the fact of Gujaratis using English among themselves is an indication of their degraded state. This practice has impoverished the mother tongue. We ourselves despise it and, as a result, lose our self-respect. When I think that I cannot express myself well in Gujarati but can do so in English, I tremble. What good can we expect a man to do to his country when he has grown indifferent to his own language? We cannot even dream of the possibility of the great people of Gujarat ever forgetting their own language and adopting another. If that is so, it will not be an exaggeration to say that those who give up that language are traitors to the country, that is, to their own people. It will not be incorrect to say that a language reflects the image of the people. It is, therefore, a very good sign that Gujarati, Bengali, Urdu and Marathi conferences are beginning to be held.

This fact should give much food for thought to Indians abroad. They carry a heavy responsibility. They will be the leaders of the people. It will be a sin on their part if they themselves grow indifferent to their respective languages.

I have come across men highly educated in English, writing or saying that they know English better than Gujarati. This is a matter of shame for us. What they say is in fact not true. I have no hesitation in saying that those who make such a claim cannot really write or speak correct English. That is but natural. I admit that some thoughts can be expressed with [greater] ease in English, but that, too, is a matter of shame for us. Generally speaking, however, it cannot be claimed that we are quite familiar with the idiom and grammar of the English language. On the other hand, the grammar and the idiom of Gujarati are generally familiar to every Indian as a matter of course. We shall never use in Gujarati the present tense in place of the past. But we shall come across errors in the use of tenses in English even in

the writings of Indians who have been very well educated. Errors is the use of idioms are endless. It does happen that we [sometimes] do not pronounce Gujarati correctly, that we do not distinctly enunciate syllables with more than one sound. This is a fault easy to point out, but it cannot be said for that reason that we know less Gujarati.

I also hear it said that students who come [here] to learn English must have practice in English and, if so, they cannot bother themselves with Gujarati. This is a fallacious notion. If Gujaratis talk Gujarati among themselves, their proficiency in English will not suffer. It may possibly improve, for in that case they will hear only Englishmen's English and the ear will be so trained as to be able to detect unidiomatic English immediately. Moreover, Indian students in England are not so engrossed in their studies that they cannot spare time for reading Gujarati books. If any student aspires, at the end of his studies, to serve the motherland, to take part in public life, he must find some time for the mother tongue. If English is learnt at the cost of the mother tongue, the purpose of learning English, service of the motherland, will be lost. Such a result will only go to prove that there is no use in learning English. If an operation is likely to lead to the patient's death, everyone will admit that it had better not be undertaken.

Furthermore, Gujarati is not a language of little worth. No limits can be placed to the growth of a language that has been served by poets like Narasinh Mehta[1], Akha Bhagat[2] and Dayaram[3] and which they have found it possible to develop, a language spoken by followers of three great religions of the world—Hinduism, Islam and Zoroastrianism. The same thought can sometime be expressed in Gujarati in three different ways. He whom the Parsis call *Khuda*, Muslims *Allah-Tala*, Hindus *Ishvar*, is referred to in English by a single word, God. The Gujarati which a Muslim writes, will reflect traces of Arabic and the Persian of Sheikh Saadi[4] ; the Parsi's Gujarati will reveal the influence of Zoroaster's Zend and the Gujarati of a Hindu that of Sanskrit. Hindus and Muslims serve all the languages of India, but the Parsis, so to say, were sent by *Khuda* from

[1] (1414-79); saint-poet of Gujarat; author of Gandhiji's favourite hymn; *Vaishnav jan to tene kahiye*

[2] Metaphysical poet of the 17th century, famed for his satire; vedantist and rationalist

[3] (1777-1853); Vaishnav poet; author of numerous lyrical compositions popular all over Gujarat

[4] (*c.* 1184-1292); Persian poet

Iran exclusively for the service of Gujarati. Their spirit of adventure can be of great benefit to the Gujarati language. Several Gujarati newspapers are owned by them. They should, therefore, exercise great care to ensure the progress of Gujarati. There is only one request to be made to them, " Please do not murder what has now become your mother tongue and which you can never give up." Parsi writers express excellent ideas in simple language, but they behave as though they were determined to spite the language in respect of pronunciation and spelling. This is a matter for regret. All the Gujaratis should think about this. On deep reflection, one will be forced to admit that all the three—Hindus, Muslims and Parsis, go their different ways. They seem to be concerned only with their own interests. Muslims have not shown much interest in education so far, and have not, therefore, left their impress on Gujarati; but now they are taking to education. Hindus and Parsis must make a big effort to see that they do. If they become educated, Gujarati may receive a powerful impetus from them.

To the Conference at Rajkot I make this humble request, that its leaders should appoint a standing committee of Hindus, Muslims and Parsis proficient in the language and charge the committee with the duty of watching the trends in the Gujarati writings of all the three communities and of offering advice to the writers. It should also be possible for writers with ideas to have their writings corrected through this committee free of cost.

To the Indians in England I say that—while here, we must not show indifference to this language which is our heritage, but cultivate greater love for it, taking a lesson from the British. If they make it a point to use their own ancestral language in writing or speaking to one another, that will ensure its quicker development. India will make progress, in consequence, and they will be deemed to have discharged their duty. With a little exercise of thought they will find this effort very easy.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-11-1909

97. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
October 6, 1909

MY LORD,

I enclose herewith the draft letter to Sir Francis Hopwood. As nothing can be lost by sending a letter as per draft, it is not of much moment whether that letter or the letter as per draft[1] sent yesterday, is forwarded. But the more I think [of] the matter, the more I feel that we will not get any further satisfaction at the present moment, and that the ambiguity is deliberate and diplomatic, and, therefore, it does not admit of being cleared up. To me, who am so inexperienced in high politics and diplomacy, the draft enclosed in yesterday's letter to Your Lordship, appeals as the more correct letter to be sent, after an addition to it sketching roughly the plan of campaign to be followed here and the intended visit to India. However, I am entirely in Your Lordship's hands, and would be guided by the advice you will kindly give.[2]

I remain, etc.,

[ENCLOSURE]

DRAFT LETTER

[LONDON,]
October 6, 1909

SIR FRANCIS J. G. HOPWOOD
COLONIAL OFFICE, S. W.

SIR,

With reference to the letter addressed to me over your signature, dated the 4th October, No. 31649—I venture to address you

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Ampthill", 5-10-1909

[2] Acknowledging Gandhiji's letters of October 5 and 6, Lord Ampthill wrote on October 7 : ". . . I note that on further reflection you are not inclined to adopt the more elaborate procedure which I then suggested. I dare say that your instinct is quite right and there is, of course, ample reason for thinking that in present circumstances Lord Crewe will not be able, even if he were inclined, to pay much attention to your business. In these circumstances I should be very sorry to interfere with your discretion and I agree with you that you cannot go wrong if you write as you first intended, with the addition of a brief explanation of the methods by which you propose to inform the public."

informally, [in ord]er to save time and in order to ascertain, if I may, the [exac]t meaning of the communication. As you are fully aware of the negotiations that have proceeded in connection with the British Indian question in the Transvaal, I take the liberty of asking for my colleague, Mr. Hajee Habib, and myself an informal interview.

The difficulty that faces us is this. The letter referred to by me says :

> The Colonial Government must first decide. . . Whether they are prepared to introduce legislation on the lines proposed by Mr. Smuts.

As reference is made to my attitude at the interview with the Earl of Crewe, I do not know whether the legislation proposed by Mr. Smuts is on the basis suggested by me at the interview, or whether it is on the basis proposed by Mr. Smuts before he embarked for South Africa. As you are aware, there is a fundamental difference between the Indian proposal submitted by me, and what Mr. Smuts was prepared to give. It will be admitted it is of the greatest importance to my colleague and myself to know the exact position taken up by Mr. Smuts after His Lordship's cable, which evidently was sent after the interview in question.

I remain, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5114-5

98. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

[LONDON,]
October 6, 1909

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have your letter from Kathore. Can you not dismiss me from your conversations, at least with me? I think, for the sake of the cause, too, you should leave me out of consideration except where you may find it necessary to bring me in. I know you will retort that you never unnecessarily discuss me, but that is really not so. Your enthusiasm at times, as you will admit, does carry you away. You will find that, if you persist there will be a reaction, not against me, which would be quite bearable, but against the cause, which you at any rate will not like. I had to speak somewhat like this to Mr. Gokhale also, when I was with him in Calcutta[1] and when he heaped upon me praise that I

[1] Gandhiji had stayed with Gokhale for about a month, after the Indian National Congress session, in 1901. *Vide An Autobiography*, Part III, Chs. XVII to XIX.

thought was excessive. Indeed, I spoke to him somewhat bitterly.

I am glad that the life over there does not appear to you to be strange. I never expected it would. You had already sufficiently pictured it in your imagination.

The cuttings received this week are very meagre. Whoever is responsible has not done his duty. I have not even the *Times of India* report nor the *Bombay Gazette*. I never received a report of the ladies' meeting you addressed,[1] nor the verses composed in your honour. I want badly to see the original.

I am dictating this letter after the receipt of Lord Crewe's reply, of which by and by. And yet I wish to say that our friends over there, who are so despondent in spite of enthusiastic meetings, have evidently either little faith in the righteousness of our cause, or in the right prevailing in the end, and by the end I do not mean the dim and distant future, but within a measurable time, the measure being the measure of effort put forth. Can you not make them see that the real success lies in the effort itself, which in our case is passive resistance, that we are giving ourselves the finest type of education, better than any university education, that the more prolonged the struggle is, the better will the people be when the end comes, and the better prepared for deserving and procuring further reforms? If the meetings are held there by the leaders without faith in the cause, or in their efficacy, they will inevitably fall flat. They may appear to be enthusiastic, but the undercurrent, which the leaders themselves will have seen, will not be missed by the Government either. Can you not make them see that, although we have no real freedom in India, that is no reason why the Transvaal Indians—if they are worthy of their salt—should not be able to make good their position and why they should not receive from Indians in India that support to which they are entitled? Will they not see that the effort in the Transvaal and the corresponding activity in India must in their very nature bring India nearer her goal, and that, by means of the purest type? Without being impertinent, can we not show to them that no part of the struggle has been idealised in India as the Transvaal one has? Every reform that the Congress has been asking for is intended to bring forth some tangible and worldly good, but not purely and simply that form of good which simply adds to the national manhood, without any visible

[1] On September 15, Polak spoke at a meeting of women in Bombay on "Condition and Status of Indian Women in South Africa".

signs. If a handful of the Transvaal Indians are determined to sacrifice themselves for the honour of India, why will not India rise to the occasion and place this thing in the forefront of its programme? Leaders of India can and ought to place the question boldly either in India or the Colonies. The latter cannot with impunity hurl insult at India and yet pretend to own the Union Jack. We know that the theoreticalequality of a very limited type that we are fighting for is of no immediate good. That, to you and to me, is all the greater reason for putting forth the best that is in us. Will the leaders over there not see it? Will they not see that, in fighting the battle, we are presenting the Indian Motherland with a disciplined army of the future; an army that will be able to give a good account of itself against any amount of brute force that may be matched against it? Let the leaders there write to us through the Chairman of the British Indian Association, asking us to go on with the fight and giving us their blessing.

I am speaking on Friday to the Emerson Club on the "Ethics of Passive Resistance",[1] and on Wednesday the 13th to the Peace and Arbitration Society, Hampstead, on "East and West".[2]

You will have received Nagappen's photograph. I wish you could get the papers there to reproduce it. Will you please write to the *Indian Review* and other papers in Madras, to take it up. I think I told you that I suggested to our people in Johannesburg to found a Nagappen Scholarship. If there is anybody in Bombay or in Madras who would do so, it would be very striking. Let them realise that a youth of 20, of unblemished character, has died for the sake of his country.

Mr. Doke's book will probably be in my hands next week. Mr. Cooper[3] promised a few copies even on Saturday.

On Friday came off the function in honour of Mr. Ali Imam. Quite unexpectedly, a toast was drunk for the South African deputations. Sir Mancherjee had charge of it and he spoke grandly. There is no denying the fact that he realises the full significance of the struggle. In replying[4] , I gently took Mr. Ali Imam to task for not having referred to the South African question in his speech, and

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Emerson Club", 8-10-1909

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Hampstead", 13-10-1909

[3] Nasarwanji M. Cooper, editor of the *Indian Chronicle*, London, published Doke's biography of Gandhiji.

[4] *Vide* "London",After 1-10-1909

appealed to the Indian members of the Council that they should demand redress, and if the Indian Council refused to move, they should give up their posts. The Mohammedan member of the Council was present at the function. Mr. Ali Imam thereupon got up and explained why he had not referred to the South African question, saying that it was too vast to be dealt with among many other subjects, but that he had the question at heart and that he would do all he could in India. There was an at-home to him yesterday. I was unable to go as I had to be at a Gujarati Literature Encouragement meeting, but he told Maud that, if you were anywhere near Calcutta, he would ask you to be his guest. Mr. Ali Imam, let me tell you, is a very genial man, and whenever you are on that side, if he makes the offer to you, you should stay with him. You will be on the look-out for him; he will be leaving for India this month.

Mr. Kaikobad Cowasjee Dinshaw and Mrs. Dinshaw left last Saturday. They will be in Bombay by the same mail that will take this letters. Mr. Petit knows him. You may meet his people at Zanzibar. Mrs. Dinshaw has given me a letter[1] addressed to the Editor of *Indian Opinion* in Gujarati, sympathising with us and encouraging the women who are suffering. Did I also tell you that Mr. Ramsay MacDonald[2] should be there by this time? Miss Winterbottom speaks highly of him as a very earnest man. He was a member of one of the Ethical Societies. I dare say you will make it a point to see him.

If you have not written short notes to Parsee Rustomjee, Randeri, Sorabjee, Vyas, Nanalal, Cama, Daud Mohamed, Ravikrishna, Medh,. . .[3], Harilal, Chettiar and others, please do.

Continued 7-10-1909

From the copies of various letters and draft letters you will see how the position stands. By the time this is in your hands, you will have received a cablegram[4] also from me. Lord Crewe's reply is as I have described it in my letter to Lord Ampthill.[5] One thing is now certain and that is that the struggle is prolonged. I am looking forward to it. My only regret is that, instead of being in the Transvaal,

[1] This was published in the issue dated 23-10-1909.

[2] (1866-1937); a leading member of the Labour Party; Prime Minister of England, 1924, 1929-35

[3] Here the original is damaged and the name indecipherable.

[4] This is not available.

[5] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Ampthill", 6-10-1909

I am here. There was a meeting of the Committee yesterday, principally to meet the Natal delegates, but the Transvaal question must crop up wherever there is a discussion on South Africa. Lord Ampthill happened to be there; he had not seen my letter. I sketched the programme to him and he approved of it entirely so that there will be a distribution of the statement, probably a meeting of the members of the House of Commons, and such other things. This will take fully three weeks. Before the work is taken up, I have to wait for Lord Ampthill's approval of one draft letter or the other, then to forward it and then wait for a reply. This may mean a loss of one precious week. The greatest question is, however, the proposed Indian visit. In reality I should not go to India at all. My place is in the Trans-vaal, but the reasoning that enabled me to come here is the reasoning that is applicable to the visit to India. I feel sure, however, that I must not come to India, if at all, without Mr. Hajee Habib. He realises the importance of the Indian visit, but he has some important business of his own in the Transvaal. He assures me that he sees the inwardness of the struggle, and he wants to take part in it fully in the Transvaal also. If, then, he must return to South Africa, I too must do likewise. The odds, therefore, are that there will be no visit to India. Lord Ampthill himself (this is quite confidential) seems to lay great stress upon the proposed visit to India. Sir Muncherjee, who was present at the Committee meeting yesterday, saw the report of the Bombay meeting as published in *Sanj Vartman*. He was grieved that there was no "anna" subscription. He thinks that there should be some workers who will make it their business to collect an anna subscription or a pice subscription,[1] and that the papers there should give the widest publicity to these collections. It is undoubtedly a fine method of education, but for that we want an army of workers. If you can get them, it is worth doing. The workers may be those who have South African experience. They need not be very many. If you can get about five in each centre, it is quite enough. Sir Muncherjee also thinks that the stopping of recruiting[2] should take place unofficially also; that we should have speakers going to the places where recruiting agents are sent, and these men should tell the would be

[1] Gandhiji had suggested a pice fund; *vide* "Cable to H.S.L. Polak" 25-8-1909 The pice subscription, known as "paisa-fund", originally sponsored by Lokamanya Tilak, had by this time become almost an institution in the Bombay province. The fund was used for the promotion of *swadeshi*.

[2] Of indentured labourers for Natal

emigrants that they should not indenture for Natal. This work you can only discuss in Calcutta and Madras. At both these places, I trust, you will make it a point to see the Immigration Depots, meet even the officials, and study the system and come in touch, if possible, with the recruiting agents. So you see that your work there is becoming more and more important, and that the centre of gravitation is shifting to India. No effective work can be or is to be done here without the fire of passive resistance being kept alive in the Transvaal, and there being a tangible response to it in India. If Chhaganlal is prepared to come, it may be advisable—after he has travelled with you a bit—for him to come over here even before March and brave the cold weather. As a matter of fact, Indians do not feel the severity of their first winter in England, and so it may be with Chhaganlal. With Ritch withdrawn—as I hope he will be—from here, Chhaganlal will be able to do some useful work. Lord Ampthill will need somebody who can give him information on points, as they may arise from time to time.

Will you please send important cuttings, both Gujarati and English, to Dr. Mehta also?

I have told you that Mr. Badat, of the Natal deputation, left some time ago. Mr. Bayat, seeing that really there is nothing to be done here is leaving next Saturday, that is the same day as this letter. Mr. Anglia, I understand, is staying as long as we do.

I send you copy of letter I have received this morning from Lord Ampthill. The first draft letter[1] will therefore be sent to the Earl of Crewe.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5113 and 5152a

[1] *Vide* enclosure to "Letter to Lord Ampthill",5-10-1909

99. DEPUTATION NOTES [–XIV]

[Before *October 8, 1909*]

I hope my giving indefinite news every week will not dishearten any Indian.

"There's no help like self-help." One must learn this saying by heart. I am sure of one thing at least, that the continued delay must be blamed entirely on us. No one must believe that the Government will not notice our weakness. We, of course, know our strong points. But one feels as though we were trying to conceal our weakness. We should give no cause for such a feeling. We have now grown used to imprisonment.

I was, personally, very happy to read that Mr. Nanalal Shah was deported once again and, immediately thereafter, re-arrested. I congratulate him. We must understand once for all that it is far better to die in prison than to be happy outside.

I have an invitation from the Union of Ethical Societies to speak at the Emerson Club.[1] It will not be a political speech. The subject is limited to "The Meaning of Satyagraha". But it will make a reference to our struggle. There is also a proposal for another speech of the same kind.[2]

I went to see Mr. Meyer, taking advantage of my meeting with him in Johannesburg. He has also agreed to help, should there be an unfavourable reply from Lord Crewe. A similar assurance has been given by Dr. Clifford, a prominent clergyman here, who is an acquaintance of Mr. Doke's.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-10-1909

[1] This was on October 8; *vide* "Speech at Emerson Club", 8-10-1909

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Hampstead", 13-10-1909

100. LETTER TO UNDER SECRETARY FOR COLONIES

[LONDON,]
October 8, 1909

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 4th instant, in connection with the British Indian question in the Transvaal. The last portion of the letter is not quite clear to my colleague and myself. The difficulty that faces us is this. The letter under reply says :

> The Colonial Government must first decide . . . whether they are prepared to introduce legislation on the lines proposed by Mr. Smuts.

I do not know whether the legislation proposed by Mr. Smuts is on the basis suggested by me at the interview of the 16th ultimo, or whether it is on the basis proposed by Mr. Smuts before he embarked for South Africa. There is a fundamental difference between the proposal submitted by me and what Mr. Smuts prepared to give. It will be admitted it is of the greatest importance to my colleague and me to know the exact position taken up by Mr. Smuts after His Lordship's cable, which evidently was sent after the interview in question.

We recognise that the negotiations will now take some time before the final result is known. We are, however, desirous not to indefinitely prolong our stay in this country. My colleague and I, therefore, feel that it is time for us to inform public opinion before our departure. In wanting to do so, we have no desire to embarrass the Earl of Crewe. Indeed, we are grateful to His Lordship for the efforts he has made, and will still make, in order to bring about a satisfactory settlement. In tak-ing up public activity we only wish to strengthen His Lordship's hands, and to be able to render a satisfactory account of our mission to our countrymen in South Africa. We propose to interview those leaders of public opinion who are likely to be interested in our troubles; if possible to address meetings of representative men; to circulate a short statement in the Press, etc., and, if we receive advice from the European and the Indian Committees at Johannesburg, and if time permits, to pay a visit to India, and to give to the Indian public an account of our mission here.

I assume that the Earl of Crewe has no objection to our making

public the net result of the negotiations, so far as they have progressed.

May I request an early reply?

I remain, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records : 291/142; also, from a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S.N. 5119

101. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD MORLEY

[LONDON,

October 8, 1909]

SIR,

I beg to enclose herewith a copy of the last letter from the Earl of Crewe and the reply[1] thereto, in connection with the Transvaal British Indian question, for Lord Morley's information.

I remain, etc.,

From the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5118

102. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]

October 8, 1909

MY LORD,

I am obliged to Your Lordship for your letter[2] As you have thrown the sole responsibility on my shoulders, I have adopted the middle course and combined the two letters into one. I enclose herewith copy of the letter as it has gone forward.[3] I trust it will meet with Your Lordship's approval.[4] In the meantime, the order is being

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] This was dated October 7.

[3] *Vide*, "Letter to Under Secretary for Colonies", 8-10-1909

[4] Lord Ampthill, in his reply of October 9, denied that he had thrown "the whole responsibility" on Gandhiji's shoulders for his course of action. He considered that the letter sent to the Colonial Office could not be easily improved upon. "It seems to me to be admirably expressed and it includes everything so that I shall be greatly disappointed if you do not receive a satisfactory reply."

sent to the printers to strike off 2,000 copies of the statement.[1]

I remain, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5120

103. LETTER TO "GUJARATI PUNCH"

[LONDON,]
October 8, 1909

TO
THE EDITOR
GUJARATI PUNCH
[BOMBAY]

SIR,

You have requested me to write something for the Special Diwali Number.

My life is taken up at present by one single thing—the life-and-death struggle for the fulfilment of the pledge taken by the Indians living in the Transvaal in South Africa. The pledge was taken by thousands of poor Indians—Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Pubjabis, Bengalis, Madrasis, Gujaratis and others—to uphold India's honour. A tiny country like the Transvaal refuses entry even to a person like the Dada[2] of India, a country as vast as the ocean. The few Indians here, illiterate traders, hawkers and labourers, cannot, will not, bear this insult. To obliterate it, to uphold their religion, be it Hinduism or Islam or Zoroastrianism (for every religion teaches us that failure to honour a pledge taken is a violation of one's religion), 2,580 persons out of a total Indian population of 13,000 in the Transvaal have already suffered imprisonment. Even now many of them are in gaol, and many will go to gaol in future. I must say that the gaol here is a terrible place. We do not get there the food that we are used to, and are classified with the Kaffirs. Many strong-minded Indian women, the so-called weaker sex, bear separation from their husbands in order that the latter may carry on the fight. Some of them, along with their children, go starving. Many of those who suffer thus are Gujaratis, for Hindus and Muslims from Gujarat are in a majority [among the Indians] in this land.

[1] *Vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909.

[2] Dadabhai Naoroji

If this letter is published, the readers of the *Gujarati Punch* must ask themselves on this festival of Diwali what they propose to do for the Transvaal Indians. There will be a Diwali, or *Id*, or Pateti for them only when they return from the battle-field[1] victorious.

Yours etc.,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Egypt-no Uddharak athawa Mustafa Kamel Pasha-nu Jivan Charitra tatha Bija Lekho

104. SPEECH AT EMERSON CLUB[2]

[LONDON,
October 8, 1909]

War with all its glorification of brute force is essentially a degrading thing. It demoralizes those who are trained for it. It brutalizes men of naturally gentle character. It outrages every beautiful canon of morality. Its path of glory is foul with the passions of lust, and red with the blood of murder. This is not the pathway to our goal. The grandest aid to development of strong, pure, beautiful character which is our aim, is the endurance of suffering. Self-restraint, unselfishness, patience, gentleness, these are the flowers which spring beneath the feet of those who accept, but refuse to impose, suffering, and the grim prisons of Johannesburg, Pretoria, Heidelberg and Volksrust are like the four gateways to this garden of God.

Indian Opinion, 12-2-1910

[1] The original has a word meaning "army" which appears to be a misprint for another meaning "battle-field"

[2] This is an extract from a report of Gandhiji's speech on the "Ethics of Passive Resistance" delivered at the Club. It was reproduced in *Indian Opinion* from the *Indian Review*, November 1909. In a dispatch from its London correspondent, the *Amrit Bazar Patrika*, Calcutta, reported that the meeting was held on the premises of the Reform Club to accommodate the large audience.

105. DEPUTATION NOTES [–XV]

[After *October 8, 1909*]

This time I am in a position to give some more news, but I am afraid it is not very cheering. Lord Crewe has written to say that he has no further information to give "for the present", and that something will be known after General Smuts has had a discussion with the other members of his Cabinet. There is no information as to what General Smuts will propose to the Cabinet. If the proposal follows Lord Crewe's cable, that will mean our demand. If he proposes what is in his mind, that will mean the repeal of the Act and admission of a limited number of educated men as a matter of favour but on a permanent basis. If it is this latter proposal which he is thinking of presenting for consideration, we can be sure it will lead to nothing. It will be all right if he presents our demand. But this letter has a deeper significance which must be grasped by every Indian. It is this, that General Smuts wants to gain time by putting forward this excuse, so that in the interval he can break the spirit of the satyagrahis. He would like to concede our demand only if his efforts failed. The satyagrahis should understand this underlying motive of his and keep up the highest spirit. They cannot afford to keep silent or to show any weakness.

This reply of Lord Crewe's proves that it is not in England that we shall find the means for the solution [of our problems]; we have it in our own hands. If we have failed to gain our demands so far, it is because we have not employed that means, our soul-force, in full measure.

It is not enough that people have gone to gaol. I have often said that we should have no mental reservations. We should place no limit on our self-sacrifice. Rather, we must be prepared to bear every hardship that we may encounter. If we do not, we shall lose the fight. One should not feel as though going to gaol once, or maybe ten times, was all that one could do. We ought to be ready to welcome any suffering, whether imprisonment or death. I hope, therefore, that all the saytyagrahis will remain perfectly steadfast and fill the gaols. Every Indian must remember that all over India they are singing praises of the epic struggle in the Transvaal. Polak has been rousing India with his speeches. The newspapers are full of our struggle. I

hope that Indians will bear in mind all this and not retreat even an inch—nor show weakness. In England, too, they say the same thing, that the Transvaal Indians have put up a most wonderful show, that they are men who will not accept defeat. Let it be remem-bered that they are fighting the battle for the whole of South Africa.

Lord Crewe's letter referred to above shows that the deputation can no longer continue to work merely in private. It is necessary now to come out in the open. We have, accordingly, requested Lord Crewe's permission to place the entire matter before the public.[1] That will be done when the permission is received. Thereafter, we shall place the facts before the members of the House of Commons, if they agree to give us a hearing. We shall have the matter discussed in newspapers and also hold such meetings as may be possible.

A very important question facing us is whether or not we should both pay a flying visit to India. On this point, our advisers are of the view that it will be the right thing to do. There are reasons to believe that it will be profitable to pay such a visit.

My own view is that it is in the Transvaal that our main work lies, and even there—in its gaols. There is but one consideration against this. Our coming here this time was an admission of weakness; [we came] in the hope that an early solution could be found. The very reasons which brought us here will justify our going to India. However, there are many other considerations. A visit to India will delay our return to South Africa. As I said above, the work in India will take up much time. We can leave for India after October 30. We shall need about a month there, and another for the journey. By that time, it will be December, and we can return from here at the end of that month. If there is no solution, even after all this, we shall be where we were. The simplest course, instead, appears to be to drop the idea of a visit to India. However, it is necessary that the suggestion which has been discussed here should be placed before everyone. Besides, this extension will involve some expenditure. Personally, I cannot express definite view. If I am asked to state my own view simply as a satyagrahi, I would say that we should immediately return to the Transvaal.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 6-11-1909

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Under-Secretary for Colonies", 8-10-1909

106. LONDON

[After *October 8, 1909*]

NATAL DEPUTATION

A special meeting of the [South Africa British Indian] Committee was called to meet the Natal deputation. It took place on Wednesday last and was attended by Lord Ampthill, Sir Raymond West, Mr. Thornton, Sir Muncherji Bhownaggree, Mr. Polak and Mr. Ritch. Mr. Anglia ac-quainted Sir Raymond with the whole position. Lord Ampthill asked for all the documents. He will go through them himself. After reading Lord Crewe's reply, he felt that there was nothing more to be done.

Mr. Anglia has placed all the facts before the editor of the *Daily Telegraph*, London[1]. Lord Crewe has replied that the matter is receiving the attention of both Lord Morley and himself. Even the fact that he has replied to say that he is thinking about the Natal problem shows that he has been influenced by [events in] the Transvaal. He is afraid lest Natal, too, should resort to satyagraha.

Mr. Amod Bhayat is returing by the same ship which will carry this letter. He thinks no more remains to be done here. Mr. Anglia, it appears, will be here as long as the Transvaal deputation remains. Probably Mr. Abdul Caadir will do the same.

"ETHICS OF PASSIVE RESISTANCE"

Mr. Gandhi gave a lecture under this title on Friday evening to members of the Union of Ethical Societies at Emerson Club.[2] Miss Winterbottom took the chair on the occasion. Many Indians were present. They included Sir Muncherji, Mr. Pal, Mr. Parikh and others. Miss Joshi and Mrs. Dube had also turned up. The burden of Mr. Gandhi's speech was that soul force is far superior to brute force, and that it is invincible. Afterwards, a number of questions were answered. The Transvaal problem was raised and everyone was moved by the tale of our sufferings. There was a speech by Mr. Pal, in which he argued that soul force should be backed by physical force. Mr. Gandhi replied that, in that case it would not deserve the name of soul

[1] The original has "Lucknow", an obvious misprint.
[2] *Vide* "Speech at Emerson Club", 8-10-1909

force. There were speeches by Mrs. Tedman and Mrs. Polak. Mr. Ritch also spoke.

SUFFRAGETTE FUNCTION

On the 7th there was a very big gathering of suffragettes in a large hall called Albert Hall. It was attended by hundreds of women. There were speeches by Mrs. Pankhurst and others. Enthusiasm ran so high that a sum of about £3,000 in cash was received on the spot in aid of the struggle. About four of them paid £250 each. In all, the women have collected £51,000 by now. Their journal has a weekly circulation of about 50,000. They appeared determined to fight till death. Leaving aside their use of physical force, they deserve to be emulated for their spirit, their enthusiasm and their intelligence. Their organisation is unrivalled by men. They have, it may be said, a huge army of volunteers. There is no limit to their resourcefulness. They go through extreme suffering. Many a woman has allowed herself to be reduced to poverty for the sake of franchise. Many have given up their jobs. This is no ordinary fight. It will be enough if the Indians follow their example. Only, we should avoid imitating them in their use of physical force. We may be sure that no good will come out of it.

MY HOPE

Mr. Amod Bhayat is returning with a full knowledge of all this. He has been convinced that the Transvaal campaign has been of benefit to Natal as well. He has also been able to see that even the people here get no justice by making petitions. Everyone knows that a petition carries no weight. I hope, therefore, that after returning there, Mr. Amod Bhayat will take to satyagraha. In any case, he has promised to help the satyagraha campaign in the Transvaal.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 6-11-1909

107. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI[1]

[LONDON,][2]
October 12, 1909

CHI. MANILAL,

The service you are rendering to Mr. West and others is the best study for you. He who does his duty is all the while studying. You say that you had to leave your studies; but it is not so. You are certainly studying when you are serving. It would be correct to say that you had to give up reading books. There is no harm in thus leaving studies. One can get academic education later on, one cannot say that one will get an opportunity of serving others later on. . . .[3] Let this be inscribed in your heart that, since your mind is pure, you will not fall ill while serving others. And even if you fall ill, I will not worry. You and I, all of us, will achieve perfection only by being moulded in this manner. Learning to live a good life is in itself education. All else is useless.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]
Gandhiji-na Patro

108. SPEECH AT HAMPSTEAD[4]

[LONDON,
October 13, 1909]

Mr. Gandhi said that the question of East and West presented a vast and complex problem. He had had 18 years' experience of contact between East and West and had endeavoured to study the question, and he felt that he might give an audience such as the present one the results of his observations. As he thought of the subject,

[1] The first part of the letter seems to have been omitted in *Gandhiji-na Patro*, the Gujarati collection from which it has been taken.

[2] The place of writing given in the source is "Johannesburg" which is evidently wrong as Gandhiji was, at the time, in England.

[3] Some words have been omitted here.

[4] Gandhiji spoke on "East and West" at a meeting held under the auspices of the Hampstead Peace and Arbitration Society at the Friends' Meeting House. C. E. Maurice presided.

his heart sank within him. He would have to say many things which would seem repugnant to his audience, and use hard words. He would also have to speak against a system under which he had been brought up. He hoped they would bear with him if he hurt their feelings. He would have to break many idols which he and his countrymen had worshipped, and which his audience may have worshipped. He then referred to the lines in Kipling's poem, that "East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet", and said he considered that doctrine to be a doctrine of despair, and inconsistent with the evolution of humanity. He felt it utterly impossible to accept a doctrine of that nature. Another English poet, Tennyson, had in his "Vision" clearly foretold the union between East and West and it was because he (the lecturer) believed in that vision that he had cast in his lot with the people of South Africa, who were living there in very great difficulties. It was because he thought it possible for the two peoples to live together in perfect equality that he found himself in South Africa. If he had believed in Kipling's doctrine, he would never have lived there. There had been individual instances of English and Indian people living together under the same rule without a jarring note, and what was true of individuals could be made true of nations. To a certain extent it was true that there was no meeting place between civilizations. The barriers between the Japanese and the Europeans were daily vanishing, because the Japanese assimilated Western civilization. It seemed to him that the chief characteristic of modern civilization [was that it] worshipped the body more than the spirit, and gave everything for the glorifying of the body. Their railways, telegraphs and telephones, did they tend to help them forward to a moral elevation? When he cast his eyes upon India, what was represented there today under British rule? Modern civilization ruled India. What had it done? He hoped he would not shock his hearers when he said that civilization had done no good to India. There was there a network of railways and telegraphs and telephones; we had given them a Calcutta, a Madras, a Bombay, a Lahore and a Benares—these were symbols of slavery rather than of freedom. He noticed that these modern travelling facilities had reduced their holy places to unholy places. He could picture to himself Benares of old, before there was a mad rush of civilization, and he had seen the Benares of today with his own eyes, an unholy city. He saw the same thing here as in India. The mad activity had unhinged us and, although he was living under the system, it seemed to him desirable that he should speak to them in that strain. He knew it was impossible for the two peoples in India to live together until the British changed their ways. We had offended the religious susceptibilities of the Hindus by sport in their sacred places. Unless this mad rush was changed, a calamity must come. One way would be for them to adopt modern civilization; but far be it from him to say that they should ever do so. India would then be the football of the world, and the two nations would be flying at each other. India was not yet lost, but had been immersed in lethargy. There were many things which could not be understood, for which we must be patient;

but one thing was certain, and that was that, so long as this mad rush lasted, with its glorification of the body, the soul within, which was imperishable, must languish.

India, 22-10-1909

109. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
October 14, 1909

MY LORD,

A cablegram has just been received from Johannesburg, which says :

Smuts tells newspapers he awaits Secretary State's answer regarding his proposals.

My interpretation of this cable is that the proposals referred to in Lord Crewe's letter to which I have sent a reply are Mr. Smuts' original proposals, and that he is waiting to know whether, if those proposals are carried out, passive resistance will cease. There is no reply yet from Lord Crewe.[1] It is evident to me that, if Lord Crewe and Lord Morley were to do their duty, this is just the psychological moment. When Mr. Smuts made his statement to Reuter's agent at Southampton before embarking for South Africa, he spoke light-heartedly and confidently, thinking that there was no fight left in the passive resisters. It is evident that he has been disillusioned on reaching Pretoria, and he, therefore, wants to know whether we here are prepared to advise acceptance of his proposals and cessation of passive resistance. Cessation, unless the theoretical right is granted, is impossible. Mr. Doke, in a letter to me, says that passive resisters have never been so strong as they were when his letter left South Africa.

Your Lordship's obedient servant,

From a photostat of the handwritten office copy : S. N. 5125

[1] Gandhiji received a reply the next day; *vide* "Letter to Under Secretary for Colonies", 19-10-1909.

110. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

[LONDON,]
October 14, 1909

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have your cable from Madras. I am sorry Mr. Doke's book is not yet ready. I have just got two advance copies, but I suppose it is not necessary for me to send one out to you. As soon as the copies are ready, I shall ask Mr. Cooper to send 250 to Mr. Natesan.

I enclose herewith cutting from *The Times* reporting the Madras meeting[1]. You will see also a cablegram from Pretoria. I do not know what it means. Surely, negotiations have gone on after Smuts' departure. However, we have to work as if they have fallen through. The report of the Indian Immigration Commission is good at the present juncture. I think that when you are in Calcutta, an attempt should be made to have an All-India deputation to wait on Lord Minto[2] . You may get Sir Charles Turner to join you, though I can well imagine your difficulty, but whether he does or not, there would be no difficulty in having the deputation, and a representative may travel from Madras, Bombay, Allahabad, Lahore, etc. I am writing with reference to your appointment as a delegate to the Congress and [the] Mahomedan Conference. They will be held, I suppose, about the same time, but [if] it is the same day, you will have to use your discretion whether you will go to the Mahomedan Conference or whether you will go to the Congress. Along passive resistance lines, it appears to me that the Mahomedan Con-ference will be the best. I take it, too, that you will go to Aligarh.

I am still creeping. I had thought that there would be a letter from Lord Crewe in reply to mine at once, but up to the time of dictating this (Thursday Morning) there is none, and until his authority for publishing the net result of the negotiations is received, I feel that nothing can be done. It is now problematical whether, even if a reply is received this week from him, I can finish the work of education before the 30th inst. As you will be seeing practically the whole of India—a privilege I have myself not yet been able to enjoy—I think I should jot down the definite conclusions to which I

[1] This was held on October 11.

[2] (1845-1914); Viceroy and Governor-General of India, 1905-10

have almost arrived after more matured observations made here.[1]

The thing was brewing in my mind, but there was no certain clear light. The heart and brain became more active after I accepted the invita-tion of the Peace and Arbitration Society to speak to them on "East and West."[2] It came off last night. I think this meeting was a splendid succ-ess; they were earnest folk, but some insolent questions were put on the South African situation. You will be surprised to learn that even in Ham-pstead there were men enough to stand up for the tragedy in South Africa,and to talk all the claptrap about the Indian trader being a canker, and what not. A dear old lady got up and said that I had uttered disloyal sentiments and, just as we have to deal with idolaters in South Africa who would think of and cling to form and superficiality as in the case of finger-impressions, so had I last night in the Friends' Meeting House. My main purpose was, in all the questions that were addressed to me, forgotten, and details were warmly taken up and discussed. The following are the conclusions :

(1) There is no impassable barrier between East and West.

(2) There is no such thing as Western or European civilization, but there is a modern civilization, which is purely material.

(3) The people of Europe, before they were touched by modern civilization, had much in common with the people of the East; anyhow, the people of India and, even today, Europeans who are not touched by modern civilization are far better able to mix with the Indians than the offspring of that civilization.

(4) It is not the British people who are ruling India, but it is modern civilization, through its railways, telegraphs, telephones, and almost every invention which has been claimed to be a triumph of civilization.

(5) Bombay, Calcutta and the other chief cities of India are the real plague spots.

(6) If British rule was replaced tomorrow by Indian rule based on modern methods, India would be no better, except that she would be able then to retain some of the money that is drained away to England, but, then, Indians would only become a second or fifth

[1] In the office copy from the Sabarmati Sangrahalaya, two pages are missing here. These have been supplied from a handwritten copy in the Gokhale papers with the Servants of India Society, Poona and collated with the part of the letter given in *M. K. Gandhi and the South African Indian Problem* by Dr. P. J. Mehta.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Hampstead",13-10-1909.

edition of Europe or America.

(7) East and West can only and really meet when the West has thrown overboard modern civilization, almost in its entirety. They can also seemingly meet when East has also adopted modern civilization. But that meeting would be an armed truce, even as it is between, say, Germany and England, both of which nations are living in the Hall of Death in order to avoid being devoured, the one by the other.

(8) It is simply impertinence for any man or any body of men to begin or contemplate reform of the whole world. To attempt to do so by means of highly artificial and speedy locomotion is to attempt the impossible.

(9) Increase of material comforts, it may be generally laid down, does not in any way whatsoever conduce to moral growth.

(10) Medical science is the concentrated essence of Black Magic. Quackery is infinitely preferable to what passes for high medical skill.

(11) Hospitals are the instruments that the Devil has been using for his own purpose, in order to keep his hold on his kingdom. They perpetuate vice, misery and degradation, and real slavery.

(12) I was entirely off the track when I considered that I should receive a medical training. It would be sinful for me in any way whatsoever to take part in the abominations that go on in the hospitals.

If there were no hospitals for venereal diseases, or even for consumptives, we should have less consumption, and less sexual vice amongst us.

(13) India's salvation consists in unlearning what she has learnt during the past fifty years.

The railways, telegraphs, hospitals, lawyers, doctors, and such like have all to go, and the so-called upper classes have to learn to live conscientiously and religiously and deliberately the simple peasant life, knowing it to be a life giving true happiness.

(14) Indians should wear no machine-made clothing, whether it comes out of European mills or Indian mills.

(15) England can help India to do this, and then she will have justified her hold of India. There seem to be many in England today who think likewise.

(16) There was true wisdom in the sages of old having so regulated society as to limit the material condition of the people: the

rude plough of perhaps five thousand years ago is the plough of the husbandman today. Therein lies salvation. People live long, under such conditions, in comparative peace much greater than Europe has enjoyed after having taken up modern activity, and I feel that every enlightened man, certainly every Englishman, may, if he chooses, learn this truth and act according to it.

There is much more than I can write upon today, but the above is enough food for reflection. You will be able to check me when you find me to be wrong.

You will notice, too, that it is the true spirit of passive resistance that has brought me to the above almost definite conclusions. As a passive resister, I am unconcerned whether such a gigantic reformation, shall I call it, can be brought about among people who derive their satisfaction from the present mad rush. If I realize the truth of it, I should rejoice in following it, and, therefore, I could not wait until the whole body of people had commenced. All of us who think likewise have to take the necessary step; and the rest, if we are in the right, must follow. The theory is there : our practice will have to approach it as much as possible. Living in the midst of the rush, we may not be able to shake ourselves free from all taint. Every time I get into a railway car, use a motor-bus, I know that I am doing violence to my sense of what is right. I do not fear the logical result on that basis. The visiting of England is bad, and any communication between South Africa and India by means of Ocean's grey-hounds is also bad, and so on. You and I can, and may, outgrow those things in our present bodies, but the chief thing is to put our theory right. You will be seeing there all sorts and conditions of men. I, therefore, feel that I should no longer withhold from you what I call the progressive step I have taken mentally. If you agree with me, it will be your duty to tell the revolutionaries and everybody else that the freedom they want, or they think they want, is not to be obtained by killing people or doing violence, but by setting themselves right, and by becoming and remaining truly Indian. Then the British rulers will be servants and not masters. They will be trustees and not tyrants, and they will live in perfect peace with the whole of the inhabitants of India. The future, therefore, lies not with the British race, but with the Indians themselves, and if they have sufficient self-abnega-tion and abstemiousness, they can make themselves free this very mo-ment, and when we have arrived in India at the simplicity which is still ours largely and which was ours entirely until a few years ago, it will still be

possible for the best Indians and the best Europeans to see one another throughout the length and breadth of India and act as the leaven. When there was no rapid locomotion, traders and preachers went on foot, from one end of the country to the other, braving all the dangers, not for pleasure, not for recreating their health, (though all that followed from their tramps,) but for the sake of humanity. Then were Benares and other places of pilgrimage holy cities, whereas today they are an abomination.

You will recollect you used to rate me for talking to my children in Gujarati. I now feel more and more convinced that I was absolutely right in refusing to talk to them in English. Fancy a Gujarati writing to another Gujarati in English, which as you would properly say, he mispronounces and writes ungrammatically. I should certainly never commit the ludicrous blunders in writing in Gujarati that I do in writing or speaking in English. I think that, when I speak in English to an Indian or a foreigner, I in a measure unlearn the language. If I want to learn it well and if I want to attune my ear to it, I can only do so by talking to an Englishman, and by listening to an Englishman speaking.

Now I think I have given you a terrible dose, I hope you will be able to digest it. It is very likely that you with your great imagination and sound common sense have perhaps, in your varied experience there, probably come to the conclusions independently of me. After all, they are not new but they have only now assumed such a concrete form and taken a violent possession of me.

I have just received the following cablegram from Johannesburg :

Smuts tells newspapers he awaits Secretary State's answer regarding his proposals. London Committee continues for present.

This cablegram means that the question is being somewhat agitated in Johannesburg and that Smuts is no longer sanguine about smashing passive resistance. It shows, too, if Lord Crewe made a supreme effort, he could bring about a settlement. However, we can but fight on. So the London Committee continues. This does not alter the situation, and it eases Ritch's position.

Poor Mrs. Ritch will have to undergo another and further operation. She may not even survive it. It will be a great relief to her if the living death turns into real death.

Later—Millie was here after the foregoing portion of this letter

was finished. As I considered it to be so important, I read it to her. This was followed by a fruitful discussion, which you can picture to yourself.

Mr. Ali Imam is still here. He leaves, I believe, on Monday.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5127, a photostat of the handwritten copy and *M. K. Gandhi and the South African Indian Problem*

111. DEPUTATION NOTES [–XVI]

[*October 15, 1909*]

The last week was rather bad. First, we saw a cable report in *The Times* that the talk about a settlement had no truth in it. Mr. Smuts [it said] had a talk with Lord Crewe, but the Government had no intention of conceding the Indian demand.

There was another private cable which reported that Mr. Smuts was awaiting Lord Crewe's reply.

There was a reply from Lord Crewe today (Friday)[1] in which he says that what General Smuts offered was what he had earlier suggested, namely, repeal of the Act and amendment [of the Immigrants' Restriction Act] so as to permit the admission of selected educated Indians on a permanent basis. Lord Crewe states, moreover, that it was for us to decide whether we should carry on any public agitation here. He asks us to consider what effect such agitation would have on General Smuts.

That is the situation here. It needs rather careful consideration now as to what is best for us to do. If Mr. Smuts is really thinking of con-ceding our demands, a public agitation here will prove embarrassing to him. If not, such agitation would be the right course.

It is not easy to express any definite view immediately. Indifference to consequences is justified in pure satyagraha, but one must pause to think when dealing with a mixed lot of men, some strong and some weak. We have now to await the reactions of Lord Ampthill and other gentlemen. Before this letter is published, some decisive step will have been taken here. The biggest issue involved in this is that concerning India. But, personally, I feel that as the struggle

[1] October 15; *vide* "Letter to Under Secretary for Colonies", 19-10-1909.

develops, the correct step will suggest itself at each stage. Meanwhile, everyone will need patience and courage and will have to go through extreme suffering[1].

The one great man in Russia is Count Tolstoy. I had addressed a letter[2] to him in connection with the struggle and other related matters. I quote below a paragraph from his reply :[3]

> I have just received your most interesting letter, which has given me great pleasure. God help our dear brothers and co-workers in the Transvaal! That same struggle of the tender against the harsh, of meekness and love against pride and violence, is every year making itself more and more felt here among us also, especially in one of the very sharpest of the conflicts of the religious law with the worldly laws—in refusals of military service. Such refusals are becoming ever more and more frequent.
>
> I greet you fraternally, and am glad to have intercourse with you.

This great man has now attained the age of 80. In Europe, at least, one will not find his equal in purity of character and godliness. He has been a soldier, has enjoyed authority over hundreds of thousands of men, has spent millions in enjoyment, and has known a life of luxury. He has no equal among European writers. In spite of all this, he has chosen to live like a fakir at present. He offers uncompromising opposition to oppressive laws in Russia and exhorts others to do the same. But he never employs physical force and forbids others to employ it. He relies entirely on spiritual force. Moreover, his books are read all over the world. We come across a number of men in this land who base their conduct on his principles. He places his trust in God alone. And so, on me at least, his words have had a highly cheering effect, and I hope that every Indian will welcome them and allow them to guide his conduct. It is a matter of deep satisfaction that we have the support of such a great and holy man. His letter shows us convincingly that soul-force—satya-graha—is our only resort. Deputations and the like are all vain efforts.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-11-1909

[1] The Gujarati has "Mahabharat", obviously a reference to the tribulations of the Pandavas.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Leo Tolstoy", 1-10-1909.

[3] This is quoted here from the English original signed by Tolstoy. *Vide* also Appendix "Tolstoy's Letter to Gandhiji".

112. LETTER TO "SOUTH AFRICA"[1]

[LONDON,
Before *October 16, 1909*]

SIR,

Your Johannesburg correspondent, in his weekly letter published by you in the current issue of your journal, has done a serious injustice to the British Indian community in the Transvaal, by mis-stating facts in connection with the Nagappen case. Moreover, your correspondent has omitted to state in his letter, that many men besides British Indians who have read the evidence laid before the Commissioner[2] , have refused to accept the Commissioner's finding, and that Mr. Benson[3] , who represented the British Indian Association at the inquiry, has exposed the weakness of the finding in a three-column letter published in the Transvaal Press. That letter still remains unanswered. And after all, what is Major Dixon's finding? He does leave it an open question as to whether the deceased had two blankets or not. He admits that the deceased did not have rice supplied to him. It is very charitable on the part of your correspondent to suggest that, if no rice were supplied, water certainly was, and that amply. My countrymen, however, consider that even an ample supply of water is not a substitute for rice, nor has the Commissioner, as your correspondent suggested, found that poor Nagappen was healthier when in custody. Any layman, and I should imagine even a medical man, would consider, as certainly did Dr. Godfrey[4], that partial starvation and insufficiency of clothing, in the very rigorous winter on the high veldt of the Transvaal, apart from anything else, would be quite sufficient to induce pneumonia from which this poor passive resister died within six days after his

[1] This appeared under the caption : "*South Africa* Again Corrected" along with the dispatch to which Gandhiji replied. *Vide* Appendix Dispatch in "south Africa"..

[2] Major F. J. Dixon who had held the public inquiry into the case at Yokeskei River Prison Camp on July 19. A report of the evidence tendered was reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 24-7-1909, and the Commissioner's findings, in the issue of 14-8-1909.

[3] Alex S. Benson had watched the proceedings and reported his observations in *Indian Opinion*, 24-7-1909. On August 14, he addressed to *The Transvaal Leader* a letter criticizing the facile acceptance of the Commissioner's findings by a section of the Johannesburg Press, which was also published in *Indian Opinion*, 21-8-1909.

[4] Dr. W. Godfrey had attended on Nagappen during his last illness and later certified that the primary cause of his death was acute double pneumonia and that it had been "accelerated by the conduct of the gaol officials, if all is true".

discharge.

In spite of your correspondent, the Indian community and many other unbiassed Europeans[1] in the Transvaal, indeed, throughout South Africa, will continue to believe that Nagappen died a martyr to duty, and that his death must lie upon the conscience of those who were in immediate charge of him whilst he was serving imprisonment.

Indian Opinion, 16-10-1909

113. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[LONDON,]
October 18, 1909

DEAR MR. MAGANLAL,

I have your post card of the 15th ultimo[2] . With regard to Mr. Budrea, I shall be obliged if you will kindly immediately forward the documents to him at his Dannhauser address. The documents should be sent by registered letter post. I am writing to Mr. Budrea also.[3]

Yours sincerely,

From the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5132

114. LETTER TO BUDREA

[LONDON,]
October 18, 1909

DEAR SIR,

With reference to your letter of the 8th inst., the deposit receipt was on the 12th inst. forwarded by me to Mr. Maganlal Gandhi with a request to obtain your signature thereto, as I thought that you were in Durban. I have now written to him asking him to forward it to you. Immediately upon receipt thereof duly completed by you, I shall re-deposit it as requested.

Yours faithfully,

MR. BUDREA
C/O GURDEEN AHEER
DANNHAUSER

From the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5133

[1] Among these were Rev. J. J. Doke and Edward Dallow, whose letters to the Transvaal papers were reproduced in *Indian opinion*, 21-8-1909.

[2] The original has "inst.", which appears to be a slip.

[3] *Vide* the following item.

115. LETTER TO UNDER SECRETARY FOR COLONIES

[LONDON,]
October 19, 1909

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter[1] of the 15th instant.

The letter leaves my colleague and me in a state of great uncertainty. The Earl of Crewe was pleased to tell Mr. Hajee Habib and me when we waited on His Lordship on the 16th ultimo that he agreed that the proposal submitted by me was reasonable, and that he would place it before Mr. Smuts for his acceptance. The letter under reply does not say whether the proposal was placed before Mr. Smuts and, if it was, what his decision was in respect of it. His Lordship will, I have no doubt, appreciate the fact that, in order not to prejudice the negotiations that have been carried on, we have remained, so far as the public are concerned, entirely inactive, and we should consider it our duty to do so, so long as the negotiations are carried on on the basis of the proposal submitted by me. The great and prolonged suffering British Indians in the Transvaal are undergoing can only end with the security of the theoretical right of British Indians of culture being attained in accordance with my submission. If, therefore, Mr. Smuts intends only to place his own original proposal made at the time of his departure for South Africa before the Transvaal Ministers and the Transvaal Parliament, it is respectfully submitted that, so far as British Indians are concerned, nothing is to be gained by a policy of inactivity. I feel sure that His Lordship will agree that we should know the exact position under the negotiations, in order that we may thereby guide our conduct and, so far as it lies within our power, facilitate them. May I, therefore, request fuller information on the subject of the negotiations at an early date?

[1] This was in reply to Gandhiji's letter of October 8 and ran as follows : ". . . the proposals referred to in the letter from this Department of the 4th instant as a possible basis of legislation with regard to the British Indian question in the Transvaal were those made by Mr. Smuts before his departure, not those made by you at the interview on the 16th ultimo.

"I am to add that the question of the action to be taken by you in connection with the controversy can only be one for your own decision. You will, however, no doubt bear in mind the effect which your proposed course may have on the attitude of the Transvaal Government and Parliament towards Mr. Smuts' proposals, and will consider whether it is not preferable to await a declaration of their policy in the matter before taking further action."

I may add that a cablegram received from Johannesburg states that to a newspaper reporter Mr. Smuts said that he was waiting for a reply from the Earl of Crewe before he made any public statement regarding his proposals on the question. This cablegram adds to our difficulty as to the course we should adopt, so long as we are uniformed as to the action which His Lordship proposed to take when the interview of the 16th ultimo was granted.

I have, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records : 291/142; also, from a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5136

116. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
October 19, 1909

MY LORD,

I have to thank you very much for your letter of the 18th instant, and for your very kind and excellent advice.[1]

I have now sent a letter to lord Crewe,[2] copy of which I enclose herewith, and which I think embodies all the points of your letter. I hope it will meet with your Lordship's approval.

I remain, etc.,

From the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5137

[1] Lord Ampthill had written : "It was, of course, to be expected that the Colonial Office should wish you to remain quiet and it is difficult to judge how far their advice is disinterested or otherwise. They tell you that it is General Smuts' own proposals which are under consideration but they do not tell you whether Lord Crewe has taken any steps to show the Transvaal Government that, from your point of view, these proposals are altogether inadequate. If I were in your position, I should point this out to the Colonial Office either by letter or by personal interview before I did anything else and say that, while you are naturally unwilling to embarrass any negotiations which are being made on your behalf, you require some assurance that your latest representations are not being ignored. I would tell them quite plainly, but, of course, in appropriately guarded language, that you cannot allow an unsatisfactory 'compromise' to be negotiated while you are kept out of the discussion and then to be told, when it is all over and you are obliged to protest, that you are 'raising new questions'. I think that they have given you an opening for a representation of this sort which you will well know how to express in a tactful and diplomatic manner. It must be exasperating for you to be put off and kept waiting in this way, and I only hope that the Colonial Office is going straight and not trading on the patience and self-restraint of which you have given such conspicuous proof."

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

117. LONDON

[Before *October 20, 1909*]

NATAL DEPUTATION

So far as I can see, there is nothing for this deputation to do now. Mr. Anglia and Hajee Habib are on a brief visit to Paris. They are likely to return in a day or so.

ALI IMAM

Mr. Ali Imam has been mixing a great deal among all the Indians here. He had asked several Indians to tea today, on the eve of his departure. A good many of them attended. Mr. Ali Imam will leave for India on the 20th. He has promised to give every help to our cause from there. He has been appointed public prosecutor in Patna.

SUFFRAGETTES' COURAGE

I have written and spoken strongly in the past against the use of physical force by the suffragettes—women who are demanding votes. But we must show all honour to them, at any rate, for the courage they display and the suffering they go through. Some of them, very delicate women, were recently arrested and sentenced to imprisonment. They refused to take any food, so that those among them who were very weak were let off after being starved for a few days. The rest are still in gaol and refuse to take food; they are, therefore, being forcibly fed with the help of a tube put through the throat.

These women have created such a terror that no member of the Cabinet can attend any function in peace. The suffragettes' spies follow every member wherever he goes and make a nuisance of themselves. They even pelt him with stones. A mere handful, the women have created a terror as though a great war was on.

Mr. Lloyd George is a member of the Cabinet. He addressed a meeting in Newcastle. But so great was the fear of the suffragettes that the strictest arrangements had to be made for maintaining order. Writing on it, *The Times* says :

In Mr. Lloyd George's meeting were to be witnessed strong iron bars, mounted police and crowds. There was a time not very long ago when no tickets were required for admission to such meet-ings and

when one or two constables sufficed to maintain order. But the suffragettes have changed all that. Wherever a member of the Cabinet addresses a meeting, the local authorities have to close the main traffic routes and requisition police and mounted guards in large numbers from neighbour-ing towns. Everyone who wants to attend the meeting has to show his ticket while he is yet one or two streets away from the venue, and he reaches it at last after passing through narrow lanes. If, on the way, anyone suspects him he may even be required to give his name. All this is a very expensive business.

Such is the women's spirit. They do not allow themselves a moment's rest. To the hundreds of thousands of women who oppose them, they merely say : "You do not know your interests. We shall fight for you. That you will not help makes no difference to us." They have also written to the Government to say that, if it agreed to grant the franchise to women who were qualified for it, those who were in gaol would serve their terms of imprisonment quietly and would not even demand voting rights for themselves. Such brave women will never be defeated. It is obvious that they have no interest of their own to serve. They fear nothing—neither rough treatment nor monetary loss nor being called immodest by the people. There is no short-cut to rights in this world. These very women, by their disorderly behaviour, bring disgrace to a struggle so fine as theirs, Their misdeeds will recoil on themselves in the end.[1] The people here yield to physical force, they worship it. Hence the women will certainly get the vote. But after that they will practise the same kind of tyranny that they are opposing now, so that the masses will remain where they are. If they had based their fight on pure satyagraha, they could have changed conditions all over England and the change would have had repercussions throughout the world. The use of physical force will ultimately lead to selfishness. Taking a warning from their example, we must learn to avoid the use of physical force, but emulate their capacity for suffering. We may also observe that the British will not concede any rights even to the women in their country without putting them to the test.

BLOW FOR A BLOW

I have come across two very beautiful poems in the *Gujarati* of Bombay. In one of them poet has, without meaning it, given a vivid

[1] The original has "The heart will pay for the misdeeds of the hands", a Gujarati saying.

description of satyagraha. The poem is as follows :

The lamp not burning,
On what will the moth throw itself and be burnt?
Seeking to burn us,
You burn yourself first.
The union of soul and body,
The same in you as in me,
Unless you wound yourself,
Us you cannot hurt.
So soon as I owned myself your lover,
You stood declared my beloved;
A name I've bestowed on you,
And will cease only when I perish.
Such airs you give yourself today,
Your eyes stern and proud;
These your arrows
Will turn back upon you, myself unharmed.
You live, if I live; if I die,
Tell yourself you die too;
Can a tree exist without seed?
The fruit, whereon will it grow?
Where is the king if there are no subjects?
Would he rule over wood and stone?
Your being is wrapped up in mine
Aiming a blow at me,
You shall only hurt yourself.

—*Diwano*[1]

This is a very interesting *gazal*.[2] It is addressed by an Indian to an Englishman. "Your arrows will turn back upon you, myself unharmed." This contains the divine law of satyagraha. So long as the victim does not resist, the aggressor will only injure himself. If we attempt to strike merely at the air, the hand will come down with a jerk. When force is employed only by one party, it will spend itself

[1] Literally, the mad on
[2] A poetic composition in the style of lyrics

for want of resistance. That is the reason why every religion has held that, if all human beings were to become good, even the poisonous and predatory creatures would disappear from the world. This may be taken to be a scientific law. If so, it is all success for me so long as I refuse to meet force with force. The man who sought my life will, in the end, meet death himself. In the same way, "Where is the king if there are no subjects, would he rule over wood and stone" means that, if the subjects refuse to recognize the authority of the king, the latter will have nothing to do. The subjects may resort to satyagraha and tell him : "We shall not submit to your orders, no matter whether you imprison or kill us." There has never been, and will never be, a king in this world who can rule by imprisoning a whole people. The king will lose the game, even if he imprisons only a few who defy him. If all defy him, he just cannot imprison there. The soul of the man who has embraced imprisonment continues its work till, in the end, others too defy [the king] in like manner. All the verses of the poem quoted above deserve careful thinking over.

"FAKIRS WE"

In the same issue, I find another poem—Fakirs We—which also, being quite interesting, I give here :

Fakirs we've made of ourselves
    For the motherland's sake;
We've kindled the flame of love
    To burn us for India's sake.
We have quit the idols we worshipped,
    Flung our books in dust;
The precious begging bowl
    We've taken up for India's sake.
The angel's words and the priest's
    We've put away from us,
Turned away from pleasures sweet as nectar
    For draughts of bitterest poison.
The tomes of *Vedas* and *Puranas*
    Down the stream we've let them float;
Little do we reck of God,
    For India alone is all our care.

Through every vein of our being
    Is coursing a wild intoxication;
Why do you seek, you men of medicine,
    To cure us of that?
In soft living you spend your days,
    'Tis your way of life;
Ours, the bad habit,
    The burden of loyalty to bear.
Such is the strange gladness
    Of the madness in our drunken hearts;
'Tis for India
    And India alone that we live.

—*Bulbul*[1]

This poem is certainly not as good as the first one, but the idea is good. The words are well arranged. Its fervent sentiment should appeal to a satyagrahi. Without it—without the voluntary poverty of the fakir that it speaks of—it is difficult to be a satyagrahi. One must kindle the flame of the Invisible for the service of India. Then alone shall we be able to discharge the debt we owe to India for having been born in it. When the words, "Tis for India and for India alone that we live" proceed from the depth of our heart, God will hear us. He sees the heart. He cannot be taken in by words. This is a game to be played in right earnest. A mere actor has no place in it.

INDIAN LANGUAGES

Reading these Gujarati poems, one realizes that it will not be easy to express such thoughts in English words of equal sweetness; for the two words, "satyagraha" and "fakir", will evoke no response in an Englishman's heart. Why should we not cultivate a language that is so beautiful? India will be aroused when we touch all the Indian languages with the spirit of patriotism. Mr. Lloyd George, about whom I have already written, was born in Wales, a principality in Great Britain. It has a dialect of its own and Mr. Lloyd George is taking steps to ensure that Welsh children do not forget their language. How much more need is there for Indians to preserve their languages than

[1] Literally, a singing bird, songthrush

for the Welsh to preserve theirs, and how much more keen should we be?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-11-1909

118. LETTER TO N. M. COOPER

[LONDON,]
October 21, 1909

DEAR MR. COOPER,

Will you kindly send Mr. Doke's book as follows : 24 copies to Dr. Mehta, 14 Mogul Street, Rangoon, India; 250 copies to Messrs Natesan & Co., Booksellers, Madras, India.

250 copies to the Manager, [Inter]national Printing Press, Durban, Natal, South Africa. (Postal address, Box 182, Durban, Natal)

Yours faithfully,

N. M. COOPER, ESQ.
154, HIGH ROAD
ILFORD
ESSEX

From the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5140

119. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD CREWE

[LONDON,]
October 22, 1909

SIR,

The following cablegram has just been received from Johannesburg :

Twenty-one arrested including Aswat; Thambi sent to prison for three months; Sorabji, Joshi, Medh ordered deported.

Mr. Aswat is a Mohammedan, and Acting President of the British Indian Association, and has now gone to gaol for the third time, and Mr. Thambi is Thambi Naidoo, one of the leaders of the Tamil community, and has now gone to gaol for the fifth or sixth time. The three others who are deported are, one a Parsee and the other two Hindoos, all cultured, educated British Indians, two of whom served as sergeants in the Stretcher Bearer Corps that was formed at

the time of the Zulu Rebellion.[1]

I have, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records : 291/142; also, from a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5141

120. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

[LONDON,]
October 22, 1909

MY DEAR HENRY,

I am not going to write at length this week. You will see the copies of various correspondence which shows that I have still to wait.

Mrs. Ritch has to undergo another serious operation next week. Ritch is now practically fixed up here, possibly for good.

Mr. Doke's book cannot still be delivered. Poor Cooper is at his wit's end. His printer being in gaol,[2] the printer's wife has not been able to keep her promise. Next week, I think, delivery will take place without fail.

I am sending you one of the booklets of Tolstoy, which you should read. I think it is very good.

Mr. Abdul Caadir leaves for South Africa tomorrow, so that now there will be only Mr. Anglia and Mr. Hajee Habib here.

I enclose herewith Mr. Phelp's letter and a pamphlet addressed to Mr. Roosevelt.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5144

121. DEPUTATION NOTES [–XVII]

[*October 22, 1909*]

I have now got fed up. I think the reader, too, must have grown tired of reading uncertain news. There is no certain information yet from Lord Crewe and correspondence is going on. So long as he has not washed his hands of the matter entirely, it appears advisable not to give out anything to the public. That is also Lord Ampthill's advice.

[1] In 1906; *vide* "Indian Stretcher-Bearer corps", Before 19-7-1906.
[2] *Vide* "London",23-7-1909

Just now a cable[1] has been received from Johannesburg, saying that 21 persons were tried and sentenced to three months. They include Mr. Aswat and Mr. Thambi Naidoo. Moreover, Mr. Sorabji, Mr. Joshi and Mr. Medh have been deported. I congratulate all these friends and pray to God to bestow on them the utmost strength of spirit. According to me, such strength is the only real deputation. It is strength which holds the real key. When I think of Mr. Aswat's and Mr. Sorabji's health, I even tremble a little, but take heart again because I know that gaol-going is the best course, whatever the state of one's health.

At this juncture, I wish to see Mr. Dawad Mahomed in the Transvaal. Soldiers cannot afford to wait on their health. I am convinced that, even when in poor health, we are in duty bound to suffer imprison-ment for the sake of the motherland. I think many Indians press Mr. Dawad Mahomed, out of their regard for him, that he should plunge himself into the fight only after he is restored to health. I would request him not to heed any such advice, and I would urge those who give such advice that they should not, in the interest of the community, hold back Mr. Dawad Mahomed even for an hour longer. The women who are fighting here go to gaol and give no thought to their health. Moreover, they take no food after going to gaol. Going to the front necessarily means risking one's head. It is, therefore, my earnest request to everyone not to stop Mr. Dawad Mahomed; rather, people should turn out in their thousands, as on former occasions, to see him off to the Transvaal.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-11-1909

122. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[LONDON,
October 22, 1909]

CHI. MANILAL,

Received your letter. I see that you have again begun to be worried about your education. Can you not give an answer to the question, "What class are you in?" Henceforward you may say that you are in Bapu's class. Why does the idea of study haunt you again

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Crewe", 22-10-1909.

and again? If you think of study for earning your livelihood, it is not proper; for God gives food to all. You can get enough to eat even by doing manual labour. Moreover, when we want to die in Phoenix or in some similar mission, why should there be any thought of earning at all? If you want to study for the sake of service to the country, why, you are already doing so. If you want to study in order to have self-knowledge, you have only to learn to be good. Everyone says you are a good person. Only one thing remains. You may want to study in order to be able to do more work. There is no need to hurry about it. Do whatever you can in Phoenix. We shall see to it later on. Please give up all worry if you are sure that I am taking all the necessary care of you.

You gave a good reply to Dr. Nanji.

What more shall I write?

I want you to shed all fear. Do have faith in me.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand : C. W. 91 Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

123. LONDON

[Before *October 23, 1909*]

NATAL DEPUTATION

Mr. Abdul Caadir is to leave[1] by the ship which will carry this letter. Mr. Anglia will then be the only one left. He and Mr. Hajee Habib have returned from Paris.

ALI IMAM

Speaking on Sunday at a meeting of the Indian Social Union, Mr. Ali Imam referred to the need for Hindu-Muslim unity. There was no reason [he said] why the two [communities] should have any differences. Muslims and Hindus will both mix with the dust of India. There should be a mutual give-and-take and readiness on the part of both to give in on minor points. India must get *swarajya* and can get it through [the goodwill of] the British. This is the substance of what he said. He left for India on Wednesday. About 15 Indians,

[1] He was to sail on October 23; *vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 22-10-1909

including Mr. Parikh, Mr. Banerjea, Dr. Abdool Majid and Mr. Bose, were present to give him a send-off. Mr. Ali Imam repeated at the moment of departure that he would exert himself to the utmost about South Africa. Mr. Polak's sister was also present at the station. Mr. Ali Imam promised to help Polak in every way. Mr. Abdool Aziz Peshawari also left with him.

CHHOTALAL PAREKH

Mr. Chhotalal Ishvarlal Parekh is the first manager of the first Indian bank here. The bank was established in the wake of the *swadeshi* movement. Its capital is mostly Indian. A farewell party was held in his honour in recognition of his services in placing the bank on a sound footing, and with the object of giving encouragement to the *swadeshi* movement. After two years of service, Mr. Parekh is leaving for Bombay. The function was attended by about 50 people. Sir Muncherji was in the chair. Tea was followed by a speech from him, in which he spoke of the bank and of Mr. Parekh's ability. Mr. Parekh was then presented with a silver tea-set. Offering his thanks in reply, he said that India was not new to the profession of banking. Judging from his experience [he said], the bank was sure to make progress. He had encountered no difficulties in England.

Dr. Abdool Majid and Mr. Gandhi also spoke a few words.

MRS. RITCH

I feel sorry to write that Mrs. Ritch's complaint has not yet been cured and that she will have to undergo another operation. It will be a serious one this time, but Mrs. Ritch has ample courage. As for Mr. Ritch, he is buried under the heavy expenditure on account of her treatment.

SUFFRAGETTES

The women continue to cause great excitement. The newspapers here discuss the question every day. The women were advised by Mr. Churchill to desist from physical attacks, and that has provoked them all the more. Mr. Churchill was to address a meeting, which the suffragettes sought to break up. They openly say that they can secure no justice except by defiance of authority. They have resolved, therefore, to continue to make physical attacks, break up ministers' meetings and harass them in other ways. Their leaders brave extreme suffering, undaunted by any fear of physical harm. Mrs. Pankhurst,

their chief, has gone to America to rouse the women there.

FUTILITY OF BRUTE FORCE

There was a famous man in Spain, Ferrer by name, who worked to spread education among the people. He was, besides, a strong opponent of the Roman Catholics. An atheist, he was an enemy of the State. It appears that he was behind the riot which broke out some time ago in one of the districts of Spain. He was accordingly court-martialled and ordered to be shot. The order was immediately carried out. This has created a stir among a large number of whites in Europe. They assert that Ferrer was not properly tried, that injustice was done to him. It had not been proved [they argue] that he had a hand in the riot. Meetings were held at several places to denounce the Spanish Government. Excitement ran so high among the people of Paris that it appeared as though there would be a big riot. One constable even lost his life.

Here, too, a big open-air meeting was held. People attacked the office of the Spanish Ambassador, but the building was saved because of the strict plice arrangements.

Some whites argue that people elsewhere in Europe should not thus interfere in Spain's domestic affairs. They have no right to do so.

This leads me to think that Ferrer having been shot dead, his comrades want to avenge his death. That will increase mutual hatred. It is now being rumoured that the King of Spain will be killed. What will be the result? It does not seem likely to benefit anyone. It is beyond doubt that Ferrer himself approved of violence. Because he has lost his life, revolutionaries in Europe have given way to a frenzy of excitement, abandoning all reason. There is no concern for justice in all this. "Kill, kill", that is all they want. If this is the way things go on, no one's life will be safe in Europe. Emperors and big officers are not safe even today. Since they too are votaries of brute force, the fashion they have set will spread as days pass. Some Indians have been thinking of introducing these methods in India. I think Ferrer's case should serve as a warning to them.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-11-1909

124. LONDON

[After *October 24, 1909*]

VIJAYA DASHAMI[1]

It is in a way a remarkable thing that the Indian communities in England observe their respective festivals. To be sure, it need not be so very remarkable, but we have been reduced to such a state of degradation that we forget to celebrate our festivals in a country like England. How can we claim, so long as this state of affairs continues, that we are ripe for nationhood? We shall also not be justified in condemning the rulers as being responsible for it. In this matter the fault is obviously ours. It is, therefore, a good thing that the different [Indian] communities have started celebrating their respective festivals.

It was the Parsis who made a beginning. They have been celebrating *Pateti* for many years now. The Muslims too celebrate *Id*. The Hindus started two years ago. All the communities join in these cele-brations, more or less. That is as it should be. It is certainly necessary for us all to be familiar with one another's festivals.

The Hindus here arranged a subscription dinner on the *Vijaya Dashami* day[2]. Non-Hindus were invited as guests. The rest took tickets of 4/- each. The dinner was cooked by volunteers from among Indian students of medicine and law. One of them was a very active fellow. He has struggled against odds in order to become a barrister. The same volunteers waited at the table. It cannot be claimed that the arrangements were perfect. The function started behind time. Those in charge of the service also did not know their job well. All the same, considering that this was a new experience, the function went off satisfactorily.

The gathering was entertained by Mr. Hussain Dawad with some songs about gaol life which were set to music. Mr. Gandhi was requested to preside. *Vijaya Dashami* recalls the war between Rama and Ravana. Mr. Gandhi pointed out in his speech that as a historical personage Shri Ramachandra could be honoured by every Indian.

[1] The 10th day of Ashvin, on which Lord Rama triumphed over Ravana. The king of Lanka. The day is celebrated by Hindus to mark the triumph of good over evil.

[2] This fell on October 24.

Everyone,whether Hindu, Muslim or Parsi, should be proud of belonging to a country which produced a man like Shri Ramachandra. To the extent that he was a great Indian, he should be honoured by every Indian. For the Hindus, he is a god. If India again produced a Ramachandra, a Sita, a Lakshmana and a Bharata, she would attain prosperity in no time. It should be remembered, of course, that before Ramachandra qualified for public service, he suffered exile in the forest for 12 years. Sita went through extreme suffering and Lakshmana lived without sleep all those years and observed celibacy. When Indians learn to live in that manner, they can from that instant count themselves as free men. India has no other way of achieving happiness for herself.

Mr. Hajee Habib proposed a toast to India, and was supported by Mr. Chattopadhyay. Mr. Savarkar delivered a spirited speech on the great excellence of the *Ramayana* and said that every Indian should realize the significance of the fact that *Vijaya Dashami* is preceded by *Navratri*[1] (*Roza*). The function was attended by about 70 Indians.

LALAJI'S CASE

Lala Lajpatrai had sued *The Daily Express* here for defamation for making certain allegations against him. Lalaji has been awarded £50 and costs. Some of the judge's remarks in this case show that, in a political case, it is extremely difficult to get justice from the court. The judge held that, since Lalaji had been banished by a man like Lord Morley, there must be some reason. The remark was altogether uncalled for. He made it, moreover, even though he had no evidence before him on the point, his only object being to mislead the jury by casting aspersions on Lalaji.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-11-1909

[1] The first nine days of Ashvin usually observed with a fast to render oneself worthy of Goddess Durga's grace

125. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD CREWE

[LONDON,]
October 26, 1909

SIR,

The following cablegram has just been received from Johannesburg:

Pretoria Indians charged section 39 Town Regulations 1899 residing town. Case 1st November. Sorabji, Medh returned sent to prison for six months.

The first part of the cablegram shows that an old Act that has never been enforced against British Indians is now being revived with a view to remove British Indians from the town of Pretoria to a Location. The latter part shows that Messrs Sorabji and Medh, who according to my letter of the 22nd instant[1] were deported, have been sent to prison for six months. Mr. Sorabji has now gone to gaol, I believe, for the fifth time, and Mr. Medh for the fourth time.[2]

I have, etc.,

Colonial Office Records : 291/142; also, from a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5145

126. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LORD CREWE

[LONDON,]
October 26, 1909

SIR,

The following cablegram has been received from Madras :

Excellent meetings Madura, Tinnevelly, Palamcotta, Trichinopoly, Salem, Masulipatam, Bellary, Penukonda, also Madras Moslem League. Over dozen District Congress Committees condemning action Transvaal, urging immediate intervention stoppage recruiting. Profound indignation everywhere.

The recruiting mentioned in the cablegram refers to the recruiting of Indian labour for Natal.

I have, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records : 291/142; also, from a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5147

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Crewe", 22-10-1909.

[2] Replying to this on November 4, the Colonial Office informed Gandhiji that it was in communication with the Transvaal Government on the subject. The latter was asked whether Gandhiji's statements were correct.

127. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
October 28, 1909

MY LORD,

I beg to enclose herewith copy of a letter to the Private Secretary to Lord Crewe with reference to meetings held all over the Presidency of Madras.[1]

I may also add that cablegrams have been received from Johannes-burg saying that active operations have commenced against passive resisters again in the Transvaal. Twenty-one have been arrested and imprisoned for three months, including the Acting Chairman of the British Indian Association. Three educated Indians were deported, two of whom have returned and have been arrested and sentenced to six months' imprisonment.[2]

I remain etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5148

128. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
October 29, 1909

MY LORD,

I have received a cablegram as follows :

Committee advises delegates return Africa if work finished London.

This is in reply to my letter[3] which reads as follows (writing on the 8th instant to Mr. Kallenbach, a German friend, who together with Mr. Doke, looks after the matters connected with the struggle there) :

This letter will be in your hands on Thursday. My programme now is that we should leave here on the 30th of this month. There is every hope of our being able to finish off the work by that time. If we do,

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Acknowledging this letter on November 1, Lord Ampthill wrote : "I am very much obliged to you for the news you have sent me, as I should otherwise be in ignorance of what is happening both in India and in South Africa, seeing that the boycott of our cause by the Press is now complete. I am distressed at hearing that there is no relaxaion of the active operations against 'passive resisters' in the Transvaal".

[3] The original letter is not available.

then comes the question about India. This will be in your hands two days before the proposed date for departure. Unless you hear something from me to the contrary, or unless the situation has developed otherwise, will you please cable what the intention of the Committee is. Next week I may have to cable myself asking for full instructions, but if I do not, a cable from you on receipt hereof may be necessary. The Indian tour means two months, one month for the voyage there and back here, and one month in India—it may mean even more. As a passive resister I feel that the Indian tour, as indeed this tour, is useless, but thinking from the standpoint of non-passive resisters, just as a few months have been given to London, two more may be added to finish off India. There will be, then, a question of funds also, and funds will have to be cabled to me.

Whether the Committee has taken a purely passive-resistance view, or whether it is owing to the want of funds, or both, it seems that, under the circumstances, we should abandon—for the time being at least—the Indian visit. The matter is further complicated by a cable from Mr. Polak, who cables today from India as follows :

> Very strongly advise you to come.

But on the whole, I feel that, no matter at what stage the struggle stands, we shall leave definitely on the 13th November for South Africa, and challenge arrest on the Transvaal border.

Lord Crewe's reply has not yet been received. I do not know what this means, but if it comes too late for public action whilst we are here, I think it should then be carried on by the Committee.[1] Mr. Ritch['s opinion] coincides with this view.

I remain, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5150

[1] Acknowledging this letter, Lord Ampthill agreed with this view.

129. LETTER TO AYLMER MAUDE

[LONDON,]
October 29, 1909

DEAR SIR,

I wrote[1] to you last week in reply to your kind note, and as I am anxiously awaiting an appointment from you, I take the liberty of reminding you again. I wonder if my letter has miscarried.

Among the things appertaining to passive resistance that I wish to discuss with you, I would appreciate your advice as to whom I should approach for the publication of Tolstoy's "Letter to a Hindoo"[2] which, I presume, you read at Tolstoy's when you were with him in Russia last month. I offered it to the *Daily News* for publication, but Mr. Gardiner has sent a message that it is too long for his columns.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

AYLMER MAUDE ESQ.[3]
GREAT BADDOW
CHELMSFORD

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand : C. W. 4438

130. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

[LONDON,]
October 29, 1909

MY DEAR HENRY,

At last Mr. Doke's books are ready. I enclose herewith a list of complimentary copies sent to the newspapers in India. If there are any newspapers left out which, in your opinion, should get complimentary copies, please take them from the parcel that will be received by Natesan, not, I fear, by the mail that takes this letter but by

[1] This letter is not available.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Leo Tolstoy", 1-10-1909.
[3] Biographer of Tolstoy who, in collaboration with his Russian wife, translated most of his works into English.

the following mail. I have had great difficulty in getting the copies. Ritch and I have come to the conclusion that, apart from the newspapers, no public men should receive complimentary copies. None have therefore been sent, but if you think that any should be sent on your side, you should consult Dr. Mehta and then distribute. Dr. Mehta has bought 25 copies for such distribution. You may either get some of these or, in order that the same person may not get two copies, after having learnt from him the names of those who may receive his copies, you will be able to get them from Natesan. I take it you have come to some arrangement with Natesan so that we may receive cash without delay. 85 complimentary copies have been distributed here. Of these 81 are to newspapermen. Will you please arrange for cuttings containing the reviews to be sent to Mr. Doke.

I have your two cablegrams, one informing me of the various meetings in the Madras Presidency and of your proposed departure for Rangoon. It is wonderful how Madras has come to the fore on this question. The people there seem to be so practical. They either do a thing thoroughly or do not do it as all. I am glad you will be seeing Dr. Mehta almost immediately on his arrival. I hope that each of you will be pleased with the other.

There is no reply yet from Crewe at the time of dictating this (Thursday evening)[1]. Your last letter (I mean the long one, which you evidently dictated) was very interesting and the whole of your family have read it. Of Sally and Maud and other members of your family we shall talk when we meet. Although Maud had left me, we meet almost every-day, and so also with Sally. For some time, I have become emboldened, and have been taking fruit luncheon at the hotel in the sitting-room just as we used to in Johannesburg, and Sally joins us. Twice a week Millie also joins us. Simmonds, of course, is there, and Myron J. Phel very often. He insists on bringing his own contribution. Ritch also drops in. The rest you may picture to yourself. On Sunday last, I presided at the Dussera Festival Dinner.[2] It was given practically by the extremist Committee. Nearly seventy Indians came. I accepted the propo-sal unhesitatingly so that I might speak to those who might assemble there on the uselessness of violence for securing reforms. This I did. My terms were that no controversial politics were to be touched upon, and these were fully carried out. I drew the

[1] It appears this letter was dispatched the next day, i.e., Friday, October 29.
[2] *Vide* "London", After 24-10-1909.

moral that I wished to point out from the *Ramayana*. The Dussera Festival is a celebration of the victory of Rama over Ravana, i.e., of Truth over falsehood. I give you this infor-mation to enable you to see how I have been utilizing my time here. I have endeavoured to come in contact with as many Indians as I could. The programme still remains the same. I hope to leave on the 13th November, unless Lord Crewe unduly delays his reply, or unless something very urgent happens here necessitating our presence. The proposal about an Indian visit has been entirely abandoned. I am addressing a meeting of the Indian Social Union[1] on Saturday. There is another meeting of Indian students on Tuesday,[2] and a third, on Sunday week, of the Indian Majlis at Cambridge.[3]

Mrs. Ritch undergoes a somewhat dangerous operation on Satur-day. The invitation to send a message to the Congress is rather an awkward thing. However, I shall try to write out something. Probably, you will have a copy of my letter[4] with this.

I see that you have been collecting well in Madras. It is necessary to enquire how the moneys collected are disbursed. Who keeps charge of these moneys? As the struggle is to be a prolonged one, we are bound to support the families of those who might be in gaol. The question has arisen already, so that, if these funds or part of them can be sent for the support of the families, it will be highly satisfactory. A gentleman. . .[5] to have subscriptions from others also of the same nature. I hope that there will be no difficulty on your side. Are any men specially appointed to look after the men who are deported? If there are, have you any names? All this information should be published and letters from those who are so helped may also be sent.

After you have finished your tours, so far as I can say at present, you will be staying there until the struggle has ended. If so, I think it will be highly desirable for you to take Hindi or Gujarati lessons. As you will be doing steady Committee work, there may be no difficulty in your having some time.

I have your cablegram saying you strongly advise me to come

[1] Indian Union Society, *vide* "Speech at New Reform Club", p. 510 and "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 5-11-1909.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Meeting of Indians", 2-11-1909.

[3] No report of the speech made on this occasion is available.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to G. A. Natesan", Aftter 29-10-1909.

[5] One line is cut off here.

to India. I have another cablegram from Johannesburg saying that, if the work was finished here, we should return to the Transvaal. I therefore think that it is highly necessary that I should go to the Transvaal. I feel that I have over-stayed my time here. You should therefore do the best you can under the circumstances. I know there are obvious advantages in our paying a visit to India, but perhaps it is as well that we should not do so just now.

From the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5151

131. DEPUTATION NOTES [–XVIII]

[*October 29, 1909*]

NOTE ON DEPUTATION

Still there is no final reply from Lord Crewe. Meanwhile, there has been a cable[1] from Johannesburg asking the deputation to return if its work in England is over. There was a cablegram from Madras, at the same time, saying that it was very necessary for us to go to India. Sir Muncherji is also very keen that we should proceed to India. I am convinced, however, that the right course will be not to go to India. According to the present arrangements, therefore, we plan to leave here on November 13. If no final reply is received from Lord Crewe, we are thinking of leaving without making any moves in public. There are only three things to be done by way of public agitation. They are, a public statement of the history of our [problem], calling a meeting of all clergymen through the Rev. Meyer and, if practicable, acquainting members of the House of Commons with the facts of the case. Out of these, I think we shall carry out the programme which requires the Rev. Meyer's services. The history may be given, if necessary, after our departure, and a meeting of the members of the House of Commons may also be called after we leave, if that is possible.

A meeting of Indians is to be held on Saturday, since it is felt that Indians should be fully acquainted with the facts. I am to speak there. Another meeting will be held on Tuesday, to explain what steps Indians should take. A third meeting will be held in Cambridge. These are the steps as at present planned.

But we may be sure that nothing will avail us so long as we do

[1] It was received on October 29; *vide* "Letter to Lord Ampthill", 29-10-1909.

not put forth all our strength. I must point out again and again that there is no other strength. I was glad that Mr. Sorabji and Mr. Medh returned. I congratulate them. Every Indian should emulate these brave Indians. Mr. Sorabji laid the foundation of the second phase of the struggle and it appears as though it will be brought to a successful issue through him. Let the future be what it may, Indians must realize that, in a tyrannical State, honest citizens have their true home in gaol.

IN AID OF SATYAGRAHIS

An Indian who wants to be known as "A Servant of India" has decided to give Rs. 50/- every month in aid of the poor for the duration of the struggle, and has already handed over a cheque of £3 as the first instalment. It will be good if other Indians too help in this way. I think it is likely that they will.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-11-1909

132. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN[1]

[LONDON,
After *October 29, 1909*]

DEAR SIR,

You have cabled me for a message to the forthcoming Congress. I do not know that I am at all competent to send any message. Simple courtesy, however, demands that I should say something in reply to your cable. At the present moment, I am unable to think of anything but the task immediately before me, namely, the struggle that is going on in the Transvaal. I hope our countrymen throughout India realise that it is national in its aim in that it has been undertaken to save India's honour. I may be wrong, but I have not hesitated publicly to remark that it is the greatest struggle of modern times, because it is the purest as well in its goal as in its methods. Our countrymen in the Transvaal are fighting for the right of cultured Indians to enter the Transvaal in common with Europeans. In this the fighters have no

[1] This was published in the December issue of *Indian Review*. Evidently, Gandhiji had simultaneously sent a copy to *Indian Opinion* which published it under the heading : "Message to Indian National Congress". *Vide* also "Letter to H. S. L. Polak",29-10-1909.

personal interest to serve, nor is there any material gain to accrue to anybody after the above mentioned right (which has, for the first time in Colonial Legislation, been taken away) is restored. The sons of Hindustan, who are in the Transvaal, are showing that they are capable of fighting for an ideal pure and simple. The methods adopted in order to secure relief are also equally pure and equally simple. Violence in any shape or form is entirely eschewed. They believe that self-suffering is the only true and effective means to procure lasting reforms. They endeavour to meet and conquer hatred by love. They oppose the brute or physical force by soul-force. They hold that loyalty to an earthly Sovereign or an earthly constitution is subordinate to loyalty to God and His constitution. In inter-preting God's constitution through their conscience, they admit that they may possibly be wrong. Hence, in resisting or disregarding those man-made laws which they consider to be inconsistent with the eternal laws of God, they accept with resignation the penalties provided by the former, and trust to the working of time and to the best in human nature to make good their position. If they are wrong, they alone suffer, and the estab-lished order of things continues. In the process, over 2,500 Indians, or nearly one-half of the resident Indian population, or one-fifth of the pos-sible Indian population of the Transvaal, have suffered imprisonment, car-rying with it terrible hardships. Some of them have gone to gaol again and again. Many families have been impoverished. Several merchants have accepted privation rather than surrender their manhood. Incidentally, the Hindu-Mahomedan problem has been solved in South Africa. We rea-lise there that the one cannot do without the other. Mahomedans, Parsees and Hindus, or taking them provincially, Bengalees, Madrasees, Punjabis, Afghanistanees, and Bombayites, have fought shoulder to shoulder.

I venture to suggest that a struggle such as this is worthy of occupying the best, if not, indeed, the exclusive attention of the Congress. If it be not impertinent, I would like to distinguish between this and the other items on the programme of the Congress. The opposition to the laws or the policy with which the other items deal does not involve any material suffering : the Congress activity consists in a mental attitude without corresponding action. In the Transvaal case, the law and the policy it enunciates being wrong, we disregard it, and there-fore consciously and deliberately suffer material and physical injury; ac-tion follows and corresponds to our mental

attitude. If the view here sub-mitted be correct, it will be allowed that, in asking for the best place in the Congress programme for the Transvaal question, I have not been un-reasonable. May I also suggest that, in pondering over and concentrating our attention upon passive resistance such as has been described above, we would perchance find out that for the many ills we suffer from in India passive resistance is an infallible panacea. It is worthy of careful study, and I am sure it will be found that it is the only weapon that is suited to the genius of our people and our land, which is the nursery of the most ancient religions and has very little to learn from modern civilization—a civilization based on violence of the blackest type, largely a negation of the Divine in man, and which is rushing headlong to its own ruin.

Indian Opinion, 27-11-1909

133. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL[1]

[LONDON,
October 30, 1909][2]

MY LORD,

I have for some time past been wishing to place before Your Lord-ship the result of my observations made here during my brief stay on the nationalist movement among my countrymen.

If you will permit me to say so, I would like to say that I have been much struck by Your Lordship's candour, sincerity and honesty of which one notices nowadays such an absence among our great public men. I have noticed too that your imperialism does not blind you to matters of obvious justice and that your love of India is genuine and great. All this coupled with my desire to withhold nothing from Your Lordship regarding my own activity about Indian matters as they may have a direct or an indirect bearing on the struggle in the Transvaal, emboldens if it does not require me to

[1] Though the draft does not carry the addressee's name, it is clear from the contents that the letter was addressed to Lord Ampthill. Acknowledging it on November 1, he wrote to Gandhiji : ". . .although I am not yet prepared to make any comment, I hasten to thank you for the expression of your views of which I fully appreciate the spirit and the candour. I must, however, confess that I do not fully understand your arguments and that I am in doubt as to the conclusions at which you have arrived. I should like to talk the matter over with you and I will ask you to come and see me (as I am now in London) as soon as I can see my way to a free moment."

[2] The original bears no date. This is derived from Lord Ampthill's acknowledgement.

inform you of what I have seen.

I have made it a point to see Indians here of every shade of opinion. Opposed as I am to violence in any shape or form, I have endeavoured specially to come into contact with the so-called extremists who may be better described as the party of violence. This I have done in order if possible to convince them of the error of their ways. I have noticed that some of the members of this party are earnest spirits, possessing a high degree of morality, great intellectual ability and lofty self-sacrifice. They wield an undoubted influence on the young Indians here. They are certainly unsparing in their efforts to impress upon the latter their convictions. One of them came to me with a view to convince me that I was wrong in my methods and that nothing but the use of violence, covert or open or both, was likely to bring about redress of the wrongs they consider they suffer.

An awakening of the national consciousness is unmistakable. But among the majority it is in a crude shape and there is not a corresponding spirit of self-sacrifice. Everywhere I have noticed impatience of British rule. In some cases the hatred of the whole race is virulent. In almost all cases distrust of British statesmen is writ large on their minds. They (the statesmen) are supposed to do nothing unselfishly. Those who are against violence are so only for the time being. They do not disapprove of it. But they are too cowardly or too selfish to avow their opinions publicly. Some consider that the time for violence is not yet. I have practically met no one who believes that India can ever become free without resort to violence.

I believe that repression will be unavailing. At the same time, I feel that the British rulers will not give liberally and in time. The British people appear to me to be obsessed by commercial selfishness. The fault is not of men out of the system and the system is represented by the pre-sent civilization which has produced its blasting effect as well on the people here as on India. India suffers additionally only in so far as it is exp-loited in the interest of foreign capitalists. The true remedy lies, in my humble opinion, in England discarding modern civilization which is en-souled by this spirit of selfishness and materialism, is vain and purpose-less and is a negation of the spirit of Christianity. But this is a large order. It may then be just possible that the British rulers in India may at least do as the Indians do and not impose upon them the modern civi-lization. Railways, machinery and corresponding increase of indulgent habits

are the true badges of slavery of the Indian people as they are of Europeans. I, therefore, have no quarrel with the rulers. I have every quarrel with their methods. I no longer believe as I used to in Lord Macaulay as a benefactor through his minute on education. And I do think that a great deal too much is being made of *pax Britannica*. To me the rise of the cities like Calcutta and Bombay is a matter for sorrow rather than congratulation. India has lost in having broken up a part of her village system. Holding these views, I share the national spirit but I totally dissent from the methods whether of the extremists or of the moderates. For either party relies ultimately on violence. Violent methods must mean acceptance of modern civilization and therefore of the same ruinous competition we notice here and consequent destruction of true morality. I should be uninterested in the fact as to who rules. I should expect rulers to rule according to my wish otherwise I cease to help them to rule me. I become a passive resister against them. Passive resistance is soul-force exerted against physical force. In other words love conquering hatred.

I do not know how far I have made myself understood and I do not know how far I carry you with me in my reasoning. But I have put the case in the above manner before my countrymen. My purpose in writing to Your Lordship is twofold. The first is to tell Your Lordship that, whenever I can get the time, I would like to take my humble share in national regeneration and the second is either to secure Your Lordship's cooperation in the larger work if it ever comes to me or to invite your criticism.

The information I have given Your Lordship is quite confidential and not to be made use of prejudicially to my countrymen. I feel that no useful purpose will be served unless the truth is known and proclaimed.

If you will pursue the inquiry further, I shall be pleased to answer any questions you may wish to put. Mr. Ritch has full knowledge of the contents of this letter. If a discussion is considered necessary, I am at your service.

In conclusion, I hope I have not unduly or unwarrantably trespassed upon your courtesy and attention.

I remain, etc.,

From a photostat of the original draft in Gandhiji's hand : S. N. 5152

134. SPEECH AT NEW REFORM CLUB[1]

[LONDON,
October 30, 1909]

The fight (he said) was for freedom of conscience, for mental independence and independence of action, not for the mechanical right of voting. British Indians first emigrated to the Transvaal in 1883, and from the first, their very vertues were set down as vices by those who could not realize how difficult it was for Indians to live in such a country.

They had heard from Lord Lansdowne that the war was undertaken as much for the British Indians as for other Outlanders, but after the war was over, the former were in a much worse position. They could only trade or hold land in Locations reserved for them, they had no burgher rights and no right to walk on the footpath, and it could be imagined how they were therefore treated by the people of the Transvaal when they were so degraded in the eyes of the law. Many statesmen allowed themselves to be betrayed into the hands of a few agitators, rivals in trade of the British Indians, and the new Registration Law of 1906 was used for oppressing British Indians. It was impossible for those who had the slightest sense of self-respect to accept that legislation. Deputations were repulsed, as was the request for a judicial enquiry. British Indians had been thrown into gaol and classed in treatment with the black men being forced to live upon the same dietery, with the consequence that they were practically starved. For the sake of the national honour they became passive resisters. It might be years before they could make themselves heard, but that would only be because they had not suffered enough. They had justice on their side, and Hindus, Mahomedans and Tamils, by working together in the cause, had solved a great racial problem.

India, 5-11-1909

[1] Gandhiji addressed the members of the Indian Union Society at the New Reform Club on "The Struggle for Fellow-citizenship in South Africa : Its Lessons"

135. SPEECH AT MEETING OF INDIANS[1]

[LONDON,
November 2, 1909]

Mr. Gandhi, in the course of his remarks, stated that in the Transvaal would be solved the question, so far as the whole of South Africa was concerned, of the status of British Indians, and that it had a far-reaching effect in India also, and as the struggle in the Transvaal was for preserving the national honour, every Indian was bound to do his utmost to help the cause. He felt that if Indian volunteers came forward to do propaganda work in London and surrounding districts a great deal could be done to inform public opinion, which was ultimately bound to react on the Transvaal. The volunteers should set apart consistently with their ordinary occupations a certain amount of time for paying house-to-house visits and getting subscriptions from one farthing upward to relieve the distress amongst passive resisters and their families, and signatures to a document[2] expressing sympathy with the struggles of the passive resisters, encouraging them and trusting that the authorities will grant relief.[3]

Indian Opinion, 4-12-1909

136. LETTER TO UNDER SECRETARY FOR COLONIES

[LONDON,]
November 3, 1909

SIR,

I shall be obliged if His Lordship the Earl of Crewe could now favour me with a reply to my letter of 19th October.

I have, etc.,

From the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5158

[1] Convened by Messrs Delgado and Azad, the latter being one of the secretaries of the Muslim League in London, the meeting was held at 3 p. m. in the Essex Hall, Strand. Parekh presided. Hajee Habib and M. C. Anglia also addressed the gathering consisting of some 40 Indians. *Vide* also "Deputation's Last Letter", pp. 522-3 for a fuller report.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Transvaal British Indians", 6-11-1909

[3] The report stated that some 20 Indians and an equal number of Europeans volunteered to do propaganda work in London, under the guidance of L. W. Ritch, and it was decided to publish later on a weekly bulletin about the progress of the struggle, to be financed by English sympathisers in London. *Vide* also "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 5-11-1909.

137. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
November 4, 1909

MY LORD,

I have now received a letter from Lord Crewe, of which I enclose a copy[1], which shows clearly where we stand. The last paragraph I do not understand at all. I beg to enclose herewith draft[2] of the proposed reply to Lord Crewe. I await Your Lordship's advice before sending it.[3]

I remain, etc.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5159

138. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

[LONDON,]
November 5, 1909

MY DEAR HENRY,

I can send you only a brief letter today, although I have a lot to say. You will find a copy of the letter from Lord Crewe, and copy of my reply. It has not yet been delivered to Lord Crewe because it has been sent to Lord Ampthill for approval.[4]

The statement[5] is now being distributed. I send you one copy along with the *Times Literary Supplement* by parcel post, and I hope to send you also copy of the letter which will accompany the statement, bringing the matters to date. The letter from Lord Crewe has been received in time for the Congress to do its duty. Let us hope that it will.

We leave on 13th November. On Saturday last I addressed a meeting of the Indian Union Society.[6] All these things are now[7]

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Letters from Colonial Office and Ampthill".

[2] This was the same as the letter sent on November 6; *vide* "Letter to Under Secretary for Colonies", 6-11-1909.

[3] For Lord Ampthill's reply, *vide* Appendix"Letters from Colonial Office and Ampthill".

[4] *Vide* the preceding item.

[5] This was the printed statement of July 16, which had been withheld from circulation till then. It was released with a covering letter; *vide* the following item.

[6] *Vide* "Speech at New Reform Club", 30-10-1909

necessary in order to let every Indian know the position. There might be a report of the meeting in columns of *India*. On Tuesday, as per card herewith, there was a meeting of young Indians to consider what they could do. Mr. Anglia, Mr. Hajee Habib, and I spoke to them.[1] The proposition I made before them was that students and other resident Indians should give what time they could regularly to propaganda work, should get a memo-randum signed by thousands of people here, with whatever subscription they may choose to give towards the maintenance of the struggle. I send you draft memorandum.[2] A meeting is to be held tomorrow to consider the programme of work and the draft memorandum. The idea is also to publish a weekly bulletin, if possible, that would give a resume of the position in India and South Africa, but there are obvious difficulties about the paper. The paper, in my opinion, cannot be financed from India. It must be self-supporting and any deficiency found by the English people, because I hold that it is their duty from many points of view to take up the work. But you require a man who is able enough, and who can give his exclusive attention to this. Ritch cannot do it at present. It therefore remains to be seen whether this can come out. If Chhaganlal is here in time, there is a likelihood of it. The work of the Committee will continue. I take it that you will correspond with Ritch regularly.

I send you herewith copy of my letter to Lord Ampthill,[3] which is quite confidential, but of course you should know the whole position. After reading the letter I would like you to destroy it. I am sending a copy to Dr. Mehta with a similar request, and I am sending also a copy of this letter to him in order to avoid my having to write about the same thing. If the volunteers do their duty here, and if India makes a sufficient effort, there is no reason why the thing cannot go through, provided, of course, that we in the Transvaal are firm. It is a curious coincidence that along with the letter from Lord Crewe comes the news from the Transvaal that Harilal too is lodged in gaol. I am itching to join him.

I have your cablegram asking me to repeat the last word of my last cable, which I shall do tomorrow in the hope of being able to add something more to the cable. The last word was "NEARCTIC" meaning

[7] The original has "not", an obvious typing error.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Meeting of Indians", 2-11-1909

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Transvaal British Indians", 6-11-1909

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Ampthill",30-10-1909

thirteenth November. It occurs in the 5th edition of the A.B.C. code.

I am addressing a meeting of the Indian Majlis at Cambridge on Sunday.[1]

You will notice from the list of volunteers that both Sally and Maud are offering their help.[2] The Pater and Mater also are coming tomorrow. I do not know what they will do. Of course if they will they also can do the missionary work, but I can hardly conceive it as possible. Miss Winterbottom has thrown herself into it.

Mr. Doke's book has been reviewed in the *Edinburgh Evening News* in about 20 lines. *The Times* has just acknowledged it, giving a 4-line notice. I do not think it has been reviewed anywhere else yet. Mr. Meyer calls a meeting to bid us farewell and to hear me on the position on Friday the 12th inst. and about sixty people are being invited to tea.[3]

From the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5162

139. LETTER TO THE PRESS

LONDON,
November 5, 1909

SIR,

The Transvaal British Indian deputation arrived in London on the 10th day of July last. The enclosed statement[4] of the British Indian case in that Colony was prepared immediately after the arrival in London of that deputation, but it was not issued as delicate negotiations with a view to arriving at a quiet settlement were in progress. We have now learnt that these have proved abortive and that the position remains unchanged. It has therefore become necessary for us to inform the public as to how the matter stands and what the struggle of the British Indians in the Transvaal means.

The ex-Colonial Secretary of the Transvaal during its administration as a Crown Colony, writing in a magazine in South Africa in the month of February last, thus correctly summed up the question :

The position of the Indian leaders is that they will tolerate no law which does

[1] No report of this speech is available.
[2] *Vide* "Deputation's Last Letter", After 6-11-1909.
[3] *Vide* "Speech at Farewell Meeting",12-11-1909.
[4] *Vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909.

not put them on an equality with Europeans in regard to restriction on immigration. They are willing to see the number of Asiatics limited by administrative action. . . They insist on equality in the terms of the law itself.

That is still the position.

Mr. Smuts, the present Colonial Secretary of the Transvaal, offers to repeal the Registration Law around which the struggle has been raging for the last three years, and to concede to a limited number of British Indians, other than former residents of the Transvaal, certificates of per-manent residence. Were the object aimed at by the British Indians the ad-mission into the Colony of a few more of their brethren, this concession would be material, but the object they have had in view in agitating for the repeal of the Law being to secure legal or theoretical equality in respect of immigration, their purpose is by the proposed maintenance of the legal disability not advanced a step. We are not aware whether the above modification of the present law proposed by Mr. Smuts will take place irrespective of the continuance of the passive resistance at present being offered by the British Indians of the Transvaal, but we are in a position to state that the proposed concession will not satisfy passive resisters. The struggle of the Indian community of that Colony was undertaken in order to obtain the removal of the stigma cast upon the whole of India by this legislation, which imports a racial and colour bar into the Immigration Laws of a British Colony for the first time in the history of Colonial legislation. The principle so laid down, that British Indians may not enter the Transvaal because they are British Indians, is a radical departure from traditional policy, is un-British and intolerable, and if that principle is accepted even tacitly by British Indians, we consider that they will be untrue to themselves, to the land of their birth, and to the Empire to which they belong. Nor is it the passive resisters in the Transvaal who in a matter of this kind have alone to be considered. The whole of India is now awakened to a sense of the insult that the Transvaal legislation offers to her, and we feel that the people here at the heart of the Empire cannot remain unmoved by this departure, so unprecedented and so vital, from Imperial traditions. Mr. Smuts' proposal brings out the issue in the clearest manner possible. If we were fighting not for a principle but for loaves and fishes, he would be prepared to throw them at us in the shape of residential permits for the small number of cultured British Indians that may be required for our wants, but because we insist upon the removal of the implied racial taint from the legislation of the

Colony, he is not prepared to yield an inch. He would give us the husk without the kernel. He declines to remove the badge of inferiority, but is ready to change the present rough-looking symbol for a nicely polished one. British Indians, however, decline to be deluded. They may yield everything, occupy any position, but the badge must be removed first. We, therefore, trust that the public will not be misled by the specious concessions that are being offered into the belief that British Indians, because they do not accept them, are unreasonable in their demands, that they are uncompromising, and that, therefore, they do not deserve the sympathy and support of a common-sense and practical public. In the final reply received by us from Lord Crewe the following is the position that is taken up :

His Lordship explained to you that Mr. Smuts was unable to accept the claim that Asiatics should be placed in a position of equality with Europeans in respect of right of entry or otherwise.

Herein lies the crux. Legal equality in respect of the right of entry, even though never a man does enter, is what British Indians have been fighting for and, according to the reports we have received from the Transvaal, is what some of them, at least, will die for. The only possible justification for holding together the different communities of the Empire under the same Sovereignty is the fact of elementary equality, and it is because the Transvaal legislation cuts at the very root of this principle that British Indians have offered a stubborn resistance.

It would be contrary to fact to argue that no relief can be had in this matter because the Transvaal is a self-governing Colony, and because now South Africa has got its Union. The difficulty of the situation is due to a mistake committed at the centre of the Empire. The Imperial Go-vernment are party to the crime against the Imperial Constitution. They sanctioned when they need not have, and when it was their duty not to have sanctioned, the legislation in question. They are now undoubtedly most anxious to settle this troublesome matter. Lord Crewe has endeavo-ured to bring about a satisfactory result, but he is too late. Mr. Smuts, perhaps very properly, has reminded His Lordship of the fact that the legislation in question had received Imperial sanction, and that he should or could not now be called upon to retrace his steps, because the British Indians in the Transvaal had undertaken to disregard the legislation, and to suffer the penalties of such disregard. His position as a politician and as an

aspirant to high office in "a white South Africa" is unquestionable, but neither the British public nor the Indian public are interested in his position, nor are they party to this crime of the Imperial Government.

We may add that, during the last four months, arrests and imprison-ments have gone on unabated. The leaders of the community continue to go to prison. The severity of the prison regulations is maintained. The prison diet has been altered for the worse. Prominent medical men of Johannesburg have certified that the present dietary scale for Indian prisoners is deficient. The authorities, unlike their action during last year, have ignored the religious scruples of Mahomedan prisoners, and have refused to give facilities for observing the sacred annual fast which millions of Mahomedans scrupulously undergo from year to year. Sixty passive resisters recently came out of the Pretoria Gaol emaciated and weak. Their message to us is that, starved as they were, they are ready to be re-arrested as soon as the Government wish to lay their hands on them. The Acting Chairman of the British Indian Association has only just been arrested and sentenced to be imprisoned for three months with hard labour. This is his third term. He is a Mahomedan. A brave Parsee, a well-educated man, was deported to Natal. He re-entered, and is now undergoing six months' imprisonment with hard labour. He is in gaol for the fifth time. A young Indian, an ex-Volunteer sergeant, has also gone to gaol for the third time on the same terms as the Parsee. Wives of imprisoned British Indians and their children either take up baskets of fruit, hawk about and earn their living in order to support themselves, or are being supported from contributions. Mr. Smuts, when he re-embarked for South Africa, said that he had arrived at an understanding with Lord Crewe that would satisfy the large body of British Indians who were heartily sick of the agitation. His prophecy has been totally disproved by what has happened since.

We remain, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

HAJEE HABIB

[ENCLOSURE]

SUMMARY OF STATEMENT

The British Indians in the Transvaal have been suffering for the past two years and six months untold suffering in order to secure :

Repeal of a Transvaal law called the Asiatic Registration Act (2 of 1907) which its authors claim to be a measure merely for effecting the identification of the British Indians entitled to remain in the Colony, but which is regarded by the British Indians themselves as most objectionable, because, in reality—

(1) The Act wounds their religious susceptibilities and degrades them in many ways; and

(2) Read together with another law of a later date (called the Immigration Act), it constitutes an impassable barrier to the immigration of Indians, however highly cultured, on the score of their race and colour.

The desired relief can easily be granted by repealing the Registration Act and slightly amending the Immigration Act, without in any way endangering the colonial policy of preventing an influx of British Indians. The practical effect of such repeal and amendment would be the removal of the racial insult, and would at the most involve the entry of the few Indian new-comers necessary for the spiritual and intellectual needs of the resident community.

The Indians at present actually residing in the Transvaal number about 5,000.

The population of Indians domiciled in the Transvaal is about 13,000.

The difference means that nearly 8,000 Indians have been driven away, for the time being, from the Transvaal, being too weak to undergo the physical suffering of gaol life.

Over 2,500 British Indians have passed through the Transvaal gaols, all but 150 having been imprisoned with hard labour. Sentences have ranged from four days' to six months' hard labour. Hundreds of British Indians have been ruined in the struggle. Several families have been supported from public subscriptions, the wage-earners being in the Transvaal gaols. Indians both young and old have suffered and are still suffering imprisonment. Many leaders are at present in the gaols, including the Mahomedan Chairman of the British Indian Association and a Parsee gentleman who is renowned

for his philanthropy throughout South Africa. Fathers and sons have been in gaol at the same time. About sixty Indians have been deported to India, where they were Ianded penniless and friendless.

A band of noble Europeans in the Transvaal, headed by Mr. Wm. Hosken, M. L. A. of the Transvaal, have formed themselves into a committee for securing justice.

Hindoos and Mahomedans, Parsees and Sikhs are fighting shoulder to shoulder. The struggle to-day is being continued to maintain the honour of the three hundred millions of their fellow-countrymen, and is absolutely selfless. The sufferers have no personal interest to serve.

The Indians contend that General Smuts, the Colonial Secretary of the Transvaal, is under promise to repeal the Asiatic Registration Act of 1907. If that Act had been repealed, the question of educated Indians would have been automatically adjusted, because, without it, the Immi-gration Law above referred to would not have prevented the entry of highly educated Indians. General Smuts contends that, whilst he discussed the question of repeal of the Act with Mr. Gandhi, he does not remember having made a definite promise. Mr. Gandhi has made an affidavit swear-ing that such a promise was made and has produced documentary evidence in support of his contention. General Smuts holds that the Indian deman-ds are in effect satisfied in that he wishes to treat the Registration Act as a dead letter and is prepared to admit educated Indians on sufferance and on temporary permits, which may be extended from time to time. Indians hold that they are under a solemn obligation to secure repeal of the Act above-mentioned, and that, if it is a dead letter, it can be of no use to the Government. They further contend that the admission of educated Indians on sufferance is useless because the struggle is not so much to secure the admission of a few individuals as to conserve national honour. *It is the unnecessary legal racial disability which makes the situation so degrading, and affords an obiding source of irritation to the whole Indian nation*. This legislation is the first of its kind in the history of the Colonies. No other self-governing Colony possesses legislation containing the racial taint, described by Lord Morley as the "bar sinister".

British Indians do not desire an indiscriminate influx of their countrymen into the Transvaal. They submit that, by a judicious administration of the Immigration Act, all but a few—say six highly

educated Indians per year—may be prevented from entering the Colony. The Cape, Australia and other Colonies have solved the question of Asiatic immigration without resort to racial legislation.

From a photostat of the printed copy : S. N. 5180

140. LETTER TO UNDER SECRETARY FOR COLONIES

[LONDON,]
November 6, 1909

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 3rd instant, numbered 34519/1909.[1] It is a matter for very deep regret that the Earl of Crewe is unable to hold out any hopes of obtaining recognition of theoretical equality as to immigration such as is claimed by British Indians in the Transvaal, and as has hitherto been accepted throughout the Colonies, and which alone, it is respectfully submitted, can justify the holding together of different peoples of the world under the same sovereignty. There remains nothing for my colleague and me to do but to place the position before the public and to return to the Transvaal. In view, however, of the Imperial importance of the question, my colleague and I respectfully trust that His Lordship will still use his influence in order to secure the removal of the offensive colour bar in the immigration laws of the Transvaal.[2]

I have, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records : 291/142; also, from a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5164

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Letters from Colonial Office and Ampthill".

[2] The Colonial Office reaction to this letter is available in a minute of November 9. On receipt of Gandhiji's communication, the Colonial Office sent a cable to the Transvaal Government. *Vide* Appendix "Colonial Office Minute".

141. LETTER TO TRANSVAAL BRITISH INDIANS[1]

[LONDON,
November 6, 1909]

We of the United Kingdom have learnt, through those who are working here on your behalf, about your sorrows and trials under the British flag. That you are fighting for the honour of your race and your motherland commands our admiration. In our opinion, the Transvaal Government has no right to debar British subjects who may be of a different race or a different colour to themselves from entering that Colony because of colour or race. We hold it to be contrary to the traditions of the Empire to which you and we belong. We appreciate the moderation of your position in that, whilst you naturally insist upon your national honour being preserved untarnished, you do not oppose the desire of the Colonists in the Transvaal to regulate and restrict immigration from India under general and non-racial legislation, and on economic grounds which to the Colonists appear to be just.

The Method you have adopted for seeking redress appeals to us who believe in religion as the guiding force of life. In making your position good, and in convincing the authorities of the justice of your cause and of the earnestness of your demand, you have not resorted to methods of violence and physical force, but you have heroically suffered in your own persons by refusing to accept a law which you rightly consider to be repugnant to your conscience and by submitting to the penalties provided by it for non-submission. 2,500 of you have already been imprisoned—mostly with hard labour, and for long terms up to six months. Some of you have become impoverished. Wives have patiently borne separation from their husbands, and have also been reduced almost to starvation. Your merchants have allowed their goods to be sold, and have allowed their creditors to take away their stock. In undergoing such suffering you are showing the true spirit of the great teachers of the different

religions of the world. We sympathise with you. We mean that our whole life shall testify how earnestly we desire for you strength and courage to continue your struggle, and, as a tangible expression of our sympathy for you, we subscribe our names herein below, and pay whatever we feel impelled to give towards the relief of your distress. We hope that the authorities, as well in the Transvaal as in London, will open their eyes and give immediate relief.

Indian Opinion, 11-12-1909

142. DEPUTATION'S LAST LETTER[1]

[After *November 6, 1909*]

LORD CREWE'S REPLY

Everything now is as clear as daylight. Lord Crewe has given a plain reply. Says he.[2]

> I am to inform you that the proposals in question were those put before you by His Lordship on the 16th of September as having been made by Mr. Smuts, *viz.*, the repal of Act 2 of 1907 and the admission of six educated Asiatics each year on certificates of permanent right of residence, which would involve, in your own view, a real step in advance and would, so far as their practical effect is concerned, provide a solution of the present difficulty. They were not, nor were they connected with, those made by yourself, and involving a theoretical claim for which His Lordship is not able to hold out any hope of obtaining recognition. Indeed, at the interview on the 16th of September, His Lordship explained to you that Mr. Smuts was unable to accept the claim that Asiatics should be placed in a position of equality with Europeans in respect of right of entry or otherwise.

DEPUTATION'S REPLY

The deputation has replied to this letter as under :[3]

[1] This was published in *Indian Opinion* with the following sub-headings : "Steps Taken in England : Detailed Statement in Press : Volunteers to Canvaas Support for Struggle."

[2] What follows is an extract from the letter dated November 3 from the Under Secretary for Colonies; *vide* Appendix "Letters from Colonial Office and Ampthill".

[3] For the text of the letter, *vide* "Letter to Under Secretary for Colonies", 6-11-1909.

It is now necessary for every Indian to understand what the struggle is about and how important are the issues involved. We are carrying a burden on behalf of the whole of India. It is but our duty to do so. Mr. Smuts is prepared to offer us whatever we want if only we concede that we are not the equals of whites. He clings to the position that we shall not have equality under the law. He has struck at the root of British principles and the principles of humanity. We have taken the blow on ourselves in order to defend those principles. Were the blow to strike at the root, the British Empire will cease to have any meaning, and it will be slavery for Indians to stay on in the Transvaal or South Africa. No one can enslave us against our will. If we do not recognize the principles of the man [who may attempt to enslave us] and refuse to carry out his orders, we cease to be slaves. In former times, they used force to impose slavery; now they use blandishments. In olden days, one might say, things were better, since all the evil was there on the surface for everyone to see, with the result that people were repelled by it. When the slaves could no longer bear their sufferings, they ran away or killed themselves. Now that they seek to confer slavery upon us through baits, we readily accept it, not even knowing that it is slavery. We are fighting the battle of satyagraha in South Africa in order to save ourselves from such a plight. The Government know, and we ought to—if we do not know already—that, if we once compel it to give up its effort [to enslave us], the rest will be easy enough for us. We are carrying on a fight for the franchise that really matters. We are demonstrating that we have the potentialities of nationhood in us, the spirit that people aspiring to be a nation must possess.

Moreover, we are not fighting against the Transvaal [Government] only, but also against the Imperial Government, for the latter has assented to the law[1] in question. "You will get all that you want if you give up the claim to legal equality;" in other words, "Sign a bond of slavery and you will be treated well." Or, we may explain this by imagining Germany saying to the British : "Come under our rule and we shall treat you well." In reply, the British will say : "We do not care to be treated well by you. We are happy defending our freedom, whatever the suffering we may have to go

[1] The Asiatic Registration Act No. 2 of 1907

through." That is exactly the kind of reply that we have been giving for the last three years, and which, I hope, we shall for ever continue to give. Many embraced poverty in the course of the fight for legal equality in respect of right of entry, and we are prepared to lay down our lives in it. I take it that the brave ones who have taken up arms will never retreat. Let every Indian tell himself over and over again that the remedy for this situation is in our own hands, not in those of the Imperial Government or of the Transvaal Government. It is our duty to make formal representations to them and reason with them. But it should not be forgotten that no pressure other than that of our own strength will avail us.

FEELINGS

The cable-report in the newspapers about the imprisonment of my son, Harilal, coming as it did at the same time as Lord Crewe's letter, certainly made me very happy. When so many Indians were re-arrested, I was not in the least happy that my son and I should be free. And just then appeared the cable-report. Miss Polak, who understands my feelings on this matter, congratulated me as she gave me the news. Though I know that the boy, poor child, will suffer, I welcome the news all the same. It will do him good to suffer, and me too; he will be doing a service to the community. It is the command of God [that one should suffer]. Nagappen, you too were a mere child, and sacrificed your life for the sake of the motherland. I regard your sacrifice as a blessing on your family. I believe that, though dead, you are immortal. Why, then, should I be upset by my son's imprisonment? His associates have returned to gaol. None of them stands to gain anything by doing so, and yet they have submitted to the hardships of gaol. I refuse to believe that this suffering will not be rewarded with happiness and that the law will not be repealed on our terms. I hope that no Indian will be timid enough to entertain such a belief.

TO SOUTH AFRICAN INDIANS

I say to all the Indians in South Africa that this struggle is not confined to the Transvaal, that it is on behalf of them all and that they should extend every encouragement to those who are fighting. To Mr. Abdul Caadir and Mr. Amod Bhayat, who have seen for themselves how matters stand here, I say that their duty requires them to instil the highest spirit in the people. Everyone can, and will, I

hope, help to the best of his means, some by expressing their views, some with money and others by going to gaol.

We have only one week before leaving[1] , and plenty to do in the meantime. A printed statement is ready, which is now to be sent round. It is accompanied by a forwarding letter, which reads as follows :[2]

It is hoped that newspapers will publish the letter.

INDIAN UNION SOCIETY

A meeting of the Indian Union Society was held on Saturday, when all the facts about the struggle were placed before the Indians and the whites. A brief report of the meeting appeared in one of the newspapers here.

MEETING OF LONDON INDIANS

A meeting of the local Indians was held on Tuesday last. Between 40 and 50 Indians were present. Mr. Hajee Habib, Mr. Anglia and I spoke. I asked for some Indians to come forward as volunteers. They would have to go from house to house and collect signatures on a letter[3] of sympathy. Besides signing the letter, one may also offer, if so inclined, anything from a farthing upwards. There can be thousands of such signatures. They cannot but produce an effect on the Imperial Government as also on others. In response to the call, about 20 Indians gave their names on the spot. This is a very promising idea. It is likely to take root and, if all the volunteers put their heart into the work, they may achieve a big result. In that case, while pressure is being exerted in India on the one hand, there will be similar pressure in England on the other and, if we meanwhile maintain our spirit in the Transvaal, the fight can well be brought to an early conclusion. Afterwards, some whites, too, gave their names. In all, the following names have been received :

Messrs G. C. Verma, S. P. Verma, F. Lalan, J. P. patel, K. Amid, N. Dwarkadas, D. C. Ghose, H. M. Bose, G. H. Khan, Abdool Haq, S. Manga, A. Haffeji, B. Sahai, H. R. Bilimoria, D. Singh, B. Prasad, Hussain Dawad, A. H. Gool, R. G. Munsif, M. K. Azad, P. Banerjee, A. Mann, H. E. Cheeseman, and among the ladies, Miss F. Winter-bottom, Mrs. G. Nag, Mrs. Polak, Mrs. Dube, Miss Hussain and the

[1] The deputation left England on November13.
[2] For the text of the letter, *vide* "Letter to the Press", 5-11-1909.
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

Misses Polak.

SUGGESTION TO START NEWSPAPER

There is also an idea that we may start a small journal here in England itself for the duration of the struggle. It should give a digest of all the news received from South Africa and India and should be put on sale at a number of places. The intention is to start the journal only if some whites here offer to finance it. It is their duty to do so, and they must, of course, carry it out. The difficulty is that Mr. Ritch does not have enough time for the purpose and no one equally capable is available at present. There are many who can work under him, but it is necessary to have a man who will offer his whole-time services to the work. The journal can start only when such a man is available.

MEYER'S HELP

To end, Mr. Meyer, the well-known clergyman who had been in Johannesburg for some time, has arranged a tea-party at his own cost to enable people to meet us both. He has invited some 60 persons. We are to explain the whole position there. The function will take place on Friday, the 12th.[1] Things are thus on the move on every side. But the effectiveness of every step will depend on our courage. The following were the final words of Mr. Meyer,[2] "We (the British) shall not be of much help to you. You will have to suffer and go to gaol. It is only when you have done so and when India is aroused that you will see the end of your trials. Otherwise, be sure that nothing will happen. I will, of course, do my best." This was well-said. It is only deluding ourselves to believe that others will do anything for us.

Dr. Miss Joshi and Mr. Mhaskar have contributed £3 [each] to the struggle. Likewise, Mr. Gokulbhai Dalal has sent 10s. Dr. Joshi has also addressed a letter to the editor [of *Indian Opinion*].

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-12-1909

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Farewell Meeting", 12-11-1909.

[2] Gandhiji met Rev. F. B. Meyer at lunch on September 24.

143. LONDON

[Before *November 8, 1909*]

SUFFRAGETTES

The campaign that women have been carrying on for the franchise can prove most useful to us, or so I think at least. It has importance both for South Africa and India. They do much that deserves to be copied, and much that should be avoided. Like us, they believe that they are being denied their rights, and that they are treated as inferior [to men]. Their struggle has been going on for quite some time. They, too, have two parties, one moderate and the other extremist. The difference between them and us is that they are not satyagrahis, but believe in brute force.

Their courage, their unity, their readiness to bear pecuniary losses, their intelligence—all these deserve to be admired and emulated. They throw stones and injure others, forgetting all sense of propriety, and these ways of theirs deserve to be shunned. Three such incidents occurred only recently. A suffragette in Manchester Gaol was being forcibly fed. She, therefore, resorted to a stratagem which made it impossible to open the door [of her cell]. Thereupon, the authorities sprayed her with a water-hose. Still, she did not open the door. This lady had real courage, indeed, but used it to a wrong end. Those who come forward to suffer are not justified in behaving as she did. Her object was to secure her release from gaol, and she achieved it. But the women won no rights [thereby]. When it came to be known that she was sprayed with a water-hose, she was ordered to be released.

In a certain locality here, election of a member to the House of Commons was going on. Two women went there with the intention of spoiling election papers.[1] They had with them some liquid with which they could burn paper. Having managed somehow to enter the election booth, they squirted the liquid all round. Not many papers were spoiled, but one of the women caused a serious injury to an officer's eye. This was a very base thing to do. It is being condemned by everyone. And yet, her Association has accepted

[1] Reports of these two incidents appeared in the Gujarati columns of *Indian Opinion*, 6-11-1909.

responsibility for what she did. The women are now being prosecuted.

At a third place, the broke the door-panes of the physician who used to carry out forcible feeding. This was done merely with the object of damaging the physician's property. In what way was the physician to blame? He was only an officer of the Government and undertook the task [of forcible feeding]. All these are courageous acts, but courage by itself cannot win any rights. Courage should be put to a worthy use.

I came to know only recently that the suffragettes publish four journals— three weeklies and one monthly. A single branch of their Association raised the entire sum of £50,000 much before the target date, and so, they are now planning to raise the figure to £1,00,000. They have a band of their own, and also a special photographer for their journal. There are meetings of the Association branches at one place or another all through the week. The franchise is nowhere in sight yet, but they refuse to accept defeat and go on fighting. This is surely no ordinary spirit.

BUDGET

The storm over the budget raged for six months in the House of Commons. It has now passed the Budget Bill, which will go to the House of Lords on Monday. The Bill is expected to meet with fierce opposition there. Many believe that the House of Lords will refuse to pass the Budget. In that case, there will be new elections in January. Many people hold that even if that happens, the Liberal Party will win. For the present, the British people are intensely preoccupied with this question. They can think of nothing else, for it is a fierce strife that is going on between the commoners and the nobility. Each side reviles the other and doubts its *bona fides*. The only thing they have desisted from, so far, is actual physical fighting and that, too, not because they think it bad but because neither side expects to profit by it. They are not likely [however] to invite help from a third party to settle their quarrel. That much is certain.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-12-1909

144. INTERVIEW TO REUTER[1]

[LONDON,
November 9, 1909]

Mr. Gandhi, interviewed by a representative of Reuter's Agency, expressed disappointment at the failure of negotiations with Mr. Smuts. He paid a tribute to the efforts of Lord Crewe to effect a settlement of the Asiatic question with the Transvaal Government, but he said that the concessions which had been made did not touch the vital principle of legal equality.

Mr. Gandhi said he expected Hajee Habib and himself to be arrested on the Transvaal border. The campaign with which he was associated would, however, be continued most strenuously in India, the United Kingdom and South Africa, where Indian and English volunteers had organized a house-to-house visitation with the object of securing support and funds.

Indian Opinion, 13-11-1909

145. LETTER TO AYLMER MAUDE

LONDON,
November 10, 1909

DEAR MR. MAUDE,

I have not succeeded in getting the *Manchester Guardian* to take up Tolstoy's "Letter to a Hindoo". I have not been able to go to the British Museum myself, but I asked a friend to look up Ballou's[2] books. His books are there.

Could you please now tell me whether you would act as co-judge with Dr. Clifford with reference to the Passive Resistance Essay.

I remain, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the handwritten original signed by Gandhiji : C. W. 4439

[1] This was published under the caption "News from London".

[2] The reference evidently is to Adin Ballou (1803-1890). American Clergyman, founder of Hopedale Community and author of *Practical Christian Socialism. I Primitive Christianity and its Corruption* and other works. Tolstoy, who mentions him admiringly in *The Kingdom of God* is within You, was greatly impressed by Ballou's writings.

146. LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

[LONDON,]
November 10, 1909

MY LORD,

I am much obliged to Your Lordship for your letter of today. As you propose to make use of the information about the interview[1] at the forthcoming discussion in the House of Lords, I quite agree that the minutes should be sent to Lord Crewe for confirmation or . . . [2]

I am delighted to learn that your son is making good progress.[3]

I remain, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5172

147. LETTER TO LEO TOLSTOY

LONDON,
November 10, 1909

DEAR SIR,

I beg to tender my thanks for your registered letter in connection with the letter addressed to a Hindu, and with the matters that I dealt with in my letter[4] to you.

Having heard about your failing health I refrained, in order to save you the trouble, from sending an acknowledgment, knowing that a written expression of my thanks was a superfluous formality; but Mr. Aylmer Maude, whom I have now been able to meet reassured me that you were keeping very good health indeed and that unfailingly and regularly you attended to your correspondence every morning. It was a very gladsome news to me, and it encourages me to write to you further about matters which are, I know, of the greatest importance according to your teaching.

I beg to send you herewith a copy of a book[5] written by a

[1] *Vide* "Substance of interview with Lord Crewe", 16-11-1909 and Appendix "Colonial Office Minute".

[2] Some words have not registered on the office copy.

[3] On November 7, Lord Ampthill had informed Gandhiji that one of his children was ill, and put off an appointment with him fixed for the next day.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Leo Tolstoy", 1-10-1909.

[5] *M. K. Gandhi : An Indian patriot in South Africa* by Rev. J. J. Doke.

friend—an Englishman, who is at present in South Africa, in connection with my life, in so far as it has a bearing on the struggle with which I am so connected, and to which my life is dedicated. As I am very anxious to engage your active interest and sympathy, I thought that it would not be considered by you as out of the way for me to send you the book.

In my opinion, this struggle of the Indians in the Transvaal is the greatest of modern times, inasmuch as it has been idealised both as to the goal as also the methods adopted to reach the goal. I am not aware of a struggle in which the participators are not to derive any personal advantage at the end of it, and in which 50 per cent. of the persons affected have undergone great suffering and trial for the sake of a principle. It has not been possible for me to advertise the struggle as much as I should like. You command, possibly, the widest public today. If you are satisfied as to the facts you will find set forth in Mr. Doke's book, and if you consider that the conclusions I have arrived at are justified by the facts, may I ask you to use your influence in any manner you think fit to popularise the movement? If it succeeds, it well be not only a triumph of religion, love and truth over irreligion, hatred and falsehood, but it is highly likely to serve as an example to the millions in India and to people in other parts of the world, who may be down-trodden and will certainly go a great way towards breaking up the party of violence, at least in India. If we hold out to the end, as I think we would, I entertain not the slightest doubt as to its ultimate success; and your encouragement in the way suggested by you can only strengthen us in our resolve.

The negotiations that are going on for a settlement of the question have practically fallen through, and together with my colleague I return to South Africa this week, and invite imprisonment. I may add that my son has happily joined me in the struggle and is now undergoing imprisonment with hard labour for six months. This is his fourth imprisonment in the course of the struggle.

If you would be so good as to reply to this letter, may I ask you to address your reply to me at Johannesburg, S.A., Box 6522.

Hoping that this will find you in good health.

I remain, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From an illustration of the original in *Mahatma*,. Vol. I; also, from a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5173

148. LETTER TO H. JUST

LONDON,
November 10, 1909

DEAR MR. JUST[1],

With reference to the official letter No. 34924/1909, may I trouble you to send me a copy of my letter[2] of 24th August last referred to in the above mentioned letter. My clerk seems to have mislaid the carbon copy.

I remain, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

H. JUST, ESQ.
COLONIAL OFFICE
DOWNING STREET
[LONDON]

Colonial Office Records : 291/142

149. LETTER TO UNDER SECRETARY FOR COLONIES

[LONDON,]
November 10, 1909

SIR,

I have the honour to draw the attention of the Earl of Crewe to the following cablegram received from Rangoon :

> Crowded public meeting held yesterday, attended by all sections community, Indians, Chinese, Burmese, emphatically condemned Transvaal Asiatic legislation, urging immediate Imperial intervention remove racial indignity, prevent further ill-treatment resident Asiatics; urging also stoppage recruitment Indian labour for South Africa until existing grievances have been remedied. Other resolutions passed expressing admiration attitude adopted by Asiatics resident Transvaal. Committee being formed raise fund to alleviate their needs. Great indignation, enthusiasm displayed.

I have, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records : 291/142; also, from a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5174

[1] Hartmann Just (1854-1929); Assistant Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1907-16

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Crewe", 24-8-1909.

150. INTERVIEW TO "THE DAILY EXPRESS"[1]

[LONDON,
November 10, 1909]

General Smuts took a step forward when he said he would repeal the obnoxious Asiatic Act and, so far as the status of educated Indians arising from the Act is concerned said he was prepared to grant certificates of permanent residence to a limited number of Indians. This is satisfactory as far as it goes, but it leaves untouched the principle for which and for which alone we have been fighting. That principle is for legal equality so far as immigration is concerned. General Smuts' offer is not enough to stop passive resistance on our part. Mr. Hajee Habib and myself are returning at once to Johannesburg. The next step probably is that both of us will be arrested at the Transvaal frontier, but the campaign will continue with unabated vigour. Hitherto we have refrained from asking for funds in India or elsewhere outside South Africa, but the severe strain upon our resources and the number of ruined families whom we have to support now make this essential. We have organised a band of Indian and English volunteers who, immediately on our departure from this country, will commence house-to-house visits both in London and in the provinces, asking for signatures for a memorandum to the authorities of the Transvaal and in London.

India, 12-11-1909

151. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

LONDON,
November 11, 1909

DEAR PROFESSOR GOKHALE,

Although I have your kind message through Mr. Polak that I should not address you as Professor[2] , my reverence for you will not enable me to adopt a more familiar style.

[1] This report of the interview was reproduced in *India* from *The Daily Express*, 10-11-1909.

[2] In his letter of September 10, Polak had informed Gandhiji that Gokhale thought it "too formal and he and you know each other too well for these formalities."

In his last letter, Mr. Polak tells me that overwork and anxiety have ruined your health and that your plain-spokenness has endangered your life[1] . I venture to suggest that you should come to the Transvaal and join us. I claim that the Transvaal struggle is national in every sense of the term. It deserves the highest encouragement. I have considered it to be the greatest struggle of modern time. That it will succeed in the end I have not the slightest doubt. But an early success will break up the violence movement in India.

I have moved very freely among our countrymen here and I notice extreme bitterness against you. Most consider that violence is the only method for securing any reform. In the Transvaal, we are trying to show that violence is futile and that the proper method is self-suffering. i.e., passive resistance. If, therefore, you came to the Transvaal, publicly declaring that it was your intention to share our sorrows and, therefore, to cross the Transvaal border as a citizen of the Empire, you would give it a world-wide significance, the struggle will soon end and your countrymen will know you better. The last consideration may not weigh with you. But it does with me for the sake of themselves. If you would come, and If you are left untouched and I am free, I should deem it a great privilege to nurse you. If you are arrested and imprisoned, I should be delighted. I may be wrong, but I do feel that it is a step worth taking for the sake of India. Feeling so strongly, I would be pardoned for suggesting that the Transvaal question should have a prominent place on the Congress platform and nothing can be so effective as for you to say that you would join the struggle.

I have written this letter in the midst of interruptions. I have not therefore been able to explain all I should like to. I would only [add] that my reverence for you has prompted this suggestion. I would see you reach perfection among your countrymen in S. A., where you would not be misunderstood and where you would be mentioned as nowhere else.

Will you kindly send your reply to me at Johannesburg, Box 6522?

I remain, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand : C. W. 924 Courtesy : Servants of India Society, Poona

[1] Polak had written on October 14: "You will see what poor Gokhale has to suffer. He tells me (privately) that the Governor sent for him and warned him that his person was in danger. The S [ervants] of I[ndia] watch him day and night and never let him go out unguarded."

152. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

[LONDON,]

November 11, 1909

MY DEAR HENRY,

I should like to write a very long letter to you, but I do not know how to. I am full of information of the greatest importance but I cannot give it to you in a presentable form during the time at my disposal. The first thing, however, I want to deal with is Maud's condition. I had only once joked with her, asking whether she wanted to go to South Africa, and the joke proceeded from a remark made by Hajee Habib, but it is evident that she has been very seriously thinking about it. Last evening she could not restrain herself, and told me she wanted to go to South Africa very badly and work for the cause. I was not surprised, and yet this is not quite accurate, because I was taken aback a little, as I have felt she was permanently fixed up at the place where she is, not that I am at all in love with it, but it appeared to me to be the best in the circumstances. She is very sweet-natured. I think she is capable of great self-sacrifice, and she is willing to work, but I do not know how far the Phoenix life would suit her. Personally, I feel that, if she wants to go to South Africa merely to earn her living, it is hardly worthwhile; but if she wants to work for an ideal, she must have the strength and courage to do it. I have told her all I could about things. I have told her as well as I could about the jarring notes there, and I have told her, too, that there is no money in it. I have further told her how Millie herself finds it difficult to reconcile herself to life at Phoenix. She is in possession of all the information that I can give her. I have further told her that I am not in a position to give a definite opinion, that first of all she must secure Pater's and Mater's consent, and then Sally's. After she has the approval of the three, she sould place her position before you, and finally depend upon Millie's advice. I have told her, too, that however much she may regard my view, and like it, I consider myself incompetent to enter into all a woman's feelings, and when she has accessible to her Millie's loving assistance and advice, she cannot do better than rely upon her judgment. She tells me that she wants to be able to send home £4 per month. I have told her that this is not impossible, but that the chief thing to consider is whether she will be able to appreciate and

love the Phoenix life. I have told her, too, that there is no definite work that can be assigned to her—that it may be anything, from what is considered the meanest household duties, to teaching, and moulding the characters of the children at Phoenix. Now, I think, I have told you everything. She will be writing you fully. You know her much better than I do, and you will be able to guide her in the path you think best for her moral well-being. The other household matters that I would like to discuss with you must wait, unless I get the time between now and reaching Madeira, but my programme for the voyage is so full that domestic matters which are not urgent are likely to be crowded out. Maud is writing to you very fully, and she has promised to show me her letter, and if I have any further suggestions, after I have read the letter, I will write again. Millie is coming here from Westcliffe on Friday, and I shall fully discuss it with her, as also with Pater and Mater, if I get an opportunity of seeing them. Millie will sleep at the Hotel, so I am looking forward to a long and quiet chat with her. Naturally we are much nearer each other now than we were ever before, having seen more of each other than in Johannesburg, where I rarely met her apart. Waldo and Brownie are looking superb. I still retain the opinion that it is difficult, if not impossible, to match Waldo in beauty, and he is daily becoming more and more wilful ! He is certainly very original, and you will appreciate the fact when I tell you that Simmonds completes his happiness. Sally, who is sitting by me, just reminds me that I should not finish this letter without telling you something about Brownie; that he is outgrowing his superficial ugliness, and that he has begun to speak is stale news, but probably you do not know that the first name he learnt to pronounce was Sally's. Sally may be a good worker in her office; she claims to be an estimable suffragette, not to be beaten by mere man; I can certainly certify to her being at her best when she is with Waldo and Brownie. When one meets a woman who is at her best with children, you know what an opinion I have of her.

Since dictating this letter, I have seen Sally. Just fancy Sally saying she is also anxious to go to Phoenix and that she would simply love the life. I wonder if the taint (?) of simplicity runs through the family and if it only requires a little nursing to bring it all out. She says that is was she who suggested to Maud that Maud should go out, but she also adds that they do not want to desert the parents, and so she recognises that one or the other should stay. I do not know how to take all this. I am afraid that I am very largely, responsible for

their enthusiasm. I have spoken in such glowing terms about the charm of simplicity and all that, that they have pictured Phoenix as a Paradise. Simmonds cautions me against any hasty advice or hasty step. His caution I appreciate very greatly, and I therefore pass it on to you. I have no intention of advising the girls to take the plunge.

As I mentioned in another letter, I should like to write at very great length, and yet this is being dictated after one o'clock a.m. and there is a vast amount of humdrum work to go through before Saturday.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 5175

153. LETTER TO UNDER SECRETARY FOR COLONIES

[LONDON,]
November 11, 1909

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th instant, enclosing a copy of a despatch from the Governor of the Transvaal, together with a minute from the Transvaal Ministers regarding the treatment of British Indian prisoners.

I note in the minute from the Prime Minister's Office, Pretoria, to the Deputy Governor, that there is a categorical denial of every complaint made. I venture, however, to submit for His Lordship's consideration the fact that, from my own personal observations made at the different prisons of the Transvaal, the complaints received by me and passed on to the Colonial Office appear to me, in the main, to be substantial.

As to the death of the late Nagappen, the magistrate's finding has been challenged by the Indian community,[1] as also by the European Committee presided over by Mr. Hosken, and that a

[1] E. I. Aswat, Acting Chairman of the British Indian Association, in a letter to *the Rand Daily Mail*, had expressed surprise at the judgment of the Commission and felt that "sufficient weight has not been attached to some portions of the evidence". The Secretary of State for the Colonies received on September 30 a communication from the British Indian Committee at Pretoria, saying that Government had been requested to reopen the enquiry. An official of the Colonial Office recorded in a minute dated October 1: "I am afraid this is a bad business. The Government enquiry into Nagappen's death is a complete white-washing and is accordingly heartily endorsed by the Ministers . . . but the evidence, it is pretty clear, hardly supports the conclusions . . . "

reopening of the enquiry was asked for and refused.[1] Moreover, I invite His Lordship's attention to the fact that the allegation that the deceased was not supplied with rice was sustained. That the magistrate left it an open question as to whether he had two blankets or not, that the deceased was taken from Johannesburg to a camp in a rigorous winter, and was called upon to do rough work, are undisputed facts.

As to the diet scale, His Lordship is already in possession of the exhaustive report of the independent medical men of Johannesburg bearing out the Indian allegation that this scale is deficient.

With regard to the prisoner Mahomed Khan, I have already stated in my letter[2] of the 16th August that there might be some exaggeration, but I venture to trust that I shall be pardoned for saying that the denials of the officials concerned of the truth of the complaints are hardly sufficient answer. It was open, as it is now, to the Government, if they wish, to invite Mr. Mahomed Khan to corroborate or withdraw his complaints.

The later developments, in the shape of a refusal to allow Indian prisoners to receive religious consolation, and to permit Mahomedans during the sacred months of *Ramzan* to receive facilities for observing their fast, hardly bear out the statement that Indian prisoners are treated humanely, and that there is no desire on the part of the prison officials to treat them harshly because they are passive resisters.

It is likely that Indian prisoners are now invariably housed in cells by themselves, but it is within my own knowledge that, up to the month of May, Indian prisoners have been housed in the self-same cells as the Natives.

I have, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records: 291/142; also, from a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5177

[1] The European Committee had appealed to General Lord Methuen, Acting Governor of the Transvaal but the latter, on the advice of his Ministers, had refused to sanction a fresh inquiry.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Crewe", 16-8-1909

154. LETTER TO "DAILY TELEGRAPH"

[LONDON,]
November 11, 1909

THE EDITOR
DAILY TELEGRAPH

DEAR SIR,

I am sorry that you could not spare a few minutes to grant me an interview. I received the message that I was to write to you. The position to date in connection with the Transvaal British Indian question is given in the statement issued to the Press,[1] a copy of which I trust you have seen. The reason why I wished to have a personal interview with you was to place before you the gravity of the Transvaal Indian question. As you will notice from the supplementary statement, the question is not now that of saving the Transvaal from an Asiatic influx; it purely and simply resolves itself into the question whether, so far as immigration is concerned, highly cultured Indians may be placed on an equality with the European immigrants, as they were before the legislation against which passive resistance has been offered and as they are now throughout the British Colonies. Thus, for the first time in the history of Colonial legislation, in the words of Mr. Chamberlain, "an affront" has been put upon the millions in India. In our struggle, therefore, I venture to think that we have a right to expect the Press of the United Kingdom to support us, and I hope that you will see your way to give due publicity to the movement, and favour it with your advocacy, regard being had to the fact that nearly fifty per cent, of the present Indian population of the Transvaal have passed through its goals, and that one young Indian[2] has succumbed to pneumonia, caught by him, according to the testimony of witnesses, whilst he was in goal.

I remain, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5176

[1] *Vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909 and also "Letter to the Press", 5-11-1909.

[2] This was Sammy Nagappen; *vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909.

155. LETTER TO UNDER SECRETARY FOR COLONIES

[LONDON,]
November 12, 1909

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 9th instant. I am not aware of the circumstances beyond what was contained in Mr. Polak's cablegram, but I am aware of the deportation of Mr. Chunilal Panachand who, although he knew English and, therefore, had a right to enter Natal or the Cape Colony, and although he was domiciled in Delagoa Bay, was deported to India. His is a well-known case.

I myself appeared in another case; that was of Mr. Shelat.[1] He would have been deported to India had he not sent a message to me and had I not appeared before the Magistrate to have the matter rectified. Cases like this can certainly be multiplied, and from the experience I have of the working of the section of the Act bearing on deportation, the hardship caused could be satisfactorily demonstrated.

I have, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records: 291/142; also, from a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5178

156. LETTER TO THE INDIAN PRESS[1]

[LONDON,
November 12, 1909]

SIR,

I venture to trust that you will give as wide publicity as possible to the statement[2] that my colleague, Mr. Hajee Habib, and I have issued in connection with the British Indian struggle in the Transvaal. Although it is raging in the Transvaal, the fact that it is a matter of vital importance to the whole of India is so clear that he who runs may

[1] *Vide* "Trial of Naidoo and Others", 16-6-1909 and also "Johannesburg Letter", Before 21-6-1909.

[2] This was published under the title: "The Indian Struggle in the Transvaal". *Vide* also "Letter to the Press", 5-11-1909.

read, and the Transvaal Government have made that issue clear by emphatically declaring that, although they would give us the incidence that would flow from the granting of the principle we are fighting for, they are not prepared to meet us on the question of the principle itself, and so the struggle must go on. The principle we are fighting for cannot be better described than in the words of the Transvaal Government itself. Lord Crewe says in his reply to the Transvaal British Indian deputation:

> His Lordship explained to you that Mr. Smuts was unable to accept the claim that Asiatics should be placed in a position of equality with Europeans in respect of right of entry or otherwise.

The phrase "or otherwise" may, for the time being, be dismissed from consideration. All that we have asked for is equality in the eye of the law with Europeans in respect of the right of entry. It should be remembered that we are fighting for the restoration of this equality, which we enjoyed before the legislation in question was passed, as well during the Boer regime as after the British occupation, that is, up to the close of the, year 1906. The doctrine laid down by the Transvaal Government, and assented to by the Imperial Government cuts at the foundation of the Empire. In the words of Lord Ampthill,[1] who has made the cause his own:

> It is a matter which touches the honour of our race and affects the unity of the Empire as a whole; it, therefore, concerns every part of the Empire. Moreover, it is certain that any departure from principle, which may be sanctioned or ignored at the heart of the Empire, will operate as a mischievous example to other places inside and out, and then only by some rude shock to the whole system will the arrest of moral decay be possible.

Further on His Lordship states:

> Theory can be modified in practice to suit the exigencies of time and place, but if theory is cast to the winds, there is no means of steering practice.

I cannot place our position in clearer terms. If the doctrine of the Transvaal Government be true, the people of India cease to be partners in the Empire, and it is in order to resist this dangerous, immoral and pestilent doctrine that we in the Transvaal are fighting. How is India, including Anglo-India, to help in this national struggle? It should be remembered that we have taken practical steps for seeking redress, that is, we are suffering in our own persons by

[1] These are from his introduction to Doke's biography of Gandhiji; *vide* Appendix "Lord Ampthills' Letter to Gandhiji".

disregarding a law which we hold to be repugnant to our conscience and to religion in the highest sense of the term. Hundreds of Indians, otherwise illiterate, drawn from all classes, have gone to gaol to vindicate their ideal. Will not India come to the rescue? Will she not make this the all-important issue? Will the Congress give it the most prominent place in its programme? Will the reformed Legislative Council assert its right dignity by undertaking to solve the problem? Whether all this is done or not, may I conclude by assuring the public in India that the fight in the Transvaal will go on so long as a single passive resister is left alive, and I very much question whether the death of every resister can end a struggle such as the Transvaal Indians are engaged in.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Gujarati, 5-12-1909

157. SPEECH AT FAREWELL MEETING[1]

[LONDON,
November 12, 1909]

Mr. Gandhi said he was thankful to Mr. Meyer for having called the meeting and given his colleague and him an opportunity of making a statement with reference to the very difficult position of the British Indians in the Transvaal. He thought the caution Mr. Meyer had uttered with reference to what they had been doing in the Transvaal was a very proper caution;[2] they did not come before the public of England for an endorsement of every step they had taken in the struggle, but to receive their generous support, their sympathy and their encouragement, in the arduous struggle in

[1] A meeting to bid farewell to Gandhiji and Hajee Habib on the eve of their departure for South Africa was held at Westminster Palace Hotel. Among the guests were Dr. Rutherford, M. P., Sir Raymond West, Sir Frederick Lely, Sir Muncherjee Bhownaggree, J. M. Parikh, the Hon'ble Mr. Khare, Motilal Nehru and L. W. Ritch. Rev. F. B. Meyer, the host, introduced Gandhiji and Hajee Habib. Speeches were made by Sir Raymond West and Sir Frederick Lely besides Gandhiji. This is an extract from a report in *Indian Opinion*.

[2] Rev. Meyer had observed : "He thought their presence there did not endorse in every particular all Mr. Gandhi's works and acts in the long and arduous agitation he had been conducting. If a man made no mistakes, he made nothing. No man had not had to regret some word or act which might have been said or performed better, but, on the whole, their presence at that meeting was their endorsement of a struggle of a singularly pure character and unselfish methods, and he felt they represented a very large number of men who were watching this conflict with interest and who felt that they could not but contribute their influence to it."

which they were engaged. The question upon which he would venture to occupy their attention for a few minutes was, in his humble opinion, a question of the most solemn importance, not only to the British Indians of the Transvaal, who were engaged in that struggle, but to the whole of the British Empire. It was perfectly true that a certain offer had been made in connection with the struggle, and Mr. Meyer had placed the position quite correctly before them in stating that they declined to accept the offer that had been made because it did not touch the principle for which they were fighting. There were in South Africa nearly 150,000 British Indians who had been settled there for close upon forty years, if not longer. The immigration of British Indians commenced with the system of Indentured Labour in Natal. This was followed by the advent of free British Indians who paid their own passage and these free British Indians it was who had excited the trade jealousy of their rivals in commerce; hence the present British Indian problem in South Africa. The position they occupied in that country was a very difficult and a very delicate position. It was also exceedingly precarious. In Natal, at the Cape, in the Orange Free State, and in the Transvaal, there existed legislation which hurt their feelings, which hurt their self-respect, and which deprived them of many avenues of earning an honest livelihood. In the Transvaal particularly, the position had become exceedingly acute. Before the War, they could not hold landed property. They had, of course, no Burgher rights. They could live only in Locations, They might not walk on the footpaths nor ride on tram cars. With regard to the living in Locations, that difficulty had now been removed, although this was not because of the good-will of the Government, but because a flaw was discovered in the laws of the country. All the other restrictions, it would be seen, vitally affected the position of British Indians in the Transvaal, as also throughout South Africa. Hitherto, that is up to the year 1906, they had been able to put up with these restrictions. They had had to suffer all these disabilities. They had memorialised the Government, they had gone to the British Agent. His friend and co-delegate, Mr. Hajee Habib, could tell them that, during his stay in Pretoria as a merchant of some standing, he had been times without number to the British Agent before the last War, for relief, but very little had been granted. Still there had been the British Agent to fall back upon, who had given them some sympathy and had sometimes obtained a measure of redress, but they had not felt called upon to go beyond taking these steps. When, however, in 1906, the law about which he had to address them was passed, he felt that that was the coping stone of an edifice that was erected in order to degrade them and to drive them out of South Africa. That legislation, as he had elsewhere said, was conceived in distrust, it was born in an atmosphere of criminality, and it was nurtured in arrogant high-handedness. When that legislation was brought in, all kinds of charges were brought against his community, and had since been disproved, and it constituted an attack on their conscience and, he would say, upon their religion also in the truest and highest

sense of the word, for it took away from them their manhood. They felt it was utterly impossible to accept legislation of that character. They again approached the Government. He would here add also that the object of that legislation was not only to degrade them, but was, together with the legislation that had been foreshadowed by the gentleman who had introduced that legislation, to put a barrier upon British Indian immigration into the Transvaal. This legislation was to be undertaken for the first time in the history of Colonial legislation. His communityrealised what all this meant. It was an attempt of the Transvaal Government to introduce into the Statute-book of the Colony the principle that British Indians might not enter the Transvaal *because they were British Indians.* They felt that very keenly. They felt that it was degrading to the national spirit and their manhood to accept such legislation and to remain in the Colony, and be satisfied simply with having petitioned and memorialised the Government in a matter of such very serious import, and it was for that reason that, when all attempts to secure justice and the removal of this bar sinister had failed, his friend and colleague, Mr. Hajee Habib, had administered an oath in a Johannesburg theatre to all assembled at a mass meeting[1] of British Indians—a meeting of nearly two thousand—not to submit to any legislation of such sinister import, and that meeting had risen as one man and had declared solemnly that, if that legislation were sanctioned by the Imperial Government, they would not accept it but would suffer the penalties for breaking it. Here, they would see, was no personal interest to serve. So long as it was a personal matter, so long as it touched their pockets only, they had put up with the disabilities under which they worked, but when it constituted a reflection on their national honour, when it meant they were not to be considered equal to Europeans even with respect to immigration, and saw that the very foundations upon which the British Constitution is built were being endangered by the Transvaal Colony, they felt that it was time for them to act more vigorously and they had before them two alternatives. One was to meet violence with violence. They rejected that doctrine. What was the other alternative? It was decided by the leaders of the community that they would not adopt any violent method, but that they would not accept this legislation and, instead, would suffer in their own persons the penalties provided. This method had been called, for want of a better phrase, Passive Resistance. He did not know how he could define the meaning he would like to attach to this term. He had been wondering how he could make their attitude clear to his audience, but an incident from the Bible occurred to him—a chapter in the life of Daniel, and he would say that the British Indians in the Transvaal had been doing what Daniel did when he was called upon to accept the laws of the Medes and the Persians, He regretted to have to say that the Imperial

[1] *Vide* "The Mass Meeting", 11-9-1906 and "Johannesburg Letter", 22-9-1906.

Government were party to this crime. They need not have accepted this legislation. They might have known that this legislation would deeply wound the susceptibilities of British Indians, and render it impossible for them to accept it while retaining their self-respect, and they might have stayed the hand of the Transvaal administration. They might have at least hesitated before they set their hand to such a document, but under the exigencies of party politics they had yielded. He could not suggest under what other motives they had lent their countenance to such a law. They (Indians) felt that acceptance was impossible, and so they became passive resisters. In effect they said to the Transvaal Government : "We will fill your gaols and suffer all the penalties you will put us to, but it is impossible for us to accept this law." He must pause and ask himself what was the meaning of the British Constitution. Did it not confer equality upon the different members of the Empire comprised in the British Constitution? He could understand that. He could consent to remain a subject of an Empire based upon this principle, but, in the light of his experience, he must declare it was utterly impossible for him to give his allegiance to an Empire in which he was not to be treated, even in theory, as an equal of any other member of that Empire. If he was to be treated as an inferior, then he would never aspire to a position of equality. He might be content to be a member of an Empire in which he participated to the extent even of a one per cent. share, but if he was to be merely a slave, then the Empire had absolutely no meaning for him. The term "British subject" then became meaningless to him, and it was this effect of that legislation that he would like to impress upon the meeting, and which they had been feeling for the last three years. This legislation of the Colony of the Transvaal was cutting at the root of the British Empire, and in resisting the doctrine implied by such legislation, they had been rendering a service not only to British India but to the British Empire. They were undoubtedly offering passive resistance not only to the Transvaal Government but to the Imperial Government, and he hoped that meeting would tell him in no uncertain voice that they were doing rightly in doing so ("hear, hear," and applause). They felt they could not do less and deserve to be members of the British Empire— they would not deserve to be partners in the Empire and, unless there was partnership there could not be Empire. He had therefore not hesitated to say that this struggle was one of the greatest of modern times, and this was so because of the great principle at stake, because of the pure ideal for which they were fighting and, lastly, because of the pure methods they had adopted in endeavouring to attain that ideal. What was the offer that had now been made? It was that this legislation should be repealed, but the condition it was sought to impose was that British Indians shall not in future enter the Transvaal on terms of equality in the eye of the law with Europeans. The Transvaal Government were quite willing to stant British Indians the incidence that would flow from this change of legislation, nacrely, that a few British Indians would be able on sufferance to enter the Transvaal. They (British Indians)

were not satisfied with that. As an illustration, let them suppose a matter telling his slave : "You may sit at the table with me, and live with me : you may enjoy all these privileges, but on this condition, that this bond of slavery shall always exist between us." Could they suppose the slave would be satisfied? Could the slave be satisfied even with the highest place at that table, whilst the taint of slavery existed? Was it not clear that acquiescence was impossible so long as that bar remained—so long as the taint of slavery was unremoved? They could not accept as sufficient what was now offered by the Colonial Government; hence, they had come to appeal to the British public for their sympathy and support in this struggle. He realised that it was impossible for the Imperial Government to force by arms the hands of the Transvaal Government, and they as passive resisters could not even ask them to appeal to force. They themselves used no force. they asked nobody to use physical violence in their behalf, but they did think that the British public should know what that struggle meant, should learn that 50 per cent of the resident community had already been in the gaols, should know also that one young man had already died of pneumonia contracted in the gaols, that fathers and sons had together gone to gaol, that mothers had taken up baskets and sold fruit in the streets in order to support themselves and their children whilst their husbands were in gaol, that many families had been pauperised and had had to be supported out of contributions. If they, at that meeting, thought that the ideals that had led the passive resisters cheerfully to experience these sufferings appealed to them, they should send that little community of passive resisters their encouragement and sympathy and a word of cheer. They might at least show the Imperial Government that they would be no party to this crime against Imperial conscience. They in the Transvaal knew that they must not rely upon sympathy in England but upon their own strength, and he (Mr. Gandhi) felt that they had that strength. He felt that, so long as a single passive resister was left alive, he would continue the struggle. He had just received a cable from Johannesburg which told him that they were determined to continue to the end. This was a message sent not only from the British Indian Association, but included the small band of European workers who had formed a Committee under Mr. William Hosken, a Member of the Legislative Assembly, and he would ask his hearers to imitate that European Committee and to give them all the encouragement they could, and so hasten the end of their sufferings.[1]

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[1] Sir Raymond West and Sir Frederick Lely spoke next. At the conclusion of the meeting, the following resolution was unanimously passed : "That this meeting desires to express its earnest sympathy with the Transvaal British Indians in their peaceful and selfless struggle for civic rights and to offer its warmest encouragement to them in this struggle."

158. PREFACE TO LEO TOLSTOY'S "LETTER TO A HINDOO"[1]

S. S. KILDONAN CASTLE,
November 18, 1909

The letter[2] translated below calls for an explanation.

Count Tolstoy is a Russian nobleman. He has had his full share of life's pleasures, and was once a valiant soldier. He has no equal among European writers. After much experience and study, he has come to the conclusion that the political policies generally followed in the world are quite wrong. The chief reason for that, according to him, is that we are vengeful, a habit unworthy of us and contrary to the tenets of all religions. He believes that to return injury for injury does harm both to ourselves and our enemy. According to him, we should not retaliate against anyone who may injure us, but reward him with love instead. He is uncompromising in his loyalty to the principle of returning good for evil.

He does not mean by this that those who suffer must seek no redress. He believes rather that we invite suffering on ourselves through our own fault. An oppressor's efforts will be in vain if we refuse to submit to his tyranny. Generally, no one will kick me for the mere fun of it. There must be some deeper reason for his doing so. He will kick me to bend me to his will if I have been opposing him. If, in spite of the kicks, I refuse to carry out his orders, he will stop kicking me. It would make no difference to me whether he did so or not. What matters to me is the fact that his order is unjust. Slavery consists in submitting to an unjust order, not in suffering ourselves to be kicked. Real courage and humanity consist in not returning a kick for a kick. This is the core of Tolstoy's teaching.

The letter translated below was originally written in Russian. It was rendered into English by Tolstoy himself[3] and sent to the editor of *Free Hindustan*[4] in reply to a letter of his. This editor holds different views from Tolstoy's and hence he did not publish the letter.

[1] This is the Preface to the Gujarati translation of Tolstoy's letter dated December 14, 1908.

[2] Not reproduced here

[3] By one of Tolstoy's translators; *vide* the following item, p. 3.

[4] A journal published from Vancouver with Tarak Nath Das as Chief Editor. *Vide*. "Letter to Leo Tolstoy", 1-10-1909.

It reached my hands and a friend asked me whether or not it should be published. I liked the letter. What I saw was a copy of the original letter I sent it to Tolstoy and sought his permission to publish it, asking him at the same time whether the letterwas in fact written by him.[1] His permission having been received,[2] both the English version of the letter and a Gujarati translation are being published in *Indian Opinion*[3].

To me Tolstoy's letter is of great value. Anyone who has enjoyed the experience of the Transvaal struggle will perceive its value readily enough. A handful of Indian satyagrahis have pitted love or soul-force against the might of the Transvaal Government's guns. That is the central principle of Tolstoy's teaching, of the teaching of all religions. *Khuda-lshwar*[4] has endowed our soul with such strength that sheer brute force is of no avail against it. We have been employing that strength against the Transvaal Government not out of hatred or with a view to revenge, but merely in order to resist its unjust order.

But those who have not known what a happy experience satyagraha can be, who have been caught up in the toils of this huge sham of modern civilization, like moths flitting round a flame, will find no interest in Tolstoy's letter all at once. Such men should pause for a moment and reflect.

Tolstoy gives a simple answer to those Indians who appear impatient to drive the whites out of India. We are [according to him] our own slaves, not of the British. This should be engraved in our minds. The whites cannot remain if we do not want them. If the idea is to drive them out with firearms, let every Indian consider what precious little profit Europe has found in these.

Everyone would be happy to see India free. But there are as many views as men on how that can be brought about. Tolstoy points out a simple way to such men.

Tolstoy has addressed this letter to a Hindu and that is why it cites thoughts from Hindu scriptures. Such thoughts, however, are to be found in the scriptures of every religion. They are such as will be acceptable to all, Hindus, Muslims and Parsis. Religious practices and

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Leo Tolstoy", 1-10-1909.

[2] *Vide* "Appendix, Tolstoy's Letter to Gandhiji", 7-10-1909.

[3] Of 25-12-1909, 1-1-1910 & 8-1-1910

[4] God

dogmas may differ, but the principles of ethics must be the same in all religions. I therefore advise all readers to think [only] of ethics.

No one should assume that I accept all the ideas of Tolstoy.[1] I look upon him as one of my teachers. But I certainly do not agree with all his ideas. The central principle of his teaching is entirely acceptable to me, and it is set out in the letter given below.

In this letter, he has not spared the superstitions of any religion. That is, however, no reason why any proud follower of Hinduism or of any other religion should oppose his teaching. It should suffice for us that he accepts the fundamental principles of every religion. When irreligion poses as religion, as it so often does, even true religion suffers. Tolstoy points this out repeatedly. We must pay the utmost attention to his thought whatever the religion we belong to.

In translating [the letter], I have endeavoured to use the simplest possible Gujarati. I have been mindful of the fact that readers of *Indian Opinion* prefer simple language. Moreover, I want Tolstoy's letter to be read by thousands of Gujarati Indians, and difficult language may prove tedious reading to such large numbers. Though all this has been kept in mind, slightly difficult words may have been occasionally used when simpler ones were not available, for which I apologize to the readers.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-12-1909

159. PREFACE TO LEO TOLSTOY'S "LETTER TO A HINDOO"

S. S. *KILDONAN CASTLE*

November 19, 1909

The letter that is printed below[2] is a translation prepared by one of Tolstoy's translators of his letter written in Russian in reply to a letter from the Editor of the *Free Hindustan*. The letter, after having passed from hand to hand, at last came into my possession through a

[1] Gandhiji did not agree with Tolstoy's ideas on reincarnation; *vide* "Letter to Leo Tolstoy", 1-10-1909.

[2] "Letter to a Hindoo", not reproduced here, published in Indian Opinion, 25-l2-1909, 1-1-l910 & 8-1-1910

friend who asked me, as one much interested in Tolstoy's writings, whether I thought it to be worth publishing. I at once replied in the affirmative and told him I should translate it myself into Gujarati and induce others to translate and publish it into various Indian vernaculars.

The letter as received by me was a typewritten copy. It was, therefore, referred[1] to the author who confirmed it as his and kindly granted me permission to print it.[2]

To me, as a humble follower of that great teacher whom I have long looked upon as one of my guides, it is a matter of honour to be connected with the publication of his letter, such, especially, as the one which is now being given to the world.

It is a mere statement of fact to say that every Indian, whether he owns up to it or not, has national aspirations. But there are as many opinions as there are Indian nationalists, as to the exact meaning of that aspiration and more especially as to the methods to be used to attain the end.

One of the accepted and "time-honoured" methods to attain the end is that of violence. The assassination of Sir Curzon Wylie[3] was an illustration in its worst and [most] detestable form of that method. Tolstoy's life has been devoted to replacing the method of violence for removing tyranny or securing reform by the method of non-resistance to evil. He would meet hatred expressed in violence by love expressed in self-suffering. He admits of no exception to whittle down this great and divine law of Love. He applies it to all the problems that worry mankind.

When a man like Tolstoy, one of the clearest thinkers in the western world, one of the greatest writers, one who, as a soldier, has known what violence is and what it can do, condemns Japan for having blindly followed the law of modern science, falsely so-called, and fears for that country "the greatest calamities", it is for us to pause and consider whether, in our impatience of English rule, we do not want to replace one evil by another and a worse. India, which is

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Leo Tolstoy", 1-10-1909.

[2] *Vide* "Appendix, Tolstoy's Letter to Gandhiji", 7-10-1909.

[3] Political Aide-de-Camp to the Secretary of State for India was shot dead by a Punjabi student, Madan Lal Dhingra, on July 1, 1909 at a reception by the National Indian Association at the Imperial Institute in South Kensington, London; *vide* "London", After 16-7-109.

the nursery of the great faiths of the world, will cease to be nationalist India, whatever else it[1] may become, when it goes through the process of civilisation in the shape of reproduction on that sacred soil of gun factories and hateful industrialism, which has reduced the people of Europe to a state of slavery and all but stifled among them the best instincts, which are the heritage of the human family.

If we do not want the English in India, we must pay the price. Tolstoy indicates it.

Do not resist evil, but also yourselves participate not in evil, in the violent deeds of the administration of the law courts, the collection of taxes and, what is more important, of the soldiers, and no one in the world will enslave you, passionately declares the sage of Yasnaya Polyana. Who can question the truth of what he says in the following:

A commercial company enslaved a nation comprising 200 millions. Tell this to a man free from superstition and he will fail to grasp what these words mean. What does it mean that thirty thousand people, not athletes but rather weak and ill-looking, have enslaved 200 millions of vigorous, clever, strong, freedom-loving people? Do not the figures make it clear that not the English but the Indians have enslaved themselves ?

One need not accept all[2] that Tolstoy says—some of his facts are not accurately stated—to realise the central truth of his indictment of the present system which is to understand and act upon the irresistible power of the soul over the body, of love, which is an attribute of the soul, over the brute or body force generated by the stirring up in us of evil passions.

There is no doubt that there is nothing new in what Tolstoy preaches. But his presentation of the old truth is refreshingly forceful. His logic is unassailable. And, above all, he endeavours to practise what he preaches. He preaches to convince. He is sincere and in earnest. He commands attention.

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 25-12-1909

[1] The original has “she”.

[2] *Vide* 5th footnote of “Preface to Leo tolstoy’s Letter to a Hindoo”, 18-11-1909.

160. "HIND SWARAJ"[1]

PREFACE

I have written some[2] chapters on the subject of Indian Home Rule which I venture to place before the readers of *Indian Opinion*. I have written because I could not restrain myself. I have read much, I have pondered much, during the stay, for four months[3] in London, of the Transvaal Indian deputation.[4] I discussed things with as many of my countrymen as I could. I met, too, as many Englishmen as it was

[1] This was originally written in Gujarati during Gandhiji's return journey from England on the *Kildonan Castle* and published in *Indian Opinion*, the first twelve chapters on 11-12-1909 and the rest on 18-12-1909. Issued as a booklet in January 1910, it was proscribed in India by the Government of Bombay on March 24, 1910; *vide* "Our Publications", (7-5-1910). This hastened Gandhiji's decision to publish the English translation; *vide* "Preface to *Hind Swaraj*", (20-3-1910). This was issued by the International Printing Press, Phoenix, with a foreword by Gandhiji dated March 20, 1910 and also the English translation of the Gujarati foreword dated November 22, 1909, reproduced here.

The text adopted here is that of the Revised New Edition published in 1939 by the Navajivan Press, Ahmedabad. Their first edition appeared in 1938 with a preface by Mahadev Desai, who also wrote (in the *Harijan*, 10-9-1938) an article on the Hind Swaraj Special Number of *The Aryan Path* (September 1938). This article of Desai's and a message from Gandhiji dated July 14, 1938 were included in the 1939 edition, the proofs of which had been, as Mahadev Desai states in his introductory lines dated December 11, 1938, "revised by numerous friends". Gandhiji discusses *Hind Swaraj* in the article "The Unbridgeable Gulf", *Harijan*, 14-10-1939.

Ganesh & Co., Madras, brought out the first Indian edition in 1919 with Gandhiji's foreword dated May 28, 1919. Their fourth edition came out in 1921 with Gandhiji's article "Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule" in *Young India*, 26-1-1921. Their sixth edition was issued in 1924. In the same year appeared an American edition by H. T. Mazumdar with the title *Sermon on the Sea*.

The second Gujarati edition was issued in May 1914, in South Africa, with a new Preface by Gandhiji, published in *Indian Opinion*, 29-4-1914. The Navajivan Press published in September 1923 a facsimile edition of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand.

Significant variations between the Revised New Edition of 1939 and the Gujarati original published in *Indian Opinion* in December 1909 are indicated in the footnotes.

[2] "Twenty", according to the original Preface in Gujarati

[3] July 10 to November 13

[4] The original has: "I have read much, I have pondered much. Also, during my four months' stay in London in connection with the work of the Transvaal Indian Deputation I discussed."

possible for me to meet. I consider it my duty now to place before the readers of *Indian Opinion* the conclusions, which appear to me to be final. The Gujarati subscribers of *Indian Opinion* number about 800. I am aware that, for every subscriber, there are at least ten persons who read the paper with zest. Those who cannot read Gujarati have the paper read out to them. Such persons have often questioned me about the condition of India. Similar questions were addressed to me in London. I felt, therefore, that it might not be improper for me to ventilate publicly the views expressed by me in private.

These views are mine, and yet not mine. They are mine because I hope to act according to them. They are almost a part of my being. But, yet, they are not mine, because I lay no claim to originality. They have been formed after reading several books. That which I dimly felt received support from these books.[1]

The views I venture to place before the reader are, needless to say, held by many Indians not touched by what is known as civilization, but I ask the reader to believe me when I tell him that they are also held by thousands of Europeans. Those who wish to dive deep, and have time, may read certain books themselves. If time permits me, I hope to translate portions of such books for the benefit of the readers of *Indian Opinion*.

If the readers of *Indian Opinion* and others who may see the following chapters will pass their criticism on to me, I shall feel obliged to them.

The only motive is to serve my country, to find out the Truth, and to follow it. If, therefore, my views are proved to be wrong, I shall have no hesitation in rejecting them. If they are proved to be right, I would naturally wish, for the sake of the motherland, that others should adopt them.

To make it easy reading, the chapters are written in the form of a dialogue between the reader and the editor.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

KILDONAN CASTLE,

22-11-1909

[From Gujarati]

[1] *Vide* "Some Authorities", Appendix I to *Hind Swaraj*

READER: Just at present there is a Home Rule wave passing over India. All our countrymen appear to be pining for National Independence. A similar spirit pervades them even in South Africa. Indians seem to be eager to acquire rights. Will you explain your views in this matter?

EDITOR: You have put the question well, but the answer is not easy. One of the objects of a newspaper is to understand popular feeling and to give expression to it; another is to arouse among the people certain desirable sentiments; and the third is fearlessly to expose popular defects.[1] The exercise of all these three functions is involved in answering your question. To a certain extent the people's will has to be expressed, certain sentiments will need to be fostered, and defects will have to be brought to light.[2] But, as you have asked the question, it is my duty to answer it.

READER: Do you then consider that a desire for Home Rule has been created among us ?

EDITOR: That desire gave rise to the National Congress.[3] The choice of the word "National" implies it.

READER: That, surely, is not the case. Young India seems to ignore the Congress. It is considered to be an instrument for perpetuating British Rule.

EDITOR: That opinion is not justified. Had not the Grand Old Man[4] of India prepared the soil, our young men could not have even spoken about Home Rule. How can we what Mr. Hume[5] has written, how he has lashed us into action, and with what effort he has awakened us, in order to achieve the objects of the Congress? Sir William Wedderburn[6] has given his body, min and money to the same cause. His writings[7] are worthy of perusal to this day. Professor

[1] The original adds: "whatever the difficulties in the way".

[2] The original has: "and the defects will have to be condemned".

[3] The original has: "That has been evident since the National Congress was established."

[4] Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917), also *vide* "The Grand Old Man of India", 3-9-1910.

[5] A. O. Hume, one of the founders of the Indian National Congress.

[6] President, Indian National Congress at Bombay (1889) and at Allahabad (1910)

[7] The original adds: "on British rule".

Gokhale[1] in order to prepare the nation, embraced poverty and gave twenty years of his life. Even now, he is living inpoverty. The late Justice Budruddin Tyebji[2] was also one of those who, through the Congress, sowed the seed of Home Rule. Similarly, in Bengal, Madras, the Punjab and other places, there have been lovers of India and members of the Congress, both Indian and English.

READER: Stay, stay; you are going too far, you are straying away from my question. I have asked you about Home or Self-Rule; you are discussing foreign rule. I do not desire to hear English names, and you are giving me such names. In these circumstances, I do not think we can ever meet. I shall be pleased if you will confine yourself to Home Rule. All other talk[3] will not satisfy me.

EDITOR: You are impatient. I cannot afford to be likewise. If you will bear with me for a while, I think you will find that you will obtain what you want. Remember the old proverb that the tree does not grow in one day. The fact that you have checked me and that you do not want to hear about the well-wishers of India shows that, for you at any rate, Home Rule is yet far away. If we had many like you, we would never make any advance. This thought is worthy of your attention.

READER: It seems to me that you simply want to put me off by talking round and round. Those whom you consider to be wellwishers of India are not such in my estimation. Why, then, should I listen to your discourse on such people?[4] What has he whom you consider to be the Father of the Nation done for it ? He says that the English Governors will do justice and that we should co-operate with them.

EDITOR: I must tell you, with all gentleness, that it must be a matter of shame for us that you should speak about that great man in terms of disrespect. Just look at his work. He has dedicated his life to the service of India. We have learned what we know from him. It was the respected Dadabhai who taught us that the English had sucked our life-blood. What does it matter that, today, his trust is still in the English nation? Is Dadabhai less to be honoured because, in the

[1] Distinguished Indian leader and statesman, educationist and reformer;

[2] Judge of the Bombay High Court and President of the Indian National Congress at Madras (1887); *vide* footnote of "the Late Mr. Tata", 20-5-1905.

[3] The original has: "This fine talk about other things will not satisfy me." The first Indian edition had: "All other wise talk. . ."

[4] The original has: "Whose services, then, must I hear about?"

exuberance of youth, we are prepared to go a step further? Are we, on that account, wiser than he? It is a mark of wisdom not to kick away the very step from which we have risen higher. The removal[1] of a step from a staircase brings down the whole of it. When, out of infancy, we grow into youth, we do not despise infancy, but on the contrary, we recall with affection the days of our childhood. If, after many years ofstudy, a teacher were to teach me something, and if I were to build a little more on the foundation laid by that teacher, I would not, on that account, be considered wiser than the teacher. He would always command my respect. Such is the case with the Grand Old Man of India. We must admit that he is the author of nationalism.[2]

READER: You have spoken well. I can now understand that we must look upon Mr. Dadabhai with respect. Without him and men like him, we should probably not have the spirit that fires us. How can the same be said of Professor Gokhale? He has constituted himself a great friend of the English; he says that we have to learn a great deal from them, that we have to learn their political wisdom, before we can talk of Home Rule. I am tired of reading his speeches.

EDITOR: If you are tired, it only betrays your impatience. We believe that those, who are discontented with the slowness of their parents and are angry because the parents would not run with their children, are considered disrespectful to their parents. Professor Gokhale occupies the place of a parent. What does it matter if he cannot run with us? A nation that is desirous of securing Home Rule cannot afford to despise its ancestors. We shall become useless, if we lack respect for our elders. Only men with mature thoughts are capable of ruling themselves and not the hasty-tempercd. Moreover, how many Indians were there like Professor Gokhale, when he gave himself to Indian education? I verily believe that whatever Professor Gokhale does, he does with pure motives and with a view to serving India. His devotion to the Motherland is so great that he would give his life for it, if necessary. Whatever he says is said not to flatter anyone but because he believes it to be true. We are bound, therefore, to entertain the highest regard for him.

READER: Are we, then, to follow him in every respect?

EDITOR: I never said any such thing. If we conscientiously differed from him, the learned Professor himself would advise us to

[1] The original has: “It must be remembered that the removal.”

[2] The original has: “that he gave a lead to the Indian people”.

follow the dictates of our conscience rather than him. Our chief purpose is not to decry his work, but to believe that he is infinitely greater than we are, and to feel assured that compared with his work for India, ours is infinitesimal. Several newspapers write disrespectfully of him. It is our duty to protest against such writings. We should consider men like Professor Gokhale to be the pillars of Home Rule. It is a bad habit to say that another man's thoughts are bad and ours only are good and that those holding different views from ours are the enemies of the country.

READER: I now begin to understand somewhat your meaning. I shall have to think the matter over. But what you say about Mr. Hume and Sir William Wedderburn is beyond my comprehension.

EDITOR: The same rule holds good for the English as for the Indians. I can never subscribe to the statement that all Englishmen are bad. Many Englishmen desire Home Rule for India. That the English people are somewhat more selfish than others is true, but that does not prove that every Englishman is bad. We who seek justice will have to do justice to others. Sir William does not wish ill to India—that should be enough for us. As we proceed, you will see that, if we act justly, India will be sooner free. You will see, too, that if we shun every Englishman as an enemy, Home Rule will be delayed. But if we are just to them, we shall receive their support in our progress towards the goal.

READER: All this seems to me at present to be simply nonsensical. English support and the obtaining of Home Rule are two contradictory things. How can the English people tolerate Home Rule for us? But I do not want you to decide this question for me just yet. To spend time over it is useless. When you have shown how we can have Home Rule, perhaps I shall understand your views. You have prejudiced me against you by discoursing on English help. I would therefore, beseech you not to continue this subject.

EDITOR: I have no desire to do so. That you are prejudiced against me is not a matter for much anxiety. It is well that I should say unpleasant things at the commencement. It is my duty patiently to try to remove your prejudice.

READER: I like that last statement. It emboldens me to say what I like. One thing still puzzles me. I do not understand how the Congress laid the foundation of Home Rule.

EDITOR: Let us see. The Congress brought together Indians from

different parts of India, and enthused us with the idea of nationality. The Government used to look upon it with disfavour. The Congress has always insisted that the Nation should control revenue and expenditure. It has always desired self-government after the Canadian model. Whether we can get it or not, whether we desire it or not, and whether there is not something more desirable, are different questions. All I have to show is that the Congress gave us a foretaste of Home Rule. To deprive it of the honour is not proper,[1] and for us to do so would not only be ungrateful, but retard the fulfilment of our object. To treat the Congress[2] as an institution inimical to our growth as a nation would disable us from using that body.

CHAPTER II: THE PARTITION OF BENGAL

READER: Considering the matter as you put it, it seems proper to say that the foundation of Home Rule was laid by the Congress. But you will admit that this cannot be considered a real awakening. When and how did the real awakening take place?

EDITOR: The seed is never seen. It works underneath the ground, is itself destroyed, and the tree which rises above the ground is alone seen. Such is the case with the Congress. Yet, what you call the real awakening took place after the Partition of Bengal. For this we have to be thankful to Lord Curzon[3]. At the time of the Partition,[4] the people of Bengal reasoned with Lord Curzon, but in the pride of power he disregarded all their prayers. He took it for granted that Indians could only prattle, that they could never take any effective steps. He used insulting language, and in the teeth of all opposition partitioned Bengal. That day may be considered to be the day of the partition of the British Empire. The shock the British power received through the Partition has never been equalled by any other act. This does not mean that the other injustices done to India are less glaring than that done by the Partition. The salt-tax is not a small injustice. We shall see many such things later on. But the people were ready to resist the Partition. At that time feeling ran high. Many leading Bengalis were ready to lose their all. They knew their power; hence the conflagration. It is now well-nigh unquenchable; it is not necessary to quench it either. The Partition will go, Bengal will be reunited, but the

[1] The original has: "It would be improper for others to claim that honour. . . ."

[2] The original has: "To dissociate ourselves from the Congress and treat it. . . ."

[3] Viceroy of India, 1899-l905; *vide* "Lord Curzon", 26-8-1905.

[4] In 1905

rift in the English barque will remain; it must daily widen. India awakened is not likely to fall asleep. The demand for the abrogation of the Partition is tantamount to a demand for Home Rule. Leaders in Bengal know this. British officials realize it. That is why the Partition still remains. As time passes, the Nation is being forged. Nations are not formed in a day; the formation requires years.

READER: What, in your opinion, are the results of the Partition?

EDITOR: Hitherto we have considered that for redress of grievances we must approach the throne, and if we get no redress we must sit still, except that we may still petition. After the Partition, people saw that petitions must be backed up by force, and that they must be capable of suffering. This new spirit must be considered to be the chief result of the Partition. That spirit was seen in the outspoken writings in the Press. That which the people said tremblingly and in secret began to be said and to bewritten publicly. The Swadeshi movement was inaugurated. People, young and old, used to run away at the sight of an English face; it now no longer awes them. They do not fear even a row, or being imprisoned. Some of the best sons of India are at present in banishment.[1] This is something different from mere petitioning. Thus are the people moved. The spirit generated in Bengal has spread in the north to the Punjab, and in the south to Cape Comorin.

READER: Do you suggest any other striking result?

EDITOR: The Partition has not only made a rift in the English ship but has made it in ours also. Great events always produce great results. Our leaders are divided into two parties: the Moderates and the Extremists. These may be considered as the slow party and the impatient party. Some call the Moderates the timid party, and the Extremists the bold party. All interpret the two words according to their preconceptions. This much is certain—that there has arisen an enmity between the two. The one distrusts the other and imputes motives. At the time of the Surat Congress[2] there was almost a fight. I think that this division is not a good thing for the country, but I think also that such divisions will not last long. It all depends upon the leaders how long they will last.

CHAPTER III: DISCONTENT AND UNREST

READER: Then you consider the Partition to be a cause of the awakening? Do you welcome the unrest which has resulted from it?

[1] Bal Gangadhar Tilak, the Father of Indian Unrest, was in Mandalay prison at this time.

[2] In 1907

EDITOR: When a man rises from sleep, he twists his limbs and is restless. It takes some time before he is entirely awakened. Similarly, although the Partition has caused an awakening, the comatose condition has not yet disappeared. We are still twisting our limbs and are still restless, and just as the state between sleep and awakening must be considered to be necessary, so may the present unrest in India be considered a necessary and, therefore, a proper state. The knowledge that there is unrest will, it is highly probable, enable us to outgrow it. Rising from sleep, we do not continue in a comatose state, but according to our ability, sooner or later, we are completely restored to our senses. So shall we be free from the present unrest which no one likes.

READER: WHAT IS THE OTHER FORM OF UNREST ?

EDITOR: Unrest is, in reality, discontent. The latter is only now described as unrest. During the Congress period, it was labelled discontent. Mr. Hume always said that the spread of discontent in India was necessary. This discontent is a very useful thing. As long as a man is contented with his present lot, so long is it difficult to persuade him to come out of it. Therefore it is that every reform must be preceded by discontent. We throw away things we have, only when we cease to like them. Such discontent has been produced among us after reading the great works of Indians and Englishmen. Discontent has led to unrest, and the latter has brought about many deaths,[1] many imprisonments, many banishments.[2] Such a state of things will still continue. It must be so. All these may be considered good signs but they may also lead to bad results.

CHAPTER IV: WHAT IS SWARAJ ?

[1] The original adds here: "many flights. . . ."

[2] Gandhiji must have had in mind the assassination of Englishmen and Indians by terrorists, who were sentenced to death or deportation or long terms of imprisonment. In 1908 Mrs. and Miss Kennedy were killed by Khudi Ram Bose, a youngster of 18, who had flung a bomb at Kingsford, the District Magistrate of Muzaffarpur in Bengal and missed him. Sub-Inspector Nandlal, who had arrested Khudi Ram Bose, was murdered, as also Narendra Gosain, approver in the Alipore Conspiracy Case, in which Aurobindo Ghosh, defended by C. R. Das, who had earlier defended B. C. Pal in sedition cases, was acquitted, in 1909, but many others were awarded heavy sentences including transportation for life. In 1909, Ganesh Savarkar was sentenced to transportation for life on a charge of writing inflammatory verses; and Ashutosh Biswas, Public Prosecutor, was shot dead, while leaving the court in Calcutta. On July 1, a few days before Gandhiji reached London, Madan Lal Dhingra had shot dead Sir Curzon Wyllie in London. Among the banishments were those in 1907 of Lala Lajpatrai and Ajit Singh of the Punjab and of B. G. Tilak who was in prison in Mandalay from 1908 to 1914.

READER: I have now learnt what the Congress has done to make India one nation, how the Partition has caused an awakening, and how discontent and unrest have spread through the land. I would now like to know your views on Swaraj. I fear that our interpretation is not the same as yours.

EDITOR: It is quite possible that we do not attach the same meaning to the term. You and I and all Indians are impatient to obtain Swaraj, but we are certainly not decided as to what it is. To drive the English out of India is a thought heard from many mouths, but it does not seem that many have properly considered why it should be so. I must ask you a question. Do you think that it is necessary to drive away the English, if we get all we want?

READER: I should ask of them only one thing, that is: "Please leave our country." If, after they have complied with this request, their withdrawal from India means[1] that they are still in India, I should have no objection. Then we would understand that, in their language, the word "gone" is equivalent to "remained".

EDITOR: Well then, let us suppose that the English have retired. What will you do then ?

READER: That question cannot be answered at this stage. The state after withdrawal will depend largely upon the manner of it. If, as you assume, they retire, it seems to me we shall still keep their constitution and shall carry on the Government. If they simply retire for the asking, we should have an army, etc., ready at hand. We should, therefore, have no difficulty in carrying on the Government.

EDITOR: You may think so; I do not. But I will not discuss the matter just now. I have to answer your question, and that I can do well by asking you several questions. Why do you want to drive away the English ?

READER: Because India has become impoverished by their Government. They take away our money from year to year. The most important posts are reserved for themselves. We are kept in a state of slavery. They behave insolently towards us and disregard our feelings.

EDITOR: If they do not take our money away, become gentle, and give us responsible posts, would you still consider their presence to be harmful?

READER: That question is useless. It is similar to the question

[1] The original has: "is taken to mean, perversely enough."

whether there is any harm in associating with a tiger if he changes his nature. Such a question is sheer waste of time. When a tiger changes his nature, Englishmen will change theirs. This is not possible, and to believe it to be possible is contrary to human experience.[1]

EDITOR: Supposing we get Self-Government similar to what the Canadians and the South Africans[2] have, will it be good enough?

READER: That question also is useless. We may get it when we have the same powers;[3] we shall then hoist our own flag. As is Japan, so must India be. We must own our navy, our army, and we must have our own splendour, and then will India's voice ring through the world.

EDITOR: You have drawn the picture well. In effect it means this: that we want English rule without the Englishman. You want the tiger's nature, but not the tiger; that is to say, you would make India English. And when it becomes English, it will be called not Hindustan but *Englistan*. This is not the Swaraj that I want.

READER: I have placed before you my idea of Swaraj as I think it should be. If the education we have received be of any use, if the works of Spencer, Mill and others be of any importance, and if the English Parliamentbe the Mother of Parliaments, I certainly think that we should copy the English people, and this to such an extent that, just as they do not allow others to obtain a footing in their country, so we should not allow them or others to obtain it in ours. What they have done in their own country has not been done in any other country. It is, therefore, proper for us to import their institutions. But now I want to know your views.

EDITOR: There is need for patience. My views will develop of themselves in the course of this discourse. It is as difficult for me to understand the true nature of Swaraj as it seems to you to be easy. I shall therefore, for the time being, content myself with endeavouring to show that what you call Swaraj is not truly Swaraj.

CHAPTER V: THE CONDITION OF ENGLAND

READER: Then from your statement I deduce that the Government of England is not desirable[4] and not worth copying by us.

[1] The original has: "and it is certainly absurd of a man to believe that the impossible will be possible."

[2] The original has: "Boers".

[3] The original has: "when we have firearms in the same way that they have".

[4] The original has: ". . . the Government which England enjoys is not the right kind and . . . ."

EDITOR: Your deduction is justified. The condition of England at present is pitiable. I pray to God that India may never be in that plight. That which you consider to be the Mother of Parliaments is like a sterile woman and a prostitute. Both these are harsh terms, but exactly fit the case. That Parliament has not yet, of its own accord, done a single good thing. Hence I have compared it to a sterile woman. The natural condition of that Parliament is such that, without outside pressure, it can do nothing. It is like a prostitute because it is under the control of ministers who change from time to time. Today it is under Mr. Asquith[1], tomorrow it may be under Mr. Balfour[2].

READER: You have said this sarcastically. The term "sterile woman" is not applicable. The Parliament, being elected by the people, must work under public pressure. This is its quality.[3]

EDITOR: You are mistaken. Let us examine it a little more closely.[4] The best men are supposed to be elected by the people. The members serve without pay[5] and therefore, it must be assumed, only for the public weal. The electors are considered to be educated and therefore we should assume that they would not generally make mistakes in their choice. Such a Parliament should not need the spur of petitions or any other pressure. Its work should be so smooth that its effects would be more apparent day by day. But, as a matter of fact, it is generally acknowledged that the members are hypocritical and selfish. Each thinks of his own little interest. It is fear that is the guiding motive. What is done today may be undone tomorrow. *It is not possible to recall a single instance in which finality can be predicted for its work*. When the greatest questions are debated, its members have been seen to stretch themselves and to doze. Sometimes the members talk away until the listeners are disgusted. Carlyle has called it the "talking shop of the World". Members vote for their party without a thought. Their so-called discipline binds them to it. If any member, by way of exception, gives an independent vote, he is considered a renegade. If the money and the time wasted by

[1] Herbert Henry Asquith (1852-1928), Prime Minister of Great Britain, 1908-16

[2] Arthur James Balfour, Prime Minister of Great Britain, 1902-05. The original adds: "and the day after, it will be somebody else".

[3] The original has: "That is its very nature, what keeps it in check."

[4] The original has: "If Parliament were not like a sterile woman, this is what we might expect."

[5] Payment to members began in 1911.

Parliament were entrusted to a few good men, the English nation would be occupying today a much higher platform. Parliament is simply a costly toy of the nation. These views are by no means peculiar to me. Some great English thinkers have expressed them. One of the members of that Parliament recently said that a true Christian could not become a member of it. Another said that it was a baby. And if it has remained a baby after an existence of seven hundred years, when will it outgrow its babyhood ?

READER: You have set me thinking; you do not expect me to accept at once all you say. You give me entirely novel views. I shall have to digest them. Will you now explain the epithet "prostitute" ?

EDITOR: That you cannot accept my views at once is only right. If you will read the literature on this subject, you will have some idea of it.[1] Parliament is without a real master.[2] Under the Prime Minister,[3] its movement is not steady but it is buffeted about like a prostitute. The Prime Minister is more concerned about his power than about the welfare of Parliament. His energy is concentrated upon securing the success of his party. His care is not always that Parliament shall do right. Prime Ministers are known to have made Parliament do things merely for party advantage. All this is worth thinking over.

READER: Then you are really attacking the very men whom we have hitherto considered to be patriotic and honest ?

EDITOR: Yes, that is true; I can have nothing against Prime Ministers, but what I have seen leads me to think that they cannot be considered really patriotic. If they are to be considered honest because they do not take what are generally known as bribes, let them be so considered, but they are open to subtler influences. In order to

[1] The original adds: " The description of Parliament as a prostitute is also justified." It is this sentence which probably Gandhiji had in mind when he said later in his preface, dated 28-5-1919, to *Hind Swaraj* published by Ganesh & Co.: "I have re-read this booklet more than once. The value at the present moment lies in reprinting it as it is. But if I had to revise it, there is only one word I would alter in accordance with a promise made to an English friend. She took exception to my use of the word 'prostitute' in speaking of the Parliament. Her fine taste recoiled from the indelicacy of the expression."

[2] The original adds: "It cannot be under one master all the time. But this is not all that I mean."

[3] The original has: "Even when a person becomes its master—say, the Prime Minister—it is not loyal to him all the time. Its ways are always the ways of a prostitute."

gain their ends, they certainly bribe people with honours. I do not hesitate to say that they have neither real honesty nor a living conscience.

READER: As you express these views about Parliament, I would like to hear you on the English people, so that I may have your view of their Government.

EDITOR: To the English voters their newspaper is their Bible. They take their cue from their newspapers which are often dishonest. The same fact is differently interpreted by different newspapers, according to the party in whose interests they are edited.[1] One newspaper would consider a great Englishman to be a paragon of honesty, another would consider him dishonest. What must be the condition of the people whose newspapers are of this type?

READER: You shall describe it.

EDITOR: These people change their views frequently. It is said that they change them every seven years. These views swing like the pendulum of a clock and are never steadfast. The people would follow a powerful orator or a man[2] who gives them parties, receptions, etc. As are the people, so is their Parliament. They have certainly one quality very strongly developed. They will never allow their country to be lost. If any person were to cast an evil eye on it, they would pluck out his eyes. But that does not mean that the nation possesses every other virtue or that it should be imitated. If India copies England, it is my firm conviction that she will be ruined.

READER: To what do you ascribe this state of England?

EDITOR: It is not due to any peculiar fault of the English people, but the condition is due to modern civilization. It is a civilization only in name. Under it the nations of Europe are becoming degraded and ruined day by day.

CHAPTER VI: CIVILIZATION

READER: Now you will have to explain what you mean by civilization.[3]

EDITOR: It is not a question of what I mean. Several English

[1] The original has: "one party magnifying its importance and the other minimising it".

[2] The original has: "join the band-wagon of any powerful orator or man. . . ."

[3] The original adds: "According to you, civilization is not civilization but the opposite of it."

writers refuse to call that civilization which passes under that name. Many books have been written upon that subject. Societies have been formed to cure the nation of the evils of civilization. A great English writer[1] has written a work called *Civilization: Its Cause and Cure*. Therein he has called it a disease.

READER: Why do we not know this generally?

EDITOR: The answer is very simple. We rarely find people arguing against themselves. Those who are intoxicated by modern civilization are not likely to write against it. Their care will be to find out facts and arguments in support of it, and this they do unconsciously, believing it to be true. A man, whilst he is dreaming, believes in his dream; he is undeceived only when he is awakened from his sleep. A man labouring under the bane of civilization is like a dreaming man. What we usually read are the works of defenders of modern civilization, which undoubtedly claims among its votaries very brilliant and even some very good men. Their writings hypnotize us. And so, one by one, we are drawn into the vortex.

READER: This seems to be very plausible. Now will you tell me something of what you have read and thought of this civilization ?

EDITOR: Let us first consider what state of things is described by the word "civilization". Its true test lies in the fact that people living in it make bodily welfare the object of life. We will take some examples. The people of Europe today live in better-built houses than they did a hundred years ago. This is considered an emblem of civilization, and this is also a matter to promote bodily happiness.[2] Formerly, they wore skins, and used spears as their weapons. Now, they wear long trousers, and, for embellishing their bodies, they wear a variety of clothing, and, instead of spears, they carry with them revolvers containing five or more chambers.[3] If people of a certain country, who have hitherto not been in the habit of wearing much clothing, boots, etc., adopt European clothing, they are supposed to have become civilized out of savagery. Formerly, in Europe, people ploughed their lands mainly by manual labour. Now, one man can plough a vast tract by means of steam engines and can thus amass great wealth. This is called a sign of civilization. Formerly, only a few

[1] Edward Carpenter; *vide* Appendix I to *Hind Swaraj*, 15-12-1820.

[2] The original has: " . . . an emblem of civilization. This is a matter which concerns physical comfort."

[3] The original adds: "; that is considered a sign of civilization".

men wrote valuable books.[1] Now, anybody writes and prints anything he likes and poisons people's minds.[2] Formerly, men travelled in waggons.[3] Now, they fly through the air[4] in trains at the rate of four hundred and more miles per day. This is considered the height of civilization. It has been stated that, as men progress, they shall be able to travel in airships and reach any part of the world in a few hours. Men will not need the use of their hands and feet. They will press a button, and they will have their clothing by their side. They will press another button, and they will have their newspaper. A third, and a motor-car will be in waiting for them. They will have a variety of delicately dished up food. Everything will be done by machinery. Formerly, when people wanted to fight with one another, they measured between them their bodily strength; now it is possible to take away thousands of lives by one man working behind a gun from a hill. This is civilization. Formerly, men worked in the open air only as much as they liked. Now thousands of workmen meet together and for the sake of maintenance work in factories or mines. Their condition is worse than that of beasts. They are obliged to work, at the risk of their lives, at most dangerous occupations, for the sake of millionaires. Formerly, men were made slaves under physical compulsion. Now they are enslaved by temptation of money and of the luxuries that money can buy. There are now diseases of which people never dreamt before, and an army of doctors is engaged in finding out their cures, and so hospitals have increased. This is a test of civilization. Formerly, special messengers were required and much expense was incurred in order to send letters; today, anyone can abuse his fellow by means of a letter for one penny. True, at the same cost, one can send one's thanks also. Formerly, people had two or three meals consisting of home-made bread and vegetables; now, they require something to eat every two hours so that they have hardly leisure for anything else. What more need I say? All this you can ascertain from several authoritative books. These are all true tests of civilization.[5] And if anyone speaks to the contrary, know that he is

[1] The original has: "Only a few men wrote books, and they were esteemed very highly."

[2] The original adds: "; this is considered a sign of civilization".

[3] The original adds: "covering about 20 miles in a day".

[4] The words for "through the air" are not found in the Gujarati text.

[5] The original has: "All these are indeed taken to be signs of civilization."

ignorant.[1] This civilization takes note neither of morality nor of religion. Its votaries calmly state that their business is not to teach religion. Some even consider it to be a superstitious growth. Others put on the cloak of religion, and prate about morality. But, after twenty years' experience, I have come to the conclusion that immorality is often taught in the name of morality. Even a child can understand that in all I have described above there can be no inducement to morality. Civilization seeks to increase bodily comforts, and it fails miserably even in doing so.

This civilization is irreligion, and it has taken such a hold on the people in Europe that those who are in it appear to be half mad. They lack real physical strength or courage. They keep up their energy by intoxication. They can hardly be happy in solitude. Women, who should be the queens of households, wander in the streets or they slave away in factories. For the sake of a pittance, half a million[2] women in England alone are labouring under trying circumstances[3] in factories or similar institutions. This awful fact is one of the causes of the daily growing[4] suffragette movement.

This civilization is such that one has only to be patient and it will be self-destroyed. According to the teaching of Mahomed this would be considered a Satanic Civilization. Hinduism calls it the Black Age. I cannot give you an adequate conception of it.[5] It is eating into the vitals of the English nation.[6] It must be shunned.[7] Parliaments are really emblems of slavery. If you will sufficiently think over this, you will entertain the same opinion and cease to blame the English. They rather deserve our sympathy. They are a shrewd nation and I therefore believe that they will cast off the evil. They are enterprising and industrious, and their mode of thought is not inherently immoral. Neither are they bad at heart. I therefore respect them. Civilization is not an incurable disease,[8] but it should never be forgotten that the

[1] The original adds: "Civilization is what I have described it to be."

[2] The original has: "four million".

[3] The original has: " . . . are labouring like beasts of burden".

[4] The words for "awful" and "daily growing" are not found in the original.

[5] The original adds: "That is beyond my capacity."

[6] The original adds: "It is a deadly civilization, and is bound to perish."

[7] The original adds: "These are the reasons why the British Parliament and other parliaments as well are found to be ineffective."

[8] The original has: "It is not that they cannot be cured of this disease of civilization,. . . ."

English people are at present afflicted by it.

CHAPTER VII: WHY WAS INDIA LOST?

READER: You have said much about civilization—enough to make me ponder over it. I do not now know what I should adopt and what I should avoid from the nations of Europe, but one question comes to my lips immediately. If civilization is a disease[1] and if it has attacked England, whyhas she been able to take India, and why is she able to retain it?

EDITOR: Your question is not very difficult to answer, and we shall presently be able to examine the true nature of Swaraj; for I am aware that I have still to answer that question. I will, however, take up your previous question. The English have not taken India; we have given it to them. They are not in India because of their strength, but because we keep them. Let us now see whether these propositions can be sustained. They came to our country originally for purposes of trade. Recall the Company[2] Bahadur[3]. Who made it Bahadur? They had not the slightest intention at the time of establishing a kingdom. Who assisted the Company's officers? Who was tempted at the sight of their silver? Who bought their goods? History testifies that we did all this. In order to become rich all at once we welcomed the Company's officers with open arms. We assisted them. If I am in the habit of drinking *bhang* and a seller thereof sells it to me, am I to blame him or myself? By blaming the seller, shall I be able to avoid the habit? And, if a particular retailer is driven away, will not another take his place? A true servant of India will have to go to the root of the matter. If an excess of food has caused me indigestion, I shall certainly not avoid it by blaming water. He is a true physician who probes the cause of disease, and if you pose as a physician for the disease of India, you will have to find out its true cause.

READER: You are right. Now I think you will not have to argue much with me to drive your conclusions home. I am impatient to know your further views. We are now on a most interesting topic. I shall, therefore, endeavour to follow your thought, and stop you when I am in doubt.

[1] The original has: "If civilization is not civilization but the opposite of it, if it is a disease. . . ."

[2] East India Company

[3] Literally, 'brave', here 'powerful', 'sovereign'

EDITOR: I am afraid that,[1] in spite of your enthusiasm, as we proceed further, we shall have differences of opinion. Nevertheless, I shall argue only when you stop me. We have already seen that the English merchants were able to get a footing in India because we encouraged them. When our Princes fought among themselves, they sought the assistance of Company Bahadur. That corporation was versed alike in commerce and war. It was unhampered by questions of morality. Its object was to increase its commerce and to make money. It accepted our assistance, and increased the number of its warehouses. To protect the latter it employed an army which was utilized by us also. Is it not then useless to blame the English for what we did at that time? The Hindus and the Mahomedans were at daggers drawn. This, too, gave the Company its opportunity and thus we created the circumstances that gave the Company its control over India. Hence it is truer to say that we gave India to the English than that India was lost.

READER: Will you now tell me how they are able to retain India?

EDITOR: The causes that gave them India enable them to retain it. Some Englishmen state that they took and they hold India by the sword. Both these statements are wrong. The sword is entirely useless for holding India. We alone keep them. Napoleon is said to have described the English as a nation of shop-keepers. It is a fitting description. They hold whatever dominions they have for the sake of their commerce. Their army and their navy are intended to protect it. When the Transvaal offered no such attractions, the late Mr. Gladstone[2] discovered that it was not right for the English to hold it. When it became a paying proposition, resistance led to war. Mr. Chamberlain[3] soon discovered that England enjoyed a suzerainty over the Transvaal. It is related that someone asked the late President Kruger[4] whether there was gold in the moon. He replied that it was highly unlikely because, if there were, the English would have annexed it. Many problems can be solved by remembering that money is their God. Then it follows that we keep the English in India

[1] In the original, the paragraph begins: "Very well. I am afraid. . . ."

[2] William Ewart Gladstone (1809-98), Prime Minister of Great Britain, 1868-74; 1880-85, 1886, and 1892-94

[3] Joseph Chamberlain (1836-1914), Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1895

[4] Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger (1825-1904), Boer leader and State President of the South African Republic; *vide"*Memorial to Chamberlain", 16-5-1899.

for our base self-interest. We like their commerce; they please us by their subtle methods and get what they want from us. To blame them for this is to perpetuate their power. We further strengthen their hold by quarrelling amongst ourselves. If you accept the above statements, it is proved that the English entered India for the purposes of trade. They remain in it for the same purpose and we help them to do so. Their arms and ammunition are perfectly useless. In this connection I remind you that it is the British flag which is waving in Japan and not the Japanese. The English have a treaty with Japan for the sake of their commerce, and you will see that if they can manage it, their commerce will greatly expand in that country. They wish to convert the whole world into a vast market for their goods. That they cannot do so is true, but the blame will not be theirs. They will leave no stone unturned to reach the goal.[1]

CHAPTER VIII: THE CONDITION OF INDIA

READER: I now understand why the English hold India. I should like to know your views about the condition of our country.

EDITOR: It is a sad condition. In thinking of it my eyes water and my throat gets parched. I have grave doubts whether I shall be able sufficiently to explain what is in my heart. It is my deliberate opinion that India is being ground down, not under the English heel, but under that of modern civilization. It is groaning under the monster's terrible weight. There is yet time to escape it, but every day makes it more and more difficult. Religion is dear to me and my first complaint is that India is becoming irreligious. Here I am not thinking of the Hindu or the Mahomedan or the Zoroastrian religion but of that religion which underlies all religions. We are turning away from God.

READER: How so?

EDITOR: There is a charge laid against us that we are a lazy people and that Europeans are industrious and enterprising. We have accepted the charge and we therefore wish to change our condition. Hinduism, Islam, Zoroastrianism, Christianity and all other religions teach that we should remain passive about worldly pursuits and active about godly pursuits, that we should set a limit to our worldly ambition and that our religious ambition should be illimitable. Our activity should be directed into the latter channel.

[1] The original has: "They will not spare any effort."

READER: You seem to be encouraging religious charlatanism. Many a cheat has, by talking in a similar strain, led the people astray.[1]

EDITOR: You are bringing an unlawful charge against religion. Humbug there undoubtedly is about all religions. Where there is light, there is also shadow. I am prepared to maintain that humbugs in worldly matters are far worse than the humbugs in religion. The humbug of civilization that I am endeavouring to show to you is not to be found in religion.

READER: How can you say that? In the name of religion Hindus and Mahomedans fought against one another. For the same cause Christians fought Christians. Thousands of innocent men have been murdered, thousands have been burned and tortured in its name. Surely. this is much worse than any civilization.

EDITOR: I certainly submit that the above hardships are far more bearable than those of civilization. Everybody understands that the cruelties you have named are not part of religion although they have been practised in its name; therefore there is no aftermath to these cruelties.[2] They will always happen so long as there are to be found ignorant and credulous people.[3] But there is no end to the victims destroyed in the fire of civilization. Its deadly effect is that people come under its scorching flames believing it to be all good. They become utterly irreligious and, in reality, derive little advantagefrom the world.[4] Civilization is like a mouse gnawing while it is soothing us. When its full effect is realized, we shall see that religious superstition is harmless compared to that of modern civilization. I am not pleading for a continuance of religious superstitions. We shall certainly fight them tooth and nail, but we can never do so by disregarding religion. We can only do so by appreciating and conserving the latter.

READER: Then you will contend that the Pax Britannica is a useless encumbrance ?

EDITOR: You may see peace if you like; I see none.

READER: You make light of the terror that the Thugs[5], the

[1] The original adds: “and still does so”.

[2] The original has: “; therefore they cease when their perpetrators die”.

[3] The original adds: “But their evil effects do not remain for even”

[4] The Gujarati saying used by Gandhiji means: “They neither follow the way of religion nor that of the world.” The original also adds: “They forget the things that really matter.”

[5] Predatory groups that used to loot, rob and kill people.

Pindaris[1] and the Bhils[2] were to the country.

EDITOR: If you give the matter some thought, you will see that the terror was by no means such a mighty thing. If it had been a very substantial thing, the other people would have died away before the English advent. Moreover, the present peace is only nominal, for by it we have become emasculated and cowardly. We are not to assume that the English have changed the nature of the Pindaris and the Bhils. It is, therefore, better to suffer the Pindari peril than that someone else should protect us from it and thus render us effeminate. I should prefer to be killed by the arrow of a Bhil than to seek unmanly protection. India without such protection was an India full of valour. Macaulay betrayed gross ignorance when he libelled Indians as being practically cowards. They never merited the charge. Cowards living in a country inhabited by hardy mountaineers and infested by wolves and tigers must surely find an early grave. Have you ever visited our fields? I assure you that our agriculturists sleep fearlessly on their farms even today; but the English and you and I would hesitate to sleep where they sleep. Strength[3] lies in absence of fear, not in the quantity of flesh and muscle we may have on our bodies. Moreover, I must remind you who desire Home Rule that, after all, the Bhils, the Pindaris,[4] and the Thugs are our own countrymen. To conquer[5] them is your and my work. So long as we fear our own brethren, we are unfit to reach the goal.

CHAPTER IX: THE CONDITION OF INDIA (CONTINUED): RAILWAYS

READER: You have deprived me of the consolation I used to have regarding peace in India.[6]

EDITOR: I have merely given you my opinion on the religious aspect, but when I give you my views as to the poverty of India, you will perhaps begin to dislike me because what you and I have hitherto considered beneficial for India no longer appears to me to be so.

[1] Mounted marauders during the 17th and 18th centuries

[2] Tribe in Central India and Gujarat

[3] The original begins: “A little reflection will show that strength . . .”

[4] The original adds: “the Assamese”. This was, however, deleted in all subsequent editions.

[5] The original has “To win them over”.

[6] The original has: “You have shattered my illusions about the value of peace in India.” The original adds further: “You have left me with nothing that I can think of.”

READER: What may that be ?

EDITOR: Railways, lawyers and doctors have impoverished the country so much so that, if we do not wake up in time, we shall be ruined.

READER: I do now, indeed, fear that we are not likely to agree at all. You are attacking the very institutions which we have hitherto considered to be good.

EDITOR: It is necessary to exercise patience. The true inwardness of the evils of civilization you will understand with difficulty. Doctors assure us that a consumptive clings to life even when he is about to die. Consumption does not produce apparent hurt—it even produces a seductive colour about a patient's face so as to induce the belief that all is well.[1] Civilization is such a disease and we have to be very wary.[2]

READER: Very well, then. I shall hear you on the railways.

EDITOR: It must be manifest to you that, but for the railways, the English could not have such a hold on India as they have. The railways, too, have spread the bubonic plague. Without them, the masses could not move from place to place. They are the carriers of plague germs. Formerly, we had natural segregation. Railways have also increased the frequency of famines because, owing to facility of means of locomotion, people sell out their grain and it is sent to the dearest markets. People become careless and so the pressure of famine increases. Railways accentuate the evil nature of man. Bad men fulfil their evil designs with greater rapidity. The holy places of India have become unholy. Formerly, people went to these places with very great difficulty. Generally, therefore, only the real devotees visited such places. Nowadays rogues visit them in order to practise their roguery.

READER: You have given a one-sided account. Good men can visit these places as well as bad men. Why do they not take the fullest advantage of the railways?

EDITOR: Good travels at a snail's pace—it can, therefore, have little to do with the railways. Those who want to do good are not selfish, they are not in a hurry, they know that to impregnate people with good requires a long time. But evil has wings. To build a house

[1] The original has: " . . . about a patient's face so that he keeps on hoping that all will be well, till he succumbs in the end".

[2] The original has: "This is also true of civilization. It is a disease that cannot be detected. Be on your guard against it."

takes time. Its destruction takes none. So the railways can become a distributing agency for the evil one only. It may be a debatable matter whether railways spread famines, but it is beyond dispute that they propagate evil.

READER: Be that as it may, all the disadvantages of railways are more than counterbalanced by the fact that it is due to them that we see in India the new spirit of nationalism.

EDITOR: I hold this to be a mistake. The English have taught us that we were not one nation before and that it will require centuries before we become one nation. This is without foundation. We were one nation before they came to India. One thought inspired us. Our mode of life was the same. It was because we were one nation that they were able to establish one kingdom. Subsequently they divided us.

READER: This requires an explanation.

EDITOR: [1] I do not wish to suggest that because we were one nation we had no differences, but it is submitted that our leading men travelled throughout India either on foot or in bullock-carts. They learned one another's languages and there was no aloofness between them. What do you think could have been the intention of those farseeing ancestors of ours who established Setubandha (Rameshwar) in the South, Jagannath in the East and Hardwar in the North as places of pilgrimage ? You will admit they were no fools. They knew that worship of God could have been performed just as well at home. They taught us that those whose hearts were aglow with righteousness had the Ganges in their own homes. But they saw that India was one undivided land so made by nature. They, therefore, argued that it must be one nation Arguing thus, they established holy places in various parts of India, and fired the people with an idea of nationality in a manner unknown in other parts of the world. And we Indians are one as no two Englishmen are. Only you and I and others who consider ourselves civilized and superior persons imagine that we are many nations. It was after the advent of railways that we began to believe in distinctions, and you are at liberty now to say that it is through the railways that we are beginning to abolish those distinctions. An opium-eater may argue the advantage of opium-eating from the fact that he began to understand the evil of the opium habit after having eaten it. I would ask you to consider well

[1] The original begins: "I do not say this without due reflection."

what I had said on the railways.[1]

READER: I will gladly do so, but one question occurs to me even now. You have described to me the India of the pre-Mahomedan period, but now we have Mahomedans, Parsis and Christians. How can they be one nation? Hindus and Mahomedans are old enemies.[2] Our very proverbs prove it.[3] Mahomedans turn to the West for worship, whilst Hindus turn to the East. The former look down on the Hindus as idolaters.[4] The Hindus worship the cow, the Mahomedans kill her. The Hindus believe in the doctrine of non-killing, the Mahomedans do not. We thus meet with differences at every step. How can India be one nation?[5]

CHAPTER X: THE CONDITION OF INDIA (CONTINUED): THE HINDUS AND THE MAHOMEDANS

EDITOR: Your last question is a serious one and yet, on careful consideration, it will be found to be easy of solution. The question arises because of the presence of the railways, of the lawyers and of the doctors. We shall presently examine the last two. We have already considered the railways. I should, however, like to add that man is so made by nature as to require him[6] to restrict his movements as far as his hands and feet will take him. If we did not rush about from place to place by means of railways and such other maddening[7] conveniences, much of the confusion that arises would be obviated. Our difficulties are of our own creation. God set a limit to man's locomotive ambition in the construction of his body. Man immediately proceeded to discover means of overriding the limit. God gifted man with intellect that he might know his Maker. Man abused it so that he might forget his Maker. I am so constructed that I can only serve my immediate neighbours, but in my conceit I pretend to have discovered that I must with my body serve every individual in the Universe. In thus attempting the impossible, man comes in contact

[1] The original adds: "Doubts will still occur to you, but you will be able to resolve them yourself."

[2] The original has: " . . . are believed to be inveterate enemies."

[3] The original adds: "A Mahomedan has no use for Mahadev."

[4] The original adds: "Hindus worship images; Mahomedans are iconoclasts."

[5] The original has: "How can these disappear and India be one nation ?"

[6] The original has: " . . . by nature that he should restrict. . . ."

[7] The word for "maddening" is not found in the original.

with different natures, different religions, and[1] is utterly confounded. According to this reasoning, it must be apparent to you that railways are a most dangerous institution. Owing to them, man has gone further away from his Maker.

READER: But I am impatient to hear your answer to my question. Has the introduction of Mahomedanism not unmade the nation?

EDITOR: India cannot cease to be one nation because people belonging to different religions live in it. The introduction of foreigners does not necessarily destroy the nation; they merge in it. A country is one nation only when such a condition obtains in it. That country must have a faculty for assimilation. India has ever been such a country. In reality, there are as many religions as there are individuals; but those who are conscious of the spirit of nationality do not interfere with one another's religion. If they do, they are not fit to be considered a nation. If the Hindus believe that India should be peopled only by Hindus, they are living in dreamland.[2] The Hindus, the Mahomedans, the Parsis and the Christians who have made India their country are fellow countrymen, and they will have to live in unity, if only for their own interest. In no part of the world are one nationality and one religion synonymous terms; nor has it ever been so in India.

READER: But what about the inborn enmity between Hindus and Mahomedans?

EDITOR: That phrase has been invented by our mutual enemy. When the Hindus and Mahomedans fought against one another, they certainly spoke in that strain. They have long since ceased to fight. How, then, can there be any inborn enmity? Pray remember this too, that we did not cease to fight only after British occupation. The Hindus flourished under Moslem sovereigns and Moslems under the Hindu. Each party recognized that mutual fighting was suicidal, and that neither party would abandon its religion by force of arms.[3] Both parties, therefore, decided to live in peace. With the English advent quarrels re-commenced.

[1] The original has: "and, being unable to carry the burden imposed by this, gives way to impatience."

[2] The original adds: "The Mahomedans also live in dreamland if they believe that there should be only Muslims in India."

[3] The original has: " . . . neither party could be made to abandon its religion or change its ways by force of arms."

The proverbs you have quoted were coined when both were fighting; to quote them now is obviously harmful. Should we not remember that many Hindus and Mahomedans own the same ancestors and the same blood runs through their veins?[1] Do people become enemies because they change their religion? Is the God of the Mahomedan different from the God of the Hindu? Religions are different roads converging to the same point. What does it matter that we take different roads so long as we reach the same goal? Wherein is the cause for quarrelling ?

Moreover, there are deadly proverbs as between the followers of Shiva and those of Vishnu, yet nobody suggests that these two do not belong to the same nation. It is said that the Vedic religion is different from Jainism, but the followers of the respective faiths are not different nations. The fact is that we have become enslaved and, therefore, quarrel and like to have our quarrels decided by a third party. There are Hindu iconoclasts as there are Mahomedan. The more we advance in true knowledge, the better we shall understand that we need not be at war with those whose religion we may not follow.

READER: Now I would like to know your views about cow-protection.

EDITOR: I myself respect the cow, that is, I look upon her with affectionate reverence. The cow is the protector of India because, being an agricultural country, she is dependent on the cow. The cow is a most useful animal in hundreds of ways. Our Mahomedan brethren will admit this.

But, just as I respect the cow, so do I respect my fellow-men. A man is just as useful as a cow no matter whether he be a Mahomedan or a Hindu. Am I, then, to fight with or kill a Mahomedan in order to save a cow? In doing so, I would become an enemy of the Mahomedan as well as of the cow. Therefore, the only method I know of protecting the cow is that I should approach my Mahomedan brother and urge him for the sake of the country to join me in protecting her. If he would not listen to me I should let the cow go for the simple reason that the matter is beyond my ability. If I were

[1] The original has: "What is stated above also applies to the saying, 'A Mahomedan has no use for Mahadev.' Some sayings live on and cause mischief. Misled by the sayings, we do not even remember that many Hindus and Muslims had the same ancestors and have the same blood."

overfull of pity for the cow, I should sacrifice my life to save her but not take my brother's. This, I hold, is the law of our religion.

When men become obstinate, it is a difficult thing. If I pull one way, my Moslem brother will pull another. If I put on superior airs, he will return the compliment. If I bow to him gently, he will do it much more so; and if he does not, I shall not be considered to have done wrong in having bowed. When the Hindus became insistent, the killing of cows increased. In my opinion, cow-protection societies may be considered cow-killing societies. It is a disgrace to us that we should need such societies. When we forgot how to protect cows, I suppose we needed such societies.

What am I to do when a blood-brother is on the point of killing a cow? Am I to kill him, or to fall down at his feet and implore him? If you admit that I should adopt the latter course, I must do the same to my Moslem brother.

Who protects the cow from destruction by Hindus when they cruelly ill-treat her? Whoever reasons with the Hindus when they mercilessly belabour the progeny of the cow with their sticks ? But this has not prevented us from remaining one nation.

Lastly, if it be true that the Hindus believe in the doctrine of non-killing and the Mahomedans do not, what, pray, is the duty of the former? It is not written that a follower of the religion of Ahimsa (nonkilling) may kill a fellow-man. For him the way is straight. In order to save one being, he may not kill another. He can only plead—therein lies his sole duty.

But does every Hindu believe in Ahimsa? Going to the root of the matter, not one man really practises such a religion because we do destroy life. We are said to follow that religion because we want to obtain freedom from liability to kill any kind of life. Generally speaking, we may observe that many Hindus partake of meat and are not, therefore, followers of Ahimsa.[1] It is, therefore, preposterous to suggest that the two cannot live together amicably because the Hindus believe in Ahimsa and the Mahomedans do not.

These thoughts are put into our minds by selfish and false religious teachers. The English put the finishing touch. They have a habit of writing history; they pretend to study the manners and

[1] The original adds: "I have nothing to say if anyone is bent upon stretching the meanings of words so as to prove his point."

customs of all peoples. God has given us a limited mental capacity, but they usurp the function of the Godhead and indulge in novel experiments. They write about their own researches in most laudatory terms and hypnotize us into believing them. We in our ignorance then fall at their feet.[1]

Those who do not wish to misunderstand things may read up the *Koran*, and they will find therein hundreds of passages acceptable to the Hindus; and the *Bhagavad-gita* contains passages to which not a Mahomedan can take exception. Am I to dislike a Mahomedan because there are passages in the *Koran* I do not understand or like? It takes two to make a quarrel. If I do not want to quarrel with a Mahomedan, the latter will be powerless to foist a quarrel on me; and, similarly, I should be powerless if a Mahomedan refuses his assistance to quarrel with me. An arm striking the air will become disjointed. If everyone will try to understand the core of his own religion and adhere to it, and will not allow false teachers to dictate to him, there will be no room left for quarrelling.

READER: But will the English ever allow the two bodies to join hands ?

EDITOR: This question arises out of your timidity. It betrays our shallowness. If two brothers want to live in peace, is it possible for a third party to separate them? If they were to listen to evil counsels we would consider them to be foolish. Similarly, we Hindus and Mahomedans would have to blame our folly rather than the English, if we allowed them to put us asunder. A clay pot would break through impact, if not with one stone, then with another. The way to save the pot is not to keep it away from the dangerpoint but to bake it so that no stone would break it. We have then to make our hearts of perfectly baked clay. Then we shall be steeled against all danger.[2] This can be easily done by the Hindus.[3] They are superior in numbers; they pretend that they are more educated; they are, therefore, better able to shield themselves from attack on their amicable relations with the Mahomedans.[4]

[1] The original has: “We in our simplicity believe all that they say.”

[2] The original has: “Should even one side be sound of heart, the third party will not succeed in its designs.”

[3] The original has: “The Hindus can easily afford to be so.”

[4] The original has: “; it should therefore be possible for them to have a heart of well-baked clay”.

There is mutual distrust between the two communities. The Mahomedans, therefore, ask for certain concessions from Lord Morley. Why should the Hindus oppose this? If the Hindus desisted, the English would notice it, the Mahomedans would gradually begin to trust the Hindus, and brotherliness would be the outcome. We should be ashamed to take our quarrels to the English. Everyone can find out for himself that the Hindus can lose nothing by desisting. That man who has inspired confidence in another has never lost anything in this world.

I do not suggest that the Hindus and the Mahomedans will never fight. Two brothers living together often do so. We shall sometimes have our heads broken. Such a thing ought not to be necessary, but all men are not equitable[1]. When people are in a rage, they do many foolish things. These we have to put up with. But when we do quarrel, we certainly do not want to engage counsel and resort to English or any law-courts. Two men fight; both have their heads broken, or one only. How shall a third party distribute justice amongst them? Those who fight may expect to be injured.[2]

CHAPTER XI: THE CONDITION OF INDIA (CONTINUED): LAWYERS

READER: You tell me that when two men quarrel they should not go to a law-court. This is astonishing.

EDITOR: Whether you call it astonishing or not, it is the truth. And your question introduces us to the lawyers and the doctors. My firm[3] opinion is that the lawyers have enslaved India, have accentuated Hindu-Mahomedan dissensions and have confirmed English authority.

READER: It is easy enough to bring these charges, but it will be difficult for you to prove them. But for the lawyers, who would have shown us the road to independence? Who would have protected the poor? Whowould have secured justice? For instance, the late Manomohan Ghose[4] defended many a poor man free of charge. The Congress, which you have praised so much, is dependent for its

[1] The original has: “equally sensible”.

[2] The original adds: “When human bodies clash against one another, some marks are bound to be left on them. Where is the question of awarding justice in this matter?”

[3] The word for “firm” is not found in the original

[4] (1844-96), lawyer and Congressman; first Indian barrister; founder and editor of *Indian Mirror*

existence and activity upon the work of the lawyers. To denounce such an estimable[1] class of men is to spell injustice,[2] and you are abusing the liberty of the Press by decrying lawyers.

EDITOR: At one time I used to think exactly like you. I have no desire to convince you that they have never done a single good thing. I honour Mr. Ghose's memory. It is quite true that he helped the poor. That the Congress owes the lawyers something is believable. Lawyers are also men, and there is something good in every man. Whenever instances of lawyers having done good can be brought forward, it will be found that the good is due to them as men rather than as lawyers. All I am concerned with is to show you that the profession teaches immorality; it is exposed to temptation from which few are saved.

The Hindus and the Mahomedans have quarrelled. An ordinary man will ask them to forget all about it; he will tell them that both must be more or less at fault, and will advise them no longer to quarrel. But they go to lawyers. The latter's duty is to side with their clients and to find out ways and arguments in favour of the clients, to which they (the clients) are often strangers. If they do not do so, they will be considered to have degraded their profession. The lawyers, therefore, will, as a rule, advance quarrels instead of repressing them.[3] Moreover, men take up that profession, not in order to help others out of their miseries, but to enrich themselves. It is one of the avenues of becoming wealthy and their interest exists in multiplying disputes. It is within my knowledge that they are glad when men have disputes. Petty pleaders actually manufacture them. Their touts, like so many leeches, suck the blood of the poor people.[4] Lawyers are men who have little to do. Lazy people, in order to indulge in luxuries, take up such professions. This is a true statement. Any other argument is a mere pretension. It is the lawyers who have discovered that theirs is an honourable profession. They frame laws as they frame their own praises. They decide what fees they will charge and they put on so much side that poor people almost consider them to be heaven-born.

[1] The word for "estimable" is not found in the original.

[2] The original has: "is to treat justice as injustice".

[3] The original has: "As a rule, therefore, the lawyer will be for taking further action in the dispute."

[4] The original adds: "It is a profession which cannot but result in encouragement of quarrels."

Why do they want more fees than common labourers? Why are their requirements greater? In what way are they more profitable to the country than the labourers? Are those who do good entitled to greater payment? And, if they have done anything for the country for the sake of money, how shall it be counted as good?[1]

Those who know anything of the Hindu-Mahomedan quarrels know that they have been often due to the intervention or lawyers. Some families have been ruined through them; they have made brothers enemies. Principalities, having come under the lawyers' power, have become loaded with debt. Many have been robbed of their all.[2] Such instances can be multiplied.

But the greatest injury they have done to the country is that they have tightened the English grip. Do you think that it would be possible for the English to carry on their Government without law courts? It is wrong to consider that courts are established for the benefit of the people. Those who want to perpetuate their power do so through the courts. If people were to settle their own quarrels, a third party would not be able to exercise any authority over them. Truly, men were less unmanly when they settled their disputes either by fighting or by asking their relatives to decide for them. They became more unmanly and cowardly when they resorted to the courts of law. It was certainly a sign of savagery when they settled their disputes by fighting. Is it any the less so, if I ask a third party to decide between you and me? Surely, the decision of a third party is not always right. The parties alone know who is right. We, in our simplicity and ignorance, imagine that a stranger, by taking our money, gives us justice.

The chief thing, however, to be remembered is that without lawyers courts could not have been established or conducted and without the latter the English could not rule. Supposing that there were only English judges, English pleaders and English police, they could only rule over the English. The English could not do without Indian judges and Indian pleaders. How the pleaders were made in the first instance and how they were favoured[3] you should understand

[1] The original adds: "What I have pointed out is the inherent tendency of the profession itself. That was, however, by the way."

[2] The original has: "Many a landowner with hereditary title in State lands has found himself robbed of his all through lawyers' machinations."

[3] The original has: "and how they struggled for favours. . ."

well. Then you will have the same abhorrence for the profession that I have.[1] If pleaders were to abandon their profession, and consider it just as degrading as prostitution, English rule would break up in a day. They have been instrumental in having the charge laid against us that we love quarrels and courts as fish love water. What I have said with reference to the pleaders necessarily applies to the judges; they are first cousins; and the one gives strength to the other.

CHAPTER XII: THE CONDITION OF INDIA (CONTINUED): DOCTORS

READER: I now understand the lawyers; the good they may have done is accidental. I feel that profession is certainly hateful. You, however, drag in the doctors also, how is that?

EDITOR: The views I submit to you are those I have adopted. They are not original. Western writers have used stronger terms regarding both lawyers and doctors. One writer has likened the whole modern system to the Upas tree. Its branches are represented by parasitical professions, including those of law and medicine, and over the trunk has been raised the axe of true religion. Immorality is the root of the tree. So you will see that the views do not come right out of my mind but represent the combined experiences of many. I was at one time a great lover of the medical profession. It was my intention to become a doctor for the sake of the country. I no longer hold that opinion. I now understand why the medicine men (the *vaids*) among us have not occupied a very honourable status.

The English have certainly effectively used the medical profession for holding us. English physicians are known to have used their profession with several Asiatic potentates for political gain.[2]

Doctors have almost unhinged us. Sometimes I think that quacks are better than highly qualified doctors. Let us consider: the business of a doctor is to take care of the body, or, properly speaking, not even that. Their business is really to rid the body of diseases that may afflict it. How do these diseases arise? Surely by our negligence or indulgence. I overeat, I have indigestion, I go to a doctor, he gives

[1] The original adds: "Among the chief features of British rule which account for its success are the courts, and these depend upon lawyers."

[2] Instead of the last sentence, the original has: "The pretensions of physicians also know no bounds. It was a British physician who played upon the credulity of the Moghul Emperor. He was successful in treating an illness in the Emperor's family and was in consequence rewarded. It was again a physician who ingratiated himself with the Ameer."

me medicine, I am cured. I overeat again, I take his pills again. Had I not taken the pills in the first instance, I would have suffered the punishment deserved by me and I would not have overeaten again. The doctor intervened and helped me to indulge myself. My body thereby certainly felt more at ease; but my mind became weakened. A continuance of a course of medicine must, therefore, result in loss of control over the mind.

I have indulged in vice, I contract a disease, a doctor cures me, the odds are that I shall repeat the vice. Had the doctor not intervened, nature would have done its work, and I would have acquired mastery over myself, would have been freed from vice and would have become happy.

Hospitals are institutions for propagating sin. Men take less care of their bodies and immorality increases. European doctors are the worst of all. For the sake of a mistaken care of the human body, they kill annually thousands of animals. They practise vivisection. No religion sanctions this. All say that it is not necessary to take so many lives for the sake of our bodies.

These doctors violate our religious instinct. Most of their medical preparations contain either animal fat or spirituous liquors; both of these are tabooed by Hindus and Mahomedans. We may pretend to be civilized, call religious prohibitions a superstition and want only to indulge in what we like. The fact remains that the doctors induce us to indulge, and the result is that we have become deprived of self-control and have become effeminate. In these circumstances, we are unfit to serve the country. To study European medicine is to deepen our slavery.

It is worth considering why we take up the profession of medicine. It is certainly not taken up for the purpose of serving humanity. We become doctors so that we may obtain honours and riches. I have endeavoured to show that there is no real service of humanity in the profession, and that it is injurious to mankind. Doctors make a show of their knowledge, and charge exorbitant fees. Their preparations, which are intrinsically worth a few pence, cost shillings. The populace, in its credulity and in the hope of ridding itself of some disease, allows itself to be cheated. Are not quacks then, whom we know, better than the doctors who put on an air of humaneness,

CHAPTER XIII: WHAT IS TRUE CIVILIZATION?

READER: You have denounced railways, lawyers and doctors. I can see that you will discard all machinery. What, then, is civilization ?

EDITOR: The answer to that question is not difficult. I believe that the civilization India has evolved is not to be beaten in the world. Nothing can equal the seeds sown by our ancestors. Rome went, Greece shared the same fate; the might of the Pharaohs was broken; Japan has become westernized; of China nothing can be said; but India is still, somehow or other, sound at the foundation. The people of Europe learn their lessons from the writings of the men of Greece or Rome, which exist no longer in their former glory. In trying to learn from them, the Europeans imagine that they will avoid the mistakes of Greece and Rome. Such is their pitiable condition. In the midst of all this India remains immovable and that is her glory. It is a charge against India that her people are so uncivilized, ignorant and stolid, that it is not possible to induce them to adopt any changes. It is a charge really against our merit. What we have tested and found true on the anvil of experience, we dare not change. Many thrust their advice upon India, and she remains steady. This is her beauty: it is the sheet-anchor of our hope.

Civilization is that mode of conduct which points out to man the path of duty. Performance of duty and observance of morality are convertible terms. To observe morality is to attain mastery over our mind and our passions. So doing, we know ourselves. The Gujarati equivalent for civilization means "good conduct".[1]

If this definition be correct, then India, as so many writers[2] have shown,[3] has nothing to learn from anybody else, and this is as it should be. We notice that the mind is a restless bird; the more it gets the more it wants, and still remains unsatisfied. The more we indulge our passions, the more unbridled they become. Our ancestors, therefore, set a limit to our indulgences. They saw that happiness was largely a mental condition. A man is not necessarily happy because he is rich, or unhappy because he is poor. The rich are often seen to be unhappy, the poor to be happy. Millions will always remain poor.

[1] Literally, "This is the meaning of *su*, that is, good, *dharo* [way of life]." The original adds: "The opposite is *Kudharo* [bad way of life]."

[2] The original has "British writers".

[3] *Vide* "Testimonies by Eminent Men", Appendix II to *Hind Swaraj*, 5-12-1820

Observing all this, our ancestors dissuaded us from luxuries and pleasures. We have managed with the same kind of plough as existed thousands of years ago. We have retained the same kind of cottages that we had in former times and our indigenous education remains the same as before. We have had no system of life-corroding competition. Each followed his own occupation or trade and charged a regulation wage. It was not that we did not know how to invent machinery, but our forefathers knew that, if we set our hearts after such things, we would become slaves and lose our moral fibre. They, therefore, after due deliberation decided that we should only do what we could with our hands and feet. They saw that our real happiness and health consisted in a proper use of our hands and feet. They further reasoned that large cities were a snare and a useless encumbrance and that people would not be happy in them, that there would be gangs of thieves and robbers, prostitution and vice flourishing in them and that poor men would be robbed by rich men. They were, therefore, satisfied with small villages. They saw that kings and their swords were inferior to the sword of ethics, and they, therefore, held the sovereigns of the earth to be inferior to the Rishis and the Fakirs[1]. A nation with a constitution like this is fitter to teach others than to learn from others. This nation had courts, lawyers and doctors, but they were all within bounds. Everybody knew thatthese professions were not particularly superior; moreover, these vakils[1] and *vaids*[2] did not rob people; they were considered people's dependants, not their masters. Justice was tolerably fair. The ordinary rule was to avoid courts. There were no touts to lure people into them. This evil, too, was noticeable only in and around capitals. The common people lived independently and followed their agricultural occupation. They enjoyed true Home Rule.

And where this cursed modern civilization has not reached, India remains as it was before. The inhabitants of that part of India will very properly laugh at your new-fangled notions. The English do not rule over them, nor will you ever rule over them. Those in whose name we speak we do not know, nor do they know us. I would certainly advise you and those like you who love the motherland to go into the interior that has yet been not polluted by the railways and to live there for six months; you might then be patriotic and speak of Home Rule.

[1] Sages and ascetics
[2] Lawyers and doctors

Now you see what I consider to be real civilization. Those who want to change conditions such as I have described are enemies of the country and are sinners.

READER: It would be all right if India were exactly as you have described it, but it is also India where there are hundreds of child widows, where two-year-old babies are married, where twelve-year-old girls are mothers and housewives, where women practise polyandry, where the practice of Niyoga[1] obtains, where, in the name of religion, girls dedicate themselves to prostitution, and in the name of religion sheep[2] and goats are killed. Do you consider these also symbols of the civilization that you have described?

EDITOR: You make a mistake. The defects that you have shown are defects. Nobody mistakes them for ancient civilization. They remain in spite of it. Attempts have always been made and will be made to remove them. We may utilize the new spirit that is born in us for purging ourselves of these evils. But what I have described to you as emblems of modern civilization are accepted as such by its votaries. The Indian civilization, as described by me, has been so described by its votaries. In no part of the world, and under no civilization, have all men attained perfection. The tendency of the Indian civilization is to elevate the moral being, that of the Western civilization is to propagate immorality. The latter is godless, the former is based on a belief in God. So understanding and so believing, it behoves every lover of India to cling to the old Indian civilization even as a child clings to the mother's breast.

CHAPTER XIV: HOW CAN INDIA BECOME FREE?

READER: I appreciate your views about civilization. I will have to think over them. I cannot take them in all at once. What, then, holding the views you do, would you suggest for freeing India?

EDITOR: I do not expect my views to be accepted all of a sudden. My duty is to place them before readers like yourself. Time can be trusted to do the rest.[3] We have already examined the conditions for freeing India, but we have done so indirectly; we will now do so directly. It is a world-known maxim that the removal of the cause of a

[1] Insemination by a person other than one's husband

[2] The original has: "he-buffaloes".

[3] The original has: Time will show whether they find them acceptable or not."

disease results in the removal of the disease itself. Similarly if the cause of India's slavery be removed, India can become free.

READER: If Indian civilization is, as you say, the best of all, how do you account for India's slavery?

EDITOR: This civilization is unquestionably the best, but it is to be observed that all civilizations have been on their trial. That civilization which is permanent outlives it. Because the sons of India were found wanting, its civilization has been placed in jeopardy. But its strength is to be seen in its ability to survive the shock. Moreover, the whole of India is not touched. Those alone who have been affected by Western civilization have become enslaved. We measure the universe by our own miserable foot-rule. When we are slaves, we think that the whole universe is enslaved. Because we are in an abject condition, we think that the whole of India is in that condition. As a matter of fact, it is not so, yet it is as well to impute our slavery to the whole of India. But if we bear in mind the above fact, we can see that if we become free, India is free. And in this thought you have a definition of Swaraj. It is Swaraj when we learn to rule ourselves. It is, therefore, in the palm of our hands. Do not consider this Swaraj to be like a dream. There is no idea of sitting still. The Swaraj that I wish to picture is such that, after we have once realized it, we shall endeavour to the end of our life-time to persuade others to do likewise. But such Swaraj has to be experienced, by each one for himself. One drowning man will never save another. Slaves ourselves, it would be a mere pretension to think of freeing others. Now you will have seen that it is not necessary for us to have as our goal the expulsion of the English. If the English become Indianized, we can accommodate them. If they wish to remain in India along with their civilization, there is no room for them. It lies with us to bring about such a state of things.

READER: It is impossible that Englishmen should ever become Indianized.

EDITOR: To say that is equivalent to saying that the English have no humanity in them. And it is really beside the point whether they become so or not. If we keep our own house in order, only those who are fit to live in it will remain. Others will leave of their own accord. Such things occur within the experience of all of us.

READER: But it has not occurred in history.

EDITOR: To believe that what has not occurred in history will not occur at all is to argue disbelief in the dignity of man. At any rate, it

behoves us to try what appeals to our reason. All countries are not similarly conditioned. The condition of India is unique. Its strength is immeasurable. We need not, therefore, refer to the history of other countries. I have drawn attention to the fact that, when other civilizations have succumbed, the Indian has survived many a shock.

READER: I cannot follow this. There seems little doubt that we shall have to expel the English by force of arms. So long as they are in the country we cannot rest. One of our poets says that slaves cannot even dream of happiness. We are day by day becoming weakened owing to the presence of the English. Our greatness is gone; our people look like terrified men. The English are in the country like a blight which we must remove by every means.

EDITOR: In your excitement, you have forgotten all we have been considering. We brought the English, and we keep them. Why do you forget that our adoption of their civilization makes their presence in India at all possible? Your hatred against them ought to be transferred to their civilization. But let us assume that we have to drive away the English by fighting, how is that to be done?

READER: In the same way as Italy did it. What was possible for Mazzini[1] and Garibaldi[2] is possible for us. You cannot deny that they were very great men.

CHAPTER XV: ITALY AND INDIA

EDITOR: It is well that you have instanced Italy. Mazzini was a great and good man; Garibaldi was a great warrior. Both are adorable; from their lives we can learn much. But the condition of Italy was different from that of India. In the first instance, the difference between Mazzini and Garibaldi is worth noting. Mazzini's ambition was not and has not yet been realized regarding Italy. Mazzini has shown in his writings on the duty of man that every man must learn how to rule himself. This has not happened in Italy. Garibaldi did not hold this view of Mazzini. Garibaldi gave and every Italian took arms. Italy and Austria had the same civilization; they were cousins in this respect. It was a matter of tit for tat. Garibaldi simply wanted Italy to be free from the Austrian yoke. The machinations of Minister

[1] Giuseppe Mazzini (1805-72); *vide* "Joseph Mazzini", 22-7-1905.

[2] Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807-82), Italian soldier and patriot, one of the leaders in the struggle for unification of Italy; *Vide* "Important suggestions for Indians Going to the Transvaal", 22-7-1905.

Cavour[1] disgrace that portion of the history of Italy. And what has been the result? If you believe that because Italians rule Italy the Italian nation is happy, you are groping in darkness. Mazzini has shown conclusively that Italy did not become free. Victor Emmanuel [II] gave one meaning to the expression; Mazzini gave another. According to Emmanuel, Cavour and even Garibaldi, Italy meant the King of Italy and his henchmen. According to Mazzini, it meant the whole of the Italian people, that is, its agriculturists. Emmanuel was only its servant. The Italy of Mazzini still remains in a state of slavery. At the time of the so-called national war, it was a game of chess between two rival kings with the people of Italy as pawns. The working classes in that land are still unhappy. They, therefore, indulge in assassination, rise in revolt, and rebellion on their part is always expected. What substantial gain did Italy obtain after the withdrawal of the Austrian troops? The gain was only nominal. The reforms for the sake of which the war was supposed to have been undertaken have not yet been granted. The condition of the people in general still remains the same. I am sure you do not wish to reproduce such a condition in India. I believe that you want the millions of India to be happy, not that you want the reins of government in your hands. If that be so, we have to consider only one thing: how can the millions obtain self-rule? You will admit that people under several Indian princes are being ground down. The latter mercilessly crush them. Their tyranny is greater than that of the English, and if you want such tyranny in India, then we shall never agree. My patriotism does not teach me that I am to allow people to be crushed under the heel of Indian princes if only the English retire. If I have the power, I should resist the tyranny of Indian princes just as much as that of the English. By patriotism I mean the welfare of the whole people, and if I could secure it at the hands of the English, I should bow down my head to them. If any Englishman dedicated his life to securing the freedom of India, resisting tyranny and serving the land, I should welcome that Englishman as an Indian.

Again, India can fight like Italy only when she has arms. You have not considered this problem at all. The English are splendidly armed; that does not frighten me, but it is clear that, to pit ourselves

[1] Count Camillo Benso Cavour (1810-61), distinguished Italian statesman, who, as Premier to Victor Emmanuel, King of Sardinia (proclaimed King of Italy in 1861), did much for the unification of Italy which was achieved in 1870.

against them in arms, thousands of Indians must be armed. If such a thing be possible, how many years will it take? Moreover, to arm India on a large scale is toEuropeanize it. Then her condition will be just as pitiable as that of Europe. This means, in short, that India must accept European civilization, and if that is what we want, the best thing is that we have among us those who are so well trained in that civilization. We will then fight for a few rights, will get what we can and so pass our days. But the fact is that the Indian nation will not adopt arms, and it is well that it does not.

READER: You are over-stating the facts. All need not be armed. At first, we shall assassinate a few Englishmen and strike terror; then, a few men who will have been armed will fight openly. We may have to lose a quarter[1] of a million men, more or less, but we shall regain our land. We shall undertake guerilla warfare, and defeat the English.

EDITOR: That is to say, you want to make the holy land of India unholy. Do you not tremble to think of freeing India by assassination? What we need to do is to sacrifice ourselves. It is a cowardly thought, that of killing others. Whom do you suppose to free by assassination? The millions of India do not desire it. Those who are intoxicated by the wretched modern civilization think these things. Those who will rise to power by murder will certainly not make the nation happy. Those who believe that India has gained by Dhingra's act[2] and other similar acts[3] in India make a serious mistake. Dhingra was a patriot, but his love was blind. He gave his body in a wrong way; its ultimate result can only be mischievous.

READER: But you will admit that the English have been frightened by these murders, and that Lord Morley's[4] reforms are due to fear.

EDITOR: The English are both a timid and a brave nation. England is, I believe, easily influenced by the use of gunpowder. It is possible that Lord Morley has granted the reforms through fear, but what is granted under fear can be retained only so long as the fear lasts.

[1] The original has: "2,000,000 or 2,500,000 men".

[2] *Vide* 1st footnote of "Preface to Leo Tolstoy's "Letter to a Hindoo", 19-11-1909.

[3] *Vide 2nd* footnoteof "Hind Swaraj", 22-11-1909.

[4] Morley was Secretary of State for India. The Morley-Minto Reforms came into force on November 15, 1909.

READER: This is a new doctrine, that what is gained through fear is retained only while the fear lasts. Surely, what is given will not be withdrawn?

EDITOR: Not so. The Proclamation of 1857[1] was given at the end of a revolt, and for the purpose of preserving peace. When peace was secured and people became simple-minded, its full effect was toned down. If I cease stealing for fear of punishment, I would recommence the operation as soon as the fear is withdrawn from me. This is almost a universal experience. We have assumed that we can get men to do things by force and, therefore, we use force.

READER: Will you not admit that you are arguing against yourself? You know that what the English obtained in their own country they obtained by using brute force. I know you have argued that what they have obtained is useless, but that does not affect my argument. They wanted useless things and they got them. My point is that their desire was fulfilled. What does it matter what means they adopted? Why should we not obtain our goal, which is good, by any means whatsoever, even by using violence? Shall I think of the means when I have to deal with a thief in the house? My duty is to drive him out anyhow. You seem to admit that we have received nothing, and that we shall receive nothing, by petitioning. Why, then, may we not do so by using brute force? And, to retain what we may receive, we shall keep up the fear by using the same force to the extent that it may be necessary. You will not find fault with a continuance of force to prevent a child from thrusting its foot into fire? Somehow or other we have to gain our end.

EDITOR: Your reasoning is plausible. It has deluded many. I have used similar arguments before now. But I think I know better now, and I shall endeavour to undeceive you. Let us first take the argument that we are justified in gaining our end by using brute force because the English gained theirs by using similar means. It is perfectly true that they used brute force and that it is possible for us to do likewise, but by using similar means we can get only the same thing that they got. You will admit that we do not want that. Your belief that there is no connection between the means and the end is a great mistake. Through that mistake even men who have been considered religious

[1] Queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858

have committed grievous crimes. Your reasoning is the same as saying that we can get a rose through planting a noxious weed. If I want to cross the ocean, I can do so only by means of a vessel; if I were to use a cart for that purpose, both the cart and I would soon find the bottom. "As is the God, so is the votary", is a maxim worth considering. Its meaning has been distorted and men have gone astray. The means may be likened to a seed, the end to a tree; and there is just the same inviolable connection between the means and the end as there is between the seed and the tree. I am not likely to obtain the result flowing from the worship of God by laying myself prostrate before Satan. If, therefore, anyone were to say: "I want to worship God; it does not matter that I do so by means of Satan", it would be set down as ignorant folly. We reap exactly as we sow. The English in 1833 obtained greater voting power by violence. Did they by using brute force better appreciate their duty ? They wanted the right of voting, which they obtained by using physical force. But real rights are a result of performance of duty; these rights they have not obtained. We, therefore, have before us in England the force[1] of everybody wanting and insisting on his rights, nobody thinking of his duty. And, where everybody wants rights, who shall give them to whom? I do not wish to imply that they do no duties. They don't perform the duties corresponding to those rights; and as they do not perform that particular duty, namely, acquire fitness, their rights have proved a burden to them. In other words, what they have obtained is an exact result of the means they adopted. They used the means corresponding to the end. If I want to deprive you of your watch, I shall certainly have to fight for it; if I want to buy your watch, I shall have to pay you for it; and if I want a gift I shall have to plead for it; and, according to the means I employ, the watch is stolen property, my own property, or a donation. Thus we see three different results from three different means. Will you still say that means do not matter?

Now we shall take the example given by you of the thief to be driven out. I do not agree with you that the thief may be driven out by any means. If it is my father who has come to steal I shall use one kind of means. If it is an acquaintance I shall use another; and in the case of a perfect stranger I shall use a third. If it is a white man, you

[1] Probably a misprint for "farce". The original has: "The result has been that everyone is found to be running after rights, giving no thought to duties."

will perhaps say you will use means different from those you will adopt with an Indian thief. If it is a weakling, the means will be different from those to be adopted for dealing with an equal in physical strength; and if the thief is armed from top to toe, I shall simply remain quiet. Thus we have a variety of means between the father and the armed man. Again, I fancy that I should pretend to be sleeping whether the thief was my father or that strong armed man. The reason for this is that my father would also be armed and I should succumb to the strength possessed by either and allow my things to be stolen. The strength of my father would make me weep with pity; the strength of the armed man would rouse in me anger and we should become enemies. Such is the curious situation. From these examples we may not be able to agree as to the means to be adopted in each case. I myself seem clearly to see what should be done in all these cases, but the remedy may frighten you. I therefore hesitate to place it before you. For the time being I will leave you to guess it, and if you cannot, it is clear you will have to adopt different means in each case. You will also have seen that any means will not avail to drive away the thief. You will have to adopt means to fit each case. Hence it follows that your duty is *not* to drive away the thief by any means you like.

Let us proceed a little further. That well-armed man has stolen your property; you have harboured the thought of his act; you are filled with anger; you argue that you want to punish that rogue, not for your own sake, but for the good of your neighbours; you have collected a number of armed men, you want to take his house by assault; he is duly informed of it, he runs away; he too is incensed. He collects his brother-robbers, and sends you a defiant message that he will commit robbery in broad daylight. You are strong, you do not fear him, you are prepared to receive him. Meanwhile, the robber pesters your neighbours. They complain before you. You reply that you are doing all for their sake, you do not mind that your own goods have been stolen. Your neighbours reply that the robber never pestered them before, and that he commenced his depredations only after you declared hostilities against him. You are between Scylla and Charybdis. You are full of pity for the poor men. What they say is true. What are you to do? You will be disgraced if you now leave the robber alone. You, therefore, tell the poor men: “Never mind. Come, my wealth is yours, I will give you arms, I will teach you how to use them; you should belabour the rogue; don’t you leave him alone.” And so the battle grows; the robbers increase in numbers; your

neighbours have deliberately put themselves to inconvenience. Thus the result of wanting to take revenge upon the robber is that you have disturbed your own peace; you are in perpetual fear of being robbed and assaulted; your courage has given place to cowardice. If you will patiently examine the argument, you will see that I have not overdrawn the picture. This is one of the means. Now let us examine the other. You set this armed robber down as an ignorant brother; you intend to reason with him at a suitable opportunity: you argue that he is, after all, a fellow man; you do not know what prompted him to steal. You, therefore, decide that, when you can, you will destroy the man's motive for stealing. Whilst you are thus reasoning with yourself the man comes again to steal. Instead of being angry with him, you take pity on him. You think that this stealing habit must be a disease with him. Henceforth, you, therefore, keep your doors and windows open, you change your sleeping-place, and you keep your things in a manner most accessible to him. The robber comes again and is confused as all this is new to him; nevertheless, he takes away your things. But his mind is agitated. He inquires about you in the village, he comes to learn about your broad and loving heart, he repents, he begs your pardon, returns you your things, and leaves off the stealing habit. He becomes your servant, and you find for him honourable employment. This is the second method. Thus, you see, different means have brought about totally different results. I do not wish to deduce from this that robbers will act in the above manner or that all will have the same pity and love like you, but I only wish to show that fair means alone can produce fair results, and that, at least in the majority of cases, if not indeed in all, the force of love and pity is infinitely greater than the force of arms. There is harm in the exercise of brute force, never in that of pity.

Now we will take the question of petitioning. It is a fact beyond dispute that a petition, without the backing of force, is useless. However, the late Justice Ranade[1] used to say that petitions served a useful purpose because they were a means of educating people. They give the latter an idea of their condition and warn the rulers. From this point of view, they are not altogether useless. A petition of an equal is a sign of courtesy; a petition from a slave is a symbol of his slavery. A petition backed by force is a petition from an equal and, when he transmits his demand in the form of a petition, it testifies to his

[1] Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842-1901), distinguished Indian judge, social reformer, author and one of the founders of the Indian National Congress.

nobility. Two kinds of force can back petitions. "We shall hurt you if you do not give this," is one kind of force; it is the force of arms, whose evil results we have already examined. The second kind of force can thus be stated: "If you do not concede our demand, we shall be no longer your petitioners. You can govern us only so long as we remain the governed; we shall no longer have any dealings with you." The force implied in this may be described as love-force, soul-force, or, more popularly but less accurately, passive resistance.[1] This force is indestructible. He who uses it perfectly understands his position. We have an ancient proverb which literally means: "One negative cures thirty-six diseases." The force of arms is powerless when matched against the force of love or the soul.

Now we shall take your last illustration, that of the child thrusting its foot into fire. It will not avail you. What do you really do to the child ? Supposing that it can exert so much physical force that it renders you powerless and rushes into fire, then you cannot prevent it. There are only two remedies open to you—either you must kill it in order to prevent it from perishing in the flames, or you must give your own life because you do not wish to see it perish before your very eyes. You will not kill it. If your heart is not quite full of pity, it is possible that you will not surrender yourself by preceding the child and going into the fire yourself. You, therefore, helplessly allow it to go into the flames. Thus, at any rate, you are not using physical force. I hope you will not consider that it is still physical force, though of a low order, when you would forcibly prevent the child from rushing towards the fire if you could. That force is of a different order and we have to understand what it is.

Remember that, in thus preventing the child, you are minding entirely its own interest, you are exercising authority for its sole benefit. Your example does not apply to the English. In using brute force against the English you consult entirely your own, that is the national interest. There is no question here either of pity or of love. If you say that the actions of the English, being evil, represent fire, and that they proceed to their actions through ignorance, and that therefore they occupy the position of a child and that you want to protect such a child, then you will have to overtake every evil action of that kind by whomsoever committed and, as in the case of the evil

[1] Instead of "more popularly but less accurately, passive resistance", the original has the one word "satyagraha".

child, you will have to sacrifice yourself. If you are capable of such immeasurable pity, I wish you well in its exercise.[1]

CHAPTER XVII: PASSIVE RESISTANCE[2]

READER: Is there any historical evidence as to the success of what you have called soul-force or truth-force? No instance seems to have happened of any nation having risen through soul-force. I still think that the evil-doers will not cease doing evil without physical punishment.

EDITOR: The poet Tulsidas has said: "Of religion, pity, or love, is the root, as egotism of the body. Therefore, we should not abandon pity so long as we are alive." This appears to me to be a scientific truth. I believe in it as much as I believe in two and two being four. The force of love is the same as the force of the soul or truth. We have evidence of its working at every step. The universe would disappear without the existence of that force. But you ask for historical evidence. It is, therefore, necessary to know what history means. The Gujarati equivalent means: "It so happened."[3] If that is the meaning of history, it is possible to give copious evidence. But, if it means the doings of kings and emperors, there can be no evidence of soul-force or passive resistance in such history. You cannot expect silver ore in a tin mine. History, as we know it, is a record of the wars of the world, and so there is a proverb among Englishmen that a nation which has no history, that is, no wars, is a happy nation. How kings played, how they became enemies of one another, how they murdered one another, is found accurately recorded in history, and if this were all that had happened in the world, it would have been ended long ago. If the story of the universe had commenced with wars, not a man would have been found alive today. Those people who have been warred against have disappeared as, for instance, the natives of Australia of whom hardly a man was left alive by the intruders. Mark, please, that these natives did not use soul-force in self-defence, and it does not require much foresight to know that the Australians will share the same fate as their victims. "Those that take the sword shall perish by the sword." With us the proverb is that professional swimmers will find a watery grave.

[1] The original adds: "The thing is simply impossible."
[2] The original has: "Satyagraha—Soul-force".
[3] Literally, "*Itihas* [history] means, 'it so happened'."

The fact that there are so many men still alive in the world shows that it is based not on the force of arms but on the force of truth or love. Therefore, the greatest and most unimpeachable evidence of the success of this force is to be found in the fact that, in spite of the wars of the world, it still lives on.

Thousands, indeed tens of thousands, depend for their existence on a very active working of this force. Little quarrels of millions of families in their daily lives disappear before the exercise of this force. Hundreds of nations live in peace. History does not and cannot take note of this fact. History is really a record of every interruption of the even working of the force of love or of the soul. Two brothers quarrel; one of them repents and re-awakens the love that was lying dormant in him;[1] the two again begin to live in peace; nobody takes note of this. But if the two brothers, through the intervention of solicitors or some other reason take up arms or go to law—which is another form of the exhibition of brute force,—their doings would be immediately noticed in the Press, they would be the talk of their neighbours and would probably go down to history. And what is true of families and communities is true of nations. There is no reason to believe that there is one law for families and another for nations. History, then, is a record of an interruption of the course of nature. Soul-force, being natural, is not noted in history.

READER: According to what you say, it is plain that instances of this kind of passive resistance are not to be found in history. It is necessary to understand this passive resistance more fully. It will be better, therefore, if you enlarge upon it.

EDITOR: Passive resistance is a method of securing rights by personal suffering; it is the reverse of resistance by arms.[2] When I refuse to do a thing that is repugnant to my conscience, I use soul-force. For instance, the Government of the day has passed a law which is applicable to me. I do not like it. If by using violence I force the Government to repeal the law, I am employing what may be termed bodyforce. If I do not obey the law and accept the penalty for its breach, I use soul-force. It involves sacrifice of self.

Everybody admits that sacrifice of self is infinitely superior to sacrifice of others. Moreover, if this kind of force is used in a cause

[1] The original has: "one of them practises satyagraha against the other".

[2] The original has: "Satyagraha is referred to in English as passive resistance. The term denotes the method of . . . ."

that isunjust, only the person using it suffers. He does not make others suffer for his mistakes. Men have before now done many things which were subsequently found to have been wrong. No man can claim that he is absolutely in the right or that a particular thing is wrong because he thinks so, but it is wrong for him so long as that is his deliberate judgment. It is therefore meet that he should not do that which he knows to be wrong, and suffer the consequence whatever it may be. This is the key to the use of soul-force.

READER: You would then disregard laws—this is rank disloyalty. We have always been considered a law-abiding nation. You seem to be going even beyond the extremists. They say that we must obey the laws that have been passed, but that if the laws be bad, we must drive out the law-givers even by force.

EDITOR: Whether I go beyond them or whether I do not is a matter of no consequence to either of us. We simply want to find out what is right and to act accordingly. The real meaning of the statement that we are a law-abiding nation is that we are passive resisters. When we do not like certain laws, we do not break the heads of law-givers but we suffer and do not submit to the laws. That we should obey laws whether good or bad is a new-fangled notion. There was no such thing in former days. The people disregarded those laws they did not like and suffered the penalties for their breach. It is contrary to our manhood if we obey laws repugnant to our conscience. Such teaching is opposed to religion and means slavery. If the Government were to ask us to go about without any clothing,[1] should we do so? If I were a passive resister, I would say to them that I would have nothing to do with their law.[2] But we have so forgotten ourselves and become so compliant that we do not mind any degrading law.[3]

A man who has realized his manhood, who fears only God, will fear no one else. Man-made laws are not necessarily binding on him. Even the Government does not expect any such thing from us. They do not say: "You must do such and such a thing," but they say: "If you do not do it, we will punish you." We are sunk so low that we

[1] The original has: "to strip ourselves naked and dance. . . ."

[2] The original has: " . . . that I would do nothing of the kind, that I had no use for their law".

[3] Literally, "But we lack the spirit of satyagraha to such an extent that when ordered by the Government, we do more degrading things than dance naked before it."

fancy that it is our duty and our religion to do what the law lays down. If man will only realize that it is unmanly to obey laws that are unjust, no man's tyranny will enslave him. This is the key to self-rule or home rule.

It is a superstition and ungodly thing to believe that an act of a majority binds a minority. Many examples can be given in which acts ofmajorities will be found to have been wrong and those of minorities to have been right. All reforms owe their origin to the initiation of minorities in opposition to majorities. If among a band of robbers a knowledge of robbing is obligatory, is a pious man to accept the obligation? So long as the superstition that men should obey unjust laws exists, so long will their slavery exist. And a passive resister alone can remove such a superstition.

To use brute-force, to use gunpowder, is contrary to passive resistance, for it means that we want our opponent to do by force that which we desire but he does not. And if such a use of force is justifiable, surely he is entitled to do likewise by us. And so we should never come to an agreement. We may simply fancy, like the blind horse[1] moving in a circle round a mill, that we are making progress. Those who believe that they are not bound to obey laws which are repugnant to their conscience have only the remedy of passive resistance open to them. Any other must lead to disaster.

READER: From what you say I deduce that passive resistance is a splendid weapon of the weak, but that when they are strong they may take up arms.

EDITOR: This is gross ignorance. Passive resistance, that is, soulforce, is matchless. It is superior to the force of arms. How, then, can it be considered only a weapon of the weak? Physical-force men are strangers to the courage that is requisite in a passive resister. Do you believe that a coward can ever disobey a law that he dislikes? Extremists are considered to be advocates of brute force. Why do they, then, talk about obeying laws? I do not blame them. They can say nothing else. When they succeed in driving out the English and they themselves become governors, they will want you and me to obey their laws. And that is a fitting thing for their constitution. But a passive resister will say he will not obey a law that is against his conscience, even though he may be blown to pieces at the mouth of a

[1] The original has: "bullock".

cannon.

What do you think? Wherein is courage required—in blowing others to pieces from behind a cannon, or with a smiling face to approach a cannon and be blown to pieces? Who is the true warrior—he who keeps death always as a bosom-friend, or he who controls the death of others? Believe me that a man devoid of courage and manhood can never be a passive resister.

This, however, I will admit: that even a man weak in body is capable of offering this resistance. One man can offer it just as well as millions. Both men and women can indulge in it.[1] It does not require the training of an army; it needs no Jiu-Jitsu. Control over the mind is alone necessary, andwhen that is attained, man is free like the king of the forest and his very glance withers the enemy.

Passive resistance is an all-sided sword, it can be used anyhow; it blesses him who uses it and him against whom it is used. Without drawing a drop of blood it produces far-reaching results. It never rusts and cannot be stolen. Competition between passive resisters does not exhaust. The sword of passive resistance does not require a scabbard. It is strange indeed that you should consider such a weapon to be a weapon merely of the weak.

READER: You have said that passive resistance is a speciality of India. Have cannons never been used in India?

EDITOR: Evidently, in your opinion, India means its few princes. To me it means its teeming millions on whom depends the existence of its princes and our own.

Kings will always use their kingly weapons. To use force is bred in them. They want to command, but those who have to obey commands do not want guns: and these are in a majority throughout the world. They have to learn either body-force or soul-force. Where they learn the former, both the rulers and the ruled become like so many madmen; but where they learn soul-force, the commands of the rulers do not go beyond the point of their swords, for true men disregard unjust commands. Peasants have never been subdued by the sword, and never will be. They do not know the use of the sword, and they are not frightened by the use of it by others. That nation is great which rests its head upon death as its pillow. Those who defy death are

[1] The original has: "A woman can offer it as well as a man."

free from all fear.[1] For those who are labouring under the delusive charms of brute-force, this picture is not overdrawn. The fact is that, in India, the nation at large has generally used passive resistance in all departments of life. We cease to co-operate with our rulers when they displease us. This is passive resistance.

I remember an instance when, in a small principality, the villagers were offended by some command issued by the prince. The former immediately began vacating the village. The prince became nervous, apologized to his subjects and withdrew his command. Many such instances can be found in India. Real Home Rule is possible only where passive resistance is the guiding force of the people. Any other rule is foreign rule.

READER: Then you will say that it is not at all necessary for us to train the body?

EDITOR: I will certainly not say any such thing. It is difficult to become a passive resister unless the body is trained. As a rule, the mind, residing in a body that has become weakened by pampering, is also weak, and where there is no strength of mind there can be no strength of soul. We shall have to improve our physique by getting rid of infant marriages and luxurious living. If I were to ask a man with a shattered body to face a cannon's mouth, I should make a laughing-stock of myself.

READER: From what you say, then, it would appear that it is not a small thing to become a passive resister, and, if that is so, I should like you to explain how a man may become one.

EDITOR: To become a passive resister is easy enough but it is also equally difficult. I have known a lad of fourteen years become a passive resister; I have known also sick people do likewise; and I have also known physically strong and otherwise happy people unable to take up passive resistance. After a great deal of experience it seems to me that those who want to become passive resisters for the service of the country have to observe perfect chastity, adopt poverty, follow truth, and cultivate fearlessness.

Chastity is one of the greatest disciplines without which the mind cannot attain requisite firmness. A man who is unchaste loses stamina, becomes emasculated and cowardly. He whose mind is given over to animal passions is not capable of any great effort. This can be proved

[1] The original adds: "True, I am exaggerating somewhat."

by innumerable instances. What, then, is a married person to do is the question that arises naturally; and yet it need not. When a husband and wife gratify the passions, it is no less an animal indulgence on that account. Such an indulgence, except for perpetuating the race, is strictly prohibited. But a passive resister has to avoid even that very limited indulgence because he can have no desire for progeny. A married man, therefore, can observe perfect chastity. This subject is not capable of being treated at greater length. Several questions arise: How is one to carry one's wife with one, what are her rights, and other similar questions. Yet those who wish to take part in a great work are bound to solve these puzzles.

Just as there is necessity for chastity, so is there for poverty. Pecuniary ambition and passive resistance cannot well go together. Those who have money are not expected to throw it away, but they *are* expected to be indifferent about it. They must be prepared to lose every penny rather than give up passive resistance.

Passive resistance has been described in the course of our discussion as truth-force. Truth, therefore, has necessarily to be followed and that at any cost.[1] In this connection, academic questions such as whether a man may not lie in order to save a life, etc., arise, but these questions occur only to those who wish to justify lying. Those who want to follow truth every time are not placed in such a quandary; and if they are, they are still saved from a false position.

Passive resistance cannot proceed a step without fearlessness. Those alone can follow the path of passive resistance who are free from fear, whether as to their possessions, false honour, their relatives, the government, bodily injuries or death.

These observances are not to be abandoned in the belief that they are difficult. Nature has implanted in the human breast ability to cope with any difficulty or suffering that may come to man unprovoked. These qualities are worth having, even for those who do not wish to serve the country. Let there be no mistake, as those who want to train themselves in the use of arms are also obliged to have these qualities more or less. Everybody does not become a warrior for the wish. A would-be warrior will have to observe chastity and to be

[1] Instead of these two sentences, the original has: "How can anyone command the power of truth unless he dedicates himself to truth? Truth, therefore, is absolutely necessary. It cannot be abandoned, whatever the cost. Truth has nothing to hide. There is no question, therefore, of a satyagrahi maintaining a secret army."

satisfied with poverty as his lot. A warrior without fearlessness cannot be conceived of. It may be thought that he would not need to be exactly truthful, but that quality follows real fearlessness. When a man abandons truth, he does so owing to fear in some shape or form. The above four attributes, then, need not frighten anyone. It may be as well here to note that a physical-force man has to have many other useless qualities which a passive resister never needs. And you will find that whatever extra effort a swordsman needs is due to lack of fearlessness. If he is an embodiment of the latter, the sword will drop from his hand that very moment. He does not need its support. One who is free from hatred requires no sword. A man with a stick suddenly came face to face with a lion and instinctively raised his weapon in self-defence. The man saw that he had only prated about fearlessness when there was none in him. That moment he dropped the stick and found himself free from all fear.

CHAPTER XVIII: EDUCATION

READER: In the whole of our discussion, you have not demonstrated the necessity for education; we always complain of its absence among us. We notice a movement for compulsory education in our country. The Maharaja Gaekwar has introduced it in his territories. Every eye is directed towards them. We bless the Maharaja for it. Is all this effort then of no use?

EDITOR: If we consider our civilization to be the highest, I have regretfully to say that much of the effort you have described is of no use. The motive of the Maharaja and other great leaders who have been working in this direction is perfectly pure. They, therefore, undoubtedly deserve great praise. But we cannot conceal from ourselves the result that is likely to flow from their effort.

What is the meaning of education? It simply means a knowledge of letters. It is merely an instrument, and an instrument may be well used or abused. The same instrument that may be used to cure a patient may be used to take his life, and so may a knowledge of letters. We daily observe that many men abuse it and very few make good use of it; and if this is a correct statement, we have proved that more harm has been done by it than good.

The ordinary meaning of education is a knowledge of letters. To teach boys reading, writing and arithmetic is called primary education. A peasant earns his bread honestly. He has ordinary

knowledge of the world. He knows fairly well how he should behave towards his parents, his wife, his children and his fellow-villagers. He understands and observes the rules of morality. But he cannot write his own name. What do you propose to do by giving him a knowledge of letters? Will you add an inch to his happiness? Do you wish to make him discontented with his cottage or his lot? And even if you want to do that, he will not need such an education. Carried away by the flood of western thought we came to the conclusion, without weighing pros and cons, that we should give this kind of education to the people.

Now let us take higher education. I have learned Geography, Astronomy, Algebra, Geometry, etc.[1] What of that? In what way have I benefited myself or those around me? Why have I learned these things ? Professor Huxley has thus defined education:

> That man I think has had a liberal education who has been so trained in youth that his body is the ready servant of his will and does with ease and pleasure all the work that as a mechanism it is capable of; whose intellect is a clear, cold, logic[al] engine with all its parts of equal strength and in smooth working order . . .[2] whose mind is stored with a knowledge of the fundamental truths of nature . . . whose passions are trained to come to heel by a vigorous will, the servant of a tender conscience . . . who has learnt to hate all vileness and to respect others as himself. Such a one and no other, I conceive, has had a liberal education, for he is in harmony with nature. He will make the best of her and she of him.

If this is true education, I must emphatically say that the sciences I have enumerated above I have never been able to use for controlling my senses. Therefore, whether you take elementary education or higher education, it is not required for the main thing. It does not make men of us. It does not enable us to do our duty.

READER: If that is so, I shall have to ask you another question. What enables you to tell all these things to me? If you had not received highereducation, how would you have been able to explain to me the things that you have?

EDITOR: You have spoken well.[3] But my answer is simple: I do not for one moment believe that my life would have been wasted, had

[1] The original adds: “and dabbled in Geology”.

[2] The words for “with all . . . order” are not found in the original.

[3] Literally, “This is a brave attack indeed.”

I not received higher or lower education. Nor do I consider that I necessarily serve because I speak. But I do desire to serve and in endeavouring to fulfil that desire, I make use of the education I have received. And, if I am making good use of it, even then it is not for the millions, but I can use it only for such as you, and this supports my contention. Both you and I have come under the bane of what is mainly false education. I claim to have become free from its ill effect, and I am trying to give you the benefit of my experience and in doing so, I am demonstrating the rottenness of this education.

Moreover,[1] I have not run down a knowledge of letters in all circumstances. All I have now shown is that we must not make of it a fetish. It is not our *Kamadhuk*[2]. In its place it can be of use and it has its place when we have brought our senses under subjection and put our ethics on a firm foundation. And then, if we feel inclined to receive that education, we may make good use of it. As an ornament it is likely to sit well on us. It now follows that it is not necessary to make this education compulsory. Our ancient school system is enough. Characterbuilding has the first place in it and that is primary education. A building erected on that foundation will last.

READER: Do I then understand that you do not consider English education necessary for obtaining Home Rule?

EDITOR: My answer is yes and no. To give millions a knowledge of English is to enslave them. The foundation that Macaulay laid of education has enslaved us. I do not suggest that he had any such intention, but that has been the result. Is it not a sad commentary that we should have to speak of Home Rule in a foreign tongue?

And it is worthy of note that the systems which the Europeans have discarded systems in vogue among us. Their learned men continually make changes. We ignorantly adhere to their cast-off systems. They are trying each division to improve its own status. Wales is a small portion of England.[3] Great efforts are being made to revive a knowledge of Welsh among Welshmen. The English Chancellor, Mr. Lloyd George, is taking a leading part in the movement to make Welsh children speak Welsh. And what is our condition? We write to each in faulty English, and from this even our M.A's.are not free; our best thoughts are expressed in English; the proceedings of our

[1] The original adds: "Your attack is ill-conceived, for".
[2] Mythical cow, yielding whatever is wished for
[3] The original adds: "Its language is no language at all".

Congress are conducted in English; our best newspapers are printed in English. If this state of things continues for a long time, posterity will—it is my firm opinion—condemn and curse us.

It is worth noting that, by receiving English education, we have enslaved the nation. Hypocrisy, tyranny, etc., have increased; English-knowing Indians have not hesitated to cheat and strike terror into the people. Now, if we are doing anything for the people at all, we are paying only a portion of the debt due to them.

Is it not a painful thing that, if I want to go to a court of justice, I must employ the English language as a medium, that when I become a barrister, I may not speak my mother-tongue and that someone else should have to translate to me from my own language? Is not this absolutely absurd? Is it not a sign of slavery? Am I to blame the English for it or myself? It is we, the English-knowing Indians, that have enslaved India. The curse of the nation will rest not upon the English but upon us.

I have told you that my answer to your last question is both yes and no. I have explained to you why it is yes. I shall now explain why it is no.

We are so much beset by the disease of civilization, that we cannot altogether do without English education. Those who have already received it may make good use of it wherever necessary. In our dealings with the English people, in our dealings with our own people, when we can only correspond with them through that language, and for the purpose of knowing how disgusted they (the English) have themselves become with their civilization, we may use or learn English, as the case may be. Those who have studied English will have to teach morality to their progeny through their mother-tongue and to teach them another Indian language; but when they have grown up, they may learn English, the ultimate aim being that we should not need it. The object of making money thereby should be eschewed. Even in learning English to such a limited extent we shall have to consider what we should learn through it and what we should not. It will be necessary to know what sciences we should learn. A little thought should show you that immediately we cease to care for English degrees, the rulers will prick up their ears.

READER: Then what education shall we give ?

EDITOR: This has been somewhat considered above, but we will consider it a little more. I think that we have to improve all our

languages. What subjects we should learn through them need not be elaborated here. Those English books which are valuable, we should translate into the various Indian languages. We should abandon the pretension of learning many sciences. Religious, that is ethical, education will occupy the first place. Every cultured Indian will know in addition to his own provincial language, if a Hindu, Sanskrit; if a Mahomedan, Arabic; if a Parsee, Persian; and all, Hindi. Some Hindus should know Arabic and Persian; some Mahomedans and Parsees, Sanskrit. Several Northerners and Westerners should learn Tamil. A universal language for India should be Hindi, with the option of writing it in Persian or Nagari characters. In order that the Hindus and the Mahomedans may have closer relations, it is necessary to know both the characters. And, if we can do this, we can drive the English language out of the field in a short time. All this is necessary for us, slaves. Through our slavery the nation has been enslaved, and it will be free with our freedom.

READER: The question of religious education is very difficult.

EDITOR: Yet we cannot do without it. India will never be godless. Rank atheism cannot flourish in this land. The task is indeed difficult. My head begins to turn as I think of religious education. Our religious teachers are hypocritical and selfish; they will have to be approached. The Mullas[1], the Dasturs[2] and the Brahmins hold the key in their hands, but if they will not have the good sense, the energy that we have derived from English education will have to be devoted to religious education. This is not very difficult. Only the fringe of the ocean has been polluted and it is those who are within the fringe who alone need cleansing. We who come under this category can even cleanse ourselves because my remarks do not apply to the millions. In order to restore India to its pristine condition, we have to return to it. In our own civilization there will naturally be progress, retrogression, reforms, and reactions; but one effort is required, and that is to drive out Western civilization. All else will follow.

CHAPTER XIX: MACHINERY

READER: When you speak of driving out Western civilization, I suppose you will also say that we want no machinery.

EDITOR: By raising this question you have opened the wound I

[1] Muslim divines
[2] Parsee priests

have received.[1] When I read Mr. Dutt's *Economic History of India*, I wept; and as I think of it again my heart sickens. It is machinery that has impoverished India. It is difficult to measure the harm that Manchester has done to us. It is due to Manchester that Indian handicraft has all but disappeared.

But I make a mistake. How can Manchester be blamed ? We wore Manchester cloth and this is why Manchester wove it. I was delighted when I read about the bravery of Bengal.[2] There were no cloth-mills in that Presidency. They were, therefore, able to restore the original hand-weaving occupation. It is true Bengal encourages the mill-industry of Bombay. If Bengal had proclaimed a boycott of *all* machine-made goods, it would have been much better.

Machinery has begun to desolate Europe. Ruination is now knocking at the English[3] gates. Machinery is the chief symbol of modern civilization; it represents a great sin.[4]

The workers in the mills of Bombay have become slaves. The condition of the women working in the mills is shocking. When there were no mills, these women were not starving. If the machinery craze grows in our country, it will become an unhappy land. It may be considered a heresy, but I am bound to say that it were better for us to send money to Manchester and to use flimsy Manchester cloth than to multiply mills in India. By using Manchester cloth we only waste our money; but by reproducing Manchester in India, we shall keep our money at the price of our blood, because our very moral being will be sapped, and I call in support of my statement the very mill-hands as witnesses. And those who have amassed wealth out of factories are not likely to be better than other rich men. It would be folly to assume that an Indian Rockefeller would be better than the American Rockefeller. Impoverished India can become free, but it will be hard for any India made rich through immorality to regain its freedom. I fear we shall have to admit that moneyed men support British rule; their interest is bound up with its stability. Money renders a man helpless. The other thing which is equally harmful is sexual vice. Both are poison. A snakebite is a lesser poison than these two, because the former merely destroys the body but the latter destroy body, mind

[1] The original has: "You have re-opened my wound."
[2] The reference, obviously, is to the Swadeshi Movement.
[3] The original has "Indian".
[4] The original has: "I am convinced that it . . ."

and soul. We need not, therefore, be pleased with the prospect of the growth of the mill-industry.

READER: Are the mills, then, to be closed down?

EDITOR: That is difficult. It is no easy task to do away with a thing that is established. We, therefore, say that the non-beginning of a thing is supreme wisdom. We cannot condemn millowners; we can but pity them. It would be too much to expect them to give up their mills, but we may implore them not to increase them. If they would be good they would gradually contract their business. They can establish in thousands of households the ancient and sacred handlooms and they can buy out the cloth that may be thus woven. Whether the millowners do this or not, people can cease to use machine-made goods.

READER: You have so far spoken about machine-made cloth, but there are innumerable machine-made things. We have either to import them or to introduce machinery into our country.

EDITOR: Indeed, our gods even are made in Germany. What need, then, to speak of matches, pins and glassware ? My answer can be only one. What did India do before these articles were introduced? Precisely the same should be done today. As long as we cannot make pins without machinery, so long will we do without them. The tinsel splendour of glassware we will have nothing to do with, and we will make wicks, as of old, with home-grown cotton and use hand-made earthen saucersf or lamps. So doing, we shall save our eyes and money and support Swadeshi and so shall we attain Home Rule.

It is not to be conceived that all men will do all these things at one time or that some men will give up all machine-made things at once. But, if the thought is sound, we shall always find out what we can give up and gradually cease to use it. What a few may do, others will copy; and the movement will grow like the coconut of the mathematical problem. What the leaders do, the populace will gladly do in turn. The matter is neither complicated nor difficult. You and I need not wait until we can carry others with us. Those will be the losers who will not do it, and those who will not do it, although they appreciate the truth, will deserve to be called cowards[1].

READER: What, then, of the tram-cars and electricity?

EDITOR: This question is now too late. It signifies nothing. If we are to do without the railways we shall have to do without the tramcars.

[1] Literally, “hypocrites”

Machinery is like a snake-hole which may contain from one to a hundred snakes. Where there is machinery there are large cities; and where there are large cities, there are tram-cars and railways; and there only does one see electric light. English villages do not boast of any of these things. Honest physicians will tell you that where means of artificial locomotion have increased, the health of the people has suffered. I remember that when in a European town there was a scarcity of money, the receipts of the tramway company, of the lawyers and of the doctors went down and people were less unhealthy. I cannot recall a single good point in connection with machinery. Books can be written to demonstrate its evils.

READER: Is it a good point or a bad one that all you are saying will be printed through machinery?

EDITOR: This is one of those instances which demonstrate that sometimes poison is used to kill poison. This, then, will not be a good point regarding machinery. As it expires, the machinery, as it were, says to us: "Beware and avoid me. You will derive no benefits from me and the benefit that may accrue from printing will avail only those who are infected with the machinery-craze."

Do not, therefore, forget the main thing. It is necessary to realize that machinery is bad. We shall then be able gradually to do away with it. Nature has not provided any way whereby we may reach a desired goal all of a sudden. If, instead of welcoming machinery as a boon, we should look upon it as an evil, it would ultimately go.

CHAPTER XX: CONCLUSION

READER: From your views I gather that you would form a third party. You are neither an extremist nor a moderate.

EDITOR: That is a mistake. I do not think of a third party at all. We do not all think alike. We cannot say that all the moderates hold identical views. And how can those who want only to serve have a party ? I would serve both the moderates and the extremists. Where I differ from them, I would respectfully place my position before them and continue my service.

READER: What, then, would you say to both the parties ?

EDITOR: I would say to the extremists: "I know that you want Home Rule for India; it is not to be had for your asking. Everyone

will have to take it for himself. What others get for me is not Home Rule but foreign rule; therefore, it would not be proper for you to say that you have obtained Home Rule if you have merely expelled the English. I have already described the true nature of Home Rule. This you would never obtain by force of arms. Brute force is not natural to Indian soil. You will have, therefore, to rely wholly on soul-force. You must not consider that violence is necessary at any stage for reaching our goal".

I would say to the moderates: "Mere petitioning is derogatory; we thereby confess inferiority. To say that British rule is indispensable is almost a denial of the Godhead. We cannot say that anybody or anything is indispensable except God. Moreover, commonsense should tell us that to state that, for the time being, the presence of the English in India is a necessity, is to make them conceited.

"If the English vacated India, bag and baggage, it must not be supposed that she would be widowed. It is possible that those who are forced to observe peace under their pressure would fight after their withdrawal. There can be no advantage in suppressing an eruption; it must have its vent. If, therefore, before we can remain at peace, we must fight amongst ourselves, it is better that we do so. There is no occasion for a third party to protect the weak. It is this so-called protection which has unnerved us. Such protection can only make the weak weaker. Unless we realize this, we cannot have Home Rule. I would paraphrase the thought of an English divine and say that anarchy under Home Rule were better than orderly foreign rule. Only, the meaning that the learned divine attached to Home Rule is different from Indian Home Rule according to my conception. We have to learn, and to teach others, that we do not want the tyranny of either English rule or Indian rule."

If this idea were carried out, both the extremists and the moderates could[1] join hands. There is no occasion to fear or distrust one another.

READER: What, then, would you say to the English?

EDITOR: To them I would respectfully say: "I admit you are my rulers. It is not necessary to debate the question whether you hold India by the sword or by my consent. I have no objection to your remaining in my country, but although you are the rulers, you will

[1] The original has: "will join hands, they can, they must".

have to remain as servants of the people. It is not we who have to do as you wish, but it is you who have to do as we wish. You may keep the riches that you have drained away from this land, but you may not drain riches henceforth. Your function will be, if you so wish, to police India; you must abandon the idea of deriving any commercial benefit from us. We hold the civilization that you support to be the reverse of civilization. We consider our civilization to be far superior to yours. If you realize this truth, it will be to your advantage and, if you do not, according to your own proverb, you should only live in our country in the same manner as we do.[1] You must not do anything that is contrary to our religions. It is your duty as rulers that for the sake of the Hindus you should eschew beef, and for the sake of Mahomedans you should avoid bacon and ham. We have hitherto said nothing because we have been cowed down, but you need not consider that you have not hurt our feelings by your conduct. We are not expressing our sentiments either through base selfishness or fear, but because it is our duty now to speak out boldly. We consider your schools and law courts to be useless. We want our own ancient schools and courts to be restored. The common language of India is not English but Hindi. You should, therefore, learn it. We can hold communication with you only in our national language.

"We cannot tolerate the idea of your spending money on railways and the military. We see no occasion for either. You may fear Russia; we do not. When she comes we shall look after her. If you are with us, we may then receive her jointly. We do not need any European cloth. We shall manage with articles produced and manufactured at home. You may not keep one eye on Manchester and the other on India. We can work together only if our interests are identical.

"This has not been said to you in arrogance. You have great military resources. Your naval power is matchless. If we wanted to fight with you onyour own ground, we should be unable to do so, but if the above submissions be not acceptable to you, we cease to play the part of the ruled. You may, if you like, cut us to pieces. You may shatter us at the cannon's mouth. If you act contrary to our will, we shall not help you; and without our help, we know that you cannot move one step forward.

[1] A reference to: "When in Rome, do as the Romans do."

"It is likely that you will laugh at all this in the intoxication of your power. We may not be able to disillusion you at once; but if there be any manliness in us, you will see shortly that your intoxication is suicidal and that your laugh at our expense is an aberration of intellect. We believe that at heart you belong to a religious nation. We are living in a land which is the source of religions. How we came together need not be considered, but we can make mutual good use of our relations.

"You, English, who have come to India are not good specimens of the English nation, nor can we, almost half-Anglicized Indians, be considered good specimens of the real Indian nation. If the English nation were to know all you have done, it would oppose many of your actions. The mass of the Indians have had few dealings with you. If you will abandon your so-called civilization and search into your own scriptures, you will find that our demands are just. Only on condition of our demands being fully satisfied may you remain in India; and if you remain under those conditions, we shall learn several things from you and you will learn many from us. So doing we shall benefit each other and the world. But that will happen only when the root of our relationship is sunk in a religious soil."

READER: What will you say to the nation ?

EDITOR: Who is the nation ?

READER: For our purposes it is the nation that you and I have been thinking of, that is, those of us who are affected by European civilization, and who are eager to have Home Rule.

EDITOR: To these I would say: "It is only those Indians who are imbued with real love who will be able to speak to the English in the above strain without being frightened, and only those can be said to be so imbued who conscientiously believe that Indian civilization is the best and that the European is a nine days' wonder. Such ephemeral civilizations have often come and gone and will continue to do so. Those only can be considered to be so imbued who, having experienced the force of the soul within themselves, will not cower before brute-force, and will not, on any account, desire to use brute-force. Those only can be considered to have been so imbued who are intensely dissatisfied with the present pitiable condition, having already drunk the cup of poison.

"If there be only one such Indian, he will speak as above to the English and the English will have to listen to him.

"These are not demands, but they show our mental state. We shall get nothing by asking; we shall have to take what we want, and we need the requisite strength for the effort and that strength will be available to him only who will act thus:

1. He will only on rare occasions make use of the English language.

2. If a lawyer, he will give up his profession, and take up a hand-loom.

3. If a lawyer, he will devote his knowledge to enlightening both his people and the English.

4. If a lawyer, he will not meddle with the quarrels between parties but will give up the courts, and from his experience induce the people to do likewise.

5. If a lawyer, he will refuse to be a judge, as he will give up his profession.

6. If a doctor, he will give up medicine, and understand that rather than mending bodies, he should mend souls.

7. If a doctor, he will understand that no matter to what religion he belongs, it is better that bodies remain diseased rather than that they are cured through the instrumentality of the diabolical vivisection that is practised in European schools of medicine.

8. Although a doctor, he will take up a hand-loom, and if any patients come to him, will tell them the cause of their diseases, and will advise them to remove the cause rather than pamper them by giving useless drugs; he will understand that if by not taking drugs, perchance the patient dies, the world will not come to grief and that he will have been really merciful to him.

9. Although a wealthy man, yet regardless of his wealth, he will speak out his mind and fear no one.

10. If a wealthy man, he will devote his money to establishing hand-looms, and encourage others to use hand-made goods by wearing them himself.

11. Like every other Indian, he will know that this is a time for repentance, expiation and mourning.

12. Like every other Indian, he will know that to blame the English is useless, that they came because of us, and remain also for the same reason, and that they will either go or change their nature only when we reform ourselves.

13. Like others, he will understand that at a time of mourning, there can be no indulgence, and that, whilst we are in a fallen state, to be in gaol or in banishment is much the best.

14. Like others, he will know that it is superstition to imagine it necessary that we should guard against being imprisoned in order that we may deal with the people.

15. Like others, he will know that action is much better than speech; that it is our duty to say exactly what we think and face the consequences and that it will be only then that we shall be able to impress anybody with our speech.

16. Like others, he will understand that we shall become free only through suffering.

17. Like others, he will understand that deportation for life to the Andamans is not enough expiation for the sin of encouraging European civilization.

18. Like others, he will know that no nation has risen without suffering; that, even in physical warfare, the true test is suffering and not the killing of others, much more so in the warfare of passive resistance.

19. Like others, he will know that it is an idle excuse to say that we shall do a thing when the others also do it; that we should do what we know to be right, and that others will do it when they see the way; that when I fancy a particular delicacy, I do not wait till others taste it; that to make a national effort and to suffer are in the nature of delicacies; and that to suffer under pressure is no suffering".

READER: This is a large order. When will all carry it out ?

EDITOR: You make a mistake, You and I have nothing to do with the others. Let each do his duty.[1] If I do my duty, that is, serve myself, I shall be able to serve others.[2] Before I leave you, I will take the liberty of repeating:

1. Real home-rule is self-rule or self-control.

2. The way to it is passive resistance: that is soul-force or loveforce.

3. In order to exert this force, Swadeshi in every sense is

[1] The original has: " 'You mind your own business and leave me to mine' is taken to be an expression of a selfish attitude, but in fact it tends to public good."

[2] The original adds: "I shall have done enough for success in the given task if I do my duty well."

necessary.

4. What we want to do should be done, not because we object to the English or because we want to retaliate but because it is our duty to do so. Thus, supposing that the English remove the salt-tax, restore our money, give the highest posts to Indians, withdraw the English troops, we shall certainly not use their machine-made goods, nor use the English language, nor many of their industries. It is worth noting that these things are, in their nature, harmful; hence we do not want them. I bear no enmity towards the English but I do towards their civilization.

In my opinion, we have used the term "Swaraj" without understanding its real significance. I have endeavoured to explain it as I understand it, and my conscience testifies that my life henceforth is dedicated to its attainment.

APPENDICES

SOME AUTHORITIES AND TESTIMONIES BY EMINENT MEN

I. SOME AUTHORITIES

The following books are recommended for perusal to follow up the study of the foregoing:

The Kingdom of God Is within You (Tolstoy)

What Is Art? (Tolstoy)

The Slavery of Our Times (Tolstoy)

The First Step (Tolstoy)

How Shall We Escape? (Tolstoy)

Letter to a Hindoo (Tolstoy)

The White Slaves of England (Sherard)

Civilization, Its Cause and Cure (Carpenter)

The Fallacy of Speed (Taylor)

A New Crusade (Blount)

On the Duty of Civil Disobedience (Thoreau)

Life without Principle (Thoreau)

Unto This Last (Ruskin)

A Joy for Ever (Ruskin)

Duties of Man (Mazzini)

Defence and Death of Socrates (from Plato)

Paradoxes of Civilization (Max Nordau)

Poverty and Un-British Rule in India (Naoroji)

Economic History of India (Dutt)

Village Communities (Maine)

II. TESTIMONIES BY EMINENT MEN

The following extracts from Mr. Alfred Webb's valuable collection show that the ancient Indian civilization has little to learn from the modern:

J. SEYMOUR KEAY, M. P.

BANKER IN INDIA AND INDIA AGENT

(Writing in 1883)

It cannot be too well understood that our position in India has never been in any degree that of civilians bringing civilization to savage races. When we landed in India we found there a hoary civilization, which, during the progress of thousands of years, had fitted into the character and adjusted itself to the wants of highly intellectual races. The civilization was not perfunctory, but universal and all-pervading—furnishing the country not only with political systems, but with social and domestic institutions of the most ramified description. The beneficent nature of these institutions as a whole may be judged from their effects on the character of the Hindu race. Perhaps there are no other people in the world who show so much in their character the advantageous effects of their own civilization. They are shrewd in business, acute in reasoning, thrifty, religious, sober, charitable, obedient to parents, reverential to old age, amiable, law-abiding, compassionate towards the helpless and patient under suffering.

VICTOR COUSIN (1792-1867)

FOUNDER OF SYSTEMATIC ECLECTICISM IN PHILOSOPHY

On the other hand when we read with attention the poetical and philosophical movements of the East, above all, those of India, which are beginning to spread in Europe, we discover there so many truths, and truths, so profound, and which make such a contrast with the meanness of the results at which the European genius has sometimes stopped, that we are constrained to bend the knee before that of the East, and do see in this cradle of the human race the native land of the highest philosophy.

FRIEDRICH MAX MULLER[1]

If I were to ask myself from what literature we here in Europe, we who have been nurtured almost exclusively on the thoughts of Greeks and Romans, and of one Semitic race, the Jewish, may draw that corrective which is most wanted in order to make our inner life more perfect, more comprehensive, more universal, in fact more truly human, a life, not for this life only, but a transfigured and eternal life—again I should point to India.

FREDERICK VON SCHLEGEL

It cannot be denied that the early Indians possessed a knowledge of the true God; all their writings are replete with sentiments and expressions, noble, clear, and severely grand, as deeply conceived and reverently expressed as in any human language in which men have spoken of their God. . . . Among nations possessing indigenous philosophy and metaphysics together with an innate relish for these pursuits, such as at present characterizes Germany, and, in olden times was the proud distinction of Greece, Hindustan holds the first rank in point of time.

ABBE J. A. DUBOIS

MISSIONARY IN MYSORE

Extracts from a letter dated December 15, 1820, Seringapatam: December, 1820, Seringapatam:

The authority of married women within their houses is chiefly exerted in preserving good order and peace among the persons who compose their families; and a great many among them discharge this important duty with a prudence and a discretion which have scarcely a parallel in Europe. I have known families composed of between thirty and forty persons, or more, consisting of grown-up sons and daughters, all married and all having children, living together under the superintendence of an old matron—their mother or mother-in-law. The latter, by good management, and by accommodating herself to the temper of the daughters-in-law, by using, according to circumstances, firmness or forbearance, succeeded in preserving peace and harmony during many years amongst so many females, who had all jarring tempers. I ask you whether it would be possible to attain the same end, in the same circumstances, in our countries, where it is scarcely possible to make two women

[1] The original edition printed by the International Printing Press in 1910 had after Max Müller's testimony the following:

Michael G. Mulhall, F. R. S. S.

Statistics

PRISON POPULATION PER 100,000 OF INHABITANTS

Several European States.... 100 to 230

England and Wales....90

India 38

Dictionary of Statistics, M. G. Mulhall, F. R. S. S., Routledge & Sons, 1899.

living under the same roof to agree together.

In fact, there is perhaps no kind of honest employment in a civilized country in which the Hindu females have not a due share. Besides the management of the household, and the care of the family which (as already noticed is under their control, the wives and daughters of husbandmen attend and assist their husbands and fathers in the labours of agriculture. Those of tradesmen assist theirs in carrying on their trade. Merchants are attended and assisted by theirs in their shops. Many females are shopkeepers on their own account; and *without a knowledge of the alphabet* or of the decimal scale, they keep by other means their accounts in excellent order, and are considered as still shrewder than the males themselves in their commercial dealings.

J. YOUNG

SECRETARY, SAVON MECHANICS INSTITUTES WITHIN RECENT YEARS

Those races (the Indian viewed from a moral aspect) are perhaps the most remarkable people in the world. They breathe in an atmosphere of moral purity, which cannot but excite admiration, and this is especially the case with the poorer classes, who, notwithstanding the privations of their humble lot, appear to be happy and contented. True children of nature, they live on from day to day, taking no thought for the morrow and thankful for the simple fare which Providence has provided for them. It is curious to witness the spectacle of coolies of both sexes returning home at nightfall after a hard day's work often lasting from sunrise to sunset. In spite of fatigue from the effects of the unremitting toil, they are, for the most part, gay and animated, conversing cheerfully together and occasionally breaking into snatches of light-hearted song. Yet what awaits them on their return to the hovels which they call home? A dish of rice for food, and the floor for a bed. Domestic felicity appears to be the rule among the Natives, and this is the more strange when the customs of marriage are taken into account, parents arranging all such matters. Many Indian households afford examples of the married state in its highest degree of perfection. This may be due to the teachings of the Shastras, and to the strict injunctions which they inculcate with regard to marital obligation; but it is no exaggeration to say that husbands are generally devotedly attached to their wives, and in many instances the latter have the most exalted conception of their duties towards their husbands.

COLONEL THOMAS MUNRO

THIRTY-TWO YEARS' SERVICE IN INDIA

If a good system of agriculture, unrivalled manufacturing skill, a capacity to produce whatever can contribute to convenience or luxury; schools established in every village for teaching reading, writing and arithmetic; the general practice of hospitality and charity among each other; and, above all, a treatment of the female

sex, full of confidence, respect and delicacy, are among the signs which denote a civilized people, then the Hindus are not inferior to the nations of Europe; and if civilization is to become an article of trade between the two countries, I am convinced that this country [England] will gain by the import cargo.

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN, BART.

The Indian village has thus for centuries remained a bulwark against political disorder, and the home of the simple domestic and social virtues. No wonder, therefore, that philosophers and historians have always dwelt lovingly on this ancient institution which is the natural social unit and the best type of rural life: self-contained, industrious, peace-loving, conservative in the best sense of the word. . . . I think you will agree with me that there is much that is both picturesque and attractive in this glimpse of social and domestic life in an Indian village. It is a harmless and happy form of human existence. Moreover, it is not without good practical outcome.

161. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

UNION CASTLE LINE,
R. M. S. *KILDONAN CASTLE*,
November 24, 1909

CHI. MAGANLAL[1],

I do not know when we shall meet next. Hence I reply all letters right here. There is no end to the work I have put in on the steamer this time.[2] You will see this from my letters to Mr. West and others and other writings. I have many things to say but that must wait till we meet. Just now, I shall write only what is necessary.

I was glad to read about Chi. Santok's[3] condition.

It seems quite appropriate that the name of Phoenix should be that and nothing else.I wish that my name is forgotten, and only my work endures.The work will endure only if the name is forgotten. It is

[1] Son of Khushalchand Gandhi, Gandhiji's cousin, and in charge of the Gujarati section of *Indian Opinion* during Chhaganlal's absence

[2] Gandhiji wrote the whole of *Hind Swaraj*, translated into Gujarati Tolstoy's *Letter to a Hindoo*, wrote the English and Gujarati prefaces to the latter, and also wrote several letters.

[3] Wife of Maganlal Gandhi

good of a name when we are just making experiments?And even when a name is given, we shall have to find a common word over which the question of Hindu or Mussalman will not arise.The word *math* or *ashram* has a particularly Hindu connotation and therefore may not be used.“Phoenix”is a very good word which has come to us without any effort on our part.Being an English word, it serves to pay homage to the land in which we live.Moreover, it is neutral. Its significance, as the legend goes, is that the bird Phoenix comes back to life again and again from its own ashes, i.e., it never dies.The name Phoenix, for the present, serves the purpose quite well,for we believe that the aims of Phoenix will not vanish even when we are turned to dust.We shall see what we can do later on.At present our whole structure and behaviour[1] are those of the bird Phoenix.

Please see my letter[2] to Mr. Thakkar[3].

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the facsimile of the original Gujarati in Gandhiji’s hand in *Jivan-nu Parodh* by Prabhudas Gandhi

[1] The original has “वाट आने घाट...”, i.e., path and form, a common Gujarati phrase.

[2] This is not available.

[3] Harilal Thakkar, a worker in the printing press at Phoenix

162. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

UNION CASTLE LINE,
R. M. S. *KILDONAN CASTLE,*
November 24, 1909

CHI. MANILAL[1],

It is 9.30 p.m. now. It is five days' voyage hence to Cape Town. As I am tired of writing with the right hand, I write this to you with the left. As I may have to go to gaol straight on landing, I write now.

I take it that you at any rate will rejoice at my going to gaol, for you have understanding. The secret of the struggle lies in going to gaol cheerfully, and being happy while there.

It was good you asked the question about Phoenix. First of all, we shall have to consider how we can realize the self and how serve our country. After we do this, we can explain what Phoenix is. For realizing the self, the first essential thing is to cultivate a strong moral sense. Morality means the acquisition of virtues such as fearlessness, truth, *brahmacharya* [celibacy] and so on. Service is automatically rendered to the country in this process of cultivating morality. Phoenix is of great help in this process. I believe that it is very difficult to preserve morality in cities where people live in congestion and there are many temptations. That is why the wise have recommended solitary places like Phoenix. Experience is the real school. The experience you have had in Phoenix you could not have got elsewhere. Thoughts about realizing the self, again, could only occur to you there. The very fact that you have asked me such a profound question when you are a mere child shows your merit. The credit of your having been able to nurse Mr. West[2] and others also goes to Phoenix. As most of the people in Phoenix are just beginners, you may find faults all round you. They may be there. Phoenix is not perfect but we wish it to become so.

The Phoenix School has nothing to do with what I have said above. The school is a means to achieve our end. If it breaks down, we shall know that we are not yet fit for that kind of work. I understand

[1] Gandhiji's second son

[2] Manager, International Printing Press, Phoenix; during his illness, Manilal attended on him; *vide* "Letter to Manilal Gandhi", 12-10-1909.

your eagerness to study. My advice to you is to have patience. Concerning you, I have been thinking in various ways. I shall explain this to you when we meet. Meanwhile have faith in Bapu. Ask me if there is anything you have not understood.

It is all right that Mr. West has given you a pocket book. You have not served him for the sake of a gift. He has not given you the book as a reward but as a memento.

I am anxious about Deva[1]. Please look after him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the original Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 92

Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

163. LAST NOTE ON DEPUTATION[2]

I[3]

KILDONAN CASTLE,
November 25, 1909

This is my last note on the Deputation. I should like to request every Indian to go through it carefully. It is my hope that when this note is published in *Indian Opinion*, we, both the brothers[4], will have been lodged in gaol or will soon be.

POLAK'S WORK

It appears that the more General Smuts sets himself against us, the greater the support we get from India. But four months is too short a period in which to rouse a people. Even four years will not be enough. What then is the secret of the success of Mr. Polak's mission?[5] The Transvaal satyagrahis, of course. Mr. Polak's effort has

[1] Devdas, Gandhiji's youngest son

[2] For earlier Notes on Deputation, *vide* Vol. IX.

[3] This instalment: was published in Gujarati in *Indian Opinion*, 18-12-1909.

[4] Gandhiji and Hajee Habib. When the deputation was on its way to England, fellow-passengers on the ship got the impression, from the friendly relations between the two, that they were brothers. *Vide"*Deputation's Voyage [—II], Before 9-7-1909.

[5] In India, where H. S. L. Polak had gone on a deputation to explain the case of British Indians in S. Africa

been welcomed on all sides, not because he is Mr. Polak, but because he is our spokesman telling the story of our grievances, because it is for India that we have been suffering and because India has come to realize the justice of our cause.

PROTEST IN ENGLAND

What about England? I cannot explain how deep a root the movement initiated in England is likely to strike. After the Deputation of 1906, the [South Africa British Indian] Committee was formed. We have often spoken of the invaluable work done by the Committee. Lord Ampthill[1] and Sir Muncherji[2] are unremitting in their efforts, in the faith that we shall hold out till the end. But the movement[3] that has now started is far more important than the work of the Committee. Its object is to take our cause right to the individual Englishman and see that every Indian in England becomes fully acquainted [with the situation]. We are not making this effort because we depend on the support of the British people. Every human being can help our cause. The object of our effort is to give world-wide publicity to the justice of our cause and the injustice of the Transvaal [Government]'s stand. We bring the matter to the notice of the British people because of the connection that exists between them and us. On being acquainted with the facts, they tell us that what we have been doing is right. They send money in aid of our cause. This conveys the suggestion of our being their equals. They do not write to us with an air of condescension, but as our brothers and sisters. This is a new idea. They do their duty [by us]. Let us assume that about a hundred thousand signatures and as many pence will be collected. The significance of this cannot be easily grasped by everyone. A hundred thousand pence will make £416. That is not a small amount. But it is not the amount that matters. The collection of 100,000 signatures is no child's play. About 40 Indians and Englishmen have volunteered to go round for the purpose. It will require a great effort on the part of all these persons to collect such a large number of signatures. Besides, it is not a small thing that 100,000 persons encourage us to go ahead with our fight. Why should these men work? Only because we make sacrifices. Does anyone

[1] Chairman of the Committee; former Governor of Madras; *vide"* Deeds Better Than Words", 26-10-1906.

[2] Bhownaggree (1851-1933), Indian barrister settled in England, Member of Parliament; "Mr. Brodrick and British Indians in the Transvaal", 2-7-1905.

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Meeting of Indians", 2-11-1909.

believe that we could get a single person to work so much for us merely by babbling something about wanting rights for ourselves ?

Having carried on the fight so far, what will the Transvaal Indians do now? If they want to uphold the honour of the people of India, they will meet death rather than give up the fight. They will not keep looking at one another, but go on with the fight. Everyone will want to be a Nagappen[1]. They will not be unnerved, but happy rather that the struggle is lengthening out, for, as days pass, people realize that we are not just being theatrical, and they also grow better acquainted with the nature of our struggle. That is the miracle that suffering works. As, one after another, the brave Moor soldiers threw themselves on the French guns and fell dead,[2] the French gunmen at last refused to fire on them and embraced the survivors. So great is the respect that courage inspires. The Moors could make the impression that they did because they were reckless of their lives. Had they known how to fire a gun, they could not have succeeded so well. But they knew how to die. Through their deeds they told the gunmen: "We are not frightened by your guns. Our country and our religion are dearer to us than our lives. Therefore, keep your guns to yourselves. You cannot bend us. You may seize our lands, if you can, after our death. Do not think, you can take them while we live." These Moors have not in fact died, but live on. For generations their people will recall the story of their courage and the whole world, too, will cite their example. The same is true of the Transvaal Indians. Let them all speak out with one voice that they are prepared to lay down their lives to fulfil their pledge; and then be as good as their word.

During [these] four months, many Indians held out courageously and have acquitted themselves well. But there were also many who betrayed weakness. We are paying the price of that weakness. The struggle is getting prolonged. What does it matter, though: the more it is protracted, the more severely are the soldiers tested. We cannot expect everyone to display the same courage. Were it to be otherwise, there would be no need for a fight. All the same, the following things need to be done.

(1) Everyone who possibly can should keep up courage and fight till death.

[1] A satyagrahi, who died a martyr; *vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case". 16-7-1909.

[2] *Vide* "Cape Town Indians", 31-8-1907.

(2) Those who cannot should cheer the others who continue fighting rather than attempt to dispirit them, or hold their tongue and not come in the way of anyone attempting to do something good.

(3) Those who cannot take part [in the struggle] as in (1) above should help with money. This is how all wars are fought. Everyone does not march to the front. The others [who remain behind] cheer those on the front, nurse them [when wounded] and help with their money.

(4) Everyone must bring home to General Smuts the determination of the Indian community not to rest till it had won its demands.

These are the duties of the Transvaal Indians. Indians all over South Africa [however] must know that it is because of the struggle that they have been spared. It is this fight which safeguards their interests. If it has become difficult to pass laws [against them] elsewhere, that is because the Transvaal has been fighting.

Indians must bear in mind that they will call down disgrace on the community if they do not act as suggested above. Even a child can see that we must win the fight. They offer to repeal the Act and to permit entry of sixIndians, but refuse equal rights of entry [with the whites] under the law. The explanation for this hurdle has also been provided by General Smuts: it is that there are only a few Indians who carry on the fight. The rest have grown sick of it. If this is true, it is obvious that we shall get nothing.

EXPENDITURE ON DEPUTATION

The expenditure on the Deputation has amounted to about £500. Of this, £210 represents the fare for the journey both ways, which leaves £290 as the figure of expenses in England. The printing bill has not yet been paid. Two thousand copies of our statement[1] were printed. The paper for these remains to be paid for and there is still some unavoidable expenditure to be incurred. The accounts for these items will be given later. An abstract of the expenditure mentioned above will also be published in *Indian Opinion*.[2] In view of the work [of collecting signatures, etc.] that we have undertaken as stated above,

[1] Of 16-7-1909; *vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909.

[2] This was done in the issue of 25-12-1909; *vide* Appendix I.

a typist under Mr. Ritch[1] will have to be maintained for the present. Miss Maud Polak[2] has undertaken the work. She gave notice resigning her permanent job when we were about to leave. The balance of the amount received last in connection with this [signature campaign] has been deposited in the bank.

OUR DEMAND

The demand we have made through Lord Ampthill is this: the law must provide for equal rights of entry to all. We are also agreeable to the Governor being empowered under the law to regulate the number of immigrants belonging to any community. But the law must be the same for all.

GENERAL SMUTS' OFFER

General Smuts has shown himself prepared to give permits of permanent residence to Indians, and also to repeal the obnoxious Act[3]. But he is not prepared to grant equal rights under the immigration law. There must be [he says] a separate law making special provision for the Asiatics. Lord Crewe[4] has stated emphatically that General Smuts is not prepared to concede equal rights even in theory.

It all boils down to this: he is prepared to give us the very thing [we want], but only as a gift rather than as a right. He insists that in the law itself there must be a distinction between the whites and the Coloured people. We argue that we have not been fighting for numbers, but for equal rights [even if only in theory].

II[5]

FUND IN ENGLAND

Contributions have been received to-date as follows, two items mentioned earlier[6] being repeated:

	[£ s. d.]
Dr. Mehta	10. 0. 0
Servant of India (per month)	3. 0. 0

[1] Louis Walter Ritch, an articled clerk under Gandhiji and later Secretary, South Africa British Indian Committee, London; *vide* "Speech at Farewell to L.W. Ritch", 9-3-1905.

[2] Sister of H. S. L. Polak

[3] The Transvaal Asiatic Registration Act 2 of 1907

[4] Secretary of State for the Colonies

[5] This appeared as the second instalment in *Indian Opinion*, 25-12-1909.

[6] From Dalal and Dr. Miss Joshi; *vide* "London", Before 8-11-1909.

Mr. Gokulbhai Dalal	0.10.0
Mr. J. M. Parikh	1. 1. 0
Mr. H. Bose	0. 2. 0
Miss Winterbottom	10. 0. 0
Mr. Duleepsingh[1]	5. 0. 0
Mrs. Dubey	1. 0. 0
Dr. Miss Joshi	3. 0. 0
	33. 13. 0

This is just a beginning; no one has yet gone round for collections.

MEETING IN CAMBRIDGE

Mr. Hajee Habib, Mr. Ismail Ise, Mr. Azam and I visited Cambridge in response to an invitation. We met students from the Aligarh College as also from the Punjab, Bengal and Gujarat. Mr. Khan came along with us from London. We met about 70 students. Mr. Hajee Habib and I addressed the meeting[2], which appeared to be considerably roused by our speeches. The students have agreed to help in raising contributions and collecting signatures. We also met Prof. Tejasingh[3] there.

The Polak family, Miss Smith, Sir Muncherji, Mr. Dubey, Mr. Parikh, Mr. Munsif, Mr. Bose and some other Indians and Englishmen were present at the station to see us off. Thus, on all sides, sympathy has been evoked for us. It is for us to keep it alive. Likewise, it also depends on us whether the fight will be over early or whether it will go on for a long time.

AT MEYER'S PARTY

Mr. Meyer[4] arranged a party on the 12th in the Westminster Palace Hotel to enable [friends] to meet us both and hear what we had to say. Letters were received from Lord Ampthill, Lord Curzon, Lord

[1] Prince Duleep Singh

[2] Of the Indian Majlis held on 7-11-1909; *vide* "Letter to H.S.l. Polak", 5-11-1909.

[3] A Cambridge graduate, Professor of English at Khalsa College in the Punjab and leading member of the Sikh community in Canada, who organized the Guru Nanak Mining, Developing and Trust Company there to help settle the Sikhs

[4] Rev. F. B. Meyer, member S. A. B. I. Committee; *vide* "Deputation's Last Letter", After 6-11-1909.

Roberts[1] and other gentlemen expressing their inability to attend. Sir Charles Bruce[2] wrote as follows:

> Although the cause they represent is passing through a dark hour, I am not discouraged. In the history of the human race, it has been darkest before the dawn. . . . Never did the cause of the Negro seem more hopeless than during the years that preceded the abolition of slavery. . . . The Saviour of the world deemed Himself lost in the moment that brought our redemption. And so I join you in spirit in wishing Godspeed to Messrs Gandhi and Hajee Habib.[3]

Sir William Markby[4] wrote:

> . . . I hear that they have not obtained the small measure of justice which they came to this country to ask. No one disputes the reasonableness of their claim. It is for political reasons only that the Government refuses to interfere. It is not pleasant to see again and again the British Government showing its inability to enforce the just claims of its subjects.

The function was attended, among others, by Princess Sophia Duleepsingh, Sir Raymond West[5], Mr. Ameer Ali[6], Sir Frederick Lely, Dr. Rutherford, Sir Muncherji Bhownaggree, Major Syed Hussain Bilgrami, Miss Winterbottom[7], Mr. and Mrs. Dube, the Hon'ble Mr. Daaji Abaji Khare, Mrs. Khare, Mr. Motilal Nehru, Mr. and Mrs. Marnham, Mr. and Mrs. Ratcliffe, Mr. Ritch and Mr. Ismail Ise.

Speaking after tea, Mr. Meyer said[8] that, when Mr. Gandhi told him what had happened, he felt that arrangements should be made for a fewgentlemen to meet Mr. Hajee Habib and Mr. Gandhi and hence he had called this meeting. He had met Mr. Gandhi in South Africa and had come to know of his self-sacrifice. They had, he said, the reputation of being men who loved fair play and could not therefore

[1] Commander in-Chief in South Africa, 1899-1900 and 1901-04; *vide* "What should the Brave Do?", 1-6-1907.

[2] Governor of Mauritius (1897-1904)

[3] From the English text of the letter published in *Indian Opinion*, 11-12-1909

[4] (1829-1914), Judge, Calcutta High Court, 1866-78; *vide* "Letter to Sir William Markby", 20-11-1906.

[5] (1832-1912), Jurist, Vice-Chancellor of Bombay University; *vide* "Deputation Notes -III, 23-11-1906.

[6] Member, Privy Council; *vide* "Honour for Justice Ameer Ali",25-12-1909

[7] Secretary of the Union of Ethical Societies; *vide* "Letter to Miss F. Winterbottom", 13-11-1906.

[8] The translation has been collated with the English report in *Indian Opinion*, 11-12-1909.

allow their friends to depart without showing them their goodwill. He thought their presence there did not endorse in every particular all Mr. Gandhi's words and acts or suggest that he had made no mistakes. Human beings would not be human beings if they did not make mistakes. But, on the whole, their presence at that meeting was their endorsement of the Indian struggle. The question touched not only the Transvaal or India, but the British Empire as a whole. Mr. Gandhi had informed them, he said, that there was an offer from General Smuts to repeal the Act of 1907, but it was subject to a condition which was unacceptable. Mr. Gandhi did not resist legislation in general, but only legislation which cast a slur upon Indians.

Mr. Gandhi said:

I am thankful to Mr. Meyer for having called this meeting and I welcome the opportunity given to my colleague and me. We do not expect this gathering to endorse every step that we have taken. We only want you to declare that our demand is a reasonable one and request your support for it. The issue on which we have been fighting concerns not only the Transvaal but the whole of the British Empire. The offer which the Transvaal Government has made is not acceptable because it does not meet our object. There are in South Africa nearly 150,000 Indians. The immigration of Indians commenced with the system of indentured labour in Natal. This was followed by the advent of free Indians who, being traders, excited the jealousy of white traders; hence the present Indian problem in South Africa. The position we occupy in that country is a very difficult and a very delicate one. In Natal, at the Cape, in the Orange Free State and in the Transvaal, there exists legislation which hurts our feelings. In the Transvaal the position is particularly difficult. Before the war, we could not hold landed property, had no voting rights, might not walk on the foot-paths nor ride on tram-cars. All these laws are still in force. Up to the year 1906, however, we put up with these restrictions. We memorialized the Government. My friend, Mr. Hajee Habib, used to approach the British Agent for relief. He sometimes obtained a measure of redress. We did not, however, go beyond taking these steps. But the law which was passed in 1906 fell in a different category. It was conceived in an atmosphere of criminality. It was degrading to the people who were settled there. They also intended to

pass another law to put a barrier upon Indian immigration. Never before had such laws been passed in a British Colony. They were an attack on us as a community. We felt therefore that petitions would not be enough. We held a meeting in a theatre, at which Mr. Hajee Habib administered an oath to everyone not to submit to any such law if it came to be passed but suffer the penalties for breaking it.[1] We had no personal interest to serve by this. So long as it was a matter of our own interests, we had kept patient. But when we saw that it constituted an attack on us as a community, that the very foundations of the British Empire were endangered, we resolved to keep quiet no longer. We had two alternatives before us. One was to meet violence with violence. We rejected that alternative. The other was to refuse submission to this legislation. We adopted this course. We acted as Daniel had done when he refused to obey the laws of men which he did not approve of.[2] The Imperial Government, too, were a party to this crime. They knew that this legislation would hurt our susceptibilities. They might have withheld their consent to the Transvaal measure, but they did not. What is the meaning of the British Constitution ? It is supposed to confer equal rights on all subjects. I could consent to remain a subject of an Empire with such a constitution. But I have found from experience that we cannot have equal rights even in theory. I am obliged to say that I cannot consent to remain a subject in such an Empire. It does not matter to what extent I am allowed to participate in it; if, however, I am to be treated as a mere slave and not as a partner, that is a position I cannot accept. This legislation cuts at the root of the British Empire and resisting it we have been rendering a service not only to India but to the whole Empire. We have been offering passive resistance against the Imperial Government as well, and I hope that this meeting will tell us that we are right in doing so. We cannot do less and deserve to be partners in the Empire, and unless there is partnership, there cannot be Empire. That is why I have said that this struggle is one of the greatest of modern times. We are fighting with no selfish motive, and the weapon we employ is self-sacrifice. What we ask is equality in the eyes of law, which Smuts refuses to grant. As an illustration, let us suppose a master telling his slave: "You may sit at the table with me, but on this

[1] *Vide* "The Mass Meeting", 11-9-1906 and "Johannesburg Letter", 22-9-1906.

[2] *Vide Old Testament, Daniel*, Ch. VI.

condition, that this bond of slavery will always exist between us." Will the slave acquiesce in such an arrangement, if he wants to be free? What he must do is to tear off the bond of slavery. That is our position. We want to tear off the bond of slavery.

We now appeal to you for your support. As passive resisters, we use no force. Nor do we ask anyone to use it. But we want you to know what our struggle means. If it appeals to you, you can extend encouragement to us. You can show the Imperial Government that you will be no party to its crime.

He was followed by Sir Raymond West and Sir Frederick Lely. Major Syed Hussain also made a spirited speech and said that the whole of India, Hindus, Muslims and Parsis, were at the back of the [Transvaal] campaign. The following resolution[1] was then passed unanimously:

> That this meeting desires to express its earnest sympathy with the Transvaal British Indians in their peaceful and selfless struggle for civic rights and to offer its warmest encouragement to them in this struggle.

This is an illustration of the agitation that is being carried on in England. Mr. Ritch will go round from place to place. He had already received invitations to speak at Oxford and elsewhere which he had accepted. On November 9, he spoke at Miss Smith's.[2] There one person offered to collect 500 signatures.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-12-1909 and 25-12-1909

164. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

UNION-CASTLE LINE,
November 25, 1909

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I write this in anticipation of my going to gaol before reaching Johannesburg.

Your letters are always a study in human nature at its best. Your last one is more so than usual. I call them a study in human nature at its best because you lay bare your heart to me ≈ a privilege I

[1] The English text is found in *Indian Opinion*, 11-12-1909.

[2] A contributor to the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, Calcutta and the *Punjabee*, Lahore.

assure you I appreciate very much indeed.

If I were to discuss all I have seen and pondered over, it will fill pages and yet I should not succeed in explaining my meaning thoroughly. I fully understand your moral difficulty ≈ how to get out of the ordinary dishonesty. I should prize this healthy discontent and nurture it. You will then soon find a way out of it. In the light of my new experiences and further development I have gone through I would like to be by your side and as of old go into the life problems with you. But there need be no impatience. Meanwhile, you have many desirable things to occupy your mind, chiefest among which is this Transvaal struggle.

You ask when will you and I be free from it? I know you have been taxed sufficiently. You have got more than you bargained for. That unfortunately is the price friends pay for close association with me. But apart from feelings of consideration for you I see no necessity for the question when shall we be free. Whichever turn the struggle takes, it is the best discipline I can have. Whilst I work strenuously to bring it to close, I continue in it as if it was to last a lifetime. And so it may be with you if you can take it cheerfully and calmly. We agreed when I left for London, that you could not be better occupied. And I am now face to face with the fact that you have to be so occupied to the end of the struggle. To say you could leave it, is to insult you and to understand your ability to stand fire. No, my dear Lower House, I can only say you should be absorbed in the struggle and to that end compel yourself to be calm.

I shall be writing to you officially also, so that you will see how far the struggle has advanced in London and what effort is necessary in the Transvaal.

Cordes continues to cause trouble. He has been swearing, it appears, at Purushottamdas Desai[1] who, so far as I know, is a very quiet and amiable man. He has felt it terribly, I do not want to write to Cordes for fear I may offend him without doing good. There seems to have been some financial trouble also. I fear that Phoenix has to be supplied with funds. What the condition there is, I do not know. I can only leave the matter in your hands to do the best you can and to ease the situation at Phoenix. Devdas, I notice, was very ill and had not recovered quite at the time they wrote to me. All this shows that I

[1] Who was in charge of the Phoenix school

should be free for a few days and yet I know that I must not ask for a postponement.

I can understand your repugnance towards Motan. And yet I feel that some day or other you [would] want to get rid of this sort of thing. Is he not a member of the same human family? Before you and I realize the identity of all life, we have to live this prejudice down. The thing is difficult but there is no escape from it.

This is a very unsatisfactory letter. Instead of relieving you of the worry and the trouble of looking after the struggle and my affairs when you are yourself not at ease, this letter invites [you] to take on more. I can only hope that I may be soon able to relieve you although the struggle may not end soon.

When I think of you and think of what awaits Mr.Doke, my head begins to turn. I pull myself up and say to myself: there is nothing of self in this. Why then worry? You and he could only do the best. And there I must leave the situation.

I expect that the house has not gone beyond what you described in your letter. I would certainly like to poke my nose into it and play the architect and give some of the newfangled notions I am bringing with me.

With every apology for this letter and with love,

Yours sincerely,
UPPER HOUSE

[PS.]

I have been working very hard on the steamer and have given myself no rest. It is now after 8 p.m. and there is still much before me to finish. I have translated a long letter from Tolstoy[1] and written an original book in Gujarati.[2]

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Which was reproduced in *Indian Opinion,* 25-12-1909, 1-1-1910 and 8-1-1910; for Gandhiji's Preface to the Gujarati translation of Tolstoy's "Letter to a Hindoo", *vide* "Letter to A.H.West", 24-12-1909 and also "Letter to Leo Tolstoy", 1-10-1909 and Appendix "Tolstoy's Letter to Gandhiji", 7-10-1909.

[2] *Hind Swaraj; vide* 15-12-1820

165. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

UNION CASTLE LINE,
R. M. S. *KILDONAN CASTLE,*
November 26, 1909

MY DEAR WEST,

This is an official letter. I knew nothing about the financial difficulty with the exception of a letter Mr. Cordes[1] sent me as from Mr. Kallenbach[2] As my movements will be uncertain, I have written to Mr. Kallenbach. I am sorry for the position. I made all the arrangements. I was capable of making. My instructions about printing several things are to be read together with this except the order from Dr. Mehta[3].

Miss Smith has of her own accord advised me that henceforth she does not want to charge for her monthly letter but that she would continue to send her contributions all the same. I have told her what she may write upon. I suggest your writing to her a letter of thanks.

You may make any other changes you may consider necessary in order to put the financial position on a satisfactory footing. I would plead, however, for Kababhai[4]. I suggest that he be not touched. As to the closing of the Durban Office, the matter requires very careful thinking. But if you think that it had better be closed, by all means do so. You may cut about the exchange and complimentary list as you may think fit and may reduce the size of the English columns. I suggest that all this should be done in consultation with Mr. Kallenbach. I am likely to meet him before I am gaoled. In that case, I shall discuss things fully with him.

With reference to Chhaganlal, Dr. Mehta offered to send one of my boys. I then suggested that he should not restrict me. He was

[1] A German theosophist, in charge of the Phoenix School; came to India and joined Gandhiji at Sevagram; died there in 1960.

[2] A German architect, devoted friend and co-worker of Gandhiji placed his farm at the disposal of the satyagrahis. *Vide* "Letter to H. Kallenbach", 30-5-1910**.

[3] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta, M.D., Bar-at-Law, and jeweller; his association with Gandhiji began right from the time he received Gandhiji on his arrival in England for the first time as a student. He rendered financial help to Gandhiji in his activities from the days of the Phoenix Settlement till his death in 1932.

[4] A compositor in the press.

prepared to send another also of my selection. I was disinclined to accept the double offer. So I asked him to let me send Chhaganlal or Maganlal to London in lieu of my boys. It was not a scholarship for competition. I felt that I could decide as to who should go to London in place of my boys but that I should ask for your permission to free the one I may select. I have not been able to discuss the reasons for coming to the decision I have. That, of course, I would as soon as we meet. They are too elaborate for me to reduce to writing and that now when I have not a minute to spare.

The scholarship for the school still stands. Several have been offered from India also. But I have not seen my way to accept them whilst we are in a state of uncertainty. Nor have the scholarships been rejected. The Indian scholarships have been offered through Mr. Polak. I asked him to invite these scholarships when I discussed the matter with Dr. Mehta.

I look to you all to see that Manilal is not disturbed. As a father, I have felt [it] to be in his interest that he should not yet go to England. Further progress depends entirely on what Chhaganlal can do. I suppose everybody realizes that the conditions of these donations are stiff. Acceptance of poverty and continuance of Phoenix work, no matter where, are indispensable.

Mr. Cordes asked me a question as to what should be done for payment of schemers[1] who may be laid up with sickness for a long time. My answer is that we are a family and that we are bound to support them and even find what medical help as poor people we are capable of finding. I am quite willing that my guarantee should stand for such cases. I would add that the same condition should apply within reasonable limits to the non-schemers. It is in such matters that in my opinion we best realize our ideals. We are trying to live a life of perpetual self-sacrifice and find joy in it. But the latter suggestion is for you to accept or reject, as you may think best.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4412 Courtesy: A. H. West

[1] Founder-members of the scheme of the Phoenix Settlement; *vide* "Letter to A. H. West", On or before 29-12-1909.

166. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

UNION CASTLE LINE,
November 27, 1909

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I thought of communicating to you the ideas that arose in my mind after reading Mr. McIntyre's[1] letter about our financial position and after writing a letter to Mr. West.[2] Please share this letter with Parshotamdas[3].

Phoenix will be put to test now. Probably we may not get money from Johannesburg. Our pledge is that we shall bring out at least a one-page issue of *Indian Opinion* and distribute it among the people as long as there is even one person in Phoenix. Do not allow any intrigues to flourish there. You must put up with anything that the others might say. If the Durban office is closed down, let it be. Always bear in mind that the main point should be stuck to. In order to give one's life for it, one has to give up the rest. The main point is to bring out the paper at any cost and not to leave Phoenix. If this one point is kept, the other things may go. We do not want to make a fetish of the journal and worship it. But we do want to keep our pledge. Our victory does not lie in issuing the paper, it lies in the pledge. There is nothing in getting the Transvaal Act repealed but there is everything in keeping the pledge. Our soul is moulded by our pledge and that is and should be the significance of keeping our pledge as well as of carrying on our other activities. You might suggest that the office may continue even if Mr. West has to go to Durban. Or let Manilal go [to Durban]. I would confide to you two only that I intend to sacrifice Manilal in the struggle if he is willing and if Ba[4] agrees. That will calm his restless mind. In fact, he wanted it himself. But if this does not materialize, it is just as well that he goes to Durban, and you remain in Phoenix. This should be done only if it is necessary. Make up your mind not to be upset if money does not come from Johannesburg.

[1] A Scottish theosophist, who joined Gandhiji as an articled clerk and later became a co-worker

[2] *Vide* "Letter to A. H. West", 26-11-1909.

[3] Parshottamdas Desai, who was in charge of the Phoenix School; *vide* "Letter to A. H. West", On or before 29-12-1909.

[4] Kasturba Gandhi, wife of Gandhiji and mother of Manilal.

You may tell them that in that case you will provide the necessary funds by earning the money in some other way. You may also declare that you will continue to live and die in Phoenix even when no one else remains there. The others will catch your spirit, provided it is born of your steadfast mind and not of arrogance. The spirit has to be genuine, not merely expressed in strong words. Be quite sure that its echo will definitely be heard. Let the other necessary changes also be made. If any changes that you consider needless are made, let them also be made. There should not be any insistence in matters of pecuniary profit and loss. It is out of our ignorance that we believe we get our bread because of our efforts. It is best if one realizes that He who has given us teeth will also give us food for chewing.

From the facsimile of the original Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand in *Jivan-nu Parodh* by Prabhudas Gandhi

167. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

UNION CASTLE LINE,
R. M. S. *KILDONAN CASTLE*,
Wednesday [*November 27, 1909*]

CHI. RAMDAS[1],

I write this letter to you as I do not know when we shall meet. Do not be angry with me if I have not brought anything for you. There was nothing I liked. What could I do if nothing European appealed to me? I like everything Indian. The people of Europe are good, but their way of life is not good. I shall explain [this] to you in detail when we meet.

Do not be upset if I go to gaol; rather you should rejoice. I should be where Harilal[2] is. I must live there even for the sake of the struggle. Be cheerful. I want to see you stout and strong.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the original Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 93
Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

[1] Third son of Gandhiji.
[2] Gandhiji's eldest son.

168. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE[1]

[*November 30, 1909*]

PRAY THANK MR. TATA[2] FOR MUNIFICENT TIMELY HELP. DISTRESS GREAT. PRISONERS' LOT HARD. RELIGIOUS SCRUPLES DISREGARDED. RATIONS SHORT. PRISONERS CARRY SLOP-PAILS; FOR REFUSING, PUT ON SPARE DIET. SOLITARY CONFINEMENT. PROMINENT MOSLEMS? HINDUS, PARSIS IN JAIL.

GANDHI

Gujarati, 19-12-1909

169. MESSAGE FROM DELEGATES AT CAPE TOWN[3]

[*November 30, 1909*]

We request the favour of your columns to inform our countrymen of the Transvaal that the net result of the Deputation shows that the struggle is a national one. The issue is clearly defined: it is a fight for legal equality regarding immigrants. We hope passive resisters will remain firm and that our countrymen throughout South Africa will support us.

We have received a cablegram from the Hon. Prof. Gokhale informing us that Mr. Ratanji Jamshedji Tata of Bombay has given Rs. 25,000 in aid of the Transvaal struggle. This munificent aid shows that the Motherland is fully alive. It requires[4] for passive resisters to show they are prepared to die for a cause that is righteous, godly and national.

Indian Opinion, 4-12-1909

[1] This, the Bombay weekly *Gujarati* reported, was sent by Gandhiji to G. K. Gokhale, whose cable announcing the donation was received by Gandhiji on his arrival on November 30 at Cape Town; *vide* "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", 6-12-1909.

[2] Ratanji Jamshedji Tata (1871-1918), leading Indian industrialist and philanthropist; started the Tata Iron and Steel Works in 1912; knighted in 1916.

[3] *Indian Opinion* published this telegram as from Messrs Gandhiji and Hajee Habib, who had arrived at Cape Town on Tuesday.

[4] A slip for "remains"?

170. INTERVIEW TO "CAPE ARGUS"[1]

[CAPE TOWN,
November 30, 1909]

Dr. Abdurahman[2], this morning, introduced Mr. Gandhi and [Mr.] Habib, who left South Africa in June last as a deputation to England on behalf of the Indian Passive Resisters. They arrived this morning, and continue their journey today to the Transvaal, if they are not stopped at Vereeniging.

Mr. Gandhi . . . has a youthful appearance; but he is over 40 years of age, and has a son who has four times been in prison as a Passive Resister. Mr. Gandhi himself has been in prison for the same reason. . . .

[GANDHIJI:] Passive resistance has gone on for three years, and now the issue is the clearest possible between the Transvaal Government and the British Indians. We have been fighting throughout this time for legal or theoretical equality with reference to the future emigration from India. We entirely recognise the Transvaal standpoint that there should be a very rigid test of all emigrants from India, but we have always held that the manner of bringing about this position should be not offensive to the whole of India, as now, and should not be a departure from such legislation in other colonies. The Transvaal legislation is the first of its kind.

Indians are excluded from the Transvaal as Indians—that is, on the ground of race or colour, whereas in other colonies, even in Australia, exclusion is brought about by severe education tests. This test is made severe, or it is relaxed, in accordance with the instructions issued by the administrator in charge of the Immigration Department.

Against this, we have nothing to say, but I feel that equality in theory should be preserved intact, otherwise the terms 'British Constitution' and 'British subject' become perfectly meaningless.

I have yet been able to find no one who has studied the question, who has anything to say against this attitude taken up by us. The question to be considered is the retention on the Statute-book, deliberately, of this unreasonable inequality. I say nothing with reference to the internal legislation in the Transvaal, bad as it is, but talk of the fundamental point I have drawn attention to. l could point out, too, that the struggle has been entirely idealised, in that those

[1] This was reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 11-12-1909.

[2] President of the African Political Organisation and member of the Cape Town Municipality.

engaged in it have no personal interest to serve, merely fighting for a principle. The method adopted also is idealised, as we seek to bring about relief through personal suffering by disregard of the law, which we hold to be against our conscience and our self-respect.

We suffer, that is the penalty; hence over 2,500 Indians have suffered imprisonment in the Transvaal, some of them even four times. Among this number are merchants, hawkers and servants, men representative of all the different religions, and today we have received a cablegram from Professor Gokhale, who is a member of the Viceregal Council, Calcutta, stating that one of the millionaires of India, Mr. R. J. Tata, has given 25,000 rupees (£1,630) to the funds of the passive resisters. Hitherto we have not appealed for funds outside of South Africa, but since the prolongation of the struggle has reduced so many Indian families to poverty, we find it necessary to accept assistance from outside South Africa. In England many Englishmen and Indians volunteered to collect subscriptions and to sign a letter[1] addressed to the passive resisters, encouraging them to continue the fight.[2]

We went to England in no spirit of defiance, but in order to take advantage of the presence there of so many Colonial statesmen. I feel certain that when the people in South Africa realise the ideal nature of the struggle, though their own ideal is not to encourage the wholesale importation of Indians from India, they will be unwilling to inflict the serious suffering that has been going on. 1 think that the South African statesmen should welcome the method adopted by us to gain relief, because we do not inflict suffering on others. Although [the result of] our visit to England was negligible, yet I feel satisfied that the English people now realise the exact nature of this struggle and are persuaded that we are moved by a sense of duty.[3]

As regards the effect in India, meetings have been held throughout the chief towns of India, in which all the different classes combined in support of the passive resisters, and I notice that one[4] the retiring Indian members of Lord Morley's Council has stated that no question has so agitated India as this concerning the Transvaal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Transvaal British Indians", 6-11-1909

[2] This paragraph was not reproduced in *Indian Opinion*.

[3] This sentence was not reproduced in *Indian Opinion*.

[4] Syed Hussain Bilgrami

treatment of the Indians.[1]

Question: Will the education test be accepted ?

[GANDHIJI:] Yes, the Emigration Officer would have a discretionary power as to the test to be applied, and it would be open to him to make a severe test as regards Indians, and so reject those who were not able to meet it. This is done in Australia and other colonies. I see no difficulty about it. There is a fear that the education test would keep the agitation alive, but I hold this to be groundless.

Mr. Gandhi, in conclusion, expressed his belief that General Smuts would give a fair hearing to their case.

Cape Argus, 30-11-1909

171. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER[2]

December 1, 1909

I never realize any distinction between a Hindu and a Mahomedan. To my mind, both are sons of Mother India. I know that Hindus are in a numerical majority, and that they are believed to be more advanced in knowledge and education. Accordingly they should be glad to give way so much the More to their Mahomedan brethren. As a man of truth, I honestly believe that Hindus should yield to the Mahomedans what the latter desire, and that they should rejoice in so doing. We can expect unity only if such mutual large-heartedness is displayed. When the Hindus and Mahomedans act towards each other as blood-brothers, then only we can hope for the dawn of India.

Indian Opinion, 4-12-1909

172. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
Kartak Vadi 5 [*Samvat*] *1966,*
[*December 2, 1909*]

CHI. MANILAL,

So long as you are firm in morals and discharge your duties, I for one shall have no worry at all about your studies. If the

[1] This paragraph was not reproduced in *Indian Opinion.*

[2] Written in Gujarati to a Mahomedan correspondent

injunctions and observances prescribed by the Shastras are practised, it will be enough for my purpose. I shall be helpful to you if you want to make further progress in your academic studies, either as a hobby or to be better equipped [for work]. I will not find fault with you even if you do not do it. However, if you decide upon a particular course of action, try to stick to it. Let me know what things you are doing now the press; also when you get up in the morning, what work you do in the field, etc.

Blessings from

BAPU

From *Mahatma Gandhiji-na Patro* (in Gujarati) edited by Dahyabhai Patel, published by Sevak Karyalaya, Ahmedabad.

173. INTERVIEW TO REUTER

[JOHANNESBURG,
December 2, 1909]

Messrs Gandhi and Hajee Habib[1] arrived at Park Station this evening. Long before the arrival of the train, hundreds of Indians and Chinese [had] assembled. When the train steamed in, quite 2,000 Indians and Chinese, and several Europeans, were present. The crowd was of the orderliest. There was a tremendous ovation, and flowers were showered upon Mr. Gandhi.

Mr. Gandhi returned thanks to the Transvaal Government for their courtesy in allowing them uninterfered re-entry. He said he hoped that the Transvaal [Government] would soon see their way to remedying the legislation. He considered the Transvaal's action was injuring, not the Indians, but the stability of the Empire. The people of England and India were waking up to the fact that the struggle was just. They were realising the detrimental nature of the Transvaal's action. The people of India were particularly alive to the necessity of carrying on the struggle, as evidenced by the handsome donation by Mr. Tata[2] during the past few days. He was pleased to know that they had a great number of European sympathisers. The English people now realised the justness of the struggle. He felt very fit, and so did all his supporters. Many men among their ranks were ready to die for the cause.

Mr. Gandhi was then escorted to Vrededorp, where the Asiatics were holding a meeting. Prior to leaving, he was garlanded.

Indian Opinion, 4-12-1909

[1] They comprised the Deputation to England which had just returned.
[2] *Vide* "Interview to *Cape Argus*", 30-11-1909.

174. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Thursday night [On or after *December 2, 1909*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Your letter to hand. I quite realise that things there are in a mess. You can certainly tell me the reasons for it as you see them. I shall consider them. I am sure you will not write with any ill will towards anybody.

I have not yet received a letter from the Bank. You may go and remind them. I again forgot to do this. The whole day passes in a ceaseless round of duties and I find no time to do it.

It is the duty of those who have devoted themselves to Phoenix to improve the life there and do their best to develop *Indian Opinion*; for through *Indian Opinion* we have been imparting education and doing public good. We need not be disheartened if some of us in Phoenix do not put in their best, waste our resources or are quarrelsome. He who knows better should put in double the effort to make good the deficiency. The study of the *Gita* [. . .] the effect of the sound of its words [. . .] in some incomprehensible way.

From a photostat of the original Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 6081

175. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

Monday [*After December 2, 1909*][2]

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have not the time to give you a long letter today. Too much disturbance at the office. At the invitation of Nagdee I took the school children to Warmbaths for the Sunday. We have just returned Kallenbach and Ritch were with me and so also Pragji.[3]

[1] This letter, of which only the first two pages are available, is placed after Gandhiji's return from England. The reference to the Bank in the second paragraph suggests that the addressee had taken charge of bank matters which were attended to heretofore by Chhaganlal Gandhi, who was at this time in India *en route* to England.

[2] This letter was evidently written after the one to the addressee dated September 23, 1909, in which Gandhiji mentions the essay on passive resistance and the syllabus that he was to draw up for it; *vide* "Letter to H.S.L. Polak", 23-9-1909. Gandhiji was in London about this time and it would appear that this was written after he returned to Johannesburg on December 2, 1909.

[3] Pragji Khandubhai Desai

You will have copy of my evidence before the Select Committee. It is not meant for publication. Dr. Mehta is there. I wish you could fix up now the essay on passive resistance on which you will remember I drew up a syllabus.

Yours sincerely,

BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

176. REPLY TO " THE STAR" [1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]

December 3, 1909

SIR,

I must again, with your kind permission, worry you and your readers with the struggle in which my countrymen have now been engaged for the last three years.

I must confess that, even in London, I could see no sign of the majority of my compatriots here having been tired of the struggle, as you are. They have certainly felt the strain. Some have undoubtedly succumbed, and, before we are through, more may succumb; but the demonstration at the station last evening[2] could not have failed to show even a superficial observer that practically the whole of the Indian community is at the back of it, and that those who have, through weakness or through other causes, accepted the law no less keenly resent it than active passive resisters.

I am, however, more anxious to engage the attention of your readers on the merits than on the question of the strength or weakness of passive resistance. In spite of your quotation from *Macbeth*,[3] I venture to repeat what I have said—that the theory of equality may be restored in our legislation as to immigration, which may be deliberately departed from in administration, and yet I would deny the

[1] *The Star's* leading article, "Mr. Gandhi's Return" dated 2-12-1909, was reproduced it part in *Indian Opinion*, 11-12-1909, along with this reply.

[2] At the Park Station, *vide* "Interview to Reuter", 2-12-1909.

[3] "Be these juggling fiends no more believed
That palter with us in a double sense;
That keep the word of promise to our ear
And break it to our hope."

charge of having "paltered with" anybody "in a double sense". It will not do to dismiss a great principle of the British Constitution by loosely using the words "administrative chicanery", "dishonesty", etc. In theory, the Indian Civil Service is open to all British subjects; in practice, it is open to the people of India in a most restricted sense. This departure from theory is unfortunate, but it is neither dishonest nor fraudulent, because the thing is done openly, and, rightly or wrongly, as an administrative necessity. Australia, Natal, and many other Colonies have legislation such as British Indians have submitted to the Transvaal Government for acceptance; and it is not possible to charge all these Colonies with questionable practices because they use their education test very effectively to keep out British Indians. Their legislation contains no national insult, and who can deny that it is a great thing to keep the Statute Books of the Colony free from the taint of prejudice? If administration is differential, it will simply be a concession to prejudice, as also the well-defined policy of the white inhabitants of South Africa. But, in the latest amendment submitted through Lord Ampthill, there is even no room left for the charge of dishonesty. The law will clearly state that the Governor-in-Council will have the power to limit the number of immigrants belonging to any class or race, in spite of their having passed the education test.

I do believe that, if the people in South Africa, and particularly in the Transvaal, really understood the question, they would ask our Government to grant the concession my countrymen have been fighting for.

Meanwhile, the Government are making the lot of passive resisters well-nigh intolerable. One of the greatest Indians in South Africa is, in spite of his weak constitution, being deprived at Diepkloof of the special food which was issued to him by the Medical Officer at Volksrust and at Houtpoort. He has been compelled to uncover his head, although he has a religious objection to doing so, an objection that was respected during his three incarcerations. He was not only hand-cuffed but chained on his arrival from Johannesburg; but, if I know Mr. Rustomjee well, I know that nothing in the world will daunt his brave spirit. Another Indian[1], an ex-sergeant, has been called upon to empty slop-pails.[2] He has scruples. Such scruples have been hitherto, within my own knowledge, very largely respected. Now he

[1] U. M. Shelat; *vide* "Indian Stretcher-Bearer Corps", Before 19-7-1906.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Johannesburg Mass Meeting",5-12-1909

has been, for his disobedience so called, put on spare diet and confined in a solitary cell.[1] It is well for the Colony to know what is being done in its name.

In conclusion, I would like to express the appreciation of my colleague, Mr. Hajee Habib, and myself of the Government's courtesy in allowing us to cross the border unchallenged.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Star, 4-12-1909

177. SPEECH AT TAMIL LADIES' MEETING[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,
December 3, 1909]

Mr. Gandhi said that the community was grateful to Mrs. Vogl and Miss Schlesin for their noble work among the Indian women of the Transvaal. The speaker understood that the ladies present were all passive resisters and had sent their husbands or brothers or sons to gaol in connection with the national struggle that was going on. They had acted very bravely and their work had attracted attention in the Motherland. The speaker then explained the result of the mission in England and hoped that, no matter what the difficulties were, his hearers would continue their work and not be frightened by obstacles or owing to the struggle being prolonged.

Indian Opinion, 11-12-1909

[1] *Vide* "Mr. Shelat's Discharge", 1-1-1910

[2] Mrs. Vogl presided at the meeting, which was held at 175, Market Street, Johannesburg. The work among "Indian ladies" had been inaugurated by Mrs. Polak, and was continued by Mrs. Vogl and Miss Schlesin; women's meetings were held regularly. At the conclusion of Gandhiji's speech, the ladies assured him that they would not flinch from their duty in the struggle.

178. SPEECH AT JOHANNESBURG MASS MEETING[1]

[*December 5, 1909*]

Mr. Gandhi said that it gave Mr. Hajee Habib and himself the greatest satisfaction to see his countrymen in such large numbers face to face again. Their presence and their welcome at Park Station gave the lie direct to the charge that interest in the struggle had waned. The speaker offered thanks to the Transvaal Government for their having allowed Mr. Hajee Habib and himself to cross the border unchallenged. It showed that the struggle could be carried on with dignity and without unnecessary bitterness, and yet the proceedings of the past five months showed that there was a great deal of bitterness as also irritation. He recalled the death of the gallant young Nagappan, who gave his life for the struggle. A thousand MajorDixons[2] could not remove the impression from his mind that he had died a martyr's death. The great philanthropist Mr. Rustomjee was in gaol, and he was shattered in health. The illustrious Imam Abdul Kadir Bawazeer was also suffering imprisonment, and so were the stout-hearted Mr. Sorabji and other brave Indians. Mr. Shelat was suffering solitary imprisonment and was put upon spare diet, because he refused to carry slop-pails. These things could not but cause great bitterness and irritation. It had been said that the community had weakened. It was perfectly true that some had fallen. It was not their fault. It was not in human nature to expect capacity for prolonged suffering on the part of many.

The state in which they were living was described by General Smuts as that of war; and, in every war, the honours of battle were reserved for the few, and every community was represented, after all, by the fewest possible. In the gaol at Diepkloof, every action of the community was represented by its best men. There

[1] The meeting, attended by more than 1,500 Indians including representatives from Boksburg, Germiston, Krugersdorp, Heidelberg and other Rand towns and a number of Chinese friends as also Messrs Vogl and Kallenbach, was held at 4 p.m. on the grounds of the Hamidia Mosque, Johannesburg, to welcome the Delegates on their return from England. Telegrams were received from several of the country districts. A. M. Cachalia, Chairman of the British Indian Association, presided and observed: "The sending of the Delegations to England and India has resulted in giving our struggle world-wide status."

A report also appeared in *Rand Daily Mail*, 6-12-1909.

[2] Major F. J. Dixon, Assistant Resident Magistrate, Pretoria, was appointed Commissioner to hold an enquiry into the allegations made in connection with the death of Nagappen on July 6. *Vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909 "Letter to Lord Ampthill", 16-8-1909 & "Letter to "South Africa", Before 16-10-1909.

was, therefore, every reason for hope, and the speaker hoped that Indians would follow the worthy example of their leaders. As a matter of fact, the deputations to England and to India were against the real spirit of passive resistance, which relied entirely upon selfsuffering, but there was weakness, too. It, therefore, became necessary to supplement the effort by sending deputations. They had returned from England without any final result, and yet they had not returned disappointed. The authorities now knew the exact nature of the struggle. There was no one in England who had anything to say against it. Lord Ampthill had supported them with his whole heart. Everyone knew that they were fighting for legal and theoretical equality as to immigration. It was recognised that the struggle was not on behalf of a handful of Indian residents in the Transvaal. It was on behalf of the whole of India, indeed, on behalf of the whole Empire. Its honour was entrusted to them, and it would be well for the Colonists to understand the seriousness of the struggle. They could not question the demand of the Indian community for a restoration of that equality it had enjoyed before the War and up to 1906, when the Colonial policy of restricting immigration from India was accepted and carried out. It was the duty of Indians to resent a national wrong. When they were told that they could not enter the country because they were Indians, the implied insult became intolerable. It was a life-and-death struggle. His (the speaker's) life and he believed that of many of his countrymen was dedicated to fighting against the policy underlying the legislation they were protesting against. The formation of a band of volunteers for doing house to house work, for collecting subscription,[1] and for reaching the heart of democracy in the United Kingdom was a very important result of their mission. The movement might be far-reaching in its effects. Many earnest English men and women and Indians had joined it. The magnificent efforts that were being made by the self-sacrificing Mr. Polak had borne ample fruit. It had resulted in the magnificent donation of Mr. Ratanji Jamshedji Tata. A struggle such as this might well be prolonged. Prolongation meant greater discipline, if it also meant greater hardship, but the goal to be achieved was worth all the sacrifice, and the speaker hoped that Asiatics would continue the struggle to the end.

He appealed to the Transvaal Government, as also the Colonists, to consider the issue. The Colonists should, in his opinion, exercise their imagination and their Imperial instinct, and concede the demands of the Asiatic communities. He hoped that they did not wish to tell the millions of India that they were to be considered as inferior beings, no matter what their status might be. The doctrine of inequality as regards immigration was laid down for the first time in the colony of the Transvaal. It was not yet too late to retrace the step. If the desired alteration in the legislation was made, it would be a simple graceful act of justice. But he feared that if the Transvaal proceeded in its present policy, it would shake the very foundations of the Empire.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Meeting of Indians", 2-11-1909.

In dwelling upon the European support received in the Transvaal, Mr. Gandhi paid a tribute to the work done by the Committee led by Mr. Hosken[1]. Those who were members of the Committee cherished the Colonial ideal just as much as anybody else, but they did not find it incompatible with that ideal to espouse the Indian cause. He confessed that passive resistance would have been practically impossible without the encouragement, support, and sympathy that were received from the European friends and workers.[2]

Indian Opinion, 11-12-1909

179. SPEECH AT JOHANNESBURG MASS MEETING[3]

[*December 5, 1909*]

This meeting has disproved the allegation that the Indian community was weakening. It must be admitted, however, that the spirit today is not what it was in the beginning. Some Indians have indeed fallen off, but that is no reason for us to be discouraged. In every struggle, the same thing happens. Only a few continue to fight to the bitter end. A community which has in it heroes like Mr. Bawazeer, Mr. Rustomjee, Mr. Naidoo[4] and Mr. Sorabji cannot surely be said to have accepted defeat. A community which can boast of such members is bound to win. But, while recognizing our strength, we must not fail to notice our weakness. Even a child can see that there would have been a settlement by now if those who gave in had not done so.

General Smuts deserves thanks for having allowed us to come in. This is an instance of the spirit of dignity that informs this struggle. But there is also increased bitterness. How can it be otherwise when they compel prisoners to carry slop-pails[5] and harass them unnecessarily? How can we forget that Nagappen gave his life for the cause? If the Indian community remembers all this, it will never give up the fight. Whatever may happen, I and many other Indians have dedicated our lives to the cause for which we have been fighting. If every Indian had been a satyagrahi, there would have been no need to take a deputation to England. The strength of the satyagrahi lies entirely in self-suffering. Since, however, all of us were not satyagrahis, a deputation was sent. It has returned unsuccessful, but not dispirited. Lord Crewe has now realized

[1] A pro-Indian leader of the Progressive Party in the Transvaal; *vide* Vols. VIII & IX.

[2] *Vide* "Resolutions at Johannesburg Mass Meeting", 5-12-1909.

[3] This is a report from the Gujarati columns, of the same speech as the preceding item.

[4] Thambi Naidoo, *vide* "Letter to G. K. Gokhale," 6-12-1909.

[5] This is a reference to Shelat; *vide* the preceding item.

that our struggle is a pure one, that it is not dictated by self-interest and that all our methods have been above reproach. Likewise, Lord Ampthill and other British leaders too understand all these things. We did not come across a single Englishman or Indian who said that our fight was not justified. This is no mean achievement. We can go ahead now.

For a time, it also appeared likely that there would be a settlement. [General Smuts] offered to repeal the Act and to make provision for the issue of certificates of permanent residence to educated Indians, at discretion. We could not accept this. It is not a favour that we want, but [recognition of] a right. If we have an inferior status under the law, it makes no difference to us that we may be allowed to come in. The offer was an appeal to our self-interest. It was not free from the insult implied in the denial of the right of entry to us on the ground that we are Indians. So long as this stigma is not removed, our pledge will remain unfulfilled. Therefore, we have no option but to carry on this fight for the sake of our people and our religion. We demand that the law must grant equal rights of entry to Europeans and Indians. It can empower the Governor to frame regulations to provide that, even from among those who had passed the test, only a fixed number from each community would be allowed to enter. This would ensure legal equality and uphold our honour. But we failed to get this, I believe, because of our weakness here. It should also be remembered by every Indian that more than this we shall never get. It would be a great victory for us even to get this much. And get it we shall.

Everyone knows the fruit of Mr. Polak's fine efforts in India. They have resulted in Mr. Tata's donation of Rs. 25,000. In England, English ladies and gentlemen as also Indians have enlisted themselves as volunteers and go round from house to house.

Thus our struggle has gained world-wide publicity. We have stepped into the limelight. It would be a great shame to give up the fight now. People have come to feel confident that the Transvaal Indians will never betray weakness of purpose. To turn away from the task now will bring disgrace to the Indian community.

It must also be realized that the status of Indians in South Africa depends to a large extent on this struggle. It is because of the struggle that new laws have not been passed, the Licenses Act in Natal has been amended and legislation in Rhodesia was disallowed. If we continue, it will be difficult to make laws against us when the Union Parliament comes into being. This is as much as to say that our interests also are involved.

That the struggle is drawing out is to our advantage, rather than otherwise. India is being awakened thereby, we are being educated and are learning to do public work. It is, therefore, my earnest request to the community that those who are strong must remain strong, that those who have fallen must openly admit their weakness and

help the struggle by giving money and in other ways. This is but a duty that every Indian owes to himself. The Imam Saheb[1], Mr. Rustomjee and others are in gaol for our sake. It will indeed be shameful for us to leave them in gaol, confessing ourselves [too] weak [to follow them], or to refuse other help that may be needed.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-12-1909

180. RESOLUTIONS AT JOHANNESBURG MASS MEETING[2]

December 5, 1909

1. This meeting of British Indians hereby welcomes Messrs Hajee Habib and Gandhi, and, after having heard their statements, endorses their action, and congratulates them upon having carried out their mission with courage, patience and moderation.

2. This meeting of British Indians hereby respectfully tenders its thanks to Lord Ampthill and his fellow-members of the South Africa British Indian Committee for having guided the delegates and given them the benefit of their mature experience.

3. This meeting of British Indians declares its intention to carry on the struggle by means of self-suffering in the shape of imprisonment and otherwise until the legal and theoretical equality as to immigration of British Indians of culture with the other immigrants is restored.

4. This meeting of British Indians of the Transvaal appeals to the Government and the European Colonists to consider the bearings of the struggle on the Empire as a whole, and in view of the fact that under the British Indian demand the Colonial ideal of rigorously controlling immigration from India is preserved intact, to see that the terrible sufferings of the community are ended by justice being done.

5. This meeting of British Indians of the Transvaal appeals to the Imperial and the Indian Governments to use their friendly efforts for securing a settlement of the long-standing grievance of the community, regard being especially had to the fact that the grievance is national and a further prolongation of it is calculated to injure the prestige of the British Empire.

[1] Imam Abdul Kadir Bawazeer; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] Gandhiji was present at the meeting and spoke there; *vide* the preceding item. These resolutions were presumably drafted by him.

6. This meeting of British Indians of the Transvaal places on record its thanks to Ratan Jamshedji Tata, Esq., for his munificent and timely donation of Rs. 25,000 in aid of the struggle.

7. This meeting of British Indians of the Transvaal authorises the Chairman to forward the resolutions to the proper quarters.

Indian Opinion, 11-12-1909

181. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO TRANSVAAL GOVERNOR[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
December 6, 1909

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR OF THE TRANSVAAL
JOHANNESBURG

SIR,

I have the honour to enclose herewith Resolutions that were carried unanimously at a Mass Meeting of British Indians, held yesterday and attended by nearly fifteen hundred men representing all sections of the community. I am desired by the meeting[2] to request His Excellency to forward these Resolutions to the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State for the Colonies and to the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State for India.

I have, etc.,
(Signed) A. M. CACHALIA,[3]
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

[Enclosure[4]]

From a photostat of the typewritten copy in the Colonial Office Records: C.O. 291/139

[1] Presumably drafted by Gandhiji.
[2] *Vide* Resolution No. 7 (preceding item), which was not enclosed.
[3] He also presided over the Mass Meeting.
[4] The first six resolutions of the preceding item.

182. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

JOHANNESBURG,
December 6, 1909

DEAR PROFESSOR GOKHALE,

As soon as we arrived at Cape Town, your cablegram announcing the magnificent donation from Mr. Tata was received, and now I have your inquiry from Poona as to our requirements. I have just cabled as follows:

> PRESENT REQUIREMENT THOUSAND POUNDS. EXPECT IMPRISONMENT BEFORE END MONTH. MUCH MORE REQUIRED LATER.

What I observe is that the expenses are necessarily great, and our resources in South Africa are exhausted. There are enough Indians in the Transvaal alone who could still carry on the struggle, if they would, without outside help, but they are not now inclined to help. They think that they have given enough. These are the weaker members of the community. The strongest have ruined themselves pecuniarily, and they simply go to gaol as often as the Government arrest them. Their families have also to be supported. When this struggle commenced, I bore the whole of the expenses of the office, as also the rent of offices, which were really for my practice, but, for the last two years, I have done very little legal work. I have also found the expenses for running *Indian Opinion*, which is by no means yet self-supporting. These are the current expenses:

Office here	£50
Office London	£40
Indian Opinion	£50
Distressed families	£25

These I apprehend will be the minimum monthly expenses. Almost all connected with *Indian Opinion* are working practically under a vow of poverty, including the Europeans, but, as the paying subscribers are very few, it is necessary to give help. I feel that, if contributions do arrive from India, we should continue the above expenses. If they do not, it is my intention to cut down much of the expense of *Indian Opinion*, thus depriving the struggle of one of its greatest supports, and to close down the London office. The active passive resisters who are likely to remain staunch to the last we count as one hundred. These will force themselves on the attention of the

authorities. The bulk of the community will help by attending meetings, making protests, and also by contributing something. This would enable the passive resisters to support their dependents. To reduce the struggle to this extent means an indefinite prolongation, but, as it has been undertaken very largely as a matter of discipline, those of us who understand it would not at all be disappointed, and are prepared for life-long suffering.

I cannot blame our countrymen in the Transvaal or in South Africa for not paying as liberally as they have hitherto. The struggle has cost already, I think, no less than £10,000. In this I include the expenses of all sub-committees, which are not found in the advertised accounts of the Central Association, but I exclude the enormous losses that individuals have suffered. It is no wonder then if many now lose heart and decline to give even pecuniary help.

As, however, the national importance of the struggle is now being recognised in India, I feel that we might receive pecuniary support, and that openly. I am anxious to make as much of it as possible. I have now placed practically the whole of the situation before you. Some of the bravest Indians representing all races are at present in Diepkloof Gaol. The foremost among them I count Mr. Rustomjee, who has now finished over nine months of continuous imprisonment. He is very much shattered in health. I paid him a visit yesterday; he is resolved upon dying in gaol if need be. Another is a cultured Mahomedan priest, Imam Abdul Kadir Bawazeer. The third is a Mahomedan merchant of standing, Mr. Ebrahim Aswat from the Surat District. The fourth is an undergraduate and Jain, Mr. Nanalal Shah. The fifth is a Brahmin from Ahmedabad, Mr. Umiashanker Shelat. He has refused to carry slop-pails, and is now confined in a solitary cell. But perhaps the bravest and the staunchest of all is the indomitable Thambi Naidoo. I do not know any Indian who knows the spirit of the struggle so well as he does. He was born in Mauritius, but is more Indian than most of us. He has sacrificed himself entirely, and has sent me a defiant message, saying that, even though I may yield and accept anything less than Lord Ampthill's amendment, he alone will offer resistance and die in the Transvaal gaols. I may perhaps add to this list another young man, Mr. Sorabji. He left a lucrative post in order to lay the foundation of the second stage of the struggle and claim entry as an educated Indian. He came light-heartedly not knowing what was in store for him, but for the last

eighteen months he has been practically in gaol. I could continue to multiply the names. In all, there are about thirty Indian passive resisters in the gaols at present; many more would certainly claim the honours if the Government would give them. The possibilities of a struggle such as this it is very difficult to measure. I hope that the Motherland will come to the rescue, and assist us as far as possible. The moral effect of continued pecuniary assistance from India will also be very great. I hope that my letter[1] from London has duly reached you, and that it has received your consideration.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I propose to utilise the funds just received £1673 from you towards liquidating debts already incurred mostly for *Indian Opinion*. You shall have full account of disbursements.

M. K. G.

From the typewritten original signed by Gandhiji with the postscript in his hand: G. N. 4111

183. EXTRACT FROM LETTER[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,
December 6, 1909]

I paid a visit to Mr. Rustomjee yesterday. He is very much broken down; he does not receive the medical food that was prescribed for him at Volksrust. The Parsees—I mean the orthodox Parsees—never take off their caps, but Mr. Rustomjee has now been compelled to remove his cap, although he was allowed to keep it on at Volksrust and Houtpoort. He is put on stone-breaking. . . . Mr. Rustomjee is also suffering from a constitutional disease; his eye-sight is affected; he was a most pitiable and piteous sight. I am applying for permission for a doctor to see him.

Colonial Office Records: C.O. 291/141

[1] Dated 11-11-1909, inviting Gokhale to the Transvaal; *vide* "Letter to G.K. Gokhale", 11-11-1909.

[2] Quoted in a letter dated December 31, 1909 from Sir Mancherji Bhownaggree to the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies; the full text is not available.

184. TATA'S GIFT

That India has been roused is evident from the generous gift of Mr. Ratanji Jamshedji Tata. By his big donation of Rs. 25,000 he has given a powerful impetus to our movement. He will probably be followed by other Indians.

Parsis are known the world over for their generous gifts. Mr. Tata has been true to that spirit of generosity. In South Africa hardly any Indian can equal Mr. Rustomjee's performance. We have had many generousdonations from him. For us, therefore, Mr. Tata's gift is no matter for surprise.

Mr. Tata has laid the entire community under obligation. What is the way to repay it? Our courage must increase tenfold after what has happened. The money has been given in the faith that we shall carry on the struggle to the bitter end. It is up to us to prove that we are worthy of such confidence.

It would be some satisfaction if the fight were continued for the sake at any rate of Mr. Tata's gift, not so much because of the amount itself as for the implication which the donation carries, and the impression that it will make on the world.

If Mr. Tata's gift is a matter for satisfaction, it also calls for a warning. In this world a gift can rarely be turned to good account. Only a few know how to put to good use money got as a gift. Such money makes people weak-willed and selfish. Our fight is based on self-help and is intended to bring about our own regeneration. Therefore, should Mr. Tata's gift lead people to relax their efforts, it may do more harm than good. We would urge the Indian community not to slacken in its duty in South Africa, regardless of this gift.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-12-1909

185. NATAL LICENSING ACT

The Natal Parliament has amended the Dealers' Licenses Act. The Indian community was keen on provision for appeal, and its desire has been partly satisfied. If an officer refuses to renew an existing licence, an appeal will now be allowed to the Supreme Court. This is a matter for some satisfaction. There used to be rank injustice sometimes, which will now cease. The amendment does not apply to

new licences, but we do not think this is much of a difficulty. With some effort we may possibly secure that too.

Every Indian must note how the change came about. There are two main reasons. One, to arrest the agitation for ending the system of indenture. Two, fear of satyagraha in Natal. Thirdly, there is also reason to believe that the change came about a little earlier than it might otherwise have done because of the Natal Deputation. But we especially draw the attention of the Indian community to the first reason. The amendment is a kind of a sop. The Government will now expect the business community to abandon its agitation for stopping the import of indentured labour. We hope the community will do nothing of the kind. If it does, it will have proved remiss in its duty.

According to us, indenture is an evil thing [in itself]. But there is also the £3 poll-tax on the indentured labourers. There must be an agitation for its removal. The Natal Government wants that the terms of indenture should expire in India. *The* [*Natal*] *Mercury* has pointed out clearly that had it not been for the difficulty of licences the Imperial Government would certainly have agreed to the change regarding the expiry of the term of indenture in India. It is our earnest request that the Indian community should not neglect its duty in this matter.

It will be evident to every Indian that this gain is the result of satyagraha. Those who see this will realize that satyagraha can meet every situation.

The problem of Indian education is also a very serious one. It demands the utmost attention from the community.

We therefore hope that the community will not sink into lethargy in the belief that nothing further now remains to be done.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-12-1909

186. LETTER TO " RAND DAILY MAIL" [1]

JOHANNESBURG,
December 11, 1909

SIR,

Every person who has the interests of the Colony, as also the Empire, at heart, must feel thankful to you for your leading article[2] on the Transvaal Indian situation.

May I, on behalf of those whom I claim to represent, state that, so far as our assistance is required with reference to those who are resident in the Colony, and who should be identified, it will be given at all times, and whole-heartedly. I need not recall the history of 1908, which is still fresh in the memory of the colonists, and which proves that we are not an unreasonable community, and that we are just as willing to suffer in order to aid the Government as we are today suffering in order to save our national honour.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Rand Daily Mail, 13-12-1909

187. JOSEPH ROYEPPEN

We congratulate Mr. Joseph Royeppen, who has recently returned after being called to the Bar, on his decision to join the Transvaal campaign. The decision must be esteemed a sign of true education. Undoubtedly, Mr. Joseph Royeppen's entry into the Transvaal will be a great encouragement to the community. His example should be followed by others.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-12-1909

[1] A summary of this letter appeared in the Gujarati columns of *Indian Opinion*, 18-l2-1909.

[2] Dated 10-12-1909, reproduced in part in *Indian Opinion*, 18-12-1909; advised acceptance of the Transvaal Indian demand.

188. LETTER TO " INDIAN OPINION"

December 20, 1909

TO

THE EDITOR
INDIAN OPINION

SIR,

I hope that I shall find myself lodged in gaol before this letter appears in print.[1]

My second son (Manilal) lives with me. For some time past I had been thinking of asking him to join the struggle. He was insistent. It appeared to me, on deep reflection, that it would be right to bring him in. I believe that to go to gaol or suffer similar hardships with a pure motive for the sake of the motherland is the truest kind of education. Since I look upon gaol as a kind of palace, how can I deny the privilege of being there to those whom I hold dear? My son has attained the age (17)[2] when he can think for himself.[3] For my part, I should like to tell all Indian parents and all Indian youths that success will attend those who have joined the struggle. It is they that do the fighting, who profit most from it.

To those who are in gaol now I make this request, that they should make up their minds to return to gaol the moment they are released, without so much as pausing for breath. An exception may be made only inthe case of Mr. Rustomjee. If he is not arrested [on his release], he would do well to go to Durban for a month. But as soon as a month is over, it will be his duty, so at least it appears to me, to return [to the Transvaal], whatever the state of his health.

Those who are outside should think of possible ways of getting into gaol. Failing everything else, it will be easy enough for them to fill the gaols in January or February.

Whether or not others fill them, it is obviously the duty of those

[1] Gandhiji expected he would be arrested on 22nd December while entering the Transvaal from Natal with six British Indians including Manilal. *Vide* "Cable to H. S. L. Polak", 22-12-1909

[2] 18 years, *vide* "Cable to H. S. L. Polak", 22-12-1909

[3] *Vide* the concluding lines of the following item.

who would do so for the sake of India not to pause even a moment for breath.

Yours,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 25-12-1909

189. SPEECH AT DURBAN MEETING[1]

[*December 20, 1909*]

The resolutions[2] proposed at this meeting are a proof of your enthusiasm and your spirit. You have identified yourself with the struggle, and that is as it ought to be, for this struggle is the support on which rest the rights of all. If we lose it, we shall be uprooted from this land or, in any case, be reduced to slavery. Even as it is, the slavery is there, as can be seen from the subjects of your resolutions. If you have any trace of manliness in you, you will turn satyagrahis. For instance, all the teachers can resign[3], and all parents can withdraw their children from schools. Parents who believe that their children receive any education in Government schools are only deluding themselves. There is, again, the question of indentured labourers. You should never forget that the provision for appeal[4] in regard to trading licences is only a bait. It has been offered in order to induce us to give up our opposition to the repatriation of indentured labourers on the expiry of their terms of contract. Is there any Indian who will agree to this? You must oppose such repatriation. The petitions you make will avail you nothing by themselves. They must be backed by some force, by the force of satyagraha (passive resistance). As General Smuts has declared, satyagraha is a kind of war. The Natal Indians can hope for no improvement in their lot unless they resort to satyagraha. Today England is on our side. India has been stirred by Mr. Polak. I have had news today from Johannesburg of a telegraphic offer of £400

[1] Organised by the Natal Indian Patriotic Union on 20-12-1909

[2] Reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 25-12-1909

[3] As a protest against the Bills which, while providing for pensions for teachers in aided and Government schools in Natal, excluded Indian teachers from the pension scheme (Resolution No. 5).

[4] To the supreme Court, as conceded by the amendments made in the Wholesale and Retail Dealers' Act (Resolution No. 7)

from the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale, following on Mr. Tata's gift. Mr. Joseph Royeppen has returned with degrees from England, and will now accompany me to gaol to receive the latest degree. Another person to come forward is Mr. V. Lawrence. He has a wife and children, whom he will be leaving behind. He will also give up his job in order to join the struggle. I am proud of him. How can we ever turn away from the example that has been set by Nagappen? Cherishing his memory, we must fight on till we win. Victory will not further anyone's personal interest, but it will uphold India's honour. If these friends or any other Indians are coming along in the hope that thereby they will secure for themselves domiciliary rights in the Transvaal, I would ask them not to do so. Among those who are accompanying us, there is another Colonial-born Indian, Mr. Samuel Joseph. Likewise, Mr. Ramalal Singh has crossed over from Germiston, and he too will enter [the Transvaal] with us and go to gaol. Having thus carried on the fight for three years, it will be disgraceful of us to give it up now. Nothing is ever achieved except through suffering. A mother suffers when her child is born. In the same way, India has to go through suffering at present. Gaol-life is a kind of education and strengthens the will-power. This, I believe, is a great benefit, and hence I have decided to take along with me my second son Manilal. He has himself elected to come. In gaol, we are to work as missionaries of satyagraha, i.e., good life.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 25-12-1909

190. CABLE TO H. S. L. POLAK[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
December 22, 1909]

JOSEPH ROYEPPEN, BARRISTER, CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE; SAMUEL JOSEPH, HEADMASTER, INDIAN SCHOOL; DAVID ANDREW, CLERK, AN INTERPRETER (ALL BORN IN SOUTH AFRICA): MANILAL, MR. GANDHI'S SECOND SON, A BOY OF 18 YEARS, WITH RAMALAL SINGH AND FAZANDAR, THE ACTING CHAIRMAN OF THE BRITISH

[1] Polak read this out at the Lahore session of the Indian National Congress while seconding the resolution moved by Gokhale on the treatment of Indians in the Transvaal.

INDIAN ASSOCIATION, AND MYSELF HAVE CROSSED THE BORDER[1] UNCHALLENGED, BUT WE EXPECT TO BE ARRESTED AT ANY TIME. I THINK THAT THE ARREST IS SUSPENDED TO AVOID CAUSING A SENSATION AT THE TIME OF THE CONGRESS. MR. FAZANDAR, ALTHOUGH VOLUNTARILY REGISTERED, WAS DEPORTED LAST WEEK. HE RE-ENTERED. THE POLICY OF THE TRANSVAAL AUTHORITIES APPEARS TO BE TO DEPORT TO INDIA EVEN THOSE VOLUNTARILY REGISTERED, THAT IS TO SAY, THOSE WHO ARE ADMITTED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO BE LAWFULLY RESIDENT IN THE TRANSVAAL. HAZURA SINGH LAL AND BAHADUR SINGH VAJA AND SIX OTHERS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED WITH A VIEW TO DEPORTATION. THEIR CASES HAVE BEEN ADJOURNED. THE "RAND DAILY MAIL" AND "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER" RECOMMEND THE ACCEPTANCE OF OUR DEMANDS .

India, 28-1-1910

191. SUBSTANCE OF LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,

December 23,1909]

Mr. A. M. Cachalia, Chairman of the British Indian Association, has written a letter to the Colonial Secretary in which he says the regulations[3] are uncalled for irritating and degrading. The regulations, in the humble opinion of his Committee, are contrary to the declarations so often made by the Government that there is no intention to wound the feelings or to interfere with the movements of domiciled British Indians.

Indian Opinion, 1-1-1910

[1] On December 22, 1909
[2] The text of this letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, is not available.
[3] The Railway Regulations gazetted on 17-12-1909

192. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

Friday Night [*December 24, 1909*]

MY DEAR WEST,

Both your letter and Joseph's[1] to the *Mercury* are very good. I should like to keep them for Natesan[2] if I may.

If there is not sufficient to pay wages, I, being the manager of the Trust[3], must make provision. In any case, the whole estate is liable for wages. Such is the legal position. The moral position is this: We do not make two ends meet; I fail to find money; we close down the Press, try other means; if we do not succeed and if we do not want to die on the land in the attempt to make it pay, we disperse or those who are dissatisfied will disperse. What do owners do, when they find their enterprise not paying? Settlers are virtually owners. Yes, it is possible for the majority to sell the land. I think we ought to leave the door open.

You will remember I once remarked that *Indian Opinion*. only may be taken over by the settlers, or some of them. Hence the clause[4]. Throughout I have presumed that the majority of us at least may be expected to carry out the ideals. The settlers will be those who will sign the list of settlers to be appended to the Trust. The wives and children are not 'Settlers, in the sense of the Trust. Polak and Harilal who have joined the scheme are. Miss Schlesin can be one. Mr. Doke and Miss Smith are not.

The earnings will pay for all they can. For the present we only contemplate a deficit. The scope has been changed in that the settlers are paid according to needs and not according to income or ability.

I shall still await your concrete suggestions for amendment or alteration or addition.[5]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand C. W. 4411

[1] Joseph Royeppen's letter was published in *The Natal Mercury*, 22-12-1909, and reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 1-1-1910.

[2] G. A. Natesan, Editor, *Indian Review*, Madras

[3] [4] and [5] The draft of the Trust deed is not available; for Trust deed *vide* Vol. XI; some particulars in regard to the Phoenix Scheme are given in "Letter to A. H. West", On or before 29-12-1909.

193. HONOUR FOR JUSTICE AMEER ALI

Last week we gave the news about Justice Ameer Ali having been honoured by the Emperor. He has been appointed a Privy Councillor. That is, he has received the right of sitting in the Emperor's Council. No Indian has received such an honour before now and Justice Ameer Ali is the first recipient. We congratulate him. Our readers probably know that for many years he has been living in England. He is President of the All-India Muslim League in England. He is also a member of the South Africa British Indian Committee, which is all the more reason why we should rejoice [at his appointment]. Also, his being honoured will encourage us to still greater effort.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 25-12-1909

194. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

Sunday, December 26, 1909

MY DEAR MILLIE,

I am writing this in Mr.Kallenbach's tent. It has been raining for the last two days. The tent is soaking wet, water dropping here and there. The wind is howling about me. Manilal is with us. He is a good boy. I notice that he is over-particular about his dress. He devoted nearly a[n] hour to ironing his suit. He is pining to go to goal.

I see you address me Brother in inverted commas and underlined thrice. We may well call ourselves brother and sister. Our conduct certainly justifies it. But will you give me a sister's confidence? If you say 'yes', I shall try to be 'brother' to you. No real increase in my family can be cause of sorrow to me.

Henry wants me to send you £ 17 now. His previous letter said £ 16. I think I wrote to you from 'on board' that I should like to be able to send you more. Now it is done by Henry which is the same thing. Henry wonders how you will take his prolonged stay in India. And yet he is there in his element. After a certain stage, my presence is a hindrance to friends' growth. Henry is doing much better independently of me. He has succeeded in captivating Dr.Mehta who wants me to print his address on industrialism and its evils for free

distribution.

Your letter is full of epigrams in your best style. You could hardly be so sweet as you are if you never needed a friend's help and consolation. Though a brother could never replace a husband, I tried during my stay in London to replace Henry so far as I could. It was no more a wrench to you to separate from me than it was to me to separate from you. We certainly came nearer each other in London than ever before. It was natural.

You may well envy Maud and yet you cannot. Maud is a different type. Friends can make or mar her. You can be helped by friends and never marred. A trusting nature like Maud's is beautiful. It can under good auspices develop into a very strong nature. Her progress can be rapid but so can her retrogression. With you retrogression is impossible. And progress, shall I say, slow if not even difficult. You would be justified. I know, in saying the same of me. We are both strong natures. We may be nearest each other but never identical. I was tempted to analyse Henry. But I must not speculate any further. Your wonderful letter before me has given rise to these thoughts. That is the beauty of epigrams. You could say so much on each.

You are right in assuming that Lord Morley's reforms may be a piece of bone thrown to a hungry dog. And yet it is open to those who will be the leaders in the new Assembly to make much out of them. Lord Morley can do little for India unless Indians themselves are prepared to do something for themselves. Just now assassination is the order of the day. Lord Morely can stop it but he is too blind to see the way. I should like to be able to throw myself into the work but I cannot, and have no desire to force the pace.

I am glad Waldo and Baby are getting on. I hope Celia and Amy are keeping well.

Of myself, you will learn from elsewhere.

With love,

Yours sincerely,

YOUR 'BROTHER'

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

195. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

Wednesday [On or before *December 29, 1909*][1]

DEAR MR. WEST,

Without going into the argument, the following is my opinion.

Health—As to sanitation, I will say nothing. I have already given my opinion as to medical expenses.[2] Reasonable medical expenses of all should come out of the business. What is reasonable should be decided in each case separately in consultation with the patient. The scheme is based on mutual trust and we must expect everyone not to wilfully fall ill or to wilfully ask us to incur expenses. If I do not want a doctor, I cannot impose the idea on others. In coming to this conclusion, I fancy that the ordinary law of human life is health and not sickness. If Dr. Nanji[3] will not come to Phoenix, another doctor may be consulted.

The School—The school should vegetate and as to the material, Mr. Gora[4] may be asked as to what he proposes to do with it. I sugges your personally seeing him. For the present, Purshotamdas alone may do what he can for the school.

Indian Opinion—The size should be changed as suggested. No apology need be offered in the paper for it. The English columns should be reduced. No leading matter of opinion [be] given for the present except explanatory notes. All matter should be severely condensed. Energy should be devoted to the art of condensing. It may be divided into Passive Resistance, Natal notes, Cape notes, etc. Reports of Bombay and other meetings may be considerably shortened. Original papers from which condensation is made should, if possible, be kept pasted in book form. The English columns then should simply give news on the disabilities throughout South Africa and about matters we are interested in. When Mr. Polak returns, he may enlarge the scope and size if funds then permit. Mr. Kallenbach should be advised as to how much will be required monthly under this

[1] The letter seems to have been written after Gandhiji's return from England and before the size of *Indian Opinion* was changed, which was done on January 1, 1910.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to A. H. West", 26-11-1909.

[3] An Indian physician of Durban, who often treated those at Phoenix including M. Gandhi

[4] Ismail Gora, Acting President, Anjuman Islam Society, Durban

heading, the ideal being not to ask for any support at all. The Gujarati columns ought not to be reduced, but if the Gujarati subscribers fall off, even that may be reduced almost to any extent, you there, in Mr. Polak's and my absence, being the sole judge.

You may put a limit to the credit for subscribers. Mr. Dawd Mahomed[1] and such others foreign or local may be placed on the complimentary or separate list, so that we know that we have to collect from them. You may cut about the complimentary list as you think fit.

As to libels, you need not fear or bother. All facts, you cannot vouch for, should be signed by those who give them—no law need be read on it just now. If I find a simple book, I shall send it. No legal adviser is necessary. But in emergency, Mr. Khan[2] will advise.

Scheme—All except Kababhai and Mrs. West should be invited to join the scheme or leave. I am so firmly of this opinion that I would do away with the Kaffir labour. We would simply do what we can with the schemers and no more. All should be voters. They should appoint a sub-committee or managers—the final veto being retained to me. Personally I feel inclined to treat Mrs. West and Kababhai too as schemers with full rights except as to the drawings. All decisions to be by votes of majority, pure and simple. You may frame rules for guiding deliberations and defining the duties of the sub-committee and managers.

A wife working in the Press does not forfeit the privileges of a schemer's wife.

I send herewith draft for £75 which please place to my credit.

Mr. Kallenbach has seen this letter.

Mr. Sam's papers will be returned to him with the cession of the bond cancelled.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

There is no one now in Johannesburg who can go out collecting. I suggest Mr. Cordes coming out for collections. Periodical visits should be paid. No reliance should be placed on the

[1] A leader of the Natal Indian community; one-time President, Natal Indian Congress; a passive resister.

[2] An Indian barrister of Durban, *vide* "Speech at Calcutta Meeting", 27-1-1902.

Johannesburg office as to collections. I shall endeavour to bring up the deficit in the capital a/c as quickly as possible.

M. K. G.

[PP.S.]

I have endorsed the draft.[1]

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4410 Courtesy: A. H. West

196. JOHANNESBURG[2]

[*Wednesday, December 29, 1909*]

KRUGERSDORP SATYAGRAHA

The case of Mr. Amad Vaja, Mr. Moosa Vaja and Suleman Hossen[3] came up for hearing on Tuesday last. There was a move to have them all deported under the Immigration law. Mr. Gandhi, appearing for the defence, argued that:

> The Immigration law had no application [in the present case], since all of them had taken out voluntary registration certificates. True, they had refused to produce their certificates, that being the place of the campaign. There is no provision in law for deporting those who refuse to show their certificates, but such persons can be sentenced to imprisonment.

The Public Prosecutor read out the instructions which he had received from Pretoria. The case has been adjourned to Wednesday[4]

[1] These words have been written by Gandhiji in the margin at the top left corner of the letter.

[2] This is an extract from the weekly dispatch "Johannesburg", which appeared almost regularly in *Indian Opinion* from 3-3-1906 onwards. (*Vide* "Letter to Chhaganla Gandhi", 18-2-1906 &"Johannesburg Letter", 26-2-1906). The dispatch was originally named "Johannesburg Letter", but the word "Letter" was dropped from 16-10-1909 onwards. After his return from England in December 1909, Gandhiji, on the evidence available, seems to have contributed only occasional paragraphs to the dispatch.

[3] Indian merchants

[4] The case came up on Thursday, December 30; *vide* "Transvaal Notes", *Indian Opinion*, 1-1-1910.

for judgment.[1]

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 1-1-1910

197. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

JOHANNESBURG,
December 31, 1909

MY DEAR MILLIE,

Nowadays I come to the office between 7 and 8. I have a quiet half hour just now which I wish to devote to writing to you. You are dearer to me than my widowed sister Gokuldas' mother, whom as you know I worship, though in thoughts a gulf divides us. You are dearer because there is so much in common between us and because I have entered so much into your and Henry's lives - I hope for our common good and the good of humanity. Your brief letter haunts me. It fills me with sorrow and admiration for you. You have written it in love, grief and resignation. I wish you had sent me the other letter also that you wrote.

No, no, my dear sister, you are not going to live away from Henry for ever. Your wondrous imagination has carried you much further, I am sure, than Henry could ever intend you to go. How I wish I was close by you to comfort you and show how wrong you were. In reply to that letter of mine which you read, Henry wrote to me and told me he was writing to you. I wish you had sent his letter to me. You have cut a deep wound in my heart by telling me that your brief letter is to be the last for many weeks. You will not treat your only (am I) adopted brother in that fashion? If I am your brother, you *must*[2] let me share your sorrows.

You are Henry's better half. No path can be considered right for him along which he cannot carry you. Will you not have sufficient faith in him to know for certain that he is incapable of creating a gulf between you and himself? I ask you to trust me *neve*[3] to carry Henry

[1] The court ordered, after hearing McIntyre's arguments, this time, that the defendants be deported, the deportation to take effect after the decision in the appeal to the Supreme Court.

[2] Words supplied in italics here and elsewhere in the text of a letter (other than those italicised as per editorial style) are underlined in the original, evidently for emphasis.

[3] *ibid*

along any route without your approval. A gift given or a sacrifice made grudgingly and not cheerfully is no gift or sacrifice. You have often given me the privilege of analysing you to yourself. You have heroically sacrificed yourself on the altar of duty. But you have done so in bitterness not always free from resentment. Your noble nature and your mad regard for truth should free you from that error. Why should not duty be pleasure? I hope you follow me in what I am writing.

Will you not, for my sake, shake yourself free from that little morbidity of your nature? It ill becomes a character like yours. I want a perfect sister and am anxious for Henry that he should have a perfect wife. It is because it is in you to be perfect that I venture to draw attention to what in my opinion is lacking in you.

'Take no thought for the morrow' is a sound maxim of life. You know exactly what this means. Why then worry!

Now do tell me what you will have me to do? At any rate let me know if you will be a true sister to me, what is running in your mind, what it is that Henry intends doing, what has caused you such a severe shock. I trust you, on the strength of a brother's love, to tell me fully, frankly and freely where you are.

With love,

Yours,

'BROTHER'

[PS.]

I return you your letter to enable you to understand this better.

M. K. G.

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

198. MR. SHELAT'S DISCHARGE

After having served six months, imprisonment, Mr. Shelat was discharged from Diepkloof Gaol on the 24th December, reduced in weight from 139 pounds to 110, looking weak and emaciated. The readers of this journal will remember that Mr. Shelat was confined to a solitary cell and placed on reduced diet for having refused to carry

slop-pails.[1] We consider that passive resisters should not hesitate to do the meanest work in the Transvaal prisons. But Mr. Shelat—a Brahmin—made the matter a point of conscience. We can but treat his objection, therefore, with respect. He was first punished with twenty-four hours' solitary confinement with spare diet for disobeying the order. Mr. Shelat was immovable. The next punishment was for forty-eight hours; still with spare diet, but without effect. The third sentence was increased to six days with spare diet. Mr. Shelat was adamant. Spare diet meant rice water twice per day. This told on him, but Mr. Shelat was determined to die for his conscience. He was further sentenced to 14 days' solitary confinement and with reduced diet. Reduced diet meant half the ordinary scale. But even the long spell in a semi-dark cell could not bend this passive resister's spirit. The last sentence was, therefore, twenty-eight days. This meant prolonging his six months' sentence by nine days. The authorities, however, discharged him without exacting the extra nine days. This is a feat that will always remain in the annals of Passive Resistance as one of the most brilliant. We congratulate Mr. Shelat on his pluck. He has shown the Transvaal Government that there are some Indians who, when it is a matter of conscience with them, do not fear consequences. Such punishment as was awarded to Mr. Shelat is reserved for criminals of a hardened type.To have inflicted it on Mr. Shelat and half starved him was wanton cruelty. But we boldly say to those who know what the struggle means—"Never mind what suffering you have to undergo. The more you suffer, the better it is for you and the community."

Indian Opinion, 1-1-1910

199. OURSELVES

With the present issue, this journal appears under a somewhat changed dress. The size, too, has been reduced. The Transvaal struggle has put a very severe strain on our resources. It has now become too great for us to continue the old form and size. It is within the knowledge of most of our readers that our publication is not a commercial concern, but our capacity for the service of the community to whose interests *Indian Opinion* is devoted is limited, and our limitation has necessitated the change the readers will notice

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Johannesburg Mass Meeting", 5-12-1909

in its appearance. We part very reluctantly by way of retrenchment with the cover whose colour was very specially selected. Though the size has been reduced, we hope that we shall be able by means of condensation to give the same amount of information. Our readers who are interested in the ideals we endeavour to promote can render useful service by finding subscribers for the journal which they may call their own. It is our desire to give more varied matter as our resources increase. It is, then, for the readers to say when they shall have a better service of news.

Indian Opinion, 1-1-1910

200. BALANCE-SHEET

Years follow one another. At the end of each, we take stock of the community's position. The Transvaal satyagraha has thrown everything else into the shade. The course of the struggle has been marked by a number of notable events. A deputation also went to England. Numerous have been the benefits of the struggle. We can make the claim that the campaign has saved us from much disabling legislation in South Africa. Several instances of this will easily occur to the reader. The educative value of the discipline of satyagraha can never be overestimated. Everyone can see now that carrying on this fight is in itself a kind of achievement. The Transvaal campaign is still going on. Quite a few Indians have weakened. Had it not been for this fact, the struggle would have ended by now. But the community has lost nothing by the fact that the struggle has been prolonged. Of soul-force, it may be said, the more it is employed the greater is the benefit. Like learning, it grows through use. The campaign has now assumed an excellent form. In England, the volunteers have been doing very good work under the guidance of Mr. Ritch. If the present tempo of the work is maintained for a year, consider what it will mean. Assuming an average of £4 a week, the collection will total £208. If the signatures average 50 [a week], there will be 2,600 in all. In fact, much more than this is likely to be achieved. If, however, even 2,600 come to be properly informed about our struggle, it will be no small achievement. The wider the publicity a satyagraha campaign receives the greater the admiration it wins, making its opponents feel rather crest-fallen. Mr. Polak has roused India. As days pass, her pressure grows more vigorous. All this shows that we stand to lose nothing because the struggle is long drawn out. A campaign in which the

combatants have no interests of their own to serve profits them all the more by being prolonged, for they fight for the good of others, and there can be no limit to doing good to others. From this point of view, we should not feel concerned even about those who have been suffering in gaol. They are tested through suffering and their worth shines all the brighter.

Turning to Natal, [we find that] the condition there is pitiable. The Natal Government has passed some laws which the community ought to oppose. We attach little value to the minor change that has been made in the Dealers' Act.[1] In the matter of education, the Government has been very high-handed. Sooner or later, the Natal Indians will have no option but to take up satyagraha.

We find that the Cape Indians have been slumbering. There has not been any new legislation to speak of in the Cape, but the community is growing weaker day by day. Trade is no longer in Indian hands. The community has failed to profit by the favourable conditions there; otherwise, the Cape Indians are in a position to do fine work not only in the Cape but in the whole of South Africa.

In Delagoa Bay, Indians have been gradually losing their rights. The Portuguese authorities have been tightening the screw on them at the instance of the British. We put it to the community that they will lose nothing by resisting the tyranny of the Government. They must do so for the good name of the community. Their duty, too, requires the same thing.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 1-1-1910

201. COLLECTOR'S ASSASSINATION

There was a cable-report in last week's papers about a Collector named Jackson[2] having been assassinated near Nasik. There are some Indians who hope to terrorize the British by such acts. What they are doing is a grave matter. The assassin is quite convinced in his mind that he is acting in the interest of the country, but it is difficult to see what good assassination can do. Wherever assassinations have taken

[1] *Vide* "Natal Licensing Act", 11-12-1909

[2] A. M. T. Jackson, I.C.S., District Magistrate of Nasik, was shot dead on 21-12-1909 by a young man from Aurangabad.

place, they have done more harm than good. President Mackinley[1] of America was assassinated by someone who imagined that that was the way to eradicate corruption from America. No such result followed. Similarly, President Carnot[2] of France was killed a few years ago. That certainly did not lead to any reforms in France. What followed both in America and France was increased repression by, and expenditure on, the police.

Unless a particular form of tyranny is directly attacked, it can never be got rid of. If at any time it does seem to have been eradicated, other undesirable consequences will follow. If B, being oppressed by A, does not himself offer resistance but gets relief through C, that will not end his subjection. He will have C, instead of A, on top of him. If C is a good man, he may put B in shackles of gold instead of iron, but the shackles—the slavery—will remain. What is necessary is to open B's eyes to his state of slavery and teach him to be free. It is not by murdering others that he can be taught this.

It is our particular request to readers of this journal that they give the utmost thought to this matter. We know it is becoming fashionable among the Indian people to admire assassinations. The fashion, we suppose, will not last long. Let every reader of *Indian Opinion* work to bring it to an early end.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 1-l-1910

202. TERRIBLE STEP

The Pretoria Town Council is dead set against the Coloured people. Every year, students are seated in the Town Hall during their examination. This time a Kaffir sat with the whites in the same hall. The Council was angered by this and served notice on the examiners that, since they had seated a Kaffir with the whites in the same hall, it would not be available to them henceforth. The examiners thereupon

[1] William Mackinley (1843-1901), twenty-fifth President of the United States in 1896, re-elected in 1900, was shot on 6-9-1901 by a Pole, Leon Czolgosz, and died on 14-9-1901.

[2] Marie Francois Sadi Carnot, (1837-1894); in 1887 became the fourth President of the Third Republic of France. His presidency was marked by the Boulangist agitation (1889) and the Panama Scandals (1892). On 24-6-1894, he was stabbed by an Italian anarchist named Caserio at Lyons, and expired almost immediately.

asked for a separate room for the Kaffir. This, too, was refused by the Council and a resolution was passed that no Kaffir or any other Coloured person should ever be allowed to use the Town Hall or any of its rooms. The whites who passed this resolution are counted very respectable and well-educated men. In a country like this, the Coloured people are placed in an extremely difficult position. We think there is no way out of this except satyagraha. Such instances of injustice are a natural consequence of the whites' refusal to treat the Coloured people as their equals. It is in order to put an end to this state of affairs that we have been fighting in the Transvaal, and it is not surprising that the fight against a people with such deep prejudice should take a long time [to bear fruit].

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 1-1-1910

203. POLAK'S BOOK

To his other successful efforts in India, Mr. Polak has added one more by writing a book[1] on South Africa. Its expenses, moreover, will not be borne by us, since Mr. Natesan has published it at his own cost.

The book gives an account of conditions in the whole of South Africa. It has four sections. The first section gives detailed information about almost all the laws in South Africa, beginning with Natal. The section occupies 90 pages, 69 being taken up by Natal. The part [dealing with Natal] contains full information about the Dealers' Act, the Immigration law and the law relating to indentured labour. In giving the account of the Dealers' Act he has cited the cases of Mr. Hoondamal[2], Mr. Dada Osman[3], Mr. Cassim Mahomed, Mr. Wahed, Mr. Goga, Mr. Chetty, Mr. Amad Bemat and others.

He has also cited many cases of hardships suffered by indentured labourers.

The Transvaal campaign takes up 45 pages.

In addition, statements made by a number of public men have also been included.

Under the heading "Immigration Scandal in Natal", Mr. Polak

[1] *The Indians of South Africa*, published in Madras
[2] *Vide* "Indian Licences: Need for Vigilance—I, 18-2-1905.
[3] *Vide"* Dada Osman's Case", 14-9-1898.

has quoted the strong letter which Mr. Anglia addressed to Lord Crewe. Information about education in Natal has also been included.

There is also information about laws in the Cape, Rhodesia and Delagoa Bay. This is a very valuable book which should be in the hands of every Indian. It is priced Re. 1.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 1-1-1910

204. LETTER TO GENERAL MANAGER, C. S. A. R.[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
January 4, 1910]

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter[2] of the 30th ultimo, in reply to my letter addressed to the Honourable the Colonial Secretary and dated the 23rd ultimo,[3] with respect to the Regulations affecting Natives and Asiatics. Whilst my Association is grateful to you for your exhaustive, courteous and conciliatory reply, I venture to point out that the spirit of my communication has been missed. My Association is aware of the existence of departmental regulations or instructions prior to the publication thereof in the *Gazette*[4]. If I may venture to say so, the instructions were a result of co-operation on the part of the community represented by my Association, and undoubtedly a proof of the amicable relationship that has hitherto existed between the Railway Administration and British Indians; but the legalising of these instructions gives the impression that the Administration is not satisfied with the spirit of forbearance and co-operation shown by them. My Association has never resented the separate accommodation provided in the respective classes and the affixing of the "reserved" labels. My Association has, however, never assented to the position that the Indian community should be deprived of facilities for travelling by express trains.

As you are aware, the present bitter and exhausting Asiatic struggle going on in the Colony is due to legal inequality and

[1] This letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was sent over the signature of the Chairman, British Indian Association.

[2] Reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 8-1-1910; *vide* "The Transvaal Railway Regulation", "The Transvaal Railway Regulations", 8-1-1910 & "The Transvaal Railway Regulations", 8-1-1910.

[3] *Vide* "Substance of Letter to Colonial Secretary", 23-12-1909.

[4] Of 17-12-1909

differentiation, andnot to departmental differentiation, which Asiatics have held to be justifiable, owing to the existence of colour prejudice in the Colony. The Railway Board, in legalising the Regulations, have ignored the struggle, and accentuated a situation against which my Association has been fighting.

It is difficult for my Association to give an opinion as to whether legal power is required by the Administration in order to deal with the Natives, but, so far as British Indians are concerned, perhaps it will be admitted that such power is not necessary. My Association, therefore, ventures to trust that the Regulations will be withdrawn in so far as they affect British Indians.

Indian Opinion, 8-1-1910

205. JOHANNESBURG

[*Wednesday, January 5, 1910*]

OF INTEREST TO TRADERS

I give below the substance of a notice published in the newspapers.

> Licences of all kinds must be taken out before the end of this month. Before a licence can be had, every business must have been duly registered as required by law. Those who fail to get their businesses registered will be prosecuted and those found without licences will be required to take them out after paying a 10 per cent fine. The following are the rates of licences:

	£ s. d.
Agent of a foreign company	10 0 0
Broker	1 0 0
General dealer	1 0 0
Pedlar	1 0 0
Hawker (with a horse-drawn carriage)	2 0 0

> A hawker who does not already hold a licence will not get a [new] licence straight away. Anyone who wants a new one will have to produce a certificate from a J. P.
>
> Trading licences should be taken out between the 12th and the 15th, if the applicant's surname begins with any of the

letters A, B, C, and D; between the 17th and the 20th, if the surname begins with any letter from E to L; between the 21st and the 25th, if from M to R; and between the 26th and the 30th, if from S to Z. Licences will be issued to Indians between 2 and 3.30 p.m. except on Saturdays.

All this applies to those who have to take out licences from the Revenue Office.

There are separate rates for those who hawk within municipal limits; they have to take out licences in Johannesburg on or before January 15.

WHAT NOW?

This means that Indians who are not full-fledged satyagrahis, or any other Indians for that matter, ought not to step into the Licence Office up to January 15. Those who own stores should not take out licences before January 30.

Though many Indians have fallen, some of them can rise again. It will be but proper for storekeepers not to take out licences for the present but to do so only at the end. Moreover, it is necessary for every storekeeper to send out at least one person from his store for hawking. Any such person who goes out hawking must do so properly. Every hawker should prepare to get arrested from the 16th onwards; for once they must fill the gaols to crowding. They will not have done anything extraordinary, if they do. If it is certain that everyone will not go to gaol, a few at least from every group or from among the members of an eating-house should do so. No one should be guided by what others do. Everyone must do what he can. If, after returning from gaol, a hawker feels inclined to take out a licence, he may, but it will be better if he does not. If the people do at least this, they will have served the community and received some training themselves.

Mr. Gardi, Mr. Moosa Miya and Mr. Ahmed Miya have undertaken to explain matters to the hawkers; they will, moreover, send out one person each from their shops. Mr. Hajee Habib will court imprisonment by working as picket or in some other manner and will also send out one person from his shop. I hope other Indians will follow this example.

I think Mr. Joseph Royeppen, Mr. Samuel Joseph and Mr. David Andrew will also go out hawking if they are not arrested.

Indians from mofussil areas can do excellent work in this field.

I am writing this letter on Wednesday. Today Mr. Joseph Royeppen, his companions, Mr. Cachalia and Mr. Gandhi are to go to Boksburg in response to an invitation from there. If people regain their spirit, an early solution is quite likely. Whether or not it is so, people must do their duty.

MORE MONEY

Mr. Gandhi has received today by telegram a further[1] sum of £200 from Mr. Petit.

ARREST

News has just been received that Mr. Ibrahim Hoosen, a satyagrahi, who had started a hair-cutting saloon, was arrested today.

HELP FROM MOZAMBIQUE

Mr. Damodar Anandji's cheque for £50 in aid of the satyagraha campaign has been received. Indian friends at Mozambique rendered excellent help to Mr. Isaac.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 8-1-1910

206. LETTER TO J. C. GIBSON[2]

JOHANNESBURG,
January 6, 1910

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

I enclose herewith a memorandum, showing what would finally close the bitter and exhausting Asiatic struggle that is now going on in the Colony.

It has been brought to my notice that the Indian community is being charged with two things: firstly, that British Indians have continually shifted their ground as to their demands; secondly, that the movement here is entirely engineered and controlled from India.

[1] "Transvaal Notes", *Indian Opinion*, 1-1-1910, had indicated: "Mr. Jahangir Petit has cabled Mr. Gandhi £400 from Bombay."

[2] This letter and the statement were the outcome of the interview which the Rev. Charles Phillips and J. C. Gibson had with Gandhiji on 6th January 1910, following their conversation with Lord Selborne, High Commissioner of the Transvaal. *Vide* their letter dated 7-1-1910 to Lord Selborne, reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 10-12-1910.

As to the first, here are a few facts. About the month of September, 1907, that is to say, before imprisonments had commenced and the compromise was effected, a public document[1] was addressed to the Colonial Secretary, signed by several thousand lndians, in which occurs the following sentence: "We respectfully submit that nothing short of total repeal of the Act can meet the difficult situation that has arisen." So that repeal of the Act was the goal always aimed at. Total repeal at the time or at any time before the passing of the second Registration Act would have restored legal equality under the Immigration Act.

When the compromise was effected[2], I contend that repeal against voluntary registration was definitely promised. This promise was alluded to by General Smuts in his Richmond speech[3] two days after the compromise. He stated that the Asiatics had asked for repeal, and that he had told the leaders that, until every Asiatic was registered, he would not repeal the Act.

When I was assaulted, a document[4] for publication was drawn as between Mr. Chamney and myself, to the effect that the Act would be repealed if voluntary registration was completed to the satisfaction of the authorities. At the meeting of the Executive Council, after the burning of the certificates, a compromise became impossible because the essential point of repeal, namely, legal equality as to immigration, was not granted; and a final settlement was not arrived at in London only because of this point remaining undecided. The following is Mr. Duncan's[5] testimony—and Mr. Duncan ought to know what he is speaking about—to the effect that we have never shifted the ground. Writing in the month of February last in the *State*[6], Mr. Duncan said:

> The position of the Indian leaders is that they will tolerate no law which does not put them on an equality with Europeans in regard to restriction on immigration. They are willing to see the number of Asiatics limited by administrative action. They insist on equality in the terms of the law itself.

In this article, Mr. Duncan has examined the charge of shifting,

[1] *Vide* "Monster Petition", before 21-9-1907.

[2] On 30-1-1908; *vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 28-1-1908 & "Interview to the Transvaal Leader", 30-1-1908.

[3] *Vide* Appendix "General Smuts' Speech in Richmond".

[4] Not published and not available; *vide* "Letter to the Press", 2-7-1908.

[5] Patrick Duncan, Colonial Secretary of the Transvaal before Smuts

[6] Monthly organ of the Closer Union Societies

and has come to the conclusion that there has been none.

As to the charge of the movement being engineered and controlled from India, I can only state that it is absolutely devoid of foundation. Indeed, it is common knowledge among those who have at all understood the agitation here that the complaint was that India was not sufficiently awakened to the national importance of the struggle going on here. Hence it was that Mr. Polak was sent. Before the deputation went to England,[1] there never was any pecuniary assistance either received or required from India. Today it is a world-wide fact that the struggle is not only affecting Indian politics, but is being financially supported from there. Every penny received is being publicly advertised. We are receiving similar support now from England also.

In conclusion, I would state that, if my letter or the statement hereto attached are not considered explicit, I shall be prepared to send any other document, so long as it carries out the intention of the statement, which is to secure repeal of the Act and legal equality as to immigration. It has become necessary to mention one point as if there were two points, because of the second Registration Act being in the way, but the point is really only one.

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

[Enclosure]

STATEMENT

British Indians will be satisfied if Act 2 of 1907 is repealed, and the Immigration Act is so amended as to enable any Asiatic immigrants of culture to enter the Colony on precisely the same terms as Europeans, and without the necessity for complying with any Registration Act. This Amendment will allow the Immigration Officer the fullest discretion as to the mode of setting the education test, and will give the power to the Governor-in-Council to frame regulations limiting the number of immigrants belonging to different classes or races, even though they may have passed the education test. So far as Asiatics are concerned, no amendment of the Immigration Act would be necessary, were it not for the presence of the second Asiatic Act passed in 1908. The amendment giving the Governor-in-Council the

[1] It left South Africa on June 23 and reached England on July 10, 1909.

power to make the regulations in the manner above referred to meets the objection that the administration of the law would be so different from its wording. So long as a limited number of (say, up to six) British Indians of culture are admitted into the Colony per year under the education test, British Indians will be satisfied. The granting of these two concessions *will finally close the struggle, and remove the question from the arena of Indian politics*. The educated Indians who have entered the Transvaal will then retire, and claim to enter, if at all, under the general test.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of Cd. 5363; also
Indian Opinion, 10-12-1910

207. SPEECH AT DINNER TO JOSEPH ROYEPPEN AND OTHERS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
January 7, 1910]

Mr. Gandhi, in proposing the toast of "The Guests", explained their motive in coming to the Colony—one, simply, of vindicating their national honour. They were here to hearten their own people by going themselves through the mill of suffering. Many of them there knew what the ordeal was, and it had, of course, yet to be seen how far the new recruits could bear it. He would acknowledge that they could no longer boast that they numbered hundreds upon hundreds who were prepared to suffer. Some 2,500 had gonethrough gaol, and many of these felt unable to return. He did not blame those who broke down—such persons were to be found in every struggle. This, however, he could say that the best of his people had simply been steeled by their suffering, and that whether the struggle lasted for months or years, it could continue until either they died or it succeeded. Personally, he had no doubt about the result. Whether the ordeal was longer or shorter was, in his view, comparatively unimportant. The thing to be thankful for was that it was proved they had in their midst a considerable residue of men showing unbreakable spirit in defence of a moral principle. Mr. Gandhi proceeded to instance the Mohammedan priest[2], "a man softly

[1] At a private dinner at the Masonic Hall, Johannesburg, in honour of Messrs Joseph Royeppen, David Andrew, Samuel Joseph and Manilal Gandhi. William Hosken presided and proposed the toast of "The King". Several prominent Indians and Europeans were present. The report of Gandhiji's speech was reproduced in *Indian Opinion* as from *The Transvaal Leader*.

[2] Imam Abdul Kadir Bawazeer

nurtured", who was now serving at Diepkloof his third term; and another British Indian—a leading Parsee[1]. The latter, he stated, had sacrificed a prosperous business, and would on the 11th of next month have served a continuous term of 12 months. He had been imprisoned originally for 6 months, but on liberation had immediately re-crossed the border and thus courted further imprisonment. Mr. Gandhi explained (being requested by the Chairman) his reason for allowing his own son[2] of 17 to enter the Colony with the prospect of arrest. The lad had repeatedly expressed his wish to share the honourable sufferings of his people, and Mr. Gandhi had at length consented, feeling that he would go into the prison not to acquire the vices of such a place, not in any sense as a criminal—(applause)—but as a missionary among his co-sufferers of his own race and among the Native convicts with whom he would be classed. (Loud applause.) He (Mr. Gandhi) felt that the stand the passive resisters were making for righteousness' sake had taken away from the gaol all criminal savour—so far as they were concerned —and he believed that in God's providence right would yet be done them and their cause would triumph. (Loud applause.)[3]

Indian Opinion, 15-1-1910

208. LIBERTY

Liberty consists in being able to obey our own will and conscience rather than the will and conscience of others.—Lord Hugh Cecil at the Edinburgh University Associated Societies.

It has often been said that the struggle at present going on in the Transvaal is a fight for liberty. Judging it according to the definition quoted above, our countrymen in the Transvaal are truly fighting for liberty and that should, therefore, command universal sympathy. Lord Hugh Cecil, in elaborating the definition he gave, said:

> The true ground for maintaining liberty is that, without it, there cannot be in any true sense virtue or righteousness. Virtue does not consist in doing right, but in choosing to do right. This is the great distinction between the animal and man.

The Transvaal Indians are exercising the power to obey their will and conscience rather than the will of the State which is in conflict with theirs. Any man who subordinates his will to that of the State surrenders his liberty and thus becomes a slave. The Asiatic Act

[1] Parsee Rustomjee

[2] Manilal Gandhi

[3] Royeppen then replied to the toast, after which Cachalia detailed his gaol experiences and D. W. Drew spoke. He said: Men who stood for great moral and spiritual principles were invincible.

imposes slavery on Indians in that it deprives them of liberty, i.e., the ability[1] to obey their conscience.

From His Lordship's remarks, it further follows that men cannot be made virtuous by Acts of Parliament. If they are compelled to do an act which is considered good, they are no more to be credited with virtue than a donkey who is compelled to carry a load.

Passive resisters in the Transvaal are, then, fighting for the liberty of the whole of South Africa in offering battle to the most powerful South African State. A handful though they are, they have a great and clear mission before them. And they have every reason to be proud of their record.

Lord Hugh Cecil, while giving us a scientific definition of liberty, does not tell us how we are to achieve it. If liberty be ability to act according to the dictates of our conscience, we certainly cannot achieve it by force of arms, i.e., by physical violence. It is attainable only by suffering in our own persons until our opponents see the error of their ways and cease to harass us by trying to impose their will on us. Such a method of fighting, and no other, is the natural corollary of the definition. Any other method of gaining liberty is a usurpation.

Indian Opinion, 8-1-1910

209. NATAL LICENCES REGULATIONS

We give in another column an abstract[2] of the regulations published under the Dealers' Licences Act. There is nothing new or striking in them, save that the fee of £12.10.0 to be deposited by appellants is still retained. We have already expressed the opinion that this fee is an illegal charge, and that the appellants are not bound to deposit the amount. The regulations show clearly that the intention is to make it more and more difficult for Indian traders to get new licences. That even a hawker, if he wants a new licence, should have to go through the farce of advertising in the papers and go through an intricate ceremony before he can labour away in order to earn an honest livelihood is, to say the least, a cruel procedure, and tantamount to putting a premium on dishonesty and laziness.

Indian Opinion, 8-1-1910

[1] The original has "activity".
[2] Not reproduced here

210. THE TRANSVAAL RAILWAY REGULATIONS

We publish an abstract[1] of further correspondence between the General Manager of the C. S. A. R.[2] and the Chairman of the British Indian Association, Johannesburg. We trust that the conciliatory tone of the letter will not deceive the Indians in the Transvaal into inaction. We welcome, therefore, Mr. Cachalia's reply[3] to the General Manager, that the fact that the same facilities for travelling will still be afforded to the Indian public means nothing so far as the Association is concerned, because its duty is rather to have the principles recognised and established than details in administration examined or challenged, important as the matter may be. The main and only point at issue is that, whereas the regulations, before they were gazetted, were simply in the nature of departmental instructions and had not the force of law, they are today part of the laws of the Colony, and, as they lay down the principle of legal inequality, it is the duty of the Indian community of the Transvaal to combat the evil with all its might. Separate accommodation on the Railways and kindred matters cannot be a subject of legislation, but can only be regulated by the good sense of the communities concerned and by voluntary co-operation. Immediately that state of things is changed, it becomes a usurpation of authority, which should be resisted by all lawful means. We use the term "lawful" in the sense well known to the readers of this journal, passive resistance, in our opinion, being a strictly lawful method of seeking redress.

Indian Opinion, 8-1-1910

211. DUTY OF HAWKERS

We address this specially to the hawkers of the Transvaal. Because of their courage, the campaign has created so fine an impression. It is because hundreds of them went to gaol that it has come to be recognized as a great movement. Questions of self-respect or honour, it was thought so far, could have little meaning for hawkers. Now, everyone admits that hawkers do care for self-respect,

[1] Not reproduced here
[2] Central South African Railways
[3] *Vide* "Letter to General Manager, C.S.A.R.", 4-1-1910

and they have risen in the esteem of others. Their presence at meetings does them credit. Having done so much, it will be unworthy of them to give in now.

The Transvaal campaign is such that everyone must rely on his own strength. We cannot depend on others to win it for us. In this struggle, we must learn to solve our own problems. If, therefore, the hawkers show themselves defeated this time, it will be impossible for them to obtain redress of any grievances in future.

It is for the hawkers to ensure an early conclusion to this struggle, and they can do so at no great cost to themselves. They should, for the present, avoid taking out hawking licences, and get themselves arrested by trading without them. This they can do quite easily. If the Government has discovered that the hawkers' resistance has collapsed, The hawkers on their part can show to the Government that, though fallen, they can rise again. In this matter, one must not depend on what others do, but each one can put in an effort on his own.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-1-1910

212. INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS AND MUSLIMS

We gave last week translations of Reuter's cables[1] about the Indian [National] Congress. The discussion at the Congress on Lord Morley's Act has made us sorry. The Congress has expressed the view that the special rights which Lord Morley has granted to the Muslims have displeased the Hindus and widened the rift between the Hindus and the Muslims. It is rather risky to comment on the basis of cable reports. It would not be surprising if those who wish to divide the two communities send one-sided reports; all the same, it will not be wrong if we proceed to discuss the matter on the assumption that the Reuter reports are correct.

The first error that we notice is the assumption that Lord Morley's legislation can embitter the relations between the two

[1] According to the cable-report reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 1-1-1910, the President, in the course of his address, said that the grant of excessive representation to the Mahomedans on the new Provincial Councils had caused, as it was intended to cause, an estrangement between the Hindus and the Mahomedans which could not be healed for years to come.

communities. There is no reason why their relations should be embittered because of any laws that Lord Morley may choose to pass.

Let us suppose, however, that the Muslims have received more rights than what were due to them. What does it matter, even if it is so? There is no need to protest to Lord Morley on this account. Even if the Muslims get more than their share, it is to members of our family that we are losing. The Hindus have no reason to get into a panic at this. So long as we believe that a third party can arbitrate between these two great communities, we shall always remain in subjection. The appointment of more Muslims or more Hindus on the Council is no cause for lamentation. We think, there is only one way of removing mutual suspicions, and that is for the Hindus to give in since they are numerically in a majority and educationally more advanced. If they do, it is obvious enough that there will be no cause at any time for a quarrel.

Finally, by such a discussion the Congress has given more importance than necessary to Lord Morley's Council. There is no justification for doing so. The Council is not going to work a miracle for Indians. We shall profit by this Council or any other Councils only when we cultivate mutual trust and solve our problems ourselves instead of complaining to a third party.

Having said this, we should also like to tell our Muslim brethren that they need not be angry with the Congress. It belongs to the Muslims as well as the Hindus. It belongs to every Indian. If the Hindus take up an unreasonable stand at its sessions, the Muslims can criticize them, and *vice versa*. No one can say that the Congress is the exclusive organisation of a particular community.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-1-1910

213. APPOINTMENT OF INDIAN ON EAST AFRICA COUNCIL

We reported last week the honour conferred on Mr. A. M. Jivanji[1]. He has been appointed a member of the Legislative Council of East Africa. We are glad to see that our East African brethren's right in this regard has been recognized. Indians are partners in the

[1] A well-known merchant of Karachi and Bombay

British Empire; this fact is being recognized in East Africa and elsewhere. Only the whites of South Africa do not admit it. The appointment of an Indian in a part of Africa itself should serve as an example to them. It should also make the Indians of South Africa and the Transvaal more acutely conscious of their own position. Our countrymen in East Africa have excellent means of safeguarding their rights and increasing their prosperity and they are sure to take advantage of these means. We congratulate Mr. Jivanji, the Bohra community to which he belongs, and the Indians of East Africa on having received this valuable privilege.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 8-1-1910

214. THE TRANSVAAL RAILWAY REGULATIONS

The community should not be misled by the [General] Manager's reply[1] to Mr. Cachalia on this subject. That the Regulations will not be enforced for the present is no consolation to us. What interest can a Government have in regulations which it does not intend to enforce? Mr. Cachalia has sent a reply[2]; we have to await the result. This is a matter which we certainly cannot afford to drop. We must put up a fight wherever new discriminatory measures are taken against Indians.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 8-1-1910

215. DELAGOA BAY INDIANS

The Delagoa Bay journal, *Guardian*, reports a move to introduce immigration legislation there similar to that in Natal. If Delagoa Bay copies Natal, we can be sure that the copy will be worse than the original. In other words, the law that will be passed there will

[1] The Regulations, the reply dated 30-12-1909 reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 8-1-1910, stated, "are in no sense new nor are they different in any way to those which have been in force since 1905", and they had to be promulgated "in order to comply with Section 4 of the Railways Regulation Act of 1908". An assurance was given at the same time that "the spirit of the Regulations will be observed in future as in the past".

[2] *Vide* "Letter to General Manager, C.S.A.R.", 4-1-1910

prove much worse than the Natal law. We hope the Delagoa Bay Indians will start taking steps this very day. If they mean business, they can do very effective work, for if, on the one hand, conditions there are somewhat chaotic, on the other, it is also easy to win over the Government. It bears no particular ill-will towards Indians.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 8-1-1910

216 NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

The Natal Government has recently passed a University Act. One of its sections[1] empowers the College authorities to refuse admission at discretion. This will bear hard on Indians and therefore the Natal Indian Congress has addressed a petition to Lord Crewe, Secretary of State for the Colonies.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 8-1-1910

217. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

January 12, 1910

MY DEAR WEST,

I have often wished to write a personal letter but I have not been able to.

How are you feeling now in body, mind and soul? Are you more at ease than before? How is the home atmosphere? Does the new arrangement satisfy Mrs. West? Is Devi[2] now at peace? How are the other people in the settlement?

For me, I am going through many a battle. Circumstances surrounding me just now are not at all congenial. But I think that my mind is at peace. My mind as you know is extremely active—never at rest. I am now trying bold experiments. Ethics of hawking[3] only

[1] Section 20, which laid down that "the Council shall have the right to refuse admittance to any applicant, should they consider it to be in the interest of the University"

[2] West's sister, who had adopted this Indian name

[3] The reference is to the article with this heading; *vide* "Ethics of Hawking", 15-1-1910.

foreshadows what is coming in my life. The more I observe, the greater is the dissatisfaction with the modern life. I see nothing good in it. Men are good. But they are poor victims making themselves miserable under the false belief that they are doing good. I am aware that there is a fallacy underneath this. I who claim to examine what is around me may be a deluded fool. This risk all of us have to take. The fact is that we are all bound to do what we feel is right. And with me I feel that the modern life is *not* right. The greater the conviction, the bolder my experiments.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I am disturbed whilst I am writing this. The above however is enough for the time being.

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4413

Courtesy: A. W. West

218. THE ROYEPPEN BANQUET

The banquet given[1] to Messrs Royeppen and his companions was more than of passing importance. That nearly forty responsible European men and women were present at the banquet to welcome the passive resisters is in itself an event of great significance. The speeches of Mr. Hosken and the Hon. Mr. Drew[2] were eloquent and sincere. Both were hopeful of a settlement in the near future. Nearly one hundred Indians sat at the festive table and these represented every class and section. All this shows that passive resisters are not dead but that they are very much "alive". Mr. Cachalia, whose speech is fully reported in our Gujarati columns, reminded Generals Botha and Smuts that if the passive resisters do not now number as many as before, it was the same thing with the Boers during the late War and that peace came when the Boer ranks were thinned to a dangerous point. The whole of Mr. Cachalia's speech was characteristic of the man. It breathed hope, strength and invincible determination to see the fight through.

Mr. Joseph Royeppen's speech was brief and to the point. He

[1] On January 7, 1910

[2] Editor of *The Friend* of Bloemfontein and M. P. in Orange River Colony; *vide* "Hosken's Meeting", "Hosken's Meeting", 15-1-1910.

was in the Transvaal to do his duty and he hoped to be able to do it.

The function was a notable success and we congratulate the organisers on their work.

Indian Opinion, 15-1-1910

219. ETHICS OF HAWKING

Messrs Samuel Joseph, David Andrew and Manilal Gandhi, the new recruits who have gone to the Transvaal to join the struggle, have now for some time been going about as fruit or vegetable hawkers. We understand that Mr. Royeppen will presently follow his companions. This hawking is by no means fancy hawking. It has been undertaken in right earnest and in the spirit of *bona fide* hawkers. These young men go from house to house and try to sell their fruit or vegetables, as the case may be, at a small profit which goes to swell the passive resistance funds.

It is necessary to examine the reasons which have induced them to take up hawking. When Mr. Essop Mia and Imam Abdul Kadir Bawazeertook to it eighteen months ago, they did so purely to court imprisonment and set an example to the other hawkers. This motive must always be with passive resisters in the Transvaal. But it is not all in the present case. The majority of free Indians throughout South Africa are either hawkers or petty traders. Now, passive resistance is not a weapon merely to defend others but it is a weapon to use for self-defence also. It is a weapon that can be used independently of anybody else and by one individual as effectively as by many. This power flows from the very nature of passive resistance. The force wielded by the soul within is the mightiest among the mighty forces of nature. Physical force is wrongly considered to be used to protect the weak. As a matter of fact, it still further weakens the weak; it makes them dependent upon their so-called defenders or protectors. Soul-force strengthens those on whose behalf it is exerted as well as those who exert it. The Transvaal struggle is intended to teach the majority of Indians the use of this magnificent force so as to make them truly independent men. If passive resistance had been initiated by the hawkers instead of the merchants, the former would today occupy a unique position. As it is, many of them, being cowed down, are no longer in the struggle. This deplorable result is due to a want of real leaders among the hawkers themselves. They would far sooner

listen to and understand one from among themselves than one who may be considered above them. In order to rectify this defect in the wonderful campaign that is now going on in the Transvaal, schoolmasters and clerks are turning their attention to hawking. Moreover, the Government probably intend to starve the new recruits out of the Transvaal. They reply by hawking in order to earn their livelihood in that Colony.

Nor is this all. It is at least debatable whether the profession of a clerk or book-keeper is better or more respectable than that of a hawker. A hawker is an independent man. He has opportunity of studying human nature which a clerk slaving away for a few pounds per month can never have. A hawker is master of his own time. A clerk has practically no time he can call his own. A hawker, if he chooses, has opportunity for expansion of his intellect which a clerk cannot dream of. And what applies to the clerk applies more or less even to schoolmasters who teach for a living and not for the sake of it; and it applies certainly to the legal profession which is beset with temptations which an ordinary man would do well to avoid. These young men, then, can do a great deal to purge the profession of hawking of its grossness and raise it to a higher level. The hawkers are only waiting for one to rise among themselves who would lead the way to a better and purer life. And just as they set a noble example to the professional hawkers, so they do to the clerks and schoolmasters, and, shall we say, lawyers and doctors who are weary of their vocations and who, if they could only see the way, would leave the drudgery of the desks that grinds them body and soul.

Last but not least, it seems to us that, after all, nature has intended man to earn his bread by manual labour—"by the sweat of his brow" —and intended him to dedicate his intellect not towards multiplying his material wants and surrounding himself with enervating and soul-destroying luxuries, but towards uplifting his moral being—towards knowing the will of the Creator—towards serving humanity and thus truly serving himself. If so, the profession of hawking, or, better still, simple agriculture or such other calling, must be the highest method of earning one's livelihood. And do not the millions do so? No doubt many follow nature unconsciously. It remains for those who are endowed with more than the ordinary measure of intellect to copy the millions consciously and use their intellect for uplifting their fellow-labourers. No longer will it then be

possible for the intellectuals in their conceit to look down upon the "hewers of wood and drawers of water". For, of such is the world made.

We, therefore, congratulate our young friends on their laudable work and hope that even after the struggle is over, they will continue to labour with their hands and feet, so far as their maintenance is concerned, and devote their talent to the service of their country both of birth and origin.

Indian Opinion, 15-1-1910

220. HOSKEN'S MEETING

We publish elsewhere a report of the dinner-party[1] in honour of Mr. Joseph Royeppen and others. It would have been impossible to arrange such a function if they had thought of it three years ago. About 40 Europeans were present, most of them prominent figures. The speeches of Mr. Hosken and Mr. Drew, Editor of *The Transvaal Leader* and member of the Orange Free State Council, were noteworthy. The party was attended by prominent clergymen. Everyone's sympathy was for satyagraha. It is a matter of great satisfaction that so many whites showed the courage to sit for dinner at the same table with Indians. We do not want to suggest that something can be done only if whites mix with us, but the fact that so many whites joined the party when a campaign is on against the Transvaal Government should certainly give us some satisfaction. This is a happy augury. We can realize from it that the struggle is about to come to an early end. But even if that does not appear likely, it is beyond question that the whites' sympathy for us is on the increase. All that now remains for the Indian community to do is to wake up again and for the hawkers to do their duty.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-1-1910

221. NATAL'S IMMIGRATION LAW

Lawlessness prevails in the enforcement of this law. Mr. Smith's[2]

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Dinner to Joseph Royeppen and Others", 7-1-1910

[2] Harry Smith, Principal Immigration Restriction Officer

ways are autocratic. Of course, his autocracy needs to be fought; but we must also examine the lawlessness that prevails among us. What tyranny do we not inflict on ourselves? Mr. Smith says[1] that boys come in dressed as women, others, sons take shelter under borrowed parents and women under borrowed husbands. We are of the view that the immigration tyranny can be fought in two ways. While the Government's autocratic methods must be opposed on every occasion, Indians trying to bring in persons surreptitiously must also be opposed likewise. We should admit that we ourselves are evidently the cause of so many of the laws passed against us. They should not be attributed solely to colour prejudice. So long as we do not realize our own fault, we shall not find the right remedy.

It is, moreover, our advice that it is better to adopt the satyagraha way of fighting than fight in courts with lawyers' help. The immigration law, too, can be fought that way.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 15-1-1910

222. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Thursday, January 20, 1910

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Received both your letters. I am not likely to go there for the present. Manilal has been arrested[2]; he will be released on Friday. Let us see what happens after that. I think it is better for me not to go there so long as arrests continue here.

It will be all right if, as you suggest, you arrange for physical exercise, etc., for Rama[3]. I did not rebuke you in connection with Mr. Cordes; it seems there was some misunderstanding on your part. And my impression remains the same despite your letter. I had never thought of Rama staying either with him or with Willie[4] for the whole day. During the day when he is not busy, let him go wherever he pleases. I wish he dines and sleeps with Mr. Cordes. I cannot think that

[1] In reply to a statement of the Indians' grievances which *The Natal Mercury* had forwarded to Smith for his observations. The statement and the reply appeared together in the same issue.

[2] On 14-1-1910

[3] Ramdas, third son of Gandhiji

[4] Cordes's son

Mr. Cordes has no love for Ramdas. I know Mr. Cordes' drawbacks; none of us are without any.

If you do not know the verse ख्यात शत्रो भगांगो[1], I shall send it to you. The sun has spots. Take it that his heart is not wicked. The rest will follow automatically.

There is still a lot of old history concerning our family. Parmanandbhai[2] alone knows it in detail.

It is worthwhile to spare time, if possible, from the press work for the children to take exercise.

It is desirable not to give more than a month's credit for *Indian Opinion*. You should only take a limited risk. Let the amount be debited to your account. It will not be deducted from your current allowance. You should never take liability for more than ten subscribers. Even that is perhaps too much. However, whatever liability you have taken upon yourself in the Cape Colony is binding on all, as you did not know the new rule. The new rule is, I believe, very good—at least for the present.

We will have to carry many [fresh] burdens; it is, therefore, better to cut down these. This [not allowing too much credit] seems to be the prevalent practice of newspapers. As people gradually get used to it, they will follow it of their own accord. We pay the licence fee in advance because of compulsion, i.e., physical force. That we shall take the subscriptions in advance will be on the strength of soul-force. That soul-force consists in making *Indian Opinion* interesting and for that the only course open to us is to put in maximum effort. The subscriptions will then come in automatically. I have no time now to dilate upon this.

There is a letter from Veerji in which he says that he intends to open an office in Durban and work there. It will be good to entrust work to him. I am writing a letter[3] to Mr. West. Did you read my last. letter to him?[4]

Please consider fully before you take the new vow of *brahmacharya*. It will be better to get Santok's consent. Kavi[5] has

[1] Hkxkadks(*vide* footnote 2 to "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 27-1-1910

[2] Parmananddas Ratanji Gandhi, Gandhiji's cousin

[3] Not available

[4] The reference is perhaps to "Letter to A. H. West", 12-1-1910

[5] Shrimad Rajchandra; *vide* "Guide to London", [1893-94].

mentioned in his writings a number of conditions for the observance of *brahmacharya* which are worth considering. This is one of the most difficult vows. Even Lord Shiva strayed from the path; so we can succeed only if we are unremittingly mindful of it. But when I think of a married man practising abstinence in regard to his wife, when I think of my own case in particular, I am bewildered. In this connection, my fate has been [singularly favourable][1]. I was saved because I had to endure compulsory separation from Ba. Had we lived together all along since 1900, I can hardly say I would have been saved. I wish you to get all the benefit of my experience.

As I won't be going down there for the present, you may ask me whatever questions you want to.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Jayashankar Vyas's wife has passed away. All of you may please write a letter of condolence to him. I had Chi. Chhaganlal's letter to Mr. Polak in which he has raised the question of household expenditure. Let me know your requirements after the change we have made. What amount will you two brothers get out of the profit this time? According to Chi. Chhaganlal, your requirement will be Rs. 30 a month and Dr. Mehta has already agreed to pay that amount. But we want to take as little as possible from him. Please think this over and let me know. As I am not going there just now, I am dealing with this matter in a letter.

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 5182

223. RECENT DISCHARGES

The release of about twelve passive resisters in the Transvaal and reported in our columns this week has excited little interest either among the Europeans or the Indians. Two years ago, such an event would have given rise to a demonstration among the Asiatics and created some interest among the Europeans. Imprisonments for conscience' sake and discharges have become common occurrences among the Asiatics. This is a very great gain. We want virtue and

[1] The Photostat is not quite clear here.

courage to be such common things among our countrymen as to occasion no surprise when they are practised. Among the discharged Indians is Mr. Aswat, sometime acting Chairman of the British Indian Association. Mr. Aswat, it will be remembered, was prepared to sacrifice all his goods rather than surrender his self-respect. Most of the resisters are well-tried fighters and have been imprisoned more than once. We congratulate them all on their bravery, and we note with satisfaction that they are ready to go to gaol again as soon as the Government will send them.

Indian Opinion, 22-1-1910

224. SHORTCOMINGS OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION

We saw in *Hind Swaraj*[1] that it is not so much from British rule that we have to save ourselves as from Western civilization. Clearly, if Englishmen settle down in India as Indians, they will cease to be foreigners. If they cannot bring themselves to do so, it will be our duty to create conditions in which it will be impossible for them to stay on.

The writings of Englishmen themselves often tell us how wicked Western civilization is. There was a storm of protest in England against the alleged high-handedness of the Spanish authorities when Ferrer[2] was put to death. The letter in the *Daily News* of October 22 which the famous author, Mr. G. K. Chesterton, wrote, pointing out that this was sheer hypocrisy on their part, will bear summarizing even today. Mr. Chesterton says:[3]

> We have been hysterically protesting against what Spain has done, but that is so much hypocrisy and nothing else. It is out of our pride that we take up such an attitude. In fact, we are just as bad as Spain, in certain respects much worse. We have no political executions in England because we have no political rebellions in our country and not because we are a religious people. Wherever we do have rebellions, there we do have executions, much more mean, reckless and savage than the execution of Ferrer. The hanging of the Fenians at Manchester

[1] *Vide* "*Hind Swaraj*"

[2] *Vide* "London", Before 23-10-1909 he worked to spread education among the people of Spain.

[3] The translation given here has been collated with the original.

has been admitted by all lawyers to have been in contempt of logic and law. The killing of Scheepers in South Africa is a thing of which even the Imperialists are now ashamed. A few harmless peasants at Denshawai[1] objected to the looting of their property; they were tortured and hanged. When our rulers react with such brutality and baseness to small and ineffectual local risings, how would they behave if confronted with a rising in London itself similar to the one in Spain? We are at peace, not because we do not exploit religion but because we have sunk silently under the domination of our rulers.[2] If we have no rebellions, we are guilty of crimes worse than the death of Ferrer.[3] A private soldier the other day committed[4] suicide in order to avoid a flogging. This suicide is more hideous than the execution of Ferrer under the pressure of strong emotions in a time of excitement. Yet the incident attracted no attention in England, because we are the one people in Europe who are successfully oppressed.

In view of such shortcomings in the civilization of this people which dazzles us so much, we had better consider whether we should tolerate it in India or banish it while we have still time to do so. It is a civilization which grinds down the masses and in which a few men capture power in the name of the people and abuse it. The people are deceived because it is under cover of their name that these men act.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-1-1910

[1] In Egypt, where four Egyptian peasants were executed for the murder of a British officer

[2] The original has: "not because we have thrown off the domination of the priesthood", and "because we have sunk . . . under the domination of the plutocracy".

[3] The original has: "Things far more fundamentally horrible than the death of Ferrer go on quite quietly all the time, because we have forgotten the trick of mutiny."

[4] The original has: "tried to commit suicide".

225. LETTER TO GENERAL MANAGER, C. S. A. R.[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
January 25, 1910

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st instant, and you have given me the privilege again of being able to tender my thanks for the courteous tone of your letter and your full reply. This fact embarrasses me in having to express dissatisfaction with the result of our correspondence[2].

The Committee of my Association accept the situation that the Administration has been compelled to make regulations with respect to practically the whole of the conditions hiterto printed in the Joint Tariff Book. My Committee thankfully accept your assurance that there is no desire on the part of the Railway Board to embitter the feeling in regardto the Asiatic struggle, and that the facilities that have hitherto been afforded to the community represented by my Association for travelling by the fast trains will be retained.

Your sympathetic attitude emboldens me to suggest that the Resolutions may be revised by the Board, and that they may be so framed as to remove the stigma that they undoubtedly put upon the Asiatic communities. My Association will be prepared to co-operate with the Board in the framing of regulations acceptable to the Asiatic sentiment, and with the Administration in their proper carrying out. In my humble opinion, the difficulty will be met, if the Administration receives power to separate classes or races and to reserve compartments for them for reasons that to the Administration may seem sufficient. It will be admitted that a regulation of such a general nature will arm the Administration with sufficient powers to deal with any case, without giving the Asiatic and other Coloured communities to understand that the Railway Regulations are based on the theory that Coloured passengers are not entitled to travel first or second class, and that such travelling on their part is allowed only by way of

[1] Presumably drafted by Gandhiji

[2] *Vide* "Substance of Letter to Colonial Secretary", 23-12-1909 and "Letter to General Manager, C.S.A.R.", 4-1-1910; *Indian Opinion*, 8-1-1910 and 29-1-1910, for letters from the General Manager, C.S.A.R., to the British Indian Association; also "The Transvaal Railway Regulations", 8-1-1910

sufferance. I am sure that that is not the intention of the Railway Board, and that the intention is merely to meet the unfortunate prejudice that exists in the Colony and, therefore, to provide separate accommodation. This intention is entirely carried out by the suggestion I have ventured to make.

I have, etc.,

A. M. KACHALIA[1]

CHAIRMAN,

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 29-1-1910

226. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO GENERAL MANAGER, C.S.A.R.

[After *January 25, 1910*]

Mr. Osman Latief of Potchefstroom was travelling from that Station, together with five other British Indians, four of whom were bound for Delagoa Bay. They were given the ordinary half second class compartment on the train, which hardly accommodates four passengers. The Delagoa passengers had their luggage also with them. Mr. Osman Latief asked the guard or the conductor No. 11 for further accommodation, but the guard or the conductor failed to find any. Mr. Latief pointed out that there were several compartments, in which room could be found for them, but the conductor gave no heed and Mr. Latief had to stand. At Krugersdorp, however, the conductor pointed out another compartment. Mr. Latief declined to avail himself of it, telling him that he would bring the matter to your notice.

Indian Opinion, 29-1-1910

[1] Same as "Cachalia"

[2] This extract from the letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji and sent over the signature of A. M. Cachalia, was quoted in "Transvaal Notes" in *Indian Opinion*, 29-1-1910.

227. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Thursday [*January 27, 1910*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Received your letter. I understand what you say about Mr. Cordes. I also admit that you can see his drawbacks better. But what I want to say is that he is a good man despite those drawbacks. You should think of his merits only. More of this when we meet.

ख्यात: शक्रो भगालको विघुरपि मलिनो माधवी गोपजातो |

वेश्यापुत्रो वसीष्ठो सरूजमदमय: सर्वभक्ष्यो हुताशन: ||

व्यासो मत्स्योदरीय: सलवण उदधी पाण्डवा जारजाता: |[2]

I had written to you about this verse. I do not remember the fourth line. There are likely to be some spelling mistakes. I have no time to recollect it. Indra is marked with holes all over his body;[3] Vidura is impure; Madhava[4] is a cowherd; Vasishtha is the son of a prostitute;[5] the bee lives in the mud;[6] fire is omnivorous; the ocean is

[1] From the contents, this appears to have been written on the Thursday following the "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 20-1-1910

[2] The correct and full text of the verse according to the *Subha-shitarainabhandagaram* is as follows:

ख्यात: शक्रो भगालको विघुरपि मलिनो माधवी गोपजाता |

वेश्यापुत्रो वसिष्ठो रतिपतिरतनु: सर्वभक्ष्यो हुताशन ||

व्यासो मत्स्योदरीय: सलवण उदधी पाण्डवा जारजाता: |

रूद्र प्रेतस्विधारी त्रिभुवनविषये कस्य दोषी न चास्ति

Indra is known to be covered with holes all over the body; even the moon has spots; Madhava was born of a cowherd; Vasishtha was the son of a prostitute; the god of love is bodiless; fire is omnivorous; Vyasa was the son of a fisher-girl; the ocean is full of salt; the Pandavas were born of illegitimate unions; Rudra wears the bones of dead bodies—is there anyone in the three worlds who is without blemish?

[3] Shakra, i.e., Indra, King of the gods, enamoured of Ahalya, wife of the seer Gautama, approached her one day in the guise of Gautama when the latter was away. Ahalya yielded. On finding this out, Gautama cursed Indra, "There shall be a thousand holes on your body."

[4] Lord Krishna

[5] Vasishtha was born to Urvashi, one of the celestial nymphs who were free to accept love from whomsoever they chose.

[6] The correct reading is jfrifrjruq% i.e., the God of love is bodiless. He was burnt to ashes by Lord Shiva with the fire emitted from his third eye when the former tried to distract him from his penance. Gandhiji mentions *bhamro* (bee) instead of *kamal* (lotus).

salty; the Pandavas[1] belong to the caste of bastards.[2] Thus, no one is without blemish. You have done well in letting me know your views.

Please be careful in giving instructions about allowing credit for *Indian Opinion*. We can find some remedy for the difficulties you mention. The best course I can see for the present is that when some subscriber has to be discontinued in view of [our new] rule, it should be done in consultation with Purshottamdas, Thaker and you. A subscriber may be placed on the 'suspense list' if he is found to be worth continuing after a month. You may open a separate account for the suspense list. Please place this suggestion before Mr. Cordes. It is better to put all the names sent by Chi. Chhaganlal on this list.

The introduction of the rule of allowing one month's credit could be physical force (selfishness) as well as soul-force (altruism). To which of the two categories it belongs depends on the motive behind making the rule.

Your idea of not taking anything from charity is very good. In fact, it is not charity. It would, however, be proper for us to regard it as such. But we had better not raise the question under the present circumstances. Do see that the amount you have indicated gets credited.

It is good for you, for the present, to draw £4 [a month]. I had thought of it when I took the decision. I had also taken into consideration Chi. Chhaganlal's prospective visit to England. I had thought about Rajkot, too.

I rejoice to read about your *brahmacharya* vow. Your vow for one year is also good and you have all my blessings for it. You will experience a different strength when you have passed through it.

It is better for Santok not to think of going to India now. I have already communicated to you my views about it.

I felt sad when I read Chi. Chhaganlal's description of the Servants of India Society[3]. It is a matter for regret that a great man like Prof. Gokhale is engrossed in it. I believe he will come out of it, for he is honest. It is simply an indifferent imitation of the West. Is it

[1] The five sons of Pandu and heroes of the Mahabharata

[2] King Pandu, unable to beget progeny himself because of the curse of a Rishi, asked his wives Kunti and Madri to have progeny by invoking the gods. Thereupon, Kunti had Yudhishthira through Yama, Bhima through Vayu and Arjuna through Indra, while Madri had Nakula and Sahadeva by the grace of the Ashvini Kumaras.

[3] Founded in Poona by G. K. Gokhale in 1905

proper for the servants to have servants? And who are the servants? Why was it necessary to engage them? Why do they have others to cook for them? What do these 'servants' think of religion? Why should there be large buildings in India? Why should not huts be enough? It is like digging up a mountain to kill a mouse. When will the mission undertaken by Prof. Gokhale end? How much money will it cost? What a superstition that only an M.A. or B.A. could become a 'servant' ! It is like the castor-oil plant passing for a mighty tree in a barren land. I do feel that the aims of Phoenix as well as the way of life there surpass those of the Society. There are quarrels amongst us but these are found everywhere. When we begin to make syrup out of sugar, a lot of dirt is seen in it, but we do not regard dirt as syrup. We are preparing here a kind of syrup and dirt is bound to be seen till the syrup is ready. What we are doing here is the real thing, what goes on in Poona is, leaving aside the motive, unreal. The motive is good, but what is being done is bad. I have written this letter in the midst of great pressure of work. The condition of my mind at present is that of ^usfr usfr*[1] . Even Phoenix is ^usfr*. Yet, comparatively, it is better than the pomp and show of Poona. Doctor Mehta has been able to grasp this inner significance. Please do not take this to mean that either Prof. Gokhale or his associates are not worthy of our deep respect. But ours is no blind reverence. According to the standard indicated by me in *Swaraj*[2], the work of Mr. Gokhale's 'servants' cannot be regarded as proper. It is likely to add to our slavery. If I tried to turn East into West, I also would sigh like Gokhale and lose heart. My present state of mind is such that even if the whole world were against what I have written, I would not be depressed. This I say not out of pride; it is the statement of a fact. We do not aspire to improve India; we want to improve ourselves. That alone can be our aspiration, the rest is all false. He who has not realized his self has not known anything. The servants, knowledge of English has become a camouflage for them. That Chhaganlal could not answer their question about Phoenix only shows his timidity. That was but natural. With a little thought, he could have seen that the position taken by the 'servants' was materialistic and not spiritual. We have to rid ourselves of the fetish of literacy and mundane knowledge.

[1] "Not this, not this" According to *Vedanta, Brahman*, the Absolute, is beyond all concepts and forms.

[2] *Vide* "*Hind Swaraj*"

Despite these views of mine, there is nothing wrong in publishing in *Indian Opinion* some portion of the description given by Chhaganlal.[1] We shall learn from it. Let us emulate Ravana's energy[2] and turn towards the inner spirit.

You may share this letter with whomsoever you choose in Phoenix; then send it to Chi. Chhaganlal, as I shall have no time to write to him. I wanted to leave on this Saturday but now I see that it is not possible. I do not think I shall be able to leave before the 15th of February.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 4926
Courtesy: Radhabehn Chowdhri

228. EXTRACT FROM LETTER[3]

[*January 28, 1910*][4]

Mr. Rustomjee still remains without the food that was medically prescribed for him at Volksrust, and continues to send messages that his complaints on the subject of his health do not receive attention. Mr. Gopal Naidoo, who was discharged today, tells us that he made a long complaint to the medical officer yesterday, whereupon he was transferred to Johannesburg. I shall be inquiring on Monday where he is being kept. Messrs Thambi Naidoo, Aswat and others, some of them heroes in the struggle, are now discharged. I have had a long interview[5] with the editor of *The Star*; he was entirely sympathetic, and told me that everybody in Johannesburg was heartily sick of the struggle, and was anxious to see it closed. Manilal Gandhi was

[1] This was published in the Gujarati section of *Indian Opinion*, 5-2-1910 and 12-2-1910, under the heading, "Servants of India Society—Examples of Self-sacrifice".

[2] The demon-king who kidnapped Sita and carried her away to his kingdom in Lanka (Ceylon). He was killed by Rama. Ravana was well-versed in Vedic lore and had performed great penance to propitiate Shiva.

[3] This was reproduced in *India* under the caption, "Quotations from the Latest Letter Received in London from Mr. Gandhi".

[4] Gopal Naidoo and Manilal Gandhi were discharged from the gaol on January 28, 1910.

[5] Report not available

discharged today, after doing ten days' hard labour. The discharged prisoners continued to complain about the absence of ghee and the insufficiency of rations, in spite of the fact that the Government have added 2 ozs. of beans. All the prisoners have lost in weight. Messrs V. S. Pillay, S. N. Naidoo and Shah[1] were discharged today. Mr. Shah, however, was detained for deportation. I was at the gaol, but was not allowed to see him, nor was he allowed to receive any food. The gaol experience has pulled him down considerably. He was supposed to walk from Diepkloof to Johannesburg, a distance of seven miles, with his bundle. Fortunately, the detective allowed Mr. Shah to use a conveyance which I offered, but, had he been obliged to walk, he would have fainted on the road. His deportation, I feel sure, is totally illegal, he having been voluntarily registered. The Registrar's office has all the identification particulars, and the Registrar could certainly have assured himself whether Mr. Shah was registered or not. This is an illustration of how officials can either place difficulties in the way of the pubic or remove them. Mr. Joseph Royeppen, B.A., LL.B. (Cantab.), a barrister-at-law of Lincoln's Inn, and a native of South Africa, who returned a few months ago, has just been arrested for not having registered and has been ordered for deportation.

India, 18-2-1910

229. MR. NANALAL SHAH'S SERVICES

Though passive resistance is now confined to a few Asiatics only, the dogged tenacity that the few, whether Chinese or Indians, are showing is most admirable. The struggle is producing true men. We single out Mr. Nanalal Shah from among the resisters who have been recently discharged. Only Messrs Rustomjee and Shah have been privileged to serve nearly a year each without a break. This imprisonment is not a simple matter. They are partially starved. Almost all have lost weight and become much reduced. The food given at the gaol undermines the prisoners' constitutions, especially when they have to go through the course, like Mr. Shah, for a prolonged period.

Mr. Shah, it will be remembered, is an undergraduate of the Bombay University. He is middle-aged and completely grey-headed,

[1] Nanalal V. Shah, *vide* the following item.

having become prematurely old, owing to life's disappointments. It was when the Chairman of the Association was twitting educated Indians about their apathy that Mr. Shah borrowed enough money for his train-fare to Natal and quietly stole away from the Transvaal, only to re-cross and be re-arrested immediately. Since then Mr. Shah has known no rest. And now he bids fair to be imprisoned again for another term of six months. Mr. Shah's body may be broken, but his spirit never will. His service consists in having dedicated such a spirit to the struggle.

Indian Opinion, 29-1-1910

230. TO PASSIVE RESISTERS

It has been suggested that a full list of active passive resisters should be published for the sake of the Indian public, for the sake of the English friends, and for the sake of the Government. As the list cannot be a very long one, it is felt that the resisters should know one another and, as occasion arises, court arrest. They cannot remain out of gaol with any profit to themselves, to the cause or to the country of their adoption. The struggle chiefly means the raising of men who will brave any danger for the sake of principle. We shall, therefore, be pleased to receive and publish the names of those who are prepared to fight unto death.

Indian Opinion, 29-1-1910

231. EDUCATED INDIANS

Mr. Royeppen went round hawking. He is a barrister. If a few days ago anyone had mentioned the possibility of a barrister going round hawking, he would have been laughed at. But satyagraha has made this possible. Mr. Royeppen's act is not only of benefit to himself but it is also a blessing to his family. Had he started practice, he would have earned something from the Indians. It is doubtful, though, whether he could have done it by honest means. It is not likely that he could have earned enough for a man of his professional status. In consequence, Mr. Royeppen would have sunk in debt, his relatives would have been sorely disappointed and in the end everyone would have suffered. Now, Mr. Royeppen will remain poor. If his

family members follow his example, they will be able to maintain themselves and live happily through manual labour.

Will any Indian follow Mr. Royeppen's example? It is difficult to say. Anyone who does so will also be happy. Educated Indians look upon illiterate Indians as so much prey for themselves and we find the latter helpless in this land. Wanting to save themselves from crafty, overbearing and wicked petty officers, they get into the clutches of educated Indians. The uneducated escape from the officers by paying them whatever they demand. If this is a correct picture, what is the duty of educated Indians? Our view of the matter is that they should maintain themselves by taking to the professions of the uneducated. They will by so doing, be of real help to them.[1] Then alone will they get a vivid idea of their sufferings and be able to maintain true honesty.

Let us turn to the educated Indians in the Transvaal. If they had joined the struggle in the right spirit, there would have been a different story to tell. The fight would have been over by now. But instead of doing that, they have gone in for luxuries, money and dissipation. As a result, the uneducated hawkers are beginning to give in and the fight is being prolonged. That the fight is drawing out is not in itself a matter for anxiety, but our hope that the end of the struggle will find the hawkers possessed of a new strength may be belied. If so, their plight will remain as abject as ever. That will deprive the struggle of its real interest.

There is time still. The educated can take to hawking in the manner of Mr. Royeppen. If they do so, they will have no difficulty in getting arrested, since people are now being arrested for hawking. Only, they must show courage. Will they?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-1-1910

[1] *Vide* "Ethics of Hawking", 15-1-1910.

232. JOHANNESBURG

WHITE TRADER'S MEANNESS

A white businessman's firm had stopped dealing with Indians when the satyagraha campaign started. Indian traders resolved thereupon that no one should have business transactions with him till such time as he apologized and paid a fine. It was also stated in the document relating to this resolution that, if any of the Indians who were signatories to the resolution traded with the white before the others did, he would have to pay a heavy fine. The white gentleman is now feeling the pinch. The thought of trade with Indians again tempted him. So he sent a message offering a private apology and a contribution to the funds for the struggle. While the businessmen were about to decide that a private apology should not be accepted, the white went back partly on his offer and sent word that he would only give £ 10 in cash on condition that his name was not disclosed. The Indian businessmen have declined the offer, showing little interest in trade with him. I hope our businessmen will not budge from the stand they have taken.

PARSEE RUSTOMJEE

Mr. Rustomjee having complained against the negligence of the gaol physician and protested to the Governor that he had been having pain in the side, he has been brought over to the Johannesburg Gaol and will be examined by another physician there. He has sent a message that he certainly intends to remain in the fight till the bitter end, whatever the state of his health. I want another fresh Indian, or one who might have beaten a retreat once, to imitate Mr. Rustomjee's spirit. Mr. Rustomjee will complete six months on February 10. He has conveyed his desire not to have too many people at the gaol-gate; he does not want any public reception. He wants to enter the town without any fuss.

ROYEPPEN'S DECISION

Before he was deported, Mr. Royeppen told me that he had decided to live always in poverty and maintain himself by physical labour. Excellent results are likely to follow from this decision if he remains firm in it.

Mr. Royeppen, Mr. David Andrew and Mr. Samuel Joseph were taken to Pretoria by the 12 o'clock train starting from Jeppe station. From there, they will very likely be sent over to Natal.

THAMBI NAIDOO

Mr. N. S. Padiachy, Mr. N. Gopal and Mr. N. S. Pillay were released on Saturday. An Indian of the worth of Mr. Naidoo was released but there was no letter or telegram of congratulations to him. No notice was taken of the release of an Indian of the status of Mr. Aswat. I regard this both as a good and a bad sign. I think we have grown used to the presence of such brave men. Courage and suffering in the service of the motherland no longer occasion surprise. It is a bad sign [however] because the community has failed in its duty of courtesy and does not even show sufficient interest in the satyagraha campaign.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 29-1-1910

233. JOHANNESBURG

[Before *Wednesday, February 2, 1910*]

ATTACK ON INDIAN TRADERS

The Sunday Times[1] has made a vigorous attack on Indian traders. The occasion was provided by news-reports of a movement against the Cape Indians. The article says that the Transvaal agitation is petering out, that the Indians have lost heart and that there is need for stricter legislation against them in the Union Parliament. The writer wants every Indian to be hounded out of South Africa. This move should serve as a serious warning to Indian traders. Most of them, and the hawkers after them, have capitulated and thereby brought down the axe on their own feet. They have lost interest in the struggle. The Government will conclude that they do notcount and so pass whatever laws it wants to. Once again, I warn the traders and the hawkers. If they want to pursue their vocations in peace, they must put forth all their strength. It will be more than enough if each of them goes to gaol even once.

We have no honesty left among us and so we want to gain our

[1] Of Johannesburg; *vide* "Indian Traders", 5-2-1910.

ends in dishonest ways. But it is quite obvious that such gains are in fact losses. However, tie habit dies hard; It will be good if they learn something from this great fight that is being carried on here.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 5-2-1910

234. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO GENERAL MANAGER, C.S.A.R.[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
February 2, 1910

He[2] was travelling from Vereeniging on Monday by the 5.30 a.m. train, which passes through Germiston. He was accompanied by Mr. M. Vaid, who is Manager at Messrs Suliman Ismail Mia & Co., of Avenue Road, Fordsburg. When they boarded the train, they noticed that two compartments were only partially occupied, but the guard would not let them take their seats in either of these, and they had to stand. There appeared to be no compartments labelled "reserved". They pleaded more than once with the guard, but he took no notice. It was after the train had left Germiston that the guard told them that they might occupy one of the compartments which had become entirely empty, so that it was only after the train had passed Germiston that they were able to get any seating accommodation.

Indian Opinion, 12-2-1910

235. THE AGA KHAN AND PASSIVE RESISTANCE

His Highness the Aga Khan, who presided at the annual session of the All-India Moslem League held at Delhi, has been speaking in strong terms of the treatment of the Indians in South Africa. His Highness has truly described the state as the Indian martyrdom in South Africa.[3] He has declared that, if all other remedies fail, the Imperial Government should be asked to stop indentured emigration from India to Natal. We are inclined to go further than His Highness and to say that it is the duty of the Imperial and the Indian

[1] Presumably drafted by Gandhiji and signed by A. M. Cachalia
[2] Ismail A. Mulla of Johannesburg, on whose report the letter is based
[3] Reuter's report of his speech was reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 5-2-1910.

Governments to stop such emigration in any case. Indeed, it is the duty of the Natal Government and, failing that, of the people of South Africa to wash their hands clean of this slavery-tainted labour. The importation is being kept up not for the people of Natal in general, but for the sake of a few monied men. If this polluted stream were stopped, we doubt not that the Indian question would largely solve itself. Meanwhile, we welcome the strong expression of opinion and sympathy from the All India Moslem League, whose importance not even General Smuts can safely ignore.

Indian Opinion, 5-2-1910

236. INDIAN TRADERS

There is among us a story about a lazy man. Once the house in which he lived caught fire. They tried hard to induce the indolent fellow to do something to put out the fire or flee from the house. He paid no heed and so was burnt to death.

That is the state [of mind] of the Indian trader; in fact, of every Indian in South Africa, but especially of the trader. The Cape newspapers are presently carrying on a campaign against the Indian traders. There is a clamour for measures against them through the Union Parliament which would finish them. The demand is supported by the *Advertiser* in Natal and the *Sunday Times* of Johannesburg. One of the newspapers[1] has published a remarkable contribution. We give [elsewhere] a literal translation of it. It is a malicious piece of writing. Comparing the Indian trader to the plague, a correspondent of the journal says that they should be rid of him as they would of the latter. According to its editor, this language is quite justified.

If the Indian traders, like the lazy man in the story, continue in their lethargy in spite of such attacks, they will be burnt to death by the flames of the whites, envy. The white traders will not rest. Indians who are already in possession of their licences should not remain under a false sense of security. Merely sending rejoinders to newspapers will serve little purpose, if not followed up by some action.

First, we must reform ourselves in regard to all those matters on which the report we have translated is right. We must stop bringing in men surreptitiously. Stores must be maintained clean. No one should

[1] *South African News*, 19-1-1910

sleep in rooms where goods are stored.

Even after these reforms are carried out, the whites' prejudice will remain. There is no way other than that of satyagraha to fight it. For satyagraha what is necessary at present is giving support to the Transvaal. The report which we have translated refers to the Cape Indians, but it applies to all. The Transvaal traders, therefore, most of whom have left off [satyagraha], ought to take a warning from this. If, out of selfishness and intoxication of wealth, they sacrifice the interests of the community, they will feel sorry for themselves later. Putting up with small losses now will save them from big losses in future. It will be better of one's own accord to sacrifice a little at present by joining satyagraha than to have to lose everything afterwards. Traders elsewhere may offer moral support and encouragement to those in the Transvaal. The whole of South Africa may help the Transvaal struggle. If they fail in this they will have cause for regret later. So long as there is a single Indian left to continue the fight, victory is certain. But the traders will derive no benefit therefrom, as it will be taken for granted that they are weak. The rulers of South Africa will fear the traders only when they are convinced of the latter's strength.

We invite every Indian trader to take careful note of these observations.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 5-2-1910

237. ARE INDIANS LIARS?

Our friend *The* [*Natal*] *Advertiser* will not give up its sting. While giving judgment in an Indian case, Magistrate Beans accused Indians of telling lies, and the *Advertiser* has commented[1] on this in a lengthy article. It is a contemptuous attack on Indians. We give a summary of this article elsewhere.[2] Mr. Beans has condemned us in his judgment and eulogized Mr. Smith. That is, of course, the way of the officers. They cannot but sing each other's praises. They do not care if the subjects are ruined in the process. They are only concerned with their pockets.

[1] In its issue dated 24-1-1910
[2] *Vide* "Asiatic Question in Natal", *Indian Opinion,* 5-2-1910.

All the same, we must learn our duty even from those who bear us ill-will. Mr. Beans's charge that we tell lies is not to be dismissed out of hand. We should pay heed to it, ignoring the element of exaggeration in it. We must admit that, when we go to courts of law, some of us are only concerned how to win the case at any cost, and not how truth may prevail. In any case it never does, so we think, in courts of law. But there are some in the Indian community who just do a little play acting and make the courts swallow any story that they choose. There is no doubt that this happens. It would be a great boon to the community if this habit disappeared. Before it can disappear from the community as a whole, the leaders must make a beginning. All the efforts of the community depend [for their successful outcome] on uprightness. We, therefore, urge our readers to ponder deeply over the *Advertiser*'s article. All of us say that God will protect those who follow truth.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 5-2-1910

238. PARIS HAVOC

Nature works unceasingly according to her laws, but man violates them constantly. In different ways and at different times, Nature tells man that there is nothing in the world which is not subject to change. It is hardly necessary to give illustrations. As Mr. Malabari[1] says in a poem of his: "They come but to leave." We sing in a *gazal*[2]: "How many fairy-like creatures there have been, graced with youth, how great the men who left." And yet every extraordinary occurrence startles us and sets us thinking. There has been one such in Paris. The river at Paris rose in such a heavy flood that huge buildings were washed off. A picture gallery[3] was in imminent danger. Strongly-built roads, on which millions of pounds had been spent, sagged at places. Men were drowned. Some who escaped drowning were buried alive. Rats, deprived of their food, attacked children. How did this happen? The people of Paris had built the city to last for ever. Nature has given a warning that even the whole of Paris may be destroyed. It certainly would have been, had the floods subsided a day later.

[1] Behramji Malabari (1863-1912), a Parsi journalist, poet and social reformer of Bombay

[2] A poetic composition of Persian origin

[3] The Louvre

Of course, the people of Paris will not realize the futility of rebuilding the palatial structures. It will never occur to them that even these new buildings of theirs will come down again. Engineers, in their conceit, will have more grandiose plans now and pour out money like water, forgetting and making others forget the deluge; such is the obsession of present-day civilization.

Are we to behave in the same way? Shall we copy such wild, thoughtless people? Only those who forget God will engage in suchostentation. The question then arises why we should fight against the Transvaal legislation, why we do not advise everyone to take up the rosary. To anyone who may ask this question, we shall reply that that is the very advice we have given, and give again. What we do not advise is the mere ostentatious bead-telling in the manner of that pious fraud, the crane [in the fable][1]. We realize the meaning of the drama that Nature is enacting, and that is why we appeal to the Transvaal Indians and the Indians of South Africa, with all the strength at our command: "Understand Nature's purposes and ponder over them; all your ostentatious ways will lead you nowhere. Telling beads on the rosary will be no answer to the Government's attack on your manliness and its attempt to enslave you. The servant of God will never consent to be the slave of any man. Do not be afraid of the despotic laws of the Government. You will have no reason for fear if you are not unduly attached to your wealth. If you cling to truth, it will always be with you, it will never forsake you; it cannot be submerged in floods. We advise you not to trust anything that the floods may wash away. We invite you to be firm in truth, which is the sole support for one to cling to. You may enjoy whatever you can, consistently with your loyalty to truth. You will then have no cause for regret. You will not then pursue enjoyments at any cost, for you will know that enjoyments are momentary but that truth is eternal and will abide with you for ever. To live thus is to follow the path of religion. Because the Government in its despotism opposes such an attempt, we call it irreligious. This is the essence of all religions and without it no religion will be true to itself."

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 5-2-1910

[1] The crane kept standing on one foot on the bank of a river, hoping to convince the fish that he had taken to a life of devotion and austerities, and that they could safely approach him.

239. ROYEPPEN SENTENCED

Mr. Joseph Royeppen, Mr. David Andrew and Mr. Samuel Joseph have been sentenced to three months' imprisonment each. We congratulate them. Mr. Royeppen's imprisonment, we believe, will provoke protests throughout India. His is no ordinary case. There is no doubt that Mr. Royeppen's entry into the struggle has given it a powerful impetus. Every white has been set thinking why Royeppen should have been sent to gaol.

The Tamil community has surpassed all expectations. It is the only one whose members we still find going to gaol. Most members of theother communities have capitulated. Are there any who will follow the example set by Mr. Royeppen and his fellow-satyagrahis?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-2-1910

240. EXTRACT FROM LETTER[1]

[*February 5, 1910*][2]

He is a splendid boy, and has certainly realised my expectations. He became a passive resister in the gaol. Together with other Indians, he shared the same cell with Chinese prisoners, some of whom are the worst criminals to be found in the Transvaal. There was only one bucket of water between all these prisoners, and these Chinese drank from the buckets as dogs from pools. Naturally, Manilal did not like the idea of drinking like the Chinese or even with a cup from water so polluted. So he complained to the Deputy-Governor, who thought that Manilal was cantankerous, and immediately gave him solitary confinement. Manilal took it quite cheerfully, and said to himself that it would give him quiet time for thinking. The next day, however, he wanted to make his position good, and say, too, that he complained not only for himself but for all the Indians. So he insisted on seeing the Governor, who was much more reasonable, stopped solitary confinement, and ordered that a separate bucket of water should be reserved for Indian prisoners. Manilal tells me, too, that he was of very great assistance to Parsee Rustomjee, who has been removed to the

[1] Presumably addressed to L. W. Ritch, London

[2] Manilal Gandhi's arrest mentioned in the letter took place on 5-2-1910.

Fort. He used to shampoo him every evening. Mr. Rustomjee is no better treated at the Fort. Medical relief has been refused. Manilal recommenced his honourable calling (hawking) today, and challenged arrest. He approached the same constable who arrested him the first time, who, after laughing remonstrance, acceded to his request and arrested him again. When, however, he was brought to the Charge Office, Vernon[1] ordered his discharge. He will, as before, go out hawking every day. I am hoping that this time he is arrested he will be deported like his companions, and be fixed up for six months.

India 25-2-1910

241. EXTRACT FROM LETTER[2]

[About *February 5, 1910*]

There is no other remedy for calamity except courage. As to the means, there is no doubt in my mind that they are the same both in the Transvaal and in India. But [Chhaganlal]'s letter[3] shows that we shall be able to prepare ourselves only in a place like Phoenix. It is our duty to remain undaunted even while sleeping in a cremation ground; it is, however, likely that a person would die of fear when he tries to sleep there. Thus, India is, for the present, like a cremation ground for us. We ought to—we have to—prepare ourselves here, so that we spread our bed there and sing Mirabai's[4] *bhajan*[5], "Bola ma, Bola ma"[6] and the like. . . I always feel that I shall be strong enough to welcome death in any form and at any time. I wish all may get this strength.

From the Gujarati in *Gandhiji-na Patre* edited by Dahyabhai Patel; also quoted in *Gandhiji-ni Sadhna* by Raojibhai Patel

[1] Superintendent of Police, Johannesburg.

[2] Probably addressed to Maganlal Gandhi

[3] Presumably refers to Chhaganlal Gandhi's letter describing the Servants of India Society. Some portions from the letter were published in *Indian Opinion*, 5-2-1910 and 12-2-1910. *Vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 27-1-1910

[4] Queen of Mewar in Rajasthan and a great poet and devotee of Lord Krishna

[5] Devotional song

[6] First words of the song, "Do not utter anything except [the name of] Radhakrishna"

242. JOHANNESBURG

Wednesday [*February 9, 1910*]

SUGGESTION TO SATYAGRAHIS

Most of those still left among the ranks of satyagrahis are Tamil friends. There is little chance of these words of mine reaching them. However, some of them follow Gujarati by having [the articles] read out to them; to these, and to the Indians from Bombay Presidency and elsewhere, I should say that what remains of the battle is both difficult and easy, because only a few soldiers remain. Those who now come forward for imprisonment should not agree to be released on bail; even when they are under-trial prisoners, they should not ask for food to be brought to them from outside; and they must be ready for imprisonment the moment they are served with a warrant. Those whom the Government finds or believes to be weak will be harassed all the more; the cases against them will be adjourned again and again. Those who wish to give the best service and suffer to the utmost should bear this in mind and show their spirit in every way.

VISIT TO PRISONERS

I wanted to visit some of the satyagrahis last Sunday. On inquiry, it was found that those who themselves had been imprisoned once could not visit prisoners. It was, therefore, a problem who should go. In the end, Mr. Harilal Gandhi was visited by Mr. Kallenbach, Mr. Sorabji by Mr. Isaac, Mr. Rustomjee by Miss Schlesin and Mr. Medh by Mr. Cole. The prisoners sent a message that they were all in high spirits.

The rule referred to above is a new way of harassing us. It was not being enforced so far. The Government's object is, of course, to stop all communications among satyagrahis. In that, however, it cannot succeed. Its designs are sure to be frustrated if, in reply to its growing harshness, we show ourselves all the more determined in spirit. What difference does it make to a prisoner whether or not he is visited by others? If our strength must be tested, the severer the test, the more should we welcome it.

AID FROM RANGOON

A cheque for £250 has been received from Rangoon and

according to Dr. Mehta, Secretary of the Transvaal Satyagraha Fund Committee there, there is a possibility of our receiving something more. Going through the particulars of contributions, I find that several Chinese traders have also subscribed. According to a resolution of the Rangoon Committee, this money should be spent only towards the relief of poor satyagrahis or those in distress.

Including this sum, a total amount of £3923-3-4 has been received so far. If this sum of £250 is deducted from this total, the rest represents the amount remitted by Mr. Jehangir B. Petit on behalf of Prof. Gokhale. We have not received detailed information about how this was collected; we are yet to know in what manner, apart from the sum of Rs. 25,000 donated by Mr. Ratan Tata, the remaining amount was raised.

KRUGERSDORP LOCATION

The whites have been giving strange evidence before the Commission that is going into this subject. They say that the presence of Indians in the Location is a source of annoyance to them, that Indians are immoral, that they harass girls, making unseemly gestures at them, and that they corrupt the morals of the Kaffirs. Many such offensive things were said in the course of the evidence. It is imperative for the Indian settlers to offer evidence to counter this. The Krugersdorp Indians must get ready to meet the situation. If, moreover, there is substance in any of these charges, such habits must be corrected. Some Indians do have contacts with Kaffir women. I think such contacts are fraught with grave danger. Indians would do well to avoid them altogether.

HEART-RENDING SCENE

[In an incident which occurred] in Mr. Gandhi's office, Mrs. Amacanoo and Mrs. Packirsamy removed all the ornaments from their persons and vowed not to wear them again till the fight was over. They took off everything, their ear-rings, nose-rings, necklaces, bangles and rings. They took off even their wedding necklaces. This was no ordinary thing to have done. Mrs. Packirsamy removed her ornaments, saying that it was impossible for her to wear them when Packirsamy's eldest son was about to go to gaol and Mr. Packirsamy himself was likely to be arrested soon.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 12-2-1910

243. MUSLIM LEAGUE MEETING

We have commented[1] on His Highness the Aga Khan's speech at the meeting of the All-India Muslim League. The resolutions passed by the League also call for some comment. In our view, the League's resolutions are very strong and should prove encouraging to us.[2] It appears from these resolutions that Mr. Polak has stirred up storms of protest all over India. The Viceroy and Lord Morley cannot but take notice of these resolutions.

But do we? The League has described the Transvaal Indians as martyrs.[3] How many such martyrs are there? Those among Hindus and Muslims who care for India must give serious thought to this. If they put in their best effort, not only will the fight end soon but India's self-respect will also be saved and her honour upheld. It is no light responsibility that the Transvaal Indians bear.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-2-1910

244. SPEECH AT CHINESE RECEPTION TO REV. J. J. DOKE[4]

[JOHANNESBURG,
February 14, 1910]

Mr. Gandhi spoke, saying that Mr. Doke's interest in the Asiatics was as old as his stay in South Africa. Both the communities had to deserve the support that was given by the European Committee.

Indian Opinion, 19-2-1910

[1] *Vide* "Aga Khan and Passive Resistance", 5-2-1910.

[2] *ibid*

[4] At the Cantonese Club with Quinn presiding; 150 Chinese passive resisters and several prominent Europeans and Indians were present. After Quinn had delivered a speech eulogising Doke's work and the address to him had been read out, Gandhiji addressed the gathering.

245. EVIDENCE BEFORE INQUIRY COMMITTEE[1]

KRUGERSDORP,
February 17, 1910

Mr. Gandhi said that the object of making the protest was that his clients challenged the authority of the Commissioner to make any recommendation with reference to the removal of the Location. It was his contention that as his clients had certain legal rights, apart from other rights, the Commission ws totally uncalled for as far as the removal of the Location was concerned. His clients had prepared a statement of the valuation of their holdings, and that statement was filed under the protest mentioned.

THE CHAIRMAN: This is not a Commission but a Committee of Inquiry.

MR. GANDHI: I have observed the distinction.

The Chairman asked, was Mr. Gandhi prepared to give a statement with regard to points on which the Committee desired information.

Mr. Gandhi said he placed himself in the hands of the Committee. He was prepared to lead evidence, or if the Committee considered a written statement more satisfactory, he would submit one. It had been his intention to lead some evidence that morning to rebut that given at the last sitting of the Committee.[2]

Evidence on behalf of the Municipality was then taken.

Mr. James Munsie (Chief Sanitary Inspector) said the buildings in the Location were defective from a structural point of view . . . it was impossible to repair the buildings so as to make them comply with the by-laws. The residents obtained their livelihood chiefly by hawking fruits and vegetables for which there was no proper storage. In case of infectious diseases considerable trouble would be experienced. (To Mr. Seehoff[3]:) If the Location were under Municipal control only a certain number of residents would be allowed tin houses, and overcrowding would be prevented. In reply to the Chairman Mr. Munsie said the Indians adopted certain methods in connection with their sanitary conveniences, and it was possible that the excess of water they used caused the nuisance.

[Q.] Then this extreme insanitation is not known to you?

No, I do not think it is possible. I find the coolies have been very careful in keeping the surroundings of the buildings clean.

[1] Which was appointed to inquire into the proposed removal of the Asiatic Location in Krugersdorp

[2] *Vide* "Johannesburg", 9-2-1910 and "Krugersdorp Location Committee", 26-3-1910.

[3] The Chairman of the Enquiry Committee

MR. CHAMNEY[1]: You have found them careful as far as possible?

Yes.

Mr. Gandhi asked permission to question the witness but the Chairman pointed out the witnesses were not subject to cross-examination. . . . Seeing that witnesses came voluntarily and the Committee had no power to summon them, he felt they should not be subject to cross-examination.

Mr. Gandhi said as a member of the public he might be able to assist the Government and the Committee. He asked through the Chairman whether the Location was not now subject to Municipal control, and whether the Municipal by-laws were not in force there.

MR. MUNSIE : As far as possible it is under Municipal control.

THE CHAIRMAN : Is it recognized as a Municipal Location?

No.

MR. GANDHI: Is it not subject to the public health by-laws of the Municipality?

Yes.

MR. SEEHOFF : The laws of the Corporation are not retrospective?

No.

MR. GANDHI: If the Asiatics say they are quite willing to abide by the reasonable requirements of the Municipality as to structural alterations would not that satisfy the objections raised by the Municipality?

The Chairman pointed out that Mr. Munsie was giving evidence as to the sanitation of the Location, and the question was more for the person who would speak on behalf of the Municipality.

The Star, 17-2-1910

246. DOKE HONOURED

[Before *February 18, 1910*]

Everyone will admit that Mr. Doke has done much for the Indians and the Chinese. Both the communities have expressed their appreciation of his services, and thereby maintained their own good name. The Chinese have presented an address.[2] The Indians are giving a dinner.[3] Mr. Doke has made a thorough study of the satyagraha

[1] Montford Chamney, Registrar of Asiatics

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Banquet to Rev. J. J. Doke", 18-2-1910

campaign. He will spend some time in England. While there, he will meet Lord Crewe and others. They cannot but attach weight to his words. Mr. Doke wields no small measure of influence in Johannesburg.

Many Indians have experienced Mr. Doke's goodness and simplicity. We can never give him too much praise for his work. During the Deputation's absence in England, he worked very hard.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-2-1910

247. LETTER TO GENERAL MANAGER, C.S.A.R.[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]

February 18, 1910

SIR,

In accordance with the promise made by Mr. Gandhi and myself at the interview[2] between us on Saturday last, I beg to enclose herewith draft railway regulations. You will notice that the draft keeps the practice hitherto observed as to the travelling of Asiatics, without making any racial distinctions and thereby offering insult. In my humble opinion, this draft can entirely replace the regulations which have been the subject-matter of this correspondence; but, if it is considered by the Railway Board that these regulations are necessary so far as the Natives are concerned, I venture to suggest that they may be repealed so far as they are applicable to Asiatics.

If the draft herewith submitted is not considered suitable, I shall be glad to receive your objections, and will endeavour to meet any such by framing another draft. In the opinion of my Committee, the matter is rather urgent, and it is felt that the regulations should be amended without waiting for the establishment of the Union Government.

My Committee gratefully appreciates the conciliatory manner in which you have been good enough to carry on this correspondence, and for the assurance given by you that no insult is intended by the publication of the regulations. My Committee hopes that your

[1] This letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was signed by A. M. Cachalia.

[2] Report not available

assurances and the good spirit will be carried out in practice by making the necessary amendment in the regulations.

DRAFT REGULATIONS

1. It shall be lawful for the General Manager to set apart different compartments on trains for different races or classes, and the class or race for which the compartments are so reserved shall be able to travel only in such compartments and no other, and any person travelling in a compartment other than the one reserved for his class shall be deemed to have committed a breach of these regulations.

2. The pointing out by a guard or any other railway official to a passenger of a reserved compartment shall be considered sufficient reservation under the foregoing regulations.

3. It shall be competent for the guard or the conductor or any other railway official to remove passengers from one compartment to another without giving any reason therefor.

4. It shall be competent for the station-master to refuse a first-or second-class ticket to any passenger who may be, in his opinion, not dressed in a decent or cleanly condition.

Indian Opinion, 26-2-1910

248. CROSS-EXAMINATION BEFORE ENQUIRY COMMITTEE

KRUGERSDORP,
February 18, 1910

In his evidence before the Committee the Mayor said the present site of the Location was absolutely unsuitable as it adjoined a white centre in Bugershoop, and was quite close to the Government School.

MR. CHAMNEY : Does the Council desire to acquire the ground?

[THE MAYOR :] I cannot speak on behalf of the Council, but the question has never been brought before the Council, and I do not think the Council is very anxious to have the ground. Mr. Gandhi put the question as to whether if the Asiatics carried out the structural alterations the Council required, its objection would fall to the ground.

THE MAYOR : I am of the opinion if the requirements of the Municipality were to be carried out, the place would have to be demolished and rebuilt.

MR. GANDHI : If the Asiatics offered to rebuild, would that meet the objection of Mr. Munsie?

Naturally yes, from the sanitary point of view.

Does not the objection to the site arise from the structural conditions?

No.

The Mayor in conclusion emphasized the point made in the statement that the Council was not liable for any compensation the Indians may be declared entitled to. Several other Indians gave evidence as to the rights they had to certain stands, and the value of the building, and the sitting was adjourned.

The Star, 18-2-1910

249. SPEECH AT BANQUET TO REV. J. J. DOKE

February 18, 1910

The Masonic Hall, Jeppe Street, Johannesburg, was the scene of a brilliant mixed gathering of Europeans, Chinese and Indians on the night of the 18th instant in honour of Rev. J. J. Doke. A vegetarian banquet was given to the reverend gentleman by the British Indian community. Mr. Hosken was in the chair. Mr. Doke was on his right and Mrs. Doke on his left. Mr. Cachalia occupied a seat to the right of Mr. Doke. Mr. Quinn and his Chinese friends were also present. . . .[1]

Mr. Gandhi, in the course of his remarks, said that he could not speak of the guest of the evening without the feelings of deepest gratitude; nor could he avoid the personal element. When Mr. Doke and he were comparative strangers, he (the speaker) was picked up by Mr. Doke as he was lying in a precarious condition in an office in Von Brandis Street. When Mr. Doke asked him whether he would go to his house, he did not take many seconds before he replied in the affirmative.[2] In his house, he was treated with every kindness and consideration. Mr. Gandhi's mother was dead, his widowed sister was 4,000 miles away, his wife 400 miles away. But Mrs. Doke was both mother and sister to him. How could he forget the figure (Mr. Doke) stealing into his room at midnight to see whether his patient was awake or asleep? Speaking of Mr. Doke's Asiatic work, it was not possible to refrain from speaking in praise of the work of the European Committee of which the Chairman (Mr. Hosken) was the President. Mr. Gandhi frankly confessed that passive resistance might have broken down without the magnificent support rendered by the European Committee. Mr. Hosken never stinted himself in rendering assistance wherever and whenever he could. He was ever-obliging. Mr. Doke had made a thorough study of the question. His home was ever open to distressed Asiatics. The speaker hoped that Mr. Doke would find the opportunity of seeing Lord Crewe and Lord Morley and give them

[1] This paragraph is from the report in *Indian Opinion*, 26-2-1910. What follows is from its issue dated 5-3-19l0.

[2] *Vide* "My Reward", 22-2-1908.

the benefit of his own experience. He joined in the prayer for every success to Mr. Doke and his family.[1]

Indian Opinion, 26-2-1910 and 5-3-1910

250 MR. DOKE

It is well that both the Indian[2] and the Chinese[3] communities have honoured Mr. Doke on his impending departure for America. Mr. Doke has rendered very great and fearless service to the cause of passive resistance. The world will perhaps never know what Mr. Doke and those Europeans who, like him, have espoused the unpopular Asiatic cause have suffered for it.

But, if we may do so, without disparagement of the other members of the European Committee, we should like to say that Mr. Doke has made an accurate study of the whole question. He has read up all the literature there is on the subject. During the absence of the deputation in England, Mr. Doke constantly conferred with leaders and encouraged them, giving them the benefit of his mature experience. Indeed, Mr. Doke had treated the work as part of his mission as a minister of Jesus and has held that he served his own congregation in serving the Asiatic cause. To him it is not a merely political battle, but it is a religious battle—a battle of and for humanity. If there were more like Mr. Doke in our midst, we would probably have no unnatural inequalities between man and man.

Mr. Doke will pass a short time in London. He holds full credentials from the two Asiatic communities. He has been urged to see the Imperial authorities and submit the case to them as it appears to him from his personal experience. If Mr. Doke gets the opportunity of seeing them, we doubt not that he will command a respectful hearing. We congratulate both the communities upon having such an able champion of the cause.

Our good wishes accompany Mr. Doke on his mission in America.

Indian Opinion, 19-2-1910

[1] Gandhiji was followed by Hosken and Doke.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Chinese Reception to Rev. J. J. Doke", 14-2-1910

251. MR. RUSTOMJEE

Mr. Rustomjee's services during the unique campaign that is going on in the Transvaal are beyond praise. Only two passive resisters have had the privilege of serving imprisonment for an unbroken period of almost a year. Mr. Rustomjee finished exactly one year. The sufferings he had described in his letter[1], published elsewhere in this issue, throw a painfullight on the policy of the Transvaal Government. But Mr. Rustomjee assures the Government that the unnecessary hardship inflicted on him cannot break his spirit.

Mr. Rustomjee, with the concurrence and on the advice of his fellow passive resisters, is having well deserved rest and putting his business, which has naturally suffered greatly during his absence, in order. We hope that Mr. Rustomjee will soon be restored to health and once more grace the Transvaal gaols with his presence unless the struggle ends in the mean time.

Indian Opinion, 19-2-1910

252. IMAM SAHEB

Imam Saheb Abdul Kadir Bawazeer and Mr. Kunke[2] have been the latest discharges from the Diepkloof gaol. Both are stalwarts in the cause and both have gone to gaol more than once.

Imam Saheb has returned almost a physical wreck, though a tower of strength to the cause. He is the respected Chairman of the Hamidia Islamic Society and a priest. The Mahomedan community in particular, the whole Indian community in general, suffers in Mr. Bawazeer's sufferings. We congratulate Mr. Bawazeer on his brilliant services and pray for strength to him and his fellow passive resisters.

Indian Opinion, 19-2-1910

[1] *Vide* Appendix II.

[2] Mahomed Ebrahim Kunke; *vide* the following item.

253. PARSEE RUSTOMJEE

Mr. Rustomjee, the Imam Saheb [Abdul Kadir] Bawazeer and Mr. Mahomed Ebrahim Kunke have been released.

Earlier, we compared Mr. Shah's services to those of Mr. Rustomjee.[1] Both these satyagrahis remained in gaol for a continuous period of one year. Mr. Rustomjee suffered imprisonment for a total period of 14 months and 19 days, of which one full year was spent in gaol at a stretch. We draw attention to his letter[2] describing what he suffered during this period. We congratulate Mr. Rustomjee and the community on the courage he displayed in the face of all those hardships.

As Mr. Rustomjee was not deported again but was set free in Johannesburg itself, he got an opportunity of going to Durban; this he has made use of on the advice and with the consent of the satyagrahis. The step taken is unexceptionable. We hope that Mr. Rustomjee will put his affairs in order and recoup his health. We want to see both these things done and Mr. Rustomjee lodged in gaol again.

If Mr. Rustomjee spent one full year in gaol, that was because he got an opportunity to do so. The Imam Saheb and Mr. Kunke, too, have utilized fully, and also given to the community the benefit of, the opportunities they got. The Imam Saheb's is a record of which the Hamidia Society and the entire Indian community can well be proud. He is reduced in health and has been suffering from some ailment; ignoring all this, he has courted repeated terms of imprisonment. So long as the community has such brave men, who can say that we shall be defeated?

We congratulate the three satyagrahis and pray to God to preserve them always in the path of virtue.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-2-1910

[1] *Vide* "Mr. Nanalal Shah's Services", 29-1-1910

[2] *Vide* Appendix II.

254. SPEECH AT DURBAN MEETING[1]

February 20, 1910

A letter was received from Mr. Rustomjee while this meeting was in progress, from which it appears that he has deliberately absented himself. Of course, there is no need to read out the letter itself to the meeting; he only wants to know from those who are assembled here, where that fine spirit has evaporated which prevailed at the meetings in which he and other friends were asked to go to the Transvaal. He also wants to know where those men are who were to accompany him. He says, further, that going through these motions of honouring him is like playing a joke on him and that he is not eager for such honour. He would feel truly honoured [he says] if people went to gaol as he had done. What we are witnessing today on the stage is the action in front of the curtain, but it is the action behind it that will determine whether or not we win. If the gentlemen[2] who made speeches today urging support for the Transvaal and paying compliments to the satyagrahis were sincere in what they said, the end of the struggle should be at hand. It is a very simple thing to win, if only our leaders cease their play-acting. It depends on us whether our campaign ends in four days or four years. If it is drawing out, the fault lies with us. Every time I went wrong in my conclusion as to the end of the struggle, I found [subsequently] that the error was in my estimate of the community's strength. When I was leaving for this place, Mr. Aswat, Mr. Cachalia and Mr. Bhayat urged me hard to take Dawad Sheth back with me. Everyone is inquiring what he will do now. I have come to take along with me Dawad Sheth, Mr. Shapurji Randeria and anyone else who may come forward. Our own men have been telling the Government that seasoned fighters are falling off and that those who have gone to Natal are not likely to return. If so, the fight will receive a severe set-back. I hope, therefore, that the gentlemen will come forward [again] this time.

Moreover, much has been said here about unity in the

[1] A meeting of the Natal Indian Congress was held on February 20, 1910 to honour Gandhiji and Rustomjee and to pass resolutions of protest against the £3 tax, the system of indenture and the Immigration Law Amendment Bill.

[2] Among these was Dawad Mahomed, who, as Chairman of the meeting, had spoken before Gandhiji.

community. I wish to point out in this connection that, if there is disunity among us, the fault lies entirely with the leaders of the two communities. If they follow up their speeches about unity with determined action, it can be achieved quite easily. It is an error to suppose that a third party can bring them together. Maintaining unity is the responsibility of those who are directly affected by it.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-2-1910

255. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
February 23, 1910

SIR,

I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of a letter[2] addressed by Mr. Parsee Rustomjee to the Press about the treatment he was subjected to at the Diepkloof Gaol. I beg to append copy of medical certificate issued by his family physician as to the state of his health upon discharge from prison:

FIRST AVENUE,
DURBAN,
February 16, 1910

> This is to certify that I have examined Mr Parsee Rustomjee, and, knowing him of old, I now find him very much reduced in weight and size, and that his health has greatly suffered from his late imprisonment, and that it will be some months before he will regain his former self. I find that his heart is affected, but whether it is an organic disease or not, it is difficult to say at once on the first examination. His eyes have also suffered from constant exposure to the sun, and are now in a state of congestion. There is distension of the flanks of the abdominal wall, which appears to me to be due to the distension of the large bowel, and which is also responsible for the constipation he suffers from. He is also subject to delayed and difficult micturition.
>
> (Sgd.) R. M. NANJI, M. R. C. S., etc.

Both the certificate and the letter speak for themselves. My Committee therefore content themselves with drawing the attention of

[1] At Pretoria; presumably drafted by Gandhiji
[2] *Vide* Appendix II.

the Government to the facts narrated by Mr. Rustomjee, who is one of the most respected members of the Indian community in South Africa, and a vice-president of the Natal Indian Congress, and venture to trust that the civilized Government of the Transvaal will not permit a repetition of sufferings such as have been undergone by Mr. Rustomjee.

Mr. Imam Abdul Kadir Bawazeer, who has been just discharged from the Diepkloof Prison, has himself suffered very severely. He states that once, when he was extremely feverish and when he was obliged to report himself sick, the medical officer suggested, without even examining him, that he was shirking work; but when Mr. Bawazeer indignantly repudiated the suggestion, his temperature was taken by the officer, and it was found to be 104 degrees. This alarmed the officer and Mr. Bawazeer was placed in the prison hospital. Mr. Bawazeer has lost 22 lbs. in weight, and is so weak that he can walk about only with difficulty.

Mr. Bawazeer reports that most of the passive resisters have lost weight owing to insufficiency of food, and specially owing to want of ghee, and this notwithstanding the allowance of two ounces of haricot beans. It is respectfully submitted that the persistent refusal to restore the use of a fat equivalent in the shape of ghee is interpreted by my community to mean that the Government intend to starve into submission the conscientious objectors to the anti-Asiatic legislation of the Colony. I beg once more to draw attention to the fact that the Native prisoners' dietary allows one ounce of fat per day.

Mr. Bawazeer further reports to the Association that Mr. Joseph Royeppen, a barrister and a Cambridge graduate, was, when he was transferred to the Diepkloof Prison, taken, together with three other Indian prisoners, in a manure cart, and was compelled to walk barefoot and bareheaded for nearly two miles, and that he and his fellow-prisoners were given no breakfast on the day they were transferred. Mr. Royeppen reported the matter to the Governor, who enquired into it and, Mr. Bawazeer thinks, also gave the assurance that the mistakes above referred to would not be repeated. My Committee, however, cannot help remarking that a system under which such grave mistakes are possible must be badly in need of revision.

My Committee hope that the various matters hereby brought to

the notice of the Government will meet with the consideration that they deserves.

I have, etc.,

A. M. CACHALIA

CHAIRMAN, BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 5-3-1910

256. SPEECH AT KATHIAWAD ARYA MANDAL

[DURBAN,

February 23, 1910]

A meeting of this society was held on the 23rd instant in Beatrice Street, Durban, in order to meet Messrs Parsee Rustomjee, Shah and Shelat. . . .

Mr. Gandhi, who was present, addressed the meeting. Mr. Gandhi explained the struggle and said that he had arrived in Natal to invite those who would to join the struggle. . . .

Indian Opinion, 26-2-1910

257. CABLE TO S.A.B.I. COMMITTEE[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]

February 25, 1910

IMAM BAWAZEER, PRIEST, CHAIRMAN HAMIDIA SOCIETY, DISCHARGED, MUCH REDUCED, WEAK. STATES ROYEPPEN MADE WALK BAREFOOT, BAREHEADED, ON TRANSFER DIEPKLOOF.[2] RUSTOMJI DISCHARGED, LOOKING REDUCED; HAS WRITTEN PRESS[3] MAKING GRAVE CHARGES; EXAMINED ON DISCHARGE, CERTIFICATE STATES HEART, EYE AFFECTED.[4] OVER THIRTY CHINESE, NEARLY FORTY INDIANS GAOL. MANILAL DEPORTED, RE-CROSSING, SENT TO PRISON[5] FOR THREE MONTHS WITH HARD LABOUR. ABSENCE GHEE DIET SCALE CONTINUES CAUSE IRRITATION. P. K. NAIDOO RELEASED WEDNESDAY, RE-ARRESTED IMMEDIATELY, SENT TO PRISON FOR THREE MONTHS WITH HARD LABOUR.

India, 4-3-1910; also the south African Blue-book, No. 5.119

[1] Sent to the South Africa British Indian Committee, London, by the Secretary, Transvaal British Indian Association

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 23-2-1910

[3] *ibid*

[4] *ibid*

258. STARVATION OF PASSIVE RESISTERS

We print elsewhere[1] Mr. Smuts' minute on the complaint of the British Indian Association of the Transvaal on the insufficiency of the revised diet scale for Indian prisoners. The minute is remarkable for the facts it omits and those it almost mis-states. It is an instance of special pleading which seeks to justify the existing unjustifiable scale of rations.

The third paragraph states that the revision was designed to approximate the Indian scale to "Indian free diets by the introduction of ghee and curry powder". There is a suggestion here that no ghee was supplied before revision. But the fact is that at Johannesburg, the Volksrust and several other gaols one ounce of ghee per day was allowed to Indian prisoners besides beans three times a week and meat once a week, and that at the other gaols one ounce of animal fat per day was allowed. In answer chiefly to the complaint that vegetarian passive resisters could not take animal fat and that, therefore, ghee should be substituted, the Government deprived the Indian prisoners throughout the Colony of fat or ghee! In the revised scale, there is no approach to "Indian free diets" because the latter consist of a liberal supply of bread, ghee, dholl, and tea. No Indian eats mealie meal by choice and yet it still remains largely the food of Indian prisoners. We are not aware of any "unbiased Indian adherents" having admitted that the revised scale is an advance on the previously obtaining scale. Indeed, they have all said that no Indian scale could be complete without ghee. From time immemorial, ghee has been considered to be the complement of rice. Its other name literally translated means the complement of rice (*anna poorna*), as rice is notoriously known to be deficient in fat-forming substance. How can deprivation of a material part of the diet be considered by any person to be an advance? Curry powder is purely and simply a spice and in no sense a food as ghee is. The minute makes much of twenty-five medical officers having been consulted as to the revised scale. But it makes no mention of the fact that for the past nine months, Indian prisoners have been chiefly concentrated at Diepkloof and, that, therefore, the other medical officers had not sufficient data for observation. The acting Medical Officer of Health may have failed to find justification for the

[1] *Vide* "Passive Resistance Prisoners", *Indian Opinion*, 26-2-1910.

allegation as to the marked "emaciation and inanition" of passive resisters. But Messrs Rustomjee, Bawazeer, Aswat and Shah testify differently in their own persons. Mr. Rustomjee is undergoing special medical treatment, Mr. Bawazeer can scarcely walk, Mr. Aswat is a cripple and Mr. Shah spits blood. They all bring the news that the absence of ghee is the greatest cause of complaint. What weight can be attached even to a whole army of medical men testifying otherwise when the victims themselves give one an ocular demonstration of the fact of insufficiency of the scale? It is undoubtedly a matter for thankfulness that beans are added to the scale when Indians do not take meat. But the minute takes no note of the fact that, whilst beans are an admirable substitute for meat, they are no substitute for ghee. We cannot, therefore, help saying that the civilized Government of the Transvaal must labour under the charge of wanton cruelty to the passive resisters so long as they callously continue to partially starve them.

Indian Opinion, 26-2-1910

259. THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

The Natal Indian Congress has, at a public meeting called for the purpose, passed a series of resolutions[1] which are important and farreaching in their results. The most notable resolutions, to our mind, were those relating to the stoppage of indenture altogether and the carrying on of the Transvaal struggle. Both these resolutions affirm great principles without in any way involving the self-interest of the movers and seconders of the resolutions. They, therefore, impart to the proceedings a high tone. The resolutions may not produce any great and tangible result in the near future, but they are bound to affect the course of events both in the Transvaal and outside it. It will certainly be admitted that both resolutions are of the highest Imperial importance.

Indian Opinion, 26-2-1910

[1] *Vide* 1st footnote of "Speech at Durban Meeting", 20-2-1910.

260. INDIAN EDUCATION

It is reported that the age-limit for admission to the Higher-Grade Indian School has been removed. But we understand that the removal of the restriction is not to be gazetted though the restriction was. The reason for this curious phenomenon is obvious. The Government, in order to catch votes, publicly paraded the news. In order not to offend, they now want to suppress the fact of removal of restriction.

Indian parents should, however, not rest content with the proposed change. They should establish their own schools where proper education could be provided.

Indian Opinion, 26-2-1910

261. THE CAPE COLOURED PEOPLE

Dr. Abdurahman, from his seat in the Municipal Council of Capetown,[1] has, given vent to bitter feelings on the vote for an expense of £1,500 at the time of the arrival of the Prince of Wales. The worthy Doctor will be in mourning on the day of the Prince's arrival. He will not sing "God Save the King". And he advises every Coloured man to refrain likewise. The reason for this outburst of anger is natural and justifiable. The partial disfranchisement of the Coloured people in the South Africa Act has gone deep down into the hearts of thousands of Coloured people. For them to take part in the approaching rejoicings would undoubtedly be a mockery and a sham. It would be hypocrisy, pure and simple.

It may be questioned whether the sentiments expressed by Dr. Abdurahman are consistent with loyalty. The word "loyalty" is a much-abused term. It would certainly be inconsistent with the loyalty of a coward or a slave. But we hold that a free man—an enlightened and independent man—which we think Dr. Abdurahman is, can consistently with his loyalty to the Crown, which is an ideal, refuse to associate himself with rejoicings which involve the degradation of a whole people who have deserved by common consent a better treatment. In courageously expressing his sentiments, we think that

[1] At its meeting on 21-2-1910; *vide* "Abdurahman's Indignation",26-2-1910

Dr. Abdurahman has cleared the atmosphere of cant and humbug and has served Truth, the Crown, his people and himself at the same time. Dr. Abdurahman's declaration almost coincides in point of time with the emphatic statement of the Coloured people's meeting at Johannesburg[1] where several speakers said, that, if the authorities became unreasonable, they would take up passive resistance. We congratulate Dr. Abdurahman on his performance and hope that he will have courage to follow out his programme when the time comes.

Indian Opinion, 26-2-1910

262. DOKE HONOURED

We congratulate the Transvaal Indians on the function they organized in honour of Mr. Doke. Rarely does one come across men of Doke's sincerity and influence and readiness to help. He has served the community well indeed. He is prepared to go to gaol if by doing so he can secure our freedom.

The Indians who were present at the function must have seen that such a gathering would have been impossible three years ago. Whites who would formerly have been ashamed to sit with us now come together to honour us and dine with us. We do not want to say that this is something extraordinary; we only want to draw attention to our previous degradation. It is the power of satyagraha which has changed all this. If people exert still greater strength, we can rise much higher. We wish the Indian community takes from this gathering the lesson that there is no help like self-help. We shall grow strong in proportion to the suffering we go through.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-2-1910

263. FUNCTIONS IN DURBAN

Functions are being held in Durban following the arrival of Mr. Parsee Rustomjee, Mr. Shah and Mr. Shelat.[2] In those arranged by the

[1] On 16-2-1910; *vide* "The Struggle of the Coloured Races", *Indian Opinion*, 26-2-1910.

[2] Gandhiji was in Durban about this time.

Congress[1] and the Kathiawad Arya Mandal[2], flattering compliments were paid to the prisoners. They said [in reply] that they wanted no praise. Speeches and functions are all right as far as they go; but there is no relish in them now. Action alone matters. If the various bodies of Indians were to take a vow of silence and discharge their duties, they would soon achieve their aims. They have only one duty in connection with the fight, namely, to enlist recruits and send them to the front. To achieve this, we should say, those who seek to persuade others must themselves come forward. If the office-bearers of the bodies show themselves sincere, they will be able to persuade others. This is a time to put aside all make-believe and plunge into battle.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-2-1910

264. ABDURAHMAN'S INDIGNATION

A proposal was made in the Cape Town Council on Monday to sanction an expenditure of £1,500 for decorations, etc., on the occasion of the Prince of Wales' visit. Dr. Abdurahman opposed it. He said:

> No Coloured man can feel happy, no Coloured man, I hope, will sing "God Save the King" on that day. I know I won't. No Coloured man will see the Prince of Wales coming through the streets on that day and feel happy; for he will know it is the consummation of the robbing him of something he has had for 50 years.
>
> Proceeding, he said that out of 35,000 of the ratepayers—half of whom were Coloured people—they were going to take something to have a day of jubilation and luncheons so that they might be happy.
>
> I, as a Coloured man cannot associate myself with it, and I, as a Coloured man, will look upon it as a day of mourning. No Englishman or Irishman would have stood up here to-day and said it in the temperate way I have, had they been robbed—disgracefully robbed—of something they would have shed their blood for.[3]

These words of Dr. Abdurahman, though bitter, are justified. The proposal was of course passed, but his words will be remembered

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Durban Meeting", 20-2-1910

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Kathiawad Arya Mandal", 23-2-1910

[3] From a report of the speech in *Indian Opinion*, 26-2-1910

for ever. If the other Coloured people were to follow in his footsteps, they would win redress of their grievances soon enough. We see no disloyalty in the Doctor's remarks. True loyalty may be bitter sometimes. It is not loyalty to say "yes" to everything. True loyalty consists in expressing only what is in one's mind and acting accordingly.

We hope that Dr. Abdurahman will be true to his word and will not take part in the celebrations during the visit of the Prince of Wales.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-2-1910

265. EDUCATION IN NATAL

The age-limit for [admission to] the Higher-Grade [Indian] School has been abolished. This is a matter for some satisfaction. But there is no reason to believe that there has been any very great victory. The only victory is that the Natal Government has eaten its own words. But we need not for that reason believe that our boys will now grow to be learned men. The duty of Indian parents is rather to start their ownschools[1] as soon as possible. The education imparted in the Higher-Grade [Schools] is not of a kind to inspire any confidence. It is mere parrotlearning, and of patriotism it teaches nothing whatever.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-2-1910

266. SPEECH AT DURBAN INDIAN SOCIETY[2]

February 26, 1910

An unusually interesting and representative gathering of Indians was held, under the aegis of the Durban Indians' Society, at their hall, 104, Queen Street, Durban, on Saturday, the 26th ultimo. The hall was packed to its utmost capacity, and the meeting was of a very orderly nature. Deshabandhu Dawad Mahomed was voted to the chair, and amongst those present were Deshabhaktar M. K. Gandhi, Deshabandhus U. M. Shelat and Nanalal Shah, of passive resistance fame. . . . The Secretary, Desh. A. D. Pillay, welcomed the veteran passive resisters. . . .

[1] *Vide* "Indian Education", 26-2-1910

[2] A brief report was published in *Indian Opinion*, 5-3-1910.

Desh. T. A. Soobramania Achary, who has decided to join the Transvaal Indian struggle, then addressed the gathering in Tamil. . . .

Deshabhaktar M. K. Gandhi and other passive resisters were then garlanded. . .

Deshabhaktar M. K. Gandhi rose to reply amidst loud cheers.

He said that all the speeches had greatly impressed him. He suggested that Mr. Naicker should join the passive resistance struggle. He proceeded to say that the struggle was being carried on as strongly as ever, and feelings of determination were still being manifested. Passive resistance was bound to win, for it was for a noble and righteous cause, and the Indians had resolved to endure it to a finish, though they might be tormented and tortured. The Transvaal Government had resorted to a treacherous measure of attaching buildings, goods, bedsteads, and crockery to recover the fines, but that could not divert the Indians from their line of action, and the resolution of the Boksburg Indians, who preferred to lose all their property, and choose the gaol, was sufficient proof of their earnestness. He read certain letters which he had received from Desh. P. K. Naidoo, which were of public interest; and he referred to the brave stand made by him, although he was repeatedly lodged in gaol. His action, he said, was worth emulating. He further added that the struggle was not confined to the sterner sex alone, but the feebler sex also evinced a great deal of interest. Their action in allowing their husbands to participate in the national struggle, which was also a struggle for equity and justice, bore evidence of the women's valour. These women had also endured untold privations. He then read a telegram[1] received from India with reference to the stoppage of the Indian indentures to Natal, in which it was stated that if the Transvaal and the Natal Governments refrained from ill-treating the Indians, and the indentured Indians themselves received better treatment, then indenture might be resumed. Desh. M. K. Gandhi did not approve of the conditional suspension of the indenture, but he said that complete abolition of indenture to these Colonies was necessary.

Desh. U. M. Shelat then addressed the assembly. Desh. Nanalal Shah followed, and gave a vivid description of the harsh treatment which he received during his gaol experience.

The Natal Mercury, 3-3-1910

267. SPEECH AT DURBAN INDIAN SOCIETY[2]

[*February 26, 1910*]

Among others, we heard two excellent speeches today, Mr.

[1] Cable from G. K. Gokhale; *vide* the following item.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

Naicker's being the best of all. It would bring much credit to the Durban Indian Society if members with a spirit such as his were to go to gaol in the Transvaal. Mr. Naicker laid stress on education. I think true education consists in the cultivation of mental and physical faculties. The effort will profit the individual himself and, in the measure that it does so, it will profit the country as a whole. Unfailing devotion to one's duty is the only true education.

Citing the example of Mr. Naidoo in this connection, he [Gandhiji] said:

Everyone will admit that he, more than others, has received true education. He has spared himself no sacrifice. He has acted like Socrates who cheerfully swallowed a draught of poison.

Reading out letters addressed to Mr. Royeppen's old mother and to himself by P. K. Naidoo when going to gaol, he said:

The Colonials especially must emulate Mr. Naidoo's example. Imprisonment in connection with satyagraha makes a man pure, truthful and brave.[1]

Reading out the cable from Prof. Gokhale, he said:

This cable has been published in the newspapers here and commented upon. This shows that the issue is coming to the fore everywhere. We must now strengthen the hands of Mr. Gokhale and His Highness the Aga Khan by telling them that we have filled the gaols in the Transvaal.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-3-1910

268. THE INDIAN COUNCIL AND INDENTURED LABOUR

The Hon'ble Professor Gokhale and his colleagues have rendered a service to us and to India generally (as also, we are inclined to think, the Colony) by their having moved the resolution to stop indentured emigration from India to Natal. The resolution seeks to stop indenture by way of penalty for non-redress of the grievances of the free Indian population of South Africa. We wish that Professor Gokhale had or could have taken up the highest standpoint and moved for the stoppage of indenture altogether as being inherently bad and of no real benefit to the indentured men themselves. There is a weakness in the resolution which it would be useless not to

[1] Supplied from the report of the speech in *Indian Opinion*

acknowledge. If indenturing be good for the indentured men themselves, those who wish to indenture should not be prevented from taking advantage of the system for the sake of benefiting the free Indian population of Natal or the sister-colonies. If, on the other hand, it is bad, no redress that may be granted to that population can be allowed to continue a state of things that is immoral or otherwise hurtful.

But we have to be thankful for small mercies in these days of compromise and expediency. Professor Gokhale has taken the lesser step because he knows that he may not carry the Government with him in his condemnation of the system of indenture as such. It is for us here to see to it that we accept no immoral bargains. Whilst we would and should agitate for removal of general grievances and point out that Natal cannot receive the benefit (questionable though it is) of indentured labour from India, we must make it clear that we ask for the stoppage of indentured labour for its own sake and because we consider that it is detrimental to the moral well-being of those who indenture.

Sir James Liege Hulett has been telling a reporter that in his opinion the movement in India is due to the agitation on behalf of the Indian traders. This is perfectly true. But the inference that it will die out because of the so-called relief having been granted during the last session of the local Parliament is quite baseless. We would appeal to Sir J. L. Hulett and his co-planters that they should look at the question from a truly South African standpoint. Is it impossible for them to realise that their interests are not necessarily the Colony's and that the latter demand complete and immediate stoppage of indentured labour? We are not sure that the Colony will be ruined if the tea and sugar industries were to disappear. Indians have benefited the Colony through their cultivation of garden produce. This will be continued by the free Indian population. But the sooner the indentured labour supply isstopped, the better. We would much rather that the Colony stopped this supply of its own motion than that it was done by the Government of India. At the same time, it is necessary that no effort should be spared in India to bring about the much-desired result, whether by way of penalty or otherwise. Entire suspension of artificial emigration from India to Natal will go a long way towards solving many of the difficulties in South Africa.

Indian Opinion, 5-3-1910

269. THE JOHANNESBURG MUNICIPALITY AND COLOURED PEOPLE

The Johannesburg Municipality wishes to have anti-colour or anti-Asiatic legislation passed in a surreptitious manner. An offensive notice appears in an obscure corner of a local newspaper, notifying the intention of the Municipality to promote a private Bill in the forthcoming session of the local Parliament. The Bill, among other things, is intended to take over the Town Regulations that were passed by the late Republican Government just before the declaration of war. These Regulations make it illegal for Coloured persons to walk on foot-paths or live in towns. It is these Regulations in accordance with which the Pretoria Municipality has served notices to quit on all Coloured residents, save Asiatics, in that town and against which the Coloured people recently made such a powerful protest. It will be remembered, too, that the Pretoria Municipality entered into a long tussle with the Government for the purpose of having these Regulations retained for its use. Now the Johannesburg Municipality wishes to copy the Pretoria sister. Mr. Cachalia has, therefore, addressed the following to the Government and lodged a formal protest with the Town Clerk:

> My Association has seen the notice in the papers of a private Bill to be submitted to the forthcoming session of Parliament by the Municipal Council of Johannesburg which, among other things, contemplates the application of the Town Regulations Article No. 1256, dated the 18th September, 1899. In the humble opinion of my Association, the object of applying these Regulations to the Municipality seems to be to use the clauses of the Regulations which are restrictive of the liberty of Coloured people. If so, this is an attempt to pass; in an indirect manner, class legislation of a very objectionable type. My Association, therefore, respectfully trust that the Government will oppose the passage of this Bill so far as the application of the aforementioned Town Regulations is concerned.

The clause relating to residents reads as follows:

> Coloured persons may not reside in any place abutting on the public street in any town or village but every householder

or owner of an erf may keep in his backyard whatever servants he requires for domestic service.

Indian Opinion, 5-3-1910

270. THE INDIAN COUNCIL AND INDENTURED LABOUR

Every Indian should realize the importance of the resolution regarding the stoppage of the immigration of indentured labour, passed by the [Indian Legislative] Council at Calcutta at the instance of the Hon'ble Prof. Gokhale and other Indian members. It is likely to have far-reaching effects, how far-reaching will depend on our work here.

The resolution is to the effect that the emigration of indentured Indians [to Natal] should be stopped [even] if justice was not done to free Indians in the Transvaal or Natal. Sir James Hulett said that we had already been granted relief; an amendment was passed during the last session of Parliament and therefore nothing further was required by way of relief. Being of that opinion he said that the Government of India would take no further action. The Veda Dharma Sabha thanks the Government for what it has done, but we should like to make it plain to all Indians that non-indentured Indians cannot be considered to have been granted any relief till the following matters are satisfactorily settled:

(1) The £3 tax to be abolished in respect of both men and women;

(2) Right of appeal to the Supreme Court to be granted in respect of every kind of licence;

(3) The poll tax of £1 to be abolished;

(4) Adequate educational facilities to be provided;

(5) Harassment [of Indians] in administering the Immigration law to stop;

(6) Harassment through the permit laws to disappear.

This is the least that needs to be done in Natal. Now that there is a Union, an inquiry should be held covering the whole of South Africa. It follows from this that the hardships experienced in the Transvaal should also disappear—not only those connected with the agitation, but also those resulting from the withholding of other

rights—and that hardships concerning licences and immigration in the Cape should be removed. If it comes to bargaining, all these issues can, and ought to, be raised. It is, therefore, the duty of the Indian community to tell the Government in plain terms that the amendments carried out during the last session serve no useful purpose. They have been of no benefit whatever to the Indian community.

The community has also another important duty. Do we really want to enter into a bargain? Prof. Gokhale was right in raising the issue in the manner he did. Had it been done in any other way, there would have been no effect on the Government of India. But we are in an altogether different position. We cannot purchase our rights at the cost of the indentured labourers. We, on our part, should make it plain that the Government must stop the emigration of indentured labourers forthwith, and that, out of consideration for the interests of the labourers themselves, because the system of indenture is fundamentally an evil thing. Since indenture is of no benefit to the labourers themselves, their emigration brings little profit to India. All this deserves careful consideration.

It should be observed that the Indians' interests will be best served by doing this[1]. So long as the immigration of indentured labourers into Natal continues, the free Indians will never be left in peace. It should also be remembered that the Union Government is not likely to permit the [continued] import of indentured labour. Mr. Merriman[2] is quite opposed to it. From every point of view, therefore, it is best that the immigration of indentured Indians should stop.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-3-1910

271. OUR OPPORTUNITY

From the Calcutta proceedings and the questions put in the British Parliament, every Indian will be able to judge what the Transvaal struggle has achieved. It is striking its roots deeper every day. They will go so deep that no one will be able to pull them out. That a struggle like this should be prolonged is no reason for anyone to get panicky. Satyagrahis should welcome it. When the devout Sudhanva was asked to throw himself into a pan of boiling oil to

[1] That is, prohibiting the emigration of indentured labourers forthwith

[2] John Xavier Merriman, (1841-1926), Prime Minister of the Cape

prove his loyalty to truth, he did so with a smile. That must be the attitude of every satyagrahi. Mr. P. K. Naidoo has provided us a striking example of it.

Our struggle is producing a profound effect on the Coloured people. Dr. Abdurahman has commented on it in his journal at great length and has held up the example of the Indian community to every Coloured person. Some of them have also passed a resolution in Johannesburg to defy the laws of the Government and take to satyagraha.

In the British Parliament, it was stated, in reply to a question, that the Government were in correspondence with the Transvaal Government.

At such a juncture, the Indian community must do a bit of hard thinking and summon up its strength. While the Chinese are again roused, Indians seem to have sunk into lethargy. The Tamil Indians are an exception. We entreat and urge the Gujarati Hindus and Muslims to consider the great significance of the struggle and throw themselves into it whole-heartedly. It is chiefly the leaders who should take up this task. If they show themselves strong, probably everything will be all right. If the community appears to be weak, it is because the leaders are so. If, in spite of the [hopeful] signs referred to above the leaders do not bestir themselves, whom should we blame?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-3-1910

272. DISGRACEFUL

We gather from *The* [*Natal*] *Mercury* that about a hundred Indians have arrived in Durban by the *Kanzler*. All of them want to go to the Transvaal. In accordance with an [official] arrangement, the [Immigration?] Department here issues passes for the Transvaal and thus Indians reach the Transvaal.

Let alone people going to gaol, they have grown so impatient to be in the Transvaal and pursue their selfish ends there that they rush thither like moths rushing into a flame.

Looking at the other side, we find some Indians and Chinese going to gaol in the Transvaal. In Natal, [too,] the Indians have come forward to join the struggle.

In these circumstances, it is quite easy for the Indians to see why the struggle is lengthening out. A satyagrahi is bound to have patience. No matter if a few Indians, lost to all sense of shame, go to the Transvaal and accept slavery, the satyagrahi will fight for their freedom. He will also thereby open their eyes.

Durban Indians can do much in this matter. They can use persuasion and stop the Indians who are impatient to go to the Transvaal. It will be a matter of rejoicing if even one Indian is saved in this way. Those who are unable to court imprisonment can attend to this task. The Congress, the Arya Mandal and other associations can do much in this matter. Will they?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-3-1910

273. JOHANNESBURG

SATYAGRAHA FUND

Questions are being asked regarding the control of large sums of money received as aid from India. It is the right of every Indian to ask for and obtain an explanation. The money is Mr. Gandhi's charge and is intended to be used only for purposes connected with the satyagraha campaign. A separate account called the passive Resistance Fund Account has been opened and is being operated by Mr. Gandhi. Part of the amount, to wit, the entire sum received from Rangoon and a portion of that received from Bombay, has been donated for the maintenance of indigent satyagrahis and their families. The rest is being used for financing the satyagraha campaign, that is, to meet the expenditure of the British Indian Association office here and in England and the expenditure incurred in India and also to pay off the debts incurred for the satyagraha campaign. Mr. Cachalia and other satyagrahis are being consulted about all this expenditure and accounts of the same are forwarded to Prof. Gokhale and to the Secretary of the Fund, Mr. Petit. Mr. Gandhi has received letters from Prof. Gokhale and Mr. Petit which leave the disbursement of the Fund to his discretion. The letters are reproduced in the English section in full.[1] If it is desired to use the Fund for any other purposes,

[1] Only relevant portions of the letters by Gokhale dated 13-1-1910 and by Petit dated 5-1-1910 were reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 5-3-1910.

permission of the donors will be necessary.

BOKSBURG STORY

The Government has got the Boksburg Indians into its clutches. I wish they remain strong and get out of them. They are being misled by some foolish persons. I should advise such persons to keep their mouths shut. If they can do no good, they should certainly not make matters worse. The former were called back by the Magistrate after they had been taken to prison, and he ordered confiscation of their property in default of payment of fine. As a result, Mr. Moses' house valued at £300 and Moonasamy's valued at £250 were confiscated in lieu of a fine of £2 [each]. I hope that, in spite of this, the Boksburg Indians will refuse to pay the fines and allow their property to be confiscated. No Indian should come forward to bid for miscellaneous articles of property, but someone should bid for the house and secure it. It has been suggested that the losses to be incurred in this process should be made good by the Committee. The suggestion, it wouldappear, proceeds from some misunderstanding. All satyagrahis have to bear [their own] losses. If the Committee were to pay the fine for anyone who is not awarded imprisonment in lieu of fine, the person concerned could not be considered to have offered satyagraha. If, on a person being fined, his property is confiscated and he is reduced to poverty, the Committee can provide for his maintenance. More than this, the Committee can never do. Several Indians have been reduced to poverty in the course and in consequence of the struggle. What help did they receive? Help is out of the question. Those who have been fined should be proud that, being reduced to poverty, they will now be able to fight with all their strength. There is no question here, be it noted, of putting up with the loss of a house.

Moreover, some persons suggest that the Court's order being unreasonable, an appeal should be preferred. The days for such appeals are over. No one will now be able to hold his own by filing appeals. If, however, the individual concerned is a man of courage, he will not develop cold feet at the prospect of the auctioning of his goods or any other similar measure. This is the last occasion. Only the most courageous should come forward now. This is no time when the others, half-hearted satyagrahis, can hope to hold out. Only a strong man can bear blows from every side. Mr. Rustomjee and Mr. Cachalia have lost their all. Who will come to their aid?

I believe the Indians [concerned] have preferred an appeal in

this matter only with a view to gaining time. The *Gazette* carries a notice regarding the auction of the property the very next Saturday, but in view of the notice of appeal, the auctioning will not be proceeded with. It is my hope, however, that in the end the Indian friends will allow their property to be auctioned.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-3-1910

274. LETTER TO MOULVI AHMED MUKHTIAR

DURBAN,

Friday, March 11, 1910

MOULVI SAHEB AHMED MUKHTIAR,

Received your letter. The Phoenix debt was incurred by me mostly during the struggle. This debt can be paid up from the Satyagraha Fund, for *Indian Opinion* is conducted solely for the service of the community and for carrying on the struggle. The workers working there live in poverty for the sake of the community and Phoenix itself was bought for the community. Whatever activity is carried on there is done for its sake. Itherefore regard Phoenix as a public institution. Moreover, the community had actually started a special fund in the Transvaal to pay up the debt that has been or is being paid from the Satyagraha Fund; but it did not succeed. Whatever expenditure has been or is being incurred is accounted for to Professor Gokhale in India.

Perhaps you do not know that all my earnings have been spent on Phoenix.

I am sorry to find that the report of your interview with me as published by you[1] gives for the most part a distorted version of what I had said.[2]

You are at liberty to publish this letter.

Salaams from

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-3-1910

[1] Not available

[2] *Vide* "Letter to M. P. Fancy", 16-3-1910

275. MR. TATHAM ON INDENTURED INDIANS

There seems to be a remarkable unanimity in Natal, save for the interested planters, that the importation of indentured labour should cease. We reproduce this week extracts from Mr. Tatham's speech[1] on the question. We are not concerned with Mr. Tatham's premises, some of which are faulty. We do not share the view that competitive industrialism promotes the greatness of a nation, and that "the civilising influence" of the white man "adds to the sum of human happiness". His strictures on the spread of Mahomedanism betray gross ignorance. With these views, however, as we have said, we are not concerned. But we heartily agree with him that "it would be better that these industries (the sugar and tea) did not exist at all than that they should be supported by a form of labour that was going to bring ruin to the country". We also go further with Mr. Tatham and say, with him, that "these industries will not suffer for want of Asiatic labour". It was to be wished that Mr. Tatham had taken up the higher ground and condemned the system of indenture on merits and because of its inherent evil. Be that, however, as it may, there can be no doubt that the importation of this servile labour into South Africa is doomed. And with it must disappear the eternal Asiatic question.

There seems to be a fear lurking in the minds of some Indians that abolition of the indenture system may worsen the position of the resident Indian population. We would venture to point out to such of our readers as entertain the fear, that they will not better the position of their countrymen by supporting a system they do not like. We desire to live here not on sufference but as a matter of right and duty.

We must not mistake the references by some of the planter-members of the Natal Legislature to the £3 tax as being unjust so far as the women are concerned for their desire to revolutionise their treatment of the Indian question as a whole. They have repeatedly declared that they want our labour but not our competition in trade or other branches of industry. They do not want to give civil or political equality. As we have often said, civil or political equality is not a matter of gift. We have to create a situation whereunder we can take it. And it must be clear to any commonsense man that such a

[1] At a meeting of the Maritzburg Parliamentary Debating Society on 3-3-1910

state of things is impossible so long as servile labour pours into the Colony from India.

Indian Opinion, 12-3-1910

276. INDENTURED INDIANS

The agitation in India for prohibiting the emigration of indentured Indians has occasioned much discussion here too in the newspapers. Mr. Tatham, a Maritzburg lawyer, stated in a speech the other day that under the Union the import of Indian labour must stop. He holds that the civilization of the West is superior to ours, and that it would not be quite right that the two should mingle with each other. He asserts that we are not good enough to be allowed to associate with them. He ends up with a few unworthy remarks about the Muslim faith, declaring that it would be best if there were no Indians in South Africa.

We need not pay any attention to this argument; it is [of course] necessary to know what it is. However, we must accept the suggestion for stopping the import of indentured labour. Every Indian should understand that the immigration of indentured Indians is neither in the interests of free Indians nor the labourers themselves. It is short-sighted to attach importance to the trade with indentured labourers and the moderate profits some of us make out of the import of foodgrains for them. We do not—we cannot—have much trade with them. We shall not be allowed to import goods for them and, even if all this were possible, the resulting gain should not tempt us. Certainly, no Indian can claim that the indentured labourer is happy. No free Indian will be ready to put himself in his position. The severity with whichthey are treated, even prisoners never experience. The amount of work they are required to do, prisoners are never made to do. When, at the end of their days of slavery, they are set free, the taint of slavery remains with them for many years. It is certainly not desirable that a single Indian should have to live in this condition.

If the immigration of indentured Indians stops, there will be an immediate improvement in the condition of the Indians now settled in South Africa. Our present plight is entirely due to [the whites'] fear of indentured Indians. Following the arrival of Chinese indentured labourers in the Transvaal, the Cape Chinese found themselves in trouble and a harsh law was passed. The whites labour under the

apprehension that a population of indentured Indians in South Africa will lead to a swelling in the numbers of the community. There is only one way to remove this fear. From every point of view, therefore, the immigration of indentured Indians must stop.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-3-1910

277. INDIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

This body has recently ventured on a very commendable undertaking. The suppliers of Nestle's milk, Needle-point cigarettes and Lion matches refuse to trade with Indians, with the result that Indian traders have to depend on the whites for these items and pay fancy prices.

It is obvious that if we had any spirit in us, these three firms could not afford to slight Indians. Even in trade one must maintain one's prestige and dignity. We often neglect to do this, disregarding self-respect where we expect some profit. The Durban Indian Chamber of Commerce wants now to change all this. It has decided to save itself both from the insults of the Nestle's milk-suppliers and the financial loss. This is how it will be done: All the milk needed by Indians will be bought from another firm and a limited liability company will be formed to obtain the necessary supplies; the company will then supply the retail traders. All the retailers will bind themselves not to buy Nestle's milk but to get their supplies only from this company.

Enthusiasm runs so high at the moment that shares to the value of about £1,500 have already been subscribed and the retailers have agreed not to buy Nestle's milk.

This is a most significant step. If it succeeds, the Nestle's people will realize that they cannot afford to insult Indians and the latter will discover that they can stand their ground by relying on their own strength.

Success will depend on the fulfilment of the following conditions:

(1) Indians must have the necessary enthusiasm and ability for such undertakings.

(2) The leaders must be honest at least in this field of

business. It will not do for any of them to appropriate the profits themselves to the exclusion of others, or for the company to expect big returns [on the capital].

(3) There must be unity among Indian traders.

(4) The small trader will have to be large-hearted.

(5) And all Indians must have a keen sense of self-respect.

If this one venture succeeds, it will pave the way for many others. We congratulate the Indian Chamber of Commerce and its office-bearers on taking this step, and wish them success in their venture. Success, though, will depend on the work of the office-bearers.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-3-1910

278. JOSEPH ROYEPPEN AS HAWKER

We once published a photograph of Mr. Joseph Royeppen the barrister. This time we publish a photograph of Mr. Joseph Royeppen the hawker. In view of the services which he has been rendering, we are sure that all readers will be pleased with the present photograph. India's uplift will be brought about by those who suffer and take to manual labour; lawyers and barristers will only put her into fetters.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-3-1910

279. JOHANNESBURG

Sunday [*March 13, 1910*]

NATAL FIGHTERS

The Natal recruits, not having been arrested [at the border], have again entered the Transvaal. At Volksrust, they were met by an officer who told them that he had no orders to arrest them. This was a disappointment to them. They were obliged to buy tickets for Johannesburg, and thus they went ahead.

Mr. Cachalia, Mr. Waja, Mr. David Ernest and Mr. David Marie had gone to Charlestown to join the recruits and get arrested. Mr. Saleh Ibrahim also joined them there. Local Indians had turned up at

the Charlestown, Volksrust and Standerton stations.

On their arrival at Johannesburg, they were received by the Imam Saheb, Mr. Abdool Kadir Bawazeer, early in the morning though it was. He invited them all to lunch. They were then taken to stay with members of their respective communities. An effort is being made to lodge all the satyagrahis in one place.

So far, what has happened is that a large amount has been spent on railway fares. Let us see what comes next. It is expected that all of them will start their hawking rounds from Monday; they will earn their own expenses that way and also get arrested.

"HIND SWARAJ" PROSCRIBED

There has been a cable report from India that Mr. Gandhi's book, *Hind Swaraj*, has been proscribed there. This was not altogether unexpected. Some of the arguments in the book tend against British rule. It seems the Government was afraid that they might give encouragement to the extremists and promote terrorism. Mr. Gandhi intends to publish an English translation[1] of the book and wishes that it should be read by a large number of whites. Money will be needed for the purpose. The book will be offered at cost price. Those who wish to buy a copy should write to Mr. Gandhi or to the Manager, Phoenix. It may take some time to bring out the translation as an independent publication, since it cannot be published in *Indian Opinion*, but it is not likely to cost more than six pence a copy. Every well-wisher of India should help in this venture.

One should consider whether this step of the Government will have any repercussions on the Transvaal agitation. It is bound to have some effect one way or another. The Transvaal struggle betokens an awakening among the Indians. The spirit that Indians have come to develop in the Transvaal and in South Africa is not one which it will be possible to put out. The Government, in its ignorance, cannot help resorting to repression. Mr. Gandhi's part in the agitation and his authorship of the book on *swaraj* cannot remain unconnected. Moreover, the man who is a satyagrahi in the Transvaal agitation will be one in other situations as well. In this way, the book on *swaraj* may either strengthen or weaken [the Transvaal agitation]. Those who are timid will take fright and protest that they have nothing to do with *swaraj*, that they do not want to invite ruin on themselves. Those who

[1] *Vide* "Preface to *Indian Home Rule*", 20-3-1910

are bold, who are satyagrahis through and through, will fight with redoubled strength and determination, knowing that the Transvaal campaign holds the key to *swaraj* in India. This will be a test for Mr. Gandhi as also for other Indians.

Generally speaking, those who have been fighting in the Transvaal have no cause to fear anything. The utmost that can happen is that thefate of the book on *swaraj* may have the effect of prolonging the Transvaal campaign. Every Indian can see that there can be no other result. There may be other consequences to Mr. Gandhi personally. He cannot choose but suffer them. One cannot serve one's motherland in any other way or on any other terms.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-3-1910

280. LETTER TO M. P. FANCY

Tuesday, March 16, 1910

SHETH SHRI M. P. FANCY,

You have raised a question in connection with the interview which Moulvi Saheb Ahmed Mukhtiar had with me and which he has published.[1] You tell me that it has been a matter of controversy among some Indians and you therefore feel that I should make a statement whether the 'interview' has been correctly reported or not.

I had not the least intention to do this. The community knows me; and if it does not yet do so, it is not possible for me to introduce myself to it now. An Indian can immediately know the truth of statements attributed to me, whether they were made by me or not. However, in response to your request I make the following reply:

I am sorry to find that, in the 'interview' as published by the Moulvi Saheb, the statements made by me have been twisted. At the end of our meeting he expressed his satisfaction and told me that he had received full explanation and would render every assistance to the struggle. Yet the twist he has given to the interview is likely to harm the struggle.

I explained to him the origin of the Satyagraha Fund. I told him

[1] Not available

about the letter[1] I had written from England to Prof. Gokhale and the one[2] to Mr. Polak. I informed the Moulvi Saheb that in these letters I had written about the debt I had incurred in connection with *Indian Opinion* on account of the struggle. I explained to him how the funds came in response to those letters. I further told him that in my letter[3] to Prof. Gokhale I had intimated to him that the funds would be spent to clear off the debt incurred on account of *Indian Opinion*, to meet the expenditure on the office of the Association as well as the office in England and to maintain the families of poor satyagrahis. I alsoinformed him of Prof. Gokhale's letter approving the expenditure and told him that, though Prof. Gokhale as well as Mr. Petit had left it to me to decide how the funds were disposed of, I had no intention of spending the money solely according to my discretion. I informed him that I consulted Mr. Cachalia and other satyagrahis in the management of the funds, that a separate account had been opened for the fund and that a statement of all the disbursements would be published at the end of the struggle; and that even now Prof. Gokhale was kept posted about how the money was spent.[4] And the Moulvi Saheb expressed complete satisfaction.

About travelling third class, I told the Moulvi Saheb that I did not for the present advise other Indians to travel third, but so far as I myself was concerned I had decided to travel third for the following reasons:

(1) The Transvaal Railway Regulations had come into force.
(2) Money was being spent from the Satyagraha Fund.
(3) I had become poor and so had other satyagrahis.
(4) My present state of mind favoured such travelling.
(5) I shuddered to read the account of the hardships that the Kaffirs had to suffer in the third-class carriages in the Cape and I wanted to experience the same hardships myself.
(6) When I was arrested in Natal in connection with the Poll Tax, I thought I could serve [the community] better if I lived like a poor Indian.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. K Gokhale",23-7-1909
[2] Not available
[3] *Vide* "Letter to G. K Gokhale", 6-12-1909
[4] *Vide* "Letter to G. K. Gokhale",25-4-1910

In spite of this explanation of mine, the Moulvi Saheb thought that it was a mistake on my part, similar to the one I had committed in giving finger-prints, to have begun to travel third. Upon this, I told him that I did not believe that I had committed a mistake in giving finger-prints and that I had taken the right step in travelling third. I, moreover, made it clear to him that I was not always going to travel third. I also argued that it would be very expensive if the large number of Indians who came forward to be arrested travelled first or second.

As regards Swami Shri Shankeranand's[1] views, I told him that I approved of what the Swami said at the Kathiawad Arya Mandal, viz., that those who wanted to stay together as equals should be equally strong. I also liked Swamiji's statement that if, of a group of four comrades, three were armed, the fourth also must arm himself. But while saying this I told him that to me 'arms' meant satyagraha. I said to him that I considered the sword powerless before a satyagrahi. I also said that I was opposed to any person who tried to set one community against another. The Moulvi Saheb expressed his satisfaction at these views also and we parted.

When, therefore, I saw the 'interview' published by him, I felt sorry for the community. What I have given above is a bare summary of the 'interview'. I have given a reply[2] to the Moulvi Saheb's questions particularly in connection with the money spent on *Indian Opinion*, a copy of which is enclosed herewith.

I am,

a servant of India,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-3-1910

[1] *Vide* "Swamiji's Speech in the *Mercury*", 2-7-1910

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Moulvi Ahmed Mukhtiar", 11-3-1910

281. INTERVIEW TO "THE STAR"[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
March 17, 1910

The Government have taken steps to arrest the Indians who came into the Transvaal with Mr. Gandhi on Sunday morning. Two were arrested on Monday, six on Tuesday, and two yesterday, and all are under order of deportation and are being taken to Pretoria to-day, from where they will be deported to Natal. All these men are either educated Indians or pre-war residents, and in spite of their right of domicile or of entry by reason of education, they will, if necessary, we understand, return to Natal when the struggle ends.

Mr. Gandhi told our representative this morning that the Indians had come to Johannesburg not to assert their personal rights, but to take part in the struggle. They will return and be re-arrested at Volksrust and imprisoned. The balance will be arrested in a few days. Mr. Gandhi said:

"I do not know why the Government do not arrest me. I freely admit that I am instrumental in bringing these men and introducing them into the Colony, and it has really been suggested that in bringing them into the Colony I am supposed to commit a breach of the Immigration Law in that I aid and abet prohibited immigrants to enter the Colony. Personally I do not consider these Indians to be prohibited immigrants at all. Our struggle principally consists in suffering, and by suffering bringing the desired relief. In Diepkloof prison there are 100 passive resisters, including Chinese, and about 36 are now awaiting deportation."

The Star, 17-3-1910

[1] A report of this appeared also in *The Natal Mercury*, 18-3-1910, and it was reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 19-3-1910.

282. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before *March 19, 1910*]

My Association is informed that four Indians who were last week taken from Pretoria to Lourenco Marques prior to deportation to India were detained at the Lourenco Marques Prison; that each of the men had to pay 5/- to the Prison Authorities; and that the Authorities provided no food whatsoever, nor could the men obtain food if they offered to pay for it. My Association respectfully requests that you will kindly make immediate inquiry into the matter.

Indian Opinion, 19-3-1910.

283. LETTER TO POLICE COMMISSIONER[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before *March 19, 1910*]

My Association is informed that, when Indian prisoners who are awaiting trial at the Fort are brought down to the Court for the hearing of their cases, no provision is made by the Government for their midday meal while there, and the men have thus to remain without food until 6 p.m. on these days, unless friends supply it from outside. My Association is further informed that the same thing has occurred in regard to men who have been taken to Pretoria prior to deportation, no lunch being provided on the journey.

My Association requests that you will kindly inquire into the matter and have the grievance remedied.

Indian Opinion, 19-3-1910

[1] This letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was sent over the signature of the Acting Chairman, British Indian Association.

[2] This letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was sent to the Commissioner of Police, Pretoria, over the signature of A. M. Cachalia, Chairman, British Indian Association.

284. MORE CRUSADERS

Mr. Gandhi took with him to the Transvaal last week[1] quite a respectable number of crusaders. The list we publish in our columns is thoroughly cosmopolitan and representative of most of the important provinces of India. That many colonial-born Indians are coming forward to join the struggle is a healthy sign. Apart from the strength that these recruits give to the struggle, there is no doubt that they themselves benefit very greatly in that they receive true education in the school of suffering. The experience that the young Indians who have proceeded to the Transvaal are now gaining will stand them in good stead in after life. We congratulate the brave men who have deliberately gone to the Transvaal to court trouble. It was a fitting thing that a large and representative gathering of Indians saw them off at the Station[2].

The Transvaal Government again disappointed the passive resisters. The Immigration Officer would not arrest them at the border. We take it as a splendid certificate of honesty for passive resisters. These men entered that Colony without giving names or signatures or finger-impressions. Their identification, therefore, consisted in their own good faith. The Government know that these resisters have no desire to serve their own ends and remain in the Colony but that they are quite ready to quit the Colony the moment the Indian demands are granted.

Yet this non-arrest at the border means a great deal of waste of money and energy to the Indian community. This is inevitable. The Transvaal Government intend to exhaust our resources. And we must be prepared to meet them. This can be done simply by going forward undaunted without caring for consequences. A passive resister must be satisfied with the right deed.

Indian Opinion, 19-3-1910

[1] On 11-3-1910
[2] The Durban Station

285. INDIAN VOTERS AT THE CAPE

A correspondent has asked us how the Indian voters should vote at the Union Parliament elections. It is not an easy matter to lay down any rule. But it is safe to say that the Indian question will not be made a party question even if the elections take place on party lines and there is no coalition Government. There will be men belonging to both the parties who would generally sympathise with us. We would, therefore, suggest that the candidates may be asked set questions, and those who answer them favourably may receive the Indian vote, irrespective of party. The Indian voters should also realise that abstention should be practised without fail if no candidate be found in any constituency who would favour the Indian cause. The questions to be asked may be on the working of the Cape Immigration Law, the required amendment of the Dealers' [Licenses] Act, the Transvaal struggle, and the stoppage of indentured labour in Natal. The last two are now properly South African questions and should engage the attention of all the public men of South Africa.

Finally, we would suggest to the Indian voters at the Cape that they should have their own organisation which ought to be able to control the whole of the Indian vote and which should define its policy for the guidance of its members. The candidates will not listen to individual voters, but a body with the whole Indian vote behind it cannot but command attention.

Indian Opinion, 19-3-1910

286. LETTER TO BRITISH CONSUL[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 19, 1910

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 61/ 10/M of the 15th instant. My letter[2] was based on the information contained in a Tamil letter received by a member of the Association here from one of the parties. My Association is very careful as to acceptance of statements made by complainants.

Whilst thanking you for the suggestion that future allegations should be received with the utmost caution, I venture to state that the reply made to you by the Administrator of the Municipality of Lourenco Marques can by no means be accepted as conclusive. Did the Administrator himself see the prisoners? Did anyone from the Consulate see them? Unless these obvious precautions were taken, it can hardly be said that the statements passed to my Association are "wholly inaccurate and devoid of all foundation". If the inquiry was confined by the Administrator only to the officials in charge of complainants, it is clear that they would be interested in denying the statements, which might incriminate them or at least make them liable to remonstrance from their superiors.

Indian Opinion, 26-3-1910

[1] This letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was addressed to the British Consul, Lourenco Marques, by A. M. Cachalia, Chairman, British Indian Association, in reply to the former's denial of the Lourenco Marques incident; *vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", Before 19-3-1910

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", Before 19-3-1910

287. PREFACE TO " INDIAN HOME RULE" [1]

JOHANNESBURG,
March 20, 1910

It is not without hesitation that the translation of *Hind Swaraj* is submitted to the public. A European friend[2], with whom I discussed the contents, wanted to see a translation of it and, during our spare moments, I hurriedly dictated and he took it down. It is not a literal translation but it is a faithful rendering of the original. Several English friends have read it, and whilst opinions were being invited as to the advisability of publishing the work, news was received that the original was seized in India.[3] This information hastened the decision to publish the translation without a moment's delay. My fellow-workers at the International Printing Press shared my view and, by working overtime—a labour of love,—they have enabled me to place the translation before the public in an unexpectedly short time. The work is being given to the public at what is practically cost price. But, without the financial assistance of the many Indians who promised to buy copies for themselves and for distribution, it might never have seen the light of day.

I am quite aware of the many imperfections in the original. The English rendering, besides sharing these, must naturally exaggerate them, owing to my inability to convey the exact meaning of the original. Some of the friends who have read the translation have objected that the subject-matter has been dealt with in the form of a dialogue. I have no answer to offer to this objection except that the Gujarati language readily lends itself to such treatment and that it is considered the best method of treating difficult subjects. Had I written for English readers in the first instance, the subject would have been handled in a different manner. Moreover, the dialogue, as it has been given, actually took place between several friends, mostly readers of *Indian Opinion*, and myself.

Whilst the views expressed in *Hind Swaraj* are held by me, I

[1] This appeared *Indian Opinion* under the captions: The Publication of "lndian Home Rule": English Translation of the Gujarati Work: Hind Swaraj: Proscribed by the Indian Government.

[2] Kallenbach, *vide* Mahadev Desai's Preface to *Hind Swaraj*, 1938.

[3] *Vide* "Our Publications", 7-5-1910

have but endeavoured humbly to follow Tolstoy, Ruskin, Thoreau, Emerson and other writers, besides the masters of Indian philosophy. Tolstoy has been one of my teachers for a number of years. Those who want to see a corroboration of the views submitted in the following chapters will find it in the words of the above-named masters. For ready reference, some of the books are mentioned in the Appendices.[1]

I do not know why *Hind Swaraj* has been seized in India. To me, the seizure constitutes further condemnation of the civilization represented by the British Government. There is in the book not a trace of approval of violence in any shape or form. The methods of the British Government are, undoubtedly, severely condemned. To do otherwise would be for me to be a traitor to Truth; to India, and to the Empire to which I own allegiance. My notion of loyalty does not involve acceptance of current rule or government, irrespective of its righteousness or otherwise. Such notion is based upon the belief—not in its present justice or morality but—in a future acceptance by Government of that standard of morality in practice which it at present vaguely and hypocritically believes in, in theory. But I must frankly confess that I am not so much concerned about the stability of the Empire as I am about that of the ancient civilization of India which, in my opinion, represents the best that the world has ever seen. The British Government in India constitutes a struggle between the Modern Civilisation, which is the Kingdom of Satan, and the Ancient Civilisation, which is the Kingdom of God. The one is the God of War, the other is the God of Love. My countrymen impute the evils of modern civilisation to the English people and, therefore, believe that the English people are bad, and not the civilisation they represent. My countrymen, therefore, believe that they should adopt modern civilisation and modern methods of violence to drive out the English. *Hind Swaraj* has been written in order to show that they are following a suicidal policy, and that, if they would but revert to their own glorious civilisation, either the English would adopt the latter and become Indianised or find their occupation in India gone.

It was at first intended to publish the translation as a part of *Indian Opinion*, but the seizure of the original rendered such a course inadvisable. *Indian Opinion* represents the Transvaal Passive Resistance struggle and ventilates the grievances of British Indians in

[1] *Vide* Appendix I to *Hind Swaraj*

South Africa generally. It was, therefore, thought desirable not to publish through a representative organ views which are held by me personally and which may even be considered dangerous or disloyal. I am naturally anxious not to compromise a great struggle by any action of mine which has noconnection with it. Had I not known that there was a danger of methods of violence becoming popular, even in South Africa, had I not been called upon by hundreds of my countrymen, and not a few English friends, to express my opinion on the Nationalist movement in India, I would even have refrained, for the sake of the struggle, from reducing my views to writing. But, occupying the position I do, it would have been cowardice on my part to postpone publication under the circumstances just referred to.

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 2-4-1910

288. LETTER TO DIRECTOR OF PRISONS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 22, 1910

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter[2] of the 19th instant in reply to my letter[3] of the 23rd ultimo addressed to the Colonial Secretary, on the subject of the treatment of Mr. Parsee Rustomjee and other matters. I beg to thank you for the exhaustive information given to my Association.

As to Mr. Rustomjee's letter[4] to the Press, he was seen leg-ironed by many Indians, and the matter was reported to my Association on the very day that he was seen in that condition.

As to the Medical Officer's opinion, I venture to draw attention to the fact that the Medical Officer at Volksrust did prescribe a special diet for Mr. Rustomjee. That the language ascribed to the Medical Officer at Diepkloof by Mr. Rustomjee was used by him is beyond question, if a host of passive resisters discharged from Diepkloof are

[1] This letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was signed by A. M. Cachalia, Chairman, British Indian Association.

[2] Reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 26-3-1910

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 23-2-1910

[4] *Vide* Appendix II.

to be believed. Indeed, most of them have complained of unbecoming language used by that Officer.

It was only at a later period that special instructions were issued that Mr. Rustomjee might be allowed to take exercise. A certificate from the family physician of Mr. Rustomjee has been produced because it became necessary to challenge the opinion of the Prison Medical Officer; and I may state that Mr. Rustomjee is still far from well, and is undergoing treatment.

In my humble opinion, the question of the religious necessity of wearing a cap is one which Mr. Rustomjee is best able to decide. The gravamen of the complaint is, however, not that Mr. Rustomjee's special cap was taken away, but that he was compelled to take it off whenever the Governor and other officers appeared, instead of being allowed to retain the cap, as was done in Volksrust and Houtpoort, where a salaam was accepted as an equivalent.

The loss of weight complained of by Mr. Rustomjee is not during the period of incarceration at Diepkloof alone, but includes the Volksrust gaol also. Mr. Rustomjee was undoubtedly grateful that his obesity was reduced, but reduction took place at very great risk to his general health.

My Association is deeply grateful for the fact that passive resisters are translated to Diepkloof in order that they may be left entirely together. But, if that be so, may I ask that the special provision as to the prisoners at Diepkloof receiving a visitor and being allowed to correspond only after three months may be withdrawn, and that they may be, as in other gaols which are not penal settlements, permitted to correspond every month, and to receive visitors also likewise?

As to the sanitary services of the prison, regard being had to the special prejudices of British Indians in this matter, before passive resistance commenced, Indian prisoners were exempted from sanitary service. It was only after their removal to Diepkloof that this hardship was imposed upon them, and, if it is not the intention of the Government to subject passive resisters to special harassment, the Committee of my Association would once more venture to ask that this requirement may be waived.

In his statement to the Governor of the Gaol at Johannesburg, Mr. Rustomjee undoubtedly expressed his thanks for the better treatment that was accorded to him at the Fort and the consideration

that was invariably shown to him by the Governor himself.

Regarding Mr. Bawazeer, I notice that his complaint is practically admitted by the Government. In his case, the seriousness of the complaint lies in the fact that his disease was ignored and his complaint was pooh-poohed until after the discovery that he had a high temperature.

My Association has once more to report that the passive resisters at Diepkloof continue to send messages through discharged prisoners that they are insufficiently fed, and that the want of ghee is felt as an additional punishment.

My Association is glad that your Department recognise the mistake made about Mr. Joseph Royeppen and his fellow-prisoners having been made to walk bareheaded and barefooted and sent without any breakfast.

In conclusion, I venture to trust that the outstanding points regarding the supply of ghee, the sanitary service and correspondence by and visitors to passive resisters will receive the attention they deserve.

Indian Opinion, 26-3-1910

289. JOHANNESBURG

Wednesday [*March 23, 1910*]

WRANGLE OVER KRUGERSDORP LOCATION

The Committee on this Location has had its last meeting. Mr. Burger, former [Mining] Commissioner, gave evidence before it. Speaking with contempt and arrogance, he deposed that removal of Indians had already been decided upon before the War, and would have been carried out had the War not broken out in the meantime. Referring to Indians, he always used the word "coolie" in a most offensive manner. The gentleman stated that the Location for Indians was placed where it was because of intervention by the British Government. The Government then could not have done otherwise in view of the London Convention. If it had, the British Resident would have protested. Mr. Burger pointed out that, since these two difficulties no longer existed, the "coolies" must be removed immediately. He could not understand why for removing them an inquiry such as the present one was being held.

About the mosque, too, he was offensive and said that he did not remember what promise he had made when granting the site for it. He would, of course, not care to remember anything relating to "coolies". He said further, replying to Mr. Seehoff, that if he had made any promise about not shifting the Location, it would have been in writing. The whole of this evidence is worth reading. Its gist is what I have given above. The Location is in immediate danger. Indians must have courage if they want to save it. If they refuse to move, they cannot easily be made to. The Location will be saved if there is unity among the Indians there; otherwise it is as good as lost.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-3-1910

290. LETTER TO T. STREENIVAS

JOHANNESBURG,
March 24, 1910

DEAR SIR,

You will pardon my not having written to you earlier in reply to your letter of the 20th January. The fact is that I have not been in Johannesburg. The Tamil Indians here are largely Pillays, Moodleys, Naidoos, Chettys and Padiachys. There are very few Tamil Brahmins. Some of them are Christians having been converted in South Africa, or are sons of Christian parents. These latter are largely sons of indentured Indians. The Christians are a small community, but from a material standpoint somewhat progressive. They have almost entirely adopted Western habits and customs. This, however, does not appear to have affected their love for the Motherland. I do not know whether the information I have given you is what you wanted. If you will kindly write to me further, I shall be pleased to reply to your communications. When the battle is won, as it is bound to be, I have no doubt that its end will have been hastened by the unexampled bravery and self-sacrifice shown by the Tamil portion of the community. When I first landed in South Africa, there was something in them which drew me to them, but I never dreamed that they were capable of the grand pluck and capacity for suffering for the national

cause that they have shown.

I am,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

T. STREENIVAS, ESQ.
BARRISTER-AT-LAW
CRITIC OFFICE
KOMALESWARANPET
MOUNT ROAD, MADRAS

From a photostat of the typewritten original signed by Gandhiji: G.N. 3779

291. DEPORTATIONS

The deportations of Transvaal Indians that are going on must furnish painful reading to any lover of justice. These deportations, when they are to Natal, are not of any very great consequence, except for their future legal effect, which we do not propose to consider at present. But when passive resisters are deported to India, the deportations become a very serious matter. They are of men who have in several cases been voluntarily registered, whose credentials are well known to the Asiatic Department, and who have even served imprisonment already as passive resisters. They savour very much of the process of "hunting out every Asiatic". Our Johannesburg correspondent has often drawn attention to the fact that some of the persons deported are born in South Africa and some of them leave their families behind them. Thanks to the magnificent response from the Motherland, these families are being supported out of the passive resistance fund. Had the timely help not arrived, what would have been the consequence? Starvation would certainly have stared them in the face.

At the risk of repeating what has been often stated in these columns, we may remind our readers that these far-reaching orders take place without any judicial trial. The cases are administratively tried under semi-secrecy. Against these administrative acts, there is no appeal to the Supreme Court. Thus, under a totally un-British procedure, the liberty of a subject is taken away with a stroke of the pen. What is lacking in the law has been supplied by the astute subtlety of an unscrupulous Department. Legally, these deportations

can take place only as far as the Transvaal boundary. The Transvaal Government have, therefore, entered into an understanding with the Portuguese authorities (the neighbouring British Colonies would not or could not enter into such a nefarious contract), whereby passive resisters deported to the boundary of the Portuguese territories are taken up by the Portuguese Government and, without any trial, put on board a steamer going to India.

The question naturally arises: Assuming that the Imperial Government cannot interfere with the course of the law of a self-governing Colony that has received His Majesty's sanction, why do the Imperial Government look with criminal indifference upon the smuggling away of British Indians domiciled in the Transvaal to India through Delagoa Bay? There is no legal justification for it. If, instead of a British Colony, it was a foreign state that had entered into such a compact with the Portuguese Government, it would be a breach of treaty and might even justify a declaration of war. Without the concurrence, then, of the Imperial Government, the Transvaal Government could not have carried out these Indian deportations. The Imperial Government are, therefore, party to the desolation of many an Indian home. The conclusion is irresistible that the Central Government has abdicated its primary function of protecting British subjects against British subjects. It is paralysed before the might of the Transvaal Government. It is unable to shield the weak from oppression by the strong. It exists to strengthen the tyranny of tyrants. This is a tragical conclusion; but it is inevitable.

Let the Imperialists of South Africa ponder well over the facts we have given above, and ask themselves whether the conclusion we have drawn is not warranted by them.

Indian Opinion, 26-3-1910

292. KRUGERSDORP LOCATION COMMITTEE

The evidence of Mr. Burger given before the Location Committee is remarkable for its frankness, callousness and impertinence. We are unable to endorse the congratulations offered by the Committee to Mr. Burger for his so-called valua-ble evidence. Mr. Burger has forfeited all right to be treated as an unbiased witness owing to the statement made by him that he did not attach sufficient importance to "the coolies", as he contemptuously

termed the respectable Indian merchants who saw him before the war in his official capacity, to remember all that passed between him and them. Mr. Burger was, however, ingenuous enough to tell the Committee that the Republican Government could do nothing, as their action was hampered by the London Convention and the British Agent. But now, adds Mr. Burger, that the Government have a free hand, they should drive away "the coolies" without any fuss. The very Government that protected the Indians during the Republican regime and that insisted on Indian Bazaars abutting public roads, is now to be utilised to drive them to an inaccessible place where they cannot do any business at all.

One thing is clear from Mr. Burger's evidence. A site for the mosque was granted by the Government with due deliberation. Mr. Burger is unable to swear that he did not promise the Indian deputation that waited on him that the Location might be treated as permanent.

Indian Opinion, 26-3-1910

293. DEPORTATION—ITS MEANING

A large number of Indians in South Africa are developing a spirit of patriotism. If they can render some service to the Motherland without any effort, they certainly want to do so; but they find themselves helpless before the claims of self-interest. There are very few Indians who pay sufficient attention to the manner in which the Transvaal campaign is proceeding at the moment. Being engrossed in their own affairs, they are ignorant of what atrocities are committed on their own brethren, and why. There are also some who think that, since most of those who go in for self-sacrifice are Tamils, no notice need be taken of them.

We draw the attention of such Indians to the following considerations. Those who find themselves in agreement with them are requested to bring them to the notice of other Indians.

For some time past, Indian satyagrahis are being deported to India. Several brave Tamils have been so deported. Some of them were born in South Africa. The families of some are left in the Transvaal without any means of support. It is impossible to say what would have happened to them, had no aid been received from India.

The Indians who are deported are not tried in a court of law, but

only in private. There is no provision for appeal to the Supreme Court against an order so made. However, there is no great difficulty so long as men are deported only to Natal, for the Indians concerned can immediately return from Natal and go to gaol.

It is the practice of deporting to India that calls for urgent attention. The Transvaal Government has legal authority only to put a person across its own border. How, then, can it carry anyone to India? Not being in a position to achieve its mean object through a British colony, the Transvaal Government has entered into an arrangement with the Portuguese Government and executes its barbarous plan with its help. It is clear, however, that the Transvaal Government is not competent to enter into such an agreement. No such step can be taken without the consent of the Imperial Government. If any other State had entered into an agreement of this kind with the Portuguese authorities that might have led to war. This means that the Imperial Government is unable to prevent its own subjects from oppressing their fellow-subjects, that it is afraid of the Transvaal. This also implies that the authority of the Imperial Government is used to perpetuate the tyranny of the tyrant, is used to help the tyrant.

What should we do in such a situation? If Indians have any spirit in them, those who have capitulated out of timidity should rouse themselves again. We shall obtain no justice by going to courts of law. We must fight on, relying on our own strength. As the Transvaal Government's repression grows, we must display correspondingly greater strength, endurance and firmness. We desire that a large number of Indians should join the struggle.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-3-1910

294. PARSEE RUSTOMJEE

The Transvaal Government has sent a long reply[1] regarding Mr. Rustomjee; Mr. Cachalia has written[2] again. The matter has [also] been raised in the House of Commons. All this is to the good. The officials stopped at nothing in their effort to break Mr. Rustomjee's spirit.

[1] *Vide* Letter from the Director of Prisons to the Chairman, British Indian Association, 19-3-1910, reproduced in *Indian Opinions*, 26-3-1910.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Director of Prisons", 22-3-1910

They are suffering the consequence now. However brave a face they may put on it in public, they appear to have received quite a severe reprimand over this affair.

In the same letter, the Government has referred to the complaint in regard to the Imam Saheb. It had to admit the justice of the complaint. The sufferings of these two will help the prisoners who follow. Such is the mysterious law of God. We must learn to submit to that law. Any man who puts himself to suffering will diminish the value of that suffering if he himself enjoys its fruits. For his self-sacrifice to be perfect, he must go on suffering as long as his breath holds out and he must leave the fruits of his suffering to be enjoyed by those who come after. We wish such goodness and such strength to Mr. Rustomjee and the Imam Saheb.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-3-1910

295. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,

Phagan Vadi 4, Samvat 1966

[*March 29, 1910*]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have received your letter.

I can appreciate your inability to come here without respected Khushalbhai's[1] permission. It is your duty to act according to his wishes.

You can assist the objectives of our struggle here even if you remain there. Now that [*Hind*] *Swaraj* has been proscribed, I see that a strenuous fight will have to be put up there too. To do that you must build your character. Do you know the fundamental principles of our religion? You will, perhaps, say that you are able to recite the whole of the *Gita* and also know its meaning and wonder why I am asking you about fundamental principles. Knowing the fundamentals, as I interpret it, means putting them into practice. The first attribute of the

[1] Gandhiji's cousin, addressee's father; Gandhiji had asked the addressee to go to South Africa; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 3-10-1909

divine heritage is 'fearlessness'. I hope you remember that verse[1]. Have you attained to the state of 'fearlessness' to any extent? Will you do what is right fearlessly, even at the cost of your life? Practise fearlessness and try to attain that state till you succeed. You will be able to do a lot if you achieve that. In this context you should remember the lives of Prahlad[2], Sudhanva[3], and others. Please do not think that all these are legends. There have been many Indians in the past who have done such deeds and that is why we memorize the stories of their lives. We should not think that Prahlad and Sudhanva, Harishchandra[4] and Shravana[5] do not exist in India even today. We shall meet them when we deserve. They are not to be found in the chawlsof Bombay. You cannot expect a wheat crop from rocky soil. I shall not write more. Do ponder over the attributes of the divine heritage again. Read this letter bearing in mind those attributes and then try to act accordingly. Do read afresh the chapters on Satyagraha in [*Hind*] *Swaraj* and ponder over them. Do ask me any questions when you feel like doing so. You may live in Bombay but be quite sure that Bombay is a veritable hell, absolutely useless.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4925Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *The Bhagavat Gita*, XVI, 1-3

[2] Son of demon-King Hiranyakashipu, he was a great devotee of Vishnu and came out unscathed from many ordeals.

[3] *Vide* "Message to Tamil Brethren", 25-2-1909 & "Who Can go to Gaol?", 5-6-1909.

[4] King of Ayodhya who suffered great hardships and, while in the service of a *chandala* (out-caste), he was even ready to kill his wife Taramati for the sake of truth.

[5] A devoted son, who carried his blind parents to various places of pilgrimage in baskets put in slings attached to the two ends of a pole. While fetching water from a river, he was killed by King Dasharatha, who mistook the sound of the water filling the pitcher for an elephant drinking.

296. LETTER TO GENERAL MANAGER, C. S. A. R.[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 31, 1910

SIR,

The following incident has been reported to my Association by Mr. Ismail Adam of Pretoria, Merchant. He holds a first-class return-ticket from Park to Pretoria, which is numbered 9271. He was travelling last evening by the 8.10 p.m. train to Pretoria. He boarded the train, his ticket was clipped, and, as there was no room in the reserved compartment, he entered the next compartment, which was occupied by four Europeans, who did not object to Mr. Ismail Adam's presence in the compartment. The conductor, however, seeing him in that compartment, asked him why he was there, to which Mr. Ismail Adam replied that he would gladly go to any other compartment if he could find a seat. The conductor then said that he would have to change. Mr. Ismail Adam, thinking that this meant change to another train, asked why. The conductor thereupon seems to have become angry, and told him that he would have to get down at Doornfontein, and there, whilst the train was in motion but had slowed down, he pulled Mr. Ismail Adam out of the train on to the platform.

In the opinion of my Association, this seems to be one of the worst cases that have been brought to its notice. My Association will be glad to be assured that you will be pleased to take prompt action in the matter. Mr. Ismail Adam's address in Pretoria is 63, Queen Street.

Whilst my Association draws attention to this incident as a matter of public duty and in the interests of the community represented byit, there is no knowing whether Mr. Ismail Adam will not take independent steps. That the conductor should not mind even risking the lives of passengers in taking them down from a train in motion seems to show an extraordinary state of affairs.

Indian Opinion, 9-4-1910

[1] This letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was sent over the signature of the Chairman, British Indian Association.

297. WAR AGAINST COLOUR

The Johannesburg Municipality is being goaded into removing every Indian and Native employee, no matter how faithful his services may be and no matter what their length. That the Municipality or any other Department may not take a fresh supply of Coloured or Asiatic servants is a position against which not much can be said, but a summary dismissal of those who are already in its employ can do credit neither to the Municipality nor to those who force its hands. As the *South African News* very properly puts it:

> Replace the black man at the bottom by the white, take away as suggested the farms farmed by Natives and give them to white occupiers. Do this and what is to happen to the replaced Natives? That will be a harder problem to settle than that of the poor whites, but so long as the Natives' opportunities are not taken away from them, there need be no problem to solve. Segregate, repress or turn the Native into permanent unemployed and the madness known as sitting on the safety-valve will have begun.

There can be no doubt that a ruthless removal of Asiatic and more especially Native servants will only end in disaster, but it behoves British Indians and other Asiatics, as also the Natives, to learn the needful lesson from the present activity against Asiatic and Coloured races. The latter must not rely upon the white Colonists finding work for them or giving it to them. They will have to find independent means of earning a livelihood, and once a few leaders set themselves towards solving the problem, it will be found exceedingly easy.

Indian Opinion, 2-4-1910

298. DUTY OF NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

From cable-reports from India, we learn that a Bill for prohibiting indentured labour has been passed in the Viceroy's Legislative Council. The Viceroy has said that the law will be brought into effect only after full negotiations with the Government of Natal. This suggests that the Viceroy, left to himself, will not stop indentured labour if Indians remain inactive. If they do their duty, the system is bound to end; but we observe that some Indians think that the prohibition of indenture will be a disadvantage. Disadvantage to whom? If one thinks it is a disadvantage to those who offer themselves for indenture that they should be saved from slavery, there is no more to be said. Who else will stand to lose? As for free Indians, we think the immigration of indentured labourers is a great disadvantage to them. Those free Indians who live by their labour do not get employment, or, if they do, it is on a very low wage. Both the indentured labourers and other Indians are humiliated because the continued immigration of the former leads to increased resentment against us.

If indenture is prohibited, Indians can hope for an immediate improvement in their status. Once slavery has disappeared, it will be possible to get the laws about passes, etc., repealed, and there will be fewer attacks on traders. No doubt, even afterwards the struggle will have to be continued, but it can be continued with greater determination and better hope [of success]. When only free Indians are left in South Africa, the community will be in a position to do a great many things. Thus, from every point of view, the interests of Indians will be best served by the stopping of indenture.

It must be borne in mind that even if Indians were to give up the agitation for the prohibition of indentured labour, the Union Parliament will certainly prohibit it on its own. Indians would then look small and would lose the credit which they have a chance of earning today.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-4-1910

299. TERRIBLE CIVILIZATION OF THE WEST

An English journal called *The New Age* has published a cartoon on this subject, which we reproduce in this issue. It shows an army on the march. Behind, there is a grotesque figure, that of a general. On the body of this terrible form are hanging a gun emitting smoke in every direction and swords dripping with blood, and on its head a cannon. There is the drawing of a skull on a badge hanging on one side. On the arm, moreover, there is a cross. (This cross is the emblem of a batch which looks after the wounded.) In the mouth, held in the teeth, there is a dagger dripping with blood. On the shoulder is seen a belt studded with live cartridges. The drawing is entitled "March of Civilization". No one who reads this description of the cartoon can help becoming grave. On reflection, we cannot help feeling that Western civilization is as cruel as, perhaps more cruel than, the terrible expression on the face of the man in the cartoon. The sight which fills one with the utmost indignation is that of the cross in the midst of weapons dripping with blood. Here the hypocrisy of the new civilization reaches its climax. In former times, too, there used to be bloody wars, but they were free from the hypocrisy of modern civilization. While drawing our readers, attention to this cartoon, we want to give them at the same time a glimpse of the divine light of satyagraha. On one side, look at the picture of civilization drawn above, a civilization grown as terrible as a wolf through its hunger for wealth and its greedy pursuit of worldly pleasures. On the other, look at the figure of a satyagrahi who, out of his loyalty to truth, to his nature as a spiritual being and out of a desire to obey God's command, submits to the suffering inflicted by wicked men, with fortitude in his breast, with a smile on his face and without a single tear in his eyes. Of the two pictures, towards which will the reader feel attracted? We are sure it is the vision of the satyagrahi which will touch the heart of mankind, and that the effect will grow deeper as his sufferings increase. Is there anyone who, looking at this cartoon alone, does not feel in his heart that satyagraha is the only way in which mankind can attain freedom and strength? We admit, of course, that to be shot dead or hanged when trying to shoot another does test one's fortitude; but dying in the attempt to kill another does not require even a hundredth part of the fortitude and courage implicit in the suffering that a satyagrahi goes through, in the slow, prolonged

torture that he calmly endures in facing a bullet without firing one in return. No one wields a sword strong enough to bear down the force of satyagraha; on the contrary, a man brandishing a sword of steel has to give ground when confronted by a sword sharper than his. That is the reason why the story of a satyagrahi is read with a feeling of reverence. One who is not strong enough to practise satyagraha is naturally tempted to resort to brute force, which is, in comparison, quite easy to employ. There are some desperate Indians who, in their mad obsession with *swaraj* for India, seem to imagine that satyagraha is bound to be followed by resort to brute force—that is, that satyagraha is but one step in the effort to key oneself up to the fanaticism of violence. It would not be wrong to compare persons holding such views to the frog in the well who sought to conceive the ocean [as a big, big well]. The truth of the matter is that the man who cannot cultivate to its utmost limit the capacity for endurance required in satyagraha turns in his impatience to brute force and, growing desperate, takes a blind leap in an effort to end his suffering quickly. Such a man has never been a satyagrahi. He does not want to understand what satyagraha means.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-4-1910

300. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Phagan Vadi 7 [*Samvat 1966*]

[*April 2, 1910*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Your letter to hand. I return it to you so that you can understand my reply to it.

I shall try to answer the questions you have raised. But even then you may not understand thoroughly. You will perhaps find the explanations you have sought from [*Hind*] *Swaraj* itself if you read it afresh once or twice.

There is no doubt that we shall have to go back to the extent to which we have imbibed [modern] civilization. This part of the task is the most difficult one, but it will have to be done. When we take a wrong path there is no alternative but to go back. We have got to free ourselves from attachment to the things we are enjoying. For this it is

necessary that we begin to feel disgust for them. Whatever means and instruments appear to us to be beneficial are not going to be given up. Only he who realizes that there is more harm than the apparent benefit from a particular thing will give it up. I personally feel that no benefit has been derived from our being able to send letters quickly. When we give up railways and such other means we shall not bother ourselves about writing letters. A thing which is really free from fault may be used to a certain extent. We who are engulfed in this civilization may avail ourselves of postal and other facilities as long as we are so engulfed. If we make use of these things with knowledge and understanding we shall not go crazy over them, and instead of increasing our preoccupations we shall gradually reduce them. He who will understand this will not be tempted to take the post or the railway to the villages which do not have these. You and I should not remain passive and increase the use of steamers and other evil means for fear that these things cannot be abolished forthwith and that all the people will not give them up. Even if one man reduces or stops their use, others will learn to do so. He who believes that it is good to do so will go on doing so irrespective of others. This is the only way of spreading the truth; there is no other in the world.

It is very difficult to get rid of our fondness for Parliament. It was no doubt barbarous when people tore off the skin, burned persons alive and cut off their ears or nose; but the tyranny of Parliament is much greater than that of Chengiz Khan, Tamerlane and others. Hence it is that we are caught in its meshes. Modern tyranny is a trap of temptation and therefore does greater mischief. One can withstand the atrocities committed by one individual as such; but it is difficult to cope with the tyranny perpetrated upon a people in the name of the people. It seems to have happened in the past that some rulers were like King Foolishman while others turned out to be wise. Had Edward alone been our ruler it would not have been so objectionable; but every Englishman is ruling over you and me. Please ponder over the meaning of this statement. I do not refer here to people's fondness for this world. The common man in India at least believes that the Parliament is a hoax. Even an extraordinarily intelligent man, caught in the meshes of this civilization, loses his sanity in Parliament.

By saying that mercy cannot have any effect on the Pindaris you have denied the very existence of the soul or its [essential]

attribute. Lord Patanjali[1] has emphasized the greatness of mercy, etc., in such a way that we feel delighted even while thinking of those virtues. The real fact is that fear has taken deep root in us and consequently truth, mercy and such other virtues do not develop. And then we think that mercy has no effect on cruel people. If we show mercy to the person who shows mercy to us it is no mercy; it is only the return for mercy.

We should be considered weak if someone protects us free of charge or even if we pay him for doing so. If we have to seek outside help to be free from the menace of the Pindaris, etc., we are unfit for *swaraj*. If we would subdue them with physical force, we shall have to develop that force in ourselves. We shall not then have to pay blackmail or tribute. A woman seeks her husband's protection as a matter of right; but she is considered an *abala* (weak) after all.

Swaraj is for those who understand it. You and I can enjoy it even today. All the others will have to learn to do likewise. What is secured for us by others is not *swaraj* but *pararaj*, i.e., foreign rule, whether they be Indians or Englishmen.

In calling the cow-protection societies cow-killing societies, I have but stated the truth; for their object is to rescue the cow or protect her by bringing pressure on Mussalmans.

To rescue the cow by paying money is no protection of the cow; it is a way to teach the butcher to be deceitful. If we try to coerce the Mussalmans they will slaughter more cows. But if we persuade them or offer satyagraha against them they will protect her. No cow-protection society is necessary for doing this. That body should be for teaching Hinduism to the Hindus. It is better to kill an ox by a single blow of the sword than to kill it by starving it, by pricking it, by over-working it and thus torturing it.

It would be very confusing to take the examples of Shri Ramachandra and others literally. I have never imagined the possibility of a Ravana in the physical form of a man with ten heads and twenty arms. But to imagine that he was a huge passionate senseless animal and that he was killed by Shri Ramachandra representing the divine essence may appeal to the intellect. Tulsidasji[2]

[1] The sage who systematized the Yoga darshana (philosophy)

[2] The great Hindi poet-saint, author of *Ramacharitamanasa*, a Hindi version of the *Ramayana*

has described Ramachandraji as the forces of the Sun who is the destroyer of pride, infatuation, and the darkness of the night of excessive attachment. Do you think we shall have the least desire left in us to destroy anybody when we are rid of all pride, infatuation and attachment? If you say 'no', how could Ramchandraji who was free from pride, infatuation and attachment and who was an ocean of mercy destroy Ravana? However, let us first attain his stage, like Lakshmana[1] give up sleep and observe *brahmacharya* for fourteen years and then see where physical force could be used.

I want to say that everything is achieved by humility[2]. The example you gave of the Transvaal is quite appropriate. It is not enough merely to profess orally to have the above sentiment; it should stand the test when the occasion comes. Think of the numberless adversities Harishchandra had to face before his [devotion to] truth was proved. Think of the suffering Sudhanva had to undergo before his *bhakti* (devotion) was proved to be genuine. We may not consider these as mere legends. It may be that the names and forms were different; but they who have composed these stories have given their own experiences through them. Even in the Transvaal the babblings of persons like me are being put to the test. Also bear in mind that many who were regarded as satyagrahis have proved to be insincere demagogues. Who, then, should be regarded as true satyagrahis? Of course, they who possess virtues like compassion, etc. Nowhere has it been said that suffering may not have to be undergone. And what does suffering after all mean? It is the mind, says the *Gita*, which is the cause of our bondage as well as of our freedom.[3] Sudhanva was thrown into boiling oil. The person who got him thrown into it thought that he was inflicting suffering on Sudhanva; but for the latter it was a grand opportunity to show the intensity of his devotion.

It will never happen that all are equally rich or equally poor at the same time. But if we consider the good and evil aspects [of the various professions] it seems that the world is sustained by farmers. Farmers are of course poor. If a lawyer would boast of his altruism or spirituality, let him earn his livelihood through physical labour and carry on his legal practice without charging anything for it. You will

[1] Brother of Shri Ramachandra; he accompanied him to the forest.

[2] Literally, bowing at the feet

[3] मन एव मनुष्याणां कारणं बन्धमोक्षयो: This sentence, though generally attributed to the *Gita*, is from the *Brahmabindu Upanished.*

not easily realize that the lawyer is lazy. Just as a sensuous man, even when exhausted by indulging in passions, remains engrossed in sensual pleasures, so a lawyer, even when he is exhausted, goes on straining his nerves to the breaking point in his practice in the hope of getting wealth and attaining to greatness and later on passing a life of luxury and comfort. This is his objective. I am conscious that there is a little exaggeration in this; but, what I have said above is true for the most part.

What service will an army of doctors render to the country? What great things are they going to achieve by dissecting dead bodies, by killing animals, and by cramming worthless dicta for five or seven years? What will the country gain by the ability to cure physical diseases? That will simply increase our attachment to the body. We can formulate a plan for preventing the growth of disease even without the knowledge of medical science. This does not mean that there should be no doctors or physicians at all. They will always be with us. The point is that many a young man who gives an undue importance to this profession and wastes hundreds of rupees and several years qualifying for it, ought not to do so. We must know that we are not, nor are we going to be, benefited in the least by allopathic doctors.

I hope I have replied to all your questions. Please do not carry unnecessarily on your head the burden of emancipating India. Emancipate your own self. Even that burden is very great. Apply everything to yourself. Nobility of soul consists in realizing that you are yourself India. In your emancipation is the emancipation of India. All else is make-believe. If you feel interested, do persevere. You and I need not worry about others. If we bother about others, we shall forget our own task and lose everything. Please ponder over this from the point of view of altruism, not of selfishness. If you want to ask anything more, please do.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati *Gandhiji-ni Sadhana* by Raojibhai Patel, and *Mahatma Gandhiji-na Patro*, edited by Dahyabhai Patel

301. FROM "TRANSVAAL NOTES"[1]

Monday [*April 4, 1910*]

Messrs David Solomon, Moonsamy Chellan, Moonsamy Paul, John Edward, Dhobi Samy and Chillia have now been deported. On the 2nd instant were arrested Messrs Govindsamy N. Pillay, Kanabathe N. Pillay, Ellary Moonsamy, Maduray Muthoo, John Lazarus, Moonsamy, Chinasamy and Govindsamy. Of these, two are youngsters, and they were all engaged at a European cigar factory. These are very typical cases; Mr. David Solomon and his three companions were serving as waiters at the Trocadero. So that, literally, bread had been taken out of their mouths. Most of these men are voluntarily registered, but the fact is that the Government intend to crush the Tamil community, and so they are hunting them out from every nook and corner, and these men, instead of being immediately sentenced, are driven from pillar to post, undergo all kinds of administrative inquiry, and then, if the Government can possibly arrange it, they are deported to India.

Whilst on this question of deportation, I have just heard that steamer after steamer refuses to take these deportees. I trust that the information is true. The remedy certainly lies with the shippers in India. If they would make it known to the different steamship companies that, if they become party to the nefarious design of the Transvaal Government, they will not receive Indian patronage, they will certainly decline to take these unlawfully deported Indians.

Indian Opinion, 9-4-1910

302. JOHANNESBURG

Monday [*April 4, 1910*]

OTHER ARRESTS

Dhobi Samy and Mr. Chillia were arrested along with Mr. David Solomon, Mr. Moonsamy Chellan, Mr. Moonsamy Paul and Mr. John Edward. All of them have been ordered to be deported.

Besides these, on Saturday, April 2, were arrested Messrs

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg", 11-4-1910

Govindsamy Naran Pillay, Kanabathe Naran Pillay, Ellary Moonsamy, Madurai Muthoo, Moonsamy, K. Chinasamy and Govindsamy. Two of them are just youngsters. They were all employed in a cigar factory owned by a white.

From what I have heard, it appears that all these persons were arrested at the instance of an Indian. They were, of course, ready for arrest. But it is surprising how any Indian could have the courage to contrive their arrest. It would have been a different matter if, with their knowledge and consent, the arrests had been contrived in order to put life into the movement. As it is, their arrests were the result of a personal grudge. Of course, the movement has stood to gain by the action of those Indians.

These are very remarkable cases. Most of them had taken out voluntary registers, which they subsequently burned. Four of them were serving as waiters at the Trocadero. They have let go their jobs. The last seven had been long employed in a cigar factory. They, too, let go their jobs. Some of them used to earn as much as eight to ten pounds a month. Such self-sacrifice is rare to come across. It should be noted that all of them are Tamils, and that they show no sign of nervousness when they are taken away. Some of them have mothers, and some children. With such brave Indians among us, the fight can have only one issue. This sacrifice of the Tamil community will surely find a place in, history the world over.

I very much wish that other Indian communities make at least a fraction of such sacrifice.

HARASSMENT ON RAILWAYS

Mr. Ismail Adam is a Pretoria merchant. He was travelling in a first-class compartment from Park to Pretoria. He was made to get down while the train was in motion. Mr. Cachalia has addressed a letter to the Manager in connection with this incident. Below is a translation:[1]

The General Manager has stated in reply that an immediate inquiry will be held. Railway officials have already called on Mr. Ismail Adam. I gather that the latter intends taking steps on his own also.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to General Manager, C.S.A.R.", 31-3-1910

FAKIRA AND DHARMOO NAICKER

They where discharged on Friday[1]. Mr. Fakira is one of the few Gujaratis who have remained staunch satyagrahis. He has served six or seven terms of imprisonment, taking no thought of himself. Mr. Cachalia went [to the prison] to receive him and Mr. Naicker. Mr. Fakira reports that all satyagrahis are cheerful.

PRISONERS VISITED

On Sunday, Mr. Kallenbach went to Diepkloof to visit [the prisoners]. He saw Mr. Sorabji, whom he found in good health. Mr. Sorabji has sent the message that the satyagrahis are maintaining an unflinching spirit. Mr. Kallenbach spent nearly an hour with him.

SATYAGRAHIS IN DELAGOA BAY

There was a letter from Mr. Chokalingam Pillay from Delagoa Bay, saying that eighteen Indians had not been put on ship till the moment of writing. He adds that there has been a change for the better in their diet, thanks to his agitation.

WHITE SATYAGRAHIS

The practice of satyagraha by the Indian community has made it quite fashionable. A stringent law has been passed in the Orange River Colony, compelling British children to learn Dutch. The Director of Education there has resigned in protest against the law. The British have taken the thing very much to heart. A member of the Colony's Parliament advises the British not to submit to that law or recognize it in any manner whatsoever. A controversy is going on over the issue, which is being fanned by the newspapers here.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-4-1910

[1] In fact, on the 2nd which was a Saturday; *vide* "Transvaal Notes", *Indian Opinion*, 9-4-1910.

303. LETTER TO LEO TOLSTOY[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
TRANSVAAL,
SOUTH AFRICA,
April 4, 1910

DEAR SIR,

You will recollect my having carried on correspondence with you whilst I was temporarily in London.[2] As a humble follower of yours, I send you herewith a booklet[3] which I have written. It is my own translation of a Gujarati writing. Curiously enough, the original writing has been confiscated by the Government of India. I, therefore, hastened the above publication of the translation. I am most anxious not to worry you, but, if your health permits it and if you can find the time to go through the booklet, needless to say I shall value very highly your criticism of the writing. I am sending also a few copies of your *Letter to a Hindoo*[4], which you authorised me to publish. It has been translated in one of the Indian languages also.

I am,
Your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

COUNT LEO TOLSTOY
YASNAYA POLYANA
RUSSIA

From a block of the typewritten original signed by Gandhiji published in *Mahatma*, Vol. I, by D. G. Tendulkar

[1] For Tolstoy's reply, *vide* Appendix III.

[2] *Vide "Letter to Leo Tolstoy", 1-10-1909* & ; 10-11-1909.

[3] *Hind Swaraj* or *Indian Home Rule*

[4] Gandhiji's Gujarati rendering of the letter appeared in *Indian Opinion*, 25-12-1909 and 1-1-1910. It was also issued as a booklet.

304. LETTER TO DIRECTOR OF PRISONS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
April 4, 1910

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter[2] No. 1459/10 of the 1st instant regarding the treatment of passive resistance prisoners. My Association has no desire to ask for passive resisters any other treatment than that to which their classification entitles them; but the complaint of my Association is that, if the Government do not wish to impose additional hardships on these prisoners, they may not be sent to a penal settlement, where, my Association imagines, hardened criminals are sent, and where they are deprived of facilities allowed in all other prisons.

With reference to the restoration of ghee to the diet-scale, my Association does not ask for it in connection with passive resistance prisoners only, but regarding all Indian prisoners, because the deprivation places them in a position more unfortunate than that of the Natives, who are allowed one ounce of fat per day.

Indian Opinion, 9-4-1910

305. LETTER TO UMIASHANKAR MEHTA

Phagan Vad 11, 1966 [*April 6, 1910*]

CHI. UMIASHANKAR,

It is well that you wrote to me. But I had never meant that you should not voice any criticism of Phoenix. You have got to see and point out any real shortcoming. We do not wish to conceal faults. Now I am investigating into the matter you have mentioned.

Chi Jayashankar[3] has done a wise thing if he has abandoned the idea of a second marriage. I had spoken emphatically.

How is business there? Have you been able to sell some of the clothes you had taken?

[1] This letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was signed by A. M. Cachalia, Chairman, British Indian Association.

[2] This was in reply to "Letter to Director of Prisons", 22-3-1910, and was reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 9-4-1910.

[3] Addressee's brother

How is your health?

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 1630. Courtesy: Gunawant Umia- shankar

306. LETTER TO THE PRESS[1]

April 8, 1910

SIR,

I have read the report of the unfortunate Indian disturbance that took place yesterday.[2] It is entirely an error to suppose that it has anything to do with the passive resistance struggle that is going on. The fight took place among the members of a particular clan which is known for its martial spirit. The members had mutual quarrels among themselves, into which I need not go, and they thought that they would settle their differences by duelling. It is remarkable that, although the police, according to the reports, knew that thefight was about to take place, they were unable to take sufficient precautions to prevent it.

Indian Opinion, 16-4-1910

307. NEVER MIND

The letter[3] from the great Tolstoy which was published in this journal was reproduced in *Gujarat* of Nadiad[4]. A notice under the new Press law has been served on the journal, that it is to be prosecuted for this. Our readers probably remember the letter from Tolstoy. To all who have not read it, our advice is that they read it immediately. It is not a little surprising that, though it does not contain a single sentence which can promote violence, the person who reproduced it is being prosecuted. This betrays sheer madness on the part of the officers.

[1] This letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was sent over the signature of A. M. Cachalia, Chairman, British Indian Association.

[2] This refers to a row between two hostile camps of the Kanamias; *vide* "Johannesburg",11-4-1910

[3] *Letter to a Hindoo; vide 1st* footnote of "Preface to Leo Tolstoy's "Letter to a Hindoo", 19-11-1909.

[4] A town in Gujarat

They are in a panic and in that state of mind they are not able to judge what is permissible and what is not. Our only regret is that, though ours is the primary responsibility for publishing this letter, nothing is done to us and it is the editor of *Gujarat* who is in danger. We hope that the editor and the manager of *Gujarat* will do their duty fearlessly and not retrace a single step.

India is being severely tested now. For the repressive laws that have been passed and the suppression of writings, the primary responsibility lies with the terrorists but the matter does not rest there. Indiscriminate suppression of newspapers by the Government will not ensure peace. We think this kind of suppression will not lead to peace but will on the contrary increase the unrest. Those who have no bitterness in their minds will also be embittered now.

In fact, Tolstoy's letter was intended to calm the people's minds, to make them see their own faults instead of others. True, the letter gave a vivid account of the harm done by British rule. That thought cannot be erased by suppressing writings. The people's eyes have opened and will not close again.

In this connection, we want to address a few words to our readers. We think they ought not to remain quiet. We certainly will not. It is not possible for us to look on helplessly when someone has come into trouble for reproducing what was published by us. But a newspaper does not mean only its editor and management; the vast majority of those connected with it are its readers. Will our readers be intimidated by these developments or will they do their duty? That is what remains to be seen. Everyone who reads an issue should try to get someone else to read it. The chief object of anewspaper is to ensure the propagation of the views expressed and to see that they are acted upon. This cannot be done without the co-operation of its readers.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-4-1910

APPENDIX I

LORD AMPTHILL'S INTRODUCTION TO "M. K. GANDHI : AN INDIAN PATRIOT IN SOUTH AFRICA"

The writer of this book is not known to me personally, but there is a bond of sympathy between him and me in the sentiments which we share in regard to the cause of which he is so courageous and devoted an advocate.

I commend his book to all who are willing to take my word that it is worth reading. I respectfully suggest that others who attach no value to my opinion would do well to avail themselves of the information afforded by this book in regard to the question of which few, unfortunately, in this country have any knowledge, but which is nevertheless an Imperial question of the highest importance.

Mr. Doke does not pretend to give more than a short biography and character sketch of Mr. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, the leader of the Indian community in the Transvaal, but the importance of the book is due to the facts that men and matters are inseparably connected in all human affairs, and that the proper comprehension of political affairs in particular ever depends on a knowledge of the character and motives of those who direct them.

Although I am not in a position to criticise I do not doubt that in these pages the facts are accurately recorded, and I have sufficient reason to believe that the appreciation is just.

The subject of the sketch, Mr. Gandhi, has been denounced in this country, even by responsible persons, as an ordinary agitator; his acts have been misrepresented as mere vulgar defiance of the law; there have not even been wanting suggestion that his motives are those of self-interest and pecuniary profit.

A perusal of these pages ought to dispel any such notions from the mind of any fair man who has been misled into entertaining them. And with a better knowledge of the man there must come a better knowledge of the matter.

The Indian community in the Transvaal are struggling for the maintenance of a right and the removal of a degradation. Can we as Englishmen find fault with them for that? The only method of protest, except that of violence and disorder, which is open to them, who have neither votes nor representation, is that of passive resistance. Can we find fault with for that? They are not selfishly resisting a tax or insidiously striving for new political privileges; they are merely trying to regain that which has been taken from them—the honour of their community. Let him who blames them say what he would do in similar circumstances. Is there one of us who, out of respect for the law, would submit meekly and without protest to deprivation of rights and social degradation?

The Colonial Government can remove both grievances without sacrificing an

ounce of principle or losing a grain of dignity. Will the Colonial Government do so for the sake of the Empire at this moment of reconciliation, union, and new hope for the future? That is the question to which we are anxiously expecting an answer at the present moment—the question whether or not the Indians, who have their homes in the Transvaal and who have assisted as a community in the development of South Africa, who are British citizens and subjects of His Majesty the King, are to have any lot or share in the general rejoicing over the Union of South Africa.

The Colonial Government has but to repeal an Act, which has served its purpose, which is now useless and unworkable, and which they themselves declare to be a dead letter, and to make slight amendment of another Act, so as to remove the explicitracial distinction imposed by these laws and in practice admit a maximum of six Indians annually to the Colony, on the old principle of right, and the question would be settled. The Indians would then have no further reason for persisting in a struggle which for them means suffering and ruin while for the Colony it means a scandal and disgrace. This does not imply that they have no further grievances. They would still labour under the disabilities imposed by the late Transvaal Republic—the incapacity to acquire the franchise and to own land, and the liability to segregation in Locations.

It is not realised in this country that in the Transvaal, during the past three years, Indians have for the first time been deprived of a right which they have enjoyed, at any rate in theory, and still enjoy in every other part of the Empire, viz., the legal right of migration on the same terms as other civilized subjects of His Majesty. That is the simple but startling fact, and if this were understood, as it ought to be understood, surely there would be protest from men of all parties in both Houses of Parliament who have so solemnly expressed their disapproval and regret at the establishment of a "colour bar" under the new Constitution for South Africa. Undoubtedly this disfranchisement, under a Liberal administration, of men on account of their colour, this deprivation of an elementary right of British citizenship on racial grounds, constitutes a reactionary step in Imperial Government almost without parallel, and perhaps there never has been so great or momentous a departure from the principles on which the Empire has been built up and by which we have been wont to justify its existence; the principles of that true Liberalism which has hitherto belonged to Englishmen of all parties. But the violation of the political ethics of our race is even greater in the case of the "colour bar" which has been established in the Transvaal than in that of the new South African Constitution. If the Houses of Parliament and the Press cannot see this and do not think it worth while to take account of so momentous a reaction, it would seem that our genius for the government of an Empire has commenced its decline.

What is to be the result in India if it should finally be proved that we cannot protect British subjects under the British Flag, and that we are powerless to abide by the pledges of our Sovereign and our statesmen? Those who know about India will have no doubt as to the consequences. And what if India—irritated, mortified and humiliated—should become an unwilling and refractory partner in the great Imperial

concern? Surely it would be the beginning of the end of the Empire.

These, briefly, are the reasons why this question of "the British Indians in the Transvaal" is a great Imperial question and not one of mere internal administration of a self-governing Colony in which the Mother Country has neither right nor reason to interfere.

It is a matter which touches the honour of our race and affects the unity of the Empire as a whole; it therefore concerns every part of the Empire. Moreover, it is certain that any departure from principle, which may be sanctioned or ignored at the heart of the Empire, will operate as a mischievous example to other places inside and out, and then only by some rude shock to the whole system will the arrest of moral decay be possible.

The matter therefore concerns all who would "think Imperially", and it needs more "clear thinking" than it has hitherto received.

The question must be decided, not by methods of temporary expediency in which practice ignores theory, but on the fundamental principles of the ethics of our race. Theory can be modified in practice to suit the exigencies of time and place, but if theory is cast to the winds, there is no means of steering practice.

There is still hope that the danger may be realised and averted, for as I write I hear that negotiations for a settlement of the British Indian question in the Transvaal are still proceeding. I have no more earnest hope than that Mr. Gandhi and his fellow countrymen may see the accomplishment of that end, for which they have struggled so bravely and sacrificed so much, before this book is published.

AMPTHILL

MILTON ERNEST HALL,
BEDFORD,
26th August, 1909

M. K. Gandhi : An Indian Patriot in South Africa

APPENDIX II

STATEMENT MADE ON BEHALF OF NATAL DELEGATES

August 12, 1909

I and my co-delegates have to thank Your Lordship for receiving us here today. The reason why we have come is to lay before you some of the very serious grievances we labour under in the Colony of Natal.

A statement which has been sent to you deals slightly with three of the most important cases, which have been referred to in the statement.

The British Indian population of Natal is a very large one—more than that of the other Colonies combined together; the *vested rights* and *interests* are also very large. As regards the grievance of the Licensing Act of 1897, the manner in which the

Licensing Officers have been using their discretion in refusing British Indian licenses has caused great consternation amongst our mercantile community. It is therefore a matter of life and death to us, as we do not know who will be the next unfortunate trader to be deprived of his license, no matter how long he may have been established. This spells, practically, ruination, some of the most glaring instances of which have been stated in the statement.

Mr. Chamberlain, who was then the Colonial Secretary, had to enter a very strong protest against its very one-sided administration. This protest has also been slightly cited in the statement. This attitude has been followed by all his successors at the Colonial Office. The reasons given for refusal of some of the British Indian licenses by the Licensing Officers were (1) "to satisfy the popular feeling"—i.e., the European trade rivals (for whose sake our long-acquired interests are sacrificed); and (2) on account of extreme prejudice, which would not hold good in courts of equity.

Some of the European traders complain of us competing unfairly in business, which is not only incorrect, but in all civilised countries competition is considered as very healthy. Considerable misunderstanding exists upon the question of how we live and feed. Our business premises are open to inspection, and compare favourably with premises of the Europeans.

We are burdened with such restricting laws that our fate hangs practically on a balance, especially those who possess vested interests in the Colony.

The British Indian merchants buy land, erect business premises thereon, pay rates and taxes, custom dues, etc. The small shopkeepers purchase their stock from local European merchants.

The refusal to transfer British Indian licenses to other of the same standing is very unjust. Not only are Licensing Officers satisfied so far, but they go even further and refuse transfers between relatives and even sons or partners.

Natal is our adopted country, and many of us have children who have never seen India. We feel very much for their future because our own is not safeguarded, although in the past we have helped to push forward the trade of the Colony.

I may mention we are not laying great stress on the political franchise, although we have it in India in a different manner. For instance, your humble speaker was a Municipal Councillor in India, and was also a member of the local board, chairman of the school board, and was also elected to vote for the election of a member to the Legislative Council, Government of Bombay, on behalf of the Municipality.

Our interest in public concerns has been evidenced on numerous occasions. We furnished Stretcher-Bearer Corps during the Boer War and during the latest Native rebellions. Moreover, when necessary, we have been ready to help financially or otherwise with any public work. During the late Boer War a relief fund was opened by several Municipalities, advantage of which was taken by large numbers of whites, even non-British subjects. All the Indian refugees were kept by our community. In Maritzburg, Mr. Amod Bayat, one of my co-delegates, and a few others upkept them

and also helped others, while in Durban we never requested any help from the relief fund, which was publicly praised by the then Mayor of Durban, Mr. Nicol, C.M.G.

In spite of all protests made by the Colonial Office and the request for fair treatment made by us, no redress has yet been granted.

It is not our profession to agitate, as we are born traders, and what we only ask for is justice, which if denied now, it will be difficult for us what to say to the people.

We are a recognised loyal and law-abiding people, and we wish for an amendment in the Dealers' Licenses Act, No. 18 of 1897, for which the community will be grateful to Your Lordship.

With reference to the Indentured Immigration Act, 1895, before the introduction of Indian labour Natal was in a state of bankruptcy, but after their arrival things began to prosper and the country was placed on a sound financial basis. The chief and nearly all the industries of the Colony rely on this kind of labour for their very existence. A reference thereto has been made in the statement. After the expiration of the indenture, and after having given the best part of their lives to the welfare of the Colony, they are allowed to settle there, on the annual payment of £3, irrespective of sex and age. The age limit for boys and girls is 14. The treatment meted to them is in some cases horrible, as the case which occurred of Armitage, who cut out a portion of his Indian's ear and openly admitted doing so in the courts of law.

What we wish done in this connection has been mentioned in the statement.

The education of Indian children has been ridiculously restricted recently by the Natal Government. No child can now attend any Government School who has completed the age of 13. This is a deliberate way in which education—which is sorely needed for the benefit of both the country and the community—is hampered. It is our duty, therefore, to protest against such curtailing of education.

The Immigration Restriction Act is also one of the injustices. No father, mother, brother, or sister of Indian birth can join a person who may have established himself, and even children of over certain age limit cannot join their parents who can upkeep them, and their presence cannot but be considered as beneficial.

There are many more injustices, but we have related a few only of the most heartrending cases. I and my co-delegates again thank Your Lordship for giving us this patient interview and a patient hearing.

Your Lordship is doubtless aware of the pressing circumstances under which we are labouring in Natal, and humbly hope that you will be kind enough to give us a message to convey to our people.

After the introduction, Mr. Abdul Caadir, on behalf of the Natal delegates, thanked His Lordship for kindly consenting to grant them an interview.

A cablegram received from a mass meeting held in Natal was also read to His Lordship, which was in support of the deputation.

At the close of the interview Mr. Abdul Caadir stated that he had been a member of the Natal community for over 25 years, and that from his experiences he

feared that no justice to British Indians in Natal was to be expected from the Union.

M. C. ANGLIA

India Office Records : 179/09

APPENDIX III

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN AMPTHILL, CREWE AND SMUTS

(1) LORD AMPTHILL'S LETTER TO GENERAL SMUTS

August 10, 1909

DEAR GENERAL SMUTS,

I went to see Mr. Gandhi yesterday afternoon and spoke to him in accordance with your suggestions, but without saying that they came from you. I found him as clear, convincing, and unyielding from his point of view as you are from yours, and after two hours of argument, in which we discussed the question from every standpoint, practical, legal and ethical, I came away in despair of any compromise.

Mr. Gandhi is contending for a principle which he regards as essential and, so far as I can judge, he is no more likely to abandon a cause which he considers vital and just than any of us are likely to abandon our life-long principles of politics or religion. Indeed it seems to me that he is less likely to do so, for there are few of us who would sacrifice everything in order to secure a theoretical and unavailable right. It is impossible not to admire the man, for it is evident that he recognises no court of appeal except that of his own conscience.

Now, I hope you will not think it presumptuous on my part to offer you a suggestion. Why should you not do that which you are prepared to do without making any bargain with the passive resisters? Would you not "take the wind out of their sails" if you gave them, at any rate in effect, what they are asking for, namely, the repeal of Act 2 of 1907 and the admission by law of a maximum of six Indians annually as permanent residents? If it is right to do this, why not do it anyhow whether the passive resisters profess themselves contented or not? You would silence the criticism of outsiders and you would be giving the Imperial Government an effective answer to complaints in India.

May I venture a step further and suggest a means by which the limited admission of Indians could be provided for in the law without maintaining the "colour bar".

Enclosed is a copy of the amendment of the Immigrants' Restriction Act which was sometime back proposed to you by Mr. Gandhi. I have added a proviso at the end which seems to me to meet the case and of which I venture to beg your consideration.

You will see that it avoids making an invidious distinction between Asiatics and other immigrants and, incidentally, gives you power which might possibly be useful in future circumstances, and so far as I can judge, it would fully effect your purpose.

What distresses me and makes me anxious from the Imperial standpoint is this : thus far Indians have enjoyed the theoretical right of entry to any part of the British Empire. It is only in the Transvaal, during the past few years, that the theoretical right has been taken away as well as limited in practice. The perpetuation and possible extension of this disability seems to me to be fraught with grave peril to British influence and reputation in India and that is why I am so persistent in this cause.

Believe me,

Yours sincerely,

Colonial Office Records : 291/141

(2) Lord Ampthill's Letter to Lord Crewe

August 11, 1909

DEAR LORD CREWE,

Please forgive me if that which I am writing seems to you an intrusion and also for sending you a typed letter. It is too hot to write with any ease.

I had long talks with General Smuts and Mr. Gandhi yesterday and found to my bitter disappointment that there is no possible compromise between the views which they respectively hold on the abstract question of "right". You are so familiar with the views of both parties that I need not explain this any further, but in order that you may know what I am doing, I send you the enclosed copy of a letter which I have just written to General Smuts. The suggestions which I made therein are my own; that is, that they are not made by way of mediation between Mr. Gandhi and General Smuts, for such mediation only belongs to you.

I venture to hope that they may not seem unworthy of consideration now that you are bringing your negotiations to a head.

My great anxiety that there should be a settlement of the difficulty is my excuse for intruding my ideas upon you.

The final "denouement" that I should like to see is that, on the occasion of the third reading of the South Africa Bill in the House of Commons, Colonel Seely should announce on your behalf that the Transvaal Government have decided spontaneously on an act of generosity which would enable the Indians to participate in the rejoicing over the South Africa Union.

Would not this be greatly to the credit of your Government and would it not be worthwhile to avoid the reproach, that, under a Liberal Government, Indians in the Transvaal have been deprived of a right which they enjoy, at any rate, theoretically,

in every other part of the British Empire?

I do not wish to say a word myself or to appear in the matter at all if you can bring this about.

Believe me,

Yours sincerely,

AMPTHILL

Colonial Office Records : 291/141

(3) LORD CREWE'S LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL

CONFIDENTIAL

COLONIAL OFFICE,

August 11, 1909

MY DEAR AMPTHILL,

I also have seen General Smuts and Mr. Gandhi, and I am afraid that the divergence in principle which you mention certainly exists, though the difficulty may not be insuperable.

Assuming, as one fairly may, that the repeal of Act 2 of 1907 would form part of any settlement, the controversy narrows itself down to the form by which the admission of six just men is to be secured. Assuming, again, that to secure a settlement they must be introduced as residents, not under a licence liable to revocation, it appears that legislation would be required for this purpose. Such legislation might provide expressly for executive power to admit a limited number of persons, notwithstanding any existing law to the contrary; or it might proceed, as your suggestion does, through the education test. It strikes me, however, as I told Mr. Gandhi that it is not quite logical to stand by the principle of admission under an education test, and then to say (as your last proviso does) that Government may exclude any man in spite of his having satisfied that test; and I confess I should like to feel convinced that the Indian community would accept such a solution, and not use the wide general permission accorded under your clause as a basis for further claims.

Whether General Smuts could be got to agree to it, or something like it, I cannot say. I am expecting to hear from him.

Yours sincerely,

CREWE

Colonial Office Records : 291/141

(4) LORD AMPTHILL'S LETTER TO LORD CREWE

R. SECRET

August 12, 1909

DEAR LORD CREWE,

Just a line to thank you for having replied so kindly and speedily, and with your own hand, to my letter of two days ago.

I am afraid that I cannot tell you whether the Indian community would accept

the solution which I propose to the extent of undertaking to refrain from further demand. I would not put that question to Mr. Gandhi as I am not in the position of an authorized mediator. My impression, however, is that the community as a whole would be [only] too glad to accept it as means of retiring without dishonour from a hopeless contest. But men like Mr. Gandhi will continue the struggle until their last breath for that which they regard as justice and right.

The failure, however, to satisfy a small band of stalwarts need not, I venture to think, deter you from giving contentment to the great majority. The Transvaal Government can put an end to the disagreeables of 'passive resistance' at any moment by refraining from prosecuting the leaders who are all well known. I think, therefore, that, if you were to *impose* the settlement I suggest without making a bargain with Mr. Gandhi, he would accept a situation which would enable him to cease from active [contest] without disavowing his principles. I should certainly urge him to do so and should decline to assist in the furtherance of any further dema[nd]. Indeed, I have told him already that it is worse than useless to ask for m[ore] until time and circumstance have al[tered] the view of South African Colonists.

Yours sincerely,
AMPTHILL

Colonial Office Records : 291/141

APPENDIX IV

NATAL DELEGATES' LETTER TO VICEROY

WESTMINSTER PALACE HOTEL,
4, VICTORIA STREET,
LONDON, S. W.
August 27, 1909

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY OF INDIA

MY LORD,

We took the liberty of sending through Your Lordship's Private Secretary, a preliminary copy of a statement setting out some of the grievances of our fellow-country-men in Natal, by the last mail. We now beg to transmit 12 copies of the statement as submitted to the Secretaries of State for the Colonies and India and of the statement read to the Colonial Secretary.

We appeal to Your Excellency to give the same the favourable consideration of Your Excellency in Committee and to take such action as the urgently calls for.

The British Indians form a very important portion of the inhabitants of Natal; have very large interests in that Colony and are drawn from all parts of India. They number over 100,000, of whom 60,000 are indentured labourers imported by the Natal Government, and it is an acknowledged fact that the prosperity of Natal depends largely if not entirely, on this labour she receives from India.

As will appear from the statement, we are being crushed out of existence in Natal in a threefold manner. Our trade is slowly being taken from us by means of the unjust and tyrannical administration of a Licensing Law, which leaves in the hands of a Licensing Officer and his employers—who are themselves our trade rivals—unlimited powers in regard to the granting or refusal of trading licenses, old or new, without any check from the judicial tribunals of the Colony. Indian labourers are worked and treated almost as salves for the material profit of Natal, but as soon as they have finished their services with the Natal planters or mine-owners to whom they are allotted, they and their wives and their children are subjected to a special exorbitant annual tax, with a view to preventing them from settling in the Colony as freemen and earning an honest livelihood, and our future progress is almost entirely prevented, by the deprivaton of even ordinary facilities for giving a suitable education to our youths.

Unless, therefore, the Government of India as our protector and guardian, takes up our case, and insists on some measure of bare justice being meted out to us by the authorities in Natal, it is only a question of time when we will be slowy starved out of the Colony. There is a tangible remedy at the disposal of the Indian Government and that is, to stop the supply of indentured labour that annually flows into it, unless the Colony will deal justly by the Indian traders and the Indian labourers. This is no new remedy. Lord Curzon accepted the proposal that was made some years ago by us and he even sent a dispatch to the Natal Ministers intimating the taking of action unless redress was granted. We do not know what was the result of those negotiations. But instead of any redress being vouchsafed to us, our condition ever since that time has become much worse, owing to the stringency of the measures stated above and their almost remorseless enforcement. Our means of sabsistence are every day curtailed and our very existence in the Colony, in the enjoyment even of the elementary rights of British citizenship, is imperilled.

We therefore pray that Your Excellency in Council would be pleased to take such action and if necessary invite the intervention of the Imperial Government to that end, as might secure to us relief from the oppressive and unjust treatment of the Natal authorities.

We remain,

Your Excellency's obedient servants,

India Office Records : 179/254

APPENDIX V

LORD AMPTHILL'S LETTERS TO GANDHIJI AND LORD CREWE

(1) LORD AMPTHILL'S LETTER TO GANDHIJI

PERSONAL & PRIVATE

August 31, 1909

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I have received your letter of yesterday and I should anyhow have written to you this morning.

I have not seen the statement by Reuter's agent to which you refer, but I will search the newspapers and add a line to this letter if it should be necessary. Meanwhile, I will tell you that which I should anyhow have written to you this morning.

Yesterday morning, I received a letter from General Smuts which he had written hastily on the eve of his departure. he said that he was sorry not to be able to see me again and told me very briefly that he had made certain proposals to Lord Crewe. I gather that these proposals are that Act 2 of 1907 should be repealed and that permanent certificates of residence should be granted annually to a limited number of educated Indian immigrants, but, I fear from what he says that General Smuts is not going to meet us on the question of "right". I went to London yesterday and at once sought an interview with Lord Crewe in the House of Lords, suggesting to him that the moment had arrived when I might invite him to make a statement. Lord Crewe had not yet read the communication which had been addressed to him by General Smuts and he objected to making any statement in Parliament (and as I think quite justifiably) on the grounds that it would not do to anticipate any announcement which General Smuts might have to make on his arrival in South Africa. I admitted that this was quite fair bur I pointed out that you were waiting for an answer, that your time was precious and that it would not be fair to keep you waiting in this country. Lord Crewe then said that he would ask you to come and see him or some member of his department on his behalf and I agreed that he could not do better. We then proceeded to discuss the whole question and I argued the question of "right". Lord Crewe seemed to be impressed by my assertion that Indians have always enjoyed the right of entry, at any rate in theory, in every part of the Empire until they were deprived of it in the Transvaal. He is very anxious that you should be satisfied and his general attitude was more sympathetic than it has been before. If, therefore, you see him personally, you will have a very good opportunity of making your position clear. It will be for you to decide whether you are bound to continue passive resistance for the sake of the theoretical right, but, personally, I hope that you will not feel so bound, as I am anxious for the sake of your community that the struggle should cease and because I think you have already done enough for the sake

of honour. You will be gaining something very substantial in the repeal of Act 2 of 1907 and you can make it quite clear that your opinions on the question of right remain unaltered even though you feel justified in giving up a quixotic struggle.

This is all the advice I can give you at present but we must consult again after you have seen Lord Crewe or his representative.

I hope you have seen the introduction which I have written to Mr. Doke's book, for I venture to think that it places on record that I am entirely with you on the question of "right".[1]

Yours very faithfully,

AMPTHILL

From a photostat of the typewritten original : S. N. 5036

(2) LORD AMPTHILL'S LETTER TO LORD CREWE

August 30, 1909

DEAR LORD CREWE,

I have just received a note from General Smuts, written hastily on the eve of his departure, to tell me that he has agreed upon a settlement of the British Indian question with you. He does not tell me precisely what it is but I gather that the settle[ment] falls short of that which I proposed.

Would it be convenient to you make a statement in the House of lord on Wednesday?

If so, may I put a brief question to you before 4.30 on Wednesday, that is to say, "by private notice" and without speeches?

I do not want to press you if it is still inconvenient to make a public annoucement, but I think that it would be well to let Mr. Gandhi depart as soon as possible. He is only waiting to know the result of the negotiation, I believe.

Yours sincerely,

AMPTHILL

[Lord Crewe's Note]

I have seen Lord Ampthill, and explained why no question should be put at present.

C[REWE]

Colonial Office Records : 291/141

[1] For Lord Ampthill's introduction amplifying his stand on this question, *vide* Appendix XVIII.

APPENDIX VI

LORD AMPTHILL'S LETTER TO GANDHIJI

PRIVATE

September 11, 1909

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I am afraid that you cannot have explained sufficiently your reason for asking for a further interview with Lord Morley or you could not have received so discouraging a reply.

Apparently, you said that you wished to "re-state your position"; if so, it was hardly a persuasive manner of asking Lord Morley to give you more of his time. I think that you ought to have explained the question of "right" in the light of the latest developments and in view of the movement in India, so that Lord Morley might have seen that you have something new to tell him and that you were able to throw fresh light on the situation. Even now I think that you would do well to write such a letter in order that your reasons for refusing to regard General Smuts' proposals as a satisfactory settlement may be recorded in advance. Otherwise, you will again be accused of using each concession as an occasion for making fresh demands. Lord Morley does not understand the question and you ought not to neglect to let him have a clear and simple explanation in writing; something to which you will be able to point and refer later on as the definite statement of your case. Could you not draft such a letter and let me see it before you sent it off?

Lord Crewe must be away from London or you would surely have had a reply to your letter. I hope that ere this reaches you it will have arrived.

Yours very faithfully,

AMPTHILL

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.

From a photostat of the typewritten original : S. N. 5065

APPENDIX VII

LORD CREWE'S MINUTE

[LONDON,]

Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Habib came to see me today. I informed them of the result of our conversations with Mr. Smuts, and of the two concessions which he was prepared to make, (a) the repeal of Act 2 of 1907, and (b) the admission of 6 educated Asiatics each year as permanent residents. Mr. Gandhi admitted that these changes would mark a real step in advance, and so far as their practical effect was concerned, he would be ready to accept them. But it was not possible to abandon the position which

he and his friends had taken up, and for which great sufferings had been undergone, that of the necessity of being equal before the law, even though the equality were only theoretical. So that even the granting of these concessions would not make him to cease from agitating for such equality. He added that the plan suggested in Lord Ampthill's letter and encl[osure] to Mr. Smuts of 10 Aug. 1909, would be accepted, though it had been reluctantly agreed to by some, such as Mr. Gokhale. I said that one reason, in addition to dislike of the fictitious character of the proposed admission, which might actuate T[rans]v[aal] Ministers in rejecting this proposal, was the probability that, if the exclusion remained purely administrative, there would be perpetual agitation to increase the number. Mr. Gandhi said he did not mind how difficult an increase were made, if only theoretical equality were maintained, and that as a matter of fact if 6 were admitted, this side of the question would be regarded as closed, though Indians would work for reforms in other matters. I then asked whether, assuming that TV Ministers would not go beyond what they had offered, the Indians would or would not prefer that the whole question should stand over till Union. Mr. Gandhi said that, as he read the Act, Asiatics being excluded from TV under the general Immigration law, and not by differential treatment, would not for this purpose come under the Union. I pointed out that there was nothing to prevent the Union from adopting a general Immigration law, which, while in fact excluding, might establish theoretical equality, if statesmen were so minded. Mr. Gandhi said that at any rate there would be months of intervening agitation.

The conversation ended by Mr. Gandhi asking me to telegraph to the TV Govt. that, though he admitted the practical advances involved in Mr. Smuts' suggestions, yet he must still hold out for theoretical equality.

The impression left on my mind is that, in spite of this, the TV Govt. would do well to make the two concessions, thus removing all practical hardship, and putting themselves right with a considerable section of public opinion.

A telegram can accordingly be drafted, giving the substance of Mr. Gandhi's statement, and adding the substance of the last preceding paragraph.

C[REWE]

16. IX

Colonial Office Records : 291/41

APPENDIX VIII

LORD AMPTHILL'S LETTER TO GANDHIJI

September 17, 1909

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Your letter of yesterday which I have just received has cheered me up. I was beginning to be rather despondent about the whole situation, prejudiced as it is by the intense preoccupation of the Government in the critical fortunes of their party at the present moment. It is indeed satisfactory that Lord Crewe should have actually promised to telegraph to General Smuts pressing him to accept our amendment. I have been in correspondence with Sir George Farrar and have arranged to see him when I return from Scotland, so you will see that I have not lost sight of the necessity of squaring the opposition. If you can now get an interview with Lord Morley and enlist his sympathy in the same manner as you did that of Lord Crewe, I think you will have done all that is possible and that you will be able to leave this country feeling that no stone which could be of any avail has been unturned. If you are leaving shortly, I am afraid that I shall have no opportunity of seeing you again, which is a matter of great regret to me. I am obliged at last to take a short holiday while it is still possible and I go up to Scotland for a fortnight, tomorrow. I shall be somewhat out of reach so that you must not be surprised if there is delay about answering your communications.

Meanwhile, I bid you and Mr. Hajee Habib "farewell" with every good wish, and I trust that, when we next meet, it will be to rejoice over an honourable and notable success.

Yours very faithfully,

AMPTHILL

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.

From a photostat of the typewritten original : S. N. 5081

APPENDIX IX

M. C. ANGLIA'S LETTER TO UNDER SECRETARY FOR COLONIES

WESTMINSTER PALACE HOTEL,
4, VICTORIA STREET,
[LONDON,] S. W.
September 20, 1909

TO
THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
COLONIAL OFFICE
[LONDON,] S. W.

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your letter of the 13th instant, in reply to the Natal Indian deputation that recently waited on the Earl of Crewe and subsequently on Colonel Seely.

On behalf of my colleagues and myself, I venture to express our regret and disappointment over the substance of the reply. We fully appreciate and are grateful for the sympathy expressed by Lord Crewe, but we miss any assurance on the part of His Lordship that further friendly and firm representations will be made direct to the Colonial Government in connection with the existing grievances. May we point out once again that these grievances bear harshly on the community at the present moment, and that they are not such as to admit of delayed redress. The trading community approaches the ensuing year with fear and trembling, because that is the time when the Licensing Officers will be applying the pruning knife vigorously to the Indian licenses. Similar apprehension is felt by the poor Indians, who will be called upon to pay the annual £3 tax for themselves, their wives and their major children, while the education of Indian boys is now being sorely neglected.

It is perhaps not realised that the Licensing Law being of a general nature, does not fall within amendment that was secured at the instance of His Majesty's Government in the South Africa Bill, placing the control and administration of matters specially and differentially affecting Asiatics in the Union Government. The Licensing Law is applicable to all, irrespective of race. It is, in the opinion of the deputation, capable of being amended by the present Natal Parliament, and will be when it is converted into a provincial legislature.

The deputation also regretfully notice the absence of any reply to its [*sic*] humble submission that the supply of indentured labour to Natal may be stopped, unless the serious grievances are redressed.

The deputation therefore respectfully venture to draw Lord Crewe's attention to the desperate nature of the Natal Indian case and request His Lordship to urge upon the

Natal Government the desirability of granting relief.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

M. C. ANGLIA

Colonial Office Records : 179/255

APPENDIX X

TOLSTOY'S LETTER TO GANDHIJI

YASNAYA POLYANA,

October 7, 1909

M. K. GANDHI

TRANSVAAL

I have just received your most interesting letter, which has given me great pleasure. God help our dear brothers and co-workers in the Transvaal.

That same struggle of the tender against the harsh, of meekness and love against pride and violence, is every year making itself more and more felt here among us also, especially in one of the very sharpest of the conflicts of the religious law with the worldly laws—in refusals of military service. Such refusals are becoming ever more and more frequent.

The letter to a Hindoo was written by me, and the translation is a very good one. The title of the book about Krishna shall be sent you from Moscow. As to the word 'reincarnation', I should not myself like to omit it, for, in my opinion, belief in reincarnation can never be as firm as belief in the soul's immortaliy and in God's justice and love. You may, however, do as you like about omitting it. If I can assist your publication, I shall be very glad. The translation into and circulation of my letter in the Hindoo language can only be a pleasure to me.

A competition, i.e., an offer of a monetary inducement in connection with a religious matter would, I think, be out of place.

I greet you fraternally, and am glad to have intercourse with you.

LEO TOLSTOY

From a photostat of the handwritten original signed by Tolstoy : S. N. 5152b

APPENDIX XI

LORD AMPTHILL'S LETTER TO GANDHIJI

October 4, 1909

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I have to thank you for your two letters of the 21st and 22nd September respectively which duly reached me while I was tramping across the mountains in Scotland. In the former, you kindly sent me a copy of the reply which you have received from Lord Morley. I regard it as very satisfactory that you should have secured Lord Morley's admission that his sympathies are with you on abstract and general grounds. That is an admission which ought to be valuable to you hereafter and of which I advise you to take careful note.

In the second letter, you refer to the question which I have on the notice paper of the House of Lords. This is nothing new; it is the question of which I gave notice very soon after your arrival in this country and which I have kept on the notice paper to be ready against any emergency and to remind the Government that the question may be raised at any moment. I have, as you know, asked Lord Crewe on several occasions whether he is yet in a position to answer it or not.

I am now anxiously waiting to hear whether you have any further news for me.

Yours very faithfully,

AMPTHILL

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.

From a photostat of the typewritten original : S. N. 5109

APPENDIX XII

GUJARATI MEETING IN LONDON

EXTRACT FROM *Indian Opinion* REPORT

A letter was received by Mr. Jethalal Parikh, Bar-at-law, and other Gujaratis from the Secretary of the Gujarati Literary Parishad, Mr. Balvantrai Thakore, requesting encouragement to the third session of the Parishad to be held at Rajkot in Kathiawar. A meeting of Gujaratis was accordingly held on October 5 in Westminster Palace Hotel under the Chairmanship of Sir Muncherjee Bhownaggree. . . .

Sir Muncherjee, on being proposed to the chair, said : ". . . I took keen interest in Gujarati when I was young. I translated into Gujarati an account of Queen Victoria's travels. . . . This is sufficient evidence that I know a little Gujarati. Hence, I agreed to take the chair.

A body named Gujarati Sahitya Parishad been in existence the past few years. It meets every year. There is no intrusion of politics into the activities of this body.

Its main object is the preservation and development of Gujarati. If anyone asks why this should be necessary, the answer is that the Indian languages are in some danger. Not that there has been an attack by an enemy; but, these days, an attitude of indifference to our languages and to other things of our country is in the air. All the men and women are taking to the study of English. That is, of course, in the fitness of things. People are naturally eager to learn a language that is the language of administration and commerce. But that does not justify one in giving up one's own language. Many of us learn French, German, etc. How, then, can we give up a language that Nature has made our own? It would not be in the least proper to ridicule that language. And yet, no one will deny such indifference is prevailing in India. I remember that, when I was a child, there were young men who would not talk Gujarati even in their homes. I can give the names of some of these. And a few of them went to such lengths in imitating the British that even the Ayahs they engaged would be from North India, so that the children might talk only Hindustani, whenever necessary, as the British did. All this happened because of half-baked education. We come across fewer such instances now. For the past many years, I have been settled here (in England), but I have not given up the use of my own language. If anyone writes to me in Gujarati, I reply in Gujarati. . . . It occurs to me, as I use the phrase 'Reception Committee', that we must find a Gujarati equivalent for it, but in the draft of the Parishad constitution which we have received they have used the English phrase and so I, too, use the same. We can see from this that we have lost control over our own language. . . ."

FIRST RESOLUTION

Mr. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi moved the following resolution :[2]

Seconding it, Mr. Nusserwanji said :

I have pleasure in seconding this resolution. The first Gujarati newspaper was started by a Parsi. *Gnanprakash* was started by a Parsi. Mr. Kabraji, who started *Stri-bodh*, was a Parsi. It was a Parsi who started writing humorous pieces. *Kautuksangraha* was also started by a Parsi. Parsis have also translated numerous books from English. Bacon's *Essays* were translated by a Parsi. Munchersha, who wrote a book on Gujarati grammar, was a Parsi. The first dictionary was also compiled by Parsi. Drama was introduced in Gujarati by a Parsi. Parsis have thus done valuable work indeed for the progress of our language; it is a matter of regret, however, that they do not take the same pains now.

SECOND RESOLUTION

Mr. Edulji Khodi next moved the following resolution :

"This meeting welcomes the efforts being made for the progress of the various languages of India and believes that the progress of entire India depends upon such

[2] Here followed the resolution and Gandhiji's speech; *vide* "Speech at Gujarati Meeting", 5-10-1909.

efforts."

Speaking on the resolution, Mr. Khodi, who has been a well-known writer since his young days, said :

Really speaking, Gujarati is the language of the Parsis : . . . Parsis in rural areas speak much better Gujarati than those in cities Prarsi writing is quite interesting, but not correct in expression as the Hindus' . . . I have been able to see from this that we can contribute to the development of Gujarati. Though Manekbai is a Parsi, her paper was lucid enough. . . .

Mr. Jorawarsinghji of Bhavnagar, Mr. Khaparde of Nagpur and Mr. Hajee Habib and Mr. Anglia of South Africa also spoke on this resolution.

Mr. Hajee Habib said :

The efforts being made to preserve our mother tongue must be welcomed. . . . I am proud that I was born in Gujarat. . . .

THIRD RESOLUTION

Dr. Ghadiali moved the third resolution as follows :

"If an Association which would function entirely through Gujarati is established to promote the development of Gujarati, the Gujaratis present here would be happy to join it." Three persons opposing the resolution, it was carried by a majority vote.

Mr. Parikh then proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman, which was carried, and the meeting terminated at 6.30 p.m.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 6-11-1909 & 13-11-1909

APPENDIX XIII

DISPATCH IN "SOUTH AFRICA"

Another Indian invention exploded! A few weeks ago, London was being dosed with cablegrams from the agitating Asiatics in this part of South Africa, alleging that a poor young Indian had died as a result of his treatment while serving a short sentence for deliberate defiance of the ordinary laws of the Colony. Whatever the effect of this yarn upon the credulous section of the British public, such statements as this could not go without an official inquiry. Major Dixon, the Magistrate appointed to report on the circumstances concerning the treatment of Nagappen, who died shortly after discharge from prison, says that Nagappen was passed as fit by a medical officer. It is not, he says, clear whether the deceased had two blankets in the camp, and there is nothing to warrant the opinion that sleeping on coir mattresses would have an injurious effect. Though no rice was supplied, there was an ample supply of water. The allegation that deceased was assaulted he finds to be groundless, as also allegations regarding Nagappen's sickness in camp, he having left camp in an apparently healthy condition. The allegations of two Indian

witnesses are, he holds, entirely refuted. Deceased had a right to leave camp at any time on payment of a proportionate part of his fine. The Commissioner, having inquired into prison conditions, suggests two or three small improvements, but these have no bearing on the case. The result of all this fuss and invention on the part of the Asiatics has been to show that their compatriot was healthier when in custody and on his discharge than when he returned to his old manner of life.

Indian Opinion, 16-10-1909

APPENDIX XIV

LETTERS FROM COLONIAL OFFICE AND LORD AMPTHILL

(1) LETTER FROM COLONIAL OFFICE TO GANDHIJI

DOWNING STREET,

November 3, 1909

SIR,

I am directed by the Earl of Crewe to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th ultimo further respecting the proposals referred to in the letter from this Department of the 4th ultimo as a possible basis of legislation with regard to the British Indian controversy in the Transvaal.

I am to inform you that the proposals in question were those put before you by His Lordship on the 16th of September as having been made by Mr. Smuts, *viz*., the repeal of Act 2 of 1907 and the admission of six educated Asiatics each year on certificates of permanent right of residence, which would involve, in your own view, a real step in advance and would, so far as their practical effect is concerned, provide a solution of the present difficulty. They were not, nor were they connected with, those made by yourself, and involving a theoretical claim for which His Lordship is not able to hold out any hope of obtaining recognition. Indeed, at the interview on the 16th of September, His Lordship explained to you that Mr. Smuts was unable to accept the claim that Asiatics should be placed in a position of equality with Europeans in respect of right of entry of otherwise. His Lordship cannot, therefore, admit that at the interview he undertook, as stated by you, to place your proposal before Mr. Smuts for his acceptance. His Lordship understood you to desire that he should telegraph to the Transvaal Government that, though you admitted the practical advance involved in Mr. Smuts' suggestions, yet you could not consent to abandon your claim for theoretical equality, and this has been done.

I am,Sir,

Your obedient servant,

FRANCIS G. S. HOPWOOD

From a photostat of the typewritten original : S. N. 5157

(2) LORD AMPTHILL'S LETTER TO GANDHI

CONFIDENTIAL

41, FATON SQUARE, S.W.,
November 5, 1909

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

The contents of your letter of the 4th inst. are a rude shock to me. The letter from the Colonial Office shows either that you were entirely mistaken in the impression which you derived from your interview with Lord Crewe, or else that Lord Crewe's recollection of what he said to you is at fault.

In the former case much time has been needlessly wasted; in the latter case there is remedy, for it is a question of Lord Crewe's word against yours. In these circumstances, I see no objection to your proposed reply which is, at any rate, dignified and restrained. I should say more myself if I were in your position and quite sure of my ground.

We will talk the matter over if possible on Monday.

Yours very faithfully,

AMPTHILL

From a photostat of the handwritten original : S. N. 5163

APPENDIX XV

COLONIAL OFFICE MINUTE

[LONDON,
November 15, 16, 1909]

This contains little or nothing that is new—it is substantially what Mr. Gandhi has been saying everywhere (e.g. *Times* 13 Nov. meeting at Westminster Palace Hotel) and is all summed up in his statement that legal equality in respect of entry though never a man enter is what the British Indians want. (c. f. 36631)

If is a strong case and well stated and when the Union Government is well launched, I think we shall have to make an effort to get an immigration law on the lines of Natal and Australia and the Governor-General should be instructed accordingly before the time comes. But, for the moment, we must take the concessions which Transvaal offers (answer to telegram on 36631 not yet in).

Lord Crewe should see this before tomorrow afternoon.

Sd. H. L.

We are still without an answer from the Transvaal Government, but hope to get it before the Debate tomorrow. I understand that Lord Ampthill only prefers to raise the question after negotiations.

Sd.

Colonial Office Records : 291/141

APPENDIX XVI

COLONIAL OFFICE MINUTE

[LONDON,
November 9, 1909]

See today *Times* p. 5, headed "Failure of the Negotiations"—we must get Tr[ansvaal] to say what they mean to do. I submit draft for consideration.

This is a very strong letter indeed. If Mr. Gandhi means what he says, *viz.*, that there is no justification for home rule in India—he does not quite, but almost, says this in so many words. We cannot dispute the rightness of his claim to equality before the law, it is indeed a fundamental principle, we only refuse to press for the recognition of the principle about which we feel no doubt, because we have no power to enforce our views on those who have the settlement of the question in their hands. When a colony is given responsible Government, the settlement of such questions necessarily passes into the hands of the Colonial Government and Parliament and though the Transvaal Government have shown readiness to meet us on points of detail, they have on the point of principle shown a tenacity (due, no doubt, to the historical abhorrence of equality of white and Coloured shown by the Dutch) quite equal to that of the Indians. If they will not accept our principle, the Empire being what it is, we cannot dragoon them.

Possibly an answer somewhat on these lines might be desirable for publication.

Sd. H. L.

In using the phrase "Colour bar", Mr. Gandhi has an eye to the Debates in Parliament on the South Africa Bill, and the position of His Majesty's Government is the same in both the cases, *viz*., that they have been obliged to accept the local view which is strongly held.

The statement in Mr. Gandhi's telegram to Mr. Polak (in the *Times* summary of the position) is no doubt based upon Lord Crewe's interview and our letter of 3rd Novemeber.

We might await an answer to the telegram before replying to the letter.

Sd. HWJ

The telegram should go at once—the reply may give us some answer to the letter. In any event, the true answer can only be found in describing in detail the sympathetic action of the Home Government, at the same time referring to the present policy of South Africa historically and not with animus.

Sd.

[TELEGRAM]

Gandhi has published statement in press stating *inter alia* that Transvaal Government have agreed to repeal Act of 1907 but desire to insert clause in Immigration Law limiting annual number of Asiatic immigrants. A question will be addressed to me next week in House of Lords. Please therefore ask Ministers to let me next week in House of Lords. Please therefore ask Ministers to let me have reply to my telegram of 10 October No. 1.

CREWE

Colonial Office Records : 291/142

APPENDIX XVII

ACCOUNT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE TRANSVAAL BRITISH INDIAN DEPUTATION TO ENGLAND

JUNE 21ST 1909 TO NOVEMBER 1909

	£	s	d
Passage to and from London	218	14	5
Cables, wires, etc., S.A., India, and local	36	11	11
Railway, tram, cabs, etc.	9	2	1
Gratuities	8	11	6
Typist	40	19	0
Stationery	31	1	0
Hotel bills	156	12	10
Dinners and luncheons, etc.	38	2	8
Sundries	10	0	11
	£548	16	4

	£	s	d
Less contribution from Natal Delegation on joint expense	31	16	10
Ditto Dr. Mehta	11	17	8
Ditto Mr. Abdul Kadir	2	0	0
	£ 45	14	6
Balance	£503	1	10

Indian Opinion, 25-12-1909

APPENDIX XVIII

PARSEE RUSTOMJEE'S LETTER TO THE JOHANNESBURG PRESS

JOHANNESBURG,
February 12, 1910

SIR,

I was sentenced on the 11th day of February, 1909, at Volksrust to six months' imprisonment with hard labour for having dared to assert my right as an old resident of the Transvaal to re-enter. I finished my sentence on the 10th August last. I was deported the same day. I recrossed the border on the same day, and was sentenced to another term of six months on the 11th August last, and was discharged yesterday. I was removed from Volksrust to Houtpoort, and from Houtpoort to Diepkloof on the 7th October last. From Houtpoort to Johannesburg I was only handcuffed, but from Johannesburg to Diepkloof not only was I handcuffed but my leg, together with that of another fellow prisoner, was heavily ironed.

At Volksrust and Houtpoort I was medically examined, and considered weak enough to receive an extra blanket and special food—that is bread and milk. I am only 48 years, though the medical officers have taken me to be 55.

At the first two gaols I was allowed, for religious reasons, to retain my sacred thread and my own cap, which I was permitted to wear, whether in the presence of the Governor and other officers, or at the time of taking meals.

At Diepkloof, the next morning, the medical officer came to examine all the prisoners. There were several fellow passive resisters. The doctor started by saying to us, "What the devil are you here for?" One of us said, "for conscience' sake." The medical officer retorted, "Your conscience be damned." He then ordered that we should all be at the same time entirely undressed. This was objected to. For an Indian this is a very painful ordeal, but, as we feared violence, we all did as we were told. When my turn came to be examined, I reported that I was put upon the sick list at both Volksrust and Houtpoort, and that I had special food allowed, but the medical officer simply said, "There is nothing the matter with you. You are too fat." I had only ordinary food allowed, but an extra blanket had been allowed to me the previous evening by the head warder. I was immediately given hard work in the shape of stone breaking. I was not allowed to rest at all, and was expected to keep the hammer going continuously. The third day the work proved too much for me, and I complained, but the warder in charge said that he could do nothing, that I had to report myself as sick, but that, until he received other instructions, he was bound to see to it that I did my work without interruption. I, therefore, continued it, and several times fit as if I were finished. Subsequently, I was examined by the doctor, who told me that there was a little soreness in my sides owing to the work, but that there was nothing in it, and that I would be all right when I had thrown off superfluous fat. I had to continue the work, which resulted in my health becoming worse. I reported again to the Governor, who ordered a re-examination, but that resulted in my being deprived even of the extra blanket that had been allowed, the doctor remarking that I had simply to work harder to become all right. This state of things continued for nearly a fortnight, I becoming

worse and worse day by day, until, at last, I became restless at night and could not sleep at all. My fellow prisoners used to shampoo me and try to warm me. I, therefore, reported to the hospital orderly, and he restored the blanket that was taken away from me, and gave me some pills. Throughout all this time the work to which I was put was never interrupted. After I had been in this gaol for over a fortnight the Governor came and ordered me to leave my special cap. I told him that I had received special permission to retain it, and that the matter was decided even by the Natal Law Courts. The Governor said that the order formerly given was given in mistake, and that the Director had written to him saying that I could not retain the cap. I was, therefore, reluctantly obliged to give it up. My religious feeling was thereby hurt. The ordinary cap that I was given I was ordered to take off on the slightest pretext by most of the warders. I was subjected generally to much harassment by the medical officer, the Deputy-Governor, and most of the warders at Diepkloof. I continually complained about sickness, but my complaints were unheeded, sometimes they were jeered at. My eyesight was very much affected, and one of my eyes still remains in a bad condition. When I complained to the medical officer about my eye, he said that I should, on being discharged, spend from £10 to £20, and be operated upon. Every time I complained to the medical officer he made flippant remarks. The Deputy-Governor disregarded the complaints almost entirely. It was only the Governor who took any interest at all in me or, for that matter, in other prisoners. When I had finished all but about twenty days of my imprisonment I was obliged to again complain about absence of medical treatment to the Deputy-Governor, as a result of which I was removed to the gaol at Johannesburg, after which time I received greater attention. The work given to me there was less exacting, being light store work and tailoring. The Governor and the warders were kind, and listened to all I had to say. My health considerably improved during the time. I have lost 73 lbs. in weight throughout my imprisonment, now extending over fourteen months, with a brief interruption after my first incarceration.

It is my opinion that the passive resisters were removed to Diepkloof in order to break their spirit and resolution. Diepkloof is a penal settlement, and the prisoners there, unlike the prisoners in the other gaols of the Transvaal, are deprived of the privilege of receiving monthly visitors, and of writing and receiving monthly letters, these privileges being allowed only after the expiration of three months, and as most passive resisters can get only three months with hard labour, they never enjoy the privilege of receiving a visitor or of receiving or writing a letter. The food has been so selected as to partially starve Asiatic prisoners. Whereas native prisoners get 1 oz. of fat per day, Indian prisoners for three months have no fat allowed at all. This change was made when Indians complained that they could not take the ordinary animal fat that was given. They asked for ghee, which was allowed in the Johannesburg Gaol, and in reply there was a complete stopping of fat or its substitute. The result has been disastrous to many Indian prisoners. At Diepkloo the prisoners were compelled to carry slop-pails. This work is most repugnant to most Indians, but the majority of us consider that, as passive resisters, we should not object to doing any work no matter how offensive it may be, so long as we are physically able to perform it. One among us, however, made it a matter of conscience

and for that reason suffered 33 days' solitary confinement and half rations for the greater part of this period. I say nothing as to minor matters, such as constant insults by warders both European and Native. Most of the warders, contrary to regulations, insist upon Indian prisoners addressing them as Sir, &c.

I do not know why this time the Government have left me alone and not deported me. The almost complete ruin that has overtaken my business requires my presence in Natal for the time being. My health, too, demands attention. But I venture to assure the Government that there are some Indians at least left, including myself, who will not be broken, no matter what hardships they are subjected to, and I shall soon have the privilege of affording the Government an opportunity of sending me to Diepkloof or any other place they choose.

I am, &c.,

PARSEE RUSTOMJEE JEEVANJEE

Colonial Office Records: C.D. 5363

APPENDIX XIX

TOLSTOY'S LETTER TO GANDHIJI

YASNAYA POLYANA,
May 8, 1910

DEAR FRIEND,

I just received your letter and your book *Indian Home Rule.*

I read your book with great interest because I think that the question you treat in it—the passive resistance—is a question of the greatest importance not only for India but for the whole humanity.

I could not find your former letters, but came across your biography by J. Doss[3] which too interested me much deeply and gave me the possibility to know and understand you better.

I am at present not quite well and therefore abstain from writing to you all what I have to say about your book and all your work which I appreciate very much. but I will do it as soon as I will feel better.

Your friend and brother.

Mahatma, Vol. I

[3] In fact, by Rev. J. J. Doke; *vide* "Letter to Lord Ampthill", 10-11-1909

1. JOHANNESBURG

Monday [*April 11, 1910*]

SENT TO DELAGOA BAY

Mr. Achary and 37 other satyagrahis were sent from Pretoria to Delagoa Bay on Saturday. Six of them were certainly not satyagrahis. I cannot say whether they have become so by now. All of them who bear Tamil names are satyagrahis. Thus, the Tamils have been keeping the flag of satyagraha flying. I have given the Tamil names in the English section[1] and therefore do not give them here.

SHIPS REFUSE

I reported in the English section[2] last week that some ships had refused to carry those persons who have been deported. I cannot say how far the report is true. But it appears that they have failed to get a ship so far. If India exerts sufficient pressure, no ship will dare carry the deportees. There is strong reason to believe that those who have been deported this time will rouse the whole of India to protest.

CHETTIAR[3]

[He] was today ordered to be deported and was taken to gaol. Mr. Chettiar is about 55 years of age. He suffers from a chronic ailment, and yet he is facing deportation with the utmost courage. He is to be deported to Natal, from where he will return immediately.

OTHER ARRESTS

Mr. Chinan Diala[4] and Selmar Pillay were arrested and they, too, have been ordered to be deported.

[1] *Vide* "From 'Transvaal Notes' ", 12-4-1910

[2] *Vide* "From 'Transvaal Notes' ", 4-4-1910

[3] V. A. Chettiar, respected old Chairman of the Tamil Benefit Society, who had been arrested on April 5. *Vide* "Transvaal Notes", *Indian Opinion*, 9-4-1910.

[4] *Vide*, however, "Transvaal Notes", *Indian Opinion*, 16-4-1910, where the name given is Anandi Alvar.

KARODIA

The case against the two Karodias[1] has been withdrawn. One of them was charged with using a false permit and the other with making a false affidavit.

The police had spared no pains in preparing for this case. They had called the Immigration Officer at Durban, Mr. Moosa Hajee Adam and others as witnesses; however, the case was withdrawn at the last moment.

The fact is that some Indians, out of spite, had made an affidavit and also induced someone else to make another against the two brothers. Later they felt sorry for what they had done. They found it very difficult to prove, their statements, for there was ample evidence to show that Mr. Karodia had lived in Johannesburg before the War. I think the Government withdrew the cases in order to protect the persons who had given the affidavits.

Mr. Karodia does not intend to leave the matter here, but will approach the Attorney General for relief in order to make an example of the men concerned and prevent similar things from happening to other prominent persons.

WHETHER COLOURED PERSONS CAN STAY

In Johannesburg, many title-deeds contain a provision to the effect that the landowners cannot permit Asiatics or Coloured persons other than servants to stay on their lands. This is so in Norwood [also]. A certain white bought a stand there. Later, he discovered that at several places there were Coloured persons staying. He filed a suit against the company to have his tite-deed nullified on this ground. The magistrate decided against the company. The case was taken higher up. The Supreme Court has now ruled that, notwithstanding the provision in the title-deeds, the company cannot be held responsible. The owner of a stand can, if he chooses, file a suit against any person who permits Coloured persons to stay [on the stand]. Accordingly, the Coloureds will stay where they are, for the present at least. We must now wait till there is another suit; its outcome is anybody's guess. The saying, "having survived a moment of danger, we may live to be a hundred years", might come true in this case.

[1] Messrs Karodia Brothers, well-known Indian merchants of Johannesburg; *vide* "Letter to Attorney General", 14-4-1910

LORD SELBORNE

The miners gave a dinner to Lord Selborne. Speaking on the occasion, he gave a warning to the whites that, if they were not careful and persisted in their unjust treatment of the Cape Coloureds, the consequences would be unhappy. Men would arise from among them who would becomeleaders of the Kaffirs. Lord Selborne thought that this was the biggest problem facing South Africa.

These views call for some comment. It does not appear that in saying this Lord Selborne was actuated by concern for the welfare of the Coloured people; he said it only because he feared the emergence of a leader from among them. Their sincere well-wishers, however, should welcome the rise of such leaders—the more the better—and encourage them.

RAILWAY REGULATIONS

The General Manager, the Assistant Manager, Mr. Bell, Mr. Cachalia and Mr. Gandhi met today. After a discussion lasting nearly an hour and a half, the draft which the Association had forwarded was accepted with some modifications.[1] The General Manager stated that he would recommend to the Railway Board the withdrawal of the Regulations which had been promulgated and that [new] regulations would be framed in terms of the draft as approved by him. According to the draft-agreement, there will be no discrimination in law on the gro-und of colour. The existing provision that Indians can travel only in the third class will be deleted and the former position will be restored.

CAUTION TO INDIANS

This will be a welcome change, no doubt. That it has come about shows that the Indian community is not to be trifled with. But the Indian community's responsibility will also increase. There will, of course, be no difficulty if we bear ourselves with dignity; should we, however, forget ourselves, difficulties will certainly arise and discriminatory regulations will be introduced.

SHOP HOURS REGULATIONS

These Regulations are again to be modified. The most important change will be that European hotels will be allowed to remain open up

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from General Manager, C.S.A.R., to Gandhiji", 11-4-1910.

to 12 midnight, whereas Asiatic hotels will have to close at 6 p.m. I do not see that we can do much to protest against this discrimination; all the same, the Association has written[1] to the Colonial Secretary about it.

ROW AMONG KANAMIAS

Kanamia[2] friends had their fill of fighting. They went at one another on a public road, a large number of whites watching the scene. Three of them sustained serious injuries. The brawlers got a bad name, and the Indian community as well, to some extent. Fighting has brought no benefit to eitherparty. Benefit there will be only for the Government and lawyers. Both the sides have engaged lawyers and it seems, from the way they talk, that money will be spent like water.

The story that has been circulated by newspapers is that this was a dispute between satyagrahis and their opponents. Mr. Cachalia has therefore addressed a letter[3] to newspapers, pointing out that the quarrel had nothing to do whatever with satyagraha.

I wish to say a few words to the Kanamias. I know, and everyone knows, that they are strong of arms; they are making a big mistake, however, if they imagine that such brawls add to their reputation. The reason for the quarrel is of no account. I am not interested in finding out who is to blame. I only know that the fighting has helped neither side. However, those who are in love with physical strength and want occasions for its use would do well to employ it, not for purposes of revenge but in defence of others.

Moreover, those who would fight, must fight it out to the last, be the end death or victory. To start a fight and then go to a court of law is cowardice twice over. To use violence against anyone is cowardly enough, but going to a court is much worse. If a man, after having fought, goes to a court, he will prove himself fit for nothing.

Duelling survives to this day in all parts of Europe, except England. The idea behind it is that two persons actually fight with each other in order to prove himself in the right and the one who is defeated is considered to have lost his point. It is not open to these persons to go to a court of law [subsequently]. I must admit that, from the point of view of those who approve of violence, this is an excellent

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 12-4-1910
[2] Muslims from Kaman, in Central Gujarat
[3] *Vide* "Letter to the Press", 8-4-1910

practice.

But those who know that it is better to die than to kill, they know best; they have conquered all. This is the Indian way.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 16-4-1910

2. FROM "TRANSVAAL NOTES"

Tuesday [*April 12,1910*]

The following were transferred to Delagoa Bay on Saturday, the 9th instant:[1] Messrs Veera Pillay, S. Manikam, N. G. Pillay, N. K. Pillay, Govinda Chetty, Joe Chinanan, Mootu Moonian, David Solomon, Moonosamy Paul, Moonosamy Chellen, Nurisumu Appen, Tommy Govindasamy, Letckey, Abhie Naidoo, John Edward, T. A. S. Achary, C. Narainsamy, R. C. Peter, L. Morgan, Chella Pather, R. Moonosamy, JohnLazarus, David Marrian, Francis Baker, Albert Baker, K. Chinasamy Pillay, H. V. Jackson, M. Jimmey, E. M. David, L. Govindasamy, D. Arumugam, Willie Lazarus, S. Moonosamy, Veerasamy Naidoo, Goolam Mahomed, Jiram Vallab, Noor Ali, and Rathanjee Ranchhod. Of these I am not sure that the last four are passive resisters, but they may have become such after coming into contact with the fine body of men in the Pretoria Police Barracks.

Indian Opinion, 16-4-1910

3. LETTER TO DIRECTOR OF PRISONS[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
April 12, 1910

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 1459/10/247 of the 9th instant regarding the general treatment of Indian passive resisters in prison.

The submission of my Association is that the selection of Diepkloof Prison where alone the limitation of three months as regards visitors and letters prevails, is deemed by the Asiatic communities to show an intention to impose hardships additional to those warranted by the punishment awarded by the Magistrates to passive resisters.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] This letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was signed by E. I. Aswat, Acting Chairman, British Indian Association.

With reference to the omission of ghee from the Indian dietary, my Association is aware that the Prison Governors have chosen the present scale. The fact, however, stands that the revision of the scale has resulted in the deprivation of an article of diet which was given to Indian prisoners in most of the prisons of the Transvaal, and which is an article especially needed by British Indians. In the humble opinion of my Association, the Prison Governors have taken no note of idiosyncrasies in deciding upon the revised scale.

Indian Opinion, 16-4-1910

4. LETTER TO GENERAL MANAGER, C.S.A.R.

JOHANNESBURG,
April 12, 1910

SIR,

On behalf of Mr. Cachalia and myself, I beg to thank you for your letter[1] of the 11th instant, containing a summary of [the] understanding arrived at yesterday between your Department and Mr. Cachalia and myself representing the British Indian Association. The summary given by you correctly sets forth the position; and, on behalf of my colleague and myself, I beg to tender our thanks to you for the conciliatory manner in which you have met the representations of my Association in the matter of the gazetted regulations which have formed the subject matter of the correspondence between your Department and my Association.

Whilst I acknowledge that the smooth working of the arrangement will depend upon the self-restraint that may be exercised by the British Indians it is no less dependent upon the tact and the goodwill of the officials in charge of the regulation of passenger traffic. In conclusion, I trust that the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony Governments and the Railway Board will accept your recommendation, and that the regulations complained of will be repealed and replaced by those set forth in your letter under reply.

I have, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI
HON. SECRETARY,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

From a photostat of the original: Cd 5363; also
Indian Opinion, 16-4-1910

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from General Manager, C. S. A. R. to Gandhiji", 11-4-1910.

5. LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
April 12, 1910

SIR,

With reference to the Shop Hours Bill published in the Government *Gazette*, my Association respectfully protests against the distinction drawn between the closing hours of European restaurants and those of Asiaticeating-houses;[2] and, as it cannot be of serious importance to the Government if the same privileges are allowed to the keepers of Asiatic eatinghouses, my Association trusts that the differentiation will be removed.

Indian Opinion, 16-4-1910

6. LETTER TO J. X. MERRIMAN

21-24 COURT CHAMBERS,
CORNER RISSIK & ANDERSON STREET,
JOHANNESBURG,
April 13, 1910

DEAR MR. MERRIMAN,

I am taking the liberty of sending you a copy of *Indian Home Rule* which is a translation by me of a Gujarati booklet[3] I wrote during the return voyage. Busy though you are, I hope that you will find time to go through it; and if you could favour me with your opinion on it, I should greatly appreciate it.

I am,
Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

THE RT. HON. JOHN X. MERRIMAN
CAPE TOWN

From a photostat: Gandhiji's Letters to Merriman. Courtesy: South African Library, Cape Town

[1] This letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was signed by E. I. Aswat, Acting Chairman, British Indian Association.

[2] *Vide* "Johannesburg",11-4-1910

[3] *Hind Swaraj*

7. LETTER TO ATTORNEY GENERAL

[JOHANNESBURG,]
April 14, 1910

SIR,

Messrs M. A. Karodia and A. A. Karodia were some time ago arrested, the one on a charge of having obtained a registration certificate under false pretences, and the other on a charge of having made a false affidavit. After two remands, both cases were withdrawn, without any evidence having been given on behalf of the Crown. Messrs Karodia Brothers are well-known British Indian merchants in Johannesburg. To this day, they do not know upon what evidence the charge was brought against them. Their arrest caused no little surprise amongst the Indian community, and no little pain to themselves. They were fully prepared, as they are now, to meet the charges brought against them. That they are merchants of standing is a fact well known to the Asiatic Department. They feel, that, if they allow the proceedings against them to end, after the withdrawal of the charges, neither they nor their fellow-merchants could consider themselves safe from similar arrest. In the circumstances, they request that the names of the deponents on whose evidence the warrant was granted and their affidavits should be handed to them. And they respectfully desire also that the Government will be pleased in future to use judicious discretion in obtaining warrants of arrest against Indians of standing.

Indian Opinion, 23-4-1910

8. SUBSTANCE OF LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

[After *April 14, 1910*][1]

In connection with this matter, Mr. Ritch writes to inform us that he has received a letter from Mr. Gandhi, stating that the excuse for sending these men to India is that they refused to give finger-prints to identify themselves with their certificates, which documents were already filed with the Registrar. He explains that the excuse is invalid, because most ofthese men have already been to gaol as passive resisters, and are consequently known to the authorities. He adds that deportation for refusal to give finger-prints is illegal, the punishment provided for the offence being imprisonment and not deportation, and confirms the report that many of the deportees were domiciled in South Africa.

India, 13-5-1910

[1] The reference is to the fifty-nine Indians deported on 14-4-1910; *vide* "Johannesburg",18-4-1910

9. TAMIL SACRIFICE[1]

The arrest of Mr. Chettiar, the fifty-five-year-old Chairman of the Tamil Society, puts the finishing touch to the glorious work that is being done by the Tamil community in the Transvaal on behalf not of themselves but of the whole Indian population throughout South Africa. Nearly one hundred Tamils are now under custody, either undergoing imprisonment at Diepkloof or awaiting deportation, which, for many reasons, is much worse than imprisonment. There is hardly a Tamil left in the Transvaal who has not suffered imprisonment in the course of the passive resistance struggle. Mr. Chettiar himself has been now arrested for the third time, his son, as we have already remarked, for the seventh time. These brave men have reduced themselves to poverty and have sacrificed literally their all for the sake of the national honour and their sacred oath. It has become such acommon occurrence for Tamils to be arrested that it excites no curiosity and attention. Mr. Chettiar, who was at one time in flourishing circumstances, has now become a pauper. We have seen some of the receipts for the jewellery which has been sold in order to provide for the household. In view of sacrifices such as these, he must be a godless person who would for one moment doubt that a community that can boast such heroes can ever fail to attain its goal.

Indian Opinion, 16-4-1910

10. THE LATE MR. WOODHEAD

In the death of Mr. Woodhead, the Indian community of Natal has, along with the European, sustained a severe loss. The late gentleman, who met with such an untimely end the other day,[2] had held a responsible position on the editorial staff of *The Natal Mercury* for a period of 28 years. During the time that he was Managing Editor, the *Mercury* has in all matters relating to the Coloured communities of the Colony, maintained a highstandard and has on many occasions struck the note of warning against race hatred and colour prejudice. It is fitting that the various Indian associations[3] of

[1] *Vide* also "Well Done, Chettiar!", 16-4-1910 and Letter to Director of Prisons", 19-4-1910

[2] He was run over by a motor car on April 11, 1910.

[3] The Natal Indian Congress, the Durban Indian society, etc. *Vide* "Death of Mr. Woodhead", *Indian Opinion*, 16-4-1910.

Durban have expressed their sense of sorrow and loss, and we join with them in offering our deepest sympathy with the widow and children of the departed journalist.

Indian Opinion, 16-4-1910

11. G. K. GOKHALE'S SERVICES

The Hon'ble Professor Gokhale has rendered an invaluable service. He has always helped us, but his work in the Legislative Council is a very precious achievement. The resolution that he moved[1] for the prohibition of indentured labour and the speech he made[2] on the occasion are worth reading. The latter gives a vivid account of the condition of Indians in all parts of South Africa. The speech has evoked appreciative comments even from English newspapers. We see that he advocated the prohibition of indenture on the ground that it was [in its very nature] an evil thing. That is as it should have been.

Prof. Gokhale was followed by other Indian members. We propose to give translations[3] of all the speeches in the issues that will follow. They will show to all readers how profound has been the effect of the Transvaal campaign.

Prof. Gokhale certainly deserves thanks for what he has done. We hope public bodies in all the Colonies will shower resolutions of thanks on him.

We gather from the newspapers that the whole of India gives credit for this achievement to Mr. Polak. At the conclusion of the meeting, congratulations were offered to him.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-4-1910

[1] On 25-2-1910, *vide* "Debate in the Viceroy's Council", *Indian Opinion*, 9-4-1910.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Not reproduced here. For speeches by others including Dadabhai Naoroji and M. K Jinnah, *vide* "Debate in the Viceroy's Council", *Indian Opinion*, 16-4-1910.

12. TRANSVAAL PARLIAMENT

Indians had hoped that the Transvaal Parliament would do something; that was our hope, too. However, it is now clear that it will do nothing to make a settlement possible. How can we expect a settlement? The weakening of the Indian community has raised further hopes in the Transvaal Government. It thought that if it waited longer, all the Indians would quietly surrender. We are sure that it is because of this calculation that nothing is being brought forward in Parliament. This does not dishearten us. We do not want to obtain anything by misrepresenting facts. We rely on our own strength. There are some strong men who in any case will fight till death, so that the ultimate victory of Indians is not in doubt. When we shall celebrate that victory depends upon how many of us put forth our strength.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-4-1910

13. WELL DONE, CHETTIAR!

Even the Indians who have given in will have their hair standing on end if they read Mr. Chettiar's case. He is an elderly man and the leader of the Tamil community. He has served two terms of imprisonment. His son has been to gaol a number of times; now he has been ordered to be deported to India. Mr. Chettiar has worked hard from outside without fear of being arrested. He has been arrested now. He has paid no attention to his ailment. He has lost all his wealth. Every hair on his body thrills with the determination to die for the sake of honour, for the sake of the motherland and the pledge, rather than surrender. He is installed in Marshal Square, a smile on his face. We hope every Indian, old or young, big or small, will be infected by Mr. Chettiar's spirit and be proud of his name.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-4-1910

14. SHOULD LORD GLADSTONE BE HONOURED?

Lord Gladstone will shortly arrive here as Governor-General of South Africa. Indians in all the Colonies must be wanting to know whether or not we should honour him.

Considering our situation from every point of view, we think it will not be proper for us to honour Lord Gladstone. Whom can we honour in a land in which we ourselves are despised? What honour can we give to the representative of a Government which refuses justice to us? This is one line of thinking.

On the other hand, there is the argument that if we are not afraid of demanding our rights, it is because the British flag flies over this land. We want to live in amity with the people of this country. We want to protect our honour. He who insists on being respected himself will always respect others. He who values self-respect will never be rude to others. In honouring the representative of the Emperor, we shall only be honouring ourselves. This is another line of thinking. According to this, we see nothing wrong in presenting an address to Lord Gladstone as a matter of courtesy. Giving an address, not by way of flattery but by way of courtesy, can be justified. Whether or not an address is justified will depend upon the attitude behind it.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-4-1910

15. JOHANNESBURG

Monday [*April 18, 1910*]

RELEASED

Perumal and Mr. Govindsamy were discharged last week after six weeks of imprisonment.

FAKIRA AND OTHERS

The brave Mr. Fakira was arrested again last Saturday. He was tried today and ordered to be deported to India. He is determined to return from India immediately.

Mr. Naransamy and Mr. Kistapa were arrested today. Besides these, Messrs Dayal Ramji, Cassim Ibrahim, Vally Adam, Isa Adam and Odav Bhikha have been ordered to be deported. These five are not

satyagrahis but they could not prevent their arrest and deportation.

CHETTIAR

Messrs Chettiar, Morgan and Francis were sentenced to three months on the 15th.

SHELAT RETURNS

Mr. Shelat is already in the Transvaal. He has been arrested, and his case will come up on Tuesday.

59 DEPORTED

How sad it is that Indians, sent to India, have to be treated as having been deported. However, we cannot help so describing the 59 Indians who were sent to India by the *Umhloti* on the 14th instant. No ship has so far agreed to carry these brave men to India. Some of the young Indians who have been sent away were born in this country, some have lived here from their childhood and some have left their families here. Some, moreover, are residents of Natal or, being educated, are entitled to go over there. It is the extreme limit of tyranny that all these men have been sent away to India. Many of these Indians had taken out voluntary registers. I am sure that all of them will return in a very short time.

Some of these men fell ill in Delagoa Bay. Mr. Samy Krister had to be removed to hospital. It is our good fortune that, despite this, not a single Indian is dispirited.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 23-4-1910

16. LETTER TO DIRECTOR OF PRISONS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
April 19, 1910

SIR,

Mr. V. A. Chettiar, who is an elderly member of the Indian community and is Chairman of the Tamil Benefit Society, has been for the third time sentenced to be imprisoned as a passive resister. This time he has been sentenced at Volksrust, my Association believes, with

[1] This letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was signed by A. M. Cachalia, Chairman, British Indian Association.

hard labour. I venture to draw your attention to the fact that Mr. Chettiar has a constitutional disease, and that at Johannesburg the Magistrate imposed only light labour. My Association is not aware what is being done with Mr. Chettiar at Volksrust, but, as he is hardly able to walk the distance that he will probably have to cover between Johannesburg and Diepkloof on his removal ultimately to Diepkloof, I beg to draw attention to the information I have given above, and to hope that suitable precautions will be taken, so that Mr. Chettiar's health may not suffer. According to the information received by my Association, Mr. Chettiar is still at Volksrust Gaol.

Indian Opinion, 23-4-1910

17. THOSE DEPORTATIONS

Never has a steamer leaving the South African shore for the Indian carried a more precious human cargo than that carried by the *Umhloti* last week. That ship has sailed with some sixty passive resisters unlawfully deported to India from the Transvaal under an administrative order based on the flimsiest evidence and from which there is no appeal to the usual courts of that Colony. Who are these passive resisters? They are most of them men who have been voluntarily registered, and are all domiciled in the Transvaal. Most of them have served their imprisonment as passive resisters. Some of them are lads born in South Africa. Some are domiciled also in Natal, and some have a right to enter Natal or the Cape on the ground of possessing educational qualifications. And many have left families behind them. These families, but for the timely assistance from India, would be starving.

And why have these men been deported? We were told at one time that those who were voluntarily registered would not be deported. But now the Asiatic officials have discovered that they can get rid of voluntarily registered passive resisters also. These men are called upon to produce their certificates. They say they have burnt the documents. Then they are asked to give their signatures and finger prints. These the passive resisters naturally decline to give. Now both these omissions— the omission to produce the certificates and the one to give signatures, etc.—are crimes carrying a high penalty. But the zealous officials do not wish to adopt the regular course of prosecuting the men. They assume that the men have no certificates at all and, therefore, insist on their deportation under an administrative

inquiry. They contend that if they do not follow this course, any Asiatic may pretend that he has been voluntarily registered and thus "merely go to gaol". There is a double fallacy in this argument. For the man who so pretends, still goes to gaol, and having gone to gaol, he has to give finger impressions which ensure detection of any such pretension. And if an examination of finger impressions should betray the man, he would be liable to be committed for perjury in addition to an order for deportation. Moreover, the above argument cannot hold water, seeing that such well-known stalwarts like Messrs Chettiar and Quinn[1] have also been deported. The policy clearly is to subject passive resisters to a treatment such that they cannot bear it. We shall see what success attends the efforts of the Asiatic Department.

Indian Opinion, 23-4-1910

18. JOURNALISTS' DUTY

We find the following report in a newspaper received from India.

> The manager and the editor of the *Gujarat Patra*, published from Nadiad, had been served with a notice by Mr. Chakravarti, the District Magistrate of Kaira, under section 124 of the Indian Penal Code, to show cause why they should not be prosecuted. When the case came up for hearing at Anand before the District Magistrate, it was stated by the defendants' advocate, Mr. Maganbhai Chaturbhai Patel, B.A., LL.B., that the matter in respect of which the notice had been issued was a translation of an English letter and that the respondents had no unlawful intention in publishing it. At the same time, he expressed regret for [the publication of] the matter whereupon the notice which had been issued was withdrawn.

We are sorry for the manager and the editor. What happened to them may now happen to any other newspaper. A time may come when here, too, the same condition will prevail. However, we see that just now it is not so, with the result that the full force of what we say cannot be appreciated. It may appear somewhat presumptuous for a man who is not himself caught in a fire to write anything about those who are. However, some general comments will not be considered out

[1] Chairman of the Transvaal Chinese Association; *vide* "The Supreme Court Case", 7-5-1910

of place on this occasion.

We think the editors of all such newspapers, which do not run with a commercial motive but only with a view to public service, must be prepared to face extinction at any moment. It is obvious that all newspapers do not come within the scope of this rule, but only those which aim at public service by advocating reforms in the Government or among the people or in both.

What should an editor do when something he has published displeases the Government or is held to violate some law, but is none the less true? Should he apologize? We would say, certainly not. True, he is not bound to publish such matter, but once it has been published, the editor ought to accept responsibility for it.

This raises a very important issue. If the principle we have laid down is correct, it follows that, if any provocative writing has been published unintentionally and no apology is offered for the same, the newspaper will in consequence be prevented from rendering other services as well and the community will go without that benefit. We would not, therefore, apply this principle to matter published unintentionally, but it should apply to what is published after full deliberation. If a newspaper runs into difficulties for publishing any such matter, we think the closing down of the newspaper will be a better service to the public. The argument that in that case one may have to face the confiscation of all one's property and be reduced to poverty has no force. Such a contingency may certainly arise, and it was precisely for this reason that we said that the editor of a journal devoted to public service must be ever ready for death.

Let us take one or two obvious illustrations. Suppose that in a certain region there obtains the cruel practice of *kanya-vikraya*[1]. A reformer starts a newspaper there and writes strongly against this practice. Those who follow the practice are angry with him and decide to outcaste him if he does not apologize. We are sure the reformer ought to go on writing against offering girls in marriage for a price, even if he has to face total ruin or be outcast for that, and, when he is left without a single pie, he should close down the newspaper; he must not apologize, whatever happens. It is only by such conduct that he can prepare the ground for rooting out the practice.

Let us take another illustration. Suppose that the Government

[1] Demanding a price for a girl (offered in marriage)

has committed a gross injustice and robbed the poor. A progressive newspaper is being published in such a place. It writes against the oppressive measure and advises the people to disregard the unjust law of the Government. The Government takes offence and threatens confiscation of property if no apology is forthcoming. Should the reformer apologize? We think the reply is again the same, that he should stand the confiscation of his property and close down the newspaper but certainly not offer an apology. The people would then see that, if the reformer could lose his all for their sake, they should also in their own interest oppose the law. If the reformer should apologize, the effect on the people would exactly be the reverse of this. They would know that the man would not be concerned overmuch even if their houses were on fire, that, from a safe distance, he would only indulge in meaningless declamations. When he himself ran into trouble [they would say], he meekly retired. And so they will think of doing likewise and resign themselves to the inevitable. They will thus argue themselves into greater weakness. It is, therefore, clear in this instance that the best service that the reformer can render will be to stop the newspaper.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 23-4-1910

19. "AS ONE SOWS ONE REAPS"

We all know this saying, but most of us go the opposite way and desire the reverse of what we do. Stay-at-homes, we want to be wealthy. Though we eat too much, we will have no indigestion. We would not work, but hope to have all our desires fulfilled. We deserve hell for our deeds, but wish to go to heaven. In newspapers from India, we come across accounts of the miserable condition of the *bhangis*[1] and other castes. These castes are despised by some so-called civilized Indians. The Maharaja of Baroda has passed an order for the admission of members of these castes to public schools. Some Indians, claiming to belong to higher castes, have protested against this and are putting difficulties in the way of the Maharaja. This is how we behave as a nation, and yet we do not want to pay the price for this and would not submit to the treatment meted out to us in South Africa. How can

[1] Scavengers

we escape [retribution]? Recently, an Indian judge[1] in Madras made some severe remarks [on our behaviour]. He does not mind, he says, our kicking up a row about South Africa, but complains that we look down upon our own people, think ourselves defiled by their touch, keep them at a distance from us and grind them under our heels; he wants to know why we do not seek to remedy this state of affairs. "Why do we not, instead of lashing out at the whites, rain lashes on our own backs?" he asks.

We have no answer to this charge. True, we can say something for ourselves. But we do not think it necessary to say it here.

To be sure, Indians in South Africa must take a lesson from their present condition. They must realize that it would not do for them, on returning to India, to treat the *bhangis* with contempt. If those who have been putting difficulties in the way[2] of the Maharaja Gaekwar are representative specimens of high-caste Hindus, a time will come when birth in a *bhangi* family will confer great honour. The contemptuous attitude of the [caste] Hindu towards the *bhangis* and others is a striking illustration of the length to which man is carried by pride and selfish-ness. We should like every wise and decent Hindu to pray, "O God! Save me from this pride and this selfishness", and to be granted the strength to fight this tyranny.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 23-4-1910

20. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

April 24, 1910

MY DEAR MILLIE,

Henry is a tender flower. The slightest breeze ruffles his spirits. You and I divide him. When he is in such a mood, you can make him happy and to a lesser degree I. But alas! he can just now have neither you nor me. The publication and confiscation of the little book of mine have disconcerted him a bit.[3] There is no occasion for it. I have

[1] K. Srinivas Rao, Sub-judge, presiding at a meeting at Tuticorin; *Vide* "The Beam in India's Eye", *Indian Opinion*, 23-4-1910.

[2] In the matter of his admitting children of the *bhangis* to public schools; *vide* "Retribution", *lndian Opinion*, 23-4-1910.

[3] Gandhiji's book Hind Swaraj had been declared seditious and proscribed in India; vide "Johannesburg", 13-3-1910, "Preface to "Indian Home Rule", 20-3-1910 and "Our Publications", 7-5-1910.

written to him at length. And then the wretched pecuniary business. He gives me the position of an elder brother and yet would not be content with my taking over the pecuniary burden. I wish you would not discuss money matters with him at all. You may do all that when you are together again. Let me alone have all your pecuniary needs. He has enough to occupy his attention besides worrying about money matters which he hates.

The farm idea is still progressing. Hosken has offered a portion of his farm. If this thing comes off, I may shift very soon. It promises to be a mighty thing if it comes off.

I was sorry to learn about Mater's and Celia's trouble. It seems useless to inquire after a lapse of a month as to how they are getting on.

From what you say, it is evident that winter has not in any way affected Waldo.

With love to you all,

BROTHER

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

21. PETITION TO TRANSVAAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY[1]

April 25, 1910

1. Your Petitioner has read a private Bill to amend certain laws relating to the Municipality of Pretoria, and to confer further powers upon the Council thereof.

2. Your Petitioner, on behalf of the Association, respectfully protests against Section 5 of the Bill, in so far as it relates to the application of certain Regulations of Towns, dated the 25th day of October, 1899, to the Pretoria Municipality, inasmuch as these Regulations constitute an attack on the rights of British Indians, among others, in respect of the use of side-walks.

3. Your Petitioner therefore prays that this Honourable House will be pleased to remove from Section 5 the portion herein before referred to, or grant such other relief as to it may seem meet. And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioner will, as in duty bound, for ever pray.

Indian Opinion, 30-4-1910

[1] This petition, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was sent over the signature of E. I. Aswat, Acting Chairman, British Indian Association.

22. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
April 25, 1910

DEAR PROFESSOR GOKHALE,

In answer to my cable[2] of the 6th December last, you cabled inquiring what funds were required, and in my replying cable I stated as follows:

> Present requirements thousand pounds. Expect imprisonment before end month. Much more required later.

On the same day, I wrote to you[3] how the funds are being dealt with. In that letter, I told you that the debt incurred in conducting Phoenix by me personally was paid out of the amount received from you. This covers over £1,200. I gave you also the following approximate summary of monthly expenses:

Office here	£50
Office London	£40
Indian Opinion	£50
Distressed families	£25

In your letter replying to mine, you were good enough to inform me that the expenses were in order.

In view of the certainty of prolongation of the struggle yet for some considerable time, it is necessary for me to give you a resume of receipts and expenditure, and of the events to date. The monies obtained to date since December last are as follows:

	£	s.	d.
From Bombay	4,253	3	4
From Rangoon	750	0	0
From London	135	8	2
From Mozambique	50	0	0
From Zanzibar	59	3	6
From Lourenco Marques	11	12	0
From Natal	8	16	0
Local	1	7	7
	5,269	10	7

The Bombay fund is divided into two parts—£3,914-10-0 has

[1] A Gujarati translation appeared in *Indian Opinion*, 7-5-1910.
[2] Not available
[3] *Vide* "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", 6-12-1909

been sent to be used for carrying on the struggle generally, and £338-l3-4 has been earmarked for relief of distress among the passive resisters or their dependants. These instructions have been closely followed. The remittances from Rangoon as also from London have, like the earmarked fund from Bombay, been devoted to the relief of distress only.

Your letter, as also Mr. Petit's, has left the expenditure to my discretion, and I have considered it best to avail myself of that latitude. The funds are banked to a separate account, called the Passive Resistance Fund Account, in the Natal Bank, Johannesburg. So far as the Bank is concerned, I alone operate upon them. No special and formal committee has been organized, nor are the funds treated as part of the British Indian Association Account. The British Indian Association covers a wider range than that of passive resistance. Disbursements are made in consultation with or subject to the approval of Mr. Cachalia, who is the President of the British Indian Association, and other passive resisters.

The Phoenix debt represented a personal debt incurred by me from European friends and clients by reason of the necessity of having to continue *Indian Opinion* under somewhat adverse circumstances and at a loss in the interests of the struggle. I have devoted to the continuance of *Indian Opinion* and the establishment of Phoenix all my earnings during my last stay in South Africa, that is, nearly £5,000. I derive no pecuniary benefit from Phoenix, the support of my family and myself being found by a European friend[1]. Those Europeans and Indians who are my co-workers at Phoenix receive as a rule only what they need, and are practically under a vow of poverty. Certain alterations have been made in the management of Phoenix, which I am glad to be able to say have so far enabled the continuance of the paper without the monthly assistance referred to in my letter. The Committee in London is being financed on a most economic basis. I have to make the same remark in connection with the offices here. The expenditure [up] to the 20th instant is as follows:

Local Expenses	374	11	8
London Office	175	15	0
Relief of Distress	449	11	11
Relief apart from Distress Fund	50	0	0

[1] Hermann Kallenbach

Indian Opinion Debt	1,200	0	0
Total	£2,249	18	7

This leaves a balance of £3,019/12/-. The monthly expenses for relieving distress have, however, as you see, gone forward, and, whereas, in the month of December only £25 was paid, on the present basis it comes to nearly £160 per month, over fifty families receiving support. Local expenses, besides the carrying on of the office here, include travelling expenses of passive resisters from Durban, etc., as also cables and such other disbursements. The above expenditure covers a period of four months and a half. Excluding relief expenditure and the item for the *Indian Opinion* debt, the average monthly expense is nearly £133. The expenses for supporting distressed families are bound to increase as time passes. I, therefore, put them down at £200 per month. The average monthly expense then may be put down at £333. The balance of £3,019/12/- may thus be exhausted about the month of January next.

Nearly £50 is being paid towards rent due by the families in distress. We have, therefore, been considering the advisability of removing them to a farm, where women as well as men could do something to earn a living, and where we should probably be able to save half of what is now being paid for relief. There was the difficulty about a capital outlay on a farm. Mr. Cachalia, others who were out of gaol and I were even prepared to risk that outlay in the hope of being able to sell the farm, if necessary, at the close of the struggle, but a large outlay will probably not be required, as a European friend has offered to buy a farm and place it at the disposal of the passive resisters during the continuance of the struggle, free of charge.[1] This very generous offer has been almost accepted and by the time this letter is in your hands, he may have secured a suitable farm, in which [case] all the distressed families and I should be living together on the farm.

The expenses detailed above take no note of relief that is being granted privately by individuals.

The estimate I gave you of active passive resisters I now see was an under-estimate, and many whom I did not consider would come forward are now either serving imprisonment or have been deported. The Authorities have been of late very active in effecting arrests,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H. Kallenbach", 30-5-1910

particularly of the brave Tamils, than whom no [other] Indians have done better in connection with the struggle. These brave men have time after time courted imprisonment. There are over thirty at present at the Diepkloof Gaol, which is a penal settlement, in which the regulations are more severe than in the other prisons of the Transvaal. Nearly sixty have been deported by the *Umhloti* and over thirty may be deported any day, orders for deportation having been already made. I cannot write about these deportations with sufficient restraint. All these men are domiciled in the Transvaal; some of them are domiciled also in Natal; some, again, have a right to enter Natal, being able to pass the education test imposed under the immigration law of that Colony. Some are mere lads born in the Transvaal or other parts of South Africa, and many have left behind them families that have been reared in this country. I come into constant touch with the brave wives, sisters or mothers of the deported men. I once asked them whether they would like to go with the deported to India, and they indignantly remarked: "How can we? We were brought to this country as children, and we do not know anybody in India. We would rather perish here than go to India, which is a foreign land to us." However regrettable this attitude of mind may be from a national standpoint, the fact remains that these men and women are rooted to the South African soil. Many of these men before the struggle commenced earned a decent living. Some of them had stores, some were trolley-contractors, and others were hawkers, cigar-makers, waiters, etc., the employees earning a minimum wage of £6 and a maximum of £15, whereas the trolley-contractors and others who followed an independent calling earned as much as from £20 to £30 per month. All these are now reduced to poverty, and their families receive from the Passive Resistance Fund the barest sustenance money. I may mention for your information that it was stated at one time by the Government that those who were voluntarily registered in the Transvaal as many of these deported men are, were not deported at all, and that those who were domiciled in parts of South Africa other than the Transvaal were deported to such parts and not to India. Both these declarations have been falsified, the excuse given being that these men refuse to supply identification particulars and to prove domicile. The first excuse is invalid, because the refusal to supply identification particulars is itself a criminal offence, and these men, seeing that they were voluntarily registered, could have been proceeded against under the special section that deals with refusal to supply identification

particulars. There was no occasion to treat them as unregistered Indians and thus deport them. The second excuse is equally invalid, in that those who were entitled to enter Natal stated that they were domiciled there and those who had a knowledge of a European language did not need to bring forward any proof. In my opinion, the fact is that, having failed to break the proud spirit of the brave Tamils, the Asiatic Department has now embarked upon a plan of extermination, and of taxing our pecuniary resources to the uttermost. Be that as it may, I think that I am quite correct in assuring you and, through you, the public in India, that neither these men, nor their wives, mothers nor sisters, as the case may be, are likely to succumb in any appreciable measure.

I hope that the Motherland will not rest so long as the insult offered to her in the Transvaal legislation that we are fighting has not been removed, and that we shall continue to receive the support that has been hitherto extended to us.

I remain,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From the typewritten original signed by Gandhiji: G. N. 3799; also *Indian Opinion*, 7-5-1910

23. LETTER TO DIRECTOR OF PRISONS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]

April 26, 1910

SIR,

Some of the passive resisters recently discharged from Diepkloof have brought to the notice of my Association complaints and information which, in the interests of humanity, my Association feels bound to place before you.

Mr. Sorabji, who has suffered imprisonment again and again, was on the 26th October last, together with Mr. Medh[2], sentenced to a

[1] This letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was signed by E. I. Aswat, Acting Chairman of the British Indian Association.

[2] Leading Natal Indian satyagrahi, *vide* "Notable Discharges", 30-4-1910

further term at Volksrust. Mr. Sorabji states that during this last imprisonment at Volksrust, he was roughly treated by a warder named Nell. The previous time that he had gone to prison, he was, under medical orders, specially put on light labour, and he was called upon to carry no heavy weight. But, on the occasion in question, on the day of sentence, before medical examination had taken place, Warder Nell ordered Mr. Sorabji to water plants, in the doing of which he was called upon to fill full with water two five-gallon buckets and to carry them to some distance, a task which the Native prisoner with whom he and the other Indians were made to work could do only with some difficulty. Warder Nell knew Mr. Sorabji during his previous term of imprisonment, and knew also that, under special medical instructions, he was put upon very light labour, and his task chiefly consisted in store-work, keeping an account of clothing and distributing it. Mr. Sorabji was working under another warder named Oberholster, who did not mind Mr. Sorabji taking his own time and only half filling the buckets. At 2 o'clock that day, Warder Nell came and insisted upon Mr. Sorabji filling the two buckets full. The latter protested and said that the warder knew him and knew also that the Medical Officer had last time put him upon light labour only. He also drew the warder's attention to the fact that he was suffering from rupture and dislocation of one of his arms and from acceleration of the heart. The warder took no heed, and still insisted upon Mr. Sorabji carrying the buckets and watering the plants. This he was obliged to do up to the time he was able to see the Medical Officer, that is, for two days. Upon his bringing the matter to the notice of the Medical Officer, instructions were at once given to the effect that he was not to be put upon any heavy work and that he was not to be made to carry any weight. Warder Nell, evidently wishing to be spiteful, brought a charge of breach of discipline against Mr. Sorabji, and the latter was tried before the Magistrate. The breach of discipline consisted in Mr. Sorabji's having drawn attention to his condition, and his having, as was alleged by the warder and denied by Mr. Sorabji, said to the former "Leave me alone. You are causing trouble for nothing." Mr. Sorabji cross examined the warder, and related the whole of the incident to the Magistrate, who, however, said that he was not trying the question of the work that was entrusted to Mr. Sorabji, but that he was simply trying the question of breach of discipline; and punished him with spare diet. It is worthy perhaps of remark that, as the Medical Officer had ordered only light labour for Mr. Sorabji, the latter was given by

the same warder the dirtiest work to do, namely, the cleaning of the water closet. Mr. Sorabji desires me to state that he had no objection, as a passive resister, to doing the work, but my Association considers it to be its duty to bring the matter to your notice.

On removal from Volksrust, Mr. Sorabji was accompanied by Messrs Medh and Harilal Gandhi. The three were handcuffed together, and marched from the gaol to the station, a distance of over a mile. They were, in spite of the handcuffs, made to carry their own bundles, which were fairly heavy, as they contained, in addition to their personal clothing, books also, and they had to carry things belonging to the warder in charge and one blanket each. They were marched from Park Station to the Fort in the same manner.

With reference to the condition at Diepkloof, Messrs Sorabji and Medh, who have been just discharged, confirm the statements made by other discharged men as follows: The Medical Officer continues to be entirely callous to the avoidable sufferings of the prisoners. Once, Mr. Thambi Naidoo, who is still at Diepkloof, and who, my Association considers, is one of the bravest men and certainly incapable of lying, complained to the Medical Officer that the prisoners were suffering from partial starvation; whereupon, he called Mr. Naidoo a liar. Mr. Medh often complained that he was losing weight, and that he should have the quantity of the food increased and the quality improved, but the Medical Officer laughed at his complaint and turned a deaf ear. When Mr. Medh had lost over twenty-five pounds, he complained to the Deputy-Governor, and it was only on the 1st April, that is, during the last three weeks of his imprisonment, that the quantity was increased. Most of the prisoners complain that they lose in weight, but the change in diet is not ordered until the Medical Officer considers that they have lost more weight than they need have. The usual remark made by him is that no harm is done to the prisoners if they lose somewhat in weightand throw off what he calls superfluous fat. The Medical Officer used often to remark to the prisoners that they were getting fat on the Government rations. In the humble opinion of my Association, under treatment such as this, the lot of Indian passive resisters at Diepkloof is being made unnecessarily hard. The fact that out of 72 Asiatic prisoners, 18 had to receive an increase in diet shows that the present scale is perilously low both in quantity and quality. The approach of the cold weather makes my Association nervous as to the health of these prisoners, who, deprived of the ordinary fat in their

diet to which they are accustomed, will suffer very seriously.

The discharged men also complain that, whereas, last winter, the articles of clothing included a stout shirt, this time it has not yet been allowed, and the prisoners have already begun to suffer from the absence of this article of clothing. My Association is not aware whether this change has been made throughout, but, even if it has on grounds of economy or otherwise, my Association hopes that Indian prisoners, who belong to a much warmer country, will not be deprived of the long-sleeved shirts to which they have always been used. My Association understands that this complaint has been brought to the notice of the Governor, as also of the Medical Officer, but they informed the prisoners that the change was made by the Government. The prisoners complain also of the fewness of the blankets. Diepkloof Prison, which is built with corrugated iron only and which is without any ceiling-board, being on high ground, is very cold, and three blankets, which may be sufficient in the stone-built prison at Volksrust, are undoubtedly not enough cover for the British Indian prisoners at Diepkloof. My Association ventures to draw your attention to the fact that, at Volksrust, all the Indian prisoners were allowed, even during warm weather, besides three blankets and matting, a bed-board and a pillow. The two latter articles are not given to the prisoners at Diepkloof. Messrs Sorabji and Medh, who have had experience at Houtpoort and Volksrust, mention that at both these places during winter time four blankets were supplied to British Indian prisoners; and they add that, at Houtpoort, four blankets were ordered by yourself, when you visited the gaol there and the passive resisters complained.

One very painful incident, too, is reported by Messrs Sorabji and Medh. There is an Indian prisoner at Diepkloof, who is over 60 years old. He pleaded before the Medical Officer for a shirt and an extra blanket, but that officer point-blank declined to grant relief.

My Association ventures to trust that the matters herein set forth will receive your urgent and careful attention.

Indian Opinion, 30-4-1910

24. NOTABLE DISCHARGES

Messrs Sorabji and Medh, who are among the stalwarts of passive resistance, were discharged on Saturday last. Both have served more than twelve months' imprisonment. Both are educated and both have sacrificed their all for the honour of India. Mr. Sorabji laid the foundation of the second stage of the struggle and Mr. Medh was among the first batch of Natal Indians who entered the Transvaal in order to test their rights as British subjects. Both have suffered much during their incarceration. Mr. Medh has lost heavily in flesh. But both have gained in moral strength, in soul-power. Their material loss is the community's gain. We congratulate these servants of India and wish them enough strength to go through what more may be in store for them.

Indian Opinion, 30-4-1910

25. THE PRETORIA MUNICIPALITY[1]

This notorious municipality keeps up its reputation for waging war against Colour. A private Bill introduced during the last session of the Transvaal Parliament seeks to perpetuate the Town Regulations of the Boer regime which prevent the use of footpaths by Natives, Coloured people and Asiatics. The British Indian Association of the Transvaal has done well in formally protesting against the Bill.[2] It contains, as it ought to, a clause to the effect that it will not come into force unless and until His Majesty has expressed his pleasure not to disallow it. Lord Crewe has now an opportunity of showing that he is ready to protect the unrepresented classes in South Africa from insult and molestation. But the ultimate court of appeal is and must be the people themselves who are affected by hostile legislation.

Indian Opinion, 30-4-1910

26. THE £3 TAX AGAIN

The Government have notified Indians who are liable to pay the annual poll-tax of £3 that by re-indenturing they may avoid payment of the tax, and they have notified the women who are so liable that

[1] *Vide* also "Pretoria Municipality", 30-4-1910
[2] *Vide* "Petition to Transvaal Legislative Assembly", 25-4-1910

they could avoid the tax by showing the Magistrate of their district sufficient cause for avoidance. On the face of it, the notice seems to be in the interests of the men and women concerned. But in reality, it is nothing of the kind. The notice as to the men is totally for the benefit of the employers of Indian labour. It was for them that the change in the law was made. For, the employers had to pay higher wages in order to enable the Indians who were liable to the tax to discharge it. A complacent Government have, therefore, met the employers by exempting from payment Indians who may be employed by them. So that the notice is in effect a warning to the unfortunate Indians to re-indenture or to pay the tax.

As for the women, the less said about the disgraceful affair the better. After the humiliating surrender to the clamorous party in the Assembly, we could expect nothing better from the Government than the insulting notice to the women. Their womanhood should either prove sufficient cause for non-payment or none other could. If their sex do not protect them, they must re-indenture in the same way as men. We hope, however, that not a single Indian woman would do anything of the kind.

Indian Opinion, 30-4-1910

27. PRETORIA MUNICIPALITY

The Pretoria Municipality has never been known to behave better than like the garbage-removing body that it is. It has earned a name for its hostility to the Coloured people. It would seem to have come into existence just to make things go hard with them. In the last session of the Transvaal Parliament, too, this Municipality dealt a blow to the Coloureds. A private Bill sponsored by it seeks to provide that Coloured persons should not use footpaths. "Coloured" will include Cape Boys and Asiatics. The British Indian Association has done well to send a petition[1] against this. It will also be necessary to send a petition to Lord Crewe. Let us see what he and Lord Morley say [in reply]. But it must always be borne in mind that ourultimate appeal lies only to ourselves. Is it possible that the Pretoria Indians will agree to avoid footpaths and walk on the roads?

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 30-4-1910

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Transvaal Legislative Assembly", 25-4-1910

28. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

JOHANNESBURG,
May 2, 1910

DEAR PROFESSOR GOKHALE,

I am sending you a public letter[1] addressed to you. After due deliberation, I thought that it was the best thing for me to do. The letter has been handed to the Press here,[2] and I take it that you will publish it on your side also. The letter, too, enables me to inform all the contributors. I have now heard from Mr. Petit that Mr. Tata approves of the expenses incurred by me in connection with *Indian Opinion.* Your letter, to which I have alluded in the accompanying, had already relieved me of anxiety on this score, but it is as well that I have received specific approval from Mr. Tata also.

I do hope that my action in publishing *Hind Swaraj* in Gujarati and now the translation in English does not in any way affect the struggle that is going on in the Transvaal. The opinions expressed by me in the booklet are personal to me. Though they have been matured in the course of the struggle, they have nothing to do with it at all, and I trust that you will be able, should any prejudice arise against myself personally or the pamphlet, to keep the merits of the struggle entirely separate from me. The views expressed by me in *Hind Swaraj* have not been formed without much thought and consideration. Mr. Polak has passed on the typed copy to you. I am not sending you the printed copy because, as the Gujarati is confiscated, I suppose the same thing applies to the translation.

If you have had the time to go through the typed copy, I shall esteem your opinion. The booklet has been widely circulated here. Much criticism has been received. There appears today in *The Transvaal Leader* a signed criticism, which I am asking Mr. Polak to forward to you.

I am not answering the personal part of your letter of December. I simply felt that it was my duty to lay my views before you, which I have done. It is not for me now to argue. Should I ever

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. K. Gokhale",25-4-1910
[2] It was reproduced in *Indian Opinion,* 7-5-1910.

have the privilege of meeting you personally, I shall certainly again press upon your attention some of the views I hold so strongly, and which it appears to me are perfectly sound. Meanwhile, with the hope that you have entirely recovered from your malady, and that you will be long spared for the service of the Motherland, I can only remain,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

THE HONOURABLE PROFESSOR GOKHALE

BOMBAY

From a photostat of the typewritten original signed by Gandhiji: G. N. 3800

29. LETTER TO GENERAL MANAGER, C. S. A. R.[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]

May 2, 1910

SIR,

Messrs F. A. Moolla and Suliman Kako, of 9 Jubilee Street, Johannesburg, were travelling on the 25th ultimo from Trichardts to Ermelo. On boarding the train, they could not secure seats. They held second-class tickets. They mentioned the matter to the conductor, who said that he would find them seats. Station after station passed by, and they met the conductor, but no seats were provided until the train reached Breyten. At Breyten, Mr. Moolla told the conductor that he would be reported, and the latter said that, in that event, Mr. Moolla would not be allowed to take a seat at all, and went away. Mr. Moolla and his companion, however, took their seats in the compartment that had been pointed out to them. My Association trusts that you will be good enough to inquire into this matter.

Indian Opinion, 14-5-1910

[1] This letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was sent over the signature of A. M. Cachalia, Chairman, British Indian Association.

30. JOHANNESBURG

Monday [*May 2, 1910*]

JOSEPH ROYEPPEN

Messrs Joseph Royeppen, David Andrew, Samuel Joseph and Dhobi Nayana were to be released on Saturday, but, even on the previous day, they were brought to the gaol here and, instead of being released, were handed over to the police for being deported. They were immediately bailed out for two days. Though this was their first experience of gaol, Mr. Royeppen and his companions spent their time very cheerfully. They are, moreover, in excellent health. All of them want to re-enter immediately.

Tuesday [*May 3, 1910*]

QUINN'S PETITION

Mr. Quinn, who has been ordered to be deported and has been kept in custody in Pretoria, challenged in the Supreme Court the Government's right to hold him in detention pending his deportation and prayed to the Court to order his release. The petition was heard and the Chief Justice ruled that the period of detention could not be considered unreasonable.[1] The Court held that since it could not pronounce judgment on the order of deportation, the only question for decision concerned the period [of detention]. The judgment is of little consequence. We are where we were. A satyagrahi should not go in for all this bother of moving the Supreme Court, but men differ in their views and inclinations and that is the reason why Mr. Quinn was obliged to make this petition. The Chinese have not been in the least disheartened by this judgment.

CHINESE MEETING

The Chinese held a meeting on Sunday. It was attended, among others, by Mr. Royeppen and his companions, the Imam Saheb, and Messrs Coovadia, Bhikhaji, Sorabji, Medh, Gandhi and others. Mr. Quinn explained the state of the struggle in all its aspects. At the end of the meeting, tea and fruits were served in honour of Mr. Royeppen. While in gaol, Mr. Royeppen was a complete vegetarian. He says he felt no need of meat. Mr. Royeppen and the others were taken to Pretoria this morning.

[1] *Vide* also "The Supreme Court Case", 7-5-1910

SHELAT

Indian prisoners at Diepkloof have sent a message to say that the Government should be requested not to ask Mr. Shelat to carry slop-pails and that they are ready to do the work on his behalf. The message does them credit. Mr. Cachalia has accordingly addressed a letter[1] to the Government, so that, if it feels like it, it may spare Mr. Shelat.

VISIT TO SODHA

Miss Schlesin left for Diepkloof on Sunday last in order to visit Mr. Sodha. He is to be discharged next Saturday. He has maintained good health in gaol.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-5-1910

31. LETTER TO DIRECTOR OF PRISONS[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,]

May 3, 1910

SIR,

Mr. Shelat was some time ago serving imprisonment as a passive resister at Diepkloof, and underwent prolonged solitary confinement for refusing to carry slop-pails. The discharged passive resisters have brought the message to my Association that the remaining British Indian prisoners at Diepkloof are quite agreeable that Mr. Shelat, who is a Brahmin and has very great conscientious scruples about removing slop-pails, should be excused from having to perform that work; and that the other British Indian prisoners will be prepared to replace him whenever his turn comes to remove the pails.[3] My Association does not know whether Mr. Shelat has yet been ordered to do this work, but I consider it my duty to bring the above matter to your notice, so that such instructions as you may consider fit may be issued to the officials at Diepkloof.

Indian Opinion, 7-5-1910

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] This letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was signed by A. M. Cachalia, Chairman, British Indian Association.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to the Transvaal Administrator", 7-6-1910

32. CABLE TO ROYAL FAMILY[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
After *May 6, 1910*]

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION TENDERS HUMBLE CONDOLENCES ROYAL FAMILY.

Indian Opinion, 14-5-1910

33. THE SUPREME COURT CASE

The judgment[2] given by the Supreme Court on the application of Mr. Quinn, the Chairman of the Transvaal Chinese Association, does not take us any further. The deportations still remain illegal. The Court was not called upon to decide upon the legality or otherwise of the warrant itself. The Court had no jurisdiction in the matter, the order being purely administrative. The question, therefore, of deporting Asiatics who are lawfully registered residents of the Transvaal remains where it was. The only question that the Court had to decide was whether the detention in Pretoria pending deportation was reasonable or not. The Court had no difficulty, in view of circumstances, to come to the conclusion that detention was not unreasonable.

The proceedings, however, throw a curious light on the situation. The authorities are unable to carry out their illegal policy through a British port. The deportees, if they were to pass through British territories, would have a legal remedy. They are, therefore, smuggled through a foreign port. As passive resisters, however, theirs is not to complain. Their duty is simply to go where they are forced to and at the earliest possible moment to retrace their steps as soon as they become free agents, and once more challenge the might of the Transvaal Government.

Indian Opinion, 7-5-1910

[1] This cablegram, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was sent through the Deputy Governor of the Transvaal on behalf of the British Indian Association by its Chairman, A. M. Cachalia, on the death of King Edward VII, who had passed away on 6-5-1910.

[2] *Vide* also "Johannesburg", 2-5-1910

34. MR. ROYEPPEN AND HIS FRIENDS

Mr. Joseph Royeppen and his companions are making history. Every passive resister who has come out of Diepkloof has spoken of Mr. Royeppen and his companions, Messrs Andrew and Joseph, in most flattering terms. They have taken their imprisonment extremely well. According to their wont, the Government, evidently to test their strength, have re-arrested them[1] and have deported them. As Mr. Royeppen states in his letter to the Press,[2] he and his friends have accepted the Government's challenge. We congratulate him and his friends on the brave stand they are making.

But Mr. Royeppen's letter reveals a most painful state of things in the gaols of the Transvaal. Much of what Mr. Royeppen has stated in his letter is generally known. But the details now given by him as to how they were kept standing barefoot on a cold stone floor, how they were kept undressed in a draughty passage, how they were handcuffed and how brutally certain warders dealt with them, revive the memories of a shocking and disgraceful incident. Such treatment, instead of unnerving them, has, we are glad to notice, strengthened them in their resolve to vindicate the national honour.

Mr. Royeppen and his companions have set to the young Indians in South Africa a brilliant and a noble example worthy to be followed. They have shown that true happiness lies not in gaining riches but in moulding character. We trust that the lead given by Mr. Royeppen will infuse a new spirit into the colonial-born and other Indians who have their work cut out before them if they wish to take part in the making of the future South African nation.

Indian Opinion, 7-5-1910

35. OUR PUBLICATIONS

The Bombay *Government Gazette* of the 24th March last notifies that *Hind Swarajya*, *Universal Dawn*[3], *Mustafa Kamel Pasha's Speech*, and *Defence of Socrates or The Story of a True Warrior*[4]—all

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg", 2-5-1910

[2] *Vide* "Indian Barrister's Gaol Experiences", *Indian Opinion*, 7-5-1910.

[3] *Vide* " Sarvodaya[-I]", 16-5-1908, "Sarvodaya[-II]", 28-5-1908, "Sarvodaya [-III]" 30-5-1908, "Sarvodaya[-IV]",6-6-1908, "Sarvodaya[-V]", 13-6-1908, "Sarvodaya[-VI]",20-6-1908, "Sarvodaya[-VII]", 27-6-1908, "Sarvodaya[-VIII]" , 4-7-1908 & "Sarvodaya[-IX]", 18-7-1908.

[4] *ibid*

publications of the International Printing Press—have been forfeited to His Majesty for the reason that they "contain matter declared to be seditious".

Hind Swarajya, in the shape of *Indian Home Rule*, is before our readers. *Universal Dawn* is a Gujarati rendering of Ruskin's *Unto This Last. Mustafa Kamel Pasha's Speech* is a Gujarati translation of the Egyptian patriot's speech delivered just before his death before a vast audience at Cairo. *Defence of Socrates or The Story of a True Warrior* is a Gujarati rendering of Plato's immortal work printed in order to illustrate the virtue and the true nature of passive resistance. All these publications, except *Hind Swarajya*, have been before the public for a considerable time. They are intended to impart a lofty, moral tone to the reader and are, in our opinion, works capable of being put into children's hands without any danger whatsoever.

But we have no right to complain. We consider this activity on the part of the Government of India a passing phase. They are in a state of panic and, wishing to do something, they intend to stop the circulation of literature that shows the slightest independence of spirit. This overzeal is bound to kill itself. The really dangerous publications will seek all kinds of dubious and devious methods of circulation, and we fear that they will, on that account, be read by the very class whom the Government intend that they do not reach.

In these circumstances, we, who are uncompromising advocates of passive resistance, have only one course left open to us. The repression cannot affect us. Our views can only remain the same, and they must find expression on every due occasion, regardless of personal consequences.

We sympathize with the Government of India in their desire to stop the spread of methods of violence. We would do and give much to stop it. But the only way we know to eradicate the disease is to popularize passive resistance of the right stamp. Any other way, especially repression, must inevitably fail in the long run.

Indian Opinion, 7-5-1910

36. ROYEPPEN

Everyone will admit that Mr. Royeppen and his companions have rendered excellent service to the community. Mr. Joseph Royeppen has put his education to the right use. His manner of living

in gaol was also quite worthy of a satyagrahi. His simplicity was nothing if not admirable. His fellow-prisoners, Mr. David Andrew and Mr. Samuel Joseph, also spent their time cheerfully.

These three heroes among Indians will be soon back in gaol.[1] The Government has moved quickly to deport them once again, counting on the fact that they are yet fresh [satyagrahis]. Its hope is that they will lose courage and return [to Natal]. It makes one happy to know that this hope will not be fulfilled.

We give elsewhere a translation of Mr. Royeppen's letter[2] to the Press; it is worth reading.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-5-1910

37. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

May 8, 1910

MY DEAR MILLIE,

I can think of nothing to write to you about. I therefore give you the following beautiful thought:

'Therefore the means of deliverance from all those evils from which men suffer lies only in one thing, the inner work of each man upon himself.

"Martha! Martha! thou art anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is needful" '.

I remain with love,

Yours,
BROTHER

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* also "Mr. Royeppen", 28-5-1910 and "Joseph Royeppen", 25-5-1910
[2] Not reproduced here

38. LETTER TO W. J. WYBERGH

May 10, 1910

DEAR MR. WYBERGH[1],

I am exceedingly obliged to you for your very full and valuable criticism of the little pamphlet on Indian Home Rule. I shall with very great pleasure send your letter[2] to *Indian Opinion* for publication, and shall treat this reply likewise.

I entirely reciprocate the sentiments you express in the last paragraph of your letter. I am quite aware that my views will lead to many differences of opinion between my staunchest friends and those whom I have come to regard with respect and myself, but these differences, so far as I am concerned, can neither diminish respect nor affect friendly relations.

I am painfully conscious of the imperfections and defects you point out in your letter, and I know how unworthy I am to handle the very important problems dealt with in the booklet. But, having had the position of a publicist practically forced upon me by circums-tances, I felt bound to write for those for whom *Indian Opinion* caters. The choice lay between allowing the readers of *Indian Opinion*, anxious though they were for guidance, to drift away in the matter of the insane violence that is now going on in India, or[3] giving them, no matter how humble, a lead that they were asking for. The only way I saw of mitigating violence was the one sketched in the pamphlet.

I share your views that a superficial reader will consider the pamphlet to be a disloyal production, and I admit, too, that those who will not distinguish between men and measures, between modern civilisation and its exponents, will come to that conclusion. And I accept your proposition that I discourage violence only because I think it to be both wrong and ineffective, and not because the object sought to be attained is wrong, that is to say, if it were ever possible, which I hold it is not, to detach the object from the means adopted to attain it. I hold that Home Rule obtained by violence would be totally different in kind from that obtained by the means suggested by me.

I have ventured utterly to condemn modern civilisation because I hold that the spirit of it is evil. It is possible to show that some of its

[1] Member, Legislative Assembly, Transvaal

[2] *Vide* Appendix "W. J. Wybergh's letter to Gandhiji", 3-5-1910.

[3] A slip for 'and'

incidents are good, but I have examined its tendency in the scale of ethics. I distinguish between the ideals of individuals who have risen superior to their environment, as also between Christianity and modern civilisation. Its activity is by no means confined to Europe. Its blasting influence is now being exhibited in full force in Japan. And it now threatens to overwhelm India. History teaches us that men who are in the whirlpool, except in the cases of individuals, will have to work out their destiny in it but I do submit that those who are still outside its influence, and those who have a well-tried civilisation to guide them, should be helped to remain where they are, if only as a measure of prudence. I claim to have tested the life which modern civilisation has to give, as also that of the ancient civilisation, and I cannot help most strongly contesting the idea that the Indian population requires to be roused by "the lash of competition and the other material and sensuous, as well as intellectual, stimuli"; I cannot admit that these will add a single inch to its moral stature. Liberation in the sense in which I have used the term is undoubtedly the immediate aim of all humanity. It does not, therefore, follow that the whole of it can reach it in the same time. But if that liberation is the best thing attainable by mankind, then, I submit, it is wrong to lower the ideal for anyone. All the Indian Scriptures have certainly preached incessantly liberation as an immediate aim, but we know that this preaching has not resulted in "activity in the lower worlds" being abandoned.

I admit that the term "passive resistance" is a misnomer. I have used it because, generally speaking, we know what it means. Being a popular term, it easily appeals to the popular imagination. The underlying principle is totally opposed to that of violence. It cannot, therefore, be that "the battle is transferred from the physical to the mental plane". The function of violence is to obtain reform by external means; the function of passive resistance, that is, soul-force, is to obtain it by growth from within; which, in its turn, is obtained by self-suffering, self-purification. Violence ever fails; passive resistance is ever successful. The fight of a passive resister is none the less spiritual because he fights to win. Indeed, he is obliged to fight to win, that is, to obtain the mastery of self. Passive resistance is always moral, never cruel; and any activity, mental or otherwise, which fails in this test is undoubtedly not passive resistance.

Your argument tends to show that there must be complete divorce between politics and religion or spirituality. That is what we see in everyday life under modern conditions. Passive resistance seeks

to rejoin politics and religion and to test every one of our actions in the light of ethical principles. That Jesus refused to use soul-force to turn stones into bread only supports my argument. Modern civilization is at present engaged in attempting that impossible feat. The use of soul-force for turning stones into bread would have been considered, as it is still considered, as black magic. Nor can I hold with you that motives alone can always decide the question of a particular act being right or wrong. An ignorant mother may, from the purest motives, administer a dose of opium to her child. Her motives will not cure her of her ignorance, nor, in the moral world purge her of the offence of killing her child. A passive resister, recognising this principle and knowing that, in spite of the purity of his motives, his action may be utterly wrong, leaves judgment to the Supreme Being, and, in attempting to resist what he holds to be wrong, suffers only in his own person.

Throughout the *Bhagavad Gita*, I can see no warrant for holding that a man who can only control "the organs of action" but cannot help "dwelling in his mind on the objects of the senses" had better use the organs of action until the mind, too, is under control. In ordinary practices, we call such use an indulgence, and we know, too, that, if we can control the flesh even while the spirit is weak, always wishing that the spirit were equally strong, we will certainly arrive at a right correspondence. I think the text you have quoted refers to a man who, for making a show, appears to be controlling the organs of action, whilst deliberately in his mind dwelling on the objects of the senses.

I agree with you entirely that a pure passive resister cannot allow himself to be regarded as a martyr nor can he complain of the hardships of prison or any other hardships, nor may he make political capital out of what may appear to be injustice or ill-treatment, much less may he allow any matter of passive resistance to be advertised. But all action unfortunately is mixed. Purest passive resistance can exist only in theory. The anomalies you point out only emphasize the fact that the Indian passive resisters of the Transvaal are, after all, very fallible human beings and yet very weak, but I can assure you that their object is to make their practice correspond with pure passive resistance as nearly as possible, and, as the struggle progresses, pure spirits are certainly rising in our midst.

I am free to admit also that all passive resisters are not fired with

the spirit of love or of truth. Some of us are undoubtedly not free from vindictiveness and the spirit of hatred; but the desire in us all is to cure ourselves of hatred and enmity. I have noticed, too, that those who simply became passive resisters under the glamour of the newness of the movement or for selfish reasons have fallen away. Pretended self-suffering cannot last long. Such men never were passive resisters. It is necessary to discuss the subject of passive resistance somewhat impersonally. If you say that physical sufferings of soldiers have vastly exceeded those of the Transvaal passive resisters, I agree with you entirly; but the sufferings of world-known passive resisters who deliberately walked into funeral pyres or into boiling cauldrons were incomparably greater than those of any soldier it is possible to name.

I cannot pretend to speak for Tolstoy, but my reading of his works has never led me to consider that, in spite of his merciless analysis of institutions organised and based upon force, that is governments, he in any way anticipates or contemplates that the whole world will be able to live in a state of philosophical anarchy. What he has preached, as, in my opinion, have all world-teachers, is that every man has to obey the voice of his own conscience, and be his own master, and seek the Kingdom of God from within. For him there is no government that can control him without his sanction. Such a man is superior to all government. And can it be ever dangerous for a lion to tell a number of other lions who in their ignorance consider themselves to be merely lambs that they, too, are not lambs but lions? Some very ignorant lions will no doubt contest the knowing lion's proposition. There will, no doubt, on that account be confusion also, but, no matter how gross the ignorance may be, it will not be suggested that the lion who knows should sit still and not ask his fellow-lions to share his majesty and freedom.

It has indeed occurred to me that an anti-Asiatic league which from pure though entirely misguided motives wishes to deport Asiatics from the Transvaal, because it may consider them to be an evil, would be certainly justified, from its own view-point, in violently attaining its object. It is not open to passive resisters, if they are not weak, to complain of such, in their opinion, high-handed action, but for them deportation and worse must be a welcome relief from having to submit to a course of action which is repugnant to their conscience. I hope you will not fail to see the beauty of passive resistance in your own illustration. Supposing that these deportees were capable of offering physical violence against forcible deportation, and yet from

pure choice elected to be deported rather than resist deportation, will it not show superior courage and superior moral fibre in them?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 21-5-1910

39. JOHANNESBURG

Monday [*May 9, 1910*]

IN GAOL

Mr. Samuel Joseph, Mr. Andrew and Mr. Dhobi Nayana, who were only recently released and deported, re-entered and went back to gaol on Friday last. They have been awarded only six weeks. This is rather surprising. To start with, it was six months, then it became three months and now it is a month and a half. I do not understand the reason for this. We need not say that the Government has grown panicky, for all its actions are dictated by panic. Maybe the Government wants to empty Diepkloof before the Union comes into being on June 1. But this is mere guess-work. "Why should it empty the gaol in this manner?" one cannot help asking. Let us wait and see. The procession is bound to reach the place of reception, drum and all.[1] To a satyagrahi, it should be the same, six months or six weeks.

SODHA

[He] was discharged on Saturday. He appeared all right. There was no sign this time of his having suffered in health as there was last time. Since he has not been [re-]arrested, he is leaving for Natal to meet his children and expects to return shortly and join his fellow-satyagrahis in gaol.[2] Mr. Harilal Gandhi, too, left for Phoenix last Friday for the same purpose.

KING EDWARD

On account of his death, everything is closed in the town today

[1] A Gujarati saying, meaning, "The truth of the matter is bound to be known sooner or later"

[2] *Vide* also "Mr. Sodha's Discharge", 14-5-1910

and black flags were unfurled over offices.

Tuesday [*May 10, 1910*]

PETER MOONLIGHT

Mr. Peter Moonlight, who was at one time Chairman of the Tamils [the Tamil Association], is now under police custody and will be deported.

TO ROYAL FAMILY

The British Indian Association has sent, through the Deputy Governor, a telegraphic message[1] of condolence to the Royal Family.

Yesterday, all shops were closed. Newspapers have published long accounts of the career of the late King.

CASE AGAINST CHINESE

The Chinese are preparing to take an appeal to the Privy Council in the case which they lost in the Supreme Court.[2] This is a complicated matter and therefore no definite decision has been taken yet.

Wednesday [*May 11, 1910*]

DEPORTED

Chinasamy Paul, a boy of 16 years, and Peter Moonlight have been deported.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-5-1910

[1] *Vide* "Cable to Royal Family", After 6-5-1910
[2] *Vide* "The Supreme Court Case", 7-5-1910

40. THE LATE KING[1]

King Edward is dead and has left an Empire in mourning. The British Constitution keeps the King outside of politics. It is, therefore, his personal qualities that alone count in measuring the loss. But these guide only those whose lives are affected by them. Indians will best remember His late Majesty as a Sovereign who followed in the footsteps of his mother of revered memory. Like her, the late King had shown a warm corner in his bosom for the people of India. And that will always be a title to our affection for his memory.

Indian Opinion, 14-5-1910

41. LONG LIVE THE KING!

H.R.H. Prince George of Wales is now King George the Fifth of England and Emperor of India. The King is dead: Long live the King! are expressions that have to be uttered in the same breath. Individual Kings and Emperors come and go but Kingship is eternal. The attributes of that office few Sovereigns are able fully to live up to. King Edward, in the words of his son, now King George V, wished that, "so long as he drew breath, he would strive to promote the best interests of the people". "That promise", adds His Majesty, "was carried out to the best of his father's ability and it would be his earnest endeavour, under God, to follow his father's example in that respect." His Majesty asks the prayer of his subjects "that God may grant him strength and guidance". That prayer will go up to heaven from many countries and in many languages. We humbly Join in that prayer.

Indian Opinion, 14-5-1910

[1] This appeared as a boxed item within thick black lines.

42. MR. V. A. CHETTIAR

Our readers will be glad to possess a portrait of Mr. V. A. Chettiar, the Chairman of the Tamil Benefit Society. We are issuing Mr. Chettiar's portrait with this issue not only because Mr. Chettiar, old as he is, has gone to gaol for the third time and that his son is now on the waters, but also by way of compliment to the whole Tamil community that has worked wonders during the struggle.

Indian Opinion, 14-5-1910

43. MR. SODHA'S DISCHARGE

Mr. R. M. Sodha, who was discharged last Saturday, is one of the stalwarts whom we mentioned the other day.[1] He has served imprisonment almost continuously for a year. Mr. Sodha, again, being an orthodox Hindu, has been obliged to suffer doubly as, during certain months of the year, he restricts himself to only one meal per day. Outside the gaol, his one meal will naturally make up more or less for the absence of the other two. But, in the prison, he had simply to be satisfied with his portion for the particular meal he chose to take. But Mr. Sodha went through it all most cheerfully. Mr. Sodha, having been discharged in the Transvaal and not being deported, has returned to Natal to see his wife and family, and proposes to return at an early date to rejoin his fellow-prisoners at Diepkloof. The calmness with which well-tried passive resisters like Mr. Sodha face imprisonment again and again does great credit to themselves and the community to which they belong.

Indian Opinion, 14-5-1910

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg", 9-5-1910

44. LATE EMPEROR EDWARD[1]

The whole of the British Empire mourns the death of King Edward. What is the position of the Indian people? Should-the fact of their being at present unhappy under British rule prevent them from joining in the mourning? Those who refrain must be ignorant of the British Constitution, under which the King takes no active part in the administration. He cannot change the policy of his Government. Hence, in judging him, we can only take into account his personal qualities. Even these have hardly had any impact on the Indian people. Those alone will feel their effects who acquaint themselves with his life and reflect over his conduct.

It is enough for us that King Edward followed the example of his mother, Queen Victoria, and showed love for the Indian people. He seems to have cherished kindly feelings for them in his heart. Therefore, the Indian people, whatever their views on British policies, will always bear the purest affection for the King.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-5-1910

45. LONG LIVE THE KING!

"The King is dead. Long live the King." These two sentences are uttered in the same breath at the time of a king's death. Kings come and go. Many have died, and many will die in future. Dara, Alexandar and others left empty-handed. There is no knowing, thus, when this body will perish. But kingship lives on. It may be despotic or benevolent. But British monarchy is neither the one nor the other. King Edward did all that he could. It was his greatness that he never thought of interfering in the conduct of the government. He saw that not to do so was the best way of serving the people. The Prince of Wales now becomes King George V, the new monarch. It ishis intention to follow in the footsteps of his father, and he prays to God for strength[2] and guidance and wants his subjects too to pray likewise. Millions will join in this prayer and we also pray to God to give him

[1] This appeared between two thick black lines.

[2] Literally, power

wisdom and strength.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-5-1910

46. JOHANNESBURG

Monday [*May 16, 1910*]

CABLES FROM POLAK

Three cables have been received from Mr. Polak, in which he reports that a big meeting was held in Madras when the satyagrahis reached Bombay. From among them, 26 have already started on the return voyage. Those who were deported also included some non-satyagrahis. Mr. Polak also reports the death of one of them. The authorities have been taken aback by Mr. Polak's brisk work. I hope Indians in Durban will welcome and look after those who disembark there. The Durban Indians can do this at least, ought to do it, namely, arrange for their lodging, honour them [in public] and send them back to the Transvaal.

FINE IN DELAGOA BAY

A correspondent informs me that passengers bound for the Transvaal have to face much harassment in Delagoa Bay. The physician demands eight shillings. Afterwards, if the passenger holds a Transvaal pass, they collect £8 from him and then allow him to disembark. He is charged a further fee of one and a half pounds. He is made to hand over his pass, and gets a ticket after the pass has been inspected. He has then to inform the police about his departure. A person accompanies him as far as the border and there returns £7 to him after deducting £1. Thus, the Indian remains a prisoner till he reaches the Transvaal and pays a fine of as much as £3. Not only do the incoming Indians submit to all this quietly, but the Delagoa Bay Indians, who are in a position to have matters set right, are too selfish to move in the matter.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 21-5-1910

47. THE RETURNED DEPORTEES

Mr. Polak and the 26 returning deportees deserve the thanks of the Indian community in South Africa, Mr. Polak for the promptness with which he has sent these men, and the deportees for the bravery and self-sacrifice they have shown in undertaking the return voyage within four days of their arrival in Bombay. It must have been to the latter a great wrench. They went to the mother-country, some of them perfect strangers to it. They could have seen something of it, had they stayed, and no one could have taken exception if they had followed that course, but they chose to put duty before everything else, and, after a trying voyage as deck-passengers, they have undertaken an almost equally trying voyage not to find or seek rest after it, but to brave imprisonment or whatever may be in store for them. Speculation is rife as to whether these men will be able to land at any of the South African ports. If they have been domiciled either at the Cape or in Natal, they should certainly find no difficulty in that. By the time they arrive, probably the Union Government will be in full working order. It will be interesting to note how they are dealt with by that Government. All speculation with reference to their arrival in the Transvaal is needless, because, whether they are tried as prohibited immigrants or otherwise, they have but to seek imprisonment, unless the Government, after having brought them into the Colony, take them again to Delagoa Bay and deport them to India. Whatever happens, as passive resisters they have only one course left open, and that is to abide by their obligation not to submit to the Law until the grievance for which they have been suffering has been redressed, irrespective of the results that may follow such a course. The Indians of Durban, too, have a duty to perform. It will be expected of them that they receive these passive resisters and make them as comfortable as possible, and give them such an ovation as would enable them to know that their self-sacrificing work is being appreciated by their countrymen throughout South Africa, and to enable the South African Government to understand that the whole of the Indian community in South Africa is at the back of the movement.

Indian Opinion, 21-5-1910

48. HINDUS AND MUSLIMS

COLONIAL-BORN INDIANS AND OTHERS

We feel ashamed to write under this heading but, ashamed or not, our duty is to speak the truth.

In Maritzburg, some Hindus and Colonial-born Indians had applied for trading licences, and also succeeded in obtaining them. We are prepared, if they so desire, to congratulate them on that. But the means which they adopted to secure the licences will prove the truth of the saying: "The heart must pay for what the hand has done."[1] In support of their applications, they submitted a statement from certain whites saying that Hindus and Muslims were not united and that [therefore] Hindus and Colonial-born Indians must not be obliged to buy from Muslim shops. And so the whites, in their wisdom, suggested that the licences should be granted.

So far as we can see, such steps can only lead to unhappy results. Till now it was only the whites who used to oppose our applications. Now we see even Indians opposing one another. This augurs ill [for the community]. We see that Indians are being tempted, with the support of whites, to profit at one another's expense. The wise among the Indians should realize at once that this will bring ruin to both the communities. A move of this kind betokens complete lack of vision. We, therefore, entreat Indian leaders to think twice before they engage in such activities. We look upon everyone, no matter whether an Indian or not, who creates differences between Hindus and Muslims or between Colonial-born Indians and other Indians, as an enemy of the community; such a person will certainly deserve to be called so. We are emphatic in our view that, if among ourselves one community gets something more than the other, the latter should acquiesce in that rather than allow anything to fall into the hands of the third party.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 21-5-1910

[1] A Gujarati saying

49. JOHANNESBURG

Monday [*May 23, 1910*]

DEPORTEES

Mr. Achary, one of the deportees, in a letter from Zanzibar dated April 23, writes to say that the deportees were happy on board the ship. They had some difficulties with the Captain about their food, but, on the British Consul's advice, these were satisfactorily settled in Beira.

OTHER DEPORTEES

Mr. David Ernest and 23 other Indians who were deported by the *Umfuli* on the 18th instant were accompanied by Mr. Quinn and 25 other Chinese. The ship is bound for Colombo. There is no definite information what will happen to the passengers thereafter. There is a report that the Chinese may be taken to China. Mr. Quinn reports that the Chinese Consul had made good arrangements for their food and accommodation. There is also a move by the Chinese to get the Chinese Minister in Lisbon, the capital of Portugal, to write to the authorities there.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-5-1910

50. LETTER TO T. D. PATHER

JOHANNESBURG
May 25, 1910

DEAR MR. PATHER,

I have your letter giving me a full explanation of the two cases referred to in your letter. I am glad that you are not concerned in any injustice being done to our countrymen. Indeed, interpreters should be a source of comfort and help to Indians who come in touch with them. I am glad you have been helping Mr. Royeppen[1] and others.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

MR. T. D. PATHER
P.O. BOX 1256
DURBAN, NATAL

From a photostat: G.N. 777

[1] Joseph Royeppen

51. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY TO VISCOUNT GLADSTONE[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
May 26, 1910

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION TENDERS RESPECTFUL WELCOME TO HIS EXCELLENCY AND LADY GLADSTONE. ASSOCIATION WILL APPRECIATE APPOINTMENT FOR RECEIVING SMALL DEPUTATION REGARDING PAINFUL ASIATIC STRUGGLE GOING ON IN COLONY.

A. M. CACHALIA
PRESIDENT

Colonial Office Records: Cd. 5363

52. CRIMINAL NEGLECT

Both the Hon. Mr. R. Jameson[2] and Mr. W. C. Daugherty[3] deserve the thanks not only of the Indian community but also of those who have the fair name of Durban at heart, for the outspoken manner in which they have exposed the criminal neglect of the Durban Corporation in not having attended to the sanitation of a plague-spot known as the Eastern Vlei Indian Location, containing a population of nearly 800 Indians whom Mr. Jameson describes as "these long-suffering, patient and helpless people". Since 1901, the Indian tenants have paid the Corporation in rents and rates the sum of £8,508 and have received in return "nothing but a swamp, a water-pipe, and sanitary services". "Had they been Europeans", adds Mr. Jameson, "this would perforce long since have been righted." Mr. Daugherty, who gives details, says that "they suffer in health and comfort and material prosperity through being overlooked or forgotten in the improvements which have in every other part of the Borough been progressing and this notwithstanding that their particular part called for amelioration more urgently than any other locality. There is not even a paraffin lamp in the road." Now this is a terrible indictment.

[1] This telegram was presumably drafted by Gandhiji. On June 23, the Secretary replied that Viscount Gladstone could not receive the deputation. *Vide* "Johannes-burg"' 27-6-1910

[2] Chairman of the Sanitary Committee

[3] Inspector of Nuisances

The first thought on reading it is naturally to swear at the Corporation. That it has neglected the Eastern Vlei Indians in a most shocking manner is all too true. But maturer consideration must lead to some heart-searchings among ourselves. We are not inclined to absolve even the Eastern Vlei Indians entirely from blame. It was, as it is even now, open to them to decline to live in that swamp. But the chief blame must rest upon the shoulders of the leaders of the community. It betrays a want of real communal life. It is possible to understand the helplessness of the location inmates. But it is impossible to understand or excuse the apathy of the leaders who should have led and compelled the Corporation to do its obvious duty. Why would the place have received prompt attention, had it been inhabited by Europeans? Surely not because they were Europeans but because their leaders, if not they themselves, would have moved heaven and earth to right such a terrible wrong. Europeans would have understood communal duty, whereas we have not. If, then, the neglect of the Corporation is criminal, that of our leaders is doubly so. The Corporation may shelve Mr. Jameson's letter[1] and Mr. Daugherty's report[2]. Will our leaders allow it todo so? Here there is simple work for the various Indian societies. It is work that can bear fruit without much trouble. They may appoint visiting members to the location, obtain accurate information, bring the inmates themselves to a sense of their duty, tell them what they can do themselves, and, last but not least, they may and should ceaselessly worry the Corporation until it has done its duty.

Indian Opinion, 28-5-1910

[1] Memorandum to the Durban Town Council reproduced in *Indian Opinion,* 21-5-1910

[2] Reproduced in *Indian Opinion,* 21-5-1910

53. GERMAN EAST AFRICA LINE'S STEAMERS

We draw the attention of the Agents of the German East Africa Line to the allegations[1] we print in another column made by the passengers per s.s. *Kanzler* during her voyage from Bombay which commenced on the 31st March last. If the allegations are true, they cast a serious reflection on the officers of the s. s. *Kanzler.* We hope that the Company's Agents will fully investigate the charges made. We would, at the same time, warn them that, if they remain satisfied with categorical denials from the officers concerned, it would hardly carry conviction. Most of the passengers who have given their names are perhaps available, and it is the duty of the Company's Agents, if only for their own interest, to carry on a thorough investigation. We cannot believe that they would countenance ill-treatment of their passengers, whether they are Indians or Europeans.

Indian Opinion, 28-5-1910

54. MR. ROYEPPEN

Mr. Joseph Royeppen, after having performed the pilgrimage to his aged mother and met his relatives whom he had left after only a short stay with them upon his return from London, has rejoined his companions and has been imprisoned with hard labour for the second time for the offence of entering a British Colony. His academic attainments are no protection to him. His Indian parentage nullifies the effect of his educational qualifications. Had he been a European, his accomplishments would have secured for him a warm welcome. The moral of the tragedy, as Mr. Polak would call this event, is obvious. For an Indian, the term "British subject" has no meaning in the Transvaal.

Indian Opinion, 28-5-1910

[1] Not reproduced here; the complaints were in respect of sleeping accommodation, water supply, medical facilities and rough treatment of the Indian passengers.

55. MORE DISCHARGES

Notable passive resisters continue to be discharged from the Diepkloof prison. That staunch passive resister, Mr. P. K. Naidoo, and the quiet volunteer, Mr. Raju Naidoo, together with young Manilal Gandhi finished their terms of imprisonment on Monday last. Mr. P. K. Naidoo has served for the fourth time during the campaign of passive resistance. In order to break his spirit the authorities re-arrested Mr. Naidoo immediately on his previous discharge. But Mr. Naidoo was adamant. The gaol had lost all its terror for him. Without, therefore, asking for a remand in order to enable him to pay a hurried visit to his family, he accepted the summons to duty. Mr. Naidoo, it may be recalled, was a member of the volunteer Indian Ambulance Corps during the Boer War and holds the war medal. But neither scholastic training nor military service counts for an Indian in the Transvaal.

Indian Opinion, 28-5-1910

56. FOR COLONIAL-BORN INDIANS

We hope that every Colonial-born Indian will read the annual report of the Inspector of Education in Basutoland for the year ended June last. The Inspector, in dealing with the comparative value of English and that of the Sesuto language for the Basutos, says:

> . . . if education is to have any real value for the Basutos, it must be based upon sound teaching in their own language. Anything which encourages the teachers to hurry over this stage in order that their pupils may be considered as belonging to the standards is fatal to education in the true sense of the word. . . . Among the Natives in Basutoland, the speaking of English is an exotic. It is an accomplishment and one which, imperfectly acquired, gains for the exponent little credit with European listeners. . . . Opinion in Basutoland is practically unanimous that this elementary education should be given in Sesuto. . . . I would deprecate, therefore, any attempt to me a sure the value of a school by the number of pupils who are reading English in advanced reading-books, or to belittle the worth of a school because the only thing known by the majority of the pupils is Sesuto. A pupil who knows Sesuto thoroughly can read the Bible and the *Pilgrim's Progress.* He can follow the news of the day in Sesuto newspapers and, in his lighter moments, can even

read Sesuto novels. Many Europeans have gone far with little more book-knowledge of their own language than this.

We hope that every Indian will carefully consider these remarks of the Inspector of Education in Basutoland. If what the Inspector says be true of the Basutos, how much more must it be so of Indian youths who receive, in the ordinary schools of the Colony, no instruction at all in their mother-tongue. Moreover, fine as the Sesuto language is, we venture to think that it cannot boast the literary merit of the great Indian languages spoken in the Colony. It must be a matter of deep shame to any Indian youth to know that he cannot speak and read his own mother-tongue like an ordinary cultured Indian. The criminal neglect that is going on among Indian parents and their children as to the learning by the latter of Indian languages is calculated almost to denationalize them. Indeed, it is the duty of the Government, as of the missionaries who are in charge of Indian schools, to take to heart the very valuable suggestion made by the Inspector in Basutoland. But, whether they perform their duty or not, it is evidently the sacred obligation of Indian parents to repair the mischief while there is yet time. The majority of the Indian children taught in the ordinary schools of the Colony study neither English nor their own mother-tongue. The result is that they become useless as Indians, as citizens of the Colony and are hardly useful as decent wage-earners.

Indian Opinion, 28-5-1910

57. JOSEPH ROYEPPEN

Mr. Joseph Royeppen is once again in gaol. He has been sentenced to six weeks' imprisonment and gone back to do hard labour for the sake of the motherland. This is fine courage indeed on Mr. Royeppen's part. His going to gaol has been, and will be, a great gain to himself and to the community.

It is no trivial matter that an educated man like Mr. Royeppen should have to suffer imprisonment the moment he enters the Transvaal. This incident proves that we are not British subjects, but slaves.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-5-1910

58. LETTER TO H. KALLENBACH

May 30, 1910

DEAR MR. KALLENBACH,

I have shown your kind letter[1] to Mr. Cachalia and other fellow passive resisters, and I have to thank you for your generous offer on their and my own behalf. I accept your offer, and I need hardly say to what extent your offer will relieve the financial pressure.

As to the improvements and additions referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3 of your letter, I shall keep an accurate account which shall be open to your inspection, and I shall not undertake improvements or additions without your approval.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 11-6-1910

[1] Which read as follows:

May 30, 1910

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

In accordance with our conversation, I offer to you the use of my farm near Lawley for passive resisters and their indigent families; the families and passive resisters to live on the farm free of any rent or charge, as long as the struggle with the Transvaal Government lasts. They may also use, free of charge, all the buildings not at present used by me.

Any structural alterations, additions or improvements made by you may be removed at your pleasure on the termination of occupation, or they will be paid for by me at a valuation in the usual manner, the terms of payment to be mutually agreed upon by us.

I propose to pay, at a valuation in the usual manner, [for] all the agricultural improvements that may have been made by the settlers.

The settlers to withdraw from the farm on the termination of the struggle.

Yours sincerely,

H. KALLENBACH

59. LETTER TO THE PRESS

JOHANNESBURG,
June 2, 1910

SIR,

The Union has been ushered in among very general rejoicing among the European races of South Africa. Asiatics have been also expected to share in these rejoicings. If they have not been able to respond to these expectations, the cause, so far at least as the Transvaal is concerned, is not far to seek. On the day of the advent of Union,[1] nearly sixty families were deprived of their supporters, and were being maintained out of public funds. On the first working day of the Union, a cultured Indian and representative Parsee, Mr. Sorabji, who has already suffered six terms of imprisonment, was re-arrested, after having been left free for over a month after his last discharge from Diepkloof; and he is now under order of deportation. Other passive resisters, too, continue to be arrested. Mr. Joseph Royeppen, the Barrister and Cambridge Graduate, and his companions are again in prison. And all this suffering is being imposed because an Act that is supposed to have become a dead letter has not been repealed, and the theoretical legal position of British Indians of high attainments to enter the Transvaal on the same terms as Europeans, British or otherwise, is not recognised.

What can a Union under which the above state of things is continued mean to Asiatics, except that it is a combination of hostile forces arrayed against them? The Empire is supposed to have become stronger for the Union. Is it to crush by its weight and importance Asiatic subjects of the Crown? It was no doubt right and proper that the birth of Union should have been signalised for the Natives of South Africa by the clemency of the Crown towards Dinizulu[2]. Dinizulu's discharge will naturally fire the imagination of the South African Natives. Will it not be equally proper to enable the Asiatics in South Africa to feel that there is a new and benignant spirit abroad in South Africa by conceding their demands, which are held, I make

[1] Wednesday, June 1, 1910

[2] Zulu chief; *vide* "Late Mr. Arathoon", 14-12-1907. After release, he was settled on a farm in the Transvaal, where he died in October 1913.

bold to say, to be intrinsically just by nine out of every ten intelligent Europeans in this Continent?

Indian Opinion, 11-6-1910

60. BIRTHDAY MESSAGE TO HIS MAJESTY[1]

[*June 3, 1910*]

TRANSVAAL BRITISH INDIANS LOYALLY CONGRATULATE KING-EMPEROR OCCASION BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY.

Indian Opinion, 11-6-1910

61. MR. BHAYAT[2]

Mr. A. M. Bhayat's discharge deserves special mention in that he not only suffered much in health but he is probably the only representative of the Kholwad section who has braved every danger and kept up its reputation by going to jail again and again. In obedience to communal duty, Mr. Bhayat remains undaunted. We hope that the other merchants will follow Mr. Bhayat's example.

Indian Opinion, 4-6-1910

62. MR. SORABJI'S RE-ARREST

Mr. Sorabji Shapurji Adajania has been re-arrested. Mr. Sorabji's arrest recalls painful memories. He is a devoted son of India. He is a brilliant representative of a brilliant race—the Parsee. He belongs to a well-known family in Bombay and he it was who laid the foundation of the second stage of the struggle. Mr. Sorabji has already suffered imprisonment six times. He will now be imprisoned for the seventh time. He has served in the aggregate the longest term—over sixteen months. The advent of the Union of South Africa is marked for Indians by the re-arrest of Mr. Sorabji.[3] That the first working day of the Union should be turned for the Indians in the

[1] Presumably drafted by Gandhiji and sent by the British Indian Association. The date is mentioned in the acknowledgement dated July l, 1910, reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 16-7-1910.

[2] *Vide* also "Bhayat", 4-6-1910

[3] *Vide* "Letter to the Press", 2-6-1910

Transvaal, if not in South Africa, into a day of mourning and a reminder that the Union to them is meaningless is a sad commentary on a great epoch in the evolution of the British Empire. Natal is within the Union. Mr. Sorabji has domicile rights in Natal. He will be deported to the territories of a member of the Union. What is this Union? Whom does it unite? What does it unite? Or is it a Union against the Indian and other Coloured races inhabiting South Africa? If the Union of South Africa promotes the might of the Empire, are we or are we not to rejoice over the fact as being members of that Empire? How will the event strike the new Emperor of India? What responsibility attaches to the Governor-General of South Africa in this matter? These are questions which may or may not be rightly answered. Meanwhile, the brave Mr. Sorabji does his duty and, if Indians in South Africa mourn over the further sufferings of a brother, they may rejoice, too, that of Mr. Sorabji the whole of India is proud and that India's salvation depends not on external aid but on internal growth such as is shown by Mr. Sorabji.

Indian Opinion, 4-6-1910

63. BHAYAT[1]

We congratulate Mr. A. M. Bhayat on his splendid courage. He has kept up the honour of the Kholvad community and brought credit to Heidelberg. He has sanctified gaol. If there had been many Indians to follow Mr. Bhayat, or if they come forward now, they would have served or they will serve, both themselves and the community in the long run. To start with, of course, they may have to suffer, as Mr. Bhayat has done, and even put up with pecuniary loss. But ultimately there will be nothing but gain. Mr. Bhayat has even sacrificed his health for the sake of the community. He has lost weight, but shows no concern on that account. We must win, no doubt. The credit for the victory will go to satyagrahis like Mr. Bhayat who have been repeatedly courting imprisonment.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-6-1910

[1] *Vide* also "Mr. Bhayat", 4-6-1910

64. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO P. J. MEHTA[1]

[TOLSTOY FARM,
After *June 4, 1910*][2]

. . . I prepare the bread that is required on the farm. The general opinion about it is that it is well made. Manilal and a few others have learnt how to prepare it. We put in no yeast and no baking powder. We grind our own wheat. We have just prepared some marmalade from the oranges grown on the farm. I have also learnt how to prepare caramel coffee. It can be given as a beverage even to babies. The passive resisters on the farm have given up the use of tea and coffee, and taken to caramel coffee prepared on the farm. It is made from wheat which is first baked in a certain way and then ground. We intend to sell our surplus production of the above articles to the public later on. Just at present, we are working as labourers on the construction work that is going on, on the farm, and have no time to produce more of the articles above mentioned than we need for ourselves.

From *M. K. Gandhi and the South African Indian Problem* by Dr. P. J. Mehta

65. CABLE TO S. A. B. I. COMMITTEE

JOHANNESBURG,
June 6, 1910

ROYEPPEN SENTENCED SIX WEEKS. SORABJEE ARRESTED FOR SEVENTH TIME FIRST OF JUNE, ORDERED TO BE DEPORTED. BHAYAT DISCHARGED EMACIATED CONDITION AND SUFFERING FROM INFLUENZA. SHELAT SENTENCED SPARE DIET

[1] Gandhiji used to write to Dr. Mehta in Gujarati. The above extract quoted by Mr. Mehta in his book must be a translation of the original Gujarati, which is not available.

[2] This letter appears to have been written soon after June 4, when Gandhiji went to stay on Tolstoy Farm, especially from the reference to construction work on the farm. *Vide* "Johannesburg", 13-6-1910

FOR REFUSING TO CARRY SANITARY PAILS. THREATENED LASHES.[1]

GANDHI

Colonial Office Records: Cd. 5363; also

India, 10-6-1910

66. JOHANNESBURG

Monday [*June 6, 1910*]

DISCHARGED

Major Thomas, Mr. Kuppusamy Naidoo, Mr. T. Narainsami Pillay and Mr. Papiya Moonsamy were discharged today.

CRUELTY TO SHELAT

These prisoners who have been released have brought the news that the authorities have been trying to compel Shelat to carry [slop-] pails. Last week he was sentenced to 24 hours' solitary confinement and was put on spare diet. The Governor has now threatened him with lashes if he persists in his refusal. Mr. Shelat said that he would submit to that too rather than carry the pails. He will again be tried today in the gaol. We are not likely to know for some time what happens. A letter[2] has been addressed to the Government about him.

SORABJI

Mr. Sorabji has been taken to Pretoria. He writes from there to say that he is happier in the Charge Office at Pretoria than he was at Johannesburg.

THAMBI NAIDOO

[He] has been re-arrested. The officials cannot afford to let him remain free even for a minute. He has an incomparable spirit. What need is there to write in praise of him? This struggle has produced few satyagrahis who can be his equals. This is the eighth time that he has been arrested.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 11-6-1910

[1] While publishing the cable, *India*, 10-6-1910, wrote: "Mr. Gandhi adds that the struggle, nevertheless, will go on until justice has been done."

[2] *Vide* the following item.

67. LETTER TO THE TRANSVAAL ADMINISTRATOR[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
June 7, 1910

SIR,

Indian passive resisters discharged yesterday have brought the information that Mr. Shelat, a Brahmin passive resister, who is serving imprisonment at Diepkloof, has been once sentenced to solitary confinement and spare diet for refusing to carry slop-pails on the ground that such work is contrary to his conscience and religion. The discharged passive resisters state that Mr. Shelat has been threatened with the punishment of lashes, if he persists in his disobedience. My Association is inclined to the belief that the threat, if it has been at all used,[2] is not seriously meant. In any event, my Association respectfully trusts that the Government will be pleased to spare the Indian community the shock that is bound to be caused by the carrying out of the threat.

My Association ventures to draw your attention to the fact that, during his previous incarceration for conscience' sake, Mr. Shelat underwent solitary confinement for over a month for the same cause, and that the other passive resisters at Diepkloof have stated that they have no objection to Mr. Shelat's being excused from the duty of carrying slop-pails.[3]

My Association trusts that you will be pleased to give the matter the attention it deserves.

Indian Opinion, 11-6-1910

[1] This letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji and marked "urgent", was sent by E. S. Coovadia, Acting Chairman, British Indian Association, to the Administrator, Pretoria.

[2] The Director of Prisons in his reply of 21st June reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 25-6-1910, said: "No threat of lashes has been made, nor would such a punishment ever be inflicted for an offence of this nature."

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Director of Prisons", 3-5-1910

68. MR. KALLENBACH'S OFFER

We do not know whom to congratulate most—Mr. Kallenbach for his highmindedness or the community for having received from Mr. Kallenbach an offer[1] which may enable passive resisters to go through the struggle without undue pecuniary strain. The best thanks that can be rendered to Mr. Kallenbach would undoubtedly be for the passive resistance families to make use of the offer and to show to South Africa at large, by exemplary behaviour on the farm, how worthy they were of such handsome treatment.

The terms of Mr. Kallenbach's letter[2] are one-sided. He has given all he legitimately could and has expected no return. He does not want to develop his estate through the labour of those passive resisters who could put in their labour without paying them for it. Acts such as Mr. Kallenbach's are calculated to bring East and West nearer in real fellowship than any amount of rhetorical writing or speaking. We shall watch this experiment with very great interest.

Indian Opinion, 11-6-1910

69. LASHES!

Our Transvaal correspondent reports news this week of the gravest character. Mr. Shelat has made it a matter of conscience not to carry slop-pails. During his last incarceration, he was under solitary confinement for over a month, during which time he had for the most part only spare diet. We had hoped that this time, with the past experience to fall back upon, the authorities would let the matter rest and not force the issue by requiring Mr. Shelat to do that particular work. On messages received from the prisoners at Diepkloof, it was represented to the Director of Prisons not to insist on Mr. Shelat doing the work,[3] as the other passive resisters were quite agreeable to the indulgence being granted him. The Director, however, wrote to Mr. Cachalia saying that no such relief could be granted. And now we see the result. For the sake of the people of the Transvaal, we hope that

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H. Kallenbach", 30-5-1910

[2] Dated 30-5-1910; *vide* footnote of "Letter to H. Kallenbach", 30-5-1910

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Director of Prisons", 3-5-1910

the authorities will not take the threatened step. To order lashes in order to compel a man to do anything against his conscience would be the height of barbarity. As a passive resister, Mr. Shelat will, no doubt, suffer cheerfully even the penalty of lashes. But for the authorities to persist in their brutal course can only add to the tension that already exists among Indians.

Indian Opinion, 11-6-1910

70. MR. THAMBI NAIDOO'S RE-ARREST

The re-arrest of Mr. Thambi Naidoo has followed close upon that of Mr. Sorabji. It is evident that General Smuts, now that he is confirmed in his control over Asiatics, wishes to show his firmness by taking up the bravest passive resisters. We wish him joy of his task. We hope that we are not doing the great General an injustice in making him responsible for this sudden activity. To passive resisters, a lodgment in the gaols of the Transvaal must be a welcome relief so long as their goal remains unreached.

The re-arrest of Mr. Thambi Naidoo is not without a dramatic touch. On Monday morning, he met his son who had just been discharged after three months' service at Diepkloof. In the afternoon of the same day he was re-arrested. Thus the father has not been allowed to remain with the son even for a few days. This, no doubt, is merely a coincidence. But it shows vividly what the struggle means to many Indians in the Transvaal.

Mr. Naidoo is one of the most determined and persevering of passive resisters. Whether in or out of the gaol, he gives himself no rest. His one aim is to live so as to deserve the high title of passive resister as the term is understood among the strugglers in the Transvaal. Mr. Naidoo, like Mr. Sorabji, is among the brightest stars of the Indian community in South Africa.

Indian Opinion, 11-6-1910

71. LASHES!

Mr. Shelat may even be flogged for refusing to carry slop-pails. Should this really happen, will the Indians of South Africa merely look on? If Mr. Shelat is flogged, for whom will it be? And who are

those who will log him? Our hair stands on end as we contemplate this. If Mr. Shelat refuses to carry pails, what is that to us?—someone may ask. Such an attitude will betray sheer want of sense. Today it is Mr. Shelat, tomorrow it may be the turn of another Indian. What matters is that Mr. Shelat has made the question of carrying pails a religious issue. On an issue like that, no one will be justified in inflicting cruelty on another. On the contrary, when a person shows himself prepared to suffer on such an issue, every sincere man of religion owes it as a duty to defend him even if he happens to have adopted a mistaken attitude. Otherwise, man will not be able to defend his freedom, and where there is no freedom of thought and action, there can be no religion. In the absence of religion, a people cannot but perish. We, therefore, hope that, if Mr. Shelat is subjected to such cruelty, Indians everywhere in South Africa will raise a strong protest and make their views known to the Government.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-6-1910

72. NAIDOO

Mr. Thambi Naidoo and Mr. Sorabji—these two satyagrahis make a remarkable pair. The moment Mr. Sorabji was arrested, they pounced upon Mr. Thambi Naidoo. He was arrested on the very day on which his son was released. This is no ordinary matter.

Now that General Smuts is confirmed in his office, he is striking with greater force. Satyagrahis are not likely to be intimidated by this. It is their business to suffer and therefore they have come to feel at home in gaol like fish in water. As long as there are such staunch Indians, the ultimate victory for the community will never be in doubt. All the same, other Indians, too, must do their duty to the best of their ability. There are many ways of doing this, which we have mentioned from time to time. We hope the community will derive inspiration from the example of Mr. Thambi Naidoo and other satyagrahis.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-6-1910

73. KALLENBACH'S GIFT

We place a very high value on Mr. Kallenbach's offer of his farm for the benefit of satyagrahis. If the families of the latter use it well, we shall have no occasion for anxiety, however long the struggle lasts. There will be much saving in expenditure, and those who settle on the farm will learn to be happy. They will have, on the farm, a noble life in place of the unclean and monotonous ways of town-life. Moreover, what they will learn on the farm will prove useful for a life-time. Indeed, we have said in the past that the Indian community would be well rewarded if it were to take to agriculture and would be saved the anxieties incidental to business. We have to pay a heavy price for not recognizing the value of this best of occupations.

We hope the leaders [of the community] will address letters of thanks to Mr. Kallenbach. His gift will be appreciated at its proper worth only when Indians settle there in large numbers.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-6-1910

74. JOHANNESBURG

Monday [*June 13, 1910*]

TOLSTOY FARM

Mr. Kallenbach has given the name "Tolstoy Farm" to the farm which he has offered for [the use of] the satyagrahi families. He has great faith in Count Tolstoy's teaching and tries to live up to it. He himself wants to live on the farm and follow a simple mode of life. It appears Mr. Kallenbach will gradually give up his work as architect and live in complete poverty.

Mr. Kallenbach has rendered a valuable service by offering the use of his farm, but more so by deciding to live among our people. He has also agreed to look after the womenfolk in the absence of Mr. Gandhi. That any white should be moved by such a spirit must be attributed to the power of satyagraha.

The farm measures about 1100 acres, being two miles in length and three quarters of a mile in breadth. It is situated near Lawley

Station, 22 miles from Johannesburg. It takes twenty minutes to walk down from the station to the farm. By rail, it generally takes about one and a half hours to reach it from here.

The soil appears to be fertile. The farm has about a thousand fruit-bearing trees growing on it. There are peaches, apricots, figs, almonds, walnuts, etc. In addition, there are eucalyptus and wattle trees.

The farm has two wells and a small spring. The landscape is beautiful. At the head there is a hill, with some more or less level land at the foot.

Mr. Kallenbach, Mr. Gandhi and his two sons have already settled on the farm since June 4. They are busy making arrangements for satyagrahis to go over there. Mr. Kallenbach and Mr. Gandhi come to the town every Monday and Thursday and spend the other days on the farm.

Last Sunday, some leading Tamil ladies, accompanied by Mr. Thambi Naidoo and Mr. Gopal Naidoo, went over there to have a look round. They spent the whole day on the farm. Mr. Kallenbach, Mr. Gandhi and his son cooked a meal for them. Mr. Kallenbach showed them round the farm and they all appeared satisfied. Mr. Gopal Naidoo, who had already made up his mind to live there, has stayed on. Mr. Moosa Nathi, too, who runs a shop nearby, came the same day and promised every possible help. Construction work has started now and some buildings are expected to be ready by the end of this month.

This is a very important venture. Its roots go deep; it is up to the satyagrahis who settle there to make it bear sweet fruit by the way they live.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-6-1910

75. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[About *June 15, 1910*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have not forgotten about the letter regarding the steamer. I shall send you the statement when I find time.

There was a letter from Chhaganlal written before his departure. I am not worried about him now. I hope he will fully recover his health in England.

I have decided to send Chanchal[2] to India. Please find out some company for her and send her immediately. I am not likely to go there. Harilal wants a second-class ticket to be bought for her and we shall do so. I hear that Motilal's[3] wife is going. Chanchal may go even in the company of some good man. If she has the courage, she need not wait for me.

For sending the sandals, there is no need to search for a person coming here. The pair I am using is almost worn out. You may send Manilal's pair too if it is there. Manilal says that his silk suit is lying there. Please send that too along with the sandals. Perhaps all this can be sent by a goods train. Please send these things by the cheapest means. It will be as well if you send them directly to the Farm.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

More on the reverse side.[4]

From a handwritten copy of the Gujarati original: C.W. 4930 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] Chhaganlal Gandhi, Gandhiji's nephew, whose letter is referred to in the second paragraph, left India for England on June 1, 1910. It took about 17 days for the post to reach South Africa from India.

[2] Wife of Harilal, Gandhiji's eldest son

[3] Motilal M. Dewan, a leading Indian of Natal

[4] Not available

76. PASSIVE RESISTERS

Of the twenty-six passive resisters who were deported and who had immediately returned from Bombay[1] and who arrived at Durban on Sunday last, only thirteen have been allowed to land, the claims of the other nine who stated that they were domiciled in the Colony having for the time being been rejected. Efforts were made to induce the Principal Immigration Officer to allow the others to land, subject to security being given for their return should they fail to establish their claim. But the officer was adamant and refused to grant this reasonable facility. These men, therefore, have been obliged to undertake almost without a break a trying voyage for the third time. Though British subjects, they have been rejected first by one British Colony and then by another. And so misery is added to misery and discontent to discontent. But the men who have been forced to go back have that stuff in them of which heroes are made. They have gone not dispirited but invigorated by their trials, and the determination with which they have borne themselves hitherto will carry them to their goal.

The community is proud of them and so should the Empire in whose name they have been so shabbily treated by Natal. They have set a noble example in deeds worthy of imitation by Indians throughout South Africa.

The task before those who have been landed is simple. They have to challenge the Transvaal Government, now part of the Union Government, to re-arrest and re-imprison or re-deport them. A true passive resister, Wordsworth's Warrior, has only one goal before him and that is to do his duty, cost what it may.

Indian Opinion, 18-6-1910

77. SATYAGRAHIS

The 26 satyagrahis who came back from India arrived [in Durban] but all of them did not disembark. This is partly our fault. How is it that nine of them could not disembark, though they had a right to be in Natal? But this is not a time to look for faults. We want

[1] *Vide* "The Returned Deportees", 21-5-1910

the community to realize that satyagrahis are its true servants and precious jewels, and so to look after them and encourage them. For satyagrahis, public honour and parties should have little attraction. Their duty is merely to do and to suffer. It is the duty of the community, however, to look after them. They are our army, our "Tommies". We have learnt from experience that all satyagrahis are not full of *satya* [truth]. But we need not concern ourselves with this. We must, for the time being, accept as such anyone who claims to be a satyagrahi. In fact, of course, no one can be accepted as a true satyagrahi till he has met death, being faithful to his pledge right up to the end.

As for some of them having had to return, let us not mind it. They are being hardened. This will be their third voyage at a running. It is up to the community to bring them back. Their own duty is to have patience. Moreover, we are justified in saying that we should not mind their having had to return because the incident exposes the despotic attitude of the Union Government. Why were these men not given full opportunity to establish their right? Why were they not allowed to stay in Durban? The more we suffer, the stronger becomes our case. The more the people suffer, the greater will be our rise and the sooner will our freedom come. Therefore, though it is a discredit to us that the Indians had to return, the incident may yet do us good.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-6-1910

78. JOHANNESBURG

Monday [*June 20, 1910*]

SATYAGRAHI FARM

There has been feverish activity on the farm to complete the arrangement for women. Mr. Kallenbach is busy with building operations. The foundation has been laid for a chawl fifty feet long. It is a stone foundation, and Mr. Chinan, Mr. Kuppusamy Naidoo, Mr. Manilal Gandhi and Mr. Gandhi have been working at stone-rolling side by side with the Kaffirs. Stones are available on the farm itself, but they have to be carried from the hill to the building-site. Mr. Gopal Naidoo attends to cooking. In all, there are six Indians and Mr. Kallenbach living together, with a common mess. All the dishes are

prepared in Indian style. In the morning, those who want a breakfast have bread and also coffee made from roasted wheat. The bread is made at home, without the use of yeast. It is prepared from boer meal and whole meal. At lunch, they have rice and curry, and bread with home-made jam prepared from oranges growing on the farm. For dinner, there is porridge, and bread and jam. Butter is not used, the ghee employed in cooking being considered sufficient. In the afternoon and at night, they have dry fruit and groundnut, if either is at hand. Modifications, if necessary, will be made in this diet after the women join. I am both surprised and glad that Mr. Kallenbach lives amidst this group like a member of the family.

DAVID ANDREW

Mr. David Andrew, Mr. Samuel Joseph and Mr. Dhobi Nayana will be free for eight days. They will be deported next Friday.

Mr. David Andrew and Mr. Samuel Joseph are staying with the Chairman of the Chinese Association at his invitation. They have been put up in the Chinese Club. It is a very well-run club. One really feels the absence of such a building for Indians.

THAMBI NAIDOO

It is not yet known where he is to be taken. There are four other satyagrahis with him.

NEW PARTIES

So far, there were the Het Volk, the Union and the Bond parties in the Transvaal, the Orange Colony and the Cape Colony, respectively. Efforts are now being made by Mr. Botha and his friends to amalgamate the three under the name of the South Africa Party. The Progressive Party has been renamed the Unionist Party.

HOSKEN

He has been trying to enter the new Parliament. There is some ground to hope that he will succeed.

MADRESSA PUPILS

These pupils were examined by Imam Saheb Bawazeer and the Moulvi Saheb here. The successful ones among them were awarded prizes.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-6-1910

79. INDIANS UNDER THE UNION

> The placing of the Native question above party politics, and the fair and sympathetic treatment of the Coloured races in a broad and liberal spirit; the encouragement of European and the prevention of Asiatic immigration into South Africa.
>
> —General Botha's Manifesto.

> To improve the social conditions of the people by opposing the introduction of Asiatics into South Africa, while securing fair treatment for those now lawfully settled in the country; a Commission to be appointed as soon as possible to investigate and report upon the special labour conditions prevailing in Natal, in order to bring them into harmony at the earliest possible date with this principle without detriment to established industries.
>
> —Unionist Party's Programme.

We leave placed in juxtaposition extracts from General Botha's manifesto and the programme of Dr. Jameson's new party. The reader will see that there is not much to choose between the two, that the statements are as vague as they possibly can be, and that the authors of the two documents consider that Asiatic immigration is inimical to improvement in the social status of Europeans residing in South Africa. Both documents desire the prevention of such immigration. The Unionist programme qualifies the desire by adding that fair treatment for those now lawfully settled in the country should be secured. That programme contemplates also an investigation into the labour conditions of Natal. British Indians throughout South Africa, then, must be prepared during the coming months for anti-Asiatic activity on a much larger scale than hitherto. The prospect, however, is by no means black or hopeless, if the different sections of the community scattered throughout South Africa will realise the significance of the statements we have above quoted and do the needful in order to combat the reactionary policy foreshadowed by them. In doing so, however, they will have to recognise well-defined limitations. Control of Asiatic immigration we are bound to put up with and recognise, but total exclusion amounting to a national insult must be considered by every Indian worth his salt to be an impossibility. It appears to us that no sacrifice that may be made by the resident community in South Africa will be too great in order

to avert, such a calamity. We hold that this sort of equality is the corner-stone of the Imperial edifice, and that Indians who suffer in their attempt to make good the position will have deserved well not only of India but of the whole Empire. The two manifestos demonstrate the greatness of the struggle that is now going on in the Transvaal. We hope that our countrymen in this continent will carefully study the programme of the two parties, and do theirduty at what is a critical juncture in the history of British Indians in South Africa.

Indian Opinion, 25-6-1910

80. GENERAL BOTHA'S VIEWS

The manifesto of his party, which General Botha has issued, sets out his views about us. These are worth studying. He wants European immigration into South Africa to be encouraged and Asiatic immigration to be stopped.

Dr. Jameson's party also sets out identical views. Its manifesto states, however, that Asiatics who are already settled in South Africa should be treated well, that the question of allowing indentured labour into Natal should be carefully examined and that it should even be stopped altogether if the existing interests of the industry did not suffer thereby.

Thus, the leaders of both the parties want to stop Asiatic immigration. Their manifestos, however, are couched in such terms that they will bear any interpretation that one may choose to put upon them. For us, of course, they have only one meaning, namely, that there is imminent danger to us. We may understand the view that too many Indians should not be allowed into South Africa. That is a hardship we cannot escape. When, however, we are told that we cannot enter just because we are Asiatics, it is the whole of India that is being insulted. We believe no Indian will put up with such an insult. Whatever the consequences of our refusal, we must bear them. For that, as we should like to show to every Indian, we must start preparing ourselves right now. Otherwise, steps will be taken under the Union to uproot Indians from South Africa altogether.

We take this opportunity to remind Indians that the Transvaal campaign is a powerful source of strength [to them]. It is in their

interest to see that the campaign is kept up.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-6-1910

81. SPEECH AT SOCIALIST HALL[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
June 26, 1910]

Mr. M. K. Gandhi delivered an interesting and well thought-out address last night at the Socialist Hall, Market Street, under the auspices of the Socialist Committee, entitled "Modern as Compared with Ancient Civilisation". The hall was crowded.

Mr. Gandhi prefaced his remarks with an apology to those who might differ from his views, and excused himself on the ground that he was an ardent searcher after truth. Modern civilisation, he said, could be summed up by two expressions. One was that it represented ceaseless activity, and the second was that it aimed at the annihilation of space and time. Everybody nowadays appeared to be preoccupied, and to him that appeared a dangerous symptom. They were all so intent upon earning bread and butter that they had no time for anything else.

Modern civilisation made them materialistic, made them concentrate their thoughts upon their bodies and upon the means of multiplying bodily comforts. Herbert Spencer had summed up the modern man by saying that the civilized man led a complex life as opposed to the entirely simple life of the savage. The source from which the Asiatic trouble arose in the Transvaal was that the Asiatic's wants were very simple, whereas those of the European were complex and therefore expensive. The tendency of modern methods went to make the Native's life more complex. While the wants of the raw Native were easily satisfied, the more enlightened of them required many more embellishments. Thus, they required more money, and when they found they could not get it honestly, they resorted to dishonesty.

After 18 years of study devoted to the consideration of the question, he had come to the conclusion that instead of there being a change for the better, there had

[1] *Indian Opinion*, 2-7-1910, published a brief summary in the following words: The speaker said that modern civilization was expressed in an attempt to annihilate time and space and in excessive care for the body. The rush of modern life left little time for higher thoughts. It looked downward to the earth, whereas ancient civilization looked upward to Heaven. It kept the body subservient to the soul. It was based on the force of love. It avoided the hateful spirit of competition. It was best expressed in village life as against modern town life.

been a change for the worse. (Applause.) He found that the simple life was better than the complex, in that they found time to devote attention to higher pursuits. In ancient civilisation, there had been no rush whatsoever. They nowadays looked downwards to the earth; in those days they looked upwards to Heaven. They did not concentrate upon the body but upon the soul, which they kept quite distinct from the soul [*sic*].

The flesh was not the be-all and the end-all of life. Now was the service of Mammon; then was the service of God. If he did not think that the soul existed and if he did not recognise that in all of them there were identical souls, then he for one would not like to live upon this earth. He would like to die. The body was the vehicle subservient to the soul. The body was simply earth, dross and objectionable.

Ancient civilisation made them look to the higher pursuits of life, the love of God, the respect of a neighbour and the consciousness of the existence of the soul. The sooner they returned to the life, the better.

Rand Daily Mail, 27-6-1910

82. JOHANNESBURG

Monday [*June 27, 1910*]

MEMBERS OF NATAL BATCH

Messrs Ram Bihari, Rajkumar, Burjorsingh, Kajee Dadamia, Essop Kolia, P. K. Desai, Kara Nanji and Tulsi Jutha, members of the Natal batch who were sentenced to three months' imprisonment on March 24, have been released. All of them are in good cheer.

DEPUTATION TO LORD GLADSTONE

Mr. Cachalia had written to Lord Gladstone,[1] soon after the latter's arrival, that a deputation would wait on him. A reply[2] has now been received that he could not receive the deputation, for, as the Ministers point out, he has already had a number of discussions with the Association about the agitation. This means that satyagrahis have only their own strength to rely on.

THAMBI NAIDOO

[He] is still lodged in Pretoria. It has not been decided where he is to be sent.

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Secretary to Viscount Gladstone", 26-5-1910
[2] Dated 23-6-1910

DAVID ANDREW

[Mr. David Andrew,] Mr. Samuel Joseph and Mr. Nayana have been removed to Pretoria for being deported again.

TOLSTOY FARM

A school has now been opened on this Farm. Mr. Gandhi teaches every day between two and five, except on Mondays and Thursdays. The [only] pupils at present are Mr. Gopal, Mr. Chinan, Mr. Kuppusami and his two sons.

Construction work is in progress. Seven Indian carpenters have gone there to work gratis. They were got together by Mr. Cachalia, Mr. Aswat, Mr. Fancy and others. About sixty carpenters assembled on Sunday. It was resolved then that those carpenters who could not go to work on the Farm should pay 12 s each. Many of them paid this amount and seven went to the Farm. For some time, they will offer their services free. They deserve congratulations on their spirit of community service.

Messrs Bihari, Rajkumar, Pragji Desai, Burjorsingh and Coomarsami Padiachy went to the Farm on Monday to settle there. They will remain there till they are arrested.

The Farm is in need of a number of things. The requirements will increase when children arrive. Those who do not take active part in the struggle by going to gaol can help in other ways. The object of settling on the Farm is to save expenses; also, those who go there will undergo some training. Much saving may result if everyone of those who do not go to gaol offers a little help. Tradesmen can supply things free or at reduced prices. Fruit- and vegetable-dealers can send these things from time to time. To send small quantities will be no burden to them, and the movement will get some help. Some fruit-dealers have expressed their readiness to help in this way. The following are the chief needs of the Farm at present:

Blankets or cotton mattresses

Wooden planks

Empty kerosene tins

Clean gunny bags or gunny-bag cloth or hessian

Any implements, such as hoes and spades, needles, sewing thread, etc.

Coarse cloth of any kind

Books for use in school

Fruits and vegetables

Cooking utensils

Foodgrains of any kind.

This is a hastily drawn-up list. There are many useful things of a similar nature which most Indians can send with a little effort. All that is needed is interest and sympathy. Things sent to the Farm should be addressed as follows:

Mr. Gandhi, Tolstoy Farm, Lawley, Transvaal.

Mr. Maimee and Mr. B. P. Ebrahim went to see the Farm on Sunday.

MR. GANDHI'S SPEECH AT SOCIALIST SOCIETY

At the invitation of the Society, Mr. Gandhi delivered a speech in the Society's hall on Sunday last. The move was initiated by Mr. Crawford, a Town Councillor. The speech was a comparison of ancient and modern civilizations. The hall was packed with whites. Some Indians, too, werepresent. A summary of the speech[1] has appeared in the *Daily Mail.* Its main theme was that ancient civilization was better than modern. The latter is selfish, godless and hypocritical. In this civilization, the chief object of man's endeavour is physical happiness. In the days of ancient civilization, men were kind, God-fearing and simple and looked upon the body as a means of spiritual uplift. It is necessary to revert to the ancient way of life and for that purpose to adopt simplicity and village life. The speech was followed by numerous questions and answers and a lengthy discussion. The audience appeared to have been well impressed.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-7-1910

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Socialist Hall", 26-5-1910

83. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Jeth Vadi 2 [*Samvat 1966*]

[*June 29, 1910*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I write nothing more about Thaker, as I have sent you his long letter.

I think I do have with me the dates of the Boer War in newspaper cuttings or somewhere else. I have no time to find them out just now. This also I write from the Farm. I shall arrange to get them for you if you particularly want them. I only remember that this Corps was formed in the November of 1899.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the original Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4924 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

84. AN AGREEMENT

[*June 1910*][1]

1. K. is not to undertake any expense or improvements on the Lawley Farm without consultation with G. and without his approval.

2. During the presence at the Farm of G., K. is free to temporarily absent himself unless his presence is by both himself and G. considered necessary.

3. During the absence of G., K. to be at the Farm and supervise the settlers.

4. K. to plan and assist in the buildings and improvements not merely by supervising but working himself.

5. K. to live separately from the settlers and to board also separately with the option to join the common board if he is so inclined.

[1] The pact was evidently drawn up during this period after the addressee's offer of his farm near Lawley for the use of passive resisters and their families; *vide* "Letter to H. Kallenbach", 30-5-1910.

6. G. to live in the same place with K. but to be free, if necessary for the settlement, to live and board with the settlers.

7. The primary object of going to the Farm, so far as K. and G. are concerned, is to make themselves into working farm hands.

8. K. is not to cherish the notion of making the Farm a commercial or speculative enterprise ≈ this does not debar him from making it naturally a profitable concern.

9. K. is to control absolutely the settlement on the Farm of Europeans, G. of Indians or Chinese.

10. It is understood that the ideal is not to employ native labour and not to use machinery.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

85. CABLE TO S.A.B.I. COMMITTEE

JOHANNESBURG,
July 1, 1910

DEPORTEES REJECTED BY NATAL.[1] RETURNED TO ZANZIBAR; PREVENTED LANDING THERE. THAMBI NAIDOO AND OTHERS DEPORTED; RETURNED, SENTENCED. ROYEPPEN DISCHARGED, BEING DEPORTED.

M. K. GANDHI

Cd. 5363

86. SATYAGRAHI FARM

We draw the attention of readers to the accounts of Satyagrahi Farm which have been published. Everyone can see that valuable work is being done on the Farm. The number of settlers is increasing. It should be noted, moreover, that support to the Farm will ensure an early end to the struggle. Even if this is prolonged, it will be seen that arrangements have been made on the Farm which will enable people

[1] In April, 60 satyagrahis were deported to India. On reaching Bombay, 26 sailed back to court re-arrest. On arrival at Durban, 9 were refused permission to land and sent back. *En route*, they attempted landing at Zanzibar. *Vide* also "Passive Resisters", 18-6-1910, "Satyagrahis", 18-6-1910 and "Johannesburg", 9-7-1910.

to continue the fight without anxiety.

At a time such as this, what is the duty of those who do not take active part in the movement by going to gaol? Every Indian can help reduce to the minimum the cost of maintaining the satyagrahis on the Farm and make things easier for them. Much saving can be effected if everyone follows the carpenters' example.[1] Every drop, as they say, helps to fill the lake: if, likewise, Indians in large numbers help a little apiece, none of them will feel the pinch. Every Indian should ponder over this matter.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-7-1910

87. SWAMIJI'S SPEECH IN THE "MERCURY"

The K. A. Mandal[2] gave a party which was a credit to the community. A summary of Swamiji's[3] speech on the occasion was sent by someone to *The* [*Natal*] *Mercury*. The latter printed it under the caption, "Wise Speech". Judging, however, from the *Mercury* report, the speech is certainly not satisfactory from the standpoint of Indians. Whoever sent the report to the *Mercury* has done no service to the community or to Swamiji. The secretaries of the K. A. Mandal have issued a mild contradiction. They have sent the statement to us for publication; however, as we have not printed the *Mercury* report, there is no need to publish the letter from the Mandal. But we ought to state that, since the Mandal has contradicted a specific portion of the report, it has admitted the correctness of the rest. If this assumption is right, the portion that is detrimental to the community stands confirmed. Those who heard the speech say that Swamiji did criticize satyagraha, as stated in the part of the report which the K. A. Mandal has not contradicted. One can understand, therefore, that the secretaries of the Mandal cannot go beyond what they have said. We are sorry that Swamiji made such comments and offered advice to the people concerning the laws. But we do not think it likely that a

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg", 27-6-1910.

[2] Kathiawad Arya Mandal, a Durban association of Arya Samajist Hindus from Saurashtra

[3] Shankeranand, a Hindu missionary who was in South Africa from 1908 to 1910

satyagrahi will abandon what he considers to be truth or give up his pledge because of such criticism.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-7-1910

88. COLOUR PREJUDICE

America is regarded as a free country. It is claimed that everyone enjoys the fullest freedom there. A great many people, we find, are inclined to imitate America. Men are dazzled by her industry. But, on deeper reflection, we shall see that there is not much in America worthy of imitation. The people there are given over to the worship of self and of mammon. For money they will do the meanest things. Only a short while ago, we saw this exemplified in Dr. Cook's case.

There are reports now [which suggest] that even the freedom which the Americans boast of is vanishing. Colour prejudice is on the increase. Indians have enjoyed voting rights till this day. An official has now discovered that the framers of the Constitution could never have intended the granting of the franchise to Asiatics. He believes that not only Indians but even Turks should be denied the right to vote. Though the vast majority of the Turkish people are white-skinned, the official has pointed out that they are, after all, Asiatics.

The agitation against Asiatics going on in the West is likely to have grave consequences. We are not thinking just now of what China and Turkey will do. It is the duty of every Indian to think of what India should do. Japan has shown one way, that of proving one's strength and defending one's land with [the power of] arms. Following that way, Japan has become like America and the imitation will soon be perfect, if it is not already so. To us it appears that, if we wish to avoid being found in America's predicament, we had better refrain from training in the use of arms. Behind the venturesome spirit of America is her armed strength.

All that India has to do to hold her own is to preserve her ancient civilization, eliminating only its defects. The kind of racial discrimination which America practises, we have practised against our own people in India. Once there were many reformers in the West who

had hoped and desired that the people there would shun such discrimination, but that is no more so. They have now begun to say that there must be no mixing with the Coloured races, that the Asiatics must be kept down. We think this movement will grow stronger rather than otherwise—it cannot but do so. Where people are concerned only with self-interest, it is not possible that they will allow others a foothold. Since their selfishness is mounting, their hostility to us will also grow. Self-interest will make them fight among themselves, too—even today they are fighting. That is a characteristic aspect of Western civilization. If we imitate the Western people, we may succeed for a time in mixing with them but subsequently we would also be blinded by selfishness and fight with them and fight among ourselves, too.

Someone may argue that even today we are fighting among ourselves. True. but our fighting is of a different kind. We must of course put an end to this. But we should be careful to see that in our attempt to mend matters we do not cause greater harm instead.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-7-1910

89. SPEECH AT TOLSTOY FARM[1]

Sunday, July 3, 1910

. . . Mr. Gandhi invited all to promote the success of the scheme by sending whatever they could for the use of the settlers who were all poor. They would thereby, the speaker said, materially assist the struggle.

Indian Opinion, 9-7-1910

[1] At the meeting which passed a resolution thanking Kallenbach; *vide* "Johannesburg", 9-7-1910

90. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR-GENERAL[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
July 4, 1910

SIR,

The Committee of my Association has decided to approach His Excellency[2] with a view to the presentation of a humble and loyal address[3] of welcome, on His Excellency's approaching visit to Johannesburg; but my Committee has hesitated by reason of a hitch that occurred at the time of the presentation of an address to Lord Selborne[4]. My Committee was then at first advised that the Association's address would be received at the same time and place as the other addresses from public bodies, but, at the eleventh hour, a message was sent to the offices of the Association to the effect that the address would be received privately by His Lordship, and it was ultimately so received. My Association then understood that the decision to receive the address at the same time as the others was altered because of the prevailing prejudice against Asiatic and coloured communities in this country. My Association is most anxious to avoid a repetition of such an awkward and humiliating position, and, therefore, trusts that, if its humble address may not be received in common with the other addresses next Friday, His Excellency will be graciously pleased to accept this letter as testifying its respect for His Excellency as His Majesty's representative. If the address of my Association cannot be received publicly, my Association can quite understand and appreciate the delicacy of the situation. But, should His Excellency consider that the humble address of my Association may be received publicly in common with the others next Friday, I am desired to state that my Association would like to make a formal presentation. May I request the favour of a telegraphic reply?[5]

Indian Opinion, 9-7-1910

[1] This letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was signed by A. M. Cachalia, Chairman, British Indian Association.

[2] Herbert John Gladstone (1854-1930); was the first Governor-General and High Commissioner for South Africa, 1910-4

[3] *Vide* the following item.

[4] High Commissioner and Governor of the Transvaal, 1905-10

[5] A reply was received communicating Lord Gladstone's consent to receive the address along with other public addresses.

91. ADDRESS TO LORD GLADSTONE[1]

Friday [*July 8, 1910*][2]

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE VISCOUNT GLADSTONE

GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

JOHANNESBURG

We the undersigned, representing the British Indian Association of the Transvaal, respectfully welcome Your Excellency and Lady Gladstone to Johannesburg.

We trust that the Union of South Africa will, under Your Excellency's *regime*, prove beneficial to all classes and communities residing in South Africa.

May we ask you to convey to Their Most Gracious Majesties the King-Emperor and the Queen-Empress an expression of the loyalty of the community represented by this Association?

Indian Opinion, 16-7-1910

92. ROYEPPEN

Mr. Joseph Royeppen has been released, and yet not released. He was released, but is to be deported again on the 14th. We can judge from his case where the struggle stands. The last time he was released, he was required to offer a security of £50 in order to be free for a few days and see people. This time he has been released on his personal recognizance. He did not even have to sign any document. This is a measure of the enhanced reputation which Indians enjoy. A satyagrahi's word, thus, is trusted.

Even in gaol, they have changed their ways. Warders are afraid to hold out threats to satyagrahis. The latter do not put up with any injustice.

The reply elicited by Mr. O'Grady's question[3] in the House of

[1] This address, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was presented by Cachalia.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] On June 29, J. O'Grady, a Labour member, raised the issue of Transvaal Indians and suggested a Gandhi-Smuts meeting to effect a compromise.

Commons is also noteworthy. The Imperial Government has said that the matter is under correspondence. Who will say, after this, that the struggle is alive no more? Not only is it alive, it has a radiant sparkle, so long as there are men with the spirit of Mr. Royeppen, and its effects are spreading wider.

Every Indian youth should take a lesson from Mr. Royeppen's example. Though a barrister and a man of learning, he holds no manual work to be beneath him. He moves through crowded markets, carrying bundles on his head. He hews wood, washes clothes and works at [railway] stations like a common labourer. He proves in this way that he has received real education.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-7-1910

93. JOHANNESBURG

SATYAGRAHI FARM

For the present at least I must say that the Farm is making progress every day. The number of settlers has increased considerably and the place has taken on the appearance of a new township. There are four tents in addition to the building which I mentioned earlier for the satyagrahis and their families. One of the tents is occupied by Mr. Kallenbach and the satyagrahis, and the building has been handed over to the ladies.

The labour for putting up the building is contributed by the satyagrahis and Mr. Kallenbach. They do every kind of work such as loading and unloading, fetching water, chopping wood, transporting goods from the station, etc. Even conducting the school is at present a strenuous task and everyone is tired out by the evening.

Mr. Gopal Naidoo, who looks after the cooking, is giving an excellent account of himself. He is busy at it from a quarter past six in the morning to nine in the evening. He practises the strictest economy in the use of food-stuffs, just as if they were his own.

VISIT BY OTHER LADIES

Other ladies came on a visit of inspection to the Farm on Sunday. They were Mrs. Sebastian, Mrs. Francis, Mrs. Chellan Nagappen, Mrs. Marimuthu Padiachy, Mrs. Ellery Moonsamy and

Mrs. Kathu Pillay. They went away satisfied with the arrangements on the Farm, and so it looks as though they will decide to settle there.

VISIT BY BUSINESSMEN

There was also a visit from Mr. Cachalia, Imam Saheb Abdool Kadir Bawazeer, Moulvi Saheb Mukhtiar, and Messrs Aswat, Fancy, Hajee Habib, Nagadi, Ebrahim Coovadia, Amod Mia, Suleman Mia, Moosa Esaakji, Goolam Munshi, Ahmed Waja, Moosa Bhikhaji, Ahmed Karodia, Moosa Ebrahim Patel, Ahmed Mamdoo, Mirza, Ebrahim Hajari, Parbhoo, Gosai and Anthony. They spent the whole day here and shared a meal with the satyagrahis before leaving. The gentlemen also joined in the work.

KALLENBACH HONOURED

Then, as many of them wanted to offer thanks to Mr. Kallenbach, a meeting was held after dinner was over. The Moulvi Saheb, on a motion by Mr. Hajee Habib seconded by the Imam Saheb, was elected to the chair. He said that the meeting was held to offer thanks to Mr. Kallenbach for what he had done. He certainly deserved their thanks. Messrs Polak and Kallenbach [he said] had rendered yeoman service, though they were foreigners.

Mr. Ebrahim Coovadia then proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Kallenbach for his generous gift and the interest he had shown in the cause.

The Imam Saheb seconded the motion. Mr. Hajee Habib supported it.

Then there followed speeches by Mr. Cachalia and Mr. Royeppen, after which the motion was unanimously carried.

Mr. Kallenbach in his reply said that he had gained by the active interest he had taken in the campaign and that this was true of other whites, too. The Indians who had joined the struggle [he added] derived still greater benefit, so remarkable was this fight.

JOSEPH ROYEPPEN

[He] was released on Friday. He was to be deported immediately after. He was therefore released from Johannesburg Gaol and asked to appear at 3 o'clock. On presenting himself at three, he was ordered to appear on the 14th for deportation. Immediately, therefore, he went to live on the Farm and plunged into work the very first day. He was joined by Mr. Solomon Ernest. The Farm, thus, has had plenty of

recruits; all those who arrive join in the work. By Sunday, Mr. Royeppen had had a turn at chopping and sawing wood, loading carriages with goods from the station godown, fetching water and doing laundry work. Full of good humour, he infects others with his genial spirits.

PRISONERS' DIET

Many changes have been introduced in the regulation diet for prisoners. The quota of rice has been increased by two ounces. In the evening, they get bread, mealie pap and one ounce of ghee. Nothing remains, therefore, to complain of regarding diet.

NOT DISEMBARKED AT ZANZIBAR

A telegram has been received from Mr. Cowasji Dinsha to say that P. K. Naidoo and his companions have not been disembarked at Zanzibar, as was intended. The authorities, it seems, raised some legal difficulties. Hence all those satyagrahis have proceeded to India. We have no reliable information regarding how this new law that Indians cannot land at Zanzibar came to be passed, but, from the point of view of Indians, this is a startling development. It shows what British freedom means.

GIFTS

Three blankets and one dozen towels have been received from Mr. Hajee Habib, a dozen blankets, somewhat damaged, and 9 rolling-boards and pins from Mr. Karodia a case of bananas, *nachis* and pineapples from Mr. Desai of Germiston and two large wooden cases from Mr. B. P. Ebrahim. It will be a very good thing if others, too, help the Farm in some such way. It is not only residents of the Transvaal or Johannesburg who can send help to the Farm. Indians from all over South Africa can send clothing, furniture and provisions. Fruiterers and vegetable dealers in Durban can send these articles and cloth merchants can send cloth. Since there are no customs duties now, the railway freight itself does not amount to much. Second-hand coats, trousers and similar articles can also be turned to use. I hope, every Indian will read this paragraph and offer all possible help. Anyone who does so will have, to that extent, participated in the campaign.

OTHER GIFTS

Mr. C. P. Lucheram has sent a gift of 31 articles such as shirts,

handkerchiefs, pillow-covers, etc. Some of them are quality goods, which satyagrahis must not use. It is intended to sell them off [and use the proceeds].

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-7-1910

94. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[TOLSTOY FARM,]

Ashadh Sud 7 [*July 13, 1910*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have gone through your letter, your note and Thaker's remarks. Thaker's criticism is free from any ill-will and is better than yours. Your interpretation of the last sentence is wrong. By saying that Hey's taunt[2] puts the Indian community to shame, the editor only tries to alert the community. I admit that the sentence in question could have been written in simpler language; but I believe most of the readers can understand it even as it is. The editor is included in the Indian community. The sentence means that what brings shame to the Indian community brings it to us too. I do not agree with your interpretation that it comes in the way of satyagraha. I return your note to you so that you may re-read it.

The parcel has arrived here. Why didn't you send it by goods train?

The appeal to the Modh[3] leaders has been forwarded by Chhaganlal. I send it for perusal by you and Purshottamdas.

If Dhanji[4] is leaving immediately I would certainly prefer his company for Chanchal. He will take good care of her. She herself

[1] A summary of Hey's article mentioned in para I was published in the Gujarati section of *Indian Opinion*, 9-7-1910.

[2] G. A. Hey, a member of the former Transvaal Parliament, visited India and wrote an article criticizing the slovenly habits of the Indians on board the steamer, and taunting them for asking the Transvaal Government to improve the prisons.

[3] A Bania sub-caste to which Gandhiji belonged

[4] Dhanji Ranji, an Indian merchant at Verulam

desires to have the company of a woman.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the original Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 4931 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

95. TRANSVAAL DEPORTEES

Mr. G. A. Natesan of Madras deserves the warmest thanks of the Indians of South Africa for the very valuable assistance he has rendered to the homeless Transvaal deportees. We have received several letters showing very great appreciation of Mr. Natesan's services. He made their lot much easier to bear. The Madras papers, too, are full of praise for him. We congratulate Mr. Natesan on his great public spirit.

Indian Opinion, 16-7-1910

96. LICENSING LAW

The Supreme Court Judgment in the matter of Mahomed Goolam and the Maritzburg Corporation (published in our last issue) is worthy of perusal.[1] It shows what Indians have to labour under in the Colony. The Licensing Officer holds their fortune in the palm of his hand. The Supreme Court does not always get the opportunity of exposing his arbitrary decisions. Every aggrieved Indian trader cannot afford to take his case to the Supreme Court. One can, therefore, only guess what hardships Indian traders have to undergo and what must necessarily remain unnoticed by the public. We drew attention only the other day to an Estcourt case which has not yet reached the Supreme Court. The only thing Indian merchants can do is to ceaselessly agitate till their trading rights are placed on a firm footing.

Indian Opinion, 16-7-1910

[1] Mahomed Goolam, a Maritzburg retailer, applied in April 1909 for renewal of his licence. The licence fee was accepted but no decision given. He continued trading till December when the City Licensing Officer rejected the application. The Town Council upheld his decision. Goolam then appealed to the Supreme Court, which allowed the appeal with costs.

97. LICENCES IN NATAL

The appeal[1] to the Supreme Court in the Maritzburg licence case suggests that the [Dealers'] Licensing Act continues to be a source of hardship. Indian traders cannot afford to be complacent about it. The Act will cease to be a problem only if they pester the Government again and again and take effective measures.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-7-1910

98. DEPUTATION TO ADMINISTRATOR

We can take two different attitudes to the deputation[2] that was led to the Administrator. One is that it was not proper to have led an independent deputation without the consent of the Congress. In a way, this is right. But we cannot now take our stand merely on this point. The community has grown wings. Indians think for themselves. Of course, they do make mistakes sometimes. They want to act on their own. We cannot repress this spirit of enthusiasm, but can direct it along the right channel. This would require patience on the part of the leaders. If they encourage young Indians, this spirit can do nothing but good. If they remain indifferent and young people take to wrong methods it is obvious that harm will follow.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-7-1910

99. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

JOHANNESBURG,
July 21, 1910

DEAR MR. NATESAN,

I am exceedingly obliged to you for your letter of the 2nd ultimo. and the sentiments expressed by you. You call the brave

[1] *Vide* footnote to preceding item.

[2] Early in July, the Indian societies of Maritzburg and Durban sent a deputation to the Provincial Administrator seeking redress of grievances regarding the poll-tax, educational facilities, trading licences, etc.

passive resisters who have been deported there your Tamil countrymen, but I claim them to be my countrymen, just as much as they are your's. We have derivedinspiration for all the work that we have endeavoured to do here from the great leaders in India. I do not think, therefore, that there is any occasion to exaggerate the merits of the passive resisters in South Africa. The handsome donation sent by you was most welcome. I shall await particulars as promised by you. Your praise of Mr. Polak is undoubtedly well-deserved. He is a most wonderful man. His devotion to the cause is simply admirable. May I state that almost every letter that I receive from him speaks in the warmest terms about your work there.

I am,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten original signed by Gandhiji: G.N. 2222

100. WHO IS UNCIVILIZED?

We published the report of a boxing match[1] in America between a negro and a white. Millions had assembled to enjoy the spectacle. Among them were both old and young, men and women, rich and poor, government officials and common citizens. Many of them had travelled all the way from Europe. What did they see? Two men were hitting each other and displaying their brute strength. The people of America went mad over this show, and America is reckoned a very civilized country! What did the spectators gain from this show? We can offer no satisfactory answer to this question. There are some who hold that the body is strengthened through demonstrations of this kind and people learn how to defend themselves. A little reflection will show that this is altogether a mistaken notion. It is, of course, good to harden the body, but that cannot be done through boxing matches in public. There are many other means, and natural ones, of strengthening the body. This is no more than a pretext. The truth of the matter is that people enjoy seeing a fight and give their adoration to physical strength only. They think nothing else can match it. In thinking thus, they deny the soul and therefore deny God. The only

[1] Between Jefferies and Johnson at Reno on July 4, 1910

epithet that can be applied to such a people is "barbarous". There is very little to learn from them. We certainly do not wish to say that there were no such shows in ancient times. But everyone knew and admitted them to be barbarous. No wise men went to them. They were attended only by boys and woolly-headed young men. On the other hand, the show in America was attended by grown-up people. Lengthy telegrams were dispatched to newspapers at a huge cost. The reports were followed with interest by millions. Thus, the show was not looked upon as something uncivilized; on the contrary, it was regarded as a mark of civilization. This, in our view, is the extreme limit of barbarism. However strong the bodies of Jefferies and Johnson, they may be reduced to wrecks in an instant. They will then be of little use. It is doubtful if the millions who had assembled at the show ever thought of this even in their dreams.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 23-7-1910

101. JOHANNESBURG

Monday [*July 25, 1910*]

NEW GAME OF ASIATIC OFFICE

It has been the practice so far to register Indian children on their attaining majority. Now, however, they refuse such registration, if the applicants have entered after the coming into force of the Act of 1908. The effect of this will be that hundreds of Indian children will not be allowed to register and so will have to return to India. It may not be proper for satyagrahis to take the matter to a court of law. But this being a serious issue, some Indians are determined to test their rights in court. The result is bound to be favourable.

GIFTS

Mr. Adam Ali of Roodepoort has sent a rug and Mr. Desai of Germiston a case of fruit. I should like to bring it to the notice of vegetable dealers that if they send Indian vegetables like beans, brinjals, etc., there will be some saving in expenditure from the funds donated. The demand from the ladies is for such vegetables. Print and flannel, if sent by merchants, will be useful to children. The need for these is being felt now.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 30-7-1910

102. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Ashadh Vadi 3 [*July 25, 1910*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

The letters you address direct to the Farm reach me sooner.

There can be no comparison between the sufferings in a gaol and those on the steamer. But Hey makes such a comparison[2] and it is shameful on our part that we give some cause for his doing so. This, as I understand it, is what Thaker means to say and his criticism appeals to me as quite fair. Please think over it again.

I send herewith Chhaganlal's letter. You need not return it to me as I have already made use of it. It would be nice if Chanchi[3] could be sent along with Dhanji. I do not think I shall be able to go there at that time.

Since Santok has given birth to a daughter, there is no worry on her account now. *Karka kasadara karpavai.*[4] Please ponder over this sentence printed at the top of Pope's [Tamil] grammar. There could hardly be a task more difficult than to conquer one's passion in regard to one's own wife. You will certainly succeed as your mind is inclined that way. Do persevere in your efforts and try to create a favourable atmosphere so that you will easily succeed. Even after I had made up my mind and was persevering in that effort, Ramdas and Devdas were born. You have to take courage from my initial failures. Poets have compared man to a lion. All of us have the inborn capacity to become kings of the forest of the senses; we can get that strength by giving continuous thought to it.

If there is a surplus stock of vegetables with anyone there, you may please send it here by "to pay" parcel. Pumpkins, chillies, etc., will all be of use here. Induce the vegetable dealers of Durban and Verulam, if you can [to help us]. If they send parcels of vegetables occasionally, that much money will be saved here. Some of the experiences gained here are worth telling you about, but I have no

[1] *Vide* footnote 1 to "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 13-7-1910

[2] *Vide* footnote 2 to "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 13-7-1910

[3] Chanchalbehn Gandhi

[4] The original has this in Tamil script. It means "What you learn, learn faultlessly: [Having learned it, live up to it.]"

time to write.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Mr. Kallenbach says that it would not now matter if the plants are sent in gunny bags instead of in tins. If they are to be had at all, they should reach here right now. It wouldn't matter if they didn't come, but we should know the position.

I have sent Dr. Mehta a detailed report on the construction of septic tanks. It would be better, I think, to accept what West and Cordes say in the matter. Moreover, we shall make the necessary changes if I am there at the time of construction.

Please remember that a third-class ticket to Lawley has to be purchased for Ba when she comes here. The railway fare for Park station is the same as for Lawley.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4932 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

103. CABLE TO S.A.B.I. COMMITTEE[1]

JOHANNESBURG,

July 28, 1910

ROYEPPEN AND OTHERS DEPORTED NATAL. RE-CROSSED. SENTENCED THREE MONTHS' HARD LABOUR. GOVERNMENT NOW TRYING TO MAKE MINORS PROHIBITED IMNI-GRANTS BY REFUSING REGISTRATION ON MAJORITY. CAUSED SENSATION.

TRANSVAAL BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

From a typewritten copy in the Colonial Office Records: C. O. 551/7

[1] This was forwarded by Ritch to the Colonial Office on August 4, 1910.

104. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Ashadh Vadi 6 [*July 28, 1910*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Received your letter. I can imagine Chi. Chhaganlal's condition. I am in no mood to write much; otherwise I wanted to write at length on the boxing match between Jefferies and Johnson. Only a little of it has appeared in Gujarati.[2]

Mr. Kallenbach says that the order for the Verulam plants may be cancelled if these cannot reach here within a week. It would not matter if it is cancelled; you should therefore not bother about it. Even if the plants are dispatched within a week, says Mr. Kallenbach, the payment should be made only after they reach here.

Hope Santok and her daughter are quite well.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4933 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

105. ANOTHER BREACH OF FAITH!

The news that our Transvaal correspondent gives regarding the latest move of the Transvaal Government is indeed astounding. It will be remembered that one of the sorest points in the Asiatic Act of 1907 was that it required direct registration of minors under sixteen years. This grievance was removed by the Act of 1908 by transferring registration of such children to their parents' certificates. And had everything else gone well, nothing more would have been heard of registration of minor children in the Transvaal. Until recently it appears that minor children of non-resisters were, on attainment of majority, registered whether such children entered before or after the commencement of the Act of 1908. But it seems that the calmness of the Asiatic Department is simply to find out how to circumvent the

[1] The boxing match mentioned in the letter took place at Reno in the U.S.A. on July 4, 1910, in which year *Ashadh Vadi 6* corresponded to July 28.

[2] *Vide* "Who Is Uncivilized?", 23-7-1910

Indian community and how to harass it into leaving that Colony. Some law officer has therefore discovered that there is a flaw in the Act of 1908 which was drawn up in a day and that that flaw enables the Government to treat minors who entered the Colony lawfully after the commencement of the Act as prohibited immigrants on their attaining majority. That the legislature never contemplated any such result is obvious. Indian parents could never consent to an arrangement whereby their children should be sent out of the Transvaal on their arriving at the age of sixteen years. The Act of 1908 was largely a matter of compromise. The history of the negotiations that led up to the passing of the Act shows clearly that the Government and the Asiatics clearly understood that minor children of registered Asiatics were to enjoy the same rights as themselves. We do not know what the exact meaning of the Act may be and we care less. But this we do know, that, whatever may be the legal effect of the Act, this latest move on the part of the Transvaal Government shows a flagrant breach of faith. It emphasizes the charge of bad faith brought by the community against that Government. It strengthens and justifies passive resisters in their resolve to continue the fight. Non-resisters will test the point in the law courts. They may be worsted in the struggle. So much the worse for the Government. If there is a flaw in the Act, it is for them to rectify the error, not to take a mean advantage of it.

But this move of the Transvaal Government has, for those who will understand it, a deeper meaning. It shows that the sheet-anchor of our hope lies not in the uncertainty of law suits but in the certainty of passive resistance. We therefore trust that Indian parents who have abandoned the fight in despair and from weakness will gird up their loins and once more throw in their lot with those who are continuing passive resistance.

We shall watch with some curiosity how the Imperial Government will view this latest phase of the question.

Indian Opinion, 30-7-1910

106. PRISON TREATMENT

Mr. Churchill has announced[1] that passive resisters and Suffragettes shall not henceforth be treated as common felons and that they are not to have degrading associations. This is a reform in the right direction. It is worthy of note that Mr. Churchill has drawn a distinction between passive resisters and Suffragettes. That is to say, even when the latter may not be classed as passive resisters, as for instance, when they assault the Prime Minister and break windows, etc., to draw attention to their cause, they are not to be treated as common criminals. This is a great victory for Mrs. Pankhurst and her followers. It is a tardy recognition of a principle to which Mr. Robertson and other well-known publicists drew the attention of the British public about a year ago.

But what about the Transvaal passive resisters? Are they less worthy of similar treatment? Must they who never use violence, who are perhaps the truest passive resisters, be classed as ordinary convicts undeserving of any consideration whatsoever? May not the Imperial Government persuade the new Union Government to copy Mr. Churchill's reform? Or must Mr. Joseph Royeppen, a barrister, who seeks imprisonment for conscience' sake, be placed on the same footing as a homicide or a burglar?

Indian Opinion, 30-7-1910

107. JOHANNESBURG

Monday [*August 1, 1910*]

SATYAGRAHI BURJORSINGH

Mr. Burjorsingh, one of the batch of satyagrahis from Durban, who was recently in gaol for three months, has had to leave the Satyagrahi Farm[2] on account of his father's illness. Mr. Ratipalsingh and other members of the Corporation gave him a dinner and spoke in praise of him. Mr. Burjorsingh will shortly return to the Transvaal and get arrested.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 6-8-1910

[1] In the House of Commons
[2] Tolstoy Farm

108. REPLY TO "RAND DAILY MAIL"[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]

August 3, 1910

SIR,

Will you permit me to correct some statements made in your leading article[2] on Lord Ampthill's action in the House of Lords[3] on the passive resistance struggle?

You say that passive resistance commenced after the Government had offered to grant permits for priests, lawyers, doctors, etc., but when[4] they refused to grant anything further. May I remind you that passive resistance commenced in 1907 when the question of priests, doctors and lawyers had not come up for public discussion, and when it did arise, it simply arose in order to forcibly illustrate the injustice that had been done by the Government in not conceding the demands of the community, which, as Mr. Patrick Duncan has pointed out, have never varied? British Indians have always asked for equality in the eye of the law as to immigration but never for unrestricted immi-gration of Asiatics.[5] I emphatically deny that British Indians who have been deported have in any large numbers declined to givein formation as to their domicile. As a matter of fact, the domicile of most of them was within the knowledge of the Asiatic department and no proof of domicile was necessary in connection with those who had educational attainments, as many had. You state, again, that in no instances have cases of harsh treatment in the gaols of the Transvaal been proved by the passive resisters. May I inform you and the public that the question of diet, which was a very serious one, was very prominently brought before the Government and the public, and that it is only now that the grievance, I am thankful to say, has been partially remedied. That passive resisters who are not criminals in the ordinary sense of the term have been sent to a penal settlement, like Diepkloof, where the ordinary privileges of prisoners are withheld in my opinion is

[1] This was published in *Rand Daily Mail* under the title, "Indian Passive Resisters".

[2] Of 29th July; *Vide Indian Opinion*, 6-8-1910.

[3] *Vide* the following item.

[4] *Indian Opinion* here has "but they"

[5] *ibid*

undoubtedly a glaring instance of harsh treatment. You further state that British Indians are keeping up passive resistance for other than the purpose of having their legitimate demands granted. In reply, I can only say that the world has not many men who would suffer, without reasonable cause, privation, starvation, separation from those who may be near and dear to them, etc., besides the loss of their worldly possessions. I quite agree with you that, if the demands of the community are granted, they should be granted not in response to passive resistance, but because they are intrinsically just; but I hope you will agree that passive resistance ought not to stand in the way of a strong government doing justice. You seem to think that passive resistance means coercion. In my humble opinion, the self-suffering which the community has undergone, and which has been expressed by the term "passive resistance", has been undertaken after the methods of petitioning, etc., had been exhausted, and in order to draw public attention to a grievance that was keenly felt and resented by the community.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Rand Daily Mail, 6-8-1910

Indian Opinion, 6-8-1910

109. TRANSVAAL INDIANS IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS

Lord Ampthill, who has rendered signal services to the cause of the British Indians in South Africa and, thereby, we venture to think, to the Empire, has again raised the question in the House of Lords.[1] Reuter's cable[2] gives only a summary of Earl Beauchamp's reply to Lord Ampthill's query. And, if the summary gives a correct version, it shows that the policy of the Transvaal Government of misleading the Imperial Government continues unabated. In reply to Lord Ampthill's protest against the deportations to India, Earl Beauchamp is reported to have said that "Every opportunity would be afforded British Indians to prove domicile in South Africa, but that many absolutely refused to give information." The fact is that, in most

[1] On July 26, 1910

[2] Dated July 27, from London, reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 30-7-1910.

cases, the authorities themselves knew the domicile of the parties concerned, and that, save in one or two cases, they all emphatically declared their domicile. It was not possible for them to do more. The authorities, however, *insisted* on production of domicile certificates which many did not possess. It is a well-known fact that possession of such a certificate is not a legal necessity. Some Indians take them out as a measure of protection. The authorities knew the case of young Manikum Pillay. He was a student in Natal; he could enter the Colony by reason of his education; his father is well known to the Asiatic Department; yet the young man was sent away to India. Young Pillay, we understand, gave all the information but it was of no avail. The fact that young Pillay and other Indians were deported and, on their return from India, could enter Natal; and the further fact that they are now serving imprisonment at Diepkloof, eloquently demonstrates, as no argument by us could, that the Imperial Government has been hoodwinked by the Transvaal Government.

Then, again, Earl Beauchamp is reported to have said that the Union Government could not agree to "unrestricted immigration" Indians in the Transvaal have repeatedly declared that they do not want unrestricted immigration. Passive Resistance has not been undertaken to bring about any such result. Indeed, they know that, if they fought for unrestricted immigration, they would forfeit the generous support given to them by Lord Ampthill and other distinguished statesmen. They have received universal sympathy and support outside South Africa only because they have shown that their demands are reasonable, moderate and such that they cannot but be satisfied in the end. So far as immigration is concerned, all that they ask for is that there shall not be in law any distinction based on race or colour; that there shall not be an insult offered to Indians as a race, as the present legislation does.

Indian Opinion, 6-8-1910

110. AN INTERESTING GROUP

Our Supplement this week is an interesting photograph[1] of Pioneer Settlers at Tolstoy Farm—the Passive Resistance settlement at Lawley in the Transvaal. Our readers will specially value the photograph as it includes that of Mr. Kallenbach, whose generosity in placing the Farm at the disposal of the passive resisters' families, together with his wholehearted sympathy with the movement, is so well known and appreciated. What will perhaps appeal most of all to the Indian community is the way in which Mr. Kallenbach, literally as well as figuratively, "takes off his coat" to the work of helping the cause he has made his own.

Indian Opinion, 6-8-1910

111. LORD AMPTHILL'S HELP

Lord Ampthill continues to help the Indians. We have already published the cabled report[2] of the proceedings in the House of Lords arising from a question asked by him.

The report shows that the Transvaal Government persists in misleading the Imperial Government. The allegation that the deportees did not furnish complete information is baseless, as also the statement that we are demanding unrestricted admission of Indians. However, the discussion in the House of Lords shows that the Imperial Government persists in its efforts. It is only a question of time. Whether or not there will be a victory depends on the satyagrahis.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 6-8-1910

[1] *Vide* Illustration: Pioneer Settlers of Tolstoy Farm (Supplement to *Indian Opinion,* 6-8-1910).

[2] In *Indian Opinion,* 30-7-1910. *Vide* also. "Transvaal Indians in the House of Lords", 6-8-1910.

112. REPLY TO "RAND DAILY MAIL"[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
August 9, 1910

SIR,

Under the heading "Asiatic Exaggeration", you revert to the question of the ill-treatment of passive resisters as well within this Province as on board a particular steamer that carried over sixty passive resisters a few months ago. Passive resisters have kept absolutely clear at least of two things —exaggeration and violence in any shape or form —both things being considered totally foreign to the spirit of the struggle. Allegations of the ill-treatment of prisoners will continue to be made in spite of every contradiction, so long as passive resisters[2] are treated with exceptional severity by being classed not only with criminals, but being sent to a penal settlement which is intended for hardened criminals. You seem to imagine that passive resisters have repeatedly complained about physical violence having been used against them. As a matter of fact, except in isolated cases, they have stated that there has not been physical violence used against prisoners. As to Lord Morley's repudiation of ill-treatment on board, one is tempted to ask, in spite of the very high source from which the contradiction comes, whether His Lordship had ever ordered examination of the passengers themselves. I gather that no such course was adopted. In the circumstances, the Indian community will continue to believe the statement made by the passengers. But here again it seems to be imagined that, when an Indian complains of ill-treatment, it must imply physical violence,[3] or it is not ill-treatment at all. That the deportees were sent as deck-passengers, and that they had to starve by way of protest for a day before they received decent food on board, are matters which call for no comment in your estimation, and yet they are matters which vitally affect the parties concerned. The only way to stop the dissemination of reports in India of the ill-treatment of passive resisters is, firstly, to accept the

[1] This was published in *Rand Daily Mail* under the caption "The Passive Resisters".

[2] *Indian Opinion* here has "passive resistance prisoners".

[3] *Indian Opinion* has "it must simply be physical violence".

deportees' standards of what is good treatment, and, secondly, to close the painful struggle by granting the just demands of the Indian community.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Rand Daily Mail, 9-8-1910

Indian Opinion, 13-8-1910

113. MR. RITCH'S DEPARTURE POSTPONED

The newspapers announced that Mr. Ritch was coming to South Africa very soon with a message of sympathy and encouragement for passive resisters. Preparations were on foot to give Mr. Ritch a welcome to which his whole-hearted, effective and able work in England entitles him. But, as our Transvaal correspondent points out, Mr. Ritch's departure has been suddenly postponed owing to Mrs. Ritch having to undergo an operation. It will be remembered that Mrs. Ritch had only just recovered from a very dangerous illness, during which she underwent a series of operations. The sympathy of the Indian community throughout South Africa goes out to Mr. and Mrs. Ritch in their trouble, and we hope that Mrs. Ritch will recover from her most recent illness. The friends of the family who know Mrs. Ritch's pluck and marvellous recuperative powers have little doubt that she will survive the operation and remain, for many a long year to come, the guardian angel of her children who adore her and whom she adores and for whom she lives.

Indian Opinion, 13-8-1910

114. INDIANS UNDER THE UNION

Those who thought that the Indian community in South Africa would fare better under the Union are being rapidly disillusioned. The Transvaal continues its persecution of passive resisters. The Orange Free State keeps her gates closed against them. Silently but surely an agitation against Indians is being fostered at the Cape and the Natal licensing laws, in spite of the recently made amendment,[1] still remain a

[1] *Vide* "Natal Licensing Act", 11-12-1909

standing menace to Indian merchants and traders. The Estcourt case,[1] to which we drew attention some time ago, now enters upon a further stage. The Provincial Court has decided that the appointment by the Government of certain members of the Board was valid. We presume, therefore, that the injured party will once more approach the Appellate Board. By the time this sickening procedure is finished, it would have cost Mr. Suleman, the party concerned, a fortune. How many Indian traders are there in the Colony who can afford the necessary expenses of such a prolonged fight?

Then, again, take Mr. Goga's case.[2] Here is a man of twenty years' standing, having a large and respectable European custom, who is openly backed by Europeans of standing in Ladysmith. He cannot get a licence in respect of his own premises. It is nothing to the Licensing Officer that Mr. Goga cannot let his shop to any Europeans and cannot sell it. Because he is an Indian, he must be content to suffer loss.

The question arises: How does the Union help Indians even in such glaring cases of injustice? The answer is that the position of Indians under the Union will in no way be made easier, and it is highly probable that it will be made much worse. All the reactionary forces will be combined against them. Let the community beware. The only effective way to fight such a mighty combination is for it first to combine and secondly to become self-reliant.

Indian Opinion, 13-8-1910

[1] One Suleman, who was refused transfer of a licence by the Licensing Officer, Estcourt, appcaled to the Estcourt Licensing Board, where his counsel, objecting to the constitution of the Board, refused to proceed. The Licensing Board, however, gave a decision. The review against this decision was dismissed by the Supreme Court (Natal Division) on August 2.

[2] In Ladysmith, Goga, an Indian retailer, was refused a licence to trade in premises owned by him, although 37 Europeans presented a petition supporting him to the Licensing Officer.

115. LETTER TO LEO TOLSTOY[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
August 15, 1910

DEAR SIR,

I am much obliged to you for your encouraging and cordial letter[2] of the 8th May last. I very much value your general approval of my booklet, *Indian Home Rule.* And, if you have the time, I shall look forward to your detailed criticism of the work which you have been so good as to promise in your letter.

Mr. Kallenbach has written to you about Tolstoy Farm. Mr. Kallenbach and I have been friends for many years. I may state that he has gone through most of the experiences that you have so graphically described in your work, *My Confessions.* No writings have so deeply touched Mr. Kallenbach as yours; and, as a spur to further effort in living up to the idealsheld before the world by you, he has taken the liberty, after consultation with me, of naming his farm after you.

Of his generous action in giving the use of the farm for passive resisters, the number of *Indian Opinion.*[3] I am sending herewith will give you full information.

I should not have burdened you with these details but for the fact of your taking a personal interest in the passive resistance struggle that is going on in the Transvaal.

I remain,
Your faithful servant,
M. K. GANDHI

COUNT LEO TOLSTOY
YASNAYA POLYANA

From a block of the typewritten original signed by Gandhiji published in *Mahatma,* Vol. I, by D. G. Tendulkar

[1] For replies by V. Chertkov and Tolstoy, *vide* Appendix "V. Chertkov's letter to Gandhiji", and (Tolstoy's letter to Gandhiji", 7-9-1910.
[2] *Vide* Appendix "Tolstoy's letter to Gandhiji", 8-5-1910.
[3] Of 11-6-1910

116. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[TOLSTOY FARM,]
Shravana Vadi 1 [*August 21, 1910*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Please write to me, if possible, at least once a week.

I have already sent you Anandlal's[2] letter.

For the vegetables you sent we shall arrange to pay out of the [Satyagraha] Fund here. We would have to spend the same amount if we brought here the quantity of vegetables you sent. You should be able to know a cheaper method of sending the vegetables if you went through the tariff book. It is, however, impossible to measure the value of the sentiment behind your sending the vegetables. What is important is the fact that people provide satyagrahis with whatever they need. If people send these things jointly the railway fare would not be much. Please explain to them that it would be shameful for those who make big profits to be scared by the paltry cost of freight.

I have not seen anything sent by Babu Talewant Singh. We have received groundnut and vegetables from Dhanji and blankets and flannels from Raghavji. If any of these things are from Babu Talewant Singh please make the necessary correction. I had a letter from Babuji himself saying that the articles were from the persons mentioned above.

Harilal cannot go to India to escort Chanchi. We are poor and cannot spend money like that. Moreover, a man who has joined the struggle cannot thus go away for three months. There would be nothing wrong if Chanchi goes to India in some good company. Many poor women do so. We do not want our womenfolk to remain delicate. I for one am a farmer and I wish you all to become farmers, or to continue as such if you have already become farmers. My way of life has completely changed here. The whole day is spent in digging the land and other manual labour instead of in writing and explaining things to people. I prefer this work and consider this alone

[1] The gifts mentioned in paragraph 4 were acknowldged in *Indian Opinion*, 27-8-1910 in 1910; *Shravana Vadi* 1 corresponded to August 21.

[2] Son of Amritlal Tulsidas Gandhi, Gandhiji's cousin

to be my duty. Ramdas dug a pit, 3 feet broad and 3 feet deep, and half of another, working till one o'clock today. If he continues to work like this he will be a very good boy. Now I do not see him engrossed in thought as he used to be in Phoenix. This is the result of manual labour. In pampering this corpulent body that has been given to us and pretending that we earn [our living] by our intellect, we become sinners and are tempted to fall into a thousand and one evil ways. I regard the Kaffirs, with whom I constantly work these days, as superior to us. What they do in their ignorance we have to do knowingly. In outward appearance we should look just like the Kaffirs. From this you may deduce other reasons also for Harilal not going to India to escort Chanchi.

For your short temper too I think this is the cure. The body is like an ox or donkey and should therefore be made to carry a load. Then the short temper, etc., will be cured. I am constantly trying to keep away the shortcomings of Phoenix from this Farm. That is why a different standard of living has been laid down. If instead of each cultivating his own plot separately all cultivate the entire land together, we can produce a larger crop more quickly. I do not think this is possible there for the present. But I did make the suggestion that it would be good if those who could co-operate cultivated their plots together. That suggestion was made with [special] reference to Purshottamdas and you. It has many other implications. However, I have written this to let you know the current trend of my mind.

The proceeds from the sale of stock in the Press cannot by any means be considered as profit. They can be credited to the capital account and nowhere else. We need not consider whether we have gained or lost by giving up the job work; we are rid of a headache thereby.[1]

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4934 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] The letter is incomplete.

117. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Shravan Vad 3 [*August 23, 1910*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I had kept your letter for replying.

If you spend your spare time in understanding and explaining to others the significance of the struggle here, I shall take it that you have done well. We need not doubt the law that we achieve the thing to which we completely devote ourselves. The satyagraha struggle deserves such devotion. Hence this advice to you.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gajarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5635 Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

118. REPORT OF PROTECTOR OF INDENTURED LABOURERS

The so-called "Protector" of indentured labourers has published his annual report. We note its main points elsewhere. The report is a matter of disgrace for every thinking Indian. How many Indians arrived, how many of them died, what were the causes of death—all this is worth knowing and will be found in the abstract of the report.

The reply by the "Protector" to Mr. Polak's vivid account of the sufferings of indentured labourers makes interesting reading. It is in fact no reply. The "Protector" seems to have assumed the role of "Exploiter". When we thus find that the sea has caught fire, where shall we get the water to quench it?

What we are seriously exercised over at the moment is this. Last year, 2,487 indentured labourers arrived from Madras, including 176 boys and 195 girls of all ages. Further, it is stated in the same report that more than 27,000 Indians have been born in Natal. What has been the fate of all these boys and girls? The Government has shown no interest in this matter. The Protector has not a single word to say about

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 29-3-1910

them. The employers of indentured labourers do nothing for them. The boys, too, are treated as indentured labourers. This is the way cattle are dealt with. Do we really treat [even] our cattle in this fashion? What this reveals is a state of slavery. The boys and girls who arrived last year are ruined both materially and morally. Any ruffian may cast his evil eye on them. From early morning when the parents go to toil like beasts, these delicate children are left to themselves and those of them who are strong enough for a little work are employed on payment of a paltry 5s. Thus, it is sugar made with the blood of indentured labourers that we use for gratifying our palate. In spite of this, some of us think that the indentured labourers gain by coming here, that they escape starvation [in India] and find happiness in Natal. We would not think of applying this argument to ourselves. We would rather prefer to starve than accept the slavery of indenture. We would not like to bring up our children in such slavery. These boys and girls are left entirely to the mercy of God. Any Indian who has faith in religion will see that we join in exploiting this slavery and as a punishment for that sin we, who claim to be free Indians, also become the victims of oppression. If only we had a pen and an intellect powerful enough, we would awaken the Indians from their deep slumber and rouse the community to take effective measures to put an immediate stop to the system of indenture. This is the right time for it. A letter signed by the leaders demanding an immediate end to the system of indenture should be sent to all those who wish to enter the Union Parliament. We have no doubt that once indenture is stopped, the hardships of Indians will not take long to disappear.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 27-8-1910

119. CABLE TO S. A. B. I. COMMITTEE[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
August 29, 1910

MAGISTRATE DECIDED ASIATIC ACT GIVES NO PROTECTION TO MINORS NOT BORN TRANSVAAL AND NOT RESIDENT AT COMMENCEMENT OF ACT 1908.[2] MATTER GOING

[1] This was forwarded by Ritch to the Colonial Office on August 30, 1910.

[2] In the case of Mahomed, son of Chhotabhai, Magistrate Jordan ruled that the inclusion of the son's name in the father's registration certificate gave him no right to apply for registration and that the father's Peace Preservation Permit did not cover the son; hence he dismissed the appeal and ordered deportation.

BEFORE SUPREME COURT, BUT AS IT AFFECTS MANY INDIAN CHILDREN AND IS SO IMPORTANT, HOPE IMPERIAL INTERVENTION WILL COMMENCE NOW.

M. K. GANDHI

From a typewritten copy in the Colonial Office Records: C.O. 551/7

120. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[JOHANNESBURG,]
Wednesday [*August 31, 1910*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I have one from Chhaganlal too.

It was good that you observed the *Janmashtami* fast. I had thought of doing so, but gave up the idea. I decided it was enough for the present if I could keep the *Ekadashi*[2] fast alone. There is only one simple way of winning divine grace—that of practising truth and other virtues, gradually and deliberately, and of concentrating on one attachment or devotion [to the Supreme] to the exclusion of all others.

Eat the whole body, O crow!
Peck away at my flesh;[3]
But pray consume not the two eyes,
I still hope to see my beloved.

This is said of a lover and his beloved; but in truth it shows the yearning of the soul to see the beloved in the form of God. He does not care if the body is lost. If the crow of passion does not eat away the eye of knowledge, he is bound to meet the beloved.

Chhaganlal's letters are still suggestive of his timidity. What he writes about Gokaldas makes it appear as though you and all of us are neglecting our elders. If Gokaldas does not go to India, it only betrays his ignorance. He has no duty to perform here. He has not even

[1] This letter appears to have been written during Chhaganlal Gandhi's absence from South Africa in 1910. "Janmashtami", Lord Krishna's birthday (according to the Indian calendar the 8th day of the dark half of *Shravana)* mentioned in the second paragraph, fell on Sunday, August 28, 1910.

[2] The eleventh day of each dark and bright fortnight

[3] The letter has और जलायौ मांस (and the burnt flesh too), but it should be read चुन चुन खाइयो मांस (peck away at my flesh).

obtained specific permission from Parmanandbhai to come over here. Moreover, Parmanandbhai wants only to see him. Gokaldas, however, does not understand [this] and therefore does not go. All of you have to serve your parents and you do it even while staying here. That can be your sole object in earning money. Of course, they might feel happy if you were with them. But they hardly need you apart from that. I hold that children who are indifferent to their parents can hardly accomplish anything in the world. I am quite freefrom worry as I do not see in your and Chhaganlal's behaviour anything that conflicts with filial duty.

What Chhaganlal writes about the exhibition has been the general impression. It is a great illusion[1]. What are we before it, when a person like Sitaji fell a prey to the temptation? This glamorous show is the product of Western civilization. We can deem ourselves successful if we are not led away by it. I do not mean to say that Chhaganlal has succumbed to the temptation. He is, however, greatly affected by it—and anyone would be so affected at first sight.

I agree with Chhaganlal about not sending Santok. I think she will not be happy in India. Such is our plight. She will not be able to live there with that spiritual and physical freedom which she enjoys here. When, thanks to her stay in Phoenix, she becomes firm in her convictions and courageous enough to adhere even in India to her ideas and way of life which she considers right, she will be happy there. Her stay will be beneficial to India and she will render true service to the country as well as to herself. I, however, feel that she may be allowed to go if she is pressed to go as was Chanchi. Veni[2] writes in every letter that in India she feels as if she were in prison. This is not true of women alone.

Please do not let Chhaganlal know of any portion of this letter even indirectly. For that might prove harmful. I am constantly pondering over his letters. I shall write to him myself when I find it necessary. My criticism too might be due to a misunderstanding. Even so, there is no need at present to disturb the tenor of his thought. For I have enough faith in him to believe that whatever he does he will

[1] Literally, a golden deer. In the *Ramayana*, Ravana's maternal uncle, Maricha, took the form of a golden deer to tempt Sita and entice Rama away so that Ravana could kidnap her.

[2] Wife of Gaurishanker Vyas, a leading Indian of Pretoria and a satyagrahi

come round of his own accord.

I have written to you in detail so that you may not be upset or distressed in any way.

The messenger did not inform me that the watch came from Tipnis. I have not mentioned his name [in "Johannesburg"] as he told me that it was sent by you. I shall make the necessary correction next week if you have not done so already. We have not received the things sent by Talewant Singh. I shall make enquiries. I fear some demurrage will have to be paid. He has not even told me what the things sent were.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4935 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

121. THE GRAND OLD MAN OF INDIA

The first Indian to become a member of the British Parliament was Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji. Born on September 4th, 1825, in the city of Bombay, he was educated at the Elphinstone School and College, and was, at the age of 29, made Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy—being the first Indian to receive that honour. In 1855, Mr. Naoroji visited England as partner in the first Indian business to be established in that country. The University College, London, did him the honour of appointing him Professor of Gujarati; and one of the benefits gained for India by Mr. Naoroji was the admission of Indians to the Civil Service in 1870. He was made Prime Minister of Baroda in 1874, and a year later was elected a member of the Corporation and Municipal Council of Bombay, to which body he gave five years' valuable service. Mr. Naoroji was a member of the Bombay Legislative Council from 1885 to 1887. The Indian National Congress honoured him by electing him President in 1886, 1893, and again in 1906. Mr. Naoroji sat in the House of Commons from 1893 to 1895 as Liberal member for Central Finsbury, London, and he did good work for his country as member of the Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure, etc., and, in 1897, gave evidence before the Welby Commission. From the very commencement of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress, he was a diligent member and hard worker. Among the publications from the pen of Mr.

Dadabhai Naoroji are: *England's Duty to India, Admission of Educated Natives into the Indian Civil Service, Financial Administration of India,* and what is, perhaps, the best known of his many writings, *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India.* In 1906, the venerable Dadabhai journeyed to the Motherland to preside over the Indian National Congress, a task which was a tremendous strain upon even his iron constitution and indomitable spirit. Since the Calcutta Congress of 1906, Mr. Dadabhai has practically retired from public life, and in 1907 he went to reside at Varsova, a small fishing village in the Bombay Presidency where he still watches with a keen interest the progress of events in India which go to make or mar its future. Truly has he earned for himself the honoured title of THE GRAND OLD MAN OF INDIA.

Indian Opinion, 3-9-1910

122. LONG LIVE THE GRAND OLD MAN

Tomorrow is the 86th birthday of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, the Grand Old Man of India and the Father of Indian Nationalism. Every year brings us nearer the day when we must part with him in the flesh. The best honour that we can render him is to imitate him in his noble career and dedicate our all to the service of the Motherland. On the first page we give a brief biographical sketch with portrait of the aged patriot.

Indian Opinion, 3-9-1910

123. GREAT LONDON MEETING

The report[1] of the great meeting held in London on the 3rd of August last has now arrived. It was fitting that Sir Mancherji Bhownaggree, who has taken such a prominent part in the struggle since its commencement, should have presided. The success of the whole gathering was due to the untiring efforts of Mr. Ritch and his helpers. A glance at the names of the speakers[2] shows what a

[1] The report of this meeting held at the Westminster Palace Hotel, to protest against the treatment of British Indians in the Transvaal, was published in *Indian Opinion*, 3-9-1910.

[2] Among the speakers were Major Sayed Hoosen Belgrami, W. P. Byles, M. P., Sir R. K. Wilson, Bepin Chandra Pal and Lala Lajpat Rai.

representative gathering it was. Sir Mancherji has forwarded the resolutions[1] to Lords Crewe and Morley. Reuter has informed us that the Imperial Government is still in correspondence with the Union Government. Mr. Ritch has appealed to General Botha to close the struggle before the Union Parliament meets. It now remains to be seen what the next month has in store for passive resisters. We confess that before the elections are over, General Botha, whose own fate and that of his fellow ministers hangs in the balance, could take no definite action. Meanwhile, passive resisters may take additional courage from the fact that their cause is being very vigilantly watched by Lord Ampthill and his Committee[2] and that the opinion of the Metropolis of the Empire is behind them.

Indian Opinion, 3-9-1910

124. INDENTURED LABOUR

The *Rand Daily Mail* has made a most excellent suggestion to the effect that the voters should ask every candidate to pledge himself to the immediate stoppage of indentured labour from India. So long as that blot remains, it is very much like straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel to persecute a few Indians out of the Transvaal Province. Whatever may be the motives of the *Rand Daily Mail* in urging total prohibition of indentured labour, no Indian can have any difficulty in agreeing with its conclusions.

Indian Opinion, 3-9-1910.

125. A REPROACH

Mr. Haggar, who found himself appointed a member of the Commission that recently sat to examine the question of indentured

[1] The first resolution detailing disabilities of the Transvaal British Indians emphatically protested against the deportations to India through Mozambique; the second appealed to Lord Crewe for protection; the third to Lord Morley to prevent further emigration to South Africa until redress of grievances; the fourth conveyed a message of "admiration and encouragement . . . to brave brothers and sisters in the Transvaal . . . in the selfless struggle"; and the fifth directed forwarding of the resolutions to Colonial and India Offices and to the Transvaal British Indian Association.

[2] The S.A.B.I. Committee

labour, thus writes in the course of a letter to the *Rand Daily Mail,* in reply to that paper's leading article urging entire prohibition of indentured labour:

> One fact was forced upon the attention of the Commission, namely, the Natal-born Indian is useless as a worker; he will play football, sell newspapers or do low-class office work but he will not undertake anything of the nature of labour. It was admitted by educated Indians that primary education made the Natal-born Indian useless in the labour market. Agriculture had nothing to hope from him.

Indians know Mr. Haggar too well to take him seriously. His unproved charges against the community have not yet been forgotten. But sometimes we do learn a great deal even from our avowed opponents. The statement that we have quoted above is not without a modicum of truth in it. Curiously enough, we have just received from a correspondent a letter inviting us to open our columns regularly for Indian sporting news. We have nothing against sport as such. And, if our columns were not almost solely devoted to the cause of the Indian struggle in South Africa, and if we had enough support from the sporting Indians, we would not be unprepared to set apart a portion for regular sporting news. But we ask our young friends whether sport should occupy so much of their time and attention as it does now. Indeed, those Indians who know what is going on around them, cannot afford to be in a sporting mood. Our forefathers did wonderfully well without the fashionable sport of today. Sport indulged in for the sake of developing the body is of some use. But we venture to suggest that agriculture, the inherited occupation of Indians—indeed of the human race—is better sport than football, cricket and all other games put together. And it is useful, dignified and remunerative. Football and cricket may be well for those who have the drudgery of the desk work to go through from day to day. But no Indian need undertake that task. We therefore advise our young sporting friends to take Mr. Haggar's remarks in good part and leave the contemptible work of clerks, newspaper sellers, etc., for the independent and manly field-work. They have before them the brilliant example of Mr. Joseph Royeppen who, though a barrister, took up hawking and latterly did manual work on the Passive Resistance Farm[1].

Indian Opinion, 3 -9-1910

[1] Tolstoy Farm

126. MEETING IN ENGLAND

We have now received a report of the meeting held in England concerning the Transvaal struggle, as also of the discussion raised by Lord Ampthill in the House of Lords. Both these developments should prove very encouraging to us. The meeting was presided over by Sir Mancherji Bhownaggree. He has been helping us right from the beginning. It was therefore but fitting that he should be in the chair. The messages which the meeting received from Justice Ameer Ali and Sir Charles Bruce were noteworthy. The meeting was attended by leaders of all parties and communities. Their speeches, too, were powerfully stirring. We can gather from all this that the movement is receiving good support in England. But that support is of far less consequence than our own strength. And if we have no strength in ourselves, the support [we have been receiving] in England will only argue our weakness. If Lord Ampthill has been fighting [for us], if Sir Mancherji has been striving hard and Mr. Ritch has been working indefatigably, that is due, in fact, to their belief that we submit ourselves to suffering, that we have embraced poverty in the cause of the motherland, that we have staked our all for our honour. For the success of this meeting, it is to Mr. Ritch and his army of volunteers that congratulations are due.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 3-9-1910

127. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

TOLSTOY FARM,

Bhadarva Shud 1 [*September 4, 1910*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I write this with a heavy heart. I constantly think your going to India has been a mistake.

[1] This letter was written during the addressee's absence from South Africa in 1910.

I was deeply pained to read your letter to Doctor [Mehta]. How can I bear your contracting tuberculosis? I write this under the impression that you are still there [in England]. Maud[1] will redirect this to you if you have left for India.

Please do as you think fit. Treat the following simply as a piece of advice from me. I wish to see your health improved.

Considering only your health, I feel that the best thing for you would be to go to Phoenix. You will get fresh air there. You will also be able to work on the farm, which is good for a tuberculosis patient. Moreover, I hope to be able to assist and nurse you. This will be possible only if you are at Phoenix. And, God willing, you can stay on this Farm too. The climate here is even better than that of Phoenix. *Brahmacharya,* which is necessary for a patient like you, can easily be observed here. I therefore think it will be better if you come over here. You can go back to India if your health does not improve here. Should you be keen on going to India, I have written to Doctor [Mehta] to send you Rs. .[2] every month. Even otherwise, you may stay in Bombay and do some public work there under my guidance. Your main work will relate to the struggle here. By doing this you will be free from worry about your livelihood and you can easily pass your life in public service. Whether you are ill or well, I wish your life is spent in the service of the country.

Many things come to mind about which I should write, but I do not feel like doing so. My suggestion about your coming over here stands even if you have already reached India. In case you do not feel inclined to come here, my suggestion regarding Doctor [Mehta] is there for you to consider.

However, even if neither of these alternatives is acceptable to you and you want to live independently on your own earnings, be sure that I would not come in your way. My only desire is that you should take the course that will give you most satisfaction.

I shall be waiting for your letter during the next week like a

[1] Maud Polak, sister of H. S. L. Polak, worked as Secretary to the South Africa British Indian Committee, London, during L. W. Ritch's absence.

[2] The figure is missing.

chataka[1] longing for the rains.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a handwritten copy of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4936 Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

128. JOHANNESBURG

Monday [*September 5, 1910*]

MINORS

A case, that of Tayob Hajee Khan Mahomed's son, very similar to that of Mr. Chhotabhai's son, has come up in Pretoria. In this case, too, the magistrate decided against the boy. In all probability, both these cases will go to the Supreme Court.

STATEMENTS OF GENERAL BOTHA AND OTHERS

I have sent for the English section the statements[2] of General Smuts, General Botha and de Villiers bearing on this question. All three have referred to the position of minors in their speeches or written about it, but none of them has stated anywhere that a child, on attaining majority, can be expelled. General Botha, in his written statement, has mentioned that the Government had accepted the Asiatics' demand in regard to minors. General Smuts has said the same thing in his speech. The Asiatics never, even in their dreams, thought of agreeing to the expulsion of minors, and none of the three persons mentioned above has claimed that they have so agreed. It is only now that the Transvaal Government has begun to put an arbitrary construction on the law.[3]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 10-9-1910

129. MR. CHHOTABHAI'S CASE

The case of Mr. Chhotabhai's son, already reported in these columns,[4] is a most important one. It affects the well-being of the

[1] A bird which is supposed to drink only the water that falls from the sky.
[2] *Vide* Appendix, "Transvaal Ministers' Declaration", 9-10-1910.
[3] *Vide* "Another Breach of Faith!", 30-7-1910.
[4] *Vide* "Transvaal Notes", *Indian Opinion*, 27-8-1910.

whole Indian community in the Transvaal. Analogous to it is also the case of the son of Mr. Tayob Hajee Khan Mahomed. If their sons, who entered the Transvaal as minors, cannot remain in that Province, hundreds of Indian parents may be obliged to leave the Transvaal. For we cannot imagine these Indian parents in the Transvaal would be inhuman enough to remain in that country if their sons, artificially declared to be majors at the age of 16, are to be deported to India without their natural protectors. Parents have taken their babies to the Transvaal but, after the passing of the Act of 1908, assuming that these babies are never sent to India until after they have reached the age of 16, and that both the parents are in the Transvaal, where is the lad now 16 years to be deported to? Assuming, further, that a child is born to Transvaal Indian parents on the high seas, where is this child, if male, to be deported after he reaches the Transvaal age of majority? One would have thought that the Transvaal Government would have stood appalled by the highly probable consequences of their interpretation of the Act.

But, apart from the purely humanitarian standpoint suggested above, we quote elsewhere General Smuts' speech[1] on the introduction of the then Asiatic Bill, General Botha's minute[2] on the Asiatic Conference and Mr. de Villiers' (the then Attorney-General's) report[3] on the Asiatic Act. All these documents show that there was then not a word said about the exclusion of minor Asiatics not born in the Transvaal entering after the commencement of the Act. Indeed, they all say that the Asiatic demand in this respect has been completely met. The Asiatics never suspected that their minor children might be treated as prohibited immigrants on reaching the age of majority. Whatever may be the interpretation of the Act, there is the pledged word of three Ministers at stake.

The question is too important to be left where the Supreme Court may leave it, assuming that its decision is adverse. We have no desire to anticipate its judgment, but this we cannot help saying, that it is a matter of life and death for the Indians in the Transvaal. We wish we could say that it would be a matter of honour with the people of the Transvaal, indeed of the whole of South Africa. Will the humanity of the South Africans tolerate what is a war against infants?

Indian Opinion, 10-9-1910

[1] *Vide* Appendix, "Transvaal Ministers' Declaration", 9-10-1910.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*

130. MESSRS RITCH AND POLAK

According to the cables published in the Press, Messrs Ritch and Polak will soon be among us. These two friends of the community in South Africa have worked, laboured and slaved for us as few of our own countrymen have. They have identified themselves entirely with our cause. They have indeed been friends in need. It is difficult, if at all possible, to compare the work of the two. Each has done his best in his own special department. Mr. Ritch is the soul of Lord Ampthill's Committee. Mr. Polak's magnificent work received a public recognition at Bombay when Professor Gokhale presented him with a silver tea-set.[1] It was no exaggeration when the honourable gentleman attributed to Mr. Polak the memorable collection of over £6,000 for assisting passive resisters. We trust that both Messrs Ritch and Polak will receive from the community such receptions as no other men have received at our hands. They deserve it.

Indian Opinion, 10-9-1910

131. SUGGESTION TO INDIANS

We shall know on September 15 who is to rule in South Africa in the immediate future. Will it be General Botha or Mr. Merriman or Dr. Jameson? In all probability, it will be General Botha. Every Indian must have realized by now that General Botha is not likely to be won over by flattery.

A fire is raging all round the Indians. In some parts of America, a forest catches fire and that fire cannot be put out. Troops go out to quench it, but even they find it a most difficult task. Hundreds of men are burnt to death. Neighbouring villages are razed to the ground. A similar fire is raging round the Indians in South Africa. But we have not yet taken the warning. This shows our apathy and our selfishness.

In Cape Town, thanks to the efforts of Dr. Abdurahman and his friends, Indian trading licences were not touched so far. But that has now changed. The Town Council has refused to grant any licences in certain areas. Mr. Alexander was the only one to oppose this. Mr. Liebermann, who was once on our side, said that his eyes had opened

[1] *Vide* "Farewell Dinner in Bombay", *Indian Opinion,* 3-9-1910.

after the report of the Chamber of Commerce. Others, too, spoke to the same effect, with the result that no licences were granted.

Though the Natal Act has been amended, a man like Mr. Goga did not get a licence [for trading] on his own premises in Ladysmith.[1] We find the same kind of high-handed treatment in Estcourt, too.[2]

About the Transvaal, the less said the better. There, those who have submitted to the law continue to get licences, but this will not last long. In what is described as the gold area, no licences are issued. Else where, too, if they can, on some other ground, refuse a licence, they certainly do so. Indian businessmen should note that after the Union Parliament is formed, trading licences will come under heavy fire.

What are we doing, meanwhile? First, We must say with regret, we waste our time in idleness or pleasure-seeking. Secondly, once our own end is served, we show little concern for others. Thirdly, we are vindictive and fight among ourselves. Fourthly, sometimes there are quarrels between Hindus and Muslims on issues both small and big; and when they are not fighting with each other, they as well as the Muslims are busy quarrelling among themselves. Thus, everyone goes his own way, unmindful of the others.

If there were no fire raging round us, perhaps we would not have much to say against these selfish and otherwise unseemly ways— no one, in any case, would listen to what we might say. A little reflection will show to Indians that, if every person looked to his own immediate interest, all of them would be in trouble before long. We should not have to point out that the interests of the community comprehend those of every individual Indian.

We believe they will lay hands first on the traders. Some Indians may imagine that traders can escape harassment if they keep aloof from other Indians. That this is mere short-sightedness is plain enough. Right from the time that the movement against the Indians started, the whites have had their eyes on their trade. It is the traders alone whom they harass. True, some selfish whites, wishing us to chop off our feet, do advise the traders that they will be saved if they dissociate themselves from the others. Some say, again, that they will have no difficulty to face, if they do not get involved in the affairs of others. Everyone is told the same thing. Should we conclude from this

[1] *Vide* "Indians under the Union", 13-8-1910
[2] *ibid*

that there would be difficulties for no one? The truth of the matter is that, if they can ruin us by soft words or baits, they would prefer to do it that way. Failing that, they will adopt other means.

There is only one simple way in the face of this snare, and that is to be alert and shake off our apathy, to get rid of our selfishness and our internal quarrels, and to adopt all necessary measures.

As for the steps to be taken, making petitions, going to court, if we have the money for that, fighting out in England, to the best of ourability—all this may be good enough, but effective remedy there is only one. Without satyagraha, everything will be unavailing. Satyagraha means our own strength. In the absence of such strength of our own, no strength of any other kind will enable us to hold our ground for long.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 10-9-1910

132. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

TOLSTOY FARM,
Bhadarva Shud 7 [*September 11, 1910*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

It is now five days since a cable[2] was sent concerning you, but there has been no reply so far. I infer from this that you are still there[3] and have not made up your mind yet. The reasons you put forward for not coming here are all feeble and only indicate that your mind has weakened. Your body had grown weak even in India. There won't be any difficulty about your treatment and nursing in Phoenix. Perhaps I may have to stay there, or you too may have to come here. Moreover, your health has not deteriorated so much that someone has always to be by your side and look after you. Even if it deteriorates to that extent, the facilities that are available in Phoenix are, I think, not to be found in India, at any rate just now. You might, I am afraid, cause pain to Khushalbhai by going to India. If you propose to go to the countryside in India, why, that life is already available in Phoenix. And if, after all, you feel restless in Phoenix or if it does not suit your

[1] This letter was written during the addressee's absence from South Africa in 1910.

[2] Not available

[3] In England

health, you can very easily go to India. Even from the financial standpoint, it would be more proper for you to stay at Phoenix. If you do so, we won't have to bother Doctor [Mehta] and you won't have to go searching for a job in India.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4937 Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

133. A PRAYER TO THE KING-EMPEROR

The Indian South African League has taken a bold step in sending a cable[1] to the King-Emperor praying for His Majesty's gracious intervention on behalf of the passive resisters in the Transvaal. The cablegram as also Mr. Natesan's spirited letter to the *Madras Mail,* extracts from which we reproduce elsewhere, shows that the feeling on the question runs high in that Presidency. Indeed, Mr. Bennett, the proprietor of *The Times of India,* said that no question stirred the people of India so much as the question of the sufferings of the Indians in South Africa. Now *The Times* writer confirms the statement.[2] It is on rare occasions that personal appeals are made to the sovereign. We shall not have to wait long before we learn what answer has been returned to the prayer of the League. Whatever the answer, it is most satisfactory to learn that the passive resisters have the full and active sympathy of those for whose honour they are fighting.

Indian Opinion, 17-9-1910

134. EFFECTIVENESS OF THE STRUGGLE

We hear it being said by many that the Transvaal agitation has no force left. We have repeated, time and again, that so long as at least one person remains to continue satyagraha, we may rest confident that victory will be ours. That is the only test of satyagraha.

During this week two telegrams have been received which lend

[1] *Vide* "Deported Indians Appeal to the king", *Indian Opinion,* 17-9-1910.
[2] *Vide* "*The Times* Correspondent's View", *Indian Opinion,* 17-9-1910.

support to our view. In one of them, we note that the League[1] in Madras, which has been helping us, has addressed a cable[2] to the King-Emperor about the deportees arriving there and prayed for his intervention. In England, *The Times* has been publishing a series of articles on the current unrest in India, in which it is pointed out that the sufferings of India are a disgrace to British rule. We can see from these two developments that the Transvaal struggle remains as effective as ever. Efforts continue to be made on our behalf from every side. Even a person like Mr. Merriman, while speaking on the problem, was obliged to speak out in our favour. Commenting on his views, *The Transvaal Leader*, too, asks for justice.

This support that we are getting should encourage us and strengthen the weak. But at the same time we should like to point out that satyagraha does not require encouragement from others. It is like a razor's edge. He who would walk on it does not pause to think of ways of securing help from others.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 17-9-1910

135. SORABJI RELEASED

Mr. Sorabji has been released. What, one wonders, will he do? He has spent most of his time in one and the same gaol right from the moment the second phase of the struggle began. Just as the heaviest load falls on the foundation, the weight [of the struggle] has fallen on Mr. Sorabji, and he has been bearing it. The Indian community has few gems like Mr. Sorabji, who fights on in silence and without a thought of self. He is a gem, however, which wins honour for the entire community and makes its name illustrious.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 17-9-1910

[1] The Indian South African League

[2] *ibid*

136. SPEECH AT DURBAN[1]

September 20, 1910

At the outset Mr. Gandhi explained the present position regarding the Transvaal struggle. He conveyed to the audience an idea of the great strength of the struggle in spite of the fact that only a handful of satyagrahis were participating in it. He stressed how important it was for the entire Indian community at Durban to give rousing receptions and banquets to the deportees when they landed at Durban, as the latter were soldiers fighting for the sake of the entire Indian community. He pointed out that it was their duty to give a hearty welcome to Mr. Polak also in view of the important services rendered by him in India.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 24-9-1910

137. SPEECH AT MEETING OF KATHIAWAD ARYA MANDAL[2]

DURBAN,

September 20, 1910

Mr. Gandhi . . . explained things to the audience here as he had done at the earlier meeting[3] of the Colonial-born Indians. He pointed out that, in addition to a rousing reception which should be given by the entire Indian community at Durban to the deportees and Mr. Polak, it was the duty of every association individually to give them addresses and dinners and to raise funds for their reception.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 24-9-1910

138. A NOTABLE EVENT

The election of the Rev. Dr. Rubusana as a member of the Cape Provincial Council for Tembuland by a majority of 25 over his two opponents is an event of great importance. The election is really a challenge to the Union Parliament with reference to the colour clause. That Dr. Rubusana can sit in the Provincial Council but not in the Union Parliament is a glaring anomaly which must disappear if South Africans are to become a real nation in the near future.We congratulate Dr. Rubusana and the Coloured races on his victory and

[1] At a meeting of Colonial-born Indians.

[2] Held to consider the giving of receptions to Polak and the deportees

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

trust that his career in the Council will do credit to him and those he represents.

Indian Opinion, 24-9-1910

139. JUDGMENT IN BOY'S CASE

Justice Wessels' judgment has gone against Mr. Chhotabhai's son. If this judgment stands, the Indian community will find itself in a hopeless situation and be uprooted before long. An appeal has been filed. Its result will be known within only two or three days of the publication of this comment. Let the appeal court's decision be what it may; we are little concerned with it. We give elsewhere a report of the case in Justice Wessels' Court. It is worth studying. He has stated that the Government's attitude is unjust and inhuman and that, if it is persisted in, there will be a howl against it throughout the civilized world. We are watching what the civilized world has to say. There is no doubt, however, that the Government, as pointed out by the judge, acted with great severity.

If that is so, why did he give judgment against the boy? This question will occur to everyone. It shows up the degrading position of present-day courts. They may dispense injustice instead of justice. It is considered justice on the part of a court if its judgment follows the letter of the law, when this is in conflict with the spirit of justice. In other words, an action which Justice Wessels, the man, pronounces unjust is upheld by him as just in his capacity as a judge.

We cannot submit to such justice or injustice. It is necessary to call meetings everywhere and pass resolutions about this. We cannot rest till the matter is settled satisfactorily.

A perusal of the judgment and the report will show that, even under the Act of 1907, children born outside the Transvaal are not entitled to enter it. Mr. Gregorowski fought hard on this point but Justice Wessels was emphatic that such boys were not protected under the Act of 1907.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 24-9-1910

140. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

September 24, 1910

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

If you go on as you are the tables will be turned and I shall have to be the Lower House.

What more can you do than what you are doing at Pinetown? I am doing less here than what you are at Pinetown. Such is my real opinion. Then why am I not joining you there? My answer is in the language of the *Bhagavad Gita* that although my work is less than yours, my duty just now lies in that direction. Pray go on, therefore, with sandal-making. And do take care what you spend.

We cannot meet today. I am taking Mr. Omar by the 2.25 train. If you come to Phfinix, as I hope you will, we can talk away tomorrow. Cordes will be with you in the train. I shall not send anyone to the station as I am not sure what you would be doing. But some dinner will be reserved for you. If, however, you think that you want perfect quiet, you need not come.

I return Monday 8.55 train in the morning.

Your remarks about Parsee's servant do great credit to your heart. Parsee has written sending for him. If the man will come we shall take him to Phoenix on Monday. Yes, everything possible should be done for him.

I am leaving letters for you.

I did not at all like the idea of your having bought prunes. It is good neither for you nor for Mrs. Gandhi.

Manilal writes saying he has been watering as per your instructions. Poor boy, he was down with fever on Wednesday.

Harilal, Medh and Sodha[1] have gone to the Farm.[2]

If nothing important keeps you in town and if you are quite self-possessed, you should come to Phoenix.

Can't say when you will be required. Parsee wants me to thank you much for your attention to his servant.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] R.M. Sodha

[2] Tolstoy Farm offered by the addressee for the use of Satyagrahi families; *vide* "Johannesburg", 13-6-1910.

141. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

PHOENIX,
NATAL,
September 30, 1910

DEAR PROFESSOR GOKHALE,

I have come here to receive Mr. Polak.[1] I hope to write to you on the situation in a few days' time.

This is to introduce Mr. Manilal Doctor, M.A., Bar-at-Law. Mr. Doctor has been practising in Mauritius for some time. In my opinion he belongs to that class of professional men who use their profession, or try to, to advance national rather than personal interest. He is going to the Congress as a Delegate and will much appreciate your advice and guidance.

I am,
Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 3801

142. RITCH TO BE HONOURED

The resolution of the British Indian Association to honour Mr. Ritch is a welcome move. Mr. Ritch has been a great asset to the Committee. Thanks to his intelligence, perseverance and wholehearted devotion to work, the Committee has won wide public notice and the Imperial Government is obliged to give due consideration to its views. All praise Mr. Ritch's energy with one voice. He will first land in Cape Town, where he will be the guest of the community. We are sure it will give him an excellent reception and so do credit to itself. We publish a photograph of Mr. Ritch as a supplement to today's issue.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 1-10-1910

[1] Polak, who had been on deputation to India, returned by s. s. *Sultan*, arriving at Durban on September 28, 1910.

143. INDENTURED INDIANS' PLIGHT

We believe that, if we had not been alert and had not raised a protest, the account which appears in *The* [*Natal*] *Mercury* under the title 'Spotted Fever' would not have come out. The facts are as follows: Some indentured Indians arrived by the *Umhloti* at the beginning of this month. These Indians were brought from India specially for Sir Liege Hulett. An epidemic of spotted fever broke out among them, as a result of which several Indians were reported to have died. On hearing of this, we addressed an inquiry to the "Protector" of Indians, to which we received an evasive reply. We wrote again. In reply, we were asked to refer to the *Mercury*. The account in the *Mercury*[1] did not satisfy us. In fact, it was the duty of the "Protector" to give us full information. But we shall not say anything about this rudeness on his part. It appears from the report in the *Mercury*, which is, in fact, the "Protector's" own report, that the gentleman is not concerned about the welfare of those who are placed under his protection. He is only worried lest spotted fever should break out among Europeans. He says that there is no reason to entertain such a fear. Moreover, lest the flow of indentured Indian labour should stop if it were to get known that such epidemics occurred only among indentured Indians, he has put out the report in such skilful language that it would apply to all Indians. In point of fact, however, there is seldom any such epidemic among Indians other than indentured labourers. He has given no information as to how many indentured labourers had set out, by whom they were to be employed, how many of them fell ill, and the present whereabouts of those who did not fall ill. We shall not allow this matter to rest here. It is necessary to pursue it to the end. We hope that the Congress will take it up.

Further, the "Protector" has stated that this disease makes its appearance in surroundings which are not cleaned for long periods and are shut out from sunlight and air. Well, the epidemic broke out on board a ship and there the supervision and the responsibility are those of the "Protector" or his agent. Why did he allow people to remain in filthy, dark and unventilated surroundings? It is quite plain that the blame for this lies entirely with the "Protector". Only those

[1] This and the letters and the replies referred to herein were published in *Indian Opinion*, 1-10-1910.

held in indenture—slavery—can possibly be reduced to such a plight. Indians who would not feel happy if they were themselves to be placed in this position should strive their utmost to put an end to the system of indenture.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-10-1910

144. TELEGRAMS TO L. W. RITCH[1]

[DURBAN,]
October 4, 1910

SEE 32 DEPORTEES.[2] THEY HAVE CAPE RIGHTS UNDER IMMIGRATION ACT. ACCORDING OLD ACT PERSONS BORN OR DOMICILED ANY PART SOUTH AFRICA ENTITLED ENTER CAPE. IF THIS CONTENTION NOT ACCEPTED, ADVISE MOVING COURT ALLOW REGISTERED INDIANS PASS THROUGH UNION TO TRANSVAAL.

In a second telegram Mr. Gandhi said that some of the men had domiciled Cape rights, and some were born in South Africa, and advised Mr. Ritch to see them, and inquire whether they would apply for duplicates of the registration papers.

Indian Opinion, 15-10-1910

145. INTERVIEW TO "RAND DAILY MAIL"[3]

DURBAN,
[*October 4, 1910*]

There are strong signs here that the Asiatic trouble in the Transvaal is about to be renewed. Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Polak, the latter of whom has just returned from Madras, are taking up between them this week 29 deportees, including three Chinese, in pursuance of the passive resistance movement. They all expect to be intercepted at Volksrust and are prepared for the consequences.

[1] Both telegrams were received by Ritch on October 4, 1910 at Cape Town and were cited in the Supreme Court in the Deportees' case on October 7.

[2] They arrived at Durban on September 28 from Bombay by s. s. *sultan* along with Polak but were not permitted to disembark and were sent by s. s. *Pinzregent* to Cape Town where, too, landing was disallowed.

[3] This was published under the title "The Passive Resisters".

Mr. Gandhi seen today denied all knowledge of the statement in a Pretoria newspaper that the Union Government had considered the Asiatic policy since the elections, and intended to make concessions to the resident Indians. He believed that the restriction measures were to be enforced in all their original vigour. He said he had had a telegram from Johannesburg saying that the staunchest passive resister there had been re-arrested for the eighth time.

Rand Daily Mail, 5-10-1910

146. SPEECH AT RECEPTION[1]

DURBAN,
October 4, 1910

As he [Gandhiji] began to speak in English, he was interrupted by shouts of "Tamil" from the audience, whereupon he said that that too might be possible in course of time, provided General Smuts sent him to gaol. He then paid compliments to Mr. J. M. Lazarus, Mr. Rustomjee and others who had worked to make the function a success, called upon the former satyagrahis to join the struggle again and pleaded forcefully with them that they must win in the struggle. He urged them also to look after the next batch of deportees when they arrived. He pointed out how Mr. Ritch had taken on a big job in Cape Town and urged the community to extend an invitation to Mr. Ritch and give him a public reception.[2]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-10-1910

147. SPEECH AT RECEPTION[3]

DURBAN,
October 5, 1910

Receptions are all right as far as they go, but the important thing is that people should go to gaol. Mr. Ritch has set an example to Indians by plunging into work without enjoying any rest. Mr. Sorabji has been arrested for the eighth time, not remaining out of the struggle even for a while; this, too, is an example for you to follow. So

[1] In honour of Polak

[2] After this Gandhiji spoke in Gujarati; the text of this speech is not available.

[3] Arranged by the Kathiawad Arya Mandal, at Mr. Parsee Rustomjee's place, in honour of Polak and the satyagrahis back from India

long as you do not learn to be true satyagrahis yourselves, you will not get the full benefit of victory in the struggle. Those who come forward to fight are assured of victory, and it is they alone who truly live.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-10-1910

148. INTERVIEW TO REUTER AND S. A. PRESS AGENCY[1]

VOLKSRUST,
[*Friday, October 7, 1910*]

M. K. Gandhi, leader of the Indian community in Johannesburg, who had been to Durban to meet Mr. Polak, secretary of the British Indian Association, passed through Volksrust on his return to the Rand by the up mail yesterday evening. To the surprise of all, no arrest was made.[2] This is strange, because Gandhi had no permit.

I interviewed Gandhi who said he had burned his permit two years ago in company with about 2,500 Indians in Johannesburg, when, as the Indians contended, the Government failed to carry out its promise to repeal the Asiatic Act of 1907.[3] Gandhi stated that he himself could not understand why he was allowed to pass unchallenged, while his son with thirty other resisters who will pass through Volksrust this (Saturday) evening will doubtless be arrested. The Indian community's demands were so reasonable that it was difficult to understand why they were not granted. They did not want an unrestricted influx of Asiatics. All they said was that Indians should not be restricted because they were Indians. The Immigration Law could impose a stiff educational test so as to prevent the entry of all but a few highly educated Indians into the Transvaal province.

Gandhi said he had not yet heard anybody objecting to such a proposal. However, so long as this very simple point was not granted the determined passive resistance would continue. In conclusion he indignantly repudiated the suggestion that the passive resisters had anything to do with the cases of forged permits which were tried at the Circuit Court in Volksrust on September 26.

Rand Daily Mail, 10-10-1910

[1] This was published under the title, "Passive Resisters".
[2] *Vide* "Interview to *Rand Daily Mail*", 4-10-1910
[3] *Vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting", 16-8-1908.

149. JOHANNESBURG

CHHOTABHAI CASE

We have now received the report of the hearing of the appeal[1] in this case. The case was argued at great length. The bench consisted of Mr. de Villiers, Mr. Mason and Mr. Bristowe. Mr. Gregorowski argued hard, and the exchange of arguments between him and the judges showed that the latter's sympathy was on the side of Mr. Chhotabhai. This time, too, the discussion related both to the Act of 1907 and that of 1909[2]. Mr. Justice Mason went so far as to observe that the law could not indirectly deprive the boy of the rights which he enjoyed prior to 1907.

Mr. Justice Bristowe, commenting on Mr. Chamney's affidavit, said that they could not rely on his opinion in deciding whether or not Mr. Chhotabhai should be treated as a resident of the Transvaal. What [he asked] could Mr. Chamney know about the matter?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-10-1910

150. LETTER TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR

[JOHANNESBURG,]

October 8, 1910

SIR,

I have just returned from Durban, where I had gone in connection with the British Indians and Chinese who were deported from this Province to India, and who had returned again to claim entry. I am aware that the Chinese produced registration certificates, but that, as they were deported under an administrative order, your Department declined to recognise the right of those Chinese to re-enter the province, and that, therefore, the Immigration Officer at

[1] Against Justice Wessels' judgment; *vide* "Judgment in Boy's Case", 24-9-1910

[2] This should be "1908".

Durban declined to issue visitor's passes enabling these Chinese to proceed to the Transvaal. May I know whether the information given to me was correct, and whether it is the intention of the Government to treat these men who produce the certificates as prohibitedimmigrants because of an administrative order of deportation against them? May I know also whether, in the event of the Government holding that these people are prohibited immigrants, they will afford facilities to aggrieved parties to test their right before a Court of Law by granting them permission to land in South Africa? As the matter is urgent, and as cases like the above may arise in Durban very shortly, I shall be obliged if you will favour me with an early reply.

Indian Opinion, 15-10-1910

151. ADDRESS TO H. S. L. POLAK[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
October 9, 1910

DEAR SIR,

On behalf of the Association we heartily welcome you back among us. We have closely watched your mission in India, and every Indian recognises that the magnificent work done by you in India shows that no better choice could possibly have been made. You have with unexampled energy informed the whole of India of the true position in this Province. The collection made in India for the relief of indigent passive resister families and for helping the passive resistance struggle generally is a magnificent record.

The whole of the Indian community in South Africa is interested in the stoppage of indentured labour, and your work in that connection fills us with hope that the cruel system will soon cease.

We shall never forget the sacrifices that you and Mrs. Polak have made in accepting separation from each other for the sake of the cause. We trust that both you and yours will be long spared to

[1] Presented by the British Indian Association at a meeting to welcome Polak. Held in Fordsburg Mosque, this address was read out by Sorabji and was published in *Rand Daily Mail* under the title "Indians and Indentured Labour" and in *Indian Opinion*, 15-10-1910, under the title "Mr. Polak's Arrival in Johannesburg".

continue the humanitarian work that you have been doing.

We are,
Yours faithfully,
A. M. CACHALIA
CHAIRMAN
M. K. GANDHI
HON. SECRETARY

Rand Daily Mail, 10-10-1910

152. JOHANNESBURG

Tuesday [*October 11, 1910*]

SUPPORT OF "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"

The Transvaal Leader has written a strong article. It appears to have been written under the impression that a settlement is about to be reached. The writer points out that it is General Smuts who is responsible for the prolongation of the struggle. He has shown the Indian demand to be quite reasonable. He has passed severe comments on the Chhotabhai case and made a powerful plea for the removal, at the earliest opportunity, of any defect that may be found in the law. He has taken to task the Government prosecutor.

MR. RITCH

Mr. Ritch left Cape Town on Monday. He will reach Johannesburg on Wednesday and return to Cape Town when the cases of 11 Indians come up for hearing.

SATYAGRAHIS IN THE CAPE

Mr. Ritch's presence in the Cape helped 11 satyagrahis to disembark.[1] They have been provisionally allowed to disembark in order to enable them to prove their rights [in a court].[2] These must now be proved. Preparations for that are going on. The satyagrahis are the guests of the Indian community and both they and Mr. Ritch are being looked after by Mr. Adam Gool. Addresses have been received from the Indian Union at Kimberley for presentation to Mr. Ritch and Mr. Polak.

[1] *Vide* "Telegrams to L. W. Ritch", 4-10-1910
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Minister of Interior", 8-10-1910

Three separate collections are being made for the addresses. One is on behalf of the Association: for this, Mr. Cachalia, Mr. Sorabji, Mr. Medh and Mr. Sodha have been going round. Mr. Thambi Naidoo is busy collecting funds for an address on behalf of the Tamils. The Hindu Association is also raising a fund for an address. The addresses to be presented by the Hamidia Islamic Society are ready. If Mr. Polak reaches here by Saturday[1], the address and the party by the Tamils will be on Sunday.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 15-10-1910

153. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO S. A. B. I. COMMITTEE

[JOHANNESBURG,
After *October 16, 1910*][2]

. . . You will be deeply pained to hear that one more death among passive resisters has occurred. The man who died, by name A. Narayansamy, was one of those who returned with Mr. Polak from India and who was not allowed to land in Durban. He proceeded, together with 31 others, to Port Elizabeth, and thence to Cape Town, where his landing, as also that of others, was prevented, and he was obliged to return to Durban, with the prospect of being ultimately sent back to India. Mr. Ritch says that he and the other passive resisters were left without boots, hats, and even without sufficient clothing for the body, their clothes having been stolen at Port Elizabeth. But for the charity of the local Indians at Cape Town, they might have gone back to Durban without food. These men have been continuously on board now under exceptionally severe circumstances for nearly two months. It is not at all surprising, therefore, that poor Narayansamy has succumbed. I do not consider this a death in the ordinary course. It is undoubtedly a legalised murder.

India, 18-11-1910

[1] October 15. Polak who had arrived in Johannesburg on October 9, had evidently gone out again during the week.

[2] Narayansamy, referred to in the letter, died on 16-10-1910.

154. LETTER TO THE PRESS[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
October 17, 1910

SIR,

Most of the newspapers published a telegram from Pretoria some days ago to the effect that at last the Asiatic question that has agitated the Colony for the last four years was about to be satisfactorily settled. This news was supposed to be officially inspired, but was immediately followed by the arrest of one of the staunchest and best respected Indians in this province, namely Mr. Sorabji, and his arrest was followed by that of three of his co-passive resisters, equally brave, that is, Messrs Thambi Naidoo, Sodha and Medh.

I should, however, not have trespassed upon your courtesy and the attention of the public in order merely to give the above information. But, in my humble opinion, it is due to the public to know something of the trials of those Indians and Chinese who, although lawful residents of the Transvaal, and some of them born in South Africa, were deported to India and returned per s. s. *Sultan* about the end of last month.

The tragedy has culminated in the death of a most inoffensive and law-abiding Indian named Narayansamy. When he left this province for India as a deportee, he possessed a healthy constitution, but over six weeks on the decks of different steamers exposed to all sorts of weather evidently proved too severe for his constitution. Mr. Ritch has pointed out that he and his fellow-deportees were not allowed to see friends or legal advisers almost for a week while their steamer was in Table Bay, and ultimately he had to obtain an order from the Supreme Court before he could see tham. He has stated in a letter to the Cape papers that he found these men bootless and hatless and in some cases even without sufficient protection for the body, shivering on the open deck of that steamer. They were refused landing first at Durban, then at Port Elizabeth, then at the Cape, and again at Durban, the last time in defiance of an order of the Supreme

[1] This was published in *Rand Daily Mail* under the title "Death of a Deportee", and in *Indian Opinion*, 22-10-1910, as a letter to the Press. It was published also in *The Transvaal Leader* of October 18, 1910.

Court restraining the Immigration Officer from removing them from the jurisdiction of the Provincial Division of Natal. The Officer, acting under instructions from the Minister of the Interior, and in his over-zeal to please his chief, gave a meaning to the order of the Court which no common sense man would give, and in indecent haste sent these men to Delagoa Bay with the result that, as above stated, Narayansamy is no more.

I have not hesitated to call the death of the late Nagappan legalized murder, and I fear that the death of Narayansamy must be classed in the same category. I have the warrant of our own Court for stating that deportation such as Narayansamy's under an administrative order, described by Mr. Laughton, K.C., as "Star Chamber procedure", is illegal. Narayansamy and his fellows, very properly, as I think every lover of justice and fair play would say, disregard such deportation, attempt to return to the country of their birth or adoption and, in the attempt, are driven from pillar to post. Inconceivable difficulties are placed in their way. Is such treatment necessary? Passive resisters are told that they must not complain if they find their lot to be hard whilst they are defying the laws of the land. Passive resisters appreciate the advice. They have no desire to avoid the ordinary consequences of the breach they deliberately commit of laws which they consider to be repugnant to their conscience. But I make bold to say that the public will never endorse the infliction of what amounts to a sentence of death as in the cases to which I have just drawn attention. I doubt not that the people of South Africa wish to see general rejoicing and goodwill among all the communities residing under the Union, on the approaching visit of a representative of the King, and on the eve of the opening of the first Parliament of the Union. Is the Indian community in any part of South Africa to be expected to share the rejoicings that will take place at the end of the month, and to partake of the goodwill that should permeate all classes?

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Rand Daily Mail, 18-10-1910

155. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

Wednesday [*October 19, 1910*][1]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

It is just 6 a.m. and this is the first letter I have taken up. I am at Mr.Omar's house which you would like immensely. It is clean. It faces the race course. I could not go to Phoenix yesterday as there was a memorial meeting regarding Narayansamy. Slept on the verandah of the house and got up at 5.15 a.m., washed my sleeping suit and shirt there. I am now writing. Passed the whole of the afternoon yesterday seeing the men. Afterwards served notice on Chamney who happens to be here. He has sent the message asking me to see him at 9 a.m. I shall see what happens then.

Read before going to bed Harishchandra about whom I gave you the book from Natesan. It you have not read it yet, I suggest your reading it at once. On the way I read The Minds of Two Judges. It is a powerful pamphlet and alas too true both in its con- demnation of the English methods and the Indian. Without the latter being bad, the former could never have secured a footing. Cordes, I observe, has taken a deck passage. He leaves on the 6th November. There is no restraining him. He is a wonderful man. We can only pray for him and help him to go through the ordeal he has set before himself. He will say that we talk and he does it. In taking deck passage he has certainly done it. Have not yet seen any of the Phoenixites.

I hope that the roof was finished or at least commenced yesterday.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] From the reference to the memorial meeting regarding Narayansamy, who died on October 16, 1910; *vide* "Extract from Letter to S.A.B.I. Committee", After 16-10-1910, . The Wednesday following fell on October 19.

156. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

TOLSTOY FARM,
Aso Vadi 1 [*October 19, 1910*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I saw your letter after reaching the Farm. Nowadays I have to go to Johannesburg daily. Please continue to address your letters to the Farm. I have read Chi. Chhaganlal's letter. We shall know more from his letter tomorrow. Chi. Narandas's attitude of indifference to worldly pleasures is a good sign. I wish that he receives encouragement. Bombay is not the place for that. But Narandas is entirely in Khusalbhai's[2] hands. He will get an opportunity for public service if any of you brothers can politely cure Khushalbhai of his infatuation. If, however, he does not get an opportunity to do public service in this life, he will, if he so wishes, get it without effort in the next.

I enclose herewith Doctor [Mehta]'s letter about Chi. Chhaganlal for you to read. Please destroy it after perusal.

Ba wants me to ask you to buy two small locks for the water tank. The suggestion seems to be quite good. Her idea is that he who really wants water may certainly use it, but the tap should not be opened by all and sundry. Moreover, she wants to know whether or not you have put all the things—cots, etc.—in their proper places. If not, please do so. If the Monday meetings are held in that house, it will incidentally get cleaned every week. I think it is better for Veerjee to live in the house formerly occupied by Bihari. It is not good to have to bother about cleaning the big house every day. Please send me at your convenience a list of the books received. Ba is positive that some rice is there in a bag behind the kitchen door. Please look for it there once more. It is not good that it should get more and more late each Friday.[3] Purshottamdas thinks that it is due to slackness on someone's part. Please try to complete the work in time by doing it all together with more energy and enthusiasm. Now that the days have become longer, it will be better if you can go [to the press] early in

[1] This letter appears to have been written during Chhaganlal Gandhi's absence from South Africa in 1910, in which year *Aso Vadi* I corresponded to October 19.

[2] Gandhiji's cousin and Narandas's father

[3] The reference is to getting *Indian Opinion* ready for despatch.

the morning on Fridays.

Do not give up your study of Tamil. What is Chakor digging pits for? Please do not ask him to do anything which you consider unnecessary. Mr. Polak says that Muthoo had been there on Friday. Please send me the passage on tuberculosis which is with Mr. West. I want to show it to a tuberculosis patient.

I have sent a telegram[1] to Anglia Sheth today. I had got the news from Rustomjee Sheth. Please read the article written by someone in *The Transvaal Leader* about Tolstoy Farm. It has appeared in the issue of today, the 19th. It is not known who the writer is.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4938 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

157. NARAYANSAMY

Narayansamy is dead,[2] but even in death he lives. He is no more in the body, but he has left an immortal name behind him. Birth and death are the common lot of all. If we consider the matter deeply, we shall realize that death, whether it comes early or late, should be no cause for grieving or rejoicing. On the contrary, to die in the service of the community or in the pursuit of some other good aim is in reality not to die but to live. Is there any patriotic Indian who will not be prepared to die for the sake of the motherland? Of course, none. So long as we do not have this [spirit] in us, we cannot claim to be patriotic.

Narayansamy suffered much. A voyage on the deck is full of hazards, all the more so if one has insufficient clothing and is handicapped in other ways. Narayansamy undertook such a voyage for the sake of themotherland. He has left the world, facing suffering till the end. We shall count him a true satyagrahi. Terms in which we cannot speak of even the greatest satyagrahi will be quite justified when applied to Narayansamy. He has died a perfect satyagrahi. Even

[1] On the death of his daughter as "the result of her clothing catching fire from a stove". The telegram is not available.

[2] *Vide* "Extract from Letter to S.A.B.I. Committee", 16-10-1910 and "Letter to the Press", 17-10-1910

a staunch satyagrahi will deserve our praise only when he has proved his worth to the full.

Nagappen achieved immortal fame in his death. And so has Narayansamy. While grieving with the members of his family on account of his death, we shall also congratulate them. All honour unto their mothers for having given birth to Nagappen and Narayansamy.

Though we think thus that Narayansamy died a hallowed death, so far as the Transvaal Government is concerned, it can be charged with legalized murder. If anyone places another person in circumstances which result in his death, the former may be charged with the latter's murder. This is just what has happened in Narayansamy's case. He and his companions were taken first, from Durban to Port Elizabeth, thence to Cape Town, from Cape Town again to Durban and so on. There were innumerable difficulties about accommodation, clothing and food. If the Indian community had not provided the other Indians with clothing and food, they too would have been reduced to the same plight. In acting thus, the Transvaal Government has been guilty of extreme harshness and its harshness has resulted in Narayansamy's death. Hence we charge the Government with murder. Since no legal steps can be taken against it, though it is guilty of murder, we call this legal murder.

Nagappen and Narayansamy have thus left us. The Tamil community is laying the other Indians under an increasingly heavier debt. It is covering itself with greater glory day by day. How will it ever be possible after this to make an adequate return for the services of the Tamil community? Other Indians would do well to take a lesson from it and, copying its example, learn to suffer in silence for the sake of the motherland. The [Indian] community will disgrace itself if it fails in this.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-10-1910

158. INDIANS' FUTURE

We reported last week that Parliament at its next session would pass an Immigration Bill applicable to the whole of South Africa. We have received this news through official sources. Though we may not rely upon it entirely, it is certain that the Indian community needs to

be on its guard. Very likely, they will delude the community with some superficially attractive provisions in the Immigration Bill and pass it. It may perhaps contain a provision to the effect that only such Indians as are approved by the Indian residents in South Africa may be permitted to enter as fresh immigrants. If the Indians of the Cape or Natal or the Transvaal walk into this snare, that will be a dishonour to the community and will bring disgrace on the name of Indians. We should repeat it over and over again to ourselves that we must not accept any law which discriminates against Indians as Indians. When it is sought to enact a law applicable to the whole of South Africa, it is but proper for the community to call a meeting of Indians from all parts of South Africa and take whatever steps may be necessary in consultation with them. If there is any undue haste in this matter or if a body of Indians or an Indian leader, prompted by self-interest, gives any undertaking, they will have reason for regret afterwards.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-10-1910

159. TRADING LICENCES IN THE TRANSVAAL

The Transvaal Government is not likely to leave the Indian traders there in peace, nor are the whites. Municipalities in the Transvaal have been passing resolutions asking for the expulsion of Indian traders from the country after payment of compensation. We have heard of some Indians approving such a move. They are certain that there will be nothing wrong in leaving this country if an adequate amount is paid in excess of the cost [by way of compensation]. This is a short-sighted view. In the first place, we believe that even one-fourth the amount of profit that we hope for will not be offered. They will pass a law which will hardly allow anything over and above the market price [of the stocks]. Indians, in that case, will be ruined. Hardly anyone from among the Indians settled in South Africa earns much after going to India. All of them come back to this country. In these circumstances, to think of accepting some payment and returning to India is obviously senseless. It should also be borne in mind that we shall prove ourselves cowards if we allow the Government to drive us out. We think we have as much right to be in this land as the whites have. From one point of view, we have a better right. The negroes alone are the original inhabitants of this land. We have not seized the

land from them by force; we live here with their goodwill. The whites, on the other hand, have occupied the country forcibly and appropriated it to themselves. That, of course, does not prove their right to it. A large number even from among them believe that they will have to fight again to defend their occupation. But we shall say no more about this. One will reap as one sows. All that we wish to point out is that Indians will prove themselves selfish if, for the sake of a little money, they accept the offer of something over and above the cost price of their stocks and leave. If they leave out of fear, they will show themselves to be cowards. We hope it will not please any Indian to earn either of these epithets.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-10-1910

160. LETTER TO REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS

DURBAN,

October 25, 1910

M. CHAMNEY, ESQ.

REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS

DURBAN CLUB

SIR,

With reference to Mr. Perumal Pillay and 18 other British Indians who are at present being detained at Salisbury Island under order of Court, I have the honour to inform you that all of them claim to have been voluntarily registered in the Transvaal and that 15 of them intend to apply for duplicates of their Registration Certificates.

I interviewed Mr. Harry Smith, the Principal Immigration Restriction Officer, this afternoon, who, I understood, is the officer appointed by you under Section 10 of the Regulations passed under Act of 1908 to receive applications, etc. Mr. Smith informs me that he cannot receive the applications in respect of these men as they have been once deported. The contention of the men is that they have not been deported within the meaning of the Section and that, even if they are, you are bound under the Act of 1908 and the Regulations to receive their applications, and, if they apply in terms of the Act, to

grant them.

I beg, therefore, to ask on behalf of my clients whether you are prepared to advise Mr. Smith or any other officer or person to receive their applications for duplicates of their certificates.

I am addressing this letter to you in Durban as the matter is one of great urgency and as, within the time allowed by the Supreme Court, it is my clients' intention, in the event of your decision being unfavourable, to apply to the Transvaal Provincial Division of the Supreme Court in the matter.

I have the honour, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 29-10-1910

161. LETTER TO REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS

DURBAN,
October 26, 1910

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of even date regarding the Indians on Salisbury Island.

I am unable to say what the men will do at Volksrust in the event of their reaching there. They have been advised that they have a legal right in terms of Act 36 of 1908 to apply for duplicates of Certificates of Registration and to receive duplicates if their applications are in order. I shall be obliged if you will be good enough to reply whether you are prepared to afford them facility to make their applications in terms of Act 36 of 1908 and the Regulations.[1]

I have the honour, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 29-10-1910

[1] To this Chamney replied in the evening that he had received instructions to receive applications and, if the same were in order, to grant duplicates.

162. DIWALI

We have taken to Western ways and manners to such an extent that we find ourselves unable to look upon the New Year of the Hindus, the Muslims and the Parsis as our New Year. If we were to adopt "New Year" as the caption of this article, it would carry no meaning. When, however, we come to write of the New Year in the [first] issue of January, everyone will understand it to mean the year 1911. There is no convincing reason to justify this state of affairs. If we have not forgotten what we are, we should observe all the three New Years and, if so inclined, the Western New Year as the fourth. When the Muslim year changes, all the Indians should observe it, and so also when the Parsi year or the Hindu year changes. This will betoken our fraternal relations and prove that we have become one nation. On the contrary, what we notice in fact is that we show no particular regard for one another's New Year. To create among the inhabitants of India the consciousness of their being one nation, no Herculean efforts are necessary. We are of course a single nation and brothers as among ourselves. We should regain that consciousness this very instant if we could only be open-hearted and get rid of the pride that goes with hypocrisy.

Diwali falls on Tuesday next. It is an important festival for the Hindus. Every Hindu has our good wishes on the occasion. But we do not see how they can materialize. Hindus certainly cannot be happy when their neighbours are not. The New Year will prove happy only for the man who has turned the preceding year to good account. Expecting a good crop in winter when the monsoon has failed is like building castles in the air. The divine law is not that we get what we desire, but that we get what we deserve. In other words, our desires will be fulfilled only if they have behind them the force of merit earned by suitable deeds.

And so we wish a prosperous Diwali to every Hindu who has accumulated during the current year the capital of good deeds, who has borne love to every other Indian as to a brother, who has earned an honest livelihood and shared the sufferings of the unhappy, and we pray to God that the New Year may confirm him in his virtuous disposition. And likewise we pray that the Hindu who has, knowingly or unknowingly, failed in his duty and spent his time merely in the

pursuit of self-interest, who has borne ill-will and not love to other Indians, may learn to repent and, be converted to better ways, wake up to a sense of duty. We request our readers' help in working for the fulfilment of this desire of ours.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-10-1910

163. INDIANS' DUTY IN NOVEMBER

Mr. Dawad Mahomed has sent a telegram to General Botha to say that he should make it possible for the agitation to be withdrawn, failing which the Indian community cannot participate in the celebrations on the occasion of the inauguration of the Union Parliament in November. This is quite correct. If the struggle does not end in November, we must observe mourning. Thoughtful Indians realize that we should be in mourning for the death of Narayansamy. If we do not join in their celebrations, do not turn out to watch their shows, if we confine ourselves to our homes at the time of the celebrations and do not put up decorations over our shops, the rulers cannot but be impressed. By doing this, we can show to them that the entire Indian community in South Africa feels sore over the prolongation of the struggle.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-10-1910

164. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

TOLSTOY FARM,
Kartak Shud 2 [*November 4, 1910*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

सिय राम प्रेम पियुष पूरन होत जनमु न भरत को ।
मुनि मन अगम जम यियम सम दम विषम व्रत आचरत को ॥
दुख दाह दारिद दंभ दूषन सुजस मिस अपहरत को ।
कलिकाल तुलसी से सठन्ह हठि राम सनमुख करत को ॥

[1] This appears to have been written immediately after the Gujarati New Year day (*Kartak Shud 1*) with special reference to the addressee's vow of *brahmcharya; vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 27-1-1910

This is the last verse in the *Ayodhyakanda*[1]. Please ponder over it. It is still ringing in my ears. In these hard times *bhakti*[2] has acquired the highest place. But even for the practice of that *bhakti* we needs must have self-discipline. That discipline is at the root of our education. I am realizing every moment that without it all our intelligence is of no avail. What other blessing shall I wish for you?

It is only when I think of it specifically that I feel some sorrow over the death of Chi. Anandlal's son. Otherwise my feelings are dead.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4939 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

165. PROPOSED NEW IMMIGRATION BILL

The Transvaal Leader of the 31st ultimo published the following telegram from its Cape Town correspondent:

I learn that the Colonial Secretary will early in the session bring in a Bill which, in addition to modifying the existing Transvaal conditions, will, in a considerable degree, aim at the consolidation of the immigration laws of the Provinces of the Union.

So far as the Transvaal is concerned, I understand it is the intention to make some fairly important concessions to British Indians, which, without weakening the attitude of South Africa, will make the law more workable and sensible than the regulations now are. Among these concessions will be the admittance of a limited number of specially qualified Indians per annum (the number suggested in the past was six per year, but it may be made even greater than this). This and other modifications are among those which have been pointed to in the past by the *Leader* as necessary to make the immigration restrictions more satisfactory to all concerned in respect of the consolidation of immigration laws.

This naturally does not imply uniformity of measures in all the Colonies, the position of Natal being a specially difficult problem. A great deal of anxiety is felt in

[1] The second book of the *Ramayana* by Tulsidas
[2] Devotion

Natal about the restrictions which will be imposed there, as the existence of the sugar industry is stated by the majority of representatives from that Province to depend on the ability of planters to rely on a continuous supply of indentured Indian labour. The suggestion has been made from some quarters in Natal that this form of labour should be allowed within an area bounded by a strictly limited distance from the coast, which will include the sugar and other plantations. What will actually be proposed by the Government will probably not become known till General Smuts brings in his Bill, but it will occur to everyone that, considering the difficulties the country was plunged into as the result of former immigration legislation, the details of the new measure should be laid before both members of Parliament and the public in time for them to consider it very carefully.

We do not know whether *The Transvaal Leader* correspondent has given a correct forecast. If he has and if the provision for the new entrantsis made on the lines suggested by Lord Ampthill and if no statutory colour bar is created, passive resistance struggle will end, assuming of course that Act 2 of 1907 will be repealed at the same time.

But Indians all over South Africa are nervous regarding the proposed consolidation of the Immigration Laws of the other provinces. Indians of the Cape and Natal cannot accept the Transvaal Registration Act, as registration is totally unnecessary for provinces with a sea border. Nor can they accept the unnecessarily rigorous educational test which will be acceptable for the Transvaal under the peculiar conditions prevailing there. British Indians have accepted the policy of restriction throughout South Africa but they cannot be expected to become party to making legislation for the Cape and Natal more severe than it already is. Indeed, as recent judgments of the Supreme Court at the Cape and Natal have shown, it is severe enough in all conscience.

Indian Opinion, 5-11-1910

166. CONDITIONS OF CAPE INDIANS UNSATISFACTORY

This is what an Indian writes to us in English from Karreedouw. He says that no Indian is permitted to enter Kaffir districts such as the Transkei, etc., which are under the jurisdiction of the Cape. Only white traders are allowed to go there. These traders rob the Kaffirs. An Indian happened to go to the Transkei as a waiter. He was turned out by the magistrate like a dog. He was asked to produce a permit, which

he did not have. He did not even know what a permit was, for he was under the impression that an Indian could move about anywhere in the Cape. The correspondent points out that the Transvaal agitation is acting as something of a check; otherwise conditions in the Cape would have deteriorated hopelessly.

The Cape Indians should reflect over this letter. It is necessary that the Association at the Cape write to the Government in this matter, asking it to state on what ground entry into Kaffir districts is prohibited.

The matter should not be left there. It will be necessary to watch developments in the Union Parliament and to act with great caution. Mr. Ritch is in the Cape, so that his help will be available to Indians. It should be utilized and necessary steps taken.

We have heard that they want to have a registration law applicable to the whole of South Africa and to limit the total number of Indians admitted into South Africa to six a year. We do not think the Cape and Natal will ever accept this.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-11-1910

167. WHO IS A SATYAGRAHI?

Mr. Vallibhai Peerbhai, who is always ready with his hospitality for satyagrahis, writes to say that Mr. Medh received three letters on the very day on which he was arrested. On reading them, he went to Mr. Mulla's shop in Volksrust and performed ablutions and then presented himself for arrest. It appears that Mr. Medh received news of his sister's death, the sister having left three children behind her. "Had I been by Mr. Medh's side", [says Mr. Vallibhai] "when he read those letters I would not have allowed him to go. But no matter, joy and sorrow are the same to a satyagrahi." It does credit to Mr. Valli to say that if he had known of it, he would have stopped Mr. Medh. By going to gaol as a matter of duty without for a moment thinking of staying out because of the news of his sister's death, Mr. Medh has offered additional proof of his being a true satyagrahi. He is a staunch and seasoned satyagrahi. The hardships of gaol life hold no terrors for him. He deserves all the congratulations we can offer him. Mr. Surendrarai Medh has covered the community with glory.

We have said earlier that he alone is a satyagrahi who gives up everything for the sake of truth—forgoes wealth and property, allows his land to be auctioned, parts from his relatives, from his parents, his children, his wife, and sacrifices dear life itself. He who thus loses for the sake of truth shall gain. By disobeying his father's order for the sake of truth, Prahlad not only remained staunch in satyagraha but also did his duty as a son. Making himself a satyagrahi, he won his own and his father's deliverance from this earthly life. No one lacking the determined spirit of Prahlad can ever hold on to satyagraha to the end.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-11-1910

168. PRAGJI DESAI'S RESOLVE

Mr. Pragji[1] writes to say that this time the gaol officials behaved with greater harshness. "But the harsher they grow, the more determined I become." Of late, they have stopped ghee altogether for prisoners serving sentences of less than three months. Hence, all of them decided to go without those meals at which ghee used to be served. Mr. Pragji alone remained steadfast in this decision till the end and continued to refuse the meals. He took no notice of the harm which this did to his health. We congratulate Mr. Pragji on this unswerving spirit of his. Mr. Pragji adds that Mr. Shelat was punished twice for refusing to carry slop-pails. At present, he is in charge of cooking.

Mr. Pragji was much grieved to hear, on his release, of his sister's death; but he has declared his determination not to keep himself out of the fight. He writes: "So long as our struggle has not come to an end, a satyagrahi can attend to no other work."

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-11-1910

[1] Pragji Khandubhai Desai, a passive resister; often contributed to *Indian Opinion* in Gujarati

169. MAHARAJA OF BIKANER

News has been received that. His Highness the Maharaja of Bikaner, like the Mysore Maharaja, has offered help to the satyagraha campaign. The implications of this help are of the utmost value to us. Everyone in India, from the highest to the lowest, is beginning to see how we are being humiliated in the Transvaal. This may hasten the end of the struggle. But it also increases the responsibility of South African Indians. They should wake up *en masse*, appreciating the real value of the Transvaal campaign. It involves not only their honour but also their interests.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-11-1910

170. TELEGRAM TO CHIEF IMMIGRATION OFFICER

[DURBAN,
Before *November 6, 1910*]

. . Mr. Gandhi had telegraphed to the Immigration Officer at Pretoria saying he would be accompanied by Mrs. Sodha and her children.[1]

Indian Opinion, 12-11-1910

171. TELEGRAM TO CHIEF IMMIGRATION OFFICER

VOLKRUST[?],
November 7, 1910][2]

. . . Mr. Gandhi had addressed a telegram to the Immigration Officer saying that he had no desire to further complicate a situation that was already sufficiently complicated, that Mrs. Sodha did not seek the right of permanent residence in the Transvaal, that she would be looked after at Tolstoy Farm and that she would retire on the close of the struggle.[3]

Indian Opinion, 12-11-1910

[1] *Vide* "Letter to the Press", 11-11-1910

[2] This telegram was despatched immediately after Mrs. Sodha was charged at Volksrust on November 7; *vide* "Letter to the Press", 14-11-1910

[3] In reply, the Chief Immigration Officer refused permission for Mrs. Sodha to enter the Transvaal, saying she would be treated as a prohibited immigrant unless she returned to Natal.

172. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[After *November 7, 1910*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

There is only one thing uppermost in my mind and that is to introduce the common kitchen. You are not to do it forcibly. If you go on pleading with Santok and Ani gradually, they will be agreeable; and if it does not come about immediately, I hope it will have done so before my next visit. During my recent visit there, you slept in the same room with me and away from your wife. I wish you make this a regular routine. Let Santok and Ani sleep together [i.e., in the same room]. It is as well if they begin to sleep together before dining together. I do not know about the danger of snakes there, but I think the practice of sleeping on a mattress [on the floor] is on the whole good.

I have imposed a great burden on you. I, however, see that you are quite able to bear it. It won't be at all unbearable if you do your work without worrying.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W.4940 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

173. TELEGRAM TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,
November 8, 1910]

R. M. SODHA, UNREGISTERED RESIDENT TRANSVAAL, IN GAOL AS PASSIVE RESISTER, AFTER DUE NOTICE IMMIGRATION OFFICER, MRS. SODHA, WITH BABY EIGHTEEN MONTHS, ANOTHER THREE YEARS AND CHILD TWELVE

[1] From the reference to Mrs. Ani Desai in paragraph 1, this letter appears to have been written after her husband, Purshottamdas Desai, was sentenced to six weeks' imprisonment on November 7, 1910.

[2] This telegram, sent by the British Indian Association, was presumably drafted by Gandhiji; *vide* "Letter to the Press", 14-11-1910

YEARS, CROSSED BORDER FROM NATAL ON WAY TOLSTOY FARM. THEY WERE STOPPED AT VOLKSRUST. MRS. SODHA CHARGED AS PROHIBITED IMMIGRANT, CASE REMANDED. HUSBAND REDUCED POVERTY AND BROKE UP NATAL HOME. MRS. SODHA WILL NOT STAY PERMANENTLY BUT ONLY PENDING CONTINUOUS IMPRISONMENT HER HUSBAND. ASSOCIATION HAS NO DESIRE FURTHER COMPLICATE ALREADY COMPLICATED SITUATION. HITHERTO INDIAN WOMEN HAVE BEEN LEFT UNMOLESTED. ASSOCIATION TRUSTS PROSECUTION WILL BE WITHDRAWN.[1]

Indian Opinion, 19-11-1910

174. SPEECH AT CHINESE FUNCTION[2]

[*November 9, 1910*]

Mr. Gandhi said that without the assistance of Mr. Ritch and Mr. Polak the Indian community would have found it impossible to carry the struggle as far as it had done. He added that the Government was not content with fighting the Asiatic males, but had carried the attack to the children, and now even to the women. He urged, therefore, that they should show themselves all the more determined to pursue the struggle.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-11-1910

175. TELEGRAM TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR[3]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
November 10, 1910

REFERRING WIRE[4] MRS. SODHA, WILL MINISTER PLEASE GRANT TEMPORARY PERMIT UNDER IMMIGRATION ACT AND WITHDRAW PROSECUTION? ASSOCIATION SINCERELY ANXIOUS

[1] The Minister replied on 9-11-1910: "Yours yesterday. As neither Sodha nor his family are entitled to enter Transvaal, the Minister regrets that he cannot interfere with the provisions of the Law, which forbid the entry of prohibited immigrants."

[2] In Johannesburg, in honour of Messrs Ritch and Polak

[3] This telegram, sent by the British Indian Association, was presumably drafted by Gandhiji; *vide* "Letter to the Press", 14-11-1910

[4] *Vide* "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 8-11-1910.

AVOID IMPORTING WOMEN STRUGGLE.[1]

Indian Opinion, 19-11-1910

176. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

TOLSTOY FARM,
Kartak Shud 9 [*November 11, 1910*][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Today I saw the letter you mentioned.

When Narandas wrote to me to send my letters to him through you, I did not find fault with his action as a piece of cowardice. I had no such idea in my mind at all. In reply to his question as to what he should do, I wrote[3] to him saying that first he should attain fearlessness as described in अभयं सत्वसंशुद्धि (fearlessness, purity of heart,) etc. And I wrote it with the idea that he should first acquire that virtue if he wanted to engage himself in any public activity. True public service can be rendered only if fearlessness can be achieved as regards [the loss of] prestige, money, caste, wife, family and even life. Then only will *moksha* (liberation), the ultimate end of life, be attained.

I have no time to write a separate letter to Narandas. Please therefore send this on to him. I shall write about the press when I find time.

Please let me know how Manilal is getting on.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4941 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] The Minister in his telegram of November 12 replied: "Reference your telegram 10th, immigration Officer at Volksrust was instructed to give Mrs. Sodha option of returning to Natal instead of having steps taken against her under Immigration Act. Minister regrets he cannot sanction temporary permit."

[2] This letter appears to have been written subsequent to "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 29-3-1910, in which Gandhiji dealt with the subject of *abhaya* (fearlessness), discussed here; in 1910, *Kartak Shud* 9 corresponded to November 11.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 29-3-1910

177. LETTER TO THE PRESS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
November 14, 1910

SIR,

Since the well-known Poonia case, the Indian community had come to understand that Indian women crossing the border would not be interfered with, and I know of several cases in which they were permitted to cross the border unchallenged. But after the interference with Mrs. Gandhi, over a month ago, when she was travelling alone, I could see that the spell was broken. Whenever, therefore, wives or other female relatives of passive resisters wanted to enter the Province from Natal, I took the precaution of informing the Chief Immigration Officer at Pretoria, who is also the Registrar of Asiatics, of the movements of these families, informing him also of their exact relationship to the respective passive resisters, and until very recently there has been no actual difficulty. I returned from Natal yesterday week in the company of Mrs. Sodha, the wife of a passive resister who is at present serving imprisonment at Diepkloof for the offence of asserting his right of entry as a free-born British subject possessing the qualifications required by the Immigration Law of this Province, as apart from the Asiatic Act.

Before leaving Natal I had taken the usual precaution of telegraphing to the Immigration Officer that I was crossing the border with Mrs. Sodha. On reaching Volksrust I learnt that the Police had received instructions to stop Mrs. Sodha. She and I, together with other passive resisters who were in my company, got down from the train. Mrs. Sodha[2] has a baby in arms, another under three years and a boy twelve years of age. I took her and her children to the Charge Office where I was asked to produce Mrs. Sodhathe following morning, and on my undertaking to do so I was permitted to take her away. Needless to say, Mrs. Sodha had never in her life seen a Charge Office or been addressed by a constable.

An Indian store-keeper kindly provided shelter and food for

[1] This was published in *Indian Opinion*, 19-11-1910, as a letter addressed to the South African Press under the title "Mrs. Sodha's Case".

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Chief Immigration Officer", before 6-11-1910

her. and her children. The next day she was charged as a prohibited immigrant and the case was remanded to the 21st instant, she being released on her own recognizance. Thinking that Mrs. Sodha's arrest might have been due to a misunderstanding, I telegraphed[1] again to the Chief Immigration Officer giving him the information about Mrs. Sodha's children and telling him that she was proceeding to Tolstoy Farm, that she would retire from the Transvaal at the end of the struggle and that she was being taken to the above farm only pending her husband's continuous incarceration. I received at Volksrust a reply to the effect that Mrs. Sodha would be tried as a prohibited immigrant unless she immediately returned to Natal. She and I, however, continued our journey as Mrs. Sodha's case was already adjourned. In order to avoid any further complications, Mr. Cachalia, the Chairman of the British Indian Association, telegraphed[2] to the Minister of the Interior, recounting the circumstances of the arrest and requesting that the prosecution might be withdrawn. The Minister replied in the negative, stating that her husband was a prohibited immigrant. As the British Indian Association was desirous of avoiding importing women into the controversy, it again approached[3] the Minister and requested that a temporary permit should be issued to Mrs. Sodha. He, however, declined to do so.

Mrs. Sodha has entered the Transvaal temporarily as the Sodha family has been reduced to poverty and their home broken up owing to Mr. Sodha's having been in prison almost continuously for the last eighteen months and as passive resister families are being supported at Tolstoy Farm out of public funds.

I do not propose to go into the legal merits of this case which is *sub judice*. Possibly Mrs. Sodha has committed a technical legal offence. If so, all the Indian women, who were allowed to enter the country and to whom I have made reference, have also committed an offence, in so far as the Government are concerned, for the latter have undoubtedly contended that all Indians who have ever been deported under the Registration Act are prohibited immigrants. The Government, however, seem to have distinguished between Mr. Sodha, who is an unregistered pre-war resident of the Transvaal, and other passive resisters who are registered residents and whose wives and

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Chief Immigration Officer", 7-11-1910
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 8-11-1910
[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 10-11-1910

families, as stated above, have entered the province unmolested.

As the wife of a passive resister Mrs. Sodha has now no alternative but to face imprisonment and deportation if found technically guilty. But why this sudden persecution, for I cannot call it a prosecution, of Indian women? The Government are at war with Indian males. They are now attempting to hound out of the Province a certain class of Indian boys born of registered parents. The community was, however, unprepared for an unchivalrous attack on its womanhood. Mrs. Sodha is not a competitor in trade. Her character is admittedly above reproach. A meeker woman it will be, perhaps, difficult to find throughout South Africa. She has committed no crime under the common law of the country. Every means that could be adopted was taken to placate the authorities, whose only aim now seems to be to punish Indian women, as the punishment hitherto inflicted on their husbands appears to have failed in its purpose. I cannot foresee the extent of the terrible effect that must be produced on the minds of the Indians throughout South Africa and of the people of India when the news of this war on women is spread abroad. With this aspect of the question the Minister of the Interior is, apparently, little concerned; but I cannot conceive that the high-handed, wantonly cruel and unnecessary proceedings against Mrs. Sodha will meet with the approval of the people of South Africa. Here is a question for the Loyal Women's Guild and other similar organisations to consider. Whatever may be their views on Asiatic immigration or on the question of general passive resistance, will not the Christian men and women of this Union rise in unanimous protest against this latest parody of administration on the part of the Government?

I trust that Mrs. Sodha's act will not be construed to be one of defiance. She is as innocent of the curious laws of this country as a new-born babe. If anyone is guilty it is the writer, under whose advice and by whose assistance the lady has entered this part of the Union. In any case I wish to recall a graceful act of administration under Crown Colony Government. In 1906, Dr. Abdurahman of Cape Town entered the Transvaal without a permit. Lord Selborne came to know of this and without questioning the legality of Dr. Abdurahman's action he instructed the then Chief Secretary for Permits, Captain Hamilton-Fowle, to send him a permit. The mighty and responsible Union Government lacks both the grace and chivalry to refrain from

harassing an inoffensive Indian woman.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Transvaal Leader, 15-11-1910

178. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[About *November 15, 1910*][1]

Make the slices and add two ounces of pine kernel. Squeeze a lime in it and add two ounces of olive oil. Even tomatoes can be used. This should be eaten with a Wallace roll. It is a very beneficial and wholesome diet. Medh knows all these things. You can take olive oil even up to four ounces. There is no harm. In the Indian diet, it is best to take *puri* and *kheer.*

There is no need to go to India to fetch Kashi[2]. She can come on her own With an escort. I too can see that she cannot be treated properly there. If you find it inconvenient to stay there because of your health,[3] you may come here. Kashi can be called here right now and she can live here even in your absence. I wish you to regain your equanimity.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5073. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

179. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[About *November 15, 1910*][4]

I can see that . . . if you do not find the place suited to your health you had better come here. Kashi[5] could be called here even

[1] Part of this letter has appeared in "Fragment of Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 15-11-1910.

[2] Address's wife

[3] The addressee who was in England, had been suffering from tuberculosis.

[4] From the reference to Kashi, this letter appears to have been written about the same period as the following item.

[5] Wife of Chhaganlal Gandhi, who was in India at the time

now and she could stay here even in your absence. I only wish you to be at ease.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5073 Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

180. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

TOLSTOY FARM,

Kartak Shud 13 [*November 15, 1910*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

India has come to a very bad pass. I have given much thought to the plague and I think there is nothing surprising in its occurrence. It may be eradicated from all other countries, but not from India. The plague does not leave India because we have made this sacred land profane, either by a misreading of religion or by giving up religion altogether. People have learnt to run hither and thither, but they do not change any of their tendencies. They go on practising irreligion and do not care to know even the rules of sanitation, etc. It is only the magic remedies known to them that they are prepared to adopt. No one bothers, while running away, about what happens to the poor who are left behind. How can we prosper in these circumstances? Our own family, too, is open to this charge. What wonder then if we receive news of fever, etc., from India?

In these circumstances, I can well understand the hesitation and the sense of discourtesy you feel in sending for Kashi here. However, this idea is worth considering. Chhaganlal, having taken away Kashi with him, is now penitent and is trying to excuse himself by saying that such was the will of God. We can talk of God's will only after first admitting our mistake. It is sheer ignorance to speak of His will otherwise. And what, after all, is God's will?

You need not have any hesitation in sending for Kashi here, for the others will not come without her. And even if they wanted to, there

[1] This letter appears to have been written during Chhaganlal Gandhi's absence from South Africa in 1910, in which year *Kartak Shud* 13 corresponded to November 15.

would be difficulties in their way. You should try to find out if any real help can be had from Kashi.

I have a constant feeling that you alone and none else will be able to master Tamil; hence keep at it under any circumstances.

The number of children that are come together here is rather large, some of them are without their mothers. It is a difficult experiment and somewhat risky too. I am not sure what will happen to Rama[1] and Deva[2].

I hope you will have some relief now that Thaker has joined duty. Let him also read Tolstoy's book.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4942 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

181. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

TOLSTOY FARM,
[After *November 16, 1910*][3]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

The enclosed notation is for *Bande mataram*[4]. You may set the song accordingly if you can.

To write about the Swami on the basis of what has appeared in the [*Natal*] *Advertiser,* is like kicking a dead animal. The proper time for writing was when his letter was published in the [*Natal*] *Witness.* But that occasion has fortunately passed. We should certainly write if by doing so we could do good either to him or to anyone else. But I do not see any occasion for it now; it came, but slipped away. That man will ruin himself with his own hand, if only people are patient. His very ways and doings seem crooked. And why did we not write against the Moulvi? There are many such examples. Please talk patiently with those who find fault with you. Keep pursuing Ismail

[1] Ramdas

[2] Devdas

[3] This letter, it appears from the reference to Shelat, was written after his release from jail on November 16, 1910.

[4] Composed by Bankimchandra Chattopadhyaya and adopted as the national anthem during India's struggle for freedom

Gora and, if even then, he does not pay, please let me know. I shall write to him and, if he does not pay even after that, his advertisement must be discontinued. I shall write to him after I hear from you. We know that he is very unmethodical and far from dependable.

I send herewith an invaluable book, *The Relation of the Sexes*[1]. To one who is conversant with the Hindu scriptures not a single idea mentioned in it is new. Please read it immediately and explain it to Manilal. Then give it to Mr. West.

It seems, from what Shelat says, that this time Harilal faced gaol life exceedingly well. It was he who first started fasting; he was joined by others later. [Supply of] ghee was secured and he was transferred to another gaol. Shelat is loud in his praises and so is Pragji Desai. He (Harilal) seems to have surpassed me. This is as it should be.

Coomaraswami's[2] book is among Mr. Polak's books that are lying at Rustomjee Sheth's. Please read it when you find the time. It is worth reading. What the author has written about music and the harmonium seems to be right. The other things, too, are worth perusal.

Purshottamdas also joined the strike. It was nice that he got into a tussle during his very first imprisonment.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4943 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

182. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI[3]

TOLSTOY FARM,

[After *November 16, 1910*][4]

. . . is for the library. You may show it to Mr. West. Please copy

[1] By Leo Tolstoy

[2] Dr. Anand K. Coomaraswami (1877-1947); an eminent Indologist and art critic; historian of Indian Art; author of several books on Indian nationalism, education, Hinduism, Buddhism, etc. The book referred to here seems to be his *Essays in National Idealism.*

[3] The first two pages and what follows page 4 are missing. It is dear from the contents that the letter was addressed to Maganlal Gandhi at Phoenix.

[4] This letter, it appears from the reference to Tolstoy's book, was written after the preceding item.

out the poem on prisoners printed on the first page and see to it that it is published in *Indian Opinion* when space permits. The other one is a pamphlet on civilization. Please go through it and ask Mr. West to takesomething from it, too. It is from *Gulliver's Travels.* Chhaganlal has sent it. I sent you yesterday Tolstoy's book on the relation of the sexes.

The example you cite of Virjee Mehta as regards cholera is quite apt. It cannot be said definitely that such diseases will never occur where external cleanliness is maintained. Only this we know: that such an epidemic occurs less frequently and with less virulence where personal cleanliness as well as public sanitation is well looked after. This, however, is certain: neither cholera nor any other epidemic will occur where there is complete purity of mind. Even with tremendous effort rarely does one attain that purity. To attain that one should . . .

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4944 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

183. JOHANNESBURG

[Before *November 17, 1910*]

MRS. RAMBHABAI SODHA

This case will probably be heard on the 22nd. Mr. Sodha has been summoned to give evidence in the case. In order to forestall the charge that Mrs. Sodha had entered the Colony with the intention of defying the law and to leave General Smuts with no argument whatever, Mr. Cachalia sent a telegram[1] to inform him that she would leave the Colony when the struggle was over. In reply, it was stated that being the wife of a prohibited immigrant, she was not entitled to enter. Mr. Cachalia thereupon sent another telegram[2] to say that being anxious to avoid bringing women into the struggle, they were even prepared to take out a temporary permit for her under the immigration law. To this, too, General Smuts has given a negative reply. Rambhabai has made up her mind to go to gaol and a number of Tamil women have come forward to follow her. It remains to be

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 8-11-1910
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 10-11-1910

seen what will happen now. Mr. Gandhi has addressed a letter[1] to the Press regarding this.

MOVE FOR SETTLEMENT

There are persistent rumours that a settlement is imminent. On Monday *The Star* had a lengthy article, which too said that the time was ripe for a settlement. There is little possibility of Indian leaders being consulted in the matter. It appears, therefore, that whatever happens will happen as a result of direct negotiations with the Imperial Government.

WHAT WILL SETTLEMENT BE LIKE?

It is necessary to give some thought to this question. It appears the demand of the Indians here will be conceded. In other words, Indians and whites will have the same rights of entry so far as the law is concerned, that is, both will have to pass a test in a European language in order to qualify for entry. At the same time, the Governor-General will be given the discretion to fix the maximum number of persons to be admitted from each community, irrespective of the number of persons passing the education test. The obnoxious Act of 1907 will be repealed. This much, if it comes about, will be enough to save the Indians' pledge and uphold their honour.

This is not the end of the matter. There appears to be a snag in it. It seems the Government wants to bring the position in the Cape and Natal in line with that in the Transvaal, that is, to make the education test in Natal and the Cape very stiff and to provide for the registration of all Indians. I am of the view that the Indians in Natal and the Cape should not acquiesce in either of these two things. There should be no question of introducing registration in Natal and the Cape similar to that in the Transvaal—for there can be no justification for it in either province—and to make the education test stiffer would obviously be wrong.

WHAT ABOUT CHILDREN?

The Transvaal needs to be watchful about the new threat to the position of children there. The matter has a bearing on satyagraha but the problem of children is such that if no justice is done, satyagraha can be and must be offered.

There are, thus, difficulties in the way of a settlement. The

[1] *Vide* "Letter to the Press", 14-11-1910

community's pledge may be fulfilled, but we may have to face losses in other ways. It is necessary to take note of this from the first.

MEASURES AGAINST THIS

Some effective measures against this are possible. In the first place, Indians in the Cape, Natal and the Transvaal should present a united front. Secondly, the leaders in the different provinces must not in their haste take steps independently of one another. Thirdly, meetings should be held in every town to pass resolutions and these should be forwarded to the Government. A petition should be addressed to Parliament as also to the Imperial Government and the Indian Government. If nothing comes out of all this, the fourth step is resort to satyagraha.

POLAK'S LETTER

Mr. Polak has addressed a letter to the Press which is worth reading.

HOW TO STOP IMMIGRATION

The Duke of Marlborough is a prominent English nobleman. He has suggested in the course of a speech in England that for the purpose of restricting immigration into the Colonies, it will be more appropriate to inquire about the character of the men concerned than about their financial position. He seems to be opposed to any discrimination on the basis of race or colour.

CHHOTABHAI CASE

The judges have at long last given their decision in this case. There were three judges, and each one of them has expressed his own opinion. Two of them having given a decision against Mr. Chhotabhai, the appeal has been dismissed. Mr. Justice Mason expressed himself in favour of Mr. Chhotabhai. The latter has filed an appeal against this decision, so that his son cannot [yet] be deported. This appeal will be heard in the Supreme Court of South Africa. The bench will consist of five judges, and three of these will probably be Sir Henry de Villiers, Sir James Ross-Innes and Mr. Justice Solomon. Perhaps Mr. Chhotabhai will win the appeal. The divergence of views among the judges leads one to believe that the higher court may decide in favour of Mr. Chhotabhai.

JUDGE PRESIDENT

[He] thinks that Chhotabhai's son is not protected under Act

No. 36 and that even if the Act of 1907 had conferred any right on him, it stands cancelled under Act No. 36. He is of the view that the Acts cannot run concurrently.

JUSTICE BRISTOWE

[He] thinks that there was some chance of his being eligible [for entry] under the Act of 1907, but that under the Act of 1908 that chance disappeared. He also believes that both the Acts are bad. It is difficult to interpret them. The expulsion of children is a manifest injustice; such a law [he says] should never have been enacted. Though he has given his decision, he is not quite sure whether it is correct. It is a decision which he has given with some regret.

JUSTICE MASON

Mr. Justice Mason believes that under the Act of 1907, the Registrar has the discretion to issue a certificate to Chhotabhai's son. His rights are not protected in the Act of 1908 but the relevant provisions of the Act of 1907 do not stand repealed [by the Act of 1908]. The boy's case, therefore, should be reconsidered by the Registrar. The judge has also stated that one feels baffled in interpreting the two Acts, and that the position that such children can be deported on their reaching the age of 16 is an intolerable one.

SETTLEMENT IN SIGHT?

Referring to Mr. Polak's speech in India, General Smuts had told Lord Crewe that Mr. Polak had made gross mis-statements of facts. Mr. Polak therefore asked[1] General Smuts to provide him with specific instances of such mis-statements. The latter has now sent a reply. He says that he could do so, but no useful purpose would be served by entering into correspondence on the subject. He does not want [he says] to add to the existing bitterness between the Asiatics and the Government, and believes that there will be a settlement quite soon.

A telegram[2] has appeared in the newspapers here which lends support to this. The report states that Sir Francis Hopwood has had consultations with the Union Government and that everything will be

[1] In his letter of October 24, 1910, reproduced along with Smuts' reply dated 12-11-1910 in *Indian Opinion*, 19-11-1910.

[2] The reference is to a Reuter report dated 14-11-1910, reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 19-11-1910.

settled quite soon. The Act of 1907 will be repealed and there will be an immigration law based on education. Discrimination on the basis of colour and race will disappear.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-11-1910

184. LETTER TO MEMBERS OF ASIATIC CONFERENCE[1]

JOHANNESBURG,

[Before *November 18, 1910*]

DEAR SIR,

I take the liberty of addressing you as one of the members of the Asiatic Conference that took place in August, 1908, and at which you were present.

You may have noticed from the papers that the Asiatic Department have interpreted the Asiatic Act of 1908, which was partly a result of that Conference, that Asiatic minors, sons of registered Asiatics, not born in the Transvaal or resident in the Province at the commencement of the Act, are liable of necessity on reaching the age of 16 years to expulsion, notwithstanding their willingness to apply for registration under the Act, and notwithstanding the fact that the names of these minors appear on the registration certificates of the fathers.

An actual case has arisen in respect of the son of Mr. A. E. Chhotabhai, a prominent Indian merchant of Krugersdorp. The boy, whose name is inscribed upon his father's registration certificate, on attaining the age of 16 years, applied for registration under the Act; he entered the Colony as a minor with his father, and with the knowledge and consent of the authorities, as he had a legal right to do under the Immigrants' Restriction Act. His application was rejected by the Registrar. He appealed to the Magistrate, who upheld the Registrar's decision, and ordered his immediate removal from the Province, which was suspended, pending proceedings in the Supreme Court. The matter went before Mr. Justice Wessels in Chambers, who characterized the action of the Government as "inhuman" and said

[1] This, along with the following item, was published in *The Star*, 19-11-1910, under the title, "The Chhotabhai Case".

"that when known it would create a howl throughout the civilized world", but the learned judge decided that the Act did not provide for the registration of such boys, and he therefore reluctantly dismissed the application. The motion went in appeal before the full bench, which by a majority upheld Mr. Justice Wessels' decision.[1] Notice of further appeal to the Appellate Court has therefore been lodged; the matter is accordingly still *sub judice*.

But I wish, however, to draw your attention to the following remarkable results of the proceedings. The judges have decided that the Act of 1907 is virtually repealed by the later Act, and that whilst Asiatic minors, in the position of Mr. Chhotabhai's son, might be protected under the Act of 1907, that protection has been withdrawn by the Act of 1908. Mr. Justice Mason, who delivered a dissentient judgment in favour of the applicant, has also held that the boy cannot be protected under the Act of 1908, but that provisions regarding minors under the Act of 1907 are not repealed. Besides this, Mr. Justice Mason and Mr. Justice Bristowe have condemned the Government's action, as also the Acts themselves, in somewhat scathing terms.

I have no doubt you will recollect the very lively discussion that took place between several members of the Conference and Mr. Quinn and myself, regarding the proposed repeal of Act 2 of 1907, but General Smuts declined to consider the question of repeal. You will recollect too the discussion that took place with reference to minors, who were to be protected, no matter where born, by their names being inscribed upon their father's registration certificate. There never was a question of giving upany substantial rights already possessed under Act 2 of 1907.

I may be permitted further to add that: (1) General Smuts, at the time of introducing the new measure into the Assembly, never stated that it was calculated to deprive any class of minors of the right of residence in the Colony; (2) Mr. de Villiers as Attorney-General, in his minute to the Governor, stated that, among others, the Asiatic demand regarding the registration of minors was conceded, and that both the Acts were to run concurrently; (3) in no part of the British Dominions are the children of lawfully resident Asiatics torn from parents at any age, much less on reaching the tender age of 16 years. I venture to submit that you, as a member of the Conference, are

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

concerned directly with the results as to minor Asiatics being defeated by what must appear to you, as it does to me, to be an entirely unexpected judgment of our Courts.

I hope that I am right in suggesting that the honour of members of the Conference is involved in the maintenance of the principles adopted at the Conference, and I therefore trust that you will, if you can do nothing more, publicly declare that you never contemplated a deprivation of the rights of minor Asiatics of the class referred to in this letter.

A matter so important as this cannot, in my opinion, be left to be decided by even the highest tribunal of justice, which according to our Constitution, must be entirely unmoved by considerations, however important in themselves, that may have led to the passing of certain laws, and which is obliged to give effect to them, no matter how harshly or morally indefensible these laws may be.[1]

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Star, 19-11-1910

185. LETTER TO "THE STAR"

JOHANNESBURG,
November 18 [*1910*]

SIR,

I beg to request that you will be so good as to publish the following letter[2] which I have addressed to those gentlemen who were members of the Asiatic Conference, that was held in August, 1908.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Star, 19-11-1910

[1] Replies to this were received by Gandhiji from Albert Cartwright, Drummond Chaplin, Opposition M. P. in the South African Union Parliament, and others, who agreed that if the names of the minors "had previously been inscribed on their father's certificate", their rights were automatically protected and that they were entitled to register on attaining the age of 16. The replies were forwarded by Ritch to the Colonial Office on January 9, 1911.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

186. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO DUKE OF CONNAUGHT[1]

JOHANNESBURG,

[After *November 18, 1910*]

SIR,

I beg to send the following resolution unanimously passed at a special meeting of the Committee of the British Indian Association held on the 18th instant in the hall of the Hamidia Islamic Society:

> That this meeting of the Committee of the British Indian Association, with profound regret, comes to the conclusion that, in view of the death of the deportee, Narayansamy, the tyrannical proceedings against minor children of a certain class, the impending prosecution of Mrs. Sodha, and the continued sufferings of the passive resisters, by reason of the refusal by the Union Government to grant the demands of the Indian community, universally acknowledged to be just and reasonable, it is not possible for the community to be associated in a public presentation of an address of welcome to His Royal Highness, the Duke of Connaught, and thus identify itself with public rejoicings over the inauguration of the Union, which, for Asiatic British subjects, has meant greater bitterness and increased anxiety for its future; and the meetinghereby authorises the Chairman to address a respectful letter to His Royal Highness, expressing the community's loyalty to the Throne, and tendering a personal welcome to him as representative of the Sovereign.

It is the misfortune of the community represented by my Association that, for the reasons stated above, its representatives are debarred from personally tendering to His Royal Highness a respectful welcome to the Transvaal, and the expression of the community's loyalty to the Throne.

[1] This letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was signed by A. M. Cachalia. The first paragraph has been retranslated from the Gujarati translation of the full text of the letter published in *Indian Opinion,* 3-12-1910*;* the resolution itself is from *Indian Opinion,* 26-11-1910*;* and the last two paragraphs from *Indian Opinion,* 3-12-1910.

In the absence, therefore, of the presentation of a public address on behalf of my Association, I beg to tender hereby a respectful welcome to His Royal Highness, and to request him to convey to Their Majesties an expression of the loyalty of the community represented by my Association.

Indian Opinion, 26-11-1910 and 3-12-1910

187. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO DUKE OF CONNAUGHT[1]

[After *November 18, 1910*]

On behalf of the [Executive] Committee of the Hamidia Islamic Society, I beg to request you to communicate our respectful welcome to His Royal Highness on the occasion of his visit to the Transvaal, and request him on our behalf to convey to His Majesty an expression of the loyalty of the members of my Society.

My Society associates itself entirely with the reasons[2] expressed by the British Indian Association and therefore we are very sorry we are unable publicly to take part in this week's celebrations.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 3-12-1910

188. SETTLEMENT?

There is now hardly any doubt that the Transvaal Indians' demand will be accepted. *The Times* report[3] which we publish elsewhere in this issue and a letter[4] which Mr. Polak has received from General Smuts point to one and the same conclusion. It also appears that no laws which humiliate Asiatics will henceforth be passed. If we are proved right in our conjecture, satyagrahis will have achieved a complete victory. It is the duty of every Indian to understand the meaning of this victory. It will not in any way advance the personal

[1] This letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was sent over the signature of Imam Abdul Kadir Bawazeer, Chairman, Hamidia Islamic Society. The English text is not available.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] *Vide* "Johannesburg", before 17-11-1910

[4] *ibid*

interests of those who are engaged in the fight; only those who can think will be able to grasp the real issue in this struggle. There will be no legal bar against Asiatics as Asiatics. But our position will remain what it is. Indians will not be able to enter in their hundreds. The difficulties about permits and certificates will continue. It is up to us to have them removed. If we are not greedy, if we remain truthful, and act with moderation and in keeping with the people's honour and our own, we shall succeed in having these difficulties removed. We shall have the tree in the form of a uniform law. It will be for us to choose whether or not to enjoy its shade.

Notwithstanding this good news, Indians need not entertain any [strong] hopes. Though the signs are favourable, things may yet go wrong. Even after the publication of an authoritative cable-report, the Bill may turn out to be quite different. We only speak of things as they appear and make an effort to ensure that the settlement, when it comes, is properly understood.

Further, we have already asked[1] [readers] to consider what the position of the Cape and Natal will be in the Bill that is likely to be introduced.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-11-1910

189. RAMBHABAI'S CASE

Angad pleaded hard with Ravana on behalf of Shri Ramchandra but Ravana, in his pride, paid no heed. He did not release Sita and called down death at last. General Smuts is in a similar position. Mr. Cachalia pleaded[2] with him on behalf of Rambhabai and urged him to withdraw the prosecution pending against her, but to this General Smuts has given, in his pride, a rude and unbecoming reply. Shri Ramchandra paid Ravana his due and freed Sita. Mr. Cachalia's plea was rejected by Mr. Smuts. What will the Indian community do now? It has only one effective way of bringing General Smuts to book. It may let him see that it will not take his attempt to persecute Rambhabai lying down. There is only one way of refusing to tolerate

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 8-11-1910 and 10-11-1910.
[2] *ibid*

it. Other Indian women should copy Rambhabai's example and court imprisonment. What men will do if women go to gaol, needs no answer. If they have any manhood in them, they will not show the slightest hesitation in filling the Transvaal gaols. We refuse to believe that men with look on passively if the Government lays its hands on women. All the wealth of men is of little account. They may lose it any day. If, on the other hand, they do not put forth all their strength when Rambhabai has gone to gaol, they will be disgraced and India will stand dishonoured through us. It is our earnest hope that, when Mrs. Sodha is imprisoned, meetings will be held in all the provinces, resolutions will be passed and forwarded to the Government, and that educated Indians from every province, or those who have been in the Transvaal formerly, will soon fill the gaols.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-11-1910

190. MESSAGE TO MEETING OF BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
November 19, 1910

It will not be possible for us to participate in the celebrations the whites are going to hold in honour of H. R. H. the Duke of Connaught on the occasion of his visit to Johannesburg, nor will it be possible to honour him in view of the troubles we are having, such as failure [on the part of the Government] to bring about a reasonable solution of the satyagraha struggle; harassment of satyagrahis in gaols through extremely unjust treatment; satyagrahi prisoners having to undertake complete fasts to secure the grant of reasonable demands even for things like ghee; depriving minors of the right to register on reaching the age of 16; and the war on women like Mrs. Rambhabai Sodha, whose case is going to be taken up next week. We can give up our struggle only after our demands are satisfied. We would give up our fight if the new immigration law was going to put an end to our grievances. But if under the Union Government that has come into

[1] This meeting was held on November 19, 1910 to consider the presentation of an address to the Duke of Connaught then visiting the Transvaal. Being prevented by illness from attending, Gandhiji sent this message to be read out to the meeting.

being the new Act applies to all the colonies, and consequently our brethren there are adversely affected and have to take recourse to satyagraha, we shall have to contribute our utmost to it. But we cannot continue the present struggle on account of these grievances. The Cape Indians did not intend to present an address to H. R. H. the Duke, but, as one was ready, it was sent by post; and, as far as I know, the Natal Indians are presenting none. Under these circumstances, we cannot participate even in the celebrations. And, how can we present an address? We can write a letter to express our loyalty and have done with it. If Mrs. Rambhabai Sodha is sent to jail, we should come forward to fill the jails, and if possible, close our shops, hold meetings and pass resolutions to protest against the injustice.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-11-1910

191. LETTER TO DIRECTOR OF PRISONS, PRETORIA[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
November 19, 1910

My Association learns with deep anxiety that, owing to continual improper treatment of Indian passive resisters who are at present confined in the Diepkloof Convict Prison, several Indian prisoners have thought it necessary to undertake a fast, by way of protest and in order to secure their removal to the Johannesburg Gaol where, they have reason to believe that, under the more immediate supervision of the Governor, they will be given better treatment. I understand that already Messrs Harilal Gandhi and R. M. Sodha have been transferred to Johannesburg Gaol. I also learn that Mr. S. B. Medh has also applied for a transfer, and that he has been fasting for the last six days. As the matter is one of extreme urgency, I shall be greatly obliged if you will give it your immediate attention. I need hardly remind you of the serious consequences to the health of the prisoners and the effect upon the members of the Indian community of the continuance of what is alleged to be the present condition of affairs.[2]

Indian Opinion, 3-12-1910

[1] This letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was sent over the signature of the Chairman, British Indian Association.

[2] Replying on 21-11-1910, the Director of Prisons asked to be furnished "with some information as to the 'improper treatment' of Indian passive resisters confined in Diepkloof Prison, referred to in your letter".

192. LETTER TO DIRECTOR OF PRISONS, PRETORIA[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
November 22, 1910

In reply to your letter herein of the 21st inst., my Association is advised that strong complaint is made against the insulting attitude of some of the warders who appear to regard Indian prisoners as suitable butts upon whom to exercise their mistaken sense of humour, as for example, calling them "Coolie", "Sammy", "Bananas", and so forth. Complaints regarding this matter and other pinpricks have constantly been made to the chief warder who either ignores it, or replies in an offensive manner. Complaint is also specially made against the conduct of head warder McLoud, who is in charge of the spans. This officer, my Association understands, systematically subjects prisoners to every possible form of harassment, requiring them to perform impossible tasks, and seizing every opportunity to report against them to secure their punishment. Frequent complaint has been made to the Governor of this officer's conduct and my Association learns that he has been more than once reported, and on at least two occasions his charges against the Indian prisoners have fallen to the ground upon examination. Apparently, the complaints have not resulted in any improvement in Mr. McLoud's attitude towards the Indian prisoners, who have, it now appears, been exasperated on account of the treatment that has been meted out to them, both by him and the chief warder.

My Association is quite prepared to learn that these charges are denied by the officers concerned, but, in anticipation of such denial, which has not been infrequent in the past, I would like to point out that no prisoner is likely to refuse to eat for a whole week, as has Mr. Medh, who does not, in his opinion, labour under serious grievances.

My Association will, accordingly, be grateful if you will be so good as to institute urgent inquiries into this matter.

Indian Opinion, 3-12-1910

[1] This letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was sent over the signature of the Chairman, British Indian Association.

193. THE LATE LAMENTED TOLSTOY THE GREAT

The great Tolstoy has quit this corporeal frame at the ripe old age of 83.[1] It is truer to say that "he has quit this corporeal frame" than that "he has died". There can be no death for Tolstoy's soul. His name will ever remain immortal. Only his body, which was of dust, has returned to dust.

Tolstoy is known to the entire world; but not as a soldier, though once he was reputed to be an expert soldier; not as a great writer, though indeed he enjoys a great reputation as a writer; nor as a nobleman, though he owned immense wealth. It was as a good man that the world knew him. In India, we would have described him as a *maharshi*[2] or fakir. He renounced his wealth, gave up a life of comfort to embrace that of a simple peasant. It was Tolstoy's great virtue that he himself put into practice what he preached. Hence thousands of men clung loyally to his words—his teaching.

We believe Tolstoy's teaching will win increasing appreciation with the passage of time. Its foundation was religion. Being a Christian, he believed that Christianity was the best religion. He did not, however, denounce any [other] religion. He said, on the contrary, that truth was undoubtedly present in all the religions. At the same time, he also pointed out that selfish priests, Brahmins and Mullas had distorted the teaching of Christianity and other religions and misled the people.

What Tolstoy believed with especial conviction was that in essence all religions held soul-force to be superior to brute force and taught that evil should be requited with good, not evil. Evil is the negation of religion. Irreligion cannot be cured by irreligion, but only by religion. There is no room in religion for anything other than compassion. A man of religion will not wish ill even to his enemy. Therefore, if people always want to follow the path of religion, they must do nothing but good.

In his last days, this great man wrote a letter[3] to Mr. Gandhi to acknowledge copies of *Indian Opinion* in which he expressed these same ideas. The letter is in Russian. We give in this issue a Gujarati

[1] Tolstoy died on November 20, 1910.

[2] Great seer

[3] *Vide* Appendix, " Tolstoy's letter to Gandhiji", 7-9-1910.

translation of it, based on an English translation.[1] The translation is worth reading. What he has said there about satyagraha deserves to be pondered over by all. According to him, the Transvaal struggle will leave its mark on the world. Everyone [he says] has much to learn from it. He extends encouragement to the satyagrahis and assures them of justice from God, if not from the rulers. The latter, being enamoured of their strength, will certainly not be pleased with satyagraha. Despite that, satyagrahis must have patience and continue to fight. Citing, further, the example of Russia, Tolstoy states that there, too, soldiers everyday turn their back upon their profession. He is convinced that, though this movement has had no tangible results in the present, it will assume a big form in the end and Russia will be free.

It is no small encouragement to us that we have the blessings of a great man like Tolstoy in our task. We publish his photograph in today's issue.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-11-1910

194. CHHOTABHAI CASE

Though [the decision in] this appeal has gone against Mr. Chhotabhai, we count it as a triumph for him and for the Indian community. Mr. Justice de Villiers' judgment is one-sided. He holds that the Act of 1907 for the most part stands repealed by the Act of 1908. He is, moreover, doubtful whether, even under the former Act, Mr. Chhotabhai's son was protected. This same gentleman, when he was Attorney-General, had told Lord Crewe that Asiatic minors were protected under the Act of 1908 and the Act of 1907 could be availed of. If the Act of 1907 stood repealed for the most part by the Act of 1908, why has General Smuts so far refused to repeal it altogether? The opinion of the other two judges is very good. Mr. Justice Bristowe is also of the view that the Act of 1907 for the most part stands repealed by the Act of 1908 and feels that Mr. Chhotabhai's son would have been protected under the Act of 1907. He shows, moreover, that both the Acts are anomalous and points out that a law

[1] This translation by Pauline Padlashuk from the original Russian was also published on the first page of *Indian Opinion*, 26-11-1910.

which does not protect the interests of minors is tyrannical. He then goes on to say that he has given his decision with profound misgivings.

Mr. Justice Mason, on the other hand, has held that the appeal should be decided in favour of Mr. Chhotabhai. He has even argued that rights which were protected under the Act of 1907 could not be treated as abrogated by the Act of 1908. Under the latter, the position of children born outside the Transvaal is not clear, but under the Act of 1907 the Registrar has been empowered to issue certificates in such cases and in the present case he would have been justified in granting the certificate. According to Mr. Justice Mason, the Registrar had wrongly assumed that he had no discretion under the Act of 1907. He has roundly condemned a state of affairs in which a minor could be expelled.

From all this, it appears certain to us that the Supreme Court will decide in favour of Mr. Chhotabhai.

The strictures passed by the judges show that both the Acts are extremely complicated and must therefore be repealed. It will not be enough to have an amendment giving effect to Mr. Justice Mason's decision. Since it is within the Registrar's discretion whether or not to grant a certificate to a minor in the position of Mr. Chhotabhai's son, it would be a favour on his part to grant one. Indians cannot leave it to be decided by anyone as a matter of favour whether or not a minor should receive a certificate. Whenever parents enjoy a right, the same right for the minors should be protected as a matter of course. Itwill certainly be protected if the Indian community has spirit enough, let the courts give what judgments they will.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-11-1910

195. HAMID GOOL

News has been received that Mr. Hamid Gool, son of Mr. Yusuf Gool of Cape Town, has passed his final medical examination in England. We congratulate both Mr. Hamid Gool and Mr. Yusuf Gool on this. His success at this advanced examination is evidence of Mr. Hamid's hard work and intelligence. We should like him to give the benefit of his knowledge and his fine qualities of character to the

community. It has been reported that he will shortly leave England for South Africa.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-11-1910

196. UNHAPPY INDENTURED LABOURERS OF MAURITIUS

The account of the sufferings of these miserable Indians which we publish elsewhere[1] deserves attention. Those who read about these sufferings will be convinced of the need to put a stop to the system of indenture. The all-too-numerous incidents of this kind prove again and again that this system is indistinguishable from slavery. Is there any Indian who will remain unmoved after reading about these sufferings of his countrymen? Indians ought not to rest in peace till they have put an end to them.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-11-1910

197. LETTER TO V. G. CHERTKOV

TOLSTOY FARM,
LAWLEY STATION,
TRANSVAAL,
November 26, 1910

DEAR SIR,

I have your letter of the 29th September last for which I thank you. I have also received your translation of Tolstoy's letter[2] to me on Passive Resistance. It is a most pathetic thing that your letter should have been received after his death.

You will see from a few copies of *Indian Opinion* I am sending you, that I had the letter already translated by a friend here. Mr. Kallenbach got the translation made.

I thank you for introducing Mrs. Mayo's[3] name to me. The

[1] Not reproduced here
[2] *Vide* Appendix, "Tolstoy's Letter to Gandhiji", 7-9-1910.
[3] Mrs. Fyvie Mayo of Glasgow, a journalist and translator of Tolstoy

lady has already written to Mr. Kallenbach. I am now sending her all the particulars needed by her.

I shall appreciate a few copies of the magazine in which Tolstoy's letter may be published.

1 am,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

V. G. CHERTKOV

From a photostat: C.W. 11073. Courtesy: L. N. Tolstoy

198. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Kartak Vad 10 [*November 26, 1910*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I am not surprised at Kanaiyalal's disappointment. But there is no reason to believe that associations among the English people are run better, though it is true that they appear to be doing well. The reason is that these associations are the product of modern civilization. The English are more adept in that civilization and can therefore conduct these associations better. Our Arya Samaj is not for the general public. It is meant only for the educated. The English institutions can be said to be for the masses to some extent, because even the masses there have come within the purview of that civilization. Therefore their institutions are governed by some discipline. Moreover, the people there consider honesty as the best policy and are honest as a matter of policy. We, on the other hand, are honest for honesty's sake; we do not know how to be honest for the sake of policy. The general tendency amongst our educated is that if one holds a position where one can serve one's selfish ends quickly, one is at once led to do so. Moreover, those who are born and bred in diplomatic surroundings take to dishonest ways even if they are not educated. If we think of our own family, we shall be able to see that the people of whom Kanaiyalal has lost all hopes are a mere drop in the ocean of Indian humanity. Please think of the hypocrisy, the

[1] The Bill for the new Act mentioned in the last paragraph was introduced in Parliament in February, 1911. The *Kartak Vad* 10 prior to this was November 26, 1910.

corruption and the immorauty of the members of our family who are occupying posts of executive officers.

You have rightly pointed out the discrepancy about mentioning the names of some persons who have gone to gaol and not mentioning those of others under the different dates. You may therefore delete them all as I am not in a position to supply the dates of the others from here. Please retain the names of Mrs. Sodha, Narayansamy and Nagappen.

I have a wire from Hosken saying that Smuts has told him that the new Act will be such as to satisfy the Indian community.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

199. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Kartak Vadi [*14, November 30, 1910*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

For providing meals to Karamat you should, I think, take money from Rustomjee Sheth. That is reasonable and I do not think Rustomjee Sheth will raise any objection. You did right to ask Karamat to cook for himself. I see nothing wrong in it. I too feel that you cannot take up that responsibility in view of your many preoccupations. I suspect Karamat must have eaten something somewhere. He needs bath [treatment]. It is also necessary to try earth-bandages. I do not, however, think that even the earth-bandages will cure him, for there is too much of suppuration. I think what he needs is complete fasting. But will he stand it? He may take bananas and lemons only if it becomes absolutely necessary. I am writing a letter[2] to him. I think he can read Gujarati; if he cannot, please read it out to him. Even when his wound healed up very quickly, I was afraid that the improvement was rather alarming.

[1] The original reads "Kartak Vadi 4" which corresponds to November 20, 1910, but it appears to be a slip for "Kartak Vadi 14", for Polak left for Cape Town either on December 1 or 2 and Doke arrived in South Africa on November 22.

[2] Not available

Mr. Polak will leave for the Cape tomorrow. He will go from there to Phoenix. He will also go out for collection. Regarding Purshottamdas, I think nothing should be drawn for him from the [Passive Resistance] Fund. Let Ani draw whatever she wants and debit the amount to my account for the present. You may ask Ani what she requires. She will require less when a good half of her children are at Tongaat. You may, however, give her whatever she asks for. Let me know how Veerjee is faring. I do not write about him here as I have already written[1] to Mr. West. Please write to Ismail Dawji Mian and tell him that the arrangement regarding the school has been completely upset just now. Purshottamdas, who was looking after it, has gone to gaol. However, if he sends his son, we are prepared to take him. He will have to pay £2 a month for him. That will cover his lodging, boarding and tuition. The curriculum will include farming, press work, English and Gujarati methods of accountancy, etc. If he sends his son even after this clarification, you should keep him with you.

Mr. Doke has returned. Please ask Mr. West to write to him a letter welcoming him. I forgot to mention this in my letter to him [West].

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4945 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

200. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI[2]

[After *November 30,1910*][3]

. . . It is good that you take . . . . Keep your mind fully inclined towards it. The reasons you mention as confusing are quite insignificant. Your land will remain yours and you will be able to develop it. The only thing that needs to be done at present is to have a common kitchen. I think it has great merit. It looks very selfish to take one's food all by oneself. Eating in company, one has perforce

[1] Letter not available

[2] The first six pages of this letter are missing. It appears from the contents to have been addressed to Maganlal Gandhi.

[3] From the reference to Karamat in the postscript this appears to have been written after the preceding item.

to control one's palate.

How is Nayak doing? What about Manilal?

I hope your study of Tamil is progressing.

There seems to be every likelihood of a settlement now. You will see this from the newspapers, too.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Karamat should have no salt. He should take a Kuhne bath every day and should have nothing but coarsely ground wheat and fruits. Please clean his leg well and fill the wound with iodoform.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4946. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

201. THE ROYAL VISIT

In the dignified letter[1] sent by Mr. Cachalia to H. R. H. the Duke of Connaught, the Transvaal Indians have but followed the example set by the Cape Indian and Coloured communities, who, as a sign of mourning, refrained from attending the ceremony of presentation. Our countrymen in this Province have done likewise. We believe that this is for the first time that Indians throughout South Africa have felt called upon to avoid identifying themselves completely in a public welcome to a Royal representative. We will remember what our countrymen did when the present King visited South Africa. Magnificent arches, costing hundreds of pounds, were erected, addresses engraved on gold plates were presented, and Indian places of business were profusely decorated. Indians were in no way behind the other communities in rendering homage to the Royal visitors. The step taken on this occasion, therefore, is a momentous one. But there was no other way of marking the community's sense of the deep grief caused by the protracted struggle in the Transvaal, and the uncertainty of its future, engendered by the Union. It is well, however, that Mr. Cachalia and Imam Bawazeer[2] should have emphasised the fact that the community's loyalty to the Throne had not suffered by reason of

[1] *Vide* "letters to Private Secretary to Duke of Connaught", after 18-11-1910.
[2] *ibid*

its afflictions, and that its personal welcome to the Royal visitors was none the less warm on that account.

Indian Opinion, 3-12-1910

202. SUPREME VIRTUE OF AGRICULTURE

O tiller of the soil,
  Rightly they call you father of the world;
You, and you alone, provide
  For all mankind;—
Cotton, fruits, flowers and grass,
  And foodgrains too,
The food that sustains all creatures,
  And clothing that is welcome to all.
Braving heat and rain,
  Unremitting in toil,
Robust of health,
  Ever you move in contentment.
Of worth supreme is the tiller's work,
  Work that tends to others' good;
Tireless in your labour,
  You teach a good lesson to the world.

We have reproduced this poem from the second standard reader which most of us studied at school. But how many of us have profited from what we learnt? Of course the farmer is the father of the world. But it is his greatness that he is not aware of the fact. Those who devote themselves to good works of any worth are not aware of their own goodness. Just as we breathe every moment but are not aware of the fact, so are good people by their very nature impelled to give expression to their goodness. They are not conscious that they deserve any credit. They do not care to be honoured. If we recite the poem given above before a farmer, he will simply be amused. He will not even understand what we mean. So true a father is he, and so sincere a benefactor.

But we who recite the poem, what do we do? If the farmer is indeed a father and if his profession is indeed the highest, why are we

busy padding ourselves with heaps of clothes? Why do we grind the poor under our heels to extort the last farthing from them? Why do we think it manly to be mere clerks, attired in respectable clothes?

Such is our benighted state. We only talk of agriculture. It has got stuck in our throats and does not go further than that.

Those Indians who wish to be happy in this country or wish to render any real service to India should ponder over the poem given above and try to act upon it. Even if there is a single reader who is convinced that he must take to agriculture, he need not wait for others [to join him].

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 3-12-1910

203. INDIANS AND H. R. H. THE DUKE

An unprecedented thing has happened in South Africa. Indians have always presented addresses to Royal guests and participated in public celebrations.

The Cape made a beginning in connection with [the visit of] H. R. H. the Duke this time. It sent an address, but did not attend the public function.

The Transvaal went a step further. It explained the reasons for not sending an address, thus bringing to the Duke's notice the disabilities under which it labours, and conveyed its loyalty in a letter. That there was no impropriety in such a step, is made evident by the Duke's courteous reply. How can the Indian community, seething with discontent and in mourning, join public celebrations? Its participation can never be sincere. However, everyone must acknowledge that the letters[1] addressed by Mr. Cachalia and the Imam Saheb were but proper. The Natal Congress, too, has taken a similar step, and rightly.

The effect of this step will be known in the future. People will be all the more convinced of our integrity and attach greater weight to whatever we do. They will know that we are no hypocrites, that we do not hesitate to place our views, in proper language, even before an emperor.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 3-12-1910

[1] *Vide* "Letters to Private Secretary to Duke of Connaught, after 18-11-1910.

204. CECIL INDIANS

Indians are unwelcome, wherever they go. As soon as, having settled in a foreign land for some time, they join in its commerce and industry and prosper, they find themselves under attack. The island of Cecil has a fairly large Indian population, and the numbers grow every year. The majority of the immigrants come from Malabar. Most of the shops in this island are owned by Indians. A few Chinese traders are also to be found. Much of the immovable property in the port has been raised with Indian investment. Agriculture there, as in Natal, owes its development to Indians. Indians have thus sought their own prosperity while advancing that of the Colony. And yet it is interesting to note what kind of attitude the whites adopt to all this. In his report for the previous year, the Governor of the island has called attention, by way of warning, to the acquisition of land by Indian traders, saying that Indians are usually bad farmers, for their aim is to get rich quick by exploiting the land for all it is worth and then run back to India. Land in this country costs on an average Rs. 100 per acre, though it is quite difficult to get any with fertile soil. One wonders, after reading this report, what reason there can be for anything in the nature of a warning if Indians, by their labour on land of ordinary quality, toil for the prosperity of the country and in the process grow prosperous themselves. An English poet, Goldsmith, has said[1] that industrious farmers area far greater and truer treasure for any country than kings and nobles. It is in the interest of the country and the people that this "treasure" should receive encouragement, instead of being regarded with distrust.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 3-12-1910

[1] Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade;
A breath can make them, as a breath has made;
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied.
— *The Deserted Village*

205. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[Before *Friday, December 9, 1910*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I send this much today. The rest you will get on Friday. If you find it too much, you may hold it over. Do not delay [the paper] in order to print it. I shall not send much.

Please translate *Fallacy of Speed* if you can. The book is commonplace, but it will serve our purpose. I intend to give a summary of Coomaraswami's book. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4947. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

206. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

TOLSTOY FARM,
December 9, 1910

DEAR MR. NATESAN,

I owe you a long reply. But being obliged to move about and being otherwise busy over the struggle, I have been unable to save a quiet hour for writing to you.

Many thanks for the cable remitting £400. The help is most timely. The unexpected difficulties about the landing of the returned deportees have cost over £500 leaving nothing for current expenses. I was therefore obliged to cable[2] to you for funds. A similar cable[3] was sent to Mr. Petit also. The same day that brought your cable brought also a letter from Mr. Ratan Tata enclosing a cheque for Rs. 25,000. There is therefore no anxiety nowregarding money. I enclose copy of Mr. Tata's letter.

[1] The Gujarati translation of Thomas Taylor's article "Fallacy of Speed", mentioned in the letter, was published in *Indian Opinion*, 10-12-1910; this letter was written before the Friday of that week, which fell on 9-12-1910.

[2] Not available

[3] *ibid*

Everyone of the returned deportees speaks most highly of your kindness. They tell me that you were most unremitting in your attention to them. May I thank you for all you have done in their behalf?

You will have noticed that not a single Indian deportee has had to go back to India—I mean of the 2nd batch. It was unfortunate that the 19 Chinese had to go back. But partly it was the fault of the Chinese Association. That body was not ready for the emergency that faced it.

You will have noticed too that everyone of the returned men has now already passed through the gaols of the Transvaal or is at present serving his term. This does not include the five men who are still at the Cape. But I expect them to cross the border shortly.

Your fear about the payment to the indigent families was natural though groundless. It did very great credit to your heart. I had suspended payment as I was, as you know, in cable communication[1] with the men. I was in hopes that the men would willingly cable consent to their families going to the Farm, as most of them knew that negotiations were going on for securing one and as they were told that the families could only be supported on the Farm. But as soon as I saw that the men would not consent, all the families who had not consented to go to the Farm were paid up to the 7th of October. That was the last date fixed because I had conferences with the men at Durban. Every fact was placed before them and they were told that the families must either go to the Farm or support themselves. I told them too that the funds in hand would not allow of the families being indefinitely supported outside the Farm. The men, however, elected to go to gaol. Some families have come to the Farm but the vast majority are supporting themselves in Johannesburg. The Farm serves a double purpose. It enables us to support families at a much cheaper rate thus providing for an indefinite prolongation of the struggle and it prevents fraud and deception. For it must be confessed that the fighters—some of them— are not above taking an undue advantage of one's ignorance. The Farm puts a stop to this sort of thing. Those who cannot really support themselves must perforce come to the Farm. Those who do not are some way or other capable of supporting themselves. Moreover this struggle is pre-eminently educative. It is

[1] Not available

intended therethrough to raise men. This cannot be done unless we purge the community of dross. On the Farm we are also able to give some kind of education to the families.

In spite of every care taken to satisfy the men, no doubt there is grumbling. It is inevitable, considering the material one has to work with and work upon. The wonder is that there has been so little real grumbling. The credit is all due to the men who are fighting so nobly, so bravely and so uncomplainingly. Our half-educated countrymen certainly could not do what these good men have done. It now remains to be seen how many will stand what might be the final test, should the struggle be further prolonged.

But there is every indication that it may be closed during the early part of the next year. This time it appears there will be no consultation with the leaders of the community. Anyhow, the issue is clear and the struggle can end only on our demands being granted.

Mr. Ritch, after a brief stay here, has returned to London. Mr. Polak has gone to the Cape to look after the concluding stages of the Cape appeal[1].

It was a most fortunate stroke for you to have secured donations from Mysore, Bikaner and [the] Nizam.[2]

Mrs. Sodha's case of which you must have learnt from *Indian Opinion* has not yet been set down. It is just likely that the case may never come off. If it does, she will certainly go to gaol and probably many of her sisters will follow her.

The matter of minor children is still hanging fire.

And now I think I shall cease to weary you with our tale.

As I write this, Messrs Thambi Naidoo and Gopal Naidoo are sitting by me. They join me in sending you regards and in once more thanking you for the noble help you rendered the poor deportees.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I must not omit to mention how thankful the passive resisters

[1] In connection with the deportees' cases

[2] Natesan had secured donations of Rs. 1,000 from the Maharaja of Bikaner, Rs. 2,000 from the Maharaja of Mysore and Rs. 2,500 from the Nizam of Hyderabad.

were to receive the beautiful photographs you sent and the copies of *Harishchandra* both of which were publicly presented, as you may be aware, at Mr. Rustomjee's house. Many thanks too for your portrait for me and the group photograph as also a copy of *Harishchandra*. What an appropriate present the latter was!

M. K. G.

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 2223

207. SWEET ARE THE FRUITS OF PATIENCE

Indians have been showing impatience ever since people began to talk about a settlement. "Why has no bill been published yet? When will one be published? Has the matter been put off till January? Will it be as late as February? Perhaps there will be no bill, after all." Such impatience is a sign of timidity and cowardice. What we are entitled to, we are bound to get in due time. But we grow impatient for something that we do not deserve and thereby prove that we are not worthy of it. We shall not show impatience about anything which we know or believe we are entitled to.

What does it matter whether a bill is published now or later, or never published at all? Really speaking, continuing delay is of double advantage to us. One, Indians who have remained staunch are being tested. Two, those who are not taking part in the struggle will realize that our demands are bound to be met so long as even one person is left to continue the fight. Indians who understand this, whether they are satyagrahis or not, will not show impatience. We should realize that impatience may delay the result indefinitely. Even in simple matters, we lose our presence of mind if we are in too great a hurry and so find ourselves completely bewildered. That is why it is said that a man in haste is a man at sea, and a man unruffled is one in full command of his wits.[1] We therefore urge all Indians to remain patient.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 10-12-1910

[1] A Gujarati saying

208. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

TOLSTOY FARM,
Magshar Shud 11 [*December 12, 1910*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have your letter.

I do not think it proper to comment on the addresses given at Maritzburg. Both deserve to be condemned. Fearing that my criticism might be misunderstood, I gave up the idea of writing about them. It anybody refers to this omission, you may say that I am responsible for it and that I did not deem it proper to comment on them.

The book of bazaar medicine has been found here.

I am positive I saw Coomaraswami's volume among Mr. Polak's books. It has a white cover.

I do not think we can do anything about it if Dada Sheth[2] discontinues all his advertisements. Let him do so if he chooses. I should prefer it if we could do away with advertisements altogether. I think it proper not to write to him at all. I shall talk to Omar Sheth[3] when I meet him. It is better to forgo the advertisements if Dada Sheth is not agreeable.

I shall write to Gora Sheth[4] only after you let me know for certain. His advertisements, too, may be dropped if he so desires.

What you write about the effect of the Rs. 25,000[5] is quite true. People are still miserably ill-educated in this matter. Constant purity of mind is our only remedy for this. Meanwhile we have to be patient. Personally I hate to take anything from the *Al Islam* property. But Mr. West wanted to. Considering that in these matters my attitude differed from that of you all and to avoid making any major changes so long as the struggle lasted, I was silent and allowed some necessary articles

[1] It appears from the reference to Coomaraswami's book that this letter was written after "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 15-11-1910; in 1910, *Magshar Shud* 11 corresponded to December 12.

[2] Dada Osman, Joint Honorary Secretary, Natal Indian Congress

[3] Omar Haji Amod Zaveri, a leading Indian of Natal; *vide* "Omar Haji Amod Zaveri", 11-5-1907.

[4] Ismail Gora

[5] The donation received from Ratan Tata in aid of the satyagraha struggle. *Vide* "Tata and Satyagrahis", 17-12-1910

to be taken from it. I shall, however, be glad if we fail to get anything out of it.

I think I have written to you saying that, if you have not got your daughter vaccinated for small-pox, you may postpone it for the present. We shall think over it.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4948. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

209. LETTER TO OLIVE DOKE

TOLSTOY FARM,

December 15, 1910

MY DEAR OLIVE,

You need not apologize for not being able to give Ramdas his singing lessons. I could quite understand the difficulty whilst painting operations were going on. And I would not dream of disturbing you during the first few weeks of father's arrival.[1]

Many thanks for offering to give Ramdas a lesson on Monday. But I do not think he could go to Johannesburg next Monday. I come to Johannesburg only three days in the week and then I have hardly time to stir out of the office. I fear therefore that I shall not be able to look you up before X'mas. I wish you and Clement[2] a very happy time at Graaff Reinet[3].

Please remember me to father and mother.

Comber[4] is evidently not going with you. Poor boy! He will feel quite lonely. Please give him my regards as also to Willie[5] when you

[1] The addressee's father, the Rev. J. J. Doke, had returned to South Africa after a long tour of Europe and America; *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", after 30-11-1910

[2] Addressee's brothers

[3] A town at an altitude of 2,500 ft. in the Cape province, 185 miles from Port Elizabeth

[4] *ibid*

[5] *ibid*

write to him.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

MISS OLIVE DOKE
SUTHERLAND AVENUE
HOSPITAL HILL
JOHANNESBURG

From a photo copy of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4927 Courtesy: C. M. Doke

210. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

TOLSTOY FARM,
Magsar Shud 15 [*December 16, 1910*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

The matter you have sent for the diary is all right. I shall not make any changes in it. Say only that Rambhabai has been arrested and that the result will be known on Wednesday. Please say that after her arrest other women have decided to court arrest.

In the note regarding the boy's case, please give the decision as reported.

I have already written to you about another acre.[2] Take it after consulting Mr. West.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4949 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

211. TATA AND SATYAGRAHIS

By donating another sum of Rs. 25,000 for the satyagraha campaign, Mr. Ratan Tata has demonstrated that he has the utmost

[1] Rambhabai Sodha's case referred to in the letter was to be heard on Wednesday, December 21, 1910; it is thus clear that this letter was written in 1910, in which year *Magsar Shud* 15 corresponded to December 16.

[2] Each member of the Phoenix settlement could take two acres of land for cultivation. The addressee, it appears, wanted one acre more between himself and his brother, Chhaganlal. The letter mentioned is not available.

sympathy for us and that he fully appreciates its value. Including his earlier donation, a total of Rs. l,25,000 has been offered in India. Two-fifths of this large sum was donated by Mr. Tata alone. Surely, this is no small gift.

His letter is as inspiring as his gift is generous. Mr. Tata knows very well that this is not a struggle to secure our own narrow ends, but that it is for the honour of India. He has said, in so many words, that the effects of this struggle will be felt in all parts of the world under British rule, and that is exactly what will happen. Even a man like General Smuts has stopped talking of racial discrimination. His two Acts show that in law at least all citizens must have thesame status. Fortunate indeed are those Indians who are taking part in a campaign of such remarkable power. What does it matter if they have lost their money and have been separated from their families, if they are starving and have been wasting away in gaols? By sacrificing their all for the sake of the nation's honour, they will but gain what they [seem to] lose. Dying in such a cause, one does not really die, but lives on. What wonder, then, if a wealthy Indian like Mr. Tata contributes money for such a struggle? He feels sorry, and one cannot help feeling sorry, that other Indians do not show the same spirit. All the same, there is no need to feel sorry. As days pass—and the struggle lengthens—its greatness will come to be recognized all the more clearly.

Mr. Tata hopes that before long the Union Parliament will find a solution which will be in keeping with our honour. We join in that hope. It is also likely that such a settlement may shortly come about.

However, the Indian community need not entertain any high hopes. We are dealing with General Smuts. The gentleman is capable of backing out without a moment's hesitation. As time passes, he grows more confident that the satyagraha will collapse; if everyone capitulates, why should he go in for a settlement? But this unholy expectation of his is not likely to come true. We are convinced that so long as there is even a single satyagrahi left, the Act is bound at last to be amended. The great Thoreau has said that a worthy cause should never be deemed lost, that it is bound to triumph, so long as there is at least one sincere man to fight for it. In fact, though a few more satyagrahis may yet fall, there will certainly remain some who will

fight on till death. As Dhira[1] has sung, "Only those who are ready for death can bring out pearls." It is so here, too. This is no ordinary fight. Let us lay down our lives in it, and so live. The sesame seed yields oil when crushed; it does not thereby lose, but gains in value. If a man voluntarily allows himself to be crushed, he yields the oil of moral energy which sustains the world. A man so crushed comes to be highly valued, even like the sesame seed. Otherwise, pining away in pursuit of wealth or sense pleasures is to meet death in the manner of a glow-worm. No one pays attention to such a one.

Mr. Tata's letter and the help he has given have doubled the burden of our responsibility. Satyagrahis ought to remain staunch; even those who cannot afford to go so far [as to offer satyagraha] ought to give, as a matter of duty, whatever they can.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 17-12-1910

212. CALCUTTA RIOT

The riot that occurred in Calcutta must have given rise, naturally, to all sorts of reflections among Indians. We do not think that this was a "religious" riot; rather, it was "irreligious". Plenty of irreligious things are done in the world in the name of religion. Little reflection is needed to show that the Marwari[2] had no reason to kill Muslims because the latter kill cows. Surely, the cows will not be saved as a result. By killing Muslims, who are his brethren, the Marwari will make himself doubly a sinner. Why do the Hindus not feel for the cows which the English kill every day? It is known very well that killing anyone is not the way to stop this. Why, again, should the Muslims kill only cows? But where people are out to spite one another, this is bound to be the result. We have been reduced to such a wretched plight and have got so much into the clutches of courts and lawyers, that we cannot use our common sense. If we did, we would immediately see that the Marwari had no reason to fight with the Muslim. What he should do is to plead with the latter once, twice, and if he does not respond, even a thousand times. Such entreaty, however,

[1] A Gujarati poet (1753-1825)

[2] Marwaris are Hindus of Marwar in Rajasthan, engaged in business in Calcutta and other cities.

will be sincere only if we have sworn not to fight or go to court, should the Muslim fail to respond. If, failing to understand this simple thing, we start riots, we shall only be exploiting religion for selfish ends.

If this is the simple duty of religious-minded Hindus, there is a corresponding duty for religious-minded Muslims. They too are not justified in fighting. Besides, they should abstain from killing cows except on occasions when that is enjoined as a religious duty.

The two sides, however, should not keep watching each other's actions. Either of them may take the right step without thinking of what the other might do.

There may also be some who hold back because of the fear that so long as we go on fighting in this manner, we shall always remain a subject people, if not under the British, under some other great power. If we go a little deeper into this, we shall see that this is quite a wrong notion. In fact, it is because of our subjection that the riots occur. So long as we believe that there is a government to shield us when we get the worse of the fighting, the one course that is truly religious will not occur to us. We shall thus go on moving round in a circle, like the bullock in the oil-mill, his vision blocked, fondly believing that we are progressing. There is one royal Toad even out of this difficult situation, and only one. Though dependent, we should behave as though we were independent. If, in consequence, one has to lay down one's life, one must do so. That alone is the final test. He who takes too much thought of this life can gain nothing either in this world or in the other. It is a matter of shame for us that we look to the police for protection. What protection can the police provide? They will only make cowards of us. Such behaviour is unworthy of men.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 17-12-1910

213. LETTER TO OLIVE DOKE

[JOHANNESBURG,]
Monday [On or after *December 19, 1910*][1]

MY DEAR OLIVE,

Ramdas and Devdas just now tell me that father is ill. I was sorry to hear this. I dare not leave the office just now. I am going back to the Farm. Please let me know there how father is getting on and what the illness is. You know the address: Tolstoy Farm, Lawley Station.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photo copy of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4928. Courtesy: C. M. Doke

214. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO THE PRESS

[Before *December 24, 1910*]

It is unfortunate that General Smuts has, on the eve (according to his statement) of a settlement being arrived at of the Asiatic question, given utterance in the statement made by him in Parliament to what is incorrect.[2]

Indian Opinion, 24-12-1910

215. EXTRACTS FROM LETTER TO S.A.B.I. COMMITTEE[3]

[Before *December 30, 1910*]

Ministers beg to assure His Excellency that the so-called Indian Passive Resisters are not differentiated against in the Transvaal prisons.

This Mr. Gandhi denies. He states:

[1] This appears to have been written on the Monday after "Letter to Olive Doke", 15-12-1910.

[2] This text is obviously incomplete.

[3] Gandhiji, citing from the Blue-book Cd. 5363, wrote a letter to the South Africa British Indian Committee, London, dealing with a number of inaccurate and misleading statements made by the Transvaal Government in its communication to the Transvaal Governor. Pertinent extracts from the letter along with the inaccurate statements dealt with were forwarded to the Under-Secretary of State, Colonial Office, by Ritch on December 30, 1910.

Bona-fide Indian prisoners, before passive resistance commenced, were, because of their known objection to carrying slop-pails, as a rule, exempted from that duty. That was so when I had the honour to be one of 151 prisoners in Johannesburg and equally so at Volksrust when there were over 75 prisoners. The severity of prison treatment has progressed with the progress of passive resistance and it reached its culminating point when all passive resisters were removed to Diepkloof, where, it being a penal settlement, the regulations are far more strict. For instance, an Indian, and for that matter a Native, undergoing sentence for, say, attempted murder at Volksrust or Johannesburg is able to receive visitors and also to write letters. At Diepkloof, prisoners, whether they are convicted of heinous offences or are passive resisters, cannot by regulation receive visitors for three months. Most of the passive resisters are imprisoned for three months.

Every opportunity was afforded to the individual of proving domicile in any other part of South Africa, but all these persons failed to do so. . . . Wherever it appeared that a person had been resident or born in any other part of South Africa, he was returned thither and not deported to India. . . It was ruled by Supreme Court of Transvaal in case of Leung Quinn and another *versus* Attorney General in May last and subsequently in the question of Naidoo *v*. Rex, that when an Asiatic failed on demand to produce certificate of registration, he could be arrested and brought before Magistrate under Section VII of Act 36 of 1908 and if he does not satisfy Magistrate that he was registered Asiatic, Magistrate had no option but was bound to make an order directing Asiatic to be removed from the Colony.

Mr. Gandhi denies that every opportunity was afforded of proving domicile or South African birth. He says:

I take the very first case that is quoted by the Government on page 130; it is that of Manikum Pillay. I make bold to say that Manikum Pillay was well known to the Registrar and so was his father. What is more, Manikum Pillay speaks English fluently. He declared himself to have been a student and certainly claimed that he was South African born and that he was entitled to go to Natal by reason of his educational qualifications. The other case is that of R.S.C. Pillay. He too claimed educational qualifications. Similarly T.A.S. Acharya. The despatch in his case makes the admission that he claimed the right to reside in

any South African Colony and so he did because of his educational qualifications. I have in my possession letters from him whilst he was being detained in Pretoria, telling me that he had stated everything he had to with reference to his qualifications. But all the prisoners named were deported to India. I know two brothers Pillay who before they went to the Magistrate asked me whether they too would be deported although they were born in Kimberley. I told them that they should not be, and that they should state to the Magistrate that they were born in the Old Colony. I saw them after the order of deportation was made against them. They told me that they had protested that they were born in Kimberley but that it had been of no avail. I well recollect the two brothers having felt offended with me because they thought that I had misled them. I could multiply such instances.

In regard to the Supreme Court cases above cited, Mr. Gandhi writes:

The Government have, I do not know whether consciously or unconsciously, undoubtedly misled Lord Crewe by stating that the cases of Leung Quinn and another *v.* the Attorney General and Naidoo *v.* Rex show that an Asiatic failing to produce a certificate of registration can be arrested and brought before a magistrate under Section 7 for his removal from the Colony. In Mr. Quinn's case, the only question at issue was whether the period of Mr. Quinn's detention after deportation was reasonable. In Mr. Naidoo's case, the question was that of legal objections as to whether the regulations under which he was charged were applicable to his case and whether the Registrar was duly appointed. Ordinarily, the misleading statement now referred to would not matter much, but in the dispatch in which it occurs, it is pertinent in order to justify the extraordinary conduct of the Government in trying to bring passive resisters before an administrative board and to procure their deportation rather than allow them to be tried judicially and to suffer imprisonment to which they had become inured. It will not be denied that many of these deportees were during the initial stages of the struggle tried judicially and simply imprisoned. They were also known to the police as being registered residents of the Transvaal. Why were they subsequently tried administratively and ordered to be deported?

As regards future deportations, instructions have been given to the police to exercise every care that Asiatics who have been registered are not dealt with under the clause of the Act which entails deportation.

Mr. Gandhi remarks:

Why this precaution only now? Is it not a fact that the proceedings under the deportation section of the Act were taken at the instance of the Law Department and that it was not the police who were responsible for the deportation proceedings? I read a Minute from the then Attorney General before the Union was proclaimed addressed to Crown Prosecutors to the effect that passive resisters were to be charged under deportation sections and not under sections for non-production of registration certificates as of old. I submit therefore that it is highly misleading, if not dishonest, now to state that the police have been instructed to exercise very great care, etc. Let me however give a few instances. There is case 46, R.S.N. Moodaley. He is supposed to have refused to give any means of identification. Now I know that the Magistrate who ordered deportation himself hesitated, as he knew Moodaley to be a resident of some twenty years and as he recognised him also to be an old offender (Passive Resister) and a duly registered Indian. Why was he ordered for deportation? There is the other old offender, Thambi Naidoo. He was not only known to the police, the Magistrate, the Registrar and everybody concerned to have been a registered resident but he was one of those who, when voluntary registration was going on (in 1907), helped the Registrar's Department, and was thanked by the Registrar for his work. Short of producing his registration certificate, Mr. Quinn, the leader of the Chinese Association, produced proof before the Magistrate that he was registered. He tried hard to avoid deportation. He was known to General Smuts, as also to the Registrar. Why was he deported?

Mr. Gandhi adds:

There are other statements made by the Transvaal Government which are also capable of refutation.

From a photostat of the typewritten copy in the Colonial Office Records: C.O. 551/7

216. TRIAL OF RAMBHABAI R. SODHA

[JOHANNESBURG,]

December 30, 1910

The much-adjourned case[1] of Mrs. Rambhabai R. Sodha came up before Mr. D J. Schuurman, in "B" Court, Johannesburg, on Friday, the 30th ultimo. She was charged with contravening Section 5, read together with Section 2 of Sub-Section 1 of Act 15 of 1907 (the Immigrants' Restriction Act) in that, being a prohibited immigrant, she entered into or was found within the Transvaal—that is to say, that when asked at Johannesburg by a duly authorised officer, she was unable, through deficient education, to write out and sign in the characters of a European language an application for permission to enter the Transvaal Colony.

Mr. Cramer prosecuted for the Crown and Mr. M. K. Gandhi appeared for the defence.

As soon as the case was called, Mr. Cramer (the Public Prosecutor) allowed Mr. Gandhi to go into an adjoining room with the Immigration Officer (Mr. Emphietze) for the purpose of putting the accused through an education test.

Some difficulty arose in connection with the interpretation of the evidence. Mr. Cramer explained that Mr. Gandhi would act as interpreter. His worship objected to this course.

MR. CRAMER: It is not a matter of evidence. There is a difficulty about the matter, for there are several dialects.

HIS WORSHIP: I have no objection personally, but is it quite regular?

MR. GANDHI: I have no objection.

MR. CRAMER: I have less.

Mr. Gandhi was eventually asked to interpret the charge to the accused.

In reply the accused said that she did not know any European language, but said that she was not guilty.

For further interpretation Mr. Pragji K. Desai was sworn to perform the duty.

Mr. Cramer said this case had been a matter of correspondence between Mr. Gandhi and the Attorney-General's office, and he (the speaker) had been instructed to carry on with the case. He then called Mr. Emphietze, an immigration officer of the Transvaal and a member of the C.I.D., who said that he had asked the accused through

[1] She was arrested on November 6, and on November 7 her case was remanded for 14 days; it was then transferred to Johannesburg.

Mr. Gandhi as to whether she could read or write a European language. She replied through Mr. Gandhi that she could not. She also said she did not know whether her husband was registered under the Act.

Mr. Gandhi corroborated this evidence, and said he also knew that accused could not speak or write any European language.

This closed the case for the prosecution.

Mr. Sodha, the husband of the accused, a passive resistance prisoner at present at the Fort, was called by Mr. Gandhi and said he was serving three months' imprisonment under the Registration Act. He had a wife and three children, had been in South Africa nearly 14 years, and came to the Transvaal in 1897. He did business in Pretoria, but during the War went to Natal as a refugee. After the War he came to the Transvaal again, passing the necessary test at Volksrust on the 7th October, 1908. Since then he had been off and on in jail for non-compliance with the Registration Act. While in jail his store was broken into and he had lost all his property.

[Questioned] by the Magistrate: His registration pass, before the war, was issued at Komatipoort. He had not taken out a registration pass under subsequent legislation because of his conscience.

Mr. Gandhi again gave evidence and said that, about two months ago, when he was in Natal, the previous witness was there also. After consultation, and solely upon witness's responsibility, the accused came to the Transvaal. He telegraphed[1] to the Immigration Officer that the accused with her minor children was entering the Province upon a particular date. He received no reply, and the accused and her children left with witness for Johannesburg. At the border she was arrested as a prohibited immigrant.

Cross-examined: Witness considered the accused's real home was in the Transvaal. When he came to the Transvaal he left his wife behind in Natal. The accused came to the Transvaal after her husband was convicted. He left a furnished home for his wife in Natal, but, unfortunately, it was not long furnished.

MR. CRAMER: I put it to you fairly and squarely. Was she not brought up here for the purpose of agitating against the Asiatic law?

[GANDHIJI]: That is entirely wrong.

Why was she brought here?

For the simple reason that the passive resisters' families had to be supported out of public funds, and It was convenient to support Mrs. Sodha in the Transvaal as also to look after her family.

For whom to support her?

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Chief Immigration Officer", before 6-11-1910

For those engaged in looking after the families of the passive resisters.

In the Transvaal?

Yes, in the Transvaal.

Sodha came up here as a passive resister?

Yes, he entered as a passive resister. He came here undoubtedly in order to test his rights.

And afterwards, in order that the passive resisters might better support his wife, you had her brought up?

Yes.

It was not impossible to keep the accused in Natal, said Mr. Gandhi, but it was highly inconvenient in the interests of the health of herself and the youngest child who was sickly. Mrs. Sodha was living in a lonely place. And she could be best protected at Tolstoy Farm.

In reply to questions from the Bench, Mr. Gandhi wished to make it quite clear that Mrs. Sodha had not been brought up in order in any manner whatsoever to support what had been called the Asiatic agitation. There had been no desire whatsoever to defy the laws of the country in connection with the entrance of Mrs. Sodha. On the contrary, every possible attempt had been made to conciliate the authorities, even where he thought they were erring on the wrong side so far as the legal point was concerned.

In further reply to the Magistrate, Mr. Gandhi said not a single passive resister got a single farthing as wage or pay for going to jail, unless the support given to dependants could be so termed.

THE MAGISTRATE: No, I do not mean that at all. What do the passive resisters do when they are discharged?

MR. GANDHI: Those who so wish are taken to Tolstoy Farm and there supported.

THE MAGISTRATE: Are they not paid anything?

MR. GANDHI: Not a farthing.

Mr. Gandhi then returned to his chair at the “horseshoe” and said that that was his case.

Mr. Cramer, in addressing the Court, said that the only question was whether the accused had a knowledge of a European language. This it was proved she did not possess. It might be unfortunate that the lady was before the Court; but her Asiatic birth had nothing to do with the case.

Mr. Gandhi, addressing the Court, gracefully acknowledged the courtesy extended by the Magistrate and the Public Prosecutor. He said that if the case ended with the education test, the Crown was bound to secure a conviction. But the speaker submitted that Mrs. Sodha was protected under the other sections of the Act. She was not guilty because she was the wife of a person who was not a prohibited immigrant. Mr. Sodha was not a prohibited immigrant because, according to the evidence, he had passed the education test at Volksrust on his entry. Again, Mr. Sodha, being a pre-war resident of the Transvaal, was an eligible Asiatic under the Registration Act, and, therefore, not a prohibited immigrant. Mr. Sodha's conviction did not affect his (Mr. Gandhi's) contention, as he was convicted only for not producing his registration certificate. This did not make Mr. Sodha a prohibited immigrant in any way whatsoever.

Mr. Gandhi further urged that Mrs. Sodha, being a married woman, could not, under the Common Law of South Africa, be declared guilty of a statutory crime. By the common Law she had a right to follow her husband. And while her husband was in the Transvaal she had a right to be also. In the circumstances, Mr. Gandhi asked for Mrs. Sodha's discharge.

The Court reserved judgement up to the 6th January.[1]

The proceedings were keenly watched by the Indian community. Many Indian ladies were present. Mrs. Vogl, Miss Schlesin, the Rev. Mr. Doke, and Mr. Kallenbach also attended. The Indian ladies remained with Mrs. Sodha the whole day and showed her marked attention. It was a pathetic scene to see her in the Court house with her baby in her arms and three-year-old child by her side.

Indian Opinion, 7-1-1911

217. LETTER TO L. W RITCH

[On or after *January 1, 1911*][2]

Mr. L. W. Ritch, the Secretary of the British Indians' Defence Committee[3], since his return from South Africa three weeks ago, has had a letter from Mr. Gandhi, who says that a conversation with General Smuts leads him to believe that the promised new Bill will satisfy the Indians. The Bill is likely to be issued about the

[1] The judgement was actually delivered on January 11, 1911. Rambhabai Sodha was sentenced to a fine of £10 and one month's simple imprisonment but, notice of appeal having been given, was released on a personal bail of £25.

[2] General Smuts' speech in the Cape Parliament mentioned in the letter was made on December 13, 1910; the New Bill was "likely to be issued about the middle of this month"; and this summary of the letter was published in *India*, 20-1-1911. It must therefore have been written early in January 1911.

[3] This should be South Africa British Indian Committee, London.

middle of this month. To satisfy the Indians it must, of course, provide not only for the repeal of the Registration Law, but for the elimination of racial discrimination in the Immigration Law. An interesting indication of the intentions of the South African Ministers is given in General Smuts' speech in the Cape Parliament a fortnight ago. He made it clear that "it will continue to be the policy of South Africa not to let Asiatics into the country". The educated British Indians will not oppose reasonable measures to restrict a flood of Asiatic immigration. Their case is simply that they must cease to be stigmatised under the law as undesirable. General Smuts went on to say that "he hoped the question was near a solution", and that "he agreed that those who were domiciled in the country should be treated fairly".

India, 20-1-1911

218. A MOMENTOUS DECISION

Reuter's correspondent at Calcutta cables the gladsome news that the Government of India has decided to issue a notice in April prohibiting the further emigration of indentured Indians to Natal from July 1st. The Hon. Prof. Gokhale, the representative of the non-official members of the Imperial Legislative Council, expressed the deep gratitude of Indians for the decision. Reuter adds that the decision has given the utmost satisfaction in India. There is no reason why, in South Africa, too, it ought not to give similar satisfaction, except among thosewhose material interests will be somewhat adversely affected by the stoppage of the labour supply. South Africa can never be the birth-place of a free and enlightened nation if it harbours slave-labour, which indentured labour certainly is. However that may be, the Indians of South Africa have achieved a notable victory. Mr. Polak had concentrated his efforts whilst in India upon the work of stopping the emigration of indentured Indians. And the credit belongs to Mr. Polak for the very satisfactory result of his labours.

Of the Hon. Prof. Gokhale, we cannot but write with the highest respect. In spite of his many most exacting self-imposed duties, and notwithstanding his indifferent health, he has found time to study our question as no other Indian has done. By his great work on our behalf, he has laid us under deep obligation to him. We hope that, without regard to what may be done to ameliorate the condition of the free Indian population, the Government of India will not swerve from their [*sic*] resolve. We oppose the system of indentured labour on

merits— not because indentured Indians are specially badly treated in Natal, but because it is bad in itself and is devoid of merit even when the employers of such labour are the most humane of men. This stoppage will automatically solve the Indian question in this sub-continent. After the removal of the incubus, only time and patience are necessary for a steady improvement in our position under the Union.

Indian Opinion, 7-1-1911

219. INDIANS IN CANADA

In a previous issue[1] we reproduced from a British newspaper a letter from one Mr. Sundersingh in Canada. We have now received a copy of the same from Mr. Sundersingh, in which he gives the particulars of the cases of Messrs Harnamsingh and Rahim. Mr. Harnamsingh had already been served with an order of deportation, and Mr. Rahim was about to be. A protest was lodged against this by the Hindustani Association there.

Our correspondent also says that Indians in Canada cannot migrate even to the U.S.A., while Japanese and Chinese traders, students and others are allowed to do so.

Once, we were talking to a Jew, who was a British subject. When, in the course of the conversation, we mentioned the fact of his being a British subject, he vehemently protested: "No; I am a British worm." The reason for his exasperation was that he himself had suffered. One should not be surprised if Indians settled in British colonies also describe themselves asBritish worms. Kind-hearted persons take care not to trample upon worms. But many whites not only take no care not to trample upon us, they rather go out of their way to do so.

What is this due to? It is the same story in South Africa, and also in British Africa. There is turmoil in Mauritius. Only a few days ago, we printed a letter from Fiji[2]. And now [we find] the Sikhs in Canada are also not allowed to live in peace.

Shall we blame the whites alone for these things? We, at any rate, cannot. If we live like worms, we are bound to be trampled upon. If

[1] *Indian Opinion*, 24-12-1910. The letter was also published in *India*, London.

[2] *Vide Indian Opinion*, 10-12-1910. There is no letter from Fiji; but there is a letter bearing the title "Indentured Slavery in Mauritius".

we cease to be worms, no one will trample upon us.

It is quite easy to see that our circumstances are of our own making. This law also holds good in the case of slaves. In every country, the remedy is the same and a simple one at that. All else is as the mirage.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 7-1-1911

220. LETTER TO CHANCHALBEHN GANDHI

TOLSTOY FARM,
Sunday, Posh Sud 7 [*January 8, 1911*][1]

CHI. CHANCHAL,

I was very glad to read your long and interesting letter. Ba also read it with interest. Harilal will read it on his release tomorrow. I hasten to write this today as I have no time at the office. I am at the Farm just now. It is 9 p.m.

You must be getting *Indian Opinion* regularly. Do you ever go out for a walk? It is good that you have kept up the habit of reading.

I wish you not to wear jewellery for fear of being criticized if you don't. There is no beauty in jewellery. The first and real ornament for both man and woman is purity of character. That you possess such character is in itself a precious ornament. Our custom of wearing ornaments on the nose and the ears seems to me barbarous. I mean barbarous, not in comparison with the whites, but according to our own ideas [of civilized life]. That the poets have described Ramachandraji, Sitaji, and others as wearing jewels seems to me to be suggestive of the custom prevailing at the time [they wrote]. Otherwise I cannot imagine the benevolent Ramachandraji or the deeply devout Sitajicarrying even a particle of gold on their bodies. Whatever that may be, we can easily understand that there is no beauty in perforating the nose and the ears and inserting something there or in wearing ornaments round the neck or the arms. However, I say nothing about putting on bangles round the wrists, as their absence would suggest something inauspicious.[2]

[1] Harilal Gandhi's release referred to in para one of this letter took place on January 9, 1911.

[2] According to Hindu practice, only widows go without bangles.

It would be enough if we put on, these things to prevent talk. These are my views. Think over them and do as you deem proper. You need not be embarrassed and do anything because of me.

Ramdas and Devdas are quite, cheerful. There are twenty boys here, so they feel quite at home. I find Ba also happy as she has the company of other women. She has given up tea at least for the present and is now habituated to bathing in cold water.

There is talk that the struggle might come to an end within this month or in February. Let us see what happens. Harilal will remain free, as the Government do not make arrests nowadays. I know his health was excellent in the Johannesburg Gaol.

Purshottamdas is also here after his release from gaol. A kiss to Ramibai[1]. My regards to Chhabalbhabhi[2]. I shall await Bali's[3] letter. What can I expect from Kumi[4] when she does not write at all?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 9528

221. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

TOLSTOY FARM,

Posh Sud 10 [*January 10, 1911*][5]

CHI. NARANDAS,

Received your letter. Remember this as an axiomatic truth that even if a single satyagrahi remains, he will win. During this struggle many successes have already been achieved. Being idol-worshippers, we shall recognize our victory only when the Act has been repealed and the colour bar removed. But for this, the battle is already won.

I read your views about weaving in your letter to Chi. Maganlal. They are quite right. What is required for the present is that every

[1] Addressee's daughter
[2] Addressee's mother
[3] Addressee's sister
[4] *ibid*
[5] Leung Quinn returned to South Africa from his visit to India in the first week of January 1911.

intelligent person should learn the craft. I see no benefit in getting the work done through hired labour. So that you are right in saying that we should not adopt that course. This is all that needs to be done: The person who weaves cloth after learning that craft must secure a rich buyer, who should make no profit from it, but should, on the contrary, be prepared to sustain a loss. If this comes about, thousands, I believe, will take to weaving.

Your views about Phoenix are, on the whole, correct. But you should not think that the impression you have gathered from a distance would remain the same when you view things at close quarters. This much is certain: under the prevailing conditions, Phoenix is the best place.

What Mr. Quinn told you about me is an exaggeration. It does not mean that I have attained any particularly high stage of development. It only means that Mr. Quinn, not having come in contact with an ordinary person of good character, was enamoured of me on seeing me. The adage, "Where there are no trees, the castor-oil plant passes for one", fits the case.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5074 Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

222. DR. GOOL

We congratulate Mr. Yusuf Gool or his son's entry into the medical profession. Mr. Yusuf Gool has received congratulatory telegrams from many places. Dr. Gool created a fine impression about himself in England. He was always busy with his studies. An examination in a medical course is not a simple affair. But Dr. Gool got through all the examinations at the very first attempt.

To what use will Dr. Gool now put his attainments? His father is a well-known public worker. Dr. Gool can do as much as his father, but the Indian community will expect more from him.

Dr. Gool has two alternatives before him. He may use his qualifications only for amassing wealth. We would consider this to be an abuse of education. The second course is to serve the community, even while engaged in making money. That will be the right use of

education.

From the experience we have had of him, we know for certain that Dr. Gool will make the right use of his position.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-1-1911

223. FROM "TRANSVAAL NOTES"

Wednesday, January 18, 1911

I give the following rumour[1] for what it may be worth, but I warn your readers against placing much reliance on this information, which I send not without much hesitation. It is stated that General Smuts made it a condition precedent to any settlement of the Transvaal trouble, that the repatriation of time-expired indentured Indians should be made compulsory. It, thus, appears that, as against repeal of Acts 2 of 1907 and 36 of 1908, and the restoration of legal equality in point of immigration, he wished to impose other conditions and restrictions, which the Imperial Government considered unacceptable. It is, accordingly, suggested that practically a deadlock exists, and that a general Immigration Bill may not, after all, be introduced during the present session of Parliament. Whether, however, there is or is not any truth in this rumour, I am in a position positively to affirm that passive resisters are thoroughly prepared for an indefinite prolongation of the struggle.

In view of possibilities, it is as well that there is a movement, amongst Indian merchants, towards supplying settlers at Tolstoy Farm with food-stuffs, the supply of which has always been a burden upon passive resistance funds.

Messrs Hansji Morar Patel and Dulabh Veera Bhaga have sent a bag of *bhimri* rice and half a case of ghee to the Farm.

Indian Opinion, 21-1-1911

[1] *Vide* the following item.

224. JOHANNESBURG

[*Wednesday, January 18, 1911*]

GIFTS

Mr. Hansji Morar Patel and Mr. Dulabh Bhula Bhagat of Germiston have sent a bag of *bhimri* rice and a tin of ghee (41 lb). If a number of Indians keep sending gifts, that may mean so much less to spend from the Satyagraha Fund.

SETTLEMENT MAY NOT COME OFF

I find it necessary to say this. From some reports[1] which I have received, it appears that the negotiations for a settlement which were in progress have been abandoned. The Imperial Government has not accepted some of the proposals of General Smuts. It is believed that he wanted the period of contract of the indentured labourers to expire in India, that, in other words, the Government of India should enact legislation for their compulsory repatriation, as a condition for his agreeing to a settlement of the Transvaal agitation. It also appears that General Smuts wished, as in return for repeal of the obnoxious Act and granting of legal equality, to impose other harsh conditions which the Imperial Government did not accept. The new Immigration Bill seems to have been held up for this reason. This report is just a rumour and is based only on inference; it need not therefore be taken as very reliable. All the same, I should like to caution those who support the satyagraha movement and attach the highest value to it, that, should a settlement fail to materialize this time, the movement may perhaps be drawn out over many long years. In that case, the available funds will be exhausted and satyagrahis will be reduced to a pitiable plight; they will then have to depend entirely upon the well-to-do members of the community. That is why I said above that much saving can be effected if Indians take a turn in sending foodstuffs.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 21-1-19ll

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

225. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

TOLSTOY FARM,
Posh Vad 6 [*January 20, 1911*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Your letter to hand. I think you have been there for over six months now. Chi. Maganlal has asked me how long you would be required to stay there. Hence I intend to discuss the question of your return. Please let me know what you yourself think, leaving aside whatever Doctor [Mehta] might say. I take it that your health has been restored. I also take it that you will now return to Phoenix. At the same time I hold that you are still free in this matter. Both Doctor [Mehta] and I think that you should do as you please. My own idea was that you should live in London for a year and gather whatever experience and knowledge you could. As for study, you will have it for the whole of your life. But if you imbibe the particular kind of atmosphere that obtains there, the voyage to England will have, to my mind, fulfilled itspurpose. You may, however, let me know your views without any reservation,

The boys—Harilal and others—walked to Johannesburg (a distance of 20 miles) and back. I suggested their going on foot to save money; they agreed and were tested. Devo[2] too joined in and so did Purshottamdas. The health of the boys has improved a lot here; whether or not their moral character too has developed, it is difficult to judge.

A motley crowd has assembled here.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I do not now think that there will be a settlement. You will see in *Indian Opinion* what I have written in this regard.[3]

From a handwritten copy of the Gujarati original: C.W. 5075. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] This letter was written towards the end of Chhaganlal Gandhi's stay in England between June, 1910 and January, 1911. In 1911, *Posh Vad* 6 corresponded to January 20.

[2] Devdas

[3] *Vide* "From 'Transvaal Notes' ", 18-1-1911 and "Johannesburg", 18-1-1911.

226. CHHOTABHAI CASE

We congratulate Mr. Chhotabhai on his great victory. In fighting for his son, he indirectly fought for the community as a whole. If he had wanted merely to protect his son's interest, he would have probably succeeded in safeguarding his right by servile entreaties to the Government. But he courageously decided that he would fight.

It is, of course, a matter of regret that Mr. Chhotabhai has submitted to the law and that, even in regard to his son, all that was at issue was merely his right to submit to the law. The problem of his son, however, involved a major issue. It had to be solved, sooner or later. Hence, by obtaining an interpretation of the law, he has to that extent served the cause of satyagraha. We hope parents will not now make a rush for their children's certificates. The verdict[1] that has been obtained will not lapse and when a settlement takes place the rights of all children will be protected.[2]

We shall know later the nature of the Court's orders. One thing is certain, namely, that the Government made an all-out attack on minors, but it has failed.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-1-1911

227. JOHANNESBURG

Wednesday [*February l, 1911*]

IMMIGRATION BILL

It is reported by *The Star's* correspondent that this Bill is being drafted by the Government. He says it will be quite an important Bill, which will reveal the Asiatic policy of the Government. The discussion on Mr. Stallard's resolution[3] in the Transvaal Council suggests that the

[1] Given by the Supreme Court on January 25, 1911

[2] This was done in the provisional settlement of May 1911.

[3] It recommended "to the Parliament of the Union . . . the enactment of legislation for preventing all further immigration of Asiatics and the repatriation of all Asiatics now in South Africa who have not been born within the Union"

Asiatic question is going to be a serious one. He said that the intermingling of Europeans and Asiatics was impossible. He has not raised issues of trade, etc. He has raised only one issue—opposition to Asiatics because they are Asiatics. His resolution was supported by 16 members. Most of them were Englishmen. Indians [born in South Africa] were excluded from the scope of the resolution.

Most of the Dutch members opposed this resolution. There seems to be some mystery behind this. There is no reason whatever to believe that they are well disposed towards us.

We shall know everything when the Immigration Bill is published.

SUCCESS OF SATYAGRAHA

Even His Royal Highness the Duke has been impressed by the satyagraha campaign. He has seen what a great movement it is. It is reported by Reuter that he referred to it at a party[1] held in his honour, and said that he expected that there would be an early settlement of the question of the position of Indians.

CHHOTABHAI CASE

Mr. Chhotabhai has received a number of letters and telegrams congratulating him, including a cable from the Mahfil-i-Saif-ul-Islam of Kholwad[2].

Mr. Chhotabhai offers his thanks to all those who sent such messages, saying that he did no more than his duty in taking the risk that he had done in fighting the case. He is very happy that the community has appreciated his action so highly.

The [Transvaal] Leader, The Star and other newspapers have condemned the Government's action. They say it is inconceivable thatchildren, whose parents have the right of residence in the Transvaal, should be deported on attaining majority.

I have not yet received the judges' comments. I shall send them as soon as I do. It will be some time, I think, before I get them from Cape Town.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-2-1911

[1] At the Guildhall banquet on 30-1-1911

[2] In Surat district, Gujarat

228. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Maha Shud 2 [*February 1, 1911*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Received your letters. It would be premature, I think, to buy land in India. Narandas has no experience in this matter. In buying land an element of selfishness is likely to creep in. There is no hurry about it. Something worthwhile can, I think, be done only if some experienced person goes from here. I feel that land will be easily available in India whenever we need it. If, however, Narandas is very enthusiastic about it, we should not discourage him. That Kashi will not come, is bad news. You have done what you could; we have to forget about her return for the present.

Is the article written by Balvantray[2] there? It is not found in the material you sent me.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5076. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

229. CHHOTABHAI CASE

As time passes, further reflections[3] occur on this case. The Chief Justice made some remarks which clearly expose General Smuts' design. He had deliberately intended the law to be vague, so that the door might remain open for the deportation of minors. But the door has now been closed. "If the Legislature desires to place restrictions upon the liberty of subjects, it should do so in language which admits of no doubt as to its intention. Otherwise, we will refuse to give effect to the law." These are the words of the Chief Justice. Not only is there no clear intention in the law to deprive the minors of their rights but

[1] This letter appears, from the reference to Kashi, Chhaganlal Gandhi's wife, to have been written after "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 15-11-1910. In 1911, *Maha Shud* 2 corresponded to February l.

[2] Balvantray Kalyanray Thakore (1869-1951), Gujarati poet, essayist and critic.

[3] *Vide* "Chhotabhai Case", 28-1-1911

General Smuts also did not, while introducing the Bill, indicate that minors were not to be treated as residents. This is breach of faith, plain and simple. "He who digs a pit will fall into it himself"; accordingly, the Transvaal Government has fallen into a pit of its own making.

The community is therefore justified in attaching great importance to the Court's judgement. Those who have sent telegrams and messages to Mr. Chhotabhai speak of his having braved a great risk. He certainly deserves the praise that has been showered on him.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, *4-2-1911*

230. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

TOLSTOY FARM,
Maha Shud 10 [*February 8, 1911*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

Received your letter of Magsar Vad 7[2]. You have asked me good questions about the plague[3]. When rats began to die in Rajkot I advised all to leave the house or the town. These were my ideas then. I now feel that it was a mistake on my part. Many of my ideas have undergone a similar change. Every time the objective was the same—the search for truth. Now I see that it is ignorance of the soul's virtue to run away from houses. This does not mean that one's house cannot be changed whatever may happen. We must leave the house if it is on fire. If snakes and scorpions are so rife as to cause instantaneous death, then also we may leave the house. I, however, do not mean to say that there is nothing wrong in doing so. For him who has completely known and realized the self the sky above is the only roof; he would live in a jungle and look upon snakes and scorpions as his friends. We who have not attained such a state live in houses for fear of cold, heat, etc., and we are ready to leave the house when dangers creep in there. Despite all this, we should aspire to realize the self as soon as may be. At any rate this is what I think.

[1] From the reference to Chhaganlal Gandhi's arrival in India, this letter appears to have been written after his departure from England for India on January 30, 1911.

[2] December 24, 1910

[3] In Rajkot in 1902 when Gandhiji stayed in India for about a year

At the time of the plague Motilal Odhavji[1] left [Rajkot] and posted his steward to look after his house. It is improper for one to do so. Had the house caught fire, the steward too would have run away. From this example you will be able to make out the distinction. The danger from plague, etc., I consider an ordinary one. The Mussalmans do not leave their houses, but stay on there with faith in God. If, however, they took the necessary measures [to fight the plague], they would be doing better. There is hardly any likelihood of the plague disappearing so long as we get panicky and run hither and thither. It is sheer cowardice if, instead of trying to find out the cause of the plague, we run away from the place where it breaks out. But when I myself am not satisfied with this answer, how could you be?

You will be able to know what passes in my mind only when we meet personally and questions come up incidentally. There are two reasons why I cannot explain things fully to your satisfaction. One is that I am so engrossed in other activities that I have no time to think over the matter and put my ideas on paper; the other is that there is no accord between my preaching and practice. If there were that accord which I would like to achieve, I would get the right words to make the thing instantly clear to you.

When respected Khushalbhai asks you to leave the house or the town for fear of the plague, it is but proper for you to do so. It is our duty to obey our elders so long as their orders do not conflict with our moral life. Therein lies our ultimate good. If you leave the plague-infested house not from fear of death but to please your parents, your behaviour will be quite blameless. However, the conditions are so difficult in some places and for some people that we have to think before obeying the orders of elders. I personally feel that the love of parents is so mysterious that one should not offend them without very strong reason. But my mind is not prepared to go to the same extent in respect of the other elders. When we have any doubt concerning problems of morality, we may disregard the orders of other elders; nay, it would be our duty to disobey them. But when there is no doubt about the morality of a question, even parents orders can be disregarded; nay, it will be our duty to do so. If my father asks me to steal, I must not. If I want to observe *brahmacharya* and my parents' orders are to the contrary, I must politely disobey them. I consider it to be a duty not to betrothe Ramdas and Devdas till they

[1] Motichand Odhavji Sharaf of Rajkot

come to their own. Were my parents alive and held a contrary opinion, I would have very politely opposed them. At the same time I believe that my mind is so free from prejudice in these matters that they would have accepted my views.

This is enough. You may question me, if further doubts arise. I have written the foregoing, knowing that you, being virtuous, will not misinterpret my words. A hypocrite, on the other hand, would, because of what I have written, either consider me to be arrogant or, putting blind faith in my words, misinterpret me and disobey elders for the wrong reasons and would interpret what I have written about the plague to mean that as a proper remedy for plague even liquor, meat, etc., could be taken.

I see from Chi. Chhaganlal's letter that he will reach there in a few days. Please tell Kalyandas[1] that I shall feel satisfied if he writes even a post card to me. Also tell him that he has not kept any of the promises he gave me.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5077. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

231. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

TOLSTOY FARM,
Maha Vad 1 [*February 14, 1911*][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Chi. Chhaganlal intends to come here. It was therefore wise of him to have gone to India. It would have been considered improper had he not done so. We were pressing him to go to India *via* South Africa, if he so desired, when he did not intend coming here. If he comes here I shall be free from worry about his health. His health will never be all right in India.

Let Karamat go to Durban. We have done whatever we could.

[1] Kalyandas Jagmohandas Mehta, who had worked with Gandhiji in South Africa; *vide* "Letter to Chief Secretary for Permits", 15-8-1905 and" Kalyandas Jagmohandas [Mehta]", 11-5-1907.

[2] This appears to have been written after Chhaganlal Gandhi left England for India on 30-1-1911.

Now he knows full well what treatment he should take. It is up to him now to take it or not.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I am mostly busy making sandals these days. I like the work and it is essential too. I have already made about fifteen pairs. When you need new ones now, please send me the measurements. And when you do so, mark the places where the strap is to be fixed—that is, on the outer side of the big toe and the little toe.[1]

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5078 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

232. LETTER TO ACTING GENERAL MANAGER, SOUTH AFRICAN RAILWAYS[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
February 20, 1911

The attention of my Association has been drawn to what purport to be railway regulations printed in the S.A.R. Official Tariff Book, No. 1[3], dated the 1st instant. The book appears to reproduce the regulations regarding Asiatic passengers which, as a result of the conference between yourself, the then General Manager, Mr. Bell, and representatives of my Association, were repealed so far as this Province is concerned.[4] I shall therefore be obliged if you will be good enough to let me know whether the replacing regulations referred to by me have been repealed and the old ones re-instated.

Indian Opinion, *25-2-1911*

233. DUTY OF NATAL INDIANS

It seems to us that the future of Indians in South Africa will be determined by what Natal Indians do. There are two main reasons for

[1] This is followed by a figure of the foot with marks made on it for the strap.

[2] This letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was sent by the Chairman, British Indian Association.

[3] Relevant extracts from which were published in *Indian Opinion*, 18-2-1911

[4] *Vide* "Letter to General Manager, C.S.A.R.", 12-4-1910

this. First, the number of Indians in Natal is large, and they have struck deep roots. Secondly, being rather small, Natal allows itself to be led by the Transvaal and the Orange Free State where people are comparatively more hostile to Indians. The new Railway regulations which have been notified will not be brought into force in the Cape, but will be in Natal. They are being followed in the Transvaal though, as we have seen, legally they stand repealed. More will be known from the reply to the letter[1] which Mr. Cachalia has written. In the Orange Free State, these regulations have been in force for some time past. Natal, therefore, has a new case, and a strong one at that. The regulations cannot survive there for a single moment if we protest against them. We think they are only in the nature of a feeler. If we do not protest against them vigorously, by and by severer measures will follow. It is our view that, since these regulations do not yet have the force of law, we can gofurther than making a petition and challenge them in a court of law. We trust the Congress[2] will immediately take up the matter.

These regulations should set us thinking. As time passes the Union Parliament will harden, rather than relent, in its attitude to us. Our strength, our enthusiasm, our unity and our spirit of patriotism should grow likewise. In the present circumstances, we have every chance of succeeding if we exert ourselves sufficiently. This is a matter to which Natal Indians would do well to pay some attention.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, *25-2-191l*

234. NEW IMMIGRATION BILL[3]

JOHANNESBURG,
Wednesday, March 1, 1911

The long-expected Immigration Bill[4] has now been received. It is very complicated and comprehensive. I simply give what suggests itself to me as the meaning:

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] The Natal Indian Congress
[3] *Vide* the following item.
[4] *Vide* Appendix, "Immigrants' Restriction Bill", 4-3-1911.

(1) The Asiatic Act 2 of 1907 is to be repealed, save in so far as it protects the rights of minors.

(2) Act 36 of 1908 is not to be repealed.

(3) It seems, but it is not clear, that those who pass the language test can enter the Transvaal and not be liable to registration. (If this is so, it will stop passive resistance.)

(4) The wives and minor children of domiciled Asiatics do not seem to be protected.

(5) The granting of certificates of domicile to Asiatics in Natal and the Cape is at the discretion of the authorities.

(6) The education test is of so drastic a character that not a single Indian may be allowed to enter the Union.

(7) No facilities seem to exist for the protection of those who may be wrongly prohibited by an officer.

Indian Opinion, *4-3-1911*

235. JOHANNESBURG

Wednesday [*March 1, 1911*]

NEW BILL

At last the new Bill[1] has been published. There is no time to give a translation. It is not even possible just yet to comment on it at length. But I see that it will have the following consequences:

(1) Act No. 2 [of 1907] will be repealed, save in so far as it protects the rights of Asiatic minors.

(2) The other registration Act [No. 36 of l908] will not be repealed.

(3) Anyone who can write fifty words in a language selected by an [immigration] officer will be allowed to enter. Indian languages are included in this, but that does not mean that Indians will be able to enter in large numbers.

(4) The wives and minor children of domiciled Indians do not seem to be protected.

(5) The rights of old residents of the Cape and Natal are seriously endangered.

(6) The granting of domicile certificates to Indians mentioned in (5)

[1] *Vide* Appendix, "Immigrants' Restriction Bill", 4-3-1911.

above will be at the discretion of the authorities.

(7) There seems to be no provision for a right of appeal to a court by anyone who may be wrongly prohibited.

This seems to be the position. It appears from General Smuts' speech[1] that Indians will enjoy only the rights which they possess at present in their respective provinces, and that only a limited number of fresh immigrants will be permitted every year.

If the Bill permits educated Indians to come in as fresh immigrants without requiring them to register, it will enable the satyagraha campaign to be withdrawn. Whether or not the Bill bears any such meaning, it is not possible as yet to say with certainty. But what will be the position of Natal and the Cape? It is serious enough to call for a bit of thinking. If the Bill passes into law, educated persons will not be able to come in as freely as they have been doing, and the rights of those who are already there will not be protected. Natal and the Cape need to take immediate steps. I think they should first correspond with General Smuts and then petition[2] the Assembly.

This is a critical time. The Bill does not yet appear to have received publicity.[3] The summary[4] given above, however, is based on the published text of the Bill.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-3-1911

236. INTERVIEW TO "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"[5]

JOHANNESBURG,

March 1, 1911

Mr. Gandhi was asked last evening by a press representative for his views on the [Immigrants' Restriction] Bill. He said:

The Bill[6] is so comprehensive and complicated that I have not

[1] Made on February 28, 1911 in the Union Assembly

[2] *Vide* "Natal Petition to Union Assembly", 9-3-1911

[3] It was published in full as a Supplement to *Indian Opinion,* 4-3-1911.

[4] *Vide* the preceding item.

[5] This appeared in *Indian Opinion,* 11-3-1911, under the caption: "Mr. Gandhi's Views".

[6] *Vide* Appendix, "Immigrants' Restriction Bill", 4-3-1911.

been able to get to the bottom of it. Passive resistance has been continued simply to secure the repeal of Act 2 of 1907, and the theoretical legal equality of Asiatics as to immigration into the Transvaal. The repeal of Asiatic Act 2 of 1907 save as to the rights of the Asiatic minors meets the first point. I do not quite understand the operation of the education test. If the Bill is intended to mean that those who pass the education test imposed by the officer appointed under the Bill are free to enter the Province of the Transvaal, as I take it they are to enter the other Provinces, without liability to registration under Act 36 of 1908—which I see is not to be repealed—passive resistance will end. And if such is the meaning of the first section, whilst the position is satisfactory with that meaning, in my humble opinion such a position should be clearly defined in the Bill. I do not see any protection for the wives and minor children of those who may enter the Union under the education test. From the speech of General Smuts, reported in today's papers, I gather that any Asiatics allowed to enter the Union will be free to move about the Union like all other immigrants so far as their mere residence is concerned, notwithstanding the existence of Ordinances such as for instance the Orange Free State Ordinance regarding Asiatics. I shall be asked by British Indians at the Cape, as also in Natal, many questions with reference to the meaning of the Bill; and whilst, whatever restrictions may be placed with reference to Asiatics in these Provinces, the present passive resistance struggle cannot be prolonged by reason thereof. I trust the Government will not resent my bringing to their notice[1] the difficulties thatarise in interpreting the Bill. In what manner are the rights of the present Asiatic residents of these Provinces secured? Both the Cape and the Natal statutes exempt from their respective prohibitive clauses domiciled Asiatics. This clause, as well as the clause of exemption regarding the wives and minor children of such Asiatics has been omitted from the Bill, and I cannot help feeling that sub-clause 2 of clause 25 of the Bill renders precarious the position of Asiatics who may wish to absent themselves from their respective Provinces. In view of the remark made by General Smuts that it is not his intention to harry the Asiatics residing in South Africa, I trust that the Bill will be so amended as to leave their position as secure as it is to-day. I miss, too, the usual clause in such Bills affording facilities to immigrants treated as prohibited by an

[1] *Vide* the following item.

immigration officer to prove their claim of entry or re-entry, as the case may be.

The Transvaal Leader, *2-3-1911*

237. LETTER TO E. F. C. LANE[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 2, 1911

ERNEST C. LANE , ESQ.
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO GENERAL SMUTS
CAPE TOWN

DEAR MR. LANE,

I have just read the Immigrants' Restriction Bill published in the *Government Gazette Extraordinary* dated the 25th ultimo. As it appears to me to be highly complicated, I am not certain of the meaning to be attached to it; and, as I am most desirous of helping, to the best of my ability, to end the prolonged Asiatic struggle in the Transvaal, I venture to submit the following to General Smuts.

Passive resistance has been continued in order to secure repeal of Act 2 of 1907 and the theoretical legal equality of Asiatics as to immigration into the Transvaal, in practice reduced to the admission of a certain number, say six, of highly educated British Indians per year.

I observe that Act 2 of 1907, save as to the rights of Asiatic minors, is to be repealed. This, therefore, practically meets the first point. I do not, however, quite understand the clause as to the education test, and its effect. As Section 1, besides repealing the laws referred to in the first schedule, also repeals other laws to the extent to which they may be repugnant to the provisions of the Bill, it seems to me that educated Asiatics who pass the test prescribed by the immigration officers will be able to enter and remain in the Transvaal, without being liable to take out registration under Act 36 of 1908. And, if such be the meaning of the first section of the Bill, the Transvaal struggle can happily end. But I venture to submit that such meaning should be clearly and unequivocally brought out in the Bill

[1] This letter was drafted before the preceding item; *vide* "Letter to L. W. Ritch", 2-3-1911

itself. May I also know under what clause of the Bill the wives of registered Asiatics are protected?

I am,

Yours faithfully,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5222; also *Indian Opinion*, 18-3-1911

238. LETTER TO R. GREGOROWSKI

JOHANNESBURG,
March 2, 1911

DEAR MR. GREGOROWSKI[1],

The enclosed Bill[2], of a copy of which I seem to be the only possessor, I must confess baffles me, the more so as I am suspicious of the intentions of General Smuts. I, therefore, do not trust myself to give a correct interpretation of it. May I, therefore, fall back upon you?

The following are my deductions:

(1) Inasmuch as all laws to the extent that they are repugnant to the provisions of the Bill are to be repealed, an educated Asiatic passing the education test prescribed by an officer is a competent immigrant to the Transvaal, without the necessity of having to submit to the Registration Act No. 36 of 1908 (*vide* Sections 1 and 4)

(2) It is not competent for the aggrieved party to have the decision of the officer imposing the education test brought in review before a Court of Law, no matter how ridiculously harsh the test imposed may be (*vide* Section 4).

(3) An Asiatic immigrant admitted under the education test will be a lawful immigrant even for the Orange Free State, in spite of its exclusive Asiatic Ordinance (*vide* Section 1).

(4) A Transvaal Asiatic will not be able to move to Natal or the

[1] A lawyer of Johannesburg whose opinion Gandhiji frequently sought on matters legal and constitutional

[2] Immigrants' Restriction Bill (1911); *vide* Appendix, "Immigrants' Restriction Bill", 4-3-1911.

Cape, because he will be excluded under Section 4 by means of a rigid education test, unless such Asiatic happened to have residential rights in either of those Provinces.

(5) An Asiatic who has once passed the education test under the Act cannot be challenged in the different Provinces, as soon as he shows that he has been once examined.

(6) The present residents in the respective Provinces do not appear to be in any way protected or exempted from the operation of the education clause. What is their legal position?

(7) The wives and minor children of resident Asiatics or such Asiatics as may enter under the education test are also not protected specifically by the Bill. What is their status? And, if they are protected under the common law, does it mean that the son under the age of twenty-one of a resident Asiatic can claim entry?

(8) Under the reservation clause in the first schedule following the repeal of Act 2 of 1907, minor sons of Asiatics registered in the Transvaal will always be able, if under the age of 16, to enter the Transvaal, and, on attaining the age of 16, to demand registration as a matter of right in virtue of the Chhotabhai judgement.

(9) In virtue of Section 25 Sub-section 2, it seems that every Asiatic leaving South Africa or the respective Provinces in which he may be resident can be made a prohibited immigrant by the Minister declining to give him a certificate of domicile.

Will you kindly treat this letter as a Brief. I do not think I need send you the Immigration Statutes of Natal, because, being repealed, they have no bearing on the question.

Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten original signed by Gandhiji: S.N. 5223

239. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 2, 1911

MY DEAR RITCH,

You have arrived on the scene none too soon,[1] and, in the words of the *Times* writer, you are immediately "to co-operate with those advocating on the spot the claims of the British Indians". You will see the new Bill there. I enclose herewith my analysis of it in the letter to Mr. Gregorowski. I enclose also my letter[2] to Smuts, and the interview with the *Leader*.[3] I, at first, wanted to send a letter to Smuts in accordance with [the] interview, which is really taken from the letter that was to be sent to Smuts. Cartwright[4] thought that I ought to publish the letter and make the position clear, but I told him it would be wise not to do that. He, therefore, published the main contents in the form of an interview. Subsequently, I changed my mind, and I thought that to Smuts I should simply write on the struggle, so that, in the event of future disputes, the issues might not be clouded. While, from the theoretical standpoint, the Bill is admirable, seeing that it recognises the equality of Indian languages also with the languages of Europe, the practical effect of the Bill, so far as the Cape and Natal Asiatics are concerned, is, in my opinion, disastrous, as you will see from my analysis. You may just compare the Cape Immigration Act with the Bill, and you will see the glaring difference. Smuts stated definitely, as you will see from the *Leader* report of his speech on Neser's[5] amendment, enclosed herewith,[6] that the way he wishes to meet Asiatic trading is by stopping Asiatic immigration entirely, except for a certain number to be agreed upon between the Imperial Government and the Union Government. This doctrine may be all very well for the Transvaal, but how can the Cape and Natal Asiatics agree to a material curtailment of their rights? It will hinder them

[1] The addressee actually arrived at Cape Town on March 7, 1911.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to E.F.C. Lane", 2-3-1911

[3] *Vide* "Interview to *The Transvaal Leader*", 1-3-1911

[4] Editor, *The Transvaal Leader*, a friend of Gandhiji and Smuts; sympathetic to Indians and interested in a reasonable settlement

[5] Member of the Union Parliament

[6] Not reproduced here

from getting clerical and other assistance, because semi-educated young Indians, I think, will hardly be admitted under the education test. I suggest, therefore, first a deputation to the Minister of the Interior, from the Cape, with a written submission; his answer being unsatisfactory, a petition[1] to Parliament, and an interview with the Cape Members who have hitherto been sympathetic, and who have also been receiving the Indian vote. I think that the Cape Members will be largely sympathetic. It is highly unlikely that, with reference to the education test, you will succeed in getting a substantial amendment of the Bill, but you may get a declaration that the test will be so applied as to enable Indians to get the necessary number of educated assistants. But the most important section, on which I think you are almost bound to succeed, is Section 25. The latter ought to define, as the present Immigration Laws both of the Cape and Natal do, the residential rights. The Cape Statute states that domiciled Asiatics and their wives and minor children are exempt from the prohibitive clauses, and the Natal Statute, besides containing the general clause as to domicile, states that, for the purposes of the Act, three years' residence in Natal will be accepted as a title to domicile; and it ought not to be at the discretion of the Minister, but obligatory on him, to issue a certificate of domicile to any Asiatic applicant. I think that in this respect you will find the Cape Members very sympathetic. When I was on board, I discussed the Cape Asiatic Act with Sauer, and he told me that the issue of temporary permits only to Asiatics absenting themselves from the Cape, instead of permanent certificates of domicile, was a crying injustice, and he assured me that he knew nothing about it.[2] If these amendments can be secured, I think that the Immigrants' Act will be admirable. I think, too, that, in order to put the community right in so far as it can do so in the eyes of the European inhabitants, it would be a tactful move to make the admission that, in view of the unfortunate prejudice that exists, we cannot claim the right of inter-communication between the Provinces; but this submission should be modified by the declaration that the education test to be imposed upon people wanting to pass to and fro within the Union ought not to be severe.

I have asked West to send you copies of *Indian Opinion* from

[1] *Vide* Appendix, "Cape Petition to Parliament", 15-3-1911.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to the Press", 27-3-1918.

and after the 18th ultimo.[1] I hope that you have them. From your letter, I presume that you have not brought Mr. Cohen[2] with you. The publication of the Bill will now keep you there, I take it, for some time. More later on.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5219

240. TELEGRAM TO ADAM GOOL

JOHANNESBURG,
March 2, 1911

TO
ADAM GOOL[3]
8, KLOOF STREET
CAPE TOWN

MR. RITCH EXPECTED NEXT TUESDAY. PLEASE RECEIVE WITH DUE HONOUR. IMMIGRATION BILL PUBLISHED. SEE "GAZETTE EXTRAORDINARY" LAST SATURDAY. BILL BAD FOR CAPE, NATAL. STRENUOUS OPPOSITION NECESSARY. AWAIT LETTER. WIRE WHETHER YOU GOT COPY.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5220

241. LETTER TO ABDUL HAMID GOOL

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 2, 1911

DEAR DR. GOOL[4],

Here is something for you which is not merely writing out prescriptions or probing other people's physical wounds. Mr. Ritch arrives on Tuesday. I hope that you will do your best to ensure a hearty welcome. This, however, is the least part of what I expect from

[1] This letter to West is not available.
[2] Addressee's father-in-law
[3] Adam Hajee Gool Mahomed, President, Cape British Indian Union
[4] One of the Joint Honorary Secretaries of the Cape British Indian Union

you. You will have, I hope, by the time this reaches you studied the new Immigration Bill. Whilst it is likely to satisfy the demands of passive resisters in the Transvaal, it deprives the Cape and the Natal Indians of a very great deal. I think that, if a proper and sustained agitation is taken up, we can at least secure a certain measure of success. The education test is very stiff without any justification. So far as Natal and the Cape are concerned, no good reason can be shown for altering the existing conditions. Then, again, the rights of domiciled Asiatics will be made very insecure, and one does not know the meaning of the Bill as to the status of the wives and minor children of lawfully resident Asiatics. All these things are capable of relief and adjustment. Will you please actively co-operate with Mr. Ritch and do whatever is possible and necessary? How are you getting on?

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5221

242. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

JOHANNESBURG,
March 2, 1911

MY DEAR POLAK,

You will see from the enclosed[1] my analysis of the Bill. The more I consider the Bill, the more certain I feel that the Transvaal struggle will end. The meaning I give to the first section is, I feel, the meaning Smuts has intended to give it; but what a terrible thing for the Cape and Natal. You will see from my letter[2] to Ritch what I suggest should be done for the Cape. I think the same steps might be taken, with the necessary change, regarding Natal. I think that the Natal people should immediately send a representation inquiring about the meaning of the Bill as to the wives and minor children, as also as to the rights of domicile. This should be done by wire, draft of which herewith. After the reply is received, a representation should be sent to the Minister of the Interior, and, failing a satisfactory reply, a petition[3] to Parliament, which will be presented through Sir David

[1] *Vide* "Letter to R. Gregorowski", 2-3-1911
[2] *Vide* "Letter to L. W. Ritch", 2-3-1911
[3] *Vide* "Natal Petition to Union Assembly", 9-3-1911.

Hunter[1]. Haggar's[2] calumnies and other misrepresentations made at the time of the debate opened by Neser should be answered by a public letter to the Prime Minister,[3] a copy of which should be posted to every Member of the Union Parliament. I hope to draft the letter for your guidance, and send it to you.

Yours sincerely,

[Enclosure]

DRAFT[4]

Committee Congress seen Immigration Restriction Bill. Before submitting its views to Government, Committee respectfully desire information following points: In absence special protective clause as in present Act, what are statute rights domicile or residence this Province for British Indians, and under what section or how are rights of minor children and wives lawfully resident Asiatics protected?

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5218

243. TELEGRAM TO PARSEE RUSTOMJEE

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 2, 1911

TO
RUSTOMJEE
DURBAN

POLAK LEFT INGOGO[5] MAIL TRAIN FOR DURBAN. INFORM HIM LONG LETTER[6] SENT YOUR CARE REGARDING

[1] Members of Parliament of the Union of South Africa

[6] No such letter appears to have been sent. In his speech, as chairman of a mass meeting of Natal Indians, Dawad Mahomed said that the slanderous statement by Haggar, that most of them were not Indians at all, but alien Asiatics, had been 'adequately' answered by *The Natal Mercury.*

[3] *ibid*

[4] This telegram was sent to General Smuts by the Natal Indian Congress on March 4. As no reply was received, a further telegram was dispatched on March 6. On March 7, the Private Secretary to Smuts sent a telegraphic reply: . . . Immigration Bill does not deal with people, whether white or coloured, domiciled or lawfully resident in South Africa, but is, as is outlined in the preamble, a Bill to regulate immigration pure and simple. Asiatic laws regulating rights of those resident lawfully in the Provinces remain unaltered and are not repealed, except Act 2 of 1907 in the Transvaal.

[5] A town in Natal, 297 miles from Durban

[6] *Vide* the preceding item.

BILL WILL REACH SATURDAY. HE SHOULD BE TOMORROW PHOENIX SATURDAY DURBAN. WILL BE TOWN TOMORROW.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5217

244. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO GENERAL SMUTS

JOHANNESBURG,
March 3, 1911

MAY I KNOW WHETHER SECTION ONE IMMIGRANTS RESTRICTION BILL JUST INTRODUCED CONTEMPLATES ASIATICS WHO MAY PASS EDUCATION TEST WILL BE ABLE ENTER TRANSVAAL WITHOUT BEING LIABLE TO TAKE OUT REGISTRATION UNDER ACT THIRTY-SIX 1908. WROTE LETTER[1] YESTERDAY MORE FULLY BUT IN VIEW BILL HAVING BEEN READ FIRST TIME[2] REQUEST TELEGRAPHIC INFORMATION.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5224; also *Indian Opinion*, 18-3-1911

245. LETTER TO DIRECTOR OF PRISONS[3]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 3, 1911

SIR,

Mr. Daniel Armugam, who was discharged from Diepkloof Gaol as a passive resister on the 1st instant, informs my Association that in the cell occupied by him and his fellow-prisoners, about a fortnight before his discharge, at one o'clock, when he was half asleep, he found a snake just crawling on his neck. He naturally got up

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E.F.C. Lane", 2-3-1911
[2] On 2-3-1911
[3] This letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was sent over the signature of A. M. Cachalia.

somewhat terrified, and succeeded in shaking it off. Fortunately, there was a light in the cell, and he awakened his neighbour, towards whom the snake was going. In an instant, all the occupants of the cell were awake. It appears that one of the prisoners was allowed to enter the cell with his sandals, and these were used for killing the snake. Mr. Armugam, as also the other Indian prisoners who were discharged with him, inform my Association that the cells at Diepkloof are ill-constructed, and are not proof against reptiles. Some of the passive resisters further inform my Association that the discovery of a snake at night-time is not an entirely unusual occurrence in that cell. Within their experience, a snake was found there some time before also. I, therefore, respectfully draw your attention to the matter, so that the cells may be so constructed as to avoid danger of the kind herein mentioned.[1]

Indian Opinion, 11-3-1911

246. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 3, 1911

MY DEAR WEST,

This will be in your hands on Monday. I think that Polak will perhaps be in Durban. I have just condensed what I thought was necessary regarding Ritch[2]. All the other correspondence from London I am sending you. When Polak comes there you may show it to him. He may make what use he likes of it beyond what I have prepared. For the time being, I shall be almost every day in town, and, in the event of an unfavourable construction of the first section of the Bill, I may even have to go to Cape Town. Everything will depend upon how matters progress. If there is too much pressure on your space in connection with the Bill, I think it will be better to postpone publication of the judgments in the Chhotabhai case.[3] The Bill places

[1] The Director replied, saying that he was inquiring.

[2] A report of the meeting held in London to present a testimonial to Ritch appeared in *Indian Opinion* of the 11th, 18th and 25th March.

[3] Accordingly the judgment was published later serially in *Indian Opinion*, 22-4-1911 and 29-4-1911. The Gujarati translation was, however, published in March in four instalments.

the judgments in the background. I send you also leading article[1] from *The Star* of yesterday, which should be condensed and reproduced; and, of course, you will get the Press Notices of the Bill from your exchanges. In the event of the Bill not going through the Assembly or being materially altered for the worse, we shall want to make use of the newspaper notices.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5225

247. LETTER TO OLIVE DOKE

JOHANNESBURG,
March 3, 1911

MY DEAR OLIVE,

I hope you enjoyed your holiday. Father[2] told me you had arrived and I mentioned the fact to Ramdas also. I shall now see whether I can send both the boys[3] on Thursday. The journey from Lawley is an expensive item and the other boys on the Farm too naturally want an opportunity of learning simple singing. In view of the publication of the Bill I propose to wait for a week or so. Thank you all the same for your kind offer.

Pray remember me to mother.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

MISS OLIVE DOKE
11, SUTHERLAND AVENUE
HOSPITAL HILL
JOHANNESBURG

From a photocopy of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4929. Courtesy: C. M. Doke

[1] Reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 11-3-1911
[2] Rev. J. J. Doke
[3] Ramdas and Devdas, for taking lessons in music

248. HELP FROM THREE WOMEN

In the Transvaal struggle we have received help not only from prominent men but in equal measure from notable women also. Readers of *Indian Opinion* are aware of the help received by Mr. Polak in India under the leadership of Mrs. Ramabai Ranade and Mrs. Petit.

And now we have had a Reuter message about a forceful article of Mrs. Mayo [published] in England.[1] We have also received an advance copy of the article itself and have a clearer idea of its contents. She writes about the whole of South Africa. As we intend to publish a translation, we do not wish to say more about the article here. We shall merely give some particulars of Mrs. Mayo. She is an old lady of about 60. She is a novelist and journalist, and one of those selected by the late Tolstoy to translate his works. We can therefore see why it was that her article caused the stir it did.

Besides Mrs. Mayo, there is Miss Hilda Howsin. The report of her lecture at the East India Association is worth reading. In this she discussed the issues involved in matters relating to the Transvaal problem. Everyone who commented on her lecture admired the satyagraha struggle and expressed sympathy for the satyagrahis. About the same time that these two ladies were thus engaged in writing or speaking, Miss Polak was appointed Secretary of the Committee.

What need is there, then, to feel dispirited, when we have been thus getting help, whether or no we ask for it, when the struggle has become well known, and when South African Indians are attracting world-wide attention and India's prestige is rising correspondingly? Seeing that this is the fruit of our struggle having been prolonged, we should fight on with still greater zeal.

We intend to publish Mrs. Mayo's article[2] and the report of Miss

[1] Mrs. John R. Mayo occasionally wrote under the assumed name of Edward Garrett. The article appeared in the *Millgate Monthly*.

[2] *Vide Indian Opinion*, April 22, 29, May 6, 13, 20 and 27, 1911 for the Gujarati translation.

Howsin's speech[1] in subsequent issues.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, *4-3-1911*

249. RAMBHABAI SODHA

The wrangling over Rambhabai's case still continues. The Transvaal High Court having confirmed the decision of the Magistrate,[2] an appeal has been filed to a higher court. This being the first case involving a woman, it will be wise, from a practical point of view, to take all possible steps to prevent her being lodged in gaol. That will be no special reflection on our idealism and the appeal may therefore be welcomed. By filing the appeal, moreover, we secure ourselves against all blame. We give proof to the world of our determination not to send women to gaol except as a last resort. General Smuts can no longer allege that we are intent on sending them to gaol.

The clay is on the potter's wheel. We shall see what kind of a pot it turns out. Meanwhile, we urge Indians, both men and women, to emulate the example of Rambhabai.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, *4-3-1911*

250. TELEGRAM TO TOLSTOY FARM AND H. KALLENBACH

JOHANNESBURG ,
March 4, 1911

TO

(1) GANDHI
LAWLEY

(2) H. KALLENBACH

INFORM ALL EXTREMELY SATISFACTORY WIRE FROM

[1] *Vide Indian Opinion,* April 29, May 6, 13, 27, June 3 and 10, 1911.

[2] The Magistrate had sentenced her, on January 10, 1911 to a fine of £10 and one month's imprisonment. The High Court revised the sentence to one of fine or imprisonment.

SMUTS.[1] COMING EVENING TWO SORABJEES[2].

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5233

251. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR

JOHANNESBURG,
March 4, 1911[3]

BEG THANK GENERAL SMUTS FOR WIRE FOURTH INSTANT AND FOR ASSURANCES CONTAINED THEREIN.[4] COUNSEL HOWEVER ADVISES UNLESS SPECIAL MENTION MADE BILL EDUCATED ASIATICS ENTERING UNDER EDUCATION TEST FREE LIABILITY TRANSVAAL REGISTRATION ACT FREE STATE ASIATIC ORDINANCE THEY WILL BE PROHIBITED UNDER THOSE SPECIAL LAWS. COUNSEL ALSO ADVISES MINOR CHILDREN OUTSIDE TRANSVAAL AND WIVES OF LAWFUL RESIDENTS NOT PROTECTED UNDER COMMON LAW. IF GENERAL SMUTS WILL BE PLEASED GIVE ASSURANCE BILL WILL BE ALTERED REMOVING UNCERTAINTY WILL GLADLY ADVISE COMMUNITY CEASE PASSIVE RESISTANCE AND GRATEFULLY ACCEPT BILL.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5234

Indian Opinion, 18-9-1911

252. LETTER TO E.F.C. LANE

JOHANNESBURG,
March 4, 1911

DEAR MR. LANE,

Will you please convey my thanks to General Smuts for the

[1] *Vide* 1st footnote of "Letter to E.F.C.Lane", 4-3-1911.

[2] Presumably, Sorabji Adajania and Sorabjee Rustomjee

[3] The photostat has the date 6th; *Indian Opinion*, however, gives the correct date, the 4th.

[4] *Vide* the following item.

encouraging wire[1] just received? I need hardly repeat what I have said in my letter of the 2nd instant, that it is my sincere desire to help to bring the struggle to a close. I, therefore, welcome the assurance that those Asiatics who pass the education test will not be subject to the Registration Act No. 36 of 1908 of the Transvaal, which is not to be repealed.

I have naturally not relied, in this very important matter, on my own unaided interpretation of the Bill. I have now received Counsel's[2] opinion, which advises that my interpretation is totally wrong, and that Section 1 of the Bill does not protect educated Asiatics from being subject to Act 36. The opinion before me states emphatically that Section 7, if nothing else, militates against any such interpretation. I, therefore, venture to submit that the Bill should be so amended in Committee as to make the point absolutely clear. I am sure that General Smuts will agree with me that this time nothing should be left understood or uncertain so far as the meaning of the Bill and the intention of the Government are concerned.

The opinion in question also raises a difficulty which I had not anticipated, namely, that the minor children of registered Asiatics who are not at present in the Transvaal are not at all protected, in spite of the judgment in the Chhotabhai case,[3] and that neither the wives nor the minor children will have common law protection in this Bill. I trust, therefore, that these two points will also be made perfectly clear during the Committee stage.

On receipt of a satisfactory assurance on the points I have taken the opportunity of raising in this letter, I shall be prepared to advise the community in the Transvaal to send a formal acquiescence,[4] and passive resistance will then naturally end. May I also express the hope that, if the assurance requested is given, those who are now in gaol will be discharged, and those who have been suffering rightly or wrongly

[1] This said: ". . . . Asiatics admitted as immigrants under new Immigration Bill would not fall under registration laws and would not be restricted to provincial limits. In order to prevent confusing them with those legally resident in the Provinces and liable to registration it would be necessary to keep the lists of them, but as they will belong to the educated class, their signatures taken on admission ought to be sufficient . . ." Reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 18-3-1911.

[2] Gregorowski; *vide* letters to H. S. L. Polak, 4-3-1911 and "Letter to J.J. Doke", 8-3-1911.

[3] *Vide* "Chhotabhai Case", 28-1-1911

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Minister of Interior", 10-3-1911

for conscience' sake will not be penalised, but that the rights which every passive resister would have under Act 36 of 1908 will be respected.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5227; also *Indian Opinion*, 18-3-1911

253. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

JOHANNESBURG,
March 4, 1911

MR. DEAR RITCH,

I hope you will receive with this my letter[1] of Thursday last, under separate cover. After that letter was closed, I saw in *The Star* that the Bill had already been read a first time. On Friday, I, therefore, sent the following wire to General Smuts:

> May I know whether section one Immigrants' Restriction Bill just introduced contemplates Asiatics who may pass education test will be able enter Transvaal without being liable to take out registration under Act 36, 1908. Wrote letter yesterday more fully but in view Bill having been read first time request telegraphic information.[2]

To this his reply[3] as per copy enclosed was received today. The reply seems to be satisfactory in more ways than one. It shows clearly how your work in London and Polak's in India have told on the Imperial and Indian Governments, and the latter's pressure on the Union Government. We ought not, however, to be satisfied with the assurance. We want no loophole left. It will, therefore, be necessary still to watch the progress of the Bill, so far as the points affecting passive resisters are concerned. Polak strongly urges that you should confer with Schreiner[4] regarding the points raised by me in my

[1] *Vide* "Letter to L. W. Ritch", 2-3-1911

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to General Smuts", 3-3-1911

[3] *Vide* 1st footnoteof "Letter to E.F.C. Lane", 4-3-1911.

[4] William Philip Schreiner (1857-1919); politician and barrister; High Commissioner for Union of South Africa in England, 1914; Member of Rhodes' second Ministry, 1898; twice Attorney-General; Prime Minister of Cape Colony, 1898-1900

letter[1] to Gregorowski. I agree with him entirely, and it will be ever so much better if we collect opinions from all sides. I am suggesting to Polak that he should confer with Laughton[2] also. You will have noticed that the Bill has been set down for the second reading on Monday[3] week. All our principal representations, therefore, should be placed either before the Government or before Parliament before that time. As it seems that the Transvaal question will not cause any difficulty, I propose, subject to your approval, to remain here. Polak, of course, attends to Durban, and you remain there until the Bill is through. Professor Gokhale cabled yesterday[4] as follows:

> Wire views new proposals. Arranging here frustrate Natal move. Private.

to which the following reply was sent:

> Thanks assurance Natal. Regarding new Bill cable later.

I think we would wait yet awhile before cabling views on the new Bill. There would naturally be expenses on your side. I hope that the Cape Indians will provide a fund for conducting the campaign. They must not expect passive resistance funds to be used for ameliorating the condition in the Cape Peninsula, nor can we afford to rely upon promises they may make. If they do not want you to take Schreiner's opinion, then, I am afraid, we should drop it. But, if they do, they have to pay for it.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5231

254. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

JOHANNESBURG,
March 4, 1911

MY DEAR POLAK,

Copy of my letter to Ritch[5] will give you most of the information I want to give you also. I yesterday sent a packet containing a lot of *Indian Opinion* matter to West directly,[6] as I

[1] Of 2-3-l911, "Letter to R.Gregorowski", 2-3-1911
[2] A lawyer of Durban
[3] March 13, 1911
[4] Actually the cable was received on March 2, 1911.
[5] *Vide* the preceding item.
[6] *Vide* "Letter to A. H. West", 3-3-1911

assumed that you would be in Durban on Monday. I purposely refrained from sending the packet to you because it has no connection with the new Bill campaign, and I do not want to interfere with the concentration of your thought upon that. Further newspaper cuttings on the Bill I am sending you. The *Pretoria News*[1] cutting should be condensed, as also that from the *Daily Mail*[2]. What I have said to Ritch about expenses is equally applicable to expenses on your side. Let that particular business be absolutely clear. If they do not want to spend anything, we will still fight on in so far as they will take the advice, but it is impossible to use passive resistance funds for the purpose.

Yours sincerely,

[PS.]

After I had finished dictating, I received Gregorowski's opinion[3]. It is dead against the Bill, as you will see. Some points of his opinion I do not share, but we must accept the opinion as if it were wholly correct, because the matter is too important to be in any respect left in a state of uncertainty.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5228

255. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

Fagan Sud 5 [*March 5, 1911*][5]

CHI. HARILAL,

I had your letter when it was least expected. We are all surprised whenever a letter comes from you. The general expectation is to have no letter from you.

What you write about Ba is not true. Had she intended to go she would hardly have been scared by my stipulation. And my condition also was meaningless. If she had wanted to return she could have borrowed money from anybody and done so. The fact is that Ba does

[1] These were reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 11-3-1911.

[2] *ibid*

[3] *ibid*

[4] Gregorowski's opinion not available in full; see however "Letter to E.F.C. Lane", 4-3-1911, and "Letter to J. J. Doke", 7-3-1911.

[5] This letter was written before the second reading of Immigrants' Restriction, Bill, which took place on March 13, 1911. The *Fagan Shud* 5 prior to it was March 5, 1911.

not know her own mind. However I have nothing to say against your pleading for her.

There is nothing to be ashamed of in your being weak in mathematics and general literary education. You could have learnt them had I given you the necessary opportunity. The practical knowledge boys in India possess is not due to the education they receive in schools, but is due to the unique Indian way of life. It is due to the meritorious deeds of our ancestors that we find healthy standards of behaviour, thrift, etc., around us, in spite of the repeated inroads of modern education, the immorality that we see among the people and their growing selfishness. This I am writing to you to give you courage and ask you to go deeper into the matter and observe things for yourself. It is not right to attribute the relation of cause and effect between things after just a superficial glance.

I will not stand in the way of your studies or other ambitions that you may have, provided there is nothing positively immoral about them. You may therefore cast off all fear and pursue your studies as long as you like. I may not like some of your views, but having no suspicion about your character I do not have any anxiety on your account.

Sorabjee is sitting by me as I am writing this letter. Shelat also has come to the Farm.

The Bill has not yet had its second reading.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati original in the possession of the Navajivan Trust: C.W. 663

256. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 6, 1911

MY DEAR POLAK,

I have your two letters. I am glad that you rated our friends in Durban so soundly, as I knew you would. They appreciate it, at least from you.

A suspected person may, in my opinion, be challenged by an immigration officer anywhere, even within the border of the Union.

That being so, why could an educated Indian not be challenged on entering Natal from the Transvaal? If you say that he could not be challenged, such an Indian then could not be prohibited from crossing the Natal border from the Transvaal side, and the provincial check would break down, in spite of Clause 7 of the Bill. Any such legislation at present in existence does notprevent the entry of such persons into Natal. Your argument about Joseph[1] entering from Natal seems to be sound. It seems difficult to believe that the omission of wives and minor children is deliberate, and, if it is, we ought to be able to wreck the Bill. I think that we are bound to protest strongly as from Natal and the Cape against the education test, and we must in this connection raise the question of inter-communication. If Smuts gives a public assurance that the education test will be for purposes of inter-communication, assuming that challenge within the border is possible, we may waive the objection. Otherwise, it should be persisted in. The question Anglia[2] raises about domicile is not a bad one. In law, I think that it is not possible for a man to claim a double domicile. Hitherto, domicile certificates produced by Transvaal residents have passed muster. I have, however, always feared a legal difficulty in the matter, and it may well be that those who are registered in the Transvaal may, in future, be taken to have forfeited their Natal domicile. Production of a certificate of Natal domicile is proof, at most, only of domicile to the day of leaving that place but is not proof that domicile subsists at the time of re-entry. I would suggest that those of the Transvaal Indians who are registered, but who are anxious to retain their Natal domicile, and who are in possession of certificates, should, for the time being, remain in Natal, or, not being there, return to Natal rather than remain in the Transvaal, because in the Transvaal the question of domicile cannot be raised, and a man who is found in Natal at the time of the taking effect of the new Bill cannot be sued. The same remarks apply to the Indians at the Cape.

I hope to send a leading article on the Bill tomorrow.[3] It will be sent to Phoenix, but a copy will be sent to you in Durban. For further information I refer you to my letter to Ritch[4] herewith.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5235

[1] Royeppen; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", before 30-5-1908.
[2] M. C. Anglia, Joint Honorary Secretary, Natal Indian Congress
[3] But he did not. *Vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 13-3-1911
[4] *Vide* "Letter to L. W. Ritch", 6-3-1911

257. LETTER TO MAUD POLAK

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 6, 1911

MY DEAR MAUD,

The enclosures will tell their own tale. You will have the full text of the Bill in *Indian Opinion*[1]. I do not envy your having to study the Bill. However, I suggest your not writing anything at all about the Bill, unless you hear anything from me by cable. I am not at all certain of the meaning of the Bill; nobody seems to be; and in the absence of a certainty all presumption must be against the Bill. When agitation there becomes necessary, you will have the views emphatically one way or the other, and you will have objections from me in concrete form. Till then, you can only give the information to inquirers. I have refrained from cabling anything to you, because we do not want any agitation there at the time of writing. I have anxious cable inquiries from India, but have simply replied[2] that they are to await further cables. All that we for the time being should say is that no Bill will satisfy passive resisters, unless two things are unconditionally granted—repeal of Act 2 of 1907, and the entry of educated Indians who may pass the education test without liability to any registration laws. If the Bill clearly means the latter, as it clearly repeals Asiatic [Act] 2 of 1907, we shall lay down our arms, however bad in other respects the Bill may be. This does not mean that we cease to worry the Government here or the Government there with our other troubles, but we do not take up passive resistance regarding them. For the time being, we still endeavour to carry on a less active agitation. I do not call the petitioning agitation constitutional to distinguish it from passive resistance, because passive resistance is just as constitutional as simple petitioning. What a happy coincidence it is that Mr. Ritch should be here just in the nick of time. I think that he himself will agree that his presence is far more necessary here just now than there. You may unreservedly express your opinion that with reference to the Cape and Natal, the Bill is as bad as it possibly can be. There theoretical equality does not weigh so, because we have it already. The

[1] Dated 4-3-1911
[2] *Vide* cable to G. K. Gokhale quoted in "Letter to L. W. Ritch", 4-3-1911.

deprivation of practical rights under this Bill, therefore, is a very serious and tangible grievance requiring redress, and, as you will see, the Cape and Natal are moving. I only hope that they will move sufficiently to be able to make an impression on the Government. I am perfectly at ease, seeing that Messrs Ritch and Polak are on the respective spots. When I receive the address[1] for Mr. Ritch, I shall gladly buy an oak frame in accordance with your instructions, send you a memo of charges, and present the thing to him. This time, instead of sending £15 for the Committee, I am sending £18. That ought to enable you to get on without a handicap, and there should be no difficulty in paying the quarterly charges.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5236

258. TELEGRAM TO "INDIAN OPINION"

JOHANNESBURG,
March 6, 1911

TO
OPINION
PHOENIX

TRANSLATE BILL[2] THERE NO TIME.

GANDHI

From a handwritten office copy: S.N. 5238

[1] Presented in London by Indian and British sympathisers. The address was reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 18-3-1911.

[2] The Gujarati translation of the Bill was published in *Indian Opinion*, 11-3-1911.

259. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 6, 1911

MY DEAR RITCH,

I enclose herewith copy of wire sent to General Smuts today[1]. No reply has been received to the time of writing. I have received the following cable from Natesan,

> Cable immediately advantages disadvantages new Act. Also advise nature future agitation here.

And I have simply cabled the reply[2] that the Bill is being considered, and that they will have a reply later.

I have sent Maud this week £25 for Mrs. Ritch, £l7 for Mrs. Polak, and £18 for the Committee. The last amount ought to prove sufficient. I telegraphed you today as per copy enclosed.[3] Mr. Doke, I may mention, is in correspondence with Mr. Merriman[4]. In the event of Smuts not yielding as to the amendment of the Bill in order to make good the meaning he attaches to it, do you consider that my presence is at all necessary in Cape Town? If you do, please wire. I do not wish to undertake the journey, unless it is absolutely necessary. There should be representations[5] from Port Elizabeth and Kimberley, or authority from them to you or to the League[6] to represent in their behalf.

Did you Leave Mr. Cohen with Mrs. Ritch? I hope you will write from there to Maud whatever you may consider necessary. Enclosed is copy[7] of my letter to her.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5239

[1] The source has the date 6th but the wire was sent to Smuts on the 4th; *vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to Minister of Interior", 4-3-1911.

[2] Not available

[3] Not available

[4] John Xavier Merriman; *vide* "Deputation's Voyage [-1]", after 23-6-1909.

[5] No representations seem to have been sent by the Indians of these towns. However, the British Indian Association of Port Elizabeth and the Indian Political Association of Kimberley had sent messages of sympathy and support to the British Indian mass meeting held at Cape Town on March 12, 1911.

[6] British India League. There were two rival organisations of Indians in Cape Town at this time: the British India League and the South African British Indian Association. Gandhiji and Ritch brought about their amalgamation under the name of "Cape British Indian Union".

[7] *Vide* "Letter to Maud Polak", 6-3-1911

260. TELEGRAM TO ABDUL CAADIR[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
March 7, 1911

TO
ABDUL CAADIR[2]
GREY STREET
DURBAN

HAVE ACCEPTED NOTHING. NOT MY POWER ACCEPT ANYTHING. HAVE ALREADY ADVISED[3] CAPE, NATAL OFFER STUBBORN OPPOSITION. KNOW NOTHING ABOUT WHAT "MERCURY" SAYS. IF LEGAL EQUALITY GRANTED AND ACT 1907 REPEALED PASSIVE. RESISTANCE TRANSVAAL MUST CEASE. IF YOU OTHER INDIANS NATAL AND CAPE WILL KINDLY DO YOUR DUTY BILL CAN BE TURNED TO GOOD ADVANTAGE. FURTHER INFORMATION SEE MR. POLAK.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5241

261. LETTER TO J. J. DOKE

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 7, 1911

DEAR MR. DOKE,

In accordance with my promise, I reduce to writing the conditions that appear to me to be essential to stopping passive resistance. The demands, as you know, are the repeal of Asiatic Act No. 2 of 1907 and the legal equality of educated Asiatics as to immigration, reduced in practice to the entry into the Transvaal of at least six highly educated Asiatics per annum.

The first demand is granted by the Bill, in that the schedule

[1] In reply to Abdul Caadir's telegram of the same date: "Immigration Bill exterminating act. Surprise[d] you accept today's *Mercury.* If you do you ruin whole community. You run after shadow giving away rights of Natal Cape. Be warned in time. Don't blunder again at concluding stage. Reply." (S.N. 5240)

[2] Dr. Abdul Caadir, *vide* "Circular Regarding Kheda Situation", 27-3-1918

[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Adam Gool", p. 417, "Letter to Abdul Hamid Gool", 2-3-1911 and "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 2-3-1911.

substantially repeals Act 2 of 1907. The second demand also appears to have been granted. But [it] is the opinion of a well-known barrister[1] that the Bill does not make it possible for educated Asiatics to enter the Transvaal under the education clause of the Bill.[2] In his opinion, as in my own, the existence of the second Registration Act, passed in 1908, blocks the way. It is, therefore, necessary to so amend the Bill as to exempt educated Asiatics who may enter under the education test from the operation of the Registration Act.

A new disability seems also to be contemplated by the Bill. The wives and minor children of non-prohibited immigrants are not protected[3] as they have been hitherto. I can only hope that this is an oversight.

There should be no difficulty in securing the necessary amendment, at least so far as the status of educated Asiatics is concerned, because General Smuts, in a telegram received on Saturday last,[4] in reply to my query[5] says that educated Asiatics are not to be subjected to the registration laws of either the Transvaal or the Orange Free State.

If, therefore, the Bill is amended in Committee as to the points I have raised above, passive resistance can immediately end and the sufferings of conscientious objectors can be avoided.

I am,

Yours truly,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5244

262. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

[JOHANNESBURG,]

March 7, 1911

MY DEAR POLAK,

The following is the wire received from Smuts, as I telephoned to you:

[1] R. Gregorowski

[2] *Vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 4-3-1911

[5] *Vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to General Smuts", 3-3-1911

[4] *ibid*

[5] *ibid*

7 March. Your letters of 2nd[1] and 4th[2] March and telegram 4th[3] March all duly received. The legal questions raised by your Counsel are being gone into by Minister with legal advisers.

Enclosed are copies[4] of what I have sent to West directly. If you have any changes to suggest, you will either send special messenger, or go over to Phoenix, or do whatever you choose, and if you want to stop anything from being published you will also advise West. The petition to the Legislative Assembly herewith with copy.[5] A copy thereof has also gone to Ritch and to West. Your copy, after it is duly signed, should be sent to Ritch with a covering letter from the officers of the Congress authorising him to send it to Sir David Hunter or any member he wishes to, that the petition will be presented only if Ritch considers it necessary.[6] I am not sending anything for the Senate just yet, because it will be at least a week, if not more, before the Bill goes to the. . . .[7] A petition to the Senate, therefore, may have to be altered. Herewith copies of telegrams exchanged between Mr. Abdul Caadir and myself.[8]

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5246

263. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 7, 1911

MY DEAR RITCH,

My letter[9] to Polak will give you such information as I have. I am just now telegraphing[10] you authority from the British Indian

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E.F.C. Lane", 2-3-1911

[2] *Vide* "Letter to E.F.C. Lane", 4-3-1911.

[3] The source has the date 6th; see, however, "Telegram to Private Secretary to Minister of Interior", 4-3-1911.

[4] Not available

[5] *Vide* "Natal Petition to Union Assembly", 9-3-1911.

[6] The petition dated 9-3-1911 was presented to the Legislative Assembly on 15-3-1911.

[7] One word is cut off here.

[8] *Vide* "Telegram to Abdul Caadir", 7-3-1911.

[9] *Vide* the preceding item.

[10] *Vide* the following item.

Association, and a telegram[1] is being sent to Smuts also, telling him that you are acting in connection with the Transvaal matter. Polak has just telephoned, and you will have a telegram from him also. You will see what I think is the proper course to adopt regarding the petition from Natal. We do not want to send the petition, if the points raised are covered in some shape or form by General Smuts. If he promises in writing during the Committee stage, no petition need be presented to Parliament. If I were you, I would even ask General Smuts whether he considers it advisable or otherwise to present the petition, that is to say, if he is in a reasonable frame of mind, as he seems to be. His reply to the Natal wire[2] is that the Bill does not affect the rights of those who are domiciled, and that the Asiatic laws referring to the rights of those domiciled remain intact. The telegram is satisfactory in so far as General Smuts appears to be in a receptive mood; but he is probably labouring under a misapprehension and believes that there are some Asiatic laws in Natal also regarding their residential rights. This, of course, is wrong both as to Natal and the Cape. I, therefore, suggest that, even if Smuts is entirely reasonable, [you] should see the friends or those whom you consider to be friends in [the] Assembly and the Senate, and tell them the substance of what is going on, so that they may be ready, I hope that you will use the wire freely, and let me know what happens daily. Please send me any cuttings you may see, and send directly to Polak or to West at Phoenix anything you may desire for publication.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5248

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to Minister of Interior", 8-3-1911.
[2] *Vide* enclosure to "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", and footnote 1, 2-3-1911.

264. TELEGRAM TO L. W. RITCH

JOHANNESBURG,
March 7, 1911

TO
RITCH
CARE ADAM GOOL
8, KLOOF STREET
CAPE TOWN

ASSOCIATION REQUESTS AUTHORISES YOU ACT REGARDING IMMIGRATION BILL BEFORE THE UNION PARLIAMENT SO FAR AS THE TRANSVAAL IS CONCERNED. THIS WIRE SHALL BE YOUR AUTHORITY FOR INTERVIEWING MINISTERS, OFFICIALS AND MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT.

CACHALIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5242

265. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR

JOHANNESBURG,
March 8, 1911

ASSOCIATION HAS APPOINTED MR. L. W. RITCH, BARRISTER-AT-LAW, SECRETARY, SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE, LONDON, JUST RETURNED INTERVIEW GENERAL SMUTS AND REPRESENT TRANSVAAL INDIAN COMMUNITY REGARDING IMMIGRATION BILL.[1]

CACHALIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5257

[1] General Smuts declined to recognize Ritch as representative of the British Indian Association. *Vide* "Telegram to L. W. Ritch", 9-3-1911

266. TELEGRAM TO L. W. RITCH

JOHANNESBURG,
March 8, 1911

DO NOT ASK YOUR OWN EXPENSES. THEY WILL BE FOUND HERE. LET ME KNOW WANTS. CAPE, NATAL SHOULD PAY EXPENSES COUNSEL'S OPINION SUCH OTHER REGARDING THEMSELVES. HOPE YOU WILL SEE SCHREINER WITHOUT DELAY. SEEK INTERVIEW SMUTS REGARDING TRANSVAAL NATAL. YOU SHOULD OFFER PERSONALLY ASSIST CAPE WITHOUT FUNDS. IF THEY DO NOT FIND LATTER YOU CANNOT OBTAIN SCHREINER'S OR OTHER LEGAL OPINION. NO TIME SHOULD BE LOST PLACING YOURSELF TOUCH AUTHORITIES. SMUTS TELEGRAPHED YESTERDAY[1] HE WAS CONFERRING WITH HIS LEGAL ADVISERS REGARDING LEGAL POINTS RAISED BY ME. CACHALIA HAS WIRED SMUTS ABOUT YOUR AUTHORITY.[2]

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5249

267. TELEGRAM TO EDITOR, "INDIAN OPINION"

JOHANNESBURG,
March 8, 1911

DO NOT PUBLISH CORRESPONDENCE WITH SMUTS.[3]

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5252

[1] *Vide* "Letter to J. J. Doke", 8-3-1911.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] Publication of this correspondence was accordingly withheld from the issue of *Indian Opinion,* 11-3-1911; the correspondence was later published in the issue of 18-3-1911

268. TELEGRAM TO EDITOR, "INDIAN OPINION"[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
March 8, 1911

THINK SECTION DOES NOT CANCEL COLONIAL-BORN INDIAN RIGHT CAPE NOR DOES IT PROTECT. I IMAGINE SUCH PERSON ENTERING CAPE BY SEA WILL BE SUBJECT TO EDUCATION TEST. ASK RITCH ASCERTAIN FROM SMUTS THEIR LEGAL POSITION.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the handwritten office copy: S.N. 5253

269. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 8, 1911

MY DEAR RITCH,

The enclosures will speak for themselves. I hope my telegram[2] was quite clear to you. We have got to work for the Cape and the Natal Indians whether they find funds or not, so far as the personal exertions of the three of us are concerned. The expenses of your stay in Cape Town will be found from the funds here, so that the only funds that the Cape people and the people in Natal have to find are for legal opinion and such other matters. If they do not wish to pay the cost of the wires that you may be sending them, we need not worry about this cost. If they will not find the funds, we shall have to work without Schreiner's opinion, which might be valuable. Anyhow, we know how the land lies and, after all, we have to secure if possible the necessary amendments in order to make the position certain and remove ambiguity. There is no further information to give you today. I am waiting anxiously to know what action you have already taken.

[1] In reply to Polak's telegram dated March 7: "Does section 7 take away right Natal-born Indians going to Cape. . . ." *Vide* "Letter to H.S.L. Polak", 8-3-1911.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to L.W.Ritch", 8-3-1911.

From Adam's[1] telegram, I gather that you are staying with him.

Yours sincerely

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy. S.N. 5254

270. LETTER TO J. J. DOKE

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 8, 1911

DEAR MR. DOKE,

The following telegram received from General Smuts throws perhaps a little more light on his mental attitude:

> 7 March. Your letters of 2nd[2] and 4th[3] March and telegram 4th[4] March all duly received. The legal questions raised by your Counsel are being gone into by Minister with legal advisers.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5255

271. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 8, 1911

MY DEAR POLAK,

I have no progress to report today. I have telegraphed to you[5] my opinion regarding your question. The seventh section of the Bill I considered very carefully last evening as also this morning. I was therefore, ready to answer your wire. If it is true that there is to be no education test under the new Bill within the Union—a contention which I do not accept in spite of Gregorowski's opinion—under Section 7 Indians going from the Transvaal to the Cape or Natal will be debarred under the education test of the Immigration Laws now to be repealed, and, if these laws have no potency after the passing of the

[1] Adam Gool; *vide* "Telegram to Adam Gool", 2-3-1911.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane" , 2-3-1911 & 4-3-1911.
[3] The source has the date 6th; see, however, "Telegram to Private Secretary to Minister of Interior", 4-3-1911.
[4] *Vide* "Telegram to Editor, *Indian Opinion*", 8-3-1911.
[5] *ibid*

present Bill, and if Gregorowski's contention is correct, the Transvaal Indians will be free to enter the Cape or Natal without let or hindrance, because there is no Asiatic legislation there except for the Chinese. I do not think that the rights of Colonial-born Indians in Natal are protected under the seventh section. If the Immigration Law of the Cape isrepealed, Colonial-born Indians who had not already entered the Cape will certainly find themselves debarred from the Cape except under the education test, because they will not have acquired any rights under the Cape Immigration Law; and the right of domicile which is left therefore under the Immigration Bill is not a potential right but a right actually being enjoyed. I do not know whether I have clearly explained the legal position. I am not sending anything at all to West today.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5256

272. NATAL PETITION TO UNION ASSEMBLY[1]

DURBAN,
March 9, 1911

TO

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER AND THE MEMBERS OF THE HON'BLE THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED

CAPE TOWN

THE PETITION OF DAWAD MAHOMED, DADA OSMAN AND MAHOMED CASSIM ANGLIA, IN THEIR CAPACITIES AS CHAIRMAN AND JOINT HONORARY SECRETARIES, RESPECTIVELY, OF THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT

1. At a public meeting of British Indians, held on the 9th day of March, 1911, under the auspices of the Natal Indian Congress, your Petitioners were authorised to petition this Honourable House with respect to the Bill to consolidate and amend the Laws in force in the various Provinces of the Union relating to Restrictions upon

[1] Drafted by Gandhiji. *Vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 7-3-1911, from which it is clear that the petition was ready on 7-3-1911.

Immigration thereto, to provide for the establishment of an Union Immigration Department and to regulate Immigration into the Union or any Province thereof, now before it.

2. Your Petitioners consider it unfortunate that the blessings of Union are not to be enjoyed by His Majesty's Indian subjects of South Africa, in that their movements are to remain as heretofore under Provincial restriction; but your Petitioners have been authorised by the public meeting aforementioned to state that, in view of the anti-Asiatic prejudice existing in many parts of the Union, those represented by yourPetitioners do not desire to raise, for the time being, any objection to the restriction.

3. Your Petitioners have, however, been asked to bring to the notice of this Honourable House the following objections to the said Bill:

(a) Under the existing immigration laws in force in this Province, the clause dealing with the education test enables an intending immigrant to submit to the test in a European language known to him. The present Bill leaves the selection of the language for purposes of examination in the hands of the immigration officer, thus making it possible for that officer to completely prevent the entry of any person or persons of any class, race, or religion, whether such person or persons be British subjects or not. In the humble opinion of your Petitioners, such a prohibition is unwarranted by previous experience.

(b) Unlike as in the immigration laws of the Province now under repeal in virtue of Schedule I to the said Bill, the wives and minor children, absent from the Province, of those who are now resident or domiciled in the Province of Natal are not protected.

(c) The rights of those who are at present residing in the Province of Natal, and those who are temporarily absent but are domiciled in the Province, do not appear to be protected as they are in the Provincial Laws already referred to herein.

(d) Sub-section (b) of Section 25 of the Bill gives absolute discretion to the Minister as to the granting of permits to lawful residents who may wish to absent themselves temporarily. Hitherto the right to such permits or certificates

of domicile, as they have been called, has remained unquestioned; and, in the humble opinion of your Petitioners, it will be a great injustice to the resident Indian population of the Province of Natal if this right is now taken away.

(e) The said Bill does not appear to give the party who may be declared a prohibited immigrant by an immigration officer, or who may be prevented from re-entering the Union or this particular Province by such officer, any recourse, as under existing legislation, to the Courts of Law established under the Union.

4. In conclusion, your Petitioners humbly pray that this Honourable House will take into consideration the objections urged herein, and amend the Bill so as to remove those objections, or grant such other relief as to this Honourable House may seem meet. And for this act of justice andmercy, your Petitioners shall, as in duty bound, for ever pray, etc.

(Sd.) DAWAD MAHOMED,
PRESIDENT, NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS
(Sd.) DADA OSMAN,
(Sd.) M. C. ANGLIA,
JOINT HONORARY SECRETARIES,
NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

Indian Opinion, 18-3-1911

273. TELEGRAM TO L. W. RITCH

JOHANNESBURG,
March 9, 1911

GENERAL SMUTS TELEGRAPHS DECLINING RECOGNISE YOU AS REPRESENTATIVE SAYING HE HAS ALWAYS FREELY RECEIVED AND COMMUNICATED WITH INDIAN COMMUNITY. REPEATING COPY WIRE GENERAL SMUTS TO YOU.[1]

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5260

[1] *Vide* the following item.

274. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR AND L. W. RITCH

JOHANNESBURG,
March 9, 1911

TO

(1) PRIVATE SECRETARY
MINISTER INTERIOR

(2) RITCH
8, KLOOF STREET
CAPE TOWN

REGARDING YOUR TELEGRAM ASSOCIATION AWARE THAT GENERAL SMUTS HAS FREELY RECEIVED COMMUNICATED WITH INDIAN COMMUNITY SOUTH AFRICA AND IS DEEPLY GRATEFUL FOR IT. REASON FOR APPOINTING MR. RITCH AS DEPUTY IS ONLY BECAUSE HE IS AT CAPETOWN AND REPRESENTATIVES TRANSVAAL INDIANS ATPRESENT SITUATED FAR AWAY. MR. RITCH IS HIMSELF SOUTH AFRICAN OF OVER TWENTY YEARS STANDING ENJOYS CONFIDENCE INDIAN COMMUNITY AND HAS BEEN REQUESTED IN ORDER SAVE TIME PERSONALLY TO RE-PRESENT ASSOCIATION NOT WITH A VIEW TO HINDER PROGRESS BILL BUT SO FAR AS ASSOCIATION CAN HELP GOVERNMENT. WOULD FURTHER ADD THAT MR. RITCH HAS NOT BEEN SPECIALLY SENT FOR FROM LONDON BUT AS HIS RETURN TO SOUTH AFRICA SYNCHRONISES WITH APPEARANCE OF BILL HE HAS BEEN REQUESTED STOP CAPETOWN DURING ITS PROGRESS. ASSOCIATION THEREFORE RESPECTFULLY TRUSTS GENERAL SMUTS WILL RECONSIDER HIS DECISION AND RECEIVE MR. RITCH

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5261

275. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 9, 1911

MY DEAR RITCH,

I have your telegram[1] which fills me with hope. Hajee Suliman Shah Mahomed, the father of the young man whom, you will remember, we met in London, and who belongs to Taunto School, writes to me saying that he will render all the help he can. I hope that you have been receiving all my wires and letters regularly. I am redirecting three letters received for you today from England.

Yours sincerely,

[PS.]

Herewith copies of telegrams[2] just dispatched.

Evidently Oom[3] Jan [Smuts][4] fears Bogeyman Ritch.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5263

276. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

March 9, 1911

MY DEAR POLAK,

I have just received a telegram from Ritch saying that the Cape community are united at last.[5] God be thanked for it. It is a surprise to me that they are united at last, and that those who have been hitherto simply in the habit of using butter will now be using harder substances.

Will you please remind Mr. Omar that I want the Church Street property lease? I have used Kallenbach's lease for getting the loan from Pretoria. At that time there was a great deal of hurry about it. Mr. Dada Osman continued to send telegrams after telegrams, and I did not wait to hear where the original lease that Mr. Omar possesses

[1] Which read: "Cape community united at last moving"
[2] *Vide* the two preceding items.
[3] Uncle
[4] The paper here is damaged.
[5] *Vide* footnote 1 to the preceding item.

was. Now the bond-holders are keeping Kallenbach's lease. We must, therefore, give his bond-holders our original. Please, therefore, find out who has it, whether Mr. Omar or anybody else. I had a chat with the Solicitors for the Norwich Union Co., who hold the bond over the lease. I will be in town on Saturday also, though I shall attempt to get away by the 1.15 train, but it will all depend upon what I hear from you and Ritch.

Your letters have been redirected to Phoenix. I enclose herewith letter[1] from Buenos Aires. I do not know the writer at all. We do not want to publish the whole of the letter, and, as far as I am concerned, I do not mind if you keep it out entirely, but if you think that there is anything in it, you may give an extract. I am not at all enamoured with the idea of Indians [mi]grating to the Argentine.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5264

277. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Phagan Shud 9 [*March 9, 1911*][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

From the serious attention you are giving to the study of Tamil, I feel certain that you will some day master it.

I send one issue of *Saraswati*[3] and Thoreau's biography today. I have gone through the biographical sketch of Ramdasji[4] in the first issue today. It is very well written. Are you sure that you have sent me the second issue? Please look up there and send it to me if it is there. I do not find it here with me. Ask Purshottamdas if he has seen it. Thoreau's biography is worth going through. Read it when you have the time. Mr. West will see it when it is entered in the library. You may, however, draw his attention to it.

It appears that the struggle will definitely come to an end. There is, however, little likelihood of my staying there. No one is likely to

[1] Not reproduced in *Indian Opinion*

[2] This letter must have been written before Chhaganlal Gandhi's arrival in South Africa in July 1911.

[3] A Hindi magazine published from Allahabad

[4] Saint Ramdas of Maharashtra was a source of inspiration and strength for the rise of the Martha power in the seventeenth century.

stay [here at the Tolstoy Farm] after the struggle ends. Mr. Kallenbach has perhaps spent £600 on buildings alone. I see that the whole burden will fall on him. To prevent this, I propose to stay on at the Farm and make good as much of the loss as possible by means of physical labour. How can I leave Mr. Kallenbach immediately after the struggle is over? At the same time it is necessary for me to go there (Phoenix) but I do not see how it will be possible. My struggle will not be over even when our satyagraha struggle ends. It is as it should be. That I shall have to stay on at Mr. Kallenbach's Farm is something not expected. I shall get plenty of experience even from that; and who knows, it may be for my good.

As soon as the struggle is over, Mr. Polak will have to be sent to England. He will take about six months to return. I want him to return *via* India. It will be very good if Chhaganlal returns before Mr. Polak leaves. I think in all probability he will.

I wish you to win over Harilal Thaker.

Please watch Manilal. Does he or can he put in any study?

How is Santok's health?

I give you a piece of information now which I have withheld. so far. Ba became nervous when she had a sudden attack of acute pain. I was busy and could not go to see her a second time. She must have got angry and when I went to her she burst into tears and made it appear as if she would die. I felt somewhat awkward, but immediately recovered myself and said to her with a smile, "Nothing to worry about if you die. There is plenty of wood. We shall cremate you on this Farm itself." At this she also laughed. Half the pain disappeared with the laugh. Then I decided that very strong remedies were called for. Earth alone would not do. So I suggested to her that she should give up vegetables and salt altogether. She should live on wheat and fruits only. She might take, if she wanted, saltless rice with ghee. She said, "Even you cannot do it." I said, "From today I give up salt, vegetables, etc." How could she take these things then? The result is that for the last one month both of us have been taking food without salt, vegetables and pulses. As for myself, I have no desire for other food. Ba has it sometimes. Once when she could not restrain herself, she took a little *gavar*. Otherwise it appears she has lived on this diet. There was a miraculous change for the better. The bleeding stopped immediately. I got the incidental benefit of extra self-control. This is my argument [as regards the eschewing of salt]: Salt is a powerful

chemical. Even a little when added to something changes its quality and taste. Its effect must be to thin the blood. So far as I can think, salt is bound to have an instant effect on the sick—and mostly adverse at that. When I first read the writings of Mrs. Wallace and others [on the subject], they had little effect on me. On this occasion I felt all the time that it would be fine if the doctor could be kept away. Thereupon, it occurred to me to note the effect of saltless diet. Even though Ba may continue her [saltless diet] throughout this month, she won't keep it up beyond that. I think of carrying on the experiment as long as possible.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Please share this with Purushottamdas.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5079 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

278. TRANSVAAL PETITION TO UNION ASSEMBLY[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
March 10, 1911

TO

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER AND THE MEMBERS OF
THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA
CAPE TOWN

THE PETITION OF AHMED MAHOMED CACHALIA, IN HIS CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN OF THE BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF THE TRANSVAAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT

l. The Members of the Association have read the Bill published in *Government Gazette Extraordinary* dated the 25th February, to consolidate and amend the Laws in force in the various Provinces of the Union relating to restrictions upon immigration thereto, to provide for the establishment of an Union Immigration Department and to regulate Immigration into the Union of any Province thereof.

[1] A copy of this was sent to Ritch; *vide* "Letter to L. W. Ritch", 10-3-1911.

2. In the humble opinion of the Petitioning Association the restriction of the residential rights of British Indians at present residing in the various Provinces of South Africa to the provincial limits laid down in the Bill is inconsistent with the Union of the Provinces and unjust to the British Indians of South Africa. But, in view of the prejudice that exists in South Africa against the community represented by the Petitioning Association, it has been decided for the time being to acquiesce in the restriction above referred to. But the Petitioning Association ventures to submit to this Honourable House that the said Bill is ambiguous in several essential particulars which very materially affect the interests of British Indians residing in the Transvaal, which particulars are as under:

(a) The Bill, according to its present wording, does not permit of the residence in the Transvaal of educated Indians who might pass the education test required under Section 4 of the said Bill, by reason of the existence of the Asiatic Registration Act No. 36 of 1908. The Association has been legally advised that, in the absence of any special mention in the Bill, such Asiatics will be subject to the provisions of the said Asiatic Registration Act, and will, therefore, be unable to enter the Transvaal, or, if they are allowed to do so, they will be obliged to be registered thereunder. The Petitioning Association respectfully submits that British Indians who may pass the education test will be sufficiently identified by reason of such examination, and that, therefore, the Bill may be so amended as to leave no uncertainty as to the right of educated Asiatics passing the education test of entering and remaining in the Transvaal and other Provinces of the Union without being subject to the Registration Laws or such other Laws of the different Provinces.

(b) The Petitioning Association respectfully draws the attention of this Honourable House to the fact that there seems to be no provision in the said Bill protecting the wives and minor children of registered Asiatics, which protection has been hitherto enjoyed by them owing to the existence of Act 15 of 1907, Transvaal, together with the Registration Act. Act 15 of 1907 of the Transvaal is to be repealed by the said Bill.

3. In conclusion, the Petitioning Association prays that this Honourable House will take into consideration the submission made herein, and amend the Bill in the desired direction, or grant such other relief as to this Honourable House may seem meet. And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioner shall, as in duty bound, for ever pray.

CHAIRMAN,

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5273, also reproduced in part in *Indian Opinion*, 18-3-1911

279. LETTER TO BUDREA

March 10, 1911

MY DEAR BUDREA[1],

I have done nothing about Shankersing. The number will be found in the Union *Gazette. You* will get all the information from Mr. Polak or anybody connected with *Indian Opinion.* I think that you will be able soon to return to Johannesburg, but for the present you ought not to think of it. The struggle is not yet closed.

Yours sincerely,

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5266

280. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,]

March 10, 1911

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your telegram in reply to mine of the 9th instant[3], informing my Association that

[1] A client who had given a general power of attorney to Gandhiji

[2] This letter, presumably drafted by Gandhiji, was sent by the Chairman, British Indian Association, and reproduced in *Indian Opinion,* 18-3-1911, as a part of the Gandhi-Smuts correspondence.

[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to Minister of Interior and L. W. Ritch", 9-3-1911

General Smuts is not prepared to depart from his decision not to recognize Mr. Ritch, as he feels that there is no necessity to bring into the matter at this stage one who is an entire stranger to him, and that the leaders of the Indian community may rely that their representations already received from Mr. Gandhi and any further suggestions that they may put forward will receive the fullest consideration of the Government, and that it is entirely unnecessary for anybody to come to Cape Town to emphasise the points put forward. My Association is grateful for the assurance contained in the telegram, and, in accordance with General Smuts' desire, no representative will be sent from Johannesburg.

It is but right for my Association to state that Mr. Ritch having been intimately connected with the controversy for a long time, having made an exhaustive study of the subject, and having lived in Johannesburg for many years, is a gentleman pre-eminently qualified to make representations to the Government. He enjoys the fullest confidence of the community, and it was felt that much might be done towards ending the struggle by personal interviews. Hence it was that Mr. Ritch was deputed to wait upon General Smuts if necessary. My Association trusts that the Bill will be so amended that it will be found in the end that the deputing of Mr. Ritch was unnecessary.

My Association has read the correspondence between General Smuts and Mr. Gandhi; and I am desired to endorse Mr. Gandhi's submission[1] to General Smuts, namely, that passive resistance will end on the Bill being amended during the Committee stage so as to exempt educated Asiatics who may be admitted under the immigration test from the operation of the registration laws in the different provinces, especially Act 36 of 1908 of the Transvaal, and unequivocally to provide for the protection of the wives and minor children of Asiatics registered or entitled to be registered in the Transvaal or to remain in this Province by reason of the education test, whether such wives and minors are within the Transvaal or without.

My Association trusts that, if the struggle, which has been so prolonged, happily ends, those who are now undergoing imprisonment as passive resisters will be discharged, and that those

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 4-3-1911.

who have suffered for conscience sake will not be penalised, but that the rights which they would have under Act 36 of 1908 will be respected.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

CHAIRMAN,

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

From a photostat of the type written office copy: S.N. 5267

281. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

[JOHANNESBURG,]

Match 10, 1911

MY DEAR POLAK,

I do not think that there need be any worry about police officer. If the Regulations provide for Kaffir Police, we can fight the Regulations. Even in attacking the details of the Bill, I think we should be very careful not to trouble ourselves with what may be remedied by Regulation. Yes, your reading of the second Section is, in my opinion, correct, but Gregorowski thinks that the seventh Section overrides that construction, and he may be right. You are quite right, the Transvaal right cannot be taken away because of registration, but the Natal right of domicile—a highly legal term—may be annulled by transference. But I quite agree with you that it is not a question to be raised just now. Your letter[1] to the *Natal Witness* I consider magnificent. I do not think the Government of India ever gave thought to the many things you mention in your letter, but it is intrinsically so good and convincing that it should be reproduced in the columns of *Indian Opinion.* I, therefore, return it to you, in case you have not a copy.

Sincerely yours,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5271

[1] The letter was reproduced in *Indian Opinion,* 18-3-1911.

282. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 10, 1911

MY DEAR RITCH,

I enclose herewith petition[1] to be presented to Parliament and copy of the letter[2] addressed to General Smuts. The petition, if you think that it should be presented—and I think it should be unless there is any special reason to the contrary—might be presented by Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, Farrar, Drummond Chaplin or Emile Nathan, and, if none of these Transvaal Members will accept it for representation, which I can hardly conceive, it might be handed through Theo. Schreiner or Alexander or whoever else you may think proper.[3] I hope that you will send full telegrams as to what happens at the second reading as also during the Committee stage. I assume that you will attend the House at the time of the second reading of the Bill. There is nothing else.

Yours sincerely,

[Enclosure][4]

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5272

283. TELEGRAM TO L. W. RITCH

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 10, 1911

SMUTS TELEGRAPHS[5][5] HE DOES NOT WISH AT THIS STAGE SEE YOU ENTIRE STRANGER BUT REPRESENTATIONS ARE RECEIVING CAREFUL CONSIDERATION. FURTHER REPRESENTATIONS WILL BE TREATED LIKEWISE AND ADDS NOBODY SHOULD COME FROM HERE EITHER. THEREFORE NO USE MY COMING. SUGGEST YOUR SEEING EVERY MEMBER YOU CAN. MAKE REPRESENTATIONS ON BEHALF PEOPLE THERE THEIR

[1] *Vide* "Transvaal Petition to Union Assembly", 10-3-1911.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Minister of Interior", 10-3-1911.
[3] The petition was presented on March 15 by Patrick Duncan.
[4] *ibid*
[5] *Ibid*

CHAIRMAN SIGNING THEM. HAVE YOU SEEN ANYONE YET.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5274

284. RITCH'S ARRIVAL

Mr. Ritch has returned from England, and has immediately plunged into work. His arrival at this juncture is quite timely. Such a man is needed at present not so much in England as here. His work in England can be attended to by Miss Polak.

The community owes it to Mr. Ritch to give him all help and encouragement. He will start practice shortly. If the community helps him, he will earn enough for a living. Everybody should remember that Mr. Ritch is a poor man.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-3-1911

285. TELEGRAM TO MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 11, 1911

MY ASSOCIATION VENTURES DRAW YOUR ATTENTION IMMIGRATION BILL TO BE READ SECOND TIME MONDAY[2]. ACCORDING LEGAL ADVICE RECEIVED BY ASSOCIATION BILL DOES NOT EXEMPT EDUCATED ASIATICS WHO MAY PASS EDUCATION TEST PROM OPERATION ASIATIC REGISTRATION ACTS AND IT DOES NOT PROTECT MINOR CHILDREN WIVES REGISTERED ASIATICS OR ASIATICS WHO MAY ENTER UNDER EDUCATION TEST. TRUST BILL WILL BE SO AMENDED AS TO COVER OBJECTIONS WHEN IT WILL HAPPILY END PAINFUL STRUGGLE WHICH HAS MEANT OVER THREE THOUSAND IMPRISONMENTS AND CAUSED RUIN MANY ASIATIC HOMES. ASSOCIATION OFFERS NO COMMENT ON BEARING BILL

[1] This telegram was sent to Members of Parliament at Cape Town and also to Ritch. *Vide* the following item.

[2] March 13, 1911

NATAL CAPE POSITION.

CACHALIA
CHAIRMAN
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5276; also *Indian Opinion*, 18-3-1911

286. TELEGRAM TO L. W. RITCH

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 11, 1911

HAVE SENT WIRES[1] FOLLOWING QUINN, WYNDHAM, T. SCHREINER, JAGGER, W. SCHREINER, CHAPLIN, DUNCAN, FITZPATRICK, FARRAR, NATHAN, ALEXANDER.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5275

287. TELEGRAM TO NAIDOO

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 11, 1911

FOLLOW MR. RITCH'S ADVICE MEETING. YOU SHOULD PROTEST AGAINST IMMIGRATION BILL REGARDING SEVERITY EDUCATION TEST, UNCERTAINTY RIGHTS OF DOMICILE AND RIGHT OF WIVES AND CHILDREN, DISCRETIONARY POWER BEING GIVEN AS TO ISSUE OF CERTIFICATES DOMICILE. AUTHORISE MR. RITCH REPRESENT YOU. LOSE NO TIME.

BIAS

From a photostat of the handwritten office copy: S.N. 5278

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

288. CABLE TO NATESAN, GOKHALE AND S.A.B.I. COMMITTEE

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 11, 1911

1. NATESAN, MADRAS
2. GOKHALE, CALCUTTA
3. DEPURITION[1], LONDON

PRINCIPLE NEW BILL SATISFACTORY BECAUSE IT RECOGNISES LEGAL EQUALITY. IT WILL END PASSIVE RESISTANCE IF IS AMENDED TO EXEMPT EDUCATED INDIANS FROM OPERATION REGISTRATION ACT AND TO PROTECT MINOR CHILDREN WIVES OF LAWFUL RESIDENTS WHETHER FORMER AT PRESENT OUTSIDE TRANSVAAL OR INSIDE. ITS EFFECT NATAL AND CAPE ADVERSE, CURTAILS RIGHTS OF LAWFUL RESIDENTS, DEPRIVES THEM RIGHT BRING WIVES MINOR CHILDREN. WHILE NO OBJECTION TO SEVERE EDUCATION TEST FOR TRANSVAAL, CAPE NATAL INDIANS LEGITIMATELY OBJECT SEVERE TEST BEING APPLIED THERE. ITS EFFECT IS SECURE VIRTUAL EXCLUSION ASIATICS. CAPE NATAL MUCH AGGRIEVED. SUCH EXCLUSION PREVENTS MERCHANTS BRINGING CLERKS ASSISTANTS WHO HITHERTO CAME UNDER EDUCATION TEST. REPRESENTATIONS HAVE BEEN MADE GOVERNMENT UNION PARLIAMENT ABOUT EVERYTHING. PROBABLE NECESSARY AMENDMENTS WILL BE MADE. GENERAL SMUTS STATES IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT ALREADY ACCEPTED BILL PRESENT FORM. IF PRINCIPLE OF BILL ONLY ACCEPTED NO HARM DONE. IMPERIAL INDIAN GOVERNMENTS CANNOT ACCEPT BILL IN DETAIL AND NOT DO INJUSTICE IF THEY DO NOT FIRST SEE INDIAN OBJECTIONS SECOND READING MONDAY. SUGGEST FOR PRESENT MAKING REPRESENTATIONS AUTHORITIES URGING CONSIDERATION OUR OBJECTIONS BEFORE BILL BECOMES LAW.

From a photostat of the typewritten draft with corrections in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 5279

[1] This was the telegraphic address of the Transvaal Indian Deputation consisting of Gandhiji and H. O. Ally during their stay in London in 1906. It is presumed that this address continued to be used by the South Africa British Indian Committee, London. *Vide* "A Retrospect", 29-12-1906 and "Letter to Maud Polak", 13-3-1911.

289. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 11, 1911

MY DEAR RITCH,

I have your telegram, as also your letter. You will have received copy of the telegram[1] sent to certain Members. I could not quite understand your meaning, but I interpreted your wire to mean that wires should be sent on behalf of the Association, giving the views on the Bill to the Transvaal Members who have at all interested themselves in the matter. You will see among the names three[2] which are not Transvaal. I thought that these three Members were specially entitled to the wire. The views are also represented in the Petition[3], which I hope you will circulate to the Press also. There is a wire from Cape Town in the *Daily Mail* to the effect that General Smuts has placed on the Table printed correspondence between the Imperial Government and the Union Government regarding the Bill. I hope you will be able to get a copy of it and send it.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5280

290. LETTER TO MAUD POLAK

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 13, 1911

MY DEAR MAUD,

A long cable[4] was sent to you on Saturday. I hope that you thoroughly understood it. The cable was not sent without a great deal of hesitation. The Bill having been published, I am rather sanguine of the necessary amendments being made. Yet, in order that it might not become law immediately after it is read a third time in Parliament, I sent the cable, so that you could consult Lord Ampthill and Sir Muncherjee, and at least warn the Imperial Government. Similar

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Members of Parliament", 11-3-1911.
[2] Alexander, T. L. Schreiner, and W. P. Schreiner
[3] *Vide* "Transvaal Petition to Union Assembly", 10-3-1911.
[4] *Vide* "Cable to Natesan, Gokhale and S.A.B.I. Committee", 11-3-1911.

cables[1] have been sent to Bombay and Madras.

I suppose you know the procedure with reference to a Bill. It is formally read a first time; a full debate takes place on the second reading, and, unless there is opposition to the principle of the Bill, the second reading is carried. Then it is read in Committee, at which stage amendments are made. Then comes the third reading. After that it goes to the Senate, and, if the Senate approves of it, it is submitted to the Governor-General for the Royal Assent. If the Bill does not contain a reservatory clause, it becomes the law of the land immediately. The reservatory clause is inserted when there is any racial differentiation. As there is none in this Bill, there is no reservatory clause at all. It may, therefore, come into force immediately, unless the Governor-General is advised by the Imperial Government not to give his sanction without first submitting the Bill to them. The last recourse left open to objectors is to secure a veto, even though the Bill may come into operation, because a clause in the Royal instructions provides that any Bill, although it may have the force of law, may be vetoed within two years of its promulgation by the King-in-Council.

I expect that the Bill will have been passed through the Lower House by the time this letter reaches you, but it may not have gone to the Senate, or at least it may not have received the Governor-General's sanction. You will have further cables as to the progress of the Bill. I am anxious to make the following position quite clear to you. Passive Resistance has been continued for securing repeal of Act 2 of 1907, and to secure legal equality as to the immigration of highly-educated Asiatics. In the cablegram, however, you have been told that, if the Bill does not protect minors and the wives of lawful residents, it may not end passive resistance. It might be said that this is a new point raised by us. I hope, however, that any such misconception you will be able to remove. Wives and minor children are under the existing legislation fully protected—you will notice that from Mr. Gregorowski's opinion[2]—but the new Bill seeks to deprive us of that right, and passive resisters can hardly be expected to bargain away the rights of parents, specially such inherent rights as those of taking their wives

[1] *Vide* "Cable to Natesan, Gokhale and S.A.B.I. Committee", 11-3-1911.
[2] Available in part; *vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 4-3-1911.

and children with them, against a grant of legal equality. I do not think that there will be any difficulty about getting the necessary amendment carried here, but, supposing that the difficulty does arise and General Smuts again talks of new points being raised by me, you will know how to deal with it. It is General Smuts who is raising a new point, if he is raising it at all. I give him the credit of not raising any contentious issues, by supposing that the matter has only been overlooked by his draughtsmen, and that he will rectify the difficulty at the Committee stage. As to the Cape and Natal, whether the position there is ameliorated or not, the present passive resistance will stop, if the Bill is amended, so far as the Transvaal is concerned, in the manner suggested by me. You will carefully go through the Petition[1] to the House of Parliament here, and all the other documents. I am asking[2] Mr. Ritch to write to you from Cape Town, so that the information I am giving you will be brought up to date by Mr. Ritch.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5281

291. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 13, 1911

MY DEAR RITCH,

I have your letter. I suppose the handwriting is Harold's[3]. I congratulate him and you also. He is copying your style. Are you at the Hotel whose paper you have used? I hope that you have been receiving my letters daily and regularly. I quite agree with you that we should not accept dictation from Smuts as to who should be the representative, and I am glad that he has sent the telegram saying no one should proceed from here either.[4] Your letter to the *Cape Argus* is none too strong. I hope that Schreiner will assist materially in this matter. I expect much from the Cape Press. They should put up a strong fight on behalf of the Cape Indians. From the *Cape Argus*

[1] *Vide* "Transvaal Petition to Union Assembly" 10-3-1911.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to L. W. Ritch", 18-3-1911.
[3] Rich's son
[4] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Minister of Interior", 10-3-1911.

leader, it would appear that the Bill will undergo considerable modifications, as it ought to, in the shape of curtailing the discretionary powers of the Administration. I am sending you cheque for £10, which you should have no difficulty in getting cashed by Silberbauer, if nowhere else. I enclose herewith copy of Laughton's opinion[1]. You have got my deductions.[2]

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5282

292. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 13, 1911

MY DEAR POLAK,

Whether you send money from your side to Ritch or not, I have sent £10 from here. I enclose herewith cuttings received from Ritch, thinking you may not have seen them or some of them. The Colonial-born Indians' attitude I can understand. It is largely due to their ignorance which in its turn owes its existence to their indifference and laziness. They have not followed the struggle, and they will not study the laws affecting Indians. You can see the grossest ignorance betrayed in the *African Chronicle* leading article, which I undertook to read after your warning. It is not only ignorant, but it is mischievous. The writer has not even taken the trouble of reading the Law, and quotes words as belonging to a Section which do not occur in it. However, we can only disabuse their minds of misunderstandings to the best of our ability. What I think you may safely promise, and what I think we may have to do, is that, immediately the matter is settled and the Bill is on the Statute Book, we will have to present our Bill of Rights throughout the Union, and work away for it, leaving me out of account,[3] of which a little later.

You will not forget the reminder for Mr. Omar.[4] It is necessary to have the lease as early as possible. I have not written any leading matter yet in connection with the Bill. I do not want to write anything

[1] Not available

[2] *Vide* "Letter to R. Gregorowski", 2-3-1911.

[3] Perhaps because Gandhiji was thinking of leaving South Africa to settle in India immediately after the Bill became law.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to H. S. L Polak", 9-3-1911.

until I have seen the Debate on the Second Reading.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5283

293. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 14, 1911

MY DEAR RITCH,

The Debate[1] seems to have gone not badly. Your coaching of Alexander[2] proved very effective. Let us hope that we shall have the necessary amendments. I thought I would have a telegram giving your own impression of the Debate. The report received here is by no means exhaustive. I hope that the petitions[3] were presented yesterday[4]. Have I asked you to get from Silberbauer Team's certificate and all the other certificates that were sent to him in connection with the cases of the deportees? If not, please get them. I am publishing the correspondence[5], as also a leader regarding yourself.[6] If you think that this is inadvisable, please telegraph Phoenix directly. This will be in your hands early on Friday morning, and if your telegram goes before 10 o'clock to Phoenix, the matter can be kept out. But I think that it should go in. We will have, in the event of the amendments not being made, to go further, and use the incident against General Smuts.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5285

[1] On the second reading of the Bill, which began on 13-3-1911

[2] After Smuts' speech on the second reading of the Bill, Advocate Alexander fervently spoke in favour of the Asiatic demands. Gandhiji himself had sent a telegram to Alexander; *vide* "Telegram to Members of Parliament", 11-3-1911.

[3] *Vide* "Natal Petition to Union Assembly", 9-3-1911 and "Transvaal Petition to Union Assembly", 10-3-1911.

[4] According to a Reuter telegram published in the Gujarati Section of *Indian Opinion*, 18-3-1911, the petitions of the Cape, Natal and Transvaal Indians were presented to Parliament on 15-3-1911.

[5] Between Gandhiji and the Minister of Interior; *vide Indian Opinion*, 18-3-1911.

[6] *Vide* "Little-mindedness", *Indian Opinion*, 18-3-1911.

294. LETTER TO "RAND DAILY MAIL"[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
March 15, 1911[2]

SIR,

There is only one thing in your leading article of today's date on which you will, perhaps, permit me to say a few words. So far as I can voice my countrymen's aspirations, there is no question now, and there was none before, of quietly accepting the existing position governing British Indians in the different Provinces. All that the present Bill can do, so far as the Transvaal is concerned, is to stop passive resistance, and that, too, if it is amended so as to make it clear that the rights at present enjoyed by the minor children and wives of domiciled Asiatics, whether they be at present inside the Transvaal or outside the Province, are not to be taken away by it, and that those few highly educated Asiatics who will enter under the education test will be able to reside in any part of the Union without being subject to Provincial registration laws. Apart from passive resistance, Indians have never ceased, nor have, for that matter, the Imperial and Indian Governments, to press for repeal of legislation which prohibits their holding landed property, interferes with their freedom of movement, etc. I am quite sure that the Cape and the Natal Indians will certainly never submit to legislation restrictive of the rights at present enjoyed by them, without making a desperate effort to avoid such a calamity. In an age which we fondly believe is an age of progress, there can be no such thing as finality, and my countrymen would be less than human, if they did not make a serious endeavour to deserve, at the hands of the European residents in the Union, better treatment than they have hitherto received. The education test in the present Bill is not a fraud, unless you are prepared to give that name to the whole of the British Constitution. The adoption by General Smuts of the policy enunciated by Lord Crewe is a recognition by him of the idea of equality. The administration of the measure will be undoubtedly

[1] This was reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 25-3-1911, along with an extract from the leading article.

[2] The source bears the date March 16. But *vide* "Letter to L W. Ritch", 15-3-1911

unequal. There is no secret about it. Administrative inequality will be a concession to the prevalent prejudice in South Africa and to human weakness. Self-respecting Asiatics are bound to make an honest attempt to remove the prejudice, first, by removing the causes that have led to the rise of any such prejudice and, secondly, by showing that largely it is based on ignorance.

I am, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5303

295. TELEGRAM TO L. W. RITCH

JOHANNESBURG,
March 15, 1911

WIRE YOUR IMPRESSION DEBATE WHEN COMMITTEE STAGE.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the handwritten office copy: S.N. 5292

296. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 15, 1911

MY DEAR RITCH,

There has been no letter from you since Monday, and no telegram. I take it that you have been too busy lobbying. I enclose herewith my reply[1] to a leading article appearing in today's issue of the *Mail.* The article itself I shall send you tomorrow. I thought it was necessary to deal with it. I felt like doing it when the *Mail* first wrote in the same strain, but Sorabjee was very nervous about it, and so I thought I would yield. I trust that you will send me, from time to time, wires as to any amendments that may be moved, and their progress. We cannot tolerate any uncertainty regarding the wives and minor children. If you have not already sent me copy of the correspondence between the Imperial and the Union Governments, please do so now. I had expected a copy today from you.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5290

[1] *Vide* "Letter to *Rand Daily Mail*", 15-3-1911

297. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 15, 1911

MY DEAR POLAK,

The *Rand Daily Mail* article referred to in the letter to Ritch[1] has been sent to West, and also the cartoon[2]. Up to the time of writing there is no wire from Cape Town. I hope our friends there will have collected a fair sum by the time this reaches you. The first thing necessary even for passive resistance in its initial stages will be funds.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the handwritten office copy: S.N. 5292b

298. LETTER TO "PRETORIA NEWS"

JOHANNESBURG,
March 16, 1911

SIR,

Certain inaccuracies in the interview with me which you have published have led, I see, to a great deal of misunderstanding in Natal, and the interview is being used much to the detriment of the cause I have at heart. Inaccuracies are inevitable in an interview, unless it is revised by the interviewed, especially when such an interview takes place, as this one did, over the telephone. I hope, therefore, that you will permit me to remove through your columns the misunderstanding created by the interview in question.

This is my position: If the new Bill admits Asiatics who pass the education test into the Union without their being subject to Asiatic Registration Laws, and if it does not take away, as it is apprehended its present wording does, the rights of wives and minor children of those registered or entitled to be registered to enter the Transvaal, passive resistance must cease; and to that extent I consider the Bill to be satisfactory. However intensely I may dislike the provisions of the Bill regarding the Asiatics at the Cape and in Natal, passive resistance

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Not available

cannot be continued by the Transvaal Asiatics in respect of the disabilities proposed to be imposed upon my countrymen in these two Provinces. So that my satisfaction with theBill can only relate to the Transvaal and to the passive resistance campaign.

The number of Indians at present serving indentures is not 15,000 but nearly 23,000.

I am, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5301

299. TELEGRAM TO H. S. L. POLAK

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 16, 1911

TO
POLAK
CARE RUSTOMJEE
DURBAN

RITCH WIRES PETITIONS PRESENTED BY DUNCAN[1] HUNTER[2] JAGGER[3] RESPECTIVE PROVINCES. ALL CONSIDER PRAYER JUST. OUTLOOK MOST ENCOURAGING. NOT KNOWN WHEN REACHING COMMITTEE. SITUATION HAS BEEN CABLED FROM CAPE .

GANDHI

From a photostat of the handwritten office copy: S.N. 5296

300. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

March 16, 1911

MY DEAR RITCH,

I have your letter, as also your telegram. You have certainly done all that was possible. If the present amalgamation[4] of the various Indian Associations continues after your withdrawal, it will be a very

[1] Patrick Duncan, Member of Parliament from the Transvaal
[2] Sir David Hunter, Member of Parliament. from Natal
[3] J. W. Jagger, Member of Parliament from the Cape Colony
[4] *Vide* 4th footnote of "Letter to L.W. Ritch", 6-3-1911.

great gain. If young Gool, the doctor, works well and self-sacrificingly, he can do a great deal. I am re-directing seven letters to you. There is nothing new from Maud. I hope that you will carefully scan every amendment that may be moved in Committee, and see to it that General Smuts does not surreptitiously create a colour bar by moving the amendment to the effect that those who may enter under the education test shall not be subject to the Registration Act of the Transvaal. The amendment should be that such men should not be subject to the registration laws of any Province, because, if that is not done, the Orange Free State will be barred, and the theory of equality as to immigration will be violated. In an immigration law of the Transvaal, exemption from the Transvaal Registration Act would have been quite enough, but, in a Union Immigration Law, exemption from all registration laws is absolutely necessary. Please note, too, that the minor children of Asiatics registered or entitled to be registered, or entering under the immigration test, have to be protected whether they are without the Union or within. General Smuts is quite capable of bringing in an amendment which would read to mean that Asiatic minors outside the Transvaal but within the Union shall alone be able to enter the Transvaal. *India* has published[1] the full report of your presentation. It reads admirably. Lord Ampthill seems to have acted perfectly, and I was glad to notice Dube[2] speaking out so nicely. The whole affair was evidently a very great success. I should like the names of all who were present; Maud has not supplied me with them. The writer in the *South African News* is a disappointing man. He leads one to think that all one's courtesy is lost upon him. However, your letter made him think.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5299

[1] In its issue dated 24-2-1911

[2] An Indian barrister practising in England

301. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

[JOHANNESBURG,]

March 16, 1911

MY DEAR POLAK,

I pass on the cutting received from Ritch. I hope that the report of the Ritch presentation[1] will go in full at an early date. Just at this time it is very seasonable. I send you the enclosed[2] from the All-India Moslem League. I do not like the advertising idea underlying it, but I fear that we have to publish it. Naidoo has sent me for correction a petition drafted either by himself or by Aiyar[3] regarding the £3 tax. In spite of your remarks in one of your letters, I still very much distrust Aiyar's good faith. He is a man of the moment. He will write one thing today, and just the opposite tomorrow. He is thoroughly unscrupulous, and I am nervous about his handling any matters of public importance, and I am much more so when he is disposed to patronise me. I like him best when he swears at me and publicly goes for me. I know that then he would not ask me to assist in any of his public activities. I fear that he is now hoodwinking P. K. Naidoo on the strength of his being a Brahmin, and possessing a better knowledge of the English language than Naidoo. Now you will more fully understand my advice [to] P.K. Naidoo. I send you copy of my letter[4] to him. I feel for him, because I consider him to be infinitely superior to Aiyar in character. All the children and most of the passive resisters on the Farm are in Johannesburg today. I brought them out by special car. The Traffic Manager quoted specially favourable terms. For 26 men and children the return journey costs £1/12/2. I propose to go back with them on Saturday by the one o'clock train, unless you or Ritch retain me in Johannesburg. Of course, I return to the Farm every evening. I was glad to notice through the telephone today that your voice was much stronger and better. I hope there is no trace of cold now left. I enclose herewith copy of my letter[5] to the *Pretoria News.* I am writing the letter because I promised I would, but,

[1] The Address to L. W. Ritch, Secretary, South Africa British Indian Committee, London, was presented at Criterion Restaurant, London, on 16-2-1911. A report of the proceedings was published in *Indian Opinion*, 25-3-1911.

[2] Enclosure not available

[3] P. S. Aiyar, Editor. *African Chronicle*, Durban

[4] Not available

[5] *Vide* "Letter to *Pretoria News*",16-3-1911.

on re-reading the interview, I see that I need not have written the letter. Stent has sufficiently explained my view about Natal and the Cape. The little inaccuracy about the figures and the concluding paragraph as to my satisfaction do not matter. However, my letter I hope you will consider sufficient.

Sincerely yours,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5302

302. LETTER TO J. J. DOKE

[JOHANNESBURG,]

March 17, 1911

DEAR MR. DOKE,

I fear that for a little thing, little, that is, from the European standpoint, the struggle will have to be prolonged. Mr. Ritch telegraphs, saying that General Smuts will introduce an amendment exempting future immigrants from the operation of the Asiatic Act of the Transvaal, that is to say, they will still be liable to the Asiatic Ordinance of the Orange Free State, and, therefore, the colour bar will still remain in the Immigration Law. I feel that we cannot possibly accept such a concession. The removal of the colour bar throughout the Union so far as the new immigrants are concerned means nothing for the Orange Free State, because the local disabilities may and will still remain, but, unless the exempting clause is put in, an educated Indian immigrant will have no foothold at all in the Free State. In practice, no educated Indian can exist in the Free State, because there are very few Indians for whom he could cater. I am sending you copies of the correspondence[1] bearing on this point, and am anxious to know how the whole thing strikes you. I feel that, if it is wrong to accept the colour bar in the Transvaal Immigration Law, it is wrong to accept it in the Union Immigration Law which replaces it. I do not want to leave the office just now. Otherwise, I would have come down.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5304

[1] Between Gandhiji and Smuts

303. TELEGRAM TO L. W. RITCH[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
March 17, 1911

CONSTITUTION ACT CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the handwritten office copy: S.N. 5306

304. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO GENERAL SMUTS

JOHANNESBURG,
March 17,1911

JUST LEARN GENERAL SMUTS PROPOSES MOVING AMENDMENT IMMIGRATION BILL EXEMPT FUTURE ASIATIC IMMIGRANTS FROM OPERATION ACT THIRTY-SIX 1908 THUS IMPLYING APPLICATION FREE STATE ASIATIC ACT SUCH IMMIGRATIONS. IF SO IT WILL CREATE A COLOUR BAR IN UNION IMMIGRATION LAW POINTEDLY INSULTING INDIANS HIGHEST CULTURE. HOPE THEREFORE THAT ASIATIC IMMIGRANTS WILL BE EXEMPTED FROM ALL REGISTRATION LAW AS WAS GENERAL SMUTS' INTENTION EXPRESSED IN TELEGRAM[2] TO ME. WISH RESPECTFULLY POINT OUT THAT CONCILIATION PASSIVE RESISTERS REQUIRES ENTIRE ABSENCE COLOUR BAR UNION BILL AND FULL PROTECTION WIVES MINOR CHILDREN AS HITHERTO IT IS THEREFORE URGED THAT IF FREE STATE MEMBERS WILL NOT EVEN TOLERATE A SOLITARY EDUCATED ASIATIC WITHIN FREE STATE BOUNDARY AND IF WIVES MINORS COULD NOT BE PROTECTED IT WOULD BE MUCH BETTER BILL WAS NOT PASSED AND TRANSVAAL SITUATION DEALT WITH

[1] This was sent in reply to Ritch's telegram which read: Schlesin's wire required immunity educated Registration Law Orangia now understand you mean educated immigrants not to be barred Free State despite unrepealed exclusion Law. Wire reference Law in question. . . .(S.N. 5305)

[2] Dated March 4; *vide* 1st footnote of "Letter to E.F.C.Lane", 4-3-1911.

BY AMENDING LOCAL LEGISLATION.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5309; also *Indian Opinion*, 25-3-1911

305. TELEGRAM TO L. W. RITCH

JOHANNESBURG,
March 17, 1911

YOU WILL GET COPY MY WIRE[1] SMUTS. JUST SEEN CARTWRIGHT. HE SEES POINT CLEARLY. APPROVES. THERE CAN BE NO QUESTION HAIRSPLITTING WHERE CLEAR PRINCIPLE AT STAKE.[2]

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5308

306. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

March 17, 1911

MY DEAR RITCH,

I have your letters and telegrams. Today has been an eventful day. I am much shaken by the news[3] you have given me. As soon as I mentioned the information to Cartwright, he said:

> That is Smuts. If one white man raises any objection to your people getting any rights, he will try to please that white man, no matter even though his doing so may cost an Empire.

Your second telegram[4] about the supporters deprecating what appeared to be hair-splitting perturbed me very much. I thought that we would have to go through the laborious process of explaining to our supporters the fact that we were asking for nothing new, and that opposition to the colour bar as to the Free State was inevitable by

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] This was in reply to Ritch's telegram: Supporters deprecate what will be reported hairsplitting and evidence unwillingness settle. Think inadvisable press point. (S.N. 5307)

[3] *Vide* "Letter to J. J. Doke", 17-3-1911.

[4] *Vide* the preceding item.

reason of the Bill being a Union Bill. But I now see that your telegram was based on a mis-reading of Miss Schlesin's telegram. She thought that you would never consider that we would ask for free entry into the Free State for educated Indians who are at present resident in South Africa. If we did so as part of the passive resistance campaign, it would be a distinct breach of faith. But, if we did not resist the attempt to prohibit educated immigrants from entering the Free State, passive resisters would be set down as cowards. We are fighting a colour bar and we must continue to fight it, whether it is in a Transvaal law or in a Union law. I hope that you will be able to persuade the supporters to take the same view. I have not yet ascertained the feeling of all the passive resisters. Mr. Cachalia and others are just now in the office and they seem to hold the same view as I do. Personally, I would like an indefinite postponement of the Bill and the desired alteration in the Transvaal Immigration Law.[1] Then, we need raise no question as to the Free State, there would arise no question as to the Cape and Natal, and the whole thing would be quite satisfactory. If General Smuts does not yield, l hope that the Cape friends will also take up passive resistance, because the question then will be no longer provincial. They are as much interested in resisting a colour bar in a Union law as the Transvaal Indians, and, if they would take up passive resistance, the whole thing could be finished in practically no time. I am writing[2] to Gool and others about funds. The dispatches[3] of Lords Crewe and Morley do credit to them, and they show that great and useful work was done by the South Africa British Indian Committee. The dispatches escape not a single argument or point. Your epitome of what should be done by the Government to placate Asiatics all over is admirable, and I hope that it was read by all the Members of Parliament. Do you suggest a letter from here and Natal to Alexander[4]? He will be, I see, a most valuable helper.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5312

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to General Smuts", 17-3-1911.

[2] The letter is not available

[3] Included in the Blue-book laid on the table of the House by Smuts while introducing the Bill. *Vide* also "Letter to L. W. Ritch", 23-3-1911.

[4] Advocate Alexander; *vide* "The Immigration Bill", 18-3-1911.

307. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

March 17, 1911

MY DEAR MR. POLAK,

I hope you have succeeded in rousing our friends there to a sense of their duty. Though I still hope that there will be a favourable reply to our telegram[1] to Smuts, we, at this end, are making every preparation for a renewal of the struggle. Cartwright is simply disgusted, with his own party as well as with Smuts. I understand that he will be leaving the *Leader* within a week or so, unless something he expects turns up.

Sincerely yours,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5313

308. THE IMMIGRATION BILL

The debate on the second reading of this Bill shows how fortunate we have been in having Mr. Ritch at Cape Town just at this juncture. The words of *The Times* to the effect that Mr. Ritch was coming to South Africa in order to co-operate with those who were trying to settle the vexed Asiatic question may be said, in the light of what is happening, to have been prophetic. We can see Mr. Ritch's hand in the weighty contribution to the debate by Mr. Advocate Alexander. He allowed not a single point raised by the Indians throughout the three Provinces to escape him, and he has shown clearly that, if the Bill goes through unaltered, passive resisters will have paid too dear a price for peace; and it is certain that, if passive resisters were not bound morally to cease struggling immediately on their demands being granted, they would be very properly justified in rejecting the Bill as an honourable compromise, if the position of the Natal and the Cape Indians were not altered by making the amendments necessary to meet the Indian objections from these two Provinces. But we hope that General Smuts will accept the advice given to him by Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, and grant the very reasonable requests made by the Indians at the Cape and in Natal. They ask for nothing new. They merely wish to stipulate that existing rights shall not be disturbed. It is said that General Smuts wants to admit only

[1] *Vide*, "Telegram to Private Secretary to General Smuts", 17-3-1911.

twelve Asiatics per year under the education test. In our opinion, this is absurd. The Transvaal Indians suggested that six per year should be allowed for the Transvaal. Surely six for Natal and the Cape is a very small number. The smooth working of the Act will depend very largely upon the spirit that actuates General Smuts in framing his regulations, and the spirit in which the Act and the regulations are administered. The fate of passive resisters will be decided in the course of the next few days. General Smuts has stated that the Bill is intended to exempt those who may enter under the education test from the operation of registration laws. He has, therefore only to make a verbal amendment in order to bring that meaning out clearly in the Bill; and we refuse to believe that he wishes to go behind the judgment of the Supreme Court and deprive minor Asiatics of the rights which that Court has recognised, or that he dots not wish to clothe with absolute protection the wives of lawful residents.

Indian Opinion, 18-3-1911

309. NEW BILL IN PARLIAMENT

Every Indian should go through the debate on the second reading of this Bill. One will find it very instructive. Irrespective of whether or not the new Bill is suitably amended, what was said about it and the emphasis that was laid on its bearing only on the Asiatic problem are worth noting. Everyone can see that this is entirely the result of the power of satyagraha. Lord Crewe revised the view which he had expressed in 1909 and requested General Botha to grant the Indians' demands. As satyagraha became protracted, the views of the Imperial Government and the Local Government underwent changes. The Act 2 of 1907 would never be repealed [it was said], and they agreed [subsequently] to repeal it. They accepted voluntary registration, which [they earlier said] they would never do. They were not prepared to permit the admission of educated Indians, but agreed to do solater under a separate law. They declared then that further than this they would never go, that it would be immoral to grant the Asiatics' demands; the bogey of immorality has vanished now and the demands of the Asiatics have been conceded. It may be asked: what does it profit us if such a demand has been accepted? We shall consider an answer after the Bill has gone through in a form that satisfies us.

For the present, the important point to note is that our demands have been met, more or less. Sir Percy Fitzpatrick[1], who at one time used to hold out threats against us, now says that General Smuts would do well to satisfy the Asiatics. The gentleman is afraid lest satyagraha should spread to the whole of South Africa. Mr. Duncan, the man who designed the obnoxious Act, now advocates its repeal, and says he will be happy if the proposed law sees the end of the satyagraha campaign. We do not find a single member who has spoken against satyagraha. Can there be a triumph greater than this?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-3-1911

310. TELEGRAM TO L. W. RITCH

JOHANNESBURG,

March 18, 1911[2]

CONFIRMING YESTERDAY'S TELEGRAM OUR FIGHT AGAINST COLOUR BAR CANNOT CLOSE IF EDUCATED ASIATICS NOT EXEMPTED FREE STATE LAW. EXISTENCE COLOUR BAR IN THIS MOST INSULTING SHAPE WILL WIDEN AREA PASSIVE RESISTANCE. AS SIR PERCY CLEARLY POINTED OUT THERE CAN BE NO COMPROMISE THIS POINT. HOPE CAPE NATAL ASIATICS WILL SEE THAT NOW THEY MUST JOIN HANDS BUT WHETHER THEY DO OR NOT MY ADVICE FELLOW PASSIVE RESISTERS WILL BE STRONGLY CONTINUE STRUGGLE. AM NOW CONFERRING WITH THEM. WILL GIVE YOU THEIR DECISION LATER: DO PRESS CAPE INDIANS COLLECT FUNDS. MAY I WRITE THEM.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5311

[1] Member from Pretoria East, Transvaal

[2] The Source has the date 17th, *vide*, however, 'yesterday's telegram', viz., "Telegram to L. W. Ritch",17-3-1911.

311. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

March 18, 1911

MY DEAR RITCH,

What is the meaning of "anticipating trouble from all quarters"?[1] I take it to mean that the Bill will be assailed not only by us, but by the Members on behalf of the community in general. I must confess that I should feel delighted if the Bill were withdrawn, and the Immigration Act of the Transvaal amended. But, if the Bill does go through, you will have to answer all kinds of questions in connection with the Free State, as, for instance, [the] right of the future Asiatic immigrants to be free from restrictions, are they to hold landed property, etc. We ask for no such thing. All we say is that, as to immigration and as to residence, because residence is part of immigration, they should be on the same footing as Europeans. As to all civil rights, they would share the same disabilities as the Asiatics. To illustrate my point, an educated Indian entering the Transvaal would not be subject to the Registration Law, but he would still be subject to Law 3 of 1885. Now, Chapter 33 of the Orange Free State Constitution Act not only deals with the manner in which an Asiatic may reside, but it also takes away other common law rights. Sections 7 and 8 affect such rights. The amendment, therefore' may exempt Asiatics from Clauses 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10 and 11 so far as they may be applicable. If you take hold of the Chapter, you will understand my meaning still more fully. We want to appear before the public with absolutely clear hands, as I profess we actually are. The present passive resistance has absolutely nothing whatsoever to do with the personal gain of a single individual; and if we make this clear and still our approach is rejected, we place our opponent in the wrong in every respect. It is just at a time like this that General Smuts, whom Cartwright considers to be either absolutely disloyal or intensely stupid, betrays either the one or the other of these qualities in refusing to see you. One good interview could settle the whole question, and could also appease the wrath of the Free Staters by showing that their

[1] The reference is to Ritch's telegram of March 18: Committee stage remote. Budget takes precedence. Advise me Smuts reply your wire. I anticipate trouble all around. (S.N. 5310)

fear is totally groundless. I take it that you will again instruct Maud from your side. I shall send you on Monday a copy of my letter[1] to her, but that can be no guide to you in writing to her as it will be too late for the time when you must post your letter.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5317

312. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

March 18, 1911

MY DEAR POLAK,

I have no telephone message to send you because I have no telegram from Ritch and none from Smuts. Natesan's letters herewith. I opened his letter to you, as also Dr. Mehta's. I am sending you Natesan's letter to me also. A parcel containing copies of his speech[2] is being sent to Phoenix. Please return Natesan's letter to me, as I have not yet replied to it. Ritch's solution of the Transvaal difficulty given in the *Cape Argus,* which I sent you yesterday, should be reproduced in *Indian Opinion.*[3]

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5320

313. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR[4]

1, FOX STREET,
JOHANNESBURG,
March 18, 1911

ON BEHALF CHINESE COMMITTEE I BEG TO ASSOCIATE THE COMMITTEE IN THE PRAYER OF BRITISH INDIAN ASSO-

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Maud Polak", 13-3-1911

[2] On the South African question delivered at the Indian National Congress held at Allahabad; reproduced in *Indian Opinion,* 8-4-1911

[3] This was reproduced under the caption, "Mr. Ritch's suggestions", in *Indian Opinion,* 25-3-1911.

[4] Presumably drafted by Gandhiji; the Post Box number mentioned at the end of the telegram was Gandhiji's.

CIATION AS TO IMMIGRANTS' RESTRICTION BILL NOW BEFORE PARLIAMENT AND TRUST THAT THE BILL WILL BE SO AMENDED AS TO REMOVE ALL POSSIBILITY AS TO COLOUR OR RACIAL BAR APPEARING IN IT AND TO AFFORD FULL PROTECTION TO WIVES AND MINOR CHILDREN OF LEGAL RESIDENTS. THE COMMITTEE FURTHER TRUSTS THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL PROVIDE IN ADMINISTRATION OF THE BILL, SHOULD IT BECOME LAW, FOR ENTRY OF LIMITED NUMBER OF CULTURED CHINESE WITHIN UNION AND THAT SUCH CHINESE WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO CHINESE EXCLUSION ACT CAPE.

MARTIN EASTON,
ACTING CHAIRMAN,
CHINESE ASSOCIATION,
POST BOX 6522

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5321

314. LIST OF CHINESE SATYAGRAHIS

[On or after *March 18, 1911*][1]

Chinese Satyagrahis arrested and sentenced [to] hard labour:

C. F. J. Frank	(3 mon. H.L.)
Lee Kong	(3 M.H.L.)
Luk Nan Dickson	(3 M.H.L.)
Ho Low	(10 days H.L.)
Sam You	(3 M.H.L.)
Chong Ah Kie	(3 M.H.L.)
Wo Kim	(3 M.H.L.)
Ah Wy	(3 M.H.L.)
Ismail Essach	
Louis Benjamin	

[1] The document bears no date but it has been placed immediately after S.N. 5321 which is dated March 18, 1911 and which deals with the problem of the Chinese.

They are either at the Fort or Diepkloof.

From a photostat of the handwritten original, the last three lines being in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 5322

315. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

TOLSTOY FARM,
Phagan Vad 4 [*March 19, 1911*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Please dispose of the enclosed papers.

Chhaganlal's health, I am sure, will be restored as soon as he comes here. I wish he comes immediately.

I have no expectations from Anandlal. He can, if he makes up his mind, please respected Amritlalbhai. The charge that he has levelled against Mr. Cordes only shows that he is suspicious and rash. That is why I send you the cutting of Mr. Cordes' speech received by the same mail. The moral is that we should keep our hearts pure and put a favourable construction on other people's doings. If we do this, misdeeds will come to be known without our effort.

The more defects you discover in Harilal, the more love you should have for him. One requires a great deal of water to put out a big fire. To overcome the baser element in Harilal's nature, you have to develop in yourself and pit against it a more powerful force of goodness. Give him the coat too when he asks for a shirt.

I note you are making good progress in Tamil. It would be good if you adopt the practice of speaking with some Tamilian.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5080. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] This letter was apparently written before Chhaganlal Gandhi's arrival in South Africa in July 1911.

316. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO GENERAL SMUTS

JOHANNESBURG,

March 20, 1911[1]

FEAR VERY MUCH IF GENERAL SMUTS CANNOT SEE HIS WAY ADVANCE UPON WHAT IS STATED YOUR LETTER 16TH INSTANT[2] THE PAINFUL STRUGGLE WILL CONTINUE. NO SUBMISSION MADE FOR REPEAL CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE BUT FOR SO MUCH OF IT AS REQUIRES APPLICATION GOVERNOR FOR RESIDENCE SHOULD NOT APPLY EDUCATED ASIATIC IMMIGRANTS. NO EXCEPTION TAKEN TO EDUCATED ASIATIC IMMIGRANTS BEING LIABLE TO OTHER DISABILITIES COMMON TO ASIATIC RESIDENTS. EXEMPTION FROM REGISTRATION ACT TRANSVAAL SHOULD BE COMPLETE. RIGHTS EDUCATED INDIAN IMMIGRANTS TRANSVAAL SHOULD NOT BE LESS THAN THOSE OF RESIDENT ASIATICS. TWO COUNSELS ONE IN TRANSVAAL[3] ANOTHER IN NATAL[4] HAVE GIVEN WRITTEN OPINION SAYING WIVES AND MINOR CHILDREN OF RESIDENT ASIATICS NOT PROTECTED UNDER BILL AS DRAWN UNLESS THEY ARE AT PRESENT IN THEIR RESPECTIVE PROVINCES. HOPE SMALL RELIEF REQUIRED FOR CLOSING STRUGGLE WILL BE GRANTED.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5326; also *Indian Opinion*, 25-3-1911

[1] This appears to have been referred to as the telegram of the 19th in Lane's telegram of the 21st (footnote to "Telegram to Private Secretary to General Smuts", 22-3-1911) and Report of the European Committee meeting (23-3-1911).

[2] *Vide* Appendix, "Lane's letter to Gandhiji", 16-3-1911.

[3] R. Gregorowski and Laughton; *vide* "Letter to L. W. Ritch", 20-3-1911.

[4] *ibid*

317. LETTER TO E. F. C. LANE

March 20, 1911

DEAR MR. LANE,

I telegraphed today[1] in reply to your letter[2] of the 16th instant regarding the correspondence between you and me over the Immigrants, Restriction Bill. I now venture to amplify my telegram.

There is no occasion, neither has it been asked on behalf of British Indians, to repeal Chapter 33 of the Orange Free State Constitution; but I respectfully submit for General Smuts' consideration that, just as educated Indian immigrants will, under the amendment he proposes to move, be free from registration under the Transvaal Act No. 36 of 1908, so may such immigrants be free from the Sections of Chapter 33 of the Orange Free State Constitution regarding what amounts to registration. Such seems to have been the intention of General Smuts at the time the telegram of the 4th instant, referred to in your letter of the 16th instant, was sent. It is therein stated that

> Asiatics admitted as immigrants under new Immigration Bill would not fall under registration laws and would not be restricted to provincial limits.

A similar statement appears in the dispatch to Lord Crewe, published in the *Blue Book U/7/11*. All that Asiatics ask for is full immigration rights in law under the Bill without a colour bar. If an educated Indian has to apply under Chapter 33 for permission to reside in the Orange Free State, it means a colour bar in the Immigration Bill, and an amendment exempting such immigrants from the operation of Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10 and 11 would meet the point, and would still make the immigrants liable to the disabilities as to holding fixed property, etc., common to the other Asiatics.

I venture to suggest that paragraph 2 of your letter is not clear. You say that the amendment to be moved will, in effect, exempt the educated Indian immigrants from registration under the Transvaal Act No. 36 of 1908. This may mean that an educated Indian immigrant will not be free from the operation of Act No. 36 of 1908 entirely, but that he will simply not be required to register. It may be that, in that

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* Appendix, "Lane's letter to Gandhiji", 16-3-1911.

case, an educated immigrant will be in a worse position than a resident Asiatic, a state of things which will hardly be acceptable to the Indian community.

As to the third paragraph, I may state that two advocates of long standing and wide experience, of the Transvaal and Natal respectively, have given their opinion to the effect that the wives and minor children of Asiatic residents will not be able to join them as heretofore, because they will be treated as prohibited immigrants, unless they can satisfy the education test; and, if it is the intention of the Bill not to debar the wives and minor children of such Asiatics, I submit that an exemption clause of a general nature should be added to the Bill.

The matters I have herein submitted are all of no intrinsic importance from the European standpoint, and I venture to think, not at all contentious, but they are of the greatest importance for the Asiatics. I hope, therefore, that General Smuts will be pleased to give them the consideration they deserve, and grant relief.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5327; also *Indian Opinion*, 25-3-1911

318. LETTER TO MAUD POLAK

March 20, 1911

MY DEAR MAUD,

It seems to me that, after all, there will be no settlement, in spite of the Bill. Only, this time, the Imperial Government will have the clearest proof of what General Smuts is and can be. He has stated, in his letter to the Imperial Government, that educated immigrants, if Asiatics, will be free to settle in any part of the Union, and yet you will see from his latest letter[1] that such will not be the case. From the enclosures you will see what, in my opinion, is our demand[2] exactly regarding the Orange Free State and the Transvaal. Mr. Ritch will write to you on Wednesday from Cape Town as to what you should do.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5328

[1] *Vide* Appendix, "Lane's letter to Gandhiji", 16-3-1911.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

319. TELEGRAM TO L. W. RITCH

JOHANNESBURG,
[*March 20, 1911*][1]

TO
RITCH
8, KLOOF STREET
CAPE TOWN

LETTER SMUTS[2] SAYS HIS TELEGRAM WHICH[3] DID NOT MEAN CONVEY [ID]EA[4] THAT CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE ORANGE FREE STATE LAWS WOULD BE CANCELLED. LETTER ALSO NOT CLEAR THAT EDUCATED IMMIGRANTS ENTIRELY FREE FROM REGISTRATION ACT. SUGGEST YOUR [MEETING][7] SUPPORTERS IMMEDIATELY SHOWING COMPLETE EXEMPTION FROM REGISTRATION LAWS UNION NECESSARY STOP RESISTANCE. FOR WIVES MINORS LETTER ALSO HOPELESSLY EVASIVE. HE SAYS DIFFICULTY NOT APPRECIATED BY DEPARTMENT.

6522[5]

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5300a

320. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

March 20, 1911

MY DEAR RITCH,

Herewith copy of letter[6] from General Smuts, and my reply[7]. I think that we are in for a big battle. He does not want to forfeit the support of the Free Staters and, therefore, evidently wants to recant. The whole letter is quite worthy of him. He is writing entirely in order to conceal his meaning. The first paragraph credits me with a desire I never had. The second paragraph is intended to veil his meaning, namely, that educated immigrants will not be able to, if they wish to

[1] This appears to have been sent on the same day as "Telegram to Private Secretary to General Smuts", 20-3-1911 and "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 20-3-1911.
[2] These words are not clear in the photostat.
[3] *ibid*
[4] *ibid*
[5] This was Gandhiji's Post Box number.
[6] *Vide* Appendix, "Lane's letter to Gandhiji", 16-3-1911.
[7] *Vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 20-3-1911.

do so, take out licences to trade. Now they, if they are self-respecting men, would never want trading licences. That is one thing; but to have a statutory disability is totally another. We are asking for a better status for them than the residents possess. How can we now have for them a legal status inferior to that enjoyed by the residents? The third para-graph betrays an intention not to specifically exempt wives and minor children so that he may put in our way all sorts of difficulties. If need be, you will not hesitate to use Gregorowski's and Laughton's opin-ions to drive our points home, because, in view of what is happening, we must insist on an unequivocal meaning of the Bill so far as the points raised by us are concerned. Unless the Progressive Party solidly wishes to do its duty, and unless some of the Nationalists like Merriman and a few others favour us, the Bill will not be satisfactory. In that event, it seems to me that it will not receive the Royal sanction.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5329

321. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

March 20, 1911

MY DEAR POLAK,

I have not much to add to what I have stated in Ritch's letter[1]. I have sent to West directly a copy of the Cape petition[2]. Further correspondence which I am sending to you should also go in. I hope to write a leading article on it tomorrow. I take it that the speeches[3] of Lord Ampthill and others at the Ritch reception will go in. A cablegram was received today to the effect that Ritch's father-in-law is dead. Whilst it is a matter for sorrow, it is equally one for congratulation, for Mr. Cohen is free from a living death.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5325

[1] *Vide* "Letter to L. W. Ritch", 20-3-1911.

[2] This was published in *Indian Opinion*, 25-3-1911. *Vide* Appendix "Cape Petition to Parliament", 15-3-1911.

[3] These were published in *Indian Opinion*, 25-3-1911.

322. TELEGRAM TO JOHANNESBURG OFFICE

LAWLEY STATION,
March 21, 1911

TO
GANDHI
JOHANNESBURG

MISSED TRAIN. ATTENDING SORABJEE[1]. MUCH BETTER. SEND COPY CHAPTER 33[2] ORANGIA POLAK WEST. WIRE IMPORTANT NEWS. SENT PAPERS MEDICINE WITH SORABJEE[3].

GANDHI

From the original as delivered: S.N. 5330

323. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO GENERAL SMUTS

JOHANNESBURG,
March 22, 1911

YOUR WIRE[4] 21ST. PLEASE CONVEY THANKS GENERAL SMUTS FOR PROMISING RELIEF REGARDING WIVES MINORS STOP AM SORRY HE THINKS SUBMISSION RESPECTING FREE STATE UNFAIR STOP BEG DRAW GENERAL SMUTS' ATTENTION GENERAL BOTHA'S DISPATCH TWENTIETH DECEMBER WHEREIN HE ASSURES LORD CREWE THAT A LIMITED NUMBER OF EDUCATED INDIANS PASSED UNDER THE BILL WILL AFTER SUCH ENTRY POSSESS PERMANENT RESIDENTIAL

[1] Presumably, Sorabjee Shapurjee Adajania

[2] Of the Orange Free State Constitution, reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 25-3-1911

[3] Presumably, Sorabjee, son of Parsee Rustomjee

[4] Which read: 21st March, Yours 17th and 19th. Minister desires me to say he is taking into favourable consideration the question of providing for the women and children of persons lawfully resident, but he considers your attitude on the Free State matter quite unfair. The Asiatics have never claimed to enter that Province, and any such claim now will make it impossible for him to arrive at a satisfactory solution of the Indian question. All the other points in dispute seem now on a fair way to being satisfactorily solved.

RIGHTS IN ANY PROVINCE OF THE UNION STOP BUT APART THEREFROM INVITE GENERAL SMUTS' ATTENTION TO FACT THAT WHOLE STRUGGLE FOR PRINCIPLE AND AGAINST COLOUR BAR STOP IF PASSIVE RESISTERS OBJECT COLOUR BAR TRANSVAAL IMMIGRATION LAW HOW CAN THEY ACCEPT IT IN UNION IMMIGRATION LAW IN WHICH TRANSVAAL LAW WILL MERGE STOP IT IS TRUE THEY HAVE NOT ASKED BEFORE AND THEY DO NOT NOW ASK FOR ENTRY EDUCATED OR OTHER ASIATICS FREE STATE STOP IT IS SUBMITTED QUESTION OF SUBSTANTIAL ENTRY DOES NOT ARISE STOP OTHER CONDITIONS THERE AND ABSENCE OF ANY SUBSTANTIAL INDIAN POPULATION THERE WILL EFFECTIVELY BAR ENTRANCE OF EDUCATED INDEPENDENT ASIATICS SUCH AS WILL BE ADMITTED UNDER PRESENT BILL STOP INDIANS ONLY PROTEST AGAINST UNION PARLIAMENT RATIFYING IN BILL FREE STATE POLICY AND THUS SAYING TO THE WORLD NO INDIAN EVEN THOUGH A POTENTATE CAN LEGALLY ENTER AND RESIDE IN A PROVINCE OF THE UNION STOP AS AGAINST DRASTIC CHANGES CAPE AND NATAL ASIATIC STATUS FREE STATE MEMBERS CANNOT REASONABLY OBJECT UNION PARLIAMENT DECLINING OFFER INSULT TO HIGHEST OF INDIA'S SONS BUT IF UNFORTUNATELY THEY DO AND GOVERNMENT CANNOT WELL DISPLEASE THEM IT IS RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED THAT BILL BE WITHDRAWN AND TRANSVAAL IMMIGRATION LAW SUITABLY AMENDED SO AS TO DO JUSTICE TO ASIATIC SENTIMENT AND CLOSE PAINFUL STRUGGLE.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5340; also *Indian Opinion*, 8-4-1911

324. TELEGRAM TO L. W. RITCH

JOHANNESBURG,
March 22, 1911

GENERAL SMUTS TELEGRAPHS[1] HE WILL FAVOURABLY CONSIDER QUESTION WOMEN CHILDREN BUT HE CONSIDERS ATTI-

[1] *Vide* footnote to the preceding item.

TUDE FREE STATE QUITE UNFAIR AND SAYS ASIATICS NEVER CLAIMED ENTER THAT PROVINCE AND ANY SUCH CLAIM NOW WILL MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO ARRIVE AT SATISFACTORY SOLUTION. AM REPEATING MY REPLY. SLEPT OVER YOUR CRITICISM.[1] IT IS GOOD FOR CAUTIOUS PEOPLE AND IT WAS YOUR DUTY ISSUE WARNING NOTE. UNACCEPTABLE FOR PASSIVE RESISTERS. SUGGEST YOUR ADVISING CAPE INDIANS TAKE UP FREE STATE MATTER.. DO YOU THINK I SHOULD JOIN YOU.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5339

325. TELEGRAM TO L. W. RITCH[2]

JOHANNESBURG,
March 22, 1911

THINK INCONSISTENT WITH DIGNITY TO ASK SMUTS NOW TO RECEIVE YOU. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE INSULT IS HIS. BUT IF YOU STILL THINK THAT WIRE SHOULD BE SENT IT WILL BE IMMEDIATELY.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5341

[1] *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Telegram to L.W. Ritch", 17-3-1911.

[2] This was in reply to Ritch's telegram of March 20 which read: Suggest wiring Smuts again request see me. Bill delayed at least today tomorrow. (S.N. 5324)

326. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

March 22, 1911

MY DEAR POLAK,

I now enclose copies of the resolutions[1] I suggest you may pass at the meeting. What a great achievement it will be if the second resolution is passed intact. I send you also my reply[2] to General Smuts. Mr. Phillips[3] is very hostile to the Bill, because he considers that the Orange Free State disability constitutes a racial bar, and amounts to, in his own words, "the banning of a nation". At his instance, a meeting of the European Committee is being called at Mr. Hosken's office tomorrow. I think that the Committee will address General Smuts strongly in the matter. I have little doubt that all the members will support us.[4] I send you Ritch's letter[5] for perusal. His argument about the Bill is worthy of every consideration. I have myself been unable to see eye to eye with him. We are raising no new issue, and I feel that we would surrender our conscience, if we gave up the struggle. Even non-resisting Indians saw the point when I mentioned it, and they had no difficulty in meeting arguments which I advanced against continuing the struggle. Most of the resisters, though they are most anxious that the struggle should close, have no hesitation in saying that, if the Free State bar remains, the struggle should continue.

Yours sincerely,

[Enclosure][6]

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5344

[1] *Vide* "Resolutions at Natal Indian Congress Meeting", 26-3-1911.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to General Smuts", 22-3-1911

[3] Charles Phillips, a congregational Minister in the Transvaal

[4] *Vide* the following item.

[5] Not available

[6] Not available. *Vide*, however, "Resolutions at Natal Indian Congress Meeting", 26-3-1911

327. REPORT OF EUROPEAN COMMITTEE MEETING

[*March 23, 1911*][1]

A meeting of the European Committee of sympathisers, in Johannesburg, met at Mr. Hosken's office, on the 23rd ultimo, to discuss the situation. Mr. Hosken presided, and amongst those present were Rev. J. J. Doke, Rev. Chas. Phillips, Rev. J. Howard, Rev. T. Perry, and Messrs A. Cartwright, T. R. Haddon, D. Pollock, E. Dallow and M. K. Gandhi. The following resolution was unanimously passed:

> This meeting of the European British Indian Committee, having considered the correspondence between the Minister of the Interior and Mr. Gandhi (especially telegrams dated 17th and 19th March from Mr. Gandhi and the Minister's reply thereto dated 22nd March), desires to record its entire approval of Mr. Gandhi's communications, and is of opinion that the telegram of 22nd March from Mr. Gandhi clearly and equitably sets out the case, and urges the Government to accept the solution proposed therein. The Committee regrets to learn that the Minister of the Interior has thought fit to raise a new point regarding the Free State, in conflict with the Prime Minister's despatch dated 20th December, 1910, which stated, 'It is, however, proposed notwithstanding this test, to instruct these officers to allow the entry of a limited number of educated Indians who will after such entry possess permanent residential rights in any Province of the Union,' and the telegram from the Minister of the Interior to Mr. Gandhi, dated 4th March, which stated, 'Asiatics admitted as immigrants under the Immigration Bill would not fall under registration laws and would not be restricted to provincial limits.'

From a photostat of the original draft, partly in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 5396 b; also

Indian Opinion, 8-4-1911

[1] The draft of the report contains the resolution passed on March 23 with correction in Gandhiji's hand.

328. TELEGRAM TO L. W. RITCH[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
March 23, 1911]

HOSKEN CARTWRIGHT DOKE PHILLIPS HOWARD PERRY HADDON POLLOCK DALLOW PRESENT EUROPEAN COMMITTEE PASSED COMPREHENSIVE RESOLUTION ENTIRELY APPROVING OUR CONTENTION REGARDING FREE STATE URGING GOVERNMENT TO ACCEPT SOLUTION PROPOSED BY ME. HOSKEN HAS WIRED RESOLUTION SMUTS MERRIMAN JAMESON HUNTER.

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 5396c

329. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

March 23, 1911

MY DEAR RITCH,

I have your letters. I wish I had the time to write to you more fully than I can. I am just going to the station to catch my train[2]. How I wish I could chat with you, and persuade you that we cannot possibly abandon the Free State point. The Members of the European Committee—whose names[3] you are having—saw the whole point without the slightest difficulty. Mr. Doke is now as strong as any of them, although he cross-examined me severely yesterday, and although, as I have told you, I read the whole of your objections to him. We are not asking for repeal of Chapter 33. We are simply asking for exemption for educated Indians in a Union Bill, because the colour bar of the Transvaal is being transferred to the Union Bill. General Smuts it is who is raising a new point, because he is committed in his speech and in his telegrams to the principle of such educated Asiatics being able to enter and reside in any Province of the Union. You will note, too, that Lord Crewe has anticipated our objection to any colour bar in the Union Bill. Hence his very serious anxiety on that score, and hence, too, General Botha's emphatic declaration[4] that educated Asiatics who may enter under the Bill can

[1] This appears to be the draft of a telegram sent to Ritch after the European Committee's meeting; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] For Lawley, probably after the meeting of the European Committee

[3] *Vide* "Report of European Committee Meeting", 23-3-1911.

[4] *ibid*

reside in any part of the Union. I do not share your fear that we would have difficulty in persuading Lord Ampthill. My only difficulty now is to persuade you. Unless you share my enthusiasm and conviction, how can you impart it to Alexander and others? More when I have the time.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5346

330. TELEGRAM TO H. S. L. POLAK

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 23, 1911

RITCH TELEGRAPHS SAYING MINISTER IS MOVING AMENDMENTS EXEMPTING PERSONS BORN WITHIN UNION DOMICILED PERSONS WIVES CHILDREN FROM SECTION SEVEN. GOVERNOR GENERAL WILL HAVE POWER PRESCRIBE NATURE PROOF OFFICER MAY DEMAND.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the handwritten office copy: S.N. 5348

331. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR

JOHANNESBURG,
March 24, 1911

YOURS TWENTY-FOURTH INSTANT.[1] AT TIME MY LETTER FOURTH MARCH QUESTION FREE STATE WAS NOT RAISED BY GENERAL SMUTS STOP RACIAL BAR WILL CERTAINLY BE CREATED IF EDUCATED ASIATIC IMMIGRANTS BE CONFRONTED SUCCESSFULLY WITH FREE STATE ASIATIC REGISTRATION LAW UPON ENTERING STOP IN TRANSVAAL ACT FIFTEEN 1907 NO DIRECT RACIAL BAR APPEARS BUT AS GENERAL SMUTS WELL KNOWS SUCH IS ITS LEGAL EFFECT REGARDING ASIATICS AND SUCH ACCORDING TO INTERPRETATION GIVEN BY COUNSEL AND APPARENTLY ACCEPTED BY GENERAL SMUTS WILL BE EFFECT OF NEW BILL STOP

[1] *Vide* Appendix, "Telegram to Gandhiji from Private Secretary to Minister of Interior", 24-3-1911.

IT IS FOR THAT REASON THAT AMENDMENT REGARDING TRANSVAAL ACT WILL BECOME NECESSARY STOP IT IS THEREFORE NOT POSSIBLE TO REGARD SUCH AMENDMENT AS A FURTHER CONCESSION AS EVIDENTLY GENERAL SMUTS SEEMS TO CONSIDER PROPOSED AMENDMENT BUT JUST AS AMENDMENT REGARDING TRANSVAAL IS NECESSARY TO PURGI BILL RACIAL TAINT SO IS AMENDMENT REQUIRED TO COVER FREE STATE LAW STOP PASSIVE RESISTERS I VENTURE TO SUBMIT HAVE BEEN ABSOLUTELY CONSISTENT PROM THE FIRST; THEY OBJECT TO RACIAL BAR IN PRESENT TRANS-VAAL LEGISLATION AND THEY WILL RELUCTANTLY BE OBLIGED OBJECT SUCH BAR IN ANY REPEALING LEGISLA-TION STOP THEY WOULD BE OPEN TO CHARGE OF RAIS-ING NEW POINT IF THEY OBJECTED ON SCORE OF FREE STATE IN A PROVINCIAL LAW STOP I CANNOT LAY TOO MUCH EMPHASIS ON FACT THAT PASSIVE RESIS-TERS ARE NOT AT ALL CONCERNED WITH INDIVIDUAL MATERIAL GAIN THEY ARE NOT CONCERNED WHETHER A SINGLE ASIATIC ACTUALLY ENTERS FREE STATE BUT EVEN THOUGH THEIR SUFFERINGS MAY BE INDEFINITELY PROLONGED SO FAR AS I CAN SEE THEY WILL NOT CEASE SUFFERING SO LONG AS RACIAL BAR BE ALLOWED TO APPEAR IN ANY LEGISLATION WHICH IS TO REPLACE TRANSVAAL LAWS AND WHICH IS TO BE PASSED LARGELY TO SATISFY THEM STOP IF HONOURABLE ATTEMPT ON PART PASSIVE RESISTERS TO SECURE EQUITABLE TREATMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH BRITISH TRADITIONS WITHOUT IN ANY MANNER ADVERSELY AFFECTING MATERIAL POSITION OF EUROPEAN COMMUNITY SHOULD EXASPERATE THAT COMMUNITY WITH ALL RESPECT I MUST STATE THAT WE HAVE TO TAKE THAT RISK BUT I SUGGEST TO GENERAL SMUTS THAT HE IS RAISING A NEW POINT IN CONFLICT WITH HIS TELEGRAM OF FOURTH INSTANT GENERAL BOTHA'S DISPATCH[1] OF TWENTIETH DECEMBER AND HIS OWN SPEECH SECOND READING AND I APPEAL TO HIS DESIRE TO CONCILIATE ASIATIC SENTIMENT AND ASK HIM TO GRANT WHAT MEANS SO MUCH TO ASIATICS AND VERY LITTLE INDEED TO EUROPEANS IN GENERAL AND FREE

[1] *Vide* "Report of European Committee Meeting", 23-3-1911.

STATE EUROPEANS IN PARTICULAR STOP I PROPOSE LEAVING FOR CAPETOWN BY THE DIAMOND EXPRESS TOMORROW AND IF GENERAL SMUTS WILL BE PLEASED TO GRANT ME. AN INTERVIEW PERHAPS I MAY BE ABLE TO MAKE MY SUBMISSION CLEARER.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5351; also *Indian Opinion*, 8-4-1911

332. TELEGRAM TO L. W. RITCH

JOHANNESBURG,
March 24, 1911

RECEIVED LONG REPLY FROM SMUTS.[1] IT IS TEMPORISING AND THREATENING. SENT YOU COPY MY REPLY[2]. AM LEAVING DIAMOND EXPRESS TOMORROW.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5354

333. TELEGRAM TO H. S. L. POLAK

[JOHANNESBURG,]
March 24, 1911

SMUTS HAS SENT HOSKEN DANGEROUS TELEGRAM[3]. I SHALL THEREFORE NEED [A]T CAPETOWN ALL BLUE BOOKS REGARDING [Q]UESTION. PLEASE FORWARD THEM CAPETOWN.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5355

[1] *Vide* Appendix, "Telegram to Gandhiji from Private Secretary to Minister of Interior", 24-3-1911.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] *Vide* Appendix, "General Smuts Telegram to Hosken", 24-3-1911.

334. CABLE TO S. A. B. I. COMMITTEE[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
March 24, 1911

GOVERNMENT SEEMED DISPOSED GRANT PROTECTION TO WIVES, MINORS AND LAWFUL RESIDENTS, BUT, DESPITE GENERAL BOTHA'S DESPATCH TO LORD CREWE ON THE 20TH DECEMBER, GENERAL SMUTS' WIRE TO GANDHI OF THE 4TH MARCH AND HIS DECLARATION ON THE SECOND READING THAT EDUCATED ASIATIC IMMIGRANTS. WILL BE ABLE TO SETTLE IN ANY PROVINCE OF THE UNION, GENERAL SMUTS NOW SAYS THEY WILL HAVE TO SUBMIT TOHUMILIATING REGISTRATION LAW OF THE FREE STATE, THUS DEBARRING THEIR ENTRY AND CREATING RACIAL BAR UNION IMMIGRATION LAW. AS PASSIVE RESISTERS HAVE ALL ALONG FOUGHT AGAINST RACIAL BAR, STRUGGLE MUST CONTINUE IF GOVERNMENT GO BACK UPON ABOVEMENTIONED THRICE REPEATED ASSURANCE AND NOW INTRODUCE RACIAL BAR. RESISTERS FIGHTING PURELY NATIONAL HONOUR AND DEFENDING BRITISH CONSTITUTION. EUROPEAN COMMITTEE PRESIDED BY HOSKEN MET YESTERDAY,[2] ENDORSED INDIAN ATTITUDE, AND URGENTLY TELEGRAPHED ASKING SMUTS NOT NOW REVERSE POLICY FORESHADOWED IN BOTHA'S DESPATCH AND SMUTS' TELEGRAM. TRUST IMPERIAL AND INDIAN GOVERNMENTS WILL TAKE ACTION BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy in the Colonial Office Records: C.O. 551/21; also from the original draft in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 5375

[1] The same cable was also sent to Gokhale. It was reproduced in *The Times of India*, 28-3-1911.

[2] *Vide* "Report of European Committee Meeting", 23-3-1911.

335. CABLE TO G. A. NATESAN[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
March 24, 1911]

SEE CABLES SENT GOKHALE ACT

From the original draft in pencil in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 5375

336. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

March 24, 1911

MY DEAR POLAK,

I have your letter. I am glad that your tooth is out. I certainly congratulate you upon getting such a splendid dentist. All I can say is that he is an exception. Karamat's case[2] is shocking. He is undoubtedly a great liar. He will not obey instructions. It is, therefore, difficult to treat him. Otherwise, I consider that his is not a hopeless case. Until he can be sent to India, and supported somewhere, all I can suggest is that, if the people at Phoenix are reconciled to the idea, Mr. Rustomjee should build him a hut, and he should live in that hut by himself and cook for himself, the settlers to have strict instructions not to supply him with any other food at all. The cost will be trifling. He could pass his time in a fairly easy manner, and he will have some sympathetic company also. He can take a small plot, which he may do anything he likes with, so long as he keeps his hut and the plot in a sweet condition. He can only be allowed to come to Phoenix, subject, as I say, to the consent of the settlers, if Mr. Rustomjee will undertake to see him personally at least once per month. To send him to a lazaretto is, in my opinion, to ask him to commit suicide. I would far rather place in his hands a revolver than be party to sending him to any place of compulsory segregation. I dare say you know something of the scandals about Robben Island[3].

Unless some telegram is received from Smuts, I shall be leaving

[1] The draft of this cable is found under the text of the cable sent to Gokhale without the addressee's name. It is presumed to have been addressed to Natesan from a reference to it in the following item.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 14-2-1911.

[3] Formerly a leper colony, at the entrance of Table Bay, Cape Province

for Cape Town tomorrow, and we shall exchange telegrams very frequently. Nothing need, therefore, be discussed by me in this letter. Miss Schlesin will write to you daily with reference to the situation here, and send you what there may be for *Indian Opinion*. I enclose cables sent today to London[1] and Calcutta[2]. I have sent a short cablegram[3] to Natesan asking him to see the cables to Gokhale and act.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5356

337. LETTER TO J. J. DOKE

March 25, 1911

DEAR MR. DOKE,

You will have received copies of the telegrams exchanged between General Smuts and myself,[4] as also between Mr. Hosken and General Smuts.[5] They portend evil. I am, therefore, going to Cape Town by the Diamond Express. I had intended to call on you before I went away, but there has not been a moment to spare. Mr. Kallenbach is now back from Potchefstroom, and he will keep himself in touch with you. I think that vigorous action on the part of the Committee[6] will be necessary to counteract the effect of, if I may use the proper term, General Smuts' lies in his telegram to Mr. Hosken. If he dared to mislead a friend of the cause in this manner, how much more must he not have done with reference to the others who have not even taken the trouble of informing themselves on the question. I have suggested a public letter signed by the members of the Committee, giving their opinion as to what has been the demand from the start. His threat about exasperating the European community reminds me of what the demonstrators did in Durban to inflame the crowd in the December of

[1] To the S.A.B.I. Committee

[2] To Gokhale, Calcutta. *The Times of India* printed it is received from Calcutta, 27-3-1911.

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

[4] *Vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to Minister of Interior", 24-3-1911; also Appendix, "Telegram to Gandhiji from Private Secretary to Minister of Interior", 24-3-1911.

[5] *Vide* Appendix, "General Smuts Telegram to Hosken", 24-3-1911.

[6] European British Indian Committee

1896 and the January of 1897.[1] The European community is certainly not exasperated, but General Smuts is, and he wants to impart his own exasperation to the community.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5358

338. RESOLUTIONS AT NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS MEETING[2]

[DURBAN,
March 26, 1911]

The Natal Indian Congress meeting passed the following resolutions:

(1) Proposed by Mr. Abdul Caadir:

This mass meeting of British Indian residents of Natal hereby places on record its emphatic protest against the Immigrants' Restriction Bill now before the Union Parliament, in that:

(1) It inaugurates a policy of most total exclusion of British Indians from this Province, and is thus calculated to curtail the facilities which the resident Indian population has hitherto enjoyed of importing from India clerical and other assistance;

(2) No definite provision has been made for recognising the residential rights of the present Indian population, especially those of Indians born in this Province;

(3) Unlike as heretofore, the issue of certificates of residence has been left by the Bill to the discretion of the Administration;

(4) No provision seems to have been made for assisting persons declared to be prohibited by an Immigration Officer to assert their rights before a Court of Law;

(5) The wives and minor children of the resident Indian population do not appear to be protected as heretofore;

(6) The Bill seeks to introduce a racial or colour bar, by rendering British Indians, who may enter the Union under the education test, liable to the Asiatic Laws as to residential rights in one Province of the Union;

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897
[2] *Vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 22-3-1911

and respectfully trusts that the Union Government will introduce the necessary amendments granting relief.

Seconded by Mr. G. P. Gandhi; supported by Mr. J. R. Solomon (Tongaat).

(2) Proposed by Mr. Ismail Gora:

This meeting of British Indian residents of Natal declares that, in the event of the clauses imposing the disabilities described in Resolution No. I, not being removed from the Bill, or otherwise satisfactorily amended, those present at the meeting shall respectfully oppose the Bill with all their strength.

Seconded by Mr. R. N. Moodley (Maritzburg); supported by Mr. S. Emammally.

(3) Proposed by Mr. Abdulla Haji Adam:

This meeting of British Indian residents of Natal hereby authorises the collection of a fund to effectively carry out the objects of the foregoing resolutions.

Seconded by Mr. R. B. Chetty; supported by Mr. M. M. Suliman (Umzinto).

(4) Proposed by Mr. Parsee Rustomjee:

This meeting of British Indian residents of Natal hereby congratulates the Transvaal Indian community upon, and cordially endorses their determination to continue, the "passive resistance" struggle until the racial or colour bar referred to in Resolution No. 1 is removed.

Seconded by Mr. Lutchman Panday; supported by Mr. Mahomed Cassim Coovadia.

(5) Proposed by Mr. Suliman Karwa:

This meeting of British Indian residents of Natal hereby authorises the Chairman to forward copies of the foregoing resolutions to the Union, Imperial and Indian Governments.

Seconded by Mr. P. K. Naidoo; supported by Mr. Rooknoodeen.

Indian Opinion, 1-4-1911

339. TELEGRAM TO JOHANNESBURG OFFICE

CAPE TOWN,
Marsh 27, 1911
11-30 [A.M.]

SAW MINISTER SHORT WHILE. INTERVIEW FOUR O'CLOCK.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the original as delivered: S. N. 5367

340. TELEGRAM TO JOHANNESBURG OFFICE

CAPE TOWN,
March 27, 1911
5-15 [P. M.]

FAIR INTERVIEW. HOPEFUL. FURTHER INTERVIEW PROBABLE.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the original as delivered: S.N. 5372

341. LETTER TO SONJA SCHLESIN[1]

[CAPE TOWN,
March 27, 1911]

Here is roughly the purport of the conversation between J.C.S. and me:

SMUTS: You see, Gandhi, I am giving you everything. I could have done so by regulation but now I am protecting wives and children in the Bill. I do not know why, but I know that everybody suspects me. I am also recognising domicile. But you are very unreasonable. Your point is absolutely new.

GANDHIJI: How can you say so, General Smuts? Are you not creating a racial bar?

[1] The addressee's name is not available, as the first two pages of the letter are missing; but from the instructions given in the last four paragraphs, it appears to have been written to Miss Sonja Schlesin, who looked after Gandhiji's Johannesburg office.

S.: No, I am not. Can you show it to me?

G.: Certainly. Will you admit that throughout the four years we have been simply fighting against the racial or colour bar?

S.: Started and said after some hesitation, 'Yes'.

G.: You know that in the Transvaal Immigration Law there is no colour bar, but you read sub-section 4 and the Asiatic Act, and you have the bar.

S.: You are not stating it fairly.

G.: Then you shall state it in your own words.

S.: In the Transvaal we wanted total exclusion and that is brought about by the combined effect of the two laws.

G.: And now you want the same thing for the Free State. The combined effect of the Free State Law and the new Bill will be [to] shut out the Nizam of Hyderabad, and I assure you that the passive resisters will fight against it.

S.: There you are unreasonable.

G.: I must deny the charge. I am not at all anxious that a single Indian should actually enter the Free State. I am sincerely anxious to help you.

S.: You do not know my difficulties.

G.: I do. And because I do, I suggest that only so much of the Free State Law should be a basis for exemption as will enable a highly educated Indian to enter the Free State. If you send for the Law, I will show you what I mean.

S.: (Sends for the law): But the Free Staters will never consent.

G.: Then why did General Botha write to Lord Crewe that educated immigrants will be able to enter any province?

S.: You do not know all the dispatches. We have not printed everything, you know. Lord Crewe knows that we never wanted to give the rights as to the Free State.

G.: But you repeated the same thing at the second reading.

S.: Yes. I was simply sounding the Free Staters, and I noticed that they were very much opposed.

G.: If they are, it is your duty to persuade them, and if they cannot be, you may simply amend the Transvaal Legislation.

S.: But I am bound to the Imperial Government to pass this Bill. (Reads the Law and asks G. to go over to his side. G. points out the

section from which the exemption is to be granted.) Yes, I now see what you mean.

G.: Yes, the educated Asiatics will be still prohibited from owning fixed property and from trading. I am not raising that issue at all. We have still to fight you on the question of Law 3 of 1885. But this has nothing to do with passive resistance. I for one do not wish to offer passive resistance for material gains, but the racial bar we can never accept.

S.: But you have no idea of my difficulties.

G.: I know that you are quite able to overcome greater difficulties.

S.: All right, I shall now talk to the Free State members. You should leave your address with Lane. I hope you will keep the Cape and the Natal Indians silent.

G.: They will certainly not remain silent. I have just got a wire from Natal. It is absolutely necessary to protect existing rights. The question of domicile is ticklish and section 25 requires amending. Certificates should be issued for the asking.

S.: But discretion is always reserved.

G.: Not in the existing statutes. But of this I shall talk later if you will let me.

S.: What are you doing in Jo'burg, etc.?

G.: Looking after the families of passive resisters, etc.

S.: It has hurt me more than you to imprison these people. It has been the unpleasantest episode of my life to imprison men who suffer for their conscience. I should do the same thing for conscience' sake.

G.: And yet you are persecuting Mrs. Sodha.

* * *

Please let Sorabjee and those on the Farm read the interview. I have written it more for their sakes, and then you may send it to Mr. Polak.

The notes of the interview are not for publication. But they are not to be destroyed.

I hope you received Mr. Hosken's permission to publish the

correspondence.[1]

Do please get Sorabjee to write daily to the people at the Farm.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 5376

342. TELEGRAM TO JOHANNESBURG OFFICE

CAPE TOWN,
March 28, 1911.

SEND POLAK ALEXANDER'S MINISTER'S AMENDMENTS PUBLICATION.[2] AM MOVING REGARDING MINISTER'S AMENDAMENTS WHICH ARE NOT QUITE SATISFACTORY. NOTHING FURTHER TODAY.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the original as delivered: S.N. 5370

343. LETTER TO E. F. C. LANE

7, BUITENCINGLE STREET,
CAPE TOWN,
March 29, 1911

DEAR MR. LANE,

I observe that amendments proposed to be moved by General Smuts to the Immigration Bill require that evidence in respect of domicile, marriage and parental relationship should be furnished to the satisfaction of the Immigration Officer. I venture to submit for General Smuts' consideration that such requirement may open the door to favouritism, corruption and bribery. I also submit that such delicate questions as to marital and parental relationship could only be decided by Courts of Law in case of doubt but not by an administrative officer nor should the matter be left to be dealt with by regulation.

With reference to the question of domicile it is a matter of the

[1] *Vide* Appendix, "General Smuts Telegram to Hosken", 24-3-1911.
[2] Published in *Indian Opinion*, 1-4-1911

utmost importance that an illustrative definition such as occurs in the Natal Statute should be given. Members of the Indian community here lay the greatest stress on this point owing to their unfortunate experience in the past.

As to section 25, the feeling is very strong that those who prove their right of residence should be entitled to receive, on their making application there for, a permanent residential certificate.

These are points which are of vital importance to the residents, and I hope that they will receive General Smuts' favourable consideration.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5385; also *Indian Opinion*, 8-4-1911

344. TELEGRAM TO JOHANNESBURG OFFICE

CAPE TOWN,
March 29, 1911

WIRE POLAK HOSKEN'S PERMISSION PUBLISH CORRESPONDENCE[1]. NO NEWS TODAY.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the original as delivered: S.N. 5382

345. INTERVIEW TO "CAPE ARGUS"[2]

[CAPE TOWN,
Before *March 30, 1911*][3]

A mistaken impression has got about that the British Indians of the Transvaal are perfectly satisfied with the provisions of the Immigrants' Restriction. Bill. Mr. Advocate Gandhi, spokesman of the Transvaal Indian community, who is at present in Cape Town, in conversation with an *Argus* representative, detailed various points of the Bill, which, are not approved of by the Transvaal Indians. [Gandhiji said:]

The chief drawback, so far as the passive resisters are concerned,

[1] For the correspondence, *vide* Appendix, "General Smuts Telegram to Hosken", 24-3-1911.

[2] The report was "Special to *Cape Argus*" and was published under the heading "Emigration Bill—Mr. Gandhi's Grievances—Some Fresh Points".

[3] The *Argus* interview was published in *The Star* of the 30th.

is in the racial bar set up, if educated Asiatics who may enter the Union under the education test may not have residential rights in the Free State. It will be remembered that General Botha in a despatch to Lord Crewe, dated December 20, said that such Asiatics could settle in any Province of the Union, and a like statement was made by General Smuts at the second reading of the Bill. It now appears that the intention is to go back upon this, and debar such Asiatics from entering the Free State.

I may mention at once that the question is purely an academic one, because no Indian will care to enter the Free State under the present circumstances, but the removal of the racial bar in an Immigration Bill is absolutely necessary to salve Asiatic sentiment.

We do not contend that the general disabilities Asiatics labour under in the Free State should be removed. That is to say, if an educated Asiatic immigrant enters the Free State, he would still be under disabilities as to the holding of fixed property and the carrying on of any trade. The objection against the entrance of such educated Asiatics is based upon ignorance of the situation. I can hardly imagine that the Free State members would object to conciliating Asiatic sentiment by a simple removal of the racial bar. There is little probability that a single British Indian of education will seek to enter the Free State, since the Indian population there is too sparse to support an Indian barrister or doctor. Unless this racial bar is removed, passive resistance, I fear, must continue, and I do not know but that its extent may be increased by the British Indians of Natal and the Cape joining it.

NATAL AND THE CAPE

I have been receiving telegrams from Natal on other points of the Bill, and on these I am conferring with my countrymen in Cape Town. They are all agreed that the existing rights should be fully protected, and they therefore reason that full protection should be given to the wives and children of those who are domiciled in South Africa, and that the rights of domicile should be fully recognised, as they have been hitherto.

THE TERM "DOMICILE"

Past experience shows that the term domicile, being a highly technical word, needs exact definition to avoid the possibilities of bribery and corruption. The Natal Act makes it possible for an Asiatic

who has resided for three years to receive a certificate of domicile. It is also contended that those having rights of residence should be able to take out certificates if they choose to do so, so as to enable them to move to and fro without difficulty, without having to incur constant expense to prove their rights. It seems to me, indeed, that many of these matters are easily capable of adjustment.

EDUCATION TEST

The great question for British Indians in Cape Colony and Natal is the disability imposed by the severe education test in the new Bill. Some guarantee is, I think, undoubtedly necessary in order that Indian residents may obtain clerical assistance from India, since this is not to be obtained in South Africa. Hitherto Indians having a fair education have entered under the immigration test, and such facilities will be still necessary if the existing rights are to be protected.

Some of us even go so far as to contend that now, under Union, there should be no restriction of movement from Province to Province, but the most moderate are for the time being reconciled to provincial restrictions. We recognise the difficulty of the Government in the matter' but it is still a pressing grievance.

From a photostat of the cutting from *Cape Argus* in the Sabarmati Sangrahalaya: S.N. 5214; a1so

Indian Opinion, 8-4-1911

346. TELEGRAM TO JOHANNESBURG OFFICE

7, BUITENCINGLE [STREET],
CAPE TOWN,
March 30, 1911

ASK KALLENBACH IF RITCH MAY LIVE MOUNTAIN VIEW, BILL NOT ON FOR SOME DAYS. SEEING MINISTER TO-MORROW. WILL BE THROUGH BEFORE END APRIL.

GANDHI

From the origina1 as delivered: S.N. 5391

347. SPEECH AT RECEPTION IN CAPE TOWN[1]

[*March, 30, 1911*]

Brothers, I am obliged to you for the trouble you have taken for my sake. If you love me and my work, the only thing I would ask you to do is to join me in the work. I do not think I deserve the praise you have lavished on me. Whatever I have done and am doing still must be attributed to the religious ardour in me. We all know that Prahlad[2] opposed his father, embraced a red-hot iron pillar and went through many other ordeals. He suffered all this, he refused to submit to his father, not because of any animosity towards his father but because of his hatred for untruth. Similarly, friends, we may say that we have resorted to satyagraha not in a spirit of hostility to the Government, but because it is a religious duty to fight untruth. Some believe that satyagraha consists only in going to gaol, but that is not true. Satyagraha means resisting untruth by truthful means. It can be offered at any place, at any time and by any person, even though he may be in a minority of one. If one remains steadfast in it in a spirit of dedication, it always brings success. Satyagraha knows neither frustration nor despair. The admiration you have expressed for the success of satyagraha in the Transvaal does show that you realize its great value.

[Referring to the Immigration Bill, Gandhiji said:]

We are nearing the end, and victory will undoubtedly be ours if we work on in the spirit of satyagraha. What is most humiliating to us in the new Bill is the provision that educated Indians cannot enter the Orange Free State, and that the Orange Free State Act, based on racial discrimination, will stand. This is humiliating to all Indians. We in the Transvaal and in Natal are firm in our opposition to it, and I am glad to know that the Cape Indians have also joined us. If we are united in offering satyagraha, our victory is assured.

Gandhiji then explained the position with regard to the correspondence between General Smuts and himself, and also described how the families of satyagrahis were maintained on the Tolstoy Farm, outlining the steps taken to give

[1] Given by the Cape Town United Hindu Association on March 30, 1911 in honour of L.W. Ritch and Gandhiji

[2] Gandhiji often refers to him as the ideal Satyagrahi of his conception.

them some education of practical value. Finally, he referred to the urgent need for clothes, blankets, etc., for the use of the inmates of the Farm during the winter.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 22-4-1911

348. TELEGRAM TO JOHANNESBURG OFFICE

KLOOF STREET,
[CAPE TOWN,]
March 31, 1911

RAMBHABAI APPLICATION LEAVE APPEAL GRANTED. HEARING TWENTY-FOURTH. BLOEMFONTEIN. GOOD INDIAN MEETINGS YESTERDAY. MASS MEETING SUNDAY.

GANDHI

From the original as delivered: S.N. 5394

349. TELEGRAM TO JOHANNESBURG OFFICE

CAPE TOWN,
April 1, 1911

TO
GANDHI
JOHANNESBURG

FREESTATERS[1] NOW CONSIDERING. FINAL DECISION PROBABLY TUESDAY.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the original as delivered: S. N. 5397

[1] Members of Union Parliament from Orange Free State; they were considering the African Indians' demand that the six educated Asiatics allowed yearly to enter the Colony under the Gandhi-Smuts compromise should have free domiciliary rights in the Free State, which were being denied to them by the proposed Union Immigrants' Restriction Bill; *vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to General Smuts", 17-3-1911; "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 20-3-1911 & "Letter to Sonja Schlesin", 27-3-1911.

350. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Chaitra Sud 3 [*April 2, 1911*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,[2]

I had asked Dr. Mehta[3] about his view and in reply he has given me permission to send you and another person to England immediately. We cannot avail ourselves of it just yet. I, however, write this in order that you may keep it in mind. There will be, I think, some delay if Chhaganlal[4] goes to . . .

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5626. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] This is the first of a series of Gujarati letters in this volume in which the date lines bear the day and month of the Gujarati calendar but mention no year. It was in 1911 that Maganlal's going to England was discussed seriously; *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", after 18-5-1911. In that year Chaitra Sud 3 corresponds to April 2.

[2] Maganlal Gandhi (1833-1928); a cousin of Gandhiji's and Chhaganlal Gandhi's brother; in 1908 he suggested " satyagraha" as a Gujarati equivalent for "passive resistance" which was the basis of Gandhiji's own term "satyagraha"; manager of the Phoenix settlement after Chhaganlal's departure for England, and later, of the Satyagraha Ashram at Sabarmati. Gandhiji dedicated his Autobiography to him.

[3] Dr. Pranjivan Jagjivan Mehta, M. D., Bar-at-law, who took Gandhiji in hand soon after his arrival in England in 1888 and "taught him English etiquette"; remained a lifelong friend till his death in 1933, evincing great interest in all of Gandhiji's enterprises including the Tolstoy Farm and the Champaran satyagraha; generally an invaluable source of funds for public activities. Through him, Gandhiji met poet Rajchandra from whom he learned to "see God in all his daily acts". *Vide An Autobiography*, Part I, Ch. XIII & XIV, Part II, Ch. I and Part V, Ch. XVI.

[4] Chhaganlal Gandhi; a cousin of Gandhiji's and a founder member of the Phoenix settlement; Editor of Gujarati Indian Opinion after 1908; was sent to England in 1911 to study for the Bar as part of Gandhiji's scheme to train members of Indian Opinion staff for increased responsibilities.

351. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

Monday [*On or before April 3, 1911*][1]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I have your 'slating' letter. It is certainly a sign of 'thickness' that I should not write to please you but write only when I have something to say. The office news I purposely refrain from writing as I should expect Miss S[chlesin] to give you the information you would need. You have not become an expert in the question and I do not want to give you details which only an expert may require. You are in fact and in reality the angel of peace and mercy. These angels simply give strength wherever it is required without knowing even that they are doing [so]. With you, as I have so often said, the heart comes first. Whenever the intellect has ruled, you have shown the worst side of your nature.

Remarkable that the finger should not still be cured entirely. But you never fasted, though you intended to.

You are 'crowing' too early. My telegrams were not intended to convey that we had the victory. The wretched new Bill[2] I certainly think is as good as dead. But whether the Transvaal Law will be amended or not is a different thing. I think it will be. Smuts is committed to settling the question. But he is never certain as to anything. He always waits till the last moment.

Harilal tells me you are going to England if I do. How so? Can it be arranged? Who will look after the Farm? I should be far more satisfied with your dispositions if Mountain Views could be sold. But I am inclined to blame you in the matter. You have never seriously tried to sell it. Will you now do it? It is, I am sure, wrong to think of clinging to both the Farm and Mountain View.

You will laugh when I tell you that the 2 lb. of butter is still

[1] From the contents; *vide* also the following two letters to the addressee; the Monday before April 5 was April 3.

[2] *Vide* Appendix, Immigrants' Restricttion Bill", 4-3-1911

lying unpacked in Gopal's[1] bag. Yes, I think, we have lost friend Gopal.

With love,

Yours sincerely,
UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

352. TELEGRAM TO JOHANNESBURG OFFICE

CAPE TOWN,
April 3, 1911

TO
GANDHI
JOHANNESBURG

GOOD MEETING[2] YESTERDAY. SEVEN RESOLUTIONS[3]3 PASSED FORESHADOWING PASSIVE RESISTANCE, FAILURE REMOVAL RACIAL BAR, SUPPORTING TRANSVAAL, HONOURING RITCH[4],

[1] Probably Gopal Naidoo, who came to stay at Tolstoy Farm around June 13, 1910 and was looking after the cooking there; *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 15-6-1910 and "Johannesburg", 9-7-1910.

[2] This meeting held by Cape Indians demanded the following changes, among others, in the Union Immigrants Restriction Bill: (1) proof regarding domicile from wives and children of domiciled Asiatics be left to courts of law; (2) Immigration Officers' decisions be made justiciable; (3) the less severe education test existing in the Cape be retained in the new law; and (4) educated Asiatic immigrants be allowed to enter and reside in any Province of the Union. Failing this, they demanded that the Cape and Natal laws be retained in their existing form and that the Transvaal immigration law be suitably amended. Indian Opinion, 8-4-1911.

[3] *ibid*

[4] L. W. Ritch; Theosophist and manager of a Johannesburg commercial firm before he joined Gandhiji as an articled clerk; passed his Bar examination in London, *vide* "Letter to A.H. West", 2-11-1906 & "The Deputation's Voyage-V", 3-11-1906; Secretary, South Africa British Indian Committee ("Letter to Lord Reay", (Enclosure), 24-11-1906) of which he eventually became the "moving spirit"; in March, 1911, helped Cape Indians to organize against the whittling down of Asiatic rights in the Immigrants' Restriction Bill; *vide* "Letter to Abdul Hamid Gool", 2-3-1911; "Telegram to L.W. Ritch", 8-3-1911 & "Letter to H.S.L. Polak", 9-3-1911. In the same month British Indian Assocation asked him to act on its behalf at Cape Town, *vide* "Telegram to L.W. Ritch", 7-3-1911, but Smuts refused to accept him, "an entire stranger", as their representative and would not see him, *vide* "Telegram to L.W. Ritch", 9-3-1911; "Letter to Private Secretary to Minister of Interior", 10-3-1911; "Letter to L.W. Ritch", 10-3-1911; was virtually in charge of BIA's legal work after he took over as solicitor in Gandhiji's office in April, 1911 ("Ritch in Johannesburg", 15-4-1911).

WHO LEFT TODAY WITH SON. ARRANGE THEIR BREAKFAST.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the original as delivered: S. N. 5406

353. TELEGRAM TO JOHANNESBURG OFFICE[1]

CAPE TOWN,
April 4, 1911

TO
GANDHI
JOHANNESBURG

MINISTER THINKS IT WILL BE WELL BUT SUGGESTS MY STAY UNNECESSARY. I THINK I SHOULD LEAVE THIS WEEK. BILL FAR OFF.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the original as delivered: S. N. 5407

354. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

[CAPE TOWN,]
Tuesday [*April 4, 1911*]

MY DEAR RITCH,

I have now got Evir's cert[ificate][2]. Saw Lane[3]. He thinks it will be well but the Bill may not come up for two weeks. He suggests my not waiting. I am now trying to see all the members[4] I can. Have wired[5] today and await some instructions.

Yours sincerely,

M. K.GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5408

[1] In reply to BIA's telegram of April 1, 1911 which read: "Strongly advise you remain Cape Town until matter settled. " S. N. 5399

[2] Birth certificate which had been asked for by Ritch

[3] E. F. C. Lane, Private Secretary to Smuts

[4] Members of Union Parliament

[5] *Vide* the preceding item.

355. TELEGRAM TO JOHANNESBURG OFFICE

CAPE TOWN ,
April 5, 1911

TO
GANDHI
JOHANNESBURG

SECRETARY ASKED FOR ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS WRITING. SUBMITTING SAME TOMORROW. ALTERNATIVE IS AMENDMENT TRANSVAAL LAW.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the original as delivered: S. N. 5411

356. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

8 KLOOF STREET,
Wednesday [April 5, 1911][1]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I suppose you do not get the time to write to me regularly.

"The salvation of men from the calamities which they inflict upon themselves can be realized only in that degree in which they are guided in their lives, not by advantages, not arguments, but by religious consciousness," so says Tolstoy. I have brought with me some of his pamphlets which I read during odd moments. There are many gems to be picked up from these pamphlets.

So now I am on the great task of seeing the members who would see me.

Sorabji has been discussing with me the problem of going to the Imperial Conference. There are some reasons why one may go to advantage. I feel however that if the struggle does not end, I must not go. But the matter cannot be decided through the post. I simply mention it so that you may discuss it with Ritch and Sorabji.

How is the finger?

I have not yet touched the butter you gave me. Still on saltless

[1] From the contents; *vide* also "Letter to L.W. Ritch", 5-4-1911.

diet. There is really no difficulty about it. I should like to keep it up. If I do not, it will be my own fault.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

357. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO MAUD POLAK[1]

[CAPE TOWN]
April 5, 1911

. . . There is another matter which is likely to cause the greatest distress in the Transvaal, if not ruin to hundreds of Indians; the Gold Law of 1908 (Transvaal)[2] Section 130 provides that no right under it can be held by or sub-let to an Asiatic or Coloured person. It has been discovered that many townships are affected by this law. Klerksdorp Indians have received notices to vacate premises occupied by them[3]. The notices have been served by the owners, who in turn have been notified by the Government that they are committing a breach of the law by allowing Asiatics to occupy Stands registered in their names. There is a Supreme Court case which says that Asiatics who have leases cannot be disturbed during the period of their leases, if their leases were entered into prior to the passing of the law. This will not protect existing rights, for very few have long leases. Monthly tenants will therefore be ruined. The legal opinion has been sent to you; it shows that, if the law is carried out, the whole Asiatic

[1] This was forwarded to the Colonial Office on May 5, 1911 by Maud Polak, sister of H. S. L. Polak and Assistant Honorary Secretary of the SABI Committee in London.

[2] The Transvaal Precious and Base Metals Act 35 of 1908

[3] At Klerksdorp, the Public Prosecutor had issued notices to European Stand-holders under Section 130 of the Gold Law of 1908 against subletting Stands to Coloured persons. The European holders had accordingly asked their Indian tenants to vacate. In May, 1911, Klerksdorp Indians petitioned the Minister of the Interior appealing that the law be repealed and the Prosecutor's notices withdrawn, but the Acting Secretary for the Interior replied in June saying that the questions raised were of a "purely legal character" and that the Minister could not move Parliament for altering the law. The issue was then taken up by the BIA. Indian Opinion, 20-5-1911 & 10-6-1911.

population of the mining districts in the Transvaal will be cleared out. Johannesburg is included in this plan, and Johannesburg contains the largest Indian population. I am sure that when the Imperial Government sanctioned this legislation they could not have contem-plated such an untoward and disastrous result.

Cd. 6087; also *Indian Opinion*, 27-4-1911

358. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

[CAPE TOWN,]
Wednesday [*April 5, 1911*]

MY DEAR RITCH,

Saw yesterday Dr. Hewart, the Opposition whip, and Sir Bisset Berry. J. W. Jagger[1] I meet this afternoon. And so I shall continue till I have seen all I want to see and all who would see me. The members I saw yesterday were introduced to me by Alexander[2]. They have promised to support Alexander. They themselves had not much time but agreed that the point was verysimple. General Botha's[3] dispatch[4] to Lord Crewe[5] does the trick.

[1] Member of the Union Assembly

[2] Morris Alexander; Jewish member of Parliament from Cape Town; was sympathetic to the African Indian cause and opposed many provisions of the Union Immigrants' Restriction Bill as affecting Indians.

[3] Louis Botha (1862-1919); "an Afrikander, Natal-born and Transvaal trained . . . . a Liberal in the old republican days, bilingual, genial, boundlessly tactful" (Eric Walker, A History of South Africa, p. 535) and one of the moderate Boers "familiar with all the intricacies of agriculture . . . there was hardly anyone in Europe . . . as good a judge of sheep as he was" (*Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. II); outstanding Dutch commander during the Boer War; in 1904-5 founded the Het Volk party pledged to conciliation and self-government (Walker, op. cit., pp. 515-6); accepted proposal for self-government under the British although extreme Boers were sceptical and managed to get through "drastic anti-Asiatic Bills" (*ibid*. , p. 519); first premier of self-governing Transvaal in 1907, and in 1910 became first Union Premier; opposed educated Asiatics' entry in Gandhi-Smuts Conference following the compromise of January 1908; *vide* "Letter to Lord Ampthill", 5-8-1909

[4] Of December 20, 1910; *vide* "Report of European Committee Meeting", 23-3-1911.

[5] Robert Ofley Ashburton Crewe-Milnes, 1st Marquess of Crewe; Liberal statesman and writer; Lord-Lieutenant for Ireland in 1892-5 cabinet; Secretary of State for Colonies, 1908; succeeded Morley at India Office in November, 1910; quitted active party politics in 1922 but became Secretary of State for War in 1931; author of Stray Verses and other literary miscellanies.

I feel sure that if the Bill comes up at all, General Smuts[1] will not dare to bring it up without the amendment[2] we are asking for. I think he has dropped the charge of bringing a new point.[3]

Sorabji[4] has been writing to me that I should go to London for

[1] Jan Christiaan Smuts (1870-1950); Gandhiji found him "as able a general and administrator as he is a lawyer", but mentions that he was warned that "slim Janny", as Smuts was known, was a "trimmer"; *vide Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XXV. After a brilliant academic career at Cambridge, Smuts was admitted to the Cape Town Bar in 1895; commander-in-chief of rebel commandoes in the Cape during Boer War; in 1902 urged compromise with the British at the Vereeniging peace negotiations; strongly opposed Milner's policy, especially the importation of Chinese coolies for the gold mines; founded in 1904. along with Botha, the Het Volk party; after Responsible Government became Transvaal's Colonial Secretary; an advocate of Union along with Lionel Curtis ("Johannesburg Letter", 9-5-1908) and an author of the South Africa Act of 1911; in 1910 became Union Minister for Interior, Mines and Defence; in 1912 took over the treasury, retaining Defence; in 1916 during World War I, accepted Imperial command in East Africa; joined War Cabinet and initiated unification of the flying services; after Armistice, wrote his Memorandum, The League of Nations: A Practical Suggestion, which subsequently became the covenant of the League. Speaking of his controversy with Smuts over the 1908 compromise, Gandhiji says, "Even today, I look upon the incident as a breach of faith . . . not perhaps . . . an intentional breach of faith"; *vide Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XXV.

[2] On March 10, 1911, Indians had requested that, in the Union Immigrants' Restriction Bill, an amendment be made exempting educated Asiatics from provincial registration laws and protecting the rights of wives and minor children of registered Asiatics; *vide* "Transvaal Petition to Union Assembly", 10-3-1911.

[3] Smuts made this charge in his telegram of March 21, 1911 ("Telegram to Private Secretary", of General Smuts, 22-3-1911) in response to Gandhiji's request ("Telegram to Private Secretary to General Smuts", 17-3-1911 and ; 20-3-1911) that educated

Asiatic immigrants be exempted from orange Free State registration laws as well. The Transvaal Leader, under its new editorship, also shared the view that the demand was a new one. Polak wrote to the editor pointing out that "the limitation of the number of educated indian immigrants" was accepted by Gandhiji only for the Transvaal, and that "Natal Indians cannot be expected to permit themselves to be deprived of rights that they already possess". Ritch also wrote saying that, while it was true that the immigration bill would "repeal the Transvaal immigration and registration laws of 1907, it virtually re-enacts the Free State law which is . . . specifically insulting to Indians". He gave the assurance that "if the objections raised . . . are met by amendment to the bill . . . the 'agitation' to which you take exception will automatically end . . . the racial bar must . . . not apply to any part of the union." Indian Opinion, 15-4-1911.

[4] Sorabji Shapurji Adajania; "as much of an Indian as a Parsee", he laid the foundation of the "second phase" of the campaign in South Africa and, entering the

the Imperial Conference[1]. I do not Know. If the struggle ends, it may be worthwhile. The Gold Law business worries me. It is such a damnable business. One might be able to do something in that connection. If the struggle does not end, it seems to me that I cannot leave at all. Let Sorabji discuss the thing with you. I have instructed Maud about the Gold Law, suggesting that she should copy my remarks and forward [them] to the Colonial & India Offices. [2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5419

359. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

[CAPE TOWN,]
Wednesday [*April 5, 1911*]

MY DEAR RITCH,

Your wire[3]. I shall not run away hastily. I wrote a short note[4] to Lane saying I was staying for some time to see the other members. He sent a note in reply asking me to see him at once. On going to him he gave me the message from J.C.S. to the effect that I should reduce to writing my two proposals. He added that Smuts did not want me to go away empty-handed and said that the matter must be settled during this session. Our friends may derive what hope they can from this.

Have been lobbying the whole afternoon. More tomorrow. I have to submit my proposal tomorrow after 10-30 a. m.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5417

Transvaal many times to test educated Indians' rights, "suffered the longest terms of imprisonment" in 1908 and deportation in 1909; was sent by Gandhiji to England in 1912 at Dr. Mehta's expense to qualify as barrister; while in England was invited by Gokhale to join the Servants of India Society; but returned to the Transvaal, did public work among Indians and died in Johannesburg at an early age. *Vide* also *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XXIX.

[1] Originally scheduled to meet on May 22, 1911 ("Letter to L. W. Ritch", 15-4-1911), it was held on June 19, 1911.

[2] She did this; *vide* the preceding item.

[3] Dated April 5, which read: "Strong feeling here that you should remain unless no likelihood Bill this session". S.N. 5412.

[4] Not available

360. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Chaitra Sud 6 [*April 5, 1911*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter from Rajkot and also the one written before that. It is a great achievement that your health is improving. That you could not go to Poona and other places is true but as you have to come back here soon, the elders will feel satisfied if you stay with them as long as you can.

I am sorry to learn that Prabhu[2] is ill but am not surprised at all. I have no faith in our living conditions there. 'Our' means 'our society's'.

Bring a good collection of Gujarati dictionaries and other useful books with you when you come. I believe that you will bring the bills. Bring along Anandlal if he agrees to come.

Tell Raliatbehn[3] to forget her brother. When I will be able to go to India and when I go whether I will be able to stay with her is all in the hands of God. Phuli's health is in her own hands. She does not control her palate and therefore will go on suffering.

I do not feel that this time, too, we will be able to arrive at a settlement. Yesterday, I had a long talk with Smuts. He says that it can be done only next year. In the meantime, he does not want to arrest anyone. How can we sit quietly the way he wants us to. I wrote to him a strong letter yesterday.

I have sent a note to Revashankerbhai[4] for your money.

[1] The year is evidently 1911 as revealed from the contents; *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 14-2-1911 and "Fragment of Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 1-8-1911 and "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 13-8-1911. The Gujarati date Chaitra Sud 6, however, does not figure in the Panchanga of that year. Chaitra Sud 5 corresponded to April 4, and can be accepted as the date when this letter was written.

[2] Prabhudas, addressee's son

[3] Raliatbehn Vrindavandas, sister of Gandhiji

[4] Revashanker Jagjivan Jhaveri , a friend of Gandhiji and brother of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

Give my respect to Khushalbhai[1] and Bhabhi[2]. I trust you will return here leaving behind all the problems.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32889

361. TELEGRAM TO JOHANNESBURG OFFICE

CAPE TOWN,

April 6, 1911

TO
GANDHI
JOHANNESBURG

SETTLED DRAFT PROPOSAL[3] NOTHING NEED BE TAKEN AS CERTAIN.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the original as delivered: S. N. 5421

[1] Khushalchand Jivanji Gandhi, a cousin of Gandhiji and his wife, Devbhabhi; parents of the addressee

[2] *ibid*

[3] Asked for in writing by Lane; *vide* the preceding item.

362. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

[CAPE TOWN,]

Thursday [*April 6, 1911*]

MY DEAR RITCH,

Have seen Farrar[1], Chaplin[2], Jagger, C. P. Robinson[3], etc. Farrar was the most sympathetic. They all agree that the Free State contention must be granted.

Had nearly half an hour with Lane. He looked at my draft, suggested certain alterations[4]. I hope to type the thing tonight and post it to him and copy to you.

Going to the meeting of the Committee of the Union[5].

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5423

[1] Sir George Farrar (1859-1915); Chairman, East Rand Proprietary Mines; a leader of the Progressive Party; one of the "Labour importers" who, "in the face of organized opposition" from the Boers and other interests, agitated successfully for the implementation of the majority Report of the Labour Commission of 1903, which sought to introduce Asiatic workers in the Rand mines since Native workers were unavailable; member of the Transvaal Legislative Council both before and after Responsible Government; member of Union Parliament

[2] Drummond Chaplin; a member of the House of Assembly and of the Progressive Party, who sympathized with the Indians in some of their grievances against the Transvaal immigration law; was the chief Opposition spokesman in the Legislative Assembly in favour of the Indians' Relief Bill of 1914.

[3] A candidate for Union Parliament

[4] Evidently in Schedules A and B of the following item

[5] The Cape British Indian Union; *vide* "Telegram to Abdul Caadir", 7-3-1911.

363. LETTER TO E. F. C. LANE

FINAL COPY[1]

7, BUITENCINGLE [STREET,]
CAPE TOWN,
April 7, 1911

DEAR MR. LANE,

In accordance with conversation[2] between us, I reduce to writing my suggestions for bringing the Asiatic struggle in the Transvaal to a close.

A

The new clause tabled by General Smuts to follow clause 27 in the present Bill should be amended as follows:

> Anything to the contrary notwithstanding in Act No. 36 of 1908 of the Transvaal and Chapter XXXIII of the Orange Free State Constitution, a person who, by complying with the conditions described in paragraph (a) of section four of this Act, has been permitted to enter the Union shall not be deemed to be subject to registration under the provisions of the said Act of the Transvaal and to Clauses 1 to 6 of the said Chapter XXXIII.

(The words underlined are the additions suggested by me.)

Subject to such amendment and subject to unequivocal protection of existing rights, especially of wives and children of lawful residents and immigrants, the bill will be acceptable to the passive resisters. I offer no comment on the special objections that the Cape and Natal Indians have naturally raised, and which I think ought to receive careful and favourable consideration.

B

As an alternative solution, I suggest as follows:

(1) The present bill be dropped.
(2) A bill to amend Transvaal Act 15 of 1907[3] be introduced and

[1] These words are in Gandhiji's hand.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to L. W. Ritch", 5-4-1911
[3] This is the Transvaal Immigrants' Restriction Act which came into force in January, 1908, without, however, superseding the Asiatic Registration Act of 1907, and against which the satyagraha campaign of 1908 was directed; for text of the Bill,

thereby

(a) The Transvaal Act 2 of 1907[1] be repealed "except so far as it is applicable to the registration of minors lawfully resident in the Transvaal". (The wording is taken from the first schedule to the present bill. My reading of the reservation is that minor children of registered Asiatics, no matter where they may be, shall be free to enter the Transvaal and be liable to and entitled to registration on reaching the age of 16.)

(b) The education clause of Act 15 of 1907 may be replaced by sub-clause (a) of clause 4 of the present bill in order, if necessary, to make the test more severe.

(c) Sub-clause 4 of section 2 of Act 15 of 1907 be repealed.

(d) General Smuts' new clause 28 be added *mutatis mutandis* to Act 15 of 1907, without of course the addition suggested by me and which addition is necessary for the present bill but NOT for the alternative solution.

In my opinion the alternative solution is the simplest; it raises no question as to the Free State and its acceptance by General Smuts will not only close passive resistance, but I feel sure will meet with the entire approval of the Indian community.

This, however, does not mean that the community waives its right to move for an amelioration of its position in many other matters.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From *Indian Opinion*, 15-4-1911; also photostat of typewritten copy: S. N. 5434.

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vide Appendix "Transvaal Immigration Restriction Bill", 13-7-1907". and for the text of the Act which is somewhat different, *vide* Appendix "Immigrants' Restriction Act", 4-1-1908.

[1] The Transvaal Asiatic Registration Act which was passed by the self-governing Colony of the Transvaal on March 22, 1907, and received Royal assent on May 7, 1907. It was virtually a re-enactment of its precursor, the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance, which had been disallowed by the Imperial Government on protest made against it by the Gandhi-Ally deputation of 1906. Both the Ordinance and the Act envisaged, among other things, the compulsory registration of Asiatics and the affixture of their finger-impressions on their certificates.

364. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

7, BUITENCINGLE [STREET,
CAPE TOWN,]
April 7, 1911

MY DEAR RITCH,

Please tell Miss Schlesin[1] that I have had no letters from there during the last two days. I take it she did not write on Monday & Tuesday. I have just a suspicion that the letters may have miscarried.

Herewith my letter[2] to Lane. I had a long chat with Lane yesterday. He suggested alterations in the draft I had taken. The copy I am sending you is the result. You will be pleased to learn that the typing has been done by me. I have borrowed Hiranand's typewriter. I am finishing this letter in Lane's office. He suggested the dropping of the last sentence[3] which he thoughts meant a threat. I told him it could not be dropped and I told him plainly that I could not rest so long as women were taxed, Indians could not hold landed property in the Transvaal, & c. I told him pretty plainly that if the Gold Law prosecu-tions[4] in Klerksdorp were proceeded with, I would not hesitate to advise & raise passive resistance. We have been talking to each other with the utmost freedom. You will see the revised letter signed by me. In it there is no material change. The second copy was typed in Lane's office. He tells me quite confidentially that the alternative sol-ution will be accepted though he adds that J.C.S. is still in treaty with the Free Staters. He was most eagerly waiting for my letterwhich I brought to him somewhat late as I was engaged last night with

[1] Sonja Schlesin; a Jewish girl "with a character as clear as crystal and courage that would shame a warrior"; joined Gandhiji as a steno-typist at the age of 16 and was his Private Secretary for many years; made herself useful to Indian Opinion; was ardently interested in the Indian cause. "When during the satyagraha days almost everyone . . . was in jail, she led the movement single handed. She had the management of thousands, a tremendous amount of correspondence, and Indian Opinion on her hands, but she never wearied"; an "ardent suffragist" and the "heart and soul" of the Transvaal Indian Women's Association. *Vide* also *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XXIII and *An Autobiography*, Part IV, Ch. XII.

[2] Of April 7, 1911, a copy of which Gandhiji had promised to send Ritch in his letter of April 6, "Letter to L.W. Ritch", 6-4-1911.

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

[4] *Vide* also "Extract from Letter to Maud Polak", 5-4-1911

Smartt[1] who gave a very patient hearing. In the morning Campbell Anderson interrupted me. Up to the time of writing this, I am sanguine of the 2nd proposal[2] becoming law in the course of a few days.

As I made mention about the approval of the whole community, I have wired you for approval,[3] though really the thing has been approved already there and here & [in] Natal. Natal went out of its way to wire approval of the Cape resolutions.

In the circumstances I am not leaving at all for the time being. As a matter of fact I could not have, even if I had your permission, until I had finished seeing the members.

I enclose [a] cutting[4] from The Times. You will notice Smuts already foreshadowing a new solution.

I hope I shall get the English mail[5] tomorrow noon.

Abdurahman[6] introduced me to Smartt. They two seemed to be rather intimate. I met Col. Crewe also though the former did not stay for the interview.

I take it you will explain the letter to the leaders there.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5428

[1] Sir Thomas Smartt; Minister of Agriculture in the 1920 Cabinet; member of the Unionist Party which later merged in the South Africa Party

[2] *Vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 7-4-1911.

[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Johannesburg Office", 7-4-1911.

[4] Not available

[5] Letters presumably received from England at Tolstoy Farm and redirected to Gandhiji at Cape Town

[6] Dr. Abdurahman; of Malay descent, a well-known physician of Cape Town; President of the African Political Organization and member of the Cape Town Municipality and of the pre-Union Cape Legislative Assembly; in 1909 went with the deputation of Coloured people to England, *vide* "Deputation's Voyage[—I], After 23-6-1909 in February 1910 opposed, in the Cape Town Municipal Council, proposal to welcome the Prince of Wales, declaring he would "look upon it as a day of mourning"; *vide* "The Cape Coloured People", 26-2-1910 & "Abdurahman's Indignation", 26-2-1910, also *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. II.

365. TELEGRAM TO JOHANNESBURG OFFICE

CAPE TOWN,
April 7, 1911

TO
GANDHI
JOHANNESBURG

MY LETTER[1] SECRETARY ACCEPTS AS SATISFACTORY AMENDMENT TRANSVAAL LAW, REPEALING ASIATIC ACT 1907, PROTECTING MINORS, EXEMPTING EDUCATED IMMIGRANTS FROM OPERATION ACT 36 OF 1908[2]. SEE KACHALIA[3] OTHERS. WIRE APPROVAL. NOT LEAVING BEFORE NEXT WEEK.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the original as delivered: S. N. 5431

366. TELEGRAM TO JOHANNESBURG OFFICE

CAPE TOWN,
April 7, 1911

TO
GANDHI
JOHANNESBURG

CHRIS BOTHA HAS TABLED AMENDMENT SAYING NOTHING IN BILL SHALL REPEAL ANY SECTION 33 ORANGIA. THIS SIGNIFIES ALTERNATIVE[4] LIKELY ACCEPTANCE.

GANDHI

From a photostat of original as delivered: S. N. 543

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 7-4-1911.

[2] The Transvaal Asiatics Registration Amendment Act born of the Gandhi-Smuts compromise of 1908. The Indians, however, continued their opposition to it since it did not incorporate the compromise proposals as understood by them.

[3] Ahmad Muhammad Cachalia; originally an interpreter, hawker and trader with "a working knowledge of English", he first addressed a public meeting of Indians, held on June 30, 1907, to protest against the Asiatic Law Amendment Act; in September, 1908, succeeded Essop Mia as Chairman of the BIA; "sacrificed his all for the community's sake" and allowed his flourishing business to be auctioned in order to pay off his creditors who refused to deal with a satyagrahi merchant; died in 1918, "serving the community till the last"; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 7-9-1908, ; 19-9-1908 & "*Letter to Rand Daily Mail*", 22-1-1909, also *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XVI.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 7-4-1911

367. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

7 BUITENSINGLE,

April 8 [*1911*][1]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

You are certainly not regular about letters this time.

This proposed London visit causes me a deal of worry. Again to leave Mrs. Gandhi and the two youngsters, again to masquerade in the wretched costume, etc. You know here I have not observed the rules of decency. I go about the House of Assembly and to Smuts in sandals and my usual jacket. I wore the shoes for two days. I saw that they were uncomfortable and really not necessary. So I discarded them. I am none the worse received for that reason. You will say perhaps it is because the men I meet are too gentlemanly, not that I am wise or right in breaking the social convention. If you did say so, you would probably be right. But that is just my position. If it were not for the passive resisters who are anxious for a settlement and for Polak, whom I want to see in London with his wife, probably I would not make even this effort and simply trust to passive resistance pure and simple to do its work.[2] What is one to do. I am torn by confliction emotions as to this London visit. Now you have the whole thought running through my mind.

Still on saltless diet. It causes me no worry. The quantity I take now is very small. I have little exercise.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] By an error the letter appears here. The date-line and contents corroborate the year 1911. It should therefore be read in the order of chronology as item no. 38, i.e., after the one to the addressee dated [April 5, 1911].

[2] Gandhiji's "worry" crystallized in the years to follow into stout advocacy of the Indian national costume for Indians. For a defence of "his manner of dressing", *vide* "*Reply Regarding Dress to the Poineer*", 30-7-1917.

368. LETTER TO E. F. C. LANE

7, BUITENCINGLE [STREET,]
CAPE TOWN,
April 8, 1911

DEAR MR. LANE,

I have now heard in reply to my wires to Durban[1] and Johannesburg[2].

The Durban wire from the Congress says:

> Thanks if Bill withdrawn and Transvaal law altered. Effect settlement, Natal Indians entirely satisfied.

The Cape Indians have already suggested the alternative solution.

The Johannesburg wire from the British Indian Association says:

> Your wires received and discussed. We take it that provision also made for right of entry some educated Asiatics; if so, fully acquiesce in settlement.
>
> Don't leave till all settled.

CACHALIA
CHAIRMAN

I have naturally assumed all along that, whichever proposal is accepted, a certain number of Asiatics not exceeding six in any one year will be allowed on account of the Transvaal to pass the education test and to enter the Union or the Transvaal, as the case may be.

I observe that Mr. Chris Botha has tabled a drastic, and from an Indian standpoint, an impossible amendment[3] to the Bill.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From *Indian Opinion,* 15-4-1911; also photostat of typewritten office copy: S. N. 5440

369. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

7, BUITENCINGLE [STREET,
CAPE TOWN,]
April 8, 1911

MY DEAR RITCH,

I have your letter. I hope you are comfortably fixed up at

[1] Not available
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Johannesburg Office", 7-4-1911
[3] *Vide* the following item.

Mountain View[1]. I hope, both you and Harold[2] will do a bit of gardening—Harold specially.

I will try to pass a day at Kimberley on my return. I shall speak to Nooroodeen about the Konkanis.[3]

Here is Botha's amendment[4]:

Nothing in this (28th) section or in any other section of this Act contained shall repeal any of the provisions of Chapter XXXIII of the Law Book of the Orange Free State Province.

Fancy this, after all his assurance to me! However, I am glad. This amendment kills the Bill and General Smuts will be bound, if he wishes to settle the question, to amend the Transvaal Act.

I have not been able to see any members today. Rev. Allmett of Lahore has taken up my morning. He is Bishop Lefroy's man and did something when Polak was in India.

As you will see from the enclosed[5], I have made use of the BIA wire as also the Natal Congress wire.

Sorabji again returns to the London visit. If I go at all, I feel sure, I ought to be accompanied by a Mahomedan. It has a threefold purpose. It will be a source of satisfaction to the community here, it will give added weight to the representatives in London and it will have a far-reaching effect in India. And fourthly, if you like, it would be good training for Mr. Cachalia who is certainly one of the rarest among the Mahomedans. But if the Bill is not brought up next week, I do not see how I can go at all. I should be in London at least a week before the date of the conference[6]. Unless I am to rush, not to go to Phoenix at all and possibly not even come to Jo'burg, I think the visit is impossible. Please consider all these practical difficulties.

Have you yet had any legal work? Have you taken your oath as solicitor? Have you notified the Law Society?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5437

[1] Kallenbach's Johannesburg house

[2] Ritch's son

[3] At Kimberley the Konkanis, a Muslim community from the Western coast of India, did not cooperate with the Indian Political Association. Gandhiji asked Nooroodeen, apparently a Cape Town Konkani leader, to intervene.

[4] *Vide* "Telegram to Johannesburg Office", 7-4-1911 and the preceding item.

[5] *Vide* the preceding item.

[6] The Imperial Conference; *vide* "Letter to L. W. Ritch", 5-4-1911.

370. TELEGRAM TO JOHANNESBURG OFFICE

CAPE TOWN,
April 8, 1911

TO
GANDHI
JOHANNESBURG

ONLY SLIGHT PROSPECT MATTER[1] COMING NEXT WEEK.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the original as delivered: S. N. 5439

371. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

[CAPE TOWN,]
Sunday, April 9, 1911

MY DEAR RITCH,

I had a funny experience after I posted the letters[2] to you and Polak[3]. I thought, I would stroll down to the House just to see what wasgoing on. After reading the order paper[4], I thought, I would go away. But, on second thoughts, I decided to send my card to Duncan[5].

[1] The Immigrants' Restriction Bill.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to L. W. Ritch", 8-4-1911. The letter to Polak, however, is not available.

[3] Henry Solomon Leon Polak; assistant editor of The Transvaal Critic who joined Indian Opinion ("Our Trial", 31-12-1904) after Gandhiji had struck up a "casual" acquaintance with him in the Johannesburg vegetarian restaurant; "had a wonderful faculty of translating into practice anything that appealed to his intellect"; he took to life in Phoenix "like a duck takes to water" and "we began to live like blood brothers, " says Gandhiji who was also best man at his wedding; became editor of Indian Opinion in 1906 during Gandhiji's absence in England and a full-fledged attorney in 1908 after having served an apprenticeship with Gandhiji; was arrested after the Great March into the Transvaal in 1913; visited India and England to help the African Indian cause. *Vide An Autobiography*, Part IV, Ch. XVIII, XXI & XXII and *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XXIII & XLV.

[4] Giving notice of Chris Botha's amendment to retain Ch. XXXIII of the Orange Free State Constitution in the proposed immigration legislation.

[5] Partick Duncan; member of the Transvaal Legislative Assembly; Colonial Secretary of the Transvaal, 1903-6, while it was still a self-governing colony; initiated in 1906 the Transvaal Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance in the face of Indian opposition; the Golden Number of Indian Opinion (1914), however, mentions that he had since become more sensible of "the Imperial issues involved" in the Indian question and had "advocated measures of redress" for Indians.

He came and said, “Perhaps it would be better for us not to talk lest it might be thought that you were influencing me.” I said, “Not [at] all. I have been informing Lane about all my movements. He knows whom I see and talk to.” “But”, he said, “you need not worry. I think you will get what you want. It is high time the thing was over.” “But”, I said, “do you know anything of the latest[?].” “Yes”, he said, “General Smuts showed me your letter[1] to him. I think, we shall drop the present Bill and adopt your alternative solution. But you will not bring in anything more. “I said, “How can you say that, Mr. Duncan? You have yourself stated our proposition very fairly.” “Yes”, he said, “I notice you have been quoting me. But you have not always brought that point forward. I thought at times you kept it in the background.” “I could not help giving that appearance at times,” I said, “we had to give prominence to one point or another as occasion required unless we were to overload every speech and letter with details. It is General Smuts who has always raised new points and each time granted less than our demands, etc.” He then wanted to know what I wanted about children, whether I wanted them to get in without giving proofs, etc. I assured him on that point. But I could not help noticing how unfortunate it was that Smuts had seen him before I, and how fortunate it was that I saw him yesterday whilst his talk with Smuts was fresh in his mind. After this experience, I have decided to stick here until the Bill is through or I am certain that nothing is to be done. One may consider it to be pretty certain that the general bill is doomed, and I am more than ever hopeful that the alternative proposal will be accepted.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji’s hand: S. N. 5441

[1] *Vide* “Letter to E. F. C. Lane”, 7-4-1911

372. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

[CAPE TOWN,]
Monday [*April 10, 1911*]

MY DEAR RITCH,

I have not yet been out today (2 p.m.); have been simply writing letters.[1]

I have your 3 letters.

You may depend upon it that anything that the good General gives is bound to be a mock-concession. It will be for us to turn it into a reality. He will put nothing into my hands so long as he can help it.

I hope that you have arranged with Titus about fees.

If the Klerksdorp friends have not come to you, you should write and invite them to see you.

It will be a great pity if Mr. Phillips[2] goes away and I am unable to see him before he does. I hope there will be Mr. Cachalia and others to see him off.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5442

373. TELEGRAM TO JOHANNESBURG OFFICE

CAPE TOWN,
April 10, 1911

TO
GANDHI
JOHANNESBURG

TAKE PRESENT BILL AS DEAD. UNCERTAIN WHEN TRANSVAAL BILL COMING.

From a photostat of the original as delivered: S. N. 5443

[1] Only this letter and the two following items written on this day are available.

[2] Rev. Charles Phillips; Congregational Minister for the Transvaal and "an energetic and persistent sympathizer of the Indian cause"; sometime Acting Chairman of the European Committee of Sympathizers. He was then "leaving for England on a health trip".

374. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[CAPE TOWN,]
Chaitra Sud 12 [*April 10, 1911*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I am a bit tired, having written many letters today with my right hand. Hence this with the left.

I wonder why my letter[2] regarding diet reached you so late.

I am not upset by the picture you have drawn of Durban. Hindus as well as others, especially the former, do not generally go abroad so long as they stick to their religion. We rarely find persons going abroad for the good of others. We ourselves were not inspired by high ideals when we left India. If our outlook happens to be somewhat pure, we must have to our credit some goods deeds done in the past. The Hindus here are in a debased state as their way of life has fallen into complete disorder. Both the communities make a distinction between the Hindu and the Mussalman and that is why persons like Anglia Sheth[3] raise the question you mention. However, you must have seen that the work can be carried on if there are two or three good workers.

Please read *Gulliver's Travels* some time if you have not already done so. How is your Tamil progressing?

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: CW. 5627. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] Gandhiji's preoccupation with diet, which is mentioned in para 2 of the letter, began in 1911. In that year, Chaitra Sud 12 corresponds to April 10. This assumption is borne out by a further reference to Gulliver's Travels in his "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 18-5-1911.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 9-3-1911.

[3] M. C. Anglia; a leading Durban Muslim and Joint Secretary of the Natal Indian Congress; suffered deportation and imprisonment in the satyagraha campaign against the Transvaal Asiatic Registration Act; in 1909, went to England as a member of the Natal Deputation; *vide* "Comments on Transvaal Indian Campaign", 28-8-1908; "London", 6-8-1909 and "statement of Natal Indian Grievances", 10-8-1909.

375. LETTER TO L.W. RITCH

7, BUITENCINGLE [STREET,
CAPE TOWN,]
April 11, 1911

MY DEAR RITCH,

I have nothing to report today. I have your wire about Madras. I am just now going to Lane and [will] then decide upon the answer to be given.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Nothing to be known before next week. That is Smuts' answer[1]. More tomorrow.

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5450

376. TELEGRAM TO JOHANNESBURG OFFICE

CAPE TOWN,
April 11, 1911

TO
GANDHI
JOHANNESBURG

SECRETARY WRITES NOTHING WILL BE KNOWN BEFORE END WEEK. CABLE MADRAS. MATTER OCCUPYING GOVERNMENT CABLING FURTHER LATER. AM STAYING TILL THING FINISHED.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the original as delivered: S. N. 5453

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Lane's Letter to Gandhiji", 11-4-1911.

377. LETTER TO L.W. RITCH

[CAPE TOWN]
April 12, 1911

MY DEAR RITCH,

I thought that I would ask Lane whether he could give me definite information for cabling to Madras. Smuts was not then in. Lane therefore went over to the House and sent me a letter[1] as per copy. I hope you understood my wire[2] sent to you thereafter. So that now we must wait the whole of this week. From Friday, there will be no work till Monday. The House meets again on Tuesday. I think we are bound to get definite information next week. Smuts is in no hurry. He certainly would like to prolong the agony if he could. We can but wait. I am not now seeing any member. I think that I have seen the principal ones and that now it would be better to refrain.

I am anxiously waiting to know how you are getting on there. You do not seem to have got any work yet.

Please ask Miss Schlesin to send me Dr. Mehta's manuscript. He says he had sent a certain speech, & c. I should like to have it here. I want also Finot's *Race Prejudice*. I think that book is among Polak's books. I want it at once for Canon Allmett who is here but who is leaving for England shortly.

How is Harold keeping in health? The weather here is most oppressive. How do you manage for cooking, & c.?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Please ask Miss S. to sent the enclosed to Mr. Barrett of Pretoria, whose address she knows or ought to, telling him that the letter unfortunately went by mistake to England from where it has only now been returned. She should add that I would do my best to sent him something as soon as I was free.

M. K.G.

[PPS.]

From Friday to Saturday I am not wiring as there will be holidays during that time.

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5458

[1] *Vide* Appendix " Lane's Letter to Gandhiji", 11-4-1911
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

378. TELEGRAM TO JOHANNESBURG OFFICE

CAPE TOWN,
April 12, 1911

TO
GANDHI
JOHANNESBURG

NO FURTHER PROGRESS. WILL NOT WIRE TILL TUESDAY UNLESS REQUIRED. WHEN PHILLIPS LEAVING.[1]

GANDHI

From a photostat of the original as delivered: S. N. 5459

379. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

April 12, 1911

MY DEAR HENRY,

Herewith copy of Lane's[2] letter. Ritch telegraphed saying Madras wanted to know my views on the amendments to the Bill. I thought I would ask Lane as to what he thought about the situation before I cabled.[3] The letter was the result. I have now asked Ritch to cable Madras that the Government is considering the situation and that another cable will be sent later. We may expect some definite news next week. If Finot's Race Prejudice is there, please send it to me. I want it for Canon Allmett.

I have your 2nd wire. It was difficult for me to advise. But I have wired you what I thought was best in the circumstances.

Do you know anything about Max Nordeau? What kind of a man is he? I mean what is his private life? I am reading his book on Degeneration.

Yours sincerely,
BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Phillips and Cartwright left Johannesburg on April 10 and sailed by the Carisbrook from Delagoa Bay on the 12th; *vide* also "Letter to L. W. Ritch", 10-4-1911

[2] E.F.C. Lane, Private Secretary to General Smuts.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to L.W. Ritch", 12-4-1911.

380. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

[CAPE TOWN,]
Thursday [*April 13, 1911*][1]

MY DEAR RITCH,

Nothing new. I won't say much, as I am off to Dr. Gool's[2] dispensary whose floor I have undertaken to stain and putty. I have replied by wire[3] regarding the proposed meeting. A public meeting should not be convened except to pass [a] definite resolution electing a deputation. No public meeting should be held for a mere discussion.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5426

381. LETTER TO L.W. RITCH

[CAPE TOWN,]
Thursday night [*April 13, 1911*][4]

MY DEAR RITCH,

I hope you understood my wire[5].

I think that we ought not to have a public meeting unless the matter has been informally but thoroughly decided. A public meeting discussing the matter of a deputation and then deciding against it may

[1] This letter is undated but Ritch, writing to Gandhiji on April 17 (S. N. 5469), acknowledged two letters from him, both written on Thursday, one mentioning the stain-ing and puttying of Dr. Gool's dispensary floor and the other discussing the subject dealt with in the following item. Evidently, therefore, both these letters were written on Thursday, April 13, 1911.

[2] Abdul Hamid Gool; a Cape Town doctor who took his medical degree in England in 1910; became, on his return, honorary Joint Secretary of the Cape British Indian Union, which was formed by the merger of the two rival Indian bodies in that Province; in 1911, became President of the Union, which office he resigned later that year; Gandhiji was constantly persuading him to take up public work and suggested to Ritch that the young doctor should be more closely associated with Cape Indian affairs; *vide* "Hamid Gool", 26-11-1910 , "Dr. Gool", 14-1-1911 & "Letter to Abdul Hamid Gool", 2-3-1911.

[3] Not available

[4] *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Letter to L.W. Ritch", 13-4-1911.

[5] Not available

be misinterpreted. [1]

I am quite sure that a Mahomedan must accompany any such deputation. Remember, this time the deputation is not to go on a clear-cut issue. The special interests of merchants will be considered. And a merchant and that a Moslem must be on it if is to carry weight. That it should be Mr. Cachalia, I have not the slightest doubt. If the community chooses a mischief-maker out of weakness, it will do it harm in the long run. It should be prepared by this time to say to weak men, 'You are weak and therefore you cannot represent the community'. It is my firm conviction that the struggle has been prolonged because the community has shown weakness and has been afraid of mischief-makers. Nor should there be any haggling regarding expenses. The community will have to subscribe liberally and that at once, if the deputation is to go. Upon my return there, I shall have precious little time left. Every time money has come at the eleventh hour. And I suggest that the whole sum is put down now. I do not want you or anybody afterwards to have to worry about collecting.

Will you please forward this to Henry[2] as I am not duplicating the thought in my letter[3] to him.

Parliament is sitting on Saturday and Monday too!

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5427

[1] To this, Ritch, in his letter of April 17, 1911, replied: "Your meaning as to the meeting was quite well understood; the project has been abandoned. The reasons you point out are to me sufficiently convincing." S. N. 5469.

[2] H.S.L. Polak

[3] Not available

382. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

Unrevised

April 14, 1911

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

L.H. says 'I AM COMING'. U.H. says 'I AM NOT SURE WE ARE GOING.'So you had better be careful in order to avoid disappointment. When I seriously think of it my head turns. I certainly want to be with Mrs. Gandhi and the children for some little time. The idea of another deputation is absolutely repulsive.[1] I am not at all sure that it is my duty to be present at the Conference. But I am sure that it is my duty to be on the Farm and with Mrs. Gandhi and the children; it is my duty to be with the boys on the Farm; it is my duty to be with the women on the Farm; it is my duty to send Polak away at the earliest opportunity[2] ; it is my duty to help Ritch to build up his practice; and if passive resistance is still to go on, it is my duty to seek imprisonment and if I cannot get that, at least to do what I can for the dependents of passive resisters. All the above catalogue can be gone through if I am in the Transvaal. Put all the above in one scale and the proposed visit to the Conference in the other and find out which weighs heavier. I am in a fog. I am therefore leaving the things to shape themselves.

You can talk light-heartedly about going to Germany. But what about the Farm, the fencing, the borehole, Mountain View, your office and a host of such other things? They all require careful thinking out, before you can stir from Johannesburg. It will be easier for you to go if I remained behind. The problem becomes doubly difficult if we both must go.

I hope Gordon is getting on. Pray remember me to him.

I understand that today is your fasting day. Wish you well in every respect.

You say autumn has set in there. We are being boiled here. The heat is very severe.

I had a day of manual labour yesterday. (I have marked the

[1] The British Indian Association decided on April 27, 1911 to withdraw the proposal to send a deputation to England, consisting of Cachalia and Gandhiji; *vide* "Transvaal Notes", 2-5-1911.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 9-3-1911. Polak left Johannesburg for London on May 1.

letter 14th but I am writing this at 9.30 p.m. 13th). I am staining and polishing the floor of Dr. Gool's surgery. I love the work. I have to finish it tomorrow, the 14th.

I have now to await developments here. May know something on Saturday.

You make no mention of Kennedy.

With love,

Yours sincerely,
UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

383. RITCH IN JOHANNESBURG

Mr. Ritch has started legal practice in Johannesburg.[1] We have not come across a single Indian who has not acknowledged his valuable services. Felicitating him is of course a way of recompensing him for his services. Another way is to seek and follow his advice. Now that he has started practice, it is also the community's duty to extend to him their patronage. We trust all those who need the services of a lawyer will engage Mr. Ritch and so show their readiness to encourage him.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-4-1911

384. TELEGRAM TO JOHANNESBURG OFFICE

CAPE TOWN,
April 15, 1911
11 a.m.

TO
GANDHI
JOHANNESBURG

TALK PASSING GENERAL BILL REVIVED. FREE STATERS MAY CONSENT. NOTHING KNOWN BEFORE WEDNESDAY.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the original as delivered: S. N. 5465

[1] Ritch arrived in Johannesburg on April 5, 1911 and commenced practice at Gandhiji's Office, 21-24, Court Chambers, Rissik Street.

385. TELEGRAM TO H. S. L. POLAK

[CAPE TOWN,
April 15, 1911][1]

GENERAL BILL MAY PASS. KNOW DEFINITELY PROBABLY WEDNESDAY.

From a photostat of Polak's letter to Ritch: S. N. 5464

386. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

[CAPE TOWN,]
April 15, 1911

UNREVISED

MY DEAR RITCH,

I have your letters. I hope you will read up some S.A. cases on libel & slander & look [up] Van Zyl for your summons.

Our question is passing thro' many ups & downs. Lane told me today that they were bound to fix up two things before the end of the session: minors' . . . [2] & Immigration. He added that J. C. S. was conferring with Lord Gladstone[3] and the Free State members. He naturally wants to pass his measure. He sees much beyond the Free Staters. So that we may still have the general bill. My latest bulletin is—a close race between the two proposals. If the general bill goes thro', the Free State bar will be removed. Lane told me he might give me some definite information on Wednesday.

As to the London visit[4] the following was the train of my

[1] Writing to Ritch from Durban on April 15, Polak quotes the telegram which he has just received. S. N. 5464.

[2] Some words are illegible here.

[3] Herbert John Gladstone (1854-1930); 1st Viscount Gladstone; English statesman; Member of Parliament, 1880-1910; successively Financial Secretary, War Office, Under-Secretary, Home Office and Secretary of State for Home Affairs; in 1910 was appointed the first Governor-General and High Commissioner for South Africa which post he held till 1914.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to L. W. Ritch", 5-4-1911.

thought in the morning. What is a deputation to do in London? The Imperial Conference will be concerned with general principles, not details. If p[assive] r[esistance] be closed, our question will largely consist of details. It is possible to do something with the Colonial Secretary. But has that time yet arrived? May it not be better to await developments here? On the other hand, may not a deputation prevent the threatened Gold Law measures, & c[?]

Thus, there are arguments for and against. It seems to me that if a deputation is to be sent, we should send the following cable[1]:

> Cable Lord Ampthill's opinion regarding small deputation proceeding view Imperial Conference although passive resistance may end other local grievances serious specially threatened action Gold Law.

I am of opinion that such a cable should be sent only after the community is ready to send a deputation in the event of an affirmative reply.

Now for the dates. The conference meets on the 22nd May Monday. I cannot leave next Wednesday the 19th, hardly on the 26th. There then remains the last & the only date, the 3rd May. That will bring the deptn. to London on the 20th May? It could hardly make any impression on the Conference. The 22nd will be merely a formal affair.

As to Cape Town, not a penny need be expected. They will support. They have neither the men nor [the] money. Of Durban, I know nothing. If they find [the] money, they would want to send their own delegate. So that the Transvaal alone will have to find the funds but the work will have to be for all.

My instinct decides against any such deputation.

Mrs. Ernest is anxious to learn from Miss Knudsen[2].

I shall write to MacIntyre[3].

[1] Evidently to the SABI Committee, London

[2] A Johannesburg masseuse who had offered to train a few young Indian women

[3] W.J. McIntyre; Scottish Theosophist and solicitor's clerk articled to Gandhiji

I am writing to Joseph[1] & Quinn[2] who were to be discharged on the 18th. [3]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5466

387. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

[CAPE TOWN,]

April 17, 1911

MY DEAR RITCH,

I have your letter. I did not write to you yesterday. There was nothing to write about. I have written a leaderette[4] in the Guj. columns of *I.O.* showing how the public can, if they wish to, appreciate your work. It should have been printed last Saturday.

If Lane is right, we should have the definite result known this week. Though Smuts would like to do it, I cannot imagine the thing being carried over to the Coronation time. However, it is no use speculating. If there is disappointment again on Wednesday, we should still know the worst before many more days have gone by.

[1] Joseph Royeppen; born in Natal of indentured Indian parents; barrister-at-law and graduate of Cambridge University; was one of the five student-signatories to a representation to Lord Elgin against the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance (*vide* "Representation to Lord Elgin", 3-11-1906 & "British Indians in the Transvaal", 8-11-1906) and generally helped the Transvaal Indian Deputation (1906) during its stay in England; later, on his return to South Africa in 1910, repeatedly suffered imprisonment and deportation; *vide* "Royeppen Sentenced", 5-2-1910; "German East Africa Lines Steamers", 28-5-1910; "Joseph Royeppen", 28-5-1910; "Letter to The Press", 2-6-1910 & "Cable to S.A.B.I. Committee", 28-7-1910 and *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch XXX.

[2] Leung Quinn; "leader of the Chinese residents of Johannesburg" and Chairman of the Chinese Association and the Cantonese Club; a signatory to the "compromise letter" to Smuts in 1908, *vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 28-1-1908.; burned his registration certificate in protest against the Asiatic Registration Act ("Petition to Transvaal Legislative Assembly", 13-8-1908) and suffered imprisonment in 1909; *vide* "Speech at Reception to Aswat And Quinn", 2-6-1909 & "Speech at Tea Party", 2-6-1909.

[3] If Gandhiji wrote these letters, they are not available.

[4] *Vide* "Rich in Johannesburg", 15-4-1911

I do hope that Gregorowski[1] will be able to go to Bloemfontein.[2] It will be very sad if he cannot. In that event it would be better to ask Lapin to send whom he likes. If there is anything definite on Wednesday, I propose to ask for relief for Mrs. Sodha[3]. This will be in your hands on Thursday. I may therefore wire[4] tomorrow regarding this matter.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5468

388. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

[CAPE TOWN]
April 18, 1911

MY DEAR RITCH,

I am sorry I have nothing yet to report. I am somewhat impatiently looking forward to tomorrow 10.30. It seems to me that disappointment awaits me again. Lane will tell me he has nothing definite to tell me. What is likely to happen is that at the last moment Smuts will rush his measure thro' whatever it may be. That will mean that he will give us the letter and we will have to force him to fulfil the spirit.

I have asked for information about the Sodha appeal. If Greg-

[1] R. Gregorowski; a Johannesburg lawyer whose opinion Gandhi frequently sought on legal and constitutional matters; later he appeared as counsel for satyagrahis in law courts; *vide* "Letter to R. Gregorowski", 2-3-1911 & "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 4-3-1911.

[2] For the appeal in Rambhabai sodha's case. Gregorowski did go but the appeal, heard on April 22, was dismissed with costs.

[3] Rambhabai Rattanshi Sodha, wife of R.M. Sodha, a passive resister. Gandhiji decided to maintain her at Tolstoy Farm with her three children for the duration of her husband's absence in jail, but she was arrested while crossing into the Transvaal in November, 1910; *vide* "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 8-11-1910 & "Letter to thee Press", 14-11-1910 . A Johannesburg magistrate sentenced her to fine of £10 and a month's imprisonment which the High Court, on appeal, reduced to a simple fine; *vide* "Trial of Rambhabai R. Sodha", 30-12-1910 & "Rambhabai Sodha", 4-3-1911. A further appeal was then filed with the court at Bloemfontein.

[4] The telegram, if sent, is not available.

orowski cannot go, I hope that you will have fixed up some decent counsel.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Please tell Miss Schlesin that I have duly received Finot and Dr. Mehta's speech.[1]

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5471

389. TELEGRAM TO JOHANNESBURG OFFICE

CAPE TOWN,
April 19, 1911

TO
GANDHI
JOHANNESBURG

[SMUTS] WISHES PASS GENERAL BILL REMOVING FREE STATE BAR BUT CONSIDERS POSSIBLE HE MAY NOT THIS SESSION MEANWHILE DOES NOT WANT AGITATION. IF SODHA APPEAL UNSUCCESSFUL DOES NOT WANT IMPRISON HER..[2] AM STAYING IF BILL NOT PASSED. CONSIDER ENGLISH VISIT[3] ESSENTIAL SITUATION REQUIRES CAREFUL CONSIDERATION.

GANDHI

From a Photostat of the original as delivered: S. N. 5475

390. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

CAPE TOWN,
April 19, 1911

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

You will see the interview and my letter to Ritch. The interview will flatter you. Smuts was very gushing about you.[4] He has evidently

[1] *Vide* "Letter to L. W. Ritch", 12-4-1911

[2] *Vide* the following item and "Abstract of Interview with General Smuts", 19-4-1911.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to L. W. Ritch", 15-4-1911

[4] For Gandhiji's interview earlier on in the day with General Smuts, *vide* "Abstract of Interview with General Smuts", 19-4-1911.

heard a lot of you. He almost gave one the impression that he had met you.

In the circumstances I feel I ought to go to London if it is at all possible. But I can only go if perfect peace can be secured at the Farm and if Cachalia comes and funds are found by the Community.

I am even prepared to leave from here directly if necessary.

There has been nothing from you now for sometime.

If Thyagarajan and Subbiah wish to go, let them go please.

I was very sorry to learn about the quarrel between Naidoo and Medh. I thought of this when I told Smuts (without your permission) that we shall be glad to see him on the Farm.

With love,

Yours sincerely,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

391 LETTER TO GENERAL SMUTS

[CAPE TOWN]

April 19, 1911

DEAR GENERAL SMUTS,

After having thought over our conversation[1] of this morning, I feel that I should place the position frankly before you.

If the question is not settled during the present session, the prospect of passive resisters remaining totally inactive is too appalling to contemplate. There are men on Tolstoy Farm with their families who are pecuniarily ruined. There are others outside in the same position. If they are not to court arrest or are to avoid it, their movements must be hampered. If they cannot for instance go to Natal and return without being challenged at the Border. Some who are traders cannot trade because they will not produce their registration certificate[s] so long as the struggle lasts. I should have nothing to say about all this misery if we were conducting an active campaign. But, to continue using military terms, our conversation contemplates a truce for a year or longer i.e., until the Parliament meets again. I do not

[1] *Vide* the following item.

know how this is to be done. As you know the campaign has cost us heavily, and our monthly expenditure for supporting families, &c., is naturally great. If we are to again start begging, we must agitate here, in India and in England. There are men from Natal. They have broken up everything. Are we to keep them for months in a state of suspense?

I am sincerely anxious to help you, but I do not know how I could promise inactivity on the part of the passive resisters. What you, the Imperial Government and I want to avoid is the ferment. I fear that, in the nature of things, it is well nigh impossible to avoid it if the matter is not closed during this session.

On the other hand, it will be churlish for me not to appreciate your own difficulty, especially at the fag-end of an exhausting session. You have many difficult questions to solve. Indians know at present only one. But I confess that I do not apprehend the difficulty your legal advisers do as to the alternative solution suggested by me. Seeing that you want some day or other to pass the general bill, there is no reason why the Transvaal Province may not anticipate the education test of that bill. It will keep out not a single white man whom you may want in the Transvaal and it will keep out all the Indians save six highly educated men per year. So far as I have been able to gauge the feeling of the leaders of the opposition, they will not raise any opposition. All will understand that the solution will be tentative and intended to meet the trouble in the Transvaal. The Free Staters will have a long time to consider your general bill and at the next session all will start anew. Is it too much then, sorely tried though you are with many other troubles, to ask you to remove the serious handicap in the way of my countrymen, and enable them to take their humble share in the approaching Coronation festivities[?]

As this letter is of a very personal nature and arises out [of] a conversation part of which you wish shall remain confidential, I will not publish [it] without your authority.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

[PS.] As Mrs. Sodha's appeal comes up on Saturday at Bloemfontein, why not now instruct the Attorney General not to arrest her in the event of its being lost by her.

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5477

392. ABSTRACT OF INTERVIEW WITH GENERAL SMUTS[1]

[CAPE TOWN,]
April 19, 1911

UNREVISED

Nothing to be published
To be ketp in the safe aft[er] *perusal*

ABSTRACT OF AN INTERVIEW BET[WEEN] J. C. S. AND G.
AT 11.30 P. M.[2] 19-IV-11

The General was extra cordial. S. [& G.] are such friends that they have left off shaking hands. But at this interview there was a hearty handshake.

"Well, Gandhi, I am sorry for you. You have been long delayed, but what can I do? You will insist on enjoying yourself in Cape Town," commenced G. S drawing, while speaking as above, a chair near his and asking G. to be seated.

"You, as a lawyer, will understand when I tell you that it is difficult to carry out your alternative suggestion[3]." G. S. turns away from G., appears to [be] looking at something in his basket and continues, "Gandhi my boy, I am sorry for you. You know I want peace." (I suppose he is having a quiet laugh while saying all this.) "But", looking now towards G., "my advisers consider that your suggestion cannot be carried out. How can we keep out whites from the other provinces[?] Parliament will not pass such a bill. I therefore want to pass my bill which I like and which I consider is fair. I shall try but I may fail to pass it during this session. All the members want to go away. And the Free State members are still opp[osed] to admitting any Asiatic. I think I can beat them in the Assembly but the Senate will throw out the Bill. I therefore want to pass the measure during the next session, if I cannot carry it this session. But meanwhile I want peace. I do not want to harass your people. You know that. And I do not want you to bring people from India and elsewhere to fight. I want to help the Imperial Government & they want to help me.

[1] Where the original is torn, the missing letters are suggested in square brackets.

[2] This is an error for "a. m."; *vide* the preceding item.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 7-4-1911

I want to help you & you want to help me. Will you not see our point of view?"

"I emphatically do," interposed G. S. continued: "I know you have many leaders. I know you to be high-minded & honest. I have told Imp. Govt. so. You have a right to fight in your own way. But this country is the Kaffirs'. We whites are a handful. We do not want Asia to come in. Now that Natal won't have immigration, I am hopeful of solving this question. But how can we hold out against you? I have read out your pamphlet[1]. You are a simple-living & frugal race. In many respects more intelligent than we are. You belong [to] a civilization that is thousands of years old. Ours, as you say, is but an experiment. Who knows but that the wh[ole] damned thing will perish before long. But you see why we do not want Asia here. But as I say the Natal difficulty being out of the way, I shall cope with the problem here. But I want time. I shall yet beat the Free Staters. But you should not be aggressive. The whole question as you know will be discussed before the Imperial Conference. You should therefore wait. Now just think it over and let me know." He paused and continued: "I do not know how your people spread. They go everywhere. I have now more petitions against dealers. My difficulty of the future will be regarding them. I do not want to disturb them. I want to let things remain as they are. But I do not know what will happen. You are too hard." After changing the subject, S. said: "Gandhi, what are you doing for a living?"

G. I am not practising at pr[esent].

S. But how then are you living? Have you plenty of money?

G. No. I am living liking [*sic*] like a paup[er], the same as other passive resisters on Tolstoy Farm.

S. Whose is it?

G. It is Mr. Kallenbach's[2]. He is a German.

[1] Hind Swaraj; *vide* "Hind Swaraj", 22-11-1909.

[2] Hermann Kallenbach; a prosperous German architect of Johannesburg with "a vein of other-worldliness" who, when challenged to a duel by a Volks-rust European for his Indian sympathies, declined, saying that he had "accepted the religion of peace"; himself a satyagrahi, he gave his 1100-acre Tolstoy Farm near Johannesburg for the maintenance of satyagrahis' families; taught on the farm carpentry, gardening and sandal-making, the last of which he had learnt at a Trappist monastery; Honorary Secretary of the British Indian Association for a time during the absence of Gandhiji and Polak; associated in dietetic experiments with Gandhiji who describes him as "a man of strong feeling, wide sympathies and childlike simplicity". *Vide* also *Satyagraha in South Africa* and *An Autobiography*, also "Address to H. Kallenbach", 31-7-1911 and "Reception to Mr. Kallenbach", 5-8-1911.

S. (Laughing) Oh, old Kallenbach! He is your admirer, eh? I know.

G. I do not know that he is my admirer. We are certainly very great friends

S. I must come and see the Farm—where is it?

G. Near Lawley.

S. I know—on the Vereeniging line. What is the distance from the station?

G. Ab[ou]t 20 minutes. We shall be pleased to see you there.

S. Yes, I must come one day.

So saying he got up to say good-bye. G. did likewise and said:

"You say you cannot amend the Transvaal Imm, Act. I must confess, I do not see any difficulty."

S. Yes, there is. The whites won't have it unless you adopt my suggestion.

G. And that is [?]

S. To give the Governor the power to make regulations setting a different test for different people. The regulations must only refer to Indians. And this I know you won't like. But you think the whole thing over & let me know what you think. You know I want to help you. If there are any individual cases of hardship, you can always come to me.

G. I shall think over the whole thing, but if you want peace, do you want to persecute Mrs. Sodha[1][?]

S. I do not indeed.

G. Do you want to imprison her?

S. No. I know nothing about this case as you know.

G. The appeal is on on Saturday. We may lose it. Then she must go to gaol or pay £10. She won't pay the fine, & must therefore go to gaol.

.S. No, I do not want her to go to gaol. But you have brought many into the Transvaal illegally. Now you won't.

G. I do not admit having brought anybody illegally. I certainly did not bring Mrs. Sodha illegally. I gave due notice to the Registrar. And I brought her because her husband like many

[1] *Vide* "Letter to L. W. Ritch", 17-4-1911 and "Telegram to Johannesburg Office", 19-4-1911

other passive resisters had to break up his home.

S. Alright, you let me know the result of the appeal and I shall see to it that she is not arrested. Let me know at once will you?

G. Thank you I will.

During the conversation, he said the Free State matter was confidential. The interview lasted nearly 40 minutes.

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5476

393. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

[CAPE TOWN,]
April 20, 1911

MY DEAR RITCH,

The enclosed has been sent to me by Chhaganlal with a request to give it to you. The extract is good for reproduction in *Indian Opinion*, but can we?

I hope you were successful in your case. When you want any cash, I assume you have been taking it from Miss Schlesin. Anyhow, the extract should go to Henry to read.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5487

394. TELEGRAM TO BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

CAPE TOWN,
April 20, 1911

TO
BIAS
JOHANNESBURG

INTEND RETURNING ON KNOWING DEFINITELY. RESULT NOT STILL HOPELESS. SUGGEST INSTEAD MEETING CACHALIA SORABJI OTHERS GOING OUTSIDE PLACES EXPLAIN POSITION AND COLLECT. NO TIME SHOULD BE LOST. NO CABLING INDIA ENGLAND TWO DAYS.

GANDHI

From a photstat of the original as delivered: S. N. 5482

395. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

Thursday, April 20, 1911

MY DEAR RITCH,

I have your two wires to which I replied yesterday in anticipation.[1] But I have replied by wire[2] also today. I am not quite without hope, and propose to stay for a conclusive reply if he would deign to give one.

If you think that Maud should have a copy of my personal letter[3] to Smuts, and I think she should have it, please make a copy at your side and send one to her. I have seen no one today. Last night I saw Sir David[4] at Anderson's house and had a long chat with him. I do not think that he can exercise the slightest influence in this matter. I am going to see Alexander tomorrow to see if a question cannot be put in the House. But I want to await S.'s reply before taking drastic measures.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's land: S. N. 5488

396. LETTER TO E. F. C. LANE

[CAPE TOWN,
April 20, 1911][5]

DEAR MR. LANE,

I wired yesterday the gist of the conversation with General Smuts to the Congress at Durban and the Association at Johannesburg.[6]

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Johannesburg Office", 19-4-1911

[2] *Vide* the preceding item

[3] *Vide* "Letter to General Smuts", 19-4-1911

[4] Sir David Hunter; member of Union Parliament from Durban, and a friend of the Indian community; sometime General Manager of the Natal Government Railways. *Vide* also "Sir David Hunter", 3-2-1906.

[5] It is evident from the reference to the telegram to the BIA, Johannesburg ("Telegram to Johannesburg Office", 19-4-1911) that this letter was written on April 20, 1911.

[6] The wire to the Durban Congress is not available; for the other, *vide* "Telegram to Johannesburg Office", 19-4-1911

The following wire has been received from the Congress:

Congress disapprove stopping agitation Transvaal trouble. Should be settled this session. According Government promise matter should be completed before Coronation, even if prolongation session necessary.

The Association wires as follows:

Your wire 19th. Committee resolved continue agitation unless law altered this session and to cable England and India immediately.

I have been discussing the matter with the Cape Indian leaders too. They unhesitatingly state that suspension of the agitation in the manner suggested by General Smuts is impossible.

As I have now gathered from the General that he has definitely decided to drop the general bill for the present session and that he will not adopt the alternative solution[1] suggested by me, I have dissuaded any public announcement or the sending of cablegrams to India and England.

I still hope that, if the Free State members cannot be conciliated, the alternative solution which, in my opinion, can offer no difficulty, will be acted upon during this session. In any case, may I know General Smuts' definite decision as soon as possible?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From *Indian Opinion*, 29-4-1911; also photostat of draft in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 5489

397. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

[CAPE TOWN,]

Friday [*April 21, 1911*]

MY DEAR RITCH,

Got an official reply[2] from S. at 2.30 p.m., went to Lane at 3 p.m. Left him at 4.45 p.m., went over and saw Alexander and then went to the telegraph office and it is now 5.45 p.m. Not much time to write to you at length. Lane showed me the confidential correspondence with the G[overnor-]G[eneral], showing that the bill could not possibly be brought up this session whether we stopped

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 7-4-1911

[2] From Lane; *vide* Appendix, "Lane's Letter to Ganddhiji", 21-4-1911.

passive resistance or not.[1] I thought therefore that we could suspend p[assive] r[esistance] if certain assurances were given. I have told of what I want. I intended to leave tomorrow by the Limited Express at 9 a.m. So Lane telephoned to S. whether he could give assurances, and he said "yes" to the last two but not [to] the first. But I am staying. Anyhow, I am writing a letter[2] to take to Lane in the morning. We have a chance of getting loaves & fishes for the passive resisters and I am trying. If the written assurance be given, I certainly think that the best thing will have happened. We are bound to get a general bill next session.

I have not the time to give you copy of General Smuts' letter[3]. I have much work before me for the evening. Will pass a day at Kimberley so that I should be there on Wednesday morning.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5492

398. LETTER TO E.F.C. LANE

7, BUITENCINGLE [STREET,]

CAPE TOWN,

April 22, 1911

DEAR MR. LANE,

I beg to acknowledge your letter[4] of the 21st instant.

I regret that General Smuts finds it impossible to settle the Transvaal Asiatic trouble during this session. I am, however, grateful for the statement contained in your letter that the matter will engage General Smuts' attention during the recess with a view to bringing about a settlement during the next session.

I share General Smuts' anxiety that passive resistance may now be brought to a close.

[1] For the Union Government's reasons for dropping the bill, *vide* Appendix, "Union Government's Reasons for Dropping Immigrants Restriction Bill (1911), 12-4-1911.

[2] *Vide* the following item.

[3] *Vide* Appendix, "Lane's Letter to Gandhiji", 21-4-1911

[4] *Vide* Appendix, " Lane's Letter to Gandhiji", 21-4-1911.

May I then suggest the following for his consideration so that the suspicion that is sure to be roused among my countrymen owing to a postponement of the solution may be allayed?

An assurance should be given that:

(a) legislation will be passed next session repealing Act 2 of 1907 subject to the reservation of the rights of minor children in terms of the Chotabhai judgment[1] and restoring legal equality as to the immigration of Asiatics into the Transvaal and maintaining existing rights. If the racial bar in the present Immigration Act of the Transvaal is removed by a general bill, such bill should naturally be free from a racial bar throughout the Union;

(b) passive resisters who but for their resistance would have been entitled to registration should now be so entitled notwithstanding anything to the contrary in Act 36 of 1908;

(c) educated passive resisters who are now in the Transvaal but who are not registrable under the Asiatic Act should be allowed to remain in the Transvaal as educated immigrants in anticipation of the forthcoming legislation, their number not to exceed six. They may have special certificates in order to enable them to

[1] A.E. Chotabhai, domiciled in the Transvaal since 1899 and registered lawfully under Act 36 of 1908, brought his minor son aged 15, whose name appeared in his father's registration certificate, in January, 1910. On the boy's attaining majority, his application for separate registration under Act 36 of 1908 was rejected by the Registrar of Asiatics. Chotabhai appealed to Magistrate Jordan who dismissed the appeal and ordered deportation. Chotabhai then moved the Provincial Court where Justice Wessels in Chambers dismissed the application but restrained the order of deportation pending appeal to the higher Court. The Full Bench of the Transvaal Division of the Supreme Court dismissed the appeal with a dissenting judgment by Justice Mason. Finally on January 25, the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of South Africa ruled that, although Act 36 of 1908 provided only for registration of minors resident in the Transvaal at the commencement of the Act or born within its boundaries, it did not follow that minors entering lawfully after that date were to be excluded from the registration provided for under the earlier Act 2 of 1907, and that it appeared improbable that the Legislature would allow Asiatic minors free entry into the Transvaal but allow the Registrar no discretion to permit them to remain in the country on their attaining majority. The appeal was upheld. The case, in its various stages, was reported in several issues of Indian Opinion between August 1910 and April, 1911; *vide* also "Cable to S.A.B.I. Committee", 29-8-1910; "Speech at Meeting of Kathiawad Arya Mandal", 20-9-1910; "Johannesburg", before 17-11-1910 & "Chhotabhai Case", 28-1-1911.

move to and fro without hindrance.

If the above assurance be given,[1] I do not anticipate any difficulty in persuading my countrymen to suspend passive resistance.

I trust General Smuts will recognize that, in asking for the above assurance, I am simply requesting ratification of what he has so often publicly stated.

I am sure that the Indian community will be deeply grateful to General Smuts for consenting not to imprison Mrs. Sodha in the event of her appeal failing.[2]

I am thankful, too, for the verbal assurance given by General Smuts that he will be pleased to grant relief in cases of individual hardship.

I need hardly reiterate the statement that, whatever befalls the present passive resistance movement, the Indian community will continue to worry him about the many matters in the different Provinces which have from time to time formed the subject-matter of memorials, etc.

Lastly, I venture to repeat what I have said so often that those who have the privilege of guiding the Indian community in South Africa have always been anxious, and will continue, to help the authorities and to study and appreciate the European standpoint consistently with that community's self-respect and interests.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From *Indian Opinion*, 29-4-1911; also Cd. 6283 and photostat of type-written office copy: S. N. 5496

[1] It was; *vide* "Lane's Letter to Gandhiji", 22-4-1911.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to L. W. Ritch", 17-4-1911 and "Abstract of Interview with General Smuts", 19-4-1911.

399. SPEECH AT KIMBERLEY

[*April 24, 1911*]

A largely attended meeting of members of the Indian community, amongst which was a fair sprinkling of Europeans, took place last evening in the Supper Room of the Town Hall, for the purpose of hearing an address from Mr. M. K. Gandhi who had just arrived from Cape Town, and was on his way up to Johannesburg.

. . . The Mayor[1] briefly introduced Mr. Gandhi to the meeting and Mr. Dawson then read the following address[2] to Mr. Gandhi . . .

Mr. Gandhi, who had an enthusiastic reception, thanked the meeting for the great welcome that had been accorded him, and the beautiful address presented. He thanked His Worship the Mayor for presiding on the occasion and said that it suggested the harmony of humanity in Kimberley. He could not take the reception as a personal tribute, but he considered it a mark of approbation of the great work which had been done by the passive resisters of the Transvaal. He was glad to be able to inform the meeting that they were nearing a solution of the difficult question that had cost the community over 3,500 imprisonments and untold suffering. He had in his possesion a letter[3] from General Smuts which stated that the legitimate demands of the Indian community would be granted during the next session of Parliament. In that letter, the speaker contended, was official recognition of passive resistance as a legitimate form of agitation for the redress of grievances. Addressing meetings in London, he had not hesitated to call [the] Transvaal passive resistance one of the greatest movements of modern times.[4] He knew of no instance in modern history in which a body of people had undertaken self-suffering by way of redress, and that was what the Transvaal movement amounted to.

Mr. Gandhi likened the Transvaal passive resistance to the conscientious opposition offered by the Prophet Daniel to the Laws of the Medes and the Persians, which the Prophet considered to be contrary to the demands of reason and holiness. He exhorted his countrymen to be always reasonable in their demands. He contended that the Indian community throughout South Africa had, as a rule, endeavoured to see the European standpoint. Whilst they fought for legal equality, they admitted that there should be differential treatment by reason of the prevalent prejudice, which the Indians would have to wear down by honourable conduct. He asked his hearers not to consider the forthcoming settlement as a victory to gloat over, but merely as a natural

[1] Councillor W. Gasson, who presided
[2] Not reproduced here
[3] *Vide* "Lane's Letter to Gandhiji", 22-4-1911.
[4] *Vide*, for example, "Speech at Farewell Meeting", 12-11-1909

consequence of the heroic fight that so many Indians in the Transvaal had put up. He paid a glowing tribute to Mr. Thambi Naidoo[1], whom he considered to be one of the greatest of passive resisters in the arduous campaign. (Loud applause.)

Mr. Dawson, Chairman of the Indian Association, moved a vote of thanks to Mr. Gandhi which was seconded by Mr. Joshua, the ex-Secretary of the African Political Association. Mr. Gandhi briefly returned thanks and in turn proposed a vote of thanks to the Mayor, which was carried by the whole audience standing.

Diamond Fields Advertiser, 25-4-1911

400. TELEGRAM TO H. KALLENBACH

[JOHANNESBURG,
April 26, 1911][2]

TO
KALLENBACH,
LAWLEY

MEETING TOMORROW TWO O'CLOCK HAMIDIA HALL DEPUTATION. PRESENCE NAIDOO, SODHA[3], MEDH[4],

[1] Thambi Naidoo; a Tamil cartage contractor from Mauritius whom Gandhiji described as "lion-like" and as one of the two most eminent satyagrahis; who but for his rashness of temper "could easily have assumed the leadership of the community in the Transvaal"; had a flair for languages and cooking; became Chairman of the Tamil Benefit Society in 1912. *Vide* also *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XX.

[2] This meeting mentioned in the text was held on April 27, 1911; clearly therefore this telegram was sent of April 26 presumably on instructions from Gandhiji who had returned to Johannesburg that morning after a month's absence at Cape Town.

[3] Ratanshi Mulji Sodha; an educated satyagrahi who suffered imprisonment during 1908, 1909 and 1910 for defying the Asiatic Registration Act; v*ide* "Prisoners Condition", 10-10-1908 & "Trial of Dawjee Amod and Others", 14-10-1908 and "Johannesburg", 9-5-1910; "Mr. Sodha's Discharge", 14-5-1910; "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 8-11-1910 & "Trial of Rambhabai R. Sodha", 30-12-1910.

[4] Surendrarai Bapubhai Medh; a sergeant in Gandhiji's Stretcher-bearer Corps during the Zulu "Rebellion" in 1906; a "stalwart passive resister" who "sacrificed his all" and "covered the community with glory"; among the first batch of Natal Indians to enter the Transvaal, following Sorabji, in order to test educated Indians' right of entry into that Colony; held the record for the longest imprisonment "having been eleven times in gaol" and having "twice fasted for eight days" in protest against the ill-treatment of prisoners; *vide* "Notable Discharges", 30-4-1910; "Who is a Satyagrahi?", 5-11-1910 & "Letter to Director of Prisons, Pretoria", 22-11-1910, also *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XI.

DESAI[1], ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the handwritten office copy signed by Sonja Schlesin "for M. K. Gandhi": S. N. 5509

401. TELEGRAM TO H. S. L. POLAK

JOHANNESBURG,
April 26, 1911

TO
POLAK
CARE RUSTOMJEE
DURBAN

TELEPHONE INTERRUPTED. RETURN EITHER TODAY OR TOMORROW.[2] REPLY. PUBLISH FULL CORRESPONDENCE[3] EXCEPT PERSONAL LETTER[4] SMUTS' 20TH.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the handwritten draft with correction in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5513

[1] Pragji Khandubhai Desai; "a well-tried passive resister" who fasted in jail in protest against the warders' ill-treatment of prisoners; among the earliest to arrive in Tolstoy Farm, he worked "harder than in jail" to build wood-and-iron structures for the settlers; Gandhiji "requisitioned his services" to teach youngsters on the Farm "who were on bad terms with their books"; wrote regularly for the Gujarati section of Indian Opinion; *vid*e "Pragji Desai's Resolve", 5-11-1910, also *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XXXIV.

[2] Polak left for Johannesburg on April 27, 1911.

[3] This was accordingly published in Indian Opinion, 29-4-1911.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to General Smuts", 19-4-1911; the letter was actually dated the 19th.

402. LETTER TO APPASAMY NAIKER[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
April 28, 1911][2]

DEAR MR. APPASAMY NAIKER,

I understand that the few remarks that Mr. Solomon made at the combined meeting yesterday have offended you and some other friends very much. Mr. Naidoo and I are indeed very sorry. We admit that the remarks should not have been made by Mr. Solomon, but we trust that this letter will be sufficient to soothe your feelings and those of others who have felt hurt. Whatever has happened in the past, it must undoubtedly be the wish of every lover of India to forget it, and for us to work together for bettering our condition.

Yours truly,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5517

403. INTERVIEW TO "THE STAR"[3]

[JOHANNESBURG,
April 28, 1911]

The correspondence with appeared in *The Star* of yesterday gave every promise of a settlement being reached, but did not indicate any exactness in the form of compromise. As a result of a meeting extending to four hours last evening, Mr. Gandhi has been given authority by his countrymen to conclude a temporary arrangement, which will permit of General Smuts advising the Governor-General to extend clemency to passive resisters at present confined. Efforts can also be made by those who have sacrificed their business to re-establish themselves, and the women and children who are living on Tolstoy Farm and [have] become a charge on the Indian community can gradually be restored to their homes. When the final stage has

[1] The letter is followed by a statement, presumably by Solomon, which reads: "I have read the above, and I entirely associate myself with the sentiments expressed. I am indeed very that my remarks should have caused offence to any Indian at all."

[2] The office copy, which is the source of this item, is dated April 27, 1911. This is evidently a slip for the meeting referred to in the text was held on April 27 and the letter itself was therefore written on April 28, 1911.

[3] This was republished in Indian Opinion, 6-5-1911, under the title "The Close of Bitter Struggle".

been reached, Mr. Gandhi is passing from public life. He has already arranged for his legal practice to be taken over by Mr. Ritch, who up to now has represented the Indian cause in London. His immediate intention is to provide for the care and education of the children whose parents are now in necessitous circumstances, and then he intends to retire to his farm in Natal, and in the spells of leisure no doubt to come in closer touch with the philosophic musings of Tolstoy and to reap inspiration from the savants of his beloved India.

A representative of *The Star* called on Mr. Gandhi today to obtain an appreciation of the stage to which the Asiatic problem has been advanced. It would appear that the Immigration Bill is finished with and that two alternatives[1] are before the Government. The first is the introduction of a new Immigration Bill from which the colour bar will be entirely eliminated, and to carry which General Smuts will have to bear down the opposition of the Free State. The second course is to practically preserve the *status quo* and to simply amend the immigration laws of the Transvaal. The first course while meeting objections raised by the Transvaal Indians, will involve the right of educated immigrants to travel throughout the Union, and will place limitations on the privileges which Indians in other Provinces at present enjoy. The adoption of such measure would not bring that finality which is desirable. On this point, Mr. Gandhi states the country is not yet ripe for general immigration legislation, because the policies throughout the Provinces have been distinct, and it would be purely a makeshift to have general legislation in name with actual statutory distinctions for the different Provinces, because it is common cause that the Provincial Asiatic legislation is to remain intact and that movements of Asiatics are to be restricted to the respective Provinces.

[GANDHIJI:] Such being the case, I cannot help saying that it will be sane statesmanship for the present to recognize the situation as it is; and yet it will be possible to administer the Provincial laws by the Central Government. Generally speaking, that the laws are so framed as to ensure practical equality of administration of European immigration.

NO HITCH ANTICIPATED

[INTERVIEWER:] You have no doubt now doubt a solution being reached?

So far as I can see, there ought to be no hitch, because each party has taken all the precautions humanly possible to avoid misunderstanding or ambiguity. Undoubtedly a great deal will depend on how General Smuts carries out his declarations. At last night's

[1] The reference is to the proposal contained in Gandhiji's letter to Lane of April 7, "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 7-4-1911.

meeting, the greatest difficulty that the Indian leaders had to face was the almost ineradicable suspicion the rank and file entertain regarding the Government's motives. They read everything that is hostile to themselves in all that is said or written on behalf of the Union Government. At one time the position was tense, and there was a very heated controversy, but calmness ultimately prevailed, and the meeting decided, with [a] few dissentients, to accept the provisional settlement. [1]

What was your experience in Cape Town?

I must confess that General Smuts was extremely obliging and conciliatory in his attitude, and throughout the negotiations, he evinced a sincere desire to come to a settlement. He more than once declared that he did not wish to prolong the distress which he knew the passive resisters were suffering.

In reply to a further question, Mr. Gandhi said that the present Indian population in the Transvaal was at the outside 8,000, and was about 7,000 below the number of pre-war residents. In conclusion, he requested that his gratitude and that of his countrymen should be acknowledged through *The Star* to the members of the European committees in Johannesburg and London, to Lord Ampthill[2] and Professor Gokhale[3], without whose support "we could not have reached the stage we have".

The Star, 28-4-1911

404. LETTER TO E. F. C. LANE

[JOHANNESBURG,]
April 29, 1911

DEAR MR. LANE,

Referring to the conversation between us of this morning, we had an overcrowded meeting at the Hamidia Hall on Thursday last Mr. Cachalia presided, and the meeting lasted four hours. After some

[1] For Gandhiji's report of the meeting, *vide* "Transvaal Notes", 2-5-1911.

[2] Arthur Oliver Villiers Russell, second Baron of Ampthill (1869-1936); Governor of Madras, 1899-1906; acted as Viceroy and Governor-General of India in 1904; took active interest in the Indian struggle in South Africa and was President of the South Africa British Indian Committee, London. He wrote the introduction to Doke's biography of Gandhiji.

[3] Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915); Indian statesman; President, Indian National Congress, 1905; founded the Servants of India Society, 1905; member Bombay Legislature and Viceroy's Legislative Council, 1902-15; member Indian Public Services Commission, 1912-5.

heated discussion, a resolution was carried, approving, as hereafter explained, of the provisional settlement set forth in the letters[1] of the 22nd instant exchanged between us. [2]

There were several questions which were asked at this meeting, and are still being asked. I think that it is right that I should draw General Smuts' attention to the most important of them. The acceptance by the meeting is based upon the interpretation of the letters indicated by the following questions put by the meeting:

(1) Will the legislation proposed and designed to meet the objection of passive resisters take away existing rights either in the Transvaal or in other parts of South Africa?

ANSWER: It will not, whether the proposed legislation affects only the Transvaal or the whole of the Union.

(2) Will the passive resisters who are pre-war residents, but who are at present outside the Transvaal, such as Mr. Dawad Mahomed[3] or Mr. Rustomjee[4], be entitled to registration in spite of their having failed to apply for their registration during the statutory period?

ANSWER: Yes.

(3) Will the passive resisters who, although registered, have been deported, be prohibited from entering the Transvaal?

ANSWER: No.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 22-4-1911 also Appendix, "Lane's Letter to Gandhiji", 22-4-1911.

[2] Here the draft has the sentence: "The smooth working will depend now entirely upon a liberal policy being followed by General Smuts" which appears to have been subsequently deleted.

[3] One of the earliest traders in South Africa, he spoke English and Dutch well although without any literary education. "Skilful", "intelligent and resourceful", he was the principal contributor to public funds raised in South Africa for Indian causes; Chairman, Natal Indian Congress; erstwhile resident of the Transvaal, he crossed over into the Colony in August, 1908 and refused to give his thumb-impressions at the border under Act 2 of 1907. He thus courted arrest to establish the right of entry of old Transvaal Indian residents and as released on grounds of ill-health after serving five months of his six months' sentence; *vide* "Letter to General Smuts", 14-8-1908; "Comments on Transvaal Indian Campaign", 28-8-1908 & "Speech at Meeting in Hamidia Mosque", 30-8-1908 and "Duncan's Views", 13-2-1909; "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909; also *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XXX.

[4] Parsi Rustomjee; philanthropic and public-spirited Indian merchant of Natal and the "Grand Old passive Resister", affectionately known as Kakaji, he was first co-worker and staunch friend and later client of Gandhiji's; strong supporter of the Natal Indian Congress.

(4) Will the passive resisters who hold Peace Preservation Ordinance Permits but have been deported be similarly protected?

ANSWER: Yes.

(5) Will the educated passive resisters who are to be allowed to remain in the Transvaal under temporary certificates be treated as immigrants for this year, and be free from liability to registration under Act 36 of 1908?

ANSWER: Yes.

(6) Will the standard of education possessed by the persons referred to be set for future Asiatic immigrants?

ANSWER: No. It was explained that only those who are highly educated will be allowed to pass the education test, and that probably all but Mr. Joseph Royeppen out of the six would be rejected if they were to seek admission as new immigrants on merits.

(7) Will educated Asiatics who are registered residents be compelled to give finger-prints or thumb-prints?[1]

ANSWER: No.

(8) Will conscientious objectors or well-known Asiatics be similarly exempt?

ANSWER: Yes, from finger-prints and also from thumb-prints, if they can give a well-formed signature.

The last two answers were given on the strength of previous correspondence[2] in 1908 and the dispatches recently published. The matter was not mentioned in the discussion between us because it was

[1] In thus formulating Question No. 7 Gandhiji may have had the procedure for taking out licences in mind rather than that of registration for he refers to these persons as having already registered. Smuts' telegraphic reply of May 20, 1911 (Appendix VI) makes the point explicit, but in Question No. 8 the reference is clearly to the procedure for registration. Smuts' reply, however, limits the concession to licensing procedure only. Presumably all that the telegram did was to safeguard the right of the Transvaal

Government to take thumb-impressions from resident Asiatic traders seeking licences if they were not educated or even from conscientious objectors seeking registration. The procedure for registration of uneducated persons could not have been at issue because the bulk of these save perhaps for the thirty mentioned in Gandhiji's letter of May 4, 1911 (pp. 59-60) had registered voluntarily, and it was agreed between the satyagrahis and the Government that immigration of uneducated persons must cease.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 28-1-1908; "Johannesburg Letter", 30-1-1908 .

quite plain to me.

I am sure General Smuts will not mind my troubling him with the above, as I know he as well as I is most anxious to avoid any misunderstanding.

I find that Mr. Sodha is not a pre-war resident of three years' standing. He resided continuously for two years before the war in the Transvaal, and actually left as a refugee. There is, of course, no doubt as to the two facts. But a strict reading of Act 36 of 1908 requires three years' pre-war residence. May not the strict letter of the law be waived and Mr. Sodha be allowed to register? If he is not, he falls under the category of educated immigrants, as he possesses educational qualifica-tions. He will then, with Messrs Roye-ppen, Sorabjee, Medh, Desai andShelat[1] be the sixth educated man. That leaves out a very desirable and highly educated man, Mr. Samuel Joseph, a nephew of Mr. Royeppen and a school master. He was born in South Africa, and is even now the organist in a Native Protestant Christian Church, and is giving some private tuition. May I ask for his protection, by waiving the strict interpretation in regard to Mr. Sodha? We might have thrown out one of the six before named in favour of Mr. Samuel Joseph, but the merits in point of suffering of the others are far greater than Mr. Samuel Joseph's.

I have been asked to mention another case of extreme hardship. That is Mr. Camay's. He was an Indian postmaster in Johannesburg. He is well educated. I believe he had served for nearly ten years in the above capacity when he had to leave because he declined to register.[2] Mr. Camay is a Parsee. He has his family in Johannesburg. He has suffered a great deal during the struggle. I believe that he was very popular as postmaster, and enjoyed the complete confidence of his superiors. In my opinion, he ought to be reinstated.

I have not yet before me a list of Indian passive resisters who being pre-war residents are entitled to registration, but I am getting the

[1] Umiashankar Manchharam Shelat; a sergeant in the Stretcher-bearer Corps formed by Gandhiji in the Zulu "rebellion" of 1906; later, as a satyagrahi, suffered imprisonment and deportation in 1908 and 1909; was one of the "stokers" at the Mass Meeting in August 1908 when Indian burned their registration certificates; *vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting", 23-8-1908 and "Trial of Naidoo and Others", 16-6-1909 & "Johannesburg Letter", before 21-6-1909; also *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XI.

[2] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 26-8-1908 and 31-8-1908.

names together. I take it that their registration will proceed immediately we agree on the points mentioned by me herein.

You were somewhat surprised when I mentioned the Chinese passive resisters. But they have continued to suffer to the end and their Chairman, Mr. Quinn, was only recently discharged from gaol. There are now, I think, more Chinese than Indian passive resisters in gaol. I am quite sure that General Smuts will not expect Indian passive resisters to desert their Chinese fellow sufferers. They naturally ask for the same protection for the Chinese passive resisters as for themselves. There are, I understand, only about twenty pre-war Chinese passive resisters who were not registered when the struggle was revived in 1908. But I introduced the question of the Chinese in order to mention the somewhat delicate matter of four who are undergoing terms of imprisonment for public violence among themselves. When the struggle was revived, the Chinese became two factions and fought with each other. As a result, some were convicted. Now the two factions are united. They are even preparing a petition to the Governor-General for the exercise of the clemency of the Crown. Will not General Smuts recommend them for favourable consideration?

I have written at great length. But I thought that I could not be too precise or too frank.

If you will kindly place this letter before General Smuts, and if he considers it necessary, appoint a day for an interview, I shall come down, and the matter may be finally closed.[1]

I am,
Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From *Indian Opinion*, 27-5-1911; also photostat of draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5521

[1] Acknowledging this letter on May 1, 1911, Lane said: "The various points raised by you are now under consideration of the Committee, and further communication will be sent to you in due course." S. N. 5525. Smuts actually discussed the points mentioned in this letter in his letter of May 19 and telegram of May 20, 1911; *vide* Appendices, Resolutions at Mass Meeting", 24-6-1908 & Chamney's Affidavit", 25-6-1908.

405 . PETITION TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COLONIES[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
May 1, 1911

[TO]
THE RIGHT HON'BLE THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES
LONDON

THE PETITION OF A. M. CACHALIA, CHAIRMAN OF
THE BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT

The painful struggle over the legal status of Asiatics, that has gone on in the Transvaal for the last four years, now gives promise of a happy ending. In view, however, of the approaching meeting of the Imperial Conference, the British Indian Association ventures to draw the attention of His Majesty's Government to the present actual position of British Indians residing in the Transvaal.

The struggle arising out of the passing of the Asiatic Registration Act (No. 2 of 1907) has caused such intense suffering among the Asiatic communities residing in the Transvaal, and has so much occupied the attention of both Asiatics and Europeans, that it has not been possible for the Association to devote much energy to securing a redress of the disabilities which were in existence at the commencement of the struggle and of others which have since been imposed, but to which passive resistance did not extend.

THE PRESENT POSITION IN REGARD TO THE REGISTRATION AND IMMIGRATION LAWS

In terms of a letter[2] addressed by the Private Secretary of General Smuts to Mr. Gandhi, and dated the 22nd April, the proposals in which were submitted to a meeting[3] of British Indians on the 27th April, and accepted by a Resolution carried with but six[4]dissentients:

[1] This was presumably drafted by Gandhiji; it was published in Indian Opinion, 13-5-1911, under the heading "The Present Position".

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Lane's Letter to Gandhiji", 22-4-1911.

[3] For Gandhiji's accounts of the meeting, *vide* "Transvaal Notes", 2-5-1911.

[4] Cf., however, "Transvaal Notes", 2-5-1911

(a) Law 2 of 1907 is to be repealed during the forthcoming session of the Parliament of South Africa, subject to the reservation of the rights of minor children in terms of what is known as the Chotabhai judgment[1] ;

(b) Legal equality in respect of immigration of Asiatic immigrants with Europeans immigrants will be restored, subject, however, to differential administrative treatment as distinguished from statutory differentiation;

(c) In the legislation to be passed, the existing rights of British Indians will be maintained, that is, if it is Provincial legislation, the existing rights of Asiatics in the Transvaal shall not be interfered with; if it is legislation applicable to all the Provinces, the existing rights in the Provinces as well as in the Transvaal shall be preserved;

(d) If the legislation should be Provincial, not more than six highly educated Asiatics will be allowed in any one year to pass the education test, and be admitted as immigrants to the Transvaal;

(e) Passive resisters who, but for passive resistance, would have been entitled to registration if they had applied within the proper time will be now allowed to register;

(f) Educated passive resisters not registrable under the Registration Act will be allowed to remain in the Transvaal in anticipation of the forthcoming legislation, and will be deemed to be Asiatic immigrants for the current year;

(g) Passive resisters who are suffering imprisonment as such will be recommended to His Excellency the Governor-General for discharge, upon an assurance being given that the community will suspend passive resistance for the time being.

My Association takes this opportunity of tendering thanks to the Union Government for the obviously conciliatory and generous manner in which they have met it, and also to His Majesty's Government for their friendly and effective intervention to bring to a happy ending the unfortunate situation.

But the suspension of passive resistance now agreed upon does

[1] *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Letter to E.F.C. Lane", 22-4-1911

not mean that the British Indian community in the Transvaal has obtained redress of all its most serious grievances. The British Indian Association, therefore, craves leave to mention the most prominent of these that the community is still labouring under.

LAW 3 OF 1885

Law 3 of 1885, which was the subject-matter of correspondence up to the time of the outbreak of hostilities between His Majesty's Government and the late South African Republic, still remains on the Statute-Book of the Union, save for the removal of the £3 fee for the registration of those Asiatics who settled in the Transvaal for the purposes of trade; and it excludes British Indians and other Asiatics from:

(a) burgher's rights;

(b) ownership of landed property except in Bazaars and Locations;

(c) residence in towns, except in Bazaars or Locations set apart for their residence.

Owing to the unfortunate prejudice against Asiatics prevalent in South Africa, the Association regards as outside practical politics any demand at present for burgher's rights, i.e., rights for political franchise.[1]

The deprivation, however, of the right to own landed property except in Bazaars or Locations is a very serious disability, and it naturally interferes with the progress of the community, and, strange as it may appear, the absence of building enterprise on the part of the community owing to this disability is used as an argument against the community, and so fosters prejudice. Though residence of Asiatics is restricted under this law to Locations or Bazaars,there being no penalty prescribed for non-residence therein, the Courts have held that Asiatics cannot be compulsorily segregated. The presence, direct and indirect, of rival European traders has, however, virtually driven a number of the poorerAsiatics into the Locations already established under the law. It is worthy of note, as an indication of the hostile spirit actuating the Government for the time being of the Province, that

[1] Transvaal Indians had consistently adhered to this position; *vide* "Deputation to Morley", 22-11-1906 and "Interview to the Press", 1-2-1908 & "Speech at Closer Union Society", 20-8-1908.

these Locations have been so far situated as to make general trade therein practically impossible, and to put Asiatic hawkers, who must every morning go to the public market for buying pro-duce, to very great inconvenience. Moreover, whereas under this law Asiatics are permitted to own landed property in such Locations, the Government permit them only to hold leases of no longer than 21 years of Stands into which such Locations are divided. Indeed, in Johannesburg, they are only allowed a monthly tenure. Here it may be added that, up to the time of the outbreak of the late war, there was a Location in Johannesburg, in which ninety Stands were held under 99 years' lease. This Location, among other areas, was expropriated under a special Ordinance, and since then Asiatics have not been able to hold any landed property in their own names save as above mentioned.

In order, however, to enable British Indians to become virtual owners of landed property, equitable trusts under legal advice were created, whereby Asiatics have been able hitherto to acquire a permanent interest in land, their European friends taking transfer of land for which the Asiatic beneficiaries pay, and the ostensible owner passing a bond over such land in favour of the equitable owner. These trusts have been recognized by the Courts, and the method has been in vogue almost since the time of the promulgation of this law.[1]

GOLD LAW AND TOWNSHIPS ACT (1908)

In order, as it would appear, to defeat such trusts and to bring about effectual compulsory segregation, the Legislature has included in the Gold Law and the Townships Amendment Act of 1908 certain

[1] The case of Aboobaker Amod's Church Street property in Pretoria was the subject of much contoversy. The Boer law of 1885 denied Asiatics the right to hold land outside Locations except for religious purposes but it was amended in 1886 to exempt Aboobaker Amod; *vide* "Blue Bok", 29-2-1908. A Supreme Court judgment in 1906 reluctantly acquiesced in this but ruled that the property could not be trasmitted to the heirs; *vide* "Deputation to Lord Elgin", 8-11-1906. Special provision authorizing the inheritance was made in the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance of 1906 ("Letter to Dr. J. Oldfield, 6-11-1906) as well as in the draft legislation repealing portions of Law 3 of 1885 suggested by Gandhiji; *vide* "Blue Book", 29-2-1908. Since the ordinance and its variations remained inoperative owing to the Indians' opposition to them, this property was meanwhile held in trust by Polak; *vide* "Legalilized Robbery", 17-3-1906 & "The Land Act in the Transvaal", 7-4-1906, This is the solitary instance of land held by an Indian individual in the Transvaal; *vide* "Fair and Just Treatment", 11-8-1906.

subtle provisions[1], which, on the face of them, appear to be comparatively innocuous (though still highly offensive), yet which are obviously designed to accomplish the object above indicated. The Association has made this discovery only lately, by accident. In the town of Klerksdorp, European owners of Stands occupied by, and in some cases equitably owned by, British Indians have been notified by the Government that they are committing a breach of Section 130[2] of the said Gold Law, and that if the British Indian occupants be not removed by the 30th April (last), proceedings will be taken against them.[3] The penalty for non-compliance is a fine of £50 and an additional fine of £5 per diem so long as the breach continues. These notices have created consternation among British Indians. The community has received legal opinion to the effect that the combined reading of the two laws above referred to means that every Indian residing within mining areas in this Province runs the risk of being dispossessed of his occupation of Stands therein and having his equitable ownership completely destroyed. The latter object is attained by a section in the Townships Act aforementioned which provides for forfeiture to the State, without compensation, of land occupied by British Indians and other Asiatics, although, as before explained, they may be virtual owners of such Stands. The only protection of existing rights granted under these drastic laws is in respect of leases directly held by Asiatics and entered into before promulgation of the Gold Law. Many important towns, including Johannesburg (which accommodates nearly one-half of the total Indian population of the Transvaal), are affected by these laws. If, therefore, they are to be strictly enforced, virtual ruin of the Transvaal Indian community must almost certainly follow and that oft-declared policy of prominent members of the present Ministry of the Union, viz., the starvation of British Indians out of the Province, will be effected at a stroke of the pen.

[1] Gandhiji must have had in mind Sections 104, 113, 114, 122, 127 and 128; *vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", Before 25-4-1908, "Petition to Transvaal Legislative Assembly", 15-6-1908 & Appendix, "The Draft Gold Law in the Transvaal", 4-4-1908.

[2] Section 130 (Sec. 127 in the Draft Gold Law, Appendix "The Draft Gold Law in the Transvaal", 4-4-1908) prohibits European owners of Stands in "proclaimed areas" from subletting any rights to Coloured persons and the acquisition of any rights whatsoever by the latter in such areas.

[3] *Vide* 3rd footnote of "Extract from Letter to Maud Polak", 5-4-1911

Had such an attempt been made by an open and plain amendment of Law 3 of 1885, instead of by an obscure interpolation in statutes covering hundreds of sections and ostensibly dealing with matters of quite a different nature, the Association feels certain that such a measure would never have received His Majesty's sanction. The Association naturally lays the greatest emphasis upon this part of the petition, and hopes that His Majesty's Government will not fail to grant relief.

FOOT-PATHS BY-LAWS, ETC.

The Association is loth to bring before His Majesty's Government by-laws and regulations needlessly interfering with the personal liberty of the community represented by the Association, in view of the fact that material interests of the community are, as shown above, hardly recognized or respected; but there can be no rest for Transvaal Indians so long as the Statute-Book of the Province remains disfigured by legislation preventing the use by them of foot-paths and tram-cars.[1] These pinpricks will not be stopped so long as British Indians continue generally to be bracketed with the natives of South Africa.

THREATENED LEGISLATION

The Association further begs to draw the attention of His Majesty's Government to the promise of the Union Government to deal with the question of trading licences granted to British Indians. The Association is aware the various Chambers of Commerce of this Province, largely composed of rival European traders, have promoted and sent petitions to the Union Parliament, containing highly coloured and inflammatory statements prejudicial to Indian interests, and praying for the restriction and even extinction, of Indian trade licences.[2] The Association fervently hopes that, as the Indian population in the Transvaal is comparatively small, and is not to be in future at all materially added to, no restraint of Indian trade will be countenanced by His Majesty's Government. The Association humbly

[1] The British Indian Association had time and again taken up the question of these disabilities with the local authorities, and the Colonial and Imperial Governments; *vide*, for example, "Foot-Paths Again", 17-3-1904 and "Lord Selborne and Indians in the Transvaal", 14-10-1905. "Statement Presented to Constitution Committee", 29-5-1906.

[2] *Vide*, for instance, "Johannesburg Letter", 25-4-1908.

suggests that the objections, mostly exaggerated, made in the petitions above referred to, to the habits of the Indian community as to insanitation, etc., in so far as they are based on facts, can be, and are, easily met by general municipal health regulations.

In conclusion, the Association trusts that His Majesty's Government will take such steps as may be necessary and expedient to safeguard the existing rights of British Indian subjects of the Crown, resident in the Transvaal, to ameliorate their position in respect of the matters hereinbefore referred to. And for this act of justice and mercy your Petitioner shall, as in duty bound, for ever pray.

A. M. CACHALIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Colonial Office Records: 551/22

406. SPEECH AT JOHANNESBURG FAREWELL

[*May 1, 1911*][1]

A large gathering of local Indian sportsmen met at the Hamidia Islamic Hall, Vrededorp, to wish good-bye to Mr. Joseph Royeppen on the eve of his departure for his home in Durban, after the conclusion of his part in the Transvaal Passive Resistance movement. Mr. Gandhi was in the chair. . . .The chairman opened the proceedings and naturally touched on his own pet game of passive resistance. He said there were many games. In some they won, and in others they lost, but there was a game in which they must always win, and that was passive resistance. He referred to the long and dreary game that had been played by them for the last four and a half years, and trusted that the winning point was now scored. A community which could play the game of passive resistance so honourably as they had done could play any other game equally well. . . .

The Star, 4-5-1911

[1] A report appearing in the Gujarati section of *Indian Opinion*, 13-5-1911, states that this function was held on May 1, 1911 under the auspices of the Bande Mataram League. *Vide* also the following item.

407. TRANSVAAL NOTES

Tuesday [*May 2, 1911*]

An overflow meeting was held at the Hamidia Hall on Thursday, the 27th ultimo. Mr. Cachalia presided. Probably 200 men had to stand outside the Hall. The proceedings lasted over four hours. Messrs Kallenbach and Ritch were also present. The discussion was at times heated, if not actually stormy, and throughout there was intense as to the intentions of the Government. Mr. Gandhi explained the whole of the correspondence, and advised acceptance of the proposals made therein. After Mr. Coovadia and Messrs Royeppen, Solomon Ernest, Thambi Naidoo, Imam Abdul Kadir Bawazeer, Sorabjee, Sodha and others had spoken in favour of acceptance, Mr. Abdul Rahman of Potchefstroom moved that the proposal as to suspension of passive resistance be accepted conditional upon fulfilment of the pledges given by General Smuts. The proposition was somewhat crudely worded, but it sufficiently expressed the sense of the meeting. Mr. Shelat seconded. There was a counter-proposition to the effect that the proposal might not be accepted until the intentions of the Government were carried into practice. The original proposition was carried with but five dissentients.

It was also decided at this meeting that the proposal to send a public deputation to England consisting of Messrs Cachalia and Gandhi should be withdrawn, and that the funds collected be devoted to sending Mr. Polak to England, in order to enable him to rejoin Mrs. Polak, as also to take up such public work as may be found necessary during the Conference and after. According to the programme at present arranged, about the middle of October, Mr. Polak will leave with Mrs. Polak for India, and there attend the meeting of National Congress in December, and remain there up to the time of passing of the Bill that is to be introduced during the forthcoming, session of the Union Parliament, in terms of General Smuts' letter of the 22nd ulto. Telegrams in suport of the meeting were received from Klerksdorp and Peitersburg, and delegates attended from Germiston, Boksburt, Heidelberg, etc.

* * *

The Chinese have also held meetings, and have passed resolutions accepting the proposed settlement, asking Mr. Gandhi to

attend to certain difficulties of their own. The one very satisfactory result, so far as the Chinese are concerned, that has been achived is that the two parties into which they were unhappily divided after the renewal of the struggle in the middle of 1908 have now reunited.

* * *

Mr.Gandhi is now in further correspondence with General Smuts, and final letters may be exchanged during the week.

* * *

Mr. Polak arrved last Saturday evening, and was received by Mr. Cachalia and other members of the community and he left for London last Monday by the *Imperial Mail*. He was seen off by nearly one hunderd Indians and Chinese, including Messrs Kallenbach, Ritch, Issac, Van Weenen and Miss Schlesin. He was garlanded by Mr. Cachalia, and was the recipient of several bouquets. Flowers were showered upon him, and as the train was about to steam out, Mr. Camay, in a few well-chosen words, thanked Mr. Polak for his great services, wished him a happy time with Mrs. Polak and his family, and hoped that whatever public work he might do would be crowned with the same brilliant success that had attended his efforts in India.

* * *

A reception was held by the Bande Mataram League in honour of Mr. Joseph Royeppen, on Monday night. Refreshments were served, and the tables were laid for nearly 50 guests, among whom were Messrs Cachalia, Quinn, Fancy, Thambi Naidoo, David Ernest, Bawazeer, Sorabjee, Medh and others. Messrs Kallenbach and Issac were also present, Mr. Gandhi was in the Chair. Several speeches were made,[1] all more or less dealing with the passive resistance struggle.

* * *

The British Indian Association is sending a petition[2] addressed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, dealing with grievances arising out of the operation of Law 3 of 1885, the Gold Law, and the Townships Amendment Act, and several other matters.

Mr. Ritch has already appeared in the Courts in several cases with success.

* * *

[1] For a report of Gandhiji's speech *vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* "Petition to Secretary of State for Colonies", 1-5-1911.

Mr. G. Ramasmy has sent a box of vegetables to the Farm.

Indian Opinion, 6-5-1911.

408. LETTER TO E. F. C. LANE[1]

May 4, 1911

DEAR MR. LANE,

With reference to the interview[2] with General Smuts, I have conferred with Mr. Cachalia and other leaders. It seems to be no easy matter to give you a complete list of the names of those who as passive resisters would be competent to apply, and, in any case, the preparation of the list will take some time. But I think I can easily describe the classes who may be permitted to apply, I do not deal with those who are in South Africa, for General Smuts, I understand, does not anticipate any dificulty about them.

There are no Chinese passive resisters outside South Africa.

Those Indians who may be in India should fall under one or [the] other of the following sub-heads:

(a) Those who, after the 1st of January, 1908, were deported under the Registration Act 2 of 1907 or Act 36 of 1908, and have not yet applied under either of the Acts;[3]

(b) Those who, though not deported, left South Africa owing to the struggle some time after the 1st day of March, 1907.[4]

[1] On May 5, 1911, Lane acknowlged this letter saying that it was being forwarded to the Minister for considarations (S.N. 5529) and on May 19 the Acting Secretary of the Interior wrote to Gandhiji recording the Government's final acceptance of the satyagrahis' demands. The Minister trusted that this acceptance would be regarded by the Asiatic community as "a final settlment of the questions involved"; *vide* Appendix, "E.M. Gorges' Letter to Gandhiji", 19-5-1911.

[2] This does not appear to be the interview of April 19, 1911("Abstract of Interview with General Smuts", 19-4-1911) for none of the issues discussed in this letter figured in that meeting. Gandhiji, however, mentions in his letter of May 8, 1911, to Polak that he went to Pretoria to see Smuts and met people on Thursday and Friday. It would be natural to suppose that these days were May 4 or 5. If this meeting did take place as is strongly suggested by the letter to Polak, no record of it is available.

[3] A batch of 16 Indians was deported for the first time on April 14, 1909 and by June 5, 1909, about 29 had been deported.

[4] In August 1907, H.O. Ally left the Transvaal since he wished neither to join the satyagraha campaign nor to register under Act 2 of 1907. Several others left about the same time for the same reasons.

The onus of proof of deportation under (a) and of leaving under (b) should fall on the applicant.

By adopting the above method, General Smuts' fear that the door may be opened to applicants who may have left South Africa for India years ago and may now set up a fictitious claim is set at rest.

I understand that not more than thirty Indians are likely to fall under (a) or (b), and that not more than 150 are likely to apply from South Africa.

It follows from the correspondence between us that those who have applied to the Registrar for registration under either the Act of 1907 or that of 1908, and have been rejected, cannot now reapply. But there are some in South Africa who applied for voluntary certificates before the Act of 1908 was passed, but who, having been rejected by the Registrar, did not apply after the Act of 1908.[1] These men will now apply under the Act so as to be able to avail themselves, if necessary, of the right of appeal reserved under the Act of 1908.

Of the Chinese in South Africa, there are not more than 30, of whom all but two are in the Transvaal, these two being in Delagoa Bay.

I take it that registration will proceed at once. I venture to suggest that applications be not received after, say, the 31st December next.

May I point out the desirability of finally closing this matter, as some passive resistance prosoners are still in gaol who are to be recommended for discharge, and as I am most anxious, if I can, to close among ourselves further discussion of the interminable points that crop up pending a final announcement.

Yours etc.

[M.K. GANDHI]

From Indian Opinion, 27-5-1911, also photostat of draft in Gandhiji's hand, in which the last paragraph is missing: S. N. 5529a

[1] In his reply dated May 19, 1911, the Acting Secretary of the Interior estimated their number at 180, including Chinese and Indians; *vide* Appendix, "E.M. Gorges' Letter to Gandhiji", 19-5-1911.

409. LETTER TO A. E. CHOTABHAI

May 4, 1911

DEAR MR. CHOTABHAI,

I am much obliged to you for your note of the 3rd instant enclosing[a] cheque for £300 in conneciton with your son's case[1] . As I have already informed you, I do not desire to make any personal use of your generous gift. It is my intention shortly to make over the Phoenix Farm, together with the machinery and the Press Buildings, which have been valued at £5,000, to trustees in trust for public purposes; and I propose, if I can induce our wealthy men to follow up your gift, to devote the money towards building a substantial school at Phoenix. Should, however, such support not be forthcoming, I propose to retain the sum to use, if required, for the objects of passive resistance, should its revival next year unfortunately become necessary.

Thanking you for your promise of co-operation in public work,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 13-5-1911

410. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

Sunday night [*May 7, 1911*][2]

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have written a great deal. My right hand is tired. It is intensely cold. I am therefore trying the left hand. I had intended to give you a long letter but just as I commenced your letter, there was an interruption. I shall, therefore, be brief. Why feel grateful to me when I was bound to [do] what I could to contribute to your joint happiness. After all on that memorable boxing day (was it not), I gave Millie to you or you to Millie, so far as the outside world is

[1] For details of the Chotabhai case, *vide* 2nd footnote of "Letter to E.F.C. Lane", 22-4-1911

[2] From the contents; *vide* also"Letter to Dr. Pranjivan Mehta", 8-5-1911

concerned. It was at my instigation that you separated.[1] It was nothing but my duty to bring you together as soon as the opportunity offered itself. No more therefore of thanksgiving. You do your duty and if I succeed in doing mine as well, we shall be fairly quits.

Now that you are there, I shall not write to Millie except when some special occasion demands it.

I have your promise that you will neither worry Sally nor Maud. They are both grown-up women and will not take even advice if not offered in a most tactful manner. I shall need their certificates before I say that you have at the end of your visit there, discharged your duty just as well as you did in India. I feel sure that you will not be impatient with the young Indians whom you will meet there.

Herewith a copy of translation of Harilal's letter. What a fine boy and yet how mad! He had left details of his movements with Joseph with instructions to inform of them if he found me inquiring. He is in Delagoa Bay. I have wired to him asking him to wait there and to confer with me before leaving for anywhere else. I understand his desire is to bury himself somewhere in the Punjab and study there. He has wired saying he is writing to me. I shall therefore hear from him tomorrow.

Have not yet received final letter from Smuts.

With love to you all,

Yours,

BHAI

[PS.]

Monday

I have your radio message which I suppose you sent just to tease me. No news yet from Harilal but Joseph had a letter from him describing his journey to D'Bay.

From the original:Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy : National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* "Abstract of Interview with General Smuts", 19-4-1911

411. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

May 8, 1911

MY DEAR POLAK,

Herewith your plate, also Mr.Cachalia's authority[1], draft for £116/9/-, and copy of a translation of Harilal's letter. Pater's letter will be, I take it, sent you by West[2]. You will have noticed that he did not understand your telegram. Cordes'[3] address is John H. Cordes Junior, 68 gr. Bleichen, Hamburg. I see that your passage to London will come to over £45, including what was paid on the luggage at Park. This does not include the expenses during the voyage, including gratuities. I, therefore, put down your passage at £55 as far as Waterloo. Here then is my estimate:

Passage to London	£ 55
May 20-Oct.15 at £50 per month	£ 250
Passage to Bombay for you, Milly, Celie and the boys	£ 100
Stay in India Nov.-March at £25	£ 125
Cable expenses, etc.	£ 100
Passage from India to South Africa	£ 60
	£ 690

I, therefore, estimate £700 as the expenses. There may be a

[1] The reference is to Cachalia's letter to Polak authorizing him to represent African Indians in England, following the decision of the BIA meeting of April 27 to send him on deputation instead of Gandhiji and Cachalia.

[2] Albert H.West. It was in Isaac's vegetarian restaurant in Johannesburg, where Gandhihji met so many European colleagues of his, that he met West also. The latter in fact sought him out offering to nurse plague patients. Instead Gandhiji asked him to take charge of the printing press at Phoenix offering him only £10 a month for the task. From then on, this "God-fearing humane Englishman. . . . remained a partner of my joys and sorrows" until Gandhiji left South Africa in 1914. He put the press at Phoenix, of which he became joint mannager, on a secure foundation. Though not detailed for satyagraha work, he was arrested in 1913 for sheltering striking indentured Indians at Phoenix.

[3] A German Theosophist who gave up a lucrative post to become a member of the Phoenix Settlement; was in charge of the school at Phoenix and also looked after the nursing work in the Colony;was at this time doing a year's course at the Theosophical Society in Adyar under Mrs. Besant whom he greatly admired; later went to India to join Gandhiji at Sevagram where he died in 1960.

saving if you return earlier. Of the above amount, £44 has been spent here roughly for your passage, and £200 has been now sent to you on account of the deputation. I have deliberately calculated £50 for the expenses there, because during your stay the activity of the Committee will be greater, and so I have put down £25 instead of £18 per month, and that may enable Maud not to worry; and I have put down a larger amount for your private expenses also because of your being there, and that will be, I should say, £25. I think that you should be able to manage without unncessary stinting. At the same time, if you find that the amounts are not enough, you can fall back upon the £100 for cables, etc., because my estimate is only rough, and you are by no means bound down to it. I have not got your account ready yet. It will be sent next week. The £16/9/-included in the draft represents the balance of the purses after deducting £20 sent to Milly, and £5/1/- your subscription to the Theosophical Society, to the Law Society, and £2 taken in Durban. But, if I have misunderstood your instructions, please let me know. I think that you told me that from the amount of the purses I should deduct the amount of the draft sent to Milly and the expenses incurred thereafter.

The Gold Law business will tax your energy and ability. I sent you under separate cover the Statutes of 1908 and the amendment to the Townships Act, 1909. The Klerkdorp people have put down, among only three of them, £150 towards your expenses. You will, therefore, realize their anxiety, as also the need for prompt work. Please give me details of all you do regarding the Gold Law for publication. You will be somewhat angry with me that I have not yet got the Natal petition[1] ready. I could not manage it. I had to go to Pretoria all of a sudden to see the General, and, as you may imagine, Thursday and Friday were spent in interviewing people here. Smuts told me that he was going to give a favourable reply on all the points as soon as he was satisfied with rererence to the number of passive resisters falling under question 2, that is, pre-war residents. He thought that my answer permitted of 300,000,000 applications from India, and his apprehension was not ill-founded. I have, therefore, defined more accurately whom I consider to be passive resisters outside South Africa. You will see my definition from the copy enclosed.[2] The interview was long and apparently cordial. He was eager to meet us on every point. He

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for Colonies", 15-5-1911
[2] *Vide* "Letter to E.F.C.Lane", 4-5-1911

certainly mentioned that there would be an unperceived diminution of the rights hitherto enjoyed by the Cape, that there would be a stringent education test for the Cape and Natal also. He is greatly desirous of passing a general Bill, and asked me to help him to solve the Free State difficulty. I can see no way out of it without first passing the provincial legislation. I hope to be able to tackle the Natal petition today. You have, I take it, Gregorowski's opinion on the Gold Law. Khota's case[1] you will find reported in *I.O.*on page 148, Vol. 1909. What we want is an amendment of the Gold Law, and suspension of operation of Section 130 thereof meanwhile.

Yours sincerely,

[M. K. GANDHI]

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5531

412. LETTER TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

TOLSTOY FARM,
Vaisakh Sud 10 [*May 8, 1911*][2]

DEAR SHRI PRANJIVAN,

Your two letters reached me this week.

I have held since 1899 the same views that you do about Theosophy. They pressed me hard that year to join the Society but I refused in no uncertain terms, saying that, though the Soceity's rule respecting brotherhood appealed to me, I had no sympathy for its search for occult powers. I do not think that Mrs. Besant[3] is a

[1] Messrs Khotas & Co. had since 1898 been trading on a stand sublet to them by a white in Nigel, a mining area. In 1909, the Receiver of Revenues refused to renew their trading licence by virtue of Sections 92 and 130 of the Gold Law which forbade Asiatics from residing or trading in proclaimed area. On appeal, the transvaal Supreme Court disallowed the Government's interpretation and ordered the Receiver to issue the licence.

[2] The gift of £300 mentioned later in this letter was received by Gandhiji on May 4, 1911 ("Letter to A. E. Chotabhai", 4-5-1911). In that year *Vaisakh Sud* 10 corresponds to May 8.

[3] Annie Besant (1847-1933); an associate of Charles Bradlaugh; free thinker and a radical socialist, became president of Theosophical Society in 1907; founded Indian Home Rule League of which she became President in 1916; President of Indian National Congress, 1917, and interned for a time by Lord Pentland; advocated the cause of extreme nationalists in India after the Montagu Reforms; her works include: *Autobiography, Religious Problem in India*, and a transation of the *Gita*, etc. In a letter to Lord Chelmsford, Gandhiji ranked her "among the most powerful leaders of public opinion" in India.

hypocrite; she is credulous and is duped by Leadbeater. When an Englishman suggested to me to read Leadbeater's *The Life after Death*, I flatly refused to do so as I had grown suspicious of him after reading his other writings. As to his humbug. I came to know of it later. All the same, I have drawn from Theosophy the lessons which seemed to me worth drawing. Blavatsky's[1] *Key* had made a good impression on me. Theosophy sent many Hindus inquiring into their own religion. It has performed the same service as Christianity has. Moreover, Theosop-hists believe in the same basic principles as we doand therefore it is easy enough to come across good persons among them. Though there is no dearth of crooks at all levels from the highest to the lowest among the Vaishnav and other sects, we do find gems like Narasinh Mehta[2] and Bhojo Bhagat[3] amongst them. Ritch was a Theosophist. He urged me to become a member. Not only did I not become one, I helped him to be free from that humbug. Polak is a Theosophist, but he stays miles away from the practices and writings of Theosophists. The same is true of Kallenbach. When I was in India, I sent Gokaldas to the College[4] at Benares. Then also I was disppointed. Even after wards, as long as I had not come to see the light, which I have now, that is, as long as I had not outgrown the fascination for modern education, I used to inquire about institutions like the Benares College and even wished to send the boys there, thinking that something was better than nothing.[5] All that is over now. Cordes, at Phoenix, is a staunch Theosophist. I have not yet been able to get him out of the hold of Theosophy. In himself, he appears to be a sincere man. He has gone to Adyar at present, against all persuasion. Being honest, he will see the the fraud that is there and turn his back on it, unless he is taken in. It is worth ascertaining what humbug prevails there safe under the cover of Mrs. Besant's goodness. Her

[1] Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-91); born of aristocratic Russian parents, founded the Theosophical Society in 1875. The Society's headquarters, set up at Adyar in 1879, addressed itself to the task of promoting a universal brotherhood and to studying comparative religion. She was controversial figure and many questioned "the spiritual phenomena she exhibited". May 8, the day of her death is, however, commemorated by her many followers the world over as "white lotus day".

[2] A saint and poet of Gujarat

[3] A medieval Gujarati poet

[4] Central Hindu College at Benares founded by Annie Besant

[5] Here Gandjiji uses a Gujarati saying, " It is better to have somebody one can call uncle than to have none at all."

desire to pass off as the "Master" is understandable. One who runs after occult powers cannot but become so intoxicated. It is for these reasons that all our *shastras* have looked upon occult powers and Yogic attainments as unworthy pursuits. And that is the reason, I think, why *bhaktiyoga*[1] is regarded as superior to *hathayoga*[2] .

Please read the accompanying letter[3] from Harilal[4]. He had told Joseph Royeppen everything and asked him to inform me as well, if necessary. That is how I came to know more about his movements. He is at present in Delagoa Bay, and has replied to my telegram from there. He did not like going to England with your money and under any binding. As Joseph tells, me, he wants to go to the Punjab and study there in peace. His letter is all ignorance. Even the idea of going to the Punjab, in the absence of more details, seems no better. But I shall know more in a couple of days. He did a lot of thinking in gaol. Moreover, he witnessed a great transformation in my life and saw my as well. All these things have, it appears, influenced his mind unconsciously. I think his morals are sound. I have, therefore, no his account. I have told him that he ought not to have taken the step he has,[5] without my knowledge. I shall give more information next week.

Six educated satyagrahis from Natal have been given permission to settle here. I think we might send them for studies in England for a year expense if they would [agree to] spend the remaining part of their life, or at least ten years, in such public work as we suggest. There are two or three of them who would [agree]. Even more might come forward. I want your consent for sending them [abroad]. If the idea appeals to you, cable just "Gandhi-Johannesburg Yes" and I shall understand. Not that they will leave immediately. I am discussing the matter with them. I am inclined to send them if they agree and if I am satisfied. My idea is that, for the present, such persons should be trained at Phoenix in agriculture and weaving; they should learn press

[1] The way of devotion

[2] The way of psycho-physical control

[3] Not available

[4] Gandhiji's eldest son. While still 20, he went to jail as a satyagrahi in the Transvaal campaign of 1908 at his father's instance; *vide* "Trial of Harilal Gandhi and Others", 28-7-1908; "Johannesburg Letter", 1-8-1908 & "Trial of Harilal Gandhi —II", 10-8-1908. Gandhiji regarded it as a part of Harilal's education; *ibid*.

[5] That is, his leaving home without informing Gandhiji

work also. When they have been so trained it may be possible to send then to India. I feel that a similar programme should be taken up in India, too. It will be, I think, easier to manage it here, though it might prove a little more expensive.

Young Indians are able to exert greater force of character here. The control which Purshottamdas[1] does, and can, exercise over his senses here would certainly be impossible in India. Likewise, the freedom his wife enjoys and her unconstrained manner of living will not, I think, be possible at present among our class in India. I keep thinking that it would be well if a few persons were trained here thoroughly, Those who bind themselves to work for ten years will have to be maintained by us. Please go through the enclosed letter[2] from Purshottamdas. The ideas mentioned in it are being implemented, independenly of me. West and others have followed their own judgment in putting these into practice. I worked very hard on Chotabhai's case. He wanted to give me something in return. I refused totake anything for myself. He has now given me £300 to be spent as I think best.[3] Having had his amount to start with, I intend to go begging for more and, if I get some, to have a building put up for the school at Phoenix.[4] Failing in this, I feel inclined to use the amount for promoting the cause of satyagraha in some manner.

Polak has gone to England. We have started a subscription for him locally and decided to collect as much as £700. With this, he may stay in England up to October, leave for India in the middle of that month, accompanied by Mrs. Polak, attend the Congress, stay on there till the Bill to be enacted here next year is passed and return soon after. By that time, it should be March next year. The expenditure on all this, including the passage, is put at £725. If, while in India, he stays with friends, something will be saved from this. I expect you will invite them to Rangoon for some time. You must have noticed that Mrs. Polak's habits are not as simple as her husband's.

If I can get some time during the next six or eight months, I propose to give my attention to farming or weaving. Purshottamdas has been to a factory to see a handloom. I have given him permission

[1] Purshottandas Desai; for some time in charge of the school at Phoenix

[2] Not available

[3] *Vide* "Letter to A. E. Chotabhai", 13-5-1911 and "Mr. Chotabhai's Gift", 13-5-1911.

[4] *Ibid.*

to buy one of the same type. If he does I will ask you to meet the cost. It will be necessary for some time to spend money on all these ventures. I wish to have a free hand, so far as you are concerned.

I see that I can make at least £200 if I forget all else and only practice. But I am resolved not to have anything to do with that. Most of the work will go to Ritch. I have given him a seat in my own office and he has already started work. He is anxious to earn money for the sake of his family. His desire will be satisfied by this arangement and the community will save £25 which it gives as a monthly allowance to his family.

The final letter from Smuts has not yet been received. But it will come. So I believe.

Bande Mataram from,

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5084. Courtesy: C. K. Bhatt

413. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI[1]

[About *May 8, 1911*][2]

. . . But I also see that . . . was . . . that is why . . . I hardly ever interfere. I propose to visit Phoenix next month. We shall then discuss things further. Please do nothing about the cow for the present. Sam[3] has made a request [to that effect]. The idea of saving an hour from press work is excellent. This is what will have to be done. Everyone should have his working hours in the press cut down, the remaining hours being devotged exclusively to farming. That is to say, if everyone has to devote nine hours to the common tasks, eight of these

[1] The first few pages of this letter are missing and the only one available is damaged at places. From the contents, however, it would appear that it was addressed to Maganlal Gandhi.

[2] It is his"Letter to Dr. Pranjivan Mehta", May 8, 1911, the preceding item, that Gandhiji first mentions that Harilal has left home without informing him. This letter was, therefore, presumably written about the same date.

[3] "Sam"was Govindsami, a machine foreman in the International Printing Press at Phoenix and a *shikari*.

hours or at the least . . . the rest . . . similarly in other . . . since we have founded...shall become shoemakers, blacksmiths, etc., and order its affairs as in a village.

Please ask Purshottamdas to take the money spent on painting and debit the amount to the building account. I shall write more later.

Harilal has taken a most extraordinary step. The fault lies with me. Perhaps one may blame the circumstances. In any case, Harilal is not to blame.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5086. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

414. CABLE TO PRANTIK PARISHAD[1]

May 9, 1911

THANKS. YOU SHALL SEE STRUGGLE CARRIED ON ANY COST MOTHERLAND'S ASSISTANCE.

[M. K. GANDHI]

From the Gujarati translation reproduced in *Gujarati*, 14-5-1911

415. MR. CHOTABHAI'S GIFT

Mr. Chotabhai, of Krugersdorp, whose name has become famous throughout South Africa for the plucky stand he made against the Union Government when they unsuccessfully attempted to drive away his son from the Transvaal, has generously presented Mr. Gandhi with a cheque for £300 for his work in connection with the case[2] . As is his wont nowadays, Mr. Gandhi has declined to make any personal use of the gift. Of his intention to convert the whole of his Phoenix property into a trust, we will say nothing for the time being.

[1] This was sent to acknowledge the congratulations addressed to Gandhiji by the Madras Provincial Conference (presumably the Madras Mahajan Sabha) on the success of his passive resistance campaign.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to A. E. Chotabhai", 4-5-1911 and "Letter to Dr. Pranjivan Mehta", 8-5-1911

But we wish to draw the attention of our readers to Mr. Gandhi's request for donations to supplement Mr. Chotabhai's gift, in order to enable him to build a school on the Phoenix ground. It is well known that in South Africa we have no scholastic institution worthy of the name. We, therefore, trust that our wealthy and liberal-minded countrymen will respond to Mr. Gandhi's call.

Indian Opinion, 13-5-1911.

416. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

May 15, 1911

MY DEAR HENRY,

You will this week have the Natal petition.[1] The Cape petition you have taken with you, I imagine.

Smuts has not yet replied to my last letter and we cannot call it a final settlement unless we have his final letter.

Harilal returned on Saturday. He is too unsettled to be able to [do] anything here. He is now going back. He will go to India and there search for knowledge.

My mind is a perfect blank just now. I can think of nothing to write to you upon.

Yours sincerely
BHAI

From the original : Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy : National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for Colonies", 15-5-1911. Referring to it in his letter to the addressee dated May 8, 1911 (*ibid*), Gandhiji says that he hopes "to tackle the Natal petition today".

417. MEMORIAL TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COLONIES[1]

[DURBAN,]
May 15, 1911

THE MEMORIAL OF DAWAD MAHOMED, DADA OSMAN[2] AND MAHOMAD CASSIM ANGLIA, IN THEIR CAPACITY OF PRESIDENT AND JOINT HONORARY SECERATRIES RESPECTIVELY OF THE NATAL, INDIAN CONGRESS

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT

1. Your Memorialists, at a meeting of the Committee of the Natal Indian Congress, representing the Indian population of the Province of Natal, in the Union of South Africa, held on the 28th day of April, 1911, were authorized and instructed respectfully to submit the following humble respresentation regading the grievances of the Indian Colonists residing in this Province.

IMMIGRATION RESTRICTION

2. Your Memorialists have read with satisfaction the correspondence[3] issued recently in the Transvaal, announcing the temporary arangement that has been arrived at between the Indian residents of the Transvaal and the Union Government. Your Memorialists venture respectfully to remind you that the painful stgruggle that has been carried on during the last four years by the Transvaal Indians has been watched with the closest interest and the utmost sympathy by the Indians of this Province, who have given it moral and material support.[4] The Indians of Natal have cordially shared the determination of their Transvaal brethren to offer the utmost resistance to legislation differentiating against Indians as a race,

[1] There is evidence in Gandhiji's letter of May 8, 1911 to Polak to suggest that he drafted this.

[2] An Indian merchant of Vryheid

[3] *Vide* letters to Lane, "Letter to E.F.C. Lane", 7-4-1911; 8-4-1911; 20-4-1911; 22-4-1911; 29-4-1911 and also Appendices "Lanes' Letter to Gandhiji", 11-4-1911; 21-4-1911 & 22-4-1911.

[4] In 1908, prominent Natal Indians offered satyagraha and others contributed funds to help the Transvaal campaign; *vide* "Pamphlet by Dr. Hundy", 7-9-1907; "What do do For Those Thrown Out of Employment?", 28-12-1907 and Appendix "The Asiatic Law Amendment Act", 22-3-1907

and they will await the fulfilment of the official undertaking of the Union Government to substitute for the present racial immigration law of the Transvaal a measure applying legally to all races alike, and the repeal of the Transvaal Act No. 2 of 1907, except for the preservation of the rights of minors, in the next session of the Union Parliament.

3. Your Memorialists desire respectfully to express grave apprehension, however, regarding the general Immigration Bill that they understand is to be introduced in the Union Parliament next session, as they have reason to believe that an attempt will be made to curtail the existing rights of the Natal Indian community.[1] Your Memorialists respectfully venture to urge that His Majesty's Government will most carefully watch the progress of immigration legislation in South Africa with a view to preservation of existing Indian rights, especially the rights of entry into this Province of the wives and monor children of domiciled Indians, and to receive certificates of domicile as a matter of right,[2] where claimants can prove statutory domicile to the satisfaction of the Minister. Your Memorialists respectfully remind you that the present Natal immigration laws define the duration of residence within the Province constituting domicile, but that the Union Immigration Bill that has just been withdrawn contains no definitive provision. In order, therefore, to avoid arbitrary administrative action, resulting in the unnecessary arousing of ill-feeling between the Administration and the Indian community, your Memorialists respectfully submit that the new Union Immigration Bill should define domicile, the period of residence in the Provinces of Natal and the Caps Colony, constituting statutory domicile, being, say, three years, as it is at present in this Province.

4. Your Memorialists respectfully submit further that the new education test proposed, being of an arbitrary nature, will result in the virtual exclusion of Indian immigration into this Province. This, in the humble opinion of your Memorialists, will result in great hardship to the resident Indian community, many members of which conduct important commercial transactions with business firms in India, in which special knowledge is often required. The new education test, however, designed to exclude all except a limited number of highly educated Indians of professional attainments, will prevent the resident Indian community from being able to avail itself of

[1] *Vide* "Natal Petition to Union Assembly", 9-3-1911

[2] This was eventually conceded in the Indians' Relief Act of 1914.

facilities hitherto enjoyed, and your Memorialists, therefore, respectfully request that, before the new Union Immigration Bill comes before the Union Parliment, His Majesty's Government will ask for guarantees that temporary permits, extensible from time to time, should be issued to confidential clerks and managers, in order to avoid great injury that would otherwise result to Indian commercial interests.[1] The number of such temporary permits issued may not exceed annually the number of Indian immigrants who last year passed the education test of the present Natal Acts, and your Memorialists venture respectfully to remind you that the extension of such facilities, whilst being much appreciated by the Natal Indian community, will not result in any permanent addition to the resident Indian population. Your Memorialists further note that, as stated in the Parliamentary paper issued during the last session of the Union Parliament, under the education test proposed in the defunct Bill, the number of Indians who were allowed to pass was to be about twelve.[2] As six was the number approximately conceded for the Transvaal, which carries a possible Indian population of 15,000 and a resident Indian population of not more than 8,000, twelve for the whole Union was altogether too small, regard being had to the fact that the Indian population of the Cape is not less than 15,000 and that of Natal not less than 150,000, including indentured Indians, In proportion to the numbers, there should be for the whole of the Union 72 new Indian immigrants of culture, but your Memorialists would be satisfied if it were understood that 50 British Indians of culture in any one year would be allowed to enter under any education test that might be proposed.

DEALERS' LICENSES ACT

5. This Act has proved most mischievous in its operation against British Indian merchants and traders of Natal[3] and, notwithstanding

[1] The Indians' complaint in this regard was a long-standing one; *vide* "Lord Selborne and Indians in the Transvaal", 14-10-1905; "The Nelson Cenetary: A Lesson", 28-10-1905; "Deputation to Lord Selborne", 29-11-1905; "British Indians in the Transvaal", 8-11-1906 & "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Elgin", 1-12-1906

[2] *Vide* "New Bill in Parliament", 18-3-1911.

[3] For Indian greivances against the Dealers' Licenses Act, *vide* "Indian Traders in Natal", 18-11-1899; "Last year's Stock-Taking", 7-1-1904 & "Natal Dealers' Licensees Act", 2-4-1904; "Letter to William Wedderburn", 12-4-1911 and "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Elgin", 7-11-1906; 1-12-1906 & "The Dealers' Licenses Act", 30-3-1907.

the slight amendment made partially restoring the inherent right of appeal against the decision of Licensing Oficers or Boards to the Supreme Court, [1] before any sense of security is given to them the Act will require fundamental alterations. Difficulty is constantly experienced in having trade licences transferred from place to place. The Licensing Officers take up very often an ancompromising attitude andonly recently a resolution was moved by a member of theNatal Provincial Council-designed to deprive British Indian merchants even of exiting licences.[2]

NATAL TOWNSHIPS

6. Your Memorialists invite your attention to the petition submitted to His Excellency the Governor-in-Council in this matter. Your Memorialist are not yet aware of the decision of His Excellency, but they respectfully trust that a right hitherto enjoyed by the British Indians of Natal will not be now taken away.

INDENTURED LABOUR

7. Your Memorialists take this opportunity of tendering respectful thanks of the British Indian community of Natal for the decision to stop the supply of indentured labour to Natal from India.[3] Your Memorialists welcome this decision not only because the attitude of the Europeans generally in South Africa is hostile towards legitimate Indian aspirations, but also because, in your Memorialists' humble opinion, the system of indenture is in itself inherently bad, and savours of a state bordering on slavery. Your Memorialists feel sure that most of the troubles that British Indians throughout South Africa have had to undergo have been largely due to an artificial increase in the Indian populatiion of South Africa, brought about by the introduction of this class of labour. Your Memorialists respectfully

[1] *Vide* "Natal Licensing Act", 11-12-1909

[2] On April 4, Hulett introduced a resolution in the Natal Provincial Council requisting the Union Parliament to delegate to the Council "the power of granting or withholding all trading licences in the Province". In his own words, Natal ought to have "the right to say who should trade or who should not trade", and his object was to rearm the Natal Government with powers sought to be conferred on it by the new Natal Licensing Bill ("Natal Bills", 9-5-1908 & "New Natal Bilss", 16-5-1908) which had been disallowed by the Imperial Government; *vide* "London", before 18-9-1909.

[3] *Vide* "The Indian Council and Indentured Labour", 5-3-1910 & "A Momentous Decision", 7-1-1911

submit that the tax of £3 per year which is exacted from those who have finished their indentures, whether they be males or females, and even their children, is a cruel and tyrannical imposition; and now that the supply of indentured labour from India is to be stopped, there would appear to be no justification whatsoever for the existence of this imposition. Under it men have been persecuted, women's chastity has been at stake, and Indian youths have had their lives blasted. This is a tax which, in the humble opinion of your Memorialists, requires total abolition in the interests alike of humanity and the British Empire. Your Memorialists here desire to remark that the relief that was supposed to be granted by a slight amendment of the Act imposing the tax, in connection with women, has almost entirely failed in its purpose.

CONCLUSION

8. In conclussion, your Memorialists respectfully pray that His Majesty's Government will give that consideration to the matters hereinbefore referred to that they deserve, and that the status of British Indians under the Union will be placed on a just, equitable and satisfactory footing, consistently with the declarations made from time to time by His Majesty's Ministers regarding equality of treatment irrespective of race, colour or creed.

DAWAD MAHOMED
DADA OSMAN
MAHOMED CASSIM ANGLIA

Indian Opinion, 20-5-1911

418. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Vaisakh Vad 2 [*May 15, 1911*][1]

CHI. MAGAN LAL,

Herewith Chhaganlal's letters. Many persons have been agistated in their minds by the Harilal episode.[2] I can well understand the varied feelings surging within you. Please consider this: If

[1] It was in 1911 that Harilal left his father's home, returned after a trip to Delagoa Bay, and left again after discussing the matter with his father—this time for India. In that year, *Vaisakh Vad* 2 corresponds to May 15.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Pranjivan Mehta", 8-5-1911 and "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 18-5-1911.

Harilal's or Manilal's[1] or Ba's[2] being unhappy with you, or their bitter words, make you think of leaving, you will be behaving as one separate from us and I shall find it difficult to do my duty to them and to you. Suppose you feel that Khushalbhai[3] is better disposed towards Chhaganlal, or suppose he is so in fact, should you leave for that reason? Alternatively, if appears that he is better disposed towards you, must leave then and injure Chhaganlal?

If you decide on leaving, Harilal's and Manilal's best interests cannot but suffer. We are engaged in a mighty task. We are seeking the ultimate Truth. I do not claim that we aim at discovering somthing entirely new. We are only experimenting in the manner of living appropriate for one who aspires to realize such knowledge in his own being. We wish to clear away the layers of earth deposited by the white ants over the years. In the process, we are bound to come up against difficulties. God will assuredly remove them all, our intentions being good. Your duty, at this juncture, is to observe what happens, unconcerned. The responsibility is entirely mine. I alone will be to blame for any false step of mine. It is possible that it may put you in danger for a time. But the fruits of my error will be for me alone to taste. It can do you no harm if you go on doing your duty, placing your faith in me.

Harilal returned this morning. I have always believed that he will never take a step which he knows to be wrong. Now I believe that all the more. I am waiting to see what he does next.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W.5085. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] Gandhiji's second son.

[2] Kasturbai Gandhi (1869-1944); tought as a volunteer in a primary school in Indian plantations around Champaran; went to jail several times as a satyagrahi, once in South Africa and, later, twice in India. In his reference to her, Gandhiji speaks of her as a spirited and courageous person;for touching incidents in their married life as narrated by Gandhiji, *vide An Autobiography*, Part I, Ch. IV & Part IV Ch. X.

[3] Gandhiji's cousin and father of Chhaganlal and Maganlal Gandhi. Gandhiji wrote to him occasionally; *vide*, for example, "Letter to Meghjibhai Gandhi and Khushalchand Gandhi", 14-5-1908

419. LETTER TO ACTING PRIVATE SECRETARY TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR

[JOHANNESBURG,][1]
May 18, 1911

THE ACTING PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR

DEAR SIR,

With reference to the provisional settlement of the Asiatic difficulty, will you please place the following before General Smuts?

Pending General Smuts' reply to my letter[2] of the 29th ultimo, passive resisters have to remain in a state of suspense. They have not resumed their ordinary occupations[s]. Mr. Joseph Royeppen is still in Johannesburg awaiting General Smuts' reply, and other passive resisters are similarly vegetating. Those who have purposely remained out of work still continue in the same state. As General Smuts is aware, passive resistance prisoners still remain in gaol altghough virtually the settlement has gone through.

Moreover, friends in London and India have not yet been informed of the settlement being actully completed. And, in view of the approaching Imperial Conference, we here are anxious to give definite information to the friends in England. May I, therefore, request an early reply to my letter? Could you please telephone tomorrow some definite information?

I remain,
Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

From *Indian Opinion*, 27-5-1911; also photostat of draft in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 5532.

[1] As is evident from the last sentence of the letter, Gandhiji was in Johannesburg at the time.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 29-4-1911. The Acting Secretary of the Interior sent two replies to this letter of Gandhiji's as well as to a subsequent communication dated May 4 ("Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 4-5-1911) first a long letter dated May 19, followed by a telegram on May 20; *vide* Appendices "E. M. Gorges' Letter to Gandhiji", 19-5-1911 & "Telegram to Gandhiji from Secretary for interior", 20-5-1911.

420. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Vaisakh Vad 5 [*May 18, 1911*][1]

CHI. MAGAN LAL,

I have sent Thakar[2] your letter about him. This happens because your minds are estranged. We know that Thakar is by nature suspicious.

Gulliver's Travels contains so effective a condemnation, in an ironic vein, of modern civilization that the book deserves to be read again and again. It is a very well-known book in the English language. Children can read it with enjoyment, so simple it is; and the wise ones get dizzy trying to comprehend its hidden significance. In Brobdingnag, Gulliver tumbled as low as he had risen high in Lilliput. Even in Lilliput, he has respresented the tiny people as possessing a few powers which were superior to his own, that is to say, to those of normal people.

You should now read Carpenter's *Civilization: Its Cause and Cure*; I shall send it tomorrow. Admittedly, Chhaganlal experienced, some difficulty owing to his inadequate knowledge of English. Even so, if we know the subject on which we wish to write or speak, we usually find the words. The deficiency in your knowledge of English will never be made good without a visit to England. I see that even the short stay in England has done Chhaganlal a lot of good. He was, moreover, trouble by an illness, so that he had to face further difficulties. The experience he gained will be very useful. I expect to be there now in no more than a few days. I am planning to leave in the beginning of June. I shall be able to let you know more positively if I get Smuts' reply. It is expected any day.

It is just as well that Harilal has left. He was much unsettled in mind. He has assured me that he does not in the least resent the the arrangement I had made regarding Phoenix.[3] He bears no ill will towards any of you. He was angry with me, really, He gave vent to all his pent-up feelings on Monday evening. He feels that I have kept all the four boys very much suppressed, that I did not

[1] It was in 1911 that Harilal, referred to in this letter, left his father's home in the Transvaal and sailed for India. In that year *Vaisakh Vad* 5 corresponds to May 18.

[2] A worker in the press at Phoenix.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to A. E. Chotabhai", 4-5-1911

respect their wishes at any time, that I have treated them as of no account, and that I have often been hard-hearted. He made this charge against me with the utmost courtesy and seemed very hesitant as he did so. In this, he had no thought of money at all in his mind. It was all about my general behaviour. Unlike other fathers, I have not admired my sons or done anything specialy for them, but always put them and Ba last; such was the charge. He seemd to me to have calmed down after this outburst. I pointed out his error in believing what he did. He saw it partly. What remains, he will correct only when he thinks further. He has now left with a calm mind. He is resolved to lean more about those things on account of which I was displeased [with him]. He is strongly inclined to study Sanskrit. Thinking that, since Gujarati is our langauge, his education should for the most part be in Gujarat, I have advised Harilal to stay in Ahmedabad. I believe that is what he will do. However, I have left him free. I feel it will all turn out well.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5087. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

421. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Monday [After *May 18, 1911*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I send you Chi, Chhaganlal's letter, etc. Dr. Mehta also sent me a copy of what he (Chhaganlal) had written. You need not be sorry because you do not have a good knowledge of English. It is not our

[1] Mrs. Vogl's Indian Bazaar mentioned in the postscript was held once in 1910 and again in 1911, but from the reference to Harilal Gandhi, who finally left his father's home for India between May 15 and May 18, 1911, (letters to Maganlal Gandhi, 15-5-1911; 18-5-1911) it is clear that the letter was writtern in 1911. The Thakar incident and Maganlal's projected visit to England are both discussed in this letter as well as in the preceding item. The sequence of events would suggest that this letter was written later. In the May 18 letter Maganlal Gandhi's knowledge of the English language is discused in the context of some remark which Chhaganlal Gandhi appears to have made, and Maganlal Gandhi had evidently brought up the subject. In this letter, Gandhiji has heard more of this from Dr. Pranjivan Mehta to whom Chhaganal Gandhi evidently addressed this remark.

language. We may try to express our ideas in that language as best as we can. This is just for your consolation, not to suggest that one should not try to be proficient in it, It is to get that proficiency and the experience of the life there that you have to go to England. Apart from this there is nothing else to be gained [by a visit to England]. We shall fix up your going as soon as you are ready.

I do not write more about Harilal as you will know everything from my letter[1] to Manilal. What does Harilal Thakar say in the enclosed letter?

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Please remember that Santok[2] and Ani[3] have to sew something and send it for Mrs.Vogl's[4] Bazaar[5] .

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5090. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

422. LETTER TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR[6]

JOHANNESBURG,
May 19, 1911

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter[7] of even date.

With reference to paragraph "C" thereof if you will re-read my letter[8] of the 4th instant, you will see that the qualifications of the 180 Asiatic passive resisters therein mentioned are not restricted

[1] Not available

[2] Wife of Maganlal Gandhi

[3] Wife of Purshottamdas Desai

[4] Wife of Vogl, a draper. The Vogis sympathized with the Indian cause and Mrs. Vogl took a keen interest in Indian women, conducting classes for them; *vide* "Letter to the Vogls", 1-2-1908.

[5] Opened on November 15, 1911, by William Hosken

[6] The reply to this letter was sent by telegram as requested by Gandhiji; *vide* Appendix "Telegram to Gandhiji from Secretary for interior", 20-5-1911

[7] *Vide* Appendix, "E. M. Gorges' Letter to Gandhiji", 19-5-1911

[8] *Vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 4-5-1911

as you have restricted them in said paragraph. The number (180) included in addition to the class you mention those[1] who never were able to apply under the voluntary system or any of the Asistic laws. The community will feel grateful for the concession regarding 3 educated Mahomedans.

The absence of any disclamer in your letter of the interpretation of the provisional settlement as set forth in my letter[2] of the 29th ultimo, I construe to be an endorsement thereof by the Hon. the Minister.

There never has been any request for the release of those who may have been convicted of having, or of having used, forged certificates. Such people have never been claimed as passive resisters.

As the Association has to advise, by cable, freinds in England and India as to the situation, may I request a telegraphic reply on receipt hereof?

I have, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From Indian Opinion, 27-5-1911; also photostat of draft in Ritch's hand with emendations by Gandhiji: S.N.5534.

423. LETTER TO G.K.GOKHALE

JOHANNESBURG,
May 19, 1911

DEAR PROFESSOR GOKHALE,

I do not know indeed whether, after your cablegram inquiring about the now defunct Immigration Bill, you expected me to write to you regularly. I have always refrained from inflicting letters

[1] This, as is clear from the reply (Appendix, "Telegram to Gandhiji from Secretary Interior", 20-5-1911) to the letters, refers to those who had acquired domiciliary rights in the Transvaal by virtue of three years' residence before the Boer War. These rights constituted an important issue in the 1908 campaign, These were fervently insisted on by Indians and eventually conceded by Smuts; *vide* "Letter to General Smuts", 13-6-1908; "Letter to the Press", 22-6-1908; "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 6-6-1908; "Letter to A. Cartwright", 14-7-1908 & "Letter to A. Cartwright", 27-7-1908.

[2] The draft (S.N.5534) from Gandhiji's file, our other source for this letter, has "4th instant". This date, as a note in the margin indicates, was subsequently corrected over the telephone to "29th ultimo"; *vide* Appendix, "Telegram to Gandhiji from Secretary for interior", 20-5-1911.

on you, being personally aware of the many other calls upon your time. Mr. Polak brought my knowledge up to date by telling me that, when he last saw you, you were, if possible, much busier than you used to be when I had the provilege of staying with you in Calcutta.[1] But I feel that it is necessary for me to give you a review of the situation here, at periodic intervals. Whilst I naturally consider that without passive resistance during the four years nothing whatsover could have been done, I am quite certain that the efforts made by the public in India under your guidance and Mr. Polak's wonderful work there and Mr. Ritch's in England have very materially hastened the end of our troubles; but we have to fight such a stubborn enemy, that ceaseless watchfulness is absolutely necessary. I am not unaware of the fact that the gaining of theoretical equality in the immigrartion legislation will not have visibly altered for the better our material condition here; but the struggle has knit us together in a wonderful manner, and it has undoubtedly secured for us an honourable hearing. The community has gained confidence in itself. We are, therefore, only now free to devote our attention to the existing local legal disabilities affecting not so much our honour as a nation but the material position of the settlers themselves. For instance, the prohibition to own landed property in the Transvaal must be removed; the disabilitgy as to using tram-cars is too galling to be tolerated for any length of time; the diabolical attempt being made through the operation of the obscure section[2] in the recently passed Gold Law of the Transvaal must be frustrated at any cost if the Indian traders are to be left undisturbed in possession of their premises and their business. So much for the Transvaal. In Natal, the inhuman annual tax exacted from freed indentured Indians, their wives, and their little children, male and female, is a burden that cannot but oppress the concience of every Indian who has any knowledge of the tax. The Dealers' Licenses Act of Natal, in spite of the slight amendment made in irt recently, is like a cloud threatening to burst upon the community at any moment. And, at the Cape, similar statute threatens the existence

[1] Gandhiji stayed with Gokhale in 1901 in Calcutta.

[2] Section 130 under which Europeans were forbidden to sublet Stands to Coloured persons in proclaimed areas. In his representation to the Transvaal Government in 1908 ("Letter to Colonial Secretary", Before 25-4-1908 & "Petition to Transvaal Legislative Assembly", 15-6-1908) against the draft Bill, Gandhiji had not foreseen any difficulties under this clause and was concerned with provisions affecting Asiatics more directly.

of Indian traders; and a clause in its immigration law makes the right of domicile possessed by Indian settlers a mockery by compeling them, in the event of their absence from the Cape, to carry a permit which is really a document giving leave of absence whose breach would cancel the right of domicile. It will be too much to expect you to read thememorials[1] submitted or being submitted to the Secretary of State for the Colonies in these matters, but perhaps you will ask one of your workers to study them, and then take what steps you may consider necessary. These will be found in *Indian Opinion*.

About the beginning of November, Mr. and Mrs. Polak will be in India, when, of course, Mr. Polak will be able to give you all the assistance you will need. Whilst there is little doubt that the Provisional Settlement will go through, we are yet awaiting a final reply from General Smuts. All the passive resisters are being warned to keep themselves in readiness, in the event of General Smuts' promise not being fulfilled next year. Tolstoy Farm is, therefore, still being continued, but every effort is being made to use the passive resistance funds most sparingly. I am preparing an account to the end of April of disbursements, which I shall embody in a public letter to Mr. Ratan Tata[2], reviewing the position. The expenses of Mr Polak's tour are being raised locally.

Hoping that you are keping well,

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten original: G.N. 3802

424. LETTER TO KNOX

[JOHANNESBURG,]
May 19, 1911

DEAR MR. KNOX[3],

I must apologize to you for not sending you the article in *Indian Opinion* you wanted. The same week that you telephoned, I had the file of *Indian Opinion* searched, but the article could not be

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Secretary of State for Colonies", 1-5-1911 and "Memorial to Secreatry of State for Colonies", 15-5--1911.

[2] Gandhiji did this on April 1, 1912.

[3] A European sympathizer of the Indian cause in South Africa

traced. As I do not possess an up-to-date index, it is somewhat difficult to trace it. I endeavoured to get you on the telephone but without success. Since then the matter has escaped me. I have now your reminder. During the two days that Mr. Polak was here on his way to London, I asked him whether he remembered the date on which the appreciation was published. He gave me an approximate date which, however, did not prove correct, but he also told me that perhaps the enclosed might suit your purpose. It belongs to Mr. Kallenbach. After use, will you kindly return it to me?

Yours sincerely,

[M. K. GANDHI]

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5535

425. A WORTHY OBJECT

We draw the attention of our readers to the brief report in our Transvaal Notes of a meeting[1] of the Hamidia Islamic Society with reference to the proposal to raise funds for supporting the project for erecting a mosque in London and for a Mahomedan University at Aligarh. We need hardly state that both the projects are laudable. The erection of a mosque in London would be but a tardy performance of a sacred duty, and the establishment of a University at Aligarh, if properly conducted, can only advance the cause of unity between the two great sections of the population of India.

Indian Opinion, 20-5-1911

426. A LICENSING SCANDAL

We reproduced in our issue of the 6th instant the report of the licensing appeal heard before the Durban Town Council on behalf of the Natal Indian Traders, Ltd.[2] Our readers are aware

[1] Held on May 14, 1911

[2] Messers Natal Indian Traders, Ltd., had appealed to the Durban Town Council against the Licensing Officer's refusal to transfer D. K. Patel's trading licence in their favour. The Licensing Officer justified his decision on grounds of expediency and Whites' right of self-preservation in the face of Asiatic competion in trade. He argued that while, in consequense, a partnership concern would have perpetual right of succession, a licence issued to an individual terminated at his demise or retiral. The Council upheld the Licensing Officer's decision. *Indian Opinion*, 6-5-1911.

that this Company is a joint-stock business, and is composed very largely of Colonial-born Indians. It is an attempt for the first time made by this body of specially deserving men, to whom Natal is the only home and India exists in the imagination as a place from which their parents came. This Company has a nominal capital of £6,000, and has over 480 registered shareholders. We do not know what future awaits this new corporation, though, if we may state a truism, its future will largely depend upon the corporate ability, energy and above all, interest shown by the members. Anyhow, its effort to make of itself a success has been checked in so far as it can be by the Licensing Officer for the Borough of Durban. He has declined to transfer an *existing* licence in favour of the Company. There is here no question of adding to the number of already existing licences held by British Indians. The reasons given for his refusal are so preposterous, arbitrary, unjust and heartless that they will bear repetition in this column, although they also appeared in the report we have referred to. The Licensing Officer states:

> In my opinion it would be unwise to transfer an existing licence to a large partnership concern which will not determine, as any privately owned business does with the death or retiral of the principal—this Traders Company will apparently have perpetual right of succession—as members can come and go—most of them appear to have a very small holding in the concern.

What a Licensing Officer could have to say against a perpetual right of succession we fail to see, but, of course, Mr. Molyneux, the Officer in question, is here referring to Indian businesses only, which he has assumed it to be his duty to curtail as much as and whenever he can. He has enunciated also the principle that all Indian businesses must end with the death or retiral of the present owners, thus contemplating a forced sale of such businesses and a consequent heavy loss. In his speech before the Council—by the way, an extraordinary procedure to be adopted by Licensing Officers, to take up a partisan standpoint and to be allowed to speak in defence thereof—Mr. Molyneux sought to justify his despotic action as fair on the ground of self-preservation, that is, of the Europeans residing in the Borough of Durban. Whatever that much misunderstood doctrine may mean, the Licensing Officer has in this instance entirely ignored the fact that, after all, this Company's business is largely connected with Indian custom. I can only hope that the 480 members of this Company will not take lying down this attempt to throttle it on the

threshold of its career, and that every member of it will resent it not only as a cowardly assault upon his personal rights, but also upon his honour as a British citizen within the Union.

Indian Opinion, 20-5-1911

427. LETTER TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR[1]

May 20, 1911

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your telegram of even date in reply to my letter[2] of the 19th instant. I beg to express my thanks for the promptness with which my request for a telegraphic reply was met and for the evident frankness thereof . . .

I am authorized by the Association to signify acceptance of the provisional settlement and, in doing so, to add that the correspondence subsequent to the letters exchanged between Mr. Lane and myself of the 22nd April last is to be taken as not in any way abating the proposals set forth in my said letter[3].

The list of those who will be intitled to relief under the settlement is being prepared and will be sent at an early date.

The following are the names of the passive resisters still undergoing imprisonment: C.F.J. Frank, Lee Kong, Luk Nan Dickson, Ho Loaw, Sam You, Chong Ah Kie, Wo Kim Ah Wy, Ismail Essack and Louis Benjamin. They are either at the Fort or at Diepkloof. I shall thank you to let me know the dates when they will be discharged so that arrangements may be made for their conveyance.

I venture to submit herewith a form of authorization[4] for the educated passive resisters. You will notice that each applicant has written his own application. An official endorsment at the foot thereof

[1] In his reply (S.N. 5539) dated May 22, 1911, the Acting Secretary for the Interior said that the Minister "was in communication with the Minister of Justice with the object of procuring the immediate release of Asiatics named on the list furnished in your letter as corrected by your telephone message in respect of Wo Kim and Ah Wy". He added, "It is understood of course that all Asiatics who have destroyed their registration certificates will not apply for the required duplicates."

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Minister of Interior", 19-5-1911.

[3] *ibid*

[4] Not available

will be sufficient cover for the holder. If necessary, duplicate of the application in the applicant's handwriting may be filed with the Department.

In conclusion, I am to convey to the Hon'ble the Minister the thanks of the Association for the conciliatory manner in which he has met the question, and to express the hope that there never will be any cause for a revival of the struggle which has cost the Asiatic communities so much.

I have, etc.,

[M. K. GANDHI]

From *Indian Opinion*, 27-5-1911; also photostat of handwritten draft: S. N. 5538

428. STATEMENT FOR PROPOSED DEPUTATION

[After *May 20, 1911*][1]

THE STATMENT OF THE BRITISH INDIAN DEPUTATION TO GENERAL SMUTS

The Deputation welcome the Provisional Settlement of the vexed British Indian question as set forth in correspondence[2] between General Smuts and Mr. Gandhi, and tender their thanks to General Smuts for his generous and conciliatory attitude.

[1] This statement deals with those Indians whose pre-war residence in the Transvaal amounted to less than three years. Their case had not been taken up during the negotiations of April, 1911, and does not figure in the demands conceded by the Minister of the Interior in his communications to Gandhiji of May 19, 1911 and May 20, 1911; *vide* Appendices V & VI. Special pleading was conceivably neccessary in their case, and any deputation for this purpose must have been proposed after May 20. We have, however, no evidence that Gandhiji or any official of the BIA sought an interview with Smuts or that an Indian deputation met him. As this document was found among Gandhiji's papers and as he himself personally conducted the negotiations on behalf of the Indians, it is reasonable to suppose that he drafted this.

[2] For letters by Gandhiji to the Minister of the Interior, *vide* "Letter to E.F.C. Lane", 7-4-1911; "Telegram to Johannesburg Office", 7-4-1911; "Letter to General Smuts", 19-4-1911; "Letter to E.F.C. Lane", 20-4-1911; 22-4-1911; 29-4-1911; 4-5-1911; "Letter to Acting Private Secretary to Minister of Interior", 18-5-1911; "Letter to Minister of Interior", 19-5-1911 and the preceding item and for comunications from the latter, *vide* Appendices, "Lane's Letter to Gandhiji", 11-4-1911; 21-4-1911; 22-4-1911; "E.M. Gorges' Letter to Gandhiji", 19-5-1911; "Telegram to Gandhiji from Secretary for Interior", 20-5-1911.

The Deputation would, however, respectfully draw General Smuts' attention to the following:

(1) Whilst the Deputation are glad that educated passive resisters at present in the Transvaal but not registrable under the Act to the number of six or seven are to be allowed to remain in this Province as permanent residents,[1] it is felt that similar facility should be given to certain educated Indians who may be required as confidential clerks or assistants. In the opinion of the Deputation, this is a crying necessity. Only the other day, a respectable merchant, Mr. Ameer Saheb, was refused permission, pending his absence owing to sickness, to bring in an assistant who was needed for his business.

(2) The Asiatic Act of 1908 enables only those who prove three years' pre-war residence to re-enter the Transvaal. Now that the Government have been pleased to enable pre-war resident passive resisters who can prove three years' pre-war residence to exercise their rights under Act 36, in spite of their having failed to apply within the statutory period,[2] the Deputation request that the claims of those who have lived in the Transvaal before the war for less than three years but who left owing to the outbreak of hostilities may be recognized. This will be an act of justice which will be much appreciated.

From a photostat of the typewritten draft: S. N. 5557

[1] *Vide* Gandhiji's letters to Lane, dated 22nd and 29th April, 1911, "Letter to Minister of Interior", 19-5-1911 and Appendices "Lane's letter to Gandhiji", 22-4-1911; E.M. Gorges' Letter to Gandhiji", 19-5-1911.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 29-4-1911; "Letter to Minister of Interior", 19-5-1911 and Appendix, "Telegram to Gandhiji from secretary for interior", 20-5-1911.

429. NOTICE TO PASSIVE RESISTERS[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
May 22, 1911

The following passive resisters are earnestly requested to send in their names immediately to the Honorary Secretary, Box 6522, Johannesburg:

(a) Those who are pre-war Transvaal residents of 3 years' standing but who have been unable to obtain their registration certificates owing to passive resistance;

(b) Those who are otherwise entitled to registration but have not been registered owing to passive resistance;

Under the Provisional Settlement arrived at with the Government, such persons will be permitted by the Government notwithstanding the lapse of the statutory period of their deportation, to apply to the Registrar of Asiatics for registration, if the application is sent before the 31st December next.[2]

Those who have at all applied for registration under the Act 36 of 1908 or Act 2 of 1907 during the struggle, and whose applications have been rejected, are requested *not* to send their names.

Those who know passive resisters of the classes above named in India should at once write to their friends advising them to take steps to secure registration before the 31st December next.

Persons sending in their names should send (a) their full names; (b) period of pre-war residence or such other claim; (c) proof of their passive resistance, such as discharge certificates or other proof that they have been passive resisters; (d) all documentary or other evidence in support of their claims; (e) those who applied voluntarily in 1908 should send particulars.

These applications will be framed whenever possible and

[1] This was presumably drafted by Gandhiji.

[2] The settlement as accepted by the Government is set forth in Appindices, "E. M. Gorges' Letter to Gandhiji", 19-5-1911 & "Telegram to Gandhiji from Secretary for interior", 20-5-1911. Gandhiji's demands on behalf of the Indians are contained in his letters to Lane, "Letter to E.F.C. Lane", 22-4-1911; 22-4-1911 and 4-5-1911.

forwarded to the Registrar free of charge by the Association. Each applicant will have himself to prosecute his application at his own expense during the subsequent stages if such become necessary. Applicants will have the ordinary right of appeal against the Registrar's decisions.

A. M. CACHALIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 27-5-1911

430. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

May 22, 1911

MY DEAR HENRY,

I cannot write to you at length as there is no time. Final letters have been exchanged and now we must trust to the future to take care of itself. I sent you a cable on Friday night as General Smuts' reply was not quite satisfactory. I did not want you to commit yourself to Reuter. I am presently sending a cable now. I have just heard that Natal has sent you its authority.

I take it that you will show Maud all the papers I send you.

More next week.

With love,

Yours sincerely,
BHAI

From the original : Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy : National Archives of India

431. INTERVIEW TO REUTER

JOHANNESBURG,
May 23, 1911

Mr. Gandhi, interviewed by Reuter's representative, stated that the settlement[1] contemplated the introduction next session of legislation repealing

[1] The Provisional Settlement as set out in "Letter to Minister of Interior", 19-5-1911; "At Last !", 27-5-1911 and Appendices, "E. M. Gorges' Letter to Gandhiji", 19-5-1911 & "Telegram to Gandhiji from Secretary for Interior", 20-5-1911.

the Asiatic Act of 1907 and restoring legal equality as regards immigration. As a set-off to the suspension of the passive resistance the Government recognizes the right of the passive resisters, numbering ten, to enter the Transvaal by virtue of their education,[1] and reinstates the passive resisters[2] who formerly had rights of residence, the Government also releasing the imprisoned passive resisters immediately and pardoning Mrs. Sodha.

The Times of India, 25-5-1911

432. LETTER TO REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS[3]

May 26, 1911

THE REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS
PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to enclose herewith list[4] of 38 Chinese who, in terms of the settlement or otherwise legally, are entitled to make applications for registration. It will be observed that there are only 26 names that fall under class C in the letter[5] of the 19th instant of the Department of the Interior.

There are 11 who are holders of Peace Preservation Permits, and one is a lad who has only just reached the age of 16, and who is here with his father.

[1] *Vide* Appendices, "Lane's Letter to Gandhiji", 22-4-1911; "E. M. Gorges' Letter to Gandhiji", 19-5-1911 & "Telegram to Gandhiji from Secretary for Interior", 20-5-1911.

[2] The 30 Indians who were either deported or left for India during the satyagraha campaign of 1908 as also others who applied for voluntary registration and whose applications had been turned down ("Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 4-5-1911). The latter were accorded the right to appeal to courts of law.

[3] This was almost certainly drafted by Gandhiji. This letter, along with another draft dated August 21, 1911 ("Letter to Registrar of Asiatics", 21-8-1911) on the same subject which is addressed to the Registrar of Asiatics and is, moreover, in Gandhiji's hand, was found among his papers but we have no evidence that they were sent; they were not published in *Indian Opinion* as such letters usually were. In his letter of May 19, 1911 (Appendix, "E. M. Gorges' letter to Gandhiji", 19-5-1911), the Minister of the Interior had asked that the list referred to here be sent to him early. In fact, it seems reasonable to assume that the letters bearing on the Provisional Settlement and on larger issues concerning Act 2 of 1907 or Act 36 of 1908 were drafted by Gandhiji.

[4] Not available

[5] *Vide* "E.M. Gorges' Letter to Gandhiji", 19-5-1911.

Of the 26 referred to in the list, 2 are in Delagoa Bay.

As for the 3 Mahomedans[1] who are to receive certificates, I am authorized to submit the following names: Mr. Kajee Kalumia Dadamia, Mr. Ismail Essop and Mr. Rasool Sarfudeen. With the exception of the last named, the other two have not received English education. The first named is an Urdu scholar and both the first and the second named are passive resisters, but probably are nto strictly per-war residents of three years' standing, though they are both pre-war residents of the Transvaal. Mr. Sarfudeen will hold a certificate the same as Mr. Royeppen and others.

I shall thank you to let me know when the persons herein described will be able to make their applications. I take it that you will be good enough to afford facility for making application at Johannesburg. Will you please give me two days' notice, so that the men may be got ready in time.

May I ask you to facilitate the discharge of passive resistance prisoners, two of whom were released today by eff[ect] to time. I need hardly assure you that there is no desire to hold a demonstration of any sort on their discharge.

I have, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten draft: S. N. 5541

433. FOR PASSIVE RESISTERS

We draw the attention of our readers to Mr. Cachalia's notice[2] regarding those passive resisters whose right of residence in the Transvaal may have been forfeited by reason only of their passive resistance. Time is of the essence in this matter. We trust, therefore, that those who are affected by the notice will lose no time in complying with its request. We hope, too, that those who have applied under the Asiatic Acts, but have been rejected, will *not* send in their names.

Indian Opinion, 27-5-1911

[1] *Vide* "E.M. Gorges' Letter to Gandhiji", 19-5-1911.
[2] *Vide* "Notice to Passive Resisters", 22-5-1911.

434. AT LAST !

A provisional settlement of the Asiatic trouble in the Transvaal has at last been reached, and the Indians and Chinese of the Transvaal are free to resume their ordinary occupations, at least for eight months. The correspondence[1] between the Minister of the Interior and Mr. Gandhi shows that every precaution has been taken to see that the parties understand each other and to leave no room for a misunderstanding. And yet a lay reader will understand from it very little of the settlement. To fairly grasp the many points discussed in it a knowledge of the Asiatic laws is indispensable, though, happily, no such detailed knowledge is necessary in order to know what the settlement really consists in. It is necessary to recall that, in the statement made by the Indian deputation that went to London in 1909, but two things were stated to be essential for satisfying passive resisters, namely: (1) Repeal of Asiatic Act 2 of 1907 and (2) legal equality for immigrants to the Transvaal, it being understood that there might be differential administrative treatment in the operation of such immigration law, subject, however, to the guarantee that at least six educated Asiatics in any one year should be able to immigrate to the Transvaal under any test that might be provided in the law.[2]

It was stated on behalf of the community that those who were actually fighting would, if required, forgo their individual rights and cease passive resistance if only the above demands were granted. Messrs Sorabji and others who entered the Transvaal as educated Indians[3] would have retired without claiming any rights for them selves, Those who, owing to the revival of the struggle, could not be registered, would have quietly forfeited their rights and, of course,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E.F.C. Lane", 22-4-1911; 29-4-1911; 4-5-1911; "Letter to Minister of Interior", 19-5-1911 & 20-5-1911 and Appendices, "Lane's letter to Gandhiji", 11-4-1911; 21-4-1911; 22-4-1911; "E.M. Gorges' Letter to Gandhiji", 19-5-1911 & "Telegram to Gandhiji from Secretary for Interior", 20-5-1911.

[2] *Vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909

[3] Sorabji entered the Transvaal to test educated Indians' right of entry and was tried three times; *vide* "Trial of Sorabji Shapurji—I", 8-7-1908; Trial of Sorabji Shapurji—II", 10-7-1908 & Trial of Sorabji Shapurji—III", 20-7-1908.

their means of livelihood.[1] This declaration was made in order to show to the world how entirely impersonal the struggle was and how it was being maintained solely for an ideal—to wit, national honour. In the result, the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth : "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all else will be added unto you"[2] has perhaps never been better verified than in this settlement. General Smuts was at one time reputed to desire to fling the demands of the community contemptuously back in their faces. In that event, the sacrifice above referred to would have been needed. But God willed otherwise. General Smuts reconsidered his position and eventually accepted the co-operation of the passive resisters. He could not carry his legislation during the last Parliament and yet, owing evidently to the Imperial Conference and the approaching Coronation, desired cessation of passive resistance.[3] The passive resisters then offered to suspend their operations if General Smuts undertook to grant their cardinal demands and to pass them into law next session of Parliament and further promised not to penalize passive resisters for their passive resistance.[4] The correspondence[5] we publish is, as will be seen, largely taken up with what may be termed the non-essential and ephemeral part of the settlement. Whatever intricacy there may be regarding this

[1] On February 10, 1908, voluntary registarion of Indians commenced after Smuts and the Indians had arrived at a compromise; *vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 28-1-1908 & "Interview to "The Transvaal Leader", 30-1-1908. The Indians later claimed that Smuts had failed to implement the compromise and decided on May 30 to resume satyagraha; *vide* "Letter to "Indian Opinion", 30-5-1908. Out of the total Indian population in the Transvaal estimated variously at 13,000, reckoning by the number of permits issued ("Interview to the Tribune", 20-10-1906), and "Letter to The Star", 4-7-1908), at 10, 000 by the census ("Interview to the Tribune", 20-10-1906), at 9,000 by Gandhiji ("Letter to The Star", 4-7-1908), 8, 700 had applied for voluntary registration by May 9, 1908. The reference here is to those who could not, for one reason or another, register before May 9, the last date set for voluntary registration.

[2] "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." *St. Matthew*, Ch. VI, *v*. 33.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to L.W. Rich", 21-4-1911 and Appendix "Lane's Letter to Gandhiji", 21-4-1911

[4] *Vide* "Gandhiji's letters to Lane", 22-4-1911 & "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 29-4-1911 and Appendix, "Lane's Letter to Gandhiji", 22-4-1911

[5] This was published in *Indian Opinion*, 27-5-1911, under the heading, "The Settlement Completed: Final Correspondence between the Minister and Mr. Gandhi".

part of the settlement, there is none as to its main part, viz, the repeal of Law 2 of 1907 and amendment of the present Transvaal immigration law.

But will the promise be redeemed? This question has been asked from many quarters. Ordinarily there can be no doubt about it. General Smuts as a responsible Minister with a Parliamentary majority behind him has bound his Government to introduce the necessary legislation.[1] If the Parliament does not accept it, it will amount to a vote of no-confidence entailing the resignation of the Ministry of which he is perhaps the most important member. But we are free to admit that General Smuts will not take any such heroic steps over an Asiatic question. Nevertheless the remote contingency of the Parliament rejecting his measure could not be allowed to stand in the way of our accepting the olive branch. Our quarrel hitherto was with General Smuts. He was the stumbling-block in the way of our reaching the goal. He has now softened his heart and is pledged to concede what only a few months ago he declared he would on no account give. Such being the case passive resisters properly decided upon a cessation of their activity.[2] This puts General Smuts upon his honour. The same stubborn, calm and dignified resistance that was offered to General Smuts could next year with equal certainty of success be offered, if need be, to the mighty Union Parliament. Passive resistance is a force which is effective against the mightiest opposition even as light is against the deepest darkness. Those, therefore, who express misgivings for the future either do not understand passive resistance or donot believe in the sincerity or the strength of the Transvaal passive resisters.

But if the legislature ratifies General Smuts' promise, will passive resistance end for ever? The Union Government in general and Smuts in particular, as being the Minister in charge of the Asiatic department, can alone answer the question. General Smuts' pledge being redeemed, passive resistance will undoubtedly cease on the question that gave rise to it. If, however, some new anti-Asiatic legislation equally offensive is introduced striking at the honour or the existence of the community, it may be affirmed with reasonable certainty that South Africa will witness fresh passive resistance. The

[1] *Vide* Appendix, "Lane's Letter to Gandhiji", 22-4-1911

[2] At the British Indian Association meeting of April 27, 1977; *vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane ", 29-4-1911 and "Transvaal Notes", 2-5-1911.

British Indian Association has rightly acknowledged and appreciated the conciliatory manner in which General Smuts has at last approached the question. If, then, he has reconsidered his attitude towards Asiatics and the statement alleged to have been made by him that he will not rest until he has driven out the last Asiatic from South Africa, and wishes to apply the same spirit of conciliation that he has applied (though somewhat late in the day) to the demands of the passive resisters, there need never be any fear of a recrudescence of Asiatic passive resistance in South Africa.

Indian Opinion, 27-5-1911

435. FOR SATYAGRAHIS

We draw the attention of every satyagrahi to the notice[1] issued over Mr. Cachalia's signature. It is essential that satyagrahis whose rights were earlier forfeited, but have been secured under the settlement, should send the required information to the Association immediately. If any of them are in India, they should also be informed. We advise those who applied under, and submitted to,the Obnoxious Act[2] or Act 36[3] while the struggle was in progress, not to send in their names. If any Indian conceals the fact of his having so applied and sends in his name regardless, he will only invite contempt both on the community and himself. If the Registrar has already received an application from a person who is applying now, the fact will soon be discovered and the applicant will not be registered.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-5-1911

436. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

TOLSTOY FARM,
Vaisakh Vad 14 [*May 27, 1911*][4]

CHI. HARILAL,

I have the letter you wrote before leaving Delagoa Bay. It is

[1] *Vide* "Notice to Passive Resisters", 22-5-1911.

[2] Act 2 of 1907, the Asiatic Registration Act

[3] Of 1908, the Asiatics' Regisrtration Amendment Act

[4] This letter, it appears, was written just after Harilal Gandhi left South Africa, and that was in the middle of May, 1911. In that year, *Vaisakh Vad* 14 corresponds to May 27.

desirable that Rami[1] grows up under the influence of strictly Indian ideas. Accordingly, I think you have done right in deciding not to send her chocolates. However, I should caution you against taking the line that 'this must be done because Bapu wants it so, From among the ideas I suggest, you should put only those into practice that appeal to you. I should like you to grow up in freedom. I know your motives are good. Whenever your ideas are mistaken, they will therefore get corrected automatically.

The prisoners have not been released so far but they will soon be.2

It appears that the cable3 I sent you about [the need for] your applying for registration has not reached you. I sent it care of Nanji Dulabhdas.

Keep reading Indian Opinion carefully while you are there.

The following Gujarati books are eminently worth reading: Kavyadohan, Panchikaran, Maniratnamala, Dasbodh, Chapter VI of Yogavasishtha—Hindi translation available—Poet Narmadashanker's4 Dharma vishe Vichar5, two volumes of Raychandbhai's6 writings.

And, of course, there are Karanghelo and other books. Karanghelo evidences the maturity of the Gujarati language. Taylor's grammar and his introduction to it are both vary good. I have forgotten whether it is a preface or a separate essay on the Gujarati language.

I should advise you to make it a regular practice to read Tulsidasa's *Ramayana*. Most of the books I have listed at the end of

[1] Harilal's doughter

[2] *Vide* " Letter to Registrar of Asiatics", 26-5-1911.

[3] Not available

[4] Narmadashanker Lalshanker Dave (1833-1889); poet and a pioneer of modern Gujararti literature whom Gandhiji often quoted

[5] The correct title is *Dharmavichar*.

[6] Raychandbhai Ravjibhai Mehta; poet and connoisseur of pearls and diamonds with a "passion to see God face to face" ; renowned for his feats of memory as *shatavadhan*; a relation by marriage of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta who introduced him to Gandhiji. This first meeting convinced Gandhiji that Raychandbhai "was a man of great character and learning" whose "burning passion for self-realization" "cast a spell" over him, and "in moments of spiritual crisis, therefore, he was my refuge" and "the predominant factor" that led to Gandhiji's vow of *brahmacharya.* Gandhiji kept up a correspondence with him till the poet;s death; *vide An Autobiography*, Part II, Ch. I, XV, XXII & Part III, Ch. VII.

Indian Home Rule are worth going through.[1] In order to learn Sanskrit well, I would advise you always to start your reading with it. Only then will you remember and understand it all. You won't find it difficult after the first book is properly done. Do not take up the second book before you have mastered the first. Whenever you come across a Sanskrit verse, you should immediately try to understand its meaning in Gujarati.

Please write to me in detail and regularly.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 9532

437. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

May 28, 1911

MY DEAR HENRY,

So you have already granted an interview. I am sending you cuttings. The whole thing seems to have been fixed up nicely. You have called it a compromise. Is not settlement a better term? Ritch points out that compromise may presuppose give and take whereas we have yielded nothing. Please criticize *I.O.* freely. I am trying to get Ritch to write for it every week. I dare say you will not fail to notice what is his.

The collections for your mission continue. We have now reached over £500 the whole of it is not yet banked. Cachalia and Sorabji are travelling in the Klerksdorp District.

We are trying to organize a dinner at the Masonic Hall for the European Committee.

I propose to go to Phoenix for a fortnight at an early date. I wanted to during the first week of June but I may not be able to do so. I want to start the work of registration before I go.

I do not propose any longer to write the weekly official letter. I want to leave it to Ritch and I do not want Maud[2] to duplicate her

[1] *Vide* "Appendices to "Hind Swaraj""Some Authorities and Testimonies Bt Eminent Men", 22-11-1909

[2] Assistant Honorary Secretary of the South Africa British Indian Committee in London

letters either. A packet addressed to Ritch should be enough. Ritch should come before the public as much as possible. Moreover, I wish to slip out of the public gaze as much as possible. I should like to bury myself in the Farm and devote my attention to farming and educating.

With love all round,

BHAI

From the original : Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy : National Archives of India

438. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

TOLSTOY FARM,
LAWLEY STATION,
TRANSVAAL,
May 31, 1911

DEAR MR. NATESAN[1],

In my cable[2] advising of the provisional settlement, I asked Prof. Gokhale to inform you of the contents of the cable. I hope he repeated the cable to you. The settlement has gone beyond our expectations. We did not expect to be able to save individual rights. These have now been fully protected. But we are by no means yet out of the wood. General Smuts has to translate his promises into legislation. This, however, there is little doubt, will be done unless General Smuts has no regard whatsoever for his reputation. The danger therefore lies not in the likelihood of his breaking his promise but in his passing other legislation affecting adversely the position of domiciled Indians. His actions, therefore, will have to be closely scrutinized. I need hardly say how much we owe to your wonderful work there. I hope that you will persist in your agitation for securing an amelioration of the condition of those who are residing in S.A. I have no doubt that you are keeping yourself in touch with the

[1] G.A. Natesan; of G. A. Netesan & Co., Madras, published lives of Indian leaders, and edited, *Indian Review*; Gandhiji maintained a "regular correspondence" with him. *Vide* "Letter to A.H. West", 24-12-1909; "Collector's Assassination", 1-1-1910 & "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", before 9-12-1910 and *Satygraha in South Africa*, Ch. XXXI.

[2] Not available.

columns of *Indian Opinion* in which are reproduced all the petitions[1] recently sent to the Imperial Government.

You have earned the gratitude of every Indian in S.A. by your work on the indenture question also.[2] Having observed the system for nearly 18 years, I have come to hold very strong views on the question of indentured emigration from India. Even if it were possible to secure fair treatment from the masters (which it is not) the system is inherently bad. Indentured men lose terribly in moral fibre. In many cases they improve as animals, they lose in almost every case as men. As a solution of the problem of poverty such emigration has in no way proved helpful. As a nation we lose in prestige by sending our poorest brethren as practically slaves. No nation of free men will tolerate such a system for a moment. I hope therefore that you will with all your might agitate for putting an end to the system, first outside India and then within our own borders. If I could help it, I would certainly not send a single Indian under indenture, say, to Assam.

As the struggle has only been suspended, Tolstoy Farm will be continued though under considerably modified conditions.

Mr. and Mrs. Polak will be in Indian about the month of November and they will remain there pending the introduction of General Smuts' Bill next year.

With renewed thanks for all you have in our behalf,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 2224

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Secretary of State for Colonies", 1-5-1911 and "Memorial to Secretary of State for Colonies", 15-5-1911

[2] On March 1, 1911, a public meeting, held under the auspices of the Indian South African League of Madras, unanimously passed a resolution urging the Government of India to restrain the *sirdars*, who were on their way to India to recruit, on behalf of the Natal planters, indentured labourers on to India ro recruit, on behalf of the Natal planters, indentured labourers on five-year contracts before the Indian Government's embargo on indentured emigration came into effect on July 1, 1991. Supporting the resolution, G.A. Natesan spoke of "the moral evil" of emigraton and emphasized "the need to dog the *sirdars* wherever they went and to prevent them from recruiting *coolies* under false information". These *sirdars* lured illiterate villagers with money and fanciful accounts of Natal as a land of gold, and the credulous villagers were made to sign the bond of indenture at their recruiting depot at Madras. Natesan sent round a circular warning all the villages around Madras against the *sirdars*; this circular was published in *Indian Opinion*, 5-8-1911.

439. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

21-24, COURT CHAMBERS,
CORNER RISSIK & ANDERSON STREETS,
JOHANNESBURG,
June 2, 1911[1]

DEAR MR. NATESAN,

This is to introduce to you Mr. R. M. Sodha. As you know Mr. Sodha is one of the staunchest passive resisters. If he travels towards your side, may I ask you please to introduce Mr. Sodha to our leaders there? Mr. Sodha is the husband of the celebrated Mrs. Sodha who was persecuted by the Transvaal Government.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 3422. Courtesy: Revashanker Sodha

440. KRUGERSDORP AGITATORS

From a recent number of the Krugersdorp paper we reproduce, elsewhere in this issue, the report[2] of a meeting held in that town, addressed by Mr. Van Veyeren, member of the Provincial Council. Amongst other questions discussed was the "coolie" question, and itwas unanimously decided to form an association, the members of which undertake not to support "coolie" traders. The committee of this association, we learn has drafted a petition asking the Government not to allow hawkers and pedlars to travel in the districts, districts, "because these itinerant traders are more detrimental to the welfare of the country than beneficial". This is not the first time that Krugersdorp has broken out in this way. The famous but now evidently defunct "White League"[3] originated at this dorp. Its efforts

[1] Ratanshi M. Sodha left for India on June 2, 1911, following the provisional Settlement of April 20. *Indian Opinion*, 10-6-1911.

[2] Not reproduced here

[3] *Vide* "Johannessburg Letter", 28-3-1908.

have not been quite successful, so it would appear. Why do these anti-Asiatic leagues and associations never succeed? Because their foundations are rotten; because the motive is greed and selfishness; and because the members are each seeking their own personal gain. There is not a man amongst them who would not grasp an advantage for himself at the expense of a fellow-member. But when it is the Asiatic who competes, all join together in order to ruin him. These rival traders have the impudence to say that even hawkers and pedlars should not be allowed to travel in the districts. One may be quite sure that the people who live in the outlying places and depend upon these useful traders for many of their wants do not say that they are more detrimental than beneficial. No, the whole thing is too transparently self- seeking on the part of these leagues and associations. They represent none but themselves, and all they are anxious about is that the field of competition should be cleared so that their profits may be larger.

Whilst there may not be much to fear from these agitators, the British Indian Association will no doubt keep a watchful eye upon their movements so that the rights and means of livelihood of respectable small traders shall not be filched away.

Indian Opinion, 3-6-1911

441. WHAT HAS SATYAGRAHA ACHIEVED?

A number of Indians sometimes question if satyagraha has achieved anything. All that they can see is that people were tortured in gaol and put up with the suffering, and the utmost that was achieved in the end was theoretical equality of rights in the matter if new immigrants which is unintelligible to most and unavailing in practice. The only outcome of any value is that (a few) highly educated men will enter the Transvaal[1] every year whose services we may have no occasion to use. For the benefit of those who believe this, we enumerate below, point by point, the several gains resulting from the campaign.

[1] *Vide* Appendices "Lane's Letter to Gandhiji", 22-4-1911, "E. M. Gorges' Letter to Gandhiji", 19-5-1911.

1. The Indian community's pledge[1] has been redeemed. There is a saying among us that if one's honour is saved all else is safe.

2. The Obnoxious Act[2] will be repealed.[3]

3. Public opinion has been roused all over India about our disabilities.[4]

4. The entire world has learnt of our struggle and has admired the Indians' courage.

5. A law has been passed (in India) to prohibit the emigration of indentured labour to Natal.[5]

6. Satyagraha helped bring about whatever improvement there has been in Natal's licensing legislation.[6]

[1] Taken at a mammoth meeting of Indians in the Empire Theatre, Johannesburg, on September 11, 1906, to the effect that they would not submit to the Asiatic law Amendement Ordinance, the foreunner of the Asiatic Registration Act; *vide* "The Mass Meeting", 11-9-1906

[2] The Asiatic Registration Act (Act 2 of 1907).

[3] *Vide* Appendices "Lane's Letter to Gandhiji", 22-4-1911 and "E.M. Gorgges' Letter to Gandhiji", 19-5-1911.

[4] The Transvaal campaign had wide repercussions in India. For protest meeting held in that country in 1908 and 1909, *vide* "Chronology" and "Interview to the Natal Mercury", 30-11-1908; "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Crewe", 29-11-1909; "Letter to Lord Ampthill", 5-10-1909 & "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Crewe", 26-10-1909.

[5] On December 29, 1909 the Indian Narional Congress passed a resolution urging the prohibition of recruitment of indentured labour. On February 25, 1910, Gokhale tabled a resolution in the Indian Legislative Council to that effect, and it was unanimously passed. The Indian Emigration Act of 1908 was amended to admit of Gokhale's resolution, and on April 1, 1911, the Government of India issued a notification prohibiting the emigration of labour to Natal from July 1, 1911; *vide* also "The Indian Council and Indentured Labour", 5-3-1910; 5-3-1910; "Duty of Natal Indian Congress", 2-4-1910; "G.K. Gokhale's Services"; 16-4-1910 & "A Momentous Decision", 7-1-1911. Gandhiji had asked for stoppage of indentured Indian immigratin as far back as 1895; *vide* "A Band of Vegetarian Missionaries", 18-5-1895.

[6] The Natal Dealers' Licenses Act (Act 18 of 1897 enacted by the Boer Government) did not allow appeals to courts of law against the decisions of licensing officers regarding renewal of old trading licences. After the Boer War, following representations by Natal Indians to the Imperial authorities that this section of the law was being unfavourably interpreted to their detriment, ("Petition to Chamberlain", 27-12-1902, in fact, Gandhiji returned to South Africa early in December, 1902 especially to discuss the licences problem with Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies in the Imperial Government, who was then

7. A law similar to the one in the Transvaal, which was passed in Rhodesia, was disallowed.[1]

8. The sinister licensing Act which was passed in Natal was disallowed.[2] Anyone who doubts that this was due to the satyagraha campaign may peruse the reasons which the Imperial Governmental gave for disallowing the law [in its despatch].

9. Enactment of legislation for the whole of South Africa along the lines of the Transvaal law has been rendered impossible.[3]

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visiting South Africa), the Colonial Government in Natal issued a circular to the Town Councils instructing them to interpret the law "in a judicious and reasonable manner" so as to respect vested rights and warning them that, otherwise, "the law might have to be reconsidered"; *vide* "The Deealers' Licenses Actt Redivivus: II", 17-9-1903. Thanks to protracted agitation by the Natal Congress, the Government, on November 24, 1909, embodied this concession in a law and enacted an amendment (Act 22 of1909) to the licence law of 1897, permitting appeals to the Supreme Court on decisions of Town Councils regarding licences; *vide* "Natal Licensing Act", 11-12-1909.

[1] *Vide* "Rhodesia Indians", 30-5-1908; "Sarvodaya[—VII]", 27-6-1908; 4-7-1908 and "Some Suggestions", 12-6-1909

[2] Two bills had been announced in 1908 which sought to discountinue the issue of new licences to Asiatic traders and to dispossess old licence-holders within a period of ten years; *vide* "Natal Bills", 9-5-1908; 16-5-1908 & "New Natal Bills", 16-5-1908 & Imperial assent to this legislation was, however, withheld; *vide* "London", before 18-9-1909

[3] The Union Immigrants' Restriction Bill (Appendix, "Immigrants' Restriction Bill", 4-3-1911), ready by the beginning of March, 1911, sought to end Asiatic immigration except for an agreed annual quota of educated Asiatics—an outcome of the Transvaal campaign-and repea-led the more liberal Cape and Natal Immigration Laws, the education tests under which were less severe than in the Transvaal; *vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 6-7-1908 and "Interview to the Transvaal Leader", 1-3-1911; "Letter to L.W. Ritch", 2-3-1911; "Letter to Maud Polak", 6-3-1911; "Natal Petition to Union Assembly", 9-3-1911 & Appendix, "Cape Petition to Parliament", 15-3-1911. In the case of the Transvaal, the Bill repealed all the earlier "obonoxious" immigration and registration laws except Act 36 of 1908 (Appendix, "Immigrants' Restriction Bill", 4-3-1911), while, in the case of the Orange Free State, Chapter 33 of th Conostitution, which Gandhiji contended was racial in character and therefore repugnant to the spirit of the Immigrants' Restriction Bill (*vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 20-3-1911 & "Letter to Private Secretary to Minister of Interior", 24-3-1911), was neverthe less retained. The Bill, besides, left unprotected the immigration rights of wives and minor children of domiciled Natal and Transvaal Asiatics, and others domiciled but temporarily absent from Natal; *vide* "Natal Petition to Union Assembly", 9-3-1911. Polak was sent to Durban to help Natal Indians (*vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 2-3-1911) to organize against the whittling down of what were, by comparison, almost unlimited rights of immigration

10. Enactment of further thoughtless legislation in the Transvaal has been prevented.

11. The Railway regulations which were promulgated in the Transvaal, making distinctions between whites and Coloureds, were

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which Asiatics possessed under previous laws; Ritch was similarly sent to the Cape to help the divided Indian community in that province (*vide* "Letter to Abdul Hamid Gool", 2-3-1911), which, in his estimate, lacked the will to defend itself against the projected diminution of its rights. It was at this stage that Gandhiji argued that the satyagraha campaign had been waged for, and on behalf of, the Transvaal alone and that, while he was willing to help with advice, Natal and the Cape should raise the funds and conduct their own campaigns when their rights were threatened; *vide* "Letter to L.W. Ritch", 8-3-1911; "Letter to Maud Polak", 13-3-1911 & "Letter to L.W. Ritch", 17-3-1911. He was, therefore, content to handle the Transvaal problem from Johannesburg and to try and secure the exemption of educated Asiatics from the purview of Act 36 of 1908. He left for the Cape to conduct the negotiations in person only when Smuts refused to receive Ritch as a representative of the Indians; *vide* "Telegram to L. W. Ritch", 9-3-1911. On March 4, 1911, Smuts informed Gandhiji that educated immigrants were free to enter the Union and reside in any Province and were exempt from registration laws; *vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 4-3-1911. When Gandhiji replied that he had had legal advice saying that these private assurances were not contained in the Union Bill (*ibid*), Smuts recanted and moved an amendment which accorded Asiatic immigrants into the Transvaal legal equality with other races and exempted them only from registration under Act 36 of 1908; *vide*., "Letter to J. J. Doke", 17-3-1911 & appendix, "Lane's letter to Gandhiji", 16-3-1911. Gandhiji, who had anticipated this clever move ("Letter to L. W. Ritch", 16-3-1911), now demanded that the principle of legal equality of races which was conceded to the1909 deputation in London (Appendix, "Lord Crew's Minute", before 17-9-1909) and in Botha's despatch of December 20, 1910, to the Imperial Government ("Report of European Committee Meeting", 23-3-1911) should extend to the Orange Free State also (*vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to General Smuts", 17-3-1911); that is to say, the Immigrants' Restriction Bill should nullify relevant provincial legislation in the Free State to the extent necessary for securing this objective; *vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to General Smuts", 10-3-1911. Hosken's Committee, coming out in support of the Indian cause, denied Smuts' allegation that this demand was a new one; *vide*., "Letter to H. S. L Polak", 22-3-1911. Gandhiji then said he would be content if the Union immigration bill was dropped and the Transvaal legislation alone amended suitably; *vide*., "Letter to Sonja Schlesin", 27-3-1911. Smuts thereupon decided, for reasons of his own, that this could not be done during the current session of the Union Parliament. Gandhiji's claim that satyagraha had prevented the extension of the unfavourable Transvaal immigration laws to the rest of the Union should be viewed against this background of facts. In fact, the Secretary of State for India had himself admitted that the Union immigration legislation extended "the Transvaal policy of practical exclusion" to the entire Union; *vide India*, 31-3-1911.

repealed and substituted by regulations of general application.[1]

12. Everyone knows that the Obnoxious Act of 1907 was the first step in legislation aimed against the Indians. They took up arms evenat this stage and thus thwarted the designs of the local Government.[2]

13. It is impossible that the Committee of European Sympathizers with Hosken as Chairman would have been called into being otherwise.[3] The Committee is now likely to be useful to us in other matters as well.

14. Apart from these, we have also won the sympathy of many

[1] The Railway Regulations, passed by decree and gazetted on December 17, 1909, under the Railway Regulations Act of 1908 ("Substance of Letter to Colonial Secretary", 23-12-1909 & "Indian National Congress and Muslims", 8-1-1910), sought to discriminate between whites and Asiatics denying the latter, among other things, the right to 'travel by express trains; *vide* "Letter to General Manager, C.S.A.R.", 4-1-1910. After a meeting between the railway authorities and Gandhiji and Cachalia, the General Manager accepted the draft regulations submitted by the British Indian Association on April 11, 1910 (*ibid*, but the Central South African Railways' *Tariff Book No. I*, published in February, 1911, retained the old Regulations in complete disregard of the earlier agreement, and only the Cape was exempted from the descriminatory provisions. Following further protests by the BIA and the Natal Indian Congress, the General Manager Wrote to Cachalia in June, 1911, assuring him that the regulations which were to come into force in June, 1911, would meet the Indian objections.

[2] The first registration legislation against which the Indians protested massively and unanimously ("Letter to Colonial Secretary", 25-8-1906 & "The mass Meeting", 11-9-1906 to "Johannesburg Letter", 11-9-1906) was the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance of 1906 gazetted on August 22, 1906, before the Transvaal was granted Responsible Government. Ganghiji himself describes the Gandhi-Ally deputation of 1906 as "the first battle" in satyagraha "waged in the arena of British politics"; *vide* "Satyagraha Again", 27-6-1908

[3] The Committee of European Sympathizers was founded in 1908 by Albert Cartwright, then editor to *The Transvaal Leader*. He was the first member of the Progressive Party actively to espouse the Indian cause, and he played a decisive role in bringing about the famous compromise of January, 1908; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 30-1-1908. The Chairman, William Hosken, was a rich and prominent member to the pre-Union Transvaal legislature and at one time a leading member of the Progressive Party. His mediatory efforts in the later stages of the 1908 campaign were not inconsiderable. By 1910, his sympathies had become more active, and he wrote a letter to Smuts supporting Gandhiji and the Indians in their demands; *vide* "Report of European Committee meeting", 23-3-1911. The letter appears to have angered Smuts who sent a "dangerous telegram" in reply; "Telegram to L. W. Ritch", 24-3-1911.

whites.

15. The prestige of the Indian community has risen and those who were wont zx of hundreds of pre-War Transvaal Indians came to be protected.

23. The charge of fraud against the Indian community has been disproved.[1]

24. Considering the latest instance, we find that the proposed poll-tax bill in Natal, which was discriminatory, was abandoned in fear of satyagraha.

25. General Smuts and the Imperial Government were obliged to rescind their decisions, the former on three occasions and the latter on two.[2]

[1] The Transvaal Indians, and Gandhiji personally, were accused of organizing large-scale, illicit immigration of fellow-Indians into the Transvaal; *vide* "Influx of Asiatics", 10-3-1906; "Cable to S.A.B.I. Committee", 23-3-1907; 6-4-1907, "Chamney's Report", 13-4-1907 & "Johannesburg Letter", 13-4-1907; "Extracts from Blue Book", 7-3-1908; "Cape Town Indians", 11-4-1908; "Letter to the Press", 22-6-1908 & "Indian Traders in Natal", 25-7-1908; on a variety of occasions, Gandhiji refuted this charge at length; *vide* "The Early Closing Act", 31-3-1906; "The Mass Meeting", 11-9-1906, & "Letter to the Press", 19-11-1906; "Interview to the Morning Leader", 20-10-1906 ; "Letter to "the Times", 22-10-1906; "Representation to Lord Elgin", 31-10-1906; "Deputation to Lord Elgin", 8-11-1906; "Deputation to Morley", 22-11-1906; "Resolutions at Transvaal Indian Mass Meeting", 29-3-1907 & "Letter to "The Natal Adversiser", 9-4-1907; "Angada's Mission of Peace", 29-6-1907; "Letter to J.A. Neser", 28-9-1907 & "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 7-10-1907 and "Interview to the Star", 6-1-1908; "Interview to the Transvaal Leader", 6-1-1908; "Interview to the Press", 1-2-1908; "Letter to the Press", 22-6-1908 & "Letter to*The Star*", 4-7-1908.

[2] Gandhiji possibly had in mind the following occasions when Smuts was obl-iged to go back on his decisions: (a) when, at the instance of the Gandhi-Ally deputa-tion of 1906, the Imperial Government refused assent to the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance; *vide* "Cable to S.A.B.I. Committee", 29-12-1906 (b) when, in the 1908 compromise proposals sent through Albert Cartwright to Gandhiji in jail, Smuts undertook to repeal Act 2 of 1907; *vide* "Letter to Colonial Seecretary", 28-1-1908 & "Johannesburg Letter", 30-1-1908 and "Speech at Reception", 5-10-1910; and (c) when he went back on the issue of a limited annual quota of educated Asiatic immigrants who, he had conten-ded, could not enter the Transvaal under the Immigrants' Restriction Act; *vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909. The Imperial Government went back on its position in the cases of (a) the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance of 1906, and (b) the immigration of educated Asiatics, an issue in which Lord Crewe, in conformity with his earlier position that the autonomy of self-governing colonies should not be lightly interfered with, was

26. Whereas formerly the Government did not pause to think before passing laws directed against us, now it not only gives careful thought to such laws but is also obliged to consider our probable reactions to them.

27. Indians command more respect as men of their word. "Better to lose millions than to lose one's reputation as a man of one's word."[1]

28. The community has demonstrated the power of truth.

29. By placing its trust in God, the community has demonstrated to the world the supreme value of religion.

Theirs alone is victory who follow truth and religion. On further reflection, we shall probably discover many other benefits, but the last mentioned is the foremost among them. A great campaign such as this could not have been waged without faith in God. He has been our only true support. If, through this struggle, we have learnt better to depend on Him alone, that is a sufficient gain in itself, and all else will follow as a matter of course.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 3-6-1911

reluctant to receive the 1909 deputation. Later however, he sent a telegram to Smuts endorsing at least two of Gandhiji's demands; *vide* "Deputation Notes[-XIII]", after 16-11-1909 & Appendix "Lord Crew's Minute", before 17-9-1909.

[1] A Gujarati saying

442. ABBREVIATIONS[1]

[After *June 5, 1911*][2]

N.N.	not noted
N.	noted
R.	rejected
P.	pending

From the original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 5526 a

443. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[Before *June 9, 1911*][3]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Please see the enclosed letter from Anandlal[4]. Show it to Purshottamdas also. I have written to Revashankerbhai[5] asking him to give Anandlal the passage money.

I shall not be able to start till June 9 at any rate. On that day a banquet is to be given to the Hosken Committee. I may leave on the 10th perhaps. Please send the enclosed letter to Nayak; I do not know his address.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5089. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] Devised by Gandhiji for classifying applications that started coming in, following the Provisional Settlement, from persons seeking entry into the Transvaal. Found among his personal papers, this list of abbreviations was evidently meant for his personal use in his dealings with the Registrar of Asiatics.

[2] The first application received from Bhagu Bhikha of Durban was dated June 5, 1911.

[3] The banquet to the Hosken Committee mentioned in the letter was given on June 9, 1911, and this letter was clearly written before that date. Addressed to Maganlal Gandhi in Phoenix, it speaks of an impending visit by Gandhiji after the 10th. The hypothesized date is further supported by the fact that Gandhiji addressed a meeting held to bid farewell to Sorabji Shapurji at Durban on June 16.

[4] Son of Amritlal Gandhi, a cousin of Gandhiji

[5] Revashanker Jagjivan Jhaveri: a friend of Gandhiji and brother of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

444. ADDRESS TO W. HOSKEN[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
June 9, 1911

WILLIAM HOSKEN, ESQ.

DEAR SIR,

We, the undersigned, on behalf of the British Indian Reception Committee, hereby wish to place on record our gratitude to you and the members of the Committee over whose deliberations you have presided during the past three years that the Committee has been in existence.

We are aware that it is due to the efforts of your Committee that the provisional settlement of the Asiatic question that has so agitated the country for the past four years has been hastened. Though the question that gave rise to passive resistance is not yet finally settled, it is a matter for satisfaction that we have a declaration from the chief opponent of the demands of the Asiatic communities that they should be satisfied. It was no small thing for you and your Committee to espouse what was undoubtedly an unpopular cause.

It is not in our power to reward you for your labours. We can but pray to the Almighty to reward you, and the other Members of the Committee, for your advocacy of a cause which you believed to be just. We shall pray that you may have long life and health, so as to enable you to continue to serve high ideals as you have done in the past.

[A. M. CACHALIA
V. CHETTIAR
ABDUL KADIR BAWAZEER
SORABJI SHAPURJI ADAJANIA
M. K. GANDHI][2]

Indian Opinion, 17-6-1911

[1] This was presented to Hosken at a banquet given to the Committee of European Sympathizers by the British Indian Association; *vide* also "The Banquet", 17-6-1911

[2] The names of the signatories, who constituted the British Indian Reception Committee, are taken from the Gujarati version of the address.

445. ENCIRCLED

The draft Municipal Councils Ordinance to be introduced in the Provincial Council of the Transvaal is a very drastic measure. The British Indian Association of the Transvaal has entered a timely protest against its provisions that bear upon Indians.[1] The most injurious section is no doubt that which gives the Municipal Councils absolute control over hawkers' and other licences.

The effect of the Gold Law, read together with the Townships Act, is to ruin Asiatic store-keepers. The effect of the draft Ordinance, if it be allowed to pass in its present shape, will be to crush Asiatic hawkers. It is a well-known fact that the majority of the Indians of the Transvaal depend upon hawking for their bread and butter. And it is evident that the framers of the Ordinance had Indian hawkers in view. Thus a circle is being drawn—it does not much matter whether with or without the knowledge of General Smuts–round the Transvaal Asiatics, although the General intends next year to bring in legislation to give effect to his promise to the passive resisters, and although he has stated that it is his intention to treat the resident Indians with fairness and justice. We fear very much that, if the draft Ordinance is an indication of what is meant by fairness and justice, the Indian idea of these two words is totally different from General Smuts'. We hope, however, that better counsels will prevail among the Provincial Councillors and that the Ordinance will be amended in the direction pointed our by Mr. Cachalia.[2]

Indian Opinion, 10-06-1911

[1] This Ordinance in effect consolidated municipal regulations and decrees, most of which Transvaal Indians had objected to at one time or another and which empowered Town Councils to enforce these with the authority of provincial law. For instance, it empowered the Government, in the main, to: (a) shift Asiatic Locations and demarcate new ones; (b) withhold a variety of licences without judicial review; (c) exclude Asiatics from the Municipal Voters' List. The purpose of all these had earlier been served by separate laws and decrees. For the p rovisions of the Ordinance as affecting Asiatics and the British Indian Association's petition against it, *vide* Appendices VII-A & B.

[2] *Vide* Appendix, "S.A.B.I. Committee's Letter to Colonial Office", 17-7-1911

446. LETTER TO HARMANN KALLENBACH

ON THE TRAIN,

[Before *June 11, 1911*][1]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Nothing has pained me so much in my leaving Johannesburg, at the present juncture, as your physical and mental condition. If I could have avoided going to Natal, I would certainly have done so, if only so that I could be with you and exercise the privilege and the duty of a friend to nurse you and encourage you. But, I think, to leave for Phoenix was a higher duty. The struggle demands it.

Had I known [of] the comfort (physical) under which I am writing this I would certainly have pressed for your coming with me and that 3rd-class. The coach I am in is a corridor, 3rd-class, for well-dressed 3rd-class passengers. It is truly more comfortable than the 1st-class on these trains. It is cleaner. It is cushioned, has a lavatory and sleeping accommodation and I am the only passenger. Our miserable false pride often keeps us from so many good things of the world. You know how necessary lavatory accommodation is for me. Here I have everything added to the pleasure of travelling 3rd-class. And I suppose no European or other passenger would want me to leave this. However we shall see. When you come I strongly advice you to take a 3rd-class ticket. I assure you that a few of us doing this will be able to do a great deal for 3rd-class passengers. The moral effect will be great. It will be good discipline for you. You must have noticed too that it attracted no attention at the station. It is only our own false pride and self-consciousness which make so many worries and troubles.

The physical health requires very great attention just now. What I have suggested is, I am sure, the best remedy. The seat of the trouble is undoubtedly the stomach. But it has been accentuated by your mental condition. You are a true man. Any false chord, therefore,

[1] From the contents it appears that the letter was written before the item following.

shakes your whole system. Your attention is almost divine. You havequite unjustly transferred it all to me. And now you find your idol not satisfying you. This hurts you as if a dagger had gone through you. But why? Who am I? If your affection for me weakens, why suffer agony? It is a passing phase. Let the idol be broken. The residue will be a purer thing. Nor need there be any worry about the practice. Take what work you can with calmness. You will give up the profession automatically when the time is ripe. As Tolstoy says it is a great thing to create the proper mental condition. The rest comes as a matter of course. The result does not follow when a man deceives himself or others. If I always hanker after doing a thing, I can only end by doing it. This is the law of nature. But if I only pretend that I want to do something which I really do not, then I end by not doing it. I am a false coin and no change can be had from such a coin.

Whatever Call is, do not worry about him or my affection for him- I cannot do otherwise than love him. He has really some very good points in him. I am sure that you too would like him one day. But what can it matter either way?

I shall certainly expect a letter from you every day. You will really do me a favour by writing. I shall be always otherwise.

Yours sincerely

UPPER HOUSE

[PS.]

I hope the room will be given up early. All surplus clothing should be sold and sent to Phoenix.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

447.LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

June 11, 1911

MY DEAR HENRY,

On my way to Natal. The train jolting Mrs.G. and the two Sorabjis with me. The older one leaving for India. The Hosken banquet[1] a great success. Silver casket address to Hosken and gold watch and chain to Sorabji. We are all travelling 3rd-class ≈ a rougher experience this time with Mrs.G. and no lavatory accommodation but it is certain that only a 3rd-class traveller can bring about reform in 3rd-class carriages. Natives are herded together like cattle!

There is nothing new in the Townships Act Regulations. Ritch will send you an extract.

I propose to stay at Phoenix for a fortnight and then return with Mrs.G.

Tables were laid for 300 men and women ≈ over 60 Europeans were present including Mrs. Hosken.

I take it that you will have met the distinguished Indians who may have attended the Coronation.

Ritch is having very good practice ≈ Desai has been fixed up as clerk for him. I am now trying to get a Tamil lad.

At the Farm we shall have very few. T.Naidoo is settling in Towns.

With love to all,

Yours,
BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Which took place on June 9; *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi, before 9-6-1911 & "The Banquet", 17-6-1911

448. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

Friday [*June 16, 1911*][1]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I have your two letters together. I am sorry for Hilt and glad for you. Both Hilt and Albert will prove a blessing to you for they put you on your mettle. I do not know that we have need to be sorry for Hilt's illness. There should be sorrow for the cause of it. You must have produced a different and pleasurable sensation in Hilt when you laid him by your side. Yes, indeed, the real individual life is only to be lived in the open and in close touch with our neighbours. Living the other so called individual life in our rooms, fearing the touch of a fellow-being, we must feel like thieves having no light to the property we may be holding.

Call is indeed a fine letter-writer. The coming union may make him. He is idealizing it and for that reason it may be very good for him.

I am not going to congratulate you on getting new work. I shall wait and see what it makes of you. Sorabji receives his address tonight from the Congress.

With love,

Yours sincerely,
UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] From the reference to the address given by the Natal Indian Congress to Sorabji; *vide* "Speech at Durban Farewell to Sorabji", 16-6-1911

449. SPEECH AT DURBAN FAREWELL TO SORABJI[1]

[*June 16, 1911*]

As a satyagrahi Mr. Sorabji has displayed many fine qualities. He has rightly been described as the greatest of the satyagrahis. From one point of view I place Mr. Thambi Naidoo on par with him. (Applause.) Another person who can match Mr. Naidoo in self sacrifice is unlikely to be found even in India. To be sure, Mr. Sorabji stands out from the rest because we volunteered for suffering. He came from Natal and was the first from that Colony to join the campaign.[2] Complaints were frequently made against the satyagrahis in gaol, but never against Mr. Sorabji, He is by nature, a mild and amiable person. That cannot be said even of Mr. Thambi Naidoo. No improper word was ever heard to escape his mouth. He has none of the Parsis' faults but I have found in him all their finerqualities. Though so well endowed he is without a trace of pride. Though a Parsi, he is an Indian first. Hindus, Muslims and Christians alike admire him. That he continues firm on his course, having once set it, and that he tries to understand every issue, is his fourth virtue. Mr. Sorabji is without compeer. The best way of honouring such a man is to emulate him. India will prosper only when it produces many more Sorabjis.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 24-6-1911

450. THE CORONATION

South Africa will be celebrating, on the 22nd instant, the Coronation of King George V. What part are we going to play in the celebrations? The provisional settlement removes the cause of mourning.

[1] The function was arranged on June 16, 1911, by the Natal Indian Congress to bid farewell to Sorabji Shapurji Adajania, who was returning to India on the conclusion of the Transvaal satyagraha campaign.

[2] Sorabji first entered the Transvaal as a satyagrahi to test educated Indians' rights on June 24, 1908; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 23-6-1908

But the letter[1] addressed to the Town Clerk by Mr. Dawad Mahomed and other leaders, we understand, still remains unanswered. If the Town Council cannot see their way to accord the same treatment to all the subject of the Crown, on a unique occasion like the Coronation of our Sovereign, if Europeans cannot forget their prejudice at such a time, we consider that it is the duty of the Indian community to refrain from taking any part in the local official celebrations, to refuse to accept any grant that may made for a separate celebration by us. The community will express its loyalty to the Throne by sending an appropriate message.

We have been informed that the Town Council officials, instead of returning a definite reply to Mr. Dawad Mahomed, are trying to hoodwink the unwary and ignorant or poor Indians to submit to degradation by accepting a miserable grant for a hole and corner celebration among themselves. The market master has, wee are told, been approaching the stall-holders and asking them whether they would agree to take part in some *tamasha* he may arrange for them. We hope that these designs will be furstrated and that the leaders will see to it that not a single Indian in the Borough of Durban has anything to do with the official celebrations.

We would appeal to the Town Council to rise to the occasion. If it boldly decided for the time being to refuse to recognize any racial distinctions, it would perform a service to the model Borough, to South Africa and to the Empire, That brief but happy interruptionneed not prevent us from resuming our prejudices the day after and setting about quarrelling again. But let the 22nd of June be held as a sacred day on which, at any rate, we may practise Imperial ideals. We are sure that such conduct on the part of the Town Council will be a tangible proof of its loyalty and will please King George much more than any lip-loyalty.

At the time of the late war, on the battle field, all distinctions disappeared as if by magic. Tommy drank from the same cup—or

[1] In this letter dated April 18, 1911, Dawad Mahomed and other Natal leaders had expressed the Indians' inability to join in the Durban Corporation's Coronation celebrations so long as the Transvaal passive resistance continued. Should, however, a settlement be reached and the Indian community decide to participate, they would join in "the general festivities" provided they were enabled to take an equal part there in with any other section of the population". But if the corporation made distincitons on racial grounds, they would celebrate the occasion independently of it. *Indian Opinion*, 22.4.1911.

rather tin—of water as the Indian stretcher-bearer.[1] Tommy shared the same tent with the Indian, and was often glad to have the same food as his Indian brother. There was perfect fellowship between them. We know that incidents like the above gladdened the hearts of the thousand Indians who were on the battle field. *Punch* was so delighted that it sang, in connection with the incident: "We are sons of the Empire after all."[2] After the close of the war, we know that the fellowship gave place to bitter jealousy, and consequent discord. But the lesson of the war remained and was repeated at the time of the Zulu revolt. The small band of Indian ambulance-bearers[3] met the Colonial soldier citizen on terms of equality. Captain Sparks and other officers appreciated the corps's services, and the Indians were enabled again to realize that they were "Sons of the Empire after all". Is it impossible to repeat the two experiences on the Coronation Day? We appeal to South Africa for an answer.

Indian Opinion, 17-06-1911

451. THE BANQUET

We congratulate the organizers of the Banquet to Mr. Hosken's Committee on the splendid success that attended their efforts. From allaccounts received, this banquet was quite worthy of its predecessors. The response from the Europeans to the invitation of the Reception Committee was liberal. The banquet was the least that the community owed to its European friends and supporters. In the beginning states of the struggle, when everybody poured ridicule on the heads of passive resisters, it required a great deal of nerve, courage and sacrifice on the part of the European sympathizers to stand by us. We know how Mr. Hosken became the butt of the cartoonist. We can have no notion of that these friends of the cause must have been obliged to put up with in their clubs and their churches. Indeed, theirs must have been at times a lot as hard as, if not harder, than that of our

[1] For the formation of the Indian Ambulance Corps during the Boer War and the work done by it, *vide* "Indian Ambulance Corps", 13-12-1899 & "Indian Ambulance Corps in Natal", 14-3-1900 and "The Natal Volunteer Indian Ambulance Corps", 12-11-1904.

[2] *Vide* also *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. IX.

[3] For the formation and work of the stretcher-bearer Corps during the Zulu rebellion, *vide* "Speech at Congress Meeting", 24-4-1906, "Indian Volunteers", 23-6-1906 & "Indian Stretcher-Bearer Corps", before 19-7-1906.

imprisoned countrymen. And yet they never swerved during the four years that the struggle lasted. We echo the sentiments expressed by Mr. Doke, that the European Committee and the passive resisters were true Imperialists, who fought in the teeth of tremendous opposition to uphold Imperial ideals. Let us hope that the happy link established between Europeans and Indians in South Africa will continue to bind the two communities and result in an increase of mutual respect and forbearance. Then will South Africa have set an example worthy to be followed in the other parts of the Empire.

Indian Opinion, 17-6-1911

452. HOSKEN'S PORTRAIT

We publish Mr. Hosken's portrait as a supplement to this issue and we are sure our readers will welcome it. It was first published in The *Star*. We have secured it though the courtesy of the paper's proprietors. We should like our readers to have the portrait glazed and to hang it up in their rooms. We have noticed that Indians have on the walls of their rooms pictorial advertisements set in frames, which are issued by wine and tobacco merchants. At other times, we see meaningless pictures stuck on walls, and we are often judged by thethings with which we surround ourselves. We earnestly hope that every Indian will have in his living-room only the portraits of thosewho have us in their debt or whose memory we wish to cherish, and that they will be careful about the other things with which they choose to surround themselves.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 17-6-1911

453. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

June 17, 1911

DEAR PROFESSOR GOKHALE,

This will be presented to your by Mr. Sorabji Shapurji Adajania, one of the greatest of passive resisters. Of all the rich experiences I have gained during the memorable struggle none has been so great as the discovery of men like Mr. Sorabji. I am sure that you will be glad to meet Mr. Sorabji. He proposes to return in time for the

legislation that General Smuts had promised to introduce next year.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 2247.

454. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

Monday [June 19, 1911][1]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Yes, I knew about the disturbance at the Farm. None of us is fit to live on a Tolstoy Farm. We can but qualify by making continuous endeavour.

I am having no rest here this time.

It will be a fine thing if the picnic comes off on Thursday. You will have a tough job to tackle.

With love,

Yours,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

455. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[Before *June 22, 1911*][2]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Well, I was the first to have sent a letter. The Rabbi was all the better for having neglected the forage bag. Mrs. Gandhi was very much upset to think that Manilal should not get the biscuits, etc.

I hope that Big eyes is better as also Devdas.

Have suggested a Coronation picnic at the Farm for the 22nd. Please see my letter to Ritch. Something ought to be done at the time

[1] From the reference to the picnic; vide the following item, and also"The Coroonation", 17-6-1911. The Monday before June 22, 1911 was on June 19.

[2] From the reference to the picnic, evidently in connection with the Coronation of King George V on June 22, 1911; *vide* "The Coronation", 17-6-1911.

of the Coronation.

So long as work is allowed to act upon us by way of intoxication, so long must depression continue. The best deeds if used as intoxicants are practically worthless for the satisfaction of the Inner Man. If I feed a hungry man for show or for satisfying my pride or giving me a false happiness I gain nothing. The hungry man is certainly fed as he might be from a mechanical contrivance, say, by pressing a button.

Manilal is splendid.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

456. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

Friday [*June 23, 1911*][1]

MY DEAR HENRY,

I had your letters last week. This week's I receive tomorrow (Saturday). I leave for J'HB on Monday.

You would have enjoyed yesterday's scenes in Town. I remained at Phoenix ≈ West went there to report. The whole affair was spontaneous. I merely guided. And yet Ramsay Collins thought the Indians would have accepted anything if I had not been in D[urba]n. Anyhow they certainly surpassed themselves. Well, they have had their first lesson in passive resistance. I have told them that they might have to raise passive resistance over the £ 3 tax. West tells me Rustomjee[2] was grand. Abdulla Hajee Adam was superb and defiant. The Mayor of Durban is a cad and a disgrace to Judaism. He showed not a single virtue of a Jew and showed every weakness which the Jew is reported to possess. I was ashamed of him for your sake. In the report, I have laid him down very gently. He was really much worse than he appears in the report. Collins was mad with him. However, he deserves our thanks for waking us up. Hollander[3] may yet be our salvation in Natal

[1] From the contents
[2] Parsee Rustomjee
[3] F.C. Hollander, Mayor of Durban in 1912

or Durban as Smuts has been in the Transvaal.

I want your comment on the recent numbers of *I.O.* and more especially on the Coronation Leader.[1]

You will see what line to take on the Gold Law from the editorial note this week. Harcourt[2] has given us a grand opening. Smuts has again overreached himself. He certainly never intended to protect leases up to the period stipulated therein. This is no protection. The Roodepoort case is, I think, accidental.

Another change at Phoenix! As soon as we can we propose giving part of press time to communal agriculture.[3] To this end we shall take in more men of a suitable type. Please do not be alarmed. *I.O.* will not be allowed to suffer. It can only gain by the men coming to their work fresh from the fields. We are performing the opening ceremony of the library and school building tomorrow.

Manilal is more settled now. He does not want to go to London before the struggle is quite over. If satisfactory legislation is passed next year, he intends to leave in March for London.

The account you give me of family affairs is cheering. I am delighted that Pater is doing better than before. You were bound to be satisfied with the boys. They are naturally clever, beautiful and healthy. And I never doubted Millie's ability to make the most of them.

With love,

Yours sincerely,

BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

457. THE CORONATION

Our countrymen through out South Africa sent their loyal greeting to their Majesties on the Coronation Day. It may seem some what anomalous to a stranger why and how British Indians of South Africa should tender their loyalty to the Throne or rejoice over the crowning of Sovereigns in whose dominions they do not even enjoy the ordinary civil rights of orderly men. The anomaly would however,

[1] *Vide* "The coronation", 24-6-1911

[2] Lewis Harcourt, Secretary of State for the Colonies

[3] *Vide* also "Letter to Harilal Gandhi", 3-7-1911

disappear, if the stranger were to understand the British constitution. British Sovereigns represent, in theory, purity and equality of justice. The ideal of King George is to treat his subjects with equality. His happiness depends upon that of his subjects. British statesmen make an honest attempt to realize the ideals. That they often fail miserably in doing so is too true but irrelevant to the issue before us. The British monarchy is limited and rightly so under the existing circumstances. Those then who are content to remain under the British flag may, ought to, without doing may violence to their conscience, tender their loyality to the Sovereign for the time being of these mighty dominions, although, like us, they may be labouring under severe disabilities. In tendering our loyalty, we but show our devotion to the ideals just referred to; our loyalty is an earnest of our desire to realize them.

The genius of the British constitution requires that every subject of the Crown should be as free as any other, and, if he is not, it is his duty to demand and fight for his freedom so long as he does so without injuring anyone else. There is no room for helotry and slavery in this constitution, though both exist abundantly. Largely it is the fault of the helots and the slaves themselves. The British constitution provides a happy means of freedom but it must be confessed that it is not easy of adoption. There is no royal road to freedom. British people themselves have reached what they mistake for freedom through much travail and suffering. Yet they are strangers to real freedom—the freedom of self. They cannot and do not blame the constitution for the disability. Nor can we because we have ours. And we have not even bled for our freedom, real or so called. If, however, we understand the spirit of the British constitution, though we suffer from disabilities in this sub-continent and though we are far from happy in the sacred land of our birth, we are bound heartily to shout.

LONG LIVE THE KING !

Indian Opinion, 24-6-1911

458. CORONATION

The Coronation of King George V was celebrated all over the Empire. The Indian residents of this country sent congratulatory cables on the occasion thus declaring their loyalty. We, however, find

some Indian asking questions: "Why, and to whom shall we show our loyalty? With what face can we take part in the celebrations? We are submerged in a sea of troubles. Conditions in our dear country give us no cause for rejoicing. That the King is to go to India for his Coronation gives us no reason to be happy. That will only result in the draining of (Indian) money. Indian will only be ruined further." Such thoughts are but natural. Indeed it is harmful to suppress them. It is necessary, therefore, to put them to the test of logic.

Our view of the matter is that, if those who argue in this manner feel that they cannot be loyal, they should declare their want of loyalty and outlaw themselves. Otherwise they will lay themselves open to the charge of insincerity and cowardice.

We believe, however, that we can remain loyal to His Majesty despite our untold sufferings. Our sufferings here are to be blamed on the local authorities, and more so on ourselves. If we become truthful [that is] if we rebel against ourselves (against the Satanic within us), thus exorcizing the devil, and ourselves manage our affairs instead, we will not have to put up with any hardship whatever and shall be able to declare, 'Oh, how happy we are under the reign of King George!' To the extent that we are unable to exorcize the Satan in us, we shall have to take to entreating the local authorities, and we might there by slake our burning woes. If we do not do either, how is King George to blame? Someone may answer saying that everything is done in the name of King George, and therefore the credit for the good things and blame for the wrong things should both be his . What we have said above disposes of that argument. The British monarchy is not free, but is confined within limits. These checks are implicit in that British system of monarchy. If the King oversteps the limits, he will be dethroned.

Moreover, the British Constitution aims at securing equality of rights and equality before the law for every subject. Those who do not enjoy such equality are free to fight for it, the only restriction being that the mode of agitation shall not harm others. Not only is every British subject free to fight in this way, but it is his duty to do so. It is a duty to express one's loyalty to such a constitution and to its head, the King Emperor, for that will only be an expression of loyalty to one's own manhood. The loyalty of a slave is no loyalty. He only serves. If a slave can be loyal, that must be due to coercion. The loyalty of a free man is willed.

It may be urged against this reasoning that it would justify submission even to a wicked king or a vicious constitution; the argument then is not quite proper. For instance, we could not, as free men, be loyal to the pre-War Boer constitution and to its head, President Kruger, for the constitution itself laid down that there shall be no equality between Europeans and Coloureds in the governance of the country or in ecclesiastical affairs. We cannot fight such a constitution and be loyal to it at the same time. In a situation like that wewould have to defy not only the head but the basis of his authority as well. If we refused to fight, we would cease to be men and be thought brutes. If the British Constitution were to change and lay down that there would be no equality, not even in theory, as between whites and Coloureds, we could no longer owe allegiance to such a constitution and would have to oppose it. Even in such a contingency, however, we could remain loyal to the King within limits; such is the virtue of the British system. It is not here necessary to explore these limits for the question does not arise.

It must be remembered that the British people won what they consider their freedom after they had let rivers of blood flow. Real freedom, however, even they have yet to win. We, on the other hand, have shed no blood, endured nothing, for the sake of freedom, real or imaginary. The Transvaal satyagrahis alone gave evidence of having suffered in some measure in the course of their great campaign. But their suffering was a drop in the ocean. Only when we come forward to suffer as much—and infinitely more—shall we succeed in winning freedom for ourselves. The British Constitution permits one to seek this freedom. The British Emperor must wish that all his subjects get such freedom; such is the British way. And there are Englishmen who sincerely strive to act on these principles according to their own lights. We can, therefore, and ought to, remain loyal to the British Emperor, our grievances notwithstanding.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 24-6-1911

459. HONOUR TO A SATYAGRAHI[1]

When Mr. Harilal Gandhi arrived at Zanzibar on his way to India, he was recognized and given a welcome by the Zanzibar Indians. He demurred but to no avail. He was taken to Mr. Wali Mohammed Nazar Ali's house where he was entertained lavishly. Replying to a reception [given in his honour,] Mr. Harilal Gandhi pointed out that the Transvaal campaign had shown what an unfailing remedy satyagraha was. Should there be foul play yet again, satyagrahis, whichever part of the world they might happen to be in, would return to join the struggle, and so on.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 24-6-1911

460. POLAK'S WORK

Though Mr. Polak has not been in England for long,[2] he has set to work in right earnest. He has met a number of persons. He spoke at a meeting of the League of Honour[3] and again at a function organized by the All-India Muslim League. It was Mr. Polak who drafted the statement[4] addressed by the [SABI] Committee to the Secretary of State for the Colonies and he has set out all the issues in that document. The problem of stands in Vrededorp has been suitably dealt with, and pointed attention has been drawn to the consequences of the Gold Law. Mr. Polak is thus always immersed in the selfsame task, wherever he may be. He has no other interests apart from the problem of South African Indians. Surely, this is no small matter. For only when a person loses himself in duty will he be capable of dedication. Mr. Polak has a profound understanding of this maxim and remains imbued with it. If the Indian community produced a number of persons like him, India would be free soon. In doing his

[1] This article was based evidently on an account of the event given by Harilal in a letter to Gandhiji; *vide* "Letter to Harilal Gandhi"; 3-7-1911

[2] Polak left Johannesburg on May 1, 1911 and arrived in London in the third week of May, 1911.

[3] On the conditions of Indians in South Africa

[4] *Vide* Appendix "S.A.B.I. Committee's Letter to Colonial Office", 17-6-1911

own duty. Mr. Polak has served to remind us of ours.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-7-1911

461. JOHANNESBURG[1]

POLAK'S LETTER

We have had two letters from Mr. Polak after his arrival in England. He writes that he has had an interview with Mr. Justice Ameer Ali[2] and that he has met Mr. Gupta of the Indian Office. He has had talks with Lord Lamington[3]. He also called on other gentlemen and ladies.

Mr. Polak's address was considered the best among all those delivered at the League of Honour. He attended and addressed two meetings of the All India Muslim League.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-7-1911

[1] A weekly despatch, "Johannesburg Letter", appeared almost regularly in *Indian Opinion* from march 3, 1906, onwards (Vol. V. "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 17-2-1906 & "Johannesburg Letter", 26-2-1906), but from October 16, 1909, the word "Letter" was dropped from its title and Gandhiji seems to have contributed only occasional paragraphs.

[2] Justice Syed Ammeer Ali (1849-1928) C.I.E; Bar-at-law; Judge of the Calcutta High Court, 1890-1904; in November, 1909, became the first Indian member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council; a member also of the SABI committee and President of the London branch of the All-India Muslim League; auther of *Islam* and books on Mohammedan law.

[3] Sometime Governor of Bombay and a sympathizer of the Indian cause who became a member of the SABI committee in January, 1909; in November that year, asked a question in the House of Lords regarding the hardships suffered, during the Ramzan fast, by Muslim satyagrahis in Transvaal jails. *Indian Opinon*, 27-2-1909 and *India*, 19-11-1909.

462. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA[1]

[After *July 1, 1911*][2]

. . .I feel it would be a mistake if you imagined that we would get the young men we wanted the moment I get to India, As I understand it, we shall have the same difficulties we had to facein this country. It will do us credit if we leave for India only after the work we have begun here has been put on a firm footing. I have not yet had a quiet stay at phoenix. It would be good in a way, I think, if I could free myself from the cares of legal practice and devote myself to teaching for a year or so. I am not taking on any new responsibilities here. I am only trying to put the existing ones in order.

Arrangements are being made to keep the men occupied in the press for half the time and on the land during the other half. I intend to engage a larger number of suitable persons for the purpose. Only thus can men be released from the press. As a result of [men] being engaged in farming, the land will improve but there will be no profit in the immediate future. By this arrangement [on the contrary], I feel it will become difficult for me to meet the monthly expenses. I feel inclined to ask you to bear the expenses for the additional men. If we extend our activities, it is likely that the expenditure will in all amount to about £1,000. If you can possibly allow this expenditure, please do. The land is very likely to appreciate in value as a result of the expenditure that will be incurred.

This is over and above the help have already asked for. At any cost we must start a school on a larger scale at phoenix. I am thinking of leaving here to go round for funds for this purpose.

I often feel it will be better still if you come over here once, while on your way to India, and see phoenix. Chhaganlal must have

[1] The earlier pages of this leter are missing. Judging from the contents, however, it would appear to be addressed to Dr. Mehta. The first sentence, in particular seems to be a further discussion of Gandhiji's scheme for educating satyagrahis which Dr. Mehta was to finance; *vide* "letter to Dr. Pranjivan Mehta" 8-5-1911.

[2] Chhaganlal Gandhi, whose departure is mentioned in the letter, left India in the first week of July, 1911, reaching South Africa on July 20.

left this week.

Bande Mataram from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5088 Courtesy: C. K. Bhatt

463. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

Unrevised

Sunday night [On or after *July 2, 1911*][1]

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have your letter describing your achievements, for such they are. Pleases me all the more to notice that you can now combine honeymoon, pilgrimage to your people and work and all this in a manner agreeable to you and Millie. Your and Millie's desires have been mostly fulfilled without your having to worry about them. You have sought first the Kingdom of God (what you thought was your duty) and everything else (the trip to London, meeting your people, etc.) has been added upto you. May your work and your joint life flourish in the best manner possible. I am giving fair notices[2] of your work in the Gujarati columns of *I.O.* I am rather cautious about London. Where for public good you think that a longer notice is necessary, please warn me in time. I may neglect these things as my attention is now chiefly devoted to the education of the boys on the Farm. I allow nothing to disturb me during school hours at present.[3] I only hope that nothing will happen to disturb me. Pray for me. I go to Town only twice a week. I propose to draw up the Trust Deed[4] and when it is fixed up I shall make collections in S. A. for a large school at Phoenix. The staff will be you. West, Chh., Maganlal[5]. Purushottamdas and myself. Miss West[6] will be the boarding superintendent. If your procreating ambitions and your animal passions are satisfied, I

[1] From the contents it is evident that the letter was written on or after July 2, 1911, which was a Sunday.

[2] *Vide* "Polak's Work", 1-7-1911 and "Johannesburg ", 1-7-1911

[3] *Vide* "Fragment of Letter to Manilal Gandhi", about 25-7-1911

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 17-7-1911. For its final version *vide* "The phoenix Trust deed", 14-9-1912

[5] Son of Khushalchand Gandhi, Gandhiji's cousin

[6] Ada West, sister of A.H. West, who had adopted the Indian name 'Devi'

would certainly like Millie to take her share in the school work. Harilal may come in later. Thakar may expand sufficiently to come inalso.

Medh is at present doing *I.O.* collections. I shall know tomorrow what success he is having. Did I tell you that Medh had given to our ideals 10 years under a double vow of truth and *brahmacharya*.[1] That reminds me to tell you that Pragji is a possible candidate for Phoenix, subject to the above vows.

I had your cable. You must by this time have received Gregg's opinion[2] and Townships Act, etc.

With love to you all and kisses to the angels,

Yours,

BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

464. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

July 3, 1911
7.30 p.m.

CHI. HARILAL,

I got your letter from Zanzibar at Phoenix. There could not have been any subsequent to that, I am expecting one again in a few days. As regards the reception you were given at Zanzibar, I was happy that most of those who took part were Khojas[3] andSecondly, that they were not put off by the mention of satyagraha. Your reply was good. I thought it proper to insert a short paragraph[4] about it in *Indian Opinion* and you must have seen it. *The Star* publishes every week a biographical sketch of some well known person and they have published mine, too. I send you a cutting [herewith]. Please pass it on to Sorabji after reading it. He must have reached there by now.

Our people in Durban put up a fine show indeed.[5] On Coronation Day I had been to Phoenix. The credit for the

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Harilal Gandhi", 3-7-1911

[2] *Vide* also the following item.

[3] A Muslim sect

[4] *Vide* "Honour to a Satyagrahi",24-6-1911

[5] The reference is too the Durban Indians' boycott of the Coronation celebrations; *vide* also "The Coronation", 17-6-1911

demonstrations on that day should, therefore, go to the local fighters.

Here, registration has not yet begun. I expect to send the first list to Mr. Chamney[1] tomorrow.

I had a talk about a good many things with Manilal . He is thinking of going to England next year if the campaign is not resumed. His work in the press is good.

I have probably written to you about the vow Medh has taken.[2] I have now taken up school work on the Farm. I wonder how long I can keep it up. Pillay's children have all left and he himself is not here either.

Thambi Naidoo now lives in Johannesburg all the time. P.K. Naidoo[3] is here.

Be went to Phoenix with me. It was found necessary to take her.

I have had no letter from Chanchi[4] for a long time now.

Your brothers are all happy. They are sitting beside me reading while I write this. It is 7.30 p.m.

Messrs Ritch and Pragji arrived at the Farm today (Sunday)[5] . I propose to spend five days [in the week] at the Farm and the remaining two at Johannesburg,

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand S.N. 9531

[1] Montford Chamney, whom Gandhiji ironically described as "His Lord ship" (*vide* "Johannesburg letter", before 10-1-1908) occupied high administrative positions in the Transvaal for the duration of the satyagraha campaigns, holding successively the offices of Protector of Immigrants, Registrar of Asiatics and Principal Immigration Officer. During the 1908 campaign, he filed affidavits saying that smuts had made no promise to repeal the Asiatic Registration Act. Gandhiji later accused him of "hopeless incompetence" and demanded his dismissal. *Vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting". 16-8-1908 & Appendix, "Chamney's Affidavit", 25-6-1908 and "Johannesburg Letter", 3-10-1908

[2] Medh had taken a vow to observe *brahmacharya* for ten years.

[3] P.K. Naidoo; born in South Africa, was one of the "valiant fighters" who repeatedly suffered imprisonment throughout the satyagraha campaign in South Africa; rendered particualr service during the Great March of 1913; was an office-beareres of the Tamil Benefit Society. Gandhiji, in his account of his imprisonment of January, 1908, describes him also as "a master of the tonsorial art" *vide* "My Experience in Gaol[-II]", *14-3-1908*, also *Satyagraha in South Africa* Ch. XXXI & XLIV.

[4] Chanchalbehn Gandhi, addressee's wife

[5] Sunday was July 2, whereas the letter is dated July 3.

465. KRUGERSDORP BAZAAR

The action of the Municipality of Krugersdorp in trying persistently to abolish the Asiatic Bazaar or Location at Krugersdorp is quite on a par with the zeal that the European residents of that dorp have generally shown in their anti-Asiatic crusade.[1] The School Committee has been a willing tool in the hands of the interested agitators. But we hope that the Krugersdorp Indians will not fail to place before the authorities the other side of the question. We have little to say regarding compensation. For that question cannot arise unless Indian consent to vacate the Stands they occupy or unless they are by law compelled to do so. We wish merely to point out that the state of things the School Committee blame has been deliberately brought about by those who have control of the Location.[2] The threat of removal has hung over the heads of the Indian residents of that Location for several years. We are sorry if the school children have to overlook the closets of that Location. Give the residents fixity of tenure, and we promise that in a month's time they will carry out all desirable alterations. We know that our harassed countrymen have pleaded, times without number, that they should he placed in a position to construct substantial and up-to-date buildings on their Stands. Not only has no encouragement have given to them in that direction but they have been actually thwarted in any such effort they have made. To say the least, it is dishonest to blame them for a state of things for which their very detractors are largely if not entirely responsible.

Indian Opinion, 8-7-1911

466. INDIAN WIVES

The decision of Justice Wessels in the matter of an application on behalf of an Indian woman to enter the Transvaal, being the wife of a registered Indian. Raises points of the highest importance to the

[1] *Vide* "Krugersdorp Agitators", 3-6-1911.
[2] *Vide* "Johannesburg", 8-7-1911

Indian throughout South Africa.[1] The lady in question is the same person who was some time ago turned away by the Immigration Officer at Durban and whose case we have already referred to. The Judge's remarks show that Bai Rasul (for that is the applicant's name) has been unduly hampered in her endeavour to make good her claim. The Judge said that, if the Court had the power, he would have granted a temporary permit to enable the applicant to produce the necessary proof of her marriage. Had the Immigration Officer granted such a permit, there would have been no case in the Court. We still hope that Bai Rasul will be given every facility to prove her claim. For surely, there is no question of Indian competition in trade.

But what is of greater importance is the Judge's *obiter dictum* that an Indian may not bring more than one wife. Hitherto those who have more than one wife have been allowed to bring them without any let or hindrance. If the Judge's dictum is sound law, all we can say is that it will have to be altered. In British Dominions, wherein all religions are respected, it is not possible to have laws insulting to any recognized religion flourishing under it. To hold otherwise in this country would simply create misery in many an Indian household in South Africa. We are glad, therefore, that the British Indian Association and the Hamidia Islamic Society have already moved in this matter. It ought to be possible to settle this matter without any agitation being necessary.

Indian Opinion, 8-7-1911

467. JOHANNESBURG

TALE OF KRUGERSDORP[1]

Indians living in the Krugersdorp Location should not become complacent. We learn from a Krugersdorp newspaper that the conflict between the Government and the Municipality regarding the Location continues. It is thanks to the local School Committee that the issue has

[1] Adamjee, an old registered resident of the Transvaal, brought over Bai Rasul, his wife, from India, at Durban, the Immigration Officer refused her permission to disembark, although normally such immigrants were allowed to land temporarily on furnishing a bail of £10. Bai Rasula then attempted to enter the Transvaal from Delagoa Bay, and her case eventually went up to the Transvaal Supreme Court. For a report of the judgment, *vide* the following item.

[1] *Vide* "Krugersdorp Bazaar", 8-7-1911.

become public knowledge. It has complained that pupils of the school which overlooks the Location have to suffer the sight of Indian closets. The municipal authorities have replied to the School Committee saying that £1,100 would have to be paid to the Indians as compensation if the Location were to be shifted. The Government contends that this sum should be paid by the Municipality. The municipality has argued that it should not be asked to pay this money, because it is the Government which has been pocketing the income (from the Location). As it was the Government that had set up the Location, it should it self pay. The editor of the newspaper has suggested that the Europeans should hold mass meetings, pass resolutions, make the Government pay this amount and have the Location shifted. It appears to have been agreed at a previous meeting of the Committee that the compensation of £1,100 would have to be paid.

My own advice to the Indians living in the Location is that they should immediately address the Government and the Municipality saying that they are willing to make the necessary improvements in the building if allowed to do so. They should also say that they had given no undertaking as to the shifting of the Location and that it is impossible to shift as there is a mosque within its precincts. I hope the Indians in the Location will not delay action in this matter.

DEPORTATION ORDER CANCELLED

There is an Indian youth named Mr. N. Dala. He was arrested in Barberton and ordered to be deported. The main reason for this order was that he was believed to be eighteen years of age. His friends sought Mr. Ritch's advice and told him that Mr. Dala was not in fact over sixteen years of age. His case was then referred to the Supreme Court for getting the order of deportation cancelled. A medical practitioner deposed in Courtthat Mr. Dala's age should be around sixteen. On the strength of his evidence the Court has cancelled the deportation order. The plea was that the law did not confer any authority [on the Court] for deporting young Indian below sixteen. Mr. Dala has not however, secured the right of residence in the Transvaal as a result of this case. He will have to submit an application for this purpose, and he will get a registration certificate only if he is legally entitled to it. Only Mr. Dala benefits from the judgement in this case; otherwise there is nothing notworthy about it.

But the judgment given by the Supreme Court last week in the case of Bai Rasul is an important one. Bai Rasul is Mr. Adamjee's wife. Some facts of this case have already appeared in *Indian Opinion*. As she could not disembark in Natal, she went to Delagoa Bay with her husband and from there tried to enter the Transvaal. The case then went up to the Supreme Court, the demand being that Mr. Chamney, the Immigration Officer, should not restrain her (from entering the Transvaal). It was an intricate case. When Mr. Adamjee got his registration certificate, his marriage with Bai Rasul had already been solemnized. Even so, he had mentioned (in his application) the name of the women from whom he was divorced as his present wife. Hence it became difficult for him to prove that Bai Rasul was his present wife. Giving its ruling, the Court said that no one could being his concubine into the Transvaal. That the former wife [of Mr. Adamjee] had been given a divorce was not proved to the Court's satisfaction, nor that the marriage with Bai Rasul had been duly solemnized, For these reasons the Court did not grant the prayer and dismissed the suit with costs. The Court said in the course of the judgement that if it I had the power, it would have granted a temporary permit to Bai Rasul to enable her to prove her right (of entry) but that it was not so empowered.

If the Court's verdict has stopped here, there would have been no great difficulty. But the court went on the observe that, if a person had more then one wife, if could grant right of entry only to one of them, that is, the first wife. Other wives could not be deemed lawful.. If this opinion of the judge stands and the [Immigration] Officer acts on it, our Muslim brethren are likely to be greatly inconvenienced. So for there has been no difficulty in securing entry for as many wives as a person had, but now objections are likely to be raised.

Both the Hamidia Islamic Society and the [British Indian] Association will soon launch a campaign in this regard.

I hope Mr. Adamjee's advisers will now have Bai Rasul brought to Durban and then proceed cautiously in the matter. As regards marriage and divorce, it is necessary to produce affidavits from respectable Moulvis and others. Bai Rasul's affidavit will also have to be produced along with these. If this is done, I believe that the court

[1] *Vide* the preceding item

cannot but pass an order [in her favour]. Once an order is obtained in the case of Durban, she will clearly have no difficulty in entering the Transvaal.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 8-7-1911

468 . LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Ashadh Vad 1 [*July 12, 1911*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Herewith Chi. Chhaganlal's letter. He appears to be well and truly contrite. Copy out a sentence from Thoreau occasionally and give it to Mr. West for use in *Indian Opinion*. I must now wait for Chhaganlal's cable. That there hasn't been one so far suggests that again there has been some obstacle to his coming here. It is good that Jamnadas also is coming.

Today I found your letter concerning the dream you had at Phoenix about Tolstoy. I must have preserved it with the intention of writing something in reply. There is no need to attach any importance to dreams. They might merely mirror our fancies. It will be enough if we always keep our attention fixed on goodness.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5636. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] The reference to Chhaganlal Gandhi's impending arrival in South Africa, would suggest that this letter was written before that event. That was in 1911, in which year *Ashadh Vad* 1 corresponds to July 12. The date is confirmed by the fact that Gandhiji had already, by July 3, shifted to Tolstoy Farm; *vide* "Letter to Harilal Gandhi", 3-7-1911.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM GENERAL MANAGER, C. S. A. R., TO GANDHIJI

JOHANNESBURG,
April 11, 1910

SIR,

With reference to the interview that Mr. Bell, Solicitor to the Railway Administration Mr. Hoy, Assistant General Manager, and the undersigned had with Mr. Cachalia and yourself this morning, I now place on record, as agreed, a summary of the understanding arrived at in the course of the discussion, namely:—

1. That Regulations 221 to 224 inclusive be replaced by the following:

   221. It shall be lawful for the General Manager where practicable to set apart different compartments on trains for passengers of different races, and the passengers for whom the compartments are so reserved shall travel only in such compartments and no other, nor will any other compartment be considered as available. Such compartments shall be marked "Reserved".

   222. It shall be competent for the guard or the conductor or any other railway official to remove passengers from one compartment to another without giving any reason therefor.

   223. It shall be competent for the station-master or other authorised official to refuse a first or second-class ticket to any passenger who may, in his opinion, not be dressed in a decent or cleanly condition.

   224. The penalty provided in Section 42 of the Act will apply to any contravention of Regulations 221 to 223, inclusive.

2. That the foregoing alterations in the wording of the regulations have been adopted so as to meet the views and wishes of the community Mr. Cachalia and yourself represent.

3. That the manner in which the regulations and the authority entrusted to the Administration has been carried out in the past has been acceptable to the Asiatic community with the exception of such cases as have been brought specially under notice and which, when it was found that there was just cause for complaint, have been dealt with in a manner that you and the community you represent considered to be proper and just.

4. I undertook that the Administration would continue to act in this spirit, and it was agreed that, should it be represented to you at any time that any member of the staff has acted in an improper manner and you have satisfied yourself by previous enquiry that there has been good cause for complaint, you would communicate with the Assistant General Manager and the Administration would, after investigation,

deal with the case as the circumstances call for, and in the spirit of requiring justice and proper treatment being extended to yourselves and to your countrymen.

5. For the purpose of giving effect to the foregoing, you approved, on my suggestion, that while the regulations to be published should be framed in the manner now provisionally agreed to, there would be no objection to the Administration renewing the instructions to the staff on the lines at present obtaining or with such modification of the existing instructions as circumstances may from time to time call for.

6. It was agreed that, in giving effect to the intention of the agreement now arrived at, toleration would have to be exercised, and that, if an instance should occur (as it is quite possible may be the case) when, say, one of your countrymen might desire to travel by a train and the officers of the Administration considered difficulty and possibly disturbance would probably result therefrom, it shall be open to the officers of the Administration, at their discretion, to require such passenger to travel by another train, and if needs be on another date.

7. It was further agreed that should difficulties arise in connection with the proposed new regulations which may seriously interfere with their practical working, a meeting would be convened with a view to altering the regulations, and you undertook to approach the question of such alteration in the spirit in which our present discussion has been conducted.

8. May I take this opportunity of reiterating the expression of satisfaction I conveyed to Mr. Cachalia and yourself at the spirit in which the discussion had been conducted by both of you and which has resulted in the arrangement now arrived at subject to confirmation by the Transvaal and Orange River Colony Governments and the Railway Board.

I have, etc.,
T. R. PRICE
General Manager

Colonial Office Records: C.D. 5363

APPENDIX II

W. J. WYBERGH'S LETTER TO GANDHIJI

JOHANNESBURG,
May 3, 1910

MY DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Many thanks for your letter and the pamphlet on Indian Home Rule. I have been prevented by business from giving adequate study to it until the last few days. I find it very difficult to criticise it adequately within reasonable length because I do not think that on the whole your argument is coherent or that the various statements and opinions you express have any real dependence upon one another. I am also inevitably rather ignorant of the actual conditions in India and am afraid, therefore, of being

presumptuous in expressing any opinion upon the correctness or otherwise of many facts which you appear to take for granted and make the basis of argument. Meanwhile I must say that on many questions of fact you are at variance with ordinary opinion. To begin with, as to the question of "loyalty". I must say that while, as a rule, you avoid giving any occasion for specific charges of disloyalty, yet there are so many subtle hints and ambiguous expressions, so many things left unsaid, and so many half-truths put forward, that I am not at all surprised at anyone considering the book highly dangerous. Granting that you do not intend to be disloyal, yet I am sure that the average plain ignorant man without intellectual subtlety would suppose that you were preaching against British rule in India, for you attack everything which the plain man would identify with this rule. You discourage violence, but only because you think violence is both wrong and ineffective, not because the object sought is wrong.

On the far more important general principle underlying your book I must say definitely that I think you are going wrong. European civilisation has many defects and I agree with many of your criticisms, but I do not believe that it is "the Kingdom of Satan" or that it ought to be abolished. It appears to me a necessary step in the evolution of mankind, especially manifested in and suitable for Western nations. While I recognise that the highest ideals of India (and Europe too) are in advance of this civilisation, yet I think also, with all modesty, that the bulk of the Indian population require to be roused by the lash of competition and the other material and sensuous as well as intellectual stimuli which "civilisation" supplies. You are practically preaching "liberation" in the religious and metaphysical sense as the immediate aim of all humanity, for that is what your Swadeshi in its best sense, as explained in Chapters XVI and XVII, and as illustrated throughout the book, really means. Now you individually, and others individually, may have arrived at the stage where it is right to make this the immediate ideal, but the bulk of humanity have not; and I agree with Mrs. Besant when she says that there is a real danger in preaching "liberation" to people who are not ready for it. She says somewhere that what the bulk of the people in India require is not to abandon desire and activity in the lower worlds but to increase them and learn from them, and that passivity for them means stagnation. That does not mean that all the *forms* of Western civilisation are suitable for India, and I don't doubt that we British have erred (in all good faith) in trying to introduce British institutions indiscriminately. But Western *ideals* are necessary to India, not to supersede but to modify and develop her own. India ought, I think, to be governed on Indian lines, (whether by Indians or Englishmen is another question) but "civilisation" is both necessary and useful, if it grows naturally and is not forced and it cannot be avoided. To turn now to the still more general application of your ideals, apart from Indian questions:—Firstly, I think you are confusing between "passive resistance" and "non-resistance". What you call "soul-force" and "passive resistance" have nothing to do with love or spirituality in themselves. In advocating these things instead of physical force, you are only transferring the battle and the violence from the physical to the mental plane. Your weapons are mental and psychic, not

physical, but also not spiritual. You are still fightingto win, and fighting harder than ever, and, in my opinion, all fighting in modern timesis tending to become more and more a matter of intellectual and psychic force and less of physical force. It is not thereby becoming more moral or less cruel, rather the reverse, but it is becoming more effective. Personally, I have grave scruples about employing "soul-force" for the attainment of physical or political objects, however strongly I may believe in the value of those objects and the justice of my cause. In political life it is often a great temptation to me to do so, for, as you know, I feel very strongly on political questions; but, while, of course, I regard all possible means of *intellectual persuasion and argument* as right and necessary, I think that the use of what you call "soul-force" for concrete ends as dangerous in the extreme, and I always have in mind the refusal of Christ to use "soul-force" for even the perfectly harmless and apparently legitimate purpose of making stones into bread. I think that in this story a very profound truth is conveyed. Now, while *I* think this is very wrong, it does not follow that those who, even while using wrong methods, are unselfishly working for a cause (however mistaken) will not reap for themselves the moral and spiritual benefit which follows upon all unselfish sacrifice, and I am sure that you will do so and are doing so, but I think this is not due to your methods but in spite of them, and that it is actually due to your motives. But there is a danger to others less single-minded. As the *Bhagavad Gita* says: "He who sitteth controlling the organs of action, but dwelling in his mind on the objects of the senses, that bewildered man is called a hypocrite." It would be better to use the "organs of action" I think!

But taking the "passive resistance" movement as a whole, on the assumption that what you are really aiming at is not merely a political object but the assertion of the superiority of *non-resistance*, of love and of true inner freedom as against the compromises and conventions of life, it does not seem consistent that you should allow yourselves to be regarded as martyrs, or complain of the hardships of prison (not that you yourself have, I believe, ever done this) or make political capital out of what seems to you injustice or ill-treatment, or indeed allow the matter to be advertised in the Press or send deputations to England and India and generally carry on a political agitation. If it is really a matter of religion, then I think that the truest heroism is not concerned in this exceedingly active "passive resistance" but that it consists in suffering *as private individuals* and saying nothing about it.

Of course, if the object is political, all these things become questions of tactics and may be very proper and useful weapons according to circumstances. Personally, while I admire heroism displayed in a political cause, and the very real heroism of many "passive resisters" I must say that it seems in no way superior to the more active forms displayed by soldiers or rioters or revolutionaries. Neither does it differ from or deserve more sympathy than that which has been shown by many quite ordinary sufferers in other political causes and such as, for instance, the anti-Asiatic movement. It so happens that neither the soldiers nor the opponents of Asiatic immigration have been called upon to go to prison, but both alike in their respective spheres and according to their duty have risked and often lost that which they held

most dear in a cause which, though not strictly "religious", they regarded as most sacred. The physical sufferings of soldiers at any rate have vastly exceeded those of "passive resisters" yet,if the soldier complains that the bullets are too hard or that campaigning is uncomfortable and therefore that the enemy is treating him most unkindly, he is regarded as simply ridiculous. Of course, under certain circumstance, it is good tactics to parade your injuries, but that is a matter for you to decide.

Finally, I come to the question of "non-resistance" itself, and its proper use and place. It appears to me that for the individual saint, seeking liberation, for whom the time has come when the personality has to be killed out and the whole world order transcended, in order that the pure spiritual consciousness may unfold,—for him non-resistance may be the right course. I do not presume to speak of this with certainty because I do not know. In its very nature, however, non-resistance of this description can have no political end in view, for its object is to enable a man to escape and transcend the world altogether. But, as a practical political principle suitable for adoption by ordinary men living the ordinary life of citizens, it seems to me altogether pernicious, and utterly disastrous to the public welfare. It is mere anarchy, and I have always regarded Tolstoy, its principal apostle, as very likely a saint personally, but when he preaches his doctrines as a political propaganda and recommends them for indiscriminate adoption, as the most dangerous enemy of humanity. I have no manner of doubt that Governments and laws and police and physical force are absolutely essential to average humanity, and are as truly "natural" in their stage of development and as truly moral as eating and drinking and propagating the species. To undermine them without being ready to substitute something else a little better but still of the same character is simply to destroy the possibility of all advance. Therefore, to my mind, such preaching is far more injurious than more disloyalty, which after all only proposes to substitute another Government. It is a fatal confusion to suppose that what is right for the saint is right for everyone else. "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's." When all humanity has reached sainthood Government will become unnecessary but not till then. Meanwhile civilisation must be mended, not ended. Even if as regards India you are right and Mrs. Besant is wrong, and it is really the case that India should be deprived of the Government both of British rulers and of Indian princes, and each man should be a law unto himself, I am at any rate quite clear that for Western nations and for South Africa such ideas are fatal. It would, if true, only illustrate how fundamental are the differences between Indian and European, and would practically justify South Africa in taking extreme measures to get rid of the Indian population. Has it not occurred to you that, if your ideas about India are correct, your conclusion in Chapter XX that "deportation for life to the Andamans is not enough expiation for the sin of encouraging European civilization" would apply with great force to deportation from the Transvaal to Delagoa Bay or to India? I have written at far too great a length, but you have raised very interesting and important issues in your pamphlet and have asked me to criticise. Let me assure you that you and others like you have my most sincere respect and most affectionate regard and

admiration, and that, as a matter of public duty, I shall continue to oppose both your object and your methods to the utmost of my ability.

Yours very sincerely,
W. WYBERGH

PS.

As you once invited me to contribute to *Indian Opinion* an essay on passive resistance, which at the time I was unable to do, it occurs to me that you might like to publish this letter. If so, please do so.—W. W.

Indian Opinion, 21-5-1910

APPENDIX III

(i)

V. CHERTKOV'S LETTER TO GANDHIJI

My friend Leo Tolstoy has requested me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter to him of August 15 and to translate into English his letter to you of September 7th (new style 20th September) written originally in Russian.

All that you communicate about Mr. Kallenbach has greatly interested Tolstoy, who has also asked me to answer for him to Mr. Kallenbach's letter.

Tolstoy sends you and your co-workers his heartiest greetings and warmest wishes for the success of your work, his appreciation of which you will gather from the enclosed translation of his letter to you. I must apologise for my mistakes in English in the translation, but, living in the country in Russia, I am unable to profit by the assistance of any Englishman for correcting my mistakes.

With Tolstoy's permission, his letter to you will be published in a small periodical printed by some friends of ours in London. A copy of the magazine with the letter shall be forwarded to you, as also some English publications of Tolstoy's writings issued by *The Free Age Press.*

As it seems to me most desirable that more should be known in England about your movement, I am writing to a great friend of mine and of Tolstoy—Mrs. Fyvie Mayo[1] of Glasgow—proposing that she should enter into communication with you. She possesses considerable literary talent and is well known in England as an author. It should be worth your while furnishing her with all your publications which might serve her as material for an article upon your movement which, if published, in England, would attract attention to your work and position. Mrs. Mayo will probably write to you herself.

[1] A journalist and translator of Tolstoy, she had written an article on the Transvaal Indians' struggle.

With sincerest good wishes from myself. Kindly transmit to Mr. Kallenbach the enclosed letter.

V. CHERTKOV

(ii)

TOLSTOY'S LETTER TO GANDHIJI[1]

"KOTCHETY"[2],
RUSSIA,
September 7, 1910

I have received your journal *Indian Opinion* and I am happy to know all that is written on non-resistance. I wish to communicate to you the thoughts which are aroused in me by the reading of those articles.

The more I live—and specially now that I am approaching death—the more I feel inclined to express to others the feelings which so strongly move my being, and which, according to my opinion, are of great importance. That is, what one calls non-resistance, is in reality nothing else but the discipline of love undeformed by false interpretation. Love is the aspiration for communion and solidarity with other souls, and that aspiration always liberates the source of noble activities. That love is the supreme and unique law of human life, which everyone feels in the depth of one's soul. We find it manifested most clearly in the soul of the infants. Man feels it so long as he is not blinded by the false doctrines of the world.

That law of love has been promulgated by all the philosophies—Indian, Chinese, Hebrew, Greek and Roman. I think that it had been most clearly expressed by Christ, who said that in that law is contained both the law and the Prophets. But he has done more; anticipating the deformation to which that law is exposed, he indicated directly the danger of such deformation which is natural to people who live only for worldly interests. The danger consists precisely in permitting one's self to defend those interests by violence; that is to say, as he has expressed, returning blow by blows, and taking back by force things that have been taken from us, and so forth. Christ knew also, just as all reasonable human beings must know, that the employment of violence is incompatible with love, which is the fundamental law of life. He knew that, once violence is admitted, doesn't matter in even a single case, the law of love is thereby rendered futile. That is to say that the law of love ceases to exist. The whole Christian civilisation, so brilliant in the exterior, has grown up on

[1] An English translation by Pauline Padlashuk, Johannesburg, was published in *Indian Opinion*, 26-11-1910, under the title "Count Tolstoy and Passive Resistance: A Message to the Transvaal Indians". A translation by Aylmer Maude is also available in Tolstoy's *Recollections and Essays* published by Oxford University Press.

[2] Castle of Tolstoy's eldest daughter

this misunderstanding and this flagrant and strange contradiction, sometimes conscious but mostly unconscious.

In reality, as soon as resistance is admitted by the side of love, love no longer exists and cannot exist as the law of existence; and if the law of love cannot exist, therein remains no other law except that of violence, that is, the right of the mighty. It was thus that the Christian society has lived during these nineteen centuries. It is a fact that all the time peoplewere following only violence in the organisation of society. But the differencebetween the ideals of Christian peoples and that of other nations lies only in this: that, in Christianity the law of love had been expressed so clearly and definitely as has never been expressed in any other religious doctrine; that the Christian world had solemnly accepted that law, although at the same time it had permitted the employment of violence and on that violence it had constructed their whole life. Consequently, the life of the Christian peoples is an absolute contradiction between their profession and the basis of their life; contradiction between love recognised as the law of life, and violence recognised as inevitable in different departments of life: like Governments, Tribunals, Army, etc., which are recognised and praised. That contradiction developed with the inner development of the Christian world and has attained its paroxysm in recent days.

At present, the question poses itself evidently in the following manner: either it must be admitted that we do not recognise any discipline, religious or moral, and that we are guided in the organisation of life only by the law of force, or that all the taxes that we exact by force, the judicial and police organisations and, above all, the army must be abolished.

This spring, in the religious examination of a secondary school of girls in Moscow, the Professor of Catechism as well as the Bishop had questioned the young girls on the ten commandments and above all on the sixth “Thou shalt not kill”. When the examiner received a good reply, the Bishop generally paused for another question: Is killing proscribed by the sacred Law always and in all cases? And the poor young girls perverted by their teachers must reply: No, not always; killing is permitted during war, and for the execution of criminals. However, one of those unfortunate girls, (what I relate is not a fiction but a fact that has been transmitted to me by an eye-witness) having been asked the same question, “Is killing always a crime?” was moved deeply, blushed and replied with decision “Yes, always.” To all the sophisticated questions habitual to the Bishop, she replied with firm conviction: killing is always forbidden in the Old Testament as well as by Christ who not only forbids killing but all wickedness against our neighbours. In spite of all his oratorical talent and all his imposing grandeur, the Bishop was obliged to beat a retreat and the young girl came out victorious.

Yes, we can discuss in our journals the progress in aviation and such other discoveries, the complicated diplomatic relations, the different clubs and alliances, the so-called artistic creations, etc., and pass in silence what was affirmed by the young girl. But silence is futile in such cases, because every one of this Christian

world is feeling the same, more or less vaguely, like that girl. Socialism, Communism, Anarchism, Salvation Army, the growing criminalities, unemployment and absurd luxuries of the rich, augmented without limit, and the awful misery of the poor, the terribly increasing number of suicides—all these are the signs of that inner contradiction which must be there and which cannot be resolved; and without doubt, can only be resolved by acceptation of the law of love and by the rejection of all sorts of violence. Consequently, your work in Transvaal, which seems to be far away from the centre of our world, is yet the most fundamental and the most important to us supplying the most weighty practical proof in which the world can now share and with which must participate not only the Christians but all the peoples of the world.

I think that it would give you pleasure to know that with us in Russia, a similar movement is also developing rapidly under the form of the refusal of military services augmenting year after year. However small may be the number of your participators in non-resistance and the number of those in Russia who refuse military service, both the one and the other may assert with audacity that "God is with us" and "God is more powerful than men".

Between the confession of Christianity, even under the perverted form in which it appears amongst us Christian peoples, and the simultaneous recognition of the necessity of armies and of the preparation for killing on an ever-increasing scale, there exists a contradiction so flagrant and crying that sooner or later, probably very soon, it must invariably manifest itself in utter nakedness; and it will lead us either to renounce the Christian religion, and to maintain the governmental power, or to renounce the existence of the army and all the forms of violence which the state supports and which are more or less necessary to sustain its power. That contradiction is felt by all the governments, by your British Government as well as by our Russian Government; and, therefore, by the spirit of conservatism natural to these governments, the opposition is persecuted, as we find in Russia as well as in the articles of your journal, more than any other anti-governmental activity. The governments know from which direction comes the principal danger and try to defend themselves with a great zeal in that trial not merely to preserve their interests but actually to fight for their very existence.

With my perfect esteem,

LEO TOLSTOY

From *Tolstoy and Gandhi* by Dr. Kalidas Nag

APPENDIX IV

TRANSVAAL MINISTERS' DECLARATION

In view of the gravity of the cases of the sons of Messrs Chhotabhai and Tayob Haji Khan Mahomed, we give the following extracts from the Blue-book dated October, 1908, containing "correspondence relating to legislation affecting Asiatics

in the Transvaal":

EXTRACT FROM COLONIAL SECRETARY'S SPEECH ON THE SECOND READING OF THE ASIATICS REGISTRATION AMENDMENT BILL, AUGUST, 1908

The third difficulty that they felt against Act 2 of 1907 referred to children. That Act provided machinery under which it was necessary that not only the adult males but also minors between the ages of 8 years and 16 years should register. There was no special reason really for that provision that minors of those ages should be registered, and, as a matter of fact, in the voluntary registration that had taken place I had adopted an alternative procedure which was just as effective, viz., where the parent had been registered, the names, ages, and description of the children up to the age of 16 were inserted on each certificate, so that if a parent at any future date said he had five children it would be quite easy from the certificate to identify these children. That was all that was thought necessary, and that I embodied in the voluntary certificates, and therefore there was no trouble in meeting the Asiatics [*sic*] and embodying them in the law. Hon. members will see, that is the third innovation made in the Bill—that minors below the age of 16 shall not be required to have certificates of administration, but shall be taken up in the certificates of their parents."

EXTRACTS FROM THE PRIME MINISTER'S MINUTE TO THE GOVERNOR, DATED THE 5TH SEPTEMBER, 1908

Nine points were raised by the Asiatics, and these were recorded in writing as representing their final demands; and, after a discussion lasting some hours, it was decided to meet their views as far as possible and to allow no opportunity for any reasonable men to say that such views had not been met in the widest possible spirit. The objections met were as follows:

(1) Alteration of the definition of the term "Asiatic" so that Mahomedan subjects of the Turkish Dominions should not as expressed in Law 3 of 1885 be specially described as Asiatics.

(2) Unregistered Asiatics domiciled in the Transvaal for three years prior to the 11th October, 1889, should be allowed to return and register themselves, provided they made their applications within one year of the coming into force of the new Act.

(3) The names of male minor Asiatics to be recorded on their parents' certificates and their registration not to be required until they reached the age of sixteen years.

(4) Thumb-impressions should not be required from applicants for trading licences who could sign their names in English in formed handwriting.

(5) An appeal from the decision of the Registrar of Asiatics refusing to register an applicant for registration should be allowed to a Magistrate specially appointed to hear all such appeals.

(6) The provision in Act 2 of 1907 allowing Asiatics under certain circumstances to acquire liquor should be deleted on the grounds that it

was contrary to the religion of the majority of the persons concerned to consume the same.

(7) While Act 2 of 1907 was to remain on the Statute Book all Asiatics holding Certificates of Registration under the Validating Act were to be specially exempted from the provisions of the Asiatic Law Amendment Act.

(8) Transfer of certain property in Pretoria to be allowed in favour of the heirs of a deceased Indian named Aboobaker Amod who had acquired the property before the passing of Law 3 of 1885.

The ninth subject of discussion was the fresh demand made for the immigration of Asiatics not claiming previous domicile in the Transvaal but who could pass an educational test. This is a claim which Ministers had previously decided was inadmissible, and, even had it been otherwise, it is difficult to see by what means a Bill providing for the immigration of Asiatics of the class in question could be passed through either of the Houses of Parliament in view of the almost universal feeling of the white Colonists on the subject. The Asiatic leaders were informed that in this single respect, their wishes could not be met, and this was distinctly understood by them. A Select Committee representing all parties in the Legislative Assembly was then appointed to re-draft the Bill in accordance with the arrangement come to. The Committee consisted of Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, Messrs Jacobsz, Chaplin, Wybergh, and the Colonial Secretary and a copy of their report, dated the 20th ultimo, submitting a new draft Bill is attached.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL, DATED 9TH SEPTEMBER, 1908

IV. The minor Asiatic (i.e., a boy under sixteen) will be included in the certificate of his parent or guardian. Under Act No. 2 of 1907, it was the duty of the parent or guardian, if the child was under eight, to furnish the necessary particulars relative to him, and when such child attained the age of eight to apply for registration on his behalf. Under the New Act the child, when he attains the age of sixteen, will have to apply for registration, and, if he attained that age while he was outside the Colony and he desires to take up his residential rights (if any) in it he will have to apply from a place outside the Colony but in South Africa."

Indian Option, 10-9-1910

APPENDIX V

IMMIGRANTS' RESTRICTION BILL

(1911)

Re-printed from "The Union of South Africa Government Gazette Extraordinary", dated the 25th February, 1911

GOVERNMENT NOTICE NO. 353 OF 1911

The subjoined Bill, "To Consolidate and Amend the Laws in force in the various Provinces of the Union relating to Restrictions upon Immigration thereto, to provide for the Establishment of an Union Immigration Department and to regulate Immigration into the Union or any Province thereof", is hereby published for general information.

W. E. BOK,

SECRETARY TO THE PRIME MINISTER

PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE,
CAPE TOWN, 24TH FEBRUARY, 1911

BILL

TO

Consolidate and Amend the Laws in force in the various Provinces of the Union relating to Restrictions upon Immigration thereto, to provide for the Establishment of an Union Immigration Department and to regulate Immigration into the Union or any Province thereof.

To be introduced by The Minister of the Interior

Be it enacted by the King's Most Excellent Majesty, the Senate, and the House of Assembly of the Union of South Africa as follows:

PRELIMINARY

1. The laws mentioned in the First Schedule to this Act shall be and are hereby repealed to the extent set out in the fourth column of that Schedule, together with so much of any other law as may be repugnant to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act.

2. In this Act, and in the regulations made thereunder, unless inconsistent with the context

"department" shall mean the Immigration Department established under this Act;

"immigration officer" shall mean the chief immigration officer or any other officer of the department, or any other person, whether an officer of the

department or not, on whom powers have been conferred or to whom duties have been assigned by the Minister as to the carrying out of this Act or the regulations;

"magistrate" shall mean a chief magistrate or a resident or assistant resident magistrate;

"master", in relation to a ship, shall mean any person (other than a pilot) for the time being in charge or command of any ship;

"Minister" shall mean the Minister of the Interior, or any other Minister to whom the Governor-General may assign the administration of this Act;

"owner", in relation to a ship, shall, in addition to the actual owner, include the charterer of the ship, or any agent within the Union of the owner or charterer;

"police officer" shall mean any member of a police force established in the Union under the authority of law;

"port" or "port of entry" shall mean.

(a) any place on the coast of the Union; or

(b) any railway station or place within the Union at or near any border thereof, at which entry into the Union can be effected;

"regulation" shall mean a regulation made and in force under this Act;

"ship" shall include any vessel or boat of any kind whatsoever used in navigation, whether propelled by sails, steam power, or other mechanical means, or by towing or oars or in any other manner whatever.

THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT

3.(1) The Governor-General may establish and, out of moneys voted by Parliament for the purpose, maintain a department to be known as the Immigration Department, which shall be under the control of the Minister.

(2) The function of the department shall be the performance of all work, whether within or outside the Union, necessary for or incidental to the prevention of the entrance of prohibited immigrants into the Union, or the entrance of persons into any Province wherein their residence is unlawful, or necessary for or incidental to their removal from the Union or any such Province. The department shall further carry out any other powers and duties specially conferred or imposed upon it by this Act or by regulation.

CHAPTER I

Prohibited Immigration

4. The entry into the Union by land or sea of any such person as is described in this section (in this Act and the regulations referred to as a "prohibited immigrant") is forbidden, namely,

(a) any person who, when an immigration officer dictates to him not less than fifty words in the language selected by such an officer, fails to write out those words in that language to the satisfaction of that officer;

(b) any person who is likely, if he entered the Union, to become a public charge, by reason of infirmity of mind or body, or because he is not in possession for his own use of sufficient means to support himself and his dependents;

(c) any person who, from information received from any Government (whether British or foreign) through official or diplomatic channels, is deemed by the Minister to be an undesirable inhabitant of or visitor to the Union;

(d) any prostitute, or any person, male or female, who lives on or knowingly receives any part of the earnings of prostitution or who procures women for immoral purposes;

(e) any person who has been convicted in any country of any of the following offences (unless he has received a free pardon therefor), namely, murder, rape, arson, theft, receiving stolen goods knowing the same to have been stolen, fraud, forgery or uttering forged documents knowing the same to have been forged, counterfeiting coin or uttering coin knowing the same to be counterfeit, house-breaking with intent to commit an offence burglary, robbery with violence, threats by letter or otherwise with intent to extort, or of any attempt to commit any such offence, and by reason of the circumstances connected with the offence, is deemed by the Minister to be an undesirable inhabitant of or visitor to the Union;

(f) any idiot or epileptic, or any person who is insane or mentally deficient, or any person who is deaf and dumb, or deaf and blind, or dumb and blind, or otherwise physically afflicted, unless in any such case he or a person accompanying him or some other person give security to the satisfaction of the Minister for his permanent support in the Union, or for his removal therefrom whenever required by the Minister;

(g) any person who is afflicted with leprosy or with any such infectious, contageous or loathsome or other disease, as is defined by regulation, or who is of a low or degenerate type of the human species.

PERSONS NOT PROHIBITED

5. The following persons or classes of persons shall not be prohibited immigrants for the purposes of this Act, namely,

(a) any member of His Majesty's Regular Naval or Military Forces;

(b) the officers and crew of a public ship of any foreign State;

(c) any person who is duly accredited to the Union by or under the authority of His Majesty or the Government of any foreign State, or the wife, family, staff or servants of any such person;

(d) any person who enters the Union, under such conditions as may be prescribed from time to time in accordance with any law or under any

convention with the Government of a neighbouring territory or state and who is not such a person as is described in paragraph (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), or (g) of the last preceding section.

OFFENCES AND PENALTIES

6.(1) Every prohibited immigrant who, after the commencement of this Act, enters or is found within the Union, shall be guilty of an offence and liable on conviction

(a) to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period not exceeding three months without the option of a fine; and

(b) to be removed at any time by the Minister's warrant from the Union.

(2) Pending the removal, the prohibited immigrant may be detained in such custody as may be prescribed by regulation.

(3) The prohibited immigrant may be discharged from the imprisonment or custody aforesaid if security be given to the satisfaction of the Minister that the prohibited immigrant will within one month leave the Union, and not return thereto.

(4) Every such sentence of imprisonment shall terminate as soon as the prohibited immigrant is removed from the Union.

(5) Every officer in charge of a prison or gaol shall, if the warrant of removal be produced to him, deliver the prisoner named therein to any police officer or immigration officer, and the prisoner shall be deemed to be in lawful custody so long as he is in the custody of any such police officer or immigration officer, or of any police officer or immigration officer for the time being in possession of the warrant.

PROVINCIAL RESTRICTION

7. The provisions of the last preceding section shall apply *mutatis mutandis* in respect of every person who, though domiciled in any Province, enters or is found in any other Province in which, according to the provisions of any law in force at or immediately prior to the commencement of this Act, he has unlawfully entered or has been found to be residing unlawfully, and any such person shall, in respect of the said other Province, be liable to be dealt with as in the last preceding section is described and removed to the Province wherein he is domiciled. For the purposes of this Act every such person shall be a prohibited immigrant in respect of the said other Province.

TRADING LICENCES

8.(1) No prohibited immigrant shall be entitled to obtain a licence to carry on any trade or calling in the Union or (as the case may be) in any Province wherein his residence is unlawful or to acquire therein any interest in land, whether leasehold or freehold.

(2) Any such licence (if obtained by a prohibited immigrant) or any contract, deed or other document by which any such interest in land is acquired in contravention of this section, shall, on conviction of the prohibited immigrant as such, be null and void.

ARRESTS

9.(1) Every person who is suspected on reasonable grounds of being a prohibited immigrant may be arrested without warrant by an immigration officer or police officer, and shall be brought as soon as possible before a court of resident magistrate to be dealt with according to law.

(2) Any magistrate may, if information on oath be laid before him that there is upon any premises a named or described person reasonably suspected of being a prohibited immigrant issue a warrant empowering a police officer of or above the rank of sergeant to enter those promises and search for the person named or described in that warrant, and arrest him.

PLEA OF IGNORANCE

10. No prohibited immigrant shall be exempt from the provisions of this Act or the regulations, or be allowed to remain in the Union, or in any Province wherein his residence is unlawful, by reason only that he had not been informed that he could not enter the Union or (as the case may be) that Province, or that he had been allowed to enter through oversight, misrepresentation, or owing to the fact having been undiscovered that he was such a prohibited immigrant.

CHAPTER II

Special Powers for preventing entry of and dealing with Prohibited Immigrants at Ports of Entry

11.(1) Any immigration officer may, as and when he deems fit, board any ship which is entering or has entered a port.

(2) Any immigration officer may, whenever it is necessary for the more effectual carrying out of this Act or the regulations, prohibit or regulate any communication with, or landing on the shore from, any ship on which the immigration officer is proceeding with the examination of persons or which has on board or is suspected of having on board any prohibited immigrant, and the immigration officer may take such steps to carry out any such prohibition or regulation as the Minister may approve.

(3) Any immigration officer may order the master of any ship to moor or anchor the ship at such distance from the shore or landing place or in such position as the immigration officer may consider expedient for enabling the provisions of this Act or the regulations to be carried out effectually.

DUTIES OF SHIPS' CAPTAINS

12. It shall be the duty of the master of any ship which enters any port to deliver to an immigration officer upon demand

(a) a list of all passengers on board the ship, classified according to their respective ports of destination and specifying the class which each such passenger has voyaged and such further particulars as may be prescribed by regulation;

(b) a list of stowaways, if any have been discovered;

(e) a list of the crew and all persons (other than passengers or stowaways) employed or carried on the ship in any capacity by or on behalf of the owner;

(d) a certificate under the hand of the medical officer (if any) of the ship or, if there be no medical officer, under his own hand, stating any known cases of disease whether infectious or otherwise which have occurred upon the voyage or any known cases of physical or mental, infirmity or affliction, the names of the persons who have suffered or are suffering therefrom and the nature in each case of the disease, infirmity or affliction.

PLACE OF DETENTION

13.(1) If it appear to an immigration officer (whether upon the representation of the master or otherwise) that any person prohibited from landing ought, for the better carrying out of the objects and purposes of this Act, to be kept elsewhere than on the ship which conveyed him, the immigration officer may cause him to be removed in, custody from the ship and to be detained in any other place, whether afloat or on shore, which may be appointed by the Minister for the detention of prohibited immigrants.

(2) Every such person shall, while detained, whether on board the ship or at any such other place aforesaid, be deemed to be in the custody of the master and not of the immigration officer, and the master shall further be liable to pay the cost of the landing; removal, detention, maintenance, and control of any such person while so detained.

(3) As soon as the ship is about to sail (due notice whereof shall be given by the master to the immigration officer) any prohibited immigrant removed under this section from the ship shall, if the immigration officer so require, be placed thereon again.

(4) The immigration officer may, prior to the said person being landed, require the master or the owner of the ship to deposit a sum sufficient to cover any expense that may be incurred by the department in connection with the landing, removal, detention, maintenance and control aforesaid.

(5) If for any reason any such prohibited immigrant be not placed again on the ship, in accordance with sub-section (3), the owner shall, without payment by the Government, provide, at the request of the immigration officer, a passage with proper food and accommodation, in another ship, for the prohibited immigrant to the place at which he originally embarked.

(6) Any such person who escapes or attempts to escape from detention, while being dealt with under the powers of this section, may be arrested without warrant, and shall, in addition to any other offence which he may have committed under this Act, be deemed to have committed an offence in respect of the escape or attempt to escape.

FORFEITS

14.(1) If after a ship has arrived at any port, any prohibited immigrant lands from the ship at that port without proper authority, the master or the owner shall forfeit a sum to be fixed by the Minister but not exceeding one hundred pounds in respect of every such prohibited immigrant.

(2) Until the sum so fixed has been paid and until the owner or the master has, to the satisfaction of the immigration officer, provided for the removal from the Union of every such prohibited immigrant, no clearance papers shall be given to the master or to the owner.

(3) The ship may be declared executable by order of a Superior Court to satisfy any forfeiture incurred under this section.

MEMBERS OF THE CREW

15.(1) On or after the arrival and again before the sailing of a ship at any port, an immigration officer may require the master to muster his crew and may serve upon him a list of such of the crew as are prohibited immigrants.

(2) If any of the crew, being prohibited immigrants, do not answer to the names at the later muster, the master or the owner of the ship may be required before the ship sails to deposit with the immigration officer a sum of twenty pounds in respect of each such person so missing.

(3) Any such sum shall be forfeited to the Government unless the master or owner prove to the satisfaction of the chief immigration officer, within six months thereafter, that the person in respect of whom the sum was deposited is no longer in the Union.

(4) Until any sum required under this section is deposited no clearance papers shall be given to the master or owner.

(5) The ship may be declared executable by order of a Superior Court to satisfy any forfeiture incurred under this section.

AN AGREEMENT

16. For the purpose of facilitating the clearance of ships habitually calling at the various ports, the Minister may, in his discretion, enter into a bond or agreement with the owner whereby the owner undertakes that he or the masters of ships belonging to himand so calling at ports will carry out so much of the provisions of the last two preceding sections as relate to the owner or the master, and thereupon the provisions of the said bond or agreement shall be substituted for those sections so far as they relate to the payment or deposit of moneys by the master or the owner.

CLEARANCE PAPERS

17. A port captain or harbour master shall not permit a ship to leave port or to go to any outer harbour or anchorage unless clearance papers be produced to him.

CHAPTER III

General and Miscellaneous

18. An immigration officer may require any person entering the Union to make a declaration in the form prescribed by regulation that he, or any person accompanying him, is not a prohibited immigrant and to state in the declaration such further particulars as may be prescribed by regulation, and may require him to fill in and complete in every respect that form and to produce, in support of the declaration, documentary or other evidence.

Every such declaration shall be exempt from any stamp duty ordinarily imposed by law on affidavits and solemn declarations, anything to the contrary notwithstanding in any law in force in the Union relating to stamp duty.

Any person who fails on demand to comply with any provision of this section or who declares upon the form anything as a fact or produces or gives such evidence as aforesaid, which he knows to be false, shall be guilty of an offence.

PERSONAL EXAMINATION

19.(1) Every person entering the Union shall, if required, appear before an immigration officer and furnish such information as is prescribed by this Act or the regulations relative to his claim to enter the Union.

(2) Every person entering the Union who is on reasonable grounds suspected of being afflicted with any disease or physical or mental infirmity which would under this Act or the regulations render him a prohibited immigrant shall, if required by an immigration officer, submit himself to examination by a medical practitioner appointed by the Minister for the purpose.

AIDING AND ABETTING

20. Any person, who

(a) aids or abets any person in entering or remaining within the Union or any Province in contravention of this Act or the regulations, knowing that person to be prohibited from so entering or remaining;

(b) aids or abets a person ordered to be removed from the Union or any Province in evading the order, or harbours any such person knowing him to be the subject of any such order;

(c) for the purpose of entering the Union, or any province wherein his residence is unlawful, or of assisting the entrance of any other person, in contravention of this Act or the regulations, commits any fraudulent act or makes any false representation by conduct, statement or otherwise,

shall be guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds or, in default of payment, to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period not exceeding six months, or to such imprisonment without the option of a fine.

21. Any person, who

(a) has been convicted, whether before or after the commencement of this Act, of a contravention of any of the provisions enumerated in the Second Schedule thereto, or of any amendment of those provisions;

(b)having been removed at the expense, either whole or partial, of any Government from the Union or any part thereof now included in the Union, or being the subject of an orderly under any law to leave the Union or any part thereof now aded in the Union, returns thereto without lawful authority, or has failed to comply with the terms of any such order;

(c) having been refused by an immigration officer permission to enter the Union or any Province, has entered the Union or that Province;

(d) admits to an immigration officer in a written document that he is a prohibited immigrant either in the Union or in any Province,

may, if not already under detention, be arrested without warrant and removed from the Union or (as the case may be) from the Province, by the Minister's warrant and, pending removal may be detained in such custody as may be prescribed by regulation.

DEPORTATION

22. Any person (not being a natural born British subject, or a person naturalized in any part of His Majesty's dominion), who, whether before or after the commencement of this Act, if serving a sentence of imprisonment for any of the offences mentioned in paragraph (*e*) of section *four* and who by reason of the circumstances connected with the offence is deemed by the Minister to be an undesirable inhabitant of the Union, may, during or at the expiration of his sentence, be removed from the Union by the Minister's warrant, and, pending removal, may be detained in such custody as may be prescribed by regulation. The provisions of sub-section (4) and (5) of section *six* shall be deemed to be incorporated *mutatis mutandis* in this section.

THE BURDEN OF PROVING

23.(1) The burden of proving that a person has not entered or remained in the Union or any Provinces in contravention of this Act or any regulation shall, in any prosecution for or in respect of such a contravention, lie upon the accused person.

(2) Any order, warrant, or other document, which under this Act or the regulations may be issued by the Minister, shall be good and effectual if signed by any officer in the public service authorized by the Minister by notice in the *Gazette* to sign such an order, warrant, or other document, and when so signed shall be evidence in all courts of law and for other purposes that it was issued in accordance with the provisions of this Act or the regulations.

MAGISTRATES' POWERS

24. A court of resident magistrate shall have special jurisdiction to impose the maximum penalties provided for a contravention of this Act or the regulations, anything to the contrary notwithstanding in any law relating to courts of resident magistrate.

TEMPORARY PERMITS

25.(1) Anything to the contrary notwithstanding in this Act contained, the Minister may in his discretion issue a temporary permit to any prohibited immigrant to enter and reside in the Union or any particular Province upon such conditions as to period of residence or otherwise as the Minister may in the permit specify.

(2) The Minister may also in his discretion issue a permit to any person who at the commencement of this Act is lawfully resident in the Union or any Province and who, desiring to proceed thereout with the intention of returning thereto, is for any reason apprehensive that he will be unable to prove on his return that he is not a prohibited immigrant. The permit in this sub-section mentioned shall expressly authorise the person named therein to return to the Union or the particular Province (as the case may be), but before issuing the permit the Minister shall require such proof of the said person's identity and such means of identification to be furnished as may be prescribed by regulation.

AUTHORITY TO MAKE REGULATIONS

26.(1) The Governor-General may make regulations, not inconsistent with this Act, prescribing

(a) the duties of immigration officer;

(b) the steps to be taken to prevent the entrance of prohibited immigrants into the Union or the entrance of persons into any Province in which their residence is unlawful;

(c) the times, places, and conduct of the enquiry or the examination, medical or otherwise, of persons entering or desiring to enter the Union or any Province or who, being found in the Union or any Province, are suspected of being prohibited immigrants or unlawfully resident therein;

(d) the procedure for, and the manner of, the detention of prohibited immigrants and unlawful residents pending their removal from the Union or any Province, and the procedure necessary for and the manner of any such removal;

(e) lists of infectious, contagious, loathsome or other diseases, the affliction with which will render a person a prohibited immigrant;

(f) the issue of permits described in the last preceding section, the conditions upon which any such permit may be issued, the fees which may be charged therefor, and the amount and the nature of the

security to be found for the due carrying out of any such conditions;

(g) the conditions under which prohibited immigrants may be allowed to pass through the Union while journeying or being conveyed to a place outside the Union or from one Province to another within the Union;

(h) the forms of warrants, permits, certificates, declarations, books, or other documents to be used, or to be made or kept, for the purposes of this Act or the regulations, and the particulars to be inserted on or in any such document;

and generally for the better carrying out of the objects and purposes of this Act.

(2) The regulations may provide penalties for the contravention thereof or failure to comply therewith, not exceeding the penalties mentioned in the next succeeding section.

PENALTIES

27. Any person, who—

(a) for the purpose of entering the Union or any particular Province, or of remaining there in contravention of this Act or any other law, or assisting any other person so to enter or so to remain, fabricates or falsifies any permit or other document or utters, uses or attempts to use any permit or other document which has not been issued by lawful authority or which though issued by lawful authority, he is not entitled to use or any fabricated or falsified permit or other document knowing it to have been falsified; or

(b) fails to comply with or contravenes the conditions under which any permit or other document has been issued to him under this Act or the regulations; or

(c) obstructs, hinders, or opposes an immigration officer or police officer in the execution of his duty under this Act or the regulations; or

(d) contravenes or fails to comply with any provision of this Act or the regulations for the contravention whereof or failure to comply wherewith no penalty is specially provided;

shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding fifty pounds, or, in default of payment, to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period not exceeding three months, and, in the case of a contravention of paragraph (a) or (b) of this section, to such imprisonment without the option of a fine.

TITLE OF THE ACT

28. This Act may be cited for all purposes as the Immigrants' Restriction Act, 1911, and shall commence and come into operation on the first day of 1911.

FIRST SCHEDULE

LAWS REPEALED

Province	No. and Year of Law	Title or Subject of Law	Extent of Repeal
Cape of Good Hope	Act No. 30 of 1906	The Immigration Act, 1906	The whole
Natal	Act No. 30 of 1903	The Immigration Restriction Act,1903	The whole
,,	Act No. 3 of 1906	To Amend the Immigration Act, 1903	The whole
Transvaal	Act No. 2 of 1907	The Asiatic Law Amendment Act, 1907	The whole, except so far as it is applicable to the registration of minors law-fully resident in the Transvaal
”	Act No. 15 of 1907	The Immigrants’ Restriction Act, 1907	The whole
”	Act No. 38 of 1908	The Immigrants’ Restriction Amendment Act, 1908	The whole
Orange Free State	Law No. 18 of 1899	The admission and expulsion of aliens to and from the Orange Free State	The whole
	Ordinance No. 25 of 1902	The Indemnity and Peace Preservation Ordinance, 1902	Sections *nineteen* to *twenty-four*, inclusive

SECOND SCHEDULE

PROVISIONS REFERRED TO IN PARAGRAPH (a) OF SECTION TWENTY-ONE

Province	No. and Year of Law	Title or Subject of Law	Section Contravened
Cape of Good Hope	Act No. 36 of 1902	The Betting Houses, Gaming and Brothels	Sections *twenty-two, thirty-one thirty-two* and *thirty-three*
Natal	Act No. 31 of 1903	The Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1903	Sections *three, thirteen, fourteen* and *fifteen*
Transvaal	Ordinance No. 46 of 1903	The Immorality Ordinance, 1903	Sections *three, thirteen, fourteen* and *twenty-one*
”	Act No. 16 of 1908	The Criminal Law Amendment Act,	Section *four* and Section *five,* paragraph (a)
Orange Free State	Ordinance No. 11 of 1903	The Suppression of Brothels and Immorality Ordinance, 1903, as amended by Ordinance No. 19 of 1908	Sections *two, eleven, twelve* and *thirteen*

Indian Opinion 4-3-1911

APPENDIX VI

CAPE PETITION TO PARLIAMENT[1]

CAPE TOWN,
March 15, 1911

1. At a public meeting of British Indians held on the 12th instant under the auspices of, the above Association, a resolution was unanimously passed directing your Petitioners to petition this Honourable House on the subject of the Immigrants' Restriction Bill, 1911, at present before it.

2. Much as your Petitioners regret that the existing restrictions upon the free movements between the Provinces of British Indians lawfully domiciled within the Union are to be maintained, they recognise that they cannot reasonably close their eyes to the popular prejudices that unhappily exist against their class and consequently they accept this decision of the Government, fervently hoping that a better understanding of them will at some future date lead to a removal of the restrictions.

3. Your Petitioners earnestly desire however to bring to the notice of the Honourable House the many respects in which their position as lawfully-domiciled residents of this Province will be altered for the worse:

(a) Instead of their education test being, as it is under the existing laws of the Province, one in an European language selected by the would-be immigrant, the choice of the language is to be absolutely with the Immigration Officer.

(b) The Immigration Officer is to be invested with other powers so absolute as your Petitioners submit may possibly lead to serious cases of hardship.

(c) The wives and minor children of lawfully-domiciled residents are not protected from the danger of exclusion as prohibited immigrants.

(d) British Indians born in the Province and others lawfully-domiciled therein who are temporarily abroad upon their return are liable to be called upon to pass the education test and to be excluded in the possible event of their failing.

(e) British Indians domiciled within the Province who desire to absent themselves temporarily may be refused permits such as are now

[1] This petition to the Legislative Assembly was presented to Parliament, signed by Messrs Adam H. Gool Mahomed, Shamsudin Casimali and Abdul Hamid Gool, M.B., in their capacities as Chairman and Joint Honorary Secretaries, respectively, of the Cape British Indian Union.

granted them and thus either be prevented from attending to matters of importance abroad or have to face the danger of rejection upon their return. Your Petitioners humbly submit that certificates of domicile should be granted to all applicants for them who shall prove residence in the Province for a period to be specified.

(f) No right of appeal to the Courts of Law of the Union against the decision, however arbitrary, of the Immigration Officer, is provided for in the Bill under consideration.

4. Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that this Honourable House will amend the Bill in terms of the above suggestions humbly and respectfully submitted and thereby preserve the rights hitherto enjoyed by them under the Laws of the Union and the Province, or grant such other relief as to this Honourable House may seem meet.

Indian Opinion, 25-3-1911

APPENDIX VII

LANE'S LETTER TO GANDHIJI

March 16, 1911

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

With reference to my telegram of the 4th instant, it was not meant to convey to you the idea that Chapter XXXIII of the Orange Free State Laws would be cancelled. No provision was made for this in the Schedule and it was never the intention of the Government to repeal the Chapter.

An amendment will be moved which will, in effect, exempt the educated Indian immigrants from registration under the Transvaal Act No. 36 of 1908. They will thus have full power to reside and to travel in Cape Colony, Natal and the Transvaal, but will not be able to reside in the Orange Free State without complying with the provisions of the local law.

With regard to the second point you raised, I regret to say that the difficulty is not appreciated by the department and perhaps you will be good enough to give a more detailed expression of your views, when the matter will be again considered.

Indian Opinion, 25-3-1911

APPENDIX VIII

TELEGRAM TO GANDHIJI FROM PRIVATE SECRETARY TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR

March 24, 1911

YOUR LETTER OF 20TH AND TELEGRAM OF 22ND MARCH RECEIVED. IN REPLY I AM DIRECTED TO INFORM YOU THAT THERE SEEMS TO BE A WRONG IMPRESSION REGARDING MATTER MENTIONED BY YOU. THERE WILL BE NO COLOUR OR RACIAL BAR OF ANY KIND WHATSOEVER AT EARING IN IMMIGRATION BILL OR ANY AMENDMENT WHICH GOVT. INTEND TO MOVE YOU HAVE REPEATEDLY STATED THAT INDIAN COMMUNITY DESIRE AS A FINAL SETTLEMENT OF THE ASIATIC QUESTION ONE REPEAL ACT 2 OF 1907 TWO EDUCATION TEST FOR ALL UNDER A NEW IMMIGRATION ACT AND DIFFERENTIAL ADMINISTRATION. NOT ONLY DOES GENL. SMUTS CONCEDE THESE POINTS BUT HE GOES FURTHER AND PROPOSES TO EXEMPT EDUCATED INDIANS ADMITTED UNDER NEW ACT FROM REGISTRATION IN TRANSVAAL WHERE THE TROUBLE HAS ARISEN. HE WILL ALSO MOVE AMENDMENTS IN REGARD TO RIGHTS OF DOMICILED OR LAWFULLY RESIDENT PERSONS WIVES AND MINORS WHICH WILL LEAVE THE RIGHTS OF ASIATICS IN NATAL AND CAPE AS THEY ARE TODAY. YOU ARE THEREFORE WRONG IN THINKING THAT THE POSITION OF ASIATICS IS MADE WORSE UNDER THE PROPOSED BILL. THEIR EXISTING RIGHTS WILL BE MAINTAINED EVERYWHERE AND NO STATUTORY DIFFERENTIATION WILL BE MADE. IN REGARD TO YOUR CONTENTION CONCERNING THE ORANGE FREE STATE GENERAL SMUTS HAS NOTHING TO SAY AND PROPOSES LEAVING THE SITUATION AS IT EXISTS UNDER THE PRESENT LAW OF THE PROVINCE. GENL. SMUTS ASKS ME TO SAY IN CONCLUSION THAT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE STATEMENT IN THE FIRST PARAGRAPH OF YOUR LETTER OF 4TH INST. HE HOPES YOU WILL DO YOUR BEST TO SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY THAT NOW OFFERS OF BRINGING THE STRUGGLE TO A CLOSE AND WILL NOT RISK A CONTINUATION OF THE PRESENT UNSATISFACTORY POSITION BY THE ABSOLUTELY NEW CONTENTION REGARDING THE O. F. S. SUCH AN ATTITUDE ON YOUR PART WILL HE FEARS EXASPERATE THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AND COMPLICATE THE POSITION STILL FURTHER.

From a photostat of the original: S.N. 5350

APPENDIX IX

(i)

GENERAL SMUTS' TELEGRAM TO HOSKEN

CAPE TOWN,
March 24, 1911

I HAVE RECEIVED YOUR TELEGRAM. I VERY MUCH REGRET YOUR ATTITUDE. THE INDIAN COMMUNITY HAVE NEVER SO MUCH AS EVEN ASKED THAT EDUCATED INDIAN IMMIGRANTS SHOULD BE EXEMPT FROM THE REGISTRATION LAWS OR SPECIAL LAWS OF THE PROVINCES. ALL THEY HAVE ASKED IS PERMANENT RESIDENTIAL RIGHTS AS OPPOSED TO MERELY TEMPORARY PERMITS. I NOW ENTIRELY OUT OF MY OWN MOTION PROPOSE TO EXEMPT THEM FROM REGISTRATION UNDER THE TRANSVAAL ACT AND AT ONCE IT IS DEMANDED THAT I SHOULD ALSO EXEMPT THEM FROM THE O. F. S. LAW ON PAIN OF THE PASSIVE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT BEING CONTINUED. YOU NOW INFORM ME THAT THIS NEW DEPARTURE MEETS WITH YOUR APPROVAL. I CAN ONLY EXPRESS MY REGRET AT YOUR ACTION WHICH I FEEL IS ILL CONSIDERED AND MISCHIEVOUS. IT IS NOT YOU WHO WILL SUFFER IN THE END BUT THE INDIAN COMMUNITY AGAINST WHOM THE WHITE POPULATION IS BECOMING DAILY MORE EXASPERATED AND DEMANDING EVEN MORE STRINGENT LEGISLATION. A GOLDEN CHANCE FOR A FINAL SETTLEMENT IS NOW TO BE THROWN AWAY BECAUSE OF THE ABSOLUTELY NEW CONTENTION THAT EDUCATED ASIATICS MUST ALSO BE ADMITTED NOT ONLY INTO THE TRANSVAAL BUT THE O. F. S. AS WELL.

From a photostat of the original: S.N. 5353

(ii)

HOSKEN'S TELEGRAM TO GENERAL SMUTS

INDIAN COMMUNITY HAS ALWAYS STOOD FOR THESE RIGHTS FOR PERMITTED EDUCATED INDIANS. SEE MR. GANDHI'S LETTER IN LORD CREWE'S DESPATCH. INDIANS HAVE ASKED NOT SO MUCH FOR PERMANENT RESIDENTIAL RIGHTS EDUCATED ASIATICS AS FOR REMOVAL OF COLOUR BAR REGARDING FREE STATE WE ONLY CLAIM FULFILMENT POSITIVE COMMITMENT BY PRIME MINISTER IN [HIS] DESPATCH 20TH DECEMBER. IS THAT PROMISE NOT STILL BINDING? ON SECOND READING, DID YOU NOT MAKE SAME PRONOUNCEMENT? AS QUESTION PRACTICAL POLITICS, PROBABLY NOT ONE INDIAN WILL ATTEMPT TO ENTER FREE STATE, BUT INDIAN COMMUNITY CANNOT ACCEPT COLOUR DISABILITY. I AM MOST ANXIOUS PROMOTE PEACEFUL

SETTLEMENT IN INTERESTS SOUTH AFRICA AND EMPIRE.

From a photostat of the typescript: S.N. 5357

APPENDIX X

LANE'S LETTER TO GANDHIJI

CAPE TOWN,
April 11, 1911

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

With reference to your visit here this afternoon, regarding the Immigration Bill, I regret to inform you that at the present time General Smuts is not in a position to be able to give you any information as to be the bill or to any modification that may be made to it before it is again brought before Parliament. The whole matter is still under consideration and is likely to be so until towards the end of the week. Under these circumstances I am afraid that we cannot give you any outline which you could use in your cable, and I can only suggest your cabling that your are in touch with the department and that when they are able to communicate anything definite you will again cable to India.

Believe me,
Yours faithfully,
EARNEST F. C. LANE

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
CAPE TOWN

From a photostat of the original: S. N. 5451

APPENDIX XI

LANE'S LETTER TO GANDHIJI

CAPE TOWN,
April 21, 1911

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I am in receipt of your letters of the 19th and 20th April, in regard to the draft Immigration Bill, and have submitted them both to the Minister.

General Smuts has asked me to say to you that he regrets that, in view of the probable prorogation of Parliament early next week, it will not be possible for the Government to proceed with Immigration legislation in any form this session.

The Government are keenly desirous of arriving at a solution of this vexed question and in the recess they will go into the matter again and see what can be done to secure a settlement.

In the meantime, General Smuts feels that the passive resistance movement, which has caused and still continues to cause considerable suffering, might now well

be brought to a close. Its continuance only tends unnecessarily to complicate the situation, and when the Government are endeavouring to fix a satisfactory solution of the question of Indian immigration the Indian community should not embarrass matter by maintaining their campaign.

General Smuts notes that Mrs. Sodha's appeal comes up at Bloemfontein on Saturday next, and requests me to say that your representations on her behalf are receiving his favourable consideration.

Yours sincerely,
ERNEST F. C. LANE
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
CAPE TOWN

From a photostat of the original: S. N. 5491; also *Indian Opinion*, 29-4-1911

APPENDIX XII

UNION GOVERNMENT'S REASONS FOR DROPPING IMMIGRANTS' RESTRICTION BILL (1911)

A

PARAPHRASE OF GLADSTONE'S TELEGRAM TO HARCOURT

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL *APRIL 12, 1911*
URGENT

Immigration Bill. J. C. Smuts tells me this morning that Gandhi says that passive resistance in Transvaal must continue if selected immigrants are not admitted into Orange Free State. He wants J. C. Smuts to drop the Bill and substitute another applying immigration proposals to Transvaal only. He says exclusion by Orange Free State is absolutely inadmissible and that in addition the Bill causes new and serious trouble in Cape of Good Hope and Natal.

J. C. Smuts says that he cannot shake Orange Free State members who are now backed by a resolution of the Provincial Council. He says a new Bill in the last days of the session is impossible and that in any case it is impossible to differentiate Transvaal from Union and to set up new immigration machinery along its borders.

In these circumstances J. C. Smuts thinks best course is to drop the Bill and endeavour to bring in a more acceptable measure next year. He thinks passive resistance is almost at an end and that he could arrange a truce with Gandhi till fresh Bill was introduced. At the same time he feels bound to proceed if you insist but he thinks Indian Government dislike present Bill so much that are not likely to object to the course which he proposes. But he would like to [have?] your views.

I greatly regret delay involved but I cannot see any alternative course open to less objection.

GLADSTONE

Colonial Office Records: C. O. 551/10

B

PARAPHRASE OF HARCOURT'S REPLY

Reference your private and personal telegram of April 12th Indian Government are being consulted and I am anxious to learn their opinion before expressing my views.

J. C. Smuts is, I presume, satisfied that he prevent a renewal of agitation by Gandhi and that there is no likelihood of his action in dropping the Bill in deference to Gandhi's opposition leading to greater trouble in the future by enhancing Gandhi's prestige and his belief that he can dictate terms to the Union Government. Is J. C. Smuts in a position to foresee that he could next year introduce a Bill which would be more acceptable to Gandhi, as regards the two matters now objected to, than the present one? Please let me know by what date you must receive an expression of my views.

HARCOURT

Colonial Office Records: C. O. 551/10

C

BOTHA'S MINUTE FOR IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT

. . . [1] Ministers had framed a measure which, while subjecting all immigrants to an equal statutory test, gave large powers to the Immigration Officers similar to those existing in Australia at the present time, under which all but a few selected Asiatics—principally professional men—could be excluded from the Union. A difficulty then arose in regard to the right of such Asiatics to enter the Orange Free State after landing in the Union, and unanimous objection was made by all members of Parliament representing Orange Free State constituencies to any educated Indians being allowed to enter that Province. A strong resolution protesting against any modification of the Orange Free State laws regarding Asiatics was also passed by the Orange Free State Provincial Council.

The Indian community, on the other hand, stated that they accepted the draft law as it stood, but that they would be compelled to continue their agitation in order to secure that all educated Asiatics admitted in terms thereof should enjoy thesame freedom in the Orange Free State as was contemplated that they should enjoy in all other Provinces of the Union.

Ministers felt that as an alternative a Bill which referred only to the Transvaal might be passed, but constitutional questions arose, and when it was, moreover, seen

[1] The preceding paragraphs of this minute are not available.

that the main object of the Bill, namely, a settlement of the Indian immigration question, would not be achieved, Ministers considered that the only course was to drop the matter for the present and to endeavour during the recess to devise some solution which would prove of a durable nature.

Ministers accordingly informed the leaders of the Indian community of the position of affairs, and have some reason for hoping that the passive resistance movement will be temporarily suspended pending the introduction of Immigration legislation during the next session of Parliament.

Ministers desire to inform His Excellency, in conclusion, that it is with great regret that they have been obliged to postpone the matter; but in view of the objections to the proposed law which reached the Government from many quarters, they felt that further consideration was essential, so that a settlement agreeable to all parties might be arrived at.

LOUIS BOTHA

Cd. 6283

D

SMUTS' SPEECH IN UNION PARLIAMENT

General Smuts said that before the Speaker left the chair he would like to say a few words. He was sorry that this Bill, which was one of the most important and one of the most valuable that had come before the House this session, would not be put on the Statute-book; but hon. members would see that, owing to so much time having been taken up with other very important and necessary legislation, it would not be possible for them to go on with the Bill, and the matter of immigration would have to stand over to be dealt with by legislation next year. When he introduced the second reading of this Bill he stated that the Government had two objects in view. The first was to secure uniformity in regard to the immigration laws of South Africa, and the second was to effect some settlement of the Indian question, which had been one of considerable anxiety and difficulty for some years past, and he laid on the table the correspondence which had passed between the British Government and the Union Government, in reference to the possibility of an early solution of those difficulties. Although it was not possible to pass this Bill into law this session, and to carry into effect the solution which was practically agreed upon between the British Government and the Union Government, he was fairly hopeful, even apart from this legislation, of putting a stop to passive resistance for the following twelve months, and of securing some peace on this question in South Africa until Parliament had a chance of dealing with it next session. That being so, there was no immediate necessity to deal with the question, and it could very well stand over for mature consideration, and for more careful thought in South Africa generally. The subject was a very important one. It dealt not only with Indian immigration, but with all white immigration, and the delay in proceeding with the Bill would probably tend to facilitate its passage through Parliament, because more mature consideration would be given to it. He therefore moved that the order be discharged and the Bill withdrawn.

Cape Times, 26-4-1911

APPENDIX XIII

LANE'S LETTER TO GANDHIJI

CAPE TOWN,

April 22, 1911

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 22nd of April, which was written in reply to my letter of the 21st instant.

I have shown your letter to General Smuts and he has asked me to say that he quite appreciates the spirit in which you write, and he has every hope that by approaching this question in a conciliatory way a temporary solution may be arrived at which will leave all concerned free to devote their energies to securing a more lasting one.

I am authorized to say that the Minister intends introducing legislation during the next session of Parliament to repeal Act 2 of 1907, subject to the reservation of the rights of minor children. In devising such legislation the Minister intends to introduce provisions giving legal equality for all immigrants, with, however, differential treatment of an administrative as distinct from a statutory character.

In regard to the second point you raised, I am to say that in such proposed legislation power will be taken to register all passive resisters who, but for their present resistance, would have been entitled to register had they done so at the proper time, nothing in Act No. 36 of 1908 withstanding.

Power will also be taken to regularize the issue at the present time of temporary certificates, which the Minister is prepared to grant to the educated passive resisters who are now in the Transvaal, but who are not registrable under the existing Asiatic Acts. Their number is, I understand, not more than five or six at the outside. These certificates would entitle the holders to remain in the Transvaal in anticipation of the forthcoming legislation.

In conclusion, I am to say that if an assurance is given by you to the effect that the community will suspend their passive resistance movement, the Minister will ask His Excellency the Governor-General to consider favourably the question of releasing passive resistance prisoners who are now undergoing sentence for contravening the existing Asiatic legislation.

I hope that, after consultation with the Indian community, you will be able to inform General Smuts on his return to Pretoria of the cessation of the passive resistance, so that he may be able to assure His Majesty's Government that the leaders of the Indian community intend to co-operate with the Government with a

view to arriving at a definite solution of this question.

Believe me,
Yours sincerely,

ERNEST F. C. LANE
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
CAPE TOWN

From a photostat of the original: S.N. 5500; also *Indian Opinion*, 29- 4-1911

APPENDIX XIV

E. M. GORGES' LETTER TO GANDHIJI

PRETORIA,
May 19, 1911

SIR,

With further reference to your letter of the 4th instant, I am directed by the Hon. the Minister to inform you

(a) That Asiatics who were deported subsequent to the 1st January, 1908, under Act 2/07 or 36/08, and who have valid claims to registration under such Acts, but who have not yet applied owing to the passive resistance movement will be permitted to make their applications not later than the 31st December next, subject of course to the provisions of the Acts and Regulations.

(b) That Asiatics who, although not deported, left South Africa without applying for registration owing to the passive resistance movement, and who can prove that they have valid claims to registration, will also be permitted to make their applications for registration in accordance with the provisions of Act 2/07 or Act 36/08 and the Regulations made thereunder, on or before the 31st December next, provided applications under (a) and (b) do not exceed 30 in number.

(c) With regard to the fifth paragraph of your letter, it is understood there are 180 Indians and Chinese in South Africa, who were refused registration under the voluntary system, and who have not yet made their applications under Acts 2/07 or 36/08. In their respect I am to inform you that provided a list of their names is furnished without unreasonable delay opportunity will be afforded to them of making their applications not later than the 31st December next, subject to the provisions of the Acts named

(d) That the seven educated Indians now in the Transvaal and named by you will receive temporary authorization to remain here pending alteration of

the law, when permanent documents will be issued to them authorizing their residence in the Transvaal. Similar authority will also be given as a special case to three educated Mahomedans. The proposed number of six educated Indians per annum, whose immigration was previously agreed to, will be adhered to in the future, the increase of the number to ten during the current year being only due to the special circumstances of the case.

The Minister trusts that the acceptance of the requests now made will be regarded by the Asiatic community as a final settlement of the questions involved. On hearing from you to this effect the Department of Justice will be communicated with, the object of procuring the release of passive resisters at present undergoing confinement for contravention of he Asiatic Registration Acts.

Prisoners sentenced in connection with the possession of forged certificates of or the use of certificates not issued to them cannot be released.

I have, etc.,

E. M. GORGES

ACTING SECRETARY FOR THE INTERIOR

From a photostat of the original: S. N. 533; also *Indian Opinion*, 27-5-1911

APPENDIX XV

TELEGRAM TO GANDHIJI FROM SECRETARY FOR INTERIOR

PRETORIA,
May 20, 1911

WITH REFERENCE TO YOUR LETTER YESTERDAY AS CORRECTED BY TELEPHONE TODAY THERE IS NO OBJECTION TO INCLUSION AMONGST 180 ASIATICS DESCRIBED PARAGRAPH C OF MY LETTER OF 19TH OF THOSE NOW IN SOUTH AFRICA WHO FAILED TO APPLY WITHIN PROPER PERIOD FOR REGISTRATION ON GROUNDS THREE YEARS PRE-WAR RESIDENCE IN TRANS-VAAL. REGARDING QUESTION NUMBER ONE OF YOUR LETTER 29TH APRIL WHILE IT IS NOT PROPOSED TO TAKE AWAY ACTUALLY EXISTING RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUALS THE POSITIONS IN THE VARIOUS PROVINCES WILL NO DOUBT BE AFFECTED BY ANY LAW WHICH IS INTENDED TO BE GENERAL AND UNIFORM FOR THE WHOLE UNION. QUESTION TWO DEALT WITH ABOVE. QUESTIONS THREE AND FOUR WERE DEALT WITH IN A AND B OF MY LETTER YESTERDAY. QUESTION FIVE DEALT WITH PARAGRAPH D MY LETTER YESTERDAY. QUESTION SIX NO FIXED STANDARD OF EDUCATION. QUESTION SEVEN WELL

EDUCATED REGISTERED ASIATICS NEED NOT GIVE FINGER OR THUMB PRINTS WHEN TAKING OUT LICENCES. QUESTION EIGHT WELL KNOWN REGISTERED ASIATICS NEED NOT GIVE FINGER OR THUMB PRINTS WHEN TAKING OUT LICENCES PROVIDED THEY CAN SIGN NAMES CLEARLY IN ENGLISH.

From a photostat of the original as delivered: S. N. 5536; also *Indian Opinion*, 27-5-1911

APPENDIX XVI

A

TRANSVAAL DRAFT LOCAL GOVERNMENT ORDINANCE, 1911

EXTRACTS AFFECTING ASIATICS

ASIATIC BAZAARS[1]

66. (1) The council may set apart, maintain, and carry on Bazaars or other areas exclusively for occupation by Asiatics, and control and supervise the same in the accordance with by-laws to be made from time to time by the council, and may lease the land and any buildings or other erections thereon to Asiatics upon such terms and at such rents as may be prescribed from time to time by such regulations.

(2) The provisions of sub-sections (4) to (7) inclusive of the last preceding section shall *mutatis mutandis* apply for the purpose of enabling a council to close such Bazaars and areas and lay out other land suitable for the same.

(3) The council shall not set apart, nor close, such Bazaars or other areas reserved exclusively, for occupation by Asiatics without the approval and consent of theGovernor-General, nor shall any by-law made under this section be of any force or effect unless and until the approval and consent of the Governor-General shall have been obtained thereto.

[1] It was in April 1899 that the Kruger regime first decided to relegate Asiatics to Locations and the power to regulate these was vested in the Town Councils; *vide* "Memorial to Chamberlain", 16-5-1899. In April 1903, the post-War British Government under Lord Milner, Lieutenant-Governor of the Transvaal, issued the Bazaar Notice; *vide* "British Undians in South Africa", 12-4-1903 The power to demarcate Bazaars was transferred to Town Councils by Ordinance in 1905; *vide* "Asiatic Bazaars in the Transvaal", 22-7-1905. *Vide* also "The British Indian Association and Lord Milner", 11-6-1903 & "Petition to Transvaal Governor", 8-6-1903; "Petition to the Transvaal Council", 8-12-1903, "Legislative activity in the Transvaal", 30-9-1905 & "Deputation to Lord Selborne", 29-11-1905; "Representation to Lord Elgin", 31-10-1906 and "Fine on Indians", 25-4-1908; "Johannesburg Letter", 16-5-1908; "Transvaal Municipal Consolidation Bill", 23-5-1908 & "Petition to Transvaal Legislative Assembly", 15-6-1908.

67. (1) The council may grant leases of plots in any Native Location or Asiatic Bazaar or township established by the council or under its control, for any term not exceeding thirty-three years, in such from and subject to such conditions as the Governor-General may approve.

(2) Any such lease shall be valid though not executed before a notary public, and any such lease or a cession thereof shall be valid if registered in a register to be kept by the council in accordance with regulation to be made by the Governor-General.

Any transfer duty or stamp duty payable on any such lease or cession thereof under any law relating to transfer duty, or stamp duty, shall be paid in manner prescribe by such regulations and the council shall account to the Minister of Finance for such duty as is so payable.

SANITATION, ETC.

75. The council may from time to time make, alter and revoke by-laws for all or any of the following purposes, namely;

(12) for licensing and regulating tea-rooms, cafes, restaurants, hotels, eating., boarding-and lodging-houses, and all purveyors of milk, dairies, milkshops, cow-sheds, bakehouses, butchers' shops, and all factories and places where articles of food or drink are manufactured or prepared for sale or use, or sold;

(13) for licensing and regulating Kaffir eating-houses;

(14) for regulating and licensing pedlars and hawkers; provided that no person, who sells only fresh farm-produce grown on land occupied by him, shall be required to take out a pedlar's or hawker's license;

(15) for regulating or preventing the washing of clothes on public or private premises, and licensing persons for washing and laundry work.

ASIATIC TEA-ROOMS[1]

88. The council may from time to time make, alter and revoke by-laws for all or any of the following purposes, namely:

(6) for regulating and licensing Asiatic tea-rooms or eating-houses.

LICENCES

91. The council may refuse a licence in respect of any premises as a theatre, music hall, public hall, concert room, or other place of amusement, or any premises where articles of food of drink are sold, used or prepared for human consumption, or any boarding or lodging houses or any premises for washing or laundry work, or to license hawkers or pedlars on any of the grounds mentioned in the last preceding

[1] It was in 1905 that a law was passed requiring all Indian hotel-keepers to take out licences; *vide* "Indian Hotels in the Transvaal & "Legislative Activity in the Transvaal", 30-9-1905; "Letter to Town clerk", 6-2-1907 & "Johannesburg Letter", 9-2-1907 and "Petition to Transvaal Legislative Assembly", 9-7-1907 & "Johannesburg Letter", 2-11-1907.

section, and also on one or more of the following grounds;

(a) that the applicant has failed to produce satisfactory evidence of good character;

(b) that the premises in respect of which a license is sought or any adjacent premises owned or occupied by the applicant are frequented by persons of bad character;

(c) that the granting of such a license is, in respect of the premises for which it is sought, calculated to cause nuisance or annoyance to persons residing in the neighbourhood;

(d) that the granting of such a license would be contrary to the public interest;

and no appeal shall lie against the refusal of the council to grant any such license.

92. The council may in respect of a license which it may grant under in by-laws and which entitles the holders thereof to carry on any trade or business for manufacturing, preparing, selling, or using articles of food and drink for human consumption,

(a) impose conditions prohibiting or restricting the employment of Native, Asiatic, or Coloured labour in the preparation of such articles of food and drink;

(b) impose conditions prohibiting or restricting the employment on premises, where articles of food and drink are sold, or females under the age of sixteen years, or the employment on such premises of females after eight o'clock at night;

provided that the conditions imposed by the council under this section shall be clearly endorsed upon the licence and the licensee shall sign a duplicate of the form of license containing such conditions. The council shall retain the duplicate so endorsed and signed and the same shall, when produced before any court of law, be *prima facie* evidence of the conditions imposed.

93. Anything to the contrary in this Ordinance notwithstanding, the council may, in its discretion refuse to grant licences to the hauler of any jinricksha or to the driver of any road locomotive, tram-car, omnibus, motor-car, cab, trolley, or other vehicle playing for hire.

VOTERS' ROLL[1]

114. Every white person, male or female, being a British subject of the age of twenty-one years or upwards, who occupies and resides in premises within the municipality of the gross annual value of twelve pounds and upwards, or who owns

[1] The section, by omission, denies Indians the right to municipal franchise from which Transvaal Indians were first debarred in 1903; *vide* "Petition to Natal Legislature", 10-6-1903; "What is a Coolie", 21-5-1904 and "Statemeent of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909.

immovable property within the municipality in respect of which either erf tax or assessment rate is payable or leviable, shall be entitled to be enrolled on the voters' list for the municipality, provided that a husband and wife shall not both be entitled to be enrolled on the voters' list in respect of the same property.

TRAM-CARS

171. The council may, from time to time, make, alter, and revoke by-laws for all or any of the following purposes:

(a) for regulating the use of any tramways established, acquired, or worked by the council and for making charges in connection with the use of the council's tram-cars;

(b) for regulating the use of the council's tram-cars by Natives and Asiatics and prohibiting or restricting the use of such tram-cars by Natives, Asiatics, and all persons who are not respectably dressed or well conducted;[1]

(c) for regulating the conditions of service and duties of persons employed by the council in working tramways, and for imposing fines (by means of stoppages of pay) on such persons for negligence, dereliction of duty, or other offence prejudicial to the good and proper working of the tramway system.

No such by-law shall be inconsistent with, contrary or repugnant to the provisions of this Ordinance or of any other law in force within the municipality.

Indian Opinion, 10-6-1911

B

PETITION TO TRANSVAAL PROVINCIAL COUNCIL

JOHANNESBURG,
June 6, 1911

HON'BLE THE ADMINISTRATOR AND THE MEMBERS OF
THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL OF THE TRANSVAAL

THE PETITION OF A. M. CACHALIA IN HIS CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN OF
THE BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

HUMBLY SHEWETH THAT

1. Your Petitioner has read the Draft Local Government Ordinance, 1911[2],

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Town Clerk", 10-2-1906; "A Reply to the Leader", 16-2-1906; "Johannesburg Trams and Indians", 17-2-1906; "Johannesburg Letter", 26-2-1906; after 18-5-1906; 26-5-1906 & "Statement Presented to Constitution Committee", 29-5-1906; "Johannesburg Letter", 25-5-1907; "Petition to Transvaal Legislative Assembly", 15-6-1908 and "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Morley", 26-6-1909

[2] The Transvaal Government had attempted a somewhat similar registration in

published in the Government *Gazette* of the 17th May, and observes with grave misgivings that several of its clauses threaten the lawfully resident British Indians with further serious disabilities.

2. Your Petitioner remarks that Sections 66 and 67 of the Ordinance empower the Council to "set apart, maintain and carry on Bazaars or other areas exclusively for occupation by Asiatics, and control . . . same in accordance with bye-laws to be made from time to time by the council", and that by subsection (3) of Section 66 the Council may (subject to the approval and consent of the Governor-General) close such "Bazaars" after posting up a notice of their intention to do so, in a conspicuous place. As to this, your Petitioner would observe that, apart from the general question of segregation to which, on principle, your Petitioner takes exception, the powers conferred are capable of being employed most detrimentally to British Indians, especially those of the shop-keeping class who may establish themselves in such Bazaars. The expansion of the towns has been followed almost invariably by the closing of the "Bazaar" previously established and the consequent removal of its occupants to another Bazaar located still further away from the town centres and routes. This uncertainty of tenure militates against business enterprise and prosperity, and constitutes a grave hardship to the British Indians who take up their abode and callings in such "Bazaars".

3. Section 75(12), (13) and (14) and Section 88(6) especially touch Asiatic interests. Councils will, under these Sections continue to control eating-houses, butchers', Asiatic and Kaffir eating-houses, pedlars', hawkers', laundrymen's and laundry licenses; and your Petitioner observes that, while provision is made for appeal to a Resident Magistrate against the refusal of Councils to grant other business licences referred to in the measure, Section 91 expressly provides that "no appeal shall lie against the refusal of the Council to grant any of the above licenses." The experience of British Indians in other Provinces of the Union where similar uncontrolled power is or was invested in licensing boards or Councils prompts your Petitioner to protest most earnestly against the express exclusion of the right of appeal against arbitrary refusals to a properly constituted judicial tribunal, apart from the fact that such a provision constitutes an infringement of the liberty of the subject.

4. Your Petitioner further draws attention of this Hon'ble House to the fact that there is now no occasion to provide for licensing Asiatic tea-rooms or eating-houses as none such have existed after the withdrawal of the Chinese indentured labourers. The wants of the small Asiatic community residing in this Province are supplied by private boarding-houses.

5. Section 92 may, by penalizing the employment of Asiatic labour, work serious hardships upon British Indians employed in useful industries, and in some

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1908 but had to drop it. *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 16-5-1908; "Transvaal Municipal Consolidation Bill", 23-5-1908; "Petition to Transvaal Leggislative Assembly", 15-6-1908 & "Johannesburg Letter", 23-6-1908.

cases may result in deprivation of their means of livelihood, In the humble opinion of your Petitioner, the discrimination against Asiatics expressed in this Section should be deleted.

6. Your Petitioner further submits that the discretion vested in the Council in regard to the granting or withholding of drivers' licences (Section 93) should be subject to a right of appeal to a judicial tribunal.

7. While your Petitioner's community, bowing to the unhappy prejudice against Asiatics existing in this Province, have not sought the political franchise, they feel keenly the specific disability imposed upon their people by Section 114, whereby they are precluded from being placed upon the Municipal Voters' roll, a disability shared by them with such white persons only as have been convicted of serious criminal offences.

Your Petitioner would venture to remind this Hon'ble House that the Indians are large contributors of Municipal rates, and, as statistics abundantly prove, are among the most law-abiding sections of the populations, and therefore, ventures to except to their being classed with white convicts.

8. Your Petitioner observes that Section 171(b) empowers the prohibition or restriction of the use of tram-cars by "Natives, Asiatics and all persons who are not respectably dressed or well conducted". This restriction is at once humiliating and inconvenient for the Asiatic communities, and, in your Petitioner's humble opinion, totally unwarranted.

9. In conclusion, your Petitioner earnestly calls the attention of this Hon'ble House to the grievances above indicated and prays that the Draft Ordinance will be amended so as to grant relief in the premises. And for this act of justice and mercy your Petitioner shall, as in duty bound, for ever pray, etc.

A. M. CACHALIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

From *Indian Opinion*, 10-6-1911; also Colonial Office Records: C. O. 552/22

APPENDIX XVII

S.A.B.I COMMITTEE'S LETTER TO COLONIAL OFFICE

THANET HOUSE,
231-232, STRAND, W. C.,
June 17, 1911

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
COLONIAL OFFICE, S. W.

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 18542/1911 of the 13th instant, inviting me—on behalf of the Secretary of State—to put before him, in writing, any further observations that I may have to make in addition to those already made to him formally by the Transvaal British Indian Association, of whichI have received a copy. As, however, I have been deputed to speak on behalf to the Cape and Natal Indians also, copies of whose memorials have been sent to me, I propose with Mr. Secretary Harcourt's permission, to deal generally with the situation affecting the Indian communities of South Africa.

2. If one feeling more than another predominates in those communities it is one of great unrest and insecurity. The Indians of South Africa realize that, but for the frequent intervention of His Majesty's Government on their behalf, their existence would be scarcely tolerable, and it was with the gravest apprehension that they watched the negotiations which culminated in the passing of the Act of Union. In the Transvaal the Indians feared the extension of the operation of the principles underlying the licensing laws of the Cape and Natal; in these Provinces the Indians dreaded the adoption of the Location Registration and immigration laws of the Transvaal. The tendency, ever since the Peace of Vereeniging, has been to equalize the treatment of Indians through South Africa on the basis of its harshest aspect. The Secretary of State will no doubt remember when, in 1903, Lord Milner issued his Bazaar Notice, Natal hastened to follow suit. The drastic licensing law of Natal was taken over by the Cape, and now attempts are being made to extend its operation to the Transvaal also. It is strongly felt, therefore that if they desire to retain any civil rights and privileges whatever, the Indians of South Africa must oppose a united front to attacks that are being made with increasing frequency in all quarters of the Union upon their vested interests. This was, in fact, one of the main reasons why, in various ways, the Cape and Natal Indians so closely associated themselves with the claims of their Transvaal brethren during the passive resistance struggle that is now suspended.

3. The great fear of the Transvaal Indians has ever been that attempts would be made to render effective the provision of Law 3 of 1885 requiring residence in Locations. In 1903 the Transvaal Supreme Court held that trading licences must be issued to Indians trading outside of Locations, and the Law contains no sanction for non-residence

therein, but the Vrededorp Stands Act was the first measure passed with the object of compelling Indians to reside and trade in Locations. The Townships Act and Gold Law have but fulfilled the Indians' worst anticipation. Contracts between Europeans and Indians conferring upon the latter the equitable ownership of fixed property, although its nominal ownership is refused them by another provision of Law 3 of 1885, have been recognized in the Transvaal Courts, as in the case of *Syed Ismail and Another* v. *S. Jacobs, N.O.*, but the new laws will result in the penalizing of European registered owners and of the Indian equitable owners, the former, like myself, being liable to a heavy fine for permitting Indian Coloured persons to reside on their own premises, and the latter to the confiscation of the property which is virtually theirs. The net effect of these several enactments is to shake the security of Indian investments and the compulsory segregation of Indian traders in Locations where no business can be done, and where they will be unable to hold any relations with their present clientele. Many hundreds of them will be ruined and obliged to leave the country for losses incurred through no fault of their own. Very many of those affected, though sympathizing with and materially assisting the passive resisters, have themselves taken no active part in the struggle, but if these measures become effective, as there is every reason to fear they will, I have very little doubt but that a much more embittered struggle will commence than that which it is hoped is now happily over, for all sections of the community are likely to unite in lively opposition to these attempts to ruin them. The policy that is being pursued is not merely one of pinpricks, but one calculated to oblige lawfully resident Indians, who cannot be removed in any other way, to leave the country, apparently of their own accord, because conditions are no longer bearable for them.

4. Very much the same may be said in regard to the Cape and Natal Indian communities. The Cape Immigration law has been used to diminish the already diminishing numbers of resident Indians. Cases have occurred very recently where advantage has been taken of the over-staying by two or three days of the period of the permit of absence, to exclude Indians who have been long resident in the Province and who, in some cases, still have businesses there. The Cape Law, unlike that of Natal, contains no definition of domicile, and great hardship constantly results from its administration. Indeed, in both these Provinces, it is the belief of the Indian community that immigration administration is most harsh and unsympathetic and that the officials appear to act upon the assumption that it is their duty, upon any colourable pretext, to prevent the re-entry of an Indian already resident therein. The immigration officers frequently act in a most arbitrary manner, and, as Mr. Secretary Harcourt will no doubt see from cables dated the 14th instant, in contempt and defiance of orders of the Courts, but it is not every Indian sufferer who can afford to seek the protection of the Provincial Courts, and there is no doubt that great hardship has been inflicted upon many inoffensive people by the high-handed methods of the immigration officers both of the Cape and Natal. The Cape Indians suggest that provision should be made in any alteration of the Provincial immigration laws for the creation of Immigration Boards superior to the Immigration officials, and that

Indians should have effective representation thereon.

5. The Licensing laws continue to bear most heavily upon Indian traders and hawkers. Licensing officers in the Coast Provinces have adopted the policy of "weeding out" Indian traders for a variety of amazing reasons, and sometimes for no reason at all. At the Cape hundreds of Indian hawkers have been ruined and may Indian firms employing them have had to close down. In Natal, the amending law of 1909, whilst it has undoubtedly been of great service to the Indiancommunity in preventing, to some extent, the flagrant injustice of the past, has induced the licensing authorities to seek other means of depriving licensing-holders [*sic*] of their means of livelihood. Where the Indian trader has entered into a compromise with his creditors, though the only method by the which he could satisfy them was by continuing his trade, he has been refused the re-issue of his licence. If he has desired to transfer his business to other premises, he has been refused the necessary endorsement upon his licence. If he has wished to take a partner the partnership has been prohibited by the licensing officer. If he has desired his son to take over the business this has been denied to him and attempts have been made to confine the duration of a licence to the lifetime of a holder, so that a son may not succeed his father. Transfers of licences, even to Colonial-born Indian, are almost impossible. It is difficult, indeed, to know what is to be the future of the Colonial-born Indians if they are to have one avenue of advancement after another closed to them, as is threatened. In view of the fact that the resident Indian community is not likely to be added to in the future, it is held by the Cape and Natal Indians that these restrictions upon Indian trade should be removed at an early date; but as against this, avowedly with the object of punishing the Indian trading community for the part that they are supposed to have taken in the stoppage of Indentured labour supplies by the Government of India, Mr. G. H. Hulett, recently procured the passing of the resolution, in the Natal Provincial Council, asking for the transfer of licensing matters to the cognizance of the Council instead of the Union Parliament, which can alone, at present, legislate thereon. The Natal Indians have strongly protested against any such procedure, basing their protest upon the effective provisions of Section 147 of the South Africa Act. I have the honour to enclose herewith, for Mr. Secretary Harcourt's further information, a copy of the transactions of the Natal Indian Congress thereon.

6. A very bitter feeling has spread throughout the Indian community of South Africa by reason of the £3 annual tax imposed upon ex-indentured Indian men, women and children, the tax upon women and children being especially resented by, and offending the feelings of, the Indian community, who urge that these, at least, should be exempt from taxation, and protected from the evil results that are admitted to flow from such imposts. The amending act of 1910 has but slightly improved the situation. Whilst some magistrates occasionally grant a complete exemption to particular individuals, others grant temporary exemptions for a limited period, whilst others, again, grant no exemption at all, but give very brief periods of grace for payment, and in default thereof, sentence the unfortunate women to imprisonment

with hard labour. It is perhaps unnecessary for me to dwell upon the economic and social evils that must naturally ensue from this enforced payment.

7. The Cape and Natal Indians were much gratified to peruse the despatches addressed by Mr. Secretary Harcourt to the Governor-General of the Union of South Africa, in which the Secretary of State declared that, in a settlement of Transvaalcontroversy, Cape and Natal Indians' rights and privileges should not be diminished. Unfortunately, the Bill presented to Parliament in the last session materially affected, to their disadvantage, Indian interests, and it is very gravely feared that the Bill that it is proposed to introduce next year will not contain all the safeguards that are necessary. It is urged that statutory domicile should be defined as in the present Natal law, that the existing tests should not be made more severe, and that Indian traders should retain the right that they already possess to procure necessary clerical and other confidential assistance from India. I am specially instructed and authorized to request that the Secretary of State will most carefully examine any proposed immigration legislation in order to avoid the infliction of grave injury and injustice upon Indian residents in these Provinces.

8. South African Indians have two serious general causes of complaint. The first is that attempts are being made, by legislation, virtually anti-Asiatic, but couched in language that would make it appear to be of general application, to defeat the purpose of the safeguards contained in Section 147 of the South Africa Act. The second is that, whilst the legislation itself may be acceptable, the regulations framed thereunder, and which very seldom come before Parliament for sanction, not infrequently contain provisions of a highly objectionable racial character.

9. I very much fear that I have to a great extent reiterated what has already been said on the subject of the South African Indian grievances, but I have thought it better, in view of the nearness of the debate upon the treatment of Indians resident in the self-governing dominions, at the Imperial Conference, and of the fact that I shall be unable to discuss the situation personally with the Secretary of State, to err on the side of repetition rather than that any matter referred to herein should not be sufficiently elaborated. Should there be any information that I may be able to furnish him with, in addition to whatever is already in the possession of Mr. Secretary Harcourt, I shall be most happy to place myself at his disposal.

I have, etc.,
Your most obedient servant,
H. S. L. POLAK

Colonial Office Records: C. O. 551/22

1. TO THE COLONIAL-BORN INDIAN

Those of our Colonial-born friends who have not read the special contribution[1] to this journal on the Native Industries Exhibition in Durban, and [*sic*] published last week, we trust, will hasten to read it and ponder over it. It is written by one who is himself an idealist and who knows thoroughly what he is writing about. He is, moreover, a friend and fellow-worker in the Indian cause. Our contributor's remarks are therefore worthy of careful consideration by every Indian whose life-mould has not yet been cast or, if it is already cast, does not give real satisfaction. Our future in South Africa depends largely upon the conduct of those who are born in this country and to whom India is merely a geographical expression.

We associate ourselves with the remarks of our contributor that "lolling on stools in lawyers' offices" is no "*useful* ambition". A moment's thought ought to convince our friends that a nation cannot be built out of clerks or even merchants."Back to the land" is General Botha's advice even to the Europeans who, after all, do follow many useful occupations. The world lives on its farmers and those who are indispensable to farmers, e.g., carpenters, shoemakers, black-smiths, masons, bricklayers, tailors, barbers, etc. It is a sad fact that very few Colonial–born Indians are found willing enough to learn or take up these truly noble (because useful) professions. We all live upon the great industry of the Natives and Indians engaged in useful occupations in this country. In this sense they are more civilized than any of us, not excluding European non-producers, inhabiting this continent. Every speculator may leave the country; every lawyer may shut down his office, every merchant may wind up his business; and yet we should live comfortably on this land endowed by nature with a beneficent climate. But if the great Native races were to stop work for a week, we should probably be starving. It must, then, be a privilege for us to be able to copy their productive industry and their ability as matters of useful handicraft. We assure our friends that, even if all the

[1] The witer had praised the Natives' industry, manual skill and intelligence which were in the evidence at the exhibition. He felt that Colonial-born Indians had no desire to be useful, that education would merely serve to produce clerks among them and that practical training in agriculture or a useful trade was the best way to equip them for public service as well as for life. *Indian Opinion*, 8-7-1911.

galling disabilities which we labour under in South Africa were to be removed at a stroke the pen, our condition would in no wise be satisfactory until our Colonial-born friends direct their undoubted ability and energy in the channels pointed out in the contribution we have drawn attention to.

Indian Opinion, 15-7-1911

2. INDIA'S SORRY PLIGHT

> The news that we have had of a complete settlement is satisfying. A campaign which called forth such sacrifices could have had only one result. [Yet] reflecting over the outcome, one is moved to sorrow at our unfortunate state here. Things are so bad that it would seem an edifice had rotted and lay about in ruins. If you still see a vestige of form[about it], it is then due to its solid foundations. People have been enfeebled in body and mind, and economically. Extreme poverty prevails all around. There is a [Gujarati] saying about the idle barber who keeps himself busy shaving wooden seats; likewise you must have also heard the one about "the weak husband who is brave with his wife". Sin is the fruit of the tree of poverty. The economic situa-tion has greatly deteriorated. People ask in despair how they can make a living. Here you will [of course] say that agriculture is the best of all. But that is for men who are patient and of a steady temperament. People are in an abject state because of wranglings over affairs of caste, and unhealthy rivalry in regard to commu-nal dinners and social customs; [people's] tendency to be satis-fied with the earnings of a few hours' work, say four, six, eight or ten hours; and to waste the rest; such misguided contentment, the terror of the plague, etc. Education, which is believed to be a means for promoting happiness has become instrumental in bringing about the worst state of misery. The strain of learning leaves one a physical wreck. The methods of learning are such that they wholly wear one out in body, in mind, and financially. Add to this the burden of [keeping up] status in society. By the time a man is mature and knowing and tries to hold his head high, he is weighed down with the responsibilities of family.

We find these reflections in a letter by a certain experienced and educated Indian of South Africa to another. The correspondent has

given a faithful and vivid picture of conditions in India. We thought it necessary to cite these views and comment on them for the benefit of readers. A patriot's first duty is to know the state of his country. Having done so, his next duty is to search for a remedy. This done, his third duty is to give effect to the remedy. The state of the country is as set forth above. One cannot question that description. Once the remedy is know, it is up to the readers to put it into practice. Our function is to help them to discover the remedy.

In the very process of setting forth the country's sorry plight, the correspondent mentioned some of the reasons. Let us consider them further. Starvation is not a cause of misery. It is itself misery. The contentment men find in service is not a cause of degradation; it is degradation in itself. Wranglings over affairs of caste, hypocrisy, unhealthy rivalries, the terror of the plague—these are not causes of a fallen state; they constitute that state. [In fact] there is a single cause for all these. We *have forsaken our duty*. We have forgotten God and we worship Satan. A man's duty is to worship God. Telling one's beads is no symbol of that worship; neither is going to mosque or temple., nor saying the *namaz*[1] or the *gayatri*[2]. These things are all right as far as they go. It is necessary to do the one or the other according to one's religion. But by themselves they are no indication of one's being devoted to god in worship. He alone truly adores god who finds his happiness in the happiness of others, speaks evil of none, does not waste his time in the pursuit of riches, does nothing immoral, who acquits himself with others as with a friend, does not fear the plague or any human being. Such a one will not, for fear of his caste, give communal dinners; if he is young, he will not, for fear of his men of his caste, marry before he is old enough or until he feels the need for it, and, if a father, he will not, for fear of men of his caste, ruin his son's and daughter's future. Such a one will not pause, in deciding on any course of action, to think of what any individual or community would think of it. He will only ask himself: 'What will God within me say of this deed of mine?' The upshot of all this is that all of us, whether Hindus, Muslims, Parsis or Christians, have forsaken our true religion. If this view is right, what we need is not remedies against the plague or revolt against the British rule; neither big associations with theirostentatious ways of doing things, nor societies

[1] The Islamic prayer
[2] The Rigvedic hymn to the Sun God

nor meetings; neither will it be any use to keep looking at one another., waiting to act till others give us the lead. One thing alone is needful; all of us, having learnt our duty; must presevere in it till the moment of death. If this view is right, we need help from none save God. We can then do our duty in the midst of a conflagration, can still do it even if placed on the edge of a sword. The worst then that can happen is that we lose our mortal bodies. Why fear this? Fear will not keep the body alive. It will perish, when the appointed hour comes.

If we do our duty in this manner, so easy if only we will think of it, we shall know the rest as we go on. The first need of a man lost in a thick wood at night is light. He may then bide without fear till he finds the road. When he does find it, he will take it straightaway. If he finds any institutions on the way, he will use them as bridges for crossing rivers and streams. If the bridges are in disrepair, he will examine them with the aid of the light and call attention to the cracks of other defects. This light of duty is easy for anyone to acquire and once it is acquired, the way will be found forthwith; even a child will admit that.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-7-1911

3. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Monday night [*July 17, 1911*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Your letter regarding the trust and other matters came to hand only today. It will be better if you address your letters to the Farm hereafter. I propose going to Johannesburg only once a week, that is, on Monday.

[1] The Somali, by which Chhaganlal Gandhi sailed from India, was first expected to arrived at Durban on july 15, 1911, according to the German East African Line advertisement in *Indian Opinion*, 15-7-1911. A news-item appearing in the Gujarati section the same week, however, mentions that the boat would arrive on july 18, 1911, instead. Acually she arrived on July 20, 1911, *Indian Opinion* 22-7-1911. From Gandhiji's letter of July 12, 1911 to Maganlal Gandhi (p.123), it is clear that he has heard from Chhaganlal Gandhi but is awaiting a cable from him, presumably about his arrival. It was therefore, on a Monday following July 12, 1911, that this letter was written, that is, on July 17, 1911. On this Monday, it was still believed that s.s. *Somali* would arrive on July 18, 1911. Thus it is that Gandhiji says later in the letter that Chhaganlal and the others must have arrived by the time Maganlal got this letter.

The arrangement about the Library is all right. Do not order books for the present. It is better just to collect money.

I also think it is no longer necessary to keep a separate account of the profits from the store. If the matter cannot be settled just now, we shall dispose of it when I go there [next]. Please make a note of this.

And now to the main part of your letter. With a little reflection, you will be able to see that the question who should send out whom just does not arise. When Phoenix is really in difficulties, there will be no question of sending out or retaining anybody. He alone will stay on there who has got into the true spirit. The problem then will be whether anyone will stay at all. No salaries are paid today, but only a kind of maintenance allowance. Who will remain, prepared to have this reduced, to face extreme suffering and live on plain bread—that will be the problem. This means that the problem will not arise. We shall know then who the true mother is and who the false. The doubt that has occurred to you is pointless.

And so are your fears about the children. India, being a land of virtue, has sports of wickedness. So also, other countries, though lands of sin, have oases by way virtuous spots. We are, however, doing our work with our eyes fixed on India. Where is the room, then, for any question about the children? Phoenix will have, and has, a constitution which will enable all children who so desire to visit India. And how can anyone say that [the spirit of] Phoenix will remain confined to Phoenix alone? Wherever the aims of Phoenix are present, there you will have Phoenix. Do you forget that we are all preparing ourselves for India? Should you and your children, however, lay down their lives for India in Phoenix itself, what harm will there be?

If we live in Phoenix as we would in India, there will be only this difference between India and Phoenix: we shall have adopted the virtuous practices of India and eschewed the evils that obtain there to-day. Is this anything to be sorry about? I shall write more on hearing from you.

If you consider my *atman*[1] to have great power, yours, too., has it. There is no difference between us in respect of our *atmans*. The moment you rid yourself of whatever in you is foreign to the nature of the *atman*—timidity, doubt, irresolution, etc.—we are equals, The

[1] The individual self which neither does nor suffers anything

only difference lies in the fact that I have, with great effort, got rid of many of my defects. If you make the bid with a determined mind, you, too will be able to cleanse yourself of all such defects and more.

Chhaganlal, Anandlal, Jamnadas[1] and others may possibly be there before this letter reaches you. I for one am very glad that they are all coming;

You ask to have a test; but that you cannot have from me. When the time is ripe, you will get it without asking for it. Readiness is all.

It does not seem likely that any member [of the party coming] will have difficulty in landing. All the same, I have made the necessary recommendation[2] to the office.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.] I hope a copy of the Trust Deed will be in your hand next week. It is only a draft.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5091. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

4. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

Sunday night [*July 23, 1911*][3]

MY DEAR HENRY,

The first news I must give you now is that Foolabhai's letter tells me that *I.O.* is suppressed in India. You know Foolabhai of Potchefstroom. The news lacks confirmation. But if it is true, it is nothing surprising. They could not very well suppress my translations[4] of Ruskin's *Unto This Last* and not suppress *I.O.* which either in the English or the Gujarati columns re-echoes those views more or less forcibly. If the paper is suppressed, my first thought is that I must accept the challenge and go to India at the earliest possible moment. This may alter our or my plans. It is evident that sooner or later the Andamans must be my home. And why not? That home should be as sweet as any other if it be purchased with duty done. But what about

[1] A brother of the addressee
[2] This letter to the Ragistrar of Asiatics is not available.
[3] From the following item
[4] Entitled "Universal Dawn"; vide "Our Publications", 7-5-1910.

you? You and Millie must consider the thing. Of course, you are not at [all] bound to follow me in my expanded activity. Phoenix ought still to continue. But with me wandering in India or being taken to the Andamans you will have to ensure your own living. If you have sufficient faith in Truth of course your living is assured. 'Look at the lily of the valley, etc.' Of course it may be that I am agitating you quite uselessly. And yet it is not so. This position is bound to arise sooner or later. The sooner probably the better, if it is in its own time. This does not in any way alter your immediate programme. You will continue your honeymoon together with your work there and go to India in October. Only I thought I must pass on the news with my reflections. You will have with this copy of the draft Trust Deed. Please let me have your criticism in detail. A copy is going to Dr.Mehta too. Every settler is also having a copy for consideration. I propose to attach to the Deed a schedule containing the signatures of [the] settlers.[1] Please let me have yours. It should be on foolscap-size paper so that I may be able to use the very paper for the other signatures.

I hope you have now Gregg's opinion. There was no delay after I understood your cable.

With love to you all,

BHAI

[PS.]

Kallenbach will probably leave[2] next week by s. s. *Armadale Castle*. I hope you will make it a point to meet him at Waterloo. He is travelling 3rd-class throughout. I am anxious that he should meet Miss Winterbottom[3] , Aylmer Maude and such other men and women.

BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* also Appendix Extracts from Immigrants Restriction Bill (1912) and Orange Free State Constitution", 3-2-1912.

[2] For Europe, mainly to visit his family in Germany

[3] Florence A. Winterbottom, Corresponding Secretary of the Union of Ethical Societies, London

5. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

[LAWLEY,]
Ashadh Vad O [*July 25, 1911*][1]

CHI. HARILAL,

There should have been a letter from you from India. You met Chi. Chhaganlal there, and he is now already here. I do hope there will be one by next mail.

Chhaganlal has brought news that Revashankerbhai advised you to join some commercial class in Bombay, deprecating [the idea of your going to] Ahmedabad. Chhaganlal also told me that you, on the other hand, continued to prefer Ahmedabad, up to the time he left. I still consider Ahmedabad to be better. It serves our purpose better. Though English may be less easy to learn in Ahmedabad, Gujarati, Sanskrit, etc., can certainly be done well there. I personally do not like Bombay at all. You may, however, do what you think best.

I see from Chanchi's letter that Manilal[2] is suffering from a serious illness. Please try if you can to persuade him to come here. Let him and Bali both come. Open air and nutritious but simple food is the only remedy for a tuberculosis patient. Please write to Chanchi not to expect regular letter from me. The burden on me at present is especially heavy, I go to Johannesburg only on Mondays. This is how things go on: physical labour on the farm up to 10 a.m.; teaching work at the school from 1.00 to 4.30 p.m.; meal at 5.30 p.m. and office and other correspondence at night. As I do everything single-handed, I have no time left and I do writing work till late at night. It is 9.45 p.m. now as I write this and I have more letters to write yet.

Mr. & Mrs. John, Rambhabhai[3], Mrs. Phillips, Mr. K. Naidoo and his wife are at the Farm. There are five boys and two girls in my school. But as they all belong to different standards, even these few are too many.

I am still on saltless diet. I personally feel better for it and as for Ba, it appears her very life has been saved. So far as I can see, she is a

[1] Chhaganlal Gandhi, who is referred to in this letter as having already arrrived, returned to South Africa in 1911, and in that year *Ashadh Vad* 0 corrresponds to July 25. The zero date also written as *Vad* 30 is peculiar to the lunnar Vikram calendar and denotes the last day of the dark fortnight.

[2] Manilal Lakshmichand Adalaja; husband of Balibehn, Harilal' sister-in-law.

[3] Rambhabai Sodha

new woman altogether. Even the children take saltless diet on alternate weeks. It is possible they might, by and by, adopt it for good. Mr. Kallenbach has also started the experiment of saltless diet. I have a feeling that it purifies the blood to a very high degree.

Manilal is at Phoenix. It seems to me his mind is quite at peace there.

I saw Mr. Smuts again[1] as Mr, Quinn's comrades have not yet been released. I still hope that they will be. Only two persons remain now. Smuts talked about the new Bill also. I found him quite amenable, in conversation at least. Perhaps he might even repeal the tax on women in Natal. I took occasion to raise this issue as well.

Let me know how Chanchi and Rami are doing. You may send both here whenever you feel inclined to. Take the money required from Revashankerbhai.. Ba simply longs for them, I told her that as you were in India the decision regarding their coming here should be left to you.

Could you read anything while on board ship? Was your luggage inspected on your landing at Bombay? Give me all such details;

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 9535

6. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[About *July 25, 1911*][2]

. . .[3] Nowadays I am chained to the school. The school works regularly from 1 to 4.30 p.m. Only on Mondays I let it off since I go to Johannesburg on that day. It is kept working on Sundays too. We have something like school for three hours in the morning as well, but only manual labour is done—either domestic chores or work on the farm. Because of these things, I see the bodies and minds of the children improving from day to day.

[1] Although there is no record of this visit, it must have been after May 20; *vide* "Letter to Minister of Interior", 20-5-1911.

[2] Judging from the similarity of contents between paragraph 1 of this letter and paragraph 4 of the preceding items, this was written about the same time. In any case, it was written soon after July 20 when Jamnadas Gandhi arrived in Natal with Chhaganlal Gandhi.

[3] The first few pages of the letter are not available

Until you put your heart in the work, you won't be able to study. If you cannot do this here, please do not imagine you can do it in England. My impression is that Jamnadas is also your schoolfellow. If so, the two of you, I feel, should be able to get on very well. Do look after him and see that he does not bored there.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 102. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

7. LETTER TO H. S .L. POLAK

Saturday night [*July 29, 1911*][1]

MY DEAR HENRY,

There is yet no confirmation from India of the alleged proscription of *I.O.* So after all Foolabhai may have been misinformed. Kallenbach leaves by the same mail as this. I have nothing new to tell you and I am tired of writing. I have been writing to Aylmer Maude and others about K.'s visit to London and his desire to see them. They will insist on presenting him an address. He has refused to accept it at a public meeting. I have not interfered at all. I have simply carried out your instructions even in Publishing his portrait[2]. The Hindus are presenting him with a set of Russian books and the Chinese with a set of Carlyle.

Chhaganlal and Anandlal[3] have now returned. Chh. has brought your pet Jamnadas[4].

With love all round,

Yours,

BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Inferred from Kallenbach's departure for London; vide "Reception to Mr. Kallenbach", 5-8-1911.

[2] As a supplement to the issue of Indian Opinion dated 5-8-1911; ibid., p. 136.

[3] Son of Amritlal Gandhi, a cousin of Gandhiji

[4] Cousin of Gandhiji

8. AN AGREEMENT

[*July 29, 1911*][1]

Articles of Agreement between Lower House and Upper House.

Lower House is to proceed to Europe on a sacred pilgrimage to the members of his family during the month of August next. Lower House is not to spend any money beyond necessaries befitting the position of a simple-living poor farmer.

Lower House is not to contract any marriage tie during his absence. Lower House shall not look lustfully upon any woman.

Lower House is to travel 3rd-class whether by sea or land. Lower House may, if the exigencies of his business in Johannesburg permit it,visit India with Dr. Mehta. In the event of his so doing he will travel the same class as Dr. Mehta.

Lower House will not tarry long in London or any other place, save the homes of the members of the family.

The consideration for all the above tasks imposed by Lower House on himself is more love and yet more love between the two Houses ≈ such love as, they hope, the world has not seen. In witness whereof the parties hereto solemnly affix their signatures in the presence of the Maker of all this 29th day of July at Tolstoy Farm.

UPPER HOUSE

LOWER HOUSE [2]

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

9. ADDRESS TO H. KALLENBACH[3]

JOHANNESBURG,
July 31, 1911

TO

HERMANN KALLENBACH, ESQ.

On behalf of the Transvaal British Indian Association, we, the Chairman and Honorary Secretary, ask your acceptance of this small token of the affection and esteem your whole-hearted and brotherly

[1] From the contents; *vide* also vide "Reception to Mr. Kallenbach", 5-8-1911.

[2] The signature is in Kallenbach's hand.

[3] This was presented to Kallenbach on July 31, 1911, when he left for Europe; *vide* "Reception to Mr. Kallenbach", 5-8-1911.

co-operation has won from the British Indians of the Transvaal.

Yours help during the long struggle that was forced upon us by reason of the immigration and registration laws was the more valuable because it was spontaneous.

Your timely generosity in placing Tolstoy Farm at the disposal of the passive resisters proved an invaluable aid to us. The acts of personal service rendered by you to our people in adversity can never be repaid.

We thank you also for your work as Hon. Secretary of the Transvaal European Committee.

All these things and many more have made the Indian community your life-long debtors, and we pray that God may bless you for them.

A. M. CACHALIA
CHAIRMAN
M. K. GANDHI
HON. SECRETARY
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 5-8-1911

10. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JOHANNESBURG,
Shravan Sud 7 [*August 1, 1911*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

It appears from your letter that you are upset again. I see no reason why you should be.

Chi. Jamnadas cap, if he so desires, appear for Cape Matric or the London Matric, though I do not know what he will gain thereby. The time he will spend in studying for the examination, things which are to be later forgotten, will be as good as wasted. The point to be considered is what Jamnadas ultimately wants to do. Do you intend to fix him up in Phoenix or have you brought him here just for the sake of his health? Whatever may have been your intention, you have acted wisely in bringing him over. . . .[2] used to find out and develop the

[1]Chhaganlal Gandhi brought Jamnadas with him when he arrived in July; *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 7-7-1911. The letter was therefore written in 1911 in which year Shravan Sud 7 corresponds to August 1. The date is confirmed by Chhaganlal Gandhi to whom we owe this letter.

[2]Two pages are missing here.

general abilities of their pupils. Modern education seems to me to be a thorough fraud. I sighed when I read the prospectus of Davar's School[1]; such is the state of my mind at present.

I am aware that the debt to Revashankerbhai is increasing. I am wondering how to repay it. It is for me to think about the debt you have incurred. It will benefit us both if you do not take upon yourself the burden unnecessarily. Make up your mind not to incur any debt hereafter. Please let me know how much you will need to draw every month, including the sum that you must send to Khushalbhai and leaving the debt incurred you out of account. I think the, Phoenix constitution [needs to be] amended. Please think it over and write to me frankly. Do not mind if I express my views in strong terms. In my present state of mind I can hardly express my ideas in gentle words or through hints. Just fancy how a pauper will dance for joy if he comes upon the philosophers' stone. Such . . .[2] is not possible all at once.

I read *Indian Idylls* (Edwin Arnold's) to the boys. It hasex cellent transactions of narrative poems from the *Mahabharata*. Amongst them I read "The Enchanted Lake" and found it to be superb. What is its sanskrit title? Please let me know if you or anyone else there knows it . I have been thinking that we should have a free translation made into Gujarati verse by Ambaram[3] and publish it. All the Pandavas go to a lake in the hope of finding water. But in their impatience they drink from the lake without answering questions [put to them] by the Yaksha, the guardian spirit of the lake, and fall down unconscious. Yudhishthira goes last and drinks water after giving the answers. All his answers relate to [the nature of] obligation, but they are very ingenious. Perhaps you know the dialogue.

It will be a good thing if you start writing in English gradually. If you understand *Letters of John Chairman*[4] fully, you may translate it. I shan't have the time for it. I re-read the book recently. It is invaluable.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati original: C.W. 5092 Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi.

[1] Davar's College of Commerce.
[2] Four pages are missing here.
[3] Ambaram Bhatt, who wrote poems about satyagraha
[4] By Lowes Dickinson.

11. RECEPTION TO MR. KALLENBACH

Mr. Kallenbach had intended to slip away from Johannesburg quietly and without any demonstration from the Indian community. But God willed otherwise. As soon as it became known that Mr. Kallenbach was to leave for Europe, leading passive resisters began to discuss among themselves the desirability of "doing something'. They felt that the owner of Tolstoy Farm, who had done so much for them in his own inimitable way, could not be allowed to leave unhonoured by the community. It was by an accident that the day of Mr. Kallenbach's departure became known. The time was short. But subscriptions were at once raised. It was decided to present him with an illuminated address, enclosed in a solid silver casket. The ideas was incongruous enough. Mr. Kallenbach, who had given up most of his luxuries, and had taken to a simple life on Tolstoy Farm where he entirely shared the life of poor passive resisters, often drinking and eating with them, using a verandah as his chair and his lap for a dinner table, to be presented with a solid silver casket! Where was be to keep it? That was no concern of the enthusiastic admirers. So the address was illuminated and a silver casket ordered and prepared. At practically the last minute, Mr. Kallenbach was informed that he was to be presented with an address. Mr. Kallenbach laughed. "What have I done? You owe me nothing, and if you do, I do not wish to collect my debt just yet." This happened on Saturday when he was on his way to the Farm. He was to leave on Monday.[1] But the determined men who had done duty as pickets would not have 'no' for an answer. Mr. Kallenbach said; "I cannot receive any public acknowledgment." His interviewers said; "You must." Thus they parted, Mr. Kallenbach thinking the storm had blown over. But on Monday morning, on his way from Lawley, Mr. Kallenbach was picketed and intercepted by a zealous band, headed by Mr. Thambi Naidoo, who had all run from Vrededorp to Canada, a distance of five miles, to meet him in his own compartment. Others met him at Fordsburg station. What could Mr. Kallenbach do against such determination. He had to yield. Passive resistance (love) and picketing were once more triumphant. Mr. Kallenbach hurreid to the Rev. Phillip's Hall. Imam Abdul Kadir Bawazeer presided. He related Mr. Kallenbach's services

[1] July 31, 1911

in a few well-chosen words. Mr. Thambi Naidoo read the address which is as follows.[1]

Mr. Easton[2], on behalf of the Cantonese Club, presented him with the complete works of Carlyle in a beautiful silver-mounted case, and Mr. Morarji with the works of Ruskin in a similar case on behalf of the Hindu Association. Mr. Kallenbach then, in the course of his reply, said that he did not consider his friends, who had done him so singular an honour, owed him anything at all. It was he who was the debtor. It was a mater of privilege to him to be able to do what he did during the struggle that lasted five years. And he did it for his own sake. He sincerely believed that he had gained much through the struggle. At the end of it he found himself a better and stronger man. He assured his hearers that it was through the struggle that he had overcome many of his prejudices and his weaknesses. If ever again the struggle was revived, he was prepared to do what little he could and he knew that whatever he did in such a struggle he would be the gainer. After giving renewed thanks for the gifts, Mr. Kallenbach resumed his seat amid applause. Mr. Cachalia, was absent, being obliged to go to Warmbaths to attend a sick friend. Mr. Ritch, Mrs. Vogl, Miss Schlesin and Mr. Isaac[3] supported the Chair on the platform. At the station there was representative gathering of Indians besides his European friends to see Mr. Kallenbach off. In order to gain experience and still further to simplify his life and to discipline himself, Mr. Kallenbach travelled 3rd class by the train, much to the surprise of his many friends who had always seen him enjoy all "the good things of life". Mr. Kallenbach is travelling 3rd class on the steamer also.

All the settlers on Tolstoy Farm were at Lawley station to see Mr. Kallenbach off.

[1] For the text, *vide* "Address to H. Kallenbach". 31-7-1911.

[2] Martin Easton; Acting Chairman, Chinese Association and Quinn's successor to that office; associated himself with Gandhiji's protest against the racial discrimination implied in the Union Immigrant' Restriction Bill; *vide* "Telegram to Secretary to Minister of Interior", 18-3-1911.

[3] Gabriel I. Isaac; English Jew and jeweller; a practising vegetarian associated with the Johannesburg vegetarian restaurant; sometime member of Phoenix settlements; travelled collecting subscriptions and advertisements for *Indian Opinion* and was ever ready to be of use to the journal and to Gandhiji; in 1908 offered to become nominal owner of satyagrahis; shops, following the Government's policy of auctioning their goods; in June, 1909, was sent by Gandhiji to Delagoa Bay to assist satyagrahis being deported to India; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 31-8-1908. He went to jail as a satyagrahi during the Great March of 1913.

We understand that Mr. Kallenbach does not intend to keep the address and the casket himself; but will hand them to his sister in Germany

Indian Opinion, 5-8-1911

12. MR. KALLENBACH

Our readers will be glad to possess a portrait, which we issue this week as a supplement, of Mr. H. Kallenbach whom they best know as the owner of Tolstoy Farm, of which he gave the free use to passive resisters families and which is still being used for the purpose. Mr. Kallenbach is leaving for Europe principally for sake of meeting the many members of his family in Germany and expects to return within six months. Our readers will recollect that, when both Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Polak were absent, Mr. Kallenbach acted as the Honorary Secretary of the British Indian Association—a most critical time in the history of the struggle.

Indian Opinion, 5-8-1911

13. TUBERCULOSIS

We invite the special attention of our Natal Indian readers to Dr. Murison's[1] letter to Mr. Gandhi on the campaign that he, with the assistance of Dr. Adams, the specialist, is conducing in the Durban Borough against tuberculosis. This fell disease is no respecter of persons and affect all the communities residing in Durban. If its progress is not arrested in time, it is difficult to estimate the damage it may cause to precious human lives. It is then only proper that Mr. Jameson and his Committee should seek and command the co-operation of all the communities in their endeavour to root out the disease. At the desire of Mr. Jameson a small Indian Committee has been already formed to render the necessary assistance to his Committee to assist ourselves. But the establishment of the Committee is not enough.

[1] Dr. Murison, Medical Officer of Health, Durban. During the 1904 plague, Gandhiji found him "sympathetic and ready to help"; *vide* "The Plague Peg", 16-7-1904 & "From Pillar to Post", 30-7-1904. On July 10, 1911 he wrote in reply to Gandhiji's of July 4, 1911 (not available), suggesting that an Indian Committee and about twenty volunteers co-operate with Durban Health Department's anti-tuberculosis campaign so that the Borough bye-laws for the prevention of infectious diseases might not be invoked. *Indian Opinion*, 5-8-1911.

We have no doubt that Dr. Murison ought to be besieged by Indian volunteers who would place themselves at his disposal to do inspection and visiting work. They may become angels of mercy in the truest sense of the term. We feel sure that the work that Dr. Murison expect (and rightly) from us can only be performed by volunteers and not paid workers. Who can reason with our consumptives except our leaders? Dr. Adams preaches the gospel of open air, first and last, in the treatmentof this disease. It will require all the ability and persuasive powers of those whom the people trust before the latter will adopt the treatment which is so incredibly[1] simple and yet, unless it is understood, so difficult of adoption. Those who are afraid of catching cold if they breathed the fresh but cold air of the fields rather than the hot but contaminated and carbon-loaded atmosphere of a stuffy room are not to be easily persuaded that their salvation—freedom from consumption—lies in breathing pure and invigorating fresh air even as we drink pure and health giving water rather than poisoned water vomited by others. We trust that every influential Indian will have his name registered is a volunteer worker in the crusade of the Durban Corporation against tuberculosis.

Indian Opinion, 5-8-1911

14. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

August 6, 1911

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I have your very good letter from Hutchinson. Hope you received my letter on board as also a joint wire from here (the Farm).

Before I received your cheque book, I had paid out, of course from your account, £ 25 to A.R.M. Roodepoort, £ 15 Partidge & 0-4-0 Shimwell Bros. There was a notice from the A.R.M. saying that you should deposit a further £ 25.

The engine is still working on the same hole. I do not know what is going to happen. I visit the works daily. They have not measured, they say, but have gone down more than 300 ft. I think. The soil varies from day to day. They got from Pretoria a new coil of rope.

Albrecht[2] thought he would first prune the fruit trees. I did not

[1] The original has “increditably”.

[2] This, the correct spelling of the German name, is variously spelt by Gandhiji as “Albert” and “Albret”, wherever it occurs.

interfere. He has now nearly finished pruning. There is only one native boy working. He is certainly a splendid boy. He asked that we should feed him too. I thought I would not haggle. He therefore has food from the kitchen beyond 30/- per month. John wanted me to give him some ground within the fence, as he said he had not the means of ploughing the ground outside. In spite of your expressed wish to the contrary, I thought I would use my discretion in this case. I thought I should not go wrong if I let him make use of the ground for one year only. I have therefore pegged out a small portion hardly 30 acres beyond the fruit trees. He is to pay £ 15 for the year. I have also given him permission to use the small plot in front of the trees to the right or the left as we pass out at the first gate going to the station for planting potatoes. I thought we could but do better than at least having the ground cleared out. I hope the arrangement will commend itself to you. We have the right to get potatoes for household use.

The native boy has been working at weeding. He is now clearing up the trees. Strict instructions have been given not to use him for household or any other work.

Fencing is likely to commence on Tuesday. Everything will depend upon our friend Albrecht who I may add has been keeping very well indeed.

I have not seen nor heard from Kennedy.

Quinn has been on the Farm for the last three days. I think his people are worrying him as his two men are not yet released. He is likely to be here yet for some days. He works at the garden. Govindji, the piles patient, goes tomorrow (Monday) completely cured. Miss Schlesin came here today chiefly to discuss your letter to her and to discuss her own future. We discussed over the dinner her affairs and your letter. You will be perhaps angry. If I had not done so, how could I have taken my school which in my opinion is daily progressing. No, my dear L.H., we may not use even our dinner hour for our pleasure. Every minute of ours is pre-mortgaged, seeing that we are born debtors. We are born only because we owe. We come into the world again and again until we have paid out what we have incurred on the score of Karma. Life is Duty.

Have not heard further about Call.

Mrs. John leaves us tomorrow, Mrs.Phillip will do so in 3 or 4

days. Krishnaswamy will probably stay. He is the brightest and most promising student, so far as learning goes. The boys again begin saltless diet tomorrow. They alternate. Krishnaswamy and Ramdas have remained saltless through and through. They took *dholl* for today. But they revert to the saltless diet tomorrow. They all tell me they are feeling extra heavy today.

L.J. Van Wyk of Van Wyk's Rust came in on Thursday and said you owed him 7/6 for his trouble in coming to fetch coal and from Lenz. He says the coal of course was not brought. I told him I should refer to you before paying. Shall I pay?

I have not understood what you did regarding the draft of £ 100 or £ 200 you wanted to take with you. I see no entry in your cheque book as to your drawing. I only see £ 30 drawn. But I propose to await news from you before doing anything.

As you gave special instructions, the £ 25 and the £ 75 cheques were sent to your office for depositing in your account.

We all miss you, and Mrs.Gandhi most of all. In the rush of work, I certainly forget you but she cannot.

P.K. Naidoo and his wife too are leaving in a fortnight's time, so that I shall only have Mrs. Sodha[1] on hands besides Mrs.Gandhi and the children. I do not mind it a bit. I shall probably value the greater leisure I shall enjoy.

You have gone on a brave mission. May God grant you all the strength you need for resisting temptations. You are deliberately making your life one of great purposes. I feel sure that your way will be fairly smooth. If we are clay in the hands of the Potter, all we need do is to be and remain receptive. I have written much otherwise, so I shall not indulge in further reflections.

I am most eagerly looking forward to your letter from Madeira.

Nothing further has yet been heard of *I.O.* prohibition. I did not give you the addresses of Maud and others.

I hope you have got them from Maud Polak and even seen some of the people by the time this reaches you.

With love,

Yours,

UPPER HOUSE

[1] Rambhabhi, wife of R.M. Sodha

[PS.]

I am not revising this letter. It is getting late. I have forgotten to deal with two most important points out of your letter. Although therefore it is now after 10 p.m. I must deal with them. The word 'bravo' in my telegram had no reference to your forgetting the cheque book. It was meant to congratulate you on your having passed through the whole ordeal so very creditably. Your bearing at the station pleased all. Your having forgotten the cheque book was a most natural thing in that rush. The wonder really is that you put in so much work that morning with so much self-possession and forget only the cheque book. You know our mutual canon of interpretation: 'not to put an unfavourable construction upon a man's writing or action so long as a favourable one is possible'.

You were hurt at my simple remark about the charge of your not being the same whether I was with you or not. I have not in my wildest dreams suspected you of having withheld anything from me. Indeed one of the binding links between us is my invisible belief in your absolute and natural frankness with me. All I said and still say was and is that when several people bring a charge against us, we should proceed to examine ourselves upon the assumption that there is some truth in the charge. We need not jump to the conclusion that it is baseless. Our friends often know us better than we do ourselves. The reason is that all of us being not perfect do things unconsciously of which we are not witnesses but our friends are. There was no rebuke ever meant when I made the remark, much less any mistrust. Have I made myself understood! It hurts me to think that I should have even unwillingly hurt you on the day of your departure.

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

15. LETTER TO H. L. PAUL

August 7, 1911

DEAR MR. PAUL[1],

I shall watch the career of your institution[2] with anxious interest. Pray congratulate Angle[3] for me.

Hoping you are all well.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4901 Courtesy: Dr. Cooppan

16. LETTER TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

Shravan Sud 13 [*August 7, 1911*][4]

DEAR SHRI PRANJIVAN,

Your letter. I certainly did not conclude from what you wrote about Sorabji that you are against sending him to England.

Please do not press Harilal to live in Rangoon. It is in his best interest that he should be allowed to live in freedom, It will be a different matter, of course, if he does to Rangoon or comes over here of his own accord, having failed in his plans. Moreover, I see little chance of his Gujarati improving in Rangoon. If he can be by himself in Ahmedabad and study, his eager desire for education will be satisfied in some measure. I will let him know your views, however. Revashnkerbhai's ideas is that he should learn shorthand, an ideas which does not appeal to me in the least. It is contrary to all my

[1] Indian interpreter and clerk in the Magistrate's Court, Durban.

[2] Indian Educational Institute, Durban.

[3] Daughter of H.L. Paul. Gandhiji was her godfather and she undertook to train in Phoenix and work in the service of the Indian community after finishing her education; *vide* "Letter to H. L. Paul", 11-6-1908 & "Letter to H. L. Paul", 1-7-1908.

[4] Although the Indian date does not mention the year, two reference in the course of the letter serve to fix the Gregorian year. It was during 1911 that a Gujarati translation of The *Indian Nation Builders* alluded to in paragraph 6 of this letter was serialized in the Gujarati section of *Indian Opinion*. A copy of the book was presumably sent to Gandhiji by Natesan. It was about this time, too, that Gandhiji was much taken up with "The Enchanted Lake" from the *Mahabharata; vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 1-8-1911. In that year *Shravan Sud 13* corresponds to August 7.

thinking.

I am not surprised to your views about Amsterdam. To me at least, all those who are entrapped in the net of civilization seem like cripples.

Nowadays I read story poems from the *Mahabharata* to the boys of my school for an hour every evening. I have no option but to read from an English book, as half the boys are Tamils. The one being read at present is Arnold's *Indian Idylls*. Last night I read "The Enchanted Lake" from it. I liked its thoughts so much that I feel like reading it over and over again, if you haven't seen the book, please get it and read this [story]. What has a nation, which has produced men capable of such grand ideas, to learn from the cowardly present day civilization?

I have not been able to take the Mauritius report in hand. Though Natesan has omitted [certain portions], I propose to start printing in *Indian Opinion* a translation of the article as published now.[1]

It is not quite true that I take upon myself too heavy a burden. Your caution is right nevertheless. It is *moha*[2] to want to do too much and *moha* is a great fault. I know this and yet I cannot abandon what I have taken up; it must not be that is the teaching of our religion. We should of course, make sure that it is not an unworthy task we have undertaken. Please do not imagine that I am harming my health because of the heavy burden. I eat like a bull. I take exactly an hour and a half four my two meals. I see that some to those around me do not spend as much time on three meals. It is not true that I keen indifferent health. However, I am always on the alert to see that nothing is done through *moha*. There is nothing, of course, I wish to gain for myself . But one must keep oneself busy. I go on doing what, on reflection, seems best to me.

Bande Mataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5093. Courtesy: C. K. Bhatt.

[1] The reference is to a series of articles published between August 12 and November 4, 1911, in the Gujarati section of *Indian Opinion*. These were translations of the lives of Surendranath Banerjee and G. K. Gokhale, among other published in a single English volume by Ganesh & Co. of Madras.

[2] Infatuation.

17. THE STORM GATHERING

Thoreau went to gaol for the sake of those who did not belong to his race. So many Mr. Ritch go to gaol for the sake of us who do not wear the same skin as he does. For he has received a notice to the effect that in allowing Indians to remain on the Stands registered in his name in Krugersdorp, he is committing a criminal offence.[1] We know that Mr. Ritch is not likely to give up the Stands on account of the notice. The authorities know well that Mr. Ritch is a trustee holding the Stands in question for his Indian wards. Mr. Ritch does not allow them to remain on his stands. They (the Indians) remain on their own. That is the real position, although, in the eyes of the law, Mr. Ritch is the owner and no other.

Klerksdorp Indian have been threatened.[2] In Roodepoort a prosecution has already taken place and an appeal is pending.[3] Now the compliment has been paid to Krugersdorp. Evidently the authorities imagine that Indians will abandon their stores and their stock immediately they take action. Mr. Neser[4] (and he ought to know) has informed South Africa that the Government have stayed their hand only because of this being the Coronation year and that actual proceedings will be take next year. Mean-while, therefore, we fancy the Government are sharpening their weapons. The notice served on Mr. Ritch is a clear call to the Indians to show of what stuff they are

[1] Ritch was the owner of certain Stands occupied by Indian in the mining area of Krugersdorp which had been declared "Proclaimed Areas" under the Gold Law, Act 35 if 1908. On August 3, 1911 the Public prosecutor, Krugersdorp, sent him a notice warning him that he was contravening section 130 of Act 35 of 1908 and was liable to criminal prosecution. He was directed to ask his Indian tenants to vacate. *Indian Opinion*, 12-8-1911.

[2] *Vide* "Extract from Letter to Maud Polak" 5-4-1911.

[3] At Roodepoort, one Alfred Tamblin was charged under Section 130 of the Gold Law of 1908 for subletting a mining stands to two Asiatics, Ahmed Khan and Abdulla Khan. His counsel argued that under the old Gold Law, an owner had the right to sublet his stand to coloured persons and that under section 77 of the present Gold Law, Coloured persons were entitle to acquire rights to stands, but the case was remanded. Subsequently a Krugersdorp magistrate found Tamblin guilty and sentenced him. On appeal, the Transvaal Division of the Supreme Court of South Africa acquitted Tamblin and ruled that the Asiatics in question we protected by section 77 of the new Gold Law. *Indian Opinion* 24-6-1911 & 2-9-1911

[4] Member of Union Parliament.

made. We have no doubt that if for no other reason, seeing that Mr. Ritch may himself have to go to gaol, the Indians affected by the notice will remain firm and show once more to the Government that, unless they carry with them the Asiatic communities their laws adversely affecting them must remain a dead letter.

Indian Opinion, 12-8-1911

18. LETTER TO SECRETARY FOR INTERIOR[1]

August 12, 1911

THE SECRETARY FOR THE INTERIOR
PRETORIA
SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter of the . . . instant, I shall endeavour to complete the list of those covered by the Settlement before the 21st instant. But I fear that it will to be possible to do so regarding those who are now in India. I had hoped to be able to complete the list much earlier, but for the reasons given in my letter[2] to the Registrar of Asiatics, I have been unable to do so.

I have the honour, etc.,

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5586.

19. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

Saturday night, August 12, 1911

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I had your cheerful note from the 3rd-class saloon of your floating palace. It is evident that you received my letter as also wires too late to acknowledge. I wrote to you on Monday so as to enable the letter to reach you on board.

Received your wire but no letter.

Have heard nothing further about Call.

I am sorry that the bore is making no progress. They now bore about 4 to 5 ft. per day. The ground is very hard. I have written to the

[1] This was found among Gandhiji's paper and was presumably drafted by him. If the original was sent at all, the date of the letter from the Secretary for the Interior referred to in the text was possibly supplied before dispatch.

[2] Not available.

Irrigation Department in your name asking for a report on the progress of the work.

The work in connection with fencing is going forward. Assisted by Krishnaswamy, Revashankar[1] and Devdas, I finished putting in the pegs today. Albrecht and Naidoo and Coopoo have been putting strainers and supports near the pegs. The native boy is digging holes. Ramdas is tarring the poles.

The garden work has been suspended for the time being. The natives have however ploughed the portion I described in my last letter. The ground looks very sweet on that account. Quinn has been hfiing. Medh is still not fit for active work. Mrs. Phillip goes away on Monday. Krishnaswamy will probably return. He does not wish to leave the Farm. I am becoming more and more absorbed in the school. The children are daily improving. They are still saltless. The work on the Farm is becoming more and more methodical. Albrecht is improving in health.

The vines you were to order have not come forward. If they are not ordered, I hope you will not order them from there.

Some letters which I think you ought to see herewith.

Miss Schlesin may leave us. She is accepting an educational appointment. She hopes still to attend to your work. In any case you need not worry.

There have been no visitors to the Farm. Ritch will probably come tomorrow.

Hope you had a good voyage and are having a nice time, i.e., a good time from a moral point of view. Gool says you have captured him.

So you see I have simply given you a diary. I must now leave off. Will write more if I have the time.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

[PS.]

Please get the books as per list. If you have no time send it to Davis.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Revashankar Jagjivan Jhaveri, brother of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

20. LETTER TO H. S .L. POLAK

August 13, 1911

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have your two letters. I hope you have been writing directly to West too about the typographical and other errors you may have noticed. West is becoming quite a nice leader writer. He is the hope of Phoenix. He is the silent 'doer'.

I shall arrange for further funds for your trip.

I like it that no more funds have been paid to Mrs. Ritch since July. The last payment to her from the funds ended June 30.

Ritch will take his time before he writes short articles.

Miss Schlesin may be leaving us next week. She wants to take up an educational appointment. She will still continue to interest herself in our affairs. She has asked for appointment in a coloured school and is likely to get the Fordsburg one.

We are having a meeting on the gold law business[1]. The receipt by Ritch of the notice is a very good thing. It will excite public attention far more quickly than anything else could have.

My little school is flourishing. I am absorbed in it at present. Nothing else interests me so much as the school.

I am glad you are having an altogether good time all round. For on your return, there will be no bed of roses for you and Millie in S.A. You will find that you have plenty to do.

With love to you all,

BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Vide "Indians Support Mr. Ritch", 19-8-1911 and also "The Storm Gathering", 12-8-1911.

21. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Shravan Vad 3 [*August 13, 1911*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

The books you have brought are good ones.[2] Please send me *Bhartrihari Shataka*[3] if the meaning of the Sanskrit text is explained in Gujarati or English.

I do not propose to return the money you have spent on the land. There are difficulties in the way. If you have paid anything for the land, that I think could be returned. This is only a suggestion I make about the land, for, if all of them get just enough to live on, how would it be possible for them to pay its cost or that of the buildings? And so I have suggested that the dues on account of land should he written off. Should anyone, however, want to buy off (his share of) the land, I shall not come in his way. The question you have raised now had also arisen in connection with Anandlal's land and yours. Instead of greeting to return you the money you have spent on the land, I should prefer paying off your debt. Returning the money spent on the land will raise many delicate problems. I am sure you will understand this I am waiting for a reply from you again about what should be paid to each of you two brothers.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 4782

[1]It would appear that this letter was written soon after Chhaganlal Gandhi's return to South Africa in 1911. It is moreover in continuation of a subject discussed in the letter of August 1, 1911, (p. 133), that is Chhaganlal's request that the debt he had incurred be set off against the money he had spent on improving his portion of the land in Phoenix. In 1911, *shravan vad* 3 corresponds to August 13.

[2] Brought by Chhaganlal Gandhi from England or India when be returned to South Africa.

[3] A collection of three hundred stanzas by Bhartrihari, a celebrated Sanskrit poet and king. A hundred stanzas are devoted to each of the three topics: *Niti* (morals) *Shringar* (love) and *Vairagya* (renunciation).

22. INDIANS SUPPORT MR. RITCH

An important meeting[1] of the British Indian Association was held at the Hamidia Society's Hall on Sunday evening last. Mr. Cachalia was in the chair. Invitations were sent all over the province. A telegram was received from Klerksdorp regretting absence but accepting the decision of the meeting. Representatives attended from Krugersdorp, Rooderpoort, etc. Messrs Ritch, Quinn, and Isaac were also present. At the invitation of Mr. Cachalia, Mr. Gandhi explained the effect of the proposed action of the authorities. The proceedings were earnest and the meeting showed determination to go through the impending storm.

Mr. Gandhi explained that he had Mr. Ritch's authority for stating that he (Mr. Ritch) was prepared to stand by the community and incur the risk of imprisonment should it be necessary in making good the trust he had undertaken on behalf of those whose properties were registered in his name. After full discussion, the following resolutions were unanimously passed:

> This meeting of British Indians thanks Mr. Ritch for his presence thereat, and for his magnanimous offer to help the community even to the extent of suffering imprisonment in connection with notices issued by the authorities under the Gold Law and in connection with landed property registered in his name, but held by him in trust for member of this community.

Proposed by Mr. Dadoo (Krugersdorp), and seconded by Mr. Ahmed Khan (Roodepoort).

> This meeting resolves to resist to the utmost the attempt being made to oust Indian merchants from their possessions and businesses, and to suffer imprisonment and other trials during the threatened campaign against them in respect of the Gold Law and the Townships Amendment Act of 1908.

Proposed by Mr. Ismail Amod Moola, seconded by Mr. Amod Moosajee and supported by Mr. E. G. Coovadia.[2]

[1] Held to consider the notice served on Ritch by the public prosecutor, Krugersdorp; *vide* "The Storm Gathering", 12-8-1911.

[2] Ebrahim Saleji Coovadia; well known Johannesburg merchant and some time Treasurer, Hamidia Islamic Society; acting Chairman, British Indian Association, 1909 and 1910 (Vol. IX p. 252 *fn* and Vol. X. p. 268 *fn*) repeatedly suffered imprisonment as a satyagrahi in 1908 and 1909; in June, 1909 was elected member of the proposed Transvaal Indians' deputation to India, but was arrested immediately after; *vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting", 16-6-1909.

This meeting authorizes the Chairman to send a respectful representation to the Government, enclosing copies of the foregoing resolutions, and urging them to alter the above mentioned laws, so as to reassure the Indian Community and to protect its member in their legitimate occupations.

Proposed by Mr. A.M. Vaja seconded by Mr. A. A. Karodia and supported by Mr. H. Mal and Mr. M. S. Nana.

It was also decided to start collecting subscriptions in aid of this struggle.

Indian Opinion, 19-8-1911

23. AN IMPORTANT DECISION

Mr. Ritch as well as the British Indian Association of the Transvaal are to be congratulated on their respective decisions as evidenced by the report of the meeting[1] of the Association, published in another column. Mr. Ritch, by his generous action, has put the finishing touch to the many services he has so selflessly rendered to the community. His action has increased tenfold the responsibility of British Indians in the Transvaal. We can only deserve execration from every right-minded man if, after allowing Mr. Ritch to go to gaol we though sheer cowardice, avoid the prospect of imprisonment ourselves. It is therefore but meet that the Association passed the second resolution, committing the community to defend the interests that are in jeopardy, even to the extent of suffering imprisonment or whatever more may be in store for it. The third resolution enables Mr. Cachalia to bring the two very important resolutions to the notice of the Government. Mr. Cachalia has not allowed any time to lapse. And we must now await the decision of the Government. We hope that wise counsels will prevail among the member of the Union Cabinet, and that they will avert what promises to become a national calamity. Indians are not to be expected to allow their interests to be played "ducks and drakes" with. The result of any attempt to force matters on the part of the Government can therefore only be (a) repetition of the unseemly spectacle of a mightly Government setting all its machinery in motion to crush a small low abiding community, endeavouring to hold on to its own.

Indian Opinion, 19-8-1911

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

24. AN EDUCATION SCANDAL

Formerly, Indian girls attended the ordinary Government Schools for girls in Durban. Some years ago, Indian girls were prohibited from attending these schools and provision was made for their attendance at the Higher-Grade Indian School. Promise was made that the girls would receive separate education from the boys. Notwithstanding the promise, the Government tried the experiment of mixing boys and girls, and failed. In theory we are quite in favour of boys and girls receiving education together, But, in practice, it is impossible to ignore deep-rooted habits or prejudices. Experience has shown that Indian parents, as a rule, will not allow their daughters to mingle with boys at a school or elsewhere. And, whenever a forcible mixture takes place, the result "Let them", shouts the unthinking reformer. "They will soon be at home if left alone" But the parents will not wait for the process. They are not reformers and they will not allow experiments to be made at their children's expense. Nor is there any dreadful hurry for pressing forward the reform. There is already a deadlock. From an attendance of thirty girls, it fell to below ten through the stupid zeal of the reformer in the Education Department. At present, we understand, even the few parents who had held out in the hope of separate accommodation being provided have withdrawn their girls. The Government need not be surprised if they find themselves being suspected of anti-Indian prejudice in not conceding the request of the Congress and the Indian parents concerned to give facilities for the separate education of Indian girls.

Indian Opinion, 19-8-1911

25. FOR INDIAN PARENTS

We confess to a sneaking regard for many of General Hertzog's pronouncements. His remarks on education and national conservation,[1] which we have copied elsewhere from Johannesburg papers,

[1] Speaking at Newlands Government school on August 12, Hertzog had criticized the present system of education which was based on cramming and examinations and benefited only those who aspired to become advocates and doctors; the remaining 97 per-cent of the population was left to suffer. He had stressed the importance of character training, technical education and the mother tongue. *Indian Opinion*, 19-8-1911.

are worthy of perusal and careful consideration by Indian parents and Indian youths. There is a tendency among us to Anglicize our children as if that was the best way of educating them or fitting them for real service to the Empire. We do not think that the wisest Englishmen desire that we should lose our nationality—that is our hereditary training—or that we should "ape" them. General Hertzog has, we think, shown most clearly that the Dutch will be in danger of losing their nationality if Dutch children received their education through the medium of any other language but Dutch. How true are his remarks that children, forgetting their own vernacular, are found lacking in respect for their parents. "Honour thy father and thy mother" is equally the commandment of Jesus with Mahomet, Zoroaster and the Vedas. Those, therefore, who are so indifferent to their mother tongue, no matter how humble it may be are in danger of forgetting a universal religious principle. If General Hertzog's remarks are true of Dutch for Dutch children, how much more so they are of Indian languages for Indian children. Millions of Indians in India, although they may not be able to sign their own names, know the spirit of the great epics, *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*, which play a part in our national life that very few other similar works do. We decline to believe that our children can be taught these epics through. English translations, however accurate they may be. We consider it to be impossible for us to exist an independent, self respecting human beings if we forget the poetry of the race to which we belong. We can never learn it through a foreign tongue.

But some of us labour under the delusion that we may pick up our mother tongue in later life. All we can say is that such persons do not know what they are saying. General Hertzog has well said that the true purpose of education is not to pass examinations but to mould the character of our children. And character cannot be moul-ded by making a child unlearn or neglect its past, and pass year in mastering a foreign tongue. A moment's reflection must convince anyone that the adoption of any such course is false economy; it is a criminal waste of capital inherited from our forefathers.

Indian Opinion, 19-8-1911

26. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

August 20, 1911

MY DEAR HENRY,

I am without a letter from you this week. I suppose you were busy with the Congress work. Why did you send the wire to Prof. Gokhale[1] regarding *I.O.*? If there was any truth in the information, we would have heard in the natural course. When the prohibition comes, I do not think we want any fuss about it.

You will not expect long letters from me just now. I am absorbed in the children and my mind is generally occupied with thoughts about making myself as capable as I can be as their teacher. And so when I sit down at the last moment to write the weekly mail, my mind is a blank.

I hope that you have still enough money to go on with. I do not want you to have to send me a cable. I hope to send you more if not the whole of the balance in a fortnight's time.

With love to you all,

BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

27. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

Sunday night [*August 20, 1911*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Let me give you the pleasant news that after all the boring has been successful ≈ 80,000 gallons in 24 hours! In reply to the note I sent to the Irrigation Department, the Engineer whom you have met, came down. Only he came down simply to inspect a very successful well. He, however, discussed the whole thing fully with me. Acting upon his advice we are now boring at the other end ≈ the spot marked by you. Boring there commenced on Friday. The dismantling and fixing was done on Thursday. At my suggestion the engine was worked night and day after water was found, in order to see the

[1]Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915); Indian statesman; President, Indian National Congress, 1905; founded the Servants of India Society, 1905; member, Bombay Legislature and Viceroy's Legislative Council, 1902-15

capacity of the well apart from the test. In your name I have given Logan 10/- as a treat for the success of their efforts. The second hole stands at 16 feet. It is very hard ground.

The holes for fencing continue. But I am obliged to use the native boy at times for work connected [with] the boring also. Naidoo is not on the Farm. He has not left altogether but will do so shortly. So I shall be the only adult member of the family apart from Albrecht.

Amies has asked for a cheque for the keys. I am therefore sending him [a] cheque without waiting for your answer.

I must not forget to tell you that the Engineer advised me to wait for the windmill till after your return. And this I shall probably do, unless for the sake of the Farm I find it necessary to fix up something.

The family continues to remain happy. Mrs. Gandhi has evidently benefited very greatly by the Sodha incident. She is very nice and tactful. The boys still continue to be saltless except on Sundays. But they are, so it appears to me, more and more finding it out for themselves that no-salt diet is better. Medh continues saltless. Pragji too is trying it.

The native inmates are behaving well. The school is flourishing. I am still absorbed in it. It has never yet been interrupted. Ramdas is getting [on] and so is Devdas and so are they all. I have not yet worried the boys to write to you.

I fear that Miss Schlesin has not kept her promise to give you a full weekly report. I hope to get out the balance tomorrow and send it to you.

Today we had a host of visitors all brought by our foreman the Indian carpenter. Isaac too graced the Farm by his presence. Gordon has not met me at all since. Lapin wrote thanking me for sending *I.O.* containing you. He said he was much interested in the account of "our mutual friend". Hosken sent his regrets that he could not see you off.

Have not seen or heard of Kennedy.

I think I have told you that I have offered to take and nurse Call here if he could be brought here. The Doctor has suggested that he could not be kept very long at Pilgrims' Rest. Douglas told me he was going there himself to see Call. I have also offered on your as also my behalf to contribute towards any expenses that might be incurred in bringing and keeping Call.

I have no time to give you translation of verses from the book[1] I alluded to, and which I have now got. I may do so next week.

Please remember me to your sister and the other relations. I am looking forward to your description of their opinion of you and of your opinion of Dr. Mehta.

And now good night.

All love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

28. LETTER TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA[2]

Shravan Vad 11 [*August 20, 1911*][3]

DEAR SHRI PRANJIVAN,

There has been no letter from you this week. Still I send this letter *via* Europe. If you are there, the week will not go by [without a letter from me]. And in case you have left Europe, you will get this in about the same time as it would take if I sent it directly to India.

I have not got Harilal's letter yet. There has been news from [Ahmedabad], however, that [Chi.] Harilal has arived there and has joined a school. He [has written] to me that he is determined to pass [the matriculation examination]; and so long as he has not passed [it], he will not be rid of his infatuation, nor will he acquire confidence in his own powers. Since he has gone with this intention I have no desire to stop him. If his character remains sound, he will gain much experience in Ahmedabad. We have had many discussions on what experience to seek and how. Now, therefore, we can only watch from a distance how he fares, I hope you will keep up a correspondence with him.

Bande Mataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5567. Courtesy: C.K. Bhatt.

[1] Presumably, Bhartrihari Shataka, a collection of three hundred stanzas by Bhartrihari, a celebrated Sanskrit poet and king; vide also "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 13-8-1911.

[2] This letter is torn at several places and the missing words are reconstructed from the context.

[3] From the reference to Harilal Gandhi in paragraph 2, this appears to have been written after he had left South Africa.

29. LETTER TO REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS[1]

August 21, 1911

THE REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS
PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to enclose herewith a revised list[2] of those Indians who are covered by the Settlement. I am unable to send you a complete list of those who are in India,[3] as the Association has not yet been able to get all the names.

The list I am sending you does not include all possible names. I am in correspondence with some of those who claim to come in under the settlement. I trust therefore, that you will not mind my sending you a few more names later on.

You will notice that there are some who have permits issued under the Peace Preservation Ordinance.[4] These names have been listed, as the persons are at present in the Transvaal, but they do not belong to the category of the names contemplated to be included among the 180.

In compiling the list of Pre-War residents, care has been taken to accept those who have been able to show *prima facie* evidence of their residence before the War for three year in the Transvaal. But neither the Association nor I are in a position to vouchsafe [*sic*] that the claimants have substantial claims. Also, whilst care has been taken not to accept any persons who have already applied under the Acts, it is not claimed that the list is absolutely trust-worthy in this respect. It is quite possible that some of them may have already applied and have either consciously or unconsciously misled the Association.

[1] This was found among Gandhiji papers and was presumable drafted by him. Since the request make in the last paragraph was acceded to, it can be assumed that the letter, although not published in *Indian Opinion*, as such letters customarily were, was actually despatched after the figures had been filled in at the blank spaces found in the penultimate paragraph. *Vide* also "Letter to Registrar of Asiatics", 26-5-1911.

[2] Not available

[3] Categories (a) and (b) in "Letter to E.F.C. Lane", P. 59

[4]These were persons who had exchanged their registration certificates issued under the Dutch Law 3 of 1885 for permits issued under the British Peace Preservation Ordinance; *vide* "Letter to General Smuts", 13-6-1908. They were unable to apply for re-registration under"any of the Asiatic laws", *vide* "Letter to Minister of Interior", 19-5-1911.

The list includes. . . out of the 150 Indians contemplated by the settlement and . . .out of the 30 Indians at present in India who are covered by the settlement and. . . Indians who are holders of peace Preservation Ordinance permits.

I shall be obliged if you will be good enough now to inform me when the Office will be opened in Johannesburg.[1]

I have the honour, etc.,

From the typewritten draft S. N. 5587; also photostat of draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5558

30. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL AND MAGANLAL GANDHI

Shravan Vad 14 [*August 23, 1911*][2]
11 P. M.

CHI. CHHAGANLAL AND CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have the letters from both of you. You may take £9 every month.

I shall not hesitate to write to you what I ought to say. I do not intend to return the money spent on the land, whether on the building or other things.[3] If anyone has paid for the land, I think we should return the amount. That is, if we set up a new convention.

If I have again to break my head over law,[4] it will not be only because of you. There may also be other factors of a similar nature to make things difficult for me. That course will be the last remedy, and the fact that I am obliged to mention it bespeaks my want of faith, my *moha* and immaturity. These ideas of mine suggest a false satyagrahi relying ultimately on brute strength. Personally I know, however that there is a difference between the two things. It will be best, all the same, if I do not have to practise law again—I do fervently wish I do not have to. I also wish, we in phoenix adopt a life of total poverty while I am yet alive, I pray to God for such a time, but the portents, I

[1]This was opened on September 9, 1911.

[2]In his "Letter to Chhaganlal Ghandhi", August 13, 1911 (p. 142) Gandhiji was disinclined to compensate him for the improvements he had effected on his share of the land at Phoenix which Gandhiji now intends to make over to a board of trustees. He has now made up his mind in this letter, which, clearly therefore comes after the letter of August 13. In 1911, *Shravan Vad* 14 Corresponds to August 23.

[3] *Vide* letters to Chhaganlal Gandhi 1-8-1911 & 13-8-1911.

[4] If I have to resume legal practice.

find, are all to the contrary. It is unlikely that the time will ever come when we shall be living in real poverty. Dr. Mehta's help stands in the way. As long as this fount flows on, I feel we shall not enjoy the rare privilege of knowing that we have not a pie left for the next day and wondering what will happen. I consider this privilege a rare one, for such is the state of the majority in the world, and such was, and will be the state of the Buddha and others [like him]. I feel positively that it is impossible to realize the great *atman* in any other away.

Jaikrishna Vyas[1] and others gave us philosophy indeed but I feel it was all dry philosophy. True knowledge, I am convinced, was taught by Narasinh Mehta and Sudamaji . To indulge in the pleasures of the senses and then assert that one does nothing, that the senses just go their way, that one is a mere observer; all this is vain chatter. He alone may argue thus who had achieved complete mastery over his senses and whose senses function only to keep the body going. By the same token, there is not one among us who is fit enough to speak these words and their will be none till we have achieved true poverty. There is no reason to believe that kings are kings in virtue of their *punya*[2]. All that can be said is that they are kings because of their deeds. But to say that these were necessarily good deeds seems entirely wrong, considering the nature of the *atman.*

If all of you agree that these ideas are right and desire that we should all enjoy the exalted state which I have pictured, God may well grant us such a time.

Narandas[3] has not even replied to my letter.

Saltless diet is in the air at the Farm these days[4]. It remains to be seen how long the fashion will last. Parsee Jivanjee's two sons have arrived today to join the school here. I have taken them on condition that they also do without salt. More later.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5568. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 9-9-1911.
[2] Accumulated merit
[3] A younger brother of the addressee
[4] *Vide* also "Letter to Harilal Gandhi", 25-7-1911.

31. LETTER TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

Bhadarva Sud 1 [*August 25, 1911*][1]

DEAR SHRI PRANJIVAN,

Received your letter regarding Polak.

The letter I had addressed to you from Phoenix has been returned to me as, through a slip, I had left the address incomplete. It is worth reading and I still want the same thing that I had asked for in that letter. Hence I send it as it is.

I do not think Polak will become an Anglo-Indian out and out. You are right in what you say about his nature. He is hot-tempered. But he is a milch cow.[2] His heart is absolutely frank and he is unswerving in his duty. Praise is everyone's enemy; how, then, can it be otherwise with him? But I do not so much as suspect that he would be corrupted by praise. He is as honest as he is frank. Maybe the words honest and frank are synonymous. How can we believe that such men can go astray? Even supposing that the thing does happen, I for one have no fear. He has done us [good] service. If, after this, he breaks away, he will sacrifice the bond [of friendship]. We, on our part, shall have nothing to lose, for the basis [of our relationship] is one-sided. We have dealings with a person so long as he seems truthful in speech and conduct. Such association cannot but be profitable to us. If he changes subsequently, the loss will be his, not ours. This has been my experience during the entire campaign. Call to mind the instances of Ally[3] and others. You will not be right if you

[1] Polak whom Dr. Mehta appears to have met in England left for that country in May, 1911, and in that year, *Bhadarva Sud* 1 corresponds to August 25.

[2] In Indian languages, this metaphor cannotes one who gives of himself ungrudgingly.

[3] Haji Ojer Ally; born in Mauritius in 1853 of Indian and Malay parents spoke Dutch, English and Hindustani fluently (*Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XIV); came to South Africa in 1884 and devoted himself whole-heartedly to the Indian cause; took notable part in the agitation against Cape Franchise Law Amendment Act; elected Chairman, Cape Coloured People's Organization in 1892; founder president, Hamidia Islamic Society and member, along with Gandhiji, of the Transvaal Indian Deputation to England in 1906; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 25-9-1906. Unable to join the satyagraha campaign and unwilling, at the same time, to submit to the Asiatic Registration Act, he left the Transvaal in 1907, leaving behind large interests; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 31-8-1907. For the incident alluded to by Gandhiji, *vide* "Ally's Mistake", 27-7-1907 and "A Brief Explanation", 22-2-1908.

say that the money and love I spent on them have been wasted. The money could have been collected only for that purpose, and he worked sincerely enough for the money that was spent [on him]. We had nothing but gain at the time from Ally's association with us.

Later on in your letter you add that you have made up with Polak. The foregoing comments, however, stand, and the views you expressed were certainly worth knowing about.

I also believe that India can have no direct benefit from the Races Congress[1]. The only indirect benefit could be that [2]

So long as he does it with an eye on there can be no bond of brotherhood with him. Selfishness and friendship have always frowned on each other. I do not think there is brotherhood among the English either. They too have learnt to follow the policy of self-interest. "Honesty is the best policy" sounds a wicked maxim to me. It images their conception of morality. This criticism applies to the common behaviour of men. They [, however,] do have among themselves selfless people like Polak (according to me).Their behaviour is not influenced by self-interest.

As you have said something about Polak, he has also given me an account of the same incident. I see from that letter also that Polak spoke to you frankly.

I believe I tore up [the report of] your speech, expecting that I would get the full text from Natesan. Now it can be [published] only if you have a copy and send it to me. I am writing to ask that translations from Natesan's [book] be stopped for the present.

I destroy all your letters after reading them. I did give a general idea of your views to Kallenbach and Polak. I hope, I did not do anything improper.

Pray do no hesitate to write to me because I happen to be busy night and day.

I have not read Mrs. Besant's Speeches.

I did not see *Gujarati's* comments on your article. If any other

[1] A Universal Races Congress, which *Indian Opinion* described as a "Parliament of Man", was held in London in July, 1911, to discuss the racial question in its various aspects. The Congress was attended by representatives of the world's religions and philosophies, and many papers were read. Mrs. Besant and Prof. Gokhale also attended. *Indian Opinion*, 26-8-1911.

[2] A page is missing here.

comments have appeared, they have not reached me. If more appear in future, I shall get them, and the *Gujarati's* comments will also be here. There are due only now.

I read something from *Kanyadohan* to the children at night. I finished the story[1] of Prahlad yesterday. The ideas so common among us, which it faithfully reflects, are rarely to be found among English books reputedly great.

I am sure you will see to it that Chhagan[2] reads such books.

Bande Mataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5628. Courtesy: C. K. Bhatt

32. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

August 26, 1911

MY DEAR HENRY,

The same mail has brought letters from you and Dr. Mehta about the incident described by you. But like you, Dr. Mehta too mentions that the little storm blew over. I will therefore not comment beyond saying that I hope you will practise what you in your letter have desired ≈ to enter into other people's feelings. You will need to do that more and more as we progress.

You may spend up to £800. That I think will be enough. I am not without some anxiety as to your Indian tour from a health point of view. But by a careful dietary, you should all be able to keep good health. The cold weather season in India is certainly not bad. What I dread is your laziness and easy-going nature when there is no resistance. You brought a corporation with you as a result. Many people will invite you. You are not the person to walk to your hosts, nor could you with the children. And you would hardly resist dishes made of Kosher food. Can Millie alone then resist? With you two gone, Heaven help the poor children. If you will therefore make a promise to yourselves as to what even in the Kosher department you would avoid, you would save a lot of trouble. Don't you say to yourself

[1] A canto from the *Bhagavata*; Prahlad was a devotee of God persecuted by his unbelieving father. Gandhiji often spoke of him as an ideal satyagrahi.

[2] Dr. Mehta's son

‘vows for the weak’. That is a prompting of the devil. All the greatest men have adopted vows. Believe me, to be able to take a vow denotes a high degree of strength. I do not care to enter into details. But generally let the children and indeed you yourselves live principally if not entirely on fruit and farinaceous foods avoiding entirely pulses and sweets whether European or Indian. I see death in chocolates. There [are] few substances so heating as the abominable chocolate that cursed product of devilish slave labour. To give tea and coffee to children in India is to give them poison.

I know that all of us cannot possibly give time to schooling. It is likely that you may not be able to do so. But if we have more hands than enough for the press, some of us could easily give time. So long as I am in S.A. and free from the turmoil of passive resistance and the miserable business of law, I should be able to give the main part of my time to education as I am now doing. Purshottamdas has given certain hours steadily to the work. Chh[aganlal] is now giving I think an hour per day. Miss West could be entirely spared for the purpose not of teaching but of looking after the boarding pupils. West certainly is anxious to give a certain portion of his time. Miss Schlesin may come only for that purpose. Maganlal could qualify. And later Harilal and Manilal are possibilities. Miss Schlesin has accepted a temporary post as a teacher in the Government school at Mayfair. More when you are here and fairly settled. The Trust Deed has already been sent to you.

With love to you all,

BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

33. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

August 27, 1911

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

The second bore-hole is going forward. They have gone down more than 150 feet now. I have ordered another truck of coal. The Company will not take the order before getting [the] cheque which I gave. The coal is now at the station. It will be removed tomorrow.

Miss Schlesin has accepted an educational appointment temporarily. I am therefore personally attending to the African Building matter. I am having all the letters addressed at the Farm. You need not

worry about me. That work won't crush me. And as I become more and more methodical, I shall feel the strain less and less. I cannot send you a systematic account this time but I shall try to do so next week. Here are the cheques paid out during the week.

Coal Owners' Association	5-16-6
B. a/c Municipality for water	1-11-6
Papering and keys	1-19-0
Municipality electric bill	0-10-0

All the receipts from the Building a/c are being banked through Amies. The receipts here are being banked through Kennedy. I have not seen him at all. Please do not hesitate to make suggestions and give hints as to the better management of this account.

Heymann I understand has written a stiff letter about Lapin's account being allowed to go into arrears. I shall see the letter tomorrow. I propose to forward it to Lapin with a personal note. I certainly think that Lapin could not be allowed to remain in arrears. The Norwick people will have a good cause of complaint against you in this business.

Ritch, Miss Schlesin, her co-teacher Boltman (a nice fellow) and Miss Knudsen[1] came to the Farm today. The last named came at my invitation to examine Albrecht. He is making wonderful progress. I therefore thought he might be assisted with massage. I have been giving me some hints which I shall follow. I hope you will not mind all this. It is to him for the last fortnight in my own way. Now Miss K. has given me some hints which I shall follow. I hope you will not mind all this. It is no use keeping a patient on the Farm and not doing all you can. He is working at the bore-hole business steadily. Fencing is making slow progress. He is really not fit for work the whole day. He can do very little after luncheon. I fancy, therefore, that active fencing will commence after the boring is finished. He might however do more this week. He does his best.

I cannot again send you extracts from the book I mentioned. I have absolutely no time to spare.

P.K. Naidoo is now fixed up at Ritch's and Pragji comes to the Farm. Pragji did not like a lawyer's office and P.K. Naidoo had to be fixed up. Mrs. Naidoo leaves Wednesday morning.

I have got two Parsee lads[2] in the school. They are nice boys.

[1] A Johannesburg masseuse who had offered to train a few young Indian women

[2] Sons of Parsee Jivanjee; vide "Letter to Chhaganlal and Maganlal Gandhi", 23-8-1911.

The school is certainly flourishing.

Call may be sent to the Farm for attention. I have offered to nurse him partly in person and partly by deputy. He has, it seems, lost mental balance. If he comes, I propose to use your room for him.

The boys remain saltless. The Parsee boys too I admitted on condition that they fell in with the settled plan. Of course, they take salt on Sundays.

The fruit trees are all now in bloom. The boys confine their attention chiefly to hoeing.

I have given permission to the native John to erect his hut on the other side of the fence and somewhere near the Kraal. I have also allowed them to remove some stones from the small Kraal. I hope that these dispositions of mine will not disturb you. I am endeavouring to give effect to the spirit underlying the title of the Farm. We should feel happy in making these poor people happy. I warn them, of course, that all arrangements are only for a year.

I want to tell you that I am making pleasing discoveries about your thoroughness and foresight. The foresight in placing a quantity of coal near the Kraal, in having the strainers for the fence cut and shaved for tarring, the fencing material taken to the fencing line all these [and] many such other things ≈ shows your method and careful calculation. I notice similar orderliness about the African Banking account. Anybody can easily pick up the thread. Importance of this method and thoroughness into matters relating to the soul will make you a far better man than many so-called holy and religious men. I cannot boast of any such thoroughness or orderliness in my own disposition. I envy you and wish to copy you in our joint lives.

When I reach the end of your letter, I am so tired that I do not attempt to write about many thoughts that come to me during the week and engage in a heart-to-heart conversation with you. I feel that my first duty is to give you all the necessary information.

With love,

Yours,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

34. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

Bhadarva Sud 5 [*August 28, 1911*][1]

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I got your letter only today. You will, given patience, recover there. If you want to stay with me for some time for the sake of your health, I can take out a permit for you. I think you will feel better here. But I leave the decision to you.

It is a good question you have asked me. You are entirely right in your interpretation. If "is" were to be used, the meaning would chang.[2] "Is" is implied in "equivalent". It is surprising that Purshottamdas should fail to understand this. I think he has a sharp mind in such matters. The Gujarati word generally used for "civilization" means "a good way of life" That is what I had meant to say. The sentence "The Gujarati equivalent for civilization is *sudharo*" is quite correct. But that is not what I intended to say. Were we to say, "The Gujarati equivalent for civilization is good conduct", according to the rules of grammar, "good conduct" would have to be taken as a Gujarati phrase. If you point this out to Purshottamdas, I think he will understand it all right. Please let me know whether it was for this reason or for any other reasons that you concluded that "means" was the right word.

I cannot tell you just now why Ayodhya is called a virgin city. I would have to read Dutt[3]. Ask me another time. The interpretation you give does not appeal to me. I may be mistaken though. It does not seem likely that *yodhya* came out of *yuj*."Virgin" in this context should be interpreted to mean "holy" in a general sense.

This is the explanation in reply to Maganlal's question.

"Community of interest" means identical interests. If all of us pursue the same object, it can be said that we have a "community of interest". If the whites seek to gratify only physical needs and we, spiritual needs, we have no "community of interest".

I have no information on what Muslim books there are in

[1] After his arrival in South Africa in July, 1911, Jamnadas Gandhi stayed in Phoenix for a while, before he shifted to Tolstory Farm. The letter was, therefore, written in 1911 in which year *Bhadarva Sud* 5 corresponds to August 28.

[2] The reference is to a passage in *Hind Swaraj.*

[3] *The Ramayana* in verse by R.C. Dutt

Gujarati. I know that a biography of the Prophet was written by Narayan Hemchandra and that copies used to be on sale at the Gujarati Press. Please tell Maganlal that it would be better for the present not to publish any list of books or journals. It will do if he reads this letter.

By sheer chance, my school has gained three more pupils, for the present at any rate. All of them observe the vow of doing without salt, vegetables and pulses between Monday and Saturday.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5640. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

35. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Bhadarva Sud 6 [*August 29, 1911*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Your article on tuberculosis will quite do. You say nothing about preventive measures against it. I have no time just now to revise the article. Let it be printed as it is. I often plan to write the chapters on health, but there is always some difficulty. All writing has to be done at night, so that very little time can bespared. However, I go on collecting my material. If I find the time to write, I shall write on tuberculosis and other diseases too.[2] It will also have to be considered whether the chapter should be published only after I have them allready or as I proceed with the writing.

I have already written about the monthly payment to be made to you.[3]

The prefatory note to the poem you sent was well done. I felt like revising it a bit, but dropped the idea. My only interest at present is in the school, so that I can give no attention to other matters and therefore ignore things. This happens again and again. I sometimes

[1] A Gujarati article entitled *Kshayano* Rog was published in *Indian Opinion*, 2-9-1911, which is presumably the one referred to in the letter. So was the preface to the poem mentioned in paragraph 3 published in *Indian Opinion*, 26-8-1911. Bhadarva Sud 6 corresponds to August 29.

[2] These articles, which Gandhiji did eventually write, were obviously not ready for publication until 1913.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal and Maganlal Gandhi", 23-8-1911.

wonder whether I am right in doing so. But each time I have felt that I am right in being so engrossed in the school. To be sure, I am not as fully engrossed as I should like to be; but I can see that other matters have taken second place. The boys are going ahead so fast that Krishnasami has lagged behind owing to ten days' absence. Occasionally, however, I wonder whether the pace is not too fast.

My teaching work is in the nature of an experiment. It is to be seen what results it brings.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 5710

36. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

September 2, 1911

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

You have surpassed yourself. Your diary I do not call it a letter is heart-stirring. I prize it so much that I propose to bind it. I have taken the liberty of letting Medh and Desai read it. It has done their souls good. I can only pray that you will end, as you have commenced your important pilgrimage. I cannot help thinking that the rigorous discipline under which you placed yourself on board will make you a much greater power for good to the members of your family there than you would otherwise have been. I am sure that your life will be to them an eloquent sermon. Your words would have been a mere waste of energy. I am naturally looking forward to your next diary.

I hope that the letters I have written to you already have given you all the information you wanted. I could have said more, but I have not the time. And after all I have certainly given you long enough letters. I shall certainly try not to miss a single week.

You will be grieved to hear that Call suffers from complete loss of memory. He is at the asylum in Pretoria. I wrote to the Superintendent of the asylum. He says that it would not be advisable to remove Call. I am therefore not bringing him to the Farm anyhow not just now. I propose to send Isaac to see Call face to face. Sundays are the days for visitors. But I think they will let Isaac visit Call during week days too. Douglas, I do not think, has played the game. He told

me he was going to see Call personally. Now he sends me the message that he cannot go and that I must do what I think proper.

The Lapins have written a nice letter in reply to my note. I enclose it for your perusal. I shall not now weary you with Heymann's letter. I talked to him through the phone yesterday. He was quite good. Of course, I had written to him too.

I hope to be ready with the monthly statement between now and Monday. In that event you shall have a copy.

The second hole is making steady progress. But I cannot say when we shall get water. Logan said on Thursday that he had gone beyond 200 feet. He has not worked today (Saturday), having worked overtime during the week days.

Fencing has made some progress during the week. Medh and Pragji will also help Albrecht and the native boy from Tuesday next.

The boys are now clearing the peach trees. Since Thursday last I have been going with them. They have been playing too much. Mrs. Gandhi is a Trojan. Since Mrs. Naidoo's withdrawal, she with the assistance (not very great) of Mrs. Sodha, has been managing the whole household. And we are 14 all told. She gets up before 6 a.m. and does not retire before 10 p.m.

It shows what people will do when put upon their mettle. She occupies Mrs. Naidoo's room and she with Devdas sleeps outside on the verandah. Ramdas and Coopoo also sleep there.

The boys are still saltless except on Sundays. Medh and Desai are entirely saltless. Desai assures me that he has given up smoking entirely.

The first birth has taken place on the Farm today. The native John's daughter has given birth to a child. I have been medically consulted as to the after-birth.

Albrecht is, I think, making steady progress.

Mrs. Goldstone is penniless and friendless. I have invited her to live on the Farm for the time being. You know her I think. She will come tomorrow with Ritch. She said she would pass a few days on the Farm. I have prepared your room for her.

Smuts sent a message that he wanted to see me. I went yesterday. We had a very sweet chat. He wants me to frame my suggestions for the next year. We talked mostly about the two civilizations ancient and modern, not Eastern and Western. I think that he was sincere in what

he said.

The school is still flourishing. My heart is still on it. And I still refuse to allow anything else to interfere with it. The two Parsee boys are well-behaved fellows and they are jolly. Ramdas may become in time the best pupil in the class[1].

The right hand fingers won't work now. They are having a fairly rough time of it at present. I have to write all my letters and they are many.

I have still not met Kennedy. I hope that he or Miss F. has been writing to you regularly and giving you all the news regarding the office.

Miss Schlesin comes back on the 1st of October.

I am sorry I am still unable to give you extracts from the book I referred to. No time.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

37. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

Saturday night, September 9, 1911

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Another remarkable letter from you. May your life on land be the same as on board. I do not wish to offer any comment on the letter except to say that it does great credit to your heart.

The second bore-hole is finished. It was finished on Saturday last. But it was tested on Monday and Tuesday. It is 220 ft. deep, it gives 40,320 gallons per 24 hours, water at 50 feet, I think, from the surface. On Wednesday the engine was removed to the third site. Logan told me today he had gone down 80 feet. If all goes well, the operations should be finished by the end of next week.

I went round to the dam with Du Ploi today. He has offered to make the dam watertight for £40. Albrecht says he could put up two dams near the 1st and 3rd hole for that amount. He says it is not at all necessary to renovate the old dam now. I am inclined to agree with Albrecht. Only following your example, I thought I could not be wrong discussing the thing with Du Ploi. Albrecht has also suggested

that I should have a siphon for one of the bore-holes. I am going to discuss the thing with Kennedy if he comes tomorrow and if there is any conversation of importance with him I shall write another letter to you. I am not going to Town on Monday. So this letter will be sent to Town tomorrow evening.

I have sent the account with cheque to Heymann. He writes expressing satisfaction, and suggests that I should not allow Hilt's arrears to accrue. I had occasion to talk to Lapin through the phone on Friday. I have therefore asked him to collect [the rent] from Hilt.

Lapin telephoned saying that the outfitter to whom Amies objected would not leave and that Amies insisted on his agreement rights. I have asked Lapin to further interview Hilt and to smooth matters over. I have a letter today from Amies complaining about the same matter. I shall do whatever may be necessary. Lapin has promised to send me a wire if need be. I have also suggested that if £1 or £2 would induce the outfitter to go, he should spend the amount. MacGeorge has paid in both the amounts.

Albrecht is working practically the whole day since the massage. He is showing many lovable traits in him. He has risen in my estimation. No progress this week with fencing. We are on re-laying the floors. We have commenced with the school. But fencing won't be neglected. Medh and Desai are on the Farm. AT Albrecht's suggestion, we have burnt up the grass between the peach trees. He now proposes to harrow between the trees. I think that we commenced burning too late. However, I am a blind man and I follow Albrecht in these matters. If a mistake has been made, no very great harm has been done. I am gaining experience with a vengeance.

The native John has not made headway with his house. But he is creeping up.

Mrs. Goldstone did not come on Sunday after all. I have got one more addition to my school. I am declining to accept any boys for the school who would not accept a saltless diet. I am anxious not to disturb the present boys in their progress. The school still absorbs me. That is my predominant occupation.

Isaac is going to see Call tomorrow. I have a letter from Dr. Gibson who says Call should not be removed for the present. He has returned the two letters you wrote to Call. Evidently Call is not able to receive any letters. At present it is a living death for him. His poor fiancee!

Mrs. Gandhi took a little salt on Sunday and she has had a severe relapse of her old complaint. Whether salt is to be blamed or not I do not know. Anyhow, I blame it.

Albrecht loves Chhotalal and he Albrecht. Tonight Chhotalal sleeps with Albrecht.

I am still unable to give you extracts from the book. But I am sure you do not need them, after your brilliant experience of the voyage.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

38. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Bhadarva Vad 1 [*September 9, 1911*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have your letter of *Sud* 13[2]. If I pay Anandlal and you the money you have spent on the construction of your house, I must pay Cordes also. But that will create no end of problems. I[think] it necessary that we approach all that we have to do in this manner. The money you all owe me on account of thehouses, I intend to forgo. That some owe more and others less, need not cause any heart-burning. As for the debt you have incurred, I think it would be best to consider it separately.[3] We shall consider the matter further when the Trust Deed is signed and we come to a final decision. I intend going there before the Deed is signed, but I think it hardly possible, within the next two or three months. It should be possible, I believe, next year. Meanwhile, you may ask me whatever you want to in this matter.

I feel I understand the meaning of poverty better each day. It should be clearer still if I were reduced to utter helplessness. I never intended

[1] In this letter Gandhiji further explains a briefer statement he made on Jaikrishna Vyas in his letter of August 23, 1911, and this one, therefore, was clearly written soon after.

[2] September 6

[3] Following Chhaganlal Gandhi (pp. 142, 149), Maganlal also appears to have raised the problem of compensation for improvements effected on his portion of the Phoenix land in the context of the new Trust Deed which envisaged the transfer of ownership of the land to trustees.

to say that the philosophy of Shri Krishna and Vyas was dry.[1] I only cited the example of Jaikrishna Vyas, brother of Prabhuram Vaidya. If you have kept my letter, please go through it again. You may then understand this better. I don't know if any word was left out, causing a serious misunderstanding of the meaning. Jaikrishna Vyas has written very well on Vedanta. I have read some of his writings. I used to go to him occasionally. I thought of him when I wrote about poverty. I had already read the story[2] of Sudama. I was imbued, and still am, with the ambition to share honours with him and Narasinh Mehta for poverty. That is how I came to write that Jaikrishna Vyas's was dry philosophy and Sudamaji's the right one and worthy of emulation. I used to observe that the former carried the key of his safe on his person, tied at the waist. I knew that he had collected quite a bit of money. All this seemed to contradict what he says in his book *Panchikaran.*

I look upon Shri Krishna as the Supreme God, the Shri Krishna, that is, who was the charioteer[3] of Arjuna, the friend of Sudama and the Ranachhod[4] of Narasinh Mehta. I did not even dream of criticizing Him. In so far as my letter gave you the impression that I did I have sinned. I shudder to think how I came to write even a single syllable on the subject. I have been agitated ever since I received your letter today (Saturday). The *katha*[5] over, I have sat down to write and my very first letter is this one to you. I think it is a wretched life I live because I do not devote the time—I can neither spare nor get it—to reading over letters after writing them. Whatever verb you may use, I am equally guilty. Things are bound to continue thus so long as the mind is unsteady.

The reproaches to which Sudamaji's wife treated him, I regard as poetic flourishes. However, even if his wife uttered those very words, the thing does not seem surprising or incongruous. A wife would speak in this manner. Sudamaji would want to suffer to the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal and Maganlal Gandhi", 23-8-1911.

[2] Sudama and Krishna, disciples of the same guru, Sandipani, were friends. Sudama had a large family and was very poor. His wife chided him for his otherworldliness and persuaded him to go to Krishna for help. Yet once in the presence of the Lord, he forgot to ask for help. But when he returned home, he found it transformed by riches.

[3] In which capacity he preached the Gita to Arjuna

[4] One of Krishna's many names

[5] Reading of narratives from holy books

uttermost while his wife would have none of it. Since they had a friend like Krishna, why not seek his help? This at any rate is certain: Sudamaji was extremely poor and content to remain so. He was, likewise, an advanced *bhakta*[1]. Narasinh Mehta rose to the presence of Shri Krishna but he never desired to be delivered from his poverty.

The saltless diet is in great favour here nowadays. I bring bananas with me whenever I go to Johannesburg. And apples likewise. We have bought a small tin of olive oil. In the morning, the boys take dilute tinned milk, bread *(bati)* and ghee. At noon, whenever fruit is available, they get banana, pieces of apple with olive oil and the juice of sour lemons from the Farm, and bread. The broken rice we had, has been cleaned and ground; we make *khir*[2] from it. At times the *khir* is made from sago and at others, with rice. Sometimes there is only rice with ghee, stewed apricots, these having been dried last year, and milk. In the evening, there is coffee (made from wheat) or milk, and *roti*[3] with ghee. Marmalade has been made from oranges, and that also is served. Once a week, the boys have rice and dal. Medh and Pragji have been on saltless diet for a few days. And Ba, of course, all the time, Though she ate a little of the beans cooked for the boys last Sunday and was in consequence quite ill for two days. God alone knows whether the illness was brought on by the beans and salt or was due to some other cause. I blame it of course on the former. If Ratanshi's wife[4] were to adopt a saltless diet, all of us, except the Kaffirs, should get credit for living without salt for six days [in the week]. But I observe that salt is the very breath of Rambhabai.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5659. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] Devotee
[2] Rice cooked in milk
[3] Unleavened bread, flat and round like a pancake
[4] Rambhabai Sodha

39. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

HEIDELBERG,
[Before *September 16, 1911*][1]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I think I shall have to wire for Manilal. They are too short-handed at Phoenix.

I sent you a message about a water-cart. We shall need it badly. Mrs. P.K. Naidoo is coming and Mrs. Sodha will, I doubt, not.

You are not at peace with yourself. That is bad.

With love,

Yours sincerely,
UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence: National Archives of India

40. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

Saturday night, September 16, 1911

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Kennedy did come last Sunday. He passed the night too at the Farm. He may come again. We discussed many things ≈ abstract and otherwise. It was only at night that he opened discussion on your relations. He showed me your letter to me. From you we went on to what should be man's duty in his dealings with friends and fellow-beings generally. He agreed that the safest course was not to analyse friends even as a son does not analyse his mother or a husband his wife. Both simply love one another. I do not think he knows what he proposes doing on your return. And for my part I would wish that you would not think of your future relations either. Let them grow themselves. The only thing one may think of is oneself. What is our duty in [the] given circumstances!

Kennedy and I discussed also the question of laying pipes, etc. I asked him to get quotations from Vereeniging. This he has done. I need hardly assure you that I would do nothing rashly.

The third hole is likely to be finished next week. Logan said so.

[1] From the reference to the water-cart; vide the following item.

He is now over 200 feet deep.

From your wonderful letters I gather that you are not worrying about things over here. I am glad.

The fencing still remains suspended. We are making use of the water-carts and re-laying the principal floors. The school-room and the kitchen verandah are finished. Men's quarters will be finished by Tuesday. The verandah between your room and the school will be finished by the end of the week. Fencing will then be taken up. I trust you do not mind the delay.

Albrecht is a brick. Now he works practically the whole day. I must retract much I said about him. His work is splendid. But his loving faculty is simply grand. Most of the boys adore him. Mrs. Gandhi loves him. That is saying a great deal in his favour. He is most unassuming. He quietly sits through the story I give the children in the evening. At times it must be uninteresting for him. But he does not mind it. Of course he is progressing in health. I am not sure that you and I are good enough to deserve him. Did I tell you that Chhotalal now sleeps with him and mainly through him it is that Chhotalal too is saltless.

A solicitor, Vand der Kessels of Heidelberg, motored from Johannesburg to consult me. I served him in our ordinary style, gave him principally a saltless meal. He seemed to appreciate the complement paid to him in not making the slightest distinction.

I sent Isaac to see Call in Pretoria. Isaac thinks that Call is not so bad and could be removed. I hope to go next week myself to see him. Probably Gordon will go with me. Here is the time table:

Self to get up at 6 a.m. and light the stove and prepare milk for the boys.

Ring the bell 6.25 for the boys to get up.

Another bell 6.55 for breakfast, the same to be finished by 7.15.

Farm work from 7.15 to 10.30.

School from 1 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Going to the engine, etc., between 4.30 and 5.30.

Supper at 5.30 p.m.

School 7 p.m. This is largely some reading from the Gujarati books together with translation in English. For the last 4 days Mrs. Sodha and Mrs. Gandhi too have been coming. Albrecht has actually caught the tunes of some of the Gujarati hymns.

8 to 10, or later, correspondence, etc.

Since last Sunday I have been omitting the school largely because I did not go to Town on Monday.

With your letter from London we received letters from Miss Winterbottom and Maud. Both speak in most flattering terms of you. Miss Nicholson also writes saying she would endeavour to see you.

Many thanks for the chart and Dickinson's[1] books.

Hilt has not paid for two months. He had taken in an outfitter in a sample room. This roused Amies' ire. He asked Lapin to remove the outfitter. I authorized Lapin to do so even if it cost a few pounds and wrote Amies not to mind a month. Now Lapin has written saying Amies is reconciled. The outfitter will of course go at the end of the month. I shall not weary you with the correspondence.

Kennedy has deposited £ 50 in your account. He told me he anticipated no difficulty about reducing the Bank's liability.

I am doing nothing about Mountain View, nor do I know how it is looking.

Without my asking you, I know you will pass on my regards to your sister and all your people.

I hope that you receive my letters regularly. I have not missed a single mail. I mention this as I do not post the letters myself and I am anxious that you should know that I write regularly.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

41. GERMISTON INDIANS

Indians of Germiston have done well in deciding to oppose the illegal Notice served on the Indians Stand-holders in the Germiston Location, by the Town Council of that anti-Asiatic stronghold.[2] According to Law 3 of 1885, all Asiatics should live in Bazaars or Locations. It is true that the law is inoperative as there is no penalty clause for residing outside Locations. But it is a notorious that in most

[1] British author Lowes Dickinson

[2] Indian Stand-holders in the Georgetown Municipal Location had been notified by the Town Council to have their licences endorsed, which would prohibit them from trading in the Location, alternatively to quit. They wrote to the Town Clerk protesting that the Council had no right to ask for such endorsement of licences and that Law 3 of 1885, as amended, protected their tenure. *Indian Opinion*, 23-9-1911.

of the Transvaal towns there are Locations provided for Asiatics and most of these places are occupied by them. The Germiston Location is one of them. There is no law to prevent Indians from trading in such Locations. Consequently several Indians hold trade licences in the Location in question. This the Town Council cannot bear. It is not at all concerned as to how they are to live if they may not trade, nor is it concerned that the residents of the Location are not in any way competing with European traders in Germiston. In the Town Council's estimation, it is an offence for an Indian to trade at all.

Now the Council is powerless by direct and fair means to prevent the Indians of the Location from trading. So it has resorted to the Notice above adverted to. The Council thinks that, as Indians do not possess any leases, it could summarily eject them from their holdings. It should be remembered that the Indians have built at their own expense substantial buildings on their Stands. Their eviction from the Locations must, as very properly pointed out by the Stand-holders in their letter to the Council, mean virtual ruin to them. Happily the Indians have decided to ignore the Council's Notice, and we doubt not that the Notice will remain a dead letter unless the Council proposes still further to stultify itself by acting up to it.

The Notice serves to show what a precarious existence it is for our countrymen in South Africa.

Indian Opinion, 23-9-1911

42. A SHOCKING CASE

We have already printed in these columns a representation addressed by the Natal Indian Congress to the Minister of the Interior regarding the forfeiture of two deposits of £100 each on behalf of certain two Indians who claimed their right of residence in the Province.[1] The immigration laws of Natal provide that, if a man, who

[1]Two minors, sons of Saued Ahmed of Durban and M.M. Nathalia of Verylam, respectively, arrived at Durban on May 15 but wre restrained from disembarking by the Principal Immigration Officer, who held that one was above sixteen and that it had not been satisfactrorily proved in the case of the other that the was in fact the son of his father. The two traders then deposited £100 each against permission to land pending appeal to the Chief Magistrate, who on May 23 ruled, in the case of Sayed Ahmed's son, that the official's discertion regarding the boy's age was beyond appeal. In the second case, he ruled that Nathalisa's evidence was insufficient. If a certificate were producted later about boy's parentage, he would gladly permit landing. He observed that the law dealt some what harshly with Nathlia and recommended the rtefund of the deposit, . The boys left for India by the first avialable boat. *Indian Opinion*, 9-9-1911.

deposits £100 and lands in order to prove his claim, fails to prove it to the satisfaction of a Magistrate, he may forfeit the deposit. Thus the forfeiture is not a legal result of any such failure. It is optional for the Minister to declare such deposits as forfeited, In the two cases before us, the boys in question never made deposits themselves. But apart from that, it was never proved conclusively that the boys had not the right of residence in Natal. On the contrary, in one case the Magistrate showed much sympathy. We could understand forfeiture in glaringly bad cases where deceit has been practised. In these cases fraud has not been even so much as whispered. The only construction that can be placed upon the action of the Government is that they intend, by a policy of confiscation, to defeat the right of Indian residents. If such is its deliberate policy, we think that General Botha's statement that there is no intention to injure the interests of Indians lawfully resident in South Africa must be set down asinsincere. We hope, however, that General Smuts will favourably consider the Congress's representation and order a refund of the deposits.

Indian opinion, 23-9-1911

43. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

Saturday night, September 23, 1911

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

The insects about me tell me that I should not do such night work-not that I should put up a perforated screen to ward off the insects. However, that is another story.

I have your letter and the report of the interview with Maude. I am not surprised that Maude has impressed you. He is a true man. But his reasoning is bad. Modern civilization has had its trial thousands of years ago. It was tried at the time of the Tower of Babel and found wanting. It was tried in India and failed. It is again on its trial and is already tottering. What trial can it want? What does it propose doing? It either rejects the divinity or seeks to find it outside of ourselves. In both of these systems, it is hopelessly wrong. His rejection of the doctrine of non-resistance to evil takes away everything from the praise he bestows on Tolstoy. If Tolstoy was the greatest reformer of his age in Europe, he owed it to his doctrine of non-resistance[*sic*]. The illustration he takes is far-fetched. A non-resistant will not find himself in the circumstances he describes as probable on a ship. We

might as well cease to be vegetarians because Icelanders must eat meat. I fancy that as vegetarians we do not go to Iceland at all. And who knows that the sinking of a ship by the pranks of a mad man might not be a proper deliverance for the men on board. Those who flew from the danger of the Jameson raid[1] courted certain disaster at Glencoe. I think I told you that I honoured Maude as a true man, i.e., a man who tried to act up to his beliefs, but I do not accept his qualified acceptance of Tolstoy's teaching. Of course, there must be rules for the guidance of voluntary associations. Only it must be borne in mind that Tolstoyan belief does not contemplate huge settlements in states. Neither men nor animals are expected or intended to roam about the earth. If I serve my neighbours whom I reach by walking to them I serve the world. When I attempt to do more, I not only do not do anything good, but I positively disturb the economy of nature in the same way that a man abuses nature by trying to make money upon money. Both arise out of conceit.

Your next letter should give me a vivid account of your meeting with Dr. Mehta. I am looking forward to it.

You have asked me to give you not much account of the Farm, in order to spare me. I however propose to continue the custom. It is no trouble to me. The 3rd bore-hole was completed yesterday. The machinery was dismantled yesterday afternoon. The hole is over 260 feet deep. Water was found at 220 feet. It is 60 feet from the surface. The hole gives over 68,000 gallons in 24 hours. Logan has been instructed to remove to a school about 10 miles from here. He will, therefore, probably leave some time next week.

In spite of most strenuous work by Albrecht, floor-laying is not yet finished. It is a long job. He allowed the school-room floor to dry for a week. We came to the school only today.

A Johannesburg solicitor (a Jew), with some English friend, came in today to inquire about the bore-hole, etc. He has just taken over a farm near Lenz. He was interested in our ideals and I gave them

[1] An abortive attempt, in December 1895, led from the Cape Colony by Dr. Jameson, Administrator of the British South Africa Company, to annex the Transvaal by taking advantage of a projected Uitlander uprising which did not materialize. Jameson was captured, tried and convicted. The Raid and the failure of the British Government to repudiate it unequivocally were among the causes that led to the Boer War; vide "Speech at Public Meeting, Bombay", 26-9-1896, "Speech at Public Meeting, Bombay", 26-9-1896 and "Speech at Meeting, Madras", 26-10-1896.

to him. He and his friend had our coffee and bread which they liked very well. Medh and Desai are still here. They are both working very well. Medh, Desai, Albrecht and I are restricting ourselves to only one meal per day for the next eight days. This is that portion of the Hindu year when millions of Hindus go in for this fast.[1] Of course, we still remain saltless.

I have read your official letter to Miss S[chlesin]. Indeed I opened it. She has not even seen it. I will not go into the letter with you. I shall attend to it. Both the accounts have been kept religiously separate. I am sorry I do not send you a weekly balance-sheet. But I have no time and seeing that I personally attend to the matter, perhaps it is not necessary. If I am making mistakes which you could check it I sent you a weekly balance-sheet, I think the mistakes should be put up with. After all I am not likely to err grievously during your absence. At the same time, as soon as Schlesin returns to the office, I shall ask her to prepare a statement for you. But I propose to continue to attend to the thing personally even when she returns. Hilt has not yet paid the arrear rent. Lapin wrote to me saying Hilt told him he was going to send it. But Hilt is hardly reliable. I shall ask Lapin again and press for payment.

Chhotalal often answers 'Mr. K[allenbach] has gone to Germiston' and then corrects it to 'Germany'.

Herewith Call's letter which you would like to see. I telegraphed to him and wrote also asking him to come to the Farm if he wished to. His calling Isaac 'Irish'shows that the poor man's mind is still defective. Mrs. Goldstone never came.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] The reference presumably is to the fasts during Navaratri.

44. LETTER TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

Aso Sud 2 [*September 24, 1911*][1]

DEAR SHRI PRANJIVAN,

I have not yet replied to your three letters. Since you were to go to India, why should I have written [to you] in England? As regards the mail to India, well, the old position continues. So it is not possible to write regularly. Even today I write without knowing when the post will be cleared.

I am not writing anything to Manilal[2] now. I enclose his last letter. I have [already] written to him saying that he may come when he wants to. I have also written to Phoenix about him. I don't think I shall be able to go there myself. I shall therefore ask him to come over. I feel he will gain some experience here. As to his going to Fiji, I have written to him plainly that he should not. Even if he goes, I think he will regret it. There was no one waiting at Fiji just to hand him money.

He has made a great mistake in converting his paper into a daily. As it is, there is no worth in it. The types are bad, the paper is bad and so is the substance. He doesn't have capable helpers in Mauritius. How then can a proper newspaper be brought out? Besides, where are the readers? I shall discuss all this with him when he comes here.

In writing about Ritch and others, you say that I should not take it ill whatever you write. You should not even entertain such adoubt. When a view is expressed candidly, why should it offend? Do continue, therefore, to write whatever you think right on any subject on

[1]A Reuter cable from Soimla dated September 5, 1911 announced that, whole there had been belated rains in many parts of North India, famine conditions continued in the Panjab and Rajasthan. It is to this that Gandhiji referes in the last paregraph of this letter, and in the year 1911, Also Sud 2 corresponds to september 24 Moreover, it is clear from the contents that this letter comes before that of October 10, 1911 (pp. 165-7), also addressed to Mehta, where internal e*vide*nce serves to fix the year more firmly.

[2] Manilal Doctor; a barrister engaged to Dr. Mehta's daughter who was at this time staying at Tolstoy Farm; founded a daily in Manuritius, which appeared in English and Hindi, for advocating the cause of Indians in the Colony. Gandhiji held that it was partly due to his efforts that the proposal to ban indenturted immigration into the Colony materialized. *Indian Opinion*, 7-10-1911.

which you feel the need to say something.

It is likely that whited entertain more hatred towards us than we do towards them. If, however, we make a great show of love in return for the little that they show us, there is another reason. It is that we fear them. Otherwise, so far as my experience goes, many Indians do not even distinguish between good and bad and take all whites to be bad. On the one hand, this needles fear must go; on the other, one must learn to distinguish between good and bad. I believe both will come about in the course of time.

I do not look upon Ritch, Polak or anyone else as my disciples, They will all work with us as long as they think it fit. There is no reason to believe that, after my death, people would imagine that their actions would necessarily have my approval. Those who have come in contact with me know that differences of opinion do exist among us on subjects other than satyagraha. However, I shall not dismiss your suggestion from my mind.

I have written written a great deal about my going there[1] . I, too, feel that I can render useful service if I am there during the famine. I shall be there when the time comes. What more shall I say? All my preparations are meant to equip myself for work there.

Bande Mataram from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Please read Tolstoy's *Ivan the Fool* if you have not done so already.

Please look up the two or three pages of comments in Indian Oovland [*sic*] on your article[2] about me.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5629. Courtesy: C. K. Bhatt

[1] To India

[2] Presumably, *M. K. Gandhi and the South African Problem*

45. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[Before *September 28, 1911*][1]

. . . and, the Protector having denied it, there was justification for publishing what was done. Aiyer[2] is innocent of what he has written now. Behind it are some persons bent on mischief. We need fear nothing on his account. We know our duty.

You may suggest to Dada Sheth[3] and others that it is an offence in law if we publish anything which we cannot prove. But it would be all right if the Congress wrote about the matter after making due inquiries. However, further inquiries about it . . .

From a Photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 6078

46. MR GANDHI AND THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

The Natal Indian Congress this week received a cablegram from Calcutta asking whether Mr. Gandhi could preside at the Indian National Congress to be held at Calcutta in December. The Natal Indian Congress leaders communicated with Mr. Gandhi by telegraph

[1] On September 9, 1911 the *African Chronicle*, owned and edited by Aiyer from Durban, reported the case of an indenturede Indian woman, Jannumia, who had been ill- treated and assaulted by her mistress during her two pregnancies. She suffered miscarriage the first time and lost her second child shortly after its birth. According to the report, she and her husband had gone twice to complain to the Protector of Immigrants but had vbeeb sent back to the employer on bothe occasions. During her third pregfnancy, she ran away into the woods. *Indian Opinion* reproduced this story in its issue of September 16, 1911, but two weeks later, it announced that the Protector had denied that a woman of that description had ever gone to him. On September 28, 1911, the Natal Indian Congress addressed the Protector about the incident, presumably after having made the inquiries syggested by Gandhiji in the letter. This letter must therefore have been written before that date.

[2] P.S. Aiyer; owner and editor of the *African Chronical* published from Durban, campaigned vigoroulsy for the £3 tax on indentured Indians through his own paper and also enlisted the support of European-owned papers like *The Natal Mercury* and *Preroria News* for the cause. The Anti-£3 Tax League of which he was honorary Secretrary was formed in September, 1911 through his effoerts. When prosecutions of re-indentured labourers for non-payment of the tax bagan, he brought to *The Natal Mercury's* notice the fact that the Government circular issued in April, 1910 regarding re-indentured Indians and the tax bore an interpretation different from that of Act 19 of 1910.

[3] Dada Osman

and telephone, strongly urging acceptance. At first Mr. Gandhi said it was not possible for him to leave the Transvaal at the present time, but at length he expressed his willingness to preside if it would serve the Motherland and on condition[1] that he should be allowed to return immediately after the session of the Congress. Accordingly, a cablegram was sent to this effect. Up to the time of going to press no further news is forthcoming.

Indian Opinion, 30-9-1911

47. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

September 30, 1911

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

You are working wonders. If you are, in the midst of your people, carrying the same spirit, they will learn much from you and your visit will be a blessing to you and to them.

I have received the no-salt and other pamphlets as also Wagner's *Simple Life* and *The Party System* for all of which I do not need to thank you.

The engine has left the Farm. Flooring is not yet quite finished. I see what a task it was. There are some signs of rain now. There were a few drops last night.

The first death on the Farm after it changed hands has taken place. John's grandchild that was born here died yesterday. I supplied him with planks for making a coffin. The child was buried somewhere near the Kraal. I thought that was the best place.

Our semi-fast finishes tomorrow. It will have to be a complete fast tomorrow. I have not felt it in the slightest degree. It is a question whether I should now at all go back to two meals. But I shall not be hasty.

Fencing should begin next week in earnest.

I wrote to Call and wired. Have not heard again.

I have not been able to go to Pretoria. It has been practically impossible, so tied down have I become to the school and its appointments.

[1] Gandhiji does not here mention the second condition which he laid down in a personal telegram; *vide* "Letter to Dr. Pranjivan Mehta", 10-10-1911.

I have restarted sandal-making. Ramdas and a new pupil are the apprentices. Between them I finish a pair by 11 a.m. if the back bands are ready. Repairs and new sandals were badly wanted.

Hilt has not yet paid the arrears. Lapin tells me in a letter that Hilt has promised to send the money in a few days. I am watching him.

By the time this is in your hands, you will have heard about the offer made to me to preside at the forthcoming National Congress in India. The invitation was sent to the Congress in Natal by six prominent Indians including the All-India Muslim League. Indians are all overjoyed. They insisted that I should accept the invitation. I have therefore said yes, but asked for a free hand.[1] I am how awaiting reply. Meanwhile, Reuter has published the news to the world. And yet it is likely that they may not have me if I want a free hand. I do not propose to discuss this matter just now. If I receive a cable accepting my conditions, I shall cable to you, asking you to return. I shall ask Polak too to do likewise. If you do not return, I could arrange to fix up matters during your absence. But it will be better to return. You may want to come to India. If so, we could start together from here after making all arrangements, or you may join me in India. My visit there will be in India more than a fortnight. For I must return in time for next year's Union Parliament. This invitation I do not like at all. I do not want it. And yet I could not say 'no'. The matter is most delicate.

With love,

Yours,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* "Mr. Gandhi and the Indian National Congress", 30-9-1911 and also "Letter to Pranjivan Mehta", 22-10-1911.

48. FRAGMENT OF LETTER[1]

[About *October 2, 1911*][2]

. . . should have light exercise, such as pacing to and fro slowly, within the space. If you don't have clear motions, you should apply mud packs on the abdomen at night. One Lutavan, who had been very ill, was restored to health with remedies such as these and he has left for home. He used to cough so badly when he arrived that I could hardly sleep. He used to double up [with coughing]. Had been reduced to a mere skeleton. Here, with half an hour's Kuhne bath ...[3] I can say more only after examining [you].

I shall send as much matter from here as possible. But it would be idle to depend on me these days. I am preoccupied with the Farm, that is, with the pupils. I have neither the time nor the inclination for anything else.

Manilal Doctor will have arrived before you receive this letter. Send on the accompanying letter.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 6076

49. "WASTED AWAY TO A SHADOW "

General Botha paid to passive resistance an indirect tribute when at Rietfontein he said the other day that "General Smuts had wasted away to a shadow when, as the result is his incessant efforts to settle the question, the gaols were filled".[4] there is no doubt that General Smuts tried every means to break the spirit of the passive resisters, and it was only when he failed to do so that he reluctantly recognized facts and

[1] The first two pages of this letter are missing. However, it appears to have been addressed to Chhaganlal Gandhi.

[2] Manilal Doctor reffered to in the letter arrived in Durban on October 2, 1911; *vide* "Letter to Pranjivan Mehta", 22-10-1911.

[3] A word is missing here.

[4] Commenting on a petition by whites asking for deportation of all Asiatics, Botha said, in his speech of September 26, 1911, that though he would like Asiatics to be sent away, the difficulty was the "fearfully big amount" of compensation involved and the fact that under trhe British flag they had to act according to British principles. *Indian Opinion*, 30-9-1911.

settled the question. Four years ago passive resistance was taboo. It was considered by some to be illigal. Others again declared that to yield to passive resistance was to court trouble with the Natives. Both the parties forgot that passive resistance took its stand upon Truth and that it was a weapon that could be effectively used by those who never relied upon bloodshed. But today we have the Union Premier frankly admitting that the Asiatic settlement was due to passive resistance. We feel sure that its worth will be more appreciated with the lapse of time.

Indian Opinion, 7-10-1911

50. THE FOOL AND HIS BROTHERS

PREFACE

We reproduce this tale[1] from a most devout piece of writing by that great man the late Tolstoy. We do not provide a literal translation of the tale; but we have attempted a free rendering of it so as clearly to bring out its significance.

This tale is far superior to the one we have already published.[2] It has also been commended by several European writers. All that is told in it is not only very plausible, but what is more, such things keep happening even now in obscure places. One should not assume that such events are improbable because they do not find a place in recorded history.

The reader will see Tolstoy's intention for himself as the chapters succeed one another.

The story is written in a style which makes it as interesting as its teaching is lofty. If our readers fail to find our version as interesting as we ourselves found the English translation, the fault should be attributed to us and not to the story itself.

We have substituted Indian names for Russian lest the latter detract from the interest of the story.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion , 7-10-1911

[1] The story itself has not been retranslated here into English

[2] *Vide* "Wonderful is the Way of God", 23-12-1905.

51. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI[1]

[About *October 7,1911*][2]

. . . Manilal Adalaja has expired.This is a cruel blow. You should take a lesson from it. I wish that in your infatuation for modern education you would not sacrifice your health. I shall write no more, since I have already told you of my views on the subject.

I have received what looks like an invitation to be President of the Congress. I have accepted it on condition that I have the utmost freedom [to express my views]. I do not covet the position but, in case I do have to come, we shall have occasion to meet.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 675

52. LETTER TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

Aso Vad 2 [*October 10, 1911*][3]

DEAR SHRI PRANJIVAN,

I have not replied to your two letters because I was not to write to you in Europe.

Harilal wants to appear for the matriculation examination. I tried hard to convince him that there was nothing to be gained by doing so, but the advice sticks in his throat. He refuses to come out of the state in which I once was, when I was infatuated with degrees. How can one blame him for it? I do only hope that he will see the light one day. His motives appear to be good.

Manilal[4] reached Durban on Monday last [week]. He left Durban yesterday (Monday). He will arrive here (at the Farm) tomorrow. There was a letter from him from Phoenix, in which he said

[1] Only the second page of the letter is available.

[2] By September 30,1911, the enquiry about Gandhiji's possible candidature for the presidentship of the Indian National Congress had been made public; *vide* "Mr. Gandhi and the Indian National Congress", 30-9-1911. A news-item in *Indian Opinion*, 7-10-1911, mentions that Gandhiji had himself cabled his reply. This letter must therefore have been written about that time.

[3] It was in 1911 that an enquiry was made as to whether Gandhiji would like to be considered for the presidentship of the Indian National Congress, and in that year *Aso Vad* 2 corresponds to October 10.

[4] Manilal Doctor

that he liked the place. Chhaganlal also writes to the same effect. Let us see how things turn out here.

I have been invited to become the President of the [Indian National] Congress. It is not clear from whom the invitation has come. The cable was addressed to the Natal [Indian] Congress, which has already cabled back that it should be possible for me to go. I have sent a private cable[1] saying that I should be asked only if my freedom would not be compromised and my presence was thought especially necessary, else I might be left alone. About twelve days have passed since the cable was sent, but there has been no reply so far. From this I infer either that the cable from Calcutta was not an invitation but a mere enquiry or that my condition was found unacceptable.

I know you are very keen that I should leave for India at an early date, and stay there for good. The idea appeals to me and I shall go the moment I can become free here. I think it necessary, however, to settle matters here. I cannot possibly be there in time for famine [relief] work. I can see that it is a terrible one. I also know that the belated rains are almost useless for many people.

Please do not think that I shall incur the sin of falling into the delusion that I should serve the entire world. I well realize that my work can only be in India and that in Gujarat, rather in Kathiawad.

Excellent articles continue to appear occasionally in *Indian Opinion*, and sometimes I even feel that the fullest advantage is not being taken of all that comes out. True, Miss Smith's despatches are insipid. But I do not wish to discontinue them. Her sympathy is sincere. I pay her nothing. I stopped paying her while I was still in England.[2] But Miss Smith herself asked to be allowed to go on writing without an honorarium. I agreed. In fact, I do not send some of her despatches for publication. Only last month, I withheld one. She is not likely to feel hurt either. Having regard to her feelings, I do not think it will be right to discontinue her despatches altogether.

[1] Not available

[2] During his 1909 visit to England Gandhiji arranged that Miss A. A. Smith, M.R.A.S., whose book *Our Sailor King* was published in 1910, should send periodical despatches for *Indian Opinion*, which she did pseudonymously as "Observer". The discontinuance of her "London Letter" for financial reasons was seriously considered, but Polak demurred saying, "It is the only non-p[assive] r[esistance] thing . . . keeping us in touch with the outside world"; *vide* "London", before 25-9-1909. Gandhiji presumably discussed the matter with Miss Smith as Polak had suggested.

I have not got the letter you wrote after meeting Kallenbach. There was no letter from you last week; only a pamphlet was received. You must have seen the *garbi*[1] on Jasama[2] in *Indian Opinion* . It has also been republished separately, as people liked it. I have instructed Phoenix to send you a copy. It fell into Chhaganlal's hands by chance. I personally feel that in this *garbi* the poet has conveyed profound knowledge in sweet and simple language. We have not been able to ascertain the name of the poet. Please let me know what impression it makes on you.

Bande Mataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5630. Courtesy: C.K. Bhatt

53. THE IMMIGRATION CASE

The Gerber case[3] decided by Sir John Buchanan at Cape Town is one of considerable importance, and, although it refers to a Russian Jew, it has a bearing on British Indian immigrants. It appears that this immigrant had £20 in his possession, had paid his own passage, was in good health, had been convicted of no crime and was an efficient workman. The Jewish Minister testified that he was a good Yiddish scholar. And yet the Immigration Officer treated him as a prohibited immigrant, because, in his opinion, his educational attainments did not come up to his requirements. We know that the Jews in South Africa are not labouring under any particular disabilities, but the silent and insidious opposition against them now and then comes to the surface, as in the present case. Had Mr. Gerber been an immigrant from any other part of Europe, and had he belonged to a different denomination, he would probably not have

[1] A Gujarati literary form resembling a ballad. This one was chosen for publication by Chhaganlal Gandhi who also wrote a preface to it which Gandhiji commended; *vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 29-8-1911.

[2] The heroine; one among many labourers employed by the King Siddharaja of Gujarat to dig a lake, she successfully resisted his improper attentions.

[3] Jack Gerber, a Russian Jew, came to South Africa to join his brother but he had left his permit behind. He was restrained from disembarking on grounds of deficient education although he satisfied the conditions for entry. The Cape Provincial Court ruled that Gerber was entitled to land and that Immigration officials' decisions were justiciable. *Indian Opinion*, 14-10-1911.

been subjected to the harsh treatment that was his lot at the hands of the Immigration Officer. What, however, has happened to him happens to scores of Indians from month to month, and nothing is heard of it. We know that it is the settled policy of the Union Government to restrict Asiatic immigration, but it can be, and should be, no part of the policy of restriction to turn away men who are fully entitled under the immigration laws of the Union. In other words, we claim that intending immigrants, irrespective of their race or colour, should have the law liberally interpreted in their favour, and equally liberally administered. We welcome the judgment of Sir John Buchanan as showing that the courts, at any rate, will not, as a rule be influenced by current prejudices and will not hesitate to interpret laws in favour of human liberty, and we hope that the punishment awarded to the Government in making them pay the costs of the application will serve as a deterrent in the future.

Indian Opinion , 14-10-1911

54. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

TOLSTOY FARM,
LAWLEY STATION,
TRANSVAAL,
October 14, 1911

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Your diary is before me. I see you are still pursuing the goal with unflagging zeal. May you never turn away from it. I am sure that your steadfastness must be a source of great strength to your people. They must love you all the more for appearing for the moment somewhat strange to them. The world has a curious way of coming round to him who does not and will not come round to it.

Fencing is going on apace now. Standards have been now fixed for the greater part of the way. By Wednesday the fixing of standards will be completed. Albrecht supervises the whole thing. He is assisted by Basella and Sam[1] and Desai.

You know Sam of Phoenix. He has come here for a change. He is a worker. So naturally he is a handyman. Manilal Doctor of Mauritius, Dr. Mehta's son-in-law and Barrister, has come here to see

[1] "Sam" was Govindsami, a machine foreman in the International Printing Press at Phoenix.

me. He is a charming man but, as he himself says, very obstinate. Because he was told by everybody that he would have to do manual work at the Farm he has promised himself not to do any at all whilst on the Farm. So much is this the case that he simply idles away the whole of his time. I can only pity him. He is one of the most straight-forward men you could meet. He proposes to leave for Mauritius and thence for India about the end of this month. He may return to practise here.

Kennedy told me that he could not come last Sunday as he was very busy. He however said he would seek the opportunity of coming some other day.

Gordon has been coming to the Farm off and on.

You showed some concern as to whether I did write regularly. Well, I have made it a religious duty not to fail at all. So that if you have not received my letter any week, the fault must be the postman's, either at my end or yours. The letters have been always (I think) posted at Johannesburg. One week I may have posted at Lawley but I think not even one week.

Call is still at Pretoria. He is getting on. I sent Isaac again and propose to send him from time to time. It is no use my trying to go. I have not a minute to spare. The arrears are appalling.

Nothing yet certain about the Indian visit. I expect a cable any day. But I feel that I am not going. I certainly hope I am not.

You will be pleased to learn that Smuts is releasing two of Quinn's men. These are long-sentence prisoners. Quinn feels like having received a new lease of life. This is more to him than his own release from gaol.

Of course you will go to India, if you think you should. Things here are in a fair condition. Thanks to your careful arrangement, the African Building matter causes little trouble.

After a gentle reminder to Lapin, he has sent me another cheque for £62. Hilt is not at all playing the game. He has not yet paid the rent. I have asked Lapin to press for payment. Am I right? I hope you do not mind my not sending you a weekly account of income and expenditure.

I have drawn a cheque for £60 for the Government regarding the mill.

No, I am not sending you *I.O.* from here. On second thoughts, I felt that you would get Maud to send you a copy. I take it that she has

your German address. Needless to say we are still saltless. I am most strictly so. I have been also on one meal per day for the past fortnight with the exception of one day's break. I broke the rule today because Mrs. Gandhi and Miss Schlesin wept over it. I have now placed myself under stricter discipline by limiting myself beforehand to so much only per meal and taking much less time than usual. This is harder for me than one meal per day. But I think I shall cope with it. This experiment only started today.

Please give my love to all your people.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

55. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE

JOHANNESBURG,
October 20, 1911

NATAL CONGRESS WHICH RECEIVED CABLE PRESIDENTSHIP MISTOOK NATURE INDICATOR ADDRESS SHOWING YOUR OTHER PROMINENT NAMES.[1] RECEIVERS THOUGHT THERE WAS DEFINITE INVITATION AND PRESSED ME ACCEPT.[2] YOUR CABLE SHOWS OTHERWISE. WIDRIG[3] COMPETE. I PERSONALLY WOULD AVOID HONOUR. MY VIEWS BEING UNORTHODOX PROBABLY CONFLICTING. CACHRYOS[4] WITHDRAW MY NAME. DISCUSSION MUCH BETTER ENTIRELY YOUR HANDS.

From a copy: File No. 45. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] For the explanation of "the muddle" regarding Congress presidentship, *vide* "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", 30-10-1911.

[2] *Ibid*

[3] Meaning 'I do not wish'

[4] Meaning 'If you can'

56. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

TOLSTOY FARM,
LAWLEY STATION,
TRANSVAAL,
October 22, 1911

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Your having become considerably reduced does not perturb me a bit. Your letters show me that your mind is vigorous. The vigour of mind is possible only in a healthy body and I am anxious for you to have a healthy body which need not necessarily be a strong, i.e., a weight-lifting body.

I must congratulate you on having a relation who has to be arrested for an imaginary political crime.

Gordon has been regularly sleeping and supping and breakfasting at the Farm now for a week. For the weekend he has not been to Town at all.

Albrecht has gone to Town. I think he wanted a change. But he is to inquire about a siphon for one of the bores. I agree with him that we should have one hole working. There seems to be great scarcity of water just at present. He returns on Monday.

The fencing Inspector wrote two days ago suggesting that the fence should be completed without delay. All the standards were completed on Wednesday. For part of the work the wires are also in. The work is going forward. We hope to finish it by the end of the week.

I have Chhaganlal's brother[1] , who arrived with him on the Farm as a patient.

We still continue saltless; I entirely.

I think that in your absence, in view of Heymann's, I should have written to the Lapins. It cannot do them harm to pinch themselves a little to pay even a friend. They have not taken it at all amiss.

They have sent me a guarantee for Hilt's rent. For the moment I forget the guarantor's name. But I have told them that they may accept the guarantee if they consider the guarantor to be a good man.

I hope to send you the July account that you want.

[1] Maganlal Gandhi

I do not think I am going to India at all. The invitation was not formal. I have therefore cabled Prof. Gokhale saying I would rather that he withdrew my name from discussion.[1]

Dr. Mehta writes saying you are almost sure to go to India.

I hope that you have been getting *I.O.* from London.

With love to you and all,

Yours,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

57. LETTER TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

TOLSTOY FARM,
LAWLEY STATION
TRANSVAAL,
Aso Vad 0 [*October 22,1911*][2]

DEAR SHRI PRANJIVAN,

I have your last letter written from Europe.

I keep writing to Harilal from time to time saying that his hankering after examinations is not right. If he writes to you, please tell him the same thing. If he still does not give up hisnotion, there is nothing for it but to bear this punishment for my sins.

It is imperative that you go [to India] during the famine, whatever people might think. As for me, how can I get away? I don't see how I can leave before the end of next year.

It looks as if there won't be any occasion for me to attend the Congress.[3] It appears that the cable from Calcutta was not an invitation, only an enquiry. There is a cable from Gokhale saying that the President will be elected on the 28th.

And so I have cabled that it would be best if my name were not discussed.[4] I have also said that my views might sound peculiar and appear contrary to [those of the Congress]. I believe, therefore, that I

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", 30-10-1911.

[2] Both the invitation to Gandhiji to become the President of the Indian National Congress and the famine in India referred to in the letter serve to establish that it was written in 1911.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Pranjivan Mehta". 10-10-1911.

[4] This cable is not available.

shall not have to go. For a variety of reasons, it is to wished that I don't have to go.I live on saltless diet consisting mainly of fruit. It is not to mortify the body that I do this but so that the body, mind and *atman* may be in fuller command of themselves and purer. I commend the diet to children also.

I believe that salt, being an irritant, is harmful. By inducing an artificial appetite, it makes one eat more and arouses the senses gratuitously. This may or may not be true, but our *shastras* speak of the virtue of abstaining from salt. It is therfore likely that the practice is a beneficent one. I have not noticed that it has had any bad effect. I have observed that all sick persons, to whom I had suggested the giving up of salt, have if anything benefited from it. If, on the basis of your medical knowledge, you see anything wrong in this, please correct me.

Manilal[1] is here. It is more than a week now since he arrived here. He is a pleasant and good-natured person. He appears to be enamoured still of a literary education. To my way of thinking, he does not seem to have a sound physique. He has too much fat which is due entirely to the way he lives. Many persons had told him that at the Farm one could not, after meeting me,resist manual work. To disprove this false notion, he made a vow in jest while at Phoenix, and in order to live up to it, he has done no work at the Farm. The Farm stood in no need of his work; only it was essential for his body. But he did not work. In a way, I think it is just as well. That work is done only because of me is utter superstition. It might partly be dispelled by Manilal. Personally, I think, whoever works does so because he knows that it is good to work. It is true, of course, that some persons work out of regard for me. This, however, is another matter.

On the other hand, I also noticed that, in a settlement such as the Farm, where a certain method of work has evolved, the upsetting of that method by a well-behaved person like Manilal sets impressionable youngsters and novitiates an unintended bad example. It should be considered gracious of a thoughtful person,—in fact, it should be his duty to a certain extent—to conform to the regulations of a settlement such as this. A guest is under no obligation to work. But Manilal cannot be reckoned among this category of guests. He held to his course, ill-conceived as it was, in a superb manner, that is, with a cheerful and innocent air—so that I feel somewhat hesitant in making

[1] Manilal Doctor; *vide* "Letter to Dr. Pranjivan Mehta". 10-10-1911.

these comments.

Manilal has done commendable public work in Mauritius, and he appears to have won the affections of the Hindus in abundant measure. Thanks to his lack of patience, he could not gain the goodwill of the Muslims, neither did he make a determined effort to do so.

His own intention, it seems, is definitely to leave Mauritius. He does not think he can make a living there, and if there is a possibility of his being able to do so after a few years, he says frankly that he does not have the patience to wait.

He has come here only because you were so insistent. Although I do not see that he has repented having come.

He is inclined to settle here or in Natal. If he does decide to stay on, he would assuredly earn enough for his needs. If he does not, I should blame only him.

Now that he has been in Mauritius, done all that public work and won the people's affection, the best course for him, as I see it, would be to brave all hardships and stay on there until he could earn a living.

But it is pointless to think about that. The other thing he could do is to come here and devote himself to teaching and other activities small and big at Phoenix and we shall then pay his expenses.

Neither is this idea acceptable to him. Therefore, the only thing that remains is legal practice, so far as this country is concerned. He would like it, for some time.

It would be best to marry him off now. He says that Jeki[1] is also impatient. Even if Jeki is not well, I don't think it would be right to stand in their way. If she is unfit for conception, let us hope and expect that they will behave thoughtfully. If they do not, or cannot, there is nothing for it but to leave Jeki to her fate.

If, therefore, Manilal comes here,[2] he hopes to bring Jeki with him. Manilal desires that, if she comes, she should live at Phoenix and come under my influence. He himself finds it too great a strain to conform to my way of living, but he approves of it. So, if it suits Jeki, he will be glad.

I am sure that there is nothing about my mode of living that is too great a strain on others. It of course happens that a person who

[1] Jayakunvar, Dr. Mehta's daughter

[2] To settle in South Africa

has been to England or who has come under the influence of English ways does not like my way of living or finds it too much of a strain.

Besides, Manilal has not the least faith in you. He charges you with having changed your views too often and jumped from one extreme position to another. He makes a similar charge against me also, if not as vehemently. And so he thinks that, by taking up the middle position, he would profit from both East and West. I have told him that this is a confession of sheer helplessness, impotence and laziness. But he is in no condition to realize this now. I believe he will come round with time and experience, being a sincere man.

I give him the money he needs from what I have. I shall debit the amount to your account. I don't suppose anything more remains to be said in this matter. You will get this letter about the same time as he arrives. He intends to attend the Congress. I shall give him letters [of introduction] to Professor Gokhale and others.[1] If it is settled that he should occupy himself with the work here, please send him back in time. As for the wedding, we can as well arrange to have it here, if so desired. If he is coming here, it will be best for me to stay on in South Africa if only for a short time. It will be right for me to leave only after he is properly settled. He could be fixed up in partnership with Ritch any time. Ritch's practice is well established.

Bande Mataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5631. Courtesy: C. K. Bhatt

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G.K. Gokhale", 24-10-1911.

58. SPEECH AT NEW YEAR'S DAY FUNCTION

JOHANNESBURG,
October 23, 1911

A function was organized to celebrate [the Gujarati] New Year's Day on October 23,1911, by the Hindu Association of Johannesburg at Rev. Mr. Phillip's school. Mr. Gandhi presided . . . and arrived with his wife at ten sharp . . . After explaining the significance of the auspicious day of Diwali, Mr. Gandhi made some suggestions in that regard and wished everyone a happy New Year . . .

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion , 4-11-1911

59. LETTER TO G.K. GOKHALE[1]

TOLSTOY FARM,
LAWLEY STATION,
TRANSVAAL,
October 24,1911

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

I wish to write a long letter to you regarding the Congress presidentship muddle.[2] It was a muddle of course on this side. But of this later.

Mr. Manilal Doctor has, as you are aware, done very good public work in Mauritius & gained the affection of the poor Indians there to whom he became a friend in need. He has been to South Africa on a visit and is likely to settle in one of the provinces in the near future. Meanwhile he is proceeding to India to attend the Congress & he wishes to work there for a resolution condemning indentured labour altogether. I agree with him entirely and think that it never did any good to anybody. Eighteen years' observation has taught me that it is no solution for our problems in India. I venture to

[1] This is the letter of introduction which Gandhiji had promised; *vide* "Letter to Dr. Pranjivan Mehta", 22-10-1911.

[2] For "the muddle", *vide* "Mr. Gandhi and the Indian National Congress", 30-9-1911 and the letters to Dr. Mehta, 10-10-1911 & 22-10-1911 and "Letter to G.K. Gokhale", 30-10-1911.

hope therefore thatyou will be able to see your way to furthering Mr. Manilal's efforts.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 3809

60. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

LAWLEY,
Kartika Sud 2, [*19*]*68* [*October 24,1911*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

This[1] is the last stanza in the *Ayodhyakanda*. Dwell on it. It constantly rings in my ears. In this difficult age devotion has been given the primary importance. One needs the discipline and regulations even for such devotion. I see every moment that therein should lie the roots of our education. What other blessings can give you?

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Ashram Bhajanono Swadhyaya, p. 301

61. MR. AND MRS. POLAK[2]

Mr. and Mrs. Polak are probably by this time on their way to India. Mr. Polak has left his mark in the United Kingdom during his brief stay there. A time which to him was one of well-earned rest, he utilized for working on Lord Ampthill's Committee with the zeal and devotion of a true soldier.[3] The meeting held under the chairmanship of Sir Mancherjee to bid godspeed to Mr. and Mrs. Polak was a fitting end to the busy programme Mr. Polak had mapped out for himself during his stay in London.

[1] Not translated here. The quotation from Tulsidas dwelt on the devotion of Bharata for Rama and his practice of austerities too difficult even for ascetics.

[2] *Vide* also "Polak's Work", 1-7-1911.

[3] For a specimen of Polak's work on behalf of the SABI Committee during his stay in England, *vide* Appendix S. A. B. I. Committee's Letter to Colonial Office", 17-6-1911.

Mr. Polak has reminded the Union Government that it will have to face stubborn opposition if it do not repeal the tax on indentured Indians of Natal and if it attempt to drive the Transvaal Indians into Locations.[1] We hope that the Government will be pleased to note the reminder. There must be a halt to the anti-Asiatic campaign. And the best method is for the local Government to decline to be party to a persecution of the resident Indian population.

Indian Opinion , 28-10-1911

62. A FRUIT OF PASSIVE RESISTANCE

We commend to the attention of our readers the remarkable letter from Bombay (which appeared in our last issue), signed by Mrs. Jamnabai Nagindas Sakai[2] and Mrs. Jaijee Jehangir Petit[3], the joint honorary secretaries of the committee formed to assist the Transvaal Indian Women's Association in its efforts to hold a Bazaar for the exhibition and sale of their work.

The list of the members of the Committee shows that the ladies represent the best Mahomedan, Parsee and Hindu families of Bombay. The presents are not to be considered in connection with their monetary value. They are a demonstration of the attention which our distinguished countrywomen in India give to us, their humbler and poorer countrymen in this our land of adoption and exile. Nor are the Bombay ladies alone in their care for us. The Calcutta ladies, too, have responded liberally to the appeal sent by the Association.

The Transvaal Women's Association itself is one of the important products of the passive resistance struggle. It represents, it is true, only a few Indian women of Johannesburg. They are mostly if not all, passive resistance families. The Association owes its present

[1] In the course of a speech at the farewell meeting, Polak predicted there would be "fights" over these two issues. He also said he believed that "legal effect would be given" to the Provisional Settlement in 1912. *Indian Opinion*, 21-10-1911.

[2] Also President of the Gujarati Hindi Stri Mandal

[3] Wife of Jehangir Bomanjee Petit, a Bombay millionaire. he was one of the Joint Secretaries of the Bombay South African Committee and Joint Honorary Secretary of an Indian Committee appointed in 1909 under the chairmanship of Sir Pherozeshah Mehta to collect funds in aid of Transvaal satyagrahis deported to India; also collected large sums of money for Gandhiji's Passive Resistance Fund; was Polak's host during his 1909 visit to India and undertook to publish his pamphlet, *A Tragedy of Empire: The Treatment of British Indians in the Transvaal.*

activity to the genius of Mrs. Vogl, assisted by Miss Schlesin. Mrs. Vogl has been occupied with the organization of the Bazaar practically for the past twelve months. All her spare time has been devoted to the work. Under her tuition and guidance, our girls have been preparing the work which the public of Johannesburg will have the opportunity of appreciating or criticizing.[1] The Transvaal Women's Association contains in it the material for a structure of the highest importance to the Indians of South Africa. And our sisters in India, by their thoughtful assistance, will have done not a little to help on the structure. All honour to them and to the passive resistance movement which has made possible such a harmonious blending as we notice in the composition and the activity of the Transvaal Women's Association and the Indian Ladies' Committee.

Indian Opinion , 28-10-1911

63. TRIUMPH OF SATYAGRAHA

During Diwali, some Hindus burst crackers. The Durban police went into a huff over this. A leading Hindu gentleman was arrested. They all decided not to let the matter rest at that. It reached the ears of Mr. Dawad Mahomed and Mr. Parsee Rustomjee. They hurried off to the Mayor, and argued that, after all, the whites also exploded crackers during Christmas. Why then should the Hindus [they asked] not do so during their festivals? Why should they have to take special permission for this purpose? No one seeks such permission during Christmas. "If, in spite of this, you wish to harass Hindus for exploding crackers, we shall also join them in this as a mark of sympathy. You may then arrest anyone that you like."

The matter is not serious and the victory[2] not much of a triumph. The significance of the event, however, is great. Because we boldly came forward to suffer the conseqences of doing what was right, we had, it transpired, nothing to suffer and our self-respect was preserved. This is satyagraha.

Another, more significant, feature of this case is the fact that a Muslim and a Parsi rushed to help in a matter which concerned Hindus alone. The outcome was indeed happy. If the right course is

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", after 18-5-1911.

[2] The Mayor's decision permitting Hindus to explode crackers during Diwali was publicized through handbills. *Indian Opinion*, 21-10-1911.

followed in one case, it is bound to happen that it will be adopted on other occasions as well. If one knot in a tangled piece of sting can be unravelled, the other too can easily be undone.

How can Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and Christians all be united? Mr. Mahomed and Mr. Rustomjee have provide the answer.

If Muslims come forward to sympathize with Hindus in what concerns the latter alone, if Hindus do the same and if both these communities act in this manner towards Parsis, will there be anyone so bereft of reason as to seek to come in the way of affection developing among them?

Let people's religions be different. You worship a Being—a single Entity—as Allah and another adores Him as Khuda. I worship Him as Ishwar. How does anyone stand to lose [by this arrangement]? You worship facing one way and I worship facing the other. Why should I become your enemy for that reason? We all belong to the human race; we all wear the same skin; we hail from the same land. When the facts are as simple as that, it will be nothing but folly and short-sightedness to bear implacable enmity towards one another.

The moderns make a key which will open many kinds of locks. They call it the "master-key". Likewise, satyagraha is the master-key to our innumerable hardships. How much could be achieved if only all the Indians would use that key! Satyagraha is not a difficult term to understand. It only means adherence to truth. Whatever else the ethical life may mean, it cannot be ethical if it is not based on truth. Truth is easy enough to follow once we know its meaning.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion , 28-10-1911

64. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

October 29, 1911

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

You have made yourself an advertising agent for me. You compel people to like me where before they did not. I can only hope that I shall die as you think I am. I have, I think, often told you that no man may be called good before his death. Departure by a hair's breadth from the straight and narrow path may undo the whole of his

past. We have no guide that a man whom we consider to be good is really good except after he is dead.

Mrs. Mayo writes to me about you in most flattering terms. You have found a place in her heart and she in yours. Your reply to her about me is quite characteristic of you. And I feel sure of this much that if I did go to India, I should certainly not surrender an iota of my (our) ideals. But I do not think I am going. I need not therefore detain you on this topic. How I wish I had seen the people whom you describe. Your descriptions would then be more life-like for me. Horhoff has been deducting 10/- per month for a certain tenant he says he has brought in. Did you make any such arrangement with him? Miss Bennett says Horhoff never brought any tenant. I have therefore asked him to refund what he had deducted.

I have not worried about the extracts from the book can't get the time at all.

Albrecht does unthinkingly profess to know more than he does. He has no notion of fence-building. I have been doing it myself for the last five days and I think that I shall be able to finish it myself. Albrecht has a very good eye for straightness. He is still with me and I am doing the work subject to his approval. I can only hope that we all unknowing people will not make a mess of it. Anyhow we are making steady progress.

I may tomorrow accept the tender of Stewarts and Lloyds for a windmill for £72 odd. Kennedy says his is the best tender. I propose shifting one of the tanks. The windmill will draw 400 gallons per hour. Our tanks are, I think, 1,000 gallons each. The overflow water will be allowed to run through the natural gutter on to the present dam. In all this I am being guided by Albrecht. He thinks we ought to make some use of the water we have.

I fear your hope that I should be the first agriculturist on the Farm is a vain hope. I hardly think I can overtake you there. You have, in this matter at any rate, a natural ability that I have not. And I am still hovering about the outskirts of farming. I have not yet really touched and mastered a single tree.

We had a visit from Adams[1] today. He would not get off his cart. He, however, had our coffee.

With you I do not think much of the medical examination by the doctors. You must be the best judge of your system. Loss of

[1] Dr. Adams

weight is of no consequence. I still feel that both morally and physically we are well without salt and the things we have abandoned.

I must now close as I have much more to write and the watch shows already 9 p.m.

Kennedy has not come again.

Gordon, I think I have told you, passed nearly the whole of last week at the Farm. He will come again.

With love to you all,

Yours sincerely,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

65. LETTER TO G.K. GOKHALE

JOHANNESBURG,
October 30, 1911

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

I have to thank you for your long cablegram with reference to the Congress Presidentship muddle. I was sorry to hear about your illness. Will you never be able to travel outside India and England? British statesmen do; why cannot Indian statesmen? If you could possibly pay a brief visit to South Africa, it would not be now a question of your courting imprisonment, but it would still serve a double purpose. It would bring the people here nearer to India, and it would give me the privilege of so nursing you as to restore you to health. In my opinion, we have at Tolstoy Farm, as also at Phoenix, convenience enough for patients like you. I am quite sure that I can anticipate Mr. Kallenbach's warm welcome to you at Tolstoy Farm, and, of course Phoenix you could treat as your own home.

The first intimation I had of my name being seriously discussed in connection with the Congress Presidentship was a telegram from the Natal Indian Congress, advising me that it had received an invitation for me to preside at the forthcoming session, and urging me strongly to accept the invitation. My reply[1] was in the negative. I, at the same time, enquired about the name of the sender of the invitation. Much to my surprise, the names sent were those of yourself, the All India Moslem League, Mr. Petit, Mr. Natrajan, Mr. Natesan, Mr. S. Bose and

[1] Not available

Mr. Malviya[1]. The inclusion of your name and that of the All-India Moslem League gave the cablegram an importance which made me waver in my decision, and I felt that, if you who knew my views so well also wished me to preside, there must be some special reason for the invitation. The news was received by me at the Farm. I travelled to Johannesburg, and the people at Durban confirmed the telegrams through the telephone and simply insisted upon my accepting the invitation[2]. To them, it was a unique honour to the Indians of South Africa and an equally unique opportunity of bringing the South African Indian case still more prominently to the notice of the Indian public. Had I not been so foolishly egotistical, I should certainly have doubted the correctness of the message that was sent to me from Durban. Before, however, I had had reason to doubt the accuracy of the message, I had allowed the Durban Congress to accept the invitation, but I felt that I should send my own cablegram[3] independently to you, which I did. Three or four days later I received from Durban a letter confirming the telegraphic messages, which, however, included a copy of a letter from Reuter, which put a different interpretation upon the cable. It seems to me that, during the time that I was in Cape Town, Mr. Polak, who was in Durban, had arranged for a code address covering the names given above. Advice was evidently given to all these parties of the code address, and Mr. Bose of Calcutta made use of it. In deciphering the cable, therefore, our people at Durban read the cable to mean that it was sent by all the six parties,but Reuter's letter, which was sent to the Congress at the time the code address was registered, shows that the code word might mean, according to circumstances, one or all the names. In this instance, if my interpretation is correct, the code indicator must be read to mean only "Mr.

[1] Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya (1861-1946); "patriarch" of the Indian National Congress; editor of The Hindustan, 1887-9, The Indian Union, 1889-92 and The Abhyudaya, 1907-9; member of Provincial Legislative Assembly, 1902-12, Imperial Legislative Council, 1910-20 and Indian Legislative Assembly, 1924; associated with the Congress since 1886; he was elected President of the 1909 Lahore session and the 1918 Delhi session; Vice-Chancellor from 1919 to 1940, of Benares Hindu University which he had founded in 1916; President Hindu Mahasabha, 1923-5; attended Round Table Conference, London, 1931-2. Gandhiji was his guest on the occasion of the founding of Benares Hindu University, when Malaviya used "lovingly to explain... like an elder brother the various view-points of the different parties". and in 1924, used to read out the Bhagawat to Gandhiji during his 21-day fast.

[2] *Vide* "Mr. Gandhi and the Indian National Congress", 30-9-1911.

[3] Not available

Bose", as the cablegram was from Calcutta. So reading it, I concluded that the so-called invitation was no invitation at all, but that it was merely an enquiry to know whether the Natal Indian Congress could spare me. Probably, had Mr. Bose known my whereabouts precisely, and that cablegrams addressed to me simply "Gandhi" would reach me, he would have cabled to me, when of course there would have been no fuss, and I should have simply answered that I could not accept the honour; but the mischief has already been done, and the over-enthusiastic people at Durban even authorized Reuter to publish the news. Your cable in reply to my second cable[1], informing me that the decision had yet to be made, confirmed my interpretation of the cable. The rest you know. I can only hope that the decision at Allahabad will be against my nomination[2] . I may receive it tomorrow. This is being dictated on the 29th, Sunday. I could not very well occupy the presidential chair, and conceal the views which I hold so strongly on many questions that are debated year after year at the National Assembly, and I am fully aware that an expression of those views on the Congress platform might not only be unacceptable to our leaders but might even place them in a false position, which I should be the last person to desire to do. I am also aware that my views are likely to be considered immature and based on insufficient data, also that I may myself change them, and, however strongly I may dissent from any of these three propositions, I think that all those who differ from me have a perfect and reasonable right to enunciate them. It seems to me that, just now, I can best serve the cause, that is as dear to me as it is to the Congress, by simply serving the South African Indian cause, and, if an opportunity offers itself of going to India, to serve my countrymen in an independent capacity, if not, unofficially under the guidance of a leader like you, from whom I have derived inspiration. Though our views differ, I know, on many matters, my regard for you and for your character as I have pictured it to myself remains the same as before.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Form a photostat of the typewritten original: G.N. 3804

[1] Not available

[2] A Reuter message published in *Indian Opinion*, 4-11-1911, said that Pandit Bishan Narayan Dhar would be elected President of the Indian National Congress.

66. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

Unrevised

TOLSTOY FARM,
LAWLEY STATION,
TRANSVAAL,
November 6, 1911

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

It is on Sunday night I am writing this thought it is dated for Monday. I am fairly tired and not in the mood to write.

Thank God I am not to preside at the Congress. It would have been a most frightful thing, had I been obliged.

A remarkable incident happened at the Farm during the week. We were making very fair headway with the fence. One day when I was not at that work, Desai came and informed me that someone had torn up the fence. This is the analysis of my mind. The thought could not have occupied more than a second. 'Some evil-minded person has done it. I must inform police.' 'You coward. Your philosophy is skin-deep. No, the police must not be informed either for your or my sake. The fence should be re-put and someone must sleep near it, if necessary.' Thus resolved I went down to the fence myself. I found that the probability was that the fence was torn up by cattle. Anyhow we fixed the poles much more strongly than before. I took with [me] plates and nails to fix on to the poles. No one slept there and there has been no further interruption. The incident, however, touched me deeply and set me thinking as to the right course of conduct. The most prominent idea that forced itself on me was that we, if we were to carry out the ideals we hold were unfit to hold more land than we *actually* used. The corollary is not that we should give up the land (though even that may not be quite so farcical as one may imagine) but that we should fence only so much as we wanted and used and no more. Then we should be able to overtake any damage with much greater ease. I discuss this only to show you how my mind is working and how more and more introspective I am becoming daily. This does not in any way alter my plans during your absence. I shall go through the programme as we have mapped it. Fencing will be finished.

I have accepted the tender of Stewarts and Llyods for £ 72 odd for erecting a windmill. I have described to you the whole thing I think. They will send an erector in the course of the week.

I have also told John that he might buy four oxen for which money will be advanced to him. It may mean £ 30. I feel that it is much better to let the natives feel that here they may depend upon the fairest treatment. And I have no doubt that if it proceeds from the heart and is uniform, continuous and not from affectation, it will bless both the parties. Anyhow just now I am generous as your steward. Of course John has to repay before the year is out. I am letting Basella too do pretty much as he likes. I see that I can get much more satisfactory work that way.

We had a very busy Sunday. A party of 13 came, all but two unexpected. These were Miss Schlesin and Gordon. The others were Indians. Poor Mrs.Gandhi, she may foam and fret afterwards. But just on such occasions she is at her best.

I note that you are seriously affecting the lives of your people there. Your telling me that they love me now more and more flatters me, but it ought not to. They love me as they see me through your glasses. However, of this when we meet.

Of course, you will continue your practice as long as you find it necessary. But I do say that it would be unwise to take precautions beforehand on the basis of Kennedy leaving you for certain. In your place I should simply let the future take care of itself. If you return committed to a definite course, naturally your actions will be in that direction. Whereas if you leave the future in the lap of the gods, you will find your course much smoother and certainly far more natural.

With love to you and all to whom you have introduced me,

Yours sincerely,
UPPER HOUSE

[PS.]

I can report nothing about Call.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

67. THE £3 TAX[1]

Recent events have shown that there is a great deal of confusion in regard to the question of who is liable to pay the £3 tax under Act 17[2] of 1895. The Law Department seems to have decided that an Indian who has re-indentured or entered into a civil contract of service under the Masters and Servants Act, which he is entitled to do under Clause 3 of Act 19 of 1910, is liable to pay the tax of £3 for the period of his re-indenture or contract of service. The clause in the Act runs:

> The payment of arrears of licence money, due under Act No. 17, 1895, by any Indian, shall be suspended during the period of a re-indenture or contract of service for a term of not less than two years, and in the event of his return to India at the expiration of such contract or indenture, payment of arrears shall be waived.

In order to get at the true meaning of this clause, it is necessary to go back a few years. In the year 1905 it was found that a great many ex-indentured Indians were not paying the £3 tax, for the simple reason that they were too poor to do so[3]. Consequently an Act

[1]This article and "A Breach of Faith", pp. 186-7, seem to have been occasioned by the summons served on one Devaragulu, under civil contract with a Durban Indian, for non-payment of arrears due to the £3 tax. When the Magistrate's attention was drawn to Clause 3 of Act 19 of 1910, he suspended the order for payment and adjourned the case *sine die*. Similar summonses had been served on about 21 Indians then under re-indenture. On September 16, 1911, a meeting of Indians held at Parsee Rustomjee's house in Durban formed the Anti-£3 Tax League to fight for repeal of the tax. *Indian Opinion*, 9-9-1911 & 23-9-1911. *Vide* also Appendix "Summary of the Protector's Report", 11-11-1911.

[2] This was passed soon after Natal became a self-governing colony in 1893; *vide* "Statement Presented to Constitution Committee", 29-5-1906. It did not envisage payment of the £3 tax by women.

[3] *Vide* "Indentured Indians", 22-4-1905. The hardships of Indians who were obliged to pay the tax came to light from time to time; *vide*, for instance, "The Poll Tax", 17-3-1906. In 1911, at Stanger, a woman hawker was sent to prison for two weeks for failure to pay this tax owing to extreme poverty. *Indian Opinion*, 8-7-1911. The Indian Immigration Law of 1891 fixed the wages of indentured Indians at 16s. per month for the first year, rising to 20s. per month for the fifth year (Vol. I, pp. 215-6), while the wage for a Native worker in the Rand mines about the year 1901 was 45s. per month and Native labour was unobtainable even at that price; Gandhiji had always therefore argued that the Indian labourers' savings from which they paid the tax could not have been very considerable. Maud Polak, in a letter to the Colonial Office (C.O. 477) mentions a Natal planter who testified before a South Afican Commission that "only 6 per cent. of ex-indentured Indians could afford to pay the £3 tax".

was passed which prohibited any person from employing or letting land to an ex-indentured Indian who could not produce his £3 licence for the current year. A contravention of this Act meant a fine of £5 to the employer. It also provided that an employer could pay the £3 and deduct the amount from the wages of the Indian. In this way it was thought to force the Indians to pay the £3 tax or leave the country. Later on in the same year, another Act was passed which entitled an Indian who was subject to the payment of the tax to re-indenture for a term of not less than two years. This was not possible before. He could also regain the privilege of being sent back to India which he had forfeited by paying the £3 tax. The Prime Minister of Natal, in moving the second reading of this bill, said that

> the bill had been brought in so as to enable the Indian who might not be able to pay the £3 tax upon his freedom from indenture to reindenture. There might well be times when an ex-indentured Indian would not be able to pay the £3 tax, and it was only fair that he should be allowed to reindenture. It was not only that the right was given to him to re-indenture, but he would become entitled to the passage back to India, which he would otherwise have forfeited by not availing himself of it at the conclusion of his previous indenture.

So here it is quite clear that it was intended that an Indian who entered into a contract of re-indenture had not to pay the tax. But this inducement was not sufficient. At the end of 1909, the planters were crying out for more Indian labour and the Government of India had threatened to stop immigration to Natal. What was to be done? In the Legislative Council, the Hon. Mr. Baynes pointed out that

> the £3 residential fee was a severe condition upon Indians, including the poll-tax. It was a fact that the number of Indians leaving the Colony was greater than those coming into it. He thought they should prevent this exodus of labour.

The Colonial Secretary, in moving the second reading of Amendment Bill, stated that

> representations had been received both from the Indians themselves and from the magistrates to the effect that the licence of £3 was unable to be paid, and the Government felt that the obligations would be met if the licence were removed so far as Indian women were concerned and that was the object of the present measure. The Indian Immigration Commission had inquired into the matter, and had recommended the course now proposed.

Sir Liege Hulett supported the Bill and said that it was never intended that the £3 tax should apply to women and girls. But, on the motion of Mr. Kirkman, an amendment was passed giving magistrates *discretion* to relieve any Indian women from the payment of licence

money. To the same Bill Mr. Clayton moved a new clause in regard to the payment of arrears, quoted at the commencement of this article, which was passed into law. This law was passed in January, 1910 and in April of the same year a circular[1] was issued from the Colonial Secretary's Office, Maritzburg, printed in English, Hindi and Tamil, to the effect that Indian men and women who should have taken out the £3 licence, but had not done so, could re-indenture for not less than two years or enter into a civil contract for not less than two years, and while under contract or indenture, the licence money would not be claimed, and should they return to India, they would not be made to pay the licence money due[2].

Reviewing the above facts, it is not possible to come to any other conclusion than that it was never intended that ex-indentured Indians would have to pay the £3 tax during the time of their re-indenture or contract of service. This review is made for the special purpose of clearing up any doubt there may be as to the intention of the legislature regarding the payment of the tax during re-indenture. The tax itself we have always fought against, tooth and nail[3], and we shall continue to do so until this pernicious and unjust law is wiped off the Statute-book.

Indian Opinion , 11-11-1911

[1] *Vide* "The £ 3 Tax Again", 30-4-1910.

[2] The confusion appears to have been caused by this circular which was sent round among Natal Indians in April, 1910, before the formation of the Union. This emanated from the Colonial Secretary's Office but the Protector's Department provided Hindi and Tamil translations. While Clause 3 of the Act exempted re-indentured Indians from "arrears" of the £3 tax, the English circular mentioned "licence money due"and the translations probably suggested exemption from current payments as well. Aiyer (footnote 2, p.162) brought the issue to the notice of *The Natal Mercury* which, in an article published on November 8, 1911, opposed the interpretation as contained in the circular produced by Aiyer with that of the Union law officers who argued that the interpretation would depend upon the wording of the statute which they held made re-indentured men liable to payment of the current tax. *Indian Opinion*, 11-11-1911.

[3] Natal Indians had always objected to the £3 tax on indentured Indians who had become free men on the ground that the tax was not a source of revenue but a measure designed to drive the Indian out after his term of indenture and that it was repugnant to British constitutional traditions. For Gandhiji's views on indenture and the 1895 Bill, *vide* "Speech at Public Meeting", 26-9-1896. 9.

68. FAMINE IN INDIA

We refer to the famine as "Famine in India" though Gujarat and Kathiawar [alone] are affected. If a part of the body is injured, the whole is injured; in the same way, a famine in Gujarat is a famine in India.

We gather from letters and newspapers from India that this year's famine will be much worse than any in the past. Men and cattle are both dying off. The last rains, it seems, have failed. One has actually to see the conditions to realize that they are beyond description. Even a day's starvation makes us irritable. If we do not get the food we are used to, there is no limit to the anger we vent upon the cook or the lady of the house. Suppose, instead, that for eight months we have had almost nothing to eat. The body is reduced to a skeleton. The belly almost touches the back. One can stand up only if helped by someone else. If we can visualize this for ourselves and suppose further that hundreds of thousands are in this state, we shall then have some idea of the conditions that obtain in India.

How can we help? The first way is to restrain our luxurious ways, our pretensions, our pride and our sharp practices and crave God's forgiveness for the sins we have committed. After this, if we feel that our minds have been purified, we may pray to God for relief for India in this cruelty inflicted on her.

If we proceed in this manner, money can be saved. We can use this money to provide relief to the famine-stricken. We are ready to accept money from those who cannot themselves send it, and to do so on their behalf. Already, we are in correspondence with a generous person who has come forward with the money he is willing to spend for this purpose. The money sent by us we shall pass on to this gentleman or to some public body of standing and publish the receipts.

The important thing is not how to send the money but how to collect it. It is our belief that the money sent by those who have made their minds simple and pure as we have suggested, will bear worthy fruit, as good seeds do; of this there can be no doubt.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion , 11-11-1911

69. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

TOLSTOY FARM,
LAWLEY STATION,
TRANSVAAL,
November 11, 1911

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

If you still think that you should send my letter about Aylmer Maude to him, you may do so.

I can fully appreciate your difficulties about even keeping to two meals and a saltless and vegetableless diet.

Your experience about your cousin is disconcerting. Your description of it does credit to your heart. You are there in the midst of the subtlest temptation. The people you want to serve may unconsciously be your death-traps. Your very abstemiousness ≈ the leaving off of salt, etc., may surround your life with romance and a halo and may then be itself a temptation. Yes, the path of those who want to think and live right is narrow like the edge of a sword. They may not only not swerve an inch from the path, they may not even lift their fixed gaze from their goal. I have seen acrobats rope-walkers in India. They walk on a rope fixed to poles in mid-air quite twenty feet or more from the ground. They walk with a bamboo stretched along their outstretched arms and their gaze steadily in front of the other end. They may not go away a hair's breadth from their path. Well, that of spiritual rope-walkers is a millionfold more difficult. Happily, they have also correspondingly greater strength. You are one of those spiritual rope-walkers. In *The Song Celestial,* Krishna says: "A good man must think of ME (God) performing every function of life." It is too true. When there is no witness, He is the most vigilant and active in noting our lapses if also our merits. Our merits count for nothing. For that is what we owe. Our lapses simply swell the heavy debit side. Beware then; think of the articles of our agreement, and God willing you will be safe. I know that I am addressing myself to a condition which existed one month ago and which, if it is existent at the time I am writing this, may have made a big alteration in your life. But I have very great faith in you enough to know that you cannot fall.

Stewarts and Lloyds have not yet sent the material. They will next week. Fencing is steadily progressing. Desai and Albrecht attend

to it chiefly. Ramdas and another young man go to help. I am engaged in making sandals for the coming Bazaar[1].

The money for the bore-holes is being paid from your account at the Natal Bank. I have paid in all £ 85 yet. They have not served the final account.

The school is going forward but not forward enough to satisfy me ≈ chiefly owing to my defects. I am learning. I have not succeeded in drawing the best out of the boys.

With love to you all,

Yours sincerely,
UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

70. LETTER TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

TOLSTOY FARM,
LAWLEY STATION,
TRANSVAAL,
Kartak Vad 5 [*November 11, 1911*][2]

DEAR SHRI PRANJIVAN,

As there have been no letters from you, I have not written regularly either. The post has become irregular now; so I put off writing to you whenever there is other important writing to be done.

I am awaiting replies to some my letters.

It is a good thing indeed that the proposal about the Presidentship of the Congress was dropped. I think I wrote to you about the long cable[3] I sent to Prof. Gokhale. If I had known that it was only an enquiry from the Calcutta committee, I would have flatly refused regardless of any pressures brought to bear upon me. I would be altogether useless if placed in a position in which I cannot express my views freely.

[1] The Indian Bazaar organised by Mrs. Vogl, who sympathized with the Indian cause and took a keen interest in Indian women. The Bazaar had been held by her in 1910, and in 1911 was inaugurated on November 15 by William Hosken.

[2] This letter takes the episode of the presidentship of the Indian National Congress further and was thus written in 1911.

[3] This is not available; *vide*, however, "Letter to Dr. Pranjivan Mehta", 22-10-1911.

The Kathiawar famine appears to be a fearful one. I hope you are still firm about wanting to visit the place. You will no doubt help with money but it would be well if, alongside of that, you can explain to the unthinking princes, should you come across any, and to others that the poor are being ruined through the imposition of railways, etc. I feel all the time that what other countries can afford, India cannot. The prosperity of the people does not consist in exports or imports. If we produce what we need and consume it locally, we would be free from famine to that extent.

My little school is expanding gradually. More boys would join if there were no severe regulations regarding diet, etc. I feel [however] we should not relax these regulations. In fact, I do not wish too many boys to join. If they did, my work would greatly increase and I would not be able to that give attention to the boys' character which I should like to.

Bande Mataram From

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5632. Courtesy: C.K. Bhatt

71. ADDRESS TO MRS. VOGL[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
[*November 15, 1911*]

DEAR MRS. VOGL,

It would be ungrateful on our part if we did not give public expression to our feeling of appreciation of the great services rendered by you to the Transvaal Indian Women's Association. This great Bazaar is the coping-stone to the work done by you.

During our darkest hours, when those who were near and dear to

[1]This address, signed by fourteen ladies of Johannesburg, was presumably drafted by Gandhiji who ". . . on behalf of the Indian Women's Association welcomed the guests. He paid meet tribute to the noble work done by Mrs. Vogl and read the following address which he handed to Mr. Hosken for presentation to Mrs. Vogl." Acknowledging the present, Mrs. Vogl said, among other things, that the proceeds (which on December 9, 1911 amounted to £138.10.9 according to *Indian Opinion*, 9-12-1911) would go towards furthering educational work and perpetuating the memory of Nagappen (Vol. IX, pp. 283,299 & 523 and Vol. X, pp. 335 & 338) and Narayansamy (Vol. X, pp. 334,335 & 337-8) "the two heroes who fell in the passive resistance fight" *Indian Opinion*, 25-11-1911.

us were in prison, you and Miss Schlesin, by unremitting zeal, assisted us in no small measure to forget our misery.

You have indeed been a true sister to us, and, so long as the European community contains women like you, we need not despair of seeing the two divisions of the Empire living in peace and friendliness.

We ask you to accept the accompanying[1] as a slight token of our esteem for you.

Indian Opinion , 25-11-1911

72. LETTER TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

TOLSTOY FARM,
LAWLEY STATION,
TRANSVAAL,
Kartak Vad 12 [*November 17, 1911*][2]

DEAR SHRI PRANJIVAN,

I have your letter. I was very happy to hear that you and Chhagan did not eat meat on board ship. I believe that your taking him back to India [from England] has been the saving of his life. It would have become difficult to make him give up his Western habits had more time gone by.

There is nothing to be said now about my speech[3] in regard to which you expressed your hope. But I am these days in so fiercely earnest a state of mind that I could not have spoken otherwise. That is why I asked for full freedom, should they invite me [to be President]. I can well understand that they cannot grant this. It is just as well that I do not have to go there as President.

That the *Gujarati* has now agreed to publish it has no interest for me. It appears that they have taken it up when it became certain that there was no risk in doing so. I have already written to you at

[1] This was "a beautiful writing-desk" presented to Mrs. Vogl.

[2] The episode of the presidentship of the Indian National Congress is here narrated to its conclusion. This letter, which is in continuation of Gandhiji's earlier letters to Dr. Mehta, pp. 165-7, 168-71 & 183-4, was clearly therefore written in 1911.

[3] Presumably the draft of the Presidential address for the Congress Session. The text of this speech, however, is not available.

length about Manilal.[1]

I have also explained to you about Miss Smith.[2] I have the feeling that she is not a dishonest woman. She keeps to one line. Whatever she sends for *I.O.*, she does out of love. Money is not the consideration at any rate.

Herewith a list of the [printing] types required here. I am unable to pay for them. Neither am I in a position at present to secure the help elsewhere. I am not writing directly to Revashankerbhai about them. You may pass on the list to him and ask him to dispatch the types if you feel that would be all right.

Bande Mataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5633. Courtesy: C. K. Bhatt

73. A BREACH OF FAITH

Apart from the legal effect of the £3 Tax Act, it is necessary to examine the bearing of the cirucular[3] we referred to in these columns last week. There are cases when legal quibbles have to be deliberately set aside. The £3 tax episode is, in our opinion, distinctly such a case. The late Natal Govenment bound themselvels through their circular to exempt the Indins who re-indentured themselves from the payment of the tax altogether. We consider that the English text bears only that construction and no other. But the translations, if anything, are still more binding on the Government in that the people *acted upon them*. The Government must apply the simple rule of interpretation, viz., the meaning of the circular is the meaning that the men concerned reasonably gave to it. Now there can be no doubt whatsoever as to what meaning the men gave. So much for the circular and its effect.

The Union Government are using the force of the tyrant in seeking to interpret and enforce the Act in question in defiance of the circular. We contend that the Acts of the late Government are binding on them, if they are to retain the respect of the inhabitants of South Africa, no matter whether they are poor Indians or highly placed

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Pranjivan Mehta", 22-10-1911.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Pranjivan Mehta", 22-10-1911.
[3] *Vide* "The £3 Tax", 11-11-1911.

Europeans. It is a distinct breach of faith for them to override the circular and now want to exact £3 per year from the poor, deluded re-indentured men. Our appeal to the present members of the Ministry is, perhaps, specially appropriate. They insisted on and succeeded in getting accepted the interpretation[1] of the Vereeniging Treaty which they, the weaker party, placed upon it. Let General Botha beware lest, in the hour of triumph[2], he forget the lesson of the past and now steam-roller poor, ignorant men into subjection.

Indian Opinion , 18-11-1911

74. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

TOLSTOY FARM,
LAWLEY STATION,
TRANSVAAL,
November 19, 1911

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

You will be pleased to hear that Call is now at the Farm. I went over to Pretoria to fetch him. He is looking fit and well. He was overjoyed to be discharged from the asylum which he did not like at all. He has been discharged only provisionally. I have signed a paper undertaking to look after him and to produce a medical certificate at a later date as to his sanity. His memory is certainly weak but he is not insane in any shape or form. I am giving him your felt mat and your blankets. He is using bed-sheets. I propose to keep him with me during all the Farm week. We sawed wood together this morning. Gordon has come to see Call. I feel somewhat angry with myself. I should have gone to Pretoria earlier. In that case probably Call would

[1] The reference is to the Boers' insistence, after the War, on their right to interpret the word "Native" in clause 8 of the Vereeniging Treaty so as to deny the franchise to the Indians. At that time Lord Milner allowed the Boers thus to interpret the clause which, however, only put off "the question of granting the franchise to Natives" "until after the introduction of self-government"; but Indians were willing to forgo the right of political franchise as well ; *vide* "Petition to Natal Legislature", 10-6-1903, "Statement Presented to Constitution Committee", 29-5-1906, "Letter to *The Outlook*" and "London", 27-8-1909.

[2] Botha's hour of triumph is a reference to how, within five years' of losing the Boer War, the Dutch, under the Het Volk, had won the peace. As Gandhiji put it at the time (Vol. VI, pp. 343-4 & 357-8), "in defeat, the Dutch had truly won". Also, they were able subsequently to turn the Union of 1909 to their advantage, that is, to promote the interests of the Dutch language and those of the poor among themselves.

have come to the Farm earlier. As it is, he wrote to the Lapins who telephoned to me. Hence his discharge.

Stewarts & Lloyds' man comes tomorrow (Monday) to erect the windmill. John has now got 4 oxen. I have to pay £ 32 for them and a plough.

I am surprised to learn that you did not receive any letter during the week you wrote your last letter. I have never failed and hope not to in future so long as you are away.

I am glad to have the news about your niece. Nevertheless my remarks of last week are not without their use.

The fence is all but complete. I am not satisfied with the way in which the gate has been fixed. I do not know the thing and Albrecht in my opinion has made a mess of it. Poor man, he worked at it 3 days. He will work again at it. Only 500 yards are now left.

The Bazaar went off very nicely.[1] The Mayor and the Town Clerk were present. Nearly £ 100 profits were made; no raffle was permitted.

I fear that we shall not have much fruit this time in our garden. This is due to want of rain. And I was not able to water the trees.

Lapin felt disappointed over not hearing from you at all after you left Maderia.

I hope that you have been writing to your brother here.

I think that your letter to Mrs. Ritch was very good.

With love to you all,

Yours sincerely,
UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] On November 15.

75. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

Friday night [*November 24, 1911*][1]

MY DEAR WEST,

Your letter could not have shaken me more severely than if you had informed me of some serious personal loss. My consolation is that the news may be totally unfounded. In have so much faith in his probity and general purity that I shall continue to disbelieve the charges, so long as I have not your definite judgment. At first I thought I should write to him but I think I shall assist your investigation by not writing so long as he does not mention the matter.

Your sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4414. Courtesy: A. H. West

76. AN UNFORTUNATE ANSWER

Mr. Harcourt's reply on the £3 tax question is most unfortunate[2]. If it represents the settled policy of the Union Government, they are in for a big battle, not of words but of action. The free Indians owe it as a duty to themselves and to their poor brethren to act so as to secure repeal of the obnoxious levy. With the stoppage of theintroduction of indentured labour from India the last vestige of justification for the levy ceases. The Imperial Government cannot so easily be allowed to shirk their obvious duty. If the levy is wrong, neither the Royal sanction nor the determination of the Union Government can make it right. The sooner the Natal Indian Congress makes the position clear as to the steps to be taken by the Indian community the better it will be for all concerned. The iniquitous tax must be removed at any cost.

Indian Opinion , 25-11-1911

[1]This was written about the same time as the letter to West (pp. 190-1) where internal evidence helps to fix the date more firmly. From the subject-matter it is clear that this was the earlier of the two letters and the Friday preceding was November 24.

[2]In answer to a question by sir. W. J. Bull, Lewis Harcourt replied in the Imperial Parliament "that the legislation had been passed with the full knowledge of the Indian and Imperial Governments". He added that, while immigration of indentured Indians to Natal had ceased, the South African Government was not prepared to repeal the £3 tax. *Indian Opinion,* 18-11-1911.

77. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

November 26, 1911

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Today is Sunday. I came into Town last night as I have to go with Cachalia today to Krugersdorp to make collections for the Polak deputation.[1]

Call too is in Town. He came in yesterday morning. Call will not stay long at the Farm I fear. He does not like anybody on the Farm except myself. He cannot bear the sight of children (Indian). He considers that no one on the Farm knows how to eat, sit, walk, run or stand. The slightest thing upsets and irritates him. I do not let the children go near him. When he eats, the children are not to be near him. He has the kitchen verandah all to himself. I have withdrawn the night school from the school room and it is held in the kitchen room. Special food has been brought for him. Of course the above condition shows disease. He tells me these things quite freely. I am now seeing whether Call could be placed elsewhere. If he had all the conditions agreeable to him, he is likely to recover quickly. Beyond good, non-stimulating food, fresh air and good surroundings, he needs nothing more. Call's condition shows how bad we must all be. Call's bad points come to the surface because the poor man has lost control over himself. But Call at his worst seems to be an angel and certainly a good man compared to what we should be if we lost control over ourselves and the worst in us had full play. The inner man must be in harmony with the outer. We ought to be able to think and feel as we act. That is, if I act politely towards you, I ought to feel that also. Do I always think and feel well of people when I act well with them? I am afraid it is not always thus. To that extent that I fail, I am a liar. And yet I must not act otherwise. I must continually try to eradicate feelings and thoughts which are contrary to my actions as they ought to be. Then I should be a wholly truthful man. May you and I have the privilege of becoming such men. I am full of thoughts on this matter which if I had the time I should put down in this letter but I must close.

Your remarks on your niece are good.

[1] Vide "Letter to Dr. Pranjivan Mehta", 8-5-1911.

The windmill was finished on Friday. We shall begin to draw water from Tuesday probably. Call may lay the piping. He has offered to do so and if he is well, I shall let him.

With love to you all,

Yours sincerely,
UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

78. LETTER TO A.H. WEST

M.K. GANDHI
ATTORNEY

21-24 COURT CHAMBERS,
CORNER RISSIK & ANDERSON STREETS,
P.O. BOX 6522, JOHANNESBURG,
November 27, 1911

MY DEAR WEST,

An otherwise excellent number has been spoilt today by the letter-press on the supplement. It looks altogether too bad to describe the Mayor, Mayoress, etc., as being next to me. It looks very inappropriate, and Mrs. Vogl, who was the centre of the show, ought undoubtedly to have been mentioned. I don't know whether Miss Schlesin wrote to you, but I told her she should ask you to insert all the names.[1]

With reference to the £ 3 tax, the first step to take is not to advice the men to refuse to pay the tax, but for the Congress to send a petition to the Prime Minister, signed by all the Indians in Natal- say 15,000 signatures. There should be a mass meeting held. The Congress should then ask the Indians in the other Provinces to support. We must then await the reply from the Prime Minister. Then there should be a petition to Parliament next year, and, if Parliament rejects the petition, there should be an appeal to the Imperial Government by the Congress aided by the other Associations in South Africa. Finally the refusal to pay the tax! Then, undoubtedly, the Congress should undertake to feed the wives and families of those who may be imprisoned. The men would undoubtedly go to goal, if there is a body of earnest workers. For this purpose, either you will have to be in Durban

[1] Vide also "Krugersdorp Agitators", 3-6-1911 and "Letter to Ratan J. Tata", 1-4-1912 and "Mrs. Vogl's Bazaar", 22-6-1912.

continuously, or someone else will. The thing cannot be taken up haphazard. If the men were asked to go to goal today, I do not think you would find anybody taking up the suggestion, but if the preliminary steps as described above, are taken, by the time a final reply is received the men will have been thoroughly prepared to face the music. I know, too, that the thing is quite capable of being done, but one man at least must be prepared to devote the whole of his time to the matter.

If it were a question of deciding whose word was to be accepted, I should any day prefer Thakar's to Virji's. However, I have written to Virji, and there may be letter waiting for me at the Farm.

Thinking over the teachers for Campbell's[1] Estate, I think it might be as well for you to tell Campbell that you would want three or four months' notice to supply him with a teacher. He should also give you the salary he is likely to offer. For Hindi we might spare a Gujarati man from Phoenix. The experiment will be so valuable, that we might lend the services of one reliable man and, for a good Tamil teacher, we might have to import a good man from India.

I am glad you were present at the function to Hosken & Co., and that you subsequently drove with Hosken. He is, you must have noticed, a very frank and enthusiastic man. I hope he will visit you at Phoenix. Who drew up the address to Hosken and the others?

I consider Lutchman Panday's suggestion to be quite impracticable. There are not sufficient workers to form an Association of the kind he suggests, nor is the movement of Indians in the different Provinces so unhampered as to allow of such an Association doing useful work.

Yours sincerely,

M.K. GANDHI

From a copy: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Marshall Campbell, Chairman, Board of Directors, Natal Estates, Lt

79. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

Magshar Sud 6 [*November 27, 1911*][1]

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. I had asked you what faults Mr. Sam[2] had found with the Farm but you have forgotten to answer.

There is no need at all to worry about my health. As my hair is [cut] very short, you felt that I was in bad health. It doesn't ever happen that I go to sleep at midnight and get up at three. Mostly I go to bed at 11 and get up by about 5.30 or 6. There is nothing extraordinary about this. You ought therefore to be free of worry on my score. I still believe that I can work longer than any of you. It may be that I can't stay up late. The lady beside me is the Mayor's wife.[3]

Even before you thought of the matter, it had occurred to me that if you could free yourself from there you . . . December . . . [4]

About £150 must have been realized at the Bazaar. After deducting expenses, there will be a net collection of £100.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall send a reply[5] to Mr. Chamney's letter.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 98 Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

[1] The Bazaar referred to in the letter is Mrs. Vogl's Indian Bazaar which was inaugurated by William Hosken on November 15, 1911.

[2] "Sam" was Govindaswami, a machine foreman in the International Printing Press at Phoenix and a shikari.

[3] This is presumably a reference to a photograph taken at Mrs. Vogl's Bazaar. *Indian Opinion*, 25-11-1911, mentions that the Mayor was present.

[4] Two pages missing here

[5] Not available

80. FRAGMENT OF LETTER

TOLSTOY FARM,
LAWLEY STATION,
TRANSVAAL,
[After *November 27, 1911*][1]

. . . has become self-seeking. Our teachers have brought us down through unworthy education. Or, rather, it is wrong to say this. As we are, so are our teachers. Our priests are *Maheshvaras*[2] or *Harajivans*[3] only in name. As for knowledge of *Brahman*[4], they are not familiar even with the A B C of it. We don't ask for much; what then, can we expect? God is the Supreme *atman*. The *atman* exists. *Moksha*[5] is possible for it. The ideas of *Papa*[6] and *punya* are true. Deliverance is possible even at the end of the present life. Once we are firmly convinced of this, we must take up the quest. There is no reason whatever to believe that anything is right just because it is an established practice or because it was done by our elders. Such an attitude is in conflict with belief in the freedom of the soul. There is much that is good in the old. However, just as there is smoke wherever there is fire, the good in the old is [inevitably] mixed with other things not as good. Wisdom consists in distinguishing between the two and drawing out the essential.

The letter[7] that Cordes has written . . .

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5665. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] As the last incomplete line in this fragment suggests, the thoughts in this letter appear to have been inspired by a letter from Cordes (Appendix X) at Madras. Gandhiji had earlier attempted to wean him from Theosophy, ("Letter to Dr. Pranjivan mehta", p. 65) but unsuccessfully as would appear from Cordes's letter which sounds like a friendly farewell note. The Trust Deed which his letter enclosed was signed and witnessed by Cordes on November 12. Assuming 15 days for the post from Madras to reach South Africa, this letter by Gandhiji, which is possibly addressed to someone in the Phoenix Settlement, of which Cordes had earlier been a member, must have been written some time after November 27, 1911.

[2] Literally, "the Supreme God", a name of Shiva, the God of austerity and self-mastery in the Hindu Trinity

[3] Literally, "One who lives in Hara", i.e., in Shiva

[4] The Absolute

[5] Deliverance from phenomenal existence

[6] Sinful action, resulting in degradation and punishment

[7] *Vide* Appendix "Cordes's Letter to Gandhiji", 12-11-1911.

81. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

Tuesday [*November 28, 1911*][1]

MY DEAR WEST,

Your letter requires a long reply. But I cannot deal with all the points just[yet]. I was not in Town yesterday. Got your letter only last night.

My own opinion is unformed. Appearances are all against . . . and so is his letter to me. And yet the thing seems to me to be unbelievable. I do not believe in the innocence of the girls. If . . . did it, they knew that it was wrong. The excessive tickling betrays a corrupt mind—it may be unconsciously. If . . . has done it he has meant no mischief. I should not consider the offence itself of a very serious nature but his hiding the guilt is certainly serious. I do not make light of the offence. What I say is that concealment is more serious. I have written to him in this light.

Manilal is a lad. He must obey. He ought therefore to stay even unwillingly.

Anandlal will leave here at the latest on Saturday. He will take in H'Burg and standerton on his way. I suggested to him that he should be there on the 1st of January at the latest. He seems to have done well here. He has not stayed beyond a day at the Farm. There is no doubt that he likes collecting.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[1]As this letter appears to have been sent from Tolstoy Farm, it could only have been written between July 20, 1911, when Anandlal Gandhi arrived in South Africa ("Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", p. 129) and about the middle of January, 1913 when Gandhiji shifted to Phoenix. The only references to any "collection" tours by Anandlal Gandhi during this period occur in the Gujarati section of *Indian Opinion*, 25-11-1911 & 9-12-1912-11. The first mentions that Anandlal has left on a collection tour and the second, which is an extract from a longer item written on December 3, adds that Anandlal Gandhi joined others at Boksburg for collecting subscriptions for the Indian famine fund. The reference to the famine (cited already in letters to Dr. Mehta, pp. 161, 166 & 183) confirms that this letter belongs to 1911. Writing on a Tuesday Gandhiji says that "Anandlal will leave here at the latest on Saturday" and promises to post some Gujarati articles for *Indian Opinion* "on Wednesday". It is reasonable to assume, on the authority of the news-items, that the letter was written between November 25 and December 3, and the only Tuesday between the two dates is November 28. We learn from the second news-item that Anandlal Gandhi actually left on the morning of the 3rd, that is, a Sunday.

[PS.]

Your analysis of the evidence is splendid. You are an eternal demonstration to me that sound judgments do not come out of book knowledge but native wit and possession of ordinary virtue.

Please tell Thakar I want to send two short leaders or some-thing like that for Gujarati. This I may post on Wednesday.

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4415. Courtesy: A. H. West

82. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI PATEL

Magshar Sud 8 [*November 29, 1911*][1]

DEAR SHRI RAOJIBHAI,

I have your letter. I gather from it that you want to work in Phoenix. It is a good idea. I shall encourage you, but I doubt if you can stand the strain. In Phoenix

1. you will have to observe *brahmacharya;*
2. you will be under a vow of scrupulous regard for truth;
3. you will have to do chiefly manual labour, that is, work with the hoe and the shovel;
4. if you intend to add to [your] book-learning, please forget all about it. Whatever addition comes naturally of because circumstances demand it will be welcome;
5. you should make up your mind that our duty is to strengthen character rather than acquire book-learning;
6. you should fearlessly oppose injustice from the caste or the family;
7. you should embrace absolute poverty.

You should think of joining Phoenix only if you would and can do this. You should tell yourself that life there will grow harder as the days pass and know that this is for your good.

Learn to think along these lines if you decide to come over in March. Continue to write to me.

With due regards from

MOHANDAS

From *Gandhijini Sadhana* (Gujarati): Raojibhai Patel; Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad; 1939

[1] Raojibhai Patel, says in his book that the letter was written in 1911. The letter itself offers no internal evidence.

83. AN ATTACK ON ASIATIC MORALS

We reproduced last week the full text of a leading article in *The Transvaal Leader* on the so-called Asiatic invasion of Boksburg in the form of the opening by Mr. Bhyat of a store in that town. The *Leader* of Mr. Cartwright's time is not the *Leader* of today. It would be difficult to find anything so virulent and offensive to Asiatics as the article in question. In the opinion of its writer,

> the Asiatic trader casts his sinister shadow, and, with his primitive mode of existence, his complete indifference to the simplest amenities of life, his Oriental ingenuity and his inferior standard of civilization menaces the future of the European shopkeeper.

In another place, the writer considers Oriental civilization to be on a "much lower grade". Then, again,

> the European trader cannot much longer keep up the fight against the commercial wiles and the social iniquities of the inscrutable coolie.

The article ends with the desire

> to protect the European from the unfair competition of the coolie who in so many towns of the Union has established himself at every street-corner, bringing with him the unfamiliar habits and dress of Asia.

In the extracts we have quoted, the reader will not fail to notice how Asiatic morals have been attacked, how their habits and mode of life decried, and how unfavourably the Asiatic civilization has been compared with the European. The ignorant writer has not hesitated to use the word "coolie" in writing of Asiatic traders. We are, however, not disposed to quarrel with the writer either for his ignorance or for his sentiments. The very civilizaiton he represents makes for ignorance, inasmuch as its exacting demands upon the frail physical frame render it well-nigh impossible for any dweller therein to have any but a most superficial knowledge of things in general, and, as those nurtured in it are continuously taught to consider that civilization to be the best, naturally one is prone to look down upon anything that does not satisfy its arbitrary standard. And so we find that the writer looks down upon the Asiatic trader with contempt, because he is "indifferent to the simplest amenities of life". The Founder of Christianity showed much greater indifference to these amenities and his mode of existence was infinitely more primitive than that of the Asiatic trader, and yet we are quite certain that the writer never intended to

cast any reflection upon Jesus.

The question, therefore, that we have to address ourselves to is not whether to placate men of the writer's stamp (and, after all, they represent undoubtedly the majority of the Europeans in South Africa), but whether we must alter our simple mode of life and take over what we consider to be the vices of modern life, in order to retain our foothold in their country. Those who have done so know to their cost that they have not, on that account, been able to make themselves more acceptable. Their Asiatic origin is still their sufficient condemnation. The two systems are struggling to live side by side in South Africa. The experiment is interesting. We can only hope that, if the Asiatic has faith in himself and in his civilization, he will not lower the latter, and we doubt not that that which has stood the test of ages will come out scatheless in the test it is now undergoing in this subcontinent. But the handful of Asiatics in South Africa have to remember that, if they do not want to disgrace the country of their origin or their system of life, they must thoroughly represent it, and not present a parody of it. They must live up to the moral code that has been handed down to them for ages past. With them, honesty is not merely the best policy, and on that account only to be observed when it is profitable, but it must be adhered to at all cost and in all circumstances. With them, might is not right, but right is always might. They can have nothing to do with the doctrine of the survival of the fittest! They have to live and let live. If they catch the modern craze for competition and adopt the characteristically grasping nature of this vaunted civilization, they will certainly go under.

Indian Opinion , 2-12-1911

84. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

December 3, 1911

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Today is Sunday, Gordon is here. He is keeping well. His farm is still unsold.

Your brother is to be married today. He sent me the invitation. I wrote wishing them a happy life. He invited Call to stay for a few days at his house and to look after it while he was away. Call left the Farm yesterday. He is still unhinged. He likes no one at the Farm. He said if it was a matter of choice, he would prefer the asylum to the Farm. I let

him do pretty much as he liked even to the extent of spiriting leather. He took it into his head to make for himself a pair of sandals. He made a horrible pair. He is never of the same mind for two minutes. Of course I shall watch him wherever he is. How nice it would have been if you had been here. He likes you immensely. He thinks that you are his only great friend. I am trying to get compensation for him from the company. He has been offered £3-2-6 per weeks. I am still in correspondence with the manager.

The windmill is working. The wheel does not turn the whole day long. Naturally, therefore, we do not get 9,000 gallons of water per day. The water is allowed to run into the dam but it has not reached there yet. I might lay the pipes as far, I shall go slowly.

£ 100 were cabled to you last week. You had written to Kennedy who was then in Durban. Miss Friedman asked me and I drew a cheque for £ 100 and the manager cabled transfer of £ 100 to the Bank there.

I am certainly sorry that you are considering commercial propositions. You have not gone to Europe for *that purpose*. We did discuss these matters here and you seemed to think that you would clear off the bond from the property itself. He who would be good and do good must have patience. As in diseases so in other matters we must let Nature have her course. Our business difficulties are also a variety of disease ≈ mental, it is true. And we may no more suppress these diseases without suffering from other eruptions than we may physical diseases without their breaking out in another form. We have to eradicate them and there is only one way of doing so. I agree with your analysis of Fisher Unwin. I too met him when I was last there. You had introduced me to the Daniels in your previous letters.

If Kennedy is at the office tomorrow, I shall discuss with him the question of your staying longer and if he is agreeable I shall cable. I am anxious that you should stay for your pleasure, it may be ever so subtle. The condition also should be that you are to stay only with Mrs. Mayo or return. Germany is certainly not now the place for you. We are not intended to *seek* temptation. We can resist it only when it forces itself on our attention.

Did I tell you that the boys had left off the saltless diet? I noticed that they were getting tired. So at present only Medh, to an extent Mrs. Gandhi, and I are saltless. With me it seems to have come

to stay. Even with the simplest diet it is possible to overeat than under-eat. Why then need we multiply dishes?

We had fair rains of late. We are therefore having a good crop of apricots. And so we have the eternal stew.

You want me to discuss with you the Indian tour. It is probably as well not to go. Personally I think that it is time for you to return. But you are the best judge. If, therefore, you wish to stay on and that at Aberdeen, you may do so if Kennedy is agreeable. Please do not mind me. It is no trouble to me to look after things here. At present, it is Miss Schlesin who looks after them. I simply sign and endorse cheques.

There are now 15 boys at the Farm. Some of them are very good but I am not satisfied with one or two of them. I could not reject them as they accepted the conditions on the Farm.

With love to you all,

Yours sincerely,
UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

85. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

M.K. GANDHI
ATTORNEY

21-24 COURT CHAMBERS,
CORNER RISSIK & ANDERSON STREETS,
P.O. BOX 6522, JOHANNESBURG,
December 4, 1911

MY DEAR WEST,

I have your letter. I return the Aiyar[1] correspondence for you to file there. I do not want to keep it here. At the same time, I do not wish to destroy it.

Your report on Eastern Vlei is very good. I certainly think that we ought to take notice of the Henwood case. Even if the man was a thief, it was nothing short of persecution; and, if you do not consider the thing to be stale now, you should still punish it. When the man has

[1] P.S. Aiyar, owner and editor of The African Chronicle published from Durban: Honorary Secretary of the Anti-£3 Tax League formed in September 1911

finished his sentence, he may be interviewed and more may be published, but the case should be followed up. Indeed, it would be well to post up somebody in order to meet him upon his discharge. So far as I am aware, Magistrate's notes can certainly be seen as a matter of right by interested parties.

I intended to write to Khan asking him to waive his fees about Muthuswamy because the amount has to come out of passive resistance funds, but I thought that I should ask you whether I should do so before writing the letter. This I forgot to do. Shall I now write or do you think that the amount should be paid without more ado?

With reference to the supplement, if the dog were in the centre, I think that your remarks would have been justified. As it is, the dog in the present instance was not sitting in the centre, but Mr. Hosken was, and, if you had said 'Mr. Hosken is in the centre with Mrs.Ellis to his right' and so on, it would have been all right. No one can be held responsible not even the photograph for the arrangement of those who sat for the group. I went there at the last moment, and, so many important persons having come in, I hardly think that Mrs. Vogl also could control the thing. Without giving the official designations, the names could have been printed. But, of course, you could not reason this way, not having seen the Bazaar and not having been intimately connected with the work. But I do say that you should have seen the impropriety of introducing the chief members of the group through me.[1]

I consider you to be entirely capable of handling the £ 3 tax business, but I am not just now in a position to feel the pulse of the community there. Whether, therefore, they would rise to the occasion or not is entirely for you to judge. You should, therefore, discuss the thing freely with them, tell them that you would be prepared to stay for a month in Durban and work the thing up, if they want you to do so. But, of course, after having gone into it, it would not do for you to limit yourself in any way. You will have either to do or die. You may stay in Durban for a month less or more. I personally cannot set any limit to work and say, 'All right, work for a month, and then things may be left to take their course'. That could be done, if I were managing the thing, but, in this instance, if the thing is to be done at all, I want you to become the initiator and organizer. Your responsibility will, therefore, be towards yourself and your God. If I felt like

[1] Vide also "For Satyagrahis", 27-5-1911.

being free to head the movement, I should plunge without a moment's hesitation. But just now, I am not in that condition at all. I shall certainly criticize you freely, and watch the working, and give advice. More I cannot do. So that you must count the cost before embarking on the enterprise. You should also take care that you do not in any way clash with what Aiyar is doing. I have now learnt something about Munroe. I have distrusted the agitation from the commencement, that is, I have not been able to consider it to be unselfish. Apart from this question, if it is necessary for you to stay in Durban with the family for a month, of course you should do it, looking to me for the deficit for that month's expenses.

I should like to see the text of this address to Hosken. Was it so long-winded as suggested by Aiyar? You will do what you think is proper regarding Jamni. Anandlal has commenced collections[1]. I share the view you have expressed about him. If Manilal is not to come during the month, you will have to get him to cheerfully reconcile himself to the delay. The coming here is with him on the brain now, and I do not wish to discourage him at all. I do not know what is going to happen to him or to any of us in March. If you detain him there, let him realize that he should put the exigencies of the work there before his inclination and take pleasure in the thought. I shall go through the essay you have sent, and we shall certainly publish it if the ideas are at all acceptable. You may nurse the lad, even while he is out of Phoenix.

Yours sincerely,

M.K. GANDHI

From a copy: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

86. LETTER TO E. F. C. LANE

December 7, 1911

DEAR MR. LANE,

I promised when I saw General Smuts last in Johannesburg that I would submit my views as to how the terms of the settlement could be satisfied. General Smuts asked me to submit my views when he thought there might be difficulty in passing legislation applying to

[1] viz subscriptions for the Indian Famine Relief Fund; *vide* "Famine in India", 11-11-1911 and "Famine in India", 9-12-1911.

South Africa, in view of the resolution[1] of the Imperial Conference. I have studied the proceedings and it seems to me that the resolution does not affect the question. It seems to cover only alien immigration.

Anyhow, it seems to me that, if general legislation cannot be passed, the Transvaal Immigration Act should be amended along the lines suggested by me in Cape Town. You have the text of my draft[2]. I find it difficult to improve upon it, and I confess that I see no constitutional difficulty in the way of the suggestion being carried out.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

E. F. C. LANE, ESQ.
PRETORIA

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5595

87. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

M.K. GANDHI
Attorney

21-24 COURT CHAMBERS,
CORNER RISSIK & ANDERSON STREETS,
P.O. BOX 6522, JOHANNESBURG,
December 8, 1911

MY DEAR WEST,

In the papers I am sending today you will find interesting correspondence regarding the £3 tax. Here is work for you. Can you, and will anyone assist you, to collect statistics showing in what cases the tax has been remitted?[3] Is it possible also to find out all the serious cases in which remission has not been granted? The more statistics we can give the earlier will be the repeal of the tax. It seems to me that it is possible perhaps to get Europeans in Natal to sign a petition for its

[1] The Imperial Conference which met in London on the afternoon of June 19 passed two resolutions. The first called for "greater uniformity in Imperial legislation concerning immigration and the exclusion of aliens". Sir Joseph Ward's resolution asking for more powers to regulate British and foreign shipping "which was really connected with his recent attempt to penalize vessels with Lascars in their crews" was lost. *Indian Opinion*, 22-7-1911. *Vide* also Appendix "Lord Crewe's Speech on Indians in Dominions at Imperial Conference", 19-6-1911.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 7-4-1911.

[3] *Vide* "The Iniquitous Tax", 16-12-1911 .

repeal, and, if we can get an influentially signed document, we can certainly bring about repeal during the forthcoming session without resort to passive resistance.

Yours sincerely,
M.K. GANDHI

[PS.]

The full text of the Germiston Judgment herewith should be reproduced.

From a copy: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

88. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

TOLSTOY FARM,
LAWLEY STATION,
TRANSVAAL,
December 8, 1911

DEAR PROF. GOKHALE,

It pains me to think that you had to dictate, ill though you were, that long letter of the 3rd Nov. last. I can quite understand what worry that wretched cable of Reuter's must have caused you.[1] Pray pardon me. It would have been a tragedy, if through any sense of false feeling for me after the publication of the cable, I had been nominated. I need hardly assure you that the discussion there in the Press has not worried or affected me in the least degree.

I saw in your letter to Mr. Ritch reference to your daughter's illness. I hope that she has entirely recovered.

Mr. Polak is with you. I need not therefore say anything about the situation here. I only hope that a resolution about the entire stoppage of indentured labour to any part of the world will have been carried.[2]

May I repeat my invitation to visit S. A. and that at the earliest moment for the sake of your health and of those who love you and who wish to see you live yet for many a year in full possession of your health both bodily and mental? What a nice thing it would be if

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", 30-10-1911.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", 24-10-1911. This resolution was passed at the session of the Indian National Congress which concluded on December 28, 1911. *Indian Opinion*, 6-1-1912.

you could come with the Polaks—earlier by all means if possible. Do please decide to come.

I am,

Your sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 3805

89. MIXED SCHOOLS AND MORALS

We gladly make room for Mrs. Wybergh's spirited contribution[1] to the *Worker* on the question of mixed schools. The matter was taken up by *The Transvaal Leader*, and the Education Board has invited Mrs. Wybergh to prove her charges. This Mrs. Wybergh has offered to do if her informants, who are teachers, are fully protected. There is some hesitation on the part of the Board to give the full protection she naturally asks for. We are not just now concerned whether Mrs. Wybergh furnishes the Board with proofs in her possession. What we wish to place on record is the fact that *The Transvaal Leader* and practically the whole of the Johannesburg Press suggest that the system of mixed schools should come to an end, especially for grown-up boys and girls. It seems to have been taken for granted that, in substance, Mrs. Wybergh's indictment is true.

"Rest and be thankful" was Lord John Russell's motto. We admire the wisdom of those Indian parents who instinctively recoiled from the stupid experiments that the Natal Education Department wished to try among us of mixing boys and girls. This is essentially an age of innovations and rash experiments. Movement is mistaken for progress. So long as you move, it does not matter whether you are moving backward or forward. The existing order of things must be bad and must, therefore, be improved, says the zealous reformer. "Hasten slowly" should be the motto of the real reformer. Mrs.

[1]In her article, Mrs. Wybergh had said that, whereas in London co-education had been dropped as its wrongly conceived ideals had tended to exaggerate instead of equalizing sex-differences, in Johannesburg it had been adopted merely to save the expense of separate school buildings for boys and girls. She charged that no care had been taken "to guard against the great and obvious dangers". The results of the system were such that she could not record them without rendering herself liable to prosecution. The parents seemed to be ignorant of this but conscientious school-teachers were at their wits' end. *Indian Opinion*, 9-12-1911.

Wybergh's revelations show clearly that we must be most careful before we uproot systems or customs that have been handed down for generations, unless we *know* them to be immoral.

Indian Opinion , 9-12-1911

90. FAMINE IN INDIA

We have started a Famine Relief Fund.[1] Mr. Gajjar has made a beginning. We have had several letters from which we learn that a number of Indians are willing to take on [the task of] going round for collections. This is our brief appeal to those who have realized how dreadful the famine is.

Please do not turn away those collecting contributions, saying that you have already paid towards many funds. Do not hesitate to send your contribution directly either. Those who have money have to contribute towards a variety of funds, but there can be no comparison between a famine Fund and other funds. To this Fund, even the poorest Indian can contribute. One who lives on coarse *roti* and ghee may go without ghee for a time and pay the money thus saved into the Famine Relief Fund. Such a one should bear in mind that while he gets at least millet *roti* and ghee, people in the famine areas do not get even *roti*. There is no fodder for cattle and both human beings and cattle have been reduced to skeletons. If this is realized by everyone, there is no Indian who cannot make a contribution, however small.

We admit that there is no charity like that which one dispenses directly, where one can see it being use. This is what people do in our country wherever they have not been caught in the wind from the West. The villager gives in charity after the fashion of the village. He shares his food with any poor person who may call at his home. He does not even dream of being able to help those whom he cannot see. He knows that even to think of it is pride and is like claiming to be God.

But we have been caught in the wind from the West. It is this which has brought us to this land. If people suffer overmuch during a famine, it is due to the Western atmosphere. What is our duty at a time like this? Our foremost duty is to quit this monstrous atmosphere here and rush to the side of the famine-stricken, to live as they do and take

[1] *Vide* "Famine in India", 11-11-1911.

them along the right path. We may be inclined to do all this, but perhaps lack the requisite strength. A man like Vibhishana[1] had to endure the monstrous atmosphere for a long time; what strengthhave we before him? There may be others, moreover, who do not feel this way and do not even want to get away from here. It is essential that both these types of people must send as much help as they can to the famine-stricken.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion , 9-12-1911

91. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

TOLSTOY FARM,
LAWLEY STATION,
TRANSVAAL,
Magshar Vad 4 [*December 9,1911*][2]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I was not in the least worried about the matter. I don't blame you or anyone else for the thing. Everyone makes such a mistake. The magistrate in alliance with a lawyer—and a veritable rogue to boot! So what else could be expected? Both want to make money, and quickly. Personally I think, there has been no libel,[3] legally speaking. If the nominal lapse is an offence, they may have £1 as fine. Even this should not be necessary, however.

If the magistrate and the lawyer take it into their heads to ruin us, the case may perhaps go to a court. Never mind if it does.

It is not things like this that keep back people from going to the help of the poor; it is their money. When we do not spend the money on ourselves, why should we mind its loss through such chances? It is occasions like this which test our worth. It would be Satanic to believe, with our money safe, that we have obliged the person concerned. Why

[1] The virtuous brother of Ravana. He tried long and hard to convert Ravana but, failing in his attempts, went over to Rama before the great battle began.

[2] This letter appears to be sequel to that written to Chhaganlal Gandhi about September 28, 1911, and was presumably therefore written in 1911. In that year *Magshar Vad* 4 corresponds to December 9.

[3] This possibly refers to the account of Jannumia's case which *Indian Opinion* had republished from the *African Chronicle*; *vide* 1st footnote"Fragment of Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 28-9-1911.

should we feel humiliated by anything that the Congress people or others might say? What our conscience tells us, that alone is our humiliation or our credit.

You should go on doing your work without any anxiety or fear.

If we have surrendered our all to Krishna, He who is the Lord of all will look after everything. If He does not, why should you and I bother? Our duty is to make sure whether we have in fact surrendered everything to Krishna or are holding back something for ourselves.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a Photostat of the Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 6077

92. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

TOLSTOY FARM,
LAWLEY STATION,
TRANSVAAL,
December 10, 1911

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

For the first time since your departure from London a week has passed without a letter from you. You have so used me to the regularity of your correspondence that last Thursday left a sad blank when I saw among the letters nothing from you. But I know that you were travelling. You told me you were leaving for Berlin on a Tuesday or Wednesday. I therefore assume that you were travelling and without reach of a station where you could post your letter to be in time.

Gordon was here today (Sunday) as he was last Sunday. He likes to be here. He is keeping well.

Call is still in Johannesburg. He may leave for London next week. It all depends upon the Medical Superintendent of the asylum. Call is by no means right yet. But probably a voyage will be the best thing for him. He may be a total wreck for ever, i.e., remain an imbecile. He is no lunatic, but he has no control over himself.

The fencing is now almost complete. Just a little finishing is required … probably there is a day's work. We are drying apricots in the manner suggested by you in your letter from Potchesfstroom.

I had a talk with Kennedy. His answer as to further prolongation

of the agreement was not quite satisfactory. I have asked him to think [it] over and let me know. He seemed to resent the fact that you had not written to him in the matter. On the whole I think it is better for you not to take more than the time you intended to when you left. After all 8 months is a fair time. You could still pass a few weeks at Mrs. Mayo's. I certainly think that you have stayed enough with your people. They know now what you are. Their assimilation of your (our) ideals now depends upon your living the life according to the ideals for a length of time. But you and I are not living the life for them or anybody else. We are living the life because we want to, irrespective of what the rest of mankind do.

Your brother was duly married on Sunday. Herewith a cutting, if you have not received it through other channels.

I have now 18 boys in the school, much to the disgust of Mrs. Gandhi. And yet I must continue as I have begun. There is no looking back. One hesitating step and I perish. We have now 4 Mohammedan boys.

With love to you all,

Yours sincerely,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

93. THE INIQUITOUS TAX

We publish elsewhere an instructive letter[1] from the Colonial Secretary addressed to Lord Ampthill's Committee, and the Union Prime Minister's Minute to the Governor-General, on the Natal £3 tax, exacted from ex-indentured men, women and children. That the taxing legislation was imposed with the knowledge and consent of the Government of India and of His Majesty's Government, and that the consent was obtained on a correct representation of facts, does not make it any the less criminal. It may be considered very gracious on the part of the Union Government to be ready to consider any specific cases of hardship brought to their notice. We venture to think, however, that every case of the exaction of this tax is a specific case of hardship. But, apart from that, if, as Mr. Sauer[2] has pointed out, they have watched the law carefully and all complaints have been inquired into, why have they not produced statistics to show in what case and under what circumstances the tax has been remitted? Our columns have been full of cases of hardship, especially on women. The Government really were bound to waive the tax in respect of women

[1] Dated November 14, 1911, this was sent by Harcourt, Secretary of State for the Colonies, in reply to paragraph 6 of the SABI Committee's representation of June 17, 1911 (Appendix VIII), which asked for exemption from the £3 tax for Indian women and children saying that the amending Act of 1910 (Natal Act 19 of 1910) had "but slightly improved the situation". It also drew attention to disparities between decisions of individual magistrates. Along with his letter, Harcourt enclosed the copy of a despatch from the Governor-General of South Africa containing a minute dated August 22, 1911 from the Union Ministers on the subject. The minute, signed by Sauer, said that the £3 tax had been imposed "on grounds of policy, with a view to limiting the free Indian population as much as possible" and that the Ministers considered its repeal inadvisable. The minute added that the application of the law in particular cases had been "carefully watched" and all complaints inquired into and that the Ministers were convinced that there had been "no undue harshness in the administration of this law". Commenting on this, Harcourt had observed that the facts had been "correctly represented" in the minute and the legislation had been passed with the full knowledge and consent of the Government of India and of His Majesty's Government and that he could only accept the Ministry' decision. *Indian Opinion*, 1612-1911.

[2] J. W. Sauer; member of the Cape Legislature and later of the Union Cabinet; fellow-passenger with the Transvaal Indian Deputation of 1909 on board s.s. *Kenilworth Castle; vide* "Deputation's Voyage", 23-6-1909 Gandhiji who met him during the voyage found him "full of sympathy"; he promised all possible help.

entirely, as has been shown by us by quoting speeches of responsible members of the now defunct Natal Parliament when the amending measure was passed.[1] The Minister's Minute is, we are constrained to say, calculated to blind the Imperial Government to the serious nature of the hardship entailed on those who have to bear the burden. We trust that the attention of the Imperial Government will be brought to the almost unanimous condemnation[2] by the South African Press of the wretched treatment meted out to people who have deserved better of those for whom they have slaved for a number of years. We think that it was open to Mr. Harcourt to have at least invited the Union Government to consider the new situation that has arisen by reason of the stoppage of recruiting indentured Indian labour for Natal. The question of limiting the free Indian population as much as possible does not now arise as witness General Smuts' own statement made to his Pretoria constituents on the 7th instant:

> If ever Asiatics were introduced here as indentured labourers, there would be revolution. That door was closed for ever.

We note with considerable satisfaction that, in the absence of Lord Ampthill, Lord Lamington has been moving the House of Lords in the matter of the forthcoming legislation.[3] We hope that the forthcoming Union Parliament will see a fulfilment, at least to the letter, of the promise made by the Union Government in the Provisional Settlement. We wish that His Lordship may take up this question of the iniquitous tax, and bring the pressure of public opinion to bear upon His Majesty's Government with a view to its repeal.

Indian Opinion , 16-12-1911

[1] *Vide* "The £3 Tax", 11-11-1911.

[2] A number of European-owned papers such as *The Natal Mercury*, the *Natal Advertiser* and the *Rand Daily Mail* had, in a series of articles and editorial comments, condemned the £3 tax.

[3] On December 6, in the House of Lords Lamington asked for the production of correspondence between the Colonial Office and the Union Government relating to British Indians in the Transvaal. He also asked for information regarding the operation of the draft Municipal Ordinance, the Gold Law and the Township Act, *Indian Opinion*, 9-12-1991.

94. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR[1]

December 21, 1911

PRIVATE SECRETARY TO INTERIOR
[PRETORIA]

THANKS YOUR WIRE. WILL CALL TOMORROW MORNING.

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 5598

95. LETTER TO A.H. WEST

M.K. GANDHI
Attorney

21-24 COURT CHAMBERS,
CORNER RISSIK & ANDERSON STREETS,
P.O. BOX 6522, JOHANNESBURG,
December 22, 1911

MY DEAR WEST,

Yes, with reference to Obligadoo, we ought to get the charge-sheet. I want to see the two counts on which he was prosecuted. You will see the Prosecutor accepted his plea of guilty on the first count and was satisfied. Generally, when a Prosecutor does that, you may depend upon it that he has a very weak case, and, as a matter of fact, this plea of guilty ought never to have been accepted by the Magistr-gistrate as a plea of guilty, because the accused has qualified it, saying he was in want of this money and took it. This qualification immediately takes away guilty knowledge. The mere taking of the money was certainly not theft. The sentence, of course, is preposterous.

Of course, the leaders will not take up the £3 tax agitation without your harassing them. Aiyar may be left to himself and he may have all the credit and all the glory. We simply do the work if the leaders are ready to do their share of it. When Parliament opens, of

[1] This was sent in reply to the telegram from the Private Secretary to the Minister of Interior, which read: "Private. Am taking copy of draft copy of Immigraiton bill with me Johannesburg tomorrow and am asked by Minister to show it to you for your personal information. Can you conveniently call at the Minister of Mines room during morning". S. N. 5598. Gandhiji's reply is drafted in pencil at the bottom of the above telegram.

of course we shall have to get Mr. Alexander to ask questions. Meanwhile you should get the facts independently of the Ministers. They will not help.

I have asked Manilal to pocket his own inclination and do as you advise him, and I think that his feeling need not be considered so long as his services are required there.

I have written to Muthu exactly in the same sense that you have spoken to him, and, if you want him, by all means have him, but it must be understood that he will have to do plenty of out-door work.

Yours sincerely,

M.K. GANDHI

From a copy: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

96. WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT

The letter (for Downing Street a long one) written to Lord Ampthill's Committee by the Colonical Office on the petition of the British Indian Association regarding the Transvaal Draft Local Government Ordinance[1] forms sad reading, and if confirmation were wanted, it confirms the opinion held by many passive resisters that it was the strength of passive resistance alone which brought about with General Smuts the Provisional Settlement which should be reduced to legislation during the next two or three months. We do not wish to convey the impression that Imperial Government sat with folded arms and that the Union Government were not in any way affected by the representations that were made by the Imperial Government, but what we do wish to convey is that the Imperial Government would not have moved at all in our favour, had it not been for passive resistance. Mr. Harcourt's letter of the 23rd November last, says in so many words that the Imperial Government will not intervene on our behalf even in order to secure redress of tangible grievances. The fact that something—it does not matter to them whether it is just or unjust—has been done before is sufficient reason for them to reject any approach

[1] For the sections of the Ordinance affecting Asiatics and the BIA's petition, *vide* Appendix "Transvaal Draft Local Government Ordinance, 1911: Extracts Affecting Asiatics", 10-6-1911.

on behalf of British Indians in order to undo an admitted wrong. We need not have been told that the municipal franchise was taken away from us by a previous Ordinance, nor that most of the clauses in the proposed Draft Ordinance were virtually a re-enactment of old provisions. It did not strike Mr. Harcourt that it was quits the proper thing for the British Indian Association to have drawn attention to such re-enactment, especially in the new circumstances arising from the Union of South Africa, and there can be no reason why Mr. Harcourt could not have pressed for a revision of a vicious policy at an opportune time like that of the impending passage of the Draft Ordinance in question.

It grieves us to find Mr. Harcourt as representing the Imperial Government concurring with the Union Ministers in their policy of shuffle. He and they insult our intelligence when they tell us that we could have no ground for complaint because the clauses regarding the issue of licences are of a general character. They must know as well as we do that, in the vast majority of cases, such general clauses have been in administration made applicable only to Asiatics. A passage, however, in Mr. Harcourt's letter dealing with the matter wherein the deprivation of the right of appeal to a court of law is referred to as a hardship supplies a ray of hope that something may be done in this direction.

It is wonderful how in an important communication dealing with weighty matters the most trifling and contemptible arguments have been seriously taken up in answer to our complaints. Mr. Harcourt, for instance, justifies the deprivation of the right of Indians, other Asiatics and, for that matter, other Coloured people to be employed in bakeries, etc., on the exploded ground of sanitation. He ought to know by this time that the clause in question is purely an attempt to take away the means of livelihood, and an avenue for employment, from honest people. Surely the sanitary authorities can be trusted to look after sanitation and to see whether bakers and their employees observe the rules of hygiene. We are also gravely told that similar disability in connection with a different matter altogether has been created against female labour. The crying grievance regarding tram-cars is similarly rejected because it is a "matter of long standing", as if a crime oft repeated actually became a virtue. We are sorry that the Imperial Government, in taking up the attitude as exemplified in Mr. Harcourt's letter, are abdicating their function of holding the balance

evenly between conflicting local interest in the different parts of the Empire; for this letter is not an isolated lapse from tradtion, but it is merely the carrying out of a new departure, noted now for a long time by well-wishers of the Empire with a great deal of pain. We could wish that there would be a reversion to the old and fearless attitude of absolute impartiality which at one time ruled at the centre of the Empire when self-interest at the centre itself was not in jeopardy.

Indian Opinion , 23-12-1911

97. A SHAMEFUL ACT

The brief report of the Nathalia case[1] we published last week has disgusted every member of the community as it disgusted the judges themselves who decided upon this matter. It is enough to make one despair of the utility of law courts if the judges cannot right a wrong that they themselves acknowledge. The late Mr. Leonard used to say and hold that there was no wrong without a legal remedy. It is this comfortable delusion which reconciles some of the otherwise best minds to the practice of a profession which has very few redeeming features.

This case on Nathalia, a young lad, cannot be allowed to rest where the Natal judges have left it. It is a national scandal that the boy cannot be admitted to the Province in spite of his having produced credentials which would have satisfied any but an autocratic immigration officer who has certainly no time to bring to bear on a case a judicial mind free from bias. His very vocation forbids it. The fault is therefore not the individual's but of the legislature that has wickedly saddled a responsibility on him which no ordinary mortal could discharge. He is legally called an "Immigration Restriction Officer" appointed to administer a restriction law. How could he generally decide in favour of persons whom he is expected to restrict?

[1] E.M. Nathalia "was sent back to India twice, and on the last occasion had returned with documents that were required to show that he was the son of the father he sought to join" in Natal. The Immigration Restriction Officer was, however, not convinced and refused the boy permission to land. The judge remarked that "the officer never seemed to be able to believe that a boy was the son of his father", but would not interfere because the officer had full authority. *Indian Opinion*, 23-12-1911.

To prevent an appeal from his decisions is to deny justice. And that the late Natal legislature succeeded in doing. We trust that the matter will be taken to a higher court and thoroughly thrashed out. It will be a discredit to the community to which the lad belongs if we allow him to be sent back. The community must make it a point of honour to protect the boy, who, we are satisfied, is the son of the person who claims him as such.

Indian Opinion , 30-12-1911

98. THE NEW YEAR

At the close of a year we are apt to look back on the way we have come and it is a good thing if we are able to find something over which we can rejoice. What has happened during this year that can be said to have affected the Indian community? The first week of January brought the welcome news from Calcutta that the Government of India had decided to issue a notice in April prohibiting the further emigration of indentured Indians to Natal from July 1.[1] This decision was carried out; and now we have seen the last of indentured Indian immigration to these shores. It is impossible at this time to say what the effect will ultimately be, but we have good reason to believe that many employers of Indian labour have awoke to the necessity of treating their work people with some consideration and providing them with decent housing accommodation. We hope to see more improvements as time goes on, including the establishing of schools for Indian children living on the estates. This, however, does not blind us to the many evils of the indenture system, and we have not forsaken our ideal of freedom for all. This will come in time when the people themselves are ready for it. Better treatment and healthier conditions, which are now being offered as inducements to re-indenture, will in the course of time lead to freedom of contract between labourers and employers.

The year opened with the Transvaal passive resistance struggle at white heat. In March the Immigrants' Restriction Bill[2] was published and our readers will remember its fate[3]. Then followed the lengthy

[1] *Vide* 4th footnote "Letter to G. A. Natesan", 31-5-1911.

[2] *Vide* "Immigrants' Restriction Bill", 24-2-1911.

[3] The Bill was dropped ; *vide* Appendix "Lane's Letter to Gandhiji", 21-4-1911.

correspondence between General Smuts and Mr. Gandhi which resulted at the end of April in an understanding[1] between the Minister of the Interior and the Indian leaders as follows: Law 3 of 1907[2] to be repealed, legal equality in respect of immigration of Asiatic immigrants with Europeans, the existing Provincial rights to be maintained, the admission of six highly educated Asiatics to the Transvaal, registration of passive resisters, and the release of prisoners. It now remains for the Parliament to ratify the promise made by a responsible Minister of the Government. Absolutely fair dealing is expected and demanded in these matters, otherwise no permanent settlement can be effected.

Since the understanding with the Government in April, a serious position has been brought about by the administration of the Gold Law[3] and the Townships Act[4]. the effect of which is to ruin Asiatic store-keepers, and the livelihood of the majority of the Transvaal Indians, who are mainly hawkers, is brought in jeopardy.

In looking forward to the coming year the Indian community of South Africa have reason both to hope and to fear. The Immigration Bill, which will be brought before Parliament early in the year,[5] concerns every Indian in the Union. The rights of resident Indians must be secured at all costs, and a reasonable number of educated men admitted to the Union. It will depend largely upon the Indian people themselves whether they are to maintain their rights and preserve their dignity in this land of their birth or adoption. A firm front will have to be shown to any attempt to filch away the people's established rights and customs. No compromise whatever can be allowed with matters that concern the very existence of the community. Just as the Transvaal Indians have fought a hard battle for five years, if it be necessary, the other provinces should not shrink from such a struggle rather than that they should forfeit their and their children's future position as citizens of the Union of South Africa.

There are other questions of vital importance which should be

[1] *Vide* letters to Lane, pp. 22-4-1911 & 29-4-1911 and Appendix 22-4-1911.

[2] Evidently, a slip for "Act 2 of 1907"

[3] For Polak's representation against these laws to the Government of India *vide* Appendix "Polak's Letter to India Government on Gold Law and Townships Act (1908)", 19-4-1912.

[4] *Ibid*

[5] This Bill was being re-drafted for the following session of Parliament; *vide* footnote of "Telegram to Private Secretary to Minister of Interior', 21-12-1911.

dealt with; for instance, the £3 annual licence on ex-indentured Indians in Natal. Indian traders and businessmen are sometimes accused of being so busy with those matters directly concerning themselves that they have no time for looking into their poorer brethren's misfortunes. If there is even a grain of truth in the accusation now is the time to show of what stuff they are made. The abolition of this unjust and cruel imposition offers a fine opportunity for all those who are not directly affected by it, to show that they are capable of putting their energy into an effort which would be entirely unselfish. In doing so they would earn the gratitude of thosewho are not able to help themselves, and the blessing of God would be their reward.

We wish our readers, one and all,

A HAPPY NEW YEAR

Indian Opinion , 30-12-1911

99. FAMINE

We give prominence, this week, to the report of the state of famine which prevails in Western India at the present time[1]. We have our difficulties in South Africa, but thank God, cruel famine is not our portion. The Indians of South Africa have shown in the past that they could rise to the occasion in assisting their brethren in India who were suffering from earthquake or famine [2]. A fund has been started in our columns which has now reached over £100, but we feel that this sum represents but an item of the amount it is possible to raise in South Africa. The Mahomedan community are showing great sacrifice in subscribing several thousands of pounds in aid of the sufferers in the Italo-Turkish war. We trust that they will be none the less generous in subscribing towards the relief of the famine-stricken people of India. The Hindu, Parsee and Christian members of the community, having had no such drain upon their resources as the Mahomedans

[1] The report said there was great scarcity of food and fodder in the Bombay Presidency and that the plauge had in addition broken out in the States of Kathiawar. Nearly a third of the cattle population would need to be fed out of public charity. For the district of Ahmedabad alone the funds required were estimated at Rs. 1 lakh. For earlier references to the famine by Gandhiji, *vide* " Famine in India", 11-11-1911 & 9-12-1911 and also letters to Dr. Mehta, 24-9-1911, 10-10-1911 & 11-11-1911.

[2] Following the 1905 earthquake in Northern India, *Indian Opinion* started an Earthquake Relief Fund; *vide* "Earthquake in India", 13-5-1905 & "Letter to Kaikhushroo and Abdul Huk", 17-5-1905.

have recently had, can make it their special mission to push forward the collection of funds for this worthy cause.

Indian Opinion , 6-1-1912

100. MR. POLAK AT THE NATIONAL CONGRESS

Mr. Polak's strenuous work has already commenced in India. He never knows what it is to rest when duty calls him to work. The resolution[1] about the indenture system to which he, with Messrs Chintamani[2] , Manilal Doctor and others, spoke is of the greatest importance and a step in the right direction. It is a crown to his past work. He shares with Mr. Gokhale the credit of bringing about a termination of the supply of indentured labour to Natal. The Congress, no doubt inspired by him, has followed the logical result of its policy by asking the Government of India to abolish the system of indenture altogether. It now remains for the Government of India to end a system which is but a form of veiled slavery.

Indian Opinion , 6-1-1912

101. JOYFUL NEWS

The announcement[3] made by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale that he proposes to visit South Africa during next summer will fill every Indian heart with joy. Mr. Gokhale is no stranger to the Indians of South Africa. By his great work in our behalf he has endeared himself to us all. Mr. Gokhale is, therefore, assured of a royal welcome. And we doubt not that he will be warmly received by the leaders of European society. Mr. Gokhale's intended visit can only do good in every respect.

Indian Opinion , 6-1-1912

[1] The Indian national Congress at its Calcutta session, held in December, 1911, passed a resolution condemning the system of indentured labour and urged the Government to introduce legislation wholly abolishing it. *Indian Opinion*, 6-1-1912; *vide* also 2nd footnote of "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", 8-12-1911.

[2] Sir Chiravuri Yajneshwar Chintamani (1880-1941); journalist; Editor, *The Leader*, Allahabad; for some time Minister, U. P.

[3] H.S.L. Polak, in the course of his speech on the South Africa Resolution of the Indian National Congress, held in December, 1911, at Calcutta, announced that Gokhale had expressed his desire to visit South Africa during the following year in order to study the situation on the spot. *Indian Opinion*, 24-2-1912.

102. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE

JOHANNESBURG,
January 10, 1912

EXPRESS
HONOURABLE GOKHALE
POONA

COMMUNITY DELIGHTED YOUR DECISION VISIT US[1] WE ASSURE YOU WARM WELCOME.

CACHALIA
CHAIRMAN, ASSOCIATION

From a copy: File No. 45. Courtesy: National Archives of India

103. LETTER TO G.K. GOKHALE

TOLSTOY FARM,
LAWLEY STATION,
TRANSVAAL,
January 12,1912

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

It is difficult to give you an idea as to how delighted we all were to read the announcement[2] that you were coming here very shortly.

I hope that you will give ample notice of the date of your coming !

If it is at all possible, do you not think that it would be better if you could come here on your way to London? You could then study our question on the spot and materially assist us in London. And I am vain enough to think that your stay here will result in your taking with you to London much better health than you would otherwise *Vide* also letters to Gokhale, pp. 176 & 195. *Vide* also letters to Gokhale[3] pp. 176 & 195.

[1] *Vide* "Joyful News", 6-1-1912.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] *Vide* also letters to Gokhale, 30-10-1911 & 8-12-1911.

The Union Parliament will now be sitting and the promised draft & bill may be published any day[1].

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 3771

104. SMALLPOX IN JOHANNESBURG

The Johannesburg papers are full of the smallpox scare. We are sorry to have to admit that, on this occasion, we are the culprits. That some Indian children had smallpox is not a matter for anxiety. A spasmodic outbreak of diseases may be taken as inevitable in any community. But our crime consists in the Indians concerned having concealed the outbreak. The whole community will have to suffer for the crime of an individual.

Happily the leaders are whole-heartedly co-operating with Dr. Porter[2] in stamping out the disease. But the leaders will be powerless unless individuals are ready and willing to listen to them and help them to help themselves.

We consider that the opposition, stubborn though it was, to the Asiatic Registration Act, was nothing compared to the opposition that the community must, if it is to progress, offer to its own erring members. Passive resistance can be as effectively applied within as without. Only, when it has to be applied within it is far more difficult. But then a real passive resister will not—cannot flinch in the face of difficulties, however serious they may be.

It is a common charge against us that we are an insanitary people and without scruples when it is a matter of cheating authorities by way of concealing diseases or misleading them. The concealment in Johannesburg has given a handle to our enemies. Let the community beware lest it place itself in the wrong by blinking at the wrong doing of its own members. It is being watched in South Africa as, perhaps, it is not anywhere else. The watching may be turned to good

[1] The second session of the Union Parliament was scheduled to begin on January 26, 1912. The first reading of the Bill took place on January 30. *Indian Opinion*, 13-1-1912 & 3-2-1912

[2] Dr. C. Porter, Medical Officer of Health, Johannesburg

account by our so behaving as to give occasion for no adverse remarks.

Indian Opinion , 13-1-1912

105. INTERVIEW TO "THE EVENING CHRONICLE"

[JOHANNESBURG,
January 15, 1912][1]

An *Evening Chronicle* man interviewed Mr. Gandhi on the questions of trading licence, the smallpox outbreak, etc.

Asked as to the particular objections to the Municipal Ordinance[2], Mr. Gandhi replied:

The objections we take to the draft Ordinance are to the control being given to Municipalities over a certain class of trading licences, without even the right to appeal;[3] to the reimposition of the disqualification as to the municipal franchise;[4] and to the qualification as to Indians and other Asiatics being engaged in bakeries, etc.[5]

The first and third of these are innovations; the second is an old grievance,[6] but I think the British Indians are bound to protest against it each time it is revived or reasserted in legislative form. Indians naturally hope that some day or other a prejudice, which has little justification, will die out, and having that as their goal it is felt that they cannot allow renewed attempts to perpetuate discriminating legislation to pass by without protest.

[QUESTION:] And the provision for Asiatic bazaars,[7] Mr. Gandhi—are these not

[1] The Gujarati translation in *Indian Opinion* mentions the date, but not the English section.

[2] For sections affecting Asiatics, *vide* Appendix "Transvaal Draft Local Government Ordinance, 1911: Extracts Affecting Asiatics", 10-6-1911.

[3] The reference is to Section 91 which invested the Town Council with the power to refuse trading and hawking licences without right of appeal.

[4] Section 114

[5] Section 92; *vide* also "What to Expect from the Imperial Government", 23-12-1911.

[6] In the Transvaal, legislation to deprive Indians of the municipal franchise was sought to be introduced as early as 1903 and again in 1904; *vide* "On the Position in the Transvaal", 18-7-1903 and "What is a *Coolie*", 21-5-1904.

[7] Section 66 empowered the Town council to open new Bazaars or close existing ones; *vide* Appendix "Transvaal Draft Local Government Ordinance, 1911: Extracts Affecting Asiatics", 10-6-1911. The first legislation of this kind was Milner's Bazaar Notice; *vide* "British Indians in South Africa", 12-4-1903.

among those to which your people object?

[GANDHI:] O yes! A protest has also been lodged against these. It is true that the sections dealing with Bazaars are merely enabling sections, and the British Indians cannot be compelled to reside in these Bazaars, but the spirit is unmistakable; the desireis to relegate Asiatics to Bazaar, and I am sure that any time any such attempt is made, it will be opposed by them.

SMALLPOX

But how about the smallpox outbreak, Mr. Gandhi, and the hiding of victims by Asiatics? Does not this suggest that for the protection of Europeans some such step is necessary?[1]

That is a very fair question. We have undoubtedly among us black sheep, and we pay the penalty for their wrongdoing, but the public have the generous testimony of Dr. Porter that the leaders of the community whole-heartedly co-operated with him in bringing to light the cases that had been hidden, and his acknowledgment that probably, without their assistance, he would not have been able to unearth these case. You will perhaps recollect that, when evidence was being laid before the Insanitary Area Expropriation Commission, medical testimony was given to the effect that any neglect of sanitation that existed among British Indians, or the others, was not to be successfully dealt with by segregating them to inaccessible Bazaars, or to places which would not lend themselves to effective supervision of the public control. The proper method of dealing with the trouble was to let their movements remain unfettered, but to effectively enforce sanitation by-laws, and if the by-laws were insufficient, to make them wide enough to cover all kinds of cases.

I can say from personal experience, extending over 18 years, that this is the best [*sic*], and the only, smallpox scare. Just imagine what would have happened if Indians were living four or five miles away, with perfunctory supervision, such as must be when they are living in out-of-the-way places. Every case of smallpox successfully concealed—even from the leaders of the community—and it would have taxed Dr. Porter to the utmost to avoid the spread of the contagion. I am quit sure that segregation will never succeed.

What I hope will happen is that the general body of Europeans will, in time to come, take just as much interest in the welfare of their

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

Indian fellow-citizens as in their own, that they will make due allowance for any special weaknesses that may exist among them, and will also insist upon their becoming better citizens from day to day.

IMPERIAL INTERFERENCE

Questioned as to his view of the right of the Home Government to interfere to have the draft Municipal Ordinance revised, as Lord Emmott, in reply to a question in the House of Lords recently indicated had been done,[1] Mr. Gandhi held that they were quite within there rights in doing so.

In fact we take the view that the attitude of the Imperial Government has been over-cautious, and that they have erred rather on the side of the Union Government. It must be remembered that the Union is still very young and that the Imperial Government has a great responsibility to the Indian peoples. I have just been reading an extract from an English paper, which should interest you. It is stated there that one of the principal reasons for King George's visit to India was to strike the imagination of the people of the self-governing colonies so that they might realize its importance, and that it was entitled to consideration equally with other great dominions of the Empire.

Indian Opinion , 27-1-1912

106. THE PLAGUE

We have every reason to hope that the plague which broke out at the Point will not spread in the Borough of Durban. There has been no fresh case since Tuesday, and we believe that the Port Health Officer and the Medical Officer of Health are doing their utmost to prevent further outbreak. The deaths of one European and one Coloured man show that it is a matter which concerns all residents, and the Indian leaders have placed themselves in the right attitude by at once forming a committee to work with the Public Health Department. It is only by being perfectly straight and above-board that such matters can be successfully dealt with, and, by a mutual understanding between the Indian Community and the Corporation, should a serious

[1] Answering a question by Lord Lamington in the House of Lords on December 6, 1911, Lord Emmott had said that the draft Municipal Ordinance had been referred to a Select Committee of the Municipal Council whose report would not be ready until after January the following year when they were due to meet again. *Indian Opinion*, 6-1-1912.

outbreak, unfortunately, occur, the Indian residents need have no fear but that everything humanly possible will be done for their welfare.

Indian Opinion , 20-1-1912

107. SMALLPOX IN JOHANNESBURG

More searches have been conducted this week following the [outbreak of] smallpox. Owing to the Indians' habit of concealing the patients for as long as they can, the Health Department has to expend much patient effort in carrying out the searches. A committee of leaders, including Mr. Cachalia, Imam Saheb[1] and others, has been working tirelessly to assist the Department. In every case that is detected the patient is removed to hospital for treatment. Further cases occurred in the family of the Malay whose case was the first to be detected and who succumbed to it later. Whites who used to patronize Indian dhobis and greengrocers now refuse to deal with them. Business has,on the whole, suffered greatly.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion , 20-1-1912

108. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

[About *January 20, 1912*][2]

CHI. JAMNADAS[3],

Your answer to Dorabji that you would reply to him only if he addressed you as 'gentleman' was perfectly right. And you were also right in not addressing him as 'Sahebji', though I have some doubt

[1] Imam Abdul Kadir Bawazeer; an Indian of Arab Descent who settled in South Africa; Assistant Priest of the Hamidia Mosque in Johannesburg and Chairman of the Hamidia Islamic Society; actively participated in the satyagraha campaigns of 1908 and 1913; settled at Phoenix after Gandhiji left South Africa and later jointed him at the Sabarmati Ashram at his invitation. For his decision to offer satyagraha in 1908, *vide* "Letter to *The Star*", 18-7-1908 and for his arrest for hawking without licence.

[2] Jamnadas Gandhi went to South Africa in July 1911 and staying first at Phoenix, went to the Tolstoy Farm Where he stayed upto December 14, 1912. Gandhiji has noted in his Diary for the year 1912 that orabji arrived at Tolstoy Farm on January 20, 1912. Probably the conversation mentioned in the letter took place during a railway journey from Durban to Johannesburg before January 20, 1912, or from Johannesburg to Durban after January 20, 1912.

[3] The youngest of the four sons of Gandhiji's cousin, Khushalchand Gandhi.

about its propriety. Still, the spirit in which you refused to say 'Sahebji' was right. When such things are being discussed, it is advisable for one to run away from the place. Personally, I have found from experience that the best course is to remain quiet and say nothing. At the time you heard that comment in the train, you would have done well to say nothing whatever. When strangers who do not know us, talk such things among themselves, why need we intervene?

We should keep a soft heart towards such persons and believing that they do not know what they are saying, have compassion for them. Even if one cannot do that, at least we should not despise them. We should take a lesson from what they are saying and consider how careful we must be before finding fault with the other person and how we should remain uninterested when anyone finds fault with a person whom we do not know. Dorabji prattled all those things under the influence of drink. And those two Muslims said what they conscientiously believed. So why should they not have said what they did?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33814

109. LETTER TO E.F.C. LANE

[JOHANNESBURG,][1]
January 29,1912

DEAR MR. LANE,

I suppose I owe it to your usual courtesy that I am in possession of a copy of the *Gazette Extraordinary* containing the Immigration Bill[2]. I understand that the Central News Agency has not yet got a supply of this number of the *Gazette.*

I see that the Bill has been somewhat altered from the copy that I saw now nearly a month ago. I do not know whether it is General Smuts' intention to make the changes[3] I have already submitted are

[1] In "Diary, 1912" (p. 366), Gandhiji mentions he was in Johannesburg on this date.

[2] The Union Immigrants' Restriction Bill of 1911 (Vol. X, pp. 516-28) was dropped in April,1911; *vide* Appendix "Lane's Letter to Gandhiji", 21-4-1911. This reference is to a new Bill drafted to meet Indians' objections; for extracts, *vide* Appendix "Extracts from Immigrants' Restriction Bill (1912) and Orange Free State Constitution", 3-2-1912. It was shown to Gandhiji on December 22, 1911, before being gazetted, when he met Lane; *vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to Minister of Interior", 21-12-1911. Further changes which were the immediate occasion for this letter had evidently been made since.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to E.F.C. Lane", 7-4-1911.

necessary. Sub-Sections (f)[1] and (g)[2] of Section 5 are a complete innovation, and, in my opinion, subversive of principles of justice. That a man should prove his domicile to the satisfaction of an Immigration Officer, who may not have a legal training or a judicial mind, seems utterly absurd, nor can I see the slightest reason why he should be the arbiter to decide as to whether a particular woman, whom I claim to be my wife, and a particular child whom I claim to be mine are my wife and child or not. This innovation disturbs the existing legal position.

Similarly, Section 7 will debar educated Indians in the Transvaal, for instance, from entering Natal on passing the existing education test.[3] This, again. will disturb the legal position, and will be a manifest injustice. It is one thing to have an almost impossible education test for checking oversea immigration, and another thing to impose that test for interprovincial migration. I draw attention to the fact that last year's Bill did not disturb the existing position.

Lastly, Section 25, sub-section 2, is an improvement on the three year rule that was laid down in the draft you were good enough to show me. It is still an exceedingly hard requirement. I do think that those Asiatics in South Africa who are at present domiciled should be able to claim as a matter of right permanent certificates of domicile, and not be at the mercy of an Immigration Officer as to whether they

[1] Section 5 (f) defines persons who are not prohibited immigrants and can enter the Union consistent with section 4 which sets out the categories of prohibited immigrants. Every would-be immigrant would have to pass a dictation test in a language of the immigration officer's choice under Section 4(a) (p. 221 and Appendix XIII) and further satisfy the official that he had not become a prohibited immigrant—that is, if he was re-entering, having either been deported or left the Transvaal.

[2] Section 5(g) vests is the immigration officers the right to demand proof of relationship from women and minor children who claimed right of entry on the ground of being wives and children of Asiatics who had established this right. These powers were vested in the officials by Act 3 of 1906 which amended the Immigrants' Restriction Act (Act 30 of 1903). Giving judgment in the Nathalia case, Mr. Justice Dove Wilson of the Natal Bench of the Supreme Court admitted that the Immigration Restriction Officer had been given "apparently unfettered discretion." *Indian Opinion*, 3-2-1912. The immigration officers were further entitled to satisfy themselves that the wives were not prohibited immigrants. *Vide* also "Indian wives", 8-7-1911 and "A Shocking Case", 23-9-1911.

[3] Section 7 implicitly denied freedom of interprovincial movement to Asiatics already residing in the Union. If they wanted to go to another province they had to pass the stiff Union immigration education test.

should get such certificates or not. It is true that the clause is only permissive, and that nobody is bound to take out certificates, but its effect would certainly be to practically compel, especially the poorer class of Asiatics, to go a-begging for these certificates, and then take with them documents fixing an arbitrary period of absence.

I do hope, therefore, that these three points will be satisfactorily settled. Whilst I have conferred with a number of my associates, I have not taken any public action yet and I do not propose to take any until I hear from you as to General Smuts' intention. Will you please, if you conveniently can, wire whether the points raised by me will be favourably considered by General Smuts.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

PS.

After signing my letter to you, I re-read Chapter 33 of the O.F.S. Laws. I see that sub-section 2 of Section 28[1] [of the Union immigration bill] is somewhat differently worded from what it was originally intended to be last year. Whilst those immigrants who by passing the education test may enter the Free State should suffer from the disability to have fixed property registered in their name or to carry on a commercial business or farming, they should certainly not have to make the sworn declaration contemlated in Section 8[2]. By reading the latter part of Section 8, you will understand exactly what I mean.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5601.

[1] Section 28 specifically declares that any Asiatic immigrant who had passed the Union dictation test would still be subject to Orange Free State Laws which required visiting Asiatics to register afresh and articles 7 and 8 of which prevented Asiatics from settling in the Colony for purposes of farming or trade. Gandhiji's objection was to any endorsing reference in the Union Bill to Orange Free State Laws which were based on colour discrimination; *vide* "Letter to J. J. Doke", 17-3-1911 & 17-3-1911. He had objected to the registration requirement; *vide* "Letter to E.F.C. Lane ", 7-4-1911 and "Interview to *Cape Argus*", 30-3-1911.

[2] This sought to prohibit any Coloured person from settling in the Orange Free State for the purposes of farming or carrying on trade.

110. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR[1]

[LAWLEY,]
January 30,1912

TO

INTERIOR'S PRIVATE SECRETARY
CAPE TOWN

POSTED LETTER[2] YESTERDAY IMMIGRATION BILL, BUT VIEW FACT FIRST READING TODAY WISH DRAW URGENT ATTENTION GENERAL SMUTS THAT SECTIONS 5, 7, 25 DISTURB LEGAL POSITION, BECAUSE THEY MAKE FINAL OFFICER'S DECISION REGARDING RIGHTS DOMICILE, WIVES AND CHILDREN,MAKE EDUCATION TEST FOR INDIANS ENTERING CAPE OR NATAL FROM TRANSVAAL, STIFFER, AND MAKE UNCERTAIN RIGHTS NATAL INDIANS RECEIVE PERMANENT DOMICILE CERTIFICATES. MOREOVER SECTION 28[3] SEEMS CONTEMPLATE DECLARATION UNDER SECTION 8, CHAPTER 33 BY EDUCATED IMMIGRANT ENTERING FREE STATE. AS I HOPE THESE POINTS WILL RECEIVE GENERAL SMUTS; FAVOURABLE TTENTION HAVE DISSUADED PUBLIC ACTIO AWAITING TELEGRAPHIC REPLY. PLEASE ALSO SAY WHEN SECOND READING.[4]

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5604; also photostat; S. N. 5619.

111. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR

[LAWLEY,]
February 1, 1912

WHILE THANKING GENERAL SMUTS' LONG REPLY[5], REGRET IT IS UNSATISFACTORY. FEEL SURE INDIANS WILL NEVER BE SATISFIED WITH BOARD'S CONTROL, ESPECIALLY VIEW PAST

[1] To this Gandhiji received the following reply: "Thirtieth January. Your telegram recieved. Second reading of Immigration Bill is not until 8th February.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] *Vide* 8th footnote"Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 29-1-1912.

[4] The second reading did not take place until May 30.

[5] *Vide* Appendix "Telegram from Secretary for Interior to Gandhiji", 31-1-1912.

EXPERIENCE BOARDS. SURELY EXISTING LEGAL RIGHTS WILL BE DISTURBED BY DEPRIVING SUBJECT OF RIGHT APPEAL JUDICIAL TRIBUNALS. NOR IS CONTENTION REASONABLE THAT EXISTING RIGHTS NOT DISTURBED UNDER SECTION 7, AS TODAY EDUCATED INDIANS MIGRATE NATAL OR VAPE ON PASSING PRESENT TEST. HOW CAN THEY BE EXPECTED EXCHANGE THIS LEGAL RIGHT FOR ADMINISTRATIVE DISCRETION TEMPERED THOUGH IT MAY BE WITH JUSTICE? FOR NATAL INDIANS TO ACCEPT TEMPORARY PERMITS OF ABSENCE IS TO CLEARLY CHANGE PRESENT LEGAL STATUS. DOMICILE CERTIFICATES AT PRESENT ISSUED CONTAIN FULL DESCRIPTION HOLDER AND INCAPABLE CHANGE HOLDERS WITHOUT DETECTION. FEEL CERTAIN GENERAL SMUTS DOES NOT EXPECT DISTINGUISHED INDIANS MAKE DECLARATION UNDERSECTION 8 FREE STATE LAW. THEY WILL BE UNABLE TRADE OR FARM WITHOUT DECLARATION, WHICH IS MEANT TO BE MADE BY THOSE ONLY WHO WISH SETTLE FREE STATE FOR DOMESTIC SERVICE. GIVING DECLARATION AGAINST WHOLE SPIRIT STRUGGLE UNDERTAKEN SOLELY FOR SELF-RESPECT. HOPE THESE REASONABLE ALTERATIONS WILL BE GRANTED, AND AWFUL REVIVAL OF STRUGGLE AVERTED. AM REFRAINING PUBLIC ACTION[1] PENDING REPLY[2].

GANDHI

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5608, also photostat: S. N. 5619

112. A NOTE[3]

[On or after *February 2, 1912*]

Urgent

Address of British Indian Union is Miller's Bldgs., 67, Hanover St., Cape Town.

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5611.

[1] Gandhiji was as good as his word; these telegrams were not even published in *Indian Opinion* of the time.

[2] *Vide* footnote of "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 6-2-1912.

[3] Written on a telegram which Gandhiji had received from Makadam Woodstock, Cape Town, dated February 2, which read: "Second reading immigration Thursday. Resolutions wanted by wire. Public meeting of Union Sunday."

113. THE NEW IMMIGRATION BILL

The Union Immigration Bill which is partly intended to satisfy the Transvaal Indian passive resisters is now out. It is in some respects a better bill than that of the last year. But it does not quite fulfil the promise made by General Smuts. General Smuts has undertaken not to disturb the existing legal status throughout South Africa in any general bill designed to meet passive resisters.[1]

The existing legal position is among other things that, at any rate at the Cape and the Transvaal, domicile and the rights of minor children and wives of non-prohibited immigrants are dependent on a decision of the highest tribunal of justice; that British Indians of the Transvaal passing the ordinary simple education test can easily enter the Cape or Natal; and that Indians of Natal have until lately received certificates of domicile as a matter of right upon proving domicile. Under the New Bill the Immigration Officer constitutes the highest court of justice to consider the rights of domiciled Asiatics and their wives and children; educated Indians of the Transvaal have to pass the stiffer test under the new Bill on entering the Cape or Natal and the Natal Indians will be unable to demand certificates of domicile as a matter of right.[2] Now these are new disabilities which passive resisters cannot be expected to accept. We hope, however, that these points arean oversight and that General Smuts will rectify the defects in Committee. The Free State difficulty is being met with as was suggested last year.[3] Only care will have to be taken that an Indian finding his way to the Free State as an educated immigrant is not called upon under Section 8 of Chapter XXXIII of the Free State Constitution to make any declaration contemplated by it. If these points are cleared up, we fancy that passive resisters will be completely met.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 29-4-1911.

[2] "A Notice to Every Indian", published in the Gujarati columns of *Indian Opinion*, 3-2-1912 said: "Indians residing in Natal or the Cape who do not possess proper certificates of domicile are advised not to leave their Provinces for the time being".

[3] *Vide* "Interview to *Cape Argus*", before 30-3-1911 and "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 7-4-1911.

There still remain general objections by Natal[1] and the Cape. They will be legitimately able to complain of the new education test, and at least be entitled to some guarantee that a certain number of educated Indians from India will be permitted to pass the education test.

The Bill even then will leave many things from an Asiatic standpoint in an unsatisfactory condition. Restriction on interstate immigration will be a cause of great grievance.[2] And the disabilities of lawful residents as to ownership of landed property, etc., in the Transvaal or the Free State must be a menace to the well-being of Indians and other Asiatics, who, after all, form part of the South African nation that is in process of formation.

Indian Opinion ,3-2-1912

114. LATE MR. ABDOOLLA HAJEE ADAM

One of the greatest figures in the Indian community of Natal is no more. Mr. Abdoolla Hajee Adam Jhaveri[3], of the well-known firm of Dada Abdoola and Co., breathed his last on Monday last, at the age of 58 leaving a widow, together with the whole Indian communityand not a few of his European friends to mourn after him. With the deceased was linked the political as also the commercial life of the Indians of Natal. He was one of the first independent Indian settlers of Natal, having almost immediately followed the late Mr. Abobaker Amod[4]. Mr. Abdoolla Hajee Adam, together with his partners,

[1] A meeting of the Natal Indian Congress held on February 4 passed resolutions protesting against: (a) the Union immigration bill and the wide powers vested under it in the administration; (b) the discretion vested in the Immigration Officer to decide the highly technical question of domicile and that of marriage and parentage. The meeting demanded the right of Natal Indians to permanent domiciliary certificates issued by the Government. It protested against the education test, the restriction on interprovincial immigration and the rescinding of domiciliary rights of Natal Indians who could prove three years' residence in the Province.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 29-1-1912 and telegrams to the Private Secretary to the Minister of the Interior, 30-1-1912 & 1-2-1912.

[3] He invited Gandhiji to South Africa in 1893 to represent his case to an English lawyer.

[4] Abubaker Amod Zaveri; one of the early Indian settlers in the Transvaal, a leading merchant of "silk and fancy goods" and the only Indian to own landed property in the Transvaal. He sent indentured Indians in distress back to India in his ships free of charge and even helped them with food and money *en route*. The transfer, on his death, of his property, which was acquired before Law 3 of 1885 came into force, to his heirs became the subject of much controversy and legislation.

probably owned the largest Indian business throughout South Africa during the last decade of the past century. His firm had at one time probably no fewer than fifteen branches, their transactions with England, Germany and India running into thousands of pounds sterling. He was the first Indian to have gone in for ship-owning in South Africa, he having bought the *Courland* and the *Khedive*. Mr. Abdoolla Hajee Adam's political ability was as great as his business talent. He was the President-founder of the Natal Indian Congress. His oratorical powers in his own mother tongue were of no mean order. Though his knowledge of English was all picked up, he could carry on with ease a sustained argument in English. He used to surprise his European friends by his resources in argument and apt illustrations which he used to draw upon for enforcing his point. He headed many a deputation to the Natal Government, especially during the late Sir John Robinson's[1] premiership. Though he was ailing, he took a most active and prominent part in the boycott of the Coronation celebrations when he spoke to the crowds that surrounded him with his old fire. No memoir of Mr. Abdoolla Hajee Adam would be complete that did not refer to his religious zeal. His greatest pleasure in life was probably to engage in a religious and philosophical discussion. He lost no opportunity of placing before his arguers the beauties of the religion of the holy Prophet of Arabia.

We tender our condolences to the late Mr. Abdoolla Hajee Adam's family.

Indian Opinion , 3-2-1912

115. NEW IMMIGRATION BILL[2]

SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT CLAUSES AND COMMENTS

The Bill will apply to the entire Union of South Africa.

SECTION 3

The Governor-General is empowered to appoint an Immigration Board to help the Government.

[1] (1839-1903); first Prime Minister and Colonial Secretary of Natal, 1893-7.

[2] For extracts from the Bill in English, *vide* Appendix Extracts from Immigrants' Restriction Bill (1912) and Orange Free State Constitution", 3-2-1912.

COMMENT

We may demand that our people should be represented on this board.

SECTION 4(A)

A person, who is unable to write out 50 words, to the satisfaction of the Immigration Officer in the language which he chooses,will be prohibited from entering the Union.

COMMENT

These may include the Arabic and the Sanskrit languages. Even so the clause is severe. The Transvaal [Indians], however, cannot protest against it; but Natal and the Cape should protest. Also, we cannot hope that this clause will be amended. But an arrangement can be made to ensure the entry of a specified number of educated Indians to meet our needs.

SECTION 4(C)

If a foreign Government sends any [adverse] information about a person, he shall be prevented from entering [the Union]

COMMENT

This section appears to be meant for agitators.

SECTION 5 (f) & (g)

A person who wants to enter [the Union] by virtue of his [pre-War] domiciliary rights and whose wife and children also wish to enter [by virtue of his right of entry] should prove their rights to the satisfaction of the [Immigration] Officer.

COMMENT

Everyone should oppose this section. There is a similar section in the Natal [law]. The Government now intends to introduce this in the Cape and the Transvaal [laws]. Even a satyagrahi cannot accept this section. We should certainly be given the right to appeal to courts of law [against the official's decisions]

SECTION 6

A prohibited immigrant is liable to three months' imprisonment. There is no [provision for a] fine. And he can be deported.

SECTION 7

If an Indian from one Province of the Union wishes to proceed to another, he must pass a fresh [dictation] test.

COMMENT

Under this section it may happen that a few educated Indians from Natal or the Cape may occasionally enter the Transvaal; but it will be very difficult for educated Indians from the Transvaal to go Natal or Cape. For, instead of the existing test which is relatively easy, they will have to pass the new test which is more severe. Everyone concerned should oppose this section. This can never be acquiesced in. Even the satyagrahis cannot afford to remain silent [on this point]

SECTION 8

No prohibited immigrant can carry on trade or own land in the Province [where his residence is unlawful], or in any part of the Union.

COMMENT

The effect of the section will be that a Cape Indian, who does not have the right to reside in Natal, cannot own land or carry on trade in that Province.

SECTION 23

The onus of proving that one is not a prohibited immigrant will lie on the [intending immigrant].

COMMENT

All such laws contain a similar section.

SECTION 25 (I)

The Government reserves powers to issue temporary permits on such conditions as it may choose.

COMMENT

Under this section the Government can permit the entry of persons whose services it considers essential.

[SECTION 25(II)][1]

The [Immigration] officer, in his discretion, may issue to any person who fears that he may forfeit his [domiciliary] right, a permit entitling him to return [to the Province or the Union] after a specified period.

COMMENT

A similar offensive section is contained in the Cape law, but it is a new one for Natal. It is not obligatory on one to take out this permit; but the poor may be [imprisoned and] sorely harassed [if, on their return, they are unable to establish their domiciliary right]. Natal should vehemently oppose this section. The satyagrahis may do so too; but it cannot be asserted just yet that they should fight. One does not forfeit one's right if one does not take out this permit and one can leave Natal after making [other] careful arrangements.

SECTION 28(I) &(II)

Act 36 of 1908 (the second Asiatic Act) will not apply to those, who enter (the Union) after passing the [dictation] test. But they will nevertheless be subject to Sections 7 & 8 of the Orange Free State Laws[2].

COMMENT

Under this section, an Indian who has passed the test gets an unqualified right to reside in all the four Provinces [of the Union]. He will not have to register himself. He cannot, however, own land in his own name in the Transvaal. In the Orange Free State, he cannot own land, neither can he carry on trade or farming. Satyagrahis cannot ask for more than this. Another campaign, and that on a big scale, should, however, be launched to secure the rights to own land, etc. For this it is essential that Indians should acquire the requisite strength. That will take time. We have still much to learn and to suffer yet.

This law contains 29 sections in all, but it is unnecessary to summarize the rest.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion , 3-2-1912

[1] This power was, in fact, vested in the Minister (Appendix Extracts from Immigrants' Restriction Bill (1912) and Orange Free State Constitution", 3-2-1912), but Gandhiji here assumes that, in practice, it would be delegated to the Immigration Officer.

[2] Chapter 33 of the Orange Free State Constitution

116. TELEGRAM TO BRITISH INDIA UNION[1]

[LAWLEY,]
February 3, 1912

TO
BRITISH INDIAN UNION
67, HANOVER STREET
CAPE TOWN

PASS RESOLUTIONS PROTESTING AGAINST DISCRETION OFFICER REGARDING PROOF DOMICILE WIFE CHILDREN NEW EDUCATION TEST FOR PROVINCIAL MIGRATION ALSO NEW TEST FOR OVERSEA IMMIGRATION RETENTION CAPE PRACTICE LIMITING PERIOD ABSENCE AND FREE STATE SECTION REQUIRING DECLARATIONS EDUCATED IMMIGRANTS. SUGGEST YOUR SEEING ADVOCATE ALEXANDER WHO KNOWS POINTS DIFFICULT GIVE TEXT RESOLUTIONS WIRE.[2]

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5612

117. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI PATEL

Maha Vad 2 [*February 4, 1912*][3]

DEAR SHRI RAOJIBHAI,

I have your letter. I have not changed my mind but, in view of our father's refusal to permit you to go to Phoenix, it is my duty to say 'No' to you. You have a like duty. If, however, your father wants you to do something that is positively wrong, I can take you into Phoenix to help your escape that. When placed in a moral dilemma, one is bound to hold one's peace if parents forbid one to follow a certain line of action; if pressed, however, to do something sinful, one should refuse to obey. Prahladji's is the only example that can be

[1] *Vide* "A Note", on or after 2-2-1912.

[2] A meeting of the Cape Indians held on February 4 passed unanimous resolutions on the lines suggested in the telegram. *Indian Opinion*, 10-2-1912.

[3] This letter comes after that of November 29, 1911 (pp. 191-2), to the same addressee. *Mahatma Gandhijina Patro* gives the last paragraph as a separate letter, which it assigns to *Maha Vad* 2 (corresponding to February 4 in 1912). It gives the rest of the letter under *Phagan Sud* 2 (corresponding to February 20 in 1912). Our source, *Gandhijini Sadhna*, gives the whole letter without a date. This letter is given here under the earlier date.

cited in this connection. One may, moreover, submit to any amount of physical suffering at the bidding of one's father. As for suffering to the self, there can be none.

You can conform to [the requirements of] morality while engaged in business. That will be education for you and a preparation for the kind of life that you wish to live. You will be, moreover, rendering a service to others through your business if you can practise absolute honesty in your dealings. You should accept a fixed price from every customer, one which would permit a reasonable margin of profit. You ought not to sell articles which you would not use yourself. You should be civil to the customers, [though] you need not flatter them in order to promote sales. If you have any assistance, you should treat them as if they were your brothers. All this should be easy enough. You should not feel that, by being in business, you will be exposing yourself to temptations; it is not as if your took to business in order to make dishonest gains. You will be joining business merely in deference to your father's order, so that your should find it quite easy to maintain uprightness. You say that you are not in love with money. One may feel unhappy in a situation which one dislikes, but one will not corrupted. I do not think Prahladji found it in any way difficult to live as a devotee of Vishnu in the midst of *rakshasa*[1]; for he utterly disliked the *rakshasa* way of life.

One can be true to one's pledge even when made to sit on the *shuli*[2]. A true pledge is the one that is kept even at such moment. If uprightness has become natural to us, has become a part of our being, it can certainly be kept, and it is the duty of us all to cultivate it to that extent. I pray that your may succeed in your noble aspiration.

With due regards from

MOHANDAS

From *Gandhijini Sadhana* (Gujarati); Raojibhai Patel; Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad; 1939

[1] Demons

[2] A sharpened iron stake on which a condemned person was impaled

118. RESOLUTIONS AT MEETING OF CAPE BRITISH INDIAN UNION[1]

CAPE TOWN
February 4, 1912

RESOLUTION I

That this meeting, having heard the address of the President and other speakers, and having been informed of the contents of the Immigration Bill, hereby endorse[s] unanimously the view taken by the President that the rights of the Indian community are placed in serious jeopardy. The meeting expresses its disapproval of the Bill as it stands, and authorizes the President and Secretary, on behalf of the whole Anglo-British Indian community, to petition Parliament, and to take such further, or other,steps as may be necessary to bring about the modification of the Bill in the particulars and on the lines suggested in the President's address, members of the meeting individually promising their strenuous support and assistance wherever possible.

RESOLUTION II

This meeting protests against the arbitrary nature of the new dictation test, both for oversea immigrants, as well as for persons domiciled in one province and wishing to enter or reside in another province.

RESOLUTION III

This meeting protests against the proof of being a domiciled person or being a wife or child of an immigrant of domiciled person,

[1] These resolutions were unanimously passed at "an excellently attended" meeting of the Union held on February 4, 1912 under the chairmanship of the President, E. Norodien, and were forwarded to the Senate and House of Assembly along with petition containing Cape Indians' objections to the Union Immigration Consolidation Bill; *Indian Opinion*, 17-2-1912. They were presumably drafted by Gandhiji, for, two days before the meeting was to be held, one Makadam from Cape Town informed him by telegram of the date of the meeting and asked him to wire the draft resolution. On this telegram as received Gandhiji made an urgent memorandum; *vide* "A Note", on or after 2-2-1912. For the text of Makadam's telegram. *vide* footnote of "A Note", on or after 2-2-1912.

being subject to the satisfaction of an immigration officer instead of being left to the Court.

RESOLUTION IV

This meeting protests against the retention of the Cape practice, limiting period of absence in the case of persons desirous of proceeding out of the Union for a temporary purpose.

RESOLUTION V

This meeting protests against the section of the Bill requiring declarations from educated immigrants who enter the Orange Free State.

Indian Opinion , 17-2-1912

119. TELEGRAM TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR[1]

[LAWLEY,]
February 6, 1912

STILL A WAIT WIRE AS PROMISED YOURS 2ND INSTANT.

From a photostat to the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5616

[1] In reply to Gandhiji's telegram of February 1, the Ministry of Interior had said: "2 Feb. Hope to be able to reply to your wire or 1st February on Monday." S.N. 5615. Gandhiji mentions in his "Diary, 1912" that he drafted this telegram but did not send it. He, however, received a telegram the next day; *vide* Appendix "Telegram from Secretary for Interior to Gandhiji", 7-2-1912.

120. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR[1]

TOLSTOY FARM,
LAWLEY,
February 7, 1912

PRIVATE SECRETARY
INTERIOR
CAPE TOWN

BEG THANK GENERAL SMUTS WIRE[2] EVINCING CONCILIATORY TONE. IN CIRCUMSTANCES EXPLANATION POSSIBLE AVOID RENEWAL PAINFUL CONFLICT IF BILL AMENDED SECUR EXISTING LEGAL RIGHTS INTER-PROVINCIAL MIGRATION EDUCATED ASIATICS AS TO WHICH WIRE QUITE SILENT. WILL STILL POSTPONE PUBLIC ACTION PENDING REPLY WHICH I HOPE WILL BE SATISFACTORY.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5614; also Photostat: S. N. 5619

121. TELEGRAM TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR

[LAWLEY,]
February 8, 1912

TO
INTERIOR

WHILST THANKING GENERAL SMUTS FOR PROMISE OF SATISFACTORY ASSURANCES REGARDING INTERPROVINCIAL MIGRATION, I VENTURE STATE THAT NO ASSURANCES SHORT OF RETENTION EXISTING LEGAL POSITION WILL SATISFY PASSIVE RESISTERS. ALSO VENTURE RECORD THAT MY SUBMISSION HITHERTO HAS BEEN PURELY IN TERMS PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT. RESERVE RIGHT CRITICIZE BILL AS TO MANY OTHER OBJECTIONABLE FEATURES.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5618; also photostat: S. N. 5619

[1] To this Gandhiji received the following reply the next day: "General Smuts appreciates your reply and especially the spirit in which you have approached the difficulties surrounding the question of immigration. He is considering the matter of interprovincial migration to which you refer, and hopes shortly to be able to give you satisfactory assurances regarding the Provinces of Natal and the Cape." S. N. 5617.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Telegram from Secretary for Interior to Gandhiji", 7-2-1912.

122. THE IMMIGRATION BILL

The Natal Indian Congress and the Cape British Indian Union have lost no time in holding public meetings[1] to protest against the Immigration Bill that was to have been read second time last Thursday. The resolutions[2] ought to command acceptance. The Bill designed not only to carry out the policy of almost entire Asiatic exclusion, but, if it is passed in its present form, it will very largely interfere with vested rights, and Asiatics generally will find themselves at the mercy of Immigration Officers.

General Botha's declaration[3] made in England, and repeated elsewhere: that the Union Government do not desire to molest the resident Asiatic population of South Africa, will be falsified. It is more an Asiatic Expulsion Bill than an Immigration Consolidation Bill, as its authors have entitled it. The rights of residence of domiciled Asiatics and those of their wives and children are very seriously threatened, and the movement of educated Asiatics as between Natal and the Cape as also the Transvaal on the one hand and the Cape and Natal on the other, is to be considerably restricted by the new Bill. So that not a single section of the Asiatic community has been left untouched. Moreover Natal and the Cape have a special grievance in that educated Indians of the status of clerks and assistants will be practically prohibited immigrants under the arbitrary education test now proposed. The remarks[4] of *The Star* in its leading article of the

[1] *Vide* 4th footnote of "The New Immigration Bill", 3-2-1912 and "Resolutions at Meeting of Cape British Indian Union", 4-2-1912.

[2] *Ibid*

[3] General Botha, who was visiting England in connection with the Imperial Conference, made a Press statement in London on May 23, 1911, expressing gratification over the Provisional settlement of May 20. Reuter further reported that "he was sure that the Indians would do their part to help the Government to make things as pleasant as possible for them. They could be fully assured that the Government entertained no hostility towards them, but must always remember that the Government was determined not to admit more, except as provided in the agreement. He hoped that the Indians both in Africa and in India would realize that Mr. Smuts had great difficulty in obtaining the concessions he had already made."

[4] *The Star*, commending the education test prescribed under the Transvaal Immigrants' Restriction Act of 1907 (which judged the ability of a would-be immigrant to write and sign, in any European language, an application for permission to enter the Colony) condemned the Bill as going "beyond the bounds of either equity or expediency" and said that the education test prescribed under it gave "the most arbitrary power" to Government officials. That there was a Board of Appeal

31st ultimo on this portion of the Bill are very apposite. Let us hope that the timely protest of the Natal Indian Congress and the British Indian Union will receive a sympathetic hearing from the Government, and an ugly situation that must otherwise inevitably arise be avoided.

Indian Opinion, 10-2-1912

123. FIRST INSTALMENT OF FAMINE RELIEF FUND[1]

We have sent Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta a cheque for £100, being our first instalment towards the Famine Relief Fund. Any suggestions by contributors have also been forwarded to Dr. Mehta. Dr. Mehta is not unknown among the Indians here. His intention is to visit the famine areas and have his own contribution expended on the spot. We feel, therefore, it is only through him that the best use can be made of the collections.[2] Equally, the instructions which we have received or may receive in future about the disbursement of the money received for specific purposes or in specific areas can be best implemented through him.

This would also seem to be the right occasion to clarify some points which have been raised about the famine fund that is being collected. To contribute to this fund we have started and to entrust us with its utilization as has been done is one method. We have also received some instructions for disbursements independently of the *Indian Opinion* fund; to have the money thus sent through us is another method. Those who intend to send money anywhere on their own may do so. Our only aim must be to see that those who realize the seriousness of the famine do send help to the home country. There can be no question of anyone taking special credit to himself.

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was of no use for the reversal of the decision of an "arbitrary officer—possibly with anti-Semitic tendencies", after many days, would be no recompense for the loss of money and the inconvenience caused. There was no provision in the Bill that the language selected by the immigration officials would be one of those commonly spoken in the immigrant's country or among his race. This, said *The Star*, was "Hertzogism run riot" and enabled "a satellite Minister of Justice to exclude an Englishman because he cannot pass a fifty words' test in the Taal". *Indian Opinion*, 10-2-1912.

[1] *Vide* "Famine in India", 11-11-1911 & 9-12-1911.

[2] The subject of the famine figured often in Gandhiji's letters to Dr. Mehta; *vide* 24-9-1911, 10-10-1911 & 11-11-1911.

We know that ours is a modest fund. The leaders [of the community] may, if they are prepared to assume the responsibility, undertake collection on a larger scale; it would do them credit if they did so. If no collection on any large scale is to be undertaken, we believe every Indian ought to give his mite to our fund.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 10-2-1912

124. LETTER TO E. F. C. LANE

February 15, 1912

DEAR MR. LANE,

I am still awaiting the promised reply[1] in connection with the Immigration Bill. I take this opportunity of reiterating what I have briefly submitted in my telegrams

As to sub-sections (f) and (g) of Clause 5, if the interpretation is as given in your telegram[2], to the effect that the jurisdiction of the courts is not ousted, it will be entirely satisfactory. In view, however, of the decision of the Natal Bench,[3] I am very nervous as to the Clause, in spite of the assurance given in your telegram. I am, therefore, taking legal opinion myself.[4]

As to Section 7, passive resisters can have nothing to complain of, if the present legal position, namely, the ability of educated Asiatics to enter Natal or the Cape from the Transvaal by passing the education tests provided by the respective laws of the Provinces is retained.

As to the Free State, if the reading of your Law Officer is correct, that the declaration under Section 8 of Chapter 33 of the Orange Free State Constitution will not be necessary, this serious

[1] To "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 8-2-1912.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Telegram from Secretary for Interior to Gandhiji", 7-2-1912.

[3] In the case of *Mahomed Moosa Nathalia* v. *Principal Immigration Officer*, the Natal Division of the Supreme Court refused to interfere with the decision of the Immigration Officer who had, in his discretion, ruled that the evidence produced to show that young Nathalia was the rightful son was inadequate. Leave to appeal from the Natal Bench of the Supreme Court was refused by an Appellate Court. *Indian Opinion*, 3-2-1912, 10-2-1912 & 17-2-1912.

[4] *Vide* the following item.

difficulty will have been solved, but as it is a mater of vital importance, we are taking legal opinion on it too.

Lastly, if domiciled Indians of Natal cannot, as a matter of right, claim to have domicile certificates issued to them, passive resisters cannot consistently object to Section 25(2)[1] of the Bill. Iwould, however, take the opportunity of pointing out that, if one thousand certificates were confiscated,[2] it entirely proves my statement that the certificates that have been issued could not be transferred without detection. That a thousand certificates have been confiscated between, I suppose, 1896 and now, shows that sixty Indians per year were ready to demean themselves by using certificates of domicile not their own, and that, being detected, they received a punishment fitting their crime.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

EARNEST F. C. LANE, ESQ.
CAPE TOWN

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5625

125. LETTER TO R. GREGOROWSKI

JOHANNESBURG,
February 15, 1912

DEAR MR. GREGOROWSKI,

I enclose herewith statement for your Opinion on the new Bill. You were good enough to give me your Opinion, which, as I told you, proved most valuable to me, on the Bill that General Smuts attempted to carry through the House last year.[3] I enclose for your assistance, in addition to the statement for your Opinion, an extract giving the necessary Sections from the Orange Free State laws, as also your

[1] The Section required, inter alia, that Asiatics who wished to leave the Union temporarily had to take out a domiciliary certificate and in order to return were required to establish their identity in any manner prescribed from time to time; *vide* Appendix "Extracts from Immigrants' Restriction Bill (1912) and Orange Free State Constitution", 3-2-1912. The argument is that, if domiciliary certificates cannot be demanded as a matter of right, identification as required in Section 25(2) should not be peremptory.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Telegram from Secretary for Interior to Gandhiji", 7-2-1912.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to R. Gregorowski", 2-3-1911.

Opinion given last year, the Bill and the Natal and Cape immigration laws.

Yours sincerely,

R. GREGOROWSKI, ESQ.
PRETORIA

[ENCLOSURE]

STATEMENT FOR COUNSEL'S OPINION

Counsel's opinion is requested on the following points arising out of the Immigration Bill now before the Union Parliament:

1. Section 5,[1] sub-sections (f) and (g) exempt from the prohibition clause wives and minor children of lawful immigrants and domiciled residents, as also domiciled persons themselves, who satisfy an Immigration Officer as to their rights whether as wives and children or as domiciled residents.

   Does this Clause remove the ordinary jurisdiction of the courts of law? And, if it does not, to what extent, if any, is the jurisdiction of the courts ousted [?] Will the decisions of Immigration Officers be subject to Appeal in the same manner as those of magistrates' courts? Is the exemption clause in any way affected by Section 7[2]?

2. Several British Indians are today in Natal or the Cape by reason of their having passed the education tests under the immigration laws of the respective Provinces.

   In what way are they protected under the Bill? Do they become both domiciled and entitled to reside in their respective Provinces by reason of their having entered them by passing the education test, or are they protected only because their rights have not been taken away specifically by the Bill?

3. What is the position of those who entered Natal or the Cape by passing the education test, but who are at present temporarily absent from their respective Provinces?

4. The present laws provide for the protection of the rights of those who are domiciled in the respective Provinces, but the Bill protects the rights of those only who are both domiciled and entitled to reside in the Union or any Province.

[1] *Vide* 4th and 5th footnotes of "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 29-1-1912; also Appendix "Extracts from Immigrants' Restriction Bill (1912) and Orange Free State Constitution", 3-2-1912.

[2] *Vide* 6th footnote of "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 29-1-1912.

What is the exact meaning of the additional, if any, restriction imposed by the clause underlined?

5. Section 7 says that the person referred to therein may at any time be required to pass that (that is, the education) test.

Could a man who has once, after the passing of the Bill, passed the education test, be challenged again, although he may prove that he has passed the test?

Is a person who passes the test under the Bill liable to be examined again upon passing from one Province to another, although he may be in a position to prove that he has already, upon entering the Union, passed the test?

6. Section 25 of the Bill gives the Minister discretion to issue a permit to any person who is lawfully resident in the Union desiring to absent himself therefrom.[1]

What will be the position of those who fail to take out such permits? Will it be enough protection for them if, rather than take out these permits, they, for instance, appear before a Notary Public, make a declaration as to their residence and then leave, and, on return, submit the declaration filed in the protocol of the Notary in proof of their right of domicile and residence?

7. Section 28 of the Bill, sub-section 2: those who enter the Free State by passing the education test are subject in all respects to the provisions of Articles 7 and 8 of Chapter 33 of the Orange Free State Constitution.[2]

Now Section 8 provides, among other things, that those who are permitted by the State President to settle in the State shall make and sign a sworn declaration before the Landdrost to whom they make the application in which they shall declare that they will neither directly nor indirectly carry on a comericial business, etc. Could such a declaration be required from immigrants entering the Free State Province under the new Bill.

8 Will Counsel please generally compare the present Bill with the laws it replaces, and state how far in other respects it is more restrictive of the liberty of the subject?

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5626-7

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Extracts from Immigrants' Restriction Bill (1912) and Orange Free State Constitution", 3-2-1912

[2] *Vide* 8th and 9th footnotes of "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 29-1-1912.

126. THE £3 TAX[1]

The judgment[2] given by a full bench of the Supreme Court, which appears in another column, would show that every Indian who has entered into a period of re-indenture or contract of service under the provisions of Act 19 of 1910 is liable to pay the annual licence of £3 for the current year. This means that all those who were induced to re-indenture by reading the Government's circular issued in April, 1910, have been cruelly deceived.[3] Whatever the intention of the Act may have been, the fact remains that perhaps thousands of Indians have entered into fresh contracts of service, fully believing that they would be relieved thereby from both arrears and current payments. Not only did the poor ignorant people believe this, but the Government departments also acted upon that interpretation. Some months ago the Law Department seems to have issued instructions to prosecute all those who had not paid the current licence. A test case[4] was brought before the Umlazi Court in which it was decided that, during the existence of the contract of service, payment should be

[1] *Vide* "The £3 Tax", 11-11-1911.

[2] On February 9, 1912, the National Division of the Supreme Court dismissed N. Mudaly's appeal against the Lower Tugela Divison Magistrate's decision declaring Mudaly liable to the payment of the ú3 tax. The appellant argued that Act 19 of 1910 protected him from this payment since he had entered into a contract of service on the expiry of his indenture. *Indian Opinion,* 17-2-1912.

[3] In its letter of November 18, 1911, to the Secretary for Justice, the Natal Indian Congress had referred to the circular of April 1910, issued by the Protector of Immigrants in a number of Indian languages (footnote 2 on p. 181) and claimed freedom for re-indentured Indians and others who had entered into civil contracts from payment of the current licence fee. It also proposed to agitate for the abolition of the tax altogether. It suggested that the Government might levy a genuine revenue tax thus compensating itself for the losses. *Indian Opinion,* 2-12-1911. In his reply of February 2, 1912, the Acting Secretary for the Interior asked for more information about the re-indentured men who had been prosecuted for non-payment of the licence fee.

[4] Vencatachale Naik was brought before the Umlazi Court some time during November, 1911, charged with the non-payment of the £3 fee. The Magistrate decided that the current licence fee should not be demanded from him—presumably because he had entered into a civil contract. Following this some "forty to fifty summonses" which had been issued were withdrawn. The Umlazi case was cited by the Natal Indian Congress in its letter of February 17, 1912 to the Acting Secretary for the Interior. *Indian Opinion,* 24-2-1912.

suspended. Consequently forty or fifty summonses which had been issued were withdrawn. The Government seems to have decided to abide by that decision, for nothing further was heard of it. Now, it appears, the Magistrate of Lower Tugela Division has given his decision to the effect that the Current licence must be paid, and the Supreme Court has upheld that decision. This brings the matter to a head and we shall shortly see what the intention of the Government is. If the Minister of Justice has a spark of humanity in him, he will at once instruct the Courts not to prosecute, for he knows well enough that many if not all of the people affected by the judgment have been trapped into fresh contracts of service by the inducements held out in the late Natal Government's circular. We understand that already the machinery of the law is being set in motion and that summonses are being issued.

There is also an element of farce about the whole business. We happen to know that, if a free Indian who has managed to escape payment of the tax wishes to return to India, no one will prevent his going, even though he may owe arrears amounting to twenty pounds. Yet this same Government rewards the man who has been inveigled into a contract of re-indenture by making him pay ú3 per annum so long as he is willing to slave away for the benefit of planters and other employers! Surely it does not need a very wise man to see both the absurdity and injustice of such procedure?

On the same page as the judgment will be found a letter from the Secretary for the Interior in reply to the Natal Indian Congress's letter of November last, which was addressed to the Minister of Justice. The Congress requested that all those who had acted upon the words of the circular should be relieved from payment, Now, after waiting three months, what is the result? The Minister of Justice, whose department was responsible for the issue of summonses against these poor Indians, ignores the request and sends the letter to the Department for the Interior which asks of the Natal Indian Congress a question which the Minister of Justice was better able to answer . In fact, when inquiry was made at the Court from which the summonses were issued, the information was refused and the advice given to obtain such information through the Secretary for Justice!

So we have the spectacle of a great Government using its tremendous power to tyrannize over poor defenceless Indians—men and women who have given their very life-blood in making Natal a

prosperous country. It is the duty of the Natal Indian Congress to boldly defend these poor people. Whatever reply it chooses to send to the Minister for the Interior, it must at all costs see to it that those who are helpless shall not seek in vain for succour.

Indian Opinion, 17-2-1912

127. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

February 17, 1912

MY DEAR MILLIE,

What a horrid thing that you should get chicken pox! Henry says it was due to the sin of going to Delhi even after the event. Whatever the cause, I am sorry you were not able to attend the Congress sittings. It was quite like you to have turned your illness to good account by reading on things Indian. I hope that the illness has not left you weaker. These illnesses if properly treated invigorate patients in the end.

Waldo is evidently having a good time of it here.

I hope you are not worrying about Amy. To worry where we cannot help if possible is to render us still more helpless for future service.

Of the bill and the prospects of the struggle, you will learn from my letter to Henry.

Manilal, Ramdas and Devdas are with me at present. They are all well. Manilal will be going to Phoenix shortly. Hoosen too has been paying a visit to the Transvaal. He proposes to leave for India shortly.

I have now 25 boys on the Farm 8 Mahommedans, 2 Parsees and the balance Hindus. Of the latter, 5 are Tamils, one Calcuttan and the rest Gujaratis. They are divided into at least four standards. Medh, Pragji and Jamnadas assist me at school. Gujarati, Hindi and Tamil are being taught besides English. I shall find it somewhat difficult to manage the school if and when Desai and Medh go to India.[1] I want to teach the boys sewing. Mrs. Vogl has been coming once a fortnight for the purpose. Poor woman. She has her old trouble coming on again and again. The doctor has now forbidden railway travelling. So the class may be interrupted. But I have learnt sufficient to continue

[1] Pragji Desai and Surendrarai Medh left for India in the second week of March 1912, vide "Speech at Farewell Meeting", 9-3-1912.

the class for some time. Sandal-making is going on regularly. I make my own shirts now. Ramdas, Devdas and I wear shirts of my own make. Mrs. V. is quite proud of her new pupil. But I fear she conceals the true fact when she credits me with having turned out an excellent shirt. I have just finished Devdas's knickers too. During the past six months, we must have made nearly 50 pairs of sandals ≈ mostly for the Farm boys. Some have been made to order also. I sent one pair to Maud and if you give me the tracing of your right foot, holding the pen perpendicular I shall do myself the honour of making a pair for you. Mrs. Vogl and Miss Schlesin have theirs.

I think I gave you the school hours. Rise at 6 a.m., breakfast 6.45 a.m. home-made bread toasted or fried in ghee and cereal, coffee or milk (condensed I am sorry) and stewed peaches 7.15 manual work some hoeing, some in the kitchen, some wood-chopping and others sandal making and sewing10 a.m. bell for bathing, 11 a.m. to 12 noon, dinnerrice and curry and bread, fruits if any and some cereal preparation for those boys who are experimenting in saltless diet. 12 to 1 boys read for themselves. 1 to 4.30 schooling. 4.30 to 4.45 drill. 5.30 p.m. supper-wholemeal porridge, milk, stew and coffee and bread. 7 to 8 some religious reading and hymns Gujarati, Hindi and English. Religious reading from Mahommedan scriptural books, Parsee and Hindu. At 8 p.m. boys are fee to go to bed. I sleep with them on the open verandah. Mrs. Gandhi too sleeps on the open verandah with the boys who cannot be accommodated on the verandah where I sleep. Devdas shares Mrs. Gandhi's bed as of old. Boys do their own washing. On the Farm they wear nothing but the shirts and trousers. If it is cold, they wear jerseys and jackets too if they wish to. There is hardly any compulsion used. Appeal is always made to their good nature for making them do anything. All boys must be vegetarians and non-smokers at least on the Farm. No boys may come from outside to have tuition only. Parents pay 3/- per month for board. They pay also 10/- for books. The 10/- should last six months. And now you have the whole picture of the school. They are taught English, arithmetic and their own mother tongue. History, geography, etc., are taught incidently.

With love,

BROTHER

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

128. LETTER TO CHANCHALBEHN GANDHI

[LAWLEY,]

Maha Vad 0 [*February 18, 1912*][1]

CHI. CHANCHAL,

I had a letter from you after many months. I should like you to be less lazy about writing letters.

I can very well understand your natural desire to be with Chi. Harilal. I do not at all wish to come in your way in this. Live, both of you, as you wish and do what you like. I can have but one wish: you should be happy and remain so.

Personally, I do not like your giving Kanti [2] Mellin's Food. I think it a sin to use any foreign goods in India, and the use of food products is all the more distasteful to me now. I cannot help feeling that all such products are polluted. Even when they do not contain animal fat, alcohol, etc., I have noticed that they are not entirely free from contamination by them, since foreigners do not object to the use of these. We should know that our children grew well enough in the olden days without these foreign foods; hence my advice is that we too should do without them. Wheat, well roasted, ground fine and mixed with a little *gur* and water will serve the same purpose as Mellin's Food. We can prepare a number of things to replace it.

It is easy to see that your presence there and that of Rami and Kanti must be a great comfort to Chhabalbhabhi[3].

Personally I don't se how Ba or I can get away from here just now.

Manilal is here at present. He will leave in the middle of Phagan[4]. Jamnadas, too, is here. I am busy at present with the affairs of the school. There are 25 pupils, eight of them Muslims, two Parsis and the rest Hindus. Among the last, five are from Madras and one from Calcutta, and the rest are Gujaratis. Jamnadas and others help with the reaching.

[1] This letter appears to have been written on the same day as the succeeding one.

[2] The addressee's son

[3] Chanchalbehn Gandhi's mother

[4] A month in the Vikram calendar corresponding to February- March in the year 1912.

My loving kisses to Ramibai and Kantibhai. Ask Bali to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 9529

129. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

[LAWLEY,]

Maha Vad 0 [*February 18, 1912*][1]

CHI. HARILAL,

I have had a letter from you after many months, You say you try to be regular, but you seem to have failed in your effort, and the fresh hope you held out to me has not been fulfilled. Since you wrote last, there have been two posts without a letter from you.

Chanchi has expressed a desire to stay on with you and asked for my opinion. I have replied to her,[2] and given her other news as well. She will send the letter on to you. If she does not, ask for it. I do not therefore repeat [its contents]. I have no objection to your living together. Do what you like and live as you deem proper.

Your staying with Sheth Miankhan is all right. Press him once again to accept some rent. I shall speak to Chandabhai when I meet him.

Why Chanchi [should have] the same disease as Ba. . .[3]

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand. S. N. 9541

[1] This appears to have been written in 1912. In that Year *Maha Vad* 0 corresponds to February 18.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] Further pages of this letter are missing.

130. LETTER TO R. GREGOROWSKI

February 20, 1912

DEAR MR. GREGOROWSKI,

I thank you for your letter. I shall await your opinion with very considerable interest. I quite agree that the draft is an awful humbug, and one of the ways I can fight it successfully is to get your valuable opinion. It would not do for me to use your last year's opinion[1], as there are some new points at least in the present Bill, and as I have to use your opinion both here and in London in support of the contentions I have already advance, in so far, of course, as your views are in agreement with mine. I, therefore, hope that you will give me your opinion on all the points I have raised without referring to last year's opinion, except in so far as you may use it for comparing the present Bill with last year's draft[2].

I am,

Yours sincerely,

R. GREGOROWSKI, ESQ.
PRETORIA

From a Photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5630

[1] *Vide* "Letter to R. Gregorowski", 2-3-1911.
[2] *Vide* Appendix "Immigrants' Restriction Bill.

131. TELEGRAM TO REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS

[Before *February 21, 1912*][1]

TO

ASIATICS

PRETORIA

SEEN CORRESPONDENCE REGARDING VISITING PERMITS FOR M. SALY KANJEE JEEWANBHAI LALJEE MEGHJEEBHAI I THINK YOU HAVE REFUSED APPLICATION THROUGH NOT KNOWING FULL CIRCUMSTANCES. PARTIES NOW LOURENCO MARQUES. THEY REPRESENT I UNDERSTAND HIS HIGHNESS AGA KHAN AND ARE VISITING CENTRES . . .[2] ASIATIC KHOJAS . . .[3] TRUST YOU WILL GRANT AUTHORIZE YOUR AGENT LOURENCO MARQUES ISSUE VISITORS PERMITS THREE WEEKS UPON APPLICATION.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5659

132. LETTER TO E. F. C. LANE

[LAWLEY,]

February 24, 1912

DEAR MR. LANE,

I have now received Counsel's Opinion on the Bill.[4] According to it:

(1) the Bill does oust the jurisdiction of the lower courts and also of the superior courts, except by way of mandamus.[5]

[1] The visit of the representatives of the Aga Khan to Johannesburg and Tolstoy Farm is referred to in a news- item in *Indian Opinion*, 2-3-1912; it also mentions that they bought a pair of sandals at the Farm.. Hussein Dwad, in a Gujarati article entitled "A Diary of My Tour" (*Indian Opinion*, 27-7-1912) mentions having met one of these persons during his travels in Zanzibar. Gandhiji, who refers to them briefly as " Zanzibar Memans", records their visit in his entry for February 21 in " Diary, 1912", and a ten-shilling credit entry, which represented the prices of the sandals, figures in his accounts for the day. This telegram, which seeks permission for their entry into the Transvaal, was evidently sent, if at all, some time before that date.

[2] Some words here are illegible.

[3] *Ibid*

[4] *Vide* letters to Lane and Gregorowski, 15-2-1912 & 15-2-1912.

[5] In the interpretation of Section 5 (f) and (g) of the Union Immigration Bill of 1912 ; *vide* "Letter to R. Gregorowski", 15-2-1912.

This will certainly curtail the legal rights of the Transvaal Indians, if not of the others.

(2) It may be that proof of domicile will be required of Transvaal Indians before they can bring their wives or children, although they may be duly registered, and apart from proof of registration.[1]

I am sure such is not General Smuts' intention. The matter should, in my opinion, be placed absolutely beyond doubt.

(3) Educated Asiatic immigrants will be liable to make the declaration required by Section 8 of Chapter XXXIII of the Orange Free State Constitution.[2]

All the points referred to by me, it will be admitted, are of the highest importance as well from the passive resistance standpoint as from that of common justice. I trust, therefore, that the defects will be remedied.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

ERNEST F. C. LANE, ESQ.
CAPE TOWN

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5634

133. MISREPRESENTATION

We publish in another column the reply of the Colonial Office to the representation made by Lord Ampthill's Committee in the Nathalia case[3]. Mr. Harcourt has been given to understand that the new Bill now before the Union Parliament will prevent "a recurrence of such a case". Mr. Harcourt, therefore, declines to take any action in the matter. Mr. Harcourt's statement that the new Bill will preclude a recurrence of such a case proves the hardship of the case. He has

[1] The reference is to Section 25(2).

[2] The reference is to Section 28.

[3] For details of the case, *vide* "A Shocking Case", 23-9-1911, "A Shameful Act", 30-12-1911 and 4th footnote of "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 15-2-1912. The SABI Committee, London, wrote to the Colonial Office on January 19, 1912, regarding the inability of the Natal Courts to interfere in Nathalia's case. The Colonial Office reply, dated February 5, 1912, said: "Mr. Harcourt understands that the recurrence of such a case is precluded by the terms of the Immigration Bill now before the Union Parliament and he does not propose to take any action in the matter." *Indian Opinion,* 9-3-1912.

obviously based his letter on information given to him by the Union Ministers. Now, everybody who knows anything of the new Bill knows that, in its present form, it does nothing of the kind. It simply exaggerates the existing evil. The Nathalia tragedy was possible because the Immigration Officer had autocratic powers. These are further increased by the new Bill. If in cases such as this, wherein misrepresentation can be easily exposed, the Union Government do not hesitate to misrepresent matters to the Imperial Government, who can tell what misrepresentations they have made in matters which will never see the light of day?

Mr. Harcourt's refusal to intervene in the individual case of the boy Nathalia is not easy to understand. The injustice is admitted. Surely he could, therefore, ask the Union Government, we shall not say, to exercise mercy, but to undo the mischief done by their own officers. Nathalia's sacrifice on the altar of an anti-Asiatic policy will rankle in the breast of every Indian in South Africa. If we cannot act more decisively it does not show that we feel the injustice any the less for it; we simply betray our weakness. But neither the Imperial Government nor the Union Government dare trade upon our weakness with impunity. A community that has once wielded the weapon of passive resistance may be relied upon to do so again on due occasion.

Indian Opinion, 9-3-1912

134. MRS. JUSSAT'S CASE

If Mrs. Jussat is deported,[1] the Transvaal British Indian Association, the Hamidia Islamic Society and, to some extent, all the Indians in South Africa will lose face.

[1] Ebrahim Mahomed Jussat, a registered Transvaal resident, had two wives, Rasool in Standerton and Fatima in India. When Rasool left him, he wanted to bring Fatima to South Africa. The Barberton Magistrate disallowed Fatima's claim to entry on the ground that, since Rasool had already acquired domicile as Jussat's wife, his first wife could not also claim entry. Fatima's appeal to the Transvaal Bench of the Supreme Court was dismissed on February 13, 1912, by Justice Wessels who, in his judgment, referred to his earlier ruling in Adam Ismail's case (footnote 1 on p. 120 and "Johannesburg", pp. 122-3) that a Muslim could bring in only one wife and this, in Jussat's case, was Rasool whom he had not divorced. *Indian Opinion*, 24-2-1912.

The Government's reply[1] to Mr. Cachalia is entirely unsatisfactory. It only goes to prove that no assurance by the Government can be relied on. The law is the last word.

General Smuts had clearly said that, notwithstanding Justice Wessels' judgment, he would grant relief in cases of hardship.[2] The community can only interpret this to mean that, whenever anyone can establish that he has contracted a second marriage in conformity with the law of his religion and wants to bring in his second wife, he should not be prevented from doing so.

General Smuts writes that there are no extraordinary facts about this case [which would warrant interference by the Government]. What extraordinary facts does he require? It is a fact important enough for us that Mrs. Jussat is a legally married wife of Mr. Jussat.

What does Mr. Jussat propose to do? Will he let his wife be deported and himself stay on in the Transvaal, without a word of protest, for the sake of his wretched belly? What do his friends propose to do? Will they look on, bangles on wrists,[3] while the police deport Mrs. Jussat, in this awful manner, for no fault of hers?

What does the Association propose to do? Does its duty end with sending telegrams and letters? Does the Hamidia Islamic Society intend to sit still? Will not its office-bearers realize that Islam is being insulted?

The issue is not whether Mr. Jussat is poor or rich, good or bad. He brought his wife in and the Government has made ready to push her out. That is [tantamount to] pushing us all out.

Let not Natal or the Cape feel that they do not have a similar law in those Provinces

We hope that Mrs. Jussat is a brave woman and that, if deported,

[1] Both Cachalia and Bawazeer had written to Smuts on February 15, 1912 protesting against Justice Wessels' judgment. On February 29, 1912, the British Indian Association sent a telegraphic reminder to Smuts who, on March 2, 1912, replied that he was unable to find "such exceptional circumstances in Mrs. Jussat's case as to warrant his intervention". *Indian Opinion*, 24-2-1912 & 9-3-1912.

[2] On July 10, 1911, Smuts had, in a letter to the British Indian Association and the Hamidia Islamic Society, assured them that the Judge's ruling in the case of Adam Ismail regarding the immigration of Muslims' wives had been noted and that cases involving hardship brought to his notice would receive consideration. *Indian Opinion*, 22-7-1911.

[3] Gandhiji often used this image; *vide*, for instance, "Lecences in Natal", 2-5-1908.

she will re-cross [the frontier] to join her husband and will, if necessary, go to gaol, for doing so.

We hope that Mr. Jussat will keep up the spirit that would be worthy of an Indian husband and that, accepting poverty for the sake of his wife, he will suffer whatever hardship is necessary; then, he will secure relief.

We trust Mr. Jussat's friends will encourage him, dip into their pockets if need be, and come forward to secure redress from the Government.

We trust the Association and the Hamidia Islamic Society will remember their previous records and fight on till they have succeeded in securing relief.

Let everyone remember that we have, first and last, only one remedy—satyagraha and nothing else.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-3-1912

135. SPEECH AT FAREWELL MEETING[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
Saturday, March 9, 1912

Messrs Medh and Pragji have rendered great service to the community by especially coming over to the Transvaal from Natal and going to gaol. Even after their release, they did not, impelledby love of money, seek any means of making it, but stayed on at Tolstoy Farm and helped in running the school and in its other activities.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-3-1912

[1] The meeting was held in the Independent Church Hall, Johannesburg, to bid farewell to Surendrarai Medh and Pragji Khandubhai Desai—both satyagrahis—who were leaving for India; *vide* the following item

136. LETTER TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

TOLSTOY FARM,
LAWLEY STATION,
TRANSVAAL,
Phagan Vad 8 [*March 11, 1912*][1]

DEAR SHRI PRANJIVAN,

This letter will be delivered to you by Mr. Surendrarai Medh and Mr. Pragji Desai or by either of them. They are both naturally looking forward to the privilege of meeting you. They have heard much about you from me. If practicable, they want to take up famine-relief work under you while they are there. Both of them are staunch satyagrahis. Mr. Medh has taken a vow to observe *brahmacharya* and devote himself to the service of the motherland for ten years. His letter about this I have sent to you to read. Mr. Pragji also wants to take similar vow. Everything will depend on how his mind works after he has consulted his elders. Mr. Medh, too, will have to consider how far he can keep to his pledge after he has reached Ahmedabad. It is certain that his father will put the utmost pressure on him.

I should like you to send for both of them. If you do, please let them have the railway fare. Both of them live in poverty. They are due to return here before Professor Gokhale's visit.

Bande Mataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 1262

137. THE INDENTURE RESOLUTION

It would have been strange if Mr. Gokhale's resolution in the Imperial Legislative Council at Calcutta calling for entire stoppage of indentured labour had been carried.[2] But it would appear that the elected members almost solidly voted for the resolution. It is, there-

[1] This letter was written after the announcement, made on December 29, 1911, about the projected visit by Gokhale to South Africa and before he actually arrived on October 22, 1912. It could therefore have been written only in 1912. Medh and Desai left for India for a short visit on March 21. *Vide* also the preceding item.

[2] Gokhale's resolution was defeated by 33 votes to 22. *Indian Opinion*, 9-3-1912.

fore, a great moral victory. Mr. Gokhale is not a man to leave off a thing after he has once undertaken it. It is reasonable, therefore, to hope that the system of indentured labour—that remnant of slavery—would end in the near future. We congratulate Mr. Gokhale on his great work. By this, his latest, effort on behalf of a class of his helpless countrymen, he has added greatly to the debt due to him by us.

There seems to be some misunderstanding regarding this resolution. It does not, as some of our readers suppose, alter the position as it exists today in Natal. That is to say, the rejection of this resolution does not undo what has already been done by the Indian Government.[1] Just as recruiting has been prohibited for Natal, the Indian Government has the power, at any time, to put a stop to recruiting for all other Colonies if the treatment of Indians is unsatisfactory. What Mr. Gokhale's motion would have done, if it had been successful, was to have put a stop to recruiting under the indenture system for all the Colonies.

Indian Opinion, 16-3-1912

138. MR. RUTHNUM PATHER

The appearance in our midst of another young Natal-born Indian barrister, fresh from his successful career as a student in England,[2] is an indication that the rising generation of Indians are a force to be reckoned with. Mr. Ruthnum Pather, who was born and brought up in Durban and attended the Higher-Grade Indian School, said, at the reception given in his honour, that he looked forward with pride to the prospect of sharing the community's sufferings, prosperity and happiness. The first of these he will certainly have a full opportunity of sharing; the second depends on what he considers to be prosperity; and the last is an illusive phantom which, if pursued, is never gained, but is rather found in duty faithfully done. Mr. Pather rightly boasts of the ancient civilization of India; and it is well if he keeps this before his mind, for, although we do not wish to disparage

[1] *Vide* 6th footnote of "What has Satyagraha Achieved", 3-6-1911.

[2] While he was in England as a member of the 1906 deputation to the Imperial Government, Gandhiji evinced much interest in Pather's education; *vide* Vol. VI, "Letter to Professor Parmanand", 26-10-1906, "Letter to J. H. Polak", 7-11-19-06, "Letter to Secretary, County School", 17-11-1906, "Letter to Minn E. J. Beck", 27-11-1906 & "Letter to J. H. Polak", 29-11-1906.

brilliancy in educational achievements, we fear that there is a danger of our young men, who have received an education entirely on Western lines, losing sight of their own nationality, their religion, and their mother tongue which is so rich in literature and culture. We extend a hearty welcome to our young friend, and we trust that his return to his native place will prove a blessing to himself, to those who come in contact with him, and to the whole Indian community.

Indian Opinion, 16-3-1912

139. TELEGRAM TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR[1]

[LAWLEY,]
March 20, 1912

TO

INTERIOR
CAPE TOWN

COULD YOU NOW INFORM ME ABOUT IMMIGRATION BILL. HAVE CABLE FROM INDIA INQUIRING ABOUT IT.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the office copy in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5641

140. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[LAWLEY,]
Chaitra Sud 6 [*March 24, 1912*][2]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I had a letter from Chi. Maganlal. I can make nothing of your meeting. Nor can I gather the purport of the minutes. I do not understand why you cannot have your original place on your return. Let me know what the upshot of it all was. I am not writing separately to Chi. Maganlal. I am rather busy with accounts work. In case they do not accept you as manager, they should, it may be suggested, decide what work to assign to you in the press. All the same, you had better remain quiet for the present. Let me know what happens. Given

[1] The Minister replied on the same day that it was "impossible to forecast when the Immigration Bill will be dealt with . . . however, when it is possible to state approximate date will communicate with you". S. N. 5642.

[2] The refefence to the famine fund would suggest that the letter was written in 1912.

patience, this phantom will disappear. I should like to feel sure that you are unperturbed.

The accompanying list of subscriptions to the famine-relief fund sent by Chi. Abhechand[1] is to be published.[2] The cheque has been received here.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5638. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

141. LETTER TO UMIYASHANKAR MEHTA

Chaitra Sud 7, [*March 25, 1912*][3]

CHI. UMIYASHANKAR,

May be I could not quite explain. Condensed milk should not be taken as it is. It should be diluted with hot water and banana should be mashed into it. Try a quarter of a banana in four tea-spoons of milk. Do not be scared. You may continue giving it if it agrees. Banana is a very nutritious food. Mr. Polak's[4] Waldo used to be given a banana and Mellin's Food. Rami is being given bananas.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 1629. Courtesy: Gunavant Umiyashankar Mehta

[1] Son of Amritlal Gandhi, Gandhiji's cousin. Abhechand Gandhi had his business at Tongaat in Natal.

[2] Though the list is not available, it is possibly the one published in *Indian Opinion*, 30-3-1912.

[3] From the contents it appears that the letter was written in 1912; *vide* also "Letter to Chanchalbehn Gandhi", 18-2-1912. *Chaitra Sud* 7 in 1912 corresponded to March 25.

[4] H. S. L. Polak

142. LETTER TO UMIYASHANKAR MEHTA

Monday, [Before *April, 1912*][1]

CHI. UMIYASHANKAR,

Received your letter. The fire in the shop thus resulted in much damage. Fortunately, it has not affected [your] reputation. I am very sad to read about Chhabildas. I can never be agreeable to fixing a betrothal after taking money. Instead, the clearer way would be not to marry at all. Your brothers should also give him the same advice.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Have you not read or not understood what you should eat with the exception of the greens?

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 1632. Courtesy: Gunavant Umiyashankar Mehta

143. PUBLIC LETTER TO RATAN J. TATA

[LAWLEY,]
April 1, 1912

I am ashamed to have to own that I am only now able to fulfil the promise I made to you and to myself in my letter[2] acknowledging your second generous contribution of Rs. 25,000 towards the expenses of the great Passive Resistance struggle that I should write a public letter to you, in which I intended to incorporate an account of receipts and expenditure. The reason for this long delay is that my time has been fully occupied with one thing or another arising out of the struggle which I could not very well postpone, and I did not care to address the letter without giving a financial statement. However, with the zealous assistance of Mr. Sorabjee Shapurjee, the stalwart

[1] From the reference to Chhabildas Mehta's betrothal it appears this was written before April 1912. Gandhiji refers to his wife in his letter dated April 13, 1912; *vide* "Letter to Manilal Gandhi", 13-4-1912.

[2] This letter is not available. Tata's earlier donation of Rs. 25,000 to the Transvaal Satyagrahis' Fund was made in November, 1909; *vide* "Cable to G. K. Gokhale", 19-12-1909. He sent a further contribution of the same value on November 18, 1910; *vide* "Letter to G. A. Natesan", 9-12-1910.

passive resister, I have just finished the account, of which I give you herewith a full summary[1].

You will see, on the expenditure side, "Farm Capital Account". This represents the expense of erecting dwellings on Mr. Kallenbach's farm[2]. The bulk, if not the whole, of it is returnable by Mr. Kallenbach, in terms of the grant of the use of his farm to passive resisters, on its being vacated. The item for *Indian Opinion* has been explained in the previous account rendered in my public letter[3] to the hon'ble Mr. Gokhale. The item "Relief" includes all disbursements made to indigent families of passive resisters and all other help given to them or to their families. All the other items speak for themselves. As to the receipt column, all I need remark upon is that the funds received from Rangoon and London were entirely earmarked for relief purposes, and certain items from India were so earmarked by Mr. Petit. All these instructions have been strictly followed. There are some items in the receipt column included under the heading "Local" which are not, strictly speaking, contributions, but which are either refunds or receipts for disbursements specially made. It also includes boarding-expenses paid by the parents of the boys attending the farm school.

But for the willing assistance rendered free of charge by many a volunteer, the timely assistance of Mr. Kallenbach, and, above all, the readiness with which passive resisters' families fell in with the idea of going to the farm, the expenses would have been much greater.

Before quitting this subject of accounts, I would like to add also that the expenditure shown in the account takes no note of hundreds of pounds raised locally and disbursed by local committees, nor of private collections of which our countrymen will probably never know anything. The financial sacrifice made by the community during the struggle which has extended over a period of four years has been very considerable, and it has been my agreeable experience to notice that those who have continuously gone to gaol for the sake of their and their country's honour have been also the men who have cheerfully spent most in aid of the struggle.

You will observe that there is already a deficit, and I am obliged to fall back upon such resources as are available to me to meet it. It commenced nearly three months ago. Happily, two timely remittances

[1] *Vide* enclosure.
[2] Tolstoy Farm
[3] Of April 25, 1910; *vide* "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", 25-4-1910.

were received from Mr. Petit lately. If no assistance is received from India, and it is not possible to raise subscriptions here, it will be a matter for consideration where the pruning-knife should be applied. Most of the passive resisters' families have withdrawn from the farm, and their husbands or bread-winners have found for themselves means of earning a livelihood, but they all understand that, in the event of a revival of the struggle, they are to return to the farm.

Though the Union Parliament is still sitting, and the Immigration Bill, designed to give effect to the terms set forth in the correspondence[1] that passed last year between General Smuts and myself, has been read a first time, it is difficult to say whether the struggle will be entirely closed this year. The Bill itself is open also to certain objections from the passive resistance standpoint, as it is also from a general standpoint.[2] In my opinion, it does not entirely carry out the agreement[3], but I have great hope that, so far as objections in terms of the agreement are concerned, the Bill will be amended. If it is not in any vital particular, the struggle will most assuredly be revived. But there is also some ground for the fear that the Bill may not be passed during the current session at all, in which case the farm will, in all probability, have to be continued. As you know, the struggle has centred round the racial bar in the Transvaal immigration legislation, and we have consistently opposed it from the very commencement. So long as the Transvaal persists in treating Asiatics as prohibited immigrants because they are Asiatics, so long will the struggle continue. Once that bar is removed, and details into which I need not go, are settled in accordance with the written undertaking, passive resisters will have achieved their purpose. How many and who will actually be able to enter the Transvaal or the Union, as the case may be, is a matter on which passive resisters, as such, have not laid any stress. The number of entrants and the, manner of entry will largely depend upon the general behaviour of the community here and the demand made by India.

Perhaps the most substantial result of the struggle is the

[1] Negotiations by correspondence began in November, 1910 and continued up to May 20, 1911, when the Provisional Settlement was arrived at. Between April 1 and May 20, 1911, Gandhiji communicated with the Minister of the Interior or his Private Secretary on the following dates: April 7, 8, 19, 20, 22 & 29 and May 4, 18, 19 & 20.

[2] *Vide* letters to Lane, 29-1-1912 & 15-2-1912.

[3] Of May 20, 1911

establishment of a school at the farm, which is being conducted by me, assisted until recently by Messrs Medh and Desai, two staunch passive resisters, and assisted at present by a cousin[1] of mine. The pupils number twenty-five, and the desire is not to admit more than fifty. No day-scholars are accepted, and all must remain on the farm. The parents of most of the boys pay £1.10s. per month for their sons' board. The amounts so received are credited in the passive resistance account. No school fees are charged. Manual training is combined with mental but the greatest stress is laid on character-building. No corporal punishment is inflicted, but every endeavour is made to draw out the best that is in the boys by an appeal to their hearts and their reason. They are allowed to take the greatest freedom with their teachers. Indeed, the establishment is not a school but a family, of which all the pupils are persuaded, by example and precept, to consider themselves a part. For three hours in the morning, the boys perform some kind of manual labour, preferably agricultural, of the simplest type. They do their own washing, and are taught to be perfectly self-reliant in everything. There is, too, attached to the school a sandal-making class, as also a sewing-class, the latter under the supervision of Mrs. Vogl, who so successfully organized the Indian Bazaar[2], held under the auspices of the Indian Women's Association last year. I need hardly mention that Mrs. Vogl's work is a labour of love. No paid servants are kept on the farm in connection either with the school or the kitchen. Mrs. Gandhi and Mrs. Sodha, assisted by two or three of the pupils, who are changed every week, attend to the whole of the cooking. Non-smoking, non-drinking and vegetarianism are obligatory on the farm. Mental training is given for three and a half hours at least, consisting of the vernaculars of the respective scholars, English, Arithmetic, and so much of history and geography as may arise from the lessons in English or in the vernacular. The medium of instruction is chiefly the vernaculars, which are Gujarati, Hindi and Tamil. The Tamil tuition, I am sorry to say, is of a very elementary character, there being no good Tamil teacher available. One hour in the evening is devoted to giving the scholars some idea of their respective religions, and, to that end,

[1] This was Jamnadas Gandhi who possibly taught Gujarati. After the departure of Medh and Desai on March 21, 1912, Gandhiji got Jamnadas over to help him with the school; *vide* "Letter to Chanchalbehn Gandhi", 18-2-1912 and "Letter to Manilal Gandhi", 6-4-1912.

[2] *Vide* "Address to Mrs. Vogl", 15-11-1911.

lessons are read from the Mahomedan, Hindu and Zoroastrian Scriptures. Readings from the last have been recently suspended, as two Parsee lads who were at the school have just left it. The classification according to religion to the date of writing this is sixteen Hindus and nine Mahomedans, and the classification according to race is eighteen Gujaratis, six Tamils and one from North India. All the boys attend throughout the hour when the respective readings are given. An attempt is made to inculcate in them the spirit that they are first Indians and everything else after that, and that, while they must remain absolutely true to their own faiths, they should regard with equal respect those of their fellow-pupils. The life on the farm is reduced to the utmost simplicity.

The school is in the nature of an experiment. Though therefore, it may be too sanguine to expect the boys to remain, when they grow up, agriculturists and simple livers, it may not be too much to hope that they will carry into their daily dealings, when they enter upon the battle of life, some of the lessons they are now learning.

The question will be asked how the school is to be continued. It is my desire, so long as I am in South Africa, to continue to devote myself to this work, and not to revert to legal practice, which has been entirely suspended for some time.[1] I should still take my share in what may be called purely political work, which here really is that of making a desperate attempt to earn one's livelihood with honour and dignity.

M. K. GANDHI

[ENCLOSURE]

ACCOUNT

Receipts	*£*	*s.*	*d.*	*Expenditure*	*£*	*s.*	*d.*
Subscription from India including Rs. 50,000 from Mr. Ratan Tata	6723	9	3	Relief for Resisters and their families	2335	1	3
Rangoon	972	0	0	London Committee	1490	6	2
Zanzibar	59	3	6	*Indian Opinion*	1200	0	0
Mozambiqu	50	0	0	Salaries	530	1	3
Mombasa	18	12	10	Travelling expen-			

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Dr. Pranjivan Mehta", 8-5-1911.

Receipts	*£*	*s.*	*d.*	*Expenditure*	*£*	*s.*	*d.*
Delagoa Bay	11	12	0	ses including freight	482	6	11
Tamakan	7	17	4	Rent, etc.	353	19	1
Navisha	2	6	8	Legal Expenses—			
Chinde		15	0	Cape Town, Natal, Transvaal	371	1	3
Chaichai		4	9	Telegrams	121	18	6
Blantyre	1	1	0	Cables	191	9	1
London	159	19	4	Newspapers	154	12	10
Local, including the whole of S. Africa, and boarding fees of scholars and refunds	459	10	1	Stamps	65	12	1
				Stationery	39	13	11
				Exchange on Drafts and Cheques	31	10	9
				Farm Capital— Erection Buildings, Material, etc.	492	11	11
To Balance	43	1	3	Farm Expenses Upkeep	659	8	0
	£ 8509	13	0		£ 8519	13	0[1]

Indian Opinion, 6-4-1912

144. LETTER TO E. F. C. LANE

TOLSTOY FARM,
LAWLEY,
April 4, 1912

DEAR MR. LANE,

I have to thank you for your last telegram[2] regarding the Bill. I see that it has not yet been reached. Could you not tell me whether the Bill is at all likely to be reached this session, or whether it will be abandoned [?] If it is to be abandoned, you will agree that some new

[1] The original, however, has £8509.13.0—evidently a printing error. For mention of the deficit, *vide* "Public Letter to Ratan J. Tata", 1-4-1912.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 20-3-1912.

arrangement will have to be made. May I ask you to give me, if you can, a telegraphic reply[1]?

Yours sincerely,

[M. K. GANDHI]

ERNEST F. C. LANE, ESQ.
CAPE TOWN

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5643

145. LOCATIONS AND DISEASE

In his evidence before the Tuberculosis Commission the other day Dr. Thornton, Medical Officer of Health for the Cape Province, is reported to have said: "Municipal Locations were very bad. With some exceptions, the huts rarely passed any kind of inspection, and very few municipalities gave anything in return for the revenue from the Locations." Other evidence given before the Commission goes to prove that the "civilizing" policy of the more "enlightened" nations has meant death and destruction to the Native people of this country. Before the adoption by them of European habits and customs, tuberculosis was practically unknown amongst the Natives. One mission station is specially mentioned as being comparatively immune from the disease, owing to the conditions of life approximating to those in the Native Kraal. All this is a serious indictment of the system under which a simple-living, pastoral people is brought from its natural surroundingsinto the crowded and unhealthy conditions prevailing in towns and Locations. It shows, so far as the health of the people in concerned, that they suffer severely for the doubtful privilege of becoming acquainted with modern life. We will not for the moment discuss the wider and much more important question of morals, except to say that we believe that the effect upon the people of congregating in crowded areas is the worst possible.

Anyone who has visited a Location, whether Native or Indian, must be impressed with the utter hopelessness of such places. The shameful neglect of the roadways, the utter absence of proper drainage, and the wretched condition of the buildings, all show at once

[1] The Minister replied telegraphically on April 9: ". . . no intention of abandoning Immigration Bill" (S. N. 5644), confirming the, same by a letter dated April 9; S. N. 5645.

that his is a Location—a place where Coloured people are condemned to spend their days as outcasts. It is whispered that it is "dangerous" to go there alone at night; avoid it as you would a plague-spot. The dust-carts and scavengers of the municipality give it a wide berth and share in the general antipathy towards such unholy places. Rents and rates are regularly collected, but the money goes into the coffers of the municipality. If a new Location is to be laid out, it is considered economical to utilize ground recently used as a dumping-ground for night-soil and dead horses. Is there any wonder that Locations are hotbeds of tuberculosis and other dangerous diseases?

We understand that the Johannesburg Town Council had decided to "tackle" the question of Native Location, and that they are going to make a "big effort" to solve the question of housing the Natives. This is how they propose to do it: All the people who are at present living where they please are to be rounded up into a huge compound, where they will be compelled to live, whether they like it or not. A fence is to be erected around the Location, and the "inmates" (suggestive term) are to enter through the gateway, which will be under police guard. At a certain hour the gates will be closed, and opened again in time to allow the Natives to get to work for their European masters. A well-known Johannesburg citizen gave it as his opinion that the scheme would be a great success, not only from a public-health point of view, but also from a *police* point of view. Now, as for the public-health point of view, we are quite certain that the public referred to is the white public and not the public which is to receive the special advantage of living in this municipal compound ; and we think that Dr. Thornton will agree with us. And what, pray, is the "police point of view"? We think we can guess, but, as there can be no certainty about it, we will content ourselves by merely suggesting that, by segregating all the blacks, it will then be an easy matter to keep a watchful eye upon the white criminal class which is known to congregate in the cities. But to return to our main point, we would ask all fair-minded and far-seeing people not to ignore the warning contained in the evidence given before the Tuberculosis Commission that to increase Locations is to multiply disease and death.

Indian Opinion, 6-4-1912

146. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[LAWLEY]
Chaitra Vad 5 [*April 6, 1912*][1]

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. I do not mind your writing to me about Virji[2] and Sam. Of course you do right to let me know whenever you notice shortcomings. Personally, however, I would rather you noted people's virtues than their faults. The latter, all of us are full of, so that we would do well to find out people's virtues and think of only these. It is possible to form this habit. So long, however, as you have not succeeded in doing so, do not hesitate to tell me of whatever faults you see [in people]. If things are what you represent them to be, I too feel that they are both wasting their time. About the press, too, your criticism may be justified. But turn your mind to the counsel in the Gita: "What is *apariharya*—that for which one has no remedy—one must resign oneself to." If you do your duty, you will feel contented. The world will go its ways in spite of our having done our duty. How can we prevent that? Even to think that we can would be conceit. I have with me what your Carlyle says on this. Only recently I read in it some profound observations, which I shall reproduce for your benefit some other time.

Mr. West and others are coming here. This may possibly make you feel a little more nervous still. But you should not be afraid. Mr. West's coming here is all to the good. It was necessary for him to meet me.

Do not let anything disturb your studies.

On Monday, we have sports for the children. We got the parents to donate prizes. Fifty other people will also attend. I wish you were here on an occasion like this.

[1] This letter was written from Tolstoy Farm where Gandhiji lived from June, 1911 to the middle of January, 1913. A day in the Gujarati month of *Chaitra Vad* can correspond to any day from April 1 to May 12 of the Gregorian calendar. The only year in which Gandhiji spent the months of April and May on Tolstoy Farm was 1912. Furthermore West, referred to in paragraph 3, arrived at Tolstoy Farm on April 10, 1912 and stayed up to May 7, 1912 recuperating from an illness. The children's sports event referred to in the last paragraph was held on April 8, 1912, which was a Monday. *Indian Opinion*, 13-4-1912.

[2] A Gujarati compositor in the International Printing Press, Phoenix

Jamnadas has been taught book-keeping, the method being quite easy. I get him to help me a good deal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 94. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

147. LETTER TO E.F.C. LANE[1]

April 11, 1912

DEAR MR. LANE,

I have just seen a newspaper cutting containing a letter from the Acting Secretary for the Interior addressed to the Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, in which the following passage occurs:

> The object of the draft Bill is not to use the dictation test as a means of permitting the entry of Asiatics into the O.F.S., but to use it to exclude them, so that, under the provisions of the draft Bill, the territory of the Free State will be actually better protected against the entry of Asiatics than it is under the provisions of Chapter 33 of the Free State Law Book.[2]

I hope that this does not mean that those who are allowed to enter the Union under the Immigration test are to be or can be excluded from the Free State by being called upon to resubmit to the test and being made to fail therein. I shall be obliged if you will kindly reassure me on the point.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

[M. K. GANDHI]

ERNEST F. C. LANE, ESQ.
CAPE TOWN

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5646

[1] In reply to this Lane wrote on April 17: ". . . the interpretation which you put on the letter written to the Secretary to the Chamber of Commerce is quite the correct one." S. N. 5647.

[2] In this letter, published in *The Natal Mercury* and reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 6-4-1912, the Acting Secretary went on to say: ". . . the existing law makes it possible for Asiatics to enter the Free State and to reside there for a considerable period before making application for permission to reside there permanenly, whereas under the proposed new law it will be possible to bar their entry on the borders of the Province".

148. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[LAWLEY,]
Chaitra Vad 11 [*April 13, 1912*][1]

CHI. MANILAL,

Your letter. Since Mrs. Pywell[2] and others took all that trouble over you, it is not surprising that you should have been so deeply moved.

Your undisciplined ways have been causing me much concern. I should like you to make every effort to submit yourself to discipline.

I saw your photograph. Your out and out English dress is not of a kind to please me. Even the collar starched? Certainly, you must have clean dress. But it does not go with our way of living to dress like a fastidious Englishman. It would even be better if you made it a rule to wear the Indian-style cap. Do not be dismayed by criticism of you in these matters. You may ignore what I say if it does not appeal to you. I do not want you to change your way of life just to please me. You need change only if my argument convinces you and you feel you are strong enough to act on it.

It is necessary that you visit Ani oftener.

Also call on Chhabildas's[3] wife regularly and look after her needs.

Mr. West has been given rooms adjoining Rambhabai's[4]. He has his meals with us. I do not think he feels inconvenienced in any way.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 97. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

[1] The reference in the last paragraph to West, who arrived at Tolstoy Farm on April 11, suggests that this letter was written in 1912.

[2] West's mother-in-law

[3] Chhabildas Mehta of Durban

[4] Rambhabai Sodha

149. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[LAWLEY,]

Vaisakh Sud 8 [*April 24, 1912*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I shall pass on to West the papers meant for him.

Print the matter on Prof. Gokhale in full. The comments that you suggest will do. It will be excellent if all of it is brought out in Gujarati as well as in English, with a picture of Prof. Gokhale added. If a Tamil translation appears simultaneously—separately perhaps—that would be fine indeed. I think 1,000 copies can sell. Print the words "the Honourable Mr. G. K. Gokhale" in full.

Wheat should be roasted till it has browned. It will be better to soak it overnight before roasting. The roasted wheat should then be ground coarse into grains. This flour should be boiled to silken fine [paste]. Add a little ghee to it, while it is still on the boil. This porridge can be taken with milk. It is desirable to keep it boiling for an hour. Just enough water should be added to make the dish a thick *khichdi-like* paste at the end of the hour. The right thing would be to eat it with honey or some home-made jam. Give as much as can be digested.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5774(A)

[1] In the second paragraph Gandhiji is referring to Press reports of and comments on Gokhale's second resolution on Indian indentured labour. They were printed in *Indian Opinion*, 20-4-1912 & 27-4-1912. In the year 1912, *Vaisakh Sud* 8 corresponds to April 24.

150. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[LAWLEY,]
Vaisakh Sud 8 [*April 24, 1912*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have kept for the present the report of the [Gujarati] Sahitya Parishad[2] and the Hindi books. The latter are being used for Budrea's[3] son who is here. The report, I myself want very much to read.

Yours was the right reaction to the *Titanic* report.[4] Such occurrences serve to remind us from time to time that we are no better than fleas.

Jamnadas is extremely restless. He cannot stick to the same idea for two days running. He and Manilal are in the same state. Jamnadas, however, is an obedient lad. I have, therefore, no anxieties [on his account]. Sometimes he is seized by a strong urge to renunciation and at other times sinks into the depths of ignorance and vain desire. The reason for this unsettled state of mind is that he has not been happy with Ba. I have argued hard with him that this is a bitter draught he must swallow. In any case, he has made a promise and I shall hold him to it. When his permit was about to expire, we had a talk at the end of which he showed himself willing to stay on, and intimation has already been received that his permit has been extended for another six months. I have explained to him, therefore, that he must not leave

[1] The *Titanic* sank on April 14, 1912, in which year this letter was therefore written.

[2] Literary conference

[3] A client of Gandhiji; *vide* "Letter to F. H. Tatham", 14-3-1908.

[4] Both Chhaganlal and Maganlal Gandhi often sent Gujarati leaders or articles they had written to Gandhiji before publication; *vide*, for instance, "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 29-8-1911. The reference here is very likely to a Gujarati article entitled "Act of the Omnipotent Creator" which was published in *Indian Opinion*, 27-4-1912. It said: "Our saints and *bhaktas* have always taught that the minutest act cannot be performed without God's will. Man should learn this truth from the sinking of the *Titanic* . . . [The Americans and the British] worship science and man's power over Nature. . . . They repose so much faith in the muscle and the intellect that they consider themselves worthy of creating anything that their conceited intellect can think of . . ." The views expressed are similar to Gandhiji's. For Gandhiji's own reactions to the fire in the Paris Metro, *vide* "Accident?", 20-8-1903; to an earthquake in Northern India, *vide* "Earthquake in India", 13-5-1905 and to a famine in Central India, *vide* "Five Crores Starving", 28-3-1908.

during this period. Latterly, Ba too has been well disposed [towards him]. More-over, he was recently away to Johannesburg for three or four days. I believe therefore that he is quite at ease with himself, though he may soon get restless again. Restlessness is a defect natural to adolescence, and has to be tolerated. Boys who, though restless, are obedient, can easily become their normal selves again. I am sure that it will turn out so with Jamnadas.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Ani should be given £4 a month.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gadhiji's hand: S. N. 5774a(2)

151. LETTER TO "SPORTING STAR"

[THE EDITOR
SPORTING STAR
JOHANNESBURG

SIR,]

You have been good enough to invite my opinion on the suggestion made by "Recorder" in your issue of the 20th instant as to some provision being made for the admission of Asiatics to the Wanderers Ground. I offer my opinion not without some hesitation, for I feel that Recorder's suggestion is not practicable, to say the least of it. I recognize the purity of his motives, but, if I may venture to deal with his suggestion on its merits, I must say that the proposed division between higher and lower class Asiatics is, or should be, totally unacceptable, if only because it is impossible to make such distinctions in matters such as those to which "Recorder" refers. I hardly think that it is character or education that counts in determining the question of admission to a sporting-ground. I should not suppose that any such distinction is made in respect of Europeans. All that can be reasonably expected is that those who apply for admission be suitably and cleanly dressed. Nor will the suggestion that a portion of certain stands be set aside for Asiatics meet with general favour. It is one thing to put us on our honour, and expect us to occupy certain parts only; it is quite another to say that we may go to certain parts, and to no other. I am not blind to the unfortunate prejudice that exists in South Africa against Asiatics and Coloured

people. But I do feel that, as long as that preju-dice is allowed to influence the deliberations of a Sporting Committee, so long it is better that we do not have any right of entry at all, than that such right should be recognized in a limited and niggardly spirit.

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 4-5-1912

152. WHAT IS A WIFE?

Mr. Jordan[1], the Johannesburg Magistrate, has presented us with a clear-cut issue. In the case of an Indian wife who entered the Transvaal together with her husband, he has decided that she is a prohibited immigrant, as her marriage cannot be recognized by the Courts of South Africa by reason of her husband having married more than one wife.[2] Mr. Jordan has gone further than Sir John Wessels. The latter left us in a state of suspense. Under the learned Judge's decision in Mrs. Jussat's case[3], it was just possible that one wife of a Mahomedan who had married more than one wife could come. But Mr. Jordan lays it down clearly that, if a man was married to more than one wife whilst the first wife was alive, all the wives become prohibited immigrants. Indeed, we consider Mr. Jordan's judgment to be more honest, if it is also more drastic. If this magisterial decision is allowed to stand unchallenged, the position of Indians with more wives than one will become most precarious. Those concerned are bound to obtain the decision of the highest tribunal of justice. Indeed, the matter cannot even rest with the Supreme Court. In the event of an adverse decision by that august body, the community will have to seek a clear declaration from the Imperial Government as to their attitude. The question is one of honour, and it will have to be

[1] H. H. Jordan; a Johannesburg Magistrate, in whose Court Gandhiji was sentenced for the first time on December 28, 1907.

[2] The reference is to the case of Hassin Mahomed's wife. Hassin Mahomed, a registered Asiatic, had married in India in 1895. In 1905, Hassin Mahomed took a second wife as sanctioned by Muslim law but later divorced her. His first wife was prohibited entry into the Transvaal by Magistrate Jordan who disallowed her claim to enter as a domiciled Asiatic's wife on the ground that polygamous marriages were not valid in South Africa. He declared her a prohibited immigrant as she could not pass the education test under the Transvaal Immigrants' Restriction Act. *Indian Opinion*, 4-5-1912.

[3] *Vide* "Mrs. Jussat's Case", 9-3-1912.

thrashed out sooner or later. Mr. Jordan's decision challenges us to have it settled sooner.

Indian Opinion, 11-5-1912

153. THE JOHANNESBURG SCHOOL

So the Executive of the Provincial Council has decided not to give the Indian community a separate school for the education of Indian children. In the absence of any valid reason why such a school should not have been sanctioned, we are constrained to ascribe the refusal to anti-Asiatic prejudice on the part of the Executive. The School Board had recommended the establishment of the school. There was ample precedent for granting the Indian request. The promoters had guaranteed the rent of the school and guaranteed a large attendance too. In our opinion the fact that the Coloured schools of Johannesburg did not provide any facility for teaching the children their vernaculars was sufficient justification for granting the Indian demand. The state could make little use of Indian youths who did not know their own vernaculars. But we know that the self-styled state does but want its Indian population, whom it regards as an evil, to be got rid of at the first opportunity.

However, we must frankly confess that we do not mind this decision—we rather welcome it; we are now put upon our mettle. A community that jealously guards its will not allow them to be neglected because an outside body refuses to help it. The English speaking section of the Free State population answered General Hertzog's intention to starve the English education of their children by opening private schools or finding other facilities for educating their children in a manner they considered best. We have no real schools of our own in Johannesburg where a good education may be given to our children. We hold that it is the duty of the promoters not to sit still but to open the school and manage it without the help of the state. Indeed, if a strong board of management can be formed, we feel sure that the school will better supply our wants by reason of the absence of state interference.

(At the time of going to press, we have received further correspondence from Johannesburg which somewhat alters the case. But we consider that our main argument still holds good.)

Indian Opinion, 18-5-1912

154. LETTER TO E. F. C. LANE

LAWLEY,
May 21, 1912

DEAR MR. LANE,

I have your letter[1] of the 14th instant for which I thank you.

I think that the alternative clause is satisfactory if it means that the declaration[2] referred to in our correspondence will be unnecessary in the case of educated Asiatics. May I suggest that the clause provides definitely that the declaration mentioned in Schedule 2 will not be required.

I beg to thank General Smuts for meeting the difficulty regarding domicile.

I hope too that the other difficulties raised in my letters[3] will be dealt with during the committee stage. They arise out of the provisional settlement as read it.

I remain,
Your sincerely,

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5653

155. INDIAN EDUCATION IN NATAL

"The Indian schools have made much progress during the last few years," says the Minister of Education for the Natal Province in his Annual Report. And that is all he has to say about the education of Indian children. He is evidently satisfied at the present condition of affairs where considerably more than £100,000 is spent annually on the education of European children and only a paltry £6,761 on Indian education. Anyone not aware of the position which Indians hold in South Africa would naturally ask the reason for such a wide difference between the educational facilities offered to Europeans and Indians. The population of Indians exceeds that of Europeans. Is it not the duty of the Government to educate its people, to whatever race

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Lane's Letter to Gandhiji", 14-5-1912.

[2] Required of Asiatics entering the Orange Free State to the effect that they had no intention of settling there to trade or to farm; *vide* Appendix "Extracts from Immigrants' Restriction Bill (1912) and Orange Free State Constitution", 3-2-1912.

[3] *Vide* letters to Lane, 29-1-1912, 15-2-1912, 4-4-1912 & 11-4-1912.

they may belong? What of the thousands of Indians brought here to exploit the agricultural resources of the Province? Surely there is a heavy responsibility resting upon those in authority. Then, again, we notice that the cost of educating a European is £5. 12s. 2_ d. and an Indian £1.14s. 5d. So even the education which a few Indian children receive is given in a niggardly manner, and under conditions which would not be tolerated for Europeans. Out of a total of 570 Indian pupils attending Government schools in Durban and Pietermaritzburg, only 25 are girls. This is due, largely, to the refusal of the Government to separate the sexes in the schools. At one time there was a fair number of girls attending the Higher-Grade Indian School, but the parents withdrew their children and now there are only three attending that school. The reason for the parents' action may be described as sentimental but sentiment carries weight with many people, and the authorities have no right to disregard those sentiments and ride roughshod over them.

But we are not disposed to blame the Superintendent of Education for the lack of educational facilities for Indians, nor is it of any use blaming the Government. The Indian community itself is negligent in these mattters. After all, we get very largely what we deserve. The Natives already are receiving nearly double the amount of public money that Indians receive for education, and they are showing, by their present activity, that they intend to demand their share of Government assistance in educating their children. But the Natives do not depend solely on the Government. They have already a great many very fine institutions in different parts of the country, built up by missionaries and by their own energies, and these are increasing in number and in usefulness.

The Government spent, last year, £9,000 on technical education for Europeans. This is provided because there is the demand for it. Even Europeans do not get anything without demanding it. A new technical institute has just been erected in Durban at a cost of £28,000. This is the result of strenuous efforts on the part of several European gentlemen who have worked away for years, sacrificing both time and money in their determination to give to their children an institution wherein they may receive instruction in scientific, artistic and practical work. One may well ask whether such institutions are not open to all. In theory, it is true, they belong to the whole of the people, but we know that, in practice, no Indian would be allowed to take a course of

study there. This is undoubtedly, a great shame, but we must not lose sight of the fact that we have not demanded technical education for our children as Europeans have. When we are prepared to make a united demandfor a school wherein our children may receive manual training and scientific instruction we may reasonably hope to get it. We would gladly see our Indian youths eager to receive a practical training in some useful professions. But manual work is not in favour. We may well apply to ourselves the words of the Minister of Education, spoken at the Pretoria Conference:"We have a growing number of children . . . with a bookish education, afraid to work, and thinking that manual labour is 'Kaffir's work'. The result is that for these men there is no room in South Africa, and South Africa is bound to suffer unless we seriously set ourselves to solve the problem."

Indian Opinion, 25-5-1912

156. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

TOLSTOY FARM,
Jeth Sud 12 [*May 27, 1912*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Dhoribhai is not the kind of man to fit into the scheme. This is West's view. This contention is based on conversation with him and is justified. Our functioning is so different at present that it is doubtful if we should admit only labourers. Dhoribhai will not understand that he is not qualified. Hence, there is no need to tell him the reasons. I shall tell him myself. What seems clear is that we cannot admit him at the moment. But is it right to tell him why? West had asked me in his last letter and so I am discussing the matter with you. This is my attitude. Now you can do whatever you think proper.

Miss Molteno writes: "Your sweet Phoenix is a poem—a dream of loveliness."[2] Strangers are bound to think that way. We cannot take pride in her comment because we have known its bitterness too. Nevertheless we should cherish the aspiration that the future may justify Miss Molteno's belief. In order to realize that, I feel that we cannot admit an utterly worldly man like Dhoribhai. A time may

[1] The year has been inferred from the reference to the arrival of kotwal, who joined the Tolstoy Farm in 1912.

[2] Quoted in English

come when only two or three of us can continue to stay there to realize that ideal. May it be so. We shall not be cowards from fear of it.

Jamnadas[1] has been there for a long time now. I have reprimanded him for what Kashi has written in her letter. Please do not hurt his feelings. He has many admirable qualities. His physique is such that he can make it hard as steel. It is best to engage him in all activities. Send him here whenever he feels inclined. I do not think he would feel comfortable there for long. I feel that if you engage him in the press it would be beneficial to you as well as to him. But you must be needing all the help there right now. Nevertheless, do only what all of you consider proper. It is enough if you give thought to my suggestions. Do not insist on putting them into practice.

Kotwal[2] can wear the dress he chooses. I shall not interfere or force him regarding this. Those of us who have established Phoenix and those whom we specially invite cannot suddenly wear that kind of dress. I see the usefulness of trousers, etc., for the carrying on of our tasks. If trousers imply anything immoral, we should not wear them whether or not our task is accomplished. Kotwal has come to meet us. Moreover, Doctor[3] has made certain recommendations about him. It is possible that he possesses such a character that we may have more to learn from him than he from us. Hence, I do not propose to discuss with him the matter of his dress unless an occasion arises. We can exercise greater freedom regarding dress, etc., at the Farm. In certain matters, there was opportunity for this Farm to rise superior to Phoenix in its way of living. Meat, etc., have got to be given up here and that is no small matter. Everyone must eat in the common kitchen, and that too is a big thing.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1164. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] Addressee's Younger brother
[2] P. K. Kotwal
[3] Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta

157. LETTER TO E. F. C. LANE

LAWLEY,
May 31, 1912

DEAR MR. LANE,

General Smuts' speech[1] on the second reading of the Bill leaves, I fear, the question of interprovincial migration in a somewhat unsatisfactory state. General Smuts appears to meet the objection raised on this point by lax administration rather than by amending the section as it appears in the measure now before Parliament. As I have already remarked, this will not satisfy passive resisters. I therefore, hope that the measure will be so amended as to leave the rights of Asiatics residing in the other provinces to enter Natal and the Cape in *status quo ante*.

I remain,
Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5654

158. "AN UNFORTUNATE CASE"

Under the above sub-heading, the following report of a case brought before Mr. J. Y. Gibson, in the First Criminal Court, Durban, appears, in the *Natal Advertiser*:

> Jadubansi, an Indian woman, was charged with refusing to return to her lawful employer, she being an indentured servant. The accused pleaded guilty. It was stated that the circumstances of this case were that the woman had served continuous sentences amounting to six months, for a steadfast refusal to return to her employer. She had been working on an estate at Stanger, and, in some accident, her baby had been burnt. She had come to Durban to make complaint to the Protector and had since refused on every occasion to comply with her indenture. Argument arose as to whether continual successive punishment could be awarded for the same offence, and it was pointed out by Mr. Gibson that section governing such cases provided that each successive refusal to comply with an order of the Court was separately punishable. His Worship said that it seemed an unfortunate thing that a woman could thus be punished time after time for a matter wherein she had shown a particular aversion from some especial place of employment. It was stated that the woman was willing

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Smuts' Speech on I. R. Bill (1912) in Union Parliament", 30-5-1912.

to work elsewhere, if she could get a transfer, and Mr. Gibson adjourned the case for a week, Jadubansi meanwhile being sent to the Protector to see what could be arranged.

We have something to add to the above report, as we have been brought into close touch with the woman concerned who, early in April, came to Phoenix and related her story in detail. In the first place, the woman had not been working on an estate, at Stanger, but was indentured to a farmer down the South coast whose name it is not necessary to mention for the moment. We learn from the report that Jadubansi's child had been burnt. It was not only burnt, but burnt so severely that it died; and the woman accuses her employer of deliberately refusing to attend to the wounds, after having first put on bandages, with the result that they stank. The woman's duties in her master's house kept her away from the child from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m., with the exception of two short intervals for breakfast and dinner. Consequently the child had to be left alone. After a fortnight's terrible sufferings, the child was sent to the hospital where it died a few days afterwards. After the death of her child, Jadubansi tells of great hardships, including the refusal of her employer to give her food for three days, forcing her to grind mealies in a hand mill, ill-treatmentby kicking, and the withholding of wages. The total wages received in the course of a year, she states, was nine shillings.

We took Jadubansi to the Protector of Indian Immigrants, laid the information before him, and left her in his charge, pending inquiries into her grievances. The matter was referred to the employer who flatly denied that he neglected the child, and accused the mother of neglect. The doctor at the hospital reported the death of the child, but did not consider its condition to be so bad as to warrant special mention.

We have these conflicting statements and we lay them before the public for them to judge which is the more likely: that a mother, whose child gets accidentally burnt, should wilfully neglect it, and refuse to nurse it, or that the employer should seek to shield himself from the consequences of serious charge. And what is the position of the doctors in such matters? They are employed by the Indian Immigration Trust Board, which consists of planters and farmers,[1] and

[1] *Indian Opinion* editorials had more than once demanded that Indians should be represented on such boards and in the SABI Committee's representation of June 17, 1911 to the Colonial Office, Polak had made a similar request; *vide* Appendix "S. A. B. I. Committee's Letter to Colonial Office", 17-6-1911.

one can easily imagine that the doctors are not over-anxious to report cases which reflect upon employers. So we must not place much importance on the non-report of the bad condition of the child. It is a crying scandal that these medical men are not under the control of the Government. We are very much afraid that many a gruesome tragedy lies hidden because of this. And what of the employer? Jadubansi states that, in one room which is a part of stable, four Indians—two men and two women—and four Natives had to cook their food together. Of the Indians, two were married and the others not. But they all had to sleep in the same room. Some months before, inspector Waller, of the Protector's Department, visited the place and saw these conditions. He ordered the employer to make alterations, which instructions, evidently, were not carried out. Thus we see that the employer is not a man who is careful over the welfare of his Indians and that is putting it very mildly.

Well, to continue the story, the Protector tried to persuade the employer to transfer the woman elsewhere as it was clear that, for some reason, she did not wish to remain with him. But the employer refused, and it seems that it was not possible for the Protector to carry his protection any further, and the officers of the law arrested Jadubansi and she was sent to prison for desertion. After serving a month in prison and again refusing to return to her employer, the latter seems to have given up all hope of getting her to return and so he has given his consent to her being shipped back to India where she wished to go and from whence, she alleges, she was forcibly brought against her will, a recruiting agent in India having deceived her.

If half of this woman's story be true, it is indeed "an unfortunate case". It must be considered unfortunate, too, by supporters of the indenture system, that such cases are brought to light. Even one such case condemns the whole system, because it shows what horrible things are possible in the outlying districts. We have to thank the Magistrate, Mr. Gibson, for having prevented the further punishment of this poor woman.

Indian Opinion, 1-6-1912

159. HEALTH OF INDENTURED INDIANS

The evidence of the Protector of Indian Immigrants, given before the Tuberculosis Commission, brings to mind once again the fact that, in matters of health, as in some other matters, he is powerless to protect the people under his charge. The Protector is a Government servant, independent of the Immigration Trust Board and is therefore in a position to act independently without interference by its members. Not so the sanitary inspectors and medical officers, appointed to look after the conditions of the barracks and the health of the occupants. They are employed by the Trust Board, and, therefore, and under the thumb of the employers. We maintain that it is impossible for these officers to do their duty under such conditions. In answer to questions by the Tuberculosis Commission regarding the ground surrounding some of the Indian barracks, which was in filthy condition with slop water and refuse lying about, Mr. Polkinghorne[1] said that there was a sanitary inspector who was supposed to look after these things. Of course, we can quite understand that a sanitary inspector, at any time, is looked upon by employers as a troublesome nuisance. His faultfindings mean increased expenses and less profits. The consequence is, in many cases, that the much needed improvements are not even suggested by these officers because they know that it will only bring a hornet's nest about their ears. Naturally, they will let matters slide rather than create trouble for themselves and make their position untenable. So far back as 1908, Protector, in his annual report, called attention to this matter.He said that, in his opinion, the high death-rate among indentured Indians working in the coast districts of Natal was due in no small measure to this state of affairs, and as a kind of protest against the scandal, he asked for no reports from, the medical officers.

The Immigration Trust Board consists of seven members elected by employers of indentured Indians, with the Protector and one other member nominated by the Government. Referring to the constitution of the Board, the protector said in his report:"In no other Colony, introducing Indian immigrants, is there any such Board of Employers, and I am strongly of opinion that such a constituted Board should not in any way have any power to deal with, or in any way influence, the

[1] J. A. Polkinghorne, Protector of Indian Immigrants, Natal

treatment of the indentured Indians in the Colony." We quite agree with Mr. Polkinghorne, and we think that he might have brought this matter a little more forcibly to the notice of the Tuberculosis Commission.

Indian Opinion, 22-6-1912

160. MRS. VOGL'S BAZAAR[1]

Mrs. Vogl, whose name and work our readers have now become thoroughly acquainted with, has an insatiable ambition. As will be seen from Miss Schlesin's letter[2] to the ladies in India, Mrs. Vogl is organizing, under the auspices of the Indian Women's Association, another Bazaar larger scale than before. The last Bazaar was successful, both financially and socially. But Mrs. Vogl, thinks that the funds should be considerably augmented if the Nagappen memorial is to be worthy of the cause to which the lamented lad gave his life. She thinks, too, that the education work of the Association will receive greater encouragement if Bazaars are held periodically. We are sure that the ladies in India will return a liberal response to Miss Schlesin's appeal, and we hope that those, both here and in England, who are at all interested in Indians in this subcontinent, will take note of the appeal and help the great movement inaugurated by Mrs. Vogl.

Indian Opinion, 22-6-1912

[1] *Vide* "Address to Mrs. Vogl", 15-11-1911.

[2] Miss Schlesin, who was the Honorary Secretary of the Transvaal Indian Women's Association, in this letter of June 14, had requested that fancy goods and specimens of Indian hand-work be sent for the Bazaar to be held towards the end of 1913. She also appealed to all willing Associations in India for help. *Indian Opinion,* 22-6-1912.

161. TELEGRAM TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR[1]

June 25, 1912

TO

INTERIOR
PRETORIA & CAPE TOWN

VIEW PROROGATION PARLIAMENT MAY I KNOW GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION REGARDING IMMIGRATION BILL AND FUTURE WORKING SETTLEMENT.[2]

GANDHI

From *Indian Opinion*, 20-7-1912; also photostat of handwritten office copy: S. N. 5656

[1] In reply, the Acting Secretary for the Interior said in his letter of July 16: ". . . I have the honour, by direction of the Minister, to inform you that the Government was most anxious to secure the passage of the Bill and that it was with regret that it was found eventually impossible to carry the matter to a conclusion. . . . an amended measure will be introduced during the course of the next Session, and that in the meanwhile, it will be necessary to continue the administration of the existing legislation on the subject as in the Past." *Indian Opinion*, 20-7-1912. On July 16, Lord Gladstone in a memorandum informed Secretary Harcourt of the Imperial Government that there was no prospect of the bill being passed that session. Harcourt wired back expressing "regret and disappointment" and hoping that "the bill would be re-introduced at the earliest opportunity and pressed through". In reply the South African Minister explained that the bill had to be abandoned due to "strenuous opposition to it and the pressure of other business". On July 17, they sent a further telegram stating that they "would re-introduce the bill at the earliest possible date the next session". From a White Paper published following Lord Ampthill's questions (Appendix XVIII) in the House of Lords. *India*, 13-9-1912.

[2] Gandhiji had written to Lane on April 21 (the letter itself is not available) presumably asking him when the Union Parliament was likely to be prorogued. Lane replied on April 25 saying that while "I am unable to give you any fixed date . . . in my own opinion, I should say on the 12th of June". S. N. 5648. The Union Parliament was prorogued on June 24 without having considered the new draft immigration Bill and was not due to meet until September 23.

162. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

Ashadha Sud 11 [*June 25/July 24, 1912*][1]

BHAISHRI KHUSHAL JIVAN,

Herewith the accounts of Phulibehn received from Revashankerbhai. From these it would seem that there is nothing owing to her by Revashankerbhai. .. I don't know what her claim is. Please inquire and write to me in detail. I judge from Meghjibhai's letter that he may have been to Ahmedabad also. There was a letter from him but it gave no details.

Does not Phulibehn live and eat with Raliatbehn? Meghjibhai's letter gives the impression that she has her meals separately and lives at her own expense.

Chi. Jamnadas is with me. He is a priceless jewel. I want him to stay with me for a long time. He has altogether changed in appearance. I think he will become stronger yet.

Manilal, Ramdas and Devdas are also with me. My humble greetings to my sister-in-law.

Humble greetings form

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11275

163. CABLE TO S.A.B.I. COMMITTEE

[JOHANNESBURG,]
June 26, 1912

THE SOUTH AFRICA BRITISH INDIAN COMMITTEE
231-2, STRAND
[LONDON] W.C.

EUROPEAN OWNERS OF STANDS AT VREDEDORP HAVE RECEIVED PEREMPTORY NOTICES[2] TO REMOVE ASIATIC TENANTS WITHIN THREE MONTHS'

[1] From the contents the letter appears to have been written in 1912 when Jamnadas had gone to Lawley to stay with Gandhiji; *vide* "Letter to Chanchalbehn Gandhi", 18-2-1912. *Ashadha Sud 11*, however, corresponded to two dates in 1912 as another month was intercalated in *Ashadha* that year.

[2] There were served on June 6, 1912 under Section 4 of the Vrededorp Stands Act of 1907 on those Stand-owners on whose premises Asiatics, Natives or Coloured persons were residing. The Vrededorp Stands Ordinance, which prohibited leasing or

TIME. FAILURE IN COMPLIANCE WITH NOTICE INVOLVES FORFEITURE OF STANDS, SOME OF WHICH ARE EQUITABLY OWNED BY INDIANS. ELEVEN INDIAN STORE-KEEPERS AT VREDEDORP ARE FACED WITH RUIN IF DISPOSSESSED.

M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records: C. O. 551/35

164. LORD AMPTHILL'S COMMITTEE

Owing to a shortage of funds for defraying the expenses of our Committee in England and of public work in Johannesburg, a collection has recently been started in the Transvaal. It is Sorabji in fact, who has taken this work upon himself. Mr. Cachalia also accompanies him sometimes. Dulabhbhai Kalyanji, Dayal Parbhu, Manchha Gosai, G. K. Patel, Bhikhubhai Karsanji and Jeram Gosai also go out [with them]. Mr. Sodha, too, goes round for the collection. A sum of about £350 has been collected, including £27.12s. received from Vereeniging towards the expenses [of the SABI Committee]. Soon they will visit other towns for collection.

But the entire [burden of the] expenses of Lord Ampthill's Committee should not devolve on the Transvaal alone. Natal and the Cape ought to share in them. The Committee functions in the interests of all parts of South Africa, and all the Indians should share in its expenses.[1]

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 29-6-1912

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subletting of land to Asiatics and Coloured persons and even their residence in premises erected there except as domestic servants, was published in the *Government Gazette* on September 28, 1906 before the Transvaal had attained responsible government, and on October 8, 1906 the British Indian Association represented to Lord Elgin against this measure asking that Royal assent be withheld; *vide* "Petition to Lord Elgin", 8-10-1906. Consequent upon this and further efforts by the SABI Committee (Vol. VI, pp. 342-3 & 347-8) a new bill which envisaged a notice period of four years and compensation in respect of buildings constructed by Indian was passed in 1907; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 17-8-1907.

[1] For earlier appeals for funds for the SABI Committee, *Vide* "South Africa British Indian Committee" 9-2-1907 & "South Africa British Indian Committee" 23-3-1907, Vol. VII "Association in Cape", 5-10-1907, "South Africa British Indian Committee" 12-10-1907 & "Johannesburg Letter", 26-10-1907 and "Johannesburg Letter", 21-3-1908.

165. SPEECH AT DURBAN FAREWELL TO PILGRIMS

[*June 29, 1912*]

. . . The Ottoman Cricket Club organized a function on Saturday [June 29] night at the same place [Mr. Rustomjee's residence]. About 200 to 300 persons were present. Mr. Gandhi was requested to take the chair and he said:

I came here to honour the Haj Pilgrims. I had no intention of presiding over this function. However, two of the office-bearers of the Club urged me to take the chair. I gladly complied after they had promised, in return, to join in the satyagraha movement if it were started again. It has indeed become my sole occupation to seek out people willing to go to goal for the country's sake. I wish the members of this club, too, would equip themselves to become satyagrahis and be ready to go to goal when the occasion arises. Why should we fight shy of goal? Students of the school attached to Tolstoy Farm walked to Wightrust seven miles away. On the way, they came upon streams and bathed in them. When they were arrested [for trespassing], they admitted to having done wrong. On being told that they could be sent to gaol, they said that they would prefer going to gaol to being let off. At this, the authorities responsible for arresting them released them. The point is that, instead of being afraid of gaol, we should become courageous and learn to fight in defence of truth. This kind of education is necessary for the Indian community.

Mr. Gandhi then expressed his heart-left happiness at having been able to attend this function to bid farewell to Mr. Dawad Mahomed and other pilgrims and then commenced the business of the meeting.

In his concluding remarks as chairman, he said:

I offer my hearty congratulations to Dawad Mahomed, Mahomed Coovadia[1] Dawad Seedat and Moola on their Undertakin the Haj pilgrimage. As a Hindu I am glad of their decision to go on the pilgrimage. A true Muslim cannot do Hindus harm. A true Hindu cannot do harm Muslims. Those who are capable of harming their won Indian brethren are neither true Muslims nor true Hindus. I consider any selfless work done in the service of the community as a religious and not a worldly act. I accordingly believe the services

[1] Mahomed Cassim Coovadia; merchant; President of the Durban Anjuman and a trustee of the West Street Mosque

rendered by Mr. Dawad Mahomed by going to gaol[1] will be acknowledged in the court of God. On the other hand, I believe that and ostensibly religious act is not a godly one if not done with a pure heart. Secondly, it is repeatedly asserted that there is no unity among Indians.[2] But one should not believe that this is really so. At the same time we should not shut our eyes to the disunity among us and say that there is none. In any case it should be remembered that the cause of our sufferings in South Africa in no disunity but lack of courage. I do not wish to say that we are wholly wanting in courage. When the Imam Saheb came forward to court imprisonment, who could have predicted that he would be able to bear up with [life in] gaol? His offer to go to gaol was a courageous act and it was again due to his courage that he could remain steadfast till the end. Our chief need is to be truthful. Our motto should be Truth and nothing but the Truth. With the aid to Truth we shall be able to cross even oceans of misery. No action undertaken with a sincere motive ever goes unrewarded. Therefore, work for the community with purity of motive. It is not difficult to preserve unity. As long as the Muslims do not want to quarrel, Hindus by themselves cannot do so. If the Hindus are not spoiling for a fight, Muslims alone cannot bring about one. Even if there are a hundred people out to create dissensions as against one who comes forward to promote unity, the hundred will lose and the one will win. If that were not so, God's divinity would be at an end.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-7-1912

[1] In August 1908, he crossed over into the Transvaal to assist the satyagraha campaign on behalf of Natal and to test his pre-war rights of domicile in that Colony; *vide* 1st footnote of "Comments on Transvaal Indfian Campaign", 28-8-1908.

[2] For Gandhiji's earlier remarks on Hindu-Muslim unity, *vide* "The World's Religion", 26-8-1905, "Divide and Rule", 4-11-1905 &:Agreement between Hindus and Muslims", 23-12-1905, "Speech at Reception", 26-12-1906 & "Reply to Mahomedan Association's Address", 3-1-1907, "Johannesburg Letter", before 10-1-1908, "A Brief Explanation", 22-2-1908, "Further Considerations", 29-2-1908, "Lord Selborne's View", 4-4-1908, "Speech at Mass Meeting", 23-7-1908 & "Parliament for Turkey", 1-8-1908, "Letter to *Indian Opinion*", 19-1-1909, "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 29-1-1909 & "Letter to Habib Motan", 21-6-1909 and, "Indian National Congress and Muslims", 8-1-1910, "Muslim League Meeting", 12-2-1910 & "Hindus and Muslims", 21-5-1910.

166. DAWAD MAHOMED

The community has honoured itself by honouring Mr. Dawad Mahomed. A person of his ability, presence of mind and good spirits is rarely come by among Indians. There is, likewise, hardly another Indian who commands the same influence among Europeans which he has come to acquire.

Mr. Dawad Mahomed's part in the satyagraha campaign has made his name resound through South Africa . We wish him and his companions success in their cherished ambition.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 6-7-1912

167. LETTER TO E. F. C. LANE[1]

July 6, 1912

DEAR MR. LANE,

I see that you are in Pretoria now. As the matter was rather urgent, I sent a telegram[2] on the 25th ultimo, addressed both at Cape Town and Pretoria, inquiring about the Immigration Bill . Whilst I am anxious not to worry General Smuts, I think that I am bound to satisfy the many inquirers who have been asking me about the measure. Is it now possible to let me know what the Government's intentions are regarding the Bill and the future working of the provisional settlement?

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

[M. K. GANDHI]

ERNEST F. C. LANE, ESQ.
PRETORIA

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5660

[1] For the reply to this letter, *vide* 1st footnote of "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 25-6-1912.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 25-6-1912.

168. DR. MURISON'S CHARGE

Dr. Murison is reported to have said before the Tuberculosis Commission that Indians were given to lying and that "it was difficult to find out much of their private life, owing to their habits". In his opinion, "Indians should be put into Locations as well as Natives." We awaited a public contradiction by Dr. Murison with reference to the charge of lying, and in order to make assurance doubly sure, we wrote, too, to the worthy Doctor, asking whether he had been correctly reported. Not having seen any contradiction and not having received a reply from him we assume that he is correctly reported. Dr. Murison has proved a conscientious medical officer, and we have often had occasion to congratulate him on his even-handed treatment[1] of all classes of the community that came under his notice. It is, therefore, not without pain that we are constrained to take exception to the sweeping charge of lying laid by him against a community, which prejudice has already terribly misrepresented in South Africa. In the first place, Dr. Murison, as medical officer, would come into contact with the unhealthy rather than with the healthy, and to impute the faults of the unhealthy to a whole body of people is, to say the least of it, highly illogical. But is it proper even to charge Indians suspected of suffering from tuberculosis with lying? We are quite free to admit that such Indians, like all other classes of patients, in order to avoid segregation and special treatment which they might not understand, would minimize their trouble, or fail to give notice or even mislead officials, but, we trust that, upon reflection, Dr. Murison will find that to charge these people with lying and then, too, to base upon that charge a recommendation for their compulsory segregation in Locations is not the proper thing. We may remind him that Lord Curzon, when he was Viceroy of India, at a lecture before University students, committed a similar indiscretion,[2] for which he suffered heavily.[3] He

[1] *Vide* "The Plague", 7-1-1905.

[2] This was at a Convocation address to an Indian University in 1905. While on the subject of the low place assigned to truth in the moral systems of the East, he had said that "craftiness and diplomatic wile have always been held in much repute" in Eastern countries. Gandhiji had answered this at length at the time; *vide* "Oriental Ideal of Truth", 1-4-1905.

[3] The reference is to his resignation following a controversy with Lord Kitchener; *vide*, however, "Lord Curzon", 26-8-1905.

lost all the prestige in India that he had previously enjoyed and laid himself open to the justifiable taunt of himself not having hesitated to lie when he thought that the occasion demanded it. Zangwill[1] once said that if a Jew committed a crime it was the whole race that committed it; if a Gentile committed a crime, it was the individual only.

Replace the word "Jew" by "Indian", and we have the whole ugly truth in nutshell. Whenever an Indian does anything that is considered reprehensible, the newspapers do not hesitate to publish it in black type, and some public men do not hesitate to speak from platforms against the whole body of Indians residing in this country. We do hope that Dr. Murison will not wish to belong to the category of public men above referred to, and that he will not forfeit the esteem in which he is at present justly held by the Indian community.

Indian Opinion, 13-7-1912

169. THE NEW BROOM

Mr. Cousins, who has been appointed Acting Immigration Officer for Natal, has signalized his advent by issuing what purports to be a circular—which we give elsewhere—as to the evidence he would require to satisfy him as to the wives of domiciled Indians who might intend to enter the Province of Natal. We can only hope that the circular is not dictated from headquarters. Nothing could be better calculated to deeply wound Indian susceptibilities than this circular. In rejecting the ordinary evidence that was submitted to him, Mr. Cousins stated that he would want unmistakable proof that the husband had no other wife, and that he should have a marriage certificate, which, too, would be accepted only when it was accompanied by proof of identity,[2] and that, if such a certificate were not produced, he would want the certificate of a superior European magistrate bearing the

[1] Israel Zangwill (1864-1926); Jewish teacher, novelist and playwright; was born and brought up in England; founded and edited *Ariel* and *The London Puck*; his works deal mostly with Jewish life and serious social problems; had earlier advocated settlement for Jews within the British Empire and later became a Zionist leader.

[2] The circular, "addressed to applicants for the admission of their wives", also stated that the applicant would have to satisfy Cousins that he was lawful resident. *Indian Opinion*, 13-7-1912.

thumb-marks of the wife, and to the effect that she was the wife of the applicant, whose identity also must be established by unmistakable means, that the superior officer had personally held an inquiry upon oath as to the date of the marriage, etc.[1], and that he was to forward all the original statements declared before him, accompanied by means of identification of both the husband and the wife, and much more along the same lines. Thus in a single circular Mr. Cousins has insulted Indian women, has impugned the honesty of Indian magistrates and even judges (for, we presume, he will not accept the testimony of even High Court judges, if they are Indian), and has insulted even European officials because he wants certificates from superior European officers, who, in turn, are insulted by being called upon to send all the records on which they issued the certificate required. We should hope that to this extraordinary circular the Government of India will have something to say, that the people of India will not sit still under the unwarranted affront offered to them, and that the Indians of Natal will treat the circular letter as it deserves and will decline to allow their wives to give thumb or any other impressions. It was one thing to require Indian males to identify themselves when there was a charge[2] of personation and surreptitious entry levelled against them. It is another to wantonly insult Indian womanhood. Let us hope that the Union Government will have the circular recalled, and that the practice of taking ordinary evidence will be continued, and may we suggest to Mr. Cousins that the quality that is required in a public officer is not over-zeal in the direction of browbeating those members of the public with whom he comes into contact but that of showing kindly courtesy to all without in any way interfering with the administration of the particular laws which he may have been appointed to administer. We cannot believe that the circular in question is required in the interests of the administration, and it

[1] The circular added that the Magistrate should also declare that: (a) the "facts declared to" by him were correct; and (b) that he had "caused a police inquiry to be made". He was also required to attach a copy of the police report of the inquiry which "should embrace various independent parties", and to state that he was satisfied as to the relationship alleged.

[2] The charge of surreptitious entry and impersonation had been made repeatedly against Indians since 1906; *vide* "*Influx of Asiatics*", 10-3-1906 & "The Mass Meeting", 11-9-1906, "Interview to *The Tribune*", 20-10-1906 & "Representation to Lord Elgin", 31-10-1906, "Johannesburg Letter", 12-10-1907 and Vol. VIII, "Interview to *The Star*", 6-1-1908, "Extracts from Blue Book", 7-3-1908 & "Cape Town Indians", 11-4-1908.

certainly shows a lamentable want of tact.

Indian Opinion, 13-7-1912

170. INDIAN INTERPRETERS

Our attention has been drawn to the fact that there is only one interpreter for three Indian languages (Hindustani, Tamil and Telugu) in the Supreme Court (Natal Division). This gentleman may be qualified to interpret in these different languages, as it is stated he is, but we contend that it is not possible for one man to give satisfaction when he is called upon to interpret in all these languages with their various dialects in one breath, so to speak. The Supreme Court has to decide questions of life and death, and upon the true interpretation of the evidence rests the fate of a prisoner. When invited to ask questions, the prisoner is unable to do so as he cannot understand the languages in which the evidence is given. Take the case of two Indians, speaking Tamil and Hindustani, tried under one charge. A Telugu witness goes into the box and gives his evidence against the two accused. The prisoners, not being represented by Counsel, are given the opportunity of cross-examining the witness. The Tamil man puts a question to the Telugu witness through the interpreter, who gives the answer in Tamil and to the Court in English. Although it is desirable that the Hindustani man shall also understand what is going on, we believe, under the present circumstances, the evidence is not interpreted to him. The interpreter is supposed to remember the proceedings and give a summary to the accused. Even with one language, much will necessarily be missed, but with two prisoners and three Indian languages, the chances of both men being properly informed by the same interpreter are very small. One can easily imagine that a man might be condemned to death wrongly in the midst of such a maze.

We have before called attention to the want of Gujarati interpreters, the large community speaking this language having always to speak in Hindustani before the Court, a language which they have never learnt and which has only been picked up in South Africa.

The whole question is one of stinginess on the part of the Government. Whilst the authorities strain at the gnat of spending a few hundred pounds a year in providing sufficient competent interpreters for the courts, they swallow the camel of spending a million and a quarter over the Union Buildings, an expenditure which has been so

severely criticized by Mr. Merriman and other members of Parliament. Not until there are competent interpreters for all the Indian languages can it be said that substantial justice is done to Indians.

Indian Opinion, 13-7-1912

171. DOMICILE CERTIFICATES IN NATAL

Natal Indians are no longer issued fresh domicile certificates. Even worse, old certificates, whoever is found to possess them, are taken away and exchanged for new ones only on the production of fresh affidavits. This causes the poor Indians much hardship. We believe the Congress should fight out the case regarding domicile as it had intended to. Meanwhile, those who have old certificates need not surrender them in order to obtain new ones. Even if they want new ones, it is unnecessary to produce fresh proof before the official. Those who do not have any certificates can leave the country without their having filed affidavits and [generally] strengthened the proofs of residence. No one is obliged to keep domicile certificates. There should be no difficulty, therefore, in leaving the country after collecting the proofs [of residence, etc.].

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-7-1912

172. LETTER TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR[1]

[LAWLEY,]
July 17, 1912

THE HON'BLE THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR
PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter[2] of the 16th instant, in answer to my communications regarding the Immi-

[1] In reply to this, the Acting Secretary for the Interior wrote on July 19: "I have to confirm the following wire sent to you today, viz: . . . provisional settlement last year will continue pending passage legislation. Six educated Indians will therefore be admitted this year not subject to registration. . . With reference to the above wire I have to request you to furnish me with the names of the 6 educated Asiatics whom you wish admitted for this year." S.N. 5667.

[2] *Vide* 1st footnote of "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 25-6-1912.

gration Restriction Bill, for which I beg to thank you.

I understand your letter to mean that the provisional settlement of last year is to continue, pending passage of satisfactory legislation contemplated by the settlement. I take it, therefore, that a certain number of educated Asiatics will be admitted for this year in anticipation, as was done last year. On receipt of your letter, names of educated Asiatics for entry into the Province will be submitted to the Government for permits.

I have, etc.,

[M. K. GANDHI]

From *Indian Opinion*, 20-7-1912; also photostat of typewritten office copy: S.N. 5663

173. MORE OF THE NEW BROOM[1]

Mr. Cousins is still "going strong". He is not satisfied with insulting our womanhood—though that was the utmost he could have attempted. He wishes to touch us at every point. The latest is that those who return from India must not only identify themselves with the documents they produce, but Mr. Cousins must go behind those documents. He insists on reopening the evidence which secured those documents to the holders. In other words, he rejects the very title-deeds. This is exactly what the late Transvaal Government attempted to do and burnt its fingers over.[2] Mr. Cousins can fare no better. Holders of certificates of domicile will certainly decline to let their

[1] *Vide* also "The New Broom", 13-7-1912.

[2] Lord Milner had demanded in 1903 that Indians should exchange the receipts for £3 paid to the Boer Government as proof of pre-War residence and their right of domicile in the Transvaal. Most Indians voluntarily exchanged these for Peace Preservation Ordinance permits at the instance of Lord Milner who promised that, "once on the Register, their position is established and no further registration is necessary, nor is a fresh permit required"; *Vide* Vol. III. "The British Indian Association and Lord Milner", 11-6-1903 & "Position in the Transvaal", 24-5-1903 and "Representation to Lord Elgin", 31-10-1906. Again in 1905, the Indians were required under the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance to establish the genuineness of their PPO permits as well as of those £3 Dutch certificates which had not been exchanged for the former; *vide* "Criminal", 8-9-1906. In 1908 Indians offered to re-register in return for repeal of the Asiatic Registration Act (which was only a variation of the Asiatic Ordinance of 1905) and by May 9, 1908, 8,700 had voluntarily registered ; of these over 6,000 registrations had been accepted by the Government ; *vide* Vol. VIII, "Johannesburg Letter", 9-5-1908.

title-deeds be treated as of no effect. They will demand entry on the strength of their certificates, if they are theirs.

This is a matter essentially for the Congress to take up, and that without a moment's delay. The situation is becoming intolerable. It is the poor who are suffering. And the Congress will justify its existence only if the voice of the poor does not go unheard with it. The responsibility will be its if a single honest but poor Indian, having rights of domicile, is turned away from the shores of Natal.

Indian Opinion, 20-7-1912

174. DR. MURISON'S LETTER

We print elsewhere Dr. Murison's reply[1] to our letter[2] referred to in our columns last week. We sympathize with Dr. Murison in his troubles. But we venture to think that the worthy Doctor unconsciously exaggerates the incidents that have come under his notice. We take leave to say that the other classes give him much the same trouble that Indian patients do. We suggest to Dr. Murison that his work will be no smoother by his flinging charges of lying against a whole community. The only remedy is gentle yet firm handling of patients who want to evade his department. If Indians suffering from small pox concealed their disease, other Indians helped him to combat the disease. No one can deplore more than we do the fact that there should be any disease at all among Indians, or that, having contracted an infectious disease, Indians should, in their ignorance or fear, attempt to conceal it. But a serious charge, such as that of lying, cannot be sustained because of the painful experiences related by Dr. Murison.

However, the community must feel thankful to Dr. Murison for his frankness and for his evident desire to serve Indians as well as the others. Those of us who claim to be responsible persons must see to it that Dr. Murison receives all the help he may need in order to keep the Borough free from disease and danger, from careless or timid person disregarding or concealing any disease that may be suspected

[1] Dr. Murison, Medical Officer of Health for the Borough of Durban, in the course of his evidence before the Tuberculosis Commission, had stated that Indians were given to lying. On this Gandhiji wrote to Dr. Murison on June 28, 1912, to which the latter replied on July 10, 1912. He maintained that, in matters dealing with public health and sanitation, "it is impossible to obtain truthful replies from this race". *Indian Opinion*, 20-7-1912. *Vide* also "Dr. Murison's Charge", 13-7-1912.

[2] This letter by Gandhiji and also the others in the series are not available.

to be infectious. It is no consolation to be able to refute a general charge of lying. The real consolation can only be derived from efforts being made to remove the smallest ground for making such a charge.

Indian Opinion, 20-7-1912

175. DR . MURISON'S CHARGE

Dr. Murison's reply to our letter seeking his explanation regarding the charge of lying he had brought against Durban Indians deserves careful study. His explanation certainly does not substantiate the charge of lying against the entire community. But we cannot just sit back having put forward this defence. We must admit the [individual] instances Dr. Murison has cited. For it is true that some Indians habitually conceal [the incidence of infectious] diseases and give false replies to the [inquiries of] officials. This habit must go. Often men lie out of fear, and fear is the consequence of ignorance. If ignorance goes, so will fear. And with the passing of fear [the habit of] lying will vanish. For instance, if a case of smallpox is declared we might be threatened with we know not what or we might be harassed in hospital; so we conceal [the incidence of] the disease due to ignorance of this kind and the fear arising from it. In fect, nobody is going to hang us for it, and if we are spirited enough nobody can harass us in the hospital either. Why then should we be afraid? Moreover, by lying we cannot [successfully] conceal a case of smallpox. If anything, we should be afraid of telling a lie. Suppose we tell a lie and conceal a patient and the matter comes to be known, we may be put to shame, charged and even punished. Moreover, if we have concealed a patient, we are likely [afterwards] to be harassed even at the hospital and our relatives may also become involved. If we learn to view the matter thus, there should be no cause for fear.

However, many of those who deceive the authorities are unlikely to read these comments of ours. Thus, the responsibility rests solely on the leaders. If we are truthful and remain so, and if we wish others also to act; likewise, we can do much. It is the duty of the leaders to keep in touch with the poorer section of the community, to point the right path to them now and again and themselves follow it. If we do this, there should be no occasion for a single charge against us.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-7-1912

176. LETTER TO REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS[1]

July 22, 1912

[THE REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS
PRETORIA

SIR,]

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 13th instant. In reply, I beg to state that the inconvenience felt by Indians who are waiting in the street outside your office is very considerable. As you are aware, many have to wait for a long time, and, apart from anything else, to be standing in the street indefinitely must be extremely fatiguing, as, indeed, those who have been obliged to wait there have so often complained to the British Indian Association. Moreover, they have no protection from the wind, sun or rain, and often, when they are in any considerable number, it is difficult for them to know where they should stand—on the pavement or in the street—as, wherever they stood, they would be causing an obstruction. In my humble opinion, as part of the public having to do business in a public office, they are entitled to the same respectable accommodation as is provided in all other public offices.[2]

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 3-8-1912

[1] This was sent in reply to a letter from M. Chamney, Registrar of Asiaitics, dated July 13, which read: "With reference to the interview I had with you on the 11th instant, I shall be obliged if you will put in a written statement regarding the inconvenience to which Indians are put while waiting in the streets outside my office, and setting forth what it is they desire." *Indian Opinion*, 3-8-1912.

[2] In reply to this, Chamney wrote on July 26: ". . . there is no special accommodation available for the convenience of Asiatics who attend at my Office, nor are there any funds available by which such special accommodation could be furnished at the present time. With regard to the sentence which closes your communication. I have the honour to state that I have ascertained that there are many offices attended by the general public, including Europeans, where no special accommodation is provided." *Indian Opinion*, 3-8-1912.

177. LETTER TO SECRETARY FOR INTERIOR

July 22, 1912

THE SECRETARY FOR THE INTERIOR
PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your telegram and letter of the 19th instant[1], for which I thank you.

I shall submit the names of six educated Indians for entry for this year, in due course.[2]

I have, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

From *Indian Opinion*, 27-7-1912; also typewritten office copy: S.N.5668

178. LETTER TO SECRETARY FOR INTERIOR[3]

July 22, 1912

THE SECRETARY FOR THE INTERIOR
PRETORIA

SIR,

Mr. R. M. Sodha is one of the British Indians admitted last year in virtue of the settlement. As was mentioned by me last year, Mr. Sodha intended to do business in the Transvaal for a living, but, as it was thought legislation would be passed during the last session, Mr. Sodha was publicly supported. But he naturally does not wish to remain idle, and is anxious to take out a licence to trade. I take it that, on the strength of the permit issued to him, he will be unable to take out a licence. Will the Government, therefore, be pleased to authorize

[1] *Vide* 1st footnote of "Letter to Minister of Interior", 17-7-1912.

[2] If Gandhiji did propose the names in a letter, it is not available.

[3] M. Chamney, the Registrar of Asiatics, replied to this on August 1, saying, ".. the settlement, as I understood it, was meant to allow six educated Asiatics per annum to enter the Transvaal for the good and benefit of their compatriots, who had not similar advantages of education . I do not think it was ever intended that the six Indians should be allowed in here for their individual benefit . I shall be glad to have your views." S.N. 5682.

the Receiver of Revenue to issue a licence to Mr. Sodha without production of a registration certificate.

I have, etc.,

[M. K. GANDHI]

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5669

179. THE SETTLEMENT PROLONGED

The correspondence[1] between the Union Government and Mr. Gandhi forms interesting reading. According to it, the Provisional Settlement of last year[2] continues pending the passing of satisfactory legislation which the Government again intend introducing during the next session. Meanwhile, six educated British Indians will be permitted to enter the Transvaal Province as if the legislation had already been passed.[3] This is all good . The correspondence avoids recrudescence of passive resistance on the points in dispute.

But the indictment of Lord Ampthill, who has been, with tireless zeal, championing our cause, remains unanswered.[4] The gravamen of His Lordship's charge is that, though the letter of the settlement is being kept, the spirit of it— indeed, General Botha's public declarations[5]—require that the resident Indian population is allowed to

[1] Between January 29 and July 17, 1912

[2] Of May 20, 1911

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Minister of Interior", 17-7-1912.

[4] For Lord Ampthill's question on July 17, 1912 in the House of Lords regarding the implementation of the Provisional Settlement, *vide* Appendix "Lord Ampthill on Provisional Settlement in House of Lords", 17-7-1912.

[5] As early as 1909, Botha had assured Lord Curzon that he would treat British Indians with liberality and justice; *vide* "Letter to Lord Curzon", 27-1-1909. Commenting on the Provisional Settlement on May 23, 1911, General Botha declared that he was very satisfied with it and that it had come about at an opportune time. While warning that only those Indians covered by the Settlement could enter the country in future he promised he would make every effort to make the living conditions of Asiatics as bearable as possible. Indeed, he said, he had no hostility against them. Again, speaking at Rietfontein on September 26, 1911, having returned from the Imperial Conference at London, he said that General Smuts "had wasted away to a shadow" trying to settle the Asiatic question. In answer to a petition which he claimed he had received and which demanded that all Indians be deported from the country, he said the difficulty was "that under the British flag they had to act according to British principles".

remain in South Africa in peace. But there can be no peace so long as wives, recognized by Indian laws, are turned away, the Gold law[1] and the Townships Act[2] are administered so as to bring virtual ruin to Indian merchants, residents of long standing are being forced out of Locations pointed out to them, residential title-deeds are disregarded, impossible proofs demanded as to marriages or domicile,[3] and trade made well-nigh impracticable by a tyrannical administration of licensing legislation.[4]

Indian Opinion, 27-7-1912

[1] *Vide* "Extract from Letter to Maud Polak", 5-4-1911 and Appendix "Polak's Letter to India Government on Gold Law and Townships Act (1908)", 19-4-1912.

[2] Indians living in "proclaimed areas" or other places where they had built up flourishing businesses were being forced into Locations either by virtue of the Gold Law or the Townships Act. The areas immediately affected were Klerksdorp ("Extract from Letter to Maud Polak", 5-4-1911), Krugersdorp ("The Storm Gathering", 12-8-1911), Roodepoort and Germiston ("Germiston Indians", 23-9-1911).

[3] As far as the Transvaal is concerned Gandhiji is referring to the sweeping powers proposed in the 1912 Union legislation for Immigration officials who would have rights unlimited by the jurisdiction of courts in determining who would have rights unlimited by the jurisdiction of courts in determining the domiciliary rights of would-be Indian immigrants. As for proof of marriage, although it was from the Transvaal that Mrs. Sodha, Bai Rasul and Mrs. Jussat were turned away by virtue of very stringent judicial interpretations on the sanctity of marriages contracted under the law of other religions, Gandhiji here seems to have in mind the Natal circular issued only a few days previously by Cousins and referred to in 1st and 2nd footnote of "The New Broom", 13-7-1912.

[4] While concurring in changes proposed by General Smuts, consequent on Indians' opposition, in the Union immigration legislation of 1911 and 1912, Gandhiji reserved the right of Indians to agitate about their other grievances (this article is a fairly exhaustive list of these); *vide* "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 8-2-1912, also "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 7-4-1911 and "At Last", 27-5-1911.

180. THE GERMISTON INDIANS

The Germiston Municipality has evidently succeeded in ruining the Indians living in its Location. After the case of *Kalasing* v. *the Municipality*, several Indian buildings have been pulled down by the Municipality. And now the following characteristic notice has been served upon several Indians suspected of trading in the Location:

> It has been reported that you are selling groceries, etc., at premises on Stand—, at Georgetown Location. Now I am instructed to obtain evidence in support of this report. An attempt will be made to trap you, which, if successful, you will know what to expect.

What they are to expect is virtual confiscation of their buildings. And thus the Municipality expects to send the Indians, by a process of slow starvation, to the dung-heaps they have chosen for the new Location. Law 3 of 1885 specially authorizes Indian trade in Locations. But now, even this is being successfully prevented by the Germiston Municipality.

Indian Opinion, 27-7-1912

181. THE BOKSBURG CASE[1]

The result of the judgment[2] in Mr. Bhyat's case is that trade of

[1] Amod Moosa Bhyat, a well-known Heidelberg merchant who had earlier suffered arrests and financial privation as a passive resister, opened a store in Boksburg on November 6, 1911, in premises registered in L. W. Ritch's name. The Europeans of Boksburg, an East Rand centre which had hitherto allowed no Asiatic to trade in the town, called a meeting on November 8, and protested against the advent of Asiatic competition. A few days earlier the *East Rand Express* had styled Bhyat as an "astute invader" who, with the help of Ritch and his "influential European friends in England", was forcing a test case and promised that the local whites would fight "to the last ditch". An editorial in *Indian Opinion*, 4-11-1911, agreed that the "clear-cut issue" was whether British Indians could trade or pursue their crafts outside "coolie Locations". *The Transvaal leader*, too, took up the cry of white self-preservation and the European Press spoke of an "Asiatic invasion" and declared that European traders could never compete with the Asiatics with their "primitive mode of existence", "Oriental ingenuity" and "inferior standard of civilization". This meeting passed three resolutions, demanding that: (a) action should be taken against Bhyat under Section 131 of the Gold Law; (b) the condition under which the leasehold of Ritch's property was converted into a freehold—that no Coloured person should reside thereon or trade therein—should be enforced; and (c) municipal facilities be denied to Bhyat by the Town Council. The Town Council, in its meeting of November 22, 1911, was faced with more extreme amendments to these resolutions and was called upon to instruct the Receiver of Revenue to cancel all existing Asiatic trade licences. In its meeting of December 8, the Town Council, however, rescinded its amendments having meanwhile taken legal advice and forwarded the resolutions to the Government. Meanwhile, the Mayor and the Chairman of the Committee of the Town Council had met General Smuts in deputation and he assured them that the Government would take immediate steps regarding the stands occupied by Coloured persons in Boksburg. On January 12, 1912 the Government served a notice on Ritch through their lawyers asking him to surrender the crown Grant of August 21, 1911 which gave him freehold of the Stands since he had "violated the conditions of Grant by permitting Coloured persons... to reside on the Stands". On February 12, 1912, the Supreme Court (Transvaal Division) issued summonses against Ritch and Bhyat following an application by the Government and hearing commenced on June 7. The Minister of Justice had moved the Supreme Court for a declaration that the plaintiff was entitled to the ownership of the said Stand since the defendant had refused to cancel the transfer deed and to deliver up the possession of the Stand. *Indian Opinion*, 4-11-1911 to 13-7-1912.

[2] In his judgment Justice Moson declared that Ritch was bound by the conditions under which the Deed of Transfer of Crown land was effected, that is, by the relevant provisions of the Townships Act and the Gold Law. The Union of South Africa were therefore entitled to cancel the Deed of Transfer of these 3 Stands and to order Ritch to deliver up possession of all these. They were furthermore entitled to eject Bhyat, the second defendant. The plaintiff was entitled to the costs of the

British Indian merchants, living within the gold areas, has been rendered not worth a day's purchase. The *East Rand Express* has already advised the other municipalities to take action similar to thatof Boksburg and force the hand of the Government. It is certainly now open to the latter to institute proceedings in respect of landed property in gold areas occupied by British Indian merchants. It is, therefore, of the greatest importance that the Bhyat case should be fought to a finish. The Union Government assured the Imperial Government that the Town-ships Act was not directly aimed at British Indians or other Asiatics, and that there was no clause in it specially affecting them.[1] We now see that, if the judgment given by the Transvaal Bench remains unreversed, the Townships Act has to be read in conjunction with the Gold Law,[2] and the combined effect of

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action. Ritch had contended that the original lease, taken out in 1896, contained no provision against Coloured persons occupying the land. As for the conditions in which leasehold was converted into freehold (that is, that the Stand should not be transferred to any Coloured person), they had been promulgated by Regulation and could not be enforced against persons of non-European descent for, being a differential provision operating against Asiatics only and not Europeans (that is to say, since it was "class legislation"), it required the "previous instruction" of His Majesty under Section 39(a) of the Letters Patent (Transvaal). *Indian Opinion*, 13-7-1912. *Vide* also Appendix "Union Ministers' Minutes for Union Government Regarding Townships Amendment Act (1908)", 16-6-1911 in which Smuts had argued in 1911 that the Townships Act did not bear on such cases.

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Union Ministers' Minutes for Union Government Regarding Townships Amendment Act (1908)", 16-6-1911.

[2] While Law 3 of 1885 did prohibit a Transvaal Asiatic from owning landed property outside Locations, it did not prevent a European from doing so on his behalf whether in perpetual leasehold or freehold. In 1905, the Transvaal Supreme Court "definitely recognized these equitable trusts as between nominal European owners and Asiatic virtual owners" (case of *Syed Ismail and Another* v. *Jacobs* cited by Maud Polak). The effect of the Townships Amendment Act and the Gold Law of 1908 was to annul these confirmed rights. Under the Townships Act, Part II, Chapter 3, Section 9(1), leaseholds of all Stands in Stands Townships were automatically converted into freehold on the payment of a licence fee. The lessor or owner was admittedly not obliged to take out a freehold title. If he did so, Section 130 of the Gold Law of 1908, prohibiting the subletting of premises or the residence of Asiatics thereon, came into force. Obviously, in cases where the property was held in trust, the Indian could not himself take out a freehold owing to the prohibition on "Coloured ownership". If the nominal European owner did so, he became liable under the Townships Act, Chapter 3, Section 3(1), to criminal prosecution, and his property would become forfeit to the Government, under Sections 130 and 131 of the Gold Law of 1908, which was brought into operation in such cases. It happened in cases where the laws were read together. That is, he could not then allow a Coloured person other than a domestic servant to reside on Township properties. Moreover, when such property passed at

the two Acts is such that the Township Act virtually becomes class legislation[1]. Whilst, therefore, it is necessary to take the matter to the highest court of appeal, it is equally necessary for the British Indians in the Transvaal to realize and understand that the courts of justice in matters of this character cannot possibly finally decide the position. In the event of the highest court of appeal upholding the decision, they will have to move in order to secure an amendment of both these laws.

Mr. Bhyat cannot be expected to undertake the burden of appealing. The whole community is in duty bound to come to the rescue. The decision in this case is of general application. We hope, therefore, that British Indians of means will not hesitate to support the proceedings now being taken by giving donations towards the expenses.

Indian Opinion, 27-7-1912

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the death of the owner to the heirs the conversion of a leasehold into a freehold was made compulsory. So much so that, at the death of a nominal European owner, the property of the equitable owner would pass out of his hands. As Lord Ampthill said, this was how the Townships Amendment Act (Act 34 of 1908) and the Transvaal Gold Law (Act 35 of 1908) provided "in a subtle and indirect manner" that the same prohibitions and penalties as were prescribed by the Gold Law in 'proclaimed areas' shall apply in the case of public Townships also. The effect of both these laws was to force, after January 1, 1909, the entire Transvaal Indian population, whether in Townships or in "proclaimed areas", into Locations. The British Government had opposed this policy before and after the Boer War, but had assented to it in 1908. (Lord Ampthill's letter to the British Press, *Indian Opinion*, 28-10-1911, Maud Polak's letter on behalf of the SABI Committee to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, July 29, 1911, C. O. 551/22 and "Mr. Polak's Statement", *Indian Opinion*, 9-12-1911 & 16-12-1911).

[1] Gandhiji had always objected to class legislation, that is, legislation which sought to place differential restrictions on any minority among British subjects which did not have political franchise. As Indians had become members of the Empire by virtue of Queen Victoria's Proclamation, the constitutions of Natal and the Transvaal (which became self-governing in 1893 and 1908, respectively) contained a special provision to the effect that any discriminatory legislation directed against British Indians as a class would require special royal assent. For Gandhiji's references to class legislation, *vide*, for instance, Vol. VI, "Interview to *The Morning Leader*", 20-10-1906 & "A Retrospect", 29-12-1906.

182. LETTER TO MANSUKH[1]

TOLSTOY FARM,
LAWLEY STATION,
TRANSVAAL,
Ashadh Shukla 14 [*July 27, 1912*][2]

DEAR SHRI MANSUKH,

I have your letter, I sent you a cable[3] regarding Mr. Manila Doctor. As there was no reply, I concluded that you were not willing to release him. For some other reasons also, Manilalji decided to go to Fiji. He left the Cape on last Friday. A cable[4] was sent to you. He will go there *via* Australia.

I hope you will all be happy about it and will make Manilalji quite comfortable. The arrangements for his board and lodging should, for the time being, be made by the people there.

If all the friends there encourage him, Manilalji will certainly settle there.

If you feel like writing again, please do.

With due regards from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 2553

183. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

TOLSTOY FARM,
LAWLEY STATION,
TRANSVAAL,
July 28, 1912

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

I was delighted to receive you cable[5]. Everybody has been enquiring about the date of your arrival. I hope that you will be able to give us at least a month. Indian Associations from all the principal

[1] This is the first Hindi letter of Gandhiji's to appear in *The Collected Works*.

[2] Manilal Doctor, referred to in the letter, left for Fiji from Cape Town on July 26, 1912. The letter was therefore written in 1912.

[3] Not available

[4] Not available

[5] Of July 25, 1912; he had said he was sailing on October 5.

towns are most eager to have you in their midst.

If you are accompanied by your secretary or anyone else, I take it you will kindly inform me of the fact.

Need I say that yours will be a royal progress through S. A.

I hope that you have greatly benefited by the change. I was rather anxious when I heard from Miss Polak that you were for some days under medical orders not to receive anybody.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[G. K. GOKHALE
ENGLAND]

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 3772

184. LETTER TO REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS

[LAWLEY,]
July 29, 1912

[SIR,]

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter[1] of the 26th instant. In my humble opinion, want of funds cannot be considered a sufficient answer by a great Government to the request of a section of the public for some reasonable accommodation in a public office.

I am afraid that the closing part of my letter has not been understood. I did not wish to convey that there was any special, that is, extraordinary, accommodation for the general public in the other public offices, but is was submitted, as it is submitted now, that there is always sufficient accommodation for the public in other public offices. I certainly know of no offices where the public are compelled to wait on the foot-paths or public roads, as they have to in connection with your office.

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 3-8-1912

[1] *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Letter to Registrar of Asiatics", 22-7-1912.

185. SPEECH AT JOHANNESBURG BANQUET TO V. A. CHETTIAR[1]

August 1, 1912

The worst days of the Indian passive resistance struggle in the Transvaal were recalled last night [August 1], and a warning was given by Mr. Gandhi to the people who voluntarily underwent imprisonment with hard labour at the time, to be in readiness for a possible repetition of their sufferings.

It was at a banquet given in honour of Mr. V. A. Chettiar, ... who is now on the eve of returning to Madras.

Mr. Gandhi, called upon by Mr. Hosken, as the teacher and prophet of passive resistance, warned his hearers that the great struggle in South Africa was by no means ended. It was, he said, only in suspense, and it might be that the community might again be called upon to undergo much suffering.

Proceeding to propose "The Guests", Mr. Gandhi paid a warm tribute to Mr. Hosken and other Europeans present, and said it was due largely to them that they were all gathered at that table on terms—might he say—of equality. To his mind equality should be a matter of course in every civilized country, and especially in every Christian community; but, labouring as they did under terrible difficulties and terrible prejudices, it was a matter for congratulations when any sort of equality could be attained.

The Transvaal Leader, 2-8-1912

186. THE GERMISTON LOCATION

We publish elsewhere the report of Dr. F. Arnold, the Acting Medical Officer of Health for the Union, on the proposed site for a new Asiatic Bazaar in Germiston. The report, in our opinion, is a special pleading for the site chosen by the Town Council. Dr. Macnab's strong remarks have been brushed aside. It is true that some of the objections have been withdrawn by Dr. Machab. But the main objection—that the Location is to be near a depositing site and a site where anthrax animals have been buried—remains. The fact of Dr.

[1] The banquet was arranged by the Tamil community of Johannesburg on the occasion of Chettiar's departure for India and was attended by about 300 guests including a number of Europeans sympathetic to the Indian cause. Rev. Dr. Ross, Rev. Doke and Hosken also spoke.

Arnold having laid down certain conditions under which only the site can be passed medically shows, too, that Dr. Macnab's strictures were quite justified. It must not, again, be forgotten that even the very ground where night-soil has been deposited is part of the site chosen by the Germiston Municipality. No doubt, from a purely scientific standpoint, it is a consolation that this portion of the Location is not to be used for building purposes for some time to come, but, in matters of this character, a favourable medical report cannot become a conclusive answer to the various objections raised. An old cemetery, form a medical standpoint, may be a good enough site for habitation, but, from other perfectly justifiable points of view, it may be a totally undesirable site. As we have already pointed out, it is a curious circumstance that, for Asiatic Bazaars and Native Locations, Municipalities always succeed in finding the most favourable spots near depositing sites. All we can say is that the Indians of Germiston decline to remove to this wretched spot, notwithstanding the favourable report given by Dr. Arnold. We are aware that they will require to have more than ordinary grit in refusing to remove to this site. The Municipality has made it well-nigh impossible for them to remain in the old Location, because all trade there is entirely stopped. Several buildings have been razed to the ground, and the Municipality have threatened to do likewise with the other buildings, if their owners are caught is the act of trading in the Location. We hope that, no matter what difficulties they have to face, the Indians in Germiston will take up a firm stand and decline to fall into the trap prepared by the Municipality.

Indian Opinion, 3-8-1912

187. LETTER TO SECRETARY TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR[1]

TOLSTOY FARM,
LAWLEY STATION,
TRANSVAAL,
August 3, 1912

[TO
THE] SECRETARY TO THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR
CAPE TOWN

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 1st instant No. 34/E/15330. I have not before me the letter of the 22nd ultimo referred to by you, but I believe it is my letter[2] addressed to the Secretary for the Interior regarding Mr. Sodha and I am replying from the farm as the matter is rather urgent.

In my humble opinion there was no question as to whether the educated Indians who might enter did so for their individual benefit or otherwise; they were to be highly educated men required for the wants of the community. I imagine that after the legislation is passed such men up to the number understood will enter on their own merits. Those who have fought for the principle of legal equality have assumed that highly educated Indians would certainly serve their community while serving themselves. The cases of those who are admitted last year were specially discussed by me with Mr. Lane. I then expressed the hope that while I could give no guarantee that they would not trade—all but Mr.Sodha would not, I told him—that Mr. Sodha was a pre-war resident,—of three years' standing and that he certainly intended to trade, but Mr. Sodha's trading does not by any means imply that he will be lost to the community; it was certainly expected that all who entered the Transvaal as educated men would earn their living by following some independent calling among their

[1] To this the Registrar of Asiatics replied on August 16: ". . . until legislation has been passed validating the residence here of the specially exempted educated Asiatics, it will not be lawful for Receivers of Revenue to issue General Dealers Licences in their favour. I regret that I am unable in consequence to issue orders to any Receiver of Revenue to issue a trading licence to Mr. Sodha, who is meanwhile only residing in the Transvaal on a temporary permit." S. N. 5696.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary for Interior", 22-7-1912.

own compatriots. I hope that an early decision will be arrived at regarding Mr. Sodha. May I trouble you to send me a copy of this letter as I have not been able to copy it myself.

I have etc.,

[M. K. GANDHI]

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5697

188. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO BALEBEHN VORA AND CHANCHALBEHN GANDHI

[After *August 3, 1912*][1]

CHI. BALI AND CHANCHI,

I have letters from you both.

A part of the blame at least for Rami's fractured hand should, I think, go to you. But such accidents always occur. If we are destined to survive, God saves us even from these.

Chi. Veni[2] writes to me to say that Chanchi now wants to come over here. She should know that she is free to come whenever she likes. I allowed her to go, believing as I did, and as I still do, that she would feel she was happier there and that Harilal too would feel likewise. That is why she is there. As to when I shall be able to go there, it is impossible at present to say. I do not think I can leave before the Act is passed at any rate.

It is good news that Kanti is growing stronger. My advice is that no foreign foods be brought into the house. My experience of them has been bad. I am more convinced each day that almost all these foods are objectionable.

Bali has done well in taking up the study of Sanskrit. If ever it is my good fortune to go to India and I have to take up my work there, I intend to use Bali's services fully.

Manilal, Ramdas and Devdas are on the farm. Jayakunvar, Dr. Mehta's daughter, is also with me. She is a great help to me in teaching the children. You must have read in *Indian Opinion* that her

[1] Manilal Doctor, referred to in the last paragraph, sailed for Fiji from Cape Town on July 26, 1912, but the information was published only in *Indian Opinion* of 3-8-1911. (The news-item because of a printing error mentions the 20th as the date of the departure.) This letter must, therefore, have been written some time after August 3.

[2] Wife of Jayashanker Vyas, a Pretoria Indian

husband has gone to Fiji.[1] Chi. Jamnadas, too, is with me. Ani is likewise on the Farm. Devibehn[2] . . .[3]

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 9530

189. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

TOLSTOY FARM,
August 4, 1912

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

Many thanks for your long letter[4]. I would not dream of having you here at the cost of your after-cure. But I assume that you would be able to complete your cure before sailing for S.A. Roughly this is likely to be the programme, subject to your consent: 22nd & 23rd Oct. at Cape Town, 25th & 26th at Kimberley, 27th at Johannesburg. I take it that most of the time will be passed in Jo'burg. Two days may be given to Pretoria. Unless you cable to the contrary I propose to ask General Botha & Mr. Fischer[5] to receive you. If Lord Gladstone returns by that time I propose asking him also. I shall ask

[1] In his "Letter to Dr. Pranjivan Mehta", pp. 169-71, Gandhiji discussed his views on Manilal Doctor's plans for the future—whether he should return to his public work in Mauritius or stay on in the Transvaal. On April 29, Gandhiji wrote to Lane presumably asking him if Manilal Doctor could be admitted to the Transvaal as one of the six educated Asiatics who were to be permitted to enter the Colony each year under the Provisional Settlement: but this letter is not available. In his reply of May 3 (S.N.5649), Lane said that, pending legalization of the Settlement, he could only issue Manilal Doctor a temporary permit. On July 8, Gandhiji wrote in his "Diary, 1912" that M. Doctor did not really want to go to Fiji but added a few days later that he had sailed for Fiji on July 26.

[2] Ada West

[3] The rest of the letter is missing.

[4] Of July 27, 1912; *vide* Appendix "Gokhale's Letter to Gandhiji", 27-7-1912.

[5] Abraham Fischer; Premier of the Orange River Colony, December 1907-May 1910, he became Union Minister for Lands following the formation of the Union of 1910. Some time in June 1912, after the Defence Bill (Act 13 of 1912) had been passed, Smuts relinquished charge of the Ministry of Interior and took over Finance while still retaining the portfolios of Defence and Mines. On this Eric Walker (*A History of South Africa*, p. 542) remarks "... Botha had to rearrange the portfolios in a way which detracted from his ministry's efficiency and enhanced the power of his two Free State colleagues." These were Hertzog and Abraham Fischer and the latter took over the Ministry of Interior from Smuts. These cabinet changes were not noticed in the columns of *Indian Opinion*. Fischer piloted the 1913 Immigration Bill through the Union Parliament.

Mr. Merriman[1] to receive you. He is the greatest statesman of S.A.Addresses will be presented at all the places named by me. It is also the intention to have a mixed banquet in Johannesburg. Probably the Mayor will preside. The last week of your stay will be in Durban and Phoenix. You will sail from Durban. Your passage for India may conveniently be booked after your arrival.

I have first sketched the programme so that if you wished to propose any change you could do so by cable as also by letter.

It would be no calamity if Mr. Fischer goes back upon Gen. Smuts' promise. It can only strengthen our cause. But I hardly think it is possible for the Union Government to do so. What is quite likely is that the Parliament (local) may not pass the Govt. Bill. The Govt. May not make it a point of honour and simply tell us as also the Imperial Govt. that they are helpless. In that event the struggle will be bitter and fierce; but it will go on so long as some of us have a spark of life left in us.

Mr. Sorabji is now there and I dare say he has already paid his respects to you.

How very nice of Mr. Tata to have given Rs. 25,000 again.[2] I know that I owe it all to you. Each time the donations have arrived in the nick of time. It was becoming a difficult question to conduct the farm.

I remain,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 3773

[1] John Xavier Merriman ; English-born farmer, "South African by adoption", he was according to Eric Walker (*op. cit.* p. 535), "the Cape Parliament with all its honourable traditions in the flesh" and "cultured, eloquent, imposing" "with a great knowledge of men and of affairs"; Treasurer in Rhodes' first cabinet, 1890-93, and Premier of the Cape Colony, February, 1908-May, 1910, he was the only serious rival to Botha for the Union premiership in 1910. In 1901, he accompanied Sauer to England to urge on the Imperial Government the case for a South African federation; went again in 1909 to discuss the formation of the Union, travelling on board s.s. *Kenilworth Castle* as a fellow-passenger of the Indian Deputation. Gandhiji, who met him during the voyage, found him "full of sympathy for the satyagrahi prisoners", but later he regretted his inability to keep his promise to Gandhiji about helping with the Transvaal Indian problem; *vide* Vol. IX, "Deputation's Voyage (I)", after 23-6-1909, "Deputation's Voyage (II)", before 9-7-1909, & "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 22-7-1909. *Indian Opinion* (Golden Number, 1906-14) describes him as "a consistent champion of fair play to Indians".

[2] For earlier donations by Tata, *vide* 1st footnote of "Public Letter to Ratan J. Tata", 1-4-1912.

190. MR. TATA'S MUNIFICENCE

Mr. Ratan Tata has outdone himself. At the Sheriff's meeting[1] held at Bombay on the 31st ultimo and presided over by Sir Jamsetji, it was announced that Mr. Tata had given a third contribution of Rs. 25,000 to the Transvaal passive resistance fund. The total given by Mr. Tata there fore amounts to £5,000—a fortune in itself. Mr Petit has already cabled to Mr. Gandhi £1,500. Mr. Tata's munificence shows not only his large-heartedness, but also his keen appreciation of the struggle. Mr. Tata has laid the passive resisters, as also the whole Indian community of South Africa, under deep obligation. He has made the lot of passive resisters easy; and the fact that there are at the back of the struggle such distinguished Indians, encourages those who are engaged in it, and probably brings them nearer their goal. The moral effect of such help on those who, from prejudice, are opposed to us, is also obvious.

Indian Opinion, 10-8-1912

191. THE SHERIFF'S MEETING

A meeting called by a Sheriff in India is equivalent to a meeting called, say, by the Mayor in Durban. The term Sheriff has a meaning different from what we understand by it in South Africa. The Sheriff's position is honorary and it is conferred upon the most distinguished citizens in India. Those of our readers who do not know India much, will now understand what the public meeting recently held in Bombay and called by the Sheriff means. The meeting naturally represented the voice of all the sections of the Bombay public. Its resolutions must, therefore, carry weight. The meeting very properly took up the whole question of the status of our countrymen settled in the British Colonies. East African Europeans want to hound our countrymen out of the British East African Protectorate. They donot even realize that, if Indians withdrew from it, the country would soon become a howling wilderness. Canada will not allow the wives of

[1] This meeting, held on August 1, protested against the treatment of Indians in the colonies, particularly in South Africa, East Africa and Canada; approved a memorandum to the Indian government for transmission to the Marquess of Crewe, condemning the continuance of the indentured labour system; and sent a message of encouragement to South African Indians, strongly approving the forthcoming visit of Gokhale to that country.

domiciled Indians to join their husbands, thus disregarding every canon of decency and fair play. It is possible to understand prejudice against successful rivals, but it is impossible to appreciate selfishness run mad, as it has in Canada—the oldest and most civilized among British Colonies.

The meeting presided over by the Parsee Baronet dealt with all these questions. We, who are living in far-off lands, have a right to look up to the motherland for help. As time goes [by] and knowledge of the condition of the emigrant spreads more generally in India, the volume of sympathy there increases.

For all this great work of education, we have, primarily, to thank Mr. Polak for his persistent and tactful advocacy. There is hardly a town of importance which Mr. Polak has not visited, hardly a public man he has not seen; hardly a newspaper he has not instructed. The Sheriff's meeting was by no means the most important result of his work. It is fortunate that we have a worker of Mr. Polak's stamp in our ranks.

Indian Opinion, 10-8-1912

192. INVALID REGULATIONS

A Boksburg Indian[1] was defended by Mr. Ritch the other day in the Magistrate's Court for a breach of municipal regulations, in that he was conducting a compound where Natives were kept as tenants. The accused was convicted. Mr. Ritch appealed. Mr. Gregorowski argued the appeal and the conviction has been set aside, the Court holding that the regulations were *ultra vires.* This is an important decision. Many Indians would have been seriously affected if the regulations had been held to be valid.

Indian Opinion, 10-8-1912

[1] Moses. He was convicted for contravening Section 38 of the Boksburg Public Health Bye-laws. On appeal being preferred, the judge declared that the bye-law was not valid inasmuch as it discriminated as between Europeans and Coloured persons, for which there was no authority in the enabling law, and he set aside the conviction. *Indian Opinion*, 10-8-1912.

193. THE HON. MR. GOKHALE

It is for the first time that an Indian such as the Hon. Mr. Gokhale is visiting this country. He has helped us much. We can never thank him enough for his work in regard to the abolition of indenture. It was again through his efforts that we received substantial contributions for the satyagraha fund. He has strong sympathy for the satyagrahis. He has helped Mr. Polak considerably. He wields much influence in the Indian Legislative Council.

Mr. Gokhale is visiting this country specifically to study the conditions of Indians here and he will meet local officials. He will be President of the forthcoming session of the [Indian National] Congress.

For these reasons, even from the standpoint of self-interest, it is but fitting that

(1) we should give him a big welcome;

(2) in doing so we should raise no issues about Hindus and Muslims;

(3) individual associations, welcome though they are to give receptions in his honour, should bear in mind that he is an Indian above all;

(4) he should [therefore] be treated as the guest of the entire [Indian] community in South Africa.

(5) If we want it to appear that he is a Hindu, Muslims should take the lead in honouring him, that being the only way to promote fraternal relations between the two sections [of the community];

(6) For welcoming Mr. Gokhale we need to raise a large sum of money.

(7) In the interest of our prestige, and for the sake of the work for which he is coming here, we would do well to put him up in a decent place.

(8) Even where there is disunity and public bodies refuse to come together on the same platform, unity should prevail on this occasion.

An occasion such as this will not recur. The efforts we make and the unity we display on this occasion will stand us in good stead forever.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 10-8-1912

194. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Shravan Sud 4 [*August 16, 1912*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Ba has been seriously ill[2], Ani is passing through a crisis and Kisan[3] has been none too well. All the three are practically bed-ridden. Being occupied with this, I can do nothing else. At night, Kisan and Nagin[4] share the bed with me, so that I don't get much sleep either. Gokuldas[5], who is here, has his bed beside Ani's. All the three patients, I think, are on the way to recovery, though not completely out of danger yet.

The error in the figure for the Famine [Relief Fund] has been found. It now remains for me to go through the thing. I shall send the figure by and by. I got Popat's letter. I have got everything that you sent. Your letter is not with me at the moment and hence I cannot recollect the items in the list you sent.

The booklet[6] about Prof. Gokhale should be as good as you can make it. I can only ask you to do what we ourselves do here. Saturdays and Sundays may be availed of for this work. Anyone who wants to may help. Here, Devibehn and Mr. Kotwal have been of invaluable assistance. Devibehn starts work at seven [in the morning] and goes on till nine at night. She cooks her own meals and eats them hurriedly, standing. Mr. Kotwal gets up at three in the morning to cook for those keeping the *roza*[7]. Jeki has greatly improved in health now. She too, therefore, makes herself quite useful. All of you having joined in spoiling Jamnadas's health, he cannot give of his best, though he is

[1] Kasturba Gandhi and Ani Desai's illness referred to in the letter are both mentioned in "Diary, 1912". Moreover it was during 1912 that Kotwal worked as a member of the Tolstoy Farm. In that year *Shravan Sud* 4 corresponds to August 16.

[2] She and Ani fell ill on the 11th.

[3] Son of Ani and Purshottamdas Desai.

[4] Son of Ani and Purshottamdas Desai

[5] Son of Parmananddas Gandhi, Gandhiji's cousin

[6] *The Hon. Mr. Gokhale and the Indenture System*, which contained a brief sketch of Gokhale's public career and a full report of the debate on the resolution moved by him in the Viceroy's Legislative Council, Calcutta. The booklet was being published by Phoenix to mark the occasion of Gokhale's proposed visit to South Africa.

[7] The fast that Muslims keep during *Ramzan*.

willing enough. He is always suffering from one ailment or another. While there, he let himself go in the matter of food, and all of you, in your affection, allowed him this liberty. He is suffering the consequences now, as he himself admits. He has, on his own, described [to me] all the liberties he took. It is possible that I may be able to go there in September.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I have Devibehn's help, but that has not reduced my work. I have to be careful still, because of fear on Ba's account. I shall have some time to myself only after she has got used to things. However, about sending the account, I have it on my mind all the time. I shall send along with it the papers about Devibehn also.

Lallubhai simply wants to get the most he can out of his book. By all means let him. Why did you publish the matter advertising it in the news columns?

Remember that we are not to publish anything relating to the Hindu Conference. Not even its advertisement material, if received. You must have seen that the whole thing is a humbug.

I am not in a position to leave immediately to look into the affairs of the [Natal Indian] Congress.

Mr. West's statement of expenses on fare, etc., is all right. He is not to be asked to reimburse the amount. He has drawn nothing here.

Manilal Doctor may be going to Fiji to keep his promise. He is in no position to start legal practice immediately. He can do so only after the new law has been passed.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 5710

195. SMALLPOX IN JOHANNESBURG

We invite the attention of the Johannesburg Indians to the extracts[1] we give from the *Sunday Post* in connection with the second

[1] Dr. Porter, Medical Officer of Health, said in the course of an interview: "Judging by past experience, the remedy for such outbreaks lies in the segregation of white and Coloured in the city. . . .What is wanted by the Council is the power to force all Coloured people—Malays, Indians, Cape Coloureds and Chinese[—] to reside in fixed Locations. At present the Council has no such power, while the Provincial Council...is also powerless." *Indian Opinion*, 17-8-1912.

outbreak of smallpox in Johannesburg. So far, Indians appear to have remained immune, but it is none the less their duty to help the authorities by removing all causes that might lead to an outbreak among themselves. There is, in that article, the suggestion that we do not conform to the laws of sanitation. The best way to meet this charge is, without doubt, that we put our houses in perfect order. We ought not to wait for prosecutions or notices before we observe the ordinary rules of sanitation. Dr. Porter is reported to have said to an interviewer that some houses in the heart of Johannesburg deserve nothing but total destruction, and that they are being inhabited by Indians, as also others including many Europeans. We feel that Indians residing within that area should at once set about vacating such houses, where they are not capable of proper repair, and they will find that, although it may cost them a little more in rent, the extra cost would be more than made up for in times of panic and by the people themselves keeping better health. Dr. Porter deserves, and is entitled to all the help that can be given to him in his war against the dreaded disease.

Indian Opinion, 17-8-1912

196. SMALLPOX IN JOHANNESBURG

Smallpox has again broken out in Johannesburg. Once the disease appears in a large and crowded city like Johannesburg, It is difficult to stamp it out quickly or [even] to check it. The news of the outbreak has therefore created a panic and thousands of people rush to get themselves vaccinated against smallpox. In order to control the epidemic, however, the chief thing is to prevent the contagion from spreading. Stress has therefore been laid on segregating the various communities, and the question of obtaining the necessary powers is also being considered. When segregation is being considered, the proposal, needless to say, is bound to include the Indians. It will be impossible to raise the issue of racial discrimination if it is proposed to segregate Indians in Locations because of the epidemic. It cannot also be denied that our people, more than others, withhold information about [the incidence of] the disease with the result that the contagion spreads further. Thus, the outbreak of the epidemic will provide an occasion for some serious suggestions to be made which, we want the Indians to note, it will be

almost impossible to oppose. Though the epidemic did not originate this time with Indians and though only a few cases appear to have occurred among them, they should not be any the less careful in the matter. Dr. Porter has stated that some of the houses in the central part [of the city], occupied by Indians and others, are so dirty that they should really be burnt down. It is the duty of the Indians [concerned] to vacate the houses forthwith and take up residence elsewhere. And they should maintain the utmost cleanliness in the new houses. Even if this means their having to incur some expenditure, it will be worth while doing so. The community should extend its full co-operation to the Medical Officer. If it shows itself to be negligent, the severest possible measures will be taken against it in the name of the epidemic.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 17-8-1912

197. LETTER TO REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS

[LAWLEY,]

August 19, 1912

THE REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS
PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter[1] of the 18th instant. I hope to be able to forward the list of six British Indians at an early date. Consultations are now being held as to the names, the fittest to be submitted out of the many received.

I have, etc.,

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5699

[1] This letter is not available; *vide*, however, 1st footnote "Letter to Minister of Interior", 17-7-1912.

198. INTERVIEW TO "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"

JOHANNESBURG,
August 22, 1912

Although Mr. M. K. Gandhi is not resident in Johannesburg at the present time, he continues to keep in close touch with public affairs, in so far as they affect his own people. Yesterday morning [August 22] a *Leader* representative had a chat with the one-time passive resister, who had trudged in from the farm Tolstoy, where he is now living in comparative retirement.

When asked whether he had read the various articles published during the past few weeks in connection with the outbreak of smallpox, Mr. Gandhi replied in the affirmative. In regard to the suggestion that the Coloured races should be segregated he stated that, although he approved of voluntary segregation, he was opposed to compulsion in any shape or form.

Segregation would in any case be totally ineffective. Even if you kept the Indians in one district, the Eurafricans in another, you could not prevent them intermixing outside in the ordinary course of their business. Segregation would not remove the danger of infection. You would find that the Indian fruit-hawker would, if he came from an area infected with smallpox, carry the disease into other areas. During the present outbreak there have been very few Indian cases, and the health officials cannot blame us on this occasion. We are only too anxious to help the authorities, but we are opposed to compulsory segregation. Dr. Murray gave some very valuable evidence on the point some years ago, when he appeared before the Insanitary Area Expropriation Commission, . He stated that any neglect of sanitation that existed among British Indians or the others would not be dealt with successfully by relegating them to inaccessible Bazaars or to places which would not lend themselves to effective control by the Health officials.

DRASTIC BY-LAWS APPROVED

I fully approve of drastic by-laws where the health of the community is concerned. I would show no mercy to offenders against such measures.

[Question ;] Do you approve of the action of the Public Health Committee in applying for the powers of demolition in the case of in sanitary dwellings?

Yes, I would enforce the law in this respect with the utmost

rigour. The proper way of dealing with all classes of the community, European, Asiatic, Eurafrican and Native, is to allow them freedom of movement, subject to a strict supervision as regards health conditions. I've had close on 20 years' experience in such matters, and if you were to segregate the Indians and force them to live in Bazaars, say 4 or 5 miles out of town, you would run a big risk of the spread of such diseases as smallpox.

We as a community have been accused of a desire to hide the outbreak of any disease. What would happen if the Indians were cut off for residential purposes from the rest of the population? I can assure you that the danger of contagion would be far greater. In any case, I am convinced that the Imperial Government would not sanction any class legislation such as a policy of segregation would entail. As a race we are only too anxious to obey the laws, and trust that the sanitary by-laws which will come into force under the new Municipal Ordinance will be enforced in a firm and just manner.

The Transvaal Leader, 23-8-1912

199. A SPLENDID RECORD

The subject of this sketch is so well known that it is almost superfluous to explain who and what Mr. Gokhale is. South African Indian remember with deep gratitude his continued advocacy of their cause and his sympathy with them in their troubles. He will be always remembered as the man who largely brought about the stoppage of recruiting indentured labour in India for Natal. Mr.Gokhale's energies have been recently thrown into the introduction of a Bill in the Viceroy's Council to provide free and compulsory education for every child in India. Although unsuccessful, Mr. Gokhale is not the man to be discouraged by failure. When he knew that the fate of his Bill was sealed, he made no complaint. In his speech before the Council he said: "I know too well the story of the preliminary efforts that were required even in England before the Act of 1870 was passed, either to complain or to feel depressed. Moreover, I have always felt and have often said that we of the present generation in India can only hope to serve our country by our failures." Such is the man as he is today. His life has been spent in serving the Motherland, and it is the prayer of millions in India and elsewhere that he may be spared many more years to continue the work he loves so well.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale was born in 1866 at Kolhapur, India. His parents were poor, but they sent him to the local college to be educated. He was a successful student and took his B. A. course principally at the Eliphinstone College, Bombay, and partly at the Deccan College, Poona. After taking his degree, in 1884, he was admitted to membership of the Deccan Education Society. The life-members of this Society bind themselves to serve in the Fergusson College and in the schools of the Society for a period of twenty years on a monthly salary of 75 rupees. For some time Mr. Gokhale lectured on English Literature and Mathematics, but for the greater part of his term of service he filled the chair of History and Political Economy, subjects which he has so thoroughly mastered that he is acknowledged to be an authority on them. Such was his devotion and love for the work that, for several years, he devoted all his holidays to the work of collecting funds, travelling incessantly, bearing hardships, and submitting to indignities. Mr. Gokhale, though never occupying the position of Principal, was a man of great influence in the conduct of its affairs. About the time that he entered the Fergusson College, Mr. Gokhale came under the influence of the late Mr. Justice Ranade[1], and for many years they studied together great world problems, and especially those concerning India. In 1887, in compliance with Mr. Ranade's wish, Mr. Gokhale became the editor of the *Quarterly Journal* of the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha. Subsequently he became Honorary Secretary of the Deccan Sabha. He was also for four years one of the editors of the *Sudharak*, an Anglo-Marathi weekly of Poona. He was Secretary of the Bombay Provincial Council for a similar period, and when, in 1895, the Indian National Congress held its eleventh session in Poona, Mr. Gokhale was elected as one of its Secretaries. In 1897 he was selected, along with other prominent public men of Bombay, to go to England and give evidence before the Welby Commission of Indian Expenditure. There, thanks to his excellent training, he was able to stand the severe heckling to which the expert Commissions subjected him, and showed a thorough grasp of principles and mastery of details. The character of the man was brought out in connection with some letters which he addressed to the British Press on the plague administration in India. When he returned

[1] 1. Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842-1901) ; economist, historian and social reformer; became judge of Bombay High Court in 1893 ; author of *Rise of the Maratha Power, Essays in Indian Economics and* other books.

to India, he was called upon to substantiate his charges, and, on his friends, who had furnished him with the information, failing to come forward to support him, Mr. Gokhale acted in accordance with the best traditions of public life and offered a generous apology. For this gentlemanly act, Mr. Gokhale suffered a great deal of unpopularity in some quarters. During 1900 and 1901, Mr. Gokhale was an elected member of the Bombay Legislative Council where he did most useful work. In 1902, he was elected a member of the Supreme Legislative Council, which is presided over by the Viceroy of India. His first Budget speech came as a revelation to the public. Ever since, his speech on the occasion of the Budget has been looked forward to with eager interest. His mastery of facts and figures and his detailed knowledge of administrative problems, together with his command of simple, clear, vigorous expression and earnestness of purpose, call forth the admiration of even his opponents. Some of the most highly placed officials in India are his personal friends, and even Lord Curzon recognized in Mr. Gokhale 'a foeman not unworthy of his steel". The Viceroy is reported to have said that it was a pleasure to cross swords with Mr. Gokhale and that Mr. Gokhale was the ablest Indian he had come across, and., in token of his admiration for his ability and character, decorated him with the title of C.I.E.

The Servants of India Society was formed by Mr. Gokhale in 1905. Mr. Gokhale believes that the Motherland is greatly in need of men who will devote their lives to willing service, and it is through the medium of this Society that he is training men for the noble work of educating the people of India in matters concerning their physical and moral welfare. In the same year Mr. Gokhale went on a mission to England, on behalf of the Bombay Public, and, just before leaving again for India, he received a pressing invitation to become the President of the forthcoming Congress at Benares. Mr. Gokhale was not at all well at the time, and would have been excused from the arduous duties, but he at last yielded to the public demand. The speech delivered by Mr. Gokhale as President dealt in a masterly manner with Lord Curzon's administration, the Partition of Bengal, the *Swadeshi* movement, and the demand of the Indian people for a greater share in the Government of their own country. It is not possible this brief outline of Mr. Gokhale's career, to go further into this and other speeches, but we would recommend readers to obtain a copy of Mr. Gokhale's published speeches and study them. We cannot do better than conclude by quoting the closing lines of the

excellent introduction to Mr. Natesan's publication, *The Speeches of the Hon. Mr. G. K. Gokhale,* from which we have gleaned the facts for this sketch ;

> Magnanimous by nature, he seldom wounds the feelings of his adversary even when he hits the hardest. Identified as he is with the moderate school of political thought, he is far from being a party man. Scorning all mere strife, his great anxiety is to unite all parties by the common tie of patriotism. Brought up in a school of severe self- examination, he is always on the guard against the insidious influences of the partisan spirit, and will not allow his love of his fellow-countrymen to be affected by irrelevance distinction. Chaste in thought, word and deed, a master of lucid exposition, a speaker who inspires without inflaming, a citizen who is not afraid of strife but loves amity, a worker who can obey as well as command, a solider of progress with invincible faith in his cause—Mr, Gokhale is indeed a perfect Servant of India.

Indian Opinion, 24-8-1912

200. SPEECH AT MEETING OF BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

JOHANNESBURG,
August 25, 1912

In accordance with the notice issued by the British Indian Association, a general meeting was held at the Hamidia Islamic Society's Hall on the 25th instant, Mr. Cachalia presiding . . . .

Mr. Cachalia, in opening the proceedings, said that it would be a great day for the Indians in South Africa when the Hon. Mr. Gokhale arrived . . . . He then called upon Mr Gandhi to explain the programme to be recommended to the meeting.

Mr. Gandhi said that Mr. Gokhale would land on the 22nd October, at Cape Town, and would not be able to prolong his stay in South Africa beyond three weeks.[1] He would have to reach India at the beginning of December, as he was President Elect of the Indian National Congress, and had also been appointed a member of the Public Service Commission. So far as he could see, therefore, Mr. Gokhale would be able to give two days to Cape Town, one day to Kimberly, from which place an invitation had already been received, and would reach Johannesburg about the 27th October. He could give the Transvaal about ten days, most of which time could be passed in Johannesburg. A suitable address should be presented from the Association on the day of Mr. Gokhale's arrival, and, if the various section of the community desired also to emphasize their sentiments beyond a general expression thereof in the Association

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Gokhale's Letter to Gandhiji", 27-7-1912.

address, their addresses should be presented at the same time. They were bound to recognize that the hon. Gentleman did not enjoy the best of health, and they would have to bear that in mind in considering the programme. On the day following, the speaker suggested, there should be a banquet, attended by about 1, 000 persons. Both the functions should take place, if it were possible, at the Wanderers', and the Mayor should be requested to preside.There should be also an arch erected, if permitted, at the railway station or at the place where the addresses would be presented; otherwise, at the residence that would be hired. The speaker said that no honour that could be paid to Mr.Gokhale could be considered too much. If he had been born in Europe—in France—he would probably have been the President of the Republic; in England, the Prime Minister; such were his moral and mental attainment! His special work for south Africa was know to everyone . In estimating the cost of the celebration, Mr. Gandhi suggested, £1,000 would be necessary. He suggested, too, that volunteers from all sections of the community should be ready to give the whole of their time during Mr. Gokhale's stay here, and for some days before. Mr. Gandhi also announced to the meeting that there was a cablegram to the effect that His Highness the Aga Khan intended to visit South Africa and East Africa in the near future, and suggested that a cablegram should be sent expressing the pleasure, of the community at the news and inviting His Highness.

Mr. Hajee Habib, Pretoria, then moved that a Comittee with all the necessary powers be appointed to make collections, to arrange the programme and to do all things necessary for honouring Mr. Gokhale on his arrival, and that the Committee should also appoint delegates to proceed to Cape Town to receive the hon. Gentleman. He moved, too, that the suggested cablegram should be sent to His Highness the Aga Khan.[1]

Imam Saheb Abdul Kadir Bazeer, the Chairman of the Hamidia Islamic Society, seconded the resolution and said that there was no doubt that it was the duty of the whole Indian community to give a royal welcome to Mr. Gokhale. The Community would simply be honouring itself by honouring such a distinguished visitor. . . . .

Indian Opinion, 31-8-1912

[1] The following cable was sent to His Highness the Aga Khan: "British Indian Association read with pleasure cable announcing your intention visit south Africa. Community gladly welcomes Your Highness. Could you time your arrival with Mr. Gokhale's? Cachalia."

201. SPEECH AT MEETING OF BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
August 25, 1912

In response to an invitation, Mr. Gandhi, speaking in the matter of the school[2], said that it had always been their desire, as a result of the passive resistance movement, to build what might be called a Federation Hall[3]. This certainly was a very suitable opportunity. If a building worthy of the community were erected, combining a meeting hall, a public school, residential quarters for pupils, residential quarters for guests, etc, it would certainly be a most proper step. It might cost £10, 000, but that sum ought not to be beyond the power of the Indian residents of the Transvaal. . . .[4]

Indian Opinion, 31-8-1912

202. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

[LAWLEY,]
Shravan Vad 2 [*August 29, 1912*][5]

CHI. HARILAL,

It would seem you have made up your mind not to write.

I enclose a letter from uncle Karsandas[6]. I just do not understand this debt. I do not know how the expenditure on Gokul-das's[7] marriage came to be incurred, and by whom. If you remember anything, however, let me know what expenditure I had agreed to. It is unlikely that I agreed to so large an amount. All the same, tell me what you know.

At present, preparations for Professor Gokhale's visit are going on. Mr. Kotwal has been working hard on the Farm. Jekibehn has also

[1] This as well as the preceding speech was made at the same meting.

[2] At Tolstoy Farm

[3] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 15-2-1908 & "Letter to *Indian Opinion*", 3-3-1908.

[4] A Committee was then nominated including Bawazeer, Cachalia, Ebrahim Coovadia, Fancy and Sonja Schlesin, presumably for the purpose of collecting funds.

[5] This letter was written in 1912 as is clear from the reference to Gokhale's forthcoming visit.

[6] Gandhiji's elder brother.

[7] Gokuldas died in 1908 ; *vide* "Letter to Meghjibhai Gandhi and Khushalchand Gandhi", 14-5-1908 & "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 21-5-1908.

been helping. Manilal is occupied with his studies. Ramdas and Devdas, too, study regularly, and work on the farm as well.

Anibehn is also on the Farm.

I shall be going to Durban in a day or two to receive Mr. Polak[1]. Ba and Devdas will go with me and stay in Phoenix for some time.

Chanchi can come over here whenever she feels like it. I should like you to send me some news from your end.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 9536

203. DEATH OF MR. HUME

By the last English mail comes the news of the death of Mr. A.O. Hume[2], who was known as the "Father of the Indian National Congress". We give elsewhere tributes to his memory reprinted from *India*. Real friends of India are so rare that we feel specially grateful to those who have taken pains to understand the peculiar and in many ways unfortunate position of India in the British Empire. Too often we find that retired Civil Servants of India are out of sympathy with the Indian people. This was not the case with the late Mr. Hume. He believed that it was not beneath his dignity to meet Indians on an equal footing. He worked side by side with the leaders of the people, encouraging them with his kindly sympathy and urging them on to higher and nobler things. We learn that, even though his strength failed him, his enthusiasm never flagged. The memory of such noble men renews again our drooping faith in the righteousness of the British people. We still hope and trust that England can produce men of the stamp of Mr. Hume—men who will stand up for justice, cost what it may. By the death of Mr. A.O. Hume, India has lost a true friend.

Indian Opinion, 31-8-1912

[1] He arrived in Durban from India with Mrs. Polak on September 4.

[2] Allen Octavian Hume; one of Sir George Trevelyan's "Competition Wallahs", was Magistrate of Etawah during the Mutiny; became Secretary to the Government of India in 1870 and did commendable work organizing the Revenue, Agricultural and Commercial departments; author of *Old Man's Hope, The Star in the East, The Rising Tide*, etc., the last being on political activity in India.

204. RAILWAY TRAVELLING IN THE TRANSVAAL

We publish in another column the correspondence that has passed between Miss Schlesin and the Railway Administration.[1] The question raised by Miss Schlesin is undoubtedly one of very great delicacy, and requires, on her part, a great deal of tact and carefulness. It is equally necessary, on the part of the Administration, to use tact and discretion. We consider that, in her capacity as Honorary Secretary of the Indian Women's Association, Miss Schlesin could take up no other position, consistently with her dignity and with the interests that are under her charge. She could not properly leave her co-workers, who are travelling with her in a common mission and separate herself from them during the railway journey. That would be carrying too far the doctrine of concession to popular prejudice, unreasonable and unreasoned as it is; and we think that Miss Schlesin, in spite of her natural desire to conciliate the Railway Department, is in no way bound by an administration of regulations which is not at all required for the purpose for which the Regulations are intended.

Indian Opinion, 31-8-1912

205. A "DISTINCT HARDSHIP"

The administration of the immigration laws of South Africa is a disgrace to a civilized country. Could anything be more heartless and cruel than to send away from their homes men whose only fault was that the ship in which they had travelled from India had been delayed by storms. That is exactly what happened the other day to five Indians at Cape Town.[2] Mr. Justice Searle, who heard the application of the Indians, said that the case was one of distinct hardship, but he was obliged to carry out the plain meaning of the law, having no discretion. All we can say is that there is something very seriously

[1] The correspondence was concerning two incidents in which Sonja Schlesin, while travelling with Indian friends in compartments reserved for Coloured persons, was asked to remove to other compartments. On both occasions she refused to comply, challenging the Railway Administration to prosecute her.

[2] Four Indians, previously resident in South Africa, had gone to India on temporary permits and were returning to Cape Town, one of them accompanied by his son. They were refused permission to enter as the time allowed in the permits had expired. Their counsel argued that, but for the delay caused by bad weather, they would have arrived 12 days earlier. The judge conceded this but had to "carry out the plain meaning of the law" which allowed no exception. *Indian Opinion*, 31-8-1912.

wrong with the law. We do not envy the Judge who has to make the humiliating admission that he is powerless to deal out justice, but we do not blame him either. Judges cannot make or alter laws; they can only interpret them. The Immigration Restriction Acts of the Cape and Natal must be either amended or ended. At Durban, Indians who are domiciled in this Province are being turned away almost daily at the caprice of a man[1] who, being a servant of the Government and therefore of the people, has not the common sense or tact of a schoolboy. The Supreme Court has to confess that it is unable to interfere with the Immigration Officer's autocratic powers. He alone must be satisfied and no one can say him nay. Are the Indians of South Africa going to sit down and accept such an intolerable situation? If they do, they will deserve to suffer.

Indian Opinion, 31-8-1912

206. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

[PHOENIX,]
Shravan Vad 9 [*September 5, 1912*][2]

CHI. HARILAL,

I have your letter. I am surprised. I cannot recall a single month during which I did not write to you. I am certain that my letters to you have miscarried. You complain that there has been no letter from me and say you are sad on that account. We, in the absence of letters from you....[3] let us see what happens at the address. Ba, Devdas and I have come over to Phoenix. I brought Ba over because she was very ill. Devdas [, too,] was very keen [to come here]. The understanding with him is that he should continue at Phoenix till my next visit, learn composing while still attending to studies and live on a salt-free diet for 28 days in the month. For the present at least, he does all this.

I have made further changes in my way of life, which I hope to describe when I have the time.

Mr. and Mrs. Polak will stay in Durban for the present. I have advised Mr. Polak to start practice. Let us see what happens.

[1] Cousins; *vide* also "The New Broom", 13-7-1912 and "More of the New Broom", 20-7-1912.

[2] The references to Kasturba Gandhi's illness and her stay at the Farm and to Kotwal later in the letter would suggest that it was written in 1912.

[3] A page here is missing.

Since the Immigration Officer here is strict nowadays, Mr. Pragji[1] has not landed as yet. He will probably do so tomorrow.

Mr. Sorabji continues to write.

Manilal is busy with his studies. Ramdas, Mr. Kotwal, Jekibehn, Ani etc., are on the Farm.

Mr. Kotwal and I also live on one meal a day. After hearing from Chanchi about your one-meal practice, I, too, felt strongly inclined to adopt it. Mr. Kotwal offering to join me, the idea was immediately put into practice. Follow any course that you like, so long as you are mindful of your health. I shall not forgive you if you ruin your health. I cannot help feeling that the time and money spent on French are being wasted. I can give you no idea of how much better it would have been if you had spent this valuable time on Sanskrit. The atmosphere, however, in which you move nowadays being corrupt, you thought of French. What a good thing it would have been if you had taken up Sanskrit! Though that might have delayed your passing the examination by a year. Knowledge of Sanskrit opens the doors to all the Indian languages. These doors, you went out of your way to shut. I make these observations, since you opened the subject of French again. I should be happier if you would reconsider the matter even now and start on Sanskrit, sacrificing a year and spending Rs.8 instead of Rs.7 on private coaching. Do as you will, however; I do not wish to stand in the way of your joining any standard you choose. Treat my advice as no more than that of a close friend.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I have not been able to understand why Chanchi did not come. Cable when you send her so that I can arrange for her landing. It was Chanchi who gave the news about Rami.[2]

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 9542

[1] Pragji Khandubhai Desai, who had gone to India on a short visit; *vide* "Letter to Dr. Pranjivan Mehta", 11-3-1912. Gandhiji mentions, however, in his "Diary, 1912" that Pragji visited him on September 4. It is possible Gandhiji started writing the letter on September 3 and posted it on September 5.

[2] *Vide* "Fragment of Letter to Balibehn Vora and Chanchalbehn Gandhi", after 3-8-1912.

207. MR. AND MRS. POLAK

Mr. and Mrs. Polak received a hearty welcome from the Indians of Durban on their return from India. Perhaps this is not the place, owing to Mr. Polak's intimate connection with this journal, to review his work[1]. But, before he takes the editorial reins in his own hands again, it may not be considered out of place to remark upon his public work, apart from his editorial activity which, as our readers are aware, is a labour of love with him.

Mr. Polak, by his tact, ability and perseverance, has been able to rouse public opinion in India in such a manner that, probably, there is no question which occupies so much attention and commands such unanimous advocacy as the South African Indian. His persistent effort has enabled the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale to achieve the brilliant result he did on the indenture question. His advocacy filled the exhausted passive resistance chest[2] and, thanks to his unremitting zeal, the Government of India is posted up with the fullest particulars about our

[1] Polak arrived in India towards the middle of November, 1911, primarily as a representative of the Transvaal British Indian Association to lay the problems of African Indians before the Indian public. Soon after his arrival he received a cable from the Natal Indian Congress authorizing him to represent that body in his dealings with the Indian Government and public organizations. He was instructed to lay great stress on the abolition of the £3 Tax. Polak addressed many letters and petitions on the subject to the Secretary, Department of Commerce and Industry. His other communications to the Government of India dealt with the Transvaal Townships Amendment Act of 1908, the Gold Law, and the Transvaal Government's refusal to recognize "polygamous marriages" contracted under Muslim Law. He also addressed the Calcutta session of the Indian National Congress held between December 26 and 29 on the Indian situation in South Africa ("Mr. Polak at the National Congress", p.207) and his speech was received with great ovation. He also surveyed the South African situation in a speech delivered at the sixth session of the All-India Muslim League. Other meetings he addressed passed resolutions condemning the treatment of Indians in South Africa and demanded that the Indian Government take steps to end their grievances and abolish the system of indentured labour. The memorial that the Sheriff's meeting (pp. 299-300) addressed to the Viceroy was the outcome of Polak's "stirring speech". Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy, the chairman of this meeting, entertained Polak at a banquet on August 7 and warmly praised Polak's services to the African Indians' cause. *Vide* also "Polak's Work", 1-7-1911.

[2] While Polak may generally have collected money for the Passive Resistance fund during his tour of India, the reference here is perhaps specifically to the donation of Rs. 25,000 by Ratan Tata announced at the Sheriff's meeting in Bombay; *vide* "The Sheriff's Meeting", 10-8-1912.

grievances.

Mr. Polak could have done little but for the zealous support ungrudgingly given to him by Mrs. Polak. Nor has Mrs. Polak's work been of a neutral character. She herself moved freely among our women folk and enlightened them on our position. Mrs. Polak believes, and rightly, that no reform or movement can succeed completely which does not command the attention of the other half of humanity. She, therefore, lost no opportunity, whether by speaking or writing, of helping her husband in his work. And we know, too, that she did not consider it beneath her dignity to do for Mr. Polak much of his clerical work. Well may the community honour such workers and friends.

Indian Opinion, 7-9-1912

208. HIS HIGHNESS THE AGA KHAN

The community has every reason to congratulate itself on the reported decision of His Highness the Aga Khan to visit South Africa. His Highness is the High Priest of one of the most important sections of the Mahomedans of India. He is the undisputed political leader of Indian Mahomedans, and is a cultured Indian, taking an active and intelligent part in all that concerns the welfare of India. As a politician of broad views, he is striving to bring Mahomedans and Hindus more closely together. It is said to be due to his efforts that the London Branch of the All-India Muslim League has suggested more intimate co-operation with the Indian National Congress. What is perhaps of most importance to us is, that His Highness has always espoused our cause and spoken out fearlessly on more than one occasion on our behalf. It was well, therefore, that the prominent Indian Associations of South Africa should have sent invitations to him and suggested that his visit may synchronize with the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale's.[1] It would, undoubtedly, be a great thing in every way if we could have both these distinguished visitors at the same time. But, whenever His Highness comes, we know that he is sure of a royal welcome from the whole of the Indian community throughout South Africa.

Indian Opinion, 7-9-1912

[1] The request for timing his visit with Gokhale's was cabled to the Aga Khan at Gandhiji's suggestion; *vide* "Speech at Meeting of British Indian Association", 25-8-1912

209. THOU, TOO, BRUTUS!

Elsewhere our readers will peruse with pain, horror and, no doubt, indignation, the remarks that a Judge of the Natal Bench deemed it necessary to make in the course of his address to the Jury in an Indian murder case. His Lordship allowed himself quite gratuitously to argue from the particular to the general. In the case in question, it appears that the murdered woman, who was employed on a sugar estate, had two "husbands". In rightly calling such a state of affairs an abomination, the Judge said "it was a common form of abomination amongst these Indians". The context shows that the word "these" is not used to specialize Indians but it is used to emphasize the Judge's opinion that it is Indians he is thinking of and no others in this connection. So that the Judge's sweeping condemnation includes the whole Indian community. Evidently, the Jury, being men of the world, knew better. In their rider to the verdict of guilty, they drew attention to the fact that on sugar estates "thousands of men were congregated with a very small percentage of women". Those who know the conditions of life on estates wonder that there is any purity of life left among their inmates, and that vio-lent crimes are as rare as they are.

We take leave to say that the Judge does not know the Indian community at all. We doubt if he has met with even half a dozen Indian cases of the kind mentioned by him. The Judge, in failing even to distinguish between Indians actually undergoing indenture and free Indians, has shown a hastiness of judgment which one rarely associates with the High Court Judge. If the learned Judge had cared to probe the truth, he would have found that such cases are not to be found in any numbers among the free Indian population, that they are not of frequent occurrence even among indentured Indians, that, where they do exist, they are really not marriages at all, but that the women, living in such circumstances, are nothing but helpless prostitutes who have fallen a prey to the lust of men; and these consider the few women, whom the law requires to be brought as a sop to conventional morality, as their natural prey. If the Judge had gone still deeper, he would have discovered that the men were not mere animals when they left India, and that most men, living in their position would have lived like

them; and that, therefore, it was the system that was at fault.[1] If the Judge had taken pains to make the inquiry we have suggested, he could have, with advantage, drawn attention to the evil of the system rather than unnecessarily hunt the feelings of Indians by his ill-conceived remarks.

Here there is scope for the activity of our Colonial-born friends, and also, though not to the same extent, for the Congress. The former can investigate the matter and make a detailed protest showing how utterly baseless the remarks are. The latter should promptly address the Department of Justice, drawing attention to the extraordinary summing-up of the Judge and courting an inquiry.

Indian Opinion, 7-9-1912

210. THE PHOENIX TRUST DEED

THIS INDENTURE MADE BY AND BETWEEN

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi of Phoenix, in the Province of Natal, South Africa, of the one part, and Omar Hajee Amod Johari[2] of Durban, Merchant, Parsee Rustomjee Jeewanjee Ghorcoodoo, of Durban, Merchant, Hermann Kallenback, of Johannesburg, Architect and Farmer, Lewis Walter Ritch, of Johannesburg, Barrister-at-Law, and Pranjivandas Jugjivan Mehta, of Rangoon, Barrister-at-Law, all of the other part,

WITNESSETH

1. Whereas the said party of the one part is the owner of a certain piece of land situate in Phoenix aforesaid and comprising one

[1] In this case, heard in the Durban Circuit Court on August 27, 1912, the Defence Counsel had argued that "these Indians behaved like animals" and had "invited" the jury to judge them as such but Justice Carter in his judgment observed that he did not know that "such [an extenuating] view could be taken", for Indians enjoyed the same law as the Europeans. They were entitled to the protection of the law and they must have it and they must also be amenable to its punishment. *Indian Opinion*, 7-9-1912.

[2] Omar Hajee Amod Zaveri; prominent Durban businessman, who contributed much money for financing public activities of Indians and many books to Durban Library; a founder of the Memon Committee; became honorary Secretary of the Durban Anjuman-e-Islam, 1897; Joint Secretary, Natal Indian Congress, 1907, resigned from that office to go abroad and qualify as a barrister *vide* also "Omar Haji Amod Zaveri", 11-5-1907 & "Farewell to Omar Haji Amod Zaveri", 11-5-1907.

hundred acres in extent and containing thereon certain buildings and machinery particulars of which are more fully set out in the Schedule hereunto annexed and marked A,

2. And whereas the said party of the one part is also the sole proprietor of the weekly newspaper called *Indian Opinion* which said newspaper is printed and published at Phoenix aforesaid,[1] and of the International Printing Press situated thereat,

3. And whereas the said party of the one part did in the year 1904 establish a settlement at Phoenix aforesaid for the accomplishment of the objects herein after mentioned,

4. And whereas certain persons are at the date of the signing of these Presents living at or connected with[2] the settlement at Phoenix aforesaid and are employed in various capacities at or in connection with the Printing Works of the said newspaper *Indian Opinion*, (Which said persons and any others who hereafter may join the said settlement, and sign the Schedule B hereto[3] are hereinafter styled "the settlers"),

5. And Whereas the majority of the settlers at present established on the said settlement joined the said settlement for the following objects and purposes and under the following conditions, namely,

(1) So far as possible to order their lives[4] so as to be able ultimately to earn their living by handicraft[5] or agriculture carried on without the aid so far as possible of machinery;

(2) To work publicly so as to promote a better understanding between the Europeans and British Indians established in South Africa, [6] and to voice and work to remove the grievances of the latter;

(3) To follow and promote[7] the ideals set forth by Tolstoy and Ruskin[8] in their lives and works;

(4) To promote purity of private life in individuals by living pure

[1] The rest of this clause is not found in the earlier draft.

[2] The words "connected with" and "in connection with" have been added in this version evidently to cover the executors and trustees none of whom was living at the Phoenix settlement at that time.

[3] "And sign the Schedule B hereto" not found in the earlier draft. Schedule B is not available.

[4] The earlier version has "to so order their lives" instead.

[5] "Handicraft" added later

[6] The rest of the sub-clause is not found in the earlier version.

[7] The draft has "advertise" instead of "promote".

[8] The rest of this sub-clause was added in this version.

lives themselves;

(5) To establish[1] a school for the education principally of Indian children mainly through their own vernaculars;

(6) To establish a sanatorium and hygienic institute, with a view to the prevention of disease[2] by methods generally known as "nature treatment";

(7) To train themselves generally for the service of humanity;

(8) To conduct the said *Indian Opinion* for the advancement of the ideals mentioned in the foregoing paragraphs;

6. And whereas the said party of the one part now desires to assign, transfer and make over the said land, buildings, machinery, newspaper and all other the [*sic*] appurtenances, stock-in-trade, book-debts[3], fixtures, fittings and other things connected therewith and with the said settlement, including the business of the International Printing Press,[4] unto and in favour of the said parties of the other part together with himself the said party of the one part IN TRUST for the use of the said settlement and for the fuller carrying out of the objects and purposes set forth in paragraph 5 thereof,

7. And whereas the said parties of the other part have each and all of them agreed to the assignment to them and to the party of the one part of the said land, buildings, et cetera, hereinbefore mentioned and together with the said party of the one part to accept the said trust on the terms and conditions herein before and herein after mentioned,

NOW THEREFORE THESE PRESENTS WITNESS

8. That the said party of the one part does hereby transfer, assign and make over unto the said parties of the other part and to himself as Trustees, all his right, title and interest in and to the said land at Phoenix, Natal, and to the said buildings, machinery, newspaper, fittings, fixtures, stock-in-trade, book-debts[5] and appurtenances, et cetera, aforesaid, to hold the same for themselves and their successors in trust and to the uses herein before enumerated as being the objects, purposes and conditions of the said settlement, and subject to the following further conditions, namely,

[1] The draft here has "at Phoenix" in parenthesis.
[2] The rest of this sub-clause was added later in this version.
[3] "Book-debts"added later
[4] "including the business of the International Printing Press" added later
[5] "book-debts" added later

(a) The said Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi shall be Manager of the Trust during his lifetime, subject to the control of the said Trustees for the due fulfillment of the objects of the Trust;

(b) In the absence from Sluth Africa or at the death of[1] the said Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, the Trustees may appoint from among themselves a Manager for the time being[2] or permanently, as the case may be;

(c) The said Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi or any other Manager shall be responsible to the remaining Trustees for due and proper management of the said Trust;

(d) A majority of the said Trustees shall bind the minority in all matters falling within their authority in virtue hereof,[3] and, in the event of the Trustees being equally divided, they shall be bound by a majority vote of the settlers;

(e) An account to be known as the Phoenix Trust Account shall be opened at a Bank and shall be operated upon by the Manager of the Trust or his substitute or substitutes to be by him appointed;[4]

(f) In the event of the death or resignation of any of the Trustees, the remaining Trustees shall be competent to carry out the Trust. The settlers may, however, nominate, by a decision of the majority of them at the time residing in South Africa,[5] Trustees to fill vacancies, which nomination shall be accepted by the remaining Trustees;

(g) The Trustees, with the consent of the settlers, shall have the power to add to their numbers;[6]

(h) In their deliberations the Trustees shall be guided by and accept[7] the decision of the settlers; but the settlers shall not be competent to impose upon the Trustees any change of policy or ideals;

(I) The Trustees may, subject to the consent of the settlers, but not otherwise, expand the objects of the Trust;

(j) The Trustees may, subject to the consent of the settlers,

[1] The words "from South Africa or at the death of" are not found in the draft.

[2] The rest of this sub-clause was a later addition.

[3] The rest of this sub-clause has been added in this version.

[4] This sub-clause read as follows in the earlier version: "The account at present conducted at the Natal Bank Ltd., Durban, shall be altered to the Phoenix Trust Account and shall be operated upon by the Manager of the Trust."

[5] "At the time residing in South Africa" added later

[6] This entire sub-clause was added later in this version.

[7] The words "and accept" not found in the draft.

introduce new settlers or temporary workers, and, subject to such consent, dis-miss any settlers or temporary workers. No settler may, however, be dismissed except for dishonesty, gross misconduct or gross neglect of duty assigned to him;

(k) The Trustees shall respect and ratify all existing arrangements or contracts;

(l) The said Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi reserves to himself the use of[1] the two acres of land and buildings at present used by him and his family on the same terms as the other settlers, and the right to draw sustenance money from the income of the Press or other under-takings, not exceeding five pounds (£5) per month.

(m) On the death of the said Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, his wife, should she survive him, shall draw from the income of the settlement not more than five pounds (£5) per month for herself and the two minor sons, Ramdas and Devdas, during her lifetime[2] and the same amount shall be paid to the guardian of the minor sons or son after her death until the younger or the survivor of them attains the age of twenty-one years; the use of the said two acre of land and buildings thereon to be similarly reserved to the wife and minor children of the said Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi;

(n) The Trustees may part with the ownership of *Indian Opinion* in favour of the settlers or any number of them[3] and may lease to them the printing-press, type and other necessary appurtenances;

(o) The Trustees shall have the right to amend or alter the terms of the Trust from time to time, subject always to the consent of the settlers;

(p) The Trustees shall have the right, subject to the consent of the settlers, to sell or mortgage the assets described in the said Schedule A and any assets hereafter acquired, and to purchase more land, build more building and buy more machinery or stock;

(q) The term "settlers" shall mean and include all those at present residing at or connected with the said settlement, and who have signed the schedule attached hereto, marked B[4]or who hereafter may be residing at or connected with said settlement and who shall subscribe

[1] The words "the use of" were added later.

[2] The rest of this sub-clause read as follows in the draft: "or until the reaching of the age of majority by devdas, whichever event happens last".

[3] The rest of this sub-clauses was a later addition.

[4] Not available

to the objects and conditions herein set forth and sign schedule B.[1]

9. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary herein, this Indenture shall come into force as and from the date of registration hereof, and shall be registrable without the signature of the said Pranjivandas Jugjivan Mehta, whose signature shall be incorporated so soon as it is received from India.[2]

In witness whereof the respective parties have hereunto set their hands in the presence of the subscribing witnesses.

SCHEDULE A

	£	s.	d.
Land	1, 087	10	3
Buildings	1,535	14	1
Plant and Machinery	1,548	1	0
Stock	307	7	10
Book Debts	600	18	3
Library and School Books	50	13	0
	£5,130	4	5

Indian Opinion, 14-9-1912

211. OURSELVES

The Trust Deed[3] which we publish in this issue, and which is in course of registration, marks a step forward in our work. Mr. Gandhi ceases to be the sole legal owner of the concern known as the International Printing Press, where this journal is printed. Nearly eight years ago we migrated to Phoenix, the idea being that the workers might be able to look more to the land for their sustenance than to the proceeds of the sale of *Indian Opinion* and the advertisements inserted in it. During this period we have not given that attention to the land which it was thought we should be able to give, and we have certainly not been able to pay our way by means of agriculture. That

[1] The earlier version makes no reference to Schedule B.
[2] Clause 9 and Schedule A were added later.
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

the journal itself has not been self-supporting is a widely known fact.[1] The assistance received by it from Mr. Tata's gift of 1909 enabled it to tide over a crisis in its career.[2]

We have also come to the conclusion that, consistently with our ideals, we could not accept advertisements for paying our way. We believe that the system of advertisement is bad in itself, in that it sets up insidious competition, to which we are opposed, [3] and often lends itself to misrepresentation on a large scale; and that, if we may not use this journal for the purpose of supporting us entirely, we have no right to cater for and use our time in setting up advertisements. We have always used our discrimination and rejected many advertisements which we could not conscientiously take. Our friends and well-wishers, who have hitherto extended their support to us, will not, we hope, take it amiss if we discontinue the practice of inserting advertisements. The object of issuing this paper is twofold[4]: to voice and work to remove the grievances of the British Indians of South Africa, and to do educative work, by publishing matter of an elevating character. We hope that our readers will appreciate our position, and continue to give us their support, by subscribing to the paper.

Indian Opinion, 14-9-1912

212. PROPOSED INDIAN SCHOOL AT JOHANNESBURG

The latest reply received by Mr. Habib Motan regarding the proposed Indian school, whilst an improvement upon the preceding one[5], is, in our opinion, quite unacceptable. It still retains the highly objectionable system of inequality. Not merit, but the colour of one's

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", 6-12-1909, "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 20-1-1910 & "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", 25-4-1910.

[2] On November 30, 1909, Ratan Tata intimated by cable to Gandhiji a donation of Rs. 25,000 "to enable Indians to continue their struggle...against the Asiatic Registration Act"; *vide* "Cable to G. K. Gokhale", 19-12-1909.

[3] Gandhiji had earlier thought of discontinuing advertisements altogehter; *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 12-12-1910.

[4] For earlier statements on the objectives of *Indian Opinion*, *vide* "Last Year's Stock-Taking", 7-1-1904, "Ourselves", 24-12-1904, "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", 13-1-1905 & "Letter to J. Stuart", 19-1-1905 and "Suggestion to Readers", 24-8-1907.

[5] *Vide* "The Johannesburg School", 18-5-1912.

skin, is to be the deciding factor in determining salaries[1]. We do not know that a superintendent is at all necessary, but, if one is required, we hope those concerned will strongly object to the restriction of the choice of a superintendent to white persons only.

Apart from the vital objection raised by us, the proposal of the Government will frustrate the object the promoter have in view. They will not be able to give Indian children education through their vernaculars. Indian teachers of standing and character are certainly not to be found at the ridiculously low salary offered by the Government.

But we think that, if the Government are sincere about granting an aid to the proposed school, they should modify their offer by granting a certain sum yearly, say £1,000, towards the salary of the teachers, etc., the teachers to be chosen and their salaries fixed by a superintending board, consisting of Europeans and Indians, nominated by the Indian community and approved by the Govern-ment. This board could also fix the syllabus, define the languages to be taught, and report upon the working of the school from time to time. We trust that Mr. Habib Motan will embody our suggestions in his letter to the Government, and that the latter will accept them. Now that they are prepared to spend a substantial sum, the rest is a matter of tactful management and respect for Indian sentiment.

Indian Opinion, 14-9-1912

213. MORE OFFICIAL ILLEGALITY[2]

It is with the utmost regret that we have, almost issue after issue, to heap coals of fire upon Mr. Cousins' head, but that official, if not by his gross tactlessness, then by the illegality of his actions, as constantly renders it impossible for us to maintain silence.[3] Mr.

[1] The annual salaries sanctioned by the Witwatersrand Central School Board were £200 for a European Principal, £150 for a European Assistant, £120 for a female European Assistant and £40 to £60, depending on qualifications, for each approved Indian teacher. In his letter of September 4, the Secretary of the Board also prescribed qualifications for the Principal and for the teachers of the proposed school. He had, moreover, recommended the appointment of a European Superintendent *Indian Opinion*, 14-9-1912.

[2] *Vide* "The New Broom", 13-7-1912. And "More of the New Broom", 20-7-1912.

[3] Gandhiji met Cousins on September 6, 1912 and Laughton on September 11.

Laughton, in his recent letter[1] to *The Natal Mercury* already quoted by us, points out that the Immigration Officer, appointed to administer the Natal Immigration Act at Durban, taken upon himself to decide who shall and who shall not immigrate into the Cape Colony, where the law is of a different kind, and where appeal may usually be made, and has, in fact, not seldom successfully been made, to the Supreme Court against decisions of the Immigration Officers appointed under the Provincial statute. We are quite sure that, whilst stationed in Natal, Mr. Cousins can exercise no authority whatever under the Cape Immigration Law, whose interpretation does not fall to our local division of the Supreme Court. He has, actually, exercised an authority not vested in him, and in preventing Mr. Laughton's client—there are other cases of which complaint has been made—from proceeding to his destination in the neighbouring Colony,—from proceeding to his destination in the neighbouring Colony, thereby denying him access to the Courts of that Province, Mr. Cousins would appear to have incurred a serious liability. We have reason to believe that suitable action is being taken in the proper quarters. It is intolerable that Immigration Officers shouldbe allowed to proceed as though existing Provincial statutes did not, in point of fact, exist, and as if they had been already superseded by a Union measure that may, after all, never mature. If anything further were needed to prove to the Imperial Government the impossibility of leaving enormous powers in the hands of apparently irresponsible and certainly arbitrary officials, Mr. Cousins could not have offered a more effective demonstration of the fact.

Indian Opinion, 14-9-1912

[1] In his letter, Laughton agreed with *The Natal Mercury* that the Immigrants' Restriction Act should be administered tactfully by officials. While he strongly opposed further introduction of Indians into the Colony, he equally strongly upheld the maintenance of rights already acquired by them. He cited two instances of unjust administration of the law by the Immigration officer, in one of which an Indian returning to Kimberley from India and passing through Durban had been prevented from proceeding either overland to Kimberley or by steamer to Port Elizabeth. He then attempted to sail from Delagoa Bay to Port Elizabeth *via* Durban where he was again detained and, this time, transhipped forcibly to s.s. *President* bound for India. Eventually, he went directly to Cape Town where the Immigration Officer allowed him to proceed to Kimberley. *Indian Opinion*, 7-9-1912.

214. OURSELVES

It is more than seven years ago that this journal began to be printed at Phoenix. We are now taking a step forward. So far the legal proprietor has been Mr. Gandhi, but the ownership is now being transferred to [a board of] Trustees, and the objectives which will govern the management of Phoenix have been precisely laid down. We feel this is a step in the right direction and we are sure our readers will feel the same.

The paper has never been in a position to pay its way. It is here needless to go into the reasons for that. It, however, needs to be recalled on this occasion that the paper would have been in dire straits if Mr. Tata's generous help had not been drawn upon to meet its needs.

When the workers decided to settle in Phoenix and start a journal there, it was expected that the income from it and the land would not only give them enough to live on but also enable them to put by substantial savings, for they were to be the masters of whatever profit might accrue from the enterprise. Experience has shown that the assumption was incorrect. We realized that the Phoenix way of life could not be reconciled with monetary gain. And so, for the last several years, the Phoenix settlement has been worked on that basis.

Our principal object was that, while living by agriculture, we should give of our best in the service of the people and publish the paper for them. We have not so far succeeded in that aim.

We gave up job-work many years ago. We now feel that we should also discontinue the practice of publishing advertisements. We believed then that advertisements were a good thing to have but on reflection we see that the practice is wholly undesirable. Advertisements are inserted by people who are impatient to get rich, in order that they may gain over their rivals. They are so much in fashion these days that any and every kind of advertisement is published and paid for. This is one of the sorriest features of modern civilization, and for our part we wish to be rid of it. If, however, we published non-commercial advertisements, which serve a public purpose, free of charge, they would fill the entire number each time, so we shall only accept them against payment. Other advertisements, we shall stop publishing forthwith. As for advertisements which we

have on hand, we shall try to negotiate with our clients and free ourselves of the commitments. We shall then be able to work more on the land and more effectively fulfil the main object of the Trust Deed[1] which we publish in this issue.

We believe that the proposed changes will enhance our capacity for public service. We also hope that we shall be able to publish worthier and more valuable [reading] matter in the journal. It has been our endeavour daily to add to its value as an instrument of moral education. There are two, and only two, reasons for its existence: to strive to end the hardships suffered by Indians in this country and to promote moral education. The second purpose can be best served by our improving our way of life. That is why we are doing our best to eschew the commercial aspects of our work, such as jobbing and advertisements. Progressively as we live up to the ideals enumerated in the title-deed, we shall be able to give our readers more useful material. We want all Indians to help us in this.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-9-1912

215. MAHOMEDAN WIVES

The letter, that we reproduce in another column, from the India Office to the South Africa British Indian Committee, shows that the representations that have been made from time to time, both to the Imperial and Indian Governments, seem to have borne fruit. The India and Colonial Offices are, we learn, in consultation on the question of the immigration of Mahomedan wives into South Africa. Matters were bad enough when the Fatima and Sukina cases were decided, but Mr. Cousins' now notorious circular[2], which took occasion also to suggest that Natal Indians were in the habit of introducing women into the Province for immoral purposes, for which there is absolutely no warrant in the past history of the community, has brought them to a crisis. They cannot be allowed to remain where they are, nor can the South African Indian community, who are so greatly prejudiced by these horrible judicial and administrative blunders, submit to the insult and humiliation imposed thereby. The honour of the Imperial

[1] *Vide* "The Phoenix Trust Deed", 14-9-1912.
[2] *Vide* "The New Broom", 13-7-1912.

Government is very closely involved. The personal law of Indians, that was guaranteed by the Proclamation of 1858, applies to them wherever in the British Empire they may go, and His Majesty's Ministers are wise, even at this late date, to realize how seriously they will jeopardize the Imperial prestige if so grave a scandal as the separation of families and the destruction of domestic ties is permitted to be perpetrated.

Indian Opinion, 21-9-1912

216. IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES AGAIN CENSURED

The appeal of Natha Ooka,[1] before the Cape Provincial Division of the Supreme Court, judgment wherein is reported in another column, has once more afforded to the Court an opportunity of offering its views on the present administration of the immigration laws of the Province and, incidentally, of laws of a like nature in the other Provinces of the Union. The Court has once again criticized most strongly the harrying policy adopted by the authorities towards lawful Indian residents of South Africa seeking readmission to their homes in this country, and has thus completely justified the many and bitter complaints that are heard all over the Union against the Government's repeated breaches of the spirit of the immigration law.[2] Only recently the cape Courts had to exclude as prohibited immigrants men domiciled in the Province, and who had been delayed a few days beyond the duration of their permits owing to causes over which they had no control, due partly to the dilatory tactics of the Natal Immigration Officer. It will be for the Imperial and Indian Governments to keep such incidents in view when considering the draft legislation that is promised for next session. In the case under discussion, the appellant was apparently able to afford the costly luxury of expensive litigation, a privilege denied to the average poor applicant for readmission. The legislation that is contemplated ought,

[1] Natha Ouka, a Cape businessman, left for India in 1906 retaining his partnership in a business in East London. On his return in July, 1911, he was prohibited from landing. On appeal, Justice Buchanan of the Cape Division of the Supreme Court granted the application with costs and, condemning the Immigration Officer's action, observed that "more judiciaousness in the administration of the spirit of the Act" would be far better "in such cases" than "the strict letter of the law". *Indian Opinion*, 28-9-1912.

[2] *Vide* also "More Official Illegality", 14-9-1912.

in our opinion, to provide a cheap and speedy remedy against official blunders of the type condemned by Sir John Buchanan, and we trust that His Majesty's Government will make it their business to see that it is provided. The so-called appeal boards contemplated by this year's defunct Bill were a sorry farce, and will have to be replaced by very much more efficient machinery if substantial justice is to be done. South African Indians cannot afford that their vital rights and most intimate interests should be jeopardized by the high-handed autocracy of the "tin Tsars" of the Immigration Department, backed up, as is know, by a Government that pretend to the Imperial authorities a most solicitous concern for the welfare of the Indian community.

Indian Opinion, 28-9-1912

217. HON. MR. GOKHALE'S VISIT

Reuter announces that the Hon. Mr. Gokhale leaves for South Africa today by the s.s. *Dover Castle*, and he is, therefore, due to arrive in Cape Town about the 26th instant. The time at the disposal of the various reception committees is all too short for their purpose of offering him an appropriate welcome, and we trust that they will use their best efforts to make the visit a successful and an enjoyable one. It appears that Mr. Gokhale, even before his departure, has been made to bear the burden of South African racial prejudice, for the Union Castle Company are alleged to have refused to carry him unless he agreed to pay for a whole cabin, "since there might be no European passenger willing to share the apartment with him".[1] We did not believe that such bare-faced audacity was possible in England, but the incident shows how widespread is the influence of South African colour prejudice. As was to be expected, Mr. Gokhale flatly refused to meet the Company's demand, and after some negotiation, it was waived.[2] Mr. Gokhale's firmness of principle should endear him the more to Indians in this country, and his example should encourage them, as occasion demands, to do likewise, in the name and for the honour of India.

Indian Opinion, 5-10-1912

[1] He left by R. M. S. Saxon instead and was expected to arrive on October 22, 1912.

[2] For a detailed description of the incident by Gokhale himself, *vide* Appendix "Gokhale's Letter to Gandhiji", 27-7-1912.

218. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

[LAWLEY,]
Aso Sud 6 [*October 16, 1912*][1]

CHI. HARILAL,

I have your letter after so many months. My letters to you seem to have gone astray.

I have written to Revashankerbhai about your attending the Congress.[2]

You have not understood the step I have taken regarding Sorabji. The chief thing is that he is a Parsi, and it befits a Hindu to encourage him. If Sorabji succeeds in becoming a barrister, his responsibilities will increase. Sorabji's services cannot be used beyond a certain point, but this is not true of Medh. That is why I would not encourage Medh to be a barrister. How then could I ever encourage you [to become one]? If I did, all my ideas would go by the board; though, at present, you will not appreciate them. We shall discuss them if and when we meet. Just now you should only attend to the strengthening of your character in your own way—that is all I want. I am sure you will change your ideas in future.

You have again succumbed to passion in regard to Chanchal. I can well understand it. The fault does not lie with the Ahmedabad [atmosphere]. The thing[3] itself is so difficult that you cannot attain it without great effort and careful and sustained thought. If you, however, continue in your endeavour you may some day overcome the weakening passion. You will be a different man altogether when you have succeeded in overcoming it. You will have a new strength. From your letter I gather that Chanchi will not now be able to come here for a couple of years.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 9544

[1] In paragraph 3 Gandhiji discusses his choice of Sorabji Shapurji Adajania as the satyagrahi who was to be educated in England at Dr. Mehta's expense; *vide* "Fragment of Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 2-4-1911 and "Letter to Dr. Pranjivan Mehta", p. 66. It was on July 21, 1912 that Sorabji left for London to qualify as a barrister. That year *Aso Sud* 6 corresponds to October 16.

[2] This letter is not available.

[3] *Brahmacharya*

219. MR. GOKHALE'S VISIT

So far as can be ascertained at present, the following is the Johannesburg programme regarding the Hon. Mr. Gokhale's visit. A special train carrying about 500 passengers will leave Park Station at about 10 p.m. on the 27th instant, to meet the Diamond Express bringing Mr. Gokhale, at Klerksdorp, at about 2 o'clock in the morning. The coach that will be specially reserved for Mr. Gokhale and party from Kimberley will be detached from the Express and attached to the special. Mr. Gokhale will receive an address at Klerksdorp, and will probably drive through the town. The special will leave Klerksdorp on the return journey at about 10 a.m., reaching Potchefstroom about the middle of the day, when there will be a prolonged halt to enable Mr. Gokhale to receive an address from the local community and to drive to the Experimental Farm. The special will then proceed to Krugersdorp, where there will be another brief halt to enable the local community to present an address. The train will then run to Park without a break, reaching there exactly at 4 p.m. Here Mr. Gokhale will be received by (in addition to the Indian community) the Mayor of Johannesburg and other European townsmen. The party will then proceed to the platform erected for the occasion at the station where, under the Chairmanship of the Mayor, addressed will be presented. The address on behalf of the British Indian Association will be read; the others will be formally handed to Mr. Gokhale, without being read, by the Chairmen of the respective Societies—the Hamidia Islamic Society, the Hindu Community, the Tamil Benefit Society and the Patidar Association. In order that the function may be finished within an hour, beyond a speech of welcome by the Chairman of the British Indian Association. In order that the function may be finished within an hour, beyond a speech of welcome by the Chairman of the British Indian Association there will be no speeches on behalf of the Reception Committee. His Worship the Mayor will then say a few words and call upon the Hon. Mr. Gokhale to reply, where after the meeting will disperse with the singing of the National Anthem. On the 30th, a meeting of the European Committee will take place at Mr. Hosken's house to enable Mr. Gokhale to meet the Committee and to discuss the whole Indian question. On the 31st, there will be a Banquet at the Masonic Hall. Arrangements are also being made to enable the European townsmen to hear Mr. Gokhale. The Indian Women's

Association will give an At Home at a place and time to be appointed. Saturday and Sunday Mr. Gokhale will pass at Tolstoy Farm. During the week following, he will interview the Ministers, and, immediately afterwards, proceed to Natal. Mr. Kallenbach has placed his residence at Mountain View at the disposal of the Indian community, and offices are being engaged for him in town, where he may receive visitors during the day.

Indian Opinion, 19-10-1912

220. INTERVIEW TO "CAPE ARGUS"[1]

CAPE TOWN,
October 22, 1912

Mr. Gandhi, interviewed by the *Argus* regarding Mr. Gokhale's visit, said he had come with the knowledge of the Indian Government, but entirely on his own initiative. He considered it his duty as an Imperialist to investigate the whole Indian question in South Africa for himself, and to make the acquaintance of the Union Ministers. Mr. Gokhale had not yet settled what position he was going to discuss and what he wanted discussed. There were no outstanding questions, but certain standing grievances in the Cape, Transvaal and Natal. He (Mr. Gandhi) was not hopeful that Mr. Gokhale's visit would result in a final settlement of all questions; they were too large to be settled in the course of a single visit by one distinguished legislator. He hoped, however, that the visit would result in a better understanding between Europeans and Indians, and that a better tone would be adopted by the two communities towards each other. That certainly was part of the mission that brought Mr. Gokhale here. Mr. Gokhale informed him that the feeling in India over the South African Question was very intense and there was no question over which all sections in India were so much agreed as this.

Indian Opinion, 26-10-1912

[1] This interview was given soon after Gokhale's arrival at Cape Town on October 22.

221. SPEECH AT CAPE TOWN RECEPTION TO GOKHALE[1]

October 22, 1912

The Mayor (Mr. Harry Hands) presided . . . Dr. Abdurahman and other leaders of the Asiatic community also occupied seats on the platform.

The Mayor, in opening the proceedings, said they were met together to extend a welcome to a very distinguished Indian subject of His Majesty the King; a gentleman who was a member of the Council of the Viceroy of India, and who had come to the Union of South Africa, with, he believed, the full consent of the Union Government, to inquire at first hand into an economic difficulty which had arisen in their midst and which their fellow Indian subjects had been feeling for some time. He had pleasure in extending to him a warm welcome to the Mother City of South Africa, and ventured to express the hope that the result of his mission would be the solution of the difficulty in a manner satisfactory to all concerned. (Applause.) . . .

Mr. M. K. Gandhi said the name of Mr. Gokhale was sacred to him; Mr. Gokhale was his political teacher, and whatever he had been able to do in the service of his fellow-countrymen in South Africa—of which he claimed to be a citizen—was due to Mr. Gokhale. (Cheers.) This South African question was not a new one to him; but they loved him not only for his interest in that question, but because of his life's work. Although he was a candid critic of the Indian Government, he was also a friend to it. (Applause.) He thought it a hopeful sign that they had this representative gathering over which the Mayor of the city presided. And the hospitality accorded to Mr. Gokhale showed that though there had been hard knocks given between the European and Indian communities, there was not bitterness. In every town where these meetings were to be held, the Mayors had signified their intentions to preside. Mr. Gokhale had come to help them in bringing the two peoples closer together, and his mission would let them know that behind this country was another, in which the people were watching its representatives in this country. They knew His Highness the Aga Khan was expected to arrive some time next year in connection with this same question.[2] The British Indian Association had only just received a letter from His Highness, in which he expressed his intention of arriving in South Africa to study the question at first hand, in so far as it affected his countrymen here. But he (Mr. Gandhi) wished to utter one word of warning, and it was this: that many of them had, in their ignorance, false expectation that Mr. Gokhale's visit would act as a

[1] The reception was held in the City Hall, Cape Town. A number of prominent whites were present and addresses were presented by various organizations.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Meeting of British Indian Association", 25-8-1912.

charm, and that all their disabilities would disappear. He hoped his countrymen would not have those expectations, or, if they had them, that they would dismiss them. Mr. Gokhale was certainly going to assist them, but they had to remember that there was nothing so valuable as self-help. (Applause.) They would have to work out their own salvation, and men like Mr. Gokhale and Mr. Schreinger[1] could only point the way to the solution, and make the path easy. They could get nothing that they did not deserve, and it was only when the time came that they would reap the reward of their past actions. (Loud applause.)

Indian Opinion, 2-11-1912

222. SPEECH AT KIMBERLEY MEETING[2]

[*October 25, 1912*]

Mr. Gandhi said an occasion like this was one of sacred memory. He paid great tribute to Mr. Gokhale's gentleness, his self-effacement, his great

[1] William Phillip Schreiner (1857-1919); brother of the well-known authoress, Olive Schreiner; Gandhiji noted his "sense of justice" and his friendly feeling for Indians; member of Rhodes' second Ministry, 1898; barrister and sometime leader of the Cape Bar; twice Attorney General; Prime Minister of Cape Colony, 1898-1900. Eric Walker, historian of South Africa, calls him an outstanding champion of federalism. In 1909, he vehemently opposed Section 35 of the draft South Africa Act (of Union)which disfranchised Cape Coloureds, went on their behalf to England and persisted in his efforts even after the House of Lords had passed the bill for unification of South Africa; In march, 1911, Gandhiji contemplated consulting him regarding the Union Immigration Bill; *vide* Vol. X, "Letter to L. W. Ritch", 4-3-1911 & "Telegram to L. W. Ritch", 8-3-1911. The Golden Number (1906-14) of *Indian Opinion* mentions his strenuous fight for justice for the Indian community; became in 1914 High Commissioner for Union of South Africa in England.

[2] The meeting, arranged for Gokhale, was held in the Town Hall, which "was crowded to its utmost capacity with members of the Indian community and a large sprinkling of Europeans". After the Mayor, who presided, had made a speech of welcome an address was presented to Gokhale on behalf of the Indian community. Gokhale himself in this, the first of his public utterances in South Africa, expressed satisfaction that the system of indentured labour in Natal had been stopped, dwelt briefly on the Indian question in South Africa which he said he would like to study from all standpoints before expressing an opinion on it. Gandhiji's memory of this incident must have been a cherished one, for writing of it without notes several years later in Yeravda Jail, he recalls Gokhale's speech on the occasion-- "concise, full of sound judgment, firm but courteous which pleased the Indians and fascinated the Europeans". Gandhiji adds: "I requested Senator W.P. Schreiner. . . to take the chair . . . and he was good enough to consent"; Although Schreiner spoke on the occasion and was in fact the principal speaker of the meeting, it was the Mayor who presided.

love of India, and consistently with that love of India, his love of humanity and his love of the Empire of which he was such a distinguished citizen. He regarded Mr. Gokhale as a political asset. He referred in glowing terms to Mr. Gokhale's services and sacrifices in the interest of Fergusson College, and in the cause of education. He declared with a show of pride that had Mr. Gokhale been a Englishman he would have been occupying position now held by Mr. Asquith, and possibly had he been born in France he would have been President of the French Republic. He hoped the result of this mission would be a better understanding between Europeans and Indians residing in South Africa. He uttered a note of warning to this countrymen not to raise false hopes and expectations from Mr. Gokhale's visit. The advent of Mr. Gokhale in their midst would not bring about the millennium among the Indian community, nor did they expect that all their disabilities would disappear as if by magic. His arrival, however, might bring about a better understanding and a better knowledge of one another, and would lead to better possibilities of a solution of the great problem that not only faced South Africa, but faced the whole Empire. The remedy lay mainly in their own hands. (Applause.)

The Diamond Fields Advertiser, 26-10-1912

223. SPEECH AT KIMBERLEY BANQUET TO GOKHALE[1]

[*October 26, 1912*]

. . . Mr. Gandhi, who was cordially received, said he thought they might well drink the toast the guest of the evening, if what Mr. Oliver, who was good enough to pay them a visit, had playfully said was true, namely, that Mr. Gokhale had brought with him the much-needed rain which the parched land of Kimberley required so badly. He only hoped that the rain had reached Johannesburg, and not merely Johannesburg, because he lived there, but throughout the whole Union. We Indians were supposed to be a superstitious nation, and he had no doubt many of his countrymen would share his (the speaker's) superstition that Mr. Gokhale had brought with him the much-needed rain. (Applause.) But he thought there was another reason also why this toast might be commended, both to their European friends, who had been good enough to respond to the invitation issued by the reception committee, as also to his countrymen, and it was this, that Mr. Oats was good enough to take the guest of the evening, together with his following, over his great mine, and when he took them over those huge pieces of machinery he (Mr. Gandhi) could not help thinking what a great thing it was. Some of his (Mr. Gandhi's) friends present at that function knew he was not

[1] The banquet was given by Kimberley Indians, and the Mayor of Beaconsfield, T. Pratley, preside. Among those that spoke were W. Gasson, the Mayor of Kimberley, Kallenback, Cachalia and Gokhale. "It is the first occasion in local history when Indians and Europeans have met at a common table. . . ."

believer in machinery. He for one was quite willing to admit that he could have done with Kimberley even had there been no diamonds and no machinery. He was no believer in millions and in diamonds, but he realized that he was now before diamond kings and he therefore bowed his head before them. One thing struck him forcibly when watching the machinery, and that was that if they as human beings worked so well together as this marvellous piece of machinery, what a happy family they would be. Then, indeed, their swords would be beaten into ploughshares, and the lions would certainly lie down with the lambs. He also felt that if one nut in that piece of machinery went loose it was possible for the whole machinery to become disjointed, and to carry that analogy to human beings, they had seen so often that one obstreperous man could break up a whole meeting, and one rogue in a family could damage the reputation of that family. Similarly, to take the reverse position, if the chief part of the machinery did its work regularly they found the other pieces working in harmony without being disjointed. He (Mr. Gandhi) regarded Mr. Gokhale's mission as a holy one, and it was a matter of pride to him that Mr. Gokhale had been instrumental in bringing about such a happening in Kimberley as a meeting of the most representative Europeans and Indians at a common board. He hoped such gatherings would be multiplied. As a humble student of the life and teachings of Tolstoy, he felt also that functions like that were unnecessary, and that they sometimes did a great deal of mischief if only by way of interfering with one's digestion. (Laughter.) But although a student of Tolstoy, for the time being he was prepared to reconcile himself to those functions even, if they brought them together, and if they enabled them to know each other better. He recalled the magnificent hymn,

> We shall know each other better
> When the mists have rolled away,

and though they might have their differences they would know each other better when the mists of ignorance had rolled away. His distinguished countryman had come to South Africa in order to dispel those mists of ignorance. He had come as the brightest jewel that India could present to them. He (Mr. Gandhi) knew that he deeply wounded Mr. Gokhale's susceptibilities whenever he made mention of what he had done, but he (Mr. Gandhi) had to perform a duty, though painful to him. There was no one who could tell them so much of Mr. Gokhale as he could about his life in the political arena of India. He it was who gave 20 years of his life to the cause of education for a mere pittance. Even today Mr. Gokhale lived in poverty, although he could command riches. Hundreds of pounds were always at his disposal whenever he wanted them for public institutions. A Viceroy of India carried the burden of Empire on his shoulders for five years (unless he was a Lord Curzon, and then held office for seven), and even then had a train of workers to assist him, but

here was a distinguished countryman of his carrying the burden of Empire on his shoulders unaided and unassisted and undecorated. True, he carried the C.I.E., but in his opinion he was worth a much better decoration. The decoration that Mr. Gokhale loved best was his love for his countrymen, and the approval of his own conscience. To those Indians who were educated with Western ideas he had given a lesson in humility and gentleness. (Applause.)

The Diamond Fields Advertiser, 28-10-1912

224. BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION'S ADDRESS TO GOKHALE[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
October 28, 1912[2]

THE HON'BLE GOPAL KRISHNA GOKHLE, C.I.E.
JOHANNESBURG,

DEAR SIR,

On behalf of the British Indian Association, we beg to extend to you a very hearty welcome to the Union in general and to the Transvaal in particular. The estimation in which you are held by our countrymen in the Motherland would suffice to ensure for you a warm welcome from us here. But you have a special claim to our gratitude.

When Passive Resistance was at its height, and when hundreds of our countrymen were undergoing imprisonment in this Province for conscience' sake, we knew that we had your most active support and co-operation. We are aware that it was because you threw the whole weight of your influence in our favour that the Passive Resistance

[1] This address, along with others by the Hamidia Islamic Society, the Johannesburg Hindus, the Tamil Benefit Society, the Patidar Association and the Pietersburg Indians, was presented to Gokhale on his arrival at Park Station, Johannesburg, where, according to *The Transvaal Leader* report, the crowd gave him "a welcome of Oriental warmth and magnificence" and "showered rose leaves upon him". Gokhale "accompanied by Mr. Gandhi stepped. . .on to a richly-decorated and carpeted platform. . .and was there received by the Mayor and Mayoress of Johannesburg." This address, the only one read out, was engraved on "a solid gold plate representing a map of India and Ceylon". *Indian Opinion*, 9-11-1912.

[2] Although *Indian Opinion*, 9-11-1912, one of the sources of this item, mentions October 29 as the date of Gokhale's arrival in Johannesburg and the presentation of this as well as the Hindus' address (the following item), the special number of *Indian Opinion* issued to commemorate Gokhale's visit, our other source, mentions October 28, which date is also borne out by an entry in "Diary 1912".

Fund was swelled by munificent contributions from India. Mr. Polak has told us how invaluable your advice and guidance were to him whilst he was our delegate in India. It was due mainly to your efforts that the supply of indentured Indian labour to South Africa was stopped. For this, not only are your countrymen most grateful to you, but we believe that the European residents of South Africa also have warmly welcomed your work in this direction.

You have crowned this special South African work of yours by now paying us a visit for the purpose of making a local study of the situation. We know what this visit has meant to you. We shall never forget the sacrifice made by you in coming to us. We thank you for it, and hope that you will carry with you pleasant recollections of your visit to South Africa; and we pray God that He may spare you for many a year to continue your service of the Motherland, which you have so patriotically made the work of your life.

We remain,
Yours faithfully,
A. M. CACHALIA
CHAIRMAN
M. K. GANDHI
HON. SECRETARY

Indian Opinion, 9-11-1912*;* also *Hon . Mr. G. K. Gokhale's Visit to South Africa, 1912.*

225. JOHANNESBURG HINDUS' ADDRESS TO GOKHALE[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
October 28, 1912

THE HON'BLE GOPAL KRISHNA GOKHALE, C.I.E.
JOHANNESBURG
DEAR SIR,

We, the undersigned, representing the Hindu population of Johannesburg, desire, particularly, to voice our veneration and regard for you.

[1] This followed the address presented by the British Indian Association, the preceding item.

There is not one among us who does not know of your untiring labours in the cause of the Motherland and her sons scattered far and wide throughout the globe. Your name is a household word with us, your image graven on our hearts, your noble example an ever-present spur to duty.

We bid you welcome to this land of our adoption, and trust that your sojourn in our midst may be a pleasant one. May you long be spared to us, and granted health and strength to continue your glorious work.

M. K. GANDHI

[AND 57 OTHERS]

Indian Opinion, 9-11-1912; also *Hon. Mr. G. K. Gokhale's Visit to South Africa, 1912*

226. INTERVIEW TO "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
October 30, 1912][2]

The Hon. G. Gokhale is being kept busy receiving a constant stream of people of all classes and complexions at the rooms which have been taken for him in Chudleigh's Buildings. He received a representative of *The Transvaal Leader* between a visit from Mr. Creswell, the Labour leader, and the introduction of a deputation of Parsees. . . .

While waiting to see Mr. Gokhale, the *Leader* representative had a chat with Mr. M. K. Gandhi, the local leader of the Indian people, who suggested that there were certain questions about Mr. Gokhale's mission which he could personally answer and which it would be an advantage to put to him, from the point of view of economizing Mr. Gokhale's time.

Mr. Gandhi first of all cleared up the doubt which exists in many people's minds as to the official character, or otherwise, of Mr. Gokhale's visit.

[QUESTION:] Is Mr. Gokhale the formally appointed representative of the Government of India in this matter?

No, he comes in his private capacity but with the full knowledge and approval of both the Indian and the Imperial Governments. Before sailing from England he had interviews with, among others, the

[1] The first paragraph has been taken from a fuller report of the interview which a special number of *Indian Opinion*, brought out in commemoration of Gokhale's visit to South Africa, republished from *The Transvaal Leader*.

[2] Neither of the versions published in *Indian Opinion* mentions the date of the interview but it was on October 30 that Gokhale received Creswell as well as the Parsee deputation referred to in the report.

Marquis of Crewe (Secretary of State for India), Mr. Harcourt (Secretary of State for the Colonies), Lord Gladstone, Sir Richard Solomon and Sir Starr Jameson.

How long will the visit to South Africa last?

Mr. Gokhale leaves on November 6 for Natal. Elaborate preparations are being made in Durban for his reception—on the 14th he meets Ministers in Pretoria, and he then leaves immediately, via Delagoa Bay on his return voyage to India.

Surely this is a very short time for the accomplishment of so important a mission?

It is an exceedingly brief stay, but Mr. Gokhale has to be back in India early in December for his legislative duties.

But he expects to have all his conclusions definitely formed by the time he sees the Union Ministers?

NO RIGHT TO BE SURRENDERED

That is so. Of course, in so far as the rights of Indians are concerned he can have no opinions to form. He has come with an open mind only from the point of view that he is anxious to understand the European side of the question. In theory, he, as a distinguished patriot, could never think of surrendering any of the rights of this countrymen. But his conclusions as to the putting of theory into practice are open to modification by local knowledge gained from contact with those who have carried on ceaseless agitation in this country against British Indians.

In further conversation, Mr. Gandhi expressed his belief, which, he said, was also Mr. Gokhale's belief, that the problem had been virtually narrowed down to the treatment of the Indian population domiciled in the Union.

As to that, Mr. Gokhale has, I think, come to the general conclusion that the Indians resident here are entitled to civic equality. That is to say, their movement within the Union should not be hampered and, under restrictions of a general character applying to the community at large, they should be allowed freedom of trade.

How about the Free State?

With reference to the Free State, Mr. Gokhale is still studying the law, and it is difficult to say what his conclusions will be on that point. Personally, I feel that for yet a few years to come the Free State will retain its policy as far as the holding of land and the carrying on of trade are concerned. As far as the immigration barrier is concerned, it

is part of the compromise that under the new Act the few fresh immigrants that will be allowed to come in will be free to move about in any part of the Union. They will, therefore, not be subject to the Free State restriction as to immigration, but they will be unable to trade or farm in that Province. But some day or other, the Free State barrier must entirely disappear. Otherwise the Union will be a farce.

Indian Opinion, 23-11-1912

227. SPEECH AT JOHANNESBURG BANQUET TO GOKHALE[1]

October 31, 1912

Mr. Gandhi, in proposing the toast of the Chairman and the European visitors, said it was his proud privilege to propose that toast. It was a proud day for Indians that they had all responded so heartily to the invitation of the British Indian Association to join in doing honour to their illustrious countryman, and, as so many of the speakers had said, worthy citizen of the Empire to which they all belonged. Mr. Gokhale himself had tendered his thanks to the Committee that was formed at the time when the struggle was at its height. He thought that the Committee had rendered a signal service to the Empire, as it had certainly rendered signal service to British Indians. It was the formation of that Committee that gave new hope to those who were struggling for the sake of conscience. The Indian community throughout South Africa would never forget the time when the committee was formed, nor would it ever forget that great occasion. They had held many banquets, many European friends and sympathizers had attended those banquets, but he could not recall a single occasion when so many great statesmen of South Africa and so many great citizens of South Africa had gathered together at the invitation of their humble selves. It gave him, therefore, the greatest pleasure to propose that toast.

Hon. Mr. G. K. Gokhale's Visit to South Africa, 1912

[1] The banquet, with Mayor Ellis in the chair, was given by the British Indian Association and was the largest of its kind, about 500 persons attending. A copy of the menu printed on satin was presented to Gokhale by Waingold and Newman.

228. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

TOLSTOY FARM,
LAWLEY STATION,
TRANSVAAL,
November 3, 1912

DEAR MR. SHASTRIAR[1],

I have heard so much of you that I almost feel we know each other: hence the familiar style.

Mr. Gokhale is taking rest for a day or two here—such as he can get after a most strenuous fortnight. I have insisted on Mr. Gokhale taking the rest he needs. He has therefore commissioned me to write to you. The receptions throughout the tour have been very flattering. Europeans—many prominent leaders—have taken part in them as you will see from the papers sent to the Society. In my opinion Mr. Gokhale's mission is bound to be fruitful. Mr. Gokhale's speeches have been much appreciated everywhere. Owing to bad service to India, Mr. Gokhale's plans have to be altered. He will now sail by s.s. *Umkuzi* leaving Durban on the 20th instant and reaching Colombo about the 7th December.[2] Will you please be on the look-out? Mr. Gokhale would like Mr. Ranganathan to meet him at Colombo and would like you to join him at Madras.

Passage has not yet been booked. Ere this reaches you a cable will be sent giving exact particulars.

I am,
Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From *Letters of Srinivasa Sastri*; Asia Publishing House, 1963

[1] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri (1869-1946); became President, Servants of India Society in 1914 after Gokhale's death; elected to the Viceroy's Legislative Council, 1916, and to the Council of State, 1920; Member, India's delegation to the League of Nations, 1921, and to the Armaments Conference in Washington, 1921; made a Privy Councilor the same year; appointed Agent-General of the Indian Government in South Africa; delegate to the India-Britain Round Table Conference of 1930, held in London and the India-South Africa Round Table Conference of 1932, held in Cape Town; was the "revered friend" mentioned in the translator's preface to *An Autobiography* (1940 Edition).

[2] Actually Gokhale sailed from Zanzibar on November 29, 1912 by s.s. President.

229. SPEECH AT MARITZBURG RECEPTION TO GOKHALE[1]

November 7, 1912

Mr. M. K. Gandhi said he had been a resident of South Africa for the past 18 years. The Ganges was a holy river, and, if its waters had flowed into the Umsindusi in the person of Mr. Gokhale, then it was a proud day for the City. Whether Mr. Gokhale's mission toward helping the Indian would be successful still remained to be seen. It would rest a good deal with those in South Africa as to whether that devoutly-hoped-for success of Mr. Gokhale's visit would materialize. Entered into with a generous and noble spirit his mission should be signally successful. (Applause.)

Indian Opinion, 16-11-1912

230. SPEECH AT MARITZBURG LUNCHEON TO GOKHALE[2]

[*November 8, 1912*]

Mr. M. K. Gandhi, in proposing "Our European Friends", said he spoke as an Indian and on behalf of the Indians. He voiced their feelings when he said that they were doubly indebted to the Europeans who had so heartily assisted the Indians in welcoming and assisting their visitor, an illustrious son of India. They were all actuated by the best of feelings. The Indians were now going through the process of Union, and in that process he would ask them to remember the advice of Sir Percy Fitzpatrick and Mr. Merriman before Union, and every time there was a jarring note he would urge them to look at the matter in the "Convention spirit". In the matter of the great problem now present in their minds, he would ask all to look at it from the Gokhale point of view. (Hear, hear!) If that was done he thought they would not have sat together at that table in vain. Wherever Mr. Gokhale had gone there had been the spirit of peace. He could only hope that the spirit would not vanish with his departure, but would continue and intensify, because there was not, after all, any reason why they should not all live together under the same flag in peace, amity and friendship. (Cheers.)

Hon. Mr. G. K. Gokhale's Visit to South Africa, 1912

[1] The meeting included all the leading Maritzburg citizens and a great number of Indians and was presided over by the Administrator of the Province. The Indians presented Gokhale with an address. The Administrator, Mayor Sanders and other Europeans also addressed the meeting.

[2] The luncheon was arranged by the Maritzburg Reception Committee. Among the speakers were the Maritzburg Administrator and Gokhale.

231. SPEECH AT DURBAN RECEPTION TO GOKHALE[1]

[*November 8, 1912*]

By an accident, my name has got into some corner of the Voters' Roll and I am therefore able to address this audience—the whites in it—as my fellow-citizens.[2]

Mr. Gandhi pointed out that Mr. Gokhale was recognized to be a great statesman, not only by the millions of Indians but also by the people of England. Viceroys had called upon him to give them advice, because he had been able to keep his fingers on the pulse of India. He had guided the deliberations of the National Congress of India, and was one of the greatest educationists of the country. Had he been born in England he would today be occupying the position Mr. Asquith occupied. Had he been born in America he probably would be occupying the position to which Dr. Woodrow Wilson had been elected, and if he had been born in the Transvaal he would be occupying General Botha's position. He warned his compatriots against building hopes too high. They would still have to agitate. Mr. Gokhale could not give them the rights they had been clamouring for, and they might still have to go to gaol for these rights. The addresses which had been presented to him were not given in any spirit of anticipation of what was to come, but simply as a tribute to the great character of the man who stood before them that evening.

Hon. Mr. G. K. Gokhale's Visit to South Africa, 1912

232 SPEECH AT DURBAN BANQUET TO GOKHALE[3]

November 11, 1912

Mr. M. K. Gandhi, proposing "The European Guests", asked his fellow-countrymen to drink that toast heartily, although they had had to drink many a bitter draught in South Africa. Still, there was a silver lining to every cloud, and there were many European friends who had come to their aid, including Mr. Silburn, although that gentleman thought that the Indian Empire had been won by the sword, and that it

[1] At this Town Hall meeting, Royeppen read the address. It was engraved on gold plate and the shield was mounted on ebony.

[2] This sentence is translated from the Gujarati version of the speech published in *Indian Opinion*, 16-11-1912.

[3] About 500 Europeans and Indians were present at the banquet. Among others who spoke were Sir David Hunter, who presided, F. C. Hollander, the Mayor of Durban, and Gokhale.

had been kept by the sword.[1] He differed from him on that point, because he believed that it was inconsistent for England to deal out justice with one hand and hold the threat of the sword with other.

Indian Opinion, 23-11-1912

233. SPEECH AT PRETORIA RECEPTION TO GOKHALE[2]

November 14, 1912

Mr. Gandhi said that he had been asked by the Chairman of the Pretoria Committee to say a few words. He had to thank the European friends who had accepted the invitation to be present, and he had to thank the Deputy Mayor. Throughout the tour Mr. Gokhale had received every kindness and courtesy. It was a matter of the greatest gratification that the Europeans had joined with the Indians in extending the hand of hospitality to the visitor. He read letters of regret at inability to be present from General Botha, Mr. Abraham Fischer and General Smuts. He then asked the Deputy Mayor to open the proceedings.

Hon. Mr. G. K. Gokhale's Visit to South Africa, 1912

234. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[LAWLEY,]
On or before *November 17, 1912*][3]

CHI. MAG ANLAL,

I have your letter.

I did not find Professor Gokhale's speeches with Mr. Kallen-

[1] Silburn had made the point that the Indian problem in South Africa was one for South Africa to deal with, and that no interference either by Great Britain or by India would be tolerated by the British people of that country.

[2] The reception was arranged to bid farewell to Gokhale and was presided over by J. H. L. Findley, Deputy Mayor.

[3] Gokhale's speeches referred to in paragraph 2 were presumably those that he delivered during his tour of South Africa between October 22, 1912 and November 12, 1912. Gandhiji, who accompanied Gokhale throughout the tour, arrived in Durban on November 8 and left on November 12. Since the letter is addressed to Maganlal Gandhi, who worked at the Phoenix press, the speeches must have been lost either at Phoenix or at Durban. Gandhiji arrived at Tolstoy Farm--which came towards the end of the itinerary--on November 15. Polak's foreword to the special publication, which was issued by the International Printing Press, the special publication, which was issued by the International Printing Press, Phoenix, in commemoration of Gokhale's visit and contained published texts of Gokhale's speeches, is dated November 20, 1912. It is probable, therefore, that his letter was written on November 16 or on November 17 on which date Gandhiji left for Lourenco Marques to see Gokhale off.

bach. Inquire at the Lost Luggage Office in the Station there. Possibly a whole bundle has been left behind. It bears the date on which I came away.

Speak to Mahomed Cassim Camroodeen[1] even so about the advertisement. Let me know what reply he gives.

Find out from Dada Sheth what action is being taken about boys being not permitted to attend the school[2]. You should also obtain weekly reports from Mr. Subramaniam[3] and publish them. If, moreover, you arranged for this through Mr. Paul, you may [thus] be able to keep in touch with him and secure valuable news. I know that this will take time. It is to be done during spare hours, and it can be done if harmony prevails in Phoenix. The answer [to the question] how this can be brought about lies with you all and so does the responsibility for achieving it.

Ask Mr. Aiyar[4] for information about C. K. D. Pillay's case. Mr. Paul will be able to give you this information at once.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5741

235. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

[*November 17, 1912*][5]

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I have your letters. I shall reply to them at leisure. At the moment, I shall only say that since you have grasped the significance [of human existence] you should order your life accordingly.[6]

From the Gujarati original in pencil in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5639 Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] A Durban Indian merchant

[2] The Indian Educational Institute at Durban run by H. L. Paul

[3] An Indian educationist of Natal who had consulted Gandhiji about the school

[4] P. S. Aiyar of the *African Chronicle*

[5] On the back of this is a brief letter to the addressee from Sonja Schlesin and it is dated November 18, 1912.

[6] Gandhiji ended the letter at this point and left for Lourenco Marques. The letter was forwarded to the addressee by Polak, as is clear from the remarks added by him.

236. SPEECH AT LOURENCO MARQUES BANQUET TO GOKHALE[1]

[*November 18, 1912*]

Mr. M. K. Gandhi said he remembered Lourenco Marques when it had the reputation of being a malarious place, but is was almost superfluous to drink the health of the European guests in a town so admittedly healthy as the town was today. They also had partaken of a vegetarian, non-alcoholic repast—these things also were consistent with good health. He considered the gathering was unique; they had with them Christians, Jews, Hindus, Mahomedans and Parsees. He had been ordered to be brief, so would ask all to drink to the guests, coupled with the name of Consul-General MacDonnell.

Indian Opinion, 7-12-1912

237. A CABLE[2]

R. P. D. KRONPRINZ

[On or after *November 19, 1912*]

THANKS PROGRAMME CONVENIENT GOKHALE'S HEALTH UNSATISFACTORY SPARE HIM TROUBLE.

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5736

[1] The banquet was presided over by Errol MacDonell, the British Consul-General.

[2] Gokhale, accompanied by Gandhiji and Kallenback, boarded R.P.D. *Kronprinz* of German East Africa Line at midnight on November 18, 1912. On the way Gokhale and party disembarked at Beira (November 21 and 22), Mozambique (November 25) and Zanzibar (November 27) and at each of these places he was felicitated and presented with addresses. Some time between November 18 and 26, therefore, Gandhiji must have addressed this telegram to the reception committee in one of these three places.

238. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

DAR-ES-SALAM,
December 4, 1912

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

I have just heard that the Indian mail closes within half an hour from now (9.30 a.m.). We are in this place for two more days.

On receipt of cable from Johannesburg to the effect that the case[1] was found at Lourenco Marques and that it was being forwarded to you, I cabled to you at Mahe.[2] I hope you received the cable. A cable[3] was also sent to Miss Schlesin, asking her to insure the case.

And now will you forgive me for all my imperfections? I want to be a worthy pupil of yours. This is not mock humility but Indian seriousness. I want to realize in myself the conception I have of an Eastern pupil. We may have many differences of opinion, but you shall still be my pattern in political life.

One word from the quack physician. Ample fasting, strict adherence to two meals, entire absence of condiments of all kinds from your food, omission of pulses, tea, coffee, etc., regular taking of Kuhne baths, regular and brisk walking in the country (not the pacing up and down for stimulating thought), ample allowance of olive oil and acid fruit and gradual elimination of cooked food—and you will get rid of your diabetes and add a few more years than you think to your life of service in your present body.

Mr. Kallenbach wishes to be remembered to you.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[1] This was presumably the case containing the address which was presented to Gokhale by the British Indian Association and engraved on solid gold plate; *vide* 1st footnote of "British Indian Association's Address to Gokhale" 28-10-1912 and entry for November 28 in "Diary, 1912", when the case was first missed.

[2] These cables to Gokhale and Schlesin are not available.

[3] *Ibid*

[PS.]

We were both glad to receive your cable. Will you kindly ask Mr. Shastriar or some other S.I.[1] to give me an account of the Mombasa reception for *I.O.?*

M. K. G.

From a photostat of the typewritten copy: C. W. 4842

239. EDUCATION IN VERNACULARS

For the first time in the history of Indian education in South Africa, Indian languages are now acknowledged as being necessary as a medium of training Indian children in schools. One of the conditions accepted by the Witwatersrand Central School Board, in connection with the establishment of an Indian school[2] in Johannesburg, is that the Gujarati language "may be taught as a language and used as a medium of instruction". It strikes us as being remarkable that the Education Department in Natal should have been so blind as not to see that the mother tongue is an absolute essential to school training. The position now is that not a single Indian school in Natal, under control, gives instruction through the language of the pupils. Nor are Indian vernaculars taught as languages to Indians in the schools, except in one or two cases where the teachers kindly give instruction in those languages after school hours to those who specially wish it. Mr. Gokhale, in his farewell speech at Pretoria, laid emphasis on the need for teaching Indian vernaculars in school hours. He also rightly pointed out that, so long as such instruction is not given, it is a legitimate excuse for the Indian community to ask for the admission of clerks and others so instructed, for the proper keeping of their bookes. But most of all we would urge the importance of the study of

[1] Servants of India

[2] This is presumably the school which Gandhiji mentioned in his speech at the British Indian Association meeting of August 25, and for which a committee was then formed. On November 16, the Secretary of the Witwatersrand General School Board wrote to Habib Motan, who was on this committee, accepting his proposal for the establishment of the school ("Proposed Indian School at Johannesburg", p. 327) on the conditions that: (a) a European Principal would be appointed and paid for by the Government, who would be the supervisor of the school, and (b) that the Indians would bear half the cost of the salaries of the teachers in return for a matching grant by the Government. The Secretary agreed that Gujarati might be taught as a language and used as a medium of instruction. *Indian Opinion*, 7-12-1912.

Indian languages because, without a knowledge of one's ideas become warped and our hearts estranged from the Motherland. The religions and literature of India can never be appreciated through the medium of a foreign language. Much as we admire the bright intelligence of our Colonial-born young men we feel that there is something missing, and that is a knowledge of real Indian thought, history, and literature. Many of them speak nothing but the English language, some few have obtained a colloquial knowledge of their mother tongue whilst scarcely any can read and write the great languages of India. This is a great pity, and we therefore welcome the enlightened decision of the Witwatersrand School Board, and hope that, ere long, we shall see the spread of vernacular teaching throughout the Indian schools in South Africa.

Indian Opinion, 7-12-1912

240. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

Magshar Sud 9 [*December 18, 1912*][1]

CHI. JAMNADAS,

You left the same day as I reached Johannesburg. I have both your letters. I shall myself tear them up after reading them. I also do not understand why your health should have suffered. Ch. Chhaganlal says that you were dispirited this time, that you, known to be the strongest of all, tired [easily]. All this shows that your recent experiment in diet did not suit you. I could have shown you where the fault lay if only I had been with you. Chhanganlal says that you had also grown irritable. You should resume taking milk, ghee, *dahi*, etc., when the six-month period is over. Sugar and salt you will not need. Do eat them, however, if you must but improve your health. You may resume your experiment, if you wish, after I go there. If you do not keep very good health, no one will believe in the value of your experiment, and, if you do not keep a normal temper, it will do you no good either.

And now to your questions.

If we eat no *dahi*, naturally butter and buttermilk should also be avoided. Surely, if *dahi* is forbidden, butter and buttermilk are constituents of *dahi*. They are less of an evil because they are less palatable. But you need not worry over this rather subtle distinction. If

[1] This appears to have been written soon after Jamnadas Gandhi left for India on December 14, 1912.

you take ghee, your may as well take milk, *dahi*, etc. We shall see about it later on.

It is nothing wrong if one who takes coco-nut oil eats copra. In fact, copra should be better. But, just as one who cannot digest wheat may be able to digest its milk[1], so may one who cannot digest copra be able to digest the oil. Moreover, oil is more convenient for a person without teeth. You are likely to find yourself in this state. And the same about gingili. In order to consume two ounces of its oil, one must eat a large quantity of the seed and this cannot be done. True, the cake will be left out, and for some constitutions it is just as well.

One can certainly live on bananas alone. Then one need not eat nuts. I feel that the kernel in the almonds and other nuts contains more nourishment than fresh fruit.

I can think of two reasons why you got boils. Because of unsuitable food the blood became weak and the enervating air at Phoenix had an immediate effect on you. Or else, Phoenix water affects only the skin, in the same way that mere contact with cactus will affect the skin of a person even it his blood is pure.

If some air enters the stomach through an enema, no harm will come out of it. At the worst, there might be stomach-ache, as the body has no use for air entering this way. When this happens, one should go to the toilet and strain, so that most of the wind is expelled. One in unlikely to die if some air enters, though, for a delicate constitution like Krishna's, the result might well be disastrous.

In case of any stomach disorder, a wet-sheet pack will certainly have some effect. The pressing out of fat through the countless pores in the skin will undoubtedly reduce pressure to that extent, and this may well induce a motion.

When the patient is in no condition to be treated with earth bandage and is too weak to fast, there is likely to be no unwanted matter in the system and even if there is it will do no harm. In this case, the patient should be given hot milk or similar food to revive him, and he should then be given earth treatment, etc. If he is so utterly weak that one may not even bring him to contact with cold water or give him a glass of water, be sure he is nearing his end. One should be resigned to and wait for it. Even while one waits, the patient may possibly revive.

There is no universal rule that one must always do something.

[1] Squeezed out of wheat soaked in water

Sometimes, rest alone is the right thing for the patient. Patients like Krishna cannot be given a hard *bhakhri*[1] made from rice or other flour. They have inflammation of the intestines and can only be given the simplest liquid food. This treatment is for enteric and other fevers. Patients like him can be given orange juice, strained. It must contain no trace of the peel or the pulp inside.

If a very weak patient has excessive motions, a wet pack, soaked in ice-cold water, should be applied to the stomach. If this has no effect, the motions should not be interfered with.

When a patient is delirious, one should understand that he is suffering. He should be treated with mud packs over his head and stomach and lowed plenty of fresh air. It does not matter if he continues to be in delirium after this. He will come round by and by. If his vitality is exhausted, he will eventually succumb.

After six months are over, you may cheerfully take whatever food your inner being prompts you to.

You may learn weaving if that can be done without strain. I do not insist on it.

We affectionately address both God and mother as thou, having no fear of either. The father inspires fear, so that one does not, normally, address him that way. As for others, they are all distant. They certainly cannot take the place of God or a mother.

It was certainly not right of Sugriva to have had Vali killed.[2] He can be defended up to a point. It is surely not possible to defend all the actions of the virtuous in the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. Even the poet has not visualized them as perfect.

If you are so crazy about a bicycle, use it, and then rid yourself of the craze. While riding to a village on a bicycle, one has to face danger from cattle. The latter are utter strangers to our bicycle and, being frightened, charge at us. You may write to Mr. Kallenbach unhesitatingly. I shall continue to write [to you].

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5641. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Thick, coarse *roti*

[2] They were brothers depicted as monkey-kings in the *Ramayana*. Sugriva besought Rama's assistance in recovering his wife from Vali who had taken her away. Rama, therefore, killed Vali and installed Sugriva on the throne.

241. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

December 20, 1912

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I am now reaching Durban. Up to Newcastle I had a compartment all to myself. From Maritzburg it became crowded. A native friend usurped my seat whilst I was walking along the platform. I thought I would walk and risk losing my seat. Could not manage two meals yesterday. I shall see what happens today.

The Indian visit fills me ≈ consideration of it in details sends my brain whizzing. Why need I think so much about it? One step enough for me. That step is the patient to whom I am going. He drove out the Indian visit from my thought. So much of self.

Now you are in a seesaw. Your mind is a spinning top set in motion at its highest. Well, the comfort before us all is that we cannot peep into the future and we cannot control all the forces that mould us. Only this we know that one of such forces is ourselves. So that our duty is done when we have performed to the best of our ability our own part. What is your own part? To make up your mind for the immediate future and stick to it manfully. You have made up your mind. Now it remains to stick to the resolution. It means your refusing to waste your time even by your mind idly thinking of other projects which might have been better.

Do your Hindi, fix up Mountain View and Africa Building, wind up your office and do not worry about Call or Geevers or anybody else or anything else.

For your food, while you need not just now return to the pure fruit diet, you may only take up bread and oil and not milk and ghee. Later only may you take these up if they are found necessary. Bread should have its trial without ghee and milk. That would be a scientific experiment.

Hope that you will have things not to be kept on the Farm packed up.

Will you remember that you may not even spend a penny without careful thinking? The next year or eighteen months or more are the time of your life.

Yours sincerely,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

242. GOKHALE'S RETURN TO INDIA

Reuter has sent us a partial report of the public meeting held in Bombay to welcome Mr. Gokhale and hear from him an account of his historic visit to this country.[1] It gives us an idea of the hopes he entertains.

Some Indians at home imagine that we demand free entry for all Indians wishing to settle in South Africa. This is the impression one occasionally gathers from newspapers coming from India. Some Indian leaders, too, make this demand. Replying to critics of this sort, Mr. Gokhale declared that we did not demand such [unrestricted] rights, and also that it would not be proper for us to do so. He has suggested that we ought to be content if the legal right was secured. He added that if we hoped for reasonable treatment, we should understand the underlying reason for the Europeans' anxieties and fears. Our prospects would undoubtedly depend to some extent on such understanding. Mr. Gokhale seems to have succeeded in making the Bombay meeting appreciate this.

The Union Government has assured Mr. Gokhale that the immigration laws would not be applied inconsiderately.[2] Let us see to what extent the assurance is acted upon. That will [of course] depend more on our own actions. Mr. Gokhale is convinced that the cruel £3 tax which the labouring class is made to pay will be repealed. We would be surprised [in fact] if a repealing bill was not brought before the forthcoming session of Parliament.

But the problem of the trade licences—the biggest and the most complicated—will still remain unsolved. We are sure the Indian community will have to put forth tremendous efforts in this matter.

[1] At this meeting, held on December 14, Gokhale had enumerated the problems of Indians in South Africa. He had declared that African Indians, if they wanted reasonable treatment, should respect the reasonable apprehensions of the Europeans who were afraid of being swamped by the Coloured people. It was not a question of right, he had said, but it was a "question of what was best for the people". He also paid the highest tribute to Gandhiji's "wonderful personality and work". *Indian Opinion*, 21-12-1912. For a full report of Gokhale's speech, *vide* Appendix "Gokhale's Speech at Bombay", 14-12-1912.

[2] Gokhale met Smuts, Botha and Fischer at Pretoria on November 14, and Gladstone on November 15, 1912; *vide* Appendix "Gladstone's Minute on Meeting with Gokhale", 16-11-1912.

Wherever Mr. Gokhale went, he had discussions with Europeans on this question, but none of them was able to suggest a satisfactory solution. The Union Government, too, had explained their problems to Mr. Gokhale. He feels that we here will have to exert ourselves in this regard. He is thinking of setting up an association in Indian which will exclusively attend to our problems, and himself will most probably be the secretary. He believes that London [S.A.B.I.] Committee, too, should continue its work. Mr. Gokhale has also suggested an easy way for keeping the Committee going ;we shall write of this later.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 21-12-1912

243. GANDHI UNDER DETENTION[1]

PHOENIX,
December 23, 1912

The Officer asked: "Are you an Indian?"

ANSWER: "Yes."

Q: "Were you born in India?"

A: "Yes."

Q: "Do you have any papers with you?"

A: "No. I am a lawyer practising in the Transvaal Court, and I have with me a return ticket to Johannesburg. And I intend to go there today."

The official said: "Don't you worry about that ! Sit here; your case will be disposed of later."

(The foregoing exchange of questions and answers was in English. In English the word corresponding to *tu*[2] is not used. The Immigration Officer used [the English] "you"; but he did so in a manner that might well suggest *Tu*. He used "you" in this contemptuous fashion, and I have rendered it in Gujarati as *tu*.)

Mr. Kallenbach and I travelled as deck passengers on the return journey, having earlier accompanied the Hon. Mr. Gokhale as far as Tanga, beyond Zanzibar. Our tickets were for Delagoa Bay. At Beira we boarded another steamer in order to save time. On board the

[1] The entry for November 29 in "Diary, 1912" contains a brief reference to the incident.

[2] A second person pronoun in the nominative case in Gujarati which implies familiarity of contempt.

second steamer, there were, besides us, abourt 60 deck passengers, who, after they had been interrogated by the Delagoa Bay Immigration Officer, were permitted to land. He questioned them even if they wished to stop there only for a few hours before entraining for Johannesburg. He issued permits only after interrogation.

Most of our co-passengers were Greek and they were poor. I was present during their interrogation. The questioning must have taken up about an hour and a half. After asking them about their residence, occupation, etc., he handed over their permits to them. Most of them were to proceed to Johannesburg, and they were found carrying some papers as well—mostly in proof of their possession of £20 on their persons. When my turn came, the Immigration Officer asked me the questions which I mentioned in the beginning.

It was Mr. Kallenbach's turn next. The official asked him: "Have you got any papers?" Mr. Kallenbach said that he had none. He introduced me and told the Immigration Officer the we had together gone to see the Hon. Mr. Gokhale off. I do not think the official even bothered to hear him out. He only said: "I shall take up his (Gandhi's) case later. I can't give him a permit. He is an Indian." Mr. Kallenbach gnashed his teeth. He was much hurt. He got his own permit immediately, but it was like poison to him. Would he disembark alone, leaving me behind? How could he possibly do that. The thought rent his heart. He felt ashamed to accept his permit, and while taking it, he turned to me and said angrily (but this was really for the benefit of the official): "You take that ! You are an 'Asiatic': your skin is black. I am a European and white. You will have to remain under detention." (Here the word *tu* suggests affection). I kept smiling, but rage flared in my heart: 'I a mere Indian? How overbearing this official is and how wicked the whites are! How despicable my countrymen are! But why blame the whites? What is there the official can do? I must share in the benefits of and pay the penalties for the impression created by my fellows in South Africa. Today I pay the penalty; tomorrow I might reap the benefit. Why blame even the South African Indians? We are after all like the Indians in India. What would be my duty in this case? To be angry with the official? Certainly not. Authority is blind. Shall I then hold my peace? No, where there is suffering, I must try to seek redress. And how does one try? I must do my duty. I must not become or remain selfish. My Indian co-passengers on the deck are living in filth; I must set them an example through my way of living. I must

move about as a deck passenger and request them to think of their self-respect and to preserve it, to remove the causes of filth, etc. They should defer to the simple and reasonable laws of the whites and resist their perverse and unreasonable laws with courage and firmness.

I must learn a lesson from this incident that person like my-self should, in so far as possible, travel deck class. Only thus will I gain a true idea of the condition of deck passengers, and be moreover able to help them.' Such I saw was my duty. These thoughts must all have arisen in the mind within a moment. Those who have not known the immense speed of thought can experience it as they read this. These thoughts must have crowded in on my wounded mind- in a medley, but eventually I became absolutely calm. I remember now that my mind did become quiet, and that is how I now infer that it had earlier been agitated.

I sat glued to my chair, half awake, half dreaming, while Mr. Kallenbach was restlessly pacing up and down. He looked a lion caught in a cage. A few Indians were standing about at the pier waiting to receive us. Mr. Kallenbach told them about my detention. They said: "We have been ready since yesterday with arrangements to receive Mr. Gandhi. We shall send a man again and he will soon fetch the permit." Mr. Kallenbach brought me this news; but becoming impatient, he went to the official again. The latter repeated: "I cannot do anything now." When all the cases had been disposed of, he left. But while going away, he told me that my case would take time yet. Some time after the official had left, the Delagoa Bay Indians' attempts proved effective. This messenger had returned with the permit. It was shown to the Immigration Officer's clerk who then issued me a pass; I was set free. Mr. Kallenbach and I disembarked and, having enjoyed the hospitality of the Delagoa Bay Indians, we took the train to Johannesburg the same day.

I for one have learnt much from the foregoing incident. I place it before readers of *Indian Opinion* hoping that they would know about it, and that they, too, may learn something from it. Surely, this has not happened only to me that I should bore readers of *Indian Opinion* with this rigmarole. Let me hope that this question would not occur to them. Admittedly, suffering a thousand times more severe has befallen Indians at Delagoa Bay and other ports. It is because I know this that I was pained and now write about this incident. I would, I suppose, be considered and educated person. That is, I would know

what to do. Many Europeans know me. I would be counted among the "big", and many would come forward to help me. If, in spite of all this, I have had to put up with so much, what must be the plight of other Indians, looked down upon as uneducated and in no wise able to defend themselves?

I wish Indians in my predicament would be infused with the same zeal that I felt. The first step towards our deliverance is the true realization of our condition. During my deck journey an Indian, referring to our condition here, expressed the opinion: "We are as ants. We must endure this suffering somehow and have done with it." This I call ignorance. We set no store by self-respect and are not prepared to defend it. 'Once I get my wages, the whites might call me a coolie, a deck-hand might kick me. I might be obliged to live in a Location; I might be prevented from owning land and mine might be a dog's plight. But I don't care.' Such, generally, is our lot. We have submitted to it all along, so the Europeans treat us in this fashion. Thus we alone are responsible for our condition. That is the lesson to be learnt from this incident. Having learnt it, we must apply it in every difficult situation and act accordingly. Two things need to be done: one, we must rid the community of its defects which may have brought about the present condition and two, every one of us must fight against injustices perpetrated by the whites.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-12-1912

244. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

December 26, 1912

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I find that I cannot leave before next week. The patients are progressing. I am making safe experiments with one of them and it appears to me that he will recover much more rapidly. It consists in eliminating milk from the dietary.

Will you please have those things which have to come here packed slowly? I should like to shorten my stay there as much as possible. The contents of each case should be noted in a book.

I have been thinking over your letter. I think that we often manufacture sorrows. Instead of simply saying to yourself you are

going to Phoenix and then to India, you are thinking in advance what awaits you at these places. May you not think thus: 'I shall go to Phoenix. I shall take up work which I can do and no other. If I cannot find anything to suit me and Phoenix appals me, I shall leave the place. I do not mind admitting defeat. I shall go to India. I shall try to like it. I shall try, too, to find pleasure in the work before me. If I still fail, I shall not lose. I shall be the gainer for having tried.'

This is a safe attitude and it is the attitude of the average man. Why should you worry by trying to know the whole future?

With love,

Yours sincerely,
UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

245. A CATASTROPHE

We have to thank our stars that the dastardly act of the bomb-thrower at Delhi did not prove fatal to Lord Hardinge's life and that Lady Hardinge had a miraculous escape. That in this century, Which is considered an enlightened period in the history of mankind, there are people who believe that assassination can lead to political or other reform is a fact which should make people think and ask whether water passes under the name of progress is real progress. We as Indians deplore that this nefarious institution of cold-blooded Satanic murder should find its votaries in India. We cannot recall instances of the kind in Indian history. Assassination for selfish ends is as old as the hills. It had its sway in India also long before the introduction, in that land, of Western influence. But Political assassination is a recent excrescence in the life of India. The mad youth who perpetrated the crime no doubt thought that by striking murders of distinguished men, rulers could be terrorized and an independent Indian could be thereby secured . We should decline to share any such independence even if it were attainable, which we doubt. We do not believe that good can be brought about by evil.

The fact is that the idea of securing independence by assassination is chimerical. The result can only be greater repression, greater suspicion on the part of the rulers, greater taxation on the people, and consequent increase in the hardships of the poorest in the land. In the midst of this darkness we can but pray for India's

deliverance from the curse of assassination and the return of the few misguided youths to the sane teaching of their forefathers that freedom comes only from self-suffering and purification—never by inflicting on others. We pray, too, for Lord Haridinge's quick recovery from the effect of the wound received by him.

Indian Opinion, 28-12-1912

246. LETTER TO G.K. GOKHALE[1]

PHOENIX,
NATAL,
December 28, 1912

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

Chhaganlal's son being ill I was obliged to hurry here as soon as we reached Johannesburg. The youngster is much better now thanks to the hip baths & partial starvation.

Many thanks for your letter from Mombasa & cable from India. The criticism you cable was expected by us. It does not affect me at all. The critics have not troubled to study the question. Even Mr. Natrajan in his paper says that we have made as good a bargain as we could under the circumstances. The fact is that we have made no "bargain". But I must not worry you. I value your time and health too much to inflict a long letter on you.

I replied to your cable early this week. I hope that the souvenir case was received in time. The *Umkazi* remained a long time at Beira.

You were right and I was wrong. The foodstuff bought at Johannesburg for our voyage went to the Farm. All evidently lost their heads, Miss Schlesin most of all. You wanted to know, too, as to who was responsible for the omission to pay our passage. Ismail says he knew nothing about it and that he never received Polak's wire. Polak distrusts Ismail. Poor Rustomjee was upset when he heard that the passage had to be paid at Beira. The omission to give you the diary of your tour was due to Polak's forgetfulness. I admit that all these mishaps were preventable and I could have prevented them had I given them more thought. The lessons I have learnt during the tour will not be lost on me.

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", 4-12-1912.

I hope to shift to Phoenix during the middle of January.

On my arrival in Johannesburg Miss Sclesin told me that the whole of the passive resistance balance was used up. As I have several calls to meet, I took the liberty of adding to the cable a few words asking you to ask Mr. Petit to cable the balance in his hands.[1]

I hope that you are keeping well. I should value all the news you could give me abut your health and the changes made in your dietary, &c.

If one of the Servants of India could be specially put on S.A. Work arrangements could be made to send him a regular letter every mail about the position here, and a few copies of *I.O.* for careful distribution. You have asked me to write to you regularly about the position. But I feel that I ought not to expect you to read such heavy correspondence from fortnight to fortnight . The member whom you may appoint could do all that & take you instructions when necessary.

I remain,

Your sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Enclosed is the bill of lading regarding the lost case and insurance certificate.

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 3806

[1] Petit had cabled the first instalment of Ratan Tata's donation of Rs. 25,000; *vide* " Mr. Tata's Munificence", 10-8-1912.

247. DIARY, 1912[1]

JANUARY 15, MONDAY, POSH VAD 11

Medh, Manilal, Pragji returned

Trip ticket book	1.	6.	3
Stamps	0.	2.	0
Bal[ance]	3.	3.	10

JANUARY 16, TUESDAY

Went to town—Porter met [me]—Returned—Plague in Durban.

Leather	0.	7.	6
Paper	0.	0.	3
Bal[ance]	2.	16.	1

JANUARY 17, WEDNESDAY

Went to town—Met the Committee on Crematorium near the graveyard—

Wire	0.	1.	0
Freight Salt	0.	1.	0
Paper	0.	0.	3
Bal[ance]	£ 2.	13.	10

[1] These brief memoranda were made by Gandhiji from day to day on a copy of "*Indian Opinion* Pocket Diary for 1912" published by the International Printing Press, Phoenix, and advertised for the first time in *Indian Opinion*, 6-1-1912. It measures 4Ω" x 3Ω" (Crown sexto-decimo size). Written in Gandhiji's hand, it contains, for the most part, names of persons he wrote to each day and of those who visited hem at Tolstoy Farm and references to his visits to Johannesburg or to Phoenix. While all these notes are in Gujarati, the entries of daily receipts and disbursements, made in single vertical column, are in English. These accounts presumably concern the petty cash kept with him at the Farm and include sundry credits and receipts and disbursements on account of the school. The punctuation in the Diary is meagre and sometimes misleading. Marks of punctuation have been supplied where absolutely necessary. In transliterating names of persons from the Gujarati, English spellings have been taken over from advertisements or news-items in the *Indian Opinion* issues for the year or from the English entries in the accounts column. As for proper names, which could not be checked with contemporaneous sources, the conventional or phonetic spelling has been used. Of the letters mentioned in the Diary, the few that have been traced have been identified by cross-references.

Post—Harilal, Doctor, Lallubhai, Dulabhai, N. M. Kadir, Editor, *Gujarati*, Chhaganlal, Lallubhai, Gulabbhai.

JANUARY 18, THURSDAY

Went to town—Saw Chamney who said he would telegraph Delagoa. Bhayat's wife sentenced.[1]

Newspaper	0.	0.	3
Buckle	0.	0.	6
R[eceive]d form Bhayat	0.	1.	0

JANUARY 19, FRIDAY

Wrote letter—Ismail Moosa Dhaled, Dulabh Vash, Maganlal

Wire to chamney	0.	4.	3
Messenger	0.	1.	0
Bal[ance]	2.	8.	10

JANUARY 20, SATURDAY, MAHA SUD 1

Went to town. Saw Dr. Porter. Meanwhile Mr. Dunning came to Farm and missed train. Schlesin and Dorabji came together—wrote letters to Mrs. Shaer.

Albert	1.	0.	0
Ricksha, etc. fr.	0.	1.	3
The Star	0.	0.	3
Bal[ance]	1.	7.	4

JANUARY 21, SUNDAY

Mahomed Hafejee & two other Musalmans & Bhikhu & Morarji came. Dorabji, Hafejee & his friends, and Schlesin & Dunning left. Wrote to Schlesin, Chhaganlal, Mehta, Winterbottom, Maud, Cole [Kaul?[2]], Purshottamdas. Started Valmiki *Ramayana*.

JANUARY 22, MONDAY

Post—Dada Abdulla, Gokuldas, Lord Ampthill.

[1] *Indian Opinion*, 27-1-1912, mentions that on January 18, 1912 one Salomi, wife of Bhayat, was sentenced to detention by a Johannesburg magistrate pending an order for deportation.

[2] This name can also be transliterated as Kaul and occurs frequently in the Diary.

JANUARY 23, TUESDAY

Ismail came—Morarji & Bhikubhai left.

Wrote—David Keshavalu, Purshottamdas, Nathu Bhana, Bomansha.

Stamps	0.	2.	6
R[eceive]d re: Ismail	2.	0.	0
Bal[ance]	3.	4.	10

The entries above should have been under Monday[1]. Thambi Naidoo came. Letters—Lepin, Saiyad Haji Mia, [Su]bhan Godfrey, Schlesin, Velshi, Burnett.

JANUARY 24, WEDNESDAY

Thambi Naidoo left, Dadabhai came & left, Albert came, wrote—Abhechand, Tyndale, Schlesin, Diwan.

JANUARY 25, THURSDAY

Wrote—Schlesin, Thakkar, Chhaganlal, Maganlal

Wire Hasan	0.	1.	3
Stamps	0.	2.	0
John	0.	2.	6
Balance	3.	0.	1[2]

JANUARY 26, FRIDAY

Mohan Soni came & left. Two whites came for sandals

JANUARY 27, SATURDAY

Wrote—Lepin, Shelat, Dularkhan, Shaer, Tyndale, Mrs. Vogl came & left. Bhimbhai came. Naidu came & left. Manilal and Jamnadas went to J. B.

JANUARY 28, SUNDAY

Gordon, Jivanji, Naoroji, Ismail Moosa Dhaled and his two friends—all these had come and left. Ferozesha and Maneksha also left with them. Wrote—Maud, Winterbottom, Chhaganlal.

R[eceive]d from Dhaled	2.	0.	0

[1] Gandhiji is here referring to a misplaced entry—the two paragraphs preceding this footnote mark belong to the previous day.

[2] Eror of Is. was later corrected on January 31 (p. 367).

JANUARY 29, MONDAY

Lutavan left. I went to town and returned. Velshi and his son Rajabali came. Hoosen and his uncle came to J. B. Wrote to Lane about New Bill.[1]

Wrote— . . . [2], Alexander, Schlesin.

Rd. re.Rajabali	3.	1.	0
Prema re.Lutavan	1.	10.	0
P[ai]d fare	0.	2.	11
Leather	0.	19.	0
Books, etc.,	0.	3.	0
Manilal	0.	6.	6

JANUARY 30, TUESDAY

Hoosen and his maternal uncle[3] came. Manilal and Jamnadas came. Fakiro[4] came & returned. Velshi left. Telegraphed to Lane[5]. Abdoolla Sheth died yesterday.[6] Letters to West, Harilal, Schlesin. Wire to Lane: [about] Dad[a]

Abdoolla; Rustomjee & Cape	0.	13.	0

JANUARY 31, WEDNESDAY

Essop Mia left-Essack's mother came and left—Kennedy came and left—and also Naidoo. Received a long telegram[7] from Lane. Wrote— Ha[jee], Habib, Prabhashanker, V. S. Pillay, Raghavji, Khanderia

Rd. For sandals	1.	0.	0
Paid Dano	0.	6.	6
Freight	0.	4.	6
Error	0.	1.	0
Bal.	£7.	14.	8

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 29-1-1912.

[2] A word here is illegible.

[3] Husband of his aunt

[4] Fakir, referred to in the diary variously as Fakiro and Fakiri; also known among the settlers of the farm as Fakirabhai. Gandhiji refers to him as "the brave Fakira"; he was in charge of stores at Phoenix for a time; served six or seven terms of imprisonment and was sentenced later to deportation; *vide* "Johannesburg", 4-4-1910 & "Johannesburg", 18-4-1910.

[5] *Vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to Minister of Interior", 30-1-1912.

[6] Dada Abdoolla Hajee Adam died on January 29, 1912; *vide* "Late Mr. Abdoolla Hajee Adam", 3-2-1912.

[7] *Vide* Appendix "Telegram from Secretary of Interior to Gandhiji", 31-1-1912.

FEBRUARY 1, THURSDAY

Budrea, Ramlal and two others came. Hoosen left. Dano came. [Wrote]—Schlesin, Chhaganlal, Editor, *I.O.*, Bhayat, Ritch, Kallenbach, Nalji Hari, Rustomjee, Osman Ahmed, Velshi Keshavji, Clement Doke. Telegraphed[1] Registrar [of Asiatics]

Rd. For Essack's father	0.	3.	6
, , John for potatoes	0.	16.	6
, , Refund loans	0.	7.	0
, , Paraffine	0.	0.	6
P[ai]d John for milk to Jan.	1.	10.	0
Telegram	0.	16.	9
Bal.	6.	15.	5

FEBRUARY 2, FRIDAY

Budrea and his friends left. Parbhu came. Hoosen came. Wrote to Miss Schlesin.

P[ai]d stamps	0.	2.	0
Wire to Registrar Bhayat	0.	1.	6
Bal.	6.	11.	11

FEBRUARY 3, SATURDAY, MAHA VAD 1

Wrote in morning: West, Chhaganlal and Purshottamdas. Pragji left. Hoosen left. Valji and Dulabh Bhaga came by evening train. Telegram from Lane saying Smuts Would reply on Monday.[2]

Pd. Station Master	3.	0.	0
Rd. From Parbhu	0.	2.	6
Bal.	3.	14.	5

FEBRUARY 4, SUNDAY

Wrote—Joshi, Maganalal, Thakkar, Winterbottom, Maud, Anandlal, N. M. Kadir, Munu.

[1] Telegram not available

[2] *Vide* footnote "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 6-2-1912.

Gordon, Quinn, Schlesin and Coopoo, who had come, left, and also Valji and Dulabh. Mrs. Naidoo and Nayana Chaki also left.

Rd. From Gordon	1.	0.	0

FEBRUARY 5, MONDAY

Wrote: Chhaganlal, West, Schlesin, Burnett.

Stamps	0.	1.	9
Wire Kall[enbach]	0.	1.	3
Bal.	4.	11.	5

FEBRUARY 6, TUESDAY

Vaja and Raja came and returned. Wrote: Dr. Gool Schlesin, Kalida Patel, Dularkhan, Amod Bhayat, Velshi. Drafted telegram to Smuts.[1]

Stamps	0.	0.	6
Bal.	4.	10.	11

FEBRUARY 7, WEDNESDAY

... [2] man came & left. Did not send telegram to Smuts. Received one[3] from him dated yesterday. Sent another[4] in reply Wrote: Vallabhram, G. A. Makanji, Velshi, Schlesin.

Rd. re. Fakir	3.	0.	0
Pd. wire Smuts	0.	4.	3
Freight & Parcel to Gool	0.	5.	7

FEBRUARY 8, THURSDAY

Telegram[5] from Smuts, drafted reply[6], . Pragji came. Wrote: Schlesin

Pd. wire Kallenbach	0.	1.	6
Freight balance yesterday	0.	0.	9
Stamps	0.	2.	6
Bal.	6.	16.	1

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 6-2-1912.

[2] A word here in illegible.

[3] *Vide* Appendix "Telegram from Secretary for Interior for Gandhiji", 7-2-1912.

[4] *Vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to Ministry of Interior", 7-2-1912.

[5] *Vide* 1st footnote of "Telegram to Private Secretary to Minister of Interior", 7-2-1912.

[6] *Vide* "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 8-2-1912.

FEBRUARY 9, FRIDAY

Budrea, Ohler [Olive?] & Govind came and left. Kalikasingh came. Budrea's son and Ablak came. Wrote: Chhaganlal, Purshottamdas, Parsee Rustomjee, Joshi, Dada Osman & Anglia.

Pd. wire Smuts	0.	4.	6
Bal.	6.	11.	7

FEBRUARY 10, SATURDAY

Ablak, Kalikasingh, Manilal, Medh & Jamnadas left. Bush & Moorgan came. Coopoo and Dahya left.

Jamnadas	0.	5.	0
Coopoo	0.	3.	0
Dana	0.	7.	3
Stamps	0.	2.	6
Medh for wire	0.	2.	6
Bal,	5.	11.	4

FEBRUARY 11, SUNDAY

Tailor from Krugersdorp came & left. Brought coat. Schlesin & Coopoo Naidoo came and left. I also left to see K. along with Ritch. Doctor gave £12

Rd. from the Tailor	0.	5.	0
For *I.O.*	0.	1.	0
St[ation] Master	3.	0.	0
Pd. Trip tickets tr[ai]n	1.	6.	3

FEBRUARY 12, MONDAY

Went to Krugersdorp. Saw K. Lunch at Quinn's. Schlesin Incident—Hanif came—The Parbhu boy[1] came to Farm—Kallenbach, Medh, Manilal, Jamnadas, Dahya, Coopoo, Shelat etc. came to Farm—Wrote—West, Devi, Purshottam, Sanghavi, Schlesin.

Coopoo's fare	0.	3.	0
Rd. Dahya's	1.	10.	0
Parbhu's fare	0.	3.	0

[1] A student at the Farm School

Pd. fares	0.	5.	0
„ Kallenbach	3.	0.	0

FEBRUARY 13, TUESDAY

Wrote: Chhaganlal, Ani, Anandlal, Abhechand. Kallenbach went to town. Telegraphed Registrar in connection with Velshi's men. Kallenbach & Kasam came—Wrote to West, to Maganlal—Pd. wire to Chamney and Velshi 0. 6. 3

FEBRUARY 14, WEDNESDAY

Wrote—Purshottamdas, Keshav Fakir, Manilal Doctor. Schlesin, Kallenbach, Narottam & Dulabhai came. All left except K. Hoosen left for Vereeniging.

Stamps	0.	2.	3
Wire for Bhayat	0.	2.	1
Bal.	5.	10.	7

FEBRUARY 15, THURSDAY

Doctor, Chhaganlal, Editor, N. Kadir, Gangot, Velshi, Schelsin, Moosa Hajee Adam—Govan came & returned. Shelat left. Wrote—Shaer, Dr. Gool, Chhaganlal, Ritch, Tikli, Mayo.

Pd. Freight	0.	1.	3
Bal.	5.	9.	4

FEBRUARY 16, FRIDAY

Wrote—Mrs. Polak, West. Kallenbach & Hoosen came.

Wire Sorabji	0.	2.	0
Freight	0.	1.	3
Rd. Kallenbach	3.	0.	0
Balance	8.	6.	1

FEBRUARY 17, SATURDAY

[Wrote to:] Editor, Nathalia, Abdool Karim, Keshavji Goga, Velshi, Chanchi[1], Harilal[2].

Pd. Parbhu and Bhaga	0.	10.	0
R[ece]i[ved] from Dahya	0.	0.	6
Bal.	7.	16.	7

FEBRUARY 18, SUNDAY

Schlesin and Thambi Naidoo came. Both Left. Received telegram about Sorabji's landing at Durban. Dictated Letter for Polak to Schlesin. Wrote to Maud & Winterbottom.

FEBRUARY 19, MONDAY, PHAGAN SUD 1

Wrote—Noormahomed, Suleman Ismail Mian, Revashankerbhai, G. S. Kaul [Cole?], Purshottamdas, Raoji—pragji came. Bhago came.

Pd. Wire Sorabji	0.	1.	0
Freight	0.	1.	3
Kr[ishna] samy rail	0.	2.	11
Trip ticket	1.	6.	3
Bal.	6.	5.	2

FEBRUARY 20, TUESDAY

Went to town, taking Parbhu with me—Pragji came by evening train—Parbhu & I returned—also K.—From office, wrote letters to Purshottamdas, Doctor Rajkot[3], Mahajan, Joshi, A., etc.—

Pd. leather	0.	9.	6
Fares	0.	4.	5
Bal.	5.	11.	3

[1] "Letter to Chanchalbehn Gandhi", February 18, 1912 (pp.237-8)?
[2] " Fragment of Letter to Harilal Gandhi", February 18, 1912 (p.238)?
[3] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta in Rajkot

FEBRUARY 21, WEDNESDAY

Sorabji, Shelat, guests from Zanzibar,[1] Medh, Pragji, Budrea [?], Lalbahadurshigh came. Guests, Budrea & Pragji returned. Windmill man came & Left.

Rd. Peaches	0.	18.	6
Budrea	2.	7.	0
[Rd.] Zanzibari for sandals	0.	10.	0
Bhagu	0.	5.	1
Freight	0.	1.	5
Bal.	9.	10.	5

FEBRUARY 22, THURSDAY

Moonsami—Pavade came & Left—[Wrote to:] Harilal, Manager *I.O.* Jussat[2], A. Karim, Dada A.—Mahomed E., Miss Schlesin.

FEBRUARY 23, FRIDAY

Hoosen came—Wrote letters in the afternoon: Abdul Karim, etc. Parbhu came. Suleman and Ali left.

Fares for S. & Ali	0.	3.	9

FEBRUARY 24, SATURDAY

Hoosen, Ferozesha, Maneksha & Parbhu left in the morning. Sorabji, Shelat & Dano left in the afternoon. Coopoo, Hanif & Shiv left for Van Wyksrust. Wrote letters to Ani and Abhechand.

Stamps	0.	2.	6
Bal.	9.	4.	2

FEBRUARY 25, SUNDAY

Gordon, Schlesin, Isaac & Coopoo came. Narayansami came. All except Isaac left.

Paid for leather to Isaac	1.	10.	0
Bal.	7.	14.	2

[1] These were M. Saly, Kanjee Jeewanbhai and Laljee Meghjeebhai; *vide* "Telegram to Registrar of Asiatics", before 21-2-1912.

[2] *Vide* "Mrs. Jussat's Case", 9-3-1912.

FEBRUARY 26, MONDAY

Wrote—-Gu[jarati] E[ditor], *I.O.*, Maud, Winterbottom, Manilal Chaturbhai, Motilal Diwan—Manilal, Isaac & Kallenbach left. Talked to Kallenbach last evening about his niece. Suleman & Dano came. Manilal & K. returned.

Rd. For Dana	0.	10.	0

FEBRUARY 27, TUESDAY

Wrote: Maganlal, West, Thakkar, Doctor, Purshottam, Polak, Amarsi Joshi, Jussat, Nathalia, Lachman Pandey. Ali came—

Rd. For peaches	1.	15.	3

FEBRUARY 28, WEDNESDAY

Wrote: Memon, [M]oosa Alisa, enclosing certificates, Mahomed Ibrahim Kunake, Patel, Shaer—Manilal left. Medh, Ismail, Fakir and Mahomed left. K. also left. Lallubhai, Gandabhai [?], Morarji, Bhikhubhai and Medh came, also K.

Pd. fares Ismail & Mahomed	0.	3.	0
Manilal	0.	5.	0
Bal.	9.	11.	5

FEBRUARY 29, THURSDAY

Went to town. Morarji, etc., left. K. left for Ermillo. Saw Mr. Howard. Ba, etc., & Krishnasamy returned.

Pd. Carriage	0.	2.	0
Fare Krishnasamy	0.	1.	2
Ricksha	0.	0.	9
Reuter	0.	10.	0
Leather	1.	14.	6
Trip ticket	1.	6.	3
Bal.	5.	16.	9

MARCH 1, FRIDAY

Telegram to Chamney. Rail letter for Schlesin. Letters to: Chamney, Greg, Ritch, Bhayat [?], Nelson. Fakir, Ismail & Mahomed came. Wrote letters to Maganlal and Manilal.

Pd. [?] & wire Chamney	0.	4.	0
Stamps	0.	2.	6
Rd. fr[om] John for flour	0.	1.	0
Bal.	5.	11.	3

MARCH 2, SATURDAY

Miss Knudsen came—Medh, Pragji & Jamnadas left.

Rd. John for potatoes 6/-	[0].	9.	9
and extras 3/9			
Paid John for milk	[0].	13.	6
Jamnadas	0.	4.	0
Bal.	5.	3.	6

MARCH 3, SUNDAY

Schlesin, Roche & Mrs. Roche and Coopoo came. All of them & Miss Knudsen returned. Kallenbach came.

MARCH 4, MONDAY

Winterbottom, Maud, Gu. S., Cachalia, Bhayat & Vallabhram came. Kallenbach, Medh & Desai returned—

MARCH 5, TUESDAY, PHAGAN VAD 1

Wrote letters: Purshottamdas, West, Harilal, Manilal, Chhaganlal, Jivaram Pandya, Motilal, Ramji—Alexander, Schlesin & Vallabhram left. Cachalia, Bhayat and K. Left in the morning. Olive & Joan [Doke] came.

Rd. Peaches sale	0.	17.	1
Balance	6.	0.	7

MARCH 6, WEDNESDAY

Letters: Miss Schlesin, Ranchhod Hari, *I.O.*, Dr. Porter, Lazarus, Chamney—Ritch came & let—Medh came.

Rd. John for K.	3.	0.	0
Stamps	0.	2.	0

Medh & Desai	1.	0.	0
Telegram Congress re. Nathalia	1.	4.	0

MARCH 7, THURSDAY

Polak, Thakkar, Loren, Dawad Mahomed, Velshi, Schlesin, K., came—Wrote some letters

Rd. fr[om] Kallenbach for cable call	0.	10.	0
Medh	0.	9.	6
Desai	0.	7.	1
Rd. from boys	0.	0.	6
Pd. telegrams Dawad Mahomed re. Hoosen & to West & stamps	0.	4.	6
„ Kallenbach for John	3.	0.	0
Balance	5.	19.	10

MARCH 8, FRIDAY

Posted letters to Velshi, Nathalia, Anglia & those of J. B.—Telegram to Nathalia—Wrote letters: Manager, *I.O.*, Ani, Delaney, Velshi, De Vere[?] Schlesin, Kallenbach, Shelat came.

Wire Nathalia	0.	1.	0

MARCH 9, SATURDAY

All left the Farm leaving Amod Bhayat [?] & K. behind. Schlesin came in the morning & left. Gajadhar from Boksburg came to fetch me.

Fares for boys	0.	11.	8
„ Hanif	0.	2.	11
Rd. From Dhaled	3.	0.	0
Pd. Hanif	0.	5.	6
Ricksha	0.	0.	9

MARCH 10, SUNDAY

Went to Boksburg, accompanied by Medh and others. Returned by 2 o'clock train—Meeting at 4 about Bhayat [?]

Pd. railway fares	2.	9.	6
Carriage, etc.	0.	4.	6

MARCH 11, MONDAY

Medh & Desai went to Durban—Boys returned to Farm, accompanied by Sorabji & Jamnadas. Bhaga Chhota & Tikli's sons came.

Rd. For Bhaga Chhota	2.	0.	0
Dahya Parbhu	1.	10.	0
For phone	0.	1.	0
Telegram re. Medh	0.	1.	0
Bal.	8.	13.	9

MARCH 12, TUESDAY

Whittaker came—K. arrived in the evening. Wrote a letter to Ritch, also to Rustomjee.

Vesanram [*sic*] —

At night—[wrote] to Harilal Thakkar, Manilal, Chhaganlal, Rutnam, *I.O.*, Medh, Rustomjee, Schlesin.

MARCH 13, WEDNESDAY

Wrote—Dangare [?], Moosa, Essackji, Schlesin, Chamney, Mahomed Ismail, David Keshavalu. Shelat came & left. Bhago & Sivpujan came. K. Came.

Bhaga's board	1.	10.	0
Stamps	0.	2.	6
Bal.	10.	1.	3

MARCH 14, THURSDAY

Schlesin & Henry. Letters to Purshottamdas, Suleman Amod, Schlesin, Whittaker left.

Rd. Suleman fare	0.	3.	0

MARCH 15, FRIDAY

Hazurasingh, Lalbahadursingh & K. arrived.

Gave cheque of £4.10.0 for Suleman.

Pd. Kallenbach for tickets	1.	0.	0
Bal.	9.	4.	3

MARCH 16, SATURDAY

Hazurasingh & Lalbahadursingh left—K. went & returned. Letter to Chhaganlal.

Rd. fr. Kallenbach	0.	17.	6
Pd. for tickets	0.	17.	6

MARCH 17, SUNDAY

Schlesin, Gordan, Moorgan, Naidoo & Bush came—Schlesin, Gordon & Naidoo left. Dhobi from Germiston came over to stay. Letters: Laughton, Medh, Hoosen [?], Tarasingh, Maud, Winter-bottom, Mayo, Schlesin.

Pd. Schlesin	0.	4.	0

MARCH 18, MONDAY

K. went & returned. Ba, Moorgan & Bush left. Telegram about Sodha having been detained [?] at Komatipoort. Shelat left. Letters: Schlesin, Cachalia, West, Ritch, Pranjivan.

Mrs. G.	0.	5.	0
Freight	0.	1.	3
Trip ticket	1.	6.	3
Wire Nicely[1]	0.	1.	0
Bal.	7.	6.	9

MARCH 19, TUESDAY, CHAITRA SUD 1

Sorabji came—Kallenbach came. Wrote letter to Schlesin, to Sodha.

Pd. Stamps	0.	1.	0
Rd. fr. Basda [Basela?] for bread	0.	1.	6

MARCH 20, WEDNESDAY

Revashanker went to town—He and Ratanshi returned. Letters: Schlesin, Kastur, Cachalia.

Wire Smuts[2]	0.	1.	6
Bal.	7.	4.	9

[1] Telegraphic Address of Natal Indian Congress

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 20-3-1912.

MARCH 21, THURSDAY

Soni, Tulsi & Valji came—Kanabi came. Wrote letter to Schlesin—

MARCH 22, FRIDAY

K. came—Ratanshi went & returned—Suleman came. Tulsi & Valji left—

Rd. famine fund Sodha	2.	1.	4
Rd. Amurandeh [?]	0.	10.	6
Bal.	9.	16.	7

MARCH 23, SATURDAY

Kallenbach left—Wrote: Velshi Keshavji, Mahomed, Mahomed Belim—

Rd. Bhikha	0.	2.	0
Pd. John loan	0.	10.	0

MARCH 24, SUNDAY

About six Kanabis came to see Pana Bhag—Coopoo also came—Letters: Maud, Winterbottom, Schlesin, Ritch, Chhaganlal[1], Abhechand—Amirudin.

MARCH 25, MONDAY

Ba & K. arrived. Ratanshi went to town.

Pd. for Hanif's mattress & rug	1.	9.	3
Pd. for Sivpujan's milk [?]	0.	5.	9
Stamps	0.	1.	6
	7.	12.	1

MARCH 26, TUESDAY

Sorabji left—I went to town on foot. Started at 3 and reached J. B. at 9.15.

Pd. Hanif's benzine	0.	1.	0
Stamps	0.	0.	1

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 24-3-1912.

Rd. from Sorabji balance	0.	0.	3
Bal.	7.	11.	3

MARCH 27, WEDNESDAY

Letters: Omar Zaveri, Manilal, Velshi, Mohanlal, Schlesin, Nathu Bhana, Ahmed Bhana, Padiar, Editor, West.

Pd. stamps	0.	2.	2
Freight	0.	2.	1
Bal.	7.	7.	0

MARCH 28, THURSDAY

Wrote letter to Schlesin. Valji Hari and Schlesin [came?] K. came back.

MARCH 29, FRIDAY

Letter: Schlesin—K. came back.

MARCH 30, SATURDAY

Naidoo came & left. Bhikho left—Ratanshi came. K. Went & returned.

Pd. for freight on Forage	0.	1.	3
Bal.	7.	5.	9

MARCH 31, SUNDAY

Gordon, Schlesin and Annie [?] came. All left.

APRIL 1, MONDAY

Letters: Winterbottom, Maud, Mr. MacDonald, West, Langston, Halim—K. Arrived—A boy, Feda, came for the night. Ratanshi & Rajabali left.

Rd. stamps	0.	1.	0
Bread Basda	0.	0.	3
Kallenback	0.	2.	6
Pd. freight on soap	0.	1.	0

Rajaab's fare	0.	3.	8
Bal.	7.	4.	10

APRIL 2, TUESDAY, CHATTRA VAD1

[Letters:] Medh, Hoosen Dawad, Rustomjee, West, Anglia, Chamney, Thakkar, Fancy, Diwan, Maganlal, Mahomed Ismail, West, Tata[1], Nathalia. Ritch, Schlesin, Kennedy came & let. Kallenbach came.

Stamps	0.	3.	6

APRIL 3, WEDNESDAY

Dano went to town, K. Also—Letters: Medh, Anandlal, Ani, Editor, Maganlal, Andrews, Lachman Pandey, Ranchhod Hari.

Dana's fare	0.	2.	0

APRIL 4, THURSDAY

Went to Johannesburg on foot & returned. K. & I with Sorabji, Ratanshi, Dano, Rajabali and his brother came. Reached office at 8.50.

Rd. from Luxman	3.	[0.	0]
for prizes, etc.	0.	12.	0
Pd. for bag	0.	0.	9
Fare Ratansi	0.	2.	3
Paper	0.	0.	3
Leather	0.	17.	6
Buckles & tube	0.	2.	0

APRIL 5, FRIDAY

Editor, Umiyashanker, Ritch, Schlesin, Isaac, Marimootu, and a relative of Parbhu came. Alibhai, Parbhu's relative, left. Schlesin having missed the train stayed over.

Rd. from John	0.	10.	0
Stamps	0.	1.	7
John for milk	0.	12.	6

[1] "Public Letter to Ratan J. Tata", 1-4-1912.

APRIL 6, SATURDAY

[Letters:] West, and Lane. Raoji Manibhai, Naik, Schlesin, Manilal[1], Mr. [?] Editor, Cole came. Ratanshi & Miss Schlesin left—Ratanshi returned— Coriander, currants, potatoes,

railage vegetables,

coconut covers. . .[2]	1.	16.	0
Pd. for stamps	0.	0.	6
Freight	0.	1.	0
Bal.	7.	7.	0

APRIL 7, SUNDAY

Mrs. Naidoo, Mr. Naidoo, Rangasamy, Miss Bush, Moorgan came. Hanif's health remained pretty bad.

APRIL 8, MONDAY

Mr. Phillips' choir came. Ritch, Gordon and many others came. Avabai stayed over, & so also Maneksha. About 200 persons came. All left. Naidoo & Mrs. Naidoo too—Wrote letters to Winterbottom and Maud.

Pd. Schlesin for Mrs. Vog1

re. Ind[ian] W[omen's]

Ass[ociatio]n	1.	0.	0
Bal.	6.	7.	0

APRIL 9, TUESDAY

Letters: Mehta, Editor, Good—Ratanshi, Miss Bush, Moorgan, Cole, K. & Essack left. Wrote to Schlesin at night. K. & Cole returned.

Rd. Basda for sugar	0.	0.	3
Essack's fare	0.	2.	0
Bal.	6.	5.	3

APRIL 10, WEDNESDAY

Avabai left, Sorabji also—Dorabji came at night.

Paid freight	0.	1.	6

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Manilal Gandhi", 6-4-1912.

[2] A word here illegible

APRIL 11, THURSDAY

Both went to town on foot—West, etc., came yesterday—accompanied to Farm today. Wrote to Schlesin. Sodha came.

Paid Moorgan for expenses	1.	0.	0

APRIL 12, FRIDAY

Cole went to town & returned—Wrote to Schlesin.

Pd. for stamps	0.	1.	0

APRIL 13, SATURDAY

Krishnasamy, Dano, Dahyo and Bhago went to town—Wrote letters—

Pd. for freight on timber	0.	10.	5
Dana's fare	0.	2.	3
Bal.	4.	10.	7

APRIL 14, SUNDAY

Schlesin & Coopoo came & left. Essack came. Bhai Ismail left. Letters: Tayob Haji Khan Mahomed, L. Pandey, A[bdul] Ka[dir], Noormahomed, Mahomed Halim, Gokuldas, Chhaganlal, Manilal[1].

Bal.	4.	10.	7

APRIL 15, MONDAY

K. & Cole went & returned—Dana & Bhago returned—Letters: Winterbottom and Maud in the morning—Chhaganlal, Schlesin at night.

Pd. stamps	0.	2.	6
Trip ticket	1.	6.	3
Bal.	3.	1.	10

APRIL 16, TUESDAY

[Letters:] D.M. Khan, Dada Abdulla, Harilal Thakkar, Nana, Omar Zaveri, Parsee Rustomjee, Naik, Hajee Dada Hajee Habib, Purshottamdas, Harilal, Manager, *N.A.* [?], E[ditor] *I.O.*, Cole, West, Miss West and Mrs. Left.

Rd. fr. Kal. for freight	0.	10.	5
"for Maud	0.	9.	0

[1] "Letter to Manilal Gandhi", 13-4-1912.

Stamps	0.	0.	2
Pd. for stamps	0.	1.	9
Bal.	3.	19.	8

APRIL 17, WEDNESDAY

Letters: Budrea, V. S. Naidoo, Chunilal, Anglia, Dawad Mahomed, Harilal Thakkar, Manager *I.O.*, Ani—Mrs. Naidoo & Marimootu came. K. went & returned.

Rd. guest carriage	0.	11.	8
Pd. stamps	0.	1.	9
Bal.	4.	9.	7

APRIL 18, THURSDAY, VAISAKH SUD 1

K., Jamnadas & I left at 6 o'clock on foot. K. Took 4.45 hours to reach [Johannesburg], J. & I six hours.

Rd. for Naidoo	0.	10.	0
Books for the boys	0.	3.	0
Potash	0.	2.	0
Tape and pins	0.	1.	6
Cheddar cheese	0.	1.	3
Paper	0.	0.	3
Bal.	4.	11.	7

APRIL 19, FRIDAY

K. Went to town & to Pretoria. Letters: Chhaganlal, Tavaria, Manilal, Ismail, Jada, Thambi Naidoo.

APRIL 20, SATURDAY

Fakira & Bhanabhai left—Ratanshi, Velshi, Jivan Bojo & Ibrahim came. K. returned. Schlesin also came. Velshi sent a cheque for £3.

Rd. cheque fr. Velshi	3.	0.	0
Rd. for sugar	0.	0.	6
Pd. freight	0.	1.	0

APRIL 21, SUNDAY

Vethan, Kallenbach & his wife came by car. Gordon & Jamnadas came on foot. Schlesin, etc., left. I also. Meeting in Hamidia Hall. Slept in Office. Boys slept at Van Wyksrust.

Pd. trip ticket	1.	6.	3

APRIL 22, MONDAY

Naidoo's sons & I returned. Heard that Revashanker was beaten up by the police yesterday.

Pd. for freight	0.	1.	0
Rd. for young Bhayat	1.	10.	0
Bal.	4.	13.	10

APRIL 23, TUESDAY

[Letters:] Khushalchand, Lakshmichand, Karsandas, Meghji Raoji, Revashanker Jagjivan.

APRIL 24, WEDNESDAY

[Letters:] Purshottamdas, Chamney, Editor

Rd. for Bhaga	0.	1.	0
Coffee	0.	0.	6
Stamps	0.	2.	0
Bal.	4.	13.	4

APRIL 25, THURSDAY

Fifteen boys, K. & I went to town on foot. Rajabali and two of us returned. Saw Kitchin[?]. Depositions before Chamney.

Pd. for Rajab's ticket	0.	1.	2
Bal.	4.	12.	2

APRIL 26, FRIDAY

[Letters:] Mahomed Belim, Sorabji, Schlesin.

APRIL 27, SATURDAY

Hanif & K. went to town—Letters: Chhanganlal, Revashankerbhai, Doctor, Manilal, Jeki, Maganlal, Velshi, Motilal. K. returned. Suleman Kasu brought his certificate.

Pd. Hanif	0.	7.	11
Stamps	0.	0.	9
Bal.	4.	3.	6

APRIL 28, SUNDAY

Gordon, Schlesin & I went to Germiston on foot. Ramdas, Ratanshi & Sivpujan followed. Ritch came by train. Slept last night at Ritch's. Cachalia, Sorabji & Naidoo also came.

APRIL 29, MONDAY

Slept last night at Gordon's. Arrived at Farm at 6.20 a.m., along with the boys. K. met us on the way & turned back. Albert broke fifteen days' old fast. Hanif came at night, so also Cachalia, Aswat, Vaja & other gentlemen and also Sodha. Krishnasamy, Ali & Mahomed are out.

Rd. Gordon	0.	1.	0
Fakir & Essack	3.	0.	0
Bal.	£7.	4.	6

APRIL 30, TUESDAY

A. Cachalia, Aswat, etc., left. Ali, Mahomed came. Mahomed Essack came. Ratanshi & Rambha left.

Pd. Sodha	0.	16.	10

MAY 1, WEDNESDAY

K. and I went to J. B. on foot, starting at 1.40 a.m., and from there to Germiston. K. went to Pretoria. Krishnasamy came. Ba ill.

Rd. fr. John	0.	0.	6
Pd. fare Germiston	0.	1.	7
Freight	0.	1.	7

MAY 2, THURSDAY, VAISAKH VAD 1

Went to town with K. in morning on foot. Took 5 [hrs]-40 minutes. West, etc., returned. Chhotalal also came.

Pd. watch repair	0. 3. 6
Rail	0. 0. 2

MAY 3, FRIDAY

West went to town. Letters to Lane, Mahomed Hasam Mitha, Chhaganlal, Dangare, Mahomed Aba, Captain Stuart—Velshi, West returned.

Rd. for West tickets	0. 7. 11
Rail Naidoo boys	0. 5. 10
Whip lash	0. 0. 9
Stamp	0. 1. 0
	_____
Bal.	6. 1. 8

MAY 4, SATURDAY

Jamnadas, . . . [1] Dano & Hanif went to J. B. Hanif returned by afternoon train. J. & I reached in 4[hrs]-37_ minutes. Wrote letters to Hoosen & Ismail Gora.

MAY 5, SUNDAY

Schlesin, Jamnadas, Dano & Bhago came walking—Parbhu, Hanif, Dahya and also Ismail met Imam. Isaac, Miss Ploughman and Gordon arrived by train—Schlesin, Gordon, Isaac & Miss [Ploughman] left--

Pd. freight	0. 2. 0

MAY 6, MONDAY

Kallenbach went to J. B. on foot having missed the train through forgetfulness & came back. Sorabji arrived. Wrote letters to Miss Winterbottom, Maud, etc.

Rd. fr. West fr. Vyas	1. 0. 0
Stamps	0. 2. 0

[1] A name illegible here

MAY 7, TUESDAY

The West family left. All went [to the station] to see them off. Miss West stayed on. Letters: Dawad Mahomed, A. E. Jada, Chhaganlal, Manilal, Ved Dharma Sabha, Boksburg, West, Purshottamdas, Chamney; [also] letters to Ani, Chhaganlal, Rahim, Naik, Anandlal, Vyas.

Rd. for West	0.	6.	1
Pd. trip ticket	1.	6.	3
Pd. John for milk	0.	10.	0
	5.	7.	0

MAY 8, WEDNESDAY

[Letters:] Editor, Schlesin, E. Kotwal, Lzarus, Raoji, Cole, Dahyabhai, Chunilal, Roche, Lane. At night Lalbahadursingh & Ramavatar came.

Pd. stamps & freight	0.	2.	0

MAY 9, THURSDAY

K., Sorabji & I went to J. B. on foot. K. & I returned.

Rd. for Laxman	3.	0.	0
Pd. for sultanas, broom, barley, etc.	0.	11.	0
Hanif's socks and gloves	0.	2.	6
Freight	0.	0.	11
	7.	10.	7

MAY 10, FRIDAY

[Letters:] Parekh, Chamney, Polak.

Pd. freight	0.	2.	0

MAY 11, SATURDAY

Jamnadas, Dano, Sivpujan, Coopoo & Suleman have gone to town on foot. Sent Ramdas to sleep at Devi's.

Pd. Vyas for West	0.	17.	0
Rd. for Vyas for int[erest] next year per p.c. note	0.	17.	0

Payment not entered in cash book as £ 1 rd. 1st May not entered.

MAY 12, SUNDAY

Schlesin, Mrs. Naidoo & her sister came & left. Jamnadas, Shivpujan & Coopoo returned. Wrote letters to West, Manilal, Yashwant Sadashiv, Lazarus, Abdool Karim Zaveri, Velshi, Dawad Mahomed.

MAY 13, MONDAY

[Letters:] Editor, Manilal Doctor, Anandlal, Chhaganlal, Pranjivan. K. went to town & returned.

Pd. stamps	0.	2.	0

MAY 14, TUESDAY

[Letters:] West, Ismail Gora, Omar Zaveri, Moosa Hajee Adam, Pragji.

Rd. fr. John	0.	0.	9
Pd. wire to Manilal	0.	1.	3
Stamps	0.	0.	9
Bal.	7.	5.	4

MAY 15, WEDNESDAY

K. & I went to town on foot. Went round with Cachalia, etc., collecting funds. Slept at Gordon's.

MAY 16, THURSDAY

Returned in the morning with Schlesin & Gordon on foot. Dano came. Some friends of K.'s came & left. Gordon & Schlesin also left.

MAY 17, FRIDAY, JETH SUD, 1

Did not write a single letter during the day. Spent the whole morning in the kitchen.

MAY 18, SATURDAY

Hanif, I & Devdas went to town on foot. Busy with collection. Slept at Gordon's. Wrote to Kotwal.

Pd. Hanif	0.	2.	6
Devadas	0.	0.	6

MAY 19, SUNDAY

All three returned from town. Cole came to Farm. So did Premo. Premo returned. Letters: Maud, Winterbottom, Kalidas Patel.

MAY 20, MONDAY

Manilal Doctor & Jeki and Sorabji came. Rambha also. In the evening, Suleman, Kallenback & Narsimulu came.

Rd. fr. John	0.	1.	0
Pd. stamps	0.	1.	0

MAY 21, TUESDAY

[Letters:] Lane[1], Manilal, Lotwal, Chhaganalal, [De] Vere [?], Schlesin, Ti...[2]Sinsingle.

Pd. for stamps	0.	2.	6

MAY 22, WEDNESDAY

[Letters:] Anglia, Chamney, Rustomjee, Dada Osman, Chhaganlal, Kotwal, Dhoribjai. Rambha, Revashankers, Chotan & Jamndas left. Ramparshi Hario came. Isaac came & left.,

Rd. Dahya's Board	1.	10.	0
Rd. Jamnadas	3.	0.	0
Luggage	0.	2.	3
not entered			

MAY 23, THURSDAY

[Letters:] Chhaganlal, West, Velshi, Boyd.

Pd. railage for Vijiya	0.	2.	6
Stamps	0.	1.	0
Freight	0.	1.	0

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 21-5-1912.
[2] Some letters in this word are illegible.

MAY 24, FRIDAY

Krishnasamy, Bhago, Dahyo & I went to town on foot. Took 5 [hrs]-14 minutes. Meeting about school—Manilal, Ba & Jeki came to town. Ba, Jeki, Manilal & I returned. So did Revashanker.

Freight	0.	1.	0

MAY 25, SATURDAY

[Letters:] Kotwal, Chamney, Rustomjee, Manolal-Schlesin came & left—

Rd. John & stamps	0.	0.	9
Stamps	0.	1.	0
Bal.	2.	1.	10
Rd. returned Jamnadas [?]	3.	0.	0
	5.	1.	10

MAY 26, SUNDAY

Schlesin, Gordon, Quinn & Gulam Mahomed Mulla came. All went back. Wrote letters.

Rd. fr. Devi	0.	5.	0

MAY 27, MONDAY

[Letters:] Chhaganlal, Purshottamdas, Manilal Desai, Captain Stuart, Maud, Pranjivan, Winterbottom, Anandlal, West, Isaac, Rustomjee. Jamnadas left. Dahyo, Kallen[bach] & Cole came.

Pd. stamps	0.	2.	6
"	0.	2.	6

MAY 28, TUESDAY

Sent [letters] to [:] Velshi, Anandlal, Editor, Mahomed Ismail, Schlesin, Jamnadas, Chhaganlal, West, Medh.

Kunwarji, Tavaria. Dano went to town. K. & Manilal returned. Three Tamils—Francis, etc—came.

Pd. Dana	0.	2.	0

MAY 29, WEDNESDAY

[Letters:] Editor, Purshottamdas, Manga Soma, Chhaganlal, Jamun[adas].

MAY 30, THURSDAY

Kallenback, Coopoo, Sivpujan and Suleman & I walked to town. Manilal & Kotwal came. Left same evening.

MAY 31, FRIDAY, JETH VAD 1

Kotwal, Manilal, Kallenback, Coopoo, Sivpujan & Suleman and also I went [to town] on foot. Devibehn, etc., came to receive us. Took 5 [hrs]-12 minutes to reach J.B. 6 [hrs]-10 minutes on the way back.

Pd. for carriage re. Kotwal's goods,

etc.	0.	3.	0
Pd. carriage Suleman & Bhaga	0.	5.	0

JUNE 1, SATURDAY

15 boys, Kallenbach, Kotwal, Schlesin, Sorabji & I went on foot to Vereeniging.[1] Ba, Devi, & Jeki Vijiya & baby left by train. Bhago & Suleman left last night to join in cooking.

Pd. for railage, etc.	1.	0.	0

JUNE 2, SUNDAY

Spent in Vereeniging. Ba, Kallenbach, Manilal, Schlesin & Sorabji returned by evening train.

Pd. Kallenbach	1.	0.	0
not entered			

JUNE 3, MONDAY

All of us returned with the boys. Mr. Suji came along with us. Reached home at 4. Dano came. Ranchhod Dhana came to ask about his boy.

Rd. for Dana	0.	2.	0
Pd. Miss West	0.	2.	6

JUNE 4, TUESDAY

[Letters:] Anandlal, Purshottamdas, Schlesin, Narandas, Hazurasingh,

[1] Presumably for the party ("the treat") that Aswat gave to the "boys". *Indian Opinion*, 8-6-1912.

Kalidas Patel, Chhaganlal, Maganlal, E. N. Patel. Mr. Bhayat's three sons, Essop, Mahomed & Ibrahim came—K. came on foot.

Pd. stamps	0.	2.	0
Freight	0.	1.	7
Bal	2.	8.	0

JUNE 5, WEDNESDAY

[Letters:] Beethasee, Sanghavi, Dada Osman, Dada Abdoolla, Damania, Hassan, Essop Moosa Hajee Adam, Cole, Ritch, Editor, Mahomed Hassim, Bhayat. Narsimulu left.

Rd. Dana	0.	0.	6
Rail Narsimulu	0.	2.	0

JUNE 6, THURSDAY

K. & I went to town. Slept at Gordon's. K. went back. Schlesin's birthday.

Rd. fr. Dahya for Mehta's book	0.	1.	0
Pd. freight	0.	1.	0
Milk	0.	4.	0

JUNE 7, FRIDAY

Went to Pretoria. Saw Chamney and also Lane. Came back to Farm. Manilal Doctor came to town yesterday, walking.

Pd. rail to Pret[oria]	0.	10.	0
Paper	0.	0.	3
Freight on K.'s bag	0.	0.	3
Freight on goods	0.	1.	4

JUNE 8, SATURDAY

Bhayat's sons left for Boksburg. Letters: Dr. Gool, Velshi, Lazarus, Chhaganlal, West, Omar Zaveri, Fancy. Gordon came—also Valji.

Pd. stamps	0.	2.	3
Pd. Kallenbach	0.	2.	6
Bal.	1.	6.	5

JUNE 9, SUNDAY

Valji, K. & Gordon left—Dano & Bhago also. Edlestein [?] came & left.

JUNE 10, MONDAY

[Letters:] Mrs. Mayo, Chhaganlal, Editor, Maud, Winterbottom, Mehta, Bhaga Daji, Navsari [Hindu United Trading] Co[mpany], Schlesin. Joshi & Chhagan[lal Bhawanidas] Gheewala [Randeria] of Cape Town came and went back.

Pd. freight	0.	2.	1
Stamp	0.	1.	0
Freight	0.	2.	3

JUNE 11, TUESDAY

[Letters:] Maganlal, Jamnadas, West, Thakkar. Dano came—young Bhago came. So did Tikli's brother and other Gujarati Hindus [to ask] about their sons. The Hindus, Tikli's brother and Tikli left.

JUNE 12, WEDNESDAY

Dano left school.

Rd. Dr. Mehta's book Bhago	0.	1.	3
„ fr. Bhago for st[am]ps	0.	0.	9
St[am]ps	0.	1.	0

JUNE 13, THURSDAY

K., Fakir, Revashanker & Ismail went to town. I too. K. & I, with Chhotam, came back. Sorabji also came.

Rd. for sugar	0.	0.	6
Pd. carriage	0.	1.	0
Freight	0.	7.	0

JUNE 14, FRIDAY

Letters: Dada Abdoolla, Mahomed Hassim, Nathu Kasam, Dangare, Motilal Diwan. Manilal Doctor and Sorabji left.

Rd. fr. K.	1.	2.	6
P[d.] Stamps	0.	1.	0

JUNE 15, SATURDAY

[Letters:] Editor, Velshi, Manilal, Narandas.

Rd. for sugar	0.	3.	0
Rd. for stamps	0.	0.	8

JUNE 16, SUNDAY, ASHADH SUD, 1

Coopoo, Revashanker and Fakir came. Ismail did not return & has discontinued [school] from today. Coopoo, Fakiri and friends left. Letters: Purshottamdas, Chhaganlal, Winterbottom, Maud, Schlesin, Dada Osman.

Rd. for Essack	2.	0.	0
Rd. milk	0.	0.	6

JUNE 17, MONDAY

Young Bhago left. K. went to town & came back.

Pd. young Bhago	0.	1.	6
Stamps	0.	2.	3

JUNE 18, TUESDAY

[Letters:] Harilal Thakkar, Editor, West, Chhaganlal, Gordon, Ritch, Imamali. Vaja & Mohamed who had come, left.

Rd. for Mehta's book	0.	1.	3
Sugar	0.	0.	3
Stamps	0.	1.	0
Freight	0.	1.	0

JUNE 19, WEDNESDAY

[Letters:] Fancy, Editor, West, Shaer, Parbhu Bhaga, Narandas, Bharucha, Vaja Moojaji. Makda came & left. Naidoo's sons came.

Pd. freight	0.	2.	5
Stamps	0.	0.	4

JUNE 20, THURSDAY

K., I, Hanif, Devdas, Parbhu, Coopoo, Krishnasamy, Ali, Luxman, Sivpujan [and] Bhago went to town. Spent night at Ritch's. Rajabali went to Pretoria. Parbhu's brother brought at the office £5.

JUNE 21, FRIDAY

Still in J. B. Night at Gordon's. Went round for collection, accompanied by Sorabji.

JUNE 22, SATURDAY

K. & I returned with all the others including the boys except Ali and Parbhu. In the afternoon Schlesin came. Devi, Fakir, Bharat Sarthi, etc., had gone to receive them.

JUNE 23, SUNDAY

Boksburg people came. Quinn came. Gordan & Manilal also came. All left. Wrote letters at night.

JUNE 24, MONDAY

[Letters:] Editor, Chhaganlal, Bhayat, Maud, Doctor, Anandlal, Winterbottom, West, Abhechand, Mohanlal, Harilal Thakkar.

Kallenbach & Davis came.

Stamps	0.	2.	6
Freight	0.	2.	4

JUNE 25, TUESDAY

[Letters:] West, Thakkar, Chhaganlal.

JUNE 26, WEDNESDAY

Manilal & I went to J. B. Ba & Jeki went by train. Came back. Sorabji also came.

Wire	0.	1.	7
Freight	0.	0.	9
Not traced	1.	0.	0
Rajabali	0.	5.	3
Bal.	2.	5.	10

JUNE 27, THURSDAY

[Letters:] Chhaganlal, Tikli, Hajee Dada, Hajee Habib, Mahomed Baba, Dada Abdoolla—Sorabji left. Jan Effendi [?] came. K. went & returned.

Rd. from Dahya for Dana's book	0.	0.	3
Sugar, etc.	0.	0.	6
Pd. for the mules	0.	18.	6
Bal.	1.	8.	1

Rd. fr. Miss S.	10.	0.	0
	11.	8.	1

JUNE 28, FRIDAY

Ba & I left for Durban.			
Tickets to Dur[ban]	6.	6.	8
Schlesin	0.	3.	0

JUNE 29, SATURDAY

Arrived in Durban. Considerable inconvenience on the way. A good many people had come to the station. Meeting of Ottoman Cricket Club in the evening.[1] Jamnadas & the two of us went to Phoenix by evening train.

JUNE 30, SUNDAY, ASHADH VAD 1

Jamnadas, I, etc., left Phoenix on foot. Met Omar Sheth, etc., on the way & I went by carriage to attend Istanbul Anjuman meeting. Meal at Hajee Hassim's. Went to Abdool Huq's. Congress meeting in the evening. Abdool Karim Sheth elected. Problem of Colonial-born [Indians]. Night at Omar Sheth's.

JULY 1, MONDAY

Went to Phoenix in the morning. Returned by 4 o'clock train. Held meeting about Deed. Lunch at Ismail Hafeejee Moosa's. Gujarati meeting in the evening. Problem of Colonial-born [Indians].

JULY 2, TUESDAY

Dawad Mahomed, Rustomjee, Abdool Karim, Abdool Huq, etc., came to Phoenix. At Chetty's by 1.36 train for lunch. Evening at Mahomed Ibrahim's. Anjuman meeting . Went with Rutnam to sleep at his place. Odd thing.

JULY 3, WEDNESDAY

Dawad Sheth left. Went to Abdool Kadir Sheth's. Met Colonialborn [Indians] in the evening. Slept at Omar Sheth's.

JULY 4, THURSDAY

Went to Phoenix in the morning. Met Raghavji, Talevant Singh.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Durban Farewell to Pilgrims", 29-6-1912.

Enema [prescribed] to Sam's wife. Dr. Stanton came. In the evening, Mahomed Ibrahim Anglia, etc., came . Left at night. Purshottamdas and Ani came.

JULY 5, FRIDAY

I & Purshottamdas left for Durban by the afternoon train. Met [people] at Budrea's. Left for J. B. in evening.

Rail phone cycle	0.	6.	0

JULY 6, SATURDAY

Inconvenience in the train.

JULY 7, SUNDAY

Arrived in J. B. Had a talk with Manilal Doctor. Speech at night. Kotwal came on foot. Manilal & Ba went to Farm. Manilal, Devi and Jeki came.

Pd. trip ticket	1.	6.	3
Ricksha, etc.	0.	1.	6

JULY 8, MONDAY

Ramdas, Fakir and other boys went to Farm. Manilal writes to say that he doesn't now want to go—Fiji. Slept at office at night—Kotwal & I. Jeki & Solbehn left by morning train. Manilal, Suleman, Ali, K. came in the evening. Sorabji, I & Bhago walked down.

Rd. for Fakir	3.	0.	0

JULY 9, TUESDAY

[Letters:] Editor, Velshi. Sorabji went to town. Sent invitation to Mrs. Vogl for a visit here.

Rd. for Jasma	0.	0.	1
Pd. For stamps	0.	2.	0
Hanif	0.	1.	6
Railage etc. during Natal visit not entered	0.	4.	5
Bal.	£5.	16.	10

JULY 10, WEDNESDAY

[Letters:] Editor, Medh, Pragji, Anandlal, Omar Hajee Amod—Uka Bhana, Gopal Vallabh, Kanji Raoji came on Thursday [*sic*]. Ibrahim, Ahmed and Mahomed Ahmed Sunara came.

JULY 11, THURSDAY

K. & I went to town, walking. Krishnasamy & Dano also came along. Saw Chamney. K., Dano, Dahyo & I returned.

Pd. Chamney for wire	0.	3.	0
„ Wire Phoenix re. Ani etc	0.	2.	0

JULY 12, FRIDAY

[Letters:] Chhaganlal, Editor, Dada Osman, Raghavji, Purshottamds. Kotwal, Manilal & I left by evening train. Function in honour of Chettiar, etc. Kotwal & I slept at Ritch's.

Rd. for Mrs. Tilak & Mrs. Stead	1.	10.	0
Richsha	0.	1.	0

JULY 13, SATURDAY

Kotwal & I returned. Jammadas. Ani and her sons came in the evening.

Rd. for sugar etc.	0.	2.	8
Pd. for wire to Gool re. Manilal	0.	2.	6

JULY 14, SUNDAY

Mrs. Badhasingh [?.], Ramji Kanji's father, Schlesin, her sister,

Gordon came—All left in the evening. Dhaled had also come.

Rd. for Dahya	0.	2.	0
Pd. for stranger	0.	2.	0

JULY 15, MONDAY, ASHADH SUD 1

[Letters:] Naik, Dr. Gool, Tikli, Paul, West, Editor, Chhaganlal, Winterbottom, Maud, Mehta, Manilal, Chhaganlal, Tipnis, Rustomjee, Mrs. Shaer, Sulemanji Patel, Shelat, Anglia, Vallabhji Brothers, Kallenbach & Dano went & returned.

Pd. stamps	0.	2.	6

JULY 16, TUESDAY

[Letters:] Schlesin, Kharwa, Editor, Thakkar, Sam, Laughton, Joshi, Anglia, Telegram to Laughton.

Rd. from Dana	0.	2.	0
Pd. stamps	0.	2.	0

JULY 17, WEDNESDAY

[Letters:] Khan, Editor, Mararji. Bhago went to town. Sent letter to Schlesin with him.

Pd. for freight	0.	2.	0
Kallenbach's freight	0.	1.	8
Stamps	0.	0.	2

JULY 18, THURSDAY

Kallenbach, Dano & I went to town and came back. Caught cold. Saw Town Clerk. Had a talk about Malay Location and Crematorium.

Rd. for Fakir's books	1.	0.	0
Pd. freight	0.	2.	5

JULY 19, FRIDAY

Three persons came and went back—Gold continues. Sorabji came in the evening. Telegram from Interior that settlement stood.

Pd. telegrams [to] Rustomji [&] Asiatics[1]	0.	3.	8
Pd. freight. . .[2]	0.	1.	0
Bal.	7.	7.	7

JULY 20, SATURDAY

[Letter:] Chhaganlal, Virji, Rustomjee, Nathalia, Virji—Nathu Naik, Gajjar, Balkrishna, Azam Abed, Suleman Mamuji, Purshottamdas, Prabhashanker, Balkrishna, Azam Abed, I.E[?]. Paredh, Diwan, Mahomed Ismail, etc. Sorabji & Schlesin came and left by night

[1] Telegraphic address of the Registrar of Asiatics
[2] Illegible

train—

Stamps	0.	3.	6

JULY 21, SUNDAY

Letters: Maud, Doctor & Winterbottom, Harilal—Kotwal, Kallenbach, Jamnadas & I went to town on foot. Meeting about Mrs. Tilak. Sorabji left. Gordon came to Farm & went back.

JULY 22, MONDAY

Kotwal & I returned to the Farm. Ba & Jamnadas stayed back in town. Will return in the evening. Also K. [Letters:] Khanderia, Anglia, Editor.

Pd. trip ticket	1.	6.	3
Chamney's wire re. Sorab	0.	2.	1
Freight forage	0.	1.	3
Mrs. G.	2.	0.	0
Bal.	3.	14.	6

JULY 23, TUESDAY

Dano & I went to town K. went by train. Meeting with Chamney.

K. & I returned.

Pd. Mrs. Hearth	0.	1.	0

JULY 24, WEDNESDAY

[Letters:] Anglia, Editor, Hakim Saleji, Abdool Hajee Adam, Hajee Dada, Hajee Habib.

JULY 25, THURSDAY

[Letters:] Naik, Dada Abdoolla, Jayashanker, Editor, Chotabhai, Chhotabhai Udyar, Khushalbhai, Chhaganlal, Meghjibhai, Revashanker, Royeppen, Rutnam, Purshottamdas, Harilal, Editor, Somabhai, Chhabildas, K. & Manilal went to town on foot & returned.

Pd. stamps	0.	2.	6

JULY 26, FRIDAY

[Letters:] Ibrahim Noormahomed, Shapuriji, Durbin [?], Naik, Purshottamdas, Schlesin, Charlie, Maliha, G. P. Patel. Kanji, anew boy, came. Two men had come escorting him & returned.

Rd. Kanji's board	1.	10.	0
Bal.	5.	1.	0

JULY 27, SATURDAY

[Letters:] Vallabh Nathu, Winterbottom, Dirk, West, Dano Bhago.

Rd. from Gordon, bread	1.	0.	0
Pd. Kall. railage for West & wife [?]	1.	6.	9
Gordon for Jam[nadas]'s suit	1.	10.	1
Baths, saucepans etc.	1.	13.	0
Knickers, Calico, etc	2.	2.	0
Jeki's flannelette	0.	5.	0
less including Gordon's	6.	16.	9
Cash paid today	5.	0.	0
	1.	16.	9
St[am]ps	0.	2.	1

JULY 28, SUNDAY

Schlesin & Ritch came & left. Telegram to say Gohkale will start on October 5. Manilal left for Fiji on Friday.

JULY 29, MONDAY

[Letters:] Editor, Joshi, Bhaga Daji, Mansukh[1], Fiji [?], Purshottamdas, Kalidas, Sorabji, Maud, Doctor, Gohkale[2], Dungarsi, Kanaiyalal, Dana Valji, Chhaganlal, K. & Dano came.

Stamps	0.	2.	0
Bal.	3.	0.	3

JULY 30, TUESDAY

[Letters:] Dada Abdoola, Wybergh, Osman Omar, Rooknoodeen, Hoosen Dawad, Cole, Schlesin, Suleman Mamuji, Ram Bahadur, Bhawani Dayal, Motilal, West, Chhabildas, Khan. Thambi Naidoo

[1] "Letter to Mansukh", July 27, 1912
[2] "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", July 28, 1912

came & took his children with him.

JULY 31, WEDNESDAY

Wrote in the evening to Keshav Fakir, Joseph, Solomon, Royeppen, Amod Metar, Govan Manji, Fulchand Shah, Govindlal. Solomon, Beethasee, Singaram, Pragji, Sheikh, Coovadia. K. & Gordon came.

AUGUST 1, THURSDAY

K., Kotwal, Ramdas & I went to town. Party to Chettiar[1]. Jeki came in the evening. Manilal & Jamnadas came by train.

Trip ticket	1.	6.	3

AUGUST 2, FRIDAY

All returned form town in the morning. K. returned in the evening.

Pd. for milk	0.	0.	3
Leather	1.	5.	0
Curds etc.	0.	2.	0
Dana Valji	0.	2.	6

AUGUST 3, SATURDAY

[Letters:] Abhechand, Chhaganlal, Albert, Naik, Vyas, Hunter, Hassan, Essack, Durbin, Ritch, Tutla, Chunu, Omar Hajee Amod, Rustomjee, Purshottamdas, Chamney,

Freight	0.	2.	6
Bal.	0.	1.	9

AUGUST 4, SUNDAY

[Letters:] Schlesin, Chamney, Maud, Thakkar, Winterbottom, Gokhale[2]. Chhabildas, Editor, Doctor, Fancy, Sorabji, Manilal Fiji. Telegram to Chamney. Schlesin came & left, Gordon also came in the evening and left.

AUGUST 5, MONDAY

Kallenbach went to town. Ratanshi, etc., who had come also left.

[1] *Vide* " Speech at Johannesburg Banquet to V. A. Chettiar", 1-8-1912
[2] *Vide* " Letter to G. K. Gokhale", 4-8-1912.

AUGUST 6, TUESDAY

[Letters:] Joshi (Cape), Schlesin—sent to Schlesin and . . .[1] her drafts of letter to Town Clerk and that about Fatima by rail post.

[Also letters to:] Laughton, Nathalia, Madhavdas, Omar Hajee Amod, Godbole, Rajkumar, Somabhai, Kallenbach Came. Naidoo's sons came.

AUGUST 7, WEDNESDAY

Kanji came. Wrote to Schlesin. Kallenbach went to town by night train.

Rd. from Kanji	0.	2.	0
Freight	0.	1.	6

AUGUST 8, THURSDAY

[Letters:] Naransami Aiyar, Chhagan, Chanchal, Umiyashanker, Naidoo, Naidoo [*sic*], Ishwarbhai Gordhands, N. J. Shaikh. also Jani [?] Jagabhai Chhabildas, Gavarishanker, Christopher, Maganbhai, Editor, K. arrived at night.

Rd. for John	0.	2.	9
, , freight & ect.	0.	1.	6
Pd. freight	0.	1.	6

AUGUST 9, FRIDAY

Posted Natal Bank letter.

Pd. wire Gokaldas	0.	1.	0
Stamps	0.	1.	6
Pd. milk freight	0.	0.	3

AUGUST 10, SATURDAY

Kotwal & I went to town on foot, also Kallenbach. I went to Roodepoort & Krugersdorp, accompanied by Cachalia. Kotwal returned after affixing his signature.

AUGUST 11, SUNDAY

Left Krusgesdorp by morning train for J. B. found Ba and Ani ill. Schlesin and Fakir also came along in train.

[1] BIA., Johannesburg?

Rd. fr. Schlesin	0.	12.	6
Pd. fare Lawley	0.	2.	3

AUGUST 12, MONDAY

Illness continues, school closed in evening. Kallenbach went to town & returned. With him came Gokaldas Makwa's mother, Ba, M [?], etc. Also Tulsi

AUGUST 13, TUESDAY, SHRAVAN SUD 1

Tulsi, etc., left in the morning. Kallenbach went to town & returned . Thambi Naidoo came & left in the afternoon.

AUGUST 14, WEDNESDAY

Illness continues. *Ramzan* commences. Almost all boys observed a partial fast and had only one meal. Essack went to J. B. K. went to town by night train. Schlesin and a friend of hers came. Both left. Chettiar, who had come on Monday, left.

AUGUST 15, THURSDAY

Kallenbach arrived in the evening.

AUGUST 16, FRIDAY

Lallubhai and Lachman Pandey and Ramavatar came. Left in the afternoon. Rajabali and Mahomed went to town.

AUGUST 17, SATURDAY

Sent letter to *I.O.* Wrote to Chhaganlal[1] and Purshottamdas. Illness subsided. Hanif. Coopoo & Bhago went to town. Devibehn went to town.

Rd. for Gokaldas	0.	7.	0
Pd. Hanif	0.	4.	6
Devi	0.	5.	0

AUGUST 18, SUNDAY

Kotwal, Krishnasamy, Kanji, Gopal, Luxman, Govindoo & I went on foot . A Hindu meeting was held. Much disturbance. Had a long talk with Kotwal.

[1] "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", August 16, 1912 (pp. 302-3)?

AUGUST 19, MONDAY

Kotwal, Luxman, Devi & I returned to Farm. Hanif, Kallenbach & Essack arrived by night train.

Rd. for Luxman	5.	0.	0
including 10% books refund	0.	0.	9
Pd. trip ticket	1.	6.	3
Freight	0.	1.	8
Luxman's ticket	0.	1.	6

AUGUST 20, TUESDAY

[Letters:] Omar Zaveri, Rustomjee, Schlesin, Chamney[1], Anandlal, Popat, Virji, Purshottamdas, Motilal, Dada Abdoolla, Chhaganlal, Velshi. Bhago, Kanji & Gopal arrived.

Stamps	0.	1.	0
Freight on fruit	0.	1.	3

AUGUST 21, WEDNESDAY

[No entry]

AUGUST 22, THURSDAY[2]

Kotwal & I went to town for lecture on Theosophy.

Trip ticket book for Miss West	1.	6.	3
K's present	0.	10.	0

AUGUST 23, FRIDAY

In town again.

AUGUST 24, SATURDAY

Schlesin and Geevers [?] came & left.

AUGUST 25, SUNDAY

Kotwal, I & Jamnadas attended Association meeting.[3] Had lunch at Geevers'.

[1] "Letter to Registrar of Asiatics", August 19, 1912 (p. 305)?

[2] "The accounts under this date have been cancelled and entered under august 26, 1912

[3] *Vide* " Speech at Meeting of British Indian Association", 25-8-1912.

AUGUST 26, MONDAY

All three returned to Farm—Mrs. P. K. Naidoo came.

Trip ticket Miss West Thursday	1.	6.	3
Present by Kallenbach	0.	10.	0
Waggon repair	1.	5.	0

AUGUST 27, TUESDAY

Geevers came.

AUGUST 28, WEDNESDAY, SHARAVAN VAD 1

Kotwal & I went to town. Tamil meeting—Returned.

Rd. Moosa Nathi	0.	3.	0
Kotwal's parcels	0.	7.	11

AUGUST 29, THURSDAY

Kallenbach, Kotwal, Manilal, Sivpujan, Dano went to town on foot.

Rd. for Schlesin	0.	10.	0
Rd. for Mehta's book	0.	1.	3
Pd. freights	0.	2.	6
Stamps	0.	7.	0

AUGUST 30, FRIDAY

Left for Durban—Accompained by Kastur, Dano, Sivpujan, Devdas. Jeki, Manila, Ramdas & Revashanker came to town—

Pd. fr. Teckets etc.	9.	19.	10
Pd. tickets for Lawley	0.	8.	6
Ticket Sivpujan	3.	3.	4
Bal.	7.	1.	7

AUGUST 31, SATURDAY

Reached Durban—Came to Phoenix in evening, accompanied by Purshottamdas

SEPTEMBER 1, SUNDAY

In Phoenix for whole day.

SEPTEMBER 2, MONDAY

Went to Durban town. Purshottamdas & I walked. Returned in evening.

Wires re. Makda	0.	9.	9

SEPTEMBER 3, TUESDAY

Went to town. Night in the town.

SEPTEMBER 4, WEDNESDAY

Polak came. Stayed at Mr. Moosa's. Pragji also came.

Rd. fr. Kallenbach at D[urba]n	1.	10.	0
Pd. wire re. Pragji	0.	8.	0
Wire re. Makda	0.	2.	9
Pd. Albert	1.	0.	0
Wires & fares	0.	10.	10
Bal.	6.	1.	0

SEPTEMBER 5, THURSDAY

Whole day in Phoenix. Talevant Singh came & left. Pragji, Chettiar, Palok, Mrs. Raoji & Amin arrived. Long talk with Anandlal. He took a vow to give up smoking for six months.

SEPTERMBER 6, FRIDAY

Again went to town. Meeting with Cousin[s?], also Khan. Returned in evening.

SEPTEMBER 7, SATURDAY

Went to town in the afternoon. Meeting. Omar appointed Chairman of Reception Committee.

SEPTEMBER 8, SUNDAY

Chhaganlal & I went to town by train—Abdool Huq came to receive. Meeting—Omar appointed chairman.

SEPTEMBER 9, MONDAY

Polak, Chhaganlal & I came to Phoenix on foot—Pragji came by

train.

Wire Schlesin	0.	1.	0

SEPTEMBER 10, TUESDAY

Caught cold. Polak left yesterday. I went to town today . Meeting of Committee. Slept at Omar Sheth's.

Pd. wire Goordeen	0.	1.	0

SEPTEMBER 11, WEDNESDAY

Retutned from town to Phoenix. Meeting at Depot Road. Met Laughton.

Pd. Polak	1.	0.	0

SEPTEMBER 12 THURSDAY, BHADARVA SUD 1

In Phoenix till noon—At noon, again went to town. Returned to Phoenix in the evening.

SEPTEMBER 13, FRIDAY

Again went to town in the afternoon. Returned to Phoenix with Pragji by evening train.

SEPTEMBER 14, SATURDAY

Came to town by the morning train. Collected contributions. Attended Hindu meeting & left for J. B. in the evening accompanied by Navin, Chhotu, Lalita, Shivaprasad, Sivpujan and Pragji. Rd. for

Govindlal	10.	0.	0
Train	0.	2.	6
J. H. B. fares for Pragji & S. Prasad	2.	14.	3
Wife	0.	10.	0

SEPTEMBER 15, SUNDAY

In train—Wrote letters.

SEPTEMBER 16, MONDAY

Reached town in the morning. News of Godfrey's death. Paid condolence visit. Came to Farm. Found Ani & Jeki ill Pragji & Hanif and Albert also came.

Pd. carriage	0.	1.	0

SEPTEMBER 17, TUESDAY

Kallenbach & Pragji went to town.

Pd. trip ticket	1.	6.	3
Railage	0.	12.	7
Ricksha	0.	0.	3
Prunes	0.	3.	9
Milk	0.	0.	3

SEPTEMBER 18, WEDNESDAY

Went to town & returned in the evening.

Rd. from John	0.	5.	3

SEPTEMBER 19, THURSDAY

Went to town by afternoon train—Kotwal left for Cape in the morning. Kallenbach also.

Pd. for freight milk	0.	0.	6
Kotwal	1.	0.	0
Pass for Sivpujan	0.	2.	6
Freight etc.	0.	2.	11
Bal	£8.	8.	0

SEPTEMBER 20, FRIDAY

Went round for collections among Patidars last night. Slept in the office at night—a boy, Dayaram Sahay, came to Farm. Suleman returned yesterday. Mahomed & Ibrahim also arrived today. Telegrams from Desai & Abhechand. I returned to Farm in the morning. Pragji & Kallenbach went to went to town. Wrote letter to Kalidas—Also to Desai.

SEPTEMBER 21, SATURDAY

Shelat came with his wife. [Letters:] Manilal Doctor. Polak, Lachman Pandey, Kastur, Devdas, Doctor, Chhaganlal, Winter-bottom, Sorabji.

Pd. wire to Office	0.	1.	3
Stamps	0.	1.	6
Milk freight	0.	0.	3
Freight	0.	1.	10
Bal.	8.	3.	2

SEPTEMBER 22, SUNDAY

Abhechand, Mr. Kallenbach & Gordon arrived by the same train.

Dayaram drowned.

Rd. for st[amp]s *I.O.* 0. 1. 0

SEPTEMBER 23, MONDAY

Kallenbach, Jamnadas & I went to letter on foot. Retruned same day. Posted mail t England. Suleman came. Sent wire to Maud.

SEPTEMBER 24, TUESDAY

Spent on Farm.

SEPTEMBER 25, WEDNESDAY

Two new boys came. Sivipujan, Dano [?] & Kanji and Devi & I left for town at noon. Both slept in the office. Went to Fancy in the evening for his contribution.

Rd. for books for the new boys 0. 10. 0

SEPTEMBER 26, THURSDAY

Maud arrived. All went to Station. Purshottamdas came. P. went to Farm by morning train. Maud, K.., Devi & I came to Farm. Kanji came to Farm.

Rd. fr. Gordon 1. 0. 0

SEPTEMBER 27, FRIDAY, [1] BHADARVA VAD 1

Spent [day] on the Farm—Kanji left the school.

Pd. for milk 0. 0. 6

SEPTEMBER 28, SATURDAY

Abhechand & Maud left.

Rd. fr. Abhechand for Devi 0. 10. 0

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3 wires Chimney, Polak & Medh

re. Medh 0. 5. 6

[1] The printed pages (pp. 273-80) of the Diary corresponding to the dates September 27 - October 4 appear to be misarranged owning to an error in the binding, the page for September 29 coming before that for September 27, etc. Gandhiji, has however, corrected the date lines in his own hand.

Freight	0.	1.	10
Stamps, freight etc.	0.	8.	0
Overlooked	1.	0.	0
Bal.	8.	9.	0

SEPTEMBER 29, SUNDAY

Some persons form Boksburg came—Raoji, etc. returned. Bechar Brahnam and Ramsami Moodaley also came.

SEPTEMBER 30, MONDAY

Kallenbach, Manilal, Bahu and Govindoo accompanied me to town . Maud & Geevers came by train.

Leather	1.	15.	0
Freight	0.	1.	5
Stamps unpaid letters	0.	1.	2
Bal.	6.	11.	5

OCTOBER 1, TUESDAY

[Letters:] Chhabildas, Anandlal, West, Abdool Huq, Kotwal, Rustomjee, Dawson, Kastur, Dada Abdoolla. Cropped Prabha's, Vijaya's, Chanda's, Rama's & Lalita's hair. Kallenbach went & returned.

Rd. for sugar	0.	0.	6
pd. Maud's boxes	2.	15.	4
Stamps	0.	1.	9
Bal.	£3.	14.	10

OCTOBER 2, WEDNESDAY

[Letters:] Moosa Akuji, Velshi, Shaikh Rasul, Chhaganlal, Motilal, Millie. Prgji came at night.

Rd. for sugar	0.	0.	6
Sugar	0.	0.	9
Stamps	0.	1.	0
JOHN	0.	2.	6
BAL.	3.	12.	7

OCTOBER 3, THURSDAY

Kallenbach, I, Pragji, Coopoo & Chhotu went to town. There was a meeting at Hosken's. Maud came along with us to the Farm.

Pd. for needle boxes and balance

to Schlesin	0.	10.	0
Rail	0.	0.	8
Tram	0.	0.	3
Bal.	3.	1.	8

OCTOBER 4, FRIDAY

Geevers came in he morning. Ramdas started saltless and spiceless [diet]. Prabha also. Rajabali left.

Pd. for stamps & milk	0.	1.	3
Rajabali's fare	0.	5.	3
Cash	0.	2.	8

OCTOBER 5, SATURDAY

Maud left. Today is the ninth day since I started on a fruit diet. Three since Purshottamdas started and four since Jamnadas. Nayno went to town. Bhago too.

Rd. fr. John refund	0.	2.	6
Rd. sugar	0.	0.	6
Sugar etc.	0.	3.	9
Stamps & milk	0.	1.	3
Nayna's fare	0.	2.	0
Bal.	2.	16.	2

OCTOBER 6, SUNDAY

[Letters:] Lachman Pandey, Winterbottom, Umiyashanker, Anandlal, Kastur, Chhaganlal, Sorabji, West—Luxman left. His uncle & Kana's brother-in - law has come here, Miss Bush & Moorgan came & left. Medh came. Pragji also.

Rd. for Nayna	2.	6.	0

St[am]ps. . . [1]K.	0.	0.	6
Pd. Medh for wires Kalidas and Noormahomed	0.	2.	0
Bal.	£5.	0.	8

OCTOBER 7, MONDAY

Medh & Desai left. Tailor & Ratanji came regarding Lallu.

OCTOBER 8, TUESDAY

Kallenbach & I went to town. Jamnadas came along part of the way. Went round for collections in the town. Meeting at Hosken's.

Rd. sugar ect.	0.	0.	9
Pd. for freight ect. to Paragji	0.	5.	0
Kallenbach	1.	0.	0
Bal.	3.	16.	5

OCTOBER 9, WEDNESDAY

K & I went to town . Geevers also with us—Had a meeting with Chimney. [Letters:] Naik, Makhera, Ram Piyari & Rutnam—Abdul Huq.

Rd. for milk	0.	0.	6
Bal.	3.	16.	0

OCTOBER 10, THURSDAY

See entry for Wednesday which was written [there] by mistake.

OCTOBER 11, FRIDAY

Bhai Kotwal came. Doctor Dunning arrived with Kallenbach at night.

pd. freight thro[ugh] P'das	0.	3.	5

OCTOBER 12, SATURDAY

[Letters:] Polak, Anandla, Abhechand, Chhaganlal, Mohanlal.

[1] A word here illegible

Telegram to Polak and Hindu . . .[1] Umiyashanker, Morarji, Bhago & Naik came at noon.

Rd. book	1.	0.	0
Pd. for rubber tube Jeki	0.	5.	6
Wires	0.	2.	3
Freight	0.	1.	3
Freight	0.	0.	3
Stamps	0.	1.	6
Bal.	4.	2.	9

OCTOBER 13, SUNDAY

Mr. Gordan & Maud came & left in the evening

OCTOBER 14, MONDAY

Kallenbach, Jamnadas & I went on foot. Umiyashanker by train. Mohamedali, Kanji came [back?] to school—Box 1167.

Rd. f[o]r. Kanji	[0.]	5[.0]	
pd. Jamnadas for fruit ect.	1.	0.	0

OCTOBER 15, TUESDAY

Pragji & I went town. Meeting at Hosken's office.

OCTOBER 16, WEDNESDAY

Kallenbach went to town. Letters: Revashankerbhai, Anandlal, Polak, Joshi, Dr. Gool, Harilal[2]. P. Naidoo came & went back—

Pd. stamps	0.	3.	0
„ Kotwal	1.	15.	0

OCTOBER 17, THURSDAY

K., Kotwal & I came to town. I spent the night in town .

Rd. fr. Miss Knudsen	0.	5.	0
Pd. for freitht	0.	2.	9

[1] Some letters here illegible

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Harilal Gandhi", 16-10-1912.

OCTOBER 18, FRIDAY

Left for the Cape accompanied by Kallenbach, Cachalia & Imam.

Rd. £ 2[0?]. 0. 0

OCTOBER 19, SATURDAY

On the way [to Cape].[1]

OCTOBER 20, SUNDAY

Arrived in Cape [Town] evening—went to stay with Dr. Gool, Attended Hindu meeting at night.

OCTOBER 21, MONDAY[2]

Spent in Cape [Town], explaining [plans] regarding addresses, etc. Met Nooroodeen's men. Meeting with Mr. Cousins.

OCTOBER 22, TUESDAY

Mr. Gokhale arrived in the morning. Addresses in Town Hall.

OCTOBER 23, WEDNESDAY

Went to Nooroodeen's meeting. Tea at Abdurahman's. Discussion with Committee at night.

OCTOBER 24, THURSDAY

Left for Kimberley.

OCTOBER 25, FRIDAY

Mrs. Olive Schreiner came at De Aar. Indians came [in] special train [and met us] at Modder River. Mayor & the Indians came at Beaconsfield. Reached Kimberley. Mayor and others at the station. Stayed at Sami's. Meeting at Town Hall[3].

OCTOBER 26, SATURDAY

Went to see a mine—Oliver came [too]. Maclaren [4]. Banquet[5] at night.

[1] Gandhiji here has "Have to send Sorabji £45" which he appears to have subsequently crossed out.

[2] Pages 297-304 of the Diary corresponding to the dates October 21—October 28 are wrongly arranged as were pp. 273-80; *vide* footnote of entry dated September 27 of "Diary, 1912". From the number of pages involved in each case, which is eight, and from the correspondence in the error between the two sets, it is clear that they both form part of a 32-page forme. While Gandhiji corrected the date lines of the first set of misarranged pages, in the second and corresponding set it would appear he followed the printed date line ignoring the binder's misarrangement.

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Kimberley Meeting", 25-10-1912.

[4] Maclaren came to represent Bloemfontein Indians' grievances.

[5] *Vide* "Speech at Kimberley Banquet to Gokhale", 26-10-1912.

OCTOBER 27, SUNDAY, ASO VAD 1

Went to Oliver's. Meeting of Indians. Left for Klerksdorp. Addresses at Christiana, Bloemhof & Windsorton.

OCTOBER 28, MONDAY

Addresses in Klerksdorp, Potchesfstroom and Krugersdorp. Arrived in J. B. Address at station. Stayed at Mount [ain] View.

Pd. stewards 3. 0. 0

OCTOBER 29, TUESDAY

Reception by Europieans in Carlton Hotel.

OCTOBER 30, WEDNESDAY

Function at Hosken's.

OCTOBER 31, THURSDAY

Banquet at Freemason Hall.

Pd. T. Naido 10. 0. 0

NOVEMBER 1, FRIDAY

Breakfast with Chinese at Grand National Hotel, Indian meeting at Drill Hall, address by women. Night at Alexander's.

NOVEMBER 2, SATURDAY

Tolstoy Farm.

NOVEMBER 3, SUNDAY

Tolstoy Farm.

NOVEMBER 4, MONDAY

Tolstoy Farm.

NOVEMBER 5, TUESDAY

Left Farm. Tea at Chaplin's.

NOVEMBER 6, WEDNESDAY

Saw Boksburg and Germiston Locations. Left for Natal in the evening.

NOVEMBER 7, THURSDAY

Addresses in Newcastle and Dundee. Arrived in Maritzburg. Stayed at Camden Hotel. Address in Town Hall.[1]

NOVEMBER 8, FRIDAY

Meeting with Indians in school. Special train arrived from Durban. Left for Durban at noon. Meeting and [presentation of] address at Town Hall, Durban.[2]

NOVEMBER 9, SATURDAY

Boys' sports. Gave away prizes.

NOVEMBER 10, SUNDAY, KARTAK SUD 1

Met Indians at Lord's ground. Special train left for Isipingo. Function in that town. Went to Phoenix by car in the evening.

NOVEMBER 11, MONDAY

Left Phoenix in the afternoon. Banquet at night in Drill Hall.[3]

NOVEMBER 12, TUESDAY

Dinner at Marshall Campbell's. Meeting of indentured labourers. Left for Pretoria.

NOVEMBER 13, WEDNESDAY

On the way, addresses at Heidelberg, Standerton & Volksrust. Address at Pretoria station. Stayed in Transvaal Hotel.

NOVEMBER 14, THURSDAY

Meeting with General Botha, General Smuts & Fischer. Function in the evening at Town Hall.[4]

NOVEMBER 15, FRIDAY

Left Pretoria by car to see Wyndham. Returned. Lunch with Gladstone. Left for Lawley in the evening.

NOVEMBER 16, SATURDAY

At the Farm.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Maritzburg Reception to Gokhale", 7-11-1912.
[2] *Vide* "Speech at Durban Reception to Gokhale", 8-11-1912.
[3] *Vide* "Speech at Durban Banquet to Gokhale", 11-11-1912.
[4] *Vide* "Speech at Pretoria Reception to Gokhale", 14-11-1912.

NOVEMBER 17, SUNDAY

Went by car to see Sir Thomas Smartt. Called on Imam [A. K. Bawazeer], Fancy & Jivan Prema. Left for Delagoa Bay.

Rd. from Miss S.	15.	0.	0
Book etc.	4.	0.	0
D[elagoa] Bay tickets	6.	6.	0
Kallenbach	4.	0.	0

NOVEMBER 18, MONDAY

Arrived at Delagoa Bay. Address in Town Hall. Dinner at Hotel.

Steamer Left at midnight.

Rd. from Madhavji	20.	0.	0
Stewards	5.	0.	0

NOVEMBER 19, TUESDAY

At sea.

NOVEMBER 20, WEDNESDAY

Fast. Arrived in Beira—At night

NOVEMBER 21, THURSDAY

Address in Beira—Started eating twice.

Pd. Kallenbach	9.	0.	0

NOVEMBER 22, FRIDAY

Telegram to Agent that fare money not received in Durban. Borrowed £63 from Tayob Sakoor & paid Agent. Went round Beira in the evening. Got diary ready for Gokhale.

NOVEMBER 23, SATURDAY

Steamer left at night.

NOVEMBER 24, SUNDAY

At sea.

NOVEMBER 25, MONDAY, KARTAK VAD 1

Arrived in Mozambique. Address in the city in the morning. Went round in a rikshaw. Steamer left after three hours.

NOVEMBER 26, TUESDAY

Promised Shri Gokhale [during the voyage] that I would not leave for I[ndia] without making arrangements for the work in S[outh] A[frica] to be carried on in my absence. Most probably the management of affairs will be left in Polak's hands. I would also try to raise £600 for three years for the Committee in England. Obtained his permission to inform the people that more help was likely to be received from him.

NOVEMBER 27, WEDNESDAY

Arrived in Zanzibar in the morning. Went to the city. Called on Mr. Yusufali, etc. Function in Victoria Gardens.

NOVEMBER 28, THURSDAY

Luggage of all three put on [board] *President* in the morning. Address presented in the city in the afternoon. Spent the day in . . . [1] Box[2] containing the J. B. Address seemed to have been left behind.

NOVEMBER 29, FRIDAY

President left last night. Reached Tongaat in the morning. Mr. Gokhale came to know about loss of box. Expressed regret. Kallenbach went to Tongaat and sent a telegram to [s.s.] *Kronprinz.* Parted from Gokhale at 4 in the afternoon. Boarded [s. s.] *Trebora* [and travelled] deck [class]. K. vented his feelings on board ship[3].

Deck and 3rd class passage	0.	17.	0
Porterage	0.	10.	0

NOVEMBER 30, SATURDAY

Reached Zanzibar in the morning. Stayed in the city. Sent telegram to Ginwala at Delagoa Bay and another at J. B. Bought chairs, etc. Returned to *Trebora* at 10 p.m.

Deck chairs etc.	0.	9.	0
Dhotias[?] etc.	0.	13.	0
CABLES	1.	2.	0

[1] Word illegible here

[2] *Vide* 1st footnote of "British Indian Association's Address to Gokhale", 28-10-1912.

[3] *Vide* "Gandhi under Detention", 23-12-1912.

DECEMBER 1, SUNDAY

Reached Dar-es-Salaam in the morning. Captain sent second-class ticket so that it might be easier to land. Had lunch at Mr. Ratanshi's. Wore Indian dress [for first time].

DECEMBER 2, MONDAY

Received Gokhale's cable, dispatched from Mombasa, saying that he was all right. Another from J. B. to say that his box had been found[1]. Wired to [Gokhale at] Mahe & [to Miss Schlesin at] J. B. asking that the box be sent on, duly insured[2].

Cables 0. 16. 0

DECEMBER 3, TUESDAY

Address in Dar-es-Salaam. Mr. Kallenbach started learning Hindi,

Rd. for tickets 7. 0. 0

DECEMBER 4, WEDNESDAY

In Dar-es-Salaam. Read about Maharaj Libel case, Age Khan's case, etc.

DECEMBER 5, THURSDAY

Boarded steamer in the evening. Function at Babu's.

Rd. fr. Goolam Husein Sarnasji [?] &
Son for *I.O.* Rs. 12[.0. 0]

Manilal Desai for Souvenir[3] Rs. 7 [.0. 0]

DECEMBER 6, FRIDAY

Left Dar-es-Salaam.

DECEMBER 7, SATURDAY

Reached Mozambique at night. Experience of deck [travel] going well. Merchants came [to meet us].

DECEMBER 8, SUNDAY

Left Mozambique at 11 a.m.

[1] *Vide* entries for November 28 and 29 of "Diary, 1912".

[2] *Vide* "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", 4-12-1912.

[3] Souvenir Number of *Indian Opinion* published to commemorate Gokhale's visit.

DECEMBER 9, MONDAY, MAGSHAR SUD 1

Reached Chindee.

DECEMBER 10, TUESDAY

Reached Beira in the morning—Stayed at Tayob Sakoor's in the city.

DECEMBER 11, WEDNESDAY

Bought tickets for [s.s.] *Dunvegan Castle*. Left by this [boat] at noon.

Wires Schlesin etc.	0.	6.	0
Gratuities etc. porterage	1.	0.	0

DECEMBER 12, THURSDAY

At sea.

DECEMBER 13, THURSDAY

Reached Delagoa Bay in the morning. Detained some tine before being permitted to land. Went to Madhavji's. Boarded train at noon & arrived in Komati[poort]. Interrogation by the police.

DECEMBER 14, SATURDAY

Arrived in J. B. —

Arrived at Lawley by 1 o'clock train. Baptism of Burnett's son.

Medh went ahead [of the others] with the luggage.

DECEMBER 15, SUNDAY

Spent at the farm. Dwarkadas Gandhi came. Gabo, Krishnasamy & Revashanker came. Gabo went back, taking his luggage with him.

DECEMBER 16, MONDAY

At the Farm. Miss Bush and her mother came. Kunake came.

DECEMBER 17, TUESDAY

Kallenbach, Govindoo & I went to town on foot. Kotwal came by train. Kotwal & Govindoo went to Pretoria. Chhotam accompanied me to Farm. Telegram from Chhaganlal about Krishna.

Ticket to Phoenix	1.	17.	1

DECEMBER 18, WEDNESDAY

Left for Durban by morning train.

DECEMBER 19, THURSDAY

Arrived at Phoenix.

DECEMBER 20, FRIDAY

Spent at Phoenix.

DECEMBER 21, SATURDAY

Went to Durban on receiving a telegram. Had an interview with Sir John Hulett—Returned by afternoon train.

DECEMBER 22, SUNDAY

Had a talk with Anandlal, West, etc. Meeting in the evening.

DECEMBER 23, MONDAY

Krishna[1] appeared to be well.

DECEMBER 24, TUESDAY

Parbhudas [2] fell ill. West went to town—Gajjar came-

DECEMBER 25, WEDNESDAY, MAGSHAR VAD 1

Worked till late in the press. Talk with Virji. Gajjar left. Sent Pragji with him.

DECEMBER 26, THURSDAY

Started working regularly. 5-7 in the orchard—8-11—study. 12-4.30 press—5-6 in the orchard—Budrea, Bhawani Dayal, Devi Dayal, Gajjar & his wife came. Pragji also came with them. from this year's accounts saw that the press will incur a loss next year.

DECEMBER 27, FRIDAY

Shivlal arrived.

DECEMBER 28, SATURDAY

Ram's son ill. Went to see him.

Abdool Karim Sheth came.

Bal. 2. 1. 6

[1] The younger and elder sons, respectively, of Chhaganlal Gandhi

[2] *Ibid*

DECEMBER 29, SUNDAY

Dada Sheth, Omar Sheth, Rustomjee Sheth, A. Huq & Ismail Haffeejee Moosa came—& left. At night Bhawani Dayal & Devi Dayal came & left.

DECEMBER 30, MONDAY

Rain—

DECEMBER 31, TUESDAY

Rain—Wrote letters. Meeting at night. Explained fresh changes.

D[ATE JANUARY] 2ND [1913]

Left Durban. Budrea gave a cheque for £15.

ON THE 4TH

Arrived in J. B. The same day Burnett's daughter fell ill at the Farm. Medh, Desa[i] & Naidoo came.

[ON THE] 5TH

Kallenbach went to town. Coopoo, Shanti, Umiyashanker came.

[ON THE] 6TH

Sivpujan . . . [1] met

MEMORANDA[2]

Mrs. Shaer
c/o Mrs. Mann
Victoria Parade
Mose[ley?]
Birmingham

H. B. Godbole
Box 1541
C[ape] Town

P. Desai—
J. E. Dada [?] & Co
Nicholson's Sugar Estate [?]

[1] A word illegible here
[2] The addresses that follow are in English unless otherwise indicated.

Glensdale

Harila[l]
Todani Pol No. 1514
. . . [1]ni Pol
Kalupur Road
[Ahmedabad] [*Gujarati*]

Mrs. MacDonald
521, Bannatyne Avenue
Winnipeg

Bapubhai Daulatrai Medh
Raipur
Akasheth's
Kuva Pol
[Ahmedabad] [*Gujarati*]

Pragji K. Desai
Salej
Post Amalsad
Taluka Jalalpur [*Gujarati*]

E. Dalborn [?]
6, Centennial Chambers
Sydney
Australia
Mehta
[c/o] M. Spendjian [?] Esq.
26, Rue de la Grande . . . [2]
Antwerp

G. Isaac
19, Upper Head Row
Leeds
Cable: Islam

[1] Some letters illegible here
[2] Illegible

Miss A. A. Smith
22, Harley Road,
South Hampstead
N. W.

Ardeshir Jamshedji Mehta
Yokohama Specie Bank, Ltd.
Fort
Bombay [*Gujarati*]

Manekbai Ardeshir Jamshedji Mehta
In the house of Dosabhai Bootwala
Khetwadi 14th Lane
[Bombay] [*Gujarati*]

Kunverbai Sorabji Shpurgi Adajania
In the house of Palanji Edulji . . . [1]
Khetwadi, 10th Lane, Back Road,
Bombay [*Gujarati*]

Palanji Edulji and Sons
Khetwadi, 13th Lane,
Bombay [*Gujarati*]

Maud Polak
c/o Mrs. Siees
31, Myrtle Gardens
Hanwell
London

From the original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 8220. Courtesy: Gandhi Smark Nidhi

248. MR. GOKHALE AT THE NATIONAL CONGRESS

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale did not allow grass to grow under his feet before he commenced work in India after his return from the arduous work done by him in this subcontinent. He succeeded in having a motion carried in the Congress at Bankipore, advocating the

[1] A word here is illegible. Cf., however, Vol. VIII, p. 427.

total abolition of the system of indenture. We trust that before long we shall sea an end to the system. Mr. Gokhale is not given to leaving things half done. He does thoroughly whatever he undertakes. He fights his battles to a finish. He is no retreat general. We feel sure, therefore, that the cause of the voiceless indentured labourers is safe in his hands. Besides speaking directly to his motion, Mr. Gokhale is reported to have devoted his speech to a reply to his critics in India.[1] The latter seem to have imagined that Mr. Gokhale had given away some rights and had made a bad bargain. Here his critics like Major Silburn charged Mr. Gokhale with having intimidated the people of South Africa. Truly, a public man who wishes to obey the voice of his conscience alone has a difficult if not an impossible task before him if he wishes also to please all people. With Mr. Gokhale it is well if he pleases the people, but it is well also if he must displease the people or any section of them so long as he pleases the voice from within.

From Reuter's condensed summary of his reply to his critics it is difficult to form any accurate opinion about the speech. But Reuter has supplied us with an infallible test by saying that Mr. Gokhale endorsed and urged all the demands made by us in South Africa. It may be well, therefore, to state them in a few sentences. So far as we know them they are: "Complete legal equality as to immigration throughout the Union, but, whilst we should be, we could be, no party to administrative discremination, we should not oppose it, so long as a certain number of new Indians are permitted annually to enter the Union. (2) Our goal is most certainly complete equality in everything, but we do not agitate for disturbing the present political status and we *do* agitate for the removal of all other legal and administrative disabilities in all the parts of the Union, save the Orange

[1] According to a Reuter telegram, Gokhale had moved a resolution at Bankipore urging that the system of indenture be abolished altogether. He called upon the Government [of India] to prohibit further recruiting. " . . . Mr. Gokhale, referring to his critics, said that neither he nor Mr. Gandhi had given any assurance of the limitation of immigration in South Africa and not one particle of the Indians' rights had been surrendered. Mr. Gandhi thought, and he agreed, that it was politic and expedient to concentrate efforts on obtaining for those already in South Africa the same conditions as were enjoyed by Europeans. The grievances that could be redressed included ability to enter and leave South Africa without difficulty; to migrate freely from one Province to another; to reside where they might choose; to acquire and own land and other property; . . . to enjoy the municipal and political franchise; and to enter the Government service and public life. . ." *Indian Opinion*, 4-1-1913.

Free State. (3) As for the Orange Free State, all we ask for is that, if a General Immigration Bill is passed, there should be no racial bar so far as *immigration* is concerned. All the other disabilities in that State will remain until our irreproachable conduct and the natural working of time have softened the present prejudice of the Europeans of the Free State, who appear to be Free Staters first and South Africans after.

When we receive the full text of Mr. Gokhale's speech, there is no doubt that we shall find his case formulated along these lines.

Indian Opinion, 4-1-1913

249. TO READERS OF "INDIAN OPINION"

In this issue readers will notice a few changes. We believe these to be an improvement; we have made them because we thought that, if the journal was printed in two columns instead of three, it would look better. It would [also] be more convenient if the articles had to be published in book form. Our purpose is to publish, from time to time, articles of permanent value so that readers who like to preserve copies can later have them bound into a volume. It is our intention to continue providing the same [reading] matter [as before], but in as short a form as possible. By so doing we will be able to fit in more material within the same space or even less. Beginning this time, we have reduced the number of Gujarati and English pages, but we wish to provide more information, though not more words within these pages. It is our hope to reduce the work of the compositor while increasing that of the writer.

Our venture is more than eight years old.[1] We have published information about rates [and prices] of interest to merchants and have also discussed serious topics. Matter varying fromfour to twenty-two pages in length has appeared in the Gujarati Section of *Indian Opinion*. We now hope to print, for the most part, writings of two kinds: those which will provide the community with full information, in so far as that is possible, of the hardships we suffer, and we will [also] consider and suggest remedies; secondly, those that deal with an ethic of public conduct or contain, in essence,

[1] More than nine years actually, *vide* "Ourselves", 4-6-1903.

thoughts of great men on this problem. We hope that *Indian Opinion* will thus become an instrument of education.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-1-1913

250. ROYAL INDIAN NAVY

We learn from a cable in the newspapers that the Indian princes are prepared to offer a few warships to help the Imperial Government. It was estimated that they would cost £21 million, which amounts to Rs. 31.5 crore. In effect this would amount to a contribution of Re. 1 *per capita* of India's population. But these figures are inadequate [for conveying the true picture]. From the names suggested for the warships, it appears that the rulers who offered to help are the Nizam, the Maharajas of Mysore, Baroda, Gwalior, Kashmir, Travancore and Rajputana, and the King of Nepal. The total population of their states is about four crores. The taxes to raise this amount would have been borne by this population; that is, the tax would have amounted to Rs. 8 a head. For a very poor man, this sum represents his earnings for four months. That the Indian princes were not going to fetch this money from the heavens is certain. It was their subjects who would have had to pay up. Happily for the good name of the Imperial Government, the Reuter cable was based on a mere rumour; and that is due to India's good fortune and the grace of God which the subjects of Indian rulers still enjoy. All responsible newspapers in England dismissed the idea as impracticable. Some of them expressed strong views. One or two even remarked that, if any such help was received from the Indian Princes, it would not be voluntary. Indian states do not enjoy real independence. If they were only told that the Imperial Government would be pleased if they rendered such help, they would consider themselves obliged to do so. Alternatively, if the Political Agents brought pressure to bear on them, they might be equally ready to make contributions. Moreover, a certain paper reminds that, while the Colonies do not contribute a single penny towards the war effort of the Imperial Government, India bears the heavy cost of financing the entire Army, both white and coloured. Over and above this, the Indian Princes keep their armies in a state of preparedness so as to assist the Imperial Government. Although the clouds over India have lifted, it does not seem likely that the Indian States will remain wholly

free. Some newspapers, however, welcomed this rumour. Germany is expanding her fleet. The Imperial Government is also expanding hers comparably. This means that the British people must go on paying heavier taxes. If the subjects go on paying taxes in this fashion, they get fed up. In this situation it will not be surprising if the British Cabinet casts a coveting eye on India.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-1-1913

251. GOKHALE'S SPEECH IN INDIA

It would appear, from newspapers coming from India, that cables of Mr. Gokhale's speeches in this country have been received there and have caused some misunderstanding. From the *Gujarati* got from Bombay, we see that the major share of the responsibility for this misunderstanding must be that of the English newspapers. The *Gujarati* defends Mr. Gokhale's speeches. On reaching Bombay, Mr. Gokhale seems to have taken note of the misconception about his work [here].[1] And now Reuter's cables tells us that Mr. Gokhale's has answered his critics in full [in the course of his speech] at the Congress.[2] Here, one of Mr. Gokhale's speeches was misinterpreted by our Major Silburn. Mr. Gokhale gave a reply which appears to have satisfied everyone.[3] In India, too, persons like our Mayor and Major Silburn misinterpreted Mr. Gokhale's speech. Such things have always happen, and will happen, to public men. No wonder, therefore, Mr. Gokhale's words were misconstrued.

Not that Reuter's cables always report speeches correctly. We have, nevertheless, to make meaning of the cables and arrive at what is likely to have happened at Bankipore. Before we can understand Reuter's cables, we should find out the significance of what Mr. Gokhale said here. What this patriot then said was that, if equality of rights in law is conceded under the Immigration Act, India would not object to the prohibition of Indian immigration beyond what was necessary to meet our needs [here]. He also said that we did not want political rights for the present. Replying to his critics in

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Gokhale's Speech at Bombay", 14-12-1912.

[2] *Vide* footnote of "Mr. Gokhale at the National Congress", 4-1-1913.

[3] *Vide* Appendix "Gokhale's Answer to Silburn and F. C. Hollander", before 4-4-1913.

India, Mr. Gokhale has said that India would not place any [upper] limit to [Indian] immigration [into South Africa]. About the franchise, he pointed out that that was contained in his demand that Indians in South Africa should have equal rights with the whites. We shall see on reflection that this is not inconsistent with his speeches in South Africa. Mr. Gokhale seems to have been charged with having bound India's hands and made her responsible for ending immigration of Indians into this country in excess [of the figure agreed upon]. This charge is not just, because all that Mr. Gokhale has agreed to is only that India would not object if the Union Government were to disallow further immigration of Indians. Between this [statement] and saying that India herself has ended [emigration], there is a deal of difference. The same is true of the franchise [issue]. Between what Mr. Gokhale has said—that we do not ask for the franchise at present—and saying that India does not demand it, there exists a great difference and a contradiction. Accepting the latter proposition would make India a party to the disabilities inflicted on the Indians. Mr. Gokhale has further pointed out that he has not committed himself to the waiving of a single right. By arguing that the demands he put forward were the same as ours, Mr. Gokhale has shown that he has neither made new demands nor has he left out any from among those that we have been making. What has been established, then, is misunderstanding on the part of the Bombay critics, for they have not until this day criticized our demands![1]

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-1-1913

252. DECK PASSENGERS

I have already recounted my experience of how the Immigration Officer at Delagoa Bay behaves.[2] One reason why we must suffer this is the behaviour of deck passengers. By their general deportment they have created an impression that one can with impunity harass Indians in any way one likes. From my few days' experience of deck [travel] I realized that such criticism is not altogether unjust.

[1] As being too moderate

[2] *Vide* "Gandhi under Detention", 23-12-1912.

There seems to be no limit to the filthiness of deck passengers. Even though facilities for bathing are provided on the ship, many of them rarely take a bath. They feel they cannot bathe in brine from the sea. This is only superstition, but they have clung to it. Some of them bathe only once in a week due to sheer laziness. Many Indians on deck do not change at all and look very slovenly. Many spit right where they happen to be sitting. They have no thought for others' convenience. One of them spat over Mr. Kallenbach's head where he sat. The deck is so covered with leavings and spittle that one shrinks from walking barefoot over it, and if one does, there is every danger of slipping. They also quarrel with one another for places. They foul the latrines by using them so carelessly that even those who observe the minimum of cleanliness cannot but feel revulsion. If this is how we live, no wonder the ship's officers treat us with contempt. And that is precisely what happens.

Furthermore, even those Indians who ought not to be travelling deck class, do so. I believe that, when these Indians who are wealthy and well known as businessmen travel deck class, through sheer miserliness, their rivals, the white traders, cease to be friendly and to think well of them. Imagine the Manager of the Standard Bank, who draws an annual salary of £1,000 or more travelling first class on a ship. He discovers an Indian client [travelling] on deck in a wretched condition. The Indian keeps a balance of five to seven thousand pounds in his bank and enjoys credit facilities of the order of £25,000. Every Christmas, moreover, he gives the manager gifts worth twice the deck fare. Though the passenger is clearly far better off, as far as money goes, than the bank manager, he travels deck class. What thoughts must cross the manager's mind when he sees his client in these circumstances! He cannot but despise us and our money.

It is not my desire that we should imitate the whites in these matters. Even so, I would certainly say that when we compete with them in trade and the like and demand the same rights that they have, we should, provided we have the means, give them no opportunity to point an accusing finger at us in matters which do not trouble our conscience. It is the duty of well-to-do people to travel first or second class for the sake of their own prestige and that of India as well and to keep the place absolutely clean. In many situations, we forget our honour.

Those who are poor may travel deck class, but they should do

their utmost not to leave any scope for complaint. We shall become happy if we end these self-created difficulties; it will then become the officers' duty to provide us further facilities, a duty they can escape only by fulfilling it.

If we had acted in this manner right from the outset, the state of deck passengers would never have been what it is. It is not great matter to [have to] observe cleanliness, to wear clean clothes and to keep them tidy. It only calls for a little care. But what I have said should not be construed to mean that we must not protest against harassment by the ship's crew nor that whatever they do is right; this is not the construction that must be put on it. On the other hand, on the ship by which I travelled as a deck passenger, I tried to get the right thing done in every circumstance; this is the duty of every passenger who is in a position to do so by virtue of his knowledge of English, etc. A passenger from the *Purnea* brought a few facts [to our notice]. If these are correct, it is absolutely necessary that some action be taken to correct this [state of affairs]. All that I mean is that we, for our part, should not be at fault. If we are ourselves blameless, our complaints will receive a better hearing. Bathing arrangements, whether they are inadequate or totally lacking; lavatories, whether they are too few in number of foul and exposed; meagre protection against the cold or the heat; inconvenience as regards cooking; the absence of special places for women; and the shepherding about of passengers [by the crew] from one spot to another as though they were cattle—none of these can be an excuse or an answer for our inadequacies or our slovenly living, whatever we are. Passengers must do something about these deficiencies. Shipping agents ought to intervene in this matter and get the right thing done. My only aim in narrating my experience is that we should do our duty as men and as Indians, and uphold India's honour in all circums-tances.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

Phoenix

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-1-1913

253. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [*-I*]

I have had to reflect on the subject of health for the past twenty years. Having gone to England and having [earlier] become used to a

particular mode of living, I had to devise my own arrangements for food. I can claim that, as a result, I have acquired considerable experience, and have been able to form certain ideas thanks to that experience. I write these chapters in the hope that they may be of some use to the readers of *Indian Opinion*.

There is a saying in English, "Prevention is better than cure". "The bund should be built before the flood", [1] expresses a similar idea. Taking steps to prevent disease is, in English, termed "hygiene". In Gujarati, it may be called *arogya samrakshan shastra*. This science is distinct from medicine, though some take it to be a branch of medicine. My only reason for mentioning this distinction is that, in these chapters, the means for the care of health will be described for the most part. Like a lost jewel that takes greater effort to find than it does to keep it in the first instance, good health, once it is lost, costs much time and effort to regain. It is therefore essential for thoughtful people to attach the utmost importance to the keeping up of health. We shall consider further importance to the keeping up of health. We shall consider further how health, which may be lost from time to time, can be regained.

Milton, the English poet has observed that both Heaven and Hell exist only in the mind of man.[2] Hell does not lie under-neath the earth, nor heaven in the clouds. This idea appears in Sanskrit literature, too. "The mind is the cause at once of bondage (hell) and *moksha*[3] (heaven)." Pursuing this line of thought, we may argue that whether a person is ill or well he is himself for the most part responsible. One falls ill owing to one's thoughts as well as one'deeds. There are numerous instances of a father contracting cholera on seeing his son suffer from it. A distinguished physician has remarked that more patients die of fear than of the plague or other diseases. The saying that "a coward dies without being dead"[4] deserves to be pondered over.

Ignorance is also a great cause of broken health. When over-taken by misfortune, our ignorance makes us helpless, and we don't know what to do; with the best of intentions, we do the wrong thing.

[1] A Gujarati saying

[2] The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a heav'n of hell, a hell of heav'n.

[3] Liberation

[4] A Gujarati saying

Being unacquainted with the common rules concerning the human body, we often do things which we ought not to, or fall into the hands of selfish and unscrupulous quacks. It is surprising but true that we know less of things close by than of those that lie far away. I might be ignorant of the topography of my street but learn by heart the names of cities and rivers in England. I will patter away about the stars in the sky but you may be sure that I know nothing of the roof atop my house. I will think of country up the stars but do not ever feel the urge to know what there is in the roof above and how many rafters have gone to its making. I do not care to watch the drama that Nature enacts before my eyes but want to watch the got up shows in the theatre. In the same way, I have no knowledge of what happens in my body—what it is, what it is made of, how the bones, flesh and blood are formed, what their functions are, who it is within me that speaks, how my movement is affected, why I think good thoughts one moment and wicked ones at another, why my mind runs ten million miles away against my will, why, when my body moves at a snail's pace, my mind can move a thousand times swifter than the wind. I thus know less than nothing about the relation which my body, nearer to me than the nearest of things, has to my mind.

It is the duty of everyone to free himself from this predicament. To discover the relation between the body and the mind is an exacting task, but everyone should consider it essential to have some idea of the normal working of the human body. This knowledge should also form part of the education given to children. When one sits down to think about it, it is a matter for shame that, when my finger is cut, I should not know what to do about it, or, when pricked by a thorn, I should be unable to take it out or, upon being bitten by a snake, I cannot think of what to do at once without losing my nerve. To argue, using difficult words, that a layman cannoy understand these matters is sheer conceit, or worse still, a "fraud to exploit mankind".

We shall, with the help of these chapters, try and enable readers of *Indian Opinion* to free themselves, to some extent, of such dependence and ignorance, if they have not already done that.

Not that such articles have not been published elsewhere. People, however, get into the habit of reading particular books or newspapers. The readers of *Indian Opinion* have come to read this journal along with a few others. Some of them do not read books on health. It is likely that they will benefit from the following chapters. Moreover, I

intend, in these chapters, to provide an abstract of the views found in a number of books. I have read many books, considered contradictory opinions and, having put them to the test, have formed certain ideas. Consequently, there will be found in these chapters the substance of more than one book. What is more, they will possibly spare the beginner the bewilderment caused by books that contradict one another. One book recommends the use of warm water for a particular condition while another suggests cold water. This may confuse the beginner. These contradictory courses of action will be considered in these chapters in the light of reason. Those who so desire may then refer to the original books and thus modify these conclusions. One may therefore safely assume that these chapters will prove useful, to a greater or lesser extent, to every reader of *Indian Opinion*.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-1-1913

254. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

Wednesday [January 8, 1913][1]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

For me, last night was momentous. Let me try to explain. I feel that you are accepting my conclusions without being ready to follow them out. Such a man dare not risk the unbalancing of his mind in the attempt to follow out somebody else's conclusions. If you had proved for yourself the correctness of the theory of life as I have endeavored to sketch it, if you had an inner conviction, if your belief in future life was unshakable, if you had become sick of the world unto death, if money had no attractions for you, if you were not influenced by your surroundings, if you were longing for poverty and suffering, it would be your duty to attempt to live the new life. But you are not any of these things, so I think that you *ought* not to think of India or work in Phoenix just now. I have an inner conviction about the things I have mentioned. My conclusions are my own and I ought to risk even the unhinging of my mind in the attempt to live the new life.

My mistake was in trying to force your pace and thinking that you could not but be right in trying to *do* right. But the trying to *do*

[1] The addressee has recorded on this letter: "Mr. Gandhi left on the 9th, Thursday for Phoenix and he handed this letter to me."

right would not have been *your* act. Or the many thoughts that arise in your mind, e.g., about Mr. Alexander[1] , or getting more work or more money, would not find place in your system. The fact is, we cannot help ourselves beyond a certain point. I feel sure, as I did not up to last night, that your duty is just now to adhere to your practice and your material advancement. In doing so, you have to watch yourself. You *must not* abandon the simple life, you *must not* revert to the rake's life and pursue your calling as in trust for others. Make very little use of your riches for you own comforts and keep poverty and suffering as your goal. So doing, you will be more in tune with yourself and it will be possible for you to come to India with a better preparation. Instead of India being a preparation, let your practice be it. After all it may only mean one year, it may even mean less. But, meanwhile, you cannot live a double life. You cannot prepare in Phoenix for India. You prepare for it in the midst of social attractions. You will thus test yourself. You will soon know when you are ripe for the change. I was wrong in presenting India before you quite so soon and wrong in suggesting a study of Hindi. You may drop the latter for the time being. Of course you will continue it, if you like the study. Under this plan you would come to Phoenix as a visitor as often as possible and comparing the two lives you will make your final choice. Such is the result of my last night's hard thinking. I hope you understand my meaning. You will do exactly as you please but in my opinion you would err in thinking of India.

Herewith draft letter to Alexander.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Morris Alexander, Jewish Member of Parliament from Cape Town

255. LETTER TO M. I. DESAI

[On or after *January 9, 1913*][1]

TO
SHRI MANILAL ICHHARAM DESAI
BOMBAY
SIR,

When new of the death of you revered father[2] was received in this country, a meeting of Hindus was held in Johannesburg. May I respectfully inform you that, at this meeting, a resolution was passed concerning your deceased father and condoling with you and your family.

Your servant,
MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI
CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING

From the Gujarati, 6-4-1913

256. AN "ACT OF GRACE"

Last week we printed Mr. Polak's letter to the Minister of the Interior on the action of the Chief Immigration Officer of Natal regarding two young Indians born in South Africa claiming rights of entry into the Transvaal.[3] That letter speaks for itself, and shows in a

[1] The meeting referred to in the letter was held on this date.

[2] Ichharam Sooryaram Desai; Gujarati writer, jouranalist and publisher

[3] On December 22, 1912, Bhawani Dayal and Devi Dayal, both Transvaal born sons of a domiciled Transvaal resident, arrived in Durban on their way back to the Transvaal. They were both accompanied by their wives one of whom had brought her baby with her. Although one of the men could have passed the education test and both calimed that they had been in the Transvaal on May 31, 1902, Cousins, the Immigration Officer refused them visitors' permits. Polak obtained an affidavit from a respectable Transvaal Indian who vouched for their identity and certified that they had been in the Transvaal on May 31, 1902, but Cousins refused to consider their claim without instructions from the Registrar of Asiatics; he further refused to communicate with the Registrar or to give the applicants visitors' passes. Polak telegraphed the Registrar of Asiatics and asked Goodricke and Laughton, attorneys, to apply for an interdict against Cousins and other parties to prevent removal of applicants, pending consideration of their claims by the Transvaal authorities. The interdict from the Supreme Court was obtained, a condition being that applicants should lodge £100 as security. Cousins, after considerable delay, went aboard ship and demanded that applicants sign a document authorizing him to keep them under restraint at the Detention Camp and to use the security for their maintenance. Polak protested that it was unlawful, but Cousins,

telling manner how high-handed the action of the Officer concerned was. Mr. Polak addressed a letter to *The Natal Mercury* also about the same time, in which he dealt not only with the case of two young Indians, but with that of Mr. Gajjar,[1] with which also our readers are familiar. Our contemporary has written a very forcible editorial[2] on

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learning that Polak was not yet enrolled as attorney in Natal, had him ordered off ship. Under pressure from Cousins, the applicants signed. The attorneys had meanwhile communicated with the Judge who declared that Cousins' action was not intended by his order. Although Cousins then issued them visitors' passes, he still refused to accept their applications for registration. Polak then wrote to the Minister of the Interior setting forth the details of this case and requesting that instructions be issued for a "humaner administration" of the immigration laws. The Dayal brothers applied directly to the Registrar of Asiatics, Pretoria, who had not yet replied when the period of their visiting passes expired. The Immigration Officer refused an extension. Meanwhile, the elder brother's claim to reside in Natal was admitted on grounds of his ability to pass the education test but his proof of marriage was rejected. The brothers, therefore, crossed the border accompanied by Polak. Although their application for residential rights was under consideration, they were charged as prohibited immigrants and the cases remitted to Pretoria and remanded to January 30. On January 27, however, Polak was notified by the Registrar that the cases had been withdrawn and the brothers' claims admitted. *Indian Opinion*, 4-1-1913 & 1-2-1913.

[1] Gajjar, an Indian merchant from Somerset East in the Cape, had gone to Durban to receive his family coming from India. He asked the local magistrate to issue him a visitors' permit for Natal which the latter in this ignorance of Cape Immigration laws thought unnecessary. He was, however, issued a certificate of identity which mentioned his standing in the community. On arrival at Durban, Cousins, the Natal Immigration Officer summoned him and discovered that he had neither a visiting pass for Natal nor a permit of temporary absence from the Cape. While Cousins issued him a visiting pass for Natal, he ordered Gajjar to stay on in Durban until he had obtained the Minister's instructions, but refused to allow his family to disembark on the ground that Gajjar was technically a "prohibited immigrant" in both provinces--in Natal because he had not got a visiting pass and in the Cape because he had not obtained a permit of absence. He was, however, allowed to return home as "an act of grace". Polak then wrote to *The Natal Mercury* saying, "Such, however, is the 'humane' administration of the Immigration Law that Mr. Gokhale was given to understand might be expected when he interviewed the Ministers at Pretoria. Are these expectations never to be realized, and is every conceivable occasion to be seized to harass unfortunately placed members of the Indian community?" *Indian Opinion*, 11-1-1913.

[2] In this *The Natal Mercury* strongly condemned Cousins. He apparently laboured, it said, under the impression that he had been placed "to give the public the greatest amount of inconvenience . . . the maximum degree of hardship he can impose"; he was "about the last man for the job" and they did "not intend Natal to rest under the stigma of being a place" where the law was administered according to Cousins' ideas. *Indian Opinion*, 11-1-1913.

these cases, which we reproduce in this issue, as also that part of Mr. Polak's letter which refers to Mr. Gajjar's case.

The most painful part of Mr. Polak's letter is where he says that Mr. Gajjar has been permitted to return to the Cape as an "act of grace". No case—and there have been harsh cases enough—under the Cape Immigration Act has, perhaps, shown in a manner as this has, the cruelty of the section that requires an Indian leaving the Province to take out a permit of absence in a particular form. Mr. Gajjar might, but for this precious"act of grace", have become a prohibited immigrant for the Cape Province although he was armed with a document of identification from the Chief Constable of his town. Under the Act, a Cape Indian paying a visit to a sister Province on the strength of a permit issued by that Province may be prevented from returning, if he happened not to know, like the Magistrate at Somerset East, the exact terms of the Cape Immigration Law. Justice in Mr. Gajjar's case has been forced from the Government by the persistent efforts of Mr. Polak, but the Cape Indians ought not to rest until the section in question has been altered and a promise taken from the Government that, pending alteration, the section will not be rigorously enforced.

So far as the action of the Officer[1] in question is concerned, the public will perhaps feel thankful to know that he has handed over the charge to Mr. Harry Smith, who is, so far as Natal is concerned, an old experienced official possessing the requisite legal knowledge of the people he has to deal with. But Mr. Harry Smith's conduct of his department under the Union Government will be watched by the Indian community with not a little anxiety. Whilst we have had to perform the painful duty of severely criticising Mr. Cousins' administration of the Immigration Act of Natal, [2] we have always felt that we might not have done justice to him by ignoring the fact that he is now a Union Officer, and that probably he has been acting against his own wishes and under orders from the Department of the Interior. However, we have not been able to place any such charitable construction upon his action so far as Mr. Gajjar's case, for instance, was concerned. No matter what the orders from the Department of the Interior might be, humane Immigration Officers would always find scope for their humanity in dealing with helpless men and women;

[1] Cousins

[2] *Vide* "The New Broom", 13-7-1912 and "More of the New Broom", 20-7-1912.

and we trust that Mr. Harry Smith will exercise, as he has often done before, kindly tact in his dealings with the Indian community.

Indian Opinion, 11-1-1913

257. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH[*-II*]

It is our habit that, at the slightest illness, we rush at once to a doctor, *vaidya* or *hakim*.[1] And if we do not, we take whatever medicine the barber or our neighbour suggests. It is our belief that no sickness can be cured without drugs. This, however, is sheer superstition. People who suffer from other causes are—and will continue to be—fewer than those who have suffered, and are suffering, because of this superstition. If, therefore, we can get to know what constitutes illness, we should be able to take a somewhat balanced view. "Darad"[2] means pain. "Roga"[3] means much the same. It is right to seek a remedy for pain, but it is fultile to take drugs to suppress pain. Actually, the result is often harmful. Taking medicine has the same effect as my covering up the refuse in my house. Refuse which is kept covered will putrefy and cause me harm. Moreover, the covering itself may putrefy and add to the refuse. I have then to get rid of the refuse which has since formed as well as that which was to begin with. This is the fate that befalls people taking drugs. But, if one throws out the refuse, the house will become as clean as it was before. By giving rise to illness—pain [that is]—Nature, in fact, informs us that there exists impure matter in our body. Moreover Nature has provided within the body itself the means of cleansing it, so that, when illness occurs, we should realize that there exists impure matter in the body and that she has commenced her cleansing process. I should be thankful to anyone who came forward to remove the refuse from my house. So long as he has not done with the cleaning, I might be inconvenienced but I would keep my patience. Likewise if I am patient while Nature is cleansing the body, which is my home, it will be well again, and I shall become healthy and so free from pain. If I have a cold, I do not have to rush to swallow drugs—*sunth*[4] [for instance]. I know that some impure matter has accumulated in a certain part of my body and that Nature

[1] A *vaidya* practices the Ayurvedic and *hakim* the Unani system of medicine.

[2] Gujarati words for pain, ailment, disease

[3] *Ibid*

[4] Ginger, dried and ground, is a much used household remedy.

has stepped in to remove it. And so I must let her have her way, so that my body may be cleansed in the shortest possible time. If I resist Nature, her task is doubled; she has both to cleanse me and cope with my resistance. I can assist Nature, for instance, by getting rid of the effective cause of the impurity, so that more of it does not accumulate. That is to say, if I stop eating for the duration of the illness, thus preventing the ingress of further impurity, and if I exercise in fresh air, I shall also start ejecting the impurity through the skin. That this is the golden rule for keeping the body free of disease, every one can prove for himself. Only, the mind must be kept in a stable state. One who reposes true faith in God will always act in this fashion. The following [throught] will help in bringing about this state of mind: `Even if I undergo the treatment prescribed by the *vaidya* or some such person, no one can guarantee that my disease will be got rid of. Not all those who put themselves in the hands of a doctor are cured. If they were, Mr. Gandhi should not have to write these chapters and all of us would be leading happy lives.'

Experience shows that once the [medicine-] bottle enters a house, it never leaves. Countless persons suffer from some ailment or other throughout their lives, go on adding to the drugs one after the other or go on changing their *vaidyas* and *hakims* in their search for the one who will cure them; finally, having ruined both themselves and others, they die, a troubled death. That famous judge, the late Mr. Justice Stephen, who had lived in India [for a time], once said that doctors introduce herbs, of which they know little, into bodies of which they know even less. Doctors say the same thing after attaining due experience.

Dr. Magendie has said: "Medicine is a great hoax." A famous doctor, Sir Ashley Cooper, has observed: "The science of medicine is based on mere guess-work." Sir John Forbes has remarked: "Notwithstanding the skill of physicians, it is Nature which cures most men of their diseases." Dr. Baker tells us: "In cases of night fever many more patients die of the drugs than of the disease." Dr. Froth declares that it is difficult to find a more dishonest profession than that of medicine. Dr. Thomas Watson writes: "In the most important matters our profession drifts on a sea of dubious hypotheses." Dr. Coswell feels that the human race would benefit immeasurably if the entire medical profession was ended. Dr. Frank avers that thousands have been killed in hospitals. Dr. Mason Good says: "Drugs claim a

heavier sacrifice of human lives than do wars, epidemics and famines." We find that an increase in the number of doctors is followed in one place after another by a rise in the incidence of disease. Large advertisements appear in newspapers which do not accept other advertisements. When *Indian Opinion* used to accept advertisements, its workers had to go about soliciting these from others, but as for drug advertisements, their manufacturers pressed them on the journal and would even tempt [us] with large sums. We pay a rupee for medicine which should cost no more than a pie. Most manufacturers generally do not let us know what the drugs are made from. A drug-manufacturer recently brought out a book entitled *Secret Medicines*, his object being to ensure that people are not misled. He reveals therein that the ingredients of sarsaparilla, fruit salt, syrup and other well-known patent medicines, for which we pay from three to seven shillings a bottle, cost from a farthing to a penny. This means that we pay from 36 to 336 times the actural cost of the medicine. The profit to the dealer is thus 3500 to 35000 per cent.

The reader ought surely to see from all this that it is unnecessary for a patient to rush to a doctor or buy drugs in a hurry. But few will so forbear. All doctors are not dishonest. That every time the drug is harmful, the common man will not admit. To such persons, one may say: 'Forbear as much as you can. Do not bother a doctor as long as you can help it. If you must call in one, get only a reliable person and, having called him, stick to him. Consult another only if he so advises. Your disease is not under your doctor's control. If it is given to you to live, you will get well and if, in spite of all that you have done, death comes to you or to your relatives, know that death is no more than a transition.' The purpose in my writing these chapters is that we might think and act according to this principle. In these, I wish to discuss with readers such topics as physiology, air, water, diet, exercise, clothing, water and earth treatment, accidents, child-care, the duties of men and women during pregnancy and common ailments.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

Phoenix

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-1-1913

258. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

Saturday [January 11, 1913]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Just a line to say that I got the message about the fares for the Naidoo boys all right.

Here we are quite comfortable but I do not know that you could stand this life. We were most of us on the verandah sleeping side by side. Jeki[1] was next to me. We all sat at the same table last night to dine ≈ we were 20. The work is good but hard. I have been up since 4.30 a.m. and now it is 5.40 a.m. I woke up the boys at 5.20 a.m. We are in all 23 in one household. In the light of what happened at the station, in the light of what is happening here, consider my letter well. Over my meal yesterday I could not have taken more than 10 minutes. I think I took the least time of all and I did not gulp. I have simply found out, I hope, the right food for me. One can only die in the attempt to find the truth. I am passionately in search of it. May you not for the time being follow my career from a distance? Poor Mrs. Gandhi and poor you! Mrs. Gandhi must have felt simply shocked to see her neat little home turned into a menagerie. But she took it all quite calmly. Your case is somewhat different. She is bound up in my life. She is not on the fence. You are not bound up in me and you are on the fence. All these things should put you on your guard. I therefore urge again: do not be hasty, nurse your office in terms of my letter, come to Phoenix whenever you like partly to share my life but not wholly, and you will test yourself. Watch me just now not with a friendly eye but a highly critical and fault-finding eye. Assimilate the joint life as we have lived it hitherto but in my flight now hesitate, watch and wait. More when you come here. You will observe things for yourself. Please understand me. I do not want to put you off. If you will take the full step in spite of my warnings, I will not stop you.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Jayakunvar, wife of Manilal Doctor

259. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[Before *January* 18, 1913][1]

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your two letters. I will not do anything in haste. Ideas ought to come up and great changes must take place in my way of life. But I will not do anything that might cause you apprehension. It is your duty not to lose hope. You can rise only through supreme effort. And when you have done that you will attain limitless effulgence. It isa great enterprise. You are competent to undertake it, for all souls have the same attributes. If only you lift the veils, you can see for yourself your powers. The key to this [life] is in the *yamaniyamas*[2]. I wish to write of these hereafter. I have other things to say, but there is now no time. I have corrected the verse from the *shataka*. Look at it carefully. If you don't follow, ask again. Always, ponder what you read. Do not utter a syllable or set down a word nor do a single deed without taking thought.

David Ernest and others are coming today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 105. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

260. DOES IT MEAN PASSIVE RESISTANCE?

We are in possession of information of the utmost importance to the Indian community throughout south Africa. We may, next week, give the whole history of the matter, which bids fair to bring about a revival of passive resistance which we had hoped would not be necessary. We understand that the Government are not keeping their

[1] The reference by Gandhiji in this letter to the great changes in his life is presumably to his decision to leave for India about the middle of 1913, which was published in *Indian Opinion*, 18-1-1913.

[2] *Yama* is a duty or observance enjoined by religion. *Niyama* is a voluntary acceptance of that discipline. While writers have mentioned as many as ten *yamas*, five are commonly known: non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, celibacy and non-possession. The ten *niyamas* include penance, alms-giving, study, restraint, fasting and observing silence.

promise regarding those British Indians who, in terms of the settlement, should be given rights of residence in the Transvaal or the Union as the case may be. It would appear that they decline to accept all the names submitted by the Passive Resistance Committee. Delicate communications are still proceeding and we hope that they will end satisfactorily. There are also other points which, directly or indirectly, bear upon and arise out of the settlement, any one of which may produce a conflagration in the community. We warn the Government to be careful. We hope that they will. But if they do not, we know that the seasoned soldiers in passive resistance will give a good account of themselves at the call of duty.

Indian Opinion, 18-1-1913

261. THE INDENTURE SYSTEM

If any further testimony were needed to bring home to the mind the evils of the indenture system, Miss Dudley's letter, which we reproduced from *India* elsewhere in this issue, would supply it. This lady's experience of fifteen years' missionary work in Fiji leads her to say that the system is past mending, and [to] entreat her readers not to be satisfied with any reforms but to continue to use their influence against the system until it is abolished. We are grateful to Miss Dudley for her outspoken letter. Such independent testimony is worth much. Other European friends, we are sure, could add their testimony against the system and so bring nearer the end which is almost in sight. We are confident that the Hon. Mr. Gokhale means to see this thing through. The National Congress, only the other day, again brought forward a resolution dealing with this matter, Mr. Gokhale being the mover.[1] So long as women and children can be dragged away into a state of slavery under the guise of indentured labour, with results too horrible to mention, so long must we continue to advocate the total abolition of this most iniquitous, cruel, and immoral system.

Indian Opinion, 18-1-1913

[1] *Vide* "Mr. Gokhale at the National Congress", 4-1-1913.

262. INDIAN EDUCATION

In the *Natal Provincial Gazette* we read the following among the rules framed for the guidance of teachers in the Government schools:

> No Native, Indian or Coloured children are to be admitted to schools other than those specially provided for them.
>
> No pupils under standard II may be admitted to an Indian School under European teachers.
>
> No subject not included in the Standard Syllabus for Primary Schools may be taught during ordinary school hours in an Indian School in charge of European teachers.
>
> No pupil who has passed Standard IV will be allowed to remain at an Elementary Indian School.

Hitherto there have been no Gazetted rules specifically debarring Indian children from entering schools other than those specially established for them. But the rules before us have altered all that. The Provincial Administration have thrown down the challenge. They have made it a matter of law. The rules, moreover, hamper Indian education in many other respects. Their effect is to prevent the teaching of vernaculars in the Government schools and to prevent our children from receiving other than elementary education in Government schools. The duty of Indian parents is obvious. They ought to make adequate provision for the education, along national lines, of their own children. There should be established our own schools affording our children opportunities to learn their own vernaculars and, through them, their own history. It is a serious reflection on us that our children are being brought up without a proper foundation to build character upon.[1]

Indian Opinion, 18-1-1913

263. ENGLAND'S BIGGEST CUSTOMER

A letter has been addressed to the English Press by Messrs R. Knight & Sons, of the Calcutta *Statesman*. In this letter they point out that India is now England's largest customer. In 1911, India's purchases from England amounted to £52,246,000 as against

[1] *Vide* also "For Indian Parents", 19-8-1911.

£39,284,000 from Germany, the great rival of England. These gentlemen further point out that the percentage taken by India of British produce and manufacture in 14Ω whereas the percentage taken by Australia is 8 and [by] Canada and South Africa 6 each. These figures carry a moral which should be driven home to every well-wisher of the Empire. The Colonies we have named have been the worst offenders in regard to their treatment of British Indians. And their trade with Great Britain is extremely small compared with India's. When India recognizes her own power, it will be difficult for British statesmen to Justify their policy of *non possumus* when dealing with the disabilities of British Indians in the self-governing Colonies. They will, for instance, not look forward to another crisis which we see distinctly coming in South Africa, unless the Minister of the Interior removes the many points of soreness among the Indians here. The Immigration policy is becoming simply intolerable.

Indian Opinion, 18-1-1913

264. LORD AMPTHILL'S COMMITTEE[1]

The major share of the expenses of this Committee, which functions in England and which, as all agree, has done epic work for us, has so far fallen on the Transvaal. It cannot go on like this for ever. Moreover, the Committee has worked for all South Africa. In the circumstances, it is palpably unfair that the Transvaal alone should pay the expenses. Everyone realizes the utmost need to maintain the Committee. Readers will see, in another section of this issue, the suggestion in this regard made by Mr. Gokhale, that we should accordingly get together a sum of £200 each year for the Committee and so have £600 for three years.[2] If readers of *Indian Opinion* show the requisite enthusiasm, the collection should not take long. Those who are willing to contribute are requested to send the money to us, and we shall remit it to Mr. Gokhale. We hope contributions will also be raised by the individual Committees[3]. There should be no need here to speak of the importance of this work.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-1-1913

[1] *Vide* also "Lord Ampthill's Committee", 29-6-1912.

[2] *Vide* the entry for November 26 in "Diary, 1912".

[3] Local committees of the British Indian Association, Johannesburg

265. PARENTS' DUTY

These days many parents think [much] on the subject of what they should do about their boys. Among British families, one notices that it is the tradition to make the handsome boy a soldier, the intelligent one a doctor or a barrister, and the dullard a priest. There are many exceptions to this rule, a big one being that, in a good family, one member is prepared for public work. India is in such a state today that all parents should prepare one of their boys for public work—that is, work in the service of the community. Where there is only one boy in the family, this of course does not apply. But many families have more than one boy each. If they train one of the boys for service to the country, the uplift of the country will become possible in a short time. This is a matter worthy of the highest consideration by all parents.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-1-1913

266. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [*-III*]

CHAPTER 1. THE HEALTHY STATE

It is the common belief that, if a person eats and drinks normally, moves about and does not call in the doctor, he is free from illness. A little thought will show that this belief is erroneous. Numerous instances come to notice of a person who eats, drinks and goes about and who ignores his ailments in the belief that there is nothing wrong with him.

In truth, there are very few persons in this world who are entirely healthy.

An English writer has observed that only he can be called healthy in whose pure body dwells a pure mind. Man is not all body. The body is merely his abode. Moreover, the body, the mind and the sense-organs are so closely connected that, if one of them is affected by illness or pain, the others also get out of order. The body has been likened to a rose. What shows without is the body of the rose, the fragrance is its soul. No one would care for a paper rose which does not smell like the real flower. The fragrance is the test of the rose, so is

the test of a man his fragrance—the character of his soul. We will, moreover, throw away a flower which looks like a rose but has an unpleasant smell. Likewise, even if a man's body appears to be all right, if the soul inhabiting that body tends to bad conduct, his body will hold no fascination for us. We thus see that one whose character is unworthy can never be called healthy. The body is so closely bound to the soul that one whose body is pure will be pure in mind too. In the West a whole tradition has emerged, based on this principle. It holds that those whose minds are pure can never be ill and one who is ill can cure himself by cultivating purity of mind. this tenet should not be rejected [out of hand]. It is sound, in fact, but the people of the West who claim to be civilized misuse it. The essential thing we have to learn from this tradition is that our mind is a potent means for the preservation of health, and that purity of mind ensures the maintenance of good health.

This man has a bad temper and is *tamasik*[1], that man is lethargic. A third is deaf. All these defects are, in fact, only symptoms of disease. Some doctors believe that even faults, such as stealing, are diseases. Some wealthy women in England pilfer worthless articles from shops. Doctors in that country ascribe this state of mind to a disease termed kleptomania. There are a few who are not at peace till they have shed blood. This, too, is a disease.

Arguing along these lines, we can describe only that person as healthy whose body is whole and without defect; whose teeth are sound; who has his ears and eyes; whose nose does not run; who does perspire but whose perspiration does not smell; whose feet and mouth do not give out a bad odour; whose hands and feet can perform common tasks; who is not given to inordinate sexuality; who is neither too fat nor too thin, and whose mind and senses are under control. It is no easy matter to achieve or maintain this state of health. We do not enjoy such good health because our parents did not. A great writer has said that the offspring, if any, of men and women who are fit in every way must surpass their parents. If this be untrue, those who hold that the world is progressing must revise their view. One who is wholly free from disease has no fear of death. The very fact that we all fear death shows that we are not healthy. Death is for us a great transformation and, according to the law of creation, should be a

[1] Full of darkness

noble one. It is our duty to strive for this lofty kind of health. How such health can be gained and preserved, we shall inquire hereafter.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 18-1-1913

267. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

PHOENIX,
Thursday [January 23, 1913]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

My heart yearns often to write long letters to you, but I am obliged to deny myself the pleasure. Such is the life here. From 4.45 a.m. to 10 p.m., I do not think I waste a single moment in talk. I see no visitors except on Sundays. But even Sunday is no free day with me. On no other terms could the new scheme be worked here effectively. My meal never now takes more than 15 minutes. Between 11 and 12, bathing and dinner are finished. Boys do no washing of pots now. Miss West alone does it and she is at the school at the stroke of 12.30 p.m. I do little personal correspondence now. Even my London letters are only a few lines. Thus do I cope with the day's programme but only barely so. The tension does not irritate me. It gives me greater pleasure.

How I wish you could stand this life. But I fear it is too much for you, at any rate at this stage. How long I shall stand it remains to be seen. But you will come and see things for yourself. Meantime you are comparing notes and collecting your thoughts and yourself. I know that you will not allow your head to guide you but your heart.

I suggest your putting the wagon and the mules at an auction sale as also everything else not required there. Your books I am keeping as they are in their cases. Only those tools which I require myself I have taken out and not the others.

I am just now on my trial. The Government have rejected two of the names given by us of educated entrants. This is a matter of principle and I have told them that passive resistance will be revived if they reject our nominees[1] . So I might any moment have to abandon work here which is moulding me and those who are with me. Secondly, I have as a matter of principle boycotted the Congress as I

[1] *Vide* "Does it Mean Passive Resistance?", 18-1-1913.

boycotted the Swami. This I have done because of Anglia. My step may bring on a great deal of trouble. I must prepare myself for it. God will help me. I know that I should be a coward if I took any other step.

I am glad Geevers has at last left you. I have often blamed myself severely for inflicting him on you. I cannot to my own satisfaction sufficiently apologize for the serious blunder I committed. Anyhow that incident opened my eyes to my weakness ≈ that of vaulting ambition wrongly to serve.

With much love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

268. NONE TOO SOON

We publish elsewhere the report printed in a recent issue of the *Times of Natal* to the effect that the Union Government have decided to abolish the £3 tax exacted annually from time-expired indentured Indians, their wives, and their children. The news, if true, is a welcome relief, though it has come none too soon. It was high time that the people of South Africa had washed their hands clean of this blood-money. We call it blood-money after full deliberation. A tax collected from a poor man, his wife, and his children, manifestly for the purpose of driving him and his family from a country for which he and his had slaved for five years, or driving him into a further term of slavery cannot be fittingly described by any other name. When the abolition of the tax is an accomplished fact, the day should be observed as one of rejoicing by the Indian community, throughout South Africa, in that it will give relief to thousands of our dumb countrymen. The credit will be Mr. Gokhale's of this hateful impost is abolished this year.

Indian Opinion, 25-1-1913

269. THE LICENSING QUESTION

A very significant reference appears in the address of the President of the Natal Municipal Association, at the annual meeting of that body at Utretcht, on the 20th instant. We are informed that the

Financial Relations Bill, which was dropped in the last session of the Union Parliament, is to be reintroduced, with certain modifications, this session, and that its objects are, briefly, to transfer to Provincial Councils the revenue derived from dealers' licences *and the right to legislate, in regard thereto*, "which means that, if the Bill passes in its present form the control of the licences will be placed in the hands of the Provincial Councils". If the effect of the Bill is to take from municipalities the control of trading licences, it will undoubtedly be a matter upon which the Indian community are to be congratulated. If it means that the control of licences is to be transferred from the Union Government to the Provincial Councils, undoubtedly the result will be most injurious to the interest of the community. We feel that the Bill has not received that consideration and criticism which it ought to have at the hands of the Indian public, and it is very much to be feared that it is in conflict with Section 147 of the South Africa Act, which provides that "the control and administration of matters specially or differentially affecting Asiatics throughout the Union shall vest in the Governor-General-in-Council", that is to say, the Union Parliament and not the Provincial Councils. So far as Natal is concerned, it is notorious that widespread hopes of adding a still further burden to those already borne by the Indian population are entertained as a result of the adoption by the Provincial Council of Mr. G. H. Hulett's resolution[1], in 1911, as an act of revenge for the stoppage of the importation of indentured labour from India. There is no doubt that the question of trading licences was in the mind of the Imperial Government when they insisted upon the inclusion in the South Africa Act of the safeguards provided by Section 147. But if this Bill passes in the form that, we understand, it is to be brought forward, those safeguards will be rudely brushed aside, and since we are told on the authority of Imperial Ministers, that the King's power of veto is little else than a sham and a delusion and its enunciation in the Royal instructions a mere diplomatic blind, it follows that Indian trading rights will be given an even more precarious character than hitherto, and that they will be speedily extinguished, unless Indians take up the challenge and offer a vigorous protest.

Indian Opinion, 25-1-1913

[1] *Vide* 11th footnote of "Memorial to Secretary of State for Colonies", 15-5-1911.

270. THE INDIAN WOMEN'S BAZAAR

The Bazaar, which was to be held at the end of the year, of which Mrs. Vogl is the moving spirit, will be held about the month of May. Of course, the Bazaar will be held under the auspices of the Indian Women's Association. The readers of *Indian Opinion* who are interested in Mrs. Vogl's scheme and in the cause of Indian women's education, will, we hope, respond liberally and send what assistance they wish to before the end of April. Helpers in India should send their consignments about the end of March at the latest. The address is: The Secretary, Indian Women's Association, Box 6522, Johannesburg.

Indian Opinion, 25-1-1913

271. OUR NEGLIGENCE

Dr. Murison's annual reports on [public] health are always worth reading. We publish elsewhere a summary of the current report. Dr. Murison and Dr. Adams, who have been engaged to conduct an inquiry regarding tuberculosis, refer critically to our negligence. Dr. Adams says that we do not bring cases of infectious diseases to the notice of his department. We pay no heed to his instructions about ventilation and water. He is also critical of some of our habits. His criticism is such that we must accept it. There is no reason to suppose that the whites always write about us in this fashion only out of prejudice. We wish that we would give no one cause for criticism in such matters. If only a few leaders would evince enthusiasm and take in hand the task of imparting this kind of education to people, a great change can be effected in our condition. This work can be done for the most part by landlords[1]. But before they can do it, they should stop being greedy.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-1-1913

[1] The original literally reads: ". . . Zamindars who rent out houses . . . "

272. "CAN WE THUS ENSURE THE COUNTRY'S PROGRESS?"

This line is from a well-known poem. It came to mind when we read the following paragraph from *Gujarati Panch:*

> Shrimant Sardar Balvantrai Bhai Saheb Scindia has set apart a sum of two lakh rupees from which to grant a monthly allowance of Rs. 125 to each Vaishnava who renounces the world and retires into *vanavasa*[1].

Shrimant Sardar has donated this money in the fulness of his heart. It is true that some worthy Vaishnavas take to *vanavasa*. To enjoy *vanavasa*—to embrace *mendicancy*[2]—is a lofty state. However, holding out the inducement of a monthly allowance to a *vanavasi*[3] is tantamount to a betrayal [of him]. *Vanavasa* and money are mutually opposed. It is our guess that Shrimant Sardar must have set apart this fund for the benefit of the *vanavasi's* relations. Even that, to my way of thinking, is faulty. A *vanavasi* places no reliance on society for the maintenance of his family. He commits his children to the Almighty. If he takes out [as it were] an insurance policy thus taking man's help for his wife and children, he cannot be deemed to have taken to *vanavasa*. Moreover, one does not calculate so before adopting *fakiri* or *vanavasa*. When the power seizes him, no one in the world can stop him.

There is a great likelihood of Shrimant Sardar's [proferred] help promoting fraud. Many who are Vaishnavas in name only will come forward to adopt *vanavasa*, and their families will draw a monthly allowance of Rs. 125 each. It can perhaps be argued that these allowances will be granted each month only after proper scrutiny. To this, our reply is that the family of a genuine *vanavasi* will not submit to scrutiny. The true *vanavasi* will not himself give "notice". Such endowments are tantamount to fraud in the name of religion. It is not by thus manufacturing *vanavasis* or patriots that [the cause of] the country can be advanced. History records no instance of any country having progressed in this manner.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 25-1-1913

[1] Literally, dwelling in the forest. The reference is to the third stage, *vanaprastha*, in the Hindu scheme of life. In this stage one retires from family life to live a life of contemplation and detachment.

[2] The original has "*fakiri*"

[3] Dweller in the forest

273. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH[*-IV*]

2. OUR BODY

Earth and water, sky, fire and air

The play of these five elements, they call the Universe.

An almost full description of the human body is contained in this verse. It says that the sport of Nature or her Creator with the five elements—earth, water, sky, light and air—which he mingles, is what we know by the name of the Universe. From the substance of which this Universe is made has been fashioned this figure of clay which we call our body. We have a saying among us, "as within the body so in the Universe"[1] and, "as with oneself, so with the country". If we remember this clue [to the mystery of the Universe] we shall certainly see that clean earth, pure water, fresh air and open space and bright sunshine are essential for the preservation of the body, and that we need not fear any of these elements. In fact, illness follows when the body becomes comparatively deficient even in one of these.

It is imperative that we know at least this much about our body, but this knowledge is not adequate for our subject.

The body is made up of skin, bone, flesh and blood. The skeleton provides the principal support for the body and it is that which enables us to stand upright and walk. The bones protect the delicate parts of the body, the skull protects the brain and the ribs, the heart and the lungs. There are 238 bones in the body by the doctors' reckoning. We can all see that a bone is hard outside, but it is not so inside; the inside is soft and hollow. The joint where one bone is joined to another is covered with cartilage which is taken to be soft bone.

Our teeth, too, are bones. During childhood, the milk-teeth first appear and these fall out. Then permanent teeth appear, which, once they drop out, do not grow again. Milk-teeth begin appearing between the ages of six and eight months and have almost all of them appeared by the time the child is bout two years old. Permanent teeth begin to appear after the age of five and they have all grown by the time he is

[1] The saying is, "यथा पिण्डे तथैव ब्रह्माण्डे".

between seventeen and twenty-five. The molars appear last of all.

If we feel our skin, we will find a number of knobs of flesh underneath at many places. These are called muscles. Our nerves get work out of them. It is because of our muscles that we can open and close our hands, work our jaws and blink. All these actions are performed with the aid of muscles.

Complete information about the body lies outside the scope of these chapters. The writer himself does not possess this knowledge. Only facts necessary for our purpose will be set out here. Having, therefore, grasped the foregoing facts, we go on to the main parts of the body. Among these, the stomach is the most important. If the stomach were to slacken even for a moment, all our limbs would languish. Even the most ferocious beast will not have the capacity to endure the strain which we subject the stomach to. Its function is to digest food and nourish the body with the food so assimilated. What the engine is to machinery, the stomach is to man. This organ is to the left, beneath the ribs. Having passed through many processes within it, the food is then broken down into different fluids and their [nutritive] element extracted, the remaining portion being expelled from the intestines as excreta. Above the stomach is the left lobe of the liver. To the left of the stomach is the spleen. The liver is to the right beneath the ribs. Its function is to purify the blood and produce bile which is needed for the digestive process.

Behind the ribs, in the hollow of the chest, are [located] other useful organs—the heart and the lungs. The sac containing the heart is to the left, between the two lungs. There are altogether 24 bones in the chest including both those to the left and to the right. The heart pulsates between the fifth and the sixth ribs. We have tow lungs, the left and the right, which consist of bronchial tubes. These are filled with air and purify the blood. Air reaches the lungs through the wind-pipe. This air must pass through the nostrils. Air which thus passes through the nostrils is warmed before it reaches the lungs. Many people, who are ignorant of the fact, breathe through the mouth and so do themselves harm. The mouth is for eating, etc. Air must be inhaled only through the nose.

We have briefly examined the structure of the body and got

some idea of its important parts. Now we shall examine the fluid—blood—on which the functioning of our body depends. Blood provides us with nourishment. It separates the nutritive part of the food, expels the useless products—excreta—and maintains the body at a constant temperature. It flows continuously through veins and arteries. It is to this flow that the pulse-beat is due. In a young and healthy person the pulse beats about 75 times a minute. A child's pulse is more rapid and that of an aged person slower.

The most important agent that keeps the blood pure is air. The blood which enters the lungs, having circulated through the body, has become useless as it now contains poisonous substances. The air inhaled into the lungs absorbs these toxic substances and passes on the oxygen it contains to the blood stream. This process goes on constantly. The inhaled air, laden with the poisons from the blood, then comes out and the blood, having taken up the oxygen, circulates through the arteries over the entire body. One can imagine the extent to which the exhaled breath is impure. Air has such tremendous effect on our bodies that it will be necessary to consider the subject in some detail in a separate chapter.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion. 25-1-1913

274. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

[PHOENIX,]
Post Vad 4 [*January 26, 1913*][1]

CHI. HARILAL,

Medh has had a letter is which his father gives news of your failure. You should have written to me.

I have not felt disappointed over your failure. Since you have resolved to pass that examination, go on working for it again. Send me your question-papers. You must have preserved them. Let me know in which subject you failed.

I read in *Mumbai Samachar*[2] that you were present at the Gokhale meeting. Give me your impressions of it.

I am arranging to go there in six months. I should certainly be able to go if a law satisfying to our demands is passed; so it appears. I have therefore settled in Phoenix. I don't wish to stir out from here for five months.

There are in all 30 children to be taught, including those in Phoenix.[3] Jekibehn, Miss West, one Patel named Maganbhai[4], Kashi and I do the teaching. I get up at 4.45 in the morning and wake up the children at five. The press hands, the schoolchildren and I do farming from 6 to 8. Between 8 and 8.30, the students and the press hands have breakfast. At 8.30, all the press hands return to the land and work there until 11. I take the children to the school, where they are taught to read and write from 8.30 to 10.30. From 10.30 to 11, again, they learn farm-work.

Between 11 and 12.30, people bathe and eat. From 12.30 to 4.30, work in the press where the older boys train for two hours; the last two hours [are spent on] reading and writing in the school. I cannot at all look after the school in the afternoons. I may be able to do so, I think, when things settle down a bit.

[1] The meeting referred to in paragraph 3 was convened by the Sheriff of Bombay on December 14, 1912 to welcome Gokhale on his return from South Africa.

[2] A Gujarati daily published from Bombay

[3] Gandhiji brought with him his students from Tolstoy Farm which was closed some time in January, 1913. *Indian Opinion*, 18-1-1913.

[4] A teacher in Phoenix, he returned to India in 1915 with Maganlal Gandhi and others.

At 5.30 the boys have dinner. After *katha kirtan*[1] from 7 to 7.30, the boys go to sleep. From 7.30 to 9, I go over Manilal's lessons. Das[2] wants to start a press in Durban. Perhaps Virji, too, will go there.

Send this letter for Chanchi to read. I have no time to write her another.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 9538

275. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

PHOENIX

Friday [*January 31, 1913*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

We are planting banana plants. Sam was superintending. His holes were not in a line. He asked me if it would matter. I said 'no' so far as I was concerned but that if you were here, you would certainly insist on the holes being in a line. The next row of holes was straight. I mention the incident to tell you how near you are to me in all I am doing. I think of you continually during all the gardening operations and often wish you were near to advise me. I relate the incident also to show how we two would have acted in the matter. I knew the holes *were* wrong and allowed them to be proceeded with. You would never have allowed it. You would have had the wrong holes filled in. I do not attach any permanent value to this work. To me it is useful only in so far as it trains those who are engaged in it. The work itself is being continually done and undone. One man builds, another destroys and rebuilds according to his notions of rightness. Who is right? Who knows? But we do know when we act to our souls' profit and when we do not. And that is all that matters on this earth. It would certainly be a great thing if you would walk with Medh and Desai. Do if you can.

No, I do not work in the knowledge that I am always to be in it. On the contrary, here I am preparing for my withdrawal. It is highly likely that some of the programme here you would like very well.

[1] Listening to mythological stories and devotional music

[2] Purshottamdas Desai?

I have an uneasy fear that you are buying there things for the household which I have removed. If so, I shall feel deeply hurt.

More in my next. I have not had the time to go through the accounts.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

276. A CORRECTION

In our issue of the 18th ultimo we referred to the recently published rules regarding the Natal schools, and we stated that the rules were framed for the first time prohibiting the entry of Indian children into the Government Schools not specially set apart for them. Our attention has, however, been drawn to the fact that similar rules were framed some time ago and that we commented already upon them at the time. We regret that we should have inferred from the rules in question that the authorities had added a new grievance to the heavy list already existing. The wrong is none the less a serious one because it has existed for some time. The Provincial Government might have taken the opportunity, seeing that they were recasting the rules, of removing the defect instead of perpetuating it.

Our attention has also been drawn to the fact that a hasty reader might conclude, from our remarks that Indian children in Natal could not receive education in the Government schools beyond the 4th Standard. The friend to whom we are indebted for the caution points out that what was formerly the Higher-Grade Indian School at Durban provides for the education of Indian children up to the 6th Standard. This we knew perfectly well. But we mentioned that Indian children could not, in effect, receive more than elementary education. And the late Higher-Grade School, whose name was always a misnomer, gives no more than *elementary* education. The 6th Standard of that school is the 6th Standard of an elementary school, and hardly equal to the 4th Standard of a High School in India. This school affords no scope for a lad who wishes to matriculate at the Cape University. He may not be admitted to the ordinary High Schools or the Natal University College. He must take private tuition.

This is a handicap of which the community justly complains. Mr. Merriman, the other day, suggested, at the opening of a Muslim school in Cape Town, that the true solution of the colour question was education. Quite so. But the Government of the Union puts every obstacle in the way of Coloured children, whether Natives or Asiatics.

Indian Opinion, 1-2-1913

277. HERTZOGISM

If what the special correspondent of *The Star* says about General Hertzog's position in the Union Cabinet, when he was still a member of it, be true, the news is disquieting. We printed, last week, the *Star* correspondent's report, according to which the visit of Mr. Gokhale was a proximate cause of the rupture between Generals Botha and Hertzog, the latter wishing that Mr. Gokhale should interview him, as he was in charge of Native Affairs.[1] In General Hertzog's estimation, evidently, Natives and Asiatics should be classed together. However, General Botha's voice prevailed. He wanted to handle Mr. Gokhale as his visit bore an Imperial significance. General Hertzog, therefore, became irritated and delivered his famous speech on Imperial responsibility, which brought about his compulsory exclusion from the Cabinet. It was no light matter for General Botha to dismiss his colleague. He has yet to reckon with Hertzogism. We may still less lightly dismiss the great General or his policy. He is still a powerful force in South African politics. He apparently represents the extreme wing of the anti-Asiatic party that would be satisfied with nothing less than our complete segregation and national humiliation. The passive resistance compromise, which almost threatens, as we hinted two weeks ago, to break down, has still to be given legal effect to. Dealers'

[1]*The Star* report quoted a friend of Hertzog as having said that, since as Minister of Native Affairs, he was concerned with the Indian question, he should receive Gokhale during his 1912 visit to South Africa. General Botha, who regarded it as an Imperial question, felt that it should be gone into by himself as Prime Minister. There then ensued a heated discussion in the cabinet; but a compromise proposal on the Indian question was adopted. The *Star* correspondent's source said that General Hertzog must have had this incident in mind when he declared, in a speech at De Wildt, that South Africa should come first and the Empire after. He thought that General Hertzog's exit from the cabinet was "a culmination of the ill feeling that had existed between General Botha and General Hertzog for a considerable time". *Indian Opinion*, 25-1-1913.

licences legislation is still a tangible grievance. Immi-gration administration continues to irritate the community. If Hert-zogism wins the day, we have trying times ahead of us. But even if it does not, it is highly likely that, so far as its anti-Asiatic programme is concerned, it may be accepted *in toto* by General Botha. When every vote counts, we who are voteless, may be safely brushed aside. But, though we are voteless, we need not be voiceless, so long as we keep ourselves well armed with the powerful, yet harmless, weapon of passive resistance.

Indian Opinion, 1-2-1913

278. GERMISTON INDIANS

It appears from [a report in] the *East Rand Express* that the Indians in the Germiston Location will have to shift to a new Location by the end of February. The Natives have all left. The Municipality has paid them £1,500 by way of compensation. The Indians have not shifted yet, though the Municipality is agreeable to paying them up to £700. Our friend the *Express* states that the Indians are not entitled to any such compensation. If the Municipality pays it, it will be an act of grace and a matter of policy. The idea is not to the liking of the *Express*.It argues that, if it is to be paid as a matter of policy, the cost should be borne by the Transvaal Government. The Municipality is then welcome to accept a share of the cost if it want to. The truth is that, whatever the Municipality pays, it will not be an act of grace, but it will be paid out of fear—fear of satyagraha, the London Committee and of the Imperial Government. Suppose the slumbering Indians wake up! Suppose Lord Ampthill discredits the Germiston Municipality in public! Suppose the Imperial Government finds fault with it! Any one of these fears the Municipality could face out; but it is meek in the face of them all [together].

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-2-1913

279. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [-*V*]

3. AIR

We have seen something of the structure of the body and have learnt that it requires three kinds of nourishment: air, water and food.

Of these, air is the most essential. Consequently, Nature has provided it to such extent that we can have it at no cost. But modern civilization has put a price even on air. In these times, one has to go off to distant places to take the air, and this costs money. It is at Matheran that residents of Bombay can get fresh air and only then does their health improve. In Bombay itself, if one can live on Malabar Hill, the air is much better. But one must have money to do this. If Durbanites want fresh air, they have to go to live in Berea. That again means expense. It would not, therefore, be quite true to say in modern times that "air is free".

Whether air is free or has to be paid for, we cannot carry on without it for a moment. We have seen that blood circulates through the entire body, is purified after returning to the lungs and flows out again. This goes on all day and all night. Every time we breathe out, we expel fouled air and, when we breathe in, we obtain from the air without, oxygen with which to purify the blood. This respiration continues every moment and the life of our body depends upon it. When we die of drowning, it only means we are unable to inhale oxygen and exhale foul air. A pearl diver puts on a diving suit before he goes down into the water and obtains air from a tube [one end of] which remains above the water-level. It is because of it that he can remain under water for a long time.

Some doctors have conducted experiments which have established that, if a person is kept without air for five minutes, the life-giving breath leaves the body. At times a baby [lying] close to its mother dies of suffocation. This happens because the mouth and nose are smothered, and the baby gets no fresh air.

We see from all this that air is the most necessary nourishment for us, one that can be had without the asking. We get food and water, only by asking for or seeking them, but air, we take in involuntarily.

Just as we hesitate to take foul water or food, so ought we to in the case of foul air. In fact we do not take in unwholesome food or polluted water in the same quantities as we do in case of foul air. The revulsion comes from the seeing. [For] we worship idols.[1] Air cannot be seen with the naked eye. We therefore have no idea of how much foul air we take in. We hesitate to eat food touched by another; we would think twice before drinking water which another has tasted

[1] That is, we believe only in good or evil that is visible.

before us. Even if we felt no aversion[1] within us [towards filth or ugliness], we would never take the vomit of another. If vomit is put even before one famine-stricken, he would die rather than eat it. But we all inhale, without revulsion, the air "spewed" by another—that is, exhaled by him. According to the rules of hygiene, spewed air is just as bad as spewed food. It has been proved that, if air exhaled by a man is introduced into the lungs of another, the latter dies instantaneously; so poisonous it is. Yet people sitting of sleeping cooped up in a small room inhale, all the time, air which is as impure. Fortunately, air is constantly in a state of movement and agitation and diffuses rapidly. Moreover, it can enter through the smallest of pores. Consequently, even as we are huddled in a room and fouling the air inside, some fresh air comes through a clearance in the door or chinks in the roof. It is not wholly "spewed" air, therefore, that we [they] breathe. The air exhaled by us is constantly being purified. When we breathe the air inside us out into the open, the foul air diffuses instantly into the atmosphere, and Nature thus maintains the [required] quantity of pure air. The atmosphere extends over a large area, enveloping this small earth.

We can now see why so many people are ailing and emaciated. There is no doubt *that bad air is the cause of more than 99 per cent. of diseases*. Tuberculosis, fever and many diseases termed infectious are all caused by the foul air we inhale. The first, the easiest and the last means of ending them is to have fresh air, purest of the pure. There is no other, *vaidya or hakim*, that can match it. Tuberculosis is a sign of rotting lungs, foul air being the cause. Just as an engine is damaged through being fed with bad coal, so are our lungs by foul air. Hence, modern doctors who understand [this] will invariably advise tuber-culosis patients, as the first step in the treatment, to spend all the 24 hours in the open. All other remedies take effect after this, but none will work without it.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-2-1913

[1] For the same concept, *vide* "Nausea", 2-2-1907.

280. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

PHOENIX
Thursday night [February 6, 1913]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I have your long letter. It made me sad. I can entirely enter into your feelings. I will not, therefore, strive with you. I quite see that you should now proceed along your own lines. And I have no fear, so long as your heart rules your head. You will come to India when you feel absolutely impelled to do so. And to Phoenix too you would come whenever you feel like it and not before. If you want me to return any of your tools or books, please say so. I should feel deeply hurt if you did not do so. I have told you that I have not even unpacked your books and your tools too are still most of them in the box.

My life is becoming harder day by day and I do feel that you would not be able to bear it even if you tried. Just now I hardly speak to anybody, so finely cut has my daily programme become. My meals too are invariably taken whilst I am serving the boys and as a rule I am finished by the time the boys are finished. There is not a moment's rest after the dinner. This I find absolutely necessary at least for the present. Miss West has entered into the thing wholeheartedly and works away the whole day. I would certainly like you to pay us, when you feel like it, a visit, examine the working and criticize. I know that in many things there is room for improvement. Only I cannot see it. I do need a friendly critic. West is excellent but he has his limits. His resources are exhausted and he is himself immersed in his own work.

Medh tells me you have advanced him £22. It was perhaps as well. You were certainly not bound to do so. Only his is an exceptional case. I hope you will not allow it to be used as a precedent.

Of course when the proper time comes you should remind Naidoo about the loan.

Can you remember anything about Mr. Doke's father's memoir I had? I cannot find it among the books sent here. I should not forgive myself if the book is lost. What about Just's book?[1] We have to send it to Mr. Gokhale.

[1] Return to Nature; vide also "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", 14-2-1913.

I shall say nothing about the Kaffir[1] boy. I must now watch you and wait. You are making an experiment with yourself. I can but pray that you may come out of it quite successful.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

281. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

PHOENIX
Friday [February 7, 1913]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

We are about to finish the work of the week. Your letter is pathetic. I feel now that I was unwise in hastening the packing of your books and tools. I can quite understand how you must be stinting yourself. I do not mind the stinting. It can only do you good. I am simply blaming my hasty judgment. I ought to have left the packing of these things to you. In that case, under the altered programme, neither the books nor the tools would have come here. But now I do beseech you to think out what you require and it can be sent to you or you could take the things with you when you are here.

If you can have Mr. Sharpe as your companion in your walk, it would be certainly good. But the walk ought not to be undertaken unless you feel sure that you could be absent from your work for so long a time.

In my opinion, now that you are living at Mountain View, you should not think of building a house but you may, by your own exertion, turn it into a nice orchard. That will give you perennial joy and healthy occupation. But these things we can discuss when you are here.

I do wish that you will leave off thinking about the synagogue. It was not to be yours. Why should it now worry you? What does it matter if your plan has been copied by someone else? Is it not rather a matter of pride that it has so commended itself to the people? And why be angry that Cohn has acted as he has done? May he not act according to his nature? When we become angry that someone has done an evil act, it really means that we might have done likewise. We do not get angry that a snake acts as it does. Just consider this and tell

[1] A term by which the native African communities in South Africa were described The expression, however, is no longer in use.

me whether there is a flaw in the thought. Now I must stop, as I am interrupted.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

282. TWO IMMIGRATION CASES

Mr. Justice Broome has given judgment in two immigration cases. They both deserve to be known. In one case the father has complained that he had suffered a loss because the official had thrown his son out [of the country] without inquiry. He had filed a suit for compensation and had also pleaded that he might be allowed to produce his son [in court]. The [claim of the] boy [to stay in the country] was rejected by the official. The father then secured an interdict from the Supreme Court to stay his son's being sent back to India. Meanwhile, additional evidence was produced before the official, but he did not accept it. The official then took legal steps to have the body deported. The case was adjourned so that a summons could be issued. Meanwhile the official changed his mind. Assuming he had the [necessary] authority, he deported the boy without issuing a summons and obtaining the order of a court. The father's contention was that the official had no such authority. The Court has rejected this contention and ruled that the official is empowered to deport anyone without the consent of the court. This ruling will have fearful consequences. Such are the tyrannical powers vested in the official that, if he chooses, he can extinguish the rights of every Indian [in the country].

The second case was for the refund of the deposit money of £100.[1] The Court has ruled that, if the deposit was made because of the Immigration Act, [the decision] to refund it or not lay within the discretion of the Government. It can be refunded if the right of the person in respect of whom it was tendered is established, and for confiscating the money so deposited, the Government needs no order from the Court. Arguing thus, the Court has dismissed the second case

[1] Wherever an Asiatic immigrant, appealing against the decision of an immigration official, wanted to have his domiciliary right tested by a court of law, he had to deposit this sum.

too; the Court has only said that where a deposit is made in good faith, the amount should be refunded on compassionate grounds.

The consequences of both these cases are fearful. There has been a considerable accretion of official power, and a situation has come about in which Indians might stop coming to this land out of sheer fright. It is our duty to wage a vigorous campaign against this.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-2-1913

283. OUR PROBLEM AT THE CONGRESS

A detailed report of the Congress [proceedings] has arrived by the post just received. We learn that, on the problem of Indians in this country, there has been more discussion than before. In his address, Mr. Mudholkar[1], the President, gave a full account of the situation in this country and has lent support to Mr. Gokhale's work. He has pointed out the need for continued help to us and has declared that indenture should be completely stopped. The Hon'ble Mr. Mazarul Haq[2], Chairman of the Reception Committee, stressed our problem in his speech and even went on to say that, if the Union Government did not settle the Indian question in a satisfactory manner, pressure should be brought to bear on the Government of India to take retaliatory measures. The Government of India, he argued, had plenty of means to bring the Union Government to its senses. The resolution concerning us came second [in the order of business]. That too shows how much weight our problem had with them. We already know from the cable that the resolution was moved by Mr. Gokhale. The resolution was to the same effect as that passed by the Congress last

[1] Rangnath Narsinh Mudholkar (1857-1921); President, Indian National Congress, 1912, at Bankipore.

[2] Maulvi Mazarul Haq (1866-1930); in 1888 established "Anjuman Islamia", an association of Muslims in England where he had gone for higher studies; appointed Munsiff in Audh in 1893 but resigned in 1896; one of the founders of the Muslim League, later became its secretary and presided over its Bombay session in 1915; elected to the Central Legislative Council under the scheme of Separate Electorates in 1910; member of the 1914 Congress delegation to England; in 1916, helped to bring about Congress-League accord at Lucknow; supported Gandhiji during the 1917 Champaran campaign and took active part in the non-co-operation movement in 1920; founded *The Motherland* and went to jail for his writings in 1921; one of the founders of Bihar Vidyapith and the Sadaqat Ashram.

year.[1] The Allahabad *Leader* tells us that Mr. Gokhale, who spoke for an hour, held the audience spellbound and that, when he came to describe the plight of indentured labourers, tears came to his eyes and his voice was choked with emotion. Our campaign also received the support of the principal leaders. The Hon'ble Mr. Madan Mohan Malaviya, the Hon'ble Mr. Mazarul Haq, Lala Lajpatrai[2], the Hon'ble Harchandrarai Vishindas, Mr. Pramathnath Banerjee, Mr. Madanjit[3] and Mr. C. Y. Chintamani were among those who supported it. When our problem is being forcefully discussed in India, we here must double our efforts. Help from India can only follow on our own strength.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-2-1913

284. FRUITS OF GOKHALE'S LABOUR

Mr. Gokhale's work continues to bear fruits. One of these is seen growing in a far-away land. We have got a newspaper from Fiji from which we reproduce a paragraph in the English Section. It reports that the white owners of sugar plantations [in that island] have passed a resolution that, in view of the agitation in India in the matter of indentured labour, necessary changes should be made in the Fiji law of indenture so as to drop the clauses providing for the punishment of labourers, refusing to work, by imprisonment or fine. That the venom is contained for the most part in these clauses, there is no doubt. It is by these clauses that Indian labourers are greatly afflicted, and they constitute the greatest difference between

[1] *Vide* "Mr. Polak at the National Congress", 6-1-1912.

[2] Lala Lajpat Rai (1865-1928); social reformer, journalist and a "great public character in the older hierarchy of Congressmen"; founded the Servants of People Society; deported in 1907 for his political activities; went to England as member of the Indian deputation, along with Gokhale, in 1906 and again in 1914 with the Congress deputation; in 1920, elected president of the extraordinary Congress session held at Calcutta to decide on non-co-operation.

[3] Madanjit Vyavaharik; "the man who for long years brought up the South African question before the Indian Congress", he set up the International Printing Press in Durban in 1898 at Gandhiji's instance, and in 1903, started *Indian Opinion* which Gandhiji took over in 1904; later founded and edited *United Burma*, an English journal, with the object of uniting the Burmese and associating them with the Indian National Congress; *vide* "Letter to Madanjit", 3-6-1902, "Tribute to Madanjit", 15-10-1904 and "Madanjit's Enthusiasm", before 29-1-1907.

indentured labourers and workers. If a common labourer makes a mistake, he is dismissed. But when an indentured labourer defaults, he goes to gaol, and on his release, he is back where he was. Even if these changes are made [in the law,] it is not desirable that the system of indenture should continue. Whatever the form it takes, the system deserves to be ended outright. But it is no small matter that the white owners, on their won, propose—in law which is to their advantage—changes by which they may lose. Such is the sturdy fruit that even a single man can raise by sincere effort.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-2-1913

285. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [*-VI*]

We consume air not only with the lungs, but some portion of it is also taken in through the skin. On the skin, there are pores, minute and innumerable, through which we draw air.

Everybody ought to know how a thing so essential may be kept clean. Indeed, as soon as a child's understanding is adequate, he should be taught about the importance of air. If the readers of these chapters perform this easy but important task and, having acquired some general knowledge about air, live according to it, pass on the knowledge to their children and make them act in accordance, I shall regard myself as having fulfilled my task.

Latrines, Open spaces, narrow lanes [dirtied through misuse] and urinals, where these are separate, are the principal agencies for defilement of air. Few are aware of the harm that can be caused by the filth from latrines. When a cat or dog defecates, it generally paws a hole and, having defecated into it, covers the faeces over with earth. Where modern water-closets do not exist, this method ought to be followed. We should keep a pail full of dry earth or ash in our latrines. Every time the latrine is used, earth or ash should be sprinkled over the faeces so as to cover them over completely. This will stop the smell, and it cannot then happen that flies and winged insects, having sat on the filth, come in contact with our bodies. One whose nose has not become defective or inured to stench can easily realize how much foul odour, filthkept uncovered can spread. If filth from a latrine were mixed in our food in our presence, we should be sick. But there is not an iota of difference between air laden with the

stench from a latrine and food mixed with faeces. If there is, it is only that the latter is visible to our naked eye, while the former is not. Seats, etc., in closets should be kept absolutely clean. We are ashamed to do this kind of work ourselves, or fret at having to do it, instead of which we should feel disgust at having to use dirty latrines. Why should we not ourselves clean up the filth excreted by our own body, which we make another person take away? There is absolutely nothing bad about doing this work oneself; having learnt this for ourselves, we must teach it to our children as well. When the pail is full, the contents should be thrown into a pit, a foot or two deep, and should be well covered over with earth. If one is in the habit of going to the fields to defecate, one should go far from where people live. There, one should dig a shallow pit with a spade to get one's business over with and should fully cover the faeces with the earth dug.

We urinate any and everywhere and this fouls the air; it is a habit that must be wholly given up. Where no special place is available for urination, we should go far from where people live; having made water on dry ground, we should sprinkle the spot with earth. There are forceful reasons, however, why excreta should not be buried too deep. One is that the heat of the sun cannot then do its work and the second that it may affect the neighbouring springs.

We spit on the carpet, on the floor, in the courtyard and wheresoever we can. Spittle is often poisonous. The sputum of a tubercular patient is extremely dangerous. Germs rising from it get into the air inhaled by others and do great harm. Over and above that, the house is dirtied, but that is another matter. In this regard our duty is not to spit any and everywhere inside the house, but to keep a spittoon. Outdoors, one should spit, if one has to, on dry ground where there is plenty of dust. The sputum will mix with the dry earth and the damage will be less. Some doctors are of the opinion that tubercular patients should spit only into receptacles containing germicide. Even if a patient spits onto the dust on dry ground, the germs in his sputum are not destroyed. This dust carrying the germs rises into the atmosphere and infects others. Whether this opinion is right or wrong, we can at least learn this much from it: spitting any and everywhere is a dirty and injurious habit.

Some people are in the habit of throwing food, refuse and peelings, etc., all over. If this garbage was buried in the ground near the surface, it would not foul the air; also it would in due course make

useful manure. One should never throw out perishables. It has been found from experience that these suggestions are easily put into practice, once they are understood.

We have seen how air is fouled through our bad habits and how this can be stopped. We shall now consider how it should be inhaled.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-2-1913

286. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

PHOENIX,
February 14, 1913

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

Dr. Gool[1] just tells me that your umbrella was traced and that Mr. Joshi whom you met in Cape Town kindly took it with him when a few days ago he went to India. Your cap too has been found. Kotwal will hand it to you upon reaching India. He will be leaving shortly.

The newspaper criticism in India is now all before me. It makes painful reading. But I was prepared for it especially after our chats. I see that you are dealing with it in your own way. That criticism has produced its reflex action here. Aiyer has been writing violent articles in his paper. I am not sending you all the cuttings but you might like to see the *Advertiser* article. The *Advertiser* reproduced Aiyer's reproduction.

The Botha ministry has its own internal troubles owing to General Hertzog's defection.[2] The *Star* correspondent, you might have noticed in *Indian Opinion*, paid you [a] compliment by stating that General Hertzog quarrelled with his brother ministers because General Botha said that, as the Indian question was an Imperial one, you should be seen not by General Hertzog but General Botha himself.[3] These internal troubles of the Ministry have disorganized the parliament and it is highly likely that the promised legislation will again be postponed. If that happens I shall be in a quandary and may not be able to leave for India about the middle of this year.

The ministers are certainly not carrying out their assurances.

[1] Dr. A. H. Gool
[2] *Vide* "Hertzogism", 1-2-1913.
[3] *Vide* footnote of "Hertzogism", 1-2-1913.

The Immigration Acts are being administered with an ever-growing severity. Wives of lawfully resident Indians are being put to great trouble and expense. All the case are collected in *Indian Opinion*.

I take it that you will form there a permanent committee and on your going to London, reorganize the London body[1].

Mr. Petit has cabled £400 telling me that the sum included £80 given to him by you.

Mr. Kallenbach has now secured a copy of Just's book, *Return to Nature*. It was posted to you yesterday. I hope you will find time to read it.

Could the quack physician know the exact condition of his patient and whether he is carrying out his directions which he undertook to do!

I wonder if the Souvenirs were received in time for distribution at the Congress.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Could you do anything for Mrs. Vogl's Bazaar? If some of the ladies you know would send work, we shall feel thankful. The Bazaar will be held in June.

From the original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 925. Courtesy: Servants of India Society

287. MR. GOKHALE'S INDIAN SPEECHES

The return of Mr. Gokhale to India after his triumphant tour in South Africa has brought the Indian question of South Africa to the front as perhaps it has not been before except during Mr. Polak's stay in India. But the public in India, during Mr. Polak's stay there was invariably sympathetic and uncritical. This in a way was a drawback. Mr. Gokhale's landing in Bombay led, on the one hand, to the unique demonstration there as described by the *Times* correspondent, and to criticism of Mr. Gokhale's work, on the other. The criticism, in our humble opinion, was hasty and ill-conceived. What Mr. Gokhale never did was imputed to him, and the very compromise, which was

[1] South Africa British Indian Committee, London

universally approved two years ago, was now condemned, because Mr. Gokhale had, on local examination, confirmed his original attitude towards it. Mr. Gokhale, therefore, immediately upon landing, had to enter into a defence of his own action and the part Mr. Gandhi had played in the compromise.[1] Mr. Gokhale's defence was, as was only to be expected, convincing. He returned to the subject at Poona, where, too, a great demonstration of welcome was held. But the most crushing reply to this critics was made by Mr. Gokhale at Bankipore, [2] where he held the Congress audience spellbound for more than an hour. The result of the discussion is that the very papers that either themselves adversely criticized Mr. Gokhale's South African achievement, or allowed their regular correspondents to offer irresponsible and ill-informed criticism, have veered round, acknowledged their mistake, and admitted that Mr. Gokhale was right, that he had not surrendered a single principle, and that he had dealt with the problem in a calm, statesmanlike, and patriotic spirit, as he alone could do. He said or did nothing new, but he did the same thing that was done by the local Indians in his own original manner, and threw the weight of his great influence and prestige in our favour. He did not speak or act for India, because he was not its accredited agent, and yet he spoke unofficially both for India and, indeed, the Empire. For Mr. Gokhale, in spite of his critics, remains the idol of his people, and commands the respect of the Empire as no other living Indian does. We hope to be able shortly to reproduce Mr. Gokhale's speech at the Congress, and an epitome of the criticism, adverse and otherwise. The ferment created by Mr. Gokhale's visit to South Africa and his return has done good in that the reacceptance of the compromise by the majority of his critics will, being now informed, add greater weight to any further agitation that may go on in India in our favour. And, Heaven knows, we want all the assistance still from the Motherland that she can give us! We are but at the fringe of our troubles.

Indian Opinion, 15-2-1913

288. WHAT A FINE SUGGESTION!

The Estcourt Magistrate has made the suggestion that the £3 tax should be levied from every Coloured person, that is, every Indian and

[1] For the text of Gokhale's speech at Bombay, *vide* Appendix "Gokhale's Speech at Bombay", 14-12-1912.

[2] *Vide* footnote of "Mr. Gokhale at the National Congress", 4-1-1913.

Negro. A Coloured servant of a white, however, should be allowed a remission of 10s. This, the Magistrate says, will make the Indians and Negroes work more. The gentleman has moreover suggested that no fresh licences should be issued to Asiatics; that the shifting of business from one place to another should not be allowed; that no firm should be authorized to admit fresh partners; that, when the owner of a business dies, it should be placed under a white trustee who should sell off the assets and close the business; and that the licences of Indians who cannot keep their books in English or Dutch should be terminated. If no such law is passed, the Magistrate goes on to say, Indians' control [of business] will become established. Though it is only this Magistrate who has spoken out, there are hundreds of other whites who think like him. They have not so far got what they want, for there is some spirit left in us yet. If that remains the same while the whites with these views increase in number, it is as clear as the rule of three that the hour of our doom is not far off.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-2-1913

289. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [-*VII*]

We saw in the previous chapter that the correct way of inhaling air is through the nose—not the mouth; few really know how to breathe correctly. Many people breathe through the mouth. This habit is injurious. If very cold air is inhaled through the mouth, one catches a cold and the voice drops. Dust particles in the air enter the lungs of one who breathes through the mouth and they often do much damage. One immediately experiences this at first hand in a large city like London. Thanks to the large number of chimneys, frequent "fogs"—yellow mists—form in that city in November. Minute black particles are suspended in the fog. They will be found in the sputum of one who inhales air laden with this dust. To avoid this happening, some women, who are not accustomed to breathing through the nose, tie a gauze mask over their mouths. This gauze serves as a kind of strainer. The air passing through it is cleared. If this mask is examined after use, these particles are seen. God has placed a similar filter in our nose. Air breathed in through the nose reaches the lungs only after it has been cleansed. Moreover, this air goes down after it has been warmed. Keeping these

facts in mind, everyone should learn to breathe in only through the nose. This is no difficult matter. When we are not talking, the mouth should be kept shut. Those who have got into the habit of leaving their mouths open should sleep at night with a bandage over the mouth. Breathing then will necessarily be through the nose. One should also take about 20 deep breaths through the nose, morning and evening, standing in the open. By so doing the habit of breathing through the nose is formed. Even if a healthy person who is accustomed to breathing through the nose does this, his chest will become strong and broad. This experiment should be tried by everyone. One should measure one's chest before commencing this experiment and again a month later. One will find that the chest has become appreciably broader even in so short a period. Sandow and others get people to exercise with dumb-bells, and the principle underlying it is the same. Exercising briskly with dumb-bells makes one breathe hard and deep. And this makes the chest broad and strong.

Together with the knowledge of how to breathe, it is also necessary to develop the habit of inhaling fresh air day and night. Our normal custom is to remain confined in our house or shop by day, and at night to sleep in a room that is like a safe. If the room has doors and windows, we shut them. *This habit must be strongly deprecated.*

It is imperative that we inhale pure air for as long as possible, especially while sleeping. Everyone who can manage to do so should accordingly sleep in an open veranda or on the terrace, outside the house or on the balcony. Those who do not have the good fortune to be able to do this should keep as many doors and windows open as possible. There is no need to fight shy of air, which is our staple diet twenty-four hours of the day. The notion that the fresh or raw air of morning causes illness is a mere superstition. It is possible that one who has spoiled his lungs through bad habits may contract a cold by sudden contact with fresh air, but one should not be afraid of this cold. In Europe, at various places, they have now put up, for persons suffering from tuberculosis, spacious buildings, which admit plenty of fresh air. The chief cause of the pestilence of plague in our own country is our bad habit of fouling the air and inhaling this defiled air. That even the most delicate of persons can only benefit from fresh air is a certain truth. If we learn not to foul the atmosphere and to take

in only fresh air, we will, without any effort on our part, be spared many diseases, and the charge of slovenliness made against us in lands such as South Africa will to some extent be obviated.

Just as it is needful to sleep in the open, so it is not to cover one's face during sleep. It is the habit of many Indians to sleep with their faces covered. By so doing, we inhale the foul air we have exhaled. Air is a thing that finds its way through the smallest of passages. However we muffle ourselves, some air does get in. If this did not happen, we would die of asphyxiation whenever we sleep covered right up to the head. But this does not happen, since some air from without, with oxygen in it, does enter; however that is not enough. If one feels cold in the head, one can cover it separately as with a Balaclava cap, leaving the nose uncovered. However cold it may be, one should never sleep with the nose covered.

Air and light are so closely connected that a word or two must be said about light in this chapter itself. As we cannot live without air, so we cannot do without light. Hell is conceived as absence of light. Where there is no light, the air is always unwholesome. When we enter a dark room, we are bound to become aware of the smell. We cannot use our eyes in the dark; and this proves that we are born to live in the light. The darkness that Nature has thought necessary for us, she has given us by creating the comfort-giving night. Many people have got into the habit of sitting or sleeping, on the hottest of days, in cellar-like rooms, having shut out light and air. Those who live without air and light look weak and lustreless.

In Europe nowadays, some doctors cure their patients by prescribing plenty of light and fresh air. It is not only the face that they expose to light and air; the patient is almost stripped and they then bring fresh air and light to play on the skin all over the body. Hundreds of persons are cured by this treatment. In order to allow light and air to enter and leave freely, the windows of the house should be kept open day and night.

On reading this, people will wonder how it is that, if light and air are so necessary, many who remain confined to their rooms do not suffer any harm. It must be said that those who entertain this doubt have not thought about the matter. Our subject is not how to exist anyhow, but how to live, if possible, in perfect health. It has been conclusively proved that, where people get insufficient air and light, they are unwell all the time. City-dwellers are more delicate

than village folk because they get less light and air. Among our people in Durban, diseases such as tuberculosis are prevalent and the Medical Officer ascribes it to the fact that we live in such conditions that we either cannot get or do not take in fresh air. The subject of air and light has so close a relation to good health that one should pay great attention to understanding it.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-2-1913

290. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

PHOENIX,
Monday [*February 17, 1913*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I do hope the mules have been found. I congratulate you upon your pickaxe work. You know how deeply hurt I would feel if you buy any tools of which I have a supply here. I shall certainly pack up your tools and send them. But I should be considerably helped if you could let me have a list of the most important ones which may be sent at once. The rest you may take with you when you come. I do not go to Durban and as a rule nobody does now. Other arrangements have been made for Town work. So we should not know who is going to Johannesburg.

Mr. Gokhale absorbed so much of my time because his possibilities are great and he has a very lofty character. I love India even impersonally. He is the man who can render her the highest service. Naturally I want to see him as perfect a being as possible. He is my political teacher. For that reason also I would like to contemplate him in his perfection. Hence my almost exclusive service to him. Am I understood? I may not have convinced you. But I want to clearly explain my position. Conviction may then come.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National

291. GOHKALE IN INDIA

Mr. Gokhale has made three noteworthy speeches in India and reports of these along with comments have reached us. The speeches

were made in Bombay, in Poona and at the Congress at Bankipore. The speech at the Congress has been considered the best. It lasted, they say, an hour and was listened to with rapt attention by the audience; such great effect did it have. As soon as Mr. Gokhale landed at Bombay, he found two groups. One, headed by Sir Pherozeshah[1], considered that Mr. Gokhale had returned after having given away Indians' rights. He had not done right [they argued] to assent to the settlement arrived at through Mr. Gandhi. One writer even went to the extent of remarking that the money sent to South Africa had all been wasted. This group was of the view that Gokhale should not only have secured Indians' legal rights to enter South Africa but should also have asked permission for unlimited numbers—[indeed] for any Indian who may wish to do so. It made no difference to this group that, in case such freedom was denied, all the Indians might have to quit. That this group is a very small one is shown by the meetings that Gokhale addressed in Bombay and Poona and at the Congress for, at these, no one came forward to oppose him. However, a paper like *The Bengalee* was misled by this group. After Mr. Gokhale's Congress speech, newspapers which had earlier made adverse comments showed regret and said that they had written under a misconception.[2] Speaking at the Congress, Mr. Gokhale has explained [his case] so well that nothing can now be said against his action. What is more, it should now be conceded that what he did was best.

We think that it has been all to the good that there was difference of opinion in India and that Mr. Gokhale's action had

[1] Sir Pherozeshah Merwahnji Mehta; "uncrowned king" of Bombay who "roared like a lion in law courts"; was associated with the Congress since its inception and presided over its sixth session at Calcutta in 1890; elected President of the 24th Session of the Congress (in 1991) but resigned dramatically six days before assumption of office; did much committee work for the Congress, particularly in connection with the protest against the Public Service Commission recommendations in 1892; member of the 1894 deputation to Lord Elgin; in 1896, met Gandhiji for the first time "as a loving father would meet his grown-up son" and helped him to call a public meeting in Bombay which both of them addressed; in 1901, advised Gandhiji against going to South Africa; first sceptical of satyagraha because he thought that nothing could be done for Indians abroad unless the country was free, but declared at a Bombay meeting in 1914 that "his blood boiled at the thought of these women lying in jails".

[2] *Vide* "Mr. Gokhale at the National Congress", 4-1-1913 and "Gokhale's Speech in India", 4-1-1913

been criticized. This gave rise to a great debate all over the country on our problem, which led to a better understanding of the true significance of our campaign. Those who had so far had only a superficial understanding now began to go deeper into the matter. Had they gone into it at the ourtset, there would have been no misunderstanding at all. Why should the selfsame men who approved of the settlement two years ago censure Mr. Gokhale now for accepting that very settlement. Why should they now oppose it? But everyone would want to know what a man such as Mr. Gokhale had done and be led thus to reflect over the matter. While doing so, people may in their impatience in fault. This is what had happened this time. The result, however, has only been beneficial. It is certain that our problem has assumed greater importance than before in India as in England.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-2-1913

292. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [*-VIII*]

4. WATER

We have seen earlier that air is food. The same is true of water. Air enjoys the first position, and water comes second. Without air man can survive only for a few minutes, whereas he can live without water for hours, even for days on end, depending on the country. Even so, it is certain that one cannot subsist without water for as long as one can without food. If, however, a person can have water, he can live for many days without food. Water makes up more than 70 per cent. of our body. Without water, it is believed, the body would weigh 8 to 12 lbs. In all that we eat, there is more or less water.

Yet we take proportionately little care of a thing which, for us, is very important. Diseases like the plague beset us because of our carelessness in the mater of air. Similar results follow from our carelessness regarding water. Typhoid often breaks out among troops in battle and the cause, it has been proved, is polluted water, because on the front soldiers have to drink whatever water they can get. Typhoid breaks out also among those who live in cities, and the cause is mostly bad water. Drinking bad water often gives rise to diseases like stone.

There are two causes for contamination of water—one, that the

water is found in places where it cannot remain pure, and two, that we sully the water. We ought not to drink water which is stores in or comes from a dirty place, and for the most part, we do not; but we do not hesitate to drink water which has been polluted by us through neglect. For instance, we throw whatever we like into a river and then proceed to use that very water for drinking and washing. The rule is that one should never drink water from the place where one bathes. River-water should be drawn from a spot up stream where no one bathes. In every village, therefore, the river should be divided into two sections—the lower section for bathing and washing and the upper for drinking. When an army camps in the vicinity of a river, the direction of the river-flow is ascertained and a flag put up [at a given spot] on the bank. Anyone who bathes in a place higher up is punished. Where, in our country, these arrangements do not exist, careful women dig pits in the river-bed and take water from these; this practice is very wholesome as the water gets filtered as it passes through the sand. Well-water is sometimes dangerous to drink. In shallow wells, the liquid from the excreta absorbed into the surrounding ground seeps in and pollutes the water. Sometimes dead birds fall into them; often birds build their nests within. Moreover, if there is no masonry round the well [at the top], dirt from the feet of persons drawing water falls into the well and fouls the water. It is therefore necessary to employ the utmost care in using well-water for drinking. Water stored in tanks is oftentimes bad. To prevent deterioration of such water, the tanks should be cleaned from time to time and kept covered; the roof and other places from where [drinking] water comes should be kept clean. Few, however, make the effort to maintain such cleanliness. The golden rule is therefore to rid the water of impurities to the extent possible; to boil it for half an hour; to let it stand for a time; to pour it into another vessel without disturbing the water and then to drink it only after straining it through thick, clean cloth into a third vessel. One who does this is, however, not released from his duty towards others. Water which is maintained for public use is in the nature of property which jointly belongs to him and to all others living in the locality. He is obliged to use it like a trustee. He must, therefore, do nothing which might foul the water in any way. He must never foul a river or well. He must not bathe or wash clothes near any source of drinking water or defecate in the vicinity. He may not cremate dead bodies near by or throw the ashes into the water.

Even after taking these precautions, we do not get water that is

perfectly pure. It contains a certain amount of salts and, occasionally, rotten vegetable matter. Rain water is regarded as the purest of all, but before it reaches us the dust particles, etc., in the atmosphere get mixed with it. Absolutely pure water has a different effect on the body. Knowing this, certain doctors prescribe distilled water for their patients. This water is made by boiling water into steam and cooling the latter. Anyone suffering from constipation may, if he chooses, have first-hand proof of the efficacy of distilled water. Such water is sold by all chemists. A book has recently been published on the subject of distilled water and its uses. The writer believes that a large number of diseases can be cured by the use of water so processed. This is an exaggeration, but it is not improbable that absolutely pure water has considerable effect on the body.

Not everyone knows that water is of two kinds, hard and soft; but the fact is noteworthy. Hard water is that in which soap does not readily lather but remains insoluble. This means that the water contains salts in large quantities. It is difficult to use soap with hard water, as it is with brackish water. With hard water, cooking too is difficult and, for the same reason, drinking it should, and does, make it difficult for us to digest our food. Hard water always tastes brackish whereas soft water is either sweet or tasteless. Some believe that, as the substances dissolved in hard water are nutritive, its use is beneficial, but we generally find that soft water is the right one to use. Rain is Nature's purest form of water. It is of course soft and all agree it is good to use. If hard water is boiled on a *chula* for half an hour, it becomes soft. After it is taken off the fire, it should be processed as described earlier.

When to drink water and how much—the question sometimes arises. The simple answer to this is that water should be drunk when one feels thirsty and enough to quench one's thirst. There is nothing wrong in drinking water during or after a meal. Those who drink in the course of a meal should, however, remember that water is not to be drunk for washing down the food. If food does not go down by itself, that is either because it has not been properly chewed or because the stomach does not need it.

In fact, it is not—and it should not be—generally necessary to drink water. Just as our bodies consist of over 70 per cent. of water, so does our food. In some foods, the proportion of water far exceeds 70 per cent. There is no food that is wholly devoid of water. Furthermore,

much water is used in cooking. Why then does one feel thirsty? A complete answer to this question can be had only by reference to the constituents of our diet. Here, it may be simply said that those whose diet does not contain things like spices and chillies, which create an unnatural thirst, need only a little water. Those whose diet consists mainly of fresh fruit will seldom want to drink water by itself. If a person is constantly thirsty without reason, we may take it that he suffers from something or the other.

One notices that some people drink water indiscriminately, having superficially observed others doing so without any apparent ill-effects. The answer that was given to a similar question in the chapter on air applies here also. Moreover, the blood in our body possesses such wonderful properties that it destroys a number of toxins itself. But a fine sword is damaged if not burnished after use, and so with blood. If we get blood to do the work of a watchman, but do not look after it, it is not surprising that its power is sapped and finally lost altogether. Thus, if one always drinks bad water, the blood will in the end certainly stop doing its work.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-2-1913

293. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

PHOENIX,
[*February 25, 1913*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Your letter calls for a long reply. I see that you are very happy. The remedy is not in Palestine, not in studies in London. It lies in two things: either in applying yourself entirely to your office and studying whilst in practice or in your living with me and coming to India. The first is hardly feasible for you as you are; the second is, as you yourself say, the course for you but it is hard. There's the rub. You want to avoid difficulties and yet do the right thing. The two things are inconsistent. You would study in London. That is an easy life and pleasant. No worry of office. You would go to Palestine and there (at the bottom of the idea) have an independent and simple life, such as you have come to appreciate. It won't do. You have to see happiness in unhappiness and feel that life is made up of wordly miseries which rightly understood hammer us into shape. You cannot

serve God and Mammon. The Mammon of ease, self-pride, luxury should be permitted to do its worst and inflict all the hardships it can by depriving us of its gifts. Then and then only could God be enthroned in our hearts. Thus far I can see quite clearly. Whether you should go to India with me or whether you should continue your practice is a difficult question to answer. It largely depends upon yourself. My suggestion is, come down here for a brief visit. See things for yourself. We would compare notes. And then you may tentatively decide. You could usefully occupy yourself doing gardening in the morning. The afternoon you could devote to study. We could chat on Saturdays and Sundays and thus you could pass a fortnight, longer if you wish. What you should do is to think for yourself but not independently of me. We would discuss, thrash out and then you will finally decide what to do.

The charge of your being able to do things with me which you would not continue for long without me is not without foundation. Only the analysis made by those who bring the charge is faulty. You are not hypnotised. You are acted upon by what is good in others. My life seems to stand your scrutiny and therefore you often prefer my judgement to your own. And that is what every one of us does. We worship our idols. I surrender my judgement to Mr. Gokhale's in matters in which I told him to be my superior. I surrender my judgement to yours in gardening, architectural and several other matters. But it would be false in either case to consider me as hypnotised either by Mr.Gokhale or by [you][1] .

I shall pack up the tools and send them to you, I hope before the week is out.

More later. The time for the evening school is on.

With love,

Yours,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] The original has "me".

294. LETTER TO H. L. PAUL

JOHANNESBURG,
February 25,1913

DEAR MR. PAUL,

Yes I am simply buried in work. I am keeping Miss N. informed of everything.

As to Mr. Serridge I am sorry nothing can be done just now. There is no Indian school here worthy of the name. But what I suggest is that he should forward his application through the Superintendent there. And if the Superintendent back it strongly, Mr. S. would stand a fair chance when the proper time comes.

I am sorry you are keeping in the same sorrowful mood.[1] You should try to get rid of it. The sorrows come not to make men despondent but to chasten.

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the original: C. W. 4902 Courtesy: Eugene Joseph Paul, Pietermaritzburg

295. JOHANNESBURG SCHOOL

It was only recently that this school was started, but there seems to be trouble already. Everyone has been under the impression that Tamil and Gujarati will be taught during school hours. We now hear that Tamil can only be taught outside school hours, which means it cannot be taught at all. If the Government does that, that will be a great injustice. In a talk with member of the School Board, Mr. Gokhale was given a clear promise that the Government would arrange for the teaching of any Indian Language if there was a considerable number of students of that Language [group] in the school. Tamil is an important Indian Language. A fair number of boys who know that language have joined the school. It is the Government's duty to give these boys a fair knowledge of that Language. The new Committee that has been set up would do well to agitate in this regard. Justice will not be difficult to get. When children

[1] Following the death of Clement, addressee's son

are not taught through their mother tongue, they only acquire a parrot-like knowledge. A boy studying in a Government Indian school, where the teacher did not know the mother tongue of the pupil, had been taught the English word for *popat* [i.e., parrot], but he did not know that the word denoted *popat* in Gujarati. When, therefore, he was asked to explain the English word, he did not know it. He only knew that it was a kind of bird. This is the state of many Indian children in schools in this country, for the Government have evolved an erroneous system. They impart knowledge only through the English language. For all that they [the pupils] learn turns out to be parrot-learning. It is assumed all round that the Johannesburg school would be free of this defect. It is the Committee's responsibility to bring about that state of affairs.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-3-1913

296. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [*-IX*]

5. DIET

Air, water and food constitute our nourishment. But as a rule we look upon food alone as nourishment, and by food we only mean food-grains. We will not believe that a person lives on food unless he eats wheat and rice.

The truth is that air is the principal form of nourishment. We have seen that we just cannot exist without it, also that we are taking in this essential form of nourishment every moment, whether we are aware of it or not. Water comes next in importance to air but before food, and so nature has seen to it that this also is more readily available than food. Food occupies the third and last place.

Food is unite a complicated subject to write on. There is much difference of opinion regarding what food to take and when. Habits differ from nation to nation. The same item of food affects different individuals differently. It is difficult, even impossible, to be dogmatic in this matter. In certain parts of the world men kill human beings and eat their flesh ; for them it is food. There are also some who eat excreta. That is food for them. Some live entirely on milk; for them milk is food. Others, again, live on fruit and for them that is food. In this chapter the term "food" covers all these

things. Although it is difficult to lay down what food should be eaten, it is necessary for each one to come to some decision for himself. It is of course superfluous to observe that the body cannot function without food. We are ready to suffer innumerable hardships, even commit sins, in order to obtain food. Under these circumstances it is necessary to inquire into the purpose of taking food. We shall then be able to determine what food we should take. All will agree that out of every 100,000 persons 99,999 eat merely to please their palate, even if they fall ill in consequence. Some take a laxative every day in order to be able to eat well, or some powder to aid digestion. Some, having gorged an enormous meal with great relish, vomit it out and are ready again for other delicacies. Some eat large quantities and then miss a couple of meals. Some die of thoughtless overeating. The author has himself come across all these types. There has been such a transformation in his own life that he can now laugh at many of his past follies and is ashamed of some others. There was a time when the author would drink tea in the morning, have breakfast two or three hours later, a regular meal at one p.m., then tea at about three o'clock and a full meal between 6 and 7 in the evening. His condition in those days was pitiable indeed. He used to get oedema. A medicine bottle was always at his side. He would often have a laxative in order to be able to eat, and afterwards a dose from another bottle by way of tonic, as a matter of routine. He feels that he now has three times the energy for work that he then had, although he must be said to be no longer in his prime. Such a life is indeed to be pitied, and is if we go deeper into the matter, low, sinful and despicable.

Man is not born merely to eat, nor does he live merely for the sake of eating. He is born in order to know his Maker and he lives to this end. This cannot be done unless one keeps one's body alive and the latter cannot exist without food. This is why food is a necessity. This is the ideal attitude and it will do for those who believe in God. But even the atheist will admit that one must eat with due regard to one's health and with the object of keeping the body fit.

Consider beasts and birds. Cattle do not eat for the satisfaction of the palate, nor do they eat like gluttons. They eat when they are hungry—and just enough to satisfy that hunger. They do not cook their food. They take their portion from that which Nature proffers to them. Then, is man born to pander to his palate? Is he alone fated to be always ill? Among the animals which are not domesticated, there is

no starvation; they have no rich and poor, nor is there one group that eats ten times in a day and another that can scarcely eat even once. All these distinctions are to be found only in our species, yet we regard ourselves as superior in intelligence to animals. It is, however, evident from all this, that if we make our stomach our God and spend our lives in its worship, we must surely be inferior to them.

If we think carefully, we shall discover that the root cause of the many evil things that we do, such as lying, pleasure-hunting, perjury, theft and so on, is our failure to restrain the craving of our palate. If we could keep it under control, we would find it easy enough to rid ourselves of the other cravings. In spite of our knowing this, we fail to regard over-eating or taking too much pleasure in food as a sin. If we steal or fornicate or tell a lie, others regard us with contempt. Among books on ethical subjects, many fine ones have been written on lying, stealing, adultery, etc., but there is no book about the kind of person who cannot control his palate. This subject is not, as a matter of fact, considered as falling under ethics. The reason for this is that we are, all of us, in the same boat. How will the pot call the kettle black? Even our great men do not appear to have succeeded in mastering the desire for tasty food. Consequently, indulging one's palate has never been considered to be wrong. The most that books recommend is that, in order to control the senses, it is desirable to limit the amount of food eaten. But it has never been said that the pampering of our palate makes us prone to other weaknesses as well. Thieves, cheats and sensual men are shunned by respectable people. But these same respectable people must be indulging in pleasures of the palate hundreds of times more varied than those of ordinary men and women. *A man's gentlemanliness is supposed to consists in the richness of his meals*. Thus, just as in a thieves' settlement stealing would not be a sin, so we, being all of us slaves of the palate, do not frown upon such slavery or even notice it. On the contrary, we are happy with it. At a wedding we give feasts to minister to the pleasures of the palate, our own and those of others. Some give dinners at funerals, too. On festival days, there must be sweets. When a guest comes, tasty dishes must be prepared. Not to invite neighbours and friends to partake of meals and not to go to them for the same purpose is frowned upon as grossly unsocial conduct. Unless we press the invited guest to overeat, we are considered to be extremely stingy. On every holiday, we feel bound to prepare special dishes. On Sundays, we seem to think that we have the right to eat till we are sick.

What is, therefore, in the nature of a great fault has been transformed by us into an essential social obligation. The serving of meals is accompanied with numerous formalities of hypocritical nature, so that our slavery, our animality is completely hidden from ourselves. How shall we free ourselves from this darkness? This problem lies beyond the scope of simple hygiene. We can, therefore, only pose it and leave it there; it must be considered, however, to the extent that it bears on the problem of health.

Let us now look at the subject from another angle. It appears to be a universal law that the food needed by living creatures, whether human or animal, is provided by Nature from day to day. There is nothing strange in this. In Nature's kingdom no insurance is required. No one is found remiss in his duty, none sleeps, no one is lazy. The water-wheel of her processes is in perpetual motion without so much as a moment's pause. And so Nature does not have to lay by a store for a year or even for a day. By this inexorable law are we governed, whether we wish it or no. If we understand and abide by it, not a single family will have to starve even for a day. Now, it is obvious that, if just sufficient food is produced every day and if one person eats more than his share—eats more than he needs, there is bound to be a shortage to that extent, and, therefore, insufficient food for another. This is the simple explanation why large numbers of people have to go without food. In God's creation, in the kitchens of thousands of kings and hundreds of thousands of rich men, food is prepared that is far in excess of what they and their servants need. This excess has been taken out of the mouths of others. Will not these others then go hungry? If two wells are served the same current of water, and if this current carries just sufficient water for the two, it is quite plain that an excess of flow into one will mean shortage for the other. If this rule is correct—a rule which is not a figment of the author's imagination but one which has been propounded by highly intelligent men—it means that, whatever we eat after our hunger has been satisfied is stolen food. Akha[1], the goldsmith, has truly sung: "Like unto unprocessed mercury swallowed in place of food is wealth stolen from another." Whatever we eat for the sake of its taste alone is to be paid for by the body through toxic reactions, either visible or invisible; we lose our

[1] A Gujarati poet of the 17th century

health to that extent and suffer. After this discussion, it will be easier for us to consider what and when to eat.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-3-1913

297. LETTER TO SECRETARY FOR INTERIOR[1]

March 4, 1913

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter[2] of the 24th ultimo regarding the procedure adopted at the Ports in respect of those British Indians who come from India and who have residential rights in the Transvaal.

In the humble opinion of my Association, the reply is highly unsatisfactory, for it ignores the real state of things obtaining at the Ports.

Your letters seem to suggest that Indian passengers arrive from India with unsupported claims for the Transvaal and that such persons are detained on board pending investigation by the Registrar. If persons having unsupported claims were in the habit of coming in any numbers, and if they were allowed to remain within the borders of the Union, though under detention, my Association would have no cause for complaint. But it is the experience of my Association that Indians with unsupported claims do not, as rule, come, and that those who do come are not detained, but sent away by the vessels that bring them.

In the case of the brothers Dayal, their claims were, as the Hon'ble the Minister is aware, fully supported, yet the boys would

[1] This letter was presumably drafted by Gandhiji.

[2] This letter from the Under-Secretary for the Interior was in reply to an earlier request by the Chairman, BIA, that Indians arriving from India and claiming rights of residence in the Transvaal be issued visiting permits at the port of arrival against a security deposit to enable them to prove their claims. The Under-Secretary said: "The practice in Natal is to allow the promptest landing, on visiting passes, of all Transvaal Indians whose papers are found, upon arrival of the parties, to be in order, and to detain on board under a restriction order all those passengers having unsupported claims to go to the Transvaal until such claims are admitted by the Registrar. In this connection, every facility is afforded to claimants to submit their cases, and if Indians come to Natal without procuring proper admission papers, they have no one but themselves to blame for any inconvenience they may suffer, and it is regretted that present arrangements in this connection cannot be disturbed." *Indian Opinion*, 8-3-1912.

have been sent away, had not the Supreme Court intervened[1]. What my Association submits is that the relief which the Supreme Court grants should be accorded to such applicants without their having to call in its intervention.

To explain its position better, it is perhaps necessary for my Association to set forth the classes of persons who have Transvaal claims.

Those Indians who are registered under the Asiatic Act and hold registration certificates form one class. These are able to produce documents to prove their right of residence in the Transvaal.

Those Indians who are not yet registered but who have a right to be registered form the other class.[2] These cannot always have documentary proof, and never such as could be effectively checked by the Port Immigration Officers, for a majority of them can support their claims only by producing evidence of witnesses in the Transvaal. Such was the case with the brothers Dayal. Their title to registration was based on the fact that they were in the Transvaal on the 31st May, 1902. My Association suggests that it was not possible for them to prove their claim, unless they were enabled to bring forward evidence that was available only in South Africa. It is for such persons that my Association seeks protection, which has been cruelly and vexatiously denied hitherto by the Immigration Officers at the Port; and my Association trusts that the relief requested will be granted.

A. M. CACHALIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Indian Opinion, 15-3-1913

[1] *Vide* 1st footnote of "An *Act of Grace*", 11-1-1913.

[2] For the categories of Indians whom Gandhiji considered eligible for registration under the Provisional Settlement, *vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 4-5-1911.

298. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

Unrevised PHOENIX,
Wednesday night [*March 5, 1913*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Your letter calls for a prompt reply. You are in a self-searching mood and are therefore hypercritical of yourself. I do not mind it at all if you make good use of this self-examination. But it has its limits. Carried too far, it makes one morbid and sometimes leads to loss of mental balance. If you have wasted 42 years then do not waste the 43rd. Let the past be a beaconlight. But you seem to have become prostrate before the enormity of your own wickedness and so almost seem to wish to remain in it. But why all this imputation of vice and weakness to yourself? Are your contemporaries stronger and better? I deny. They are more amenable to the voice of Satan than you are. Have you wasted your life in that you have overcome ten thousand temptations and succumbed to the ten thousand and first? By all means avoid now the second mistake after the ten thousand and first and take courage from the fact that you had strength to resist ten thousand attacks. Find out the cause for the stray mistake made and you will certainly avoid it. The true remedy is to compel yourself into ceaseless activity. Refuse to believe that you are weak and you will be strong. Believe continuously that you are wicked and you will sink.

Have you never done a good turn to anybody? Have you never given a helping hand to a stranger? Have you never denied yourself pleasure of life? Why do you attract Mrs. Mayo to yourself or Maude! Why do you gain the ear of Liddle when others fail? Why have you been often saved against yourself? I do not suggest that you may pat yourself on the back for these things. But you must use these good points to enable you to go forward. A man in the midst of plague-stricken patients gets frightened and has the plague himself. You imagine yourself to be in the midst of plague-stricken companions conjured up by your imagination and may well end by getting the plague yourself. Why not think that these companions are passing phantoms that will disappear before the other healthy-thought companions you may create for yourself. And after all, this heart-searching is a species of subtle pride. At the bottom, there is a desire to shine, to be considered, rather than be, good. If this is not true, you

know yourself that you are good because you try to avoid evil. The world, however, knows only your failures. Are you pining to show the world your successes? If you are, you are on the wrong track. But I know that you are not consciously pining. I do know, however, that you are desirous of showing to yourself service. But why desire so? The only legitimate desire we can have is to perfect ourselves. If we keep that as our goal, we shall never despond, we shall never weaken; we shall ever go forward and never go mad. You are made for this better state. For Heaven's sake do not unmake yourself by thinking evil of yourself as you have the knack of doing when the mood comes on you.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

[PS.]

I have your books in mind. I am letting West read them.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

299. WELCOME[1]

In common with our countrymen we extend a hearty welcome to Mr. Hajee Dawad Mahomed. It is the dearest wish of a devout Mahmomedan to be able to pay a visit to holy Mecca and to be called a "Hajee". Mr. Hajee Dawad Mahomed has had his wish fulfilled. And he now returns to the land of his adoption to take up the work of serving his countrymen. We wish him long life and success in his arduous task.

Indian Opinion, 8-3-1913

[1] *Vide* also "Speech at Durban Farewell to Pilgrims", 29-6-1912 and "Dawad Mahomed", 6-7-1912.

300. GOGA'S CASE

Mr. Goga has lost again.[1] In our view, however, Mr. Goga has won. We congratulate him on his untiring efforts. We are sure that he will succeed if he fights to the finish. Once again, he has filed an appeal against the decision of the Licensing Board. This time the judgment of the Supreme Court may possibly go against him. We would advise Mr. Goga to move [the court at] Bloemfontein if he loses in the Supreme Court, and, should he fail there too, to take the matter even to England. Meanwhile, other Indians would do well to declare their support to Mr. Goga. They should hold meetings and make representations to the Government. Satyagraha can also be employed in a case like this. If we are brave enough, we can collect such cases and hold mass meetings in every town and so convince the Government that Indians will permit neither themselves nor the Government to rest in peace till the Licensing Act is repealed or amended.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-3-1913

301. BHAWANI DAYAL'S CASE[2]

The British Indian Association at Johannesburg is still pursuing this case. The latest communication[3] from the Government must be considered unsatisfactory. It is clear enough from the letter that the Immigration Officers do not supply all the information to the Government and that the latter too anxious to obtain it. If the Government had acquainted itself with all the facts, it could

[1] M. A. Goga, an Indian trader of Ladysmith, had been refused transfer of his trading licence to himself and his son by the Borough Licensing Officer, the Ladysmith Chamber of Commerce appearing as objectors. On appeal, a Full Bench quashed the proceedings and mulcted the Chamber in costs (£59). Goga's application for transfer was then heard *de novo* by the Licensing Officer and rejected. On appeal the Borough Licensing Appeal Board upheld the officer's decision. For Goga's earlier cases concerning trading licences, *vide* "Goga's Licence", 2-3-1907, "Statement of Natal Indian Grievances", 10-8-1909 and "Indians Under the Union", 13-8-1910.

[2] *Vide* also 1st footnote of "An *Act of Grace*", 11-1-1913 and "Letter to Secretary for Interior", 4-3-1913.

[3] *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Letter to Secretary for Interior", 4-3-1913.

not betray the ignorance that we find it does in its latest communication. The Government forgets that the immigration officers, if they are not satisfied with [the claims of] immigrants from India, do not keep them on board the ship but deport them. It seems to be under the impression that such Indians are detained on the ship. If this were done, we would indeed be spared the enormous expenditure and inconvenience to which we are put. Mr. Cachalia's letter[1] has now made all these things clear. The Government will have a difficult job replying to this letter, or it will have to admit that the Government is bent on harassing even old-residents. In this case, Mr. Polak had asked for payment of the costs by the Government. Whether costs are granted or not, the Government is going to realize that its high-handed attitude may be advertised all over the Empire.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-3-1913

302. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [-*X*]

In considering what food we should eat, let us first ask what we should not eat. If we designate as food all that enters the body byway of the mouth, then alcohol, cigarettes, tobacco, hemp, tea, coffee, cocoa, spices—all are food.

All these should be avoided. The author has found this to have been borne out by experience. Some of these articles he has consumed himself; regarding the rest he has observed the experience of others.

It is necessary to write about alcohol and hemp. All religions regard them as bad. There is hardly anyone who will defend their consumption. Alcohol has brought destruction to entire families. Millions of drunkards have been ruined. Under the influence of drink a man ceases to be himself. Such a one sometimes forgets the difference between mother and wife. This vice corrodes the intestines and, in the final stages,the victim becomes a burden upon the earth. Drunkards may be seen rolling in the gutters. A respectable man turns into a man of straw when he gets drunk. It is not that a person falls into such a state only when he drinks. An alcohol addict, one will observe, is feeble-minded even when sober. He has no control over his

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary for Interior", 15-3-1913.

mind, which wanders like a child's. Alcohol, as also hemp, deserves to be entirely avoided. There is no room for two opinions on this. Some think alcohol may be taken as medicine. However, doctors in Europe, which is the home of wine, say that even this is not necessary. At first alcohol was used there for many ailments, but that has now been stopped. As a matter of fact, this whole argument is advanced with dubious motives. if wine can be used for medicinal purposes [the argument runs], there can be no objection against its use as drink either; that is the game of these advocates of drink. But aloes and crotons are good medicine; yet no one suggests that they be used as food. It is possible that alcohol may prove beneficial in certain illnesses, but the havoc that it has wrought is so great that it is the duty of every thoughtful person to give up even its medicinal use, at the cost of his life if need be. If, by using alcohol for preserving the body, we are likely to harm the best interests of hundreds of people, our duty requires that we sacrifice the body instead. There are in India hundreds of thousands who do not take alcohol in spite of the doctor's orders. They are not willing to prolong their lives by taking alcohol or anything else to which they have an objection. The great people of China, enslaved by opium as they are, will soon perish in spite of the freedom that they have achieved. The *garasias*[1] among us have lost their patrimony, thanks to their addiction to opium.

The reader will easily recognize the harm in alcohol, hemp and opium, but not so readily that in cigarettes and tobacco. These have spread their tentacles so firmly over the human race that it will take ages to free it of them. Young and old, all alike have got into their clutches. Even people regarded as virtuous have taken to smoking and the habit is not regarded as something to be ashamed of. It is quite a popular form of hospitality among friends. Instead of being checked, the habit is spreading. The ordinary man is not even aware of the fact that cigarette dealers use every kind of trick in the manufacture of cigarettes to confirm the hold of the addiction over its victims. Various kinds of perfumed solutions[2] and even opium water, are sprinkled on the tobacco. As a result of these practices, cigarettes acquire a stronger and stronger hold over us. Thousands of pounds are spent on advertisement in order to popularize them. Cigarette

[1] Landowners inheriting shares of state lands in virtue of relationship with the ruling family.

[2] Literally, "acids"

companies in Europe run their own printing presses. They purchase bioscopes and offer all kinds of prizes, start lotteries and spend money like water on advertisements. The result is that even women have begun to smoke. Poems have been written about the cigarette, which has been called the poor man's friend.

It is impossible to estimate the harm done by smoking. A smoker becomes so brazen-faced that, indifferent to the feelings of others, he will light his cigarette even in another's house without so much as asking for permission to do so. He respects no one's presence.

It has been observed that cigarette or tobacco smokers will commit many other crimes in order to obtain these things. Children steal money from their parents, In gaol, prisoners treasure stolen cigarettes at great risk. they can get on without food but not without cigarettes. During war, soldiers addicted to smoking are in a pitiable condition if they do not get cigarettes. They become practically useless.

The late Tolstoy, writing on this subject, tells the story of a man who planned to kill his beloved. He drew his knife and got ready to use it. Then he relented and turned back. After this, he sat down for a smoke. The fumes of the cigarette entered his head, the poison affected his brain and he finally committed the murder. It was Tolstoy's firm belief that the cigarette is so subtle a form of intoxication that it should be regarded as in some ways a greater menace than even drink.

Smoking is also very expensive and, indeed, every smoker feels the strain of the expense to a greater of lesser degree, depending on his means. Some people spend five pounds or seventy -five rupees a month on cigarettes. The author has himself come across such a case.

Smoking weakens the digestion, renders food tasteless so that more and more spices have to be added to it. The smoker's breathe is offensive. The smoke that he exhales pollutes the atmosphere. At times he gets small ulcers in the mouth. Gums and teeth become black or yellow, and some persons have even contracted serious diseases in consequence. It seems strange that people who disapprove of drinking see nothing wrong in smoking; when, however we remember how subtle is the poison of smoking, we see easily enough why it is that men who hate alcohol are nevertheless ready to enjoy smoking. Those who wish to remain healthy should definitely give up the cigarette.

Drink, tobacco, hemp, etc., not damage physical health but also impair mental fitness and entail wasteful expenditure. We lose all our moral sense and become salves to our weakness.

About tea, coffee and cocoa, however, it seems extremely difficult to explain the truth and convince anyone that they are harmful. One must say, all the same, that they, too, are harmful. These also contain some kinds of intoxicants. If milk and sugar were not added to tea and coffee, they would have no nutritional value whatever. experiments in living exclusively on tea and coffee indicate that they contain no nourishment for the blood. Only a few years ago, tea and coffee were generally not drunk among us. They were only taken on certain occasions or with medicine, but, tidy in the wake of modern progress, they have become a daily necessity. They are offered even to a casual visitor and frequent tea-parties are given. During Lord Curzon's regime, tea wrought terrible havoc. That gentleman, seeking to promote the interests of tea merchants, introduced tea into every household so that those who were previously accustomed to wholesome drinks now take tea.

Cocoa has not yet become so popular because it is slightly more expensive that tea. Fortunately for us, we have not yet made friends with it, but it holds strong enough sway in fashionable homes.

Tea, coffee and cocoa, all have a certain property that weakens out digestive powers, They are intoxicants because they form a habit which cannot be broken. When the author was in the habit of drinking tea, he felt lethargic if he did not get tea at the usual hour—this is the conclusive test of an intoxicant. On one occasion, about 400 women and children were gathered together at a function. The organizing committee had resolved not to provide tea or coffee. The women in the gathering were in the habit of taking tea at four every afternoon. A message was soon conveyed to the organizers that, if tea was not served, the ladies would fall ill and be unable to move. And so the resolve had to be set aside. As arrangements wee being make for serving tea, excited messages poured in demanding that the organizers should hurry up, The ladies' heads had begun to ache and every moment felt like a month to them. It was only after they had their tea that these worthy ladies' face brightened up and they calmed down. This incident has been described exactly as it happened. One woman had suffered so much harm because of the tea habit that she could not digest any food and had constant headaches. Her health, however, has

greatly improved since she, with a strong effort of will, gave up tea. A physician in the employ of Battersea Municipality in England has discovered that thousands of women in that area suffer from nervous disorders, which he ascribes to their addiction to tea. The author has come upon innumerable examples of the harm done to health by tea and he is personally convince, therefore, that tea is very injurious to health.

As regards coffee, there is a couplet which has become well known:

Counters phlegm and wind, [1] but lower vigour and strength

And turns blood to water—two merits against three faults.

This verse sounds quite convincing. Coffee may have the virtue of counteracting phlegm and wind. But so have some other substances. Those who wish to drink coffee for the first two reasons should take a little ginger juice; it will serve the same purpose as coffee. But a preparation detrimental to vigour which needs to be fully conserved, one reducing strength and turning blood into water, surely deserves to be wholly shunned.

Cocoa shares the defects of coffee. Like tea, it also contains a substance which has the effect of making the skin quite rough.

For those who include morals in their conception of good health, there is a further argument against these three beverages. Tea, coffee and cocoa are produced for the most part by indentured labour. In cocoa plantations,. Negro workers are subjected to such inhuman treatment that if we witnessed it with our own eyes we would have no desire to drink cocoa. Volumes have been written on the tortures inflicted in these plantations. To be sure, if we made searching inquiries regarding the origin of the various articles of our diet, we should feel called upon to reject 90 per-cent of them!

In place of these three drinks, a harmless and nourishing beverage can be prepared in the following manner. Those who like can certainly call it tea. Many coffee lovers cannot distinguish it from coffee. Wheat should be well cleaned and roasted in a pan. It should be kept on the fire till it becomes red and is about to turn black. It should then be taken off the fire and ground rough in a coffee-mill. A teaspoon of this powder should be put into a cup and boiling water

[1] The original has *kaph* and *vayu*—terms in Ayurveda, a system of Indian medicine.

poured over it. Boiling this mixture for a minute improves the flavour. Milk and sugar to taste may be added but it can also be taken without them. Every reader will find it worth while to make this experiment. If he acquires this habit and gives up tea, coffee and cocoa, he will save such money and also be spared the risk to his health. Those who do not want the bother of roasting and grinding the wheat may send 9d. to the Manager, and they will receive one lb, of the prepared wheat powder.

[From Gujaraji]

Indian Opinion, 8-3-1913

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

SUMMARY OF THE PROTECTOR'S REPORT

The Report of the Protector of Indian Immigrants for the year 1910 shows that considerably more than double the number of men, women and children were introduced into Natal under the indenture system during 1910 than in the previous year, the figures being 5,858 and 2,487 respectively. There were sixteen deaths during the voyage, which, says the Protector, "is considerably above the average, and was largely occasioned by the number (eight) who died on the s.s.*Umhloti's* sixth voyage from Madras." It will be remembered that the *Umhloti* was the boat on which the outbreak of "spotted fever" occurred. Some light may be thrown on the outbreak when we read what the Protector says: "The Surgeon-Superintendent informed me that several of the children were embarked in a very weak state, and this had to be, or a considerable number of Indians would have had to be kept back." So we see that the agents were so anxious to get off a large shipment that they were prepared to run the risk of sickness and death on the voyage, and, as it happened, an outbreak of a serious disease. We are also informed that there were several deaths among the Indians of this shipment after landing including eight from cerebro-spinal meningitis or "spotted fever". There were 14 deaths during the year from this disease. We venture to think that the Protector's reply to our enquiries at the time, that "there was no need for any alarm", that "a few had died" and that "it was expected that the disease had run its course", was hardly a sufficient one in view of the above facts.[1]

[1] Some deaths due to "spotted fever" were reported among a batch of indentured Indians (intended especially for Sir Liege Hulett's estate) on board s.s. *Umhloti* which reached Durban in September, 1910. Official information being unavailable, *Indian Opinion* wrote on September 22 to the Protector of Indian Immigrants, Polkinghorne, seeking confirmation of the report. Replying on September 24, Polkinghorne admitted that "a few" deaths had occurred but assured that there was "no need for any alarm". The Editor wrote again enquiring about the number of those dead, affected or detained owing to the disease. In reply, Polkinghorne referred him to a *Natal Mercury* news report. *Indian Opinion* of October 1 commented strongly on this reply, at which the Protector declined to give any further information to the Editor. On October 26, the Natal Indian Congress wrote to Polkinghorne who said he would supply the desired information provided they did not publish it in *Indian Opinion*. The Congress wrote to him on October 31 saying that, as the matter was a public one, they would certainly hand over Polkinghorne's reply to the Press and that *Indian Opinion* could not be prevented from taking a "copy from the local dailies"; *vide* "Indentured Indians' Plight", 1-10-1910 and *Indian Opinion*, 1-10-1910 & 19-11-1910.

There were 1,955 deaths during the year, being an increase of 268 on the previous year. The Chief causes of death were diarrhoea 249, tuberculosis of the lungs 189, bronchitis 133, and pneumonia 283. There were 24 suicides, being a decrease of 10 on the previous year. Why there should be even 24, which is a very high figure, remains a mystery which the Protector does not enlighten us upon. The high figures for diarrhoea, tuberculosis, and pneumonia call for attention from those in authority. The very high death rate of 22.15 amongst free Indians is explained by the fact that all children of indentured parents are classed as "free". The death rate of Indian Children (noted in last year's report as being so exceptionally low, 6.56) has this year risen to 23.33. The weather conditions of the latter half of the year, the Protector thinks, may probably account to some extent for this increase. We are not aware that the weather conditions were so severe as to make [for] such a huge increase in the death rate. Seeing that the heavy death rate among children was "under consideration", we should have thought the Protector would have been able to give some substantial reason for this excessive death rate.

There is a distinct indication that wages are on the increase, says the Protector. This, of course, applies only to re-indentured Indians. There was no indication that the rate of wages of first-indentured men would be increased. Consequently there were applications for 15,114 more men. The Protector anticipates that, owing to the increase in the percentage of those re-indenturing, there will probably be at the end of 1911 as many men under indenture as there have been for the last two years. It is possible that this may be found to be the case, as, apart from the increase in wages offered, the £3 tax still remains as a compelling force upon them to give up their liberty. We are glad to note that, in the opinion of the Protector, "employers generally are now more careful in the management of their Indians, and are more willing to dismiss overseers and sirdars for wrongful conduct towards the Indians, and less inclined to screen them than in years gone by." This is satisfactory as far as it goes, and we have, no doubt, to thank for this very largely the efforts of those who have endeavoured to give publicity to the evils of the indenture system. The question of overwork still remains unsettled to the satisfaction of the Protector. This is due in a measure, he thinks, to the inherent difficulty of settling what is a fair task. He might have added that the task system is altogether unfair. What we have seen is that whilst a strong man or woman cutting cane finishes the set task early in the afternoon, the weaker ones have to work until dark night. And in the work of filling carts, the question of finishing the task depends largely on the number of carts and the distance to travel. Even if every other condition was satisfactory, the task system would make life a burden to many an indentured Indian. It can easily be imagined that those who fail to finish their task fall under the displeasure of the managers and sirdars, and where ill-treatment is complained of, the task system will invariably be found to be the cause.

The Deputy Protector, in his report, says that a number of deserving women have been relieved of the payment of the annual £3 licence under Act 17 of 1895, and he understands that women generally are not unduly pressed for payment. The

Protector adds that 485 women have been granted exemption passes by the Magistrates. Surely it must be evident that, whatever this figure represents, women should not be asked to pay it at all. It is bad enough that men should have to pay for the privilege of remaining as free men in a country which they have done so much to build up, but for women and girls over the age of thirteen to be taxed to such an extent to monstrous. We know of several cases in which the Magistrates have refused to grant exemption certificates to Indian women. Why should such a matter be placed at the mercy of a Magistrate? At Verulam, the Magistrate wisely exercises a wide discretion, exempting all women claiming exemption; but at Stanger the Magistrate has scarcely exempted a single poor woman of his district.

This year has seen the stoppage of further supplies of indentured Indians from India, and for this we are thankful. We believe that the resident Indian population will benefit by the action of the Indian Government. *The Natal Mercury* thinks that, now that Indian immigration is stopped, the European population will increase at a greater ratio than the Indian, as in the one case there will be the open door to immigrants, and in the other it will be closed. Whether that will be so or not remains to be seen, but, there it will now be no excuse whatever for persecuting the resident indian population. They are here for good or ill, and it depends very largely on the European community what the future will be. If South Africans act up to the traditions of the British Empire, there is no reason to fear but that all sections will find room in this country. For ourselves we shall not rest until the identure system in abolished, We believe in freedom for all. We want to see the Indian community of South Africa a free and happy people, and this can never be, so long as there are thousands of men, women and children living in what, even under the best conditions, can only be described as semi-slavery.

Indian Opinion, 11-11-1911

APPENDIX II

CORDES'S LETTER TO GANDHIJI

[ADYAR,
November 12, 1911]

MY DEAR GANDHI,

I send you the trust deed duly signed and witnessed.

I shall be passing Calcutta on the 16th of December and have written to Natesan to find out whether I can get a chance of a handshake with you onold *Aryavartha's* soil. I hope you will be as pleased as I was personally. We are the best of friends. And from man to man be it said that I have not met your equal as regards outward virtues. I know that young Krishnaji is your equal, in fact he surpasses you in *sweetness* already but I spoke of grown-ups. You are a mystic & those I am privileged to know & love now are occultists who see & are not content to go on without it. My

brother, the Doct . . .[1]is like you a true mystic \& abhors astral visions, etc. I wish he were as magnanimous as yourself. However we shall see each other at Calcutta ere this meets your eye on your return. If not, it is meant to take the place of the brotherly handshake. wishing you a merry Xmas at Phoenix near old Kallenbach if possible.

Fraternally yours,

JOHN H. CORDES

[PS.]

Kindest regards to dear Manilal, Ramdas & Devdas, Maganlal & the others, Mrs. Gandhi & the ladies & kiddies.

From a photostat of the original: S. N. 5592

APPENDIX III

LORD CREWE'S SPEECH ON INDIANS IN DOMINIONS AT IMPERIAL CONFERENCE

LONDON,
June 19, 1911

A

The Imperial Conference met in London on June 19, 1911 with Rt. Hon'ble L. Harcourt, Secretary of State fore the Colonies, in the chair, Gen. L. Botha (Prime Minister of the Union), F. S. Malan (Minister of Education) and Sir David de Villier Graaff (Minister of Public Works, Posts and Telegraphs) attended on behalf of the Union of South Africa. A memorandum about the problem of Indian subjects of the Empire in the Colonies was also circulated.

The agenda for discussion included a resolution by the New Zealand Prime Minister who sought to confine Coloured races to their zones and later changed his resolution to deal with rights of self-governing Colonies "with wider legislative powers" in respect of British and foreign shipping.

The proceedings of the Conference began with some general remarks by the Earl of Crewe, Secretary of State for India, on Indians within the Dominions. Extracts from his speech are given below:

. . . if there was any question which seemed to threaten not merely the well being, but the actual existence, of the Empire as an Empire, it was this difficulty between the white races and the Native races, because I ventured to point out, as between the Dominions and the Mother Country there could be no question, whether it was a question of commerce or a question of defence or any other of the questions which we now discuss, which could not be solved by good-will and by good sense on both sides . . . I understand that this memorandum which I have before me has been circulated to all the members of the Conference, and those who have read it will recognize that it

[1] Two words illegible here

deals both with the general principles of the question, and also with special instances of difficulty which have arisen in the various Dominions with regard either to the ingress of Indians or to the treatment of Indians when they are there . . .

Now I desire to say first, that I fully recognize—as His Majesty's Government fully recognize—two fact: the first is, that as the Empire is constituted, the idea that it is possible to have an absolutely free interchange between all individuals who are subjects of the Crown—that is to say, that every subject of the king whoever he may be or wherever he may live has a natural right to travel or still more two settle in any part of the Empire—is a view which we fully admit, and I fully admit, as representing the India Office, to be one which cannot be maintained. As the Empire is constituted it is still impossible that we can have a free coming and going of all the subjects of the King throughout all parts of the Empire. Or to put the thing in another way, nobody can attempt to dispute the right of the self-governing Dominions to decide to themselves whom, in each case, they will admit as citizens of their respective Dominions.

That is one of the facts which on behalf of His Majesty's Government I fully recognize. I also recognize this—that we are or may be easily prone in this country to underrate the difficulties which confront the Dominions in this matter, because we are not troubled to any extent by a similar problem here. It so happens that there never has been any influx of Coloured races into this country on a scale which has awakened any of the difficulties, which, as I well know, confront you gentlemen in the different self-governing Dominions . . .

. . . Many have now abandoned, for instance, the theory that labour can be regulated simply by the conditions of supply and demand. There are many nowadays, too, who have abandoned the theory that the remuneration of labour need necessarily stand in any very close relation to the value of the work done, and that being so, it is clear that the rivalry of cheap labour such as may be introduced from India seems a greater hardship than it did in the days of a harsher political economy which was generally accepted . . . during the greater part of the nineteenth century . . . we are certainly approaching, if we have not already arrived at, the time when organized labour will seriously object to the importation of any kind of lower paid labour, whatever its colour and whatever its nationality, if it is of a competitive character. This is one of the main difficulties, indeed, which is connected with this question ofIndian immigration . . . But as to the existence of the colour difficulty in its crudest form there can, of course, be no question whatever.

. . . It is one of those prejudices or beliefs which become stronger as people become more educated and more generally superior, and in this respect it differs from most of the easy and foolish prejudices which are held against the Native races. I am disposed to go so far as to say that in most respects the less a white man has individually to be proud of, the prouder he is apt to be of his whiteness, and the more he considers himself . . .

. . . among the observations made by Mr. Chamberlain in his address to the

Conference in 1897. Those word are, if I may venture to say so, well worth weighing. I will not attempt to enlarge upon or in any way to develop what Mr. Chamberlain there so admirably said. I might, however, venture perhaps to remind you that, on the point of the national claims of Indians grounded on their past history . . . this at any rate is not a moment when we desire to ignore those considerations, The ceremony of Thursday next, to which we are all looking forward, depends to a great extent for its meaning upon the long line of British sovereigns, through the Stuart, Tudor, and Plantagenet dynastics back to the time of the Norman Conquest and dim ages of the Saxon monarchy'; and yet there are to be found in India those whose pride of descent is no less well founded and no less real than that of the King of England himself. Then, again, as regards history we must never forget that not merely has India produced a great number of remarkable men both in the public service, and, to go back further, notable in ancient literature, but that she is most closely linked to a great number of the most famous men of our own race—statesmen, soldiers and others. Now, of course, these considerations do not appeal to everybody . . . If "A man's man for a' that" is to be our motto, the claim of a large number of Indians is a real and solid claim indeed. Whether we value intellectual culture, whether—apart from questions of creed—we value the religious mind, whether we value that remarkable devotion to and understanding of the things which are not seen which is so exceptionally deep in India and which, I think, appeals to many people in these harder and material days, whether, again, we value simple intellectual force, uncertain in its exercise in some directions I admit, but which in others produces as keen and fine an instrument as you can find in any part of the world—whether we value all of those things or any of them it is undoubtedly the fact that India and Indians can establish a high and real claim for our consideration, apart from all others.

. . . India must admit the main postulates with which I opened those observations, that is to say the undoubted liberty of the self-governing Dominions to lay down the rules of their own citizenship, and I can say cheerfully on behalf of the India Office and the Government of India that we will always do our best to explain to the people of India how the position stands in this matter. We will not encourage India in any way to develop what, as circumstances are, can only be called extravagant claims for entrance into the self-governing Dominions, and we will do our best to explain to them what the conditions of the Empire really are . . . . all sections and shades of Indian Opinion . . . combine when it is a question of Indian disability in any part of the British Empire. It cannot be denied that this difficulty is a very real asset, and a valuable asset in India to those who are opposed to our rule there . . . If, they ask, Indians are to suffer from disabilities in various part of the Empire, what good in the British connection at all? . . . I may point out also that the growing tendency to apply principles of self-government to India adds greatly to the complication and difficulty of the matter, because when a legislative council, as always possibly may happen, takes occasion to make a particular protest against some legislation or some administrative act on the part of the Government of a Dominion, It becomes . . . a far more serious matter than if a mere uninformed

grumble . . . is heard.

. . . On the other side, as regards the protection of those who are already domiciled there, some, I may remind you, have been there for a very long time indeed. There is at any rate one of the Dominions in which Orientals have been domiciled for some 200 years.

. . . The difficulty, of course, does not arise, I know very well, from the views or prejudices of Ministers themselves, but it cannot always be easy for them to impress upon their subordinates, quite subordinate officials who are probably imbued with a very strong anti-colour prejudice, the importance which we attach, and which those who have to do with India and know India always attach—to what may seem small matters of this kind. . . . however close the connection and however perfect the understanding between the Mother Country and the self-governing Dominions, we are not a united Empire unless that understanding spreads to some considerable extent also to that vast part of the Empire of which, of course, India is the most prominent division, but which also includes all the Crown Colonies which are inhabited by the various Native races . . . . it is a distinct misfortune and a derogation from the unity of the Empire if the Mother Country continually finds itself implicated in difficulties between various parts of the Empire.

. . . I do not pretend, as I repeat once more, that the question is really a soluble one in the full sense—I do not think it is—but I am quite certain that if the Dominions will agree all thorough to show an accommodating and friendly spirit towards India, . . . the best public opinion in India will recognize your efforts . . . .

India Opinion, 14-10-1911 & 21-10-1911

B

INDIA OFFICE MEMORANDUM FOR IMPERIAL CONFERENCE

INDIA OFFICE,
June, 1911

The general principles which His Majesty's Government desired to maintain in regard to the relations between His Majesty's Indian subjects and the self-governing Dominions were thus stated by Mr. Chamberlain in the course of his address to the Conference of Colonial Premiers in 1897:

"We quite sympathize with the determination of the white inhabitants of the Colonies which are in comparatively close proximity to millions and hundreds of millions of Asiatics that there shall not be an influx of people alien in civilization, alien in religion, alien in customs, whose influx, moreover, would most seriously interfere with the legitimate rights of the existing labour population. An immigration of that kind must, I quite understand, in the interest of the Colonies, be prevented at all hazards, and we shall not offer any opposition to the proposals intended with that object, but we ask you also to bear in mind the traditions of the Empire, which makes no distinction in favour of, or against, race and colour; and to

exclude, by reason of their colour, or by reason of their race, all Her Majesty's Indian subjects, or even all Asiatics, would be an act so offensive to those peoples that it would be most painful, I am quite certain, to Her Majesty to have to sanction it. Consider what has been brought to your notice during your visit to this country. The United Kingdom owns as its brightest and greatest dependency, that enormous Empire of India, with 300,000,000 of subjects, who are as loyal to the Crown as your are yourselves, and among them there are hundreds and thousands of men who are every whit as civilized as we are ourselves, who are, if that is anything, better born in the sense that they have older traditions and older families, who are men of wealth, men of cultivation, men of distinguished valour, men who have brought whole armies and placed them at the service of the Queen, and have in times of great difficulty and trouble, such, for instance, as on the occasion of the Indian Mutiny, saved the Empire by their loyalty. I say you, who have seen all this, cannot be willing to put upon those men a slight, which, I think, is absolutely unnecessary for your purpose, and which would be calculated to provoke ill-feeling, discontent, irritation, and would be most unpalatable to the feeling not only of Her Majesty the Queen but of all her people.

What I venture to think you have to deal with is the character of the immigration. It is not because a man is of different colour from ourselves that he is necessarily an undesirable immigrant, but it is because he is dirty, or he is immoral, or he is a pauper, or he has some other objection which can be defined in an Act of Parliament, and by which the exclusion can be managed with regard to all those whom you really desire to exclude. Well, gentlemen, this is matter, I am sure, for friendly consultation between us. As I have said, the Colony of Natal has arrived at an arrangement which is absolutely satisfactory to them, I believe, and remember they have, if possible, an even greater interest than you, because they are closer to the immigration which has already begun there on a very large scale, and they adopted legislation which they believe will give them all that they want, and to which the objection I have taken does not apply, which does not come in conflict with this sentiment, I am sure, you share with us; and I hope, therefore, that during your visit it may be possible for us to arrange a form of words which will avoid hurting the feelings of any of Her Majesty's subjects, while at the same time it would amply protect the Australian Colonies against any invasion of the class to which they would justly object."

The position of India in the British Empire was again emphasized by Mr. Asquith at the Colonial Conference of 1907, when he said: "We should never, under any conceivable circumstances, accept here a preference granted to us only in respect of goods carried in ships in which the whole of our fellow subjects in India were not allowed to serve. We could not possible accede to that, and everybody here would say we would rather have no preference limited by such condition as that."

PARTICULAR DIFFICULTIES

It is unnecessary to recapitulate the course of events since 1897, but the forms in which Asiatic questions have arisen in the self-governing Colonies may be briefly indicated.

NATAL

In Natal, which alone imported Indian labour, the resident Indian population was increased by a large influx of collies who, at the end of their indentures, remained in the Colony subject to special taxation, and by a small "free" immigration of persons who were able to pass the education test imposed by the Immigration Act. Difficulties arose about traders' licences, municipal franchise, and the education of Indian children, and these were accentuated by the passing in 1908 by the Natal Parliament of two Bills which were reserved and have not come into operation, one to bring to an end the issue of new trading licences to Asiatics,t he other to prohibit after a certain time, the holding of trading licences by Asiatics. In 1909, however, the Dealers' Licenses Act of 1897 was so amended as to allow an appeal to the Supreme Court on the renewal of existing licences, though not on their transfer or on the issue of new licences.

TRANSVAAL

In the Transvaal, which most of the resident Indians had left during the War, acute difficulties were caused by an influx of Indians after annexation and by doubts as to the exact effect of some of the laws and regulations of the South African Republic. Under the Peace Preservation Ordinance permits to Asiatics to enter the Colony were granted only to persons who had resided before the War. This provision was stereotyped by the Asiatic Law Amendment Act of 1907, passed immediately after the grant of responsible government, and, although the Immigrants' Restriction Act of the same year was in form modelled on the Natal Act, the effect of the two Acts read together was that no Asiatic, however well educated, could claim as a right to enter the Colony unless he could prove that he was before the War a *bona-fide* resident. This position, which had no parallel in any other part of the Empire, was, with great reluctance, accepted by His Majesty's Government. The stringent provisions for proof of the identity of lawful residents, though declared by the Transvaal Government to be necessitated by the trade in forged documents, gave rise to an acute and bitter controversy, which was allayed only for a few months by an amending Act of 1908. On the one hand the Indians deliberately adopted a policy of passive resistance to the law; on the other hand some of the incidents of imprisonment and deportation of Indians awoke in India itself a feeling of indignation the sincerity and the importance of which were very imperfectly appreciated in South Africa.

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE AND ORANGE FREE STATE

In Cape Colony, which allowed the entry only of Indians who could pass an education test, and in the Orange Free State, where an Asiatic question had never arisen, nothing had recently happened which calls for notice, except for one or two complaints that old residents who went back to India on a temporary permit were refused readmission to Cape Colony on technical grounds, which caused hardship.

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

Under the Act of Union matters differentially affecting Asiatics were reserved for the Union Government. The Union Government introduced an Immigration Bill in the recent session of Parliament which aimed at a final settlement of the question. The Bill was withdrawn at the end of the session, but it is understood that the subject will again be taken up. Meanwhile, a provisional settlement has been arranged by the Union Government which has led to the abandonment of the passive resistance movement. The stoppage of indentured emigration from India to Natal has now prevented the further recruitment of the uneducated classes of Indians within the Union. Thus, in South Africa, the problem henceforth will practically be that of the government of a resident Asiatic population, considerable in numbers only in Natal . . . .

QUESTIONS OF POLICY

The foregoing summary shows that the question of Indian immigration affects the several Dominions in different ways and in varying degrees. But the question may be said to fall under three heads:

(1) The entry of new immigrants.

(2) The status and condition of Indians who have been allowed to enter.

(3) The employment of Indians on ships in colonial waters.

(1) ENTRY OF IMMIGRANTS

His Majesty's Government fully accept the principle that each of the Dominions must be allowed to decide for itself what elements it desires to accept in its population. The extreme contention urged by some Indians, thought not by those who speak with responsibility, that membership of the British Empire shall entitle any British subject to resides where he chooses, is disposed of by acknowledged political facts. At the same time it is of great importance to recognize that subjects of the King, however different in physique, customs, and religion, from the European races, are not aliens. It is not sufficiently realized that, for purely local reasons, the Dominions have adopted a policy which puts Asiatic British subjects on the same footing as alien Asiatics. In fact, for reasons noted above, the Dominion of Canada is more rigorous towards British Indian than towards Japanese immigration. A second important fact, generally overlooked, is that some parts of the British Empire have adopted, towards Asiatic British subjects a policy of exclusion which foreign nations

have found unnecessary. It is of course the case that the tropical and sub-tropical possessions of European Powers correspond in climate and conditions to the British Crown colonies, and do not reproduce those local conditions which account for the immigration policy of the Dominions. None the less, it is a striking fact that British Indians are allowed by foreign countries privileges denied to them by the Dominions.

It is useless to attempt to veil the fact that the policy of building up new nations of European blood within the empire the absolutely incompatible with the idea that every British subject, whatever his race, shall have free right of ingress to any part of the Empire. This being so, all that His Majesty's Government is entitled to ask is that the immigration policy of the Dominions shall be so framed and expressed as to avoid wanton injury to the self-respect of non-European British subjects. The policy of basing exclusion upon an educational, not a racial, criterion, meets this requirement, although, in its application to individual cases, it admits of being administered so as to exclude Indians on racial grounds. Other methods of restricting immigration, without in statutory terms differentiating against a particular race, find place in the Canadian law, which gives power (1) to exclude immigrants deemed unsuited to local climate or requirements, or immigrants of any specified class, occupation, or character; (2) to require immigrants to be in possession of a certain minimum sum of money.

It will not be disputed that each of the Dominions is under the strongest moral obligation to take no isolated action which would involve the Empire in war with a foreign power. But it does not appear to have been thoroughly considered that each Dominion owes responsibility to the rest of the Empire for ensuring that its domestic policy shall not unnecessarily create embarrassment in the administration of India. It is difficult for statesmen who have seen Indians represented only by manual labourers and petty traders to realize the importance to the Empire as a whole of country with some three hundred million inhabitants, possessing ancient civilizations of a very high order, which has furnished and furnishes some of the finest military material in the world to the Imperial forces, and which offers the fullest opportunities to financial and commercial enterprise. It is difficult to convey to those who do not know India the intense and natural resentment felt by veterans of the Indian Army, who have seen active service and won medals under the British flag, and who have been treated by their British officers with the consideration and courtesy to which their character entitles them, when (as has actually happened) they find themselves described as "coolies", and treated with contemptuous severity in parts of the British Empire. Matters like this are, of course, very largely beyond the power of any Government to control, but popular misunderstandings are such a fruitful source of mischief that it seems worth while to put on record the grave fact that a radically false conception of the real position of India is undoubtedly rife in many parts of the Empire . . . .

. . . The immigration difficulty, however, has on the whole been met by a series of statues which succeed in preventing Asiatic influx without the use of deferential or insulting language. It is accepted that the Dominion shall not admit as

permanent residents people whole mode of life is inconsistent with their own political and social ideals.

But the admission of temporary visitors, to which this objection does not apply, has not yet been satisfactorily settled. If the question were not grave, it would be seen to be ludicrous that regulations framed with an eye to coolies should affect ruling princes who are in subordinate alliance with His Majesty, and have placed their troops at his disposal, members of the Privy Council of the Empire, or gentlemen who have the honour to be His Majesty's own Aides-de-Camp. It is of course true that no person of such distinguished position would in fact be turned back if he visited one of the Dominions. But these Indian gentlemen are known to entertain very strongly the feeling that, while they can move freely in the best society of any European capital, they could not set foot in some of the Dominions without undergoing vexatious catechisms from petty officials. At the same time the highest posts in the Imperial services in India are open to subjects of His Majesty from the Dominions.

The efforts of the British Government to create and foster a sense of citizenship in India have, within the last few years, undoubtedly been hampered by the feeling of soreness caused by the general attitude of the Dominions toward the peoples of India. The loyalty of the great mass of Indians to the Throne is a very conspicuous fact, and it is noteworthy that this feeling is sincerely entertained by many Indian critics of the details of British administration. The recent constitutional changes have given the people of the country increased association with the Government, and have at the same time afforded Indians grater opportunities of bringing to the direct notice of Government their views on the wider question of the place of India in the Empire. The gravity of the friction between Indians and the Dominions lies in this, that on the Colonial question, and on that alone, are united the seditious agitators and the absolutely loyal representatives of moderate Indian Opinion. The Government of India, while appreciating the Colonial point of view, cannot, and do not, which to dissociate themselves from general feeling of disappointment at the unwillingness of the Dominions to recognize that Indians are entitled to consideration. Many highly educated and well-bred Indians have natural and laudable desire to see other parts of the Empire, but at present are deterred from visiting the Dominions. It is earnestly hoped by His Majesty's Government that the measures necessary to prevent such an influx of the lower classes of Indians as would modify the population of the Dominions and create grave internal difficulties will not be extended to visitors of good social rank, merchants of sound commercial position who have interests outside India, or students who have attained to University standing.

(2) THE STATUS OF INDIANS RESIDENT IN THE DOMINIONS

It is in South Africa alone that there is any large resident Indian population, and it existence here is in the main due to the deliberate importation by Natal (inaugurated under Crown Colony but continued under Responsible Government) of contract Indian labour. In Canada and Australia Indian immigrants have been

comparatively few in number and have come on their own commercial business. But in South Africa—apart from the entry of some representatives of those Indian traders who have for centuries past done business on the east coast of tropical Africa—the Indian element is, in origin due to the action of Government undertaken at the instance and in the interests of a very important section of the European population of Natal.

So far, then, as an Indian population exists, the Dominions can do much to allay unrest in India by abstaining from any administrative policy which could be represented as showing an intention to expel them, or to reduce them to a position of degradation. In South Africa Indians compete chiefly with European traders—often with a low class of Europeans of alien origin,—while in British Columbia they are in competition with white workmen. It is thus inevitable that from time to time this economic rivalry should lead to friction. But the treatment of Indian traders by municipal authorities in Natal has at times been flagrantly unfair, and even now security for permanence of trading rights is given, by means of Appeal to the Supreme Court against licensing boards, only to individuals who already possess trading licences. The transfer of existing, or the grant of new, licences, is entirely in the hands of municipal authorities. Certain schemes of legislation in Natal, and of administrative measures in the Transvaal, have caused much apprehension among Indians, and it is to be hoped that, when the union has satisfied itself that safeguards against unlimited Asiatic immigration have been provided, it will be possible to treat resident Indians generously.

Any system of generous treatment may be held to involve:

(1) avoidance of any measures calculated to take away the means of livelihood from respectable traders by vexatious regulations;

(2) restriction of sanitary measures to cover real sanitary needs, and regulations adequate to prevent the use of such measures as an indirect means of disturbing Indian residents;

(3) the grant of educational facilities, which, of course, need not lead to the admission of Asiatic and European children into mixed primary schools;

(4) a determination not to utilize immigration laws to banish lawful residents by means of legal quibbles, or to break up domiciled families, or to refuse temporary admission on visiting permit to relatives whose presence is urgently required by resident Indians. (Such an incident as the refusal of a permit to a son to attend to funeral of his father, which is alleged to have occurred in British Columbia, would create very bitter feeling amongst a people who attach supreme importance to funeral rites.)

It is practically certain that there will never be any large Indian population in Canada, Australia, or New Zealand, the Dominions in which the aboriginal population is small, and in some cases decreasing, and which will, in the ordinary

course of events, be, for all practical purposes, purely European. But in South Africa not only does the Native population so enormously outnumber the whites that unskilled labour will probably always remain in Native hands, but a small Asiatic element has existed for nearly two centuries. Cape Colony has found it possible to govern without friction and to utilize the "Malays" imported by the Dutch East India Company, who are Mahomedan in religion and distinctive in their social habits. They have established a position as fishermen, drivers, and petty agriculturists. It cannot be maintained that South Africa can accommodate only white and black, and has no place for the brown races. For although in a comparatively recently colonized area, such as the territories of the two former republics, this might be argued, Cape Colony affords an example of a large element, consisting not only of the "Malays", but of the "Coloured people", which is intermediate in civilization and habits between the Native Africans and the Europeans. There is no intention to minimize the difficulties caused by the presence of an intermediate element, whether of mixed blood or purely Asiatic. But it is believed the equitable administration can prevent these difficulties from becoming dangers.

(3) THE EMPLOYMENT OF INDIANS IN SHIPS IN COLONIAL WATERS

It is unnecessary to add to what is said on this point in the historical summary, where the serious disabilities which the New Zealand Shipping Bill of 910 would impose on Indian seamen are pointed out.

Indian Opinion, 9-9-1911, 16-9-1911, 23-9-1911 & 30-9-1911

APPENDIX IV

UNION MINISTERS' MINUTES ON IMMIGRANTS' RESTRICTION BILL (1912)

A[1]

In the course of conversation this morning General Smuts referred to the draft Immigration Bill. I asked him what would be the position, under Clause 28, of one of the limited number of educated Indians to be admitted into the Union under the dictation test if he wished to enter the Free State. The Minister said there would be no restriction upon his entry into the Free State or into any other Province, and the only special disabilities to which he would be subjected would be the prohibition to acquire fixed property, or to engage in commerce or farming in the Free State, as set forth in Sub-clause 2 of Clause 28. According to what General Smuts said, there would be nothing to prevent him from establishing himself as a doctor except the absence of sufficient number of his compatriots to make professional practice lucrative. The rest

[1] This is a report by the Private Secretary to the Governor-General based on a discussion he had with Smuts. It was forwarded by Gladstone to the Colonial Office on October 28, 1911.

of Chapter 33 of the Orange Free State Law Book was not being repealed, but its provisions, with the exception of Article 7 and 8, would be practically inoperative so far as the Indians admitted under the dictation test were concerned, as their status and rights were protected under the draft Bill. I asked the Minister whether he did not anticipate strong protests from Mr. Gandhi and his followers in regard to the specific retention of Articles 7 and 8. He said that Mr. Gandhi would raise no objection so long as the right of entry into the Free State were secured, as it was under the draft Bill. I did not anticipate such a sanguine reply, but I conclude from the confidence with which General Smuts spoke that he has been in communication with Mr. Gandhi and has satisfied himself on this point He appeared to be convinced that the Bill, so far as it went, would be acceptable to the Indian community in this country. As regards the attitude of the Orange Free State members, General Smuts recognized that Sub-clause 2 of Clause 28 did not go so far as they would desire. Their wish would be to prevent any Indian from entering their Province, and time would show whether they would prove intractable. He hoped that they would be reasonable enough to appreciate that it would be intolerable if they endeavoured to wreck the Bill because it did not meet all their aspirations in every particular, and he considered that he had a strong argument in his armoury in that there was no absolute bar upon the entry of Indians into the Province under the present law, as the grant or refusal of permission in each case was left to the exercise of ministerial discretion, and there was nothing to prevent a Minister from admitting an unlimited number of Asiatics into the Free State if he saw fit, subject always to the statutory bar in regard to their owning fixed property, or their engaging in commerce or farming. He seemed to think that, if this circumstance were brought home to them, their attitude might not improbably undergo some modification. I may add that I have reason to believe that the draft of Sub-clause 2 was specially submitted to General Hertzog, and that he did not take exception to its terms.

2. I mentioned that I had failed to observe in the draft Bill any provision for giving effect to the Minister's undertaking in his correspondence with Mr. Gandhi that provision should be made for the registration of passive resisters who, but for their passive resistance, would previously have been entitled to registration. This point, it will be remembered, was alluded to in Paragraph 15 of Lord Gladstone's despatch Confidential (2) of the 23rd October, General Smuts replied that it had been found that no special legislation was required for the purpose of carrying out this pledge, and that certificates of registration were now in fact being granted.

3. As regards the dictation test, General Smuts volunteered the statement that he was considering the expediency of adopting the Australian model in its entirety and of providing that the subject of the test should be restricted to European languages. He thought there would be no difficulty in scheduling a list of European languages, and he would be prepared to include Yiddish in the list as the overwhelming majority of white immigrants at present were of the Jewish race.

4. He said that he was very hopeful of passing the Bill into law during the next session, and would use every endeavour in that behalf, as it was of the greatest

importance that the immigration question should be regularized and settled. The emphasis with which he spoke is the more satisfactory as a few months ago there were indications suggesting the possibility of some slackening of interest in the subject.

. . .[1] engage in productive industry. It will be noted that his observation on the general question of white immigration differ considerably, both in tone and in intention, from the public utterances of at least one of his colleagues.

6. As regards the Asiatic question in the Transvaal, he expressed himself as gravely concerned by the interpretation placed by the Divisional Court upon Section 77 and 130 of the Gold Law, to which reference was made in Lord Gladstone's despatch No. 917 of the 23rd instant. He considered that the decision was bad in law but he did not propose to interfere with it. Its effect he understood to be that wherever a right to let Stands to Asiatics had existed in mining areas, outside of townships, prior to the passing of the Act, that right could still be exercised. The result would be that a large number of Asiatic stores would spring up all over the reef, that the white trader would be crowded out, and that a considerable impetus would be given to the illicit traffic in gold and liquor in which Asiatics were prone to indulge. He thought that further legislation might be necessary, and a solution, to which he inclined, both in regard to this particular difficulty and to the general question of Asiatic trading in the Transvaal, might have to be found in the introduction of a licensing system resembling that of Natal. It will be remembered that the contemplation of some such expedient was indicated by Ministers in their Minute No. 1028 of the 2nd September, which was transmitted to the Secretary of State with Lord Gladstone's despatch No. 737 of the 4th idem. The scheme in General Smuts' mind appears to be the introduction of an universal system of licensing of all businesses in the Transvaal by the local authorities, without any explicit discrimination against Asiatics, and subject to the preservation of existing rights and to an appeal to some central authority with a view to obviating the infliction of undue hardship. He has evidently not yet come to a definite conclusion on the subject, and he appreciates that any such proposals would encounter formidable opposition in several quarters. He said, however, that he was strongly impressed with the necessity of taking some action to check what he described as the alarming development of Asiatic trading in this Province; and that, of course, would be the practical effect of the introduction of a licensing system, however free from racial differentiation it might be in form. The white trader, he asserted, could not exist side by side with Asiatic competition. He quite recognized that the business methods of white trader did not entitle them to very much sympathy, as they had taken as unreasonable advantage of their opportunities and were inclined to charge excessive profits. But however that might be, he was not prepared to face the alternative of the whole retail trade of the country falling into Asiatic hands. As between the two evils of the undesirable business methods of white traders on the one hand, and the unlimited extension of Asiatic trading on the other,

[1] A page is missing here.

he could not hesitate to choose the former, unless he wished to stultify his ideal of South Africa as a white man's country. The tone of his remarks left no doubt in my mind that he was giving the question serious attention, not merely as a subject for theoretical consideration, but with a view to effective action, and it would, I fear, be idle to hope that it will be allowed to remain to abeyance.

H. J. STANLEY

Colonial Office Records: C.O. 551/14

B

November 28, 1911

1. It is not considered necessary to provide by law for the validation of the settlement of the Transvaal passive resistance controversy.

2. Clauses 5(f). Domicile does not necessarily confer the right to reside: e.g., by failure to comply with the Asiatic Registration Laws a domiciled person would lose any right to reside.

3. Clause 5(e) and (g). The point raised by the Secretary of State will be borne in mind.

4. Clause 5(h). It is not anticipated that the use of the term "white" will cause any difficulty. The object of the clause as at present worded is to compel any Government to go to Parliament whenever there is an intention to introduce Coloured or Asiatic labour into the Union from other parts of the world.

5. First Schedule. Although His Majesty's assent was never given to Transvaal Act No. 36 of 1908, it remains on the Statute-book, and legal questions may afterwards arise which it may be advisable to obviate by formally removing it from the list of laws passed by the Transvaal Parliament.

6. Clause 7 and 28(2). Indians admitted into the Union under the provisions of Section 4 (a) will require no further permission to enter the Orange Free State; but if they do enter that Province they will naturally by subject to the disabilities in respect of trading, farming and ownership of land which are imposed by Chapter XXXIII of the Orange Free State Law Book.

Those clause although they do not represent a hard and fast agreement with the Indian leaders are, it is believed, most likely to prove satisfactory to them, as they are in accord with representations which have been made to the Government from time to time by the Indian leaders.

7. With regard to the question raised by the Secretary of State for India as to the position of Natal Indians desirous of emigrating to the Cape and *vice versa*, Ministers desire to state that the Provisions of Clause 7 are intended to prevent the Natal Indian population from migrating to the other Provinces. The European inhabitants in the Cape, Transvaal and Orange Free State would resent most strongly the intrusion of Natal Indians and Ministers are not prepared to state that, under the provisions of this Clause, even selected Natal Indians would be allowed to enter the Cape in future.

Ministers desire to point out that the difficulties in connection with the Indian population of South Africa require most careful handling on the part of the

Government and if Cape members of Parliament were to gain the impression that Natal Indians would be allowed into the Cape Province their opposition might possibly prove fatal to the Bill.

LOUIS BOTHA

Colonial Office Records: C.O.551/14

C

secret

November 30, 1911

Immigration Bill. Reference my telegram of today's date.

I saw J. C. Smuts after receiving Ministers' reply to your questions. He strongly deprecates raising question of validating registration certificates for passive resisters. A separate bill would be necessary. The Government are issuing certificates and their validity could only be challenged by themselves. By issue they will themselves be stopped. It is their intention to safeguard position of passive resisters. I think that it will be best not to press them on this points.

As regards answer 3 of Minister's minute J. C. Smuts quite recognizes your point. But he says that it is new and to make provision in bill [for?] fresh immigrants would be dangerous. He prefers to deal with point in Parliament in the event of its being raised and then to deal with it as best he can. Gandhi has not raised it.

As regards answer 4 he does not think Gandhi will make difficulty. He thinks that paragraph can be considered from points of view other than differentiation. Attempts now being made to organize entry of Natives from Liberia and he believes elsewhere, and therefore he provides in such cases for necessity for legislation. Whites must be exempted in view of white immigration scheme approved by Government for land and other development here.

He cannot say that he has an agreed scheme with Gandhi. They are in agreement generally but J. C. Smuts does not wish to incur risk of being charged with breach of faith constructive or otherwise which unforeseen developments might produce.

Owing to opposition in Orange Free State and the Cape, and from Jews, he is doubtful whether he can get the Bill through, and he wishes to avoid its position being prejudiced in advance.

GLADSTONE

Colonial Office Records: C.O. 551/44

D[1]

January 6, 1912

With reference to His Excellency the Governor-General's Minutes Nos. 15/234 and 15/235 of the 18th ultimo on the subject of the draft Immigration Bill, Ministers have the honour to state that they have given careful consideration to the further points which have been raised by the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Secretary of State for India.

With regard to the recent settlement with the passive resisters, Ministers do not anticipate that any difficulty will occur in connection with the validation of certificates which have been issued to Indians in terms of that settlement. The Indian leaders themselves do not ask for such legislation, and in Ministers' opinion no question is likely to arise with any future Government of the Union, as the certificates in question are limited in number which will all have been issued in the space of a short time, and it would be impracticable, even if it were legal and possible, for any Government to recall or to refuse to recognize any such certificate which had been officially issued.

Clause 5(g): Both under the law in South Africa and under the practice in the past polygamous marriages have not been recognized, and Ministers are unable to pro*vide* any facilities in the draft Bill which would have the effect of altering the present position in South Africa.

Clauses 5(h): The Indian leaders, to whom the draft Bill has been shown, have raised no objection to Clause 5(h) in its present form, but should it appear, during the passage of the measure through Parliament, that opposition exists to the use of the word "white", Ministers will be prepared to consider the question of an amendment.

Clauses 6 and 7: Ministers desire to state that the interpretation placed on these Clauses by the Secretary of State for the Colonies is the correct one.

Clauses 7 and 28(2): The leaders of the Indian community have raised no objection to the reference to Chapter XXXIII, but have, on the contrary, intimated that the Clause as drafted appears to afford a satisfactory solution of the difficulties which have been experienced in this matter. Ministers desire, however, to add that the question whether it will be possible to carry the Section as it is at present drafted depends very largely on the attitude of the members of Parliament from the Orange Free State, who are most strongly against any relaxation of the provisions of the Chapter in question.

J. C. SMUTS

Colonial Office Records: C.O. 551/25

[1] Gandhiji met Lane in Johannesburg on December 22, 1911, and was shown a copy of the new immigration bill; *vide* "What to Expect from the Imperial Government", 23-12-1911. Gandhiji says in his letter to Lane of January 29, 1912, that the bill, as published in the *Government Gazette* had undergone some changes since he had seen it last.

APPENDIX V

EXTRACTS FROM IMMIGRANTS' RESTRICTION BILL (1912) AND ORANGE FREE STATE CONSTITUTION

To consolidate and amend the laws in force in the various Provinces of the Union relating to Restriction upon Immigration thereto, to provide for the establishment of a Union Immigration Department and regulate Immigration into the Union or any Province thereof.

The Governor-General may appoint an immigration board at any such port of entry as may seem to him expedient, and the duty of any such board shall be to advise the Minister as to whether persons alleged to be prohibited immigrants should be permitted to enter the Union, and as to matters incidental to their entrance. (Section 3) (3).

The term "prohibited immigrant" includes:

(a) any person who is unable to pass the dictation test, that is to say—when an Immigration officer dictates to him not less than fifty words in the language selected by such an officer, fails to write out those words in that language to the satisfaction of that officer;

(c) any person who, from information received from any Government (whether British or Foreign) through official or diplomatic channels, is deemed by the Minister to be an undesirable inhabitant of or visitor to the Union. (Section 4).

The exemption clause includes:

(e) subject to the provisions of section seven, any person born in any part of South Africa included in the Union;

(f) subject to the provisions of section seven, any person who satisfies an immigration officer that he still is both domiciled and entitled to reside in the Union or any Province, and that during his absence from the Union he has not become such a person as is described in paragraph (c), (d), (e), (f) or (g) of the last preceding section;

(g) subject to the provisions of section seven, any person who is proved to the satisfaction of an immigration officer to be the wife, or the child under the age of sixteen years;

(i) of any person who by passing the dictation test described in paragraph (a) of the last preceding section has been permitted to enter the Union;

(ii) of any person described in paragraph (f) of this section, provided that the wife or the child (as the case may be) does not fall within the classes of person described in paragraphs (c), (d), (e), (f) or (g) of the last preceding section. (Section 5).[1]

(1) Every prohibited immigrant who, after the commencement of this Act, enters or is found within the Union, shall be guilty of an offense and liable on conviction

[1] *Indian Opinion* adds the following by way of comment: "Paragraphs (d), (e), (f) and (g) refer to persons suffering from certain diseases or convicted of certain crimes."

(a) to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period not exceeding three months without the option of a fine; and

(b) to be removed at any time by the Minister's warrant from the Union.

(2) Pending the removal, the prohibited immigrant may be detained in such custody as may be prescribed by regulation.

(3) The prohibited immigrant may be discharged from the imprisonment or custody aforesaid if security be given to the satisfaction of the Minister that the prohibited immigrant will within one month leave the Union, and not return thereto.

(4) Every such sentence of imprisonment shall terminate as soon as the prohibited immigrant is removed from the Union. (Section 6).

Notwithstanding that a person is domiciled and entitled to reside in any particular Province either at the commencement of this Act or thereafter, nothing in this Act contained shall be construed as authorizing him to enter or reside in any other Province wherein he has not become entitled to reside unless he is able to pass the dictation test described in paragraph (a) of section four, and he may at any time be required to pass that test. For the purposes of this Act every such person shall, unless he has passed the said test, be a prohibited immigrant in respect of the said other Province and the provisions of the last preceding section shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to him. (Section 7).

(1) No prohibited immigrant shall be entitled to obtain a licence to carry on any trade or calling in the Union or (as the case may be) in any Province wherein his residence is unlawful or to acquire therein any interest in land, whether leasehold or freehold, or in any immovable property.

(2) Any such licence (if obtained by a prohibited immigrant) or any contract, deed or other document by which any such interest is acquired in contravention of this section, shall, on conviction of the prohibited immigrant as such, be null and void. (Section 8).

(1) Every person who is suspected on reasonable grounds of being a prohibited immigrant may be arrested without warrant by an immigration officer or police officer, and shall be brought as soon as possible before a magistrate's court to be dealt with according to law. (Section 9).

An immigration officer may require any person entering the Union to make a declaration in the form prescribed by regulation that he, or any person accompanying him, is not a prohibited immigrant and to state in the declaration such further particulars as may be prescribed by regulation, and may require him to fill in and complete in every respect that form and to produce, in support of the declaration, documentary or other evidence.

Every such declaration shall be exempt from any stamp duty ordinarily imposed by law on affidavits or solemn or attested declarations, anything to the contrary notwithstanding in any law in force in the Union relating to stamp duty.

Any person who fails on demand to comply with any provision of this section or who declares upon the form anything as a fact, or produces or gives such evidence

as aforesaid which he knows to be false, shall be guilty of an offence. (Section 18).

Any person who

(a) has been convicted, whether before or after the commencement of this Act, of a contravention of any of the provisions enumerated in the second schedule thereto, or of any amendment of those provisions;

(b) having been removed at the expense, either whole or partial, of any Government from the Union, or any part thereof now included in the Union, or being the subject of an order issued under any law to leave the Union or any part thereof now included in the Union, returns thereto without lawful authority or has failed to comply with the terms of any such order;

(c) having been refused by an immigration officer permission to enter the Union or any Province, has entered the Union or that Province;

(d) admits to an immigration officer in a written document that he is a prohibited immigrant either in the Union or in any Province;

may, if not already under detention, be arrested without warrant and removed from the Union or (as the case may be) from the Province, by the Minister' warrant and, pending removal, may be detained in such custody as may be prescribed by regulation. (Section 21).

(1) The burden of proving that a person has not entered or remained in the Union or any Province in contravention of this Act or any regulation shall, in any prosecution for or in respect of such a contravention, lie upon the accused person. (Section 23).

(1) Anything to the contrary notwithstanding in this Act contained, the Minister may in his discretion issue a temporary permit to any prohibited immigrant to enter and reside in the Union or any particular Province upon such conditions as to period of residence or otherwise as the Minister may in the permit specify.

(2) The Minister may also in his discretion issue a permit to any person who is lawfully resident in the Union or any Province and who, desiring to proceed thereout with the intention of returning thereto, for any reason apprehensive that he will be unable to prove on his return that he is not a prohibited immigrant. The permit in this sub-section mentioned shall expressly authorize the person named therein to return, within a period specified in the permit, to the Union or the particular Province (as the case may be), but before issuing the permit the Minister shall require such proof of the said person's identity add such means of identification to be furnished as may be prescribed by regulation (Section 25).

(1) Anything to the contrary notwithstanding in Act No. 36 of 1908 of the Transvaal, a person who, by passing the dictation test described in paragraph (a) of section four of this Act has been permitted to enter the Union shall not be deemed to be subject to registration under the provisions of the said Act of the Transvaal.

(2) Any person, being such a person as is described in Chapter 33 of the Orange Free State Law Book, who, by passing the said dictation test, has been permitted to

enter the Union or, by passing the dictation test in accordance with section seven of this Act, has been permitted to enter the Orange Free State from any other Province, shall be subject in all respects to the Provisions of article seven and eight of the said Chapter 33. (Section 28).

The Immigration Laws of all the Colonies are repealed; as also the Asiatic Law Amendment Act of the Transvaal, No. 2 of 1907,—the whole, except so far as it is applicable to the registration of minors lawfully resident in the Transvaal.

ORANGE FREE STATE LAWS

The following are Sections 7 and 8 of the Orange Free State Constitution, Chapter XXXIII:

7. No such Coloured person as is mentioned in the preceding articles (i.e., Arab, Chinaman, Coolie, or other Asiatic Coloured person) nor the successor in title of any such Coloured person shall, under any circumstances, have the right to have fixed property registered in his name in this State.

8. No such Coloured person as is mentioned in the preceding Articles shall, under any circumstances, be permitted by the State President to settle in this State for the purpose of carrying on a commercial business or farming, either directly or indirectly, and each applicant, before obtaining permission to reside in this State, shall make and sign a sworn declaration before the Landdrost to whom he makes the application, in which he shall declare that he will neither directly nor indirectly carry on a commercial business or do any farming in this State, and each such Coloured person carrying on any other business or trade than the one for which he obtained permission to settle in the country shall be liable to fine or punishment as provided in the following Article. (1st offences, a fine not exceeding £25 sterling or in default of payment imprisonment with or without hard labour for a period not exceeding three months, and for subsequent offences the fine and punishment shall each time be doubled).

Indian Opinion, 3-2-1912

APPENDIX VI

TELEGRAM FROM SECRETARY FOR INTERIOR TO GANDHIJI

January 31, 1912

FURTHER TO YOURS YESTERDAY. IN REGARD TO SECTION FIVE, NO LEGAL RIGHTS ARE DISTURBED BECAUSE, IN ANY CASE, A DISCRETION WILL HAVE TO BE LEFT TO THE OFFICER. THAT DISCRETION MAY BE REVISED BY THE BOARD AND, IN THE LAST RESORT, BY THE MINISTER. UNDER SECTION 7, NO EXISTING RIGHTS ARE DISTURBED, AS INTERPROVINCIAL IMMIGRATION WOULD STILL BE A MATTER FOR ADMINISTRATIVE DISCRETION, BUT, OF COURSE, IT IS WELL UNDERSTOOD THAT AS FAR AS POSSIBLE SUCH IMMIGRATION WILL BE KEPT WITHIN NARROW LIMITS, AS YOU

ARE AWARE THAT WAS THE POLICY CARRIED OUT UNDER EXISTING IMMIGRATION LAWS. IN REGARD TO THE DOMICILE CERTIFICATES IN NATAL, THEIR ISSUE WAS OPTIONAL, AND COMPLAINTS HAVE BEEN REPEATEDLY MADE TO MINISTER THAT THEY HAVE BEEN ABUSED. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO CONTINUE ISSUING DOMICILE CERTIFICATES APART FROM SYSTEM OF REGISTRATION AND IDENTIFICATION, AS THOSE CERTIFICATES ARE FREQUENTLY PASSED ON TO OTHERS WHO ARE NOT ENTITLED TO THEM. THE SYSTEM OF PERMITS IN FORCE AT THE CAPE IS NOT BEING ATTENDED ALL OVER THE UNION, AND THE MINISTER IS SURE THAT WITH A REASONABLE ADMINISTRATION IT OUGHT TO GIVE SATISFACTION TO INDIANS WHO WISH FOR LONGER OR SHORTER PERIODS TO VISIT THEIR OWN OR OTHER COUNTRIES. WITH REGARD TO SECTION 28, THE SWORN DECLARATION IS NOT AN IMMIGRATION PROVISION, AND IS ONLY INTENDED TO SAFEGUARD THE ABSTINENCE OF THE PERSON ENTERING FREE STATE FROM CARRYING ON FARMING OR TRADING. THAT BEING SO THE MINISTER DOES NOT UNDERSTAND WHAT POSSIBLE OBJECTION THERE CAN BE TO IT. IF IT IS AGREED TO BE REASONABLE THAT ASIATICS SHOULD NOT TRADE OR FARM IN THAT PROVINCE, SURELY IT IS QUITE REASONABLE TO REQUIRE THEM TO MAKE THE DECLARATION.

From a photostat of a typewritten copy: S.N. 5619

APPENDIX VII

TELEGRAM FROM SECRETARY FOR INTERIOR TO GANDHIJI

February 7, 1912

6/E. REFERENCE YOUR TELEGRAM 1ST FEBRUARY, THERE SEEMS TO BE SOME MISUNDERSTANDING IN YOUR MIND. NOWHERE IN THE BILL ARE THE LAW COURTS EXCLUDED FROM JURISDICTION, AND IT IS A MISTAKE TO THINK THAT UNDER CLAUSE FIVE OR ANY OTHER CLAUSE AN APPEAL WOULD NOT IN LAST RESORT LIE TO A LAW COURT. WITH REGARD TO THE DOMICILE CERTIFICATE, IT IS QUITE IMPOSSIBLE TO HAVE SUCH A SYSTEM INAUGURATED ALL OVER THE UNION. EVEN IN NATAL THERE HAS BEEN A GROSS ABUSE OF THESE CERTIFICATES, AND MORE THAN ONE THOUSAND HAVE ALREADY BEEN CONFISCATED IN THE HANDS OF PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT ENTITLED TO THEM. THE QUESTION WHICH ARISES UNDER SECTION 8 OF CHAPTER 33 WITH REGARD TO A DECLARATION BY AN IMMIGRANT, THE O.F.S. RAISES SOME DIFFICULTIES AND THE DEPARTMENT IS TAKING THE OPINION OF THE LAW OFFICES ON IT. IT SEEMS QUESTIONABLE WHETHER AS THE CLAUSE STANDS

IN THE BILL THE DECLARATION CAN STILL BE REQUIRED.. IT IS HOPED THE PROVISIONS OF THE BILL THESE EXPLANATION [*sic*] WILL PROVE ACCEPTABLE, AS ANY OTHER ATTEMPTS TO PASS A GENERAL IMMIGRATION LAW WITHOUT DIFFERENTIAL PROVISIONS WOULD BE VERY UNLIKELY. MINISTER HAS DONE HIS VERY BEST TO COME TO A FINAL SETTLEMENT ON A QUESTION WHICH HAS DEEPLY AGITATED ALL PARTS OF SOUTH AFRICA, AND HOPES THAT HIS EFFORTS WILL BE SUPPORTED BY THOSE IMMEDIATELY CONCERNED, AND VENTURES TO EXPRESS THE HOPE THAT YOU WILL USE YOUR UNDOUBTED INFLUENCE WITH YOUR COMPATRIOTS TO THIS END. THE BILL CONTAINS NO DIFFERENTIAL PROVISIONS, AND SATISFIES THE POINTS OF HONOUR AND SELF-RESPECT ON WHICH YOU HAVE ALWAYS LAID THE MOST STRESS.

From a photostat of a typewritten copy: S. N. 5619

APPENDIX VIII

LANE'S LETTER TO GANDHIJI

CAPE TOWN
May 14, 1912

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I am asked by the Minister to refer you to your letter of the 24th February in which you refer to an opinion given you by your Counsel in regard to the proposed Immigration Bill. General Smuts asks me to forward for your information a copy of the new draft sub-section which he proposes to insert in place of sub section 2 of section 28 of the draft Immigration Bill now before Parliament. You will remember that it was not certain whether under the provisions of the clause as introduced, the declaration required under section 8 of Chapter XXXIII of the Orange Free State Laws would be required of educated Asiatic immigrants, and that before coming to a definite decision the Department undertook to look into the point.

The matter has been considered and the amendment forwarded under cover of this letter has been drawn up as an alternative to the clause as it stands in the Bill at the present time, the legal advisers being of the opinion that if the provisions of the declaration are included in the Bill the necessity of completing the declaration as set out in schedule 2 of the Chapter is done away with.

With regard to the question of domicile which you raise, I am to say that the Minister intends to insert a clause which, by removing all doubts in the matter, will meet with your support.

I shall be glad if you will let me have an expression of your views on the amendment now before you at an early date as the Minister hopes to bring the Bill forward very shortly in the Assembly.

Believe me,

Yours sincerely,

ERNEST F. C. LANE

From a photostat of the typewritten original: S. N. 5650-1

APPENDIX IX

SMUTS' SPEECH ON I. R. BILL (1912) IN UNION PARLIAMENT

CAPE TOWN,

May 30, 1912

In the House of Assembly on the 30th ultimo, the Minister of the Interior moved the second reading of the Immigrants' Restriction Bill, and stated that the Tuberculosis Commission had been instructed to report first on such questions as might be of importance in regard to the Bill. The report, he thought, was a valuable one, and parts of the recommendations would probably be adopted by the House before the Bill became law. Although the Bill was not of the most urgent importance from a purely South African point of view, yet it was important and urgent from the wider point of view. The questions that received solution in the measure were of great Imperial importance. The Bill intended to put in force and embody in legislation an understanding come to as far back as 1910 with the British Government regarding Asiatics and the immigration of Asiatics, especially Indians, to South Africa. The Minister added that this was not merely a Bill dealing with white immigration to South Africa, but dealt also with the somewhat different and more complicated subject of Asiatic immigration to South Africa. The Asiatic population, and especially the indian population, of South Africa had taken up an attitude, in which they were supported by the India Office and the British Government, whereby they claimed, as regarded the laws of South Africa, that there should be no differentiation between them and the whites. They did not object to differential administrative action or difference applied in practice to them; but they objected to and opposed most strenuously any legislative stigma being put on them, so far as the statutes of this country were concerned. In this attitude they were supported by the British Government, and it was now, as members knew, after a great deal of trouble and negotiation on the part of the present Government, that they had acceded to that position, and they had recognized that in the legislation of the country there should be no difference, but the difference would be confined to the administration of the laws which they might pass. The difficulty in working the Immigration Law in this country was considerable, because whilst, on one hand, they were most anxious to foster the immigration of white people, they were equally anxious to keep Asiatics out. (Hear!Hear!)They had therefore to pass a law applying in the same terms to all

sections, but aiming at bringing certain people in and keeping others out. It looked almost like a Chinese puzzle. After a great deal of consideration, they had decided to adopt the suggestion of the Colonial Office, supported by the Government of India, to apply the Australian education test. This apparently was a very stiff test, but it admitted of being applied with rigour in one case and laxity in another, so that whites might be engaged to come to the country, whilst Asiatics would be kept out. That Australian test, as adopted in the Bill, was the principal provision of the Bill and that was also likely to give rise to the most discussion. It apparently placed enormous powers in the hands of the Government, yet he was prepared to state, on the part of the Government, that in the administration of this law there was not the slightest intention of making it more difficult for white people to come into the country than it was today. The intention was rather the other way. In the past there had been too great a tendency under their existing legislation to lay stress on purely educational qualifications. (Hear! Hear!) A man who wanted to come to this country, and was physically fit and otherwise might be a good citizen, was asked to test his knowledge in some European language. Some of these languages did not concern them in this country in the least. A man who had a very high knowledge of Yiddish did not impress him, and the same applied to Russian and many other languages. What they did want in this country was a certain type of character and physical fitness, and they should not look too much to immigrants' literary attainments or educational qualifications in languages of little use in this country. As for the rest, the Immigration Department would be carried on the same as under existing laws. He was perfectly prepared to state, as he now did, that no test would be applied to white people more difficult in future than was applied in the past. So far as the Indian and Asiatic populations were concerned, he was going to carry out the arrangement with the British Government, and that was that they would permit a small number of educated and professional Asiatics to enter South Africa yearly, but, of course, in limited numbers, but they certainly would provide for others in such a manner that there would not be any influx into this country of Asiatics.

I do not wish to say anything to influence this House. They have seen the Bill, and they are most anxious it should be put on the Statute-book, although they have raised one point in regard to domiciled people which is not in the Bill, but which I want to bring forward as an amendment. The Government of India have also seen the Bill, and agreed to it, and their desire is that it should appear on the Stature-book as soon as possible. Proceeding, Mr. Smuts said the Bill contained the usual provisions as to what were prohibited immigrants and what were not. In this regard he wished to say that, in accordance with the report of the Tuberculosis Commission, they would now have to add another paragraph to his section, by which it would be provided that persons infected with tuberculosis might be permitted into this country under certain conditions. Opinions differed as to whether they should allow people suffering from tuberculosis into this country, but it would, however, be a considerable hardship to close the door to these people without respect to the degree of tuberculosis from which they were suffering, and the Commission had come to the conclusion that these

people might be allowed in under certain conditions, and provided they conformed to certain regulations discussed in the Commission's report. That part of their report he would like to adopt (Hear! Hear!) They should fight the scourge [of] tuberculosis in this country, for it was rapidly becoming one of the most dangerous diseases in the country. They should make a commencement at their seaboards, so that they should not be further infected with this disease. (Hear! Hear!) He agreed they should not entirely close their doors, but he also thought that if the recommendations provided for were accepted it would be possible to prevent any further infection from abroad. Exceptions were also provided in the Bill—that was to say, certain classes of people would be free to come into this country, and would not fall under the provisions of this Bill at all. The provisions of the Bill of last year in this respect had been somewhat extended, so that now all South Africans would be able to come in from abroad with their wives and children. Some difference of opinion has arisen with the Chamber of Mines in the Transvaal as to one of the paragraphs. Provision was made in Clause 5 that the following persons would not be prohibited immigrants, namely, any person who entered the Union in accordance with any law or convention with a neighbouring Government. This provided for the exemption of all those Native labourers from the East Coast of Africa. The convention referred to here was the Mozambique Convention. The Chamber of Mines had raised several difficulties, and had pointed out that Natives coming from Basutoland might technically under this section be prohibited immigrants. Natives coming from Nyasaland, they pointed out, might also be prohibited immigrants. He thought there was not much force in these objections. With regard to Natives from Basutoland, the provisions of the recruiting law of last year dealt with them. The Chamber also pointed to the case of the Nyasaland Natives. Of course, Natives from Basutoland were not prohibited immigrants, as Natives who came here in accordance with any other law were exempted, but if there was any doubt he was prepared to meet the Chamber of Mines. As regards the Nyasaland Natives, his information was to the effect that they were not recruited in Nyasaland. They usually went into Portuguese territory from where they were recruited by the agents of the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association, so that they fell under the Mozam-bique Convention. He, therefore, thought no amendment would be required in regard to these objections. Another important point under this Bill was with regard to the movement of Asiatics in South Africa. It would in future be possible to prevent wholesale immigration into the Union, but the difficult question in regard to interprovincial movements still remained, and this was one of the points which the British Govern-ment had impressed upon them. There was practically no immigration of Asiatics allowed into the Transvaal or Free State, but under the laws of the Cape and Natal Provinces it was possible for Indians and Asiatics to comply with the Education test and enter these Provinces, not only from abroad, but from other Provinces. The Natal Indian who wished to go to the Cape need only pass a low test under the Cape law, and similarly the Transvaal or Cape Asiatic who wished to go to if Natal could do so he passed a test under the Natal law. There was no law in the Cape or Natal as regarded immigration of Asiatics, and therefore, hon. members would

understand the difficulty, as Asiatics could not at present go to the Transvaal or Free State. Now the British Government had asked them in the application of this Bill not to make the position of Asiatics worse than it was. Although they did restrict, under the Bill, the interprovincial movements of Asiatics, they had asked so far as the Caps and Natal were concerned not to go further in actual administration than the law allowed to be done. As regards the position in the Transvaal, added the minister, "We have a free hand, and we can debar their entrance from other parts of the Union to this Province." Whilst it was intended to enforce their law in the interior provinces, they were prepared to make its administration not more drastic than hitherto under the existing law. The question arose, what would be the actual position in a Province like the Free State if this Bill became law? The position there would be that this limited number of Asiatics who would be admitted annually into the Union under this Act, if they were educated or professional people; and if, also, they were in limited numbers as the Union Government might agree to let in.[1] These people would be admitted into the Union, and it would be free for them to settle if they desired in any Province of the Union, even in the Free State, but the provisions of the existing law in the Free state made impossible for them to exercise certain trades and professions or to hold ground. All these prohibitions would remain in force, and the disabilities imposed there would remain, even if they chose to go there. If Clause 28 did not appear quite satisfactory, he was prepared to embody an amendment to make it still more explicit that these people, although they could go anywhere in the Union, even in the Free State, should be debarred from exercising any of those rights they were at present debarred from by existing laws in the Free State. The net result in the Free State would be that the position would be safer from the white point of view, because the present Free State law was certainly of the most lax character. The present law of the Free State provided that an Asiatic might come into the Free State, but within two months of his arrival must apply for permission to remain there. If he got permission he remained, but the door was opened. The Asiatic came first to the Free State, and after two months got permission. That was a most unfortunate provision, for if people were to be prevented from entering the Province it was best to prevent them at the border. Once in the Province, it was very difficult to remove them. The result would be that the position in the Free State would be safer. Continuing, the Minister said that a deal of dissatisfaction arose from time to to time with regard to the administration of the Immigration Department. Officers of the Department were able and painstaking, but they were also human beings and no doubt sometimes did make mistakes, which produced a certain amount of public commotion. Their decisions created some criticism which he thought avoidable, and he proposed, therefore, to appoint Advisory Boards at certain points. It was impossible to appoint a Board at every port of entry into the Union by rail, as well as by sea, but he thought that at Cape Town

[1] There appears to be some mistake in the reproduction of the foregoing point. What Smuts seems to mean, however, is that only those Asiatics would be allowed into the Free State that have passed the Union immigration test and no other.

and Durban they should have Boards which could consider cases where the Immigration Officer was about to prohibit a man from entering the country. These Boards would be so constituted as to provide for fair and impartial consideration to appeals. Some amendments would be necessary to the Bill, such as that a man domiciled in South Africa should have leave to appeal to the law courts. He moved the second reading of the Bill. (Cheers.)

Indian Opinion, 8-6-1912

APPENDIX X

LORD AMPTHILL ON PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT IN HOUSE OF LORDS

LONDON,
July 17, 1912

MY LORDS,

I am not going to take up your Lordships' time with a speech, but I must say a few words of explanation with regard to the Question which stands in my name. I am obliged to put this Question because there was no opportunity in another place for those interested in this supremely important question of the treatment of British Indians in South Africa to elicit information from the Secretary of State. Your Lordships will remember that the Secretary of State took the members of the House of Commons for a tour round the Crown Colonies, which was so interesting and protracted that there was not opportunity to go further. Those of us who have for some years past been interested in this question are feeling very grave anxiety at the present time. Our anxiety is due to two causes—in the first place, that the settlement which was promised so long ago, promised so definitely and so hopefully by the late Secretary of State for the Colonies, has again been postponed; and, in the second place, that the management of the settlement is now in other hands. General Smuts, who was Minister for the Interior, was personally pledged to carry out a settlement which, as we believe, had been agreed upon as satisfactory, not only by the Indian community in South Africa, but also by His Majesty's Government and by the Government of India. But now, unfortunately, the Bill has been postponed, and the office of Minister of the Interior is in other hands—in the hands, I believe, of Mr. Fisher, who unfortunately we know to be, I will only put it this way, less amicably disposed towards the British Indian community than was General Smuts. We should like to know most particularly whether the fact that there is a new Minister of the Interior will make any difference as regard the settlement, and also, of course, why exactly it has been found necessary to postpone this settlement.

Your Lordships will remember that more than a year ago we were assured most confidently and hopefully by the noble Marquess, the Leader of the House, who was then Secretary of State, that the settlement was close at hand, that he was really confident it would be brought about. Perhaps I may remind your Lordships what that settlement was. The essence of the settlement was the repeal of the Transvaal Act No.

2 of 1907, which was so hurtful to the feelings of our Indian fellow citizens in South Africa. That Act, which served no useful purpose and only acted as a humiliation and a soreness to the Indians in South Africa, was to be repealed, while the rights of minors were to be safe-guarded and the principle of the restriction of Asiatic immigration—to which the Indians themselves assented and which they recognized as inevitable and reasonable even—was to be that there should be no racial bar on the Statutes of the Colony. That was the one thing they had been contending for—that Indians should not be excluded on account of their colour. "If you must exclude us", they said, "let it be by administrative differentiation. Do it because it is a matter of economics convenience, but do not do it on the ostensible ground that you think we belong to an inferior race." We had hoped that the settlement might have been brought about long ago. It has been twice postponed. Therefore the first thing I want to know is what are the exact causes of the postponement, and then I should like to know whether His Majesty's Government are satisfied that the Bill which has recently been before the Union Parliament does actually fulfil those conditions of settlement to which I have referred. I know that there are competent lawyers in South Africa who say that it does not fulfil those simple and plain conditions, but that the racial bar is maintained in another form. What is the opinion of His Majesty's Government on that point? And supposing they are not satisfied, what steps have they taken, are they taking, or are they going to take to set that right?

Then it is also alleged—I speak subject to correction, but it is one of the points on which I am asking the noble Lord for information—that this Bill does deprive Indians in the Coast Provinces of rights which they have hitherto held undisputed. Is that the case or not? His Majesty's Government, in the Despatch of October, 1910, I think it was, said that no settlement of the Transvaal Indian trouble would be acceptable if it diminished the rights of Indians in other provinces. All along it was the profession of the South African Government, long before the Union, that they did not wish to diminish the rights of Indians who were already lawfully resident in that country. Lord Selborne, when he was High Commissioner, made that the keynote of his statements on the subject. He said he did not wish in any way to treat Indians who were lawfully resident in the country one whit less well than they had been treated before. The only things he stuck out for was that no more were to be admitted, with the reasonable exception, which has been agreed to now by all parties, that the few educated men who are required for the natural life of the community, as ministers of religions, as doctors, and as lawyers, should be admitted. The number of six per annum was given as a probably reasonable limit to the requirements of the community. I hope it is not the case that, after competent examination, it has been found that this new Bill does actually diminish the existing rights of Indians in the country, because, if that were so, it would be a very grave and unpardonable breach of faith. I trust, therefore, that we shall hear that His Majesty's Government have examined very carefully into that point and have been in friendly communications with the Union Government about it.

But there is one more word which I must say in order to explain the object of

my question, and that is, that the spirit of this settlement, which we were told was so near at hand, seems to have been violated during this period of delay. It was because we were allowed to expect that there would be an immediate settlement that the Indian community themselves agreed to drop their passive resistance movement. It was because we were told that a settlement was at hand that friend of the Indian community in this country stayed their hand and have since shown considerable reticence and self-restraint. We have waited most patiently, we have not bothered the Government with Questions and Motions in Parliament, we have treated them with very considerable trust and confidence and have waited patiently for a long time before asking them again what they were doing in regard to this question. I say that advantage has been taken of this delay to violate the spirit of the settlement. The spirit of the settlement was to treat Indians who were lawfully resident in the country as well as possible. I must show what I mean by quoting some instances. In the first place, the Transvaal Supreme Court have taken a very serious course in deciding against the introduction of plural wives married according to the law of Islam, and there has been a notorious case in which it has been decided that the second wife of Mahomedan cannot be admitted into the Transvaal. It is going further than that. It seems to me to be part of a very deliberate movement, for there is now an attempt to secure a decision against the admission of Mahomedan wives at all into the country on the ground that polygamous marriages are not recognized by the Transvaal law. From there it would only be a step to declare that the offspring of these marriages are illegitimate. I need not enlarge upon that point. I need only appeal to your Lordships' imagination. Your Lordships have only to think for a moment what the consequences would be in India, in Egypt, in every part of the Empire where there are thousands of His Majesty's loyal Mahomedan subjects, if an affront, and insult, of this kind were levelled at the Mahomedan religion. Surely the whole spirit of rule under the British flag wherever it was flown has been religious toleration. There seems to me absolutely no ground for departure from that principle, and surely, whatever the risk may be, it is the duty of His Majesty's Government to uphold that principle wherever there are British citizens under the British flag. That is a very serious matter. Apart from everything else, a necessary question, if the movement is allowed to continue, is the breaking up of homes, the wives not being allowed to come in or being turned out of the country, the separation of families, the ruin of business, the expulsion of men whose right to be in the country has never been questioned, and consequences which I leave to the imagination of any one of your Lordship who will take the trouble to give the matter a thought. I want to know what His Majesty's Government have done in regard to this decision of the Supreme Court of the Transvaal. Have they pointed out how fatal would be the consequences of carrying this movement any further? Have they protested? What has been the nature of their protest, and what answer have they received?

There is another matter, and that is the growing tendency on the part of the immigration officers to exercise arbitrary power. On one case I had occasion to correspond with the Colonial Office, but I got vary little satisfaction. That case

showed this, that even of an Indian can prove his right to be in the country to the satisfaction of the Supreme Court, it is within the power of the immigration officer to keep him out. That was proved by the decision in that particular case. It is said—I want to know whether it is the case or not—that the present Bill increases the arbitrary powers of the immigration officers. General Smuts, in introducing the Bill, did make some sort of apology for what he regarded as the occasional excesses on the part of the immigration officers. On a par with this action of the immigration officers is the exclusion of children of lawful residents in the country by the Portuguese officials at Mozambique at the instance of the Immigration Department of the Union. What has been the consequence of this? It is a very serious consequence, and I cannot understand for the life of me why more notice has not been taken of it. The result is that the Germans are imitating our example. In German East Africa they are proposing anti-Indian legislation on the ground that we are pursuing the same course. What will be our position as a nation before the people of India if we are obliged to confess that we cannot protest against this exclusion by a foreign country because it is merely what we are doing ourselves? There are other matters which are serious enough, though they are smaller. For instance, the growing tendency to exercise the trade licensing laws in Natal with the apparent object of making it impossible for Indians to have a right to be in Natal, whose right has never been questioned, with the object of compelling them to leave the the country. The same is being done, during this period of delay of which I have spoken, with the Township Act in the Transvaal and the Gold Law. The tendency of the regulations, which seem to be unlawful regulations, under that Act is to force Indians into Locations. I should have thought that His Majesty's Government, of all people, would instantly object to and resent any attempt to force Indians into Locations. That was the test of Chinese slavery. The one test was that Chinese labourers were obliged to live in Locations. What, then is the Government answer to and their justification of this deliberate tendency to force Indians into Locations?

I could give scores of instances of the way in which advantage has been taken of this Bill to oppress—there is no other word—the lawful Indian residents in the Transvaal. What I want to know is whether His Majesty's Government have been taking note of these oppressive sets, whether they have done anything to protect His Majesty's subjects, our Indian fellow subject, who are in South Africa and have every right to be there, whose right have never been questioned. I emphasize that because it is not a case of immigrants who have forced their way in without permission. I do hope the noble Lord who is going to answer me will not give that answer which I have often heard before, and which I dare say the occupants of the Front Bench opposite think good enough for me. It is not good enough for those on whose behalf I speak. It is not good enough for anybody who regards this question from the point of view of common sense and the interests of the Empire as apart from the ordinary devices of political parties in Parliament. That answer is that you cannot interfere with a self-governing Colony. That comes to be satisfying to many people, but it is a rotten answer, a stupid answer. In the first place, there is no question of interference.

Let me remind you of the Malecka case. If you can interfere with the Government of a foreign country, over which you cannot possible exercise any compulsion, in order to secure the reversal of the acts of a Court of Justice on behalf of one single person who was only half British citizen if she was a British citizen at all, then surely you have a right to do something, to say something, to make a bargain, to come to an understanding, about thousands of persons who are wholly British citizens, and to that understanding with people who are your own national kinsmen, who are under the British flag, who are under the authority of our Sovereign, and with whom—and that is the point—we have absolutely vital interests in common. If you cannot come to an agreement with our kinsmen in our Dominions oversea about matters which concern the whole welfare of the Empire, then I say that the Empire itself cannot have any existence in fact.

I wish to Heaven that I had the power or the knowledge which would enable me to create public opinion and propitiate those wizards of the Press who, for good or for evil, influence our destinies in the same way as opinion was created and the Press were propitiated in regard to the Malecka case. Ten thousand times justification has there been during the last five years in the case of our Indian fellow subjects in Transvaal; and if the pressure which. I refer to in the Malecka case was potent to move the Government in this country to action, to oblige then to interfere, with a foreign country over whom we have no power of control, how much more, had I known the trick, would it have been possible to move them into action in regard to our Indian fellow subjects in Transvaal? I hope I have made it clear to the noble Lord what are the exact points on which I wish to have an answer.

Indian Opinion 7-9-1912

APPENDIX XI

UNION MINISTERS' MINUTES FOR IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT REGARDING TOWNSHIPS AMENDMENT ACT (1908)

A

June 16, 1911

With reference to His Excellency the Governor-General's minute, of the 12th instant, No.15/139, transmitting a telegram from the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State for the Colonies, asking for Ministers' observations on the petition of the British Indian Association, copy of which was enclosed in His Excellency's minute of 8th May, and on the question raised by the South Africa British Indian Committee in their letter of the 5th May, on the subject of the effect of Section 130 of the Transvaal Gold law, Ministers desire to state that they do not think that is necessary to review the situation which has arisen under Law No. 3 of 1885, and subsequent laws dealing with the rights of Asiatics to own or otherwise hold property outside Locations and Bazaars.

The grievance to which attention is particularly drawn in the enclosures to the Governor-General's minute refers to certain police action which has been taken at Klerksdorp under Section 130 of the Precious and Base Metals Act of 1908. The reference by the British Indian Association to the Townships Amendment Act, 1908, is not understood by Ministers, as no provision such as is alleged to exist is contained in that Act.

With regard to the Section of the Precious and Base Metals Act referred to, Ministers wish to point out that that law deals primarily and almost entirely with mineral and mining rights, from which Coloured people have always been excluded under the provisions of the Mining Law of the Transvaal. No doubt the language of Section 130 is wide enough to cover all rights conferred under the Act of 1908 as well as under previous Gold Law; but there is no intention of interfering with the business or rights of carrying on business which Indians have acquired and exercised previous to the enactment of Act 35 of 1908. Ministers are informed that the Stands at Klerksdorp in reference to which action has been taken were clandestinely acquired for business purposes by Indians subsequent to the passive of the Act, and in contravention of the Section referred to. They understand that action has been taken at the instance of the local trading community, which is profoundly exercised over the rapid ousting of white traders by the Indians. Ministers are, however, causing further enquiries to be made in order to avoid as far as possible any harsh application of the provisions of Section 130 of the law in question.

J. C. SMUTS

B

December 2, 1911

With reference to His Excellency the Governor-General's Minute No.15/170, of the 1st September, on the subject of the position of British Indians under the Transvaal Townships Amendment Act of 1908 and the Transvaal Gold Law, Ministers have the honour to state that the Courts by their recent judgment in the Tamblin case[1] seem now to have finally interpreted the meaning and scope of Section 130 of Act (Transvaal) No.35 of 1908, so for as it affects the right of occupation of Stands by Coloured persons under lease from white holders on proclaimed areas outside townships.

[1] At Roodepoort, one Alfred Tamblin was charged under Section 130 of the Gold Law of 1908 for subletting a mining Stand to two Asiatics, Ahmed Khan and Abdulla Khan. His counsel argued that under the old Gold Law, an owner had the right to sublet his Stand to Coloured persons and that under Section 77 of the present Gold Law, Coloured persons were entitled to acquire rights to Stand, but the case was remanded. Subsequently, a Krugersdorp magistrate found Tamblin guilty and sentenced him. On appeal, the Transvaal Division of the Supreme Court Africa acquitted Tamblin and ruled that the Asiatics in question were protected by Section 77 of the new Gold Law. *Indian Opinion*, 24-6-1911 & 2-9-1911.

With regard to the position of such persons in townships within mining areas it is, an His Excellency will be aware, one of the conditions attaching to freehold grants in Stand townships and private townships that the land shall not be occupied by Coloured persons. Ministers, however, desire to repeat the assurance they have already given that they do not propose to interfere with vested rights in such townships which were acquired by individuals prior to the date of such grants; but it is impossible for them to allow attempts in the direction of the acquisition of new rights to be made without taking action. In this connection they desire to add that the leaders of the Asiatic community appear to be making an organized attempt to invade townships where Asiatics had no rights before, and public opinion amongst the European community is, consequently, becoming greatly exercised; so much so that Ministers will, in all probability, be compelled to take action under the Townships Act to enforce the conditions contained in the title-deeds.

S. W. SAUER

Indian Opinion, 27-4-1912

APPENDIX XII

GOKHALE'S LETTER TO GANDHI

THANET HOUSE,
231-2, STRAND,
LONDON, W. C.
July 27, 1912

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I wired to you the day before yesterday to inform you definitely that I have booked my passage by the *Saxon*, which sails from Southampton on 5th Oct[ober]. This means that I shall reach Cape Town on 22nd Oct[ober] and it will give me about 24 days in South Africa, and I must leave Durban for Bombay on 16th Nov[ember.] Last Saturday I had a letter from Lord Crewe, offering me a seat in the proposed Royal Commission on Public Services in India and I have accepted the offer. But the Commission will not begin work till the beginning of January next. So that will not now necessitate my starting for South Africa earlier than 5th Oct[ober]. Miss Polak tells me that she has written to you by the letter going out today about the difficulty I have had in the matter of my booking my passage. This morning, however, I had a letter from Sir Owen Phillipps, Chairman of the Union Castle Company, telling me that things would be put right and that everything would be done to make my travelling comfortable If Sir Owen's reply had been unsatisfactory, I had meant to write to the papers and several editors—Mr. Spender of the *Westminster Gazette*, Mr. Gardiner of the *Daily News*, Mr. Massingham of the *Nation* and a member on the staff of *The Times* would have vigorously taken up the matter and Mr. Ramsay MacDonald had intended asking questions in the House. Mr. Harcourt, too, whom I met at a lunch the other day at the house of the Spenders, was very angry and had asked me to let him

know if Sir Owen's reply failed to give me satisfaction. However, I don't think anything should now be done in this matter, though in a way I am sorry to drop it, as the question of principle involved in it remains more or less unsolved.

Miss Polak also tells me that she has written to you to suggest that she should pay a visit to South Africa this autumn so as to be able to deal here with first-hand knowledge with our S. A. problems. I entirely agree with her, & I do hope most earnestly that you will approve her proposal. I have been least that enormous difficulties she has to contend against in this office, & the least that can be done to help her in her work is to give her an opportunity to acquire a first-hand knowledge of South Africa. From every point of view, her idea is the right one. If the question of expense is likely to deter you from approving it, I undertake to raise the hundred pounds which her visit will cost, on my return to India. Please therefore approve her plan & authorize her by wire to engage her passage.

I leave for the continent on 5th Aug[ust]. Letters received here at the National Liberal Club (Whitehall Place, S. W.) will be forwarded to me wherever I may be.

Yours sincerely,

G. K. GOKHALE

From a photostat of the handwritten original: S. N. 5672

APPENDIX XIII

POLAK'S LETTER TO INDIA GOVERNMENT ON GOLD LAW AND TOWNSHIPS ACT (1908)

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY,
SIMLA

April 19, 1912

[SIR,]

In view of the recent publication of the White Paper [Cd. 6087], containing "correspondence relating to the position of British Indians under the Gold Law and Townships Amendment Act, 1908, of the Transvaal", and especially of paragraph 2 of the Union Government's Minute (Enclosure in No. 9), at page 17 thereof, I have the honour, on behalf of the Indian community of the Province, to offer the following observations.

2. Law 3 of 1885, operating against the Native races of Asia, excludes Indians and other Asiatics from the ownership of landed property, except in Bazaars or Locations.

3. The Transvaal Administration, however, have declined to grant them freehold or long leasehold title of landed property in such Locations, but have permitted them to acquire leases, of 21 years only, of the Stands into which these Locations are divided, and, in Johannesburg, a monthly tenancy is alone allowed.

4. In spite, however, of the legal prohibition against the ownership, by an Indian, of landed property, the custom grew up of the creation of virtual trust, whereby European friends of Indian traders took nominal transfer of certain properties, which, however, were bought and paid for by the Indian, and virtually owned by them, These properties were acquired, not for speculative purposes, but for the furtherance of legitimate business interest, and the virtual Indian owners, as a rule, built substantial and modern structures thereon, costing many thousands of pounds in the aggregate, as residences for themselves and as business premises.

5. Of the fact that these transactions were not secret means of defeating the law, there is sample evidence.

6. Before Law 3 of 1885 came into force, Messrs Mahomed Ismail, Indian traders of Klerksdorp, bought at public section certain Stands in the Township, upon the condition of the payment of monthly licences thereon, and the Stands were registered in their name. It became customary amongst the Klerksdorp Stand-holders to pay the Stand licences half-yearly, and Messrs Mahomed Ismail made payment in this way. After some time, an anti-Indian agitation arose, the Republican Government intervened, and summarily confiscated the Stands without compensation to the Indian owners, who strongly protested against this unwarranted act of spoliation. After lengthy negotiations, the Government notified the Indian traders that they would be permitted to resume the ownership of the Stands, upon condition that these were registered in the land registered in the name of some European. The condition was accepted, and the land was so transferred, at the suggestion of the authorities themselves.

7. The late Mr. Aboobaker Amod, the pioneer Indian trader in South Africa, bought in 1885, a certain Stand, in Church Street, Pretoria, before the law was enforced, but transfer was not granted before that date. The Indian owner died, and transfer was refused direct to the heirs, but granted to certain European nominees on their behalf. The injustices of the situation was realized by the new Transvaal Government, in 1907, who, in Act 2 of that year, endeavoured to provide for transfer to the heirs. The property had meanwhile been registered in my name. On an application to the Supreme Court, however, it was held that the provision of Act 2 had been so worded as to preclude transfer to the hiers, and, in framing Act 36 of 1908, provision was made, in terms, for the transfer to them of the Stand registered in my name, the entire transaction being recorded in a clause of a Transvaal Act of Parliament.

8. In the year 1905, in the appeal case of *Syed Ismail and Another v. Jacobs, N. O.*, such virtual trusts were distinctly recognized by the Court. Some months afterwards, when the legality of such transfers was questioned by the Deeds Office, and legal opinion was sought by the Department, it was held that the Supreme Court's decision in this case put the legality of such transactions beyond dispute, and a number of similar ones took place subsequently to that time.

9. In the debate in the House of Lords, on the 19th February last, on Lord Ampthill's questions dealing with the operation of the Townships Amendment Acts

of 1908 and 1909, Lord Selborne, late High Commissioner for South Africa and Governor of the Transvaal, put the matter of the openness with which those transactions were carried out beyond all doubt. In the Official Report, he is recorded to have said: "A British Indian subject might not own the freehold of land and he might not engage directly in a mining enterprise. I say here, my Lord, what I have said before to a Transvaal audience. I do not think these two restrictions are justifiable. I think they are not only not justifiable, but they are very foolish, *because they are perfectly inoperative*. A British Indian is forbidden to hold land in freehold, *but he holds it absolutely securely through the medium of a white man with whom he makes arrangement*."

10. Whilst, then, it is plain that the law denied Indians the right of ownership of fixed property, it is equally evident that, apart from certain extra incidental expenses, the wealthier members of the Transvaal Indian community suffered little actual hardship from the denial, by season of the growth of a custom of indirect ownership, recognized both by the Courts and by the Government of the Colony.

11. If the Imperial Government and the Transvaal Indians pressed for the repeal of the prohibition clause of Law 3 of 1885, it was not only for the protection of the less well-endowed members of the community, but for the removal of a racial disability, imposed neither upon the aboriginal Natives nor upon any other Coloured British subjects in the Transvaal.

12. It should be realized that, whilst individual Indians have availed themselves of the right of indirect ownership of landed property, the right was held prospectively by every single member of the community.

13. In the year 1908, the Townships Amendment Act (No. 34 of 1908, Transvaal) was passed, amending the Townships Act of 1907, and dealing specifically with Stands in a township. This measure, and a subsequent amending Act of 1909, were framed in general terms, i.e., they contained no racial differentiation, and made provision for the conversion, in certain circumstances and on certain conditions, of leasehold titles into freehold titles.

14. Whilst, however, in ordinary circumstances, no leaseholder is obliged to make application for the grant of freehold, in certain circumstances, such an application is rendered compulsory.

15. These Acts provided for the publication of regulations (see Appendix[1] to White Paper [Cd. 6087]), setting forth the conditions upon which the freehold grants are to be made.

16. These conditions were published under Government Notice (Transvaal) NO.640 of 1909, and sub-clause (d)reads as follows: "It (the land granted by the deed of grant)or any portion of it shall not be transferred, leased, or, in any other manner, assigned or disposed of to any Coloured person;and no Coloured person, other than the domestic servants of the registered owner or his tenant shall be permitted to reside

[1] Not reproduced here

thereon or in any other manner occupy the same. *Any branch of the foregoing condition shall entitle the Government of the Transvaal to cancel this grant and resume possession of the land hereby granted, without payment of any compensation in respect of buildings or structures erected on or improvement effected to the said land.”*

17. It should be observed that, though the parent law is couched in nondifferential terms, the conditions of the Crown Grant, which from an integral part thereof, impose a serious racial disability, in that they deprive the Indian community of the indirect right, hitherto possessed by them, of holding fixed property, Moreover, in the circumstances alluded to in paragraph, 14 hereof, Indians at present owning landed property indirectly may be at a future date, deprived of their property lawfully acquired without compensation.

18. The Indian community hold that these conditions are *ultra vires* of the law, or, in the alternative, that the law itself is *ultra vires*, and, therefore, unconstitutional. They hold that the tenor of the Townships Amendment Acts of 1908 and 1909 is such as to preclude the framing of differential regulations. On the other hand, the Transvaal Constitution of 1906 provides that differential legislation must be reserved for the expression of Royal wishes thereon. The Acts of 1908 and 1909, being in general terms, were not reserved, but were assented to immediately by the Governor. The differential regulations framed thereunder were never brought before the cognizance of Parliament, nor were they submitted to the scrutiny of His Majesty’s Secretary of State. It is held that the requirements of the Constitution have not been complied with, and that the regulations are of no force or effect.

19. Partly in order to extend his business and partly to test the validity of the regulations, Mr. Ahmed Moosa Bhyat, in the latter part of last year, in the exercise of the right of indirect ownership of landed property hitherto recognized by the Courts and Government of the Province, purchased the freedhold of certain Stands in the Township of Boksburg, which were registered in the name of Mr. Lewis Walter Ritch, Barrister-at-Law, lately the Secretary of the South Africa British Indian Committee, in England, and presently practising as an Attorney of the Supreme Court of the Union of South Africa, in johannesburg.

20. Previously to that date, the white inhabitants of the township had combined to refuse to sell indirectly to Indians any Stands therein, with the object of maintaining Boksburg as a white preserve, confining the Indian residents to the Location. Mr. Bhyat, having been able to find a seller, purchased the aforementioned property, erected, at great expense, suitable premises, and opened a general dealer’s business therein, having previously obtained from the Government a licence thereto.

21. The trade jealousy of Mr. Bhyat’s European commercial rivals has, however, been aroused, he has been the victim of an organized boycott, and the white residents have induced the Union Government to institute proceedings against Messrs Ritch and Bhyat for the cancellation of the title-deeds, a declaration of forfeiture of the property, ejectment, and damages. In order to defend their position, they are both

faced with costly litigation, whilst Mr. Bhyat stands to lose his property and his business, without compensation therefor. It should be added that his stock has been supplied to him by European wholesale firms of Johannesburg, to whom he has been known, as a trader of high integrity, for many years.

22. In bringing these facts to the notice of Government, I am desirous of emphasizing the growing tendency in the Union to legislate by means of regulations of which both the Union parliament and the Imperial Government are wholly ignorant. I wish also to make it clear that the Indian community are claiming no new right or privilege, but merely the retention of one that existed up to the date of the enforcement of the aforementioned Acts, whilst, nevertheless, not withdrawing the demand for the repeal of the differential provisions of Law 3 of 1885, whose injustice has been the subject of many remonstrances by the Imperial authorities, both before and since the War.

23. I venture, accordingly, to request Government to use their utmost efforts to prevent the imposition of further disabilities upon an already overburdened community, and to secure the preservation to them of a right, actual and potential, always hitherto recognized and justified.

[*Yours, etc.*]

H. S. L. POLAK

Indian Opinion, 6-7-1912

APPENDIX XIV

GLADSTONE'S MINUTE ON MEETING WITH GOKHALE

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
PRETORIA,
November 19, 1912

CONFIDENTIAL

SIR,

Mr. Gokhale came to luncheon with me yesterday, and subsequently we discussed the British Indian question.

2. I ascertained from the Prime Minister that some of his Ministers and many persons in the Orange Free State had taken umbrage at what they considered a minatory passage in one of Mr. Gokhale's speeches. But I am satisfied that Mr. Gokhale has no intention of making a threat. He wished to present to his audience the position in India, and the danger which might result from a continued stated of friction in South Africa. The danger is all the greater because of inevitable exaggerations, and the efforts of revolutionaries to use the grievances of British Indians in South Africa against the British in India. In one of his speeches at Durban, he made his intention clear. He stated that he is sincerely anxious for the passage of the Immigration Bill, though he is disturbed at Mr. Fischer's apparent wish to

substitute a Canadian test for the Australian. Ministers however say that Mr. Fischer's idea is his own and not theirs. Mr. Gokhale appeared to attach much more importance to the licensing question and the £3 tax.

3. As regards the £3 tax, the Prime Minister told me that he thought it would be possible to meet Mr. Gokhale's view, though there might be strong opposition in Natal. From what Mr. Gokhale said I gathered that the Prime Minister had given him a satisfactory assurance.

4. The licensing question is likely to cause trouble, but for the present I think it is best to concentrate effort on the passage of the Immigration Bill. I am convinced that the Prime Minister and General Smuts ate sincerely anxious to put it through, and probably the irritation caused by Mr. Gokhale's somewhat indiscreet language on the position in India will die down.

5. Mr. Gokhale has seen most of the influential members of the Unionist party, including Mr. Alexander, who was the protagonist against the Bill. From all of them he says he has received satisfactory promises of support when the Bill is before Parliament. He had arranged to see Sir Thomas Smart before sailing form Lourenco Marques on Monday.

6. Last session the Second Reading of the Bill was taken dangerously late. Its fate was sealed by the silence of the Opposition leaders, and the determined opposition of some of the rank and file.

7. I can hardly believe that the Unionist party will again fail next session to support General Botha and his colleagues in their endeavour, in the highest interests of the Empire, to remove grievances in South Africa which are productive of grave mischief and danger in India. If the Opposition leaders do their duty to the Empire next session, and if Minister fulfil their promise to bring in the Bill at an early date, there seems to be no reason to anticipate another regrettable failure.

8. Mr. Gokhale expressed his gratitude for the courtesy and consideration of the Union Government and all the officials concerned in their arrangements throughout his stay in South Africa for his comfort and convenience.

9. He will present a report to Lord Hardinge as soon as possible after landing in India, which in due course will doubtless be transmitted to you.

I have, etc.

GLADSTONE

GOVERNOR-GENERAL

Colonial Office Records: C.O. 551/30

APPENDIX XV

GOKHALES SPEECH AT BOMBAY[1]

December 14, 1912

The Hon. Mr. Gokhale, who was received most enthusiastically, then said: "Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, I cannot tell you how glad I am to be back again in India and my joy is further intensified by the kind and cordial greetings which this great gathering has extended to me and the generous terms in which, you, Sir, have spoken of my work in South Africa. Your warm welcome joined to the undoubted satisfaction with which our countrymen in South Africa have regarded the visit, is to me ample reward for such strain as the work imposed on me while it lasted. You probably know, what I have publicity stated more once, that my visit was undertaken in response to an earnest invitation repeatedly presses on me by our great countryman there, Mr. Gandhi. When I first made up my mind, however to pay the visit, my idea was to go about the country as quietly as possible to visit all important Indian centres, to collect such facts as I could concerning the treatment to which our countrymen were subjected there [and] on my return to lay those facts before the Government and the people of this country in the hope of stimulating thereby greater exertion on this side in support of the Indian cause in South Africa . . . When, however, I reached Cape Town and actually saw how anxious the Union Government was to treat me with every consideration and how arrangements had already been made for my meeting not only my own countrymen at all important centres, but also members of the European community at these centres, the only thing left to me was to enter whole-heartedly into the spirit of the arrangements and utilize to the full the opportunities placed within my reach. To have done anything else in these circumstances would have been to betray the cause which I had gone there to serve and to show myself unworthy of the confidence which my countrymen there had chosen to repose in me."

HOW THE TIME WAS SPENT

Mr. Gokhale then described how his four weeks in South Africa were spent in visiting important Indian centres, meeting not only thousands of Indian residents in that country, but also a large number of Europeans, many of them men of note, addressing meetings somethings sometimes composed exclusively of Indians, sometimes of Europeans, but more often mixed gathering of both Europeans and Indians discussing the several phases of the question in interviews and at conferences with leading men of all shades of opinion and representing various interests. He was already fairly familier with the Indian side

[1] Gokhale arrived in Bombay from South Afica on December 13, 1912, and this speech was delivered on December 14 at a public meeting convened in the Town Hall by the Sheriff and attended by both Indians and Europeans.

of the question and it did not take him long after his arrival at Cape Town to acquire a firm grasp of the facts of the case so far as the Indians were concerned. And the access that he was enabled to have to the European community gave him exceptional opportunities to acquaint himself with the feelings and opinions of different sections of the European community. After examining the whole question from every point of view, Mr. Gokhale met the Ministers—General Botha, General Smuts and Mr. Fischer—on 14th November at Pretoria in a long interview lasting for two hours, when they went over the whole ground point by point and there was a full and frank interchange of views, the Ministers promising a careful consideration of the case submitted to them and they on their side explaining what they considered to be the special difficulties of the position. On the following day Mr. Gokhale had an opportunity of laying the whole matter before the Governor-General, H. E. Lord Gladstone, and then he left South Africa, feeling satisfied in his own mind that he had done all that he was capable of and bringing away with him the liveliest recollections of the wealth of affection lavished on him by his countrymen there, of the extreme kindness with which the European community had treated him and of the great consideration and courtesy shown to him by the Union Government.

A POSITION OF DIFFICULTY

Proceeding, Mr. Gokhale said: "Before I attempt to give you an idea of the state of things as I found it there . . . I should like to make one or two observations of a somewhat personal character. The first is about the extreme difficulty of my position in South Africa. Never before in my life, I assure you, had I to walk on such difficult and delicate ground, nor did I ever feel so oppressed with a sense of responsibility as during my four weeks in South Africa . . .

"My second observation will be about my dear and illustrious friend, Mr. Gandhi. From the moment I landed at Cape Town to the moment I left South Africa and even afterwards during nearly the whole of my visit to East Africa, Mr. Gandhi was with me and we were together nearly every moment of our walking hours. He had taken upon himself the duties of my private secretary, but he was in reality my guide, philosopher and friend. I do not wish to speak on this occasion of the devoted love with which he surrounded me but I feel it to be my duty to pay a brief, though altogether inadequate, tribute to the great work he has done for India in South Africa.

HERO AND MARTYR

"Ladies and gentlemen, only those who have come in personal contact with Mr. Gandhi as he is now, can realize the wonderful personality of the man. He is without doubt made of the stuff of which heroes and martyrs are made. Nay, more. He has in himthe marvellous spiritual power to turn ordinary men around him into heroes and martyrs. During the recent passive resistance struggle in the Transvaal—would you believe it?—twenty-seven hundred sentences of imprisonment were borne by our countrymen there under Mr. Gandhi's guidance to uphold the honour of their country. Some of the men among them were very substantial persons, some were small traders,

but the bulk of them were poor and humble individuals, hawkers, working men, and so forth, men without education, men not accustomed in their life to think or talk of their country. And yet these men braved the horrors of gaol- life in the Transvaal and some of them braved them again and again rather than submit to degrading legislation directed against their country. Many homes were broken in the course of that struggle, many families disperses, some men at one time wealthy, lost their all and became paupers, women and children endured untold hardships. But they were touched by Mr. Gandhi's spirit and that had wrought the transformation, thus illustrating the great power which the spirit of man can exercise over human minds and even over physical surroundings. In all my life I have known only tow men who have affected me spiritually in the manner that Mr. Gandhi does—our great patriarch, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji and my late master, Mr. Ranade—men before whom not only are we ashamed of doing anything unworthy, but in whose presence our very minds are afraid of thinking anything that is unworthy. The Indian cause in South Africa has really been built up by Mr. Gandhi. Without self and without stain, he has fought his great fight for this country during a period now of twenty years and India owes an immense debt of gratitude to him. He has sacrificed himself utterly in the service of the cause. He had a splendid practice at the bar, making as much as five to six thousand pounds a year, which is considered to be a very good income for a lawyer in South Africa. But he has given all that up and he lives now on £3 a month like the poorest man in the street. One most striking fact about him is that though he has waged this great struggle so ceaselessly, his mind is absolutely free from all bitterness against Europeans. And in my tour nothing warmed my heart more than to see the universal esteem in which the European community in South Africa holds Mr. Gandhi. At every gathering, leading Europeans, when they came to know that Mr. Gandhi was there, would immediately gather round him anxious to shake hands with him, making it quite clear that though they fought him hard and tried to crush him in the course of the struggle, they honoured him as a man. To may mind Mr. Gandhi's leadership of the Indian cause in South Africa is the greatest asset of that cause and it was an inestimable privilege to me that he was with me throughout my tour to pilot me safely through my difficulties."

THE POSITION ANALYSED

Proceeding to describe the position of the Indians in South Africa, Mr. Gokhale said that the Union of South Africa consisted of four provinces—Cape Colony, Natal, Transvaal, and Orangia and in the whole Union there was a total Indian population of about a hundred and fifty thousand persons. Of that, roughly speaking, about a hundred and twenty thousand were in Natal, about twenty thousand were in the Cape and about ten thousand were in the Transvaal. In Orangia there were hardly any Indian, the total number not exceeding a hundred, as some years ago, the Boer Government of that time forcibly expelled from the Republic all Indian except such as were domestic servants. Four fifths of the entire Indian population in South Africa represented indentured labourers, ex-indenturted and their descendants. The

remainder were free persons who had gone there at their own expense in the wake of the indentured labourers. One peculiarity of the position which the meeting had to realize was that there was no educated class among the Indians in South Africa similar to the educated class of this country—the men who followed, what were called, learned or liberal professions being so few as to be counted on one's fingers. The bulk of the people were either tradesmen or working men and a few were domestic servants. The traders were most of them petty traders, though some were fairly substantial. Speaking roughly, there were about two thousand traders and five to six thousand hawkers in each one of the three provinces mentioned. Of the working men a large proportion were still serving their indenture, while the rest were ex-indentured labourers or their descendants. In the Cape Indian could acquire both the municipal and the political franchise. In the Natal they had the municipal franchise but not the political and in the two Dutch provinces they were rigorously excluded from both the municipal and the political franchise. The present immigration law was different for the different provinces. In cape Colony and Natal Indians could enter only by passing a test in a European Language and the average number of such immigrants for the last few years was between 40 and 50 for the two provinces together—a surprisingly small number. In the Transvaal and Orangia new Indians were at present prohibited altogether from entering. The traders' and hawkwers' licences in Cape Colony and Natal had to be renewed every year and the grant of new licences lay in the discretion of local authorities manned almost entirely by the European trade rivals of Indian traders. In the Transvaal, on the other hand, licences had to be granted as a matter of course for the mere tender of a licence fee. But there were two laws in force there, known as the Gold Law and the Townships Act, the combined effect of which was to make those licences practically worthless. Wherever an area was declared to be a gold area under those laws, Indians could only reside and trade in special Locations situated as a rule at some distance from the towns. In Cape Colony and Natal, Indians could own land or acquire other immovable property, which they could not do in the Transvaal and Orangia. In addition to these there were several minor disabilities, including many galling social ones of greater or less severity in the different provinces. Finally there was hardly any provision for the education of Indian children. A few primary schools were to be found here and there mostly maintained by missionary bodies or by the community itself. Throughout South Africa there was no provision of any kind for the secondary, higher or technical education of Indian children.

A HEART-RENDING SITUATION

When the speaker arrived in South Africa and took a broad survey of the Indian position as he found it, he confessed his heart for a time sank within him. The position in many ways was truly pitiable and heart-rending. It was well known that the lot of their countrymen in the Transvaal, hard as it was in the days of the Boer Republic, had grown far harder since it became a British Province. But it was not so well known that in Natal and even in the Cape the situation had been steadily getting

worse since the Union, the harsh anti-Indian Transvaal spirit gradually infecting the whole Union. Mr. Gokhale found on his arrival that almost every section of the Indian community throughout South Africa was filled with a serious dread about its future, a feeling of insecurity, harassment and oppression prevailing generally such as was bound to demoralize any community. A large proportion of European population was e*vide*ntly determined to a make things so intolerable for the Indians there that they should of their own accord get out of the country. Not only were some of the laws under which they lived harsh and unjust, but even the administration of other laws, which in themselves were neither harsh nor unjust, was so oppressive as to drive the community well nigh to despair. Thus the Immigration Law in regard to old Indian settlers in the Cape and Natal was being so worked as to fill everyone with the fear that if he left the country temporarily on a visit to India or elsewhere, he might have difficulty in getting back. About the same time that Mr. Gokhale arrived at Cape Town, a case occurred there illustrating what he was saying. At present an Indian settler in that province wishing to be temporarily absent from the country had to take out a permit with him specifying the period within which he should return. And an Indian trader who had thus left with a year's permit on a visit to India, leaving his business in charge of his wife and children, returned one day late, owing to his steamer having been held up four days on the way by a storm. If the steamer had run according to schedule time, he would have arrived at Cape Town three days before the expiry of his permit. And yet on the technical ground that he had not returned within the specified time, he was turned back, his business ruined and his wife and children put under the necessity of leaving the country. Similarly in Natal old settlers were provided with domicile certificates which were supposed to give them the right of going out of the country and coming back whenever they liked, the only provision being that Immigration Officer should satisfy himself about the genuineness of the certificates. In exercise of that power even holders of certificated 15 or 16 years old were being cross-examined, on their return to Natal after a temporary absence, as to minute details of where they lived, what they did when they first arrived and so forth. And the smallest discrepancy between the answers unwarily given by the men and the actual recorded facts was deemed sufficient to justify the rejection of the certificates, compelling the holders to return to Indian absolutely ruined men. Now the speaker would put it to his European friends on the platform how many of them, if they were suddenly asked all sorts of questions as to when they first came into this country, where they lived, what they did and so on, would be able to answer such questions without making any mistake. Again, the question of trading an hawking licences was agitating the Indian mind gravely throughout Cape Colony and Natal. Both provinces had now clearly entered on a policy of granting no new licences to Indians as far as possible and of steadily extinguishing all existing licences as opportunities offered themselves. As those licences were renewable every year, a feeling of the utmost uncertainty as to what would happen to his licence when the time for a renewal came filled the mind of every Indian trader. Businessmen in Bombay would have no difficulty in understanding how

ruinous must be the consequences of such a state of things and how much constant anxiety about the future must paralyse and finally destroy all business enterprise among the persons affected. In the Transvaal the steady extension of the gold area condemning Indian traders to trade and reside only in Locations was in itself a frightful hardship.

RELENTLESS OPPRESSION

But some local authorities were carrying the policy of relentless oppression still further by breaking up old Location if Indians were found to be doing business successfully in them and ordering them to remove to fresh Locations even more disadvantageously situated. The speaker had personally visited several Locations and he could only say that the whole policy involved in them deserved to be denounced in the strongest terms. They would thus see how gravely disturbed and anxious the mind of the Indian trading community in South Africa was. The labouring population in addition to many disabilities laboured under a special grievance of their own which caused them untold suffering, i.e., the £3 Licence Tax. The speaker had no hesitation in saying that a more cruel impost it was impossible to conceive. Under it all ex-indentured Indians in Natal who completed their indentures after 1901 and their descendants were liable to pay annually £3 each, all males above the age of 16 and females above the age of 13 being so liable. And for non-payment they were sent to gaol with hard labour. That under any law a girl of 13 should have to pay £3 a year to the State and should be liable to be sent to gaol with hard labour for non-payment, was a thing too horrible to contemplate. If they took an ordinary family of a father, a mother and two daughters of 13 and 15 with one or two younger children, they would find that the family had to pay £12 a year for the mere permission to live in the colony of Natal-and that after the man and the woman had contributed five years' labour to the prosperity of Colony under a system of indenture. Now the average monthly wage of the man might be taken at about 25 shillings and the woman with her two daughters looking after the household might earn about 16 shillings a month among them—a total income of about £2 a month.

Out of that sum £1 or full one-half had to be given as that miserable Licence Tax. After that there was rent to pay and the cost of food and clothing and all ordinary taxes common to the general community. Need anybody wonder that a prominent member of the Natal Legislature declared openly two years ago that the impost broke up families, drove men into paths of crime and women into lives of shame? One of the most harrowing sights at which Mr. Gokhale had to be present was a meeting in Durban of those who were liable to pay the £3 Tax. About 5, 000 persons were present. As man after man and woman after woman came forward and narrated his or her suffering due to the Tax, it was impossible not to feel overwhelmed by feelings of indignation, pity and sorrow. One old woman of 65 was there who had been to gaol six times for inability to pay the tax and Mr. Gokhale could not recall the case even after that interval without emotion. As things stood, unless a fairly satisfactory settlement was soon arrived at it would not take many years for the Indian community

of South Africa to be practically harassed out of the country after undergoing great suffering and losses.

POSITION OF EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

That was the position of the Indian community as he found it. He wanted next to describe to them briefly the position of the European community. It was necessary to understand that position clearly, to understand their interests, their difficulties, their view and their sentiments and even their prejudices. They were a handful of people—only about a million and a quarter in all—in the midst of a vast indigenous population at a totally different grade of civilization. And the contact between the two races had already created grave problems—social, political, economic and moral—which were already filling the European mind in that subcontinent with uneasiness, misgiving and even dread. And they found in the midst of their difficult and complicated situation a third element introduced belonging to another civilization and representing other modes of life and thought. It was true that the present number of Indians in South Africa was only a lakh and a half against 12_ lakhs of Europeans. But the Europeans felt that there were 300 millions of people in India and if Indians continued to come freely into South Africa, there was nothing to prevent several millions from going there and swamping the European community and practically making the country another India. The fear was based on an absolute misapprehension, but it was there, deep and strong and general, and no useful purpose would be served by shutting one's eyes to it. In addition to this, there was first the tremendous colour prejudice which existed in that land—a prejudice felt even more by the Dutch than by the English—and secondly the dread of Indian competition on the part of small European traders, who felt that they could not hold their own against their Indian rivals in a fair field, owing to the Indians' less expensive scale of living. The combined result of all these causes was the present harsh and oppressive policy towards Indians—a policy plainly directed to making the lot of the Indians in that country so hard as practically to compel them to leave the country, or if remain they must, to remain there as a servile, degraded and depressed community.

A GRAVE SITUATION

Such was the position—grave, anxious and extremely difficult. What was to be the way out of it? So long as the European mind in South Africa was dominated by the fear of serious influx of Indians swamping the Europeans, so long there was no chance of securing—leave alone absolute equality—even reasonably just and humane treatment for our countrymen such as would enable them to live in peace and security and steadily advance to the position of a worthy element in a self-governing community. Even the best friends of Indians among the Europeans in South Africa—and there was a small section that could be thus described—were convinced that unless the fear of being swamped was removed form the European mind, they were powerless to urge with any effect the plea of more just and more humane treatment for the Indian community. Another section, a much larger section, that had the sense of fairness to

feel heartily ashamed of the present policy pursued towards the Indians, would also then, but not till then, sympathize with the struggle of the Indians against their present treatment. The Indian community of South Africa itself also clearly felt the necessity of removing that fear, groundless more or less though it was, in view of the fact that the average number of free immigrants during the last few years had been only between 40 and 50—a number, however, which the ordinary European there did not accept and could not be pursuaded to accept as correct. For some time past, therefore, the policy of our countrymen in South Africa under the leadership of Mr. Gandhi was, while insisting on maintaining intact their theoretical rights as equal subjects of the Empire in the legislation of the country, to strive for such modification in practice of the present policy of injustice and oppression as would enable the community to live and proper in peace and security and steadily advance in status and importance in that land. And even the briefest visit that one could pay to South Africa would satisfy one that that was the only wise, sound, practical, and statesmanlike course for the Indians to adopt in existing circumstances. It was in accordance with that course that in the compromise which was arrived at between Mr. Gandhi and General Smuts last year, under which the passive resistance movement was suspended, the Union Government agreed not to make any legislative differentiation against Indians in the proposed new immigration law. Mr. Gandhi on his side agreed that in practice the discretion vested in the exicutive administering the law might be exercised by the administration as it thought reasonable, subject to a minimum number of Indians being admitted every year to supply the higher needs of the community and replace its wear and tear in certain direction. That minimum was six Indians for the Transvaal where under the existing law no Indian whatever was admitted. For the whole Union a minimum now asked was forty, which was the present number of free immigrants annually on an average of seven years. The essence of the compromise was that by removing legislative inequality the theoretical rights of the Indians as subjects of the Empire should be maintained, while by agreeing to limitation of new immigrants to the present average number, the fear of an indiscriminate influx which haunted the European mind should be removed. Once that was done, the Indians there could struggle far more effectively than at present for a juster, more equal and more humane treatment in other respects. Mr. Gokhale's own work in South Africa had been done on those line. He did not ask for an inch either more of less than what the Indian community there had been asking. His one advantage was that he was enabled to have access to the European community as no other Indian had it before him and he was thus enabled to address his appeal for justice and humanity to the very heart and conscience of the European community, speaking to it members face to face.

THE OPEN-DOOR POLICY

On his return to India the previous day Mr. Gokhale said he was astonished to learn that the view was expressed in some quarters that the line taken by him in South Africa was wrong, that he should have stood out there for the open door in practice

and nothing less and that the surrender of India's rights in the matter already made by Mr. Gandhi had been confirmed by him. All he would say in regard to that criticism was that those who passed it did not show any real grasp of the problem in South Africa. The supreme question of the Indian community there was not to urge a policy of the open door for more Indians to come there, but to secure such an amelioration of the conditions under which they live that their lot might become more bearable and they might have opportunities of growing into an important part of a self-governing community. And the only chance of their securing that was if they approached the whole question in a practical spirit. Mr. Gokhale could easily have stood out for the open door in practice in South Africa. He could have made brave speeches on that subject and could have returned to his country feeling that he had made brave speeches. But the cause of the Indian community in South Africa could not been been served that way. The European community would have been made, if anything, more implacable in their determination to get rid of the Indians at all costs and the eventual expulsion of Indians from that subcontinent would only have been hastened by such a course. As regards the charge brought against Mr. Gandhi, it amounted to an utter travesty of the actual facts. After all, their right to equal treatment in the Empire today were largely theoretical. But even to maintain them theoretically intact Mr. Gandhi had been four times to gaol and had inspired hundreds of his countrymen to do the same. Those theoretical rights would no doubt steadily grow more and more into rights enjoyed actually in practice, but that was a matter of slow growth and it depended in a large measure upon the improvement of their position in India itself.

PRESENT OUTLOOK

Concluding, Mr. Gokhale said: "Ladies and gentlemen, before I sit down you may well ask me what is now the outlook in South Africa. Well, the catalogue of our grievances there is so long that as General Botha said to me, in the course of our interview, even the strongest Ministry that could be conceived in South Africa today could not be strong enough to remedy those grievances all at once and if it attempted any such thing it would straightway be hurled from power. The situation is such that though we must keep up the struggle ceaselessly, we must not expect anything else than a slow, though steady, amelioration of our lot. But I think in certain matters relief will be forthcoming almost immediately. In the first place, I fully expect that the provisional settlement, arrived at between Mr. Gandhi and General Smuts as regards the passive resistance movement which the Government found itself powerless to carry through Parliament last session, will be successfully carried through this year. The actual working of the Immigration law also will, I expect, soon become milder and more considerate. Then that outrageous impost, the three-pound license tax, will, I fully expect, go in the course of this year. In fact, I may mention that Ministers have authorized me to say that they will do thier best to remove the grievance as early as possible. In the matter of education also, the position will materially improve and the actual administration of laws such as the Gold Law and Townships Act will tend to become less and less burdensome. In one

respect, however, I fear the position will not soon change for the better, and it is even possible that it may even grow worse before it become better. And that is in regard to trading licences. Here, however, our community is fighting for bare justice. And it has behind it in the matter the sympathy not only of the Government of India and of the Imperial Government but also of the better mind of the European community in South Africa. And in the struggle, if only we in this country do our duty properly, our countrymen there will win. And this brings me to my concluding observations. Ladies and gentlemen, I strongly feel—many friends of our cause in England and South Africa also feel—that so far India has nor done her duty by her children across the seas, struggling to uphold her honour amidst unparalleled difficulties. One man amongst us, it is true has set a great and glorious example—my friend Mr. Ratan Tata—whose name I assure you is held in the deepest affection and gratitude by the Indian community in South Africa. A committee in Madras has also done some work and the committee here has collected some funds, but all these taken together amount to but little, considering the issues involved. Ihope, however, that whatever may have been our remissness in the past, we shall do better in this respect in the future. I hope we shall all take in the future more interest in what will go on in South Africa, follow the developments more carefully and enable our countrymen there to feel that we stood solid and united behind them. I hope too that we shall collect and send much larger funds in aid of the cause there than we have hitherto done. Remember, the community there is already exhausted financially and otherwise by its long struggle. Remember also, that it requires assistance not only in waging this most unequal struggle, but for providing educational and other facilities for the moral and material well-being of its children. Remember finally that it is no merely the interests of the Indian community in South Africa alone that are involved in the struggle, but our whole future as a nation in this Empire is involved in it. In proportion therefore as we do our duty in this matter, shall we have advanced more and more towards a position in this Empire more worthy of the self-respect of civilized being. In proportion as we do this duty, shall we have deserved well of our country, of our children and our children's children.

Indian Opinion, 25-1-1913 & 1-2-1913

APPENDIX XVI

GOKHALE'S ANSWER TO SILBURN AND F. C. HOLLANDER

A

Speaking at Durban on November 11, 1912 at a banquet in Gokhale's honour, Silburn had said among other things, "He had followed Mr. Gokhale's tour through the country, and had noticed that few word of warning had been given him as to what the position really is. Many thought the British and the Boers were hostile to his countrymen, but that was not the case. He, as a politician did consider that there were grievances under which the Indians were suffering, and that they should be remedied as

speedily as possible and personally he should give his assistance in removing the £3 tax. But it had to be remembered that a very difficult native racial problem confronted us, and that the introduction of a third element tended to make it more complex rather than to ease it. Furthermore, the people on the spot here were the people to deal with it, and he asked Mr. Gokhale to go back to India, and to let the Government of India and the Government of England know that this problem was to be dealt with in South Africa, and that no interference either by Great Britain or by India would be tolerated by the British people of this country." To this, Gokhale, in his speech had rejoined, "He knew enough of English history and the traditions of the English race to realize that if anything were to be got from Englishmen it would not be got in these ways, but by appealing to their sense of fair play of justice. . . . He would be the very last person, then, to do anything to diminish the right of self-governing dominion. But the position was peculiar. The Indian Government could not approach, the South African Government directly; they could only approach them through the Imperial Government, and the Imperial Government was therefore their sole protection in these matters....he asked Major Silburn what he would do if he were in India and in his shoes. He thought that he would do what any Britisher would do, namely, represent his cause to the Imperial Government . . ."

B

Gokhale, in his speech at Maritzburg on November 7, 1912, had said, "On the one side was a small European community in a vast country scattered among a vast number of Natives . . . the two races were on different grades of civilization, and their contact had already produced difficulties. . . . The European community naturally wished to safeguard its own civilization. . . . Then the Indian factor had been introduced. Their numbers at present were small, but there was a fear in the mind of many Europeans that unless drastic measures were taken their numbers would grow, and they would possibly one day swamp the European community. He had come to think that a large part of the conditions of which the Indians, perhaps rightly, complained, was due to that fear. Then came trade jealousies, the Europeans fearing that, with his simpler standard of living, the Indian would undersell him. That was a question, however, which had two sides. The complaint came from the small trader, who was inconvenienced, not from the community as a whole which, if it was interested in anything, was interested in buying as cheaply as possible." *(Indian Opinion*, 16-11-1912). On November 8, Hollander[1], in his speech of welcome at the Duration Town Hall selectively recalled only two observations from the above speech and quoted them, saying, "He ventured to refer specially to two utterances in Maritzburg. Mr. Gokhale was reported to have said that he realized that where there were tow grades of civilization growing up alongside each other, contact with each other must necessarily bring about serious difficulties . . . He welcomed these two utterances, because they proved at once that

[1] F. C. Hollander, mayor of Durban

their distinguished visitor was prepared to approach his task in no narrow-mined spirit, that he was prepared to realize . . . there would perhaps be more than one point of view. He was certain in his own mind, also, that Mr. Gokhale had realized since he had been in South Africa that there was another and even more outstanding question, and one which perhaps overshadowed every other question in the country: it was what we called the Native question, and all the questions affecting race and colour were so intermingled the one with the other anyone who attempted to approach the solution of one of them must find himself confronted with the greatest difficulty, because of the presence of the other."

From *Hon. Mr. Gokhale's Visit to South Africa, 1912*

1. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

PHOENIX,
[*March 12, 1913*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

The above[1] is soul-stirring. I was teaching one of the boys this morning and came upon it. I thought it so fitted your case at many points that I would have it copied. Please read and reread and come out of Doubting Castle after having killed Giant Despair.

With Love,

UPPER HOUSE

[PS.]

I have not written to the Countess[2]. I thought I would await Mrs. Mayo's letter. As you will soon be on the tramp I am not sending the agricultural books. It is right?

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

2. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

Phagan Sud 6 [*March 14, 1913*][3]

CHI. HARILAL,

After many months I have has a letter from you. Every time yu express regret and say you are sorry for not writing regularly.Your repentace has no meaning either for you or for me. Repentance will bear fruit ony when it relates to one's failure to do a thing despite one's best effort and when it is followed by greater vigilance in guarding against further failure. Your regret amounts to mere formality. Do children naveto be formal with parents?

As soon as I knew of yur examination [result] from another

[1] An extract from John Bunyan's allegorical work The Pilgrim's Progress.

[2] Presumably Countless Tolstoy

[3] In his letter to Harilal Gandhi of January 26, 1913 (p. 449), Gandhiji had discussed Harilal's examination result and asked for the question-papers. Here he repeats the request and adds that the two letters are being posted together. This was, therefore, written shorlty after the letter of January 26.

source, I wrote you a letter[1]. But it could not be posted until now,. because the diary[2] containing your address had been misplaced. You will therefore get that letter as well as this one about the same time.

I am not the only one to wait anxiously for a letter from you. Ba keeps on inquiring, and so do Miss Schlesin and the others.

Your mind has not become calm even there. I do not understand what it is that you want. All that I can make out is that you want to live in Ahmedabad and with Chanchi. Perhaps you wrote to the Doctor[3] too, about this, You may live as suits you best.

In reply to the second portion of yur letter, I shall say only this: "Live in any way that suits you,.[but] strive to realize God anyhow." I shall not argue.

Our paths may well be different. If our destination is the same, we shall meet there. What would it matter even if we should follow contrary paths? I am not so arrogant as to believe that I am wholly right and others, in the wrong. Of course, I hold on to the idea that I must do what seems to be my duty. Though I know that we do not become equal even if I give you this freedom, because, in following a course opposed to my ideas, you have to depend on me for money. I wish I could release you even from this situation [of dependence] and then argue with you as an equal. But how is this possible? If, impelled by my sense of duty, I have erred in giving up the source of my income, I shall of course have to repent for that. Have I not, however, done an injustice because in doing this I failed to take my sons' interests into account? My answer is "No" I did consider their interests, too, accordingly to my own lights. Whether my judgement was right or wrong time alone will show to us both.

I observe that England is still on your lips. Please overcome the desire. Your time is not yet.

Send me the question-papers of your examination if you have preserved them.

Manilal is deep in his studies. He is interested in them. I give him an hour and a half every day. Let me know what books you read—for your examination, I mean. Send me some samples of your

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Harilal Gandhi", 26-1-1913.
[2] *Vide* "Diary, 1912", end of 1912.
[3] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

English composition.

Blessings from

BAPU

PS.

Ramdas and Devdas also study fairly well, but they have developed no interest in their studies. Ba is well, more or less. Anandlal has left Phoenix that he may be able to look after Abhechand's business.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 9539

3. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

Phagan Sud 6 [*March 14, 1913*][1]

CHI. JAMNADAS,

The letters you wrote from India have arrived now. They were read with great interest. I know the restrictions you have placed. But in these letters you have given me permission to show them to Chhaganlal and Maganlal. They were also shown to Manilal. I thought it was in his interest that he should read them, so admirable they appeared to be. I shall not show them to anyone else. If any letter of yours contains only personal reflections of an intimate nature, I alone will read it and then destroy it.

Your boils must have disappeared by now. You will continue to have one ailment or another till your blood is completely purified and you have suitable diet as dictated by experience. With effort, this [trouble] can be overcome. This desire [that you should recover] was one of my reasons for wanting you to be with me.

Ginger, according to our rule, need not be avoided, but it is not beneficial either. Its undesirable effects will be immediately observed in those who live on a fruit diet.

"If we must know English we should know it well"—from this we cannot conclude that if we must travel by railway, we should travel first or second. Studying English is not bad in itself, travelling by railway is wholly so; if we must travel, therefore, we should just huddle

[1] Jamnadas Gandhi left South Africa on December 14, 1912 and any letter from him could not have reached Gandhiji before January 15 of the following year at the earliest. In 1913, *Phagan Sud* 6 corresponds to March 14.

ourselves in and mind no discomforts. Moreover, where countless people are forced to put up with hardships, we should submit to them voluntarily—that is, on occasions when it is not immoral to suffer.

All the items of the diet on the Farm may not be suitable in Phoenix. You fell ill because you did not wait long enough for necessary adjustments to be made.

A ship is bound to look after the needs of deck passengers.

I agree that you should not give up milk or curds, but do not give them the chief place. They make us more indolent. Our friend Kotwal is now in India. Cultivate contact with him. He still lives on fruit diet. You may profit by his experience. He is likely to go deep into the matter and discover things which you will not.

While doing honour to Brahmins, one must maintain a reverential attitude and not treat them with contempt, in the same way that we would respect a person born in a noble family even while we pity him. We would, naturally, feel no respect for a prostitute's son. I do not mean, however, that we should support any Brahmins in their wicked ways. If you interrupted your studies to offer some little flour to Brahmin beggars who had no business to go begging, you would only be sacrificing your studies. I would not think that in doing so you had done honour to the Brahmins; I would rather count it as your timidity or want of judgement. Question me again if you have not followed this.

Give up the afternoon nap, forcing yourself if need be. When you feel the urge coming over you, take a bath.

I am not against schools or against education, but against the stamp. This is one ground of objection against government schools.

A second objection is the lack of character in teachers and the fact that pupils have no intimate contact with them. The wasting of time over certain subjects is the third objection, and the fourth that quite often these schools become symbols of our slavery.

The Parsi cap is not the Parsis' but ours, though an adopted one. Our forefathers may have erred in adopting it. The error, however, is not one that need be corrected now. But why should we take the trouble of adopting a fresh one? Putting on a Hungarian or Moghul cap is suggestive, in a way, of pride and conceit—that we are different from others.

I imagine that even after my going [to India] the press[1] will continue as before. There is a possibility that Miss Schlesin and Miss West may go over to India ultimately. Mr. Polak and Mr. Ritch will of course practise and live on in South Africa. About Mr. Kallenbach, nothing is certain. Kotwal, it seems, will remain with me. Manilal, probably, will be where I am. He is going strong with his studies. They will still continue. I cherish the fond notion that no one else can, and will, teach him as quickly and as well as I. Jekibehn keeps well enough. She is, for the present, my only adopted daughter. She is mine more than Dr. Mehta's so that it seems likely she will remain with me.

Do not be eccentric in your dress. The head should be covered, a shirt may be worn, if needed, and so also slippers. These latter, however, only when you go out. At home, keep bare-footed, and outside, too, except when it is very hot or cold. One need not be too particular about these things, but such of them as one has grown used to should be kept up.

All the questions raised in your letters have now been answered. I have no time to write more. I pray that all my hopes in you be realized, that you remain firm in your mind and that God may help you.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5642. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] International Printing Press, Phoenix

4. A PUBLIC EXAMPLE

A question was raised that the election of Mr. Gokhale to represent the non-official members of the Bombay Legislative Council in the Viceregal Council was invalid, as he was an "official" drawing remuneration from the public treasury as a member of the Public Services Commission. Mr. Gokhale has, we understand, set the matter at rest, in characteristic fashion, by declining to accept the remuneration to which he would have been entitled. Such things are expected from such a man whose whole life has been one of self-abnegation in the service of the public. We do not congratulate him upon what he would himself regard as a perfectly natural act, but we sincerely congratulate the Motherland upon the possession of so rare-minded a son. Whilst it is true that an incident of this particular character could not occur in South Africa, where members of commissions are statutorily exempted from the disabilities otherwise attaching to the receipt of remuneration for their services in that capacity, Mr. Gokhale's example is one that might well be followed even in this self-governing Dominion, where, on the contrary, such instances of public morality have been, at least of late years, practically non-existent.

Indian Opinion, 15-3-1913

5. BRITISH NAVY

Millions of Englishmen think that British rule is maintained by the strength of the British Navy. Many people is Europe believe this and the idea is impressed upon the minds of all citizens of the British Empire. Associations have been established for this purpose. Newspapers are full of it. A huge association named the Navy League has been formed. Expenditure on the Navy is rising every day. British children are taught from the earliest age that there is nothing at all wrong in this. The British sailor is glorified. The colonies are even asked to pay a share of the expenditure. There was a debate in the Union Parliament last week on this question of contribution, when Mr. Merriman made a very biting and thought-provoking speech. He said in so many words that Europe had gone crazy. It had simply become possessed by the idea of armies. The desire for bigger and bigger armies, it would seem, was a kind of disease. The poor get crushed in consequence, Mr. Merriman believes. He argues, therefore, that South Africa should not join in this craze. Though himself an Englishman, he has not much use for British greatness based on the Navy. His own view is that it is not from their armed strength that the British derive their greatness. He told General Botha and the rest that South Africa should not in any way participate in the British scheme for the [Imperial] Navy. Mr. Merriman holds also that the British Army stationed in South Africa should be withdrawn.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinions, 15-3-1913

6. GENERAL BOTHA'S SUGGESTION

There is no doubt that General Botha is a real farmer. Everyone knows that he holds land running into thousands of acres. But that would not by itself make him a farmer. There is a big company in Natal which owns hundreds of thousands of acres of land; none of the members, however, is a farmer. They only want to make profits through farmers. But General Botha, it seems, lives like a farmer. He himself works on the land, is well informed about matters connected with the land and knows all about the various crops. On horses and sheep he is an expert. Besides, even his speeches touch upon the great importance of agriculture. In his heart of hearts, he seems to be convinced that South Africa's future does not lie in its gold mines. There are some who even believe that the gold mines will be exhausted in a few years, and that Johannesburg and other cities will be reduced to the same condition as some American cities. Be that as it may, General Botha has recently made a speech which is worth noting. He has expressed himself in favour of expropriating the land of the white landlords who do not themselves work on it and transferring it to worthier hands. Of course, other whites will not allow him to take such a step and the idea will not be implemented. Nevertheless, it is valuable in itself. Botha, with his enthusiasm for agriculture, can give it a strong impetus through his influence and authority. We would like to see something of the same spirit among us. We, too, would do well to turn our minds to agriculture.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-3-1913

7. WHO IS ENTITLED TO ENTER TRANSVAAL?

During our representative's tour a number of leading people wished to know who can enter the Transvaal. Hence, though this has been stated earlier, we repeat it below.

Only those Indians who hold certificates under the Registration Act of 1908 or 1907 can now enter the Transvaal without an application or other formalities. Apart from showing their certificates on the border and producing evidence that they are their own, there is nothing they have to do.

If, however, anyone is accompanied by a wife, or minor under 16 years, he is required to produce evidence in respect of them. Very often, the officer is high-handed and does not allow one to proceed further. This means one's being kept waiting on the border. It is sometimes even necessary to approach the magistrate. One has to pay lawyers. To save oneself from this harassment one method that is adopted is to flatter the Registrar and take out a permit in advance. But method has had an undesirable consequence: the pressure in that direction has increased. Even a person with excellent evidence is put to difficulties. An alternative way is to put up with the difficulties for the time being and obtain redress through the regular procedure. This may mean inconvenience in the immediate present but things will be smoother afterwards. If all Indians adopt this course, the matter will be put right quite soon. If only some do so, it might take longer. In this connection, a question has also been raised as to what minors and women coming in should do. The Transvaal officers require evidence on the following lines in respect of minors:

(i) A certificate from a first-class magistrate to the effect that the minor holding it is in fact the child of the person represented to be the father.

(ii) The thumb-impression of the minor and the father on the certificate for purposes of identification.

(iii) Evidence as to the child's age. This need not be very precise in every case. When it can be seen from the child's physique that the age is without doubt below 16, no evidence as to age is necessary.

(iv) It should be clearly stated in the magistrate's certificate that he has fully satisfied himself that the child is in fact the son of the

person concerned.

In a genuine case, evidence on these points can be easily secured and a father who wants to take his son with him to the Transvaal would do well to carry such evidence. It should, however, be remembered that those who have not brought any such evidence do not on that account lose their rights. Poor people cannot sometimes get in India evidence that they can in South Africa.

We hear that such certificates are also required from women. It is our emphatic advice, however, that women must not give their thumb-impressions. The Government has no authority to be so rigorous in regard to the identification of women for the simple reason that there is no need for that. There have not been many instances of Indians trying to bring in women who have no genuine rights. About women therefore, we must put up a fight. We believe that in the case of women the marriage certificate would suffice and we know that the right of a woman holding such a certificate can be legally established.

The explanation we have given above relates to the Transvaal. The question, too, was about the Transvaal. But, by and large, it holds for Natal also. We know that there is greater strictness in Natal. The Natal officer has more power. But it should be enough for anyone to have evidence as indicated above. It should also be remembered that we are carrying on a fight against the strictness in Natal. If any Indian, in his selfishness, submits to the high-handedness of an officer there, he will to that extent strengthen the officer's position and weaken the struggle. This is a simple rule: where there are no slaves, there are no slave-drivers. It is only where people seem prepared to submit to slavery that others set themselves up as masters.

Our condition in South Africa is such that vigorous action will bring about an immediate improvement in it. But weakness will reduce it to the lowest level. This is not so in other colonies because conditions there are neither too good nor too bad so that people do not even realize that they are held in fetters. Here, on the contrary, every Indian feels he is a captive in chains.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-3-1913

8. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [*-XI*]

We have seen that certain things should be avoided altogether. It remains to be shown that there are others which, for quite different reasons, should either be given up or consumed only in limited quantities. Postponing this discussion for the moment, we shall consider what our diet ought to be.

We can divide mankind into there very large categories on the basis of diet. To one class belong the people who, by choice or necessity, eat vegetable products only. This is the largest class. It consists of most persons in India and Europe and considerable numbers in Japan and China. Of these people, a few are vegetarians as a matter of religious principle, but the majority do without meat because they are unable to obtain it, though, if they get it, they eat it with relish. Among these latter are included Italians, Irish and Scottish people and the poor of Russia as well as of China and Japan. Thus, the chief food of Italy is macaroni, of Ireland potato, of Scotland oatmeal and of China and Japan, rice. People of the second category eat a little meat or fish in addition to vegetable products, once or more than once a day. The majority in England comes under this category, as do rich Muslims in India and Hindus who are unorthodox, besides the well-to-do Chinese and Japanese. This division, though quite large, is very much smaller that the first one. The third division consists of primitive tribes inhabiting the Arctic regions, as well as some Negroes who live on flesh alone. Their number is very small and even these, as they come into contact with European travellers, are learning to add vegetables to their diet. The conclusion to be drawn from all this simply is that man can live in all the three ways; what we have to consider, however, is the question as to which diet is the most health-giving.

The structure of the body would seem to indicate that Nature intended man to be a vegetarian. A comparison which other animals reveals that our body structure most closely resembles that of fruit-eating animals, that is, the apes. The diet of the apes is fresh and dry fruit. Their teeth and stomach are similar to ours. The teeth and the stomach of predacious beasts, such as the lion and the tiger, differ in structure from ours. We do not have claws as they have. We have, moreover, something in common with non-carnivorous beasts—the

ox, for instance. We do not, however, possess intestines like theirs and in the same number, for digesting large quantities of grass. From this, many scientists conclude that man is not by nature carnivorous nor is he formed so as to be able to eat every kind of vegetable food. Even from among vegetable products, fruit alone should be his staple diet.

Chemists have shown by experiment that fruits contain all the elements necessary for the maintenance of human life. Fruits such as bananas, oranges, dates, figs, apples, pineapples, almonds, walnuts, peanuts and coconuts contain all the elements necessary for health and energy. These scientists say that this food need not be cooked, and as animals maintain health by eating sun-ripened fruit, so should we. They go so far as to assert that cooking removes certain essential properties of vegetable foods and reduces their nutritional value. The stimulating quality peculiar to vegetable products is partly lost in the process. They even advance the argument that vegetable products which cannot be eaten raw are no diet for us.

If this argument is correct, surely much of the time spent in preparing and eating food be saved and we could finish our meals in a shorter time. Much of the time of our womenfolk and the space take up by kitchens, etc., in our homes would then be saved and we would be free to attend to many other matters by putting to good use the time and money thus saved.

The idea that all cooking will stop, that women will be set free from the prison-house of the kitchen, that women will themselves desire such freedom—all this will, I am afraid, seem a mere dream and some may ask why at all we should discuss things which are impossible. We are, however, not concerned at the moment with whether everyone can put this into practice. We are only thinking of what is best to do. If we know what is perfect health, we shall achieve a more or less satisfactory level of health. If we know what the ideal diet is, we shall know what we should generally eat.

Many books have been written on this subject in Europe. One even comes across Europeans who experiment with fruit diet. Some of them have recorded their experiences. These men take to a fruit diet not from any religious consideration but purely for the sake of health. There is a German named Just who has written an excellent book[1] in which he has proved, with numerous examples,

[1] Return to Nature

that fruit diet is the best. He has cured many patients merely with the help of fruit diet and fresh air. He even claims that men can get all the nourishment they need from the fruit growing in their own regions.

It will not be out of place if I here describe my own experiment. For the past six months, I have eaten nothing but fruits. I have not taken even milk or curds. My diet has consisted of bananas, peanuts, olive oil, lemon or similar citrus fruit, and dates. I do not claim that the experiment has proved completely successful. Six months is not enough to gauge the results of such a big change, but I can say this at any rate, that when others fell ill I remained well. I have greater physical and mental energy, than before. As regards physical strength, I may not be able, I admit, to lift as heavy weights as I could formerly, but I can work for longer periods at a stretch without fatigue. Of mental work I do much more at present and cope with it all. I have recommended this diet to some patients and the results have been little short of miraculous. I intend to describe these in the chapter on diseases. In fine, then, the experience of others and of myself and what reading and thinking I have done seem to suggest that a fruit-diet is superior to all other kinds of diet.

I do not for a moment expect that anyone reading this will straightaway take to experimenting with fruit diet. What I have will scarcely have any effect on the reader. But, if I am to tell the truth, as I wish to, I think it is my duty to present only my own conclusions, such as they are.

If, however, any reader does plan to experiment with fruit diet. I would advise him not to rush into it but to go slow. After first reading all the chapters, he should draw his own conclusions and then do whatever he wants to with full deliberation.

In the following section we shall consider the diet of the second category. I think the conclusions of that section will be more acceptable and also that, after he has perused it, he will find it easier to understand the present section.

To those who have been following these chapters seriously, my request is that they form their own opinions and that, too, after reading the entire series.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 15-3-1913

9. LORD AMPTHILL'S ADVOCACY

Lord Ampthill moved, the other day, in the House of Lords, for papers regarding the visit of the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale to South Africa.[1] We have expressed more than once the gratitude of the Indian community to this nobel man for his great and unremitting zeal in our cause. He has never allowed a single opportunity to be missed whenever he could usefully occupy the attention of the House of Lords. And every Indian knows how helpful his Lordship's work has been and how it has encouraged us in the midst of our troubles. His latest effort, a full report of which we publish elsewhere, was based on Mr. Gokhale's visit. Lord Ampthill was not satisfied to allow the visit to pass out of men's minds without tangible results. He was anxious that the good tone produced by the visit should be fully utilized for the purpose of securing legislation or administration of existing laws that might relieve the pressure that is continuously being put upon us. Incidentally, he paid a glowing tribute to Mr. Gokhale's personality and worth. Lord Emmott, who represented the Government, we regret to say, did not rise to the occasion. He missed the excellent and friendly spirit of Lord Ampthill's remarks, and, therefore, returned a chilling reply. He was as secretive as he well could be, and would commit himself to nothing. It is this disposition to over-regard colonial sentiment and disregard Indian sentiment that so exacerbates us and makes us realize, as nothing else does, that we have to depend upon our own resources.

Indian Opinion, 22-3-1913

[1] On February 11, 1913, Ampthill had asked in the House of Lords whether the Imperial Government had received official information in confirmation of Press reports that Gokhale's visit to South Africa had been successful, and if there was hope of an early and satisfactory settlement of the British Indian question. He also moved for Papers. In the course of his speech, Ampthill said that it was an Imperial question "of the first magnitude" and had caused discontent in India which came to a climax at the Indian National Congress of 1911. The Imperial Government, he said, had approved of Gokhale's visit. He further wanted to know what the Government had now done "to acknowledge and encourage and take advantage" of the resulting "spirit of reasonableness and conciliation and goodwill". Lord Emmott, Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, in the course of a "frigid and cautiously official" reply said that Gokhale's visit was unofficial, that his representations to the South African Ministers were "informal" and that he had no Papers to lay before the House. *Indian Opinion*, 22-3-1913.

> The whole question was whether a wife, married by Mahomedan custom, was wife within the meaning of the Immigration Act. His Lordship held that the application must be refused as the marriage did not satisfy the requirements of the Immigration Law.

Thus the *Cape Argus* report. Indians of South Africa will never get a clearer or more important judgment to deal with. Hitherto the judgments that have been given affecting the question of marriage have been more or less enigmatic. On the occasion in question, a clear-cut issue was presented. The case was admitted to be a test case and judgment has been given against us Indians.[1] This is not a judgment given against an individual. The Judge was, no doubt, helpless. The Immigration Officer could not be held to blame. He had to administer an Act and he has done so. The meaning of the judgment is that every Hindu and Mahomedan wife is in South Africa illegally, and, therefore, at the mercy of the Government, whose grace alone can enable her to remain in this country. And no one will be blamed but ourselves if the future Indian wives—Hindu, Mahomedan or Parsee—are turned out. This is a state of things which our self-respect forbids us from tolerating. We hope that every Anjuman, every Association, and every Dharma Sabha will send respectful representations to the Government urging that the new Immigration Bill should be altered so as to admit the legality of marriages celebrated according to the recognized Indian religions. This request should be promptly granted, not merely because we are part of the British Empire, but even because of the law of comity of nations.

It is, indeed, a serious question for passive resisters to consider whether they ought not to include in their requirements a redress of this unthought of but intolerable grievance. Anyway, it is a question which demands, on the part of the Indians, sacrifice of their all—their businesses, their money, their ease—which will have been dearly bought at the price of the nullity of their or their brethren's marriages. No consideration should be allowed to come in the way of their taking prompt and energetic action.

Indian Opinion, 22-3-1913

[1] *Vide* the following item

11. ATTACK ON INDIAN RELIGIONS

We have never read or heard of a judgment as important as the one concerning women recently published in the *Cape Times.* A woman named Bai Mariam had been married according to Muslim rites and her husband brought her from India. The Immigration Officer stopped her. The only reason he gave was that her marriage could not be recognized as legal. This was admitted to be a test case. There was only one point at issue, whether or not a marriage solemnized according to the Muslim rites or under any religion other than Christianity was legal. The Judge decided that such a marriage was not legal and that therefore the woman had no right to enter the Cape. She has been ordered to return. This decision means that as from today all Hindu or Muslim wives living in South Africa lose their right to live there. In other words, a Hindu, Muslim or Parsi wife can live in this country only by the grace of the Government. It is quite on the cards that the Government will not permit any more wives to come in or that, if it does, it will be entirely as a matter of favour. We cannot conceive of a more degrading state of affairs.

The remedy is entirely in our hands. Every Anjuman, every Dharma Sabha and every one of the other associations must respectfully submit to the Government that the law should be amended and that marriages solemnized under the rites of Indian religions should be recognized as legal. Any nation that fails to protect the honour of its women, any individual that fails to protect the honour of his wife is considered lower in level than a brute. We know that many battles have been fought to protect the honour of women. And so it would not be too much if we, for the same purpose, embrace poverty.

We cannot offer the advice that this case should be taken to a higher court. What can a court of appeal do? Nor do we think this a case in which we should not approach the Government till a decision has gone against us once again.

It will be nothing extraordinary if right now we sacrifice our wealth, our stocks, our businesses and start the fight. All these things are intended for our happiness. If we lose our honour, what remains of happiness? And if we do not spend what we do not spend what we have earned for our happiness, where shall we find beggars like us?

This is a situation over which even satyagrahis should ponder. It is worth considering whether they ought not to include among their

demands one that might help to ward off this unexpected blow. We hope that in this situation not a single Indian will give in.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-3-1913

12. GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE

We can know the Union Government's attitude from a number of instances. Mr. Ibrahim Mahomed Cassim has a thirteen-year-old son named Hassan. There seems to be no reason to doubt his age. Even then Mr. Smith refused him permission to land and informed his lawyer that he had instructions not to permit the entry of any minor without a certificate of birth from India. The boy's father, therefore, has obtained an interdict. The matter will now go to a court. The case is of interest to us only in so far as it reveals the Union Government's attitude towards us. Since it is not the practice in India to get births registered, for hundreds of children it will be impossible to obtain certificates giving precise information. The Union Government is not likely to be unaware of this fact. If, despite this, it has laid down that no one should be permitted to enter without a certificate, it can only mean that it wants to increase the difficulties in our way in order to stop the entry of children altogether. We have already written about women. Children, too, are to be harassed. This can have only one result in the end, namely, that we shall have to leave this country. The remedy lies in our own hands.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-3-1913

13. OUR QUESTION IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS[1]

A detailed report is now available of the discussion in the House of Lords when Lord Ampthill raised our question once again. This noble gentleman does not miss a single opportunity of advocating our cause. His speeches indicate, moreover, his unremitting zeal on our behalf. Utilizing the opportunity afforded by Mr. Gokhale's visit to this country, Lord Ampthill initiated a discussion on our question. In the course of his speech, he paid a glowing tribute to Mr. Gokhale and criticized the administration of the laws passed here. The only regret is that Lord Emmott, who spoke on behalf of the Government, missed the spirit of Lord Ampthill's remarks and gave a half-hearted reply. The impression that the reader gathers from this is that his Lordship stands in awe of the Colonies and that he disregards Indian interests when the interests of the former are at stake. This is and overbearing attitude, indeed, and it is such behaviour which embitters Indians. We can also realize from Lord Ampthill's speech how very useful is the Committee in England. As we have already pointed out, we have no funds left for that Committee. We have also said that Mr. Gokhale is prepared to shoulder this responsibility. But it is necessary, all the same, that we send him something at least for the maintenance of the Committee. The response to our appeals to Indians has so far been disappointing. We hope those who realize the Committee's value will now bestir themselves a little.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-3-1913

[1] *Vide* also "Lord Ampthill's Advocacy", 22-3-1913.

14. MALAY LOCATION DISPUTE

It happens sometimes that, when two big parties fight, a third party, which is weak, gets the benefit. This is what is likely to happen in the case of the Malay Location. Indians in Johannesburg must be aware that a portion of this Location has been handed over to the Railway. Hitherto, the Town Council used to collect rent from the Location on behalf of the Railway. The latter's intention is to drive us out, in course of time, from the portion it has acquired. Because of this uncertain state of affairs, the improvements which the Town Council wished to effect in the Location could not be proceeded with. It tried hard to arrive at an arrangement with the Town Council and its Railway Committee has proposed a resolution to the effect that the Council should not act [as agents] for the Railway any longer. The Committee wants the Council to go ahead with the improvement already undertaken and also to refuse to collect rent on behalf of the Railway. If the resolution is accepted and if the Indians play their part well, no one will be able to touch the Malay Location. The Indians' part consists in seeing to it that they desist from creating filth. We should not allow ourselves to mar the buildings out of greed for rents, and we should maintain the utmost cleanliness that we possibly can.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-3-1913

15. VREDEDORP CASE

In this case Mr. Buckle has given judgment, with costs, in favour of the Chinaman.[1] Mr. Buckle says in the course of the judgement that the Chinaman cannot be said to reside in Vrededorp; he was only an employee of a white. The business belongs to the white, who attends the store in person. It is the white, therefore, who should be treated as a resident. If a contrary meaning were given to the expression "to reside", a Coloured who happened to be in someone's house and occupied a chair for five minutes would have to be treated as having residedthere. There is no reason to believe [he says] that the framers of the law had intended any such meaning. If the Chinaman had his boarding and lodging in Vrededorp or had his own business there, he would have been liable to prosecution. The Vrededorp law does not forbid the employment of Coloureds as shop assistants. All that follows from this judgment is that a white carrying on business in Vrededorp can employ any number of Coloureds for that purpose. No Coloured, however, can have his home in Vrededorp and live there.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-3-1913

[1] The Vrededorp Municipality had sued for the ejectment of Ah Kai, a Chinese, from Stand 495 on the ground that he was an Asiatic and, at the time, not a *bona-fide* servant of a white. Judgment in this case, described by *Indian Opinion*, 22-3-1913, as "an important test case", was given, with costs, in favour of Ah Kai.

16. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [*-XII*]

On the next level and below fruits, comes vegetable diet. This consists of all kinds of vegetables, cereals, pulses, beans, milk, etc. Just as fruit-diet contains all the elements that man needs, so too does vegetarian diet, though the two do not have the same effect. Some of the elements we obtain from food are also to be found in the air; yet we cannot obtain them from air and do without food. Moreover, all vegetable products lose something of their original nature when cooked and are to that extent robbed of value, one would have cooked food and cannot go without vegetables, it has to be considered what it would be best to take.

Among grains, wheat is the best. Man can live on wheat alone. It contains all the nutritive elements in good proportion. Many preparations can be made of it, and it is also easy to digest. Children's foods available in the market also contain a proportion of wheat. In the same category with wheat are millets and maize, from all of the which *rotli*[1] or *roti*[2] can be prepared, though these cereals cannot compare with wheat. It is important to understand what the best way of taking wheat is. Wheat flour, which we know as mill-flour, is absolutely worthless, devoid of all nutritional value. Dr. Alinson says that a dog he kept exclusively on such a diet succumbed as a result, but another flourished on bread from a different variety of flour. White flour is entirely devoid of bran, which is the source of the taste and energy-giving property of wheat. White bread is in such demand because, eaten with it, other tasty things are most enjoyed. For instance, those who eat cheese derive energy from it but they eat it, and can eat it, only as an adjunct to bread. *Rotli*, too made of such flour is bad; it is tough and offers neither taste not nutrition. *The best flour is that which is obtained by grinding clean wheat at home* and if in addition, it is ground by hand in a quern, it is considered to be the very best. If, however, one cannot secure a quern, one can purchase at a low cost a handmill to be kept in the home and grind wheat for

[1] Unleavened bread
[2] *ibid*

personal use. Or one can buy unsifted Boer-meal and use it. The flour should be used as it is, unsifted, The *roti* made of this flour is tasty and nourishing and the flour is more economical to use than *maida*, since, being nutritious, it cannot be consumed in the same quantity as *maida*.

It should be borne in mind that ready-made bread is quite worthless. Whether white or brown, it is adulterated. Moreover, it is prepared from flour fermented with yeast. This is a great drawback. It is the opinion of many experienced people that bread made of such flour is harmful. Then again, during preparation. the loaf is covered with *tandul* or fat; hence it should be unacceptable both to Hindus and Muslims. *To eat shop bread in place of roti prepared at home is nothing but a mark of laziness.*

Another easy and pleasant way of eating wheat is to grind it coarse and make porridge from it. Porridge, if well cooked in water and taken with milk or sugar, tastes delicious and is much superior to other kinds of food.

Rice seems to contain no nutriment and it is doubtful whether man could live on it alone, unless pulses, ghee and milk are added to it. Wheat, on the other hand, cooked in water alone is enough to maintain one in good health.

Vegetables are eaten mainly for their taste. They have a laxative effect and thus help purify the blood. However, they are of the nature of grass, they are difficult to digest and give excessive work to the stomach. Everyone must have noticed that those who are given to consuming vegetables in excessive quantities are of the delicate constitution and are called *pepchidas*[1]. They frequently suffer from dyspepsia and are always swallowing medicines for indigestion. That some varieties of vegetables are a form of grass is plain enough to us. Vegetables, therefore, should certainly be eaten but, be it remembered, only in small quantities.

Pulses—beans, *val*,[2] *tuwar*,[3] vetches, tare, lentil—are regarded as good tonic foods. They are difficult to digest as they require much

[1] Gujarati colloquial expression meaning “milksop”
[2] Varieties of pulses
[3] *ibid*

heat in the stomach. The fact that a person who has eaten a quantity of pulses frequently passes wind only means that he has not been able to carry it. It is for this reason that pulses are regarded as causing *vayu* [excess of wind]. One characteristic of pulses is that they keep one going for a fairly long time. A person who has to undertake much physical labour can tolerate pulses more easily and even derive some benefit from them. We, however, who do limited physical work generally cannot afford to eat an excess of pulses. Those who loll in cushioned seats cannot eat the same type or quantity of food as labourers.

A famous writer in England named Dr. Haig has proved with numerous experiments that pulses are a very unwholesome food. They produce an excess of a particular acid in the body which causes many ailments and brings on premature old age. He has given many reasons to explain why this happens, which there is no need to consider here. My personal experience, at any rate, indicates that it is harmful to eat pulses. Those, however, who cannot master their palate may eat them, but with care.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-3-1913

17. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR[1]

PHOENIX,
NATAL,
March 24, 1913

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
THE HON'BLE THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR
CAPE TWON

DEAR SIR,

There are two matters of urgency in which I feel that I should now write asking for information. Being aware of the illness of the Hon'ble the Minister of the Interior from which I hope Mr. Fischer is recovering, I have been reluctant to trouble the Minister acting for Mr. fischer. But as I have been pressed by inquirers I venture to ask for information on the following:

Some considerable time ago the Registrar of Asiatics wrote to me saying that he forwarded to the Hon'ble the Minister the correspondence regarding permits for educated British Indian entrants for the past year, in terms of the provisional settlement. The Registrar has rejected two out of the six names of entrants submitted by me after consultation with passive resisters and the British Indian Association.[2] I have requested that the names might be restored as it is, I respectfully submit, part of the compromise that the names of entrants should be submitted by those in whose name and for whose sake the settlement was arrived at. I shall therefore be glad to learn that the Hon'ble the Minister has directed the Registrar to include among the entrants the two omitted names.

And may I know whether the proposed Immigration Bill embodying the terms of the provisional settlement will be brought forward during the present session of the parliament?

I remain,
Yours faithfully
[M. K. GANDHI]

From a photostat of the handwritten draft with corrections in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5746

[1] For the reply to this, *vide* Appendix "Letter from secretary for interior to Gandhiji", 4-4-1913.

[2] This letter to the Registrar of Asiatics listing the entrants' names is not available.

18. THE MARRIAGE QUESTION[1]

We dwelt at some length last week upon the momentous decision given by the Cape Provincial Division of the Supreme Court on the question of the validity of non-Christian marriage among Indians. This week we publish valuable information regarding the action of the Master of the Natal Provincial Division. This officer has questioned the validity of Mahomedan marriage for the purpose of assessing succession duty.[2] We need not go into the particulars about the difference in the duty chargeable. But the great issue raised by the Master, so far as we are concerned, is that of the validity of marriages performed according to the tenets of the great faith of India. It might be here remarked that this totally unexpected calamity—it is nothing less—has overtaken us not because of any new law but because of the new interpretation that is being placed upon an old law. Ever since the settlement of Indians in South Africa, Indian marriages, celebrated according to Indian religious custom, have been recognized. The issues of such marriages have inherited considerable properties as lawful heirs of their deceases parents. It is the new spirit of the Union breathed upon the officers administering old laws that has brought about the present intolerable situation. Indeed, the logical result of the new interpretation is that even past acts might be impugned and heirs in possession of the inheritances might be dispossessed. Indian society has suddenly been plunged into confusion from which it can extricate itself only by a mighty effort. For, if the policy of the Government, as foreshadowed in the cases we have published from time to time, is continued, they will be able without resorting to new legislation either to exterminate us or to paralyse us as a progressive community, unless we are prepared to offer stubborn opposition.

We may now, perhaps, understand the reason for the very cautious reply[3] made by Lord Emmott to Lord Ampthill. These cases explain his Lordship's reticence, but they cannot be allowed to excuse

[1] *Vide* also "Hindus and Mahomedans Beware", 22-3-1913 and "Attack on Indian Religions", 22-3-1913.

[2] In Natal, a Mahomedan had left by his will his entire property to his surviving wife. For assessing the succession duty, the Master of the Provincial Division of the Supreme Court had called for proof apart from the husband's statement and suggested that the parties concerned should get the Supreme Court's ruling on the point. *Indian Opinion*, 29-1-1913.

[3] *Vide* 1st footnote of "Lord Ampthill's Advocacy", 22-3-1913.

it. If he knew that the Union Government were to remain unbending, and if he had any regard for us, he should have, when Lord Ampthill gave him the opportunity, strongly disapproved of the attitude of the local Government.

Indian Opinion, 29-3-1913

19. INDIAN MARRIAGES

Last week we dwelt upon the marriage case in Cape Town. Another case of the same nature, regarding one Bai Janubie, has come to our knowledge. This lady is a widow, whose husband has left her his property by a will. The Master of the Supreme Court, however, refuses to execute the will. He states that Bai Janubie's marriage cannot be recognized as valid. The marriage question, thus, is assuming a serious aspect day by day and we shall find ourselves quite helpless afterwards if we are not vigilant and fail to act in time. The effects will be felt by all Indians. Some people argue, we hear, that there can be no satyagraha in a matter concerning women, for they cannot be asked to go to gaol. We leave aside the question whether or not they can be. Cannot men go to goal for women's honour and their own? There may be no need whatever for women to go to gaol or to be asked to do so. What is needed is that men should be men enough. Satyagraha, moreover, is far off yet. Where is the question of satyagraha in taking counsel together, parting with a little money, holding meetings and sending petitions? If we take cover behind the argument that there can be no satyagraha and sit back with folded hands, we shall only bring ridicule upon ourselves and our womenfolk.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-3-1913

20. LICENCE CASE IN ESTCOURT

When licensing officers do not harass us, we find white traders waiting to do so. On the Licensing Officer issuing a licence to Mr. Khamisa Ibrahim, the white traders of the locality appealed to the Licensing Board. Since the members of the Board had expressed views hostile to Indian traders, Mr. Khamisa's lawyer raised an objection against them. This was ruled out and the Board, reversing the decision of the Licensing Officer, rejected Mr. Khamisa's application for a licence. We assume that Mr. Khamisa will take the case further. All such cases should also be forwarded to Lord Ampthill's Committee so that redress may be obtained from the Imperial Government on the issues involved.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-3-1913

21. ARE SYRIANS ASIATICS?

The Registrar refused to register a piece of land[1] in Johannesburg in the name of a Syrian, arguing that, since Syria was a state in Asia, Syrians were Asiatics and the Asiatics Law of 1885 should apply to them. The Syrian has thereupon moved the Supreme Court for an order that the land be registered in his name. He has argued as follows:

> True, I was born in Asia. But I am a Christian. My skin is white. The framers of the laws of the country could never have intended that the law of 1885 should apply to me, a white Christian from Asia. If it applies to me, it should also apply to white Jews from Asia. But in fact the law has never been applied to white Jews. If, again, the law of 1885 is applicable to me, I should be subject also to the Registration Act of 1907. If it should be held that I am, there would follow a result which could never have been contemplated by the framers of the law.

The Judge before whom the case was heard has reserved judgment, holding that this was an important case, which no doubt it

[1] Two Stands in Wolhuter Township

is. Indians will await the judgment eagerly. If the Judge confines himself to the letter of the law alone, Asiatic Syrians will be placed on par with us, even if they are Christians or whites.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-3-1913

22. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [*-XIII*]

We shall now consider what vegetables should be avoided. In almost every part of India, it is customary to use chillies together with spices such as coriander seed, black pepper, etc. The practice does not obtain in other parts of the world to the same extent. If we offer any of our spicy dishes to the Negroes here, they also will hesitate to eat them as they do not care for their taste. Many white who are unused to spices are totally unable to eat our pungent food and, if they force themselves to eat it, their digestion suffers and the mouth gets inflamed. I have witnessed this myself in the case of some whites. We may conclude, therefore, that spices are not themselves appetizing but that, having become accustomed to them by long use, we like their smell and taste. We have already recognized, however, that eating anything for the sake of its taste is harmful to health.

Let us then examine why people eat spices. They do so, it will be readily admitted, in order to be able to eat more and digest more. Chillies, coriander seed, cummin, etc., produce heat in the stomach and in consequence we seem to feel more hungry. If, however, we imagine from this that the food we have thus consumed is all digested and transformed into pure blood, we shall be sadly mistaken. Many people indulge in over-spicy food. Their stomachs become very weak in the long run and some even get attacks of sprue. A certain man used to eat large amounts of chillies, a habit which he could not overcome, and he died in his youth after a long illness which kept him on bed for six months. It is imperative that we eliminate spices from out diet altogether.

This stricture applies equally to salt. No one will like this idea and some may even be aghast at it, but its truth has, nevertheless, been proved by experience. An association has been started in

England whose creed is that salt is even more injurious than most spices. Our diet supplies salt to us in organic forms, and that is all that we really need. Sea-salt and rock-salt, on the other hand, are superfluous and when consumed are expelled again through perspiration and otherwise. This means that salt has no specific utility for the body. One book goes so far as to say that consumption of salt has a toxic effect on the blood and that one who has abstained from salt for many years and has otherwise kept his body clean has his blood stream so pure that even snake-bite will do him no harm; for the blood of such a person develops a resistance to the venom. We cannot ascertain the truth of this statement but from experience I can at least say that ailments such as cough, piles, asthma, bleeding, etc., respond immediately to a saltless diet. A certain Indian had long suffered from asthma and cough. These were cured by the adoption of a saltless diet together with the use of the usual remedies. I have not come across any undesirable results from giving up salt. I myself gave it up over two years ago and have felt no ill effect; on the contrary, I observe some beneficial effects. I need less water and feel less lethargic. The incident which occasioned my giving up salt was somewhat unusual, too. The person[1] whose ailment was responsible for my doing so has had her illness under control ever since. I am confident, too, that had the patient been able to give salt completely, her malady would have been entirely eradicated. I have observed during numerous experiments that people find it difficult to give up green vegetables and pulses together with the salt but this has to be done. I think these articles prove hard to digest without the addition of salt. This does not mean that salt stimulates digestion; on the contrary, just as chillies merely give the illusion of aiding the digestive process and are found to be harmful in the long run, so it is with salt. It follows, therefore, that those who adopt a saltless diet must give up green vegetables and pulses as well. Anyone can make this experiment and watch the effect on himself. Just as an opium addict who tries to rid himself of his habit feels out of sorts and weak at first, so is the case with one who refrains from salt. One should not, however, lose heart on this account. If the person who gives up salt is patient

[1] Kasturba Gandhi.

enough, he will be rewarded by and by.

The writer has been bold enough to assert that even milk is among the articles to be avoided. One basis for this opinion is his own experience, but that should be kept out of consideration. We entertain so strong a superstition as to the value of milk that it would be a vain effort to combat it. The writer does not expect that his readers will agree with all the opinions he expresses in these articles, nor does he expect either that all those who approve of them will put them into practice; his object is only to present his ideas, leaving it to others to accept whatever they will. There is nothing wrong, therefore, in his writing even about milk. Many doctors have stated that milk is the cause of typhoid. Pamphlets have been published on this subject. Milk gets easily contaminated with airborne germs and those which are inimical to health multiply rapidly in it. We have to take a great deal of trouble to keep it in good condition. In South Africa there are special laws for [the protection of] consumers of milk. Very many recommendation are made for the preservation and storage of milk and cleaning of utensils. It seems reasonable to question whether it is worth while using an article which needs so much care to keep and which, if not so guarded, may do harm.

Moreover, the goodness or otherwise of milk depends on the condition of the cow and what she eats. Doctors cite instances of persons drinking the milk of a tuberculous cow and themselves developing tuberculosis. It is difficult to find a perfectly healthy cow, and the milk of a diseased cow is unwholesome. It is well known that a sick mother's milk makes the baby also sick. When a baby which has not yet been weaned falls ill, *vaids* treat the mother, so that through her milk the medicine may act on the baby. What is true of woman's milk applies also to cow's milk. In this way, the food and the health of the giver of milk have an intimate bearing on its consumer. Would not the right course be to avoid this milk, the consumption of which demands so much trouble and carries so much risk? The strength-giving property of milk is to be found in other substance as well. Olive oil is a good substitute for milk in many ways. A preparation of sweet almonds made by soaking them in hot water, peeling and grinding them to a fine paste and mixing this thoroughly with water,

will have all the beneficial properties of milk and none of its risks. Finally, let us consider the law of Nature: a calf gives up sucking after a few months and, as soon as its teeth are developed, it turns to food which requires their use; this should be the rule with human beings, too. We are meant to take milk only so long as we are infants. We, too, should, when our teeth are grown, employ them in chewing fresh fruit such as apples and dry fruit such as almonds, or *rotli*. This is not the place to calculate how much money and time can be saved by anyone who has shaken off his slavery to milk, but each one will be able to find out for himself. Milk-products, too, are unnecessary. The acid content of whey is available from lemon and its other nutrients from almonds, etc. As to ghee, thousands of Indians consume oil instead.

Let us now turn for a while to the third type of diet. It is a mixture of vegetarian and non-vegetarian elements. This diet is adopted by a large number of people, of whom many suffer from various ailments and many others are found to be healthy. That we are not meant to be meat-eaters, each one of our organs and the constitution of our bodies make evident. Dr. Kingsford and Dr. Haig have vividly described the ill effects of non-vegetarian diet on the body. They have proved that the acid produced by consumption of pulses is also produced by that of meat. Meat-eating damages the teeth and causes rheumatism. It makes a man more prone to anger, and therefore a sick man. According to our definition of health, one who is quick to get angry cannot be counted a healthy person.

Those who eat the fourth and last type of diet, that is, who subsist exclusively on flesh, need not detain us here. Their state is so vile that the very thought of them should be enough to put us off meat-eating. They are not healthy in any sense of the term. As soon as they come up a little and get some knowledge, they tend to accept a vegetarian diet.

What all this adds up to is that very few people will be found ready for an exclusively fruit diet, but that a diet of dry and fresh fruit, wheat and olive oil is worth a trial, it being possible to maintain sound health on it. Among fruits, bananas occupy the first place. Besides, dates, plums and figs are strength-giving fruits. Fresh grapes improve the blood. Orange, lemons and apples can be mixed with

bananas and eaten with *rotlis.* The addition of olive oil to *rotli* does not impair its taste. Such a diet costs very little trouble or money and does not require salt and chillies, milk or sugar. Plain sugar is an absolutely useless article of food. People who are very fond of sweets lose their teeth early and the sweet food does them no good in any way. Wheat, almonds, peanuts, walnuts, fresh fruits—from every on of these a number of edible preparations can be made.

What we have now to consider is how much food to eat and when; this we shall do in the next chapter.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 29-3-1913

23. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

Phagan Vad 7 [*March 29, 1913*][1]

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I got your three letters together. You want to have a letter every week but, since I do not have one from you so frequently, I do not know how I can meet your wishes. However, I shall try to write oftener.

After the stipulated period of six months is over, you need not persist in saltless diet. It is not intended that in clinging to it one should sacrifice one's life. We have adopted diet without salt and sugar in the belief that we should be healthier without them. If that does not happen, we are not bound to give up either. For us, a saltless diet is not, like vegetarianism, a matter of ethical principle. When we come to think of it as such, we will not eat salt. About milk, I do feel that way. Speaking for myself, I seem to do very sell without salt, sugar, vegetables, pulses, etc.

I am rather unhappy that you cannot have sour lime, etc., there. I can see many defects in your experiments. You are not in the least to blame, though. Not being conversant with the thing, you have not

[1] Judging from the contents this letter appears to have been written after Jamnadas Gandhi left South Africa for India on December 14, 1912.

been able to make any changes, Moreover, you cannot make your own independent experiments. If, therefore, you are still going on with the saltless diet, etc., and if it does not suit you, do please give up the practice.

To enable you to preserve my letters, I shall try to use paper of uniform size when writing to you. Some of the letters may possibly deserve being read a second time. Moreover, as you are very eager to know my views, in case you do not get a letter from me in any week, you can re-read instead the latest ones received in preceding weeks.

Do not hesitate to ask me any questions in any words.

Let it not worry you that you went [to India] against my advice. My only concern in trying to stop you was that you, all by yourself, would not be able to strengthen your ideas. But when I observed your keen desire to serve Khushalbhai[1] and Devbhabhi,[2] the other thought appeared of secondary importance beside this desire. It was therefore all to the good that you went. Moreover, the bitter experience you are getting is also a kind of training for you, for your ideas are noble, all of them, and you aspire to raise yourself up.

Our use of Urdu words like *madari jaban*[3] is perfectly in order. If we would preserve Gujarati as simply a branch of Sanskrit, Parsis and Muslims should not be regarded as Gujaratis. This is not possible even if we wish it to be so. Gujarati has, and will continue to have, a number of Urdu and persian words in use. The language used in the *Opinion* must be such as will find favour with both Hindus and Muslims. I making it so, we may use Allah[4] and *Parameshwar*[5] both, as occasion may require. If any Englishmen settle in Gujarat, we may even introduce some English words into our language. The English words being taken over at present are just so much ostentation, ignorance of flattery, Behind this borrowing there is no thought of developing the language.

If the Hindus are faced with anything similar to the Turkish War,

[1] Parents of the addressee
[2] *ibid*
[3] Mother tongue
[4] A Muslim name for God
[5] A Hindu name for God

they too should raise a row. Italy and the Balkan States are both in the wrong in this war and we do nothing amiss in pointing to the fact of their being so. There is no ill will towards Italy in this. Many of the journal's readers being Muslims, it is our duty to give them as much news of the invasion as possible. We claim the *Opinion* to be a medium of moral education, but how could it serve that purpose if there were no readers? By giving the news about the war, we humour readers in harmless fashion. Moreover, readers ought to keep themselves informed about the war and to that extent the issue involves a moral principle. Finally, though morals and publicity to our hardships are its chief concerns, it is not the intention that the paper should carry no news at all. Maybe, you have more racial discrimination there, but it does affect the masses. Here it is they who are specially affected.

The reason why in the sacred centres of pilgrimage oil is forbidden and ghee is regarded as pure can be explained by the conjecture which I have made. At one time, India was entirelya meat-eating country but, when someone converted the land to vegetarianism, ghee came to be considered specially sacred. And so we use unlimited quantities of ghee in our diet. The more ghee there is in any preparation, the more highly we value it. Can there be a greater instance of ignorance than this! And yet this is what people believe. In consequence, ghee is assigned a high place in holy centres of pilgrimage as well. The reformer must have imagined that if people consumed plenty of ghee they would not miss meat very much. With this object, in England, too, vegetarians take eggs in excess in the absence of meat, and even fall ill. There are hardly any preparations of theirs in which eggs are not used. They have assigned almost a sacred place to eggs.

It would have been very good if you had undertaken to teach the *bania*. You would have been partly cured of your restlessness and the earnings would have been some help.

Do not take my going there as in any way certain. There is a possibility that satyagraha may be revived on issues affecting wives and minors. In that case, I think I shall have to stay on. Should satyagraha be revived, how could you join it now? I do not think it

will be right for you to come away from there. Your purpose in going away was service to your parents. With that as your chief concern, do whatever is best. For this same reason, you cannot go to Baroda or elsewhere to learn weaving.

I knew the verse you have quoted about controlling the palate. My criticism applies all the same. One verse can make no difference. They attached no importance to this subject. Had they done so, there would have been no feeding on delicacies in the *havelis*[1] and other places on every pretext and no gifting of provisions with ghee and jaggery on every sacred occasion, nor the feasting of Brahmins either. These days, even *rishis* and *sadhus* do not master their palate, but are found to have been mastered by it. This is a long story. If we said these things by way of fault-finding, we would incur sin. When, however, our chief object is our own and others' welfare, it is our duty to take into account whatever imperfections we observe even in the most respected personages.

This closes the reply to one of your letters. As to the other letters, I shall try to answer them later, that is, next week, so that I may have something to write to you every week.

Here, so many things happen which it is impossible to write about. I do not have so much time. But some of the things will find their way in as I deal with the questions you have asked.

Manilal is fully engrossed in his studies. I leave him not an hour free, so that it is in vain to expect him to write to you. He may possibly answer your letters. Jeki, too, is busy; but, apart from this, she is disinclined to write letters and does not quite know how to. Do not, therefore, put much hope in her either.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5643. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Vaishnava temples

24. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]
Monday [*March 31, 1913*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I have your two letters. My cold is a thing of the past. I was living during the damp weather on abnormal food and treating too many patients and having no exercise. The food was mainly monkey-nuts and lemons. There was no physical exercise. I gave myself exercise, I left off monkey-nuts, took hot water and lemons and blanched almonds. The effect was magical: the cough vanished in 48 hours. I have now returned to monkey-nuts, cannot afford almonds and do not want to eat them myself when I cannot share them with the children, nor do I need them now. The boy's cough I have not been able quite to trace the reason for. But they too are better. I agree that we all could do with much less than we eat. It is not possible to force the boys to eat so much and no more. I try to coax them.

Herewith draft reply for Heymann. I think it is better to rest on your last letter and not now agree.

Hope you will get a better price for the mules and wagon.

Did you get the book I sent you? If you are stopping there long, I could send you the other books you mentioned.

Your commission for Dar-es-salaam is receiving attention.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE,

[PS.]

The Free Age Press may reprint the letter. We have nearly 10,000 copies which they may have at the cost price.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India.

25. LETTER TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR[1]

[PHOENIX,]

April 1, 1913

[TO

THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR

CAPE TOWN]

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Justice Searle's decision[2] regarding the validity of Indian marriages and the statement said to have been made by the Immigration Officer in Natal, to the effect that no boys or girls claiming to be the children of resident Indians would be admitted unless they or their parents produce certificates of birth, have created great consternation among my countrymen. And passive resisters have also felt compelled to examine their own position.

According to Justice Searle's decision, no Indian marriage whether celebrated in South Africa or elsewhere can be recognized unless it is in accordance with the marriage laws of the Cape Province, i.e., every Indian marriage is invalid that is not registered before a Marriage Officer or celebrated according to the Christian rites. This, in my humble opinion, is an intolerable position and disturbs rights hitherto exercised by Indians. I need hardly draw the attention of the Hon'ble the Minister to the fact that marriages celebrated according to the Hindu, Mahomedan or Parsee rites are fully recognized in India by Indian law.

With reference to children, it is a well-known fact that very few births are registered in India. Registration of birth is not universally compulsory. And it is practically impossible to produce certificates of birth except in rare cases.

The practical result of both the cases is almost completely to prevent the entry of wives and minor children of domiciled Indians. In the circumstances, I venture to submit that, apart from other considerations, it is necessary in order to give full effect to the

[1] This was published in *Indian Opinion*, 7-6-1913, under the heading "Correspondence with Mr. Fischer".

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Text of Searle's Judgement", 21-6-1913.

provisional settlement[1] to so frame the new Immigration Bill as to restore the position as to wives as it availed before Justice Searle's decision and to revoke the instructions regarding children. May I also suggest that it would be better if the leading members of the community were consulted regarding proof required by the Government as to marriages or the age or sonship of boys. I am sure that the Indian community has every desire to co-operate with the Government in facilitating the examination of relationships of wives and children so as to avoid fraud or deception.[2]

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

[M. K. GANDHI]

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5747

[1] For the terms of the settlement, *vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 22-4-1911.

[2] To this the following reply dated April 10 was received: ". . . I am directed by the Minister of the Interior to state that it does not appear that any new principle has thereby been laid down, as from the earliest times, following the introduction of European civilization into South Africa, the law of the land has only recognized as a valid union the marriage, by a recognized Marriage Officer, of one man to one woman, to the exclusion, while it lasted, of any other. A very old established section of the Cape population, and a large one in point of numbers, viz., the Cape Malay community, has always followed the Mahomedan faith and conducted its marriages according to the tenets of that religion; but such unions, unless solemnized by a Marriage Officer, are not recognized under the Marriage Order-in-Council or officially recorded in any way.

"You will note that the law does not demand that unions before Marriage Officers should be in accordance with Christian rites in order that they may be duly recognized as marriages. The unions effected before such officers are by no means exclusively confined to persons holding the Christian faith. It is not possible, therefore, to accept your contention that marriages according to Indian custom, but not celebrated before a Marriage Officer, have hitherto been recognized as valid here; nor is it possible to consider the introduction of any law which would have the effect of disturbing the position so far as it affects the Cape Malay or the Indian sections of the population.

"As has already been intimated, the Government has no intention of departing from the present practice in regard to the introduction of the wives and minor children of British Indians lawfully resident in South Africa, and Immigration Officers have been so advised."

26. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]

Thursday [*April 3, 1913*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I was unconsciously addressing you Upper House.[1] I note you are angry. I carried the information to you from here as soon as I could. For Johannesburg will you blame me? And yet you may. Why did I not specially ask Miss Schlesin to do so? Well, I expected her to keep you informed. I shall, I hope, know better next time. Now please get from Miss Schlesin a copy of the letter I have written myself to the Interior.[2] I have no spare copy with me.

You are hard on Mr. Gokhale. Your defence of Mr. Hosken does your heart the greatest credit. I agree with all you say about him. I wish you would forget in our relations that I am an Indian and you a European. There are undoubtedly moments when those who are the nearest to me do not distract my attention at all. You have given me the privilege of considering you to be one of the nearest.

I am interrupted. More next time.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] In the superscription Gandhiji had begun to write "Upper", but scored out the letters "Upp" for "Lower".

[2] *Vide* "Leter to Minister of Interior", 1-4-1913.

27. THE STORM SIGNAL

Johannesburg, as was quite proper, has given the storm signal. The mass meeting[1], called by the British Indian Association, was a thorough success. Mr. Cachalia[2] has given a respectful but firm warning that there are some Indians in South Africa who are prepared to give their all for the sake of their and their country's honour. The meeting passed resolutions which we doubt not would receive Government's earnest attention.

Indeed, it would appear that the meeting has already produced some effect on the mind of the Government. Reuter's report of the Johannesburg meeting is quickly followed up by an inspired explanation of the Searle judgment. The wire[3], which we publish in full, is a lame and poor attempt to whittle down the full effect of Justice Searle's judgment. The *bonafides* of Bai Mariam is questioned. The question of polygamy has been quite gratuitously introduced. But the Searle judgment is too clear and too precise to need any explanation. The learned Judge himself said that it was a test case. It was treated as such by both the parties, and the only issue before him was whether marriages solemnized according to the. tenets of Islam could be recognized by the Cape courts for the purposes of the immigration law. His Lordship's decision on the point is unequivocal and emphatic. Such marriages are invalid. It is on this that the protest of the Johannesburg meeting is based. The Government may not, they dare not, follow up the case to its logical extent. But the legal possibilities are there. They were clearly brought out by Mr. Ritch[4] in his speech before the meeting. There are some things which we may not worry over until the actuality stares us in the face; but there are some other things whose possible happening, too, must be avoided at all cost. No Indian husband can rest under the possibility of his wife's status being questioned and all the consequences of

[1] This was held on March 30, 1913; for the resolutions passed at the meeting, *vide* Appendix "Resolutions at Vrededorp Mass Meeting", 30-3-1913.

[2] Ahmed Mahomed Cachalia, Chairman, British Indian Association

[3] This is not reproduced here.

[4] L. W. Ritch, barrister, an active associate of Gandhiji.

the possibility becoming an actuality.

It was, therefore, we consider, a most proper thing for Mr. Cachalia to convene the meeting, whose demand cannot be abated by reason of the so-called explanation. It was fitting, too, that, in point of time the Tamil meeting should have been the first. The Tamils were the greatest sufferers during the late struggle. They are now in the forefront. We hope that the other towns of South Africa will follow Johannesburg's lead and support its action. Above all, we sincerely hope that the Government will not miss the golden opportunity they have, during the passage of their Bills of conceding the very just request of the mass meeting.

Indian Opinion, 5-4-1913

28. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [*-XIV*][1]

6. HOW MUCH AND HOW OFTEN TO EAT

We have considered what the ideal diet should be. It is necessary to inquire how much and how often to eat, and the topic calls for a separate article. To some extent the two questions, "How much should one eat?" and "How often should one eat?" are interrelated. I say "to some extent" because one cannot, and one should not, eat at a single meal the total quantity of food to be consumed in one day, so that "how much to eat" and "how often" are not so closely inter-related.

Doctors differ widely on the question: how much one should eat. "In plenty", says one doctor, and he recommends different amounts of various foods according to their properties. Another

[1] Articles in this series were later published as a book which was translated into Hindi and other Indian languages. Based on the Hindi version was *A Guide to Health*, an English adaptation by A. Rama Iyer, published by S. Ganesan, Madras, in July 1921. The book was translated into several European languages.

In August-December 1942, during his incarceration in the Agakhan Palace at Poona, Gandhiji wrote in Gujarati what became, in its English translation by Dr. Sushila Nayyar, *Key to Health*, published by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, in 1948. While this book was not based on the series of articles published in *Indian Opinion*, according to Gandhiji, it did not fundamentally differ from them.

doctor says that physical and mental workers should eat different kinds and quantities of food. A third opines that a labourer and a prince should eat the same quantity of food—that it is simply not true that a prince can make do with less but a labourer must have more. Everyone knows that a weak man and a strong man need different quantitiesof food. The diet of a man differs from that of a woman. There is a difference in the quantities of food for adults and children, for the aged and the young. Lastly, there is one writer who even states that, if the food is so thoroughly masticated that it turns into liquid and is swallowed with ease like saliva, we would find two to four ounces of food quite sufficient. He has carried out thousands of experiments. His book has been sold by the thousand and is widely read. Such being the position, it is useless to recommend definite quantities of food; most doctors have said, however, that 99% eat more than they require. Even otherwise, the thing is simple enough to be obvious to us all. This being so, it is not necessary to prescribe a minimum diet for fear that people might eat loo little. To tell the truth, what needs to be emphasized is that, while planning a diet, all of us should cut down on the quantity we consume.

As mentioned above, food should be thoroughly masticated. By this means, we shall be able to extract the utmost nourishment from even a small quantity of food and gain in every way. It has been shown that the faces of one who eats only as much as he can comfortably digest are small, well formed, darkish, sticky, dry and free from bad odour. One whose faeces are not so formed must have eaten excessive and unsuitable food and failed to masticate it and mix it with the saliva in his mouth. Thus, from the appearance of our faeces we can make out if we have eaten too much. He whose tongue is coated on rising, who sleeps uneasily and dreams frequently, must have been eating too much. One who has to get up often at night to pass urine must have taken too much liquid. By such detailed observation, anyone can decide the quantity of food required by him. Many people have offensive breath. Clearly, they have not digested their food. At times, those who over-eat get boils and pimples on the face and in the nostrils. But we do not take these affections seriously. Some get continuous hiccups. Others suffer from flatulence. *The simple meaning of all these ailments is that we have turned our stomach into a commode and that we carry this commode with us wherever we go*. If we could spare the time to think quietly about this matter, we would thoroughly despise our own habits. We would definitely eat less and

put an end to dinners and feasts, would make it a rule never to attend or give community dinners. Our hospitality would take an altogether different form, much to our own relief and that of the guest. As for dinner parties, one would forget the very mention of them. We do not invite people to join us when we clean our teeth or when we drink water. Eating a meal is a similar bodily function. Why do we go fussing all over in performing it? Every time we have a guest, we must not make things unbearable both for him and us. The explanation is that our palate has been spoilt through constant indulgence, so that we trump up one excuse after another for eating something. We feed our guest sumptuously in the hope of being similarly treated at his house. Actually, we seek such occasions so that we can have more opportunities of feasting on rich dishes. If we asked someone with a whole-some body to smell our mouth about an hour after we have indulged in such eating and heard his comments, we would certainly have cause to be ashamed of ourselves. There are even some young gourmets who, in order to be able to enjoy eating, take fruit salt immediately after a meal or vomit out what they have already consumed and then fall to eating the sweets again.

To a greater or lesser extent, we all behave like this. That is why our great men laid down for us certain religious observances like fasts, *rozas*[1], etc. There are numerous fast days among Roman Catholics too. There is nothing wrong whatever in anyone fasting completely or partially once in a fortnight purely for the sake of good health. It will do him a world of good indeed. The practice followed by many Hindus of eating only once a day during the *chaturmas*[2] is based on considerations of health. When the air is humid and the day is overcast most of the time, the digestion becomes slack and one should, therefore, eat less at such times.

Let us now consider how often one should eat. Most people in India eat only twice a day. Those who eat thrice will be found to belong to the labouring classes. People learnt eating four times only when they began to ape English ways. Recently, certain societies have been formed in England and America. Their function is to persuade the public to refrain from taking more than two meals a day. They

[1] Fasts observed by Muslims from sunrise to sunset, during the month of *Ramzan*

[2] The four monsoon months, from about mid-July to mid-November, during which pious Hindus observe partial fasts

advise us to go without breakfast. The night's sleep serves the purpose of food. At daybreak, therefore, we are ready not for food but for work. They believe that we are ready for food only after two or three hours of work. These men, therefore, eat only twice a day and do not even drink tea, etc., between meals. A well-known doctor called Dewey has written a book on this subject in which he has described in a convincing manner the benefits accruing from fasting, cutting out breakfast, generally eating less, etc. My own experience during the past eight years is that, after the period of youth is past, there is absolutely no need for anyone to eat more than twice a day. Once a person's body is fully grown and further development has stopped, he has no need to eat either much or often.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-4-1913

29. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

April 5, 1913

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I cannot plead guilty this time. I have undertaken nothing new. But I must discharge the burdens already taken on whether I like the thing or not. My work is so well concentrated and divided and regular here that practically even a minute counts. But I hope some day to have some rest from this toil. As to food, I can do no more than I am doing. I simply have not the heart. Anyway I do not suppose anyone here is keeping better health on the whole than I am. Then why grumble? More anon.

You shall have the books.

Yours,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

30. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]

Monday [*April 7, 1913*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I have your letter. It was Miss. Schlesin's ordinary duty to inform not only you but everyone interested in the movement. But I hope to do better next time.

Ritch is entirely wrong. The feeling cannot be inflamed. I have drawn attention to what is a fact. The idea is certainly to educate the people into knowing how invidious distinctions are drawn. If truth costs the advocacy of Lord Ampthill or one greater, we must pay the price. Was I now prepared to sacrifice the goodwill of both Lord Ampthill and Mr.Gokhale? In these matters Ritch cannot be followed. I never received the wire you refer to. I see you are getting bitter against Mr.Gokhale. He certainly never considered you to be unworthy and how could he who knew everything consider you to be in any way interested? On the contrary, he used to think of you as the only entirely disinterested European of the inner circle. Now you are showing your morbid sensitiveness which sometimes attacks you when you are at your weakest. Your attack on him in defence of Mr.Hosken was good. But your attack on him in regard to yourself is unworthy of your better self. You have become like Cassius brooding too much. I hope you have not also like him because lean on that account.

I hope your books will leave with this. No, Miss Schlesin now goes nothing for all she is doing. Geevers was here to say good-bye. I extended the usual hospitality to him but did not have many words with him. We talked platitudes for a few minutes and I left him alone. He understood the situation. I did not interrupt any of my work. When he left he abruptly asked for 25/10 which I gave as I did not want to enter into discussion with him. He said he would return the money. I do not even know his London address.

The concern that Dr. Mehta and Sorabji show about my health shows what a low opinion they have of me. If they gave me any credit for being a hygienist, they would never show that concern. Now you want to add your quota. Is it not too funny for words? How can I be

[a] hygienist if I do not show good health? I assure you it is not being neglected.

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

31. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[*April 7, 1913*][1]

The largest and most important book leaves today. Then there remain:

1. *Rural Hygiene*
2. *The Earth in Connection with Preservation of Contagia*
3. *The Dwelling House*
4. *Hints on Fruit Growing*

These will follow. Do you want the educational books also which I took with me? They are most of them worthless. I have looked into them. But *The Dwelling House*, noted above, you as an architect should study. It is a good book. It will leave tomorrow not today. I am having an extract made from it.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Although the text of the note is placed in the source as post-script to the following item, dated April 9, it appears from the contents that it was written on this day, following the letter on pp. 118-9.

32. TELEGRAM TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR[1]

[PHOENIX,]
April 9, 1913

INTERIOR
[CAPE TOWN]

HAVE JUST READ IMMIGRATION BILL. IT IS OPEN TO SERIOUS OBJECTIONS FROM INDIANS STANDPOINT. IT DISTURBS, CONTRARY TO A PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT, SEVERAL EXISTING RIGHTS. SECTION THREE TAKES AWAY SUPREME COURT'S JURIS-DICTION HITHERTO POSSESSED. CLAUSE (A), SUB-SECTION 1, SECTION FOUR SEEMS TO TAKE AWAY THE RIGHTS OF EDUCATED INDIANS WHO HAVE PREVIOUSLY ENTERED THE CAPE OR NATAL BY REASON OF THEIR EDUCATION. SAME CLAUSE ALSO CONTEM-PLATES THE PROHIBITION OF ENTRY INTO THE FREE STATE, ALTHOUGH THE IMMIGRANT MAY HAVE PASSED THE EDUCATION TEST. SUB-SECTION THREE, SECTION FOUR, MATERIALLY REST-RICTS RIGHTS POSSESSED BY THE NATAL AND THE CAPE INDIANS TO RE-ENTER AT ANY PORT. SUB-SECTION 1, SECTION FIVE, DEPRIVES NATAL INDIANS, NOT STRICTLY DOMICILED BUT OF LONG RESIDENCE THEREIN, OF RIGHTS HITHERTO POSSESSED. PROVISO SECTION FIVE RESTRICTS THE LEGAL EFFECT OF TRANSVAAL REGISTRATION CERTIFICATES AND NATAL RESIDENTIAL CERTIFICATES. BILL DOES NOT APPEAR TO PROTECT RIGHTS OF INTERMIGRA- TION TO THE CAPE OR NATAL OF EDUCATED INDIANS UNDER EXISTING LEGISLATION AND SOUTH AFRICA-BORN INDIANS TO ENTER THE CAPE UNDER THE EXISTING CAPE LAWS. LASTLY SEARLE JUDGMENT REQUIRES AMENDMENT OF THE BILL RECOGNI-ZING INDIAN MARRIAGES CELEBRATED ACCORDING TO INDIAN RELIGIONS IN ORDER TO PROTECT LAWFUL WIVES AND MINOR CHILDREN. HOPE ABOVE OBJECTIONS WILL MEET THE SYMPATHETIC

[1] It appears that similar telegrams were sent also to Sir Thomas Smartt and Drummond Chaplin, Members of Parliament. It was later passed on, to and published in *Indian Opinion*, 7-6-1913, with corrections and the following words in Gandhiji's hand: "Mr. Gandhi's telegram to the Minister, 9th April 1913." A copy of this telegram was cabled to G. K. Gokhale. Gandhiji made it a practice to send him such important communications to keep him informed. A similar telegram was sent by Cachalia on behalf of the British Indian Association on April 15.

CONSIDERATION OF THE MINISTER AND THUS REVIVAL OF PASSIVE RESISTANCE AND ALL CONSEQUENT SUFFERINGS MAY BE AVOIDED.[1]

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy with corrections in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5752

33. TELEGRAM TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR

PHOENIX,
April 9, 1913

INTERIOR
CAPE TOWN

REFERRING TO MY TELEGRAM[2] OF TODAY, I JUST OBSERVE THAT SUB-SECTION (G), SECTION FIVE, UNLIKE PREVIOUS BILLS DOES NOT PROTECT WIVES AND MINOR CHILDREN OF EDUCATED ENTRANTS. BILL ALSO NOT CLEAR THAT NO DECLARATIONS WILL BE REQUIRED FROM EDUCATED ENTRANTS INTO THE FREE STATE, ALTHOUGH THEY WILL REMAIN LIABLE TO RESTRICTIONS AS TO TRADE, FARMING AND OWNERSHIP OF LAND. COULD I KNOW WHY WORDS ARE ADDED IN SECOND SCHEDULE TO EXTEND REPEAL ACT 2, 1907, WHICH DON'T APPEAR IN THE LAST BILL?[3]

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy with corrections in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5753

[1] For the reply from the Minister of the Interior, *vide* Appendix "Telegram from Minister of Interior", 15-4-1913.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] For the reply from the Minister of the Interior, *vide* Appendix "Telegram from Minister of Interior", 15-4-1913.

34. LETTER TO E. F. C. LANE

PHOENIX,
NATAL,
April 9, 1913

DEAR MR. LANE,

The papers have given the information that General Smuts[1] will be in charge of the Immigration Bill whose text I have only just seen. I enclose herewith copy of the telegram[2] I have addressed to the Government which will show General Smuts how seriously open to objection the Bill is, examined purely from the passive resistance standpoint. You will see that my telegram covers practically the whole ground. You may remember that some of these objections were discussed thoroughly, and General Smuts, so far as I am aware, promised to meet them all. One thing has been omitted from the telegram. In the correspondence between us of last year, I questioned whether declaration would be required from educated entrants under the Free State reservation clause. If it be eligible, the clause will have to be altered so that, whilst the prohibition against the ownership of fixed property, farming, etc., continues, the declaration is dispensed with as regards those who enter under the proposed measure as immigrants into the Union.

The question about Indian marriages might conceivably be treated as a new point, but is it in reality? I certainly never dreamt that Indian marriages that have been hitherto recognized by the Courts of Law in the Union were unlawfully recognized. It cannot for a moment be denied that the Searle judgment shakes the existence of Indian society to its foundation.

Will you place this letter before General Smuts and, even if he is not to be in charge of this Bill, may I look to him for support? I know he will accept my assurance that I am not itching for passive resistance, indeed, I was so sure of the Bill carrying out the provisional settlement both to the letter and in the spirit that I was preparing for a visit to India in June, but I fear that, if the objections are not met, a

[1] Jan Christiaan Smuts (1870-1950); South African soldier and statesman; Prime Minister, 1919-24 and 1939-48

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 9-4-1913.

revival of the awful struggle is a certainty.

I am,
Yours sincerely,

E. F. C. LANE, ESQ.
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO GENERAL SMUTS
CAPE TOWN

[PS.]

You will see that I have sent a further telegram[1] to the Interior as a new discovery has been just made. In it I have brought out the Free State difficulty.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5754

35. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]
Wednesday [*April 9, 1913*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I like yours to Dr. F. but not to Mrs. Mayo. Was it dictated? It is cold and prosaic. Both the letters show in what mood you are at present. The best of you is that you can conceal nothing. More when we meet. My letter to Lane and wires to the Government[2] you will get from Miss Schlesin. The Bill as published is rotten and there seems to be no help from passive resistance.[3] I sent off *The Dwelling House* yesterday.

Yours,
UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 9-4-1913 and "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 9-4-1913.
[3] *ibid.*

36. TELEGRAM TO BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

[PHOENIX,
After *April 9, 1913*]

BIAS[1]
JOHANNESBURG

READ BILL UNACCEPTABLE SENT FULL TELEGRAMS[2] CAPE. HOPE ALL READY FIGHT.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5759

37. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR-GENERAL

21-24, COURT CHAMBERS,
RISSIK STREET,
JOHANNESBURG,
April 10, 1913

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL
PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to enclose herewith, in triplicate, copies of Resolutions[3] passed at a Mass Meeting of British Indians held at the Hamidia Islamic Hall, Vrededorp, on the 30th ultimo; and to request that His Excellency will be good enough to have same forwarded to the Hon'ble the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Hon'ble the Secretary of State for India.

I have, etc.,
A. M. CACHALIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Colonial Office Records: 551/39

[1] Telegraphic address of the British Indian Association.

[2] The reference, apparently, is to the telegrams to the Minister of the Interior dated April 9, 1913; *vide* "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 9-4-1913.

[3] *Vide* Appendix "Resolutions at Vrededorp Mass Meeting", 30-3-1913; also, "The Storm Signal", 5-4-1913.

38. LETTER TO SECRETARY FOR INTERIOR

PHOENIX,
April 11, 1913

TO
THE SECRETARY FOR THE INTERIOR[1]
CAPE TOWN

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant. I beg to thank the Minister for accepting the two names that were rejected from among the educated entrants for the past year.

It is not my intention that the names of entrants submitted by me in future should always. be accepted. But I do respectfully submit that the names of such entrants up to six for the Transvaal should be submitted by me in my representative capacity and that they should be accepted by the Government so long as the settlement remains in a provisional state. As soon as it becomes final, as I hope it will be during the current session, no doubt, some arrangement, satisfactory alike to the Government and the Indian community will be made for the selection.

Personally, I think that the Government of India can have no voice in the selection for the simple reason that they cannot judge the wants of the local community. I venture to think that, if after the settlement becomes final, different Indian associations and groups submit too many different names, it will be for the Government to give due weight to each representation and select from the names so submitted the number, previously determined, of entrants for any particular year.

I note that your letter seems to suggest that the entrants will be restricted to certain provinces. I beg to point out that the settlement contemplates the ability of educated entrants, under a general Bill governing the whole Union, to enter and settle in any province of the Union subject, nevertheless, to the local disabilities not connected with immigration. It is submitted that it is the essence of the compromise that, as to immigration, new Indian immigrants are not to suffer any

[1] E. M. Gorges

disability not imposed upon any other section or race. This, however, is a matter which is now, I note from your wire, among the other points raised by me, under the consideration of the Government.

I am now asking the Immigration Office, Pretoria, to let me have permits for the two gentlemen whose names have been accepted.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5762

39. LETTER TO REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS

[PHOENIX,]

April 11, 1913

THE REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS
PRETORIA

SIR,

We understand that the proof you require in case of wives of registered Indians is a certificate from a first-class magistrate in India to the effect that the person claiming to be the wife of a registered Indian is, to the knowledge of the magistrate gained from the evidence before him, the wife of such Indian and that such certificate should bear the thumb-impression of such registered Indian, if he is then in India.

We understand further that the proof you require in respect of minor children is a certificate from a first-class magistrate that the child appearing before him is to his knowledge, gained from the evidence before him, the child of the person claiming to be its father and that the certificate should bear the thumb-print of the child as also the father, if he be there.

We shall esteem it a favour if you will be good enough to let us know whether we are correctly informed. We may state that we have already published the information in our Gujarati columns but, if we would have it authentically from you, it will materially assist Indian

claimants and obviate trouble and delay in future.

We remain,
Your faithfully,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5764

40. THE NEW BILL

The long-promised Immigration Bill has at last seen the light of day. We might say, at once, that it is disappointing, it is worse than its predecessor, and fails in material respects to give effect to the provisional settlement. Elsewhere will be found a detailed list of the points[1] in which it falls short of the settlement. It is a pity that this is so. The Government have so often declared their intention of carrying out the terms of the settlement that the Bill will come as a rude shock to those who have at all cared to follow that settlement. The Bill confirms the suspicion that the Government only want to give us what they must, that they wish ill even to those who have established rights in the Union, and that, by hook or by crook, they desire to compass our ruin. In carrying out this ruthless policy, they have gone as far as they dare in their precious Bill. If it becomes law in its present form, it will whittle away some of our cherished and existing rights and make our position, insecure as it already is, doubly so. The Bill plays with words regarding the Free State difficulty and is quite on a par with the Immigration Act of the Transvaal in unscrupulous subtlety. The immigration law of the Transvaal, as we have pointed out so often, has created a *legal* racial bar without anyone, save those well versed in the Transvaal laws, knowing it. So it seems to us, does this Bill create a *legal* racial bar without a superficial reader being able to detect it.

Unless the Government yield and amend the Bill materially, passive resistance must revive, and, with it, all the old miseries, sorrows and sufferings. Homes, just re-established, must be broken up. Those passive resisters who have resumed their ordinary vocations, must exchange them for that of becoming once more His Majesty's guests in his gaols in South Africa. We do still hope that the Government will

[1] *Vide* " Its Effect", 12-4-1913.

see their way to grant relief. But, if they do not, we must learn the lesson again of finding pleasure in pain.

Indian Opinion, 12-4-1913

41. THE MARRIAGE IMBROGLIO

The letter on the marriage question from the Master of the Supreme Court, Natal Provincial Division, and Counsel's opinion obtained thereon, both of which will be found in another column,[1] show clearly what an important issue faces the Indian community. The Master himself realizes the full significance of his attitude and, therefore, suggests to the European Executor of the deceased that the Supreme Court should be moved in order to determine the position. This case shows, in a manner in which it could not be shown otherwise equally vividly, how absolutely necessary it is for the Indian community to secure an amendment of the law as to non-Christian Indian marriages.

Mr. Cachalia has received an apparently soothing reply from the Government on the resolutions of the recently held Johannesburg mass meeting. The Government assure Mr. Cachalia and, through him, the community, that they do not intend to disturb the practice that has hitherto existed, in spite of the Searle judgment. We accept the assurance but it is not worth much. In vital matters, assurances which are in conflict with an actual legal position can afford little relief. For the question is not, in the present case, that of introducing a few Indian wives into the Union per year, but it is one of determining the theoretical status of Indian women. In plain language, the Searle judgment reduces their status from that of being honoured and honourable wives of their husbands to one of concubinage. In the eye of the law, now Mrs. Cachalia, Mrs. Naidoo, Mrs. Cama and Mrs. Gandhi are concubines, and their offspring not honoured and beloved sons or daughters of their parents but illegitimate children. What comfort can it be to these husbands that, though the law may consider their dear ones as the lepers of society, the Government will condescend not to do so? So much for the sentiment of the matter, which, to us, is the reality. It often happens that what hurts the sentiment also hurts the matter. At any rate, such is the position in this

[1] These are not given here.

marriage question. The Janubie case[1] illustrates our point. The Government's condescension is of no avail to the poor widow. The Master of the Supreme Court has no discretion to do otherwise than carry out a law which he has to administer. So long as the Searle judgment stands, he must treat Janubie, not as the widow of her husband but as a kept woman, and as such disentitled to remission of succession duty. With all the good-will in the world, the Government can grant no relief, for they cannot direct the Master as they can an Immigration Officer. Hence it is absolutely necessary to amend the law as requested by the great meeting of Johannesburg. The Government have a golden opportunity of granting the necessary relief. They can do so by slightly amending the Immigration Bill they have just published, and it will be the best earnest of their good-will.

Indian Opinion, 12-4-1913

42. ITS EFFECT

The above Bill[2] fails to carry out the provisional settlement because it takes away, contrary to the settlement, existing rights, i.e.,

(1) Section 3 takes away the Court's jurisdiction, hitherto exercised in terms of existing statutes now to be repealed. (2) Clause (a) sub-section l of Section 4 seems to take away rights acquired by educated Indians who may have entered the Cape or Natal by passing the education test.

(3) Sub-section 3, Section 4 restricts rights possessed by the Natal and the Cape Indians to re-enter at any port.

(4) Sub-section (f), Section 5 deprives Natal Indians, not strictly domiciled, but of long residence therein of domiciliary rights hitherto possessed. (This may turn thousands of Indians now resident in Natal into prohibited immigrants.)

(5) Proviso Section 5 very largely nullifies the legal effect of Transvaal registration certificates. (These, in spite of treble registration, in most cases, cease, under the Bill, to constitute, in Lord Milner's words, "an indefeasible title to residence in the Transvaal"; for three years' absence from the Transvaal would, under the Bill,

[1] *Vide* "Janubie Case", 12-4-1913.

[2] The reference is to the Immigration Bill.

destroy the title to residence created by the certificates.

(6) The same proviso invalidates the Natal domicile certificates, after three years' absence by the holders.

(7) The same proviso restricts the right of Cape or Transvaal Indians to enter Natal by passing the present education test of Natal, and of the Natal and the Transvaal Indians to enter the Cape by passing its education test.

(8) The same proviso takes away the right of South Africa-born Indians to enter the Cape under its existing statute.

Further examined from the passive resistance standpoint only, the Bill is also defective in that:

(1) Sub-clause (a) sub-section I of Section 4 seems to contemplate the prohibition of the entry into the Free State of new immigrants who may pass the education test.

(2) Even if it does not prohibit such entry, the Bill seems to require a declaration from an educated immigrant which would not be required from any other immigrant as an immigrant.

(3) Sub-clause (g) of Section 5 does not recognize the right of the wives and minor children of new immigrants to enter the Union with their husbands.

(4) And the Bill does not correct the defect, discovered by the Searle judgment, in the existing South African laws as to Indian marriages and minor children born of such marriages.

Indian Opinion, 12-4-1913

43. THE NEW BILL AND THE OLD

There are many points of difference and of similarity between the above Bill and the abortive draft of 1912[1]. The structure of the new Bill is very dissimilar to that of the 1912 measure. Section 1 corresponds with sub-sections 1 and 2 of Section 3 of the 1912 Bill, but sub-section 3 of Section 3 is elaborated and extended, both as to scope and methods of administration, in the twelve sub-sections of Section 2 of the new Bill, providing the machinery for appeals to Immigration Boards, which are to have, subject to instructions to be given them by the Minister pursuant to the general terms of the Bill, final jurisdiction except on questions of domicile, and Section 3, excluding the jurisdiction of the courts of law, except in matters of domicile, is entirely new.

Section 4 corresponds generally with Section 4 of the 1912 Bill, but it also includes the Provincial restrictions of Section 7 of the old Bill. There are, however, two provisions which radically distinguish it from that measure. First, there is the clause providing for exclusion, at the will of the Minister, upon economic grounds, and secondly, the education test is to be that of the existing Provincial statutes. Sub-sections 2 and 3 are new.

Sections 5 of the two Bills correspond, except that sub-section (f) confines the exemption to persons domiciled in any Province, persons otherwise resident not being protected. No provision is made for the recognition of non-Christian Indian marriages or for the protection of the children of these marriages. South Africa-born Indians, who have today the right to proceed to the Cape Province unmolested, are deprived of that right by the first proviso of this section, whilst the second proviso enables the authorities to prevent the return to South Africa of any Indian who has been absent from the country for more than three years. This proviso is new. Sections 6 of each Bill, though differing considerably in language, have substantially the same effect in each. Section 7 corresponds substantially with sub-section 2 of Section 28 of the 1912 Bill. Sections 8, 9 and 10 of each substantially correspond. Chapter III of the new Bill corresponds

[1] *Vide* "Extracts from Immigrants' Restriction Bill (1912) and Orange Free State Constitution", 3-2-1912.

in the main with Chapter II of the 1912 measure, and deals with the special powers for preventing the entry of and dealing with prohibited immigrants at the ports of entry. Section 19 appears to be intended to cover the provisions of Sections 18 and 19 of the old Bill, but the new Bill provides that any person found within the Union is liable to an inquisition by the Immigration Officer, and may be, unless he satisfies the Immigration Officer that he is not a prohibited immigrant, dealt with as such, subject to his right of appeal to a Board. Sub-section 2 provides a new procedure not contemplated in the obsolete measure. Section 20 of each Bill is the same. Sections 21 and 22 of the new Bill, whilst including the same general provisions as those of the corresponding sections of the 1912 Bill, exempt from their operation persons born in South Africa. Sub-sections 1 and 2 of Section 23 of the new Bill correspond with the similar sub-sections of the old measure. Sub-section 3 is new. Section 24 is the same. The first part of sub-section 1 of Section 25, giving the Minister the power to exempt any person from the provisions of Section 4, is new. Sub-section 2 speaks of a "certificate of identity", and not of a "permit", as does the corresponding sub-section of the 1912 Bill, and the period of its validity is not limited. But this advantage is nullified by the second proviso of Section 5. Section 26 corresponds, generally, with Section 26 of the old Bill, and provides for the issue of regulations by the Governor-General. Section 27, providing for penalties, is the same. Section 28 corresponds generally with sub-section 1 of Section 28 of the old measure, save that any Asiatic not exempted from the provisions of Section 4, all of whose tests he may have passed, is required to register under Act 36 of 1908. Section 29 corresponds with Section l of the 1912 Bill, and sets forth the measures to be repealed. Section 30 is generally identical with Section 2 of the old measure. Section 31 brings the Bill, if enacted, into force on July 1st next.

Indian Opinion, 12-4-1913

44. JANUBIE CASE

We have commented on this case before now.[1] This time we have received more important documents which we reproduce in the English section.[2] Among these is a letter from the Master of the Provincial Supreme Court in which he states that, though there are affidavits by Mr. Ismail Bhayat and other gentlemen, he cannot accept these as evidence. The trustee has to prove that the marriage is legal, failing which no rebate will be allowed on account of the wife's share. The Master has also advised the trustee to consult a lawyer, as the case is important for the Indian community as a whole. Accordingly, the case was referred to a lawyer for his opinion. Mr. Tatham, the lawyer, is of the view that Bai Janubie's marriage cannot be treated as legally valid. A marriage can be considered legally valid only if it has been either registered or solemnized according to Christian rites. The gentleman adds that the opinion he has given need not frighten the Muslims as they can have their marriages registered! We are not surprised at this view. It is necessary, however, to understand it fully. Only those who do not understand this case will remain unconcerned. Those who understand it will not sit still even for a moment. According to Mr. Tatham, men whose marriages were duly solemnized and who have had children should now admit that their wives were hitherto not lawful wives and they are advised to secure legal status for their wives by getting the marriages registered now. We hope no Indians will agree to do so. Does it make any sense to say that a man and a woman who are already married should be married again? Mr. Tatham states, moreover, that a person having two wives will be considered to have committed an offence under the law. This is true, indeed, but it is a position which we cannot tolerate. We give the warning that this case has implications so grave that, even if the Government were to drop the matter, our children will not be recognized as legal heirs by the courts. The Government cannot dictate to the courts. This is not a matter concerning the administration of law but its inter-

[1] *Vide* "The Marriage Imbroglio", 12-4-1913.

[2] These are not given here.

pretation, which rests with the courts. The Government can permit the entry of our wives by issuing orders to the officers in charge, so that we may be pacified. But it is for the courts to accept our children as legal heirs. If our marriages are treated as legally invalid, the courts will be able to offer us no relief. The difficulty can be solved only through amendment of the law.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-4-1913

45. FOR HINDUS

There is a belief, we hear, that the decision of Mr. Justice Searle does not apply to Hindus or Parsees. This belief is unfounded. The decision means, in plain terms, that marriages not contracted according to the law of this land are no marriages at all. It is not material, from the point of view of this ruling, whether as a matter of fact a person has one wife or more. This needs to be carefully borne in mind. We shall go so far as to offer the advice that until this dispute is settled, those Hindus or Muslims or Parsees who do not wish their wives to join satyagraha should not ask them to come here. What surprises and grieves us is the fact that Indians in South Africa have not yet flared up as a result of this judgment. It would seem as though we had lost all spirit. Shall we merely look on when our wives are treated as concubines by the law of this land?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-4-1913

46. REPLY TO THE ASSOCIATION

Mr. Cachalia has received a reply to the resolutions on the subject of marriages passed at a meeting of the British Indian Association in Johannesburg and communicated to the Government at Cape Town.[1] The Minister for the Interior says in the reply that he fails to understand why the decision of Mr. Justice Searle should have agitated the community so much. The community is not unaware [he says] of the legal position and the Government's view on the subject of marriages. The Government has frequently stated that, whatever the legal position, it does not intend to enforce the law in an oppressive manner. If a woman's marriage has been celebrated according to the rites of Islam or any other religion, if the evidence adduced in support of the marriage is satisfactory and if it is shown that the husband has no other wife in South Africa, she is allowed to land. Officers have been instructed not to depart from the practice that has obtained so far, the Searle judgment notwithstanding. This reply goes to prove the correctness of our inference, based on a Reuter telegram, regarding the effect of the resolutions passed at the meeting of the Association. There is no doubt that the Government has been taken aback by the resolution about satyagraha. It appears from [its] telegram that for the present women will not be subjected to further harassment; but this is not enough to reassure us. We cannot rest in peace so long as the sword of the Searle judgment continues to hang over our heads. If, in fact, the Government did not intend to make any change in the current practice, why did it seek a categorical ruling from Mr. Justice Searle? Why was Bai Mariam detained? Even, according to the Government, Bai Mariam's co-wife is in India. We do not know whether her husband has another wife. It is, however, a sufficient reply to the Government that even if he has another wife, she is in India. Thus, the assurance given to us in the telegram is an after-thought on the part of the Government. If, moreover, we consider the position of Janubie in this context, we shall see that the Government will not be able to intervene in her case. If her marriage is not treated as legally

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Governor-General", 10-4-1913.

valid, she forfeits her right and, until the law is amended, neither the Government nor anyone else is empowered to grant us relief. The Parliament alone can do so. It rests with the Government to move the Parliament for the purpose. Now that the Parliament is in session, and the Immigration Bill is before it, the Government has a golden opportunity of redressing our grievance if it really means to do so. If we are sincere enough, and so is the Association, the Government cannot but be sincere likewise. If we mean what we say, we shall hold meetings everywhere to extend support to the Association's resolutions and, if the Association is sincere, it will not yield an inch whether it receives any support or not.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-4-1913

47. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [*-XV*]

7. EXERCISE

Exercise is just as essential to mankind as are air, water and food, though it is true that man cannot get on for a long time without air, water and food as he can without exercise. It is a fact of common experience, however, that one cannot enjoy really good health without exercise. We have to interpret exercise in the same way that we did "food". Exercise does not necessarily mean *moidanda*[1], football, cricket or going out for a walk. Exercise means physical and mental activity. Just as food is necessary for the mind as much as for bones and flesh, so also is exercise necessary both for body and mind. If the body has no exercise, it is sickly and, if the mind has none, it is dull. Stupidity should also be regarded only as a kind of illness. It betrays sheer ignorance to describe as healthy a wrestler who, though adept at wrestling, is mentally a boor. There is a saying in English that he alone is healthy who has a sound mind in a sound body.

What is this exercise? Nature has so arranged things for us that we can be continuously taking exercise in one way or another. If we

[1] An Indian game

but think calmly enough, we shall see that a majority of people in the world live on agriculture. All members in a farmer's family have some form of exercise. It is only if they work eight, ten or even more hours every day in the fields or elsewhere that they can get their daily bread. They need no separate exercise for the mind. A farmer cannot work without applying his mind. He must be able to test the nature of his soil, must watch changes of weather, must know how to manipulate his plough skilfully and be generally familiar with the movements of the stars, the sun and the moon. However clever a city-dweller may be, every time he goes to a farmer's house, he feels altogether out of his element. The farmer can say how seed should be sown; he is familiar with all the by-ways in the vicinity and knows all the men in the neighbourhood. By looking at the stars he can judge the direction even at night. He can make certain deductions from the voice and speed of birds ; for instance, when certain birds cluster or sing together, he sees in it a sign of the approach of the monsoon or some other similar phenomenon. Thus, the farmer knows enough of astronomy, geography and geology to serve his needs. He has to feed his children and has, therefore, some idea of the duties of man, and, residing as he does in the vast open spaces of this earth, he naturally becomes aware of the greatness of God. Physically, it goes without saying, he is always sturdy. He is his own physician, when ill. Thus, we can see, he does have an educated mind.

But all men are not going to be farmers. Moreover, these chapters are not being written for the benefit of farmers. The question is, what should those who have gone into business or some similar profession do in this regard? The farmer's life has been described at some length in order that we may find a rational answer to this problem, that we who are not farmers can arrange our way of life somewhat on the pattern of his and that we may realize that, in so far as our manner of living differs from the farmer's, we would enjoy poorer health. We can conclude from a farmer's way of living that a man should do physical work for eight hours a day and that of a kind that would stimulate our mental powers in the very process of doing it. Now, merchants and others certainly obtain mental exercise in the course of their work, but this is one-sided. A business man does not know astronomy or geography or history, as the farmer does. He may

be able to judge about movements of prices and may be proficient in the art of salesmanship, but this is not enough to exercise fully his mental faculties. In this type of work, the body does perform some movements now and then, but they are too slight to be of any account.

In the West, they have invented games like cricket for such people. Another way is to observe some days in the year as holidays, when more games are played, and to do some light reading by way of mental exercise. This is one method which we may consider. To be sure, spending time in sports does give some exercise to the body, but exercise of this kind does nothing to improve the mind. We can see the truth of this from numerous instances. What proportion of men of high intellectual calibre shall we find among those who regularly play cricket or from among the large number who play football? In India, what do we observe as regards the mental development of the princes who give their time to sports? Again, how many of those with well-developed intellectual powers are sportsmen? Experience shows that highly intellectual men are seldom sportsmen as well. The British nowadays are very much given to sports. Their own poet, Kipling, has described these sportsmen as enemies of the mind, and adds that they will also prove themselves enemies to their country. In India, our intellectuals seem to have found a different way. They provide exercise for their minds but relatively very little or none for their bodies. These people are lost to us. Their bodies are enfeebled by excessive intellectual work. They are continually pursued by some ailment or other and just when they have gained enough experience to be of real use to the country, they pass away. From this we may conclude that neither exercising the brain alone nor the body alone is enough and also that exercise which serves no useful purpose, namely, that derived from sports, has little meaning. Real exercise is that which trains, continuously, both mind and body alike. He alone who takes such exercise can preserve good health. The farmer is the only such person.

Then, what are those to do who are not farmers? The exercise obtained from sports such as cricket leaves much to be desired. We must, therefore, think of a form of exercise something like what the farmer gets. Businessmen and others similarly placed can make a garden round their house and regularly spend two to four hours a day digging there. Hawkers get exercise from their own work itself. If we

are living in a rented room, we should not raise any difficulty about working in another's land, for that would indicate a small mind. We would derive nothing but benefit from working on land, whosoever's it might be. The appearance of our house would be improved and we would have the satisfaction of having looked after another's land. It is necessary to say a few words for those who cannot find an opportunity to work on land or who do not favour such work in any circumstances. Apart from working on land, the best form of exercise is walking. It has been truly described as the king of physical exercises. Our *fakirs* and *sadhus* are very healthy. One reason for this is that they do not use horses, carriages or other vehicles. Their journeys are always performed on foot. There has been a famous American writer named Thoreau[1], who has written a highly thought-provoking book on the subject of walking. According to him, the writings of one who refuses to leave his house on the excuse of lack of time and who undertakes no physical activity, are bound to be anaemic like himself. Speaking of his own experience, he says that when he wrote his best books he was doing his longest walking. He thought nothing of walking four or five hours at a stretch. Just as we cannot work when we are hungry, so it should be with exercise. We do not know how to measure mental work, therefore, we arc not able to realize that mental work done unaccompanied by physical exercise will inevitably be dull and ineffectual. Walking results in rapid circulation of blood in all the parts of the body, promotes movements in every organ and strengthens it. One should remember that the arms move during walking. We obtain fresh air by going for a walk and behold the beauties of Nature. One should not take walks always in the same place or in narrow lanes but go out into fields and groves. We will then be able to appreciate in some measure the beauty of Nature. A walk of a mile or two can scarcely be called walking. A walk, to be worth the name, should cover ten or twelve miles. Those who cannot do this regularly can take long walks on Sundays. A certain patient, who used to suffer from indigestion, went one day to an experienced *vaidya*[2] for some

[1] Henry David Thoreau (1817-62); American philosopher, naturalist and writer; author, among others, of *Walden, or Life in the Woods* and *Excursions*. *Vide* also "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience", 7-9-1907.

[2] Physician practising *Ayurveda*, an indigenous system of medicine

pills. The *vaidya* advised him to take short but regular walks. The patient protested that he was too weak. The *vaidya* realized that he was, in fact, a timid man. He thereupon took the patient with him in his carriage. On the way he purposely dropped his whip. The patient, out of politeness, had to get out to pick it up. The *vaidya* immediately drove off. The poor patient had to follow, panting hard for breath. The *vaidya* having made sure that the former had covered a fairly long distance, turned the carriage back, picked him up and told him that, since walking was the only medicine for him, he —the *vaidya*—had forced him to walk even at the risk of appearing cruel. By this time, however, the patient was ravenously hungry and had forgotten all about the whip episode. He thanked the doctor, went home and ate his fill. Those who are not in the habit of walking and suffer from indigestion and its accompanying ills should try the experiment.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-4-1913

48. LETTER TO SECRETARY FOR INTERIOR[1]

April 14, 1913

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 5th instant, in reply to my telegram[2] of the 2nd instant, regarding the recent judgment given by Mr. Justice Searle.

I am to submit that it had never, before the judgment of Mr. Justice Searle, become clear to the community that non-Christian marriages not registered in South Africa would not be recognized by the South African Courts. Mr. Justice Wessels' judgment[3], delivered sometime ago, went perilously near such a pronouncement, but his judgment turned rather upon the legality or otherwise of bigamous marriages than upon the validity of marriages celebrated according to the rites of the various great Indian faiths. As the Hon'ble the Minister will have noticed, Mr. Justice Searle's decision was not based upon any precedent, but was an original pronouncement upon the Marriage Law, the case before him having been considered a test-case.

Moreover, up to now, Hindu, Mahomedan and Parsee marriages have not been questioned, and the Masters of the several Divisions have recognized them. But, since the judgment referred to, the Master of the Natal Provincial Division, my Association understands, has questioned the validity of a Mahomedan marriage in connection with the succession of the widow of a deceased Mahomedan to his estate.[4]

My Association is grateful to the Government for giving the assurance that it is not their intention to apply the law in a harsh or arbitrary manner, but, in view of the judgment in question, I hope that the Government will understand the attitude of the community represented by the meeting in considering the assurance as not sufficiently meeting the requirements of the situation. In the eye of the law now, Indian wives of non-Christian persuasion are not wives but concubines. I feel sure that the Government will appreciate the position of

[1] This was signed by A. M. Cachalia.
[2] This is not available.
[3] *Vide* "Mrs. Jussat's Case", 9-3-1912 & "What is a Wife?", 11-5-1912.
[4] *Vide* "Janubie Case", 12-4-1913.

the community if it resents, as it does resent, such a humiliating reduction of the status of Indian wives and, as has been already pointed out, the legal consequences of the judgment, which, it is apprehended, it is not within the power of the Government by administrative action to remedy, are serious enough to warrant an alteration of the law.

My Association, therefore, ventures to hope that the Government will be graciously pleased to give due consideration to the feelings of the Indian community in the matter, and take the opportunity that the introduction of the new Immigration Bill offersto remedy the evil created by the unexpected judgment of Justice Searle.[1]

Indian Opinion, 19-4-1913

[1] The Secretary wrote on May 9: "I am directed . . . to inform you in reply that it would be entirely opposed to the principles of European civilization to pass legislation which would have the effect of disturbing in any way the position in regard to the solemnization of valid marriages, as it now exists in South Africa under the Roman-Dutch Law, by recognizing as valid any marriages solemnized under a form which permits of the union of one man with more than one woman.

"As you seem to question the statement, made by me in my previous communication that the position, as indicated in Mr. Justice Searle's judgment, has been well understood in South Africa for many years past, I am to invite your attention to the fact that a case bearing on this question was settled in the Cape Courts so long ago as 1860, and, as a result, an Act was passed in that year which provides additional facilities for contracting valid marriages by empowering the Governor to appoint special Marriage Officers for the purpose of solemnizing marriages of persons professing the Jewish faith and of persons professing the Mohammedan faith."

49. TELEGRAM TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR

[PHOENIX,]
April 15, 1913

THE INTERIOR

AM GRATEFUL GOVERNMENT FULL REPLY[1] STOP REGRET HOWEVER REPLY UNSATISFACTORY. COMMUNITY'S EXPERIENCE BOARDS HITHERTO MOST UNHAPPY. RIGHT APPROACHING SUPREME COURT CHERISHED PRIVILEGE STOP BOTH PREVIOUS BILLS THEORETICAL RIGHT ENTRY FREE STATE WAS TO BE RECOGNIZED. HOWEVER CONVENIENT SUB-SECTION THREE SECTION FOUR MAY BE IT CONSTITUTES CLEAR DEPARTURE EXISTING LAW PRACTICE STOP PRESENT NATAL IMMIGRATION ACT GENERALLY ACCEPTS THREE YEA RS RESIDENCE EQUIVALENT DOMICILE. RETENTION SUCH CLAUSE FOR NATAL CANNOT CONFER RIGHT NOT HITHERTO EXISTING STOP IN NATAL INDIAN ABSENTING NO MATTER HOW MANY YEARS CAN LEGALLY RE-ENTER IF HE CAN ESTABLISH PREVIOUS DOMICILE AS LIBERALLY DEFINED BY NATAL ACT STOP PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT NEVER CONTEMPLATED THAT EXISTING INDIAN RIGHTS COULD BE DIMINISHED BY NEW BILL IF EUROPEAN RIGHTS COULD ALSO BE DIMINISHED STOP MATTER OF FACT VAST MAJORITY EUROPEANS NOT AFFECTED BY PROVISO BUT ALMOST EVERY INDIAN ABSENTING HIMSELF OVER THREE YEARS WILL ASSUREDLY LOSE RIGHTS RESIDENCE A POSITION WHICH I SUBMIT IS TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE STOP INTER-MIGRATION IS SUCH A TANGIBLE RIGHT AND CAN SO EASILY BE LEFT UNDISTURBED PRESENT BILL THAT PROMISES OF MERE ADMINISTRATIVE LIBERALITY WILL HARDLY SATISFY THOSE CONCERNED STOP EFFECT SEARLE JUDGMENT CAN BE WHOLLY COUNTERACTED IN MY OPINION ONLY BY LEGISLATION STOP IT IS SUBMITTED WIVES AND MINOR CHILDREN EDUCATED INDIANS SHOULD BE PROTECTED BY CLEAR DEFINITION AS IN PREVIOUS BILL STOP IF MINISTER RECOGNIZE LEGAL POSSIBILITY EDUCATED INDIAN ENTERING FREE STATE DECLARATION BY

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Telegram from Minister of Interior", 29-5-1913.

HIM UPON ENTERING CLEARLY UNNECESSARY AND IF INSISTED UPON WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE IMMIGRANTS DECLARATION NOT REQUIRED FROM OTHER IMMIGRANTS STOP WHILE ADMISSION IN FACT TO FREE STATE UNNECESSARY EXISTENCE RIGHT ENTER UNDER GENERAL BILL REQUIRED FOR RESPECTING THEORY EQUALITY IN POINT IMMIGRATION STOP YOUR REPLY DOES NOT COVER QUESTION EXISTING RIGHTS SOUTH AFRICA BORN INDIANS ENTER CAPE STOP REGRET REFERENCE PASSIVE RESISTANCE HAS BEEN INTERPRETED AS THREAT AND OFFENDED MINISTER NOTHING FURTHER FROM MY DESIRE THAN TO USE THREAT OR GIVE OFFENCE BUT IN MENTIONING POSSIBILITY REVIVAL PASSIVE RESISTANCE I HAVE ONLY MENTIONED WHAT I KNOW IS TRUE I HAD THOUGHT THAT BY THIS TIME GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE SOUTH AFRICA HAD RECOGNIZED THAT PASSIVE RESISTANCE BY UNREPRESENTED COMMUNITY AND OF TYPE PRACTISED BY MY COUNTRYMEN WAS A CLEAN LEGITIMATE METHOD DEMONSTRATING INTENSITY FEELING AND SECURING REDRESS IF IT GIVE OFFENCE EITHER TO GOVERN-MENT OR TO PEOPLE SOUTH AFRICA CO-WORKERS AND MYSELFCAN ONLY TAKE THE CONSEQUENCE AND UNDERGO ORDEAL HOWEVER TERRIBLE FOR A CAUSE DEAR TO US AS OUR OWN LIVES AND DEARER STILL IF POSSIBLE.[1]

GANDHI

From photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5766

[1] The Ministry of the Interior in reply said that the matters raised in the telegram were engaging the Minister's attention.

50. LETTER TO SECRETARY FOR INTERIOR

[PHOENIX,]
April 15, 1913

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th instant, in reply to mine of the 1st instant,[1] on the question of Indian marriages.

With due deference to the Hon'ble the Minister of the Interior, it is respectfully submitted that the Searle judgment, if my reading of it is correct, lays down a definitely new principle. Hitherto non-Christian Indian marriages have been recognized both by the Immigration Department and the Master of the Supreme Court. Issue of persons married according to the rites of their respective faiths, but not before Marriage Officers, have been hitherto accepted in intestate estates as lawful heirs. But such issue could not, according to the Searle judgment, be now so recognized. The Master of the Supreme Court, Natal Provincial Division, has already, as will appear from the report enclosed herewith, raised the question.

I am aware that the marriages registered before Marriage Officers have not necessarily to be Christian marriages. But the vast majority of non-Christian Indian marriages have never taken place before Marriage Officers. All these and the marriages celebrated and considered by the Indian law to be legal in India, of Indians lawfully resident in the Union, seem to be adversely affected by the Searle judgment.

I trust that the Government do not expect that these marriages should be solemnized or registered before Marriage Officers in the Union, in order that they might be accepted as valid in the eye of the law here. I gratefully acknowledge the consideration that the Government propose to show by directing Immigration Officers not to disturb the existing practice. But the relief that would be thus afforded would not sufficiently meet the case if only because no administrative

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Minister of Interior", 1-4-1913.

action can deal with the legal consequences that are sure to arise from the Searle judgment.

In my letter, I did not raise the question of plurality of wives. That question does not affect vast issues as the one raised by the Searle judgment does. But as your letter seems to imply that South African law does not recognize plurality of wives, I may be permitted to draw the Minister's attention to Act 2 of 1907 (Natal) which countenances the practice among indentured Indians. I refer to Sections 6 and 7 of the Act which I copy and enclose herewith for the information of the Minister.

In my humble opinion, the issue raised by the Searle judgment can be effectively dealt with only by amending the marriage laws of the Union so as to legalize marriages celebrated according to the rites[1] of non-Christian religions and performed before non-Christian priests.[2]

I have etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5768

[1] The original has "rights", evidently a typing error.

[2] The Minister of the Interior replied to this letter on May 9: "The Minister is quite aware of the provision contained in Natal Act No. 2 of 1907, but that is special legislation intended to apply to a particular class of the community who, it was not contemplated, would become a permanent section of the inhabitants of South Africa."

51. LETTER TO DRUMMOND CHAPLIN

[PHOENIX,]
April 16, 1913

MY DEAR MR. CHAPLIN,

I took the liberty of supplying[1] the long wire[2] I had to send to the Minister of Interior regarding the Immigration Bill which, I see from your letter to Polak, was duly delivered to you and was engaging your attention. I now take the liberty of sending you copy of the further communications that have passed between the Minister and myself. Among the copies you will see the correspondence regarding the recent judgment delivered by Justice Searle whose effect is to invalidate all Indian marriages. Among the points raised is, therefore, one asking for an amendment of the law of the existing legislation so as to restore the legal status as it was understood to exist before the judgment.[3] The other points need not be commented upon by me; they were, as you may recall, discussed[4] at the Conference held at Mr. Hosken's house during Mr. Gokhale's stay in Johannesburg.

I do hope that the Bill, if it is passed at all, will be passed with such alterations as may be necessary to meet the vital objections raised on behalf of the community.

I am,
Yours truly,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5770

[1] The original has "replying", obviously a typing error.
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 9-4-1913.
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.
[4] The original has "disgust", evidently a typing error.

52. CONVERSATION WITH KASTURBA GANDHI[1]

[Before *April 19, 1913*][2]

When Mrs. Gandhi understood the marriage difficulty, she was incensed and said to Mr. Gandhi: "Then I am not your wife according to the laws of this country." Mr. Gandhi replied that that was so and added that their children were not their heirs. "Then," she said, "let us go to India." Mr. Gandhi replied that that would be cowardly and that it would not solve the difficulty. "Could I not, then, join the struggle and be imprisoned myself?" Mr. Gandhi told her she could but that it was not a small matter. Her health was not good, she had not known that type of hardship and it would be disgraceful if, after her joining the struggle, she weakened. But Mrs. Gandhi was not to be moved. The other ladies, so closely related and living on the Settlement, would not be gainsaid. They insisted that, apart from their own convictions, just as strong as Mrs. Gandhi's, they could not possibly remain out and allow Mrs. Gandhi to go to gaol. The proposal caused the gravest anxiety. The step was momentous.

Indian Opinion, 1-10-1913

[1] This is an extract from the column "News of the Struggle", a weekly feature in *Indian Opinion*.

[2] Gandhiji intimated to Gokhale on April 19 Kasturba's decision to join the struggle, but requested him not to make it public; *vide* "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", 19-4-1913.

53. THE IMMIGRATION BILL

This Bill will be read a second time on the 24th instant when we shall learn more about it than we do from merely reading it. In order, however, to understand and appreciate its deadly effect on the Asiatic communities of South Africa, it is necessary to go back to what is somewhat ancient history. Those who have felt interested in the Indian struggle in this land will recall how strenuously the Government tried, by giving a forced interpretation to Act 2 of 1907 and Act 36 of 1908, to prevent from entering or re-entering the Transvaal a certain considerable class of minor children of lawfully resident Indians. If they had succeeded in their attempt, a large portion of the resident Indian population of the Transvaal would have been obliged to leave the Transvaal and face ruin. Happily, this attempt was frustrated by the public-spirited action of the late Mr. Chhotabhai who, at great cost, took his son's case to the Appellate Court and won it.[1] Indians have, ever since, watched every new move of the Government with the greatest suspicion. The most recent events have but confirmed the suspicion. Their circulars about wives and children mark the second big attempt to reduce the number of resident population. The Bill now before Parliament seeks legislative sanction for this policy. And every one of its restrictive clauses has to be studied in the light of this bitter experience. For it should be remembered that the Bill is not wanted for meeting any difficulty of European immigration. It has been brought forward principally, if not solely, to satisfy the passive resisters and to carry out the compact entered into between the Imperial Government and the local Government about the Indian settlement. And yet, instead of carrying out the spirit and the letter of it, and instead of liberalizing the existing laws where they tell harshly against the resident Asiatic population, the Bill represents a deliberate policy of ridding South Africa of its resident Asiatic population. That is how General Botha's statement that there was every desire, on the

[1] The court of trial had ruled that entry of his son's name in his registration certificate did not entitle the former to register. *Vide* "Letter to Members of Asiatic Conference", before 18-11-1910; "Chhotabhai Case", 26-11-1910; "Chhotabhai Case", 28-1-1911 & "Chhotabhai Case", 4-2-1911.

part of his Government, to treat the resident Asiatics with justice and liberality, is to be interpreted.

Indian Opinion, 19-4-1913

54. LORD AMPTHILL'S COMMITTEE

The representation, made by Lord Ampthill's[1] Committee, to the Secretary of State for the Colonies is a weighty and exhaustive document. It enables one to study, in a connected and compact form, the march of events in South Africa regarding Indian matters. The Committee has shown clearly how the cases cited by it evidence a policy, on the part of the Union Government, of exterminating the resident Indian population. The administration of the immigration laws of South Africa makes Indian residence in it more and more difficult. And the licensing law of Natal, at any rate, steps in where the immigration laws fail to compass our ruin. The Committee's letter will be a difficult document for the local Government to answer.There is one point made by the Committee which will come as a surprise both to the Imperial and the local Governments. The latter have so often stated that South African law does not recognize polygamy. But the Committee has been able to show that it has been recognized even as late as 1907 and that, too, by a statute. Sections 6 and 7 of Act 2, 1907, of Natal provide:

Sec. 6. The provisions of Section 68 of the Indian Immigration Law, 1891, shall, as regards Indian immigrants arriving in the Colony after the commencement of this Act, apply to all marriages shown in the certified copies of their marriage register, notwithstanding that any such marriage may be a polygamous marriage.

Sec. 7. The Protector of Indian Immigrants may, on the application of any Indian immigrants, men and women, who shall have

[1] Arthur Oliver Villiers Russell, Second Baron of Ampthill (1869-1936); Governor of Madras, 1899-1906; acted as Viceroy and Governor-General of India in 1904. He took active interest in the Indian struggle in South Africa and was Chairman of South Africa British Indian Committee; wrote the introduction to Doke's biography of Gandhiji, *vide* Appendix "Lord Ampthill's Introduction to *M. K. Gandhi: An Indian Patriot in South Africa*" 26-8-1909.

arrived in the Colony prior to the commencement of this Act, and who shall produce certified copies of their marriage registers, and shall show that they are the persons therein referred to, register such marriage, notwithstanding that any such marriage may have been a polygamous marriage or that the man may have been married in this Colony under the provisions of the said law to any other Indian woman.

It is true that it was inconvenient for the then Government not to recognize polygamy, because indentured Indians were wanted by an influential class. It is now inconvenient to recognize it for free Indian settlers because they are intruders. It will be interesting to know how the local Government deal with the dilemma.

Indian Opinion, 19-4-1913

55. NATAL INDIANS, BEWARE!

The Government Notice, published elsewhere, regarding the issue of certificates for the protection of those who may wish temporarily to absent themselves from the Province, is a veritable death-trap into which we hope not a single Indian will be caught. The Notice seeks to do what the Natal Immigration Act provides no warrant for. It is a bare-faced attempt to bring the Natal Law into harmony with the Cape Law, even in advance of the new Immigration Bill. It will be seen from the Notice that an Indian who takes out the certificate provided for therein will have only one year in which to return if he wishes to escape the ordeal of a re-examination. This certificate carries with it a fee of £1 and, as the document has to be surrendered immediately after use, every absence from Natal means not only a fresh inquiry but a fresh imposition of £1. so that, if a businessman has to leave Natal, say, for the Cape four times a year and wishes to arm himself with these tickets-of-leave, he must pay £4 for them. This is a monstrous impost. And the method that has been devised to fine poor people is wicked. It is the duty of Indians to send a strong protest against this latest attempt of the Government to harass us into leaving the country.

Indian Opinion, 19-4-1913

56. SNARE

Like a hunter, the Union Government lays a number of snares for us. Whichever of them catches us, the Government will have its prey. On one side, there are rigorous restrictions on children, on the other, humiliation of women; thirdly, harassment about licences; fourthly, the new Bill; and now, for those in Natal, a net has been cast among the Indian people, with a bait that smells sweet but contains poison inside. The number of fish that take in the bait will be so much of a gain to the Government. According to a notice in the*Gazette* of April 11, those who wish to leave Natal for temporary periods may, if they so desire, apply for such permits for absence. It will be for the officer to decide whether or not to grant a permit. Any Indian going out may have one on payment of £1 if he supplies the information required by the officer. One of the conditions of the permit will be that the person concerned must return within one year. If he does so, he will he allowed to disembark without going through an education test. On the expiry of one year, the permit will lapse. A permit that has been used once cannot be used again, but must be surrendered to the officer. Here, a bait is held out that there will be no education test on return. Before issuing a permit, however, they will have done enough to make the applicant gasp; what more can they put him to, within a year's time? Let us consider the consequences of applying for such a permit. First, the applicant will have to pay, as it were, a fine of £1. He will have to pay this fine every time he leaves. Secondly, the officer will put him to a test on every such occasion. Thirdly, if a great many Indians take out these permits, the Government can argue that the provision for three years' absence in the new Bill is a big concession. What objection, besides, can be raised against the limit of one year? As against these dangers, the advantages of not taking out such a permit are many. Anyone who leaves may remain outside without the least anxiety and, on returning, re-enter by furnishing the [required] evidence. If he keeps the evidence ready before leaving, there will hardly be any difficulty. Another important advantage is that a person not applying for a permit would have done no harm to the community. We hope that not a single Indian will look at this permit.

We also hope that those who read this note will explain it carefully to others and advise them not to walk into the snare. It is the duty of Durban leaders to protest against this notice without losing any time and to tell the Government in strong, clear terms that the community, instead of regarding this notice as having been issued for its benefit, thinks it injurious and insulting to them.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-4-1913

57. NEW BILL

We entreat every responsible Indian to give the most serious thought to the new Bill. With great dexterity and malice, the Government have tightened the screw on every section of Indians. If the Bill is passed in its present form, it will be impossible for us to continue our residence in this country. Indians long settled here live now with a certain sense of security; this Bill will shake them out of it. The rich and the poor, the educated and the uneducated, those born here and those born outside—the Government have laid hands on all. We know that the Government will even seek to delude us with sweet assurances that the law will not be enforced. Should any Indian get into the Government's clutches, he will have reason to be sorry afterwards. This Bill and the Searle judgment will have the effect of depriving us of heirs though we have heirs living. Our wives will come to be looked upon as concubines. If we leave South Africa and remain absent for a period of three years or, leaving one province, live in another for the same period, we shall altogether lose the right of returning. No matter what documents we may take with us regarding the business we have left behind, none of it will avail. How long can we hold our own under such conditions? Through this Bill, the ground is being prepared for our total undoing. And yet, we are sorry to say, all South Africa, with the exception of Johannesburg, is slumbering. We are persuaded that, even if a single Indian who understands things comes forward to work in each area, the whole of South Africa will be roused. Our lethargy is bound to be our ruin. It is the duty of every Indian who realizes this

to rouse himself and others from such lethargy. If any of them, thinking that it is none of his concern, holds back, he too will go down along with the others.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-4-1913

58. MRS. PANKHURST'S SACRIFICE

All Indians are familiar with the celebrated Mrs. Pankhurst[1] who has been fighting for franchise for British women. This lady has broken all bounds in fighting. She advises women to plunder, to destroy. We are against all these things, but about her courage, there is no doubt whatsoever. She has money, and much ability; she has used these in the service of her chosen cause. She is no longer young. She had never before known suffering and has not been trained to bear it; still, she is ever in the front volunteering to suffer. A short while ago, the house of Mr. Lloyd George, Finance Minister, was burnt down at Mrs. Pankhurst's instigation. She willingly took on herself the entire responsibility for this. She was prosecuted and was sentenced to three years' imprisonment. Even in gaol, these ladies are bent on harassing the authorities and so getting themselves released. Accordingly, though Mrs. Pankhurst was offered a variety of delicious dishes in gaol, she refused to touch them and fasted for eight days. She was about to collapse, and was, therefore, released. And now this brave lady is in hospital in a critical condition. This kind of fighting is not satyagraha. A satyagrahi's object is to get into a prison and stay there. He will not even dream of harming others. If, however, we leave aside her mode of fighting and only think of the suffering she has borne, we shall find much to learn from her. Despite numerous difficulties in their way, she and her companions do not yet feel dispirited, nor are they likely to do so. They will struggle on till death. Though a woman, Mrs. Pankhurst is as manly as any man. Indians should emulate all this courage, for the British women being without the franchise is

[1] Emmeline Pankhurst (1858-1928); leader of the suffragette movement in England

nothing compared to the disabilities we suffer.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-4-1913

59. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [-XVI]

8. ATTIRE

If health depends on diet, it is also affected to some extent by dress. White women, for the sake of what they fancy to be beauty, dress so that their waist and feet should look narrow and fall victims to various ailments in consequence. In China, women's feet are kept so small that even our children's feet are larger in comparison. The practice does great harm to the health of Chinese women. The reader will easily see from these two illustrations that what we wear does, in some measure, affect our health. The choice of our costumes is not, however, in our own hands. We dress the way our elders did and this seems the right thing to do in our present circumstances. The real function of clothes has gone out of people's minds and these have come to serve as symbols of our religion, country, community, etc. Again, the costumes worn by the labourer and the office-worker differ greatly from each other. It is indeed difficult in these conditions to consider clothes from the point of view of health; it will be useful, though, to give this matter some thought.

The term attire should here be understood to include also shoes, ornaments, etc.

Let us first examine the basic purpose of clothes. In the natural state man wears no clothes. Men and women cover only their private parts, the rest of the body remaining bare. This makes their skin tough and strong. Such men and women find it easy to withstand the rigours of the open air. They do not suddenly catch cold. In the chapter on air, we saw that we breathe not only through the nose but also through the countless pores of the skin. By covering ourselves with clothes, we obstruct this most important function of the skin. In cold countries, man had to cover himself with more and more clothes as he grew

more and more lazy. He could no longer bear the cold. In course of time, this became a regular custom. By and by, people came to look upon clothes as a mode of personal adornment, and, ultimately, costumes came to be a means of identifying one's community, etc.

In fact, Nature has provided man with the best dress in his skin. It is altogether wrong to think that the nude body is ugly. The finest pictures we see are of the naked body. By covering up the normal organs of the body, do we not, as it were, suggest that Nature has made a mistake? The richer we are, the more stylish grows our dress. People dress themselves in a variety of ways and, looking into the mirror, smile with pleasure and congratulate themselves on their appearance. If custom had not perverted our outlook, we would easily realize that man appeared at his best and enjoyed the finest health in his naked state. The moment he puts on a mere shirt, he detracts by so much from his appearance. As if this were not enough, both men and women *wear jewellery*. There are quite a few men who fetter their legs [with anklets] and put rings on ears and fingers. All these things are dust-traps. *Heaven alone knows what charm there is in them*. As for women, they have broken all bounds. Anklets so heavy that they can scarcely lift their feet, numerous rings in the ears, large rings again in the nose, and no end of bangles on the wrists. By wearing these, we collect a great deal of dirt on the body. The filth in the ears and nose is beyond description. We regard this filthy condition as an ornament and feel constrained to spend money on it. The women do not mind risking their lives at the hands of robbers. It has been truly said that for the folly of pride we pay an unlimited price by way of suffering. Women have refused to have their earrings removed, though they have boils in their ears. A bangle cannot be removed, even if there is a boil on the hand and even if the latter has become septic. Be it a he or a she, it would be impairing one's appearance to take off one's diamond ring even when the finger has grown septic! Most people must have personally come across such instances.

It will be difficult to bring about a radical improvement in dress, but we can discard ornaments. We can dispense with garments which do not seem necessary, retain a few in deference to custom and discard the rest. Anyone whose mind has outgrown the fallacious notion that "apparel maketh a man" will be able to effect considerable imp-

rovement [in his dress] and safeguard his health.

Nowadays, moreover, a notion is in the air that it is best for us to put on European dress, that it is more impressive and wins us greater respect from people. This is not the place for a discussion of the topic. All that needs to be said here is that, though the Euro-pean costume is suitable for the cold countries of Europe, the Ind-ian costume suits both Hindus and Muslims in India. Our clothes are loose and, therefore, allow free circulation of air. Being white, they disperse the rays of the sun. In dark clothes one feels hotter in the sun because the rays falling on them are not so dispersed,

We always cover our heads, particularly when going out. The turban has become our especial mark declaring us to be Indians. There will be nothing but benefit, however, from leaving the head uncovered wherever possible. Wearing long hair and parting it with ever so much care seems to be rather uncouth. Dust, dirt, and lice collect in long hair. One will also find it difficult to treat any boils that may develop on one's scalp. For a turban-wearer to grow long hair like a Saheb is sheer absurdity.

We fall into the clutches of many diseases through our feet. The feet of those who wear shoes, etc., become tender. With shoes on, the feet perspire and emit an offensive odour. Anyone sensitive to smell can scarcely bear to stand near such a person when he is removing his shoes and socks, so offensive is the odour of the feet. We call shoes "shields against thorns" or "protectors of the feet", which means that we need wear shoes only when we have to walk among thorns or stir out in extreme heat or cold, and even then, we need cover, not the entire feet, but only the soles; when necessary, therefore, one may put on only sandals. Anyone who suffers from headaches, physical weakness, aching feet, and anyone used to wearing of shoes should try walking barefoot. He will soon discover the advantages of keeping one's feet uncovered, in contact with the earth and free from perspiration. Sandals are an excellent form of footwear and also comparatively cheap. In Africa, they are made by Trappists[1] near Pinetown for anyone who wants them and one can also get them made in Phoenix. The average individual will not have the courage to use sandals only.

[1] Monks of Cistercian order noted for silence and other austerities.

Even such a person should always keep his feet uncovered whenever possible and use sandals when he must cover the soles and can do without shoes.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-4-1913

60. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

PHOENIX,
April 19, 1913

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

By this time you are already on your way to London. I do hope that there you will get some rest. I was grieved to see from the papers that you had a nervous breakdown. It is on such occasions that I long to be with you.

Polak will write to you fully on the situation. I wish to state only this that this time the struggle, if it comes, will involve more sufferings than before. So far as I know, we shall not appeal to the public in India for pecuniary support. If those who know me personally wish to send anything, I shall gratefully accept the help. The plan would be to beg in S[outh] A[frica] from door to door. I think that thereby we shall manage to get sufficient to feed and clothe us while we are out of gaol. May I ask you also not to make any public appeal for funds. I have still about £300. These I am jealously guarding for emergencies. Most of the settlers here including the womenfolk will join the struggle. The latter feel that they can no longer refrain from facing the gaol no matter what it may mean in a place like this. Mrs. Gandhi made the offer on her own initiative and I do not want to debar her.[1] The matter of Mrs. Gandhi's intention has not yet been made public. Will you also not mention it anywhere for the time being?

I hope that you will do what you can for the London Committee.[2] I am going on with the collections as I promised I would. As

[1] *Vide* "Conversation with Kasturba Gandhi," before 19-4-1913.
[2] South Africa British Indian Committee (SABIC)

soon as I have [a] decent sum by me, it will be passed on to you. We have stopped sending anything to Maud Polak[1] since this month.

It is likely that Maud will discuss with you her conduct regarding her visit to S. A. I wrote[2] to her saying that she had misled me and that you too had been misled. In spite of the breach of the very personal relation between us, she has continued to do her work on the Committee satisfactorily. She thinks that she is simply the victim of a misunderstanding. I am disinclined to believe it and I have said so to her. I wish I could have saved you the bother of having to revive painful recollections. But I was bound to let you know what had passed between Maud and myself.

I should much appreciate a line about your health and the treatment you may be undergoing. Could you at all find time to visit Just's Jungborn and Kuhne's Institute?

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 926 Courtesy: Servants of India Society

[1] H. S. L. Polak's sister, was Assistant Honorary Secretary, SABIC

[2] This letter is not available.

61. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

Friday [*April 25, 1913*][1]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Manilal has taken out your things. He will pack them and send by goods. He does odd things only in the morning, hence the slow progress of the work.

You will be pleased to know that Devdas and Fakiri ran to the station and back in 35 minutes and Sivpujan in 29.

Gokhale had a nervous breakdown. Beyond the letter you saw he has not written to me, either, as he promised to on the work itself. But why should you even for his sake mislead people? If you feel that he should have written and he has not, you could certainly say you expected a letter but had not received one. You cannot hide behind the shelter of the statement that you belong to the majority and I to the minority.

Do you remember the story of Dr. Primrose in *The Vicar of Wakefield*? He used to give a horse to the guest whom he did not want back. He lost both the horse and the guest and was satisfied. This is a fine illustration of returning good for evil. Geevers asked me just when he was to go to the station and I to my work for the money. I asked, I think, exactly two questions. They did not satisfy me. But not to give would have caused delay, waste and irritation. I thought the best thing was to give even from the fund I have and be done with. It was the penalty I paid for having countenanced him at first and then having inflicted him on you. Am I clear? You may pursue the subject still more when we meet.

I may leave here on Monday, though I am not sure. I may stay a day or two and go to the Cape Town.

From Phoenix the resisters will be Mrs. Gandhi, Chhaganlal, Mrs. Chhaganlal, Mrs. Maganlal, Jeki, Hanif, Coopoo, Manilal,

[1] From the reference to Gokhale's nervous breakdown, to which reference is made by Gandhiji in his letter to Gokhale dated April 19, 1913; vide "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", 19-4-1913. The Friday following this date fell on April 25, 1913.

Govind, Ramdas, Sivpujan, Sam and Solomon. I may have omitted a boy's name. The women's names are for your use only. Miss Schlesin knows I think that Mrs. Gandhi and Jeki will join. But I do not think I wrote about the others. I have sketched out an elaborate programme which I have not the time to set forth here.

Hoosen Doud's son has arrived a wreck vomiting blood. Perhaps you would like to write a word of sympathy to him or Doud.

I hope Albret will pardon me for not writing in reply to his advice.

Yours,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. COurtesy: National Archives of India

62. TELEGRAM TO KALREY

[PHOENIX,
April 26, 1913]

KALREY

SECOND READING BILL COMMENCED PARLIAMENT.[1] HOPE COMMITTEE TELEGRAM GONE. COMMITTEE SHOULD WIRE COPY CHAPLIN, ALEXANDER, SMARTT, MERRIMAN. HOPE INDIAN WOMEN'S PROTEST SENT.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 5787

[1] This was on April 26.

63. £3 TAX DISAPPOINTMENT

We learn from an authoritative source that, owing to the exigencies of the political situation, the Government do not intend to introduce this session a Bill to repeal the £3 tax required, under Act 17 of 1895, of ex-indentured Indians who remain free in Natal at the expiry of their contracts. The news will come as a shock and a bitter disappointment not only to those immediately affected, but to the entire Indian community, who rightly regard the impost as a tax upon its honour and social integrity. BecauseGeneral Botha[1] and General Hertzog[2] are engaged in a party quarrel, the business of the whole country must come to a standstill. General Botha has adopted the attitude that he is fighting his opponent in the interests of the Empire. He does not seem to realize the inconsistency of that attitude with his inability to keep his unwritten pledge to the Hon. Mr. Gokhale to repeal this tax at an early date. It is an open secret that the only reason why no public announcement of the intentions of the Government was made during Mr. Gokhale's visit was because Ministers desired, before definitely committing themselves, to ascertain the feeling of the Natal members. The views of most of these, as is now well known from General Smuts' statement in the House on the Financial Relations Bill, are against the retention of the tax as inequitable and there is, therefore, no valid excuse for the dilatory tactics of the Government beyond a cowardly fear to arouse further antagonism from the Free State reactionaries, who are in no way interested in the question beyond their notorious obsession by [sic] anti-colour mania. We have no doubt that Mr. Gokhale, who is now on his way to England, will have certain home truths to speak to His Majesty's Ministers at the gross manner of the betrayal of his own and the Indian community's hopes. The least the Government can do, to save their face, is to give instructions that the tax and its arrears are not to be demanded, pending the passing of the necessary repealing legislation next session.

Indian Opinion, 26-4-1913

[1] Louis Botha (1862-1919); Boer General and statesman; Prime Minister of the Transvaal, 1907, and of South Africa Union, 1910-19

[2] James Barry Munnik Hertzog (1866-1942); South African nationalist leader and politician; Prime Minister of South Africa Union, 1924-39

64. THAT BILL

The Immigrants' Restriction Bill is apparently meeting with all-round opposition. The scathing criticism of the *Natal Witness* on the withdrawal of the right of access to the Supreme Court, except in certain rare cases, is highly appropriate. It is not the autocracy of little "tin tsars" that the officials now demand. The people of South Africa are now called upon to hand over their liberties into the keeping of an infallible bureaucracy that is afraid to face the criticism and the scepticism of His Majesty's judges. We do not need to emphasize the glaring audacity of the Government's attempt to impose upon the public—or, rather, the Indian public—Immigration Boards whose decisions are to be unappealable, when there is almost daily record of the havoc wrought to Indian interests by the existing Licensing Boards of Natal and the Cape. We are rapidly reaching, in South Africa, that Government by bureaucracy against which Sir James Rose-Innes recently inveighed so strongly, and it is difficult to believe that people with such splendid traditions of liberty and freedom as the South African Colonists can boast will be content to deliver to a close corporation of unchecked permanent officials the control of their movements into and within the Union.

Indian Opinion, 26-4-1913

65. NEW BILL

Perhaps, as we write this note, further news of the Bill is already available. At the moment, it seems quite possible that the Bill may fail for reasons not connected with our struggle. There is a split in General Botha's camp. The supporters of General Hertzog have shown their teeth. They came together at a meeting in Bloemfontein and passed a resolution supporting General Hertzog, so that there is little possibility now of the Orange members supporting General Botha. Even in the Cape, General Hertzog has some members to help him. Likewise, there may be a few here and there in the Transvaal too. It does not, therefore, appear that General Botha will be able to continue in power with the support only of his own party. If he seeks the support of the Unionist Party, not only will it be a humiliation to him, but General Hertzog will grow stronger still, and General Botha will be left with very few supporters among the Boers. Many believe that, in this difficult situation, he may not be able to retain the reins of power in his hands. If this view is correct, there are two possible consequences; one, that General Botha may dissolve the Parliament and order fresh elections, so that a new Parliament will come into being; alternatively, he may accept all the demands of General Hertzog's supporters. In either case, there is little chance of this Parliament being able to do much. The papers also report that General Hertzog's supporters have raised two issues, first, that Mr. Sauer[1], who has always been known as a friend of the Zulus and who champions their cause, has been appointed by General Botha as Minister for Zulu Affairs, and secondly, that he has decided to grant relief to the Indians out of deference to the Imperial Government. Thus, we have also become a cause of friction among them. This is, however, nothing for us to be happy about, for these two reasons just happen to have come in handy. The unthinking Boers are likely to be taken in by them, for there is an element of truth in both of them, which, however, will do good neither to the Zulus nor to us. Mr. Sauer, as Minister, is not

[1] J. W. Sauer, Member of the Union Cabinet, a philanthropist and radical who refused knighthood.

going to present the Zulus with cart-loads of wealth nor General Botha to gift away a kingdom to us in order to oblige the Imperial Government. We have seen what it is that he is prepared to give. But the fine words to which General Botha treated the Imperial Government in our case are being deliberately used against him by General Hertzog's supporters. We can, therefore, hope for no advantage to us from all this. Even if General Hertzog comes to power, we shall secure neither more nor less than what we can by our own strength. Satyagraha is equally effective in all circumstances and at all times; such is its invincible and supreme power.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-4-1913

66. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [*-XVII]*

9. AN INTIMATE CHAPTER

Those who have carefully followed the chapters on health so far should read this, I submit, with especial care and ponder well over it. Other chapters are still to follow and will, I feel, prove useful, but there will be none in the series as important as the present one. As I indicated earlier I have in these chapters said nothing on which I have had no personal experience or of which I was not firmly convinced.

There are many things which promote good health, all of them necessary, but the most important is *brahmacharya*[1]. We can have good health by means of good air, water and food; but, if we spend all that we earn, we shall be left with nothing on hand. Similarly, if we fritter away the health which we gain, what remains ofour capital behind? For both men and women, therefore, *brahmacharya* is an absolute necessity if they are to preserve the wealth of physical well-being; no one need doubt this. He who has conserved his generative fluid is known as *viryavan*, a man of strength.

[1] Literally living in the *Brahman*, the Absolute. In ordinary usage the term has come to signify celibacy, which is considered essential for attainment of that state.

What is *brahmacharya*?—it may be asked. It consists in men and women refraining from carnal enjoyment. "Refraining from carnal enjoyment" does not mean merely refraining from contact with each other with such enjoyment in view, but also keeping the mind free from the very thought of it—one must not even dream about it. Man should not be disturbed by the presence of woman and woman by the presence of man. We should hold back and store within our bodies the mysterious power that Nature has bestowed upon us and use it to promote our health, the health not only of the body but also of the mind, the intellect and the memory.

Let us now take a look-at the strange things that go on around us. Most men and women, whether young or old, are submerged in this infatuation. On such occasions we go utterly mad. Our reason ceases to function, a veil seems to come over our eyes and we are blinded with passion. I have observed men, women and young people of both sexes looking distraught when possessed by passion. My personal experience is no different. Whenever I have been overcome by this state, I have lost all sense. Such is the nature of passion. Thus, for the sake of a grain of pleasure[1], we lose a maund of vitality. When our excitement dies down, we find ourselves in a pitiable state. The following morning our body is heavy, we are ill at ease, and a lethargy sets in. Our mind is out of sorts. In order to set these things right again, or keep them right, we must needs drink milk boiled with spices, swallow iron, take *yakutis*[2], approach *vaidyas* for strength-giving drugs and look around for foods that will serve as aphrodisiacs. Thus, as the days and years go by, we decline in body and mind and find our intellect gone in old age.

This, surely, should not be—in old age, the intellect should grow sharper rather than duller. We should be in such condition that the experience gained during a life-time can be of use to us and to others, a condition possible to those who observe *brahmacharya*. Such a person is unafraid of death and does not forget God evenat the moment of death. He does not indulge in vain attempts and does not

[1] The original has a pun on the Sanskrit word *rati* which means pleasure and, also, a measure of weight.

[2] Tonic preparations of the *Unani* system of medicine

behave like a dandy. *He who gives up this frame with a smiling face and goes to render his account to the Master is truly a man and she who dies thus is truly a woman*. Such persons alone may claim to have maintained true health.

We do not, as a rule, stop to consider that the basic cause of pleasure-hunting, envy, ostentation, hypocrisy, anger, impatience, violent hatred and such other evils is our violation of *brahmacharya*. If one's mind is not under one's control and one behaves more foolishly even than a child, indulging oneself once every day or oftener, what other crimes would not one commit, knowingly or unknowingly? What unforgivable sins would one stop short of?

But does one ever find anyone observing such *brahmacharya*? If everyone did so, the world would come to an end. [So runs the argument.] This is likely to involve a discussion of religious issues. I shall, therefore, pass over that aspect of the matter and consider it from a worldly point of view. In my opinion, both these questions have their origin in our fear and weakness. We do not want to observe *brahmacharya* and, therefore, seek excuses to escape from it. There do exist people, and in large numbers, who observe it; if, however, they were easy to discover, what would be their worth? Thousands of labourers are imprisoned in the bowels of the earth in order that diamonds might be obtained and, even then, only a handful of these are found in a mountain of broken earth and rock. What efforts, then, would be necessary to discover the jewels among men who observe *brahmacharya*? Let us do a simple sum in the rule of three to calculate. If the world comes to an end because we observe *brahmacharya*, how is that any concern of ours? We are not God. He who has created the world will look after His affairs. Whether others observe it or not is not a question for us to ask. When we select business or law or anything else as a career, we do not ask what would happen if everyone became a lawyer or business man. Finally, those men and women who observe *brahmacharya* will, in the course of time, receive answers to both the questions, that is, they will find others like themselves. And it will also be as plain as daylight to them what will happen to the world if all did the same.

How can these ideas be put into practice by men caught up in

worldly responsibilities? What should the married ones do? And those who have children? What should they do who cannot control their desire? We have seen what the ideal is. If we always hold it before us, we shall either be able to follow it faithfully or approximate to it in some measure. If we place before a child the finest models when teaching it to write the letters of the alphabet, it will copy them to the best of its ability. Similarly, we can place before us the ideal of unbroken *brahmacharya*, and then make every effort to approximate to it. What if we happen to be married? The natural law is that men and women should depart from *brahmacharya* only when they desire progeny. If a couple do so after full deliberation, once in a few years, they will not wholly forget themselves and will remain well stored with vitality. Rarely do we come across couples who indulge in sexual intercourse only for the purpose of procreation. The rest in their thousands seek the pleasures of lust, yearn for them and indulge in them. The consequence is that, against their wish, children are born to them. In enjoying these pleasures, we become so utterly blind that we have no consideration for our partner. In this matter men are more guilty than women. In his stupidity man gives no thought to the woman's weakness; he does not stop to consider whether she is strong enough for the burden of bearing children and bringing them up. People of the West have broken all bounds in this matter. They adopt various techniques so that they may have their pleasure without being burdened with children. Books have been written on these techniques and there are professionals who explain how to indulge in the pleasures of lust and yet have no children! So far at least we have been free from this sin; but we do not think for a moment before imposing burdens on our women and we do not care if our children are weak, lacking in vitality, timid and dull of intellect. Whenever a child is born, we offer thanks to God. This is only a way of covering up our pitiable condition. *Why should we not regard it a sign of divine anger that we have weak, crippled, lustful and worthless children born to us? What reason for satisfaction can there be over a child of twelve having issue? Why should this be an occasion for merry-making? Why should we not regard it as a manifestation of divine wrath that a girl of twelve should become a mother*? We know that, if a tree bears fruit too soon after it has been planted, the latter is immature and we take good care

to see that fruit does not appear too early on a tree. When, on the contrary, we have a celebration on the birth of a child to a child-wife by a child-hus-band, surely we behave with incredible blindness. Of what good is it to India or the world to be swarmed over with worthless creatures, as with ants? Animals are better off than we are inasmuch as the male and the female are brought together only when we intend them to have progeny. Subsequent to the union, the period of pregnancy and the period between the birth and the weaning of the child, when it can fend for itself, should be looked upon as sacred and during this time at least the husband and wife should scrupulously observe *brahma-charya*. But we give no thought whatever to the matter and continue to take our pleasures recklessly. Such is the sickness of our minds—a good example of incurable sickness. It is a disease which brings us to death, and until that time we wander about like insane men. It is the especial duty of married couples that they should not mistake the purpose of marriage, but should understand it aright and come together only while they have no child and desire an heir.

In our present pitiful condition, this is extremely difficult. Our diet, our way of life; our talk, the sights which surround us, are all such as to excite our lust. Sexual pleasure, moreover, has become a craving with us, much like opium. Is it likely that in such a state we would take thought and turn back? But to any sceptic who wants to know how the ideal can be practised, there is no answer in this chapter. It is intended for those who are ready to think and make an effort to do what ought to be done. Those who are satisfied with themselves will find it boring even to read these things; the chapter is intended, rather, to help those who have realized their abject state and are tired of it to some extent.

We can see from the foregoing that those who have not married should not do so in these difficult times and that, if one cannot do altogether without marriage, one should marry late. *Young men should take a vow not to marry before they are twenty-five or thirty years of age*. This is not the place to consider the other benefits which, apart from good health, may follow from this course; everyone, however, will know how to gain such benefits for himself.

To parents who may read this chapter, we must say that they are guilty of cruelty in selling away their sons and daughters by marriage or betrothal while they are still children; in doing so, they regard their own interests instead of those of the children. They want to feel important and have a name in the community, want to have a big show by celebrating their children's marriage. If they desired the welfare of their children, they would look after their education, care for them and train their bodies. What can be more harmful to the interests of boys and girls today than that they should be married off while they are still children?

Lastly, when a married man or woman is separated from his or her partner by death, it will benefit the survivor's health to lead the life appropriate to a widower or widow. Some doctors have expressed the opinion that young men and women must have opportunities for sexual relief. There are also some others who argue that this is not necessary in any circumstances. When doctors thus quarrel among themselves, we should take care not to be misled by any of them and sink in self-indulgence in the belief that we have their support. From my own experience and that of others which I have come to know of, I can affirm without the least hesitation that it is unnecessary to indulge in sexual relations for the sake of health; on the contrary; such indulgence and the resultant loss do much physical harm. The vitality of both mind and body developed through many years is so much impaired even by one such occasion that it takes a long time to regain it and, even so, the original state is never restored wholly. One may make use of a broken glass by re-joining the fragments, but it will always remain a broken thing.

In order to conserve virility, fresh air and water, wholesome food as described earlier, and pure thought are indispensable. In this way morals are closely linked with health. A perfectly moral person alone can achieve perfect health. Anyone who, prepared to make a fresh start from the moment that he sees the light, meditates carefully over what has been said so far and puts these suggestions into practice will have direct proof in experience. Even one who has observed *brahmacharya* for some period will notice the increase of mental and physical powers and, having once secured this philosopher's stone, will guard it with care like very life. The slightest lapse and he will

realize what an error he has made. I have committed mistakes even after I had thought over—experienced—the countless benefits of *brahmacharya* and I have known the bitter consequences. I have vivid memories of the exalted state of the mind before a lapse and the pitiable condition after it. But from these mistakes, I have learnt the value of that precious jewel. I do not know if I shall be able to preserve it unbroken. I hope to, with God's help. I can see the good it has done to my mind and body. I, who was married in childhood, was blinded [by lust] in childhood and had children while a mere child, awoke after many years and seem to have realized on awakening that I had been pursuing a disastrous course. If anyone learns from my mistakes and my experience and saves himself, I shall be happy to have written this chapter. The following calculation is also worth making. Many people have said, and I believe it, that I have plenty of energy. My mind is not considered weak—as a matter of fact—some think me obstinate. I have ailments of body and mind ; and yet I am reckoned as fairly healthy in comparison with those with whom I have come into contact. If I have been able to maintain this condition because, after some twenty years of self-indulgence, I woke up, who can say what I would have been if I could have saved those twenty years as well. I am sure, myself, that there would have been no limit to my energy and I would have had so much of it to spend on service to the public or myself that others would have found it an ordeal to equal it. This is the conclusion to be drawn from my all-too-imperfect example. The physical, mental and moral strength of one who has been able to observe unbroken *brahmacharya* must be seen to be believed; it cannot be described.

Anyone reading this chapter will see that, when married persons have been advised to observe *brahmacharya* and widowers to continue in that state, there can be no question of any men or women, married or unmarried, being permitted to gratify their desire anywhere. It is not possible, when dealing with questions of health, to consider the dire effects of casting evil glances at other people's wives or prostitutes. This is a matter for religion and ethics. Here we need only state that those who indulge in such extra-marital relations and have contacts with prostitutes suffer, we find, from such unmentionable diseases as syphilis and rot away because of them. Nature is so merciful to

them that it promptly incapacitates them; they keep slumbering, however, and run from doctor to doctor in search of a cure for their diseases! Where there is no adultery, fifty per cent. of the doctors and *vaidyas* will lose their occupation. These diseases have such a hold on the human race that thoughtful doctors have been driven to observe that, despite all their discoveries, the nations of the world will soon be wiped out if the evil of adultery continues unchecked. The remedies for the diseases in question are so toxic in effect that, even when the diseases themselves seem to be cured, others take root in their stead and pass from generation to generation.

We shall now indicate how married couples may observe *brahmacharya* and so conclude this rather long chapter. A married person cannot observe celibacy merely by following rules regarding diet, air and water. He must also refrain from being alone with his wife. We shall realize on reflection that, except for the purpose of conjugal relations, it is not necessary to be alone with one's wife. At night the husband and the wife must sleep in separate rooms. During the day they should remain fully occupied with useful activity and pure thoughts. They should read such books and meditate over such lives as would strengthen them in their good resolve and should frequently remind themselves that all pleasures lead to suffering. Whenever they feel passion rising in them, they should take a cold bath. This will transform the cosmic fire in their bodies into a benign influence for both men and women and increase their happiness. All this is certainly hard of achievement, but conquering difficulties is what we are born for and. anyone who wishes to acquire good health must conquer this one.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 26-4-1913

67. NOTE TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[P.O. BOX 2493]
JOHANNESBURG,
April 26, 1913

1. The architect business should be wound up with the least possible delay at the most in 3 months; the decision should be announced at once.
2. The Mountain View property should be sold without reserve within 3 months.
3. Tolstoy Farm should be kept practically at any cost.
4. The African Building should be the primary occupation.

ON PROP. 1

You are not a competent architect. Study seems to be almost impossible but even if it were practicable, it is not desirable or profitable. The beer-hall business is the best warning that you must subordinate your conscientious scruples to your business. Its continuation means a loss of moral fibre and a reluctant fawning upon people whom you would rather keep at a distance. And after all the fawning and all the abandoning of principles, it is a question whether the business has any money in it. And the business ties you down as nothing else can if you are really to nurse it and give satisfaction to your clients.

ON PROP. 2

Mountain View is a veritable Devil's temptation. It simply absorbs money and energy without any certain prospect of preventing a loss. It is better to lose even £1000 or more than to sink more money and risk losing even that. A wise and cautious man will never fear to abandon a proposition which was wrong in the beginning. Your action just now is like that of a man [who] fearing to let his rotten shares go, buys in attractive-looking ones to recoup himself for the loss on the rotten ones forgetting all the while that the others may prove just as bad. The Mountain View proposition is decidedly a

speculation and an honourable man should never speculate, much less to avoid a loss. The dividing line (if any) between speculation and gambling is very thin indeed. It is a niggardly spirit that fears to lose.

ON PROP. 3

Tolstoy Farm cannot be given up because of the memories connected with it and because in the event of your leaving South Africa for any new enterprise, spiritual or other, you are in a position to look back with satisfaction upon something accomplished in a concrete manner.

ON PROP. 4

The African Building is the cleanest and most reliable asset you possess. It is also the most heavily burdened asset. And if you want to avoid insolvency in case of unforeseen misfortunes, you will be wise to increase the monthly income from it so that you can pay out the bond debt as quickly as possible. It provides steady and healthy occupation according to the ordinary European standard. It will not unduly fetter your movements. There is nothing of a speculative nature about it. The social atmosphere of Pretoria is much purer and calmer than that of Johannesburg. Being on the spot, you have a far greater opportunity of getting a buyer for your lease so as to relieve you from the bond debt and leave you £2000 clear after paying all your other debts. The monthly withdrawal of £25 enables you to live comfortably and meet your ordinary wants.

GENERAL REMARKS

It is necessary to map out the future course in detail and take a solemn vow never to depart from it. Your position does not warrant any help to anybody, whether friends or relatives. It is quite wrong, I feel sure, to send £30 to Mrs. Daniel and equally so to send £12 to Mrs. Mayo annually. Just consider your position by taking a few figures. Add up your monthly expenses thus:

Salaries

Rent

Sundries Household

Rates on Mountain View

Premiums on policies

Rates and premiums and rent on African Building

Personal expenses average

Contributions such as Mrs. Daniel, etc.

Interest on loans

Against that put down your monthly income and you will find that you are running your various businesses at a loss, thus showing that you are an insolvent. You ought to make out this statement not roughly but accurately. Again, make out another list putting down all your assets and all your liabilities and then find out what the assets will fetch today under a forced sale. And if you come to the conclusion that they will not pay your creditors, you are an insolvent. Remember that the forced sale at a current bank rate, a fixed bank deposit, etc., fetches the same amount as an ordinary sale. You have practically not a single asset worth mentioning of this character. The reason is obvious. You have never laid by any money as a prudent worldly man would. Your transactions therefore were of a speculative character. From that original taint not even the African Building or Tolstoy Farm is free. But you cannot abandon these unless you are ready to embrace poverty as you would a brother or sister. My recommendations are therefore intended for you as you are at your ordinary best, not your very best.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

68. TELEGRAM TO GOOL AND GOOLMAHOMED

[JOHANNESBURG,
After *April 26, 1913*]

GOOL
7, BUITENCINGEL
ADAM GOOLMAHOMED
8, KLOOF STREET
[CAPE TOWN]

HOPE YOU WILL LODGE PROTEST AGAINST IMMIGRATION BILL. READ DEBATE BILL WHICH SAYS INDIANS GENERALLY WILL ACCEPT IT.

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5772

69. SPEECH AT VREDEDORP[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
April 27, 1913]

Mr. Gandhi, who had come specially from Phoenix, after explaining the nature of the Bill, said that he hoped that the Government would grant their humble request. But, if they did not, they were bound, after exhausting all their resources by way of petition, etc., to take up the well-tried weapon of passive resistance. This would be the third campaign and he had no doubt that itwould be the most brilliant of all, though it would involve much greater suffering and would be a protracted ordeal. But, as self-respecting men, they could not shirk it. They must be prepared to risk all for the honour of their womanhood, for the sake of their religions and for the good name of the country of their birth. They wished to deceive neither themselves nor the Government. It was plain to the speaker that, in the impending struggle, they could not count upon hundreds going to gaol, but he knew that what they might lack in numbers

[1] A meeting of the British Indian Association was held at Vrededorp, a suburb of Johannesburg, to consider the Immigration Bill. A. M. Cachalia presided. For the text of his speech, which was later forwarded to the Governor-General, *vide* Appendix "Speech by A. M. Chachalia", 27-4-1913.

would be made up for by the earnestness and; the unconquerable will of the few. Those who could not suffer the hardships of a gaol life might still take their share in the campaign. They could hold meetings, they could collect subscriptions, they could sacrifice their time and look after the families of those who might be imprisoned. Such work, too, was necessary. No country in the world could afford to place all its children at the same time on the field. Theirs was an army of peace. Although they used military terms, they agreed with the soldier only in so far as the latter was a sufferer in his own person. A true passive resister could never be party to injuring others. His motive power was not vengeance. It was hardly possible to expect the whole community to become soldiers in such an army. But, whether they had five hundred or fifty, or five, or even one true passive resister on the field, victory was theirs.

THE RESOLUTION[1]

This mass meeting of British Indians hereby endorses the action of the Committee of the British Indian Association in forwarding to the Government its objections against the Immigration Bill and, inasmuch as it affects the honour, the religious sentiment and the very existence of the Indian community in South Africa, solemnly resolves that, in the event of the Government not conceding the request, passive resistance, which has remained under suspense since 1911, be revived and continued, until the sufferings of the passive resisters shall have proved to the Government and the Europeans of South Africa the earnestness of the community and, therefore, the necessity of granting relief.[2]

Indian Opinion, 3-5-1913

[1] This was unanimously passed.

[2] The meeting was then addressed by L. W. Ritch and H. Kallenbach on invitation.

70. TELEGRAM TO DRUMMOND CHAPLIN AND OTHERS

[JOHANNESBURG,
After *April 27, 1913*][1]

DRUMMOND CHAPLIN
RT. HON'BLE MERRIMAN
SIR THOMAS SMARTT
MORRIS ALEXANDER
THEO. SCHREINER
CAPE TOWN

PROTESTS AGAINST IMMIGRATION BILL HAVE GONE FROM ALMOST EVERY IMPORTANT INDIAN ASSOCIATION. IF BILL PASSED WITHOUT AMENDMENT GRANTING INDIAN DEMANDS PASSIVE RESISTANCE CERTAIN REVIVE. IF GENERAL BILL CANNOT BE CARRIED WITH AMENDMENTS SUGGESTED BY INDIANS, TRANSVAAL IMMIGRATION LAW COULD EASILY BE AMENDED REPEALING ASIATIC ACT OF 1907, REMOVING RACIAL BAR THEREIN AND BRINGING MARRIAGE BILL RECOGNIZING AS BEFORE SEARLE JUDGMENT VALIDATING INDIAN MARRIAGES.

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5773

[1] It appears that this telegram and the cable to Lord Ampthill, *vide* the succeeding item, were sent some time after the mass meeting held at Vrededorp on April 27.

71. CABLE TO LORD AMPTHILL[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
After *April 27, 1913*]

MR. GOKHALE SUGGESTS MY CABLING YOU OBJECTIONS BILL. THEY ARE, BILL CONTRAVENES SETTLEMENT, DISTURBING EXISTING RIGHTS AND IMPOSING DISABILITIES NOT CONTEMPLATED. REPLACES SUPREME COURT JURISDICTION BY CREATION BOARDS OF ANNUALLY REMOVABLE MEMBERS HAVING FINAL JURISDICTION EXCEPT CASES DOMICILE, TAKES AWAY RIGHTS EDUCATED INDIANS ENTER CAPE OR NATAL FROM TRANSVAAL ON PRESENT EDUCATION TEST. CONTEMPLATES PROHIBITION ENTRY FREE STATE NEW EDUCATED IMMIGRANTS ALTHOUGH SETTLEMENT PROVIDES THAT UNDER GENERAL BILL SUCH INDIANS SHALL HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS WITH OTHERS REGARDING IMMIGRATION. RESTRICTS PRESENT RIGHT ENTRY THROUGH ANY PORT TO ANY PORT SPECIALLY APPOINTED. DEPRIVES NATAL INDIAN LONG RESIDENCE OF RIGHTS OF DOMICILE HITHERTO POSSESSED BY IMPORTING STRICTER CAPE SECTION ON DOMICILE. CONTRARY PRESENT STATUTORY POSITION MAKES NATAL TRANSVAAL INDIANS WHO MAY ABSENT FROM THEIR RESPECTIVE PROVINCES LONGER THAN THREE YEARS PROHIBITED IMMIGRANTS. DEPRIVES S[OUTH] A[FRICA] BORN INDIAN RIGHT ENTER CAPE. RECENT JUDGMENT CONTRARY ESTABLISHED PRACTICE INVALIDATES INDIAN MARRIAGES NOT SOLEMNIZED ACCORDING CHRISTIAN RITES OR BEFORE MARRIAGE OFFICERS WHETHER SUCH MARRIAGES PERFORMED INDIA OR HERE. THUS REDUCING MAJORITY WIVES STATUS CONCUBINES. BILL SEEMS DEPRIVE EDUCATED INDIANS WHO ENTERED UPON EXISTING TEST OF RIGHT RE-ENTRY UNLESS OTHERWISE DOMICILED. IF BILL NOT AMENDED ALL THESE PARTICULARS, REVIVAL PASSIVE RESISTANCE CERTAIN THOUGH CHIEFLY RESIGNED MEET PASSIVE RESISTERS.

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5774

[1] The draft does not bear Lord Ampthill's name, but presumably the communication was addressed to him,

72. INTERVIEW TO "THE STAR"[1]

JOHANNESBURG.

On or before *April 28, 1913*]

Interviewed by a representative of *The Star*, he said the Bill would be totally unacceptable to the Indian community unless it carried out the fundamental principle of the compromise in respect of existing rights and the removal of the racial bar.

It is perfectly true that there are no local wants of the Indian community in the Free State, and it is also true that no Indian is likely to enter the Free State, but we want the theoretical right of entry preserved in a general way. The reason why the first Bill did not pass was because the Government wanted to introduce legislation to meet those points; last year's Bill provided for it, and we quite recognized that Indians who entered the Free State would be subject to local disabilities, such as the prohibition to hold landed property, to farm and to trade. If we accepted the present Bill, the position of Indians would be infinitely worse than it was even before passive resistance began.

The Government appears to be desirous of consolidating the worst features of the Provincial legislation; for instance, in the Cape the term "domicile" has a stricter meaning, and that is the meaning they want to apply to Natal, a contingency which would not have been possible five or six years ago. They want to level down the conditions in Natal to those of the Cape instead of levelling up the Cape practice to that of Natal.

Mr. Gandhi evidently considers it is almost hopeless to expect a general Immigration Bill that would meet the views of Indian communities in the different Provinces, and in reply to a question as to the most ready way to settle the problem, he expressed himself in favour of amending Provincial legislation, and suggested, as far as the Transvaal was concerned, that the Immigration Law should have the racial bar removed, which would not arouse any hostility, and that the offending Asiatic Act of 1907 should be repealed.

[1] Gandhiji was on a visit to Johannesburg to consult the European Committee and the executive committee of the British Indian Association. The report was reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 3-5-1913.

It is clear that the Indians are resolved to resist the provisions of Mr. Fischer's Bill in the event of it becoming law, and already they have communicated with Mr. Gokhale, who happens to be in London, with the object of placing before the Imperial Government.

The strained relations between the Indians and the Government began soon after the grant of Responsible Government, and the passive resistance movement continued from 1906 to 1910, when the compromise with General Smuts was reached.

The Star, 28-4-1913

73. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR-GENERAL

JOHANNESBURG,
April 30, 1913

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL
CAPE TOWN

SIR

I have the honour to enclose herewith, in triplicate, copy of the Resolution[1] unanimously passed at an open-air meeting of British Indians held at Vrededorp on the 27th instant under the auspices of my Association, and to request that His Excellency will be good enough to forward same, as also copy of the Chairman's speech[2] on the occasion, likewise enclosed, to the Hon'ble the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Hon'ble the Secretary of State for India.

I have, etc.,
A. M. CACHALIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Colonial Office Records: 551/39

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Vrededorp", 27-4-1913.
[2] *Vide* Appendix "Speech by A. M. Chachalia", 27-4-1913.

74. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]

Wednesday [*April 30, 1913*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Probably you would be expecting an early letter from me. Hence this at 5.45 a.m. before I go down to the field.

Did you write to Hoosen? The sooner you do so the better, if you have not done so already.

I have not been keeping a regular diary, so here is my resolution. I am not to accept any pecuniary assistance from you until I consider that you are not in an insolvent condition. Consider well the propositions[1] I have jotted down and having done so come to a decision quickly. Do not be more than a week over your decision. I feel sure nothing but vows would save you from yourself.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

75. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]

May 1, 1913

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Incidents have taken place in the Farm which have agitated me much. Devdas made me weep today as I have not wept for years.[1] I shall tell you all about these things when we meet. They drive me more and more into the jungles of India. This may be counted as a weakness of mine and that it may be proof of coming imbecility. Only something within me tells me that I am more and more being driven to Truth. You know that in my search for it nothing will daunt me.

Your simile is right. But if in the attempt to straighten out the back it breaks, you have to suffer the breaking. Do you nurse a tree whose trunk is rotten though stiff? Or do you cut it off and sometimes even see to it that your trim digs deep enough to tear away the roots. So it is with us. You and I can but break in the pursuit. Better to do that than to sit still, remain drones and parasites. I know that parasites as well as drones have their place in nature but we are parasites and drones out of place. Just examine the last working of your mind. You suggest flying to Norwich, as if a loan would settle everything! The true position is that the loan would follow if you only woke up to a sense of your own duty and began to work at it. No loan is required to wind up your business or to stop the fever at Mountain View.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. courtesy: National Archives of India

76. THE BILL

The Johannesburg mass meeting[3] was held none too soon. Its resolution is most timely. The composition of the meeting, the number of delegates who attended from most parts of the Transvaal, and the messages sent to Mr. Fischer must have shown the Minister that he could not hope to satisfy British Indians unless he was prepared to accede to their request for amendment of the Bill in the direction pointed out in Mr. Cachalia's telegram. It is difficult, therefore, to understand Mr. Fischer when he says, at the second reading of his precious measure, that the Bill would pacify the Indian community. Mr. Chaplin, who contributed to the debate in an excellent speech, uttered seasonable warning when he said that the Bill was useless and unacceptable to the Unionist Party unless Mr. Fischer could give a definite assurance that the Indians were satisfied. In spite of the Bill being pushed forward a stage further, we imagine that it will never reach the third reading stage. But it is well for passive resisters to keep themselves in readiness. It is to be hoped that, if the struggle is revived, the impending third campaign will be the purest, the last and the most brilliant of all. We share the belief, with Thoreau, that "one true passive resister is enough to win a victory for right". Right is on our side. It could not be on the side of a Government that has no regard for its sacred pledges. And we have many true passive resisters. We would all fail to satisfy the definition of an ideal passive resister, but we feel sure that the community contains many who would approach the ideal as nearly as is possible for mortals to do. On such rests a great duty.

Indian Opinion, 3-5-1913

77. THE CAMPAIGN

RESOLUTION ON SATYAGRAHA

The mass meeting held at Johannesburg has passed a resolution that satyagraha be started against the new Bill. If the Government does not accept our demands, there is not the slightest doubt that satyagraha will be revived. This was a meeting of no ordinary importance. Many Indians were present. Leaders of every town were there. One can see that, if satyagraha is resumed, the campaign will follow a different pattern. In the past, we could not be sure who would go to gaol or be in a position to do so.[1] We had no means of judging how strong or weak the community was. By now, however, we have had some training. We can now make a fair guess how many and who will be able to court imprisonment. The Government also knows our strength. On the previous occasion, we expected everyone to go to gaol. We besieged persons in order to drag them out. It was the time for such training. Those who besieged people and those who were besieged were alike new to the situation. We know better now from experience.

PLAN OF CAMPAIGN

Mr. Cachalia has, therefore, made it clear that we will have neither ourselves nor the Government labour under a false impression. The very resolution passed at the meeting implies that those who support it are not bound to go to gaol unless they themselves declare that they will do so. Everyone who approves of satyagraha can make himself a party to this resolution and declare himself in agreement with it. The person accepting this resolution tells the community and the Government that he believes in the justice and the necessity of this satyagraha campaign, that he will oppose the Government, that, even if he does not go to gaol, he will give monetary or other help to those who do, will look after their dependents, will make himself useful in the campaign in other ways, offer body-labour if he has no money,

[1] The reference is to the passive resistance movement of 1909, which was followed by mass arrests of Indians, including Gandhiji.

will regularly spend some of his time working for it, will not avail himself of any of the provisions of the law and will not support the Government in its oppressive measures.

CAPE AND NATAL

This struggle is not for the Transvaal [alone], but for all South Africa. Therefore, it befits the Cape and Natal also to wake up. It is only natural that Johannesburg should lead the way. It would be shameful, however, if the Cape and Natal sit back. From there, too, people should come forward to go to gaol, and meetings should be held in both these provinces similar to the one in Johannesburg. The Government may treat us as if we are separate, but we can demonstrate our "union" by our actions.

COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS CAMPAIGN

It was our experience during the previous campaign that those who did not go to gaol sought to thwart the community's effort and join hands with the authorities. Some others, who did not turn against the community, hid themselves in shame and helped in no other way at all, as they should have done. Difficulties of both these kinds should disappear, thanks to the resolution adopted this time. If anyone, for whatever reason, schemes against the community, he will only be acting as its enemy and, to that extent, as his own. As for those who hid themselves, their absence meant so much loss to the movement. Our cause thus received a set-back. It was, however, not possible for us at that time to fight in any other way. We were all being tried in the furnace. We could not distinguish one from another. It was insulting a man to say that he would not be able to go to gaol and the statement was taken as bringing discredit on him. That was but right. All the stronger for the testing, we have now emerged from the furnace. A man will not be in disgrace for not going to gaol and need not feel ashamed. He has realized, and so has the community, that he lacks the necessary strength. Those who come forward to court imprisonment must not feel proud. They should not think that they are doing something great. We are all limbs of one body. Just because the eye performs the function of seeing, it is not justified in looking down on the leg. The leg should not feel humbled for not being able

to see as the eye does. The leg and the eye, each works according to its nature. The body needs them both. But either of them will call down disgrace on itself if it fails in its natural function. Then the body and the organ will both suffer. This is equally true of those who volunteer to go to gaol and those who do not.

TO THOSE GOING TO GAOL

Now, a few words to those who come forward to court imprisonment. This time, the campaign, if it starts, is likely to be a big one. If the community stands united behind those who go to gaol, the campaign will in all probability be over quite soon. But whether the community is or is not unanimous, whether it helps or does not help, it is not permissible for the satyagrahis to give up their pledge. Hence, they must be prepared to submit to heavy suffering in this campaign. Moreover, a satyagrahi may not take cover behind what others do. He is not concerned with whether others do or do not go to gaol. Some people, it is observed, say that they will go to gaol if the leading businessmen do. If not, [they say,] they are not prepared to sacrifice themselves, poor people that they are. Again, the Tamils say that they will come forward only if the Gujaratis do, and the Hindus only if the Muslims do. The businessman says that he can look after himself quite well, but that, for the sake of the community, he will be prepared to come out if the hawkers do. None of those who argue thus is a satyagrahi. One interested in business will mind his business. He will not look to what others do. He alone can be a satyagrahi whose soul is possessed by satyagraha. He must understand that he has not come forward in order to confer a favour on anyone, but because he has understood and come to like satyagraha and has the requisite strength. The first to benefit from it will be himself. The community's benefit follows from his. In patriotic work, there is no clash between one's own interests and those of thecountry. If anyone thinks that there is, he is not patriotic enough. A mother does not seek domination over her child because she has drudged for it. A child is not proud because it has served its mother. He who has dedicated his all to his country or religion feels that he is serving his own interests in doing what he thinks to be his duty. What, then, is so wonderful about doing one's duty? Why look to what others do? Why think ill of others? A satya-

grahi can make no conditions. He stands ready to sacrifice himself, body, mind and possessions and, hence, is not afraid of losing wealth or life. He has entered into a pact with death itself. There is no middle of the road line for him. One who feels thus will help to keep up the fight. He will live on even after death. We trust that those who lack this spirit will not come forward for going to gaol. It is our firm belief that fifty Indians so inclined, or five or even one, will be enough for winning our demands.

TO THOSE WHO MAY NOT GO TO GAOL

Finally, let us say a few words to those who may not come forward to go to gaol. There will be no one now to shame any person [into doing anything]. That is no reason for any Indian to conclude that he need not go to gaol and so can stay away. No Indian may sit back in the belief that even one Indian will suffice, and that others need not, therefore, go [to gaol]. A man going to gaol may remain unconcerned even if he is the only one to do so. But the one who does not come forward for gaol should feel ashamed within. The shame in one's heart is more painful than what others cause. If a man has the requisite strength, he should prefer gaol; and if he cannot go, he should feel sorry. It is not proper that one who does not go should seek to brazen it out. That's not the meaning of the resolution. What it means is that, if a person wants to go but cannot do so out of sheer weakness, he may be allowed to excuse himself. Indians who thus plead weakness will take much trouble and work untiringly to help the campaign in other ways. The duty of such Indians begins this very day. They should know that they will be supporting the campaign, if they help maintain the London Committee. Perhaps, through the efforts of the Committee, it may even become unnecessary to start the struggle. Therefore, such Indians should dip their hands into their pockets this very day to help maintain the Committee and strengthen its position. This is the right time for doing so. Mr. Gokhale will not be in England for ever. If the Committee is not put on a sound basis now, we shall have no such opportunity again. This is, therefore, the immediate duty of those who will not be going to gaol and we hope that help will be forthcoming from all the three places, Natal, the Cape and the Transvaal. Making up their minds, if satyagraha starts, to

provide for the families and look after the affairs of those who go to gaol, they must begin the necessary preparation right now. With that end in view, we must find out who are likely to go to gaol and fix up simultaneously the arrangements for helping them. If this is done, we shall have an exciting fight this time, one which will surpass the previous one and which will be recognized as on a higher plane.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 3-5-1913

78. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [*-XVIII*]

SOME REMEDIES: 1. AIR

We have considered how to keep good health, on what it depends and how to conserve it. If all men always followed the rules of health and observed unbroken celibacy, the chapters that follow would not be necessary because such men cannot possibly suffer any physical or mental illness. But such persons are rare indeed. There is hardly one so fortunate as never to have fallen ill. The average person is perpetually ill with some sickness or other. Such a person will enjoy good health in the measure in which he follows the rules set out in the first part. If, moreover, he knows some simple remedies, he will not get into a panic and rush to a doctor or *hakim*[1] when he does fall ill. It is with this in mind that the chapters which follow are written.

We have seen that fresh air is the first essential for good health: it is also an invaluable cure for certain ailments. For instance, if a man whose joints have become stiff is treated with steam, there will be immediate perspiration and the joints will be relieved. This method of applying steam is known as Turkish bath.

If a person whose body is burning with high temperature is made to sleep naked in the open air, the temperature will immediately come down. He will feel easy and, if he is covered with a blanket when his body has become cool, he will begin to sweat and the fever will disappear. There is a notion among us that, when anyone has high

[1] Physician practising the *Unani* system of medicine

fever, all the windows and doors should be closed, even if that should make the place unbearably hot for the patient, that the latter's head and ears should be wrapped up, and that he should be covered with heavy blankets. This is an entirely wrong notion. The practice causes the patient acute discomfort and makes him weak. It often happens that the patient, having been wrapped up in this way, perspires profusely and the thermometer shows a lower temperature, but the patient is greatly weakened. In fever brought on by heat, no one should be afraid to take the air treatment described above. The patient will immediately feel the benefit and no harm whatever will come of it. One should only make sure that the patient does not shiver when lying exposed. If he feels cold, it means that his discomfort [from heat] had not been too severe to bear after all. In case the patient is not in a condition to lie naked out of doors, there can be no harm whatever if he is made to sleep covered up in the open air.

A change of air is a highly effective remedy for prolonged fever or any other sickness. The practice of going for a change of climate is, as a matter of fact, part of the "air treatment". There is also a custom, among some, of changing houses. Many believe that a house which is never free from illness must be a haunted one. This seems to be mere superstition. The so-called haunting is in fact just polluted air. Consequently, the change of house means change of air, and that is in itself a great advantage. The air we breathe has so close a bearing on the condition of our bodies that the slightest change in it is bound to affect us for better or worse. The rich can go abroad in search of good climate. A poor man can also benefit by going to a neighbouring town or even by a change of residence. Sometimes a patient improves merely by being moved from one room to another. It is superfluous to caution here that on all such occasions the air in the room, house or town to which one goes should be better than that left behind. Sickness caused by a humid atmosphere will not disappear by a change to a more humid place. Sometimes no benefit is derived from a change of air, the reason being that the change is made without a knowledge of the principle involved. Sometimes health does not improve because, though the change has been to a better climate, other necessary precautions have not been taken, with the result that the benefit derived from a good climate is lost.

I would request the reader to compare this chapter with the one in Part I devoted to the subject of "air".[1] The earlier chapter explai-ned the relation between air and good health and it contained a gen-eral discussion on air. In this chapter, the therapeutic value of air is considered. Read in conjunction with this chapter, the earlier one will be better understood.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 3-5-1913

79 LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]

May 5, 1913

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

My analysis of your position reacted upon me and made me feel that if my remarks were sincere (and they were that absolutely) I could not possibly let you spend on my behalf without being guilty of having participated in a fraud upon yourself, your creditors and in a fraud upon yourself, your creditors and myself. My resolve was a most natural consequence of my discovery long ago made but realized only during our last communion. No matter what others may say, I should defend the position before all that you are today in an insolvent position. To fully grasp the truth is to avert the crisis and make yourself solvent. Your condition is not hopeless or helpless. But every insolvent is not necessarily helpless. If he can enter into a composition with his creditors he can pay 20/- in the pound. But at the moment he has not the money to pay his creditors and is therefore insolvent. Such is undoubtedly your position.

All the same, you are bound to send the £200 to your brother-in-law. Only I wish it would be the final lesson of your life. Your position does not warrant the gift. It is no use calling it a loan nor can

[1] *Vide* "General Knowledge about Health (-I)", 1-2-1913; "General Knowledge about Health (-V)", 1-2-1913 & "General Knowledge about Health (-VII), 15-2-1913.

it do any good to your brother-in-law. But a promise is a promise and you should send the money. Will you then seriously set to work so that your position becomes sound, i.e., you can confidently say, 'I have no debts I cannot pay on demand without a loss'. To arrive at that stage, I feel that a firm adoption of the propositions suggested by me is necessary. That alone will save [you]. And the very effort will provide you with an occupation which is bound to raise you.

Now for your modifications. I must say I do not like them but you must be the final judge. If that is the utmost you can do, then let that stand. I return the paper. Anyway, please resolve quickly and act promptly.

Please let me know if you have examined your tools. If you find any missing and you want them, please let me know.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

80. LETTER TO SECRETARY FOR INTERIOR[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
After *May 7, 1913*]

I beg to thank you for your letter of the 7th instant, in reply to my telegram[2] of the 4th idem.

My Committee fears that the Government reading of the Searle judgment is different from that of the Indian community —you say that, in my telegram, I "refer to the judgment recently delivered by Mr. Justice Searle, in relation to the question of marriages which have been solemnized by rites or customs which recognize polygamy."

I would respectfully point out that my Association has never understood that the Searle judgment dealt with the question of poly-

[1] This was signed by Sonja Schlesin, Secretary, Transvaal Indian Women's Association, and, presumably, drafted by Gandhiji.

[2] *Vide* the following item.

gamous marriages. Justice Searle's pronouncement, in the humble opinion of my Committee, is unequivocal "the whole question in the case was whether a wife, married by Mahomedan custom, was a wife within the meaning of the Immigration Act." And what applies to marriages by Mahomedan custom would apply also to marriages by Hindu custom or to marriages by Zoroastrian custom or to marriages consecrated according to the customs of any religion save the Christian, which were not registered before a Marriage Officer. The question of polygamy has, therefore, I respectfully submit, been quite gratuitously introduced.

My Committee trusts that the Government will recognize the great urgency of the question raised by it and that the laws of the Union regarding marriages will be amended during the present session so as to restore the former practice of recognizing in law Indian marriages.

Indian Opinion, 24-5-1913

81. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]

Thursday [*May 8, 1913*][1]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I do not want to keep you in suspense. Had I had the time I would have given you the Devdas incident earlier. Even now I shall be brief. We have all only just returned from Verulam after the Temple-opening ceremony. Devdas ate stolen lemons at Inanda Falls although he had promised not to do such a thing again. When he was faced with the fact, he was inclined to be naughty and sharp. This grieved me much. And his last defence broke me entirely. He said he did not immediately confess his guilt as he was afraid of being hit by me, as if I am in the habit of hitting boys. And so I felt that by way of lesson to

[1] Gandhiji opened the Hindu temple at Verulam, on May 8, 1913, a Thursday.

him I would deposit a few slaps on my cheeks which I did and then felt the grief so much that I wept bitterly. More later.

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

82. INDIAN WOMEN AS PASSIVE RESISTERS

The following telegram has been addressed by the Transvaal Indian Women's Association to the Hon'ble, the Minister of the Interior:

> Committee Transvaal Indian Women's Association has carefully considered position, in the light of the Searle judgment, of Indian women resident in South Africa or entitled to enter therein with their husbands possessing rights of resi-dence in the Union, and has come to the conclusion that the honour of Indian womanhood is affected by that judgment. Committee therefore respectfully trusts that the Government will be pleased to amend the law so as to recognize the validity of Indian marriages which have been duly consecrated accor-ding to the religious customs of the parties and are recognized as legal in India. I am also to inform the Government that the earnestness of the members of the Association is such that, if the Government cannot see its way to comply with the request, they would offer passive resistance and in common with the male members of the community suffer imprisonment rather than suffer the indignity to which in their opinion the Searle Judgment subjects them.[1]

SONJA SCHLESIN

HONORARY SECRETARY

We understand that the above telegram was sent after over forty Indian ladies of Johannesburg, professing the Hindu, the Mahomedan

[1] This telegram was dated May 4, 1913. What follows appeared as a "Note" by the Editor, *Indian Opinion*.

and the Christian faiths, had decided upon sending it. Most of them have emphatically declared their intention of braving imprisonment, should the Government decline to grant their prayer. The readers of *Indian Opinion* are aware of the fact that the Honorary Secretary (Miss Sonja Schlesin) is not an Indian but a European. She has made common cause with us now for a long time, by way of protest against the prevailing anti-Asiatic prejudice on the part of the majority of the Europeans of South Africa. She has been the Honorary Secretary of the Indian Women's Association ever since its establishment. Miss Schlesin, whilst she is in love with her work, is not in love with the official position she occupies. She considers that the office should rightly belong to an Indian woman. But she recognizes that her Indian sisters have not that knowledge of the English language and of South African politics which is required in a Secretary of an Association like the one which she has been guiding and serving so long. Miss Schlesin has fitted herself for the task before her by being in Mr. Gandhi's office and, therefore, in close contact with the passive resistance movement since its inception in l 906. Miss Schlesin, like the male European workers in South Africa for the Indian cause, demonstrates the unity of human nature, whether residing in a brown-skinned or a white-skinned body, and also that South Africa is not devoid of disinterested souls.

Indian Opinion, 10-5-1913

83. THE WOMEN'S RESOLUTION

The remarkable resolution of the Indian women of Johannesburg on the marriage question, that has been agitating our countrymen for the past few weeks, marks an interesting development of the passive resistance campaign. The resolution has been duly wired[1] to Mr. Fischer, and, if the Minister still persists in ignoring the grievance created by the Searle judgment, he will do so with his eyes open. He may rest assured that Indian women are not dying to go to gaol, nor do the male members of the community contemplate with equanimity the prospect of their women-folk being imprisoned. If, therefore, Indian women become passive resisters, they must have what is, to them at any rate, a very serious grievance. We congratulate our plucky sisters who have dared to fight the Government rather than submit to the insult offered by the Searle judgment. They will cover themselves and the land of their birth, as, indeed, of their adoption, with glory, if they remain true to their resolve to the end.[2] We know that they fully recognize what their wire means.

We hope, too, that the male members of the population will realize their own duty in the matter. It is largely in their hands to end the struggle at an earlier stage. "The larger the number of passive resisters, the quicker the termination of the struggle" is a mathematical formula.

Indian Opinion, 10-5-1913

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] How the pioneer women passive resisters acquitted themselves in the struggle is narrated in *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XL.

84. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [-*XIX*]

2. WATER TREATMENTS

Air does its work invisibly, so that we cannot fully realize the efficacy of air treatments. But the properties of water and the effects it produces are immediately apparent and we can, therefore, readily see how admirably it works.

Water treatments by steam are more or less familiar to all. We give a steam-bath to a patient suffering from fever. A bad headache can often be relieved by the use of steam. If joints are affected by rheumatism and it is desired to give the patient quick relief, treatment with steam, followed immediately by a cold bath, proves highly beneficial. When there are boils on the skin, too many of them, we cannot apply ointment or poultice to all of them, but they soften in no time if treated with steam.

When exhausted, if one takes a hot bath followed by a cold shower, one feels light in body and the fatigue disappears. If anyone suffering from insomnia takes a steam-bath, followed by a cold shower, he will, more often than not, soon fall asleep.

In most of these cases hot water can be substituted for steam. It is not necessary, therefore, to make any distinction between the two. If one suffers from stomach-ache, it can be quickly relieved by hot water fomentation. This can be done by placing a bottle or other vessel, filled with boiling water, on a cloth over the abdomen. Sometimes it becomes necessary to cause vomiting. This can be done by drinking plenty of hot water. One suffering from constipation can get relief by drinking hot water when retiring or in the morning immediately after brushing the teeth. Sir Gordon Spring, a former Prime Minister of the Cape, enjoyed excellent health. When asked what it was chiefly due to, he replied that he drank a glass of hot water the last thing at night and the first thing in the morning. That was, he said, the secret of his good health. Some people pass a motion only after drinking tea and in their ignorance give the credit to tea. Actually the tea is harmful: it is the hot water in it that produces the effect.

There is a special kind of tub for a steam-bath, but this is not really necessary. A spirit or kerosene stove or small wood or coal fire should be placed under a cane chair or wooden stool. A pot of water should be covered and placed on the fire. A counterpane or blanket should then be spread over the chair and so arranged over the front that the patient seated on it should not feel too severely the heat from the fire or steam. The patient should be wrapped in a cotton rug or blanket and seated in the chair. The lid should then be slipped off the water pot so that the steam reaches the patient. It is our custom also to cover the latter's head but this is not necessary. Heat generated in the body rises to the head and drops of perspiration form on the face. If the patient is not in a condition to get out of the sick-bed; he may be laid on a cane couch or iron bedstead and given steam-treatment. In that case, also, the blankets should be so arranged that heat and steam do not escape. Care must be taken to see that the patient does not sustain burns and the blankets or other things do not catch fire. Should the patient happen to be extremely weak, one should hesitate to give him steam-treatment, for if steam has its benefits, it can have harmful effects too. After taking a steam-bath, the patient always feels weak. The weakness does not last long but the treatment, if taken habitually, is bound to have an exhausting effect on the patient. Steam should, therefore, be used with great caution. It may also be applied locally. For instance, in a case of headache it is not necessary to steam the whole body. Water should be boiled in a narrow-necked vessel or kettle and the forehead held over the opening. The head should be partially covered with a cloth so that the steam may reach the head through the nostrils. If the nose is blocked, such inhalation will give immediate relief. If an inflammation is confined to a particular spot, it may be treated by applying steam to the affected part only.

The good effects of hot water and steam are fairly widely known, but few seem to know the value of cold water. To tell the truth, the beneficial properties of cold water even surpass those of hot water. It may be said that on most people cold water has a stimulating effect. Even the weakest patient can be given cold water treatment. For fever, smallpox, rash and other skin affections, wrapping up with cotton sheets soaked in cold water is highly efficacious. The effect seems almost miraculous and anyone can test it without the slightest risk. In

cases of giddiness or delirium, a piece of cloth soaked in ice-water and placed over the head gives great relief. If one has had no motion, it may be possible to get relief by applying cloth soaked in ice-cold water to the abdomen. Those who have wet dreams often get relief if they sleep every day with a cold wet bandage tied over the lower abdomen. The application of an ice pack stops bleeding in any part of the body. When the nose is bleeding, immediate stoppage is brought about by dashing a lot of very cold water on the head. One suffering from any disease of the nose, or from cold or headache derives great benefit from drawing up water through the nostrils twice a day. One nostril should be closed, water drawn in through the other and then ejected through the first. Water may also be drawn in through both the nostrils and ejected through the mouth. If the nose is otherwise clean and some of the water passes from the nostrils into the stomach, it does no harm. It is an excellent habit to clean the nose by drawing in water through the nostrils. Those who cannot manage this may do so by using a douche, but anyone can master the technique of drawing water up through the nostrils after a few attempts. Everyone should try to learn it since a headache can often be cured instantly by this easy method. If the nose gives out an offensive smell, for that, too, this is an effective remedy. Some persons suffer from a running nose; they will find the method of drawing water in through the nostrils an unfailing remedy for their condition.

Many people are reluctant to take an enema, and some even argue that it causes weakness. This is a wrong notion. There is no better method of immediate relief from constipation. In various conditions, where other remedies are ineffective, an enema provides relief. It empties the bowels completely and prevents accumulation of new poisons in the body. Anyone who suffers from gas, flatulence or any complaint brought about by poor digestion may take two pounds of water by enema, and so have an immediate rest. There is a book on this subject. Its author had tried many remedies, but failed to cure his dyspepsia. He had grown extremely weak and anaemic. With the use of the enema, his appetite improved and, in a short time he was in excellent health. Complaints like jaundice can be immediately cured by means of enemas. If this treatment has to be prolonged, it is advisable to use cold water, as hot water may cause weakness; this,

however, is not to be blamed on the enema as such.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 10-5-1913

85. LETTER TO BHAVANI DAYAL

INDIAN OPINION
EDITOR
H. S. L. POLAK

PHOENIX,
NATAL,
May 12, 1913

DEAR SHRI BHAVANI DAYAL[1],

I have your letter. The whole of it is not worth printing, for it contains no new fact or argument. Therefore only the portion commending satyagraha will be published in *Indian Opinion*.[2] I do not think it worthwhile to translate it into English. Your article is not for English readers. I shall send you a copy of *Indian Opinion*.

If the Swami[3] is invited to the Hindu Conference or if it seeks his support in any way, no sensible Hindu can participate in it.

Bande Mataram from
MOHANDAS

From the handwritten original in Hindi signed by Gandhiji: C. W. 5743
Courtesy: Vishnudutta Dayal

[1] Edited the Hindi section of *Indian Opinion* for some time from January 28, 1914; President of Indian Young Men's Association; was later known as Bhavani Dayal Sannyasi.

[2] This was published in the issue of 17-5-1913.

[3] The reference appears to be to Swami Shankeranand, who visited South Africa during 1908-10, and was again there at this time.

86. LETTER TO DRUMMOND CHAPLIN

[PHOENIX,

May 14, 1913]

DEAR MR. CHAPLIN,

Mr. Fischer's statement is certainly extraordinary.[1] The Imperial Government could never have seen the full text of the Bill. As before, in my opinion, the Union Government have merely cabled home a summary giving their interpretation of the debatable clauses. If so, they have obtained the Imperial Government's consent under false pretences. Be that as it may, I venture to state that if any of the existing rights as set forth in my letter[2] are disturbed and if the legal status as to marriage is not restored as it existed before the Searle judgment, passive resistance will undoubtedly revive and this time it is bound to be of a general character, i.e., it cannot be confined to the Transvaal. You may also have noticed that Indian women will actively participate in the struggle if the marriage question is not settled. I trust you do not mind my writing frankly in this matter.

May I thank you and the Unionist leaders for their sympathetic speeches at the second reading and may I hope that the same vigilance will be exercised by you and them during the

[1] Moving the Immigrants' Restriction Bill for the second reading on April 30, Fischer had strongly defended the proposed legislation and the various other measures adopted by the South African Government to control Asiatic influx. *Indian Opinion* reported Fischer to have stated: " . . . complications had arisen through the coloured population in their midst, and thus they had, perhaps, to be more careful in regard to those who would come in, who were not of that civilization which they had in the country, and not best fitted to promote the best interests of South Africa. . . . With Europeans they in this country could assimilate. With Indians they could not. The large introduction of Indians into this country would give rise to grave economic, moral, social and political evils. . . . It was the intention of South Africa to exclude Asiatics. . . ." On the marriage question, he was reported to have said: " . . . what was recognized was that the marriage was according to the Roman-Dutch law, and according to the civilization to which South Africans belonged. That they should upset the code of marriage laws of this country was not to be acceded to. . . ."

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary for Interior", 15-4-1913.

remaining stages of the Bill? I cannot help feeling that, if the Government will not grant all our demands, the best solution will be to amend the Transvaal law.

I am,
Yours faithfully,

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5781

87. THE SECOND READING

In spite of the unanimous opposition of the Unionist Party, the Immigration Bill has been read a second time without a division. The result would be considered astounding if we did not know the ways of the Botha Ministry. The Right Hon'ble Mr. Fischer has bought his second reading by promising to consider favourably the suggestions made by the Opposition for improving the Bill and by telling the House that he had secured the general approval of the Imperial Government for his measure. We may expect lively debates and drastic amendments during the committee stage. But this may not serve our purpose in the least degree. Nothing but a total acceptance of our demands can satisfy us, and this not because we do not compromise but because there can be no question of compromise on points of existence or honour. Passive Resisters are under a vow not to accept anything in satisfaction of their demands if it disturbs existing rights. By their very constitution they are precluded from bargaining away the rights of others in order to save themselves the sufferings of imprisonment.

From Mr. Fischer's language, it is clear that he wants to egg on the Europeans of South Africa to rise against us, and us to offer passive resistance. Though the majority of the speakers during the debate spoke against his Bill and advised him to placate passive resisters, he gratuitously mentioned that the threat of passive resistance might make the Government to come to "plain terms". We wish they would. We certainly do not want ambiguity. And in pleading for general terms in an Immigration Bill, we do not countenance a subterfuge, as it has been called, but we ask for a continuance of the excellent part

of the British Constitution which requires that, however persistent a bad practice may be, it shall not be incorporated into the law. In Lord Ampthill's words, theory should be sound, though one may fail to carry it out in practice. In theory, there is no such thing as a straight line that can be drawn, but because we draw a line that is only fairly but not quite straight, we are not supposed to have resorted to a subterfuge by having still the true, though theoretical, definition in view. To keep our theory right is to obey the law of our higher nature; to depart from it in practice is to concede the weakness of human nature. If, therefore, the Government wish to depart from the theory of the British Constitution to which they owe their very existence, they are welcome to do so; only, then, they will not have used "plain terms" but they will have avowed their enmity to the origin of their existence. And passive resisters who still cling to the beautiful vision of that Constitution are prepared to fight for making it a reality or die in the attempt.

Indian Opinion, 17-5-1913

88. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [-XX]

2. WATER TREATMENTS (CONTINUED)

After numerous experiments, a German named Kuhne has discovered that certain water treatments are most effective in a number of ailments. His book on this subject has been translated into many languages. Translations are available in India also. His thesis is that the stomach is the source of all disease. If there is excessive heat in the stomach, it erupts by way of boils on the skin or rheumatism or some such trouble, or as fever, causing the whole body to become hot. There were many before Kuhne to write on water treatments. There is a very old book called *Water treatments*. But no one before Kuhne had laid the same emphasis as he did on the basic identity of diseases. No one had pointed out that all ailments had their origin in the stomach. It is not necessary for us to accept Kuhne's thesis as gospel truth, nor need we go into the details of the matter. But it seems quite certain that, in a large number of cases, Kuhne's diagnosis and

treatment are correct. Thousands have found this by experience. The late magistrate of Durban, Mr. Titan, was struck down by paralysis after an attack of tetanus. Having tried various treatments without success, he was advised by someone to see Kuhne. He went to him, was completely cured and lived in Durban for many years after his return. He always advised people to try Kuhne's treatments. There is a clinic in Natal which gives his treatments. It is near Sweetwaters station. This is only one instance of its popularity; one can find many others.

Kuhne says that the excessive heat in the stomach can be removed by cooling, and for this purpose he advises a bath which will cool the stomach and the adjacent areas of the body. He has invented a special tin bath to make the process easy, but we can do without it. Oval tin tubs of 36 inches, more or less as may suit the patient, are readily available; one of these will do for a Kuhne bath. Three quarters of the tub should be filled with cold water and the patient should be placed in it so that his feet rest outside on a board and the upper part of the trunk also remains above the water-line. Only the portion from the navel to the thigh should be submerged. The patient must be naked in water. If he feels cold, the upper part of his trunk and his feet may be covered with blankets or he or she may wear a shirt or `a blouse, keeping it out of the water. This bath should be taken in a room which can let in light, air and sunshine and, in fact, does let them in while the bath is proceeding. After seating himself in the tub, the patient should rub his abdomen, under the water, with a rough towel or get it rubbed by an attendant. This kind of bath can be taken for 5 to 30 minutes or longer. Sometimes the relief is immediate. If the patient is suffering from gas, wind begins to pass or he begins to belch. If he has fever, his temperature is bound to fall by one or two degrees 5 minutes after the bath has commenced. He will have a free motion. An exhausted person will feel refreshed. One suffering from insomnia will feel relaxed and be able to sleep. One who is excessively drowsy becomes alert and lively. The reason why such seemingly opposite effects are produced has already been stated. Lethargy and insomnia are different results produced by the same cause; they are only apparently opposites. Both diarrhoea and constipation arc similarly the results of indigestion. Some get diarrhoea while others get constipation. The bath has a highly beneficial effect

on both conditions. Very old cases of piles are cured by this bath treatment in conjunction with correct dieting. If a person feels nausea, he will probably be cured immediately he starts the bath. The weak grow strong with it. Many have been cured of their rheumatism by this means. The bath is also excellent for haemorrhage and useful in cases of blood-poisoning. Anyone having a severe headache will get immediate relief with this bath. Kuhne himself thought that his baths were invaluable even in such terrible diseases as cancer. Pregnant women will have easier deliveries if they take these baths. It is a treatment that can be taken by children, by the young and the aged, by men and women.

There is another way of taking this bath which is unfailingly effective in certain ailments. It is called *the wet sheet pack*, which in Gujarati means "a bandage of wet cloth". The manner of treatment is as follows: Place a table or low seat, long enough for the patient to lie on full-length, if possible in the open air. Arrange on this four or more blankets according to the weather, so that they hang down on all sides. Spread over them two clean bed-sheets, long and thick, which have been soaked in cold water and wrung out. Place a pillow under the blankets for the head. The patient should then be stripped of all clothing, except a small handkerchief or cloth round his waist which may be retained if desired. He should be laid flat on his back between the sheets arranged as above, the arms hanging own and the [lower] sheet and blankets wrapped round him from both sides, one over the other. The covering at the bottom should be carefully wrapped round his feet. If there is sunshine, a wet cloth should be placed on his head and face, leaving the nose uncovered in all cases. The patient will feel a momentary chill which will be immediately followed by a feeling of relief and comfortable warmth. He may remain in this condition for 5 minutes to an hour or more. By and by, the patient becomes so hot that he perspires. Frequently, he falls asleep at this stage. When he comes out of the wet sheets, he must immediately have a cold bath. This treatment is highly effective in many skin diseases. Eczema, ringworm, pimples, chickenpox, smallpox, simple boils, fever, etc., yield quickly to the "wet sheet pack". However severe the attack, smallpox can, in most cases, be cured by this treatment. An attack of rash is cured by taking one or two baths. The

technique of taking or arranging this bath is easily learnt and everyone will discover its effectiveness in experience. During the bath, the dirt from the skin is deposited on the wet sheet. The latter should, there-fore, never be used again by the same or another patient until it has been thoroughly washed in boiling water.

Finally, there is one point to be kept in mind about these water-treatments, that, if the bath is taken without proper attention to diet and exercise, it can never have full effect or may have no effect at all. If a man suffering from arthritis takes the Kuhne bath or "wet sheet pack" but eats unsuitable food, does not breathe fresh air, lives in dirty surroundings and takes no exercise, he cannot hope to benefit from the treatment alone. It can be of help only if other rules of health are duly observed. There is no doubt whatever that, if they are, water treatment will help the patient to a most speedy recovery.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 17-5-1913

89. LETTER TO SECRETARY FOR INTERIOR[1]

[PHOENIX,]
May 19, 1913[2]

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th instant in reply to my letter of the 30th ultimo.

I observe that the Hon'ble the Minister resents any reference to passive resistance.[3] I am sorry but the reference as a statement of facts was inevitable. There was no desire to use any threats. Revival of

[1] The letter was sent over the signature of A. M. Cachalia. The correspondence was published in *Indian Opinion*, 24-5-1913.

[2] This is the date assigned by *Indian Opinion*; the draft is undated.

[3] The Secretary of the Interior, in his letter dated May 9, had written: "It is a matter of great regret to Mr. Fischer that, in referring to the draft Immigration Bill, your Association and other representative bodies in the Indian community have seen fit to threaten to revive the passive resistance movement."

passive resistance is no threat but a certainty, should the Government unfortunately find it impossible or be reluctant to carry out the sacred promise made by the predecessor, in office, of the Hon'ble the Minister. The promise was made in the name of the Government and in its name it was repeated last year. Everyone of the points raised by the Association arises out of the terms of the provisional settlement. Moreover, I am constrained to point out that the policy hitherto pursued by the Government in administering the existing legislation affecting the community represented by my Association is wholly at variance with the "desire" expressed in your letter not to treat that community in any but an entirely fair manner! My countrymen consider not only not fair but harsh and unjust the treatment meted to wives who wish to join their husbands in South Africa or minor children who wish to join their parents, or to those, as in Natal, who want to re-enter on the strength of previous residence or to those, as in the Cape, who try to re-enter after the expiry of the period mentioned in their permits of absence or to those who want temporary permits to enter the Transvaal. It may be added that, if the community in the Transvaal has not been altogether extinguished under the combined effect of the Gold Laws and the Townships Act, it has to thank the Supreme Court and not the Government who so ungenerously attempted to read a meaning into the Acts which they did not bear. Even the marriage trouble is due entirely to the deliberately hostile policy of the Government. They could have avoided the ruling of the Court by simply allowing the only wife of the applicant in South Africa to join her husband. It will thus be seen that any pressure that could be put upon the Government by the European community cannot, in my humble opinion, result in greater cruelty being practised upon my community, short of its utter annihilation. And if passive resistance, i.e., self-inflicted suffering of my community, should prompt measures to destroy its existence in South Africa, I doubt not that it will prefer such destruction to a destruction of its honour, its religious sentiments and its self-respect.

I have, [*etc.*,]

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5755

90. LETTER TO SECRETARY FOR INTERIOR[1]

[PHOENIX,]

May 19, 1913

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th instant, in reply to mine of the 14th ultimo2 regarding the validity of Indian marriages.

My Committee had, it was thought, made it clear that, in its request, it had not raised the question of polygamy, which could be treated on its merits. What the Searle judgment does is to disregard marriages contracted in India or in South Africa in accordance with the rites prescribed by Indian faiths. I beg to inform the Hon'ble the Minister that the religious ceremonies in India do not mention polygamy, nor do all Indian faiths necessarily recognize polygamy. All my Association asks for is that monogamous marriages celebrated in India or in South Africa according to the ceremonies prescribed by the great Indian faiths may be lawfully recognized, as they were before the Searle judgment. Where my countrymen bring or have more than one wife the indulgence promised in the Government communication may be exercised till the time is ripe for legal recognition of such marriages.

I do respectfully hope that the position taken up by my Association has now been made clear.

Indian Opinion, 24-5-1913

[1] This letter was signed by A. M. Cachalia.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary for Interior", 14-4-1913.

91. THE BILL

The Immigration Bill promises to become the law of the land, if one may judge from the considerable progress made by it in Committee since Monday last. Mr. Fischer, in spite of his unsatisfactory letter to Mr. Cachalia which we reproduce this week, has seen the error of his ways and actually himself moved amendments which, in his telegraphic and other communications, he evinced no desire to do. The amendments include the restoration of the existing rights of inter-provincial migration under the Cape and the Natal laws, also of the rights of domiciled Indians whose right to return after three years' absence was threatened. The exact effect of the amendments it is impossible to ascertain unless we have the full text thereof before us.

Mr. Alexander, who has been working so disinterestedly and zealously for all causes which are neglected or unpopular owing to the colour prejudice, moved a reasonable amendment which would probably have met our demand on the marriage law, and was met with a fishy and misleading reply from the Minister, although Mr. Chaplin supported Mr. Alexander in a well-informed speech. The Minister threw dust in the eyes of the Members by stating that we had declined to accept a Marriage Officer as we wanted polygamy recognized in South Africa. It has been made perfectly clear that the Searle judgment invalidates every non-Christian Indian marriage if it is not registered. No appointment of a Marriage Officer can meet this difficulty unless Indians are to be expected to register existing marriages and thus impliedly admit their illegality prior to registration—a position which no Indian would humiliate himself by accepting. Nor would such appointment meet the difficulty of wives who may come from India. The Transvaal Marriage Law provides for legal recognition of European marriages, no matter how celebrated in Europe in the following terms:

> All marriages entered into outside this state by persons of whom one or both were not at the time of entering into such marriage resident within this state shall be recognized and considered to be equally valid in this state as in the country where such marriages shall have been solemnized, and should the

legality of such marriages be questioned by any heirsor other interested parties, the same may be proved in any court of law by producing the marriage registers or certificates, if it should be customary to keep such registers in such country, or to grant certificates thereof, or by producing duly authenticated copies thereof, or by witnesses, or any other means of proof admissible by law in all other ordinary cases.

Presumably, such marriages may, therefore, well be even polygamous; they may be performed according to any rites. Why should not the same recognition be vouchsafed to Indian marriages?

Moreover, Mr. Fischer has evidently not studied Mr. Justice Gardiner's recent judgment. According to that judgment, an Indian wife, unless her marriage is registered, is not exempt from liability to give evidence against her husband. Here, at least, there was not even a suspicion of the question of polygamy arising. But the fact is that Mr. Fischer does not scruple as to how he misleads the House when he has to deal with an awkward situation.

So it may be that the Immigration Bill now in Committee may come out of it satisfying all our demands but the one about marriage. Mr. Fischer proposes to deal with the marriage difficulty administratively. In the words of *The Natal Mercury* parliamentary correspondent, "the objection to the administrative solution is, of course, that it reduces the title of the domiciled Indian to import a wife from a right to a favour—one, moreover, which is dependent on the discretion or caprice of an official". We warn Mr. Fischer that, *even if this question is the only one left unsolved, revival of passive resistance is a certainty.*

Indian Opinion, 24-5-1913

92. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [-XXI]

3. EARTH CURES

We have learnt something about water treatments. In some cases, earth cures, have shown even more spectacular results. Our bodies are made up largely of earth; it is, therefore, not surprising that earth should have an effect on us. All people regard earth as something sacred. The ground is coated with mud to destroy odours, earth is sprinkled over refuse, dirty hands are cleansed with earth, the private parts can also be wiped clean with earth. Yogis coat their bodies with mud. The original inhabitants of this country [Africa] apply mud to boils. We filter water through sand or earth in order to purify it. Finally, dead bodies buried in earth will not pollute the air. Such, we observe, is the undoubted excellence of earth. From this we may make a fair guess that earth, probably, has some highly beneficial qualities peculiar to itself.

Just as Kuhne gave much thought to water and said many useful things about it, another German named Juste has written about earth. He goes to the extent of saying that even incurable diseases may yield to earth treatment. He reports how once, in a neighbouring village, a man bitten by a snake and even given up as dead by many was brought to him on someone's advice. Juste placed him under earth and the man soon regained consciousness. This is not an impossible thing to have happened. Juste had no reason to tell a lie. It is obvious that great heat will be generated in anyone buried under earth. We have no means of discovering how the invisible bacteria in the earth act upon the body; it does seem, however, that earth has the power to absorb poisons. By citing Juste's illustration, it is not of course intended to suggest that every case of snake-bite can be cured by earth treatment, but it should certainly be tried on such occasions. The suggestion that earth should be used for bee and scorpion stings is easier to accept. I have myself tried it on such stings and found that immediate relief followed. For this purpose, a stiff paste made of earth soaked in cold water is applied on the affected part, which is then bandaged.

The illustrations that follow are from my personal experience. A patient suffering from dysentery was cured in two or three days by the application of a mud pack to his abdomen. Immediate relief has been obtained by this method in cases of headache. Inflammation of the eyes is cured by placing a mud pack just over the affected eyes. Swelling brought about by blows is relieved. For a number of years I could keep well only if I took fruit salt, etc. I learnt of the efficacy of earth treatment in 1904, since when I have never had to take fruit salt. For anyone suffering from constipation, the application of mud packs to the abdomen is found to be highly beneficial. Stomach-ache also is relieved in this way. Diarrhoea can also be cured by a mud pack. High fever is reduced in an hour or two by tying mud packs to the stomach and the forehead. Boils, the itch, eczema, etc., often yield to treatment by mud pack. However, once pus is formed in the boils, mud packs are found to be of little use. In the case of burns, the immediate application of mud pack reduces pain and prevents swelling. Piles yield to the mud pack. As a result of frost, the hand and feet often become red and swollen. Mud packs are a sure remedy for this condition. Mud has been found to be good for eczema. For pain in the joints, the application of mud brings immediate relief.

From these numerous experiments with mud packs, I have come to the conclusion that as a house-hold remedy mud is invaluable.

Every kind of earth is not equally efficacious. Red earth has been found to be particularly effective. The earth to be used should always be dug out from a clean spot. Earth containing a mixture of dung, etc., should not be used. It should not be excessively sticky. Earth which is partly sandy and partly sticky is excellent. It should be altogether free from grass or roots. It is sometimes advisable to strain the earth through a fine sieve. It must always be mixed with cold water and the paste should be of the consistency of dough. It should normally be placed in a clean unstarched piece of cloth and applied like a poultice to the affected part. The pack should be removed before the mud is about to dry up. A pack usually lasts for two or three hours. Mud from a used pack should not be used again. The cloth, however, may be used after washing, provided there was no pus on it. When mud is applied to the abdomen, a warm cloth should be placed over the pack and then the whole thing tied with a bandage.

One should have a tin of earth handy so that it can be used whenever necessary and one does not have to go hunting for it in emergency. In case of scorpion stings, etc., the earlier the mud is applied the better.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 24-5-1913

93. TELEGRAM TO DRUMMOND CHAPLIN AND OTHERS

[PHOENIX,
May 24, 1913][1]

DRUMMOND CHAPLIN
PATRICK DUNCAN
SIR DAVID HUNTER
THEO SCHREINER
RIGHT HON'BLE MERRIMAN
MORRIS ALEXANDER
PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CAPE TOWN

MINISTER'S STATEMENT INDIANS DEMAND LEGAL RECOGNITION POLYGAMY WRONG STOP INDIANS DEMAND ONLY LEGAL RECOGNITION NON-CHRISTIAN INDIAN MARRIAGES CELEBRATED INDIA OR SOUTH AFRICA STOP APPOINTMENT MARRIAGE OFFICERS CAN ONLY MEET CASES FUTURE MARRIAGES AND THEN ONLY MARRIAGES CELEBRATED SOUTH AFRICA STOP TRANSVAAL MARRIAGE LAW 1871 SPECIALLY RECOGNIZES ALL EUROPEAN MARRIAGES CELEBRATED EUROPE NO MATTER WHAT FORM STOP SIMILAR PROVISION FOR INDIAN MARRIAGES WOULD MEET CASE STOP DRAW ATTENTION ALSO FACT AMENDMENTS CARRIED COMMITTEE DO NOT INCLUDE PROTECTION RIGHTS ENTER CAPE OF INDIANS BORN SOUTH AFRICA UNDER SECTION 4 SUB-SECTION 'F' PARA 'A'

[1] The draft is undated. It, however, appears from the telegram dated May 24 addressed to Marshall Campbell, *vide* the following item, that this was also sent the same day.

CAPE ACT 30 OF 1906 STOP NOR DO THEY SOLVE FREE STATE DIFFICULTY THEORETICAL RIGHT STOP SUBMIT THAT IF EXISTING RIGHTS DISTURBED OR FREE STATE AND MARRIAGE DIFFICULTY LEFT UNSOLVED PASSIVE RESISTANCE CERTAINTY.[1]

From a photostat of the handwritten draft: S. N. 5784

94. TELEGRAM TO MARSHALL CAMPBELL

[PHOENIX,]
May 24, 1913

SENATOR MARSHALL CAMPBELL
CAPE TOWN

THANKS YOUR WIRE IF TAX REMOVED THIS SESSION IT WOULD SAVE GOVERNMENT DISCREDIT AND DISGRACE. FOR INDIANS IT WOULD BE MEASURE TARDY JUSTICE. HAVE WIRED ALEXANDER SAYING MARRIAGE AMENDMENT DOES NOT MEET CASE HARDLY ANY INDIAN MARRIAGE IS REGISTERED IN INDIA. AMENDMENT THEREFORE WILL GRANT NO RELIEF UNLESS REGISTRATION CLAUSE TAKEN OUT. ALEXANDER UNAWARE INDIAN LAW AND CUSTOM. IF MINISTER'S ASSURANCE TO YOU MEANS ANYTHING HE WILL NO DOUBT EVEN NOW AMEND BILL TO RECOGNIZE VALIDITY INDIAN MARRIAGES TO RESTORE RIGHT SOUTH AFRICA-BORN INDIAN[S] ENTER CAPE AND PRESERVE ALL EXISTING RIGHTS FEW AS THEY ARE. PASSIVE RESISTERS CANNOT ACCEPT COMPROMISE FOR SAKE SAVING THEMSELVES IMPRISONMENT OR WORSE IF THEY ARE CALLED UPON ACCEPT SURRENDER OF OTHER PEOPLE'S RIGHTS. YOU WILL EARN GRATITUDE OF HELPLESS PEOPLE IF YOU SUCCEED MAKING GOVERNMENT RENDER JUSTICE AND HONOUR THEIR OWN PROMISES. PLEASE

[1] In reply to this, Patrick Duncan sent the following telegram on May 26: "Your telegram. Difficult to see how to avoid recognition polygamous marriages if legal recognition granted Indian non-Christian marriages."

WIRE COMMUNICATIONS PHOENIX.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the handwritten draft: S. N. 5786

95. TELEGRAM TO PATRICK DUNCAN

[PHOENIX,]
May 27, 1913

PATRICK DUNCAN
CAPE TOWN

THANKS WIRE[1] AMENDMENT MAY RECOGNIZE ONLY ONE WIFE IN LAW AS JUSTICE WESSELS DID JUSSAT CASE. AMENDMENT ACCEPTED YESTERDAY BY MINISTER NOT SUFFICIENT AS IT CONTEMPLATES REGISTRATION IN ADDITION CELEBRATION ACCORDING RELIGIOUS RITES STOP THERE IS NO SYSTEM REGISTRATION MARRIAGES INDIA.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5792

[1] *Vide* footnote 2 to "Telegram to Drummond Chaplin and Others", 24-5-1913.

96. TELEGRAM TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR

[PHOENIX,]
May 27, 1913

INTERIOR
CAPE TOWN

INVITE MINISTERS ATTENTION TRANSVAAL MARRIAGE LAW 1871 WHICH RECOGNIZES EUROPEAN MARRIAGES CELEBRATED OUTSIDE SOUTH AFRICA NO MATTER UNDER WHAT FORM STOP SIMILAR PROVISION CAN MEET INDIAN CASE STOP BEG STATE INDIANS DO NOT DEMAND LEGAL RECOGNITION POLYGAMY. AMENDMENTS CARRIED DO NOT APPEAR PROTECT RIGHT SOUTH AFRICA-BORN INDIANS ENTER CAPE UNDER SECTION 4 SUB-SECTION 'F' PARA 'A' CAPE ACT 30 OF 1906 NOR DOES FREE STATE DIFFICULTY THEORETICAL RIGHT APPEAR REMOVED STOP SUBMIT RISK OFFENDING MINISTER THAT PASSIVE RESISTANCE CERTAINTY IF QUESTIONS INCLUDED PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT LEFT UNSOLVED ACCORDANCE THEREWITH.[1]

GANDHI

From a photostat of the handwritten draft: S. N. 5793

[1] The Minister replied the same day that the amendment recognizing Indian marriages was accepted on the assurance from Sir David Hunter and others that it would "entirely meet the case" of Indians, the point regarding entry into the Cape was a new one, and the question of intermigration referred to in correspondence of February 1912 was fully met. Asking for elucidation of the point regarding the Free State, the Minister hoped there would be no further reference to passive resistance.

97. TELEGRAM TO SIR DAVID HUNTER

[PHOENIX,
May 27, 1913]

SIR DAVID HUNTER
CAPE TOWN

THANKS WIRE[1] AND SYMPATHY [STOP] UNFORTUNATELY AMENDMENT ACCEPTED NOT ENOUGH AS IT CONTEMPLATES REGISTRATION STOP THERE IS NO SYSTEM REGISTRATION INDIA STOP REGISTRATION CLAUSE TOTALLY UNNECESSARY AND DOES NOT OCCUR TRANSVAAL LAW REFERRED TO MY TELEGRAM[2] OF YESTERDAY STOP OTHER POINTS ALSO NOT YET MET.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5796

[1] This was dated May 26. It read: "Government this day accepted amendment which puts marriage question right. The Bill has now passed second and third readings and I think we may heartily congratulate ourselves upon the concessions obtained by the friends of the Indians."

[2] This is not available; *vide*, however, "Telegram to Drummond Chaplin and Others", 24-5-1913.

98. TELEGRAM TO SCHREINER AND CAMPBELL

[PHOENIX,
May 27, 1913]

SENATOR SCHREINER
SENATOR MARSHALL CAMPBELL
CAPE TOWN

IMMIGRATION BILLS NOW BEFORE SENATE FAILS CARRY OUT PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT OF 1911 ARRIVED AT BY GENERAL SMUTS WITH INDIAN COMMUNITY STOP IT TAKES AWAY RIGHT SOUTH AFRICA-BORN INDIANS ENTER CAPE UNDER PARA 'A' SUB-SECTION 'F' —SECTION 4 OF CAPE ACT 30 OF 1906 STOP BILL AS AMENDED YESTERDAY DOES NOT SOLVE MARRIAGE DIFFICULTY AS IT REQUIRES REGISTRATION MARRIAGES STOP THERE IS NO SYSTEM REGISTRATION INDIA STOP TRANSVAAL MARRIAGE LAW RECOGNIZES MARRIAGES EUROPEANS OUTSIDE SOUTH AFRICA NO MATTER WHAT FORM [STOP] SIMILAR PROVISION REGARDING INDIAN MARRIAGES WILL MEET CASE STOP PROVISOMAY BE ADDED EFFECT POLYGAMY WILL NOT BE RECOGNIZED BY LAW STOP AM NOT AWARE WHETHER BILL NOW PROTECTS NATAL INDIANS' RIGHTS RETURN ON PROOF OF THREE YEARS' RESIDENCE NATAL STOP SETTLEMENT CONTEMPLATES THAT THERE SHALL BE NO RACIAL BAR IMMIGRATION BILL STOP PRESENT BILL SEEMS BREAK THIS CONDITION BY REQUIRING INDIANS MAKE DECLARATION NOT REQUIRED FROM OTHERS STOP IF THIS REQUIREMENT IS WAIVED FREE STATE DIFFICULTY MAY BE SOLVED THOUGH INDIANS SO ENTERING WILL STILL BE LIABLE DISABILITY HOLD LAND OR TRADE OR FARM STOP HOPE YOU WILL SEE YOUR WAY EFFECTIVELY INTERVENE TO HAVE SETTLEMENT CARRIED OUT THUS

PREVENTING REVIVAL PASSIVE RESISTANCE.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5805

99. TELEGRAM TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR

[PHOENIX,]

May 27, 1913[1]

INTERIOR

[CAPE TOWN]

BEG THANK MINISTER FOR CONCILIATORY TONE MESSAGE STOP HAVE NO DESIRE HURT FEELINGS BY REFERENCE PASSIVE RESISTANCE STOP YESTERDAY'S AMENDMENT WILL NOT SOLVE MARRIAGE DIFFICULTY AS IT CONTEMPLATES REGISTRATION IN ADDITION RELIGIOUS CELEBRATION STOP THERE IS NO SYSTEM REGISTRATION INDIA STOP AMENDMENT AFTER TRANSVAAL SECTION QUOTED MY WIRE YESTERDAY WOULD MEET CASE STOP MARRIAGES RECOGNIZED AS LAWFUL INDIA SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED HERE SO FAR AS ONE WIFE IS CONCERNED STOP IT IS TRUE NO MENTION WAS MADE ABOUT SOUTH AFRICA-BORN INDIANS BECAUSE OF MY OVERSIGHT OF PARTICULAR SECTION CAPE ACT BUT SETTLEMENT IS BASED UPON MY LETTER[2] 22ND APRIL 1911 SPECIALLY MAINTAINING EXISTING RIGHTS AND GENERAL SMUTS' REPLY SAME DATE STOP COMMUNITY COULD NEVER CONTEMPLATE SURRENDER EXISTING RIGHTS STOP MEMBERS WHO SPOKE DURING DEBATE I FEAR SPOKE IN IGNORANCE BELIEVING THERE WAS NEW MOVE INTRODUCE SOUTH AFRICA-BORN INDIANS CAPE STOP THERE NEVER HAS BEEN ANY LARGE DESIRE NATAL-BORN INDIANS ENTER CAPE BUT IT IS INCONCEIVABLE THEY SHOULD BE DEPRIVED RIGHT POSSESSED BY THEM

[1] *Indian Opinion*, 7-6-1913, published this telegram as dated May 28. It is likely that it was drafted on May 27 and dispatched the following day.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 22-4-1911.

FOR YEARS STOP MATTER SPECIALLY MENTIONED HON'BLE GOKHALE STOP APART FROM REMOVAL RACIAL BAR ESSENCE COMPROMISE IS THAT EXISTING RIGHTS SHOULD BE MAINTAINED STOP REGARDING FREE STATE CLAIM THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO LEGAL RACIAL DISCRIMINATION AGAINST INDIANS AS TO IMMIGRATION STOP EDUCATED IMMIGRANTS SHOULD THEREFORE NOTBE LIABLE MAKE DECLARATION SECTION EIGHT CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE FREE STATE LAW STOP THIS POINT WAS CLEARLY BROUGHT OUT LAST YEAR'S CORRESPONDENCE [STOP] WITHOUT SEEING BILL AMENDED FORM IMPOSSIBLE SAY WHETHER OTHER POINTS SATISFACTORILY MET STOP IF BILL WILL TAKE TIME BEFORE BEING CONSIDERED BY SENATE AND IF MINISTER DESIRE MY PRESENCE IN ORDER FACILITATE DISCUSSION AND ARRIVE AT SETTLEMENT WILL BE PLEASED COME AND WAIT UPON HIM STOP PRAY ASSURE MINISTER MY EARNEST DESIRE IS ASSIST GOVERNMENT COME TO LASTING SOLUTION CONSISTENTLY WITH HONOUR MY COUNTRYMEN.[1]

GANDHI

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5795

[1] In a reply on May 29, *vide* Appendix "Telegram from Minister of Interior", 15-4-1913, the Minister held out no hope that Parliament would alter the provisions of the Bill on the points raised by Gandhiji. That the Government, however, was keen on averting a revival of passive resistance is borne out by the Governor-General's confidential despatch to the Colonial Office; *vide* Appendix "Governer-General's Cable to Colonial Office", 29-5-1913.

100. TELEGRAM TO MORRIS ALEXANDER

[PHOENIX,]
May 29, 1913

ADVOCATE ALEXANDER
PARLIAMENT
CAPE TOWN

THANKS WIRE[1] AM WIRING[2] SENATOR SCHREINER REGISTRATION INDIA SUPERFLUOUS AS INDIAN MAR-RIAGES PERFORMED WITH GREAT SOLEMNITY AND PROLONGED CEREMONIAL. DURING PROLONGED EXPERIENCE HAVE NOT KNOWN SINGLE INSTANCE UNDESIRABLE INDIAN WOMEN HAVING ENTERED SOUTH AFRICA.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the handwritten draft: S. N. 5802

[1] Dated May 28, it read: "Your wire. Have consulted with Senator Schreiner. Telegraph him what you suggest in absence of registration to prevent immigration of undesirable women. Why cannot Indian Government be petitioned to provide for registration."

[2] *Vide* the following item.

101. TELEGRAM TO SENATOR SCHREINER

[PHOENIX,]
May 29, 1913

SENATOR SCHREINER
PARLIAMENT
CAPE TOWN

ALEXANDER SUGGESTS MY WIRING WHAT I THINK WILL MEET CASE IN ABSENCE OF REGISTRATION MARRIAGES TO PREVENT ENTRY UNDESIRABLE WOMEN. THINK REGISTRATION INDIA SUPERFLUOUS BECAUSE INDIAN MARRIAGES CELEBRATED WITH GREAT SOLEMNITY AND PROLONGED CEREMONIAL. MOREOVER DANGER ENTRY UNDESIRABLE INDIAN WOMEN VERY REMOTE. DURING LONG EXPERIENCE HAVE NOT KNOWN SINGLE CASE OF SUCH INDIAN WOMEN HAVING ENTERED SOUTH AFRICA ALTHOUGH BEFORE SEARLE JUDGMENT INDIAN WOMEN ENTERED FREELY UPON HUSBANDS MERE VERBAL STATEMENT. AMENDMENT AS IT STANDS ENTIRELY USELESS FOR PROTECTION INDIAN WIVES.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the handwritten draft: S. N. 5803

102. TELEGRAM TO SENATOR SCHREINER

PHOENIX,
May 30, [*1913*]

SENATOR SCHREINER
CAPE TOWN

THANKS WIRE DID NOT COMMUNICATE EARLIER AS I HESITATED WORRY YOU UNLESS ABSOLUTELY OBLIGED. LETTERS EXCHANGED BETWEEN GEN. SMUTS MYSELF 22ND APRIL 1911 FORMED BASES PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT PUBLISHED 29TH APRIL 1911 "INDIAN OPINION". AM WIRING PARTY HAND YOU COPY PROBABLY OBTAINABLE "CAPE TIMES". OFFICE INTERIOR HAS FULL CORRESPONDENCE SEE ALSO IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT BLUE BOOK NO. C.D. 5579. DATE — MARCH 1911 PARTICULARLY PAGE SEVENTEENTH IN WHICH MR. HARCOURT TELEGRAPHED ANY SOLUTION WHICH PREJUDICED OR WEAKENED PRESENT POSITION OF INDIANS CAPE COLONY AND NATAL WOULD NOT BE ACCEPTABLE TO HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT. MR. FISCHER HAS TELEGRAPHED TO ME TAKING UP IMPOSSIBLE POSITION OF SAYING SOUTH AFRICA-BORN INDIANS ARE TO BE DEPRIVED OF RIGHT EXISTING UNDER PRESENT CAPE ACT OF ENTERING CAPE WITHOUT TEST. AS TO MARRIAGES THERE IS AMPLE REGISTRATION BY PRIESTS LIKE KAJEES AND CERTIFICATES FROM HEADMEN OF DIFFERENT CASTES COULD ALWAYS BE PRODUCED. MAGISTRATES INDIA ARE NOT AUTHORIZED OR OBLIGED GRANT CERTIFICATES SUCH AS YOU MENTION. IN RECENT CASE BOMBAY MAGISTRATE DECLARED INABILITY GRANT SUCH CERTIFICATE FOR ABOVE REASONS. AMENDMENT SHOULD REQUIRE EVIDENCE SUCH AS IS OBTAINABLE AND RECOGNIZED IN PLACE OF CELEBRATION MARRIAGE SUCH IS CLAUSE MARRIAGE

LAW TRANSVAAL 1871 REFERRED BY ME PREVIOUS TELEGRAM[1].

GANDHI

From a photostat of the handwritten draft: S. N. 5806

103. TELEGRAM TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR

[PHOENIX,]
May 30, 1913

INTERIOR
CAPE TOWN

WHILST I BEG TO THANK MINISTER FOR EXHAUSTIVE REPLY[2], FEEL BOUND RESPECTFULLY TO POINT OUT THAT AMENDMENTS SO FAR CARRIED DO NOT SETTLE OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS. AM CONVINCED THAT THE MARRIAGE AMENDMENT REQUIRING AS IT DOES THE IMPOSSIBLE CONDITION OF REGISTRATION IS TOTALLY USELESS. IF THEREFORE GOVERNMENT CANNOT SEE THEIR WAY TO REMOVE REGISTRATION CLAUSE IT WOULD CERTAINLY BE MORE HONEST TO WITHDRAW THE AMENDMENT. AS FOR SOUTH AFRICA-BORN INDIANS IF ORIGINAL DRAFT HAD RESPECTED EXISTING RIGHTS NO QUESTION WOULD HAVE ARISEN AT THE CAPE. THERE WAS CERTAINLY NO PUBLIC DEMAND FOR A UNION IMMIGRATION BILL. INDIAN DIFFICULTY COULD BE MET BY MERE AMENDMENT OF THE TRANSVAAL IMMIGRATION LAW. THEN INDIANS COULD NOT RAISE CAPE, NATAL, FREE STATE POINTS WHICH THEY ARE BOUND TO DO NOW WHEN CONSIDERING UNION BILL. BUT IF EUROPEAN PUBLIC OR GOVERNMENT DESIRE PASSIVE RESISTERS TO SELL EXISTING RIGHTS OF THEIR BRETHREN FOR GAINING FREEDOM FROM IMPRISONMENT OR WORSE, THEY MUST RESPECTFULLY DECLINE TO

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Schreiner and Campbell", 27-5-1913.
[2] *Vide* Appendix "Telegram from Minister of Interior", 15-4-1913.

ACCEPT A BARGAIN SO DISHONOURABLE TO THEM. PRESENT BILL NOT AN ORDINARY BILL WHERE PARLIAMENT MAY LEGISLATE WITH FREEDOM. GOVERNMENT IF THEY WISH TO CARRY OUT TERMS OF THE SETTLEMENT CAN ONLY BRING IN A MEASURE CONSISTENT WITH ITS TERMS AND ARE IN MY HUMBLE OPINION, IN HONOUR, BOUND TO WITHDRAW IT, IF PARLIAMENT WILL NOT ACCEPT IT. I TRUST THAT MINISTER WILL EXCUSE THE FRANKNESS WITH WHICH I HAVE TAKEN THE LIBERTY TO EXPRESS MY SENTIMENTS.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the handwritten draft with corrections in Gand hiji's hand: S. N. 5807

104. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

Vaishakh Vad 10 [*May 30, 1913*][1]

CHI. JAMNADAS[2]

Once again, I have not been able to write to you as I had hoped to, so busy I keep. Since I have had two letters from you, I write this. I shall not be able to write much, though.

I find no harsh words in your letter.

I don't see how you can join the struggle, since neither Maganlal[3] nor anyone else from here can go [to India]. Chhaganlal[4] or Maganlal will write to you about all these matters. I should certainly like you to be with us. But how can we always get what we want?

I return herewith the relevant part of your letter, with your questions serially numbered, so that I have less to write and yet you

[1] This appears to have been written after Jamnadas Gandhi left South Africa for India in December 1912.

[2] Son of Khushalchand Gandhi, Gandhiji's cousin

[3] Addressee's elder brothers

[4] *ibid*.

could follow [the answers].

l. [If there is no God, how can there be *moksha*? What is the meaning of *moksha*?][1]

To ask how there can be *moksha* if there is no God is to fail to understand *moksha*. We can grasp only a part of the meaning of *moksha*; the rest must be experienced; it cannot be put into words. We have no organs with which to describe it. In so far as we can understand, it means deliverance from having to assume an endless succession of various bodies, and from the resultant suffering. There is no need, however, to deny the existence of God. We may try to define God in accordance with the limits of our knowledge.

At any rate, God is no dispenser of rewards and punishments, nor is He an active agent. But, if one *atman*[2] can be conceived after the embodied *atmans* have become free, it is God. He is no material thing, but pure consciousness. This is also the view ofthe *advaitavadins*[3]. At no time and in no circumstances do we need a kinglike God. By thinking that we do, we put a limit to the power of the *atman*, which is infinite.

2. The same distorted meanings, and as many of them, have been and are being read in the Bible as in any other holy book. Those who level charges against Tolstoy are ignorant. I do not know the truth about Marie Corelli[4]. But to describe her as a witch is sheer ignorance.

3. [What should I do if, though I would not injure a cow and have never done so, I am attacked by one even when I am not in her way? What could be the reason for my being thus attacked?]

If we are attacked by a cow, it must be because we fear cows and other creatures and so the fault is ours. All fear is of the nature of a moral weakness and, so long as we are subject to it, we shall always have to face such misfortunes. While we fear cows, we should take care not to stand in the way of any. If accidentally we find ourselves doing so, we should put up with the injuries. By hitting the cow, we shall do

[1] The question have been supplied from *Mahatma Gandhijina Patro*.

[2] The Self, not identifiable with any aspect of human individuality

[3] Those who hold the view that the *atman*, the Self in man, is not distinct from the *Brahman*, the Absolute

[4] (1864-1924); celebrated novelist

no service to ourselves or to her.

4. [How can one say that a tiger will not kill a man living in his den without fear?]

A tiger will never eat up a man who, on occasion, lives in his den without any fear whatever. In what circumstances he might do so, would need to be considered.

5. I do not in the least approve of the European custom in regard to marriages. When a young man is to be married, wisdom lies in the parents choosing [the bride]. This is true for any young man, even a man of 25 or older. Of course, the parents will consult him.

6. [Did or did not Dharmaraja[1] commit a sin in declaring that Ashvatthama was killed? Why did Lord Krishna advise him to say this?]

The only lesson I draw is that even a Dharmaraja may stumble, so that we too should be on our guard. If we believe that a Shri Krishna in the body advised a Yudhisthira in the body, there is no harm in conceding that Shri Krishna was not perfect. If we look upon Shri Krishna as the Supreme Being, the entire episode will have to be interpreted symbolically. One will then read in it a meaning which accords with one's moral principles. The *shastras*[2] need not be regarded as infallible. We will never go wrong if, having got hold of the inviolable principles of morality, we interpret the *shastras* in the light of these principles and then are guided by them.

7. [Is it necessary that there should be only one religion for the whole world?]

Personally, I think the world as a whole will never have, and need not have, a single religion.

8. There is no such rule that all wholesome foods can be taken irrespective of one's condition. Food which is wholesome for a labourer cannot be so for a tubercular patient.

I have no more time now, but this answers one of your letters.

[1] In the battle of Kurukshetra, Yudhishthira, eldest of the Pandava heroes in the *Mahabharata* and known for his absolute truthfulness, was prevailed upon to say within Dronacharya's hearing: "Ashvatthama is killed." Ashvatthama was the name of Dronacharya's son and also that of an elephant. In fact, only the elephant had been slain. Dronacharya, who had proved invincible as leader of the Kaurava host, laid down his arms on hearing that his son was dead.

[2] Holy books other than those regarded as revelation

You have committed many grammatical mistakes in the letter to Miss Schlesin. I asked Chhaganlal to keep a copy. If he has done so, I shall correct and return it.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5646 Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

105. THE OUTLOOK

It is difficult to state definitely the position that now faces our countrymen under Mr. Fischer's Bill. It must be admitted that some amendments (we refuse to call them concessions) in the right direction have, undoubtedly, been made. But much more must be done if there is to be no revival of passive resistance, and if there is to be even a bare fulfilment of the terms of the provisional settlement of 1911. Not a single existing right can be surrendered. Passive resisters may not—dare not—buy peace and freedom from imprisonment at the cost of the rights of others. And yet the right of South Africa-born Indians to enter the Cape, which they possess today in virtue of the Cape Immigration Act of 1906, is being taken away by the Bill. South Africa-born Indians, i.e., in practice, the Natal-born Indians, are not pining to go to the Cape. They rarely evinced any such desire throughout all these years. But they will certainly not give up on that account the right they possess of being able to enter the Cape. Nor can passive resisters be party to a Bill which deprives them of such a right.

That Mr. Fischer has accepted the marriage amendment, moved by Mr. Advocate Alexander, shows, let us assume, a desire on his part to meet us on the point. But, through no fault of Mr. Alexander's, the amendment has a fatal defect in it. It requires re-registration at the place of celebration. Mr. Alexander does not know that there is no *system* of registration of marriages in India. It is, therefore, not possible to produce registration certificates. This impossible requirement makes the amendment useless for the very purpose for which it is

intended.

Nor is registration necessary as a safeguard against the introduction of undesirable women. In the first place, the amendment requires the marriages to be celebrated in accordance with the faiths of the respective parties. Indian marriages are accompanied with great solemnity and elaborate ceremonial, lasting for days, and in some cases even months. Indeed, there is much greater publicity and ceremonial about ordinary Indian marriages than there is in the publication of banns that precede European Christian marriages. This in itself acts as a perfect safeguard better than any system of registration that could be devised. In the second place, it is a well-known fact that there is hardly a case on record during the past thirty years or more of an undesirable Indian woman having been introduced, although Indian women have entered until lately, on the mere verbal statement of their husbands. It should, therefore, cause no difficulty to remove the registration clause during the progress of the Bill in the Senate.

And if this marriage question is settled, and no other existing rights are taken away, and if the Free State difficulty is satisfactorily solved, there will remain the one question of the existing right of the South Africa-born Indians. We can only hope that the Senate will rise to the occasion, the Government will see the necessity of fulfilling a solemn compact, and that this right will be restored. But, if it is not, passive resisters will fight, we have no doubt, on that single issue.

Indian Opinion, 31-5-1913

106. MUNIEN'S CASE[1]

The evidence in this case and the cruel sentence passed by the Verulam Magistrate were reported by us a fortnight ago in these columns. Thanks to the sympathy of Sir David Hunter, the case became the subject matter of a question by him in the House of Assembly. Mr. Sauer gave a chill, unsympathetic and haughty reply to Sir David's very pertinent question. Readers can see elsewhere both the question and the answer, and judge for themselves. It is plain to us that Mr. Sauer gave the answer he did because the matter was one that concerned only a poor, neglected ex-indentured man, belonging to a race that is unrepresented in the House that Mr. Sauer and his colleagues dominate, and that is labouring under a prejudice which makes it possible for anybody to heap insults upon it with impunity. Had the case been that of a European, Mr. Sauer would not have dared in a most careless manner to shirk inquiry, profess and glory in his ignorance of the case and consider Magistrates' decisions above criticism by the Legislature, which, after all, is the body finally responsible for the well-being of the meanest subject of the State.

But truly does pride go before destruction and haughtiness before a fall. Hardly had Mr. Sauer finished his heartless reply when Justice Hathorn began his review of the Magistrate's action and considered it to be so irregular and illegal that he quashed the conviction against Munien and awarded him costs of appeal. The Magistrate, who was more jealous of obedience to his orders than of the welfare of those who had the misfortune to appear before him, gave it as a reason for his vindictive judgment that Munien was punished as an example to others, so that his orders might be obeyed by them. We suppose Mr. Sauer's cynicism will permit him even now to defend the Magistrate and his own action in shirking investigation.

Indian Opinion, 31-5-1913

[1] Munien, an Indian, was charged for default of payment of £3 tax arrears. He was sentenced to 14 days' imprisonment with hard labour for contempt of court even after the amount due was paid.

107. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [*-XXII*]

4. FEVER AND ITS REMEDIES

Having considered the principal remedies, we shall now turn to a few specific diseases and in the process we shall get some idea of other forms of treatment which do not call for separate chapters.

We use the term fever for any rise in body temperature but English doctors have distinguished many varieties of it and written big volumes on these, ending up in sheer confusion. As shown in these chapters, and according to the popular view of the matter, one remedy is enough for most types of fever. I have had experience of a single remedy applied in all cases of fever ranging from simple fever to the bubonic plague and I believe the results have been quite satisfactory. In 1904, there was an epidemic of the plague among our people.[1] Twenty-three persons were attacked by it. In twenty-four hours, twenty-one cases proved fatal and only two could be removed to hospital. Of these, one survived and he happened to be the only one who could be treated with the mud pack. We cannot, of course, conclude from this that the patient was saved by the earth-treatment, but it can at any rate be maintained that the latter did him no harm. All the victims had inflammation of the lungs and fever. They had become unconscious. A mud poultice was applied to the chest of one of them. He was bringing up blood and phlegm. After taking him to hospital, I learned from the doctor that he had previously been given very little food and that too only milk.

Fever has its origin generally in some stomach trouble. The first step to be taken therefore is fasting. The notion that a weak person or one suffering from fever will be weakened by fasting is entirely mistaken. We saw in an earlier chapter that only that food is useful which can be digested and converted into blood. The rest merely remains in the stomach like a lump of lead, as we have seen in earlier chapters. The digestive system of one who has fever becomes extremely slack. The tongue becomes dark or coated and the lips are dry.

[1] *Vide* "Plague in Johannesburg", 9-4-1904.

What can a person digest in such a condition? Giving him food is bound to raise his temperature. By stopping all intake of food, we give the stomach a chance to do its work. The fast, therefore, must be continued for at least a day or longer. Kuhne baths should be administered during and after the fast. At least two should be taken every day. In the intervals between baths, a mud pack should be applied to the abdomen. If there is headache or the head feels very hot, a pack should be applied to the head also. The patient should be adequately covered but kept in the open air. The fast should be broken with orange juice added to warm or cold water. Juice should be squeezed out of the orange and strained and then hot or cold water added as required. As far as possible, sugar should not be added. This mixture of orange juice and water will have an excellent effect. If a patient can take lime juice and water without his teeth being set on edge, he should be given that. For the next meal he can take half or a whole banana, well mashed. One spoon of olive oil and half a spoon of lime juice should be added to the mashed banana and given to the patient after mixing them well. If he feels thirsty, he should be given water, which has been boiled and cooled, or lime juice and water. Unboiled water should never be given. Cold water must always be previously boiled. Methods of purifying water have been described in an earlier chapter which should be referred to. The patient should wear only a minimum of clothing and this should be frequently changed. As he is to be covered with a sheet, very little clothing is necessary with this treatment. Some persons suffering even from such a severe illness as typhoid fever have been known to recover and, what is more, they now enjoy excellent health. Quinine brings about an apparent cure but the patient suffers from side effects. Quinine is believed to be particularly effective for patients suffering from "malaria fever", but in fact they are rarely found to be entirely free of it, whereas I have seen even malaria patients completely cured by nature treatment.

Much reliance is placed by-others on a milk diet during fever, but my experience has been that milk taken in the early stages of fever does actual harm. It is, moreover, difficult to digest. If necessary, it should be given along with wheat coffee or boiled with a little quantity of rice flour and water. But in cases of obstinate or high

fever, it cannot be given even in this form. At such times I have found lime juice mixed in water to be remarkably beneficial. When the patient's tongue has become clear, the banana diet should be started, the banana being prepared in the manner described earlier. If the patient is constipated, rather than a purgative he should be given an enema of hot water mixed with borax to clear his bowels. Olive oil in the diet will thereafter help to keep the intestines clear.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 31-5-1913

108. STATEMENT ON IMMIGRATION BILL[1]

[DURBAN,
June 2, 1913]

If the Bill is not amended in several material particulars I feel that a revival of passive resistance is inevitable. The provisional settlement of 1911 contains two principal conditions to be fulfilled by the Government, namely, that existing rights should be maintained intact in any legislation that might be passed in order to satisfy the Indian claims, and that Transvaal Act No. 2 of 1907, subject to reservation of the rights of minors, should be repealed, and there should be no racial bar introduced in any such legislation. Both of these conditions are violated by the Bill even in its amended form. Our claim that existing rights should be maintained is fortified by a declaration of the Imperial Government in their despatch dated October 7, 1910, in which it is specially laid down that "any solution (of the Transvaal controversy) which prejudiced or weakened the present position of Indians in the Cape Colony and Natal would not be acceptable to His Majesty's Government," and Mr. Harcourt emphasized the point once more in his telegram of February 15, 1911, in discussing the Immigration Bill of that year. That existing

[1] Lord Gladstone, Governor-General, sent from Cape Town a copy of this statement to the Secretary of State for the Colonies on June 4. It was also published in the *Cape Times*, 3-6-1913 and in *Indian Opinion*, 7-6-1913, along with editorial comments from *The Natal Mercury*.

rights are jeopardized is clear from a consideration of the following facts:

South Africa-born Indians have, under the present Cape Immigration Act, the unconditional right to enter that Province. This right is now being taken away. If the Bill is not adequately amended, this deprivation will constitute a very serious grievance, and passive resisters will lose all title to respect if, for the sake of avoiding the hardships of gaol or any other penalty to which they might be liable, they were to accept such a bargain. I do not know what other fatal defects there may be in the Bill as amended. The question of domicile, for instance, may have been left in a most unsatisfactory position, and so also that of the right of appeal to the Supreme Court.

The marriage amendment moved by Mr. Alexander, and accepted by the Minister will, I fear, frustrate the very purpose with which Mr. Alexander moved it in such a public-spirited manner. It requires the fulfilment of an impossible condition, namely, registration of marriage at the place of its celebration, in addition to proof of due performance of religious rites. There is, however, no system of State registration of marriage in India. As a matter of fact, a recent arrival from India endeavoured to obtain a certificate of marriage from a magistrate at Bombay, who refused to issue it, on the ground that he was not authorized by law to do so. Nor is this requirement necessary for any purpose whatsoever. The religious celebration is accompanied by so much solemnity, ceremonial and publicity, that it is the best possible safeguard against collusive connexions. Finally, the strictness with which the marriage question has been dealt with by the Government is quite unwarranted by past experience. During my 20 years' experience in South Africa, I have never known of the entry under the Immigration Law of a single Indian woman belonging to the undesirable class.

The second condition of the settlement appears also to have been broken by the Government in that a declaration is to be required of such Indian immigrants as may possibly be admitted into the Free State, it not being required of European immigrants. The declaration in question will be highly offensive and wantonly irritating, because, in the case of an educated Indian, who alone could enter that Province,

it would be wholly unnecessary. It is merely a statement that the declarant shall not hold landed property, trade, or farm there, disabilities to which he is subject whether he makes the declaration or not. It will be remembered that it was the Free State difficulty that came in the way of a permanent settlement on the two previous occasions.[1] Mr. Fischer cannot now settle the controversy by ignoring it as if it were not of the most vital importance. One can only hope that the Senate will perform its duty as a vigilance chamber and the guardian of unrepresented interests, by insisting upon amendment of the measure, so as to fulfil both the letter and the spirit of the provisional settlement.

The Natal Mercury, 3-6-1913

109. TELEGRAM TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR

[DURBAN,
After *June 5, 1913*]

TO
THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR AND SEVERAL MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

I OBSERVE THAT THE £3 TAX IS TO BE REMOVED ONLY FROM INDIAN WOMEN SHOWING, I PRESUME, THAT THERE IS NO PRESENT INTENTION TO REMOVE IT FROM MEN. THIS WILL CAUSE THE GREATEST SHOCK TO THOUSANDS INDIANS WHO DURING MR. GOKHALE'S VISIT WERE MADE TO BELIEVE THAT THE TAX WOULD BE REMOVED FROM ALL MALES AND FEMALES.[2] THE MOST RESPONSIBLE MEN IN NATAL MET MR. GOKHALE. I AM NOT AWARE THAT ANY OF THEM DEFENDED THE TAX OR OBJECTED TO ITS REMOVAL. I HOPE THAT EVEN AT THIS LATE

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 16-3-1911.

[2] This was during his visit to South Africa in November 1912. When the legis-lation to repeal £3 tax was being discussed, there was no suggestion to restrict the relief to women.

HOUR GOVERNMENT AND PARLIAMENT WILL SEE THE WISDOM OF REMOVING THE WHOLE TAX AND RENDER JUSTICE WHICH IS ALREADY OVERDUE.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5809

110. THE BILL

The correspondence between Mr. Fischer and Mr. Gandhi, published elsewhere,[1] shows clearly that Mr. Fischer had fully intended to deprive us of almost every right that we have been enjoying under the existing Immigration Laws of the different Provinces. The only right that was to be left to us was for those, who are at present physically residing in the respective Provinces, to live confined in their Provinces with little chance of being able to re-enter if they left their Province. Thanks, however, to the stubborn opposition from the Unionist Members and the fear of passive resistance, some slight modifications have been introduced into the measure. We wish that the Unionist Members had retained their firmness to the last. But Mr. Fischer successfully put them off the scent by telling them that the Imperial Government had already approved of the will. But the correspondence makes it clear that, in spite of the amendments, the Bill offers no settlement of the Indian question, that it leaves many big gaps and that, if they are not filled up, passive resistance is sure to revive. Mr. Fischer must consider us to be a perfectly stupid community, if he thinks that, with vested rights taken away, we are going to accept his measure. The threat to withdraw the marriage amendment, if we do not accept his measure, is unworthy of a responsible Minister. Either the amendment is intended to remedy a fault or it is useless. If it is so intended, the attitude of the community cannot affect the necessity of the amendment. But it is perfectly true that the amendment is quite useless and it would be more honest to tell us that our marriages are not to be recognized than

[1] *Vide* letters and telegrams to the Minister and the Secretary for the Interior, 1-4-1913; 9-4-1913; 15-4-1913; 27-5-1913; 27-5-1913 & 30-5-1913.

to mislead us, by an ineffective amendment, into believing that our wishes are being respected. This marriage difficulty, however, is only one of the many defects in the Bill. And, unless the Senate is prepared to adopt heroic measures, the Bill, which is supposed to have been designed to satisfy passive resisters, will simply compel them to revive the struggle, cost what it may.

Indian Opinion, 7-6-1913

111. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [*-XXIII*]

5. CONSTIPATION, SPRUE, DYSENTERY, PILES

It will certainly appear strange to most readers that four diseases are considered together in this chapter. But they are, in fact, closely related to one another and our cures for them, which require no medicines, are common to all. When the intestines are heavily loaded, some people, because of their peculiar constitution, become constipated. That is, they do not pass stools regularly and in proper quantity and have to strain. If this goes on for a long time, they begin to pass blood. This results sometimes in the rectum becoming flaccid and sometimes in piles. Still others suddenly develop diarrhoea. If the motions are numerous continuing during all hours at short intervals and in small quantities, the condition is known as sprue. Some have dysentery in which mucus is passed and there is griping.

All these patients suffer from lack of appetite, look pale, become weak, have offensive breath and a coated tongue. Some have headaches or develop other ailments. Constipation is so common that hundreds of medicines and powders have been invented for it. Mother Seagle's Syrup, fruit salt, etc., are intended chiefly to cureconstipation and thousands come to harm through them, since they are apparently effective. Any ordinary *hakim* or doctor will tell us that the root cause of constipation is indigestion and will also add that constipation will disappear if the causes of indigestion are removed. The more honest among us freely admit that patients want to shake off the disease without shaking off their own bad habits, and hence they are driven to

prescribing powders and decoctions. Advertisements nowadays actually announce that those who take the medicines in question will not need to change their diet or other habits; they will be cured by the medicine alone! Those who have been following these chapters must have realized that such advertisements are fraudulent. The effect produced by a purgative is always bad. Though it may remove constipation, it will, however mild it be, give rise to other poisons in the body. Having taken a purge, if one proceeds to change one's bad habits so that purgatives will not again be necessary, one may perhaps derive some benefit from it. Those, however, who continue with their bad habits arc bound to get some other ailment even if they are cured of constipation or sprue.

We shall now consider remedies for these four diseases. The first is for the patient to reduce his diet. Heavy foods, those prepared with excessive ghee, sugar and milk kept boiling over a long time, should be eschewed. If he has any addictions like smoking, drinking, hemp-taking, etc., he must give them up. If he is in the habit of eating white bread, he should give it up. Tea, coffee and cocoa should be given up. The diet should consist mainly of fresh fruits, together with olive oil.

Treatment should begin with a 36-hour fast. During this time and later, mud packs should be applied to the abdomen on retiring and one or two Kuhne baths should be taken daily. The patient should walk at least two hours a day. Anyone following this regimen is bound to benefit. I have actually seen severe cases of diarrhoea, constipation, dysentery, and also of severe and chronic piles, cured in this way. With regard to piles, it is necessary to insist that, as long as mucus or blood is being passed, no food is to be taken. When the patient is in a position to take food, he should have orange juice filtered and added to boiling water. In this way, the worst case of dysentery can be cured in the shortest time without harming the patient. If dysentery is accompanied by severe griping, the abdomen should be fomented with a bottle filled with very hot water or with a heated brick. As in all illnesses, the patient needs fresh air here too.

The following fruits are regarded as especially beneficial in constipation: figs, French plums, muscatel raisins, large grapes, black

grapes, green grapes and oranges. One should not, however, imagine from this that these fruits should be eaten even when one is not hungry. When there is griping or a bad taste in the mouth, even these fruits can be harmful. When food is needed, these fruits will be specially beneficial in constipation, that is all that the statement above should be understood to mean.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 7-6-1913

112. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

PHOENIX,
NATAL,
June 7, 1913

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

I thoroughly understood why there was no letter from you. The cause of it grieved me much and I wished I was with you as your nurse. I am glad that you are much better now. India as a whole will never understand you fully and your energy being unapproachable excites jealousy. May you bear it well with a light heart.

As your quack physician, I shall certainly want to know all about your health, diet, etc.

Polak I know has been writing to you regularly. I do not therefore wish to inflict a long letter on you. If you have the time, you will doubtless read this week's I[*ndian*] O[*pinion*] which reproduces the whole of the correspondence I have carried on with Mr. Fischer. The Unionists put up a spirited fight at first but they weakened in the end. Fischer's information that the Imperial Government had accepted the measure as it stood did the trick. I can hardly believe that they could ever accept the Bill as drafted. If you have followed the debate as printed in the pages of *I. O*., you will have noticed that your name was very freely used by several speakers and that mostly to the advantage of our cause. Yes, the visit is bound to produce far-reaching results in many ways.

The Bill has been read a second time in the Senate. There may be some alterations made but I do not think there is enough fight left in W. P. Schreiner to carry all the amendments that are necessary to prevent a revival of the struggle. Have I told you that Mrs. Gandhi, Mrs. Doctor and the wives of Chhaganlal and Maganlal are joining the struggle? Pray do not disclose this just yet. Of course there are many men at the settlement who are joining this time. If the struggle comes, as seems almost certain, my return to India must stand indefinitely postponed.

Polak has now opened office. I have no anxiety about Ritch's expenses. And Polak will presently find his own. The London Committee remittance has been stopped since March last. So that the only burden is *I. O*. and if the struggle revives, Medh's[1] family will have to be supported. Apart from this, there will be only the incidental current expenditure. Medh's I would rather not beg in South Africa. But the other expenses we either find here or do without. I am collecting steadily the amount to be placed at your disposal for the London Committee which I hope you will reorganize. If there is any deficit in the £600 to be collected for 3 years' existence of the Committee, I have a promise from our friend Rustomjee[2] that he will find it. I think that if anyone is reliable in S[outh] A[frica], he certainly is. That reminds me of your cap and umbrella which I hope were safely delivered to you.

Kallenbach is here for a few days.

Hoping that this will find you in good health,

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the handwritten original: C. W. 927 Courtesy: Servants of India Society

[1] Surendrarai Medh, a satyagrahi

[2] Parsee Rustomjee, a leading Indian merchant of Natal and a satyagrahi.

113. STATEMENT ON £3 TAX[1]

[DURBAN,
Before *June 11, 1913*]

I observe that the Government propose to ask Parliament to remove the tax only on women. This, it is to be presumed, shows that they have no intention at present of removing it from men. Mr. Gokhale met most of the public men of Natal at Newcastle, Dundee, Maritzburg, Durban, Isipingo, and elsewhere. I had the honour of being present at all these meetings. And I do not remember a single public man having defended the tax or objected to its removal. Mr. Smuts stated the other day that he was to consult the Natal members of Parliament. If, therefore, now the tax is not removed from both males and females, the presumption will be that the Natal members do not desire to see men released from the burden. In my humble opinion the honour of Natal is involved in this matter. I can recall many a Town Hall meeting held for less important purposes. I am sure that Natal holds its honour dearer than the navigability of its beautiful harbour. Will not the public men of Durban, at a Town Hall meeting, demand from Parliament removal of this iniquitous impost? All, be they never so hostile to Indian aspirations or to my countrymen's presence in this Province, may join hands in overdue justice being done, and the fame of Natal being preserved.

I well remember the great meetings of Indians which Mr. Gokhale addressed at Lord's Ground, Isipingo, and, as the Hon. Marshall Campbell's guest, at Mount Edgecombe.[2] Fully 10,000 indentured and ex-indentured Indians were present at Mr. Campbell's estate. Over 5,000 were present at Lord's. They were assured that, as Mr. Gokhale had met with no opposition from the Europeans to the removal of the tax, it would very probably be removed at an early date. Subsequently, after his interview with the Ministers, he declared that he had received assurances that the tax would be removed. This

[1] This was reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 14-6-1913.
[2] *Vide* "Diary, 1912"

information was passed on to these thousands of helpless men and women. One man in Verulam had the "effrontery" to believe that the tax had already been repealed, and for that crime was sentenced to be imprisoned with hard labour by the Verulam Magistrate.[1] What will these men think when they hear that, though their women will at last be free, they themselves will have to continue to pay?

The Natal Mercury, 11-6-1913

114. STATEMENT ON IMMIGRATION BILL

DURBAN,
June 13, 1913

If Mr. Harcourt is correctly reported,[2] his answer is astounding. If he has seen the Bill in its original form, it will be impossible to avoid the conviction that the Imperial Government have thrown the Indians overboard and have gone back upon their own despatches in order to please the Union Government. I shall, however, hope that they have not seen the Bill, and that they have no first-hand knowledge of the full effect of the amendments made. It is perfectly clear, on the other hand, that the Union Government have not only committed a breach of trust towards the Indians, violated the settlement of 1911 and belied their assurances to Mr. Gokhale, but instead of honestly telling the Imperial Government that they do not intend to carry out the terms of the settlement, or to respect the wishes of the Imperial Government as expressed in so many despatches, they have actually deceived the Government.

There is no evidence in the original draft of the Bill of the slightest desire to meet the anxiety of the authorities in Downing Street.

It is a wilful misstatement of facts to say that racial differentiation has been removed by this Bill even in regard to immigration. Indeed, Mr. Fischer's telegram to me completely bears out my remark. The Free State difficulty has been, since 1911, a racial dif-

[1] *Vide* "Munien's Case", 31-5-1913.
[2] The reference is to his statement in the House of commons on June 11.

ficulty. Mr. Fischer has not surmounted it, and he says distinctly in his telegram that he will meet it by administrative action. If such a proposal could have been accepted in 1911, the Bill of that year would have become law, but it could not be then and it cannot be now.

The Union Government, if they have any sense of honour, are bound to remove the racial inequality before the law, and in any measure passed to bring about that end, they are bound not to disturb existing rights. They have failed to carry out either part of the compact.

Mr. Harcourt seems also to be under the impression that the few amendments that have been made in the Bill are due to the initiative of the Union Government or their desire to do justice. They have been wrung from them by an Opposition in Parliament which was as creditable as it was unexpected by the Ministry. Indeed, had the Opposition been only a little stronger and more consistent we should now have a law in spite of the Union Government, that would have made final the provisional settlement of 1911.

As it is, unless the Royal sanction is withheld from the Bill, and fresh assurances given to the community that the terms of the settlement of 1911 will be entirely carried out, and that the marriage difficulty will be removed, passive resistance, this time both by men and women, will be taken up. The Union Government may be, indeed are, indifferent whether it is or is not, but I have faith enough in this sovereign remedy for all the ills that the civic and political life of a community is heir to know that, if we are true to ourselves, it must succeed.The latest proposal of the Government to remove the £3 tax only from women demonstrates beyond doubt their consistently hostile attitude and bad faith towards the Indian community.

The Cape Argus, 13-6-1913

115. THE BILL

The Bill may now become the law of the land any moment and Indians may find themselves deprived on the 1st August and, thereafter, of several rights which they have hitherto enjoyed. It is not possible to speak with certainty of the amendments so far carried or of the full effect of the Bill. Mr. W. P. Schreiner, who put up a strenuous fight on our behalf, was able to secure a modification of the marriage amendment and, in spite of Mr. Fischer's threat that he would not only not withdraw the registration clause but that if we did not accept the Bill in full, he might take out the whole amendment and restore the original draft, the registration clause seems to have been omitted. What the new clause in its latest form is one cannot judge without having the full text.

But even if the marriage difficulty is over, there is no doubt that the Bill leaves much that is offensive enough to compel passive resisters to resist it. It appears to leave the question of jurisdiction of the Supreme Court in a very unsatisfactory state. It deprives Indians resident in Natal of the usual facility with which they have hitherto been able to re-enter it. They may not now, as of yore, be able to do so on the strength of three years' previous residence in Natal. Nor may indentured Indians who may have paid the £3 tax be allowed to claim the right of residence therein. South Africa-born Indians may not *now* enter the Cape under the Cape Act. The Free State difficulty remains as it was before. It therefore appears that this is a Bill, resistance to which is a duty and compliance a crime.

It is remarkable, however, that the Bill, though avowedly an anti-Indian Bill, had a stormy passage through both the Houses and that concessions, such as they are, were wrung from an unwilling and hard-hearted Minister. In the Senate, on two occasions the voting on certain clauses resulted in a tie. This is a good augury for the future and speaks well for the effect of passive resistance. It has quickened the spirit of in inquiry into Indian matters on the part of a large number of members.

But, if some members of the Union Parliament have spoken

zealously in our behalf, the Imperial Government seem to have neglected us entirely and wholly accepted the Union Government's view. Indeed, so far as they are concerned, they appear, incredible as it may seem, to have accepted the Bill as it was originally published, thus going back upon their own despatches. If Mr. Harcourt is correctly reported, he appears to believe that the Union Government are desirous of doing us full justice. This opinion certainly could not be based upon the original Draft Bill nor upon what happened in Parliament. The original draft could not well be more drastic; it was so considered by the South African Press; the attitude of the Minister in charge of the Bill could not well be more hostile.

But we need not feel sore if the Imperial Government have betrayed us and neglected their trust. They are more concerned with pleasing the Union Government who represent an infinitesimal but a boisterous European portion of the Empire, than with pleasing India which, though supposed to be the brightest diadem in the British crown, represents a people who are long suffering and who do not require to be pleased, much less pampered. Our final court of appeal must be ourselves. If we are true to ourselves, no doubt others will be true to us, as soon as they discover the fact, but no sooner.

Indian Opinion, 14-6-1913

116. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [*-XXIV*]

6. INFECTIOUS DISEASES: SMALLPOX—I

We have discussed a few things about fever and some other ailments. It is not intended in these chapters to go into detail with regard to all diseases. Indeed, it is unnecessary to write individually of each disease when both cause and treatment are common to all of them. Infectious diseases like smallpox also arise from the same cause and it is not really necessary, therefore, to write separately about them either. It will not be wrong, however, to devote one chapter to smallpox.

An outbreak of smallpox creates such a scare that hundreds of superstitions connected with it are current. In India, it is actually ascribed to a particular goddess and countless men and women take vows in order to be cured of the disease. Like other illnesses, smallpox arises from polluted blood, which in its turn originates in fever of the intestines. The body throws out accumulated poisons by way of eruptions. If this view is correct, there is no need whatever to be afraid of smallpox. If it was uniformly infectious, then all those who freely touch the body of the smallpox patient would catch the disease. But we know that this does not happen. There is no need, therefore, to dread smallpox, though, of course, we should take precautions against it. We cannot say definitely that it is not infectious. If anyone pre-disposed to the disease touches a smallpox patient, he will certainly get it. That is why, whenever smallpox breaks out, a number of people fall a prey to it. Because the infection is caught in this manner through contact, people are infected with cowpox and misled into believing that the cowpox infection will induce smallpox in a mild, harmless form and so prevent an actual attack of smallpox. The process consists in first infecting a cow's udder with smallpox and then introducing the vaccine taken from that part into our body through the skin, in order to induce smallpox in us and thus protect us against an attack in an acute form. At first it was believed that one vaccination of this sort would provide life-long immunity. But on experience it was found that even those who had been so vaccinated

did not remain immune against infection for a very long time. It has been concluded, accordingly, that after the lapse of a certain period, it is necessary to repeat vaccination. Nowadays, the rule is to vaccinate the entire population wherever an epidemic breaks out, irrespective of whether the people had been previously vaccinated or not. One thus comes across persons who have been vaccinated five or six times or even oftener.

Vaccination seems to be a savage custom. It is one of the poisonous superstitions of our times the equal of which is not to be found even among so-called primitive societies. Its advocates are not satisfied with voluntary vaccination. They insist on making it compulsory. Those who refuse to take it are prosecuted and awarded harsh penalties. Vaccination was invented in 1798. Thus it is not an ancient superstition. During this short period, millions of people have been victims of it. Those who are vaccinated are presumed to be immune against smallpox, but the presumption is without any sound basis. No one can say that they would surely have had a severe attack of the disease if they had not been vaccinated. On the contrary, in view of the fact that there have been cases of vaccinated persons being attacked by smallpox, it certainly cannot be claimed that anyone getting vaccinated will escape the infection.

Vaccination is a filthy remedy. Vaccine from an infected cow is introduced into our bodies; more, even vaccine from an infected human being is used. Some persons generally vomit at the sight of the vaccine. If it so much as comes into contact with the hand, they wash the hand with soap. If we were asked to eat it, we would be nauseated and would pounce upon anyone who might make such a suggestion even in fun. And yet scarcely anyone realizes that, when he is vaccinated, he is absorbing a substance which is in reality infected blood. It is well known that patients are given medicine or liquid nourishment through the skin and this takes effect more rapidly than if given by mouth. What is taken by the mouth is not immediately absorbed into the blood but anything taken through the skin is, and even a small dose acts very quickly. From this point of view, the taking of any medicine or nourishment through the skin is the same as eating it. Even then, in order to save ourselves from smallpox, we, in effect, eat vaccine. It is said cowards die before their death. Similarly, from fear

of death or disfigurement by smallpox, we die before our time by getting ourselves vaccinated.

I personally feel that in taking this vaccine we are guilty of a sacrilege. Even meat-eaters are forbidden to drink blood, and the flesh and blood of living animals are, I find, prohibited in all circumstances. But here blood is taken from a blameless living creature, is cultured, besides, and then fed to us through our skins. A religious man would rather get smallpox a thousand times or an early death than take such blood.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 14-6-1913

117. TELEGRAM TO GOVERNOR-GENERAL

JOHANNESBURG,
June 16, 1913

HIS EXCELLENCY LORD GLADSTONE
[GOVERNOR-GENERAL
PRETORIA]

VIEW PASSAGE IMMIGRATION BILL PARLIAMENT, MY ASSOCIATION WOULD RESPECTFULLY DRAW YOUR EXCELLENCY'S ATTENTION TO FOLLOWING OBJECTIONS BILL FROM STANDPOINT INDIAN COMMUNITY. BILL FAILS TO CARRY OUT THE PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT IN THAT CONTRARY TO THAT SETTLEMENT IT TAKES AWAY EXISTING RIGHTS. IT RESTRICTS RIGHT APPEAL SUPREME COURT PRESENTLY EXISTING. IT DEPRIVES INDIANS RESIDENT NATAL OF FACILITY PRESENTLY ENJOYED, REENTER THAT PROVINCE AFTER ABSENCE ON STRENGTH OF THREE YEARS PREVIOUS RESIDENCE, WHILE INDENTURED INDIANS WHO HAVE PAID £3 TAX MAY NOT UNDER BILL BE ALLOWED CLAIM RIGHT RESIDENCE THAT PROVINCE. IT TAKES AWAY RIGHT SOUTH AFRICA-BORN INDIANS ENTER CAPE UNDER ITS EXISTING STATUTE. FREE STATE DIFFICULTY REMAINS AS BEFORE IN THAT DECLARATION REQUIRED FROM EDUCATED INDIAN IMMIGRANT WHICH WOULD

NOT BE REQUIRED FROM ANY OTHER IMMIGRANT AS IMMI-GRANT. MY ASSOCIATION THEREFORE EARNESTLY PRAYS YOUR EXCELLENCY TO WITHHOLD SANCTION BILL, AND SO OBVIATE RECURRENCE PAINFUL STRUGGLE WITH ALL ITS HARDSHIPS, SUFFERING, AND SACRIFICE FOR COMMUNITY REPRESENTED BY MY ASSOCIATION.[1]

A. M. CACHALIA
CHAIRMAN,
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Colonial Office Records: Cd. 6940/13

118. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

PHOENIX,
NATAL,
June 20, 1913

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

The Bill is so bad that passive resistance is a necessity. By the time this is in your hands, some of us may be already in gaol. I propose to go to Johannesburg next week and from there send a final letter to Mr. Fischer reciting our I objections and asking him to meet them next year. If he gives a definite written promise that he would do so, the struggle will be suspended. There is very little hope that he would. But before I ask fellow-passive resisters to embark on what would undoubtedly be a very bitter and prolonged struggle, I want to adopt all legitimate methods that prudence may dictate to avert the misery that must result from a renewal of the struggle.

These are the defects in the Bill:

(1) The Free State difficulty appears to remain and therefore

[1] *Indian Opinion*, 21-6-1913, published an extended version of the communication. Lord Gladstone acknowledged it on June 17 and forwarded a copy to his Ministers. However, in reply to a telegram from Parsee Rustomjee on behalf of the Zoroastrian behalf of the Zoroastrian Anjuman, the Governor-General informed him that he had given his assent to the Bill the previous week.

the racial distinction.

(2) The existing rights are disturbed in that

(a) the right of appeal to the Supreme Court is modified,

(b) the right of the South African Indians to enter the Cape is taken away,

(c) the right of domicile of ex-indentured Indians . . .[1] pay the tax seems to have been taken away,

(d) the existing marriage position is considerably modified, though the amendment has eased the tension considerably.

I have only just received the amended Bill by Mr. Schreiner's favour. There may be other defects in it. I shall prepare a full statement[2] to be sent to you next week. I am not explaining theabove-mentioned points, as I am anxious to spare you the trouble of having to read a long letter.

Now for your questions.

1. As you will have seen, the Bill has received the Royal assent.

2. Passive resistance will be resumed probably [at] the beginning of the next month.

3. In order to court imprisonment we will enter all the Provinces in disregard of the new Act and will refuse to show certificates or any other papers. Both educated and uneducated Indians will join the struggle.

4. So far as I can judge at present, 100 men and 13 women will start the struggle. As time goes, we may have more.

5. I do not expect to raise much cash but I do not anticipate any difficulty about getting sufficient food and clothing by begging. If we all go to gaol, Kallenbach has undertaken to do the begging himself. He can be thoroughly relied upon to see that no family is starved so long he has life in him. If no funds

[1] The original is illegible here.

[2] This is not available; *vide*, however, "Letter to Private Secretary to Minister of Interior", 28-6-1913.

arrive unasked from India or elsewhere, we shall perform our wanderings on foot, and no money will then be spent on telegrams and cables. Just at present Miss Schlesin does all the public work in Johannesburg but for her maintenance works elsewhere. I am raising a special fund for the London Committee to be placed at your disposal. I am also getting rid of other pecuniary burdens. *Indian Opinion* staff has been brought down to a minimum and they will be thrown on their own resources. Some of my private burdens are being found by Dr. Mehta[1].

6. The struggle is expected to last a year but if we have more men than I anticipate, it may close during the next session of the Union Parliament. We are making provision for an indefinite prolongation.7. It is difficult to answer what amount will be required to see the community through the crisis. At the lowest calculation made by me, nothing in cash will be required. But as I get cash, I shall use it for ending the struggle quicker and for giving support to families and *Indian Opinion*. Some people from Natal and the Cape will certainly join the struggle.

My prayer to you is: Please do not worry about us, do not beg for funds publicly and do not injure your health for the cause. This prayer is selfish. I am anxious to meet you in the flesh inIndia, work under you and learn, may I say, at your feet, all I want to and must. In some things I want to be disillusioned if I am in the wrong and I want you to be disillusioned if I am in the right and we do not agree. I shall not misunderstand you if I do not receive any letters from you. But whenever you have time and health, I shall value your letters and advice. They would be a source of comfort.

After the receipt of Mr. Hall's letter I had decided not to write to you personally. But your letter leaves me no choice.

I must write another letter regarding your cable to Polak. He will come if it is at all possible. Funds and his family are the chief considerations. I shall discuss the situation with him tomorrow and

[1] Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta, a friend of Gandhiji since his student days in London.

leave him to write to you on his return to Durban. He will have a day more than I have for mailing letters.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the handwritten original: C. W. 928 Courtesy: Servants of India Society

119. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [*-XXV*]

6. INFECTIOUS DISEASES [CONTINUED]: SMALLPOX—2

A number of thoughtful men in England have carried out researches on the harmful effects of vaccination and a big anti vaccination society has been formed. Its members refuse vaccination and oppose the law making it compulsory. Some have suffered imprisonment in this cause. They also advise others against vaccination. Many books have been written on the subject and much discussion is being carried on. The following are the reasons the opponents of vaccination advance in support of their stand:

l. Taking vaccine from a cow's udder, which in fact belongs to her calf, is itself an act of extreme cruelty to thousands of living creatures. This cruelty is no credit to man's sense of pity and it behoves him, therefore, to forgo any benefit that may accrue from it.

2. No benefit is derived from such vaccine. On the contrary, taking the vaccine causes other infections. The sponsors of this movement are of the opinion that, since vaccination was introduced, the incidence of other diseases has increased.

3. The infection originates in man's blood, so that the germs of other diseases in the person are likely to be present in the culture and in all the samples of the vaccine.

4. Vaccination does not guarantee protection from smallpox. Its inventor, Dr. Jenner, had claimed that vaccination at one spot on one arm would provide life-long immunity. Later, he said

vaccination on both arms would give such immunity. Then it came to vaccination on more than one spot on both arms. When the disease occurred in spite of this, it was said that immunity could not be guaranteed for more than seven years. This period has now been reduced to three years. Thus doctors themselves are far from certain in this regard. In fact, the idea that one who is vaccinated will never get smallpox is entirely untrue. No one can prove that a person who has been vaccinated and has never caught smallpox would have caught the infection if he had not been so vaccinated.

5. Finally, they hold that vaccination is a filthy practice and that it is sheer barbarism to imagine that filth can be removed by filth.

With these and many other arguments and illustrations, the anti-vaccination society has been able to exert a great influence on the British public. There is a town in England where the majority of the population refuse to be vaccinated and, yet, the incidence of the disease among them is very low. Some enthusiastic members of this society have probed carefully into the whole question and have shown that doctors find it in their interest to keep this superstition alive. They earn thousands of pounds annually through vaccination. Consequently, either intentionally or otherwise, they are blind to its harmful effects. This opinion has been expressed by certain doctors themselves and most of these have strongly opposed vaccination.

If, then, vaccination is harmful, should we submit to it? My personal reply would be a definite "No". There are certain exceptions, however. I am certain that no one should get himself vaccinated voluntarily. But in all places where we have settled, the law has made vaccination compulsory. In this country ([South] Africa), to break the law involves a tremendous risk, for, if we refuse to comply with it, we shall invite on ourselves the charge of wilfully endangering public health, in addition to the many other charges often made against us. What should we do in such circumstances? If we live where the majority believe in the benefits of vaccination, it becomes something of a duty for us to fall in line with themto avoid a panic among them. Those who object to vaccination on religious grounds, in view of the facts I have set out above, must resist it even if they have to stand

alone and must be prepared to suffer the consequences. Those who refuse vaccination merely in the belief that they would remain healthier on that account would not be justified in opposing the law in this regard outright. Anyone who wants to do so must have made a thorough study of the matter. He should be able to convert others to his point of view and should undertake to change public opinion. If one cannot do these things, one may not ignore public opinion merely to protect one's health. There are many things which we dislike and yet feel compelled to do out of regard for the society in which we live. Personal convenience has to yield to public interest. The accepted principle is that only in matters of morality or religion do situations arise in which a man will be justified in standing alone against the opinion of the majority. Those, however, who have no belief of their own but are possibly swayed by writings such as the present one and are unwilling to be vaccinated through sheer apathy, should certainly abide by the law.

Further, those who do not get vaccinated must take pains to study and observe the rules of cleanliness, etc. One who does not want smallpox infection [by way of vaccination] and, at the same time, contracts diseases on account of immoral conduct or suffers in other ways by disregarding the rules of hygiene, has no right to oppose vaccination in a country or society in which it is regarded as a means of preserving health.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 21-6-1913

120. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE

DURBAN,
June 21, 1913

GOKHALE
LONDON

GOING TRANSVAAL TO PRESENT FINAL LETTER TO MINISTER.[1] IF REPLY SATISFACTORY AND FRESH SETTLEMENT MADE, NO PASSIVE RESISTANCE. THE ACT APPEARS TO CONTAIN FOUR FATAL OBJECTIONS.[2] NOT VERY HOPEFUL. FAILING SETTLEMENT, PASSIVE RESISTANCE STARTING BEGINNING JULY. THEN POLAK CAN IMMEDIATELY LEAVE. IF POSSIBLE FUNDS TO BE RAISED IN INDIA MEET EXPENSES OF HIS TRIP WHICH ARE ESTIMATED FOR ONE YEAR INCLUDING ALLOWANCE FOR FAMILY STAYING HERE AT ONE THOUSAND POUNDS. IT IS AT PRESENT IMPOSSIBLE TO RAISE THESE FUNDS HERE.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the original as delivered: C. W. 4843 Courtesy: Servants of India Society

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Minister of Interior", 28-6-1913.
[2] *ibid*.

121. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [*—XXVI*]

6. INFECTIOUS DISEASES [CONTINUED]: SMALLPOX—3

Writing of smallpox, we have so far considered the harmful effects of vaccination. We must now study ways of preventing smallpox. One who faithfully and intelligently observes the rules concerning fresh air, water and diet described in earlier chapters is in no danger of getting smallpox because his blood will itself contain the antidote against the infection.

For one who has contracted the disease, the wet sheet pack is a miraculous remedy. The pack should be applied to the patient at least three times. This will reduce the burning sensation in the body and the sores will subside in a very short time. It is not necessary to apply ointment, etc., to the sores. If the latter are limited to one or two spots where mud packs can be applied, that also should be done. The patient should be given rice, lemons and light fresh fruit according to appetite. I have said "light fruit" because, when the body is burning with smallpox, highly nourishing fruit such as dates and almonds should not be eaten. The sores are bound to subside after a week's treatment with the wet sheet pack. If they do not, it means that some poison still remains in the body and is being thrown out. Smallpox need not be regarded as so very serious a disease. It is only a symptom of poison escaping from the body and, therefore, of the body regaining health.

The last explanation applies to many diseases but is more likely to be correct in regard to diseases of the smallpox group. The reason why some patients remain weak or suffer from other ailments, after recovery, is to be found not in the original disease but in the remedies employed. Thus, quinine taken for malaria often causes deafness. Some even get a serious complaint known as quininism. Venereal diseases are cured with mercury, etc. The disorders which this gives rise to, as is well known, remain with the patient for ever. Thus medicines not only do not cure the disease but in fact cause new ones. We shall find numerous instances of patients who resort to purgatives

in order to cure constipation and develop piles, etc., in consequence. To understand and remove the basic cause of a disease and, when the latter has disappeared, to obey the laws of Nature is a better tonic than any *bhasma*[1]. Metals are processed so as to make them assimilable and turned into powders like *lohabhasma*[2]. But it is wrong to regard these as unfailing remedies. They do indeed seem to have some beneficial properties, but to the extent that they benefit the body, they strengthen the passions. Thus, they are ultimately harmful to one in their total effect. These medicines find greater favour as cures for smallpox. One who has had an attack of this disease rarely contracts it again. As a matter of fact, he often enjoys excellent health after his recovery because all poisons from the body have been drained out.

When the attack subsides and the sores dry up, olive oil should be applied to the skin and the patient regularly bathed. If this is done, most of the scars will disappear altogether and new skin will be formed.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-6-1913

[1] Form of metallic medication in *Ayurveda*

[2] *Bhasma* with properties of iron

122. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR[1]

JOHANNESBURG,

June 28, 1913

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR
PRETORIA

DEAR SIR,

I have endeavoured to study the Immigrants' Regulation Act, and observe with thankfulness that it is an improvement upon the original Bill.[2] But I respectfully beg to point out that it fails to carry out the provisional settlement of 1911 in at least four important particulars. In my humble opinion, if redress is granted in regard to these four particulars, the policy of the Government will not be affected, and yet the terms of the settlement, as my countrymen read it, will be just, but only just, satisfied.

The points are:

(1) According to the definition of the term "domicile", those indentured Indians who arrived after the Indian Immigration Law Amendment Act of 1895 and their descendants appear to become prohibited immigrants.

(2) The descendants of this class, although born in South Africa, will, if the above interpretation be correct, be unable henceforth to enter the Cape Province.

(3) Women married in South Africa according to the rites of Indian religions, and going to India, and returning with their husbands will not be on the same footing as those

[1] This was published in *Indian Opinion*, 13-9-1913, under the title "Revival of Passive Resistance".

[2] A detailed comparison of the draft Bill and the Act as gazetted was published in *Indian Opinion*; *Vide* Appendix "Draft Immigration Regulation Bill and the Act", 28-6-1913.

[married]1 in India. Nor are the hundreds of women married according to non-Christian faiths provided for by the amendment.

(4) The Free State difficulty seems to remain as it was before.

With reference to the first point, in view of the fact that the Minister has respected the right of the South Africa-born Indians to enter the Cape, if they are born of Indian parents domiciled in South Africa, but not of indentured parents if they were indentured after the Natal Act 17 of 1895. It seems to me to be a small matter for the Government if they were to recognize the status of the descendants born in South Africa of those Indians who were indentured after the Act of 1895. I am sure the Government do not intend to set up distinctions between one class of Colonial-born Indians and another. Nor can it affect the policy of the Government to recognize the right of domicile of such indentured Indians themselves. There could not be more than seven thousand such Indians at the outside. This number, compared with the Indian population of Natal, which is estimated at 133,000 cannot fairly be deemed a dangerous permanent increase to the Indian population, especially when it is borne in mind that these men are wanted by the Europeans of Natal.

To the Indian community both the first and the second points are of the highest moment. According to the judgment of the Natal Courts, these men, if they are paying the annual tax of £3, have a right to remain in Natal as permanent residents. Are they now to become prohibited immigrants? I presume that the Government do not intend to deport them, but do they intend to enforce the provisions of the Act as to trading or the holding of land by them?

As to the marriage question, the difficulty raised by me is, in my humble opinion, obvious and calls for consideration.

As to the last point, in the correspondence that took place between General Smuts and myself, doubt was expressed whether, in spite of the reservation clause, the declaration referred to in Section 8 of Chapter 33 could be required of an Indian who might be permitted to enter that Province under the new Act. What the people of the Free

[1] The original is not legible here.

State want, I hope, is not a humiliating declaration from an Indian immigrant, but his legal disability to hold land, to farm, or to trade. If this be particularly mentioned in the Act itself, they cannot reasonably object to the removal of the clause which requires the declaration.

For the moment, and for the purposes of a settlement, I do not raise the question of the ousting (now only partial, I admit) of the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, and the other drastic provisions of the Act which at once make it far more illiberal than the previous Provincial Acts which it replaces.

If Mr. Fischer considers that it is possible for the Government to meet the Indian community, and give an assurance that the necessary amendments will be made next year, and if he considers it worthwhile to discuss the points personally with me, I shall be pleased to wait on him. I hope that Mr. Fischer will see his way to consider my letter in the spirit in which it has been addressed. I beg to assure him that I have no desire to precipitate an acute crisis, which is certain to arise if no settlement can be arrived at between the Government and the Indians.

In the event of an appointment being made, it will be necessary to discuss at the interview the administration of the Act as to the admission of married women in cases where the marriage is not monogamous, as also the mode of regulating the entry of educated Indians. I do not discuss them here for fear of making this letter too long, and because I believe that, if the law can be set right, the question of administration is a comparatively easy matter.

I need hardly say that I have throughout this letter assumed that there are no other existing rights disturbed by the Act which have not formed the subject matter of correspondence, telegraphic or written, between the Government and myself.[1]

As I shall await your reply before advising my fellow-workers, may I ask for a telegraphic reply?[2]

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5811

[1] This paragraph, in Gandhiji's hand, appears to have been added later.

[2] This letter was followed by an interview on July 2. Gandhiji reduced the points discussed to writing; *vide* the following item.

123. LETTER TO SECRETARY FOR INTERIOR

[JOHANNESBURG,]
July 2, 1913

SIR,

With reference to the interview between us this morning, and in accordance with your wishes, I reduce to writing the points discussed between us:

l. With reference to Indians born in South Africa and their right under the Cape Immigration Act to enter the Cape, in my opinion, under Section 5 of the new Act, such men will not be able to enter the Cape by reason of the Proviso of Section 5. If the Government intend to recognize their right to enter the Cape on proving their South African birth as heretofore, they can do so without further legislation, by regulations that would exempt them from the operation of Section l Clause (a) of the Act. It may be observed that, if such Indians can pass the simple education test of the Cape, they can enter that Province under Paragraph A of sub-section 2 of Clause 5. As you are aware, most of the Colonial-born Indians have passed through the Government Indian schools and possess sufficient knowledge to undergo the Cape examination. It is also a well-known fact that, throughout the time that the Cape Act has been in force, hardly any South African-born Indian not belonging to the Cape has endeavoured to migrate to that Province; the reason is that there is no scope for them there.

2. With reference to the indentured Indians who entered Natal under the amending legislation of 1895, as I have already told you, the Natal Courts have held that these indentured men, after they have finished their indentures, are free to settle in Natal and could not be treated as prohibited immigrants if they have not reindentured themselves, and that, after three years' residence without indenture, these people acquire under the Natal Immigration Act full rights of domicile in the same manner as other Indians; such Indians now appear to be affected by the definition of the term "domicile" in the present Act. I have already told you that we have obtained best legal opinion in Natal, which is to the effect that the definition does not

cover such Indians and that their rights will not be affected by the new Act. However, I do not wish to take upon my shoulders the responsibility of advising my countrymen that they may be guided by that opinion alone. It is my sincere desire that any points which I, at least, can foresee should not be left open or not entirely understood. If the Government, however, give the same interpretation to the term "domicile" that our Counsel does, an assurance to that effect settles this point. Let me state it as clearly as I can. We are not seeking to gain any new rights for indentured Indians, but we are anxious that their present rights should be left intact, and these according to the belief of the Indians are that, if an indentured Indian entering into a contract of service after 1895, having become free at the end of his contract, does not re-indenture, lives in the Province for three years, then goes to India and returns, he has a right to re-enter under the present Immigration Law of Natal by reason of his three years' free residence.

3. As to the Free State, I have drawn your attention to the letter from General Smuts to the effect that, in his opinion, possibly the Free State declaration was not required. If that is the legal position according to the opinion of the legal advisers of the Government, a statement to the effect that such is the position will meet the difficulty. I venture to suggest that the declaration that will be required in terms of Section 19 of the new Act may have all the disabilities printed at the back thereof, including Section 28 of the new Act. Then there need be no repetition of a declaration when a British Indian is recognized as an immigrant for the Free State.

4. As to the marriage question, in view of the Searle judgment[1], it is absolutely necessary to legalize Indian marriages celebrated or to be celebrated within the Union. This can be done by amending the new Act by removing the words "outside the Union" from the marriage clause of the Act, or by amending the Marriage Laws of the different Provinces authorizing the Government to appoint Marriage Officers for different denominations whose certificates as to the celebration of marriages according to the rites of the respective religions of the parties would be recognized as proper

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Text of the Searle Judgement", 21-6-1913.

proof of marriage.

With reference to the marriage amendment in the new Act, I understand that only monogamous marriages will be recognized, and I appreciate that nothing more can be done in law at present, but an assurance is necessary to the effect that the present practice of admitting one wife of an Indian immigrant so long as she is the only one in South Africa, irrespective of the number of wives he might have in India, will be continued.

Then there will remain the question of polygamous marriages. As I have told you, there are not many such cases, but it is necessary to admit or re-admit plural wives of Indians who are already resident in South Africa. No new polygamous unions need be administratively recognized. A list can easily be prepared of those who have more than one wife either in the Union or outside it. My remarks are naturally applicable to the children of these unions also. I may point out that, in the July of 1911, General Smuts gave the assurance that special cases of polygamy would be considered by the Government.

I think that I have now exhausted all the points we discussed. If you think that there is anything omitted or that I should supplement this letter, kindly let me know. It is clear to me that the solution of this difficulty is very easy because, with the exception of the marriage difficulty, all the points can be settled without an Act of Parliament.

If a settlement is arrived at, it will be necessary to discuss the mode of admitting new entrants and the number for the various Provinces. May I suggest that, if the solution suggested by me is considered acceptable by General Smuts, you should telephone to me, so that I can come over to Pretoria and a final letter setting forth the terms of the settlement may be given to me. I make the suggestion so that there may be no correspondence necessary in order to elucidate any doubt that might arise as to the language of any letter that might be given to me, and the. question of new entrants could also then be discussed. I have told you how urgent the matter is, and may I rely upon your courtesy to let me have an early reply?[1]

[1] *Indian Opinion* reported that, for a time, the negotiations were suspended by Smuts due to civil disturbance in Johannesburg. When, however, peace was restored, Gandhiji resumed the correspondence on August 11, 1913.

I am sending this letter per Mr. Pragji Desai[1], who will be at your disposal to carry any communications you may wish to send me, and, if you require me at the telephone, you have only to ring up 1635, and I shall be at the telephone from wherever I may be.

Indian Opinion, 13-9-1913

124. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

Jeth Vad 14, 1969 [*July 2, 1913*]

CHI. JAMNADAS,

You have asked me some questions about serpent-bite and cited the experiences of others. What I say about this should be treated as no more than my inference. It is not based on experience. The instances you have come across do not deserve much attention. There may be something behind the cases of frenzied shaking of the head from side to side, but for the most part they are cases of fraud. I believe the same about cures of snake[-bite] and scorpion[-sting]. Possibly there is something in them, but one had better not go inquiring into these matters. We are to concern ourselves only with activities that tend to spiritual welfare. Everything else—even health—is subordinate to that. Certain it is thathe who strives to realize the Self will have everything else given to him.

Many people put on woollen clothes all through the year. Though it is true that they are non-conductors, it will be better not to use them in summer, for one may otherwise grow a little too soft in body. Instead of trying to maintain the body at an even temperature, we should train it to stand both cold and heat.

God exists, and yet does not. He does not, in any literal sense. The *atman* that has attained *moksha* is God and therefore omniscient. The true meaning of *bhakti*[2] is search for the *atman*. When the *atman* realizes itself, *bhakti* is transformed into *jnana*.

[1] Pragji Khandubhai Desai, a satyagrahi.
[2] Devotion

Narsimha [Mehta][1] and others gave themselves to such devoted search of the *atman*.

Krishna, Rama and others were divine incarnations, but we, too, can be like them when immense *punya*[2] has accrued to us. The *atmans* about to attain *moksha* are so many divine incarnations. We need not believe in their perfection while yet alive.

It is difficult to say who was the greatest among Krishna, Rama, the Buddha, Jesus, etc. Their achievements differed, because they lived in different times and under different circumstances. In point of character alone, possibly the Buddha was the greatest. But who can say? They have been described by their devotees according to their own inclinations. *Vaishnavas* attribute perfection to Krishna. One has to, of course. Otherwise singleminded *bhakti* would be impossible. Christians do the same to Jesus. In India, Krishna being the last [of the incarnations], his figure is invested with especial greatness.

Those who deny the existence of God will end up on the wrong path, for they will be obliged to deny the existence of the *atman*. *Avatar* is, and will always remain, a necessity. It is only when people are in utter despair and immorality is widespread that a belief in *avatar* comes to prevail. A small number following normal morality in the midst of a wicked majority looks for support. In a situation of this kind, a man of great moral strength who has no fear of the wicked but of whom the wicked stand in fear, is looked upon as an *avatar* after his death, or even during his life-time. It is not probable, in most cases, that such a person regards himself as an *avatar* right from the beginning.

Comparison of religions is uncalled for. One must gain a mature understanding of one's own religion and then study others. For purposes of comparison in a general way, the criterion is compassion [taught] as a rule of life. The greater the scope for compassion in a way of life, the more of religion it has. "The ethical way has its roots in compassion"—that is the first principle to be taught to everyone; and the second, "*Brahman* is the Reality; the Phenomenal world is unreal." No single principle may appeal to all, but it would seem that

[1] Poet-saint of Gujarat
[2] Accumulated merit

one who is in quest of the *atman* will have the right principle spring to his lips at the right time.

Caste-distinctions are both necessary and unnecessary. Their forcible observance is unnecessary. . . . G's action in giving encouragement to the pariah was praiseworthy.

In fact, there are as many paths as there are human beings. So long as men differ [in temperament], their paths are bound to differ. He who sees the identity of his *atman* with the *atmans* of others will also see unity in the [different] religions.

When the *atman* is free from bondage to the body, it is said to have attained *moksha*. The nature of that state is not to be described. It can only be experienced. Ghosts, etc., are an evil order of beings. Those guilty of wicked deeds are born in that order.

I have glanced through the book on milk-treatment. I was not impressed by it. That is, however, because of my present frame of mind. Even if anyone could prove that meat had a highly beneficial effect on the body, it would remain unacceptable. I hold the same view about milk. It is but another form of meat and man has no right to take it. [To argue] that because a baby sucks the mother's milk, man should take cow's milk is the very limit of ignorance.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahatma Gandhijina Patro

125. LETTER TO SECRETARY FOR INTERIOR

[JOHANNESBURG,]
July [*4*], *1913*

DEAR MR. GORGES,

I thank you for your note of the 3rd instant, and in view of my conversation with you regarding Mr. Polak, may I ask you to 'phone to me as early as you can tomorrow, Saturday? I shall be practically up to half-past-two at my office, telephone No. 1635.

I promised to let you have the Natal case regarding the indentured Indians who are paying the £3 tax. The case is Subrayen versus the Principal Immigration Officer, Natal Reports, page 638. This is the substance telegraphed to me of the case:

> Subrayen had served indentures which expired in 1906. Thereafter, he had paid tax till May 1911. He then proceeded temporarily to India, leaving his wife in charge of business. Subrayen returned in November 1912, but was restricted under Section 5, sub-section A of the Natal Act, 1903. Under sub-section B, Section 32, the Court held that Subrayen's residence in Natal as free Indian on payment of the tax did not come within the meaning of the words "or the like" following after "indenture" [in] section 32 and that he was entitled to exemption from operation of the Act under Section 4.

I think you will agree that the case completely bears out the contention submitted by me.

I remain,
Yours truly,

E. M. GORGES, ESQ.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5823

126. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [—XXVII]

7. OTHER INFECTIOUS DISEASES

We have considered smallpox in some detail. Now remain allied diseases such as chickenpox, measles, etc. The plague, cholera, and fast-spreading dysentery are also infectious diseases. We are not afraid of chickenpox and measles because they are seldom fatal, nor do they cause disfigurement. Apart from this, they are very similar in effect to smallpox and are contracted in the same manner. Cold water treatments and wet sheet packs are the best remedies for them. Diet during the attacks should be extremely light and bland. If a patient can subsist on fresh fruit, his recovery will be rapid.

The "tumour fever" is a terrible disease. In English it is called "the bubonic plague". Hundreds of thousands have died of it in India since 1896. Despite much fuss, doctors have so far been able to discover no remedy for it. Nowadays, a preventive inoculation similar to vaccination is given for this disease also. Producing with it a mild attack of the plague, the doctors explain that this will confer immunity against further infection. But this is a mockery similar to vaccination and is an equally sinful experiment. Just as it cannot definitely be stated of anyone who has been vaccinated that he would surely have got smallpox if he had not been vaccinated, so also is it impossible to say that one who has been inoculated against the plague would have got it were it not for the inoculation. There is no known antidote against the bubonic plague. Nor can any guarantee be given that water and mud treatments will prove effective against the disease. However, for the benefit of those who do not fear death and who have trust in God, the following measures may be suggested:

1. On getting fever or at the very first signs of it, take a wet sheet pack.
2. A thick mud pack should be applied to the swollen glands.
3. The patient should be given no food whatever.
4. If he feels very thirsty, cold lime juice and water

should be administered.

5. The patient should lie in a place open to plenty of fresh air.

6. Except for one person, no one should be allowed to go near him.

7. If anything can bring about a cure, these measures certainly will.

No definite knowledge is available regarding the origin of the plague. Many, however, are of the opinion that it is spread by rats and there seems to be some basis for this impression. In areas where cases of the plague have occurred, it is imperative that houses be cleared of rats, and that grains, etc., be stored so that rats cannot gain access to them and are not attracted. Rat-holes should be filled in; if a house cannot be completely freed of rats, it must, of course, be vacated.

But the best insurance against the plague is to adopt from the start a clean, wholesome and spare diet, give up all addictions, take regular exercise, live in fresh air, keep one's home and surroundings clean and thus maintain oneself so fit that this fashion of a plague does not touch one. This should be the normal manner of living but, even if that is not possible, it should in any case be followed while an epidemic is on.

An even more terrible disease and one which breaks out simultaneously with the bubonic plague is fever accompanied by difficult breathing, known in English as the pneumonic plague. The temperature shoots up very high and the patient remains for the most part unconscious. Recovery from this *kalajwar*[1] is rare. This disease came to Johannesburg in 1904 and only one out of twenty-three cases survived. Some account of this incident has already been given. For this condition, too, the remedies are the same as those suggested for the bubonic plague, except that in this case it is necessary to apply mud packs to both sides of the chest. If there is not enough time in which to keep the patient in a wet sheet pack, thin mud poultices should be applied to the head. For this disease also preventive

[1] Literally, deadly fever

measures are easier to take and more effective than remedies for cure, and it will be wise to employ these as shown above.

Cholera appears horrible when there is an actual case but, in fact, it is a much less serious disease than the plague. Wet sheet packs cannot be used here because the patient suffers from cramps, especially in the thighs. It may be of some benefit in this condition to apply mud packs to the abdomen, but where there are cramps it is necessary to foment the spot with hot water bottles, The patient's feet should be rubbed with mustard oil. No food, of course, must be given. The patient's friends should see that, instead of his getting scared out of his wits, his courage is kept up. If he has frequent motions, he should not be made to leave bed for the purpose, but he should be provided with a shallow pan without sharp edges in which he may pass stools. If these measures are taken without delay, there will be little risk for the patient. During an epidemic of cholera, there are effective measures with which to protect oneself against it. The disease usually appears in summer. People suddenly start eating unripe or rotten fruit. We are not as a rule accustomed to eat fruit, but many kinds ripen in this season and are cheap, so that they are eaten in large quantities. This is in addition to the usual food, with the result that the harmful effect of such fruit follows immediately. Even as it is, we frequently suffer from stomach-ache and such other complaints. When the stomach can stand the strain no longer, we get cholera. Others' physical condition is similar to ours and hence they also get an attack. No special precautions are taken regarding the patient's stools and the germs from these pollute the atmosphere. Water also is bad during the hot weather. With everything going dry, water becomes dirty and infected and is drunk without being filtered or boiled. Under such conditions, is it any wonder that diseases occur? It is only because Nature has provided us with a tough physique that we survive at all. Otherwise, looking at our conduct and habits, we deserve a very early end indeed.

We shall now consider the precautions to be taken during an epidemic of cholera. It is very important to keep the diet light and moderate. Good fruit may certainly be eaten but it should be carefully examined. We should never, out of miserliness or because of their

tastefulness, eat mangoes or any other fruits which are rotten in parts. Fresh air is essential. *Drinking water must always be boiled* and filtered through a thick and clean piece of *khadi*[1]. Excreta of patients must be burned and the place covered with dry earth. If it became a regular practice with every person to sprinkle ashes over the excreta after using the latrine, the danger would be greatly reduced. To tell the truth, this should be a permanent rule. Cats dig a hole into which they pass stools and then cover it up with earth. It is only we who neglect to do this, thinking it to be a kind of pollution or feeling squeamish about doing it, and so fall victims to disease. If ashes are not available, dry earth should be used. If in lumps, the earth should first be broken up and made into dust.

The fast-spreading dysentery is the least serious of these infectious diseases. In this condition, if only mud packs are properly applied to the abdomen and all intake of food stopped, the disease will be cured. It is essential that excreta be covered up in the manner described above. In regard to water, the same precautions should be taken as for cholera.

Finally, when any of these infectious diseases occurs, neither the patient nor his friends and relatives should lose courage. With fear, the patient will succumb much sooner, and his relatives, and others as well, will be in danger of catching the infection.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 5-7-1913

[1] Any coarse cloth; later, in India, the term came to signify handspun and handwoven indigenous cloth.

127. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

BOX 6522,
Thursday [July 10, 1913][1]

MY DEAR MILLIE,

So Henry is on the waters on his way to London.[2] Such is the uncertainty of the life of those who are associated with me. It was very brave of you to have permitted Henry without a murmur to separate from you. I need hardly say that you will as before unreservedly fall back upon me for your wants. You will not leave me to anticipate your wants, will you?

There is no reply yet from General Smuts. I am expecting one every day. The strike has dislocated many things.[3]

How are you all getting on? I am not likely to leave here, if at all, before Monday next.

With love to you all,

Yours,
Brother

[PS.]

The Bazaar was a social success but not a financial success that it might have been.

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] H.S.L. Polak left for London on July 10, 1913 to assist Gokhale in representing South African Indians' case. From the contents it is evident that the letter was written on this day, a Thursday.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", 12-7-1913 and "General Knowledge about Health (XXXII)", 9-8-1913

[3] *ibid.*

128. RIOT IN JOHANNESBURG

HISTORY OF STRIKE

In Johannesburg, the white workers in the mines had gone on a big strike unprecedented in the gold area. It ended on Monday. Nearly 40,000 labourers had struck work. It was all much ado about nothing.[1] The cause was insignificant. Forty new labourers were hired in a mine. The management demanded a quarter of an hour's extra work from them on Saturdays, which the labourers refused. The management insisted. This was a downright mistake. There was a conflagration. The secretary of the Union gave notice that the workers would go on strike if they were made to work a quarter of an hour longer. The secretary was not employed in any of the mines. No weight was attached to his letter. This was an insult to the Union, and added fuel to the fire. The workers went on strike. The proprietors then came round. They agreed to take back the new workers on their terms. But the game was out of their hands. The workers were now in no mood to listen. They considered the insult to the secretary as an insult to themselves. The fire spread. Workers in the other mines were also members of the Union. They, too, went on strike. One by one, the mines began to close down. If any labourer went to work, he was assaulted. In Benoni the workers started looting. The houses of the manager and others were burnt down. Huge meetings were held and bitter speeches were made. The Government was caught unawares. There were hardly any police. The few there were proved inadequate. This emboldened the workers still further. The Government is being blamed by many people.

The flames spread to Johannesburg. Friday saw the worst. Life and property were in danger. The Government requisitioned the entire police force of South Africa. Meanwhile bloodshed continued. There was blood in the workers' eyes. They carried red flags and were bedecked with red tassels. They intimidated the men working the

[1] The Gujarati saying literally means: "a mustard seed being magnified into a mountain!"

trams. The authorities showed wisdom and stopped the trams. The leader was a woman named Mrs. Fitzgerald. Accompanied by a gang of 50 people, she threatened the shopkeepers and made them close down the shops. Trade came to a standstill in Johannesburg. People were in panic and began to store food grains, etc. The cost of a bag of coal went up to ten shillings.

Things did not stop there. At night, Mrs. Fitzgerald and her companions went to the railway station, where they broke windows and doors. The ticket-office and the godown were reduced to ashes. They were in no way deterred by the police. One Kaffir employee was burnt to death. Then, at about nine at night, the crowd went to the office of The Star. There some of the men broke the windows and went in. They made a heap of all the copies of the paper and put a lighted match-stick into it. A few hours, and a beautiful building was a heap of ashes. This newspaper has been under a cloud many a time. It has not come out till Tuesday. The fire brigade which came to extinguish the fire was driven back by the workers. Then they looted the arms and ammunition shops and, taking possession of guns and powder, prepared themselves to fight. Other shops were also plundered. Three or four Indian shops, too, were looted. This seems to have been the work not of the workers but of ruffians. When there is chaos, who will listen to whom?

Meanwhile, the Government had woken up. Johannesburg was crowded with police. Guards were posted at important buildings. On Saturday afternoon, the strikers began an attack on the Rand Club. The police warned the people, coaxed them. The law-breakers paid no heed. Shots were fired over their heads. But they were not frightened. Thereupon, they aimed the guns exactly at their bodies. Bullets descended in a shower, killing the guilty and the innocent. Blood flowed in streams. Many died and many were wounded. The Red Cross came, removed the dead and took the wounded to hospital. Terror reigned now. People began to run for their lives, The Rand Club was saved. Meanwhile, someone spread a rumour that Mr. Chudley had fired a shot from the Club. Immediately people rushed to his magnificent shop to wreak vengeance. There they broke the window panes and sacked the shop.

Such was the state of affairs when General Botha and General Smuts came to Johannesburg. At a meeting with the strikers' leaders, an agreement was drawn up and signed by the two generals and three leaders. The terms of the agreement are that the workers in the mines, as also the other workers, will be reinstated, that the Government accepts responsibility for the dead and the wounded and, as far as possible, will compensate their dependants and that it will inquire into the other grievances. The leaders demanded that no action be taken against those who had incited the people and taken part in looting. General Botha said that he would do his best, but that he could not promise to interfere with the course of justice. At present, nearly 100 people are under arrest. Mrs. Fitzgerald has also been arrested. Newspapers had stopped publication. Except The Star, all the others resumed publication on Tuesday. Other activities have also been resumed. At the moment of writing, it looks as if nothing had ever happened in Johannesburg. Man soon forgets his misery and his danger.

On Monday, Johannesburg observed mourning. Flags were flown half mast, all the dead were buried at four in the afternoon. It is estimated that a crowd of 30,000 followed the funeral procession. These same people, the previous day, saw blood. On Monday they followed the funeral procession in a slow, sad march.

It is now that the difficulties of the strike-leaders have begun. Some of the strikers abuse the leaders and say that they were cheated by the Government. Some say that the leaders betrayed them. Some want to fight on still. The bulk have accepted what the leaders have done. Votes of the different unions were taken. The railway workers, too, were defiant. In the end, however, they calmed down. Quite a few hold that they should watch how the Government keeps its promise and so normal activities have been resumed. The miners have also been warned, at a meeting, that they should be vigilant lest the Government let them down, as it had done with the Asiatics. Regarding this suspicion, one leader said that, if the workers remained strong, the Government dared not play foul and that, if it did, they should reply with a still bigger strike.

At the special request of the Government and in order not to excite public feeling, both the leading newspapers have refrained from

commenting on this epic strike and apportioning blame.

Pressure is being put upon Mr. Harcourt in England. Imperial troops are stationed in South Africa. The understanding is that these troops are not to be used to deal with a situation of this kind. Mr. Harcourt was, therefore, questioned why Lord Gladstone used the Imperial troops. He is being blamed by several people. Thus, the story of this uprising is not yet over. At present, no one can say who has lost and who has won. In Johannesburg, the loss on account of looting and arson alone is estimated at £50,000, apart from the losses in business and those sustained by the railways, trams, etc. The number of deaths is put at 18. In all, nearly 400 people are believed to have been wounded. There are still ten wounded men lying in the hospital in a critical condition.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-7-1913

129. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [*-XXVIII*]

8. CONFINEMENT

We have so far considered general diseases. It is not the intention, in these chapters, to write on all the maladies one may come across in this world or make suggestions about them, but rather to show that most diseases have a common origin and a common form of treatment. Those who have been driven to desperation by illness and are afraid of death will certainly consult a doctor, whatever books are placed before them. The most that these chapters can indicate is how those who suffer from ordinary ailments may recover and, observing the laws of good health, may not fall ill again or become a prey to a serious disease. Only a few have the courage even for this. That those few may find these brief articles useful is one of the objects in view in the present series. We have now reached a point when, after a brief consideration of confinement, infant-care and accidents, we may conclude these chapters.

The subject of confinement has been made too much of. Deli-

very is nothing very dangerous for a woman whose body is healthy. Among villagers, a confinement is regarded as a very ordinary occurrence. Pregnant women perform their usual tasks right up to the last and suffer no harm during child-birth. There have been cases of *Bharwad*[1] women resuming normal work immediately after giving birth to a child. Animals, we know, suffer no pain.

Then, why do urban women suffer so much pain? Why do they suffer such unbearable agony during the birth of a child? Why does it become necessary to give these women special care before and after delivery? Let us take up these questions.

The city women's way of life is completely unnatural. Their diet and dress are opposed to Nature's laws. The most important. reason, however, is something quite different. If a girl becomes pregnant while she is still a child, if her husband does not refrain from intercourse with her even during this period and, soon after delivery, so conducts himself that within a short time she becomes pregnant again, why will she not suffer? We see hundreds of thousands of girls and women in this fearful and pitiable condition. City-life of this kind is no different from hell. As long as men continue thus to behave like monsters, women can never be happy. Many men blame women. It is not our business in this chapter to say who is more to blame. Whether it be the fault of both parties or of one, having realized that something is wrong, parents, child husbands and child-wives should take heed. As long as intercourse during childhood, during pregnancy and immediately following confinement is not given up, deliveries can never be easy. Because the women do not have to suffer excessively for a very long period and as it is considered inevitable that they will be weak for a month and a half afterwards, they put up with the ordinary pains of child-birth and, thanks to the prevailing ignorance about this state of affairs, a race of cowardly, emasculated and spiritless creatures is coming into existence day by day. This is a terrible thing indeed, and each one of us needs to work tirelessly to prevent it. If even one man or woman shuns such evil practice, that will be so much gain to the whole world. In this matter, one should never wait for another to make a beginning.

[1] A Community of shepherds in Gujarat

According to this view, then, the first step to be taken in the care of a pregnant woman is for her husband to stop all sexual intercourse with her. Many responsibilities are to devolve upon her during the nine months of pregnancy. It should be realized that the future conduct of the child will depend to a great extent upon that of the mother during this period. If the mother is affectionate, so will the child be. If she is bad-tempered, the child too will be bad-tempered. It is quite important, therefore, that the mother should maintain a very pure state of mind during these nine months. She should be engaged in virtuous deeds, avoid anger, be particularly compassionate and generous, be free from anxiety and fear, not allow carnal thoughts even to enter her mind, not waste time in useless gossiping, and never tell an untruth. If a woman observes all these rules, the child to be born to her cannot but grow to be an illustrious person.

Just as it is imperative that the mind be kept pure, so also must the body be kept clean. It is essential always to have fresh air. During pregnancy, the woman's respiration becomes more rapid. Consequently, she must be in a place where the air is much fresher. Her diet should be regular, easy to digest and nourishing. A good diet should be planned along the lines recommended in earlier chapters. She should consume during this period olive oil, bananas and wheat in quantities which she can digest. If she gets constipated, she should not go in for any medicine but increase the quantity of olive oil. If suffering from nausea, she should take lime juice in a little water without sugar. Spices, chillies, etc., should be completely stopped, during these nine months, at any rate.

Some women feel all kinds of fanciful desires and aversions at this time. The best way to combat them is to have regular Kuhne baths. This bath will increase strength, improve the lustre of the skin and ensure easy delivery. Many women have had this experience. It is also necessary to control these fancies when they come. It is possible to forget an object which the mind hankers after by disregarding the desire on one or two occasions. At all times, both mother and father must be careful of the safety of the child she is carrying.

It is the husband's duty not to agitate the wife by starting quarrels with her during this period. She should be kept happy and

relaxed. If she has to carry too heavy a burden of domestic work, the husband should try to lighten it. It is essential for her to have a short walk in the open air every day. During pregnancy, it should be seen to it that no medicine of any kind is swallowed by the mother.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 12-7-1913

130. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

"MOUNTAIN VIEW',
[JOHANNESBURG,]
July 12, 1913

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

I hope you duly received the cable[1] I sent you. As there was no certainty about a settlement being arrived at and as your wires were imperative, it was thought best to send Polak to you. There is up to the time of writing no definite information from General Smuts. In reply to a personal letter[2], his secretary telegraphs saying owing to the crisis General Smuts has no time to go into the points raised by me. There are internal dissensions too in the Cabinet.

In the event of a settlement, I have suggested to Polak that he should unreservedly place himself at your disposal. If you can use him for your own secretarial work, he will, I know, feel honoured and he can be spared. If you think that he may be the Secretary of the London Committee, you may appoint him as such.

Regarding his expenses the position is this. Mr. Rustomji has advanced for his start nearly £250. His monthly expenses I am paying out of the little I have still left with me. Mrs. Polak and the rent of his office need at least £35 per month. His passage and other expenses have already come to roughly £50. If it is at all possible, I have therefore asked him to suggest to you that £300 at least should be sent

[1] *Vide* "Cable to G. K. Gokhale", 21-6-1913.
[2] This is not available.

to me for the time being.

But if the raising of the money means any mental [strain][1] or trouble to you, may I beseech you not to trouble about the funds. I shall manage somehow or other till his return. In my cablegrams I felt bound to place before you my position. But the cablegrams need not worry you at all. All I care for is, selfishly, to see you alive for some years at least. And nothing would grieve me more than to find that our troubles hastened your departure from this earth. Nor is it at all necessary in the event of the struggle reviving, for you to go to India in August or before your health is restored. I have spoken to the passive resisters and they have all asked me to tell you that they are not frightened by the prospect of prolongation of the struggle. I personally feel that but for a Cabinet crisis and but for strikes, the struggle, if it is revived, will be sharp and swift.

I hope you will be able to read my horrible writing.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the handwritten original: C. W. 929 Courtesy: Servants of India Society

[1] The original is damaged here.

131. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

July 13, 1913

MY DEAR MILLIE,

Herewith a cheque for £12.

I had a wonderful meeting last night. Manilal insists on observing the same penance vow that I am. His fast too therefore starts from today. And yet I know that in spite of all that, there may be no change of heart. But I must continue to trust and believe. I take it that you will bank all the monies that may be received there and send me the deposit slips. Is Solomon keeping the books?

Of course you may come down during the fast week too. And if Voysey offers to come during the week, let him come. West will attend to him.

With love,

BROTHER

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

132. IMMIGRATION LAWS

Regulations have been framed under the Immigration Act and published in *The Union Gazette*.[1] We have no time just now to give a summary of the regulations. We must study them carefully and decide what is best to be done about them. The administration of the Act will depend on these regulations. Even an otherwise excellent law can be made oppressive, and an oppressive law can be made milder, through regulations. We have glanced through these regulations and have so far not seen any section which may prove particularly dangerous. But we can also see that much has been left out in them and that supplementary regulations are likely to be published. We must state in this connection that some gentlemen have drawn our attention to section 19 of the Act and told us that we have either overlooked or failed to understand the implications of that section. It has certainly not escaped our attention. We have gone through it again, word by word. We see nothing dangerous in it. The section is to the following effect:

> Every person who enters or is found within the Union will, if required, have to appear before an [immigration] officer and satisfy such officer that he is not a prohibited immigrant either in respect of the Union or in respect of any particular province. The officer may require every such person to give a declaration in the form prescribed under the regulations and to produce documentary or other evidence relative to his claim to enter or remain. The person must submit to any examination or test. If he is suspected of being afflicted with any disease [which would render him a prohibited immigrant], the officer may also require him to submit to a medical examination. Every such declaration will be exempt from stamp duty. After such test, every person whom the officer considers not to be a prohibited immigrant will be free [to enter or remain,] but if any person fails to undergo the test as above or, having given it fails to

[1] For an analysis of the Regulations and the related documents, *vide* Appendix "Immigration Act Regulations", 26-7-1913.

satisfy the officer that he is not a prohibited immigrant, he will not be permitted to land and will be informed in writing that he may, if he chooses, appeal to an immigration board. If the person is on board a ship, such notice [of appeal] will have to be given immediately; otherwise, within three days of the receipt of written intimation from the officer.

This is the meaning of Section 19 as we understand it, and according to this interpretation we find nothing objectionable in it. This Section can be used oppressively. But so can many other sections. Under this Section, the Government can authorize an officer to demand finger prints or other humiliating means of identification, but it has not done so. There are such sections even in the old Act. If, when the regulations are framed, the Government prescribes under this Section evidence which it would be a hardship to produce, we must certainly protest. But this is a separate question and does not arise from Section 19. We cannot object to the Government being invested with such power under the law. Laws cannot even be enforced unless the Government is armed with such powers. What we must do is to protest every time against their abuse. As we have said above, we see no provision in the regulations framed under Section 19 which need cause alarm. After we have read the regulations again, and made sure of their correct interpretation, we shall be in a better position to advise the community.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-7-1913

133. NEW IMMIGRATION ACT

ITS OBJECTIONABLE FEATURES

Mr. Gandhi has returned from Johannesburg. In a message to him, General Smuts says that the current agitation by white Railway workers leaves him no time for anything else, and he will, therefore, think about the matter when conditions become a little more peaceful. The following are the points in this Act which remain to be settled:

1. Indentured labourers who arrived after 1895 seem to lose their right of settling down [in Natal] on the expiry of their term of indenture.
2. The right of entry into the Cape which all Indians born in South Africa have enjoyed seems to disappear.
3. Indian marriages celebrated in South Africa must be recognized as valid. Moreover, the term "monogamous" used in the Bill must not be interpreted by the Government to imply that any woman intending to immigrate should be the only wife of her husband in India. So long as the husband does not have another wife in South Africa, there should be no objection to the entry of such a woman. Further, if any of those who are already resident in South Africa have married twice in India, or here, both the wives should be free to leave and return [to South Africa].
4. An Indian entering the [Orange] Free State as a fresh immigrant should not be required to sign the declaration that he has to at present.
5. Particulars about the admission of Indians this year must be settled.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-7-1913

134. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [-XXIX]

9. CARE OF CHILDREN

It is not intended in this article to go into the details with which midwives are concerned. We shall therefore turn to the time after the child has been delivered. Those who have understood the previous chapters will realize that even during confinement it is not necessary that the mother and child must be kept roasting in a dark, unventilated room, with bedding all too dirty and heated from beneath. However old the practice of keeping a confined woman in a dark room, it is cruel all the same. Keeping out fresh air is even more cruel. The custom of placing fire under [the cot] is entirely unnecessary and one full of risk. During the winter the patient will certainly need greater warmth. For this purpose, she should be supplied with extra coverings. If the room is cold, a fire, first lighted outside, may be brought in after the smoke has subsided, and the air in the room be warmed but it is absolutely unnecessary to place it under the cot. A hot water bottle in the mother's bed will as well help to keep it warm. It is also a cruel and superstitious practice to provide her with dirty sheets to sleep on. After recovery, the clothes can be thoroughly washed and used again.

The child's health depends on the condition of the mother. Therefore, in addition to these precautions, she should be given an easily digestible and nourishing diet. There is no evidence that [tonic foods made with] gum and things of that kind are particularly beneficial. If the mother eats a diet of wheat, banana and olive oil, sufficient heat will be generated in her body and she will have plentiful supply of milk. Olive oil will give milk a mildly laxative quality, and this will ensure clear motions for the child. If the baby has any complaint, it is the mother who should be examined. To give any drug to the baby will be risking its life. The child's intestines being extremely delicate, the toxic effects of the drug will be felt immediately. At such times, it is the mother who should take the medicine as its curative properties will in an imperceptible manner pass into her milk. If the baby appears to have too many motions or to be coughing frequently, there is no need for panic. Instead, one

should wait for a day or two. The specific cause of the trouble should be removed and the child will recover. Flying into a panic and giving medicines will definitely harm the baby's health.

Infants should be bathed in lukewarm water and should have a minimum of clothing. For the first few months it will be better for the baby to have no clothing at all. It is best wrapped in a soft white sheet and then covered with a warm shawl. In this way the bother of dressing the child is avoided. Fewer clothes will be soiled and the baby will come to have a tough rather than a weak constitution. A folded thin cloth should be laid over the umbilicus and a bandage tied over it. The custom of tying the umbilical cord to the neck with a string is bad. The bandage should be changed every day. If there is any raw skin round the umbilicus, finely strained powder of cleaned rice should be sprinkled over it with clean cotton wool. This will help the part to dry up.

As long as the mother has a plentiful supply of milk, it is unnecessary to give the infant any other food. When the supply decreases, the child should be given the flour of roasted wheat, mixed with warm water and a little jaggery and this will have the qualities of milk. Alternatively, half a banana mashed and well mixed with half a spoon of olive oil will prove very beneficial. If cow's milk is to be given to start with, a mixture of one part milk and three parts water, heated to boiling point, should be used. A little quantity of pure jaggery should also be added to this. Substituting sugar for jaggery seems to be harmful. If the child is gradually given increasing quantities of fresh fruits, its blood will remain in excellent condition from the very start and it will grow strong and vigorous. Many mothers feed babies with *dal*, rice, vegetables, etc., as soon as its teeth appear or even earlier than that. But this is undoubtedly no good for it. Tea and coffee should in no case be given to a child.

When the baby has grown up, that is, has learnt to walk, it may be dressed in a shirt, etc. Shoes are quite superfluous. An infant does not have to walk among thorns. If, therefore, it remains barefoot, the child's feet will be toughened and there will be no obstacle to the circulation of blood which might otherwise be constricted because of the shoes. It is both vulgar and cruel to dress up a child, for the sake

of show, with silken clothes, or dresses padded with cotton, narrow pyjama, a cap on head and ornaments round the neck. To imagine that we can improve upon the appearance that Nature has given the child is sheer vanity and ignorance.

It must be realized that the child's education begins right from its birth and that its real teachers are its father and mother. To threaten a child, to pad its body [with dresses], to overload its stomach all these are a violation of educational principles. If the parents are irritable, the child will grow likewise, and from parents who are soft it will learn to be soft. Its ways of speech also it will learn from the parents; if the parents pronounce words correctly, so will the child; if they use stammering or foul speech, the child will do likewise. If they follow immoral ways, to be sure, the child will learn them. "As the father so will be the child, as the banyan tree so will be its fruit"[1]—is indeed a true saying. Here the word 'father' stands for both parents. The child learns to eat the food the father eats. Later on, it will never get elsewhere the education that it can receive in its home.

When we consider all this, it becomes clear how very delicate is the responsibility the parents carry. Man's primary duty is to teach children purity of conduct so that they may bring credit to themselves and the parents. We observe of trees and their fruits that only plantains can come from a plantain tree and that an excellent tree alone produces good fruit. A fine animal has fine offspring. Man falsifies this rule. Parents with a reputation for purity have children of impure conduct and apparently healthy parents have unhealthy offspring. The chief or rather the only reason for this is that, though not worthy to be parents, we frequently become such merely in consequence of self-indulgence. How then can we be mindful of children's interests? But it is incumbent on right-minded parents to bring up their children in the best possible manner. To be able to do this, both father and mother must have received true education. Parents who have not done so should, if they realize their error, leave their children in the charge of other well-educated and virtuous persons. It is vain to hope that children will learn good behaviour at school. There is only one way of teaching good behaviour and that is to give the child an opportunity

[1] A Gujarati saying

to live constantly in that kind of atmosphere. If there is one sort of training at home and another at school, the children can never improve. It follows from this that there are no fixed times when a child is to receive its education. Its education commences at its birth and from that very moment begins its physical, mental and spiritual or religious training. Its training in language starts the moment it begins to prattle. Instruction in letters also it can have from its parents, as it plays. In olden days, this was what usually happened. Now, it has become the custom to send children to schools. If parents would do their duty by their children, there would be no limit to the heights the latter could reach. But, if we regard children merely as toys, fondle them excessively, spoil them out of a mistaken notion of affection with sweets and rich clothes right from their childhood, allow them to do as they please, if we are greedy for money ourselves and teach this greed to children, are engrossed in pleasures and set that example before children, are lazy ourselves and make them lazy, are dirty and teach them dirty ways, tell lies and teach them lies, then is it any wonder that our progeny grow up to be feeble, immoral, lying, lustful, selfish and greedy? Thoughtful parents need carefully to ponder over these remarks. India's future, a good half of it, lies in the hands of parents.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-7-1913

135. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

[PHOENIX,]

Ashad Vad 1 [*July 19, 1913*][1]

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I got your two letters together. I advise you to marry because I do not credit you with spiritual strength of a high order. By obstinately refusing to marry, you will cause extreme pain to your parents, and still more to your prospective father-in-law. You can do all this, but for that you require higher knowledge. When you have achieved it, you will ask me no questions, nor will your parents or anyone else take your words amiss. You cannot say with certainty that your present state of mind will last for ever. When Lord Buddha had an indirect knowledge of the truth, he went away, abandoning his wife as she slept, and causing much grief to his parents. Yet, the world has admired his action. At present, your ideas rest on your faith in me. I have, therefore, given you advice in keeping with your state. You may, however, remember my condition. I have told you that you will have to marry. All the same, if you have no sexual union with your wife, this cannot but conduce to the welfare of both of you. It will also be an excellent example to others. It is more difficult to observe unbroken *brahmacharya* in marriage than without marrying. You will be able to observe it only if you are strongly impressed with its great virtue. This will happen only if you have earned extraordinary *punya* in your previous lives. If you have the strength, you should do this. You should respectfully tell your parents of your views and your father-in-law through them. You may tell them: "I desire to observe inviolate *brahmacharya* and feel that it will be better for me not to marry. If you understand my ideas, kindly help me. If you think this to be mere childishness in me, I will obey you and marry. But I shall have no union with my wife. I shall try to persuade her also to observe brahmacharya and seek her cooperation in my effort. We shall not

[1] The letter appears to have been written after the addressee's departure for India in December 1912.

share the same bed. I shall look after her in all other ways and bear her pure love." If you can speak these words with knowledge they will have effect and, having announced this, you will find it extremely difficult to seek union with the lady, notwithstanding the fact that you two are married. You will see that this course will keep you free from the difficulties of looking after children, etc., which you have been thinking of.

There has been no settlement yet. I believe there will be one. Even if there is, it is not possible now to leave here before September. I shall send you a cable when I start.

You have correctly explained why unwholesome food produces an immediate effect on persons like us. When Lord Buddha ate the flesh he received as alms, his body fell dead. If, through ignorance or oversight, eggs have been used in Mrs. Besant's[1] food, she vomits it.

It will be a good—an excellent—thing for Valji Fojdar's son to take in water through the nostrils. He should also modify his diet. First, he should fast for a day or two. For some days he should live on fruit diet, and of that, too, only one meal every day. He should take Kuhne baths and eschew supper altogether. Ghee should be washed and mixed well with camphor powder, and this may then be smelt. It will be good to do this three or four times every day. There is no harm in smelling tobacco either. Tobacco can be used with discrimination for medicinal purposes.

You are right in what you say about Sir Isaac Newton's discovery. The well-known scientist Wallace has recently expressed the same view. He says that people's moral sense has in no way improved as a result of all these discoveries.

Don't suppose that no one has ever thought about milk. I am sure there must be quite a few who go without milk. But as I said once,[2] the giving up of meat-eating in India at the instance of some great man was a change of such far-reaching importance that we do not find anyone to have thought or written about milk. This, however, is due to our ignorance. We have not read everything and seen

[1] Annie Besant (1847-1933); theosophist leader, politician and social reformer

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Jamnadas Gandhi", 29-3-1913.

everyone. The best test is this: "Does the thing appeal to reason, leaving aside the question whether or not it was considered in the past?" Moreover, nobody has said or believed that it is a sin to do without milk. Swami Ramatirth's[1] teaching appeared to me very gross in many places. Some of it also seemed morally unsound. His ideas about travel are much too rough and ready. Malbari[2] has better ideas. There is no need whatever for a religious leader from India to go preaching to America. *Karmayoga*[3] imposes limits on us and to cross them would be *moha*[4] and *mamata*[5] on one's part.

I have never believed that Japan and America are advancing. The man who gave up his life to no purpose did nothing worthy. That was self-will on his part and, therefore, a sinful act.

If the husband and wife belong to different religions, there can be no sense of oneness.

Printing presses and newspapers are also evils. Knowing this, we should not venture upon new ones. What I have written in *Hind Swaraj*[6] on this still holds good.

Manilal has written about the episode involving him . . ., so I will say nothing here. It has many lessons to teach.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5647 Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] (1873-1906); Hindu religious thinker, philosopher and poet

[2] Behramji Mervanji Malbari (1854-1912); poet, journalist and social reformer

[3] The concept of doing one's duty disinterestedly and in a spirit of worship, no one type of service being intrinsically superior to another

[4] Self-delusion

[5] Sense of "I" and "mine"

[6] *Vide* "Hind Swaraj", 22-11-1909.

136. LETTER TO UMIASHANKAR MEHTA

Ashadha Vad, 2 [*July, 20, 1913*][1]

CHI. UMIASHANKAR,[2]

I have your letter. It is not certain when I shall be going. There may or may not be a settlement. I have written to Jayashankar to look for an escort. But I see that Jayashankar does not intend to contribute a single pie towards the expense of their Journey. If you would care to meet the expense of sending them I shall send them. I do not think your contributing half the expense will be enough. You may pay half their school expenses. I do not remember the exact month, but it should be twelve months since they came. If that is so, it would be £36 for food and £2 for 10 books every six months, that is, £38 in all. Out of this amount you send £19. It does not matter if you cannot send the money immediately; but keep it in mind and try to send it early. Shanti's health is very good. But he has not grown much in size.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1631. Courtesy: Gunavant Umiashankar Mehta

[1] From the contents and the dateline, this appears to have been written four days before the letter to the addressee (C. W. 1628) written on *Ashadha Vad 6*, the date of which has been inferred July 24, 1913.

[2] Son of Dr. Pranjivandas's brother.

137. LETTER TO BHAVANI DAYAL

[PHOENIX,]
Ashadh Krishna 5 [*July 23, 1913*]

DEAR SHRI BHAVANI DAYAL,

I have your letter. I could not inform you of my departure from Johannesburg because it was so sudden; for this I beg to be excused.

The correspondence with the Minister of the Interior has not come to an end. However, I had a telegram from Pretoria which says that the Government could not attend to any other matter so long as the strike[1] trouble was there. When that is over, I shall go to Johannesburg. We shall know then whether the struggle will continue or a settlement will be arrived at. I am unable to advise whether Swami Mangalanand Puri should come here to preach or to court imprisonment.

Shri Satyadevaji may come here on a visit any time he likes.

Bande Mataram from
MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5735 Courtesy: Vishnudutta Dayal

[1] The reference is to the strike in the Johannesburg gold mine area; *vide* "Riot in Johannesburg", 12-7-1913.

138. LETTER TO REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS

[PHOENIX,

After *July 23, 1913*]

THE REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS
PRETORIA

SIR,

[*Re*:] *Mahomed E. Bhayat: 41/E/857*

With reference to your letter of the 23rd July last, as per the telephonic message sent to you when I was recently in Johannesburg, I have now traced the correspondence I had with Mr. Lane. I beg to refer you to my letter to him of the 11th April 1912 and the official reply dated the 8th May of the same year.[1] Reading the two together, I venture to submit that my interpretation that the permit is to be indefinitely renewed (naturally during the minister's pleasure) is not unwarranted. It always has been my intention as it is now also to ask for a permanent certificate. But I was waiting for the new legislation to be passed. Unfortunately although the legislation has been passed, there remain outstanding questions yet to be settled. If they are satisfactorily settled, I shall hope to make my due submission regarding this lad. Meanwhile, may I ask for further extension of the permit? I observe that you have suggested in your letter to Bhayat of the 26th ultimo that Mr. Bhayat should deposit £10 for the extension to be issued to the boy. I presume however that the powers given to you under Act 36 of 1908 remain unimpaired. If you agree with my interpretation, a deposit is not required. In view of my submission, I hope that you could waive the undertaking required by you in that letter.

I may draw your attention to the fact that the boy is not 17 years but that he is under 16.

I have, etc.,

From a Photostat of the handwritten draft: S. N. 5848

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 11-4-1912.

139. LETTER TO UMIASHANKAR MEHTA

Ashadha Vad, 6 [*July 24, 1913*][1]

CHI. UMIASHANKAR,

I have your letter. I have sent a cheque to Chi. Jayashankar. I have decided to send the children since Bhai Joshi will be accompanying them. He will be leaving tomorrow (Friday). Chi. Jayashankar has flatly refused to pay the expenses, so I have given instructions that the money should be put to my account.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1628. Courtesy: Gunavant Umiashankar Mehta

140. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]
Thursday [*July 24, 1913*]

When will that incomparable time come when I shall be free from bondage outward and internal! When shall I go along the path of the good, having burst the bonds of all associations?

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I propose in my letters to send you translation of one verse per day from the hymn I explained during the fasting week. Let the verse you receive be your chief thought during the day and may it be also your guide.

I have your letter. I was delighted to find you fared so well. I

[1] From the contents and from *Ashadha Vad 6* in the dateline which was a Thurs-day.

was somewhat afraid. The portion you gave yourself was very moderate. I am just now extra cautious, so much [so] that I am very hungry tonight. I had only four tomatoes boiled with the skin off and a pineapple with a few monkey-nuts. I had besides a spoonful of the pawpaw vegetable and a lemon squash. I worked a little in the garden too. Manilal is much better today. He takes two meals. He feels very hungry. He eats well. He worked at the office today and was not so morose as yesterday. I cannot describe to you how I miss my bed companion.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

141. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]

Friday [*July 25, 1913*]

> Having become detached from the qualities of matter, I should consider the body as given to me only for the sake of self-control. There should never be any thought about anything else. There should be not the slightest trace of attachment to bodily pleasures.

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Such is the second verse. I am quite aware of my limitations in translating. I can neither give you the music of the language nor the full spirit of the thought. These you must fill in from your imagination.

I have a letter from Mr. Gokhale in which he apologizes again for not writing to you.

Manilal has given full day's work today. The strain had told on

Mrs. Gandhi. She is now in bed. Did I tell you that Jeki had become saltless? She is that for 8 days as a trial.

Hope you have seen Strukey (?), also the people who were to be seen about the Farm. You should try to pay a visit to the Farm before you return.

You ought to give yourself some time every evening for some uplifting reading.

I am still feeling weak and have not the courage to walk even to the station and back tomorrow, at 11 a.m. I could do it about 7 or 8. But I may feel better tomorrow. I had a fair meal today 6 bananas, pawpaw vegetable, orange and date jam and spoonfuls olive oil, also 2 oz. monkey-nuts.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

142. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [-XXX]

10. ACCIDENTS: DROWNING

We have made a brief study of certain ailments. Everyone should have some knowledge regarding accidents that may occur at any time so that he can render assistance if anyone is in mortal danger. If children are given such knowledge from quite an early age, they are likely to develop kindliness in greater measure.

We shall begin with the treatment to be given to one who may have fallen into water. In England, a philanthropic association has been established to render assistance in such emergencies. It has issued some valuable suggestions. The following note is chiefly based on these, with some modifications and additions. It is said that a person can live for hardly five minutes after he stops breathing. That means that, when a drowning man is taken out of the water, there is little life left in him. Immediate measures have to be taken to keep life going—to bring the drowning person back to consciousness. Two things must especially be attended to in such a case. One is to make the victim resume normal breathing by giving artificial respiration and the second is to give him warmth. When thinking of remedies, it has to be kept in mind that immediate treatment has to be given, if needed, at places like river banks where no equipment is available. It is possible to render treatment to a drowning man only if there are two or three other persons present. These must possess presence of mind, courage and promptness. If they themselves fall into a panic, nothing can be done. If each of the two or three men wants to follow his own method or starts advising the others, there is little hope for the victim. They must immediately recognize the most capable among the themselves and follow his instructions at once.

As soon as the victim is taken out of the water, his wet clothes should be removed. His body should be wiped with any cloth the companions may have. A hand should then be placed on his forehead and he should be gently turned over for a minute. A hand should be pressed against his chest and dirt and water removed from his mouth.

When the tongue comes out, it should be held. This can be easily done with a handkerchief, etc., kept ready in the hand. The tongue should be kept pulled out all the time, till there are signs that life is reviving. The patient should then be turned on his back, but with the head and upper parts a little higher than the feet. A man should now kneel behind his head. The patients' arms should be slowly lifted and drawn full length towards the person volunteering this service. With this the ribs will be lifted and air from without will enter the patient's body. Then the arms should be bent and placed on his chest. Thereby the ribs will be pressed down and the breath exhaled. Hot and cold water should be dashed against the chest. If the materials required to make a fire are within reach or if fire can be obtained immediately from some source, fomentation should be applied and the victim be made warm. Those present should cover him with whatever clothes they have. His body should be vigorously rubbed so as to make it warm. It is necessary to continue these measures for quite some time. Hope should not be abandoned too soon. Dr. Moore states that with these measures a victim resumed breathing even after five hours. They should be taken, therefore, with great energy and promptness. If he comes round, the patient should be given a hot drink. If given orange juice in hot water or a decoction of cinnamon, cloves and pepper, he will quickly rally. It may also help if he is made to smell tobacco. People should not crowd round him as he has need of all the fresh air he can get. Signs of death in these cases are generally as follows:

The victim does not breathe and no heart-beat can be detected by the hand or stethoscope. There is no pulse, the eyes are half closed, the pupils are dilated, the jaws are clenched, the fingers are bent, the tongue is between the teeth, there is froth in the mouth, the nose is slimy and the whole body extremely pale. A feather held over the mouth does not flutter nor does vapour collect on the mirror. If all these symptoms are present, it may be taken that life is extinct. But Dr. Moore says that even with these signs, life is sometimes not over. The only definite symptom of death is that decomposition starts within the body. We may conclude from this that hope should be abandoned only after prolonged treatment has been given.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 26-7-1913

143. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]

Monday morning [*July 28, 1913*]

When the ignorance that deflects true vision is removed and when a knowledge that the body is totally different from the soul is acquired, the seeker will remove all obstacles to true knowledge of the soul and begin to centre on the soul.

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

According to our contract I have omitted the Sunday letter for want of train service.

Manilal, Raojibhai, Maganbhai, Ramdas and the new boy Gokuldas walked to Inanda Falls yesterday. Manilal has gone back to one meal only now.

Parsee Rustomjee is here for a few days. Jalbhai has rejoined his father. You will fix up the oil when you return.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

144. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]

Monday night [*July 28, 1913*]

Steadfastness of the soul shall last to the end of one's earthly existence. And it shall not be capable of being disturbed by afflictions from without or within, no matter of what nature.

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Your two letters before me. Your start was certainly extremely encouraging. I hope that in spite of the temporary outburst of anger, you have been able to continue the progress. May you have strength to carry out your resolutions. I envy you your walks. I do not think I have yet regained my strength. It is an effort to rise up the hill.

Manilal is now almost normal. He seems to have picked up strength.

With love,

Upper House

[PS.]

If the Farm cannot be sold, the security you have offered seems all right.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

145. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE

DURBAN,
July 29,1913

GOKHALE
LONDON

INDUSTRIAL CRISIS BLOCKS PROGRESS NEGOTIATIONS SETTLEMENT.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the original as delivered: C. W. 4844 Courtesy: Servants of India Society

146. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

Tuesday night [*July 29, 1913*][1]

Even the religious discipline must be only with a view to gaining self-control. In a full knowledge of the soul, one must abide by the precepts of the Prophet (Jin). And even these fade away as the soul rises higher in the acquisition of self-knowledge.

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Naturally there was no letter from you today as you could have none from me. Friend Rustomjee is still here. He causes me no trouble and takes very little of my time. He does not want to go to Durban until the two boys have quietened down.

Praying for the continuation of your progress, with love,

UPPER HOUSE

[PS.]

Do not forget to bring the oil please.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

147. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]

Wednesday [*July 30, 1913*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I have your two letters in one cover. Have written to both B. Alexander and Mrs. N. Kallenbach.

Your statement of figures is somewhat rosy. But if the loan can be raised and the office fixed up as you suggest and Mountain View safely let on a lease subject to the right to you to sell and cancel the lease if necessary, you may come out all right. I certainly think that the £500 for the material on the Farm should be somewhere included in your figures. It is as well. The money need not be paid now, especially while the struggle is considered probable. But the matter should be kept in view.

Have you been able to fix up John of the Farm? And what of D. Pollock?

My advice still will be to let the Farm go if there is a buyer for the full value.

Manilal is regaining himself. He works out his hours. He eats very well. I am eating well, take a long time over my meal and am not satisfied. I am very weak. The after-effect has been the worst with me. The ringing noises in the ears were there before but they are very persistent. I am not capable of great physical effort. But I think I shall slowly regain my strength. The mental capacity is still great. The mind seems never to be fatigued. It is an effort now to get up at 4.30 a.m. Today I got up at 5.45 a.m.

Jeki works away nicely and cheerfully. Did I tell you that Manilal had reverted to one meal? Raojibhai, Maganlal, Ramdas, Devdas, Dahya, Sivpujan and Revashankar also have one meal. Mrs. Gandhi is still bed-ridden. She is purely fruitarian. It is hard for her.

Here is the 6th verse.

There shall be freedom from indulgence in the passions rising from the five senses and there shall be no attachment to the working

of the senses. The soul must move without being limited by the bondage of place, time and matter, subject only to the working out, without attachment, of its own previous actions.

Of course you will not hurry to come here so long as you are enjoying peace there and attending to and winding up your affairs in the spirit of the above lines, with sufficient detachment.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

148. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]

Thursday night [*July 31, 1913*]

He is angry with anger, he has sense of respect for his own humility, he is the seer of the false show about him but untouched by it and he is avaricious of avarice itself.

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

You are certainly keeping up the momentum. Am glad you have taken up spiritual reading. It is proper food for the soul.

Have you heard from or about Albrecht?

I am too much disturbed to say more.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

149. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]
August 1, 1913

There shall be no anger even against one who does us serious harm and there shall be no pride even though an emperor should bow the knee before us; there shall be no self-delusion even though the body may perish and no ambition though we may command the wealth of a Croesus [1].

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Yes, you need not come away leaving work that may be progressing under you. I am glad you had a heart-to-heart chat with Mrs. Binion. I know that when we meet again, you will have a great deal of your experiences to give me.

We may take it that the loan will not be an easy matter. If Gordon can take over the Mountain View property as a business propo-sition, your troubles are practically solved. He can hang on to it and therefore he can have nothing to lose. Did you mention it to him? He may do it in order to free you for your spiritual growth. The knowing friends may reserve you for work they will not or cannot do. It is true they may say yours will be purely an experiment. Why not? We make experiments in mundane business. So we may in spiritual matters.

If you are staying long, how about your food? The best thing would be for you to buy sufficient meal and bake bread and biscuits yourself. You [need] not go in for the thing wholesale. The wheat you have there you may bring with you when you come. As you are falling in love with your solitude and as you light the stove regularly, it is no trouble to bake once or twice a week. We have made here banana flour and almond coffee. As Mrs. Gandhi is a fruitarian, you may expect all these delicate complications.

[1] The last king of Lydia, 560-546 B.C., reputed to be the wealthiest man of his age

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

150. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

[JOHANNESBURG,
August 1, 1913]

MY DEAR HENRY,

I see that you have not allowed the grass [to grow] under your feet. Already you have worked the oracle. I see your hand in Reuter's cable also. All this does not surprise me. You have accustomed me to those experiences of your ability to identify yourself with your cause.

The strike affair here paralyses all other activity. It is impossible to expect the ministry to do anything just now for us. But your work there will tell whenever the negotiations are reopened. I see that I have now hardly £150 left with me. I do not know how to tide over the prolongation of the agony. If the struggle were to start, we should be independent of funds. For the maintenance will come from the begging. But in the state of suspense the difficulty is very great. If Mr. Gokhale is well, you may discuss the situation. On no account do we want a public appeal. But a private donor will solve the difficulty. You must however use your judgment. Please let it be made clear to the donor if there be one that he will give, if he does, not for families in distress but to facilitate my hanging on and to enable me to continue in comparative ease the undertakings we have in hand and which will enable us to declare passive resistance whenever we want to. Whilst I give you the financial position, you need not give yourself anxiety over it. If you can do anything, you should do it. If you cannot, I shall manage somehow. We have still got the jewellery!—the gifts—in the Bank.[1] I shall not hesitate to use it, if the necessity arises.

[1] The reference is to a trust, created by Gandhiji in 1901, of gifts and ornaments presented to him; *vide* "Letter to parsee Rustomjee", 18-10-1901.

With love to all,

Yours sincerely,
BHAI[1]

[PS.]

You will study the remarks on the regulations. I have reproduced the Senate debate for your use, should the struggle revive. It so thoroughly discredits Fischer.

From the original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 930

151. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [*-XXXI*]

11. ACCIDENTS: BURNS

When any person's clothing or something else about him catches fire, we get into a panic, which is like branding a man who has already sustained burns[2]—instead of being helpful to the victim, we make things worse for him. It is everyone's duty therefore to know what remedies to apply to a man who has suffered burns.

The person whose clothes catch fire should also not become terrified but, if it is the loose end of a garment, should promptly rub it with the hand. If the entire clothing has caught fire, he shouldroll on the ground or, if there is a carpet or similar thick cloth within reach, he should wrap himself in it. If water is available, it should be thrown on the flames. As soon as the fire is extinguished, he should be examined for burns. If there are any, the cloth is likely to stick to those parts. This should not be pulled off. The remaining clothing should be cut round with a pair of scissors and the part that has stuck to the skin left in place. Great care should be taken not to tear the skin. Leaving the victim in this condition, one should collect clean earth forthwith and mix it with cold water to make a poultice and this should be tied over the burns so that the victim will suffer the minimum of pain. If cloth is sticking to the burns, it may safely be left

[1] "Brother"; this was how associates addressed Gandhiji.
[2] A Gujarati saying

under the bandage. As soon as the mud dries, the poultice should be changed. There is no need to be afraid of using cold water.

For anyone who may not think of this treatment at the moment, here are others which will be useful to note. They are taken from a book by a British writer. Take a green banana leaf and spread olive oil or sweet oil [sesame oil] over it. Then place it over the burn and tie it up. In the absence of a leaf, a clean soft cloth soaked in oil will do as well. A mixture of linseed oil and lime water in equal proportion and well shaken is also effective. If cloth pieces get stuck and cannot later be removed, lukewarm milk and water should be used to soak them. When they are softened, it will be possible to remove them. If oil bandages have been used, they should be changed after two days in the first instance and subsequently renewed every day. If a blister is formed, it is necessary to open it. The skin need not be removed.

If the burn has only caused redness of the skin, there is no better remedy than a mud poultice. The burning will cease immediately.

If the fingers have been burnt, they should be kept carefully separated from each other by clean bandages. Sometimes a person receives burns through a strong acid which falls on his skin. The remedies suggested above are effective in this case also.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 2-8-1913

152. LETTER T0 JAMNADAS GANDHI

[JOHANNESBURG,]

Shravana Sud 6 [*August 7,1913*][1]

CHI. JAMNADAS,

You say you were scared by what Harilal told you about baths. There is no reason for it, though. Harilal has been talking in his ignorance. All that caution is unnecessary. I never bother to take the temperature and so on. There is no need to. The temperature of the water should be lower than that of the body. The rest one knows from experience. Whenever Kuhne baths seem to be called for, they may be taken without the least hesitation.

This is the reason behind the notion that tomato, lime, etc., are a cause of fever. When they are taken with a heavy meal and illness follows, it is blamed on them. Secondly, when a person whose blood is excessively hot through the use of spices, such as chillies and pepper, and pulses and things of that nature, starts taking lime, etc., there is likely to be a crisis at first. If, however, he gives up the use of spices and similar things and starts the use of lime, etc., according to need, there is no doubt that his blood will be purified. A man who has been in a very hot place and then suddenly exposes himself to a breeze may get cramps. It is possible that lime may have a similar effect on one who has been accustomed to eating chillies, etc.

I think I have written to you about looking upon Brahmins with reverence

I am not against a good school, but I believe that a school with too many pupils cannot be a good one. Moreover, that alone is a school in which the pupils are on the campus for all the twenty-four hours. Otherwise, one receives education of two different sorts.

When I am there, the Press will continue to work as usual. Mr. Polak will carry on his practice. Miss Schlesin is already fixed up elsewhere. Mr. Kallenbach will very likely accompany me. Miss West

[1] This appears to have been written after the addressee's departure for India in December 1912.

will stay on in Phoenix for the time being. Manilal will go with me.

We need not assume that all our *shastras* have been written after careful thinking and from knowledge. Charvaka's[1] is also a*shastra.* If by the term *shastra* we mean that alone which contains perfect knowledge, then, of course, we can say that all *shastras* have been written from knowledge. From this point of view, any *shastra* which mentions human sacrifice, etc., should be taken to be mere ignorance. The idea may have been interpolated in the genuine *shastras* at some later time. One who wants to realize the *atman* need not go in for such research. It is the concern of the historian; we, on the other hand, should look for the essence, the spirit, of every text or utterance. Why should we put ourselves to the bother of reading sense in their nonsense in the belief that all *shastras* are *shastras* [in fact]?

In India, as elsewhere, knowledge and ignorance go hand in hand and so we find obnoxious practices, like offering sacrifices to Kali[2], followed in the name of religion. We may not concern ourselves at present about stopping them either. Our first concern is that we should realize the *atman*. When we have learnt that lesson and mastered it, we shall be able to solve all others with little effort.If Vibhishana[3] went over to Shri Ramachandra with no selfish motive, what he did was perfectly right. Who would conceal from God the fault of even a blood brother? One is, moreover, justified in seeking God's help to undo a brother's evil.

It is not possible to cling to the literal meaning of the verse you have quoted from the *Bhagavata*[4]. Krishna alone knows the meaning of His sport. He may, submitting to the urge of desire, pursue love, but we creatures of flesh and blood cannot do likewise. The freedom He may have by virtue of his Godhead, we cannot possibly take. Apart from this, the author of the *Bhagavata* wrote what he did about Krishna within the limits of his own knowledge. No one knows the

[1] A philosopher who propounded materialism

[2] The Mother Goddess in her destructive form

[3] Younger brother of Ravana in the *Ramayana,* who urged his brother to return Sita and make peace with Rama

[4] One of the 18 *Puranas,* sacred narrative poems in Sanskrit, part history and part legend; it depicts the love of Radha and Krishna as symbolical of the love of the human soul for God.

real Krishna.

For the present, you should spend your time in the service of your parents, in manual labour and studies.

I cannot say where I shall settle down permanently. I don't know where a photograph of mine may be found. You need not insist on securing one. Mr. Kallenbach's will be available.

I have not passed the test qualifying me for *moksha*. All my desires have not been subjugated. I cannot still claim to havemastered the palate. I dare not assert that the desire for sexual pleasure will never get the better of me in whatever state I may be. Love for the wife, the sons and other members of the family has not yet melted away. All that can be said about me is that I am one who is striving earnestly to attain *moksha*.

All your letters, which I have been carrying with me for so many days, are now answered. You may ask whatever else you may yet feel like asking.

I have been in Johannesburg for the last ten days. I have come here to revive the struggle in case a settlement fails to come off. I cannot say what will happen. I am waiting for a reply from Pretoria. Mr. Polak has gone to England as desired by Mr. Gokhale.

Let me know your daily routine. Write to Kotwal. His address: Kotwal House, Thana.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5648 Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

153. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [*-XXXII*]

12. ACCIDENTS: SNAKE-BITE

Men have always feared snakes. There are countless superstitions, too, connected with the serpent. We are afraid even to mention its name. At night we refer to it as "the big creature". Among Hindus, the snake is an object of worship. *Nagpanchami*[1] is regarded especially as the day of snake worship. There is a popular belief that the earth is supported on the head of the serpent *Sheshnag.* God also is held to be *Sheshshayi,* i.e., lying on *Sheshnag.* God Shiva is said to wear a snake as a garland. "*Sheshnag* with his thousand mouths could not describe this"; in saying this we attribute intelligence and knowledge to the serpent. There is a similar idea in Christianity also. "Be wise as the serpent", so runs a saying in English. The serpent *karkotak* conferred a boon upon Nala[2] by biting him, thereby making him so ugly and deformed through its poison, that none would look upon him with evil intent as hewandered in the forests. The serpent also stands, in the Bible, for the Devil. It was he who tempted Eve.

Thus there are all kinds of beliefs and tales about this creature. It is easy to understand the dread of snakes. If a snake-bite takes full effect, death is inevitable, and no one wishes to die. Hence this fear. It is also easy to see how snakes have been worshipped out of fear. If the snake had been a tiny creature, it would not perhaps have inspired such worship despite its being the terror that it is. But being long, large, beautiful and of strange aspect, it is even ceremonially worshipped.

It is more difficult to say without thinking why the snake has been credited with intelligence. Modern scientists aver that it has none. According to them, a snake should be killed at sight. Government statistics show that in India 20,000 people perish annually from

[1] Fifth day of the bright half of *Bhadrapad*

[2] A victim of the Kalipurusha, the malignant spirit of the Iron Age, he lost his kingdom and was cruelly separated from his wife, Damayanti. The story is told in the *Mahabharata* for the benefit of Yudhishthira.

snake-bite. I think the figure must be higher. The Government offers a reward for every poisonous snake killed; it is doubtful, however, if the offer has served any useful purpose. This confirms the general experience that the snake does not bite without cause. It bites only if attacked or teased. Does this possibly indicate intelligence, or, if not that, harmlessness? It uses its fangs in its own defence. Man also uses teeth for that purpose often enough. To attempt to make India or any other place entirely free of snakes is like trying to wrestle with the air. Snakes can be prevented from coming to a particular spot. Killing the ones found entering the place will prevent others. They will come to realize that going to the place is like walking into the jaws of death. But this can be done only for a limited area. The attempt cannot be made over a vast country like India. To seek, therefore, to kill and extirpate the snakes entirely in this way from the country amounts to throwing money down the drain.

Moreover, it is the same God who creates snakes [as well as ourselves]. We cannot understand all the works of God. Surely, He has not created beings like tigers, lions, snakes and scorpions only so that we may kill them! If the snakes themselves were to get together and consider how men killed them at sight, they would ask if God had created man for the sole purpose of destroying them. Just as that would be a mistaken belief, so would be ours regarding snakes.

St. Francis was a great *Yogi* in Europe. He used to wander in the forests among reptiles, etc., but they never harmed him. On the contrary, they were friends with him. Thousands of *Jogis*[1] and fakirs live in the forests of India. They move fearlessly among tigers, wolves, snakes, etc., and one never hears of their coming to any harm on that account. It might be argued that there must be casualties even among them through snake-bites, or predatory animals; this is very likely. We know, though, that in comparison with the great number of reptiles, etc., the *jogis* and fakirs are so few that if these deadly creatures, were set on destroying them, not one of them would survive. We are told—and we believe it to be true—that these *jogis* and fakirs keep no weapons with which to withstand these beasts. This proves that some dreaded beasts are friendly to or, at any rate, do not touch some *Jogis*

[1] Corrupt form of *Yogi*, used commonly for ascetic

and fakirs. I personally feel that when we rid ourselves of all enmity towards any living creatures, the latter also cease to regard us with hate. Compassion or love is man's greatest excellence. Without this he cannot cultivate love of God. We come to realize in all the religions, more or less clearly, that compassion is the root of the higher life.

Furthermore, is it not possible that the very existence of creatures like snakes or the cruelty in their nature reflects our own attitudes? Is there not cruelty enough in man? On our tongues there is always poison similar to a snake's. We tear our brethren to pieces as wolves and tigers do. Religious books tell us that when man becomes pure in heart, the lamb and the tiger will live like friends. So long as in our own selves there is conflict between the tiger and the lamb, is it any wonder that there should be a similar conflict in this world-body? We but mirror the world. All the tendencies present in the outer world are to be found in the world of our body. If we could change ourselves, the tendencies in the world would also change. As a man changes his own nature, so does the attitude of the world change towards him. This is the divine mystery supreme. A wonderful thing it is and the source of our happiness. We need not wait to see what others do.

The purpose of writing at such length on the subject of snakebite is that if, instead of merely suggesting a few concrete remedies, we go deeper into the matter, we discover a miraculous remedy with which to face all such terrors and, if even one reader adopts it, my writing this will not have been in vain. It has been said earlier, moreover, that the purpose of these chapters on health is not merely to promote physical health but examine the means of cultivating health of every kind.

Even modern research-workers admit that a man who is healthy, whose blood is not overheated and whose food is wholesome, will not be affected by snake venom. On the other hand, if a man's blood is overheated with intoxicants, spices, or hot foods, snake venom spreads through his body in no time and he succumbs to it quickly. All this has been experimentally established by medical experts. One of them has gone so far as to declare that the blood of a person who discards salt and lives exclusively on fruits becomes so pure that it is able to combat poison of any kind. It is not possible to confirm from experi-

ence how far this last statement is true. Moreover, having abstained from salt, etc., for a year or two, one is not justified in believing that the blood which had lost its quality through a life-time's abuse had regained it because of wholesome living for a year or two.

It has also been demonstrated through experiments that if any poison gets into the system of one who is nervous or in a rage, the effect is instantaneous and more potent. Everyone can discover for himself that, when frightened or angered, the pulse is faster and the heart-beats increase. Whenever the blood circulates at a greater speed, it becomes hot. Heat generated by anger, etc., is unnatural and, therefore, deleterious. There is no reason to doubt that rage is a kind of fever. We can at least infer from this that one of the best defences against snake-bite is to have only as much as we need of wholesome food, that is, food which Nature has placed at our disposal, to avoid anger and fear and, even when bitten by a snake, not to fall dead with fear before even a remedy has been tried. One should have confidence in the potent effect of the purity of one's life and ultimately take courage in the thought that the length of one's days is that ordained by God.

That many deaths which are apparently due to snake-bite are in reality caused by fear or wrong treatment has been confirmed by Mr. Fitz-Simon, head of the museum in Port Elizabeth. He has studied snakes for many years and performed experiments on their poison. He has written much about the different types of snakes and also suggested remedies for their bites. He states that he has known cases where the condition had become serious owing to sheer panic and others where the persons had died as a result of extremely painful remedies.

All snakes are not poisonous and even the venom of those that are does not cause instantaneous death. Moreover, the most poisonous snake does not always get time to empty the entire poison from its fangs into our blood. Knowing this, no person need be terrified by a snake-bite. An easy remedy is current nowadays which one can apply oneself. This is as follows:

A handkerchief should be bound tightly just above the spot where one has been bitten by the snake. This can be tightened by

means of a tourniquet made with a pencil or piece of stick. Theidea is to prevent the venom from circulating through the arteries. Then a cut should be made, half an inch in size, over the bite with a fine blade and allowed to bleed. After this, the purple powder of a salt called potassium permanganate should be rubbed into the cut. This powder is said to be a potent and unfailing remedy. A tube about one and a half inches in size and shaped like a stick, with facility for holding the potassium permanganate on one side and with a small, sharp blade on the other, is also available in the market for one shilling. If this implement is not at hand, either another person or the victim himself should suck the wound and spit out the matter he has sucked up. This cannot be done by anyone who has sores in the mouth as the sucked-up matter contains poison. This method is effective only if it is employed within five to seven minutes of the bite. Once the poison has entered the blood stream, it is rarely that it can be neutralized. Juste, who has experimented with mud treatment, declares that he cured a patient who was supposed to have succumbed to a snake-bite. The victim was placed in a hole dug in the earth and given warmth; the poison was drawn out, and there he was, rising again. Juste reports other similar instances. I have no personal experience of snake-bite but, having tried the mud treatment in many other cases, I have come to have unshakeable faith in it. Immediately after a cut has been made at the spot where the bite has occurred and potassium permanganate rubbed in, or the poison sucked out, a large mud poultice, half an inch thick, should be placed over it. For instance, if the hand has been bitten, it would be well to cover the entire arm with the poultice. Everyone should keep a tin of such earth ready in his house. It will be excellent if the earth be ready powdered and strained, and better still if kept outside in the sun, at a level where water cannot reach it. Bandages made from torn clothes should be kept handy. These preparations prove useful not only in cases of snake-bite, but also for other accidents, injuries, etc.

If the patient feels drowsy or his breathing stops, artificial respiration, as in the case of drowning, should be given. In the former case, he should be given warm water or a decoction of cloves and cinnamon. The victim should be kept in the open air but well covered. If his body is getting cold, hot water bottles should be placed round

his body or he should be warmed with the help of flannel pieces wrung out in hot water.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 9-8-1913

154. LETTER TO IMMIGRATION OFFICER

[JOHANNESBURG,
August 10, 1913]

THE IMMIGRATION OFFICER,
PRETORIA

SIR,

I understand that an Indian named Purshotam Mavji was, whilst on his way to India, deprived of his registration certificate last week. This certificate was obtained by him in terms of Act 36 of 1908. Will you kindly let me know whether the information given to me is correct, and if it is, in terms of which section of the new Act Mr. Purshotam Mavji was deprived of his certificate?[1]

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5854

[1] On August 15, the Registrar of Asiatics wired Gandhiji, asking by whom and at which place Purshotam's certificate was taken. *Vide* "An Effect of the New Act", 16-8-1913 and also "Letter to Registrar of Asiatics", after 1-9-1913.

155. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY FOR INTERIOR

[JOHANNESBURG,]
August 11, 1913

WROTE MR. LANE LAST WEEK.[1] I OBSERVE HE IS ON LEAVE. COULD YOU PLEASE ASCERTAIN AND WIRE WHETHER GENERAL SMUTS COULD NOW DEAL WITH MY PROPOSALS. WILL WAIT ON HIM IF REQUIRED. WIRE PHOENIX.[2]

GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 13-9-1913

156. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

PHOENIX
Thursday [August] 15 [1913][1]

He shall be naked, he shall be shorn, he shall be unwashed, he shall not have to wash his mouth; he shall neither ornament his hair nor any other part of his body and he shall have gained complete mastery over himself and have been free from every form of bondage.

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

It is now nearly 5 a.m. It has been intensely cold and windy these two days and we have been obliged to sleep inside the room. I have a cable saying Polak is leaving on the 30th August and reaching here on the 28th Sept. I am delighted. If there is a settlement, he will

[1] The letter referred to is not available.

[2] To this the following reply was received: "Yours yesterday. Your proposals are receiving Minister's careful consideration and he hopes to let you know a little later what his views are, as he wishes first to consult his colleagues. I will advise you in due course whether necessary for you to come here." For the letter which followed this, *vide* Appendix "Letter from E. M. Gorges", (19-8-1913).

be here just when we are ready to leave. And the cable from Dr. Mehta says:"I do not agree with you. Terrible outrage has been done, damaging to all. I do not approve of your action." This has reference probably to hair-cutting or to all the penances and vows.[2] We shall see. He cannot understand. He is too much in the world. Hope the fire generated by the fast continues.

With love,

Yours,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

157. AN EFFECT OF THE NEW ACT

We understand that an Indian named Purshotam Mavji, a British Indian, duly registered in terms of Act 36 of 1908 (Transvaal), was deprived of his registration certificate whilst he was on his way to India and was told by the officer who took the certificate from him that it would be restored to him if he returned within one year of the date of his departure from the Transvaal. We do hope that our information is not correct or that, if it is correct, it is merely an error committed by an overzealous officer. But if the Act is interpreted by the Government to mean that the rights acquired under the Registration Act of the Transvaal are adversely affected, it would be one more grievance against the Government and a further justification for a revival of the struggle.

Indian Opinion, 16-8-1913

158. THE LATE SIR ADAMJEE PEERBHAI

We learn through Reuter's cables with regret that Sir Adamjee Peerbhai, a great philanthropist of Bombay, is no more. He was a wealthy merchant who knew how to use his money. He was best known to many as the owner of a famous sanatorium in Bombay. But his charities were not confined to a particular project or persons. They were most catholic. Sir Adamjee's son, Mr. Cureembhai, it will be remembered, paid a visit to Natal some years ago. Ever since that time, a link was established between the Indians of South Africa and the late Sir Adamjee, who always took a kindly interest in all South African Indians who visited him. We sympathise with the deceased's family in their loss.

Indian Opinion, 16-8-1913

159. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [-*XXXIII*]

13. ACCIDENTS: SCORPION AND OTHER STINGS

We have a saying, “May none suffer the agony of a scorpion sting”, so unbearable it is. As a matter of fact, it is far more painful than snake-bite and yet we dread the latter more, for it is likely to prove fatal. A scorpion sting rarely causes death. Dr. Moore says that one whose blood is pure suffers less pain.

The remedies for this and similar stings are simple. A cut should be made at the spot with a sharp knife or with the special instrument used for snake-bite, and some blood allowed to escape. The cut should then be sucked and the poison spat out. A bandage should be tied a little above the spot, to prevent the poison from spreading, and a large mud poultice applied. With the latter, much of the pain will probably subside at once.

Some books recommend the frequent application of a compress soaked in equal parts of water and vinegar or washing of the area with salt water. If the affected part can be held in the solution, it should be. But the mud poultice is by far the most effective remedy, as anyone unfortunate enough to be stung by a scorpion can test for himself. It must be remembered that the poultice should be as large as possible. The use of two seers of earth for the purpose will not be excessive. If a finger has been stung, it will not be too much to extend the poultice as far as the elbow. If the mud is placed in a long vessel and the arm buried in it, the pain is immediately relieved. Even for the stings of centipedes, bees, etc., the remedies are the same.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-8-1913

160. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEALTH [-*XXXIV*]

CONCLUSION

These chapters on the subject of health have been appearing for the past few months. They have now come to an end. If I get time, I plan to publish, as a sort of supplement, the qualities and uses of a number of simple materials. The present series, however, ends with the preceding chapter. Before I take-leave of my readers, I feel it will not be out of place if we once again examine the purpose of these chapters.

I have repeatedly asked myself why I wrote them. I am not *a vaidya.* My knowledge of the subject is but superficial. Is it not likely that my suggestions have been made after inadequate thought or observation? In truth, both study and observation are bound to be incomplete, a process without end. Every day new facts are observed and new ideas emerge. Why, then, this effort? Thus has my mind been perplexed.

And yet, medical science is itself based on inconclusive experiments. Most of it is quackery, as I have shown. With so much of it about, if these chapters are also reckoned as such, no great harm will be done ! They have been written from a worthy motive. The intention is not to recommend what medicines to take after the onset of a disease. The more immediate purpose, rather, has been to show how sickness may be averted. A little thought will show that the steps for prevention of diseases are easy enough. No specialized knowledge is necessary for this. The difficulty lies in taking to that way of life. I have felt it proper to write on certain diseases, but only in order to show that most ailments have a common origin and, as a result, the treatment also should be common to them all. Moreover, despite all precautions, the diseases mentioned in these chapters do occasionally occur. Some remedies for these, one finds, are known to all. If my experience is added to these, nothing is likely to be lost.

The main question, however, still remains to be considered. Why is good health necessary? We behave as if no such necessity exists. To

be sure, rather than build a stout and healthy body and give it over to the enjoyment of luxuries, regard the body as the only thing worth preserving and be puffed up with pride to see it strong, it will be better to have it rotting with leprosy.

All religions have looked upon this body as a place where one may meet and recognize God. It is called the House of the Lord. It has been leased to us, all the rent we have to pay being praises of the Master. Another condition in the rent note is that we must not misuse it. It should be kept clean and pure inside and out and returned to the Master in due course in the same condition in which it came to us. If all the conditions are duly fulfilled, the Master will reward us at the end of our tenure and will make us his heirs.

All living creatures have bodies alike in their design, in that they have organs for hearing, sight, smell and pleasure. But the human body has been described in prose and verse as a *ratnachintamani*. The term signifies a jewel which secures to one anything one may wish for. In an animal body, the soul cannot attain to the highest knowledge and cultivate devotion to God. Without these, there can be no freedom for the soul and, so long as the soul has not attained freedom, there can be no true happiness and no ending to our real suffering. This body is of some service only if it is well used, that is, made the abode of God, otherwise, it is a filthy mass of bones, flesh and blood, and the breath and water that exude from it are full of poison. Of all the excreta coming out of the innumerable openings in the body, there is nothing that we would wish to retain. One is nauseated at the very thought or sight or touch of them. It is only with the greatest difficulty that we can prevent them from being infested with worms. By means of the body, we practise a thousand things which we would do better to avoid, cunning, self-indulgence, deceit, stealing, adultery, etc. Its desires are endless.[1] Even when they are all gratified, it is so like a glass bangle that it has less strength to resist a blow than has a broken vessel. It is destroyed in an instant.

Such a state is quite natural for the body. Anything that can be used for the highest purpose is also capable of being misused.

[1] The original Gujarati saying literally means: "That little pot must needs have thirteen things."

Otherwise, it would be impossible to know or estimate its value. We can measure the value of sunlight because we experience the darkness that follows the sun's absence. In that same sun, without which we cannot live, resides the power to turn us to ashes. A king can be both magnanimous and wicked.

God is striving for mastery over the body, and so is Satan engaged in a desperate struggle for it. When it is under the control of God, it is like a jewel. When it passes into the control of the Devil, it is a pit of filth. If engrossed in pleasure, gorging itself the wholeday with all variety of putrifying food, exuding evil odours, with limbs employed in thieving, the tongue uttering unworthy words and taking in unwholesome things, the ears hearing, the eyes seeing and the nose smelling what they ought not to, the body is worse than hell. Everyone recognizes hell for what it is. But though we use the body as if it were hell, we go on pretending that it is heaven. Such is our hypocrisy in regard to the body. Knowing a latrine for what it is, we shall know its right use. If a splendid hall, however, comes to be used as a lavatory, the result is bound to be evil. Therefore, if the body be in the Devil's control, it would be far better to desire its destruction, rather than its well-being.

In these chapters on health, an effort has been made to bring home the truth that the body can remain in health only by obeying the laws of God. It can never be healthy if it the Devil. Where there is real health, there alone is true happiness possible, and in order to achieve real health we must conquer the palate. If we succeed in this, all other organs will be automatically under our control and one who has this body under control can subdue the world because such a one becomes God's heir, a part of Him. Rama is not in the *Ramayana*, nor Krishna in the *Gita*. *Khuda* is not in the Koran, nor Christ in the Bible. They all live and have their being in the purity of human conduct, which springs from morality. Morality consists in truth, which is the same as *Shiva*[1]. You may know it by whatever name you please. That one may have a glimpse, if only occasional, of this truth in these chapters on health has been the underlying purpose of this effort.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 16-8-1913

[1] God of austerity and self-mastery in the Hindu trinity

161. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

August 16, 1913

He is equidisposed towards friend and foe; he is equiminded whether he is respected or insulted; he is the same whether he lives or dies and is of the purest mind when he is released from the bondage of the world.

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

This I am writing at the Press whilst the preparations for printing are going on. I expect to hear from you about Hoosen and Jalbhai. If an opportunity occurs you will not fail to sell either Mountain View or Tolstoy Farm. I wish you could now let the mules and the wagon go. I suppose you have already paid many times 4/- to make up the £2-10 which you would have lost if the mules had gone a fortnight ago. When you run short of your supply of provisions, you will not fail to bake I know. What about the oil bill? If you let me have it, I shall send you cheque.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

162. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

IN THE TRAIN, ON WAY TO PHOENIX,
[After *August 16 1913*][1]

CHI. MANILAL,

I hope you have taken with you the *I*[*ndian*] *O*[*pinion*] file. You should be very much on your guard against laziness.

See that you get up not later than four in the morning, even if you have to force yourself to do it. Being none too fit, I am rather weak in this matter; you should not take my consequent irregularity on this account as an example to be followed.

Make it a regular practice to complete the appointed work for each day. Do everything after careful thinking and with understanding. When asked by Mr. Ritch, you should have given whatever reply you wanted to. Now, however, when you are yourself again and have settled down to regular work, you should pay him a visit one evening and spend an hour or two with him. It would be better not to go before the middle of next week.

Also, be regular with the exercises in Arithmetic. Among the hours we counted, one for these exercises.... [2]

... and it will also be possible to include it in the table of contents of the Chapters on Health.

Write to me every day without fail, even on Sundays, and let me know whatever you want to say.

Always take pleasure and keen interest in being of service to others. Last evening, it should have immediately occurred to you to carry the lantern. When the guests arrive, they should be immediately received and welcomed with due regard. Protect yourself against heat and cold, but don't feel miserable.

There is a leather bag of ours there, the one which Kallenbach

[1] The last instalment of articles on health referred to in the letter was published in *Indian Opinion*, 16-8-1913.

[2] Here two pages of the letter are missing.

had taken away. There are some baskets also. Keep them all. They will be useful to us.

Since there is some wheat in stock, it should be ground into flour and used for making bread. Afterwards, it will be better to order flour. The bread made of it is generally good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 101 Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

163. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]

Monday [*August 18, 1913*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I am glad the loan is about to be paid up. The calmer you are in all your dealings, the better you will be and feel. This is a truism but it is well to see it repeated by a friend in black and white. For according to yesterday's verse, you have to stare lions and tigers in the face in lonely mountains unmoved. That day may be far off but a beginning must be made and the face set forwards. Dickson is friendly to an extent only. He has to serve not two but three masters … you, the company and himself. The order of service is, of course, the reverse. If he can serve you after serving himself and the company, he will certainly do so, equally certainly not otherwise. Let us realize this fully and act accordingly. We must not expect the impossible from him.

The Doke memorial service[1] may bring me to Johannesburg on Sunday. I am awaiting a reply from Smuts too. I take it you are taking an active part in alleviating the grief of the family. You will sign no documents regarding the loan or anything else.

Of course it would be monstrous if you thanked [me] for

[1] For Rev J.J. Doke; vide "The Late Mr. Joseph J. Doke", 23-8-1913.

anything done there. Either it is your home equally with mine or it is not. Love does not must not speak, never thank.

Mrs. Gandhi is getting on but slowly. She becomes in the same proportion that I can become impersonal and therefore purely gentle towards her, no matter how she behaves. If I consider her my own specially and then become hot, she too becomes heated and both of us suffer. How true that we are all in the same boat. One man springs a leak and if we sit with folded hands, all must sink. Another who knows repairs it and even the mad one who sprang the leak is saved! Why not? Both did according to their lights.

Here is the 12th verse:

He does not wince even whilst he is going through severe austerities; he is not pleased because he has delicate dishes spread before him; he believes that a particle of dust and the riches of the gods are all transformations of the same matter.

With love,

Yours,

UPPER HOUSE

[PS.]

It was very cold here too during last week.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

164. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

PHOENIX,
Wednesday morning, August 20, 1913

Thus having gained victory over impediments to the building up of character, he shall enter upon a stage where one's acts are of the purest; and then having thus gone up step by step, he arrives at a state in which there is contemplation of the Highest and Purest.

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

You must have received the news from Miss Schlesin of my intended departure for Johannesburg on Friday, reaching there early on Sunday morning. I can ill afford to come just now. Mrs. Gandhi is so bad and she is helpless and entirely reliant on me for everything just now. But I fancy that I ought to attend the memorial service. If Mrs. Gandhi is very bad by Friday, I might be obliged to cancel my departure. And if she is not well, I would like to return on Monday. If she is well I would stay and force the pace with General Smuts from whom I have now a wire saying my proposals are under consideration by the Cabinet.[1] Thus you see one has to be at the mercy of fate even regarding one's immediate movements. But as Carpenter has pointed out, we make emphatic arrangements about the future. The more ignorant we are, the surer we become!

With love,

Yours,
UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India.

[1] *Vide* also "Telegram to Secretary for Interior", 11-8-1913 and "Letter from E. M. Gorges", 19-8-1913.

165. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

PHOENIX,
August 21, [1913][1]

Having crossed the great ocean of illusion, he shall rest where there is no darkness and having become entirely free from desires and being centred in Self, he shall attain the pure knowledge.

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Am preparing to come. Manilal will probably go with me and if I have to return to Phoenix immediately he will stay there till I return. Dahya also comes with me. So you see I am not pressing anyone to keep his boys with me. Hanif is in Durban on his way to Mombasa. What a tragedy! Mrs. Gandhi seems to be somewhat better.

I am glad you find in Grimmer a good man. The firmer you are in your ideals, the more you will naturally impress people who should be impressed. But it is a long discipline of which we dare not be weary. Yes, you may have to mix with and live among stinking men. Better therefore to make a virtue of necessity by travelling 3rd. But of course I had suggested your travelling 2nd, as you had your 2nd excursion [ticket]. That you phoned to Gordon having gone earlier is nothing. But the whole thing is nothing. I simply pointed out how a poor man would have less acted.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] `From the contents

166. THE LATE MR. JOSEPH J. DOKE[1]

Mr. Doke is no more! The thought is terrible. He who was seen only the other day by a host of friends, when he set out on his journey) to the North-western border of Rhodesia, close to the Congo border, full of hope and buoyancy, has gone to his reward. And he quitted this mortal frame without any of his relations by his side. Even his son Clement, who accompanied him, was sent home. But in a death like this is summed up Mr. Doke's life. He claimed no exclusive relationship with anybody. To him every human being was truly a friend and brother. He, therefore, died surrounded by newly-made friends. His life preached the gospel of work. He died in harness, doing his duty. His life preached love to his fellowmen. He died whilst finding further fields for his loving activity. And as he loved, so is his death today mourned by not only his European congregation, not only by Englishmen, but also by many of his Native, Chinese and Indian friends. In a place where even men of religion are not free from the local prejudice against colour, Mr. Doke was among the few who know no distinction of race, colour or creed. Though dead, Mr. Doke lives through his work of love and charity in the hearts of all who had the privilege of coming in contact with him.

Mr. Doke's energy was inexhaustible. He was a man of many activities. In his own department—that of preaching—he was eloquent and earnest. He said nothing he did not mean. He advised no rules of conduct for which he was not himself prepared to die. His preaching, therefore, was effective. He was an able writer. He wrote a memoir of his own grandfather. He contributed to magazines. He wrote *An Indian Patriot in South Africa*—a popular history of the story of Indian passive resistance. Lord Ampthill wrote a very flattering introduction to it. To Mr. Doke it was purely a labour of love. He believed in the Indian cause and the book was one of the many ways in which he helped it. Only a short time ago was published his book, *The Secret City*— a romance of the Karoo. It is a wonderful piece of imaginative work. The book has already passed through the second

[1] This was published as "A Memoir specially written for *Indian Opinion*".

edition and has been translated into Dutch. He was so impressed with the Indian campaign of passive resistance that he was engaged in writing an elaborate treatise on passive resistance as a rule of conduct. For writing it, he had specially studied a number of books bearing on the subject.

He was an artist of no mean order. Some of his paintings are worth treasuring. His irrepressible humour can be traced in many cartoons he drew for a New Zealand paper.

Mr. Doke had a frail body but a mind of adamant. His jaws showed the determination of the owner. He feared no man because he feared God so. He believed in his own religion with a burning passion, but he respected all the other great faiths of the world. He detested lip Christianity, but he considered that final salvation was possible only through heart Christianity.

His special work for Indians during practically the whole of his stay in Johannesburg is too well known to the readers to need recapitulation here. But it is not known to many that he came to the Indian cause uninvited. He was ever a seeker, ever a friend of the weak and oppressed. As soon, therefore, as he came to Johannesburg, he set about finding out the problems that engaged people's attention. He found the Indian problem to be one of them, and immediately sought out the leaders, learnt the position from them, studied the other side of the question and, finding the Indian cause to be wholly just, allied himself to it with a rare zeal and devotion. He risked loss of popularity among his congregation. But that was no deterrent to him. When the Editor of this journal was in India, Mr. Doke's was the guiding hand, and never did a week pass during a period of nearly six months, but Mr. Doke sent his ably-written and well-informed leading articles. He guided, too, the deliberations of the British Indian Association, jointly with Mr. Kallenbach, at a most critical period of its history. When he went to America in connection with his Church, a grateful community held a banquet in Mr. Doke's honour at which Mr. Hosken presided. Mr. Doke's words then uttered still ring in the ears of those who heard him. It may truly be said of Mr. Doke that he lived well and he died well. He is mourned by many more than the members of his family, and may that thought comfort and sustain them in a loss which is just

as much that of those who had learnt to love Mr. Doke as of the members of his family.

The late Rev. Joseph J. Doke was born at Chudleigh, Devonshire, on the 5th November, 1861. He was the younger, by some two and a half years, of a family of two. His father was the Baptist Minister of Chudleigh. His brother, the late Mr. William H. Doke, died as a missionary at the end of 1882 on African soil.

The late Rev. Doke had very little schooling, owing to delicate health. At the age of 16 he lost his mother. At the age of 17, on the resignation of his father from the pastorate, he became pastor. At the age of 20 he came to South Africa, where he was in Cape Town for a short time. Later, he was sent by the South African Baptist Union to open up a new cause in Great Reinet. Here he met and married Miss Biggs, in 1886. Shortly after, he returned to Chudleigh. From Chudleigh Mr. Doke was called to the pastorship of the City Road Baptist Church, Bristol, where, with the exception of a visit to Egypt, Palestine and India, he remained until 1894. In 1894, Mr. Doke removed with his family to New Zealand. Here he was Minister of the Oxford Terrace Baptist Church, Christchurch, for a period of seven and a half years, returning to England in 1902. In addition to the duties connected with his pastorship, Mr. Doke conducted a class for Chinese, which was greatly appreciated and which is still being continued by his successors.

Towards the end of 1903, Mr. Doke received a call to the Grahamstown Baptist Church, and took up his work in South Africa again. After four years in Grahamstown, he came to the Rand as Minister of the Central Baptist Church. He remained Minister of this Church until his death. All his life, more especially since the death of his brother, Mr. Doke's ambition was for missionary work, but owing to his health and family circumstances, the way was not clear, until, just at the end of his life, it seemed to open up. Together with his son, Clement, he decided to visit a lonely mission station in North-western Rhodesia close to the Congo border, and on the 2nd July they set out on this trip, which was to take about six weeks. Mr. Doke was also entrusted by the South African Baptist Mission Society to visit a mission station near Umtali, they taking advantage of his

being in Rhodesia to secure particulars which they wanted. Mr. Doke enjoyed the trip to the 'Ndla District immensely, and maintained good health throughout. He suffered, however, from footsoreness —the distance to be traversed was some 350 miles—and he travelled most of the way by "machilla"—a hammock slung on a pole and carried by two natives—, but despite this he was in the best of spirits and had the greatest hope for the success of his mission. Through an interpreter he spoke at numerous villages, and he did a great deal of writing and took many photographs with a view to lecturing on his return. On the 4th August, Broken Hill was reached, and on the 7th August, Mr. Doke parted from his son at Bulawayo, the latter being called home by business duties. Mr. Doke then proceeded to Umtali, after a few days' waiting at Bulawayo, reaching the end of his train journey on the morning of the 9th instant. Here the Rev. Woodhouse met him and the greater part of the day was spent in the discussion of missionary matters. In the afternoon the party proceeded to the residence of Mr. Webber—a friend—just outside the town, where, owing to Mr. Doke's feeling too unwell, they remained for the night. The next morning, Mr. Doke was up before sunrise, feeling very ill, and all thought of going to the mission station then was abandoned. Mr. Doke complained of severe pains in the back and had to take to his bed again. The usual remedies for fever were applied, but, as there seemed to be no temperature, it was concluded that the malady was not fever, and a doctor was sent for, who at once ordered him to the Umtali Hospital, whither he was conveyed by "machilla". Here he was under the best doctors and nursing supervision possible. On the 12th a telegram was sent to Mr. Doke's family, saying that he had a slight attack of pleurisy, but that there was nothing serious and no one was to come. On Friday evening, the 15th, a further telegram was received by Mrs. Doke saying that Mr. Doke was seriously ill with enteric. Mrs. Doke at once made preparations to leave by Saturday night's train, but on the morning of that day a telegram was received that Mr. Doke had passed away at 7 o'clock the previous evening. Owing to the great distance, the remains were not conveyed to Johannesburg, but the funeral took place at Umtali at four o'clock on Sunday last, a service being held at the Baptist Church, Johannesburg, at the same hour.

During his sojourn on the Rand, Mr. Doke was prominently connected with many religious organizations.

Besides the widow, the deceased has left three sons: Willy, Clement, and Comber, and one daughter, Olive. The eldest boy, Willy, is training in America as a medical missionary.

Indian Opinion, 23-8-1913

167. THE LATE MR. DOKE

In the death of Mr. Joseph J. Doke, the Indian community of South Africa has lost one of its truest friends. This is not the place to recount Mr. Doke's general public work, great and substantial as it was. But, paying our humble tribute to the memory of the deceased, we cannot help contemplating Mr. Doke's noble work for us. When Mr. Doke came to the cause, he threw himself into it heart and soul and never relaxed his efforts in our behalf. It was usual with Mr. Doke to gain complete mastery over the subject he handled. He, therefore, became one of the best informed men on the subject in South Africa. He loved passive resisters as they were his own congregation. The poorest Indian had free access to this pious Englishman. His pen and his eloquence were continually used by him during the troublous times through which the community has passed. He missed no opportunity of visiting passive resistance prisoners in gaol. And at a critical period in the history of the community and this journal, he magnanimously and at no small inconvenience to himself, took charge of our editorial department, and those who came in contact with him during that period know how cautious, how painstaking, how gentle and how forbearing he was. It is such a noble soul whose withdrawal from this transitory world we, the Indian community, mourn in common with his family and his congregation. We tender our respectful sympathy to Mrs. Doke and family.

Indian Opinion, 23-8-1913

168 THE LATE REV. JOSEPH DOKE

This great and altruistic man has given up his earthly life. The writer's pen shakes in his hand even in writing this sentence, and various are the thoughts surging in his mind. As a human being, Mr. Doke was full of nobility; as an Englishman, his conduct was such that, had all Englishmen been like him, there would be no bitterness between them and the Indians. As a priest, he was a man of faith in God and, although he was very zealous in his religion, he never vilified other religions. Not only that, but he did his best to understand the importance of other religions. However, it is for his excellent services to the Indian community of South Africa that it will for ever cherish the name of Mr. Doke. In 1907, when preparations for the satyagraha campaign were in full swing, Mr. Doke had recently come to the Transvaal from New Zealand. He began taking a keen interest in the Indian problem from the very day he arrived, and continued to help till he died. With the exception of one or two, no other Englishman, and hardly any Indian, had such clear grasp of our problem as Mr. Doke. He had gone through all the documents and laws having a bearing on it and equipped himself to meet anyone or, the subject. He never concealed his sympathy for the Indians. In his house, every Indian, whether rich or poor, was given the same consideration. One of his many hopes was to see a satisfactory solution to our problem, and for achieving this he was ever ready for any sacrifice. Who will not grieve over the loss of such a friend and well-wisher? We had learnt to look upon Mr. Doke as our shield. That shield is now gone. Our duty is clear. After the death of a friend, we must not forget his kith and kin. We must show our sympathy for them. But the most important duty is to live up to Mr. Doke's ideas of us. Mr. Doke believed that we were true satyagrahis, that we were ready to sacrifice our lives for the sake of our honour and our religion, that we would not wish ill of anyone who might injure us but, leaving justice in the hands of God, would love even those who boreus ill-will and fight them with the sword of love. Maybe all of us cannot be so good or behave so well but we can all make an effort. Even if a few of us

succeed, we shall have honoured his memory aright and God will send us another Doke. It is not as if one becomes a saint on meeting a saint; it is rather that on becoming a saint one finds a saint.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 23-8-1913

169. LETTER TO SECRETARY FOR INTERIOR

JOHANNESBURG,
August 24, 1913

I thank you for your letter[1] of the 19th instant.

I have come to Johannesburg in order to attend the Doke Memorial Service and shall be here for a few days. If, therefore, General Smuts desires my presence in Pretoria, I would be pleased to come down. I submit the following for General Smuts' consideration regarding the points dealt with in your letter.

As to South Africa-born Indians, it is perfectly true that I did not raise, in the correspondence of 1912, this point. It had entirely escaped me until a friend drew my attention to it. But I assured the friend that no difficulty need be anticipated as the correspondence setting forth the provisional settlement of 1911 protected all existing rights of British Indians. I freely admit that I do not lay claim to a full knowledge of all such rights possessed by my countrymen throughout the Union or even the Transvaal. The fact that very few South Africa-born Indians availed themselves of the right was used by me to show that the Government had no occasion to fear a sudden influx into the Cape of South Africa-born Indians if the right was retained. From the Indian standpoint, I wanted to emphasize the fact that we were fighting for the sentiment, viz., that the liberal and reasonable view, taken by the old Cape Legislature, should be left untouched. And I fear that I must press that view again on General Smuts' attention. I have already submitted that the Cape members laid stress on this point because the Right Hon'ble Mr. Fischer fostered, I submit, without a knowledge of

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from E. M. Gorges", 19-8-1913.

the facts, the view that there was a large influx of South Africa-born Indians into the Cape. I observe that your letter seems to suggest that I am asking for a breaking of the Provincial boundary altogether. Though this would be a legitimate desire, I have not asked for it as I know that it is no part of the provisional settlement.

As to the second point, I am glad that the Government interpretation agrees with that of the Indian community.

As to the Free State difficulty, the point raised by me has not been understood. I do not ask, for the sake of asking, that the attention of intending immigrants should be drawn to the disability. But I have submitted that the wording of the Act seems not to require the declaration in question at the Free State border. If such is also the Government interpretation of the Act, the Free State difficulty could be solved without any statutory alteration. In order to allay anxiety on the part of the Free Staters, I suggested that the disability in the Free State might be notified on the general declaration to be made at the first port of entry at the coast. I need hardly say that I have assumed the legal possibility of an Indian being permitted under the new Act to enter the Free State.

As to the fourth point, the question of the legality of the marriages already solemnized in South Africa of the resident Indian population, as also of the marriages hereafter to be solemnized within the Union, is of vast practical importance. A definite assurance that legislation will be introduced next session is necessary to settle this very thorny problem. Regarding the plurality of wives, I have not asked for a general recognition of polygamy. All I contend is that, in continuation of the practice hitherto followed, existing plural wives of domiciled residents should be allowed to enter. And this was the assurance given in the letter quoted by me in my correspondence with you.[1] The number of such wives could be easily ascertained at the present moment, and the toleration may be restricted only to the number so ascertained.

I observe that cases have already arisen in Natal out of the new Act. I cannot help remarking that the marriage case is inconsistent with the assurance contained in your letter under reply. For Kulsam-

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary for Interior", 4-7-1913.

bibi is admittedly the only wife in South Africa of her husband. I would respectfully suggest that the case be withdrawn and the lady set free The other cases are regarding domicile. The Government contention seems to be that, even where there is no dispute as to facts or the *bona fides* of the holder of a certificate of domicile, his right should be impugned if he has been long absent from the Province of domicile. If such is the Government interpretation of the new Act, *existing and acquired* rights are threatened. And in the event of a decision unfavourable to the Indian community, a position will be created that would be totally intolerable and inconsistent with the provisional settlement as also the declaration of the Right Hon'ble General Botha and other members of the ministry that there is no desire to harass the resident Indian population. I, therefore, venture also to suggest that these cases may be withdrawn. I have assumed that you are fully aware of these cases. They are reported in the current issue of *Indian Opinion*.

May I ask for an early reply?[1]

Indian Opinion, 13-9-1913

[1] To this communication Gandhiji received the following reply on September 10: "Am directed by Minister reply your letter 24th August. As to first point, regrets he can add nothing to statements already made in my letter 19th idem. Second point calls for no further action. As regards third point, there is no difficulty, as any declaration made would be on entry into Union and not at Free State Border. With regard to marriage question, cannot give any assurance that a marriage law will be introduced next session on lines asked by you which would apparently alter whole basis of existing law in South Africa. Your reference to an assurance given to you that plural wives would be admitted not understood as I can find nothing in communications from this Department to that effect. Should you please elucidate? Regarding appeal cases at Durban, those you refer to are apparently still *sub judice* and Minister would consequently not be able to interfere."

170. SPEECH AT MEMORIAL SERVICE[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
August 24, 1913]

Mr. Gandhi said that the Indian community revered Mr. Doke's memory for the great work done by him for them. He was one of its truest friends. It could not be said of every man that death was swallowed up in victory and that death had no sting. But it could undoubtedly be said of Mr. Doke. A death like Mr. Doke's really called for no mourning. Mr. Doke's was a life of perfect self-surrender. He had dedicated his all to his Maker. He would now rise with a glorified and better body for the service of his Maker. But it required men like Mr. Doke not to mourn. For him (the speaker) with whom probably the soul was crushed in the care for the body, he needed a friend in the flesh. He therefore mourned for a true friend and wise counsellor. Mr. Gandhi here recalled the assault committed on him[2] by a countryman which he said was delivered in order to redress a wrong which his assailant thought, rightly or wrongly, he had done to the community and which, in the assailant's opinion, could only be redressed by an assault. Mr. Gandhi proceeded:

When I was lying in the office of a friend in a helpless condition there stood over me Mr. Doke, and his words ring in my memory today, as they were so appealing to me that afternoon. They were something like these: "Would you rather go to hospital, or would you rather be carried to my home? I am sure that Mrs. Doke and my family will welcome you, and we shall do all we can in order to relieve your pain." I had no hesitation in making my choice, and I shall never regret the choice I made. I remember the evening when, at my request, the whole family sang to me the beautiful hymn, "Lead, Kindly Light". That tune will never die from my memory; it will never fade out. It is as fresh to me to-night as it was soothing to my nerves on that great evening when I saw myself surrounded by people who were no longer strangers. During the night, whether it was 12 or 1 or 2 o'clock, I could see peeping through the door, that had been

[1] A memorial service was held at 7.30 p.m. for Rev. J. J. Doke at Grahamstown Baptist Church, Johannesburg, of which he was pastor. Gandhiji, who had specially arrived from Phoenix to attend the service, paid a tribute to the deceased.

[2] *Vide* "My Reward", 22-2-1908.

purposely left open, Mr. Doke's face, just glancing in occasionally to ascertain whether I was suffering or whether I needed anything. The whole family were at my disposal in order to nourish me, in order to serve me, in order to soothe me, although I was a stranger to them and had never done a single service to them.

Mr. Gandhi added that he was certainly proud to have had such a friend. Mr. Doke had always been willing to help those who needed his help, and those who needed his help had not to go to him. He went to them. The speaker also recalled to instance Mr. Doke's fervent faith in his own religion and his (Mr. Doke's) efforts to convert him to Christianity. Mr. Gandhi told him that he, as a Hindu, believed that the fullness of Christianity could only be found in its interpretation in the light and by the aid of Hinduism. But Mr. Doke was not satisfied. He missed no occasion to bring home to him (the speaker) the truth as he (Mr. Doke) knew it and which brought him and his so much inward peace. Mr. Doke's was not modernized and civilized Christianity. He practised the original. Mr. Doke believed in practising as he preached. The speaker thought the deceased was quite capable, like the martyrs of old, of being burnt at the stake for the sake of his convictions. The binding tie between them was the belief they shared in the doctrine preached by Jesus of non-resistance to evil-a doctrine that was smothered nowadays in a multiplicity of exceptions. With Mr. Doke hatred was to be conquered by love, vice by the fullest exercise of virtue. Mr. Gandhi wished that Mr. Doke's mantle would descend to his children and that the thought that Mrs. Doke had such a noble husband, whose memory was revered by so many men and so many races, would sustain and comfort her.

Indian Opinion, 30-8-1913

171. INDIA'S GRAND OLD MAN

Our readers hardly need a reminder that India's G.O.M. celebrates his eighty-ninth birthday on Thursday next, the 4th September. We again have the pleasure of expressing our good wishes to India's greatest son. Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji has done more than one man's share of public work and is now enjoying rest from his labours. The memory of his strenuous life in the interests of his countrymen is a constant spur to our small efforts. Such lives make a nation rich—not in material possession—but in all that goes to make national honour and faithfulness to duty. For those who may wish to send messages of congratulations and who may not know his cable address we may state that messages addressed "Dadabhai Naoroji, Versova, Bombay", will find him. We present with this issue a special supplement, giving the portrait of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji.

Indian Opinion, 30-8-1913

172. MORE FRIENDS GONE

The fates seem to have decreed that South Africa should lose, in quick succession, some of its best men. Following on the heels of the news of Mr. Doke's death, comes the shocking news of the death of Dr. Ross, that well-known Presbyterian Minister on the Rand who relinquished his ministry only last year and the death of the popular Editor of *The Natal Mercury*, Mr. Milligan. Dr. Ross's was an influential personality. We say nothing about him as a public man of Johannesburg. But we cannot help recalling with gratefulness the fact that Dr. Ross had made himself acquainted with the Transvaal Indian struggle and that he had joined Mr. Hosken's Committee[1]. He was often present at Indian functions and never hesitated, in unequivocal language, to show his sympathy towards us. We know that, when passive resistance was at its height, he even carried on personal correspondence with General Smuts, urging him to grant the demands of passive resisters.

With Mr. Milligan's services to the Indian cause Indians are quite familiar. He carried out the best traditions of the *Mercury* and worthily filled the chair that used to be occupied by the late Sir John Robinson[2] and the late Mr. Ramsay Collins—no easy task. Only the other week, we had the pleasure to reproduce a trenchant leading article written in his paper by the deceased regarding the arbitrary action of immigration officials. His pen was ever ready to be used for any just cause.

In the passing away of such men, South Africa is undoubtedly the poorer. And the loss will be difficult to make up. We tender our sympathy to the families of the deceased.

Indian Opinion,30-8-1913

[1] Committee of European sympathizers of the Indian cause led by William Hosken, M.L.A. It had "pledged itself to support the British Indians in their struggle" and to secure justice for them; *vide* "Interview with Natal Mercury", 5-1-1909 & "Letter to the Press", 5-11-1909.

[2] (1839-1903); Prime Minister and Colonial Secretary of Natal, 1893-7

173. IMPORTANT JUDGMENT ABOUT MARRIAGE

An Indian woman named Bai Manchhi was stopped by the Immigration Officer when entering [the Cape Colony] with her husband. The latter, Bhagwan Bhikha by name, obtained an interdict to enable her to land. Since their marriage in India was not recognized, the counsel advised marriage with the woman here. On the counsel writing to the magistrate, the latter expressed his inability to register the marriage on the ground that the woman was a prohibited immigrant. The husband thereupon went in appeal, which Mr. Justice Gardiner decided in his favour last week. The judge has held that under the law anyone's marriage can be registered. The parties must only prove that they are both eligible to get married under the law in force here. At the time of marriage, whether one is a prohibited immigrant or not is an irrelevant question. Accordingly, the magistrate has been ordered to register the marriage without raising any such issue, provided there is no other ground for objection. As a result of this judgment, if any Indian brings out his wife and she is stopped by the Immigration Officer, they can get married after landing. Whether, after the marriage, she can stay on or not is a different question, which the judgment referred to above does not decide. It is also a separate question, and a big one, whether or not one should go through a marriage in this manner. If a man, having married a woman once, declares that he has not and so marries her again, his action will prove him to be a man without honour and, therefore, a coward. The poor people must have patience and assure themselves that the problem will solve itself in due course. If they fail to get relief meanwhile, the honourable course for them is to leave their wives in India.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 30-8-1913

174. LETTER TO REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS

[JOHANNESBURG,
After *September 1, 1913*]

THE REGISTRAR OF ASIATICS
PRETORIA

SIR,

[*Re:*] *Purshotam Mavji 17162*

With reference to your telegram herein of the 15th ultimo in reply to my letter of the tenth[1] ultimo, I regret the delay that has been caused in dealing with it. Before replying I had to make inquiries and I find that the information, given to me was misleading. Purshotam Mavji having left for India, it is difficult to ascertain what actually happened. But it is now surmised that Purshotam Mavji referred not to a Transvaal certificate but to a Natal one.

I have, etc.,

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5854

[1] The original has " 15th tenth", evidently a slip. *Vide* also "Letter to Immigration Officer", 10-8-1913.

175. LETTER TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INTERIOR

[JOHANNESBURG,]
September 3, 1913

As I informed you through the telephone, today, I am leaving for Phoenix tomorrow. But, before I leave, I would like to draw General Smuts' attention to the eagerness and impatience with which many of my co-workers are looking forward to some final answer. Indeed, I have even been blamed for writing the first letter. Their impatience is natural. All our activity is at a standstill. Several have been obliged to refuse offers of handsome employment owing to the suspense. I hope, therefore, that among the many important matters that engage General Smuts' attention, this will find its proper place. If nothing definite is vouchsafed by Tuesday next,—the day given by you—may Mr. Gorges' letter be taken as the final answer? I would also like to mention that, if the negotiations now going on prove abortive, the struggle will be revived on a wider issue. Several most important items have been omitted from my correspondence for the purpose[1] of securing a settlement and in order to show that we are not pining for a revival of the struggle.

I hope that General Smuts will appreciate the spirit in which this letter has been written.

Indian Opinion,13-9-1913

[1] The original has "purchase".

176. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

ON THE TRAIN,
Thursday [*September 4, 1913*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

You *must* be firmer with yourself. You often speak and give opinions on the spur of the moment. That is called being impulsive. And you are impulsive very much so. Now the last hymn we sang was: "Take my life", etc. I know that neither you nor I have given our life or anything *completely* to God. But is it our earnest longing to do so? If it is, our impulsivenss must go I can give you scores of instances where you would have spoken otherwise if you had thought before speaking. Do you know that you harmed Manilal by suggesting that you would surrender your ticket if he wanted to go or was going as far as Germiston. The ticket is untransferable. That is one thing. I had to say that there was no occasion for him to go whereas he might have thought differently and therefore he might consider my judgment to be harsh. This is the last illustration of what I want to say: 'Think before you speak and look before you leap' (as in the case of the proposed lease in Pretoria). You have need to examine yourself much more than you are doing ≈ though you are doing a great deal, it is not enough. I shall save the 2/6 for the bed. I know there will be no need. I saved 6 d. by not buying tomatoes on the spur of the moment. Medh did not stock my basket with tomatoes. He had sent his messenger. Manilal did not pluck your nice tomatoes. The flesh wanted to spend 6 d. the spirit resolutely declined to yield and triumphed. I am none the worse for having not had them. I did not act on the spur of the moment. This does not mean that I never act or speak hastily. But you must not copy me in my weaknesses.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

[PS.]

Please hand [over] the enclosure to Manilal at the first opportunity.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

177. THE DEBATE IN THE LORDS

We have now the full text of the debate initiated by Lord Ampthill in the House of Lords on the Immigration Act of the Union.[1] The debate is memorable for more than one reason. Most weighty contributions were made to it by an ex-Governor of Madras and one-time acting Viceroy of India in the person of Lord Ampthill, by an ex-Governor of Bombay in the person of Lord Sydenham[2] who has only just returned from India and who, therefore, knows the pulse of India on this question, and by an ex-Viceroy of India in the person of Lord Curzon. All these noblemen spoke fervently in our behalf and admitted the full justice of our demands. They did not satisfy themselves with general statements but each of them showed a mastery of details of the question which one is not accustomed to in such debates. Of Lord Ampthill's great pains, care and attention we have now known for a number of years. His Lordship has made our question his own. But it is most consoling and refreshing to find Lords Curzon and Sydenham also possessing a wonderful grasp of the subject. Their interest in our question is a happy augury for the future and it considerably strengthens Lord Ampthill's hands in his advocacy of a cause he has found to be just and of such Imperial importance as to warrant, in the midst of his many other activities, his constant and personal attention.

The debate shows, too, that Lord Crewe had no case. The attitude of *non possumus* that he took up is dangerous in the extreme. We venture to think that the doctrine of non-interference by the Imperial authority with the domestic affairs of self-governing Colonies is being carried too far and is reaching a point that endangers the very stability of the Empire. It is a mockery to describe self-governing Colonies as part of the British Dominions if they are to

[1] His speech was published in *Indian Opinion*, 20-9-1913 and its four subsequent issues.

[2] George Sydenham Clarke (1848-1933); British soldier and administrator, an authority on military matters; Governor of Bombay, 1907-13

be so independent that they may defy Imperial traditions and Imperial considerations. They cannot, for any length of time and with safety to the Empire to which they pretend to belong, always take and never give. As has been pointed out by the great English newspapers which we have already quoted, the Union Government were ready enough to fall back upon Imperial troops in the hour of their need.[1] May they not be expected to show equal readiness to help the Imperial Government out of a serious situation facing them in their Government of the Indian Empire by doing a simple act of justice? India will certainly demand and have a satisfactory answer some day.

Indian Opinion,6-9-1913

[1] *Vide* "Riot in Johannesburg", 12-7-1913,

178. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]

September 6, 1913

15

There, all the evil-producing acts are destroyed, the very seed of incessant births and rebirths is burnt up, and the soul shines all light, all power, all purity and the knower of everything.

16

There, only the natural actions are performed automatically without touching the soul which lives out the life in the present body and after leaving it ceases to be liable to put on more bodies.

17

There, all the bondage of matter is loosened in thought, speech and body. That state is one of supreme bliss and completely free from bondage.

18

There, untouched by anything, the soul sits spotless and steadfast. It is the essence of life incomparable, indescribable; it is in its natural state.

19

It is a state attained by previous effort. It is the highest and it is the abode of the Perfect. The soul is there all knowledge and absorbed in divine contemplation.

20

Even thought-perfect soul, although it realized this state, could not describe it. How can anyone else describe it? It is only to be

known fully by self-realization.

21

My mind is fixed upon that state. I am incapable of reaching it in my present state but it is my sole ideal. Rajchandra, the author, is determined by God's grace to attain it.

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Here are the balance of the verses. You may take them down one by one or together. But contemplate them well.

Hoosen I found a little better.[1] He now wants some of the books Daniel has sent. I am forwarding them.

Yours,

UPPER HOUSE

[PS.]

Please tell Manilal I am not writing separately. The verses are my letter to him.

19[2]

[*September 7, 1913*]

My house is high, my sons are respected by good men, I have inexhaustible wealth, I have a beautiful wife, I am young ≈ thus reasons man steeped in ignorance and considers this universe to be indestructible and allows himself to be imprisoned in it. But those who are far-seeing renounce the world, knowing it to be transitory.

20

O my soul! live joyously on fruits, roots and leaves. Let mother earth cover you; let us go to the forest where we do not have to meet

[1] Haji Hoosen Dawad Mahomed who had been ailing, passed away on September 22, 1913; *vide* "The Late Mr. Hoosen Dawad", 24-9-1913 and "The Late Mr. Hoosen Dawad", 1-10-1913.

[2] The numbering of verses here is evidently duplicated; vide "Letter to Hermann Kallenbach", 6-9-1913

people who know not discrimination, who being diseased with money fever, utter thoughtless words and where we do not even hear such people's names.

September 9, 1913

34

There is fear of disease in enjoyments, there is danger of destruction in having a family, there is danger from kings in having riches, there is danger of ignominy in trying to be respected, there is danger of creating enemies in showing one's physical power, there is danger of disfigurement in having beauty, there is danger of disputation in discussing scriptures, there is danger from the evil-minded in being endowed with high qualities, there is danger of death in having the body thus is everything a cause of fear. Only complete renunciation is free from fear.

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I have your two letters. I am glad that realization of weakness now does not make you despondent but nerves[1] you for the struggle that is to come. I find that if we have trust in the Supreme, every difficulty we face shows its own way out of it. 'One step enough for me' was not spoken by an inexperienced man.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] The source has "ennerves".

179. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY FOR INTERIOR

[DURBAN,]
September 10,1913

THANKS FOR WIRE.[1] FEAR REPLY MAKES REVIVAL STRUGGLE IMPERATIVE NOTWITHSTANDING EVERY EFFORT MINIMIZE POINTS OF DIFFERENCES. REGARDING POLYGAMOUS MARRIAGES REFER ASSOCIATION LETTER 5TH JULY 1911 AND INTERIOR MINISTER REPLY 10TH SAME MONTH.[2]

Indian Opinion, 13-9-1913

180. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

September 10, 1913

What is there not surrounded by its enemy? Birth is swallowed up by death, beautiful youth by old age, contentment by desire for wealth, the happiness of calmness by the blandish-ments of a clever woman, high qualities by the jealousy of the jealous, the forest beauty by snakes and adversity by instability. (That is, a man loses his tranquility in adversity which should otherwise be for him a beneficent school of experience).

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

These verses require pondering over again and again. They are

[1] *Vide* 3rd footnote to "Letter to Secretary for Interior", 24-8-1913.

[2] To this Gorges replied on September 19: "I was somewhat at a loss to understand what assurance you were referring to; hence my enquiry. Looking now at the past correspondence on this subject, I fear that the very wide interpretation you are seeking to apply to the Immigration Officer's letter of 10th August, 1911, is not one which was ever contemplated or one which would be accepted by the Minister"

results of experience double distilled.

I saw reference in your letter to business talk. But you should not hesitate to write about it when you are thinking about [it]. To me it is an index to one's mental state. I know what friend Rustomjee is when the first thing in the morning he talks about what there should be in his store and how his sons should behave towards him. If he were to suppress the talk, he would want to appear to be otherwise than he is. You should therefore cease to talk business when you cease to think it. For the time being, therefore, I expect you to discuss all your business with me. There is no wire from Pretoria yet. It is now 4.45 a.m. and the boys are preparing to walk to Durban. They will witness the football match and return in the evening.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

181. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]

September 11, 1913

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

So the struggle is to start.[1] I have sent you a wire today. You should see Chaplin[2] and suggest his writing to Smuts. See also Hosken. Draw attention to Gokhale's doing and Lord Ampthill's [and] Lord Curzon's advocacy, etc[3]. We start on Monday or Tuesday. Further news tomorrow. You should clear post on Sunday morning and Saturday evening, the latter if you are in town.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] The reference is to the impending Indian struggle; vide "Letter to Secretary for interior", 11-9-1913.

[2] Drummond Chaplin, Member of Parliament

[3] *Vide* also "Lord Ampthill's Advocacy", 22-3-1913.

182. LETTER TO SECRETARY FOR INTERIOR[1]

110, FIELD STREET,

DURBAN,

September 11,1913

THE SECRETARY FOR THE INTERIOR

PRETORIA

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st ultimo in reply to mine of the 15th idem regarding the regulations framed under the Immigrants' Restriction Act.

On behalf of the Anjuman, I respectfully submit that most of the objections raised by my Anjuman are to principles and not to details. Lapse of time will certainly fail to affect principles. That certificates of identity whose applicability is limited to a period of one year would be of infinitely less value than the permanent certificates that were issued under the old Natal Act is a fact of which the value will not be affected either way by lapse of time. Nor will the fact of the imposition of the fee of £1 for even interprovincial visiting permits be affected by time. In the humble opinion of my committee, the objections raised on its behalf merit early and favourable consideration.

With reference to the appointment of Immigration Officers as members of Appeal Boards, their inclusion is open to serious objection in spite of their not deciding all the individual cases themselves in the first instance. They are the officials who are responsible to the Government for administering the Act in accordance with their instructions and they are the officials who will, my committee presumes, issue instructions to their subordinates. They, therefore, could not be considered unbiased judges applying their minds without preconceived ideas to cases before them. My committee, therefore, strongly urges that the appointment of these officials should be cancelled in order to give the public interested in the proceedings of the Appeal

[1] An office copy of this letter is found in the Sangrahalaya papers and it is presumed that this was drafted by Gandhiji.

Boards a sense of security and to inspire that public with confidence in the decision of these Boards.

I have, etc.,

CHAIRMAN,

ZOROASTRIAN ANJUMAN

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5858

183. LETTER TO SECRETARY FOR INTERIOR[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
September 12, 1913]

SIR,

On behalf of the British Indian Association, I have the honour to submit, for the information of the Hon'ble the Minister, that, after having read your telegram[2] of September 9, addressed to Mr. Gandhi, it has been most reluctantly and with the utmost regret decided to revive passive resistance, owing to the inability or unwillingness of the Government to concede the points submitted by Mr. Gandhi in his letters to you, which my Association has seen.

I venture shortly to explain the position that unfortunately faces the community represented by my Association.

Ever since the British occupation, the position of the Indians residing in this Province has admittedly grown worse than it was during the Republican regime. In 1906 it culminated in the Bill of that year, which not only summed up the black past but foreshadowed a blacker future, and which, though then vetoed; was repassed almost as the first Act of the Responsible Government, and became known as Act 2 of 1907[3]. As the measure was considered by the community to

[1] This was published in *Indian Opinion,* 20-9-1913, under the caption "The Indian Demands".

[2] *Vide* footnote 3 to "Letter to Secretary for Interior", 24-8-1913

[3] The Transvaal Asiatic Law Amendment Act, also known as the Transvaal Asiatic Registration Act.

be humiliating, and as the circumstances surrounding it showed a policy deliberately hostile to an honourable existence of the community in the Transvaal, my countrymen solemnly decided in the month of September, 1906 to adopt passive resistance.[1] As is well known, over 3,500 imprisonments were suffered by my countrymen during the struggle, over 100 deportations to India took place, and even two deaths occurred, owing to the suffering gone through during the crisis. Several families were rendered homeless, and they had to be supported from public funds. Then came the provisional settlement of 1911, which the Indians thought not only promised them what they had been suffering for but also meant an attitude of friendliness towards them such that, almost complete prohibition of Indian immigration being obtained, the resident Indian population would be free from the state of uncertainty it had lived in and might look forward to a steady improvement in its status, as a permanent element of the new nation that was forming in South Africa. Moreover, the inauguration of the Union gave it some hope, though it filled it equally with misgivings and threw on the passive resisters a responsibility for the whole of the Union instead of for the Transvaal only.

But the community was soon disillusioned. The administration of existing laws specially affecting it grew steadily harsher. The Cape Licensing Act, the Natal Licensing Act, the Gold and the Township Laws of the Transvaal and the existing Immigration Laws of the Provinces began to be administered as they never had been before. What has been termed the "northern," spirit began to pervade the administration in Natal and the Cape. Thus the spirit of the settlement certainly began to be broken as soon as it was effected.

The abortive Bill of 1912 showed that even the letter would be broken. The original draft contained serious flaws and was in conflict with the two principles of the settlement—the removal of the racial bar and the maintenance of existing rights throughout the Union. I must admit in fairness that, so soon as the defects were pointed out, there was a willingness on the part of the Minister to remodel his objectionable clauses. But that Bill fell through, and fresh assurances were issued to the community that the settlement would be carried out.

[1] *Vide* "The Mass Meeting", 11-9-1906.

Then came the memorable visit of the Hon'ble. Mr. Gokhale. High hopes were again raised. The position was made perfectly clear. And declarations were made by responsible statesmen inducing the expectation that a satisfactory Bill would be passed during the ensuing session, and that the iniquitous and admittedly unjust tax of £3 on certain ex-indentured men and women would be withdrawn. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale declared at public meetings that he had every confidence that the tax would be abolished both for men and women.

But the last session dashed all hope to the ground. The Draft Immigration Bill broke almost every condition of the settlement of 1911, and it showed that the community was to expect nothing from the Government, who would have carried the Bill as it was, could they have done so. That the Act itself is a great improvement on the original Bill is due entirely to the unexpected opposition that the Government met from all quarters of both Houses of Parliament. The attempt of the Government to remit the £3 tax only on women showed also that they, at any rate, were not prepared to remove it from men.

Notwithstanding such gloomy indications of the hostile spirit of the Government, Mr. Gandhi was authorized to enter into negotiations for a settlement by submitting proposals which, if accepted, would have just, but only just, sufficed to fulfil the letter of the provisional settlement of 1911 above referred to. The community had hoped that, if even such a settlement were effected, the terrible passive resistance could be avoided, and that other grievances could be pressed on the attention of the Government by means involving less personal sacrifice and suffering by the community.

But the Government evidently thought otherwise. They have not only rejected most of Mr. Gandhi's proposals, but they are showing by their administration of the new Act in Natal and by their having passed regulations under the Act, some of which are harsh and unjust, that it is their desire not only to keep out new immigrants, but also to keep out domiciled residents who, before the new Act, found no difficulty in re-entering, and to put obstacles in the way of wives of domiciled Indians entering the respective Provinces.

In the circumstances, there is now no course left open to the community but to take up passive resistance again, which now

naturally will not be confined to this Province alone, and which, on this occasion, will be taken up by women as well as men. The leaders of the community fully realize their responsibility in the matter. They know also what they and their countrymen will have to suffer. But they feel that, as an unrepresented and voiceless community which has been so much misunderstood in the past and which is labouring under a curious but strong race prejudice, it can only defend its honour and status by a process of sacrifice and self-suffering.

Passive resistance has been recognized by the Government as a legitimate means of securing redress. It is, therefore, hardly necessary to assure the Government that the community has no desire to defy the laws of the land, to which it will submit by bearing the penalties provided for a breach of the obligations thereunder which the community cannot discharge consistently with its honour and self-respect.

In conclusion, I beg to state that the struggle will be continued so long as:

(1) a racial bar disfigures the Immigration Act;

(2) the rights existing prior to the passing of the Act are not restored and maintained;

(3) the £3 tax upon ex-indentured men, women, and children is not removed;

(4) the status of women married in South Africa is not secured;

(5) generally, so long as a spirit of generosity and justice does not pervade the administration of the existing laws referred to herein.

And it is respectfully submitted that a smooth and just working of the laws is not possible until the Government consult the leaders of the community in the different Provinces.

[*I have, etc.*,]

A. M. CACHALIA

CHAIRMAN,

BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

Rand Daily Mail, 15-9-1913

184. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[Phoenix, *September 12, 1913*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I have your letter. It is strange you did not receive my letter on Monday. I gave it to Sorabji to post. But the careless boy evidently never posted it or posted it too late.

If I receive a reply tomorrow that Cachalia's letter has gone, I shall send the resisters from here on Monday. They will reach Volksrust on Tuesday. You should leave Monday night by the mail train so that you are at the station when the Kaffir Mail reaches Volksrust on Tuesday evening. You should simply watch as a spectator. They are not to speak in English. One of them only will speak in that tongue, interpret for the others. They will not give finger-prints. If the police arrest them, they must ask for shelter at the police station. If the police do not arrest them, you should, there and then, buy tickets for them and proceed to Johannesburg. I then suggest their being housed at Mountain View. If strangers don't come, it might be well to make Mountain View the headquarters. But you are to be the judge, not I, of this thing. If they are to go to Mountain View, you may buy nothing but leave instructions for purchases so that you have full stock at once. No more than Boer meal and a little *dholl* and rice will be required and fruit and nuts of course. If they are arrested, you should attend court, send full wire to me from Volksrust as also full letter. If they are imprisoned you should immediately see the gaol doctor and the jailor and tell them of religious and health foods they may take and may not take. But you should also say that they will not complain if they do not get what they want. Mrs. Gandhi will be purely fruitarian. Jeki and others will not touch bread. Some of them will be able to take only one meal. The names and further details later. It is well that you will be free from your business even if passive resistance is to start. Your whole time will be wanted for the struggle. You should read my letter to be

signed by Cachalia most carefully.[1]

Yours

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

185. NO SETTLEMENT

We reported earlier that negotiations for a settlement were going on between the Government and Mr. Gandhi. We have now to announce that they have failed and that satyagraha will be revived. In this, too, there must be some divine purpose. So far as we can judge, the revival of the struggle is to our advantage. Had there been a settlement, it would have barely fulfilled the letter of the terms of the 1911 settlement. The object of the settlement would have been defeated, for the settlement would have been honoured only in the letter. The rights of Indians born in South Africa to enter the Cape would have been safeguarded. The marriage problem would have been solved and, in theory, the colour bar would have disappeared. Even this would have been all right, though it was not likely to have satisfied the community. Now the Government has placed us under an obligation by not granting even that much. The real object of our fight must be to kill the monster of racial prejudice in the heart of the Government and the local whites. We feel the presence of this monster in the Government's administration of the Gold Law in the Transvaal and the new immigrant law, in its insistence on the collection of the £3 tax from poor, miserable, helpless Indians, and in its attitude towards our women.

The best cure for all this lies, not in securing the repeal or amendment of the respective laws, but in rooting out the evil from the heart. There is only one way to kill the monster and that is to offer ourselves as a sacrifice. There is no life except through death. Death

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary for Interior", 12-9-1913.

alone can raise us. It is the only effective means of persuasion. It is a seal which leaves a permanent imprint. We will not conquer the whites by hating them. We can gain no victory by killing them. We may kill a white in the body, but the monster inside will survive and multiply. A tree will grow the larger when a branch is cut. It will be destroyed only if it is pulled out by the roots. In the same way, we are not concerned with the body of any white, but only with the evil in his heart. The only effective way of bringing about a change in his attitude is satyagraha. It is a divine law that even the most hard-hearted man will melt if he sees his enemy suffering in innocence. The satyagrahi volunteers to suffer in this way. There is another remedy, but it is not likely to be adopted. For the prejudice in the heart of the whites against us, we are partly responsible. We have several defects. We tell lies and follow wrong courses. We give false evidence. We are dirty in our ways. We can overcome the whites' prejudice only if we give up these bad habits. But this is not likely to happen. The Indian who is full of faults will not read writings of this kind. Nor can those who do make him see reason. Satyagrahis should die for his sake as well. Their death will be an education for these our brethren, whom ignorance has made blind. It has always been the way of this world that the fruit of one's death is reaped by others. Not to seek gain through one's death is in itself a gain. This difficult saying needs to be pondered over. It is the great secret by which one can gain true life. Those alone who join satyagraha in this spirit will win in this great fight that is beginning. We entreat those who cannot join the fight not to oppose it, but to give whatever help they can. They should think of the community's interest. If they can do or say nothing good, let them stay quiet. If they are weak, let them admit their weakness rather than weaken others. In this way we can help one another. The campaign this time has no programme or plan of action. The plan will unfold itself as we proceed. This is a fight for bringing about a change in the Government's hostile attitude to us. The obnoxious £3 tax must go at any cost. That is a debt we owe to the defenceless Indians, and to Mr. Gokhale.

The Government, breaking a promise made to him, has broken a promise made to us. We hope that many Indians will utilize this golden opportunity and that God will give the requisite strength and

faith to those who join the fight.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 13-9-1913

186. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX],

[*September 15, 1913*][1]

DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I am dictating this to Ramdas as I am eating. I have your two letters. When you meet the train tomorrow you will not at once identify yourself but simply watch as a spectator. I am sending special foodstuff for Mrs. Gandhi. Until she is in jail she will use the food I have prepared. When she is sentenced you should take charge of her food and after you have received permission to give her special food you should take charge of the food. After the sentence and after you have made arrange[2] ments you should give it to the gaoler. So far as possible you would arrange for her to receive the food from the Government. She is only fruitarian, for health and religious reasons and she can take olive oil, bananas, plums, dried figs, almonds, tomatoes, grapes, oranges, lemons, banana flour, apples. You will stay there until everything is fixed up and either come here or return to Johannesburg according to the exigencies of the struggle and of your own personal affairs.

About your business, we shall talk later or I shall write later on.

Yours,

FOR BAPU,

CHHAGANLAL

[1] The addressee was to meet the train with the satyagrahis on Tuesday; vide "General Knowledge about Health (XXIX)", 19-7-1913. From the reference to "tomorrow" it is evident the letter was written on Monday which was September 15, 1913.

[2] The letter up to here is apparently in Ramdas Gandhi's hand, the remaining half being identifiably written by Chhaganlal Gandhi. The word split here ("arrange-") marks the end of the first page of the letter.

[PS.]

The party includes Mr. Rustomjee Parsee.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

187. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI AND SANTOK GANDHI

[*September 15, 1913*][1]

CHI. KASHI[2] AND SANTOK[3],

Today is Friday and I have finished my writing work. So I have some free time. Jeki[4] wants to know whether the children will be able to live without you. Parents fondly imagine that their children would not be able to live without them. To uphold their conceit, parents believe that their children will be fretting restlessly in their absence. They do not realize that all the people about them get deprived of their parents and still none of them pines away to death. To children, those who love them at the moment are their parents. Rukhi laughed and frisked about as soon as the train moved out. Radha cried a little after the train had left but when I told her of a prize for her, after about five minutes, she also started talking to others. Krishna and Keshu were not even aware that anything had happened. They were shouting and running all the way back. All of them lifted up one another and played among themselves. When they reached home, they asked for the finest dishes to be served. I even had to tell Krishna and Keshu, "See now, your parents have gone to jail and so, though you are children, you ought to exercise some self-control." They, then, felt a little abashed. These two do not call to mind anyone even for a moment. Rukhi and Radha are real ladies. I gave them the salt cakes

[1] A party of 16 Satyagrahis, led by Kasturba and including Kashi and Santok left Durban on September 15, 1913 to cross over into the Transvaal and thereby court arrest. The Satyagrahis were arrested on the 22nd and on the 23rd, were sentenced to three months' rigorous imprisonment each. Gandhiji seems to have written the letter after seeing the Satyagrahis off at the Durban railway station.

[2] Wife of Chhaganlal Gandhi

[3] Wife of Maganlal Gandhi

[4] Jayakunvar Doctor

which I have preserved specially for them. All that Rukhi wants is to be served vegetables. Whatever vegetable is served to her, she likes it as if it were her mother and her father. Children are not born with infatuations of any kind. They forget the infatuation of their previous existence, too. Thus, they are unconsciously like saints who are free from all desires. Grown-up people consciously become *sannyasis*. Even otherwise, children and *sannyasis* are alike in their state of mind. I do not wish from this to draw the conclusion that parents should abandon their children. But they should give up their fond attachment and stop believing in what does not exist. They should not shower so much affection on the children that the latter would pine away in their absence, nor should they believe that the children would suffer when separated from them. But children are born as a result of our sin and are dependent on usand therefore we ought to have compassion and love for them. When there are others to look after the children and it becomes necessary for us to leave them for the sake of some other duty, we should not yield to blind love, nor suffer. The children will get along quite well without us. That we may not do without them is another matter. Even so, we have never heard of any mother who has pined away to death at the loss of her only son. Shravan's parents[1] burnt themselves to death. They were helpless and the significance of that story is quite different.

I meant to write to you quite a worldly letter, but have written one with a deeper meaning. So, read it attentively. Show it to Chhaganlal, Raojibhai, Maganlal and Jeki. If Ba wants to read it, I have no objection but I fear she might not be able to draw the right lesson from it and might unnecessarily be distressed.

You know how well I love both of you. I had wanted to tell you many things here but could get no free time. Today the bag of thoughts unfolded itself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33098

[1] The story of Shravana and his parents occurs in the first canto, named *Balakanda* of Valmiki's *Ramayana*.

188. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[DURBAN,]
Wednesday September 17, 1913

CHI. MANILAL,

...[1] Ba and others boarded the train with great courage on Monday....[2] Besides *tamas*, there are the qualities of *rajas* and *sattva.* The first keeps a man blind, ignorant and lethargic. The second makes him rash, daring and energetic in worldly pursuits. The quality of *rajas* predominates among the nations of Europe. Most of our activities are also of a like nature. Those endowed with the quality of *sattva* are tranquil, self-collected and discriminating. They do not bother themselves with the affairs of the world, but keep their minds fixed on God. This *sattvic* disposition has been rightly described as "soothfastness". "Soothfast" means calm. With "ness", the word becomes a noun and means peace. Only when the mind is peaceful can one realize God, and the state of mind in which such realization becomes possible is the *sattvic* state. God, as transcending the three qualities, has no activity, good or otherwise, but [through] *maya*[3] He exists as *chaitanya*[4]. He is beyond the three qualities. When, however, He does engage Himself in some activity, such as instructing Arjuna, the impulse behind it is a *sattvic* one and, since activity as such is a mode of qualification, He [Krishna] is described as [God] in his *sattva*-qualified aspect. Keep your mind very steady.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Jivannu Parodh

[1] There is indication of some omissions here in the source.
[2] Mental propensities derived from one's physiological equipment.
[3] A Vedantic concept, seeking to explain phenomenal existence
[4] Principle of life and consciousness

189. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX],
[*September 17/18, 1913*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

You are carrying out your resolution to do your very best, as you have said in your rail-post letter from Johannesburg. But it causes no surprise as I have never doubted your ability to rise to the occasion. In some cases I impertinently consider that I know your merits and demerits more than you do. And it ought to be so, seeing that I am the Upper House your better half. Only please do stop me when I go too far in piling on the agony. You know my way. I do not consider co-workers I hope including myself, when we are moving towards an ideal as we are in this connection.

On no account should the officers know the names of the passive resisters who, I now think [should] even decline to sign their names in Gujarati before being sentenced. Of course, you will be conducting your office from Volksrust whilst the passive resisters are awaiting their fate.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

[PS.]

I am wiring *post restante.* You will instruct the Telegraph office where the wires may be delivered.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

190. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]

Thursday [*September 18, 1913*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I have your letters and wire. What a relief you are there. The party should not give any further information to the authorities and they should not give even Indian signatures certainly not finger-impressions or other means of identification, until they are sentenced to be imprisoned and then, too, if they are satisfied that they will have to fill in the full term of imprisonment. I had intended to leave here on Saturday.

Now unless you all those at Johannesburg think otherwise, I do not propose to leave here until the trial is known.[1] Meanwhile you should devote your leisure to study. I take it you are keeping Johannesburg well-informed. I am wiring to you just now.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] The trial came off on September 23.

191. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

[DURBAN,]

Bhadarva Vad 3 [*September 18, 1913*][1]

CHI. HARILAL,

You have not kept your promise about writing to me. You gave such a promise more than once and you have broken it every time.

I am very unhappy that your health has gone down. I always thought it would. I even warned you. You know that, though you went with my consent, I did not want you to go. Even now, your way of life and your ideas do not appeal to me. Personally, I feel that the education you are having is of the wrong kind. You have harmed Chanchi's interests and now you are harming those of the children. Still, I regard you as friend, with due affection, so that I do not wish to order you. I want to bring you round only by appealing to you. I do not wish to exploit your filial piety to make you do anything. There is no anger in this. I do this as a matter of duty. Still I must advise you to shake off this craze for examinations. If you pass, it won't impress me much. If you fail, you will feel very unhappy. However, take the course you think is best. If you give up the thought of examinations and if, when you get this letter, the struggle here is continuing, come over here along with Chanchi, both of you prepared for imprisonment.[2] Chanchi has otherwise no right to come now. If the struggle ends soon, I shall go there immediately and we shall have a good hug and a talk.

There is only one remedy for your dyspepsia—a daily walk of 15 miles. By way of diet, you should have solid food, according to

[1] The arrests referred to in the letter took place on Tuesday, September 16. This letter was written on the following Thursday.

[2] Gokhale, however, detained Harilal and cabled Gandhiji on December 26, saying: "Your son Harilal saw me Bombay, told me you had asked him return South Africa immediately rejoin struggle. I have taken on myself responsibility asking him remain India and continue studies. Forgive my intervention."

appetite, which you can chew. If you have read the chapters on health,[1] the experiments described there will help you to get rid of [the complaint] altogether. It is not surprising that you have lost your mental powers. The education there is useless because it is ill-conceived. Since you have never reflected over the mental vacuity of thousands of educated people, what can I say and to whom am I to say it? What have your studies been that you should acquire strength of mind through them? Where the aim is merely to pass an examination, the result is bound to be unhappy. As far back as thirty years ago, Mr. Ranade[2] used to discuss this problem. Just think of the condition of the ordinary B.A. What can you do if, after passing a big examination, you find yourself a physical or mental wreck? Have you had a careful look at things round you?

Ba, Ramdas, Kashi[3], Santok[4], Chhaganlal, Kuppu, Govindoo[5], Revashankar[6], Shivpujan, Raojibhai[7], Maganbhai[8], Sam, Rustomjee Sheth, Solomon[9] and others have set out to get imprisoned. They were arrested at Volksrust on Tuesday. I am writing this letter on the morning of Thursday. There has been no telegram yet about what happened yesterday.[10] Devdas is in Phoenix. He has acquired great efficiency. I get up at 3.30 a.m. and Devdas at 4.30 a.m. At 5, studies and other activities begin. He has filled out a little. Of course, changes do occur in this schedule. For the present, the boys who have remained behind go without salt on all days except Sunday. They propose to continue the practice as long as the satyagraha lasts.

[1] *Vide* "General Knowledge about Health (XII)", 22-3-1913, and "General Knowledge About Health" 5-4-1913 & 12-4-1913.

[2] Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842-1901); judge of the Bombay High Court, social reformer, economist and politician

[3] Wife of Chhaganlal Gandhi

[4] Wife of Maganlal Gandhi

[5] A compositor in the Phoenix Press

[6] Son of Rambhabai and Ratanshi Sodha.

[7] Raojibhai Manibhai Patel, a life-long associate of Gandhiji

[8] Maganbhai Patel, a teacher in Phoenix School

[9] Solomon Royeppen, nephew of Joseph Royeppen, who was one of the educated Indians admitted to the Transvaal in 1912

[10] The trial came off on September 23 and all the 16 satyagrahis were sentenced to three months' imprisonment with hard labour.

Maganlal and Miss West[1] will look after the children. I shall leave for Johannesburg on Saturday.[2] People at Johannesburg will then try to get arrested. I shall get arrested last. I have thought out a way of getting arrested, one which will require a little especial courage. I am constantly praying to God to grant me that. Manilal is in Johannesburg. He has now subjected himself to strict vows and is going through a course of penitence. He will court arrest in Johannesburg. Jeki[3] has accompanied Ba to get arrested. She, too, has changed her way of life altogether. Medh and Desai are also in Johannesburg. Jamnadas is impatient to be in gaol. I shall most probably wire to him to come over. I have not made up my mind, though. Please remember that you have not sent me your examination papers, which I had asked for. I am trying to make arrangements for the maintenance of Gangabhabhi. For the present, my desire to go over there has come to nothing.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

My wish is that whatever steps you take should be without reference to me or my views.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 9540

[1] Miss Ada West, sister of A. H. West, manager of International Printing Press

[2] In fact, Gandhiji left Durban on Thursday, September, 25.

[3] Jayakunvar, daughter of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

192. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[DURBAN,]

Thursday [*September 18,1913*][1]

CHI, MANILAL,

I have your letters. Today too I don't have time to write much. Ba and others have been arrested in Volksrust. They were to attend court yesterday.[2] I am, however, waiting for a telegram to know what happened. I wanted to pass on the news to you, but I haven't got any so far. The more disappointed you are, the more miserable I shall be. I have not budged from the promise I made to you. I have made no great change. It cannot make me unhappy, surely, to cultivate inward serenity. I do not suffer by being bound by vows; rather, I feel happy. It is ignorance on your part to be concerned on this account. I can be unhappy only if you misbehave. Whether I am happy or otherwise depends on how you behave. By thinking about what I do, you cannot remove my suffering. You can make me happy if you think of your duty.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 107 Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

[1] Mrs. Gandhi's arrest referred to in the letter took place on Tuesday, September 16.

[2] Actually, the trial came off on September 23.

193. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]

Friday [*September 19, 1913*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I hope you have been receiving my letters regularly there. As I have already said, you would ask the resisters to demand being sent to gaol as awaiting-trial prisoners, if the proceedings are delayed. Do the merchants find the food there or do we have to pay for it?

You are yourself controlling your purse there, I hope. I shall want an account of every penny you spend. How do you pass the spare time there? Do all the merchants of Volksrust get *I.O.*? You should look up Chergan Dhobi who is living on the boundary line. He was, during the late struggle, the most hospitable of all. I believe he once vacated his own house in order to find shelter for resisters. Have you heard further about the lease in Pretoria? I have been thinking over the trap.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

[PS.]

Polak lands at Cape Town on Saturday. You may read the letters (herewith) which are in English.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

194. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]
Friday afternoon [*September 19, 1913*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I may send you more men in advance of me. Three may leave Pietermaritzburg today. In that event, they will wire you names and train of departure. It might be as well, if they place a trap at your disposal to meet these men at Charlestown and have a chat with them before they reach Volksrust. They may leave with me also. I take it you have made arrangements for delivery of wires to you promptly. If you want me to make other arrangements, please give me the address to which I should send your letters and wires.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

[PS.]

Indian Opinion is being sent to the gaoler. 3 copies will be sent to Mr. Badat so that all may get copies to read. If Mr. Badat is not a subscriber, you should collect one subscription from him at least. Perhaps you want the enclosed embossed envelope.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

195. MR. CACHALIA'S LETTER[1]

The irrevocable step has been taken. The British world knows, through the magnificent agency of Reuter, that the handful of Indians in South Africa have declared passive resistance— that this microscopic minority of men have pitted themselves against a mighty Government, against a European population comparatively overwhelming in numbers and enjoying the privileges which cannot belong to Indians in this sub-continent, perhaps, for generations. Indeed, this time, passive resistance is not merely against the Govern-ment and the Europeans of South Africa, but it is equally against the Imperial Government. Lord Ampthill, in his great speech in the House of Lords, has made it clear that, had the Imperial Government done their duty, the course of legislation would have been different; had they been only neutral, the Immigration Act would probably have not been passed. We may not, therefore, expect any assistance from them unless, by passive resistance, we open their eyes and they begin to see clearly how criminally they neglected their trust.

Mr. Cachalia has made it perfectly clear why the great and awful step has been taken—a step that may mean ruin to hundreds of our countrymen. He states definitely the demands of the community. He asks for (l) removal of the racial bar from the Immigration Act, (2) the restoration of rights that existed prior to the legislation, (3) a generous and just administration of the existing laws throughout the Union affecting Indians, (4) the removal of the £3 tax, and finally (5) a spirit of friendliness towards the community in place of one ofhostility which one notices in all their acts concerning Indians. And this is what Lord Ampthill asked in his speech just referred to.

Let us examine each point as briefly as possible. We notice that *The Natal Mercury*, in its otherwise admirable leaderette on the situation, falls foul of the objection to the racial bar. We feel sure that our usually well-informed contemporary has in this instance secured the service of a leader-writer who is not yet *au fait* with the question.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary for Interior", 12-9-1913.

That the racial bar should be removed has been common cause since 1910. Indeed, the Union Government have defended—and the Imperial Government have approved of—the measure, contending that there is no racial bar in it. Nor does its removal in this case involve racial equality in every other case. To remove the racial bar merely means a reversion to the state that existed in 1906. It refers to racial equality in law for purposes of immigration. Even when this equality is granted, as it must be sooner or later, there will still remain racial inequality in respect of many other laws in all the provinces. That, in spite of the Government's protestations, racial inequality is to be found in the Act has been clearly shown by Lord Ampthill. The Act requires from an Indian immigrant an unnecessary and insulting declaration which it does not from a European immigrant. The declaration is merely an admission of the legal disabilities imposed on the Indians of the Free State. Without the admission the disabilities, as had been admitted by the Government, will remain. The retention of this racial bar is due merely to the unreasoning obstinacy of the Free State Members of the Union Parliament. The Government do not wish to offend these, their supporters. Otherwise, removal of the racial bar means nothing to the Government and it may not add a single Indian resident to the Free State population. As a matter of fact, removal of the racial bar is one of the items of existing rights. It has been separated from other such rights because the struggle hinged, prior to 1911, only round the racial bar question.

The existing rights attacked by the new Act are. for instance, the right of South Africa-born Indians to enter the Cape under the now-repealed Cape Act by reason merely of their birth, the right that existed, or was assumed to exist, of the wive of resident Indians married in South Africa according to non-Christian rites, to be regarded as legally married; the right of Natal Indians to absent themselves for any length of time from Natal and to return if they were proved to be *bona fide* holders of certificates of domicile. We do not touch upon minor existing rights which may or may not have been taken away by the Act.

The £3 tax is the sorest question from many points of view. It is a burden imposed upon a most helpless class and it is a tax which was universally condemned during Mr. Gokhale's stay last year in South

Africa and, as Lord Ampthill most emphatically states, "the Ministers in South Africa definitely promised Mr. Gokhale that this £3 poll-tax should be removed and Ministers told the Governor-General that they had given him this promise". We hold that a promise given to Mr. Gokhale is a promise given to the Indian community. It, therefore, becomes our sacred duty to offer passive resistance until the tax is repealed.

Indians cannot be expected to sit still if the administration of the existing laws is made harsher day by day. Formerly Indian wives were admitted without fuss and without much questioning. Now the Government have instructed Immigration Officers to demand closest proof, and then, too, there are all kinds of quibbles raised. Kulsambibi's case is the latest. There never has been any justification offered for such harshness of procedure in admitting Indian wives. There has been no charge brought against us of having attempted to bring in women of questionable character or of our women having offered any competition. Then, take the unreasonable deposit of £25 required from men who want to prove their domicile as against £10 which used to be demanded before. Visiting passes which used to be issued fairly liberally are now being granted in a most niggardly spirit. We know of cases in which sons have been refused permits to visit their parents and business people to visit other provinces to collect their debts. It is no easy matter for an Indian creditor to secure a permit to visit the Transvaal for the purpose of collecting his book-debts. The tendency of the administration is to wipe out the resident Indian population by making its life in South Africa as intolerable as possible. The administration of the Gold Law and the Townships Act in the Transvaal and of the trade licensing laws in Natal and the Cape has been simply scandalous. Mr. Cachalia, therefore, insists that this method of administering the laws affecting us must be changed.

And none of the reforms Mr. Cachalia desires can possibly be attained unless the Government and the Europeans of South Africa adopt a less hostile and more reasonable attitude. If the former continue to frown upon us and the latter continue to pass resolutions demanding our destruction by a process of compulsory civic starvation, we must meet them by showing that we are capable of dying for our honour and an honourable existence in South Africa, not by

fighting them bodily, but by a process of voluntary suffering which at once purifies and dignifies.

Indian Opinion, 20-9-1913

196. HOW TO DO IT

Passive resistance, this time, will be comparatively an easy matter, as it will extend to all the Provinces of the Union,—not that the sufferings will be less; indeed, they are likely to be greater, but to court imprisonment will be easier. Hitherto, passive resisters have challenged arrest by crossing the Transvaal border. That is how the present struggle, too, has been commenced. We may, on this question of the crossing of the border, at once say that this method of resistance does not mean that we are asking for a breaking of the provincial boundaries. On the contrary, as soon as the reason for the struggle ceases, those who will have crossed the borders of different Provinces will return to the Province of their domicile. Passive resisters are not fighting—Dare not fight—for personal and individual rights.

But the crossing is an expensive business. Those who feel inclined to take an active part in the campaign can, in a quiet and dignified manner, court arrest by hawking or trading without licences, or, if they have their licences, without showing them. They should, in each case, inform the police or the courts that it is not their intention thus to break the law but that, until there is a settlement with the Government, they propose not to assist the authorities in carrying out the laws of the land which have no moral or natural but only an artificial basis. This is not a struggle of a day. Each one can think out for himself how he can best court arrest. Time and experience will show the right way if we have the will to suffer for the sake of our own and our country's honour.

Indian Opinion, 20-9-1913

197. HOW TO ORGANIZE THE STRUGGLE

This third campaign will embrace the whole of South Africa. We believe, therefore, that going to gaol will be an easy matter. It does not mean that this time the sufferings in gaol will be less. They may even be more. Only, it will not be difficult, as it was before, to find ways of going to gaol. So far, people courted imprisonment by entering the Transvaal. There is no need to do that this time. If, in every town and every province, a few Indians at least take intelligent interest in the fight, they will be able to participate in it in some measure, however small, and help it. The easiest way is for the hawkers. Those who are hawkers by profession, as also those who are not, can get arrested by hawking without licences. For this, the imprisonment will be only for a short term. It will involve no risk of goods being auctioned. Moreover, they can pause and rest when tired. If we can have such a movement in every town, we shall have put up a big fight. It will agitate the whole of South Africa and compel the most serious attention from those in power. Even those who hold licences can act in this manner. The police demand licences from time to time. If, having them, we do not produce them, it will be their duty to arrest us. Store-keepers and even their assistants can do this and so get arrested. As we think of it, we see that this is the easiest way and the simplest. It will involve comparatively little of suffering, the initiative will always be with us and we shall be able to have rest whenever we want. The hawkers and store-keepers should remember that their interests are deeply involved in the struggle. Both the Government and the whites feel sore over trade more than anything else. If we were not to engage in trade, we would provoke much less envy. Trade is our very life here. One should always remember that our sufferings will diminish in the measure in which we command increased respect. We hope, therefore, that the business community will utilize this excellent opportunity which will cost them so little. We need hardly say that even one single Indian in a town can put up such a fight. If there is any such hero, he should send us his name before going to gaol. Those who get arrested by crossing the border must bear in mind that they will not thereby acquire any

rights for themselves. Satyagraha is not meant for acquiring rights for oneself. Selfishness and satyagraha can never go together.

HOW TO HELP IN OTHER WAYS

We have seen above that it is only by going to gaol that we can best help the struggle. But we know that all Indians do not have the pluck for this. We need them to consider what such Indians should do. We give below the ideas that occur to us.

l. One may look after the business of those who go to gaol and care for their families or see to the maintenance of their dependants.

2. This time we are not going to ask for money from India. At the same time, we are left at present with very little money; it is up to everyone to send contributions to the satyagraha fund.

3. Those who cannot afford to give money, may send foodgrains.

4. In every town of every province, meetings should be held and resolutions passed approving of Mr. Cachalia's letter[1] and these resolutions should be dispatched, by telegram or post, both to the local and the Imperial Governments.

5. Telegrams welcoming the fight should be sent to the [British Indian] Association.

6. Wherever meetings cannot be held, telegrams and letters should be sent to the Government on behalf of public bodies.

7. The matter should be discussed with the whites of one's town and they should be kept well-informed through issues of *Indian Opinion* having a bearing on the struggle.

8. Shaking off lethargy, every Indian must acquaint himself with the aims of the campaign and the nature of the issues involved.

9. Issues of *Indian Opinion* pertaining to the struggle should be procured and sent to different places in India and England.

10. One should help in the collection of funds for the London Committee.

11. Every Indian should set apart some time for the fight and engage himself during that period in some work or other connected

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary for Interior", 12-9-1913.

with it.

Most of these things may be done by every Indian and by every organization. Every individual and every association must undertake as many of them as possible. What can be done right now is to hold meetings at every place, pass resolutions and send them to both Governments.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 20-9-1913

198. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

VOLKSRUST,

[*September 20, 1913*][1]

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL[2],

You will be free on Sunday and Monday. If you are you should canvass Volksrust for *1.0.* sub[scribers]. See the Editor of the *Reporter* newspaper there or Mr. Kallenbach may see him. We must educate the Europeans. See leading article in the current issue. You may forward the copy to Miss Schlesin.[3] This information she may give the Press but not show this very copy.

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence, Vol. II, p. 502
Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] The letter was written at the bottom of another to the Chief Immigration Offi-cer, which carries the date September 20, 1913 in Herman Kallenbach's hand. For the text of the letter signed by the addressee who was at this time the spokesman for the passive resisters in Volksrust, *vide* "The Resisters at Volksrust", 24-9-1913.

[2] Cousin of Gandhiji and a founder-member of the Phoenix Settlement; editor of Gujarati section of *India Opinion* after 1908.

[3] Sonja Schlesin, Secretary, Transvaal Indian Women's Association

199. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

Saturday [*September 20, 1913*][1]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I have wired saying I was sending instructions. Here is the draft letter.[2] This will be in your hands on Sunday. Please let Chhaganlal copy it and sign and deliver immediately. I have kept a copy for *Indian Opinion*, which will be printed for the Wednesday issue. Please send me full information by wire, so that I may give it in *Indian Opinion.* If they do not reply or reply evasively, you may board the train without taking any tickets. If they detain you next morning strong men should walk out of Sandfontein only seven miles I think and the ladies unless they wish to walk should be in a trolly to be hired with Mr. Rustomjee in charge. You may there entrain. If they arrest there, splendid. Then they must keep all in custody. If they do not, simply pass the night out on the Veld. You will have sufficient provisions and proceed early morning on your wagon journey. It will be simply splendid and romantic. You, I know, will love it. But the others too will fall in with it. So you will continue until you reach Johannesburg, always trying the train whenever you can.

Yours,
UPPER HOUSE

[PS.]

Am sending this Box 8, Care Badat so that you may get it even on Sunday.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] This appears to be the "Saturday letter" written to the addressee
[2] *Vide* "The Resisters at Volksrust", 24-9-1913.

200. LETTER TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"[1]

[DURBAN,]
September 21, 1913

SIR,

There is evidence in the special article from Pretoria on the Indian position which you published in your issue of Saturday last that its writer has been in the know. It will, therefore, be accepted by the public as a weighty pronouncement on behalf of the Government. You will, therefore, perhaps permit me to correct some of its most glaring errors. The writer contends that two of the four things in dispute were granted by the Government. This is only partly true. The Free State difficulty is that of the legal racial bar. The last telegram from Mr. Smuts lends colour to the suggestion that the difficulty is removed. But in reality it is not. What is required is an admission in the same way in which it was made about the point raised regarding the right of ex-indentured Indians, that the new Act does not in law require any declaration not required from any other immigrant, from an Indian who may, under the Act, enter the Free State. This is quite different from saying that such declaration will only be taken upon an Indian entering the Union. The point is that, so far as immigration only is concerned, an Indian should be able to enter on the same terms as a European. Administrative differentialism there undoubtedly will be. But that will regulate the number of entrants, not the legal mode of entry. The point is somewhat technical from the nature of the case. The struggle has been directed hitherto towards guarding against a fundamental change in the British Constitution which is based upon the theory of equality. The letter of the Indian contention was granted in 1910 after four years' continuous suffering on the part of my countrymen. But the spirit of it is missed even now in the new Act by reason of the ambiguous Free State clause.

The second difficulty not solved is the marriage question. Your

[1] Evidently, Gandhiji had simultaneously sent a copy of this letter to *Indian Opinion*, which published it in its issue of September 24.

correspondent asserts that I have asked for legal recognition of polygamy, and therefore, a subversion of the marriage law of the country, which is based on the Christian doctrine. A glance at the correspondence[1] between the Government and myself, published in *Indian Opinion*, September 13, will show that I have not asked for any such thing. I have asked that the legality of marriages of Indians celebrated in South Africa should be recognized in the same way as those celebrated in India will be, under the new Act. I directed alteration to the flaw in the wording of the marriage clause in the new Act, and showed two ways of dealing with it, i.e., either by slightly amending the new Act or by similarly amending the marriage laws of the Union without in any way interfering with the monogamous nature of marriages. The writer at Pretoria has raised the question of the meaning of "monogamous marriage". The point will be soon decided by the Supreme Court. If the phrase does not mean what it was meant to mean when the marriage clause was passed, the blame will be that of the Government. They have raised the issue, not the Indian community. Millions of Indian unions in which the husband has married only one wife are, to the lay mind, monogamous marriages. If the phrase means anything else, the Government have misled the Senate, the Imperial and Indian Governments, and the Indian community. It will not be denied that this marriage question is one of the highest importance to us. I am sure the Europeans of South Africa will permit us to cherish the honour of our womanhood as much as they cherish that of theirs.

As to the £3 poll-tax, I note that your correspondent does not seriously contend that it is a new point. He has only to look at the reservation clause in the correspondence of 1911 to see that it cannot be treated as a new point. It is new in the sense that it was not included in the recent negotiations. It could not well be as the discussion turned only upon the new Act. Had there been a settlement on the basis of the negotiations, the community would have continued to urge the removal by way of petitioning, etc., but the negotiations having failed,

[1] This, *inter alia*, included letters addressed to the Private Secretary to the Minister of the Interior dated June 28, to the Secretary for the Interior dated July 2 and August 24, and to the Assistant Secretary for the Interior dated September 3. These have been given in their chronological order.

the way was open for the community to include this matter of simple humanity in the struggle. Lord Ampthill has declared that the Union Government gave Mr. Gokhale a definite promise that the tax would be removed. If the Government intend to keep the promise, they have but to say so, and there will be no struggle on that point. If they do not intend to keep it, Indians would have no right to exist side by side with a free and self-respecting community if they have no decency, and moral strength, to suffer imprisonment, or worse, in order that a promise given to their distinguished countryman may be fulfilled, and their poor, helpless countrymen freed from a burden which ought never to have been imposed on them, and for which the sin must, I fear, be shared by the free Indian population of South Africa almost equally with the Europeans.

Lastly, your correspondent's advice that we should accept thankfully what has been granted, and what has been denied as being of little importance, and then press forward the redress of the balance of grievances by way of petitions, etc., and his suggestion that, then, we may be blessed with a special law such as the Natives' Land Act, whereby we may have a reserve set apart for us where we can buy land, etc., remind me, if he will forgive me for the analogy, of Æsop's justice-loving wolf. We have petitioned in vain all these years. Right after right has been taken away from us. And an Indian reserve means that the substantial right at present enjoyed of owning and buying land in Natal, and the Cape, and a modified right of possessing land in the Transvaal should be surrendered, and we must allow ourselves to be penned in an enclosure, and then bless the Government for this grace as a reward for not offering passive resistance, which involves suffering for nobody but ourselves, but which, if it ensures nothing else, at least saves us from a surrender of our manhood.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 25-9-1913

201. LETTER TO SECRETARY FOR INTERIOR

[DURBAN,]
September 22, 1913

DEAR MR. GORGES,

I am much obliged to you for your letter[1] of the 19th instant regarding the marriage question. I have not widened the original scope of my request. But I shall endeavour as clearly as possible to re-state the position.

It is submitted that authority should be taken from Parliament during its next session to legalize monogamous marriages already solemnized or hereafter to be solemnized by Indian priests among Indians belonging to non-Christian denominations. Legislation has become necessary only because the marriage clause in the new Act was hastily worded without considering the full position. Unless the relief now sought is granted soon, the status of Indian women married in South Africa is that of concubines and their children not lawful heirs of their parents. Such is, as I take it, the effect of the Searle judgment combined with the action of the Natal Master of the Supreme Court and the Gardiner judgment[2]. I have asked for a promise of amelioration during the next session because I submit that the matter is one of urgency. With regard to polygamy, I have not asked for legal recognition but the admission, under the powers vested in the Minister, of plural wives without the Government in any way recognizing their legal status. The admission is to be restricted only to plural wives already married to Indians who may be found to be unquestionably domiciled in the Union. This at once restricts the scope of the Government's generosity and enables them to know *now* how many such wives will have to be admitted. I have already submitted a plan as to how this can be brought about.

In my humble opinion, the letter of the 10th August, 1911, referred to in your communication, bears the interpretation I have

[1] *Vide* 2nd footnote to "Telegram to Secretary for Interior", 10-9-1913.
[2] *Vide* "Important Judgment about Marriage", 30-8-1913.

placed upon it. The British Indian Association raised the question of polygamy and the above-mentioned letter containing the assurance was the reply. I suppose you know that plural wives have actually been admitted by the Immigration Officers and that polygamous unions are even registered on the Transvaal registration certificates.

As doubts have arisen as to the meaning of the term "monogamous marriage", I beg to record that the meaning that the community has placed upon it is that a marriage is monogamous if a man is married to only one woman, no matter under what religion and no matter whether such religion under given circumstances sanctions polygamy or not.

I observe that paragraph 2 of your letter seems to suggest that my reply to your last wire did not [cover], though it might have covered, the other points referred to therein. I purposely refrained from touching the other points as I felt that no scope was left open for me to do so. But if General Smuts is still prepared to consider the other points, I shall be certainly prepared to make a further submission. I cannot help feeling that the unfortunate rupture has taken place on points very vital to the Indian community but of little consequence to the Government or the dominant population of the Union.

Pray, always consider me to be one the least desirous to obstruct the Government and most anxious to serve it in so far as I can do so consistently with my duty to my countrymen.[1]

[*I have, etc.*,]

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 29-10-1913

[1] Acknowledging this on September 27, Gorges wrote: "I have submitted your communication to the Minister, who, after full consideration of the matter, requests me to say that it will not be possible for him to give any assurance that legislation on the lines indicated in Section 4 of my personal letter of the 19th ultimo to you will be introduced at the next session of Parliament."

202. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]
[*September 22, 1913*][1]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I have your letters. I still expect a wire from you. As we are issuing on Wednesday, I must not wait to write at length. I only hope that your expectation will be realized. You do not seem to have received my letter on Sunday. Anyway I expect a wire from you at noon. More, therefore, then. No time to write separately to the others just now.

I wrote to Miss Schlesin saying she need not worry about replying to the papers. As it so happens the *Leader's* is an inspired article and reproduced in the *Mercury*[2].

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] From the contents; vide the following item.

[2] The Natal Mercury; *vide* also:Letter to the *Natal Mercury*", 21-9-1913 and "What Appeal Boards Stand For", 24-9-1913.

203. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]

Monday afternoon [*September 22, 1913*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I have been most regular in my correspondence. I cannot understand how 3 letters were delivered to you at the same time. In several cases I sent train letters. However, you got my Saturday letter[1] in time. I have your 3 wires. I am delighted that they are at last deported and that they have recrossed. I hope now to hear from you next as to sentences. If they are [sentenced] it would be well for you to stay there two days and arrange for special foods for Mrs. Gandhi and others who may need it. You may have a heart-to-heart chat with the doctor who is a nice man and tell him of Maganbhai's disease too. If they are gaoled, I shall leave here on Thursday. That gives you [time] there till Friday. If I bring a large contingent, you should stay over and see them through. If on the other [hand] I have only Budrea with me, you will not stay but join me, i.e., if I am not also stopped. Wednesday will just give me time to wind up for the next issue here.

You and I have our work cut out in Johannesburg and if all goes well, we may settle the matter in a month's time. There are indications in the newspapers themselves.

The resisters tell me you have been a tower of strength to them. Mrs. Gandhi says most pathetically that you are all attention to her. I simply pass these sentiments on to you.

Have not yet had a wire from Polak.

Will you please arrange with Badat and others that they look after those who may follow?

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jamnadas Gandhi", 19-7-1913.

204. THE RESISTERS AT VOLKSRUST

We reported last week that the passive resisters were told they would be deported on receipt of warrants from Pretoria. Fuller details that have come to hand show that the spokesman[1] was summoned before the Immigration Officer on Thursday[2] last and told that he had received instructions from Pretoria to submit to the party for filling in forms prescribed under the Act. The spokesman regretted that the party could not comply with the request. Would they submit to the test? The spokesman said they could not do that either.

"Then," said the officer, "you are all prohibited immigrants." And, so saying, he handed the usual notices for all, informing them of his decision and saying that they could appeal against his decision to the Appeal Board within 3 days. The spokesman said the party did not want to appeal at all. The officer then said that, in that event, he would deport them all upon receipt of warrants. Thereupon, the spokesman urged that they should all be taken in custody, as they did not wish to remain free and not proceed with their journey. But the officer said he could not take them in custody. The next day the party informed the officer that, unless they were kept under custody, they would proceed to Johannesburg.

"Then," said the officer, "I shall have to stop you, but I will not imprison you." Thereupon, the following letter was addressed to the officer, signed by the spokesman:

My fellow-passive resisters and I have been stopped by you from continuing our journey to Johannesburg since Tuesday last, the 16th instant. I told you then that, if you wished to detain or arrest us, you could do so only by keeping us in prison, as we did not desire to remain in Volksrust with friends, however insistent they might be to accommodate us. But you told us that you had not sufficient room at the Police Station for such a large company as ours and that, therefore, you would rather that we remained out, pending receipt of instructions from the Government. We have waited, it would be admitted, long enough to enable you to receive your instructions.

[1] Chhaganlal Gandhi
[2] September 18

On my telling you on Friday that, if you could not keep us under custody, the party would consider itself free to proceed to Johannesburg, you informed me that you would prevent it from so doing and that yet you could not keep us in custody until you had heard from the Government.

I beg, therefore, now to inform you that unless you take charge of the party, we shall entrain for Johannesburg on Monday, by the Kaffir Mail, and if you offer physical resistance at the time, as passive resisters, we can only yield to it for the time being. But, if you set us free afterwards and do not hold us bodily, we shall seek some other means of continuing our forward journey.

Later wires received from Volksrust show that the delivery of the notice acted like a charm. The whole party was deported on Monday, at 10 a.m., to the Natal border. Deportation merely consists in pushing the deportees beyond a line midway in a shallow stream. As soon as the party was deported and the back of the deporting officer was hardly turned, they re-crossed and were arrested. They were straightaway taken to the Charge Office.

Indian Opinion, 24-9-1913

205. THE LATE MR. HOOSEN DAWAD

We regret to announce that young Hoosen Dawad, who was ailing for a long time and who had the benefit of the most skilled medical attendance and the unceasing and devoted nursing of a loving father, passed away on Monday night. We consider that Mr. Hoosen gave promise of being one of the greatest Indians of South Africa. We extend our sympathy to the bereaved family. We hope to give a special memoir[1] and portrait of the deceased in our next issue. This issue being specially published for giving news of the passive resistance struggle, it is impossible for us to cope with the memoir.

Indian Opinion, 24-9-1913

206. THE £3 TAX

For many reasons we consider that the central point of the struggle is this blood tax, as we have not hesitated to call it. It ought never to have been imposed. The history of the imposition does not reflect any credit on Natal. It would never have been imposed if we, the free Indian settlers of Natal, had, at the time, done our duty completely. It would never have been imposed if the otherwise fine statesmen of Natal, who were then in power, had not truckled to the planter and the farming communities. We may here recall the fact that the original intention of the then Government was to impose an annual tax of £25 on ex-indentured Indians and to make its non-payment a criminal offence. This was too much for the Government of India, though it was soft and accommodating enough. The figure was, therefore, brought down to £3 and the Government of India would not listen to the proposal to make its non-payment a criminal offence. So a Bill was passed in 1895 imposing the tax, the condition being that, if the ex-indentured Indian left for India on the

[1] *Vide* "The Late Mr. Haji Hoosen Dawad Mahomed", 1-10-1913.

termination of his indenture or entered into further indenture, he was exempt but, if he did not do either and wished to settle in Natal as a free man, he and his were bound to pay the tax which could be collected by a civil summary process. The first collections started in 1900, and since then men, women and children have been harassed, more or less inexorably, to pay this wretched penalty for their freedom. We call it a penalty because it is admittedly not a revenue-producing impost. It is avowedly for the purpose of compelling the helpless people to re-indenture or to return to India from whence they came to avoid starvation, and on the strength of unscrupulous allurements of touts. The law-officers then set about working to find out how they could send these men to gaol although it was a compact between the Natal and the Indian Governments that it was not to be deemed a criminal offence if the tax was not paid. They found out that it was possible to use effectively the small debts clause of the Magistrates' Courts Act in order to override the compact and send these people to gaol if they did not pay the tax. Disobedience of an order of Court is contempt of Court for which the defaulter is sentenced to imprisonment. There is an exception to the clause to the effect that, if a debtor shows that he has been unable, through want of means, to discharge a debt which he is ordered to pay, he may not be imprisoned. But we know that, in most cases, the Magistrates, after all human beings living in the midst of the all-powerful planting community, have disbelieved the evidence as to poverty and sentenced the men to be imprisoned for non-payment. The latest case in point is that of Sarjoo[1]. He has not paid for the last three years. He paid what he could and then pleaded inability. But the plea was not accepted and he had to serve imprisonment with hard labour for 30 days. And even this imprisonment does not free him from payment. If he is believed by a police officer to have means, he can be re-arrested and re-sentenced unless he pays the tax. Thus we hold that the local Government have broken faith with the Government of India by resorting to the Magistrates' Courts Act to thrust the poor men and women into gaols for non-payment.

[1] An ex-indentured Indian who had not paid his tax arrears; Maganlal Gandhi was summoned for employing him.

But one would have thought that, with the stoppage of the system of indenture, the tax would be abolished. Nothing of the kind has happened. The relentless employers, who want indentured labour, having tasted the sweets of it, are not satisfied with anything less, certainly not with free labour. And so the tax has continued.

Then came the climax. Prominent people of Natal assured Mr. Gokhale that the tax would go, that they did not want it. The Union Government made a definite promise to our distinguished countryman that they would remove the tax. And yet, during the last session of Parliament, they broke the promise.

Who can say that the local Indian community have decided a second too soon upon passive resistance? It would have been proper at any moment. It is doubly so at this moment. If our readers only knew, as we know, how this breach of faith, this failure to remove the tax, has shaken Mr. Gokhale and how, in spite of strong medical advice, he decided to return to India to rouse the Government and the people to action, and what extraordinary pressure was brought to bear upon him to induce him to postpone his departure from England, every Indian would let every consideration of self go and fight for the removal of this tax even unto death. It is a simple, primary duty every Indian in South Africa owes to his country, to Mr. Gokhale and to the poor men who are the victims of gold hunger on the part of the employers of indentured Indian labour.

Indian Opinion, 24-9-1913

207. WHAT APPEAL BOARDS STAND FOR

The Natal Mercury, in a leaderette, offers the opinion that the Appeal Boards are a distinct advantage to the Indians because one or two men have been successful in their appeals. This would be true if the Appeal Boards had taken the place of something worse. But the facts are that they are dealing with a situation that did not exist before. That is to say, before the Act was passed, men who were undisputed possessors of their domicile certificates re-entered as a matter of right. Now the Act has nullified the effect of these certificates and created work for the Boards which reject the majority of cases, which formerly were quite safe and then grant one or two. Thus the law, having deprived the community of all its rights, allows Appeal Boards to restore some. If, for this mercy, one has to be thankful, one ought also to thank a thief who restores part of stolen property. Of course, we have nothing to say against the Boards as such. Indeed, the appointment of Mr. Binns and Mr. Maurice Evans is unexceptionable. But the best judge is of no use, if he is appointed merely to act as an anaesthetic acts when a patient has to undergo a severe operation resulting in the loss of a limb. And the analogy is somewhat too flattering for the Government. In the latter case, the patient submits to the operation willingly and for his own good. In the former case, he is the unwilling victim.

Indian Opinion, 24-9-1913

208. THE £3 TAX

It is, I think, our good fortune that the £3 tax has been included among the issues for satyagraha. The previous history of this problem is worth recalling. The proposal for the £3 tax first came up in 1894. The Natal Government sent a deputation to India. At that time the Indians protested violently against it.[1] The Government's original intention was to levy a tax of £25 and, if any Indian could not pay that tax, the Government wanted to be empowered to effect hiscompulsory repatriation. Thanks to our agitation, the Indian Government rejected both the proposals and passed a resolution that an Indian who, after completing his indenture, did not re-indenture himself should either return to his country or pay an amount of £3 tax each for himself, his wife and his children. If anyone did not pay the tax, it could be recovered by auctioning his property, if he had any, but that the Government would have no power to imprison him. The Indian community made a strong representation against this too. In 1896, meetings were also held in India in this connection.[2] Nevertheless the tax remained. For some time, thereafter, the Government collected the tax from those who paid it. Meanwhile, though there was no provision for imprisonment [in case of default], the Government found an indirect way of sending defaulters to gaol. According to a section in the law relating to magistrates' courts, anyone failing to comply with a magistrate's judgment is guilty of contempt of court for which the court could sentence him to imprisonment. Under this section, first a decree would be issued on an Indian to pay his tax. Then, if he did not pay the tax, he would be brought before the court for contempt of court. If he is able to prove his poverty, the court must discharge him. Why should the court believe the evidence of such a miserable wretch? The result was violation of the agreement made with the Indian Government. This was breach of trust. And hundreds of Indians found themselves in prison. Several women and young men were also

[1] *Vide* "Open Letter", before 19-12-1894, and "Petition to Lord Ripon", before 5-5-1895.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Meeting, Madras", 26-10-1896.

imprisoned. Are we not to blame for all this? Had we taken more pains than we did, these poor people would have been free from the yoke which they had borne for 15 years. Would not thousands of pounds of the poor have been saved? It must sear our hearts to hear all these questions. We did not hear the cry for help at our own doors ! Who can tell how much of such burden [of guilt] we have to bear? It is enjoined by all religions that we should share in the suffering that we see around us. We have failed to do so. An opportunity has offered itself today.

We are sure that, if many from the community fight against it, the tax will be repealed forthwith. If only a few do so, there is likely to be delay. But the repeal of the tax is certain. The campaign that is now coming is such that it should be easy for all Indians to join it with zest. So far we could ask nothing of the thousands of ex-indentured Indians. Now, they too can join the fight with all their heart. We are convinced that, if every Indian who is not able to court imprisonment or give money for this cause, just spares one hour of his time to acquaint the poor and the illiterate people with the issue of the tax, there will be a real fight indeed. No one, moreover, should remain complacent in the belief that the tax is bound to be repealed. On the contrary, everyone must do his best. The community will find a great deal to learn from this struggle and will be able to raise itself very high. A wise man does not avert his face or go to wash it when Lakshmi[1] comes to him, in his own house, to put a tilak[2] on his forehead.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 24-9-1913

[1] Hindu goddess of prosperity
[2] Auspicious vermilion mark

209. LETTER TO CLEMENT DOKE

PHOENIX,
NATAL,
September 24, 1913

MY DEAR CLEMENT,

I have your letter but not the list. I am now sending you 25 copies[1] for distribution among father's friends and congregation. You can have more. It never was the intention to charge European friends for the memoir. The idea was to get Indians to buy copies for wide circulation in India.

Thanks for inquiring about Mrs. Gandhi. She is now in gaol at Volksrust as a passive resister together with 3 other ladies from Phoenix.

The Secret City[2] *is* enchanting. I have been reading it in my spare moments. I have nearly finished it.

I am leaving tomorrow for Johannesburg.

I hope you are getting and reading your copy of *Indian Opinion* regularly.

With regards to you all.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 743

[1] These were copies of a memoir of Rev. J. J.Doke, addressee's father; *vide* "The Late Mr. Joseph J. Doke", 23-8-1913.

[2] A book by Rev. Doke; *vide* "The Late Mr. Joseph J. Doke", 23-8-1913.

210. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

IN THE TRAIN,
[After *September 25, 1913*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I find myself in an awful state today. I ran for the train. I gave no end of trouble to the boys. Everyone was delayed because of me. Unmindful of that, I committed a further mistake and sent Purshotam[2] again. Thinking of this, I felt extremely miserable. Even those of my actions which I believed to be for a spiritual purpose have a big flaw in them. I am too full of *moha* and *lobha*[3]. It is never the mark of a spiritual aspirant to be in too great a hurry and make himself a nuisance to others. He may, of course, not overtax himself–ought not to. What an ignoble state to be in ! All this is the consequence of initial mistakes. I also realized that if I had skipped the meal, I could have worked with an unruffled mind, with plenty of time on hand, and would have been no cause of trouble to any of you. A spiritual aspirant should not accept exacting services for himself. To make you give up the school and to send the boys running argue an abject state of mind. I always knew this, but realized it vividly today. I felt ashamed within myself even as I was on the way—I reproached myself. I, who used to believe that I had perhaps something in, find myself today in a humiliating state. I tell you all this because you attribute so many excellences to me. You should see the faults in me in order that you may save yourself from like faults. Plunged as I have been in the affairs of South Africa, I think I can be entirely free only in India. But please warn me whenever I take upon myself too heavy a burden. You will be with me, no doubt, even in India. If I am imprisoned, it will be all peace and nothing but peace for me. If not, I

[1] This appears to have been written by Gandhiji on his way to the Transvaal. He left Durban on September 25 and reached Johannesburg on September 27.

[2] Purshotam Desai, a satyagrahi, in charge of the Phoenix School for some time

[3] Greed

may even return there. Please warn me if ever in future, even in South Africa, you find today's story being repeated. We could have done without bread for Mr. Kallenbach and without groundnut jam for me. We need not have been particular about feeding the children. Or rather, we might have pleased ourselves in all these ways and yet things would have been all right if I had not insisted on having my meal. But I would ride all the horses and that is why God ordained my fall. Surely this is not the first occasion when such a thing has happened to me. This time, however, the lesson has been brought home to me. I will now change myself a little.

Please arrange the household things, or have them arranged properly. There are old cotton beddings near where the tools are stored. Ask Baku to wash them. Have them stitched by Mrs. Sam[1] and put them back well arranged.

For the present, let the children learn to write the addresses carefully. It will be good to lighten this burden on Devibehn[2] by half—and to remove it entirely by and by. If Chhotam and Navin worry her, draw them away to yourself. The matter about Lord Ampthill will now have to be attended to by you, unaided.

While in Durban, I heard that the men will be removed from Volksrust to Maritzburg.[3] If they are, it is just as well. That will be some experience indeed and, with Rustomjee Sheth there, they will be better able to face the situation.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

If the children cannot manage to write 300 addresses this time, you should try and help them to complete them on Sunday or Monday. You will find there a jacket made by me for Budrea[4]; this is to be sent on to Polak.

Two powers [of attorney] on behalf of Rustomjee Sheth have

[1] Wife of Govindsamy
[2] Indian name given to Miss Ada West by Gandhiji
[3] The prisoners were removed to the Maritzburg Gaol on September 28.
[4] An old client of Gandhiji

been left there. They should be attested by you and Devibehn under the date of Monday, Phoenix, and preserved there. Fill [in the details], if you can.[1] Otherwise I shall do that when I am there.

From the Gujarati original in pencil in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5649 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

211. LETTER TO SOUTH AFRICAN RAILWAYS

[JOHANNESBURG,]
September 27, 1913

TO
THE GENERAL MANAGER
SOUTH AFRICAN RAILWAYS

[SIR,]

With two other Indians I was travelling by the Kaffir Mail that left Durban on Thursday to the Transvaal. We were all travelling third-class. We occupied one of the corridor third-class compartments which are usually attached to the Natal trains. My companions and I were put in the compartment we occupied by one of the conductors. At Ladysmith, however, the new conductor came and told me that we would have to shift from the compartment we were occupying to another. On enquiring for the reason I was told that the compartment we were occupying was meant for Europeans only. I drew the conductor's attention to a compartment which was so labelled, also to the fact that our compartment was not labelled at all, and that I had travelled in such compartments several times on the Natal line. I informed him also that the conductor at Durban had placed me in that compartment, but the new conductor said that I was to obey instructions or to get permission from the Station Master to remain where I was. Thereupon, I saw the Station Master, but I must say that, in rather a rude manner, he told me that I was to do as the conductor asked me, and that I ought to know that the conductors could ask passengers to

[1] The original is not clear at this point.

shift as many times as they chose without giving any reason whatsoever. I did not argue the matter with the Station Master but simply went and occupied the compartment I was in and awaited developments there. Meantime, unknown to me, a friend who happened to be on the platform, and who knew me, disclosed my identity to the conductor who subsequently spoke to me and told me that, in asking me as he had done to remove, he was only carrying out instructions. I told the conductor then that, after having known who I was, it was his duty to have me arrested for disobeying instructions, but that he would not do. I was told by the Indians who were on the platform at the time, and who were watching the proceedings, that such difficulties happened to Indian passengers very often. I do not know what truth there is in what the conductor told me. I can only hope that he has misread the instructions of the administration, because, in my humble opinion, it would be preposterous if even third-class Indian passengers may not travel without being disturbed, and without being told that the nicest compartments were always reserved for Europeans.

I hope that you will be good enough to investigate this matter and do whatever you consider is necessary. I feel that high officials, such as Station Masters, ought to be told to realize their responsibility and behave courteously towards passengers even though they may not belong to the European race. I hardly think that it was necessary for me to disclose my identity before I could claim courteous treatment from the Station Master.

[*I have, etc.,*

M. K. GANDHI]

Indian Opinion, 8-10-1913

212. ON POINT OF BEING ARRESTED

[*September 27, 1913*][1]

On Thursday[2] last, Mr. Gandhi went to the Transvaal with some satyagrahis. He and his companions were in a third-class compartment. Among the third-class carriages, there are some which are clean and comfortable. The railway official had put Mr. Gandhi and his companions in one of these. When the train reached Ladysmith, the conductor ordered them to vacate the compartment and occupy the next one. Mr. Gandhi said: "We are not going to, and we will reach the Transvaal in this very compartment."

The conductor said, "I order you to go."

Mr. Gandhi said, "It was the conductor at Durban who placed us here." The conductor retorted, "Don't argue with me. I tell you to get out. This compartment is for the Europeans. This train is under my charge."

Without entering into an argument, Mr. Gandhi decided to remain in the same compartment with his companions and hoped to be arrested for disobeying the conductor's order. He thought that this was a good opportunity that had offered itself for him to go to gaol. Some Indians who were present there saw what was happening and were glad to think the incident would have a good result. But Mr. Windon, who was on the spot, spoiled the game. The conductor did not recognize Mr. Gandhi. Mr. Windon went to him and told him the name. That made the conductor hold his peace. Afterwards he had a long conversation with Mr. Gandhi in the presence of other conductors and told him that he was only doing his duty. In his ignorance, however, the friend, with the best of intentions, behaved like an enemy. Had Mr. Gandhi been arrested at Ladysmith, some of the problems concerning railways would have been solved and, incidentally, the struggle would have gained strength. All the Indians on the platform were disappointed and, later on, Mr. Windon realized

[1] *Vide* reference to preceding item in the last paragraph.
[2] September 25

that it would have been far better if he had not interfered.

Mr. Gandhi has sent a written complaint about this to the General Manager, telling him that he was informed by the Indians who were on the station that such hardships were a common experience. He has also pointed out in the letter that the Station Master, instead of attending to the complaint, behaved rather rudely.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-10-1913

213. LETTER TO SECRETARY FOR INTERIOR

[JOHANNESBURG,]

September 28, 1913

DEAR MR. GORGES,

I do not know that I am justified in writing this letter to you, but, as you have been personally solicitous about the non-revival of passive resistance, and as, in the course of my conversations with you, I have so often told you that I have nothing to withhold from the Government, I may as well inform you of what is now going on.

I wrote to you[1] from Phoenix in reply to your last letter, and if you have not yet replied to my communication but intend to do so, I would suggest your sending your reply to my Johannesburg address, as I shall be here for some time at least.

The campaign has started in earnest. As you know, sixteen passive resisters, including four women, are already serving three months' imprisonment with hard labour.[2] The resisters here were awaiting my arrival and the activity here will commence almost immediately.

I cannot help saying that the points on which the struggle has re-started are such that the Government might gracefully grant them

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary for Interior". The Secretary's reply dated September 27 had evidently not reached Gandhiji by this time.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Harilal Gandhi", 18-9-1913.

to the community. But what I would like to impress upon the Government is the gravity of the step we are about to take. I know that it is fraught with danger. I know also that, once taken, it may be difficult to control the spread of the movement beyond the limits one may set. I know also what responsibility lies on my shoulders in advising such a momentous step, but I feel that it is not possible for me to refrain from advising a step which I consider to be necessary, to be of educational value and, in the end, to be valuable both to the Indian community and to the State. This step consists in actively, persistently and continuously asking those who are liable to pay the £3 tax to decline to do so and to suffer the penalties for non-payment and, what is more important, in asking those who are now serving indenture and who will, therefore, be liable to pay the £3 tax on completion of their indenture to strike work until the tax is withdrawn. I feel that, in view of Lord Ampthill's declaration in the House of Lords,[1] evidently with the approval of Mr. Gokhale, as to the definite promise made by the Government and repeated to Lord Gladstone, this advice to indentured Indians would be fully justified. That the tax has weighed most heavily upon the men I know from personal experience, that the men resent it bitterly I also know from personal knowledge. But they have submitted to it more or less with quiet resignation, and I am loth to disturb their minds by any step that I might take or advise. Can I not even now, whilst in the midst of the struggle, appeal to General Smuts and ask him to reconsider his decision on the points already submitted and on the question of the £3 tax and, whether this letter is favourably considered or not, may I anticipate the assurance that it will in no wise be taken to be a threat?

[*I have, etc.,*]

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 29-10-1913

[1] *Vide* "The Debate in the Lords", 6-9-1913.

214. SPEECH AT VREDEDORP MEETING[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,
September 28, 1913]

Mr. Gandhi at the outset stated that he had already addressed two meetings that afternoon, one of which consisted of some fifty Indian women who were mostly affected by the Immigration Act. All of them had decided to throw in their lot with their sisters who were serving three months' hard labour at Vereeniging (Applause.) They had decided, some of them with babies in arms, to undergo all the hardships that gaol life meant. They were going to suffer for their own honour, and though he had warned them, and had even exaggerated the factor of the hardships of gaol life, they would be gratified and surprised, possibly, to hear that the women were staunch. In a few days' time they would be in His Majesty's gaol. (Applause.)

Mr. Gandhi touched upon the requests of the Indian community and the reasons for resuming the campaign of passive resistance.

Our demands are, in my opinion, incredibly simple. The first in point of importance is that the poll-tax of £3 be abolished. This is payable by all the ex-indentured Indians, their wives and grown-up children, so that in the case of a family of six the tax is £18 per year. This tax, as Lord Ampthill stated in the House of Lords, was on promise of repeal during the last session of Parliament. This was a promise made to Gokhale when he came to South Africa. The second thing is the marriage difficulty. I see wild statements made to the effect that we are trying to alter the whole basis of the marriage law of South Africa and to legalize polygamy. Nothing can be further from our thought than that. All we ask for is the restoration of the status that existed before the Searle judgment, and that is, legal recognition of monogamous marriages according to our own religious rites. Surely, this does not mean any alteration of the basis of the marriage law of South Africa. We have certainly asked for the admission of the existing plural wives of the Indians who are domiciled here, but for no legal recognition of their status. This has been done before, and we

[1] Gandhiji addressed a well-attended mass meeting of Indians at the Hamidia Hall. A. M. Cachalia presided.

simply ask for its continuation. It affects a very small number of Indian women. You will be surprised to know that the law of South Africa has actually, in the interests of the planting community, even legally recognized polygamy in the case of the indentured Indians. But we are asking for no such legal recognition for plural wives of free Indian settlers. The third point is the retention of the right of South Africa-born Indians to enter the Cape by reason of their birth. The fourth point is the Free State difficulty. This is almost settled. We claim that the new Act does not mean that an Indian who may possibly enter the Free State is required to make as an immigrant the Free State declaration as to prohibition of holding landed property, to farm and to trade. If such is the interpretation placed upon the law by the Government also, there is no dispute. If the Government make that admission, the whole difficulty is solved. (Applause.) [Resolution][1]

That this meeting held under the auspices of the British Indian Association endorses the action taken by Mr. Cachalia in his letter to the Government, and congratulates the pioneers from Natal who are waiting in His Majesty's gaol at Vereeniging. This meeting further resolves upon the immediate taking up of passive resistance and to continue it until the requests contained in Mr. Cachalia's letter are granted. The meeting respectfully urges the Union Government to grant that request in fairness to the community and also asks the Imperial and Indian Governments to help the community and trusts that the leaders of thought, both in England and India, will support the community in the endeavour to conserve national honour.

Rand Daily Mail, 29-9-1913

[1] After Kallenbach, L. W. Ritch and Joseph Royeppen had spoken, the meeting adopted the resolution, presumably drafted by Gandhiji. The resolution, with some verbal variations, was also published in *Indian Opinion*, 1-10-1913.

215. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[JOHANNESBURG,]
Monday [*September 29, 1913*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Your letter. You need not have made yourself unhappy. Even if you had not gone on to finish your meal, all the things could not have been completed and the confusion[2] could not have been avoided. How can my defects be removed by your disciplining yourself? The remedy lies with me alone.

Manilal, Medh and Pragji have dressed themselves as hawkers and gone out for rounds. I am awaiting news of their arrest.

There will be a good number of women coming forward here. They will start in a day or so. I hear that even women have been removed from Volksrust to Maritzburg. I find that it will also be necessary to start a Satyagraha Fund. On their own, men are coming forward with contributions. Acknowledge the following amounts, therefore:

Mrs. Noor Mahomed Babul 1-1-0

Jogi Fakir of Bejalpur 1-0-0

You will see dehydrated bananas everywhere on that side. For quick dehydration, you may put them into the fire. It seems that Ba has been removed to Maritzburg. Nobody can say when, if ever, we shall be permitted to send food there. You will not need a mortar and pestle. You may make minute pieces with a nut-cracker and grind them in a stonemill. I am sending on a letter from Chhaganlal received here.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5868

[1] The acknowledgment of the amounts referred to in the letter appeared in *Indian Opinion*, 8-10-1913.

[2] The reference is to the situation described in "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi".

216. INTERVIEW TO "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"

[JOHANNESBURG,
September 29, 1913]

Mr. Gandhi... discussed the situation fully and frankly. He considers that the people of the Transvaal are all with the Indians in their demand for fuller rights. Everyone he spoke to, he said, was sympathetic.

[REPORTER:] Then you do not consider that Parliament truly reflects the feeling of the country?

[GANDHIJI:] No, there you have professional men.

Mr. Gandhi said that the Indians were as steadfast and loyal to the cause as ever. Numerically they would not be so strong, but they were quite as earnest as before. The trouble, he said, had arisen to purify them. Asked why the number of resisters would be smaller, he stated that many who had experienced the discomforts of Transvaal prisons had no wish to return.

Some merchants too are not joining your ranks?

They may not go to prison, but they will help us with money.

Are you as well-off in a financial way as on the occasion of the last campaign?

No, we are not.

He went on to say that it was not a question of 3,000 convictions this time. A different procedure will be followed. Instead of a large number of men being in prison for short periods, a hundred or so would bear the brunt of the attack, and, as the Government seemed disposed to inflict the maximum penalty, they would spend a long period in gaol, even if they were only arrested three or four times. They would be assisted by their compatriots in the other Provinces. In the Free State they were only fighting for a theoretical right.

"The thin end of the wedge," suggested the interviewer.

Hardly that, though perhaps in some respects it is.[1]

The Transvaal Leader, 30-9-1913

[1] Gandhiji then explained that the people in the Orange Free State must first be educated on the question. The report added that a number of Indian merchants were opposed to passive resistance, which Gandhiji refuted; *vide* the following item.

217. LETTER TO "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
September 30, 1913

TO
THE EDITOR
THE TRANSVAAL LEADER

SIR,

I trust that you will allow me to correct the many misrepresentations made by your reporter with reference to the passive resistance movement. No doubt they are not all consciously made, but he certainly has been the instrument through which they have been made. "The Indian Passive resistance campaign", you have reported, "is threatened with collapse." This statement will prove to be untrue even if there is one passive resister earnest enough to carry it on, and I prophesy that, so long as there is one-passive resister left to fight, the points we are now fighting for will be granted, not because of the strength of such solitary passive resister, but because of the invincible strength of the truth for which he may be fighting. That our demands are just you have admitted in your leading article, only you have asked us not to revive passive resistance, but to be patient and to petition. Which course is the better is a matter of opinion. I hold that the points at issue are to the community of such vital importance that passive resistance is the only remedy, petitions having failed.

Now for facts. Your report states: "The Indian merchants throughout the Transvaal have dissociated themselves from the movement, and have withdrawn from Mr. Gandhi sources of revenue without which the campaign must fail:" The fact is that the great mass

[1] This is a rejoinder to an allegation in *The Transvaal Leader*, in a report of the interview with Gandhiji on September 29, that a number of influential Indian merchants were opposed to passive resistance. Similar letters were written by L. W. Ritch and H. Kallenbach and were reproduced along with this in *Indian Opinion*, 15-10-1913.

meeting of Sunday[1] was attended by almost all the Indian merchants of Johannesburg, and telegrams in support of the objects of the meeting were received from all the principal towns of the Transvaal, sent by the Indian merchants of those places, anddelegates attended from the towns which could send them upon hardly 24 hours' notice. If there is a split in the community, I assure you that it will not be because passive resisters are asking too much, but because they will be asking too little, for I admit that there are men amongst us who undoubtedly want passive resisters to go to the full length. They cannot be held blameworthy, but they certainly will not represent the moderate wing. I do not know who the influential Mahomedan merchants are who gave your reporter the information that there is very little ground for complaint, and that those who attended the Gold Law Conference were against passive resistance. Your reporter is free to see the names in my possession of the principal merchants in the Transvaal who have expressed themselves heart and soul with the movement. It is true that they have not all offered to go to gaol, but they have certainly offered to help with their purses. But I need not carry any further the refutation of the misrepresentations contained in your report, for the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and time will show whether the movement collapses either for want of men or of money. This, however, I will add, that the movement does not necessarily depend upon financial help, as I endeavoured to make clear to your reporter yesterday. Indeed, my view of passive resistance is that it is impure so long as it has to depend upon any pecuniary assistance whatsoever. It is essentially a religious force, but I do not claim for the movement, in which I am a humble participator, that it has reached the purest stage. When it does, it will be independent of any public demonstration in the shape of public meetings, resolutions or appeals to even England and India. Our ideal is that truth, in order to assert itself, needs no such props. We are striving to reach it, and we can but die in the attempt.

Lastly, permit me to say that the statement that passive resisters "demand payment for their penance, there must be compensation for enforced confinement, martyrdom is on a money basis," is an atroci-

[1] September 28

ous libel, and a cruel wrong to the men and women who have suffered during the last campaign, and who will suffer now. A statement of disbursements was published some time ago, and details are open to inspection by any person who may care to go through them. There never has been any payment to passive resisters for their services as such. There has been maintenance given to the dependants of those who were in gaol, and the payments were made for barest necessities of life. Your reporter should challenge his informants for facts in support of the statements made by him. Indeed, fairness should have dictated this course to him before he undertook to publish them in the confident and emphatic manner in which he has. Nothing could have been easier for him than to have at least come to me and asked me to refute or corroborate them. He admits that there was no want of candour on my part in replying to any questions he put to me.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Transvaal Leader, 1-10-1913

218. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

September 30, 1913

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have your letter. Send a copy of the paper to Mrs. Blair.

I have left behind a watch there in the [jacket] I wear at home. Please look for it and find it.

Manilal, Medh and Pragji tried hard yesterday to get arrested, but did not succeed. They have gone out [hawking] again today. The women will set out in a day or two.

Let me know under what strain you have to work. Does Shanti give trouble?

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

If you find any letter of Raojibhai's in the jacket or anywhere else, please send it. There is something about Gordhanbhai[1] in it. I have received Bhayat's papers. I am sending herewith Rustomjee Sheth's power [of attorney] for attestation. Sign it as witness and keep it safe. I also send some matter for the press. Send on to Omar Sheth the power [of attorney] in his favour. Ask him to affix a five[-shilling] stamp on it. Medh, Pragji and Manilal have been arrested.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5653 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] Raojibhai's uncle

219. THE LATE MR. HAJI HOOSEN DAWAD MAHOMED[1]

The rose has withered in its bloom. Young Hoosen has died in the prime of life, leaving a nation in mourning. He was but twenty-two, but he carried on his shoulders a head that would sit well on a wise man of forty-two. Truly do the gods take away those they love best. Had Mr. Hoosen Dawad lived to see the winter of life, I feel sure that he would have left a mark on the history of the Indian community in South Africa. Not that he has not, by the purity of his life, influenced it even now. But what he was able to do was merely the shadow of what was to come. He was a young man of truth for which alone he lived. He was impatient of cant, hypocrisy and humbug even in those who were his elders. He stood up for truth against all odds. From his early age, he wanted his word to be as good as a bond. He was innocence personified. No evil company could influence him. He influenced his companions, no matter how depraved they might be. Once Mr. Dawad Mahomed wrote to him, asking him to beware of snares that lured young men in London and of bad companions. He was indignant and wrote almost in these words: "Father, you do not know your boy. Snares cannot affect Hoosen. Bad companions mislead those who do not know where they are. Your son knows where he is. He lives for truth and will die for it." To this sterling character, he added a burning enthusiasm for his country, India, which then existed only in his imagination. He had never seen it. But it was enough that it was the land of his forefathers. He had read about it and he had learnt to love it with a passion that could not be stifled. "O, Mr. Rustomjee," young Hoosen said to him when he went forward on the 16th ultimo as a passive resister, "if I rise from this sick bed, you will find me in gaol. What a glorious death it would be, to die in gaol for the sake of Truth and Justice!" He clung to life desperately. But his desire was unalloyed with selfishness. He wanted to live in order to serve his country and humanity.

When quite young, he began to hate trade, though Mr. Dawad,

[1] This was published as a "Special Memoir".

his father, was and is a merchant prince. He scorned possession of wealth. He wanted to study. He was placed with me at Phoenix by Mr. Dawad Mahomed and the whole settlement began to value the golden worth of the boy. He became a loved member of my family. But Phoenix was not enough for him. He liked the life but he wanted scope for his literary and political tastes. He wanted to fight his country's battles. He felt a call. He thought (I think erroneously) that it was necessary for him to go to London and become a barrister, if he was to do any good. He was the idol of his father. He went to London amid the good wishes of all. In London he soon made himself loved wherever he went. He applied himself to study. And I know that he used to go to Hampstead Heath, sit on the damp grass, read his favourite poets and lose himself in dreams. He used even to compose poems which, those who can judge tell me, were promising.

But it was ordained that Hoosen was not to live. The dread disease that destroyed his body began its operations upon it in London. He tried many cures. He was under the treatment of specialists. He rallied for a time, but was never cured. He returned to Durban and felt better. Dr. Adams, who loved Hoosen, treated him with rare attention. He was better, but only better. He was longing to go to England and study. He went to India and saw it with the eye of reverence. He said, in one of his many letters to me, that he wanted not to see the stone work of India; he wanted to see its heart. He went with his father and a distinguished company to the Holy Shrine in Arabia. The pilgrimage made a lasting impression on him. In one of his letters, he broke into raptures over the powers of the Prophet who could summon millions, year after year, to pay their homage to the Creator in this special manner. Thence the party proceeded to Constantinople whilst the war with Italy was going on. Young Hoosen was really his father's guide and friend. The whole company leant on him during this visit. The highest in Turkey were seen by them. There, too, in that strange land, Hoosen became the favourite of those who came in contact with him. He parted company with his father there. His second Mecca was London. He must go there to finish his studies. But the fiend never let go the grip of him. He was suddenly taken ill. Mr. Dawad Mahomed received a cable, saying that Hoosen was returning. It told its own tale. The father knew that the son was

returning to die in his lap, and so he died, conscious to the last moment, in the lap of a father whose love was rare. (I had almost said, supernatural.) Mr. Dawad Mahomed became Hoosen's exclusive nurse. For five long months and more, this loving father never left the side of Hoosen's bed. It was a privilege to me to make a pilgrimage to Mr. Dawad's house to see the young patient whenever I was in Durban and it was a treat to see how Mr. Dawad nursed the son and how the latter relied entirely upon his nursing and no other. Dr. MacKenzie, assisted by Dr. Adams, treated him. But Hoosen never left the bed that he occupied on his return from Turkey.

The funeral procession was enormous. Thousands followed the hearse. Hindus from all provinces of India vied with the Mahomedans in paying their respects to the memory of this good youth. Colonial-born Indians mustered in strong force to pay their respects to the memory of one who, like themselves, was born in South Africa. Special trams emptied themselves at Congella, during practically the whole of the Tuesday on which the funeral took place. All Indian shops in Durban were closed for two hours and so was the Indian Market, by consent of the Corporation. No Indian has ever received the spontaneous tribute to his memory that this young man of brilliant promise received. His death made us all forget, for the moment, that we were Hindus, Mahomedans, Parsees or Christians. He, even in his death, makes us realize that we are sons of India after all—we are kith and kin, owning the same mother. I have loved to linger on Mr. Hoosen's character. I knew him as few did. And it has not been my good fortune to meet many young men—aye, even old men—with a spotless character that Hoosen possessed. To me Hoosen is not dead. He lives in his character. May this humble tribute be accepted by Indian youths throughout South Africa in the spirit in which it has been offered, and may we all copy the example set to us by Mr. Hajee Hoosen Dawad Mahomed.

Indian Opinion, 1-10-1913

220. THE MARRIAGE QUESTION

The struggle, this time, involves so many matters of highest importance that it is well to devote particular attention to each. We dwelt, last week, on the £3 tax question. This week we propose to examine the marriage question which, in so far as it has drawn our women into the struggle, is of even greater importance than that of the annual exaction from ex-indentured men, women and children.

The marriage difficulty dates from the Searle judgment. It is, therefore, necessary to understand the position that existed before that now historic judgment. Little did Justice Searle know what effect his judgment was likely to produce among the Indians of this sub-continent.

Before the judgment, Indian wives were recognized as lawful married wives of their husbands. The masters of the Supreme Courts of the different Provinces recognized the claims of such wives and their issue in intestate estates. Never did an Indian have cause to suspect that the legality of marriage might be questioned by the Courts of South Africa on the ground of the want of its Christian character or the want of registration in South Africa. But the Union Government, in pursuance of their policy of greater repression of the Asiatic than before and not being satisfied with their attack on the male members of the community, wanted to extend their hostile operations to our womenfolk. Some zealous law officer discovered that it was possible to prevent the entry of wives of domiciled Indians by declaring their marriage to be illegal in terms of the South African law. They, therefore, challenged the entry of such a woman at the Cape, and Justice Searle was called upon to decide the issue now raised for the first time by the Government. The learned Judge pronounced marriages performed according to the rites of a religion that allows polygamy to be illegal, and, as the person, claiming before him to be the wife of a domiciled Indian, was a Mahomedan, her marriage could not be recognized by the Courts of the Union. This ruling was followed by the Master of the Natal Provincial Division of the Supreme Court. The Master rejected the claim of the only wife of a

deceased Indian for exemption from succession duty by reason of her marriage not being in accordance with the laws of the Union. The doctrine was carried to its furthest limit by Justice Gardiner when he declined to recognize the marriage of an Indian wife when she claimed exemption from liability to give evidence against her husband in a trial against him upon a charge of murder. Thus, suddenly, non-Christian Indians found that, in South Africa, their wives occupied merely the position of concubines and their children were considered illegitimate. The reader must remember that, not only does this discovery of their awful position hurt the susceptibilities of a proud race, but it also effectually prevents the entry of almost every Indian wife and every Indian child. If the Government had dared to follow out the consequences of the Searle judgment which they deliberately invited, not an Indian wife or her children could have entered the country. That would have been an injustice which even the humanity of the Europeans of South Africa would not have tolerated. Therefore, after having us at their mercy, the Government were graciously pleased to declare that the judgment would not interfere with the practice of the administration to admit the wife of a domiciled Asiatic so long she was the only wife of his in South Africa. This so-called forbearance, it must be remembered, would not have saved the wives and children thus admitted on sufference from the other consequences already adverted to of the Searle judgment. Indians were not to be satisfied with exchanging the legal status of their wives for a position of total uncertainty in law, notwithstanding their admission. They were not prepared to put up with the implied slur on their womenfolk. The Government, therefore, reluctantly, in a most niggardly spirit, and in instalments, accepted, first Mr. Alexander's and then Senator Schreiner's amendments to the Immigration Bill that was under consideration by the Union Parliament. But the amendments, being hastily drawn, gave (if they did at all) partial relief only. For they legalized Indian monogamous marriages celebrated *outside* South Africa, no matter under what religious rites they were solemnized. These amendments, therefore, left undefined the status of women married or to be married in South Africa. Indians now contend that Indian marriages celebrated in South Africa should be placed upon the same footing as those celebrated in India. And this, as

has been[1] pointed out to the Government, can be done with but a slight alteration in the Immigration Act or by an amendment of the marriage laws of the Union.

We have used the expression "if they did at all" with reference to the relief granted by the amendments. This qualification has become necessary owing to the attitude of the Government in the case of Kulsumbibi now pending before the Supreme Court. The Immigration Officer at Durban, no doubt upon instructions from the Government, has raised the question whether a marriage celebrated under the rites of a religion which permits polygamy can be called monogamous, although the woman so married may be the only wife of her husband. This issue the Government need not have raised. But they evidently intend to show that the amendments made were not made in good faith. They were made ostensibly to meet the Indian demand for legalization[2] of Indian marriages. Mr. Alexander's amendments fell short of that. Mr. Schreiner's was, therefore, accepted. The Government knew that the most popular religions of India, viz., Hinduism and Islam, did not prohibit polygamy. If, therefore, they accepted the amendment with the mental reservation that the adjective "monogamous" would by law still exclude the women married according to the rites of these two great religions, they certainly misled Parliament and the Indian community. We think that the Supreme Court will reject the Government interpretation, but, should its decision be otherwise, it certainly will be necessary to alter the Immigration Act in order to clothe all Indian marriages with legality. Even at this eleventh hour, the Government could withdraw the case and not challenge a decision.

Then, there remained the question of the admission of plural wives as distinguished from their legal status after admission. The practice has been always to admit such wives of domiciled Indians. In the Transvaal such unions are even noted on the registration certificates. The first shock of disturbance in this practice was felt in 1911 by a decision of Justice Wessels,[3] which, too, was invited by the

[1] The original has "even".
[2] The original has "legislation".
[3] *Vide* "Indian Wives", 8-7-1911 & "Johannesburg", 8-7-1911.

Government. As a result of the decision, the British Indian Association carried on correspondence with the Government and an assurance was given by them that all cases of hardship would be considered by them. This correspondence seemed to settle the question, for the Indian demand as to plural wives is not for legal recognition but for admission into the Union of the existing plural wives of domiciled Indians. But the disposition of the Government seems to be now to recede from the assurance contained in their communication. We shall reproduce this correspondence in our next issue so that the reader may judge for himself whether the correspondence can bear any other interpretation than that put upon it by the community.

To sum up, then, the demands of the community are simple and three-fold:

(1) Legalization of monogamous marriages already celebrated and to be celebrated in South Africa; (2) The term "monogamous" to include marriages celebrated according to the rites of religions that may not prohibit polygamy, so long as the woman whose union is to be recognized is the only wife of her husband; (3) the admission of existing plural wives of domiciled Indians without granting such wives a legal status apart from full residential rights.

Indian Opinion, 1-10-1913

221. THE MARRIAGE QUESTION

Just as we considered last week the obnoxious £3 tax, we must now consider the marriage question. Not one, but many important issues, unrelated to one another, are involved in this struggle. The community must have a clear understanding of all these issues. The marriage question itself has three aspects.

First, that marriages celebrated according to Hindu, Muslim or Parsi religious rites are not recognized as legally valid. Before the Searle judgment, there simply was no problem about Indian marriages. All marriages were recognized in courts. But the Searle judgment changed all that. The Government acted deliberately in seeking that verdict. After the formation of the Union, there came to be greater strictness than before. The desire entered the Government's mind to root out Indians from South Africa, be the means what they might. Till now the Government did not lay hands on women. But now it has cast its evil eyes on them. The Government seems to have had the wicked idea that, by preventing the entry of women, their children can also be stopped. Its officers, accordingly, looked up the various laws and found that it might be possible to hold that Indian marriages were not valid according to the laws of this country and that, if this was proved right, the Government's object would more or less be fulfilled. And so the Government challenged the right of one woman, and the case went up to Mr. Justice Searle. He held that a marriage solemnized under a religion which permitted polygamy, even if it was in fact monogamous, could not be recognized in South African law. Following upon this judgment, the Master of a Natal Court decided that a widow and her children could not be exempted from payment of succession duty after the decease of her husband if her marriage with the deceased husband had been celebrated otherwise than under Christian rites.[1] In Ladysmith, again, Mr. Justice Gardiner ruled that a woman so married could not claim the privilege of exemption from giving evidence against her husband.[2] The result

[1] *Vide* also "Janubie Case", 12-4-1913.

[2] Kulsumbibi's case

of these three decisions is that Indian women and their children cannot come to this country. The women who are already here become mere concubines and their children will not be accepted as the legal heirs of their parents. Having established this as the legal position, the Government declared, in its graciousness, that despite the new law it will permit one wife to come in with every individual. This only means that the women will be granted right of domicile but that they will be looked upon as concubines. Consequently, neither they nor their heirs will have any rights in a court. Indians cannot accept such a position. Strong letters [of protest] were addressed to the Government. It introduced in the new Bill amendments suggested by Mr. Alexander, and later by Mr. Schreiner. But it did so rather unwillingly, without applying its mind to them, and only because it was left with no choice in the matter; the amendments, therefore, remained defective, and the result was that the validity of marriages celebrated in India was recognized, but not that of marriages which have been or which may be celebrated in this country under our religions. Hence, we have asked the Government to treat marriages celebrated in South Africa, or those that may be celebrated in future, on the same footing as marriages celebrated in India. We have also pointed out how this may be effected.

The second point is that the amendment made in the Bill has the effect of recognizing the validity of monogamous marriages. In Kulsumbibi's case, the Government purposely raised the objection that the new law does not recognize a marriage solemnized under a religion which permits polygamy. If this interpretation is correct, the difficulty created by the Searle judgment has not been removed and the Government can be accused of a bit of sharp practice. It knew well enough that our demand related to marriages solemnized under the Hindu and Muslim faiths. If it was the Government's intention not to recognize such marriages, it has deceived us, and also deceived the Parliament, the Imperial Government and the Indian Government. Kulsumbibi's case was not brought up by us. It was the Government that did so. The decision is not likely to be what the Government wants it to be. But in case it is, the Government will have to hide its face in shame and amend the law again so as to include within its scope marriages celebrated under our faiths.

The third point refers to cases of polygamy. The issue was raised in 1911. If an Indian had more than one wife, all the wives were [previously] allowed to come in. But the Government brought up the issue and Mr. Justice Wessels ruled that under the law here only one wife could come in. Mr. Cachalia thereupon addressed a letter to the Government and the latter replied that it would consider such cases. We acquiesced in the position. We did not ask for recognition of polygamous marriages but for permission for all one's wives to enter this country. The Government now says that its letter of 1911 is not to be interpreted as we have done. We are, however, convinced that it can bear no other interpretation.

We have thus made three demands of the Government. One, that marriages celebrated in this country, and those to be celebrated in future, according to our religious rites should be recognized as valid. Two, that the term "monogamous" marriage should include a marriage celebrated according to our religions. Three, that in case an Indian is already married to more than one woman, all his wives should be permitted to come in.

We will not sit down for a moment's rest till the Government concedes these demands. Since women have been attacked, they too have had to join the struggle. In so far as this marriage question involves an insult to our religions and an attack upon our national honour, it is far more serious than that of the obnoxious tax. A nation that cannot protect its women's honour and the interests of its children does not deserve to be called by that name. Such people are not a nation but mere brutes. Even animals use their horns to defend their young ones. Will men, then, if they are men, hang back, clinging to their wretched finery and their pleasures?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-10-1913

222. CRIPPLED WITHOUT WEAPONS

Much has been written by correspondents in the columns of this paper about the Indians not getting licences for weapons. We sympathize with them. Our view, of course, is that a man does not need any weapons. But this rule can apply only to those who have no interest in wealth. Those who carry on business and wish to protect themselves from attack need weapons, no doubt. But it is also certain that writing letters to newspapers will bring no redress. Something may be done if leaders exert themselves hard enough. Meanwhile, we suggest to our correspondents that they should send us all the letters that were exchanged between them and the Government. Names of places where robberies have occurred with positive evidence, the strength of population in the neighbourhood, —if all this information is supplied to us in clear handwriting, we are ready to take suitable steps. The time, we feel, is also very opportune. In the present satyagraha campaign, we can take up many new issues whenever we think it right. If prompt steps are taken, there will be no difficulty in securing arms.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-10-1913

223. HAJI HUSSAIN DAWAD MAHOMED

It is with full deliberation that I say that the untimely death of Bhai Hussain has widowed the Indian community here. People may wonder whether it is not something of an exaggeration to say that a young man of 22, of whom most Indians had not even heard, whom not many had seen, who never made any big speeches and never sought to teach wisdom to people, has widowed the people by his death, but my answer will still be the same. The character which Bhai Hussain possessed I have seen in few youths or grown-up men. In South Africa, I can think of no grown-up man who can equal him, and I doubt if there is any among the many youths whom I know. If there is anyone who can surpass him, such a one is not known to me. Bhai Hussain had based his way of life on truth. He lived for truth. Bhai Hussain detested lying, deceit, cunning and hypocrisy. He felt extremely uncomfortable in the presence of deceit. Whenever he saw people lying, his head would ache and he felt like flying away from there, if only he had wings. The lies that go on in ordinary company were so disgusting to this youth that, many a time, he felt disinclined to stay on in Durban. Whenever he heard and believed that a man was good, he was all admiration for him. So guileless was he. His heart was meek like a cow's. I never observed the slightest taint of sin in him. His innocence and his frankness were all his own. A budding rose has withered. But its fragrance remains. We can still enjoy deep draughts of it. He has left that fragrance with everyone who came in contact with him. Evil company had no effect on him. Once Mr. Dawad Mahomed wrote to Hussain, "My son, guard yourself against the temptations of life in England. Beware of evil company." I remember what Mr. Hussain wrote back in reply: "Father, you do not know your son. Evil company cannot taint Hussain. Your son is not likely to succumb to the temptations in England." That was the gist of his reply. It takes a Hussain to write with such assurance. He was a *parasmani*[1]. Base metal—like iron—

[1] A precious jewel, famed to have the virtue of transmuting base metals into gold.

would turn into gold in contact with it. I request the readers not to think that I have exaggerated anything in what I have said. Along with these other virtues, the fire of patriotism always kept burning in his heart. Having never seen India, he had drawn a picture of her in his dreams. This youth was prepared to die for India and Indians. How Indians may prosper, how the sons of India may shine out was his constant concern. I believe he was a zealous Muslim, but he had not the slightest hatred of other religions. To him all Indians, Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Parsees, were the same. That they should be good was all that he wanted. Indians, for the simple reason that they were Indians, were like brothers to him. Who can think it an exaggeration to say that we have been widowed by the passing away of one so richly endowed?

Though Bhai Hussain was born in the house of a merchant prince like Mr. Dawad Mahomed, he had a distaste for business right from his childhood. A desire for education came upon him. His father put him under my charge in Phoenix. Forthwith, all the inmates of Phoenix fell in love with him. With his guileless nature, he soon spread the aroma of his presence all around. He became entirely one with my family, and I felt I had gained a fifth son. After he had stayed for a few months, he wrote to me: "I like Phoenix. I wish to spend my life here. But just now I wish to go to England. I have satisfied you that I am not likely to get corrupted there. It is my desire not to. Kindly give me your permission and secure my father's permission." He was not content with Phoenix. He desired to acquire a good education in letters. He wanted to utilize his gift for poetry. He copied the poem "A garden in spring, this world" and sent it to me. He had taught it to everyone in Phoenix. In copying the last verse, he changed, "Let Nazir[1] remember this" to "Let Hussain remember this". I asked him why. He told me that though the poem was not his, the thoughts it expressed were his too. His desire was to be a Nazir. The boy then went to England. He wanted to be a barrister. I did not fancy the idea. I reasoned with him. He told me, "That may be so for you, but not for me. For myself, let me be a barrister."

[1] Nazir Akbarabadi (1735-1830); Urdu poet and saint who showed catholicity and breadth of mind in his choice and handling of religious themes.

"What will you do after that, my friend?" "You will see." "Do you want to practise and earn money?" His vehement answer "Certainly not, Sir", still rings in my ears. "My only desire is to serve my country. Having made myself a lawyer and a well-informed man, I will stay in Phoenix and share the sufferings of my fellow-countrymen." Dawad Sheth sent Bhai Hussain to England. The moment he reached there, he started work on his studies. He worked on and on. There's a beautiful ground near London, where he would go and sit all alone and fall into a reverie. This is a state similar to *samadhi*[1]. He would be engrossed in his favourite poems. He often showed me the poems he wrote sitting there. One or two of these I showed to persons[2] who were good judges of English poetry, and they told me that Hussain, indeed, showed promise of developing a gift for poetry. In a place like England, he preferred solitude. I do not remember that he ever fell a prey to a single one of the innumerable temptations in England.

But fell Time was stalking Bhai Hussain. Just when I was in England, he manifested symptoms of tuberculosis. I was alarmed. He was sent for a change of air. The best doctors there and a doctor in Paris too were consulted. But the disease had gone deep. Periods of progress were followed by relapses. Hussain's lustre began to fade. His spirit was gone. He felt miserable. The hope for life was strong in him. Not, however, for the sake of pleasures. He wanted to live on only because he wanted to serve the country. He returned to South Africa. There were again signs of improvement. He toured in India, as on a pilgrimage. Writing from there, he said, "I have not come to see the places in India. I am looking into India's heart, which I came to see." Then he went on to holy Mecca. There he poured out his pure heart to God. The pilgrimage had a deep effect on his mind. In a letter that he wrote from there, he said, 'How great must be the power of the Prophet for whose sake millions of people every year gather in this holy place? Who can doubt his being a Prophet? I feel extremely happy at heart that I came here." There, the Bulgarian war was on. Bhai Hussain soon became the adviser, guide and friend of his father

[1] Yogic trance

[2] This was some time in July-November 1909, when Gandhiji was in England on a deputation,

and other companions. He won the hearts of the big officers there and created a fine impression about India and Indian Muslims. What must have made the people adore this child? I will say that it was the light of his truthfulness. The father and son then separated. Dawad Sheth returned to Durban. Bhai Hussain, however, wanted to complete his education in England. But God had willed otherwise. Suddenly Bhai Hussain started spitting blood. His health went down badly. Dawad Sheth received a cable. He resigned himself to his fate. He knew that Hussain would not come back unless he was seriously ill. That relapse proved to be the last. In Durban he was put to bed, where he remained, never to leave it. He was treated by the best of doctors. The father turned into a nurse. I have seen very few fathers attending on their sons as this one did. Hussain was to Dawad Sheth as the very pupil of his eye. He watched him day and night. Never did he leave his side even for an hour. But human effort is unavailing before fate. Fate always walks two paces ahead,[1] and strides on so fast, that one can never overtake it.

Whenever I went to Durban, Congella became a place of pilgrimage to me. Once I saw tears in Hussain's eyes. I asked: "Is death so difficult to face, brother?" With a smile, Hussain replied, "I am not afraid of death." Then, crying, "But I have as yet done nothing whatever, I want ever so much to serve the country." I tried to console him, saying, "Bhai, you have done much indeed for the country. If India was to produce young men like you, her condition would change for the better this very day. Even if you die, to me you will always be alive. The body will perish, it has ceased to be of service. But the soul is immortal. Personally, I believe that you will come to possess a more splendid body and will be able to render better service to India." But this was no consolation to him. He could be sure, so to speak, of that alone which was already in his hand. He wanted to achieve more in this very life. Had he yet done anything to show the miraculous power of truth in him? How much could he do now? Hussain's funeral was attended as no other funeral in South Africa has ever been. In an instant, there were thousands of Indians on the spot. Muslims, Hindus, Christians, all attended in large numbers.

[1] A Gujarati saying for: "Who can control his fate?"

No one had gone to persuade them. They went of their own accord on hearing of the death. Hussain proved in the hour of his death that the children of India, Hindus, Muslims and Christians, are all one people. On Tuesday, there were no distinctions. People big and small, Madrasis, Bombayites, Colonial-born Indians, all turned up to pay homage to the memory of a jewel of an Indian. Special trams emptied themselves in front of Mr. Dawad's bungalow. Indian shops remained closed for two hours, and the Indian Market, too, with the permission of the Corporation.

Thus, Bhai Hussain, following truth, showed the invincible power of truth in this cruel Iron Age. Hussain Mian is not dead; he will live in the fragrance of his character. My pen will never tire of writing praises of Hussain's virtues. Numerous examples of his purity keep haunting my mind. I hope the readers will understand my purpose in this article. Let everyone be an Indian of the same stamp as Hussain. Let us all, young and old, emulate Bhai Hussain's conduct, no matter whether we are Hindus or Muslims. If we cherish his memory and follow in his footsteps, we shall cease to make distinctions among us. Let us hold on to truth and dedicate our all to the country's cause. Though Bhai Hussain was on his death-bed, when Rustomjee Sheth went to visit him before starting again on the 16th on a pilgrimage to gaol, he said, "Yes, uncle, you are going. If I could leave this bed, I too would go to gaol with you. How happy I would be to die in gaol for the sake of the country!" May India beget thousands of Hussains!

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-10-1913

224. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

Thursday night [October 2, 1913][1]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I certainly did not like to part with you. But the parting was inevitable. Remember the resolutions of the Yom Kippur day[2]. You must constantly check yourself.

Did you feel any the worse for the turning of the wheel?

You will see to Chaplin, Hosken, the London *Times* letter. You should keep in touch with the reporters. Ask Cachalia to see you daily and inquire when he is going to jail. P.K. Naidoo and others may cross to the Cape border at Fourteen Streams. Will you open correspondence with Merriman, Schreiner and others? I should even send them a copy of the London *Times* letter and ask for their authority to sign. But of course I am just now suggesting your writing about the Committee. Please tell Manilal if he is free that I did not write as I expected him to be in gaol regarding the Asiatic Act charge.

My interview with Dada Osman was a study. But otherwise it was not of any use.

Hope you had a fairly comfortable journey.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] From the reference to the addressee's departure; vide "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 2-10-1913.

[2] Day of Atonement among Jews

225. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

THE TENTS,

"MOUNTAIN VIEW",

P. O. BOX 2493,

JOHANNESBURG,

Aso Sud 3 [*October 2, 1913*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

If you receive any report or news about the Johannesburg school, do not print it. Habib Motan must be kept out. When the English matter is in excess, the advertisements, etc., on the last page should be omitted and the number of pages for English should be increased to seven.

It appears from the telegram in yesterday's *Star* that the women too had gone on fast. [They] are having a good taste of suffering.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Thursday Morning

I have your letter. Twelve women have left today[1] for Maritzburg to court arrest. They are accompanied by Mr. Kallenbach. Two others[2] have been arrested today for hawking. The letter from Jamnadas is full of despair. Orders have been issued for the restoration of the sacred thread and shirt[3] and the suspension of vaccination.

I propose to wire Jamnadas asking him to come alone. I shall send the telegram[4] today or tomorrow. I have sent some material. Some of it is of a kind that may be used whenever needed.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5901

[1] October 2

[2] Rajoo and Willie Murgan

[3] Parsee Rustomjee was deprived of his Zoroastrian sacred shirt and thread in Maritzburg Gaol. *Vide* also "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 5-10-1913.

[4] This is not available.

226. LETTER TO OLIVE DOKE

JOHANNESBURG,
October 3, 1913

MY DEAR OLIVE[1],

Miss Schlesin was the first to remind me yesterday that it was the day on which one year more was written off against me. Yours is the second reminder. Many thanks for the trouble you take to think of my birthday.

Please remember me to mother and tell her that the fact that I have not come to see her does not mean that the family is absent from my thoughts. Indeed just now there are special reasons for recalling father's memory and with that for thinking of you all. But mother knows that I am not formal. Whenever I am wanted there or I can do anything, you can all command me.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5698 Courtesy: C. M. Doke

[1] Daughter of Rev. J. J. Doke

227. RESOLUTION AT PATIDAR ASSOCIATION MEETING[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
October 5, 1913

This meeting of the Patidar Association resolves that, in its opinion, *The Transvaal Leader* report, to the effect that the mercantile section of the Indian community is against passive resistance and that only some of the poorest in the community are likely to take part in the struggle is unjust and false; the meeting is heart and soul with the movement, approves of Mr. Cachalia's letter to the Government, and will undertake to support the movement with men and money, and requests the Government to end the sufferings of those already incarcerated by conceding the just demands of the community.

Indian Opinion, 15-10-1913

[1] The meeting was addressed by Gandhiji at some length and, thereafter, a number of Indians announced their intention to go to gaol immediately. No report of Gandhiji's speech, however, is available. The resolution adopted at the meeting was presumably drafted by Gandhiji.

228. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[JOHANNESBURG,]
Sunday [*October 5, 1913*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

This is rather excessive matter which I am sending today. But all of it has got to be printed. Today's meeting was excellent. Acknowledge receipt of £22-7-6 only in the Satyagraha Fund. Say "From Patidar Mandal (Johannesburg)".[2] All the names must be included in the report[3]. I have promised that they will be. It seems now that the Jaffar from whom we had a telegram is none else but Gajjar; for the latter has again sent a tele-gram here. About your zeal, all I can say is that you should be mindful of your health. I also feel that the report about Rustomjee Sheth having been deprived of his sacred thread, etc., must be taken from there.

Sodha's batch will honour its pledge.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 4365

[1] The meeting of the United Patidar Society, to which the letter refers, was held on October *5; vide* the preceding item.

[2] This was acknowledged in *Indian Opinion,* 15-10-1913.

[3] This was published in *Indian Opinion,* 8-10-1913.

229. IMPORTANCE OF VOWS

If we resolve to do a thing, and are ready even to sacrifice our lives in the process? we are said to have taken a vow. It is essential for every person to train himself to keep such vows; one can strengthen one's power of will by doing so and fit oneself for greater tasks. One may take easy and simple vows to start with and follow them with more difficult ones. It seems the negroes of the Congo have taken such a [simple] vow. For the past three years, the whites have been trying hard to get the negroes over there to extract rubber, but they answer that their forefathers had pledged themselves not to do so. They are, therefore, unable to go against their plighted word. We shall find several examples in history of men undergoing great suffering for the sake of a pledge. To embrace satyagraha amounts to taking a great vow. Having taken it, one must die rather than forsake it. Such is the profound import of satyagraha, and it is for this reason that satyagraha may be said to know no defeat.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 8-10-1913

230. LETTER TO DIRECTOR OF PRISONS[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
October 9, 1913

[SIR,]

Messrs Medh and other British Indian passive resisters, who last week served a term of imprisonment at the Fort of Johannesburg, complained that Dr. Visser was unnecessarily and wantonly rude and insulting to them. 1 hey were asked to strip themselves entirely bare in the presence of other prisoners, for medical examination. They respectfully submitted to the doctor that it was contrary to their moral scruples and to their notions of decency, and they added that they were prepared to submit to the examination in a separate cell. Dr. Visser grew angry over this request and used most insulting language. The exact expression used by him was "the . . . coolies". He also charged them with disobedience, but my Committee is informed that the charge was never pursued, and that, upon their complaining to the Superintendent of the gaol, they were privately examined. My Committee hopes that an inquiry will be instituted into this complaint, and necessary steps will be taken to prevent officers using language alleged to have been used by Dr. Visser, even though it be towards prisoners.

The discharged passive resisters also complained that there was no ghee or any vegetable fat supplied with their meals, as used to be the case before. Their meals, my Committee understands, consist of rice, mealie meal, vegetables, and a little bread. My Committee showed, it is submitted, during the last campaign of passive resistance, that ghee or some vegetable fat was absolutely necessary for maintenance of the human frame in fair order.[2] My Committee understands

[1] This was published along with a letter to the Press dated October 7, signed by Surendra B. Medh, Pragji K. Desai and Manilal M. Gandhi, requesting the Editor to write in protest against the brutal treatment to which they had been subjected.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to E. F. C. Lane", 29-4-1911; "Petition to Secretary of State for Colonies", 1-5-1911 and "Memorial to Secretary of State for Colonies", 15-5-1911.

that animal fat for one of the meals still forms part of the diet given to the Native prisoners. It is therefore respectfully requested that instructions will be issued to supply one ounce of ghee per day, as was the case formerly with British Indian prisoners, who are precluded from taking meat or animal fat.

Yours, etc.,

Indian Opinion, 22-10-1913

231. AN OFFICIAL STATEMENT

The situation today in regard to the Indian passive resistance movement is explained in the following statement which has been officially communicated to Reuter's Agency, and the Press. The demands of the Indian community are:

(1) The removal of the annual tax of £3, which ex-indentured Indians—men, women, and children—are liable to pay as the price of their remaining free from re-indenture in Natal. (2) (a) An amendment of the marriage law of the Union, so as to recognize the legality of monogamous Indian marriages celebrated, whether in India or South Africa, according to the rites prescribed by the Hindu and Mahomedan religions. Although both of these religions countenance polygamy, statistics show that only 1 per cent of Indian marriages are polygamous.

(b) Administrative admission of existing plural wives (not more than 100 in all) and their children, of Indians already domiciled. This was the position at the time of the inauguration of Union. Legal recognition of polygamy is not asked for.

(3) Restoration of the right of South Africa-born Indians to enter the Cape Province, a right that they possessed at the time of the introduction of the Immigration Bill, and its retention may in practice mean the admission of hardly more than a dozen Indians annually to the Cape from Natal and the Transvaal.

(4) The Government say that there is no racial bar in the

Immigration Act. Therefore, an admission from them is necessary that no declaration will in law be required from an Indian at the Free State border that will not be equally necessary from a European. In practice, this does not mean that any Indian will necessarily enter the Free State, but, if he does, he will still remain liable to the prohibition to own land, to farm and to trade.

(5) A declaration that existing laws, such as the Transvaal Gold Law and Townships Act, the Licensing Laws of the Cape and Natal, and the Immigration Act, shall be administered in a liberal spirit, and with due regard to vested rights. The policy of the Government is, for example, to prevent Indians with *bona-fide* proof of previous residence from re-entering their respective Provinces, if they have been absent for a long period. This situation is intolerable.

The first point was the subject of a definite promise to the Hon. Mr. Gokhale. The others arise out of the provisional settlement of 1911.

WHAT INDIANS DO NOT WANT

Indians do not fight for equal political rights. They recognize that, in view of the existing prejudice, fresh immigration from India should be strictly limited, provision being made for the entrance of a sufficient number annually for reasonable wear and tear.

PASSIVE RESISTANCE

As no relief could be obtained by prayers, petitions, or negotiations, Indians started passive resistance on September 15 by12 men and four women setting out from Natal to court imprisonment at Volksrust.

The movement is spreading. There are already in gaol 35 passive resisters—a larger number than when the two previous campaigns started or when the provisional settlement of 1911 resulted in a suspension of passive resistance. Numbers of men and women are coming forward daily to seek arrest. Several of the women have taken their babies with them, as they have not yet been weaned or are incapable of being looked after otherwise. Arrest is courted by crossing the border or by hawking without licences or by refusing to

show licences or permits, or by breaking other civil laws which do not involve a breach of the moral law. The Free State border is left untouched, as there is no desire to inflame public opinion so far as it can be avoided, and there is every desire to show that Indians wish to respect the Free State prejudice. The movement will also consist in advising indentured Indians to suspend work until the £3 tax is removed. The indentured Indians will not be invited to join the general struggle. On the strength of the promise made to Mr. Gokhale, and which promise was brought to the notice of the House of Lords by Lord Ampthill, these men were assured by Indian leaders, at meetings of thousands, that the tax would be repealed during the last session of Parliament. Meetings in support of the claims of the passive resisters have been held at Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London, Woodstock, Durban, Maritzburg, Tongaat, Verulam, and Johannesburg (representing all the principal towns in the Transvaal), and similar meetings are being held at other centres.

THE WAY TO GRANT RELIEF

If the Government wish to grant relief, fresh legislation will be necessary only on the marriage and the £3 tax questions. All other points are capable of easy adjustment without legislation. The marriage difficulty can be solved by a brief amendment of the Immigration Act without in any way interfering with the general marriage law of the Union.

Indian Opinion, 15-10-1913

232. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

[DURBAN,]

Aso Vad 2 [*October 17, 1913*][1]

CHI. HARILAL,

It hurts me to have no letters from you. Your lethargy in this matter makes you doubly guilty. The first guilt is that you neglect the duty which you owe to your father, and the second that you break your promise to me that you would write regularly. There have been three mails [from India] and no letter from you. Mr. Sorabji[2] and Ratanshi[3] left after you did, but I have had more letters from them than from you. Chanchi writes more often than you do. Ba, too, is unhappy because there are no letters from you.

Both of you may come over here and get arrested. Chanchi may come while the fight is on only if she has the courage to go to gaol. I have already written to you to say that you should not wait for the examination. If you yourself wish otherwise, I do not want to come in your way. Ask for money from Doctor Saheb[4]. It is likely that I shall be in gaol when you arrive. I think I shall succeed in getting myself arrested somehow or other.[5] I have been making efforts to this end. If, before this letter reaches you, you hear that there has been a settlement, there will be no need for you to come over.

I want you to be fit and at peace with yourself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 9537

[1] From the reference to gaol-going in the letter, it appears to have been written in 1913.

[2] Sorabji Shapurji Adajania.

[3] Sodha.

[4] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

[5] Gandhiji was arrested on November 7.

233. INTERVIEW TO "EVENING CHRONICLE"

[JOHANNESBURG,
After *October 17, 1913*]

Interviewed by the *Evening Chronicle* (Johannesburg) on Mr. Fischer's recent statement,[1] Mr. Gandhi said that during the last session of Parliament, all the time the Hon. A. Fischer said he would grant nothing, so long as there was talk of passive resistance, he continued to grant. He even withdrew his own threat of removing the slight amendment in the marriage clause, if Indians did not withdraw their demand for a better amendment. In spite of that threat in the Senate, Mr. Fischer accepted the very amendment that was suggested by the Indians, so that he could not help saying that Mr. Fischer was not to be taken seriously.

Indian Opinion, 29-10-1913

[1] In an interview to Reuter's Agency in London on October 17, Fischer had said: "My own department deals with the Indians, and it is impossible to alter the law on any material point. Indeed the spirit in South Africa is to make the law more strict. The Government will be content to let the law stand. To meet the views of the Indians we will make administrative arrangements where we can, but the popular sentiment and needs of South Africa must be considered. Therefore the Indians in their own interest must be cautious and moderate. If the Indians abandon theoretical questions and adopt a practical standpoint, then a *modus vivendi is* possible"

234. KULSUMBIBI'S CASE

A move is afoot in Durban to take this case to the Appeal Court. A bioscope show was also arranged to collect money for the purpose. There is no harm in taking the case to a higher court, but the community need not imagine that this is bound to bring some gain. The case might just as well go against us as in our favour. Even if the result should be so happy, it should be remembered that, where a marriage is solemnized in South Africa, the wife will continue to be treated as a concubine. Hence those who know what the struggle means must not become lukewarm. The fight must be carried on in right earnest. We see on all sides that everyone concedes our demands to be reasonable, the latest instance being that of Mr. Orr, a member of Parliament, who said in a speech in Maritzburg that the £3 tax must be repealed and that we must get full justice on the marriage question. Whatever the interpretation of the court, [he said] it was clearly understood by Parliament that a man with only one wife would have no difficulty in bringing her in.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-10-1913

235. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE

JOHANNESBURG,
October 22, 1913[1]

GOKHALE
POONA

NEARLY HUNDRED [IN] GAOL. NEARLY TWO THOUSAND LABOURERS FAMILIES INDENTURED AND FREE IN NATAL COLLIERIES ON STRIKE. STRIKERS WILL RESUME WORK WHEN GOVERNMENT PROMISES REPEAL THREE POUND TAX. THEY NOT INVITED JOIN GENERAL STRUGGLE. NEARLY HUNDRED INCLUDING SOME BRAVEST WOMEN DESPERATELY COURTING ARREST. STRIKE DUE LARGELY THEIR INFLUENCE. THEY NOT HAVING BEEN ARRESTED CROSSING BORDER HAVE BEEN MOVING AMONG LABOURERS QUIETLY INFORMING THEM POSITION. NO FORCE OR RETALIATION USED DESPITE PROVOCATION OFTEN AMOUNTING ASSAULT. STRIKE LIKELY SPREAD OTHER COLLIERIES. EUROPEAN OPINION INCREASINGLY FAVOURS REPEAL TAX. UNIONIST PARTY LIKELY PASS OFFICIAL RESOLUTION THAT EFFECT MOVEMENT SPREADING. POLAK [IN] NEWCASTLE. HE WILL BE [IN] DURBAN THURSDAY.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the original as delivered: C. W. 4845

[1] It appears this cable was drafted on October 21, but actually sent the next day; *vide* the following item.

236. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE

JOHANNESBURG,
October 22, 1913

GOKHALE
POONA

ELEVEN WOMEN[1] WITH SIX BABIES REFERRED TO [IN] YESTERDAY'S CABLE[2] SENTENCED THREE MONTHS HARD LABOUR AS VAGRANTS WHILST SPEAKING STRIKERS NEWCASTLE.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the original as delivered: C. W. 4846

237. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

Wednesday night [October 22, 1913][3]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I am sorry that I was impatient with you regarding Baker and the walk to Chaplin's. Baker's business simply shakes me. I feel it deeply that one whom [I] so love has such a base commercial side to his character. And how could I put on speed when I hardly walk? It was torture to be told to walk fast in my present physical state.

I am surrounded by men. I have recess as Mr. Lazarus is talking in Tamil to some men. Went to Dannhauser today. It was a grand meeting[4] . The strike[5] is a real thing. It is now making itself felt. Had

[1] These were: Mrs. Bhavani Dayal, Mrs. Thambi Naidoo, Mrs. N. Pillay, Mrs. K. M. Pillay, Mrs. A. P. Naidoo, Mrs. P. K. Naidoo, Mrs. K. C. Pillay, Mrs. N. S.Pillay, Mrs. Ramalingam, Miss M. Pillay and Miss M. B. Pillay.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] From the reference to Manilal's arrest which took place on October 23, 1913, and also from the reference to Gandhiji's presence at Dannhauser on this day.

[4] At which over a thousand Indians decided to strike work

[5] In Natal collieries, vide "Cable to G. K. Gokhale", 22-10-1913 and "Telegram to the Press", 23-10-1913.

an interview (unofficial and private) with Deputy Protector. Nothing in it. Had a long discussion with some other Europeans too. We are not without sympathy. All the youngsters who went with me got arrested but Manilal. He will go in tomorrow.

The Press is undoubtedly boycotting us. You should ask Pollock why. You may see Micel-Dunn too. The reporters are powerless to help. I think the Editors have received a hint from the Government. If Cachalia came here it would be splendid. Try. You should try also to collect rice or cash. We shall now want it quickly. It might be cheaper for Johannesburg to give cash. But if they give rice, let them give rice and you may sell it. You should get circulars sent everywhere.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

238. INTERVIEW TO "RAND DAILY MAIL"

[JOHANNESBURG,
October 22, 1913]

In connection with the mass meeting of Indians held at Durban on Sunday[1], Mr. M. K. Gandhi told a *Mail* representative yesterday that the report published in a contemporary was only half the version and was incorrect. There certainly was a disturbance at the meeting, said Mr. Gandhi, and one *of* the secretaries, at the time of tendering his resignation, made a long statement consisting of an attack upon Mr. Gandhi and upon his work during the past 20 years which he characterised as being not only worthless but highly injurious to the Indian community. So much so that, in his opinion, Mr. Gandhi was instrumental in having enticed the Indian community into slavery.

[GANDHIJI:] Personally, I don't think that any but very few people at the meeting took him seriously, but I saw that there were elements of discord and that passions were rising on either side, and I felt that the best thing under the circumstances would be to have the meeting closed. I, therefore, suggested to the chairman that he should dissolve the meeting, which he promptly did. It was really an attempt to bring about a schism in the Indian community and was not on the question of passive resistance by any means, because I don't think there was any difference of opinion as to passive resistance. A great many side issues were brought forward having no bearing on the present trouble.

Upon the dissolution of this meeting, those who disapproved of the action of the secretary immediately formed themselves into a procession and a meeting was held at Mr. Rustomjee's premises and a new body was formed, with Mr. Dawad Mohamed as president and Mr. Omar Haji Amod Jhaveri as secretary, two of the most respected Mohammedans in the community. At this meeting a resolution was passed in support of the movement, and a collection was taken for defraying the expenses in connection with the fares, etc., of the passive resisters who accompanied me to court imprisonment. The utmost

[1] October 19

enthusiasm prevailed, and it was considered that the most reasonable and peaceful Indians would join this body. Personally, I feel that if this new Association is worked along strict passive resistance lines, then those who may be considered hostile to this body and even to the movement will ultimately throw in their lot with the body. That the movement has a strong hold in Natal is demonstrated by the fact that Natal has supplied the largest number of gaol-goers. There are at present nearly 100 Indians in the gaols at Maritzburg and Newcastle, and of these by far the largest number are from Natal and include all sections of the Indian community.

A strike, too, which promises to become very formidable, is going on in Natal. Up to now six collieries are affected and 2,000 Indians are on strike. I may say that, though I had hoped that the strike would come about, I had never expected that the response would be so spontaneous, sudden and large.

The ladies who tried to get arrested at Vereeniging, as the public knows, failed, and they have further crossed over into Natal, where they were left untouched. When they went into Natal, they were joined by eight men, none of whom was arrested on the Natal border. It was proposed that they should go to Newcastle and there place the position before the men serving on the collieries and ask them to strike work pending the promise of removal of the annual tax of £3 which ex-indentured Indians and their wives and children have to pay.

The presence of these brave women who had never suffered hardship and had never spoken at public meetings acted like electricity, and the men left their work.

The strike is being conducted on purely passive resistance lines, and the men have instructions on no account to use physical force, to retaliate or to defend themselves physically. I saw a man who was severely assaulted at Dannhauser yesterday, and the assault was cruel. He states that he had gone to fetch water and was assaulted by one of the compound managers. The man himself is able-bodied and well able to defend himself, but on account of the above order having been issued, he did not defend himself, and suffered the severe injury without a word. He is now being looked after in Newcastle, and he will certainly make a deposition in this by no means isolated case.We are

at present putting up with physical injury, insults and everything. The reason why we ask the men to strike is that by means of such demonstration we may bring about the repeal of the £3 tax. It was stated during the last session of Parliament that the majority of employers of labour in Natal were adverse to the removal of the tax. I feel that the only way in which such employers can be brought to see the humanity of removing it is for the men to strike work. The strikers will immediately resume work as soon as the Government see their way to make a promise that the tax will be repealed during the coming session of Parliament. If they make that promise, they will simply be fulfilling their obligation to Mr. Gokhale which, Lord Ampthill says, they incurred during the interview that took place between Mr. Gokhale and the ministers.

I may also add that the Government were not without notice that the strike was also on our programme. I addressed a letter[1] on the 28th September to that effect to the Government.[2]

Rand Daily Mail, 23-10-1913

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary for Interior", 28-9-1913. The official assessment of the strike situation was summed up in a confidential despatch from the Governor-General to the Colonial Office, dated October 23, 1913; *vide* Appendix "Extract from Governor-General's Despatch to Colonial Office", 23-10-1913.

[2] The report concluded with the observation by *Rand Daily Mail:* " . . . the women mentioned above have been arrested at Newcastle and the strike is assuming larger proportions. It is no longer confined to the coal fields, but is extending to the sugar and tea plantations and to the railways in Natal,"

239. TELEGRAM TO GENERAL BOTHA

[NEWCASTLE,
Before *October 23, 1913*]

WE HEAR YOU TOLD THE COLLIERIES' MANAGERS THAT THE INDIANS WERE ADVISED TO STRIKE FOR A GENERAL STRUGGLE, AND THAT THE STRIKERS WERE SIMPLY DECEIVED FOR SELFISH ENDS. I BEG TO STATE THAT SUCH NEVER WAS, AND IS NOT NOW, THE INTENTION. THE STRIKE HAS BEEN ADVISED PURELY REGARDING THE £3 TAX AND THE STEP HAS BECOME NECESSARY OWING TO THE NONFULFILMENT OF THE PROMISE MADE TO THE HON. MR. GOKHALE THAT IT WOULD BE, AND AS A DEMONSTRATION AGAINST THE STATEMENT MADE BY THE GOVERNMENT DURING THE LAST SESSION THAT THE MAJORITY OF NATAL EMPLOYERS ARE AVERSE TO THE REPEAL OF THE TAX. IF GOVERNMENT WILL SEE THEIR WAY TO PROMISE TO REPEAL IT NEXT SESSION, THE STRIKERS WILL BE ADVISED TO RETURN TO WORK.

Indian Opinion, 29-10-1913

240. TELEGRAM TO THE PRESS[1]

[NEWCASTLE,
October 23, 1913]

WE ARE ADVISING THE STRIKERS TO LEAVE THE MINES AND COURT ARREST, AND FAILING ARREST, TO MARCH TO VOLKSRUST. WE CONSIDER IT IMPROPER TO LIVE ON MINE RATIONS WHEN WE DON'T WORK. THE MOVEMENT MAY START INSTANTLY.

Indian Opinion, 29-10-1913

241. LETTER TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR[2]

[JOHANNESBURG,]
October 23, 1913

THE HON'BLE THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR
PRETORIA

SIR,

I am directed by my Association respectfully to invite your attention to the following. My Association has been informed that:

1. On or about the 27th September, a British Indian named Abdool Fazula Khan was arrested at Johannesburg under Section 4(Ia) of the Immigration Law of 1913, which reads:

> Any such person as is described in any paragraph of this sub-section who enters or is found within the Union, or who, though lawfully resident in one Province, enters or is found in another Province in which he is not lawfully resident, shall be a prohibited immigrant in respect of the Union or of that other Province (as the case may be), that is to say—any person or class of

[1] This was part of a Reuter message from Johannesburg according to which Gandhiji stated that Indians had struck work on more mines and that many had been arrested. For the circumstances which prepared the ground for the march.

[2] This was sent on behalf of the Chairman, British Indian Association.

persons deemed by the Minister on economic grounds or on account of standard or habits of life to be unsuited to the requirements of the Union or any particular Province thereof.

2. The said Khan appealed against the decision of the local Immigration Officer, and on the 13th October the said appeal was duly heard by the Board sitting at Pretoria and dismissed.

3. The evidence led at the hearing of the appeal, and which was not disproved or rebutted, shows:

(a) That the said Khan first came to the Transvaal in 1900 as a private of the Indian Transport Corps No. 2 Division.

(b) That he received a good discharge in November 1902 and, thereafter, remained in this Province for nearly another year— till towards the end of 1903.

(c) That he then went to Cape Town where he filled several situations, among others, working for Messrs Jagger & Co., Ohlson & Co., and Petersen & Co. He remained in Cape Town about eight or nine years with the exception of a few months of service in German South West Africa.

(d) The said Khan then returned to the Transvaal by rail from the Cape and entered this Province without let or hindrance. (e)

(e) While in German South West Africa, Khan lost his discharge and several other papers of a similar character.

4. On the day the said Khan's appeal was dismissed, as stated in Paragraph 2 and immediately after, he was removed to Pretoria Gaol for deportation, but before removal, his Attorney, Mr. Ritch, saw the Principal Immigration Officer and represented to him the claims of the said Khan to be sent to the Cape Province. Mr. Ritch gave the names of the principal employers for whom the said Khan claims to have worked.

5. On the following evening, the said Khan was deported to Natal without his having had an opportunity to collect his clothes or other belongings and without any further communication having been made to his Attorney, and, thereafter, was immediately transported to India.

6. I am desired to point out that no effort would appear to have been made to investigate the said Khan's claims to be sent to the Cape, where he had resided for so many years, and to add that, in the respectful opinion of my Association, this should have been done even though it might have meant a few weeks' longer detention in the Transvaal of the said Khan.

7. My Association also desires me to call attention to the serious hardships which must necessarily follow such sudden deportation as this, in which case the deportee would appear to have been sent away without any means and with no more clothing than he stood in. Had Khan's Attorney been notified a few hours beforehand, his friends would have passed over to him his clothing and blankets and also money to assist him on his journey.

8. My Association trusts that the facts in this case will be fully investigated by you; and that steps will be taken to prevent a repetition of the unfortunate incident.

I have, etc.,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 5904

242. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

NEWCASTLE,

October 23, 1913

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Just now it seems to me that a solution has been found for the building proposal. The strikers must leave the mines. Otherwise the strike is bound to collapse. I am therefore inviting them to come out. If they do, one of us will march with them to the Transvaal border to court arrest. We should be arrested on the way. This avoids the difficulty of lodgings, etc., and keeps the men going. The situation is certainly difficult and serious. The strike is now having its effect. But unless some such thing like the above is done, the movement is bound to collapse. You should carefully watch the Press. You should constantly make it clear that we do not wish to break the Provincial barrier. Our only purpose is by intense suffering to make a striking demonstration against the £3 tax. Not a minute to spare. I hate writing.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

243. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[NEWCASTLE,]
Aso Vad 9 [*October 24, 1913*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

No, I have not forgotten about Jamnadas, but I have not had a moment to myself. I send the letter[2] herewith. You have Tyob Sakur's address. Please dispose of the letter. And also write to Thakkar Damodar Anandji and Khetsi in my name. I am not sure of their correct names. You have them. Also say that Jamnadas should see them. They will take it ill if we do not write to him. Inquire when *Pundua* will reach Beira, and also consider when these letters will get there. If you find that they are not likely to reach there in time, send a telegram to Beira through the Company. Such telegrams are delivered "inland" and cost less. Wire to Tyob Sakur that he should put up Jamnadas, buy him a ticket for Bulawayo and give him the necessary money for the voyage, debiting the amounts against me.

Great things are happening in Newcastle. There is a move to lead a march of 2,000 men into the Transvaal. Let us see what happens. I do not know whether I shall be able to send any matter. The telegrams and letters from here the Secretary will continue to send. Medh is here. Pragji is at Volksrust. Manilal has been arrested. Write to me at the following address:

37, Murehesion Street,
Newcastle.

Send a copy of *Indian Opinion* to Mr. Lazarus at the foregoing address. The ladies' block should appear this time. Speak to Muttu about this. About the block itself, speak to West. I have no time to

[1] The date is assigned on the basis of the reference in the letter to the picture of the women satyagrahis, which appeared as a supplement to *Indian Opinion*, 29-10-1913.

[2] This is not available.

write to him.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5906

244. CABLE TO G. A. NATESAN[1]

DURBAN,

[Before *October 25, 1913*]

THE REPORT IS ENTIRELY FALSE; MEETINGS HELD THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY ARE STRONGLY SUPPORTING THE MOVEMENT, AND NEARLY A HUNDRED MEN AND WOMEN REPRESENTING ALL SECTIONS OF THE COMMUNITY ARE ALREADY IN GAOL.

The Times of India, 25-10-1913

245. STATEMENT AT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE[2]

[DURBAN,]

October 25, 1913

At joint meeting of representatives of coal, sugar, and agriculture industries held this morning, Mr. Gandhi stated that present strike of coal mines was specifically due to failure of Union Government to carry out definite promise given by them repeatedly that the annual tax of £3 would be repealed. He states that a promise or assurance was given definitely to Mr. Gokhale, and that this is confirmed

[1] This was in refutation of a cable from Reuter which was published in *The Times of India*, 21-10-1913: "There appears to be a decided split among the local Indian community, but it is believed that the majority will support the passive resistance movement."

[2] A meeting of leading employers of Indian labour was held at the Chamber of Commerce on October 25. Gandhiji made a statement on the position of the strike. This is an extract from a telegram sent by the Coal-owners' Association to the Minister of the Interior on October 25. No separate report of Gandhiji's statement is available. For an account of Gandhiji's discussion with the mine-owners.

by a statement made by Lord Ampthill in the House of Lords, and reported in Blue-book, without reservation as to men, women and children. Mr. Gandhi states that Indians will be immediately advised to resume work, regardless of any other grievances, as soon as Government give assurance that they will carry out their promise.[1]

Indian Opinion, 5-11-1913

246. INTERVIEW TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"

DURBAN,
October 25, 1913

. . . After the conference[2], Mr. Gandhi was asked by a *Mercury* representative whether there was any truth in the suggestion that the strike was at an end.

[GANDHIJI:] No, the strike is still continuing. I have telegrams from Dannhauser district to say that that is so, and from Dundee and Newcastle also. The position is that the men were to be withdrawn from the collieries in order to court arrest and imprisonment in Natal, or, failing that, to cross the border to the Transvaal, and be arrested there. As this conference was coming, this movement was suspended. So the position is that they are on strike, but have not left the mines.

The idea behind this proposed movement from the mines was that it was not a proper thing to draw rations from the mine-owners, and yet not to work. I personally felt that the strike was weak so long as the men did not actually leave the mines. What will happen now will depend on the result of the conference, and that I am unable to

[1] The telegram went on to state: "After hearing Mr. Gandhi, the meeting resolved that the Union Government be asked to say whether they gave assurance regarding £3 tax mentioned by him, and as confirmed by Lord Ampthill in the House of Lords; whether said assurance applied to men, women and children, and, if not, what were the reservations, if any? The meeting would be glad to know, also, what the present intentions of the Government are in regard to tax of £3. In view of the extension of the strike daily, they would be indebted for immediate information for guidance of further joint meeting to be convened immediately such reply is received."

[2] This was held at the Chamber of Commerce; *vide* the preceding item.

foreshadow. The strike, however, will continue. According to my estimate there are nearly 3,000 on strike. The effect of this is not entirely to stop work as they have a certain amount of Kaffir labour, and with this Kaffir labour and the Europeans they are able to do some work, though the bulk of it is certainly at a standstill.

I saw it reported that we might even ask the Kaffirs to strike. But such is not our intention at all. We do not believe in such methods. We have nothing against the employers as such, but as the employers are supposed—at least some of them—to have opposed the repeal of this tax, this demonstration has become necessary. As soon as the Government make a promise to the effect that the tax will be repealed during the next session of Parliament, the strikers will be advised to resume work.

It is not the intention to ask them to join the general struggle at all; because, apart from the £3 tax, there are other grievances also for which the passive resistance by the general body of the people will continue. The other grievances are the marriage question; the question of domiciliary rights; the harsh administration of existing laws, as the Gold Law in the Transvaal; the right of S[outh] A[frica] born Indians to enter the Cape by reason of their birth; and the theoretical question of the social bar. For these things, even if the promise to repeal the £3 tax is given, passive resistance, without the strike, will continue.

I may state also, that no intimidation of any sort was used against non-strikers, and the strike is absolutely a voluntary act, and in so far as I have been able to see, quite spontaneous. The men only needed the position to be placed before them to strike.

For the relief of the strikers, whom we have to support, subscriptions are being collected everywhere. In Durban, 110 bags of rice, dholl, and other articles were promised, and the bulk of this is already upon rail. More collections are still going on.[1]

If the Conference ends in a fiasco, we shall certainly endeavour to widen the area of the strike, but I am totally unable to say what response we shall have. Wherever indentured Indians or ex-indentured

[1] The situation which Gandhiji and his co-workers had to tackle is vividly described in *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Chs. XLII & XLIII.

Indians are working as labourers, we shall advise that they should strike.

The Natal Mercury, 27-10-1913

247. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[*October 26, 1913*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

This will be given to you by Medh. I have been on the move all the time. My deal times have been changed. Soon after ablutions I take my meal. And the ablutions take place early enough. If I did not do that I should get no time to eat.

The coal miners' Conference was all right.[1] They have sent a cable to General Smuts which they await a reply to. I am now on the veld and surrounded by people at Hatting Spruit.

With love,

Yours,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India.

[1] The Conference was held at the Chamber of Commerce, Durban, on October 25; *vide* also "Statement at Chamber of Commerce", 25-10-1913.

248. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

NEWCASTLE,
October 27, 1913

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I arrived here this morning to find your welcome letters and your interview with the *Times.* I see you are going strong. It would be splendid if the women came. Yes, they may have their tickets for Newcastle. I want Mr. Cachalia, Imam Saheb and all the Mohammedans here just now. Anglia and Dada Osman are making much mischief. I have written Cachalia to that effect. He and the others are required to counteract the mischief.

The Conference was good. They threatened, they flattered, they tried everything to wean us from the strike. But it could not be done. Now they are in communication with the Government. We may know the result any day. All the largest mines are now out but the one at Elandslaagte. We are trying for it. To bring out the men proved easy. To keep them is most difficult. But fortune has favoured us up to now and may continue to do so. Thambi, of course, is by far the best worker. And another Naidoo almost bids fair to rival him in energy.

You will observe that under the new plan we do not need a camp. We simply march out the men. Women and children will have to be looked after.

I shall be continuously on the move but you may treat Newcastle as my headquarters.

With love,

Yours,
UPPER HOUSE

[PS.]

I take it that these letters are shown to Miss Schlesin too.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

249. TELEGRAM TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR

[NEWCASTLE,
Before *October 28, 1913*]

HAVE READ GOVERNMENT REPLY NATAL COLLIERIE SASSOCIATION.[1] BEG DRAW MINISTER'S ATTENTION FACT PROMISE TO MR. GOKHALE MENTIONED MR. CACHALIA'S LETTER, ALSO MY LETTER SEPTEMBER 28TH. NO REPUDIATION THEN MADE. REPEAL TAX THOUGH ONLY NOW MADE MATTER PASSIVE RESISTANCE CERTAINLY NOT AFTER-THOUGHT AS COULD BE PROVED FROM DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE IN POSSESSION GOVERNMENT. HAVE REPEATEDLY STATED INDIAN EMPLOYEES UNDER INDENTURE NOT BEING BROUGHT OUT FOR OTHER POINTS OF PASSIVE RESISTANCE. INDEPENDENT NATAL INDIANS CERTAINLY FIGHTING ON GENERAL GROUNDS. MARRIAGE, SOUTH AFRICA-BORN INDIANS TO ENTER CAPE, IMMIGRATION ACT, LICENSING ACT QUESTIONS AFFECT NATAL INFINITELY MORE THAN OTHER PROVINCES. GOVERNMENT CANNOT COMPLAIN OF STRIKE SEEING AMPLE NOTICE WAS GIVEN. ANY CASE RESPECTFULLY ASK MINISTERS NOT TREAT STRIKE AS THREAT, BUT EMPHATIC EXPRESSION OF INTENSE FEELING AGAINST TAX. HUNDREDS OF POOR HELPLESS AND COMPARATIVELY IGNORANT PEOPLE WILL NOT LISTEN TO FANCIED UNFELT GRIEVANCES OR GRIEVANCES SERIOUS IN THEMSELVES, BUT BASED UPON THEORY. I THEREFORE APPEAL TO MINISTER TO CONSIDER TAX QUESTION UPON MERITS ONLY.

Indian Opinion, 5-11-1913

[1] The Government said, in the course of the reply: "With regard to your telegram, Government never gave such promise as Mr. Gandhi alleges, either to Mr. Gokhale or anybody elsewhere. . . ."

250. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

NEWCASTLE,
October 29, 1913

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

Polak keeps you informed of the progress of the struggle. I am marching out presently with the strikers in order to court arrest for ourselves. But this I write to ask you kindly to facilitate Polak's residence in London. He can then do public work and manage the London Committee. After my withdrawal which will take place as soon as the settlement comes, he thinks that he would not be able to work efficiently in South Africa. I agree with him in this view. Mr. Dube has invited him to settle in London. This he can only do if he receives the support of some of the Pleaders in India who handle Privy Council cases. Polak as you know intends to practise as Privy Council Agent in London.

I remain, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 931

251. TELEGRAM TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR

[CHARLESTOWN,
October 30, 1913]

TO
MINISTER OF INTERIOR
PRETORIA

NEWCASTLE INDIAN COMMITTEE HAVE LEARNT THAT GAOL DOCTOR FORCIBLY VACCINATED PASSIVE RESISTANCE FEMALE PRISONERS BY REMOVING BLOUSE AND HOLDING ARM. LADIES NOT SUPPLIED WITH GHEE, REQUEST INVESTIGATION, PROMPT RELIEF.[1]

GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 5-11-1913

252. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

ON THE WAY TO VOLKSRUST,
October 30, 1913

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I sent you a full message from Ingogo which I hope you received. Mr. Mahomed Meer is at Waschbank. He has the 'phone. It was he who gave the information about the Ramsay Collieries assault. Please inquire further. You know that I telegraphed to the Protector at Durban and the Interior.[2] You may now inquire further through Meer and if there [be] any workers, send one to make local investigation.

[1] To this the Director of Prisons replied that instructions had since been issued to the Newcastle Magistrate that the Minister of Justice would not insist on the Gaol Regulations in regard to vaccination being enforced where religious objections were raised by passive resisters.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 28-10-1913.

The women need not march to Volksrust. If they would, they may as far as Ingogo and entrain there. But there should be someone to join them from Newcastle. Mr. Seedat at Ingogo seems to be a decent man. He gave biscuits, tea, bread, etc., to the men without stinting. He gave me cigarettes too for them. I have asked him to pay the express fares for the women and some men who could not and would not walk. There must be quite 40. If the women who want to go to gaol wish to entrain, they may do so. As much as possible, please discourage movement to Phoenix. If you have sufficient accommodation there, the women should be kept and fed there so long as possible as you have plenty of rations there and fine workers in Mrs. Lazarus and Miss Thomas.[1]

If I am arrested, you should immediately transfer the Johannesburg balance in your name and open a separate account called Agency Account. I may be fined. I shall make a statement to the effect that I have nothing I can call my own, that I have given up everything and that even in those things which are in my name I have no interest of my own. You and others should likewise say and return *nulla bona*. In order to avoid technicalities the accounts may be transferred. The account at Durban should be withdrawn and it should be redeposited in the names of West and Maganlal, either having the power to operate upon it severally. The paper too should be transferred in the names of West and Maganlal and the trustees may transfer it and the Press to them at pepper-cornrent.

All the men, as soon as they are there, must be marched out. They must take two days' rations with them. Some stupidly did not fill their pots.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 28-10-1913.

253. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[*October 30, 1913*][1]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

We reached in excellent condition at 5 p.m. The men have done extremely well. The store-keeper here is supplying tea. It is big thing because of the labour involved.

I have just telephoned asking that Mr. Badat should go to Pardekop. We shall march out early in the morning so that some distance at least may be cut before daybreak. I am sending back Mr. Vallibhai's[2] cart but am trying to procure other transport.

I am almost inclined, if the men can be somewhat disciplined, to march through Johannesburg and hold a meeting there. The merchants may give a feast to the men. You may discuss with Cachalia through the 'phone. Hosken and others may be invited. Please tell Miss Schlesin that my proposed letter should be deferred till the march is over.

There, as I have said, Chergan is the most reliable man for the strikers' residence . But if all are not accommodated there, the one next man is Sivpal who is above Chergan. It is at these two places that you should concentrate the majority of the people. Then comes Ramkhelawan who can take many people, but you must not establish a kitchen there. There are men also at Rughbir's, towards Newcastle way and beyond the corner Indian store. If you succeed in getting two kitchens established it would save your much work and you will be able to move about. Men who may come should be served only with bread or porridge. Rice is a great bother. No tea to be provided but only sugar. This will simplify matters. But you will use your own judgment. You will examine and list the jewellery the men have sold and deposited. Polak should be furnished with the itinerary. I will say no more just now. I hope you had a nice luncheon and that Miss Schlesin had something to eat. So long as she is there, you should

[1] From the contents; vide also the preceding item.
[2] Valli Peerbhai

look after her food.

I suggest your seeing Mrs. Anton, the baker's wife. She is ill. I have recommended Kuhne's bath and our bread. You may offer to explain.

Yours,

UPPER HOUSE

[PS.]

Please remove from the jacket lent by Mr. Vallibhai a packet of stamps I left.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

254. GIST OF LETTER TO SECRETARY FOR JUSTICE[1]

[CHARLESTOWN,
October 31, 1913]

Mr. Gandhi wrote to the Secretary for Justice from Charlestown on the 31st ultimo pointing out that a large number of Indians had surrendered themselves for arrest and, as the Government had no accommodation for them nor facility for feeding them, they were being fed and housed by the Indian Committee there at Government expense. Mr. Gandhi suggested that all the people should be arrested, but, if not, he stated that they would proceed with their march into the Transvaal—an event which he was anxious to avoid. He also warned the Government against allowing Indians to remain free on the border and stated that it was the desire of the passive resisters to guard in every way they could against the surreptitious entry of a single Indian.[2]

Indian Opinion, 12-11-1913

[1] The original letter is not available.

[2] Official policy in regard to the handling of the strike situation is clarified in a confidential despatch, dated November 6, from the Governor-General to the Colonial Office; *vide* Appendix "Extract from Governor-General's Despatch to Colonial Office", 6-11-1913.

255. GIST OF LETTER TO IMMIGRATION OFFICER[1]

[CHARLESTOWN,
October 31, 1913]

A letter was addressed on the same day by Mr. Gandhi to the Immigration Officer, Pretoria, pointing out that all passive resisters receive at the Transvaal border three days' notice of appeal, although they declare they do not wish to appeal, and that they are allowed to roam about as they please. In Mr. Gandhi's opinion the Act does not require the warning to be given in all circumstances.

Indian Opinion, 12-11-1913

256. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

CHARLESTOWN,
November 3, 1913

The enclosed letter was written on the way.[2] It is unfinished. I have seen the quotations for tents, and it seems to me that, after all, bell-tents would be the cheapest and the easiest to fix up. One bell-tent takes in twelve men. At that rate in order to accommodate 1,200 men, we should want 100. The figures then amount to £75. That would be, in my opinion, prohibitive. The alternative is to buy tarpaulin and make our own tents and poles. It seems to me that this could be easily fixed. If we could sew them on to the tarpaulin, the thing would be quite substantial, but it may be too long. In that event we shall have to use handles. I am now writing without any experience whatsoever, but I am giving you all these suggestions for what they are worth. At the time of the Zulu Rebellion[3] we had tents which when erected simply looked like the wings of a roof without any wall. There were pegs which were to be driven in. They could easily be rigged up and two

[1] The original letter is not available.
[2] *Vide* "General Knowledge about Health [-XXXI], 2-8-1913.
[3] Of 1906

slender poles kept them erect. They were V-shape inverted, and if these tents could be bought probably they would be the cheapest. Six could at a pinch be put into these tents. I would like to carry these tents myself on the march, failing that tarpaulin. Having known all these things, you may do what you like, but what I want is sufficient cover for my journey. The same cover I shall use in Charlestown until I have commenced the march.[1] As soon as you can supply me with sufficient tents, you may send me all the men there, so that we could concentrate all the women and children at Charlestown. All the men must march, the women may get trains. Whilst you are in Johannesburg, you must see Mr. Cachalia and others, and get them to send vegetables, oil, rice, mealiemeal and even coal- whatever they can beg. Not a single consignment has yet arrived from Johannesburg, and it is certainly discreditable that the merchants have not yet sent anything.

Yours sincerely,
M.K. GANDHI

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] The March commenced on November 6; *vide* also "Interview to "the Natal Mercury", 5-11-1913 & Cable to G.k. Gokhale", before 6-11-1913.

257. INTERVIEW TO REUTER[1]

[CHARLESTOWN,
November 3,1913]

Mr. Gandhi, interviewed, stated that he contemplated moving 1,500 men to the Transvaal to court arrest, and if not arrested they would proceed further, and would probably settle down on Mr. Kallenbach's farm at Tolstoy, near Lawley.

Indian Opinion, 12-11-1913

258. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE

[CHARLESTOWN
Before *November 4, 1913*]

FIVE THOUSAND ON STRIKE, OF WHOM FOUR THOUSAND HAVE TO BE FED, INCLUDING THREE HUNDRED WOMEN AND SIX HUNDRED CHILDREN. THREE HUNDRED ARE IN JAIL AND TWO HUNDRED MORE HAVE BEEN ARRESTED. FIFTEEN HUNDRED STRIKERS ARE AT CHARLESTOWN AND THE REST ARE GATHERING AT NEWCASTLE PRIOR TO CROSSING THE BORDER TO COURT ARREST. THERE IS A GROWING ENTHUSIASM AMONG THE STRIKERS. THE CLERGY IN MANY PLACES ARE MOVING TO SECURE THE REDRESS OF OUR GRIEVANCES.

The Times of India, 5-11-1913

[1] Gandhiji had camped at Charlestown along with other marchers. He had an interview with a Reuter correspondent of which only this brief report is available.

259. INTERVIEW TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"

[CHARLESTOWN,
November 5, 1913]

Mr. Gandhi readily granted an interview, but had nothing to say, except that he and his followers were still quite determined, and would march into the Transvaal on the following day, courting arrest, and if they were unmolested, would march right on until they reached Tolstoy Farm. They would then remain quietly there until satisfactory terms had been made with the Government. All arrangements had been made along the route, and food depots established at eight different points along the way. Their object was to court arrest, but they wished to do everything quite openly, and had acquainted the Government with their intentions.[1]

Indian Opinion, 12-11-1913

[1] Before zero hour was reached, Gandhiji made a final bid to avert the march. This is what he has himself recorded:

"When all the preparations for the march were completed, I made one more effort to achieve a settlement. I had already sent letters and telegrams. I now decided to 'phone even at the risk of my overtures being answered by an insult. From Charlestown I 'phoned to General Smuts in Pretoria. I called his secretary and said: 'Tell General Smuts that I am fully prepared for the march. The Europeans in Volksrust are excited and perhaps likely to violate even the safety of our lives. They have certainly held out such a threat. I am sure that even the General would not wish any such untoward event to happen. If he promises to abolish the £3 tax, I will stop the march, as I will not break the law merely for the sake of breaking it, but I am driven to it by inexorable necessity. Will not the General accede to such a small request?' I received this reply within half a minute: 'General Smuts will have nothing to do with you. You may do just as you please.' With this the message closed.

"I had fully expected this result, though I was not prepared for the curtness of the reply. I hoped for a civil answer, as my political relations with the General since the organization of Satyagraha had now subsisted for six years. But as I would not be elated by this courtesy, I did not weaken in the face of his incivility. The strait and narrow path I had to tread was clear before me. The next day (November 6, 1913) at the appointed stroke of the hour (6.30) we offered prayers and commenced the march in the name of God. The pilgrim band was composed of 2,037 men, 127 women and 57 children." *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XLIII.

260. CABLE TO G. K GOKHALE

[CHARLESTOWN,
Before *November 6, 1913*]

THE STRIKE IS CONTINUING. THE GOVERNMENT IS NOT ARRESTING PASSIVE RESISTERS. MONTHLY EXPENSES EXCEED £7,000. LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS ARE EXPECTED TO COME UP TO £1000 EVERY MONTH IN PROVISIONS AND CASH. I AM MARCHING ON THURSDAY[1] TO TRANSVAAL WITH FOUR THOUSAND MEN. ENDURANCE AND DISTRESS ARE GREAT. SEVERAL BIRTHS HAVE OCCURRED IN THE CONCENTRATION CAMPS WHICH HAVE BEEN FORMED. TWO DEATHS OF BABIES OCCURRED DURING THE MARCH.

The Times of India, 7-11-1913

261. NEWS OF STRUGGLE[2]

[CHARLESTOWN,
Before *November 6, 1913*]

During the Transvaal march, Mr. N. C. Desai was diligent in attending to the indentured labourers. He offered tea to people and shelter to the women who were tired. The Indian community in Standerton supplied one thousand tins of jam and entertained the marchers generously. At Vaal station, Mr. Patel was in attendance and he took persons who had fallen sick to stay with him. During two stages in the march, Mr. Badaat proceeded ahead of the marchers by train and had bread ready for them. Mr. Valli Peerbhai offered his carriage for transport of stores during the first stage. Dr. Briscoe gave four pounds worth of medicine free of charge for the pilgrims. Mr. Sidaat of Ingogo supplied tea and biscuits to those who had started on

[1] November 6
[2] This was published as “From Mr. Gandhi”.

the march from Newcastle. In this way, at every place the marchers were cared for by Indians. The Indian community in Charlestown was, and still is, very diligent. Mr. Sheikh Mukadam devotes all his time to this work.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-11-1913

262. TELEGRAM TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR[1]

[PALMFORD,
November 7, 1913]

WHILST I APPRECIATE THE FACT OF GOVERNMENT HAVING AT LAST ARRESTED PRIME MOVER IN PASSIVE RESISTANCE STRUGGLE, CANNOT HELP REMARKING THAT FROM POINT VIEW HUMANITY MOMENT CHOSEN MOST UNFORTUNATE. GOVERNMENT PROBABLY KNOW THAT MARCHERS INCLUDE 122 WOMEN, FIFTY TENDER CHILDREN, ALL VOLUNTARILY MARCHING ON STARVATION RATIONS WITHOUT PROVISION FOR SHELTER DURING STAGES. TEARING ME AWAY UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES FROM THEM IS VIOLATION ALL CONSIDERATIONS JUSTICE. WHEN ARRESTED LAST NIGHT LEFT MEN WITHOUT INFORMING THEM. THEY MIGHT BECOME INFURIATED. I, THEREFORE, ASK EITHER THAT I MAY BE ALLOWED CONTINUE MARCH WITH MEN OR THAT GOVERNMENT SEND THEM BY RAIL TOLSTOY FARM AND PROVIDE FULL RATIONS FOR THEM. LEAVING THEM WITHOUT ONE IN WHOM THEY HAVE CONFIDENCE AND WITHOUT GOVERNMENT MAKING PROVISION FOR THEM IS IN MY OPINION AN ACT FROM WHICH I HOPE ON RECONSIDERATION GOVERNMENT WILL RECOIL. IF UNTOWARD INCIDENTS HAPPEN DURING FURTHER PROGRESS MARCH OR IF DEATHS OCCUR, ESPECIALLY AMONG

[1] Gandhiji was arrested near Palmford and charged with having brought unauth-orized persons into the Transvaal. He was produced before the magistrate at Volksrust and released on bail. The telegram was evidently dispatched after this. He was, however, re-arrested the next day at Standerton. For an account of the arrest at Palmford and the court proceedings, *vide Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XLIV.

WOMEN WITH BABIES IN ARMS, RESPONSIBILITY WILL BE GOVERNMENT'S.

Indian Opinion, 12-11-1913

263. APPLICATION FOR BAIL[1]

STANDERTON,
November 8, 1913

Before pleading, accused stated he was already on bail, and asked to be admitted on bail. Accused stated his object in asking for bail was to enable him to take the men to their destination. The Prosecutor opposed bail unless the accused would refrain from taking further part in the demonstration. The accused said he was not prepared to give this assurance.[2]

The Star, 8-11-1913

[1] Gandhiji arrived at Standerton with about 2,000 passive resisters. 85 Indians who had left Hattingh Spruit Colliery were arrested. Gandhiji was charged with "aiding or abetting prohibited persons to enter the Transvaal".

[2] According to a report in *The Transvaal Leader*, when the Prosecutor protested against Gandhiji's plea for bail, "the Magistrate pointed out that every prisoner not charged with a capital sentence was in law entitled to be allowed to give bail for his appearance, and said that Mr. Gandhi could not be deprived of that right." Gandhiji was then released on his own recognizance of £50, and the case was remanded till the 21st. As soon as Gandhiji was released, the column continued its march. For a detailed first-hand report of the next part of the march, *vide* "The Great March", 8-11-1913; also *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XLIV.

264. INTERVIEW TO REUTER[1]

STANDERTON,
November 8, 1913

Mr. Gandhi . . . replied that he felt sure the Government would repeal the tax. He was positive that the Government had told Mr. Gokhale it was its intention to repeal the tax.

[GANDHIJI:] If, the Government can show a justifiable reason why the tax should be paid, the Indians would pay it, but no good reason for paying has yet been given. The crowd is very orderly and under perfect control.

The Star, 8-11-1913

265. LETTER TO INDIANS[2]

[Before *November 11, 1913*]

The like of this struggle will not come again. We have reached the limit now. The courage that the indentured labourers have shown and the suffering they have gone through have been boundless. How many men will be ready to foot 24 miles a day on one and a half pounds of bread and a little sugar? This is what our poor brethren have done. They have suffered horses' kicks. They have silently endured kicks and blows by whites. Women have walked in the heat of the noon, two-month-old babies in arms and bundles on head. Everyone has braved the rigours of weather, heat and cold and rain.

[1] After Gandhiji was released on bail, a representative of Reuter who interviewed Gandhiji asked him "what he thought would be the outcome of the demonstration".

[2] Gandhiji was arrested for the third time, on November 9, at Teakworth. He was taken to Heidelberg and produced before the magistrate on the following day. Gandhiji applied for remand of the case. He was to be tried at Dundee; *vide Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XLV. This is Gandhiji's message issued before he was taken to Dundee Gaol on November 11.

To what end? For India. Such sacrifice will no doubt result in repeal of the £3 tax but what is more, it will enhance India's prestige.

I consider the Transvaal march to have been perfectly successful. The object was to get arrested and all have been arrested.

It is only now, however, that the struggle will grow really exciting. Hundreds of men, who are not ready for gaol, can play their part. They have only to resolve that they themselves will go without meals but feed the strikers. Whether or not any money arrives from India, we must supply the food from here. We should put courage in the strikers' hearts and advise them not to retaliate even if mercilessly kicked. All Indians can do this. An opportunity like this will not come again. Every Indian may take a pledge. He can cut out a meal every day, and with the money so saved provide food to the hungry. Decency requires that traders in every place should give food and shelter to any striker who might find his way to that place and then send him on to where facilities exist for feeding large numbers. If any Indian fails to play his part in this great venture, I for one will consider him an unfortunate man indeed.

India's servant

Satyagrahi

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 19-11-1913

266. TRIAL AT DUNDEE

[DUNDEE,
November 11, 1913]

Mr. Gandhi was on the 11th instant charged on three counts, before the Resident Magistrate, Mr. J. W. Cross of Dundee, with inducing indentured immigrants to leave the Province. The court was crowded with Indians and Europeans. Mr. W. Dalzell-Turnbull was specially instructed by the Attorney-General to appear for the prosecution, and Mr. Advocate J. W. Godfrey appeared for Mr. Gandhi. Mr. Gandhi pleaded guilty to the charges.

Mr. Turnbull read the section and left the matter in the hands of the Magistrate.

Mr. Godfrey stated that he was under an obligation to the defendant not to plead in mitigation in any way whatsoever. The circumstances which had brought Mr. Gandhi before the Magistrate were well known to all persons, and he was only expressing the desire of the defendant when he stated that the Magistrate had a duty to perform, and that he was expected to perform that duty fearlessly, and should therefore not hesitate to impose the highest sentence upon the prisoner if he felt that the circumstances in the case justified it.

Mr. Gandhi obtained the permission of the Court, and made the following statement:

As a member of the profession, and being an old resident of Natal, he thought that, in justice to himself and the public, he should state that the counts against him were of such a nature that he took the responsibility imposed upon him, for he believed that the demonstration for which these people were taken out of the Colony was one for a worthy object. He felt that he should say that he had nothing against the employers, and regretted that in this campaign, serious losses were being caused to them. He appealed to the employers also, and he felt that the tax was one which was heavily weighing down his countrymen, and should be removed. He also felt that he was in honour bound, in view of the position of things between Mr. Smuts and Professor Gokhale, to produce a striking demonstration.[1] He was aware of the miscries caused to the women and babes in arms. On the whole, he felt he had not gone beyond the principles and honour of the profession of which he was a member.

[1] The difference of opinion was over the abolition of the £3 tax, regarding which the Union Government insisted it had given Gokhale, in 1912, no assurance; *vide* "Extract from General Botha's Speech", 1-11-1913 for General Botha's categorical denial.

He felt that he had only done his duty in advising his countrymen, and it was his duty to advise them again, that until the tax were removed, to leave work and subsist upon rations obtained by charity. He was certain that without suffering it was not possible for them to get their grievance remedied.

The Magistrate then addressed as follows: In this case the accused had pleaded guilty to the three counts, and the section of law under which the accused was charged made him liable to a fine of £20 for each immigrant he attempted to induce, or induced, to leave the Province. Mr. Gandhi was an educated gentleman, and had the distinction of being a member of the legal profession, and whatever he had done, he had done with a full knowledge of the consequences of his act. The Magistrate then referred to the conditions under which Indians were brought into this Province, and the terms they had agreed upon for remaining here after the expiry of their indentures. He also referred to the contention of the Indians regarding Mr. Smuts' alleged promise to the Indians. The Natal members of Parliament had consented to the tax being removed so far as it affected the women and children, but not the men. The Government had, therefore, not broken faith with the Indians and he believed this was the ground upon which Mr. Gandhi had advised the Indians to strike. To strike was to defy the law, and the Government's position was that, so long as the Indians were out on strike, it was impossible for them to consider any legislation regarding repeal. The defendant was, by his threatening conduct, only bringing ruination to the men and harshness upon themselves. He therefore advised the Indians to stop the passive resistance, and make representations to the Government. He also believed that the Indians were alienating the sympathy of the Europeans who were at one with the Indians in requesting the Government for the repeal of the tax. It was a painful duty to pass sentence upon the conduct of a gentleman like Mr. Gandhi, upon the deliberate contravention of the law, but he had a duty to perform, and Mr. Godfrey, his counsel, had asked him fearlessly to perform that duty. The accused having pleaded guilty, he (the Magistrate) accepted that plea, and passed the following sentences: Count 1: £20, or three months' imprisonment, with hard labour; Count 2: £20, or three months' imprisonment, with hard labour, to take effect upon the expiration of the sentence in respect to Count 1; Count 3: £20, or three months' imprisonment, with hard labour, this to take effect upon the expiration of the sentence imposed in Count 2.

Mr. Gandhi, in a clear and calm voice, said:

I elect to go to gaol.[1]

Indian Opinion, 19-11-1913

[1] A large crowd of friends waited outside to see Gandhiji come out, but the police took him away secretly and no one knew how he was taken away.

267. MESSAGE TO STRIKERS[1]

[DUNDEE,
November 11, 1913]

No cessation of the strike without the repeal of the £3 tax. The Government, having imprisoned[2] me, can gracefully make a declaration regarding the repeal.

Indian Opinion, 19-11-1913

268. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

DUNDEE GAOL,
Tuesday [*November 11, 1913*][3]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have got nine months and if I get six months each at the other two places, that will make 21 months; I shall be most lucky in that case. That I could get into gaol without having to disguise myself was so much the less bother. Today, for the first time after the commencement of the strike, I have some leisure. You must certainly have received some news of Jamnadas. Lest the Government cast its eye on the money in my name, I have written[4] to Mr. Kallenbach to get it transferred to your name and West's. This arrangement is also to be followed in respect of the sums Mr. Gokhale may send hereafter. You must watch what cheques are issued. Miss Schlesin or whoever else is outside will give you the account. Omar Sheth[5] and Cachalia Sheth should have supervision over the money. Expenses will be heavy only for the duration of the strike. If people remain firm even

[1] After the trial J. W. Godfrey visited Gandhiji who said "he was cheerful and confident" and sent this message through him.

[2] The original has "imprisonment", which, evidently, is a misprint.

[3] This letter was written on the day Gandhiji was sentenced and sent to Dundee Gaol.

[4] This letter is not available.

[5] Omar Haji Amod Zaveri; *vide* "Omar Haji Amod Zaveri", 11-5-1907

in my absence, the £3[tax], at any rate, will go.

It looks as though your responsibilities had increased and I was enjoying myself. Going to gaol has become holidaying for us. Even so, I felt I should not hold back any longer from going to gaol. The case today was full of technical loopholes. But how could I take advantage of them? That would have been *moha*. I remained firm, for fear that it would be sheer conceit on my part to believe that I could work better by staying outside. James Godfrey was keen on appearing on my behalf and so I allowed him. He said that he would send the whole report. They will take me to Volksrust from Dundee on Thursday for the case there.[1] If you wish to write to me, send the letter to Badat; it will probably reach me.

Right from today the doctor has ordered fruits, etc., for my diet. I shall have no difficulty, therefore. If I can write down an account of the march, I shall send it on. It was a wonderful experience. And so I took a pledge yesterday that I would live on one meal a day till a repeal of the tax was promised. Four months have passed even according to the English calendar. The pledge this time will permit my taking lemon or orange squash. I can write no more.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

MAGANLAL K. GANDHI
PHOENIX, NATAL

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 2538

[1] On Friday, November 14, Gandhiji was sentenced at Volksrust to a further 3 months' imprisonment.

269. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

DUNDEE,

Wednesday [*November 12, 1913*][1]

MY DEAR MILLIE,

You are brave. So I know you will consider yourself a proud and happy wife in having a husband who has dared to go to gaol for a cause he believes in. The £3 tax cause is the cause of the helpless and the dumb. And I ask you to work away in the shape of begging, advising and doing all you can. Do not wait for their call but call the workers. Seek them out even though they should insult you. Miss S. knows the struggle almost like Henry. Assist her. I have asked her to move forward and backward and assume full control. Draw upon West and Maganlal for your needs. May you have strength of mind and body to go through the fire.

With love,

Yours,

BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] The addressee's husband H.S.L. Polak, along with Hermann Kallenbach, had courted arrest on November 10, 1913. Gandhiji was sentenced on November 4 and sent to Dundee. He was removed to Volksrust on November 13. This letter was evidently written on November 12, 1913, which was a Wednesday.

270. TRIAL AT VOLKSRUST

[VOLKSRUST,
November 14, 1913]

Mr. Gandhi appeared in Court before Mr. Jooste, Assistant Magistrate, charged under Section 20 of the Immigration Regulation Act. He pleaded guilty, but the formal evidence of a resister named Poldat was called.

Witness stated he belonged to Ballengeich Mine, and remembered during the current month proceeding with a number of Indians into the Transvaal. Poldat said Mr. Gandhi was leading them from Charlestown to Johannesburg. Poldat recognized Mr. Gandhi as the leader. Poldat knew he had no right in this Province, because he was a prohibited immigrant.

Mr. Gandhi said he would like to ask witness two questions.

Why did Poldat enter the Transvaal?

Poldat said he entered the Transvaal as a protest against the £3 tax.

Would Poldat have gone back to the mines if that £3 tax had been repealed?

Poldat said yes; if the Government had agreed to repeal the £3 tax, he would have gone back.

Mr. Gandhi was asked if he wished to make a statement.

Mr. Gandhi then addressed the Court.[1]

I admit that I advised not only the last witness but hundreds of other Indians, whom I knew to be prohibited immigrants, to cross the border from Natal into the Transvaal. Of my intention to do so I gave the Minister of the Interior due notice and I specially interviewed the Immigration Officer at Volksrust, and informed him even of the date on which I proposed to cross the border. I told both the Government and the Immigration Officer that in doing so my only object was to make a demonstration against the £3 tax which was weighing heavily upon those who were affected by it, and to court for myself and the party who crossed with me imprisonment. I assured them that nothing

[1] The statement as reported in *Indian Opinion* is in the third person. The original statement given here is extracted from the Transvaal Court Records.

could be further from my wish than to desire that a single one of those men who crossed the border should remain in the Transvaal and settle there. I said also that, with such a large number crossing with me, I might be totally unable to prevent them for all time from roving about the country and that, therefore, I hoped that the Government would take charge of the men. Throughout the march into the Transvaal, I endeavoured to keep the men under control and to prevent them from dispersing, and I claim that not a single Indian left the column if it may be so called. I heard something at Heidelberg about the formation of a Vigilants Committee at Volksrust, whose aim I understand was to make the Government enforce the Immigration Act. There is, therefore, common cause between the Committee and my co-workers and myself. Through the Court I beg to make the assurance that the present movement has nothing whatsoever to do with the unlawful entry for purposes of residence in the Transvaal of a single Indian. I think I may fairly claim that my whole career in the Transvaal has been actuated with the motive of assisting Government in preventing surreptitious entry and unlawful settlement, but I have pleaded guilty as I know that I have committed a technical breach, on a vast scale, of the section under which I am charged. I am aware too that the steps I have taken are fraught with the greatest risks and intense personal suffering by those who have accepted my advice, but after very mature consideration, based upon 20 years' experience of South Africa, I have come to the conclusion that nothing short of such suffering will move the conscience of the Government as also of the inhabitants of the Union of which, in spite of the so-called breach of the Statutory Laws of the Union, I claim to be a sane and law-abiding citizen.

The Court then adjourned for a quarter of an hour for the Magistrate to consider his decision.

On resuming, Mr. Jooste passed sentence of three months' imprisonment.

Indian Opinion, 26-11-1913; also Transvaal Court Records

271. EVIDENCE AT POLAK'S TRIAL[1]

[VOLKSRUST,
November 17, 1913]

Mr. Gandhi gave evidence that the march to the Transvaal was fixed without consultation with Mr. Polak, who intended leaving for India on November 14th, and he knew all arrangements had been made for Mr. Polak's departure from Durban. Had it not been for witness's arrest before reaching Greylingstad, Mr. Polak would certainly have left at that station. Under the circumstances, Mr. Gandhi thought Mr. Polak should lead the column to its destination, so that the men would not disperse. In Mr. Gandhi's opinion, if Mr. Polak was guilty of aiding and abetting, so also were the troopers whoguided the column on its way. He considered that Mr. Polak had rendered service to the State, and to his race, by acting as he had. The men had been handed over to Mr. Polak because Mr. Cachalia had not then arrived on the scene.

Indian Opinion, 26-11-1913

[1] Polak and Kallenbach were arrested at Charlestown on November 10. Polak was charged before Mr. Jooste, Assistant Magistrate, under Section 20 of the Immigration Act, but declined to plead guilty to the charge. The evidence of five witnesses including Kallenbach and Gandhiji was called. Rifleman Joubert stated that he had seen Polak asking Gandhiji for instructions at Balfour and thought that Polak was one of the leaders of the movement. Constable Kneen stated that Polak had addressed the Indians and advised them to return to Charlestown. Kallenbach said that Polak's intention had been to return to Durban. His purpose was to discuss certain matters with Gandhiji regarding his departure for India. Polak was found guilty and was awarded three months' simple imprisonment without hard labour. Earlier, while awaiting trial in Volksrust Gaol, Polak had addressed a communication to Lord Ampthill, which furnished a detailed account of incidents leading to his arrest; *vide* "Polak's letter to Lord Ampthill", 12-11-1913.

272. LETTER TO MISS DEVI WEST

BLOEMFONTEIN GAOL,
December 14, 1913

Name of convict: M. K. GANDHI

Number: 1739

TO WHOM SENT:

Name in full: Miss Devi West
Occupation: Schoolmistress
Postal Address: International Printing Press
Nearest Town: Phoenix, Natal

MY DEAR DEVI,

As I do not know where everybody else is, it is the most appropriate for me to write to you.

I am quite happy and well here. It is almost as hot here as in Phoenix this time of the year.

Hope that you and others are keeping good health and that Devdas, Prabhudas and the other boys are observing the discipline that was introduced after the ladies' withdrawal from Phoenix and that the boys are thriving under it. Pray remind Devdas of the promises he has made me at various times. Ask him if he can recall them all. When you or someone else writes to me, I should like [to know] the day's routine for the boys. Is Shanti giving trouble? Is Navin obedient? And are Sivparsad and Chhotam as playful as ever? I hope that Rukhi causes no extra trouble to you or to Maganlal. Krishna, Radha and Keshu are not out of my mind, but they are used to being with Maganlal and, therefore, do not call for special inquiry. I hope Rustom West is growing and that he still remains the most beautiful baby in the world to Mrs. Pywell and Mrs. West.

Please tell Mrs. Sam that I did not forget her message to Mr. Sam but, as she knows, I never had the time or the opportunity to have it delivered. I have no doubt however that she will soon see Mr. Sam and then secure his approval of the proposed match. That

reminds me that Muthu promised to help all he could and I hope he is keeping the promise.

Miss Schlesin, if she is there, must be proving very useful.

When the ladies and the boys return, please tell Mrs. Gandhi that she will please me immensely by not disturbing the routine established after her withdrawal and I hope that Ramdas and the other boys will fall in with it. Your reply to this should be sent after their return, so that you may give me full information about them. I shall not withdraw any other letter but the reply to this.

I hope Mrs. Gandhi's old trouble did not revive and that she kept good health. Please let me know too how the other ladies fared. Jekibehn should adhere to the promises made by her to me. Please tell that hardly a day passes when I do not give much thought to her. As for her diet, I do not bind her to any promises or resolutions she may have made. She may take whatever suits her constitution. But she must keep not only good health but be robust. She must grow her hair unless she has definitely heard otherwise from Dr. Mehta.

How I wish Kashi and Santok could join the common household and Mrs. Gandhi could approve of it?

I hope Maganlal traced my Tamil volume that was missing; otherwise he should inquire of Govindoo and find and keep it safe. Most of my spare time is being devoted to Tamil study. A short time is daily given to compiling the book on food values and the uses of popular and comparatively harmless drugs.[1]

A money order should be sent to Khushalbhai (Rajkot) to cover Jamnadas' expenses whatever they may have been in Rajkot and for his travelling and £10 extra. Out of the latter, he should pay the widow of my deceased brother Rs. 20 per month. Khushalbhai should also be asked to prevail upon my sister to cut down her allowance to the extent of Rs. 5 or Rs. 10. Of this Rs. 5 may be added, if necessary, to the allowance to my brother's wife. The whole of the money that may be sent may be debited to suspense or emergency a/c.

Mr. MacIntyre should be reminded by Miss Schlesin to start repayment that he promised to do so long ago.

[1] It is not known if Gandhiji actually completed this work and published it.

Jamnadas, if he is there, should follow Maganlal in his dietary and other habits and he will keep well. I am anxious to know how he has been keeping in body and mind.

Chhaganlal should take as much olive oil as he can and do as much garden work as possible, and should sleep in the open in all weathers and take deep breaths early in the morning and at the time of retiring. He may also smear and rub his chest and his back with olive oil every day for 15 minutes. This massage should be given gently by some strong person. Maganlal or Ramdas should do it. He should read Dr. Carton's thesis on consumption. It was given by me, I think, toMaganlal to read. I hope Maganlal received from Mr. Dowd the books that were lent to Hassan. Out of them, I should like *Food Remedies* sent to me.

I returned to the Gaoler at Volksrust the following: a roll conta[in]ing Mr. Kallenbach's and my blankets and my writing leather case, *Uttar Ramcharit*, Addison's *Essays* and Dayanand's commentaries on *Rigved* &c. The Gaoler promised to return them to Phoenix. If you have them, Addison's *Essays* should be returned to Mrs. Polak. I hope she and the children are keeping well and that her wants are being supplied.

The trustees under the Phoenix settlement should be kept supplied with the monthly a/cs we prepare. Does Mr. Omar visit the settlement. If not, remind him of his promise.

What has happened to Mr. Budree's case? You may inquire of Mr. Budree or Mr. F. S. Tatham, to whom Mr. Polak handed the case. Mr. Ismail Parekh wrote to me saying that the case could be adjourned *sine die*.

Please also write to Khushalbhai, saying that I shall see to my niece Tulsi's a/c being settled whenever I return to India. If I do not within 18 months' time, I shall see to its settlement otherwise. The interest I am doubtful about. I must add that I wrote to Dr. Mehta, asking him to advance the monthly sum to my brother's wife. If he has commenced to do so, £10 extra need not be sent to Khushalbhai.

I implore Mrs. Gandhi not to be anxious about me. She will help me to keep better by looking after her own health. And the secret

of it is in sticking to the dietary prescribed for her.

With much love to you all,

Yours very sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

This should be read by all and be sent to Miss Schlesin wherever she may be. Remember me to Mr. Kotwal when you write to him. I hope Lalchand is helping. How is he keeping and the little baby?

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5913

273. SPEECH AT JOHANNESBURG[1]

JOHANNESBURG,

December 18, 1913

Speaking at a meeting at the old Gaiety Theatre, Mr. Gandhi said he was not the least thankful for having been released, for he preferred solitude and the peace of prison because it gave him opportunity and time for meditation; but, having been released, he should now resume the work upon which he was engaged when he was convicted. For himself he was not satisfied with the Indian Commission appointed by the Government.[2] He was uncertain whether it would be effectual, and whether it would be in the interests of the Indian population that he and others should give evidence before it. However, it had been decided that he and Messrs Polak and Kallenbach should proceed to Durban in the morning, and when there they would decide whether they would accept the Commission as it was at present constituted. He was not at all satisfied, and rather than have a weighted or packed Commission which would militate against the welfare of the Indian community in South Africa, he would prefer

[1] An "Indian Inquiry Commission" was set up by the Union Government on December 11, to inquire into the causes of the strike and the disturbances in connection with it. On the Commission's recommendation, Gandhiji, Polak and Kallenbach were brought to Pretoria and released unconditionally on December 18. They were accorded a reception on reaching Johannesburg in the evening.

[2] The Commission's personnel consisted of Sir William Solomon as Chairman, Ewald Esselen, K.C. and J.S. Wylie, K. C. For the official view of the situation and policy in regard to the Commission, *vide* Governor-General's Cable to Colonial Office", 1-12-1913.

to go back to prison and allow the Indian cause to stand upon its own merits. He would not positively say at the present time that he would not give evidence, but his inclinations were that way as the Commission was loaded against them. His prison experience, just over, had been a change from that he had undergone on a previous occasion. He had been treated with the utmost courtesy, and he would like publicly to record the excellent manner in which the prison officials had considered his comfort.[1]

Indian Opinion, 24-12-1913

274. SPEECH AT DURBAN[2]

DURBAN,
December 20, 1913

Mr. Gandhi intimated to the audience that they were on the eve of a most momentous decision, and that he proposed to take a vote of their considered views at a mass meeting to be held on the morrow. He indicated that the question that they would be called upon to decide was whether they could in honour tender evidence to a Commission which had been constituted without any reference to Indian wishes or opinion, and also whether the personnel of that Commission could be regarded as fair and impartial.

Indian Opinion, 24-12-1913

[1] After Gandhiji, Polak, Kallenbach and William Hosken addressed the meeting, it was unanimously resolved not to tender evidence before the Commission as then constituted.

[2] On reaching Durban station, Gandhiji, Polak and Kallenbach were garlanded and taken in a procession to the office of the Natal Indian Congress where they addressed the gathering.

275. INTERVIEW TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"

[DURBAN,
December 20, 1913]

Interviewed by a *Mercury* representative, Mr. Gandhi said that at the meeting which followed his arrival with Mr. Kallenbach and Mr. Polak, thanks were expressed for the reception accorded them. His release, he added, was a surprise, and only when he was out of the prison did he learn that his release was due to a recommendation of the members of the Commission.

We feel that our release throws a great responsibility upon our shoulders, and, on learning how the Commission is constituted, I feel that the fundamental fraud is that the Indian community was not consulted as to the nomination of the members. The spirit of the whole passive resistance struggle since 1907 has been that, in matters affecting the community, the Government should consult its opinion and sentiments. This the Government, apparently, have not done regarding the Commission, and therefore[1] there is objection to its nomination of itself.

With reference to Mr. Esselen and Col. Wylie, Mr. Gandhi said he had the pleasantest recollections of both gentlemen, and had not the slightest doubt that they would discharge their duties on the Commission conscientiously, but he could not credit them with the superhuman qualities of divesting themselves of their anti-Asiatic views, which they were known to so profoundly hold. Now that they had been nominated members of the Commission, he would not object to their appointment, but it was due to the Indian community, he added, that the influence they might have on the findings should be counter-balanced by appointments from the European nationality known to possess no anti-Asiatic bias.

Unless the Government accede to this reasonable request, it is not possible for us to accept this Commission or assist its deliberations. Unless the submission be accepted, we have decided not to give any evidence before them, and we shall resume activities in order to seek re-arrest and re-imprisonment.

The Natal Mercury, 22-12-1913

[1] The original has "thereto".

276. SPEECH AT MASS MEETING[1]

[DURBAN
December 21, 1913]

Mr. Gandhi was received with cheers on rising and a bunch of flowers was placed in his hand by one of those near the platform. He mentioned that he would have preferred to speak first in one of the Indian tongues, but in the presence of Messrs Polak and Kallenbach, his fellow-convicts, feelings of gratitude compelled him to speak first in the tongue they knew. They would notice he had changed his dress from that he had formerly adopted for the last 20 years, and he had decided on the change when he heard of the shooting of their fellow-countrymen. No matter whether the shooting was found to be justified or not, the fact was that they were shot, and those bullets shot him (Mr. Gandhi) through the heart also. He felt how glorious it would have been if one of those bullets had struck him also, because might he not be a murderer himself, by having participated in that event by having advised Indians to strike? His conscience cleared him from this guilt of murder, but he felt he should adopt mourning for those Indians as a humble example to his fellow countrymen. He felt that he should go into mourning at least for a period, which should be co-extensive with the end of that struggle, and that he should accept some mourning not only inwardly, but outwardly as well, as a humble example to his fellow-countrymen, so that he could tell them that it was necessary for them to show by their conduct and outward appearance that they were in mourning. He was not prepared himself to accept the European mourning dress for this purpose, and, with some modification in deference to the feelings of his European friends, he had adopted the dress similar to that of an indentured Indian. He asked his fellow-countrymen to adopt some sign of mourning to show to the world that they were mourning, and further to adopt some inward observance also. And perhaps he might tell them what his inward mourning was—to restrict himself to one meal a day. They had been released, he continued, not on any condition, but they knew that they were released on the recommendation of a Commission appointed by the Government, in order that every facility might be given not only to them, but to the Indian community, to bring before the Commission any evidence that community might have in its possession. He thought that a right and proper thing that the Government had appointed a Commission, but he thought the Commission was open to the gravest objection from the Indian standpoint; and he was there to tender his humble advice to

[1] Gandhiji addressed a mass meeting held under the auspices of the Natal Indian Association, attended by about six to seven thousand persons including some prominent Europeans. Abdul Kadir presided.

them that it was impossible to accept the Commission in a form in which the Indians had no voice. They were fighting for so many grievances, and the underlying spirit of the struggle was to obtain full recognition on the part of the Government of the right of consultation in anything which appertained to Indian interests. Unless the Government was prepared to condescend to that extent, unless they were prepared to ascertain and respect the Indian sentiments, it was not possible for Indians, as loyal but manly citizens of the Empire, to render obedience to their Commissions or laws which they might have passed over their heads. This was one of the serious fundamental objections. The other objection was that it was a partisan Commission; therefore, the Indians wanted their own partisans on it. This they might not get, but they at least wanted impartial men, who had not expressed opinions hostile to their interests, but gentlemen who would be able to bring to the deliberations of the Commission an open, just and impartial mind. (Applause.) He considered that Mr. Esselen and Mr. Wylie, honourable gentlemen as they were, could not possibly bring open minds to bear on the inquiry, for the simple reason that they had their own human limitations and could not divest themselves of their anti Asiatic views which they had expressed times without number. If the Government appointed the Indians' nominees, and thus honoured their sentiments, and granted a release for the prisoners now in gaol, he thought it would be possible for them to assist the Government, and therefore, the Empire, and bring, perhaps, this crisis to an end without further suffering.

But it might be that they might have to undergo further suffering. It might be that their sins were so great that they might have to do still further penance.

Therefore, I hope you will hold yourselves in readiness to respond to the call the Government may make by declining our just and reasonable requests, and then, to again force the pace by again undergoing still greater purifying suffering, until at last the Government may order the military to riddle us also with their bullets. My friends, are you prepared for this? (Voices: "Yes.") Are you prepared to share the fate of those of our countrymen whom the cold stone is resting upon today? Are you prepared to do this? (Cries of "Yes.") Then, if the Government does not grant our request, this is the proposition I wish to place before you this morning: That all of us, on the first day of the New Year, should be ready again to suffer battle, again to suffer imprisonment and march out. (Applause.) That is the only process of purification and will be a substantial mourning both inwardly and outwardly which will bear justification before our

God. That is the advice we give to our free and indentured countrymen—to strike, and even though this may mean death to them, I am sure it will be justified.

But if they accepted the quiet life, he went on, not only would the wrath of God descend upon them, but they would incur the disgrace of the whole of that portion of the European world forming the British Empire. (Applause.) He hoped that every man, woman, and grown-up child would hold themselves in readiness to do this. He hoped they would not consider self, that they would not consider their salaries, trades, or even families, their own bodies in the struggle which was to his mind a struggle for human liberty, and therefore, a struggle for the religion to which they might respectively belong. It was essentially a religious struggle—(hear, hear)—as any struggle involving assertion and freedom of their conscience must be a religious struggle. He therefore hoped they would hold themselves in readiness to respond to the call and not listen to the advice of those who wavered, nor listen to those who asked them to wait or to those who might ask them to refrain from the battle. The struggle was one involving quite a clear issue, and an incredibly simple one.

Do not listen to anyone, but obey your own conscience and go forward without thinking. Now is the time for thinking, and having made up your minds, stick to it, even unto death.[1]

THE RESOLUTIONS[2]

(1) This mass meeting of British Indians of Natal, held under the auspices of the Natal Indian Association, hereby resolves that the community may not, in honour, give evidence before the Commission recently appointed by the Government because the community has not been consulted as to the choice of the members of the Commission, and because it does not include any members specially representing the community, whose interests are to be vitally affected by the finding of the Commission.

(2) This meeting respectfully urges the Government to add to the membership the Hon. Mr. W. P. Schreiner and the Hon. Sir James Rose-Innes, or such other eminent members of the European race residing in South Africa whose nomination would be acceptable to the South African Indian community.

[1] The meeting was then addressed by Kallenbach, Polak, Ritch and Rev. Bailie, Superintendent of the Indian Mission, Natal.

[2] The resolutions adopted were presumably drafted by Gandhiji.

(3) This mass meeting, in the event of the Government's accepting the Indian view that the personnel of the Commission should be added to for the purpose of securing adequate representation of all interests involved in its inquiry, also requests the immediate discharge of all the passive resistance prisoners presently in gaol, and, on its part, the Indian community undertakes to suspend passive resistance until the publication of the findings of the Commission. In the unfortunate event, however, of the Government's refusal to comply with its respectful requests, the community will be obliged at once to prosecute the struggle with renewed vigour and determination.

The Natal Mercury, 22-12-1913

277. LETTER TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR[1]

[DURBAN
December 21, 1913]

SIR,

We understand from the papers that our release from imprisonment, before the natural period of the respective terms to which we were sentenced, was due to the recommendation of the members of the Commission which has been recently appointed to investigate the causes that led up to the strike of indentured and other Indians in Natal and other Indian matters. We fully appreciate the reasons which moved the Commissioners to make the recommendation, and the Government's acceptance thereof, and we are desirous of helping the Commission to investigate the causes. We beg to express our gratefulness for the appointment of a Commission for the purpose above indicated, but we are reluctantly obliged to inform the Government that we shall be unable to render the assistance which it is in our power to do, unless the objections presently to be set forth are met by the Government. We have ascertained that the Indian community of South Africa has not been given the opportunity of

[1] A gist of this letter appears in *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XLVlI.

making any nomination on its behalf to the membership of the Commission. We may point out that the spirit of the passive resistance struggle, ever since its commencement in 1907, has been to secure a recognition from the Government of the fact that, in matters touching the community, it is necessary to consult and respect its wishes and sentiments before it can be expected to give willing obedience to or acceptance of laws or matters affecting the vital interests of the community. We feel that it was a grave omission on the part of the Government, in selecting the Commissioners, not to have given an opportunity to the Indian community of submitting for appointment on the Commission two names of gentlemen of known South African standing who, in its opinion, could have guarded and specially represented its interests. This, in our humble opinion, is a fatal and fundamental objection to the acceptance by the Indian community of the Commission.

Moreover, we observe that the appointment of Mr. Ewald Esselen, K.C., and Col. Wylie shows that the Government, for reasons best known to itself, intended to give the commission a partisan character, for it is within our knowledge that Mr. Esselen has expressed anti-Asiatic views in very strong language, and that Col. Wylie has not only done likewise, but has even recently given his opinion that the £3 tax levied on ex-indentured Indians should be retained. Again, the acts of the military in connection with the strike will be before the Commission for investigation. We hold that Col. Wylie, by reason of his prominent connection with the military, is naturally an interested party. Against Mr. Esselen and Col. Wylie, as South African statesmen, we can have nothing to say. The first undersigned has pleasant recollections of his professional connection with both Mr. Esselen and Col. Wylie; and of Col. Wylie when he served under him during the late Zulu rebellion as sergeant-major in charge of the Indian Volunteer Ambulance Corps, that was formed,[1] and whose services were offered during that crisis to the Government; and we have no doubt that, in so far as they could, they would endeavour to sit as impartial judges on the Commission, but we cannot help fearing that they share the common human failing of not being

[1] *Vide* "Indian Ambulance Corps in Natal", 14-3-1900.

able to divest themselves entirely of their bias. Much, however, as we regret the appointment on the Commission of these gentlemen, we do not propose to raise any objection to their nomination; but, in order to counter-balance the effect that their bias may have on the finding of the Commission, we submit that it is absolutely necessary to appoint gentlemen of South African standing, known to possess no anti-Asiatic bias, on the Commission, and, as such, we venture to suggest the names of the Hon. Sir James Rose-Innes and the Hon. W. P. Schreiner.

Immediately on our release, without a moment's delay, we began to ascertain the feeling of the Indian community, and, to our agreeable surprise, we found that the community had already anticipated what would undoubtedly have been our humble advice to it, that it had already sent strong protests to the Government against the nominations, and had submitted to the Government the names mentioned above. We found, too, that by way of further protest, 36 passive resisters, of whom five were women, had crossed the Volksrust border from Natal, and had been arrested and received imprisonment. In their statement to the Court, we understand, they informed the presiding Magistrate that their object in courting arrest was to lodge a respectful protest against the partisan character which had been given to the Commission, and we found further that two other parties of passive resisters had already left for Volksrust for the same purpose.

Our position, therefore, was easy and clear. A mass meeting was called to-day by the Natal Indian Association. We were invited to attend that meeting, and all that we had to do was to tender our advice that the protest that had already been sent should be ratified by that meeting, and this, we are glad to be able to say, was done. We hope and pray that the Government will be pleased to accede to the submission and nominate on the Commission the gentlemen whose names have been proposed by the meeting.

If the nomination is accepted, we beg to state that, before we can tender our evidence to the Commission and advise the community to offer the overwhelming evidence which is in its possession, it will be necessary to release the passive resisters who are presently undergoing imprisonment, whether in the ordinary gaols or in mining compounds

which have been turned into gaols. We hope that the Government will recognize the force of this prayer, for it would ill become us to remain free whilst those who have courted imprisonment partly through our advice are still under incarceration, and it would be hardly possible for us to advise other passive resisters to refrain, pending the inquiry by the Commission, from courting imprisonment whilst their brethren and sisters are suffering the hardships of gaol life.

If the additional appointments suggested above are made, and if our request as to the release of the passive resistance prisoners is accepted, we would advise the community to suspend passive resistance pending the Commission's finding. Further, if we are enabled by the Government's accepting our suggestions to tender evidence before the Commission, we and other members of the community will have to have full and free permission to enter the different estates and collieries where Indians are employed, in order to collect evidence, and for the purpose of advising the people to continue to work under their contracts, pending the investigation.

We take it that the Commission has sufficient powers to investigate all the grievances that have caused the revival of passive resistance as set forth in Mr. Gokhale's letter, and to make its recommendations to the Government.

Finally, we beg to place on record the advice that we have tendered to the community, that, whilst the finding of the Commission—enlarged in the manner suggested—will finally settle the dispute as to the allegations of ill-treatment of workers and others and the acts of the military, its recommendations on the grievances, whose redress is being sought, will not be accepted by the community in derogation of its demands. If, unfortunately, the Government does not see its way to accept our prayer, there will be no course left open to us but to seek re-imprisonment. We, as passive resisters, can never rest still, having been discharged before the termination of our terms of imprisonment.

We beg to reiterate the declaration we have often made that, as passive resisters, we countenance no violence, even by way of retaliation, on the part of those who take part in the movement, whether as strikers or otherwise. We have repeatedly given effective advice, which has been acted upon, to the effect that passive resisters must submit to

personal violence in the course of their passive resistance, even though such violence may entail death. It becomes necessary for us to re-declare the above view, as after our incarceration, we observe that it has been alleged that, on some estates, strikers used violence.

The last two undersigned, as Europeans, desire to assure the Government that, in throwing in their lot with their fellow–South African Indian subjects, they have but rendered service to the State and to their fellow-Europeans. They have done so after very careful investigation, and their intimate experience of Indians of every grade has enabled them to see that the grievances of which the Indian community is seeking redress are grievances which are keenly felt by it, and for whose redress it has patiently waited for an unduly long time. It is because we firmly believe that to delay in granting the demands of the Indian community endangers the reputation of the Europeans of South Africa as members of a civilized race worthy of self-government, that we have so fully identified ourselves with their cause, and we ask the Government during this season, which for it means, or ought to mean, peace for all living in South Africa, to give the community an earnest of its desire to redress its legitimate grievances by accepting this prayer.

We have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servants,

M. K. GANDHI

H. S. L. POLAK

H. KALLENBACH

[PS.]

May we request an early reply, as our dispositions are to be made by New Year's Day, in the event of an unfavourable reply.[1]

Indian Opinion, 24-12-1913

[1] In his letter of December 24, the Minister Of the Interior rejected Gandhiji's terms. The Governor-General's despatches of December 22 and 23 to the Colonial Office furnish the Union Government's reactions to Gandhiji's demands. *Vide* "Governor-General's Cable to Colonial Office", 1-12-1913.

278. SPEECH AT MARITZBURG MEETING[1]

MARITZBURG,

[*December 22, 1913*]

Mr. Gandhi rather rebuked the decorators, urging that the present was rather a time for mourning for the blood of their fellow-countrymen which had been spilt, rather than for receptions and rejoicings. He thanked them, however, for their kindness. He urged the men to show their sympathy by discarding the useof tobacco, betel-leaves, and other luxuries, and felt that the women might lay aside their fine dresses and jewels in this time of mourning.[2]

The Natal Mercury, 23-12-1913

279. SPEECH ON KASTURBA GANDHI'S RELEASE

MARITZBURG,

[*December 22, 1913*]

This is a very sad time for us. We can have no joy in gatherings and celebrations. All the same, I give thanks to you, on behalf of my wife and the other ladies, for the welcome you have accorded them. My brethren have lost their lives, killed by bullets, and I feel extremely sad, at a time like this, in taking part in this reception even to the extent that I have done. In gaol, I was free from all anxieties. This crying[3] is perfectly suggestive of our mourning. My Indian brothers and sisters can at this time express their sincere sympathy with the helpless widows and orphans by themselves observing mourning in various ways. Men can leave off tobacco, betel-leaves

[1] On the release of Kasturba Gandhi, Mrs. Chhaganlal Gandhi, Mrs. Manilal Doctor, Mrs. Maganlal Gandhi and Solomon Royeppen from Maritzburg Gaol, a procession was taken out which terminated in a reception meeting. Gandhiji addressed the audience on behalf of the released passive resisters. For a report of his speech in Gujarati, *vide* the following item.

[2] Speeches were also made by Kallenbach, L. H. Greene and Mrs. Polak. Shortly after, a mass meeting was held.

[3] Gandhiji was referring to a weeping child in the audience.

and betel-nut; women may lay aside ornaments and fine dresses.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 24-12-1913

280. SPEECH AT MARITZBURG MASS MEETING

MARITZBURG,
[*December 22, 1913*]

[Gandhiji] explained the resolutions passed at the Durban mass meeting on Sunday. Passive resistance, he said, was a harmless search for truth, and he appealed to every Indian present to be prepared to die, if need be, for the truth.[1]

The Natal Mercury, 23-12-1913

281. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE[2]

DURBAN,
December 22, 1913

HON'BLE GOKHALE
SERVINDIA
POONA CITY

WE WERE DISCHARGED UNCONDITIONALLY THURSDAY ON RECOMMENDATION COMMISSION STOP HAVE ADDRESSED JOINT

[1] P. K. Naidoo then moved the resolution endorsing the resolutions passed at the Durban mass meeting, which was passed.

[2] Gokhale had received Reuter's summary of a report of Gandhiji's interview to *The Natal Mercury, vide* "Interview to the Natal Mercury", 20-12-1913. The following cable was received from Gokhale at 10 p.m. on December 21: "Reuter cables substance your interview. After Solomon's speech fear boycotting inquiry will be grave mistake, alienating sympathy Government of India and many friends England. Engage best counsel and yourself Polak assist offering evidence. Inquiry does not concern general grievances passive resisters but it is most important, opportunity offered producing evidence support allegations cruelties should not be refused. I venture suggest draw up protest against Esselen and Wylie, explaining fully objection to both and appear under protest."

LETTER[1] GOVERNMENT INFORMING UNABLE ASSIST COMMISSION BY EVIDENCE UNLESS COMMUNITY RIGHT TO BE CONSULTED MATTERS AFFECTING IT RECOGNIZED AND PARTISAN CHARACTER COMMISSION COUNTER-BALANCED BY APPOINTMENT SCHREINER APPELLATE JUDGE ROSE-INNES OR OTHERS EQUALLY IM-PARTIAL APPROVED BY COMMUNITY AND UNLESS NEARLY FOUR THOUSAND PASSIVE RESISTANCE PRISONERS IN ORDINARY AND MINE GAOLS RELEASED. WE THEN UNDERTAKING ADVISE SUSPEND PASSIVE RESISTANCE PENDING FINDING COMMISSION STOP HAVE ALSO STATED SCOPE INQUIRY SHOULD INCLUDE EXAMINATION ALL GRIEVANCES AND THAT WHILST FINDING ON ALL ALLEGATIONS BRUTALITY AND ACTS MILITARY WILL FINALLY SETTLE CONTROVERSY THEREON. ANY FINDING ON GRIEVANCES IF DEROGATORY PASSIVE RESISTERS DEMANDS SET FORTH CACHALIA'S LETTER[2] SEPTEMBER WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED BY COMMUNITY. HAVE FURTHER INFORMED GOVERNMENT THAT IF PRAYER REJECTED WE SHALL SEEK REARREST AND ADVISE STILL MORE RIGOROUS PROSECUTION CAMPAIGN STOP MASS MEETING TO-DAY ATTENDED ABOUT SIX THOUSAND CONFIRMED ABOVE ADVICE PASSED RESOLUTIONS ACCLAMATIONS STOPTRANSVAAL OTHER CENTRES UNANIMOUS STOP MEETING IN-FORMED IN EVENT UNFAVOURABLE REPLY PEOPLE MUST HOLD READINESS MARCH FOOT STARVATION RATIONS FROM DURBAN TO PRETORIA SEEKING REARREST. ANTICIPATE TAXING IN THOUSANDS EN ROUTE STOP MEETING WARNED EXPECT BULLETS AND TOOK DECLARATIONS READINESS UNDER OATH STOP CHURCH COUNSELS, INFLUENTIAL INDIVIDUAL EUROPEANS HAVE SUPPORTED REJECTION PRESENT COMMISSION STOP DUR-ING TRAVEL FROM PRETORIA TO DURBAN WE MET REPRE-SENTATIVE INDIANS ALL PRINCIPAL STATIONS. ENTHUSIASM GREAT AND DISAPPROVAL PRESENT COMMISSION UNIVERSAL STOP DISCOVERED OUR RELEASE PEOPLE LARGE NUMBERS HAD SHOWN UNEXPECTED POWERS ENDURANCE SUFFERINGS. WE WERE STAGGERED UNLOOKED FOR ABILITY INDENTURED INDIANS

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Minister of Interior", 21-12-1913.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary for Interior", 12-9-1913.

WITHOUT EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP ACTING PERFECT COOPERATION DISCIPLINE DETERMINATION STOP ASK INDIANS IMMEDIATE VIGOROUS CO-OPERATION.[1]

GANDHI
KALLENBACH
POLAK

Servants of India Society

282. LETTER TO "THE NATAL ADVERTISER"[2]

[After *December 22, 1913*][3]

Having known most of these passive resisters for a number of years and come into close contact with them, I can say that they are not the men to make baseless allegations. Mr. Rustomjee, an old and respected resident of South Africa, was also in this batch. He took a leading part in the previous campaigns and had experience of the gaols in Volksrust, Heidelberg, Diepkloof and Johannesburg. This time, on being sentenced at Volksrust, he was brought to the Pietermaritzburg Gaol and later removed to the Durban Gaol. He had a taste of the Maritzburg Gaol, but his experience in the Durban Gaol, he tells me, was the worst.

Mr. Rustomjee declares, and he is supported by other passive resisters, that the Native warders used to assault them, with no fear of

[1] To this cable Gokhale replied the next day: "Since release unconditional, most important Polak should proceed England immediately with fullest information regarding whole position and occurrences. Absolutely essential keep Press England well-informed. Parliament opening 2nd February. Ramsay MacDonald taking up question specially system indenture and methods adopted suppress strike." *Vide* also "Cable to G. K. Gokhale", 31-12-1913.

[2] *The Natal Advertiser* did not publish this letter on the ground that a Commission of Inquiry had been appointed. Later, it was translated into Gujarati for the readers of *Indian Opinion*. The original is not available. This is an English rendering.

[3] Parsee Rustomjee and other passive resisters referred to in the letter were released on December 22, 1913.

consequences. One, Mr. P. K. Desai, was assaulted so violently that the blow sent him reeling to the ground and from there he was dragged to his cell. The treatment of the injuries kept him in the hospital for eleven days. Mr. Rustomjee and his fellow-prisoners had to resort to a fast to secure him [permission to wear] his shirt and sacred thread. A good Parsi will not move a single step in the absence of these two things. Mr. Rustomjee was also assaulted twice by Native warders. The matter was brought to the notice of the superintendent, but to no purpose. A youngster was beaten for standing out of line.

On one occasion, several passive resisters went on a fast to register a strong protest against such treatment. At the end of four days of complete fasting, the boy referred to above was forcibly fed while he kept shrieking in protest all the time. Even the prison doctor in charge is reported to have condemned this display of barbarism and stated that he did not accept responsibility for the forcible feeding. The fact that the prisoner was a vegetarian was ignored: the milk which was fed to him was mixed with eggs.

The prisoners were supplied dirty clothes which could be a menace to their health. The food was poor and was served, half-cooked, in rusted tin bowls, and the prisoners report that in consequence many of them got dysentery. Some are troubled by it even now in gaol. Cockroaches and insects were found in the food, and, when the matter was reported to the officer, his reply was that a prison was no hotel and that even in a hotel one found insects in food.

Most of the passive resisters were men of good education. Though well used to reading, they were not given books to read from the prison libraries nor permitted to read any of their own.

Despite protests, all the gaol officers, from the highest to the lowest, used to address the passive resisters as “coolies”. The more they resented this, the more obstinate the officers became. They [also] report that the present doctor pays no attention to their health. During these three months, the magistrate visited the gaol only once. He did not listen to the complaints of the prisoners. Indian prisoners are generally allowed sandals and socks. In this gaol most of them did not get these; even women were not given any. Quite often the prisoners were supplied only one blanket each, and that a torn one. They were

refused permission to see their lawyers and were not even allowed to write to the Director of Prisons.

All this is but a brief summary of the tales of suffering I have heard from my countrymen. The affidavits to be submitted to the Government on this matter are under preparation. This is, however, quite a serious matter and calls for public attention. There is no exaggeration whatever in what I am reporting and you are free to show this to the officers concerned before publishing it. Mr. Rustomjee and his fellow-prisoners ask for nothing but a full, fearless, independent and impartial discussion, and demand an lnquiry.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 7-1-1914

283. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE

DURBAN,
December 23, 1913

SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
POONA

BEEN MARITZBURG WHICH AT MASS MEETING ENDORSED YESTERDAY'S DURBAN RESOLUTIONS. IMPOSSIBLE ACCEPT COMMISSION UNLESS SUGGESTION ADDING TO COMMISSION, RELEASE PRISONERS ACCEPTED. PEOPLE EARNEST ENTHUSIASTIC. THEY WILL NOT LISTEN ADVICE ACCEPTANCE COMMISSION EXCEPT ON ABOVE CONDITIONS. THEY ARE DESPERATE, THOROUGHLY DISTRUST GOVERNMENT. COMMISSION SEEMS INCLUDE EXAMINATION GENERAL GRIEVANCES. ANYWAY OUR LETTER ASSUMES INCLUSION SUCH EXAMINATION AND ASKS FOR IT IF OUR INTERPRETATION INCORRECT. SIXTEEN PIONEER PASSIVE RESISTERS INCLUDING RUSTOMJEE FOUR LADIES DISCHARGED EXPIRATION SENTENCES. RUSTOMJEE OTHERS WHO ARE AMONG MOST RESPECTABLE MEMBERS COMMUNITY STATE PRISON TREATMENT BARBAROUS, CRUEL. RUSTOMJEE WHO HAS EXPERIENCE MANY PRISONS DURING PREVIOUS LONG IMPRISONMENTS SAYS

PRESENT TREATMENT DURBAN PRISON UNPARALLELED INCRUELTY. MAGISTRATE INDIFFERENT RARELY VISITS PRISON RECEIVE COMPLAINTS, GOVERNOR ALMOST UNAPPROACHABLE. BEFORE HUNGER STRIKE, WARDERS RUDE, RUFFIANLY STUDIOUSLY INSULTING. THEY DECLINE TAKE COMPLAINTS, NATIVE WARDERS CRUEL, UNWARRANTABLY THRASH PASSIVE RESISTERS WITH IMPUNITY. PRAGJI DESAI, WHOM YOU KNOW, WAS WITHOUT CAUSE ROUGHLY ASSAULTED MAKING HIM FALL, WAS THEN DRAGGED TO CELL LYING IN AGONY CONSIDERABLE TIME BEFORE RECEIVING ATTENTION AND REQUIRED ELEVEN DAYS, HOSPITAL TREATMENT. PHOENIX SCHOOL STUDENT SIXTEEN YEARS ROUGHLY ASSAULTED. RUSTOMJEE, MANILAL GANDHI OTHERS ALL KNOWN TO YOU KICKED, ROUGHLY HANDLED, INSULTED, CALLED COOLIES IN SPITE REPEATED PROTESTS MANY NOT RECEIVED SANDALS, SOCKS, SOME DEPRIVED SANDALS ON ASKING SOCKS. DIRTY UN-WASHED GAOL CLOTHING ISSUED. PROTESTS AGAINST SUCH DIRTY DANGEROUSLY INSANITARY HABIT UNHEEDED ANDJEERED AT. GAOL LIBRARY BOOKS NOT ISSUED, PREVENTED FROM TAKING THEIR OWN. RUSTY DISHES, RUSTY PANNIKINS CONTINUOUSLY ISSUED. FOOD INFERIOR QUALITY, GHEE ADULTERATED. OFTEN UNDER-COOKED BEANS ISSUED CAUSING DYSENTERY, FROM WHICH SOME LADIES WHO ARE STILL IN DURBAN GAOL ARE SUFFERING. COCKROACHES, MAGGOTS FOUND IN FOOD, YET FOOD NOT REPLACED. BY WAY PROTEST AGAINST SUCH ILL-TREATMENT MANY HUNGER STRUCK. FAST LASTED FOUR DAYS. FOURTH DAY ONE OF THEM VEGETARIAN BY RELIGION FORCIBLY FED WITH MILK AND EGGS. STRIKE DISSOLVED BY GAOLER PROMISING RELIEF WHICH NEVER CAME. DURING STRIKE PRISONERS . ASKED SEE GOVERNOR WHO WAS NOT SEEN TILL AFTER TWENTY FOUR HOURS. THEY HAD ALSO HUNGER STRIKE IN MARITZ-BURG FOR THREE DAYS BEFORE RATIONING GHEE WAS IS-SUED. RUSTOMJEE'S STATEMENT[1] OF GRIEVANCES HAS CREATED SENSATION. DISCHARGED PASSIVE RESISTERS SHOW FIXED

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

DETERMINATION COURT RE-ARREST IMMEDIATELY, IF NECESSARY. PREPARING AFFIDAVITS SUBMISSION GOVERNMENT. REQUESTING INQUIRY.[1]

GANDHI

Servants of India Society

284. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE[2]

DURBAN,
December 23, 1913

SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
POONA

WE NEVER WENT PRETORIA SEE MINISTERS STOP UNLESS PROMPTEST AGITATION INDIAN SUPPORTING OUR DEMANDS GOVERNMENT ACCEDING UNLIKELY STOP VICEROY MISAPPREHENDS SITUATION STOP INSPIRED TELEGRAM[3] PUBLISHED TODAY SAYS COMMISSION NOT APPOINTED CONCILIATE LOCAL INDIANS; BUT ONLY IMPERIAL INDIAN GOVERNMENTS. THAT AGITATION FICTITIOUS CARRIED ON AT DICTATION EXTREMISTS INDIA PURPOSE EMBARRASSING INDIAN GOVERNMENT STOP GREAT EFFORTS BEING MADE BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT DISCREDIT AGITATION WHICH IS ASSUMING ALMOST UNCONTROLLABLE PROPORTIONS. MY FIRM CONVICTION THAT MASS

[1] An abstract of this cable was released to the Press and appeared in *lndian Opinion*, 29-10-1913.

[2] This was sent in reply to two cables from Gokhale: The first, received at 9 A.M., read: "Powerful attempts here separate Viceroy from us. These greatly assisted by Reuter's partisan cables. Cannot counteract unless you reply promptly. Cable urgent some length your objection Esselen Wylie mentioning specific instances anti-Indian conduct." The second, which reached Durban two hours later, said: "Your last evening's cable just received. Reuter reported you had proceeded Pretoria see Ministers. Cable what happened. Cable also what probability Government conceding demands Sunday meeting. Viceroy feels strongly inquiry secured after great efforts. Desirable satisfy him your reasons boycotting good. Cable therefore urgent objections Esselen Wylie. Must issue statement today. Country anxiously waiting."

[3] *Vide* the following item.

PEOPLE SO INDIGNANT THAT IF ATTEMPT WERE MADE ASK THEM ACCEPT PRESENT COMMISSION, THEY WOULD KILL LEADERS. STRONG PROTESTS WERE LODGED WITH GOVERNMENT FROM MOST CENTRES BEFORE OUR DISCHARGE AND MANY DEMANDED NOT ADDITION BUT SUBSTITUTION ESSELEN WYLIE. IT REQUIRED CONSIDERABLE TACT CALMNESS INDUCE PEOPLE ACCEPT ESSELEN WYLIE EVEN IF OUR NOMINEES APPOINTED. ESSENCE STRUGGLE RECOGNITION RIGHT CONSULTATION VITAL MATTERS. IF RIGHT WAIVED AT THIS CRITICAL STAGE, PASSIVE RESISTANCE DIES. ESSELEN SPOKE MEYLER MEMBER ASSEMBLY PRIVATELY RECENTLY MOST OFFENSIVELY AGAINST INDIANS. MEYLER PUBLICLY PROTESTED APPOINTMENT ESSELEN HAS DECLARED ON PUBLIC PLATFORMS EMPHATICALLY ANTI-ASIATIC VIEWS. IN REALITY HE IS SO INTIMATELY RELATED POLITICALLY UNION MINISTERS THAT HE MAY BE DESCRIBED AS NON-OFFICIAL MEMBER MINISTRY. WYLIE DURING AGITATION HAS SAID TAX OUGHT NOT BE REPEALED. IS COLONEL DEFENCE FORCE WHOSE ACTS SUBJECT INQUIRY. LEGAL ADVISER MANY ESTATE-OWNERS AND ADMITTEDLY ANTI-ASIATIC SINCE EIGHTEEN NINETY-SIX, WHEN ADVISED PEOPLE SINK SHIPS[1] BRINGING INDEPENDENT INDIANS STOP EVEN IF WE MUST BOYCOTT COMMISSION, WE CAN PRINT INDIAN EVIDENCE SUPPORTING CHARGES STOP IT IS PATENT PRESENT COMMISSION DESIGNED NOT GRANT RELIEF BUT GAIN TIME HOODWINK PUBLIC.

GANDHI

Servants of India Society

[1] These were s.s. *Courland* and S. S. *Naderi*: for details of the anti-Indian demonstration led, among others, by Col. Wylie, *vide* "Memorial to Secretary of state for the colonies", 15-3-1897.

285. CABLE TO LORD AMPTHILL

DURBAN,
December 23, 1913

LORD AMPTHILL

INSPIRED TELEGRAM PUBLISHED TODAY SAYS COMMISSION NOT APPOINTED CONCILIATE LOCAL INDIANS BUT ONLY IMPERIAL INDIAN GOVERNMENTS THAT AGITATION FICTITIOUS CARRIED ON AT DICTATION EXTREMISTS INDIA PURPOSE EMBARRASSING INDIAN GOVERNMENT. GREAT EFFORTS BEING MADE BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT DISCREDIT AGITATION WHICH ASSUMING UNCONTROLLABLE PROPORTIONS. MASS PEOPLE SO INDIGNANT THAT IF ATTEMPT MADE ADVISE ACCEPTANCE PRESENT COMMISSION THEY WOULD KILL LEADERS. STRONG PROTESTS LODGED GOVERNMENT FROM MOST CENTRES BEFORE OUR DISCHARGE. GREATEST DIFFICULTY EXPERIENCED INDUCE ACCEPTANCE PEOPLE PRINCIPLES ADDITIONAL MEMBERS INSTEAD OF SUBSTITUTION. ESSENCE STRUGGLE RECOGNITION RIGHT CONSULTATION VITAL MATTERS. IF RIGHT WAIVED THIS CRITICAL STAGE PASSIVE RESISTANCE DIES STOP UNLESS PROMPTEST AGITATION ENGLAND SUPPORTING OUR DEMANDS UNLIKELY GOVERNMENT ACCEDING RESULTING UNTOLD MISERY HARDSHIPS DEATH.

GANDHI
POLAK
RITCH
KALLENBACH

Colonial Office Records: 551/52

286. CABLE TO LORD AMPTHILL[1]

[DURBAN,
December 23, 1913][2]

VEREENIGING INDIANS AT PUBLIC MEETING ASSOCIATED THEMSELVES WITH ACTION BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION DETERMINED PASSIVE RESISTANCE AND CONGRATULATED BRAVE BROTHERS AND SISTERS NOW SUFFERING IMPRISONMENT INDIA'S HONOUR. TRUST UNION GOVERNMENT WILL GRANT RELIEF AND ENGLAND AND INDIA WILL HELP.

ASWATH
CHAIRMAN

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5902

287. LETTER TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"

110, FIELD STREET,
DURBAN,
December 23, 1913

SIR,

I venture to suggest that, in your editorial this morning on the resolutions passed at the mass meeting on Sunday and upon the letter addressed to the Government by my colleagues and myself, you have taken up an attitude that is hardly calculated to serve the Empire. You see the mote in our eye, but you miss the beam in that of the Government. I do not admit that the tone adopted by the speakers at the mass meeting was aggressive or offensive, unless the mere assertion of rights be so considered. In my humble opinion, the

[1] A copy of this was sent to *Immortal*, Bombay.
[2] The draft of the cable is undated. It is likely that it was drafted about the same time as the preceding item; it is not known whether it was actually sent.

Government not only refuse to do justice, to which you consider we are entitled, but the manner of denying it is also offensive and contemptuous in the highest degree. Take the inspired telegram published this morning. According to it, the Commission has been appointed, not to conciliate us —we are beneath notice—but to conciliate the Imperial and Indian Governments. We are accused of being tools in the hands of the Indian extremists, and of nursing a fictitious agitation. Do you think that, if you were in our place, you would, under any circumstances whatever, take advantage of a seemingly relieving measure? I submit that if we have a grain of self-respect left in us, it is impossible for us, after learning the view of the Government—if the telegram does represent it—to recede an inch from the position which we have taken up. Peace for us is unattainable until we dislodge the Government from the attitude of contemptuous disregard of our sentiments.

In asking us to revise our prayer, you are asking us to surrender a principle,. namely, that of the right to be consulted in matters vitally affecting us, the very thing for which we have been fighting, and now dying; whereas the Government, if they granted our prayer, would be only giving what we are entitled to, and what would justify them in the estimation of the civilized world.

You say that by its present attitude the Indian community is alienating the sympathy of its South African friends. This warning has been given to the community on many an occasion, and yet the truth of its cause has each time succeeded, not only in retaining, but in increasing it. It may be that we might, this time, have relied once too often upon its retention. If so, I should be very sorry. I value that sympathy, but I value the cause more, and if, in prosecuting it, we must forfeit the former, we must be content for the time being, and believe in the ultimate triumph of truth, which is on our side.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 24-12-1913

288. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE

DURBAN,
December 24, 1913

GOKHALE
SERVINDIA
POONA CITY

UNDERSTAND YOUR FEELING[1] STOP WOULD GIVE MY LIFE IF THAT MIGHT HELP STOP THIS STRUGGLE INDEPENDENT VICE ROY, IMPERIAL MINISTERS ANY TEMPORAL POWER. SOLEMN DECLARATION GOD'S NAME SUNDAY IRREVOCABLE STOP IF PEOPLE'S STRENGTH PERSISTS MOST ADVERSE CIRCUMSTANCES, IT WILL ONLY ACCELERATE ATTAINMENT JUSTICE, WHICH MUST BE RENDERED SOONER LATER STOP MY FIRM CONVICTION ANY ONE OF US ESPECIALLY I ADVISING PEOPLE NOW ACCEPT COMMISSION WITHOUT ADDITION WOULD BE VERY JUSTIFIABLY KILLED STOP QUESTION ASKED BEFORE ADMINISTRATION OATH, WHETHER I WOULD REVISE ADVICE IF YOU OR VICEROY URGED US ABANDON CONTENTION, I SAID NO HUMAN BEING COULD INDUCE ALTERATION DECLARATION ONCE SOLEMNLY MADE STOP FEEL WE ARE GAINING GROUND HERE; BUT WHETHER OR NOT AND WHETHER AFTER VICEROY'S REPUDIATION WE RETAIN OR LOSE HOLD ON MASSES STRUGGLE MUST CONTINUE TILL THE FEW PERISH IN ATTEMPT STOP THROUGHOUT THIS LONG SPIRITUAL STRUGGLE WE HAVE HITHERTO SUCCESSFULLY UPHELD ABOVE VITAL PRINCIPLE STOP DURING STRUGGLE IMPERIAL MINISTERS HAVE REPEATEDLY REPUDIATED AFTERWARDS RALLIED LIKE LOCAL MINISTERS STOP MAY YOU HAVE STRENGTH DURING TERRIBLE CRISIS AND MAY YOU FIND WAY OUT NOTWITHSTANDING

[1] The reference is evidently to Gokhale's anxiety that a boycott of the Commission might alienate the Viceroy; *vide* footnote I to "Cable to G. K. Gokhale", 23-12-1913.

OUR INABILITY RECEDE.[1]

GANDHI

Servants of India Society

289. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE[2]

DURBAN,
December 24, 1913

CONFIDENTIAL. TO-DAY SEVEN REPRESENTATIVE MINISTERS RELIGION CONFERRED LENGTHILY US THREE. THEY HAVE WIRED GOVERNMENT OFFERING INTERVENTION. IF NOT ACCEPTED THEY WILL AGITATE PUBLICLY FOR GRANTING OUR DEMANDS. "RAND DAILY MAIL" "EAST LONDON DESPATCH" STRONGLY URGE GOVERNMENT CONCEDE. HOSKEN HAS ISSUED PUBLIC APPEAL SUPPORTING DEMANDS.

GANDHI

Servants of India Society

[1] Gandhiji gives the gist of a similar cable in *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XLVII, and states that C. F. Andrews too concurred with it. This is obviously incorrect as Andrews reached South Africa only on January 2, 1914.

[2] This cable, with the last two sentences omitted, was also sent to Lord Ampthill.

290. CABLE TO LORD AMPTHILL

DURBAN,
December 24, 1913

LORD AMPTHILL

SEEN[1] CABLE RITCH[2] NO PEREMPTORY TONE ADOPTED STOP CAPE TIMES ADMITS REASONABLENESS DEMANDS COURTEOUS TONE BUT OBJECTS EFFECTS LETTER AS ULTIMATUM STOP WE HAVE NOT DEPARTED HAIRBREADTH FROM MODERATE LANGUAGE DESPITE GRAVE PROVOCATION BUT ALTERNATIVE SUGGESTED NAMELY RENEWAL PASSIVE RESISTANCE AN ALTERNATIVE WHICH HAS ACCOMPANIED ALL SUCH LETTERS IS BEING TREATED AS THREAT STOP "RAND DAILY MAIL" JOHANNESBURG "EAST LONDON DESPATCH" ASK GOVERNMENT CONCEDE DEMANDS THUS RECOGNIZING ITS IMPERIAL OBLIGATIONS. HOSKEN ISSUED PUBLIC APPEAL SUPPORTING OUR LETTER. CHURCH COUNCILS MOVING SAME DIRECTION WE SHALL ENDEAVOUR UTMOST CONTINUE TRADITIONS PASSIVE RESISTANCE THUS RETAINING YOUR LORDSHIP'S CONFIDENCE AND YOUR POWERFUL EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY.

GANDHI
POLAK
KALLENBACH

Colonial Office Records: 551/52

[1] The original has "sent", which is evidently a typing mistake.

[2] Lord Ampthill had cabled L. W. Ritch: "Tell Gandhi that in my judgment his present attitude will alienate sympathies now obtained after ten years patient persistence, will place friends here and in India in false position and will wreck cause. Peremptory tone not in accordance with spirit of passive resistance. Earnestly exhort him to meet half way undoubted wish for settlement."

291. TELEGRAM TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR

DURBAN,
December 25, 1913

VERY URGENT.
INTERIOR
PRETORIA

HAVE SEEN PAPERS TEXT GOVERNMENT REPLY JOINT LETTER[1] FROM POLAK KALLENBACH SELF. APPRECIATE CONCILIATORY TONE AND VENTURE HOPE POSITION NOT IRRETRIEVABLE. BEG ASSURE GENERAL SMUTS OF DESIRE AVOID INFLICTION SUFFERING ON WHITE AND INDIAN. WOULD DO ANYTHING WITHIN MY POWER PREVENT LOSSES TO EMPLOYERS INDIAN LABOUR FOR SOME OF WHOM I ENTERTAIN HIGH REGARD BUT AM COMPELLED HEEDLESS OF SUFFERINGS FOLLOW COURSE DICTATED BY CONSCIENCE. IF GENERAL SMUTS BE APPROACHABLE I WOULD LIKE WAIT ON HIM AND HOPE SUBMIT SUGGESTIONS ACCEPTANCE WHEREOF MIGHT LEAD REMOVAL DEADLOCK WITHOUT LOSS OF DIGNITY FOR GOVERNMENT OR HONOUR FOR INDIANS. ONLY REASON FOR PUBLISHING OUR LETTER WAS THAT OUR APPEAL WAS INTENDED BOTH FOR GOVERNMENT AND FOR PUBLIC. MOREOVER OUR RELEASE WITHOUT OFFICIAL INTIMATION OF REASONS THEREFOR WAS INTERPRETED BY US TO MEAN ABSENCE OF DESIRE ON PART GOVERNMENT CONSULT COMMUNITY EITHER FORMALLY OR INFORMALLY IN MATTERS VITALLY AFFECTING IT. OUR LETTER I SEE HAS BEEN MISDESCRIBED AS AN ULTIMATUM. BUT I HOPE MINISTER WILL ACCEPT MY WORD THAT IT WAS MEANT NEITHER TO BE ULTIMATUM NOR THREAT. WE HAVE CONDEMNED PROCEDURE. GOVERNMENT HAS GRACEFULLY RECOG-NIZED [USEFULNESS] OF INFORMING THEM THAT ON CERTAIN OCCASIONS COMMUNITY'S FEELING IS SUCH THAT NOT GRANTING REQUESTED RELIEF WOULD RESULT IN CONTINUATION OR REVIVAL PASSIVE RESISTANCE NAMELY SELF-SUFFERING. I VENTURE HOPE GENERAL SMUTS WILL BE PLEASED APPOINT

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Minister of Interior", 21-12-1913.

TIME GRANTING INTERVIEW. WILL REFRAIN FROM HANDING THIS PRESS PENDING REPLY.[1]

GANDHI

Colonial Office Records: 55l/46

292. CABLE T0 G. K. GOKHALE[2]

DURBAN,
December 25, 1913

GOVERNMENT'S REPLY OUR LETTER RECEIVED. THOUGH REJECTING DEMAND ADDITION COMMISSION, IT LEAVES OPENINGS NEGOTIATION. HAVE ASKED FOR PRIVATE INTERVIEW.

GANDHI

Servants of India Society

[1] The following telegram, dated December 29, was received from the Minister of Interior: "Your wire 25th. Minister is pleased to note therefrom that a more conciliatory attitude is being adopted by the leaders on the Indian question. The Minister notes request for an interview but in view of misunderstandings which have occurred in the past he would prefer that the points on which it is desired to make representations be formaly set out in writing. The Government are prepared to give any reasonable representations their careful consideration." *Vide* also "Letter to Minister of Interior", 21-12-1913.

[2] It appears a similar cable was sent the next day to Lord Ampthill who acknowledged it and earlier cables, adding that he was "doing all that is possible".

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM SECRETARY FOR INTERIOR TO GANDHIJI

THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA,
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
CAPE OF GOOD HOPE,
April 4, 1913

SIR,

With reference to your letter of the 24th ultimo, I am directed by the Minister of the Interior to state the question raised by you some time ago in reference to the issue of permits to enter the Transvaal in favour of certain selected British Indians has been receiving his attention. Mr. Fischer understands that, in this matter, you are representing that section of the Indian community in the Transvaal, which was known some three or four years back as the "Passive Resisters" and he believes that your recommendations for the issue of permits were confined to persons whose interests ate more or less indentical with this particular section of the community. The Minister cannot find that it was anywhere been either implied or accepted that, in this matter, you were acting on behalf of the entire Asiatic population of the Transvaal, and this being so, he is somewhat at a loss to understand the attitude you are adopting.

The actual position is that, when the question of allowing limited number of educated British Indians to enter the Transvaal annually for the benefit of their compatriots settled there was being discussed, the Government gave an undertaking that it would allow six such persons to enter each year; but there was no agreement that all six were to b e nominated by you, which is apparently the contention you are now seeking to establish. As you have already been advised in my letter of the 15th January, the different sections of the Asiatic community of the Transvaal submitted the names of twenty-two persons for special exemption from the Immigration Law during 1913, and in order to meet the community as far as possible by giving each section a share in the permits to be issued, Mr. Fisher decided to increase the number of permits from six to ten, and in so doing, acceptedfour out of the six of your nominations, and granted six our of thesixteen other nominations that had been made to him. In this he was influenced by the knowledge that you were speaking for a largesection of the population; but nor, so far as he is aware, for the whole body of

British Indians.

It is, however, apparent that there has been a misunderstanding on the subject between yourself and the Government, and the Minister will accordingly raise no further objection on this occasion to the acceptance of the two other names submitted by you; but it must be understood that the Government can in no way bind itself to accept in future without question, the proposals for the introduction of educated British Indians, which may be made by, or on behalf of, one or other of the many Societies and Associations which already exist, and which there is no reason to suppose will not multiply in years to come. The Government has undertaken to allow a certain number of these persons into South Africa every year, and all applications for inclusion in the list will receive the Government's careful consideration; but it is quite clear that unless some definite arrangement is made, such, for example, as a recommendation by the Government of India in each case, or the actual selection by that Government of the persons to be admitted, it will be very difficult if not impossible, to reconcile the conflicting claims to consideration which are sure to be advanced by these different bodies.

Regarding the second point referred to in your recent communication, I may say that the new immigration Bill is being published this week. Power is taken in Section 25(1) to exempt any persons from the provisions of Section 4 (which describes the persons who may be treated as prohibited immigrants). Those British Indians, therefore, whose names are included in the annual list of entrants would be exempted, in respect of the Province in which they are authorized to reside, from the requirements of Section 4.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

E. M. GORGES

SECRETARY FOR THE INTERIOR

From a photos tat of the origin al: S. N. 5750

APPENDIX II

TEXT OF THE SEARLE JUDGMENT[1]

Mr. Justice Searle, in giving judgment, said: I should have been glad to have had a little more time in regard to giving judgment in this matter so as to have been able to go into it somewhat more fully, but on account of the departure of a steamer it is of urgency and thus requires to be disposed of at once. The facts are not in dispute. The applicant, an Indian who has been living at Port Elizabeth since 1902, obtained a permit last year to go to India, where he contracted a "marriage" by Mahommedan rites with one Bai Mariam, who now seeks admission to this country with him, as an immigrant under Act 30, 1906. It is admitted that she is unable to satisfy the qualifications of Section 3(a) of Act 30, 1906, and that unless she is to be regarded as the wife of applicant under Section 4 (e) of that Act, she cannot claim admission. What appeared at first to me to be a difficulty in the way of the respondent was that a certificate from a magistrate in India was annexed to the petition in which it was stated that she was the wife of the applicant; but I understand that that document is only admitted as evidence subject to the admission made by the applicant that this so-called marriage was what is commonly known as a polygamous one, in other words, that the applicant was free to enter any unions of a similar nature during the subsistence of the marriage with Bai Mariam. As a fact, however, he has not done so, and the question for discussion, it is agreed between the parties, is simply narrowed down to this "What is the meaning of the word 'wife' in Section 4(e) of the Act?" Does it mean a wife by a marriage recognised as legal by the laws of this country, or must the term be extended to embrace a so-called wife by a custom which recognises polygamy? The courts of this country have always set their faces against recognition of these so-called Mahommedan marriages as legal unions; although by Act 16 of 1860 of Cape Colony, provision was made whereby marriage officers could solemnise such and thus give them validity, until so solemnised they remain out of the pale of legal marriages. It is clear, however,that such solemnisation has not taken place in this case, and there is no statementeven of any intention to effect this if Bai Mariam is permitted to land. Itwas in consequence of the existence of that statute that Magistrate's case and the others quoted on the same lines were decided. The object of allowing the wife of an immigrant to land with him was no doubt because of the intimate legal relations existing between husband and wife, whereby they are partners

[1] The judgment was delivered on March 14, 1913, in the Cape Supreme Court. Hassan Esop, husband of Bai Mariam, had applied for an order restraining the Minister of the Interior from deporting her.

in legal contemplation for many purposes and the husband is bound to maintain the wife until they are legally separated by the Court. If, however, persons are admitted as "wives" who might legally be repudiated the next day after the arrival by the husband entering into a lawful union in this country with someone else, or even without his doing so, it seems to me the object of the exemption in favour of the wife would not be carried into effect. The statute is in general term; it is not framed merely for Asiatics or, indeed, principally for them, though the word Asiatic is incidentally mentioned in the Act; not all Asiatics, however, contract unions of a polygamous character. It is said that *at* all events one "wife" should be admitted of a Mahommedan union, and I do not know whether *it* is to be the first that comes, or the first that is married; but it is said that otherwise there will be great hardships imposed and immorality presumably encouraged; these are matters for the legislature to consider, though I am not satisfied that such consequences would necessarily ensue by the interpretation of the Act contended for by the respondent. The matter has never been judicially decided in this Province, but in the Transvaal a recent decision disclosed a difference of opinion on the Bench. The Transvaal Statute is in similar terms to Act 30 of 1906, and I agree with the decision of the majority of the Court. This is not a case where merely ceremonial forms of the marriage celebration in the foreign country by parties domiciled there are different from those required in this country; in such cases *it* may well be that the marriage could not be impeached here, but this is a case where the very elements and essentials of a legal union of marriage are, by admission, wanting. As pointed out for respondent, when the legislature of this Colony did intend to put a wider interpretation on the word "wife" so as to include a reputed wife as in Act 15, 1865, the Act clearly said so; the onus here lies on the applicant and I am not satisfied that he has discharged it. The application must be refused. It was suggested that the Court should intimate that Bai Mariam might be allowed to land if applicant agreed to legalise his marriage under Act 16 of 1860, but that is not a matter for the Court to interfere with, though I can see no objection to such a course of the procedure if the Minister should direct it. I don't even know if machinery for such legalisation at present exists. As costs are not pressed for, there will be no order as to costs.

Indian Opinion, 21-6-1913

APPENDIX III

RESOLUTIONS AT VREDEDORP MASS MEETING

JOHANNESBURG,
March 30, 1913

RESOLUTION I

This Mass Meeting of British Indians, held under the auspices of the British Indian Association, expresses deep distress and disappointment at the decision of the Cape Provincial Division of the Supreme Court, whereby non-Christian Indian marriages, celebrated according to the tenets of the great faiths prevailing in India, and which marriages are recognised by law in India, are invalidated and the great religions of India insulted; and respectfully and earnestly requests the Government to introduce a remedial legislation recognising the validity of such marriages throughout the Union.

RESOLUTION II

This meeting is of opinion that the decision referred to in the foregoing resolution is calculated, if logically acted upon, to disturb Indian domestic relations, to break up established homes, to put husband and wife asunder, to deprive lawful children of their inheritances or of the advantages, in some parts of the Union, of the law of inheritance as to succession and transfer duty, and to prevent the entry into South Africa of the lawful wives and children of Indians entitled to reside within the Union.

RESOLUTION III

This meeting is further of opinion that the questions arising out of the decision are of such vital importance to the British Indian population of South Africa that, unless the relief requested is granted, it will become the bounden duty of the community, for the protection of its womanhood and its honour, to adopt passive resistance.

RESOLUTION IV

This meeting of British Indians authorises the Chairman to forward copies of the foregoing resolutions to the Union Government, the Imperial Government and the Indian Government.

CERTIFIED CORRECT

A. M. CACHALIA
CHAIRMAN

Coloni al Office Record s: 551/39

APPENDIX IV

DEATH OF GIANT DESPAIR[1]

Mr. Great-heart, Old Honest, and the four young men went up to Doubting Castle to look for Giant Despair. When they came to the Castle gate, they knocked for entrance with an unusual noise. At that the Old Giant comes to the gate and Diffidence, his wife, follows. Then said he: "Who and what is he that is so hardy, as after this manner to molest the Giant Despair?"

Mr. Great-heart replied, "It is I, Great-heart, one of the King of the Celestial Country's conductors of pilgrims to their place; and I demand of thee that thou open thy gates for my entrance. Prepare thyself also to fight. . .for I am come to take away thy head, and to demolish Doubting Castle."

Now Giant Despair, because he was a giant, thought no man could overcome him, and again thought he, "Since heretofore I have made a conquest of angels, shall Great-heart make me afraid?"

So he put on his armour, and went out. He had a cap of steel upon his head, a breast-plate of fire girded to him and he came out in iron shoes, with a great club in his hand.

Then these six men made up to him, and beset him behind and before: also when Diffidence, the giantess, came up to help him, old Mr. Honest cut her down at one blow.

Then they fought for their lives, and Giant Despair was brought down to the ground, but was very loath to die. He struggled hard, and had, as they say, as many lives as a cat: but Great-heart was his death, for he left him not till he had severed his head from his shoulders.

Then they fell to demolishing Doubting Castle, and that you know might with ease be done, since Giant Despair was dead. They were seven days in the destroying of that, and in it of pilgrims they found one Mr. Despondency, almost starved to death, and one much afraid, his daughter, these two they saved alive. But it would have made you wonder to see the dead bodies that lay here and there in the Castle-yard, and how full of dead men's bones the dungeon was.

When Mr. Great-heart and his companions had performed this exploit, they took Mr. Despondency and his daughter. Much afraid, into their protection, for they

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Hermann Kallenbach", 5-3-1913.

were worthy, honest people, though they were prisoners in Doubting Castle to that tyrant Giant Despair.

They, therefore, I say, took with them the head of the Giant (for his body they had buried under a heap of stones) and down to the road and to their companions they came and showed them what they had done, and when they saw that it was indeed the head of Giant Despair, they were all very merry and danced with joy.

When all these things were finished, Mr. Great-heart took the head of Giant Despair and set it upon a pole by the highway side: And then the pilgrims went forward on their journey.

From a copy: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

APPENDIX V

TELEGRAM FROM MINISTER OF INTERIOR

[CAPE TOWN,]

April 15, 1913

YOUR FIRST TELEGRAM NINTH. MINISTER DESIRES ME TO REPLY TO YOUR POINTS AS FOLLOWS. AS TO SECTION THREE BOARDS OF APPEAL TAKE THE PLACE OF COURTS EXCEPT IN QUESTION OF DOMICILE. THERE ARE WELL ESTABLISHED PRECEDENTS FOR THIS. AS TO CLAUSE (A) SUB-SECTION 1, SECTION 4, FIRST POINT YOU RAISE APPEARS IS COVERED BY SECTION 5(F). PROHIBITION OF ENTRY INTO FREE STATE IS NO NEW PROPOSAL AND WAS CONTEMPLATED IN PREVIOUS BILL. SUB-SECTION 3, SECTION 4, AS TO RESTRICTION TO ONE PORT, THIS PROVISION IS NECESSARY FOR ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES BASED ON EXPERIENCE AND IS INTENDED TO PREVENT UNAUTHORIZED ENTRY VIA PORTS WHERE GOVERNMENT HAS NO SATISFACTORY CONTROL OVER THE MOVEMENTS OF PROHIBITED IMMIGRANTS. SUB-SECTION (F) SECTION 5, ANY ALTERATION IN THE DIRECTION INDICATED BY YOU WOULD SEEM TO CONFER A RIGHT WHICH HAS NOT HITHERTO EXISTED. AS TO PROVISO TO THE SECTION, MINISTER CANNOT FIND IN THE CASE OF NATAL THAT RESIDENTIAL CERTIFICATE CONFERRED ANY RIGHTS. IN THE CASE OF TRANSVAAL, SECTION II OF ACT 36 OF 1908 GIVES RIGHTS WHICH WILL, OF COURSE, BE RESPECTED, BUT CANNOT SEE THAT SUCH RIGHTS CAN BE GREATER IN THE CASE OF AN INDIAN THAN IN

THE CASE OF A EUROPEAN WHO, BY LONG ABSENCE, MAY LOSE HIS DOMICILE IN SOUTH AFRICA. REGARDING QUESTION OF INTER-MIGRATION TO THE CAPE AND NATAL OF EDUCATED INDIANS WHO COULD PASS EDUCATION TEST AT PRESENT IMPOSED, POSITION WAS CLEARLY STATED LAST YEAR BY THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR IN HIS SPEECH ON THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, THAT RESTRICTIONS ON INTER PROVINCIAL MOVEMENT OF ASIATICS IN SOUTH AFRICA WOULD NOT BE MADE GREATER THAN THEY ARE AT PRESENT AND THERE IS NO INTENTION OF DEPARTING FROM THAT POLICY WHICH WILL BE CARRIED OUT EITHER BY GRANTING EXEMPTION OR BY OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION. WITH REFERENCE SEARLE'S JUDGMENT, GOVERNMENT HAS ALREADY INTIMATED THAT IT HAS NO INTENTION OF DEPARTING FROM THE PRESENT PRACTICE IN REGARD TO WIVES AND MINOR CHILDREN. WITH REFERENCE TO YOUR SECOND TELEGRAM, THE WIFE AND MINOR CHILDREN OF SELECTED EDUCATED ENTRANT EITHER COME WITH HIM AND ARE ADMITTED WITH HIM OR THEY ARRIVE AFTER HE HAD ACQUIRED A DOMICILE AND THUS FALL UNDER THE EXEMPTION. REGARDING DECLARATION, AS POINTED OUT TO YOU LAST YEAR, THE SWORN DECLARATION IS NOT AN IMMIGRATION PROVISION, AND CANNOT THEREFORE UNDERSTAND THAT ANY DIFFICULTY IS LIKELY TO ARISE. THERE IS NO SETTLED ASIATIC COMMUNITY IN FREE STATE AND IT CANNOT BE CONCEIVED THAT ANY OF THE EDUCATED ENTRANTS WHO ARE TO BE ADMITTED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE INDIAN COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE WILL EVER SEEK TO SETTLE IN THAT PROVINCE. CASUAL VISITS ARE PROVIDED FOR WITHOUT FORMALITY. REGARDING LAST POINT, WORDS WERE ADDED AS LAST YEAR'S DRAFT WAS DEFECTIVE. IN CONCLUSION, MINISTER STRONGLY DEPRECATES REFERENCES IN YOUR TELEGRAM AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS TO PASSIVE RESISTANCE. THE THREATS THEREIN CONTAINED MIGHT VERY POSSIBLY, IN VIEW OF FEELING THROUGHOUT THE UNION ON MATTER UNDER CONSIDERATION, LEAD TO RESULTS FAR DIFFERENT FROM THOSE ANTICIPATED BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE INDIAN COMMUNITY WHEN MAKING THEM.

Indian Opinion, *7-6-1913*

APPENDIX VI

SPEECH BY A. M. CACHALIA

JOHANNESBURG,

April 27, 1913

It has become necessary again to convene a mass meeting in order that you may consider the long-expected Immigration Bill, which has been just published. A respectful protest has already been wired to the Government on behalf of the Association, embodying our objections to the Bill, and a reply has been received saying that the objections are receiving the careful consideration of the Government. We may reasonably hope, therefore, that the Bill will be amended in accordance with our objections. It was, however, considered advisable, regard being had to the very great importance of the occasion, to obtain the opinion of the whole Indian community in the Transvaal, as also to consider what steps we should take in the event of the Government declining or being unable to meet us.

The Bill, if it becomes law in its present form, will make our position worse than it was before the struggle was commenced in 1906, a position which we, as a self-respecting community, can never endorse. You will notice, moreover, that it seriously affects the rights hitherto enjoyed not only by grown-up men but by women and children also. It affects equally the rich and the poor. It takes away the rights of those who are domiciled in South Africa, notwithstanding the declarations made by General Botha that it is not the intention of the Government to molest the resident Indian community. A Bill which cuts at the very root of existence must be resisted by those affected by it at any cost.

We, who are unrepresented in Parliament although we contribute to the expense of keeping it, have only one effective mode of securing redress, and that is Passive Resistance. Having had considerable experience of passive resistance, we are in a position to measure our strength as well as our weakness, and to measure also the value of passive resistance as a remedy. It will not be denied that, during the first campaign, our sufferings were little compared with the sufferings that the community had to undergo during the second campaign; but we found, too, that, during that long period of four years over which the second campaign spread, in the last stages of it, the number of those who could stand what then appeared to be almost endless imprisonment was undoubtedly small in comparison, but it was a band mostly of earnest and indomitable spirits, and it was due to their sufferings alone that we were able to reach what is known as the provisional settlement. It was called "provisional" because, whilst it conceded all that we had been fighting for, it had not the force of

law. The present Bill is supposed to embody that settlement, but, as you have seen from the objection drawn up by your Committee, it has done nothing of the kind. We are now pleading with the Government, and we shall continue to do so so long as there is hope, but, in the last resort, it is perfectly clear that the same means that brought about the provisional settlement must be adopted now to secure legislative sanction for the promises contained in the settlement.

If, in spite of all our efforts to the contrary, the community has to engage in a third campaign, it must necessarily be bitter and painful and involve much greater sufferings than before. It is evident that thousands will not be ready to engage in such a strenuous fight, but all who, having understood the spirit of the Bill, are opposed to it, can endorse the action of those who have the will and the ability to go through the hardships entailed by imprisonment or any other and further penalty that the Government may devise. Because they cannot come to gaol, they need not stand out. They can look after those who may be left behind by the sufferers. They can inform the Government that they are at one with them in making the demand for redress, and that they are heart and soul with the movement. I take it that this meeting is composed of two such classes and that it is actuated by only one impulse, as everyone of its members is affected equally by the Bill under consideration. I am hoping that the Government will give heed to the telegram l have referred to in my opening remarks, but, if unfortunately it cannot see its way to do so, I hope that this meeting will unanimously pass the only resolution that will be submitted to it.

Coloni al Office Record s: 551/39

APPENDIX VII

(1) TELEGRAM FROM MINISTER OF INTERIOR

[CAPE TOWN,]
May 29, 1913

YOUR TELEGRAM OF THE 27TH INSTANT. ALL POINTS RAISED BY YOU WERE FULLY CONSIDERED BY GOVERNMENT AND PARLIAMENT. IN REGARD TO MARRIAGE QUESTION, HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY WAS NOT PREPARED TO GO ANY FURTHER THAN IT HAS IN THE AMENDMENT RECENTLY ADOPTED AND, IF IT IS NOT SATISFACTORY TO THE INDIAN COMMUNITY, MINISTER MUST SERIOUSLY CONSIDER ADVISABILITY OF ASKING SENATE TO DELETE THE PROVISION IN QUESTION AND ALLOW THE MATTER TO REMAIN ONE FOR ADMINISTRATIVE TREATMENT IN FUTURE ON THE LINES WHICH THE MINISTER HAS ALREADY STATED HE IS PREPARED TO ADOPT AND IS, AS A MATTER OF FACT, NOW ADOPTING. MINISTER WENT OUT OF HIS WAY TO CONSIDER THE AMENDMENT PROPOSED BY MR. ALEXANDER AND ONLY ACCEPTED IT ON THE ASSURANCE THAT IT WOULD REMOVE THE GRIEVANCES OF THE INDIANS. THE CONTENTION YOU ARE NOW SETTING UP WITH REGARD TO THE RIGHTS OF SOUTH AFRICA-BORN INDIANS TO ENTER AND RESIDE IN THE CAPE PROVINCE IS ONE THAT PARLIAMENT WILL NOT AGREE TO. NONE OF THE QUESTIONS WHICH LED UP TO THE SETTLEMENT WERE CONNECTED WITH THE POSITION OF INDIANSIN THE CAPE AND THE CAPE PARLIAMENT HAD THE UNDOUBTED RIGHT TO ALTER IN ANY RESPECT IT CHOSE THE PROVISIONS OF THE IMMIGRATION LAW IT CREATED AND IT IS ENTIRELY IN DEFERENCE TO PUBLIC OPINION IN CAPE PROVINCE THAT PARLIAMENT WAS NOT ABLE TO MEET YOU IN THE POINTS YOU RAISE. YOU MUST SURELY ADMIT THE ENTIRE REASONABLENESS OF THE ATTITUDE OF THE CAPE PUBLIC. THE GOVERNMENT HAS KEPT THE DOOR OPEN FOR THE EDUCATED INDIAN WHO CAN COMPLY WITH THE EXISTING EUROPEAN LANGUAGE TEST AND IN DOING SO MET WHAT HE THOUGHT WAS YOUR GREAT POINT ABOUT THE INTERMIGRATION OF THE EDUCATED PERSON, BUT PARLIAMENT AFTER FULL DISCUSSION REFUSED TO AGREE TO ALLOW EVERY INDIAN BORN IN NATAL THE RIGHT TO ENTER

THE CAPE. AS ALREADY INTIMATED, THE MATTER OF DECLARATIONS UNDER CHAPTER XXXIII OF THE FREE STATE LAWS CAN AND WILL BE DEALT WITH ADMINISTRATIVELY. ANY SUGGESTION SPECIFICALLY TO ALTER THE TERMS OF THE LAW WOULD MEAN STRENUOUS OPPOSITION ON THE PART OF THE ORANGE FREE STATE AND THE POSSIBLE WITHDRAWAL OF THE BILL, WHICH IS A CONTINGENCY THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS NOT AT THIS HOUR PREPARED TO FACE. MINISTER MUCH APPRECIATES YOUR OFFER TO COME TO CAPE TOWN BUT DOES NOT THINK IT NECESSARY AS HE IS FULLY AWARE OF THE ATTITUDE OF ALL MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE ON THE POINTS YOU RAISE AND CAN HOLD OUT NO HOPE THAT PARLIAMENT WILL ALTER THE BILL ON ANY OF THE POINTS UNDER REFERENCE.

Indian Opinion, 7-6-1913

(2) GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S CABLE TO COLONIAL OFFICE

SECRET

May 29, 1913

IT IS POSSIBLE THAT FOR REASONS OF THEIR OWN AGITATORS HERE MAY CONTINUE AGITATION AMONG INDIAN COMMUNITY IN SPITE OF CONCESSIONS MADE ON IMMIGRATION BILL. IF THIS SHOULD LEAD TO RENEWAL OF PASSIVE RESISTANCE EFFECT ON PUBLIC OPINION IN SOUTH AFRICA WOULD BE VERY SERIOUS AND INDIANS WOULD PROBABLY BE REGARDED AS HAVING FORFEITED ANY CLAIM TO CONSIDERATE TREATMENT. I HOPE YOU WILL REPRESENT THIS TO INDIAN GOVERNMENT AND ASK THEM TO USE SUCH INFLUENCE AS THEY MAY POSSESS WITH GANDHI AND OTHERS. I GATHER FROM FISCHER THAT WOMEN AND CHILDRENWILL ALMOST ALL CERTAINLY BE EXEMPTED FROM NATAL £3 TAX. I AM DOING MY BEST TO SECURE TOTAL ABOLITION OF TAX. MATTER IS STILL UNDER CONSIDERATION.

GLADSTONE

Coloni al Office Record s: 551/40

APPENDIX VIII

DRAFT IMMIGRATION REGULATION BILL AND THE ACT

THE BILL AS INTRODUCED	THE ACT AS GAZETTED
3. No court of law in the Union shall, except upon a question of domicile in the Union or any Province, have any jurisdiction to review, quash, reverse, interdict or otherwise interfere with any proceeding, act, order, or warrant of the Minister, a board, an immigration officer or a master, if such proceeding, act, order, or warrant purports to be had, done, or issued, under this Act and relates to the detention, or to the removal from the Union or any Province, of a person who is being dealt with as a prohibited immigrant.	3. (1) No court of law in the Union shall, except upon a question of law reserved by a board as in this section provided, have any jurisdiction to review, quash, reverse, interdict or otherwise interfere with any proceeding, act, order, or warrant of the Minister, a board, an immigration officer or a master, had, done or issued under this Act, and relating to the restriction or detention, or to the removal from the Union or any Province, of a person who is being dealt with as a prohibited immigrant.
	(2) A board may, of its own motion, and shall. at the request of the appellant or of an immigration officer, reserve for the decision of a superior court having jurisdiction, any question of law which arises upon an appeal heard before such board under the last preceding section, and shall state such question in the form of a special case for the opinion of such court by transmitting such special case to the registrar thereof. The question so stated may be argued before such court which may call for further information to be supplied by the board if the court shall deem such information necessary and may give such answer on such case, supplemented by such information, if any, and may make such order as to the costs of the proceedings, as it may think right.

(3) For the purposes of this section—

"a question of law" shall, among other questions, include a question of domicile; and "a superior court having jurisdiction" shall mean the provincial division of the Supreme Court which has jurisdiction where the board was sitting, or any judge of such division, or the Eastern Districts Local Division having such jurisdiction or any judge thereof, and "appellant" shall not include an alien.

(4) If the special case aforesaid is stated at the request of the appellant he shall, if he is a person seeking to enter the Union for the first time lodge with the said registrar security, to such amount, as the registrar may determine, for any costs that the Court may order the appellant to pay.

4. (1) Any such person as is described in any paragraph of this sub-section who enters or is found within the Union, or who, though lawfully resident in the Province, enters or is found in another Province in which he is not lawfully resident, shall be a prohibited immigrant in respect of the Union or of that other Province (as the case may be), that is to say—

(a) any person or class of persons deemed by the Minister on economic grounds or on account of standard or habits of life to be unsuited to the requirements of the Union or any particular Province thereof;

(b) any person who is unable, by reason of deficient education,

4. (1) Any such person as is described in any paragraph of this sub-section who enters or is found within the Union, or who, though lawfully resident in one Province, enters or is found in another Province in which he is not lawfully resident, shall be a prohibited immigrant in respect of the Union or of that other Province(as the case may be), that is to say—

(a) any person or class of persons deemed by the Minister on economic grounds or on account of standard or habits of life to be unsuited to the requirements of the Union or any particular Province thereof;

(b) any person who is unable, by reason of deficient education, to read and write any European

to read and write any European language to the satisfaction of an immigration officer; and for the purpose of this paragraph Yiddish shall be regarded as an European language;

(c) any person who is likely, if he entered the Union, to become a public charge, by reason of infirmity of mind or body, or because he is not in possession for his own use of sufficient means to support himself and his dependents;

(d) any person who from information received from any Government (whether British or Foreign) through official or diplomatic channels, is deemed by the Minister to be an undesirable inhabitant of or visitor to the Union;

[Paragraphs (e) to (h) omitted.] Subject to the provisions of section *two* and *three*, an immigration officer shall cause a prohibited immigrat so entering or found within the Union or within any Province into which his entry, or in which his presence, is presence, is unlawful, to be removed therefrom.

(2) A list of all persons who have been declared under this Act to be prohibited immigrants in respect of the Union or any Province, and who have been removed therefrom or whose entry into the Union or any Province has been restricted, shall be laid by the Minister upon the tables of both House of Parliament within fourteen days after the commencement of each session thereof. Such list shall be framed in respect of a period ending one month

language to the satisfaction of an immigration officer or, in case of an appeal, to the satisfaction of the board; and for the purpose of this paragraph Yiddish shall be regarded as an European language;

[Paragraphs (c) to (h) omitted.] Whenever the Minister exercises any power conferred upon him by this sub-section, he shall transmit written ten notice of that fact to the immigration officer concerned and to every board. Subject to the provisions of section *two* and *three* an immigration officer shall cause a prohibited immigrant so entering or found within the Union or within any Province into which his entry, or in which his presence, is unlawful, to be removed therefrom.

(2) Nothing in sub-section (1) (a) contained shall be constructed—

(a) as enabling a person to be deemed a prohibited immigrant in the Cape of Good Hope or Natal if, being at the commencement of this Act lawfully entitled to reside in any Province, he shows or has shown that he is able to comply with the requirements described in section *three* (a) of Act No. 30 of 1906 of the Cape of Good Hope, or of section *five* (a) of Act No. 30 of 1903 of Natal; or

(b) as abrogating or affecting any right conferred by Act No. 36 of 1908 of the Transvaal upon the lawful holder of a certificate of registration defined in that Act.

(3) A list of all persons who have been declared under this Act to be prohibited immigrants in respect of

before the session commences, and shall contain the name, sex, and nationality of each such person and the reason of each such person and the reason for his removal or restriction.

(3) The Minister may from time to time by notice in the *Gazette* declare that persons described in paragraph (a) of sub-section (1) of this section when permitted under this Act to enter or return to the Union or any Province, shall enter or return at a port or ports specified in the notice and not at any other port, and thereupon, it shall be unlawful for any such person to enter or return at any other port.

5. The following person or classes of persons shall not be prohibited immigrants for the purposes of this Act, namely—

[Paragraphs (a), (b), (c) and (d) omitted.]

(e) any person born in any part of South Africa included in the Union;

the Union or any province, and who have been removed therefrom or whose entry into the Union or any Province has been restricted, shall be laid by the Minister upon the tables of both Houses of Parliament within fourteen days after the commencement of each session thereof. Such list shall be framed in respect of a period ending one month before the session commences, and shall contain the name, sex, and nationallity of each such person and the reason for his removal or restriction.

(4) The Minister may from time to time, by notice in the *Gazette*, declare that persons belonging to classes described in paragraph (a) of sub-section (1) of this section when permitted under this Act to enter or return to the Union or any Province, shall enter or return at a port or ports specified in the notice and not at any other port and thereupon it shall be unlawful for any such person to enter or return at any other port.

5. The following persons or classes of persons shall not be prohibited immigrants for the purposes of this Act, namely—

[Paragraphs (a) to (d) omitted] (e) any person born before commencement of this Act in any part of South Africa included in the Union whose parents were lawfully resident therein and were not at that time restricted to temporary or conditional residence by any law then in force, and any person born in any place after the commencement of this Act whose parents were at the time of his

	birth domiciled in any part of South Africa included in the Union;
(f) any person domiciled in any Province;	(f) any person domiciled in any Province who is not such a person as is described in paragraph (e) or (f) of sub-section (1) of the preceding section, or who has not been removed under section *twenty-two* of this Act;
(g) any person who is proved to the satisfaction of an immigration officer to be the wife, or the child under the age of sixteen years, of any person described in paragraph (f) of his section, provided that the wife or the child (as the case may be) is not such a person as is described in sub-section (1) (d), (e), (f), (g) or (h) of the last preceding section;	(g) any person who is proved to the satisfaction of an immigration officer or in case of an immigration officer or in case of an appeal, to the satisfaction of the board, to be the wife, or the child under the age of sixteen years, of any person exempted by paragraph
[Paragraph (h) omitted.]	(f) of this section, including the wife or child of a lawful and monogamous marriage duly celebrated according to the rites of any religious faith outside the Union, provided that the wife or the child (as the case may be) is not such a person as is described in sub-section (1) (d), (e), (f), (g) or (h) of the last preceding section;
	[Paragraph (h) omitted]
Provided that nothing in this section contained shall be construed as entitling a person to whom the provisions of sub-section (1) (a) or the last preceding section apply, to enter the reside in a Province in which he has not previously been lawfully resident: provided further that if any person, having been absent for a period of three years continously from a Province in which he was previously lawfully resident of, for a longer period than the duration of a permit issued under the authority of any law hereby repealed, claims to enter, enters or is found in that Province, he shall not be deemed to fall within the exemptions contained in this section.	Provided that nothing in this section contained shall be construed as entitling a person to whom the provisions of sub-section (1) (a) of the last preceding section apply, to enter and reside in a Province in which he has not previously been lawfully resident.
7. Any such person as is described in Chapter XXXIII of the Orange	7. Any such person as is described in Chapter XXXIII of the Orange

Free State Law Book shall, notwithstanding that he is lawfully resident in a particular Province or that he has been permitted to enter the Union, continue to be subject in all respects to the provisions of sections *seven* and *eight* of the said Chapter XXXIII, and if he acts in contravention of those provisions, he may be dealt with under this Act as a prohibited immigrant in respect of the Orange Free State.

8. (1) No prohibited immigrant shall be entitled to obtain a licence to carry on any trade or calling in the Union or (as the case may be) in any Province wherein his residence is unlawful or to acquire therein any interest in land, whether leasehold or freehold, or in any other immovable property.

(2) Any such licence (if obtained by a prohibited immigrant) or any contract, deed or other document by which any such interest is acquired in contravention of this section, shall, as from the date that the holder of the licence or interest is dealt with as a prohibited immigrant under this Act, be null and void.

9. (1) Every person who is suspected on reasonable grounds of being a prohibited immigrant may be arrested without warrant by an immigration officer or police officer, and shall be dealt with in accordance with this Act.

(2) Any magistrate may, if information on oath be laid before him

Free State Law Book shall, notwithstanding that he is lawfully resident in a particular Province or that he has been permitted to enter the Union, continue to be subject in all respects to the provisions of sections *seven* and *eight* of the said Chapter XXXIII, and if he acts in contravention of those provisions, he may be dealt with under this Act as a prohibited immigrant in respect of the Orange Free State.

8. (1) No prohibited immigrant shall be entitled to obtain a licence to carry on any trade or calling in the Union or (as the case may be) in any Province wherein his residence is unlawful or to acquire therein any interest in land, whether leasehold or freehold, or in any other immovable property.

(2) Any such licence (if obtained by a prohibited immigrant) or any contract, deed or other document by which any such interest is acquired in contravention of this section, shall, as from the date that the holder of the licence or interest is dealt with as a prohibited immigrant under this Act, be null and void.

9. (1) Every person who is suspected on reasonable grounds of being a prohibited immigrant may, if there is reason to believe that the delay occasioned by obtaining a warrant would enable such person to evade the provisions of this Act, be arrested without warrant by an immigration officer or police officer, and shall be dealt with in accordance with this Act.

(2) Any magistrate may, if information on oath be laid before him

that there is upon any premises a person reasonably suspected of being a prohibited immigrant, issue a warrant rant empowering a police officer of or above the rank of sergeant to enter those premises and search for such person and arrest him.

25. (1) Anything to the contrary notwithstanding in this Act contained, the Minister may in his discretion exempt any person from the provisions of section *four* or, subject to the provisions of section *seven*, may authorize the issue of a temporary permit to any prohibited immigrant to enter and reside in the Union or any particular Province upon such conditions as to the period of residence or the calling or occupation which he may follow therein or otherwise, as may in the permit be specified.

(2) The Minister may also in his discretion authorize the issue of a certificate of identity to any person who is lawfully resident in the Union or in any Province and who, desiring to proceed thereout with the intention of returning thereto, is for any reason apprehensive that he will be unable to prove on his return that he is not a prohibited immigrant.

that there is upon any premises a named or described person reasonably suspected of being a prohibited immigrant, issue a warrant empowering a police officer of or above the rank of sergeant to enter those premises and search for the person named or described in that warrant and arrest him.

25. (1) Anything to the contrary notwithstanding in this Act contained the Minister may, in his discretion, exempt any person from the Provisions of paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d) of sub-section (1) of section *four* or, subject to the provisions of section *seven*, may authorize the issue of a temporary permit to any prohibited immigrant to enter and reside in the Union or any particular Province upon such conditions as may be law fully imposed by regulation.

(2) The Minister may also in his discretion authorize the issue of a certificate of identity to any person who is lawfully resident in the Union and who, desiring to proceed thereout with the intention of returning thereto, is for any reason apprehensive that he will be unable to prove on his return that he is not a prohibited immigrant.

(3) The Minister may authorize persons outside the Union to issue to any intending immigrant a certificate that he is exempt from the provisions of sub-section (1) (a) of section *four*, but no such certificate shall be recognized in the Union unless the holder thereof furnish to the immigration officer such proof as is prescribed by regulation of his identity with the immigrant to whom

28. Anything to the contrary notwithstanding in Act No. 36 of 1908 of the Transvaal, a person who has been exempted from the provisions of section *four* of this Act or, on the authority of a temporary permit issued under sub-section (1) of section *twenty-five* of this Act, has been permitted to enter and reside in any part of the Union, shall not be deemed to be subject to registration under the provisions of the said Act of the Transvaal.

the certificate was originally issued.

28. Anything to the contrary notwithstanding in Act No. 36 of 1908 of the Transvaal, a person who has been exempted from the provisions of paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d) of sub-section (1) of section *four* of this Act or, on the authority of a temporary permit issued under sub-section(1) of section *twenty--five* of this Act, has been permitted to enter and reside in any part of the Union, shall not be deemed to be subject to registration under the provisions of the said Act of the Transvaal.

30. In this Act, and in the regulations made thereunder, unless inconsistent with the context,—

"domicile"shall mean the place in which a person has his present home or in which he resides or to which he returns as his place of present permanent abode and not for a mere special or temporary purpose; and a person shall not be deemed to have a domicile within the Union or any Province (as the case may be) for the purposes of this Act unless he has resided therein for at least three years, otherwise than under terms of conditional or temporary residence permitted by this Act or any other law or as a person under detention in a prison, gaol, reformatory or lunatic asylum; and a person shall be deemed for the purposes of this Act to have lost his domicile within the Union or any Province (as the case may be) if he voluntarily go and reside outside the Union or that Province (except for a special or temporary

purpose) with the intention of making his home outside the Union or that Province (as the case may be.)

[This is a new definition.]

Indian Opinion, 28-6-1913

APPENDIX IX

IMMIGRATION ACT REGULATIONS

Regulations under the Immigrants Regulation Act were gazetted on the 15th instant. They are divided into 31 Sections.

Of these, Sections 1 to 6 deal with the examination and control of vessels.

Sections 7 to 15 deal with the examination of passengers.

Section 7 provides that all passenger for ports of the Union shall ordinarily be examined at the ship's first port of call in the Union.

Section 8 provides that the examination of passengers shall be conducted by the Immigration Officer on board a ship or at such other place as may be convenient. Every person, before being permitted to land, shall be required to complete a declaration in the form set out in the second annexure.

Section 9 empowers the officer to require the passenger to write out the declaration himself as also to call in the aid of an interpreter.

Section 10 requires the officer to give notice to the master of the ship of those who have been found to be prohibited immigrants and thereafter the master is responsible for their safe custody.

Section 11 provides that all examinations shall be reduced to writing.

Section 12 authorises the officer to postpone examination in case of doubt.

Section 13 enables the officer to accept evidence that a passenger, on landing, can be supported by friends as sufficient proof that he will not become a public charge.

Section 14 reads as follows:—

"The immigration officer may require for the purpose of an application made in respect of a wife or child, under paragraph (g) of section *five* of the Act, a properly authenticated copy of the certificate of the marriage, or of the birth as the case may be; or, if no copy of such marriage certificate or birth certificate can be produced, the immigration officer may require the production of an official certificate under the hand of

(a) an officer competent to give the same stating that in his personal knowledge the parties were married on a date under the circumstances stated; or (as the case may be) that the child was born on a date and at a place set out and of parents named in such certificates; or (b)

the production of a certificate under the hand of an officer competent to give the same stating that he has taken sworn testimony or other evidence as to the circumstances and date of the marriage, or the date of birth and the parcentage of the child, and that such testimony and such evidence is attached to such certificate together with such officer's finding thereon.

"The immigration officer may require any certificate mentioned in this regulation to be supplemented by satisfactory evidence as to the identity of the persons referred to in the certificate, and the immigration officer may, in any case of doubt, require such further evidence as may be necessary to satisfy him that any wife or child referred to in the certificate is such a wife or child as, under paragraph (g) of section *five* of the Act, is exempted from being considered a prohibited immigrant."

Section 15 authorises the officer to obtain a warrant for the arrest of a person who may be suspected of being a prohibited immigrant.

Section 16 to 18 deal with diseases and medical examination.

Section 19 is a long one, dealing with the procedure on appeal. It gives the form of notice of appeal. Pending appeal, the appellant may be received at a detention depot.

Sub-section (3) of Section 19, being rather important, we give in full as under:

"If there be no board which ordinarily sits or is sitting or about to sit at his station the immigration officer shall also communicate with the immigration officer in charge by telegraph, and shall inform the appellant that if he desires to be present at the hearing of his appeal he will be required himself to pay for his passage by sea, or for this transport by land subject to such conditions as may be imposed and under escort approved by the immigration officer, and paid for by the appellant to and, if necessary, from the place at which the board having jurisdiction is to sit. On arrival at such place the appellant shall be dealt with as provided in sub-section (2) of this regulation.

Sub-section (4) authorises the officer to issue a temporary permit to the appellant. The Board of Appeal may summon witnesses; the appellant may give and call evidence; he may be represented by Counsel, and the officer may also examine witnesses and be otherwise represented.

Sections 20 to 24 deal with permits and temporary permits. Temporary permits are to carry a fee of £1 and a deposit of from £10 to £100 for due fulfilment of conditions.

Sub-section (3) of Section 20 says:—

"It shall be deemed to be a condition of every permit that the holder shall report himself to the officers and at the periods and places specified in such permit; and if the holder gives any false or misleading address, he shall be liable to forfeiture of his permit and deposit, and to be dealt with as a prohibited immigrant."

No permit may be issued for over a year without the sanction of the Minister. The holder of a permit must give one day's notice of his intention to leave.Sub-section (l) Section 21 says:—

"The certificate of identity which may be issued, in terms of sub-section (2) of section *twenty-five* of the Act, to persons lawfully resident in the Union or in any Province shall be in the form and subject to the conditions set out in the Fifth Annexure to these regulations. There shall be paid in respect of every such certificate, a fee of one pound, and every certificate shall contain such particulars and marks as may be deemed necessary for purposes of identification."

Duplicates of lost permits carry a fee of £2.

The Officer may cancel permits if the holder commits a breach of its conditions or has obtained it by fraud.

Sections 25 to 30 deal with the detention of prohibited immigrants.

Section 31 provides that the penalty for a breach of the regulations is £50 fine or three months' imprisonment, with or without hard labour.

SECOND ANNEXURE

DECLARATION BY PASSENGER OR OTHER PERSONS

(The information required hereunder must be given in English or Dutch)
Name in full
Port of Embarkation
Port of intended Debarkation
Age
(If over 21 years state "Full")
Sex
Race
(European, Asiatic, or African)
Nationality
(British, French, German, etc.)

If accompanied by wife, state her name
If accompanied by children (or wards) under 16 years, state name and age of each.

(If unaccompanied by wife or children, state "Travelling unaccompanied" in reply to question 8 and 9.)

Address at destination in fullPeriod (if any) of previous residence in South Africa. (If none, state "None.") OccupationWhat means can you produce, your own *bona fide* property? (If more than £20, state £20. If £20 or less, state full amount, and explain what documentary evidence you have of definite employment, or support, promised to you; and what references you can give to persons in South Africa?) What European language can you write?

Have you ever been prohibited from entering the Province or expelled from it?

Have you been convicted of any crime in any country?

I hereby declare that I understand the above questions, and have answered them truly.

Signature or Mark of Passenger:

Declared before me at . . . . . this . . . . . day of . . . . . .

IMMIGRATION OFFICER

FIFTH ANNEXURE

CERTIFICATE OF IDENTITY: FEE, ONE POUND

It is certified that . . . . . having appeared before . . . . . for the purpose of supplying the means of identification which are now specified herein, and having intimated that he/she is about to absent himself/herself from the Province of . . . . . for a period of . . . . . on a visit to . . . . . this document is issued to the said . . . . . and, subject to the conditions enumerated below and to the verification of the marks of identification, will be accepted by the examining immigration officer without further evidence as proof of the identity of the said . . . . . on his/her return.

IMMIGRATION OFFICER IN CHARGE

Date

Place

CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THIS CERTIFICATE IS ISSUED

1. That on the return of the person referred to herein to the Province of . . . . . this certificate shall be surrendered to the examining immigration officer.

2. That if the person referred to herein seeks to re-enter the Province of . . . . . after a period of one year has elapsed from the date hereof, the protection afforded by this certificate shall be deemed to have lapsed, and

he/she shall be required to satisfy the requirements of the Act.

3. This certificate may be held to be invalidated if the person named herein *is* shown to the immigration officer to have made a false declaration in a material point when applying for a certificate.

Identification Marks:

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

INDIAN OPINION, *26-7-1913*

APPENDIX X

LETTER FROM E. M. GORGES

PRETORIA,
August 19, 1913

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Referring to our previous correspondence on the subject of the Immigrants Regulation Act, 1913, I beg to say that the points you raised have been fully considered by the Minister, and at General Smuts' request I will now indicate what view he takes of them.

1. Your first point was that the descendants of indentured Indians would not in future be able to enter the Cape Province by reason of the proviso to Section 5 of the Act. General Smuts requests me to submit that this is an entirely new point and one not raised by you when all the matters at issue between the Indians and the Government were dealt with by you in your correspondence with him in January and February, 1912. Your letter of 29th January to the Private Secretary and your telegram of 1st February referred to the right of educated Indians to enter the Cape and Natal Provinces from other parts of the Union on passing the education test provided in the Immigration Laws of those Provinces, while your letter of 15th February, 1912, contained a specific statement that passive resisters could have nothing to complain of—"if the present legal position namely the ability of educated Asiatics to enter Natal or the Cape from the Transvaal (and presumably from Natal to Cape and *vice versa*?) by passing the education tests provided by the respective laws of the Provinces is retained."

I have only to refer you to paragraph 7 and 8 of Minister's Minute, 902 A. of 20th December, 1910, printed as enclosure No. 8 to the White Book (Cd. 5579) to make it clear that the Union Government have all along regarded it as impossible to allow Indians born in Natal to migrate freely to the Cape, and until you raised the

matter for the first time in your telegram of April 9th of this year to me the Minister was not aware that your community had any views on the subject at all.

The rights of the educated Indian inhabitants of any Province to enter the Cape and Natal by passing the education test prescribed in the recently repealed immigration laws of those two Provinces are fully secured by sub-section (2) of Section 4 of our new law and, as you yourself pointed out in your last letter (2nd July) to me, most of the Colonial-born Indians in Natal have passed through the Government Indian Schools and possess sufficient knowledge to undergothe Cape test. You also stated that it was a well-known fact that, throughoutthe time the Cape Act was in force, hardly any South Africa-born Indian, not belonging to the Cape, has endeavoured to migrate to that Province as there is no scope for them there. In view of all these facts the Government cannot conceive that the Indian community now wishes to make a grievance of the fact that provincial boundaries have been maintained in the new law, and General Smuts trusts that the position created by that law will be accepted. You will be aware also that the point was fully discussed in Parliament last Session and the very strongest exception was taken by members representing constituencies in the Cape Province to any proposals for allowing non-educated Natal-born Indians to enter the Cape.

2. Secondly, in regard to the position of the ex-indentured Indians under the definition of "Domicile" in the new Act, the Government takes the view that the provisions of paragraph (f) of Section 5 of the Act would apply to any such Indian who has resided under annual licence or pass in Natal for three years or more after his indentures expire and who leaves the Province with the intention of returning thereto, and that this view is not affected by the definition of domicile in Section 30 of the Act.

3. Thirdly, with regard to the question of the declaration required under Chapter XXXIII of the Orange Free State Law Book General Smuts has no difficulty and rather sees an advantage in notifying all educated Indians admitted into South Africa of the disabilities that Indians are under in the Orange Free State. Steps will be taken to have these disabilities specified on the form of declaration which is required under Section 19 of the Act.

4. Fourthly, General Smuts is quite prepared when some suitable occasion presents itself for dealing with the consolidation of the Marriage Laws of the Union to make provision for the appointment of special Marriage Officers for denominations other than Mahomedan, upon its being shewn that there is a demand by the members of such denominations for such appointments and that there are suitable persons in the different communities on whom the appointments could be conferred. The present practice of admitting one wife of an Indian now entitled to reside in any Province or who may in future be permitted to enter the Union, irrespective of the fact that his marriage to such wife may have been solemnized

according to tenets which recognize polygamy or that she is one of several wives married abroad, will be continued so long as she is his only wife in South Africa; but General Smuts regrets that it will not be possible to go further and admit plural wives of Indians who are already resident in South Africa.

Believe me,
Yours very truly,
E. M. GORGES

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.,
PHOENIX
NATAL

From a photos tat of the typewr itten origin al: S. N. 5835

APPENDIX XI

EXTRACT FROM GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S DESPATCH TO COLONIAL OFFICE

PRETORIA,
October 23, 1913

A new phase of the campaign was inaugurated by Mr. Gandhi on the 17th instant, when he visited the Natal coalfields and induced a number of indentured Indians employed in local mines and hotels to strike work until the Government should promise to repeal the £3 tax during the next session of Parliament. The adoption of this policy was foreshadowed in Mr. Gandhi's letter of the 28th ultimo to Mr. Gorges, a copy of which will be found in the correspondence accompanying my Despatch, Secret (2) of yesterday. I have not yet been able to obtain full particulars as to the development of the strike movement, which, so far as I can judge, does not appear to be causing the Government much anxiety. Some little light is thrown on the subject by the attached extracts from the *Rand Daily Mail* and *The Transvaal Leader* of today. It will be seen that Mr. Gandhi estimates the number of strikers at 2,000 and says that six collieries are affected, whereas nine collieries are mentioned by the Durban correspondent of *The Transvaal Leader.* Mr. Gorges told my Secretary this morning that the latest official report received by the Department of Justice estimated the number of strikers at 1,500. He was not sure, however, whether that estimate applied to the whole area of the strike, and he thought that possibly Mr. Gandhi's figure of 2,000 might be correct, although no precise information on the point was available. The Secretary for Justice, he added, had at the same time been advised that the movement showed some signs of weakening, as a number of the strikers were beginning to return to work. An attempt appears also to have been made to "pull out" the Indians working on the Railways in Natal, but the absence of further

information on this point may perhaps be taken as indicating that hitherto the attempt has not been attended with any appreciable success.

Coloni al Office Record s: 551/45

APPENDIX XII

EXTRACT FROM GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S DESPATCH TO COLONIAL OFFICE

PRETORIA,

November 6, 1913

You will observe that Mr. Gandhi appears to be disconcerted by the inaction of the Government, and to have made representations to the effect that it was their duty to arrest the demonstrators and to provide them with board and lodging.On Monday last General Smuts explained his policy to my Secretary. He said that his refusal to interfere with many of the Passive Resisters in the Transvaal had led to a collapse, for the time being at any rate, of the movement, and he thought that a similar policy of laissez-faire might produce similar results in the case of the Natal strikers. Mr. Gandhi appears to be in a position of much difficulty. Like Frankenstein he found his monster an uncomfortable creation, and he would be glad to be relieved of further responsibility for its support. The Department had been anxious to arrest him, but this course had not commended itself to the Ministerial mind. If Mr. Gandhi were arrested, he would be able to disclaim further responsibility for the maintenance of his army of strikers. So long as he remained at liberty, the Indians would look to him to provide for their necessities. General Smuts therefore proposed to adhere to his policy of non-interference, and he would place no obstacles in the way of strikers entering the Transvaal. They did not belong to the trading classes and could do little harm. Moreover, there would be no difficulty in returning most, if not all, of them to Natal later on. At present they were quite peaceable, and if later on, under the stress of hunger or hardship, they became lawless, they could easily be dealt with. It was not unlikely that in the end, when the supply of provisions began to fail, they would ask to be sent back to their work in Natal, and he would then be prepared to provide transport for their return. He doubted whether Mr. Gandhi would agitate among the workers on the sugar estates unless the strike on the coal mines proved successful.

The number of strikers now on the march is estimated at 4,000. Mr. Gorges told my Secretary today, that this morning a body of about 2,400, including approximately 130 women and 40 children, had crossed into the Transvaal. They would be allowed to proceed, in the hope that when they were well inside the Province, Mr. Kallenbach and Mr. Polak might be tempted by the supineness

of the Authorities to lead further bodies of men across the frontier. Those two gentlemen, whom the Department were particularly anxious to secure, would then be arrested on a charge of aiding and abetting the entry of prohibited immigrants into the Province. The rank and file would, so far as possible, be left undisturbed. The detention of Mr. Polak was particularly desirable, as he had been designated to proceed to India for the collection of funds.

Coloni al Office Record s: 551/45

1. CABLE T0 G. K. GOKHALE

DURBAN,
December 26, 1913

PRAY ASSURE HIS EXCELLENCY FROM YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF ME I WOULD DO EVERYTHING CONCEIVABLY POSSIBLE FOR ME NOT EMBARRASS OUR GOVERNMENT. I ASSURE YOU HIS UNFLINCHING ADVOCACY[1] HAS CREATED SILENT SUBTLE INFLUENCE FAVOUR BRITISH CONNECTION WHICH NO DECLARATION NO COMMISSIONS COULD POSSIBLY HAVE DONE. HIS UNEQUIVOCAL, COURAGEOUS PRONOUNCEMENT HAD RING SINCERITY WHICH PRODUCED PROPOUND IMPRESSION UPON EUROPEANS INDIANS. AM EXPECTING HOURLY REPLY FROM INTERIOR ABOUT PROPOSED PRIVATE INTERVIEW. OTHER LOCAL INFLUENCES WORKING OUR FAVOUR. YOU KNOW INTERIOR'S REPLY SAYS GOVERNMENT INTENDED MAKE COMMISSION IMPARTIAL; THAT THEY DID NOT CONSULT PLANTERS TIME APPOINTMENT STOP AT INTERVIEW IF GRANTED OTHERWISE PUBLICLY BEFORE MARCHING, SHALL ASSUME GOVERN MENT'S IMPARTIALITY WITHDRAW CHARGE PARTISAN CHARACTER AND FORSAKE MAKING GOOD FUNDAMENTAL POSITION, THAT OUR SENTIMENT SHOULD BE FORMALLY [OR] INFORMALLY CONSULTED RESPECTED AND FOR APPEASING COMMUNITY. IN PRESENT STATE TENSION, SUSPICION, INDIGNATION, REQUEST NOMINATION ONE ONLY ADDITION MEMBER OUR SIDE, PLANTERS HAVING RIGHT NOMINATE ONE THEIRS. APPREHEND NO DIFFICULTY REGARDING DISCHARGE PASSIVE RESISTANCE PRISONERS WE NOT ASKING SO CALLED PASSIVE RESISTERS, IF ANY, CONVICTED VIOLENCE STOP EVERYBODY ADMITS ABSOLUTE NECESSITY DISCHARGE. "PRETORIA NEWS" STRONGLY URGES GOVERNMENT ACCEPT PRAYER. COULD HIS EXCELLENCY POSSIBLY URGE ACCEPTANCE THIS MIDDLE COURSE WHICH, WITHOUT IMPAIRING OUR PRINCIPLE, WOULD CAUSE GOVERNMENT NO LOSS DIGNITY PRESTIGE, SMOOTHS WAY FUTURE PERMANENT SETTLEMENT. ARE TRYING OUR SIDE AND YOU

[1] The reference is to Lord Hardinge's speech at Madras on November 24. *Vide* "Lord Hardinge's Speech, 3-12-1913.

SHOULD YOURS TO SEE THAT IF FORTUNATELY WE ENABLED ACCEPT COMMISSION AND SUSPEND STRUGGLE. NO DOUBT LEFT COMMISSION COVERING ALL GRIEVANCES.[1]

GANDHI

Servants of India Society

2. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE[2]

DURBAN,
December 26, 1913

OATH INCLUDES NOT FIRST JANUARY. ALREADY PROMISED CLERGY REASONABLE POSTPONEMENT. NOTHING FROM INTERIOR YET.

GANDHI

Servants of India Society

3. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE

DURBAN,
December 26, 1913

SERVINDIA
POONA CITY

WEST WENT DELIVER MY CABLE FOUND YOURS[3] ABOUT FUNDS AND REPLIED. REASON FOR ASKING YOU HOLD FUNDS IS NONE KNOWS LIMIT TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT'S REPRESSIVE METHOD. THEY MAY UNDER MARTIAL LAW SEIZE EVERYTHING EVERYBODY. MARTIAL LAW WAS SERIOUSLY SUGGESTED. BETTER THEREFORE IF YOU HOLD FUNDS AND SEND AS REQUIRED. MOVEMENT SPREADING BEYOND ALL EXPECTATION. REMAIN BESIEGED BY PEOPLE ALL DAY. MARCH WILL BE POSTPONED

[1] Gokhale, in reply, cabled the next day: "I repeated yesterday Viceroy your cable asking him support, suggested middle course. He replies, many thanks telegram, repeating substance Lord Crewe,"

[2] This was in reply to the following cable of the same date from Gokhale: "Cable urgent if oath includes 1st January as definite date renewal. Has interview been granted."

[3] Gokhale's cable dated December 26 read: "Cabling tomorrow seven thousand Bombay one thousand Madras."

ALMOST CERTAINLY. WHILST THERE IS HOPE OF PEACE AM NOT FIXING PRELIMINARIES NECESSARY PROVIDING PROBABLY FIVE THOUSAND MARCHERS WHOSE RANKS MAY SWELL, TWENTY THOUSAND AS MOURNING BUT DETERMINED MEN WOMEN PROCEED. AM ATTENDING MASS MEETING[1] MARITZBURG SATURDAY. ARRANGING YOUR CABLES BEING REPEATED. WILL GIVE PROMPTEST ATTENTION CABLE INSTRUCTIONS.

GANDHI

Servants of India Society

4. LETTER TO MARSHALL CAMPBELL

110, FIELD STREET,
DURBAN,
December 26, 1913

DEAR MR. MARSHALL CAMPBELL[2],

I learnt only two or three days ago that you had returned from England. Will you allow me to tell you how deeply concerned I was when I learnt that your men were among the first to strike on the coast? At an important meeting, when I was actually asked why I would not advocate a strike on the sugar plantations also, I replied that we were endeavouring to confine the area to the collieries only, in the hope that the strike on the collieries would be a sufficient demonstration to secure relief. Whilst I was at Newcastle organizing relief for the collieries' men who had come out, I was asked by my co-workers in Durban what answer to give to the coastal Indians who wanted to join the movement, and I emphatically told them that the time was not ripe for them to do so. Later, too, when I was again approached, I made the same statement and one of my last letters[3] before my arrest was that, as we were so much indebted to you for your efforts to bring about the repeal of the £3 tax legislation, your men should be the last to be called out; but I am absolutely certain that after my arrest the workers found it impossible to control the men and the movement became not only spontaneous, but it assumed gigantic proportions. I would like you to enter into our feelings. Had I been free and assisted in calling out the men, I must freely admit that I would have certainly

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Maritzburg", 27-12-1913.
[2] Chairman, Board of Directors, Natal Estates, Ltd.
[3] These are not available.

endeavoured to call out your men also; but, as I have already stated, yours would have been the last estate.

As you know, in this struggle for honour and self-respect, and for the relief of the distress of my dumb and helpless countrymen, the indentured Indians, it was not possible for us to consider or confine the extent of our sufferings. In this struggle we have not hesitated to invite our own women and children to suffer and lose their all, and we could not very well be expected to consider the interests of individual friends and sympathisers. In all our strugglesof this nature the innocent as well as the guilty suffer. I hope, therefore, that neither my countrymen nor I have forfeited the valuable co-operation andsympathy which you have always extended. I may state that I am just now carrying on delicate negotiations with General Smuts, in spite of his rejection of our prayer, and if you have the leisure and could interest yourself in the negotiations, and if you would appoint a time and place, I would come over and discuss the situation.

Both Messrs Kallenbach and Polak, who have pleasant recollections of the luncheon you gave in honour of Mr. Gokhale, associate themselves in the sentiments I have expressed.[1]

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

THE HON. MARSHALL CAMPBELL

MOUNT EDGECOMBE

The Natal Mercury, 5-1-1914

5. INTERVIEW TO REUTER[2]

[DURBAN,
Before *December 27, 1913*]

Mr. Gandhi, interviewed by Reuter on the subject of the reply received from Government,[3] said that there seemed in it a tone of conciliation of which he was trying to take advantage. He would not state anything beyond saying that he had placed himself in private communication with the Government, but he thought that a way out of the deadlock was possible, and that, without any loss of

[1] For Marshall Campbell's reply *vide* footnotes to "Letter to Marshall Campbell", 1-1-1914

[2] This was reproduced in *lndian Opinion*, 31-12-1913.

[3] *Vide* "Lord Hardinge's Speech", 3-12-1913.

prestige or dignity, Government could respond to the earnest prayer of the Indian community for the representation of its interests. The Government's declaration that it, at any rate, did not intend the Commission to bear a partisan character was a hopeful sign.

He added that he wanted to assure the Europeans in South Africa that he felt just as much for the Europeans as for his own countrymen, regarding the sufferings to be undergone by them both in a struggle of this gigantic nature; and that, realizing fully his sense of responsibility, he would leave no stone unturned to avoid a revival of passive resistance.

He claimed to rank amongst the staunchest loyalists alike to the ImperialGovernment as to the Union Government and, his loyalty being rather to the Constitution than to persons, was unaffected by acts of the Government, however harsh he might consider them to be.

He, therefore, begged the citizens of South Africa to believe him in his declaration that he would leave nothing, short of compromising his own conscience, undone to avoid a recrudescence of the sufferings. On his release from imprisonment, he was deeply pained to learn that employers on the coast, for some of whom he entertained high regard, had to suffer losses. He only hoped that the Government would appreciate the private communication which he had made, and that the European public would lend their support even though it might be on trust.

The Natal Mercury, 27-12-1913

6. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE[1]

DURBAN,

December 27, 1913

WILL CERTAINLY POSTPONE TILL ROBERTSON'S ARRIVAL. MAY WE GIVE PUBLIC RECEPTION STOP IN EVENT PRESENT NEGOTIATIONS FAILING MAY WE ANNOUNCE WE AWAITING ARRIVAL

[1] This had reference to the following cable which Gandhiji received the same day from Gokhale: "Understand if Robertson starts twenty-ninth will reach about eighth. But arrangements departure suspended pending your definite promise that he will have at least one week there before you renew struggle. Viceroy meanwhile undertaking move Lord Crewe secure adjournment Commission till end week. Do you promise? Cable explicitly. You certainly entitled if your present negotiations fail announce reason postponement struggle, also to abstain from participation inquiry if Commission not adjourned. Public reception Robertson desirable." *Vide* also the following item.

BEFORE RECOMMENCING. MEANWHILE WE SHALL REFRAIN GIVING EVIDENCE.

GANDHI

Servants of India Society

7. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE

DURBAN,
December 27, 1913

I PROMISE SUSPEND MARCH UPTO ONE WEEK AFTER. ROBERTSON'S ARRIVAL PROVIDED HE LEAVES TWENTY-NINTH.[1] MEANWHILE HOPE PRESSURE WILL BE EXERCISED PROM INDIA ENGLAND REGARDING MY PROPOSAL SUBMITTED YESTERDAY AND ASKING GENERAL SMUTS GRANT REQUEST WITHOUT REFERENCE ROBERTSON'S ARRIVAL. MISS HOBHOUSE, STAUNCH FRIEND GOVERNMENT, HAS JUST WIRED ASKING ME SUSPEND MARCH AND SHE IS INTERVENING. SIMILARLY SYMPATHY BEING GAINED HERE. THIS POSITION SHOULD NOT BE DISTURBED EITHER BY VICEROY OR LORD CREWE UNDER PRESSURE FROM UNION GOVERNMENT AS HAPPENED DURING PASSAGE IMMIGRATION BILL BY EITHER APPROVING UNION GOVERNMENT ACTION OR CONDEMNING OURS. ON YOUR REPLY HERETO[2]

[1] This was in response to Gokhale's suggestion contained in a cable dated 27th reading: "Please make no public mention Viceroy moving Lord Crewe secure adjournment or what you will do if adjournment not granted this to avoid appearance threat. Confine announcement for the present statement you postpone renewal struggle pending arrival Robertson and one week after. Say, if necessary, you do this under strong pressure from India."

[2] Gokhale sent two cables the following day. The first cable was: "Have just sent following wire Viceroy: 'Gandhi promises not renew struggle till Sir Benjamin has had one week there after arrival. I have given Gandhi to understand Sir Benjamin starts immediately.' Impossible now Robertson start tomorrow. He must have at least one day hand over charge after receiving Viceroy's orders, and another for journey Nagpur to Bombay."

The second said: "Viceroy wires: 'In view promise given by Gandhi and my intense desire secure peaceful settlement, Robertson will leave first January arriving Durban about eleventh. Have asked Lord Crewe endeavour arrange with Union Government short postponement meeting Commission.' Viceroy wants you communicate freely with Robertson on arrival. He goes [to] give fullest assistance community. Viceroy, however, thinks it desirable you should know that if community resort passive resistance or violence, Robertson will immediately dissociate himself." For the full text of the Viceroy's cable to Gokhale, *vide* Viceryo's Telegram to G. K. Gokhale", 28-12-1913.

WILL ANNOUNCE THAT AT VICEROY'S DESIRE, BECAUSE ROBERTSON COMING, WE HAVE SUSPENDED MARCH WITHOUT COMMITTING OURSELVES TO COMMISSION AT PRESENT CONSTI-TUTED AND WITHOUT TAKING PART AT ITS SITTINGS. THIS ANNOUNCEMENT WILL NOT BE MADE UNTIL I HAVE DES-PAIRED OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH SMUTS. ANDREWS[1] WILL BE FULLY HONOURED. SO WILL ROBERTSON.

GANDHI

Servants of India Society

8. SPEECH AT MARITZBURG[2]

MARITZBURG,

[*December 27, 1913*]

Mr. Gandhi, in a speech of noteworthy moderation, intimated that negotiations of an important character were proceeding in connection with the grievances of the Indians. Indians had, he said, to await the final issue of the negotiations. He counselled them to be ready, as it might happen that they would be called upon to join in the march from Durban to the Transvaal to court arrest. He did not anticipate that the march would commence on January 1. It might not take place until January 15. And in the event of such a march taking place, they had to make all the necessary arrangements for commissariat, which was a matter of very great importance. He claimed, in the course of his speech, that they were simply seeking to obtain the elementary rights of humanity and ordinary justice.[3]

Indian Opinion, 31-12-1913

[1] Charles Frere Andrews (1871-1940); British missionary who took great interest in Viswabharati, University founded by Tagore; his devoted services for many years in the cause of the Indian people, especially those in distress or difficulty, won him the name "Deenabandhu", friend of the poor; he was deeply attached to Gandhiji.

[2] Gandhiji spoke at a meeting attended by about 1,000 Indians. This report was reproduced in *Indian Opinion* from *The Natal Mercury*.

[3] Parsee Rustomjee and H. S. L. Polak also addressed the gathering.

9. TELEGRAM TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR

[DURBAN,]

December 29, 1913

BEG THANK MINISTER FOR WIRE[1] VENTURE SUGGEST THAT ONE MEMBER BE SELECTED BY PLANTERS AND OTHERS AND ONE BY INDIAN COMMUNITY. THIS WILL ALLAY SUSPICION AND WILL BE AN EARNEST OF GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION NOT DISREGARD INDIAN SENTIMENT IN MATTERS VITALLY AFFECTING INDIAN COMMUNITY. WE SHALL MAKE PUBLIC STATEMENT THAT WE ACCEPT THE ASSURANCE OF GOVERNMENT THAT THEY DID NOT INTEND GIVE COMMISSION PARTISAN CHARACTER BUT THAT AT OUR EARNEST REQUEST THEY HAVE APPOINTED ADDITIONAL COMMISSIONERS TO REPRESENT US GIVING THE SAME RIGHT TO PLANTERS AND OTHERS. I MAY STATE THAT I SHALL BE PREPARED ADVISE MY COUNTRYMEN ACCEPT A SINGLE MEMBER COMMISSION SIR WILLIAM SOLOMON BEING SOLE MEMBER IF GOVERNMENT COULD SEE THEIR WAY ACCEPT MY HUMBLE PROPOSAL. FROM THE TONE OF THE REPLY DATED 24TH INSTANT I ASSUME THAT THERE WOULD BE NO DIFFICULTY ABOUT DISCHARGEING BONA FIDE PASSIVE RESISTANCE PRISONERS AT PRESENT UNDERGOING IMPRISONMENT BUT NOT SO CALLED PASSIVE RESISTERS WHO MAY HAVE BEEN GUILTY OF VIOLENCE. ALSO THAT THE REFERENCE TO THE COMMISSION WOULD BE WIDENED SO AS TO INCLUDE AN INQUIRY INTO ALL THE GRIEVANCES AND TO BRING IT IN A LINE WITH SIR WILLIAM SOLOMON'S STATEMENT AT THE OPENING SITTING. THIS CONCESSION BEING MADE WE SHALL UNDERTAKE SUSPEND PASSIVE RESISTANCE PENDING FINDING COMMISSION. IF GOVERNMENT AT ALL VIEW MY SUBMISSION WITH FAVOUR I STILL RESPECTFULLY PRESS FOR INTERVIEW WHICH WILL FACILITATE SETTLEMENT MATTERS OF DETAIL. SHORTHAND NOTES MAY BE TAKEN AT THE INTERVIEW SO AS TO AVOID ANY FUTURE MISUNDERSTANDING. IF GOVERNMENT COULD ENABLE ME ANNOUNCE ACCEPTANCE PRAYER BEFORE NEW YEAR'S EVE IT WOULD RELIEVE TENSION AND MY COUNTRY

[1] *Vide 1st* footnote of Telegram to Minister of Interior", 25-12-1913.

MEN WOULD BE ABLE TO LOOK FORWARD TO NEW YEAR WITH HOPE AND FEEL GRATEFUL FOR GOVERNMENT'S ACT OF JUSTICE.[1]

GANDHI

Colonial Office Records: 55l/46

10. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE

DURBAN,
December 29, 1913

SERVINDIA
POONA CITY

NO FURTHER WAY OUT POSSIBLE STOP IF WE MUST LOSE LORD CREWE'S INDIA'S SYMPATHY WE MUST BE CONTENT. ALL I HOPE YOU WILL KINDLY DO IS NOT BE OVER-ANXIOUS ABOUT US. WE HERE ARE PERFECTLY CHEERFUL SUFFERING IS WHAT WE BARGAINED FOR AND WE SHALL TAKE IT STOP SERIOUS ENOUGH POSTPONE MARCH PEOPLE DESPITE WARNINGS ALREADY SELLING FEW BELONGINGS ANTI-CIPATION STOP WHERE SO MUCH EARNESTNESS DESPITE WITH-DRAWAL OUTSIDE HELP THERE IS HOPE STOP SENDING STATEMENT[2] LATER.

GANDHI

National Archives of India: File No. 45 Courtesy: Servants of India Society

[1] For the Minister of the Interior's response to this representation, *vide* "Telegram from Minister of Interior", 5-1-1914 The subject matter of these communications was covered in a secret despatch of December 31 addressed by the Governor-General to the Colonial Office, which incidentally threw light on Sir William Solomon's own reaction—apart from the Government's—to Gandhiji's proposals for reconstituting the Commission. *Vide*"Telegram from Minister of Interior", 5-1-1914

[2] *Vide* the following item.

11. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE[1]

DURBAN,
December 29, 1913

SERVINDIA
POONA CITY

INDIANS CONSIDER COMMISSION AS AT PRESENT CONSTITUTED PACKED. ALMOST ENTIRE SOUTH AFRICAN PRESS AGREER EASONABLENESS INDIAN SUGGESTIONS AS TO ADDITIONAL MEMBERSHIP. ESSELEN WYLIE KNOWN GENERALLY ADMITTEDTO BE AMONG STRONGEST VIOLENTEST ANTI-ASIATIC PARTI-SANS STOP COMMISSION ACCORDING CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT INVESTIGATING NOT ONLY MATTERS FACTS AS TO ILL-TREATMENT BUT ALSO POLICY SUCH AS GRIEVANCES STOP THOUGH INTEGRITY CHAIRMAN UNDOUBTED HE COULDN'T CON-TROL COLLEAGUES MATTERS POLICY. COMMISSION NOT MERELY JUDICIAL BUT POLITICAL ALSO AS EVIDENCED FROM VERY

[1] This was sent in response to the following cable, dated December 28, from Gokhale: "Necessary now explain country your position. Best course you cable me immediately for publication compact connected statement four hundred words or more if necessary first detailing your objections Esselen Wylie and explaining your reasons distrusting Commission generally. Secondly feeling and advice friendly Europeans South Africa about Commission. Thirdly describing briefly but effectively cruel treatment passive resistance prisoners, including ladies gaol. Fourthly any other circumstances stirring indignation community before meeting Sunday. Fifthly declaration made at meeting and reasons for same. Sixthly any negotiations going on to which public reference may be made. Seventhly present position and prospects. And lastly any message you would like send India. Let statement be conciliatory but firm in tone, appreciative Viceroy's support so far and calculated inspire hope this country. Statement should arrive here Tuesday morning without fail." On December 30, at 9.30 a.m., Gandhiji received a cable from Gokhale saying: "Publishing statement with additions important details previous cables." Gokhale released the statement to the Press on December 31 and sent Gandhiji the following cable: "Have issued statement today after editing and incorporating into it portions some previous cables. Statements sentiments wholly yours, language occasionally altered suit requirements here. Expect will have excellent effect. Bombay cabled seven thousand yesterday, Madras cabling one thousand. Had intended seeing Robertson Bombay tomorrow before departure, but doctor forbids. Sending him special note our case with Shastri." For the text of the statement issued by Gokhale, *vide* "Statement issued by G.K. Gokhale", 31-12-1913.

PERSONNEL STOP INDIAN POSITION ALWAYS HAS BEEN IN-SIST ON COMMUNITY'S BEING CONSULTED EITHER FORMALLY OR INFORMALLY REGARDING MATTERS VITALLY AFFECTING IT STOP IN CONSTITUTING PRESENT COMMISSION ON INDIAN SENTIMENT NOT ONLY NOT CONSULTED BUT CONTEMPTUOUSLY IGNORED STOP DURING RECENT DEADLOCK EUROPEAN RAILWAYMEN'S GRIEVANCES MEN PERMITTED CHOOSE THEIR NOMINEE BY REFERENDUM STOP WE MERELY ASK INFORMAL CONSULTATION STOP AGAIN BEFORE DISCHARGE THREE LEADERS THEY WERE NOT INFORMED REASONS THEREFORE NOR CONSULTED AS TO COMMISSION STOP SCORES MEETINGS PRIOR DISCHARGE PROTESTED NOMINATIONS WHICH WERE ALL IGNORED STOP PEOPLE'S INDIGNATION WAS WHITE HEAT OWING FLOGGINGS SEEN THEIR OWN EYES SHOOTING WHICH THEY BELIEVE UNJUSTIFIED REPORTS HARROWING TREATMENT GAOLS WHEREON PASSIVE RESISTERS HAD RESORT HUNGER STRIKE ORDER SECURE ORDINARILY HUMANE TREATMENT. PRISON TREATMENT INCLUDES INSULTS BY WARDERS FREQUENT ASSAULTS BY ZULU WARDERS NOT SUPPLY BLANKETS SANDALS SOCKS BOOKS. ALSO BAD FOOD OFTEN BADLY COOKED BY ZULUS STOP THIS INFUSE INDIGNATION ADDED TO BY KNOWLEDGE COMMUNITY'S FEELINGS COMPLETELY IGNORED AS TO CONSTITUTION COMMISSION STOP PEOPLE ALSO FELT THIS AS INDICATION GOVERNMENT'S DISINCLINATION GIVE FAIR PLAY. DISCHARGE LEADERS INTERPRETED NOT ACT GRACE BUT CHALLENGE TO COMMUNITY. THEREFORE INSTEAD PRIVATELY APPLYING FOR ENLARGEMENT COMMISSION COMMUNITY OPENLY DEMANDED IT SHOWING WHAT WOULD HAPPEN EVENT REJECTION DEMANDS STOP FEELING THAT IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES ACCEPTANCE PRESENT COMMISSION IMPLIED COMMUNITY'S SURRENDER SELF RESPECT. MASS MEETING TWENTY FIRST ACTUATED BY RELIGIOUS FERVOUR PASSED RESOLUTIONS TAKING OATH NOT ACCEPT PRESENT COMMISSION BUT REVIVE STRUGGLE UNLESS ABOVE DEMANDS AFFECTING VITAL PRINCIPLE GRANTED STOP COMMUNITY DEEPLY GRATEFUL AND SUSTAINED BY REASON VICEROY'S HUMAN SPEECH MADRAS AND HIS EXCELLENCY'S SUBSEQUENT PERSISTENT ADVOCACY OUR CAUSE SUPPORT FROM INDIAN ENGLISH PUBLIC TOO HAVE CONSOLED IT DURING

TERRIBLE CRISIS STOP EUROPEAN FRIENDS HERE PRESENTLY ENDEAVOURING REMOVE DEADLOCK SECURE ACCEPTANCE COMMUNITY'S PRAYER FOR CONSULTATION AND ADDITIONAL IMPARTIAL NOMINATIONS STOP CAN BUT HOPE INDIA WILL EFFECTIVELY SUPPORT OUR PRAYER WHICH UNIVERSALLY ADMITTED INTRINSICALLY JUST STOP EXCEPTION HAS BEEN TAKEN TO FORM PRESENTATION THEREOF BUT WE CANNOT BE HAMPERED AT PRESENT CRITICAL JUNCTURE BY MERE CONSIDERATIONS ETIQUETTE STOP WE MUST NOT BE PENALIZED BY GOVERNMENT'S CRIMINAL BLUNDER NOT CONSULTING COMMUNITY AND APPOINTING MEMBERS TO WHOSE NOMINATION GOVERNMENT MUST HAVE KNOWN THERE WOULD BE TREMENDOUS OPPOSITION STOP WE WOULD BE PREPARED LEAD EVIDENCE BEFORE SIR WILLIAM SOLOMON ALONE WHO SHOULD SIMPLY ENQUIRE CHARGES FLOGGING ACTS MILITARY OTHER ILL-TREATMENT. BUT COMMUNITY MORE INTERESTED REMOVAL GRIEVANCES THAN PROVING ILL-TREATMENT STOP FINALLY ASSURE COUNTRYMEN SITUATION SO DESPERATE THAT ANY ATTEMPT ON PART LEADERS EVEN IF SO INCLINED DEPART FROM ESSENCE DEMANDS WOULD RESULT THEIR BEING KILLED AND JUSTLY SO STOP GENERAL SMUTS HAS REPLIED MY COMMUNICATION ASKINGTHAT PROPOSALS MAY BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING PROMISING CONSIDERATION. HAVE WIRED PROPOSAL WHICH I HOLD OFFERS HONOURABLE VIA MEDIA.

GANDHI

National Archives of India: File No. 45 Courtesy: Servants of India Society

12. INTERVIEW TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"[1]

[DURBAN,
December 29, 1913]

[GANDHIJI:] The effect of the Indian Congress resolutions which we have received certainly strengthens our position, because the Congress has given its powerful and unanimous support, and it has expressed entire approval of our prayer that Indian interests should be represented on the Commission. I can therefore only hope that, what with the Congress's support, and what with the efforts that are being made by influential European friends today to induce the Government to concede our prayer—which has been hailed by the whole South African Press as being just in itself— that this prayer will be granted by the Government.

Unless we have a satisfactory reply in reference to our prayer, it will not be possible for us to take any part in the Commission; but just now, at the request of friends who have intervened, and in view of the fact that I am still in telegraphic communication with the Government, we have decided not to proceed with the contemplated march to Pretoria on January 1, but that we shall wait until we know that we have left no stone unturned to arrive at an honourable settlement, and that there is no hope of such a settlement being concluded. For the present, the march is only suspended; but all the evidence I am receiving day by day forces the gravity of the situation on my attention. I see poor men are already making preparations, and people who go and tell them that the march is not to be proceeded with on January 1 are not even believed. I am therefore endeavouring to circulate a leaflet[2] signed by myself informing everyone that we are suspending the march for the time being.

Asked if it was intended to call out the Indians on strike again on January 1,

[1] Gandhiji was interviewed by a representative of *The Natal Mercury* about the effect of the Indian National Congress resolutions on the South African question. These resolutions, adopted at the Karachi session, December 26-28, protested against the treatment still meted out to Indians in South Africa, declared that the people of the British dominions which refused Indians the rights of British citizens should be ineligible for appointments in India, and demanded the abolition of indentured labour.

[2] This is not available.

Mr. Gandhi said:

We are not calling out the men on January l. But, we shall leave no stone unturned to bring about a strike, only with a view to bringing about imprisonment, and nothing else, if all the endeavours we are making for a settlement with the Government come to naught. I am hoping that the contemplated march will not be necessary, and there are reasons for my thinking that it may not be; but the communications that are in my possession are of such a delicate nature that it is not possible for me to say anything further at this stage.

Mr. Gandhi proceeded to say that he was pained deeply that the indignation of the Indians was aggravated by the stories of distress by the passive resisters released from gaol. He proceeded to detail allegations of "brutal and barbarous treatment" in Durban Gaol—that assaults were committed by Native warders on passive resisters, that complaints were unheeded, and that many of the prisoners were suffering from dysentery. It was also alleged that they were given unwashed prison clothing to wear, were denied the use of books, and were chaffed by responsible officers. Prisoners were stated to have been even bathed in sheep-dip after taking their bath, while allegations were made that many prisoners had to hunger-strike before their religious susceptibilities were respected. All these allegations Mr. Gandhi was reducing to affidavits, to be sent to the Government for investigation.

The Natal Mercury, 30-12-1913

13. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE[1]

[DURBAN,
December 30, 1913]

SERVINDIA
POONA CITY

TRUST ME TO DIE TO MAKE GOOD WORD GIVENBY YOU MY NAME. HAVE NOT GIVEN REASONS POSTPONEMENT BUT TOLD PUBLIC WE SHALL SUSPEND

[1] The message was conveyed through Reuter. Gokhale had cabled Gandhiji the previous day: "Reuter wires you have announced 15th as date renewal. Robertson leaving first and arriving about 11th. Delay starting due to your promise reaching me only 28th and Viceroy's orders reaching Robertson only yesterday afternoon. He hands over charge today and leaves Nagpur tomorrow. I have guaranteed that you will wait one week after Robertson's arrival and feel confident you will make my word good."

MARCH UP TO FIFTEENTH EARLIEST. ASSURE YOU WE SHALL WAIT ONE WEEK EVEN LONGER AFTER ROBERTSON'S ARRIVAL STOP AFTER RECEIPT SMUTS' FINAL REPLY WILL IF SATISFACTORY HAVE ANNOUNCE STATEMENT. PROPOSE SAYING AS VICEROY'S REPRESENTATIVE COMING IF ONLY OUT OF DEFERENCE WE SHALL DO NOTHING UNTIL HE HAS HAD OPPORTUNITY EXAMINING SITUATION. PRESS CABLES ANNOUNCE YOU ABSENT CONGRESS ILL HEALTH. PLEASE ENLIGHTEN US.

GANDHI

National Archives of India: File No. 45 Courtesy: Servants of India Society

14. LETTER TO "THE NATAL MERCURY"

DURBAN,
December 30, 1913

SIR,

Your first leader in today's issue of your paper invites a statement from me, which I hope you will permit me to make.

You imagine that a more potent reason for delaying the contemplated march is "to be found in the fact that the mass of the local Indian community could not be relied upon to join in the resuscitation of a form of conflict which recoiled most injuriously upon the Indians themselves". There are other inferences, also, you have drawn from the delay, with which I shall not deal at present. I, however, assure you that you are wrongly informed if you consider that the mass of the local Indian community is not to be relied upon to join the march, if it has ever to be undertaken. On the contrary, the difficulty to-day is even to delay it and my co-workers and I have been obliged to send special messengers and to issue special leaflets[1] in order to advise the people that the march must be postponed for the time being. I admit that speculation as to whether the mass of the local Indian community will or will not join the march is fruitless, because this will be, if it has to be, put to the test at no distant date. I give my own view in order that the public may not be lulled into a sense offalse belief that the movement is confined to a few only among the community.

[1] These are not available.

The chief reason, therefore, for trespassing upon your courtesy is to inform the South African public through your columns that, whilst the great National Congress that has just closed its session at Karachi was fully justified in asking, and was bound to ask, for full citizen rights throughout the British Dominions for all the King's subjects, irrespective of caste, colour, or creed, and whilst they may not and ought not to be bound by local considerations, we in South Africa have repeatedly made it clear that, as sane people [we] are bound to limit our ambition by local circumstances, we are bound to recognize the widespread prejudice, however unjustified it may be, and, having done so, we have declared—and I venture to re-declare through your columns—that my co-workers and I shall not be party to any agitation which has for its object the free and unrestricted immigration of British Indians into the Union or the attainment of the political franchise in the near future. That these rights may come in time will, I suppose, be admitted by all; but when they do come, they will not be obtained by forcing the pace, as passive resistance is undoubtedly calculated to do, but by otherwise educating public opinion, and by the Indian community so acquitting itself in the discharge of all the obligations that flow from citizenship of the British Empire as to have these rights given to them as a matter of course. Meanwhile, so far as my advice counts for anything, I can only suggest that the efforts of the Indian community should be concentrated upon gaining or regaining every lost civil right or every such right at present withheld from the community; and I hold that even this will not happen unless we are ready to make an effective protest against our civic destruction by means of passive resistance, and unless through our self-suffering we have demonstrated to the European public that we are a people that cherishes its honour and self respect as dearly as any people on earth.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 31-12-1913

15. HINDI AND TAMIL

The satyagraha campaign, as carried on this time and still continuing, has hardly a parallel in history. The real credit for this goes to the Hindi and Tamil speaking brothers and sisters living in this country. Their sacrifice has been the highest of all. Some of them

have even lost their lives, killed by the bullets of the white soldiers. As a tribute to their memory, we have decided to give Hindi and Tamil news in this paper. Some years ago, we used to bring out this paper in these two languages as well, but we had to discontinue the practice owing to some difficulties.[1] Those difficulties are not yet over. And yet, we resume publication in these languages for the duration of the struggle, that being, in our judgment, the least that we must do, even at some inconvenience to ourselves, in honour of communities whose members have made such sacrifices in a struggle of this kind. It is not with a commercial motive that we are publishing in these languages. Whether or not to continue the practice after the struggle is over we can only decide in the light of the circumstances then prevailing.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 31-12-1913

16. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE[2]

DURBAN,
December 31, 1913

SERVINDIA
POONA CITY

SUGGESTION POLAK GOING LONDON FULLY WEIGHED. HAD HOPED BE ABLE SEND. WE ALL THINK SITUATION DEMANDS HIS PRESENCE HERE. IF COMMISSION ENLARGED HE MUST BE HERE GIVE EVIDENCE. IF MARCH UNDER TAKEN EVERY LEADER NECESSARY. HE TOO MADE

[1] Publication of Hindi and Tamil columns was suspended in 1906 owing to difficulty in securing the "services of the necessary editors and compositors"; *vide* "Our Tamil and Hindi Columns", 3-2-1906.

[2] This was in response to a cable Gandhiji had received earlier in the day from Gokhale: "I have promised Ramsay MacDonald that Polak would send him immediately full statement on indenture system and three pounds tax, also fairly detailed account of our strike and methods adopted suppress it. MacDonald hopes raise questions debate address, so Polak must send statement earliest possible. You have not replied my suggestion about Polak going England beginning February. Strongly think it indispensable." *Vide* also footnote I to "Cable to G. K. Gokhale", 22-12-1913

SOLEMN DECLARATION. FULL STATEMENT PREPARING DESPATCH MACDONALD. SEVEN THOUSAND RECEIVED.

GANDHI

National Archives of India: File No. 45 Courtesy: Servants of India Society

17. LETTER TO MARSHALL CAMPBELL

110, FIELD STREET,
DURBAN,
January 1, 1914

DEAR MR. MARSHALL CAMPBELL,

I am much obliged to you for your letter of the 30th ultimo, and for frankly expressing your feelings. I see that recent events have caused a breach between my friends and myself which must be left to time and future uniform conduct on my part to heal. I can only give you my assurance that I know of no agent who has been permitted to encourage or advise violence.[1] It is the essence of passive resistance to be free from violent methods even under circumstances the most provoking. I know you will permit me to say that neither Mr. Gokhale's acceptance nor the Indian Committee's acceptance of your hospitality can be allowed to interfere with what Mr. Gokhale or we here might consider to be our public duty.[2]

The strike and the subsequent courting of imprisonment were not intended to be a protest against the general treatment of indentured Indians, but against the Government's breach of promise given to India's greatest representative, and the injustice of perpetuating a cruel tax which has been so universally condemned. Passive resistance, which your letter seems to condemn in unmeasured

[1] In his letter dated December 30, Marshall Campbell had written, *inter alia*, ". . . I may add that they [indentured labourers] were only induced to come out by grave threats of personal violence made by persons whom I believe to be your agents, two of whom were arrested and fined."

[2] This had reference to Marshall Campbell's remarks in his letter: "Mr. Gokhale and your Committee accepted my hospitality, and ate of my salt less than 12 months ago, and between 10,000 and 15,000 Victoria County Indians did the same."

terms,[1] has been the only weapon of the community for securing redress of grievances for the last six years, and whilst each stage of it in its commencement has evoked such condemnation as you have seen fit to pronounce, reflection that, as time went on, public men were able to give to the struggle, justified it in their estimation. In a large measure it brought about the relief for which the weapon was used. This time it has covered a larger range, it has caused much greater suffering both in intensity and extent, and has, therefore, called forth a great, though not unexpected, outburst of indignation, especially from parties immediately affected. It is hoped that the Government will, in deciding upon the proposals submitted to them after the utmost consideration, be guided by wisdom and justice rather than by expedience. Should it, therefore, be otherwise, and should they reject our prayer, much as I dislike it, I fear that a recrudescence of the struggle is inevitable. Posterity alone will be able to judge as to the wisdom or otherwise of those who are at present guiding the Indians.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 5-1-1914

[1] Campbell had observed: "If anything, it, in my opinion, aggravates the unfortunate blunder of your policy. More than this, no movement can be successful, however high the ideals of its founders, if it involves the suffering of innocent and guilty alike; the inherent injustice of such an effect must work its ruin, and you will pardon me if I say quite frankly, though as a friend, that many of those you lead are realizing the weakness of your policy more and more every day, and are coming to the conclusion that to use a large body of, in the main, contented but ignorant people, namely, the indentured labourers, by inflaming their passions with high words, false hopes incapable of realization, and violent threats, as a tool for procuring political rights by which most of them will never benefit, even if they are ever attained, to put it very mildly, is not a policy dictated by wisdom and far-sightedness."

18. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE[1]

DURBAN,
January 1, 1914

SERVINDIA
POONA CITY

"UMTALI" EXPECTED HOURLY[2] CABLE STATE HEALTH MANYANXIOUS INQUIRIES.

GANDHI

National Archives of India: File No. 45 Courtesy: Servants of India Society

19. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE

DURBAN,
January 2, 1914

SERVINDIA
POONA CITY

ANDREWS PEARSON[3] DULY HONOURED.[4] FEELING WELL. THEY SEND LOVE. ROUGH PASSAGE.

GANDHI

National Archives of India: File No. 45 Courtesy: Servants of India Society

[1] This was evidently in reply to Gokhale's cable of December 31, 1913, inquiring if C. F. Andrews and W. W. Pearson had arrived.

[2] S.S. *Umtali* was due to arrive on December 28; but it had encountered stormy weather and actually reached Durban harbour five days later, on January 2.

[3] William Winstanley Pearson; had worked in Bengal as a missionary and collaborated with Andrews in Y.M.C.A. work; for some time, teacher at Santiniketan; in South Africa, studied the conditions of Indian labour on Natal Sugar estates.

[4] At the Wharf were Gandhiji, several Indian associates, H. S. L. Polak, A. H. West and a number of European clergymen including the Rev. Archdeacon Gregson. On landing, Andrews greeted Polak and asked: "Where is Mr. Gandhi?" Polak turned to a slight ascetic figure, dressed in a white *dhoti* and *kurta* of such coarse material as an indentured labourer might wear. Andrews bent swiftly down and touched Gandhi's feet. *Charles Freer Andrews*,.

20. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE[1]

DURBAN,
January 2, 1914

THE REV. C. F. ANDREWS AND THE REV. W. PEARSON HAVE ARRIVED AND WERE ACCORDED A MOST CORDIAL RECEPTION BY THE INDIAN COMMUNITY. THEY HAD A VERY ROUGH PASSAGE. WE ARE NOW TRYING TO SECURE THE ADDITION TO THE COMMISSIONOF AT LEAST ONE EUROPEAN MEMBER IN WHOSE IMPARTIALITY WE HAVE CONFIDENCE. THE PLANTERS, IF NECESSARY, ARE TO BE ALLOWED TO NOMINATE ONE ON THEIR SIDE. I SINCERELY HOPE INDIA WILL SUPPORT US IN THIS. PRAY ASK ALL NOT TO BE OVER-ANXIOUS ON OUR ACCOUNT. WE DISCOVERED ON OUR RELEASE THAT A LARGE NUMBER OF OUR COMMUNITY HAD SHOWN UNEXPECTED POWERS OF ENDURANCE AND SUFFERING, AND WE WERE ASTONISHED AT THE UNLOOKED FOR ABILITY SHOWN BY INDENTURED INDIANS WITHOUT EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP TO ACT WITH DETERMINATION AND DISCIPLINE. WE ARE QUITE CHEER-FUL IN OUR CALAMITY PREPARING FOR AND AWAITING EVENTS.

The Times of India, 5-1-1914

[1] This cable was reportedly sent after a meeting of Andrews and the Indian leaders. He had asked Gandhiji: "Isn't it simply a question of Indians' honour? Gandhi's eyes flashed. 'Yes!' he said vehemently, 'That is it, that is it. That is the real point at issue.' 'Then', said Andrews, 'I am sure you are right to stand out. There must be no sacrifice of honour.' He and Gandhi were friends from that hour; within two or three days they were 'Mohan' and 'Charlie' to one another." *Charles Freer Andrews*,.

21. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE[1]

DURBAN,
January 3, 1914

SERVINDIA
POONA CITY

GODFREY ILL INFORMED QUESTION KNOWLEDGE ILL DIGESTED. ASKED HIM PLACE HIMSELF YOUR DISPOSAL. PLEASE TAKE REST DURING SUSPENSION. NO SUMMARY REUTER. ANDREWS WANTS ME PASS ONE WEEK WITH HIM PHOENIX HAVE AGREED. SUBJECT YOUR SANCTION FEEL HARILAL SHOULD COME. HE VOWED SEE STRUGGLE THROUGH AS RESISTER. SHOULD BE PERMITTED FULFIL OBLIGATION. MY OPINION GAOL OTHER EXPERIENCES SUBSTANTIAL EDUCATION.

GANDHI

National Archives of India: File No. 45 Courtesy: Servants of India Society

22. SPEECH AT RECEPTION TO C. F. ANDREWS[2]

[DURBAN,
January 4, 1914]

Mr. Gandhi said that, for the past twenty years, it had invariably been his duty to act the part of interpreter of the chairman's speech when it was delivered in the Hindi or Gujarati language. He had been asked to do soon this occasion. The chairman had said that the small purse of gold represented the hearty sympathy of their people

[1] This was in reply to the following cable dated January 2 from Gokhale: "Robertson started yesterday. Communicated your intention giving reception arrival. He, however, thinks best plan small deputation meet him demonstration might cause misunderstanding. He has sent message he will do his best for community. Papers announce Godfrey arrived Bombay cable how far he is trustworthy. Am suffering accumulation fluid cavity heart result extreme exhaustion system. Must lie bed several days. Your statement published yesterday made up of various cables and elaborated to nearly two thousand words. Bringing public opinion strongly round your side. Has Reuter cabled summary."

[2] On Sunday morning, Andrews and Pearson were given a reception by the Indian Hawkers' Association at the Surat Hindu Association Dharmashala in Victoria Street. Gandhiji was given a purse of £60 as donation to passive resistance funds.

for the movement. They might not all be able to go to prison, but they wished to show that they were heart and soul in the movement. The Hindus of Durban extended a warm welcome to their guests from India. When the announcement was made in the papers of their coming, it gave a new hope to them in a time of darkness. They felt that the hand of God was upon their movement. The chairman mentioned one grievance which he was desirous of bringing to the notice of Messrs Andrews and Pearson. That was the fact that many of their caste fellows, who had the right of domicile, had been refused admittance by the Immigration Officer, who took advantage of some slight flaw in their evidence and sent them back to India, away from their friends, to face poverty there.

Indian Opinion, 7-1-1914

23. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

110, FIELD STREET,
DURBAN,
January 4, 1914

MY DEAR BOY,

I was delighted to receive your letter. In the first place, ever since my discharge I have had not a minute's rest and I hardly get full sleep any day. In the second place, there were so many to whom I should have written, that I thought I would neglect you all and you would understand the reason why; but your letter compels me to write to you. I think that, on your discharge,[1] you will see both mother and me. Ramdas is looking well and has done well. Devdas has proved a hero. He has developed a sense of responsibility which was unexpected. Purbhoodas did almost equally well, but he is not so quick as Devdas. All the women folk are well and are looking forward to meeting you all. I am sorry that you were not able to read much. I think that, if you approach the Magistrate for more books, he will grant you the permission and you may remind him that you had all the books you desired granted to you at Johannesburg and elsewhere. You will be pleased to hear that I had become a most industrious student at Bloemfontein and I was sincerely sorry to have my studies interrupted. I gave about eight hours a day to solid reading and writing, principally Tamil. The authorities kindly gave me every

[1] Manilal Gandhi was serving a three months' sentence for participating in the passive resistance movement.

facility. Jamnadas arrived, as you perhaps knew, before you were imprisoned. He is in Christiana. Harilal may return shortly. The money was sent to Medh's father. With love from us all.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a microfilm of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5687 Courtesy: Louis Fischer

24. INTERVIEW TO REUTER

DURBAN,

January 4, 1914

Interviewed by Reuter with regard to the correspondence which has been exchanged between Senator Campbell, the well-known sugar planter, and Mr. Gandhi, the latter said that he had appealed to Mr. Campbell to continue his co-operation and sympathy.

Mr. Campbell in reply stated that he adhered to his opinion that the three pound tax should be repealed and still supported Indians seeking redress from harsh administration and the licensing laws, bus that nevertheless he appealed to Mr. Gandhi to desist from lawlessness and not to refuse to accept a Commission composed of men with judicial minds and of known integrity.

Mr. Gandhi replied that the strike and the subsequent courting of imprisonment were a protest against the Government's breach of the promise to Mr. Gokhale and the three pound tax, not against the general treatment of indentured Indians. He feared a recrudescence of former measures if the Government rejected the Indians' prayers.[1]

The Hindu, 5-1-1914

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Marshall Campbell", 1-1-1914.

25. LETTER TO EMILY HOBHOUSE

110 FIELD STREET, DURBAN,
January 5, 1914

DEAR MISS HOBHOUSE[1],

It was a perfect pleasure to have received your very kind and generous letter. Had I known how to approach you before, I would undoubt-edly have endeavoured to enlist your large heart in our behalf. It was during the Boer war that I came to admire your selfless devotion to Truth, and I have often felt how nice it would be if the Indian cause could plead before you for admission; and it is evident to me that your first telegram[2] uttering a note of warning was an answer to that yearning. I am loathe to write to you on this question,as Miss Mol-teno[3] has told me how feeble you are now in health. She was good enough to read to me a part of Miss Greene's[4] letter, telling her in most pathetic tones how it was the duty of those who loved you to refrain from imposing fresh burdens on you. I am, therefore, torn by conflicting emotions. But, as Miss Molteno, who knows you better assures me that [*sic*] to expect you now not to interest yourself in our cause is to misjudge you and to aggravate your illness, because you would, she says, fret about us without being enabled by us to render your assistance effective.

If your health permits and if the climate on the North Coast of Natal would not be too trying for you, I would esteem it a privilege if you could take rest on the little settlement at Phoenix where *Indian*

[1] Miss Emily Hobhouse, the daughter of Lord Hobhouse, who at the time of the Boer War, moved among the Boer women and encouraged them to stand up against the concentration camps ; *vide* "Speech at Antyaj Conference, Nagpur", 25-12-1920 and "Speech at Commonwealth of India League", 12-11-1931.

[2] Of December 27, 1913, which read: "Kindly postpone the rally by fifteen days on the plea of an humble woman like me." *Vide* also "Cable to G.K. Gokhale", 17-12-1913.

[3] Elizabeth Mari (Betty) Molteno (1852-1927); eldest daughter of Sir John Charles Molteno, the first Prime Minister of Cape Colony; she did her best for the Indians in South Africa.

[4] Alice Greene, sister of Graham Greene, was a friend and companion of Miss Molteno.

Opinion[1] is published. Miss Molteno knows the settlement well. It is situated about eighty feet above sea-level and is exposed to certain winds which sweep across the hills that overlook the settlement and purify the atmosphere. The scenery around is certainly very charming, the site is beautifully isolated, there is no bustle or noise, it is two miles from the nearest station and I venture to think that you will find loving hands to administer to your wants, and nothing would give me personally greater pleasure than, if I were free, to be able to wait upon you and nurse you. You will, I hope, consider this offer a coming from the heart and without the slightest hesitation accept it if you can.

I will not weary you with copies of correspondence and details about the question. I enclose the telegrams exchanged between General Smuts and myself, which speak for themselves. We have always accepted what we could get in matters of detail, but, in this matter of the Commission[2], we are solemnly bound to sacrifice ourselves for the principle of consultation[3]. In striving to secure this recognition of an elementary right, if we must, for the time being, forfeit public sympathy, we must be prepared to do so. Knowing that the truth is on our side, past experience will enable us to have patience, and, as days go on, the mists of ignorance will be removed, the cloud will lift and I have no doubt that Truth will conquer. What we have asked for is the smallest measure and, if the Government obstinately refuses to grant that measure of

justice, surely it will be an indication of their disinclination to recognize the status of British Indians throughout the Union. Indeed, through my twenty years' experience, I have been able to gather many an indication of the same spirit and it is really against that that we are fighting. In those matters to which Passive Resistance is directed, I hold there can be no compromise. Could Daniel have compromised by bowing to one of the laws of Moses and the Persians and not to others, or would the whole body of those laws have represented the influence of Satan and, therefore, been unacceptable *in toto*?

The last paragraph of your letter seems to assume that we are following the tactics of the high-souled militants of England. May I say that we have not only not copied them, but, wherever it has been

[1] A Weekly published by Gandhiji
[2] Indian Grievances Commission; *ibid*
[3] *ibid*

necessary, I have drawn a sharp distinction between their methods and ours? Indeed, I used to have long discussions with the followers of the great Mrs. Pankhurst[1] on this very question. At no stage do we believe in the use of physical force, but I am free to confess that we have certainly been encouraged, in the hour of our weakness, by the noble example of devotion to duty and self-sacrifice that the militants have set, though we condemn their methods and tactics as suicidal and beneath the dignity of woman.

I hope that God will restore you to health and spare you for many a long year to continue your noble and unassuming work in the cause of Humanity.

I am,

Yours truly

MISS HOBHOUSE

THE COTTAGE

KENIL WORTH

CAPE TOWN

From a copy: C.W. 11345. Courtesy: E. S. Reddy, New York

26. LETTER TO "INDIAN OPINION"

[DURBAN,

After *January 5, 1914*]

TO

THE EDITOR

INDIAN OPINION

I give below a few facts known to me concerning Bhai Hurbatsingh, who passed away on Monday last[2], believing that readers of *Indian Opinion* would like to know them.

When I was in Volksrust gaol two months ago, it was sanctified by the coming of Hurbatsingh. He was one of the batch of 37 Indians or so who, after waiting for a while in Charlestown, entered Volksrust and elected to go to gaol. When I saw Hurbatsingh among them, my heart overflowed with joy. I became introspective and reflected over

[1] Emmeline Pankhurst (1858–1928), leader of the suffragette movement in England; *vide* "Mrs. Pankhurst's sacrifice", 19-4-1913

[2] Hurbatsingh died on January 5. *Vide* also the following item.

what I had done. My heart was full because even a 70-year-old Indian like him, who had spent 30 years in Natal as a labourer, had thought of India, India's honour and of India's *tapascharya*[1] in ancient times. Even in his declining years, he preferred to endure the sufferings of prison life rather than live in comfort. I grew sad as I reflected: "Dear self of mine! If you have led your innocent brothers, unlearned but wise, into a wrong path, what a burden of sin will you have to bear? If ever you discovered that you had made a mistake, what good would your remorse do then? The men whom you had led to death would not come back to life; those who, following your advice, endured the hardships of gaol-life, would never forget them." At this thought I felt sad. But then I considered: "No blame would attach to you if you acted sincerely in advising your brothers to go to gaol. Truly is it said that without *yagna*[2] this world would perish. But *yagna* is not merely kindling wood and pouring ghee and other things into it. This may purify the air, but surely it will not purify the spirit. When we offer up our bones to burn like wood, pouring out our blood like ghee in order that they may burn, and sacrifice our flesh to the flames, that alone will be true *yagna*, and by such sacrifice will the earth be sustained. Without such *yagna*, such sacrifice of self, it cannot be sustained. No peoplehas risen without self-sacrifice; can it be otherwise with us? Certainly not." Reflecting thus, I saw that it was no matter for grief if an old Indian like Hurbatsingh went to gaol for India's sake and died while in prison. I once asked Hurbatsingh why, in his extreme old age, he thought of going to gaol. In reply he said: "When all of you, and the women too, are going to gaol, what should I alone do outside? When you went to Charlestown, I decided to leave my small farm and follow you. When my friends came to gaol, I also did the same." "But, friend," I asked, "What if you die while in gaol?" This wise Indian replied: "If I must, I shall. I am an old man; what is the good of my living on?"

This veteran had been sentenced to imprisonment with hard labour. When the first batch of prisoners during the first satyagraha campaign was sentenced to simple imprisonment, the Government, I believe, hinted to the Courts not to award simple imprisonment to any Indian satyagrahi. In consequence, after the first cases of simple imprisonment, no Indian received such sentence. Fortunately, in

[1] Voluntary suffering as a means of self-purification, penance
[2] Sacrifice

Volksrust the gaoler was kind to Hurbatsingh. The latter used to work in the garden, watering the plants, and his energy put the younger satyagrahis to shame.

Is there an Indian who will not shed tears of joy at the glorious death of such an Indian? When Hurbatsingh's body is carried to the cremation ground, I do hope that every Indian will follow it on foot right up to the ground.[1] By paying this homage, we shall not only honour the memory of the departed one but shall also honour India and ourselves.[2]

I am,
India's bond-slave,
MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 7-1-1914

27. IMMORTAL HURBATSINGH

Hurbatsingh, an indentured Indian, 70 years old, with no kith or kin, gave up this earthly life on Monday. The whole Indian community mourns for him. He who had not one relative in this wild, forbidding land has today 150,000 Indians living here as his kinsmen. His death, which ordinarily no Indian would have heard of, will, in the unusual circumstances of today, be known to the whole of India. One may ask, why? The answer is that he was a satyagrahi; and as truth is eternal, even so a man who resolutely clings to truth is immortal. Just as one cannot hide the sun by covering it, truth also will come out, however much one tries to hide it. Therefore, one who serves truth even in the smallest measure can never be eclipsed. An indentured labourer of old days, Hurbatsingh did not have to pay the £3 tax; nevertheless, because the others came out, he too chose to do likewise.

His body has been buried. As soon as the fact was known, a request was made to the Government for its return. By the time this article is out, the request will have been granted. When received, the body will be cremated. We trust that every Indian will follow the funeral procession.

[1] The funeral procession on January 8 included Europeans and Indians of different faiths.

[2] *Vide* also *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XLV.

Hurbatsingh has achieved immortal fame by joining the struggle. We wish that all Indians have his courage and his understanding.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 7-1-1914

28. INTERVIEW TO "PRETORIA NEWS"[1]

[PRETORIA,
January 9, 1914]

[GANDHIJI:] I cannot tell you anything about the confidential negotiations which are proceeding at the present moment.

[REPORTER:] What about the Railway strike?

[1] Gandhiji, accompanied by C. F. Andrews, arrived in Pretoria on the morning of January 9, for negotiations with Smuts. A brief summary of those observations appeared in *Indian Opinion*, 14-1-1914. The Governor-General, Lord Gladstone, forwarded to the Colonial Office, a clipping of the interview "in which", he observed, "Mr. Gandhi gave a personal assurance that he and his friends would refrain from resuming operations until the railway strike was settled." In *Charles Freer Andrews*, pp. 95-6, there appears a report of this interview which puts it in its proper context: "At Pretoria, the Editor of the *Pretoria News* greeted Gandhi in friendly fashion. 'Are the Indians going to join the General Strike?' he asked. 'No, certainly not,' replied Gandhi. 'We are out for a clean fight. Passive resistance will be suspended.' 'May I publish that?' 'No—there is no need to do so.' The Editor turned to Andrews. 'Do persuade him, Mr. Andrews,' he said. 'There will be Martial Law within twelve hours.' Andrews took his meaning; up and down they walked, outside the Editor's office, while he argued the point with Gandhi. 'Of course, you are right to suspend the struggle,' he said, 'but if no one knows till afterwards, all the good effect will be lost—people will say you did it out of fear?' At last Gandhi yielded: the message went out, with all its power for good, to Cape Town and the world. A few minutes later the strikers cut the telegraph wires." In *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XLVII, Gandhiji has this to say on his refusal to embarrass the Government: "This decision of ours created a deep impression, and was cabled to England by Reuter. Lord Ampthill cabled his congratulations from England. English friends in South Africa too appreciated our decision. One of the secretaries of General Smuts jocularly said: 'I do not like your people, and do not care to assist them at all. But what am I to do? You help us in our days of need. How can we lay hands upon you? I often wish you took to violence like the English strikers, and then we would know at once how to dispose of you. But you will not injure even the enemy. You desire victory by self-suffering alone and never transgress your self-imposed limit of courtesy and chivalry. And that is what reduces us to sheer helplessness.' General Smuts also gave expression to similar sentiments."

I haven't anything to do with the Railway strike.

I know, but what is your attitude towards it?

I have no attitude. What attitude can we, a voteless and neglected people, have in such a crisis?

The point is this, are you going to take advantage of the Governments embarrassment at the present moment to revive your passive resistance and strike movement?

Mr. Gandhi looked very thoughtful; he paused a moment and then said:

That has never been our policy.

Come, come, plain speaking. Never mind your policy in the past; what are you going to do now?

For myself I will be no party to embarrassing the Government at a time like this, we shall follow the policy that we adopted during the Rand miners' strike in July.[1] At that time we suspended all operations, and we shall do this again, if necessary. I am most anxious that there should be no confusion of issues between our case and the case of the Railwaymen; such confusion might occur if we revived passive resistance at this moment. In any case I mean to take no unfair advantage of the Government . . . .

I am hopeful that the negotiations now proceeding and the representations of our European friends in South Africa may successfully avert any need for further passive resistance, but whatever happens (this very emphatically) whether the Minister's reply to us be favourable or unfavourable, *we shall not resume operations until this Railway matter is settled; for that you have my personal assurance.*

Pretoria News, 9-1-1914

29. IMPORTANT ADVICE[2]

I have heard that some Indians enter into a second indenture on the expire of the first. Probably all friends know that there is no need whatever to renew indenture. Once the £3 tax is removed, there will be no need for accepting a second term of indenture. While, therefore, the present struggle is in progress, [no one] should renew indenture and accept slavery by doing so. I hope every educated man will

[1] *Vide* "Riot in Johannesburg", 12-7-1913.

[2] A Hindi translation of this also appeared in *Indian Opinion*, 14-1-1914.

consider it his duty to give this information to those who do not get or cannot read this paper.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 14-1-1914

30. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

PRETORIA, BOX 1156,
January 14, 1914

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

The uncertainty of our stay here made me neglect correspondence. And I have been continually with Mr. Andrews[1] from rising hour to bedtime talking about the question or religious topics. I often say to myself how nice it would have been if you could have been here. But I am sure that it was the best thing for you not to have come. You would have been held up like us and what is worse, Mr. Andrews would never have talked with the same freedom if he had to talk to two instead of one as now. He entirely lives the Indian life and loves to live among and with Indians. He had a two-hour interview (private) with the Governor-General[2] and he preached at the Cathedral here last Sunday.

You being with Mrs. Gandhi I am free from all anxiety. The interview with Smuts has been indefinitely postponed. He had brief talks with him but on the question. Sir Benjamin[3] is due to arrive today. You may now write as if I am not coming there for some time.

With love,

Yours,
UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Charles Freer Andrews (1871-1940); British missionary who shared a deep friendship with Gandhiji; devoted many years of service in the cause of Indian people.

[2] Sir Herbert John Gladstone

[3] Sir Benjamin Robertson, who had been deputed to give evidence before the Indian Enquiry Commission set up by the Union Government on December 11, 1913, to inquire into the causes of the strike and consequent disturbances

31. INTERVIEW WITH GENERAL SMUTS[1]

PRETORIA,
January 16, 1914

The original proposal laid before General Smuts by Mr. Gandhi on Friday last was as follows:

He asked for definite assurances on four points:

(a) The £3 Tax: General Smuts enquired whether he would be satisfied if the payment of the licence money were abolished, but the licence retained and no further alteration made in the provisions of Natal Act 17 of 1895. Mr. Gandhi thought that this solution would meet his requirements, but he urged that if the licence were retained, it should be made a standing licence not subject to annual renewal.

(b) The marriage question: He did not make it quite clear what precisely he desired, but General Smuts gathered that his expectations were not unreasonable, and that they would probably be satisfied if statutory recognition of *de facto* monogamous wives

[1] This official version of what took place at the interview between Gandhiji and General Smuts on January 16 is extracted from a confidential despatch dated January 22 which the Governor-General, Lord Gladstone, addressed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. The Governor-General, referring to the developments, wrote: "I am glad to be able to report that the prospects of an early settlement of the principal points at issue between my Government and the Indian community in this country have distinctly improved during the past week. Obstacles which it would be imprudent to disregard still exist, and others, either unforeseen or only dimly foreseen at present, may yet arise before mutually acceptable legislation can be passed. But on the whole the situation is more hopeful now than at any previous period of my term of office.

"Numerous personal interviews have taken place between General Smuts and Mr. Gandhi, General Smuts and Sir Benjamin Robertson, and Sir Benjamin Robertson and Mr. Gandhi. Mr. Andrews also has had conversations both with the Minister and with Sir Benjamin Robertson. General Smuts has shown a most patient and conciliatory temper. In spite of a series of conflicts extending over many years, he retains a sympathetic interest in Mr. Gandhi as an unusual type of humanity, whose peculiarities, however inconvenient they may be to the Minister, are not dovoid of attraction for the student. Sir Benjamin has proved himself tactful, judicious, and reasonable. He has established excellent relations not only with General Smuts but also with the Prime Minister, and is on friendly terms with the other members of the Cabinet whose acquaintance he has made, while on Mr. Gandhi his firmness and shrewd common sense would seem to have exercised a salutary restraining influence. It is no easy task for a European to conduct negotiations with Mr. Gandhi. The workings of his conscience are inscrutable to the occidental mind and produce complications in wholly unexpected places. His ethical and intellectual attitude, based a it appears to be on a curious compound of mysticism and astuteness, baffles the ordinary processes of thought. Nevertheless, a tolerably practical understanding has been reached."

were accorded.

(c) The admission of South Africa-born Indians into the Cape Province: Mr. Gandhi did not press for legislation on this point but only for an assurance that the law would be so administered that the education test would not be applied to such Indians seeking to enter the Cape. This was to be subject to the understanding that only a small number would thus seek admission, and that if large numbers came forward, the education test should be applicable. I cannot vouch for the actual wording of the stipulation, but I believe that this was its substantial effect.

(d) The declaration said to be required under the Orange Free State Law: General Smuts pointed out that the Government had already in Mr. Gorges' letter of the 19th August (Cd. 7111, page 51) signified their willingness to accept Mr. Gandhi's suggestion on this point. Mr. Gandhi said that he did not so understand the relevant passage in that letter, but that a slight verbal amendment of its terms would meet the difficulty.[1]

Mr. Gandhi explained that if General Smuts would give him a clear assurance in writing on his four points, he would regard it as disposing of the whole general question of Indian grievances. The Commission need not then consider general grievances or policy. Its enquiry should in that case be limited to the occurrences of the recent passive resistance campaign and the strike and the various allegations to which that movement and the manner of its repression had given rise. On that basis he and his friends would be prepared to appear before the Commission and give evidence. If the assurance were not forthcoming, they would still be willing to appear before the Commission and give evidence on all matters included in the terms of reference, provided that either Sir James Rose-Innes or Mr. Schreiner were added to its membership. In that event he would raise in detail the whole question of all Indian grievances dating, I think, from 1885, and he let it be understood that his opening statement alone would occupy at least two days of the Commission's time.

If neither of his alternative proposals was accepted, he could have nothing to do with the Commission and must reserve complete freedom of action although he would consider himself bound by his promise not to embarrass the Government by a renewal of passive resistance while the present industrial troubles remained unsettled.

General Smuts pointed out the obvious objections to any interference with the present constitution of the Commission, and endeavoured to impress on Mr. Gandhi how desirable it was in his own interests that instead of askingfor assurances he should state his case on his four points of grievances before the Commission. The Government would be in a far stronger position to carry remedial legislation if they could base it on recommendations made by the Commission. From private conversations with Sir William Solomon and Mr. Esselen, the Minister had gathered the conviction that remedial legislation would be recommended by the Commission, and Mr. Gandhi would therefore be ill-advised if he neglected the opportunity of

[1] Lord Gladstone here observed: "It will be seen that only the first two of Mr. Gandhi's points would involve fresh legislation."

making his views on these points clear to the tribunal.[1]

Mr. Gandhi however insisted on the insuperable obligations of his vow, and General Smuts ended the interview by promising to consider his proposals and give him an answer as soon as possible.[2]

Colonial Office Records: 551/54

[1] In *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XLVIII, Gandhiji has reported Smuts' observations as follows: "The Indians had demanded that a member should be co-opted to the Commission to represent Indian interests. But on this point General Smuts would not give in. 'That cannot be done,' said he, 'as it would be derogatory to the Government's prestige and I would be unable to carry out the desired reforms. You must understand that Mr. Esselen is our man, and would fall in with, not oppose, the Government's wishes as regards reform. Colonel Wylie is a man of position in Natal and might even be considered anti-Indian. If therefore even he agrees to a repeal of the £3 tax, the Government will have an easy task before them. Our troubles are manifold; we have not a moment to spare and therefore wish to set the Indian question at rest. We have decided to grant your demands, but for this we must have a recommendation from the Commission. I understand your position too. You have solemnly declared that you will not lead evidence before it so long as there is no representative of the Indians sitting on the Commission. I do not mind if you do not tender evidence, but you should not organize any active propaganda to prevent anyone who wishes to give evidence from doing so, and should suspend Satyagraha in the interval. I believe that by so doing you will be serving your own interests as well as giving me a respite. As you will not tender evidence, you will not be able to prove your allegations as regards ill treatment accorded to the Indian strikers. But that is for you to think Over."

[2] For the rest of the despatch covering the subsequent course of negotiations, *vide*"Extract from Governor-General's Despatch", 22-1-1914. During the last days of the negotiations, news reached Gandhiji that Kasturba was seriously ill in Durban. At a moment, on January 21, when the talks had reached a deadlock over a phrase which General Smuts had wanted to insert in the proposed agreement, an urgent telegram summoned Gandhiji to Durban; but Gandhiji refused to leave till the deadlock had been removed. Andrews recorded what happened during that critical night in these words: "That night we talked till 1 a.m. Finally, an alternative phrase occurred to me. The difference seemed to be very slight, but Gandhi found it acceptable. 'If General Smuts will accept your phrase,' he said as we went to bed, 'then everything is finished.' In the morning, saying nothing to Gandhi, I went to Smuts and at eight o'clock found him alone. I told him Gandhi's personal anxiety, and showed him the suggested wording. 'I don't mind a bit,' he said, 'it makes no difference as far as I am concerned.' 'Would you make the change and sign on the spot?' 'Certainly."' *Charles Freer Andrews*, pp. 96-7. The settlement reached, Gandhiji and Andrews left for Durban, by the 11 o'clock train, on January 22. According to the Governor-General's observations at the end of his despatch of January 22, 1914, the sentence inserted at Gandhiji's suggestion was: "He also recognizes the motive which makes you unwilling to revive old sores by courting libel proceedings before another tribunal." *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Minister of Interior", 21-1-1914, paragraph 1. *Vide* also the following item.

32. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

PRETORIA, BOX 6522,
Saturday [*January 17, 1914*][1]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I have your wire. You will have seen yesterday's news in my letter to Polak. The interview with Smuts as also with Robertson was good. I discussed the passive resistance points fully. I have not the time just now to set them forth. But I shall try to do so in my next letter. Mr. Andrews had nearly 1 hours with Sir Benjamin today. He meets an Indian deputation on Monday. Now we shall have to await events. Mr. Andrews is a wonderful man full of wonderful experiences. I am most anxious to nurse Mrs. Gandhi. She needs it and asks for it. But I am still a prisoner and cannot give her the attention I should like to. Lazarus may come there from Newcastle. If he does you should soothe him. Miss Schlesin wants instructions about the ladies who are coming out. I have given them in full in my letter to Polak. I am, therefore, not writing to her separately. Please tell her so.

You will keep your eye on all who are to be discharged. They should be met at the gaol gates by someone responsible.

I am anxious to know all about Mr. Pearson from you.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

33. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

PRETORIA, BOX 1156,
Sunday [*January 18, 1914*][1]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I have your two letters.

As to the handwritten letter, all I wish to tell you is that I sensed your fear. You need not fear at all however. The result has been and

[1] From the reference to the interview with Smuts, which took place on Friday. January 16; *vide* "Interview with General Smuts", 16-1-1914.

[1] From the contents; *vide* also the preceding item.

will be contrary to that you have feared. All is gain for you and me. I see that our difficulties in India will probably be less than we had expected. But as you say, you want me to discuss this when we meet. So I shall say no more.

I was pained to see. P. K. Naidoo's letter. I look to you to soothe them. The complaint is not without foundation, I fear, and Miss Schlesin is probably at the back of it. But you are just the one to deal with the crisis.

I endorse all you say regarding *Indian Opinion.* And if the paper can be turned out there, certainly it should be. In the new circumstances that we have found, West's presence is certainly not needed in Durban now. If the struggle revives we shall have to see. We could at any time get out stuff printed at the *Mercury* office. The current number is undoubtedly horrible nothing of it was printed at Phoenix, is it not so? I have already suggested to West that he might now shift to Phoenix. Neither Mr. Andrews nor Mr. Pearson require guides. In all these matters however you should take the initiative. Consult me by all means where necessary but you may ignore me too when there is no time for consultation.

I am pining to come down and nurse Mrs. Gandhi. But I feel that I dare not do so just at present. I must treat this as of primary importance. General Smuts now knows my domestic position and he may hurry forward if he likes. In any case it cannot be long delayed now seeing that the industrial crisis is now practically over. Meanwhile Mr. Andrews is moving forward. He has got a wonderful grasp of the central position and he is pushing it forward with all the spiritual force he possesses.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

34. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

PRETORIA, BOX 11[56],
Sunday [*January 18, 1914*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Herewith a cheque of £5.5 from the Khoja Youngmen's Association, Pretoria. Deposit it in the Satyagraha Fund. I will prepare the report and arrange to send it to you.

I have received Mirza's letter. I am surprised that he has gone there. I have replied that he should work there diligently and abide by the rules. Write to me about where he is staying and what work he is doing, etc.

Good work is being done here. Mr. Andrews[2] is creating a good impression here.[3] In a meeting here, he gave a speech dressed in a *dhoti*. At present, he is full of India. More when we meet.

If you want to print the English section of the paper there, do it without any reservation. It depends on the convenience of you all. Mr. Kallenbach[4] has written to me in detail on the subject. I had suggested that it be published from Durban in the expectation that the struggle will intensify soon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32886

[1] From the contents it appears that this letter was written on the same Sunday as the one on which the letter to Hermann Kallenbach dated January 18, 1914 was written. *Vide* "Letter to Dr. J. Oldfield", 13-11-1906

[2] harles Freer Andrews (1871-1940); his services in the cause of the Indian people, especially those in distress won him the name "Deenabandhu", a friend of the poor.

[3] For Gandhiji's speech at reception to C.F. Andrews, who arrived in South Africa on January 2, 1914; *vide* "speech at Reception to C.F. Andrews", 4-1-1914

[4] Hermann Kallenbach, a prosperous German architect of Johannesburg

35. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

PRETORIA, BOX 1156,
January 19, 1914

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I have your letters regularly now. If Mrs. Gandhi continue to improve, I would like to finish everything here and in Johannesburg before returning. I owe a visit to the Johannesburg people. They are most anxious. I hope you will study Mirza. I am glad the boys are now settling down to work.

I return the letters you want me to. I shall certainly try to remember the oil. But what if I pass Germiston by the night train. Remember, too, there is still martial law.

I have asked Lazarus to run down to Durban himself, but if he does not, you may certainly go there and see the people who receive rations, etc.

Ephraim wrote to me too in the same strain as in the letter sent by you. If his account is true, and it must be, Sir Benjamin is worse than Lord Emmott. He is a dangerous, weak and shifty man. He would not dare talk in that strain to you and to me. Even Ephraim could see that he was frightening. We have to watch him. Fortunately, we are passive resisters and we cannot be harmed by anybody but ourselves. So if we fear ourselves, one need fear no earthly power. He left a poor impression on Mr. Andrews and me. I send you the letter received by me also. Please show both to Polak, West and others. Andrews has seen both. Do Christopher, Lazarus, Lazarus Gabriel and others come near you? How do you find the atmosphere in Durban?

My task here is incomparably easier than that of the workers there.

How are you keeping mentally and bodily? I hope you are not spending money uselessly. Remember your aim is poverty. Realize it whilst you have the resources.

Andrews is away just now at the Government House lunching.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

36. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

PRETORIA, BOX 1156,

Paush Vad 8, 1970, Monday [*January 19, 1914*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. How nice it would have been if it was not necessary to call a doctor for Ba. But no one is at fault in that. How can one find fault where all things are done in good faith?

It will be good for us if Mirza is really good and honest and stays with us. Train him affectionately. Same is true of Bhawani Dayal.

I do not like it that we should employ paid compositors for . . .[2] work. Are so many of us not enough? You have done a good thing in making it a rule for the children [to work in the press].

Mismanagement of the newspaper is painful. I guess that Miss Schlesin[3] is responsible for it. I am somewhat disappointed with her. However, she may not be responsible this time. It is necessary that you write to West[4] and sort out the things. I have already written to her to go and live in Phoenix. Check what Bhawani Dayal writes in Hindi and give it for printing.

Talk to Miss Schlesin about Johannesburg. Get the address of Narottam and write to him that we would stop sending him *Indian Opinion* if he did not send the money. What you write is correct. I, too, do not approve of an agency. Whoever wants *Indian Opinion*, should subscribe toit directly. I, too, will write to Johannesburg from here. But to depend on me at present in such cases is useless.

[1] *Paush vad* 8 in the Vikram Era 1970, i.e., the year 1914, corresponded to January 19 and was a Monday.

[2] A word here is illegible in the source.

[3] Sonja Schlesin; a Jewish girl who joined Gandhiji as a steno-typist at the age of 16 and was his private secretary for many years; made herself useful to *Indian Opinion*; was ardently interested in the Indian cause

[4] Albert H. West, Manager of the International Printing Press, Phoenix you make the change and sign on the spot?' 'Certainly."' *Charles Freer Andrews*, pp. 96-7. The settlement reached, Gandhiji and Andrews left for Durban, by the 11 o'clock train, on January 22. According to the Governor-General's observations at the end of his despatch of January 22, 1914, the sentence inserted at Gandhiji's suggestion was: "He also recognizes the motive which makes you unwilling to revive old sores by courting libel proceedings before another tribunal." *Vide* "Letter from Minister of Interior", 21-1-1914, paragraph 1. *Vide* also the following item.

Here there is an atmosphere of unity. We have not come across a single person trying to cause trouble in Pretoria where the conditions were always unsatisfactory. You will find this in my second report which I am about to send to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32888

37. LETTER TO SECRETARY FOR INTERIOR[1]

PRETORIA,
January 21, 1914

TO
THE SECRETARY FOR THE INTERIOR
PRETORIA

SIR,

Before leaving for Phoenix I venture to express my thanks to General Smuts for the patient and kindly interviews that he has been pleased to grant me during a time of overwhelming pressure. My countrymen will remember with gratitude his great consideration.

I understand that the Minister is unable to accept (with regard to the Indian Enquiry Commission) either (1) my suggestion that a member representing Indian interests should be co-opted when questions of policy are enquired into; or (2) my suggestion that a second Commission, with Indian representation, should be appointed to deal with these questions only; the present Commission in that case becoming purely judicial. I submitted a third proposal also, but this, in view of the Government's decision, I need not state here. Had any of my suggestions been viewed favourably by the Government, it would have been possible for my countrymen to assist the labours of the present Commission. But with regard to leading evidence before this Commission (which has a political as well as a judicial character) they have conscientious scruples, and these have taken with them a solemn and religious form. I may state briefly that these scruples were based on the strong feeling that the Indian community should have been either consulted or represented where questions of policy were

[1] This was reproduced in *Indian Opinion*, 28-1-1914; also, a summary is found in *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XLIX.

concerned.

The Minister, I observe, appreciates these scruples, and regards them as honourable, but is unable to alter his decision. As, however, by granting me the recent interviews he has been pleased to accept the principle of consultation, it enables me to advise my countrymen not to hamper the labours of the Commission by any active propaganda, and not to render the position of the Government difficult by reviving passive resistance, pending the result of the Commission and the introduction of legislation during the forthcoming session.

If I am right in my interpretation of the Government's attitude on the principle of consultation, it would be further possible for us, without violating the spirit of the vow we have taken, to assist Sir Benjamin Robertson, whom the Viceroy with gracious forethought has deputed to give evidence before the Commission.

A word is here necessary on the question of allegations as to ill-treatment during the progress of the Indian strike in Natal. For the reasons above stated the avenue of proving these through the Commission is closed to us. I am personally unwilling to challenge libel proceedings by publishing the authentic evidence in our possession. I would far rather refrain altogether from raking up old sores. I beg to assure the Minister that as passive resisters we endeavour to avoid as far as possible any resentment of personal wrongs.[1] But in order that our silence may not be mistaken, may I ask the Minister to recognize our motive and reciprocate by not leading evidence of a negative character before the Commission on the allegations in question.

Suspension of passive resistance moreover carries with it a prayer for the release of the bona-fide passive resistance prisoners now undergoing imprisonment either in the ordinary gaols or the mine compounds[2] which have been declared as such.

Finally, it might not be out of place here to recapitulate the points on which relief has been sought. They are as follows:

(1) Repeal of the £3 tax in such a manner as the Indians relieved will virtually occupy the same status as the indentured Indians discharged under the Natal Law 25 of 1891.

(2) The marriage question.

[1] *Vide Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XLVIII.

[2] Since all the passive resisters could not be accommodated in the gaols, the Government resorted to use of mine compounds for the purpose.

(These two are the points that, I have verbally submitted, require fresh legislation.)

(3) The Cape entry question.

(This requires only administrative relief, subject to the clear safeguards explained to the Minister.)

(4) The Orange Free State question.

(This requires merely a verbal alteration in the assurance already given.)

(5) An assurance that existing laws specially affecting Indians will be administered justly and with due regard to vested rights.

I venture to suggest that the Nos. 3, 4 and 5 present no special difficulty, and that the needful relief might now be given on these points as an earnest of the good intentions of the Government regarding the resident Indian population.

If the Minister, as I trust and hope, views my submission with favour, I shall be prepared to advise my countrymen in accordance with the tenor of this letter.[1]

I have, etc.,

M.K. GANDHI

Rand Daily Mail, 23-1-1914; also, Colonial Office Records: 551/54

38. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI PATEL

PRETORIA,

Wednesday, Posha Vad 10 [*January 21, 1914*]

DEAR SHRI RAOJIBHAI,

I had thought of leaving this very day for Johannesburg with Mr. Andrews. But that was not to be. General Smuts' reply to my letter is not satisfactory. I hope, if possible, to get it amended. I am therefore staying on tomorrow. If I get a satisfactory reply, though I shall not take it as concluding a settlement, it will be an important step towards one. I haven't the time to explain everything. I am leaving in a moment to see Sir Benjamin again.

I am surprised that Maganbhai's complaint persists. If for

[1] For the Minister of the Interior's reply, *vide* Appendix XXI; also, *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XLIX.

nothing else, at least to observe the symptoms of his ailment, I wish to spend some time in Phoenix in complete peace. Do what you can. If we get a satisfactory reply from General Smuts, I may hope to have some peace of mind. Take particular care to see that the boys resume their regular work.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahatma Gandhijina Patro and *Jivannu Parodh*

39. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE[1]

JOHANNESBURG,

January 22, 1914

LETTERS EXCHANGED GOVERNMENT SELF PROMISING PROVISIONAL AGREEMENT. GOVERNMENT UNABLE ACCEPT ANY OF THREE COMMISSION PROPOSALS SUBMITTED[2] BUT DECLARE THEMSELVES DESIROUS SPEEDY SOLUTION. THEY ACCEPT PRINCIPLE CONSULTATION AND GIVE FULLEST OPPORTUNITIES. WE CANNOT BREAK VOW AND GIVE EVIDENCE BUT WILL ASSIST ROBERTSON WHERE POSSIBLE. APPRECIATING GOVERNMENT'S POSITION WE SUSPENDED PASSIVE RESISTANCE HAVING ASSURANCE PROPOSED LEGIS-LATION DURING FORTHCOMING SESSION. REGARDING ALLEGATIONS AS PASSIVE RESISTERS WE REFRAIN FROM REVIVING OLD SORES BY PUBLISHING OUR AUTHENTIC EVIDENCE. GOVERNMENT RECOGNIZE OUR MOTIVE AND THEM SELVES GIVE NO EVIDENCE ON ALLEGATIONS OF NEGATIVE CHARACTER. RELEASING ALL PRISONERS. AM NOW SUB-MITTING MY ACTION FOR RATIFICATION COMMUNITY. WE TOOK CONSIDERATION EVERY CIRCUMSTANCE INCLUDING YOURS AND VICEROY'S FEELINGS. AGREEMENT JOINT WORK ANDREWS SELF.[3] ANDREWS PRESENT LAST INTERVIEW

[1] An extended version of this was published in *The Hindu* and *The Times of India* of January 24, 1914.

[2] For details of the proposals regarding the constitution of the Commission, *vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting", 25-1-1914.

[3] Andrews had held talks with Smuts and Sir Benjamin Robertson. On January 13, he had met the Governor-General in a private interview, a report of which the latter forwarded to the Colonial Office in the course of a despatch. *Vide* "Andrew's Interview with Governor-General", 13-1-1914.

SMUTSEXPECT BE DURBAN SATURDAY.[1]

GANDHI

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 5929

40. INTERVIEW TO "RAND DAILY MAIL"

[JOHANNESBURG,
January 23, 1914]

Yesterday a *Mail* representative asked Mr. M. K. Gandhi for a statement of the position at present. Mr. Gandhi—barefooted and clothed in white, an indication of the deep religious view now being taken of the Indian cause —has taken offices at 15 Anderson Street where he is in touch with his countrymen in prison, and with the rest of the world by wire and cable.

[GANDHIJI:] I hope that the European public in South Africa will recognize the spirit in which the Indians are endeavouring to meet the serious deadlock that arose through non-representation of Indian interests on the Commission, and that they will also understand and reciprocate the attitude I am advising my countrymen to take up in connection with the allegations of ill-treatment during my incarceration.

Our suspension of passive resistance, and our refraining from taking any action regarding the allegations should leave the public and the Government free to calmly consider the five points that gave rise to passive resistance on their merits, and which five points have, in my opinion, commanded almost universal sympathy. No reasonable man can question our right to have Indian marriages recognized as legal, or our right to have the three pounds tax unconditionally repealed. The other points of passive resistance, as I have already stated, require only administrative solution. As you will observe from my letter, the points are exactly the same as they were enumerated in Mr. Cachalia's letter to the Government sent immediately before the revival of passive resistance last year. In conclusion, I would like to state that we appreciate the action of the Government in releasing our passive resistance prisoners.

Rand Daily Mail, 24-1-1914

[1] For the official version of the implications of the Provisional Settlement, *vide* Appendix XX; for Gandhiji's explanation of the spirit behind it, *vide Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XLIX.

41. LETTER TO BHAVANI DAYAL

BOX 1156,
PRETORIA,
Friday [*January 23, 1914*][1]

DEAR MR. BHAVANI DAYAL,

I hope you are well. I was very glad to hear about your excellent performance in the gaol. I had received your message. Accommodation is ready for you at Phoenix. You may stay there with your family. You will get from Mr. Polak the information about the negotiations that are going on for a settlement.

Bande Mataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5689 Courtesy: Vishnu Dutta Dayal

42. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE

[DURBAN,
On or before *January 25, 1914*][2]

PROVISIONAL AGREEMENT REACHED. WE NOT ASSISTING COMMISSION OWING SOLEMN DECLARATION BUT HELPING ROBERTSON. SUSPENDING PASSIVE RESISTANCE PENDING LEGISLATION WHICH GOVERNMENT PROMISES AFTER COMMISSION. PRINCIPLE OF INDIAN CONSULTATION ACKNOWLEDGED. GOVERNMENT ROBERTSON BOTH SATISFIED. PRISONERS BEING RELEASED. OPPORTUNITY FOR SETTLEMENT NOW MORE FAVOURABLE.

From a photostat of a draft with corrections in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5928

[1] Bhavani Dayal was released on Saturday January 17, 1914; this letter appears to have been written on the following Friday. He took over as Editor of the Hindi section of *Indian Opinion* from its issue dated January 28.

[2] Gandhiji explained the provisional agreement, soon after it was reached, at a mass meeting on January 25; *vide* the following item. It is likely that this cable was sent on or before January 25.

43. SPEECH AT MASS MEETING[1]

[DURBAN,
January 25, 1914]

Mr. Gandhi, before proceeding to explain the terms of the provisional agreement, announced that Mr. Andrews had received a letter from England preparing him for the death of his beloved mother, whom he had expected to meet on his arrival in England. He also added that Mr. Andrews was suffering fromfever due to the strain under which he had worked in Pretoria in connection with the agreement. Not with standing these facts, Mr. Andrews had insisted on attending the meeting.

Mr. Gandhi addressed the meeting at length, both in English and Hindustani; his remarks being subsequently rendered into Tamil. Mr. Gandhi said that those to whom he was addressing his remarks in English would, he hoped, have read what had been published in the papers, but he would give them the purport of the agreement with the Government. At the first interview he had had with General Smuts, he had placed before him three propositions, the acceptance of any one of which would have enabled the community to lead evidence before the Commission without violating the solemn declaration made some time ago on that very ground. These alternatives were that either the Government should appoint another Commission and restrict the scope of the present Commission purely to a judicial inquiry into the allegations that had been made as to ill-treatment and cruelty, while the other should go into the question of grievances, when the community would be able to lead its evidence before both; or that a member should be co-opted to the Commission to represent Indian interests who would sit specially on the Commission hearing the statement of grievances as apart from the allegations of cruelty, so that the functions of this Commission could clearly be divided into judicial and political; or that the scope of the present Commission should be restricted purely to a judicial inquiry, and that before the community's appearance before it, the Government should grant the community's request in terms of Mr. Cachalia's letter[2], namely, the five points (1) the repeal of the £3 tax; (2) the restoration of the status of Indian wives as it existed before the Searle judgment; (3) the restoration of the right of South Africa-born Indians to enter the Cape; (4) the removal of the little difficulty that still exists with reference to theracial bar regarding the Orange Free State; and (5) the question of the

[1] A mass meeting of Indians numbering over 3,000 was held under the auspices of the Natal Indian Association to discuss the details of the provisional agreement between Gandhiji and Smuts, and to take action thereon. Imam Abdul Cadir Bawazeer presided.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary for Interior", 12-9-1913.

just administration of existing laws with due regard to vested rights. The last three points could be dealt with administratively; the first two only by amending legislation, and he had ventured to submit to General Smuts the easiest and the quickest way in which the matter could be dealt with. General Smuts had said that he would consider the matter, and after he had considered and conferred with the Cabinet, he said, in the presence of Mr. Andrews, that the Government were willing to grant these things, but wanted the Commission to sift them, and that they could not possibly, though they would gladly have met the community, meet them at that stage with reference to its propositions regarding the Commission.

Of course, that would create a deadlock, and that meant either passive resistance and all that that meant, or it meant a suspension of passive resistance until the Government had had a chance, until the Commission had had a chance, of doing what they proposed to do, and he had had no difficulty in coming to the conclusion, after consultation always with Mr. Andrews, that the community could fairly suspend passive resistance, seeing that the Government had taken up the, what he considered, reasonable attitude, and seeing also that the Government were prepared to understand and appreciate that the community was bound by its solemn obligation not to take part in the Commission, and not to resent that attitude on the part of the community, and, as against that, he had suggested to General Smuts that, if the community suspended passive resistance, it was only fair that Government should release the passive resistance prisoners then undergoing imprisonment. There then remained the very serious questions of the allegations of cruelty. What was to be done with regard to those if the community was not to lead evidence even with regard to the judicial aspect of the Commission, and yet it seemed clear that in the present circumstances they could not lead evidence. It then meant that they should publish a book containing the whole of the evidence in their possession, and challenge anybody who wished to bring libel proceedings against the community, so that in defending the charge the community could prove its case. As a passive resister, it immediately occurred to him that there should be no difficulty in dropping those proceedings. That would avoid all irritation, and in the estimation of those who might think for themselves and who knew the history of passive resistance the community would stand justified. In any case, if the community could stand justified in the estimation of the Government, and if the community could ask the Government to appreciate its motive in not challenging libel proceedings, he felt that the community could ignore what the world might say as to its being afraid now of coming to a court of law because it had really no evidence, and that it had simply taken allegations to India in order to work on feeling there. They must tolerate such criticism from the world, for the world would have something to say against the best actions, but, if the Government appreciated thecommunity's attitude, he felt that, as passive resisters, it became them to act in that manner. They were not passive resisters of the purest type. They

had, for example, taken advantage of law and defended actions in law courts; pure passive resisters would not have done that. But they had not yet reached the purest stage of passive resistance. They must, however, keep such an ideal actively before them and, perhaps, one day, they would have made such an approach to that state that they would be considered perfect passive resisters. Till they had reached that stage, they could not call themselves perfect passive resisters, but they need not therefore remain stationary, and he had felt that they might take that step in advance, and he had come to the conclusion that that was a proposition that might be submitted to the Government. The net effect of the letter written to him by the Government and their reply was, in his opinion, that they had accepted the principle of consultation, that they hat recognized the motive of the community in dropping the question of the allegations altogether, that they recognized the community's motive in not leading evidence before the Commission, that they had given an assurance that they wished to settle the matter in accordance with the community's submission, and they wanted to do this through the Commission, but they felt that the community's demands were so reasonable and had been so sanctified and strengthened by the suffering that it had undergone during the past months, that there should be no difficulty in securing the recommendation from the Commission. They felt, he thought, also confident because of the presence of Sir Benjamin Robertson and because of the prestige that was behind Sir Benjamin Robertson, that he came not in his individual capacity but as the representative of the Viceroy, that as such his testimony before the Commission was bound to carry its due weight. And under those circumstances they need not worry themselves thinking or fearing what might happen; and why need a passive resister ever fear so long as he had the purest weapon in the world at his disposal? The future lay entirely in their own hands, and, holding that future as firmly as ever, he had no hesitation in recommending the adoption of the agreement, and he hoped that the meeting would approve the action they had taken. At the same time he had not bound the community. He had bound the community on occasions when he had gone with a clear mind and when he had known what the community had already asked for, but on this occasion a new situation had arisen, and for that situation he certainly required the ratification of the community. He could not possibly bind the community with reference to this matter which he had not himself contemplated. He had therefore stated to General Smuts that he was prepared to advise his countrymen in accordance with the tenor of his letter, but he had not bound the community, so that they were free agents entirely and might dismiss the agreement from their minds if they wished, but he believed that they might accept it—it was perfectly honourable, dignified, and would save an amount of misery. What was more, they wanted, if they possibly could, to conciliate theViceroy. He had said that Viceroy or no Viceroy, Mr. Gokhale or no Mr. Gokhale, no matter what friends or the world said, if their consciences did not approve, if their oath did not approve, they could not accept their views, but when it

was possible for them to keep their oath to satisfy their conscience, he thought that then they should go to the utmost length in meeting the wishes of their friends, and such a noble Viceroy, for whom, perhaps, there was no equal except perhaps, Lord Ripon and Lord William Bentinck; and he did not know what the Viceroy might still have in store for them. But that was the picture one formed of the Viceroy, and that had been strengthened by what Mr. Andrews had told him of his noble qualities. They ought to take into account the Viceroy's wishes at that stage, seeing that it was possible for them to do so without violating their oath. Their distinguished countryman, whom India had idolised, to whom they offered reverence, who, while lying on a sick bed, had yet worked for their cause and made it world-wide and had made India ring from end to end with that and nothing else—Mr. Gokhale—also desired it. Lord Ampthill also had been saying: "They had a noble cause, they were bound to win; let them now stay their hand; they had made sufficient demonstration; they had aroused the conscience of the United Kingdom; let them now even give their evidence under protest before the Commission." That view they bad been unable to accept, but they could accept the present arrangement. From every point of view, the agreement was good, dignified, and worthy of acceptance.[1]

Indian Opinion, 28-1-1914

44. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE

DURBAN,
January 26, 1914

INDIAN MASS MEETINGS AT DURBAN, PRETORIA, JOHANNESBURG AND OTHER CENTRES HAVE UNANIMOUSLY ENDORSED AGREEMENT.

The Times of India, 28-1-1914

[1] After Polak, C.F. Andrews and Kallenbach had spoken, the following resolu-tion was moved by Parsee Rustomjee and unanimously passed: "This mass meeting of British Indians, held under the auspices of the Natal Indian Association, after having heard the terms of the provisional agreement arrived at between the Government and Mr. Gandhi, hereby endorses Mr. Gandhiji's action, and earnestly and respectfully hopes that the prayer of the Indian community, as set forth in Mr. Gandhi's letter, will be granted."

45. LETTER TO INDIAN GRIEVANCES COMMISSION

DURBAN,
January 26, 1914.

THE CHAIRMAN
INDIAN GRIEVANCES COMMISSION
DURBAN

[SIR,]

We understand that our discharge from imprisonment, on the 18th ultimo, before the expiry of our respective sentences, was due to the recommendation of the Indian Grievances Commission, to enable the Indian community to have such assistance as we were able to givein order to prepare and place its case before the Commission. It is, therefore, a matter of deep and sincere regret that we are unable, for the reasons already set forth in the correspondence between the first undersigned and the Minister of the Interior,[1] with whose tenor we understand the Commission is already acquainted, to avail ourselves of the opportunity for which we are indebted to it.

We earnestly trust that our refraining from appearing before the Commission, in the circumstances therein described, will not be regarded by it as an act of discourtesy.

M. K. GANDHI
H. S. L. POLAK
H. KALLENBACH

Indian Opinion, 28-1-1914

46. SMUTS-GANDHI CORRESPONDENCE

Elsewhere in this issue is published a translation of these letters which, we hope, every Indian will go through carefully. We have not enough space or time to offer detailed comments in this number. The following is the upshot of the two letters:

(1) Not a single Indian must give evidence before the Commission.

(2) The Government has turned down the request for enlargement of the Commission.

[1] *Vide* the following item.

(3) If, therefore, Indians gave evidence, it would mean violation of the community's pledge.

(4) The Government has recognized that our refusal to give evidence before the Commission is based on conscientious grounds.

(5) Our refusal to produce, in another court, evidence on flogging, etc., since we are unable to do so before the Commission, does not imply weakness on our part. On the contrary, we show ourselves the better satyagrahis for that. The Government appreciates this attitude.

(6) We have been pressing, in recent times, that the Government should consult us in regard to measures affecting us; this demand has been conceded.

(7) In view of this, we shall be justified in placing our case before Sir Benjamin Robertson.

(8) The Government has declared its intention to satisfy us by conceding our demands and introducing necessary amendments in the law, and it hopes to do so without delay in the ensuing session of Parliament.

(9) In view of this, we should give an opportunity to the Government to carry out its intention and should postpone resumption of satyagraha.

(10) The Government is bound not to lead negative evidence before the Commission in regard to flogging and other repressive measures.

(11) The Government will release the satyagrahis now in gaol.

The Government's position is that whatever it intends to grant, it will do through the Commission.

If the Government acts in this way, we may hope that this great struggle is near its end. If it does not, we lose nothing. We shall be able to show greater strength still. By taking the step we have done, we have met the wishes of the Viceroy and have refrained from provoking the local community; we shall not appear to have treated the advice of our friends and counsellors with contempt and, if we have to resume the struggle, we shall make our satyagraha shine all the brighter in the world and expose more effectively the Union Government's misdeeds and iniquities.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 28-1-1914

47. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE[1]

DURBAN,
January 30, 1914

THE CONGRESS MEETING[2] NUMBERED LITTLE OVER A HUNDRED PEOPLE. OPINION IS SHARPLY DIVIDED. THE MAJORITY VOTED AGAINST OFFERING EVIDENCE. SO FAR THREE INDENTURED INDIANS ONLY HAVE APPEARED BEFORE THE COMMISSION. THE CONGRESS MEETING WAS ENGINEERED BY MEN WHO WERE OPPOSED TO PASSIVE RESISTANCE AT THE VERY BEGINNING OF THE STRUGGLE. NO IMPORTANCE IS ATTACHED TO THE MEETING LOCALLY THE GENERAL EUROPEAN FEELING IS GROWING IN OUR FAVOUR. AN INFLUENTIAL MEMBER OF THE SENATE PAID A PERSONAL VISIT TO MR. GANDHI AT PHOENIX YESTERDAY AND WAS MOST CORDIAL. HE OFFERED ALL HELP TOWARDS A SETTLEMENT, AND WANTED BYGONES FORGOTTEN. DON'T BE ANXIOUS.

The Times of India, 2-2-1914

48. VIEWS ON THE MARRIAGE QUESTION[3]

February 2, 1914

Mahommedan and Hindu monogamous marriages shall be legalized by an amendment of the immigration law or by a special statute. Statutory legalization can be effected by a system of registration whereby all past monogamous marriages will be entered in a record book to be kept by the respective religious priests, who will be authorized marriage officers, and the validation of these unions will date back to the original marriage ceremony, whether performed in South Africa or in India. Future marriages will also be celebrated by

[1] This was sent jointly by Gandhiji and C. F. Andrews.

[2] The Reuter-South Africa Press Agency released on January 28 the following news report about the Durban meeting: "At a meeting of the Natal Indian Congress tonight, it was decided to give evidence before the Indian Enquiry Commission. This body does not support Gandhi."

[3] The typescript of this item bears the heading "Mr. Gandhi's Position" and is evidently the gist of Gandhiji's views presumably recorded by himself after a discussion or an interview.

these priests religiously and simultaneously recordedin the record book, and no other marriage between one of the parties and another person could be so recorded or otherwise validated during the lifetime of the other.

Legal effect would be that no Hindu or Mahommedan will be able to take to himself more than one wife, but it will not preclude him from taking a number of women whom he calls his wives, but who, in the eyes of the law, will be considered as concubines. Such, says Mr. Gandhi, is the state of English marriages today. This does not mean that he wants the State to recognize any polygamous marriages. But he objects to a declaration being made by either party to the marriage contract that neither will take another partner in future, because any such declaration would be tantamount to a renunciation of their religion.

In the case of a past marriage, a man can have only one wife before he can make the declaration that she is his only wedded wife.

DIVORCE

A marriage which is legalized according to the South African law can only be dissolved in terms of that law. A woman can only be divorced under South African law for adultery or desertion.

From a photostat of a typewritten copy: S. N. 5930

49. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[PHOENIX,]

Tuesday [*February 3, 1914*][1]

CHI. MANILAL,

I have had two letters from you. I am also sorry I had no talk with you. No doubt, I was very much hurt that you ate chillies. It is possible that you will not feel the effects just now. But never forget that *tamasic* food[2] cannot but have an evil effect. I am sure it will do you good in future if you discipline your senses. For all that

[1] From the reference to Andrews in the letter, it appears to have been written when Manilal Gandhi accompanied Andrews as secretary on the latter' tour of Natal between January 30 and February 5, 1914.

[2] Spicy, salted food; liable to stimulate the qualities of *tamas* or darkness, animality.

I can see, there has been no spiritual gain to you through your experience of gaol. You have great need to cultivate thoughtfulness. It is a rare gain to have come into contact with Mr. Andrews. I should like you to take the fullest advantage of theoccasion by preserving the utmost purity. So far, Mr. Andrews has expressed himself perfectly satisfied about you.

Keep an account of every pice you spend. Have no shame about doing any work for Mr. Andrews. You may even massage his calves. Having done so once myself, I know that he probably finds it agreeable. Polish his shoes and tie up the laces. You must not forget to write to me every day. Maintain a diary of meetings with all persons and the developments from day to day.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

It is impossible to say anything about Ba's health. Medh and Desai are here today, and Lal Bahadursingh too.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 100 Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

50. WHO MAY BE DEPORTED?

Seen superficially, the difference between satyagraha and brute force is so subtle that it escapes notice and both satyagrahis and non-satyagrahis, i.e., those who believe in brute force, are misled. Some of our well-wishers and friends did not like our strike in Natal, as they thought we had overstepped the limits of satyagraha. Others mistakenly imagined that the recent strike of the white railwaymen was satyagraha, though the difference between their aim and ours in going on strike is as great as that between North and South. If we went on strike, it was not in order to harass the Government. We only wanted to suffer—do *tapascharya*—by going to gaol. In the event, we find that our victory is at hand. That victory is also unique. We seek no political powers for ourselves. We only wish to preserve our self-respect and defend our religion. Whatever we may suffer in our own persons, we shall never seek to injure our opponent or dislodge him from office. The railwaymen's attitude is the precise opposite of this. Their fight is not for self-respect. They have nothing to do with

religion. They wanted a rise in their pay—wanted improvement in their economic condition. They went on strike not in order to get themselves gaoled but with the object of bringing pressure on the Government. If the latter were to use force against them, they, too, would, if they could, use force in return. If it were possible, they would even overthrow the Government and installthemselves in power. In fact, that is their ultimate object. And so they have had to surrender in sheer helplessness before superior force. The Government, too, on its part, acted boldly and deported them overnight, secretly, without producing them in any court. All the world has commended its action and praised its courage. If it were to deport us, it would lay itself open to the charge of being oppressive, though we, of course, would have to submit with a smiling face. There is thus a vast difference, which every Indian should note and understand, between satyagraha and *asatya-graha*[1]. Satyagraha is not a game in which one might either win or lose. There is no room for failure in it. Brute force has to take its chance of success or failure. And the odds are always with the stronger party, irrespective of the rights of the case.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 4-2-1914

51. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

PHOENIX, NATAL,

[*February*][2] *5, 1914*

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I have your wire. I do not understand why Andrews hastened his departure for the Cape. However I sent the wire to Kimberley.

I enclose Kennedy's letter. Although he does not want a reply I am sending a brief note saying he ought not to worry over the past, nor should you. The best thing is to ignore Hastings except to meet the settlement arrived at.

Sir Benjamin and Slater came yesterday and stayed about 2 hours. He suggests that I should be in Cape Town by the 18th. I am most anxious not to leave Mrs. Gandhi. Two days ago she seemed to

[1] Fight for untruth

[2] The sources has "January", which is a slip. Sir Benjamin Robertson visited Phoenix on February 4, 1914.

be sinking. But from yesterday she has begun to brighten up. She ate well yesterday. If she recovers it will be due to the fast and the leaves.

Please do not involve yourself in anything further and come away as soon as you can or you may accompany me to the Cape. I would leave it entirely to you.

Your missing spoons have been traced.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

52. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

PHOENIX,
NATAL,
February 10, 1914

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I have your letters. The very fact that you ask yourself the question whether you have profited during the two years is a sign of progress. The voice within is still clear and emphatic.

I shall see to Pearson being paid. I may leave here on Thursday with Mrs. Gandhi on my way to the Cape. In that case I should be there on Saturday morning, leaving the same day by Diamond Express. I should so like Pearson to stay there for that will be my only chance of meeting him, if I do leave on Thursday. Who is sending an account of the meetings?

Aboobaker's cheque received and handed to Mr. Omar.

Mrs. Gandhi progressing. I note what you say about Fremeren.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

53. THE IMMIGRATION ACT

The interpretation of this Act daily presents new difficulties. The latest is Justice Broome's decision in the matter of Dawad Ismail and Daya Purshotam against the Immigration Officer. According to Justice Broome's interpretation of the Act, the Supreme Court may not even grant an interdict against that officer, acting under the Act of last year, in respect of persons seeking to re-enter the Union as was the case in the matter we are discussing. Thus the Supreme Court will be powerless, if Justice Broome's decision holds good, to prevent a manifest miscarriage of justice, as happened in this case, through the stupidity of the under-officials. As Justice Broome himself remarked, here the ends of justice were not defeated only because the aid of the Court was improperly invoked and as improperly given by the Court granting the interdict. If such is the correct reading of the law, every Indian is entirely at the mercy of Immigration Officers. The only comfort that the Court could give to the parties grossly injured was that they had not to bear the costs of crown although the proceedings were irregularly brought by them. It is true that the Court came most reluctantly to the decision it did. But we cannot eternally live on sympathy unless it leads to useful action. This case is merely a sample of several others like it. Every section of the Act—even the protective sections—seems to have been designed, wittingly or unwittingly, to harass the resident Indian population. So that the law not only prohibits Indian immigration in practice, but it materially interferes with the liberty and the free movement, within the law, of the resident Indian population of the Union.

Take, again, the case recently decided by the now defunct Appellate Board, appointed for Natal under the Act. There, Mr. Binns, delivering the judgment of the Board, reluctantly granted relief to a man who possessed a domicile certificate issued under the old Act and with which certificate he was completely identified. Why was there this reluctance? Why should an Indian be called upon to tax his memory as to what happened fifteen years ago? The title-deeds of property once granted cannot be questioned. They are conclusive proof of title. Why should a domicile certificate be treated differently? These certificates were granted after due and exhaustive—and in many cases vexatious—inquiry. By what right are they now questioned? If the Act

gives such powers to Immigration Officers, the sooner it is amended the better it will be for both the Government and the people affected by the Act.

What is, however, perhaps more ominous even than the above mentioned legal proceedings is the severe administration of the Act. It is clear that, had the officers done their duty by the persons who were seeking re-entry—not those who were seeking to immigrate into the Union—the cases need never have arisen. The officials are certainly going mad over their administration of the Act against persons in the Cape and Basutoland who have continually to pass through the Free State on their way to the other Provinces. To expect them each time to take out temporary permits is to put an unwarranted tax upon their purses and is an unnecessary annoyance to the men who have to apply for permits. The old practice of letting Indian passengers go through unchallenged never caused the slightest difficulty to the administration and it ought to be continued.The case of a boy that has happened in Pretoria is also of the same type. Surely the child, whatever may be the meaning of the Act, is entitled to enter the Transvaal, seeing that he is the son beyond doubt of his father and that his mother is dead. Indeed, the Government have practically bound themselves to recognize at least administratively the right of such children to join their parents who may be in South Africa. But in the Pretoria case, the Appellate Board has interpreted the Act, too, in favour of the Indian applicant. Yet the Government are not satisfied. They must seek to upset the finding of the Appellate Board which is appointed by them and whichhas powers given largely to protect the administration rather than the persons coming under its lash. The fact that the Government are challenging the liberal interpretation of the Act shows that they want it to be interpreted as strictly as it is administered. It is against this wretched spirit that we must wage war, if we are to live in this country as men.

Indian Opinion, 11-2-1914

54. REQUEST TO LEADERS

We have carefully studied the evidence given by Mr. Anglia and Mr. Dada Osman and it is our considered view that both the leaders have done harm to the community. That the Commissioners pay compliments to them is of no account. Their evidence seems to suggest that our only grievances about licences and immigration are those that they mentioned. By giving the evidence that they did, they set a limit [to what we could demand]. It happens, however, that theirs is not the last word on behalf of the community. Even if their demands are accepted, much will remain and, so long as this is not settled, there will always remain the possibility of the Indian community resuming satyagraha. If they were bent on giving evidence, it was their duty to put it all together and have it formulated by a reliable lawyer before presenting it. It was their primary duty to the community to have accepted the resolution passed by thousands of people to boycott the Commission and to have remained silent. If, however, they wished to give evidence, they should have been more careful. Their evidence has had the unhappy result of provoking the thoroughly hostile evidence of Mr. Wincall against us. If Mr. Wincall were right in his facts, there would have been nothing that we could do. But we know that his evidence is not factually true, and that he has made many statements which are altogether false. Those who claim to be leaders should have a better sense of their duty. If they were keen on tendering evidence, they should have produced a number of witnesses and not behaved with the utmost irresponsibility, as Mr. Sooker did, just when the Commission's sittings were coming to a close. They had known for a month that the Commission would be sitting and should have started preparing well beforehand so that they could give evidence which would be sound. We therefore believe that these two leaders, instead of doing their duty by the community, have done it harm. Having said this, we also thank them for having refrained from washing the dirty linen of the community before the Commission. Mr. Anglia stated that he could speak with authority on behalf of all the Indians of established standing and reputation. Who are these Indians on whose behalf he was speaking? If Mr. Anglia's claim is right, we pity these well-established Indians and feel sorry for them. We hold that Mr. Anglia has erred in making such a statement

and has failed to pay due regard to his position and the responsibility that rests on him.

About Mr. Sooker, we simply refuse to comment. The youngman is carried away by pride. As regards Mr. Aiyar, what can we say? He has given evidence without thinking. It was good of him to have made it plain that he spoke not on behalf of anyone, but on his own responsibility and only for himself. He might not have, therefore, done much harm.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 11-2-1914

55. ON MARRIAGES

We know that the marriage question has now become the most serious one in this country. The Commission is in a fix about it. The question raises the issue of an important amendment in the laws of the country. We hold that the evidence given by Mr. Anglia and others on this subject was misguided. The problem is so complicated that they should not have meddled with it. In any case, they should have done so with full understanding. Let us now consider what the question involves. The correspondence carried on by Mr. Cachalia means that an Indian marriage which is monogamous in fact should be recognized. If a person has more than one wife, the Government, as a matter of grace, should permit the entry of all his wives and his minor children, provided he is an old resident. If anyone marries two women in future, he should be allowed to bring in one of them. Wives of the last two categories will be entitled legally to no other rights. In this, we are not binding ourselves for the future. The Commission, it appears, insists that, where a man with only one wife desires to have his marriage legally recognized, the marriage should be considered monogamous only if he makes a solemn declaration that he will not take another wife during the life-time of the first one. Mr. Gandhi has strongly opposed this line of argument and pointed out that signing such a declaration amounts to repudiating Hinduism and Islam in the matter of marriage. If the law recognized only the first wife, that would be a different matter. In this case, no Hindu or Muslim would be acting contrary to his religion. Recognition of such marriages would safeguard the rights of hundreds of Indians and these Indians will generally have only one wife. The Government is committed to

recognizing the wife in a monogamous marriage. The law here also does that. The Commission, or anyone else for that matter, has no right to tie us down for the future. True, the [exclusive] recognition of monogamous marriages is likely to curb the practice of polygamy. Which husband will like to have one wife legally recognized and another treated as a concubine?

Less than this we cannot accept. More than this it is almost impossible that we can get. In any case, it seems satyagraha will above be justified for securing more. If our demands are met as above, the honour [of our religions] will have been upheld and hundreds of Indian families will have a chance of being happy.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 11-2-1914

56. IMPORTANT IMMIGRATION CASES

There have been two important immigration cases in Natal. As we were busy writing on other matters, we have had so far no time to explain them. We take the opportunity of doing so now. In one case, an unusual one, the judgment was given by Justice Broome. The Indian concerned might have had to leave this country altogether. The position was this: The petitioner, who arrived from India in October last, was not permitted to come in. He did not appeal against this as required by law. He went back to India, but came again in January. Again the officer stopped him. This time the petitioner's lawyer obtained an interdict from the Supreme Court, which prevented the officer from deporting him. Finally, the Attorney-General conducted an inquiry and found that the petitioner had been wrongly sent back and that he was entitled to stay in Natal. His right of residence, thus, was recognized, having been admitted by the Attorney-General. But the Court had yet to decide who should pay the expenses incurred in obtaining the interdict against the officer. Deciding the point, Mr. Justice Broome held that there was no provision in the lawgranting the right of applying for an interdict against an [immigration] officer. Under the law, the officer's order can only be set aside in a case involving corruption and bribery. There was no such thing in this case. Nevertheless, the Court felt that the officer had acted hastily and erred in sending the petitioner away. Had an interdict not been granted, legal though this might have been, it would have resulted in

injustice to the petitioner and cost him his right. The Court decided that, in the circumstances, the costs should be borne by the parties themselves. This decision cannot be said to be in our favour. If the Court cannot intervene in cases of undue haste on the part of officers, the latter might pass arrogant and arbitrary orders, as caprice takes them. In matters involving rights of persons, there is bound to be injustice if supreme powers are vested exclusively in the Executive. Justice Broome's decision cannot be accepted as correct. If fact,Courts always have powers of granting interdicts and the legal point involved here, we believe, will bear being taken in appeal to Bloemfontein, should a similar situation arise again. Meanwhile, it is necessary at any rate to write to the Government about it.

The second case relates to a decision of Mr. Beans. He has now left the Immigration Appeal Court. The decision about which we wish to write was his last one. True, it does justice, but Mr. Beans was not happy giving it and did not miss having a fling at the community. Mr. Justice Broome did an injustice in his decision, but showed that he was not happy doing so. Thus two persons, both occupying seats of justice, have two different temperaments. The facts of the case decided by Mr. Beans are simple. The petitioner had a certificate of 1896. He had been to and returned from India twice with this certificate. On this third occasion, the officer stopped him on his arrival and so there was an appeal. Mr. Beans remarked rather gratuitously that the petitioner was not stating the facts, but lacked the courage to send him back. How is it possible to send back a man who has been here twice? For this reason and also because the officer acknowledged that he [the petitioner] was the one who had taken out the certificate, Mr. Beans could not give an unfavourable decision. Though giving a favourable decision, he allowed himself to remark that the officer did well in stopping him. He went further, and said that, in such cases, criminal proceedings should be instituted; with that end in view, he has forwarded all the evidence regarding the petitioner to the public prosecutor. Such is the terrible position we are in. A harsh law, administered harshly, and the difficulty of obtaining redress in the lower courts. All the same, this case, in all likelihood, will have the result of making it difficult for officers to deport those who may enter on their own certificates.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-2-1914

57. RIGHTS OF MINORS

There was recently a very important immigration case in Pretoria. The Immigration Officer refused to admit a Muslim boy. We shall say nothing here about some odd reasons given by him but only examine the legal point involved. The reason for refusing admission was that the boy was born of a marriage celebrated according to the Muslim faith; since the law does not recognize Muslim marriages, the children of such marriages could not be admitted. The applicant wentin appeal against this decision. It came up before the new Board appointed at Pretoria. The relevant section of the law provides that the wife and children of a man entitled to be here can come in, and the persons so entitled to come in will include a wife by a monogamous marriage recognized in law, and his children. The Court interpreted this section in favour of the petitioner. Its argument ran as follows: "True, only a wife whose marriage is recognized by law can come in, but there is no rule that only her children can enter. Children can come in, whether the parents are married or not. This will include the children of a legally married couple. Children of couples living together without being legally married are not barred." Following this argument, the Court gave a decision in favour of the petitioner.

We must not jump to conclusions from this argument of the Court. It will not carry conviction. If the Court's argument is correct, then it will also apply to women. In the relevant section of the law, the words "wife" and "child" occur at two places. The Court has given different meanings to the word "child" in the two places, but has given the same interpretation to the words "wife" at both places. The Court's reasons for doing so sound plausible but lack substance. Its decision, therefore, does not remove our misgivings. If, however, its interpretation is correct, we must admit that our protests regarding the position of children in connection with the marriage question will lose some of their force. Because children born out of wedlock have been given the right of entry, it does not follow that we have secured all our rights. The Immigration Officer has not been happy over the decision of the Court and, therefore, the case will go, at his instance, to the Supreme Court. Let us see what happens there. That the Immigration Officer is likely to take this case to a higher court shows that the Government does not mean well by us. More, it wants to have the laws interpreted strictly and by adopting such methods to root us out altogether. It should be realized that we have resorted to satyagraha

against this state of mind. Our sufferings will not end with one campaign of satyagraha; we shall have to use this weapon whenever they become intolerable. If we do so often enough, the Government will see our strength, will know what our real demands are and give up its obduracy.

We can see from this case that with the new Appeal Boards things have improved. We are sure an Appeal Board of the older type would never have given such a decision. The old Appeal Board at Pretoria would have acted in the same manner as its counterpart at Durban in the case of Kulsumbibi.

We hope, in this case, the petitioner will fight in the Supreme Court with the same skill as he has shown so far. When we say that the case is not strong, we do not mean that there are no arguments for it. If the Supreme Court takes up a liberal attitude, it may accept the arguments advanced in favour of the petitioner, in which case, the children of all wives will be able to come in. If the decision goes against us, there will be no need to feel discouraged, for the great fight on the issue of marriage which we have been carrying on will decide this question too. We can very well see from this case how big is our struggle and how many important results it is likely to yield.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 11-2-1914

58. OUR HOPES

A gentleman writes to us:

This is, indeed, a rare time for you, the like of which will not recur. Circumstances will never again favour you with a similar opportunity, what with the support India has been giving you and the strong sympathies that have been aroused. Nothing, therefore, should be left out from the full citizenship rights which are to be achieved, so that our people may not have to endure hardships again. Besides the matters in dispute, there are the questions of the right to own land, the Gold Law, the Township Act, freedom to hold licences in the Transvaal, the franchise, the prohibition on Indians putting up stores on new stations, while the Jews are free to do so, and reserved compartments in trains being packed with as many as twelve men. There must be many other matters besides these of which you will be aware. There is, of course, no need for me to write. I have only mentioned this in passing. All that I mean is that the present opportunity will not come again and that, therefore, every

right should be secured.

It is well that we have received this letter. We believe that what this one gentleman has put in writing is in the minds of many. We have, however, to say with regret that such hopes will lead to disappointment. Like everything else, satyagraha has its limits. To understand how much may be achieved through it is the first step to success in it. It needs to be understood, once and for all, that the path of truth is not meant for ends not consistent with truth. It is our belief that raising our demands will amount to untruthfulness. Many things, moreover, which can be achieved through satyagraha we shall surely fail to achieve if we are not uncompromising enough in our regard for truth. For instance, we should have the right to [own] land in the Transvaal. But that was not one of our demands in this struggle. We cannot, therefore, advance it at this stage. The strength that may be needed to demand the right in future, we do not as yet see in the community. In the present satyagraha, the indentured Indians have shaken the world. Inspired by their strength, India resounded with protests. But we certainly cannot on that strength secure land rights. For the right to vote, we need to have many things in us without which, as we believe, the franchise would prove unavailing, even if granted. We have no doubt in our minds that it will be a long time before we have the vote. For that India herself will have to wake up, independently of everything else. In the matter of the Gold Law, licences, etc, provision is made in Section 5. Not that all our grievances in these matters will disappear by virtue of this Section, but an assurance from the Government that the laws in regard to them will be reasonably administered will enable us to build further and obtain redress without resorting to satyagraha. As regards hardships on railways, we need to have some grit. If there are already six men in a compartment, the seventh must display courage. If he demands another compart-ment, the conductor is bound to provide it. As long as we are prepared to submit to kicks, there will be men ever ready to deliver them. If a man does not fight for himself in such matters and is trampled over in consequence, nothing that we can do will help him. Letters may be addressed and even assurances that such things will not recur may be received. The conductors, however,will persist in their autocratic ways.

"The opportunity will not come again, we shall not have a fight like this in future." Such things have been said during every campaign. However, the campaign in 1908 turned out to be on a

larger scale than that of 1907, and the one in 1913 than that of 1908. More people went to gaol during 1908-11 than during 1907-8. In 1913, the very highest limit was reached. Even so, when the fight comes again, it will go one better. It is up to us to see that it does. Even when we have the best of dishes placed before us, we can eat only according to our capacity. If we eat in excess, we shall get indigestion and may even die. The same is true of opportunities. The opportunity of the future will far excel the present one, but only if, ignoring it, we rest satisfied with our original demands. If we were to raise our demands ever so little, we are sure we would lose the sympathy we have both here and in India. "The community may not have to endure hardships again"—these are words of cowardice. The community will not acquire stamina except through suffering. Every step forward is bound to cost some effort. What we have gone through is not to be looked upon as hardship but as requisite effort. To wish that one may not have to make any such effort is to desire that Nature's law shall cease to function. Never, in the wide world, have we come across, nor cease to function. Never, in the wide world, have we come across, nor have we in history read of, an instance of achievement without effort.

Finally, Indians need to realize in all seriousness that it is the first principle of satyagraha not to enhance our original demands. The second principle is that what is obtained by satyagraha can be retained only by satyagraha. The third principle is that what is attainable by satyagraha cannot but be achieved and that satyagraha knows no such word as "defeat". We are convinced that, if this is understood, no misconceptions will arise in the community and that it will be able to make excellent progress.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 11-2-1914

59. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH[1]

February 14, 1914

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Now that you know the worst about Ritch, you will have to handle the matter in the gentlest manner possible. If anything is disclosed apart from my side, you will step in at once and in any event see to it that you secure control over all the funds that may come in future. What a tragedy. I do feel like taking you away and both of us escaping to the jungle. What a snare and delusion this wretched civilization, in the midst of which you and I are still living and of the bitter fruit of which we are still tasting! Woe to us if we tarry in it a minute longer than may be absolutely necessary. Do wind up your affairs satisfactorily and flee from the tyrant whilst yet there is time. Do not deceive yourself into the belief that we are saved until we are quite out of it which we will not be quite even in India all of a sudden. The Indian visit will be merely a preparation for the glorious future which must be unalloyed by the poison of the modern craze. Do not put your trust in money please. You know that you are free to come to Cape Town whenever you wish to come. Only finish your work there, both public and private, for there may be no time left after the legislation in Cape Town.

With love,

Yours,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] A note at the top of the letter by the addressee reads: "In the train on the way between Johannesburg and Cape Town. Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi left Johannesburg 14-2-1914."

60. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI PATEL

[CAPE TOWN,]
Sunday [*After February 15, 1914*]

DEAR SHRI RAOJIBHAI,

I must have piled up claims on you in some previous life. Else, how could I deserve so much love from you? Still, the love that you showed me in my misfortune yesterday was beyond description. For this, I pray, may you both grow brighter in your souls. You should pray, likewise, that having experienced this love [of yours], I may grow the stronger in my faith in soul-force. If a trivial pledge, none too important in itself, i.e., the mere undertaking of *tapascharya,* can achieve so much, there can be no measuring, as the simple rule of three will show, how much may be achieved by *tapascharya* actually practised. Quite so. Had I not taken the vow, I would not have tasted pure love as I did; there would have been no speedy discovery of truth and the poor children would not have been proved innocent as they actually were.[1]

Chi. . . . has had to come down from the heights where I had imagined her to be. Still my mind tells me that she is a blessed soul. Her virtues are many. It is our duty to develop them. Her action and her guilt were serious indeed. We should act so as not to remind her of them. Encourage her to become proficient in household work. See that none of the children insults her . . . [2] Continue the readings from holy books in the evenings. I shall hold it to be R's responsibility to wake up the children at five . . .[3] See that I have regular news of Maganbhai's health.

With due regards

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]
Mahatma Gandhijina Patro and *Gandhijini Sadhana*

[1] A Phoenix teacher, had committed a breach of Ashram discipline by eating pakodas along with some students. Though she denied this lapse when questioned by Gandhiji, she confessed it the day after he had decided to go on an indefinite fast of atonement.

[2] Some portions have been omitted here in the sources.

[3] *ibid*

61. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

7 BUITENSINGLE,
CAPE TOWN,
[*February 17, 1914*][1]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

We reached yesterday morning without any extra discomfort on the way. Andrews leaves on Saturday. He has done very wonderful work here indeed. He has again seen Gladstone, Newman, all the newspapermen, most of the judges and has been lunching out almost every day with some notability or other, his main topic of conversation being always India and Tagore or the Indian question here.

Jamnadas is here and two other young Indians who were his fellow-prisoners. They are all at present being accommodated at Gool's place. I am really ashamed to have to be here with Mrs. Gandhi but he would not hear of my having rooms myself.

Has Ritch returned or have you heard any more about him?

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

62. ANGLIA'S EVIDENCE

With reference to our criticism, Mr. Anglia writes as follows to Mr. Gandhi:

> I have carefully gone through your comments, in *Indian Opinion,* on my evidence. I very much regret that you thought it fit to pass judgment before publish-ing the full evidence in Gujarati. Was it worthily done? Be that as it may, I believe that the paper exists for the community, and you claim to serve the community. If, therefore, you mean to serve it well, you should print the full text of the evidence in the next issue. You may then make whatever comments you wish to. Until you reproduce the entire evidence, how can the public form their own judgment?

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's being in train (*vide* fn. to preceding item), it appears he reached Cape Town on the morning of February 16. This letter was written the next day and C. F. Andrews left for England on February 21, a Saturday.

We certainly intend to reproduce the evidence. We took it that everyone must have read it in the local papers. But we have with us a verbatim report. We intend to publish in Gujarati the evidence as it appears in this report so that no injustice is done. We offered our comments after seeing the report of the evidence in the papers. If, after going through the verbatim report, we feel like changing our opinion, we will certainly do so. But we found the evidence as reported in the papers so bad that we did not think it proper to wait till we had read the full text. It was our duty to give a timely warning. If the evidence was not correctly reported in the Press, Mr. Anglia and Mr. Dada Osman should have sent a correction to the Press. In any case, we shall, as we have said, write again after going through the full text of the evidence.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 18-2-1914

63. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE

CAPE TOWN,
February 18, 1914

GOKHALE
SERVINDIA
POONA

LECTURE RABINDRANATH TAGORE BY ANDREWS CITY HALL. MAYOR PRESIDING PUBLICLY EXPRESSED SYMPATHY WITH ANDREWS MISSION. VERY LARGE DISTINGUISHED AUDIENCE INCLUDING PROMINENT MEMBERS PARLIAMENT. LECTURE SIMILAR VICEREGAL LODGE SIMLA. MERRIMAN LATE PREMIER EMPHASISED NEED BETTER UNDERSTANDING HIGHER INDIAN LIFE. ANDREWS HAD TRULY INTERPRETED THIS. NO GREATER SERVICE TODAY THAN SUCH INTERPRETATION. GOVERNOR-GENERAL EXPRESSED DEEP SATISFACTION HEARING SUCH LECTURE AT PRESENT CRITICAL TIME. THANKED ANDREWS FOR SERVICE RENDERED CAUSE OF PEACE AND SETTLEMENT. TRUSTED SETTLEMENT NEAR AT HAND. HIMSELF WHEN OXFORD SPECIALIZED INDIAN HISTORY ALSO TRAVELLED INDIA, WARMEST APPRECIATION OF HIGHER INDIAN LIFE AND THOUGHT SUCH AS TAGORE REPRESENTED. WISHED MORE STUDY INDIA NOT LAND

COOLIES BUT LAND NOBLE IDEALS SUCH AS ANDREWS EXPLAINED. LORD GLADSTONE SPOKE WITH DEEP FEELING. LECTURE PROMINENTLY REVIEWED CREATING GOOD IMPRESSION. EXPAND PUBLISH THIS CABLEGRAM.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the original as delivered: C. W. 4851 Courtesy: Servants of India Society

64. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

7 BUITENSINGLE,
CAPE TOWN,
February 18, 1914

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I had your letter sent to Phoenix redirected. There is no doubt that Andrews has done most wonderful and ceaseless work. His address was brilliant and Lord Gladstone made a speech which was very good.[1] You must have seen it in the papers. I shall send you copies. As soon as Andrews is gone I would like to send Manilal to Johannesburg. I am here for a month or more. Whether you come here or not I think the best thing is for Manilal to stay and work at Mountain View by himself. But you will have to be fairly strict with him. He has not gained by his gaol experiences. And you may leave him only after he is in fairly full swing. But please let me know what you feel about this. I would like him to come out to Johannesburg as soon as Andrews is off, subject to your consent. You may, therefore, wire if you think fit.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] C.F. Andrews had addressed the university students on February 17 on Rabindranath Tagore; *vide* also "Anglia's Evidence", 18-2-1914 to "Letter to Raojibhai Patel", 24-2-1914.

65. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE

CAPE TOWN,
February 19, 1914

GOKHALE
SERVINDIA
POONA

"CAPE TIMES" REPRODUCES ANDREWS LECTURE FULLY WITH LEADING ARTICLE. REPORTS GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S CONCLUDING WORDS AS FOLLOWS: PERSONALITY OF TAGORE WAS INTENSE EXPRESSION OF INDIAN IMAGINATIVE NATIONAL LIFE. INDIA HAD DEVELOPED PERHAPS FAR ABOVE OTHER PARTS BRITISH EMPIRE IN CIVILIZATION AND EFFORTS TO ATTAIN HIGHER LIFE. HE BELIEVED ANDREWS LECTURE WOULD DO MUCH SOLVE TROUBLE WHICH HAD ARISEN BETWEEN INDIA AND SOUTH AFRICA. HE THANKED ANDREWS HEARTILY FOR ALL HIS EFFORTS IN SOUTH AFRICA TO BRING ABOUT BETTER UNDER STANDING.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the original as delivered: C.W. 4852 Courtesy: Servants of India Society

66. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI PATEL

CAPE TOWN,
Maha Vad 12 [*February 21, 1914*]

DEAR SHRI RAOJIBHAI,

I have your letter. . . . It is not that I wanted Chi. Manilal to be sent there. He has been removed from the atmosphere of luxury here. . . . Chi. Jamnadas has been sent there for the same reason. . . . I believe that one who wants to observe *brahmacharya* should not dwell in the midst of luxuries. Ba seems to maintain good health. Be particular that the boys there become hard-working and that none of them slackens ever so little in the matter of getting up early. How does Maganbhai keep? Give me a detailed report. See that Imam Saheb's wife does not feel uncomfortable. If any particular article of food is

found necessary for her, I think it will be all right to have it specially prepared or allow it to be prepared.

Beyond doubt Mr. Andrews has done great work.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahatma Gandhijina Patro and *Jivannu Parodh*

67. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

February 22, 1914

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I have your two letters and wires. I am glad you were successful at Pretoria.

Even if Ritch has not finally left Johannesburg, the step he has taken warrants all my reflections. The contemplated removal to Mombasa is the act of a mad man. And his sudden departure without any consultation with anybody is undoubtedly lunacy. The use of the £500 is willful misappropriation. The use of my money was legitimate. The inability to reply was capable of being understood or at least explained away.

I did not wait for wire regarding Manilal. I found that he must leave Cape Town. The atmosphere was enervating for both the boys. Both Manilal and Jamnadas therefore left today, Manilal for Johannesburg and Jamnadas for Durban. They both interrupt their journey at Kimberley. Manilal, therefore, reaches you on Wednesday morning. There is nothing too wrong with the boy but he needs a calmer and quieter atmosphere which Mountain View will provide.

When you find that Manilal has regained his balance and may be safely left alone, I presume, you will come here if your business allows it.

Miss Moonsamy[1], a passive resister girl, is dead. I hope you have been to see her people and consoled them.

Our friend Habib Motan is here making all the mischief he can.

Mr. Andrews has continued to remain a rare man to me. He got a

[1] Valliamma Moonsamy Mudaliar, who died after a long illness on February 22, 1914; *vide* In Memoriam", 25-2-1914

marvellous hold on the elite of Cape Town and he has calmed the atmosphere in a wonderful manner. His affection for the poet[1] is phenomenal. He called him his Guru at the University lecture which was a treat[2] . More when we meet. I am longing to have early morning walks with you on Table Mountains and sleep on the roof of the house quite in the open.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

68. LETTER TO ELIZABETH MARI MOLTENO

7 BUITENSINGLE,
CAPE TOWN,
February 23, 1914

DEAR MISS. MOLTENO,

My impression is that I said we would call on you tomorrow (Tuesday), but Dr. Gool[3] does not remember. Not to make any mistake we shall be coming there between 3 and 4 tomorrow and take our chance.

The visit to Miss Hobhouse was entirely successful. It was a perfect pilgrimage for me. Mrs. Botha[4] was all you described her. She was most kind to both of us and most loving towards Mrs. Gandhi. Thank you for all this. Incidentally, we met Lady Gladstone too &?[5] Are you not pleased?

With our regards to you and Miss Greene,

I remain,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Molteno Murray Family Papers. Courtesy: University of Capetown Libraries

[1] Rabindranath Tagore
[2] *Vide* "Cable to G.K. Gokhale", 18-2-1914.
[3] Dr. J. H. Gool
[4] Wife of Gen. Louis Botha
[5] As in the source

69. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE

CAPE TOWN,
February 24, 1914

REV. MR. ANDREWS, WHO LEFT FOR ENGLAND ON SATURDAY, ADDRESSED PRIVATELY BEFORE LEAVING A MEETING OF CHURCH COUNCIL, AT WHICH I ALSO WAS INVITED TO SPEAK. MR. ANDREWS ALSO DELIVERED AN ADDRESS TO UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ON TAGORE AND HIS MESSAGE, THE VICE-CHANCELLOR PRESIDING. INDIAN COMMUNITY BADE HIM FAREWELL AT A PUBLIC MEETING AT WHICH MANY ENGLISH VISITORS WERE PRESENT. THE GENERAL IMPRESSION CREATED BY HIS MISSION HAS BEEN MOST FAVOURABLE. INDIANS FEEL DEEPLY GRATEFUL FOR DEPUTATION OF MESSRS ANDREWS AND PEARSON. MANY EUROPEANS, INCLUDING MINISTERS, HAVE EXPRESSED SINCERE SATISFACTION AT THE RESULTS OF THE VISIT. MR. ANDREWS SPREAD A SPIRIT OF SYMPATHY AND LOVE ALL ROUND AND HAS CONTRI-BUTED MUCH TO WARDS SPEEDY SETTLEMENT.

GANDHI

Servants of India Society

70. LETTER TO ELIZABETH MARI MOLTENO

7 BUITENSINGLE,
February 24, 1914

DEAR MISS. MOLTENO,

I am sorry to have to inform you that Mrs. Gandhi has had a relapse and she is at the time of writing lying in bed. She wants me therefore to say that whilst she would try her best to keep the appointment for tomorrow, she might not be able to go out at all. I thought that I should let you know this. In any case I shall expect you tomorrow afternoon and we shall be able to discuss. If she is very ill, I would also have to remain in to be by her side. It is a great pity

events have turned out so. But man proposes?

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Molteno Murray Family Papers. Courtesy: University of Capetown Libraries

71. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[CAPE TOWN,

February 24, 1914][1]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I have your letter enclosing Ramdas's and others'. You may well want to treasure Ramdas's letter. It is a gem. The boy seems to be shaping beautifully. If the composition is his own, it is also good. Thambi is now there. Please collar him and pacify him. Mrs. Gandhi is better but she has ups and downs and continues to cause anxiety. Imam is doing good work. We have not come here a moment too soon. Mrs. Gandhi and I went over to see Miss Hobhouse. We saw there Mrs. Botha and Lady Gladstone. Miss Hobhouse has a divine face. Have never seen a diviner face. Gokhale by his features took me by storm. Miss Hobhouse has done likewise, only more so. I feel like gazing at her in awe for hours.

Thursday, March 19

The above was found among my papers. I knew I had mislaid this. But I think that I gave you the substance of what is above written. However, you should have it as it is.

The report of the Commission is very fair and reasonable.[2] It is a creditable document and a complete vindication of our position.

With love,

Yours,

UPPER HOUSE

[1] From the reference in the letter written the next day; *vide* the following item.

[2] The Indian Enquiry Commission; *vide* "Observations Regarding Commission's Report", after 17-3-1914 and "The commission's Report and Recommendations", 25-3-1914.

[PS.]

Herewith Call's letter. You should drop him a line.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

72. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI PATEL

CAPE TOWN,
Maha Vad 30 [*February 24, 1914*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter about J, I have sent on to Doctor and the one about M, I destroyed after reading. Putting that letter in his hand might, I thought, have the wrong effect on him. Now I feel, however, that you should communicate these views to him direct. I have formed a very bad impression about him. It seemed to me that, if he were to read your letter, he would be angry with you and would run into sin, and that would have been a state far worse than you have described. I thought later whether or no I should send it on to him and in the end decided as above.

It is beyond all doubt that, if we keep back anything from one whom we trust or give a false impression on about us, we would come to not good. And so J's and . . .'s sins have been regarded as heinous. It is because of their extreme hypocrisy that they could be guilty of such [sins]. If they had no mind to deceive, they would, after they had turned into beasts under the urge of passion, have soon become human beings again and stopped pursuing pleasure. One seems now to be back on the right path and the other caught in the toils of desire and given over to hypocrisy.

[*Blessings from*
MOHANDAS]

[From Gujarati]
Mahatma Gandhijina Patro

[1] This appears to have been written in 1914 when Gandhiji was in Cape Town for negotiations with Smuts.

73. IN MEMORIAM

In another column we record the lamented death of yet another martyr to the passive resistance cause. Miss Valliamah Moonsamy, a young lady not yet in her twenties, was one of those devoted Indian women who sought imprisonment in protest against a marriage law that dishonoured her parents' marriage and cast a stigma upon herown birth. Her sudden and unexpected demise, two days after her return home, holds in it all the elements of tragedy. We mourn the loss of a noble daughter of India who did her simple duty without question, and who has set an example of womanly fortitude, pride and virtue that will, we are sure, not be lost upon the Indian community. We tender to her family our most respectful sympathy.

Indian Opinion, 25-2-1914

74. UNTIMELY DEATH OF A YOUNG PASSIVE RESISTER

It is with extreme regret we announce the death of Miss Valliamah, the eldest daughter of Mr. R. Moonsamy Moodaliar of Johannesburg, on the 22nd instant at Johannesburg, after a prolonged illness in gaol. It appears that she was taken to bed immediately after her conviction, and also after her release was suffering greatly. The late Miss Valliamah was born in Johannesburg in 1898 and attended the Government School. She joined the passive resistance struggle on the 29th October last and proceeded to Newcastle with a party of ladies. She afterwards rendered assistance at Charlestown, Dundee, Ladysmith, Dannhauser, Maritzburg, Tongaat and Durban. She eventually re-crossed the Transvaal border and was convicted, with her mother and others, at Volksrust on the 22nd of December 1913, to three months' imprisonment with hard labour and was discharged on the 11th instant in terms of the Provisional Agreement

Her father is one of the pioneer Indian settlers of the Transvaal. He was once in gaol as a passive resister and during the last campaign was very ill and only came out of the hospital where he underwent an operation recently. We share the sorrows of the parents and express our deepest sympathy at their irreparable loss.

Indian Opinion, 25-2-1914

75. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

7 BUITENSINGLE,
CAPE TOWN,
February 25, 1914

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I fear that my letter written to you yesterday has either beendestroyed through mistake or enclosed in a letter to Polak.[1] For I see Ramdas's letter before me and I thought I would post your letter myself after dinner, which I did not do. I do not know what is going to happen to Mrs. Gandhi. She hovers between life and death. Her appetite seems to be coming to her. But she has again developed the ominous swellings which frightened Dr. Gool who asked to examine her urine. His examination has led to no results. And the swelling persists. He is a good man. He never interferes.

Solomon has undergone his operation but he is causing anxiety, so Polak wires. He is receiving best attention.

What is happening just now is that I am becoming a society man and Miss Molteno is the instrument. She insists on introducing Mrs. Gandhi and me to all the families she knows. Yesterday, we went to the great Estate of the Moltenos and met several people. That is the nature of work just now. She is undoubtedly a tactful peacemaker.

Sir Benjamin continues consciously or unconsciously to cause mischief. He is now in league with Habib Motan, whom I saw with our friend Nooruddin and Morris Alexander of Johannesburg coming out of Sir Benjamin's office as I went in.

Manilal must be there now. I hope you will try to be with him as much as you can. If he remains morose I suggest your taking him with you to your office and using him for office work in so far as you may and can. I should like you to take your meal with him for the time being.

You will be agreeably surprised to know that my eldest brother[2] who used always to go strongly against me has now completely changed and repents of his past letters and thinks that I have not

[1] The letter was later traced and sent to the addressee with one dated March 19; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] Lakshmidas Gandhi.

discredited the family after all as he used to think before. He is ailing and his one wish is to see me before he dies. His is a most pathetic letter this time.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

76. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

[CAPE TOWN,]
Phagan Sud 2, 1970 [*February 26, 1914*]

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I see that you and Manilal have for once failed to understand me. Had I thought that it was for your good to keep you, I would not have sent you away merely to serve my convenience. I could not have fought against the atmosphere here. You have no idea of how subtle its effect can be. . .[1] I noted Dr. Gool's priceless worth long before any of you did. However, just as I recognize similar worth in you and yet consider you weak and mere children, and would hesitate to place anyone under your charge, much in the same way I would hesitate to place innocent youths like you under Dr. Gool's influence. Dr. Gool himself knows that he is a mere child. He knows his shortcomings too and that is the reason he has kept his own brother away from him. . . .is rash and passionate. I do not want to see such rashness and passion in you. You have not acquired the discrimination of the swan[2]. If you had, there would have been no occasion for me to criticize you so harshly. You have found my excess of love scorching on this occasion. That happens. Calm yourself down, though. I have not acted without thinking. You are wrong in charging me with arguing like a lawyer. Once before also you said this. I find from experience that I possess in an especial degree the gift of analysis and of discriminating right from wrong and, in the result, my nice arguments sound like special pleading to others. All the same, you may unhesitatingly say whatever you wish to in self-defence or with a view to putting me right. That is your duty. I insist on your continuing to write to me. Ba

[1] Some words are missing here in the source.
[2] Fabled to have the gift of separating milk from water

is just the same. The danger is not over.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Jivannu Parodh

77. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[CAPE TOWN,
About *February 26, 1914*][1]

. . . [2]You have sinned, without knowing it, in charging me with cruelty. How could I have grown cruel in fifteen days? I have given no such impression to others. Nothing of the sort happened in Phoenix. I have grown very tender to Ba, as she has observed. If I turned cruel to you, what little goodness I claim would be no more than a show and I would think that my life had been wasted.

But I shall no doubt appear cruel to you at present. . . .[3] The veil of ignorance which prevented me from seeing the same veil over you has vanished, leaving only pure love. This love appears cruel to you for the time being, for, like a physician, I must make you swallow bitter draughts. . . .[4] I have grown impatient to help you. . .[5] to become perfect. Impatience is my weakness. To the extent that I am impatient, I am but a fond lover. I have fondness enough in me yet to make me attached to you for being my son. When that has gone, even the cruelty that you think you see in me you will see no more. Meanwhile, please bear with me.

And now for the contradictions in your letter. For three days you did not [as you say] go out to see Cape Town because of my harsh words. And yet, when leaving, you expressed a desire to do so, though I was in a rage. The harsh words had been there, even on Sunday. Believing that I was cruel, how could you hope to learn anything by living with me? You showed yourself very keen on

[1] This letter, evidently addressed to Manilal Gandhi, appears to have been written about the same time as "Letter to Jamnadas Gandhi", the preceding item.

[2] Some words are missing here in the source.

[3] *ibid*

[4] *ibid*

[5] *ibid*

visiting Table Mountain. When I told you then that you would see much more, what did you find in that to take offence?

Well, what has happened has happened. It is your duty not to take notice of my faults. A son should have devotion enough to his father not to notice his shortcomings but to think only of his virtues. I should like to see this trustfulness in you. I don't want to make an ascetic of you. I want to see your character pure, to see in you truthfulness, chastity, straightforwardness, tenderness, self-confidence, humility and goodness. I want to see you indifferent to the commonpleasures of the world. I doubt, however, if you have these at present. I am not asking you to start doing immediately everything I do. But I want you to understand my deepest feelings and so attain true success in your life.

Send this letter to Chi. Jamnadas.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Jivannu Parodh

78. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

7 BUITENSINGLE,

February 27, 1914

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Why very Low House? I see nothing wrong in your letter regarding food. I have seen nobody who has been able to deny himself so much of the world's good things of life as you have. And what does it matter if you have been taking macaroni about which you have so satisfied yourself. Indeed if you went back to rice and tomatoes, I should not worry. I would certainly like you not to go back to vegetables. But your dissatisfaction is that you have been obliged to discuss your food so much. We are food reformers and so we cannot help it. When our reform becomes part of our nature, we shall cease to discuss it. If I discuss it less than you do (which I doubt) it must be because mine has become more natural to me than yours to you. Though I love and almost adore Andrews so, I would not exchange you for him. You still remain the dearest and the nearest to me and so far as my own selfish nature is considered I know that in

my lonely journey through the world, you will be the last (if even that) to say good-bye to me. What right had I to expect so much from you!

Now about Manilal. I have given you some idea. He and Jamnadas appeared to me unbalanced. They did the very things that they used to criticize in others. For instance, they give themselves every indulgence that they denied themselves at Phoenix. If Hanif too[k] something outside Phoenix, both of them used to bring it to my notice. In spite of Manilal's sad experience, both took the greatest freedom with the girls. They [were] surrounded with much attention and love from all the members of the family. Dr. Gool who is such a noble soul but yet youthful, made a deep impression on them by his suave nature. The result was that the boy's faculty for thinking, study or work was paralysed. They rose after 6 a.m. They never studied. Their talk seemed to me to be unnatural. They found themselves placed in gaudy surroundings which unhinged them for the moment. I felt that to give them a month of this life would be to hurt two very sensitive young promising plants. I spoke very sharply and bitterly to them. They have resented my tone and my speech as also my action. The discovery I made on arrival was so shocking that I certainly became impatient. But I am sorry neither for my action nor for my speech. I had a right to expect them not to misunderstand me. After all I have sent them away to my personal discomfort and for their advantage. My presence in their midst could not have counter-balanced the unperceived mischief that was working its way into their system. Jamnadas must therefore naturally go to Phoenix and Manilal not to Phoenix whilst Jeki is there and that when I am away. The only alternative for him was to be at Mountain View where he can do the right thing just to the extent that he is able. I wished to place both in circumstances most favourable to their spiritual growth. I have advised Manilal that he ought to religiously avoid baker's bread, tea and coffee and that he should rarely go to Town, never eat the Town food and never sleep in Town. But I have told him he is a free agent. He need only adopt that part of my advice which appeals to him and no more. I do not want him to do anything for my sake. I want him to become not a creeper but a vigorous tree.

I had another glorious interview with Miss Hobhouse yesterday. We discussed you fairly fully and I have told her that it is likely you might be here whilst I am also here. She is General Smuts' guest

tomorrow (Saturday). Miss Molteno too has been attentive and helpful.

Will you select a tablet for the two deceased. Valliamma's death I felt most keenly. My first disappointment was that not a single Gujarati had died. Even I was left alive when those that did not want to die had gone. I then became conceited and felt that those that had died had done so because they had lived a most unnatural life. If anybody should have died it was Mrs. Gandhi. There is no guarantee even now that she will live. But she seems to be rallying and would certainly have succumbed under the orthodox treatment. And yet the desire in me to die is overpowering. I am unable to stare a Tamil in the face when I recall these deaths. It is weakness I know. But it is there. Consult Naidoo about the stone, please, and both can be put on when I am passing through Johannesburg. I should be delighted.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

79. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

CAPE TOWN,
February 27, 1914

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

For the time being I am at Cape Town watching the course of events. I do not want to inflict on you any news about the struggle. I shall be as brief as I possibly can.

Mr. Andrews and Mr. Pearson are truly good men, we all like them very much. Sir Benjamin has disappointed us. He has hardly done any good and he may do a great deal of harm. He is weak and by no means sincere. Even now he has hardly grasped the details. And he undoubtedly, consciously or unconsciously, fosters divisions among us. Mr. Andrews will tell you all about him. But I thought that I should give you my impressions of Sir Benjamin.

If there is a settlement in March, I propose to leave for India in April. I shall have with me probably about 20 men, women and children who will live with me. These will include the school children who are likely to come. I do not know whether you still want me to

live at the Servants of India quarters in Poona or how. I shall be prepared to do so immediately after I have paid a visit to the members of my family. It is likely that the number living with me may be augmented by some members of my family who may wish to share my life and work. Please do not consider yourself bound to keep me at the Society's quarters. I am entirely in your hands. I want to learn at your feet and gain the necessary experience. No matter whether I am staying somewhere under your guidance or not, I shall scrupulously observe the compact of silence for one year after my arrival in India. The vow of silence as I have understood it does not include the South African question and may be broken at your wish for furthering any project about which both of us hold the same view.

My present ambition you know. It is to be by your side as your nurse and attendant. I want to have the real discipline of obeying someone whom I love and look up to. I know I made a bad secretaryin South Africa. I hope to do better in the Motherland if I am accepted.

May you benefit in health by the change and the calmer atmosphere on the continent.

This letter will be in your hands about the middle of March. If you deem it necessary to say anything to me about my movements, you will of course cable. I assume too that you will not want me to go to Poona before you return. If you did, I should of course go.

If I am enabled to leave for India in April, I propose to use the funds you have sent for our passages which shall be all deck. I have no means of my own and Phoenix can hardly supply funds now. It is drained totally dry.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 3774

80. LETTER TO ELIZABETH MARI MOLTENO

7 BUITENSINGLE,
CAPE TOWN,
February 27, 1914

DEAR MISS MOLTENO,

How nice of both of you to have come yesterday! I was out seeing Miss Hobhouse at her request. She wished to discuss the marriage question[1] with me. I am deeply grateful to you for having brought me in contact with that noble soul. To be with her is a spiritual uplifting for me.We meet on Monday. With regards from us to you both.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Molteno Murray Family Papers. Courtesy: University of Capetown Libraries

81. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE

[CAPE TOWN,]
February 28, 1914

[GOKHALE]
SERVINDIA
POONA

BALANCE HERE NEARLY EIGHTEEN THOUSAND

From a photostat of the original as delivered: C.W. 4854 Courtesy: Servants of India Society

[1] *Vide* "On Marriages", 11-2-1914.

82. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

[CAPE TOWN,]
Phagan Sud 3, 1970 [*February 28, 1914*]

CHI. JAMNADAS,

There is no telegram from you, and no letter either, except one; it looks as if you are angry. Your letter from Kimberley was not well considered. Having seen, however, that your conduct itself, while you were here, was defiant, why should I complain about a letter? The letters from both of you indicate that Cape Town has been no healthy influence on you. . . .[1] Why is it that in Phoenix I did not get exasperated by anyone's conduct? I forget, there was one exception, Miss Schlesin. But she could realize her mistakes in the end. In the beginning she gave me nothing but trouble. You two, on the other hand, started pointing out my faults. I hope you will think the matter over and calm down. I am not writing to Manilal today. Please, therefore, send this on to him.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Jivannu Parodh

83. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

7, BUITENCINGLE,
[CAPE TOWN,]
Phagan Sud 3 [*February 28, 1914*][2]

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. I know that you are sorry. You haven't the courage to answer when someone asks you why you went away. It shouldn't be difficult for you to say that you were sent away to live by yourself because fathers did not like your ways. You should realize that in releasing you from attendance on Ba and asking you to go,

[1] Some words appear to have been omitted here in the source.
[2] From the reference to Andrews in the letter, it appears to have been written in 1914 after his departure from South Africa on February 21.

without thinking of my personal convenience, I must have acted with the purest of love. More than your services, I want good behaviour from you. If you become so good that you will never make a slip, I should ask for no more. I would tell Ba too that it was as well you had left. For the last four days I have been seeing that there is meat on the table thrice a day. I manage to finish my meals earlier since I have changed the hours. It hurt me very much yesterday to have to see all that meat in front of me and I simply did not know what to do. I have now decided that, as far as possible, my meal-hours shall not be the same as theirs. They are not at fault in this matter. They tell me quite frankly [that I can fix my own hours]. Formerly, I was not sensitive about this. It is only now that I am growing so. This sensitiveness on my part is a good sign. At the same time they are not to be blamed for having all these things prepared. But I would certainly not wish you to be placed in such surroundings. But for Ba being with me, I would touch none of the preparations. At present, all sorts of things are being prepared. They have bun and also jam; and even ground-nut is cooked. Of course, this is not the reason for my sending you away. But having regard to this as well, I think it is good you have left. So long as Mr. Andrews was here, he acted as a shield for you, but they would not have desisted from meat-preparations on your account. Your going away can do you nothing but good. If you are keen on serving Ba or me, you will certainly have the opportunity to do so. That will be only when you are earnest in your desire, or when, wanting your services out of our pure selfishness, I spoil you. This can never be, so that your serving [us] depends entirely on the effort you make. Consider the full meaning of this letter and ponder over it. Do not be angry with father.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5650 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

84. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[CAPE TOWN]
Sunday [*March 1, 1914*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Mrs. Gandhi wanted medicine. She had it in the mildest form from Dr. Gool and she is now laid up with fever, aches all over and pain in the stomach. The crisis may have been coming and the medicine may have nothing to do with this serious relapse. Anyhow the latter is there and there is no escaping it. For her death will be the finest deliverance. But we are in God's hands. Let His will and not ours be done. I am by her side day and night. I commenced today reading the *Ramayana* to her. She cannot listen longer than hour. Yet it is something. You may need this to Manilal. There is no cause for anxiety. And he need not fret. She is certainly most resigned and has commenced fasting again.

I am drying some bananas for you. It is an experiment. This is not for bread but for stew which will be substantial and not sweet. We must perpetuate Valliamma's memory. Can you suggest anything? Confer with Naidoo and others.

With love,

Yours,
UPPER HOUSE

[PS.]

How are you affairs progressing? Have you fixed up Kennedy? How is Mr. Forest? Is the office paying its way? Is the new lease fixed up to your satisfaction or is it to be a loss? What about Tolstoy Farm? If there is a settlement I shall be impatient to go. You should therefore finish all your projects at once. We may have the Indian Bills even next week.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

85. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

[CAPE TOWN,]

Phagan Sud 4 [*March 1, 1914*]

RESPECTED KHUSHALBHAI,

How could I help being happy beyond words that, in deference to my wish, you have sent on Jamnadas also? He has conducted himself in gaol in the same spirit that moved him to come over here. The courage and presence of mind he displayed when going to gaol and while in gaol, few others could have shown in their first experience. I can recall no such instance at the moment. Jamnadas behaved as though he had already gone through the mill. This shows that he had lived in thought through the experience of others and profited by it. Many people learn nothing unless they themselves suffer; but I have observed that Jamnadas has the gift [of learning from the experience of others]. His habit of thinking too much has an unsettling effect on him, but I believe this will disappear in course of time. He keeps well enough.

About the question of his marriage, it would be better, I think, to talk over the matter when we meet instead of my expressing an opinion right now. I have understood your point. After considering all the circumstances, we shall take whatever step we may decide on. I think Chi. Narandas[1] should be able to meet all your special requirements. It should be enough for you to have one son to attend on you, if that is what you want. This too I should like to discuss personally with you when we meet there. Provided a settlement comes off, I hope to start April. Should the struggle start again, there will be nothing to think about. Jamnadas must, in that case, go through it. I have seen in him a courageous spirit which I should be very happy indeed to bring out. I see that all your sons have it in them to be ornaments to the family, to the community and to the whole world. From among them all, Jamnadas may even prove to be the best, thanks to his *karma*[2]. And naturally too. He is the youngest of the four, and so, when the two of you drew his life into being, your spiritual state had attained full maturity and Jamnadas, too, would have that maturity. He has also the advantage of several other circumstances

[1] Third son of the addressee

[2] Acts or deeds, here meritorious

denied to his three brothers[1]. All these, however, are my conjectures. Our duty in the matter is to encourage and develop whatever good we observe in our children. The rest must depend on the working out of their *prarabdha*[2].

You have two daughters-in-law, at any rate, of the same calibre as your sons. Having known Kashi and Santok, I have always felt that I have been granted such tender-hearted children because of some former good deeds of mine. They have spared no pains to meet my wishes and have made my work here very easy.

As if fortune had not favoured me enough already, respected Kalabhai[3] also wants to entrust his son to me. I am not the one to fight shy of accepting additional responsibilities, and my conscience tells me that I have perfect faith in God.

With deepest regards from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

As Chi. Harilal was with you about a month ago, the letter[4] to him is addressed c/o you.

With deepest regards from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5637 Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

86. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI PATEL

CAPE TOWN,

Phagan Sud 4 [*March 1, 1914*]

DEAR RAOJIBHAI,

I have your letter. It has indeed been a deliverance for Nepal[5]. I have known his wife to be a hard-hearted woman. Death should make us think of our duty and fill us with contempt for the body, but

[1] Chhaganlal, Maganlal and Narandas

[2] Accumulated merit or demerit of past lives

[3] Lakshmidas, Gandhiji's eldest brother

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Harilal Gandhi", 2-3-1914.

[5] An indentured Indian who had lived near the Phoenix Settlement with his wife, also indentured. Lying ill in bed, he was burnt to death when his hut caught fire. His wife had ill-treated him because he was of a lower caste.

inspire no fear. It seems that a man does not suffer excessively even when he is burnt to death. When the pain becomes unbearable, he loses consciousness. Those who cling to the body so very tenaciously only suffer the more. One who knows the truth about the *atman* will have no fear of death. Thousands of men, thousands of creatures, are burnt to death, like Nepal, every moment now. In the universe, Nepal is an infinitely smaller creature than even an ant. How many creatures, relatively bigger than Nepal, do we not burn away, knowingly or otherwise, in making fires or using lights at night?

Imagine a being of immense size like Brahma[1]. To him, we must be smaller than ants. The very size of his eyes must be so large that we would look like fleas. What if Nepal has been burnt to death by a creature like this? He might have even believed that he might burn away a creature like Nepal for the happiness of a great being such as he was. To us, Nepal is a creature of our size, so that we pity him, afraid of what we might suffer in similar circumstances. But the argument we use in our wisdom about creatures like the ant, the bug, the flea and other countless insects invisible to our naked eye, must be the very argument applied to us by the much wiser Brahma. If we can understand this, we may learn the following lessons from the case of Nepal and others of the kind:

1. We should have compassion on ourselves as on all creatures, looking on them as one, and draw back in alarm from destruction of life for any purpose of ours.

2. We should cherish no fond attachment for the body and have no fear whatever of death.

3. We should strive for *moksha* right now, knowing that the body is all too apt to let us down.

It is very easy to utter these three maxims but it is difficult to ponder over them and, after pondering, it is like walking on a sword blade to put them into practice.

It is morning now. My ideas flow in this direction, for Ba is in pain again and I am trying to free her from the fear of death.

With due regards
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]
Jivannu Parodh

[1] The Creator, Supreme Being

87. FRAGMENT OF LETTER[1]

[CAPE TOWN,
About *March 1, 1914*][2]

. . . saved the child. She is making herself miserable with grieving, but to what purpose now? If the woman had restrained her anger, had paused to think, had looked round, things would not have come to such a terrible end. We should, accordingly, pause and think when about to do anything and then do it calmly. If we did so, we would not be misled by anyone, would not follow the example of others thoughtlessly and would continue to go forward. You will be able to achieve something worthwhile only when you have such strength of mind in you. Consider, moreover, that it is your duty twice over to strive towards this end.

Nothing can be said about Ba's health. One does not know when she will leave the bed, if at all. Just now, she wants support even when she wants to sit up in the bed. She lives for the most part on *neem* juice, taking grapes or orange juice occasionally. She is at peace, however. Please do not make yourself unhappy that you are denied the opportunity of attending on her. To make up for that. . .

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5654 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

88. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[CAPE TOWN]
Monday [*March 2, 1914*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I have written to you about perpetuating Valliamma's memory. Three Tamils have now died. I think that if there is a settlement there will be a large surplus left. A part of it may be used for building Valliamma Hall in Johannesburg attached to which may be a school building or which itself may be a school, etc. There may be an outhouse for guests, etc. It should stand on a stand by its[elf][3] . It must

[1] Only the second page of the letter is available.

[2] This appears to have been written about the same time as "Letter to Raojibhai Patel", the preceding item, in which Gandhiji has referred to the death of Nepal.

[3] This portion of the word, at the end of the line, is damaged in the source.

be in Johannesburg. We shall have plenty of money for the purpose. Confer with Naidoo first please. Will you have this copied and sent to Polak and Miss Schlesin and West for consideration? After the settlement, I shall have no time left. My brother being very ill, I should like to leave at once.

With love,

Yours,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

89. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

[CAPE TOWN,]

Phagan Sud 5 [*March 2, 1914*][1]

CHI. HARILAL,

I have your letter. You apologize in every letter of yours and put up a defence as well. It all seems to me sheer hypocrisy now. For years, you have been slack in writing letters, and then coming forward with apologies. Will this go on till death, I forgiving every time? And what is the point of my forgiving? Forgiving has a meaning only to the extent that the person who has apologized does not err again. My forgiving you all the time means that I should go on doing my duty as father though you may not do yours as son. My duty, of course, I shall continue to do according to my judgment. I don't believe that you are impatient to see us both; equally, this idea that you were to come here sounds insincere to me. Does one who really means to come trumpet it aloud? Now, of course, your coming is pointless, as you say. I see that your ideas and mine differ very much. Your conception of your duty as son differs from mine, but I have no right to enquire what your duty is. If you go on doing your duty as you in all sincerity conceive it to be, I shall be perfectly satisfied. Whether your idea of duty is sincere or not, I and others will be able to judge from your actions. It seems you have also applied your mind to what my duty is, and in this respect, too, our ideas differ.

[1] From Gandhiji's reference to his being in Cape Town with Kasturba Gandhi. it appears this letter was written in 1914.

It should be for me to consider what my duty is. You may, nevertheless, continue to tell me what you think.

I did not reply to your letter. I got it after my release from gaol. Your suggestions, however, were carried out; that is, I wrote to Revashankerbhai that he should have a talk with you and give you more [money] as may seem necessary.

You want my advice regarding Chanchi, and also about your studies. You violate all the conditions I had made and you promised to fulfil. You were asked never to go in for studies at the cost of your health. You have failed to take care of it. No wonder that Ramdas and Manilal have outdone you. And Ramdas has put in a fine effort, indeed, and grown in size as well. Manilal, too, has plenty of strength and would have been stronger yet if he had not taken to the evil ways of pleasure. Even their studies I take to be sounder than yours. Your mind is now running after Bombay. You say you have Revashankerbhai's consent for that. What weight can that consent carry with me? I would submit in all humility to Revashankerbhai's judgment of a diamond. How could I listen to him in the matter of studies? You are, so it seems to me, in a state of stupefaction. What, then, am I to say? You can only think of Davar's classes. That simply stuns me. Do you think it will be much of an achievement to pass the matriculation examination? I do not even understand what it is that you want to do. I would only advise you to do nothing. Wait till my return. Meanwhile, read as you like. Do not, however, start a new venture. Later, you may talk things over with me, but only if you want to.

If, indeed, you wish to go ahead with your plan for studies, you should have Chanchi stay with me and should yourself stay away from me. I shall supply your needs. Think of Chanchi when you turn your mind to earning. If you wish to live as I want you to, stay with me and be my right hand. Use your own judgment in all these matters, taking no thought of my personal inclinations. Weighing my advice against that of others, do what you think best. I am a father who is prejudiced against you. I do not approve of your ways at all. I doubt whether you have any love for us. This statement sounds very harsh, but I see extreme insincerity in your letters. If I am mistaken in this, consider that I am in Kurukshetra[1] and so forgive me, showing me the

[1] The great battlefield of the Mahabharata, figuratively used for turmoil or conflict.

generosity that Shravana[1] did to his parents. Even worldly children show some marks of love for their parents. You have shown none. Nevertheless, I am so proud a father that I attribute perfection to my children. This is an error. It is spiritual darkness. But, apart from this . . .[2] have not fulfilled. . . .[3] Despite your promise, you did not send me the papers at the last year's examination. You have not taken the trouble to remember to send this year's either. I become angry when writing to you and also feel like crying. This is my ignorant state, my lack of enlightenment. I ought not to be so much attached to you. I will free myself from this. Be patient with me till I succeed.

Now I have given you too long a lesson. I will write no more. I shall be satisfied if you treat me as a friend and show me the regard due to a friend. I want you to improve your character and train your inner self.

I will probably go there in April. Just now I am in Cape Town. Ba is with me. She lies hanging between life and death. Till yesterday, she was very bad indeed. There is again a little improvement. She is a mere skeleton. She gives me no trouble, but, not having succeeded yet in disciplining the palate, she suffers and pines. I am by her side the whole day. Between yesterday and today, she must have consumed the juice of two tomatoes and a teaspoonful of oil.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 9543

90. LETTER TO SIR BENJAMIN ROBERTSON

7, BUITENCINGLE,
CAPE TOWN,
March 4, 1914

DEAR SIR BENJAMIN,

It strikes me that, with reference to Mr. Polak's note, I should mention perhaps the manner in which relief can be granted in the several matters.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 29-3-1910
[2] A few words are missing here.
[3] *ibid*

Immigration. Relief can be easily given in the administration of this Act, as there is one Act applicable to all the Provinces and it can be done by altering the regulations in the desired direction. Inter-provincial visiting and travelling permits should be granted for the asking and either without a deposit or with a small deposit and no more than a shilling stamp to cover the bare cost.

Certificates of identity should be of a permanent duration even as the Transvaal certificates are—why should the Transvaal have an advantage over the other Provinces in these matters?

The question of the withdrawal and return of children should be definitely fixed.

Proof required from wives who would be administratively admitted should be definitely stated. Indeed, it is necessary to go through the regulations clause by clause with Mr. Gorges and then discuss them with General Smuts.

Dealers' Licences. This is a difficult question. The three Provinces have three different laws and they are not administered directly by the Union Government. The control is partly in the hands of the Provincial Governments and partly in those of the municipalities. Each municipality has its own policy and bye-laws. The utmost that can be done is for the Government to address circulars to the responsible bodies warning them of the danger of following a sweeping policy. This method was successfully adopted by the late Mr. Escombe[1] who was himself the author of the Natal licensing law of 1896. And the local administrations will not fail to note the changed attitude of the Union administration if it ever changes for the better.

The Transvaal Gold Laws. In this the Union Government can give definite relief by accepting the meaning that I have ventured to give to the expression 'vested rights' which they have promised in their dispatches to respect. By 'vested rights' I understand the right of the Indian and his successors to live and trade in the township he was living in and trading, no matter how often he shifts his residence or business from place to place in the same township.

Law of 1885 Transvaal. The Government can safely and easily administer the Law in a liberal or, rather, just spirit by granting the

[1] Sir Harry Escombe (1838-99); leading advocate, who pleaded for Gandhiji's admission to the Bar of the Natal Supreme Court; was Prime Minister of Natal for a few months in 1897.

benefit of a freehold title in Locations or Wards fixed under the Law. In this connection I would state that it would be a most dangerous thing for the Government to de-proclaim old established Locations.

Education. The Government have sadly neglected this matter. The wretched schools in Natal and the few at the Cape and the Transvaal serve no useful purpose. The vernaculars are neglected and Indians are becoming dis-Indianised, without becoming Europeanised in the proper sense.

Future admissions. The number of future admissions of new men needed for the wants of the community has not yet been fixed save for the Transvaal. I have suggested at least 40 for the Union. This is far below the average of the past five years.

Every one of these points is covered by the 5th clause of the Passive Resistance declaration.[1] They can hardly be tackled by the Commission. But, in my humble opinion, they can be best dealt with by a full discussion between you and General Smuts. The whole weight of the Government of India will have to be used in our behalf if real peace is to be enjoyed by the Indians of South Africa and the Viceroy so far as the S. A. question is concerned.

May I trouble you to send me a copy of this letter? I have no typing assistance here.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of a copy of the original: S.N. 5945 & 5954

91. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

7 BUITENSINGLE,

March 4, 1914

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I propose sending Polak to Johannesburg to take charge of the practice there. Ritch finished, you and I in India and Polak in England, why, the thing is inconceivable. And the whole structure must topple over. I have, therefore, suggested that Polak should take up Johannesburg as headquarters and not go to England for the time being. And he and she have most loyally accepted the proposal. I

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary for Interior", 12-9-1913

have suggested too that Mrs. Polak should go to England leaving Polak alone here. But she does not cherish the idea. They should rent Mountain View from you and live there. I do not know what they will do. At the same time I do not know whether [the] proposition is a suitable one for you. It must be a business proposition this time. We are princes and just now we must spend money in a princely style. There is no need, therefore, for me to ask you to give me Mountain View. On the contrary, I am thinking of your own dispositions in this connection. If Mountain View can be sold or a better tenant can be found, you need not think of Polak. The proposal has to suit you both.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

92. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[CAPE TOWN,]
Wednesday, Phagan Sud 7 [*March 4, 1914*]

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. You ought not to have hidden from me the fact that you lost the tin of water. Just think how much care I take even in regard to such things and take a lesson from it. But that lesson you will take only if you lay open your heart before me. You will not be able to learn anything so long as you try to hide your mistakes from me, even for a moment. Be sure that hiding or secrecy is a form of untruth, which is like poison in the system. A poison turns other healthy substances also into poison. Even a grain of arsenic is enough to render milk unfit for drinking. Insist on getting up at 4 a. m. always. If it is very cold, sit in the house, cover yourself liberally but do get up early. You may go to bed as early as you like; I do not mind that.

As regards food, you may have three meals a day if you feel the necessity. You need not control yourself in the matter of taking food. It is enough if you observe some rules regarding the articles of food.

Ba is somewhat better today; but still the crisis is not over. She is

bed-ridden. Mrs. Gool and her children are a great help.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 1500 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

93. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[CAPE TOWN,]

Phagan Sud 8, 1970 [*March 5, 1914*]

CHI. DEVDAS[1],

Improve your handwriting. Ba's condition has grown very bad of late. She and I both believe that medical treatment has had altogether an adverse effect on her. She herself had asked for such treatment. After she had had two or three doses, her condition became serious. She can eat no food at present. She took a few grapes yesterday, but it seems they did not agree with her. Even if the end is death, we have made up our minds to have no fear of it. You need not worry, therefore. The body is sure to fall, and that, on the appointed day. Remedies occur to us accordingly. The *atman*, besides, is immortal and, though we seem to be concerned only with the body, our real concern should be for the *atman*. For a truth, we don't preserve the body for any length of time after the soul has left it. So thinking, I take the necessary measures for Ba's health and then stop worrying, and I would ask you all to do the same. Realizing, then, the fate of the body, we should cultivate goodness[2] and disinterestedness. Goodness does not mean outward indifference to objects of desire or a wandering life, but purity of character. Disinterestedness does not mean gloominess but aversion to the pleasures of the senses and absence of interest in the things of this world. If you learn this during Ba's illness, that will be evidence, indeed, of your true devotion to her.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Jivannu Parodh

[1] Gandhiji's fourth and youngest son

[2] The Gujarati word is an abstract noun from sadhu, which in Sanskrit means "good", but in popular usage has come to mean an "ascetic".

94. LETTER TO SIR BENJAMIN ROBERTSON

CAPE TOWN,
March 6, 1914

DEAR SIR BENJAMIN,

You will see from the enclosed that every result feared from the Searle judgment is being brought about by the very action of the Government. The original case is reported in *Indian Opinion*.[1] But I send you the *Pretoria News* cutting. I was waiting for the Supreme Court decision. This was invited, as you will observe, by the Government. Now the Highest Court has reversed the decision of the Lower Court and the children of *de facto* monogamous unions [are] declared illegitimate and, therefore, prohibited immigrants. Now, such children and the children of wives to be administratively allowed to enter the Union are to be protected under the proposed settlement. Will you kindly go into this matter and secure, pending settlement, the non-deportation of the child? As I am writing to you, I am not myself writing to the Government in this matter.

May I ask you please to let me have copies of this and my previous letter?[2]

I am,
Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of a copy of the original: S.N. 5946 & 5954

95. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

7 BUITENSINGLE,
March 7 [*1914*][3]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Here is the inscription[4] in 3 languages. The Tamil one you should procure there. The dates have to be filled in, in each case.

Yes, it would be sinful to desire death in cowardice but not when

[1] The case of immigration Officer v. Mahomed Hasan reported in Indian Opinion, 11-2-1914 & 11-3-1914, decided that a child of a polygamous marriage celebrated outside the Union was not exempted under Section 5(g) of Act 23, 1913, and, as such, was a prohibited immigrant.

[2] Typewritten copies of these were later sent by Sir Benjamin.

[3] From the contents

[4] For the Valliamma Memorial

one saddened by grief outside desires it. If properly desired, I think it uplifts one and fits one better to meet difficulties involving danger to one's life.

Mrs. Gandhi's state still remains uncertain. Mrs. Alexander called in to see her and was inquiring about you.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

96. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI PATEL

CAPE TOWN,
Phagan Sud 10 [*March 7, 1914*]

DEAR SHRI RAOJIBHAI,

I read and re-read your letter. Shankaracharya has a verse which says that more patience and time are required for disciplining the mind, that is, attaining *moksha,* than is needed by a man who, sitting on the shore, would empty the ocean of all its water drop by drop with a blade of grass. You seem to be in too great a hurry.

I have not got rid of the fear of death, despite much thinking. But I feel no impatience. I keep on trying and I am sure I shall get rid of it one day. We should not let go a single occasion when we may try. That is our duty. It is for God to produce or will the result. Why worry then? When feeding her baby, the mother has no thought of the result. The result does follow, though. To get rid of the fear of death and to drive away desire, make the effort and keep cheerful ; and they will disappear. Otherwise, it will be the same with you as with the man who, resolving not to think about a monkey, kept on thinking of one.

We are born in sin, and we are enslaved in the body, because of our sinful deeds; how can you hope to cleanse yourself of all the impurity just in a minute?

You may live as you like,
Realize God anyhow.

This is the teaching of Akha Bhagat[1]. Tulsidasji says:

[1] Mystic poet of the 17th century, famed for his satire; vedantist and rationalist

Whether in adversity or no, repeat over and over again the name of Rama and you will achieve all there is to be achieved.

This is the end we must aim at. Therefore, go on repeating that name. Be clear in your mind who this Rama is. He is unconditioned, formless. Armed with the countless virtues that belong to the godly nature, He destroys Ravana, representing a host of monstrous desires. He practised penance for 12 years to earn this strength. Finally, do not allow your body or mind to remain idle even for a moment. Keep both cheerfully engaged; if you do this, all your troubles are bound to vanish. For the rest, have faith in God; your depending on me will be in vain. This faith will be to some purpose only after you have done what I have advised.

If the heart is pure, the grosser impulses of the body will have no scope. But what do we mean by the heart? And when may we believe the heart to be pure? The heart is nothing else but the *atman* or the seat of the *atman.* To imagine that it is pure is to imply perfect realization of the *atman* and, in the presence of such realization, the cravings of the senses are inconceivable. But ordinarily we attribute purity to the heart when we are but striving after such purity. Say, I love you. This only means that I try to cultivate such a feeling for you. If I have unceasing love, I should be a perfectly enlightened man, which, indeed, I am not. Anyone for whom I have true love will not misunderstand my intentions or words, nor will such a one bear ill-will to me. It follows from this that, when anyone looks upon us as his enemy, the fault is primarily ours. This is also true of our relations with the whites. Perfect purity of heart, therefore, is the final stage. Before we have reached that stage, as we advance towards greater and greater purity, the cravings of the senses will subside in corresponding measure. These cravings do not originate in the senses.

The mind alone is the cause of man's being bound or free.[1]

The senses are the points at which the impulses in the mind become manifest. Through them we come to recognize the impulses as such.

And so, by destroying the senses, we do not do away with the impulses in the mind. Eunuchs, as we observe, are full of desires. Those who are such by birth are so full of them that they have been known to be guilty of unnatural acts. I am deficient in the sense of

[1] In the source this has been quoted in Sanskrit.

smell; even so, I feel the desire to enjoy fragrance, so much so that, when I find anyone talking about the fragrance of the rose or other flowers, the mind, like the donkey, immediately runs after it and is held back with the greatest difficulty.

We have heard of men who, passionate in their convictions, cut off their organs when they found it impossible to control their minds. It may possibly be one's duty to do so in such circumstances. Supposing my mind becomes a prey to desire and I cast an evil eye on my sister, I am burning with lust but have not been totally blinded by it. In such a situation, I think cutting off one's organ would be a sacred duty if there is no other remedy. This will not happen to a man who advances gradually. It may perhaps happen to one who has suddenly lost all desire but whose past life was nonetoo good. To want an instantaneously effective method of ensuring freedom from desire and the urgency of the senses is much the same as asking for a son of a barren woman. Such a result can be achieved only with the utmost patience. A mango tree created by magic is only meant for the eye; much the same is true of mental purity brought about with complete suddenness. Yes, it may happen sometimes, that the mind is ready for purification and is merely looking for association with holy men which is a kind of a philosopher's stone. On getting this it becomes instantly aware of its purity and the absence of it earlier becomes a dream. Surely, this [change] is no instantaneous occurrence, but the simple and the shortest and, to that extent, the quickest method is:

Withdrawal into solitude, seeking association with holy men, singing the names of God and telling sacred stories, reading edifying books, unremitting mortification of the body, a spare diet, living on fruits, minimum of sleep, giving up of pleasures; anyone who can practise these things will find control of the mind quite easy as the *amalak* in the hand[1]. Practise these and meditate over the rest. Whenever the mind is disturbed with desire, one should turn to observances such as fasting.

. . .'s work was like Ravana's activities. He practised penance and acquired the nature of a demon. Rama did the same and acquired the nature of a god. Thus, different fruits accrue from similar acts according to the motives behind them.

[1] A traditional phrase meaning "as easy as a myrobalan in the grip of hand"

If the work in the field does not progress well, and if you really find that the fault is yours, shake it off with all your energy. The pattern of life of the youngsters depends on that of you elders.

Remember that God comes to us in the form in which we long to see Him. When Tulsidasji wanted [to see] Ramachandra, Shri Krishna became Shri Rama and Lakshmi became Sita.

Cure Maganbhai's cough. Find out the cause.[1]

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahatma Gandhijina Patro and *Jivanna Zarana*

97. LETTER TO ELIZABETH MARI MOLTENO

7 BUITENSINGLE,
CAPE TOWN,
March 8, 191[*4*][2]

DEAR MISS MOLTENO,

I am sorry both of you had to rush away yesterday. I was in the act of shaving when you were announced. You had hardly gone when I came out of the bath room.

You will be glad to learn that Mrs. Gandhi is decidedly better today. I had a most anxious week but if today's condition continues the danger is over for the time being. I enclose for your acceptance and Miss Greene's a copy of Mr. Andrews lecture[3]. If you want more copies or if you want me to send copies elsewhere please let me know.

With regards to you both from us both,

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Molteno Murray Family Papers. Courtesy: University of Cape- town Libraries

[1] The last four paragraphs have been taken from Jivannu Parodh where the letter is given in two parts under different dates.

[2] From the contents

[3] On Rabindranath Tagore, addressed to University students on February 17 in the Capetown City Hall; *Vide* also "Anglia's Evidence", 18-2-1914 and "Letter to C.F. Andrews", 13-3-1914.

98. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

7 BUITENSINGLE,
March 8 [*1914*][1]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

If you are sufficiently composed why not re-commence your Gujarati. It would be such a gain if you knew something of it. And you will easily pick it up by getting the household words and commencing to talk straightway.

Eric has written to me about Polak. Of course if Ritch comes and wants to practise, Polak will not worry about it. But I know that Ritch will not resume practice. He is hopelessly insolvent. He has broken his vow. He had gone away without notice. He is mad. I have to [tell] Eric about it. I want to give him about £150 for the pressing debts. I am writing Phoenix to send you cheque for £200 so that you may have enough for disbursements.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

99. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

7, BUITENCINGLE,
Sunday, Phagan Sud 10 [*March 8, 1914*][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I hope you are sending six copies of *Indian Opinion* to Mr. Andrews at 44 City Road, Birmingham. After the next issue, send him the six copies to his address, Santiniketan, Bolpur, Bengal. It would be good to send one copy to Mr. Pearson at the same address.

In my letter to Raojibhai, I have given expression to some of my reflections on Nepal being burnt to death. If you have not read that letter, please take it from him and read it.

[1] From the contents

[2] This was written after the departure of Andrews from South Africa. Phagan Sud 10 was on Saturday. But since Sunday is mentioned, the date given is that which corresponds to the day and not to the tithi.

Here is a list of persons going with us [to India]. I cannot say whether all those mentioned will go or not. We have still to decide about those whose names have a question mark against them. I have written to Kuppu. You may ask him again to consult his father and decide. Discuss things with Chhaganlal. Other names also may have to be added. to the list. I take as certain all the names except those against which I have made a question mark. I know this is all perhaps like building on sand. Perhaps, the settlement may not come off; other things also might happen. Nevertheless, we want to leave as soon as a settlement is reached; it is therefore necessary to make all the preparations. Banana flour is made here. There is ample facility for getting it made and bananas are always available. I believe if we have biscuits made of banana flour with us on our voyage, nothing else would be required and we can carry on even if bananas are not available. We should get carpets made out of gunny bags for all of us. They will be useful in India also. Get these stitched and washed ready for use. It is necessary to hem their borders also. Two carpets for each would be preferable. They can be used one above and one below. It would be still better if these could be given some sort of coating. Do think about this. We should have something like the jug I have brought for [carrying] water. If we can get the empty tins of olive oil lying with us, repaired so that they can be corked, they would perhaps be cheaper. Get them so repaired that they might be useful in India also. Each one will have blankets, to be sure. They must have at least two, at the most three. It is not desirable to carry much luggage with us. I want every child to land in India with Indian-style clothes on. The very young should have a lungi, a shirt and a cap like the round one of velvet we have and the others should have a dhoti, a shirt and a cap. The grown-ups like you should wear a *safa* and a long coat. But you will decide this by yourselves. It is not quite necessary that you should do exactly what I want. I see no need for the boys to have shoes. However, if they have sandals they may keep them. I think new ones should not be made. But I am not particular about this thing. You may consider this also. It would be good if everyone learnt to eat with one hand only (the right one) and that too sitting cross-legged on the floor. It is desirable that they do not have to be taught to do this after they are in India. They should not take the plate on their lap. This applies to all who are to go. 1 therefore see no harm if all squat on the ground to dine. If you do so you will have to clean the floor with a wet cloth thrice a day. But that I think is desirable. Think of this also. They should also know how to make obeisance to the elders. What we want the youngsters to do, we elders should demonstrate by doing ourselves. This may cause a little inconvenience in the

beginning, but it is worth while suffering it. They should learn to distinguish between the pure and the impure. We should make all necessary preparations irrespective of whether we go or not. We had stopped for some days the use of toilet paper in the latrines by the boys but we became slack again. I think we should stop its use again. We should explain patiently to the older boys the whole significance and object of making the changes. It would also be well if they knew the geography of Bombay Presidency. The boys, I think, should start wearing dhotis on the steamer. Consider what foodstuffs and how much should be taken with us, and also how to carry them. Try to take as few enamelled utensils as possible. Drinking glasses or cups and such other things, made of brass, would serve our purpose. As we may have to use lemon, we shall take with us the enamelled cups that are already there. But we want to dispense with them as far as possible. In the manufacture of these vessels many a man is ruined. In comparison to the loss [of life] due to kicks and the lathis or sticks, the workers' health has been affected to a greater extent [in this manufacture]. Consider this aspect and then decide.

I see good improvement today in Ba's health. If she survives, take it for certain that our [nature cure] remedies and faith in God have saved her. She has come to realize that the doctor's medicine was the cause of her breakdown. She was tempted by a desire to take the doctor's treatment and I did not interfere. The punishment she received was severe and so the lesson learnt was equally valuable. Ba showed infinite capacity for patience. She did not trouble me at all. The Gools showed great love. The doctor is a generous man. He does not interfere much with what I do. We wanted very much to satisfy him, but Ba later showed great firmness. I always read the *Ramayana* to her and sing prayer songs. She appears to listen to these attentively. I repeat Ramanama also. The intention behind all this is not that she should survive; it is that, whether she lives or dies, her mind should be pure and tender. I have made all preparations and inquired about everything in case she dies. There is a cremation ground here equipped with the necessary facilities. It is four miles away.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5765 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

100. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

7 BUITENSINGLE,
CAPE TOWN,
March 9 [*1914*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I have your two letters and wire.

If I were you I would not disturb the meals you have arranged. Do not change what seems to agree so much only so that on occasions you can do without them. Manilal won't save all the time you imagine. Your description shows that the preparation must take 1 hours. But that loss of time need not worry you. So long as there must be cooking so long must there be loss both of time and life. But habits of long standing cannot be altered in a day. You will observe that my tolerance is again reasserting itself and I am becoming more and more indifferent to the surroundings. Mrs. Gandhi's sickness has given me food for introspection and a review of the past. I am glad Manilal is regaining his balance.

Mrs. Gandhi's recovery (if the improvement continues) is almost a miracle. And she has responded to our natural treatment. I feel too that medical treatment would have killed her, not that she is certain now to live. But hope has revived. I had prepared her for death and had made arrangements for her funeral. There is a crematorium here built owing to the energy of Lucheram[1] . She has remained very calm and sweet. I have now introduced in my life the counting of beads. I sing hymns to her in the morning and read the *Ramayana* to her in the evening and also sing hymns. Mrs. Gool sometimes comes and listens. My food you should know ≈ tomatoes peeled by warming them and banana flour and coconut biscuits, also ground monkey-nuts or dried bananas stewed. The latter was tried for you. I had it for the first time today. It takes no time and by itself makes a perfect dish. There was very little water in it, of course, there was oil. Mrs. Gool prepared it. Mrs. Gandhi or I had made it, it would have been better I fancy. I add, of course, fresh fruit, principally grapes and a few almonds which I have been taking for the past week to test their effect on the eyes which have much troubled me. I take, I think, five

[1] Chooharmal P. Lucheram

tomatoes though I am not sure. The whole preparation does not take Mrs. Gool longer than 30 minutes, if that. But on a good stove the tomatoes to be soft should take no more than 5 minutes and the banana when done not more than 15 minutes. This much cooking is a concession to Mrs. Gandhi and a temporary indulgence for my palate. Peeling of tomatoes is a necessity. But alone I should peel them without warming.

Now for P. K. Naidoo, I was bound to give him the best advice. And I offered Phoenix. It is today partly a passive resistance farm. Whilst we may not disturb the even tenor of the Phoenix life, force of circumstances must interrupt and then the settlers are involuntarily tested. We may not expose ourselves to temptation. But when it comes, we must face it. Or we have no character. I may not put my hand in a lion's jaw but may I fly away from it when it is in front of me? The simile must not be carried too far because I see it is not a perfect illustration. For if you may not fly away from the lion, you may not from a seductive woman. As a matter of fact you must fly away from both if you cannot face them without fear. You may not kill the lion and you may not succumb to the woman. Reverting to Naidoo, when a man asks me what he should do, must I not propose the best for him? The secret of Phoenix is that it will and can harbour those who will conform to its fundamental rules. And if Naidoo can stand them he will be a help to himself and to Phoenix. Shelat[1] came, was found wanting and went. Even Harilal Thakar went. And Anandlal and Virji. There is a natural process of winnowing going on that very wonderful place. I call it wonderful although it is partly my offspring. I have no doubt it was conceived in the purest spirit, it was born amid most strenuous and holy circumstances and it has been nurtured on a spiritual diet which has been and is being continuously purified more and more. It can become a place that would not hold an impure soul. The future depends upon West and Chhaganlal mostly and partly on Sam. Raojibhai and Maganbhai may be taken away from Phoenix at an early date though not for a year or so perhaps.

Thambi has written to me. He is very bitter against us all. We must meet his bitterness by the greatest gentleness. Simply walk over to him. Tell him you do not want to hurt his feelings. And if he is unwilling to talk, come away. Repeat the performance till your love conquers his passion. This we must do so long as he is not found to

[1] Umiashankar Manchharam Shelat

be, as he is not, a bad coin.

Your affairs I understand a little. I will say nothing. What I may not like I shall tolerate and watch.

I have asked opinion today by wire to post you cheque for £200. From this you should pay Eric in any event for the pressing calls upon the family to the extent of £160. The Newcastle Hospital bill should not be paid by you. But Miss Schlesin writes to me saying she has transferred it to you for you to contest with the Government. But if there is to be no contesting, please pay out the Passive Resistance funds, not your own.

Be cautious about paying P.K. Naidoo or others. Refer them to me when you are in doubt.

What a long letter this! I think I have covered all the points raised by you.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

101. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

7 BUITENSINGLE,
Tuesday [*March 10, 1914*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

The greatest grief imaginable has befallen me. My brother[1] died yesterday. I suppose simply thinking up to his last breath of me. What a passionate wish it was on his part to meet me![2] And for me I was hurrying everything on so that I could go to India with the quickest despatch and fall down at his feet and nurse him. But it was not to be. Now I must go to a family of widows with my poor self as the head. You who do not quite know the Indian patriarchal [system] cannot quite realize what this may mean. Anyway my desire to go to India is keener than ever. And yet who knows! I doubt very much whether I shall ever realize that desire. However, I must prepare for the pilgrimage and then calmly leave it in the hands of Him who wields

[1] Lakshmidas Gandhi; *vide* also "Letter to C.F. Andrews", 13-3-1914
[2] *Vide* "General Knowledge about Health [—XXXIV]", 16-8-1913

the almighty power.

These shocks make in me still more intense fearlessness of death. Why should the event agitate one? The grief itself has a selfish touch about it. It is no calamity that my brother is dead, if I am ready to meet death and consider it as the supreme and welcome crisis in life. It is because we fear death so much for ourselves that we shed tears over the deaths of others. How can I who know the body to be perishable and the soul to be imperishable mourn over the separation of body from soul. But there is a condition attached to a real belief in this beautiful and consoling doctrine. He who believes in it must not pamper the body but must be its ruler. He must regulate its wants so as to make it serve the dweller within and not allow the body to master him. Not to grieve over the death of others is to accept a state almost of perpetual grief for this connection between body and soul is itself grievous.

These are the thoughts that rule me just now. I shall not write another such letter just now. This has written itself. Please, therefore, pass on to Polak. Let Manilal read it. And then you may pass on to Chhaganlal for West and others to read.

I am revolving the idea in my own mind of help for the indentured.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

102. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

CAPE TOWN,

Phagan Sud 14, 1970 [*March 11, 1914*]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have some time to myself just now. Medh writes to say that they are plotting again in Johannesburg to take my life. That would indeed be welcome and a fit end to my work. I would not be frightened by this and stay away from Johannesburg on account of this. In case I die suddenly, be the reason this or any other, I want to set down here certain ideas which I have thought out and which I have not so far placed before you.

"Service of the family should come first." This is quite correct from the point of view of our supreme interest. He alone who can render such service will be able to serve the community or the country. What that service consists in is the only point to consider. I think selfless conduct will show that quite easily.

The life of service or political work which we have followed so far seems to me of the lowest order. Ours is a notorious family, that is, we are known to belong to a band of robbers. Without disparaging our elders, we may say that they have possibly done service to the people, but only incidentally, while they pursued their selfish interests. Judged by common standards, it would seem that they have acted with a fair measure of justice. That is, they treated people to a smaller measure of oppression. At present, the family has fallen on evil days. Any member who failed to obtain a paid job would be on the streets. The highest our eyes can look up to is Narandas, slaving away in Bombay. Other members of the family just loiter about or, wallowing in the politics of [princely] States, manage to earn just enough for their food from day to day. All of them are busy multiplying, arranging marriages, etc. The utmost limit of a grandmother's or a daughter-in-law's ambition is to get [the grandson or] the son married.

How may we save ourselves from this? If possible, we should take another road. We should become farmers, in the first instance. If, to our misfortune, that should bring unbearable hardships on us, we should labour as weavers, etc., and live in the same state as we do in Phoenix. We must reduce our wants to the minimum. As for diet, we should, as far as possible, adhere to the system which we have thought out. Milk, which is generally considered a pure substance, may be taken, but it should be looked upon rather as the opposite of pure. This is an important change. Its roots go deep; and its consequences will be far-reaching. It is a separate question whether or not the change will prove acceptable to all. But knowing at least that this article is denied to millions, one should avoid it. The idea that it is pure flesh and not in keeping with the way of non-violence will never leave my mind. I do not think I shall ever be able to consume milk, ghee, etc., while I inhabit this body. You should do with the minimum use of fire. Any boys from the family who might wish to join should be allowed to do so and admitted. They should not be permitted to stay on if they failed to follow these ideas. Widows who might not wish to live such a life should be respectfully told that you would pay

them each one and a half times as much as would be spent on each if they were to follow that way of life and so clear your debt to them, that, apart from this, you could give them nothing else. Never trouble yourself to get anyone married and provided for. The boy, on growing up, will arrange the business himself if he wants to marry. If it does become necessary to find husbands for daughters, we would offer them to those who are prepared to marry them with no more than a tulsi leaf for dowry. We would not spend a single pie. We would wait till we came across such a candidate and teach the daughter to be patient. We should be prepared for some gossiping in consequence, and to be sneered at. All this, we would bear with love. If we remain upright in our conduct, we would come to no harm. To have offspring is no religious obligation on us. It is none of our duty to multiply numbers in the world. The real secret of life seems to consist in so living in the world as it is, without being attached to it, that *moksha* might become easy of attainment to us and to others. This will include service of self, the family, the community, and the State. We should not stop till we reach that stage.

Whoever joins us in this way of living will be to us as a member of our family. We shall take in Raojibhai, Maganbhai, Pragji and any others who may come forward. Should I meet with an untimely end, it is my desire that you should order your life as indicated here. Be in no hurry to leave Phoenix, but bear these objects in mind and stay on. I am quite hopeful about Maganlal. If Jamnadas gets trained up, he has the necessary spirit. He has determination, too.

After my death, the money needed on account of the widows who have been my special responsibilities should be obtained from Dr. Mehta. If it is not forthcoming, all of you who agree with the aims set out above should make the necessary provision even if you have to put yourselves to extreme difficulty and slave for the purpose. Harilal will have to fend for himself. He may entrust the children to you. or anyone else who is in India. Fuli has enough and to spare, so that there is no question of providing for her. And now remain Gokibehn[1], Nandkorbhabhi[2], Gangabhabhi[3] and Gokuldas's[4] wife. If they live

[1] Raliyatbehn, Ghandhiji's sister

[2] Widow of Lakshmidas Gandhi

[3] Widow of Karsandas

[4] Son of Gandhiji's sister, who died within a fortnight of his marriage in 1908.

together, that will be very good of them, graceful of them. If they do not, separate provision should be made for each. Children may be handed over [to them]. But it would be better if they come over to live with the others. In that case, the total cost of maintaining them is not likely to be [even] as much as Rs. 40. The expenses for Ba also should be estimated on a similar scale. She should, at any rate, understand that the right thing for her would be to live with them. And she, too, should hand over the boys. The sons who are prepared to assumere sponsibility for their mothers should, of course, be welcome to do so. The suggestion made above concerns such of them as apply to us for help. If Harilal takes upon himself the burden of maintaining Ba, let him by all means. It would be better still if he maintained Nandkorbhabhi. Then the problem will remain only in regard to Gokibehn and Goka's wife, and Gangabhabhi. It would be as well if Kaku should assume the responsibility for his mother, and Samaldas[1] on account of his. The way suggested above is for those who would be left with no support. No one will be justified in expecting, or will expect, anything above your own standard of living. Since I consider that to be the best way of living, the ideas outlined above do not appear to be harsh. The logic behind this reasoning is based on poverty which, indeed, appears to be the only sound basis.

After my death, you may show this letter to anyone you like. For the time being, it may be read by Maganlal, Raojibhai, Maganbhai, Pragji and Jamnadas. I only want that these persons should not mention it in other company. If you feel that all of them should not be allowed to read it, show it to those only who, you think, should read it.

I think the letter is so comprehensive that it will provide answers to all the questions which may occur to you. If, however, any point seems to have been left out, ask me. If you want to discuss any questions with me, set them down in writing. If you differ from me, have no hesitation in telling me so. You should also tell me if you feel that the responsibility will be too heavy for you. Make all points by way of criticism that may occur to you.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[1] Son of Lakshmidas Gandhi, Gandhiji's elder brother

[PS.]

Manilal is not there, otherwise I would have permitted him as well to read this. For the present, make a copy of this letter. If you approve, send it on to him by registered post, asking him to read and return it to you.

[From Gujarati]
Gandhijini Sadhana

103. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

CAPE TOWN,
March 13, 1914

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I had your ocean post message as also cable from London. There was also Reuter's cable giving the gist of your interview with Reuter's agent.[1] I have expanded your ocean letter and sent it to *I*[*ndian*] *O*[*pinion*].[2] I took the liberty of omitting Mrs. Gandhi and Manilal because they are your own. I omitted Kallenbach, Polak, and West because their names did not seem to me to fit in with the others. Perhaps you will make time to write to them individually if you have not done so already. Regarding the omission of the last three, I am not decided in my judgment. In such cases I obey the first instinct.

I do hope you had a nice time with your people. For the last two weeks I have felt like writing a letter to your dear father, but I did not know whether it might not be considered presumptuous I could still write, of course. I shall abide by your judgment and if I may write,

[1] The interview took place on March 10, after Andrews arrived in London. He was accorded a reception by Indians, led by Sarojini Naidu, the poetess. The report stated that: " . . . Mr. Andrews extolled the chivalrous patriotism of Mr. Gandhi, during the railway strike, in calling off the passive resistance movement so as not to embarrass the Government. He also extolled the heroism and endurance of the Indians, and the generous and fairminded treatment of himself by the Union Government.

"He said he was immensely impressed with General Botha's sterling character and simplicity, and added that General Botha had assured him that he would do whatever he could to act justly by the Indians."

[2] The message, despatched on March 1, conveyed Andrews' thanks to friends in South Africa. It was published in Indian Opinion, 18-3-1914.

please let me have Mr. Andrews' full name.

Mrs. Gandhi was near death's door last week. I have therefore done hardly anything else save nursing her during the last 10 days. She rallied 2 days ago and the improvement continues. Owing to the illness I have been obliged to remain at home.

I had a chat today with Sir Benjamin. He tells me the report has been shown to him and that it is on the whole good. But as you know we may not accept his verdict.

Copies of the reprint of your lecture[1] have been sent to most of the men with whom you came in contact. The Bishop has written a charming letter in acknowledging his copy. Mrs. Drew is sailing for London tomorrow. She has sent £5—for the P[assive] R[esistance] fund. She sent me some names for sending the reprint to. The papers have published notices as per enclosed cutting[2]. There is a request daily from a few for copies. An attempt is being made to induce Indians to take up copies for distribution among European friends of theirs. W.P. Schreiner had a complimentary copy. He paid for 6 extra copies for his friends in England. So you see your mission is showing a double success. The great saint and the cause that brought you to S. A. are being advertised to the good of humanity.

I suppose I ought to tell you that I had cable news of the death of my eldest brother in Porbunder.[3] He was like father to me He it was who sent me to London.[4] He used to be very bitter against me for being in S. A.,[5] but his last letter was, to my great joy, one of complete reconciliation. His one wish was to meet me. And I was longing to hurry back to India. But it was not to be. I have now the responsibility of having to look after 5 widows in my father's family and of course their children. However I am quite at peace with myself. There is a very remarkable manifestation of sympathy for Mrs. Gandhi and myself as the news of the loss is spreading among the community.[6]

I hope that you were able to recover your health in London and

[1] Andrews had addressed the university students on February 17 on Tagore.

[2] This is not available.

[3] Lakshmidas Gandhi passed away on March 9.

[4] This was for his legal studies, in. 1888.

[5] For Gandhiji's reply to Lakshmidas's charges, *vide* "Letter to Lakshmidas Gandhi", 20-4-1907.

[6] Gandhiji acknowledged the messages of condolence in "Letter to Indian Opinion", 18-3-1914

that you had a good time among your people.

With love

Yours,

MOHAN

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 4099

104. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[CAPE TOWN,]

Phagan Vad 2 [*March 14, 1914*]

CHI. MANILAL,

I have not delayed in the least in writing to you. It seems I write wrong addresses. It happened in the case of Jamnadas. The same thing happened in the case of Schlesin also. I shall hereafter read the addresses again.

Ba is now getting better. You must have seen what I wrote about Bapa in my letter to Kallenbach. Do write a letter to Chi. Samaldas.

You need not be disturbed by the intrigues that are being hatched there. No man can hasten or delay my death even by a minute. The best way of saving oneself from death is to go seeking it. It is no doubt our duty to take care of our life in a general way. More than this we need not do. We should rather welcome death whenever it comes.

It will not matter if you do not try to save time by discontinuing to cook for yourself. Let things go on as at present. I think it will take three hours at least. You can save time only if you make more changes in your diet. It is not necessary to make the changes for the present. I have written to Kallenbach also accordingly.

Send the list of your books again to Phoenix.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 1499 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

105. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

7 BUITENSINGLE,
March 15 [*1914*][1]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Yes, you may expend the amounts you suggest on the stones. The inscription on both should be the same, only the names and the dates will vary.

I know that I have your sympathy and more in the affliction that has befallen me. But I must not say thanks to you. We are so indivisible one soul in two bodies.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

[PS.]

Bananas are and should be unripe. Remove the outer skin, cut them into thin discs and dry in the sun 3 days. They are ready to be stored away when they are quite dry and brittle. They can be ground to any fineness or thickness and can be cooked as they are. With nuts and oil and tomatoes they make a perfect meal. But, of course, this is not ideal. The ideal is the uncooked meal. It is however the nearest approach and the least expensive. For travelling where you may not get fresh fruit it is perfect in the form of biscuits. These with dried unripe mangoes could be carried for an army. And they would form a most nourishing diet not at all sweet. Mrs. Gandhi is better but not satisfactory. I fear that she has a fatal trouble in her stomach. The only cure for her so far as I can see is a prolonged fast with the *neem* leaves water. She may have cancer of the stomach. This never yields to medical treatment but it must yield to fasting treatment if the patient has stamina. Mrs. Gandhi has that yet, I think. This information is however only for you. This is alarming and I am only conjecturing. I have informed Chhaganlal. She moves about but in the heart of her hearts she herself is not satisfied. The swelling recurs most obstinately. I am slowly preparing her for the worst again. But the agony may be prolonged. What a cruel man I must be or can be to thus contemplate the death of others. However, such is my state just now. Nothing

[1] From the contents

moves me permanently. If Eric has not the cheque he may have it without questioning. I think you should discuss these things with Polak. The latter may not with the family so long as he is not *persona grata*.

The report will be out on Wednesday I think.[1] This is still supposed to be private. We may then expect the Bill[2] early.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

106. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

[CAPE TOWN,]
Phagan Vad 6 [*March 17, 1914*]

CHI. JAMNADAS,

You are right in what you say about wheat and dates. Every grain of wheat will yield a plant. That is not the case with a date palm. The part of the date fruit[3] which we eat will not grow if planted. So long, therefore, as we are still on the middle level, eating the date fruit is not very objectionable. Groundnut is certainly open to objection, as I have always been saying. We have not, however, reached a stage when it can be given up. Olive is not open to objection because it contains a separable seed. You have rightly pointed out the objection against the sesame seed. Ultimately, we are to give up sesame oil itself and make do with what oil can be obtained from dry fruit. Of course, the objection I have mentioned will probably apply to every variety of dry fruit; almond, for instance, is but seed. You will see on reflection, however, that there is much difference between consuming wheat and consuming almonds. An almond tree continues to flourish, but the wheat plant, once the grain has been removed, is no better than a weed. It is of no other use. No such violence as is involved in the sowing of wheat and other operations is involved in similar operations relative to almond. It is not possible, however, to go very deep into this kind of argument. . I am but ignorant myself. I am telling you of my

[1] The Solomon Commission Report was presented to Parliament on March 17, Tuesday.

[2] The Indians' Relief Bill which was published on May 28, *vide* "The Relief Bill", 3-6-1914 and Appendix "The Indians Relief Act", 1914.

[3] The original has "the date stones".

own conclusions, tentative and immature as they are. The basic principle, undoubtedly, is this: one should make do with the fewest possible articles [of food] and in the smallest possible quantity, no more than what is absolutely necessary to pay the body its hire. It will be best to frame the rules of our diet bearing this principle in mind. A man who cooks a meal of just an ounce of rough-ground wheat and is free in five minutes is far superior to the one who wrings (as I do) the utmost pleasure from a variety of fruits. Another, however, who lives on no more than five bananas will out-distance the first. In other words, one who lives on fruit diet stands a far better chance of rising than the other. Even here, the mental attitude is the primary factor. The motive is the chief thing.

We cannot deduce any rule that, if we can consume the fruit, we can also consume the leaves, the bark, etc.

The reason why certain green vegetables are permitted on *ekadashi*[1] but wheat is forbidden seems to be an obvious one rather than anything abstract. Since people do not have an entire meal of vegetables or look upon them as food, some vegetables were permitted for gratifying the palate; but wheat, being food was excluded and in this way the original aim of eating less on *ekadashi* was to some extent maintained.

Gourds, etc., are, like tomatoes, more or less a kind of fruit. The tomatoes are allowed because they can be eaten uncooked. It is doubtful if gourd and the like, if uncooked, can be digested by all. Radish, etc., are but roots of a weed and the consumption of roots is thoroughly objectionable according to Jain principles. When Ba wanted to have ginger, I ate it with her to know its effects. I liked it and continued to take it after *neem* juice. Ba has quite an enthusiasm for it. Both she and I liked it. She collected some tender shoots of ginger. They were nothing but roots. I ate them for a day or two and relished them very much indeed. This morning, I was filled with compassion and despised myself. It was as though I could see the souls in these pieces of ginger. On one knot of it, there are several tender shoots. To eat them amounted to destroying so many embryos. Deeply pained, I gave up ginger today. I had not done so till now, having kept myself free to eat it when necessary. Henceforth, I will treat it as forbidden and avoid eating it as far as possible. Before I am

[1] Eleventh day of each dark and bright fortnight. Hindus generally fast on this day.

in India, I don't want to place myself under any more restrictions than those I have already accepted. Ginger, however, I will not eat in this country.

Consumption of cooked food involves the destruction of life in an unnatural, and therefore cruel, manner. The destruction of life through eating uncooked food occurs in a natural manner. Moreover, food, when cooked, loses its nourishing element (vitality). Havingregard to this, we can practically eat only ripe fruit. To pluck or eat fruit before it is ripe is objectionable. You will see from this that I have not been able to act upon all the results of my thinking. To that extent, my thinking is ahead of my action. But that will remain, of course. The effort is always for eagerly following up thought with action.

If the desire to eat our food while it is still hot comes back again and again, it is because of the hold of a vicious habit of long standing. The desire must be suppressed with the utmost effort. Improper desires will always occur. By suppressing them every time, we grow firmer in mind and gain in spiritual strength.

Ba's condition is not so good, nor so bad. The oedema is quite heavy today but she moves about with courage. I have asked her to eat whatever she relishes. One cannot say what will happen. She is not bed-ridden at present.

I am likely to be detained here for three weeks more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5697 Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

107. OBSERVATIONS REGARDING COMMISSION'S REPORT

[CAPE TOWN,
After *March 17, 1914*][1]

Reference to the Tr[ans]vaal Gold Law has been omitted by the Commission. A declaration that vested rights will be respected is necessary. I have already given my meaning of vested rights.

[1] The Solomon Commission Report was laid on the table of the House of Assembly on March 17, 1914. *Vide* "Extracts from Solomon Commission Report", 25-3-1914 for the extracts from the Report.

S[outh] A[frica-]born. Indians cannot be kept out of the Cape unless the economic clause is applied to them by special instructions to the Immigration Officers. It is suggested that these instructions should be issued to the officers unless a new condition arises, namely, that there is an inordinate influx of illiterate S. A.-born Indians into the C[olony].

There seems to be an obscurity in the Commission's report on this (the marriage) point.

(a) Plural wives of domiciled Indians should, with their minor children, be admitted irrespective of the fact whether they have previously entered S. A. or not. Such cases are very few. And all these cases might, within a specified period, be notified to the Union's officials or the Provincial officials.

(b) Indi[an] m[arriage] off[icers] should not be prohibited from celebrating plural unions though these would not be legalised.

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 5977

108. LETTER TO "INDIAN OPINION"

THE EDITOR

INDIAN OPINION

SIR

I have been so overwhelmed with wires from different parts of the Union expressing sympathy with my wife and myself regarding the death of my brother in India that it is impossible for me to thank severally the Associations and individual senders. Numerous messages have been received from Durban, Maritzburg, Johannesburg and other places. I thank all most heartily for their sympathy. Whilst doing so I would like to say just a word. To me as a passive resister and as a firm believer in the oneness of the Soul, my brother's loss should occasion no greater pain than the death of Nagappen, Narayanasamy and Hurbatsing, who were just as much my brothers as my blood brother whose loss so many friends are mourning with me. Valliamah Moonsamy's untimely end is, if possible, a greater stab from the hand of Death than my brother's end. Yet I share the common human failing, and the thoughts that arise in the mind from the loss of my brother, who was in the place of father to me and to whom, next to my

dead mother, I owe all I am in life, are more vivid than those that arose in me when those three brother passive resisters and the sister passive resister died. The idea that is uppermost in my mind just now is that death should cause no fear in us, if we have lived in the fear of God and have done nothing in violation of the voice of our conscience. Then, indeed, is death but a change for the better and, therefore, a welcome change which need not evoke any sorrow. Such a change, I feel, my brother's death must mean for him. And we in South Africa, especially those who are passive resisters, must learn not only not to fear death but must be prepared to face it and welcome it when it comes to us in the performance of our duty. So have died Narayansamy and his three successors. I wish for no better end and I am sure no other passive resister does.

Finally, may I ask those friends who have overwhelmed me with their sympathy in my bereavement to help me, if the points of passive resistance are satisfactorily settled in the near future, in my desire to return to India to fall at the feet of my brother's widow and to take charge of the domestic cares of five widows in my father's family, in which the hand of death now leaves me the responsible head, according to the Hindu usage.

I am. etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 18-3-1914

109. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[CAPE TOWN,]

Thursday [*March 19, 1914*]

CHI . MANILAL,

I hope it was after careful thought that you made the changes in diet you have done. See that whatever you do is not [done in a hurry] to be given up afterwards, and remembered merely as a dream. Some of it at least must endure for the whole of your life. You have introduced so big a change that you may perhaps find yourself in the same state you were in at the end of *chaturmas.* There is only one way to guard oneself against excessive eating, viz., to serve out the full

quantity for oneself in advance and put away the utensils containing the rest before sitting down for the meal. Ba is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

MASTER MANILAL GANDHI
BOX 2493
JOHANNESBURG

From the original postcard in Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 104 Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

110. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

7 BUITENSINGLE,
March 20 [*1914*][1]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

You seem just now to be the busiest man in our circle. Your correspondence is invariably (almost) written in the train. Well, I hope, the result of this activity will be greater peace for you and a great benefit to the circle. I am not joking. I am serious though naturally I am sceptical about the value of such restless activity. But under exceptional circumstances it may be the lesser evil.

You asked me a question about the counting of beads. I forgot to deal with it. There is undoubtedly great efficacy in knowingly and deliberately uttering some sacred name as often as you can. The love of the owner of the name then grows on you and you ultimately merge in Him. Now every rosary has a stated number of beads. The Hindu rosary has 108. You take the 108 names of the deity once every turn of the rosary. And as the number of the beads is fixed you never omit a name. Thus you simply contemplate the name without worrying to know how often you have taken it or whether you have omitted any. The Muslims have 99 beads to correspond to the 99 names of God. Some Hindus simply mutter the same name. In that case the number of beads is of no consequence so long as it is the same rosary. You are in a position to know then how often during the day you have taken the sacred name. Thus to mutter the name of the Highest without a selfish purpose is a most desirable practice. Hence

[1] From the contents

the universality of rosaries. I want to continue the counting if I can. The more secretly it is done, the better of course. The early morning and sunset are the best times and I try to keep these times at present. I do not ≈ cannot for my eyes get up very early nowadays. I am going to try again. I cannot just now have my eyes examined or take another pair of spectacles. I want to observe the effect of the Indian climate on the eyes.

Another question of yours was why was *Indian Opinion* transferred to West and Maganlal? Simply because the Trust-deed[1] contemplates it and the Trustees should not [be] made responsible for what may appear in *Indian Opinion*.

Yours,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

111. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

7 BUITENSINGLE,

March 21 [*1914*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Yes, I have given you a most thankless task to perform. I hope that you will be able to make a healthy impression on Eric. My analysis of Ritch was, I feel convinced, perfect. His children are suffering for his sins. It was a most recklesslike [*sic*]. No more than the present debts are to be discharged and then to the extent of not more than £170 so far as I can see at present. Do not sour Eric by too strong words. We can only put them in the best position possible and then they must rise to it or fall.

As for Mrs. Polak, she must follow her own inclinations. She is a different type. She knows or thinks she knows what she is doing. She is a superior woman. And Polak is a gem of the "purest ray serene".[2] He can reflect those he loves. After all the money must go the way it has come.

[1] Of September 14, 1912; *vide* "The Phoenix Trust Deed", 14-9-1912.

[2] A popular poetic metaphor authored by Thomas Gray in his "Elegy in a country churchyard"; *vide* also "In Memoriam", 12-1-1921.

The best translation of *Ramayana* is I think Griffith's. What you want is a translation of Tulsidas's *Ramayana* and no other. I might some day dictate it to you. Meanwhile you should procure Dutt's rendering of the substance.

The Parliament rises for holiday on the 9th April and meets again on the 22nd. Whether therefore the Bill is brought or not before then I propose to leave here at least on the 9th but it may be much earlier.[1] I must see. I shall know more next week.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

112. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI PATEL

CAPE TOWN,

Phagan Vad 10 [*March 21, 1914*]

DEAR SHRI RAOJIBHAI,

I have your letter. I had heard about your fast. If you had a reason for going on a fast, I have nothing to say. You will certainly enjoy no solitude there. There should be more of physical activity in Phoenix. That is conducive to peace. There the first place is assigned to service.

The breakdown in J's health has given me a fright. I wish she recovers soon.

I feel anxious on account of Maganbhai. I cannot judge why things do not get right [with him]. I also feel that it would be good if he went along with me. Please keep on preparing his mind to that end. We shall see what can be done in India. I have a persistent feeling that the thing is due to mental illness. I am trying to discover why he enjoyed good health in gaol, but this is all that I can think of. While in gaol, the mind had been forced into an equable state and this had an effect on the body, too, so much so that he kept well despite the sort of food that he had to eat. Cannot he attain to that mental poise out of gaol? Be that as it may, the only right course for Maganbhai seems to be that he should go with me to India. Let him also think it over.

[1] The Indians' Relief Bill was introduced in the House of Assembly on June 2; *vide* "The Relief Bill", 3-6-1914 and Appendix "The Indians Relief Act", 1914.

I shall cite in passing one instance, my own. Ba wanted to take ginger. Since I was under no vow to avoid it, I started taking it along with her in order to test its properties. Ba's tongue loves dainties. She happened to discover some shoots of ginger. I fell in love with them, so much so that I also used to chew four or five of these tender shoots, of the size of a grain of gram. One day, Ba collected a quantity of these from Mrs. Gool's basket and placed them in [our] room. I was struck with horror to see them. The night passed. I sprang out of bed in a fright, early in the morning. How could one eat ginger? This thing, a single joint of which proliferated into so many shoots, must indeed be full of lives. Moreover, to eat fresh shoots was as good as killing delicate babies. I felt extremely disgusted with myself. I resolved that I would never eat ginger, not in this life. But the real fun comes now. Ba saw that I would not take ginger. She asked me the reason. I told her. She also caught my point. She carried away the very tendershoots and pressed me to take something from the rest. I declined. The vow holds, but the tongue and the eye are like dogs. The desire to eat ginger comes over me whenever the eye falls on a piece of it. The tongue starts licking. But just as a dog greedily watching food left over will not dare to eat it in the presence of the master, the tongue is prevented from touching the ginger by the watchfulness of *Mr. Atman*. My eye falls on it the whole day because it is lying just where my papers are. It seems more difficult for me to turn away my mind from ginger than it was to give up sugar or salt, such is the state I find myself in.

What, then, should you blame yourself for? It is not for nothing that the mind has been compared to a monkey that has got drunk. What is the point in having high hopes of learning wisdom from me? We are all sailing in the same battered ship and I, with greater wisdom than the rest by way of experience, point out the direction in which you are welcome to toddling along. We are all in darkness, groping for the same thing. Maybe my steps are firmer and move with greater confidence. To hold me in greater respect than this will amount to arresting your upward progress. When I have conquered all desire, I will instruct you without the least hesitation. For the present, let us pull together in quest of *Narayana*[1] who grants *moksha* and, undeterred even if we lose our way or fall or get knocked about, go on seeking

[1] Name of God Vishnu

with courage and patience.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]
Gandhijini Sadhana and *Jivannu Parodh*

113. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

[CAPE TOWN,]
Phagan Vad 11 [*March 22, 1914*]

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I got your two letters today. There is always twice the normal quantity of post on Saturdays. Write to Rustomjee Sheth and Motilal[1] about the *neem* tree. It will be good if Maganlal plants one whenever he finds a sapling. From what Mr. Kallenbach has discovered, macaroni can be eaten but only if obtained from a particular source. There is a big risk, however, in that it is an article prepared by non-vegetarians and one concerning which we have no information. We can do nothing else but take their word. The traditional objection of the Hindus against all ready-made articles of food deserves to be respected, as far as possible. Jaggery is not merely [sugar-cane] juice; *kharo*[2] or salt is added to it. Moreover, sugar-cane juice is boiled and from the whole only the sugar or jaggery is retained. If mangoes were to be processed in the same manner, the product would likewise be unacceptable. As for wind, it will probably be cured if [the sufferer] is given neem leaves and pepper or ginger. Do you take plenty of exercise? For the present you need not force yourself to get up early.

Did you read what I have written[3] to Ramdas about fasting? If not, ask for the letter and go through it. I don't want to prevent boys from fasting. Only, it should be done intelligently.

It is uncertain where else, apart from Johannesburg, I shall stop on the way back. The shirts at the Farm are mine. I am afraid I cannot spare any of them for you. You will have to have new ones made. That is easily done. Take my shirt as a model.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5699 Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Motilal M. Diwan, a leading Indian of Natal
[2] Substance containing carbonates of sodium and potassium
[3] This letter is not available.

114. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[CAPE TOWN,]
Phagan Vad 11 [*March 22, 1914*]

CHI. MANILAL,

I have been getting your letters. I see that your going over there has been for the best. And it is as well that you are alone. You are too quick in making changes. I wish some of them at least endure. It will be enough if your habits become regular there. Personally, I think it will be best if you come along with me. There will be no difficulty if 20 of us are together on the ship. I certainly don't think Jekibehn will be able to stay with me at any rate for some time after we reach India. It is my desire to see you esteemed in India as a *brahmachari* of a high order, your conduct so naturally well-disciplined that it cannot but produce an impression on others. This will require hard work, study and purity in you. No impression can be made by doing anything with the deliberate object of producing one. If, however, the things which commend themselves to one are best, they will impress. You must, therefore, make your own choice and consider what you want to do. You must then cling to the thing till death.

I am sending Chi. Harilal's letter for you to read. Think over the wretched state he has been reduced to. The fault is not his, but mine. During his childhood, I followed a way of life none too strict in its rule and he is still under its influence. Tear off the letter after reading it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 103 Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

115. FRAGMENT OF LETTER

[CAPE TOWN,]

Sunday [*March 22, 1914*][1]

Everything is transient, except the *atman*. Not only should we keep reminding ourselves of this but we should work on accordingly. The more I reflect, the more insistently I feel the supreme importance of truth and *brahmacharya.* The latter, together with all other rules of morality, is comprehended in truth. I cannot help thinking, however, that *brahmacharya* is important enough to share the place of honour with truth. It is my unshakable faith that these two can conquer any obstacle whatever. The real obstacles are the evil desires of the mind. If, for our happiness, we depend in no way on our outward relations with others, we would always think of what we ought to do rather than of what people might say.

[From Gujarati]

Gandhijini Sadhana and *Jivan Prabhat*

116. THE COMMISSION'S REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS[2]

The report of the [Indian Inquiry] Commission was released last week. We must admit that the report displays a sense of justice on the part of the Commissioners. It is a unanimous report, signed by all the three members. Messrs Esselen and Wylie deserve congratulations on this. We had felt it our duty to protest against their appointment. But they have not allowed their previously expressed views to affect their judgment. The agitation by the community is responsible, we believe, for this good result.

The Commissioners, as also Lord Hardinge, have criticized the action of Mr. Gandhi, and the general body of the Indians who

[1] In the source this letter has been placed in March 1914, but the exact date is not ascertainable. It is, however, likely that the letter was written about the same time as the "Letter to Manilal Gandhi", the proceding item

[2] This was an editorial note.

acted on his advice, in abstaining from giving evidence. This criticism is not al all surprising. They wanted that the largest possible number of Indians should give evidence. We can understand why the Viceroy also criticized this action. He had both toact consistently with the advice which he had previously offered and to support the Commission. We believe, however, that the Indian community acted wisely in abstaining from giving evidence. To speak plainly, an oath once taken can never be broken. If they had tendered evidence, they would have struck at the very root of satyagraha. Moreover, abstention from tendering evidence has, in the event, proved to be an advantage. We had three hundred witnesses at least. Indian Associations throughout South Africa would have led evidence on our grievances. Then, there were the Europeans ready to tender evidence. Thus, the mere recording of our evidence would have taken six months. After that, the Commission would have taken some more time before issuing the report. It would then have been rendered impossible to introduce remedial legislation in the current session of Parliament, as is now likely to be done. What could have been more disastrous for us? Again, if we had tendered evidence, the spirit of conciliation which we find prevailing today would not have been there. It would also not have been possible for Mr. Andrews to do what he did, sowing the seeds of conciliation so silently and with such deep love and humility. The reason is that our giving evidence would have aggravated animosity. We, on our side, would have made bitter statements and the whites would have retaliated. The latter would have led stronger evidence against the evidence tendered by us, and in that case, would not have had the sense of responsibility that they actually showed. In these circumstances we could not have entertained strong hopes for settlement as we do now. Thus, our remaining faithful to an oath taken in the face of advice to the contrary by the Viceroy was sacred in itself and it has yielded gratuitously other good sweet fruit. Such is the magic power of truth and the efficacy of satyagraha. He who has thefear of God in him need not be afraid of any man.[1] The truth of this has been proved over and over again a million times.

A scrutiny of the Commission's report leads us to the same conclusion. Practically no evidence was tendered by us in regard to the £3 tax and the question of Indian marriages. But these two issues were in the forefront of our struggle, and the Commission's recomm-

[1] An Indian saying

endations on them could not possibly have been better even if we had tendered voluminous evidence. If we had led evidence in regard to the £3 tax, very probably, as it seems to us, the Commission would not have found it possible to criticize it as strongly as it did. All those Indians who were misled into giving evidence rendered a disservice [to the community]. One of them gave evidence about force having been used and his testimony has been summarily dismissed by the Commission. The evidence tendered in regard to the Immigration Act was so flimsy that it undid the effect of the strong note submitted by Mr. Polak to Sir Benjamin; leading such evidence before the Commission could only result in putting us off with mere trinkets. These trivial issues, on which the community could have secured concessions at any time after the settlement or as part of the settle-ment, provoked the Commission's strictures and proved our petty-mindedness. Let us cite one or two examples. The Commission has recommended that the certificates of identity be issued for three years' duration instead of one year. In fact, we are entitled to permanent certificates [of domicile]. And that was what we demanded before Sir Benjamin. In consequence of the demand for three-year identity certificates submitted to the Commission, our demand for permanent certificates [of domicile] has been set aside. Because of uninformed and scrappy evidence tendered to the Commission on the question of trading licences, the Commission simply dismissed the issue. The issue of the Gold Law was also dismissed by the Commission as it was mixed up with other issues. Thus, in regard to the questions on which evidence was tendered we shall have to be satisfied with much less. Let the community note that all these matters were covered by the fifth point in Mr. Cachalia's letter[1]. It contained a demand for reasonable administration of all existing laws. But for this demand, the evidence that was given could not have been given. If, therefore, our countrymen had not been hasty and given the ill-considered evidence that they did, we could have secured much more and the fifth demand would have met with the same fortunate result as the demands in respect of the £3 tax and other matters. No permanent harm has, therefore, been done by their evidence, for the fifth point [in Mr. Cachalia's letter] represents a demand for a standing assurance. If the Government gives, as it will have to give, such an assurance, the community will be justified in taking up further questions like the administration of the Gold Law,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary for Interior", 12-9-1913.

and the various trading licence Acts. Efforts are being made to see that this becomes possible. The Commission's report is not the last word on the Indian question. In so far as it adversely affects our interests, it is not binding on satyagrahis, and the community is not likely to be harmed by the misguided evidence given in ignorance by some of its members. The remedy, of course, lies in the community's hands

The Commission's report establishes that our satyagraha was in a just cause, that the charge of breach of promise levelled by us was correct and that all our demands were reasonable. This result is by no means insignificant. Unquestionably it is, as we believe, a perfect success for satyagraha.

If the Government accepts the Commission's recommendation on the marriage question, the following will be the consequences:

(1) In the case of a person who has more than one living wife, one of the wives and her minor children will have the right of entry.

(2) If a man with only one wife wants his marriage to be legally recognized, he can do so, and get it registered before a Maulvi or Brahmin or other marriage officer nominated for the purpose.

(3) A person with only one wife desiring to have his marriage legally recognized can secure a certificate of legal recognition after the registration of his marriage, and his wife will have the same rights as a European wife.

(4) Arrangements are to be made for appointing Brahmins and Mullahs as marriage officers for the purpose of new marriages.

(5) If a person has more than one wife, all his wives and minor children will be permitted to enter; they will have no other legal rights.

(6) Even in the case of a lawful monogamous marriage, the husband will be free to take a second wife as sanctioned by his religion. But the second wife will not be recognized for legal purposes.

(7) No Indian is bound to take any of these steps and non will, in consequence of not doing so, forfeit the rights of his wife or wives.

More than this we did not demand and, we believe, cannot. To conclude: in addition to undertaking legislation about marriages and the £3 tax, the Government will have to do all it can to meet our demands in the Cape and the Free State and the demand relating tothe administration of existing laws, and then alone will this epic struggle of ours, which has been going on for the last eight years, come to an

end. For the present, we hope the signs point to its termination. But when one like Rama did not know what the next day was to bring him, who are we that we should claim to know the future?

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 25-3-1914

117. SPEECH AT CAPE TOWN RECEPTION[1]

[*March 25, 1914*]

Mr. Gandhi thanked those present at the function, as also Mr. and Mrs. Gool and other members of the family, for their services to Mrs. Gandhi during her illness and to himself, and likewise all those friends who called to inquire after Mrs. Gandhi from time to time and brought fruit. He explained the implications of the Commis-sion's report and argued with special emphasis that it was in the interests of the [Indian] community that Hindus and Muslims live as brothers. It was perfectly possi-ble, he explained, for each community to adhere to its religion and yet live in peace with the other.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 1-4-1914

118. LETTER TO MAHATMA MUNSHIRAM[2]

PHOENIX,
NATAL,
March 27, 1914

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

Mr. Andrews has familiarised your name and your work to me. I feel I am writing to no stranger. I hope therefore that youwill pardon me for addressing you by the title which both Mr. Andrews and I have

[1] A meeting of Indians was held under the auspices of the Hindu Sabha to honour Gandhiji, Kasturba and Imam Abdul Kadir Bawazeer. Vartak presided. The Patidar community donated a sum of £7 10s to be used at Gandhiji's discretion. The following report appeared in the English columns of Indian Opinion: "Mr. Gandhi wishes us to state that, during his stay at Cape Town, Dr. Gool was most unremitting in his attendance on Mrs. Gandhi during her serious illness, from which, we are sorry to say, she is not yet quite free."

[2] (1856-1926); later known as Swami Shraddhanand; a leader of the Arya Samaj, founder of the Gurukul at Kangri near Hardwar; was killed by a Muslim fanatic.

used in discussing you and your work. Mr. Andrews told me also how you, Gurudev and Mr. Rudra[1] had influenced him. He described to me the work your pupils did for the Passive Resisters and gave me such word pictures of the life at the Gurukula that as I am writing this I seem to be transported to the Gurukula. Indeed he has made me impatient to visit the three places described by Mr. Andrews and to pay my respects to the three grand sons of India who are at the head of these institutions.

1 remain,
Yours,
MOHANDAS K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 2204

119. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

PHOENIX,
NATAL,
April 1, 1914

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

I had your two cables. To the last one I am just now replying.

I doubt whether Mrs. Gandhi will survive the settlement. I am writing this by her bed side. I have to be her doctor, nurse and everything. Then my brother's death leaves the sole charge of five widows and their children in my hands. Dr. Mehta is just now paying the expenses of the others. To this he will, I do not doubt, add the maintenance of my brother's widow. But she and the others are most naturally anxious to have me with them at the earliest possible moment. I would, therefore, grudge having to go to London unless you consider it absolutely necessary. If you do, I shall certainly come if Mrs. Gandhi dies or is better—so well, that is to say, as to permit of my being away from her, I suppose, at least for two months.

As I have already informed you, Indian legislation will not be undertaken before the reopening of the Union Parliament on the 22nd instant.

I do hope that you will materially benefit by the cure at Vichy.

[1] Susil Kumar Rudra; Indian Christian educationist; Principal, St. Stephen's College, Delhi, 1909-23

I know it is useless my asking you not to worry about me or my future. Wherever I may be placed in India I shall carry out my compact with you, viz., that I should observe absolute silence excepton the S[outh] A[frica] question for one year at least after my landing in India and about everything else I have promised.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 3775

120. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[PHOENIX,
NATAL,]
Chaitra Sud 8, 1970 [*April 3, 1914*]

CHI. MANILAL,

The changes you have introduced are excellent. If you keep them up, you may do yourself much good. I have heard a great deal about the moral effects of getting up early. Why should you be afraid of April 1? *Chaitra Sud* 5 is looked upon as a sacred panchami[1], which means that you have introduced the change on an auspicious day. In the last analysis, we alone can make fools of ourselves. If we have spirit enough in us, no one dare make a fool of us.

The morning hours should be devoted to the most important activities. It will do if you make it a rule to do a large number of sums in arithmetic. I shall be able to tell you more later. I am sending some books for you. Learn Sanskrit also very well.

Ba takes wheat coffee without milk. Except for that, she is on a fast. She is confined to bed. It seems her oedema will go down. I cannot say what the final outcome will be.

What did you do about the letter from Bapa? I wrote some thing in English about him. What happened to it?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 95 Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

[1] Fifth day

121. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[*April 4, 1914*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Herewith Miss Hobhouse's farewell for you to keep. You may explain the meaning of it to Manilal. Her preface is wrong if it were universally applied.

You have made a great change about getting up. You can keep it up if you adhere to the retiring time which you should do.

Mrs. Gandhi is still practically fasting. She is taking wheat coffee without milk or sugar in addition to the infusion of the leaves. The swelling has not left her entirely but I think it is going. Anyway I feel that no other treatment could be better.

The whole of my time is given up to her and she takes it all. She resents my absence even for an hour. She is helpless without me.

With love,

Yours,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

122. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]

Tuesday [*April 7, 1914*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

You will remember the following in the 2nd Chapter of the *Song Celestial:* "Anger leads to madness which brings on loss of memory. Then the intellect becomes weakened till at last the man himself is undone." Why did you give vent to anger? Manilal describes the apple incident[1]. Was that the cause? He says he retorted and was sorry. Anyway your early rising must be for the sake of control of passions.

It is obvious we both fasted practically the same day. For me it was the nativity of Rama. And I had decided in Cape Town that as we

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Manilal Gandhi", 12-4-1914.

laid so much stress on *Ramayana*, I would fast that day and then I further decided to fast every eleventh day of the two halves of the month as I used to before[1]. There is no fixed limit for this, so that I fasted on Saturday and then again on Monday. Hence I was up this morning at 2 a.m. Manilal's was the first letter I wrote and yours is the second. You know how little sleep I need when I am fasting.

I have made a very drastic change here which I am asking Jamnadas to describe in his letter to Manilal. He will do so and Manilal must give it to you. Here I would only say that I took a vow on Sunday that I would restrict myself to one helping only whilst at Phoenix. I should endeavour to carry it out elsewhere also.

Mrs. Gandhi is lingering. She is taking a little food now but it is next to nothing. At this rate she can't live many months if that. Yet who knows?

Please return the inscription I sent you. I shall have it rewritten in bold letter.

I see here a bag containing your papers. It has some letters from Mrs. Mayo[2], etc. I thought I would search there for your Standerton papers but my search was vain. I cannot get over the loss of those papers.[3] I cannot reconcile myself to the idea of their having been deliberately stolen. If they are not mislaid, they must have been lost by you owing to your usual habit of rushing. I do not ask questions but I have a vague fear that even now you are rushing and spending money in what to me would be idle speculation. But it is as well I am not with you. Let your progress go along your own line. How long could I reason? Only think, think and think forty times before you do anything at all. Haste is waste. 'Hasten slowly' was Lord John Russell's motto.[4]

And you seem to me to have been hasty in judging Andrews. I fancy that I know him better. Anyway, he does not consider every

[1] *ibid*

[2] Mrs. Isabella Fyvie Mayo Lafcadio Hearn, British journalist, author of several works on Japan, who married a Japanese woman and became a Japanese citizen.

[3] Gandhiji had been arrested on Standerton Road on November 8, 1913 during the third and last satyagraha campaign before he left for India; *vide* "Application for Bail", 8-11-1913 and "The Last Satyagraha Campaign: My Experience", after 23-7-1914.

[4] For similar references by Gandhiji to illustrate his point, *vide* "Mixed Schools and Morals", 9-12-1911

Indian to be a saint. Nor is he like Hearn.[1] Hearn began by loving theJaps, Andrews began by suspecting Indians. Remember he came avowedly as a missionary to convert. But this is enough. I cannot begin another sheet and must write other letters.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

123. A MARRIAGE PROCLAMATION

The Union *Government Gazette* of the 24th March contains a marriage proclamation which is of some importance, as it bears on the expected legislation on the Indian marriage difficulty. We give elsewhere the proclamation in full. In effect, it requires banns to be published of intended Mahomedan or Hebrew marriages, in terms of the existing Natal legislation. If the proclamation has reference in practice only to Hebrew marriages, we can have nothing to say. If it anticipates the Indian marriages legislation and is intended to be a feeler, it is an ill omen. For the essence of the Indian proposal is that Indian marriages *celebrated in accordance with the religious ceremonial prescribed by any of the great Indian faiths should be recognized by the law of South Africa so long as they are monogamous in fact.* Now Indian religions do not require publication of banns. We have our own method (in our opinion, far superior to that of the publication of banns) of widely advertising approaching marriages. No Indian priest worthy of the name can possibly perform a marriage ceremony if there is any objection offered against it in terms of the religious custom or law. And it is the caste or the guild which takes severe notice of any breach of the canonical law. Whilst we do not wish to offend the sentiment of the Europeans of South Africa regarding monogamy, we certainly do not contemplate surrendering our religious principles by a hair's breadth. We think it but right to utter this note of warning whilst the proposed legislation is still unpublished.

Indian Opinion, 8-4-1914

[1] Lafcadio Hearn, British journalist, author of several works on Japan, who married a Japanese woman and became a Japanese citizen

124. LETTER TO E. M. GORGES

[PHOENIX,
NATAL,]
April 8, 1914

DEAR MR. GORGES,

I would like to bring the following point to your notice. Mr. Polak sent the temporary certificates that were issued to the educated Indians who were allowed to settle in the Transvaal in terms of the Provisional Settlement of 1911 to be exchanged for permanent certificates in virtue of the Immigrants Regulation Act of 1913, and I understand that Mr. Chamney has written saying that such certificates are not yet to be issued. May I know why permanent certificates are not being issued?[1]

I am,

Yours truly,

E. M. GORGES
OFFICES OF THE INTERIOR
CAPE TOWN

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5958

125. LETTER TO E. F. C. LANE

[PHOENIX,
NATAL,]
April 8, 1914

DEAR MR. LANE,

I notice in the Union *Government Gazette* a Marriage Proclamation requiring those who want to have their marriages celebrated by their Mahomedan or Hebrew Marriage Officers to have notices published of their intention so to do. I do not know whether this proclamation is deliberate as showing the future policy of the Government in anticipation, or whether it is a proclamation required for the Hebrews but necessitating reference to the Mahomedans in terms of the Natal Marriage Law referred to therein. If it is the former, I beg to draw General Smuts' attention to the fact that what has been

[1] A reply to this was received to the effect that the matter was under consideration and it would be dealt with after the passage of the Asiatic legislation.

submitted by me on behalf of the Indian community is that past *de facto* monogamous marriages celebrated according to Indian religious customs should be legalised and that, in future, such marriages should be recognized as legal. The Marriage Proclamation in question introduces the practice of the publication of banns, a practice which is totally opposed to both the Hindu and the Mahomedan usage; nor is any such publication necessary, because of the respective religions themselves requiring an elaborate process which renders fraudulent marriages impossible. I feel that, whilst the legislation to give effect to the recommendations of the Commission is being drafted, I should bring this matter to the notice of General Smuts.

I observe, too, from Mr. Burton's reply to Mr. Meyler that the indentured Indians in the employ of the Railways Department have deducted from their wages instalments in part payment of the £3 Tax. I venture to suggest that a continuance of this practice is hardly consistent with the attitude shown by the Commission regarding the Tax. One of the chief points that the Commission had to advise upon was the £3 tax, and it is submitted that this deduction might have been stopped by the Government at least pending the report of the Commission, and now that the Commission has made such strong recommendations for the repeal of the Tax, I do trust that the officials concerned will be advised, if they have not been already, not to insist upon this deduction, for I assume that, if the Government bring in a Bill for the repeal of the Tax, the arrears will be remitted.

I am,

Yours truly,

ERNEST F. C. LANE, ESQ.
OFFICES OF THE INTERIOR
CAPE TOWN

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 5957

126. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]
Friday [*April 10, 1914*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Just now I am nothing but an efficient nurse devoting my whole energy to my task. Mrs. Gandhi is my sole consideration and she claims me. If I am away from her for any length of time she cries

bitterly. I do not know what is to become. She may recover but there is not much chance. She will linger on for a while but cannot survive this illness. She has to be helped to do everything. I am only praying that there may be no imperative public call on me whilst I am doing this work.

You will now see why I cannot give you love letters at present. I did not or did I tell you that I do not want to perform the opening ceremony regarding the tombstone and I ought not to. We should get our old friend Hosken or any other you may think of.

The drastic changes made here are most satisfying. If they continue, they will form a splendid structure but we shall see. When I have more time I shall go into them more fully.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

127. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

April 12, 1914

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Your letter of the 9th is petty, touchy and spiteful. It has made me sad and shows that all your so-called reforms there are simply superficial. What you call a circular letter is no circular letter. It was addressed to you and Polak. In your letter of the 8th, you complain of absence of my letter and in yours of the 9th you resent the very letter which explains absence of anything from me. Polak went for me for not writing and not getting Miss Schlesin to write about Mrs. Gandhi's health. You, Polak and Manilal are sufficiently interested in her health to want to know about it daily; hence the letter from Miss Schlesin and the instructions that she herself should write as often as possible. There would have been no such letter had Mrs. Gandhi not been sick. Now tell me wherein I was wrong in sending you what you call a circular letter. Do you see my point and your pettiness? You are entirely right when you say you are jealous (and wrongly so) of Miss Schlesin and Andrews. Because she wrote the letter, it became an offence to you. And as if your letter, warning me not to send you a circular letter was not enough, you must perforce remark underneath

Miss Schlesin's letter, "Please do not send me such circular letters henceforth". You should be ashamed of having done this.

Manilal writes saying that you were surprised that I should have asked him to retire even [if] you might not have. Why surprised? You and Manilal are not equals. Manilal is a lad having to form his character. If he wants to cultivate the habit of early rising, it is essential that he retires early. Your hours may not be regular. Manilal not being a businessman need never have irregular hours. And I should have thought that you would encourage the boy to keep strictly regular hours even though you may not. I certainly do not expect the boys to keep awake with me because I retire late. If Manilal has misunder-stood the position, you may explain it to him. I feel the same thing about his food. If he wishes to keep to a particular course of diet, he should not change with you. If the entirely fruitarian experiment had agreed with him, you should have allowed him to keep to it and made the complicated changes only for yourself.

Mrs. Gandhi is much better but an event happened yesterday which once more proved what I have told you, namely, that she has both the devil and the divine in her in a most concentrated form. She made yesterday a most venomous remark: "Who has opened Devdas's drawer?" suggesting that Jeki had tampered with it. She spits fire on Jeki. I gently remarked that I had opened it. "Why?" was the growling query. I said, "In order to see whether I could find a sheet for you." "That does not contain sheets," was the retort, so much as to convey to me that I had not opened the drawer but I was telling a fib to shield Jeki. This was too much. And I again gently but rebukingly remarked that she was sinful in her thought and that her disease was largely due to her sins. Immediately she began to howl. I had made her leave all the good food in order to kill her, I was tired of her, I wished her to die, I was a hooded snake. The manner of the delivery of these remarks was most vicious. I told her even though she was ill, I could not pity her in her sins. The more I spoke the more vicious she became. I kept completely self-possessed. I apologized to her and told her that henceforth even to that extent I would not remonstrate with her. Nor would I. She has a character and she has none. She is the most venomous woman I have ever met. She never forgets, never forgives. She is quite normal today. But yesterday's was one of the richest lessons of my life. All the charges she brought against me she undoubtedly means. She has contrary emotions. I have

nursed her as a son would nurse his mother. But my love has not been sufficiently intense and selfless to make her change her nature. What wonder if Anglia and others cannot respond to my skin-deep love? What wonder if they misunderstood me? Truly she has so far been my best teacher. She teaches me emptiness of the world, she teaches me patience, forgiveness, greater need for self-sacrifice, for love and charity. The incident leaves me, I hope, a better, wiser, more loving man if it also leaves me sadder. Yes, a man who wishes to work with detachment must not marry. I cannot complain of her being a particularly bad wife or bad woman. On the contrary no other woman would probably have stood the changes in her husband's life as she has. On the whole she has not thwarted me and has been most exemplary. But how can a leopard change his spots? And yesterday's incident would probably not have happened either in an ordinary household. My point is that you cannot attach yourself to a particular woman and yet live for humanity. The two do not harmonise. That is the real cause of the devil waking in her now and again. Otherwise he might have remained in her asleep and unnoticed.

I wish you would not just now repeat walks like the Pretoria walk but allow Manilal to follow the even tenor of his life.

With love,

Yours,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

128. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[PHOENIX,
NATAL,
Sunday, Chaitra Vad 2, April 12, 1914][1]

CHI. MANILAL,

. . .[2] Whatever Mr. Kallenbach's hour for going to bed, you must follow one rule alone. And the same about eating. Here is the meaning of the sentences which you could not understand: "All acts done in a purely legalistic spirit (in accordance with the literal

[1] The date was supplied by Raojibhai Patel.
[2] Some words appear to have been omitted here.

meaning) are, indeed, cursed. Even so, it is stated that those who do not keep doing the things as indicated by [the letter of] the law are all cursed."[1] The point is that mere bookish souls can never attain *moksha*. The Gita has a verse to the same effect, which you may ponder over. "The Vedas keep on the plane of the three *gunas;* be thou, Arjuna, beyond those *gunas."*—This is what Shri Krishna said to Arjuna. This does not mean that one need not do the duties prescribed in the *Shastras*. It means rather that doing them is not quite enough, that one must understand their hidden significance, their aim, and go beyond the actions themselves. The man who renounces the prescribed duties and professes himself a barren *Brahmavadin*[2] will have no footing anywhere. He will have lost the support provided by the *Shastras* while the foundation of inward illumination has not yet been built, so that he is bound to fall. St. Paul therefore told the Galatians: "Do perform the acts enjoined by the scriptures; but you will remain under a curse, if you have no faith in the teachings of the Lord Jesus and do not follow his teachings." The same meaning is to be read in "bond maid" and "free woman".[3] Bond means *bandhan*. Scriptures are compared to the mother in flesh who, it is pointed out, has the status of a slave so that her children are also born slaves.

Faith, which means *bhakti, is* described as a divine mother, whose children are angels. Read the sentences which precede and follow in the light of this explanation and tell me whether you follow them properly or not. The 56th verse of Chapter 15 in *I Corinthians* means that sin is the sting of death, that, in other words, that a sinful man alone feels death as a sting. For the virtuous, it is the means of attaining *moksha*. The second line means that mere dry knowledge of the scripture has the power of a curse. We observe this at every step. Hundreds of sins are committed in the name of scripture. The meaning of *Romans* V, 20 is simple enough. Scripture made its appearance again and led to more crimes. As the load of sins increased, however, God's grace also increased in like measure. That is, even in such evil times, men were found who broke themselves free from the chains of dry learning and, teaching the way of *bhakti,* brought out the hidden meaning of scripture; this was God's grace.

[1] Probably the reference is to Galatians, III, 10.

[2] One who expounds the nature of Brahman

[3] "Abraham had two sons; the one by a bond maid, the other by a free woman."—Galatians, IV, 22.

St. John, XV, 3 means this: "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." Here "are" denotes the future and "through" should be taken to mean "by acting according to".

Think twice before introducing changes by way of reform in your life. But I wish that, having once adopted a change, you would cling to it like a leech. Love the virtues of Mr. Kallenbach. Know his weakness when you see it and keep yourself away from it. The latest change you have introduced has not been adopted after due thought. You are not bound to adopt all the changes which Mr. Kallenbach may make. You must learn to think independently for yourself and stick to your judgement. It will not matter if, in doing so, you sometimes go wrong. You are even entitled to oppose my views afteryou have honestly thought over a matter; in cases in which it seems right to oppose me, opposition becomes your duty. It is my earnest desire that you should understand the idea of *moksha* and aspire for it. This will never come about, however, till you develop a capacity for independent thinking and firmness of mind. At present, you are in the condition of a creeper. It assumes the shape of the tree over which it spreads. That is not what the *atman* does. The *atman* is free and, in its essence, omnipotent.

"It is desire, anger, born of the quality of *rajas*, all-devouring and sinful; know it to be the enemy."[1] This is the reply that Shri Krishna gave to Arjuna when the latter asked him what it was that drove man to commit sin against his will. It means this: "The cause of sin is desire, anger, which has its origin in the quality of *rajas; is* all-devouring and drives men to sins without number. Know it, for certain, to be the enemy." This is an established truth. Hence you should have remained quiet when Mr. K. lost his temper. When one's elders get angry, one should be gentle and not answer back; if forced to reply, one should say: "I will correct myself; please forgive me this time." There is no admission in this of one's having acted wrongly on purpose. Later, when the person has calmed down, one may politely put one's doubt to him, if one has any. You can ask Mr. K., when he is himself, how it was wrong to serve apples picked from a lot which was getting rotten.

David's Psalm has a meaning which is worth understanding. He desires in it the destruction of the wicked; the significance of this is

[1] *Vide* Bhagavad Gita, III, 37. Here the original verse in Sanskrit has been quoted.

that he cannot bear evil. The same idea appears in the *Ramayana*. Gods and men both pray for the destruction of *rakshasas*[1]. The prayer *Jaya Rama Rama* is inspired by the same sentiment. The spiritual significance of the Psalm is that David (Arjuna—the godward attributes[2]) desires the destruction of Duryodhana and others [the satanic attributes]. This is the *sattvic*[3] impulse. It comes into play when one is in a state of bhakti. When one attains to the state of *jnana*[4], both the impulses subside and all that remains is pure consciousness—Knowledge Absolute. You will not probably find this state described in the Bible. Though David was imperfect, he was a *bhakta*[5]. His sentiments have found expression in the Psalm in simple language and, though a great man, he makes himself humble before God, looking upon himself as a mere blade of grass.

[From Gujarati]
Gandhijini Sadhana

129. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

April 17, 1914

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

How curious! No matter how intimate I may be with Gokhale or Andrews or anyone else, you will always be you and you alone to me. I have told you will have to desert me and not I you. So that I should like you finally to dismiss that fear from your mind. If I am called upon to enter Gokhale's mansion or Andrews' without you, I will refuse to enter. Only my own movements may become too hot for you and you always wishing to go the whole length with me may not be able [to] and may fall back. Our joint life does not demand coincidence though that is what you are bringing about. If I can lie on a stone bed and you cannot, you should certainly have a mattress underneath. And though you may lift a ten-stone weight, I shall certainly not attempt to do any such thing myself and still not feel ashamed to be your companion. I shall put up with you and love you

[1] Demons

[2] *Vide* Bhagavad Gita, XVI, 1-3.

[3] Tending to the ethical life, as distinct from the rajasic, tending to competitive striving, and the tamasic, tending to inertia; *vide* Bhagavad Gita, XVIII, 30-2

[4] Enlightenment

[5] Devotee

just the same notwithstanding what you may call your limitations, even as you have to do likewise to me. We can therefore but go forward as far forward as our legs will carry us and no farther and still be together, one soul and two bodies. Please therefore be at ease so far as my side is concerned. Take care of your own and everything else will follow.

I have not received the letters you say you are enclosing.

Death for Mrs. Mayo can only be welcomed by her friend.[1] She will go to a higher state and we must not form attachments for the sake of the bodies of people. Through the body we learn to know them but we do not need their bodies to continue to love them.

I shall have the inscription copied as you suggest.

I suppose I need not repeat here the information about the changes here that I have given to Manilal.

Mrs. Gandhi is decidedly better. It remains to be seen whether the change continues.

Some members of the Theosophical Convention visited Phoenix on Tuesday. They were 9 in all. Miss Pillenbury was one of them. I have asked her to describe to you the visit. They dined here. It was the simplest style, no strange food was given them. Indian marrow, rice and potatoes and rice pudding cereal, coffee and fresh lemon drink. Old Nelson was one of the party. They seemed to be pleased. I had sent the message that those who cared could come and visit the Settlement.

With love,

[PS.]

Gokhale has cabled inquiring whether I would visit him in London before going to India. I have answered I might if absolutely necessary, Mrs. Gandhi's health permitting. We shall see.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Mrs. Mayo died in the second week of May 1914; *Vide* "The Late Mrs. Mayo", 20-5-1914.

130. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

April 17, 1914

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

What about the house at Mountain View which the Polaks want to buy from you? What are the terms you have suggested?

I have a letter from Douglas Hall, written for Gokhale, asking me if I would go to London before returning to India.

Mrs. Gandhi is still feeling well. If the improvement continues, it may be all well.

Yours,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

131. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

PHOENIX,
NATAL,
Friday, Chaitra Vad 8 [*April 17, 1914*]

CHI. MANILAL,

Received your letters. Ba is, now at any rate, on the way to recovery again.

Even there, I cannot but think, it will prove a rewarding practice to sit down on the floor to eat. You should clean the place where you sit down, so that no one could object. We have made it a practice to sleep on the floor and so we may have our meal as well. It should be enough if you mop the floor where the meal is to be served. One would feel it awkward if one had to start doing this after going to India. There is humility in sitting on the floor for a meal; it will mean, moreover, that we are adopting a practice followed by crores of people. It is few who have their meals at the table.

My diet consists of 18 dates, 9 bananas, three [*sic*] uncooked groundnuts, four *amatungulu* and two lemons, with two spoonfuls of oil added. I take a quantity of coconut kernel which I can chew. Tomatoes being dear, they have been ordered only for such as cannot

do without them. Not everyone lives on one meal a day. Raojibhai and I alone follow the practice. Ramdas carried on with it for a month. On Mondays and Fridays, everyone goes without salt.

I do not know why people do not fast on the tenth instead of the eleventh day [of each fortnight]; it seems obvious, however, that going without the usual food at least one day in a fortnight purifies body and mind. We want to have the palate under control but, falling short of complete success, we atone for the failure once in a fortnight. Moreover, we commit numerous sins mentally and hence by balancing the account once a fortnight we realize our abject state. To observe the *ekadashi*, it is not enough merely to keep a fast; the day should be spent, rather, in reflecting over matters of faith.

I have already asked two books to be sent to you. The *Gita* transcribed by you will be in addition to these.

"Such passeth from all 'plaining' to blest *nirvana*" is a translation of *sa shantimadhigachchhati*[1]. It means, he attains to peace. He who has given up all desires, who is free from the sense of "I" and "mine", who is unconscious of his identity as a separate being, attains peace. In the word "plaining" occurring in the English [translation] above, 'ex' has been left out, so that the word is "explaining". Such a man escapes from all concerns (objects of desire and pursuit) to the happy state of *nirvana*.

One who rises early should make no exception on Sundays. If we do, we shall anxiously await the coming of a Sunday. If, therefore, you seriously want to form the habit, you must get up at the same time on Sundays as on other days.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Swami Mangalanandapuri has been here for the last two days. He will leave tomorrow.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 96 Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

[1] Bhagavad Gita, II, 71

132. TELEGRAM TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR

[PHOENIX,
NATAL,]
April 22, 1914

TO
THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR

I HAVE JUST RECEIVED RECORD OF CONVICTIONS AT VERULAM MAGISTRATE'S COURT ABOUT £3 TAX. THESE CONVICTIONS HAVE TAKEN PLACE DURING THE CURRENT MONTH. I VENTURE SUGGEST LEAST INDIAN COMMUNITY EXPECTS FROM GOVERNMENT IS THAT THESE FORCED COLLECTIONS OF TAX SHOULD BE SUSPENDED, PENDING LEGISLATION. RECORD BEING PUBLISHED. IF I CAN HAVE REASSURING ANSWER IT WILL AVOID MUCH IRRITATION, ILL-FEELING.

GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 29-4-1914

133. FRAGMENT OF LETTER

[PHOENIX,
NATAL,]
Chaitra Vad 13 [*April 22, 1914*]

. . . Never perhaps have I spent such days of agony as I am doing now.[1] I talk and I smile, I walk and eat and work, all mechanically these days. I can do no writing whatever. The heart seems to have gone dry. The agony I am going through is unspeakable. I have often wanted to take out the knife from my pocket and put it through the stomach. Sometimes I have felt like striking my head against the wall opposite, and, at other times, I have thought of running away from the world. But then again I reflected: "The simple fellow that you are! Foolish one! Why do you go crazy in this fashion? If you do not preserve your balance of mind at this

[1] One of the inmates of Phoenix Settlement for whom Gandhiji bad great regard was found to have been guilty of a moral lapse and had obviously deceived Gandhiji. On being warned by him, the person promised not to sin again; but when the offence was repeated, Gandhiji undertook a fast for 14 days.

hour, full of agony though it be, what use is the little wisdom you have come by?" And so I pass my days at present. I want just now to inform my well-wishers, "See here, my friends, J. has committed terrible sins."

When I knew all this, I thought I must atone for my own sin in putting my faith in one who did not deserve it. I was about to resolve on a fast for 15 days, but checked myself. I thought of Ba. If I fasted for 15 days, that would mean Ba's death. I gave up the idea for the time being, deterred only by this fear. However, I decided afterwards that J. must leave for. . . .[1] To go and live there was the only right thing . . .[2] could do . . .[2] would come to no good by remaining here. . . .[2] I do not know what evil there is in me. I have a strain of cruelty in me, as others say, such that people force themselves to do things, even to attempt impossible things, in order to please me. Lacking the necessary strength, they put on a false show and deceive me. Even Gokhale used to tell me that I was so harsh that people felt terrified of me and allowed themselves to be dragged against their will out of sheer fear or in the attempt to please me, and that those who found themselves too weak assumed an artificial posein the end. I put [he said] far too heavy a burden on people. He, too, [he added] strained himself to do things beyond his capacity when he was asked by me.

[From Gujarati]
Gandhijini Sadhana

134. TELEGRAM TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR

[PHOENIX,
NATAL,]
April 24, 1914

TENDER MY THANKS FOR PROMPT REASSURANCE ABOUT £3 TAX.[2] MAY I SUGGEST THAT THOSE MEN WHO DURING RECENT PROSECUTIONS WERE IMPRISONED BECAUSE THEY COULD

[1] Some words are omitted here in the source.

[2] In response to Gandhiji's telegram dated April 22, General Smuts had wired: "Your wire today on subject of prosecution of Indians for failing to take out £3 licence. Representations have been made to the Minister for Justice with view to suspending action re[garding] prosecutions, pending consideration of recommendations of Indian Enquiry Commission by Parliament."

NOT OR DID NOT PAY THE INSTALMENTS BE DISCHARGED, WHETHER AT VERULAM OR ELSEWHERE?

GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 29-4-1914

135. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

April 28, 1914

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

You ask me whether it will be inconvenient for me to have you here. What a question? You still observe the distance. What though it were inconvenient? You have still a right to come. So come when you like. Only I may have to leave for Cape Town any day now.

I have been unable to write to you for some days as I have not been able to get up early for the last few days, the nights having been disturbed by Mrs. Gandhi. She is getting better but sometimes requires service during night. The discipline here is becoming more and more severe. The boys may not now get up late on Sundays. It is the same hour for all the days, i.e., 4 a.m. Only two meals are served now. The times are 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. Two days in the week are saltless. The little ones get two bananas and a *naarangi* each at 7.30. The youngsters rise at 6 a.m. The school hours are 4.30 to 7 a.m., 7 to 9.30 physical labour, 9.30 to 10 bathing, 10 to 11.30 dinner, etc., 11.30 to 2 school, 2 to 2.30 recreation, 2.30 to 3.30 Press work, 3.30 to 4.45 agriculture, 5 p.m. supper, 6.30 to 7.30 p.m. service. To bed at 8 p.m. Coffee has now been rejected because I do not want any makeshifts in India. Please let Manilal see this as I shall not be giving him a separate account.

Your scale of diet is too extravagant and rich. Here we allow no more than one ounce of oil per head. You take nearly 6 oz. per head. The other allowances are also on the same liberal scale and it therefore makes the body gross. The scales should be fixed with some consideration for the lives of the poorest of mankind. In any case the scale cannot be followed in Phoenix without causing very great disturbance. We are now using gingili[1] oil as I have been able to procure the finest quality. I commenced the experiment first. The taste has agreed with all. Whether it will agree with all constitutions

[1] Gandhiji has spelt the word as "gingelly".

here remains to be seen.

As for Polak, could he not buy the property and pay rent and interest at the same time? I say this without much consideration. The whole to be paid over in, say, 5 years' time.

I am writing this under too much disturbance. The inscription is being sent by Jamnadas. I must not perform the opening ceremony.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

136. "HIND SWARAJ"[1]

I wrote *Hind Swaraj* in 1909 on board the ship during the return voyage from England. Copies of the book having been confiscated in the Bombay Presidency, I published a translation in 1910. It is now five years since the ideas in it were expressed in public. And during this period, many persons have had discussions with me on those ideas. Englishmen and Indians, both have written to me about them, several expressing dissent. At the end of it all, however, I find that the convictions I stated in the book have grown stronger. If only I had the time, I could set forth the same ideas more elaborately, with additional arguments and illustrations. I see no reason at all for revising them.

Numerous requests having been received for a second edition of *Hind Swaraj*, the inmates of Phoenix and the pupils there have found time to print it as a labour of love.

I should like to comment on one thing only. I have gathered an impression that, though *Hind Swaraj* does not advocate the use of physical force at any time and in any circumstances, and advocates always the use of soul-force to gain the desired end, the result of its teaching has been to create hatred for the British and to suggest that they should be expelled through armed fighting or use of violence otherwise. I was unhappy to know this. Such was by no means my object in writing *Hind Swaraj*, and I can only say that those who have

[1] This is the preface to the second Gujarati edition of Hind Swaraj which was published in May 1914. For the preface and text of the first edition, *vide* "Hind Swaraj", 22-11-1909.

drawn from it the foregoing conclusion have totally failed to understand the book. I, for one, bear no ill-will against the British or against any people or individuals. All living creatures are of the same substance as all drops of water in the ocean are the same in substance. I believe that all of us, individual souls, living in this ocean of spirit, are the same with one another with the closest bond among ourselves. A drop that separates soon dries up and any soul that believes itself separate from others is likewise destroyed. For myself, I am an uncompromising enemy of the present-day civilization of Europe. I tried to elaborate my view in *Hind Swaraj* and show that it is not the British that are responsible for the misfortunes of India but we who have succumbed to modern civilization. India can be free this very moment if we turn our back on this modern civilization and go back to our ancient way of life, which embodied the right ethical principles. The key to an understanding of *Hind Swaraj* lies in the idea that worldly pursuits should give way to ethical living. This way of life has no room for violence in any form against any human being, black or white.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 29-4-1914

137. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH[1]

[PHOENIX]
Monday [*May 4, 1914*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

You must excuse my not writing to you regularly. I have not a minute to spare and I have no heart to write just now except when I am obliged. I am unable to get up early and unless I can do so I cannot write. The new discipline taxes me to the utmost.

Your telegrams I have misunderstood. I still do not know their meaning. I do not know whether you have to give me some news of further distress or what. However, your letter will say something.

I have, I think, answered all the points you summarised in your last letter. The Nagappan inscription, Manilal can write from

[1] A note by the addressee at the top of the letter reads: "Written during the 'Fortnight Fast' ".

Valliamma's. I have not before me the exact dates.

On your diet scale I should like to write more fully when I have the time. Mrs. Gandhi continues to be better.

With love,

Yours,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

138. TELEGRAM TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR

[PHOENIX,
Before *May 6, 1914*]

TO
THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR

I HAVE SEEN TELEGRAM[1] SENT BY THE ANJUMAN ISLAM, DURBAN, REGARDING PHOTOGRAPH[S] REQUIRED FROM INDIAN WIVES SEEKING ENTRANCE INTO THE PROVINCE. UNABLE UNDERSTAND REQUIREMENT IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT. VENTURE DRAW ATTENTION FACT THAT, WHEN QUESTION AROSE REGARDING EVEN MALES IN TRANSVAAL SOME YEARS AGO, IT GAVE RISE TO SUCH BITTERNESS THAT GOVERNMENT WERE PLEASED WITHDRAW REQUIREMENT. REGARDING WOMEN IT IS A MOST DANGEROUS THING. HOPE MINISTER WILL BE PLEASED INSTRUCT IMMIGRATION OFFICER WAIVE REQUIREMENT AND ACCEPT LOCAL PROOF OFFERED BY THE PARTIES IN QUESTION. UNDERSTAND ALSO THAT IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT ADOPTING SEVERE METHODS REGARDING INDIAN ENTRANTS GENERALLY. AMONG THESE IS INSISTENCE UPON INDIANS POSSESSING RIGHTS DOMICILE MORE THAN ONE PROVINCE CHOOSING ONE PROVINCE ONLY. SUBMIT REQUIREMENT ARBITRARY, UNCALLED FOR. PRACTICE RECOGNIZING DOUBLE OR TRIPLE DOMICILE NEVER HITHERTO QUESTIONED, AND WHAT EVER LEGAL INTERPRETATION IMMIGRATION ACT 1913, HOPE

[1] The Chairman of the Anjuman Islam of Durban had conveyed to the Minister of the Interior the Indian community's concern at and objection, on religious grounds, to the demand for the photographs of Indian wives, and urged that local proofs be accepted for identification.

GOVERNMENT DO NOT INTEND DEPART FROM EXISTING PRACTICE .[1]

GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 6-5-1914

139. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

May 6, 1914

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Jeki has been found lying more than once. I therefore told her that she could not stay away from her husband unless she was absolutely superior to him. Indeed she is inferior to her husband. The latter is no hypocrite. But Jeki is a finished hypocrite. You may understand what all these discoveries must have cost me. However she has now consented to go to Fiji. I have Dr. Mehta's authority by cable. So she goes next Sunday escorted by Miss West. She leaves by a Castle boat for Cape Town, and will there book for Fiji.

You did not ask for English inscription. You had it there. You asked only for Gujarati. And that you have. If there was anybody's fault it was mine for the delay. But perhaps you will understand why I was delayed. Nagappan's I have written to you about already.

With love,

Yours,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

140. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

PHOENIX,
NATAL,
May 6, 1914

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

I have your cable, your own most affectionate letter and Dr. Mehta's letter. How I would like to be by your side during your

[1] In reply to this, the Minister of the Interior telegraphed: "Your telegram today. Matter being inquired into."

illness although I may be utterly helpless for any useful service ! Your cable is for my comfort and convenience. But Mrs. Gandhi is now much better. If her progress continues, in a month's time she should regain most of her former health. In that case and in any case I could come to London taking her with me. And after consultation with you, we may both proceed to India directly and the rest of the party may leave here after we have left. This will enable me to reach India without any great loss of time. At the outside it can be only three weeks. Please therefore cable if I may still come. In view of your own and Dr. Mehta's letter I should much like to come. It would be a disappointment to me, if you do not let me come. Unless, therefore, you are leaving for India to reach there before me, I do hope that your cable will authorise my coming to you.

The draft bill[1] is not yet out. It may, therefore, take quite to the end of June before I am free to move. And it is just likely that a final settlement may not be reached at all. In that event the struggle must recommence and I dare not go to India. I am fully prepared for either event.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 3776

141. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

May 7, 1914

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Pardon me for not writing to you promptly or fully. I have not written fully because your letters have not been with me at the time of writing. I have not written promptly because I get no time. Jeki and Mrs. Gandhi have put such a severe strain on me that I feel like doing nothing at all. I have never been so sorely tried as I am just now. I cannot write everything because I have not the energy but when we meet you shall have it all.

I am keeping your letter before me today, so here are the answers.

[1] The reference is to the Indians' Relief Bill.

1. I say that the walks to Pretoria should be stopped. If you want to cultivate regular habits, disturbances should not occur.

2. Yes, there is a letter from the Poet and it is a nice letter. I shall have it sent. It is not by me just now.

3. If I must go to London you may not come because you will be taking the party to India. I should go to India from London.

4. Isaac I fancy is going to Johannesburg. He will not be allowed to come to India. He is just now at Phoenix.

5. Dahya has offered to come to Phoenix and I have said he may. I do not know that he will come to India. Jeki will probably not go to Cape Town as I can get a boat to Australia on the 31st May. But I am not sure. I see there is a boat to Australia on the 20th from Cape Town. I am inquiring.

I have answered about Valliamma and the Valliamma Hall. As to Polak's property, I must consider. The matter may not be done in a hurry. More later.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

142. TELEGRAM TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR[1]

[PHOENIX
On or after *May 7, 1914*]

REQUEST FAVOURABLE REPLY MY WIRE REGARDING PHOTOGRAPHS INDIAN WIVES. MEMBERS COMMUNITY GETTING AGITATED. IF DELAY DECIDING MATTER PLEASE INSTRUCT OFFICER EXTEND TEMPORARY PASSES.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the handwritten draft: S.N. 5974

[1] This appears to be in reference to the "Telegram to Minister of Interior", before 6-5-1914, and was evidently sent some time after May 6, 1914.

143. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]
Sunday [*May 10, 1914*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

You must have little love for me if it is dependent upon letters from me and if it misinterprets absence of letters and does not believe that there must be sound reasons for the extraordinary absence. I have told you that latterly I have gone through mental shocks and agonies I have never gone through before. I do not want to write anything. I do not want to talk to anybody. I want to live in solitude and yet I am talking, writing and living in company. In the day-time I can do little writing. I am unable to get up early in the morning. Can you not enter into my feelings and let your love overlook the omissions and the faults?

Here is Valliamma's inscription in English. This I think finishes the list, does it?

With love,

Yours,
UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

144. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]
Wednesday [*May 13, 1914*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Love is mute, it does not complain. Love is blind, it sees no fault. Love is deaf, it hears no tales. Love ever gives never demands. Love is constant, never varying whether in adversity or prosperity. Love is never hurt. Love never tires. How has yours fared of late!

Manilal knows nothing of Manilal of Fiji. He is an infatuated lad. Now that I know Jeki, I know that she is not a patch upon Manilal of Fiji. The latter is an honest man. He has left what an injured husband would feel. Is it any wonder? He has bluntly given vent to his feelings. Is it not honest? I could only keep Jeki away from her

husband only in the belief that she was infinitely superior to her husband. Now I find that she is inferior. She is a liar, a wretched hypocrite, without pity, without remorse, full of evil passions. Could I ever keep her from her husband? Why, she would soon be as bad as he is and take part in all his enjoyments. Why should she not?

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

145. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH[1]

PHOENIX,
Sunday [*May 17, 1914*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I have not the energy to write to you myself, but it is better that I dictate something rather than I should let you remain without any letter at all. Manilal will give you a translation of my views on regular walks to Pretoria. This fast[2] has been a very rich but very bitter and painful experience. I have suffered tortures and I am still suffering. It has left me utterly exhausted. However, more I must say later. If you have to go to India in charge of the party, of course I shall meet you at Bombay because I shall precede you and you will certainly be better able to cope with the party on boat than I can. When I go to Cape Town, you will certainly accompany me. I may be in Johannesburg during the week in order to be able to attend to many matters.

Yours sincerely,
FOR UPPER HOUSE,
CHHAGANLAL

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] This letter was followed by a letter to the addressee from Chhaganlal Gandhi; *vide* "Resolutions at Vrededorp Mass Meeting", 30-3-1913.

[2] *Vide* "Fragment of Letter", 22-4-1914.

146. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

May 18, 1914

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

This fast has brought me as near death's door as possible. I can still hardly crawl, can eat very little, restless nights, mouth bad. But it would be all right. The fast was a necessity. I was so grossly deceived. I owed it to Manilal of Fiji, to Dr. Mehta, and to myself. It was one of the severest lessons of my life. The discipline was very great. Everyone around me was most charming. Mrs. Gandhi was divine. Immediately she realized that there was no turning me back, she set about making my path smooth. She forgot her own sorrows and became my ministering angel. And she still remains the same. The result is that she is better in health. I appealed to all not to go in for fasting but to rejoice that one of themselves was trying to purify himself. All caught the fire and I was helped all along.

I felt it my duty not to let you or Polak know because that would have thrown additional care on me and no good purpose could be served by informing you. The step had to be taken by me prayerfully and I took it. I would not miss the experience. What the effect will be I do not know.

Please let Polak read this so that I may not have to write the same thing twice. I am still too weak to write much.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

147. LETTER TO ELIZABETH MARI MOLTENO

PHOENIX,
May 19, [1914][1]

DEAR MISS MOLTENO,

I know that I owe you a letter. But since leaving Cape Town I have passed through so many trials that I have not had the time or the inclination to write really to anybody. Mrs. Gandhi had a very serious

[1] From the contents

relapse and she absorbed all my time. Then followed a disciplinary fast of 14 days the severest trial of my life[1]. The fast was broken on Saturday last and I am feeling much better today. Mrs. Gandhi too has responded to the careful nursing and today for the first time after my return to Phoenix I am at the Press working at the desk having just left Mrs. Gandhi to her household work.

Now I know you will excuse me why I should not have written a line to you after that very serious last conversation we had. Do please let me hear from you.

I had a very sweet letter from Miss Hobhouse this week. I am not replying just yet but may do so next week.

Mrs. Gandhi often recalls your love to her and thinks of the kind friends in Cape Town.

Manilal is still in Johannesburg with Mr. Kallenbach. With our united regards to both of you.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Molteno Murray Family Papers. Courtesy: University of Cape Town Libraries

148. TELEGRAM TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR

[PHOENIX,]
May 19, 1914

TO
INTERIOR
CAPE TOWN

COULD I KNOW FOR SATISFYING INQUIRERS WHEN INDIAN LEGISLATION LIKELY BE INTRODUCED.[2]

GANDHI

From the handwritten draft: S.N. 5970

[1] *Vide* also "Fragment of Letter", 22-4-1914

[2] The Minister in his telegram of May 20 replied: "Is it your desire to come here and discuss draft Bill with Minister, and if so, appointment could be made for a day early next week. Bill would probably be introduced week following."

149. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

Tuesday [*May 19, 1914*]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Please read the enclosed and return.[1] I am much better today and for the first time working at the Press. More later.

With love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

150. THE LATE MRS. MAYO

We regret to announce the death of Mrs. Mayo[2], which took place last week. The news was cabled to Mr. Kallenbach, and it soon became common property amongst the many who had come to look upon Mrs. Mayo with regard and veneration. Hers was [a] truly noble soul. It was a most strenuous life that she led up to the very end. She was one of the few true interpreters of Tolstoy's teachings, and she will be best known to the world as such. To the Indians of South Africa her memory will be a cherished treasure for her very warm and loving sympathy during their troubles.

Indian Opinion, 20-5-1914

151. TELEGRAM TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR

[PHOENIX,
NATAL,]
May 22, 1914

TO
INTERIOR
CAPE TOWN

AM LEAVING FOR CAPE THIS EVENING REACHING THERE WEDNESDAY MORNING HOPE REPORT MYSELF THEN.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the handwritten original: S. N. 5972

[1] The enclosed letter from Emily Hobhouse is not available.
[2] Mrs. Isabella Fyvie Mayo

152. LETTER TO "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"[1]

[JOHANNESBURG,]

May 23, 1914

[SIR,]

In your today's issue of the *Leader, you* publish certain remarks made by Mr. Justice Mason, to which you give the headings "Credibility of Evidence", "Judge's Remarks on Indians".

I have no desire in any way to controvert His Lordship's statement which may be justified by the facts brought to his notice from time to time, but it should be well understood by the public that Mr. Justice Mason confined his remarks to a certain class of Indians only, whom my Association has no desire to direct from such criticism. He did not, as Mr. Greenberg appeared to suppose condemn Indian evidence on national or racial grounds at all. There are also certain classes of non-Indians equally guilty of attempts to mislead the Court, but I do not presume that, in similar circumstances, you would speak of the Judge's remarks on Europeans. It is notorious that lawyers, like doctors, see mainly the seamy side of life, and they will necessarily draw conclusions from what they see. In spite, however, of

[1] This was signed by A. M. Cachalia and was in reply to the following report in The Transvaal Leader: "Some rather strong observations regarding the credibility of Indian witnesses were made by Judge and counsel in the Witwatersrand Local Division yesterday. The case was one in which an Indian applied for the sequestration of a compatriot's estate and the latter resisted an order on the ground that the applicant was not a creditor to the amount of £50 as provided by the Insolvency Law.

"Mr. Justice Mason remarked that the evidence in support of the respondent's case was what one very often found in Indian cases. There generally seemed a number of witnesses for one side fortuitously at hand when the opposite side gave away its whole case. . . .

" . . . In giving Judgment, Mr. Justice Mason said that the respondent's case was that, in order to defeat other creditors, the applicant agreed with him to take over certain goods in reduction of his debt, and that that was done. In support of that, the respondent produced witnesses who conveniently happened to be present when the agreement was made, although the parties making it must have known that the arrangement was one which would be somewhat open to criticism in the eyes of the law. Then there were two more witnesses who happened to come on the scene when the arrangements were being carried out, and who seemed to know all about the collusive agreement. Now, these were coincidences which, if true, were of a remarkable character. Unfortunately, however, these coincidences so often appeared in Indian cases. They had got to face that fact."

what might have been to a less just man a strong temptation to exaggerate, Mr. Justice Mason confined his remarks to that section of the community which he believed to be guilty and did not level an indictment against the whole of the Indian community, as one might suppose from the first few lines of your report.

I trust that you will find space for this letter in order to remove any wrong impression that might have been created.

[*I am, etc.*,]

Indian Opinion, 3-6-1914

153. PRAYER SPEECH

[JOHANNESBURG,
May 23, 1914]

I shall not be pleased just because you recite verses from the Gita. I don't care whether or not you read history, do sums in arithmetic or learn Sanskrit. What is necessary is that you should acquire self-control. That is what I want. I may agree to be some one's slave, but not that of my mind. There is no sin as base asbeing the slave to one's mind. Be wise, therefore, and learn to discipline your mind. So you will be able to live with me. Otherwise I have no need of anyone. Nor am I conceited enough to want to teach you or anyone else. I have a pupil, to train whom is the most difficult task. It is only by training that pupil that I can do some good to you, to India or the world. That pupil is myself, what I call my mind. Only those who thus become their own pupils are fit to stay here. Others who cannot stand such a life had better not stay here. Such a person would do well to leave this place. It is a sin, however, to do anything blindly (without a purpose, mechanically). I want no such thing.

[From Gujarati]
Gandhijini Sadhana

154. INTERVIEW WITH E. M. GORGES[1]

PRETORIA,
May 27, 1911

Upon Clause l Mr. Gandhi indicated that he valued this provision mainly for the sake of appearances. He thought that the appointment of a large number of Indian priests as marriage officers might easily lead to abuses, as some persons representing themselves as priests might not be of the highest character. He contemplated therefore that a somewhat sparing use would be made of the power of appointment, and that only such priests would be selected as were known to be of unimpeachable reputation. He thought that, for practical purposes, the machinery of registration under Clause 2 would and should become the usual method of legalizing Indian marriages, and he therefore deprecated very strongly the limitation of the right to such marriages only as existed at the commencement of the Act.[2]

. . . Another point which was considered at the interview between Mr. Gorges and Mr. Gandhi was the expediency of enabling Magistrates generally, whether appointed as marriage officers or not, to register Indian marriages under Clause 2.[3]

On Clause 3 Mr. Gandhi does not appear to have taken any exception to

[1] On May 30, 1914, the Governor-General, Lord Gladstone, addressed a despatch to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, forwarding printed copies of the draft Indians' Relief Bill, and pointing out certain verbal amendments made therein. In the course of the despatch, the Governor-General reported: "Mr. Gandhi has been summoned from Natal, and a copy of the Bill as printed was handed to him by the Secretary for the Interior on Wednesday morning. After perusing it he saw Mr. Gorges again on Wednesday afternoon. I understand that he seemed on the whole to be satisfied, and that the substance of the interview may be summarised as follows." No other report of the interview is available.

[2] The despatch continued: "I may mention that I had previously caused to be conveyed to Mr. Gorges an expression of regret at the introduction of the words 'at the commencement of this Act'. Mr. Gorges said that they had been inserted by General Smuts' direction, but he did not know whether the Minister's decision on this point must be regarded as irrevocable. I am therefore not without hope that Mr Gandhi's representations in regard to this clause will not prove wholly ineffective. He will have an opportunity of discussing the matter with General Smuts in the course of the next few days."

[3] The despatch here added: "Mr. Gorges, I understand, will suggest to General Smuts the insertion of a provision that, for the purposes of this action, the term 'Marriage Officer' shall include any Magistrate."

proviso (b) of sub-clause (2). He urged, however, that the children of deceased women, who would have been eligible for admission under this clause, should not be excluded from its benefits. Mr. Gorges told my Secretary that he would submit to the Minister an amendment to the following effect: after the word "defined" at the end of the clause insert some such phrase as "or the child of the exempted person and a deceased woman who, had she lived, could have been recognized as a wife within the meaning of this section, or whose marriage could have been registered under the provisions of section 2 of this Act". These, so far as I am aware, were the only points raised by Mr. Gandhi upon the Bill.[1]

He, however, made the following representations upon questions of adminis-tration. He asked for facilities for the admission and registration of all existing plural wives, whether in or out of South Africa, of Indians lawfully resident in the Union. This, you will observe, is a slight extension of the second recommendation on page 39 of the Commission's Report, where the grant of the privilege is contemplated only in the case of plural wives who had actually lived in the country. Mr. Gorges did not seem to regard the request as un-reasonable, but he told my Secretary that he was not aware of the view which General Smuts might take of the proposal. Mr. Gandhi renewed his request for an assurance that, so long as the immigration of Natal-born Indians into the Cape did not exceed its present dimensions, such Indians should be admitted without the imposition of a test, and particularly without the application of the provisions of Section 4(1)(a) of last year's immigrants Regulation Act. He did not ask for legislation, as presumably he is well aware of the very serious difficulty which the Government would experience if the question of the Cape entry were again to be raised in Parliament even by the introduction of the small amendment recom-mended by the Commission on page 16 of their Report. I gather that the Commission attached no great importance to this recommendation andthat after the position had been explained to them and they had been apprised of the reason why the words "at the commencement of this Act" had been inserted in Section 4(2)(a) of Act 22 of 1913, they intimated that the recommendation was not one which they would be disposed to press.

Mr. Gandhi renewed his plea for a satisfactory statement in respect of the declaration required under the Free State law from Indians entering that

[1] In his interview to Gandhiji on May 30, only a reference to which is available in the Governor-General's despatch of June 5, 1914, Smuts agreed to the three legislative points raised by Gandhiji, *Vide* "Extract from Governor-General's Despatch", 5-6-1914.

Province. This point should occasion no difficulty as General Smuts and Mr. Gandhi had previously come to an agreement upon it.

Mr. Gandhi then raised two new points.

(1) He asked for some declaration or assurance that vested rights under the Transvaal Gold Law should be recognized and preserved. Mr. Gorges told him that this was really a matter for the Mines Department, and suggested that he should discuss it with General Smuts.

(2) Mr. Gandhi urged that a free pardon should be granted to all *bona fide* passive resisters in respect of convictions for *bona fide* passive resistance offences, excluding all offences of violence which had been committed during the passive resistance campaign. I see no reason why the Minister should adopt a *non possumus* attitude towards this request, but I am not aware of his views.

As regards Clause 4 of the Bill, I understand that the Government think it undesirable to interfere with the special legislation governing the status of indentured Indians under the Natal Acts, except in so far as the repeal of the £3 tax is concerned. For this reason they are disinclined to modify any provisions mentioned in Clause 4. Mr. Gandhi, I believe, made no comment upon the clause.

Colonial Office Records: 551/57

155. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[CAPE TOWN,]
Thursday [*May 28, 1914*][1]

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. While you express your regret, you say in the selfsame letter that on that very day you had forgotten to serve so important an item as the vegetable. You say it was left out, without explaining how it happened. Who is to blame? Why did you entrust the task to anyone else? You should have yourself carried the vegetable you had lovingly cooked. You may as well take a lesson from this. There is no need to be sorry for what is past and over, but it is important that one should learn something from it. While there, learn

[1] From its reference to the publication of the Indians' Relief Bill, which took place on Thursday, May 28, it is evident that the letter was written the same day.

to be devoted to your duty and cultivate self-discipline. This cannot be achieved, however, unless one thinks.

Have regard for everyone there, think of the good qualities in others, rather than their weaknesses, and be mindful of your own shortcomings. Instead of gossiping away your time, keep thinking. A single moment wasted is so much [time] lost from one's life and so much stolen from God. Understand this and use every moment well. See that your body becomes tough.

The Bill has been published and is likely to come up next week.[1] One does not know, though. There has been no meeting yet with General Smuts.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 106 Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

156. THE RELIEF BILL

The long-expected Indian Bill has now been published. We reproduce the full text with the schedule.[2] It is a simple and short measure and seems to carry out the recommendations of the Indian Commission in so far as legislative action is necessary. The Bill removes the marriage difficulty and restores the status as it existed before the Searle judgment. It repeals the £3 tax and remits the unpaid arrears. Lastly, it validates Natal certificates of domicile, if the owner can establish his identity with the certificate by proving that the thumb-impression on it is his own. There is another clause in the Bill with which the community is not concerned. It is the clause which enables the Government to give a free passage to any Indian not otherwise provided for if he renounces for himself and his family all claim to domicile in Natal or any other Province of the Union.

There are certain alterations necessary in the Bill. It will be a proper thing to use for validating future unions the machinery provided in the Bill for validating existing unions. Amendment will also be necessary for protecting the children of deceased wives, where such wives, if alive, could have been recognized under the present Bill.

[1] It was introduced in the House of Assembly on June 2

[2] *Vide* "The Indians Relief Act", 1914.

Assuming that the Bill with the suggested alterations becomes law, there will still remain the other matters recommended by the Commission and the matters covered by Mr. Cachalia's and Mr. Gandhi's letters. These require administrative treatment and include the Free State question, the Cape entry and the administration of existing laws. If satisfactory assurances are issued in connection with them, the struggle that has gone on for years, and that has meant enormous losses and sufferings to the community, may be said to have fitly and honourably closed.

Indian Opinion, 3-6-1914

157. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

[CAPE TOWN,]
June 5, 1914

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

I was thankful to receive your cable. Mrs. Gandhi is much better but still weak. If she comes I shall bring her with me & Mr. Kallenbach may also come so that he may say good-bye to his people and also be with me. If you will not allow me to be with you as your nurse, I would like to go away to India immediately after our consultation.

As I do not know the state of your health I do not want to write a long letter though I feel tempted. I have, however, written[1] to Sorabji & asked him to see you about what I have written to him if you are well. He will then take instructions from you.

The Indian Bill has passed through the first stage. It is quite satisfactory & I am about to have another interview with General Smuts about the other points. There is, therefore, every prospect of the struggle being finally closed. In that event I should leave for London about the middle of July & even earlier if I can.

May I ask you please to cable the state of your health when you receive this?

Mr. Kallenbach who is just now with me wishes to be remembered to you.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 2248

[1] This letter is not available.

158. FRAGMENT OF LETTER

CAPE TOWN,
Tuesday, Jyestha Vad 2 [*June 9, 1914*]

We cannot pass any judgment on Mr. Sinha on the basis of what we read in newspapers at this distance. Mr. Norton also acted formerly as a public prosecutor in such cases. Who is a leader and who is not is a matter of opinion. Generally, a satyagrahi will express no opinion. In the kind of situation you mention, if one were to offer satyagraha and be imprisoned in consequence, the purpose of satyagraha would have been served. We need not always speak out in such cases. There is no ready answer to the question when satyagraha should be offered. A satyagrahi does not deliberate in advance when embarking on satyagraha. When he finds anything done that violates his conscience, he should use soul-force against it. Even at the time that I first started satyagraha, I considered it to be but a part of dharma. I have discovered from experience that it is the only religion and the only *chintamani*[1], and it has, therefore, developed in me especially in its aspect as dharma. He is a satyagrahi who has resolved to practise nothing but truth and such a one will know the right way every time. One's entire life should be permeated with truth. This will come about gradually through the observance of *yamas*[2], *niyamas*[3], etc. Just as, in learning secular subjects, one has to work at them for many years, so too must one make efforts to understand the nature of satyagraha. As the veils which cover your *atman* and mine fall off, the *atman* of each will shine the more brightly and be the more resolute satyagrahis in battle.

[From Gujarati]
Mahatma Gandhijina Patro

[1] A fabulous gem supposed to yield to its possessor all that he desires; the philosophers' stone

[2] This means any moral duty or religious observance. The yamas are usually said to be ten, but their names are given differently by different authorities. They include celibacy, compassion, truth, charity, non-violence, etc.

[3] Any voluntary or self-imposed religious observance, dependent on external conditions.

159. INDIAN GRIEVANCES

The Bill as originally circulated, but not gazetted, has already been amended in the sense indicated as being necessary in our leading article[1] last week. It will be remembered that the original draft required Indians applying for the validation of a marriage by virtue of its provisions to satisfy the Marriage Officer "that there existed at the commencement of this Act between them a union then recognized as a marriage under the tenets of an Indian religion which they profess". The Bill as amended, and now gazetted, reads that the officer must be satisfied "that there exists between them a union then recognized as a marriage under the tenets of an Indian religion which they profess". This amendment provides, therefore, for the validation of future marriages celebrated within the Union or elsewhere. Then, again, paragraph 3, sub-section 2, of the Bill is amended to provide that "the child under the age of sixteen" shall include "the child of the exempted person and a deceased woman who, if she had been alive, could have been recognized-as the wife (as herein defined) or whose union with the exempted person could have been registered as a marriage under section 2 of this Act". The amendment speaks for itself, and the Bill now seems to satisfy the legislative requirements of Passive Resisters. We hope that it will have a speedy passage through Parliament.

Indian Opinion, 10-6-1914

160. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI PATEL

CAPE TOWN,
Wednesday, Jeth Vad 3 [*June 10, 1914*]

DEAR BROTHER,

When Ramachandra was about to go to the forest, King Dasharatha asked him to ignore his [Dasharatha's] promise to Kaikeyi and not to go, breach of promise though this might mean. Ramachandra disre-garded this desire born of the common worldly attachment for the son and went to dwell in the forest, thus showing true reverence for his father, and so made Dasharatha's and his own name

[1] *Vide* "The Relief Bill", 3-6-1914.

immortal. Harishchandra, by selling his wifeand showing himself ready even to bring down the sword on Rohit's neck, proved his devotion to his wife and his love for the son. Prahlad, by disobeying his father's order, rendered a service to him and brought about his deliverance. Mirabai[1], by leaving Kumbha Rana, turned the Rana himself into her disciple. Dayanand[2] ran away from his parents, breaking betrothal already solemnized, and even gave the slip to the men who had been sent after him; in this way he showed his devotion to his mother and father. Lord Buddha went away as his young wife lay asleep.

We find many similar examples. Pondering over them, we must, in the difficult situation in which we are placed, do what seems the right thing from the point of view of true ethics. In the case of Shravana, the finer, intangible form of service happened to flow in the same channel as outward, physical service. Not infrequently, therefore,we fail to discover from his example what the right course should be. He who habitually follows the path of truth will know the right way at the crucial moment. If the things such as poems about disinterested-ness, which we read are of no help to us when faced with moral dilemmas, we will have read them in vain, parrot-like. We could not have reflected over them. If, despite our having read the *Gita*, it does not come to our help at the last moment, we might as well have not read it. This is the reason why I have always said: "Read little, but reflect over the little that you read, understand its significance and be ready to put it into practice."

It is only when we cease to be selfishly attached to those we love that the heart feels true compassion and renders service to them. To the extent that I have grown free of such attachment for Ba, I am able to serve her better. The Buddha, by leaving his parents, brought deliverance to them as well. Gopichand, by his renunciation, displayed the purest love for his mother. In the same way, you will be serving your parents by strengthening your character and cultivating spotless morality. When your soul has grown pure, it cannot but produce a corresponding effect on all those whom you love.

[*With due regards,*

MOHANDAS]

[From Gujarati]

Gandhijini Sadhana

[1] A medieval saint-poetess of Rajasthan

[2] Swamy Dayanand Saraswati (1824-83); founder of the Arya Samaj

161. JOTTINGS[1]

[CAPE TOWN,
About *June 10, 1914*]

Any marriage whether before or after should be legalised.

Sec. 3: What about the children of other wives, children living here?

The definition of child

The other wives

Their children

The Cape entry

The Free State

The number of entrants

The administration of existing laws—Gold Law, Townships licensing law, Immigration

The other recommendations

Free Pardon

Camay

Ficksburg

Anjuman

Bhayad

Educated Indians who entered before the Act of 1913

Guns for old holders and new ones who may need them Registration of those who legally enter

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 5965

[1] These concerned various matters obviously requiring Gandhiji's attention. The date is assigned on the basis that on June 10 he forwarded to the Secretary for the Interior certain representations on behalf of Ficksburg Indians and the Anjuman Islam.

162. LETTER TO E. M. GORGES

[CAPE TOWN,]
June 11, 1914

DEAR MR. GORGES,

The enclosed speaks for itself. I do not understand the *Mercury* reading of the measure.[1] But, as the principle involved is so great, I would value an assurance that the meaning given to the Bill by the *Mercury is* not the meaning Government attach to the Bill.[2]

[*I have, etc.*]
M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 1-7-1914

163. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI PATEL

CAPE TOWN,
Saturday [*June 13, 1914*]

DEAR SHRI RAOJIBHAI,

I got your letter so late today that I am in no position to write to you by today's post or even send a telegram. I shall now send a telegram only on Monday.

Where it is a question of a mother's love or a son's affection, it is something of a moral dilemma for a third party to offer advice. But

[1] The Natal Mercury in an article had doubted whether Indians would be allowed to remain in the Province. It had contended that, when the £3 tax is removed, the privilege of remaining in the country will be taken away from Indians and the only alternative left for them will be either to re-indenture or return to India. It had also pointed out that under the Immigrants Regulation Act the minister had power to declare all Asiatics "prohibited immigrants" on economic grounds and thus to deport ex-indentured Indians.

[2] On June 22, Gorges replied: "General Smuts desires me to say that it is perfectly clear from the report of the Commission that it was never intended that, by the repeal of the provisions of the existing laws dealing with the £3 licence, the position of the ex-indentured immigrant would be prejudicially affected in some other way; and had there been the slightest doubt on the subject, he is sure that the Commission—consisting as it did of three eminent lawyers—would certainly have drawn attention to it. The Minister himself is quite satisfied that the effect of the Bill as it now stands would not be to bring into evidence the position which the Mercury and African Chronicle would have us believe will be created."

offer it I must. When you took the decision you did on the strength of your father's letter, we were able to judge your mother's feelings. Her letter does not introduce any new factor. It has given rise, however, to a new concern, and love has naturally gained the first place in your heart. If now you can take a decision, with a mind free from selfish attachment, your love can be transformed into a pure and divine thing. You can give it to the entire world, that is, strive to do so. That is the end to which one must love and serve one's mother. Any other form of love is of an earthly character, such as is common in the world, a love purely of the physical frame. You recite poems, often enough, which sing of freedom from such love. Recite this one, *Know this world as of little good*, and reflect over its inner meaning. What is the significance of *The Living One's kinship only with that which breathes?* What is distinctive of the Phoenix way of life is that we strive to cultivate in us what we read about. Your going to India will have but momentary effect; ultimately, there needs must be grieving and weeping, be it after five days or fifteen, and certain separation ever afterwards.

Moreover, we aspire after a way of life in which we would not have a single pie of our own. Consider what men of such poverty would do in a situation like this.

That you should always yearn for a sight of your parents is good indeed. It is your duty [however] to repress the longing for the present and free your life more and more from the sway of attachments. You are enduring exile only for the sole purpose of training your character. This is the condition of *vanavasa*[1] for you. Through it alone will you bring credit to your parents. The way of self-indulgence is not for you; if, instead, you raise your *atman* higher day by day and acquire a greater measure of self-control, you will be free, for the present, from the obligation of returning to India.

In reasoning thus, I have not had the slightest regard to the circumstances in the press. In giving the advice I have done, I have only considered what would best conduce to your spiritual progress.

All the same, if you do feel yourself drawn to India by human attachment to your mother and cannot be at peace with yourself while remaining here, by all means go. Treat what I have said only as advice

[1] Literally, a recluse's life in the forest, like Rama's during his 14 years' exile.

and come to your own independent conclusion, and then act accordingly.

With due regards

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahatma Gandhijina Patro and *Gandhijini Sadhana*

164. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MANILAL AND JAMNADAS GANDHI

CAPE TOWN,

Saturday [On or after *June 13, 1914*][1]

I should welcome your keeping pace with me, but I don't expect it. I have never wished that you should all follow me in everything I do. But whatever you undertake to do, you must carry out. . . .[2] There is no question of coercion, of course. Having, however, given up the evil of . . .[3], if you cheat me, you are certainly to blame . . . .[4] it may be conceded that the boys have reached a certain level. They refrain from certain things in Phoenix; while there, they regard them as things to be avoided. How, then, can they go after the very same things when away from Phoenix? No one is obliged to do without salt. Everyone refrains on principle from strong spices, addictions of any kind, sweets, rich feasts, tea, coffee, etc. And likewise, sexual indulgence, stealing, untruthfulness and late rising are shunned by all. How can anyone who finds this too strict a rule stay there? Every institution has certain rules which must be observed both in and outside the place. If anyone does not do so, there is no point in his remaining in the institution.

What you mean is that the boys and others do some of the things because of their regard for me and not voluntarily, and that, therefore, they are cheating me. The blame for this may be mine, but I have only one way of escaping it and that is by not staying with anyone. This does not seem to be my duty at present. If R . . . is

[1] From the reference to Norton in the letter, it appears to have been written after "Fragment of Letter", 9-6-1914.

[2] Some words are omitted here in the source.

[3] *ibid*

[4] *ibid*

driven by his regard for me to make a show of adopting a saltless diet, when I have asked him to do no such thing, and so deceives me, how am I to blame? . . .[1] I don't love you any the less for your not adopting a saltless diet and J . . . any the more for his living exclusively on fruits. There is no special sin or virtue in eating or not eating salt. It is the underlying principle which raises moral issues. Imam Saheb is not the less dear to me because he will never adopt a saltless diet. Miss Schlesin takes an opposite course to mine in all matters, but in some ways I place her character very much higher than that of you all. In all the changes [we introduce], our aim is to practise and develop self-discipline to the best of our ability. What I said that evening was that anyone who is not ready for this may leave me. I think I was perfectly right . . . .[2] I am not much in love with Norton's action nor do I despise Bengali lawyers. A satyagrahi has no concern with them and his field of duty is quite different from theirs. The point of your question is, [how one may know] whether a person is a true satyagrahi or not. If you cannot know this yet, I will only say that it is a matter of intuition, that others cannot explain it. We are making all these efforts to master the palate, etc., in order to be able to understand this. . . .[3] Do not think that self-discipline means living on a saltless diet. You may live on a dry crust of bread, two days old, and a pinch of salt. That may, of course, be a much higher thing than my enjoying all manner of fruits and nuts. The moral worth of our actions is to be judged from the motive behind your eating dry bread and my living on fruits.

Purity of character is not put to shame, but rather gains further strength, by what others say against us.

If you have done anything unworthy, confess everything to me. Unless you do so, your fasts and the many other penances you may go through will be in vain. I am getting impatient to be there but cannot run away from my duty.

I am not likely to go back on a pledge once taken, even if the sun were to rise in the west.

If those whom I believed to be very pure are really so sinful, I don't wish to nourish this body and keep it alive even for a moment.

It is not easy for a man to stick to his pledges.

[1] Some words are omitted here in the source

[2] Some words are omitted here in the source.

[3] *ibid*

This letter will make both of you angry. But it would be a blot on my love of truth, such as it is, if I did not say what was in my mind and I would but ill serve you. It is my duty at the moment to cause you pain.

[From Gujarati]
Mahatma Gandhijina Patro and Jivannu Parodh

165. LETTER TO KUNVARJI MEHTA

[CAPE TOWN,]
Jeth Vad 8 [*June 15, 1914*]

DEAR SHRI KUNVARJI[1],

I have your letter. Thanks. I hope to meet the students in Surat when I return to India.

With due regards
MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 2660

166. A HISTORIC DEBATE

The second reading of the Indian Bill was carried by a very substantial majority and became the occasion for a weighty pronouncement on the Government's Indian policy.[2] General Smuts'speech was studiously moderate and not at all offensive as some of his speeches on the subject have been in the past. General Botha's speech was worthy of the occasion. We feel grateful for his declaration that the Government proposed to stand or fall by the Bill. The other speeches delivered in favour of the Bill were of the same high order and, if the spirit of justice and conciliation that pervaded the speeches is continued in the administration of the existing laws, there need be no fear whatsoever of any Indian trouble arising in the future. We take the speeches as an earnest of the intention of the Government and the legislature that the resident population is to be

[1] Kunvarji Vithalbhai Mehta, manager of the Patidar Students' Hostel at Surat, in Gujarat

[2] This was on June 8, 1914.

treated with justice and fair play. Contrary to past experience, General Smuts made it clear that, this time, not only had the Government considered the feelings of the Imperial Government and the Government of India, but they had considered the Indian sentiment also. We trust that the same policy will be followed in the future.

What could have contributed to this high tone of the debate? Certainly the watchfulness of the Imperial Government; certainly, also, the courageous handling of the question by the Viceroy. Mr. Andrews' mission of love, too, contributed not a little to the lofty tone of the debate. His spirit seemed to watch and guide the deliberations of the House. And none of these helps would have been at our disposal if we had not helped ourselves. The spirit of Passive Resistance it was which made this trinity of causes possible. Let the community, therefore, understand that its last weapon at a critical moment is Passive Resistance, which has been once more fully vindicated. But we hope and we have reason to believe that the community will not be called upon again to pass through the terrible fire of suffering which it has had to pass through during the last, long years.

Indian Opinion, 17-6-1914

167. LETTER TO MARSHALL CAMPBELL[1]

CAPE TOWN,
June 20, 1914

DEAR MR. MARSHALL CAMPBELL,

With reference to this morning's conversation between us about the telegram that appears in today's issue of the *Cape Times* regarding the Indians' Relief Bill, I beg to repeat what I said to you this morning, viz., that I do not know of any such Indian agitation as is referred to in the wire. I am sure that no responsible Indian has taken exception to the Bill. I do not believe for one moment that the Bill makes the Indians, affected by it, prohibited immigrants—a result

[1] This was published in Indian Opinion, 24-6-1914. Reuter quoted this as a telegram from Gandhiji.

never contemplated by the Imperial Government, the Government of India or the Indian community or, I feel sure, by the Union Government.

I remain,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

You may make what use you think fit of this letter.

M.K.G.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy signed by Gandhiji: S. N. 5991

168. LETTER TO INDENTURED INDIANS

[CAPE TOWN,
After *June 22, 1914*]

TO
INDIANS COMING WITHIN THE SCOPE OF ACT 17 OF 1895

MY DEAR BRETHREN,

You must have known by now that the £3 tax which you, your wives and grown-up children had to pay every year has been repealed and that the collection of arrears has been suspended. This means that you can live in freedom in this Province without re-indenturing yourselves. The Act of 1891 which applied to those who arrived before 1895 will now apply to you as well. It was in order to bring this about that you, I and hundreds of our brethren put up a struggle and went through suffering. But *The Natal Mercury* has stated that your position has become worse than it was and that now you will be either compelled to re-indenture yourselves or sent back to India. This is not true. The Government has stated categorically in one of its communications that the inference which the *Mercury* has drawn is not correct.[1] The Imperial Government and the Government of India are parties to the settlement. I know how they understand it. They have no doubt that the repeal of the tax means that you can live as free men and that, if you live so in Natal for three years, you will get the same

[1] *Vide* 1st footnote of "Letter to E.M. Gorges", 11-6-1914.

rights of residence as Indians who arrive as free immigrants. And finally I want to tell you that, if, under the new Act, you are treated as prohibited immigrants, as *The Natal Mercury* says you will be, no matter in what part of the world I may be, I shall use all my strength to get-so terrible an injustice removed. I am convinced, however, that the Government intends nothing of the kind and also that the Act bears no such meaning. This is the view of Mr. Marshall Campbell, too, who worked so hard to secure the repeal of the tax. You need have, therefore, no apprehensions on this score and I hope that no Indian will henceforth re-indenture himself out of fear of being expelled from this Colony.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 29-7-1914

169. THE LATE SIR DAVID HUNTER

The news reached Durban on Sunday that Sir David Hunter, K.C.M.G., one of Natal's most sincere and broad-minded public men, had passed away, after an operation at a nursing home in Edinburgh. Sir David was well-known as one who stood up for the weak and oppressed. In as out of Parliament his voice could always be heard in favour of justice and fair-play, especially on behalf of those who were unrepresented in the Legislature. The Indian community will feel his loss very keenly. During his twenty-six years' connection with the Natal Government Railways as General Manager he was known as a humane employer. He always spoke well of his Indian employees and they always thought highly of their Chief. We well remember, at the time of Mr. Gokhale's visit, Sir David speaking at the historic banquet in the Durban Drill Hall, in the capacity of Chairman, saying that, through long and varied experience, he had learned to respect his Indian staff for their faithful and useful service, and he, therefore had satisfaction in believing that they reciprocated his feelings towards them by loyal trust in him. He also spoke of the innate dignity and courtesy which were characteristic of the Indian race. Sir David, along with many others, maintained that the £3 tax was an unjust imposition, and we had the assurance from his own lips that he intended to support its repeal at the earliest opportunity. Had it not been for the unfortunate illness which took him to Scotland in the hope of relief, we are confident that there would not have been a more faithful

supporter of the present Indians' Relief Bill than Sir David Hunter. To the relatives and friends we offer our sincere sympathy and condolence, and we feel sure that the whole Indian community will share our feelings.

Indian Opinion, 24-6-1914

170. POINTS FOR DISCUSSION WITH MINISTER OF INTERIOR[1]

[CAPE TOWN,
Before *June 27, 1914*]

1. Indians born in S[outh] A[frica] to enter the Cape
2. Indentured Indians after 1895
3. The Free State
4. Marriages
5. How many will be admitted & how
6. Assurance that wives would be admitted if they are the only wives in S.A. and that even polygamous marriages will be recognised.
7. Evidence regarding wives
8. This year's entries in the Transvaal, Cape and Natal.

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5973

171. LETTER TO E. M. GORGES

CAPE TOWN,
June 27, 1914

DEAR MR. GORGES,

I forgot to borrow from you the Mauritian Ordinance.[2] Could you please send it to me at Phoenix? I shall return it to you as soon as I have dealt with it.

[1] Presumably, this was a memorandum for the interview Gandhiji had with Smuts on June 27, the gist of which was communicated to Gandhiji by Gorges on June 30; *vide* Appendix "The Indians Relief Act", 1914. Gandhiji acknowledged this the same day; *vide* "Letter to E. M. Gorges", 30-6-1914.

[2] This dealt with Indian marriages; *vide* "Cable to "the Hindu", 6-7-1914; also "Marriage Law in Mauritius", 8-7-1914.

I think that you took down in your notes for the proposed letter: "wives and their children". If not, will you please add "children" to "wives" in the paragraph about plural wives?

I trust that your letter will be liberally couched. I have already told you something about the opposition I shall have to face.

I have been thinking over the Gold Law discussion. Protection of the vested rights (in the sense in which I have used the term) of those trading and residing in Gold areas is of vital importance and I hope that General Smuts will apply to the consideration of this matter the same generous spirit that he has, I am grateful to be able to say, applied to that of the other matters we discussed. I trust that on this point also I shall get a definite reply at an early date so as to enable me to make final arrangements for my departure.

You will kindly send me the letters about Messrs Bhyad and Camay too on Monday.

May I thank you for the great patience and courtesy shown to me by you throughout our somewhat protracted discussions?

I am,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of a handwritten copy: S. N. 5996

172. SPEECH AT CONGRATULATORY MEETING[1]

CAPE TOWN,
June 27, 1914

Mr. Gandhi, in replying, referred to the period 21 years ago when he first came to this country, an Agnostic. He had since learned, however, to recognize that there was a Divine purpose in the world, and a Divine hand guiding events conformably thereto. In the long struggle for the removal of Indian disabilities, a struggle which had absorbed the best part of his life, he had had many a hard knock, and many things had been attributed to him that he

[1] Gandhiji spoke at a gathering of European and Indian friends who had assembled in the evening to congratulate him on the passage of the Indians' Relief Bill. Senator Marshall Campbell and Hugh M. Meyler, M. L. A., expressed pleasure at the removal of £3 tax and other outstanding disabilities of the Indians in South Africa. The report in the indirect form is from a despatch by the Parliamentary Representative of The Natal Mercury.

had neither done nor intended to do. The method on which he had relied, which he thought was now beginning to be better understood had nothing in it of a lawless or desperate spirit, but he knew always that it made more demands on a man's courage and endurance than methods of violence could do.

Mr. Gandhi said it was a harder form of agitation, which, in the present case, could not have succeeded had his own countrymen not supported him, as was their duty. He felt himself to have been but a tool, and one of many tools. His deep thanks were due to the many European friends whose help had most materially contributed to the success now realised. He remembered how, during the month of the trying march into the Transvaal, a large number of Europeans had met the Indian column at various points along the road and encouraged them with sympathy and practical assistance. Potent, however, though passive resistance was as an instrument for winning reforms—perhaps the mightiest instrument on earth—it could not have achieved success had the Indian community not moderated their demands to what was reasonable and practical. This, again, was not possible until some of them were able to see the question of Indian rights from the European standpoint.

Mr. Gandhi went on to say he had made it his aim to see that question with the eyes of those who had seemed to his fellow-countrymen to be doing them an injustice; and he thought that, after long effort, he had fairly well succeeded. As to the Bill, he would say that it was a settlement of present difficulties. He felt that his countrymen in South Africa, after their struggle of eight years, were entitled to a reasonable period of peace. He had been impressed by the spirit of national and Imperial responsibility manifested in the recent speeches on the Bill in the Union Parliament, and, if that spirit continued, he had no doubt the Government here would be able to solve the problems which still remained in regard to their Indian subjects. He did not see that the peace now accomplished needed ever to be disturbed. There would be no more influx of Indians into the country. Indentured labour had been stopped for ever—let them thank heaven for that. The Indians knew perfectly well which was the dominant and governing race. They aspired to no social equality with Europeans. They felt that the path of their development was separate. They did not even aspire to the franchise, or, if the aspiration existed, it was with no idea of its having present effect. Ultimately—in the future—he believed his people would get the franchise if they deserved to get it, but the matter did not belong to practical politics. All he would ask for the Indian community was that, on the basis of the rights now conceded to them, they should be suffered

to live with dignity and honour on the soil of South Africa.[1]

We do not aspire to social equality, and I dare say our social evolution lies along different lines. We have stated so repeatedly — that we shall not at present ask for the whole franchise. We understand who is the predominant race here. In the process of time, when we have deserved it, we shall get the franchise also. I dare say, but that is not a question of practical politics. There will be no further influx of Indians from India—thank Heaven! —so that it is only a question of the fair and just treatment of the Indian population that is here, and, if that population is to live in peace, the least it is entitled to is to have the ability and opportunity of living here in absolute peace, and with honour and dignity. If that is not what we are entitled to, I do not know what we are entitled to.[2]

The Natal Mercury, 29-6-1914 and 30-6-1914

173. DRAFT FOR HERMANN KALLENBACH

CAPE TOWN,
June 30, 1914

I shall talk to Hoekstetter on business only calmly and dispassionately without any exaggeration.

I shall not be irritated with Wilson but put up with his weaknesses even as I would expect others to put up with mine.

I shall not preach to anyone, i.e., not speak to anyone about my

[1] What follows is from a "special" despatch dated June 29 and published in the issue of June 30. It was preceded by the following resume of a part of Gandhiji's speech: "It had been his privilege to make life-long companions and friends, almost brothers, in South Africa amongst the Europeans. Where should he go to find such faithful, such noble friends, if he might say so, as Senator Marshall Campbell. Senator Marshall Campbell had shared their miseries and shared their sorrows; even in the thick of the struggle he had come in order to learn, and in order to gain, and he had no doubt that anybody who did join such a struggle did learn and did gain. It had never been a struggle of violence. They had not used passive resistance as a weapon of the weak. to be properly wielded, it required an infinitely stronger weapon than violence. If the spirit which had guided the deliberations of both Houses in the passage of that Bill, and of all their individual friends, was the spirit which would be applied to several other problems, there need be no fear of a recrudescence of passive resistance. After a struggle lasting eight years, the Indians needed a period of peace, and it was for the Europeans not to be sparing of sympathies."

[2] The gathering was then addressed by Kallenbach.

life or to anyone about reforming his own, knowing well that I have yet to reform myself and find my ground.

I shall not do more with Dickson than merely asking him to assist me if he would.

I shall consider that with M. I was enjoying freedom, without him I am in prison and therefore be more strict in observing the discipline:- I shall rise earlier, I shall count beads more attentively, I shall not take more than 15 minutes over my stick, shall not take more food but less food, I shall not think evil of anyone and try to be loving and charitable to all and I shall always, before retiring and at the time of rising, ask God to give me strength to follow the Truth wherever it may lead me.[1]

2. I shall daily before using the beads read Thomas a Kempis.[2]

I shall always try to remember "Not to seek to be anything", but "To seek to be nothing".

I shall specially be silent to and patient with all my relations.

If only possible walk from and to Mountain View. I shall try to avoid irritation of any kind in my communications with all my workmen and contractors at Mountain View, in the office, at Pretoria and with any person I have any dealings with.

I shall daily think of Cape Town's discussions, resolutions, vow of silence, real understanding, what my life has been and what it has to and must become, so that I am more ready and fit instrument when I meet M[3]. at Phoenix or Johannesburg and we take the work up in exactly the same manner as we left it.

The above and anything to be added, I shall read twice daily, morning and evening.

Avoid familiarity and speak as little as possible wherever you may be. Remember your vow of silence.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Up to here the draft is in Gandhiji's hand

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to The Natal Mercury", 21-9-1913.

[3] Illegible in the source

174. LETTER TO E. M. GORGES

CAPE TOWN,
June 30, 1914

DEAR MR. GORGES,

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter[1] of even dateherewith setting forth the substance of the interview that General Smuts was pleased, notwithstanding many other pressing calls upon his time, to grant me on Saturday last. I feel deeply grateful for the patience and courtesy which the Minister showed during the discussion of the several points submitted by me.

The passing of the Indians' Relief Bill and this correspondence finally closes the passive resistance struggle which commenced in the September of 1906 and which to the Indian community cost much physical suffering and pecuniary loss and to the Government much anxious thought and consideration.

As the Minister is aware, some of my countrymen have wished me to go further. They are dissatisfied that the trade licences laws of the different provinces, the Transvaal Gold Law, the Transvaal Townships Act[2], the Transvaal Law 3 of 1885 have not been altered, so as to give them full rights of residence, trade and ownership of land. Some of them are dissatisfied that full inter-provincial migration is not permitted, and some are dissatisfied that, on the marriage question, the Relief Bill goes no further than it does. They have asked me that all the above matters might be included in the passive resistance struggle. I have been unable to comply with their wishes. Whilst, therefore, they have not been included in the programme of passive resistance, it will not be denied that some day or other these matters will require further and sympathetic consideration by the Government. Complete satisfaction cannot be expected until full civic rights have been conceded to the resident Indian population. I have told my countrymen that they will have to exercise patience and by all honourable means at their

[1] *Vide* "Letter from E.M. Gorges", 30-6-1914.

[2] The Gold Law and the Townships Act of 1908 prevented Indians from residing or trading except in Locations in all the Gold areas.

disposal educate public opinion so as to enable the Government of the day to go further than the present correspondence does. I shall hope that, when the Europeans of South Africa fully appreciate the fact that now, as the importation of indentured labour from India is prohibited and as the Immigrants Regulation Act of last year has in practice all but stopped further free Indian immigration and that my countrymen do not aspire to any political ambition, they, the Europeans, will see the justice and, indeed, the necessity of my countrymen being granted the rights I have just referred to.

Meanwhile, if the generous spirit that the Government have applied to the treatment of the problem during the past few months continues to be applied, as promised in your letter, in the administration of the existing laws, I am quite certain that the Indian community throughout the Union will be able to enjoy some measure of peace and never be a source of trouble to the Government.[1]

I am,

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. *N. 5999*

[1] The Governor-General, Lord Gladstone, in two despatches, dated July 4 and 10, 1914, reported to the Colonial I Office the reaching of the settlement, and analysed in some detail how and to what extent Gandhiji's demands had been met; *vide* Appendix "Governor-General's Despatch to Colonial Office", 4-7-1914.

175. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

IMBERLEY TRAIN,
July 1, 1914

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

I cabled[1] yesterday saying that everything was settled. I am not inflicting copies of the correspondence or any other papers on you.

I am making a desperate effort to leave by the 18th instant. My one desire is now to meet you and see you, take my orders from you and leave at once for India. This will be in your hands after I have left, if I leave on the 18th, but before if I leave on the 25th. I shall cable next week when I am to leave. If, therefore, you have any instructions for me will you kindly cable Cape Town or Madeira as the case may be.

I hope that your health is improving.

Mrs. Gandhi and Mr. Kallenbach accompany me.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 3777

176. SPEECH AT KIMBERLEY RECEPTION[2]

[*July 2, 1914*]

After giving a brief account of the events from the day of the meeting in the Gaiety Theatre, Johannesburg, in September 1906, up to date, and a moving description of the Indians' sacrifices during the period, Mr. Gandhi said:

As a result of these sufferings, today we see that the hearts of the Europeans in South Africa have melted. In this struggle, I was only a soldier in the army of voluntary sufferers. Real honour should go to

[1] This cable is not available.

[2] A meeting was held in the Beaconsfield Town Hall to honour Gandhiji, with Councillor T. Pratley in the chair. The original report of the speech in English is not available.

those who went through these unbearable sufferings. We also owe thanks to Mr. Kallenbach, Mr. Polak and all other European friends who have helped us during difficult times.

Speaking on the new Bill, he said:

We could see that the Union Government worked to get the Assembly and the Senate to pass a Bill which would satisfy the Imperial Government, the Government of India and the Indians of South Africa. General Botha, it must be admitted, has done much for us, seeing that, for the sake of a community as docile as the Indians, he threatened to resign if the Bill was not passed. We also thank the Opposition for treating this issue, not as a matter of party-politics, but as an Imperial problem. We are thankful, too, to the Imperial Government and to Lord Hardinge, that noble Viceroy of India, for their help. The help which India gave us under the leadership of Mr. Gokhale and the invaluable help from Mr. Andrews—each I of these surpassed the other and it is thanks to them that we have this final and satisfactory settlement today. The spirit which animated the Government in dealing out justice to us will also inspire the administration of the Act and, if so, there will be no occasion again for a struggle like this. But, with their leave, I wish to point out to my countrymen that the remedy for every hardship lies in the first instance with us; after that, we have the weapon of satyagraha. . . . I shall for ever cherish the sacred memory of European friends and the love my countrymen have borne towards me.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 8-7-1914

177. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

Sunday morning, July 5, 1914

MY DEAR FRIEND AND SEEKER,

First the experiment. My ration was 3 bananas, 4 apples, 2 oranges, 6 *naarangi*[*s*], 4 dates, 4 oz. monkey-nuts, 2 spoonful oil and lemon and orange squash. Had no noises and only one motion for the whole day well bound. I am looking forward to the result of yours which is so thorough.

About Joseph, you were hopelessly wrong. You ought to have bought his ticket- Polak could not be considered. If you did not want to buy, you should not have taken the money and having failed to do either, you should have had the courage to give Joseph the real reason for not buying. It was a lie. Do you think Joseph could not understand? He was quite nice and allowed us to chat away. He was no disturbing factor. Turn your reading to account. Not until you have truth in you, will you make real progress. Fear God only. Do not fear man. Be ever brave but be truthful or do not speak. You could easily have said, 'Joseph, and Polak and Gandhi are going to have a private chat. So better not go but if you must, ask their permission or I cannot help you to get the ticket'. That would have been gentlemanly and honest.

Hope Medh sent the wire to Union Castle.

Finish everything without worry.

May God give you strength and courage.

With love,

Yours,

DAS

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

178. SPEECH AT DURBAN MEETING[1]

[*July 5, 1914*]

The inference that the *Mercury* and other papers have drawn about the £3 tax is altogether wrong and misleading. It does not at all follow from the Act. After the *Mercury's* comments were published, General Smuts was addressed on the matter, and he is also convinced that the Act does not bear the meaning which the *Mercury* has read in it.[2]

Speaking on the marriage question, Mr. Gandhi said:

Some Indians have asked for a marriage law similar to the one in Mauritius. I have, however, read that law; it is worse, on the contrary [than the law here]. We shall not find anywhere else a better solution to the marriage problem than the one we have secured.

Proceeding, he said that the issue of the right of entry of South Africa born Indians into the Cape and the problem of the Orange Free State had also been satis-factorily settled, and added that the Government had given assurances for reasonable and lenient administration of the Act. Concluding, he thanked them for gathering in such large numbers to honour him.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 8-7-1914

179. CABLE TO "THE HINDU"[3]

JOHANNESBURG,
July 6, 1914

THE FINAL SETTLEMENT OF PASSIVE RESISTANCE COMPLETED ENDING EIGHT YEARS' CONTINUOUS STRUGGLE PASSIVE RESISTANCE SUBMISSION ENTIRELY MET BY LEGISLATIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES AS REQUIRED. SPIRIT OF JUSTICE PREVAILED MINISTERS SPEECHES AND DEBATES IN BOTH HOUSES. FOR THIS HONOURABLE RESULT THOUGH REACHED PRINCI-

[1] The meeting was held at the Football Ground on Gandhiji's return from Cape Town, after the passing of the Indians' Relief Bill.

[2] *Vide* 1st footnote of "Letter to E. M. Gorges", 11-7-1914.

[3] This was signed by Cachalia, Kallenbach, Polak and Gandhiji.

PALLY THROUGH SUFFERINGS OF THOUSANDS OF RESISTERS BY WAY OF QUICKENING SOUTH AFRICAN CONSCIENCE COMMUNITY IS DEEPLY GRATEFUL TO IMPERIAL INDIAN AND UNION GOVERNMENTS AND ALSO INDIAN PEOPLE UNDER GOKHALE'S GUIDANCE AND TO ANDREWS AND PEARSON'S MISSION. IF ABOVE SPIRIT CONTINUES TO PERVADE ADMINISTRATION EXISTING LAWS NO FEAR REVIVAL OF TROUBLE.

The Hindu, 8-7-1914

180. CABLE TO G. K. GOKHALE

[JOHANNESBURG,
July 6, 1914][1]

HON'BLE MR. GOKHALE
LONDON

WHOLE INDIAN COMMUNITY TENDERS YOU HEARTFELT THANKS CONGRATULATIONS FOR FINAL SETTLEMENT WHICH WITHOUT YOUR SELF-SACRIFICING SERVICES WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN REACHED SO EARLY. WE ASK YOU AS OUR SPOKESMAN CONVEY BY CABLE LORD HARDINGE OUR HUMBLE THANKS FOR HIS GREAT HELP AND FOR FEARLESS MANNER IN WHICH HE FACILITATED SETTLEMENT.

Indian Opinion, 8-7-1914

181. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[PHOENIX]
Monday [*July 6, 1914*]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I posted a letter to you at P.M. Burg yesterday.

The boys were in Town. We had a good meeting. Then we took the train to Avoca and walked from there. It is now exactly 2.55 a.m. I woke up at 1.40, left the bed at 2.25, retired at 10 p.m. and slept away at perhaps 10.30 p.m. after a chat with Mrs. Gandhi. I am none the

[1] It appears that this and the "Cable to The Hindu", the preceding item, were salt on the same day.

worse for the walk. Mrs. Gandhi has reconciled herself[1] to uncooked diet now so that there is not much danger of my taking cooked fruit.

They in Durban want you even though it may be for a day. I have told them it is difficult.

Hope Medh sent the wire to Union Castle.

If I am able to get up as early as I have today, I should give you a daily letter.

With love,

Yours,

DAS

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

182. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

Tuesday [*July 7, 1914*][2]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Today I woke up at 4.5 and left the bed at 5.5. Retired last night at 11 p.m. The food was all uncooked. I had Phoenix oranges and Phoenix tomatoes. The former were very nice. Mrs. Gandhi feels all this but is afraid to interfere. She is still pleading with me that I should take banana *chapati.*

The extract I sent you yesterday was from Ruskin's writings.

It is fairly cold here. My packing was practically finished yesterday. Please tell Medh that after all I shall have to bring Revashanker with me.

With love,

Yours,

DAS

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] The source has "myself".

[2] From the contents it appears that this was written after the preceding item; vide also the following item.

183. LETTER TO E. M. GORGES

PHOENIX,
NATAL,
July 7, 1914

DEAR MR. GORGES,

I have now got a moment to submit my note upon the Gold Law. As you know, after maturer consideration, I refrained from pressing for the insertion of a special clause defining "vested rights" in connection with the Gold Law and Townships Amendment Act, because I felt that any definition in the correspondence might result in restricting the future action of my countrymen. However, so far as my interpretation of "vested rights" is concerned, I think that I shall reduce it to writing. General Smuts was good enough to say that he would endeavour to protect vested rights as defined by me. The following is the definition I submitted to Sir Benjamin Robertson, who, I understood, submitted it to General Smuts. My letter[1] containing, among other matters, the definition, is dated the 4th March, 1914. "By 'vested rights' I understand the right of an Indian and his successors to live and trade in the townships in which he was living and trading, no matter how often he shifts his residence or business from place to place in the same township." I am fortified in my interpretation by the answer given by Mr. Harcourt in connection with the matter, in the House of Commons, on the 27th June, 1911:

> Complaints against that legislation (the Gold Law and Townships Amendment Act) have been made and are now being investigated by the
>
> Government of the Union of South Africa, who have lately stated that there is no intention of interfering with any business or right to carry on business acquired and exercised by Indians prior to the date of the legislation.

I have also now traced the note by Mr. de Villiers which I alluded to in our conversation. It is contained in a White Paper published in London in March, 1912, and has the following:

> No right or privilege which a Coloured person has at the present time is taken away by the new Act (Act 35 of 1908).

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Benjamin Robertson", 4-3-1914.

And again,

> Section 131, which, before the Billas introduced into Parliament, formed the subject of questions in the English House of Commons and of despatches from the Secretary of State to the Governor, has been amended in Committee so as to safeguard any rights which a Coloured person may, at the present time, have of occupying land in mining areas.

Certainly, prior to the passing of the Gold Law, no restrictions were, to my knowledge, placed upon the movement or the trade of British Indians in the Gold Areas. There can, therefore, be no justification for any restriction now, especially in regard to those who are already settled in their respective townships.

I am,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

E. M. GORGES, ESQ.
PRETORIA

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 6003

184. SPEECH AT FAREWELL MEETING[1]

DURBAN,
July 8, 1914

Mr. Gandhi, in returning thanks, first explained why he appeared in the mourning costume which he had been wearing since the time of the strike.[2] He hoped they would forgive him for appearing in that strange costume, which he had adopted on his premature discharge from prison, as a sign of mourning. That mourning had gone, yet he retained the costume, and as the alternative was for him to wear evening

[1] A large and enthusiastic meeting of Indians, attended by a number of Europeans, was held in the Town Hall to bid farewell to Gandhiji, Kasturba and Kallenbach on the eve of their departure for England en route to India. W. Holmes, the Mayor, presided. Gandhiji and Ba were garlanded and presented with bouquets. Kallenbach could not attend and a telegram from him expressing thanks was read at the meeting. Addresses on behalf of a number of organizations all over South Africa were read. Indian and European admirers of Gandhiji paid him glowing tributes. Gandhiji then addressed the meeting. This report of Gandhiji's speech has been collated with the one appearing in The Natal Mercury, 9-7-1914.

[2] The Natal Mercury reported: "Mr. Gandhi who appeared in Hindu mourning costume, and was received with prolonged cheering, began with a reference to the object of his appearing in the dress he wore that night."

dress, he felt that, in the mental attitude which possessed him at that moment, he could not render a greater respect for them than in appearing as he did. (Cheers.) Referring to the addresses which had been presented to him, he said that, while he valued them, he valued more the love and sympathy which the addresses had expressed. He did not know that he would be able to make adequate compensation. He did not deserve all the praise bestowed upon him. Nor did his wife claim to deserve all that had been said of her. Many an Indian woman had done greater service during the struggle than Mrs. Gandhi. He thanked the community on behalf of Mr. Kallenbach, who was another brother to him, for the addresses presented. The community had done well in recognizing Mr. Kallenbach's worth. Mr. Kallenbach would tell them that he came to the struggle to gain. He considered that, by taking up their cause, he gained a great deal in the truest sense. Mr. Kallenbach had done splendid work during the strike at Newcastle and, when the time came, he cheerfully went to prison, again thinking that he was the gainer and not the loser. Proceeding, Mr. Gandhi referred to the time of his arrival in 1897 when his friend Mr. Laughton had stood by him against the mob.[1] He also remembered with gratefulness the action of Mrs. Alexander, the wife of the late Superintendent of Police in Durban, who protected him with her umbrella from the missiles thrown by the excited crowd. Referring to passive resistance, he claimed that it was a weapon of the purest type. It was not the weapon of the weak. It needed, in his opinion, far greater courage to be a passive resister than a physical resister. It was the courage of a Jesus, a Daniel, a Cranmer, a Latimer and a Ridley who could go calmly to suffering and death, and the courage of a Tolstoy who dared to defy the Czars of Russia, that stood out as the greatest. Mr. Gandhi said he knew the Mayor had received some telegrams stating that the Indians' Relief Bill was not satisfactory.[2] It would be a singular thing if in this world they would be able to get anything that satisfied everybody, but, in the condition of things in South Africa at the present time, he was certain they could not have had a better measure.

I do not claim the credit for it. It is rather due to the women and children and young people like Nagappen, Narayansamy, and Valliamah who have died for the cause and to those who quickened the conscience of South Africa. Our thanks are due also to the Union Government. I shall never forget that General Botha showed the greatest statesmanship when he said his Government would stand or fall by this measure. I followed the whole of that historic debate—historic to me, historic to my countrymen, and possibly historic to South Africa and the world.

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897

[2] The Natal Mercury version here has: "Mr. Gandhi defended passive resistance which he described as the cleanest weapon they could use."

Proceeding, Mr. Gandhi said that it was well known to them how the Government had done justice, and how the Opposition had come to their assistance. They had also received handsome help from both the Imperial and The manner in which India, led by their great and distinguished countryman, Mr. Gokhale, had responded to the cry which came from the hearts of thousands of their countrymen in South Africa was one of the results of the passive resistance movement, and left, he hoped, no bitter traces or bitter memories. (Applause.)

This assurance I wish to give. I go away with no ill-will against a European. I have received many hard knocks in my life, but here I admit that I have received those most precious gifts from Europeans—love and sympathy. (Cheers.)

This settlement, he said, had been achieved after an eight years' struggle. The Indians in South Africa had never aspired to any political ambition, and as regards the social question, that could never arise in connection with the Indians.

I do not hold for one moment that East and West cannot combine. I think the day is coming when East must meet West, or West meet East, but I think the social evolution of the West today lies in one channel, and that of the Indian in another channel. The Indians have no wish today to encroach on the social institutions of the European in South Africa. (Cheers.) Most Indians are natural traders. There are bound to be trade jealousies and those various things that come from competition. I have never been able to find a solution of this most difficult problem, which will require the broad-mindedness and spirit of justice of the Government of South Africa to hold the balance between conflicting interests.

Referring to his stay in South Africa, Mr. Gandhi said that he should retain the most sacred memories of this land. He had been fortunate in forming the happiest and most lasting friendship with both Europeans and Indians. He was now returning to India—a holy land, sanctified by the austerities of the ages. In conclusion, Mr. Gandhi said, he hoped that the same love and sympathy which had been given to him in South Africa might be extended to him, no matter in what part of the world he might be. He hoped that the settlement embodied in the Indians' Relief Bill would be carried out in a spirit of broad-mindedness and justice in the administration of the laws lately passed in connection with the affairs of the Indian community.

Then, I think there will be no fear on the part of my country-men in their social evolution. That is one of the lessons of the settle-ment.[1]

Indian Opinion, 15-7-1914

[1] The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Mayor and the singing of the National Anthem.

185. THE END

A struggle of eight years' duration has at last finally closed. The Indians' Relief Bill and the correspondence[1] between the Government and Mr. Gandhi embody a complete and mutually satisfactory and honourable settlement of the problems that were affected by the passive resistance movement. For this happy ending we have to thank the Imperial, Indian and Union Governments, the Motherland, guided and moved by Mr. Gokhale, and Mr. Andrews' mission. The sufferings of thousands of Passive Resisters, the martyrdom of Valliamah, Narayansamy, Nagappen and Harbatsingh brought these forces into being. Passive Resistance, as a lawful weapon, has thus once more been vindicated. The lengthy reference made by Lord Gladstone to the settlement shows its importance. We are grateful to His Excellency for clearly placing before the people of South Africa the Imperial aspect.

It now remains for the Union Government to follow up this happy solution of a difficult problem by a sympathetic and just administration of the laws that affect the Indian community and for the latter to show by its action that it is ever worthy of just treatment. If the community is permitted to enjoy rest, it will be possible to find an easy method of dealing with the matters dealt with in Mr. Gandhi's letter and which some day or other will demand attention in order that the resident population may be restored to the ordinary rights of citizenship. For it must not be forgotten that, though there is cause for thankfulness in that the most pressing grievances have been removed, we shall still labour under legal disabilities which intense colour prejudice has brought into being. Administration of trade licence laws, largely on racial lines, the deprivation of the right to own land in the Transvaal, the precarious position under the Transvaal Gold Law, inter-provincial restrictions—these and many other such limitations of our liberty show how true were Lord Gladstone's words when he said that the Indians' Relief Bill did but the barest justice. Indeed, it can only be taken as an instalment and as an earnest of the future. The struggle will, therefore, have done much more than give us the Bill and the administrative measures, if it has also altered the repressive policy of the Government to a progressive one, such that we may look forward to a steady improvement in the future.

Indian Opinion, 8-7-1914

[1] *Vide* "Letter with E.M. Gorges", 27-5-1914; "Letter to E.M. Gorges", 11-6-1914; 27-6-1914; "Letter to E.M. Gorges", 30-6-1914 & 7-7-1914.

186. THE END OF THE STRUGGLE

The struggle that went on for eight years has come to an end, and such an end as, we believe, hardly any other movement in modern times has been crowned with. The foundation of the struggle was laid in Johannesburg in September, 1906. The issue then concerned only the Registration Act. The Government refused to listen to us. Gaol-going was resorted to. While the struggle had not yet ended, the Immigration Act was passed. A conditional settlement followed. The Government failed to honour its commitment. The movement was revived and had to beextended to cover the effect of the Immigration Act on the Registration Act. A new issue was thus added, that there should be no racial discrimination in the Immigration Act. Naturally, our feelings were aroused still further in consequence. The struggle was prolonged and a second deputation went to England.[1] The Union Government, however, refused in so many words to remove the racial discrimination. While the struggle was thus being prolonged, in 1911 again a provisional settlement came about. This covered a third issue. Since a problem created by a law of the Transvaal had to be solved by the Union Parliament, the satyagrahis took the stand that they could not accept legislation which, though it might meet their requirement, would endanger the rights of others. Accordingly, a condition was included in the provisional settlement of 1911 to the effect that the existing rights of Indians in all the parts of the Union should be left untouched. There was no decision, however, until 1913. In the meantime, there was the visit of Mr. Gokhale. The Government gave him a promise that the £3 tax would be removed. Even so, had the Government granted the satyagrahis' demands in full during the settlement in 1913, the movement would not have been revived and the £3 tax would have had to be taken up as a separate issue.

Meanwhile, the Searle judgment raised the marriage question. This also entailed the loss of existing rights. In 1913, the late Mr. Fischer carried through the Immigration Act in the face of our protests. It conceded much, but also denied a few things. The marriage question was left unsolved and in other ways, too, existing rights were endangered. This led to the resumption of satyagraha a fourth time

[1] This was in 1909.

and our demands naturally increased. Now that the Government has had to concede all the demands, the struggle has ended.

We can see from this, if we will, that every time the Government went back on its word, it was obliged to yield more to us. This it is which makes one say that chicanery never pays. Double dealing may remain unexposed only where both sides play more or less the same [dirty] game. In satyagraha, one side alone plays this game. The satyagrahi himself cannot conceivably do so.

We can also see that the more the struggle was prolonged the greater became the strength of the people and their capacity to suffer, so that the suffering that the masses endured towards the end of the last year was unparalleled in modern history. And, if the suffering has been great, the relief obtained has also been proportionately great. This correlation goes to prove another eternal law of Nature. Man can be happy only in the measure that he suffers. He who merely scrapes the soil on the surface can harvest nothing but grass. He alone can harvest grain who ploughs deeper. In other words, it is vain to hope for happiness without undergoing suffering. Thus it is that the life of austerity, the fakir's self-denial and other such practices have everywhere been held in high esteem and their praises sung.

What the community has bought at the cost of so much suffering it will be able to keep and add to, only so long as it retains the same capacity for suffering. If it loses that capacity, it will lose all it has gained, and more. All this is plain enough, but we often lose sight of it.

NEW ACT

Let us now have a look at our gains. The new Act covers two things. In the first place, the £3 tax has been abolished. Arrears have also been remitted. In this connection, it has been suggested by *The* [*Natal*] *Mercury* and other papers that in gaining one thing we have lost something else; for, though the Government has repealed the tax, the consequence will be that the indentured labourers, poor creatures, will be obliged to leave this country or continue for ever under indenture. This suggestion is entirely unfounded, as is clear from General Smuts' own letter. The other point is about the marriage question. The manner in which it has been solved gives us more, not less, than what we had been demanding. This Act confirms the position that was believed to obtain before the Searle judgment. Prior to that judgment, we had assumed that the local law recognized monogamous marriages

celebrated under any faith, including marriages solemnized under our rites. Mr. Justice Searle, however, ruled otherwise and held that Christian marriages could be recognized but not Hindu and Muslim marriages, even if such marriages were in fact monogamous. This was obviously an affront to the two religions. Mr. Cachalia therefore desired amendment of the law. The demand has now been met. The Act does not involve any other change. The position with regard to divorce, inheritance and polygamy remains what it was. The Act safeguards the interests of children by a deceased wife. Its provisions are permissive. No one is obliged to have his or her marriage registered. As for those coming from India, the question just does not arise. The main object of getting a marriage registered is to ensure that children's interests do not suffer. Now that the danger has been removed, it is not necessary for any Indian to have his or her marriage registered. We would rather advise them not to do so. The situation required a [new] law. It was necessary to undo the affront to [our] religions. It should be sufficient that we have succeeded in this. The Act has been so drafted as to secure children's interests without requiring registration of the marriages. In view of this, the question whether a marriage is monogamous or polygamous will not arise at all. In any case, one who intends to marry more than one woman, would do well not to have his marriage with any of them registered. It was necessary to have provisions made for appointment of our priests as marriage officers. But we would not advise that this right be availed of. We are of the view that such appointments will lead to dishonesty in the community and expose the priests to temptations. As for marriages already solemnized, there is no need for such appointments since these marriages can be registered before any magistrate. It is the same with regard to marriages that may be celebrated in future. In other words, we can have a marriage solemnized by any *Maulvi*[1] or *Gor*[2] and get it registered subsequently before a magistrate whenever we choose. We would, there-fore, particularly advise the community, not to take the trouble of getting marriage officers appointed. Before we leave this point, it has to be said that in no other Colony does a [marriage] law go as far as the one passed here does. It has been said that in Mauritius [Indian] marriages are recognized whether polygamous or not, but this is not true and the law there is not as good

[1] Muslim priest
[2] Hindu priest

as the one here, as we show elsewhere in this very issue.

A third point that has been satisfactorily settled in this Act is that, in case of any doubt regarding the domicile certificate of a resident of Natal, the certificate must be accepted as genuine if the thumb-impression on it is identical with the one on the copy in possession of the Immigration Officer. The result will be that people will not be unneces-sarily harassed, as at present, with inquiries and sent away for making false claims in spite of the genuineness of the thumb-impression having been established. Those who can prove the thumb-impression to be genuine have their right secured now. This section does not however mean that one who has been away from Natal for a number of years will, just because he has the [domicile] certificate, be safe. Everyone, of course, will have to prove that he had not left Natal for good.

ADMINISTRATIVE RELIEF

The kind of ameliorative measures needed outside the law can be judged from the correspondence between the Government and Mr. Gandhi. These concern issues such as South African Indians, the Free State and the administration of existing laws. Only one of these points calls for comment here. In view of the promise of reasonable administration of the laws in force, with due regard to existing rights, it will be possible for the community to obtain redress in every case of injustice. This clause, we believe, should prove very useful in future. But its usefulness will depend on how the community's leaders exert them-selves. If they sleep on, the clause will have been passed in vain. The laws which will most need to be watched are two: the licensing law in each Province and the Gold Law of the Transvaal. Mr. Gandhi has pointed out in his letter that we shall have to agitate in future to secure amendment of these laws. In starting any such agitation, the community will have to be particularly careful in obeying the laws in question; if it does so, it will, for the present at any rate, enjoy peace.

We must admit that on this occasion the Government have displayed a desire for justice and that the leading members of Parliament have also been actuated by the same desire in their speeches. It would also appear from the speeches of the ministers, and especially from that of General Smuts, that he is inclined to deal justly in future. We advise the community to profit by this desire, and this it will be able to

do only if it has unity, manly spirit and regard for truth.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 8-7-1914

187. MARRIAGE LAW IN MAURITIUS

We had heard that in Mauritius the law recognized polygamous marriages in the case of Indians. Thereupon we made inquiries. We have not received a copy of the Act. This law was the result of agitation by Indians there. It was passed on December 17, 1912. It provides for the appointment of Hindu and Muslim priests as marriage officers. No Indian marriage is to be recognized as valid unless it complies with the provisions of the Act of 1890. That is, the general law which applies to all applies to our people also. It is specifically mentioned in that general law that the provisions of sections 46 to 51 regulating marriages also apply to Indian marriages. If the husband is below 21 years and the wife below 18, the consent of the parents of both is necessary. There are other sections prescribing the duties and functions of marriage officers, the manner of maintaining registers, etc. Violation of any of the provisions or registration of an unlawful marriage is punishable with a fine up to Rs. 500/-. The following are some of the conditions to be observed by priests under this Act:

1. A boy under the age of 18 and a girl under 15 cannot be married except by special permission of the Governor.
2. If one wife is living, marriage with another woman cannot be contracted unless the former is lawfully divorced.
3. In case of divorce for adultery, the divorced party cannot marry the partner in such adultery.
4. A widow or divorced woman cannot remarry until after ten months.
5. No marriages can take place between a man and his niece, a woman and her nephew, and man and his brother's wife, even where the woman is a widow.

Besides these, there are many other provisions which, how ever, we do not notice here.

What we have given above shows that the general law in Mauritius is applicable to Indians in regard to divorce, polygamous

marriages, the minimum age for marriage and such other essential matters. The only change introduced by the new law is that, whereas Indian priests could not register marriages formerly, such priests can be appointed now for that purpose.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 8-7-1914

188. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

July 9, 1914

MY DEAR FRIEND,

No letters from you for the last 2 days. Manilal says there should be with you my shoes and neckties, etc. I have not a collar left nor more than one tie. Please search and if the shoes are there youmay get them stretched.

Yesterday's function was good I acted for you and against you.[1]

I am writing this in the Durban train. Am paying the passage here and sending all my luggage here so that there may be only a little to carry.

With love,

Yours,
DAS

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

189. SPEECH AT GUJARATI MEETING[2]

DURBAN,
[*July 9, 1914*]

[Gandhiji] said that he would take the opportunity to address a few remarks to the Colonial-born Indians, as he did not know whether he would have another opportunity to speak to them. To them his first words had been when he came to South

[1] For Gandhiji's speech at the farewell function organized in his honour and for Kasturba and Kallenbach, *vide* "Speech at Farewell Meeting", 8-7-1914

[2] In his English speech thanking the gathering for the reception to Ba and himself, Gandhiji made touching references to the happy relations which existed between Hindus and Muslims.

Africa and to them his last words would be when he left it. It was they who had assisted him with his first piece of political work in South Africa, when a petition signed by some 10,000 Indians had been addressed to Lord Elgin, the then Secretary of State for the Colonies,[1] against the disfranchisement of Indians. That petition had been successful in its object, the Bill being vetoed, though the Government of the day subsequently in another form achieved its purpose. The Colonial-borns had since also borne their share of the communal work, but they could, if they would, do more. It was they who were the permanent Indian settlers of South Africa. To the Colonial-borns South Africa was their birth-place and home, and it was essential to the well being of all other sections of the community that they should work together with the Colonial-borns. Their responsibility was great. It was they who would have to nurse the settlement, to maintain the happier tone which had now been established between the European and Indian communities and to live down the prejudice which today still existed in South Africa. This they would accomplish in time if they did their duty at all times. He referred to the fact that Nagappen and Valiamma had both been Colonial-borns, as had the ladies who did such noble work at Newcastle. He urged upon them to preserve their national characteristic, to learn their mother-tongue and study the history and traditions of their Motherland, where he would hope to see them some day.

Indian Opinion, 9-9-1914

190. SPEECH AT GUJARAT SABHA FUNCTION[2]

[DURBAN,
July 9, 1914]

I have but limited time and I only wand, therefore, to say a few things to Indian youths born in South Africa. In the van of the satyagraha battle were Indians born here and among them, particularly the poor and the simple people rendered great services. The rich were busy getting richer. My brother Nagappen and sister Valliamma were born here, and so was brother Narayansamy. I would urge you all to follow in their footsteps and advise you to go on a pilgrimage to India, be the difficulties what they might.[3]

[1] This petition was addressed in May 1895 to Lord Ripon, the then Secretary of State for the Colonies. A copy of this was sent to Lord Elgin who was, at the time, Viceroy and Governor-General of India. *Vide* "Open Letter", Before 19-12-1894 to "Petition to Lord Ripon", Before 5-5-1895

[2] Held at the Hindu Dharmashala in Victoria Street.

[3] Gandhiji next addressed the gathering in Gujarati.

I am grateful to you all, friends, for the honour and the love that you have given us both. Whenever I am honoured, I feel my *atman* is exposed to danger. Whenever, on the contrary, I am attacked or insulted, I realize my imperfections and a new light dawns upon me. In my present state of mind, however, I am not at all likely to be corrupted by praise of me. I feel extremely sad to have to part from you, but sooner or later that was bound to happen. I am about to leave a *bhoga-bhumi*[1] for a *karma-bhumi*[2]. For me there can be no deliverance from this earthly life except in India. Anyone who seeks such deliverance must go to the sacred soil of India. For me, as for everyone else, the land of India is "the refuge of the afflicted". I am therefore longing to return to the motherland. It is my parting prayer that you should all bear love for one another, regardless of caste or creed.

I have always shown the same respect for Muslims as for Hindus. Hinduism, too, teaches this [regard for other religions], and if anyone says that in this I am not acting like a Hindu, I shall offer satyagraha against him. I make bold to say that certainly no onepresent here is more of a Hindu than I am, perhaps not even as much. Whenever we have a guest, we show due respect to him. We ought to respect members of other communities in the same manner. If every Indian lived thus in amity with others, there is not the slightest doubt that we shall make great advance in South Africa.

As to the honour that has been done to me on this occasion, I have only this to say, that every time I have been honoured I have felt particularly weak and that when I have received blows I have felt accession of strength and progressed towards greater firmness of mind. Those friends, therefore, who speak ill of me these days are, to judge from results, my well-wishers. I shall have been rightly honoured only when every friend becomes a satyagrahi.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 15-7-1914

[1] Land of enjoyment
[2] Land of duty

191. SPEECH AT SPORTS FUNCTION[1]

DURBAN,
[*July 9, 1914*]

Mr. Gandhi said that he was deeply grateful to the Farewell Committee for having organised those sports and for having set apart that day for the sake of the Indian children and gathered them together at that short notice, and he must confess that he was not at all equally grateful for the function that they had in the Town Hall.[2] For him that had been insipid, but that function that afternoon would carry with it or would send with him the pleasandest recollections of his stay in South Africa. He knew the community of South Africa, but he scarcely knew the community of India. He felt confidand that if he wanded to give a knowledge to anybody as to how the lndian mind in South Africa would run on a particular occasion, he should be able to state accurately the direction in which it would go, but he had no knowledge at all as to what the Indian mind in India itself could do or would do on a particular occasion. To that extent he knew his countrymen in South Africa, and it gave him very great pleasure that afternoon to see those around him when he was about to say good-bye to South Africa and to say good-bye to his dear countrymen and to all those boys and girls. He then addressed the children. He said they had come there that afternoon to indulge in sports, and sports were good, they were excellent, if they knew the meaning of those sports, but he would leave those alone that afternoon and would like to direct their attention to the real sport in life. They had raced for prizes and, as Mr. Baillie had just reminded him, the prize-giving might have a demoralising effect upon those who had the training of the children in their hands as well as upon the children themselves. He shared that fear, but, if they had raced that afternoon for the sake of racing in order to show that during the past few years they had been endeavouring to keep the physical portion of their being in a fit and proper state, it showed also the value of the industry, the courage and the time that they had put forth in a disciplined manner in order to gain that particular purpose in life. But in life there was a better race for them and for him to run—did they know what that race was? All the children who went to churches if they were Christians, or all the children who were Hindus if they had any Hindus to teach them what their own religion taught, or if they were Mahomedans and had priests to tell them, he felt sure that they would all tell them that there was that race in life where they had to make themselves good in future and behave themselves if they grew up as men and women. In his opinion, if he might

[1] Gandhiji spoke at a children's sports function held in the Albert Park, Durban. A brief report of the function appeared in Indian *Opinion,* 15-7-l914.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Farewell Meeting", 8-7-1914

address a few remarks to the teachers also, having played at teaching himself for a number of years, it seemed to him that the real teaching consisted not in giving the children a knowledge of letters merely, but in developing their character, and that, in so far as the boys and girls developed their character whilst they were still tender and whilst they could still be moulded, and, if their teachers told them that character was the first, the middle and the last and that their knowledge of letters was purely and simply an aid to develop that character, then he thought that they were doing well in attending those schools and it was well for their parents also [to allow them] to do that; but, if their parents sent them, if they went to schools, merely to have a knowledge of letters, so that they might earn a few pounds anyhow in future, then he was afraid that their education was not education and he felt that he should say that little word to them that afternoon.

Presently they were going to receive prizes, but they had been told that the Sporting Association of the Natal Province was about to receive a wandering trophy from Mr. Rustomjee, and he understood that it was not a trophy which was intrinsically valueless, but that it had actually cost a sum of over £30. He hoped that the Natal Sporting Association deserved that trophy, but he did not dwell upon the trophy because it was a valuable thing, but he did hope that the Natal Sporting Association would behave in a sportsmanlike spirit, and in that real sport in the world and in that race in life would set a noble example to the children, the boys and girls who had gathered together there that afternoon, by gaining trophies not from one Parsee Rustomjee but from everyone of their countrymen in South Africa by placing themselves at their disposal and by serving them in a sportsmanlike manner. And, even as these schools had run the races and put their whole spirit into the race, so he hoped that the Association would do so, and he thought that they had given him an earnest of what they were doing from the manner in which they had conducted those proceedings, because it was, he thought, on their shoulders that the brunt of the burden had fallen, led as they had been and still were by Mr. Rustomjee. And one word for Mr. Rustomjee. Friend though he was to him, client though he had been to him, trustee though he was of the Phoenix Settlement, he did wish to commend to them the services of Mr. Rustomjee. He knew that he had worked himself practically to death in connection with that farewell, but he did hope it had not been because a friend of his was going away from South Africa, but in order to show what they had got to do in South Africa, in order to show that South Africa had a reputation, or the Indians in South Africa had, in keeping up the reputation of the Motherland, and he showed also by his energy and by his supporting all such movements what they had got to do. He knew that Mr. Rustomjee was at times hard to please. But if they did please him, he (the speaker) knew also that they had no better, no more constand, leader to work with in South Africa. Mr. Rustomjee knew no distinction of race or religion. He was a Parsee among Parsees, but also a Mahomedan among Mahomedans in that he would do

for them, die for them, live for them. He was a Hindu amongst Hindus and would do for them likewise. There were many others whom he (the speaker) might point out in South Africa who could equal Mr. Rustomjee in many respects and surpass him, but none his equal in constancy and courage. And before he left the Port of Durban, he would leave that parting word with them. If there was anything of public work to be done, let them trust Mr. Rustomjee, but let them also obey him. They should bear with Mr. Rustomjee, but also with his faults. There was no human being without faults. Even the sun and moon had spots. God alone was spotless; it was not given to any mortal being to be spotless. Let Mr. Rustomjee's faults take care of themselves, and let them see his merits, and they knew what he had been to them during the gigandic strike. In conclusion, he asked them to pray for him, to give their love to him, and send him nice messages, and, in return, he promised that, in whatever part of the world he might be, he would not forget his countryman with whom he had mixed in South Africa and how they had loved him, and he prayed that God might give him strength to love them in return. God alone knew him and could see his heart. It may be that he had loved them wisely, it might be that he had loved them ignorandly, and thereby performed a service or disservice to them; then, God was also great enough to forgive him, but they should also forgive him if he had not loved them well enough, served them well enough, but knew that all he had done and endeavoured to do had been done from the bottom of his heart. Mistakes he had committed, for which they should pardon him. But if they had seen traces of love in him, let them pray to the Almighty that that love might grow abundandly and come forth to them also as some poor return of the love and generosity and consideration they had shown to him and Mrs. Gandhi in their darkest hours.

Indian Opinion, 2-9-19l4

192. SPEECH AT RECEPTION BY DHEDS[1]

[DURBAN,
July 9, 1914]

This morning, gentlemen of the Dhed community called on me to extend an invitation, but, not aware of who they were, I expressed my inability to accept it owing to pressure on my time. Had I known their caste, I would have certainly come earlier. I feel proud that I am now meeting [members of] this caste. They are our own brethren, and to regard them with the slightest disrespect not only argues our own

[1] Gandhiji addressed members of the Dhed community, traditionally charged with sanitary duties.

unworthiness but is morally wrong, for it is contrary to the teaching of the *Bhagavad Gita*.

Mr. Gandhi then explained how the training of children's character was far more importand than literary education. They might learn less, but the education they received would have some meaning only if they understood what they learnt.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 15-7-1914

193. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

PHOENIX,
July 10, 1914

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter today. This time I do not want to miss a single day if I can help it.

I have here your waistcoats and trousers which I am bringing with me as also your papers.

Yesterday and today I have not been able to get up early having retired after midnight. The functions in Durban compelled me to take only the 9.30 p.m. train from Durban. The temptation to take cooked fruit was great but it is finished now. I am not likely to succumb between tomorrow and Sunday. Here is the train coming so good-bye.

With love,

DAS

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

194. SPEECH AT PRETORIA[1]

July 10, 1914

Mr. Gandhi, in replying to the address and speeches, expressed pleasure that Mr. Stent had presided over the gathering Mr. Stent had consistently advocated their cause, and he (the speaker) felt personally grateful to him. He reciprocated Mr. Chamney's sentiments. He had certainly stood up against Mr. Chamney and the

[1] Gandhiji attended a farewell meeting at Pretoria, presided over by Vere Stent Chamney, Hajee Habib and Mangalbhai eulogized Gandhiji's work and leadership.

management of his office, but there had been no personal ill-will on the speaker's part, and he always received the utmost courtesy at Mr. Chamney's hands. He appreciated the compliment Mr. Chamney paid him by coming out to arrest him with one man only to assist, when the speaker was at the head of 2,000 men and women. It showed the confidence Mr. Chamney had in him as a passive resister. He thanked them for the purse, the contents of which, in common with those of any others received, would not be used for himself, but first for the furtherance of the interests of the Indians of South Africa, and, secondly, for any work he might have to do in India which had commended itself to them in the course of the conversations they had had. He felt that the settlement they had received was a kind of Magna Charta. It was not a final settlement in the sense that they had no wrongs left. They had to exercise patience and cultivate European opinion, in order to get those wrongs redressed. They had to maintain the sympathy which men like Mr. Stent might think fit to extend to them. He paid a glowing tribute to the work done for the Indian cause by Miss Schlesin.

Indian Opinion, 29-7-1914

195. THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF PASSIVE RESISTANCE

[Before *July 11*, 1914][1]

I shall be at least far away from Phoenix, if not actually in the Motherland, when this Commemoration Issue is published.[2] I would, however, leave behind me my innermost thoughts upon that which has made this special issue necessary. Without Passive Resistance, there would have been no richly illustrated and importand special issue of *Indian Opinion,* which has, for the last eleven years, in an unpretentious and humble manner, endeavoured to serve my countrymen and South Africa, a period covering the most critical stage that they will, perhaps, ever have to pass through. It marks the rise and growth of Passive Resistance, which has attracted world-wide attention. The term does not fit the activity of the Indian community during the past eight years. Its equivalent in the vernacular,[3] rendered into English, means

[1] En route to India, Gandhiji left Phoenix on July 11.

[2] The "Golden Number" of *Indian Opinion,* dealing with the Indian struggle in South Africa, was released on December 1, 1914.

[3] "Satyagraha", the phrase Gandhiji preferred to use; *vide* "Gujarati Equivalents for Passive Resistance, Etc..

Truth-Force. I think Tolstoy called it also Soul-Force or Love-Force, and so it is. Carried out to its utmost limit, this force is independent of pecuniary or other material assistance; certainly, even in its elementary form, of physical force or violence. Indeed, violence is the negation of this great spiritual force, which can only be cultivated or wielded by those who will entirely eschew violence. It is a force that may be used by individuals as well as by communities. It may be used as well in political as in domestic affairs. Its universal applicability is a demonstration of its permanence and invincibility. It can be used alike by men, women, and children. It is totally untrue to say that it is a force to be used only by the weak so long as they are not capable of meeting violence by violence. This superstition arises from the incompleteness of the English expression. It is impossible for those who consider themselves to be weak to apply this force. Only those who realise that there is something in man which is superior to the brute nature in him, and that the latter always yields to it, can effectively be Passive Resisters. This force is to violence and, therefore, to all tyranny, all injustice, what light is to darkness. In politics, its use is based upon the immutable maxim that government of the people is possible only so long as they consent either consciously or unconsciously to be governed. We did not wand to be governed by the Asiatic Act of 1907 of the Transvaal, and it had to go before this mighty force. Two courses were open to us—to use violence when we were called upon to submit to the Act, or to suffer the penalties prescribed under the Act, and thus to draw out and exhibit the force of the soul within us for a period long enough to appeal to the sympathetic chord in the governors or the law-makers. We have taken long to achieve what we set about striving for. That was because our Passive Resistance was not of the most complete type. All Passive Resisters do not understand the full value of the force, nor have we men who always from conviction refrain from violence. The use of this force requires the adoption of poverty, in the sense that we must be indifferent whether we have the wherewithal to feed or clothe ourselves. During the past struggle, all Passive Resisters, if any at all, were not prepared to go that length. Some again were only Passive Resisters so-called. They came without any conviction, often with mixed motives, less often with impure motives. Some even, whilst engaged in the struggle, would gladly have resorted to violence but for most vigiland supervision. Thus it was that the struggle became prolonged; for the exercise of the purest soul-force, in its perfect

form, brings about instandaneous relief. For this exercise, prolonged training of the individual soul is an absolute necessity, so that a perfect Passive Resister has to be almost, if not entirely, a perfect man. We cannot all suddenly become such men, but, if my proposition is correct—as I know it to be correct—the greater the spirit of Passive Resistance in us, the better men we will become. Its use, therefore, is, I think; indisputable, and it is a force which, if it became universal, would revolutionise social ideals and do away with despotisms and the ever-growing militarism under which the nations of the West are groaning and are being almost crushed to death, and which fairly promises to overwhelm even the nations of the East. If the past struggle has produced even a few Indians who would dedicate themselves to the task of becoming Passive Resisters as nearly perfect as possible, they would not only have served themselves in the truest sense of the term, they would also have served humanity at large. Thus viewed, Passive Resistance is the noblest and the best education. It should come, not after the ordinary education in letters of children, but it should precede it. It will not be denied that a child, before it begins to write its alphabet and to gain worldly knowledge, should know what the soul is, what truth is, what love is, what powers are latent in the soul. It should be an essential of real education that a child should learn that, in the struggle of life, it can easily conquer hate by love, untruth by truth, violence by self-suffering. It was because I felt the force of this truth, that, during the latter part of the struggle, I endeavoured, as much as I could, to train the children at Tolstoy Farm and then at Phoenix along these lines, and one of the reasons for my departure to India is still further to realise, as I already do in part, my own imperfection as a Passive Resister, and then to try to perfect myself, for I believe that it is in India that the nearest approach to perfection is most possible.

Golden Number, Indian Opinion, 1914

196. SPEECH AT DURBAN BANQUET[1]

[*July 11, 1914*]

Mr. Gandhi thanked those present for the hearty way they had received the toast. Amid all the kind words that had been spoken of him, there was a danger of developing a swollen head. When much praise was being bestowed, that was the time to beware. Speaking of the Settlement, he said that, whilst it was a settlement of the present difficulties, it was not a complete settlement. It was not a charter of full liberties.[2] There were many questions which would require patience to solve. One of these was the licensing question. He had never been able to find a solution. It would need much tact and a sense of justice on the part of the Government and a desire to meet all the requirements of sanitary and building by-laws on the part of the Indian community. A certain class of Indians were born traders and if these people were to be driven from their means of livelihood, a serious position would arise. The value of the settlement lay in the struggle which preceded it—a struggle which quickened the conscience of South Africa—and the fact that there was a different tone prevailing to-day. (Hear, hear.) It would rest upon themselves to keep up that tone. That which they had gained was but a portion of that which they had to gain. Speaking generally of the opposition with which they were faced, he said that, although there was great prejudice, in his opinion, unreasonable and unjustifiable, there was also a spirit of justice behind that prejudice.[3] He appealed to his fellow-countrymen to exercise patience and try to live down prejudices which were against them. They had not received all they were entitled to, but it depended very largely upon themselves whether they received in the future a full measure of justice. Referring to the Provincial barrier, he said that the Union was no Union for them so long as they were confined within their own Province. They appealed for and should have freedom of movement no matter to what Province they desired to go. In conclusion, Mr. Gandhi spoke of the British Constitution and ideals, and remarked that so long as both were retained as they were, and the traditions maintained then it was a good thing, but evil would be the day when the Constitution crumbled, and its ideal was changed.

[1] A pubic dinner in honour of Gandhiji at Durban was attended by the Mayor, other prominent Europeans and about 30 Indians. Addresses were presented to Gandhiji and Miss Schlesin on behalf of the Farewell Committee. The Hon. Robert Jameson, J.P., presided.

[2] The report in *The Natal Mercury,* 13-7-1914, added here: "Many things had been given up, and in return they had received only a portion."

[3] *The Natal Mercury* reported Gandhiji as having said here: "The trading question was a big one, and in order that the community should live in peace, it would be a question that would have to be settled on amicable and just lines."

(Applause). Although he was going home to India which was dear to him, he assuredthem that he would never forget South Africa, and next to the homeland it would be nearest his thoughts. (Applause.)

Mr. Gandhi again rose, on behalf of Miss Schlesin, to thank the donors of the address and set of books presented to her. He said that Miss Schlesin had played a great part in the passive resistance movement. She had worked night and day and thrown herself heartily into the work. She had not hesitated even to court imprisonment but that was denied her. For many years she had acted as his secretary and rendered valuable assistance to him in his public work, but she was also no less than a sister to him. She had organised the Transvaal Indian Women's Association and had acted, since its inauguration, as honorary secretary.[1]

The Chairman (the Hon. R. Jameson) had recalled an instance which he (the speaker) thought he might have forgotten, and that was when the scene was laid in his office and he had approached him tremblingly, but also in the fullest faith, that he was a friend of the community, that he had guided him, as he well said, as a father would guide his child, in many things which he wanded to do as a humble burgess of that beautiful borough, the garden of South Africa. He had approached him first with that proposal of his in connection with the offer of forming an ambulance corps and he, naturally, as a soldier, had put a damper on his enthusiasm. He had uttered words of caution. The speaker had gone away chastened but he had gone to another friend. He did not know whether he was a soldier, but he knew that he was an Imperialist and also that he had a kindly corner in his heart for him— Mr. Laughton. His eyes beaming with delight, because he had never thought that the Indians could ever make any such offer, he had said, never mind what Jameson said, he should make the offer and he would see that the Government would probably accept it, but even if they did not, his countrymen would rise in the estimation of the Colonists of Natal. That sealed their fate. The offer was made and was rejected. He went over to Dr. Booth who was then in charge of St. Aidan's Mission and asked him whether he would give them ambulance lessons. He formed the class and gave them those lessons for three or four weeks. They continued to have them. Most of those who made the offer were Colonial-born Indians. Just then they all had the fear that the enemy, now the friends of the British Empire, were descending upon Maritzburg and finally might take the Port of Durban also. The offer, was renewed, this time with better hope. Dr. Booth went over to the Bishop of Natal,[2] who intervened—and he would not take no for an answer—till at last the offer was not only accepted, but they were able to form a very decentStretcher-bearer Corps which, as they all knew, did its humble share. If he had

[1] The gathering was then addressed by the Mayor who said Gandhiji had done splendid work for the Indians not only in Durban but also in South Africa. He wished him godspeed on his voyage. The report which follows appeared in *Indian Opinion,* 23-9-1914.

[2] *Vide"*Indian Ambulance Corps", 13-12-1899

dealt with that matter in some detail, it was in order to render a humble tribute to the European friends and to say that at that time, as on many other occasions, there had been a perfect blending, a perfect harmony and a perfectly friendly tone, that at that time they were not without European sympathy and without European friends. With what a heavy heart, then, would he leave South Africa when he had all those rich memories. If he dwelt upon that incident, he also dwelt upon it in order to show to his countrymen that, if they always clamoured for their rights, if they always wanded to resist any encroachment upon their rights, they had also to recognize their obligations as members of a state. That was an occasion which offered itself for such a recognition on the part of the Indian community, and though they had been only a few thousand, he thought that they had done whatever it was in their power to do, and he wished to remind his countrymen of that occasion and wished them to understand that the settlement also carried with it obligations.[1]

Indian Opinion, 22-7-1914 & 23-9-1914

197. SPEECH AT VERULAM[2]

July 12, 1914

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

When I agreed to come over to Verulam, I had no idea in my mind that I would receive an address. I came only to pay homage to my indentured brothers and to explain to them the facts under the new law. Moreover, a visit to this place is for me like going on a pilgrimage, for the Indian friends here played a great part in the recent strike; and in what wonderful a manner! When all the so-called leaders were resting in their private rooms or were busy making money, the indentured brethren of this place, the moment they happened to hear that a strike was on in Charlestown and elsewhere about the £3 tax, struck work too. They looked for no leaders. The leaders at Verulam, Tongaat and Isipingo were busy going round

[1] Brief reports in *The Transvaal Leader* and *The Star*, both of 13-7-1914, said: "Mr. Gandhi made an importand statement to the effect that Indian disabilities were only partially satisfied by the Relief Bill, and added that the question of equal status was bound to come up in the future. He was leaving South Africa for some years, but might return."

[2] Gandhiji addressed a farewell meeting of about 5,000 indentured and other Indians. Some representative Europeans also attended. Addresses and purses were presented to him on behalf of Tamils and other Indians from Verulam and Tongaat. E. H. Langston presided. Gandhiji first spoke in Hindi and then in English. For the speech in English, *vide* the following item.

collecting money. But spontaneously, the friends here struck work. This proves that poverty is real wealth. The poor are like kings. They will have their way. Be it here or in India or anywhere else, our salvation lies through poverty. The poor are the soul of a great movement like this.

As I accept the addresses that you have presented to me, I remember an injunction in the scriptures: "Man! Flee from a place where you find yourself being praised, or at least plug your ears with cotton-wool." I keep turning over this injunction in my mind whenever I hear myself praised. But, on this occasion, I have not been able to act as enjoined. When one can do neither, the injunction says: " *Jiva*[1], if you cannot act as enjoined here, offer all the praise you receive to Lord Krishna." And this is what I do. Obedience to such religious injunctions and the path of uprightness will ensure success in every undertaking. What I mean to say is that you are not right when you attribute our success to me. It was the strength of our indentured brothers that brought us success. It is they who have done something really great. Even if I and those near me had continued to be in gaol to this day, a settlement would not have come about as quickly as it did.

[Having explained that the tax, including the arrears, would not be collected henceforth, Gandhiji said:]

The prevalent impression that because of the repeal of the tax Indians would have to remain permanently under indenture or be repatriated is entirely mistaken. On the expiry of your contract, you can stay as free citizens. My own advice to you is that you should never re-indenture yourselves. You will, of course, have to complete the term of the present contract; no one can escape that. Those who become free can obtain passes from the Protector at Durban. Free Indians who remain here for three years will be treated as domiciled here. After completing three years, anyone who wands to go to India and return will be able to do so. Such a person should go to India at his own expense, and not approach the Government for the purpose. But those who have made up their minds not to return here will be able to claim from the Government the expenses for the journey to India.

I take this occasion of my visit to Victoria County to offer thanks to Mr. Marshall Campbell for help in securing the repeal of the

[1] The individual Self, conscious of its separate identity

tax. He worked indefatigably in the Senate to achieve that end, unmindful of his own interests.

Your feeling unhappy, as you say, at my going away binds me all the firmer to you in love. But I am leaving Phoenix behind me. You may approach Mr. West or the other inmates on any matter connected with the law or when you are up against any other difficulty. They will encourage you, advise you and work for you. They will not charge you a single penny and, in case they can be of no help, they will direct you to the right quarters. If ever they start demanding money from you at Phoenix, you should refuse even to turn your eyes in that direction again. I shall, of course, continue to work for you. You are under indenture with one person for five years, but I am under indenture with 300 millions for a life-time. I shall go on with that service and never displace you from my heart. All the money I have received here, I shall use for local purposes and the books for my own study.

It made me very unhappy to know that, during the recent strike, provoked no doubt by excessive cruelty or some other cause, you raised your hand in retaliation. Had I been with you, I would have had my head broken rather than allowed you to do what you did. For the future, however, I wish to put before you one importand suggestion. If it should ever happen that the Government is harsh with you or that your employers ill-treat you, you should fearlessly strike work; sit yourselves down at one place, go hungry if they do not give you food, suffer yourselves to be abused and kicked and finally, if such be your lot, submit even to hanging or being shot dead, but do not waver in your faith in God. If you act thus, even the stoniest heart will melt. Such is the power of satyagraha. Have trust in it. This alone is pure satyagraha. It is a weapon which surpasses all weapons, all your clubs and other weapons. Cling to it—therefore; it will never fail you in times of need. Good-bye to you.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opinion, 22-7-1914

198. SPEECH AT VERULAM[1]

July 12, 1914

Mr. Gandhi asked the chairman's permission to speak in Hindustani first, and, then, in as brief as possible English, so that it might be interpreted into Tamil, which he did not speak. . . . He would not elaborate his Hindi remarks regarding the presentations and praise to himself. The money would be used for such public purposes as commanded themselves to him on reaching India, but preference would be given to South Africa. He then continued:

Please understand, my indentured countrymen, that it is wrong for you to consider that relief has been obtained because I or youhave gone to gaol, but because you had the courage to give up your life and sacrifice yourselves, and, in this instance, I have also to tell you that many causes led to this result. I have to specially refer to the valuable assistance-rendered by the Hon. Senator Marshall Campbell. I think that our thanks and my thanks are due to him for his work in, the Senate while the Bill was passing through it. The relief is of this nature: The £3 tax you will not have to pay, and arrears will be remitted. It does not mean that you are free from your present indentures. You are bound to go through your present indentures faithfully and honestly, but when these finish, you are just as free as any other free Indian under Act 25, 1891, and can receive the same protection as set forth in that Act. You are not bound to re-indenture or return to India. Discharge certificates will be issued to you free of charge. If you wand to go to India and return therefrom, you must first spend three years in Natal as free Indians. If you, being poor, wand assistance to enable you to go to India, you can get it on application to the Government; but, in that case, you would not be allowed to return. If you wand to return fight shy of this assistance, and use your own money or borrow from your friends. If you re-indenture, you come under the same law —namely, 25 of 1891. My advice to you is: Do not re-indenture, but by all means serve your present masters under the common law of the county. Now, in the event of any occasion arising (which I hope it will not do), you will know what is necessary.

Victoria County has not been as free from violence as the Newcastle district was. You retaliated. I do not care whether it was

[1] The speech was translated into Tamil.

under provocation or not, but you retaliated, and have used sticks and stones, and you have burnt sugarcane. That is not passive resistance. If I had been in your midst I would have repudiated you, and allowed rather my own head to be broken than allow a single stick or stone to be used. Passive resistance is a more powerful weapon than all the sticks, stones and gunpowder in the world. If imposed upon, you must suffer even unto death. That is passive resistance. If, therefore, I was an indentured Indian working for the Hon. Mr. Marshall Campbell, Mr. Saunders, or other employer, and if I found my treatment not just, I would not go to the Protector—I would go to my master and ask for justice; and if he would not grand it, I would say that I would remain there without food or drink until it was granded. I am quite sure that the stoniest heart will be melted by passive resistance. Let this sink deeply into yourselves. This is a sovereign and most effective remedy.

If you wand any advice or guidance, all I can suggest is that you go to Phoenix to Mr. West [or Mr. Chhaganlal Gandhi][1], if you do not wand to pay Mr. Langston, or any of his brothers in law. I have no doubt that if you go to Mr. Langston with a certificate from Mr. West [or Mr. Chhaganlal Gandhi], saying that you are too poor to pay a lawyer's fee, that the lawyer in Mr. Langston will sleep, and the man within him will rise, and he will give you advice free of charge. Do not sign any document unless you first consult Phoenix, and Phoenix advises you to sign it. If Phoenix ever fails you, or wands a penny from you, shun Phoenix.

I shall now say my farewell to Verulam and you all. The scene before me will not fade in my memory, be the distance ever so great. May God help you all in your trouble. May your own conduct be such that God may find it possible to help you.

Mr. Gandhi then lowered his voice to address the Europeans near to him. He asked his European friends to forgive those Indians who during that awful time retaliated. He had no part or parcel in such retaliation but there were times in life when one lost self-control, and the brute in one arose, and one felt that might was right, and worked with the doctrine of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth". He again asked for their forgiveness. He thought that sometimes the European employer was inclined to be selfish, and he asked them to bear in mind that the indentured Indians were human beings, with the same sentiments as themselves. They were not cattle, but had all the weaknesses of themselves, and all the virtues if they were only

[1] This addition is found in *Golden Number*, *Indian Opinion*, 1914.

brought out. He made a plea for sanitary housing, and asked that the Europeans would look upon their indentured Indians as fellow-beings, and not as Asiatics who had nothing in common with them. The indentured Indian was a moral being.

Do not place him in surroundings in which he cannot rise from hideous immorality. He is not beyond reclaiming, but is capable of responding to every moral pressure and realising the highest moral height.[1]

Let them credit them to the fullest extent with their weaknesses, as also at least with the possibility of all the virtues. Would they not then treat their Indian employees even as brothers? It was not enough that they were well treated as they well treated their cattle. It was not enough that they looked upon them with a kindly eye merely; but it was necessary that employers should have a much broader view of their own position, that they should think of their employees as fellow human beings and not as Asiatics who had nothing in common with them who were Europeans, and they would also respond to every attention that might be given to them. Then they would have an intelligent interest not merely in the material or physical well-being of their men, but in their moral well-being. They would look after their morality, after their children, after their education, after their sanitation, and, if they were herding together in such a manner that they could not but indulge in hideous immorality, that they would themselves recoil with horror from the very imagination that the men who were for the time being under their control should indulge in these things because they had been placed in these surroundings. Let them not consider that, because these men were drawn from the lowest strata of society, they were beyond reclamation. No, they would respond to every moral pressure that might be brought to bear upon them, and they will certainly realise the moral height that is possible for every human being, no matter who he is, no matter what tinge of colour his skin possesses.[2]

The Natal Mercury, 14-7-1914 and *Golden Number, Indian Opinion*, 1914

[1] What follows is an additional report found in *Golden Number*, *Indian Opinion*, 1914.

[2] S. D. Shroff then proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman. A number of Indians insisted on prostrating themselves before Gandhiji. A photograph was taken and then Gandhiji and Kasturba left for Durban by the 1 o'clock special train.

199. SPEECH AT DURBAN MEETING[1]

[*July 12, 1914*]

SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

The honour I have received today is the highest ever in my life, for your love has been simply beyond words, and seeing so many of my indentured brothers and sisters makes me happy indeed. You must have heard quite a few things about the Settlement, some of them, perhaps, false. The indentured friends will be able, on the expiry of their contracts, to buy land and settle down as free men. If, however, you are not sufficiently vigiland after my departure or if you weaken, the Government may even exploit the situation to its advandage. In that case, all that you did last year to win relief from your sufferings you must repeat and suffer again. You will not for that purpose need my presence or that of other leaders. If thus, in the hour of your difficulty, you turn to satyagraha instead of looking for leaders, success will assuredly be yours.

I shall now tell you something else. For Indians born here, this istheir motherland. They have a better right here than other Indians. Their future is bound up with that of this country. I would ask them to be vigiland. They would do well to turn their attention to land insteadof crowding lawyers' or other offices. Besides, whenever as a commu-nity you find it necessary to oppose the authorities, you should employ the same weapon as you did during the last eight years to a successful end.

Brothers and sisters under indenture, yours is a very wretched state. I have had information from several sources throwing doubt on the value of the repeal of the £3 tax. The money thus saved [it has been suggested] will go to wine-dealers and goldsmiths. The labourers will be robbed at either place. This is quite true. To goldsmiths, of course, I can say: "Dear friends, give up robbing. It can have no good result. Do not reduce your brethren to a miserable state. Do not rob your poor kith and kin by mixing copper or brass with gold." To the wine-dealers, I can say nothing. But I shall address myself to you. If you resolve that you will have no intoxicating drink, the wine-dealers will close down their shops. I have often seen numbers

[1] Gandhiji addressed a meeting of indentured labourers and other Indians held on the Football Ground, Durban,

of men and women, lost in drink, engaged in street-brawls or going tipsily along public roads. I have been deeply moved by such sights. What a pity, I would say, that my brothers and sisters should be in such a state! Through this wretched habit of drinking, how low have we sunk in this country? Losing all sense, we have fallen into immorality and vice. In order that we may be freed from this condition, the young among us must come forward. They must reason and plead with the obtuse, entreat them and dissuade them from drinking. They must station themselves near wine-shops and turn away Indians who might approach these. If, in doing so, they have to suffer insults or assaults, they must put up with them, too. This course, if adopted, would help destroy the evil habit. You will all become better in the result. The whites here will also look on you with respect. Your pecuniary condition will improve as well, and you will be set on the right path. I, therefore, beg of you to shake off this evil habit.

I will never forget your love for me and it will be my chief duty in India to look after your interests. I am under indenture with you all for the rest of my life, so that I am not likely ever to put you out of my heart. May you, too, not forget me.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 22-7-1914

200. PARTING MESSAGE[1]

[DURBAN,
July 12, 1914]

Whether you are Hindus or Muslims, Parsis or Christians, work unitedly as Indians. Forget religious differences and never allow your heart to shrink. The community will retain the prestige it has gained only if all of you work together. If, during my stay in South Africa, I have harmed anyone, maybe unknowingly, please forgive me.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 22-7-1914

[1] Gandhiji gave this message at Durban on the eve of his departure for Johannesburg.

201. SPEECH AT JOHANNESBURG[1]

[*July 13, 1914*]

Mr. Gandhi . . . declared that at last a settlement had been reached that was honourable to both sides, and in keeping with the dignity of passive resisters; for the Government had conceded every tittle of what had been asked for by Mr. Cachalia in his last letter[2] before the negotiations were interrupted last year. To have asked the Government to go further would, Mr. Gandhi declared, have been a breach of faith on the part of passive resisters, to which he could be no party.

The Transvaal Leader, 14-7-1914

202. SPEECH AT FAREWELL BANQUET[3]

JOHANNESBURG,
July 14, 1914

Mr. Gandhi said that they or circumstances had placed him that evening in a most embarrassing position. Hitherto those who had known him in Johannesburg had known him in the capacity of one of many hosts at gatherings of that kind, but that evening they had placed him in the unfortunate position of being a guest, and he did not know how he would be able to discharge that duty. For the other he thought long experience had fitted him, if he might say so with due humility, most admirably; but the present position was entirely new to him and Mrs. Gandhi, and he was exceedingly diffident as to how he was going to discharge the new duty that had been imposed upon him. So much had been said about Mrs. Gandhi and himself, their so-called devotion, their so-called self-sacrifice, and many other things. There was one injunction of his religion, and he thought it was true of all religions, and that was that, when one's praises were sung, one should fly from those praises, and, if one could not do that, one should stop one's ears, and if one could not do either of these things, one should dedicate everything that was said in connection with one to the

[1] On their arrival at Park Station, Gandhiji and Kasturba were greeted by a large crowd of Indians. They were seated in a cab drawn by enthusiastic admirers and taken in procession. Later Gandhiji addressed a meeting.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary for Interior", 12-9-1913.

[3] A farewell banquet was given in the Masonic Hall, Jeppe Street, in honour of Gandhiji, Kasturba and Kallenbach. They were presented with addresses on behalf of the British Indian Association, the Chinese Association, the Tamil Benefit Society, the Transvaal Indian Women's Association and the Gujarati, the Mahomedan and the Parsee communities. Offering his four sons to Gandhiji, C. K. T. Naidoo said: "On behalf of myself and my wife, I have the honour to present these four boys to be servands of India."

Almighty, the Divine Essence, which pervaded everyone and everything in the Universe, and he hoped that Mrs Gandhi and he would have the strength to dedicate all that had been said that evening to that Divine Essence.

Of all the precious a gifts that had been given to them, those four boys were the most precious, and probably Mr. Chamney could tell them something of the law of adoption in India and what Mr. and Mrs. Naidoo, both of them old gaol-birds, had done. They had gone through the ceremony of adoption, and they had surrendered their right to their four children and given them (Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi) the charge. He did not know that they were worthy to take charge of those children. He could only assure them that they would try to do their best. The four boys had been his pupils when he had been conducting a school for Passive Resisters at Tolstoy Farm and later on at Phoenix. Then when Mrs. Naidoo had sought imprisonment, the boys had been taken over to Johannesburg, and he thought that he had lost those four pearls, but the pearls had returned to him. He only hoped that Mrs. Gandhi and he would be able to take charge of the precious gift.

Johannesburg was not a new place to him. He saw many friendly faces there, many who had worked with him in many struggles in Johannesburg. He had gone through much in life. A great deal of depression and sorrow had been his lot, but he had also learnt during all those years to love Johannesburg even though it was a Mining Camp. It was in Johannesburg that he had found his most precious friends. It was in Johannesburg that the foundation for the great struggle of Passive Resistance was laid in the September of 1906. It was in Johannesburg that he had found a friend, a guide, and a biographer in the late Mr. Doke. It was in Johannesburg that he had found in Mrs. Doke, a loving sister, who had nursed him back to life when he had been assaulted by a countryman who had misunderstood his mission and who misunderstood what he had done. It was in Johannesburg that he had found a Kallenbach, a Polak, a Miss Schlesin, and many another who had always helped him, and had always cheered him and his countrymen. Johannesburg, therefore, had the holiest associations of all the holy associations that Mrs. Gandhi and he would carry back to India, and, as he had already said on many another platform, South Africa, next to India, would be the holiest land to him and to Mrs. Gandhi and to his children, for, in spite of all the bitternesses them those life-long companions. It was in Johannesburg again that the European Committee had been formed, when Indians were going through the darkest stage in their history, presided over then, as it still was, by Mr. Hosken. It was last, but not least, Johannesburg that had given Valiamma, that young girl, whose picture rose before him even as he spoke, who had died in the cause of truth. Simple-minded in faith—she had not the knowledge that he had, she did not know what Passive Resistance was, she did not know what it was the community would gain, but she was simply taken up with unbounded enthusiasm for her people—she went to gaol, came out of it a wreck, and within a few days died. It was Johannes-

burg again that produced a Nagappen and Narayansamy, two lovely youths hardly out of their teens, who also died. But both Mrs. Gandhi and he stood living before them. He and Mrs. Gandhi had worked in the lime-light; those others had worked behind the scenes, not knowing where they were going, except this, that what they were doing was right and proper, and, if any praise was due anywhere at all, it was due to those three who died. They had had the name of Hurbatsingh given to them. He (the speaker) had had the privilege of serving imprisonment with him. Hurbatsingh was 75 years old. He was an ex-indentured Indian, and when he (the speaker) asked him why he had come there, that he had gone there to seek his grave, the brave man replied, "What does it matter? I know what you are fighting for. You have not to pay the £3 tax, but my fellow ex-indentured Indians have to pay that tax and what more glorious death could I meet?" He had met that death in the gaol at Durban. No wonder if Passive Resistance had fired and quickened the conscience of South Africa! And, therefore, whenever he had spoken, he had said that, if the Indian community had gained anything through this settlement, it was certainly due to Passive Resistance; but it was certainly not due to Passive Resistance alone. He thought that the cablegram that had been read that evening showed that they had to thank that noble Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, for his great effort. He thought, too, that they had to thank the Imperial Government, who, during the past few years, in season and out of season, had been sending despatches after despatches to General Botha, and asking him to consider their standpoint—the Imperial standpoint. They had to thank also the Union Government for the spirit of justice they had adopted at that time. They had, too, to thank the noble members of both Houses of the Legislature who had made those historic speeches and brought about the settlement; and, lastly, they had to thank the Opposition also for their co-operation with the Government in bringing about the passage of the Bill, in spite of the jarring note produced by the Natal Members. When one considered all these things, the service that he and Mrs. Gandhi might have rendered could be only very little. They were but two out of many instruments that had gone to make this settlement. And what was that settlement? In his humble opinion, the value of the settlement, if they were to examine it, would consist not in the intrinsic things they had received, but in the sufferings and the sorrows long-drawn-out that were necessary in order to achieve those things. If an outsider were to come there and find that there was a banquet given to two humble individuals for the humble part they played in a settlement which freed indentured Indians from a tax which they should never have been called upon to pay, and if he were told also that some redress were given in connection with their marriages, and that their wives who were lawfuly married to them according to their own religions had not hitherto been recognized as their wives, but by this settlement those wives were recognized as valid wives according to the law of South Africa, that outsider would laugh, and consider that those Indians, or those Europeans who had joined them in having a banquet, and

giving all those praises and; so on, must be a parcel of fools. What was there to gloat over in having an intolerable burden removed which might have been removed years ago? What was there in a lawful wife's being recognized in a place like South Africa? But, proceeded Mr. Gandhi, he concurred with Mr. Duncan in an article he wrote some years ago, when he truly analysed the struggle, and said that behind that struggle for concrete rights lay the great spirit which asked for an abstract principle, and the fight which was undertaken in 1906, although it was a fight against a particular law, was a fight undertaken in order to combat the spirit that was seen about to overshadow the whole of South Africa, and to undermine the glorious British Constitution, of which the Chairman had spoken so loftily that evening, and about which he (the speaker) shared his views. It was his knowledge, right or wrong, of the British Constitution which bound him to the Empire. Tear that Constitution to shreds and his loyalty also would be torn to shreds. Keep that Constitution intact, and they held him bound a slave to that Constitution. He had felt that the choice lay for himself and his fellow-countrymen between two courses, when this spirit was brooding over South Africa, either to sunder themselves from the British Constitution, or to fight in order that the ideals of that Constitution might be preserved—but only the ideals. Lord Ampthill had said, in a preface[1] to Mr. Doke's book, that the theory of the British Constitution must be preserved at any cost if the British Empire was to be saved from the mistakes that all the previous Empires had made. Practice might bend to the temporary aberration through which local circumstances might compel them to pass, it might bend before unreasoning or unreasonable prejudice, but theory once recognized could never be departed from, and this principle must be maintained at any cost. And it was that spirit which had been acknowledged now by the Union Government, and acknowledged how nobly and loftily. The words that General Smuts so often emphasised still rang in his ears. He had said, "Gandhi, this time we wand no misunderstanding, we wand no mental or other reservations, let all the cards be on the table, and I wand you to tell me wherever you think that a particular passage or word does not read in accordance with your own reading," and it was so. That was the spirit in which he approached the negotiations. When he remembered General Smuts of a few years ago, when he told Lord Crewe that South Africa would not depart from its policy of racial distinction, that it was bound to retain that distinction, and that, therefore, the sting that lay in this Immigration Law would not be removed, many a friend, including Lord Ampthill, asked whether they could not for the time being suspend their activity. He had said "No." If they did that, it would undermine his loyalty, and even though he might be the only person, he would still fight on. Lord Ampthill had congratulated him, and that great nobleman had never deserted the cause

[1] *Vide* "Lord Ampthill's Introduction to "M.K. Gandhi: An Indian Patriot in South Africa", 26-8-1909.

even when it was at its lowest ebb, and they saw the result that day. They had not by any means to congratulate themselves on a victory gained. There was no question of a victory gained, but the question of the establishment of the principle that, so far as the Union of South Africa at least was concerned, its legislation would never contain the racial taint, would never contain the colour disability. The practice would certainly be different. There was the Immigration Law—it recognized no racial distinctions, but in practice they had arranged, they had given a promise, that there should be no undue influx from India as to immigration. That was a concession to present prejudice. Whether it was right or wrong was not for him to discuss then. But it was the establishment of that principle which had made the struggle so importand in the British Empire, and the establishment of that principle which had made those sufferings perfectly justifiable and perfectly honourable, and he thought that, when they considered the struggles from that standpoint, it was a perfectly dignified thing for any gathering to congratulate itself upon such a vindication of the principles of the British Constitution. One word of caution he wished to utter regarding the Settlement. The Settlement was honourable to both parties. He did not think there was any room left for misunderstanding, but whilst it was final in the sense that it closed the great struggle, it was not final in the sense that it gave to Indians all that they were entitled to. There was still the Gold Law which had many a sting in it. There was still the Licensing Law throughout the Union, which also contained many a sting. There was still a matter which the Colonial-born Indians especially could not understand or appreciate, namely, the watertight compartments in which they had to live; whilst there was absolutely free inter-communication and inter-migration between the Provinces for Europeans, Indians had to be cooped up in their respective Provinces. Then there was undue restraint on their trading activity. There was the prohibition as to holding landed property in the Transvaal, which was degrading, and all these things took Indians into all kinds of undesirable channels. These restrictions would have to be removed. But for that, he thought, sufficient patience would have to be exercised. Time was now at their disposal, and how wonderfully the tone had been changed! And here he had been told in Cape Town, and he believed it implicitly, the spirit of Mr. Andrews had pervaded all those statesmen and leading men whom he saw. He came and went away after a brief period, but he certainly fired those whom he saw with a sense of their duty to the Empire of which they were members. But, in any case, to whatever circumstances that healthy tone was due, it had not escaped him. He had seen it amongst European friends whom he met at Cape Town; he had seen it more fully in Durban, and this time it had been his privilege to meet many Europeans who were perfect strangers even on board the train, who had come smilingly forward to congratulate him on what they had called a great victory. Everywhere he had noticed that healthy tone. He asked European friends to continue that activity, either through the European Committee or through other channels, and

to give his fellow-countrymen their help and extend that fellow-feeling to them also, so that they might be able to work out their own salvation.

To his countrymen he would say that they should wait and nurse the Settlement, which he considered was all that they could possibly and reasonably have expected, and that they would now live to see, with the co-operation of their European friends, that what was promised was fulfilled, that the administration of the existing laws was just, and that vested rights were respected in the administration; that after they had nursed these things, if they cultivated European public opinion, making it possible for the Government of the day to grand a restoration of the other rights of which they had been deprived, he did not think that there need be any fear about the future. He thought that, with mutual co-operation, with mutual goodwill, with due response on the part of either party, the Indian community need never be a source of weakness to that Government or to any Government. On the contrary, he had full faith in his countrymen that, if they were well treated, they would always rise to the occasion and help the Government of the day. If they had insisted on their rights on many an occasion, he hoped that the European friends who were there would remember that they had also discharged the responsibilities which had faced them.

And now it was time for him to close his remarks and say a few words of farewell only. He did not know how he could express those words. The best years of his life had been passed in South Africa. India, as his distinguished countryman, Mr. Gokhale, had reminded him; had become a strange land to him. South Africa he knew, but not India. He did not know what impelled him to go to India, but he did know that the parting from them all, the parting from the European friends who had helped him through thick and thin, was a heavy blow, and one he was least able to bear; yet heknew he had to part from them. He could only say farewell and ask them to give him their blessing, to pray for them that their heads might not be turned by the praise they had received, that they might still know how to do their duty to the best of their ability, that they might still learn that first, second, and last should be the approbation of their own conscience, and that, then, whatever might be due to them would follow in its own time.[1]

Golden Number, Indian Opinion, 1914

[1] Kallenbach then thanked the gathering. Miss Schlesin was given an address. The proceedings concluded with a speech by Dr. Krause.

203. INTERVIEW TO "THE TRANSVAAL LEADER"

[JOHANNESBURG,
July 14, 1914]

I am going to India for good. I am going with the intention of never returning, and if ever I have to return to South Africa or leave India, it will be owing to circumstances beyond my control, and at present beyond my conception.

The Settlement I consider to be entirely honourable to both parties. I believe both General Botha and General Smuts have acted most justly. There has been no mental reservation whatever. The one desire on the part of General Smuts was that there should be no misunderstanding left, and he endeavoured to appreciate the Indian standpoint at every stage of the interviews that he gladly gave me, even when he was pressed with work.

And I do feel that nothing could have been finer than the co-operation that the Opposition gave whole-heartedly.

In fact, the whole spirit of the debate, both in the Senate and the Assembly, in spite of a jarring note from Natal, was of a highly Imperial order. And it will be a thousand pities if either my own countrymen, by excessive agitation, or Europeans spoil that tone and destroy the good effect produced by the Settlement. It respects all the reasonable demands of the Europeans with reference to immigration and such other matters, and it concedes to the Indians entirely what they have been fighting for and suffering for during the last eight years. Throughout my travelling I have noticed a very exemplary attitude on the part of European friends, many of whom have been really strangers to the question, and certainly strangers to me personally.

[REPORTER:] Is the struggle really at an end—will Indians here not fight, constitutionally no doubt, for political equality?

We have never asked for political equality. We do not hope to get that.

You wand the vote?

No; my view on that would be to leave the question of the political vote severely alone, and my firm conviction is that passive resistance is infinitely superior to the vote. I have never asked for the

vote. What I always have insisted on was the removal of racial distinctions, not for equality.

Mr. Gandhi then went on to recall some of the more remarkable incidents in his career, particularly the march of the Indian strikers into the Transvaal in November last year which he described as his most wonderful experience in South Africa.

Through that march, I learned to love human nature more, and to appreciate that no matter whether the human spirit flourished under European or Indian, under the Western or the Eastern sky, it could respond in an equal measure to the same chord.

In recounting his experiences on the march, Mr. Gandhi did not dwell on the hardships; these he seemed to have forgotten. But he recalled the little acts of kindness that were done by obscure individuals. There was the station master who brought him a glass of milk and a couple of boiled eggs, and many other delicacies to tempt a starving man.

It seemed rank ingratitude to refuse them, but I kept to my vow, and I explained to the station master that I seldom ate eggs, and could not taste the milk and the other nice things he had brought, because I had to accept the same treatment as the rank and file. He seemed hurt,: and I was sorry, but I was not ungrateful, and I hope the kind soul understood.

At another place the proprietor of an hotel said to me: “You are shivering. Come to my hotel, and I will put you up.” I thanked him, but declined, and, pointing to my companions, I said: “They too feel the cold, and are shivering.” “Oh! It is not a case of putting you on the verandah,” he said, “I will give you a room.” His kind offer I was obliged to decline.

At another place we reached, a woman who ran a small store placed everything she had at our disposal. I remonstrated, but she would have her way. She said: “Though you are all Indians, you are suffering and I hope I have enough of the old British sense of sympathy left in me to help you.” At Charlestown and Newcastle the whole community helped us, and we helped them. There was no pilfering, no drunkenness.

I explained to the men before they started that they would win,not by putting their sticks over the shoulders of others, but over their own. It took them some time to see it, but that was the condition on which I allowed them to come with me. So our army kept on its way. We rose before the sun in the morning and did the best of our day’s march before food passed our lips. Then we halted for a small

ration of bread and sugar. It was, you will admit, a wonderful thing for two thousand men to have marched so far without violating the law, without stealing or rioting.

As to the treatment of himself personally, and of his family during those troubled times, Mr. Gandhi could not find words to express his appreciation.[1]

The Transvaal Leader, 15-7-1914

204. LETTER TO INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

[JOHANNESBURG,
Before *July* 15, 1914]

DEAR BROTHER OR SISTER,

On the eve of my departure from South Africa, I should like to leave a brief message in writing.

There has been no limit to the love I have received from the Indians in this country. I am sure those who have given such love will always prosper. I hear it said that our community is ungrateful. My heart tells me that this is said in ignorance and impatience. Were the Indian people really so, I would have felt no pride in being called a son of India, nor could I recite with utter sincerity the sublime poem, *India, a refuge of all those that suffer.*

Though I have had more than human love from Indians, I also know that there are some of them who believe themselves, and aretaken by others, to be my enemies. For me, however, they are no enemies. Those who speak ill of us sometimes prove to be our true friends. I do not consider at the moment whether this is so in my case

[1] In the course of his report, the representative of *The Transvaal Leader* summed up thus his own estimate of Gandhiji: "So it is humanly certain that the most arresting figure in the Indian community in South Africa today is to say good-bye to a country in which he has spent many years, crowded with experience and exertion, his work on behalf of his countrymen at last crowned with success. When a man has been imprisoned so often that were his offences not merely political he would have qualified as an 'habitual', when he has times without number endured fatigue, and fasted with a smile, when he has moved steadily on over obstacles that might daunt the bravest, to the goal on which his eye has been fixed, you might picture him physically as an Apollo, and imagine his heart made of the fibre that belongs to martyrs. In the qualities of the heart and of the soul you may believe the best of Gandhi, but you would wonder, did you see him, that so frail a figure could house so vigorous a character."

or not. I only wand to show that I am not free from responsibility for their speaking ill of me. If I had perfect love for them, they would never have bitter things to say against me. Such love, however, is hardly possible for man. Whilst I lack it, I shall bear their hostility; I shall not regard them as my enemies.

There are easy and effective measures which will enable Indians to live in peace in this country. All religious andagonism, as that one is a Hindu or a Muslim, a Christian or a Parsi, should be forgotten. Let there be no provincial distinctions such as Bengalis, Madrasis, Gujaratis, Punjabis, etc. All ideas of high and low which divide men into Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras should be abandoned. Indians are all subject to the same laws; if so, how can we fight them disunited?

We need must observe truth. I know it is futile to expect, in this land, that everyone will be perfectly truthful; it should, however, be possible for us to adhere to truth, by and large. Otherwise, Indians cannot live on here as Indians, or human beings.

Whenever there are hardships, they will have to be fought courageously. Should Indians refuse to fight them, blinded by self-interest or because of weakness, they will assuredly be overwhelmed by disaster.

If the leaders are selfish, greedy, lazy, given to lying and licentious, the common people will make no progress. And so, should the latter remain backward, the responsibility will be that of the leaders and theirs, too, will be the guilt.

Indians from Bombay are often rude to those hailing from Calcutta and Madras and indifferent to their feelings. The term *colcha*[1] has still not gone out of use in our language. Such ways are fraught with danger and, if not abandoned, will assuredly bring the community to grief. The people from Bombay know very well that their compatriots from Calcutta and Madras are far more numerous than they. Even from the point of view of self-interest, therefore, it is necessary that we show them due regard.

Even good Indians show contempt for Colonial-born Indians. I have believed, and still believe, that they are wrong in doing so. Colonial-born Indians do have some defects; but, then, who has not? Theyhave also many fine qualities. It is worth noting that, if the

[1] Probably, a corrupt form of “coolie”

satyagraha campaign has been a glorious performance, it was because of the sacrifices of Indians born in this country. Large numbers of such Indians, and many women too, have gone to gaol. To help forward any Colonial-born Indians, either educated or uneducated, will be an act of piety on the partof the community meriting a reward, and I am sure it will be duly rewarded, for such has been my experience.

We are very dirty and some of us behave so abjectly, because of greed, that the whites feel disgusted, as they well might. If the leaders exert themselves, they can end all the filthiness that we notice around us. That there should be too many people sleeping in small rooms, that these should hold stores of foodgrains, fruit, etc., and never be washed, that lavatories should be kept unclean, that bedsteads should never be aired in the sun, that the windows should never be opened, that the place should never be dusted, that sleeping, cooking, bathing, relaxing, should all be done in one and the same room—this is pathetic indeed. This way we turn ourselves into denizens of hell in this very world. This state of affairs must change.

Gold-smuggling by members of the community is on the increase. Some Indians wand to get rich quick. They will get into trouble and disgrace the name of the community as a whole. I wish they would rein themselves in.

As some Tamils and Calcuttamen have become slaves to the wicked habit of drink, so have some Gujaratis too. The Indian who weans them from this will be a man of noble soul indeed. Indian businessmen can exercise a good influence, if they mean to, over these helpless brethren whose state is so pitiable.

As I understand it, the Settlement which has taken place is a charter of our freedom. We could not have accepted less than what it gives. More it is not possible to secure at present. It is my emphatic advice, therefore, that every effort should be made to preserve what has been obtained and to resist the Government if it seeks to take away anything from it. If it places upon the terms of the Settlement a construction different from ours, or mine, or if a court does so and the Government then refuses to make any modifications, there will be cause for friction and the Government will again invite the charge of breach of promise.

The main difficulty for the present will be regarding the Dealers' Licenses Act. Even in this matter, however, redress will be

easier wherever things are under the jurisdiction of the Union Government. Where, on the other hand, licenses are granded by the municipalities, things will be very difficult. The remedy for this is to put up a fight whenever licenses are taken away, apply to courts and petition the Government, hold meetings and pass resolutions. If, at the end of all this, there should be no redress, there will be nothing for it but to resort to satyagraha. This is easy to offer in the matter of licenses. If only the hawkers show courage, the struggle for licences could be won. It is possible that traders will have to suffer for some time. I hope they will not fail to do their duty at the critical moment. We must demand complete freedom to trade, and ought to get it. Everything depends on the traders.

The Gold Law in the Transvaal is a very oppressive measure. The settlement secures to all the right to carry on business wherever they are doing so at present. People can shift their business from one place to another in the same town, but they cannot go over to another town. So much can be taken as included in the clause on "existing rights". If the Government permits less than this, that will be a breach of the terms of the Settlement. To secure more than this, independent efforts will be necessary, and I don't think these can be made at present. Great care will have to be exercised to see that they do not keep us in the dark and pass complicated laws on these and related subjects. In regard to the Gold Law also, it should be easy to offer satyagraha against it, if it is administered with excessive severity.

As regards the Transvaal Law of 1885, I don't see any possibility of our being able to touch it at present.

On the issue of marriages, it is not possible to secure anything more for the present. To waste efforts on that will interfere with other importand tasks. There is no better law elsewhere than the one which has been enacted.

We need not fight for votes or for freedom of entry for fresh immigrands from India. I think we shall have to rest content at present with the removal of the taint [of racial discrimination] from the law.

However, if the Indian community is strong and itself enterprising, if it maintains unity, truthfulness and courage, the following expectations may be realized in 15 years:

1. Complete freedom of trade.

2. Full rights of ownership of land in all Provinces and

3. Freedom of movement from one Province to another.

In order to bring all this about, it will be necessary to have the Licensing Acts, the Gold Laws, the Township Act, Law 3 of 1885 and the Immigration Act amended, for which purpose public opinion will have to be cultivated among the whites of South Africa. This is not difficult to do.

The community need not be anxious on account of the indentured labourers. There is nothing in the new law which can be interpreted to mean that the Government may send them away. I appeal to all Indians to help Mr. Polak and seek his help. No one is as well informed about our question as he. He has regard for the community, is honest, has ability and is full of enthusiasm. It is my earnest request to Indians in all Provinces that they utilize Mr. Polak's services and follow his advice. Others will not be able to draft petitions as well as he can. He will not accept money for any public work, which means that he will remain in South Africa only if he can pay his way by his professional work; otherwise, he will leave for England. I know that he still does not earn enough to meet his needs and, therefore, I earnestly appeal to the Transvaal Indians to entrust their legal affairs to Mr. Polak.

Indian Opinion is run only for the service of the community. So is Phoenix. Those who have settled there have not done so with the intention of making money. They draw only as much as they need for a simple and plain life. It will be so much of a loss to the community if it does not utilize the services of those who are working in this spirit. Mr. Omar Hajee Jhaveri and Parsee Rustomjee are now the owners of the Phoenix lands and its managing trustees in South Africa. The community can get all information about Phoenix through them or even directly. I request every Indian to understand the objects of Phoenix. I cannot help saying that it is a great field for anyone aspiring to serve India. This, some may indeed feel, is rather improper of me to say in view of my close association with Phoenix; it is, however, my sincere belief.

Though I am leaving for the motherland, I am not likely to forget South Africa. I should like friends who may have occasion to go to India to come and see me there. I do intend, of course, to work in India in regard to the disabilities here. And I shall be able to work better if the people in South Africa ask for my services. I think the expenses to be incurred in India on this work by way of stationery,

postage, printing, etc., should be met from here. The money I have been given I propose to use only for this purpose.

Above all, I wish to say that it is up to the community to win its freedom and that its ultimate weapon, an irresistible one, is satyagraha.

If I have harmed any Indian, knowingly or unknowingly, if I have been the cause of pain to anyone, I crave God's forgiveness and theirs.

I am, of course, a satyagrahi and I hope always to remain one, but in December last I fell more under the spell of indenture. Since the term *girmitio* ("indentured labourer") is already in use about me in Gujarati.

I am,

As ever,

The community's indentured labourer,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 6020

205. TRIBUTE TO PASSIVE RESISTANCE MARTYRS[1]

BRAAMFONTEIN,
July 15, 1914

Mr. Gandhi said he thought that, in Johannesburg, among their intimate European friends, Mrs. Phillips was the oldest, and therefore, if they considered her to be the mother of the family, they only gave her her due. Mrs. Phillips had set the seal upon that that morning by unveiling those two monuments. He knew that he was uttering a truism when he said that Mrs. Phillips had taken the trouble, but it was not the physical trouble. What he wished to refer to was that Mrs. Phillips had come there with a heart just as sore as any Indian's and he hoped that the noble words that she had uttered would go down into the hearts of every one of them. He personally had never felt tired of repeating his sentiments again and again in connection with that dear sister—a daughter to her, to him a sister—and that dear brother Nagappen, and whenever he had thought of those two and the neglected grave of Narayansamy, whose bones were now resting at Lourenco Marques, he had felt the littleness of the

[1] Gandhiji attended at 11.30 a.m. the ceremonial unveiling of memorial tablets erected in honour of Nagappen and Valliamma in Braamfontein cemetery. Kasturba, Miss Schlesin and Mrs. Polak were among those present. Gandhiji spoke after Mrs. Phillips, wife of Rev. Charles Phillips, the Acting Chairman of the European Committee, had unveiled the memorials.

service rendered by all of them. Mrs. Polak had just reminded him how lightly they had treated the sickness of the girl whose body lay under that cold stone. He recalled also a scene when he left Durban, and when he had paid a hurried visit, with Mr. Polak to see Valliamma—that was a most affecting scene. She was just coming out. Her mother was there. Her mother, most loving and attentive, thought that she must hurry forward Valliamma. He felt guilty that there was any hurry at the time, but she was brought out. She was almost in a swoon. They three carried her in the best manner they could. There was no feather mattress, no stretcher, in the room where she lay, simply the wooden floor; not that they were cruel to her, but their discipline was so rigorous and exacting that those who were in immediate charge, as Thambi Naidoo, would not think of having any other things or taking any other things. That was her lot inside and outside prison, that was her spirit, that was the spirit also, he well remembered, of the young lady by her side in the same condition, who had just been delivered of a child. He did not know whether they should not now consider themselves criminally guilty. At the same time he did not know because, as Passive Resisters, they held the soul immortal, and the body merely subject to the spirit, and if the body might be lost for the perfection of the soul, they held it was the right thing. Valliamma herself, he fancied, if he knew anything of that soul, would have spurned the idea of being treated differently from her other sisters. Those scenes would never be effaced from his memory. Nagappen's face he could not recall so vividly as Valliamma's, but he knew full well how that brave lad had suffered in that horrible camp prison, exposed to the most severe weather, and how unnecessary it had been to send him there. But the desire then had been not to do something for Passive Resisters but to bend their spirit. But today they recognized the steel of which Nagappen's heart was made. He came out of prison a wreck, but he said. What did it matter? He had to die but once, and he was ready to go to gaol again if it was necessary for him to do so, and so that undaunted spirit died. But yet they were not dead, for they would live, and live for ever in the memory of every Indian. It was a matter for mourning that they were no longer with them to set them a noble example, but when he thought of it a little more deeply, it was a matter for rejoicing that they had amongst them such three noble souls who had usefully lived out their lives for the sake of truth—he would not say for their country. Little they knew of their country. He believed they were perfect strangers to it—they were Colonial-born. They had no idea of their Motherland; to them South Africa was their Motherland; but this they knew, that it was a sacred fight, a religious fight, a fight for truth. They lived for the truth, and for it they died, and therefore he felt that they had every cause for rejoicing and instead of appreciating them by stones, they should erect in their own hearts, every one of them, imperishable memorials, and, whenever they felt like succumbing to temptation, remind themselves of the imperishable names of these three. Then, indeed, would they have done honour to their graves in the true spirit and then only

would it have been worth Mrs. Phillips' while to have come there all the way to perform that ceremony.

Indian Opinion, 29-7-1914

206. SPEECH AT TRANSVAAL INDIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
July 15, 1914

Mr. Gandhi said that they had spoken of him that day as a Protector and a Guru but he felt that he was undeserving of either title, but if they would accept him as their devoted brother, it was the highest honour that he could claim from them, and he knew that it would be a precious privilege to him to think of them, wherever he might be, as his sisters. And as their co-worker and fellow-Passive Resister, but with greater experience than they possessed, he could only tell them to continue the work they had commenced, and that the work they had done was noble. They should hold together as one woman, and, if the call to duty came again, they should not fail to respond and should not fail to do even as Valliamma had done. They should not forget Mrs. Vogl[2]. She had done much selfless work. They could still receive her assistance in taking sewing classes and much other work. Her companionship too was worth catering for. She was a true woman who felt for them. She would do more if she could, and she would never fail to do all she could. They owed her a great deal, but the best honour that they could pay Mrs. Vogl was not to pile gifts upon her, but to follow her advice and receive her assistance, which she was most anxious to give in connection with classes and such other matters. In India sisters gave their blessings to their departing brothers, whether younger or older than they. He hoped that his sisters there would give him their blessing, no matter in what part of the world he might be placed.

Indian Opinion, 5-8-1914

[1] The meeting of the Transvaal Indian Women's Association was held in the Ebenezer Church Hall to bid Gandhiji farewell. Mrs. Rama Moodaley, President of the Association. was in the chair.

[2] She conducted classes for Indian women and took keen interest in the Indian cause.

207. SPEECH AT MUSLIM MEETING[1]

[VREDEDORP,
July 15, 1914]

Before answering the questions, Mr. Gandhi, who was applauded by a section, assured them that he appreciated it as a high honour that they had invited him, because he knew that some of them were opposed to the Settlement and had moved heaven and earth that the settlement should not become final. He had not despaired of pleasing even these countrymen of his. The first question was on whose authority he had accepted or arranged this settlement with the Government. It was on the authority of the general body of the Indians throughout South Africa, because when the final letter of Mr. Cachalia was sent, it was sent in the name of the British Indian community.[2] He was the secretary and carried on the negotiations, and when he found that there was nothing he had to abandon but that he could get all, he did not consider it necessary to come to them again[3]. It was not possible for any public man to do otherwise. If he had done less he would have been an unworthy servand. He did his duty when he carried out the full terms of that letter. Of course, General Smuts wanded this Settlement accepted by the community in general —he did not wand to leave any

[1] Gandhiji addressed a crowded Muslim meeting at the Hamidia Islamic Society Hall, convened for the purpose of expressing Muslims' dissatisfaction over the Sett-lement. Essop Ismail Mia presided. Gandhiji's speech largely comprised statements made in reply to various questions put to him by the Chairman of the meeting and by other speakers. *Rand Daily Mail,* 16-7-1914, reported Mia's observations as follows: "The Chairman whose remarks were interpreted—sometimes with the aid of Mr. Gandhi himself—-asked on whose authority the compromise was made with the Government. He next referred to the funds of the plague hospital, and wished Mr. Gandhi to say what had become of the funds. Ever since the commencement the Indian Association had subscribed, and he wished the accounts to come before the public, and that Mr. Gandhi should explain the position. Four points had been put forward, and Mr. Gandhi, according to his view, had gained only one and a half. In the marriage problem a question had cropped up which required explanation, affecting the Mahommedans. He would explain to his merchand friends what they had gained during their eight years' struggle. Mr. Gandhi had said in Durban that no man could satisfy everybody. He wished to say that Mr. Gandhi had left them with the battle to be fought all over again. As regards the marriage question, not only the Mahommedans, but the Hindus also had said that they had gained nothing."

[2] *The Transvaal Leader* report of the same date has here the words: ". . . without a word of protest. It was supported by all throughout."

[3] *The Transvaal Leader* report has: " . . . he did not think there was any need to hesitate as to whether he should keep it open or conclude the agreement. He had abandoned nothing, but gained everything."

loophole. In the series of meetings so far there had been as much unanimity as possible. The next question was what had they gained out of the Settlement? He suggested that they had gained everything they had asked for. They had gained to the fullest extent and in the most liberal manner.

The next question was what had he done with the hospital moneys? There had been some misunderstanding about this. The origin of this fund was as follows: The stands in the old location had been expropriated, and he acted on behalf of certain claimands against the Town Council.[1] He did not charge the full legal fees, which, taxed, would have amounted to £40 or £50. He agreed to charge so much a stand, and told them that he did not wand it all for himself. £5 he would use for his own purposes, and set the balance aside as the nucleus of a hospital fund. He had ideas at the time of going to England, [of] qualifying as a doctor,[2] and coming out again to minister to their needs; but those were castles in the air. There were no public funds—no charity.[3] The whole of that fund had been used up in the course of the passive resistance movement for public purposes and South African public purposes; but he was unable to hold himself responsible to the public in connection with those funds; but even a child could come and look at his public dealings.

With regard to the accounts of the British Indian Association, he had also to inform them that, every time they had held a committee meeting, he had submitted accounts of disbursements. Later on he had several funds—the andi-Indian law fund, the passive resistance fund, and the funds from Bombay. All these he had accounted for, some in the columns of the Press. He was not taking the books away, and at any time they could ask Mr. Polak as to the disposal of the funds. So long as they were not unreasonable, they could certainly inspect what had been done.

The next question was how many points had been gained. The points in Mr. Cachalia's letter were the marriage question, the £3 tax, the Orange Free State and the Cape entry question, and the administration of the existing legislation with due regard to the Indians' feelings. They had got these five points, and a little more. Now what had the merchands gained? The merchands had gained everything that the community had gained, and had gained probably most of all. The Indian community had raised its status in the estimation of Europeans throughout South Africa. They could no longer be classed as coolies by General Botha and others. The term had been removed as a term ofreproach, silently but effectively. If they had not fought for the past eight years, no trace would have been left here of Indians as a self-respecting community. They might have been able to live in the Locations and eke out the miserable existence of coolies and dogs. If they had asked for more they would not

[1] *The Transvaal Leader* report here adds the words: " . . . 75 out of the 99 entrusting their claims to him. He received part of the costs from the Town Council and was authorised to charge attorney and client fees . . ."

[2] *Vide"*Letter to H.S.L. Polak", 8-9-1909

[3] *The Transvaal* Leader report adds: " . . . but simply his fees and those funds were not used for a hospital . . ."

have got it, and would have been hounded out of court and been regarded as a community not to be trusted. He explained what they had gained by the Settlement in regard to marriage,[1] and concluded by stating that he would continue to serve the community. That was his religion.[2]

[1] *The Transvaal Leader* report here furnishes details of Gandhiji's reply on this point: "He had not yet heard a Hindoo say he was not satisfied with the marriage question. That was where they had gained a little more than they asked. Before the Port Elizabeth case, they thought one Indian wife would be recognized, no matter what her religion. That was overturned; and they came to the conclusion that they should ask the Government to legalise one-wife marriage throughout South Africa. Polygamy had been a question in this country for 50 years, but the only question which arose concerning the Settlement was that of monogamous marriages. What they asked in this respect was granded, and a little more also, for Magistrates were allowed to legalise marriages. Polygamy they could practise, but it was not legalised. Natives could only have one wife. Sir William Solomon wanded to go as far as that with the Indians, but he (Mr. Gandhi) said, 'No; if you do, we will fight.' All he expected the South African Government to do was to become tolerand of polygamy, but not to legalise it."

[2] Here H. O. Ally, who had in 1909 accompanied Gandhiji on a deputation to England, raised a number of points, as reported by *Rand Daily Mail:* "It was only fair that Mr. Gandhi should call a mass meeting and explain the Settlement. They had heard one thing from his speeches in Cape Town and another thing from his speeches in Durban. In his speech at the Masonic Hall again, Mr. Gandhi had admitted that the Colonial-born question was not settled. Many things were not settled, and yet with what right or face could any Indian organisations apply to General Smuts in the future, and say there were certain disabilities and grievances that were killing their people—in the face of Mr. Gandhi's expressions here of the 'final honourable settlement'?

"Cables and congratulations had passed between Gokhale, the Imperial Government and India. Where could they ask for more redress? What they wanded him to explain to them was how they were going to live in future. They had trusted Mr. Gandhi. He (the speaker) was one of his admirers. He (Mr. Gandhi) knew that it was his elder brother that was talking to him. It was not one who was jealous of him. Mr. Gandhi had been a staunch patriot, and he had said so to his detractors. But he (the speaker) never knew that Mr. Gokhale cabled to Mr. Gandhi that it was a mistake not to submit to the Commission the real grievances of the Indians throughout the Transvaal. He now understood that Mr. Gandhi had received such a cable and had spent about £200 on sending a lengthy cable to Bombay about the oath to continue passive resistance until the four points were settled. Now about this settlements. No sensible man expected the Union Government to legalise polygamous marriages. But Mr. Gandhi ought to know very well, because a message was sent to him from that Hall, that it was impossible for Mussulmans to break one syllable out of their holy *Koran.* He was told that, whatever he did with regard to the marriage question, not to bind the Mussulmans with regard to one man one wife, because they would be transgressing the law of God. And the *Koran* said that 'Whosoever transgresses the statutes of God will be cast into hell fire for ever.'

Mr. Gandhi, in reply, said that there was no compulsory registration of children who were South-Africa-born. Up to the age of sixteen they were entirely free. If all passive resisters had fallen and he was the only one left, he would have died in that cause. As for the future, he had said that the Settlement was final in the sense that passive resistance was closed. His own letter[1] to General Smuts had left the door open. The Settlement was that of the passive resistance on the questions that were on the board for which they had fought and bled and suffered. It did not close anything else. It did not prevent them from holding mass meetings, passing resolutions and taking up new passive resistance. The inter-provincial immigration was an open question yet. That was not in the terms of the Settlement, and it was a fair matter for agitation on the part of the Indian community.

The Settlement did not bind himself or the Indian community not to restart passive resistance if they came to the conclusion that they had grievances which would justify it. Take the Free State question, the licensing laws, the gold laws, and the township laws. He had warned his countrymen, however, that they must educate Europeans on these matters. On the marriage question the Settlement did not violate one iota of the Holy *Koran.* He had admitted that they did not expect a Christian community to legalise polygamy, so that there was no point at issue. Day and night his programme was so full that he was not allowed time for meals. He was addressing meetings all the time—some twenty mass meetings in the last few days.[2]

After a number of speeches in Hindustani, Gujarati and Tamil, Mr. Gandhi replied. He did not think the letter he had received was representative of Mahomedan opinion. It was their duty if they wanded a meeting at that time to call it and invite him. With regard to the £1,200, he pointed out that *Indian Opinion* was a public Indian property—it was only nominally registered in his name. The money was

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Therefore they could not accept the law and would remain in the country as unmarried. Not a single Mussulman had accepted the Cape law of 1860. In fairness it was his duty to call a public meeting before talking of an honourable final Settlement. He challenged Mr. Gandhi to call a mass meeting and produce the minute books of the British Indian Association. At the time of the 1909 passive resistance movement Mr. Gandhi had said that he would continue to resist until all children were free, even if he were the only person left."

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. M. Gorges", 30-6-1914.

[2] At this stage, there were further questions put to Gandhiji. According to *The Transvaal Leader* report: "Mr. Stent asked how Mr. Gandhi could say he represented *Indian opinion*, when the Hamidia Islamic Society and the Hamdad Society passed a resolution on March 31 saying that he and his friends had no authority to act for them? He had been deliberately repudiated by the two societies. Mr. Gandhi received certain funds for the passive resistance movement, and it was up to him to give an account of them. Habib Motan asked if Mr. Gandhi did not take £1,200 for the Phoenix newspaper."

expended on behalf of the public, and he had rendered the accounts and had published them. Still he told them again that they could go to Mr. Polak and see what had been done with the money. He eulogised Mr. Polak for his work and self-sacrifice for the Indian cause. He (Mr. Polak) would be secretary of the British Indian Association. Mr. Polak had certainly been receiving his living out of the passive resistance fund but he had contributed his all to that fund.

Rand Daily Mail, 16-7-1914

208. SPEECH AT TAMIL MEETING[1]

JOHANNESBURG,
July 15, 1914

Mr. Gandhi said that he felt, in coming to meet the Tamil brothers and sisters, as if he came to meet blood relations. That was a sentiment which he had cherished now for many years, and the reason was quite simple. Of all the different sections of the Indian community, he thought that the Tamils had borne the brunt of the struggle. The largest number of deaths that passive resistance had taken had been from the Tamil community. They had that morning gone to the cemetery to perform the unveiling ceremony[2] in connection with the two memorials to a dear sister and brother. Both of these had been Tamils. There was Narayansamy whose bones lay at Delagoa Bay. He had been a Tamil. The deportees had been Tamils. The last to fight and come out of gaol had been Tamils. Those who were ruined hawkers were all Tamils. The majority of the passive resisters at Tolstoy Farm had been Tamils. On every side, Tamils had shown themselves to be most typical of the best traditions of India, and by saying that he was not exaggerating in the slightest degree. The faith, the abundand faith in God, in Truth, that the Tamils had shown had been one of the most sustaining forces throughout those long-drawn years. The majority of women to go to gaol were Tamils. The sisters who defied the authorities to arrest them and had gone from door to door, from barracks to barracks at Newcastle, to ask the men to lay down their tools and strike work—who were they? Again, Tamil sisters. Who marched among the women? Tamils, of course. Who lived on a pound loaf of bread and an ounce of sugar? The majority were Tamils; though there he must give their due also to those of their countrymen who were called Calcutta men. In that last struggle they also had responded nobly, but he was not able to say quite so nobly as the Tamils; but

[1] Gandhiji spoke at a meeting of the Tamil community which, among others, was attended by Kasturba, Miss Sehlesin and a number of ladies, Indians and Europeans. Thambi Naidoo presided.

[2] *Vide* "Tribute to Passive Resistance Martyrs", 15-7-1914

they had certainly come out almost as well as the Tamils had, but the Tamils had sustained the struggle for the last eight years and had shown of what stuff they were made from the very beginning. Here in Johannesburg they were a handful, and yet, even numerically, they would show, he thought the largest number who had gone to gaol again and again; also, if they wanded imprisonment wholesale, it came from the Tamils. So that he felt when he came to a Tamil meeting that he came to blood-relations. The Tamils had shown so much pluck, so much faith, so much devotion to duty and such noble simplicity, and yet had been so self-effacing. He did not even speak their language, much as he should like to be able to do so, and yet they had simply fought on. It had been a glorious, a rich experience, which he would treasure to the end of his life. How should he explain the settlement to them? They did not even wand it. But if he must he could only tell them all that they and theirs had fought for had been obtained and obtained largely through the force of character that they had shown; and yet they did not wand, they had not wanded to reap the reward except the reward that their own consciences would offer them. They had fought for the Cape entry right for Colonial-borns. That they had got. They had fought for the just administration of the laws. That they had got. They had fought for the removal of the racial taint in the law with reference to the Free State. That they had got The £3 tax was now a matter of the past. And, with reference to the marriage question, all those dear sisters who had gone to gaol could now be called the wives of their husbands, whilst but yesterday they might have been called so out of courtesy by a friend, but were not so in the eye of the law. That was one of the things they had fought for and had got. Truth was what they had been fighting for, and Truth had conquered—not he or they. They might fight tomorrow for an unrighteous thing, and as sure as fate they would be beaten and well-beaten. Truth was unconquerable, and whenever the call to duty came, he hoped they would respond. There was one thing more. They had sometimes, as every other section of the community had, jealousies amongst themselves. They had petty jealousies not in connection with the struggle, but in matters which had nothing to do with the struggle. All those petty jealousies and differences he hoped would go, and they would rise higher still in the estimation of themselves and of those who at all grew to know them and the depth of character which they had. They had also, as ail sections of the Indian community had, not only those jealousies but sometimes many bickerings also, and petty quarrels. He felt these also should be removed especially from their midst, because they had shown themselves so fit to give themselves to the Motherland. And here, of course, it was a Tamil who had given his four sons to be trained as servands of India.[1] He hoped Mr. and Mrs. Naidoo knew exactly what they had done. They had surrendered all right to those children for life, and they could not possibly do anything to advance their

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Farewell Banquet",14-7-1914.

material well-being, but had always to remain servands of India. It was no joke, and yet Mr. and Mrs. Naidoo had certainly done that. He could not appeal to them too strongly that they of all sections should rid themselves of all those bickerings, petty jealousies and quarrels amongst them-selves. He would also ask them whenever they chose a President or a Chairman to obey him, to follow him, and not always listen to the views of this or that man. If they did that, their usefulness would be curtailed. And then, too, they should not worry if others and not they might reap the reward. Their reward would be all the greater if it was not of this earth; they were not fighting for material reward, and a true passive resister never thought of material reward. They should not worry about material prosperity, but always have higher things before them. Then, indeed, they would be like the leaven working in the community which could raise the community as one to look up to. The privilege was certainly theirs and time also was at their disposal, and if they make good use of that time it would be a splendid thing for the whole of South Africa, and would certainly be a splendid thing for them; and if he heard in India that all those little things to which he had drawn attention had also been got rid of by the Indian community, he would, indeed, be rejoiced. One thing more. He had known something of Madras, and how sharp caste distinctions were there. He felt they would have come to South Africa in vain if they were to carry those caste prejudices with them. The caste system had its uses, but that was an abuse. If they carried caste distinctions to that fatuous extent and drew those distinctions, and called one another high and low and so on, those things would be their ruin. They should remember that they were not high caste or low caste, but all Indians, all Tamils. He said Tamils, but that was also applicable to the whole Indian community, but most to them because most was certainly expected of them.[1]

Indian Opinion, 5-8-1914

209. SPEECH AT PRETORIA[2]

July 16, 1914

Mr. Gandhi, in replying, said that he was very pleased that Mr. Stent had consented to preside. Nothing could have been more fitting, on account of the way in which Mr. Stent had advocated their cause. When the speaker first came to Pretoria he found comments in the *Pretoria News* advocating their cause. He inquired, and was told that Mr. Stent was a negrophilist and took up many an unpopular cause at great

[1] The gathering was then addressed by Kallenbach, Polak, P. K. Naidoo and Thambi Naidoo.

[2] Gandhiji arrived at Pretoria by road at 8 a.m. An address was presented to him in the Indian Location. Chamney, Vere Stent, Hajee Habib and several others paid tributes to Gandhiji.

personal risk to himself. Mr. Stent had consistently advocated their cause, and the speaker felt personally grateful to him. He reciprocated Mr. Chamney's sentiments. He had certainly stood up against Mr. Chamney and the management of his office, but there had been no personal ill will on the speaker's part, and he always received the utmost courtesy at Mr. Chamney's hands. He appreciated the compliment Mr. Chamney paidhim by coming out to arrest him with one man only to assist, while the speaker was at the head of 2,000 men and women. It showed the confidence Mr. Chamney had in him as a passive resister. He thanked them for the purse, the contents of which, in common with those of any others received, would not be used for himself, but first for the furtherance of the interests of the Indians in South Africa, and secondly for any work he might have to do in India which had commended itself to them in the course of the conversations they had had. He spoke feelingly of the many European friends he was leaving behind, and said that on their memorable march he had had much sympathy and encouragement from Europeans; it was for this reason that that march had made him love South Africa more than ever before. It was during that. period he had realised that, although South Africa was a land largely ruled by materialism, there was no need to despair. He felt that the settlement they had received was a kind of Magna Charta. It was not a final settlement in the sense that they had no wrongs left. They had to exercise patience and cultivate European opinion in order to get those wrongs redressed. They had to maintain the sympathy, which men like. Mr. Stent might think fit to extend to them. He spoke of the tremendous force of passive resistance, which he hoped they would not need to use again, and said Indians could not separate politics from religion; with them the two things were as one. He paid a glowing tribute to the work done for the Indian cause by Miss Schlesin.[1]

Rand Daily Mail, 17-7-1914

210. SPEECH AT MEETING OF GUJARATIS[2]

JOHANNESBURG,
July 16, 1914

My Gujarati brethren have done a great deal for me and Mrs. Gandhi but they did not, I must say, render as much service in the cause of the struggle as the Tamil community did. I wish the Gujaratis to learn a lesson from the Tamils. Though I do not know their

[1] Gandhiji then spoke in Hindi and, after a meeting with the leaders of the community, left for Johannesburg.

[2] The Gujaratis had gathered to bid farewell to Gandhiji and Kasturba.

language, they have given me the greatest help in the fight. On the other hand, though I can explain my aims best to Gujaratis because I know Gujarati, they have failed in their duty. They cared [more] for money. It makes me very unhappy to hear that some members of the community have fallen a prey to drink. They must be pitied. Those who know better have a duty to help such persons break free from the vicious habit. Some are engaged in smuggling gold. They believe that thereby they are helping India economically. Ill-gotten money, however, is never secure. I have not yet attained a state in which I would not seek monetary help. Even so, I would on no account accept help offered from such ill-gotten money. You will perhaps feel that,every time I speak to you, I use fairly harsh language. My bitter words will, however, prove wholesome to you in the end. I am going far away from you, to the motherland, but I can never forget your affection.

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 5-8-1914

211. THE LEGAL POSITION

[Before *July 18*, 1914][1]

As the removal of the £3 tax has given rise to the fear that it makes the Indians affected by it prohibited immigrands and that, therefore, their position becomes worse than before, it may be worth while examining the true legal position. For, if it is a fact that the removal makes them prohibited immigrands, the first clause of Paragraph 2 of the letter[2] from the Secretary for the Interior addressed to Mr. Gandhi, providing for the issue of discharge certificates to such Indians, does not, as *The Natal Mercury* says, take them out of the category. That clause was inserted, not for the purpose, as the *Mercury* would have us believe, of securing these poor men's right of domicile. It was inserted simply to enable the men to move about the Province without vexatious inquiries from the Police and to free them from liability of arrest for being without passes. Now the contention that has been made by the *Mercury* is that, if the men do not pay the tax, they

[1] Evidently, this item was written before July 18 when Gandhiji left for England *en route* to India.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from E.M. Gorges", 30-6-1914.

have to perform one of the other two conditions of their contract, namely, to re-indenture or to repatriate themselves to India, and, if they do not do either—so it is argued—they can be declared prohibited immigrands in virtue of Section 30 of the Immigrands' Regulation Act of last year, which defines the term "domicile", declaring those who may have entered the Union under terms of conditional residence prohibited immigrands. If the above contention were correct, those Indians who have not paid the tax for years could all have been declared prohibited immigrands and driven out of the Province immediately after the passing of the Immigrands' Regulation Act. But no such thing was done. The contracts containing the conditions as to re-indenture or re-patriation are made with the Immigration Trust Board, a private body. It is a well-known maxim oflaw, that contracts which are opposed to public morals or are in restraint of personal liberty, are invalid. Therefore, the clause as to repatriation, being against public morals and in restraint of personal liberty, is invalid, and a special statute would be necessary to make them valid and effective in law. This is what the late Natal Government tried and failed to obtain from the Government of India, and the only thing—though it was a wrong and shameful thing—that the then Government of India consented to do, was to make the men, who did not repatriate themselves, liable to pay the tax. Therefore, the tax being removed, the clause as to repatriation or re-indenture becomes ineffective and valueless. Another maxim of law is that any Statute which does not provide a sanction, that is, a penalty, for a breach of any of the obli-gations which it may impose upon the subject is powerless to compel the subject to perform that obligation. This was clearly laid down by the Supreme Court of the Transvaal in a case that arose out of Law 3 of 1885, which requires Indians to reside in Locations. If they do not so reside, no penalty is provided in that Law, and the Supreme Court has, therefore, held that Indians cannot be compelled to live in Locations, and that position remains unchanged, and, in spite of the Section referred to, Indians reside where they like in the Transvaal. It is, therefore, absolutely clear, so far as the legal aspect is concerned, that the Indians affected by the repeal of the tax are exactly in the same position as those who came under Law 25 of 1891. Adding to this the fact that the Commission themselves, composed of three distinguished lawyers, recommended the repeal of Section 6 of the Act of 1895 in question, and considered the repeal to be sufficient to put the men who came under it in the same position as

those who came under Law 25 of 1891, that the Government of India and the Imperial Government, too, hold the same opinion as the Commission, and understood clearly that the men, after the repeal of the tax, would be free to settle in the Province after completing their present indenture and that the Union Government themselves have declared that such is also their reading of the law, we fail to see the slightest cause for alarm. The *Mercury* further has suggested that, whilst the assurance of the Union Government may be enough, should the legal interpretation placed upon it be found to be true, that assurance will not be of any value if General Hertzog were to become the Premier. We cannot share this fear, no matter what policy General Hertzog may have on the Indian question. In a constitution[al] State such as the Union of South Africa is, General Hertzog would be bound by the promise made by his predecessor to third parties. He can change policy, he can alter laws, but he cannot, he dare not, alter or commit a breach of promise made by predecessors in office to third parties. If he could, it is easy to see that there would be an end to government, and that people could not with any assurance have dealings with governments where there is Responsible Ministry [*sic*]. Lastly, our countrymen need have no fear as to the future. Many things are possible; they are highly improbable. It is possible that the Supreme Court may interpret the law as the *Mercury* has. It is possible, though highly improbable, that any future Government or even the present Government would commit a breach of the promise deliberately made. Surely, in those circumstances, with the clearest conscience and with the fullest justification before the world, Indians can make use of the same irresistible weapon of Passive Resistance, as they have hitherto done.

Indian Opinion, 22-7-1914

212. FAREWELL LETTER[1]

[CAPE TOWN,
July 18, 1914]

I would like, on the eve of my departure for India, to say a few words to my countrymen in South Africa, and also to the European community. The kindness with which both European and Indian friends have overwhelmed me sends me to India a debtor to them. It is a debt I shall endeavour to repay by rendering in India what services I am capable of rendering there; and if, in speaking about the South African Indian question, I am obliged to refer to the injustices which my countrymen have received and may hereafter receive, I promise that I shall never wilfully exaggerate, and shall state the truth and nothing but the truth.

A word about the Settlement, and what it means. In my humble opinion, it is the Magna Charta of our liberty in this land. I give it the historic name, not because it gives us rights which we have never enjoyed and which are in themselves new or striking, but because it has come to us after eight years' strenuous suffering, that has involved the loss of material possessions and of precious lives. I call it our Magna Charta because it marks a change in the policy of the Government towards us and establishes our right not only to be consulted in matters affecting us, but to have our reasonable wishes respected. It moreover confirms the theory of the British Constitution that there should be no legal racial inequality between different subjects of the Crown, no matter how much practice may vary according to local circumstance. Above all, the Settlement may well be called our Magna Charta, because it has vindicated passive resistance as a lawful, clean weapon, and has given in passive resistance a new strength to the community and I consider it an infinitely superior force to that of the vote, which history shows has often been turned against the voters themselves.

The Settlement finally disposes of all the points that were the subject-matter of passive resistance, and in doing so it breathes the spirit of justice and fair play. If the same spirit guides the

[1] Gandhiji released this to Reuter's Agent at Cape Town. Addressed to Indians and Europeans in South Africa, it was also published in *Rand Daily Mail,* 20-7-1914, and *The Transvaal Leader,* 24-7-1914.

administration of the existing laws, my countrymen will have comparative peace, and South Africa will hear little of the Indian problem in an acute form.

Some of my countrymen have protested against it. The number of these protestants is numerically very small, and in influence not of great importance. They do not object to what has been granted, but they object that it is not enough. It is impossible, therefore, to withhold sympathy from them. I have had an opportunity of speaking to them, and I have endeavoured to show to them that, if we had asked for anything more, it would have been a breach of submission made on behalf of the British Indians in a letter addressed to the Government by Mr. Cachalia during the latter part of last year and we should have laid ourselves open to the charge of making new demands. But I have also assured them that the present settlement does not preclude them from agitation (as has been made clear in my letter to the Secretary of the Interior of the 16th ultimo) for the removal of other disabilities which the community will still suffer from under the Gold Law, the Townships Act, the Law 3 of 1885 of the Transvaal and the Trade Licences Laws of Natal and the Cape. The promise made by General Smuts to administer the existing law justly and with due regard to vested rights gives the community breathing time, but these laws are in themselves defective, and can be, as they have been, turned into engines of oppression and instruments by indirect means to drive the resident Indian population from South Africa. The concession to popular prejudice in that we have reconciled ourselves to almost the total prohibition by administrative methods of a fresh influx of Indian immigrants, and to the deprivation of all political power, is, in my opinion, the utmost that could be reasonably expected from us. These two things being assured, I venture to submit that we are entitled to full rights of trade, inter-Provincial migration, and ownership of landed property being restored in the not distant future. I leave South Africa in the hope that the healthy tone that pervades the European community in South Africa today will continue, and that it will enable Europeans to recognize the inherent justice of our submission. To my countrymen I have, at various meetings that I have addressed during the past fortnight, attended in several cases by thousands, said, “Nurse the Settlement; see to it that the promises made are being carried out. Attend to development and progress from within. Zealously remove all causes which we may have given for the rise and growth of anti-

Indian prejudice or agitation, and patiently cultivate and inform European opinion so as to enable the Government of the day and Legislature to restore to us our rights. " It is by mutual co-operation and goodwill that the solution of the balance of the pressing disabilities which were not made points for passive resistance may be obtained in the natural course, and without trouble or agitation in an acute form.

The presence of a large indentured and ex-indentured Indian population in Natal is a grave problem. Compulsory repatriation is a physical and political impossibility, voluntary repatriation by way of granting free passages and similar inducements will not—as my experience teaches me—be availed of to any appreciable extent. The only real and effective remedy for this great State to adopt is to face responsibility fairly and squarely, to do away with the remnant of the system of indenture, and to level up this part of the population and make use of it for the general welfare of the Union. Men and women who can effectively strike in large bodies, who can for a common purpose suffer untold hardships, who can, undisciplined though they are, be martyrs for days without police supervision and yet avoid doing any damage to property or person, and who can in times of need serve their King faithfully and capably, as the ambulance corps raised at the time of the late war (and which had among other classes of Indians nearly 1,500 indentured Indians) bore witness, are surely people who will, if given ordinary opportunities in life, form an honourable part of any nation.

If any class of persons have special claim to be considered, it is these indentured Indians and their children, to whom South Africa has become either a land of adoption or of birth. They did not enter the Union as ordinary free immigrants, but they came upon invitation and, indeed, even after much coaxing by agents of South African employers of this class of labour. In this letter I have endeavoured as accurately and as fairly as is in my power to set forth the Indian situation, and the extraordinary courtesy, kindness and sympathy that have been shown to me during the past month by so many European friends. The frankness and generosity with which General Smuts, in interviews that he was pleased to grant me, approached the questions at issue, and the importance that so many distinguished members of both Houses of Parliament attached to the Imperial aspect of the problem, give me ample reason for believing that my countrymen who have made South Africa their home will receive a fairly full measure of

justice and will be enabled to remain in the Union with self-respect and dignity.

Finally, in bidding good-bye to South Africa, I would like to apologise to so many friends on whom I have not been able, through extreme pressure of work, to call personally. I once more state that, though I have received many a hard knock in my long stay in this country, it has been my good fortune to receive much personal kindness and consideration from hundreds of European friends, well-wishers and sympathisers. I have formed the closest friendships, which will last for ever, for this reason and for many similar reasons, which I would love to reduce to writing but for fear of trespassing unduly upon the courtesy of the Press. This sub-continent has become to me a sacred and dear land, next only to my motherland. I leave the shores of South Africa with a heavy heart, and the distance that will now separate me from South Africa will but draw me closer to it, and its welfare will always be a matter of great concern, and the love bestowed upon me by my countrymen and the generous forbearance and kindness extended to me by the Europeans will ever remain a most cherished treasure in my memory.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Opinion, 29-7-1914

213. FAREWELL SPEECH AT CAPE TOWN[1]

July 18, 1914

Mr. Gandhi, who was received with cheers, said he thanked them most heartily and sincerely for the honour they had done his wife and himself on this day of their departure from the land of their adoption. He thanked those who had framed this beautiful address for the sentiments that had been expressed. He wished he could believe with them that he deserved even one tenth of what they, in their generosity, had been good enough to say about the little service that he might have rendered to

[1] Accompanied by Kasturba, Kallenbach, Mr. & Mrs. Polak and Miss Schlesin, Gandhiji arrived at Monument Station by the Imperial Mail. The party was received by a large number of European and Indian friends and was taken in procession to the Docks. Here Gandhiji was presented with gifts, an address by the Madras Indian Association, and another telegraphed by Port Elizabeth Indians. After Dr. J. H. Gool and Dr. Abdurrahman, Cape Town leaders, had eulogized his services, Gandhiji addressed the gathering.

his countrymen in South Africa. The speeches which had been made by Mr. Gool and Dr. Abdurrahman had also been tuned similarly, but if he had done anything for his countrymen in South Africa, that in itself was sufficient reward for him.

You have presented me with costly gifts. If you have at all followed my life, you would know how inconsistent these gifts are with the life I have endeavoured to lead, in however small a manner, during the past few years, the life which I have sketched out for myself in India. However I take these rich gifts as an indication of your love, of your sympathy, and your support. May God grant that I should so behave in India as to retain this love of yours. May God grant that this love, although distance may separate us, will extend as the ages go by.

Continuing, Mr. Gandhi said that they had done well in referring to the loss Lord Hardinge had sustained,[1] "that noble Viceroy and faithful friend of ours", and he would endeavour to convey their sincere sorrow, in which he heartily joined, to His Lordship.

It was very hard for him, he said, to part from them, but though he was apart from them in body, he was sure that in spirit they would be knitted together. It was 21 years ago that he landed on the shores of Natal, when he came as a stranger in their midst. He did not know any of his countrymen; they did tot know him. He knew not a single European.[2] He had only a vague knowledge of the geography of the country. He found that he was leaving a country with great resources, with beautiful scenery, and with a beneficent climate, and certainly, in spite of the hard knocks he had received, with a people who had the great spiritual view, and one need not fear or despair of a land which had produced an Olive Schreiner—(cheers.)—W. P. Schreiner, and a John X. Merriman. (Cheers.) These noble men and women would live when they had gone, and a land which had produced these noble men and women was a land that had a great future.

Continuing, he said he would carry away with him happy recollections of many European friendships that would last when he had gone from South Africa.

Turning and placing his hand on the shoulder of Mr. Kallenbach, he said:

Why, I carry away with me not my blood brother, but my European brother. Is not that sufficient earnest of what South Africa has given to me, and is it possible for me to forget South Africa for a

[1] The reference is to the death of Lady Hardinge.

[2] *Indian Opinion,* 29-7-1914, reporting the speech says: "Since then he had made many friends, some of them his staunchest and most faithful being amongst Europeans. He had learned to love the country, its beautiful scenery and splendid climate..."

single moment? (Cheers.)

Our difficulties, your difficulties are by no means over, but I do hope [and trust][1] you will treat this generous settlement that has been given to us in the spirit in which it has been given, backed as it is by those long-drawn-out sufferings extending over a period of eight years, backed as it is by those historic debates in both Houses of Parliament, and backed as it is by the Imperial and Indian Governments—a settlement so well meant, so well conceived should be fruitful of a great future. But the future is entirely in your own hands. Let me hope that we shall deserve by our conduct whatever may be in store for us.

[I] would like to make a final appeal to our European friends who take an interest in the British Indian question in South Africa. Let me appeal to them to take a humanitarian view of the question, the imperial view of the question. Rightly or wrongly, for good or for evil, Englishmen and Indians have been knit together, and it behoves both races so to mould themselves as to leave a splendid legacy to the generations yet to be born, and to show that though Empires have gone and fallen, this Empire perhaps may be an exception and that this is an Empire not founded on material but on spiritual foundations.

That has been my source of solace all through. I have always believed there is something subtle, something fine in the ideals of the British Constitution. Tear away those ideals and you tear away my loyalty to that Constitution; keep those ideals and I am ever a bondman. (Cheers.) Both races should see that those ideals of the British Constitution always remained a sacred treasure.

I say good-bye, farewell. I shall never forget you. So much love, so much sympathy has overwhelmed me in spite of my trials and tribulations in South Africa, and that love and that sympathy which I have received, not only from my fellow countrymen, but from my European friends, will never be forgotten, but will always remain a sacred memory. (Cheers.)

Cape Times, 20-7-1914

[1] These words are reported in the introductory paragraph of the speech.

214. INTERVIEW TO "THE CAPE ARGUS"[1]

CAPE TOWN,
July 18, 1914

Well, let me say that I shall carry away with me the happiest recollections, and that I hope it will be my pleasure while away to find that my countrymen are being treated with justice in South Africa.

Indian Opinion, 29-7-1914

215. MESSAGE OF THANKS[2]

CAPE TOWN,
July 18, 1914

May I convey, on behalf of Mrs. Gandhi, Mr. Kallenbach and self, our deepest thanks to hundreds of senders of telegrams from all parts of South Africa which awaited us upon our arrival on board. These telegrams, containing messages of love and sympathy, will bean additional reminder to us of what South Africa has meant to us. We trust that the goodwill shown to us personally by so many European friends will be trans ferred to those to whose cause our lives in South Africa were dedicated.

The Natal Mercury, 20-7-1914

[1] Just before s.s. *Kinfauns Castle*, by which Gandhiji was sailing, weighed anchor, a *Cape Argus* representative approached him for "any final remarks he would like to make". Of his departure from South Africa Gandhiji later wrote in the following terms: "I sailed for England, to meet Gokhale on my way back to India, with mixed feelings of pleasure and regret,—pleasure because I was returning home after many years and eagerly looked forward to serving the country under Gokhale's guidance, regret because it was a great wrench for me to leave South Africa, where I had passed twenty-one years of my life sharing to the full in the sweets and bitters of human experience, and where I had realized my vocation in life." "Conclusion": *Satyagraha in South Africa.*

[2] Gandhiji sent this by wireless to Reuter's Agency soon after he sailed for England *en route* to India.

216. LETTER TO ELIZABETH MARI MOLTENO

July 20, 1914

DEAR MISS MOLTENO,

I had your two letters. I am sorry we were not able to meet to say goodbye to one another. Mrs. Gandhi and I cannot forget the affection you and Miss Greene showed us during our stay in Cape Town. May God reward you for it.

Do please write to me occasionally. My address will be Rajkot *via* Bombay.

With our united regards to you both,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Molteno Murray Family Papers. Courtesy: University of Cape Town Libraries

217. THE LAST SATYAGRAHA CAMPAIGN: PREFACE

[S. S. *KINFAUNS CASTLE,*
July 23, 1914]

I have left South Africa, but not my connection with that land. I said in many of my speeches during the final days that I would not give up that connection. My writings in *Indian Opinion* will furnish some proof of my keeping the promise. In them, I shall express my thoughts from time to time, hoping that readers will like them and find them useful as well.

I am commencing this article on board the *Kinfauns Castle.* Five days have passed since we left the Cape. We are travelling third class, Mr. Kallenbach, my wife and I. This is my first experience of a voyage to England in this class. Of first class I have had experience on several occasions. I must say that we are happier in third class than we could have been in first. There are no attendants here keeping constant watch on us. We feel no pricking of conscience that we are living in special style, segregated from the poor. One does not have

here the feeling of closeness one has in first class, nor has one to submit oneself to meaningless conventions. There are no inconveniences in particular. The usual ones which attend on poverty prove wholesome in the end. I do not mean by these comments of mine that every Indian should travel third class. I have always felt that those who are rich and wish to live among the rich must, of course, travel first class, as a matter of duty at least; otherwise, we are likely to invite the charge of miserliness. It is certain, however, that travelling in first class for the sake of better comforts is sinful. Men like me, moreover, who travel at public expense and whose mode of travelling has no bearing on the prestige of their community must necessarily travel third class, or in a still lower class, if there be any.

All three of us live almost entirely on fruit, though we cook fruit which may not have ripened, or boil things like groundnuts. The labour is generally Mr. Kallenbach's. He has at present accepted manual work as a kind of religion and takes joy in it. For Mr. Kallenbach and my wife, this is the first occasion when they have had no sea-sickness. I believe it is their simple habits and heir fruit diet which have made the difference. We are getting more convinced by experience every day that a fruit diet is the best. We hardly ever come into contact with other passengers. We have divided up our time and do everything at the appointed hour, so that the days pass easily.

The love of our Indian brethren in their thousands and the honour they accorded us are constantly in our minds. That love reminds me of the wonderful power of the soul and its extraordinary properties. The functions at Durban, Verulam, Johannesburg, Kimberley and Pretoria are, we find, impossible to forget. The Cape Town friends, moreover, placed us under a crushing burden of gratitude by taking out a procession. Where so many showed such immeasurable love, whom shall we thank by name? The white people, too, made an excellent demonstration of their affection. During the final days, we drank the cup of their love also full to the brim. Occasions such as these prove that there is no bar or permanent division as between the whites and Coloureds and that, if both the sides make the required effort, the evil in South Africa can be overcome. If one side at least were to practise satyagraha on every occasion and in every manner, it is my firm faith, borne out by experience, that even such effort, one-sided as it would be, would suffice to remove the evil of colour-

bar. So much by way of preface.[1]

[From Gujarati]
Indian Opinion, 26-8-1914

218. THE LAST SATYAGRAHA CAMPAIGN: MY EXPERIENCE[2]

[After *July 23, 1914*]

During the last campaign, the very highest limit was reached. I have had simply no time to write of the experience. I had meant to share it with the readers of *Indian Opinion.* They will remember that the last struggle was, as it were, the third chapter in the story of satyagraha. When the first chapter came to a close, we, at any rate I, had thought that it was definitely the last. When the time came for the second chapter to open, many friends said to me: "Now who will fight? The community cannot be expected to put forth so much strength every time." I laughed when I heard this. My faith in truth was unshakable and I replied, "The people, having tasted once the joy of struggle, will fight now with even greater zeal." And that was precisely what happened. On the first occasion, a hundred or two hundred Indians went to gaol. The second time, not only did hundreds court imprisonment, but the whole of Natal woke up and leaders came from there to join the struggle. The fight dragged on, but the morale never went down and we advanced. When it came to launching the last fight, I heard only talk of defeat. "Every time the Government deceives you," they said, "and you allow yourself to be imposed upon and the people's interests suffer. This will never do." I

[1] An editorial note at the end of the article stated that this was followed by a long account of the latest satyagraha campaign, which had been held back for publication in the Golden Number of *Indian Opinion. Vide* the following item.

[2] Gandhiji started writing this article on board the ship after he had prepared the prefatory one, *vide* the preceding item. It seems to have been sent to Chhaganlal Gandhi in two or more instalments. It could not apparently be completed owing to Gandhiji's illness and his preoccupation in connection with Indian Ambulance Corps work in London. Chhaganlal Gandhi collected the different parts of the article for publication in the Golden Number of *Indian Opinion.* This special issue also carried a comprehensive survey of the entire Indian struggle in South Africa and its implications by the Editor of *Indian Opinion; vide* Appendix "The Struggle and what it has meant".

had to listen to bitter words like these. I knew only too well that neither I nor anyone else had any remedy against the Government's foul play. If, after we have accepted a promissory note, the signatory refuses to honour it or confesses his inability to do so, how are we to blame? To me it was clear that, if the Government broke its promise, though we would have to put in greater efforts, it would have to yield all the more. The longer the time taken to repay a debt, the heavier the burden becomes. This unalterable law applies to both material and moral obligations. My reply at that time was, "Satyagraha is a kind of struggle in which there can be no defeat and no cause for regret. A man can only become stronger through the struggle. He suffers no exhaustion and at every stage he gains fresh strength. If truth be on our side, the Indian community will work harder this time and earn an even more glorious name." When I made this reply, I never dreamt that 20,000 poor Indians would arise and make their own and their country's name immortal. General Botha observed in the course of a speech that the whites had not been able to start and conduct the kind of strike that the Indians had done this time. This fight was joined by women and by many young boys of sixteen, so that the campaign became much more of a moral struggle. South African Indians became the talk of the world. In India, rich and poor, young and old, men and women, kings and labourers, Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians, citizens of Bombay, Madras, Calcutta and Lahore—all were roused, became familiar with our history and came to our assistance. The Government was taken aback. The Viceroy, gauging the mood of the people, took their side. All this is public knowledge. I am stating these facts here in order to show the importance of this struggle. My main purpose in writing this article is to reveal certain details with which I am particularly familiar, which are not known in India and even to Indian friends in South Africa.

The training imparted in Tolstoy Farm proved to be of great use in this last fight. The mode of life accepted by the satyagrahis on the Farm became an invaluable asset in the struggle. It was copied and improved upon in Phoenix. When Tolstoy Farm was closed, the pupils who wished to, came over to Phoenix. The discipline was severe and there was an understanding with each pupil and his parents that those of the pupils who chose to live in Phoenix should, provided they were of a suitable age, join the struggle, if it was launched again. To tell the truth, the education in Phoenix was for the most part a preparation for satyagraha. The rules applied also to the families living in Phoenix.

Only one of them kept aloof. The result was that, leaving aside those engaged in running Phoenix, all were fully prepared when the agitation started. Thus the third struggle began with the residents of Phoenix. I shall never forget the scene when those men, women and children marched out. Each had but one thought— that this was a holy war and that all were setting out on a pilgrimage. They set out singing hymns, one of which was the famous ‘‘Let not thy mind be affected by joy or sorrow”. The strains of music that issued from the throats of those men, women and children still echo in my ears. The great Parsee Rustomjee was among this band. Many had thought that Mr. Rustomjee had suffered so much in the previous struggle that he would not join this one. Those who said so did not know his true greatness. That women and children should go forth and he stay behind was unthinkable to him. Two other incidents of this period stand out in my memory. There was an argument between Mr. Rustomjee and his lion-hearted son, Sorabji, who insisted that he would accompany his father. “Father, let me go in your place,” he said, “or take me along with you.”

The second incident was the meeting between the late Hoosen Mian and Rustomjee. When Mr. Rustomjee went to see him, tears streamed from his eyes and he said, “Kakaji[1], if I had been well, I would have accompanied you to gaol.” Bhai Hoosen loved his country dearly; though bed-ridden, he gave full support to the struggle and spoke constantly of it to all who visited him

Among those who remained behind in Phoenix were boys under sixteen. Although they and the others who managed the affairs of Phoenix stayed out of prison, they did better work than those who went to gaol. Day and night were one to them. They placed themselves under the strictest vows till such time as their companions and elders should be released, lived on saltless diet and fearlessly took upon themselves even the most onerous tasks. When the strike began in Victoria County, hundreds of indentured labourers took shelter in Phoenix. To have looked after them was in itself a very great achievement. It was equally an achievement to have gone on doing their work in complete fearlessness in spite of the danger of raids by their masters. When the police came and arrested Mr. West, they prepared themselves for the possibility that others also might be taken. But not a single person moved out of Phoenix. As I have said already,

[1] Uncle

only one family remained an exception. The Indian community can never truly measure the services that the Phoenix workers rendered to it at that time. This secret history has yet to be written, that is why I am recording a part of it here in the hope that some lover of truth might collect further information and might appreciate the services of the Phoenix workers at their true worth. I am very much tempted to write more, but I drop Phoenix here.

When the Phoenix batch went to prison, Johannesburg could not remain behind. The women there became restive. They were fired with the desire to be in gaol. The entire family of Mr. Thambi Naidoo got ready. His wife, sister-in-law, mother-in-law, Mr. Moorgan's relatives, Mrs. P. K. Naidoo, Valiamma, who made herself immortal, and otherwomen came forward. They marched forth with children in their arms. Mr. Kallenbach took them to Vereeniging. The idea was that, when they crossed the Free State border and returned, they would be arrested. Their expectations were not fulfilled. They somehow managed to spend a few days in Vereeniging, where they tried to get arrested by going round with baskets, hawking, but they were left free.

This frustration held within itself a glorious future[1]. If the women had been arrested in Vereeniging itself, the strike might not have taken place; at any rate it would never have reached the proportions it finally did. But the community was in the [protective] hand of God. He is ever the protector of truth. When the women were not arrested, it was decided that they cross the Natal border. If they were not arrested even there, they were to fix, along with Mr. Thambi Naidoo, their headquarters at Newcastle. Accordingly, they proceeded to Natal. At the border, the police did not arrest them. They made their home in Newcastle. There Mr. D. Lazarus handed over his own house to the women; his wife and sister-in-law, Miss Thomas, took it upon themselves to look to the comforts of the women satyagrahis.

The plan was that in Newcastle the women should meet the indentured labourers and their wives, give them a true idea of their conditions and persuade them to go on strike on the issue of the £3 tax. The strike was to commence on my arrival at Newcastle. But the mere presence of these women was like a lighted match-stick to dry fuel. Women who had never before slept except on soft beds and had seldom so much as opened their mouths, now delivered public speeches among the indentured labourers. The latter were roused and,

[1] Literally, "immortal hope"

even before I arrived, were all for commencing the strike. The project was full of risk. I got a wire from Mr. Naidoo. Mr. Kallenbach went to Newcastle and the strike began. By the time I reached there, Indians in two coal mines had already stopped work.

I was sent for by the Committee of European Sympathizers presided over by Mr. Hosken. I met them. They approved of the strike and decided to support it. I stopped for a day at Johannesburg and proceeded to Newcastle and stayed on there. I saw that the people's enthusiasm was tremendous. The Government could not tolerate the presence of the women and finally they were sent to gaol as "vagabonds". The house of Mr. Lazarus now became a dharmsala for satyagrahis. Food had to be cooked there for hundreds of indentured labourers. Mr. Lazarus was not to be daunted. The Indians in Newcastle appointed a committee. Mr. Sidaat was elected chairman, and the work proceeded apace. Indians in other mines downed tools.

Thus, as the strike by the Indian workers in the mines was spreading, a meeting of the Mine-Owners' Association was held. I was invited to attend.[1] A great deal of discussion ensued but no solution was found. Their proposal was that, if we called off the strike, they would undertake to write to the Government about the £3 tax. This, the satyagrahis could not agree to. We had no quarrel with the mine-owners. The object of the strike was not to hurt them but rather to invite suffering on ourselves. And so the suggestion of the owners was unacceptable. I returned to Newcastle. when I reported the result of this meeting, enthusiasm mounted still higher. Work stopped in more mines.

Till then the workers had always resided at the mines where they worked. The Council of Action in Newcastle felt that, as long as the labourers continued to live on their masters' estates, the strike would not have its full effect. There was the risk that they might be either tempted or coerced to resume work. Then again, to live in the master's house or eat his bread while refusing to work for him would be immoral. The workers' continued stay on the mines was morally wrong. This last taint, it was felt, would sully the purity of the satyagraha movement. On the other hand, to house and feed thousands of Indians was a stupendous problem. Mr. Lazarus' house was now too small. The two poor ladies laboured night and day but found it impossible to cope with the work. It was decided, even in the

[1] *Vide* "statement at Chamber of Commerce", 25-10-1913

face of this, to adopt only the right course, whatever the cost. Messages were sent to miners to stop work and proceed to Newcastle. The moment these messages were received, an exodus from the mines began. Indians from the Belangi mine were the first to arrive. It appeared as though bands of pilgrims were daily streaming into Newcastle. Men young and old, women—some by themselves, others with children in their arms —all arrived with bundles on their heads. The men, one saw, were carrying trunks. Some arrived by day, others by night and food had to be provided for them. How can I describe the contentment of these poor people? They were pleased with what they got, no matter how little. Rarely did one come across anyone with a downcast look. A smile played on every face. To me they appeared to have come from among the 33 crores of gods. The women were like goddesses. From where could shelter be provided for all? For bedding, straw was spread on the earth and the sky was their roof. Godwas their protector. Someone asked for a *bidi*[1]. I explained that they had come out, not as indentured labourers, but as servants of India. They were taking part in a religious war and at such a time they must abandon addictions such as drinking and smoking. Those who were unable to give them up should not expect their requirements to be paid for from the common coffers. The good men accepted this advice. I was never again asked for money to buy a *bidi.* The exodus from the mines continued. One pregnant woman had a miscarriage on the way. In spite of numberless hardships of this kind, no one gave up the struggle or turned back.

There was a tremendous increase in the Indian population of Newcastle. The houses of Indians were over-filled. The number made available was enough to accommodate women and old people. I must state here that the white people of Newcastle showed us great courtesy, even sympathy. No Indian was harassed by them. One good lady even gave her house free for our use; other assistance of a minor nature was also received from a number of whites all the time.

It was, however, not possible to keep thousands of Indians permanently in Newcastle. The Mayor became apprehensive. The normal population of Newcastle is about three thousand. An additional ten thousand could not be accommodated in such a town. Labourers stopped work in other mines too. And so the question arose: what should be done? The intention behind the strike was to court imp-

[1] Tobacco rolled by hand in a dry leaf and smoked like a cigarette

risonment. The Government could have arrested the workers if it had so wished, but there were not enough prisons to house those thousands. Hence, they had not so far touched the strikers. The one simple way left to us now was to cross the Transvaal border and get arrested. We thought that the congestion in Newcastle would thereby be relieved and the strikers could also be put to the test. In Newcastle, the agents of the mine-owners were trying to lure away the workers. Not a single person had yielded; even so, it was the duty of the Council of Action to keep them away from all temptation. It seemed desirable, therefore, that they should march from Newcastle to Charlestown. The distance is about 35 miles. To provide railway fare for thousands was out of the question. It was therefore arranged that all able-bodied men and women should do the journey on foot. The women who could not walk were to be taken by train. There was a possibility of arrests on the way. Moreover, this was the first experience of its kind for them. It was therefore decided that I should myself take the first batch. It consisted of about 500 persons of whom 60 were women, with their children. I shall never forget that scene. The company walked along raising cries of "Victory to Dwarkanath", "Victory to Ramachandra" and "Vande Mataram". Each person was given enough cooked rice and dal to last for two days. Everyone carried his or her things in a bundle. The following conditions were read out to them:

1. It was probable that I would be arrested. Even if this happened, they were to march on until arrested themselves. Though every effort would be made to provide them with meals, etc., on the way, they should not mind, if by chance, food was not available on some day.
2. For the duration of the struggle, they should abstain from drinks.
3. They must not retreat even in the face of death.
4. They should expect no shelter for night halts during the march, but should sleep on the grass.
5. No trees or plants on the way should be harmed in the least nor should any article belonging to others be touched.
6. If the Government's police came to arrest anyone, the latter should willingly surrender.
7. No resistance should be offered to the police or any others; on the contrary, beating should be patiently borne and no

attempt should be made to protect oneself by offering violence in return.

8. They should cheerfully bear the hardships in gaol and live there as if the gaol were a palace.

There were persons of every caste and community in this pilgrim-band. There were Hindus, Muslims, Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras. There were men from Calcutta and there were Tamils. Several Pathans and Sindhis from the North found it difficult to accept the conditions requiring them to refrain from defending themselves in case they were beaten; not only did they accept it, however, but, when the testing time came, they actually made no move to defend themselves.

And so, the first batch started on its march. On the very first night, we had the experience of sleeping out on the grass. On the way, warrants were received for the arrest of about 150 persons and they surrendered themselves readily. A single police officer had come to make the arrests. He had no assistant; how the arrested men were to be taken away became a problem. We were only 6 miles from Charlestown. So I suggested to the officer that these persons could proceed along with me and that he should take them into custody at Charlestown, or do whatever he thought fit after obtaining instructions from his superiors. The officer agreed and left us. We arrived at Charlestown. This is a very small township, with a population of barely 1,000. There is only one main road and the Indian population is negligible. The whites were amazed, therefore, at the sight of our party. At no time had so many Indians appeared in Charlestown. There was no train ready to convey the prisoners to Newcastle. Where could the police keep them? There was not enough room for all these arrested persons at the Charlestown police station. And so, the police handed them over to me and agreed to pay for their food. This is no small tribute to satyagraha. In the ordinary course of things, how could people arrested from among us be placed in our charge? If some of them had escaped, the responsibility would not have been ours. But everyone knew that it was the job of the satyagrahis to court arrest and they had, therefore, full confidence in us. The arrested men thus stayed with us for four days more. When the police were ready to take charge of them, they went away willingly.

More and more people were being recruited to our party. On some days 400 would join, on others even more. Many arrived on

foot, while women came mostly by train. These were put up wherever there was space in the houses of Indian merchants of Charlestown. The local Corporation also offered us houses. The whites did not give us the slightest trouble. On the contrary, they went out of their way to help us. One Dr. Briscoe took it upon himself to give us free medical aid and, when we proceeded beyond Charlestown, he gave us *gratis* some expensive medicines and useful instruments. Our food was cooked in the mosque premises. The fire had to remain lit all the twenty-four hours. The cooks came from among the strikers. During the final days, four to five thousand persons were being fed. Yet these workers never lost heart. In the morning, the meal consisted of mealie pap with sugar and some bread. In the evening they had rice, dal and vegetables. Most people in South Africa eat thrice a day. The indentured labourers always have three meals, but during the struggle they remained content with only two. They like to have small delicacies with their meals, but these, too, they gave up at this time.

What to do with these huge crowds of people became a problem. If they were kept somehow in Charlestown, there was the likelihood of an epidemic breaking out. Moreover, it was not desirable that so many thousands accustomed to hard work should be kept in a state of idleness. It needs to be mentioned here that, although so many poor people had come together in Charlestown, not one of them committeda theft. The police had never to be called and they had no extra work on our account. However, it seemed best not to keep waiting in Charlestown. It was therefore decided to proceed to the Transvaal and, if not arrested, to go on ultimately to Tolstoy Farm. Before commen-cing the march, the Government was informed that we were procee-ding to the Transvaal to court arrest, that we had no desire to stay there or to claim any rights, but that, as long as the Government did not arrest us, we would continue our march and finally stay on Tolstoy Farm. If, however, the Government promised to withdraw the £3 tax, we were willing to return. But the Government was in no mood to consider this notice. It was misled by its informants who assured it that the strikers would soon be exhausted. The Government had a notice printed in all languages and distributed among the strikers.

At last the time came for us to proceed beyond Charlestown. On November 6, a party of 3,000 left at day-break. The procession was more than a mile long. Mr. Kallenbach and I were at the rear. The

procession reached the border where a police party stood in readiness. When the two of us reached the spot, we had a talk with the police. They refused to arrest us and the procession went on in a disciplined and peaceful manner through Volksrust. On reaching Standerton Road outside the town, we halted and had some refreshments. It had been arranged that women should not join in this march, but later it became impossible to check the tide of enthusiasm and a few women managed to accompany the procession. However, some women and children still remained behind in Charlestown. After crossing the border at Volksrust, Mr. Kallenbach was sent back to look after them.

On the following day, the police arrested me near Palmford. I was charged with having brought unauthorized persons into the Transvaal. There was no warrant for the arrest of anyone else. Therefore, on reaching Volksrust, I sent the following telegram[1] to the Government.

The procession went ahead. I was produced before the magistrate at Volksrust. I did not, of course, wish to defend myself. But as some arrangements had yet to be made regarding those who had gone beyond Palmford and those left behind at Charlestown, I asked for time. The Government pleader objected, but the magistrate pointed out that bail could be refused only in a case of murder. He then asked me to furnish a bail of £50 and gave me time for a week. The amount was immediately paid by a merchant in Volksrust. As soon as I was released, I went straight to the marchers. Their enthusiasm was doubled. Meanwhile, a wire came from Pretoria to say that the Government had no intention of arresting the Indians who were with me. Only the leaders were to be arrested. This did not mean that all the rest would be allowed to go free. But the Government had no desire to make our work easy by arresting all of us or to provoke agitation in India on this account.

Mr. Kallenbach followed with another large batch. Our party of over 2,000 was nearing Standerton. There, I was again arrested and the hearing was fixed for the 21st. We, however, proceeded on our way. But now the Government could stand this no longer and it took the step of separating me from the rest. At this time, preparations were afoot to send Mr. Polak to India with a deputation. He came to see me before leaving. But "our undertakings remain unfinished, and the will

[1] This is not reproduced here. For the text, *vide* "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 7-11-1913

of God prevails". This is what happened. On Sunday I was arrested, for the third time, near Greylingstad. The warrant this time was issued from Dundee and the charge was that of instigating the workers to stop work. I was removed from there to Dundee in utmost secrecy. I have mentioned above that Mr. Polak was in the march with us. He now took charge. My case came up for hearing in Dundee on Tuesday. All three charges against me were read out and I pleaded guilty to all of them. I then made, with the Court's permission, the following statement.[1]

I made myself quite comfortable in gaol. Afterwards, proceedings were taken against me in Volksrust and I was given another three months of gaol, besides the nine months I got at Dundee.

About this time, I learnt that Mr. Polak had been arrested and that instead of going to India he found himself in gaol. I, for one, was delighted, because this, to my mind, was a far more weighty deputation than the other one. Soon after this, Mr. Kallenbach was arrested and he also, like Mr. Polak, found himself lodged in gaol for three months. The Government was sadly mistaken when it imagined that, once the leaders were arrested, the people would surrender. All the strikers were put into four special trains and taken to mines in Dundee and Newcastle. They were subjected to much cruelty and they suffered terribly. But they had come forward to suffer. They were their own leaders. They had to demonstrate their strength, left as they were without any leaders, so called; and they did so. How well they did is known to all the world.

Rightly indeed has Dayaram[2] sung:

Who without utmost suffering has attained to a vision of

Krishna?

Find any, if you can, among the saints of the four ages;

Rare are the men who have much love for a *Vaishnava;* Persecutors all and enemies to *bhakti*.

Dhruva and Prahlad, Bhishma, Bali and Vibhishana,

Vidur and Kunti, with her princes, were all ill-used.

Vasumati, Devki, Nandji and Yashomati,

[1] This is not reproduced here. For the text, *vide* "Trial at Dundee", 1-11-1913.

[2] (1777-1853); Vaishnav poet; author of numerous lyrical compositions popular all over Gujarat

Unhappy Vraj-lovers all, happy in their love.

Nala, Damayanti, Harishchandra and Tara,
Rukmangada and Ambarish, and many others, full of misery their lives;
Narasinh Mehta and Jayadev, and Mira as well—
Suffering first for them and only then showers of bliss.

Vyas knew suffering of body and mind, and so did Tulsi and Madhav,
For the *Kapalis*[1] secret lore Shiva is blamed by all mankind. Past endurance the suffering of Janaki, Mother of the world, She suffered, though sinless—she whom all adore.

With no store of past actions working out as Fate,
Even such a one suffers the threefold pain;
Inscrutable are the ways of God and their causes,
Irresistible His will.

Sin and virtue are but words,
The world dances as Nandkumar makes it dance;
Not a leaf stirs but by the wish of Daya's lover
Though in the unripe mind the delusion never clears.

[From Gujarati]
Golden Number, Indian Opinion, 1914

[1] Sect of Shiva-worshippers, reputed to follow occult practices of worship

219. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[ON BOARD SHIP,]
Shravan Sud 6 [*July 28, 1914*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Go on writing to Nayak about the money due from him. Take Motilal's help as well. I am writing to Nayak.

It is only today that I write this letter. The note above was set down lest I should forget the thing. All three of us[2] are keeping excellent health. Ba behaves wonderfully. She gives no trouble about food. She has reduced the intake of wheat to a minimum. She lives for the most part on raw banana, boiled groundnut and milk. After the wheat *bati* brought from there has run out, she is inclined to give up even wheat for the present. For one hour I teach Gujarati to Kallenbach and for one hour, at seven in the evening, I explain the *Gita* to Ba and read the *Ramayana* to her. She attends to both with great interest. I do not feel any of the inconveniences usual in the third class, but see many advantages. We do not come into contact with other passengers and that saves us plenty of time. We have framed time-tables and the fixed routine is never upset. The Company has stocked all fruit so that we get bananas, oranges, etc., in plenty. It also supplies almonds, etc. If any cooking has to be done, it is attended to by Mr. Kallenbach.

The party[3] who were to leave for India must have done so and, therefore, I address nothing to them.

The separation this time was a very painful experience. I received much love in Phoenix. "The creeper of love I have planted and watered with tears."[4] I can utter this from my own experience and rich has been the harvest I have reaped.

I am sending plenty of material and you will see that I have not finished. I shall send more after leaving Madeira, that is, post it from Southampton. I hope I shall not let you run short of matter.

[1] The letter, with the exception of the first paragraph, was written on July 28.

[2] Gandhiji, Kasturba and Kallenbach.

[3] A batch of some twenty-five Phoenix students, a few teachers and Maganlal Gandhi left for India in the first week of August 1914, to join Tagore's Santiniketan.

[4] This is from a lyric by Mirabai.

I have kept you with me from your childhood as though it was through divine inspiration that my eyes rested on you. So far, I have not been disappointed in you. I pray God to give you strength so that I may never be. Strive to observe the five *yamas* all your life.

Win everyone's love in Phoenix. That is the way of *daya* (charity). Think over the deep implications of *daya*. I have just finished reading *Yogadipaka*. I read in it that the *atman* advances through action that is natural to it and falls back through action that is contrary to its nature. I found this definition of *swadharma*[1] more convincing [than the usual one][2]. I would very much like to go on writing, but my time-table will not permit my doing so. You will, however, be able to develop these ideas further.

This letter is for all three of you to read. I shall be content, therefore, with much shorter letters to Raojibhai[3] and Pragji.[4]

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 6048

220. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI PATEL

[LONDON,]
Shravan Sud 7, 1970 [*July 29, 1914*]

[DEAR SHRI RAOJIBHAI,]

I cannot forget your love. I think it has been a wonderful achievement for you to have won over Ba. I notice here that she has changed much.

Remain firm in the vows you have taken. Cling to them like a fanatic. You will then be able to win over M[anibhai], conquer the world and become master of yourself; you will also achieve India's freedom. In other words, one single key ensures victory of every kind, such is the path that we follow. This ancient path is indescribably easy

[1] One's own duty determined by one's nature and station. According to the *Gita*, death in pursuit of *swadharma* is preferable to duty foreign to one's nature, however attractive in itself.

[2] Which interprets *swadharma* as the duty traditionally assigned to one's caste

[3] *Vide* the following item.

[4] The letter addressed to him is not available.

and also difficult.

Increase still further the simplicity we have adopted. You were free so long as I was there. Consider yourself in prison now. Do not let the palate run away with you. Do not tell yourself, 'I may have this, and this too'; keep thinking, rather, 'I have got rid of this slavery, and now I will of this too,' and so be victorious.

Keep me fully informed how you live. Live with Shri Pragji as with a blood brother. Give your whole-hearted attention to agriculture, spread your fragrance all over Phoenix and see that the place grows into a centre of pilgrimage. Keep silent, as far as possible.

Do not give up Tamil. Get into the habit of speaking with Muthu and others.

[BLESSINGS FROM
MOHANDAS]

[From Gujarati]
Gandhijini Sadhana

221. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

60, TALBOT ROAD,
BAYSWATER, W.,
[LONDON,]
August 7, 1914

MY DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

I am just now laid up in bed with the old pain in my left leg, and shall not, therefore, be able to write you in Gujarati. Miss Polak is taking down this letter for me. Herewith copy of my letter[1] to Polak which will tell you all about the circumstances here. I am not sending you the balance of the Gujarati writing[2], as I am afraid it might be lost. I shall see how things go next week.

Please remember me to all at Phoenix and from the copy herewith you will see why I am not writing my letters this week. There is nothing to worry about as to the pain in my leg; it is due to

[1] This is not available.

[2] For the article under reference*; vide* "The Last Satyagraha Campaign: My Experience", After 23-7-1914.

overstraining yesterday. I have not yet got rid of the effect of the long fast.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

PHOENIX

(NATAL)

S. A.

From a photostat of the typewritten original signed by Gandhiji in Gujarati: S. N. 6040

222. SPEECH AT LONDON RECEPTION[1]

August 8, 1914

To you, Mr. Basu, and to Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, I can only say that you have both overwhelmed me; I do not even know that I can struggle through what I have to say. I would make the briefest reference to the tremendous crisis[2] which has overwhelmed the Empire. Since we reached England and heard the news, I have been reading and thinking about it. I think of husbands and sons who have gone to fight, of mothers, wives, and sisters left weeping behind. I ask: 'What is my duty? I am an exile of 21 years from my Motherland, so cannot speak as the representative of the imaginary India which my friends tell me I have pictured.' If I were in South Africa, I should certainly speak as the representative of my people. I have not yet come to any conclusion, but trust we can do something in concrete shape. I hope those of you who are as young as I am, those who are fellow-students of mine—I am still a student—will think what can be done, consult with our elders and follow their advice if it commends itself to our consciences.

It is impossible to express in adequate terms the sense of

[1] After his arrival in England on August 4, Gandhiji, Kasturba and Kallenbach were given a reception at Hotel Cecil by British and Indian friends. Among those present were Sarojini Naidu, Satchidanand Sinha, Lala Lajpat Rai, M. A. Jinnah, Mrs. Wybergh and Albert Cartwright. The Hon. Bhupendranath Basu presided. Sarojini Naidu paid a tribute to Gandhiji and garlanded the chief guests.

[2] The outbreak of World War I

gratitude which Mrs. Gandhi and I feel to you all. We come among you almost as barbarians. We have lived isolated on a little farm, cut off from the cities. That is why I said we were "barbarians". We have worked in the limelight, and you have seen what we have done in exaggerated form. If we merit any approbation, how much more those behind us, who went into the battle with simple faith, with no thought of appreciation.

What will you say to Hurbatsingh, an ex-indentured Indian, 75 years of age, who was with me at Volksrust Gaol? He was 6 feet tall and of noble carriage. "Why have you come?" I asked. "How could I help it?" was his reply. "In the evening of my days I am content to pass the rest of my life in prison to deliver my countrymen." He remained in gaol and died there.

What do you think of the young lad, Narayansamy, whose parents came from what is falsely called the Benighted Presidency, Madras? He had never seen India except as a deportee; he starved for some days when he returned. He died.

And what of Nagappen, another lad from Madras who suffered imprisonment. He worked as a prisoner on the African veldt in the bitter cold of winter, in the early morning when there was no sun. You know what the cold of a London winter is like, but few of you know the biting cold of the early mornings of winter on the veldt. Unfit for work, he still held on, but at last he died.

Then there is Sister Valliamma, a girl of 18. She went to prison and was only discharged when she was very ill. I remember well when Mr. Polak and I went to see her; how we lifted her with greatest care on to her carpet, and tended her to the best of our powers. She died, leaving thousands of Indians in South Africa to mourn the loss.

There were 20,000 strikers who left their tools and work because there was something in the air. People said that they did not know why they had struck. There was a half-truth in that saying; they went out in faith. Violence was entirely eschewed. These men and women are the salt of India; on them will be built the Indian nation that is to be. We are poor mortals before these heroes and heroines.

But victory is due not only to their work. They quickened the conscience of the Empire and of South Africa. Success was due also to the help given by the Motherland in the hour of trial of her sons and daughters, led by that saintly politician, Gopal Krishna Gokhale; to the stand made by India; and to the action of that great Viceroy,

Lord Hardinge. Success would, however, have been impossible had not the conscience of South Africa been quickened, had not the people realised the moral force which Indians could bring to bear against brute-force.

Marching over the veldt last November, Europeans came to our aid. I have spoken elsewhere of unreasonable and unreasoning prejudice; but the masses stood aside; they never worried us; and during the march they helped us and showed us practical sympathy.

The Botha Government, too, "played the game". Mr. Smuts said to me: "We do not want any misunderstanding; we want all the cards on the table. Take these documents; read them; come to me again and again if you are not satisfied; we will make changes." And he did.

You see many things conspired to enable the Settlement to be made. But I must mention one more: Mr. Andrews. You have no notion what he did; how he worked in selfless zeal, preaching love for India through his Master—the poet-saint at Bolpur whom I have come to know through Mr. Andrews—Rabindranath Tagore.

I have called the Settlement the Magna Charta of the British Indians of South Africa; after due deliberation I repeat my statement. It is the Magna Charta of British Indians, not only because of its substance, which is great enough, but for its spirit, which indicates a change of attitude on the part of South Africa and the South African Government. The sufferings of our countrymen sealed the Settlement. The discovery was made that the ancient force could be applied in South Africa; conviction came after the sufferings of eight long-drawn-out years. They saw that Indians, when in earnest, were irresistible; that they would not take a bit less than the minimum they demanded.

Mr. Cartwright is here; he has been our staunch friend throughout and I honour him for his help. But I tell him here that he almost tried to weaken us. I remember, and he will remember how he came to me in Johannesburg Gaol, and said: "Will not this letter do?" "No, Mr. Cartwright," was my reply; "not until this alteration is made." "But everything is achieved by compromise," he urged. "There can be no compromise on principles," I answered. There never was any compromise on principles from 1906 to 1914.

The Settlement is final on all the points of our passive resistance, but not of all our grievances. Grievances remain which will have to be

redressed in no distant future. But I hope it will not be by way of passive resistance. They are capable of settlement by pressure of Indian public opinion, by pressure from Downing Street, and from Delhi or Calcutta. The attitude of South Africa has changed; that is our greatest asset. On our behaviour depends the future settlement in South Africa.

I thank again, on behalf of Mrs. Gandhi and myself, Mr. Basu and Mrs. Naidu for all their kind words. But you have only seen the bright side; you do not know our weaknesses. Indians are altogether too generous; they overlook faults and magnify virtues; this had led us to incarnating our heroes. I think of what is written in our scriptures—that it is our duty to fly away from praises, we must lay them all at the feet of the Almighty. I hope we have enough courage, and courage to lay them at His feet, in whose name and in the name of Mother India we have endeavoured to do our duty, but nothing but our duty.

Indian Opinion, 30-9-1914

223. LETTER TO UNDER SECRETARY FOR COLONIES

[LONDON,]
August 10, 1914

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
COLONIAL OFFICE, S.W.

SIR,

Mr. Hermann Kallenbach is a German by birth, his parents having migrated from Russia and settled in Germany at the border town of Russ, East Prussia. He is a Jew by religion, an architect by profession. He has settled in South Africa for the last 18 years. He is owner of Tolstoy Farm in the Transvaal and considerable other landed property in the same Province.

He has been connected with my activity in South Africa for the last 10 years and has come with me, both of us being on our way to India.

Mr. Kallenbach never formally became a British subject, but as he was coming with me to India, both of us came to the conclusion that it would be better for him to become naturalised. Before, therefore, we left South Africa, that is before the 18th July, he filed his

application for naturalisation with the Secretary for the Interior at Pretoria. He was to have taken the oath of allegiance in India, where his papers were to follow him. Owing to the crisis, both Mr. Kallenbach and I are now stranded here and both of us hope shortly to be able to offer our services as non-combatants during the crisis that has overtaken the Empire.

I write this, however, to ascertain whether, as Mr. Kallenbach does not yet hold the certificate of naturalisation, he is to take any steps in connection with the notices published requiring Germans to register themselves.

In any event, Mr. Kallenbach wishes to place himself entirely at the disposal of the authorities.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records: 551/68

224. A CONFIDENTIAL CIRCULAR[1]

[LONDON,
August 13, 1914]

We, the undersigned have, after mature deliberation, decided for the sake of the Motherland and the Empire to place our services unconditionally, during this crisis, at the disposal of the Authorities. We advisedly use the word 'unconditionally' as we believe that, at a moment like this, no service that can be assigned to us can be considered to be beneath our dignity or inconsistent with our self-respect.

Indian Opinion, 16-9-1914

[1] This was sent round in connection with and preceded the Indian offer to assist the British Government during the War, *vide* the following item. It was signed by Gandhiji, Kasturba, Sarojini Naidu and fifty others.

225. LETTER TO UNDER SECRETARY FOR INDIA

[LONDON,]
August l4, 1914

TO
THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA
[SIR,]

It was thought desirable by many of us that, during the crisis that has overtaken the Empire and whilst many Englishmen, leaving their ordinary vocation in life, are responding to the Imperial call, those Indians who are residing in the United Kingdom and who can at all do so, should place themselves unconditionally at the disposal of the Authorities.

With a view of ascertaining the feeling of the resident Indian population, the undersigned sent out a circular letter to as many Indians in the United Kingdom as could be approached during the 30 hours that the organisers gave themselves. The response has been generous and prompt and, in the opinion of the undersigned, representative of His Majesty's subjects from the Indian Empire at present residing in the different parts of the United Kingdom.

On behalf of ourselves and those whose names appear on the list appended hereto, we beg to offer our services to the Authorities. We venture to trust that the Right Hon'ble the Marquess of Crewe will approve of our offer and secure its acceptance by the proper authority. We would respectfully emphasise the fact that the one dominant idea guiding us is that of rendering such humble assistance as we may be considered capable of performing, as an earnest of our desire to share the responsibilities of membership of this great Empire, if we would share its privileges.

It may be added that some of those whose names are sent herewith are already doing work in connection with some of the organisations that are already rendering assistance, and we have no doubt that, if our humble offer is accepted, as the news permeates the Indian community, many more volunteers will come forward.[1]

M. K. GANDHI
and others

Indian Opinion, 16-9-1914

[1] The Under Secretary of State for India, Charles Roberts, replied to this co communication, indicating Government's qualified acceptance of the offer. *Vide* Appendix "Letter from C.Roberts", After 14-8-1914.

226. LETTER TO C. ROBERTS

[LONDON,]
August 24, 1914

DEAR MR. ROBERTS,

You have no doubt heard of Mr. Hermann Kallenbach who has been associated with the Indian movement in South Africa for the last 10 years. His parents originally came from Russia and settled in Germany at Russ, East Prussia. Mr. Kallenbach was born there and has been a German subject. He has settled in South Africa for the last 18 years and has carried on the profession of an architect. He is owner of considerable landed property in the Transvaal. Not having exercised the duties required of German citizens in the Transvaal, Mr. Kallenbach forfeited, according to German law, the rights of German nationality.As he was accompanying me to India before we left South Africa, both of us came to the conclusion that he should become naturalised. He, therefore, completed his application for naturalisation on the 15th July last at Johannesburg. And instructions were left with his solicitor to forward the certificate to his Indian address, as we did not expect to stay in London for any length of time. He was to have taken the oath of allegiance in India.

As I do not know what Mr. Kallenbach's legal status exactly is, for his protection, I have placed the above facts before the Colonial Office and am now awaiting their answer.

Mr. Kallenbach is desirous of joining the Indian Volunteer Corps and taking First Aid instruction in the class that is being formed under Dr. Cantlie. But he does not wish to take any such steps without the knowledge and approval of the India Office. Will you kindly consider the matter and, if this letter reaches you in time, favour me with your reply before Wednesday morning; the class, as you know, commences at 10 a.m. that day.

I remain,
Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

CHARLES ROBERTS, ESQ., M.P.
INDIA OFFICE

Colonial Office Records: 551/68

227. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

84-85, PALACE CHAMBERS,
WESTMINSTER,
LONDON,
Bhadarva Sud 5 [*August 26, 1914*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

As my affairs are in a mess, I do not know what to write. I am attending these days one of the training classes[2] recently started for nursing the wounded. All told, we are 59 Indians in this class, which will run for three weeks. After that, I may have some idea when I shall be there [in India]. There may be some difficulty, perhaps, about Mr. Kallenbach's going.[3] In that case, my departure is likely to be delayed. I have been coming up against one obstacle after another to my going to India.

You may commence writing to me. All of you are on your trial there. Use money with the utmost care. Let everyone be scrupulous in observing the various restrictions on food. That will keep you collected both in body and mind and bring credit to Phoenix. I am not writing this time to everyone. Next week, I may possibly get more time. Send me a list of the persons in your party.[4]

I read in *Indian Opinion* that all of you were honoured in Durban. Let everyone of you be absorbed in studies there. I hope Maganbhai[5] is keeping well. If you need anything, see Mr. Deodhar[6] of the Servants of India Society. I think you are put up with Revashankerbhai[7]. I had a letter from him in which he said that you

[1] From the reference to the First Aid Class it appears this letter was written from England in 1914.

[2] These were conducted by Dr. James Cantlie, an authority on Red Cross work, at the Regent Street Polytechnic.

[3] Kallenbach, being a German, was denied a passport to India.

[4] The reference is to the party of Phoenix inmates bound for India.

[5] Maganbhai Patel

[6] Gopal Krishna Deodhar (1869-1935); a social worker who worked for the Servants of India Society and Sevasadan, an institution for women's uplift, in Poona

[7] Revashanker Jagjivan Jhaveri, brother of Dr. Mehta and a life-long friend of Gandhiji

would stay with him.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5656 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

228. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[LONDON,]

Bhadarva Sud 14 [*September 3, 1914*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I wrote a letter to you last week.[1] I hope you get all my letters. Here I am quite engrossed in work. It seems that one who wants to do his duty should expect no leisure.

Today we had an examination in first aid. I too had to read a lot. The questions were as follows: "What is the cure for opium poisoning?" "What is the treatment for a broken collarbone?" "What should be done to stop bleeding from a wound in the palm?" We are 70 Indians in the class. From tomorrow begins the next session. And, besides, I must see all these volunteers who keep turning up. There is no knowing what the outcome of the War will be, or whether we shall have to go on special duty. Things are thus in an uncertain state. Ba keeps excellent health. My weakness has not disappeared yet, thanks to fasting. Mr. Kallenbach is learning Gujarati. I am yearning for letters from you all.

This letter is for all of you to read. I see that you will be tried much more severely than we thought. For the present, I do not write separately to Maganbhai, Manilal, Jamnadas, and others. I shall see next week. Keep writing to me. I am anxious to hear about the health of Maganbhai and Santok.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 2763

[1] *Vide* the preceding items

229. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[LONDON,]

Bhadarva Vad 13 [*September 18, 1914*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I had no time last week to write to you. Most of the time is spent in the training class for first aid to the injured and the rest with Mr. Gokhale. He is keeping good health at present. They will give us training for two more months and then send us to the front. This means that my going to India in the immediate future is out of the question, unless the War suddenly comes to an end.

All of you may want to know why I have undertaken even the nursing of the wounded. Recently, I used to say, in South Africa, that, as satyagrahis we cannot help in this way either, for such help also amounted to supporting a war. One who would not help a slaughter-house should not help in cleaning the butcher's house either. But I found that, living in England, I was in a way participating in the War. London owes the food it gets in war time to the protection of the Navy. Thus to take this food was also a wrong thing. There was only one right course left, which was to go away to live in some mountainor cave in England itself and subsist there on whatever food or shelter Nature might provide, without seeking assistance from any human being. I do not yet possess the spiritual strength necessary for this. It seemed to me a base thing, therefore, to accept food tainted by war without working for it. When thousands have come forward to lay down their lives only because they thought it their duty to do so, how could I sit still? A rifle this hand will never fire. And so there only remained nursing the wounded and I took it up. This is how I communed to myself. I cannot say for certain that the step I have taken is the right one. I have thought much about the matter though, but so far I have discovered no alternative.

My guess is that we shall be here for at least four months more. The War should not go on longer than that. Ba is keeping good health. She can even walk long distances. Here she has given up wheat as well. She takes only milk in addition to what I do. Mr. Kallenbach, too, enjoys excellent health. He keeps up his study of Gujarati. Mr. Sorabji sees me every day. He has joined the War along with me. We

are 70 in the class. He has passed the first examination, that is, the entrance examination [for the Bar]. He will take three more years to be called to the bar. I am growing more convinced with experience that coming here for degrees serves no useful purpose whatsoever. The students' plight is pitiable. Maybe they do get some education, but they learn nothing. Their character is ruined. Perhaps the coming over of a very small number may be useful (only at a mature age, though).

All of you should read this letter. Make a copy and send the original to Dr. Mehta. Send the copy to Harilal. Write to me regularly at this address: 84-85, Palace Chambers, Westminster, London. I do not write separately to the others. This may be taken, therefore, as meant for all.

You must be finding yourselves in a trying situation indeed, all of you. I pray to God to be your help and to give you the firmness of mind to do your duty. Send a copy of this letter to Samaldas[1] also. He should join us. Who knows when I shall be able to bow down my head before the sisters-in-law. I am eager to know if Maganbhai has been to his people. See if you can arrange for [teaching] Tamil to Fakiri[2] andKuppu[3]. You may see Mr. Natarajan[4]. He will guide you. Ask everyone to write to me. Tell me how things are with Kalyandas[5] .

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati original: C. W. 5766; also S. N. 6052 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] Son of Lakshmidas Gandhi, Gandhiji's elder brother

[2] Boys who accompanied Maganlal Gandhi to India

[3] *ibid*

[4] Kamakshi Natarajan, editor of *Indian Social Reformer*, Bombay

[5] Kalyandas Jagmohandas Mehta; *vide* "Kalyandas Jagmohandas [Mehta], 11-5-1907.

230. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[LONDON,]
Bhadarva Vad 14 [*September 19, 1914*]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I still hesitate to send you what I have written, so afraid I am about the post. There have been no letters from you so far by the latest mail. To me this country seems like poison. My soul is in India. I am, however, staying on because I think I must. I want to write more about this but I have neither the time for it just now, nor the mood. Do go on writing to me here. Give my salaams to Imam Saheb. I wish to write again to him. I do not know, though, when I shall be able to do so. Ask Raojibhai and Pragji to write.

I have given £190 to Sorabji for admission to the Bar. Debit that to Dr. Mehta's account and send me a draft for the amount by registered post. If I am not here, the letter will follow me to India.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 6051

231. CIRCULAR REGARDING TRAINING CORPS[1]

September 22, 1914

In response to a desire widely expressed by Indian students resident in the United Kingdom to take some active part in the defence of the country and in service abroad, it has been decided to organise a Field Ambulance Training Corps in connection with theRed Cross Society, and to give members of this Corps, when adequa-tely trained, an opportunity of serving with the Indian Army in Europe. The nucleus of such a Corps has already been formed in London, and drilled and trained for some weeks under Dr. James Cantlie, and steps are now being taken, with the co-operation of the War Office and the authorities of the London University Officers'

[1] The original entitled "Indian Field Ambulance Training Corps" was drafted by Gandhiji and Mr. Mallet; *vide* "Letter to C. Roberts", 25-10-1914

Training Corps, to expand and develop this nucleus into a highly organised corps. The Government of India has given its sanction, and Lieutenant-Colonel Baker of the Indian Medical Service (retired) has consented to act as Commander of the Corps.

Indian gentlemen desirous of joining it should send in their names without delay to the Indian Volunteers Committee, 60, Talbot Road, Bayswater, London.

The Corps is intended mainly for residents in London; but Indian students from other centres will be admitted if they desire to join. Men with medical training will be able to undertake special duties, but all men willing to train and serve will be of use. Applicants will be asked to enrol themselves in the Indian Field Ambulance Training Corps, and will require to be passed by a Medical Board as physically fit. They will then be drilled almost every day by trained instructors in London, at an hour which will not interfere unduly with their ordinary studies or occupations; and at each week-end they will be expected to go into camp for further training from Friday night to Monday morning. A camping ground within easy reach of London will be placed at the disposal of the Corps, and uniforms and equipment will be procured. After some weeks of training—which will involve hard and steady work—they will, when efficient, be entitled to volunteer to serve for six months as a Detachment under the Red Cross Society in connection with the Indian troops abroad. The terms and conditions of such service will be announced later. But it is hoped that the Red Cross Society will be able, in the first instance, to find places in the Detachment sent abroad for 10 Medical Officers and for 50 other recruits who would serve as Nursing Orderlies, Dressers, Compounders, Bearers, &c. The rates of pay on active service will probably be 20s. per day for Medical Officers and 4s. per day, with free rations, for the rest. Preference in the filling of these places would be given to recruits who, in the opinion of the Commanding Officer, were the most efficiently trained.

From a printed leaflet: S. N. 6053

232. LETTER TO DR. ABDURRAHMAN

[LONDON,
October 1. 1914]

DEAR DR. ABDURRAHMAN

I think you should inform the Minister that you represent not only the Malay community but the other Mahomedans also who are not Malays. At the same time, a statement of your case should certainly be submitted to him. You will read in this week's *Indian Opinion* counsel's opinion which would show you that the resident Mahomedans are also affected by the judgement. What you desire is that (you will tell him) non-Christian marriages celebrated according to the rites of the respective religions of the parties should be recognised and that if a deputation was received a way out of the difficulty might be found and further that the Minister will then notice the intensity of the feeling roused. I hope that you will be satisfied with nothing less than an alteration of the Law—no assurances can be accepted as sufficient.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 5758

233. SPEECH TO INDIAN FIELD AMBULANCE CORPS[1]

[LONDON,
October 1, 1914]

Mr. Gandhi spoke of Dr. Cantlie's splendid spirit in all the work that had been done, but added that, if he had one weakness, it was his keen desire "to make us wear kilts in order to keep ourselves thoroughly warm!" The one who laughed longest and

[1] At a public meeting held at the Polytechnic Institution, Regent Street, the Indian Voluntary Aid Corps, which was trained by Dr. James Cantlie in First Aid, Sanitation and Hygiene, received recognition from the War Office as the Indian Field Ambulance Corps. Col. R. J. Baker, an ex-member of the Indian Medical Corps, took over charge of further instruction. Gandhiji presided over the meeting which was addressed by the Aga Khan and attended, among others, by Kasturba, Sarojini Naidu, Ameer Ali and Kallenbach. Earlier, Gandhiji presented Dr. Cantlie with a set of Tagore's works in appreciation of his services to the Corps.

loudest was Dr. Cantlie himself. To the Directors of the Polytechnic Institution Mr. Gandhi also paid a fine and deserved tribute; it has made a home for the Indian Corps, given them the use of its splendid equipment, of its rooms and halls, of its many facilities, for practically nothing because dominated by the spirit of patriotism and service.

When speaking of H. H. the Aga Khan—to "introduce" him, said Mr. Gandhi, would be an impertinence, especially by one who had been for more than twenty years an exile from his Motherland—Mr. Gandhi, as might be expected, fastened upon the offer of His Highness to serve as a private in the British ranks in this time of crisis. It was a noble example set by one to whom every avenue in the army might be open; it would comfort, encourage and cheer the Indian Corps, who would gladly serve His Highness. A word was added about the unfailing encouragement and substantial financial help which His Highness had always given to the struggle in South Africa, of his help to Mr. Gokhale in his strenuous work on behalf of the Indians in South Africa, and of the thrill of joy which touched not only the hearts of the Aga Khan's followers, of whom there were some in the midst of the struggle, but of all Indians, irrespective of creed.[1]

Mr. Gandhi afterwards expressed on behalf of Hindus complete sympathy with Mussulmans in their resentment of Mr. Lloyd George's words, and made the suggestion that they should raise a farthing subscription and present to the Chancellor of the Exchequer an authentic narrative which would prove that the Prophet of Islam was not the monster he thought him to be.

Indian Opinion, 4-11-1914

234. LETTER TO COL. R. J. BAKER

LONDON,
October 13, 1914

DEAR COLONEL BAKER,

I thank you for your note of today's date, supplemented by the message sent by you, verbally, through Mr. Venkatraman who was good enough to take [my] note to you.

I am aware that strict military discipline requires that all complaints by members of a Corps should be sent to the commanding officer through section leaders. I am also aware of the fact that, in the military sense, I am no more than any other private, but I have been

[1] The gathering was then addressed by the Aga Khan,

under the belief that in the interests of the Corps, and unofficially, I would be allowed to act as a humble channel of communication between you and the members of the Corps, so as to avoid any friction or stiffness, especially in the initial stages, when the members who have never undergone military discipline are likely to misunderstandexperiences which may be quite new to them. I also thought that you would not mind recognising my representative capacity as Chairman of the Volunteer Corps, and would not resent my approaching you in the matters affecting the Corps, and it was in that belief that, being entirely a cripple, I took the liberty of inviting you to my room so that we could have a mutual discussion, which I have always known to be far more satisfactory than letter-writing, and if you think it worth while, I would still ask you to favour me with a call.

Meanwhile, and in any case, here are the complaints so far as they have been brought to my notice.

First, grievous dissatisfaction has been caused by the appointment of section leaders without reference to the feeling of the members of the Corps. They are disappointed, and I share their disappointment, that they were not in any way consulted as to the appointment. The leaders appointed may or may not be desirable persons, and I hardly know any of them, but I think that the efficient and smooth working of the Corps demands the appointments of officers who are likely to be popular with its members. I, therefore, venture to suggest that the appointments already made may be recalled, and that the members of the Corps may be invited to elect section leaders and other officers whose appointment would depend entirely upon you, and in the event of your not approving of the choice made by the members, that they should elect others in the place of those rejected by you.

The other complaints are of minor importance. The blankets supplied are not considered enough, nor of sufficient length. The quantity, as also the kind of rations, requires revision. There are still some other matters with which I will not burden this note, which is, I fear, too long as it is.

I remain,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the typewritten office copy signed by Gandhiji: S. N. 6069B

235. RESOLUTION[1]

[LONDON,
October 13, 1914]

This meeting of the Indian Volunteers of the Indian Field Ambulance Training Corps hereby places on record its deep sense of regret in connection with the appointment of corporals without reference to the wishes of the members of the Corps and expresses further regret that the Commanding Officer has not seen his way to comply with the reasonable request of the Chairman of the Corps suggesting that the appointments already made may be recalled and that members may be given an opportunity of electing during the training period Corporals and other officers subject to confirmation by the Commanding Officer, and respectfully resolves that, unless the appointments above mentioned are recalled and some means adopted of ascertaining definitely the wishes of the members of the Corps in making fresh appointments, the members will be reluctantly obliged to abstain from further drilling and week-end camping.

From the typewritten office copy: S. N. 6069B

236. LETTER TO COL. R. J. BAKER

[LONDON,]
October 14, 1914

DEAR COLONEL BAKER,

I have to say with the greatest regret that Your letter in reply to mine of yesterday's date was a severe disappointment to me. I had come to look upon you as a good-natured and soulful Commander who, being free from red tape and stiffness, would carry everything before him and that in the sweetest manner possible. But your letter disillusions me. I made a most reasonable suggestion well knowing the feeling of the Corps. My special vocation in life has been to smooth over difficulties between officials and my countrymen, and I may tell you, although I occupied no official rank in the late South African Indian Ambulance Corps consisting of 1200 men, there never was a

[1] This was passed at a meeting of the Corps held on October 13 and was sent to Col. Baker; *vide* the following item.

hitch between Colonel Gallwey and the Corps.[1] And though officiallythere were even several Europeans who occupied ranks, Colonel Gallwey and Major Baptey, who was under him, were good enough not to take any steps without reference to me with a view to ascert-aining the wishes of the Corps. And you may know that we were attached to a column of 30,000, were under strictest military discip-line, and the Corps was called upon to work at the most critical period of the Boer War and when, in the initial stages, British arms had suffered reverses. I assure that nothing can be further from my thought than to undermine your proper authority or to do anything subversive of military discipline, but if you desire to train us for that discipline, in my opinion, there is no other way than the one I have ventured to suggest. It will enable you to know your Corps better, and may I say that, by accepting my humble advice, you will add to your popularity and prestige.

We had an enthusiastic meeting of the Corps last night. There were 53 members present. I attended though I was in agony and in defiance of medical instructions. The subjoined resolution was carried by 49 votes against 2 dissentients. I have asked the members present to attend at the drilling time this afternoon. If you could possibly see your way, in the interest of the Corps, to alter your decision, the drilling will go on. If you could not do so, those of us who voted for the resolution and the others who may fall in with it will be informed of your unfavourable decision and will therefore respectfully with-draw.

I hope that you will reconsider your decision and avoid what would undoubtedly be a catastrophe. I assure you that I am most anxious to please you as our Commanding Officer, but I am equally anxious to serve my countrymen many of whom have joined this movement upon my advice.

Mr. Gandevia who has kindly offered to take this letter to you will await your reply.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the typewritten office copy signed by Gandhiji: S. N. 6069B

[1] *Vide"*Letter to Chhaganlal Ganddhi", 23-1-1902 "Speech at Calcutta Meeting", 27-1-1902

237. LETTER TO C. ROBERTS

[LONDON,]
October 16, 1914

DEAR MR. ROBERTS,

An unfortunate situation has arisen in connection with the Indian Field Ambulance Training Corps which may disrupt it if it is not handled in the right spirit.

Last week, Colonel Baker appointed section commanders without reference to the wishes of the members of the Corps. There was grave dissatisfaction and, when it was brought to my notice, I shared it. On Tuesday morning I appealed to Colonel Baker to recall the appointment, and appoint those whom the members of the Corps may choose, subject to further election by them, in the event of the choice not being accepted by Col. Baker. He, however, much to my surprise, took up what to my mind was an untenable attitude. He thought that any complaints that the members might have to make could only be brought before him through the section commanders and that recall of the appointments would be subversive of all discipline. My committee at once called a meeting of the members of the Corps and a resolution was adopted on Wednesday night requesting Col. Baker to recall the appointments and to allow us to submit names for his approval. He not only did not accede to our request but considered it a grave breach of military discipline to have convened the meeting.

I submit that Col. Baker has grievously misunderstood his position and that of the Corps.

I venture to think:

1. That up to the present we are only probationers undergoing training in ambulance work.
2. That we have yet to sign contracts which would bind us in the military sense.
3. That the internal administration of the Corps should rest in the hands of the Volunteer Committee.
4. That our services have been accepted only as a voluntary aid detachment and that, therefore, the full military code can never apply to us.

I may be permitted to draw your attention to two precedents within my knowledge. At the time of the Boer War the Indian Ambulance Corps was 1200 strong. There was also a European

Ambulance Corps, I think much larger. We were all under Col. Gallwey's command. But Col. Gallwey never claimed to interfere with the internal administration of the Corps, although we were under military discipline. And we were not then, as the Corps is now, merely a training body. We were in action at the most critical period of the war. Col. Gallwey did not appoint section commanders. We appointed our own leaders and others. As it so happened, all orders ultimately passed through my hands. Similarly, at the time of the Zulu rebellion in Natal, we were under Col. Sparks' command.[1] Col. Sparks never appointed officers of our Corps. We appointed from among ourselves our officers and the sole responsibility for carrying out orders as to military duty rested upon one of us. You may be aware that both Corps found honourable mention in dispatches. There may be precedents to the contrary[2]. I do not know the military code. If a grave and punishable breach of discipline has been committed in the calling of the meeting alluded to above, or in any other manner, I alone must be held responsible and I shall cheerfully bear the penalty. But if the Corps is to be held together, I cannot help feeling that the appointments of the corporals should be recalled, the status of the Corps exactly defined and the position of Col. Baker and my Committee determined.

I need hardly assure you that I have addressed this communication to you in no irresponsible manner. I know that this is not the time for squabbles or quibbles but for solid work. I fear however that Col. Baker's uncompromising attitude has made it impossible for many of us to work through him unless he can alter his attitude. I venture to trust that you will be able to suggest a way out of the difficulty.

I am,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

CHARLES ROBERTS, ESQ., M.P., ETC.

INDIA OFFICE

From the typewritten office copy signed by Gandhiji: S. N. 6069B

[1] *Vide* "Indian Stretcher-Bearer Corps", Before 19-7-1906.

[2] The original has "country".

238. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO J. E. ANDREWS[1]

[LONDON,]
October 20, 1914

Charlie has been writing to me. . . . You are likely to be grieved over his having given up the clerical robe. I hope however that such is not the case. His action is no change; it is, I feel convinced, expansion. He preaches through his life as very few do, and he preaches the purest love. . . . Charlie has evidently a mission (of) whose extent even those who are nearest him have no conception. May I plead for your blessings to Charlie in all his work? It will be such a comfort to him to know that nothing he has done has grieved you.

Charles Freer Andrews

239. LETTER TO C. ROBERTS

16, TREBOVIR ROAD, S. W.,
[LONDON,]
October 22, 1914

DEAR MR. ROBERTS,

I thank you for your letter received this morning.

I am unaware of the regulations governing Red Cross contingents, and though I think that the Indian Corps can be isolated from the Red Cross Detachments in that it is a unique corps and is being treated as a Red Cross Detachment only because it is the Viceroy's wish (no doubt for the better safety of the Corps). I shall be prepared to advise the Committee to accept the position stated in your letter and resume duties which have been unhappily suspended. But before I advise the Committee, I would like an assurance that the principle of consultation which Col. Baker will recognize is not to be merely personal to me but that it would apply to my Committee and that its status and existence will be recognized by Col. Baker and that the principle of consultation is to be applied to all matters affecting

[1] In early August 1914, Andrews had taken a critical decision to leave the Order, on conscientious grounds. His father and some of his friends were disturbed over this. Andrews relied on non-Christians among them to speak for him, and Gandhiji wrote to Andrews' father. The full text of the letter, however, is not available.

the internal administration of the Corps. I presume, too, that the circulars, which have been issued presumably by Col. Baker inviting Indians individually to offer their services, will no longer be issued if my Committee resumes co-operation with him. I am sure His Lordship will consider that the recognition I am asking for the Committee is solely for the sake of ensuring success and efficiency.

As I am calling a meeting of the members of the Corps for tomorrow, may I ask for a reply perhaps by express delivery. I shall thank you if you will kindly lend me your copy of Army Regulations referred to in your letter.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the typewritten office copy signed by Gandhiji: S. N. 6069B

240. LETTER TO C. ROBERTS

16, TREBOVIR ROAD,
LONDON, S. W.,
October 25, 1914

DEAR MR. ROBERTS,

I have to thank you for your prompt reply of the 23rd instant. The correspondence between us was read to the meeting referred to in my letter of the 22nd instant and with but two dissentients, the meeting passed a resolution expressing deep regret over your letter under reply and authorising me to negotiate for a settlement on the lines of my last letter.

I fear very much that there seems to be a complete misunderstanding between the India Office and my Committee as to its functions and the relative positions of Col. Baker and the Committee. The issue of the circular[1] which was drafted by Mr. Mallet and myself, and of which I enclose copy herewith, was simultaneous with the appointment of Col. Baker as the Commanding Officer. That circular expressly contemplates exclusive recruiting by my Committee. And up to the time of the unfortunate rupture, recruiting has been exclusively done by it with the knowledge of Col. Baker. It is, therefore, hardly fair to suggest that I am now even challenging Col. Baker's *right* to

[1] *Vide* "Circular regarding Training Corps",22-9-1914.

recruit—a right which never belonged to him. Indeed, if I may say so, we have a right to complain that, whilst we were trying our best to healthe breach, circulars inviting recruits were issued by Col. Baker and even the Students' Department intervened and more or less formally wrote to those who were likely to respond to Col. Baker's efforts. These attempts suggest that there is no intention on his part to retain my Committee's co-operation. It would certainly have been more becoming, if he had waited for the result of the negotiations carried on by me for a settlement. If, therefore, in spite of resumption of duties by the Corps, Col. Baker were to continue recruiting, the Corps would lose its national and voluntary character and his action would be contrary to the circular referred to by me and the practice based upon it. It would moreover be contrary to the spirit of your letter of the 18th August wherein the signatories to the offer were invited to form a committee. The least that is, in my opinion, due to the Committee, is, in the event of a settlement, to be allowed to retain its exclusive right to recruit.

Your letter further suggests that it would be impracticable for Col. Baker to accept the principle of consultation with my Committee in matters affecting the internal administration of the Corps. It has not, I feel sure, been Col. Baker's experience hitherto. He has not, for instance, found it impracticable to seek and value the co-operation and advice of the Committee rendered through me as to the method of managing the Commissariat, the way of dealing with the difficult question of different sections wanting different foods as also of dealing with the equally difficult question of uniforms. It is, not suggested by me that upon matters of rendering service and doing work my Committee might be consulted. I am well aware of the fact that, in the forms of contract voluntarily signed by us, we have undertaken to obey all lawful commands of our commanding officer. But we have not undertaken to subscribe to the exercise by that officer of functions that we have all along understood do not belong to him. I may be allowed to state that I have before now known how to obey and I hope that, if it becomes my good fortune to serve during this crisis in any capacity whatsoever for which I may be fitted, I shall not be wanting. And I think I may say the same of my fellow-workers. Throughout this unfortunate affair, their one desire has been to fulfil the letter as also the spirit of the contract forms signed by them.

I have already written at much greater length than I had desired

to. My Committee and I are very anxious to see a settlement. And as I know that nothing conduces to a mutual understanding so much as personal conversation, may I avail myself of your offer to visit me again when necessary. I am under strict medical orders not to leave my bed at least for a fortnight. I shall, therefore, be deeply grateful, if you could find time to come over.

Any time and day will suit me.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the typewritten office copy signed by Gandhiji: S. N. 6069B

241. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

LONDON,

Kartak Sud 7, 1971 [*October 25, 1914*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have not been able to write to you lately.

Being better today, I have sat down to write. I am still confined to bed and shall be so, it seems, for another ten days at least. This time the pain was extreme and the reason for it, in my opinion, was that I listened to doctor friends. Pressed by everyone, I agreed to take things against which I had not taken an inviolable pledge. I ate dal, rice, and vegetables for four days. The pain went on increasing all these days, instead of subsiding as expected. On the fifth day, I took salt. The pain on that day was unbearable. On the sixth day, I gave up the doctors and went back to my own remedies. The pain vanished entirely and the piles also disappeared. The pain returned, however, thanks to my own foolishness. On the day I ate salt there was blood in my cough, for the first time in my life. I still get it. And so Mr. Kallenbach brought a white doctor, a vegetarian whom I know. He said that there was no need for salt, but pointed to the need for roots and tubers. He suggested, moreover, that the body having grown extremely weak through fasting, I should not take oil, nuts, etc., for the present. Hence I live at present on barley water, eight ounces of fresh fruit, and eight ounces of soup of turnip, carrot, potato and cabbage mixed. The body is extremely emaciated. I do not have full

faith even in this treatment. Since, however, I have not myself hit upon the key to my health, I am trying out this experiment. The pain has stopped. Blood continues to come up while coughing. I have lost all taste for food and hence this is an excellent opportunity for mastering the palate. The doctor has stopped lemon as well, so that, in the absence of oil, the soup of turnip, carrot and cabbage is not very inviting, but I take it with relish. In the beginning, barley water did not taste nice. But now I think I can stand it. I write all this in detail toyou, but there is no need to worry. I hope I will be all right, and that too, I still feel, with fruits. It is yet to be seen whether this is borne out by experience. Friends insist that I should take milk, but I have flatly refused to do so. I have told them that I have vowed not to consume it and would not therefore have it even if I should die without it.

Ba's stamina is wonderful. She is coming to have more faith in my remedies.

I have had to start a satyagraha here against the India Office, details of which I will give in my next letter.[1]

Follow all the ideals of Phoenix even at the cost of extreme suffering. Tell me in detail how everybody is keeping and what has been the effect of the environment on the minds of the children after going there.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Gandhijini Sadhana

242. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[LONDON,
About end of *October 1914*][2]

. . . [3] I shall let you know its details in my next letter.

Mr. Gokhale left by the last mail [steamer]. Do meet him. He has promised to give monetary assistance if needed. He is of the opinion that we cannot use for our expenditure there the funds lying

[1] Some portion appears to have been omitted here in the source.

[2] Gokhale arrived in Bombay on November 13. He was likely to have sailed for home about three weeks earlier, soon after which this letter was written.

[3] Some portion of the letter is missing in the source.

with us; nor can the expenses on account of the voyage of all of us be met from these funds. He has, however, told me that he would make the necessary arrangements after my arrival there. We can use the purse-amounts. Remain faithful to all the aims, even at the cost of extreme suffering. You have three sources for help: Dr. Mehta, Mr. Gokhale and Mr. Andrews. Draw upon any of them as you may findconvenient. So long as Dr. Mehta is ready to meet the expenses, I think you should not seek anybody else's assistance. Please write to me in detail what your expenses are, what food you eat, how all of you keep and what effect the atmosphere has on the inner life of the boys, etc.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5775 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri.

243. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[LONDON,]
Kartak Sud 13 [*October 31, 1914*]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I am in no condition to write a long letter to you. I am still confined to bed and I fear I will have to stay there. There is no danger, however.

There is nothing else to do but to let Mr. Polak draw whatever he wants. You can discuss the matter with him. I can think of no advice to give you from here on this matter. I have already written[1] about Lakshmi. I cannot say how long I shall have to stay.

The satyagraha here is over. We got what we wanted.

Tell Pragji and Raojibhai that I will write to them later.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 6060

[1] This letter is not available.

244. LETTER TO "INDIA"

[LONDON],
November 4, 1914

TO
THE EDITOR
INDIA
[LONDON]

SIR,

There were at the Netley Hospital last Sunday nearly 470 Indian wounded soldiers. Many more are expected to arrive shortly, if they are not there already. The need for Indian Volunteer orderlies is greater than ever. Nearly 70 members of the local Indian corps are already serving as nurses there. Leaving aside the medical members of the corps, there are now very few left to answer the further call when it comes.

May I, therefore, trespass upon the hospitality of your columns to appeal to the Indian young men residing in the United Kingdom to enlist without delay? In my humble opinion, it ought to be our proud privilege to nurse the Indian soldiers back to health. Colonel Baker's cry is for more orderlies. And in order to make up the requisite number, as also to encourage our young men, several elderly Indians occupying a high position have gone or are going to Netley as orderlies. Among them arc Mr. M. A. Turk had, a former vice-president of the Rajkumar College in Kathiawar; Mr. J. M. Parikh, barrister-at-law; and Lieutenant-Colonel Kanta Prasad, of the Indian Medical Service (retired), who has served in five campaigns.

I hope that the example set by these gentlemen will inspire others with alike zeal, and that many Indians who can at all afford to do so will be equal to the emergency that has arisen. Those who desire to enlist can do so at the Indian Volunteers Committee's rooms at 16, Trebovir Road, near Earl's Court, at any time during working hours.

[I am, etc.,]
M. K. GANDHI
CHAIRMAN,
INDIAN VOLUNTEERS COMMITTEE

India, 6-11-1914

245. A CIRCULAR LETTER[1]

[LONDON,]
November 4, 1914

There were at the Netley Hospital last Sunday nearly 470 Indian wounded soldiers. Many more are expected to arrive shortly, if they are not there already. Nearly all the available members of the Indian Volunteers Corps are working either as nurses or as orderlies at Netley.

The cry is for more orderlies.

The Committee thinks that it should be considered a proud privilege by us to be able to nurse our own wounded countrymen. Atleast two hundred more recruits will be required in order to cope with the work that lies before us. The service will be required for no more than three months. Students, therefore, will not be called upon to sacrifice more than three months of their time after being enlisted.

Several of our elderly countrymen have gone to Netley as orderlies. Mr. M. A. Turkhad, ex-Vice-President, Rajkumar College, Kathiawar, Mr. J. M. Parikh, Barrister-at-Law, and Lieut. Col. Kanta Prasad, I.M.S., (retired), who has served in five different campaigns before, are now working as orderlies at Netley.

Indian Opinion, 9-12-1914

246. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI HARIBHAI PATEL

Kartik Vad 1 [*November 4, 1914*][2]

BHAISHRI MAGANBHAI,

I have your letter. I felt great pity for you when I read it. I can see that you are facing a real dilemma.

Consult Bhai Maganlal and take whatever money you receive.

I don't see anything wrong in your having you son with you. It would be better if you brought your wife there after I return. I intend

[1] This was signed by Gandhiji and Gandevia.

[2] From the contents and from the lettter to Maganlal Gandhi dated November 6, 1914, which has reference to this letter; *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 6-11-1914 *Kartik Vad* 1 in the year fell on November 4.

to involve you all here in the war if my stay here becomes prolonged.[1] Let us see what happens. Today there is no time to write more.

I don't think that Raojibhai can be freed all of a sudden. Still I shall write to Phoenix. It is only natural that when we meet our dear ones we should feel unhappy by the thought of those who are away from us. But that feeling subsides. I am writing this to comfort you, not because I do not want Raojibhai to come.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

More from letter to Maganlal. Show this letter to Chi. Maganlal.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 11010. Courtesy: Suryakant C. Patel.

247. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[LONDON,]
Kartak Vad 9 [*November 5, 1914*]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter.

It does not seem proper that I should write to Mr. Polak from here. Mr. West and you may do what seems best. However, if you insist on my writing, I will. Send me the accounts subsequent to the point where Maganlal left off, so that, in due course, I may publish them in Bombay. Mr. Gokhale has been able to do nothing about the accounts. He has told me not to publish them till I have met the Committee.

I shall have to stay here for at least three months more—how much longer, is yet to be seen. I have sent another offer[2], a copy of which will be sent to you by Mr. Polak. You will see from it that I wish to include South Africa and our group[3] in India.

I am not quite well yet, but not confined to bed either. I take short walks. Let us see what effects that will have. Today is the third

[1] Gandhiji as Chairman of the Indian Volunteers' Committee in London had been recruiting Indian volunteer orderlies to nurse wounded Indian soldiers at the Netley Hospital.

[2] This is not available.

[3] The reference is to the Phoenix party.

day since I started.

It does not seem likely that I shall go to France. I may have probably to go where our wounded soldiers are. Perhaps Ba and Mr. Kallenbach may also be able to join me. The latter has been staying with me and will remain with me for the time being. He has had to take out a pass. He suffers no inconvenience, though.

I am sending Chi. Maganlal's letters with this. I have already sent some matter [for *Indian Opinion*] to you. I have been able to do nothing after that. I hope to be able to write if I keep well. Miss Smith[1] told me again yesterday that she continues to send contributions regularly.

Ba keeps excellent health. Here she is exercising the utmost control over the palate. Now, we go out for a short walk.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 6061

248. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

[LONDON,]
November 6, 1914

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

I saw your letter to Mr. Kallenbach. I have been out of bed for the last five days and am slowly regaining my strength. Please do not worry about me.

You will be pleased to learn that the quarrel with Col. Baker has been adjusted. He has conceded the two points for which we were fighting. I do hope that you benefited by the voyage and that you are keeping well.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 2249

[1] She used to write a newsletter from London for *Indian Opinion*.

249. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[LONDON,]

Kartak Vad 3, [*November 6, 1914*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

This is no time to write long letters. My health is improving. If I am better next week, I will give you more details. Do not worry about me. I expect to improve. I have been out of bed these three days.

I have had a letter from Mr. Maganbhai I have sent a reply[1]. Read it and act upon it. . . .[2] Send for money from Phoenix, if necessary. Mr. Sorabji has gone to the Hospital which has some of our wounded troops. Seventy more from among us have gone to him. I could not go on account of my ill-health. I hope to be able to send some papers along with this.

The satyagraha started here has succeeded. Mysterious are the ways of Providence.

Ba keeps good health. Mr. Kallenbach is staying with me.

I am trying to bring you all here, in case I have to stay here for long. I hope to send a copy of the letter[3] I have written to Mr. Roberts. No one should be upset over that letter, nor build any hopes on it. If you do not receive a cable[4] from me before this letter, you may understand that nothing has come of my offer.

Tell all of them that I am unable to write a separate letter to each of them.

There has been no letter at all from Jamnadas. Let them not think that because I do not write to them, they too need not write to me.

Please let me know what your food expenses come to there. If you do not have to come here, I believe, so far as I can see today, I shall be free from here within about three months. But nothing is certain. Nothing can be said definitely before I leave this and actually reach there.

[1] This is not available.
[2] Some portion is found to have been omitted here.
[3] This is not available.
[4] There is no evidence that this was sent.

If any of the sons of revered Kalabhai or revered Karsandas comes, take him with you. Write to Nandkorbhabhi that I will make all the arrangements after I reach there.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5776 Curtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

250. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

LONDON,

Kartak Vad 10/11 [*November 13/14, 1914*]

CHI . MAGANLAL,

I did get the letters which Manilal and you wrote from Delhi. The mails have been very irregular, so that letters arrive on no fixed days.

You are all getting plenty of experience. Stay in Santiniketan so as to be helpful and give them no cause to be displeased. Perhaps, you may find it more convenient to get from elsewhere any articles of food you cannot do without. From here I can make no suggestions. After due consideration, do whatever is necessary. Be quick in teaching Hindi to the Tamil children, otherwise they will be ill at ease.Pick up a little Bengali, as you are staying there. It will not take much time to learn it. Find out a Tamilian, if available. It would be good if Dr. Mehta spares Mr. Rajangam. Many unforeseen responsibilities have devolved on you. I should like you to come out successful.

Mr. Sorabji and others have already gone down to nurse the wounded. I could not go on account of my ill-health. I am trying hard now, but difficulties crop up.

Make yourself useful to the Poet[1], Mr. Andrews and Mr. Pearson. See that everyone shows respect to the elders. You should all rise earlier than the residents there.

Write to me regularly. Please let me know how much expenditure was incurred per head on account of food in Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] Rabindranath Tagore

[PS.]

Treat this letter as meant for all of you. I am unable to send you all the papers I wanted to. Read the accompanying carefully and ponder over them. Show them to Jamnadas as well and preserve them. Show to Andrews if he wants to see them. Tell him about them. The other papers, I shall send later.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5777 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

251. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

[LONDON,]
Kartak Vad 10/11 [*November 13/14, 1914*]

CHI. JAMNADAS,

Had a letter from you after a long time. Here we always remember you.

You must be married now. May your life be pure. I pray that all the hopes you have cherished be fulfilled. Remain firm and he always devoted to what you think is your duty. Given patience and faith, everything will come off all right. Keep writing to me at length. Do not look for long letters from me at present. I keep good health. It is improving now, though there is considerable weakness. It is with my own treatment that I am recovering. At home, we have kept up the Indian style in everything. We take meals sitting on the floor and likewise make our beds too on the floor. Whatever cooking is necessary, we do ourselves. Mr. Kallenbach is with us. I keep on our own dress when I see anyone. When going out, I have to put on the English dress.

I see that I shall be detained here for at least three months more. Sorabji and others have gone to attend to the wounded and are already busy. There is a possibility of my going next week.

Give my humblest greetings to the respected Khushalbhai and Devbhabhi, as also to Raliatbehn and Gangabhabhi, and tell them that I am getting impatient to see them. Give me all the news.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5688 Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

252. LETTER TO PRAGJI DESAI

LONDON,

Kartak Vad 12 [*November 15, 1914*][1]

DEAR PRAGJI,

I have your letter. I can well understand that you have doubts. I think I have sent[2] to someone the replies to your questions. All the same, I shall try to answer them again. A satyagrahi cannot support war directly or indirectly. There are no two opinions about that. I am not such a perfect satyagrahi. I am trying to be one. Meanwhile, one should go as far as one can. Soon after I landed here, the War started. I spent some days thinking out my duty. It seemed to me that to go on living in England, keeping my thoughts to myself, also amounted to taking part in the War. It was obvious to me that, if this island were not protected by the Navy, the people would starve and they would all fall into the hands of Germans. I am being protected, therefore, by that Navy, which means that I was indirectly supporting the War. As a satyagrahi, it was my duty to go away to a spot where I would not need such protection and could do without the food so procured. Such a place would be the mountains here. There, one is not under any protection. If the Germans took me away, I should not mind. I must subsist on whatever fruit or grass or leaves grew on the mountains. This food is not protected by the Navy. I am not, however, ready for this manner of living. I could not summon the necessary courage. It is for cultivating such courage that I am going to India, where the circumstances are favourable. They are not so here, and to create them here one must have an *atman* a hundred thousand times stronger than mine. What is my next duty, then? Brothers, husbands and sons have gone, rightly or wrongly, to get themselves killed, leaving behind weeping sisters, wives and mothers. Thousands have already been killed. And am I, doing nothing, to continue enjoying myself, eating my food? The *Gita* says that he who eats without performing *yajna*[3] is a thief. In the present situation here sacrifice meant, and means, self-sacrifice. I saw, therefore, that I too must

[1] In the original, Gandhiji has given *Kartak Vad* 3, November 6, at the top, but he says at the end of the letter that he resumed writing on November 14 and finished it on November 15.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 18-9-1914.

[3] Sacrifice

perform *yajna*. I myself could not shoot, bur could nurse the wounded. I might even get Germans to nurse. I could nurse them without any partisan spirit. There would be no violation of the spirit of compassion then. And so I decided to offer my services. Now, I am not a private individual, but a public figure. I must also talk to others. These others are out for fighting and are not opposed to war. I must address them; an unconditional letter, which I did.[1] But you must have seen in it a sentence to the effect that we would unconditionally undertake any work for which we were qualified. Everyone knows that I am not fit for active service. I could not, therefore, be asked to fight. This is the explanation for using the expression "unconditional". The main point, however, is whether I could even undertake to nurse the wounded. I have explained it, therefore, at greater length. It is possible you may even then remain unconvinced. If so, write to me again. I shall keep writing to you in reply whenever I have time. Gradually, you will come to see the point. It is after much deliberation that I have taken this step. Whenever I was questioned there, I used to reply that I could not even join in ambulance work now. You have seen that my position is still the same. It is on a level with the idea that I must not kill a snake. But so long as, in my cowardice, I fear a snake, I would certainly remove it to a distance, if not kill it outright. This also is a form of violence. If, while I am removing one, it struggles hard, I should hold it so tight between the sticks that it might bleed, and even be crushed to death. Even so, my statement that I ought not to kill a snake would and must hold true. So long as I have not developed absolute fearlessness, I cannot be a perfect satyagrahi. I am striving incessantly to achieve it, and will continue to do so. Till I have succeeded, do all of you save me [from doing anything wrong] and put up with my cowardice. You should all keep struggling to make yourselves fearless.

Let everyone there read this letter and then send it to Medh. Afterwards, send it on, or a copy of it, to Chi. Maganlal, so that he, too, may have some points explained.

I have written this letter in three instalments. I am so busy even here. I commenced it last week, resumed it yesterday and finished it today, the [*Kartak vad*] 12th[2].

Further news you will get from the other letters. Sorabji is busy

[1] *Vide* "A Confidential Circular", 13-8-1914

[2] November 15, 1914

nursing the wounded.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5657; also from a photostat: G. N. 2659 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

253. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

LONDON, S.W.,
November 20, 1914

MY DEAR WEST,

I have your welcome letter after months. You all say that you had not heard from me at all. That's strange. Certainly, not a mail has been missed by me—either I wrote myself or Sorabji for me, at least to someone or other in Phoenix. It is evident, therefore, that my letters have all, or some of them, miscarried.

I wish that your surmise was true and that I was working among our wounded soldiers. Most of the members of the Corps are certainly doing so, at Netley. When the last batch went I was bedridden. In any case, my presence was necessary here, in order to get together the required number of men. I was to have followed, however; but now unheard of difficulties are being put in my way and am prevented from going to Netley, or to any of the other hospitals where our wounded soldiers are being received. It seems to me that I am being prevented, because the officials immediately in charge fear that I might make mischief. The ostensible reason given to prevent my going is ill health. I may be quite wrong in my surmise, however. At any rate, I have placed the whole facts before Mr. Roberts, the Under Secretary for India—and I should know before long probably.

So you will see that I have not yet been separated either from Mrs. Gandhi or Mr. Kallenbach. We are all now living under Mr. Gandevia's roof. He, as you know, is the Secretary of the Corps. He is the proprietor of a boarding house for Indian students. He has placed one of his best rooms at our disposal.

I envy you your gardening work. Just now my own health seems to have been completely shattered. I feel that I hopelessly mismanaged my constitution in the fast. I was in a hurry to regain my lost energy. I, therefore, overfed the system and overstrained the body in

compelling myself to take long strenuous walks. I was too impatient and am paying the penalty: I can now scarcely walk with any strenuousness without the original pain starting. The ribs seem to have become shattered—they will not stand any strain, nor the groins. I, therefore, am obliged largely to keep indoors and remain in bed. Of food I can take very little—the slightest excess would upset me. In spite of all this, I am able to attend to my work. Nor does all this imply that I am only skin and bones. By carefulness I am able to undo the mischief done. The mental and moral atmosphere is also a great drawback. Everything appears so artificial, so materialistic and immoral that one's soul almost becomes atrophied.

I am longing to go to India and so is Mrs. Gandhi;. but a sense of duty and—I am not sure that, on this occasion, it is a right sense of duty that compels me to remain here.

I share your views about the War. If I had the moral strength, however, I would certainly be the passive resister that you have pictured in your letter.

I am glad that you all are getting on well there and that your little ones are doing so well and add to the joys of your life. I hope that everything there is going on peacefully.

Please remember us to all. I may not be writing any other letter this week so that I would like you to show this to everybody.

This letter is being taken down, you will be glad to know, by an Indian friend. After James, he is the first Indian friend I have found capable of taking shorthand notes. He is just now staying in the same house with me awaiting instructions to proceed to one of the hospitals where our Indian troops are. His name is Manic Lal Chandra, and has been in England for about four years. Mr. Chandra, from what I understand, is a much-travelled man.

I shall try and write to Polak, but you may pass this letter on to him lest I fail to do so.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the handwritten original signed by Gandhiji: C. W. 4416
Courtesy: A. H. West

254. LETTER TO G. K. GOKHALE

[LONDON,]
November 26, 1914

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

I have your cable to which I have replied.[1] I cannot bring my malady under control. Nor can the doctors. They would say that they could if I followed them implicitly. This I am unable to do. I do not want to live on any terms. Dr. Allinson, the Vegetarian doctor, considers my own treatment to be perfect in the circumstances. Dr. Mehta has been most attentive. I listen to him wherever it is possible. I had a serious relapse last week. I am still in bed but much better and seemingly progressing. Pray do not be anxious about me. If I cannot recover, I shall try to leave for India.

We all wish that in your cable you had said something about your own health. I hope that it is much better. Anyhow you have now surroundings you were longing for.

I remain,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 2250

255. LETTER TO MRINALINI SEN

16 TREBOVIR ROAD, [LONDON] S.W.,
November 30, [*1914*][2]

DEAR MRS. SEN,

Mr. Sen told me that you would gladly give me lessons in Bengalee whilst I was confined to my room. I think that I am now in a position to take them. Could you kindly come for say _ hour daily on any day that may suit you? Any time between 2 to 3.30 or 5.30 to 6.30 will be suitable for me. I have a good Bengalee grammar. If you

[1] This cable is not available.

[2] The year has been inferred from the reference to Gandhiji's learning Bengali while confined to his room in London. He began learning Bengali during his illness in October-December 1914; *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 10-12-1914.

have a simple Bengalee book or a newspaper, I would prize it. We may read together from any of them.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Courtesy: Arati Sen

256. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Magshar Vad 2 [*December 4, 1914*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I am still confined to bed. I have sat up to write a long letter to you. I do not know when I shall finish it. Have no anxiety on my account. I have a very sweet letter from Mr. Andrews. He says that Gurudev also, on his part, will be very happy to have youall in Santiniketan. He adds that your presence there willhelp to remove whatever unhealthy caste distinctions stillremain and that, on the whole, your visit will certainly benefit Santiniketan. It is up to you all to see that it does. If all our Phoenix ideals are kept up, Gurudev's expectations are sure to befulfilled. Let everyone of you give some service rather than ask for any. Do not forget agriculture. You must not think that you will not be there to enjoy the benefit of the trees you plant. Rise earlier than the others do. Do your own cooking, of course, but also undertake cooking for the whole establishment, if you can. Out of respect for Gurudev and by way of inducement to you all, I have started study of Bengali in my bed. I have completed Mrs. Murat's grammar and the Bengali primer. This is the fifth day. I started the study on Monday. Today is Friday. I see that it is easy for a Gujarati to learn Bengali. Everyone of you should pick it up. The alphabet, too, is simple. Study of Gujarati and Tamil should also continue. Sanskrit, of course, you must be doing.

Your boarding expenses are to be borne by Gurudev. Approach Rajangam through the Doctor for his help in Tamil. The latter says that his sons are there. You must be in correspondence with him. Sendfor Maganbhai's son. More later. This letter is meant for all. Ba is pining to see you all. Her nursing is incomparable.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5655 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

257. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[LONDON,]
Magshar Vad 8 [*December 10, 1914*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I got the letters from all of you. In my present helpless condition, I do not write to everyone. Hence, take this letter as meant for all and, on your part, all of you continue to write to me.

You say you would ask me for permission for whey after I return. But I give it straight from here. After observing the conditions there, make any exceptions that you find necessary. Do not wait to consult me. Only, in all that you do, remember the need for self-discipline.

You are right in concluding that agriculture is the only real prayer and service. It is not only fitting but it is actually one's duty to keep repeating God's name, whether we are busy in the fields or having our meal, whether playing or wandering aimlessly, during a bath or at any other hour. One who wants to lose himself in Rama, who is striving to do so, requires no particular hour; all the same, it is necessary to have some kind of a rule for the young. And so the time not meant for work in the fields should be specially appointed for prayers, that is, just before daybreak, when it is still dark. The *shastras* lay down that *sandhya*[1], etc., should be performed before dawn. The evening hour that we have set apart is the right one.

Intensify your interest in agriculture. Plant fruit-trees.

Send for wheat from Bombay. Use the indigenous grinding stones. Make copra or ground-nut oil at home. You will get both milk and ghee by crushing fresh cocoanut kernel to a fine paste and straining it through a piece of cloth. It seems this is very beneficial. Since it is certain that you will be there for quite some time, there is nothing wrong in stocking the necessary articles. Wheat must be available in Calcutta. It seems they do not use tamarind there.

I have written a letter[2] to Mr. Pearson, which I think he will show you. It will be an excellent thing if the elders among you undertake to do some service for every teacher.

As for the expenditure on all of you, that on Kuppu's and

[1] Prayer to Sun-god, usually in the morning and evening
[2] This is not available.

Naidoo's sons and for Maganbhai will be met from the Satyagraha Fund. For you, Manilal and others, I shall make some arrangement. The money for Sivapujan, Shanti and Navin is to be provided by the respective parents. The expenses for Chhotam are to be met from the Satyagraha Fund.

From what Mr. Andrews wrote, it appeared that Gurudev would bear the expenses. But you need not discuss the question. Let him, if he does; if not, it should not matter.

Make everything you can with your own hands. Get used to doing without the things which you cannot make.

If only we learn to maintain ourselves by agriculture and manual labour, there will be nothing more for us to earn or learn. That is what I too must learn. I may, however, pass away without doing so. Let that not happen to you.

If Gurudev is likely to be put to inconvenience and if there is not enough room there, ask him to let you live in a tent or make some other arrangements.

Personally, I have always felt, and it now appears that there is no institution today in the world to excel Phoenix in its ideals or its way of life. If there is any, the civilized world has not heard of it. I am happy that all of you have the same impression. While I am yet to recover, Ba has had an acute attack of menorrhagia since yesterday. I do not know what God has willed. Ba is confined to bed and so I have forced myself to get up. Let none of you be anxious, however.

Since my diet was deficient in organic salts, Dr. Allinson[1] has advised me to take roots and tubers and leafy vegetables. And so, even in this dangerous condition, I am making experiments. My diet is as follows: In the morning, I have soup with two or three tea-spoonfuls of dry banana brought from there[2] and ground-nut, with tomatoes and a spoonful of oil added. At noon, I take a small carrot and one half of a small raw turnip, with eight biscuits, made of wheat or banana flour, boiled. Sometimes, in place of carrot and turnip, I take two leaves of cabbage, crushed. In the evening, two spoonfuls of rice, boiled, with vegetables as above or dry figs, soaked in water, with a small piece of bread made of banana flour or wheat. This is the routine at present.

[1] Dr. T. R. Allinson, author of books on health and hygiene which Gandhiji found helpful; a member of the London Vegetarian Society till he was censured for his unorthodox views on birth control

[2] South Africa

The intention is to replace cooked items with uncooked articles and wheat by nuts. I take two apples in the morning. I have been taking raw vegetables for nearly a month now. I have observed no harm from this at any rate. You used to say that vegetables could be eaten raw, but I would not believe it. I find many persons here eating vegetables raw. The practice has many implications. I cannot write about them, however. Later, I may. I have taken a final vow here not to have milk and ghee. Doctors were very insistent, and I feared I might give in if I did not take a solemn vow. Hereafter, I will never consume these things in this present life. I will take other vows when I am there, though I cannot be sure that I will not take some here meanwhile, occasion arising.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 6097; also *Gandhijini Sadhana*

258. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI[1]

[LONDON,
About *December 10, 1914*][2]

[CHI. CHHAGANLAL,]

I have established very good relations with Mr. Charles Roberts. Also with his wife. He took great care of me during my illness.

Write a letter of condolence on the death of Miss Smith's mother, on your behalf as well as on behalf of the press. When writing for the press, consult Mr. West. That lady has been giving us excellent help. Perhaps Mr. Sorabji will ask that his wife be sent to England. If so, pay her up to £100 for the fare. She will ask for it.

Send me immediately the bank balance, the Satyagraha [Fund] balance and the accounts of whatever remained after the withdrawal by Maganlal. It will not be possible now to publish the accounts in India. We are not to blame for the delay.

If I keep well, I will start writing for Indian Opinion. It is necessary to ask the parents of Shanti, Sivapujan and Navin for money to

[1] From the contents this appears to have been addressed to Chhaganlal Gandhi. The first three pages of this letter are not available.

[2] From the reference to the expenses regarding Shanti, Sivpujan and Navin the letter appears to have been written about the same time as "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi"; *vide* the preceding item.

meet their needs. If Sivapujan's parents cannot pay for him, let me know, so that the amount may be debited to the Satyagraha Fund. There are also outstanding dues on account of Shanti. Remind Chi. Jayashanker about this. Let me know the total amount I received by way of purses and the names. Indicate also which of the amounts belong to the Emergency Fund. I have not yet told you that the funds of the Transvaal [British] Indian Association have been handed over to me. The transfer deed is with me. Credit the amount to my account and debit it to the Association's. Include this amount too under "purse". I think the purse amounts will have to be used to run the institution in India. The expenses for persons other than the satyagrahi boys cannot be met from the Satyagraha Fund. I shall, however, be in a better position to judge after I reach India.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 6047

259. ACCOUNTS OF INDIAN AMBULANCE CORPS

[LONDON, *December 18, 1914*]

Receipts	£	s.	d.
His Highness the Aga Khan	200	0	0
His Highness the Gaekwar of Baroda	50	0	0
Mr. Ratan J. Tata	50	0	0
Mr. Karimbhoy Adamji Peerbhoy	15	0	0
Contributions from members of the Corps for ambulance class fees, etc.	3	6	6
Total	318	6	6

EXPENDITURE	£	s.	d.
Stationery and printing	16	6	0
Stamps, telegrams, telephone, etc.	13	17	7
Members' travelling expenses	18	12	0
Ambulance class fees, etc.	29	17	8
Balance	239	13	3
	£ 318	6	6

India, 25-12-1914

260. INTERVIEW TO REUTER[1]

LONDON,
December 18, 1914

In the course of an interview with Reuter, the Indian leader emphasised that the settlement made in South Africa was a most happy thing for the Indians, who were rallying to the Government in the time of the great crisis. He had he said, the most pleasant recollections of his last interviews with General Botha and General Smuts.

Mr. Gandhi paid a tribute to the Union Government for taking into account Indian feelings, even in small matters and he was glad to be able to announce this in India. . . .

Indian Opinion, 23-12-1914

261. SPEECH AT LONDON FAREWELL[2]

[*December 18, 1914*]

Mr. Gandhi, who was received with cheers, said that his wife and himself were returning to the motherland with their work unaccomplished and with broken health, but he wished, nevertheless, to use the language of hope. He declared, too, that despite the dictum of two doctors, he felt that if he had been allowed to take his part even now, the work itself would have cured his weakness! When the Ambulance Corps was formed, it had been a matter of great joy to him that so many students and others came forward and willingly offered their services. Men such as Colonel Kanta Prasad, and Mr. Turkhud, and Mr. Parikh were none of them expected to do the work of hospital orderlies at Netley, but nevertheless they had cheerfully done it. Indians had shown themselves thereby capable of doing their duty, if they received recognition of their rights and privileges. (Cheers.) The whole idea of the Corps arose because he felt that there should be some outlet for the anxiety of Indians to help in the crisis which had come upon the Empire. (Hear, hear.) He thanked Mr. Roberts for his appreciation of the services that are being rendered. It was, he said, after prayerful consideration as to how Indians would help in the crisis that the Corps had come into

[1] This is an extract from a Reuter's dispatch covering also a farewell reception to Gandhiji and Kasturba held later in the day; *vide* the following item.

[2] Gandhiji and Kasturba were given a farewell dinner at Westminster Palace Hotel, attended among others by Charles Roberts, Sir Henry Cotton, Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Polak and Miss F. Winterbottom. J. M. Parikh presided. After Sir Henry Cotton, J. M. Parikh, C. Roberts and Mrs. Olive Schreiner had spoken, Gandhiji replied. The report has been collated with a despatch from the London correspondent of *Amrit Bazar Patrika* published in *Indian Opinion*, 27-1-1915.

being; his joy was mixed with pain because he could not do his part; he had himself pleaded hard with Mr. Roberts that some place should be found for him but his health had not permitted, and the doctor had been obdurate. He had not resigned from the Corps. If in his own motherland he should be restored to strength, and hostilities were still continuing, he intended to come back, directly the summons reached him. (Cheers.)[1] As for his work in South Africa, that had been purely a matter of duty, and carried no merit with it, and his only aspiration on his return to his motherland was to do his duty as he found it day by day. He had been practically an exile for 25 years, and his friend and master, Mr. Gokhale, had warned him not to speak on Indian questions, as India was a foreign land to him. (Laughter.) But the India of his imagination was an India unrivalled in the world, and an India where the most spiritual treasures were to be found, and it was his dream and hope that the connection between India and England might be a source of spiritual comfort and uplifting to the whole world.[2] He could not conclude without expressing his warmest appreciation of the great kindness which Lady Cecilia Roberts had shown to his wife and himself in the illness. They had landed in England as strangers, but they had speedily fallen among friends. There must be something good in the connection between India and England, if it produced such unsolicited and generous kindness from English men and women to Indians.[3]

We are blest with many friends, who have helped and cheered us, and we hope and pray that we may so discharge ourselves as to deserve the kind things that have been said and the tribute of this gathering as well as that arranged on our arrival from South Africa. We hope this is not a final good-bye to so many good friends.

India, 25-12-1914 and *Indian Opinion*, 27-1-1915

[1] The *Amrit Bazar Patrika* report quoted Gandhiji as saying here: "My hope is to come back and if the War should last till then, I shall be ready to do my share of service as a nursing orderly."

[2] The *Amrit Bazar Patrika* version has: "India, he felt, was the country where the greatest spiritual treasures were to be found for the comforting and uplifting of the whole world and all could work towards strengthening the tie between India and Great Britain by each giving of its best to the other."

[3] What follows is from the *Amrit Bazar Patrika* report.

262. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

. S. N. C o. S. S.,
December 23, 1914

MY DEAR WEST,

I am thoroughly done up now but on the approach of Xmas eve I cannot help sending you loving thoughts. Our departure was sudden & early. We are keeping well considering the stormy weather. My health improving I hope to resume writing for I.O. Please send to Miss Smith a message of condolence on her mother's death.

I have been so often prevented from reaching India that it seems hardly real that I am sitting in a ship bound for India. And having reached that what shall I do with myself? However, 'Lead Kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom, lead Thou me on.' That thought is my solace & may it be yours in the darkest moments.

With love to you all from both of us.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 4417 Courtesy: A. H. West

263. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

S. S. "ARABIA",
December [*23, 1914*][1]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

This is the fifth letter I am writing to you during the voyage. The first was written before reaching Sheerness. My last letter was written in a gloomy mood. But somehow or other the gloom went with the disappearance of the gateway to Europe. It is strange yet true. But why strange! Perhaps it should be considered quite natural.

Our joint life is becoming stricter. Our menu now is for Mrs. Gandhi a portion of the special bread, three biscuits soaked in water, 3

[1] The source has December 3 in Gandhiji's hand, evidently a slip as he set sail for India on December 19, 1914. From the opening sentence in the letter, the date is presumed to be the 23rd, the fifth day of voyage.

plums, a fig, two tomatoes and 3 oranges, also a spoonful of oil and 6 almonds. This twice a day. Mine was ground-nut, butter spoonful, two biscuits, 6 plums, 2 oranges, one tomato and teaspoonful pine kernel. This for breakfast; for the evening meal ground-nut preparation with the other things and no biscuits but 6 walnuts. Before retiring, I shall drink a lemon. These simple meals satisfy us both and now for me there is no hankering. The only thing to complete our happiness would be your presence. We always talk about you at meal times, whatyou would be doing there at the time, how you would make the stewards work here and how you would have insisted on some cooked things and how you would have wanted more tomatoes and more oil and how I would have protested against both. This return to the old style has improved my health wonderfully though the pain in the side has not yet left me. However, that may leave me in India. Today I have worn somewhat to Mrs. Gandhi's disgust, the Indian dress I used to in South Africa. The passengers looked surprised as I appeared on the deck but I think the surprise has passed away.

I have been more and more devoted to my Bengali studies and I fancy I have made marked progress. Before retiring I invariably read the *Bhagavad Gita, Ramayana* and sing one hymn.

We have mixed but little with the passengers. One very noted suffragist is on board. She has become interested in us. So we talk to her now and then.

So much of our life. But yours we left you unhappy, a lonely calf! That cow must be wretched that leaves her calf! And yet the leaving was the only thing possible and I think it was the best. I shall feel very sad if you keep me without a cable even when we reach Bombay. I dare not expect any news of you at [Aden][1] which we reach tomorrow.

And now a personal touch before I reach India. I have been harsh to you, apparently cruel even, rude too as you thought. But the words came out of the purest love. If I did wrong, it was not because I love you less but because I loved too well. I became impatient to see you do what I thought was the right thing. Pardon me then if I hurt you as I know I did. You made no secret of it. I did not heed it. I hope I did right in not heeding it. Let that love keep you and me on the path we have chosen. It is a strange path, it is difficult but not inaccessible. With sufficient attempt we shall reach it. The glory, if we

[1] The source has "Arden".

want it, lies in the attempt not in the reaching. Tolstoy even said that the goal ever receded as [one] went nearer.

Mrs. Gandhi, who is sitting by me, wants me especially to send her love to you.

And now, may this letter be redirected to you in India. May you have left before this reaches London. If it does reach you in London, please give the purport of this unless you would read it to Sorabji, Gandevia[1] and Mehta.

With love,

Ever Yours,
OLD FRIEND
LATE UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

264. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

ON S. S. *ARABIA,*
Wednesday, Posh,Sud 7 [*December 23, 1914*]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Wonderful is the sport of God! I have been able to leave London unexpectedly early and in an unexpected manner. It remains to be seen whether I reach home safe. I cannot feel that I am in India till I have landed in Bombay. I have been disappointed many times. We are both keeping good health, now at any rate. We are very careful. Let us see whether I regain my former strength. We live on the food we have brought from England. Mixing two parts banana flour and one part wheat flour, we have made biscuits and *rotis.* We eat these and dry fruit, soaked in water. Ripe fruit we obtain from the ship. Ripe bananas are over, so they put half-ripe bananas into the oven for ripening before giving them to us. We have brought our own stock of groundnuts, dates, etc. We have our meals both times only in the cabin. We have second-class tickets. There is no third-class or deck accommodation on this ship. It is very crowded. There is no room for moving about on the deck. I think we should reach Bombay on January 11th or 12th.

[1] Secretary of the Indian Field Ambulance Training Corps

I study Bengali on the ship. I have not been able to read much on account of the cold.

Every effort is being made for Mr. Kallenbach. He will come as soon as he gets permission.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 6098

265. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

December 26 [*1914*]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Much to our surprise there was no cable from you at Gibraltar. The inference I drew was that there was no reply yet received. We reach Malta tomorrow (Sunday). I hope to have a word from you then.

The voyage has been uneventful. The pain in the ribs continues. The weather is still cold, though the sea is calm. Our menu still continues the same. I have taught the baker how to make our bread. So I am making use of Allinson's meal they have on board, thanks to your foresight. He makes it much better than we should. I asked him to whip the water before adding it to the flour. This aerates the bread and makes it very light. They supply delicious oranges and now tomatoes also. So you see we have really more than we want. Though the temptation to take cooked food is great (the 2nd Steward has offered to have anything specially prepared) we have hitherto resisted it.

I do not get up early. There is no stove to warm myself at. I, therefore, remain in bed up to 9 a.m. and keep warm. Mrs. Gandhi does likewise.

I do fairly decent strolling on deck. The groins are still keeping well.

For reading what time I get I devote to Bengali. I write as much as I can in order to get a hold on the alphabet. Not much time however can be given to study owing to the severely cold weather. One cannot keep warm for long.

So much for ourselves. What about you, I wonder! Mrs. Gandhi

often misses you. It shows how people are sometimes appreciated when they are not available.

I can only repeat the formula. Do not allow circumstances to master you. We are made to master them. If we succumb to them, they unman and enslave us. If we control them we ever ascend and grow manlier. Study of Gujarati is a necessity. And do read *The Light of Asia*, Bunyan, Thomas a Kempis again and again and yet again.

I take it you are giving some time to Mrs. Olive Schreiner. It may not be amiss to give W.P. Schreiner a call. His offices are in Victoria Street.

With love,

From Your
OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

266. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

December 30 [*1914*]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Yet no cable from you. You have made me somewhat anxious. I am hoping against hope that I may have something from you at Port Said this evening. For we reach that place about 9 p.m. tonight.

I have had somewhat of a setback. The piles reappeared and the pain in the side seemed to be slightly greater than before. I attribute the piles to the pure wheat bread I described to you. We have therefore dropped it and we are now living purely on biscuits made there and fruit. The piles have subsided and I am hoping that the ten days that now remain will not cause any complications. I have found a very decent Bengali scholar. So I am reading Bengali with him. All the time I can get is given to Bengali only. Mrs. Gandhi too is not well. She is just now beside me with a severe headache on. I have put her in one of our sleeping chairs. Such are the ups and downs of life and such the hopes and disappointments. I notice that I have lost much in London in mental equilibrium. My mind wavers and longs for things which I had thought it had laid aside. How we are deceived! We fancy that we have got rid of particular desires but suddenly we

discover that they were only asleep in us and not dead. No, London has done me no good. Instead of returning to India a man full of health and hope, I am returning a broken-down man not knowing what he is to do or be in India and I did not know before too. But it was a joy not to know, now it is not a joy. The anchor of hope is not there to buoy me up. So, my dear Lower House (the expression has still a sweet flavour), beware of London! You are in the city of Darkness. Let the Inner Light guide you and keep you on the narrow and straight path. I am free of the place and yet it haunts me.

No more now.

With love,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

267. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[About *1914*][1]

. . . then it is possible. I wish that such things should occur to you. I firmly believe that there is some [truth] in it. I easily experience the presence of some great men. Now something more about diet.

At 1 o'clock. I take bananas, grapes and groundnuts. I have enough groundnuts. When that is over, I will take almonds. The groundnuts also seem to suit me here. Even then, I am an exception as far as groundnuts are concerned. Rama and Mr. Kallenbach also take groundnuts. However, for the last two days, they are taking almonds. In the evening, we have gruel made of queni mill and some hand-made bread without powder. Both butter and milk are added to the gruel. Some salt is added to it and so also sugar. From today, sugar has been removed from my diet. I take some groundnuts in the evening also. It does not spoil the taste of my mouth. Mr. Kallenbach keeps fine. Rama takes a glass of milk and a piece of bread in the

[1] From the contents, the letter appears to belong to the year 1914; *see* references to usefulness of milk in "Letter to Jamnadas Gandhi", 2-7-1913; 19-7-1913, "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 11-3-1914; to benefits of a fruit diet, *ibid* to Santok's health, *ibid* and to good health of jail inmates *ibid* which match the references to these subjects as mentioned in this letter.

morning. His health has become very good. I do not feel that milk is necessary but that can be said for sure only after special experience. I, on my part, have not taken milk for a long time but there is no adverse effect on me. Most of the Indians who were in the jail, had done without milk and ghee, but they came out quite healthy. Lakhs of poor like Thambi Naidu never get milk. The experience of such people suggests that one can preserve one's strength even without milk. There may be many reasons behind the instruction to the householder to keep a cow. One is that a householder quite frequently uses his semen and is, therefore, advised it's use. The late Raychandbhai[1] had written that a person who wants to observe unadulterated *brahmacharya* should give up milk. It is obvious that *brahmacharya* serves the purpose of milk for many. Otherwise many a youth from Kathiwar, used to drinking milk have left this world. I had told Dr. Mehta[2] of my opinion that all of them were lustful and that is why they had gone. He had agreed with me. Dharamsi is no more. What is the reason for his going? He would have drunk plenty of milk and partaken [of food from] a number of offerings. But in a room like a store-room, he most probably regularly played with the body of a small innocent girl. Leading such an immoral life, eating *rotis* made of mill-flour and enjoying the rich 'malarial' food of Bombay, he 'ruined' his health and left this world. Such is the favour shown by God to India that either demons will survive in India, or religious persons. Persons pretending to be religious men, either consciously or unconsciously, will not survive. Our eyes will open only when such things happen on a large scale. Such thoughts come to my mind quite often. All this is not for running down milk but to help one to get rid of his attachment for milk.

I have discovered one thing. It takes a lot of time to cook queni mill. How can we waste so much time? I have not found a reason here to live on just dry fruits. It seems that at present we will have to keep wheat with us.

I soaked wheat in water for about 12 hours and then roasted them. I thought they would pop up but that did not happen. On

[1] Raychand Ravjibhai Mehta, also known as Rajchandra; a poet and a man of great character and learning; died young at the age of thirty-three. His writings exercised a great influence on Gandhiji, greater than the writings of Ruskin or Tolstoy or Thoreau.

[2] Dr. Jivraj Mehta

being roasted, wheat became hard. I added hot milk and sugar to it. It became gruel. Chewing it took a lot of time. I, no doubt, ate it with relish but not Rama and Mr. Kallenbach. I have had a coffee-mill bought. In it, I ground the roasted wheat into rough powder. I soaked the powder in a mixture of water and milk for 10 minutes and added a pinch of salt and a spoon of butter. Mr. Kallenbach and I ate it without sugar. Rama added some sugar to it. After that, we had two bananas and an apple each. I think that was sufficient. Roasted wheat can be eaten as it is. It is good if cooked the way I have described. It also tastes good if it is roasted in *ghee* and jaggery. Water should be added to it. It is also good if you eat it with cow's milk or tinned milk. This thing should be eaten in place of bread or *roti* and is meant to save time. It is clean. It would have no worms like the flour. It is enough if the wheat is roasted once a week. It does not require a big stove, etc., and one can very easily prepare the best food in ten minutes. Wheat can be sent from here if you want to prepare the food I have described and you do not get wheat there.

Why should we indulge in such activities? Why should we experiment with food? Where will it take us? Such thoughts come to me quite often. Every seeker of self will have such thoughts. They arenot worthless and in our condition, they are necessary. We are setting up everything new. If we [do not experiment], to what things would we cling? Our normal food is full of rituals and takes a whole day to eat. To cling to that food, is attachment. Living on fruit is the best. At present, however, fruit diet alone will not do. So, we have to think of something close to fruit diet. With that aim in view, I feel like making innocent experiments. Maybe there is some attachment in that too. At present, I do not feel that way. Experience suggests that as we start leading a simple life and as we become firm in our search for self-realisation, our craving for variety in food dwindles. The [craving] for food I had an year ago is there no more. Mr. Kallenbach keeps on testing me. He also feels the same way. From that it appears that I am on the right path. I had to do the same in England twenty years ago and could thus subsist on a non-violent diet there.

Now I have written enough. This letter has been written on the basis of the questions raised by you and Purshottamdas in your letters. Both of you should read it. Send it to Chhaganlal if you think it proper. If you fear that the views about food will provoke him, do not send it to him.

For prolonging the life of Santok, it is very necessary for her to take simple food, Kuhne's baths and, if required, mud-packs, and agreeable exercises. She should sleep in the open with the face uncovered. If she feels cold, she can wrap a shawl around her head but the face should be kept out of the cover. If the face is kept uncovered, one will breathe through the nose only. One can manage without water for a day but without air one cannot live even for a minute. If the water is polluted, it can have an adverse effect on one's health. One can easily imagine how much worse will be the effect of polluted air on one's health. But we remain indifferent to things which we do not see with our naked eye. We would touch the feet of God if we could see him without naked eyes . . .[1]

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32926

268. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

S. S. *ARABIA*,
Paush Vad 3 [*January 3, 1915*][2]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Today is Sunday. We will reach Aden in the morning. I was very much depressed and despondent till Port Said. Whatever the reason, but the moment I left behind the gateway to Europe, I cheered up, was full of hope again and the joy of returning to mother country became more intensified. Ispent the time on the Red Sea in a state of spiritual bliss. I regularly read Tulsidas's *chaupais* for spiritual company. I am reading them with a new zest. For all I know, the Indian soil itself might act as spiritual company for me. I have gone back to my normal diet and Ba does not interfere. Everything seems to be going on very well. Only time will tell whether it is transient or lasting.

Both of us were not well but now we seem to be all right. I still have pain in the ribs but that does not make me uneasy. From today, I have started wearing my Indian dress of the South African days. In India, I will wear only our customary dress. Here, the dress of South African days seems more suitable.

[1] The letter is incomplete.

[2] Though *Paush Vad* 3 in the year 1915, when Gandhiji returned to India from South Africa, corresponded to January 4, a Monday, the letter was actually written the previous day as the first sentence of the letter indicates.

I am occupied in my study of Bengali and for that reason, I am not writing other letters. Show this to all the inmates of the Phoenix Ashram. Ask Bhai Pragji[1] to translate it or if you have the time, do it yourself and send it to Johannesburg.

Ba sends her blessings to all of you. Tell Imam Saheb that I will definitely see his father.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32904

269. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

January 9, 1915

On January 9, 1915, the day of his arrival in Bombay from abroad, Gandhiji was interviewed by a representative of *The Bombay Chronicle*.

I need hardly say that having been out of India for practically [a] quarter of a century, and without interruption for over 13 years, both my wife and I were exceedingly glad to see again the dear old Motherland, and the kind and hearty reception which the public gave us has added to the joy, and overwhelmed us. I can only hope that by our future conduct we shall have deserved this welcome.

As the public know, I, in common with many of our countrymen, offered my services to the authorities in connection with the War. These services were accepted,[2] and I had hoped that I should be able to render personal service in one or other of the hospitals that had been placed at the disposal of the wounded Indian soldiers. Unfortunately, however, I was suffering from pleurisy, and the Commanding Officers in charge of the various sections would not listen to my going to any of the hospitals. Meanwhile, Mrs. Gandhi had a relapse of an old malady, and the Under-Secretary of State for India[3], on hearing this, immediately wrote to me saying that, after all, my work, so far as the organisation of the corps was concerned, was finished, and that as both of us were ill. we should at once return to

[1] Pragji Khandubhai Desai, Gandhi's co-worker in South Africa; among the earliest to arrive at the Tolstoy Farm; taught the youngsters at the Farm and wrote regularly for the Gujarati section of *Indian Opinion*

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Under-Secretary for India", 14-8-1914

[3] Charles Roberts

India. Hence it is that we are here before our time.

I know that the public would like something with reference to the South African situation, and I can but repeat what I have said so often before, that every point on which passive resistance was directed has been completely gained, through the great assistance that was rendered by our noble Viceroy[1] and the generous public of India, led by the Hon. Mr. Gokhale[2]. I must confess that the Ministers there were very frank, and entered into the spirit of the struggle, and, as you are aware, General Smuts[3], speaking during the debate on the deportationof the leaders of the railway strike, distinguished passive resistance from the latter and justified our position. There is now a spirit of sympathy, and, I think a desire to consult Indian opinion before undertaking any special legislation affecting us in South Africa. I have, therefore, every hope for the future. Not that all the disabilities have been removed, but the bulk of them have, and by proper conduct on our part, and sympathetic administration on the part of the Government, there need be no fear of a repetition of the miseries so many of us have had to go through.

Questioned as to his future movements, Mr. Gandhi said he had come to India to settle here, and he would not go back to Africa unless circumstances rendered it necessary. He did not know what he would do here, but he would be at the service of Mr. Gokhale, whom he had for years recognised as his guide and leader, and his movements would be largely controlled and directed by him. Mr. Gandhi concluded:

For the present, as Mr. Gokhale has very properly pointed out,[4] I, having been out of India for so long, have no business to form any definite conclusions about matters essentially Indian, and that I should pass some time here as an observer and a student. This I have promised to do, and I hope to carry out my promise.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-1-1915

[1] Lord Hardinge

[2] Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915), educationist and statesman.

[3] J. C. Smuts (1870-1950), South African general and statesman, later Prime Minister

[4] *Vide* "Speech at Reception by Ahmedabad Citizens", 2-2-1915.

270. INTERVIEW TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"

January 9, 1915

Questioned regarding the position of Indians in South Africa, he [Gandhiji] said that it was much better than it was before the settlement, all the points to which passive resistance was applied having been gained. He thought that on the whole the Indian community was satisfied with the "relieving legislation"[1] that had been passed. The future, he said, very largely depended upon the Indians themselves, as well as on the personnel of the Ministry.

One great thing which I think has been attained is that the Government have recognised that, in any legislation affecting the British Indians in South Africa, Indians should be consulted and their wishes respected as far as possible. This I think to be an advance in the right direction. This happy result has no doubt been arrived at owing to the valuable assistance afforded to our great and righteous cause by H. E. Lord Hardinge and the magnificent response made bythe Motherland under the spirited guidance of my esteemed friend, the Hon. Mr. Gokhale.

Describing the present attitude of the Indian settlers in South Africa, Mr. Gandhi said there was no hesitation on the part of the whole community in offering their services to the local and Imperial Governments during the war. Though the occasion for the acceptance of the services had not arisen, the offer was much appreciated by the Governments. Mr. Gandhi added that on the whole the present Ministry[2] was not unsympathetic and, as it understood Indian questions, was probably better able to understand the Indian mind and therefore better calculated to advance Indian interests than any other Ministry. The material position of the Indians in the colony was not all that could be desired, but its improvement depended upon the future commercial outlook.

Mr. Gandhi said that he intended to devote his time to study Indian problems during the remainder of his life and he did not propose to return to the scene of his former activities unless some unforeseen call was made upon him.

The Times of India, 11-1-1915

[1] Indian Relief Bill (1914); *vide* "Letter to Lazarus", after 17-4-1915.

[2] With Louis Botha as Prime Minister

271. SPEECH AT RECEPTION, GHATKOPAR

January 11, 1915

At a reception to Mr. and Mrs. M. K.. Gandhi at Ghatkopar [Bombay] on Monday, Mr. Gandhi was presented with an address enclosed in a silver casket, with fetters made of gold, Rao Bahadur Vassanji Khimji presiding.

Mr. Gandhi, in acknowledging the gifts, described the silver casket and the fetters as somewhat unsuitable to a person who had neither a roof over his head nor locked doors to his house. Fetters, whether of gold or of iron, were the same to him, as they were fetters after all. A function like the one they held, he said, was most uncongenial to him, and the temptations it involved would tend to spoil a person like him whose only thought was to serve his Motherland, irrespective of praise or blame, with no expectation of any reward whatsoever.

The only idea behind his work was duty. He had only been able to do so far one anna of it and he had returned to his country after all these years to try his best to do what he could of the other 15 annas in the years that were left to him. He hoped for nothing and wished for nothing, beyond being able to fulfil the duty that lay before him. He entreated them all to accept whatever service he could give, and not to give him costly presents which he could not use, and which could be put to far better uses. He sincerely trusted that they would not misunderstand him; he was only expressing his innermost feelings.

The Bombay Chronicle, 15-1-1915

272. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Posh Vad 10[1]*, 1971, Monday* [*January 11, 1915*]

CHI. MAGANLAL[2],

I have your letter. I was filled with tears of joy when, nearing Bombay, I sighted the coast. I am still beside myself with joy. I don't like Bombay, though. It looks as if it were the scum of London. I see here all the shortcomings of London but find none of its amenities;

[1] The Original has *Posh Vad* 11, which appears to be a slip, for that day was a Tuesday.

[2] Son of Khushalchand Gandhi, Gandhiji's cousin. Maganlal had assisted Gandhiji for about a decade in his activities and experiments in South Africa; left Phoenix in August 1914 with a party of about 25 students and teachers for India, and with the party stayed at Tagore's Santiniketan.

this is also one of the benefits of living in India. It would seem that Lady India had resolved to exhibit nothing but the scum of London lest we should be thrown off our balance by the amenities. I feel suffocated by all this public honouring. I have not known a moment's peace. There is an endless stream of visitors. Neither they nor I gain anything.

My health is good, on the whole, and the same is true of Ba[1]. I am divided in my heart over three places Rajkot, Porbunder and Bolpur. It will take more than a month before I am there[2]. You do well to stay on patiently there. A farmer should not go about from place to place. A farmer's son would be violating his dharma if he were to neglect sowings that he might go and see his father. You have spread your fragrance there; it must be that some good deeds of yours and mine are now bearing their fruit. Mr. Andrews[3] writes much in praise of you. We are to meet before long, so I won't write much. This letter is meant for you all.

I think all of us should know the Hindi, Urdu, Tamil and Bengali scripts. It would be good if the children could be taughtall these. I gave much thought to this matter while on board the ship.

I have made considerable progress in the study of Bengali. I shall leave here on the 16th for Rajkot.[4] I shall return before February 5, to leave for Poona immediately and from there proceed to Bolpur. Let me know the shortest way to that place. Ask Mr. Andrews or Mr. Pearson[5] about it. I am glad that your difficulties about food are over. I have been living entirely on fruit, subsisting mostly on bananas, groundnuts and lime.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] Kasturba Gandhi

[2] At Bolpur

[3] Charles Freer Andrews (1871-1940), British missionary who took great interest in Vishwabharati University founded by Tagore; his devoted services for many years in the cause of the Indian people won him the name 'Deenbandhu' "brother of the poor"; he was deeply attached to Gandhiji.

[4] Actually Gandhiji left for Rajkot on January 15. *Vide* "Diary for 1915".

[5] William Winstanley Pearson, a Christian missionary and an active supporter of Indians; for some time teacher at Santiniketan

[PS.]

Tell me if I should bring anything. I have not been able to bring any books from England. We may get them here, if you send me the names. Mr. Kallenbach[1] has not been able to come, since he did not get the permission.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5660. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

273. SPEECH AT PUBLIC RECEPTION, BOMBAY

January 12, 1915

A public reception was accorded by the elite of Bombay to Gandhiji and Shrimati Kasturba Gandhi at Mount Petit, on January 12, 1915, over 600 distinguished citizens being present, including Europeans. The Hon. Sir Pherozeshah Mehta[2], who presided, warmly welcomed the guests of the evening.

Replying to the toast, Mr. Gandhi said that he did not know that the right word would come to him to express the feelings that had stirred within him that afternoon. He had felt that he would be more at home in his own Motherland than he used to be in South Africa among their own countrymen. But during the three days that they had passed in Bombay, they had felt—and he thought he was voicing the feelings of his wife, too—that they were much more at home among those indentured Indians, who were the truest heroes of India. They felt that they were indeed in strange company here in Bombay, and that reminded himof one thing said to him by a great Englishman, namely, that duty would be merited [*sic*] at the last.

In what he had done, he had done nothing beyond his duty and it remained to be seen how far he had succeeded in doing his duty. That was not a mere lip expression but he asked them to believe sincerely that these were his feelings. He felt all that his elders had done for him, all that his political leaders had done for him, all that Sir Pherozeshah Mehta had done for him and he could recall many an incident when he, i.e., Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, had cheered him up while he was a young briefless barrister in his disappointments. He had had the honour of receiving instruction, guidance, and advice from many other distinguished countrymen of his own, and

[1] Hermann Kallenbach, a German associate of Gandhiji in South Africa, who left South Africa for India with Gandhiji, was not allowed by the British Government to go to India because of the War and was held up in London.

[2] (1845-1915), one of the founders of the Indian National Congress, its President in 1890 and 1909.

would he not be ungrateful if he did not do what they told him to do? He had paid his respects to the Grand Old Man of India—Mr. Dadabhoy Naoroji[1]—that morning. His life was an inspiration to him and in that connection he dared not leave out one name, that of his guide—at least his political leader, the Hon. Mr. Gokhale. (Cheers.) His life was more than an inspiration to him. Mr. Gokhale had been to him more than a brother. He also must not omit to mention the deep debt that he owed to all his countrymen, let alone the memory of his revered parents, who taught him to respect them and through them the whole country. They were paying these regards to them, who were but poor creatures, while the real heroes were the indentured labourers. He wished to remind them of the indentured Indian that staggered him in jail. When he met that Indian, he did not know what inspired the latter to go to jail, and what inspired him to utter the words he did utter. He told the Indian that there was no occasion for him to go there and that he had never advised such of his countrymen as Harbat Singh[2] to go there. But that old Indian said that he could not restrain himself from going there when he saw his poor brothers and sisters go there for the honour of the country. How could he leave himself out, he asked, and added that he wanted to die there. They were alive and he was dead. That man was the hero and there were many of his type. If he had lived and come out to India, they would not have noticed him, perhaps he too would not have noticed him. All honour was due to the memory of Harbat Singh.

They had also honoured Mrs. Gandhi as the wife of the great Gandhi. He had no knowledge of the great Gandhi, but he could say that she could tell them more about the sufferings of women who rushed with babies to jail and who had now joined the majority than he could.

In conclusion, Mr. Gandhi appealed to them to accept the services of himself and his wife for, he said, they had come to render such service as God would enable them to do. They had not come to receive big entertainments like that because they did not think they were worthy of such presents. He felt that they would only spoil them if ever by such action a thought crossed their minds that they had done something to deserve such a big *tamasha* made in their honour. He, however, thanked them on behalf of his wife and himself most sincerely for the great honour done to them that afternoon and he hoped to receive the blessings of the whole country in their endeavour to serve the Motherland. Hitherto, he said, they had known nothing

[1] (1825-1917), the first Indian to be elected member of the British Parliament in 1893; President of the Indian National Congress thrice, in 1886, 1893 and 1906; author of *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India*; *vide* "The Grand Old Man of India", 3-9-1910.

[2] An old man of 75 from Uttar Pradesh; *vide* "Speech at Public Reception, Madras", 21-4-1915.

of his failures. All the news that they had received related to his successes. Here they would now see them in the naked light and would see their faults, and anticipating such faults and failures, he asked them to overlook them, and with that appeal, he said, they as humble servants would commence the service of their country. He again thanked them most sincerely for the very great honour done to himself and his wife.

The Bombay Chronicle, 13-1-1915

274. SPEECH AT NATIONAL UNION MEETING AT BOMBAY

January 13, 1915

At a meeting convened by the Bombay National Union at Hirabag [Bombay] on the 13th instant to welcome Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi, Mr. Tilak[1] was present, though no formal invitation was sent to him. The meeting was attended by about 250 persons. Mr. Tilak addressing the gathering said that they were only doing their duty in honouring Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi, as they had fought for the honour of India in a distant land. He said that India ought to produce more men and women of the self-sacrificing spirit of the honoured guests, and impressed upon the audience that this was the lesson they had to learn from the career of Mr. Gandhi.

Mr. Gandhi's speech was colourless and formal; he expressed the gratefulness of the Indians in South Africa to the mother country which contributed lavishly to the fund[2] for their relief during the late struggle. He said it was a pleasure to meet Mr. Tilak in Bombay as he fully intended to pay his respects to him when he visited Poona.

Mr. Baptista said that it did not matter whom Mr. Gandhi selected as his guru (this refers to a remark made by Mr. Gandhi that Mr. Gokhale was his guru), so long as he always held before him the ideals of honour and self-respect, as he had done throughout his life. Both he and Mr. Ali Muhammad Bhimji referred to the gallantconduct of the Indian troops in support of the cause of right in the present war.

Bombay Government Police Abstracts, 1915, p. 40, Para 60

[1] "Lokamanya" Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920); Indian patriot politician and scholar.

[2] Passive Resistance Fund: *vide* "Letter to J. B. Petit", 16-6-1915.

275. SPEECH AT SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY, BOMBAY

January 14, 1915

The premises of the Servants of India Society's[1] Home in Bombay were tastefully decorated for the entertainment that was given to Mr. & Mrs. Gandhi on the evening of 14th January by the members of the Bombay Branch of the Society and by some of those who were associated with it as its helpers, supporters and co-workers....Among those present were Sir Bhalchandra Krishna, Sir Vithaldas Thakersey, Sir Jagmohandas, Shet Dani, Shet Hansraj Pragjee, Mrs. Ramabai Ranade, Lady Jagmohandas, Mrs. Sonabai Jayker, Mrs. Bahadurjee and others. On the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi, Mr. Devadhar spoke on behalf of those that were assembled. . . .

Mr. Gandhi, then, in the course of a brief speech, said that he was proud to have seen so many men and women who helped the Servant of India Society, which would soon be the sphere of his work. He had accepted Mr. Gokhale as his political leader and guide and he considered those people fortunate who had the privilege of being associated with Mr. Gokhale in their work. He would go over the country for one year and, after studying things for himself, he would decide his line of work. In conclusion, he thanked all the ladies and gentlemen, on his behalf as well as on behalf of his wife, for the honour they did them.

Sir Bhalchandra garlanded Mr. Gandhi and Mrs. Ramabai garlanded Mrs. Gandhi. After the distribution of flowers, etc., the whole assembly partook [of] refreshments. . . .

Indian Opinion, 10-3-1915

276. SPEECH AT GURJAR SABHA RECEPTION, BOMBAY[2]

January 14, 1915

A garden party in honour of Gandhiji and Shrimati Kasturba Gandhi was given by members of the Gurjar Sabha, Bombay, on the grounds of Mangaldas House, on January 14, 1915. Messrs M. A. Jinnah[3], Chairman of the Sabha, who presided on the occasion, and K. M. Munshi[4] having spoken (in English) welcoming the guests,

[1] Founded by Gokhale in 1905 with headquarters in Poona, the members being life-workers in the service of the nation

[2] A brief report of this also appeared in *Gujarati,* 17-1-1915.

[3] Mohammad Ali Jinnah (1876-1948), Muslim leader, founder and first Governor-General of Pakistan

[4] (1887-), lawyer, politician and author; founder and President of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan; Governor of U.P., 1952-7

Gandhiji replied as follows:

Mr. Gandhi, who spoke in Gujarati, thanked Mr. Jinnah for presiding at this function and said that while he was in South Africa and anything was said about Gujaratis, it was understood to have a reference to the Hindu community only and Parsis and Mahomedans were not thought of. He was, therefore, glad to find a Mahomedan a member of the Gurjar Sabha and the chairman of that function.

With regard to their words of praise and welcome, he was at a loss to say anything. As he had said so often before, he and his wife had done nothing beyond their duty. He did not wish to repeat the same thing, but he desired to say that he considered all these good feelings and kind words as their blessings and he prayed to God. that those blessings might enable him and his wife faithfully to serve their country. They first intended to study all the Indian questions and then enter upon the service of the country. He had looked upon the Hon. Mr. Gokhale as his guide and leader and he had full confidence in him and he was sure that Mr. Gokhale would not put him on the wrong track. He had visited His Excellency the Governor[1] that morning and while thanking him for the honour, he also mentioned the same thing that he was absolutely confident that under the guiding spirit of the Hon. Mr. Gokhale he would be adopting the right course.

Continuing, Mr. Gandhi said that the chairman had referred to the South African question. He had a good deal to say on this subject and he would explain the whole situation in the very near future to the Bombay public and through them to the whole of India. The compromise was satisfactory and he trusted that what had remained to be gained would be gained. The South Africans had now learnt that they could not utterly disregard the Indians or disrespect their feelings.

With regard to the Hindu-Mahomedan question he had much to learn, but he would always keep before his eyes his twenty-one years' experience in South Africa and he still remembered that one sentence uttered by Sir Syed Ahmed[2], namely, that the Hindus and Mahomedans were the two eyes of Mother India and if one looked at one end and the other at the other, neither would be able to see anything and that if one was gone, the other would see to that extent only. Both the communities had to bear this in mind in the future.

In conclusion, he thanked them for the great honour done to him and his wife.

The Bombay Chronicle, 15-1-1915

[1] Lord Willingdon

[2] Sir Syed Ahmed Khan (1817-98), educationist and reformer; founder of the Mahomedan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh

277. FRAGMENT OF LETTER[1]

[Before *January 15, 1915*][2]

. . . You must have seen Radha[3]. You should urge her to write to me. Ask Raliatbehn[4] to have patience. We shall meet only when God wills it. She should not be quite so eager that we should meet. I am taken up with such difficult tasks. I indeed very much want to see her, but I have simply no time. Tell me all about conditions at home. Let me know how Fuli does. Give me all details now about the conditions in the home, who is in charge of shopping, and so on.

I met Harilal. He looks very handsome. . .

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 6714

278. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

ON THE TRAIN,
[*January 16, 1915*]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Not a minute's rest. Your cable received. I am sorry. I shall try.

Good-bye.

Love,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Only the seventh page of this letter is available.

[2] The letter appears to have been written immediately after Gandhiji's arrival in India and before Gandhiji left Bombay for Rajkot.

[3] Maganlal Gandhi's daughter

[4] Gandhiji's sister; also known as Gokibehn

279. SPEECH AT RAJKOT IN REPLY TO CITIZENS ADDRESS[1]

January 17, 1915

I have not been keeping very fit and, during the last thirty-six hours, my health has gone down very badly; but I have conserved my strength as much as possible in order to be able to visit my native town, Rajkot. Coming here, I fully realize what a loss I have suffered in the death of Shri Kevalrambhai, whom I respected as an elder. This is a painful thought to me. I have been laid under an obligation by Shri Pandit who has won the affection [of the people] of this Province by his fine qualities and who has expressed good wishes for me. I regard it as my good fortune, moreover, that in the absence of Shri Kavelrambhai I have been presented this address by you, a friend of his. His Excellency the Governor told me that the spontaneous demonstration of popular feeling towards me suggested that I was likely to have a fruitful career. I have had today first-hand proof of the truth of this. The daughter of my friend, Mr. Shukla[2], was the first to put a *tilak* on me and garland me. I look upon this as a blessing. The honour I have been receiving in Rajkot is beyond all bounds. In India it has become a kind of custom to accord such excessive honour.

Hills, they say, look pleasing from a distance; you have only heard my praises. But we have done nothing in particular. We have come here only as novices ready to learn. Everyone must have observed that nowadays people work with a variety of motives. It is extremely difficult to know what is in the heart of any individual. We are now in India and you will find it easier to form a correct opinion about us from what we do. The world is full of selfish men, who work with some ulterior motive or other. But to work in this manner is like mixing poison in milk. We have much to learn from Kathiawar and, when we have gone through the training, you will have an opportunity of testing us. I must tell you, however, that you will then see our failures also; I ask of you that [even then] you should keep up, unimpaired, the love which you have shown today. Let the rest of the

[1] Bejonji Meherwanji Damri, the Dewan of Rajkot, presiding

[2] A barrister practising at Rajkot; friend and fellow-student of Gandhiji

country forsake me, if it will, because of any failure of mine; if the people of Rajkot even then overlook my shortcomings with a generous heart I shall believe that your expression of love today was really the result of genuine feeling. This love of yours will be put to the test at that time. As for our achievements in South Africa, I tell you that people of lower standing than ours did a thousand times better work than we. An old man of 75 and a young girl of 17 both died in jail.[1] I am a barrister and it is natural, therefore, that I should feel impelled to work. But innumerable men and women, poor souls, gave their lives in the service of the nation, suffering the hardships of Jail life, merely because of their faith and as a matter of duty. What honour will you do to them? These persons, like truly heroic spirits, sacrificed their lives. Accepting, now, this honour you have done to us as a form of blessing, we dedicate our services to the country and declare here that we should be thought of as good children of Rajkot if we always show ourselves keen on doing our duty; but as unworthy ones if we are found to be remiss. I thank you all.

[From Gujarati]

Kathiawar Times, 17-1-1915

280. SPEECH AT RECEPTIONS BY RAJKOT MODH COMMUNITY

January 20, 1915

. . . In reply, Mr. Gandhi pointed out that men who entered public life had to make their hearts hard indeed. He had lost an elder brother[2] and had also had to bear other losses. Nevertheless, when attending parties, he had to agree to being entertained with songs, poems, etc., though he was in mourning. If he kept back his grief in order to receive such honour, it was because he received it as a symbol of the people's love. People should understand the real meaning of what little he had done and when he undertook something to serve the interests of the community or the people at large, he would demand their help as a matter of right because of their love for him.

If the people respond favourably at such a testing time, I shall believe that the love you have shown towards me on this occasion is

[1] Harbat Singh and Valiamma; *vide* "Speech at Public Reception, Madras", 21-4-1915.

[2] Laxmidas Gandhi, who passed away at Porbunder on March 9, 1914

sincere. If they refuse the help I ask for, I shall believe that you have only been following one another blindly, like so many sheep, and that it is just the same whether an address is written on a sheet of gold or silver, or merely on paper, none of them being of greater worth than dust. I must admit that, when I returned to India as a barrister, the Modh community elsewhere deserted me but that the Modh people here at Rajkot stood by me. I would be an ungrateful man to forget this and hence I regard the honour I have received today as a blessing.

[From Gujarati]

Kathiawar Times, 24-1-1915

281. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

January 22 [*1915*][1]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Harilal has written to you at my instance. But I wanted to give you a line no matter where I was. We left Rajkot this morning. We are here at a place called Jetpur. I am writing this squatting on the verandah of a nice isolated bungalow. Addresses have been raining on me. I am perfectly sick of them. I doubt very much whether they will serve any purpose. However there they are; I [am] receiving them at the cost of my health. I am due at Poona about the 10th February. Pleurisy has become chronic. It is not very painful but it necessitates great care.[2]

So you are not free to come. There is a divine purpose in all this forced separation.[3] I am anxiously waiting for your letter. And then I may be able to do something. My constant prayer every day is that you may be rightly guided during your stay in London and that you may take no new step hastily.

May I ask you in all you do to think over the past and keep before you our joint ideals?

I had your first letter at Rajkot. The second should have reached

[1] From the contents

The addressee was not allowed by the British Government to visit India because of the War and was held up in London.

[2] *Vide* also *An Autobiography*, Part IV, Ch.s XLI and XLII.

[3] The addressee was not allowed by the British Government to visit India because of the War and was held up in London.

me by this time but it has not.

With love,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

282. SPEECH AT RECEPTION AT DARBARGADH[1]

January 22, 1915

Mr. Gandhi said that he was much gratified to see that Hindus and Mahomedans were united on the occasion and knowing that they had done so he had accepted the invitation to come down to Dhoraji. In the future he would undertake to bring about happier and closer relations between these two communities.

Kathiawar Times, 24-1-1915

283. SPEECH AT RECEPTION BY PORBUNDER MODH COMMUNITY

January 25, 1915

I am happy beyond words in accepting your blessings, here in this place of my birth and my childhood days. As for my services to the country, I ought to say that it is not for me alone to follow truth. All of us can follow it if we choose, and, if we do, not I alone but all of us shall deserve honour and be able to play our part in some great task.

[From Gujarati]

Kathiawar Times, 31-1-1915

[1] A place near Dhoraji in Saurashtra

284. SPEECH AT PORBUNDER IN REPLY TO CITIZENS' ADDRESS

January 25, 1915

After visiting a few places, I shall come back here. So many herbs grow on the hills round here. There is much I can learn about them. I shall move about for a week in the company of my friend Mr. Jaikrishnabhai, the ex-Curator, and be in your midst afterwards.

[From Gujarati]

Kathiawar Times, 31-1-1915

285. LETTER TO MAJOR HANCOCK

RAJKOT,
January 26[1]*, 1915*

DEAR SIR,

I am sorry that during my stay in Porbunder I was not able to pay my respects to you. I shall try to seek that opportunity another time when I am again in Porbunder. Meanwhile I would like to thank you for the great kindness that the officials and the public of Porbunder showed to my wife and me during our stay there. I would also like to thank you, if I may, for your help during the passive resistance struggle in South Africa. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale told me of the kindly worded letter that accompanied the generous gift.

I am,
Your faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

MAJOR HANCOCK[2]

From a copy of the original: C.W. 5661. Courtesy: District Deputy Collector, Porbunder

[1] According to the Diary for 1915, however, Gandhiji left for Rajkot on the 27th.

[2] Administrator of Porbunder State during the Rana's minority; later, Political Agent to the Viceroy in Western India States Agency

286. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS BHAGWANDAS[1]

RAJKOT,
Maha Sud 11 [*January 26, 1915*]

I got your kind telegram at Gondal. I hope you received my reply telegram[2]. I am sorry I have not been able to accept the people's invitation but I hope that you will all forgive me, seeing that I am helpless. I am in such poor health that, if I did not have to call on my widowed sisters-in-law at Rajkot and Porbunder, I would probably not have come to Kathiawar just at present. On my way to these two places, I passed Gondal and other towns where I was obliged to stop. In thinking of visits to Bhavnagar andother cities, I am afraid for my health and my time is also over. I can now hope to see you all only when I come to this side again after two or three months.

Please accept the respectful greetings of

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Kathiawar Times, 31-1-1915

287. SPEECH AT GONDAL RASASHALA[3]

January 27, 1915

The eminent *vaid*[4] is a good scholar of Sanskrit and Ayurveda and the *rasashala*[5] he has established has been serving the people through Ayurveda. The literature published by the Pharmacy is very useful to the people. I used to read some of it in South Africa. I was very much flattered by the compliments a scholar like him paid me in the address which he has read. I shall cherish them for ever. I think highly of Ayurveda. It is one of the ancient sciences of India, which ensures the health of the millions in her thousands of villages. I advise

[1] Chief of the business community of Bhavnagar

[2] Not available

[3] Gandhiji paid a visit to Rasashala Aushadhashram, a celebrated Ayurvedic pharmacy at Gondal, in Saurashtra, and addressed a large gathering of citizens including the Dewan of the State, Ranchhoddas Patwari.

[4] Jivaram Kalidas Shastri, who presented the address on behalf of the Rasashala

[5] Pharmacy

every citizen to live his life in accordance with the principles of Ayurveda. The Pharmacy, the dispensary and the *vaidraj*, all have my blessings that they may be enabled to render the best possible service to Ayurveda.

[From Gujarati]

Report of Rasashala Aushadhashram, Gondal, 1948

288. SPEECH AT RECEPTION BY GONDAL CITIZENS

January 27, 1915

Shri Gandhi . . . referred to the obligation which His Highness the Thakore Saheb had laid him under, and, being himself unworthy of the epithets applied to him, to his search for someone in India who would be worthy of them, to his struggle over the years, and the struggle that he wished to carry on, to be so worthy, and said that he had tendered all this praise as an offeringto Lord Krishna. Giving his blanket to Keshavji Sheth, he asked the Sheth to spend the hundred rupees[1] in the service of the country or for some pious purpose. Pointing out, in conclusion, that it was *brahmacharya* that led to all the virtues and ensured success in one's tasks, he said that it was yet to be seen whether the sentiments expressed at the moment would remain the same when the time for testing came.[2]

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 7-2-1915

[1] The price offered by Shri Sheth for the blanket, which had been put to auction

[2] The English report in the *Bombay Chronicle*, 1-2-1915, adds: "He [Gandhiji] said the essential qualities a servant of the country should possess were simplicity of life, truthfulness and *brahmacharya*, and it was his ambition to establish somewhere in the vicinity of Kathiawar [Saurashtra] an institution where the rising generation of the country could be trained in those ideals."

289. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

RAJKOT,
January 28, 1915

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your second letter. Your diary is silent as to your studies. Do you read the *Imitation of Christ*[1]? Do you attend to the rosary? Do you read Gujarati? Do you read the *Song Celestial*? The idea of California frightens me. I do not want to restrain you but I would like you not to come to any hasty decision. Do let me try to bring you out here. You need hardly be assured that I shall leave no stone unturned to have you here. At every turn I think of you. At times I feel glad you are not here. For, some of the positions I pass through are most trying. Other times I wish you were here for you would have gained greatly from the experiences you would have passed through in common with me.

Mrs. Gandhi has up to now remained a pure fruitarian. It is a most wonderful thing indeed. I have found no difficulty in remaining a fruitarian up to now. I anticipate none now.

Harilal and Jamnadas are going with me to Bolpur.

With love,

Yours,
OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

290. SPEECH AT RECEPTION BY AHMEDABAD CITIZENS[2]

February 2, 1915

Ahmedabad is the capital of Gujarat and the place where I took my [matriculation] examination[3]. The reason why I have especial regard for Ahmedabad is that one of my fellow-workers and

[1] By Thomas a Kempis
[2] Sir Chinubhai Madhavlal, Baronet, presiding
[3] In 1887

fellow-sufferers in the satyagraha campaigns was Mr. Surendrarai Medh, a resident of this place. This place has made an important contribution to the satyagraha struggle. Today I have come on a pilgrimage to it.[1]

We have done no more than our duty. I have come to India to learn. My revered guru, Mr. Gokhale, gave me a piece of advice: One who had been out of India for 25 years should express no opinion about affairs here before he had studied things carefully. Accordingly, I keep my ears open and my mouth shut.

[From Gujarati]

Kathiawar Times, 7-2-1915; also *Gujarati*, 14-2-1915

291. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

BOMBAY
February 6, 1915

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letters. I am writing against time. My travels are not yet finished. I leave here for Poona very shortly and then go to Bolpur. In a fortnight's time I may have some peace at Santiniketan. My ribs are not yet right. I have asked Jamnadas to write to you at length. More next week I hope.

With love,

Yours,
OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] The last two sentences are from *Gujarati*, 14-2-1915.

292. SPEECH AT MISSION SCHOOL, BOMBAY[1]

February 7, 1915

This function today has given me greater pleasure than any grand reception ever did. I will try to avail myself of every opportunity of meeting you and keeping in touch with you.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 14-2-1915

293. LETTER TO C.F. ANDREWS

BOMBAY,
February 7, 1915

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have hardly any time left to me to attend to correspondence. I have a moment left whilst I am waiting for Mr. Setalvad[2] to come. I shan't be long before I am with you. We go to Poona tonight. I may leave for Bolpur on the 18th or even earlier. Hope to drop you a wire as soon as the date is fixed. With love,

Yours ever

MOHAN

From the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5663. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] Gandhi visited, without any formal invitation, a Mission School for the children of *Antyajas*, i.e., low-caste Hindus, whom he later described as Harijans, God's folk.

[2] Dr. Sir Chimanlal Harilal Setalvad, a leading member of the Bombay bar; Vice-Chancellor of Bombay University

294. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[1]

February 7, 1915

Truthfulness, *brahmacharya*, non-violence, non-stealing and non-hoarding, these five rules of life are obligatory on all aspirants. Everyone should be an aspirant. A man's character, therefore, is tobe built on the foundation of these disciplines. Beyond doubt, they are to be observed by everyone in the world. Though a business man, one must never utter or practise untruth; though married, one must remain celibate; though keeping oneself alive, one can practise non-violence. It is difficult to be of the world and yet not to steal (to observe the rule of non-stealing) and not to hoard wealth or any other thing. One must, nevertheless, keep that as an ideal to be attained and have some limit in these respects; when the mind has begun to turn away from these things, one may even embrace the supreme renunciation.

Everyone who observes these vows will be able to find a way out of all perplexities.

[From Gujarati]
Bapuni Prasadi

295. LETTER TO MAHATMA MUNSHIRAM

SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY,
POONA CITY,
Magha Krishna Paksha 8 [*February 8, 1915*][2]

MAHATMAJI,[3]

I had your Wire; my reply telegram[4] must have reached you. I

[1] Son of Anandbehn, Gandhiji's sister

[2] From the reference to the addressee's looking after Gandhiji's children (Phoenix teachers and boys), the letter appears to have been written in 1915. In 1915, *Magha Krishna Paksha* 8 corresponded to February 7, but Gandhiji went to Poona from Bombay only on the 8th.

[3] Mahatma Munshiram (1856-1926), later known as Swami Shraddhanand; nationalist leader; was active in the Arya Samaj; one of the early pioneers of national education, he founded the Gurukul at Kangri

[4] Not available

had written[1] to Mr. Andrews asking him to thank you for the trouble you took looking after my children and for the affection you showered on them. But, as I am anxious to pay my humble respects to you, I deem it my duty to go there without waiting for an

invitation. I hope to wait on you on my way back from Bolpur.[2]

Yours respectfully

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 2205

296. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI H. PATEL

Wednesday [Before *February 10, 1915*][3]

BHAISHRI MAGANBHAI,

I have your letter. I will never leave you so long as you do not want to leave me. I am aware of your trouble. I want to take work from you keeping that in mind. Take the vows only when you think it right to do so. I shall arrange to have the meeting with your father in good time. The rest from my letter to Maganlal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 11009. Courtesy: Suryakant C. Patel

[1] Letter not available

[2] Gandhiji left for Bolpur on February 15. He could, however, reach Kangri only on April 6.

[3] This letter appears to have been written before the one to Maganlal Gandhi dated February 10, 1915 (*vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 10-2-1915), wherein Gandhiji, mentions the addressee's father.

297. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

February 10, 1915

DEAR MR. KALLENBACH

The bearer Mr. Khandwala proceeds to England for his studies. Will you please guide him and introduce him to friends?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

298. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[POONA,]
Maha Vad 11 [*February 10, 1915*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I am writing this letter from the [Servants of India] Society's premises in Poona. I have talked to Chi. Jamnadas[2] about the clothes you have sent for. I saw Maganbhai's[3] father. We had a long talk. He was even pacified somewhat; for the present, however, he will not send his son. We shall have to wait for three months.

I think Chi. Narandas's[4] son will be with me. I have not even considered whether it will be possible to accommodate all. If it is not possible, we shall come away from there earlier. There will be some delay, of course, since nothing will be decided in a hurry. Meanwhile, I have decided to bring along those who live with us, that they may not be left to fend for themselves.

I am not bringing the *sitar*[5] and *tabla*[6], as I am told by Prof. Barve that they will be available there; that is, in Calcutta, of good

[1] From Gandhiji's tour itinerary mentioned in the letter, it appears to have been written in 1915.
[2] Addressee's younger brother
[3] Patel, a teacher in the Phoenix school, who came to India with the addressee
[4] Addressee's younger brother
[5] A stringed musical instrument
[6] A percussion instrument

quality and cheap in price.

Most probably, we shall leave on Monday, that is, on the 15th. We have decided to take the route you have suggested. I don't write much, since we are to meet soon. I shall reach Bombay on Sunday. If, therefore, you wish to send any telegram, send it there.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall be accompanied by Ba, Harilal[1], Jamnadas, Kaku, Ranchhod, Shanti, Chhotalal—Chhabildas's. These at any rate, and I, are coming. There may be one or two more.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5644. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

299. REPLIES TO QUESTIONS AT POONA MEETINGS

February 11/12, 1915

Mr. Gandhi came to Poona on Monday morning . . . was garlanded at several places during his drive through the city to the buildings of the Servants of India Society, where he put up. On Thursday evening the Deccan Sabha met him in a friendly gathering. The next evening he was treated to a friendly party by the Sarvajanik Sabha in its hall. Mr. Gandhi's conversation at both these conversazione parties was most enjoyable and edifying. To see the living embodiment of simple life and high thoughts was an education in itself. His unassuming demeanour and free and hearty talk were revelations of the pure and burning spirit within. He was asked several questions to which he gave straightforward replies.

Asked about his future plans he replied that he had not yet settled anything and that it was not certain that he would join the Servants of India Society.

Respecting South Africa he was asked why it was that some people there still complained that the question was not yet finally and satisfactorily determined and in what sense he thought it finally settled. Mr. Gandhi replied by pointing out the difference between grievances for which people were ready to sacrifice property and life—in fact, become passive resisters—and grievances which were not felt so acutely. There was a settlement as far as the former kind of grievances were concerned, though there remained others such as those relating to locations and racial distinctions on tramways and railways, towards the removal of which attempts still

[1] Gandhiji's eldest son

must be made. But these latter, though serious, were not felt so acutely as to justify the initiation or continuation of the Passive Resistance Movement.

Asked wherefrom exactly the pressure came upon the Union Govt.,— what exactly as the difficulty which in a way forced that Govt. to yield, he replied that it was the favourable European public opinion in the colony which made it possible for the Passive Resistance Movement to succeed. He recognised the value of the representations of the Indian Government and the Imperial Government, but he thought all these would not have availed much, had the passive resisters not the advantage of the sympathy of the general European public towards their cause. The passive resisters, weak, indigent and unarmed as they were; could not have marched in the way they did in a foreign and alien country had not the tacit sympathy of the general population been on their side. In their march they emptied tanks of water belonging to the Europeans with impunity and even without much remonstrance, and that was saying much in a country where water was very deficient. Some of the white settlers even helped the marching party with food. One of the passive resisters was tempted to steal a blanket but he was not prosecuted by the European owner but generously forgiven. That showed the attitude of the general public of white settlers. The Bantoos, that is, the original settlers, were not at all hostile, but favourable, if anything, to the Indian cause. The opposition came mainly from some Boers and the trading and industrial classes of the European white population. The planters and the traders—those were the strong opponents of Indian claims. The traders did not stand competition with the Indian merchants and hawkers. The planters opposed the Indians but they could not do without Indian labour.

Asked whether the traders and planters wanted to send Indians bag and baggage back to India, Mr. Gandhi said that the planters wanted Indians very badly—but only as indentured labourers. The plantations would be waste lands without Indians. Indigenous labour was not so steady and skilful as the Indian. In fact it was the Indians who were largely contributing to the industrial prosperity of the colony. And Mr. Gandhi clinched his point by remarking that he had always said to the planters to boycott Indians, if they really did not want them. That was in their hands and Indians could not have legally complained about it. But the Indians were useful labourers and traders and they could not be spared—that was why they were not boycotted.

Asked whether there were any temples for Hindus and mausoleums of the Mahomedans, he said there were some but they were more or less apologies of temples and mausoleums. He knew the priests there, and he was obviously sad when he had to speak of their character.

Asked how people from different provinces managed to speak with each other, he proudly referred to Hindi. As to social customs, he said that there was inter-dining among the different sections of the Hindus, but not intermarriage.

To the question, whether the Indians there would be absorbed by the population of their country of adoption, he had to give an emphatic "No"—thanks to the Indian civilization. It was obvious from his manner of speech that the "so-called western civilization" was not very highly thought of by him and that he felt a pride in speaking of the Hindu civilization.

The Mahratta, 14-2-1915

300. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

February 12 [*1915*][1]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have seen your letter to Mr. Gokhale. Yours to me has not yet reached me. The idea of California does not appeal to me. But I must not interfere. If you think that your pecuniary position will warrant the enterprise and that London will not make you happy, you may go. The best thing, however, is to await Mr. Gokhale's arrival there. You will then discuss with him the whole thing. I feel that if you went to a farm in England it would be better. And all this is subject to the result of my efforts to bring you here. This effort I can only make after reaching Bolpur. I reach there next week.

Your letter shows that you were most miserable at the time of writing. There is no peace but from within. And this I know that any peace brought from without is false and transient. We must all therefore search within. Then there is no disappointment. Try, try again and yet again.

Yes, India is still the place of spirituality that I have pictured to myself. It has brought me unconscious peace. There is much to criticize, much to disappoint; underneath it all there is an intense spirituality. The basis of life is spiritual. You can therefore build straightway. Not so anywhere else and in the same degree.

Mr. Gokhale is better than he was there but he is no more at peace with himself here than he was there. His nature is to worry.

Your answer to Gandevia was right. You could not give pecuniary assistance with your sensitive nature. I can quite understand that the incident must have added to your unhappiness. My heart goes out to you. My comfort is that I shall not leave a stone unturned to

[1] From the contents

secure your permit. If I fail[1] — I do not know.

With love and sympathy,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

301. SPEECH AT POONA PUBLIC MEETING

February 13, 1915

On Saturday Mr. Gandhi visited the Anath-Balikashram of Prof. Karve[2], the Fergusson College and the Anandashram, at all of which places he was warmly welcomed. In the evening there was a public meeting held in the Kirloskar Theatre. The speakers were Sirdar Nowroji Padamji, the President, Sir R. G. Bhandarker[3] and Mr. Wadia.

Mr. Gandhi made an appropriate reply in which he referred to Poona as a place of learning, culture and noted for the spirit of self-sacrifice of its citizens—a city which, whether he made his future 'home' or not, would be considered by him and his wife as a sacred place of pilgrimage. He had, he said, rendered very little service to the country, but what little he rendered had raised such high expectations about him that he feared, they perhaps would be disappointed and he prayed that in case he disappointed the people's hopes about himself, he would be judged in a spirit of generosity and forgiveness. He closed his speech remarking that his guide and teacher[4] had asked him to endeavour to close his lips and keep open his ears for some time. He finished off his nice little speech with expressing thanks for the honour done to him and hoping to be judged generously if he slipped in future.

The Mahratta, 14-2-1915

[1] For the significant Shakespearean echo of the uncertainty expressed herein, *Vide* "Message to Gokhale's Life", before 4-2-1916.

[2] D. K. Karve (1858-1962); social reformer; "Bharat Ratna"; founder of the Indian Women's University; *vide* "Speech on Indian Women's University", 23-2-1916.

[3] (1837-1925), Orientalist and author Vice-Chancellor of Bombay University; leader of Hindu social and religious reform movements.

[4] G. K. Gokhale; *vide* "Speech at Reception by Ahmedabad Citizens", 2-2-1915.

302. SPEECH AT PRIZE DISTRIBUTION TO STUDENTS IN BOMBAY[1]

February 14, 1915

It seems India is now under the deadly sway of the Iron Age. I have been moving about in this country for a month and seen on what an enormous scale fraud is prevalent here. I had firmly resolved that for twelve months I would go round everywhere, keeping my ears open and hear everything, but address no meeting and express no opinion on any subject. But I must advise you, students, to read these prize-books carefully, to reflect over their real import and, keeping in mind all the profound truths set out in them, follow the path enjoined by religion. Whether you are a girl or a boy, you will grow up one day and have to carry a heavy burden of worldly duties; give some thought, therefore, to the future. Truth is revealed not only in our scriptures but in the scriptures of other religions as well.[2]

It is the duty of students to assimilate whatever they have learnt. They should have religious and moral instruction, as much of it as they can usefully apply. They need education in such measure that it would not become too much of a useless burden on them. I should like to address a few words exclusively to students. Men and women students, you will benefit from what you have learnt only to the extent that you have assimilated it. That should be the object of this institution too. You should ponder over the element of truth in whatever books of religion you read. If you cling to truth, success is yours. I would advise you, from my experience, to profit well from your education. That will be to your advantage and to your country's as well.[3]

[From Gujarati]

Kathiawar Times, 17-2-1915 and *Gujarati*, 21-2-1915

[1] At the function of the Sanatan Dharma Nitishikshan Pravartak Samiti, founded by Manmohandas Shroff; Gandhiji presided.

[2] From *Kathiawar Times*

[3] From *Gujarati*

303. SPEECH AT KAPOL HOSTEL, BOMBAY[1]

[*February 15, 1915*]

I am not in the least surprised that you have collected Rs. 70,000 for the Hostel, as the Kapol community is quite wealthy and it is the duty of its richer members to provide for the education of its poorer members and help them to employment. I thank you for your kind words. I would not, normally, have found it possible to pay this visit to the Hostel, but Dr. Jivraj Mehta[2] had lived here and hadhad an illustrious career and I was, therefore, keen on seeing the place. Of him, I will say in brief that, young and patriotic that he is, I am confident he will prove himself useful to the country in the years to come. I am indebted to the Kapol community because Jagmohandas Shamaldas gave me a substantial loan. When I returned as a barrister, I was afraid he might ask for an instalment but Mr. Mulji Barbhaiya came to my help. In conclusion, I would ask the students to speak in their mother tongue instead of using a hotchpotch of English and Gujarati in their speech. Finally, I should urge everyone here to work for success, to cultivate character and to serve both one's family and country.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 21-2-1915

304. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

SANTINIKETAN,

BOLPUR,

February 17 [*1915*][2]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You may now send all letters c/o Servants of India Society, Poona City. There is no responsible party in Rajkot and letters may

[1] On the occasion of Gandhiji's and Kasturba's visit to the Hostel. Sheth Tribhuvandas Varjivandas presided.

[2] (1887-), Minister of Finance, Bombay Government, 1950-60. He later became the first Chief Minister of Gujarat on the bifurcation of the old Bombay State in May, 1960. Appointed High Commissioner in London in December, 1963.

[3] Inferred from the contents

get lost. The letter you say in yours to Mr. Gokhale you have written to me, has not yet been received by me. It may follow me.

I reach the above place today. I am just now at Burdwan, waiting for a change. Andrews has come here to fetch me. Bolpur is about 20 miles from here. I have a big party, i.e., 6 young men, with me. Of course, Mrs. Gandhi is inseparable. My eldest brother's two boys, the other brother's one boy and Chhotu[3], Chhabildas Mehta's son, whom you know, Harilal and Jamnadas—these form the party.

After consultation with Andrews, I propose to write to the Viceroy[4] myself about you and see what reply is received. I hope that you will war is over and that within a short time. Anyway I shall try.

Though I am not yet free from pains, I am better. Both of us are still strictly fruitarians.

Andrews sends his love to you. He is by me as I am writing this.

With love,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

305. SPEECH AT SANTINIKETAN RECEPTION[3]

February 17, 1915

The delight I feel today I have never experienced before. Though Rabindranath[4], the Gurudev, is not present here, yet we feel his presence in our hearts. I am particularly happy to find that you have arranged for this reception in Indian style. We were received with much pomp in Bombay, but there was nothing in it to make us happy. For there, purely western ways were imitated. We shall proceed to our goal in our own eastern ways and not by imitating the West, for we are of the East. We shall grow up in the beautiful manners and customs of India, and true to her spirit, make friends with nations having different

[1] Chhotalal

[4] Lord Hardinge

[3] Presented by the inmates

[4] Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941); poet and artist, won Nobel Prize or Literature in 1913; founder of Santiniketan, now a University

ideals. Indeed, through her oriental culture, India will establish friendly relations with the eastern and western worlds. Today I feel a close kinship with this Ashram in Bengal. I am no stranger to you. I liked also the distant land of Africa because the Indians there have not given up their Indian habits and customs.

Gandhiji ended his speech by offering his thanks to the audience.

From a Bengali report in *Tattvabodhini Patrika*, February, 1915

306. TELEGRAM TO H. N. KUNZRU

[BOLPUR,
February 20, 1915]

EXPRESS
KUNZRU[1]
SERVINDIA
ALLAHABAD

MR. GOKHALE PASSED AWAY[2]. PROCEEDING POONA TONIGHT'S MAIL. MEET ME CHHEOKI. BETTER IF YOU JOIN ME.

GANDHI

From the draft in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5672. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] Hriday Nath Kunzru (1887-), President of Servants of India Society; Liberal politician and parliamentarian

[2] On February 19

307. TELEGRAM TO KARSANDAS CHITALIA

[BOLPUR,
February 20, 1915]

DEFERRED
CHITALIA[1]
SERVINDIA
BOMBAY

HEARD TERRIBLE NEWS. REACHING POONA MONDAY EVENING. TELL REVASHANKER[2] SEND LETTERS POONA.

GANDHI

From the draft in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5666. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri.

308. CABLE TO TRANSVAAL B. I. ASSOCIATION

BOLPUR,
[*February 20,1915*]

DEFERRED
GANDHI
JOHANNESBURG

GOKHALE DEAD. SUGGEST UNIVERSAL MOURNING. WE HALF FASTING.

GANDHI, POONA

From the draft in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5665. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

309. SPEECH AT SANTINIKETAN ON GOKHALE'S DEATH

February 20, 1915

My one desire tonight is that my heart may reach your hearts and that there should be a real at-one-ment between us.

You have all learnt something about Tulsidas's *Ramayana*. The

[1] Associated with Bhagini Samaj, Bombay, and Servants of India Society.

[2] Revashanker Jagjivan Zaveri, a friend of Gandhiji and brother of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

most stirring part is that about the companionship of the good. We should seek the company of those who have suffered and served and died. One such was Mr. Gokhale. He is dead, but his work is not dead, for his spirit lives.

The masses came to know of Gokhale's efficiency in work. All know Gokhale's life of action. But few know of his religious life. Truth was the spring of all his actions.[1]

This was behind all his works, even his politics. This was the reason he founded the Servants of India Society, the ideal of which was to spiritualise the political as well as the social life of the nation.

It was fearlessness which ruled all the actions of his life. But as he was fearless he was also thorough. One of his favourite *shlokas*[2] from the shastras says: Real wisdom is not to begin a thing but to see the thing through to the end. This characteristic of thoroughness may be seen from this incident. He once had to speak to a large audience andhe spent three days in order to prepare a short speech for this meeting and he asked me to write out a speech for him. I wrote out the speech. He took it and smiled his heavenly smile, discussed it with me and said, "Give me something better, rewrite it." For three days he worried over it. When the speech was given, it thrilled the whole audience. He delivered his speeches without notes, but he did so, because he was so thorough, that one might say he wrote his speeches with his own blood. As he was thorough and fearless, so he was gentle. He was human from top to toe in all his dealings. He was sometimes impatient, but he would ask forgiveness, coming forward with his smile, whether to a servant or a great man, saying, "I know you will forgive me, won't you?"

He had a great struggle during the latter days of his life, a struggle with his conscience. He had to decide whether he should continue to take part in a struggle at the expense of his health. His conscience ruled every action of his life. He did not wear it on his sleeve, he wore it in his heart. Therefore he is living still, and may we all have the strength to carry out his last wish. His last words to those members of the Servants of India Society who were with him were: "I do not want any memorial or any statue. I want only that men should love their country and serve it with their lives." This is a message for

[1] This paragraph is from *Tattvabodhini Patrika*.

[2] Verses

the whole of India and not only for them. It was through service that he learnt to know his own nature and to know his country. His love for India was truthful and therefore he wanted nothing for India which he did not want for humanity also. It was not blind love, for his eyes were open to her faults and failings. If we can love India in the same way that he did, we have done well in coming to Santiniketan to learn how to live our lives for India's sake. Copy the zeal which he showed in all he took up, the love that was the law of his life, the truthfulness which guided every action and the thoroughness which was characteristic of all his work.

Remember that our shastras teach us that these simple virtues are the stepping stones to the higher state of life, without which all our worship and works are useless.

I was in quest of a really truthful hero in India and I found him in Gokhale. His love and reverence for India were truly genuine. For serving his country, he completely eschewed all happiness and self-interest. Even while lying on his sick-bed, his mind was occupied in thinking about the welfare of India. A few days ago, when at night he was under the grip of a painful ailment, he called for some of us and began talking about the bright future of India, as envisaged by him. Doctors repeatedly advised him to retire from work but he would not listen to them. He said, "None but death can separate mefrom work." And death at last brought peaceful rest to him. May God bless his soul![1]

From *The Ashram*, handwritten monthly magazine of Shantiniketan, June & July, 1915; also a Bengali report in *Tattvabodhini Patrika*, February, 1915

[1] This paragraph is from *Tattvabodhini Patrika*.

310. LETTER TO CHIEF TRAFFIC MANAGER, E. I. RAILWAY

SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY,
POONA CITY,
[*February 23, 1915*][1]

THE TRAFFIC MANAGER
EAST INDIAN RAILWAY
CALCUTTA

SIR,

Mrs. Gandhi, two friends and I travelled on the 21st instant by the 3 up mail from Burdwan to Kalyan en route for Poona. We were holders of 3rd class tickets Nos. 7186 to 7189. Upon the train-steaming in, I found that the 3rd class compartment was uncomfortably crowded containing far more passengers than the number specified on the label. However, we tried to get in. The station clerk who was standing by prevented us from doing so. I suggested that we would stand in the carriage as it was necessary for us to reach Poona at the earliest possible moment. The clerk would not listen to me. I then suggested that we should travel in an intermediate compartment until we could find accommodation in the 3rd class carriage. This suggestion was accepted. We got into an intermediate carriage. The station clerk duly reported the matter to the guard who insisted that we must pay the difference between the 3rd class and intermediate fares as far as Jubbulpore or we should not travel by mail train at all and go by the passenger train which was to follow. I protested but my protest was of no avail. I had therefore no alternative but to consent under protest to pay the difference which was taken from me at Assansol. The excess fare ticket number was 274577. Ipaid Rs. 19-12-0. I asked the ticket master to note on the ticket that I paid the excess fare under protest. He disregarded my request. As I had no desire to travel in an intermediate compartment, I and my party were looking for an opportunity of transferring to 3rd class compartment which we did at Mughalsarai. Here I asked the ticket collector to mark on the excess fare ticket that I had changed to the

[1] From the reply of the addressee.

3rd class compartment but he declined to do so.

I submit that, in the circumstances above mentioned, my party should have been found seats in the 3rd class compartment, failing that, permitted to travel intermediate without extra fare until the pressure had been removed; in any case it was unfair to insist on excess fare being paid as far as Jubbulpore and that as my party actually transferred to the 3rd class compartment at Mughalsarai, there is no warrant for the retention of the excess fare between Mughalsarai and Jubbulpore.

I trust that the Railway Administration will direct a refund of the full excess fare.

I have thought it to be my duty to bring this matter to your notice, as; much for the sake of the recovery of the excess fare paid (having operated upon public funds for my travels) as for the principle 3rd class passengers are entitled to proper treatment. I observed that they were roughly handled by several officials who were rude and impatient. I have no doubt that the Administration do not desire to see 3rd class passengers in any way roughly handled by inconsiderate officials.[1]

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

From the draft in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5667. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] In his reply dated March 27, the Acting Divisional Traffic Manager defended the action of the railway staff, but wrote: "As the difference in fares was correctly realized according to rules, and there is no record at Moghulsarai of your having travelled from that point to Jubbulpur 3rd Class, under ordinary circumstances refunds are not granted, but I am prepared to accept your statement and will send by Postal Money Order the difference in fares between Moghulsarai and Jubbulpur."

311. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY,
POONA CITY,
February 23, 1915

MY DEAR SISTER,

What would you say of a brother who does not inquire about his sister's health, does not acknowledge her message of goodwill and who does not even send a note of sympathy on her father's death? You will believe me when I tell you that I have not had a moment's rest after our landing. I thought therefore that I would write to you on settling down somewhere. Then I heard from Mr. Gokhale just when I left for Bolpur that you had lost your father. I said to myself then that I would write to you on reaching Bolpur. But no sooner did I reach Bolpur than I had to retrace my steps to visit the desolate home of the Society.[1] Oh! the pity of it. And yet my *Rajya Guru* died as very few had the privilege of dying.

And now excuse me for the delay in writing to you. My sympathies are with you in your sorrow. You have enough philosophy in you to bear the grief that has overtaken you. Do please let me know how you are keeping.

With regards from us both,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Gopal Krishna Gokhale had passed away on February 19.

312. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

POONA,
February 25 [*1915*]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You do not expect a long letter from me this week. This death[1] has severely taxed me and is still doing so. I have hurried back here from Santiniketan. I have not yet joined the Society[2] and I do not know that I ever will. My abstention will perhaps be the best service I shall render to the memory of the Master. However, I do not know.

I am asking Maganlal, who is with me, to write to you at length.

With love,

Yours,
OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

313. LETTER TO RATILAL M. SHETH

SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY,
POONA,
Phagan Sud 13 [*February 27, 1915*][3]

BHAISHRI RATILAL,

I have your letter. My health is improving.

I am indeed very happy that you think of using the looms. I would advise alteration in Indian looms, only after they have been patiently handled and such alteration is found necessary. An intelligent man may suggest improvements, but only after he has learnt to operate a hundred per cent Indian loom and produce cloth on it. There will be some propriety in that. Yarn, too, it seems to me, should be spun on our own spinning wheels. That way, I see, lies the prosperity of the country, of its poor, that is. More about this when we

[1] Of G.K. Gokhale on February 19, 1915
[2] The Servants of India Society
[3] Gandhiji was in Poona on this date.

meet.

The man who knows in his heart of hearts that this mortal frame is liable to perish any moment will be ever ready to meet death. That he might be so, the householder will limit his external activities and expand the inner and live accordingly. Following this rule, though a householder you can limit the scope of sense-pleasures. You can introduce even into your business some degree of holiness. Before deciding on any course of action, you can ask yourself whether it is essential. That way, you will also discover very easily what will be most conducive to your highest good. All this can be explained more clearly only in a personal discussion.

Let me know what kind of cloth you keep.

Remember this about what I may write or say, that I too am a novice like you. Possibly, I have more experience. You are welcome to profit by that experience.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4648. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

314. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

POONA,
Phagan Sud 14, February 28, 1915

I got your letter here. It seems to me that for the present, you must do nothing but prepare for the future. I think it will be a good thing if you start studying Hindi and Marathi as languages. It will be better still to learn hand-weaving at the same time. If you haven't formed the habit of going out for a walk every day, you should. At least four hours should be spent in body labour.

We shall think of some other book after you have completed *Yogadarshan*[1].

I shall be there most probably on Thursday and start for Bolpur again the same day.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi

[1] Aphorisms on Yoga by Patanjali

315. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

SERVANTS OF INDIA [SOCIETY],
POONA,
March 2 [*1915*]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have before me your two letters. I have not left out a single week. But when I was physically unable to write, being engaged here, there or elsewhere, I asked someone to write to you. I am happy, am progressing, am strong spiritually and becoming stronger physically but I hate the rush and the constant moving about. Yet it is necessary, I feel. Before I settle down I have to see certain things.

I was in Bolpur last week but Mr. Gokhale's sudden death brought me back to Poona. What an end! He died in harness. He was in full possession of all his faculties to the last and was working away. I was with him the Sunday previous to his death, which took place on the Friday following. Well, I am without a helmsman. But it is well. He lives in the spirit and his spirit is enthroned in my heart.

I have not joined the Society. Yet I pleaded for admission but there were differences which could not be bridged. So I am to travel about and see tings for myself and study. This I shall do.

Meanwhile I am trying to settle the boys somewhere, possibly near Bombay, i.e., 150 miles from it — in Ahmedabad. Maganlal is now in Ahmedabad looking into affairs [*sic*]. He has risen to the occasion fully. I retain the idea that there is something in the atmosphere here which enables you to be easily spiritual. In spite of the rush I am going through there is peace within. May such peace be also yours.

I was going to concoct a letter to the Viceroy about you in conjunction with Andrews when I was called away, as I have said before. I hope to try again on reaching Bolpur. If I fail, I can only advice that you should stay in London where you are. Better to put up with the ills we have than to risk having greater ones whilst trying to avoid what we have. No happiness obtainable from without. You may study agriculture there. I can understand that. And is there not a better chance of our meeting earlier if you are there than if you were anywhere else? Surely that thought should rivet you to England. You will be surprised that Mrs. Gandhi has developed a passion for you. She thinks of you at every turn. She thinks that our life is incomplete

without you. This is not my favourable construction method but this is how it is happening with her just now.

It surprises me with what tenacity she holds on to a purely fruitarian diet and mostly uncooked. I am living on purely uncooked fruitarian food. The meal today consisted of 3 bananas, 1, 2 small cucumbers, 2 tomatoes and 2 ripe figs and a few green grapes. The latter two were brought by friends only today. You will notice absence of ground-nuts. These I omitted only today because I had a full dose yesterday. I am always better when I have only a few ground-nuts. Of course I am having no physical exercise worth naming. I fancy that you too would have been satisfied with such food. I am going to take up other salad vegetables if necessary in order to compete with the poorest.

I think that you should ring up Lady Cecilia[1] and inquire whether she received the letters you sent. They must have missed her. There is no other explanation. In any case the least that you owe her is to inquire through the phone or walk over to them. I should do that most decidedly.

Now I think I have given you enough. I shall resume the chat next week.

Yet best to address letters c/o Servants of India Society. They will thereby reach me more quickly wherever I am.

With love,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

316. LETTER TO D. B. SHUKLA

Phagan Vad 1 [*March 2, 1915*][2]

BHAISHRI,

I have your letter. May I thank you for sending Rs. 1500?

My health is fairly good. There is still pain in my ribs but Dr. Dev said that there was no pleurisy now.

[1] Lady Cecilia Roberts, wife of Charles Robert, Under Secretary of State for India

[2] From the post mark

I am left without shelter through revered Gokhale's death. I am thinking of leaving here on Thursday and returning to Bolpur.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

REVERED BHAISHRI DALPATRAM BHAVANJI SHUKLA

BARRISTER

CIVIL STATION

RAJKOT

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 2326

317. LETTER TO SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN

March 3, 1915

DEAR SIR WILLIAM[1],

The national calamity that has befallen us has prevented me from replying earlier to your letter.

Many caskets of the kind sent to you have been brought to India. But the Cape Town one was, as it were, destined to go to England. It was the last one received in South Africa just on the day of embarkation for Southampton. Then we stayed in London and the thought of leaving the casket in England was developed during the time. Mr. Roberts, Mr. Kallenbach and I agreed that the best institution where it could be housed was your own house. It will only be a small personal tribute to one whom I have been taught to love and regard as one of India's best friends. The depositing of the casket with you may serve as an effort in binding the two nations together.

May I therefore ask you kindly to keep it yourself. I am sure that had Mr. Gokhale read your letter he would have joined me in my request.

With respects,

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 21645C

[1] (1838-1918), President, Indian National Congress at Bombay, 1889 and at Allahabad, 1910.

318. SPEECH AT GOKHALE CONDOLENCE MEETING, POONA

March 3, 1915

At a crowded meeting of the citizens of Poona held at the Kirloskar Theatre on March 3,1915, under the presidentship of the Governor of Bombay, to condole the recent death of Mr. G. K. Gokhale, the following resolution proposed by Gandhiji was passed:

That the citizens of Poona in public meeting assembled place on record the great loss the whole country, and especially Poona, has sustained in the untimely death of the Hon. Mr. G. K. Gokhale who was the leader of the wholecountry and who by his devotion and self-sacrifice has left a great example to his countrymen of selfless public work. That this meeting deeply sympathises with Mr. Gokhale's daughters and other relatives in their grief and requests the President to communicate this Resolution to them.[1]

Mr. Gandhi proposing the resolution paid an eloquent tribute to the memory of the deceased statesman. The speaker said it would look a presumption on his part if he were to add to the glowing tribute which H.E. Lord Willingdon had paid to the memory of the deceased patriot. One thing he would like to mention and that was the deep-seated religious feelings of the man from which sprang a thoroughness which was one of his chief characteristics. He also possessed a conscience. Shortly before his death, Mr. Gokhale was called upon to decide whether he should attend a certain conference. After much deliberation, he decided to do so in the interests of his country, though at a grave risk to his life.[2]

The Bombay Chronicle, 4-3-1915 and *The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 5-3-1915

319. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[BOMBAY,]
Phagan Vad 3, Thursday [*March 4, 1915*][3]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I am writing this letter from Bombay. Very likely I shall have to stop here, too, for a day. I got three letters from you at Poona, at the

[1] From the report in *The Bombay Chronicle*
[2] From the report in The *Amrita Bazar Patrika*
[3] From the reference to the founding of an institution in Ahmedabad, the letter appears to have been written in 1915. Again, Gandhiji was in Bombay on this date, and, before that, he was in Poona between February 22 and March 3.

same time. We want to run our institution for the whole of India and so we will beg from the entire country. From Ahmedabad, however, we want the land and the required buildings. That will be the foundation.

We will do without machinery as far as possible. We need not concern ourselves whether this will lead to the stopping of the mills. It will be no bad thing even if the millowners stop erecting additional mills. And if indeed they do not, we will still keep to the path which we think will make for our happiness.

You have not understood the [true] significance of *brahmacharya*. Will you be unhappy if Keshu[1] were to attain *moksha*[2]today? If yes, how profound is your condition of *moha*[3]! To believe that procreation by good persons is conducive to the happiness of the world seems to argue great conceit and ignorance. Good men have no desire for worldly pursuits. They desire withdrawal from them, that is, *moksha*. Those who keep them company [on the path] are their children. Not to admit even this bespeaks a state of utter ignorance. All this does not mean that Keshu will never marry. His inclination will be determined by the influences under which he grows up. Your duty is to place the highest ideal before him. It will not matter if he falls short of it. The children of one who so falls will be able to do good to the world. But please ponder deeply over the difference between this position and the other, namely, that the man who violates *brahmacharya* for the purpose of procreation is likely to have good progeny. Ponder deeply over this fine distinction between the two conditions. In one of them, we deliberately commit sin. In the other, though knowing better, we fall through weakness. In this latter, there is scope for rising yet. In the former, one has set one's face against rising. Rising is looked upon rather as falling. If, in spite of our giving the right education to Keshu, he does marry, there will be no harm. If he does not, he will acquire a light that will shine over all the world, such is the strength he will gain. Parents should desire the best for their children. The latter will then acquire what they are capable of. There is no error in my thinking. Be sure of that. I want you to understand my thoughts very carefully. Do not take weakness to be strength. Do not regard *moha* as knowledge. Think over this

[1] Addressee's son
[2] Deliverance from phenomenal existence
[3] Delusion resulting from attachment to worldly objects

very carefully. Preserve this letter and send it to Maganbhai[1] at Shantiniketan.

I have wired[2] to Raojibhai to come here. If you think it proper to show this letter to anyone there, you may.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

If it should become necessary for me to go there, I think it will be better that I go after I have finished my work at Bolpur, etc.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 110. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

320. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[BOLPUR]
March 10 [*1915*]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I write this only to tell you that I have not a minute to write a decent letter to you this week. I therefore send you my love. I am at Bolpur and am leaving tonight for Calcutta and thence for Rangoon.

Yours,
OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

321. SPEECH AT RECEPTION BY CALCUTTA MODH COMMUNITY

March 12, 1915

By Mr. Gokhale's untimely death, I have lost a friend, philosopher and guide, in whose footsteps I followed in serving the motherland. From his deathbed, he exhorted his friends that we

[1] Patel
[2] This telegram is not available.

Indians should render sincere service to the motherland.

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Vartaman, 24-3-1915

322. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

CALCUTTA,
March 13 [*1915*][1]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am here on my way to Rangoon. I am writing far in advance of the next mail as I may not be able to reach it otherwise, being on the waters.

Extraordinary changes have been made in the Santiniketan school. Andrews and Pearson[2] rose to the occasion and Pearson and I, whilst we were working away at sanitation reform, thought of you how you would have thrown yourself into the work.

I hope you have given up the idea of going to California. I have not yet written about you[3] . I am waiting for the opportunity.

Ramdas is with me going to Rangoon.

With love,

Yours,
OLD FRIEND

[PS.]

This is a general p[ersonal] a[ppeal][1] to you remember me to all friends.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] From the content

[2] William Winstanley Pearson, a Christian missionary and an active supporter of Indians; for some time teacher at Santiniketan

[3] To the Viceroy; *Vide* "Message of Gokhale's Life", before 4-2-1916.

[4] The source has "p.a."

323. SPEECH AT CALCUTTA RECEPTION[1]

March 13, 1915

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I do not know in what terms to return my thanks to you for giving me such a hearty welcome. You, sir (President), have blessed me and have entrusted a charge to me also. I hope I shall have deserved your blessing and I shall have power enough and willingness enough to carry out the charge that you have entrusted. Calcutta revives hallowed memories. It was in 1902 that I recognised, as I had not recognised before, in Mr. Gokhale my political master. It was at his feet that I learnt all that I felt I should learn. It was at his place that I came to know Dr. P. C. Roy[2]. I wondered if I should be able to see his face during my visit and I am thankful that I have been able to do so. You have said much which I know I do not deserve. If I can steal a corner of your heart, what do you propose to do to Harbat Singh, who went to jail in South Africa against the wishes of his friends and against my wish also?

Harbat Singh, Mr. Gandhi went on to say, died in prison. How could he describe the deed of Baliama[3] than whom a sweeter woman was not born? She was a girl of 17. What would they give to Harbat and Baliama? If anybody deserved anything, it was they who deserved a corner of their heart but not heroes like himselfwho were imported from England. Whatever he was able to do or say, he learnt in England. Harbat was uneducated, he did not know a word of English but he was the worthiest of all. It was Baliama and not his wife who should be exalted.

Proceeding, Mr. Gandhi said it was the life of Mr. Gokhale which inspired him and would do so throughout the work that lay before him. Mr. Gandhi was described as one who did not break the law.[4] That, Mr. Gandhi said, had only a restricted meaning.

[1] On the grounds of the palace of the Maharaja of Cassimbazar, with Babu Motilal Ghosh in the chair

[2] Dr. (Sir) P. C. Ray (1861-1944), scientist and patriot

[3] Valliamma, who died a martyr in South Africa; *vide* "Speech at Public Reception, Madras", 21-4-1915.

[4] Surendranath Banerjea in his tribute at the meeting had said: "Mr. Gandhi's name would find its place in the enduring pages of history. Mr. Gandhi would not break laws, he would submit to laws but triumph over laws. There was a lesson to the Bengal anarchists which they well might lay to heart, which they might follow. Mr. Gandhi triumphed over the law by moral force."

They had been described in South Africa as law-breakers. Mr. Gandhi said he broke the law and invited the penalty under the law which his conscience could not accept.

Babu Hemendra Nath Sen proposed a vote of thanks to the chair.

Before the close of the meeting, Moulvi Leakut Hossein called for shouts of "Bande Mataram" which were lustily responded to and the "Bande Mataram" song was sung in chorus.

The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 15-3-1915

324. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

ON WAY TO RANGOON,
Phagan Vad 14 [*March 14, 1915*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

We are having a very bitter experience of the deck, which is but common. Those going are Ba, Ramdas[2] and myself. We hope to return to Shantiniketan by the end of this month.

I see that there has been a misunderstanding between Harilal and me. He has parted from me completely. He will receive no monetary help from me. [I] gave him Rs. 45/- and he parted at Calcutta. There was no bitterness. Let him take any books or clothes of mine he may want. Hand over the key to him. He may take out anything he likes and then return the key. You must have heard that the key supposed to have been lost was found. It was withRevashankerbhai. Get it from him, if you have not got it already.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in pencil in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5668. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Gandhiji was on his way to Rangoon on this date
[2] Third son of

325. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[After *March 14, 1915*][1]

BHAISHRI 5 M[2],

You are right in what you think about non-violence. Its essentials are *daya*[3], *akrodha*[4], *aman*[5], etc. Satyagraha is based on non-violence. We saw this clearly in Calcutta and came to the conclusion that we should include it among our vows. The thought led to the further conclusion that we must observe all the *yamas*[6] and that, if we do so by way of vows, we perceive the inner significance of non-violence. In my talks with hundreds of men here I place the various *yamas* above everything else.

सियरामप्रेमपीयूषपूरन होत जनमु न भरतको ।

मुनिमनअगम यमनियमसमदम विषमव्रत आचरत को ।।[7]

I remembered this verse in Calcutta on this occasion and pondered deeply over it. I am absolutely clear in my mind thatIndia's deliverance and ours will be achieved through the observance of these vows.

In observing the vow of non-hoarding, the main thing to be borne in mind is not to store up anything which we do not require. For agriculture, we may keep bullocks, if we use them, and the

[1] From the references to Calcutta and Tagore, the letter appears to have been written after Gandhiji's first visit to Shantiniketan and Calcutta after his arrival in India. Gandhiji left Calcutta on March 14, 1915. In *Gandhijini Sadhana* it is stated that this was written after February, 1915; however, in *Mahatma Gandhijina Patro*, this letter is published as from Madras with the date *Vaishakh Sud* 11, which corresponds to April 25, 1915.

[2] This superscription in a letter addressed to Maganlal Gandhi is unsual. It is reproduced as in *Mahatma Gandhijina Patro.*

[3] Compassion

[4] Freedom from anger

[5] Freedom from the desire to be respected

[6] Any great moral or religious duty or observance. The *yamas* are usually said to be ten, but their names are given differently by different writers. Generally they include truthfulness, non-violence, compassion, celibacy, etc.

[7] "If Bharata had not been born, imbued with the ambrosia of love for Sita and Rama, then who would have practised such self-control and strict observance, continence, restraint and rigorous vows as scarce enter the imagination of sages?" *Ayodhya Kanda* (Second book) of Tulsidas's *Ramayana* (Hill's translation) .

equipment required for them. Where there is a recurring danger of famine, we shall no doubt store food-grains. But we shall always ask ourselves whether bullocks and food-grains are in fact needed. We are to observe all the *yamas* in thought as well, so that we shall grow more secure in them from day to day and come to think of fresh things to renounce. Renunciation has no limit to it. The more we renounce, the more shall we grow in the knowledge of the *atman*[1]. If the mind continues to move towards renunciation of the desire for hoarding and if in practice we give up hoarding as far as it is physically possible to do, we shall have kept the vow of non-hoarding.

The same is true about non-stealing. Non-hoarding refers to stocking of things not needed. Non-stealing refers to the use of such things. If I need only one shirt to cover myself with but use two, I am guilty of stealing one from another. For, a shirt which could have been of use to someone else does not belong to me. If five bananas are enough to keep me going, my eating a sixth one is a form of theft. Suppose we have a stock of 50 limes, thinking that among us all we would need them. I need only two, but take three because there are so many. This is theft.

Such unnecessary consumption is also a violation of the vow of non-violence. If, with the ideal of non-stealing in view, we reduce our consumption of things, We would grow more generous. If we do so, actuated by the ideal of non-violence, we would grow more compassionate. In assuring, as it were, every animal or living thing that it need have no fear on our account, we entertain compassion — love—for it. A man who entertains such love will not find any living being inimical to him, not even in thought. That is the most emphatic conclusion of the shastras and my experience as well.

The principle underlying all these vows is truth. By deceiving oneself, one may refuse to recognize an act of stealing or hoarding as such. Hence, by taking careful thought we can ensure at every step that truth prevails. Whenever we are in doubt whether a particular thing should be stored or not, the simple rule is not to store it. There is no violation of truth in renunciation. When in doubt about the wisdom ofspeaking, it is the duty of a man who has taken the vow of truth not to speak.

I want all of you to take only such vows as each one feels

[1] The Self

inclined to, of his own free will. I always feel that vows are necessary. But anyone may take them only when he himself feels the need and take only such as he wants to.

Ramchandra may have been a man of great prowess, performed innumerable feats and killed hundreds of thousands of monsters, but no one would think of him today if he had not had such devoted men as Lakshmana and Bharata to follow him. The point is, if Ramchandra had had no more than extraordinary strength as a fighter, his greatness would have been forgotten after a while. There have been many brave warriors who killed monsters as he did. There has been none among them whose fame and greatness are sung in every home. Ramchandra possessed power of some other kind which he could induce into Lakshmana and Bharata and in virtue of which the latter became great men of austerities. Singing in praise of their austerities, Tulsidasji asked who else, if Bharata had not been born and practised austerities unattainable even by great sages, would have turned an ignorant man like him to Rama? This is as much as to say that Lakshmana and Bharata were the guardians of Rama's fame, that is, of his teaching. Moreover, austerities are not everything. For, if Lakshmana went without food or sleep for 14 years, so did Indrajit[1]. But the latter did not know the true significance of austerities which Lakshmana had learnt from Rama; on the contrary, he possessed a nature which inclined him to misuse the power earned through austerities and so came to be known merely as a monster and suffered defeat at the hands of Lakshmana, the man of self-mastery, a lover of God and seeker of deliverance. In the same way, however great the ideal of Gurudev[2], if there is no one to implement that ideal, it will remain hidden in the profound darkness of the ages. Conversely, if there are any to put it into practice, it will spread its light multiplied many times over. The steps which one has to climb in order to practise an ideal constitute tapas. One should realise, therefore, how very necessary it is to bring tapas—discipline—into the life of children.

[From Gujarati]

Gandhijini Sadhana; also *Mahatma Gandhijina Patro*

[1] Meghanad, son of Ravana, who had earned the name of Indrajit by his victory over Indra, chief of the gods

[2] Rabindranath Tagore

326. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI H. PATEL

ON WAY TO RANGOON,
Phagan Vad 15 [*March 15, 1915*][1]

BHAISHRI MAGANBHAI,

Harilal has parted from me. I have given him Rs. 45 on which he will struggle through as he pleases. There is nothing improper about it.

We shall return by steamer on Monday or latest by Thursday. It seems on our way back we shall have to stop at Calcutta for two days. We have abandoned the idea of being at the Gurukul in the beginning of April. We shall have to spend some time at Santiniketan.[2] We must do our utmost to see that the new experiment[3] succeeds.

You will have received the dried fruit which Manilal was asked to send, and you will have managed with. . .[4]

Fakiri and Baba will have fully recovered by now.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 11003. Courtesy: Suryakant C. Patel

327. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

RANGOON,
March 16[5] [*1915*]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

We reached Rangoon this morning. This time I had a real experience of deck passage. The latrines were the filthiest I have ever seen anywhere and so was the so-called bathing place. The latter we

[1] Gandhiji left Calcutta for Rangoon on March 14, 1915. *Phagan Vad 15* corresponds to March 15.

[2] The addressee along with some other Phoenix companions was staying at Santiniketan.

[3] In self-cooking at Santiniketan; *vide An Autobiography* —Part V, Chapter IV.

[4] One word is illegible here.

[5] This appears to be a slip. Gandhiji had reached Rangoon on March 17; *vide* "Diary for 1915", 9 January , 1915

simply did not use. The deck was crowded. There was hardly seating accommodation. There was no air space. It was a time of trial. You would almost have died in the latrine. We had three nights of it and 3 days. Yet I am returning as a deck passenger. I am sending a complaint to the company. I understand that the steamer is one of the oldest of the company.

Here in Rangoon it is already very hot. Dr. Mehta however has built a nice place out in the open. It is therefore not unbearable. I should not have come here but for Dr. Mehta. Burma for the present at any rate is not in my line. The country is being exploited by Indians with the assistance of the English.

We stay here about a week and return to India.

I am seeing much, observing much. I am not disappointed. I am finding things as I had expected and I feel that you would have felt the spiritual India, could you have come. The cities are still plague spots. But even in the cities you meet with real men as you do there.

Harilal came to me for a time. He has again left. He has no faith in me and my co-workers except you. He thinks that I have used my sons for my own benefit and sacrificed them to my ambition. He did not put it quite so badly but the purport was unmistakable. The other boys have grown in wisdom. Harilal is now not to receive any pecuniary help from me. I think that is the best thing I can do for him[1].

I shall still be travelling for a few months and seeing things.

I must describe Santiniketan to you in my next letter.

For you, I have still the same message. Have patience, find happiness in the situation that faces you. There are others much worse situated.

With love,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 14-3-1915 and "Guide to Lndon", [1893-94].

328. AMENDMENTS TO "OBJECTS" OF IMPERIAL INDIAN CITIZENSHIP ASSOCIATION[1]

[On or after *March 16, 1915*]

The following clauses are suggested in place of l to 4 under the head 'objects'[2].

To ascertain the condition of Indian settlers not excluding indentured labourers outside India and to agitate for the removal of their disabilities and grievances.

To secure for such settlers equal status with all the other settlers in the respective parts of the world.

To investigate the conditions of transport under which immigrants travel to their destination and secure an amelioration of such conditions where they may be found to be defective.

To secure with all the other British subjects equality of treatment alike as to terms of admission and as to residence for all British Indian emigrants to any part of the world including British self-governing Colonies.

To maintain a bureau of information for the benefit of emigrants.

To establish and maintain a library containing colonial and foreign laws and journals and all other special books of interest to emigrants.

From a photostat of a draft in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 6305

[1] Amendments suggested in reply to Jahangir Bomanjee Petit's letter of March 16, 1915, forwarding a draft copy of the rules and regulations of the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association for Gandhiji's perusal and suggestions

[2] "Objects" 1 to 4 were as follows:

(1) To protect and safeguard the civic interest of Indians in general in any part of the world outside India, including the self-governing British Colonies;

(2) To work for, insist upon and obtain for Indians in all British foreign possessions in particular, absolutely equal treatment in all respects with all other British citizens;

(3) To establish and maintain by all possible constitutional means the right of Indians to emigrate into and settle in any part of the British Empire, including self-governing Colonies, on the same terms as other members of the Empire;

(4) To maintain by all legitimate and constitutional means the inherent right and privileges of Indians within the Empire as British citizens.

329. LETTER TO AGENTS OF B. I. S. N. COMPANY

[RANGOON,]
March 19, 1915

THE AGENTS
BRITISH INDIA STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY

GENTLEMEN,

With Mrs. Gandhi and five others, I was a deck passenger from Calcutta to Rangoon per s.s. *Lunka* which arried here yesterday[1]. I have been in the habit of travelling as a deck passenger now for some time. I was surprised to find that the arrangements for deck passengers on s.s. *Lunka* were the worst I have yet seen. The deck was uncomfortably crowded. There was hardly enough sitting accommodation for the number of passengers taken. My party could not all fully stretch ourselves during night although several passengers were anxious to make us comfortable. I saw many lying anyhow and anywhere thoroughly cramped. The latrines were in a dangerously filthy state. The floor space between the seats and the doors was used as urinals. There seemed to be no outlet for the urine. There was therefore always a pool of urine in front of you. The walls of the latrines I found to be extremely dirty and sticky. The doors were without bolts. The only bathing room I saw was used by the passengers for urinary purposes. There was no check against passengers spitting anywhere. The deck used by them was never washed.

I am sure that a great company like yours do not wish to treat their deck passengers in the manner described above. May I ask you please to forward this letter to the proper quarters for attention? I am likely to return to Calcutta next week and may I hope that my party and I, in common with the other passengers, will be able to have the ordinary sanitary comforts which a human being should have?

I remain,
Yours faithfully

From a photostat of the original draft in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 6167

[1] On the 17th, both according to the "Diary for 1915'. and the Company's letter of the 20th, acknowledging this letter and promising an inquiry into the complaint about the state of latrines (S.N. 6168)

330. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI H. PATEL

Chaitra Sud 6 [*March 21, 1915*][1]

BHAISHRI MAGANBHAI,

I have your letter. I shall be here till Monday night. I shall reach Calcutta on Thursday and hope to be at Santiniketan on Saturday. It is very good that the work there is proceeding well. We should continue to help in it to the best of our ability. Look after Messrs. Andrews[2] and Pearson[3] very carefully. You have not given any news about Pal Baba's health. Maganlal shall have reached there before my arrival.

I had told Manilal to send the dried fruit immediately. You must have received it soon after your letter.

It is extremely hot here. I am now tired of all the honour and respect being showered on me, I do not see any meaning in it.

All the three[4] of us are well.

Regards from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Look after your health. Professor Balwantrai Thakore will have arrived there or will be arriving. Look after him. Give him my regards if he has already come, and give the necessary news.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10999. Courtesy: Survakant C.

331. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

RANGOON,
March 21 [*1915*]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

This is my second letter from Rangoon. Yours of the 12th February has followed me here.

You want to know my personal life. I shall therefore restrict this to its description. I rise never later than 5 a.m. and often at 4 a.m.

[1] From the contents it is evident that this letter was written from Rangoon and after the one to the addressee dated March 15, 1915.

[2] C. F. Andrews

[3] William Winstanley Pearson

[4] Ramdas and Chhaganlal Gandhi had accompanied Gandhiji to Rangoon.

Here in Rangoon I go out for a long walk with Dr. Mehta. At 10 a.m. we take the first meal. Mine and Mrs. Gandhi's consists of uncooked fruits and nuts. Ground-nuts are roasted. My menu today was 4 bananas, 2 tiny tomatoes, 1 tiny unripe mango chopped, 2 spoonfuls of grated fresh coconut, 4 walnuts, perhap 2 ounces of date, ground-nut meal mixed, 1 naarangi, 2 slices of wretched melon, 2 lemons and a drink of coconut water. Much the same will be taken at 5 p.m. Dr. Mehta joins me in the fruitarian meal. He adds milk and almonds to the above. Both of us walk about the Town barefoot. Mrs. Gandhi cooks unripe bananas when she can get them. I have now no desire for cooked bananas. Hitherto, there has been no difficulty about procuring fruits and nuts. Several young men in different parts of the country are trying the fruitarian diet. I have asked them to let me have results. The tutor to Dr. Mehta's sons is trying the experiment with me. We retire here at about 10 p.m. Elsewhere I have not been able to do so. The pains in the ribs are still there somewhat. I notice nothing in the groins or the right calf. I have a good appetite now and my bowels move twice. I anticipate no difficulty about continuing the experiment. This country seems to be peculiarly fitted for fruitarian diet. The temptations which I feared there have not overtaken me at all. On the contrary, living our ideals here seems to be comparatively easier.

Dr. Mehta's house is nice and airy. It is very simply conducted. His life is transparent. There is no cant or hypocrisy about it. You would have liked the life here immensely. He has a farm also which is groaning under the weight of fruit trees that were there when he bought it. He has introduced handlooms there.

I leave here on the 29th instant and reach Santiniketan about the 5th April.[1]

Now good-bye.

With love from us all,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] However, Gandhiji left Rangoon on March 26 and reached Santiniketan on April 2; *vide* also "Diary for 1915", 9 January 915.

332. INTERVIEW AT RANGOON

[Before *March 22, 1915*]

A correspondent from Rangoon writes under the date March 22:

When I asked Mr. Gandhi to grant me an interview on behalf of a local paper, he simply would not hear of it. He said he had returned from S. Africa only recently. He had not given to the, problems of India the amount of study they required. Therefore he could not be expected to speak on Indian affairs with any semblance of authority. He was at present engaged in studying our problems on the late lamented Mr. G. K. Gokhale's advice. When his studies were over, then he would be "out for interviews", but not till then. But I assured him that I had no intention of asking him his opinions about topical matters. I said I represented a Tamil paper, that I was myself a member of the Tamil community and that I merely intended to ask him what he thought of the Tamil community with whom he must have largely come into contact in South Africa. On hearing this he seemed greatly relieved and without the slightest pause, like a man who had already formed his final opinions on this subject, he delivered a glowing eulogy on the Tamil people.

He started by saying he could quote chapter and verse for the good work performed by them in South Africa. They were of the greatest help to him during the passive resistance struggle. All the Indian communities were of very great help to him, but especially the Tamil community. It was considered a shame among them for one man not to have gone to jail at least once for the common cause. That was not true of any other community, but that was entirely true of the Tamil. When he first met them, he learnt to admire them. Ever afterwards he had found them better and better. He said:

I consider I have more in common with the Tamil community than with any other.

I asked him whether he had any ulterior purpose in visiting Burma. . . . His answer was simple. He said:

My work lies in India.

The Hindu, 30-3-1915

333. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

Chaitra Sud 12 [*March 28, 1915*][1]

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I have your letter. About the diet, you will be able to speak of your experience only after some time. With patience, you will see the results. It happens that one needs glasses for the eyes, whether to buy them or not, we shall consider by and by.

I too am surprised how the pillars came down all of a sudden. If they were the ones which bore the invaluable inscriptions, the thing is very much to be regretted. What you did was quite right. You had them brought down after getting your doubts cleared, and that was but proper. Show me this place.[2]

We shall know more then. I don't think tamarind induces weakness. An excessive quantity of food must have been taken.

Fiction means an imagined story. It is beyond doubt that the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* have less of history and more of imagination. They are both sacred books; tens of millions of people look upon them as more than history, and rightly. Maybe there was no brother of Rama exactly like Bharata, but there have been such Bharatas at any rate in India and that is why Tulsidas could conceive one. It is to the Bharata depicted in the *Ramayana* that Bharatvarsha[3] pays homage.

We need not make ourselves unhappy in the least if, because of our offering satyagraha, Phoenix should turn desolate and go to waste. In settled conditions, we should take to agriculture. When conditions are unsettled, we may beg or labour, or starve. We should have unshakeable faith that nothing that is done is ever done in vain. This is a law which has no exception. If circumstances arise again, we may resume agriculture. If not, we need not worry. Agriculture is not the end but only a means. The end is, from the lower point of view, service of the people and, from the higher point of view, *moksha*. One of the means for achieving both is agriculture. When it hinders us

[1] Gandhiji left Rangoon on March 26, 1915.

[2] It has not been possible to ascertain the exact significance of this paragraph

[3] India

from attaining the end, we should abandon it.

The freedom that the Poet takes is wrong. We should, however,bear with a man like him, in the hope that one day he willgive up indulgence of the senses. For him, our company is all to the good. We should make things as easy for him as we can. We need not apply to others the rule we apply to the Poet. That is, we need not have the same rule for all in such matters. Even the Poet may not cross the bounds, however.

It is because of the respected Gokhale that we keep using the name " 'Phoenix' Institution". He gave this name to our institution in order that everyone, himself included, may recognize the meaning immediately. Most of the aims of Phoenix are the aims of our institution here. He understood the aims of Phoenix and so gave that name. We need not keep it for ever. We will look for another name after we have settled down somewhere.

I shall preserve the dresses and hand them over to you. But they will be useless when I have worn them out. You will have, therefore, to make your selection right now. They were good experiences I had in Rangoon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati original: C.W. 5684. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

334. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI H. PATEL

8 MOIRA STREET,

CALCUTTA,

Monday [*March 29, 1915*][1]

BHAISHRI MAGANBHAI,

I shall be busy here till the evening of Wednesday, hence I shall leave by the last train, and reach there around 11 or 11.30 at night. Everybody will have got to Hardwar.[2] I have received Mr.

[1] From the contents this letter appears to have been written after Gandhiji's arrival in Calcutta from Rangoon, i.e., March 28, 1915, and before he left for Santiniketan on March 31. Monday in the interim fell on March 29.

[2] Gandhiji's Phoenix party had been invited to assist the volunteer corps of the Servants of India Society at the Kumbha fair at Hardwar.

Kunzru's[1] telegram saying that everyone should be sent there. It seems that I shall have to go there too, but I shall have to return immediately. Chi. Maganlal will have arrived.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Dr. Mehta's elder brother Potatbhai is with me. Anna[2] and Doctor's sons are not here.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10998. Courtesy: Suryakant C. Patel

335. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' HALL, CALCUTTA[3]

March 31, 1915

On Wednesday evening under the presidency of the Hon'ble Mr. Lyons[4] and before a stupendously large gathering at the Students' Hall, College Square, Mr. Gandhi delivered an address, embodying advice as to the duties of young men in view of the anarchical crimes committed by some misguided youths in this country.

Though it was the command of his guru, the late Mr. Gokhale, that Mr. Gandhi, during his stay here keep his ears open but his mouth shut, he could not resist the temptation of addressing the meeting. It was the opinion of the speaker as well as his departed guru that politics should not be a sealed book to the student community; for he saw no reason why students should not study and take part in politics. He went the length of saying that politics should not be divorced from religion. They would agree with him as well as their teachers, professors and theworthy chairman that literary education was of no value, if it was not able to build up a sound character. Could it be said that the students or the public men in this country were entirely fearless? This question engaged the speaker's serious attention although he was in exile. He understood what political dacoity or political assassination was. He had given the subject his most prayerful and careful attention and he had come to the conclusion that some of the students of his country were fired no doubt with zeal in their minds and with love for their motherland, but they did not know how they should love her best. He believed that some of them resorted to

[1] H. N. Kunzru

[2] Harihar Shama, a teacher from Baroda, who joined Gandhiji in June, 1915.

[3] This was published under the caption "Mr. Gandhi's Advice to Young Bengal", reprinted under the caption, "On Anarchical Crimes" in *Speeches* and *Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, Natesan.

[4] P. C. Lyons

nefarious means, because they did not work in the fear of God, but in the fear of man. He was there to tell them that if he was for sedition, he must speak out sedition and think loudly and take the consequences. If he did so, it would clear the atmosphere of any taint of hypocrisy. If the student, who were the hopes of India, nay perhaps of the Empire, did not work in the fear of God, but in the fear of man, in the fear of the authorities— the Government whether it was represented by the British or an indigenous body —the results would prove disastrous to the country. They should always keep their minds open regardless of what the consequence would be. The youths who resorted to dacoities and assassinations were misguided youths with whom they should have absolutely no connection. They should consider these persons as enemies to themselves and to their country. But he did not for a moment suggest that they should hate those people. The speaker was not a believer in Government; he would not have any Government. He believed that that Government is the best that governs the least. But whatever his personal views were, he must say that misguided zeal that resorted to dacoities and assassinations could not be productive of any good. These dacoities and assassinations were absolutely a foreign growth in India. They could not take root here and could not be a permanent institution here. History proved that assassination had done no good. The religion of this country, the Hindu religion, was abstention from *himsa*, that was to say, taking animal life. That was he believed, the guiding principle of all religions. The Hindu religion said that even the evil-doer should not be hated. It said that nobody had any right to kill even the evil-doer. These assassinations were a western institution and the speaker warned his hearers against these western methods and western evils. What had they done in the western world? If the youths imitated them and believed that they could do the slightest good to India, they were totally mistaken. He would not discuss what Government was best for India, whether the British Government or the Government that existed before, though he believed that there was a great deal of room for improvement in the British Government.

But he would advise his young friends to be fearless, sincere and be guided by the principles of religion. If they had a programme for the country, let them place it openly before the public. The speaker concluded the address with an appeal to the young men present to be religious and be guided by a spirit of religion andmorality. If they were prepared to die, the speaker was prepared to die with them. He should[1] be ready to accept their guidance. But if they wanted to terrorise the country, he should rise against them.

The President, in the course of an eloquent speech, eulogised the address of the evening and suggested that the young men should band themselves for the purpose of uprooting the anarchical evil from this country. He offered a vote of thanks to Mr.

[1] *The Bengalee*, 1-4-1915, has “would”.

Gandhi.

Mr. Gandhi made a suitable reply and invited correspondence from the student community to which he promised to give a prompt reply.

The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 1-4-1915. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta

336. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

April 1 [*1915*]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letters. Sometimes I have no time and I am travelling. Naturally I must then only send love. Today is such a time. I have just returned from Calcutta and can only send you love.

Your diaries are still interesting for the omissions.

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

337. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

April 8 [*1915*]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am still wandering, still seeing people and places. Here I am almost beyond the reach of the post.[1] I saw yesterday a little of the Himalayan scenery and I wished you could have been with me as I was wandering. I have not seen anything grander anywhere else. This place lies at the foot of the mountains. It is one of the holiest places of India. But the holiness is all but gone. I have brought the boys here to help the pilgrims. The air is bracing. The Ganges you see flowing in all her grandeur.

[1] Gandhiji was in Gurukul Kangri, Hardwar on this day. His Phoenix party had been invited to assist the volunteer corps of the Servants of India Society at the Kumbha Fair at Hardwar; vide also the following item and "Speech at Gurkul, Hardwar", 8-4-1915.

I have not yet decided where I am to settle down. The question is becoming more and more complicated. But some day it will solve itself. 'One step enough for me.'

I have just walked 15 miles. This is my longest walk for months. I do not know how it will affect me. But you will excuse my not giving you a fuller letter. I am not too tired but I have to go to a meeting in a few minutes.

Yours with love,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

338. SPEECH AT GURUKUL, HARDWAR

April 8, 1915

An address of welcome was presented to Mr. Gandhi by the Brahmacharis of Gurukul Kangri on 8th April when Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi visited Hardwar in connection with the Kumbhi. Professor Mahish Charan Sinha with his band of Brahmacharis went to receive him. Brahmachari Budhaduri read the address....

Mr. Gandhi replied:

I feel indebted to Mahatmaji for his love. I came to Hardwar only to pay my respects to Mahatma Munshiram, as Mr. Andrews has pointed out his name as one of the three great men whom I ought to see in India.

He thanked the Brahmacharis for the help they sent to their Indian brothers in Africa and felt specially grateful to the Brahmacharis and the Mahatma for the love and affection they extended towards his Phoenix boys while visiting Gurukul and felt that his pilgrimage to Gurukul was satisfactory. He said:

I am proud that Mahatmaji has called me his brother in a letter, Please pray that I may deserve his fraternity. I have come after 28 years to my country. I can give no advice. I have come to seek guidance and am ready to bow down to anyone who is devoted to the service of the Motherland and I am ready to lay down my life in the service of my country and I shall no more go abroad. One of my brothers is gone.[1] I want guidance. I hope the Mahatmaji will take his place and be a brother to me now.

[1] Laxmidas Gandhi

To the Brahmacharis, he said:

Whatever your aim is, is the aim of all of us. May God fulfil our mission.

Mahatma Munshiram, while welcoming him, said that he was glad to hear that he would live in India and would not go abroad like others to serve India from outside. He hoped that Mr. Gandhi would be the beacon light of India.

The Hindu, 12-4-1915

339. SPEECH AT ST. STEPHEN'S COLLEGE[1]

DELHI,
April 13, 1915

Mr. Gandhi said he took the liberty of speaking in Hindi having ascertained previously from the Principal that the European staff of the College understood the language of the people and he was glad to know that they did.

In the course of his address he said that it would be premature for him to offer any advice in regard to Indian problems, for he had been long away from the motherland. He needed to learn first before he spoke. He had come to learn and hoped to live and die in India now. Long years ago when he met his Master Mr. Gokhale, he felt he had found his *guru* in the sphere of politics and he had tried humbly and faithfully to follow him. In the religious sphere he had not met with a religious *guru* yet. But he must not leave people under a false impression in this respect. His Master, Gokhale, was a deeply religious man. Nobody worked with him in the closest contact but felt the depth of the reality of his essential religious temper. To Mr. Gokhale God was a great reality and truth was a great reality. This it was which explained his incessant and indefatigable labours which tried his physical powers at last. He was a Hindu but one of the right type. A Hindu sannyasi once came to him and made a proposal to push the Hindu political cause in a way which would suppress the Mahomedan and he pressed his proposal with many specious religious reasons. Mr. Gokhale replied to this person in the following words: "If to be a Hindu I must do as you wish me to do, please publish it abroad that I am not a Hindu." But Mr. Gokhale was a Hindu and his religion was fearlessness. He had a deep belief in God, in the eternal triumph of truth. This explained his arduous toil in mastering facts and in investigating truth. India's greatest need was this great fear of God—the fear of God alone and therefore no fear of man. That was the one thing we needed. Anarchism was

[1] This was in reply to a welcome address by Principal Rudra. Gandhiji spoke in Hindi.

not necessary. If it existed, it showed there was no fear of God. To face evil we must stand in the strength of God and truth; and there was that ancient text on the College walls that truth, not falsehood, eternally triumphed. Evil of any kind could not stand the searching light of truth and could only be rooted out in the strength of God through personal suffering and not through the infliction of suffering on others. That was the secret.

Fear God, therefore, and do not fear men, and remember that ahimsa is our religion, the great gift of our *rishis.* What we have got to do is to bring this religion of the Fear of God into all our lives and even into politics. Nothing but this and the passionate love of truthwill help us. I would exhort you therefore to obey your teachers and to be true to your College motto, to be rooted in the truth of it, so that you may worthily enter the citizenship of your motherland."

Then thanking the students for their splendid help in the South African crisis and their hospitality and kindness to the Phoenix boys when they were the guests of the Principal, Mr. Gandhi resumed his seat amidst loud and prolonged applause.

St. Stephen's College Magazine, No. 32, pp. 6-9

340. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

ON THE WAY TO MADRAS,
April 16 [*1915*]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am on my way to Madras. This eternal moving is now telling on me and I am pining for rest my post too cannot be received as no one knows where I am. I shall get letters only at Madras now. My experiences have been rich and varied. Some time or other I may let you have a portion of them. This cannot be until I have settled down somewhere. I have not yet stayed a fortnight at a stretch at any place, not even at Rangoon.

I had hoped to meet the Viceroy at Delhi but he was not there. I have not yet been able to hit upon any method of approaching him about you. I fear that for the time being you will have to wait there. I am sure that you ought not to think of going to California or any other place. I only wish you could find some occupation to steady you. For me there is no doubt that India has a great hold on me. Even amid the most trying circumstances, I am able to perceive the inner life. It may be all a delusion. But it is there.

At Hardwar, one of the holiest places in India, I felt the need to take a further step and this is what I have done. In India I am not to take for my sustenance more than five things during 24 hours and not to eat after sunset. Things include condiments. Thus if I have taken today, say, bananas, dates, ground-nuts, oranges and lemons, I may not take cloves or tamarind. I still take two meals and I have to make my choice of five things for the day. Both the vows are fairly stiff. But they had to be taken. The spirit was there. The flesh will have to yield. The vows were taken on the 10th instant.[1] I have left the boys at Hardwar to work as volunteer nurses to pilgrims. With me are Mrs. Gandhi and Dr. Mehta's eldest brother.[2] He accompanies me to curb his temper. He is 65 years old. He has become a pure fruitarian and avoids milk also. He is doing very well indeed.

Needless to say we have been travelling 3rd-class throughout. At times it is most trying, involving long night journeys in crowded compartments.

Will you please give the contents of this to Miss Winterbottom and Sorabjee.

With love,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

341. SPEECH ON ARRIVAL AT MADRAS

April 17, 1915

Mr. and Mrs. M. K. Gandhi arrived in Madras last Saturday evening from Hardwar by the Delhi Express. . . . A little disappointment was in store for the people, however. When the train arrived, they searched all the first and second class compartments, but in vain, and they were inclined to think that Mr. Gandhi and Mrs. Gandhi had not come. But a guard told them that Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi had come by that train and they were in a compartment at the end of the train. A long search discovered Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi sitting in a third class compartment. Mr. Gandhi looked thin and emaciated, a loose shirt soiled by four days of continuous travel covered his body and a pair of trousers similar in appearance covered his legs. There

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Reception By Indian Christians, Madras", 26-4-1915 and "Diary for 1915", and *An Autobiography*, Part V, Ch. VII, p. 310.

[2] *ibid*

was a rush to that compartment and the crowd was such that about a dozen policemen who had been there found themselves powerless to manage the crowd and had to leave it to shift as best it could. . . .Shouts of "Long live Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi", "Long live our hero" and "Bande Mataram" rang from the crowd. Mr. Gandhi bowed to them in acknowledgement and was conducted to the carriage. The students who had gathered in large numbers unyoked the horse and volunteered to drag the carriage. The carriage was taken, dragged by the students, to the premises of Messrs Natesan & Co., Sunkurama Chetty Street, Mr. Gandhi being cheered all along the way, Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi standing in the carriage and with hands cooped [*sic*] acknowledging the greetings.

On arrival at Messrs Natesan & Co., where he will be stopping during his stay in Madras, Mr. Gandhi stood up in the carriage and in a loud and clear voice said that he was exceedingly thankful to them for the expression of their love to him. He was fagged on account of the four days continuous journey and wished to be allowed to say good night. He would, however, be free to see them during his stay here between three and five o'clock on all days and discuss questions affecting their common good.

Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi expect to stay in Madras for a fortnight. Mr. Gandhi desires to visit the places in the South wherefrom the bulk of South African Indian settlers have been drawn in order to meet such of the passive resisters as have settled in India.

The Hindu, 19-4-1915

342. LETTER TO LAZARUS

MADRAS,
[After *April 17, 1915*][1]

MY DEAR LAZARUS,

I have your letter. The Indian Relief Bill[2] ought to serve, as it was designed to serve, as a sound basis on which we can erect a sound structure. I gave ample warning on my leaving South Africa that it might be differently interpreted by the Government. In every such case we have our own remedy—legal and moral. We may or we may not take up the legal remedy. The moral is, and should be, always at our disposal, and that is passive resistance. If the spirit of the settlement is not carried out and hardships are inflicted by the

[1] Gandhiji arrived in Madras on April 17, 1915; this was his first visit to the place after returning from South Africa.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "The Indians Relief Act", 1914.

administration, our final remedy must be passive resistance. I hope none of you considered that we would never have to resort to passive resistance. All that one could hope for was that the Government had altered their spirit and that they would not lightly invite a revival of the struggle. But this last and sovereign remedy is always at our disposal to be used whenever necessary. Of course virtue lies in knowing when it should be used. Generally speaking, if there is a departure from the fundamental principles which were laid down at the time of the settlement, there is sufficient cause for offering passive resistance. You must understand the main purpose of the Relief [Bill] Let me reiterate the chief points. First, the removal of the £3 tax: second, the reinstatement of the status of Indian wives: third, repeal of the Asiatic Act. These three things have been obtained, I think, practically for all time. Just administration of existing laws is a point covered by the correspondence[4] which was published immediately after the passage of the Bill, and it is there that naturally there was an uncertainty. Our meaning of just administration may be totally different from that of the Government, and to keep the Government up to the level of our views, there must be continuous watching.

With regard to Christopher, I note what you would want me to do. I shall try to do what I can. I have not yet settled down. I have just arrived in Madras in the course of my wanderings, but as soon as I settle down I shall see what can be done. I take it that, if there is a scholarship forthcoming, he will study in India.

As to your suggestion about *Indian Opinion*, its sphere is narrow for want of workers. In spite of desperate efforts we have not been able, as you are aware, to get a sufficiently large number of selfless workers. I still feel that it cannot be worked upon any other lines. Immediately we introduce the system of payment according to ability, it will lose all its usefulness. Anyhow, that is not the Phoenix ideal. You have to raise at least a few colonial-born young men who would devote themselves to public cause without thought of reward, and you can make *Indian Opinion* a greater power than it is and you can then make it cater for colonial-born Indians in the special sense you suggest.

That a sound body carries a sound mind is after all a truism, but it is to be interpreted with many qualifications. Take the celebrated Sandow. His is, as you would consider, one of the soundest bodies. I am not sure that he necessarily carries a sound mind with it. To me a

sound body means one which bends itself to the spirit and is always a ready instrument at its service. Such bodies are not made, in my opinion, on the football field. They are made on cornfields and farms. I would urge you to think this over and you will find innumerable illustrations to prove my statement. Our colonial-born Indians are carried away with this football and cricket mania. These games may have their place under certain circumstances. But I feel sure that for us, who are just now so fallen, they have no room. Why do we not take the simple fact into consideration that the vast majority of mankind who are vigorous in body and mind are simple agriculturists, that they are strangers to these games, and they are the salt of the earth? Without them your and my existence would be an impossibility, whereas you and I are totally unnecessary for their well-being.

The health of both Mrs. Gandhi and myself is good. It would have been better had we not been touring so ceaselessly as we have done. But the holy atmosphere of India has done all that we had expected. It is because there is something peculiar about the Indian atmosphere that I suggest so strongly to the colonial-born friends that they should consider it as a matter of duty to visit India, and to visit as Indians wanting to live the purely Indian life, and not half-European and half-Indian.

I think I have now covered all the points you have raised. Be good to the people of Phoenix, have patience with them. They are doing their best, they are giving their all, they mean to render services to the motherland. Help them to do so, criticise them by all means, but let your criticism be tempered with love of the settlement. Please remember me to the old folks. I should not forget you or Brian from whom I have received so much love. Whenever you are prepared to give me your boys on my terms, I shall be ready to take them over. The sooner you come to a decision, the better. Else it may be too late for them.

Yours sincerely

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 6120

343. SPEECH AT GOKHALE CLUB, MADRAS

April 20, 1915

Yesterday evening, Mr. Gandhi spent about an hour and a quarter in a conversation in the home of the Servants of India Society with the members of the Gokhale Club, an association of young men started some six months ago for the study of pubic questions under the guidance of experienced elders.

Mr. Gandhi described his "Phoenix" settlement scheme[1] as one meant for the training of people for the service of the motherland. Special attention would be paid in the settlement to the formation of character and several vernaculars would be taught in it. In his opinion, the observance of *brahmacharya* was essential for all national service and would be a necessary condition for admission into the settlement. Everyone there would be taught and required to do some manual work, preferably in connection with agriculture. The settlement would be open to persons of both sexes, married and unmarried. Asked if he would recommend *brahmacharya* and poverty as ideals to be followed by the whole country, he said he would do so without the least hesitation; only he would recognise it as a religious impossibility for a whole nation to follow them. For conduct in life he would recommend two principles above all—love of truth and *ahimsa*, the latter including abstention from giving any pain to the body or to the mind and extending to all forms of life. As to the application of passive resistance to politics, he warned his hearers that it was a very difficult weapon to use and should not be resorted to except as a last resource and in defence of the dearest interest like national honour. He was against the use of all machinery and would use only hand-made articles.

When the meeting dispersed, everyone present felt chastened by his inspiring words.

The Hindu, 21-4-1915

[1] *Vide* "Interview to *The Madras Mail*", 22-4-1915.

344. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[GEORGETOWN, MADRAS][1]

Vaishakh Sud 7 [*April 21, 1915*][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I learnt from Maganbhai that you had reached Gurukula.

Agricultural work is part of satyagraha. We have deduced the necessity of agricultural work from satyagraha. Hence the question: what should one do if it becomes necessary to give up agricultural work for the sake of satyagraha? My purpose was to show Jamnadas that [in such a situation] agricultural work is not our chief object. His question was: What should one do if the ruler of the place where we are living seizes our land? Also, that if a situation arises in which one may have to attend immediately to some urgent work, the agricultural work may get neglected. I can say much to explain this matter. Our object always remains the same. But as circumstances change from time to time, we can deduce from the nature of our object what should be done in each case.

If Jamnadas does not take the vows, he can remain in the capacity of a student.

Harilal's[3] letter made me realize that 1 should act more independently of others than I do at present and teach you all to do likewise. You have to show to a still greater degree that you always do what you think proper and not out of regard for me. As for Harilal's letter, it merely echoed his weakness. All of us shrink from admitting our weakness, and so abuse what our weakness does not permit us to do. Even Harilal seems to have realized this now. His two letters accompanying this, are worth reading and pondering over by you all. Therefore, read them and understand their meaning. Preserve the letters. It seems to me that Manilal[4], Ramdas[5], and you too, will recover

[1] From the printed letterhead

[2] From Gandhiji's itinerary mentioned in para 5; he arrived at Bombay on May 10, having left Madras on May 7; reached Ahmedabad on May 11 and Rajkot on May 15. *Vaishakh Sud* 7 in the year 1915 corresponded to April 21.

[3] This first son of Gandhiji.

[4] This second son of Gandhiji.

[5] This third son of Gandhiji.

your peace of mind to some extent.

Here I am tasting the utmost sweetness. I will leave Madras on the 7th and go to Bombay. From there to Ahmedabad, and from there to Rajkot. I have now received Sheth Mangaldas's letter. He says in it that the place is ready in Ahmedabad. I will go to Ahmedabad and see everything for myself. I will await a detailed letter from you today.

Assuming that Maganbhai and the others will also read this letter, I am not writing another one to them.

Ba is fine. You must have come to know of my two vows.[1] Raojibhai also has taken a vow. You must have come to know of it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33907

345. SPEECH AT PUBLIC RECEPTION, MADRAS[2]

April 21, 1915

Mr. Gandhi rose amidst deafening cheers and said:

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

On behalf of my wife and myself, I am deeply grateful for the great honour that you here and Madras, and, may I say, this Presidency have done to us and the affection that has been lavished upon us in this great and enlightened—not benighted—Presidency. ("Hear, hear.") If there is anything that we have deserved, as has been stated in this beautiful address, I can only say I lay it at the feet of my Master under whose inspiration I have been working all this time under exile in South Africa. In so far as the sentiments expressed in this address are merely prophetic, Sir, I accept them as a blessing and as a prayer from you and from this great meeting, that both my wife and I myself may possess the power, the inclination, and the life to dedicate whatever we may develop in this sacred land of ours to the service of the motherland. (Cheers.) It is no wonder that we have come

[1] On April 10, 1915, at Hardwar, Gandhiji took two vows—not to eat more than five articles of food during 24 hours and not to eat after sunset.

[2] The address, presented by the Indian South African League, was read by G. A. Natesan. Sir Subrahmania Aiyar presided. Among those present were Mrs. Besant, Justice Tyabji, Srinivasa Sastri and others.

to Madras. As my friend, Mr. Natesan, will perhaps tell you, we have been overdue and we have neglected Madras. But we have done nothing of the kind. We knew that we had a corner in your hearts and we knew that you will not misjudge us if we did not hasten to Madras before going to other Presidencies and to other towns. It was in 1896 that I found in Mr. Gokhale my *rajya guru* (Cheers.) and it was in the same year that I found in Madras, as I did not find in any other place, that deep abiding sense of religion. It appeared in 1896 before you as a stranger pleading a forlorn cause.[1] I then discovered that Madras, or this Presidency, had that instinctive power to distinguish between a right cause and a wrong cause, and it was here that you appreciated in its fullest measure the gravity of the situation that I was then endeavouring to place before my countrymenthroughout India. ("Hear, hear.") And the impressions that I took with me to South Africa in 1896 have been more than amply verified throughout my experience in South Africa.The drafters of this beautiful address have, I venture to say, exaggerated the importance of the little work that I was able to do in South Africa out of all proportion. (Cries of "No, no".) As I have said on so many platforms, India has been still suffering under the hypnotic influence produced upon it by that great saintly politician, Mr. Gokhale. (Cheers.) He issued in my favour a certificate which you have taken at its surface value, and it is that certificate which has placed me in a most embarrassing position, because I do not know that I shall be able to answer the expectations that have been raised about myself, and about my wife in the work that lies before us in the future on behalf of this country. But, Sir, if one-tenth of the language that has been used in this address is deserved by us, what language do you propose to use for those who have lost their lives, and therefore finished their work on behalf of your suffering countrymen in South Africa? What language do you propose to use for Nagappen[2] and Narayansamy[3], lads of seventeen or eighteen years, who braved in simple faith all the trials, all the sufferings, and all the indignities for the sake of the honour of

[1] *Vide* "Letter to F.S. Taleyarkhan", 5-11-1896 to "Interview to "the Natal Advertiser", 13-1-1897.

[2] Who died a martyr on July 6, 1909; *vide* "Two Posers", on or before 12-6-1945.

[3] Who died a martyr on October 16, 1910; *vide*"Letter to the Press", 17-10-1910 & "Narayansamy", 22-10-1910

the motherland? (Cheers.) What language do you propose to use with reference to Valliamma, that sweet girl of seventeen years who was discharged from Maritzburg prison, skin and bone, suffering from fever to which she succumbed after about a month's time? (Cries of "Shame".) It was the Madrassees who of all the Indians were singled out by the great Divinity that rules over us for this great work. Do you know that in the great city of Johannesburg, it is found among the Madrassees that any Madrassee is considered dishonoured if he has not passed through the jails once or twice during this terrible crisis that your countrymen in South Africa went through during these eight long years?[1] You have said that I inspired these great men and women, but I cannot accept that proposition. It was they, the simple-minded folk, who worked away in faith, never expecting the slightest reward, who inspired me, who kept me to the proper level, and who compelled me by their great sacrifice, by their great faith, by their great trust in the great God to do the work that I was able to do. (Cheers.) It is my misfortune that I and my wife have been obliged to work in the limelight, and you have magnified out of all proportion (Cries of "No, no".) this little work we have been able to do. Believe me, my dear friends that if you consider, whether in India or in South Africa, it is possible for us, poor mortals, the same individuals, the same stuff of which you are made, if you consider that it is possible for us to do anything whatsoever without your assistance, and without your doing the same thing that we would be prepared to do, you are lost, and we are also lost, and our service will be in vain. I do not for one moment believe that the inspiration was given by us. The inspiration was given by them to us, and we were able to be interpreters between the powers who called themselves the governors and those men for whom redress was so necessary. We were simply links between those two parties and nothing more. It was my duty, having received the education that was given to me by my parents, tointerpret what was going on in our midst to those simple folk, and they rose to the occasion. They realised the importance of birth in India, they realised the might of religious force, and it was they who inspired us, and let them who have finished their work, and who have died for you and me, let them inspire you and us. We are still living, and who knows whether the devil will not possess us tomorrow and we shall not forsake the post of duty before any new danger that may

[1] 1906 to 1914

face us? But these three have gone for ever. An old man of 75 from the United Provinces, Harbat Singh, has also joined the majority and died in jail in South Africa, and he deserved the crown that you would seek to impose upon us. These young men deserve all the adjectives that you have so affectionately, but blindly lavished upon us. It was not only the Hindus who struggled, but there were Mahomedans, Parsis and Christians, and almost every part of India was represented in the struggle. They realised the common danger, and they realised also what their destiny was as Indians, and it was they, and they alone, who matched the soul-force against the physical forces. (Loud applause.)

The meeting then terminated with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

The Hindu, 21-4-1915

346. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[GEORGETOWN, MADRAS][1]

Vaishakh Sud 8 [*April 22,1915*][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I got your letter today. I see from it that you are much worried and that you have become nervous. I have not become impatient. I am perfectly easy in mind. It is true that the condition of the country that I see today has induced in me a still greater spirit of renunciation. But you are in no way connected with that. I do not in the least mind if all of you continue to be as you are today. We have been observing in the past the vows[3] that I have suggested. All that I am now asking is that they should be observed more firmly and intelligently. But even in that, I will expect and accept from you only what you can give. I do not insist on anything. I wish you to shed fear. I will be able to go there[4] in about a month's time. I will leave this place on the 7th. They have been showing me boundless love here. About four persons are likely to join us. All the four are good men.

Leaving on the 7th, I will go directly to Bombay and thereafter

[1] From the printed letterhead
[2] *Vide* the preceding item, fn 3, page 10.
[3] For the contemplated Ashram
[4] To Ahmedabad

to Ahmedabad. From there, I intend to go to Rajkot and settle the matter about the house. I will also settle the questions concerning Kaku, Ranchhod and Shanti at the same time. All this is likely to take the whole month of May.

I wish the boys there to start digging and studying. I have suggested to Mahatmaji[1] to permit you to make separate arrangements for cooking your meals. He has agreed to do so.

I am eager to know how you manage the thing. It would be well if you become calm and collected. I am keeping well. I am getting plenty of experience.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Ask Manilal to write to me.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33906

347. INTERVIEW TO "THE MADRAS MAIL"[2]

April 22, 1915

Yesterday, a representative of this journal had a long and interesting talk with Mr. M. K. Gandhi, about various topics of current interest, of which the following is a summary:

Will you kindly tell me, Mr. Gandhi, what is to be your programme of work, now that your labours in South Africa have ended in a satisfactory solution of the Indian situation in that country?

For this year, of which three months have already gone, I am under instructions from Mr. Gokhale to tour round the country, study the people and institutions, and form my own conclusions before I commence any active work. And during this period of probation, I am also to refrain from speaking on controversial topics on public platforms. At the end of the year, I shall know definitely what the questions are to which I shall be able to devote my attention. There is one thing, however, which it was agreed upon between Mr. Gokhale

[1] Mahatma Munshiram, an Arya Samaj leader who afterwards embraced *sannyasa* and adopted the name 'Shraddhanand'

[2] This appeared under the caption, "Mr. M. K. Gandhi—His Future Work in India".

and myself that I should continue to do, and that was the conduct of what he called the Phoenix institution. It was so called by Mr. Gokhale because he saw the experiment I am about to explain to you in working order partly on the Tolstoy Farm, belonging to Mr. Kallenbach, and partly at Phoenix, a wayside station on the north coast of Natal. The experiment consists in training young men, and also women and children, for long service to the Motherland. It is a feature of the institution that everyone should perform some form of manual labour, and as agricultural labour is the best form of manual labour, everyone is expected to work for a certain period of the day on the soil. It is proposed also to introduce hand weaving. All who are in the institution will also study the chief vernaculars of the country, in order that they may be able to come into contact with the masses in different parts of India without any difficulty. For mutual intercourse, vernaculars alone will be used, the use of English being confined as far as possible to communications with British people, or those who may not understand any of the chief Indian languages. The vow of *brahmacharya* and poverty will be strictly observed at the institution. I feel that if the experiment proves a success, and there is a large response from young men, it will automatically solve many of the important problems that now puzzle or worry us.

Can you tell me something of the proposed methods of work of the institution and the nature of the service to India?

It is not possible for me to say what form the service will take. It will largely depend upon the results of my observations during the period of probation. At the same time, it is easy to see that an important part of the service is really included in the training itself that I have mapped out. It ought to be easy for anyone to realize the various directions in which work may be done in this respect; but I do not propose to discuss with the public what branches of public activity are going to occupy my attention and that of my co-workers, if only because of my promise to Mr. Gokhale that I would refrain from committing myself to any definite programme until I had previously studied problems in the manner mentioned. The obligation not to dothis rests all the more heavily on me in that, I have lost my helmsman, and I am thrown entirely upon my own resources. I, therefore, want to act with the greatest caution, and, as far as is humanly possible, to keep an open mind upon all the burning questions of the day.

Was this period of probation imposed on you by Mr. Gokhale because you had been away from India for so very many years?

Yes, that was his great argument, because I was away from India for nearly 28 years and all my ideas were formed outside India, and, therefore, a corrective in the shape of personal contact with present-day conditions was, in his opinion, absolutely necessary.

Have you noticed any perceptible change in the condition of affairs in India since you last visited this country?

So far as I have been able to observe and so far as I am competent to compare things to-day with things as I observed them in 1902, during my brief visit to India, I notice that there is greater eagerness amongst the younger generation to be of service to the Motherland, and that there is also great willingness to undertake work which may require a measure of self-sacrifice.

Our representative then referred to the Indian question in South Africa, political agitation in India and various other topics, and gathered that Mr. Gandhi does not lay so much store by agitation for obtaining concessions from the Government as by working for the moral, material and economic regeneration of his countrymen, for he is of the opinion that once people make themselves fit by their character and capacity, the grant of privileges will follow as a matter of course—in fact, there will be no need for people to ask for concessions, and whatis granted will be no concessions, for people will have grown into them. Mr. Gandhi implicitly believes that no agitation for political concessions will do any service to the country without reform coming from within, at the same time. Mr. Gandhi prefers to be judged by his conduct rather than by the words he utters, words spoken under the limitations of an interview not being, in his opinion, capable of expressing all that the person interviewed might like to say on the subjects discussed.

The Madras Mail, 23-4-1915

348. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

April 23 [1915]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

In the hope of writing to you at length I deferred writing to you earlier and now I find I would have almost missed the mail. But I suddenly woke [up] with a fright that I had not yet written to you. Here am I, therefore, writing this in the small hours of the morning by

candle light. Your diary still remains interesting for what it omits. My dear friend, I know you want to assist me, you could do so even now if you were here. But you could do so from there by realizing our common ideals. You have no notion of how from that distance even you can affect the lives of men here. The powers of a soul purified are illimitable. May you be able to carry out your resolves. More later.

With love,

Yours,
OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

349. SPEECH AT RECEPTION BY MAHAJAN SABHA AND CONGRESS COMMITTEE, MADRAS

April 23, 1915

The members of the Madras Mahajan Sabha and the Madras Provincial Congress Committee were "At Home" to Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi last evening at "Humayun Munzil", the residence of the Hon. Nawab Syed Mahammad President of the former Association.

NAWAB SAHEB AND FRIENDS,

On behalf of my wife and myself, I thank both these venerable associations most sincerely for having organized this function, and the address[1] couched in such beautiful language. I do not think that you expect any speech from me. I feel that one thing is true about us that distance lends enchantment to the view. We have now come to work before the public gaze. I have now to trade with whatever capital I have brought from South Africa. I am already exhausting that capital. When we have begun to work before you, you will see us in our nakedness; and I request you to exercise then that generous spirit for which our great Motherland is famed. I expect you to excuse any faults in us, and to take what we give in the best spirit in which we offer it. (Applause.)

New India, 24-4-1915

[1] Not reproduced here

350. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS, MADRAS

April 23, 1915

A representative of the Associated Press interviewed Mr. Gandhi in course of which the latter referred to the splendid loyalty of British Indians in South Africa who stood on the outbreak of war by the Union Government as representing the Imperial Government. General Botha in an appreciative letter promised to make use of their services, should the occasion arise.

Asked if any further improvement in the status of Indians was probable after the war, he said that it largely depended upon the attitude of the Imperial Government and many other considerations.

Referring to the continuation of his work in South Africa, he said that so far as legal assistance was concerned, Mr. Polak himself was practising as an attorney and was eminently fit to advise. There were many able Indian passive resisters, he continued, who were looking after the situation, so that the problems as they rose would be fully looked after by local friends of India assisted by Mr. Polak. The *Indian Opinion* voicing the passive resisters' views was managed and controlled by Mr. West[1] and Mr. C. Gandhi[2].

Questioned as to his future work in India, he said he was touring round the country as was advised by Mr. Gokhale for study, preliminary to forming a definite plan of work in the service of the country. He said:

> Meanwhile I shall also be continuing the institution which was being conducted in South Africa and which has for its object the training of young men for life-long national service. As is well known, I have already charge of several young men and boys who have followed me from South Africa and have been either passive resisters or are sons of passive resisters.

The Bengalee, 24-4-1915

[1] A. H. West, Manager of the International Printing Press, Phoenix, which published *Indian Opinion*

[2] Chhaganlal Gandhi

351. SPEECH AT RECEPTION BY MUSLIM LEAGUE, MADRAS

April 24, 1915

On Saturday evening, the Muslim League was At Home to Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi at Lawley Hall, Mount Road. . . . The refreshments being over, Mr. Yakub Hasan[1] made a short speech . . . . He promised on behalf of the Mussalman community co-operation in any work he might undertake for the benefit of India.

Mr. Gandhi made a short reply in which he thanked them on behalf of his wife and himself for their kindness to them. A promise had been made to him and it was an unconditional promise to co-operate with him in anything he might undertake on behalf of this country. It was one thing to promise and another thing to fulfil. He gave them fair warning that he was most exacting to demand the discharge of obligations, especially when so voluntarily given and it might give them an uncomfortable hour when he called upon them to discharge their obligations. In this connection, he remembered two instances of the valuable services rendered by the Mussalmans in South Africa. One was that of Ahmed Mohamed Kachadia[2] who was a merchant. He had not known a more stubborn man than Kachadia. He went to jail several times for the sake of the country and his European creditors forced insolvency upon him for political reasons, but he was able to pay them 20s. in the £. The other instance that of Abdul Sahiba Muezzin. His services were as valuable as any rendered by anybody else and he also forsook everything and was reduced to poverty on behalf of the mother-country. He and his family were now in the Phoenix settlement in Natal. He again reminded them of the promise they made.

On Sunday afternoon at 2.30 p.m., the ladies of the Abeda Aikya Ananda Samajum gave an At Home at their premises in Ramaswamy Street, Manady, where an address was also presented.

The Hindu, 26-4-1915

[1] Secretary, Indian South Africa League

[2] Ahmed Muhammad Cachalia, Chairman, Transvaal British Indian Association; *vide* "Telegram to Johannesburg Letter", 7-4-1911.

352. SPEECH AT MADRAS LAW DINNER

April 24, 1915

Under the auspices of the Madras Bar Association, the Annual Madras Law Dinner, the third of its kind, came off on Saturday evening last in the open air under bright moonlight on the extensive grounds adjoining the Moore Pavilion, People's Park, Madras. The Hon'ble Mr. F. H. M. Corbet, Advocate-General, was in the chair.... Mr. Gandhi, who is now in Madras, and who, as a Barrister, had been invited to the Dinner, was honoured with a seat on the left of the Hon'ble the Advocate-General. . . . The Chairman asked Mr. Gandhi to propose the toast of "The British Empire". . . .In proposing the toast of "The British Empire", Mr. Gandhi said:

MR. CHAIRMAN, MR. LORD CHIEF JUSTICE, MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

When the learned Advocate-General came to me and asked me to propose this toast, I must confess that I was taken aback a little. I don't think he noticed it himself, but I make that confession to you. I felt that I was invited to be present here as at one time I belonged to the profession to which you or most of you belong and as I happen to be in Madras, but that I would be allowed to remain a silent spectator of what was going on here. But when he mentioned the thing I did not hesitate to say, "Yes, I shall be pleased to speak to this toast." During my three months' touring in India as also in South Africa, I have been often questioned how I, a determined opponent of modern civilization and an avowed patriot, could reconcile myself to loyalty to the British Empire of which India was such a large part, how it was possible for me to find it consistent that India and England could work together for mutual benefit. It gives me the greatest pleasure this evening at this very great and important gathering to re-declare my loyalty to this British Empire and my loyalty is based upon very selfish grounds. As a passive resister I discovered that I could not have that free scope which I had under the British Empire. I know that a passive resister has to make good his claim to passive resistance, no matter under what circumstances he finds himself, and I discovered that the British Empire had certain ideals with which I have fallen in love, ("Hear, hear.") and one of those ideals is that every subject of the British Empire has the freest scope possible for his energies and efforts and whatever he thinks is due to his conscience. I think that this is true of the British Empire as it is not true of any other Governments that we

see. ("Hear, hear.") I feel as you have perhaps known that I am no lover of any Governmentand I have more than once said that Government is best which governs least, and I have found that it is possible for me to be governed least under the British Empire. Hence my loyalty to the British Empire. (Loud applause.) And may I before I sit down and ask you to drink to the prosperity of the British Empire remind you of one singular incident that happened during this campaign in far-off South Africa. General Beyers, the trusted Commander of one of the Forces of the British Empire, rose against that Empire in open rebellion. It was only possible for him under that Empire and that Empire alone not to have himself shot on sight. General Smuts wrote to him in a memorable letter that he himself was at one time a rebel. He wrote to General Beyers that it was only under the British Empire that it was possible for him to save his life. Hence my loyalty to the British Empire. (Loud applause.)

The toast was very enthusiastically honoured.

The Hindu, 26-4-1915

353. SPEECH AT SOCIAL SERVICE LEAGUE, MADRAS

April 25, 1915

The members of the Social Service League met Mr. Gandhi in the Ranade Hall, on Sunday (25-4-1915) last at 3.30 p.m. Among those present were Mr. S. Sreenivasa Aiyangar, Rao Bahadur T. Vijayaraghavachariar, the Hon'ble Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, Mr. V. T. Krishnamachariar, Mr. G. A. Natesan and others.

Mr. Gandhi, who was introduced to the meeting by Mr. T. Vijayaraghavachariar, said that he had already heard something of the work which the League had been doing. He began by saying that all social work must be undertaken in a spirit of utter humility and self-sacrifice and instanced Mr. Gokhale who had said that to all true pubic workers, work was its own reward. Absence of recognition or appreciation should not in the least deter a social worker from carrying on his work strenuously and with whole-hearted attention. Whatsoever a social worker attempted to do, he must not cease his labours till he had carried it out to a successful conclusion. He was against half-hearted social service and said that such work had better not be done at all. Asked what he would advise the members of the League to do who were only able to devote a limited time each week, Mr. Gandhi said that they should devote at least the few hours they could spare with concentrated attention. He said that if they had the right sort of men undertaking social work, success could

certainly be hoped for.

He was unable within the time at his disposal to enter into the question of moral and religious instruction for the depressed classes, while he fully believed that it was a most important point, a true understanding of which would enable them to get to the heart of the people among whom they worked.

Asked about the policy of mingling Panchama boys with caste boys in night schools, he said that there was nothing bad in it at least in the night schools, where the time of teaching was so short, and that neither the Panchama boys nor the caste boys would be prejudicially affected in any way. As to elementary education generally and the policy of extending that education indefinitely, he said that there was no doubt that it did a great deal of good and was an eminently desirable thing, though it was not indispensable for the sanitary betterment of the masses. Even people without a knowledge of the 3 R's were capable of understanding hygienic principles and capable of co-operating in any proper scheme of improvement that might be devised for them. He said that there was a great and crying need for active work in that direction....[1] work or put into their head the notion that manual labour was degrading and said that he saw nothing wrong in a cobbler who had taken the M.A degree following that profession throughout his life. Regarding intemperance, Mr. Gandhi said that it was an evil which it was extremely difficult to remedy and that it could be successfully overcome only by a great religious worker. He gave a practical instance of this from the experience of a social worker in Poona.

Mr. Gandhi in closing the conversation said that for social service what was required was not money but men, men of the right sort with right sentiments, with an abiding love and charity and full of faith in their work. If they did have such men, money would come, even unasked. Much social work could be done without any money. It was very difficult for an educated man to understand and appreciate exactly the feelings that prompted the masses unless he retraced his steps; and it was impossible for any man however wealthy to do any social work if he was inspired thereto not by the work itself, but by any feeling of personal ambition. It was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for such a man to do any effective social service.

With a vote of thanks to Mr. Gandhi, the meeting terminated at 4 30 p.m.

The Hindu, 27-4-1915

[1] A few words are missing here in the source which has been damaged.

354. SPEECH AT RECEPTION BY ARYA VAISHYA MAHASABHA, MADRAS[1]

April 25, 1915

Mr. Gandhi in his reply thanked them for the honour shown to his wife and himself and said that the credit for their success in South Africa should be given to other people who have settled in South Africa. He said it was not the time for him to detail all they were doing in South Africa The Indians in South Africa were petty agriculturists, hawkers and petty traders. The cause of the trouble was the stubborn competition which our people offered to the Europeans domiciled in South Africa. There were many other things also which accounted for the struggle but the chief reason was the competition. Although a settlement had been arrived at for the time being, he said, they might assume that some kind of irritation remained and would remain so long as that competition remained. He said our people there were not men with scholarship or university men, but he told them that they were men that would enable India to be raised in the scale of nations.

The Hindu, 26-4-1915

355. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

GEORGE TOWN,
MADRAS,
Vaishakh Sud 11 [April *25, 1915*][2]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. I shall leave here for that side on the 7th.

Maganlal and the rest are at Kangri Gurukul, Hardwar. Everybody has settled down to studies, each in his right place.

You are right in your guess about Harilal's letter. One will not easily find a parallel to what Harilal has done. When a son writes in that manner, there is bound to be bitterness between father and son, though in our case there was not even a possibility of anything of the kind. Harilal has written to say that he has recovered his

[1] At Vasantha Mantapam Govindappa Naick Street at 6 p.m., Mr. Salla Guruswamy Chetty delivered a short welcome address.

[2] Gandhiji arrived in Madras on April 17 from Hardwar and Delhi. There were two *Vaishakhs* in this year.

calm and that he is sorry he wrote that letter. The letter was all error, and I know that, with experience, he will understand things better.

The Bolpur weather itself is very hot in summer and Ramdas got ill in consequence. The food there is less hot than elsewhere. The people here keep saying harsh things nowadays about the heat. Speaking for myself, I don't feel it at all.

I have not told you about the two vows I have taken,[1] never to eat after sunset in this country and not to have more than five articles of food on any day. The second vow is rather stiff and may sometimes cause difficulty. It was worth taking, though and the mind feels freer as a result of it. We both keep good health. Revashankerbhai's elder brother, who has joined me so that he might overcome his anger, also lives on fruit. There is no one with me from among our company. I shall spend about four days in Bombay and then leave for Ahmedabad.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5669. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

356. SPEECH AT RECEPTION BY INDIAN CHRISTIANS

MADRAS

April 26, 1915

The Rev. T. and Mrs. Subramaniam, of the Wesleyan Mission, Peter's Road, Royapettah, received at their house yesterday, a number of European missionaries and Indian Christians, representing the clergy and the laity, to meet Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi . . . Mr. M. D. Devadoss, Barrister-at-Law, and Mr. V. Chakkarai Chetty, on behalf of the Indian Christian community of Madras, spoke a few words of welcome. . . .

Mr. Gandhi, in reply, said that while in South Africa he had the hearty co-operation and sympathy of Canon Booth[2] and other missionaries as well as of all the Indian Christians there. He thanked the host and the hostess for the entertainment, and the guests dispersed.

The Madras Mail, 27-4-1915

[1] On April 9 at Hardwar; *vide* "Diary for 1915".

[2] Dr. booth, Head of St. Aidan's Mission, Durban; he supervised the small charitable hospital founded by Indians. In 1899, during the Boer War, he helped to train the Indian Ambulance Corps.

357. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI[1]

MADRAS,
[*April 27, 1915*][2]

. . . have been repeated. If you send your reply to this letter through Narandas to Bombay it will reach me. It is enough if I get it there. Today is the 27th. This letter will reach you on the 1st. Even if you take two days to consider it you can write to me on the 3rd. The letter should reach me on the 7th. Depending on when you write address your reply here or to Bombay. I do not intend to stay for more than four days in Bombay. I shall go thence to Ahmedabad. I shall stay there for about three days and proceed to Rajkot to dispose of the house there. I think I shall not need to stay for more than four days at Rajkot.

I wish Jamnadas not to leave the place before we meet. He need not be in a hurry.

Frorn the Gujarati original: C.W. 11168. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

358. SPEECH AT Y. M. C. A., MADRAS[3]

April 27, 1915

MR. CHAIRMAN AND DEAR FRIENDS,

Madras has wellnigh exhausted the English vocabulary in using adjectives of virtue with reference to my wife and myself and, if I may be called upon to give an opinion as to where I have been smothered with kindness, love and attention, I would have to say: it is Madras. (Applause.) But, as I have said so often, I believe it of Madras. So it is no wonder to me that you are lavishing all these kindnesses with unparalleled generosity, and now the worthy President of the Servants of India Society—under which Society I am going through a period of probation—has, if I may say so, capped it all. Am I worthy of these things? My answer from the innermost recesses of my heart is an emphatic "No". But I have come to India to become worthy of every adjective that you may use, and all my life will certainly be dedicated to prove worthy of them, if I am to be a worthy servant.

[1] The first four pages of the letter are not available.
[2] The month and year have been inferred from Gandhiji's itinerary.
[3] In reply to the Madras students' address, V. S. Srinivasa Sastri presiding

And so it is that you have sung that beautiful national song[1], on hearing which all of us sprang to our feet. The poet[2] has lavished all the adjectives that he possibly could to describe Mother India. He describes Mother India as sweet-smelling, sweet-speaking, fragrant, all-powerful, all-good, truthful, a land flowing with milk and honey, and having ripe fields, fruits and grains, and inhabited by a race of men of whom we have only a picture in the great Golden Age. He pictures to us a land which shall embrace in its possession the whole of the world, the whole of humanity by the might or right not of physical power but of soul-power. Can we sing that hymn? I ask myself, "Can I, by any right, spring to my feet when I listen to that song?" The poet no doubt gave us a picture for our realisation the words of which simply remain prophetic, and it is for you, the hope of India, to realise every word that the poet has said in describing this Motherland of ours. To-day I feel that these adjectives are very largely misplaced in his description of the Motherland, and it is for you and for me to make good the claim that the poet has advanced on behalf of his Motherland.

THE REAL EDUCATION

You—the students of Madras as well as students all over India—are you receiving an education which will make you worthy to realise that ideal and which will draw the best out of you, or is it an education which has become a factory for making Government employees or clerks in commercial offices? Is the goal of the education that you are receiving that of mere employment whether in the Government departments or other departments? If that be the goal of your education, if that is the goal that you have set before yourselves, I feel and I fear that the vision which the poet pictured for himself is far from being realised. As you have heard me say perhaps, or as you have read, I am and I have been a determined opponent of modern civilization. I want you to turn your eyes today upon what is going on in Europe and if you have come to the conclusion that Europe is today groaning under the heels of the modern civilization, then you and your elders will have to think twice before you can emulate that civilization in our Motherland. But I have been told: "How can we help it, seeing that our rulers bring that culture to our Motherland?"

[1] The proceedings had begun with the "Vande Mataram" song, all standing.
[2] Bankim Chandra Chatterji

Do not make any mistake about it at all. I do not for one moment believe that it is for any rulers to bring that culture to you unless you are prepared to accept it, and if it be that the rulers bring that culture before us, I think that we have forces within ourselves to enable us to reject . that culture without having to reject the rulers themselves. (Applause.) I have said on many a platform that the British race is with us. I decline to go into the reasons why that race is with us, but I do believe that it is possible for India if she would but live up to the tradition of the sages of whom you have heard from our worthy President, to transmit a message through this great race, a message not of physical might, but a message of love. And then, it will be your privilege to conquer the conquerors not by shedding blood but by sheer force of spiritual predominance. When I consider what is going on today in India, I think it is necessary for us to say what our opinion is in connection with the political assassinations and political dacoities. I feel that these are purely a foreign importation which cannot take root in this land. But you the student world have to beware, lest mentally or morally you give one thought of approval to this kind of terrorism. I, as a passive resister, will give you another thing very substantial for it. Terrorise yourself; search within; by all means resist tyranny wherever you find it; by all means resist encroachment upon your liberty, but not by shedding the blood of the tyrant. That is not what is taught by our religion. Our religion is based upon *ahimsa*, which in its active form is nothing but love, love not only to your neighbours, not only to your friends but love even to those who may be your enemies.

One word more in connection with the same thing. I think that if we were to practise truth, to practise *ahimsa*, we must immediately see that we also practise fearlessness. If our rulers are doing what in our opinion is wrong, and if we feel it our duty to let them hear our advice even though it may be considered sedition, I urge you to speak sedition but at your peril. You must be prepared to suffer the consequences. And when you are ready to suffer the consequences and not hit below the belt, then I think you will have made good your right to have your advice heard even by the Government.

RIGHTS AND DUTIES

I ally myself with the British Government, because I believe that it is possible for me to claim equal partnership with every subject of the British Empire. I today claim that equal partnership. I do not

belong to a subject rate. I do not call myself a member of a subject race. But there is this thing: it is not for the British governors to give you; it is for you to take the thing. I want and I can take the thing. That I want only by discharging my obligations, Max Muller[1] has told us—we need not go to Max Muller to interpret our own religion but he says, our religion consists of the four letters "D-u-t-y" and not the five-letters "R-i-g-h-t". And if you believe that all that we want can grow from better discharge of our duty, then think always of your duty and fighting along those lines, you will have no fear of any man, you will fear only God. That is the message that my master—if I may say so, your master, too—Mr. Gokhale has given to us. What is that message then? It is in the constitution of the Servants of India Society and that is the message by which I wish to be guided in my life. The message is to spiritualize the political life and the political institutions of the country. We must immediately set about realising its practice. The students cannot be away from politics. Politics is as essential to them as religion. Politics cannot be divorced from religion. Politics divorced from religion becomes debasing. Modern culture and modern civilization are such politics.[2] My views may not be acceptable to you, I know. All the same I can only give you what is stirring me to my very depths. On the authority of my experiences in South Africa, I claim that your countrymen who had notthat modern culture but who had that strength of the *Rishis*[3] of old, who have inherited the *tapascharya*[4] performed by the *Rishis*, without having known a single word of English literature and without knowing anything whatsoever of the present modern culture, they are able to rise to their full height. And what has been possible for the uneducated and illiterate countrymen of ours in South Africa is ten times possible for you and for me today in this sacred land of ours. May that be your privilege and may that be my privilege! (Applause.)

Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi

[1] (1823-1900), German orientalist
[2] These two sentences are from *The Hindu*, 28-4-1915.
[3] Sages
[4] Penance

359. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

April 29 [*1915*]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I can only send you goodwill by the mail that leaves tomorrow. I am just going to a meeting and from there to a place further away so that if I do not send you this line now I cannot write at all this week.

With apologies and love,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

360. SPEECH AT LAKSHMI MEMORIAL ARYA PATHSHALA, MADRAS[1]

April 29, 1915

Mr. Gandhi, in reply, said that he and Mrs. Gandhi were exceedingly obliged to Mr. N. Swaminatha Aiyer[2], for having shown them the institution at work, and congratulated the school on having such a generous patron as Mr. C. Ramanujam Chettiar.

New India, 30-4-1915

361. SPEECH AT RECEPTION BY GUJARATIS OF MADRAS

April 29, 1915

"Govinda Vilas", Patter's Road, Royapettah, the residence of Mr. Lodd Govindas, was the scene of a very large and representative gathering yesterday evening of the leading Indian citizens of Madras who responded to the invitation of the Gujarati community to attend an At Home in honour of Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi. . . A group photograph with Mr. Gandhi in the centre was taken. Mr. Lodd Govindas in a short speech said that the Gujarati community was indeed proud of possessing a great man like Mr. Gandhi among them. . . . Dewan Bahadur Govindas Chathurbujadoss read

[1] At Thambu Chetty Street

[2] Sub-Inspector of Schools, Georgetown Range

an address of welcome in Gujarati.

Mr. Gandhi, in replying in Gujarati, drew the attention of the Gujarati community in Madras to that important fact that their well-being was the same asthat of other communities in Madras and consequently impressed on them the necessity for working in unison with others. He was grateful to the Madras public for having taken such a large number of Gujarati people into the town and this Presidency.

Mr. Lodd Govindas, on behalf of the members of the Gujarati community, as well as the Gujarati-speaking people of Madras, presented, with great pleasure, a money purse to Mr. Gandhi.

Mr. Gandhi, in thankfully accepting it, said that he never received any kind of present from anybody, and the money would therefore be dedicated to public use.

New India, 30-4-1915

362. SPEECH AT RECEPTION AT TRANQUEBAR

April 30, 1915

Yesterday the public of Tranquebar[1] and suburbs accorded a grand and enthusiastic reception to Mr. and Mrs. Gandhi. Over 2,000 people representing numerous classes, particularly passive resisters, had assembled. . . .Mr. K. C. Subramaniam, Barrister, read the welcome address. . . .

The distinguished guest replied in appropriate terms exhorting his fellow-workers to take to passive resistance whenever and wherever needed for adopting constitutional agitation [*sic*].

His speech was heard with rapt attention and it was translated on the spot.

The Hon'ble Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri was next called upon to speak. He exhorted the audience to work for their country's cause.

The Hindu, 1-5-1915

[1] In Madras state

363. SPEECH AT RECEPTION BY DEPRESSED CLASSES SOCIETY, TRANQUEBAR

April 30, 1915

The South Indian Depressed Classes Society presented a separate welcome address.

Mr. Gandhi in reply observed that that section of his countrymen needed larger attention and patriotic, earnest and practical work until the existing shameful differences disappeared and the so-called depressed got elevated and got equal privileges.

The Hindu, 1-5-1915

364. SPEECH AT RECEPTION AT MAYAVARAM[1]

May 1, 1915

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I am exceedingly thankful to the people of Mayavaram for presenting this beautiful address to me on the occasion of our simply passing through your town or village whatever it may be called, on our way to places where I had hoped to see two widows of men who were shot during the struggle that went on for eight years in South Africa. I was able to see only one and I was not able to see the other whom I hope to see before I leave this great Presidency. It is therefore a matter of greater pleasure to me that you would not allow us to pass unnoticed even though it were simply a passing tour through Mayavaram. But if we have appreciated or if we have received this great and warm welcome from you, may I, for the first time after my return to the sacred land, commence to make a return for the great love that has been shown to us and with your permission I shall try to do so this evening.

It was quite by accident that I had the great pleasure of receiving an address from my Panchama brethren, and there they said that they were without convenience for drinking water, they were without convenience for living supplies and they could not buy or hold land.

[1] In reply to a welcome address by Municipal Chairman at the meeting in the Victoria Town Hall, with Rao Bahadur V. K. Ramanujachariar in the chair

It was difficult for them even to approach courts. Probably, the last is due to their fear, but a fear certainly not due to themselves and who is then responsible for this state of things? Do we propose to perpetuate this state of things? Is it a part of Hinduism? I do not know; I have now to learn what Hinduism really is. In so far as I have been able to study Hinduism outside India, I have felt that it is no part of real Hinduism to have in its hold a mass of people whom I would call "untouchables". If it was proved to me that this is an essential part of Hinduism, I for one would declare myself an open rebel against Hinduism itself. ("Hear, hear.") But I am still not convinced and I hope that up to the end of my life, I shall remain unconvinced that it is an essential part of Hinduism. But who is responsible for this class of untouchables? I have been told that wherever there are Brahmins, it is they who are enjoying supremacy as a matter of right, but today are they enjoying that supremacy? If they are, then the sin will fall upon their shoulders and that is the return I am here to declare and that is the return I shall have to make for the kindness you are showing to me; often my love to my friends, relations and even to my dear wife takes devious ways. So my return here for your kindness is to suggest a few words which you were probably not prepared to listen to and it does seem to me that it is high time for Brahmins to regain their natural prerogative. I recall to my mind the beautiful verse in the *Bhagavad Gita*[1]. I shall not excite the audience by reciting the verse, but give you simply a paraphrase. "The true Brahmin is he who is equi-minded towards a Pundit and a Pariah."

Are the Brahmins in Mayavaram equi-minded towards the Pariah and will they tell me if they are so equi-minded and, if so, will they tell me if others will not follow? Even if they say that they are prepared to do so but others will not follow, I shall have to disbelieve them until I have revised my notions of Hinduism. If the Brahmins themselves consider they are holding a high position by penance and austerity, then they have themselves much to learn, then they will be the people who have cursed and ruined the land.

My friend the Chairman has asked me the question whether it is true that I am at war with my leaders. I say that I am not at war with my leaders. I seemed to be at war with my leaders because many things I have heard seem to be inconsistent with my notions of self-respect and with self-respect to my motherland. I feel that they

[1] Ch. V, *v*. 18

are probably not discharging the sacred trust they have taken upon their shoulders; but I am not sure I am studying or endeavouring to take wisdom from them, but I failed to take that wisdom. It may be that I am incompetent and unfit to follow them. So, I shall revise my ideas. Still I am in a position to say that I seem to be at war with my leaders. Whatever they do or whatever they say does not somehow or other appeal to me. The major part of what they say does not seem to be appealing to me. I find here words of welcome in the English language. I find in the Congress programme a Resolution on *Swadeshi*. If you hold that you are *Swadeshi* and yet print these in English, then I am not *Swadeshi*. To me it seems that it is inconsistent. I have nothing to say against the English language. But I do say that, if you kill the vernaculars and raise the English language on the tomb of the vernaculars ("Hear, hear."), then you are not favouring *Swadeshi* in the right sense of the term. If you feel that I do not knowTamil, you should pardon me, you should excuse me and teach me and ask me to learn Tamil and by having your welcome in that beautiful language, if you translate it to me, then I should think you are performing some part of the programme. Then only I should think I am being taught *Swadeshi*. I asked when we were passing through Mayavaram whether there had been any handlooms here and whether there were handloom weavers here. I was told that there were 50 handlooms in Mayavaram. What were they engaged in? They were simply engaged chiefly in preparing *sarees* for our women. Then, is *Swadeshi* to be confined only to the women? Is it to be only in their keeping? I do not find that our friends, the male population, also have their stuff prepared for them in these by these weavers and through their handlooms. (A voice: There are a thousand handlooms here.) There are, I understand, one thousand handlooms; so much the worse for the leaders! (Loud applause.) If these one thousand handlooms are kept chiefly in attending to the wants of our women, double this supply of our handlooms and you will have all your wants supplied by your own weavers and there will be no poverty in the land. I ask you and ask our friend the President how far he is indebted to foreign goods for his outfit and if he can tell me that he has tried his utmost and still has failed to outfit himself, or rather to fit himself out with *Swadeshi* clothing and therefore he has got this stuff, I shall sit at his feet and learn a lesson. What I have been able to learn today is that it is entirely possible for me, not with any extra cost to fit myself with *Swadeshi* clothing. How am I to learn, through those who move or

who are supposed to be movers in the Congress, the secret of the Resolution? I sit at the feet of my leaders, I sit-at the feet of Mayavaram people and let them reveal the mystery, give me the secret of the meaning, teach me how I should behave myself and tell me whether it is a part of *Swadeshi*, whether it is a part of the national movement that I should drive off those who are without dwellings, who cry for water and that I should reject the advances of those who cry for food. These are the questions which I ask my friends here. Since I am saying something against you, I doubt whether I shall still enjoy or retain the affection of the student population and whether I shall still retain the blessings of my leaders. I ask you to have a large heart and give me a little corner in it. I shall try to steal into that corner. If you would be kind enough to teach me the wisdom, I shall learn the wisdom in all humility and in all earnestness. I am praying for it and I am asking for it. If you cannot teach me, I again declare myself at war with my leaders. (Loud cheers.)

The Hindu, 3-5-1915

365. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

May 4, 1915

MY DEAR WEST,

I will take your letter as it comes. It is no use your qualifying as a lawyer. It is possible you may get some guilty ones discharged on technicalities and you may get the innocent also saved from imprisonment. But when you consider what a small percentage of the population passes through the courts, you at once see that it is no part of humanitarian work to take up law. All that you can do, without getting the title of a lawyer you are doing. More you do not need. If you have leisure, read up your laws by all means as Mr. Gokhale did, though he never was a lawyer.

I am nearing the end of my first tour. I hope then to write more regularly and to write for *Indian Opinion* also. I am going through very varied experiences. India continues to satisfy my aspirations. I see much to dishearten me and I see much to encourage me.

We are both keeping fairly good health. If we can settle down somewhere, we should do better. More than this, I have not the time to say just now.

So with love from us both,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I have seen Selvan's widow and I succeeded in getting from her the youngest boy. She will get a monthly allowance of Rs. 5. I invited her also to join me but she wouldn't.

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4418. Courtesy: A. H. West

366. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

NELLORE,
May 4, 1915

MY DEAR SISTER,

I did not reply to your last letter as I had hoped to be able at the time of replying to tell you when I was likely to visit Hyderabad. But the receipt of your booklet with the beautiful inscription in it compels me to write to you now, even though I cannot fix the date of my coming to Hyderabad.

I thank you for the inscription. Yes, Mr. Gokhale longed to have you as a full servant of India. Your acknowledgment of discipleship fills one with new hope. But of this more when we meet. For me the death of the Master has drawn me closer to him. I see him and appreciate his worth as I never did before; for the lover, the loved one never dies.

Are you keeping well in health?

I leave Madras on the 7th instant for Bombay.

My permanent address is Servants of India Society, Poona.

Mrs. Gandhi, who is with me, sends her love to you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

367. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Vaishakh Vad 5 [*May 4, 1915*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I shall arrive there on the 10th or perhaps the 9th. So far as I know, Chi. Jamnadas had joined the institution, but there may have been a misunderstanding on my part. Jamnadas thinks that he had taken no vow. One who does not take any vow cannot be a member, though such a one can stay as a student. Even a student must observe the vows while he lives in the institution. A member must observe them all his life. Jamnadas wants to remain outside the institution and observe its rules. It seems Harilal's letter has had some effect on his mind. He is hurt by the former's allegations.

Groundnuts and dates have done most of us no harm. By not eating more than five articles on any day, we advance in the observance of the vow of non-violence, as, on that particular day at least, we spare all vegetable life excepting the articles in question. The vow concerning [the control of] the palate will also be better observed because one would not have more than five things to enjoy for their taste. The vow of non-stealing will be conformed to because, in drawing nourishment from five articles, one would not be over-eating and there would be greater economy besides. I shall have to think much now before eating the groundnut sweet. As it would contain three articles, I could have only two in addition. Cardamom and similar things would also count as separate articles. This is a difficult vow to have taken but I am getting used to it. The mind, the dog that it still is, runs about like one seeking to extract the utmost relish from the five articles. More you may ask me when we meet. I shall be in Bombay for as short a time as possible. The mind has only one thought, settling the affairs at Ahmedabad.

Inform Madhavji[2] about the date of my arrival there.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand C.W. 5670. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] This appears to have been written in 1915 after Gandhiji took at Hardwar a vow to take only five articles of food in a day on April 9; *vide* "Diary for 1915".

[2] Kasturba's brother

368. SPEECH AT NELLORE[1]

May 5, 1915

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I do not propose to inflict a speech upon you. I am extremely zealous of individual liberty about which we heard this morning from the eloquent lips of Mrs. Besant[2] and from Mr. Sastriar, with his matchless, merciless, severe and cold logic. I was so zealous of your liberty that I had concocted a plot, but, unfortunately it failed. I was not able to draw in our worthy Chairman of the Reception Committee and the present president of this Conference. I wanted to suggest to them that for the Congresses and for the future Conferences, they might lead the way by not reading their addresses but by simply distributing their addresses for us to read.

It is an accident that this resolution[3] follows on two resolutions one with reference to my noble master Mr. Gokhale, and the other to the noble Viceroy to whom fitting tribute has been made, and I amhere to acknowledge the indebtedness that your countrymen in South Africa owe to the Viceroy.

Sir, if my wife and I are worthy of anything that has been said on this platform and on many a platform, I have repeated, and I am here to repeat, that the inspiration that we derived was from an Indian source and that was from the late Mr.Gokhale. His life, his message, his words, his methods, have been to me a guiding star, and they will still remain an important guide; and we can best revere hismemory by translating some part of his life into our own. My life is dedicated to that, and I appeal to you, my countrymen, not to spoil

[1] At the 21st Madras Provincial Conference

[2] Annie Besant (1847-1933), President of the Theosophical Society in 1907; also founder of Central Hindu College at Benares; President, Indian National Congress, 1917. She had said: "In the successful issue of the struggle in South Africa is a presage of the successful termination of the struggle for liberty on the Indian soil. We thank him not only for what he did, but also in that what he did will strengthen the Indian nation in the future. Mr. Gandhi's great help to us is that of inspiration—an inspiration to self-sacrifice, an inspiration to following of a great ideal, the recognition of the fact that there is no dishonour in anything that is endured for the sake of right and justice, and that a prison is no dishonour when the soul within it is free, and when prison is accepted as the price of that liberty."

[3] The resolution moved by G. A. Natesan which expressed "grateful appreciation of the enormous sacrifices...." of Gandhiji and Kasturba

us, not to isolate us in the service, not to overrate what we have done in South Africa. Let me make this humble appeal. Let what is done in South Africa be buried there. Our countrymen in South Africa know well of what has been done there. It is impossible to stand here upon any reputation we may have built in South Africa. You will spoil us for two reasons. We may lose our heads and so be lost to the country. The other is that you may raise enormous expectations about us and disappointment may at last be the result.

Indian Opinion, 7-7-1915

369. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, NELLORE

May 6, 1915

The address having been read and presented to Mr. Gandhi, he then thanked the students for taking such a lively part in the Conference[1] and serving as volunteers.' He said that unless what had been said on the platform was translated into action and interest kept up, these Conferences were of no use. A great deal was said about the encouragement of industries on the platform, but when he went into that part of the public hall, where clothes made of fly shuttle weaving and brought from Narayanavanam, Chittoor District, were exhibited and enquired of the owner how much worth of clothes he had brought, and how much of it he had sold, he found that out of Rs. 1,000 worth of clothes, he had sold only Rs. 50 or Rs. 60 worth. The clothes were good enough, and in spite of it even the educated could not be induced to put their hands into their pockets and purchase some if only to mark their appreciation of the Swadeshi enterprise. When such was the state of encouragement offered to local indigenous industries, there was no hope of advancement. He exhorted the students to set a practical example, and not rest contented with merely making speeches.

New India, 7-5-1915

[1] Madras Provincial Conference; *vide* the preceding item.

370. FRAGMENT OF LETTER[1]

[NELLORE,
May 6, 1915]

I think it is all to one's good to observe these vows. I believe in making a supreme effort for rising above this earthly existence. It seems to me that service of the nation will include such an effort. Our aims are right. I think our faith in them is unshakable. It becomes stronger through experience. I should like you to follow the same reasoning. I don't want any of you to submit to my wishes and take things on trust. Nor will I force my views [on you]. You may all take the vows when they appeal to you.

There will be some gentlemen from Madras with me. I see that the number will go up. I am bringing along Selvan's son.[2] You know him. He is the little one who used to be naughty in Phoenix.

I am writing this from Nellore. I am attending a conference[3] here. I shall leave tomorrow morning.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 6671. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

371. STATEMENT AT INDIAN SOUTH AFRICAN LEAGUE MEETING, MADRAS[4]

May 7, 1915

Mr. Gandhi, in the course of a brief statement, said that the passive resistance Africa as the Searle judgment[5]; (3) repeal of the annual £3 tax which was payablestruggle started with the Asiatic struggle in the Transvaal in 1906. As it went on stage after stage, it owing to the exigencies of the case and as a matter of course

[1] The first four pages of the letter are missing. The available portion is also torn at places.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to A. H. West", 4-5-1915.

[3] Madras Provincial Conference

[4] At the premises of Messrs G. A. Natesan and Co.

[5] The judgment delivered by Justice Searle of the Cape Supreme Court on March 14, 1913 which declared as invalid all marriages not solemnized with Christian rites and not duly registered

expanded and embraced the following further points, viz., (1) the removal of racial disability in the immigration legislation of the Union of South Africa; (2) the restoration of the status of Indian wives whether married in accordance with Hindu or Mahomedan religious rites as it originally existed before what was known in South by every ex-indentured Indian, his wife and his children—male and female—males after reaching 16 years, females after reaching 12 if they decided to settle in the province of Natal as free men; (4) just administration of existing laws specially affecting British Indians with regard to vested rights. All these points were completely gained under the settlement of last year, and they have been embodied so far as legislation was necessary in what was known as the Indians' Relief Act[1] and otherwise in the correspondence that took place between General Smuts and himself immediately after the passing of the Act referred to. Such being the case and as the Indian South African League was formed solely for the purpose of assisting the struggle, it could well dissolve itself. Mr. Gandhi referred also to the administration of the funds that were sent to him from India and other parts of the Empire. He said that at every stage of the struggle a complete statement of income and expenditure was published. The first was sent to Mr. Gokhale accompanied with a public letter[2]. The second statement was rendered to Mr. Ratan Tata[3] also accompanied with a public letter. The third was ready and was to have been published after consultation with Mr. Gokhale and the general committee at Bombay. Such was Mr. Gokhale's desire. He (the speaker) was now waiting to see Mr. Nut, Mr. Petit, the secretary of the committee, and then publish the statement.[4] Mr. Gandhi added there were nearly 30 passive resisters including their families in India who were to be supported. These included the widows and children of two men who were shot in the course of the struggle. He therefore suggested that the small balance which was still with the Indian South African League might well be devoted to their assistance.[5] Mr. Gandhi desired to take the opportunity to express the thanks of the South African Indians for the great and valuable assistance it had rendered to them during the most critical times of the struggle. He was not going to mention any names but he felt it his duty to convey in person, as the interpreter of the wishes of many Transvaal deportees who were in Madras in 1909, their heartfelt thanks to Mr. Natesan for the devotion which he displayed in looking after their interest

[1] *Vide* "The Indians Relief Act, 1914"..

[2] *Vide* "Letter to G.K. Gokhale", 25-4-1910.

[3] Sir Ratan Tata (1871-1918), Parsi philanthropist who sent large sums of money for the satyagrahis in South Africa; *vide* "Public Letter to Ratan J. Tata", 1-4-1912

[4] *Vide* "Letter to J. B. Petit", 16-6-1915.

[5] The League passed a resolution, dissolving itself and placing the balance at his disposal.

during their exile in India. He was glad [he was] able to convey in person his gratefulthanks to the chairman and the members of the League for the moral and material support they had rendered to their cause.

The Leader, 24-6-1915

372. SPEECH AT BANGALORE[1]

May 8, 1915

MY DEAR COUNTRYMEN,

Before I perform this ceremony to which you have called me, I wish to say this to you that you have given me a great opportunity or rather a privilege on this great occasion. I saw in the recitation[2], the beautiful recitation that was given to me, that God is with them whose garment was dusty and tattered. My thoughts immediately went to the end of my garment; I examined and found that it is not dusty and it is not tattered; it is fairly spotless and clean. God is not in me. There are other conditions attached; but in these conditions too I may fail; and you, my dear countrymen, may also fail; and if we do tend this well, we should not dishonour the memory of one whose portrait you have asked me to unveil this morning. I have declared myself his disciple in the political field and I have[3] him as my *Rajya Guru;* and this I claim on behalf of the Indian people. It was in 1896 that I made this declaration, and I do not regret having made the choice.

Mr. Gokhale taught me that the dream of every Indian, who claims to love his country, should be to act in the political field, should be not to glorify in language, but to spiritualise the political life of the country, and the political institutions of the country. He inspired my life and is still inspiring [it]; and in that I wish to purify myself and spiritualise myself. I have dedicated myself to that ideal. I may fail, and to what extent I may fail, I call myself to that extent an unworthy disciple of my master.

What is the meaning of spiritualising the political life of

[1] While unveiling the portrait of G. K. Gokhale in Government High school at the instance of the Social Service League

[2] From Tagore's Gitanjali, of the poem "Leave this chanting and singing and telling of beads' which has: "He is with them in sun and in shower and his garment is covered with dust. . . . What harm is there if thy clothes become tattered and stained?"

[3] "love" in *Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, Natesan

the country? What is the meaning of spiritualising myself? That question has come before me often and often and to you it may seem one thing, to me it may seem another thing; it may mean differentthings to the different members of the Servants of India Society itself. It shows much difficulty and it shows the difficulties of all those who want to love their country, who want to serve their country and who want to honour their country. I think political life must be an echo of private life and that there cannot be any divorce between the two.

I was by the side of that saintly politician to the end of his life and I found no ego in him. I ask you, members of the Social Service League, if there is no ego in you. If he wanted to shine, —he wanted to shine in the political field of his country,—he did so not in order that he might gain public applause, but in order that his country might gain. He developed every particular faculty in him, not in order to win the praise of the world for himself, but in order that his country might gain. He did not seek public applause, but they [*sic*] were showered upon him, they were thrust upon him; he wanted that his country might gain and that was his great inspiration.

There are many things for which India is blamed, very rightly, and if you should add one more to our failure, the blame will descend not only on you but also on me for having participated in today's functions. But I have great faith in my countrymen.

You ask me to unveil this portrait today, and I will do so in all sincerity and sincerity should be the end of your life. (Loud and continued applause.)

The Indian Review, May 1915

373. TALK WITH BANGALORE CITIZENS

May 8, 1915

Mr. Gandhi was met today at his temporary residence Seshadri Road, Bangalore, by a few citizens who engaged him in conversation.

Questioned as to India's poverty, Mr. Gandhi said India was becoming poorer and poorer, on account of disappearance of the handloom industries owing to violent competition and export of raw materials.

He said:

We have lost much of our self-respect on account of being too much

Europeanised. We think and speak in English. Thereby, we impoverish our vernaculars, and estrange the feelings of the masses. A knowledge of English is not very essential to the service of our Motherland. Turning to caste, he said:

Caste is the great power and secret of Hinduism.

GANDHI'S HOME

Asked where he would stay, Mr. Gandhi replied:

Great pressure is brought down on me to settle in Bengal; but I have a great capital in the store of my knowledge in Gujarat and I get letters from there.

WANTED A LIBRARY

Vernacular literature is important. I want to have a library of all books. I invite friends for financial aid to form libraries and to locate them.

MODERN CIVILIZATION A CURSE

Modern civilization is a curse in Europe as also in India. War is the direct result of modern civilization. Every one of the powers was making preparations for war.

GREAT MORAL FORCE

Passive resistance is a great moral force meant for the weak, also for the strong. Soul-force depends on itself. Ideals must work in practice, otherwise they are not potential. Modern civilization is brute force.

It is one thing to know the ideal and another thing to practise it. That will ensure greater discipline, which means greater service and greater service means greater gain to Government. Passive resistance is a high aggressive thing. The attribute of soul is restlessness; there is room for every phase of thought.

THREE EVILS

Money, land and woman are the sources of evil and evil has to be counteracted. I need not possess land, nor a woman, nor money, to satisfy my luxuries. I do not want to be unhinged because others are unhinged. If ideals are practised, there will be less room for mischievous activities. Public life has to be moulded.

SADHUS IN INDIA

Every current has to change its course. There are one and a half

million *sadhus*[1] and if every *sadhu* did his duty, India could achieve much. Jagatguru Sankaracharya does not deserve that appellation because he has no more force in him.

INDIAN IDEALS

Malicious material activity is no good. It finds out means tomultiply one's luxuries. Intense, gross modern activity should not be imposed in Indian institutions, which. have to be remodelled on ideals taken from Hinduism. . Virtue as understood in India is not understood in foreign lands. Dasharatha[2] is considered a fool in foreign lands for his having kept his promise to his wife[3]. India says a promise is a promise. That is a good deal. Material activity is mischievous. Truth shall conquer in the end.

EMIGRANTS

Emigration does no good to the country from which people emigrate. Emigrants do not return better moral men. The whole thing is against Hinduism. Temples do not flourish. There are no opportunities for ceremonial functions. Priests do not come, and at times, they are merely men of straw. Immigrants play much mischief and corrupt society. It is not enterprise. They may earn more money easily in those parts, which means they do not want to toil and remain straight in the methods of earning. Immigrants are not happier and have more material wants.

THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Questioned about the Theosophical Society, Mr. Gandhi said:

There is a good deal of good in the Theosophical Society, irrespective of individuals. It has stimulated ideals and thought.

New India, 10-5-1915

[1] Wandering recluses

[2] Father of Rama

[3] Kaikeyi, who wanted Rama to be sent into exile and her own son Bharat to become the crown prince

374. SPEECH AT CIVIC RECEPTION, BANGALORE[1]

May 8, 1915

MR. CHAIRMAN AND MY FRIENDS,

I think it is simply impertinent to tell you that I thank you most sincerely on behalf of my wife and on my own behalf for the signal honour you have shown me. Words fail me, and one thought oppresses me all the more. Am I, are we, worthy of the honour? Are we worthy of the oriental generosity of this love? The Chairman[2] has furnished this ground for the love, and quoted Mr. Gokhale. Let me not bask in that reputation. See me please in the nakedness of my working, and in my limitations, you will then know me. I have to tread on most delicate ground, and my path is destined to be through jungles and temples. The glamour produced by the saintly politician has vanished, and let us be judged eye to eye. So many have assembled here to do honour. This morning[3], you did greater honour. Greater honour was shown by the Reception Committee in arranging for the conversation[4], in order to open my heart to you and to understand the innermost thoughts in you by quiet conversation between my countrymen and myself.[5]

I did not want to be dragged in the carriage. There is a meaning in that. Let us not spoil our public men by dragging them. Let them work silently. We should not encourage the thought that one has to work because one will be honoured similarly. Let public men feel that they will be stoned, they will be neglected and let them still love the country, for service is its own reward. A charge has been brought against us that we as a nation are too demonstrative and lack business-like methods. We plead guilty to the charge. Are we to copy modern activities or are we to copy the ancient civilization which has survived so many shocks? You and I have to act on the political

[1] At Albert Victory Conservatory at Lal Bagh

[2] Dewan Bahadur Puttana Chetty, Hon. President of the City Municipal Council, who read the address of welcome

[3] Gandhiji had received a great ovation on his arrival at the City Station and at the unveiling of Gokhale's portrait.

[4] *Vide* the preceding item.

[5] This paragraph is from *Mahatma Gandhi*: *His Life, Writings and Speeches*, Ganesh & Co.

platform from a spiritual side and if this is done, we should then conquer the conquerors. The day will dawn then when we can consider an Englishman as a fellow citizen. (Cheers.) That day will shortly come; but it may be difficult to conceive when. I have had signal opportunities of associating myself with Englishmen of character, devotion, nobility and influence. I can assure you that the present wave of activity is passing away and a new civilization is coming shortly which will be a nobler one. India is a great dependency and Mysore is a great Native State. It must be possible for you to transmit this message to British governors, and to British statesmen; the message is: "Establish a *Ram Rajya* in Mysore and have as your minister a Vashishta who will command obedience." (Prolonged cheers.) My fellow-countrymen, then you can dictateterms to the conqueror. (Prolonged cheers.)

Indian Review, May, 1915; *Mahatma Gandhi: His Life, Writings and Speeches*, Ganesh & Co.

375. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

BOMBAY,
May 10, 1915

DEAR MR. NATESAN,

How shall I thank you for the extraordinary affection shown to me by you?[1] As you did it all for the country I accepted it. I shall endeavour to prove myself worthy of it. Yes, Madras still remains my favourite.

We reached without much discomfort. As all the principal men are out of Bombay I am leaving for Ahmedabad tonight. Sundaram[2] seems to be shaping well. Naiker[3] still remains a gem. The old friend[4] is all right. And Mrs. Gandhi can only think of you.

You must let me have Tamil books please. I want books for beginners and books for men like Sundaram. I want all Dr.

[1] During Gandhiji's visit to Madras
[2] Inmates of the Satyagraha Ashram
[3] Inmates of the Satyagraha Ashram; *vide* the following item
[4] Revashanker Zaveri's elder brother; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 25-4-1915.

Pope's[1] books. Will you please attend to this as early as you can?

And you will send us those covering sheets?

Please remember us to your mother and Mrs. Natesan and to all the friends who may be still thinking of us.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 2228

376. THE ASHRAM: AN ESTIMATE OF EXPENDITURE[2]

Vaishakh Vad 13, Tuesday [*May 11, 1915*]

Dada[3]	Maganbhai	Shanti
Ba	His wife	Ranchhod
Myself	His son	Kaku
Sundaram	Maganlal	Keshu
Naiker	Shivpujan	Krishna
Santok	Shanti	Prabhudas
Rukhi	Navin	Rajangam
Radha	Cuppu	Rati
Manilal	Fakiri	Magan
Ramdas	Bala	Three other Tamils
Devdas	Chavda's daughter	
Kaka	Chhotalal	
Naranji	Narandas	
His wife	Parthasarathi	

To begin with, there will be about 40 inmates in the institution The number is likely to be 50 in a short time.

There are likely to be, on an average, ten guests in a month.

Three to five of them will be with families.

[1] Dr. G. U. Pope (1820.1908), author of *First Lessons in Tamil, A Handbook of the Ordinary Dialect of the Tamil Language, A Textbook of Indian History, etc.*; *vide* "The Late Dr. Pope", 14-3-1908.

[2] Prepared for Sheth Mangaldas Girdharlal of Ahmedabad; *vide* "Diary for 1915".

[3] Used for elder brother or grandfather. Here presumably for Revashanker Jhaveri's elder brother

Hence the accommodation to be provided should be such that those with families can stay separately and the rest together.

Having regard to this, three kitchens and rooms measuring 50,000 sq. ft. [together] will provide sufficient accommodation to all.

In addition to this, a room and cupboards for holding a thousand books will also be required.

At least five acres of land will be required for cultivation. Agricultural implements sufficient for at least thirty persons to work with will be needed. These should include hoes, shovels and pickaxes.

Carpenter's tools will be required as under:

5	Big hammers
3	Adzes
5	Small hammers
2	Anvils
3	Drills
10	Chisels, small and large
4	Carpenter's planes
l	Pricker
4	Files
4	Gimlets, small and large
4	Saws, small and large
5	Pinches, small and large
20	lbs nails and pins
1	Wooden hammer

Cobbler's tools

I estimate the total cost at Rs. 500.

The kitchen utensils required will cost Rs. 150.

If we are far away from the railway station, one bullock cart or horse-carriage will be needed for transport of luggage and also perhaps for conveyance of guests, etc.

The annual expenses on boarding, etc., I estimate at the rate of Rs. 10 p.m. per head. I don't see any possibility of our being able to provide this from our produce during the first year. Thus, with an average of 50 inmates, the annual expenditure will come to Rs. 6,000.

I have understood it to be the desire of the [local] leaders that we should merely experiment for a year in Ahmedabad. If that is so,

Ahmedabad should bear the whole of this burden. My demand was that Ahmedabad should provide me with land and building complete, while I would obtain the remaining expenses from elsewhere or by other means. As we have now changed the basis, I think Ahmedabad should bear the entire burden' for a year or any shorter period. If Ahmedabad is not prepared to do this for a year, I am in a position to provide for 'the boarding charges.

As I have worked out this estimate in a hurry, it is likely that I have missed some few items. Moreover, I have no information about local conditions, except for boarding charges. Hence my estimates may well be incorrect.

If Ahmedabad bears all the expenses, the figures under the different heads will be as follows:

Rent—bungalow and farm land

Cost of cupboards for books

Carpenter's tools

Cobbler's tools

Kitchen utensils

Bullock-cart or horse-carriage

Boarding charges for one year: 6000

I think we shall need blacksmith's and mason's tools and many others besides. But I have not taken into account these and also equipment for educational purposes. Five or more indigenous looms will be the main requirements among the latter, as far as I can see.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

HOUSEHOLD ARTICLES

4	Large cooking pots for 40 persons
2	Small cooking pots for ten persons
3	Water jars of brass or copper for fetching water
4	Earthen [water pots]
4	Wooden stands
1	Frying pan large enough for ten pounds
3	Small ladles
2	Trenchers for kneading flour
1	Large brass vessel for heating water

3	Kettles
5	Buckets or metal vessels to hold bathing water
5	Flat cover-dishes for cooking pots
5	Utensils to store corn
3	Shallow pans
10	Metal trays
10	Metal cups, large size
10	Metal tumblers
10	Cups
4	Tubs for washing clothes
2	Sieves
1	‘Brass strainer
3	Querns
10	Spoons
1	Scoop
1	Pair of mortar and pestle
3	Sweeping brooms
6	Chairs
3	Tables
6	Cupboards to hold books
30	Inkstands
6	Black-boards
6	Racks
3	Maps of India
3	Maps of the world
2	Maps of Bombay Presidency
l	Map of Gujarat
5	Handlooms

Carpenter’s tools

Cobbler’s tools

Agricultural implements

4	Bedsteads
1	Carriage
5	Lanterns

3	Commodes
10	Beddings
3	Chamber-pots
4	Street lamps

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 6196

377. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

AHMEDABAD,
May 13 [*1915*]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Last week no letter went to you. I miscalculated the mail day and found myself at a place from where I could not send a letter to fit in with the mail day at Bombay.

So you have changed the restaurant life for the life at Walden. I do not mind, if it gives you some peace. The chief thing is to occupy yourself in something useful. It is quite clear you will not study there. What you will do when you rejoin me remains to be seen. I see no present chance of my[1] securing permit for you. With the bitterness between the parties increasing, no permits will be granted. I observe too that you are no longer meeting the Roberts. I do hope that this forced separation will nerve you and fit you for the struggle to come. For whilst the atmosphere here is grand, it requires all the greater effort for the perception it gives one.

I am now at a place where, for the time being at least, I shall have fixed up the Phoenix party. We have almost arranged. I am being given a temporary residential place, tools, etc. The leaders here will watch me and my work and meanwhile look about for a place which will be an agricultural site. I shall then have to think out a plan for buildings, etc. In this you could have advised most efficiently. However, just now I must simply do the best I can.

My health continues to be good. The pain in the side somehow or other does not leave me entirely. It is difficult to understand the thing. The fruit diet continues and the restriction to five articles does not cause any trouble. The sunset arrangement answers admirably.[1]

[1] The source here has "you".

[2] The reference apparently is to the vows Gandhiji took on April 9 at Hardwar; *vide* "Speech at Reception by Indians Christians, Madras", 26-4-1915.

I had a rare time in Madras. I met the two widows and I have taken with me one of the little ones of one[2] of the widows.

More in my next.

With love,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

378. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[AHMEDABAD,]

Vaishakh Vad 0)), Thursday [*May 13, 1915*][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I am writing this letter on Thursday. You will get it on Monday or Sunday. It has been decided to rent a bungalow[3] here and later look about for land, etc. The rent for the bungalow and the cost of tools, etc., are to be borne by Ahmedabad. And of utensils as well. Boarding charges are to be borne by us. I am leaving for Rajkot today. I shall return to Ahmedabad at the latest on Tuesday. If you start from there[4] on Monday, you will reach Delhi on Tuesday morning, and Ahmedabad on Wednesday. Fix the date and let me know by wire when you will start. Tell me in the telegram when you will reach here. I enclose [currency] notes for Rs. 200/-. If I am not mistaken, you will need 16 and a half tickets.

Send away Pandit to Calcutta now, though, of course, if you feel that he may join you, let him. He should pay the fare himself, however.

I shall be in Rajkot on the day you get this letter, and in Ahmedabad when you arrive there.

[1] Mrs. Selvan whose son Naiker was taken by Gandhiji to the Ashram; *vide* "Letter to A.H. West", 4-5-1915 and Fragment of Letter", 6-5-1915.

[2] From the reference to the renting of a bungalow in Ahmedabad, the letter appears to have been written in 1915. In Gujarati the fifteenth day of the dark half of the month is written as 0)).

[3] For the Ashram

[4] Gurukul, Hardwar

You will get the most convenient train via Delhi: Laksar, Saharanpur, Delhi Ajmer, Palanpur and Ahmedabad. If you purchase at Hardwar a through ticket to Ahmedabad, you will save Rs. 5/-. The fare is two and a half pies per mile for the first 100 miles and 2 pies beyond that. The Mail has only Intermediate Class. There is a mixed' third-class Express from Delhi, reaching Ahmedabad in 27 to 30 hours. It seems you will have to change at least at Laksar, Saharanpur and Delhi. If a large stock of dates, etc., remains over, it will be better to buy it. They should not feel at the Gurukul later that we had been a burden there.

There is nothing more to write.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5673. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

379. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

AHMEDABAD,
May 14, 1915

DEAR MR. SHASTRIAR[1],

I want to have a quiet chat with you regarding your health. I feel very strongly about it. I am sure that you can by regulating your diet and taking water treatment completely cure yourself while there is yet time. You owe it to the Society and the country to get cured when it is so easily possible to do so. In the treatment I suggest, there need be not a day's interruption in your public work.' The one thing needful is to follow the cure religiously. Prolonged treatment is not necessary to notice its results. And here it is:

2 hip baths per day of at least 20 minutes' duration, the baths to be taken not before the completion of three hours after a meal. Two hours' gentle walk in the open air morning and evening.

Only two meals per day, the last not after sunset.

Every morsel of diet must be chewed with deliberation so that it goes down the throat not as a solid mass but as a smooth thick liquid.

[1] (1869-1946), scholar, statesman; President, Servants of India Society, 1915-27

Whether you have done this or not can always be noticed in your stools.

The diet to consist of bananas, mangoes, oranges, oats, figs (fresh or dried), sultanas, grapes, lemons, tamarind, papaw, pineapple, prunes, cocoanut, groundnuts, almonds, pistachios, walnuts, olive oil, if necessary.

Only two varieties of nuts may be taken during the day. In quantity no more than 4 ounces of both during the day. At the commencement, i.e., for 4 days nuts may be omitted altogether and then gradually introduced.

Either lemons or tamarind may be taken. Figs, dates and other dried fruit should be well washed and soaked for six hours before eating. The water in which they are soaked should be drunk.

If olive oil be taken, no more than an ounce per day may be taken. Nine, fair-sized bananas should be enough per day along with the other fruits.

However, quantity may be regulated by each one for himself.

A month's trial without a break is sure to show you that complete recovery lies in this direction and no other. Of course, all drinks—coffee, tea, soda water, etc., and betel leaves, etc., must be eschewed during the treatment. Later on you will go back to your old diet with variations that you may have picked up during the treatment.

Do please think of this thing seriously.

Pray remember us both to your mother and Mrs. Shastriar.

Yours sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 6287

380. SPEECH AT LIMBDI[1]

May 19, 1915

The epithets used of me in the address and the praise showered on me by the speakers are full of exaggeration. In all that I did, I did no more than my duty towards my motherland.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 30-5-1915

[1] In reply to an address from the citizens, His Highness the Thakore Saheb of Limbdi presiding

381. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

LIMBDI,
Vaishakh, Sud 5, Wednesday [*May 19, 1915*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have come here for a day, as the Thakore Saheb was keen that I should. Santok and the girls have also come along. Jamnadas will stay in Rajkot for the time being.

Send the luggage lying with Revashankerbhai, as also that with you and Kalyandas[2], to Ahmedabad in a goods train. The beddings, I think, will have to be covered with hessian and stitched in. Alternatively, a friend coming this way could bring them along. Boxes which may have no locks should be packed well. Those containing glassware should be handled carefully.

There is a telegram from Chi. Maganlal saying that they will all leave Hardwar on Thursday. So they should be in Ahmedabad on Saturday or Sunday.

Shamaldas has come with me. Whether he will stay on, or what he will do, I can't say.

Respected Khushalbhai and I have had long talks. I feel all the time that there is something owing from him to me. In the same degree that he has satisfied me, Nandkorbhabhi, Gangabhabhi and Gokibehn[3] have disappointed me.

More when we meet.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5674. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Gandhiji was in Limbdi on this date with Shamaldas, son of his elder brother Lakshmidas, and Santok, wife of Maganlal Gandhi.

[2] Kalyandas Jagmohandas Mehta, who had worked with Gandhiji in South Africa; *vide* "Kalyandas Jagmohandas [Mehta]", 11-5-1907.

[3] Raliatbehn, Gandhiji's elder sister

382. DRAFT CONSTITUTION FOR THE ASHRAM[1]

[Before *May 20, 1915*][2]

This is only a draft printed for circulation among friends for their comments.[3] It is not intended as a statement for the Press.[4]

SATYAGRAHASHRAM?[5]

DESHSEVASHRAM?

SEVAMANDIR?

OBJECT

The object of the Ashram is to learn how to serve the motherland one's whole life and to serve it.

CLASSES

The Ashram consists of three classes Controllers, Novitiates and Students.

(1) CONTROLLERS

The Controllers believe that, in order to learn how to serve the country, the following observances should be enforced in their own lives and they have been trying to do so for some time.

1. VOW OF TRUTH

It is not enough for a person under this vow that he does not ordinarily resort to untruth; such a person ought to know that no deception may be practised even for the good of the country. One should consider the example of Prahlad in order to understand how one should behave towards elders such as parents in the interests of Truth.

[1] This was revised and published as third edition on November 7, 1915.

[2] The Ashram, as stated in the third edition, was established on May 20.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Ranchhodlal Patwari", 5-6-1915 and "Letter to Purushottamdas Thakurdas", 8-6-1915.

[4] These sentences were replaced in the third edition by: "Some revisions have been made in this edition in the light of suggestions from friends or experience." The revisions were as indicated in the footnotes.

[5] The third edition appeared under this title, with the following note below it: (Established) in Ahmedabad on *Vaishakh Vad* 6, Thursday, May 20, 1915).

2. VOW OF NON-VIOLENCE

It is not enough to refrain from taking the life of any living being. He who has pledged himself to this vow may not kill eventhose whom he believes to be unjust; he may not be angry with them, he must love them; thus, he would oppose the tyranny whether of parents, governments or others, but will never kill or hurt the tyrant. The follower of truth and non-violence will offer satyagraha against tyranny and win over the tyrant by love; he will not carry out the tyrant's will but he will suffer punishment even unto death for disobeying his will until the tyrant himself is won over.

3. VOW OF CELIBACY

It is well-nigh impossible to observe these two vows unless celibacy too is observed; and for this vow it is not enough that one does not look upon another woman with a lustful eye, one has so to control the animal passions that they will not be moved even in thought; if one is married, one will not have sexual intercourse even with one's wife, but, regarding her as a friend, will establish with her a relationship of perfect purity.

4. CONTROL OF THE PALATE

Until one has overcome the palate, it is difficult to observe the foregoing vows, more especially that of celibacy. Control of the palate should therefore be treated as a separate observance by one desirous of serving the country and, believing that eating is only for sustaining the body, one should regulate and purify one's diet day by day. Such a person will immediately, or gradually, as he can, leave off such articles of food as may tend to stimulate animal passions.

5. VOW OF NON-STEALING

It is not enough not to steal what is commonly considered as other men's property. One who has pledged himself to this vow should realize that Nature provides from day to day just enough and no more for one's daily needs by way of food and so hold it theft to use articles of food, dress, etc., which one does not really need and live accordingly.

6. VOW OF NON-POSSESSION

It is not enough not to possess and keep much, but it is

necessary not to keep anything which may not be absolutely necessary for the nourishment and protection of our body: thus, if one can do without chairs, one should do so. He who has taken this vow will always bear this in mind and endeavour to simplify his life more and more.

SUBSIDIARY OBSERVANCES

Two other vows follow from the foregoing.[1]

1. VOW OF SWADESHI

The person who has taken the vow of Swadeshi will never use articles which conceivably involve violation of truth in their manufacture or on the part of their manufacturers. It follows, for instance, that a votary of truth will not use articles manufactured in the mills of Manchester, Germany or India, for he cannot be sure that they involve no such violation of truth. Moreover, labourers suffer much in the mills. The generation of tremendous heat causes enormous destruction of life. Besides, the loss of workers' lives in the manufacture of machines and of other creatures through excessive heat is something impossible to describe. Foreign cloth and cloth made by means of machinery are, therefore, tabooed to a votary of non-violence as they involve triple violence. Further reflection will show that the use of foreign cloth can be held to involve a breach of the vows of non-stealing and non-possession. We follow custom and, for better appearance, wear foreign cloth in preference to the cloth made on our own handlooms with so little effort. Artificial beautifying of the body is a hindrance to. a *brahmachari* and so, even from the point of view of that vow, machine-made cloth is taboo. Therefore, the vow of Swadeshi requires the use of simple clothing made on simple handlooms and stitched in simple style, foreign buttons, cuts, etc., being avoided. The same line of reasoning may be applied to all other articles.

2. VOW OF FEARLESSNESS

He who is acted upon by fear can hardly observe the vows of truth, etc. The Controllers will, therefore, constantly endeavour to be free from the fear of kings or society, one's caste or family, thieves, robbers, ferocious animals such as tigers, and even of death. One who

[1] Omitted in the third edition

observes the vow of fearlessness will defend himself or others by truth-force or soul-force.

3. VOW AGAINST UNTOUCHABILITY[1]

According to Hindu religion as traditionally practised, communities such as *Dhed, Bhangi,* etc., known by the names of *Antyaj, Pancham, Achhut* and so on, are looked upon as untouchable. Hindus belonging to other communities believe that they will be defiled it they touch a member of any of the said communities and, if anyonedoes so accidentally, he thinks that he has committed a sin. The founders of the Ashram believe that this practice is a blot on Hindu religion. Themselves staunch Hindus, they believe that the Hindu race will continue to add to its load of sin so long as it regards a single community as untouchable. Some of the consequences of this practice have been terrible. In order to be free from this sin, the Ashram inmates are under a vow to regard the untouchable communities as touchable; actually one *Dhed* family was staying in the Ashram, and it is still there, when the third edition of these rules was being drawn up. It lives exactly in the same condition as others in the Ashram do. This vow does not extend to association for purpose of eating. All that is desired is the eradication of the evil of untouchability.

VARNASHRAM[2]

The Ashram does not follow the *varnashram* dharma. Where those in control of the Ashram will take the place of the pupils' parents and where life-long vows of celibacy, non-hoarding, etc., are to be observed, *varnashram* dharma has no scope. The Ashram inmates will be in the stage of *sanyasis*[3] and so it is not necessary for them to follow the rules of this dharma. Apart from this, the Ashram has a firm belief in the *varnashram* dharma. The discipline of caste seems to have done no harm to the country; on the contrary, rather. There is no reason to believe that eating in company promotes brotherhood ever so slightly. In order that the *varnashram* dharma and caste discipline might in no way be undermined, the Ashram inmates are under obligation, whenever they stir out, to subsist on

[1] This and the paragraph on Varnashram were added in the third edition.

[2] The organisation of society into four castes, each with a distinctive function, and the division of life into four stages

[3] Those who, in the last stage of life have renounced the world

fruits if they cannot cook their own food.

MOTHER TONGUE

It is the belief of the Controllers that no nation or any group thereof can make real progress by abandoning its own language, they will, therefore, use their own language. As they desire to be on terms of intimacy with their brethren from all parts of India, they will also learn the chief Indian languages; as Sanskrit is a key to Indian languages, they will learn that too.

MANUAL WORK

The Controllers believe that body labour is a duty imposed by nature upon mankind. Such labour is the only means by which manmay sustain himself; his mental and spiritual powers should be used for the common good only. As the vast majority in the world live on agriculture, the Controllers will always devote some part of their time to working on the land; when that is not possible, they will perform some other bodily labour.

WEAVING

The Controllers believe that one of the chief causes of poverty in the land is the virtual disappearance of spinning-wheels and handlooms. They will, therefore, make every effort to revive this industry by themselves weaving cloth on handlooms.

POLITICS

Politics, economic progress, etc., are not unconnected matters; knowing that they are all rooted in religion, the Controllers will make an effort to learn and teach politics, economics, social reform, etc., in a religious spirit and work in these fields with all the zeal that they can command.

(2) NOVITIATES

Those who are desirous of following the foregoing programme but are not able immediately to take the necessary vows may be admitted as Novitiates. It is obligatory upon them to conform to all the observances which are followed by Controllers the while that they are in the Ashram. They will acquire the status of Controllers when they are able to take the necessary vows for life.

(3) STUDENTS

1 Any children, whether boys or girls, from four years and upwards may be admitted with the consent of their parents.[1]

2 Parents will have to surrender all control over their children.

3 Children will not be permitted to visit their parents for any reason until the whole course of study is finished.

4 Students will be taught to observe all the vows intended for the Controllers.

5 They will receive instruction in religion, agriculture, handloom-weaving and letters.

6 Instruction in letters will be through the students' own languages and will include History, Geography, Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, Economics, etc., the learning of Sanskrit, Hindi and at least one Dravidian language being obligatory.

7 English will be taught as a second language.

8 Urdu, Bengali Tamil, Telugu, Devnagari and Gujarati scripts will be taught to all.

9 The Controllers believe that the whole course will be completed in ten years.[2] Upon reaching the age of majority, students will be given the option of taking the vows or retiring from the Ashram. This will make it possible for those to whom the programme has not commended itself to leave the Ashram.

10 They will exercise this option at an age when they will require no assistance from their parents or guardians.

11 Every endeavour will be made from the very beginning to see that, when they leave, they will be strong enough to have no fear what they would do for their maintenance.

12 Grown-up persons also may be admitted as students.

13 As a rule, everyone will wear the simplest and a uniform style of dress.

14 Food will be simple. Chillies will be excluded altogether and generally no condiments will be used excepting salt, pepper and turmeric. Milk, ghee and other milk products being a hindrance to a

[1] This was replaced in the third edition by: "Boys and girls under twelve years of age will not be admitted if their parents do not join at the same time."

[2] This sentence was omitted in the third edition.

celibate life and milk being often a cause of tuberculosis and having the same stimulating qualities as meat, they will be most sparingly used, if at all. Meals will be served thrice a day and will include dried and fresh fruits in liberal quantities. All inmates of the Ashram will be taught the general principles of hygiene.

15 No holidays will be observed in this Ashram but, for one and a half days every week, the ordinary routine will be altered and everyone will have some time to attend to his private work.

16 During three months in the year, those whose health permits it will be taken on a tour, on foot for the most part, of India.

17 Nothing will be charged either from Students or Novitiates towards their monthly expenditure, but parents or the members themselves will be expected to contribute whatever they can towards the expenses of the Ashram.

MISCELLANEOUS

Administration of the Ashram will rest with a body of Controllers. The Chief Controller will have the right to decide whom to admit and to which category.

The expenses of the Ashram are being met from moneys already received by the Chief Controller or to be received from friends who may have some faith in the Ashram.

The Ashram is accommodated in two houses on the banks of the Sabarmati, Ahmedabad, on the road to Sarakhej across the Ellis Bridge.

It is expected that in a few months, about 250 acres of land will be acquired in the vicinity of Ahmedabad and the Ashram located thereon.

A REQUEST

Visitors are requested to observe all the Ashram rules during their stay there. Every endeavour will be made to make them comfortable; but the management will be thankful to them if they bring with them their bedding and utensils for meals, as the Ashram rules permit the stocking of only a minimum of articles.

Those parents who intend sending their children to the Ashram are advised to pay a visit to the Ashram. No boy or girl will be admitted before he or she has been duly tested.

DAILY ROUTINE[1]

(l) An effort is being made to see that everyone in the Ashram gets up at 4 o'clock. The first bell rings at 4.

(2) It is obligatory on all, except those who are ill, to get up at 4.30. Everyone finishes bathing by 5.

(3) 5 to 5.30: Prayers and readings from holy books.

(4) 5.30 to 7: Breakfast of fruits, such as bananas.

(5) 7 to 8.30: Manual work. This includes drawing water, grinding, sweeping, weaving cooking, etc.

(6) 8.30 to 10: School work.

(7) 10 to 12: Meal and cleaning of utensils. The meal consists of *dal*, rice, vegetables and *rotlis* for five days. On two days, there are *rotlis* and fruits.

(8) 12 to 3: School work.

(9) 3 to 5: Work, as in the morning.

(10) 5 to 6: Meal and cleaning of utensils. The meal mostly follows the same pattern as in the morning.

(11) 6.30 to 7: Prayers, as in the morning.

(12) 7 to 9: Study, receiving visitors, etc.

Before nine, all children go to bed. At ten the lights are put out.

For school work, the subjects of study at present are Sanskrit, Gujarati, Tamil, Hindi and Arithmetic. Study of History and Geography is included in that of languages.

No paid teachers or servants are employed in the Ashram.

In all, the Ashram has at present 35 inmates. Four of them live with their families. There are five teachers to look after teaching. Permanent members of the Ashram include two from North India, nine from Madras Presidency and the rest are from Gujarat and Kathiawar.

[From Gujarati]

From photostat of printed leaflets: S.N. 6187 and S.N. 6189

[1] Added in the third edition

383. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

AHMEDABAD,
May 20 [*1915*][1]

DEAR MR. SHASTRIAR,

I have just returned from a brief domestic visit to Rajkot to find your two letters. If I may suggest, I think that you should respond to Sir William's call. Sir Pherozeshaw is likely to take the same view that Mrs. Besant does. To me it is enough that Sir William wants you, and that you know the subject you are expected to handle. Your credentials as President of the Society are and ought to be sufficient to give you the status and authority you will need in your mission.

And if you go, I suppose you will not need to do so for two months. Will you not then during the time get rid of your disease so as to enable you the more effectively to do your work?

Naiker and Sundaram seem to be doing very well.

I am settling down here for the time being at any rate.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The pamphlet I have sent you is not the last word.

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 6289

384. LETTER TO G. B. VEERASWAMY

AHMEDABAD,
May 20, 1915

DEAR VEERASWAMY,

I have your letter. I shall know in due course what you propose doing.

Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

G. B. VEERASWAMI
1/6 NALLATHAMBHI MUDALI STREET
TRIPLICANE
MADRAS

From a photostat: C.W, 11014. Courtesy: Balachandran

[1] The reference to Sir Pherozeshah Mehta (who died in November 1915) fixes the year as 1915.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

THE GREAT MARCH

[VOLKSRUST,
November 8, 1913]

He [Gandhiji] left almost at once by motor to rejoin the marchers. Thus, if there was an effort on Government's part to put an end to the demonstration by depriving the men of their leader in the hope that they would become discouraged and abandon the attempt to reach the Rand, this effort has been completely stultified. I shared the motor in which Messrs Kallenbach and Gandhi overtook the main body of marchers about 33 miles from Volksrust. They were well on their way to Kromdraai Station, near Standerton, which is their halt for the day. The narrow ribbon of road which leads to the Rand passes through beautiful grassy country, and, as the weather was pleasant, the strikers were walking easily and showed little fatigue. They were a little beyond General Botha's farm when the car overtook them, and there was extraordinary enthusiasm as Mr. Gandhi alighted among them. The car had halted at Paardekraal, where Mr. Gandhi spoke some encouraging words to the women. Old and infirm men halted there, and Mr. Gandhi left some medicines which a doctor in Newcastle had supplied. All along the road the car passed stragglers, who lined up and saluted Mr. Gandhi, calling him "Bapoo", or father.

THE RATIONS

Although the rations served out consist only of a pound-and-a-half loaf of bread and an ounce of sugar per man, the marchers are cheerful and patient to an extraordinary degree. They have the utmost confidence in Mr. Gandhi, and obey him implicitly, although as a class indentured coal-miners and the like—they are totally unused to discipline unaccompanied by force. As lieutenants, Mr. Gandhi has several young Johannesburg Indians who were prominent during the former passive resistance movement, and the mounted constables accompanying the marchers told me they had orders to arrest some of these at Kromdraai and take them in to Standerton.

Mr. Gandhi informs me that the passive resistance movement is diminishing his resources by £250 a day, and that more than the present contribution of £3,000 per month will have to be sent from India if the success of the movement is to be assured. He has, however, no doubt at all about the response from India. Apart from the women at Charlestown, there are communities of strikers in every affected area to be supported, and the cost of the march to the Rand is estimated at one shilling per day per man. Volksrust bakers have received a contract for the supply of bread, which is sent on each day by rail to an appointed station. The sugar is served out for its

sustaining properties, and amounts to about five packets a day in the aggregate. The Indians make a hole in their loaves, into which they put their handfuls of sugar. Each man carries a pannikin, which he fills with water as often as is possible. The marchers had an unexpected treat at Paardekop, where last night tea was served to the full 2,000 odd of them at the expense of a local Indian storekeeper. Mr. Gandhi impressed upon them the fact that tea was not on the regular menu. Leaving Mr. Gandhi with the passive resisters, whose leadership to the promised land he resumed, Mr. Kallenbach and I returned to Volksrust, and passed about 13 miles from the town a further band of 100 coolies, who crossed the border this morning with as little trouble as their predecessors. Some of those who march to Johannesburg, I learn, are men who were charged at Newcastle with breaking their indentures, and were released on their own recognisances through lack of prison accommodation. They offered to await trial if food and shelter were provided, but this the local Magistrate refused, and so they departed to join in the march on Johannesburg.

Indian Opinion, 19-11-1913

APPENDIX II

EXTRACT FROM GENERAL BOTHA'S SPEECH[1]

[NYLSTROOM,
November 1, 1913]

General Botha said he was sure there was only one road to befollowed in dealing with the Asiatic question and that was the right road. He hoped people not living in South Africa would realise that their altitude in regardto the Asiatic was not prompted by a desire to get rid of Asiatics, but wasprompted by principle. In this country they had Coloured races to deal withand they did not want to have the position complicated any further. Their sole aim was to keep the position pure and clean. Today he understood the Asiatics would undertake a great march from Newcastle to Volksrust. He hoped these people would accept better advice than they were doing today. General Smuts had recently made a statement as to what had taken place when Mr. Gokhale was here. Mr. Gokhale had replied and made a different explanation of what occurred. He (General Botha) wished to state that he was present at the interview with Mr. Gokhale. It took place in his (General Botha's) office, and the others present were General Smuts, Mr. Fischer, and Mr. Gokhale. He only wished to say that he agreed with and endorsed every word spoken by General Smuts in regard to that interview, and in regard to what took place. "At any rate," General Botha concluded, "we shall do nothing by which your rights will suffer."

[1] This has been extracted from Governor-General's despatch dated November 6, 1913, to the Colonial Office.

It will be observed that General Botha confirms the denial given by General Smuts to the statement that the repeal of the £3 tax was definitely promised to Mr. Gokhale.

Colonial Office Records: 551/45

APPENDIX III

POLAK'S LETTER TO LORD AMPTHILL[1]

VOLKSRUST GAOL,
November 12, 1913

DEAR LORD AMPTHILL,

My present address will not surprise you after the cables that will have doubtless been sent home. The circumstances of my arrest you will see from *Indian Opinion.* The whole affair, whilst partially accidental, is really taking advantage of me on the part of the Government. I had joined Mr. Gandhi near Greylingstad, in order to discuss a number of matters with him prior to my prospective departure for India on Friday next. He was then marching at the head of 1500 of the £3 tax passive resisters who had entered the Transvaal to court arrest, as the Government had refused otherwise to deal with them and had left the heavy burden of feeding and otherwise maintaining them upon us. I had received a warning from him that if I came to the Transvaal from Natal, I might be arrested. In view of the fact that I, as an outsider, had so often counselled Indian passive resisters to challenge arrest, I felt that it would be highly dishonourable for me—an Englishman—to draw back before such a risk, and I did not hesitate to join him. We had hardly been conversing half an hour before we were met by a police sub-inspector and the Chief Immigration Officer, who arrested Mr. Gandhi on a warrant from Dundee, charging him with removing indentured Indians from Natal. He was driven away at once, and as these hundreds of people were leaderless, did not know where their camping ground was for the night, or where they were to get their rations next day, the authorities having refused the responsibility of taking charge of them and providing for them, I had no option but to accept the

[1] A copy of this was forwarded by Lord Ampthill to the Colonial Office on December 5, along with a covering letter in which he observed, "I venture to think that the Union Government of South Africa would have done better to invite the leaders of the Indian community to confer with them instead of putting them in gaol as there can be little doubt that under Mr. Gandhi's leadership the struggle would have been managed without disorder and with none of the injury which has since been caused. I trust, however, that His Majesty's Government have already suggested to the authorities in South Africa that negotiation with Mr. Gandhi affords the most likely means of arriving at a speedy solution of the difficulty."

responsibility of leading the people to Greylingstad, where we camped on the open veld for the night, and the next day to Balfour, about 13 miles beyond. Here the police officer and the Chief Immigration Officer asked me to discuss the situation with them. They informed me that they were instructed to order the arrest of all the people as prohibited immigrants in the Transvaal and to deport them to Charlestown, in Natal, where they would be arrested on local charges by the Natal authorities. They asked me to co-operate with them in entraining the men so as to avoid disturbance and the intervention of the squad of police that had arrived. I told them that, in the circumstances, I would co-operate with them cordially, as they now assumed the responsibility of feeding and sheltering the people, but that, had they not given me that assurance, I was prepared to continue to march with the men until either they were arrested or I, and I offered to place myself at their disposal for arrest then if they desired to hold me. I hey replied that they had no desire whatever to do so and thanked me for my offer of service. Later, when the people were arrested, some of the more defiant spirits, who did not know me refused to entrain until they received the instruction from Mr. Gandhi, and carrying the mass with them, they proceeded to resume the march. I at once stood in front of them and urged them to remember their status as passive resisters. Eventually I prevailed upon them to follow me to the station where they all entrained peacefully. I am sure it would have been impossible to entrain them had I not been present, and the men would probably have been goaded into violent reprisals by police tactlessness and military brutality. I was specially thanked by the police officials in charge and also, subsequently, by the magistrate here. As I did not know exactly what might happen at Charlestown, and in order to assist the authorities to keep order in case of need, I travelled down with the first train. Shortly afterwards I was arrested and brought to Volksrust. Yesterday both Mr. Kallenbach (whose name is no doubt well-known to Your Lordship—he is the owner of Tolstoy Farm, where the passive resisters were maintained in the last struggle, a German by nationality, a Jew, like myself, by religion, and an architect by profession) and I were charged before the magistrate with aiding and abetting in the introduction of prohibited immigrants into the Transvaal. A remand until tomorrow was asked for by the prosecution. We were refused bail as we declined togive an assurance that meanwhile we would take no further part in the movement. We are now in prison awaiting trial, and expect to be convicted tomorrow. We shall probably get about 3 months, but whether with or without hard labour I cannot say. We shall, of course, refuse to pay the alternative fines.

I at once wired the circumstances to the Minister of the Interior, explaining that I had intended to leave for India on Friday at Mr. Gokhale's request, thus leaving it to him to decide whether or not to proceed with the prosecution. He has replied that the case should go on. I shall not, therefore, be going to India. May I suggest that a representation on the subject may be made to the Imperial Government, pointing out

that, with the facts before them, the Union Government have prevented my joining Mr. Gokhale a his request in order to assist him in placing the South African Indian question fully before the Government of India.

I am sure that Your Lordship will agree that, in the circumstances in which I suddenly found myself, I could not have adopted honourably any other course of action than I did. In any other case, such influence as I have with the Indian community would have at once disappeared.

I may add that the spread of the strike along the Coast, on the plantations, is wholly spontaneous, and indeed, strongly against our advice as we did not wish it to get beyond manageable proportions. But the Government must now bear the responsibility.

Both Mr. Kallenbach and I are looking forward to an enviable period of repose and irresponsibility. The strain of the last few weeks upon Mr. Gandhi especially and ourselves has been tremendous and this withdrawal from public activity for the time being will be a matter of real relief to us. Mr. Gandhi was sentenced at Dundee yesterday to nine months hard labour, on three separate charges under the indenture law. I am afraid that, meanwhile, until my release, Your Lordship must derive your news of the movement from *Indian Opinion.*

With kind regards,

Yours very truly,
HY. S. L. POLAK

Colonial Office Records: 551/52

APPENDIX IV

(1) GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S CABLE TO COLONIAL OFFICE

December 1, 1913

SECRET

CACHALIA, WHO PRESIDED AT A MEETING OF INDIANS AT JOHANNESBURG YESTERDAY SAID THAT £3 TAX WAS ONLY ONE OF SURFACE SORES INDICATING PRESENCE OF DEEP SPREAD ROOTED EVIL; NOTHING LESS THAN THE SWEEPING AWAY OF THE WHOLE SYSTEM OF INDENTURED LABOUR WOULD SATISFY BRITISH INDIANS. THE INDIANS HAVE THEREFORE AS YOU WILL SEE AGAIN CHANGED THEIR GROUND. I HAVE SEEN J. C. SMUTS THIS MORNING ON HIS RETURN FROM DURBAN. LOCAL AUTHORITIES BELIEVE THAT STRIKE WILL VIRTUALLY TERMINATE THIS WEEK. INDIANS WORKING COAL MINES AND ON SOUTH COAST, ABOUT 2500 STILL OUT ON THE NORTH COAST. J. C. SMUTS SAYS

THAT STRIKE HAS HARDENED NATAL FEELING. REPEAL OF THE £3 TAX OPPOSED AND MUCH TALK OF REPATRIATION BUT THERE IS OF COURSE NO EXISTING POWER TO REPATRIATE. HE IS QUITE SATISFIED THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO VIOLENCE IN PRISON COMPOUNDS BUT THE POLICE HAD AT TIMES TO USE STICKS FREELY AGAINST RIOTERS AND NO DOUBT MANY SHOW MARKS. INDIAN ASSOCIATION DECLINE TO GIVE ASSISTANCE TO MARDALL THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR OF THE PRISONS, WHO WAS SENT TO REPORT ON ARRANGEMENTS IN THE NEWCASTLE DUNDEE DISTRICTS. J. C. SMUTS SAID THAT OF COURSE A JUDICIAL ENQUIRY MUST BE HELD AND PROPOSED DOVE WILSON NATAL JUDGE, PRESIDENT. I SAID THAT I THOUGHT THAT WOULD BE WORSE THAN USELESS. IF COMMISSION WERE APPOINTED IT SHOULD BE A STRONG ONE OF NOT LESS THAN THREE. I PRESSED FOR SOLOMON AS PRESIDENT WITH DOVE WILSON AND A GOOD TRANSVAAL REPRESENTATIVE, POINTING OUT THAT ENQUIRY WOULD BE OF FAR GREATER IMPORTANCE THAN THE RAND RIOTS ENQUIRY. J. C. SMUTS APPEARED QUITE FAVOURABLE. I WARNED HIM THAT IF MINISTERS APPEARED TO FAVOUR REPATRIATION WITHOUT EXPRESS AGREEMENT WITH GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, INDIANS HERE WOULD PROBABLY SAY THAT MINISTERS HAVING REFUSED TO REMOVE GENUINE GRIEVANCES WERE SEEKING TO DEPORT BRITISH SUBJECTS FROM HOMES AND OCCUPATIONS. J. C. SMUTS AGREED THAT PROPOSAL IN ANY CASE COULD NOT BE ENTERTAINED EXCEPT BY ARRANGEMENT WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

GLADSTONE

Colonial Office Records: 551/46

(2) GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S CABLE TO COLONIAL OFFICE

December 19, 1913

CONFIDENTIAL

MY TELEGRAM OF YESTERDAY CONFIDENTIAL 2. I AM TOLD BY J. C. SMUTS THAT SOLOMON DID NOT SUCCEED IN REMOVING HIS DIFFICULTIES BUT THAT LITTLE REMAINS TO BE DONE AFTER FORMAL ANNOUNCEMENT. BEST COURSE WOULD HE THINKS BE FOR INDIANS HERE TO RETAIN CAPABLE SOUTH AFRICAN ADVOCATE, SUCH AS SCHREINER. THIS WOULD SERVE THE PURPOSE OF INDIA GOVERNMENT. IF HOWEVER INDIAN GOVERNMENT DECIDE TO NOMINATE COUNSEL IT WOULD BE FAR BETTER FROM POINT OF VIEW OF MINISTERS FOR THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT

TO RETAIN SCHREINER OR SOME OTHER CAPABLE SOUTH AFRICAN ADVOCATE. SOLOMON HIMSELF URGES THIS COURSE STRONGLY AS LONG DELAY IN SENDING COUNSEL FROM INDIA WOULD BE VERY INCONVENIENT FOR THE COMMISSION WHICH ADJOURNED YESTERDAY AND PROPOSES TO RESUME PROCEEDINGS AT DURBAN ON JANUARY 12TH. GANDHI INTIMATES THAT THE INDIANS HERE HAVE NOT DECIDED WHETHER THEY WILL ACCEPT COMMISSION. SHOULD THEY REFUSE TO GIVE EVIDENCE THE COMMISSION WILL IN ALL PROBABILITY BE DISSOLVED. IF PASSIVE RESISTANCE AND STRIKES ARE SUBSEQUENTLY AGAIN RESORTED TO THE FEELING HERE WILL BE EXASPERATED AND A VERY DANGEROUS POSITION WILL PROBABLY BE CREATED. MY MINISTERS AND THE COMMISSION HAVE DONE THEIR UTMOST TO MEET VIEWS OF THE INDIAN AND IMPERIAL GOVERNMENTS. I TRUST THAT YOU WILL IMPRESS THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT THROUGH THE INDIA OFFICE WITH THE EXTREME IMPORTANCE OF SECURING THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE COMMISSION AND ABSTINENCE FROM ALL PROVOCATIVE ACTION BY THE BRITISH INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

GLADSTONE

Colonial Office Records: 551/46

APPENDIX V

(1) LETTER FROM MINISTER OF INTERIOR

PRETORIA,
December 24, I913

GENTLEMEN,

Your letter, which was dated 21st instant and immediately communicated by you to the Press, has only today reached the Department of the Interior and been seen by the Minister.

I am instructed to reply at once that the Minister is uable to accept the conditions on which you propose to give evidence before the Commission appointed by the Government and to suspend passive resistance pending the Commission's finding, particularly the condition which involves the appointment of additional members to the Commission in the interests of the Indian community. The Commission was intended to be impartial and judicial in character, and in constituting it the Government consulted neither the Indian community nor the Coal-owners and Sugar Planters' Association of Natal, nor could the Government for a moment, by following the course you propose, give colour to the unwarranted

reflections you make on two of the Commissioners appointed.

The course you propose to pursue is noted and deeply regretted, not least so in the interests of the Indian community, which cannot but be profoundly affected by the lawless character of your procedure, the gratuitous infliction of grave sufferings on the innocent, both white and Indian, and the consequent exasperation of public opinion throughout the Union.

I have etc.,
H. B. SHAWE
ACTING SECRETARY FOR THE INTERIOR

MESSRS M. K. GANDHI
KALLENBACH, AND
H. S. L. POLAK
110, FIELD STREET
DURBAN

Colonial Office Records: 551/46

(2) GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S CABLE TO COLONIAL OFFICE

PRETORIA,
December 22, 1913

CONFIDENTIAL

MY TELEGRAM OF 19TH DECEMBER CONFIDENTIAL. AT MASS MEETING OF INDIANS AT DURBAN YESTERDAY GANDHI IS REPORTED AS SAYING THAT INDIANS COULD NOT ACCEPT CONSTITUTION OF COMMISSION THERE BEING GRAVE OBJECTIONS TO IT FROM INDIAN STANDPOINT. HIS ADVICE WAS THAT THEY SHOULD NOT ACCEPT COMMISSION IN ITS PRESENT FORMATION AS INDIANS HAVE HAD NO VOICE IN IT. THEY WERE FIGHTING FOR REDRESS OF SEVERAL GRIEVANCES THE UNDERLYING SPIRIT OF THE STRUGGLE BEING TO OBTAIN A FIRM RECOGNITION ON THE PART OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE RIGHT OF CONSULTATION IN ANYTHING APPERTAINING TO INDIAN INTERESTS. UNLESS GOVERNMENT WERE PREPARED TO CONDESCEND TO THAT EXTENT AND TO ASCERTAIN AND RESPECT INDIAN SENTIMENTS IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR INDIANS AS LOYAL BUT MANLY CITIZENS OF EMPIRE TO RENDER OBEDIENCE TO COMMANDS OF LAWS PASSED OVER THIER HEADS. OTHER OBJECTION TO COMMISSION WAS THAT IT WAS PARTISAN AND THEREFORE INDIANS WANTED THEIR OWN PARTISANS. THIS THEY MIGHT NOT GET BUT THEY WANTED AN IMPARTIAL COMMISSION. UNLESS MEN HOLDING NON-ANTI-ASIATIC VIEWS WERE NOMI-NATED INDIANS COULD NOT ASSIST GOVERNMENT TO BRING CRISIS

TO AN END WITHOUT FURTHER SUFFERING. IF GOVERNMENT DECLINED THIS REQUEST HE PROPOSED THAT THEY SHOULD ALL ON NEW YEAR'S DAY BE READY AGAIN TO SUPPER BATTLE AND AGAIN SUPPER IMPRISONMENT AND MARCH OUT. THAT WAS HIS ADVICE TO FREE AND INDENTURED INDIANS. IF THEY ACCEPTED A QUIET LIFE THEY WOULD INCUR THE DISGRACE OF ALL THEIR COUNTRYMEN IN THEIR MOTHERLAND AND THE WHOLE OF BRITISH EMPIRE. THEY SHOULD OBEY THE ORDERS OF CONSCIENCE AND GO FORWARD WITHOUT THINKING. WHEN THEY HAD MADE UP THEIR MINDS THEY SHOULD STICK TO IT EVEN UNTO DEATH. KALLENBACH POLAK AND RITCH ALSO SPOKE RESOLUTIONS WERE PASSED (1) THE COMMUNITY MAY NOT IN HONOUR GIVE EVIDENCE BEFORE COMMISSION BECAUSE IT HAD NOT BEEN CONSULTED AS TO CHOICE OF MEMBERS AND BECAUSE NONE WERE INCLUDED SPECIALLY REPRESENTING COMMUNITY'S INTERESTS. (2) URGING ADDITION TO COMMISSION OF SCHREINER AND ROSE INNES OR OTHER EMINENT SOUTH AFRICANS OF EUROPEAN RACE WHOSE NOMINATION WILL BE ACCEPTABLE TO INDIAN COMMUNITY. NITY. (3) REQUESTING THAT IN THE EVENT OF GOVERNMENT GRANTING ADDITION TO PERSONNEL TO SECURE ADEQUATE RE-PRESENTATION OF ALL INTERESTS INVOLVED ALL PASSIVE RESISTANCE PRISONERS SHOULD IMMEDIATELY BE DISCHARGED. INDIAN COM-MUNITY WOULD THEN UNDERTAKE TO SUSPEND PASSIVE RESIS-TANCE UNTIL PUBLICATION OF COMMISSION'S REPORT BUT IF GOV-ERNMENT REFUSED COMPLIANCE WITH THESE REQUESTS COMMUNITY WOULD BE OBLIGED AT ONCE TO PROSECUTE STRUGGLE WITH RENEWED VIGOUR AND DETERMINATION. I SEE NO PROSPECT OF GOVERNMENT BEING ABLE TO COMPLY WITH THESE DEMANDS.

GLADSTONE

Colonial Office Records: 551/46

(3) GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S CABLE TO COLONIAL OFFICE

PRETORIA,
December 23, 1913

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL

MY CONFIDENTIAL TELEGRAM 22ND DECEMBER. IF INDIANSFOLLOW GANDHI'S ADVICE THE POSITION IS SERIOUS, GOVERNMENT WILL PRESS THE COMMISSION TO MAKE ENQUIRY AS FAR AS POSSIBLE. BUT CONCURRENTLY THERE MAY BE RECRUDESCENCE OF MARCHES INTO TRANSVAAL STRIKES AND VIOLENCE. IF SO QUES-TION OF TAKING LEGISLATIVE POWERS TO REPATRIATE INDENTURED

INDIANS WHO REFUSE TO WORK AND LAW BREAKERS WILL AT ONCE ARISE. VICEROY OF INDIA AMPTHILL AND GOKHALE HAVE I BELIEVE ALREADY MENTIONED GENERAL REPATRIATION BUT APPARENTLY AS A MENACE. IF INDIAN GOVERNMENT PROPOSED THIS J. C. SMUTS TELLS ME THAT IT WOULD BE WELCOMED BY MINISTERS. FURTHER HE SAYS THAT NATAL PLANTERS AND COLLIERY OWNERS ARE BEGINNING TO REALISE THAT THIS MAY BE THE ONLY SOLUTION. BUT THIS IS THE LAST THING WISHED BY THE INDIANS HERE. IF THEY REALISED THAT THE LAW BREAKERS WOULD BE REPATRIATED IT WOULD PROBABLY PUT AN END TO LAW BREAKING. AT PRESENT GANDHI AND HIS ASSOCIATES HERE AND IN INDIA BELIEVE THAT COOLIES ARE ESSENTIAL TO NATAL AND PRESS IMPOSSIBLE DEMANDS ON THAT SUPPOSITION. THESE DEMANDS ARE IMPOSSIBLE. REPRESSION OF DISORDER IS COMPARATIVELY EASY BUT IT IS NO REMEDY AND WILL EMBITTER FEELING IN INDIA. MINISTERS THINK THAT THEY WILL HAVE TO GO TO THE ROOT OF THE TROUBLE. DO YOU THINK REPATRIATION OF THE LAW BREAKERS AND INDENTURED INDIANS IN WHOLE OR IN PART COULD RECEIVE CO-OPERATION OF THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT? FAILING THAT WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON LEGISLATIVE ACTION HERE TO THAT END? COMPENSATION WOULD BE PAID IN RESPECT OF PROPERTY.

GLADSTONE

Colonial Office Records: 551/46

APPENDIX VI

LORD HARDINGE'S SPEECH[1]

A message from Madras states that the Viceroy (Lord Hardinge), in a speech in reply to Indian addresses said the position of Indians in South Africa for some years past had received the most anxious consideration of the Raj, which was doing all in its power to ensure fair treatment.

He added: "The Union Act of which you complain has in practice the effect of putting an end to Asiatic emigration to South Africa, though it does not discriminate in so many words against Asiatics. We, however, have succeeded in securing the privilege of entry for a limited number of educated Indians annually, and have also specially endeavoured to secure as favourable terms as possible for the Indians already

[1] This was delivered on November 24, 1913.

resident in the Union. Our efforts have resulted in the inclusion of provisions for the right of appeal to the Court on points of law and definition of domicile in accordance with which the position of un-indentured Indians is satisfactorily laid down.

"We are at present in communication with Lord Crewe regarding other restrictions in the Act to which you take exception and we trust our representations will not be resultless. You urged retaliatory measures by the Raj, but it is not stated what particular measures are adoptable. We forbade the emigration of indentured Indians to Natal in 1911, and the Natal planters sent a delegate to India to beg for a reconsideration of that decision. That shows how hardly the planters were hit by the stoppage of that emigration, but I am afraid that it had little effect on South Africa as a whole, and unfortunately it is not easy to find means whereby India can make its indignation felt by those holding the reins of Government in South Africa.

"Recently your compatriots in South Africa have taken matters into their own hands, organising passive resistance to laws which they consider invidious and unjust, an opinion which we, who are watching their struggles from afar, cannot but share. They violated those laws with a full knowledge of the penalties involved, and are ready with all courage and patience to endure the penalties. In all this they have the deep and burning sympathy of India and also of those who, like myself, without being Indians, sympathise with the people of this country, but the most recent developments have taken a most serious turn. We have seen the widest publicity given to allegations that passive resistance is dealt with by measures which would not be tolerated for a moment in any country claiming to be civilised. These allegations were met by a categorical denial by the responsible Government of South Africa, though even the denial contains admissions which do not seem to me to indicate that the Government exercised a very wise discretion in some of the steps it adopted. That is the position for the moment. I feel that if the South African Government desires to justify itself in the eyes of India and the world, the only course open is to appoint a strong impartial committee, whereon Indian interests will be represented, to conduct the most searching inquiry, and you may rest assured that the Raj will not cease to urge these considerations on the Imperial Government."

Indian Opinion, 3-12-1913

APPENDIX VII

VICEROY'S TELEGRAM TO G. K. GOKHALE

December 28, 1913

THE HON'BLE MR. GOKHALE
SERVINDIA
POONA

IN VIEW OF PROMISE GIVEN BY GANDHI AND MY GREATDESIRE TO SECURE A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT SIR BENJAMIN ROBERTSON WILL LEAVE BOMBAY ON JANUARY 1ST AND SHOULD ARRIVE IN DURBAN ON 11TH OR 12TH STOP I HAVE ASKED THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO ENDEAVOUR TO ARRANGE WITH THE UNION GOVERNMENT A SHORT POSTPONEMENT OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMISSION STOP I AM NOT VERY HOPEFUL OF THE RESULT OF ROBERTSON'S MISSION BUT AM ANXIOUS TO LOSE NO OPPORTUNITY OF SECURING PEACE STOP I THINK IT IS DESIRABLE THAT YOU SHOULD INFORM GANDHI THAT IF HE AND THE INDIANS COMMENCE PASSIVE RESISTANCE OR HAVE RESORT TO VIOLENCE ROBERTSON WILL IMMEDIATELY DISSOCIATE HIMSELF FROM THEM STOP I TRUST THAT GANDHI WILL COMMUNICATE FREELY WITH ROBERTSON ON HIS ARRIVAL.

VICEROY

National Archives of India, File NO. 45 Courtesy: Servants of India Society, Poona

APPENDIX VIII

(1) TELEGRAM FROM MINISTER OF INTERIOR

PRETORIA,
January 5, 1914

TO
GANDHI
1 10, FIELD STREET DURBAN

32366 DELAY IN REPLYING TO YOUR TELEGRAM 29 DECEMBER REGRETTED BUT WAS DUE TO CONTRADICTORY INFORMATION WHICH ARRIVED FROM DURBAN AS TO REVIVAL OF PASSIVE RESISTANCE AND THE COMMENCEMENT OF A NEW MARCH TO THE TRANSVAAL. LATER INFORMATION HOWEVER HAS SHOWN THAT

THE MOVEMENT OF CERTAIN BODIES OF INDIANS IN NATAL ON THE FIRST JANUARY WAS MISUNDERSTOOD.[1] WITH REGARD TO THE PROPOSALS CONTAINED IN YOUR TELEGRAM THE MINISTER REGRETS THAT THE REQUEST FOR ADDITIONS TO OR A REDUCTION IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION CANNOT BE ACCEDED TO FOR THE REASONS ALREADY MENTIONED IN MYLETTER OF THE 24TH DECEMBER. IN VIEW OF THE ATTITUDE YOU HAVE TAKEN UP IN REGARD TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMISSION THE MINISTER HAS NOT DEEMED IT NECESSARY FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER WHAT ADVICE SHOULD BE TENDERED TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL AS TO THE REMISSION OF SENTENCES OF PASSIVE RESISTERS AND THE GOVERNMENT HAVE CONFINED THEIR ACTION TO THE RECOMMENDATION MADE BY THE COMMISSION IN RESPECT OF THE LEADERS. THE COURSE ADOPTED BY THE LEADERS IMMEDIATELY ON THEIR RELEASE HAS NOT BEEN SUCH AS TO IMPRESS THE GOVERNMENT AS TO THE BENEFICIAL RESULTS LIKELY TO FOLLOW FROM THE RELEASE OF THE BALANCE OF THE PASSIVE RESISTERS. IF YOU ARE STILL DESIROUS OF SEEING THE MINISTER HE WILL BE PREPARED TO GRANT YOU AN INTERVIEW DURING THIS WEEK.

Colonial Office Records: 55l/53

(2) EXTRACT FROM GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S DESPATCH[2]

PRETORIA,
December 31, 1913

You will observe that Mr. Gandhi's present attitude is less unreasonable than that which he adopted in his public utterances immediately after his liberation. General Smuts is still considering his reply to Mr. Gandhi's latest proposals, and I think it not improbable that he will agree to grant a personal interview as requested. I doubt, however, whether Mr. Gandhi's suggestions with regard to the constitution of the Commission will be found acceptable. The addition of two members, nominated

[1] This referred to an erroneous report about the movement of a group of Indians collected at Pinetown, near Durban, on January l, the date originally announced by Gandhiji for the resumption of the march into the Transvaal. It later transpired that the group acted in ignorance of Gandhiji's declaration that Passive Resistance would not be resumed on New Year Day.

[2] This formed part of a despatch forwarding to the Colonial Office copies of correspondence between Gandhiji and the Minister of the Interior, and clippings from various newspapers.

respectively by the Indian community and by the employers of Indian labour, would destroy the judicial character of the Commission, and this would probably entail the resignation of Sir William Solomon. The alternative proposal that the Commission should be converted into a single-member Commission, consisting only of Sir William Solomon, is not open to the same objection, and neither Mr. Esselen nor Colonel Wylie would probably show any disinclination to resign their membership. It would not, however, be easy for the Government so to reconstitute its own Commission at Mr. Gandhi's bidding without seeming to admit that the two members whose elimination is asked for were in fact not wholly impartial. Possibly if General Smuts and Mr. Gandhi meet, their combined ingenuity may succeed in discovering some way out of the difficulty.

On Monday last General Smuts told my Secretary in confidence that he had received a private letter from Sir William Solomon expressing regret at the bad use which Mr. Gandhi, Mr. Polak and Mr. Kallenbach had made of their liberty, and intimating that if the Commission were to be boycotted by the Indians, in whose interests it had been appointed, it was unlikely that the enquiry could prove anything but one-sided. Sir William went on to say that he had accepted appointment, much against his own personal inclinations, only from a sense of duty because it had been represented to him that by acting as Chairman he would have an opportunity of rendering a public service. As it now seemed likely that the Commission would be unable to do any useful work, he was inclined to doubt whether there was any reason why he should continue to serve. General Smuts said that he proposed in his reply to point out the distinction between abstention by the Indians from giving evidence and a renewal of passive resistance, strikes and lawlessness. If recourse were again had to disorder, the question whether the enquiry should be proceeded with might arise. If, however, the Indians confined themselves simply to a policy of abstention from giving evidence, the Commission would still be able to hear official and other European witnesses upon the incidents of the strike and the allegations of ill-treatment, and to consider the general question of grievances from the documentary material which could be laid before it by the Government. It was desirable, moreover, that the official witness who was being sent by the Government of India should be afforded an opportunity of being heard. General Smuts seemed to hope that these arguments would induce Sir William Solomon to continue to serve. He was evidently apprehensive lest Mr. Gandhi should be enabled to enhance his prestige by the personal triumph of breaking up a Government Commission of whose constitution he happened to disapprove.

Colonial Office Records: 551/46

APPENDIX IX

STATEMENT ISSUED BY G. K. GOKHALE

[*December 31, 1913*]

In view of the anxiety prevailing in the country as to the position of matters in South Africa and the inquiries that are being addressed to me on the subject, I think it necessary to publish the following statement:

On 18th December, I received at Calcutta a cablegram from the Natal Indian Association stating that there was a strong feeling among Indians in South Africa not to accept the Commission of inquiry appointed on account of two members out of three being known to be hostile to the community and asking for my advice as to what should be done. Mr. Gandhi and other passive resistance leaders were then in jail and there was at that time no indication of the lines on which the Commission proposed to work. It was impossible for me in the circumstances to offer any definite advice and after hurriedly consulting two distinguished friends in Calcutta, who were within easy reach, I cabled back to say that the course to be adopted should depend on the strength of feeling of the community and the advice of friendly Europeans in South Africa; and I asked the Association to weigh carefully which course would do greater harm to the cause, viz., abstention from offering evidence or participation in the proceedings under protest, adding that I would cable again from Bombay after consulting Sir Pherozeshah Mehta. I left Calcutta that same day and arrived in Bombay on the 20th, when I read in the papers a summary of Sir William Solomon's opening statement, as also news about the release of Mr. Gandhi and other passive resistance leaders. As Reuter had stated that the released leaders had proceeded to Pretoria to see the Ministers, I naturally concluded that the Union Government was desirous of arriving at some understanding with the community and that Mr. Gandhi's reported visit to Pretoria was in connection with some negotiations that had already been started. I immediately put myself into telegraphic communication with Mr. Gandhi and during the last ten days numerous cables have passed between us. It is not possible to publish all these cables, but I think I may state that in the course of these communications every effort was made to press on Mr. Gandhi the view which clearly is now gaining ground in this country, viz., that after Sir William Solomon's speech, the release of the leaders and the recognition given to the Commission by the Government of India by the deputation of Sir Benjamin Robertson, it would be a tactical mistake to boycott the Commission as forgoing an important opportunity secured after great difficulty to state the Indian case before the whole world and likely to alienate from the cause influential support both in this country and in England. Mr. Gandhi, however, finds himself unable to act on this view unless the Union

Government modify in some manner the constitution of the Commission and release all passive resisters at present in jail, as he and the Indian community stand bound by a solemn oath not to accept the Commission except on these terms. This is the situation at present. Meanwhile Sir Benjamin Robertson starts for South Africa on 1st January. As it is necessary that the country should clearly understand Mr. Gandhi's position, I asked him to cable to me for publication a full statement of that position. This statement into which are incorporated some of his previous cables is as follows: Mr. Gandhi says: We were discharged unconditionally on 18th instant on the recommendation of the Commission. We were not told at the time of our release why we were being released. It is not true that after release we went to Pretoria to see the Ministers. Knowing what we do of the feelings of Mr. Esselen and Col. Wylie towards Indians, it is impossible for us not to feel strongly that the Commission has not been appointed to give us fair play, but it is a packed body intended to hoodwink the Government and the public both in England and in India. The Chairman's integrity and impartiality is undoubted, but Mr. Esselen and Col. Wylie are well-known and admitted generally to be amongst the strongest and most violent opponents of Indians in South Africa. Mr. Esselen has emphatically declared from public platforms on many occasions extreme anti-Asiatic views, and he is so intimately related politically to Union Ministers that he is regarded here practically as a non-official member of the Ministry. Only recently he expressed himself privately most offensively about the Indians to a member of the Union Parliament, named Mr. Meyler, who has publicly protested against his appointment. Col. Wylie has been our bitterest opponent in Natal for more than twenty years. So far back as 1896 he led a mob to demonstrate against the landing of Indians who had arrived at Durban in two vessels, advocated at a public meeting the sinking of the ships with all Indians on board and commending a remark made by another speaker that he would willingly put down one month's pay for one shot at the Indians, asked how many were prepared to put down similarly a month's pay on those terms. And he has consistently been our enemy all these years. Moreover he is colonel of the defence force whose acts are the subject of inquiry and ho is also legal adviser of many estate owners and during present agitation he has openly said that the £3 tax ought not to be repealed. Commission is not merely judicial but also political, investigating not only facts as to ill-treatment, but also recommending policy for the future, and it is impossible that the Chairman will control the views of his colleagues in matters of policy. To appoint Messrs Esselen and Wylie to investigate our grievances and to stigmatize our protests against their appointment as an unwarranted reflection on their impartiality is to add insult to injury. Almost entire South African Press admits reasonableness of our suggestions as to additional members, and several influential ministers of religion and other European friends are working to remove present deadlock and secure us fair play. We would be prepared to lead evidence before Sir

William Solomon alone if it was a question merely of inquiring into charges of flogging, acts of military and other ill-treatment, but this inquiry includes an examination of grievances also. Before our release public meetings had been held at all Indian centres throughout South Africa protesting strongly against the personnel of the Commission and urging the appointment of Mr. Schreiner and Judge Rose-Innes to counterbalance Messrs Esselen and Wylie. Immediately on our release as soon as we took the situation in, we addressed a letter to the Ministry asking for these additions to the Commission. Objection has been taken to the form in which this request was put forward by us, but we are confronted with a terrible crisis and it is not easy always to weigh carefully niceties of form at such a juncture. Indian position always has been to insist on the community being consulted at least informally regarding matters vitally affecting it since it is voteless. In constituting present Commission Indian sentiment not only was not consulted but was contemptuously trampled on. During recent deadlock in connection with European railwaymen's grievances the men were permitted to choose their nominee by a referendum. We merely ask for informal consultation. When we were released, we found that the indignation of our countrymen was at white heat owing to floggings which they had seen with their own eyes, shooting which they believed to be unjustified, and other acts of ill-treatment; and this indignation was further intensified by the harrowing accounts of prison treatment which passive resisters, including ladies, who were released at this time on the expiry of their sentences, gave to the community. In all our experience of prison treatment in this country, never have we been treated before with such unparalleled cruelty. Insults by warders, frequent assaults by Zulu warders, withholding of blankets and other necessary articles, food badly cooked by Zulus, all these necessitated a hunger-strike causing immense suffering. You have to know these things, to understand the frame of mind in which the community met in public meeting on Sunday 21st December to consider the position and resolve on future action. l here was but one feeling at the meeting and that was that if we had any self-respect we must not accept the Commission unless it was modified in some manner in favour of the Indians, and we must also ask for the release of all real passive resister-prisoners, in which term we do not include persons rightly convicted of actual violence. And we all took a solemn oath in God's name that unless these conditions were complied with, we would resume our passive resistance. Now this oath we mean to keep whatever happens. In this struggle we are fighting with spiritual weapons, and it is not open to us to go back on our solemn declarations. Moreover, in this matter it is not as though it is the leaders that are egging the community on. On the contrary, so determined is the community to keep the vow which it has solemnly taken that if any leaders ventured to advise the acceptance of the Commission without any modification on the lines asked for, they would beyond all doubt be killed, and I must add justly so. I believe we are gaining ground. Several

influential Europeans, including some ministers of religion, recognizing the justice of our stand, are working to help us and we have not yet given up the hope that some way may be found out of the difficulty. In all this crisis, I wish to say before concluding, two things have greatly sustained and comforted us. One is the splendid courage and staunch advocacy of our cause by His Excellency the Viceroy and the other is the hearty support which India has sent us. We shall do nothing now till Sir Benjamin Robertson arrives and we shall receive him with all honour and trust, both because you tell us we shall find in him a strong friend and also because he has been appointed by the Viceroy to whom we feel so profoundly grateful. But unless the Commission is made in some way more acceptable to us, I do not see how renewal of passive resistance can be avoided. We know it will entail enormous suffering, assure you we do not desire it, but neither shall we shrink from it, if it must become.

The Times of India, 1-1-1914.

APPENDIX X

EXTRACT FROM GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S DESPATCH

PRETORIA,
January 22, 1914

Subsequently in the course of confidential conversation General Smuts intimated to me that practically no difficulty would be presented by Mr. Gandhi's two administrative points, and very little by the point on the marriage question, if the sense of Mr. Gandhi's proposal thereon had been correctly apprehended. The abolition of the £3 tax would be a much more formidable task, but he was disposed to think that it would in the end be found inevitable. In substance therefore Mr. Gandhi could probably be met; on the question of form, however, he did not see his way clear to compliance with Mr. Gandhi's wishes. If in regard to policy he were to ignore the Commission appointed by the Government and to make a compact with Mr. Gandhi after all that had occurred recently, he and his colleagues would be placed in a most undignified and, he feared, even impossible position. At the same time, if a settlement which would be accepted by all parties as final was attainable, he would like to effect it without unnecessary delay by carrying the requisite legislation during the forthcoming Session. He doubted whether he would be able to carry such legislation unless he were fortified by a recommendation of the Commission, and equally whether a recommendation would be obtainable in time if evidence were to be led on every Indian grievance which could conceivably be brought forward. From this point of view matters would not be advanced by the acceptance of Mr. Gandhi's second alternative, viz., the addition of Sir James Rose-Innes or Mr. Schreiner to the Commission, even if there were no serious objections to such a course on other

grounds. He was in favour of limiting the enquiry of the Commission on questions of policy to the four points specified by Mr. Gandhi, if this could be done without making an overt bargain with him.

After further consideration and consultation of the Cabinet, General Smuts signified his decision to Sir Benjamin Robertson for communication to Mr. Gandhi. Its purport was that the Government could not see their way to alter either the composition or the terms of reference of the Commission, nor could they authorize him to make a compact with Mr. Gandhi by giving in advance of the Commission's report the assurances for which he had asked. The Commission must go on as previously arranged, but it would be asked to submit its recommendations in regard to policy at a sufficiently early date to enable legislation to be introduced during the forthcoming Session. If Mr. Gandhi felt himself precluded by his vow from giving evidence under these conditions, he was quite at liberty to abstain from participation in its proceedings; he need, however, feel no serious apprehensions as to the probable nature of the Commission's recommendations on his four points and as to the Government's intentions, but he should promise not to revive passive resistance until the Commission had reported and the Government had been given an opportunity of taking action on the report. The Minister repeated that while he had no knowledge whatever of Colonel Wylie's views he had some little time ago sounded both the Chairman and Mr. Esselen and felt sure that their recommendations would be satisfactory to Mr. Gandhi.

In the result of the ensuing interviews and negotiations an understanding which is embodied in the enclosed correspondence of yesterday's date, was finally reached by the Minister and Mr. Gandhi. You will observe that, while Mr. Gandhi receives no assurances, the Government expressed their desire for an early settlement. Mr. Gandhi and his friends will not appear before the Commission, but in recognition of the opportunities of consultation which General Smuts had afforded by consenting to receive Mr. Gandhi, they offer to assist Sir Benjamin Robertson in the preparation of his evidence. Passive resistance is to be suspended pending the report of the Commission and the introduction of legislation. The release of *bona fide* passive resisters now serving sentence is asked for, and the Minister explains that this had already been done by the Government. At his own suggestion, Mr. Gandhi and his friends will take no further action with regard to the allegations of ill-treatment during the Indian strike. The Government while repudiating the allegations as emphatically as ever will also refrain from leading evidence upon them, but reserve their right to ask the Commission to investigate the shooting affrays at Esperanza and Mount Edgecombe. It will be noted that Mr. Gandhi has added to his previous four points a fifth, asking for an assurance of just administration of the law and of due regard to vested rights. This appears to be innocuously vague and should not cause

any difficulty. He has also slightly modified his stipulation respecting the licence under Natal Act 17 of 1895. He formerly asked that a standing licence should be substituted for the annual licence, but he now apparently contemplates that after an ex-indentured Indian has acquired domiciliary rights, in terms of the judgment in the Subrayen case, by three years continuous residence after the expiration of his indentures, the licence should be dropped altogether. This is a point of detail on which the Commission's recommendation will doubtless carry weight with the Government. I may mention that yesterday afternoon, when Mr. Gandhi received Mr. Gorges' letter, he was much perturbed by the omission of any explicit recognition of the motive which restrained him from pursuing the allegations of ill-treatment. In order to meet his difficulty, General Smuts caused the words which now form the third sentence of the letter to be inserted. They were suggested by Mr. Gandhi himself, and he is understood to be satisfied[1] and to be leaving for Natal today.

Colonial Office Record: 551/54

APPENDIX XI

LETTER FROM MINISTER OF INTERIOR

PRETORIA,
January 21, 1914

SIR,

With reference to your letter of even date I am instructed by the Minister of the Interior to reply that you are correct in your statement that it is not proposed to make any alteration either in the personnel of, or the reference to, the Commission appointed to enquire into the recent Indian Strike in Natal. The Minister regrets but of course understands that you are so far committed by your previous public declarations in regard to the Commission that you are precluded from appearing before it. He also recognizes the motive which makes you unwilling to revive old sores by courting libel proceedings before another tribunal.

The Government repudiates as strongly and emphatically as heretofore the charges of harsh or improper action against the Indian passive resisters and strikers. But as you and your friends have decided not to appear before the Commission and lead evidence in support of those allegations, it seems likely that there will be no charges for the Commission to investigate. The Government would regret the consequent absence of an opportunity to lead rebutting evidence in vindication of the

[1] This has reference to the resolution of the deadlock in the final negotiations described by Andrews; *vide* footnote 2 to "Interview with General Smuts", 16-1-1914.

conduct of its officers, but it feels that, unless it has a definite case to answer, any attempt to deal with the allegations before the Commission could only result in an unprofitable waste of time. The Government is anxious that any recommendations which the Commission may make on the larger issue of Indian grievances should be received at a sufficiently early date to enable proposals to be submitted to Parliament during the forthcoming Session. It is hoped that those proposals, if accepted by Parliament, would ensure a satisfactory and permanent settlement. The Government considers that such a settlement of long standing disputes is too important to justify any risk of endangering its achievement by delaying the proceedings of the Commission—already delayed through unforeseen circumstances—by an enquiry, which would now be necessarily one-sided, into points of minor and secondary moment relatively to the wider issues at stake. If, therefore, the Indians decline to submit to the Commission any specific charges in connection with the treatment of passive resisters and strikers during the recent troubles, the Government will not think it necessary to take any further action in refutation of the allegations against it and its officers, but it reserves its right to ask the Commission to investigate the occurrences which resulted in loss of life at Esperanza and Mount Edgecombe.

With reference to your prayer for the release of *bona fide* passive resistance strikers from ordinary or compound gaols, the Department of Justice had already previous to the arrival of your letter taken steps for the release of the small balance of these prisoners kept in the gaols.

In regard to the grievances which you have summarised at the end of your letter, the Government will, as already stated, await the recommendations of the Commission before taking any action.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

E. M. GORGES

SECRETARY FOR THE INTERIOR

M. K. GANDHI ESQ.

PRETORIA

From a photostat of the typewritten original: S. N. 5926

APPENDIX XII

ANDREWS' INTERVIEW WITH GOVERNOR-GENERAL[1]

[PRETORIA,
January 13, 1914]

I saw Mr. Andrews quite privately on Tuesday and had a long talk with him. He impressed me favourably and appeared to have an exceptionally intimate acquaintance with the working of Mr. Gandhi's mind. He said that Mr. Gandhi makes two crucial demands (I) the recognition of one wife as having a legal status, (2) the repeal of the £3 tax. Importance was also attached but to a lesser degree to some agreement being arrived at which restored the right of unrestricted admission into the Cape Province enjoyed by South Africa-born Indians under the Cape Immigration Act. Mr. Andrews assured me that Mr. Gandhi would make no claim whatever to equal franchise rights, and fully accepted the policy of exclusion of Asiatics from South Africa. According to Mr. Andrews, Mr. Gandhi is prepared to accept the Commission in so far as enquiry into disturbances is concerned. If his political conditions are accepted, it would be a solution of the position and there would be no necessity for any further work by the Commission. If they were not accepted, a very difficult question would arise for Mr. Gandhi had, with several compatriots, taken a vow not to recognize the Commission unless he was met on his basic points. I said that personally I saw little difficulty in conceding what Mr. Andrews stated Mr. Gandhi required. But Ministers might not feel able to give unconditinal promises because the political situation might prevent giving absolute guarantees that the remedial Act could be passed. Mr. Andrews said that he feared Mr. Gandhi's vow would prove an insuperable obstacle. I suggested that Mr. Gandhi could give evidence as regards the disturbances as he expresses readiness to do this. He could then by leave address the Court, state his conditions, giving arguments and say that while fully accepting the capacity and authority of the Commission to decide on questions of fact, he reserved to himself and his colleagues absolute discretion to take their own courses on matters of political principle, and concerning his own conscience. He hoped that the Commission would arrive at a right judgment but that neither he nor his colleagues could give further evidence. Mr. Andrews said that this gave a ray of light. Nothing could shake Mr. Gandhi on matters of conscience. The vow might still create great difficulty. Mr. Gandhi's life, on a former occasion, had been attempted in Johannesburg by two Pathans because, after taking a vow, he had come to an agreement. But he would do his best to induce Mr. Gandhi to take this course if the Government assurances were not satisfactory.

[1] This is an extract from Governor-General's despatch dated January 14? 1914 to the Colonial Office.

He said further that, while Sir Benjamin Robertson was an excellent official, he would not understand the subtle and sensitive working of Mr. Gandhi's mind. I have given this information to General Smuts. How far Mr. Andrews correctly interprets Mr. Gandhi's views I cannot say, but if he speaks with accurate knowledge, the situation looks more hopeful. The Government, moreover, are in a better position to take a generous view than at any previous time. Their firm and courageous action in dealing with the strike firmly establishes their authority and reputation which various events had shaken. Mr. Gandhi's action in holding his hand while the Government were in difficulties has been much appreciated. If concessions are now made to the British Indians, no one can allege that they are made under coercion. l sincerely trust therefore that the outcome may be satisfactory.

Colonial Office Records: 551/53

APPENDIX XIII

EXETRACTS FROM SOLOMON COMMISSION REPORT

As the Bill based upon the recommendations of the Commission may be published very soon, we do not propose to give many extracts from the Report. Moreover, the full report is available at 9d. per copy in Cape Town. We give, however, some of the salient points from it. We have not found it possible to condense the exhaustive sketch of the marriage and the £3 questions. We have, therefore, been obliged to content ourselves with merely giving the text of the recommendations on these two points. The curious must search the Report itself. The document occupies 38 foolscap pages from which we take the following:

ON THE COMMUNITY'S ABSTENTION

Unfortunately the main object which the Commission had in view in commending the release of Messrs Gandhi, Polak and Kallenbach was, to a great extent, frustrated by the attitude taken up by these persons.

So far from assisting the Commission by placing before it the case for the Indian community for the redress of alleged grievances and by collecting evidence in support of the serious allegations of acts of violence committed upon persons sentenced to imprisonment in connection with the strike, the leaders decided, on various grounds which it is unnecessary to mention, entirely to ignore the Commission. The result was that not only was the Indian community not represented by counsel, but that, acting upon the advice given by Mr. Gandhi, no witnesses appeared to substantiate the charges of violence.

Fortunately, during the latter end of our sitting, a few Indians, chiefly from the Mahomedan section of that community, who represented the Natal Indian Congress,

did appear before us and gave evidence of considerable value and importance. At a later stage of the enquiry, when the Commission sat in Cape Town from the 23rd to the 27th February, several other Indians presented themselves who claimed to represent various societies, three of them having travelled from the Transvaal for that purpose. These persons were, we think, well advised to refuse to follow the advice given by Mr. Gandhi to his fellow-countrymen to ignore the Commission. By appearing and giving evidence they were able to give us important information on certain subjects and, by doing so, they, in our opinion, rendered considerable service to the Indian community.

ON THE CAUSES OF THE STRIKE

The documentary evidence as contained in the various Blue Books which have been placed at our disposal makes it clear that the strike was immediately due to dissatisfaction on the part of the leaders of the Indian community with the provisions of the Immigrants Regulation Act, 1913.

Being unable to obtain from the Minister what he considered to be satisfactory assurances on these points, Mr. Gandhi deliberately decided to take the grave steps which immediately led to the strike and to the subsequent disturbances which are the subject of this enquiry. In his letter of the 28th September, which closed the correspondence between the Minister and himself, he informs the former that the step which he proposes to take "consists in actively, persistently and continually asking those who are liable to pay the £3 tax to decline to do so and to suffer the penalties for non-payment, and, what is more important, in asking those who are now serving under indentures and who will, therefore, be liable to pay the £3 tax on completion of the indentures, to strike work until the tax is withdrawn."

This is the first occasion on which, in the course of the correspondence already referred to mention was made of the £3 tax. It was a matter, however, on which there can be no doubt that many of the Indians felt very strongly, and it had been one of the chief subjects of discussion between the Union Government and Mr. Gokhale when he visited South Africa in 1912. The feeling of the Indians on this subject had been much aggravated by the statements made to them that the Union Government had promised Mr. Gokhale that a Bill would be introduced in the next session of Parliament to repeal the tax.

When, therefore, no such Bill was introduced and when, in addition, the Government repudiated having made any promise to that effect, the result was that there was grave disappointment, on the part of the Indian community, especially in Natal. It is impossible for us in this enquiry to enter into the controversy which has arisen on the subject of the promise alleged to have been made to Mr. Gokhale; it is sufficient for our purpose to state that the Indians had been led to believe that such a

promise had been made, and that, on failure to introduce the expected legislation, there was considerable feeling on their part against the Government.

There were other matters affecting Indians which we were invited by certain witnesses to investigate, but which, in our opinion, did not fall within the scope of our reference. Our enquiry into alleged grievances is limited to those which in any way contributed to the strike. We have no authority to investigate and to make recommendations upon the general position of Indians in the Union, and the disabilities under which they suffer.

There was one other subject, however, upon which, though we at first felt some doubt as to whether it was within the terms of our reference, we ultimately decided to hear evidence. Complaints were made that the laws of the Union, more especially the Immigration and Licensing Acts, were being administered against Indians in a harsh and unsympathetic manner. That was one of the subjects specially referred to in a letter from Mr. Cachalia, the Chairman of the British Indian Association, to the Secretary of the Interior, dated 12th August, 1913, and published in Blue Book C.D. 7111, page 26, in which he formally notifies the Government that the Indian Community proposes again to have recourse to passive resistance, and in which he states that the struggle will be continued so long as, amongst other things, "a spirit of generosity and justice does not pervade the administration of the existing laws referred to herein."

The same subject is referred to in other communications that took place between the Indian leaders and the Government, and in his letter of the 21st January, 1914, in which Gandhi intimates to the Minister his intention not to take part in the proceedings before the Commission, he sums up the points on which relief is sought, as follows:

(1) The Orange Free State question

(2) The Cape Colony question

(3) The Marriage question

(4) Repeal of the £3 tax

(5) An assurance that existing laws, especially affecting Indians, will be administered justly and with due regard to vested rights.

In view of these circumstances, we came to the conclusion that we were justified in extending the scope of our enquiry so as to include an investigation into the subject of the administration of the Immigration and Licensing Laws.

We feel bound, however, in view of the terms of reference, to limit our investigation to the five subjects specified above, and to eliminate from our enquiry such questions as the following, which we were invited by various witnesses to consider:

(a) That the Transvaal Laws prohibiting Asiatics from becoming the

owners of fixed property and from acquiring rights under the Gold Law should be repealed.

(b) That it should be illegal for the Government to insert in grants and leases of land in townships in the Transvaal a clause prohibiting the transfer or sub-letting of the land to Asiatics;

(c) Such general questions as the alleged want of proper educational facilities for the children of Asiatics; their inability to carry firearms, to ride in trams in the Transvaal, etc.

None of these matters in our opinion had any effect in bringing about the strike, and most of them could only be dealt with by legislation and not by administrative action, so that we do not consider that they fall within the scope of our enquiry.

That being so, we now proceed to discuss the five subjects set forth by Mr. Gandhi in his final letter of the 21st January, 1914.

THE ORANGE FREE STATE QUESTION

This has already been referred to, and, in view of the assurance given by the Minister on the subject, it is somewhat difficult to understand why it has been resuscitated. The only point that can be made regarding it is, that, inasmuch as under Section 7 of the Act of 1913 educated Indians entering the Free State become subject to Section 8 of Chapter 33 of the Free State Law Book, which amongst other things requires that a declaration shall be made before a Resident Magistrate, and inasmuch as it has been agreed by the Minister that no such declaration shall in future be required, it might be advisable to amend Section 7 of the Act so as to make this perfectly clear.

THE CAPE ENTRY QUESTION

It is clear that, if the provisional settlement of 1911 did in fact safeguard the existing rights of Indians, then in strict law there has been a breach of that agreement. Unfortunately the terms of this settlement are not set forth specifically in any formal document, but are to be gathered from two letters which passed between the Private Secretary to the Minister and Mr. Gandhi on the 23rd April, 1911.

It has been pointed out that in the letter of the Private Secretary of the 22nd April, there was no direct assurance that existing rights would be maintained, but there is no doubt that Mr. Gandhi and the Indian community generally understood that this was one of the terms of the settlement. This appears from many letters subsequently written by Mr. Gandhi to the Minister and specially from certain correspondence which took place between them in January and February, 1912, and subsequently in July and August, 1913. For example, in Mr. Gandhi's letter of the 24th

August, 1913, he states specially that "the correspondence setting forth the provisional settlement of 1911 protected all existing rights of the British Indians". Statements to the same effect are made in other letters, and never on any occasion was this claim repudiated by the Minister. In fact, a perusal of the correspondence leaves the impression that this was common cause between the parties, and was never the subject of controversy.

Then, if that be so, it follows that by restricting the entry of Indians born in south Africa into the Cape Colony to those who can satisfy the educational requirement of Act 30 of 1906, there has been a departure from the provisional settlement of 1911. At the same time, it is clear from Mr. Gandhi's own letters to the Minister that there is very little substance in this alleged grievance.

Looking at the whole subject from a practical point of view, we have come to the conclusion that no good purpose could be gained by recommending that this shadowy grievance should be remedied by amending the Act of 1913, so as to restore the right of South Africa-born Indians to enter the Cape without undergoing the educational test therein provided.

Before leaving the subject we might refer to a point to which our attention was directed by Sir Benjamin Robertson. Section 4, (2) (a) of the Act of 1913 which deals with the educational requirements of the Cape and Natal Provinces, makes provision for those who were, *at the commencement of the Act*, lawfully entitled to reside in any Province. It was pointed out that the right conferred by that section would not strictly avail any person who became lawfully entitled to reside in any Province *after* the Act came into force, as for example, a child born, after the commencement of the Act, of Indians domiciled in South Africa.

It is indeed difficult to see what good purpose is served by the inclusion in the Section of the words "at the commencement of the Act," and they might very well be deleted.

ADMINISTRATION OF EXISTING LAWS

We have now reached the fifth and last of the alleged grievances which have been formulated by Mr. Gandhi in his letter to the Minister of the 21st January, 1914, in-which he requires "an assurance that the existing laws especially affecting Indians will be administered justly and with due regard to vested rights." The representations which have been made to us on this subject deal mainly with the Immigration and Licensing Acts, and, as already stated, we propose to confine ourselves to these subjects.

THE IMMIGRATION ACT

The complaints against the administrative methods of the Immigration

Department were fairly numerous, chiefly in the Cape Colony. In respect of some of them we were not satisfied that they have been established and we do not propose to make any reference to such. There are others, however, in regard to which we are of opinion that grievances do exist and we propose to deal with these as shortly as possible.

THE LICENSING ACTS

Representations were made to the Commission regarding the administration of the Acts with reference to the grant of licences to carry on trade or business in the Cape Colony and in Natal.

We do not, however, see our way to making any recommendations on this subject which are likely to be of any use.

No evidence was laid before us as to the administration of the licensing laws in other towns of the Cape Colony or in the country districts, and we have, therefore, no observations to make on that subject.

As regards Natal, the system is somewhat different from that which obtains in the Cape Colony.

The evidence before us is to the effect that the Act is not so strictly administered against Indians in the Natal boroughs as it is in Cape Town, but that it is becoming more and more difficult for Indians to obtain new licences except in those quarters of the town which are inhabited almost exclusively by them, and which may be regarded as Asiatic reserves. In some other parts of the towns it is almost impossible now for Indians to obtain new licences.

As regards the rest of Natal outside of the boroughs and townships, there is one licensing officer who is a Government official, and from whose decision an appeal lies to the licensing board. His policy towards Indians is far more liberal than that of the licensing officers in the boroughs. In fact, he informs us that he makes no distinctions between Europeans and Indians.

A fact of some interest which was elicited from this witness is that, where applications for new licences are made by Indians, more than 50 per cent of the objections come from other Indians.

We had no complaint regarding the grant of new licences from this licensing officer, the complaints being directed entirely against the administration of the Act in the boroughs and townships. We do not see our way, however, to make any recommendations on this subject. Nothing can be done which would be of any effect except by legislation, and, for the reasons already given when dealing with the grant of licences in Cape Town, we are unable to suggest any amendment of the laws.

We have now dealt with all the grievances formulated by Mr. Gandhi in his

letter to the Minister of the Interior, but before closing, we think that it is desirable to summarise the various recommendations that appear in different parts of the report.

Some of these recommendations will require legislation to give effect to them whilst others can be sufficiently dealt with by administrative action.

They are as follows:

(1) Section 5 (g) of the Immigration Regulation Act of 1913 should be amended so as to bring the law into conformity with the practice of the Immigration Department, which is: "To admit one wife and minor children by her of an Indian now entitled to reside in any Province, or who may in the future be permitted to enter the Union, irrespective of the fact that his marriage to such wife may have been solemnised according to tenets that recognise polygamy, or that she is one of several wives married abroad so long as she is his only wife in South Africa."

(2) Instructions should be given to the Immigration Officer to open registers in each Province for the registration by Indians of, say, three or more years' residence in South Africa, who have at present, or have had in the past, more than one wife living with them in South Africa, of the names of such wives, who are to be free to travel to and from India with the minor children so long as the husband continues to reside in this country.

(3) There should be legislations on the lines of Act 16 of 1860 of the Cape Colony making provision for the appointment of marriage officers from among the Indian priests of different denominations for the purpose of solemnising marriages in accordance with the respective religions of the parties.

(4) There should be legislation for the validation by registration of existing de facto monogamous marriages, by which is understood the marriage of one man with one woman, under a system which recognizes the right of the husband to marry one or more other wives.

(5) Section 6 of Act 17 of 1895 of Natal which requires certain Indians to take out year by year a pass or licence to remain in the Colony and which provides for the payment of £3 a year for such licence should be repealed.

(6) Conditions under which identification certificates under the Immigrants Regulation Act of 1913 are issued should be amended so as to provide that such certificates shall remain in force for a period of three years instead of one year.

(7) An Interpreter should be attached to the office of the Immigration Department in Cape Town who should be a whole-time officer.

(8) Application forms for permits, certificates, etc., from the Immigration Department should be filled in by the clerk in the office upon information supplied to him by the applicant, if the latter so desires.

(9) The practice at present existing in the Cape Town office of this Department

of taking in certain cases prints of all the fingers of both hands, instead of the thumbs only, should be discontinued.

(10) The Resident Magistrate of a district in which there is no immigration officer should have authority to issue temporary permits to Indians residing in his district who desire to travel from the Province in which they are living to another Province of the Union.

(11) The present fee of £1 for an identification certificate or temporary permit should be materially reduced, and no charge should be made for any extension.

(12) The present practice of the immigration officer of one Province of communicating by telegraph with the immigration officer of another Province, when an application is made by an Indian for a permit to travel from one Province to the other, should be discontinued.

(13) Domicile certificates which have been issued to Indians in Natal by the immigration officer of that Province, and which bear the thumb impression of the holder of the permit should be recognized as conclusive evidence of the right of the holder to enter the Union as soon as his identity has been established.

(14) An arrangement should, if possible, be made with the Government of India for the holding of official inquiries by the magistrate or other Government official in the case of women ant children proceeding from India to join their husbands and fathers in South Africa. If, on inquiry, the official is satisfied that the woman and children are the wife and children of the man in South Africa whom they claim as husband or father, a certificate should be given by him to that effect, and such certificate should be treated by the immigration officer as conclusive evidence of the facts stated in it.

Indian Opinion, 25-3-1914

APPENDIX XIV

Letter to Hermann Kallenbach [1]

Sunday 9.30, May 17, 1914

DEAR MR. KALLENBACH

It is very late now. I must go to bed early so that I can have no difficulty in getting up in time tomorrow morning. Father is a little better today but he will have still to be confined to bed for about 5 to 6 days. He is very weak. He speaks very slowly and not quite distinctly. He takes fruit juices and lemon drink now and then.

[1] *Vide* "The New Bill and the Old", 12-4-1913

The period of the fortnight was of a great commotion and hardly anybody in Phoenix could give rest to one's thought or mind. Jeki Behn is now away and father seems to have some feeling that a great burden is removed from his mind.

With love from us all,

Yours sincerely,

CHHAGANLAL

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

APPENDIX XV

EXTRACT FROM GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S DESPATCH

CAPE TOWN,
June 5, 1914

In my despatch Secret of the 30th ultimo I had the honour to report that Mr. Gandhi was about to have an interview with General Smuts for the purpose of discussing the points which he had raised upon the draft Indians' Relief Bill, and upon certain administrative questions. The interview took place on Saturday last. I understand that General Smuts suggested to Mr. Gandhi that, in view of the more immediate urgency of the Bill, the points connected with it should be taken first, and the administrative questions allowed to stand over for a short time until the Minister should have a little more leisure for their consideration. To this suggestion Mr. Gandhi appears to have agreed. The result of the interview was that General Smuts acceptedMr. Gandhi's representations upon the three legislative points specified in the third paragraph of my above-mentioned despatch, and gave instructions for the necessary amendments to be made in the text of the Bill prior to its introduction in the House of Assembly.

2. You will have learnt from my telegram of the 3rd instant that the Bill was introduced and read a first time on Tuesday last, and was set down for second reading on Monday the 8th instant. The variations from the original text have also been communicated to you by cablegram. Copies of the Bill as introduced accompany my despatch No. 362 of the 5th instant.

3. Mr. Gandhi's wishes have been met by the elimination from 2(1)(a) of the words "at the commencement of this Act", and the substitution of the word "exists" for the word "existed". The word "then" has been retained before the word "recognized" but I am not aware whether this retention is deliberate or due to an oversight. I am enquiring into the point, but in any case it does not seem to be one to which importance need be attached. The paragraph in its present form restores the

privileges in regard to the registration of Indian marriages which were provided in the last type-written draft, as enclosed with my despatch Secret No. 4 of the 16th ultimo. By a further amendment of Clause 2(1), the words "Magistrate or" have been inserted on page 2, line 25 of the new print. Thereby all Magistrates will be enabled to register Indian marriages under Clause 2, irrespective of the circumstance whether or not they also hold appointment as marriage officers. This meets Mr. Gandhi's second point. His third (relating to the admission of the children of a deceased woman who, had she lived, would have been eligible under Clause 3 for exemption from restriction) is met by the introduction of the words following the word "defined" on page 4, line 33 of the new print.

4. I have reason to believe that General Smuts is anxious to complete the second reading stage as soon as possible. It is to be hoped, therefore, that the Bill will not be crowded out by financial business on Monday. Considerable opposition from Natal members on both sides of the House is anticipated. Sir Thomas Smartt and other prominent Unionist members may be expected to give the Bill a helping hand. There are no indications at present as to the attitude which the Hertzogites and the Labour party are likely to adopt.

Colonial office Records: 55/58

APPENDIX XVI

THE INDIANS' RELIEF ACT, 1914

ACT NO. 22 OF 1914

TO MAKE PROVISION FOR THE REDRESS OF CERTAIN GRIEVANCES AND THE REMOVAL OF CERTAIN DISABILITIES OF HIS MAJESTY'S INDIAN SUBJECTS IN THE UNION AND OTHER MATTERS INCIDENTAL THERETO

Be it Enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, the Senate and the House of Assembly of the Union of South Africa, as follows:

APPOINTMENT OF MARRIAGE OFFICER TO SOLEMNIZE MARRIAGES ACCORDING TO THE RITES OF AN INDIAN RELIGION

l. (1) The Minister of the Interior (hereinafter referred to as Minister) may from time to time appoint priests of any Indian religion to be marriage officers with authority to solemnize the marriages of Indians in accordance with the rites and formularies of such religion.

(2) A marriage between two Indians solemnized in accordance with such rites and formularies by a marriage officer so appointed shall be a valid and binding marriage, and all the incidents shall follow therefrom which follow from any other union recognized in law as a valid and binding marriage.

(3) A marriage officer appointed under this section shall be under the same obligations of keeping registers and entering therein particulars of marriages solemnized by him as are imposed upon marriage officers appointed under any other law in force in the Province in which those marriages are solemnized and the provisions of any such law as to the custody and inspection of registers, the obtaining of copies thereof, the evidence of certified copies thereof, the loss, the destruction or falsification of or injury to such registers or such certified copies shall be deemed to be incorporated in this section.

VALIDATION BY REGISTRATION OF MARRIAGES WHICH IN FACT ARE MONOGAMOUS

2. (1) If any Indian male and Indian female upon a joint application to any magistrate or marriage officer (whether appointed under this Act or under any other law) satisfy such officer:

(a) That there exists between them a union recognised as a marriage under the tenets of an Indian religion which they profess; and

(b) That there does not exist between either of them and any other person a union so recognised as a marriage or any union recognized in law as a marriage; and

(c) That each of them is desirous that the union should be regarded as a valid and binding marriage in law,

such officer shall, upon being furnished with particulars as to the full name, residence, place of birth, and age of each party and such further particulars as are prescribed by regulations made under this section, register such union in manner so prescribed, as a marriage between those parties. Notwithstanding that by the tenets of the religion which the parties profess polygamous unions are approved or recognised, the said union shall, by the fact of registration, become, as from the date when it was contracted, a valid and binding marriage between the parties, and all the incidents shall follow therefrom which follow from any other union recognised in law as a valid and binding marriage, and the marriage shall be deemed to have taken place at the place where the union was, prior to the registration, contracted.

(2) The Minister may make regulations as to the manner in which applications shall be made under this section, the keeping of registers for the purposes thereof, and the particulars to be entered in those registers. The provisions of the marriage laws in force in the Province in which such unions are registered as marriages, so far as those laws relate to the custody and inspection of registers, the obtaining of copies thereof or extracts thereform, the evidence of certified copies thereof, the loss, destruction or falsification of or injury to those registers certified copies or extracts shall *mutatis mutandis* apply to registers kept under this section.

AMENDMENT AND INTERPRETATION OF SECTION FIVE (G.) OF ACT NO. 22 OF 1913

3. (1) From paragraph (g) of Section *five* of the Immigrants Regulation Act, 1913, (Act No. 22 of 1913), the following words shall be deleted, that is to say, the words—

> "Including the wife or child of a lawful and monogamous marriage duly celebrated according to the rites of any religious faith outside the Union—"

(2) In the interpretation of that paragraph, as hereby amended—

"The wife" shall include any one woman between whom and the exempted person mentioned therein there exists a union recognized as a marriage under the tenets of an Indian religion, notwithstanding that by those tenets the union of that exempted person with other women at the same time would also be recognized as a marriage: Provided that no woman shall be deemed to be the wife of such exempted person—

(a) If such a union exists between him and any other woman who resides in any Province; or

(b) If such exempted person has in any Province offspring by any other woman who is still living;

"The child under the age of sixteen" shall mean a child who is the offspring of the exempted person and the wife as herein defined, or the child of the exempted person and a deceased woman who, if she had been alive, could have been recognized as the wife (as herein defined) or whose union with the exempted person could have been registered as a marriage under Section *two* of this Act.

SAVING OF EXISTING PROVISIONS OF INDIAN IMMIGRATION LAWS OF NATAL AS TO MARRIAGES

4. Nothing in the preceding sections in this Act shall be construed as repealing or in any manner modifying the provisions of Sections *sixty-five* to *eighty-nine* inclusive of the Indian Immigration Law, 1891, of Natal (Law No. 25 of 1891) or Act No. 2 of 1907 of Natal.

AMENDMENT OF SECTION THREE OF ACT 17 OF 1895 (NATAL)

5. Section *three* of the Indian Immigration Amendment Act, 1895 (Natal) is hereby amended by addition to the end of that section of the words "if he applies therefor within twelve months after such expiry".

POWERS TO GRANT FREE PASSAGE TO INDIA AT REQUEST OF INDIANS

6. The Minister may in his discretion cause to be provided out of moneys appropriated by Parliament for the purpose a free passage from any port in the Union

to any port in India (with or without free conveyance by rail to such first mentioned port) for any Indian (other than an Indian who is or may become entitled under Law No. 25 of 1891—Natal—or any amendment thereof to such free passage) who makes a written request for such free passage and—

(a) Signs as a condition of the grant of such request a statement that he abandons on behalf of himself and his wife and all minor children (if any) all rights possessed by him or them to enter or reside in any part of the Union together with all rights incidental to his or their domicile therein; and

(b) Furnishes to an officer designated by the Minister such means of identification of such Indian and his wife and minor children (if any) as the Minister may prescribe.

A condition so signed shall be conclusive evidence that such Indian and his wife and minor children (if any) have abandoned his or their rights to enter and reside in the Union and any rights incidental to his or their domicile therein.

EVIDENCE OF FORMER RESIDENCE OR DOMICILE IN NATAL OF INDIANS

7. If in the administration of any law any question arises as to whether an Indian who produces a certificate of former residence or domicile in Natal is identical with the Indian who was lawfully entitled to obtain that certificate, then if the thumb impressions placed on that certificate when it was issued by the immigration officer are identical with the thumb impression of the Indian who produces it, the certificates shall be conclusive evidence of such Indian's former residence or domicile in Natal.

REPEAL OF PROVISIONS OF LAWS RELATING TO YEARLY PASSES OR LICENCES OF EX-INDENTURED INDIANS

8. The laws specified in the Schedule to this Act are hereby repealed to the extent set out in the fourth column of that Schedule, and those provisions of those laws which are hereby repealed shall, in so far as they have been extended to Zululand, cease to be in force therein.

No proceedings shall be taken to recover any moneys which may have become due from any Indian prior to the commencement of this Act under the provisions so repealed.

SHORT TITLE

9. This Act may be cited for all purposes as the Indians' Relief Act, 1914.

Colonial office Records: Cd. 7644/14

APPENDIX XVII

LETTER FROM E. M. GORGES

CAPE TOWN,
June 30, 1914

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Adverting to the discussions you have lately had with General Smuts on the subject of the position of the Indian community in the Union, at the first of which you expressed yourself as satisfied with the provisions of the Indians' Relief Bill and accepted it as a definite settlement of the points, which required legislative action, at issue between that community and the Government; and at the second of which you submitted for the consideration of the Government a list of other matters requiring administrative action, over and above those specifically dealt with in that Bill; I am desired by General Smuts to state with reference to those matters that:

(1) He sees no difficulty in arranging that the Protector of Indian Immigrants in Natal will in future issue to every Indian, who is subject to the provisions of Natal Act 17 of 1895, on completion of his period of indenture, or re-indenture, a certificate of discharge, free of charge, similar in form to that issued under the provisions of Section 106 of Natal Law No. 25 of 1891.

(2) On the question of allowing existing plural wives and the children of such wives to join their husbands (or fathers) in South Africa, no difficulty will be raised by the Government if, on enquiry, it is found, as you stated, that the number is a very limited one.

(3) In administering the provisions of Section (4) (1) (a) of the Union Immigrants' Regulation Act, No. 22 of 1913, the practice hitherto existing at the Cape will be continued in respect of South Africa-born Indians who seek to enter the Cape Province, so long as the movement of such persons to that Province assumes no greater dimensions than has been the case in the past; the Government, however, reserve the right, as soon as the number of such entrants sensibly increase, to apply the provisions of the Immigration Act.

(4) In the case of the "specially exempted educated entrants into the Union" (i.e., the limited number who will be allowed by the Government to enter the Union each year for some purpose connected with the general welfare of the Indian community), the declarations to be made by such persons will not be required at Provincial borders, as

the general declarations which are made in terms of Section 19 of the Immigrants' Regulation Act at the port of entry are sufficient.

(5) Those Indians who have been admitted within the last three years, either to the Cape province or Natal, after passing the education tests imposed by the Immigration Laws which were in force therein prior to the coming into effect of Act 22 of 1913, but who, by reason of the wording of Section 20 thereof, are not yet regarded as being "domiciled" in the sense in which that term is defined in the Section in question, shall, in the event of their absenting themselves temporarily from the Province in which they are lawfully resident, be treated, on their return, as if the term "domicile" as so defined did apply to them.

(6) He will submit to the Minister of Justice the cases of those persons who have in the past been convicted of "*bona fide* passive resistance offences" (a term which is mutually understood) and that he anticipates no objection on Mr. De Wet's part to the suggestion that convictions for such offences will not be used by the Government against such persons in the future.

(7) A document will be issued to every "specially exempted educated entrant" who is passed by the Immigration Officers under the instructions of the Minister issued under Section 25 of Act No. 22 of 1913,

(8) All the recommendations of the Indian Grievances Commission enumerated at the conclusion of their Report, which remain over and above the points dealt with in the Indians' Relief Bill, will be adopted by the Government;

and subject to the stipulation contained in the last paragraph of this letter the necessary further action in regard to those matters will be issued without delay.

With regard to the administration of existing laws, the Minister desires me to say that it always has been and will continue to be the desire of the Government to see that they are administered in a just manner and with due regard to vested rights.

In conclusion, General Smuts desires me to say that it is, of course, understood, and he wishes no doubts on the subject to remain, that the placing of the Indians' Relief Bill on the Statute Book of the Union, coupled with the fulfilment of the assurances he is giving in this letter in regard to the other matters referred to herein, touched upon at the recent interviews, will constitute a complete and final settlementof the controversy which has unfortunately existed for so long, and will be

unreservedly accepted as such by the Indian community.

I am, etc.,
E. M. GORGES

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
CAPE TOWN

Colonial Office Records: 551/58

APPENDIX XVIII

(1) GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S DESPATCH TO COLONIAL OFFICE

CAPE TOWN,
July 4, 1914

SIR,

The agreement reached between General Smuts and Mr. Gandhi upon outstanding administrative points, as reported to you by telegraph on the 1st instant, is a welcome sequel to the enactment of the Indians' Relief Bill, and presages, I trust, a respite from those Indians' troubles which have formed the subject of constant correspondence during practically the whole of my residence in this country.

2. I enclose herewith copies of the two letters[1] which were summarised in my telegram. The concessions promised by the Minister display a spirit of generosity and statesmanship. All Mr. Gandhi's stipulations which were recorded in my Secret Despatch of the 30th May have been met, although in regard to the preservation of vested rights in the administration of existing laws and particularly of the Transvaal Gold Law, the general assurance given towards the end of Mr. Gorges' letter is less precise and categorical than Mr. Gandhi desired. This point, I believe, was found the most difficult of adjustment. On Sunday last General Smuts said that on the previous day he had received Mr. Gandhi in an interview lasting a couple of hours, and that, apart from the question of the administration of the Gold Law, an agreement was in sight. Upon the Gold Law, however, Mr. Gandhi's demands involved an extension rather than a confirmation of vested rights as understood by the Minister, and he did not think it would be possible to give the specific assurance for which he was asked. Being anxious for a settlement, he was still considering what could be done, but he doubted that he would be able to go as far as Mr. Gandhi wished. The further negotiations were conducted by Mr. Gorges, and in the end Mr. Gandhi, either in a mood of sweet reasonableness or from reluctanceto jeopardize what he had obtained

[1] The reference is to E. M. Gorges' letter to Gandhiji of June 30, 1914, the preceding appendix, and Gandhiji's reply thereto of the same date ("Letter to E. M. Gorges", 30-6-1914).

for the sake of the unobtainable, signified his willingness to accept the formula which was offered and to close the bargain. Letters were exchanged and on the following morning, the 1st instant, Mr. Gandhi left Cape Town for Durban. My Secretary, who happened to meet him before his departure, did not observe any marked change in his appearance as the result of his recent fast. In the course of a brief conversation he spoke with great modesty of his own share in the settlement and with generosity of the help which had been given by others.

3. Mr. Gandhi presumably will publish the attached correspondence shortly after the end of the session. It is not likely to enhance the popularity of the Government in Nationalist circles, and even in some other quarters, especially in Natal, it may be expected to have a dubious reception. In these circumstances publicity before Parlia-ment has risen might prove very inconvenient. I need not lay stress on the courage with which General Smuts has disregarded the prejudices of a large section of his party.

4. The assurance given on the first point specified in Mr. Gorges' letter should go far to allay the apprehensions which have been aroused in Natal as to the effect of the removal of the £3 licence. These misconceptions are responsible for the foolish telegrams from Durban, which have been communicated to you under cover of my Despatches No. 467 and No. 468 of the 2nd instant, asking that the Bill should be "vetoed". The sender of one of them, Mr. K. K. Pillay, who describes himself as "Chairman of the £3 tax Committee", is said to be a person of no importance. I am also told that it is very doubtful whether Mr. M. C. Coovadia, from whom the other emanates, has any considerable following even among the members of the Natal Indian Congress. Information has reached me that at a recent so-called "mass meeting" which he summoned the attendance only numbered some thirty Indians. For the accuracy of this statement I cannot, however, vouch. There is some force in his criticism of Section 7 of the Act as redrafted. The point had not been overlooked. I saw the new clause for the first time when it appeared among the amendments on the Order paper. I at once caused enquiry to be made why the Commission's re-commendation had been varied so that proof might be required not only of the identity of the Indian producing a certificate of domicile, but also of the grantee's lawful title to its issue. I was advised that in some cases such certificates had been obtained by fraud and that the Government did not think it right that these should be protected. I should have preferred the original clause, but as the contention of the Government was not in itself unreasonable, and as Mr. Gandhi took no exception to the amendment, I did not feel called upon to cause embarrassment by insisting on so relatively trivial a detail. In other respects Mr. Coovadia's telegram is futile. It is conceivable, though there is no evidence, that this agitation may have been encouraged by a few Euro- peans in Natal who were perhaps not averse from allowing

Indian suspicion and credulity to be stimulated into a belief that, in the absence of a £3 licence, reindenture was the only safeguard against compulsory repatriation. Mr. Gandhi's influence may, upon his return to Natal, be expected to supply the necessary corrective.

5. On the second point in Mr. Gorges' letter, the concession is more generous even than the Commission's recommendation in so far as the requirement that the plural wives affected shall previously at some time have lived in South Africa has been omitted. That the privilege was only to be granted if the number of potential beneficiaries was found to be small has been common ground throughout.

6. On the third point Mr. Gandhi receives the desired administrative assurance in regard to the question of the "Cape entry". On the fourth point his difficulty about the Orange Free State declaration is met. The matter dealt with in the fifth point had not hitherto, so far as I am aware, been raised. It is disposed of in an eminently fair and reasonable manner. On the sixth point a conciliatory and favourable answer is given to Mr. Gandhi's plea that past convictions for "*bona fide* passive resistance offences" should not in future be brought up against the persons so convicted. The seventh point regulates satisfactorily a detail of procedure in connection with the admission of "specially exempted entrants". In the eighth point the pledge given by General Smuts in the House of Assembly as to the adoption of all the administrative recommendations summarised at the end of the Commission's report is explicitly reiterated. No surprise can be felt at the addition of a stipulation that the fulfilment of all these assurances in conjunction with the legislative action which has been taken is subject to the understanding that the settlement will be accepted as complete and final by the Indian community.

7. Mr. Gandhi in his reply says unequivocally that the passage of the Bill and this correspondence bring the passive resistance struggle to a final close and at the end of his letter he expresses his conviction that, if the generous spirit recently displayed by the Government continues to be applied, as promised, in the administration of existing laws, the Indian community in the Union will be able to enjoy some measure of peace and will never be a source of trouble to the Government. Further than this Mr. Gandhi could hardly be expected to go, and General Smuts would probably have been glad if the letter had been confined to these two statements. The indication that other points stand over for adjustment at some future date is, however, tactfully worded, and Mr. Gandhi may have felt its inclusion to be necessary both in justice to himself and as a means of preventing any immediate clamour for further concessions. General Smuts, when the letter was submitted to him, is understood to have described it as a remarkable feat of diplomacy and ingenuity; he does not appear to have regarded it as a serious departure from the terms of settlement, but I have not yet had an opportunity of sounding him personally on the point.

8. I enclose two newspaper extracts. The first reports the proceedings at a congratulatory function held in Mr. Gandhi's honour on Saturday last. The speeches delivered by Senator Marshall Campbell, Mr. Meyler, and Mr. Gandhi will be read with interest. The second records a grumble by a Muhammdan Society at Johannesburg. Their grievance presumably is that the Act fails to give recognition to polygamy, and that grievance, I fear, will, for the present at any rate, have to remain unredressed. The legislation of Mauritius, to which a Muhammadan deputation invited the attention of General Smuts, is considered by the Department of the Interior, with whose view I agree, to be rather less liberal, in this respect than the marriage provisions of the Indians Relief Act as passed by the Union Parliament.

I have, etc.,
GOVERNOR-GENERAL

Colonial Office Records: 551/58

(2) GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S DESPATACH TO COLONIAL OFFICE

CAPE TOWN,
July 10, 1914

SIR,

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a copy of correspondence, as published in the Press, between the Department of the Interior and Mr. Gandhi upon certain administrative questions which had stood over for adjustment pending the enactment of the Indians' Relief Bill. The Act which has now been placed on the Statute Book gives effect to those recommendations of the Indian Enquiry Commission which necessitated legislation. The remaining recommendations were such as could be dealt with departmentally. In regard to them the necessary action is promised in the enclosed correspondence and this promise is supplemented by assurances acceptable to Mr. Gandhi upon the other points which he had specified as essential to the attainment of a satisfactory settlement.

2. Mr. Gandhi's statement that this correspondence, coupled with the passage of the Bill, finally closes the passive resistance struggle which began nearly eight years ago will be noted with much gratification. I am glad indeed in relinquishing my office here to know that the Indian troubles of South Africa which have occasioned so much anxiety not only to the Government and people of this country but also to His Majesty's Government and the Government of India may now be expected to subside. In my judgment the Ministers and Parliament of the Union a well as Sir William Solomon and his fellow Commissioners have performed a great Imperial service by their several contributions to the present settlement.

3. It will be observed that while Mr. Gandhi accepts the agreement so far as he personally is concerned, he mentions in his letter a few other points which, in his

opinion, remain to be dealt with at some future date. He does not, however, foreshadow a revival of agitation, and I cannot believe that any considerable portion of the Indian community will be so ill-advised as to make the concessions which have been afforded to them a new starting point for further demands. Some apprehensions in this respect seem to have been felt by the writer of a leading article in the *Cape Argus*, of which I attach a copy, but it is to be hoped that the Indians, after obtaining so much, will not commit the folly of displaying impatience because they have not obtained even more.

4. The further Press extracts which are enclosed will be read with interest.

The first reproduces the text of two telegrams despatched from Johannesburg to Mr. Gokhale in England and to some addressee at Bombay, respectively. The former is signed by Mr. Cachalia, whose ultimatum to the Government, it will be remembered, formed the prelude of the Natal Strike and its concomitant movements towards the end of last year; the latter is signed by Messrs Cachalia, Gandhi, Kallenbach, and Polak. In both the words "final settlement" are used, and both are conceived in a spirit and couched in language to which the most querulous critic could take no exception.

The second extract reports Mr. Gandhi's arrival at Durban and the adoption of a Resolution by the Natal Indian Association approving of his action.

The third summarises a farewell speech delivered by Mr. Gandhi at a reception given in the Town Hall of Durban under the presidency of the Mayor, on the 8th instant. You will observe that he expresses gratitude to the Union Government, acknowledges the help received from other quarters, and in speaking of the settlement appears to attach no qualifications to them.

The circumstance that he proposes to leave South Africa next week may perhaps be taken as implying that he regards his labours in this country as having been brought to an honourable conclusion.

I have, etc.,
GOVERNOR-GENERAL

Colonial office Records: 55l/58

APPENDIX XIX

THE STRUGGLE AND WHAT IT HAS MEANT

(BY THE EDITOR)

How oft by God's will, hath a small host vanquished a large
host, and God is with the patiently persevering.—*Quran*
Think ye to enter Paradise, when no such things have come

upon you, as on those who flourished before you?—Ills

and troubles tried them.—*Quran*

To survey, within a limited space, the origins and incidents of a movement that has occupied eight years of the history of South African Indians is a task impossible of satisfactory fulfilment. The present sketch will, therefore, be but a hasty outline, with here and there an indicator emphasising a noteworthy occurrence or a fundamental outline.

The origins of the Passive Resistance Struggle are to be sought, not in the agitation of 1906, but in that which commenced, in one of its phases, in the Transvaal, in 1885, and, in another, in Natal, in 1894. The old Republican Law 3 of 1885, whilst imposing various burdens upon Asiatics residing in the country, required that such of them as entered for purposes of trade should be registered at a fixed fee, and that, "for sanitary purposes", they should reside in Locations specially set apart for them. To a large extent, both requirements proved a dead letter, but a great deal of friction with the British Government was engendered, resulting in Imperial intervention at the time of the War, when resident Indians, as British subjects, were promised complete redress of their grievances.

In Natal, a British Colony, the position had been complicated by the grave prejudice aroused by the presence of large numbers of Indian labourers brought at the instance of the European Colonists under indenture, and an agitation had arisen for the exclusion of free Asiatic immigration and the disfranchisement of all Asiatics. It became a question whether this was to be accomplished by specifically racial legislation or by general enactment differentially administered. The conflict of views represented by these two methods raged for some time, but at last, thanks to the statesmanship of Mr. Chamberlain, in 1897, the second method was adopted, and the famous "Natal Act" passed, imposing an educational and not a racial test. From then onwards, in Natal, racial legislation was a thing of the past, and hence the first signs of renewed trouble arose in the Transvaal, where the principle of statutory equality had not been accepted, owing to a different political conception of the status of Coloured people.

In the re-settlement that took place after the War, it was hoped that the burdens would be removed from the shoulders of the British Indian community, but Indians were dismayed to find the Imperial authorities endeavouring vigorously to enforce the obnoxious legislation against which they had strongly protested in pre-War days, a policy that was later weakly defended by Lord Selborne. Immigration of Indians was severely restricted by the Peace Preservation Ordinance. Registration of practically all adult male Indians, under Law 3 of 1885, was urged by Lord Milner, and was subsequently agreed to by the Indian leaders as a purely voluntary act, on Lord

Milner's definite promise[1] that this registration would be regarded as complete and final, and that the certificates issued would constitute a permanent right of residence to the holders and a right to come and go at will.

Meanwhile, Law 3 of 1885 was being enforced so as to compel all Indians to reside and trade in Locations, and the pre-War controversy was revived, resulting in an appeal to the Supreme Court, which reversed the old Republican High Court's decision, and held that Indians were free to trade anywhere they pleased, and that non-residence in a Location was not punishable at law. This decision was a severe rebuff to the anti-Indian element in the European population that had its representatives even in the Government, which endeavoured to legislate to overcome the effect of the Supreme Court decision—without result, however, owing to the intervention of the then Secretary of State for the Colonies, the late Mr. Lyttelton. But the general public, by ingeniously manipulated statistics, were led to believe in a huge influx of unauthorised Asiatics into the Transvaal, to which some colour was lent by the dispersal of the Indian residents of the Johannesburg Indian Location throughout the Colony, after it was burnt down at the time of the plague outbreak in 1904, and meetings all over the Transvaal were held with the object of closing the door against all Asiatic immigration, and compelling Indians to trade and reside exclusively in Locations. In an atmosphere of prejudice and terror thus created, it was impossible effectively to protest one's innocence, and the request of the Indian community for an open and impartial inquiry, whether by Royal Commission or otherwise, fell on deaf ears; so that when a draft ordinance was published in 1906 to "amend" Law 3 of 1885, requiring compulsory re-registration of the entire Indian community, men, women, and children, it was vociferously welcomed by the whole European population, whilst it fell amongst the Indian victims-to-be like a bombshell. The basic assumption, on the part of the authorities, for its necessity lay in the unquenchable belief in wholesale Indian immigration of an unlawful character, to which, in their opinion, resident Indians could not but be a party. So far as the general public was concerned, the measure was hailed as the first instalment of a scheme designed to drive Indians out of the Colony altogether, and Europeans in the neighbouring Colonies and territories eagerly looked on, as they had looked on, in 1903, at Lord Milner's abortive effort to compel Indian trade and residence in Locations, so that they might take advantage of the results of the new policy to relieve themselves of their own Asiatic "incubus".

Appalled by the magnitude of the disaster that threatened the community, the Indian leaders hastened to take steps to avoid it, if possible. They sought an interview with the responsible member of the Government, but succeeded only in getting women excluded from the operation of the measure, and, as a last resort, an Indian mass meeting[2] was held at the moment that the legislative Council was

[1] *Vide* "The British Indian Association and Lord Milner", 11-6-1903.

[2] *Vide* "The Mass Meeting", 11-11-1906 & "Johannesburg Letter", 22-9-1906.

debating the clauses of the draft ordinance. Whilst the Council's debate was perfunctory and prearranged performance, the whole business being concluded in less than a couple of hours, the crowded Empire Theatre rang with impassioned denunciations of the Government's policy, which belied the solemn undertaking of Lord Milner in every important respect, assumed the guilt of the Indian community unheard and without proof, and adumbrated their virtual expulsion from the Colony, and, eventually, from South Africa. So fierce was the indignation aroused that, when the famous Fourth Resolution[1] was put, committing all present, and those they represented, to go to gaol, if the measure should become law, until such time as it should be repealed or disallowed, the whole vast audience of three thousand persons rose as one man, and shouted a solemn "Amen," when the oath of Passive Resistance was administered. Simultaneously, however, and as a last effort to avoid a terrible conflict, a deputation to England was arranged for.[2] The delegates proceeded there to interview the Imperial authorities and arouse public opinion, and their efforts resulted in the suspension of the Royal Assent to the measure owing to the imminence of the inauguration of self-government in the Transvaal, and in the formation of the famous South Africa British Indian Committee, with Sir Mancherji Bhownaggree as its Executive Chairman, Mr. L. W. Ritch as its Secretary, and, subsequently, Lord Ampthill as its President.

The disallowance of the measure was, however, merely a temporary respite, for, taking umbrage at what was thought to be an impertinent intrusion on the part of the Imperial Government in the affairs of a practically self-governing British Colony, the European section of the population angrily demanded the immediate re-enactment of the ordinance, and almost the first action of the new Parliament was to rush it through all its stages in a single session of a unanimous House,[3] entirely ignoring Indian opinion and Indian protests, for, as Indians were not directly represented in Parliament, nobody appeared to consider it necessary to take their feelings into consideration.

Still anxious to avoid a struggle that had appeared to be inevitable, the Indian leaders had urged the Government and Parliament not to proceed with the Bill, but to accept a voluntary effort of re-registration in a manner that might be mutually agreed upon, in which they proffered all possible assistance. But they were distrusted and ignored, and all the tragic possibilities of a prolonged conflict were forced upon the Indian community. In July 1907, the new Act came into force, and registration under it officially commenced, in compartments, the registration officers travelling from town to town throughout the Colony. Their efforts to induce registration were wholly unsuccessful, and an extension of the advertised time for registration was given by

[1] *Vide* "The Mass Meeting", 11-11-1906
[2] This was in October-December, 1906.
[3] *Vide* "Cable to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 6-4-1907

the Government, as a last opportunity to comply with the law. But 95 per cent of the Indian community remained true to its oath. Meanwhile, a further effort had been made to avoid an extension of the trouble, and a petition[1], signed by some 3,000 Indians, had been addressed to the Government, imploring them to realise the depth of suffering into which it was threatened to plunge the Indian community, who once more offered voluntary re-registration if the Act was suspended. The petition was rejected contemptuously, and, at the end of the year, several of the leaders were arrested, ordered to leave the Colony, and, upon their refusal to do so, imprisoned for various periods. This process was repeated, until some hundreds of all classes were lodged in gaol, and the Government, realising that their efforts to crush the communtiy had failed, opened up negotiations through the agency of Mr. Albert Cartwright, then Editor of *The Transvaal Leader,* with the result that, almost at the moment that H. H. the Aga Khan was presiding over a huge public meeting of protest in Bombay, a compromise was signed, whereby it was agreed to suspend passive resistance, to proceed with voluntary re-registration for a period of three months, during which the operation of the law was to be suspended, and, as the Indian signatories clearly understood, to repeal the hated Act if the re-registration was satisfactorily completed. In the meantime, the situation had been complicated by the passing of an Immigration Act that, operating jointly with the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, absolutely prohibited all Asiatic immigration, no matter how cultured the immigrant might be. Thus, at a stroke, the policy of non-racial legislation, that had been so strongly advocated by Mr. Chamberlain, was destroyed. The community, however, realised that, with the repeal of the Asiatic Act, the racial taint would disappear, and all efforts were, accordingly, concentrated upon that. The commencement of voluntary re-registration was signalised by a murderous attack upon Mr. Gandhi[2] by a misguided countryman, and, for the moment, everything was in confusion. But a special appeal to the community was made and, with confidence restored and the promise of repeal, re-registration was duly completed by the middle of May, and Lord Selborne himself bore testimony to its satisfactoriness. Then the Government were called upon to perform their part of the compromise, but the promise of repeal was repudiated, and immediately the Indian community was thrown into a turmoil. The Government offered to repeal the Act provided that certain classes of Indians were treated as prohibited immigrants, and the racial bar remained in the Immigration Law. Naturally, these terms were indignantly rejected, and the community prepared for a revival of Passive Resistance. Mr. Sorabji Shapurji, an educated Parsee from Natal, was Imprisoned as a protest against the racial bar. The Natal Indian leaders entered the Transvaal, in order to cooperate with their brethren

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 1-11-1907
[2] *Vide* "My Reward", 22-2-1908

there, and were arrested as prohibited immigrants and ordered to leave the Colony. But at a mass meeting[1] held in Johannesburg, at which they were present, hundreds of certificates of voluntary registration were publicly burnt, and a challenge of wholesale imprisonment was thrown out to the Government, who took alarm at the situation, and a conference of leading members of the Government and Opposition, and of representatives of the Indian and Chinese communities, together with Mr. Albert Cartwright, as mediator, was held at Pretoria. The conference proved abortive, however, for though they were prepared to waive the other points upon which they had previously insisted, the Government proved adamant on the two main issues. They definitely refused either to repeal the Asiatic Act or to remove the racial bar of the Immigration Law. An amending Bill was passed through both Houses of Parliament, validating voluntary registration, and improving the Indian position in certain respects, but it being, in the main, unsatisfactory for the reasons given above, it was not recognized by the Passive Resisters, who resumed the struggle with energy. The new measure, however, strengthened the hands of the Government by giving them powers of deportation, which, however, were at first neutralised by their deporting Passive Resisters across the Natal border, whence they returned as fast as they were deported.

Into the many details and ramifications of the struggle at this stage it is unnecessary now to enter; suffice it to recall the Delagoa Bay incidents, when the Portuguese Government acted as the catspaw of the Transvaal, in preventing the entry into the Transvaal of returning Indians lawfully resident there, the various test-cases brought in the Supreme Court against the Government, some of which were lost and some won, the voluntary insolvency of Mr. A. M. Cachalia, the Chairman of the British Indian Association, who preferred to keep his oath and preserve his honour to the sordid joy of money-making, the imprisonment of Indians of all classes by hundreds, the appeals to India, where protest meetings were held in different parts of the country, the financial help of Natal, the arousing of enthusiasm amongst Indians all over the country, the activity of Lord Ampthill's Committee in London, and of the British Press, the bitter controversies that raged in the Transvaal papers, the latent sympathy of not a few Transvaal Europeans, culminating in the formation of Mr. Hos- ken's Committee that rendered such splendid and patriotic service in a number of ways, the public letter to *The Times*, the refusal of the Royal Assent to anti Indian measures passed by the Legislatures of Natal and Southern Rhodesia, the Indian mass meetings in Johannesburg and all over South Africa, the weakening of some sections of the Indian community and the strengthening of others, the amazing revelation of Tamil strength and fortitude, the energetic labours of the Indian women, the ruin and desolation of businesses and homes, the cruel gaol hardships whose purpose was to

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting", 16-8-1908 & 23-8-1908

crush the spirit of the Passive Resisters, the magnificent courage of those who sought imprisonment again and again, the glorious religious spirit that was developed as the struggle moved on from phase to phase, the hopes and fears, the firm faith of the leaders in ultimate success—all these constitute a pageant of incidents and emotions that gave greatness to the Passive Resistance movement, and that bestowed upon its most distinguishing characteristics.

New life was given to the movement in the middle of 1909, when two deputationswere authorised to proceed to England and India respectively, to cultivate public opinion there and to seek assistance. As the delegates were on the point of leaving, the majority of them were arrested and imprisoned as passive resisters, doubtless with the intention of preventing the departure of the remainder. But the community insisted that the deputations should go. In England, interest in the question was strongly revived, and, as Transvaal Ministers were there at the time in connection with the Draft Act of Union, the Imperial authorities strove to effect a settlement; but General Smuts proved obdurate, and flatly declined to remove the statutory racial bar and substitute for it general legislation, though it was clear that the Asiatic Act was doomed. The deputation, which had been led by Mr. Gandhi, therefore returned to South Africa, having accomplished only a part of what it had hoped to achieve, but having arranged for a body of volunteers who undertook to collect funds and keep the subject before the public.

The deputation to India, heralded by the tragic death of Nagappen shortly after his release from prison, was of a different character. Mr. Polak, who was the sole remaining delegate, placed himself unreservedly in the hands of the Hon. Mr. Gokhale, whose Servants of India Society arranged for meetings to be held in every part of the country, from Bombay to Rangoon, from Madras to Lahore. Tremendous enthusiasm was aroused, Indian patriotic pride in the sufferers in South Africa was awakened, and funds were energetically collected following the example of Mr. Ratan J. Tata, some £10,000 being contributed for the maintenance of the struggle, ruling princes sending generous subscriptions. All sections of the people united in demanding the intervention of the Imperial Government, and at the historic session of the Imperial Council at Calcutta, the Government of India announced its acceptance of Mr. Gokhale's resolution, unanimously supported, to take powers to prohibit the further recruitment of indentured labour in India for Natal. After a thirteen months' campaign, India had been educated on the South African Indian question to a degree that aroused the attention and anxiety of the Home authorities, and when angry protests came from every part of the country against the Transvaal Government's action in deporting to India large numbers of Passive Resisters (many of them born in South Africa), with the object of breaking up the movement, the Imperial Government, upon the urgent representations of the Government of India,

successfully implored the Transvaal—and, subsequently, the Union—Administration to cease to deport. The deportees subsequently returned to South Africa, but with the loss of Narayansamy, who died at Delagoa Bay after having been unlawfully denied a landing anywhere in British territory.

Meanwhile, the four South African Colonies had become Provinces of the Union of South Africa, and the Imperial Government, convinced at last of the justice of the Indian cause, and taking advantage of the possibilities of the new situation, addressed to the Union Government the memorable despatch of October 7, 1910, in which they powerfully recommended the repeal of Act 2 of 1907, the removal of the racial bar, and the substitution for the latter of the Indian suggestion of non-racial legislation modified by administrative differentiation, effectively limiting future Indian immigration to a minimum number annually of highly educated men, whose services would be required for the higher needs of the Indian community. To this dispatch was appended the condition that nothing that was done to Settle the Transvaal controversy at the expense of the Indians residing in the Coast Provinces would be satisfactory to the Imperial Government. The Union Ministers responded in a friendly manner, the struggle became less acute, and ultimately, in 1911, a Union Immigration Bill was published, purporting to settle the controversy that had been raging for so long. The new measure, however, obviously did not serve its purpose, for, whilst repealing the Asiatic Act of 1907, saving the rights of minors that had been declared by the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court in the Chotabhai case, the Bill did not remove the racial bar, but rather extended it throughout the Union, by reason of the Orange Free State entry question, and it took away other rights not only from Transvaal Indians, but from those resident in the Coast Provinces. A unanimous outcry arose from them, negotiations were re-opened, and the suggestion was thrown out by the Passive Resistance leaders that the Bill should be replaced by one limited to the Transvaal alone, which, however, was not adopted. Eventually it was found impossible to pass the Bill, and a provisional settlement was arranged, whereby the Indians undertook to suspend Passive Resistance, whilst the Government promised to introduce satisfactory legislation in the 1912 session of Parliament, meanwhile administering the law as though it had already been altered, and specially exempting, in terms of an earlier understanding, a limited number of educated entrants into the Transvaal.

Taking advantage of the full, and of the better feeling aroused at the time of the King's Coronation in India, a further mission was sent there, in order to maintain public interest and to place before the Government the points upon which the Indian community insisted. The measure of 1912, however, met with no better fate than its predecessor, and the provisional agreement was extended for another year. It was then that preparations were made throughout South Africa to welcome the Hon. Mr.

Gokhale, whose tour in the subcontinent is still fresh in the minds of all. He succeeded, as no one else had yet done, in raising the discussion of the Indian problem to the Imperial plane, and won the admiration even of his opponents for his moderation and statesmanship. It was during this visit that Indians later alleged, on his authority, that a promise of repeal of the iniquitous £3 tax was made by the Government, in view of the fact that, for over a year, further indentured immigration from India had been prohibited by the Indian Government.

When the 1913 Bill, however, was introduced into Parliament, and the Indian leaders observed the spirit in which the Indian question was dealt with by the Union Ministers, grave fears were aroused that a situation, which had already become still further complicated by the position created by the Searle judgment, invalidating practically every Indian marriage, would once more develop into a catastrophe. The Government were warned that the marriage question must be settled if peace were desired, and that the racial bar must be finally removed from the measure. Amendments were introduced and accepted by the Government, purporting to settle the marriage controversy on the basis of the recognition of *de facto* monogamous marriages, but, even as passed, the Bill failed to satisfy the demands of the Passive Resisters, whilst the £3 tax remained unrepealed. A final attempt was made by the Indian leaders to avoid a revival of the struggle, and negotiations were once more opened with the Government, so as to obtain a promise of remedial legislation in the next session of Parliament. They were, however, interrupted by the European strike, during the heat of which Mr. Gandhi, as spokesman of the Passive Resisters, undertook to refrain from pressing the Indian case for the moment. Meanwhile, a mission had proceeded to England to co-operate with the Hon. Mr. Gokhale, at his urgent invitation, in order to bring home to the imperial Government and the British public the extreme gravity of the situation, and the certainty of the extension of the demands of Passive Resisters unless a settlement of the points in dispute were promptly arrived at. All these representations, however, failed to conciliate the Union Government, which proved obdurate, and a final warning was sent to them stating that unless assurances of the introduction of legislative and administrative measures, in the following session, were given to recognize in law the validity of *de facto* monogamous marriages to remove the racial bar, as regards the Free State, to restore the right of entry into the Cape Colony to South Africa-born Indians, to repeal the £3 tax, and to administer justly and with due regard to vested interests existing legislation operating harshly against Indians, Passive Resistance would be immediately revived. The warning was ignored, and the struggle was resumed in all its bitterness and on a much wider scale than before. Its incidents are too fresh in the public mind to need more than a brief mention—the campaign of the Indian women whose marriages had been dishonoured by a fresh decision of the Supreme Court, at the instigation of the Government, the awakening of the free and indentured labourers

all over Natal, the tremendous strikes, the wonderful and historic strikers' march of protest into the Transvaal, the horrible scenes enacted later in the effort to crush the strikers and compel them to resume work, the arrest and imprisonment of the principal leaders and of hundreds—almost thousands—of the rank and file, the enormous Indian mass meetings held in Durban, Johannesburg, and other parts of the Union, the fierce and passionate indignation aroused in India, the large sums of money poured into South Africa from all parts of the Motherland, Lord Hardinge's famous speech at Madras, in which he placed himself at the head of Indian public opinion, and his demand for a Commission of Inquiry, the energetic efforts of Lord Ampthill's Committee, the hurried intervention of the Imperial authorities, the appointment over the heads of the Indian community of a Commission whose personnel could not satisfy the Indians, the discharge of the leaders whose advice to ignore the Commission was almost entirely accepted, the arrival of Messrs Andrews and Pearson and their wonderful work of reconciliation, the deaths of Hurbatsingh and Valliamma, the strained position relieved only by the interruption of the second European strike, when Mr. Gandhi once more undertook not to hamper the Government whilst they had their hands full with the fresh difficulty, and, when it had been dealt with, the entirely new spirit of friendliness, trust, and co-operation that was found to have been created by the moderation of the great Indian leader and the loving influence spread around him by Mr. Andrews as he proceeded with his great Imperial mission.

All these things are of recent history, as are the favourable recommendations of the Commission on practically every point referred to it and out of which Passive Resistance had arisen, the adoption of the Commission's Report in its entirety by the Government, the introduction and passing into law of the Indians' Relief Act, after lengthy and remarkable debates in both Houses of the Legislature, the correspondence between Mr. Gandhi and General Smuts, in which the latter undertook, on behalf of the Government, to carry through the administrative reforms that were not covered by the new Act, and the Indian protagonist of Passive Resistance formally announced the conclusion of the struggle and set forth the points upon which Indians would sooner or later have to be satisfied before they could acquire complete equality of civil status—and the final scenes of departure, enacted throughout the country, wherein the deaths and sufferings of the Indian martyrs, Nagappen, Narayansamy, Hurbatsingh, and Valliamma, were justified and sanctified to the world.

It is significant that, as Passive Resistance became stronger and purer, it succeeded more and more in bringing together the best representatives of the European and Indian sections of the population. With each new phase came new triumphs and new friends. Whilst every material gain has been but the restoration of

that which was taken away, each gain of principle has been the concession of that which had been denied. The struggle commenced with a protest against the universal distrust and contempt for the Indian community. That distrust and contempt have been exchanged for trust and respect. It commenced with the complete ignoring of Indian sentiment. Gradually that policy, too, was altered, save that it revived acutely when the Commission was appointed over the heads of those mainly interested in its findings. To-day, however, the leaders are consulted in matters vitally affecting the welfare of the Indian community, and Passive Resistance has given for these disfranchised ones far more than the vote could have won, and in a shorter time. The movement commenced with a demand for the repeal of the Transvaal Act 2 of 1907. The Act was repealed and its threatened extension to other parts of South Africa was completely prevented. At the beginning, racial legislation against Indians was threatened, so as to drive them from the Colony. The Settlement has removed the possibility of racial legislation against Indians throughout the Empire. The system of indentured immigration from India, that had been regarded almost as a permanent feature of South African economics, has been ended. The hated £3 tax has been repealed and its attendant misery and insult destroyed. Vested rights, that were tending everywhere to disappear, are to be maintained and protected. The bulk of Indian marriages, that had never previously received the sanction of South African law, are henceforth to be fully recognized in law. But above and beyond all this is the new spirit of conciliation that has resulted from the hardships, the sufferings, the sacrifices of the Passive Resisters. The flag of legal racial equality has been kept flying, and it is now recognized that Indians have rights and aspirations and ideals that cannot be ignored. The struggle has more than proved the immense superiority of right over might, of soul-force over brute-force, of love and reason over hate and passion. India has been raised in the scale of nations, her children in South Africa have been ennobled, and the way is now open to them to develop their capacities in peace and concord, and thus contribute their quota to the building up of this great new nation that is arising in the South African sub-continent.

Golden Number, Indian Opinion, 1914

APPENDIX XX

LETTER FROM C. ROBERTS

[After *August 14,* 1914]

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Lord Crewe desires me to thank you for your letter of the 14th, and to express his warm recognition of your loyal offer of services.

His Lordship desires to accept the offer in the spirit in which it has been made,

and he has given his earnest consideration to the manner in which the services of the Indian community can be utilised to the best interest of the Empire.

He is disposed to think that it would not be advisable for Indian student to volunteer for military duties. If they enlist in the force which Lord Kitchener is now raising, they may not be able to leave it for three years' time. His Lordship is very averse to encouraging them without the sanction of their parents to take a step which would so seriously interrupt the purpose for which they came to this country, and which might prejudice their whole future. Neither is it possible to advise them to join the Territorial Force, as the establishment is now complete, and a long waiting list is already in existence, so that at the present it is impossible to secure enrolment in that force.

There is, however, another sphere of public duty not less important for which in this country we are in the habit of depending very largely upon voluntary assistance, and this consists in rendering aid to the sick and wounded. The number of these in the present war may, unhappily, be large, and if that should prove to be the case, the military hospitals and military staff may have difficulty in coping with the demands made upon them. It will, therefore, be necessary to create temporary and voluntary organisations to meet this emergency. This duty is already being undertaken by a very large number of Englishmen and women in the voluntary aid detachments of the British Red Cross Society, and it is to work of this kind that Lord Crewe would direct your attention.

His Lordship suggests that a committee should be formed among the Indian residents and visitors in London, and that they should undertake to get up an Indian voluntary aid contingent. It is understood that Mr. James Cantlie, who has taken an active part in the organisation of the voluntary aid detachments of the Red Cross Society, has offered to train and drill an Indian voluntary aid contingent if a sufficient number of persons are prepared to undergo a course of instruction. Lord Crewe notices that several of the signatories to your letter are qualified medical men, and if they will co-operate with Mr. Cantlie, there is reason to hope that the Indian voluntary aid contingent would become one of the most efficient detachments in the kingdom.

It is, of course, quite impossible at the present moment to guarantee that the services of the Indian voluntary aid contingent will be utilised in any given direction. If the number of sick and wounded should, fortunately, not be large, the ordinary military and charitable hospitals will be able to deal with them. But the prevalent feeling in this country, which, as your letter shows, is shared by Indians, is that we ought all to prepare ourselves to render efficient service to the empire should the necessity arise.

Yours truly,

CHARLES ROBERTS

Indian Opinion, 16-9-1914

1. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

AHMEDABAD,
May 21 [*1915*]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Here am I now hoping to settle down. The boys are at the Gurukul, Hardwar, I have wired for them and they may be here any day. Two cottages have been placed at my disposal. They are isolated from this big city. There are 3 acres of ground attached to them. Living there I shall conduct the Institution[1] along our lines and shall search for an agricultural plot.

I pleaded for admission to the Society after Mr. Gokhale's death as I knew that such was his wish.[2] Of course, my admission could not mean any alteration of my views. They are too firmly fixed to be altered. I find here nothing but confirmation. I am passing through a curious phase. I see around me on the surface nothing but hypocrisy, humbug and degradation and yet underneath it I trace a divinity I missed there as elsewhere. This is my India. It may be my blind love or ignorance or a picture of my own imagination. Anyway it gives me peace and happiness. It fills me with hope and confidence without which no man could work.

I wonder if you will stick to your carpentry and restaurant-keeping. Both are good education. Your diary does not even give me an idea of your monthly expenses. Does Polak continue to give you satisfaction by way of letters?

Do you do any reading at all? Have the rosary and *Imitation of Christ* disappeared from your view entirely?

With love,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] The Kochrab Ashram which was established on May 20, 1915 on the outskirts of Ahmedabad

[2] Vide An Autobiography, Part V, Ch. VI.

2. LETTER TO UMIYASHANKER

AHMEDABAD,
Vaishakh Sud 7, Friday [*May 21, 1915*][1]

CHI. UMIYASHANKER,

I have your letter. I returned only yesterday, after visiting Rajkot and Limbdi. I have no personal relation with Hussain Tyobji so that I could write to him. However, Chhabildas should apply immediately, or you may do so on his behalf. You . may mention my name and say that I know him well and will be ready to give a guarantee [on his behalf]. If he then inquires of me, I shall be able to say something.

Have you done anything about what you were to send me concerning Chhotu?

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 1635. Courtesy: C. K. Bhatt

3. LETTER TO KUNVARJI V. MEHTA

AHMEDABAD,
May 25, 1915

BHAISHRI KUNVARJI,

I do not see the least possibility of my being able to attend the conference this time. I feel there is need for me to stay here at present. I find I have been away from the students too long and should not therefore leave at once. I must therefore look for another occasion to visit Surat.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N. 2662

[1] Gandhiji returned to Ahmedabad on May 20 from Rajkot and Limbdi.

4. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

AHMEDABAD,
May 28, 1915

DEAR MR. NATESAN,

I have your letter enclosing cheque for Rs. 3,000 for which please find receipt herewith.

I notice that the Bangalore 'talk' has been much misrepresented and that Mrs. Besant has done me no justice whatsoever. I saw the 'talk' only the day before yesterday and it is a parody of what I actually said. I never sent Mrs. Besant any explanation for publication I now hear that she has published what purports to be an explanation from me. Could you please send me the copies if you have seen them.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 2229

5. LETTER TO G. B. VEERASWAMY

AHMEDABAD,
May 30, 1915

DEAR MR. VEERASWAMI,

You may come here at any time you like and you will stay if we mutually agree. . . .[1] now nothing is obligatory. English books are stocked here in a large quantity and newspapers are also received. Those who are in the Institution[2] do write letters and stamps or post-cards are provided for them. The rest can be discussed personally if you decide to come. Servants of India Society may not admit you as you are only a matriculate.

Yours truly,

GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 11015. Courtesy: Balachandran

[1] The source is damaged here.
[2] The Satyagraha Ashram

6. LETTER TO P. G. BALASUNDARA SASTRI

AHMEDABAD,
June 1, 1915

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Natesan[1] has sent me your letters addressed to him and to me. I thank you for both. Your son[2] has been in correspondence with me. His last letter stated that he was driven away by you. I therefore wrote to him yesterday saying that in that case he was free to come to me. His ultimate aim seems to be to join the Servants of India Society. If your boy comes here and is found to be not of mature age so far as I am concerned he will be certainly sent back to you. I take no boysunder age without the consent of their parents. You may therefore fully depend upon my co-operation with you.

Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

MR. P. G. BALASUNDARA SASTRI
GOVINDAPURAM VILLAGE
ADUTURAI POST
THANJAVUR DISTRICT, MADRAS PRESIDENCY

From a photostat C.W. 11016. Courtesy: Balachandran

7. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

AHMEDABAD,
June 4 [*1915*][1]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I feel like crying out to you 'Do come and help me!' Mrs, Gandhi is again down with her swellings. She has lost all power of resistance. She weeps like a child, is ever angry with me as if I was the party responsible for her swellings. I am over head and ears in work. This institution costs me much trouble. I wish I had the time to

[1] G. A. Natesan
[2] G. B. Veeraswamy
[3] From the contents

describe to you the troubles I am passing through. I am not dejected but I feel lonely. You know what I mean. Heaven knows what will happen. There are so many sick people on the Farm. I want hours of solitude and have not a minute of it. Do 'buck up' and prepare for the struggle of the spirit when you are able to come here.

I know nothing about some honour[1] that has been conferred upon me. I have just received a letter of congratulations. More in my next.

With love,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

8. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Vaishakh Vad 7 [*June 4, 1915*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I see that you are rather upset. The fault, I am sure, is mine. In attempting to ride too many horses at a time, I am in danger of falling off all of them. I have not quite, for my enthusiasm proceeds from an eager desire for service. I may not, however, be able to hold on long if I continue to go the way I am doing, forgetting all about service. Be patient. I intend to send you all, on suitable occasions, to different places, so that you may see things for yourselves. Everything will depend on what help we get and how many we can have with us here. I am perfectly confident of this, at any rate, that I shall satisfy the aspirations of you all; meanwhile, I do feel that the life you have all led so far has not been in vain, that, on the contrary, you have learnt much.

I am not unaware that you have not attained to a state of perfect non-attachment, for I have not attained it myself and I know that you are yet to reach even my level. If we stop making noise about the vows, we shall "not find ourselves in unhappy situations as we occasionally do. And now one question. Explain to me what you mean by "not having attained to a state of perfect non-attachment". I can explain [how that is so with me]. For example, I observe *brahmacharya*, but not in all its subtle aspects. I cannot say that my

[1] The Kaisar-i-Hind Gold Medal; vide the following item.

mind or eyes are never disturbed.

2. I maintain truthfulness, but I cannot say that I am never guilty of exaggeration, consciously or unconsciously. To say what I like saying and not to say anything which I do like saying casts a shadow on the vow of truthfulness.

3. I make untiring efforts to control the palate but I observe that I extract the utmost pleasure from the five articles [I permit myself in a day]. But I do want to keep these and other vows inviolate and make progress in them day by day, and I am quite confident that 1 shall succeed. I feel that I am not likely now to depart from a literal observance.[1]

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5685. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

9. LETTER TO RANCHHODLAL PATWARI

AHMEDABAD,

Vaishakh Vad 8 [*June 5, 1915*][2]

RESPECTED SHRI RANCHHODBHAI,

Having been very busy with various affairs, I could not write earlier. Those at Hardwar were expected to arrive any day and so I could not go to Gondal nor could I stay on [at Rajkot]. I have taken up residence in two bungalows here. Efforts [for acquiring land] will now be taken up. Boarding expenses have to be found by me. Utensils. tools, etc., have been supplied by Ahmedabad. Things have not made as much progress as we would have liked, for the various articles take a long time in arriving.

Could you send from there someone to teach [us] how to operate an indigenous loom? Could you secure me such a loom and some sample of handloom cloth woven on it?

Do you know any teacher, a man of character, who can teach Sanskrit and Gujarati? We may pay him. We shall be satisfied if we get one for a short period.

[1] The letter is incomplete.

[2] From the references to the arrival from Hardwar of Maganlal Gandhi's party at Ahmedabad and the draft constitution of the Ashram in the letter, it appears to have been written in 1915.

Herewith is a draft constitution[1] for the institution. Please go through it and send your comments and suggestions. I am sending three copies. If you require more, ask for them. Which [name] do you prefer? Or, would you like to suggest a different one altogether?

How does Mr. Dwarkadas keep now?

Respectful greetings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 2796; also G. N. 4116

10. LETTER TO KUNVARJI MEHTA

AHMEDABAD,
Vaisakh Vad 9 [*June 6, 1915*][2]

DEAR SHRI KUNVARJI,

I have your letter. Read the enclosure and you will have the answers to your three questions. I place Mr. Gokhale in the front rank. I cannot judge about others. Come over here when you are free. I am leaving for Poona on the 10th. I shall return by the 15th.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 2661

11. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

AHMEDABAD,
June 7, 1915

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am writing this early in the week as I may not be able at all to write at a later time. Mrs. Gandhi is again very bad with her swelling and has almost become a child. She has no restraint on herself. Then I have to go to Poona and attend to several other things. Distraction is very great. And I am hardly able to give you long letters.

[1] *Vide* "Draft Constitution for the Ashram", before 20-5-1915

[2] This appears to have been written in 1915, for Gandhiji left Ahmedabad for Poona on June 10, 1915, and returned from there on June 16. *Vide* "Diary for 1915".

I do not fear your internment. You will simply enjoy it. You will be able to make the best of it.

I understand that the Kaisar-i-Hind Gold Medal has been awarded to me. I have no official intimation as yet.

My difficulties here are of a different type altogether and some of them most trying. When I have greater leisure, I shall describe them to you.

For the time being, if I do not give you long letters, you will know that my whole time is given to organizing the Institution and looking after pat[ients].

I do wish you w[ould] try to take up the course we had jointly devised.[1] Where is *Imitation of Christ*? What about the rosary? What about the *Song Celestial*? And why not Gujarati?

With love,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

12. LETTER TO PURSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

AHMEDABAD

Vaishakh Vad 11 [*June 8, 1915*][2]

DEAR SHRI PURSHOTTAMDASJI[3],

I saw your letter on Revashankerbhai. Thanks for your views.

You will know something about my activities if you go through the accompanying draft [constitution of the Ashram][4]. I shall be obliged to have your comments.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5700. Courtesy: Ramanlal Saraiya

[1] Vide "Speech at Surat on place of English", 3-1-1910.

[2] From the reference to the draft constitution, the letter appears to have been written in 1915.

[3] Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas, economist, and a cotton magnate of Bombay

[4] *Vide* "Draft Constitution for the Ashram", before 20-5-1915.

13. LETTER TO RANCHHODLAL PATWARI

AHMEDABAD

Vaishakh Vad 12 [*June 9, 1915*][1]

RESPECTED SHRI RANCHHODBHAI,

I have your letter. Thanks for your criticism. The portion concerning parents is written with the best intentions but I shall make changes in it all the same. As for the other points, instead of carrying on a discussion in letters, I hope to have a full talk about them when we meet. I will sacrifice this life itself to uphold the sanatana dharma as I understand it.

I want coarse cloth as well as fine hand-woven cloth. I shall be glad, therefore, if you send it from there as well as from Palanpur. Please send the loom and the man who will teach how to operate it, as soon as they can possibly arrive.

Respectful greetings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 2798; also G. N. 4114

14. LETTER TO VIRCHAND SHAH

Thursday [On or about *June 10, 1915*][2]

BHAI SHRI VIRCHAND[3],

I have your letter. I send herewith a copy of the scheme [of the Ashram]. Return it after you have gone through it You may also send any comments you feel like making. If, moreover, there are any men of learning in Bhavnagar to whom copies should be sent, give me their names.

[1] This was written after "Letter to Ranchhodlal Patwari", 5-6-1915.

[2] From the reference to the scheme of the Ashram, the letter appears to have been written at the same time as "Letter to Ranchhodlal Patwari", 5-6-1915 and "Letter to Purshottamdas Thakurdas", 8-6-1915.

[3] Virchand Panachand Shah, Jain scholar and philosopher

Mr. Deepchand is still here.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5701. Courtesy: Pramod Virchand Shah

15. LETTER TO RANCHHODLAL PATWARI

AHMEDABAD,
Vaishakh Vad 13 [*June 10, 1915*][1]

RESPECTED SHRI RANCHHODBHAI,

I wrote to you yesterday in the midst of many preoccupations. I think some of your questions I should answer right now. I have a little time on hand today and, since I leave for Poona in the evening, I set down a few things this very moment.

There need be no congratulations on [the award of] the Kaiseri-Hind medal.[2] One may get it and also lose it. I do want a medal, but of a different kind altogether. There is no knowing when I shall get it, if ever.

The English article which is sold as flour is often no flour but a mixture of other things. There is fraud in [the sale of] this article. The retailer, being a third party, may not perhaps be involved in it. Handloom cloth is only an example. The vow of swadeshi implies that every article should be swadeshi. Kindly permit me to say that the observance of this vow has a subtle moral bearing.

Arithmetic will certainly include oral sums and Indian accountancy.

It cannot be that Gujaratis will never look outside Gujarat. They will go everywhere in India. They are to serve the nation. If they do not know the languages of Madras, they can have no contact with the people there. As for English, it can be of service only to those who know English. Shankar[3] had learnt all the languages of India. Vallabh[4], who belonged to the land of the Dravids, had learnt Gujarati.

[1] This was written on the next day after "Letter to Ranchhodlal Patwari", 9-6-1915.

[2] Gandhiji was awarded this medal on June 26 at Poona.

[3] 8th-century philosopher

[4] 15th-century philosopher

There are at present hundreds of Gujaratis in Madras who know Tamil. [In] Europe, people in the various countries know four or five European languages. It is very easy to acquire such proficiency in languages. The time wasted over English will, if saved, be sufficient for the purpose of these other languages.

Pupils are to receive education which will incline them to do nothing but national service when their studies are over. If, on growing up, they leave the Ashram, the education will have failed to that extent. Should any occasion of the kind arise, the student will be free [to follow his inclination]. It is not the aim, however, that the students should return to their parents and get lost in the sea of practical affairs.

I have had bitter experience that, when provision is made for exceptional circumstances, parents conveniently fall ill. While they are still in the stage of *brahmacharya*, students must not go to attend marriages. They are to be surrounded with a new kind of atmosphere and I always feel that, if there is frequent breaking away from this, building of character is impossible.

As for dress, a single uniform is prescribed for the present, it being necessary to do this for several reasons.

I think I have given very deep thought to the subject of milk. It is a legacy of our non-vegetarian past. It is objectionable from so many points of view that it ought to be avoided altogether. Quite a number of boys have gone through the experiment for several years and I have observed no ill-effects on their health. More [about this] when we meet.

I shall try to respect people's sentiments in every way I can without compromising the aims of the Ashram.

We have secured four teachers. One of them will stay with us. Others live in the neighbourhood and come over daily for teaching. If a teacher is not a man of character, he will be of no use to us.

Respectful greetings from

MOHANDAS

For washing clothes, I use for the present an Indian soap which is free from fat. I am looking out for a substitute.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 2792; also G. N. 4117

16. LETTER TO KOTWAL

AHMEDABAD,

Jeth Sud 1 [*June 13, 1915*][1]

BHAISHRI KOTWAL,

You seem to have forgotten me. I send herewith a draft of the constitution for the Ashram. Please go through it and let me have your considered comments. Anna[2] has arrived at Ahmedabad. You may also come when you have time and take a look at the Ashram.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 3607

17. LETTER TO MAHATMA MUNSHIRAM

AHMEDABAD

Jeth Shukla 2 [*June 14, 1915*][3]

MAHATMAJI,

As I was preoccupied with making all sorts of arrangements after the boys' arrival from Gurukul, I could not write to you earlier. The boys can never forget the love you showered on them, I am highly obliged to you for giving shelter to my boys and colleagues.

I have started an Ashram at Ahmedabad at any rate for the time being. A Hindi version of its rules and regulations is being prepared, When ready, it will be sent to you for your opinion. I have not at all forgotten my promise to go to Hardwar again and spend a few

[1] From the reference to the draft constitution of the Ashram, the letter appears to have been written in 1915. Though Gandhiji was in Poona on this day, he wrote the letter as from Ahmedabad presumably because he was to leave Poona for Ahmedabad on this day.

[2] Harihar Sharma, a teacher of the Ganganath Vidyalaya, Baroda, who joined Gandhiji at this time

[3] The boys and teachers referred to in the letter arrived in Ahmedabad with Maganlal Gandhi on May 23, 1915 from Gurukul; *vide* "Diary for 1915". Though Gandhiji was in Bombay on this day, the letter is dated as from Ahmedabad, presumably because he was to leave Bombay for Ahmedabad the following day.

dayswith you. I will certainly come when I get the time.

Looking forward to your kindness,

Yours

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 2208

18. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

AHMEDABAD,
June 15 [*1915*][1]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The omission of your dairy altogether is, I feel, a retrogression. It was a good measure of discipline. Your diary gave me an insight into yourself for that particular week as nothing else could. Do please therefore resume your diary if you can.

This has been a sad week. Bombay has so weighed me down that I am in a most melancholy mood. If I had to live in Bombay for one year, I would die. I am glad just now you are not with me. I go about barefoot. There is hardly a road clean enough to make you feel safe about your tread. This has not got on my nerves so much hitherto because I have not had the opportunity of walking much. And the closets! I know you would vomit eternally if you merely looked at them. Now what is the duty of a reformer in this position? Can the city life be mended? If not, can he by working in a city perpetuate the life? Suppose he succeeded in getting clean roads and clean closets, not by any means an easy task, what will he have gained? How is he to deal with the filth within? How will he regulate the morality of the people? These are awful questions and I have to answer them, you have to answer them.

The enclosed is a partial or complete answer. Read it carefully and criticize freely and fully.[2] I will send you more copies later. I have a limited number by me here.

The life at Ahmedabad is good. There you would be perfectly at home. The boys are making progress. Only Mrs. Gandhi causes

[1] From the contents

[2] The enclosure probably was a copy of the draft constitution for the Satyagrahashram; vide "Draft Constitution for the Ashram", Before 20-5-1915.

trouble sometimes by her temper and sometimes by her sickness. You have known her in all her temperaments. So I do not need to describe her to you.

Andrews had a severe attack of cholera. He has survived it. He will take care of his health.

I can understand your liking for carpentry. You can be at home with your tools if you have full time given to you for your work. I envy you your occupation it would be perfect if only you could add some studies. Will you? Do please.

With love,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

19. LETTER TO J. B. PETIT[1]

AHMEDABAD,

June [*16*][2], 1915

DEAR MR. PETIT,

I beg to submit herewith an account of the income and expenditure as up to the 31st January 1915 in connection with the passive resistance movement in South Africa.

Publication of the account has been delayed beyond my desire and expectation. It was Mr. Gokhale's intention that the accounts should be published along with a statement about the disposal of the balance in hand. As he was the prime mover in India and remained in closest touch with the movement to the end, I never did anything without consultation with him, and through him with your Committee. It was his intention that before the accounts were finally published, I should confer with your Committee. The cruel hand of Death having removed him from us, the matter of publication has been further delayed, and it is only now that it has become possible to submit the accounts to the public.

[1] This was sent to the addressee, Jehangir Bomanji Petit, who was Secretary of the South African Indian Fund, as a draft. It was eventually printed and made public on October 31, 1915, with additions and alterations indicated in footnotes.

[2] *Vide* "Diary for 1915".

The income includes not only the monies received through you but includes also those received from Madras, Rangoon, London and various parts of Africa, Passive Resistance School, etc. Thus, of the £27,324.0.7, £8,424.0.7 were monies other than those received through you.

As to expenditure, there are some items which require explanation. Relief which takes up nearly £3,000/- means assistance given to Passive Resisters or their families, and it is a recurring item. There are widows of Passive Resisters who died during the struggle without leaving anything for those left behind them. There are children of Passive Resisters and Passive Resisters themselves who require support.[1] Farm upkeep and improvements mean expenses in connection with the Phoenix Settlement which became the Passive Resistance Farm after the transference to Phoenix of Passive Resisters from Tolstoy Farm belonging to Mr. Kallenbach. Phoenix Settlement consists of 100 acres of land originally bought by me for locating the printing works of *Indian Opinion*. Though the legal title vested in me for some years, I never made personal use of the property. During the struggle, however, I divested myself of the legal title and it is now held by Trustees for public purposes defined in a registered Trust deed.[2] This property is still being used for housing Passive Resisters or their families. Settlers who are living on the land receive no wages but take out of the income from *Indian Opinion*, and other sources just enough for their maintenance. The journal has never been and can never become an entirely self-supporting proposition. The English portion of it is mainly of an educative character for the European public amongst whom it is distributed gratis. It was a powerful weapon in the armoury of Passive Resistance and continues to be the only recorder of accurately sifted facts about our countrymen in South Africa and of Passive Resistance movement. It is in no sense a commercial enterprise. This settlement will still need assistance.[3]

The third item is Valiama Hall. This is an institution founded in the memory of the late Valiama, a girl of 17 who died shortly after her discharge from prison of fever contracted therein. Its use will be

[1] The published letter here adds: "For these, disbursements will still have to be made."

[2] The two sentences that follow are omitted in the published letter.

[3] In the published letter, this sentence reads: "It is to this settlement that assistance has been given to the extent mentioned in the account."

chiefly educational. The Tamil portion of our countrymen have suffered most. Johannesburg is one of the largest Indian centres. It gave the largest number of Passive Resisters, and the Tamils were the foremost among them. The late sister belonged to Johannesburg. No better use of the Passive Resistance funds could be conceived than to have a permanent hall in Johannesburg for the public needs of the community. The institution will be registered in the name of Messrs Kachalia, the Chairman of the British Indian Association, Thambi Naidoo and Polak for the purposes mentioned above. This will cost probably £4,000. I hope that this disposal of the funds will commend itself to your Committee as being strictly in accordance with the purposes for whichthe monies were sent to South Africa, namely, relief of Passive Resisters and furtherance of the struggle. The available balance should, in my opinion, remain as it has done, in the names of Messrs A. H. West and Maganlal K. Gandhi as a trust with instructions to utilize the funds from time to time for furtherance of measures being adopted to secure just administration of local laws and the removal of the remaining disabilities and for relief of Passive Resisters, if further relief than what I have already adverted to is necessary. Co-operation of Messrs Cachalia, Parsee Rustomjee and other Passive Resisters is sought whenever extraordinary expenditure has to be incurred.[1]

Whilst the actual courting of imprisonment has ceased, the struggle for removal of the remaining disabilities itself has by no means ceased and this brings me to a brief statement of its results.[2] In its last stages, nearly 25,000 Indians actively participated in it, that is, one sixth of the total Indian population in South Africa. The balance of the community practically but with few exceptions supported the struggle whether by contributions in cash or in kind or by holding meetings in support[3], etc. It began in the Transvaal with the passing of

[1] In the published letter, this paragraph is replaced by the following:

"Bulk of the unexpended balance, viz., Rs. 215,000 has been cabled to me from Durban. In accordance with the desire of your Committee, I have handed this sum to you. In my opinion, the saving of such a large sum shows that utmost economy has been used in handling the funds.

It is perhaps necessary at this stage to give in its briefest outline an account of the struggle to the maintenance of which the mother country contributed so generously."

[2] In the published letter, this sentence reads: "Whilst the actual courting of imprisonment has ceased, the struggle itself has by no means ended."

[3] These two words are omitted in the published letter.

the now famous Asiatic Registration Bill in the year 1906, but as year after year the struggle rolled on with temporary settlements, it included many other things besides the Asiatic Registration Act, and covered the whole of South Africa till at the time of the settlement the points in Passive Resistance were as follows:[1]

(1) Repeal of the Asiatic Act.

(2) Removal of the racial or colour disqualification as to immigration from the Union legislation.

(3) Removal of the legal disabilities of Indian wives.

(4) Removal of the annual Poll Tax of £3, which was payable by ex-indentured Indians, their wives and grown-up children.

(5) Just administration of existing laws with due regard to vested rights.

All these points are covered by the settlement of the last year which are considered[2] to be a complete vindication of Passive Resistance and I venture to state that if more has not been gained, more was not and could not be asked[3] for as an item in Passive Resistance, for a Passive Resister has to frame his minimum as well as his maximum and he dare not ask for more nor can he be satisfied with less.

But I do not wish to be understood to mean that nothing further remains to be done in South Africa, or that everything has been gained. We have only fought for removal of legal disabilities as to immigration, but administratively it tells more heavily upon us than other nations. In accepting administrative inequality, we have given due regard to existing conditions and prejudices.[4] We fought to keep the theory of the British Constitution intact so that practice may some day approach the theory as near as possible. There are still certain laws in South Africa, for instance, the Law 3 of 1885, Trade Licence Laws of the Cape and Natal which continue to cause worry.

[1] In the published letter, this sentence reads: " . . . and covered the whole of South Africa. At the time of the settlement, the points of Passive Resistance were as follows:"

[2] The published letter has "I consider" instead of "are considered".

[3] In the published letter, this portion of the sentence reads: " . . . more was not—could not be—asked . . . "

[4] In the published letter, these two sentences are replaced by the following:

"We have only fought for removal of legal disabilities as to immigration but administratively we have taken note of existing conditions and prejudices."

Administration of the Immigration Law is not all it should be. For these, however, Passive Resistance [is not] applied and is at present inapplicable, its application being confined to grievances which are generally felt in a community and are known to hurt its self-respect or conscience. Any of our[1] grievances referred to by me may any day advance to that stage. Till then only the ordinary remedies of petition, etc., can be and are at present being applied[2]. Letters received from South Africa show that difficulties are being experienced in some cases acutely by our countrymen and if not much has been heard of them in India just now, it is because of the extraordinary self-restraint of our countrymen in South Africa during the crisis that has overtaken the Empire.

This struggle has defined principles and removed disabilities which were in the shape of a national insult. The larger question of the treatment of British Indians who came there[3] from outside can only be dealt with here[4] and for the question of the local disabilities still unredressed, your Committee will have to exercise a ceaseless watch and assist as heretofore the efforts of our countrymen in South Africa.

I feel that I ought to place on record my strong conviction, based upon close personal observation extending over a period of twenty years, that the system of indentured emigration is an evil which cannot be mended but can only be ended. No matter how humane the employers may be, it does not lend itself to the moral well-being of the men affected by it. I therefore feel that your Committee should lose no time in approaching the Government of India with a view to securing entire abolition of the system for every part of the Empire.

Before closing, I am bound to mention that the struggle would not have ended so soon and even as satisfactorily as it did, but for the generous support rendered by the Motherland under the leadership of the great and saintly patriot whose death we all mourn and but for the very sympathetic and firm attitude taken by the noble man who at present occupies the Viceregal chair.

M. K. GANDHI[5]SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN
PASSIVE RESISTANCE FUND ACCOUNTS

[1] The published letter has “the” instead of “our”.
[2] The published letter has “adopted”.
[3] This word is deleted in the published letter.
[4] In the published letter, the sentence ends here and “and” is omitted.
[5] Taken from the published letter

AS UP TO JANUARY 31, 1915[1]

EXPENDITURE

	£	s	d
Debit balance April 6, 1912 as per statement rendered to Mr. Ratan Tata	43	1	3
Relief	2,868	10	1
Legal expenses	235	2	9
Telegrams and cables	705	15	10
Bank commission	117	4	6
Printing & stationery	169	15	0
Travelling	2,258	19	3
Johannesburg office	1,070	15	7
Medical expenses	92	9	10
Stamps	20	19	3
Railage and cartage	118	12	7
Maritzburg committee	125	0	0
Farm upkeep & improvement (expended)	976	19	2
—do— (unexpended)	2,023	0	10
Newspapers	94	19	0
Reporting commission sittings	183	10	0
Durban office	1,068	11	2
Commissariat	540	16	11
Funeral expenses Passive Resisters	67	0	8
Salaries	197	15	6
[2]Valiama Hall (expended)	877	0	0
—do— (unexpended)	3,123	0	0
London Deputation	400	0	0
London Committee	240	5	6
Sundries	4	13	0[3]

[1] In the published letter, income and expenditure are shown in parallel columns.

[2] These entries have been omitted in the published letter.

[3] The published letter has the following entries here:

"Grand Total	11600	16	10
Balance in hand	15723	3	9
	27324	0	7 "

Allocations to Valiama Hall, Passive Resistance Relief and furtherance [of] struggle including support to Phoenix Settlement	3 000	0	0
Allocation to Passive Resistance Relief	2 400	0	0
	23,023	17	8
Balance in hand	4,300	2	11
	£ 27,324	0	7

INCOME

Funds acknowledged in *I.O.*	1,054	17	6
Bombay	18,901	6	8
Madras	4,035	0	0
Rangoon	2,136	0	6
Nairobi	150	0	0
Zanzibar	33	6	8
London	386	11	10
Farm School fees refund	491	10	7
Goods sold	67	13	10
Johannesburg	64	17	0
Durban office refund	1	1	0
Travelling refund	1	15	0
	£ 27,324	0	7

From a photostat of the handwritten draft with corrections in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 6211; published letter: G.N. 8224

20. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[*June 19, 1915*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

Chi. Shamaldas writes from Porbunder to say that Ba's copy of the *Ramayana*, with Gujarati commentary, is lying there at Rajkot. If you come across it, bring it along, as also any Tamil books by Pope I may have lent to Jamnadas. Think over what I have written[2] to

The subsequent entries under expenditure are omitted in the published letter.

[1] From the postmark

[2] This letter is not available.

respected Khushalbhai concerning you. If you have unshaken faith in the Ashram, take the plunge.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

CHI. NARANDAS KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

OPPOSITE MIDDLE SCHOOL

PARA

RAJKOT

From the original post card in Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5676. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

21. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,

Jeth Sud 11 [*June 23, 1915*][1]

MU. BHAISHRI KHUSHALJIVAN GANDHI,

For some time, 1 have been thinking about Chi. Narandas. That ultimately he is to live with me is his own desire as also yours and mine. My only purpose in employing Narandas in a job is that thereby he should earn something and contribute to your expenses. I feel that you should fix the figure of your needs, and that I should meet them and that you should then free Narandas. The Ashram needs one or two persons. If Narandas comes, the need will be met. I am looking for someone whom I can engage as a paid assistant. Why should I then not give the opportunity to Narandas? Maganlal and Manilal are kept fully occupied with the teaching of Sanskrit and they are quite engrossed in it. This being so, we are short of teachers. On myself also, I have placed an excessive burden, with the result that I have to leave undone some other things which require my attention. Hence, if Narandas joins me, I will be saved from many difficulties.

Please do not think of the matter from a purely worldly point of view. Consider only what is good for Narandas and for us all in coming to a decision.

Since Narandas also will read this letter, I am not writing to him

[1] From the reference to Narandas, it appears that this letter was written before the one to the addressee dated September 24, 1915. *Jeth Sud* 11 in the year 1915 corresponded to June 23.

separately. I have assumed that in fact Narandas is eager to join the Ashram and that is why I have written this letter.

Respectful prostration by

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33915

22. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

AHMEDABAD,
June 25 [*1915*][1]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Your letters, last two, have been brief and contained a trace of bitterness. The bitterness was due to the brevity of my letters. But if you knew the rush under which I have been living you would not have grumbled. You might have imagined that during that time the letters to you were the only writing work that I probably did. I hope however that your next letter will be less gloomy.

Your overlooking the diary is a fatal omission. The omission too is partly due, I fear, to anger. But it is again a fall. Do please resume the diary.

I am having extraordinary difficulties. I do not know that what they mean. I can only hope that they will chasten us all. The difficulties arise from our strangely simple life. The people around us do not understand us. There is one man who strikes and swears at the boys and prevents them even from using water we are entitled to. Things are getting better somewhat. But new situations give rise to new difficulties. This is the life. To rise at 5 a.m. Worship 6 a.m. Fruit breakfast (meagre) at 6.30 a.m. Manual work 7 to 8.30 a.m. School 8.30 to 10 a.m. Meal 10 to 12. School 12 to 3. Manual work 3 to 5. Meal 5 to 6.30 p.m. Worship 6.30 to 7 p.m. Sanskrit class for the grown-up ones between 7 and 9 p.m. There are 5 new admissions. We are in all 32 at the present moment. Maganlal, Maganbhai and Manilal are the real helpers.

Mrs. Gandhi's health and her temper cause worry. My brother's wives have proved obdurate. They have withdrawn their sons from my care.

Harilal is growing in impertinence. I am, may be, doing an

[1] From the contents

injustice to the young man. But such is the impression created on my Mind by his letters. He ever succeeds in doing the wrong thing at the wrong moment.

With love,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

23. LETTER TO GENERAL TRAFFIC MANAGER, G. I. P. RAILWAY

[AHMEDABAD,

June 28, 1915][1]

THE GENERAL TRAFFIC MANAGER

G. I. P. RAILWAY

BOMBAY

SIR,

I travelled on the 27th instant from Poona to Bombay on 3rd class return ticket, taking the 16.45 train last Saturday from Kirkee. As my ticket was only as far as Dadar and as I wished to go as far as Victoria Terminus, I informed an official that I was travelling beyond my destination. I attempted to give the information at Dadar but succeeded in giving it only at Parel. The official, who I subsequently learnt was a brakesman, told me to inform the *bada*[2] Guard. I could not do so as he was in a far-off compartment. At Masjid the authorities collected from me the fare from Dadar and the usual penalty, notwithstanding my protest. They ascertained too from the brakesman that I had duly informed him. The authorities at Masjid said that in order to enable them to exempt me from the penalty, I should produce a certificate from the Guard or the Station Master. You will see that I could not procure the certificate without the risk of missing the train. I asked for the certificate from the only official whom I could safely approach. And he would not grant one. I bring this incident to your notice as I have often observed that 3rd class

[1] From the addressee's reply

[2] Superior

passengers are often punished without any fault of their own. I shall be obliged if you will kindly inquire into this matter. In my opinion, either Station Masters should be instructed not to charge penalties when information has been given about over-travelling to any railway official of the company or strict instructions should be given as to promp issue of certificates by the officials concerned. If it was not competent for the brakesman to issue the certificate, was it not his duty to immediately inform the Guard that a passenger wasover-travelling and that he had applied for the usual certificate?

I enclose herewith the receipt for this fare and the penalty.[1]

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 6200

24. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

AHMEDABAD,

July 2 [*1915*][2]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Your letters are getting provokingly brief week after week. Do not give me up like that. You fret that I do not write at length. But imagine a person travelling almost continuously in a crowded 3rd-class compartment and being besieged by visitors immediately on landing. What is one to say in such circumstances? I did not during my travels get a moment to myself. And now too it is continuous work. But I can now attend to some of my correspondence.

Dr. Mehta asks me whether I am going to try for your entry here. It is an impossibility. Things are becoming stricter and there seems to be no way out of the difficulty. At the same time I am going to make a desperate effort when I meet the Viceroy in the natural course.

[1] In his reply dated July 18, the Acting Deputy Traffic Manager (Commercial) said: "From enquiries made, I find that you did not intimate at Dadar your intention to ride on to V. Terminus, and since you had already ridden as far as Parel before any intimation was given to the train staff, you were correctly encessed, and I cannot grant you any relief."

[2] From the contents

The medal has worried me. It was announced without consultation. To refuse a medal would have been churlish. I therefore said nothing about it. I wrote a note to the Viceroy when at length a formal letter conferring the medal came to me. It is not considered the same as a title. It was presented last week[1] at a Government at-home.

Mrs. Gandhi is lying in bed causing some anxiety. She is under the treatment of an Indian physician[2] . She has lost faith in my treatment. She has become a most difficult patient.

I am receiving much critism on the scheme. I may some day be able to send you copies of some of it. Here as you may imagine, I have no copying assistance.

I am myself keeping fairly well. Somehow or other I cannot regain my original vigour.

My food just now is only nuts and dried figs or dates and lemons. We are badly off for fruit in this place.

Yours sincerely,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

25. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI[3]

[After *July 7, 1915*][4]

[CHI. MANILAL[5],]

. . . I shall make some arrangement for your Tamil. It seems desirable that you get hardened a bit as a result of the difficult situation in which you find yourself, provided, of course, you go through the process intelligently. Let me know when you run short of funds. Keep writing to me. Don't lose heart in any way. Keep in mind

[1] On June 26 at Poona
[2] Vaidya Jatashanker
[3] The first page of this letter is missing.
[4] The addressee went to Madras on July 7, 1915.
[5] Second son of Gandhiji

what the poor do and bear yourself accordingly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C W. 99. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

26. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

AHMEDABAD,
July 9 [*1915*][1]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I must say I feel nothing about your being interned. It was to come. You have a rare opportunity for disciplining yourself and of affecting your neighbours. You will have plenty of time to think. This prolongation may mean more prolonged separation between us. But we shall learn to live together more intimately even though we may be separated bodily. In thousand and one things I miss you. In some experiences I feel glad you are not with me. In fullness of time, when we meet, we shall [have] grown, let us hope, better and better able to reach our common goal.

The life here has become most regular and nobody has leisure for idle talk. Boys who wanted to have their ambition fulfilled, I do not encroach upon their time for study. They appreciate this very much.

My diet just now consists of soaked figs, monkey-nuts and lemons. This is a somewhat trying place for cheap fruit. Those who were saltless remain so here also and some now and then become fruitarians for a week or so.

All are learning Hindi, Sanskrit, Tamil, Gujarati and Arithmetic. They have 4 hours of study, apart from their morning study.

How about your cabinet-making? This ought not to be interrupted. But I shall know more from week to week.

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] From the contents

27. SPEECH AT BOMBAY PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE, POONA[1]

July 11, 1915

MR. PRESIDENT, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Perhaps, it is impudent on my part to add anything to the feeling words that have been spoken by Mrs. Ranade. The fact that she is the widow of the master's master adds solemnity to the proceedings, which I can only mar by any remarks I may make. But, claiming as I do to be one of Mr. Gokhale's disciples, you will forgive me if I say a few words which are personal titbits.

It was on board the *Cronprinz* some years ago,[2] that I found myself in the master's company together with a common friend, Mr. Kallenbach[3], a German. Let me say that all Germans are not fiends, nor; are all German soldiers Friend.[4] Mr. Kallenbach is a German and a soldier, but I feel that no purer-minded person to-day walks the earth in Europe than Mr. Kallenbach. He was accepted as a worthy companion by Mr. Gokhale, who used to play with him the game of quoits. Mr. Gokhale had just then, during the voyage from England to Cape Town, picked up that g ame, and he very nearly gave Mr. Kallenbach a beating in the game. I fancy that was a drawn game between them, and, let me add, Mr. Kallenbach, so far as I am aware, is one of the cleverest players of quoits in South Africa. Just after that we had our meals at which Mr. Gokhale was talking to me with reference to the result of the game. He thought I never indulged in such sports and that I was against them. He expostulated with me in kind words and said, "Do you know why I want to enter into such competition with Europeans? I certainly want to do at least as much as

[1] While seconding the following resolution moved by Mrs. Ramabai Ranade: "The Conference places on record its sense of, profound grief at the irreparable loss the country and the Empire have sustained in the untimely and the universally mourned death of the late Mr. Gopal Krishna Gokhale, than whom no more self-sacrificing and devoted patriot and no more far-sighted statesman ever consecrated his life in the cause of his country."

[2] In 1912

[3] Gandhiji's co-worker in South Africa, who had placed at the disposal of the satyagrahis the Tolstoy Farm; *Vide* "Letter to H. Kallenbach", 30-5-1910.

[4] During the First World War, Britain and, with her, India considered Germany as an enemy country

they can do for the sake of our country. It is said, rightly or wrongly, that we are an inferior people in many matters, and so far as I can do it"—and this he said in all humility—"I certainly want to show that we are at least their equals, if not their superiors."

That was one incident. On board the same steamer, we were engaged in a hot discussion in connection with. our dear motherland, and he was mapping out for me, as a father would for his child, a programme that I was to follow in India if I ever happened to see the motherland again, and, in connection therewith, there was one thing he said: "We lack in India character; we want religious zeal in the political field." Shall we then follow the spirit of the master with the same thoroughness and the same religious zeal, so that we can safely teach a child politics? One of his missions in life, I think, was to inculcate the lesson that whatever we do, we should do with thoroughness. This it is not possible for us mortals to imitate in any degree of perfection. Whatever he did, he did with a religious zeal; that was the secret of his success. He did not wear his religion on his sleeve; he lived it. Whatever he touched, he purified; wherever he went, he recreated an atmosphere around him which was fragrant. When he came to South Africa, he electrified the people there not only by his magnificent eloquence but by the sincerity of his character and by the religious devotion with which he worked. What was that devotion? Ailing though he was, he was awake the whole night practically when he was to have seen General Smuts; he did so in order to prepare the case for his countrymen with a thoroughness that surprised the leader of the Boer Government. What was the result? The result was that he got the promise from the South African Government that the £3 tax would be gone in a few years, and the £3 tax is no more. It is no more there to grind down so many thousands of our countrymen. Mr. Gokhale is dead, but it is possible for you and for me to make his spirit live in us and through us. ("Hear, hear.") We are about to pass resolutions which would expect us, the chosen representatives, or, it may be, the self-elected representatives of the people to do certain things. Shall we discharge our trust with the master's devotion? The people we represent will base their verdict not upon our speeches but upon our actions, and how shall we act? We have a right to pass this resolution if we act in the spirit of the master. With these words, I have much pleasure in seconding this resolution.

Report of the Proceedings of the 15th Bombay Provincial Conference, July, 1915

28. LETTER TO SUNDARAM

Tuesday [On or after *July 13, 1915*][1]

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

I was delighted to receive your letter. Do please come whenever you wish to. I have certainly not given you up entirely, Whilst you are in Madras, you should help Manilal with his Tamil and find out for him a Tamil companion when you are away. We sing *Mutti Neri*[2] everyday without fail. Devdas[3] has made fair progress in Tamil.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 3188

29. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI[4]

AHMEDABAD,

Ashadh Sud 3 [*July 15, 1915*][5]

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. I won't let you be thrown on the streets; do not lose heart. I don't like that you should feel helpless, even when dealing with me. You had better put up with your present difficulties. There are mosquitoes everywhere in Madras. You should sleep covered with a thin sheet. If you rub some kerosene on the face, mosquitoes will keep away. I hope you sleep in the open. If not, do so. Take a room in the neighbourhood, provided it is [airy] like a *maidan*.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 112. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

[1] This appears to have been written after Manilal Gandhi went to Madras on July 7, 1915

[2] In the original, Gandhiji has written in Tamil script these first two words of Tamil devotional song by Manikkavachagar.

[3] Youngest son of Gandhiji

[4] The letter is incomplete.

[5] The addressee went to Madras on July 7, 1915.

30. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

AHMEDABAD,
July 16 [*1915*][1]

DEAR MR. SHASTRIAR,

Herewith copy of Mr. Andrews' letter[2] for your perusal. I think that the Society[3] can inaugurate a big movement for seeking total prohibition[4].

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Are you trying to secure me a Tamil teacher?

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 6293

31. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

AHMEDABAD,
July 16 [*1915*]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

There is no letter from you for this week.

There is a pencil letter from you complaining of want of news from me. Events have moved with me so swiftly that I did not know what to say and what to omit. Names of men and places I omitted as I could not give you the history of men and geography of places I visited. Bolpur I left as it never was the intention to settle down there. The boys' services were required in the nursing department at a fair in a holy place and they left. They then went to Gurukul whilst I was touring through Madras. After finishing Madras I took up quarters at Ahmedabad and sent for the company. At Madras the two friends who interested themselves in the scheme are lawyers of note. But so many have interested themselves in it. Few are willing to adopt it themselves.

[1] From C. F. Andrews' reference to his illness in the letter to which this is a reply, this correspondence seems to have taken place in 1915.

[2] Written to Gandhiji on July 11 from Simla where Andrews was convalescing. The Ietter is not reproduced here.

[3] The Servants of India Society

[4] Of recruitment of indentured labour in India

However I feel that it is the right thing. There is something noble in a 7-year-old lad thinking he is working for his meal and he is studying for his country. There is something great if a boy of seven does not look forward to leaving the place when he is learning and altering his life. After a number of years whether many will do this or not is not the question. What is of importance is that some are making a serious attempt to live such a life. There was a verse we read at the morning prayer today. 'Pain and pleasure, happiness and misery are without doubt results of some previous causes set in motion by ourselves.' This thought gives us the faculty for bearing pains without fear or anxiety. If we add to this the thought that what passes as a misery may not be misery at all but divine discipline.[1] If a man about to commit a heinous crime is prevented by snake-bite from fulfilling his purpose, the bite was surely a blessing for him. Our analysis of events is often faulty. The remedy therefore lies in trying to remain unaffected by outward circumstances.

With love,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

32. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
Ashadha Sud 5 [*July 16,1915*][2]

MU. KHUSHAL JIVAN,

I got your letter. After returning from Poona, I was about to write to you when I got yours. I am fully convinced that it will be for Narandas's good in every way if he joins me. And he wishes so, too. I do think that he will not get anywhere else the opportunities he will get here of building up his character. The others agree to his joining. You need not at all fear that Narandas and others may have to starve here. As for your needs, you may depend upon their being met with

[1] This sentence is left incomplete in the original.

[2] From the reference to Gandhiji receiving the addressee's letter after "returning from Poona". Gandhiji was in Poona from July 10 to 12, 1915, and returned to Ahmedabad on the 14th. In 1915, *Ashadha Sud* 5 corresponded to July 16.

such unfailing regularity as pension for Government service is paid. It has been my experience on numerous occasions that any work embarked upon in a spirit of selflessness succeeds under all circumstances. It may not happen in our lifetime, but l believe that the step you have taken will greatly benefit the family in future. Whether or not it does, will depend upon the character of the four brothers[1] and upon how long they live. I have no doubt on either point. The four brothers complement one another. I believe I will not be disappointed in my faith in Jamnadas. The other two, I have trained with the hardest tasks and Narandas has given me the impression of being quite mature in his character. With God's grace, the country will see what the four brothers can do.

Respectful prostration by

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33106

33. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

AHMEDABAD,
July 22, [*1915*][1]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter, also the cable sent by Mr. Turner to whom I am writing. I do not know that you expected any cable in reply.

My heart is with you. I have unpacked our goods and as a perpetual reminder I am using your favourite wooden pillow which you will recall you did not want to leave behind. In trying to reduce things to order, I ever think of you, I ever miss you. As it is, I am simply preparing the house as if I wanted to receive you. That is, you are positively with me when I am cleaning up the compound and the closets. I ask myself whether you would approve of my work and the method of cleaning. Your suggestions and your nose I miss so much.

But for better or for worse we must live for some time in physical separation. Only we must so act that we should be nearer in spirit if we have to put up with this enforced physical separation. Your

[1] Chhaganlal, Maganlal, Narandas and Jamnadas

[2] The year is evident from the contents, e.g., the reference to Narandas Gandhi and Gandhiji's sister; vide "Draft Constitution for the Asjram", Before 20-5-1915, "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 19-6-1915; 16-9-1915.

internment has brought you nearer to me, if it is possible for you to be nearer than you were.

Your life there must be a model for the others. How I would love to think that you are there vindicating your German birth, your ancestral faith and our joint ideals. You vindicate the first two if you realize the third. And i know you will not fail.

I shall expect from you a full description of the life there.

I hope you will allow anything there to irritate you and that you will act with the greatest calmness of mind and sufficient detachment.

Life here is growing sweeter I think. It is difficult but worth trying. More and more order is being evolved. Narandas, Maganlal's brother, is also coming to us. That means that all the boys of this particular cousin of mine are to devote themselves to this kind of life. It is wonderful sacrifice. Narandas you will love when you see him. There is something so good about all the Chhaganlal brothers. My brother's boys and their wives have disappointed me completely and so has my sister[1]. This is strange. And yet not quite so strange. Harilal is more and more going away from me. What was before hard for him to follow is now not even worth following. He has come to the conclusion that there is nothing good in the institution. Such is the might of inertia.

I have unpacked all your books. They are somewhat damaged. I shall take care of what has been spared.

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Gandhiji's elder sister, Raliatbehn, also known as Gokibehn.

34. LETTER TO CHHOTALAL TEJPAL

[AHMEDABAD,]
Ashadh Sud 11 [*July 22, 1915*?][1]

BHAISHRI CHHOTALAL,

I got your letter, but could not attend to it for want of time. Please forgive me.

The cause of your hardship is not the Customs Department. It originated with the Police Department. It is possible to file a suit against the police, but I don't advise that. I think it will be better, for the present, to write to the Police Department. It will be advisable to have this done through some lawyer friend of yours there. You can also do it yourself. If you make a brief, factual statement in Gujarati, that will serve your purpose all right. That will be the basis.

It is necessary to leave the papers about Viramgam with me for the time being. I don't propose to drop the matter.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 2591

35. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

AHMEDABAD,
July 23, 1915

DEAR MR. SHASTRIAR[2],

I hope you will succeed soon in getting me a Tamil teacher. I do not think holding meetings is necessary. But briefest representations shall go to the Viceroy from all the public bodies. These should be duly advertised in the press and there should certainly be vigorous newspaper agitation. The impending publication of my letter to the press regarding the S. A. accounts[3] may be seized as a proper

[1] From the reference to the Viramgam papers, the letter could have been written either on July 22, 1915 or July 11, 1916 or July l, 1917. On July 1, 1917, Gandhiji was in Motihari. We do not know where he was on July 11, 1916. He was in Ahmedabad on July 22, 1915.

[2] President, Servants of India Society

[3] *Vide* "Letter to J.B. Petit", 16-6-1915.

opportunity for starting the campaign.

I hope Mrs. Shastriar is now free from her disease.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 11331. Courtesy: T. N. Jagadisan

36. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

AHMEDABAD,

Ashadh Sud 15, July 26, 1915

. . . The subject of physical contact [whether it is rightly prohibited] is a large one. I think we are committing a great sin in treating a whole class of people as untouchables and it is owing to the existence of this class that we have still some revolting practices among us. Not to eat in company with a particular person and not to touch him are two very different things. No one is an untouchable now. If we don't mind contact with a Christian or a Muslim, why should we mind it with one belonging to our own religion? No defence of untouchability is possible now, either from the point of view of justice or that of practical common sense.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi

37. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

July 26, 1915

. . . Your reading for M.A. seems to me, personally, so much unnecessary drain on your health. If you don't need to work for a living, study Sanskrit and learn other Indian languages; this is necessary.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi

38. LETTER TO B. G. TILAK

AHMEDABAD,
July 27 [*1915*][1]

DEAR MR. TILAK,

I have your note. I have not given anyone any authority to use my name in connection with the interviews I had with you. I have not even read the things you are referring to. The conversations between us were private and must remain so. The draft sent by you hardly does justice to the interview. I never said that I spoke for the Congress party or with its authority. I simply came as a friend and admirer and for friends. I did not know what view the Congress party would take. I simply put a tentative proposal before you.

I hope you will respect my wish not to be drawn in a newspaper controversy and that you will in no case publish the interview.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile of the original in Gandhiji's hand published in *Mahatma*, Vol. I

39. LETTER TO CHHOTALAL TEJPAL

[AHMEDABAD,]
Ashadh Vad 5 [*July 31, 1915*][2]

The following is found in the issue of February 2, 1910 of *The Times* [*of India*]:

> We could wish that His Excellency's visit had synchronised with the removal of the Viramgam customs line, which is a blot upon the administration of India and very imperfectly serves the purpose for which it was designed.

[1] This letter appears to have been written in 1915, for Gandhiji had two interviews with Tilak on July 11 at Poona.

[2] From the postmark

Please excuse me for the delay in searching this out.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND
SHRI CHHOTALAL TEJPAL
RAMCHANDRA MANSION
SANDHURST ROAD
GIRGAUM
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N 2586

40. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

AHMEDABAD,
August 1 [*1915?*][1]

DEAR MR. SHASTRIAR,

This will be presented to you by Mr. Raghavendra who is desirous of joining the Society in any capacity in which he may be found fit. He seems to have had a varied experience. I have known him for some time as a correspondent.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 6290

41. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

AHMEDABAD,
August 3, 1915

MY DEAR WEST,

This is for you and Chhaganlal herewith Passive Resistance Fund a/c[2] with my covering letter which speaks for itself. You may publish the a/c here.You will see some items allocated in anticipation. £2,023 have been allocated to the improvements there. This enables you to develop agriculture and keep the ground in such order as toenable

[1] This appears to have been written during the early years of Gandhiji's stay in India after his return from South Africa. In 1917, 1918 and 1919, he was not in Ahmedabad on this date. We do not know whether he was in Ahmedabad on August 1, 1916 but we know that he was there in 1915 on this date.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to J. B. Petit", 16-6-1915.

you to cope with emergency, it being understood that the property is open to receive more Passive Resisters than there at present. Of course you will not expend this amount if it is not required.

Allocation of £3,000 to Phoenix settlement includes assistance to *Indian Opinion*. This enables you to report cases of hardship and to help such cases also. You may even open a branch office in Durban and collect information about hard cases of immigrants and give them free help, you can engage men for reporting cases, etc. The expense will be justified only as far as you use the paper to attend [to] local relief. Allocation to passive resistance relief means relief given both here and there. I am supporting the widows, etc., you have there your cases in Phoenix and elsewhere. I have made a rough calculation.

For Valliama Hall up to £4,000 may be expended.

It is possible that there will be some talk about the Phoenix allocations. But I could not do otherwise than to deal with the whole matter as I have done. Your work if it is fruitful of results will silence cold criticism in the end. If there is any further information please let me know. I am having this letter copied so that I should know the contents if you referred to it in your correspondence.

Yours sincerely,

I have read Maganlal's letter written on my suggestion. I approve of it. Please let me have your views upon it. Should any questions arise there regarding the accounts, you should refer the questions to Mr. Petit.

From a photostat of the handwritten office copy: S.N. 6215

42. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

AHMEDABAD,
Ashad Vad 10 [*August 5, 1915*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Please send me two dozen copies of *Kavyavinod*[2].

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the postmark
[2] A Sanskrit primer

43. LETTER TO B. G. TILAK

AHMEDABAD,
August 17 [*1915?*][1]

DEAR MR. TILAK,

Immediately on receipt of your letter last week, I duly telegraphed[2] as requested. I hope you got my wire in time.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile of the original in Gandhiji's hand published in *Mahatma*, Vol. I

44. LETTER TO CHHOTALAL TEJPAL

AHMEDABAD,
Shravan Sud 8 [*August 18, 1915*][3]

BHAISHRI CHHOTALAL,

The right time for me will be when I can work in freedom. That cannot be during this year. The root cause of all this is. the same. As we are against customs levy as such, whether or no there is police tyranny, we must emphasize the inherent injustice of the system. We would oppose the customs levy even if the police were gods.

I know you have no selfish end to serve.

I did not receive *Jain Hitechchhu* at all. I waited for it.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 2592

[1] In the source, this letter is ascribed to the years 1915-16. We do not know where Gandhiji was on August 17, 1916. He was in Ahmedabad on August 17, 1915.

[2] This telegram is not available.

[3] This appears to have been written after "Letter to Chhotalal Tejpal", 31-7-1915.

45. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
Shravan Sud 11 [*August 21, 1915*]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. I think your duty is simple. You have given due notice. They want to retain you longer for their own purpose; this, they cannot do. Even during September, you should have only to go for their case, for a day or two, at their expense.

Directors are always much too greedy and look at only one side of a question. They can take into account nothing but their own interest. Now that you know my view, it is entirely for you to decide what you will do.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5677. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

46. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

AHMEDABAD,
August 23 [*1915*][1]

DEAR MR. SHASTRIAR,

Here is Manilal my second son. He will tell you why he finds himself in Madras. He is to complete[2] his training in Tamil and handloom weaving there. Kindly guide him. Hanumanthrao can try his social service training on Manilal.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 6292

[1] Manilal Gandhi was in Madras at this time.

[2] He had been to Madras before for this training; *vide* "Letter to Sundaram", on or after 13-7-1915.

47. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M. K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,

August 23 [1915][1]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have not missed more than two weeks to my knowledge. So when you do not get my letters, you will presume that the fault is not mine.

I am glad you have received all the things in good order. Have you been using the sticks? Have the biscuits kept all right? If they have, I must send you more biscuits and sticks.

Chhaganlal has been here for some time. He is going today to his parents again. He has not yet decided how he will act in India. He does not feel like joining me. Jamnadas too has gone back to Rajkot. His is a pathetic case. He is most undecided. I can weave Indian tape. The mechanical arrangement is very simple. Here it is.[2]

It represents a bunch of strings that receives the warp. A wooden knife serves to press the woof home. A bobbin made of reed unwinds the woof. The tape is from half an inch to two inches in width. Boys are also put on to that work. Presently I shall go to more difficult work.

With love from us all,

Yours sincerely,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] From the contents

[2] A reproduction of the sketch by Gandhiji appears on an art-sheet facing page 224.

48. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M.K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,

August 26 [*1915*]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The life here is becoming more and more intense. We have now a handloom on the premises. It is calculated that it will start work tomorrow. I hope to send you the pattern we may turn out. Manilal is fully occupied in that work.

Languages occupy most of the inmates. Thus there is hardly a minute free for anybody. They have all become very studious. Poor Ramdas has always some ailment or another and I find it difficult to get him to reach his original strength. I am trying hard. The others are keeping well. Manilal is becoming stouter. Maganlal is regaining his strength. Mrs. Gandhi has become very active again. I expect a collapse any day. Such is life here. Your presence can complete the life. We sang this evening "When I survey the wondrous cross". How nice it would have been to have had you to join! The day will come some day and the reunion will be all the sweeter for this compulsory separation.

With love,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

49. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M.K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,

September 9 [*1915*]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I want to be brief today. I have three illnesses on hand today. They are all Tamils and in each case overeating is the cause. One has a very dangerous type of fever. The patient is better but by no means

quite out of the wood yet. The other is Fakiri. The third is a new man from Madras. Then we have rearrangement in the Ashram as we have a paid carpenter now working in the premises. (Here I was so exhausted that I slept off for a few minutes.) Such is work here. And it is this work I want you to share as soon as you can, i.e., as soon as you are free.

With love,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

50. LETTER TO MADHURIPRASAD

AHMEDABAD,
Bhadrapad Shukla 1 [*September 10, 1915*]

DEAR SHRI MADHURIPRASAD,

I have received the letter written by Totaramji[1] and you. I am sorry I have no time at present to visit Ferozabad. The Ashram work here will not allow me to go.

Yours sincerely,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI MADHURIPRASAD
BHARATIBHUVAN KARYALAYA
FEROZABAD

From a photostat of the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 2764

51. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

AHMEDABAD,
September 14, 1915

DEAR SHASTRIAR,

I think that the newspaper statement should be answered at once. I am prepared to relate the conversation I had with him in Cape Town

[1] Totaram Sandhya, who had lived twenty-one years in Fiji and written a book on his life there. Later, he joined Gandhiji's Ashram at Sabarmati.

and on other occasions. It is not possible to believe the signature story until we have seen the original application itself A mischievous attempt is being made to bolster up what am I to call it!

I am in the midst of a momentous step[1] being taken in my life. I have no time today to write about it, some of that is about the Pariah question.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 6288

52. LETTER TO VIDYAGAURI R. NILKANTH

AHMEDABAD,
Bhadarva Sud 6, [*September 15, 1915*][2]

DEAR SISTER,

I am grateful to you as well as to Shri Ramanbhai[3] for the translation you have sent. What I require, however, is the meaning of the *bhajan*. I want to have its spirit conveyed in our language.

We do not have an expression corresponding to दयामयी ज्योति ('Kindly Light') एक पगलानी आशा[4] does not convey the same sense as in 'one step enough for me'. It should not be difficult for us to find from among our literary works an expression parallel to Newman's thought.[5]

Do not charge me while giving an inch with asking for an ell. Please do not take what I have said as criticism.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS KARAM CHAND

[From Gujarati]

Vidyabehn Nilkanth Jeevan Jhanki

[1] The reference is to the admission of an "untouchable"; *vide* "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri," 23-9-1915.

[2] The date is evident from the contents of the letter. *Bhadarva Sud* 6 in 1915 corresponded to this date.

[3] Ramanbhai Mahipatram Nilkanth, addressee's husband

[4] 'Hope of one step'

[5] Subsequently, *Premal Jyoti Taro Dakhavi,* Narasimharao Divetia's Gujarati translation of Gandhiji's favourite hymn, Newman's Lead, Kindly Light, came to be accepted; *vide* also "Letter to Verrier Elwin", 27-5-1932.

53. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Bhadarwa Sud 7 [*September 16, 1915*]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I did not write to you only because I thought that you would soon be here. To wish you a long life will avail you but little. What I wish you is self-realization during this very life. You have my blessings and my help in your efforts to that end.

You will arrive here at a difficult time. It is for a time like this that I desired your presence. I believe you will not be discouraged by reports of the trouble. Worries from the side of one's wife may be overcome only with gentle firmness. A husband or a wife has no right to obstruct the other in pursuit of a worthy aim. In the situation which has arisen, I indeed suffer outwardly but experience boundless inward happiness. I feel that it is only now that my life in India has started.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5678. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

54. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M.K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,

September 17, 1915

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Greater work than passive resistance has commenced. I have taken in the Ashram a Pariah[1] from these parts. This is an extreme step. It caused a breach between Mrs. Gandhi and myself. I lost my temper. She tried it too much. She is not now allowed to take part in the kitchen. Navin has left the Ashram on the account. Many further developments will take place and I may become a deserted man. This tries the resources of the Ashram to an enormous extent. In spite of it all I am happy but a man without any leisure. I shall ask the others to write to you.

[1] Dudabhai Malji Dafda

Harilal has come with his wife to the Ashram for a few days' stay. His wife will stay longer.

Andrews is due here next week.

With much love,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

55. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

AHMEDABAD,
September 23 [*1915*][1]

DEAR MR. SHASTRIAR,

When I took in Naiker, Mrs. Gandhi did not 'kick'. Now I had to decide whether I was to take in a grown-up Gujarati *Dhed*[2] with his wife.[3] I decided to take him and she rebelled against it and so did another lady at the Ashram. There was quite a flutter in the Ashram. There is a flutter even in Ahmedabad. I have told Mrs. Gandhi she could leave me and we should part good friends. The step is momentous because it so links me with the suppressed classes mission that I might have at no distant time to carry out the idea of shifting to some *Dhed* quarters and sharing their life with the *Dheds*. It would mean much even for my staunchest co-workers. I have now given you the outline of the story. There is nothing grand about it. It is of importance to me because it enables me to demonstrate the efficacy of passive resistance in social questions and when I take the final step, it will embrace swaraj, etc.

Please share this with Dr. Deva and any other member you please.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 6291

[1] Naiker referred to in the letter joined Gandhiji in 1915.

[2] An untouchable

[3] The reference is to Dudabhai, the first 'untouchable' who joined the Ashram with his family on September 26; *vide* "Diary for 1915". Gandhiji accepted him at the suggestion of Amritlal Thakkar. The event caused a stir in the socio-religious life of Ahmedabad and people thought of even boycotting the Ashram.

56. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M. K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
September 24, 1915

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have been regularly receiving your letters. I do not care to ask others to write to you as we are full up to the brim with work.I had seven patients last week, all more or less in a bad state. It was no ordinary illness. I am thankful to say they are all convalescent now. These included Ramdas and Devdas. They were all treated after our fashion partial or total starvation and hip-baths.

You know what a Pariah is. He is what is called an untouchable. The widow's son whom I have taken is a Pariah but that did not shock Mrs. Gandhi so much. Now I have taken one from our own parts and Mrs.Gandhi as also Maganlal's wife were up in arms against me. They made my life miserable so far as they could. I told them they were not bound to stay with me. This irritated them the more. The storm has not yet subsided. I am however unmoved and comparatively calm. The step I have taken means a great deal. It may alter my life a bit, i.e., I may have to completely take up Pariah work, i.e., I might have to become a Pariah myself. We shall see. Anyway let my troubles brace you up if they can.

Andrews and Pearson were with me for a day. I lent the latter some of your books. They are both on their way to Fiji in order to investigate the indenture question.

Harilal was here for a few days. He is gone. His wife is here with her children.

I am sending you a piece of cloth from what has been woven by us. It is Manilal's work. Sewing is mine and Devdas's. May it serve to wipe your hand and may the spirit that has prompted the gift serve to strengthen the inner man in you.

With love,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

57. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
Bhadarva Vad 1, September 24, 1915

RESPECTED KHUSHALBHAI,

I realized after meeting Narandas that you repent having given him the permission and the chief cause for remorse is that I have admitted a learned *dhea*[1] [to the ashram] . That would have hurt the feelings of Santok too. In fact, no one should feel bad about it because in Phoenix we shared food with everyone. But the same thing is viewed differently here.

There is no need for you to feel sorry. Narandas has taken a very good step. If I was not worried about the unhappiness of my sister-in-law, I would have boldly asked Narandas to come here. However, on considering everything, I thought it was better for Narandas to go to Madras with his wife. There Tamil....[2] Santok and the two girls are going.

Maganlal is accompanying them to Bombay today.

By doing so, Narandas, Jamna, Santok and the girls would not be caught in the storm[3] that threatens the Ashram. They would not be banished from the caste and so their sorrow will be a little less. Jamnadas is no doubt there. There is no need for him to come here.

It is Chhaganlal's duty to stay on in Phoenix. Now remain Maganlal and his children. Let him be caught in the storm along with me. Those who live with me, should never expect that they will never have external problems because those who live with me should learn to welcome problems and realize that purification lies in that. I have told Maganlal that he should go to Madras for a short period if he wanted to. There is no objection if Maganlal goes to Madras and Narandas comes here. I have asked the two brothers to do what is convenient to them.

I am going to fulfil your desire once Narandas is relieved from his job.

[1] Dudhabhai Dafda

[2] A few words are illegible here.

[3] As a consequence of Gandhiji's decision to admit an untouchable family to the Ashram. Also *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 16-9-1915

I do not think that a more satisfactory arrangement can be worked out. It contains truth and dharma indeed is included in it.

I wish that you should be at peace.

I do want that Maganlal should go there.

Respectful prostration by

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33105

58. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,

[Before *September 26, 1915*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have again written[2] to respected Khushalbhai. You should handle the situation there quite calmly. Do what will please the self. If Santok wants to return, let her. It will be all right even if she goes to Madras. She need only observe all the Ashram rules there. If you want, you may stay on there [for some time] or go to Madras.

There have been two letters for you, which, for the present, I don't send on.

Narandas should remain determined. He should be confident and fearless about the future.

Keshu came round very soon. Already, he is playing about today. Two of his different groups [of subjects] are under my charge. I am therefore in a better position to observe how he does. Purushottam[3] has felt nothing. He had his usual meal.

Dudabhai will arrive on Sunday morning.

Things have been happening at Phoenix, it seems.[4] Chhaganlal appears to have cut off his connection altogether. The price of *Indian Opinion* has been reduced to one penny. It seems he has been hasty. This also must be for a good end. More when you are here. You, of

[1] Dudabhai referred to in the letter arrived with his wife at the Ashram on Sunday, September 26, 1915.

[2] This letter is not available.

[3] Son of Narandas Gandhi

[4] *Vide* the following item.

course, ought not to allow yourself to be upset. The burden is on you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5679. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

59. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

AHMEDABAD,
September 26 [*1915*][1]

MY DEAR WEST,

I have your typewritten letter.

I note the changes made and I accept them. The central idea is that *Indian Opinion* should be kept up at any cost. If you can be totally independent of public support, i.e., from the Passive Resistance Fund, so much the better.

This means revision of the account sent to you by me.[2] Fortunately there was delay on my side. The new scheme requires a revision which I shall do shortly.

I am not going to keep the large sum with me but it will be handed over to the Trust.

As for part of the payment to Pragji[3] and Imam Saheb[4] being, debited to the P. R. Fund, I am inclined to think that they were present at the meeting, where the matter was settled. But if they object, the amounts could be debited to the P. R. Fund as assistance to *Indian Opinion*. In either case, the money has to come from the P. R. Fund. It was debited by way of relief as the whole amount could not be a legitimate charge against *Indian Opinion.* But for their being passiveresisters, we could not have availed ourselves of their services. But it was a matter of account keeping. I should be prepared to defend the outlay in any case.

Unless Chhaganlal is bodily incapable, his withdrawal from

[1] This is in reply to West's letter dated August 23, 1915. On West's letter Gandhiji has written "Reply, 26th Sept."

[2] *Vide* "Letter to A. H. West", 3-8-1915.

[3] Pragji Khandubhai Desai, a passive resister during the South African struggle

[4] Imam Abdul Kadir Bawazeer; Muslim priest and passive resister; President of the Hamidia Islamic Society

Indian Opinion is a bad sign. However I must not grumble. You who are on the spot must know what is best. The ideals we are working are common to us and you will work according to your own way. Hence the Phoenix Trust. I can only advise from this distance.

Auditing, if it is to cost anything appreciable, is useless. Our books contain all the transactions. The bank-balance represents the savings from the Fund, etc. However, even in this matter you know best what should be done.

Mr. Rustomjee's warning is now superfluous as I shall not be handling the funds any more. For the Phoenix funds there are the trustees and they may, subject to the sanction of the schemers, do the needful.

This exhaust the points raised by you. The amount fixed for Polak should stand until he himself feels that he can dispense with it.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4420. Courtesy: A. H. West

60. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M. K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,

October 3 [*1915*][1]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

No letter from you after your transference. Mr. Turner has however written to me.

The admission of a Pariah family continues to occupy me. I have been deserted by most helpers and the burden is all falling on my shoulder assisted by two or three who are remaining staunch. Poor Maganlal is simply torn asunder. He is in Bombay fixing up with his wife and mother. How it is a question whether Narandas will come. I have told you that a time may come when I may irresistibly take a step which may result in my being left alone. Well, I must still follow the light as I find it.

[1] From the contents

Mr. Turner says you now better situated. I want your letter.

With love,

Yours

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

61. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M. K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,

October 8 [*1915*][1]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have to make this Herculean effort just now under extraordinary difficulties. It is now nearing 9 p.m. Mrs. Gandhi who has been making my life hell for me is just now at me. But I must not miss this weekly communion. I give you this news to show that peace is not to be found from without. I am not at war with myself in spite of the disturbance I have mentioned above. She however does succeed in making me angry at times and throwing me off my balance. I am making a desperate effort to overcome this weakness. The whole situation has...[2] because I have admitted a man who is every whit as good as she is. She is still talking and I must close.

With love,

Yours ever,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] From the contents

[2] The source is damaged here.

62. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M. K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,

October 16 [*1915*][1]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I hope you have received my letter the one that did not reach you in time. There was no omission [on] my side. We are all so short-handed that I do not like to ask anyone to write to you.

Here there is no extensive piece of ground for cultivation hardly one acre. There are two roomy houses with little plots of ground attached. We are doing only a little vegetable gardening. Water is drawn from two wells. These are rustic wells, with primitive contrivances for drawing water. The dispute was paltry, out of cussedness. The man felt polluted because the boys fetched water from his side of the well. It was no water dispute.

We are now weaving our own cloth, sewing things, too, ourselves.

The buildings were ready for our occupation. They are hired houses. We are not on our own ground yet. Manilal has completed his weaving lessons. He has now gone to a village to complete his course. Maganlal too has nearly picked it up. Devdas is becoming an expert tailor. He is turning out a fine student.

But the life here owing to the untouchable problem has become most difficult for me. Mrs. Gandhi is the cause. And yet as I have told you I am internally at peace.

Now good-bye.

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] From the contents

63. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M. K. GANDHI
AHMEDABAD,
October 23 [1915][1]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Mrs. Gandhi has become a little better but before she could regain her sanity I had to undertake partial starvation. I lived without nuts for a few days.

Just now we have about 40 guests. Of these 37 are from an institution about 150 miles from here. So we have been obliged for the last 4 days to cook for about 80 people. Fortunately there are some fine workers and the guests themselves do their share of the work. They assist in the kitchen, in water-carrying and grinding.

Carpentry is going strong. We are making sectional book-cases. I think I mentioned this to you. Your books will be housed in one of them. When you see these you will like them. There will be five sections to each. The cost will come to about £6 each. Cheap enough you will say. But according to the measure here £6 for a book-case is rather a heavy charge.

I wish I could give you a sketch of the handlooms but I cannot. It is an intricate affair. You cannot have any notion from my description because I cannot give you a technical description. Suffice it to say that it has as much string-work as wood-work. The cost of the simplest loom is under £7.

Maganlal is to leave for Madras in a day or two in order to finish his Tamil study and his handloom experience. There is a big and rather good handloom business in Madras.

Did I tell you that we all remain in the house bare-bodied? All we wear is *dhotar* the cloth round the waist. It is the sanest thing we could have done. I receive visitors, both English and Indian, in that condition. So you will see that the cost of clothing will be very little. We shall confine ourselves to our own production.

And now good-bye. The bell has gone to serve the boys. Do come soon and take your share in the serving.

Yours always,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] From the reference to Maganlal;s Tamil studies; vide ”leeter to A. H. West”, 5-11-1915

64 . SPEECH ON INDENTURED INDIAN LABOUR AT BOMBAY[1]

October 28, 1915

Mr. Gandhi, who was loudly cheered by the audience, said that the question of indentured labour was just now a topical question, because those true and real friends of India, Messrs Andrews and Pearson, were conducting an enquiry[2] in Fiji. The Fiji Islands absorbed the largest number of indentured Indians at the present moment. Messrs Andrews and Pearson were not the first to interest the Indians in this question, but it was the deceased statesman, Mr. Gokhale, who first impressed Indians with the importance of their duties in connection with this question. Mr. Gandhi here read the resolution[3] introduced by Mr. Gokhale in the Viceregal Council and his speech[4] upon it demanding the total abolition of the indenture system and commented upon it at some length. The resolution which Mr. Gokhale brought before the Council was defeated by a majority, though all[5] the non-official members of the Council voted for the abolition. However much a benign and sympathetic Viceroy wished to remove this abominable system of indenture from the Indian Statute Book, there was a very serious difficulty in his way and that was the report by the two Commissioners, who were sent by Lord Hardinge, namely, Messrs MacNeill and Chimanlal,[6] which was contained in two bulky volumes. All might not care to wade through the rather dull pages of those volumes, but to him who knew what real indentured labour was they were of great interest. They might, however, take upon trust that the report recognised that indentured labour should continue just as it was, if certain conditions were fulfilled. Those conditions, Mr. Gandhi said, were impossible of fulfilment. And the recommendations, which these two great Commissioners made, showed that they really could not seriously have meant that the system of indenture which existed today in Fiji, Jamaica, Guiana and other colonies should be continued a minute longer than was actually necessary. The speaker here referred to the previous commission and said that the defects which Messrs MacNeill and Chimanlal had pointed out were patent to all. Their report contained nothing new. But there was unofficial investigation on behalf of some philanthropic body in England some forty years

[1] Under the auspices of the District Congress Committee at the Empire Theatre, Sir Ibrahim Rahimtullah presiding

[2] The results were published in their Report on Indentured Labour in Fiji.

[3] Recommending prohibition of recruitment of indentured labour in India; *vide* “Indenture or Slavery?”, December, 1915.

[4] On March 4, 1912

[5] 22 in number

[6] McNeill and Chimanlal were sent by the Indian Government to report on conditions prevailing in Jamaica, Trinidad, British Guiana and Fiji—Colonies where the indenture system was still permitted.

ago, and in that book an unvarnished tale was given, which told in graphic language what were the hardships under the system.

In this connection, Mr. Gandhi quoted a statement made by the Prime Minister of Natal in which he said that the system of indenture was a most inadvisable thing and that the sooner it was terminated, the better for the indentured labourer and the employer. Lord Selborne said the same thing when he was the High Commissioner in South Africa: he said that it was worse for the employer than the employed, because it was a system perilously near to slavery. Sir William Hunter[1] wrote a beautiful series of letters in 1895 when he first brought himself to study the system personally and compared the system of indenture, after due investigation, to a state bordering on slavery. On one occasion he used the expression 'semi-slavery'. Mr. Gandhi said if he erred in making these statements, he erred in Lord Selborne's company. And it was in connection with this system that these two worthy gentlemen, the Commissioners, had seen fit to report and advise the fulfilment of certain conditions which in the very nature of the contract were impossible of fulfilment. The conditions were that unsuitable emigrants be excluded; the proportion of females to males to be raised from 40 to 50 per cent. The speaker could not understand what they meant by "unsuitable emigrants" being excluded. The Commissioners themselves told them that it was not easy to find labour in India. India was not pining to send her children out as semi-slaves. Lord Sanderson[2] stated that it was the surplus population from India that went out from dissatisfaction with the economic condition in India. But they must remember that there were 500 recruiting licences issued in the year 1907. Could they conceive the significance of the extraordinary state of things which required one recruiter to 17 labourers? The Colonial Governments had their sub-agents in India for this indentured labour to be collected. They were paid a sum of Rs. 25 for each cooly recruited, and this sum of Rs. 25 was divided between the recruiter and the sub-agent. Mr. Gandhi thought the mental state of those recruiters must be miserable, who could send so many of their countrymen as semi-slaves. After having seen what the recruiting agents did and after having read the many gross mis-statements they made, he was not surprised that thousands and thousands of their countrymen were becoming indentured labourers. The Commissioners devoted several pages to the immorality prevailing on the estates. It was not forty women for sixty men, but the statement was made that these men did not marry these women, but kept them and that

[1] (1840-1900), historian, an authority on Indian affairs and author of *Indian Empire*; served in India for 25 years, was sympathetic to lndian aspirations; member of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress in London

[2] Chairman of the Committee appointed by the British Government in England to investigate conditions in the Crown Colonies of Jamaica, Trinidad, British Guiana and Fiji.

many of these women were prostitutes. Mr. Gandhi said he would decline to send his children out of the country under such an indenture, if he was worthy of his salt. But thousands of men and women had gone. What did they think of that in India?

The conditions were that rigorous provisions should be either expunged from the Ordinances and that the Protector should control employers. As for the regulations made to protect these labourers, they could take it from him, Mr. Gandhi said, that there were a great many flaws in them and a coach and four could be easily driven through these. The aim of the rules was to make the employer supreme. Here was capital ranged against labour with artificial prop for capital and not labour.

Mr. Gandhi condemned the "protectors" of emigrants. They were men belonging to that very class to which employers belonged; they moved among them and was it not only natural that they should have their sympathies on the side of the employers? How was it then possible that they could do justice to the labourer against the employer? He knew many instances when magistrates had meted out justice to the indentured labourer, but it was impossible to expect such a thing from the Protectors of Emigrants. The labourer was bound hand and foot to the employer. If he committed an offence against his employer, he first of all had to undergo a course of imprisonment; then the days that the labourer had spent in the jail were added to his indenture and he was taken back to his master to serve again. The Commissioners had nothing to say against these rules. There was nobody to judge the Protector of Emigrants if he gave a wrong judgment, but in the case of the magistrate he could be criticised. Again, the Commissioners said that these prisoners should be put into separate jails. But the Colonial Government would be bankrupt if they built jails for hundreds of prisoners that were imprisoned. They were not able to build jails for the passive resisters. Then the Commissioners said that the labourer should be allowed to redeem his indenture by payment of a graduated redemption fee. They made a mistake in thinking him to be an independent man. He was not his own master. Mr. Gandhi said he had known of English girls, well educated, who were decoyed, and who were not indentured, unable to free themselves. How was it then possible for an indentured labourer to do this? Then the Commissioners said the special needs of Indian children in the matter of primary education should receive consideration. As for education, Mr. Gandhi said, no doubt, some work of that kind was being done by some of the philanthropic missions, but nothing substantial was being done or could be expected. Mr. Balfour[1] compared the labourer under an indenture to a soldier. But the soldier was a responsible man and he could rise to a high position. But an indentured labourer remained a labourer. He had no privileges. His wife was also included under his disabilities, so also his son. In Natal the finger of scorn was pointed at these

[1] Arthur James Balfour (1848-1930), British statesman, Conservative leader and Prime Minister

people. Never could an indentured Indian rise to a higher post than that of labourer. And what did the labourer bring when he returned to India? He returned a broken vessel, with some of the artificial and superficial signs of civilization, but he left more valuable things behind him. He might bring some sovereigns also with him. They should decline to perpetuate this hateful system of indenture because it robbed them of their national self-respect.

If they could consider well over what he had said, they would try and abolish the system in a year's time and this one taint upon the nation would have gone and indentured labour would be a thing of the past. He wanted to remove thecause of the ill-treatment of Indians in the Colonies. However protected that system might be, it still remained a state bordering upon slavery. It would remain, said Mr. Gandhi, a state based upon full-fledged slavery and it was a hindrance to national growth and national dignity.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-10-1915

65. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI[1]

[After *October 28, 1915*][2]

. . . the requirements will have been known that way.[3] If we can do without oil, we shall have made a very important change. I have noted that in some institutions they use neither oil nor ghee.

Fakiri[4] doesn't like being in Ahmedabad. He had of course to be looked after, and it became something of a problem where he should be kept. I found the Nursing Home in Surat very good and so he is kept there. There is a letter from him today, in which he says that he is not well yet.

Manilal has gone to leave Chanchi[5] at Rajkot. Her mother, wanted to have her there for a few days before she left for Calcutta.

Kaka[6] is here. Revashanker[7] has gone to fetch his wife.

[1] The first two pages of the letter are not available.

[2] From Gandhiji's request to the addressee to procure a Tamil teacher, it would appear that the latter was in Madras. Maganlal Gandhi left for Madras on October 28.

[3] The original is not clear at this point.

[4] Naidoo

[5] Chanchalbehn Gandhi, wife of Harilal, Gandhiji's eldest son

[6] Dattatreya Balkrishna Kalelkar (1885-); educationist, writer and constructive worker; Padma Vibhushan; *vide* also "Circular Letter for Funds for Ashram", 1-7-1917.

[7] Sodha

Maganbhai[1] has left for Dharmaj today to make arrangements for his son. We have two new persons in the Ashram. It has been decided not to admit fresh students for a year in any circumstances. We may as well give up hopes of Anna. The two new persons are grown-up men.

See if you can get a Tamil teacher to come over here. We may pay him. We shall not mind his living outside the Ashram. He must be a man of simple habits. We shall know the position from theGurukul side, after they have been through the whole thing,

Blessings from

BAPU

Kitchin[2] has committed suicide. Reason: Monetary loss.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5690. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

66. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M. K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,

October 30, 1915

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Not a week just now passes but has its surprises for me. Chhaganlal seems to be dangerously ill. He has been persistently coughing blood and says he is going down. He eats little. I had to telegraph saying he should be sent if still ill. Things at Phoenix are not moving well otherwise. Pragji has not much heart in the work. I do not know that I can spare anybody from here. Maganlal went on Thursday to Madras with his wife and the two daughters. Fakiri and another have joined him. Maganlal is to finish his Tamil course and handloom work. So he can be ill spared just now. Mrs. Gandhi continues to cause trouble. So you see my difficulties are fairly thick. They give me food for thought but no anxiety. I know that I can but do little.

You are afraid of the increasing intensity of life here. But I feel

[1] Patel

[2] Herbert Kitchin, a theosophist who edited *Indian Opinion* after Nazar's premature death. Lived with Gandhiji for a time and worked with him during the Boer War

sure you will like it when you come to it, especially after the experiences you are going through.

Yours sincerely,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

67. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

AHMEDABAD,

October 31 [*1915*][1]

MY DEAR WEST,

I have your indictment. If you do not speak out, who would? I value your friendship just because you always say exactly what you mean.

Now for the reply.

I could not consult anyone there as to allocations because I was not there. The Phoenix allocations were discussed between us there. Relief allocations needed no discussion. Valiama Hall allocation was settled there. The £1,000 for Polak's expenses, should he have to return to England penniless, was a matter which was fixed there but I am not able to say that it was positively discussed. But I suggest that it is again an expense about which I should not deem consultation necessary. If the community has any respect for itself, it could not send them away starving. It would be pure passive resistance relief. I would not dream about publishing it in the accounts sheet. We are not bound to disclose the names of the resisters helped.

Mr. Petit's statement was published after consultation with me. Mine was delayed at his instance. I have brought every item; including Polak's £1,000 to the Committee's notice. I am even going to bring to Mr. Petit's notice your and Rustomji's dissent.

You suggest that you could not take interest which is tainted nor would you take the help offered. I congratulate you. The strongeryou are, the better. The allocations suggested by me were due to our collective weakness. But you will not find me weakening you if you

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's cable to the addressee regarding Chhaganlal Gandhi, the letter appears to have been written in 1915.

are strong.

You suggest that for Phoenix's improvement, I would have to send you money from elsewhere. This I could not do. Even when we discussed there, it was clearly understood that the charges should come out of the passive resistance funds, as we were running Phoenix as a P. R. farm and wanted to make it more and more a refuge for indentured Indians who may be in distress. If therefore you want the help, it can only come out of the fund.

I would certainly welcome any decision you may come to as to not receiving any help.

The money does not belong to South Africa. The Committee here has control over it. They asked that the funds be transferred to them, subject to such allocations as I may suggest. I am now having no definite allocations but shall receive monies for you in S.A. as you there may desire from time to time. This gives the Committee here the fullest control. I shall act as the go between.

As to books, you are quite wrong. Our books contain all the receipts and all disbursements. We need no audit, we owe nobody anything and no one has a legal right to ask us to do anything except the Committee. Individual subscribers may ask. Them we could satisfy. Not a penny has been yet spent which could not be brought within the scope of the fund.

Relief to resisters includes Polak, Thambi and even Mr. Cachalia. I do not think we have received the loan given to him. So will it include Chhaganlal, Maganlal, Pragji, etc. It will most decidedly include Naidoo's and other passive resisters' children. It will not include me and my family simply because our expenses are found otherwise. As I am or rather have been the controller of the funds, I have desired to remain free from personal help. But if I had no one else to help me, I should not hesitate to draw for self and children. Only then I would at least make that clear to the public. No such precaution is necessary regarding other passive resisters as I cover them.

I need not discuss your proposal to invest in land, as we no longer have the funds under our control.

I have cabled[1] you regarding Chhaganlal. He seems to be breaking up. If so, he should be sent here. And unless Pragji and

[1] *Vide* the following item.

Imam Saheb undertake the work, I must send someone from here. All I know is this that you must continue *I.O.* even if you have to labour in the streets and if you burn your boats, so much the better. If you cannot, you and your family, so long as you are at Phoenix turning out the paper, will be supported at all costs.

I think I have now exhausted all the material points raised by you. I mean material in view of the new state of things. Now you may all consider and let me know your decision. I have P. R. a/c to 31st Jan. If Chhaganlal is there or if Pragji can manage it, you should let me have further a/c.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4421. Courtesy: A. H. West

68. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
Aso Vad 11 [*November 3, 1915*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I sent a cable[2] to say that Chi. Chhaganlal might be sent here if he was still ill. Khushalbhai was very pleased. The reply came "Chhaganlal better, West." I can see from this that he is not likely to come in the near future. I am writing all the same that, if they can spare Chhaganlal, he may come away.

The printing of the satyagraha account is nearly over.

Keshu is enjoying himself. He had slight fever for a day. All the children sleep by my side. I take their lessons and that is a great advantage. I take all the lessons of Naransami and Parthasarathi with the exception of Sanskrit, and I intend to continue doing so for the present.

Ba has calmed down a little. But I observe she is smouldering inside. About untouchability she has relaxed a little.

Amritlalbhai Thakkar[3] is in the Ashram at present.

[1] This appears to have been written in 1915; *vide* the following item.

[2] Not available

[3] Popularly known as Thakkar Bapa, who dedicated his life to the uplift of the tribals and the untouchables

Khushalbhai had offered to send Jamnadas if he was needed and so I have sent for him.[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 6239

69. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

AHMEDABAD,
November 5, 1915

MY DEAR WEST,

I forgot to mention that Valiama Hall had to go. I saw that the Committee[2] do not like the idea. It would have sanctioned it if I had insisted, but I did not especially in view of the condition of the community there.

I have your wire about Chhaganlal.[3] Letters recently received from Chhaganlal have been alarming. And I felt that if he was not keeping well, it was better to send him here. The latest from him says that even if he was well, he could not only be spared but that his retirement would cause relief. If he can be spared, he may be sent.

If you need [an] assistant from here, I would send after 3 months or thereabout.

I cabled[4] too saying that audit was unnecessary. You could gain nothing by auditing especially now. If we decide not to take any public funds, our books can be only simple. All you will then have will be receipts from *Indian Opinion* and book sales and expenditure. What is left for Polak is earmarked. If you would not handle it there, it now could be transferred here. But I hope that you will all consider that allotment to be necessary.

Valiama Hall ground may be kept or it may be sold and the proceeds returned here.

Maganlal has gone to Madras to finish his Tamil studies. His wife accompanies him and also Fakiri Naidoo.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4422. Courtesy: A. H. West

[1] The letter is incomplete.

[2] Committee for the South African Indian Fund; *vide* "Letter to J. B. Petit". 16-6-1915.

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

[4] This cable is not available.

70. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

[AHMEDABAD,
November 8, 1915][1]

WITH HUMBLE RESPECTS TO MY BROTHER,

There was no limit to the pain I gave you last year. Since I acted as I did in the sincere belief that that suffering was for the welfare of the country, the family and my own soul, I think I deserve pardon and so pray for your forgiveness. I crave your blessings for, if anyone among the elders of the family understands me, more or less, it is you. I also offer my most humble respects to my sister-in-law and pray for her blessings and forgiveness.

Most reverent regards from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5681. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

71. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

AHMEDABAD,
Kartak Sud 3 [*November 10, 1915*]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I had forgotten your address.

Your post card indicates that you have not forgotten me. I have high hopes of you. That they may be fulfilled, may God give you greater moral strength.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi

[1] From the postmark

72. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[AHMEDABAD,]

Saturday [*November 13, 1915*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

As you address the letters in Gujarati, they go to the Dead Letter Office before they arrive here. If the name of the town is written in English, they will be delivered in time.

Dr. Deva[2] is here at present. He got your letter very late. He was touring. He asks you now to reply to Nogin Babu that he may go whenever he wants to, after giving eight days' notice. Accommodation will be arranged by Dr. Deva. Does Manilal experience any difficulty in starching the yarn?

There is no new work on hand at present. Prabhudas[3] has left off carpentry. I set him to work on the loom for as many hours as possible. Hajee Ismail Moosa is also here. A meeting was held this evening to honour Dr. Deva. There was a good attendance. I hope you are going on with your Tamil. I don't think it is necessary to ask for a scholarship for you from the Doctor[4]. Jamnadas is not to come over here for the present. Did I send you a copy of [my] letter[5] to Petit? We have two new persons here, one named Narandas Patel and another Bapuji Bhagat. The latter has his grandson also with him. Dana is also here. Everyone is working quite well. Krishnasamy Sharma arrived today.

Blessings from

BAPU

Inform Mr. Vrajlal that the money order for Rs. 25/- has not been received.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5680. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] The meeting to felicitate Dr. Deva, referred to in the letter, took place on this day.

[2] Secretary of the Servants of India Society, Poona

[3] Son of Chhaganlal Gandhi

[4] Pranjivan Mehta

[5] *Vide* "Letter to J. B. Petit", 16-6-1915.

73. SPEECH AT PHEROZESHAH MEHTA CONDOLENCE MEETING AT AHMEDABAD[1]

November 15, 1915

The entrusting of this resolution to me has given me a welcome opportunity to express my sentiments about Sir Pherozeshah in public. He was the lion of the Bombay Municipal Corporation and I too have sometimes heard the roaring of this lion. Many were the battles he fought with Sir George Clarke[2], Lord Harris[3], successive Viceroys and many Governors in India. No wonder that the whole of India mourns the death of such a valiant leader. But there is selfishness behind this expression of grief. If many more among us could live and die as he lived and died we would in that case have nothing to grieve for. A little while ago, India was lamenting the death of the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale. Before these tears had dried, we have had another stunning blow. It would not be fair to compare these two great men. They did their best, each according to his lights. Mr. Gokhale was a selfless man and as such deserved the title of *rishi*. There are two epithets which describe Sir Pherozeshah. In the first place, he was the Father of the Bombay Municipal Corporation and, in the second, he was the uncrowned king of Bombay, say rather, of the whole of India—a king chosen by the subjects themselves. He took the lead on every public issue and the people had come to have such confidence in him that they would do whatever he wanted them to do. That was because of the respect that people, not only of Bombay city but of the whole Presidency, had for his judgment. There was none to challenge his position in the Presidency. At a time when the people of India expect to win important political rights, no one is left, we may say, who could speak to the Government on our behalf. I have read somewhere that those who love their friends dearly love them all the more in their death; likewise, if we are overflowing with love at this moment, it is because of the great qualities of Sir Pherozeshah. We may have crossed him often enough when he was alive, spoken well or

[1] Held in Premabhai Hall, Sir Chinubhai presiding; Gandhiji proposed the condolence resolution.

[2] Lord Sydenham, ex-Governor of Bombay

[3] Ex-Governor of Bombay and chairman of the Consolidated Gold Fields of South Africa, *vide* "Lord Harris and British Indians", 19-11-1903.

ill of him; but, now that he has gone, we are not to look at his faults. It is but our duty that we should hold a condolence meeting on his death. We must not, however, stop with this. It was Sir Pherozeshah's desire that we, too, all of us, should render public service as he did and we shall have done our duty to him only if we render such service. His body, which was mortal, has perished but what he did will live on. His interest in public service was so keen that he would get his clients' cases adjourned or let go his fees, suffer all manner of inconvenience even to attend meetings of the Bombay Municipal Corporation. He would sometimes not go to the Assembly; he considered the work of the Corporation of greater importance. He did not like being absorbed exclusively in political activities. It was his principle that whatever one took up, one must carry to success and he, therefore, gave his best attention to the work of the Bombay Corporation. There is no city in India in which a member has rendered such services in the field of municipal work as Sir Pherozeshah has done. The world has admired the services of Mr. Chamberlain[1] as President of Birmingham Municipality, but Sir Pherozeshah did, single-handed, work for Bombay which it would have taken four Chamberlains to do. The right memorial to Sir Pherozeshah would be for all municipalities to work in the manner he did. The daily political discussions in Sir Pherozeshah's office were unfailingly echoed immediately in the public at large, so important and influential were his views. He was more of an Indian than a Parsi and believed that the unity of India could be achieved only by turning the entire population into a single community. The discussions in his office were mainly concerned with how we could fight fearlessly for our rights. He had to suffer much while doing public service. He once gave me the best advice on this subject. I was insulted by an Englishman once and I was about to file a suit for damages against him. Sir Pherozeshah told me then that, if I wished to do any good to myself or the country, I should swallow the insult and that I should swallow similar insults in future as well. Indeed, I have had to swallow them on numerous occasions. I must admit that whatever capacity for work I possess I owe to this advice. If we pay tributes to him today, it is because of his good sense, his courage and faith. I feel like making a suggestion about how we may perpetuate the memory of this great man whom Ahmedabad mourns today. This public hall is so small that the city should be ashamed of

[1] Joseph

it, for towns even one-fourth the size of Ahmedabad possess halls bigger than this. It is my submission, therefore, that the people of Ahmedabad should build a big public hall in memory of Sir Pherozeshah Mehta. His magnificence, too, deserves to be understood. He was lavish in spending money. Mr. Gokhale, Mr. Ishvar Chandra Vidyasagar[1] and others held one view about how one should live and Pherozeshah held another, which, however, did no harm. Ahmedabad ought to put up a memorial to so great a man and I hope my appeal will find favour with the people of Ahmedabad.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 21-11-1915

74. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI H. PATEL

AHMEDABAD,

Kartak Vad 11 [*November 17, 1915*][2]

BHAISHREE 5 MAGANBHAI,

I continue to receive letters from you. I think it would be proper to give what Sundaram asks. You have not written about Shanti's and Bhaiya's cough.

My towel which I use as a *dhoti* has been left behind. I had three. I left the one I had been wearing yesterday hung on the bathroom door. Ask Chi. Manilal to look for it. I have found the knife. Ask Ramdas to write to me in detail about his health and his studies. Other boys will be getting on with the lessons I have given. Tell them that I shall be deeply disappointed if they don't do it. It will be good if *Namameeshameeshana*[3] can be taught to all the boys. Quilts will have been got ready or should be.

You may get Krishnasamy's watch repaired if it can be done for anything up to a rupee.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 11006. Courtesy: Suryakant C. Patel

[1] (1820-1891), educationist and social reformer of Bengal

[2] The year has been inferred from the contents. *Kartak Vad 11* corresponded to November 17 in 1915.

[3] First line of a hymn by Shankaracharya

75. SPEECH AT RAJCHANDRA BIRTH ANNIVERSARY, AHMEDABAD

November 21,1915

At a public meeting held at the Premabhai Hall, Ahmedabad, on November 21, 1915, to celebrate the birthday of the famous philosopher of Gujarat, Shrimad Rajchandra[1], Gandhiji, who occupied the chair, dwelt in the course of his opening remarks on the appropriateness of the celebration of the great philosopher's birthday.

Dealing with the life of Rajchandra, Mr. Gandhi mentioned that he had come in close personal contact with him and, so far as he was competent to judge, he declared it to be his deliberate opinion that the deceased was one of the best religious philosophers of modern times in India. He was incomparable in true perception, he was free from attachment, and had true *vairagya* in him.[2] He followed no narrow creed. He was a universalist and had no quarrel with any religion in the world. In the West, the speaker had found Tolstoy and Ruskin among the best philosophers and he did not hesitate to put the deceased above both of them. The deceased outdid them in religious experience. The faith of the deceased was a robust faith, such as could only be based upon the true realisation of the self. Upon the speaker's own life, the deceased had exercised a very powerful influence. There was a suitable and certain sublimity and genuineness about the writings of the deceased, which gave them peculiar charm and enabled them to have a powerful hold upon the reader.

Concluding, Mr. Gandhi hoped that those who had attended the celebration would take the trouble of studying the writings of the deceased Mahatma and he promised that they would feel all the better for their trouble.

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-11-1915

[1] Son-in-law of Revashanker Jagjivan Mehta, elder brother of Gandhiji's life-long friend and supporter, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta. Gandhiji first met him in 1891 at the suggestion of Dr. Mehta. A business man and an expert jeweller, he lived his life in the spirit of *karmayoga*. His was the first profound influence on Gandhiji in his mature years, comparable to that of Ruskin and Tolstoy later; *vide An Autobiography*, Part II, Ch. I.

[2] *Gujarati*, 28-11-1915, has here: "He had *gyana, vairagya* and *bhakti*."

76. FRAGMENT OF LETTER[1]

[Before *November 26, 1915*]

The Ashram activities are in full swing. It has at present 33 inmates in all, three of whom are *Dheds*. These latter have become a serious issue. Ahmedabad is considered to be a stronghold of *sanatana dharma*[2]. Hence the issue of the *Dheds* has led to a storm. At first we thought the entire Ashram would be outcast, and that may yet happen. The boys have made much progress in their study of Sanskrit, Hindi and Tamil. They are being taught carpentry and hand-weaving. Two carpenters are engaged in the Ashram. In a few days, we shall send you some cloth woven on looms by our own hands. The boys have made tables, etc. They are now working at book-cases for holding books.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 26-12-1915

77. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M. K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,

November 26 [*1915*][1]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You have asked me to tell you more about Andrews and Pearson than I have done. I came in very close touch with both of them in Santiniketan. We came nearer one another than we ever were. They are both now in Fiji investigating the indenture question. Before going, they passed some time here. They were quite happy. They are to be back in two months' time. Pearson is a full-fledged teacher at Santiniketan. Andrews is the Poet's mentor. He takes no part in

[1] A part of Gandhiji's letter received in Phoenix and reproduced in *Prajabandhu* from *Indian Opinion*, 26-11-1915

[2] In which the caste system is accepted as one of the unchanging foundations of Hinduism

[3] From the contents; vide "Letter to Madhuriprasad", 10-9-1915 to "Letter to A.H. West", 26-9-1915.

teaching. Andrews was at death's door recently having had a severe attack of cholera. He was better when he left.

Maganlal was upon his trial when the Pariah was admitted. He stood it well. He remains as much attached to the Ashram as ever. But what I said in my letter holds good. My soul may take me anywhere any day and I may find myself without the staunchest of my co-workers at that time. It will certainly be no fault of theirs. I cannot expect them to understand or follow me in all my flights.

Mrs. Gandhi still remains disturbed. She does not want to live away from me. If she could overcome the strong desire to live with me, she would have left me long ago.

Jeki had a son born to her in Fiji. She is now in Rangoon. I have not met her. Dr. Mehta was here the other day. He told me she was well.

Indian Opinion has been reduced in size. The price too has been reduced. It is 1d. now. Ritch has returned to South Africa.

This finishes the budget of news.

You say you have not influenced your surroundings, if anything you have been influenced by them. I do not gather it from your letters. In any event one certainly cannot be too much on one's guard. True worth of a man seems to me to consist in his capacity to resist his surroundings. It is the measure of his self-realization. If we control ourselves we cannot be controlled by others, not even by our surroundings, not fashion, nor food, nor spectacles, nor games, nor company, nor hobbies. There is no true happiness without this real self rule. You have a unique opportunity of acquiring it. May it be your lot to do so.

With love,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

78. SPEECH AT AHMEDABAD FUNCTION[1]

November 28, 1915

I know that you will dislike my expressing, amidst all this gaiety, views which you will find unpleasant; I must, all the same, tell you what I feel. It may, of course, be questioned whether, holding the views that I do, I should have come to a gathering such as this; it is still more open to question whether I should express them. It is love which prompted me to come here and, again, it is love which has prompted me to stand up and speak. You are all very happy and I too am happy to see you honour Bhai Nanalal.

He has succeeded in gaining admission into the Indian Civil Service. . . .[2] He deserves to be honoured for his hard work. . .[3] But I should not like other students to follow his example and enter the civil service. Our students do not need at present the kind of example Civilians provide; they stand in need of the example set by the lives of Mr. Dadabhai, Mr. Gokhale and Mr. Pherozeshah Mehta. If I may use the words of the late Mr. Gokhale, what we need at present is characters not labels. Bhai Nanalal's father spent Rs. 30,000 to make him a Civilian; I believe he could have put that money to better use instead; and Bhai Nanalal, even if he had remained an ordinary man, could have rendered better service to India in some other capacity, if he had so chosen. Civilians have to come to India in plenty, and many more will come; but it doesn't look as if they have been particularly useful to the country. Bhoja Bhagat[4] was a cobbler but, working as a cobbler, he succeeded in raising himself; and so also Akha Bhagat[5], who was a goldsmith. Thus, if one wishes, one can progress spiritually even while pursuing one's vocation. And so also Bhai Nanalal could have been more useful to the country if he had devoted himself to its service while pursuing some vocation. You are in love with labels and you think that it is something to have acquired one. On the contrary, as I believe, the man is crushed beneath them, loses his truth.

[1] In honour of N. C. Mehta, who had been admitted to the Indian Civil Service

[2] The source is damaged here.

[3] *ibid*

[4] A Gujarati poet, 1785-1850

[5] A metaphysical poet of the 17th century, famed for his satire; vedantin and rationalist

We have no need at present of labels like *B.A.*, *M.A.*, *Baronet*, *K.C.S.I.*, *C.I.E.*, *Sir*, *the Hon'ble*, etc. We need men who will rise above the desire for all such honours and work. People need education which will enable everyone to express his thoughts with the utmost freedom. Today, all over the country there is an atmosphere of fear, so much so that we feel afraid, unnecessarily, even to express our views. We need an education that will blow up all such notions and make us truly fearless. We don't need labels. I know many of you will not like this discordant note. But, whispering into my ear a little while ago, Bhai Nanalal asked me why the people in India are so much impressed by success at examinations. He said he could speak nothing of this but asked me if I wouldn't like to say something. It is this hint from him which prompted me to say a few things which I had in mind. You may accept what appeals to you and throw away or leave behind in this hall what may seem rubbish to you. I wouldn't mind it either way. I wish Bhai Nanalal all success in doing his duty, that is, in loyally serving theGovernment and comporting himself with the people, over whom he will be placed in authority, not as their superior but as one of them; for he should know that the people are not the slaves of the officers, it is the officers who are their servants. May God give Bhai Nanalal long life and may he fulfil all our dreams about his serving the country. If he does, I should be happy. If things do not turn out so and he goes the way others do, I wish that he then performs *prayashchita*[1] and, should I come to hear of it all, I too would do *prayashchita* for having attended this function and addressed it. It is not enough merely to acquire a means to a good income; there is much else one has to do afterwards and we need at present the character, the education and the men that will teach us how to do this.

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Vartaman, 8-12-1915

[1] Act of penitence

79. INDENTURE OR SLAVERY?[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

AHMEDABAD,

Girmit[2] is a corrupt form of the English word agreement. The term cannot be dispensed with. What it suggests, "agreement" does not. There is no alternative word in the language. The document under which thousands of labourers used to emigrate and still emigrate to Natal and other countries on contract for five years is known by the labourers and the employers as *girmit*. A labourer so emigrating under *girmit* is a *girmitio*[3]. About 12,000 such indentured labourers emigrate annually from India, mostly to the Fiji Islands near Australia, Jamaica near South America, British Guiana, Dutch Guiana and Trinidad.

The late Mr. Gokhale, a brave soul, held indenture to be a state bordering on slavery; it was described in the same terms by the famous historian, the late Sir William Wilson Hunter; the same analogy was used by Mr. Harry Escombe, a well-known former Minister of Natal.

Indenture is indeed a state of semi-slavery. Like the slave before him, the indentured labourer cannot buy his freedom. A slavewas punished for not working; so also is an indentured labourer. If he is negligent, does not attend work for a day, if he answers back,—he will suffer imprisonment for any one of these lapses. A slave could be sold and handed over by one owner to another, so too the indentured labourer can be transferred from one employer to another. The children of a slave inherited the taint of slavery; much in the same way, the children of an indentured labourer are subject to laws specially passed for them. The only difference between the two states is that while slavery ended only with life, an indentured labourer can be free after a certain number of years. It should be noted, moreover, that indenture came after the abolition of slavery and that indentured labourers were recruited to take the place of slaves.

The following facts concerning indentured labourers have been

[1] This appeared as an article in *Samalochak*.

[2] Indenture

[3] Indentured labourer

established. In the countries to which they emigrate, they receive no moral or religious education. Most of them are unmarried. On every ship carrying indentured labourers, there is provision for taking women to the extent of 40 per cent. Some of these are women of ill fame. They do not, as a rule, enter into a marriage alliance. In this state of affairs, even if 20 per cent of the men wish to marry, they cannot. Going to lands so far away, they get into the habit of drinking. Women, who in India would never touch wine, are sometimes found lying dead-drunk on the roads.

After all this degradation, the profit which they point to is that the economic condition of these people improves. Everyone will admit that even though we may stand to gain economically by selling our souls, we ought not to do so.

How is it that this thing has been allowed to go on for fifty years now? None of us will be prepared to submit himself to a condition such as this. How then did we tolerate it for our own brethren? In raising this question, I have not the least desire to make people feel sorry for the past, but the question helps us to realize our duty in the present. The late Mr. Gokhale introduced, in March 1912, a resolution in the Imperial Legislative Council, asking for the repeal of the law governing indenture and demanding that the emigration of indentured labourers from India be stopped. At that time, 22 members took a pledge that "they would bring forward the resolution every year till indenture was abolished". It is for us, the survivors, to fulfil that pledge. Mr. Andrews and Mr. Pearson have gone to Fiji for this very purpose. It is not too much to say, therefore, that every educated Indian is in duty bound to apply his mind to this question and join in discussing it so as to help in getting it finally settled.

This is not the place to go into details; for those, however, who wish to study the subject, there is literature in plenty and easily accessible: in particular, the debates in the Imperial Legislative Council on the resolution mentioned above, the Lord Sanderson Committee Report and the report of Messrs MacNeill and Chimanlal on the condition of indentured labourers. If any paper gets a special note prepared on this literature, it is bound to prove useful.

[From Gujarati]

Samalochak, December, 1915

80. SPEECH AT VIRAMGAM

December 1, 1915

Mohanlal [*sic*] Karamchand Gandhi arrived at Viramgaon on the 1st instant by the 1 Down Mail from Ahmedabad. He was received on the station by about 25 men of Viramgaon. After about an hour's halt, Gandhi went on to Rajkot by train.During the time he was on the station at Viramgaon, he made a brief speech to the assembled people, explaining that he was going to Rajkot to collect subscriptions for a memorial to the late Mr. Gokhale. He requested the people of Viramgaon to contribute towards the memorial.

Gandhi was accompanied by his wife and one Chintaman Sakharam Davle, a member of the Servants of India Society.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1915, p. 316

81. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M. K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,

December 3 [*1915*]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am today at a place[1] in Kathiawad collecting subscriptions for the Servants of India Society. There is a member of the society with me. We have been accommodated in a beautiful cottage built on a splendid hill commanding a fine view of the country. The place has a population of 7,000 men. It has 300 handlooms. It is ruled by an Indian prince having limited jurisdiction within his own state.

I shall not see your letter yet for two days perhaps. It must have been received at Ahmedabad yesterday.

Mrs. Gandhi is with me.

Yours as ever,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Wankaner

81. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI H. PATEL

GONDAL,

Kartak Vad 13 [*Saturday, December 4, 1915*][1]

DEAR MAGANBHAI,

I have your letter. Nearly Rs. 825 was collected at Wankaner.[2] With some more contributions coming in the amount may go up to a thousand. A meeting was held at Gondal too.[3] What the result will be it is difficult to say. Jamnadas is with me. Ba is at Rajkot.

With me being away the atmosphere may tend to change. You must work with faith to see that it does not change. Even if it should change, if you do not succumb to the change it will change automatically again. We must remember that the Ashram is still in its infancy.[4] It is necessary for me to spend some time there. Will such an opportunity come?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 11001. Courtesy: Suryakant C. Patel

83. SPEECH AT GONDAL ON GOKHALE[5]

December 4, 1915

Gokhale was so great a man that his death is mourned by 330 million Indians. Right up to the moment of death, he thought only of service to the country; the Servants of India Society was his very life to him. I came into closer contact with him than others did and I observed that he was a man of great capacity. He knew both how to live and how to die.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 12-12-1915

[1] Gandhiji was in Gondal on December 4, 1915 and *Kartak Vad* 13 corresponded to it. The source, however, has "Friday" evidently a slip.

[2] For the Gokhale Memorial Fund

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Viramgam", 1-12-1915.

[4] The Satyagraha ashram was eastablished At Kochrab near Ahmedabad on May 20, 1915.

[5] The meeting was held for making an appeal for subscriptions to the Gokhale Memorial Fund, the State Diwan presiding.

84. SPEECH AT JETPUR[1] *ON GOKHALE MEMORIAL FUND*

December 5, 1915

We have not come here to get contributions to the Fund. Pay something only if, after this account of his life, you feel that you should. You may send the amount later. We don't want to shame anyone into paying. Pay only if you wish to.

[From Gujarati]

Kathiawar Times, 8-12-1915

85. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI H. PATEL

BHAVNAGAR,

Tuesday [*December 7, 1915*][2]

BHAISHRI MAGANBHAI,

You have asked good questions. Krishnasamy cannot thus ask for fresh *rotis*, nor send registered letters. He must read Gujarati. And if he has already decided to leave after one year, he cannot even stay there. You handle him as best as you can. Or leave the matter to await my return. He ought to be told to do grinding.

I do not think it is proper to remind Sundaram about his studies as long as he is ill.

You have not sent me the rules of the Ashram. I have to be at Bhavnagar till Thursday. I shall be at Amreli on Friday.

You must have received my other letters.

There is good progress everywhere. The collection at Wankaner will be Rs. 1,000. How are Shanti and Bhaiya?

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 110016. Courtesy: Suryakant C. Patel

[1] A town in Saurashtra

[2] The year has been inferred from the reference to the collection of funds at Wankaner. Gandhiji was in Bhavnagar from December 7 to 10. Tuesday in the inerim fell on December 7.

86. A TALK[1]

BHAVNAGAR,

[On or after *December 7, 1915*][2]

Dignity of labour means that students should wash their own clothes and do their own personal work like cooking, cleaning of utensils and so on. They should abandon any false sense of shame in body-labour.

I am against machines because big industries like steel and coal dehumanize men. Rather than destroy big and small industries we must establish a balance between them and give first place to village industries.

I do accept the importance of primary education. But I know many person who cannot read and write, yet are able to work efficiently, because of their intuitive understanding. Hence, we cannot afford to wait for education.

History today teaches strife, treachery and intrigue, whereas it should give greater importance to noble deeds.

Man has no right to drink milk, because whether in human beings or animals nature has intended milk only for the young. Hence whatever the arguments, there is no justification for drinking milk.

I believe in *varnashramadharma* but I do not believe in castes. *Vranashramadharma* means that a man should find satisfaction in getting his livelihood from his ancestral occupation.

I am always in quest of truth. For the sake of truth I have abandoned many of my ideas and acquired new ones. I have never hesitated to give up the old and accept the new and will never hesitate as long as I live.

[From Gujarati]

Sevamurti, p. 33

[1] With Veerchand Panachand Shah, Nanabhai Bhatt and others. This is a summary of the talk as Reported by Panachand Shah.

[2] According to the source the talk took place at Bhavnagar towards the end of 1915. Gandhiji was in Bhavnagar from December 7 to 10 in 1915.

87. SPEECH AT BHAVNAGAR FOR GOKHALE MEMORIAL FUND[1]

December 8, 1915

He [Gandhiji] expressed his great happiness at the unprecedented enthusiasm displayed by the people of Bhavnagar that day and the day before and offered them his heartfelt thanks. He gave very useful advice to students and youth in general, appealed to the people of Bhavnagar to subscribe to the Memorial Fund for his guru, the late widely-respected Hon'ble Mr. Gopal Krishna Gokhale and explained the aims of the Servants of India Society established by him as also the great things expected of it. Proceeding, he said:

I was invited four months ago by the people of Bhavnagar to visit this place, but I could not do so then owing to certain circumstances. But now that I am here, I see that my not coming here then has in a way furthered the purpose of my visit, for then Sir Prabhashanker was not here and, now that he is here, I have had the honour of receiving this address from the blessed hands of so popular an officer as he; what is more, there will be—I am perfectly sure of this—a most substantial gain to the Memorial Fund for the late Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale for which I have especially come here.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 12-12-1915

88. SPEECH AT RECEPTION BY BHAVNAGAR MODH COMMUNITY

[*December 9 1915*]

I am grateful to all my friends of the [*Modh*] community, who invited me here, for the love they have shown to me. My *Modh* friends showed me the same love even when I landed in Bombay. I do not deserve it, for I have rendered no service to the community. Besides, my friends and members of the community ask me sometimes what good I have done to it, and accuse me of forsaking *swadharma*[2] and taking up *paradharma*[3]. In reply, I shall merely say that I serve the

[1] In reply to an address from the citizens, Sir Prabhashanker Pattani, the State Diwan, presiding

[2] Duty natural to oneself; *vide Bhagavad Gita*, III. 35.

[3] Duty natural to someone else

country to the best of my ability and that, the community being but a part of it, I believe service of the country includes that of the community. You express unbounded love for me at the moment but remember, friends, not to obstruct me when I do something which you may not approve of. Even in those circumstances, I shall crave your blessings. I feel so sad that even my own people do not know me. I cannot keep with me a thing like this[1] made of silver, since I observe the rule of non-possession. If I do, a thief may try to steal it and I may then have to resort to violence for protecting it; this, again, will violate my rule of non-violence. I will therefore get it melted and use the money for the purposes of the Ashram. I thank you all, gentlemen, and my friends of the community.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 19-12-1915

89. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M. K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,

December 10[*1915*][2]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your two letters delivered at the same time. One of your letters complaints of absence of any letter from me. I can only tell you that I have not missed a single week.

Just now I have been travelling in connection with the Gokhale Memorial. Your letters have followed me at one of the places. You question whether you will be able to follow the life here after the experiences you are going through there and especially after the changes introduced here. Well, the temptations which I feared here have been no temptations and I fell all the stronger for my stay here. Will it not be so for you also? Anyway, do not anticipate any trouble please. I think you will find the life pleasant enough here. But when

[1] The casket containing the address
[2] The source is damaged here.

will that golden time come? I am praying for it to come soon and I know you are too.

With love,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

90. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI H. PATEL

AMRELI,

Magsar Sud 3 [*December 10, 1915*][1]

BHAISHRI 5 MAGANBHAI,

I have your letter. If Danibehn's[2] cough has not gone she should reduce the intake of oily foods.

It is all right to give sugar separately to Chi. Chanchi and keep the shelf clean. Tell Sundaram that I have prohibited sugar for him. However, Sundaram does need to be given time.

There is no harm in opening the letters. Send Miss Schlesin's[3] letter too.

Tell Sundaram that if he leaves before I return it will be on his own responsibility. I am writing to him.

We are having good collections everywhere.

People at Bhavnagar were very enthusiastic. There is a similar atmosphere at Amreli. I am sending a telegram about our programme.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[1] From Gandhiji's itinerary this letter appears to have been written in 1915. Gandhiji was in Amreli from December 10 to 12 in 1915. *Magsar Sud* 3 however fell on December 9.

[2] Wife of Dudhabhai Dafda

[3] Sonja Schlesin who joined Gandhiji as a steno-typist and later played an important role in the satyagraha struggle in South Africa.

[PS.]

Send more copies of the rules and regulations. Our programme is as follows:

Bagasara Sunday, Porbundar Monday evening, leave Porbundar Tuesday and reach Rajkot Wednesday. Reach Wadhwan Thursday. Send letter to me at Wadhwan at Free Library, Wadhwan City. I shall write later about the rest.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 11012. Courtesy: Suryakant C. Patel

91. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI H. PATEL

HADALA,

Sunday [*December 12, 1915*][1]

BHAISHRI 5 MAGANBHAI,

I have received your mail from Bagasara. If you wish to pay a visit to Dharmaj, you may do so after I come. I am worried all the time that Shanti has still not got over his cough and Shivprasad is not rallying; I fret about it night and day. I am making enquiries. I am also consulting *vaidyas.* Do we suffer from some major deficiency? We must find out what it is and where it lies. The visit to Porbundar is off. We shall reach Limbdi on Monday evening. We shall go to Wadhwan on Tuesday. We shall be at Limbdi on Tuesday till 3 o'clock. Hence it will be all right if you send the next post to the Free Library at Wadhwan. From Wadhwan we shall go to Dhrangadhra on Wednesday, expecting to be back the same day. Hence that day's post can also be sent to Wadhwan. We expect to reach Viramgam on Thursday. You may therefore send Wednesday's post to Viramgam. You can get the address from Punjabhai.

I am having wonderful experience everywhere. There is no time to write about it.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 11011. Courtesy: Suryakant C. Patel

[1] From Gandhiji's itinerary it would appear that this and the following letter were written in 1915 Gandhiji was in Hadala on December 12, 1915

92. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI H. PATEL

HADALA,

Sunday [*December 12, 1915*]

BHAISHRI [1] MAGANBHAI,

I visited Bagasara today. I got another batch of letters there. There was one from Shivpujan too. His argument seems to be correct. We cannot experiment with the children who are put in our charge. Therefore, if you consider it necessary, please introduce immediately provision of ghee and milk for the sick and for others who desire to take these. Supply ghee to those who want it and arrange to get milk in sufficient quantity. I think there is need to effect this change and watch matters for a few months. It is certainly bad that so many should be in poor health. If anyone needs buttermilk, we should give it to him and see. Nobody should deprive himself of ghee from shyness. Only those who are under a vow may abstain from ghee, or those who even though not under a vow want to do without it. Shanti should not be given oil even in vegetables. The expenditure on dried fruit should be brought down.

Shivpujan complains of undercooking. Look into the matter. Everything should be cooked well even if it takes more time.

I have nothing to say about the money sent for Anna. Both of you enjoy a certain position and so what you have done at the moment can be justified. This cannot be done for Mama[2]. Payment could not be made to Krishnaswamy because there was no question of his becoming manager. Mama of course has almost reached the position of manager. Moreover in such work we must have one strict rule.

I am sending Shivpujan's letter for you to see. Be more lenient, not less, in my absence. I do not wish that the students should have complaints to make against you. It is necessary that Shivprasad, Shanti, Chhotam and others should get well at once. Give milk to Sundaram. He can have only a *dhoti* which we all have. We cannot

[1] V. L. Phadke, a teacher from Baroda, who joined Gandhiji along with Harihar Sharma

[2] *ibid*

give him one with a border. If cold *rotis* do not suit him it is better to avoid them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 11007. Courtesy: Suryakant C. Patel

93. SPEECH AT BAGASRA ON VIRAMGAM CUSTOMS CORDON[1]

December 12, 1915

Mohanlal [*sic*] Karamchand Gandhi was in Bagasra on the 12th instant, coming *via* Hadala from Amreli. He was accompanied by Darbar Shri Vajsurwala, of Hadala, Devchand Uttamchand, Bar-at-Law of Jetpur, his son and a man from Rajkot. Vakil Chhaganlal Ghordhan gave an address of welcome to Gandhi.

Gandhi in reply said he would now try his best to get Government to abolish the Customs arrangements at Viramgaon.[2] His ostensible reason for touring Kathiawar was to collect subscriptions for the Gokhale Memorial Fund. He collected some Rs. 250 at the meeting.

On the 15th December Gandhi visited Wadhwan City and Camp when he addressed meetings and asked for subscriptions towards the Fund. He went to Dhrangadhra by the 1.15 p.m. train the same day.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1916, p. 15

94. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M.K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,

December 18, 1915

MY DEAR FRIEND,

There is no letter from you this week. I have just returned from my tour. I am unable therefore to give you a long letter this week.

Dr. Mehta is here for a few days. There is still sickness at the

[1] At a meeting in the ginning and weaving factory of Ratilal Motichand which most of the inhabitants of Bagasra attended

[2] *Vide* also "Speech on Viramgam Customs Cordon", 23-10-1916.

Ashram. Somehow or other I cannot get rid of it. I am endeavouring to find out the cause. This time it is Parthasarathy[1].

Yours ever,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

95. DRAFT LETTER FOR V. G. DESAI[2]

[Before *December 21, 1915*][3]

I observe that Government servants are not allowed to attend the Indian National Congress session even as visitors. It is my intention to attend the Congress session as a visitor. I feel that the prohibition referred to is an undue interference with one's personal liberty. If therefore you consider that I am a Government servant in the sense in which His Excellency the Governor has used the term, I beg herewith to tender my resignation.

From the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5686. Courtesy: Valji Govindji Desai

96. TELEGRAM TO V. G. DESAI

December 21, 1915

WITHDRAW RESIGNATION, ASK PERMISSION ATTEND CONGRESS.

From the original as delivered: C.W. 5682. Courtesy: Valji Govindji Desai

[1] The name misspelt "Bharathsarathi" here and in a few other letters has been corrected to read thus.

[2] Valji Govindji Desai, sometime lecturer in English, Gujarat College, Ahmedabad; resigned from service and joined Gandhiji; translated *Satyagraha in South Africa* and other works of Gandhiji

[3] This evidently was drafted before "Telegram to V. G. Desai" and "Letter to V. G. Desai", 21-12-1915.

97. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY,
GIRGAUM,
[BOMBAY,]
Tuesday, December 21, 1915

BHAISHRI VALJI GOVINDJI,

I hope you got the telegram I sent you today. After coming here, I learn that any [Government] servant can go with the permission of his superior. I think it will be proper for you to apply for such permission. If it is refused, you may proceed to resign. In the telegram, I asked you to withdraw the resignation. As a matter of fact, however, your letter has not been treated as amounting to resignation. All the same, I think you should acquaint Robertson with the latest position.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5683. Courtesy: Valji Govindji Desai

98. SPEECH AT INDUSTRIAL CONFERENCE, BOMBAY[1]

December 24, 1915

Mr. Gandhi in support of the Resolution[2] said that they could not keep their industries if their industrial population went away from India and returned, if it ever did, a broken reed, a moral wreck. The two adjectives, 'injurious" and "immoral" were not chosen haphazard but they bore the "imprimatur" of their deceased countryman, Mr. Gokhale. He urged them to insist on the abolition of the system even while the war was going on.

[1] At the eleventh session, with Sir Dorab Tata as President and Sir Dinshaw Petit as Chairman, Reception Committee

[2] Which read: "This Conference tenders its respectful thanks to H. E. Lord Hardinge, Viceroy of India, for all he has done for Indian labour outside India and for recommending its abolition to the Secretary of State and submits that, in the highest interests of the country, the system of Indian indentured labour is undesirable and urges its abolition, looking to the highly injurious and immoral effects of the same, as soon as possible."

Mr. K. N. Aiya Iyer seconded the Resolution. He said that this wretched system no human ingenuity could mend and, therefore, must be ended.

Mr. Muzumdar, in supporting, said that no more despicable system could be invented by man.

The Hindu, 25-12-1915

99. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M.K. GANDHI

BOMBAY,
December 25, 1915

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have come to Bombay for the Congress week. There is no sincerity about anything. 'Much cry and little work' proverb applies most appropriately. What I should have done I do not know. The boys are with me as volunteers and they are not wanted. I made a great mistake in bringing the boys at all. Mrs. Gandhi is not here. She does not yet appreciate my action about the Pariah friend. Manilal too has remained behind. Dr. Mehta is here. He is likely to be here yet for a few days.

Imamsaheb and young Sorabji have arrived from Natal.

More next week.

Yours ever,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

100. SPEECH ON INDIA AND THE COLONIES AT BOMBAY CONGRESS SESSION

December 28, 1915

Mr. M. K. Gandhi (Bombay) moved Resolution X regarding India and the Colonies on 28th December 1915 at the 30th Indian National Congress session held at Bombay.

He said:

MR. PRESIDENT AND FRIENDS,

The resolution that stands in my name reads thus:

This Congress regrets that the existing laws affecting Indians in South Africa and Canada have not, in spite of the liberal and imperialistic declarations of Colonial statesmen, been justly and equally administered and this Congress trusts that the self-governing Colonies will extend to the Indian emigrants equal rights with European emigrants and that theImperial Government will use all possible means to secure the rights which have been hitherto unjustly withheld from them, thus causing widespread dissatisfaction and discontent.

May I please appeal to the Press to alter the word "equally" to "equitably" because that was the word given last night at the Subjects Committee meeting?

Friends, it is an irony of fate that, whilst this vast assembly will be regretting the attitude, the hostile attitude that has been adopted by the self-governing Colonies, a contingent of your countrymen formed in South Africa will be nearing the theatre of war in order to help the sick and the wounded. I am in possession of facts in connection with this contingent formed in South Africa, which shows that it is composed of the middle classes which, according to *The Times of India*, are going to form the future self-governing nation. These men are drawn from ex-indentured Indians and their children; they are drawn from the petty hawkers, the toilers and the traders—all these men compose this great contingent. And yet the Colonies do not consider it necessary to alter their attitude, nor do I see the logic in their altering their policy. It is the fashion now-a-days to consider that because we have taken our humble share in the war by not being disloyal to the Government at the present juncture, we are entitled to rights which have been hitherto withheld from us as if those rights were withheld from us because our loyalty was suspected. No, my friends. If they have been withheld from us, the reasons are different and those reasons will have to be altered. They are due, some of them, to undying prejudices; they are due, some of them, to economic causes and these will have to be examined. The prejudices will have to be borne down.

What are the hardships that our countrymen are labouring under in South Africa, in Canada and in the other self-governing Colonies? In South Africa, the settlement of 1914 secured what the passive resisters were fighting for and nothing more and they were fighting for the restoration of legal equality in connection with emigration

from British India and certain other things. That legal equality has been restored, the other things granted, but the domestic troubles still remain, and if it was not the custom unfortunately inherited for the last thirty years that the language, the predominant language in the assembly, should be English, our Madras friends will have taken good care to learn one of the northern vernaculars and then there are men enough from South Africa who would tell you in one of our own tongues the difficulties that we have to go through even now in South Africa. They are in connection with the holding oflanded property; they are in connection with men who, having been once domiciled in South Africa, return to South Africa; there are difficulties in connection with the admission of their children and in connection with trade licences. These are, it I may call them so, bread and butter difficulties. There are other difficulties which I shall not enumerate just now. In Canada, it is not possible for those brave Sikhs who are domiciled there to bring their wives and children. (Cries of "Shame".) That is the difficulty in Canada. The law is the same but the administration is vilely unequal. I feel that this unequal administration will not be altered because of the splendid aid which India is said to have rendered to the Empire.

Then how are these difficulties to be met? I do not intend to go into details, but the Congress proposes that this difficulty can be met by an appeal to the sense of justice of Colonial statesmen and by an appeal to the Imperial Government. I fear that the Congress can only do this. Lord Hardinge, only a few months ago, made a fervent appeal to Indian publicists and to Indian statesmen for helping him to come to an honourable solution which will retain the dignity of India and at the same time not cause any trouble to the self-governing Colonies. Lord Hardinge is still waiting for an answer. That answer is not supplied by the Congress nor can it be supplied by the Congress. It has to be supplied by associations such as the Imperial Citizenship Association, the specialists, if I may call them so. The Congress has given them the lead and it is for these associations to frame the details in which they will have to examine the rival claims and offer to Lord Hardinge a detailed solution, a solution which will satisfy the Colonial Governments as well as the Indian people and will not take away any thing whatsoever from the just demands that this resolution makes. With these words, I have much pleasure in proposing this resolution. (Loud applause.)

Report of the Thirtieth Indian National Congress (Bombay), pp. 62-4

101. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO RATANSHI SODHA[1]

[*1915*][2]

Write a letter to Rajkot and leave Chi. Reva[3] under my charge. I don't expect, however, that you will do this, for I think that, while you are strong in some, you are very weak in other ways.

It is not at all necessary for you to send a suit for Chhotu[4]. I get all the clothes we need made here. If you can save anything, send some money towards the expenditure on his account.

Due regards from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 3420. Courtesy: Revashanker Sodha

102. DIARY FOR 1915[5]

JANUARY 9, SATURDAY[6]

Arrived in Bombay.[7] Saw Mr. Gokhale.

JANUARY 13, WEDNESDAY

Gathering at Mount Petit.[8]

JANUARY 14, THURSDAY

Interview with Governor.

[1] Only the last page of the letter is available.

[2] The letter appears to have been written in 1915. The exact date cannot be ascertained.

[3] Revashanker, son of the addressee

[4] Another son of the addressee

[5] In Gandhiji's own hand, in Gujarati, the Diary is for the most part a factual record of Gandhiji's movements and activities, the persons he met, the places and institutions he visited, the addresses received, the interviews given, the speeches delivered and the letters and telegrams sent. It also records, in some detail, developments during the year in regard to the Ashram he proposed to establish.

[6] The pages of the printed Diary contain besides the English dates, the corresponding dates in the Vikram, Hijri, Saka and Parsi eras. Only the English dates are reproduced here.

[7] *Vide* "Interview to *The Bombay Chronicle*".

[8] This should be under January 12; *vide* "Speech at Public Reception, Bombay", 12-1-1915.

JANUARY 15, FRIDAY

Address from women. Left for Rajkot.

JANUARY 16, SATURDAY

Night at Vankaner. Chhotu joined. Umiyashanker came to see.

JANUARY 17, SUNDAY

Arrived In Rajkot in morning. Address[1], etc.

JANUARY 18, MONDAY

Saw Thakore Saheb.

JANUARY 21, THURSDAY

Left Rajkot. Arrived in Jetpur. Addresses—stayed overnight— Shukla accompanied.

JANUARY 22, FRIDAY

Left Jetpur by special train. Address at Dhoraji.[2] Left Dhoraji. Reached Porbunder. Devchand Parekh accompanied.

JANUARY 24, SUNDAY

Address from *Modh* community.[3]

JANUARY 25, MONDAY

Address in Porbunder.[4] Also one from women.

JANUARY 26, TUESDAY

Reached Gondal. Stayed at Patwari's. Ranchhod, Shanti and Gokuldas joined at Porbunder.

JANUARY 27, WEDNESDAY

Went to see Thakore Saheb. Address[5]—Visit to Orphanage. Left for Rajkot.

JANUARY 28, THURSDAY

Meeting with Nagji Swami.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Rajkot in Reply to Citizens' Address".

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Reception at Darbargadh".

[3] This should be under January 25; *vide* "Speech at Reception by Porbunder Modh Community", 25-1-1915.

[4] *Vide* "Speech at Porbunder in Reply to Citizens' Address".

[5] *Vide* ''Speech at Reception by Gondal Citizens".

JANUARY 29, FRIDAY

Saw Mr. Sladen.

JANUARY 30, SATURDAY

Address from women at Rajkot. Took Ba to see Mrs. Sladen.

JANUARY 31, SUNDAY

Went to hear Nagji Swami's lecture. Paid Rs. 1,650 to Fuli in full settlement of her claims. Decided to put it out to interest. Shukla paid the money. He decided to bear Fuli's maintenance charges himself. Gangabhabhi to be paid Rs. 20 & sister Rs. 10 per month, with effect from today. Paid Rs. 8.5 as interest to Fuli. Paid Rs. 3 to Gokibehn for the month. Paid Rs. 14 to Gangabhabhi.

FEBRUARY 1, MONDAY

Left Rajkot. Reached Ahmedabad. Stayed at Sheth Mangaldas's[1]. Accompanied by Gokuldas, Modi, Becharbhai, Ranchhod, Harilal, Shanti, Kaku, Chhotu & Jamnadas.

FEBRUARY 2, TUESDAY

Address in Ahmedabad.[2] Met Bapubhai at his place Went toMiyakhan's & Patwari's. Address from women—Talk with leadersregarding settling down in Ahmedabad. Jamnadas left for Bombay.

FEBRUARY 3, WEDNESDAY

Went to see land. Lunch at Ambalalbhai's[3] Address by *Modh* community. Tea at the club in the afternoon. In the evening at Asharambhai's. Met Akhandanand[4].

FEBRUARY 4, THURSDAY

Left Ahmedabad. Harilal and Gokuldas stayed on. Reached Bombay at night.

FEBRUARY 5, FRIDAY

Meeting with Patwari. Discussion about caste restrictions.

[1] Millowners of Ahmedabad

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Reception by Ahmedabad Citizens".

[3] Millowners of Ahmedabad

[4] A *sanyasin*: founder of Sasta Sahitya Karyalaya, a publishing firm bringing out low-priced books on religion, etc.

FEBRUARY 6, SATURDAY

Saw Bhagvanlal. Paid him the full amount of Rs. 2900 in the matter concerning Modi. Settled the account with Modi. Total came to Rs. 6000/-. This settles the account with both brothers. Sent the documents about the house to Shukla. Another meeting with Patwari.

FEBRUARY 7, SUNDAY

Went to see School[1] for untouchables. Amritlal[2] & Kesariprasad stayed with me last night. Had a talk with them. Left at night for Poona.

FEBRUARY 8, MONDAY

Reached Poona, accompanied by Gokuldas. Discussion about my joining the [Servants of India] Society.

FEBRUARY 11, THURSDAY

Saw Prof. Barve's institutions, etc. Had gone to Shri Tilak's.

FEBRUARY 13, SATURDAY

Public meeting[3]—women's and general. Mr. Gokhale fainted.[4]

FEBRUARY 14, SUNDAY

Went to Bombay. Gokuldas, Kunzru and Devadhar[5] accompanied. Also Balvantrai. Talk with Gokhale from four in the morning. Presided at function of Sanatana Dharma Niti Mandal.[6] Went to theatre. Meeting with Sorabji's sister.

FEBRUARY 15, MONDAY

Meeting with Robertson. Visit to Kapol Hostel.[7] Left for Bolpur accompanied by Nagindas.

FEBRUARY 16, TUESDAY

On the way.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Mission School, Bombay".

[2] Probably Amritlal V. Thakkar, a member of the Servants of India Society and a leading worker in the cause of depressed classes and aboriginal tribes

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Poona Public Meeting".

[4] *Vide An Autobiography*, Part V, Ch. II

[5] C. K. Devadhar, a member of the Servants of India Society, and later its President

[6] *Vide* "Speech at Prize Distribution to Students in Bombay".

[7] *Vide* "Speech at Kapol Hostel, Bombay".

FEBRUARY 17, WEDNESDAY

Andrews and Santokbabu came to see in Burdwan. Went to Khristi's. Reached Bolpur at night. Had experience of old-style hospitality.[1]

FEBRUARY 18, THURSDAY

Talk with Andrews.

FEBRUARY 19, FRIDAY

Further talk with Andrews.

FEBRUARY 20, SATURDAY

Received telegram about death of my political master.[2] Left Bolpur. Sent cable to J. B.[3] Andrews accompanied up to Burdwan. Had a long talk. Talk with teachers about reforms. Difficulties on train.[4] Maganlal, Nagindas & Ba accompanied.

FEBRUARY 21, SUNDAY

On the way.

FEBRUARY 22, MONDAY

Reached Kalyan at noon. Saw Mr. Kaul. Reached Poona at night. Brief talk with members [of Servants of India Society].

FEBRUARY 23, TUESDAY

Long talk with members. Wrote letters to Mahatmaji, Ranchhodbhai and others.

FEBRUARY 25, THURSDAY

Talk with Shinde about *Bhangis*[5], etc.

FEBRUARY 26, FRIDAY

Discussion with members about this.

FEBRUARY 27, SATURDAY

Started Marathi. Tried to think out a solution to the problem of *Bhangis*.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Santiniketan Reception".

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to H. N. Kunzru" and "Telegram to Karsandas Chitalia".

[3] Johannesburg; *vide* "Cable to Transvaal B. I. Association".

[4] This should be under February 21; *vide* "Letter to Chief Traffic Manager, E. I. Railway", 23-2-1915.

[5] One of the communities traditionally regarded as untouchable

FEBRUARY 28, MONDAY

Offered oblations at river.[1] Maganlal went to Bombay,

MARCH 3, WEDNESDAY

Public meeting in Poona. Governor presided. The first resolution[2] in my charge. Left for Bombay by night train.

MARCH 4, THURSDAY

In Bombay in the morning—Saw Jehangir Petit and Narottamdas. Left Bombay at night. Tapidas and Mulji came along, latter with his wife.

MARCH 5, FRIDAY

Reached Santiniketan. Meeting with Gurudev. Fakiri had temperature on way.

MARCH 6, SATURDAY

Went down to Santiniketan. Meeting with Gurudev.

MARCH 7, SUNDAY

Went to Gurudev's place with Andrews Talk with Harilal. Lecture by Gurudev.

MARCH 8, MONDAY

Gurudev left for Calcutta. Had a talk with Andrews about his conduct. Met teachers at night. Discussed education.

MARCH 9, TUESDAY

Went round with Sanitary Committee. No end of filth.

MARCH 10, WEDNESDAY

Talk with teachers. Meeting with boys. Started experiment in self-cooking. Fruits in morning. Lecture in temple in the evening.

MARCH 11, THURSDAY

Hot words between Andrews & Sarod Babu. Andrews apologized. Left for Calcutta at night. Harilal and Ramdas accompanied. Met Gurudev at Station. Gave Rs. 200/- to Andrews on account of the boys. Took the money from Dattatreya[3].

[1] *Vide An Autobiography*, Part V, Ch. VI.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Gokhale Condolence meeting. Poona".

[3] Dattatreya Balkrishna Kalelkar

MARCH 12, FRIDAY

Reached Calcutta. Big crowd. Stayed at Bhupen Babu's. Address from Gujarati Mandal.[1]

MARCH 13, SATURDAY

Meeting of Marwaris. Meeting in Cassim Bazaar.[2] Meeting with Moti Babu. Party at Bhupen Babu's. Harilal's final decision to separate.

MARCH 14, SUNDAY

Left for Rangoon with Ramdas, Rajangam, Chhagan, etc. No end to filth and over-crowding [on the boat].[3]

MARCH 15, MONDAY

Wrote a good many letters.

MARCH 16, TUESDAY

Wrote more letters.

MARCH 17, WEDNESDAY

Reached Rangoon. Received, etc., same as usual.

MARCH 18, THURSDAY

Went round with Doctor[4]. There was a party in the evening at his place.

MARCH 19, FRIDAY

Visited garden. Wrote letters. Sent telegram to Malaviya about Gokhale Memorial. Suggested spending the amount for promoting Hindu-Muslim unity.

MARCH 20, SATURDAY

Visited park. Wrote letters. Walked the distance both ways.

MARCH 21, SUNDAY

Went to Mulla Dawood's & Jamal Sheth's. Latter was not present. Wrote letters to England. Visit to Chetty temple.

MARCH 22, MONDAY

Meeting with Sen. Dinner at Popatbhai's.

[1] *Vide* "Speech a Reception by Calcutta Modh Community".
[2] *Vide* "Speech at Calcutta Reception".
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Agents of B. I. S. N. Company", 19-3-1915.
[4] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

MARCH 23, TUESDAY

Anna expressed desire to join me. Asked him to think further and tell me tomorrow morning. Told him about Kotwal's and Maganlal's vows. Public meeting—address.

MARCH 24, WEDNESDAY

Anna still of same mind. Expressed urgent desire to join forthwith. But Doctor advised against it. Garden party.

MARCH 25, THURSDAY

Went to see groundnut mill. To Jamal's garden in the evening. Talk with him about reforms.

MARCH 26, FRIDAY

Left Rangoon. Popatbhai accompanied.

MARCH 27, SATURDAY

On the ship.

MARCH 28, SUNDAY

Reached Calcutta in the evening. Stayed with Mr. Das.

MARCH 29, MONDAY

Address by Hindu Sabha. Meeting with Mr. Holland. Party at Mr. Das's.

MARCH 30, TUESDAY

Meeting with teachers of National College. Discussion with members of Indian Association. Meeting with Mrs. Roy, also with Mr. H. Bose and Kumar Babu.

MARCH 31, WEDNESDAY

Brief address to students.[1] Mr. Lyon in the chair. Left for Bolpur. Marwaris gave Rs. 300/- to cover expenses of journey to Bolpur. Reached Bolpur at night. Pranlal came along with me.

APRIL 1, THURSDAY

Visit to an ailing boy, Saw Andrews' miserable position. Meeting with Gurudev.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at students' Hall, Calcutta".

APRIL 2, FRIDAY

Talk with Gurudev about Andrews and then with the teachers. Finally with Andrews in the presence of the teachers. Telegram from Kunzru asking us to reach Hardwar by the 5th. Attended on Nepal Babu.

APRIL 3, SATURDAY

Last meeting with boys with Gurudev as Chairman. Kept Maganlal and Ramdas at Bolpur to help in the kitchen. Left for Hardwar with the rest. Shanker Pandit accompanied.

APRIL 4, SUNDAY

In the train.

APRIL 5, MONDAY

Reached Hardwar in the evening. Accommodated in Sarvannath's garden. Meeting with Kali Kamaliwala Bava Ramnath.

APRIL 6, TUESDAY

Visit to Gurukul in the morning, accompanied by a volunteer. Meeting with Mahatmaji. Returned in his van. Jamnadas, who had accompanied me, stayed on a Gurukul. Boys left for Rishikesh. Meeting with Akhandanand, Padhiar and others—Mulji, Tapidas—in Gurukul.

APRIL 7, WEDNESDAY

Went to Rishikesh. Walked to Lakshman Jhoola. Saw hanging bridge, also Swargashram. Many reflections passed through my mind. Meeting with Mangalnathji. Discussion about *shikhasutra*[1]. Meeting with Swami Narayana.

APRIL 8, THURSDAY

Visit to Jawalapur Mahavidyalaya. Visit to Hindu Sabha and Rishikul. Address from Gurukul students.[2] Raojibhai arrived, also Kotwal.

APRIL 9, FRIDAY

Vow to have in India only five articles of food during 24 hours, and that before sunset. Water not included in five articles. Cardamom, etc., included. Groundnut and its oil to count as one article. Raojibhai vowed to abstain from milk and milk-products.

[1] *Vide An Autobiography*, Part V, Ch. VIII.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Gurukul, Hardwar".

APRIL 10, SATURDAY

Vow on this date—see entry under last date. Visit to other institutions. Dharsimal, whom I met on way to Rishikesh, seems to be gradually drawing closer.

APRIL 11, SUNDAY

Visit to Mohini Ashram. Saw Ramakrishna Mission. Left for Delhi. Discussion with members of Society.

APRIL 12, MONDAY

Arrived in Delhi—with Ba and. . . bhai[1], also Kotwal, Raojibhai, and Deodhar. Parted company with all except Deodhar. Meeting with Mr. Alwatt and Mr. Weston. Saw Kutub Minar. Many thoughts.

APRIL 13, TUESDAY

Function of college students in the morning. Went to Sultan Singh. Saw Mr. & Mrs. Hailey. Saw the Fort. Many thoughts. Public meeting in the evening. Speech by Mahomed Ali.

APRIL 14, WEDNESDAY

Left Delhi in the morning for Vrindavan. Reached Vrindavan at noon. Visit to Prem Mahavidyalaya, Rishikul, Gurukul, and Ramkrishna Mission. What filth in the city. Returned to Mathura at night and took the train to Madras.

APRIL 15, THURSDAY

In the train.

APRIL 16, FRIDAY

In the train. Under police surveillance—interrogated.

APRIL 17, SATURDAY

Arrived in Madras in the evening. Large crowd at station. They drew the carriage. Meeting with Mrs. Besant. Stayed with Natesan.

APRIL 18, SUNDAY

started meeting people.

APRIL 19, MONDAY[2]

Met many people.

[1] Not legible here

[2] *Vide* "Speech on Arrival at Madras".

APRIL 20, TUESDAY

Met many people.

APRIL 21, WEDNESDAY

Address by South African League.[1]

APRIL 22, THURSDAY

Krishnaswami Sharma, Has studied up to matriculation. Passed examination in 1907. Knows Tamil, Telugu. Has *Bhagavad Gita* by heart. Spent three years in gaol. Sub-Editor in *Hindu Nesan*. Under vow of life-time *brahmacharya*, truthfulness, non-violence non-hoarding & non-stealing. Wishes to devote himself exclusively to service of country. Owns land and house in Conjeevaram. Annual income of Rs. 200/- therefrom. In the Cosmopolitan Club.

APRIL 23, FRIDAY

Address from Mahajan Sabha.[2] Slept at Tyobji's.

APRIL 24, SATURDAY

Meeting of Muslim League.[3] Dinner with lawyers.[4]

APRIL 25, SUNDAY

Dinner with Bohra friends. Social Service League.[5] Women's meeting. Arya Vaishya Sabha.[6]

APRIL 26, MONDAY

Function at Mr. Subhramaniyam's,[7] the Rev. Father's and S. Shrinivas Ayyangar's.

APRIL 27, TUESDAY

Function at Mr. Simon's. Function at Young Men's Christian Association.[8] Address from students.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Public Reception, Madras".

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Reception by Mahajan Sabha and Congress Committee, Madras".

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Reception by Muslim League, Madras".

[4] *Vide* "Speech at Madras Law Dinner".

[5] *Vide* "Speech at Social Service League, Madras".

[6] *Vide* "Speech at Reception by Arya Vaishya Mahasabha, Madras".

[7] *Vide* "Speech at Reception by Indian Christians, Madras".

[8] *Vide* "Speech at Y. M. C. A., Madras".

APRIL 28, WEDNESDAY

Talk with teachers of Pachayappa College. Function at Mrs. Besant's. Aluri Ramraj's decision to join. Age 29, parents dead, language Telugu, no knowledge of Tamil, is a B.A., knows Sanskrit, has two elder brothers. Has always been a *brahmachari*. Vegetarian for 15 years. Prepared to take six vows. Doesn't ask for railway fare. Will come in July.

APRIL 29, THURSDAY

Talk with Ramraj in the morning. Took vows mentioned under Wednesday. Krishnamachari Vardachari. Age 25, . . . married for six years, no parents, no responsibility for maintaining anyone. Has passed matriculation. In service for three years. Venkatapar Seturam Aiyyar. Age 33, married in 1889, three children, son 7, daughters 9 and 2. Parents alive. Does not have to maintain anyone. Both have some property. Has passed matriculation. Knows a little Sanskrit. Party at Govinddas's.[1]

APRIL 30, FRIDAY

Reached Mayavaram in morning. Left for Tranquebar in tonga. Stopped at Semnarkoil on the way. Meeting at Tranquebar in the evening.[2] Address from *Panchamas*.[3]

MAY 1, SATURDAY

Went to Ramapuram and Teliyadi in morning. Left for Mayavaram in evening. Address there.[4] There are a thousand handlooms in Mayavaram, manufacturing women's fabrics. Took train to Madras at night. Naiker, Selvan's son, accompanied.

MAY 2, SUNDAY

Reached Madras. Talk with Nate[san] about *Panchamas*. Meeting with students.

MAY 3, MONDAY

Went for dinner at Mr. Shastriar's. Left for Nellore in the evening. Stayed with De[wan] Ba[hadur] Ramchandra Rao there. Accompanied by Naiker and Ada. Mr. C. Srinivas Ayyangar gave Rs. 500/-. Entrusted the amount to Natesan.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Reception by Gujaratis, Madras".

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Reception at Tranquebar".

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Reception by Depressed Classes Society, Tranquebar".

[4] *Vide* "Speech at Reception at Mayavaram".

MAY 4, TUESDAY

Ada fell ill. He got tired of fruit-diet and ate cooked food. Gave it to Naiker also. Attended Conference. Saw *Prahlad Akhyan* in Telugu.

MAY 5, WEDNESDAY

Attended Conference.[1] Also Social Conference. There was Sanatana Dharma Conference as well.

MAY 6, THURSDAY

Attended both Conferences. Saw swadeshi cloth. Resolution about us.[2] Reply. Address again at night from students. Reply to it.[3]

MAY 7, FRIDAY

Departure in morning. Reached Madras. League meeting.[4] Also, drama on Harishchandra by Suguna Vilas Sabha. Accompanied bySundaram.[5] Left for Bangalore . . . a fraud. Forbade him to join. One student gave Rs. 10. Gokuldas gave a draft for Rs. 1,000/-.

MAY 8, SATURDAY

Reached Bangalore in the morning. Much excitement. Natesan accompanied, Met Surju's wife. Arranged for Rs. 20 to be given to her. Have decided to pay her Rs. 10/- a month for 2_ years. Unveiled Mr. Gokhale's bust in Bangalore.[6] Public meeting.[7] Meeting with Diwan Saheb.

MAY 9, SUNDAY

On the way.

MAY 10, MONDAY

Reached Bombay. Put up in Society. Gave the draft for 1,000/- to Mani. Left Bombay.

MAY 11, TUESDAY

Arrived in Ahmedabad. Ada gave Rs. 50/- towards his fare. It came to Rs. 66-7-0 up to Ahmedabad. Went with Jivanlal to inspect a house.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Nellore".
[2] *Vide* "Speech at Nellore," 5-5-1915.
[3] *Vide* "Speech at Students' Meeting, Nellore".
[4] *Vide* "Statement at Indian South African League Meeting, Madras".
[5] V. A. Sundaram, later Secretary to Madan Mohan Malaviya
[6] *Vide* "Speech at Bangalore".
[7] *Vide* "Speech at Civic Reception, Bangalore".

Drew up estimate[1] of expenditure and handed it over to Sheth Mangaldas.

MAY 12, WEDNESDAY

Talk with Sheth Mangaldas. He started a fast to cure his cough.

MAY 13, THURSDAY

Took Rs. 200/- from Sheth and sent to Maganlal. Wired to him to come away. Stayed a day longer at Sheth's request. Meeting with Doctor Madhavlal.

MAY 14, FRIDAY

Left Ahmedabad.

MAY 15, SATURDAY

Came to Rajkot. Meeting with Ranchhodbhai.

MAY 16, SUNDAY

Spent in Rajkot.

MAY 17, MONDAY

Sister-in-law, Shamaldas, Gokuldas & Maneklal came. Saw Pandit.

MAY 18, TUESDAY

Shamaldas and Gangabhabhi signed Power of Attorney. Sent a telegram to Maganlal and another to Limbdi.

MAY 19, WEDNESDAY

Reached Limbdi. Shamaldas accompanying, also Santok and the girls.[2] Met Thakore Saheb in the morning. A procession. Had a long discussion with Thakore Saheb in the evening, and also during afternoon, about education, etc.

MAY 20, THURSDAY

Reached Ahmedabad in the morning. Collected our things. Had a pot[3] carried to the new house and performed *vastu*[4].

[1] *Vide* "The Ashram: An Estimate of Expenditure".

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi".

[3] It is the custom, while moving to another house or occupying a newly built house, to have first a pot filled with water carried to it by an unmarried girl or a married woman whose husband is alive.

[4] A religious ceremony invoking the gods to make their abode in the house

MAY 21, FRIDAY

Nanalal Kavi[1] and others visited. Had an acute attack of superficial inflammation of the lungs.

MAY 22, SATURDAY

Inflammation has subsided. Went over to the new house. Received telegram that the boys had left. Wired to Kunzru.

MAY 23, SUNDAY

Maganlal and others arrived.

MAY 24, MONDAY

Shamaldas, Shanti, Ranchhod & Kaku left for Rajkot.

MAY 25, TUESDAY

Made some beginning in school routine. Doctor Mahadev Prasad and Bhogilal Kantharia started teaching.

MAY 26, WEDNESDAY

Received boards, etc., from Jivanlalbhai. Ranchhodbhai and Nanalal turned up. Letter from Natesan, with Rs. 1,000/-. Nanalal gave Rs. 300/-.

MAY 27, THURSDAY

Chhaganlal Master paid a visit. Gave Re. 1/-. Madhavdas came and left his son Vrajlal. Gave Rs. 1,450/- to Nanalal to be deposited with a Sharaf.

MAY 28, FRIDAY

Popatbhai and his adopted sister Gangabehn came. Some household things from Punjabhai arrived. Received a cheque for Rs. 3,000/- from Mr. Natesan.[2] Manilal Kothari called.

MAY 29, SATURDAY, JETH VAD 1

Raichandbhai's pupil, Manasukhbhai came to see. Pain again. Fasted. Narandas's wife came.

[1] An eminent Gujarati poet (1877-1946); son of Dalpatram, himself a poet, Nanalal was a prolific and versatile writer and distinguished himself as the greatest lyricist of Gujarat.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to G. A. Natesan".

MAY 30, SUNDAY

Saw Sheth Mangaldas. Attended Raichandbhai's death anniversary. Popatbhai gave Rs. 100/-, Ranchhodbhai Rs. 10 & Manasukhbhai Rs. 1/-. Prof. Ramamurti[1] came.

MAY 31, MONDAY

All went to Ramamurti's show. Maganlal stayed behind to attend on Maganbhai. Vithalrai came. Some household things also. The rest where they are.

JUNE 1, TUESDAY

Maganbhai's fever continues, though reduced. Besides, had been obliged to go to Ramamurti's show. Noticed falsehood among the boys. And so started a fast. Lying admitted. Broke the fast in the evening. Maganlal brought the household things. Received Rs. 25/- from Keshavlalbhai.

JUNE 2, WEDNESDAY

Haribhai came with family.

JUNE 4, FRIDAY

Ranchhodlal, a teacher from Limbdi, came. Received Rs. 100/- from the Queen-mother of Rajkot. News of Kaisar-i-Hind Medal.

JUNE 5, SATURDAY

Went to see Ambalal, Dalpatbhai, Jamiatram Shastri, Bhaishanker, Nanabhai and others. Popatbhai came. Maneklal agreed to keep Rs. 3,000. Maganlal, Maganbhai and Manilal took the vow of truthfulness.

JUNE 6, SUNDAY

Boys from *Vaghari*[2] school came. Attended *kirtan*[3] at Popatbhai's in the morning. He sent mangoes, *puris*, etc., for the boys. Madhavji Shastri and Girjashanker started teaching boys and teachers.

JUNE 7, MONDAY

Visit from Hirji Bhimji Chavda. The Limbdi teacher left yesterday. Maganbhai's wife came back.

[1] Physical culturist
[2] Name of a socially and economically backward community
[3] Devotional music

JUNE 8, TUESDAY

Amathalal, his wife and son came to see Ashram. Ba's illness, serious.

JUNE 10, THURSDAY

Chavda left. Amathalal got tired and left. Raojibhai came, also Popatlal. Anna & his wife, too. Sundaram & I left for Poona by Mail.

JUNE 11, FRIDAY

Reached Bombay. Accompanied by Kaka. Saw Mr. Petit. Reached Poona. Sundaram accompanying.

[Rs. As. Ps.][1]	
9. 8. 0	Mail fare—for two
0. 15. 0	Conveyance to and from Petit
5. 10. 6	Fare to Poona
0. 8. 0	Conveyance

JUNE 12, SATURDAY

Mr. Shastriar's speech.

JUNE 13, SUNDAY

I submitted brief report before members. Left Poona.

[Rs. As. Ps.]	
0. 6. 0	Stamps
2. 11. 0	Poona to Bombay
0. 11. 0	Tram and *tonga*
0. 4. 0	Ticket to Colaba
20. 11. 6[2]	[Totalof entries under June 11 and June 13]
0. 14. 0	Fare to Bandra
0. 4. 0	Miscellaneous
21.12. 6[3]	[Grand total]

[1] The accounts are given in the Diary at the end of the year under the dates (according to the Vikram era) written down in Gandhiji's hand. They are reproduced here under the respective English dates.

[2] This should be 20-9-6.

[3] This should be 21-13-6.

JUNE 14, MONDAY

Stayed in Ghatkopar. Saw Ratanchandji Sadhu.

Telephone from Mr. Petit. Saw Hajibhai and Devkarandas.

JUNE 15, TUESDAY

Saw Mr. Ratan Tata. Paid condolence visit to Mr. Natarajan at Bandra. Left Bombay. Narandas came along.

JUNE 16, WEDNESDAY

Reached Ahmedabad. Sent estimate with draft letter to Mr. Petit.[1]

JUNE 17, THURSDAY

Maganbhai's father-in-law paid a visit. Vaidya Jatashanker came. Examined Ba.

JUNE 18, FRIDAY

Popatlal left for Limbdi.

JUNE 19, SATURDAY

Narandas left for home.

JUNE 20, SUNDAY

Nothing worth noting.

JUNE 21, MONDAY

Maneklal gave Rs. 10/-.

JUNE 22, TUESDAY

Narmadashanker started teaching. Mangaldas and Popatbhai came over.

JUNE 23, WEDNESDAY

Nothing new.

JUNE 24, THURSDAY

Governor's letter. About the medal. Sent him telegram yesterday.

JUNE 25, FRIDAY

Left for Poona to receive the medal. Pandit Madhavji came over to stay in the institution. Nephew of Zaverchand of Dhoraji also came.

[Rs. As. Ps.]

6. 7. 0 Ahmedabad to Bombay

[1] *Vide* "Letter to J.B. Petit".

JUNE 26, SATURDAY

Reached Bombay in the morning. Left for Poona. Met Lallubhai there. Received the medal. Pattani[1] came to leave me at Kirki. Discussed rules and regulations with Shastriar.

[Rs. As. Ps.]

2.	7.	0	Bombay to Poona
0.	2.	6	Masjid Bunder to Bori Bunder[2]
2.	0.	0	*Vairagya Prakarana, Abhanga* and postage.
11.	0.	6	[Total of June 25 and June 26]
1.	4.	0	Bananas and labour charges
0.	1.	0	Porter at station

JUNE 27, SUNDAY

Reached Bombay. Talk with Station Master at Masjid Bunder. About fare. He apologized on recognizing me. Posted letters: Polak, Shastriar, Pragji, Miss Schlesin Langdale Smith.

JUNE 28, MONDAY

Back to Ahmedabad. Visit by Phadake.

[Rs. As. Ps.]

2.	0.	0	Stamp—on account of ‘not-paid’

JUNE 29, TUESDAY

Bapubhai Dolatrai came to see me.

[Rs. As. Ps.]

0.	11.	0	Porter charges for bedding
0.	0.	6	Miscellaneous
15.	0.	0[3]	[Total of entries under June 25, 26, 28 and 29]
5.	1.	0	Balance
20.	5.	0[4]	Account of Poona journey

[1] Sir Prabashanker
[2] This should be under the next date.
[3] This should be 15-1-0.

JULY 4, SUNDAY

Speech by Mahadevprasad on health. I was in chair.

JULY 5, MONDAY

Amritlal Thakkar came. Maganbhai also. Ramanbhai came to see Ashram.Harilal, Mulchand and Trambaklal started teaching.

JULY 6, TUESDAY

Narandas came at night.

JULY 7, WEDNESDAY

Swami from Bihar paid a visit. Also Chandramani from Gurukul. Maganlal went to Viramgam & returned. Amritlal Thakkar left. Hathibhai came. Manilal came. He went back.

JULY 9, FRIDAY

Left for Poona. Hathibhai left. Narandas accompanied me.

JULY 10, SATURDAY

Reached Poona. Conference[1] started.

JULY 11, SUNDAY

Saw Mr. Tilak in the morning & in the afternoon.[2] Discussion with Akhandanand and Dayalji about various matters.

JULY 12, MONDAY

Paid a visit to Home for Destitute Students. Left Poona.

Talk with Bhajekar. Bhaishanker came to Ashram.

JULY 13, TUESDAY

Reached Ahmedabad. Visit of Nagji Swami.

JULY 14, WEDNESDAY

Nagji Swami came over to stay in Ashram. He gave a talk in the morning.

JULY 15, THURSDAY

Nagji Swami left. Went to see Mr. Pratt[3]. Talked about many things. Promised to help.

[4] This should be 20-2-0.

[1] Bombay Provincial Conference, Poona; *vide* "speech at Bombay Provincial Conference, Poona", 11-7-1915.

[2] *Vide*, "Letter to B. G. Tilak", 27-7-1915.

[3] Commissioner, Northern Division of the then Bombay Presidency

JULY 16, FRIDAY

Bhaishanker ill at ease because of his addictions.

JULY 17, SATURDAY

Started taking bath before morning prayers. Ba washed Deva's dhoti. Seen doing so. Told a lie. Could not control my anger. Went at her. Vowed to fast for 14 days if she should wash anything of Deva's, even a handkerchief. May God help. Bhaishanker Oza left because he could not give up his addictions.

JULY 19, MONDAY

Meeting with several gentlemen. Shyamlal came.

JULY 20, TUESDAY

Ratansinh Parmar started coming to help. Revashankerbhai came.

JULY 21, WEDNESDAY

Saw Painter, the Collector. Meeting with Mangaldas Sheth.

JULY 22, THURSDAY

Revashankerbhai left.

JULY 24, SATURDAY

Went to see Vadilal's looms. Mistri started work. Fixed Rs. 40/- for 30 days.

JULY 25, SUNDAY

Went to see Judge Kennedy.

JULY 26, MONDAY

Shyamlal's brother came. Nanalal Kavi and the ladies of his family paid a visit. Manilal started going to Vadilal's looms. Carpenter did not come today.

JULY 27, TUESDAY

Carpenter left. Vanamali came. His son is with him.

JULY 28, WEDNESDAY

Mangal joined.

JULY 29, THURSDAY

Krisnaswami Sharma came.

JULY 30, FRIDAY

Vanamali left.

JULY 31, SATURDAY

Maneklal arranged dinner for all.

AUGUST 1, SUNDAY

Panditji asked for salary. Decided to pay him from July to December at the rate of Rs. 20/- p.m. It was arranged that in return he should give 3 hours and Sharadabehn[1] 2_ hours. The ladies went to Punjabhai's. Professor Swaminarayan[2] paid a visit. Mangal disappeared.

AUGUST 2, MONDAY

Jamnadas arrived. Harilal and Trambaklal started living in the Ashram.

AUGUST 3, TUESDAY

Manasukhlal came. Punjabhai and another slept here. Ada fell ill & seemed to have failed in the test. Rallied.

AUGUST 4, WEDNESDAY

Krishnarao came. Manasukhlal took to nature cure.

AUGUST 5, THURSDAY

Jamnadas left for Surat.

AUGUST 6, FRIDAY

Krishnarao left Ashram. Shivaraman came.

AUGUST 7, SATURDAY

Babu *alias* Madhavan all came. Jethalal and his brother Purushottam also.

AUGUST 8, SUNDAY

Amarsinh came. Paid a visit to Jivanlalbhai, Motilal Sheth and others. Vikramsinh came with his son.

AUGUST 9, MONDAY

Amarsinh left. Received Rs. 100/- from Sir Subramaniam. Pandit left

[1] A social worker, sister of Vidyagauri Nilkanth, *vide* " Speech on Indian Women's University", 23-2-1916.

[2] Professor of Mathematics, Gujarat College, Ahmedabad

for 10 days.

AUGUST 10, TUESDAY

Started Tamil a little more seriously. Gomatibehn decided to give up wearing ornaments.

AUGUST 11, WEDNESDAY

Purushottam ran away. Keshu, Krishna and Navin were inattentive. Placed them and myself under *Pradosha Vrata* for tomorrow.

AUGUST 12, THURSDAY

Manasukhlal bought up Gomatibehn's jewellery for Rs. 250/-.

AUGUST 13, FRIDAY

Mohan Soni came.

AUGUST 14, SATURDAY

Karunashanker Master[1] and others came to see me.

AUGUST 15, SUNDAY

Karunashanker Master and others came to see me.

AUGUST 16, MONDAY

Karimbhai Salwala of Palanpur came.

AUGUST 17, TUESDAY

Mulchand Parmar sent word that he would not be able to come to teach. Ratansinh Parmar asked for pay and, on being refused, he also stopped coming.

AUGUST 18, WEDNESDAY

Took five divisions today. Maganbhai fell ill. Maganlal observed a semi-fast, taking only one meal, for some fault of Parthasarathi's.

AUGUST 19, THURSDAY

Abdul Karim Sheth came. Anna placed himself under vows: *brahmacharya*, truthfulness and abstaining from six articles, also from milk and its products.Read eleventh canto [of the *Bhagavat*] yesterday.

AUGUST 20, FRIDAY

Jamnadas & Parvati came.

[1] Literally, a teacher; Karunashanker was responsible for introducing Dr. Maria Montessori to Gujarat.

AUGUST 21, SATURDAY

Purushottam Patel [and] his brother came. Sundaram admitted his error.

AUGUST 22, SUNDAY

Jamnadas left.

AUGUST 23, MONDAY

Jamna & Purushottam came.

AUGUST 24, TUESDAY

Purushottam [and] brother left for Dharmaj.

AUGUST 25, WEDNESDAY

Ba and other ladies went to Sheth Mangaldas's.

AUGUST 26, THURSDAY

Jamna left.

AUGUST 28, SATURDAY

Carpenter started work. Fixed Rs. 45/- for 30 days.

AUGUST 30, MONDAY

Received letter & draft from Chhaganlal.

AUGUST 31, TUESDAY

Sundaram's temperature not coming down.

Ramdas's weakness also causing anxiety.

SEPTEMBER 4, SATURDAY

Dadabhai *jayanti* [birth anniversary]. Speech in Premabhai Hall. Vrajlal & Hirji Chavda came. Telegram for Krishnaswami about his mother's illness. Anna & Mama left for Baroda.

SEPTEMBER 5, SUNDAY

Krishnaswami left for Madras.

SEPTEMBER 6, MONDAY

Anna & Mama returned.

SEPTEMBER 7, TUESDAY

Trambaklal & Harilal came back.

SEPTEMBER 9, THURSDAY

Amritlal, High Court pleader, came.

SEPTEMBER 10, FRIDAY

Karimbhai returned from Palanpur.

SEPTEMBER 11, SATURDAY

Dudabhai came from Bombay. There was quite a scene. Santok refused to eat, and I, too, therefore. Started a fast because Vrajlal had smoked.

SEPTEMBER 12, SUNDAY

Mr. Pratt and Advani paid a visit. Went to see Bhaichandji. Saw Nagji Swami. Also Sir Chinubhai[1]. Feel the strain of the fast.

SEPTEMBER 15, WEDNESDAY

Dudabhai went to bring his wife. Harilal came. Attended party at Commissioner's.

SEPTEMBER 16, THURSDAY

Chanchi & Nanubhai came. Pandit left. Also Navin.

SEPTEMBER 17, FRIDAY

Received Rs. 1/- from Shaan & Rs. 7 from Rangoon, Davis and Ambalal Sheth came.

SEPTEMBER 18, SATURDAY

Nichhabhai came.

SEPTEMBER 19, SUNDAY

Left Ahmedabad to receive Andrews. Harilal accompanied. Nanabhai left.

SEPTEMBER 20, MONDAY

Andrews & Pearson arrived. Meeting of Committee. I was asked to preside. All went to see *Dheds'* houses. All three left for Ahmedabad.

SEPTEMBER 21, TUESDAY

Reached Ahmedabad. Leaders had come. At home, found sister, etc. There was a good meeting. The two friends left at night. Chunilal

[1] A leading citizen of Ahmedabad and a philanthropist

came.

SEPTEMBER 22, WEDNESDAY

Chunilal and Dayalji left.

SEPTEMBER 24, FRIDAY

Maganlal and Santok & the girls left for Bombay.

SEPTEMBER 26, SUNDAY

Dudabhai and his wife came.

SEPTEMBER 27, MONDAY

Kaka, Gunaji and a student came. Vrajlal left for Rajkot. Maneklal came for two or three hours.

SEPTEMBER 28, TUESDAY

Deshpande came. Left in the evening. Gunaji also. Shivaraman left.

SEPTEMBER 29, WEDNESDAY

Left for Bombay. Devbhabhi and Jamnadas with me during the journey. Long talk with Devbhabhi.

SEPTEMBER 30, THURSDAY

Reached Bombay. Talk with Narandas on various matters. Went to Natarajan's. Had a long talk with him. Fruits at Naranji's. Examined Harakhchand's health. Meeting of Committee. Left the matter of Valiamma Hall to Mr. Tata. Left Bombay.

OCTOBER 1, FRIDAY

Returned to Ahmedabad. Professor Valji came over to stay.

OCTOBER 3, SUNDAY

Joitaram left. Maganlal & Santok returned.

OCTOBER 4, MONDAY

Prakashanand came. Mistri (carpenter) started coming.

OCTOBER 5, TUESDAY

Devbhabhi came. Accompanied by Jamnadas. A meeting about famine, with Collector in the chair. I attended. Resolutions.

OCTOBER 6, WEDNESDAY

Devbhabhi & Jamnadas left.

OCTOBER 7, THURSDAY

Valji gave Rs. 15. Sent a cheque for Rs. 1,500/- to Mr. Petit.

OCTOBER 8, FRIDAY

Dahyabhai gave Rs. 8/-. Got excited again and lost temper with Ba. I must find a medicine for this grave defect.

OCTOBER 9, SATURDAY ASO SUD 1

Vrajlal ran away. Joitaram came. He won't be able to stay.

OCTOBER 10, SUNDAY

Went to Sojitra. Saw the Boarding House there. Saw loom and other things, also the one at Petlad. Met Kavi's brother on the way. He came to the Ashram with Mulchand Parmar.

OCTOBER 11, MONDAY

Harakhchand came. Jekibehn[1] says she does not want to stay in the Ashram. Joitaram and Parmar left.

OCTOBER 12, TUESDAY

Manilal & Karimbhai left for Palanpur. Also Harakhchand left.

OCTOBER 17, SUNDAY

Madgaonker came. Santok left for Rajkot. Vrajlal's brother Chhotalal stayed here today.

OCTOBER 19, TUESDAY

Dayalji & his students came from Surat. Manilal returned from Palanpur. The boys went to Sarkhej.

OCTOBER 23, SATURDAY

Vrajlal came.

OCTOBER 24, SUNDAY

Dayalji & his students left.

OCTOBER 25, MONDAY

Revashanker came.

OCTOBER 26, TUESDAY

Vithalji Dave and his sons came.

[1] Daughter of Dr. P. J. Mehta

OCTOBER 27, WEDNESDAY

Maganlal, Santok, Radha, Rukhi, Vrajlal, Fakiri and I left for Bombay by the 5.30 p.m. train.

OCTOBER 28, THURSDAY

Maganlal and others left for Madras. Speech in Empire.[1]

OCTOBER 29, FRIDAY

Returned to Ahmedabad. Jagjivandas Mehta and a Kapol boy came last evening. Left the same night.

OCTOBER 30, SATURDAY

Dayalji, his mother and his friends came. A student from Baroda named Pandurang, expressed keen desire to join Ashram. Stayed overnight.

OCTOBER 31, SUNDAY

Pandurang left, saying he would return after seeing his people. Jamnalal [Bajaj] from Wardha and Doctor Benjamin paid a visit.

NOVEMBER 1, MONDAY

Dayalji left in the morning.

NOVEMBER 2, TUESDAY

Amritlal Thakkar came at night. Finished one chapter of Doke's book.

NOVEMBER 3, WEDNESDAY

Kanbi Naranji came in the morning.

NOVEMBER 4, THURSDAY

Mr. Painter came to see. Sharadabehn[1] had been to see Ashram.

NOVEMBER 5, FRIDAY

Amritlal Thakkar came.

NOVEMBER 6, SATURDAY

Amritlal left. Indulal Yagnik[2] came.

NOVEMBER 7, SUNDAY

Indulal left. Bapuji came with his two grandsons Bechar & Chatur.

[1] *Vide* "Speech on Indentured Indian Labour at Bombay".

[2] An active political worker. Gandhiji later took over *Navajivan* from him.

NOVEMBER 8, MONDAY

Boys of *Vaghari* School, more than 125, came on a visit. Offered them fruits. Maneklal & Punjabhai each gave Rs. 5/

NOVEMBER 9, TUESDAY

Valji returned.

NOVEMBER 10, WEDNESDAY

Vrajlal Vora came.

NOVEMBER 11, THURSDAY

Doctor Deva came. Vrajlal left for Bombay.

NOVEMBER 13, SATURDAY

Sheth Ismail Moosa & a friend of his came. Arranged a function today to enable [friends] to meet Doctor Deva. Prof. Anandshanker[1] and others came.

NOVEMBER 14, SUNDAY

Naranji left. Attended a meeting about Sir Pherozeshah.[2]

NOVEMBER 15, MONDAY

Ismail Sheth and his friend left. A meeting of Gujarat Sabha at Govindrao Patil's. Rules and regulations drafted.

NOVEMBER 16, TUESDAY

Felt burning sensation when passing urine.

NOVEMBER 17, WEDNESDAY

Trouble more acute. Naiker's mother & his brother came.

NOVEMBER 18, THURSDAY

Did not eat in the morning. Passing much blood.

NOVEMBER 19, FRIDAY

Pain continues.

[1] Prof. Anandshanker Bapubhai Dhruva, Sanskrit scholar and man of letters; Vice-Chancellor, Benares Hindu University (1920-37)

[2] This should be under November 15, *vide* "Speech at Pherozeshah Mehta Condolence Meeting at Ahmedabad".

NOVEMBER 21, SUNDAY

Raichand *jayanti*.[1] Less pain. Naiker & his mother left.

NOVEMBER 22, MONDAY

Another meeting about *jayanti* in the Ashram.

NOVEMBER 23, TUESDAY

Doctor came. Makkhanlal Gupta came.

NOVEMBER 24, WEDNESDAY

Mama left for Rajkot & other places.

NOVEMBER 25, THURSDAY

Doctor left for Rajkot. Valji came from Rajkot.

NOVEMBER 26, FRIDAY

Chandulal of Patidar Boarding spent a day.

NOVEMBER 30, TUESDAY

Mr. Devle[2], Chintaman Sakharam came.

DECEMBER I, WEDNESDAY

Left Ahmedabad with Devle to go to Rajkot. Ba got ready at the last moment and came along. Punjabhai came as far as Wadhwan. Met the people of Wadhwan and Viramgam.[3] Called on Gokibehn at Rajkot. Joined by Gopalji at Wadhwan.

DECEMBER 2, THURSDAY

Spent in Rajkot. saw Pandit. Approached Vithalraibhai for contribution He set down Rs. 20/-

DECEMBER 3, FRIDAY

Went to Wankaner. Ba & Jamnadas accompanied. Saw looms. A function. A procession earlier. Received Rs. 825/- at the gathering. Returned to Rajkot, having left Wankaner in the evening.

DECEMBER 4, SATURDAY

Reached Gondal. Jamnadas, Khanderia and Purushottamdas

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Rajchandra Birth Anniversary, Ahmedabad".

[2] Member, Servants of India Society; *vide* "Speech at Viramgam", 1-12-1915.

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Viramgam".

accompanying. Saw Thakore Saheb. A function.[1] Popatbhai came from Rajkot.

DECEMBER 10, FRIDAY

Left Bhavnagar. Reached Amreli. Public function. Asked Harilalbhai to auction caskets received with addresses.

DECEMBER 11, SATURDAY

Saw the jail, boarding houses, schools, etc., at Amreli.

DECEMBER 12, SUNDAY

Arrived in Hadala. Went to Bagasra. A function there.[2]

DECEMBER 19, MONDAY

Came to Limbdi. Jamnadas parted company at Hadala. Called on Nanchandji Maharaj.

DECEMBER 14, TUESDAY

Reached Wadhwan. Left Limbdi. Function there, with Thakore Saheb as Chairman.

DECEMBER 15, WEDNESDAY

Function in Wadhwan. Reception in [Wadhwan] Camp. Left for Dhrangadhra. Arrived there Function in High School. Raja Saheb in the chair.

DECEMBER 16, THURSDAY

Reached Viramgam. Left Dhrangadhra. Address by *Modh* community. Meeting in Viramgam. Doctor came to see in Viramgam. Ada parted company and went to Bombay. Devchandbhai left. Reached Ahmedabad in the evening.

DECEMBER 17, FRIDAY

Devle & Gopalji left.

DECEMBER 18, SATURDAY

Asked Bapuji to leave Ashram.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Gondal on Gokhale".

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Bagasra on Viramgam Customs Cordon".

DECEMBER 19, SUNDAY

Doctor and I dined at Popatlal's. Observed that he & Punjabhai were not on good terms.

DECEMBER 20, MONDAY

Devchandbhai, A . . . bhai, Paramananddas, Chandulal & others came. Left for Bombay along with the students.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 8221. Courtesy: Gandhi Smarak Nidhi

103 SPEECH AT SALEJ[1]

January 1, 1916

I do not deserve the honour you are giving me, because, being a barrister, I am expected to be a man of understanding. Honour is due to those who, though illiterate, do their work, full of faith. We should honour men who have faith.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarat Mitra ane Gujarat Darpan, 9-1-1916

104. SPEECH AT SURAT[2]

January 2, 1916

Please take it that the opening ceremony which I was invited to perform has been performed this very moment. May the inmates of the temple imbibe its beauty. I hope those who come to worship here and the members and admirers of the Arya Samaj[3], will acquire a fragrance that will endure even after this temple has come down some day. May it prosper and may its prosperity in turn ensure that of the devotees visiting it.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarat Mitra ane Gujarat Darpan, 9-1-1916

[1] In reply to an address by the people of Salej, in Gujarat, the native place of Pragji Desai, who had worked with Gandhiji in South Africa

[2] While declaring open the Arya Samaj temple

[3] A socio-religious movement for reform of Hinduism, started by Swami Dayanand Saraswati (1824-83); *vide* the following item.

105. REMARKS AT PRIVATE RECEPTION

SURAT,
[*January 2, 1916*][1]

Please expect no speech from me. I would rather that you imposed a vow of silence on me. Go ahead with your work without waiting for a speech. Kindly forgive me for the trouble you have been put to on my account and leave now.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarat Mitra ane Gujarat Darpan, 9-1-1916

106. SPEECH AT ARYA SAMAJ ANNUAL CELEBRATIONS, SURAT

January 2, 1916

You have laid me under a heavy debt by inviting me to attend this function and declare open the Arya Samaj temple and I am thankful likewise to the Samaj and to the people of Surat for asking me to preside over this celebration. Let me tell you at the outset that I am not an Aryasamajist, as members of the Samaj, and others as well, know. At the same time, I ought to say that I bear no ill-will to the Samaj either. I am not a member of this body just as I am not a member of any other body. There are numerous other bodies like the Arya Samaj in India and they all do their best by way of service, but I have especial respect for the Samaj. I have developed good relations with Munshiramji of the Gurukul at Hardwar. My sons and other friends of mine had occasion to stay in that Gurukul[2] and it is not easy to forget the love which prompted all that was done for them. The whole of India knows its work as much as I do. Swami Dayanand, the adored founder of the Samaj, was a rare man and I must acknowledge that I have come under his influence. I have had occasion to talk about the Arya Samaj at many places. In my opinion, the Samaj could

[1] Gandhiji arrived at Surat to perform the opening ceremony of an Arya Samaj temple on January, 2, 1916; *vide*"Speech at Salej", 9-1-1916

[2] The Phoenix party had stayed at Gurukul for some time and, in 1915 at the Kumbha Mela at Hardwar, it assisted the Volunteer Corps of the Servants of India Society. Later, Gandhiji also joined the party.

do very useful work if some change was brought about in it. What needs to be changed is this,—that some of the spokesmen of the Samaj seem to be only too ready to enter into violent controversy to gain their end. They could, however, achieve their purpose without recourse to controversy. I discussed this matter in Hardwar and mention it again here today. The service that the Arya Samaj renders is not different from that of the Hindu religion. If one examines different bodies like the Brahmo Samaj[1], the Sikh Samaj, etc., one sees that all of them express the truths of the Hindu religion. Only the names differ. Just as individual persons are mentioned by name for the purpose of a census, so are the various sects listed with some public good in view. If you examine the basic principles of all the sects, they will be found to differ in no way from those of the Hindu religion. The trend of the discussions at present going on shows unmistakably that a time will certainly come when all the sects of Hindus will be included under the single term "Hinduism". There are different religious groups in India like Hindus, Parsis, Muslims and so on, but for purposes of national work they all get united. This will show that the spirit of religion is active in all. Let it be remembered that without this spirit, no great task was ever ventured upon or ever will be. I shall now make a few observations I feel like making on this occasion. They will serve my own purpose and will also help me to discharge my duty. I have been given half an hour now and one hour in the evening, a total of one and a half hours, for speaking, but it is beyond me to speak so long and see that you digest all that I say. I like to have the shortest possible time for a speech and I have had good experience in the matter. I have been at a good many places during the last 30 years and I have noticed that where there is much speaking, there is little work. This charge has long been made against the whole of India. It is made by Europeans, that is, by people from the West. We deserve it. It has been remarked even at a session of the Congress that we are fed only on speeches and discourses. When shall we break free of this? We are very much at fault on this count and find ourselves in a miserable plight in consequence. As you know, there is much hunger in India, and it has always been hunger for spiritual food. If, on occasions of such celebrations, the day is spent merely in listening to speeches for seven or eight hours, when can we have time for work? If we had spent as much of our lives in work as

[1] A socio-religious reform movement started by Raja Ram Mohan Roy

we have in listening to speeches, how much could have been accomplished in India by now. If we had spent in doing sums in arithmetic all the time we wasted on speeches, I think India would be now on the threshold of swaraj. We shall never get swaraj by listening to speeches and discourses, sitting in *pandals* like this. It is to be had only through sacrifice of self and by making ourselves worthy of it. I brought up this matter for discussion in the Congress session, at Hardwar and wherever else I went and, having got this opportunity today, place it before you. Whenever I have occasion to speak, I have my say in brief and I shall continue to follow that practice. I appeal to the speakers [today] to proceed apace likewise. We arrange programmes of as many as seven hours of speeches at these gatherings. If the men who have assembled here were given a hoe and a shovel each and made to work at digging the land here for that number of hours, and the land were sown, we should certainly have a good crop next year. If I could take the leading workers of the Arya Samaj round the town and make them clean up the dirty spots, they would certainly earn the gratitude of the people of Surat. We see that the people of the West are more keen on work than on speeches. If at all you want to imitate them, imitate them in their good qualities. You will learn much therefrom. If, instead, you adopt foreign ways from them, you will invite your undoing. If we could reduce the programme of speeches today from seven to four hours and give the three hours thus saved to doing something useful, the time would be better spent. If merely listening to speeches could accomplish anything or cure our ailments, why, they arrange reading from the *Bhagavat* at so many places and these draw large audiences, but we shall find on several of these occasions that quite a few in the audience are dozing. If we could get everything by submitting to speeches, we need do nothing else. Only let the Brahmins go on with their readings from holy books and *Puranas* and our salvation would be assured. Indians, thus enjoy speaking and hearing others speak and paying compliments to themselves. They go to extremes in these matters. If, instead, we were to hold our tongues, there is much we could learn. Speaking hinders reflection. If, on the other hand, you do something, be it what it may, that will lead to a discussion and the people will be enabled to draw some lesson from it. I would, therefore, entreat you to employ every available minute in doing your duty. A great saint has said that, if at any time too many ideas rush into one's mind. one should not lose one's judgement. One should not act upon them

immediately. One should sleep over them for a night and examine them with oneself from every point of view so as to cast out such of them as are of no value, discuss the rest with one's wife, exchange views with her and cut out those which are found unsound. The idea that remains at the end, if one feels with all one's soul that it is true, one may act upon it and place it before the world undeterred by any attacks that may follow. Only an idea that is held with such conviction can be translated into action, and no time will be wasted in consequence. I respectfully submit that it is very necessary to take full thought before embarking upon any course of action. It will be impudence on my part to tell you what ought to be done. By my saying so, moreover, the thing will not be done. What I have told you today is but my own experience and I would humbly request you, therefore, to accept from it only what may appeal to you as right. Rather than imitate the West, it would be far more profitable to us to reject everything that they offer us. If only you consider, they don't have speeches in Europe as we have, for they get no time to listen to any. In order to make the progress that they are making, there are certain rights we must demand and secure from the Government. For that purpose, we must get ready for a struggle. I know that the honour people give me these days is because of the fight I gave to the Government for securing our rights and because of the suffering I went through in doing so. We have to deserve such rights. May you, therefore, read and think and learn from others in order to make yourselves so worthy and be fit to give a fight to the Government along the path of truth! If the workers of this Samaj take the lead in doing this duty, that would be more profitable. With these words I request your permission to resume my seat.

Replying to some observations of the speakers who followed him, Gandhiji said:

It is not enough that today, acting upon a hint from me, you did not indulge in long speeches to make things easy for me. It will make me happier to know that you will never do so. Pandit Ramchandraji put me an important question in the course of his speech. He asked me to say how the world of the Arya Samaj could be made more useful and popular. It is not only here that the question has come up. It was also discussed when I was at Hardwar. I have no time just now to answer it. I shall argue with Panditshri about it if he visits me at Ahmedabad. It will also be necessary to take into account the views of those who have different ideas on the subject. I was asked by my guru, the late Mr. Gokhale, not to get involved in such controversies and

hence I avoid them. This is not a controversy, however, with people not one's own. I look upon members of this Samaj as my friends and I owe it to them to offer my advice. I have been tested on the anvil and have stood the test; it is my duty, therefore, to share my experience with my friends. We must strive every day for India's progress.[1] In reply to one Balkrishna who argued against Gandhiji's advice to refrain from controversies, he said:

Following the advice of my guru, Mr. Gokhale, I do not enter into argument with anyone. With the new year, I must remind myself of this and, since the issue has come up, I shall say that it is a very delicate one and the question cannot therefore be answered without some discussion. I am not partial to anyone. If I feel that I can serve India better by becoming a member of the Samaj, I will become one and when I feel that way, I shall immediately say so in public. At the moment, I cannot give any reply to Mr. Balkrishna. However, if he comes to Ahmedabad any time, I shall discuss the matter with him and satisfy him.[2]

[From Gujarati]

Gujarat Mitra ane Gujarat Darpan, 9-1-1916 and *Gujarati*, 9-1-1916

107. SPEECH AT SURAT ON PLACE OF ENGLISH[3]

January 3, 1916

It is very surprising that students who deliver speeches in English do not see whether or not the audience can follow what they say. Nor do they consider whether those who understand English will feel interested or bored by their broken, incorrect English. It is a sad state of affairs that growing young people turn away from their own mother tongue and become such devoted lovers of a foreign language. Those who argue that a new era has come to prevail in our country through foreign contacts, how much do they care to explain their new ideas to the people around them? They ought to consider whether the new era will draw closer or recede farther by their prating in a language which their parents do not know, which their brothers and sisters do not know, and their servants, wives, children and

[1] From *Gujarat Mitra ane Gujarat Darpan*

[2] From *Gujarati*

[3] On the occasion of the opening of the Jain Students' Library

kinsfolk cannot follow. There are some who think that English is our national language and that sooner or later it will be the language of all the people of the country, but this does not seem correct to me. If we take a handful of persons who have received English education to be the nation, it must be said that we do not understand the meaning of the word "nation". I am sure it can never happen that 300 million people will pick up English, so that it becomes our national language. Those who have been fortunate enough to acquire new knowledge and new ideas must explain their ideas to their friends? kinsfolk and fellow-countrymen. To those young men who argue that they cannot express their ideas in their own language, I can only say that they are a burden to the motherland. It does not become any son worthy of the name to slight his mother tongue, to turn away his face from it, instead of removing what imperfections it may have. If we of the present generation neglect the mother tongue, future generations will have occasion to feel sorry for us. We shall never cease being reproached by them. I hope that all the students present here will take a vow that they will not use English at home unless it is absolutely necessary to do so.

Parents also should be on their guard against being carried away by the tide of the modern age. We do want the English language, but we do not want it to destroy our own language. Our societywill be reformed only through our own language. We can ensure simplicity and dignity in communication only through our own language. Students, and their parents as well, should all aspire for a high level of proficiency in their own tongue. If this library opened by me helps to weaken rather than nourish our language, I cannot help feeling sorry when I hear of the fact.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 16-1-1916

108. SPEECH AT YOUTH ASSOCIATION, SURAT[1]

January 3, 1916

What can the heart speak when it is attuned to other hearts? I was told by many even in South Africa that, when I returned to India, others might or might not help me, but that there was a Patidar[2] Youth Association which would be only too ready to help me in my work. It was my wish all along to come here and visit this institution at the first available opportunity after returning to India and that makes me all the more delighted. How far this Association helps me will be seen when the time comes, but it certainly has men of character.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 9-1-1916

109. SPEECH AT ARYA SAMAJ FUNCTION, SURAT[3]

January 3, 1916

SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

I should have been here at two but I could not; kindly forgive me for that. I find myself in difficulties wherever I go. I have one or two days at my disposal and too many people to meet and too many places to see, with the result that I cannot always manage to be punctual. Nor can I deny myself to anyone. Yesterday, a subject was suggested to me for a speech, but I did not like to speak on it. It has again been suggested today. I shall, therefore, as desired, place before you what few ideas I can. We find everyone in India in a state of fear, so much so that a father and a son dare not speak frankly to each other. The reason for this, you will find, is that it has become difficult to speak the truth. One is always in doubt whether one's words will please the other person or not. So long as this is our condition, we shall never be able to speak the truth. While this state of fear continues, we shall always remain backward and shall always be dogged by misery. From the prevalent atmosphere, it seems that the people are eager for something to be done. What is that something?

[1] In reply to an address from the Surat District Patidar Youth Association

[2] Landlord

[3] On the second day of the celebration

Allow me to point out that we shall have to suffer whatever work we take up. In taking up any work, we must first decide on the course we want to follow and then go ahead fearlessly. We are afraid at the sight of a policeman. We feel afraid if it is but a station-master. Why this fear? It is there because we are afraid of speaking the truth. Though they are men in authority, they are in a way our servants, since their services are paid for from public revenues. Why, then, should we be afraid of those whom we have ourselves appointed? Only when people become fearless will they wipe out this charge of timidity. I would say that fear springs in a man from within, that no one puts the fear into him. If you stand by the side of a wild animal, like a tiger, utterly fearless, he will play with you; if you try to run away, he will kill you. If, for example, you run because of the barking of a dog, he will run after you, but he will play with you if you face him fearlessly. Government officers are in fact our servants. We should entertain no fear of them, though we should not behave rudely to them either. There must be courtesy even in dealing with servants. We should follow truth, and be fearless in doing so. A coward is himself afraid and fills others with fear. Such is the condition of affairs in families and communities. Where, then, shall we voice the demand for reform? Everyone who desires reform in his community only talks about the matter before others, saying: "Oh yes! There is need for such a reform, certainly. But you know what our community is like! The members would raise a storm." To be afraid in this way and do nothing is no credit to one's manliness. The other members of the community would not feel for our daughter as we do. I know the way caste affairs are managed; everywhere there is the same story. Parents remain in great fear for their daughters. Any reform that is necessary in this matter must be carried out. If that is not done, to what end do bodies like the Arya Samaj exist? The poet Akha has said; "Live as you will, Realize God anyhow, anyway."

We are to seek Hari[1] through these activities. We cannot attain Him till we have realized the self. This country is ever in the forefront with words, but hindmost in action. This charge against our country must go, however. It was my experience in South Africa that people spoke with a profuse flow of words at meetings, declared themselves ready in their speeches even for imprisonment, but, when the testing time came, they made themselves scarce. A man is one person when

[1] Vishnu

speaking and another when the time for action comes. Then, fear takes possession of his heart. Till you have driven out that fear, you will make no progress, material or spiritual. People in India will know real life only when they have shed all fear. The country has a population of three hundred million. Even if only a few of these come forward, they will give a lead to the rest. One good coin is of greater worth than millions of bad ones. With these words, I beg leave to resume my seat. I should tell you that I have yet another appointment elsewhere. Kindly give me leave, therefore, and go on with the rest of the programme.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarat Mitra ane Gujarat Darpan, 9-1-1916

110. SPEECH AT SURAT RECEPTION[1]

January 3, 1916

SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

I have grown weary listening to my praises on this occasion and I am sure you too are tired, as it has grown so late, and you must be disinclined to hear a long speech. That you all shout 'no' means nothing in particular; I know it only signifies our good manners in India. I thank you very much indeed for the sentiments you have expressed about my wife. The reason, as far as I know for all that is being said about me and my wife is that the sentiments the high-souled Shri Gokhale expressed about us here[2], in India, are still echoing. We, husband and wife, were not the only ones in South Africa to have gone to gaol; there were many others. A young girl of 17, fresh from *Vanitavishram*[3], went to gaol, and her husband too. While in gaol, he died of an illness. It has become a custom in India to show respect to anyone who happens to be present. India needs to wake up; without an awakening, there can be no progress. To bring it about in the country, one must place some programme before it. The question then is: how to bring about awakening and spread understanding in the country. I had a key with me for this purpose; it was this: I first learnt the language of the people through whom I had

[1] Under the auspices of the District Bar Association

[2] While Gandhiji was in South Africa

[3] A girls' school

to work and I told them, in their own language, of the situation in which I found myself, seeking from them the line of action which would best meet the needs of that situation. It was entirely because of this approach that they could appreciate the situation as I saw it and they came to my help. Then, again, once on coming out of gaol I received a letter, telling me that the leaders had left and asking me what I could do by myself. But lo! 20,000 men were afire without there being anyone to lead them—such is the experience I have had. What did it matter if all had left? If, therefore, you desire to work for the good of India, give primary education to its three hundred million people, not the kind of education that goes by that name at present but such education as will impart to them the knowledge that is required in these times. Teach them why it is that India is growing more and more abject. The poor and the illiterate should know that this is happening because they are being deprived of everything. In consequence of this abject attitude, men are in a constant state of fear and are afraid of anyone in authority, even a policeman. There is so much of fear in India today that a father and a son distrust each other and cannot exchange ideas. We should, therefore, spread the right kind of knowledge in order that we might end this state of affairs. I came by such knowledge in 1896 in a *mantra*[1] I learnt from the late Mr. Gokhale. Surat is a city of heroes. Blessed by the poet Narmad[2], it enjoys immortal fame. It has suffered frequently from the ravages of fire and flood but it continues on its even course, fair to all. From the very same city of Surat came Ahmad Mahomed[3] and Sorabji Shapurji[4], who carried on a brave fight in South Africa and were imprisoned again and again but did not lose heart in the least. Such are the heroes who belong to Surat and I have great respect for this town. When I returned to India, I wanted that my first visit should be to Surat but unforeseen circumstances prevented this. I am extremely grateful to the people of this city for the affection they have showered on me today. I hope that you will continue to give me the same love and help me whenever I need your services. I don't propose to spend away what I have saved from my earnings, for I am a *bania*. I shall

[1] Phrase with magical efficacy, accompanying rituals; here, an effective rule of conduct

[2] The first poet of the New Age in Gujarat

[3] Cachalia

[4] Adajania; Parsi public worker and passive resister who suffered imprisonment and deportation during the satyagraha campaign in South Africa; *vide* Vol. XI, p. 7 *fn.*

use the amount in the service of the place where I earned it. I don't ask for any money from you for my own purpose. But I only hope that anything that I may ask for a public cause, you will be generous enough to give. What I want from you is some contribution to the Memorial Fund for the late Mr. Gokhale. I have been able to collect thirteen to fourteen thousand from towns in Kathiawar and I hope I shall get a good sum from a city like Surat. I have heard that Surat has done nothing in this matter, I called today on Mr. Adwani, the District Judges and mentioned the matter to him. He told me that nothing had been done about it; but that he would be happy if something was done, that he encouraged such an effort and would agree to put down Rs. 50/- as his contribution. You know how very important this project is. It is necessary to preserve Mr. Gokhale's legacy. And so let everyone, from the highest to the lowest, give anything he thinks fit. It has been said of Surat that it is slow to be roused but that, when need arises, it wakes up and does what no other city will be able to do. Once again, I thank the people of Surat for the great love they have shown me and beg leave to resume my seat.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarat Mitra ane Gujarat Darpan, *9-1-1916*

111. SPEECH AT MAHOMEDAN ASSOCIATION, SURAT[1]

January 3, 1916

This gathering reminds me of South Africa, where the Hindus, Parsis and Muslims had become one. I find here in Surat the same bond of brotherhood between Hindus and Muslims which I have found wherever I have moved in India. From among my old friends in South Africa whom I have met here, Abdul Kadir Bawazeer shared much suffering with me. If I were to speak about that, I would take long and I don't have all that time. I shall, therefore, tell you in brief that I returned to India with the desire to render equal service to both the communities, Hindus and Muslims. We shall accomplish the tasks that face us in India only when my Hindu, Muslim and Parsi brethren feel that they are all one. It would be best if the community that happened to be in the majority [at any place] realized that it was for

[1] In reply to an address by Saiyadpura Mahomedan Association and Islamia Library

that community to see that there were no quarrels. The leaders of each community should regard themselves as belonging to both communities and lead any movement accordingly. With the growth of brotherly relations between these two communities, you will have better zeal for work. In South Africa, Hindus and Muslims live as brothers. In a right cause, a community can win even if it fights single-handed. It is the same God, service to whom ensures our salvation; if, then, our two communities live in harmony, we shall have all that we want dropping into our hands, so to say. To ensure this, we must behave with no fear in our hearts, and with a mind that is ever the same. Finally, I thank you for the kind things you have said in your address and in the speeches and pray to God that I may make no distinction of Hindu and Muslim and may ever serve both. May you also pray likewise.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarat Mitra ane Gujarat Darpan, *9-1-1916*

112. SPEECH AT KATHOR[1]

January 4, 1916

The places of birth of satyagrahis are for me places of pilgrimage, and so I am here on a pilgrimage. It would be greatly for India's good if our people were like the late Mr. Hoosen Dawad[2]. You can achieve much if you follow his example. When in Surat, I called on Mr. Hudson, the Collector. On my requesting him to be of help to the Indians going to South Africa, he asked me how he could help those who wanted to secure false certificates on the basis of incorrect statements. I would advise you, therefore, not to follow such practices. Going to South Africa is likely to bring you no great profit. We should rather strive to earn honestly whatever we can here in India. I shall value the honour you are now doing me only if I find when I visit this place again that you have followed my advice.

[1] Small town near Surat in Gujarat, native place of Dawad Mahomed, President of Natal Indian Congress

[2] Son of Dawad Mahomed, whom Gandhiji held in great regard. (*vide* "The Late Mr. Haji Hoosen Dawad Mahomed", 1-10-1913) When on his death-bed, he had expressed a wish that Gandhiji should visit Kathor some time.

In conclusion, Gandhiji exhorted the Hindus and the Muslims to work unitedly.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarat Mitra ane Gujarat Darpan, 9-1-1916

113. SPEECH AT MOTA VARACHHA[1]

January 4, 1916

I have come here to see an old friend of mine. Hindus and Muslims should become united; that is the desire I have expressed at every place. I hope both these communities will help me. When I started from Kathor in a small bullock-cart; I was in a hurry and as I wished, for the sake of my personal convenience, to reach here early, I did not mind when bullocks were struck with a goad. Hinduism, however, teaches us that we should not hurt cows and bullocks. The sacred book of Islam stresses the importance of compassion. I felt that it was cruel to strike bullocks with a goad. In England, this is a punishable offence, but here no action is taken in the matter. The scriptures of both the religions lay down that we should not inflict cruelty on even the meanest of creatures. I also will have to answer for this in the court of the Almighty. When I come here again, it will make me happy to see that the sticks are no longer spiked. If I do not find that you have done so., I shall prefer going on foot rather than in the bullock-cart. We should not strike animals which happen to be weak. Let us remember that if any person strikes us, we abuse him. Finally, I thank you for the kindness shown to me.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarat Mitra ane Gujarat Darpan, 9-1-1916

[1] A village near Surat in Gujarat

114. SPEECH AT NAVSARI

January 5, 1916

Gentlemen, I am sorry I could not be here before you yesterday and you had all, therefore, to go back disappointed.[1] We, satyagrahis, can have our way in everything on which we set our heart, but in the face of an accident we are helpless. I am grateful to you all for your being so full of love and respect for me. The credit for the work done by me in South Africa should go to Fakira Koli[2] and others who helped me. What I did there was to explain dearly to my countrymen the new laws enacted there and get them amended through satyagraha. My efforts were for the most part successful. I could guide the people there along the right path. In India, I find things are different. Here, if I asked people to go through some suffering, they would turn their back in fear. I pray to God to give me strength that I might do some little service to my country and my countrymen. Navsari[3] owes much to its Parsi population. I congratulate this small community, which plays a leading part in every field. Relatively to other [Indian] communities in South Africa, this community is so small that its members are as the little stones found in a heap of wheat. Even so, the Parsis played their part very bravely, and Parsee Rustomjee especially deserves great honour.[4] I express my thanks to you all for the great honour the members of the Koli community and other gentlemen have done me.

Refusing the silver casket presented along with the address, Gandhiji said:

I do not keep with me such valuable articles. I want to put it to sale and use the proceeds for some good work.[5]

[From Gujarati]

Gujarat Mitra ane Gujarat Darpan, 9-1-1916

[1] As the newspaper report says, the cart carrying him had been overturned and he had missed the train in consequence.

[2] He was with Gandhiji for a number of years.

[3] A place on coastal Gujarat

[4] The *Times of India* report adds here: "He (Gandhiji) declared himself highly satisfied with the work of the Daboo Parsi General Hospital and appealed to the Parsi community to help handsomely this institution."

[5] The casket, auctioned on the spot, was bought on behalf of the community for Rs. 145.

115. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

AHMEDABAD,
January 13, 1916

DEAR MR. SHASTRIAR,

You have anticipated me. I had told Dr. Deva that I would place my conclusions before you, if possible, during the Congress week. I was unable to do so. Now, however, that the members have already begun to consider the question, perhaps it is unnecessary for me to set forth my conclusions. The members are coming to a just decision in not having me as a member. Whilst there is possibility of co-operation when we are working independently, I can see that I would, as a member, become a disturbing factor. The methods of the Society as such are so totally different from mine in many respects. Our common discipleship would constitute an indissoluble bond though we would be following out Mr. Gokhale's work from different view-points.[1]

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Letters of the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri

116. LETTER TO SONJA SCHLESIN[2]

AHMEDABAD,
January 16, 1916

MY DEAR DAUGHTER,

You have at last favoured me with a letter. Even six letters in a year you do not call a brilliant performance. Do you? However I must

[1] Gandhiji writes in *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*: "I saw clearly that, when there was such a sharp division amongst the members of the Society over admitting me, by far the best course for me was to withdraw my application for admission and save those opposed to me from a delicate situation. Therein I thought lay my loyalty to the Society and Gokhale. . . .The withdrawal of my application made me truly a member of the Society." Part V, Ch. Vl.

[2] A Jewish girl, steno-typist and Private Secretary to Gandhiji for many years; made herself useful to *Indian Opinion*; was ardently interested in the Indian cause

be content with what you may give me.

You might at least have given me the credit for uttering no such nonsense as Mrs. Besant's correspondent attributed to me. Natarajan[1] apologised for reproducing the calumny. What I did say bore a totally different construction. I made use of a Gujarati proverb in defence of my proposition that man continually did an injustice to woman by using her for his lusts.

I have taken such vow as you attribute to me about anger. And if I had, I agree with you that it would lose all point by being disclosed.

I quite agree with you that Polak has done more during the past 18 months than what he did even in India. I would certainly feel delighted if Thambi[2] came. But it is not a nice thing to pay his debts out of the passive resistance funds.

Jeki[3] is with her father quite settled down to the humdrum life of the home.

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 6262

117. SPEECH AT BAVLA[4]

January 17, 1916

I had no idea whatsoever that you had planned to present an address to me on the last day of the celebrations. I have never received from anywhere else as much money as has been presented to me here at Bavla[5]. Hereafter, I shall have occasions to accept such funds and they will always be rightly used. I have so far done no work in this country and yet the affection showered on me is beyond measure. Serving the motherland is not possible as long as one's heart is not purified. Even those who fight with weapons are required to give up their attachment to life. Similarly, if we have some disease, we have to sacrifice our bodies for the sake of our souls.

After stressing the need for rousing the spirit of national service, Gandhiji

[1] Kamakshi Natarajan, Editor of *Indian Social Reformer*, Bombay

[2] Naidoo, a leading passive resister during the South African struggle

[3] Jayakunvar, daughter of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

[4] In reply to an address presented to Gandhiji on the third day of the celebrations arranged by Janahitartha Karyalaya

[5] A small town in Ahmedabad district

concluded by saying:

I have no almirah in which to keep things like this casket, etc., and so I shall use the amount that will be realized from its sale for the purposes of the Ashram. It would be more convenient if people gave me money rather than such articles.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 23-1-1916

118. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI[1]

AHMEDABAD,

Monday, January 24, 1916

BHAISHRI 5 VALJI,

. . . And if someone who has been stung by a scorpion can save others by his own experience, then [my] bitter experience in England can well be sufficient for others.

You have got to take your LL.B. I would wish that no one helps you in becoming a barrister. If your health does not suffer in the process of becoming a lawyer. It should be a blessing for you.

The fact that you could think only of five poisons as medicines for your body is the bad effect of your past actions. Poison will not lose its property if you call it nectar.

If you translate Tolstoy's *What is Art* for publication and read the proofs you will get Rs. 100. The work . . . will go on for two months at the rate of four hours a day. You must work only from there. I shall get the work done through you. I shall be able to arrange Rs. 50 for you there. If you engage for four hours in this, I doubt if you can appear for the second term of your LL.B. this year.

I shall be going to Banaras on the 31st[2]. I shall be going to Madras on my return from there. I can take you to both the places if you are willing.

I may be detained anywhere any time in connection with the War effort. It would be nice if you could come.

[1] A number of words in the first two or three sentences of the letter are illegible.

[2] For the foundation-stone-laying ceremony of the Banaras Hindu University; *vide* "Speech at Benares Hindu University", 6-2-1916.

I have received the letter from Viramgam.

I had been to Nadiad yesterday

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 11272. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

119. MESSAGE OF GOKHALE'S LIFE[1]

[Before *February 4, 1916*]

All that you do, and all you enjoy,
What you offer in sacrifice, what you give in charity,
All austerities that you go through,
Render up everything to me.[2]
When, smiling and playing my way through life,
I see Hari revealed to me, a visible presence,
Then shall I consider my life
To have attained its true end.
Muktanand's[3] Lord, who sports with us,
O Odha[4] ! He is the thread of our lives.

The counsel Shri Krishna addressed to Arjuna was, as it were, addressed by Lady India to Mahatma Gokhale and taken to heart by the latter, such was the manner of life of this great, departed soul. It is a fact known to everyone that all his activities, all his joys and thesacrifices he made, all the suffering he went through, were dedicated to Mother India.

The state of Odhava's mind[5] with regard to Shri Krishna, as depicted by Muktanand, was that of the late Gokhale with regard to India.

What is the message of a life such as this? The Mahatma did not leave even this unsaid. When dying, he sent for the members of the Servants of India Society who were then present and told them: "Do

[1] The article was originally published in *Bhagini Samaj Patrika*. *Vide* also the following item.

[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, IX, 27

[3] A Gujarati poet

[4] A friend of Shri Krishna. The lines are spoken by the *gopis*.

[5] Evidently, Gandhiji understood the verse in a different sense.

not occupy yourselves with writing my biography or spend your time in putting up my statues. If you are true servants of India, dedicate your lives to the fulfilment of our aims, to the service of India." We know, too, what he felt in his heart about the meaning of that service. The Congress should of course be kept alive, the true condition of the country should be placed before the people through speeches and writings and efforts made to have education provided to every Indian. What was the aim behind all this? And how was it to be realized? In answering these questions, we get to know his point of view. Framing a constitution for the Servants [of India] Society, he laid down that the duty of its members would be to spiritualize political life in India. This embraces everything. His was a religious life. My soul stands witness that, in all that he did, at all times, he acted wholly in the spirit of religion. Some twenty years ago, this Mahatma's sentiments sometimes appeared to be those of an atheist. He said once: "I don't have Ranade's[1] faith. How I should like to have it!" Even at that time, however, I could see a religious bent of mind in his actions. It would not be wrong to say that his very doubt proceeded from such a bent of mind. He who lives in the manner of a sadhu, whose desires are simple, who is the image of truth, is full of humility, who represents the very essence of truth and has wholly renounced his ego, such a one is a holy soul, whether he knows it or not. Such a one was Mahatma Gokhale, as I could see from my twenty years' acquaintance with him.

In 1896, I discussed [with leaders] in India the question of indentured labour in Natal. At that time, I knew the Indian leaders only by name. This was the first occasion when I had contact with he leaders at Calcutta, Bombay, Poona and Madras. The late Gokhale was then known as a follower of Ranade. He had already at this time dedicated his life to the Fergusson College. I was a mere youth, with no experience. The bond which developed between us on the occasion of our very first meeting in Poona never came to exist between any other leader and me. Sure enough, all that I had heard about Mahatma Gokhale was confirmed by my own experience; but especially the effect which the soft expression on his lotus-like face had on me has still not vanished from my mind. I instantly recognized him as dharma incarnate. I had an audience with Shri Ranade, too, at that

[1] 1842-1901, Indian judge, social reformer, author and one of the founders of the Indian National Congress

time, but I could get no glimpse into his heart. I could only see him as Gokhale's mentor. Whether it was that he was much senior to me in age and experience or that there were some other reasons, whatever the reason, I could not understand Shri Ranade as well as I could Gokhale.

After this contact with him in 1896, Gokhale's political life be came my ideal. That very time he took possession of my heart as my guru in matters political. He edited the Quarterly of the Sarvajanik Sabha, he made Fergusson College illustrious by teaching there. He gave evidence before the Welby Commission[1] and demonstrated his true worth to India. He created so fine an impression on Lord Curzon[2] by his ability that the latter, who feared none, feared him. By his performance in the Central Legislative Assembly, he brought credit to India. At the risk of his life, he served on the Public Service Commission. He did all this and much more. Others have given a far better account of these things than I could hope to. Moreover, one cannot claim that his message, as I have understood it and defined it here, may be clearly deduced from these actions of his. I, therefore propose to conclude this article by relating what I have myself known and what exemplifies his message.

The satyagraha struggle made so profound an impression on his mind that, though his health absolutely forbade it, he decided to pay a visit to South Africa. He went there in 1912. The Indians in South Africa gave him a right royal welcome. On the very next day after his arrival in Cape Town, there was a meeting in the local Town Hall. The Mayor was in the chair. Gokhale was in no condition to attend meetings and make speeches. But he left intact all the countless and taxing engagements that had been fixed. Following this decision, he attended the meeting in the Town Hall. At that very first appearance, he conquered the hearts of the whites in Cape Town. Everyone felt that a great soul was visiting South Africa. Mr. Merriman[3], a prominent leader in South Africa and a man of character and liberal views, had this to say when they met: "Sir, a visit by a person like you brings a breath of fresh air into this land of ours."

[1] The Royal Commission on Expenditure (popularly known as the Welby Commission) appointed in 1894 to consider the question of apportionment of military expenditure between England and India

[2] (1859-1925), Viceroy of India, 1899-1905

[3] (1841-1926), M.L.A., Union of South Africa

As the late Mr. Gokhale's tour progressed, this first impression became stronger. At every place the distinction between whites and Coloureds was forgotten for the moment. There were meetings in all places like the one held in Cape Town. The whites and Indians sat in the same rows at these meetings and, according equal honour to the late Mr. Gokhale, earned similar honour for themselves. There was a dinner in his honour in Johannesburg. It was attended by nearly three hundred prominent whites. The Mayor was in the chair. The whites in Johannesburg are not likely to be awed by anyone. If they have some multi-millionaires among them, they have also men who know people's worth. These vied with one another in shaking hands with Mr. Gokhale. There was only one reason for this. In his speeches, the audiences saw Gokhale's overflowing love for his motherland and a sense of fairness, at the same time. He wanted his country to be treated with the fullest respect and honour but did not want that any other country should be humiliated. If he was anxious to see all the rights of his countrymen preserved, he was equally anxious to see that the rights of others were not jeopardized in the process. Because of this, everyone felt a genuine sweetness in his utterances.

Mr. Gokhale believed that he delivered in Johannesburg his best speech[1] in South Africa. It lasted more than three quarters of an hour but I never felt that anyone in the audience was bored. How did he make this speech? He started preparing for it six days in advance. He acquainted himself with the history of the question, as much as was necessary for his purpose, posted himself with the relevant figures and, sitting up late the preceding night, got ready with his language. The result was as I have stated. He satisfied both the whites and his own people.

I shall never forget while I live the pains he took to prepare himself for his meeting with Generals Botha and Smuts in Pretoria, the capital of South Africa. On the day before the interview, he closely examined Mr. Kallenbach and me. He got up at three o'clock and woke us up. He had finished with the literature he had been supplied and now wanted to cross-examine me, in order to make sure whether he was fully prepared. I told him politely that he need not have exerted himself so much, that we would fight it out if we obtained nothing then, but that we did not want him to be sacrificed for our sake. But how would a man, who had made it a rule to throw himself

[1] In 1912

heart and soul into everything that he undertook, listen to my words? How shall 1 describe his manner of cross-examining [me]? How shall I praise his thoroughness? Such pains could have only one result. The cabinet promised Mr. Gokhale that a Bill conceding the satyagrahis' demands would be introduced in Parliament in the ensuing session and that the annual tax of £3 on the indentured labourers would be repealed. The promises were not kept at the time mentioned. Did Mr. Gokhale hold his peace thereafter? Not for a moment. I am sure his exertions in 1913 to secure the fulfilment of the promises must have shortened his life by at least ten years. This is what his doctors believe. It is difficult to give an idea of the labour he went through in that year in rousing India and collecting funds. India was in an uproar about the issue of South Africa. The power which brought this about was Mr. Gokhale's. Lord Hardinge made a speech in Madras[1] which will go down in history. This too was owing to Gokhale. Those who were the nearest to him bear witness that, worrying himself over the South African issue, he became permanently bed-ridden. Even so, till the very last he refused to rest. He would receive, at midnight, telegrams from South Africa as long as letters. He attended to them immediately and drafted a reply on the instant. A telegram would be sent to Lord Hardinge the same moment and a statement for the Press prepared. In attending to the question, he delayed his meal and delayed going to bed, ignored the difference between day and night. Such single-minded and selfless devotion would be possible only to an elevated soul.

On the Hindu-Muslim question, too, his approach was ever the most religious. Once a man dressed as a sadhu went to see him, claiming to speak for Hindus. He would have the Muslims treated as

[1] Replying to addresses of welcome of the Mahajan Sabha and Madras Provincial Conference Committee at Madras on November 24, 1913, Lord Hardinge said:

"Recently your compatriots in South Africa have taken matters into their own hands by organising what is called passive resistance to laws which they consider invidious and unjust—an opinion which we who watch their struggle from afar cannot but share. They have violated as they intend to violate those laws with full knowledge of the penalties involved and ready with all courage and patience to endure those penalties. In all this they have the sympathy of India deep and burning and not only of India but of all those who, like myself, without being Indians themselves, have feelings of sympathy for the people of this country." *Vide* "Lord Hardinge's Speech", 3-12-1913.

inferior and the Hindus as superior. When Mr. Gokhale refused to play this game, he was accused of wanting in pride as a Hindu. Knitting his brows, he replied in a voice that pierced the heart: "If Hinduism consists in doing what you say, I am not a Hindu. Please leave me." One sannyasi left another and walked off.

Mr. Gokhale possessed in an eminent degree the quality of fearlessness. Among the qualities that make for the religious way of life this occupies almost the first place. There was a reign of terror in Poona after the assassination of Lieutenant Rand[1]. Mr. Gokhale was in England at that time. He made a famous speech there in defence of Poona. Some of the statements he made in that speech could not subsequently be proved. After some time, he returned to India. He apologized to the British troops against whom he had levelled charges. This action even displeased a section of the Indian people. Some persons advised the Mahatma to retire from public life. A few ignorant Indians did not even hesitate to accuse him of pusillanimity. To all of them, he replied in words at once earnest and gentle: "What I have undertaken at no one's order, I can abandon at no one's order. I should be happy to have popular opinion on my side while performing my duty; should I not be so fortunate, however, that too may be just as well." He believed that one's duty lay in working. I never observed that while doing anything, he considered its effect on popular opinion from the point of view of his personal fortunes. If it ever became necessary to mount the gallows for the sake of the country, I believe he had the strength to do so fearlessly and with a smile on his face. I know that, often enough, mounting the gallows would have been a far easier thing for him than to be in the condition he had to pass through. He was in such painful situations more than once but he never gave way.

All these instances would seem to point to this lesson, that if we would learn anything from the life of this great patriot, it should be to emulate his religious attitude. All of us cannot go into the Central Legislative Assembly, nor do we always observe that doing so necessarily means serving the nation. We all cannot join the Public Service Commission and all those who do are not patriots. We may not, everyone of us, acquire his learning, nor do we see that every

[1] In 1897, W. C. Rand, I.C.S., and Lieutenant Ayerst were assassinated in Poona while on plague duty. Damodar Hari Chapekar and his brother were tried and executed for the murder.

learned person is a servant of the country. All of us, however, can cultivate virtues like fearlessness, truthfulness, fortitude, justice, straightforwardness, firmness of purpose, and dedicate them to the service of the nation. This is the religious way. This is what the *mahavakya*[1], that political life should be spiritualized, means. He who follows this line will always know the path he should take. He will earn a share in the legacy left by the late Shri Gokhale. It is the divine assurance that anyone acting in this spirit will come by all the other gifts he needs. The life of the late Shri Gokhale is an irrefutable proof of this.

[From Gujarati]

Mahatma Gandhini Vicharsrishti

120. LETTER TO KARSANDAS CHITALIA

KASHIJI,

Friday, February 4, 1916

BHAISHRI KARSANDAS,

I send with this a fresh article[2] altogether. I cannot write, at present at any rate, anything more or better than this. It is certainly better than what I sent earlier. If you find it difficult to decipher the handwriting, take help from Narandas Gandhi or Kalyandas. I shall correct the proofs if you send them to me. I shall reach Bombay on the morning of the 11th. I shall most probably go there *via* Ahmedabad.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

[1] Memorable statement of a great truth, like *tattvamasi* (Thou art That) in the *Upanishads*

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

121. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI H. PATEL

[*February 4, 1916*][1]

I have. received your first letter. I have met the Secretary to the Viceroy and others. Nothing has been decided yet. Mr. Andrews had made arrangements to get all of them together. I shall write further. I cannot write more today in the midst of all the hectic activity. As for Fakiri, I have written to Raidas Karimbhai should certainly be given Rs. 15/- and food. He will have arrived there. If you like you may postpone the matter of his salary till I arrive. I hope to go to Bombay after coming there.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAI MAGANBHAI PATEL
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10995. Courtesy: Suryakant C. Patel

122. SPEECH AT KASHI NAGARI PRACHARINI SABHA[2]

February 5, 1916

YOUR HIGHNESS AND BROTHERS,

I feel ashamed that before you I cannot speak well in Hindi. You know that I used to live in South Africa. It was there that I learnt a little Hindi while working with my Indian brethren. You will therefore forgive me my failing.

I had not thought that I would have to speak at this gathering. And I am not fit to deliver a speech. I have been told to say something. Although it is beyond my capacity to say much, I shall speak to you about a few things that come to my mind. You are perhaps not aware that I have with me thirty to thirty-five men and women. They have taken a pledge to use Hindi. I also corresponded with this body. I was in need of some books which I could not get. The Sabha has done something and I offer it my thanks and

[1] From the postmark
[2] Under the presidentship of the Maharaja of Kashmir

congratulations and pray to God that it may increase its membership every day. It should try to prepare the books that I wanted. Its office-holders are all M.A.'s and B.A.'s and LL.B.'s and they have read those books in English. From those of its office-holders who are lawyers, I want to know whether they do their court work in English or in Hindi. If they do it in English, I will say to them that they should do it in Hindi. To those young men who are students, I will say that they should take a vow to use Hindi for writing letters to one another.

Freedom cannot be gained without literature. People should therefore bring to the masses the advanced thoughts and new ideas that are available in English. Tomorrow Dr. J. C. Bose will be making a speech. If he speaks in Bengali, I will have no quarrel with him. I will have a quarrel with him if he speaks in English. It is the duty of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha to translate into Hindi the books that Dr. Bose has written in English. When a learned book is published in Germany, the very next week it is translated into English. That is why that language is so mature. It should be the same with Hindi. However much people may exalt their own language, real glory will belong only to the language which produces great scholars and that language alone will spread in the country. If Tamil produces great scholars, we shall all begin to speak Tamil. The language in which a poet like Tulsidas wrote his poetry is certainly sacred and no language can stand before it. Our chief task is to learn Hindi, but even so we shall learn other languages also. If we learn Tamil, we shall be able to teach Hindi to Tamil- speakers also.

[From Hindi]

Mahatma Gandhi by Ramchandra Varma

123. SPEECH AT BENARES HINDU UNIVERSITY

February 6, 1916

The following is the full text of the speech delivered on February 4th[1] on the occasion of the opening of the Benares Hindu University. Gandhiji, who edited the report for G. A. Natesan, wrote:

I have merely removed some of the verbiage which in cold print would make the speech bad reading:

Friends, I wish to tender my humble apology for the long delay

[1] Misprint for 6th

that took place before I was able to reach this place. And you will readily accept the apology when I tell you that I am not responsible for the delay nor is any human agency responsible for it. (Laughter.) The fact is that I am like an animal on show and lay keepers in their over-kindness always manage to neglect a necessary chapter in this life and that is pure accident. In this case, they did not provide for the series of accidents that happened to us—to me, my keepers! and my carriers. Hence this delay.

Friends, under the influence of the matchless eloquence of the lady (Mrs. Besant) who has just sat down, pray, do not believe that our University has become a finished product and that all the young men who are to come to the University that has yet to rise and come into existence, have also come and returned from it finished citizens of a great empire. Do not go away with any such impression and if you, the student world to which my remarks are supposed to be addressed this evening, consider for one moment that the spiritual life, for which this country is noted and for which this country has no rival, can be transmitted through the lip, pray, believe me you are wrong. You will never be able merely through the lip to give the message that India, I hope, will one day deliver to the world. I myself have been "fed up" with speeches and lectures. I except the lectures that have been delivered here during the last two days from this category, because they were necessary. But I do venture to suggest to you that we have now reached almost the end of our resources in speech-making, and it is not enough that our ears are feasted, that our eyes are feasted, but it is necessary that our hearts have got to be touched and that our hands and feet have got to be moved. We have been told during the last two days how necessary it is, if we are to retain our hold upon the simplicity of Indian character, that our hands and feet should move in unison with our hearts. But this is only by way of preface, I wanted to say it is a matter of deep humiliation and shame for us that I am compelled this evening under the shadow of this great college, in this sacred city, to address my countrymen in a language that is foreign to me. I know that if I was appointed an examiner to examine all those who have been attending during these two days this series of lectures most of those who might be examined upon these lectures would fail. And why? Because they have not been touched. I was present at the

sessions of the great Congress in the month of December. There was a much vaster audience, and will you believe me when I tell you that the only speeches that touched that huge audience in Bombay were the speeches that were delivered in Hindustani? In Bombay, mind you, not in Benares where everybody speaks Hindi. But between the vernaculars of the Bombay Presidency on the one hand; and Hindi on the other, no such great dividing line exists as there does between English and the sister-languages of India; and the Congress audience was better able to follow the speakers in Hindi. I am hoping that this University will see to it that the youths who come to it will receive their instruction through the medium of their vernaculars. Our language is the reflection of ourselves, and if you tell me that our languages are too poor to express the best thought, then I say that the sooner we are wiped out of existence, the better for us. Is there a man who dreams that English can ever become the national language of India? (Cries of "Never".) Why this handicap on the nation? Just consider for one moment what an unequal race our lads have to run with every English lad. I had the privilege of a close conversation with some Poona professors. They assured me that every Indian youth, because he reached his knowledge through the English language, lost at least six precious years of life. Multiply that by the number of students turned out by our schools and colleges and find out for yourselves how many thousand years have been lost to the nation. The charge against us is, that we have no initiative. How can we have any if we are to devote the precious years of our life to themastery of a foreign tongue? We fail in this attempt also. Was it possible for any speaker yesterday and today to impress his audience as was possible for Mr. Higginbotham? It was not the fault of the previous speakers that they could not engage the audience. They had more than substance enough for us in their addresses. But their addresses could not go home to us. I have heard it said that after all it is English-educated India which is leading and which is doing all the things for the nation. It would be monstrous if it were otherwise. The only education we receive is English education. Surely we must show something for it. But suppose that we had been receiving during the past fifty years education through our vernaculars, what should we have had today? We should have today a free India, we should have our educated men,

not as if they were foreigners in their own land but speaking to the heart of the nation; they would be working amongst the poorest of the poor, and whatever they would have gained during the past 50 years would be a heritage for the nation. (Applause.) Today even our wives are not the sharers in our best thought. Look at Professor Bose[1] and Professor Ray[2] and their brilliant researches. Is it not a shame that their researches are not the common property of the masses?

Let us now turn to another subject.

The Congress has passed a resolution about self-government and I have no doubt that the All-India Congress Committee and the Moslem League will do their duty and come forward with some tangible suggestions. But I, for one, must frankly confess that I am not so much interested in what they will be able to produce as I am interested in anything that the student world is going to produce or the masses are going to produce. No paper contribution will ever give us self-government. No amount of speeches will ever make us fit for self-government. It is only our conduct that will fit us for it. (Applause.) And how are we trying to govern ourselves? I want to think audibly this evening. I do not want to make a speech and if you find me this evening speaking without reserve, pray, consider that you are only sharing the thoughts of a man who allows himself to think audibly, and if you think that I seem to transgress the limits that courtesy imposes upon me, pardon me for the liberty I may be taking. I visited the Viswanath Temple last evening and as I was walking through those lanes, these were the thoughts that touched me. If a stranger dropped from above on to this great temple and he had to consider what we as Hindus were, would he not be justified in condemning us? Is not this great temple a reflection of our own character? I speak feelingly as a Hindu. Is it right that the lanes of our sacred temple should be as dirty as they are? The houses round about are built anyhow. The lanes are tortuous and narrow. If even our temples are not models of roominess and cleanliness, what can our self-government be? Shall our temples be abodes of holiness, cleanliness and peace as soon as the English have retired from India, either of their own pleasure or by compulsion, bag and baggage?

I entirely agree with the President of the Congress that before we think of self-government, we shall have to do the necessary plodding. In every city there are two divisions, the cantonment and the city proper. The city mostly is a stinking den. But we are a people unused

[1] Sir J. C. Bose, F.R.S., botanist

[2] Sir P. C. Ray, chemist

to city life. But if we want city life, we cannot reproduce the easy-going hamlet life. It is not comforting to think that people walk about the streets of Indian Bombay under the perpetual fear of dwellers in the storeyed buildings spitting upon them. I do a great deal of railway travelling. I observe the difficulty of third-class passengers. But the Railway Administration is by no means to blame for all their hard lot. We do not know the elementary laws of cleanliness. We spit anywhere on the carriage floor, irrespective of the thought that it is often used as sleeping space. We do not trouble ourselves as to how we use it; the result is indescribable filth in the compartment. The so-called better class passengers over-awe their less fortunate brethren. Among them I have seen the student world also. Sometimes they behave no better. They can speak English and they have worn Norfolk Jackets and therefore claim the right to force their way in and command seating accommodation. I have turned the searchlight all over and as you have given me the privilege of speaking to you, I am laying my heart bare. Surely we must set these things right in our progress towards self-government. I now introduce you to another scene. His Highness the Maharajah, who presided yesterday over our deliberations, spoke about the poverty of India. Other speakers laid great stress upon it. But what did we witness in the great *pandal*in which the foundation ceremony was performed by the Viceroy? Certainly a most gorgeous show, an exhibition of jewellery which made a splendid feast for the eyes of the greatest jeweller who chose to come from Paris. I compare with the richly bedecked noblemen the millions of the poor. And I feel like saying to these noblemen: "Thereis no salvation for India unless you strip yourselves of this jewellery and hold it in trust for your countrymen in India." ("Hear, hear" and applause.) I am sure it is not the desire of the King-Emperor or Lord Hardinge that in order to show the truest loyalty to our King-Emperor, it is necessary for us to ransack our jewellery-boxes and to appear bedecked from top to toe. I would undertake at the peril of my life to bring to you a message from King George himself that he expects nothing of the kind. Sir, whenever I hear of a great palace rising in any great city of India, be it in British India or be it in India which is ruled by our great chiefs, I become jealous at once and I say: "Oh, it is the money that has come from the agriculturists." Over 75 per cent of the population are agriculturists and Mr. Higginbotham told us last night in his own felicitous language that they are the men who grow two blades of grass in the place of one. But there cannot be much spirit of self-government about us if we take away or allow others to take away from them almost the whole of the results of their labour. Our salvation can only

come through the farmer. Neither the lawyers, nor the doctors, nor the rich landlords are going to secure it.

Now, last but not the least, it is my bounden duty to refer to what agitated our minds during these two or three days. All of us have had many anxious moments while the Viceroy was going through the streets of Benares. There were detectives stationed in many places. We were horrified. We asked ourselves: "Why this distrust? Is it not better that even Lord Hardinge should die than live a living death?" But a representative of a mighty Sovereign may not. He might find it necessary even to live a living death. But why was it necessary to impose these detectives on us? We may foam, we may fret, we may resent but let us not forget that India of today in her impatience has produced an army of anarchists. I myself am an anarchist, but of another type. But there is a class of anarchists amongst us, and if I was able to reach this class, I would say to them that their anarchism has no room in India if India is to conquer the conqueror. It is a sign of fear. If we trust and fear God, we shall have to fear no one, not Maharajahs, not Viceroys, not the detectives, not even King George. I honour the anarchist for his love of the country. I honour him for his bravery in being willing to die for his country; but I ask him: Is killing honourable? Is the dagger of an assassin a fit precursor of an honourable death? I deny it. There is no warrant for such methods in any scriptures. If I found it necessary for the salvation of India that the English should retire, that they should be driven out, I would not hesitate to declare that they would have to go, and I hope I would be prepared to die in defence of that belief. That would, in my opinion, be an honourable death. The bomb-thrower creates secret plots, is afraid to come into the open, and when caught pays the penalty of misdirected zeal. I have been told: "Had we not done this, had some people not thrown bombs, we should never have gained what we have got with reference to the partition movement[1]." (Mrs. Besant: "Please stop it.") This was what I said[2] in Bengal when Mr. Lyons presided at the meeting. I think what I am saying is necessary. If I am told to stop, I shall obey. (Turning to the Chairman) I await your orders. If you consider that by my speaking as I am, I am not serving the country and the Empire, I shall certainly stop. (Cries of "Go on".) (The

[1] The partition of Bengal, which took place in 1905, was annulled in December, 1911.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Students' Hall, Calcutta", 31-3-1915.

Chairman: “Please explain your object.”) I am explaining my object. 1 am simply (Another interruption.) My friends, please do not resent this interruption. If Mrs. Besant this evening suggests that I should stop, she does so because she loves India so well, and she considers that I am erring in thinking audibly before you young men. But even so, I simply say this that I want to purge India of the atmosphere of suspicion on either side; if we are to reach our goal, we should have an empire which is to be based upon mutual love and mutual trust. Is it not better that we talk under the shadow of this college than that we should be talking irresponsibly in our homes? I consider that it is much better that we talk these things openly. I have done so with excellent results before now. I know that there is nothing that the students are not discussing. There is nothing that the students do not know. I am therefore turning the searchlight towards ourselves. I hold the name of my country so dear to me that I exchange these thoughts with you and submit to you that there is no reason for anarchism in India. Let us frankly and openly say whatever we want to say to our rulers and face the consequences if what we have to say does not please them. But let us not abuse. I was talking the other day to a member of the much-abused Civil Service. I have not very much in common with the members of that Service, but I could not help admiring the manner in which he was speaking to me. He said: “Mr. Gandhi, do you for one moment suppose that all we, Civil Servants, are a bad lot, that we want to oppress the people whom we have come to govern?” “No”, I said. “Then, if you get an opportunity, put in a word for the much-abused Civil Service.”, And I am here to put in that word. Yes, many members of the Indian Civil Service are most decidedly overbearing, they are tyrannical, at times thoughtless. Many other adjectives may be used. I grant all these things and I grant also that after having lived in India for a certain number of years, some of them become somewhat degraded. But what does that signify? They were gentlemen before they came here, and if they have lost some of the moral fibre, it is a reflection upon ourselves. (Cries of “No”.) Just think out for yourselves, if a man who was good yesterday has become bad after having come in contact with me, is he responsible that he has deteriorated or am I? The atmosphere of sycophancy and falsity that surrounds them on their coming to India demoralises them as it would many of us. It is well to take the blame sometimes. If we are to receive self-government, we shall have to take it. We shall never be granted self-government. Look at the history of the British Empire

and the British nation; freedom loving as it is, it will not be a party to give freedom to a people who will not take it themselves. Learn your lesson if you wish to from the Boer War. Those who were enemies of that Empire only a few years ago have now become friends.

[At this point there was an interruption and there was a movement on the platform to leave; the speech therefore ended here abruptly.]

Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi (4th Edit.), pp. 317-26

124. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO MAHARAJA OF DARBHANGA[1]

February 7, 1916

Speaking last night at one of the lectures inaugurated in connection with the University week in Benares, Mr. Gandhi referred to the precautions taken by the authorities to protect the Viceroy while he was in Benares. Mr. Gandhi was asked to explain briefly what he was about to say. Eventually all the princes present left in a body, and, though Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya[2] explained that what Mr. Gandhi meant was that it was a shame to themselves that such a course was thought necessary because of the misdeeds of a few misguided youths, the meeting dispersed at once.

Mr. Gandhi, today, wrote a letter of explanation to the Maharaja of Darbhanga[3] in which, after expressing his regret at last night's incident, he says:

My sole object in referring to the Viceregal visit was to express the very strong views I hold against all acts of violence and so-called anarchy. In common with most of us, I felt deeply humiliated that extraordinary precautions should have been rendered necessary for the protection of the person of one of the noblest of Viceroys when he was, in a special sense, our honoured guest in this sacred city. My mission in life is to preach and assist in securing the utmost freedom for my country but never by violence to the person of any human being, even under the greatest provocation. My speech was conceived

[1] This was published under the caption: "The Hindu University: A Remarkable Incident".

[2] (1861-1946), founder of the Benares Hindu University; member, Imperial Legislative Council; twice President of the Indian National Congress

[3] Who was in the chair at the meeting on February 6

to instill this lesson into the hearts of young men.

The Maharaja of Darbhanga, who presided at the morning lectures today, at which almost all the princes now in Benares were present, made a brief reference to last night's incident. He observed that they had heard with grief and pain the remarks of Mr. Gandhi and he was sure they all disapproved the attitude Mr. Gandhi had taken up. (Voices: "We all disapprove.")

The Pioneer, 9-2-1916

125. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI H. PATEL

BOMBAY,

Wednesday [*February 9, 1916*][1]

BHAISHRI MAGANBHAI,

Perhaps you did not receive in time a telegram I sent from Jabalpur; because a telegram sent here has not been received. Send Krishna by the Kathiawar Express. Get her a half-ticket for Grant Road. I shall go to receive her on that train. I shall leave for Madras by 9 o'clock in the morning on Friday. Ba will leave by the Kathiawar Express tomorrow. Somebody should receive her on the train.

I shall write about the trouble at Banaras[2] later; there is no time now. It was interesting.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1096. Courtesy: Suryakant C. Patel

[1] From the postmark

[2] For Gandhiji's speech at the inauguration of the Banaras Hindu University and the furore it caused in political circles, *vide* "Speech at Benares Hindu University", 6-2-1916.

126. INTERVIEW TO A.P.I. ON BENARES 'INCIDENT'

February 9, 1916

Mr. Gandhi, who arrived in Bombay yesterday afternoon from Benares, being interviewed about the incident which interrupted his speech at Benares, said that he was unable to say what particular remarks of his were objected to, nor did Mrs. Besant point out any such remarks. She only appealed to the Chairman to stop him. Mr. Gandhi said his speech that evening was practically a repetition, in so far as it related to anarchism, of what he had said[1] at the Calcutta meeting last year of which the Hon. Mr. Lyons was Chairman. At this point, the audience wanted the speaker to go on, but Mr. Gandhi said that he would not do so unless he received the Chairman's permission to continue. He also asked the audience not to resent, as it was inclined, Mrs. Besant's interruption, as anybody who might feel aggrieved against the speaker's remarks had a right to ask for a ruling from the Chair.

Continuing, Mr. Gandhi said:

And I proceeded with my speech only after the Maharaja of Darbhanga's permission, which he gave after considering the matter for a while and cautioning me to explain matters briefly. I proceeded, but still noticed a stir on the platform, and that Mrs. Besant was whispering to the Princes who were sitting near her that I was neither withdrawing nor explaining and saying that they ought not to stay.[2] The next thing I observed was that the Princes rose one after another and as the Chairman also left, I could not finish my speech.

In reply to a question whether he would like to withdraw any of the remarks he had made at the meeting, Mr. Gandhi emphatically declared that every word was well-considered and well-weighed. Continuing, he said:

That I could ever endorse methods of violence is unthinkable. I was not eager to speak at all. I did so under great pressure from friends, as I was credited with having some influence over the student population of the country. I was asked to speak about the violence which has unfortunately been the creed of some impulsive youths, owing to which we had to witness the humiliating spectacle of extraordinary precautions having to be taken for the protection of the

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Students' Hall, Calcutta", 31-3-1915.

[2] *New India*, 10-2-1916, published along with the report of this interview, Mrs. Besant's statement: "I did not suggest to the Princes to leave." *Vide* "Annie Besant's Explanation Regarding Benares Incident", 10-2-1916.

life of our honoured guest from ourselves. Throughout the whole of my remarks, there was not a word of endorsement of violent deeds. I did give the misguided youths credit for patriotic motives, but I showed that the action was all the worthier of condemnation, in that it did irreparable harm in the long run. In fact, the whole of my speech was intended to direct the searchlight towards ourselves and to show that for many of our difficulties, we were alone responsible. It is my firm belief that, but for Mrs. Besant's hasty and ill-conceived interruption, nothing would have happened and my speech in its completed state would have left no room for any doubt as to my meaning.

Questioned as to whether it was a fact that the Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya apologised to the meeting after the incident had occurred, Mr. Gandhi replied:

Mr. Malaviya did address the meeting. But I could trace no apology in his remarks. He merely said that I had spoken at his special request and my sole intention was to show how suicidal methods of violence were.

The Bombay Chronicle, 10-2-1916

127. SPEECH ON SWADESHI AT MISSIONARY CONFERENCE, MADRAS[1]

February 14, 1916

It was not without much diffidence that I undertook to speak to you at all. And I was hard put to it in the selection of my subject. I have chosen a very delicate and difficult subject. It is delicate because of the peculiar views I hold upon swadeshi, and it is difficult because I have not that command of language which is necessary for giving adequate expression to my thoughts. I know that I may rely upon your indulgence for the many shortcomings you will no doubt find in my address, the more so when I tell you that there is nothing in what I am about to say, that I am not either already practising or am not preparing to practise to the best of my ability. It encourages me to observe that last month you devoted a week to prayer in the place of an address. I have earnestly prayed that what I am about to say may bear fruit and I know that you will bless my words with a similar

[1] Text of the paper read by Gandhiji. It was reprinted In *Young India* 21-6-1919

prayer.

After much thinking, I have arrived at a definition of swadeshi that perhaps best illustrates my meaning. Swadeshi is that spirit in us which restricts us to the use and service of our immediate surroundings to the exclusion of the more remote. Thus, as for religion, in order to satisfy the requirements of the definition, I must restrict myself to my ancestral religion. That is the use of my immediate religious surroundings. If I find it defective, I should serve it by purging it of its defects. In the domain of politics, I should make use of the indigenous institutions and serve them by curing them of their proved defects. In that of economics, I should use only things that are produced by my immediate neighbours and serve those industries by making them efficient and complete where they might be found wanting. It is suggested that such swadeshi, if reduced to practice, will lead to the millennium. And as we do not abandon our pursuit after the millennium because we do not expect quite to reach it within our time, so may we not abandon swadeshi even though it may not be fully attained for generations to come.

Let us briefly examine three branches of Swadeshi as sketched above. Hinduism has become a conservative religion and therefore a mighty force because of the Swadeshi spirit underlying it. It is the most tolerant because it is non-proselytising, and it is as capable of expansion today as it has been found to be in the past. It has succeeded not in driving, as I think it has been erroneously held, but in absorbing Buddhism. By reason of the swadeshi spirit, a Hindu refuses to change his religion not necessarily because he considers it to be the best, but because he knows that he can complement it by introducing reforms. And what I have said about Hinduism is, I suppose, true of the other great faiths of the world, only it is held that it is specially so in the case of Hinduism. But here comes the point I am labouring to reach. If there is any substance in what I have said, will not the great missionary bodies of India, to whom she owes a deep debt of gratitude for what they have done and are doing, do still better and serve the spirit of Christianity better, by dropping the goal of proselytising but continuing their philanthropic work? I hope you will not consider this to be an impertinence on my part. I make the suggestion in all sincerity and with due humility. Moreover, I have some claim upon your attention. I have endeavoured to study the Bible. I consider it as part of my scriptures. The spirit of the Sermon

on the Mount competes almost on equal terms with the *Bhagavad Gita* for the domination of my heart. I yield to no Christian in the strength of devotion with which I sing, "Lead, kindly Light" and several other inspired hymns of a similar nature. I have come under the influence of noted Christian missionaries belonging to different denominations. And I enjoy to this day the privilege of friendship with some of them. You will perhaps therefore allow that I have offered the above suggestion not as a biased Hindu but as a humble and impartial student of religion with great leanings towards Christianity. May it not be that the "Go Ye unto All the World" message has been somewhat narrowly interpreted and the spirit of it missed? It will not be denied, I speak from experience, that many of the conversions are only so called. In some cases, the appeal has gone not to the heart but to the stomach. And in every case, a conversion leaves a sore behind it which, I venture to think, is avoidable. Quoting again from experience, a new birth, a change of heart, is perfectly possible in every one of the great faiths. I know I am now treading upon thin ice. But I do not apologise, in closing this part of my subject, for saying that the frightful outrage that is just going on in Europe, perhaps, shows that the message of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Peace, has been little understood in Europe, and that light upon it may have to be thrown from the East.

I have sought your help in religious matters, which it is yours to give in a special sense. But I make bold to seek it even in political matters. I do not believe that religion has nothing to do with politics. The latter divorced from religion is like a corpse only fit to be buried. As a matter of fact, in your own silent manner, you influence politics not a little. And I feel that if the attempt to separate politics from religion had not been made, as it is even now made, they would not have degenerated, as they often appear to do. No one considers that the political life of the country is in a happy state. Following out the swadeshi spirit, I observe the indigenous institutions and the village panchayats hold me. India is really a republican country, and it is because it is that that it has survived every shock hitherto delivered. Princes and potentates, whether they were Indian-born or foreigners, have hardly touched the vast masses except for collecting revenue. The latter in their turn seem to have rendered unto Caesar what was Caesar's and for the rest have done much as they have liked. The vast organisation of caste answered not only the religious wants of the community, but it answered too its political needs. The villagers

managed their internal affairs through the caste system, and through it they dealt with any oppression from the ruling power or powers. It is not possible to deny of a nation that was capable of producing the caste system its wonderful power of organisation. One had but to attend the great Kumbha Mela at Hardwar last year to know how skilful that organisation must have been, which without any seeming effort, was able effectively to cater for more than a million pilgrims. Yet is it the fashion to say that we lack organising ability. This is true, I fear, to a certain extent, of those who have been nurtured in the new traditions. We have laboured under a terrible handicap owing to an almost fatal departure from the swadeshi spirit. We the educated classes have received our education through a foreign tongue. We have therefore not reacted upon the masses. We want to represent the masses, but we fail. They recognise us not much more than they recognise the English officers. Their hearts are an open book to neither. Their aspirations are not ours. Hence there is a break. And you witness not in reality failure to organise, but want of correspondence between the representatives and the represented. If during the last fifty years we had been educated through the vernaculars, our elders and our servants and our neighbours would have partaken of our knowledge; the discoveries of a Bose or a Ray would have been household treasure as are the *Ramayan* and the *Mahabharat*. As it is, so far as the masses are concerned, those great discoveries might as well have been made by foreigners. Had instruction in all the branches of learning been given through the vernaculars, I make bold to say that they would have been enriched wonderfully. The question of village sanitation, etc., would have been solved long ago. The village panchayats would be now a living force in a special way, and India would almost be enjoying self-government suited to its requirements and would have been spared the humiliating spectacle of organised assassination on its sacred soil. It is not too late to mend. And you can help if you will, as no other body or bodies can.

And now for the last division of swadeshi. Much of the deep poverty of the masses is due to the ruinous departure from swadeshi in the economic and industrial life. If not an article of commerce had been brought from outside India, she would be today a land flowing with milk and honey. But that was not to be. We were greedy and so was England. The connection between England and India was based clearly upon an error. But she (England) does not remain in India in

error. It is her declared policy that India is to be held in trust for her people. If this be true, Lancashire must stand aside. And if the swadeshi doctrine is a sound doctrine, Lancashire can stand aside without hurt, though it may sustain a shock for the time being. I think of swadeshi not as a boycott movement undertaken by way of revenge. I conceive it as a religious principle to be followed by all. I am no economist, but I have read some treatises which show that England could easily become a self-sustained country, growing all the produce she needs. This may be an utterly ridiculous proposition, and perhaps the best proof that it cannot be true is that England is one of the largest importers in the world. But India cannot live for Lancashire or any other country before she is able to live for herself. And she can live for herself only if she produces and is helped to produce everything for her requirements within her own borders. She need not be, she ought not to be, drawn into the vortex of mad and ruinous competition which breeds fratricide, jealousy and many other evils. But who is to stop her great millionaires from entering into the world competition? Certainly, not legislation. Force of public opinion, proper education, however, can do a great deal in the desired direction. The handloom industry is in a dying condition. I took special care during my wanderings last year to see as many weavers as possible, and my heart ached to find how they had lost, how families had retired from this once-flourishing and honourable occupation. If we follow the swadeshi doctrine, it would be your duty and mine to find out neighbours who can supply our wants and to teach them to supply them where they do not know how to, assuming that there are neighbours who are in want of healthy occupation. Then every village of India will almost be a self-supporting and self-contained unit exchanging only such necessary commodities with other villages where they are not locally producible. This may all sound nonsensical. Well, India is a country of nonsense. It is nonsensical to parch one's throat with thirst when a kindly Mahomedan is ready to offer pure water to drink. And yet thousands of Hindus would rather die of thirst than drink water from a Mahomedan household. These nonsensical men can also, once they are convinced that their religion demands that they should wear garments manufactured in India only and eat food only grown in India, decline to wear any other clothing or eat any other food. Lord Curzon set the fashion for tea-drinking. And that pernicious drug now bids fair to overwhelm the nation. It has already undermined the digestive apparatus of hundreds of thousands

of men and women and constitutes an additional tax upon their slender purses. Lord Hardinge can set the fashion for swadeshi and almost the whole of India will foreswear foreign goods. There is a verse in the *Bhagavad Gita*, which, freely rendered, means masses follow the classes. It is easy to undo the evil if the thinking portion of the community were to take the swadeshi vow even though it may for a time cause considerable inconvenience. I hate interference in any department of life. At best, it is the lesser evil. But I would tolerate, welcome, indeed plead for, stiff protective duty upon foreign goods. Natal, a British colony, protected its sugar by taxing the sugar that came from another British colony, Mauritius. England has sinned against India by forcing free trade upon her. It may have been food for her, but it has been poison for this country.

It has often been urged that India cannot adopt swadeshi in the economic life at any rate. Those who advance this objection do not look upon swadeshi as a rule of life. With them, it is a mere patriotic effort not to be made if it involved any self-denial. Swadeshi, as defined here, is a religious discipline to be undergone in utter disregard of the physical discomfort it may cause to individuals. Under its spell, the deprivation of pin or a needle, because these are not manufactured in India need cause no terror. A swadeshi will learn to do without hundreds of things which today he considers necessary. Moreover, those who dismiss swadeshi from their minds by arguing the impossible forget that swadeshi, after all, is a goal to be reached by steady effort. And we would be making for the goal even if we confined swadeshi to a given set of articles, allowing ourselves as a temporary measure to use such things as might not be procurable in the country.

There now remains for me to consider one more objection that has been raised against swadeshi. The objectors consider it to be a most selfish doctrine without any warrant in the civilized code of morality. With them, to practise Swadeshi is to revert to barbarism. I cannot enter into a detailed analysis of the proposition. But I would urge that Swadeshi is the only doctrine consistent with the law of humility and love. It is arrogance to think of launching out to serve the whole of India when I am hardly able to serve even my own family. It were better to concentrate my effort upon the family and consider that through them I was serving the whole nation and, if you will, the whole of humanity. This is humility and it is love. The motive

will determine the quality of the act. I may serve my family regardless of the sufferings I may cause to others, as, for instance, I may accept an employment which enables me to extort money from people. I enrich myself thereby and then satisfy many unlawful demands of the family. Here I am neither serving the family nor the State. Or I may recognise that God has given me hands and feet only to work with for my sustenance and for that of those who may be dependent upon me. I would then at once simplify my life and that of those whom I can directly reach. In this instance, I would have served the family without causing injury to anyone else. Supposing that everyone followed this mode of life, we would have at once an ideal State. All will not reach that state at the same time. But those of us who, realising its truth, enforce it in practice will clearly anticipate and accelerate the coming of that happy day. Under this plan of life, in seeming to serve India to the exclusion of every other country, I do not harm any other country. My patriotism is both exclusive and inclusive. It is exclusive in the sense that in all humility I confine my attention to the land of my birth, but it is inclusive in the sense that my service is not of a competitive or antagonistic nature. *Sic utere tuo ut alienum non laedas*[1] is not merely a legal maxim, but it is a grand doctrine of life. It is the key to a proper practice of ahimsa or love. It is for you, the custodians of a great faith, to set the fashion and show by your preaching, sanctified by practice, that patriotism based on hatred "killeth" and that patriotism based on love "giveth life".

The Hindu, 28-2-1916

[1] This Latin legal maxim means: "Use your property in such a way as not to damage that of others." *Vide* also *An Autobiography*, Part I, Ch. XXV.

128. SPEECH ON 'ASHRAM VOWS' AT Y. M. C. A., MADRAS[1]

February 16, 1916

MR. CHAIRMAN AND DEAR FRIENDS,

I have so often said that I am not myself fond of hearing my own voice and I assure you that this morning also I retained the same position. It was only, if you will believe me, my great regard for the students, whom I love, whom I respect and who I consider are the hope of future India that moved me to accept this invitation to speak to you this morning. I did not know what subject to choose. A friend has handed me a slip here asking me whether I would enlighten the students on the Benares incident. ("Hear, hear".) I fear I shall have to disappoint that friend and those of you who associate yourselves with that view. I don't think that you need lay any stress upon that incident. These are the passing waves which will always come and go. I should therefore this morning fear rather if I can possibly do so and pour my soul out to you with reference to something which I treasure so much above everything else.[2]

To many of the students who came here last year to converse with me, I said[3] I was about to establish an institution—an Ashram—somewhere in India, and it is about that place that I am going to talk to you this morning. I feel and I have felt during the whole of my public life that what we need, what any nation needs, but we perhaps of all the nations of the world need just now, is nothing else and nothing less than character-building. And this is the view propounded by that great patriot, Mr. Gokhale. (Cheers.) As you know, in many of his speeches, he used to say that we would get nothing, we would deserve nothing unless we had character to back what we wished for.

[1] With Rev. George Pittendrigh of the Madras Christian College in the chair. This was published with the following note by the Editor, *Indian Review:*

We have received several enquiries from our readers regarding Mr. Gandhi's new organisation, the Satyagrahashram. We are glad to be able to give the following account of the Ashram from a special report of the speech that Mr. Gandhi delivered sometime ago in Madras. The report has since had the benefit of Mr. Gandhi's revision and may, therefore, be taken as an authoritative exposition of the aims and objects of Mr. Gandhi's Satyagrahashram.

[2] This paragraph is from *The Hindu*, 16-2-1916.

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Gokhale Club, Madras", 20-4-1915.

Hence his founding of that great body, the Servants of India Society. And as you know, in the prospectus that has been issued in connection with the Society, Mr. Gokhale has deliberately stated that it was necessary to spiritualise the political life of the country. You know also that he used to say so often that our average was less than the average of so many European nations. I do not know whether that statement by him, whom, with pride, I consider to be my political guru, has really foundation in fact, but I do believe that there is much to be said to justify it in so far as educated India is concerned ; not because we, the educated portion of the community, have blundered, but because we have been creatures of circumstances. Be that as it may, this is the maxim of life which I have accepted, namely, that no work done by any man, no matter how great he is, will really prosper unless he[1] has a religious backing. But what is religion? the question will be immediately asked. I, for one, would answer, not the religion which you will get after reading all the scriptures of the world; it is not really a grasp by the brain, but it is a heart-grasp. It is a thing which is not alien to us, but it is a thing which has to be evolved out of us. It is always within us, with some consciously so; with others, quite unconsciously. But it is there; and whether we wake up this religious instinct in us through outside assistance or by inward growth, no matter how it is done, it has got to be done if we want to do anything in the right manner and anything that is going to persist.

Our scriptures have laid down certain rules as maxims of life and as axioms which we have to take for granted as self-demonstrated truths. The shastras tell us that without living according to those maxims, we are incapable even of having a reasonable perception of religion. Believing in these implicitly for all these long years and having actually endeavoured to reduce to practice these injunctions of the shastras, I have deemed it necessary to seek the association of those who think with me in founding this institution. And I shall venture this morning to place before you the rules that have been drawn up and that have to be observed by everyone who seeks to be a member of that Ashram.

Five of these are known as *Yamas*, and the first and the foremost is, the

[1] "it" in *New India*

Not truth simply as we ordinarily understand it, that as far as possible we ought not to resort to a lie, that is to say, not truth which merely answers the saying, "Honesty is the best policy"— implying that if it is not the best policy, we may depart from it. But here Truth, as it is conceived, means that we have to rule our life by this law of Truth at any cost. And in order to satisfy the definition, I have drawn upon the celebrated illustration of the life of Prahlad[1]. For the sake of Truth, he dared to oppose his own father, and he defended himself, not by retaliation by paying his father back in his own coin, but in defence of Truth, as he knew it, he was prepared to die without caring to return the blows that he had received from his father or from those who were charged with his father's instructions. Not only that: he would not in any way even parry the blows. On the contrary, with a smile on his lips, he underwent the innumerable tortures to which he was subjected, with the result that at last, Truth rose triumphant, not that Prahlad suffered the tortures because he knew that some day or other in his very life-time he would be able to demonstrate the infallibility of the law of Truth. That fact was there; but if he had died in the midst of torture, he would still have adhered to Truth. That is the Truth that I would like us to follow. There was an incident I noticed yesterday. It was a trifling incident, but I think these trifling incidents are like straws which show which way the wind is blowing. The incident was this: I was talking to a friend who wanted to talk to me aside, and we were engaged in a private conversation. A third friend dropped in and he politely asked whether he was intruding. The friend to whom I was talking said: "Oh, no, there is nothing private here." I felt taken-aback a little, because, as I was taken aside, I knew that so far as this friend was concerned, the conversation was private. But he immediately, out of politeness, I would call it over-politeness, said there was no private conversation and that he (the third friend) could join. I suggest to you that this is a departure from my definition of Truth. I think that the friend should have, in the gentlest manner possible, but still openly and frankly, said: "Yes, just now, as you properly say, you would be intruding" without giving the slightest offence to the person if he was himself a gentleman—and we are bound to consider everybody to be a gentleman unless he

[1] Prahlad was a devotee of God persecuted by his unbelieving father, the demon-king, Hiranyakashipu. Gandhiji often spoke of him as an ideal satyagrahi.

proves to be otherwise. But I may be told that the incident, after all, proves the gentility of the nation. I think that it is over-proving the case. If we continue to say these things out of politeness, we really become a nation of hypocrites. I recall a conversation I had with an English friend. He was comparatively a stranger. He is a Principal of a College and has been in India for several years. He was comparing notes with me, and he asked me whether I would admit that we, unlike most Englishmen, would not dare to say "No" when it was "No" that we meant. And I must admit that I immediately said "Yes". I agree with that statement. We do hesitate to say "No", frankly and boldly, when we want to pay due regard to the sentiments of the person whom we are addressing. In this Ashram, we make it a rule that we must say "No" when we mean "No", regardless of consequences. This, then, is the first rule. Then we come to the

DOCTRINE OF AHIMSA

Literally speaking, ahimsa means non-killing. But to me it has a world of meaning and takes me into realms much higher, infinitely higher, than the realm to which I would go, if I merely understood by ahimsa non-killing. Ahimsa really means that you may not offend anybody, you may not harbour an uncharitable thought even in connection with one who may consider himself to be your enemy. Pray notice the guarded nature of this thought; I do not say "whom you consider to be your enemy", but "who may consider himself to be your enemy". For one who follows the doctrine of ahimsa, there is no room for an enemy; he denies the existence of an enemy. But there are people who consider themselves to be his enemies, and he cannot help that circumstance. So, it is held that we may not harbour an evil thought even in connection with such persons. If we return blow for blow, we depart from the doctrine of ahimsa. But I go further. If we resent a friend's action or the so-called enemy's action, we still fall short of this doctrine. But when I say we should not resent, I do not say that we should acquiesce; but by resenting I mean wishing that some harm should be done to the enemy, or that he should be put out of the way, not even by any action of ours, but by the action of somebody else, or, say, by Divine agency. If we harbour even this thought, we depart from this doctrine of ahimsa. Those who join the Ashram have to literally accept that meaning. That does not mean that we practise that doctrine in its entirety. Far from it. It is an ideal which we have to reach, and it is an ideal to be reached even at

this very moment, if we are capable of doing so. But it is not a proposition in geometry to be learnt by heart: it is not even like solving difficult problems in higher mathematics; it is infinitely more difficult than solving those problems. Many of you have burnt the midnight oil in solving those problems. If you want to follow out this doctrine, you will have to do much more than burn the midnight oil. You will have to pass many a sleepless night, and go through many a mental torture and agony before you can reach, before you can even be within measurable distance of this goal. It is the goal, and nothing less than that, you and I have to reach if we want to understand what a religious life means. I will not say much more on this doctrine than this: that a man who believes in the efficacy of this doctrine finds in the ultimate stage, when he is about to reach the goal, the whole world at his feet, not that he wants the whole world at his feet, but it must be so. If you express your love—*ahimsa*—in such a manner that it impresses itself indelibly upon your so-called enemy, he must return that love. Another thought which comes out of this is that, under this rule, there is no room for organised assassinations, and there is no room for murders even openly committed, and there is no room for any violence even for the sake of your country, and even for guarding the honour of precious ones that may be under your charge. After all, that would be a poor defence of honour. This doctrine of ahimsa tells us that we may guard the honour of those who are under our charge by delivering ourselves into the hands of the man who would commit the sacrilege. And that requires far greater physical and mental courage than the delivering of blows. You may have some degree of physical power—I do not say courage—and you may use that power. But after that is expended, what happens? The other man is filled with wrath and indignation, and you have made him more angry by matching your violence against his; and when he has done you to death, the rest of his violence is delivered against your charge. But if you do not retaliate, but stand your ground, between your charge and the opponent, simply receiving the blows without retaliating, what happens? I give you my promise that the whole of the violence will be expended on you, and your charge will be left unscathed. Under this plan of life, there is no conception of patriotism which justifies such wars as you witness today in Europe. Then there is the

VOW OF CELIBACY

Those who want to perform national service, or those who want

to have a glimpse of the real religious life, must lead a celibate life, no matter if married or unmarried. Marriage but brings a woman closer together [*sic*] with the man, and they become friends in a special sense, never to be parted either in this life or in the lives that are to come. But I do not think that, in our conception of marriage, our lusts should necessarily enter. Be that as it may, this is what is placed before those who come to the Ashram. I do not deal with that at any length. Then we have the

VOW OF CONTROL OF THE PALATE

A man who wants to control his animal passions easily does so if he control his palate. I fear this is one of the most difficult vows to follow. I am just now coming after having inspected the Victoria Hostel. I saw there, not to my dismay, though it should be to my dismay, but I am used to it now, that there are so many kitchens, not kitchens that are established in order to serve caste restrictions, but kitchens that have become necessary in order that people can have the condiments, and the exact weight of the condiments, to which they are used in the respective places from which they come. And therefore we find that for the Brahmins themselves there are different compartments and different kitchens catering for the delicate tastes of all these different groups, I suggest to you that this is simply slavery to the palate, rather than mastery over it. I may say this: Unless we take our minds off from this habit, and unless we shut our eyes to the tea shops and coffee shops and all these kitchens, and unless we are satisfied with foods that are necessary for the proper maintenance of our physical health, and unless we are prepared to rid ourselves of stimulating, heating and exciting condiments that we mix with our food, we will certainly not be able to control the overabundant, unnecessary, exciting stimulation that we may have. If we do not do that, the result naturally is, that we abuse ourselves and we abuse even the sacred trust given to us, and we become less than animals and brutes. Eating, drinking and indulging passions we share in common with the animals, but have you ever seen a horse or a cow indulging in the abuse of the palate as we do? Do you suppose that it is a sign of civilization, a sign of real life that we should multiply our eatables so far that we do not even know where we are; and seek; dish after dish until at last we have become absolutely mad and run after the newspaper sheets which give us advertisements about these dishes? Then we have the

VOW OF NON-THIEVING

I suggest that we are thieves in a way. If I take anything that I do not need for my own immediate use, and keep it, I thieve it from somebody else. I venture to suggest that it is the fundamental law of Nature, without exception, that Nature produces enough for our wants from day to day, and if only everybody took enough for himself and nothing more, there would be no pauperism in this world, there would be no man dying of starvation in this world. But so long as we have got this inequality, so long we are thieving. I am no socialist and I do not want to dispossess those who have got possessions; but I do say that, personally, those of us who want to see light out of darkness have to follow the rule. I do not want to dispossess anybody. I should then be departing from the rule of ahimsa. If somebody else possesses more than I do, let him. But so far as my own life has to be regulated, I do say that I dare not possess anything which I do not want. In India we have got three millions of people having to be satisfied with one meal a day, and that meal consisting of a *chapati* containing no fat in it, and a pinch of salt. You and I have no right to anything that we really have until these three million are clothed and fed better. You and I, who ought to know better, must adjust our wants, and even undergo voluntary starvation in order that they may be nursed, fed and clothed. Then there is the vow of non-possession which follows as a matter of course. Then I go to the

VOW OF SWADESHI

The vow of swadeshi is a necessary vow. But you are conversant with the swadeshi life and the swadeshi spirit. I suggest to you we are departing from one of the sacred laws of our being when we leave our neighbour and go out somewhere else in order to satisfy our wants. If a man comes from Bombay here and offers you wares, you are not justified in supporting the Bombay merchant or trader so long as you have got a merchant at your very door, born and bred in Madras. That is my view of swadeshi. In your village, so long as you have got your village-barber, you are bound to support him to the exclusion of the finished barber who may come to you from Madras. If you find it necessary that your village-barber should reach the attainment of the barber from Madras, you may train him to that. Send him to Madras by all means, if you wish, in order that he may learn his calling. Until you do that, you are not justified in going to another barber. That is swadeshi. So, when we find that there are many things that we cannot

get in India, we must try to do without them. We may have to do without many things which we may consider necessary, but believe me, when you have that frame of mind, you will find a great burden taken off your shoulders, even as the Pilgrim did in that inimitable book, *Pilgrim's Progress*: There came a time when the mighty burden that the Pilgrim was carrying on his shoulders unconsciously dropped from him, and he felt a freer man than he was when he started on the journey. So will you feel freer men than you are now, immediately you adopt this swadeshi life. We have also the

VOW OF FEARLESSNESS

I found, throughout my wanderings in India, that India, educated India, is seized with a paralysing fear. We may not open our lips in public; we may not declare our confirmed opinion in public; we may hold those opinions; we may talk about them secretly; and we may do anything we like within the four walls of our house,—but those are not for public consumption. If we had taken a vow of silence, I would have nothing to say. When we open our lips in public, we say things which we do not really believe in. I do not know whether this is not the experience of almost every public man who speaks in India. I then suggest to you that there is only one Being, if Being is the proper term to be used, Whom we have to fear, and that is God. When we fear God, we shall fear no man, no matter how high-placed he may be. And if you want to follow the vow of truth in any shape or form, fearlessness is the necessary consequence. And so you find, in the *Bhagavad Gita*, fearlessness is declared as the first essential quality of a Brahmin. We fear consequences, and therefore we are afraid to tell the truth. A man who fears God will certainly not fear any earthly consequence. Before we can aspire to the position of understanding what religion is, and before we can aspire to the position of guiding the destinies of India, do you not see that we should adopt this habit of fearlessness? Or shall we over-awe our countrymen even as we are over-awed? We thus see how important this "fearlessness vow" is. And we have also the

VOW REGARDING THE UNTOUCHABLES

There is an ineffaceable blot that Hinduism today carries with it. I have declined to believe that it has been handed to us from immemorial times. I think that this miserable, wretched, enslaving spirit of "untouchableness" must have come to us when we were in

the cycle of our lives, at our lowest ebb, and that evil has still stuck to us and it still remains with us. It is, to my mind, a curse that has come to us, and as long as that curse remains with us, so long I think we are bound to consider that every affliction that we labour under in this sacred land is a fit and proper punishment for this great and indelible crime that we are committing. That any person should be considered untouchable because of his calling passes one's comprehension; and you, the student world, who receive all this modern education, if you become a party to this crime, it were better that you received no education whatsoever.

Of course, we are labouring under a very heavy handicap. Although you may realise that there cannot be a single human being on this earth who should be considered to be untouchable, you cannot react upon your families, you cannot react upon your surroundings, because all your thought is conceived in a foreign tongue, and all your energy is devoted to that. And so we have also introduced a rule in this Ashram that we shall receive our

EDUCATION THROUGH THE VERNACULARS

In Europe, every cultured man learns, not only his language, but also other languages, certainly three or four. And even as they do in Europe, in order to solve the problem of language in India, we, in this Ashram, make it a point to learn as many Indian vernaculars as we possibly can. And I assure you that the trouble of learning these languages is nothing compared to the trouble that we have to take in mastering the English language. We never master the English language; with some exceptions, it has not been possible for us to do so; we can never express ourselves as clearly as we can in our own mother tongue. How dare we rub out of our memory all the years of our infancy? But that is precisely what we do when we commence our higher life, as we call it, through the medium of a foreign tongue. This creates a breach in our life for bridging which we shall have to pay dearly and heavily. And you will see now the connection between these two things—education and untouchableness—this persistence of the spirit of untouchableness even at this time of the day in spite of the spread of knowledge and education. Education has enabled us to see the horrible crime. But we are seized with fear also and, therefore, we cannot take this doctrine to our homes. And we have got a superstitious veneration for our family traditions and for the members of our family. You say, "My parents will die if I tell them that I, at

least, can no longer partake of this crime." I say that Prahlad never considered that his father would die if he pronounced the sacred syllables of the name of Vishnu[1]. On the contrary, he made the whole of that household ring, from one corner to another, by repeating that name even in the sacred presence of his father. And so you and I may do this thing in the sacred presence of our parents. If, after receiving this rude shock, some of them expire, I think that would be no calamity. It may be that some rude shocks of the kind might have to be delivered. So long as we persist in these things which have been handed down to us for generations, these incidents may happen. But there is a higher law of Nature, and in due obedience to that higher law, my parents and myself should make that sacrifice, and then we follow

HAND-WEAVING

You may ask: "Why should *we* use our hands?" and say "the manual work has got to be done by those who are illiterate. I can only occupy myself with reading literature and political essays." I think that we have to realise the dignity of labour. If a barber or shoe-maker attends a college, he ought not to abandon the profession of barber or shoe-maker. I consider that a barber's profession is just as good as the profession of medicine.

Last of all, when you have conformed to these rules, I think then, and not till then, you may come to

POLITICS

and dabble in them to your heart's content, and certainly you will then never go wrong. Politics, divorced of religion, have absolutely no meaning. If the student-world crowd the political platforms of this country, to my mind it is not necessarily a healthy sign of national growth; but that does not mean that you, in your student-life, ought not to study politics. Politics are a part of our being; we ought to understand our national institutions, and we ought to understand our national growth and all those things. We may do it from our infancy. So, in our Ashram, every child is taught to understand the political institutions of our country, and to know how the country is vibrating with new emotions, with new aspirations, with a new life. But we want also the steady light, the infallible light, of religious faith, not a faith

[1] One of the Hindu trinity, regarded as Preserver of the Universe

which merely appeals to the intelligence, but a faith which is indelibly inscribed on the heart. First, we want to realise that religious consciousness, and immediately we have done that, I think the whole department of life is open to us,andit should then be a sacred privilege of students and everybody to partake of that whole life, so that, when they grow to manhood, and when they leave their colleges, they may do so as men properly quipped to battle with life. Today what happens is this: much of the political life is confined to student life; immediately the students leave their colleges and cease to be students, they sink into oblivion, they seek miserable employments, carrying miserable emoluments, rising no higher in their aspirations, knowing nothing of God, knowing nothing of fresh air or bright light, and nothing of that real vigorous independence that comes out of obedience to these laws that I have ventured to place before you.

CONCLUSION

I am not here asking you to crowd into the Ashram, there is no room there. But I say that every one of you may enact that Ashram life individually and collectively. I shall be satisfied with anything that you may choose from the rules I have ventured to place before you and act up to it. But if you think that these are the outpourings of a mad man, you will not hesitate to tell me that it is so, and I shall take that judgment from you undismayed. (Loud cheers.)[1]

The Indian Review, February, 1916

129. SPEECH AT MADRAS SOCIAL SERVICE LEAGUE[2]

February 16, 1916

I have been asked to speak to you this evening about social service. If this evening you find that I am not able to do sufficient justice to this great audience, you will ascribe it to so many engagements that I hastily and unthinkingly accepted. It was my desire that I should have at least a few moments to think out what I shall have to say to you but it was not to be. However, as our Chair Lady[3] has said, it is work we want and not speeches. I am aware that you will have lost very little, if anything at all, if you find at the end of

[1] This paragraph is from *New India*, 16-2-1916.

[2] At its annual meeting held in the Madras Christian College

[3] Mrs. Whitehead, who presided

this evening's talk that you have listened to very little.[1]

For social service, as for any other service on the face of the earth, there is one condition indispensable, viz., proper qualifications on the part of those who want to render that service.The question to be asked is whether those of us who are already engaged in this kind of service and those who aspire to render that service, possess the necessary qualifications; because you will agree with me that servants, if they can mend matters, can also spoil matters, and in trying to do service, however well-intentioned that service might be, if they are not qualified for that service, they will be rendering not service but disservice. What are those qualifications? I imagine I should almost repeat to you the qualifications that I described this morning to the students in the Y.M.C.A. Hall,[2] because they are of universal application and are necessary for any class of work, much more in social service at this time of the day in our national life in our dear country. It seems to me that we do require truth in one hand and fearlessness in the other hand. Unless we carry the torch-light of truth, we shall not see the stall[3] in front of us and unless we carry the quality of fearlessness we shall not be able to give the message that we might want to give and on proper occasion. When the occasion for testing us comes—and such occasions do not occur to men so often as they might imagine, they come but rarely, they are special privileges—when that supreme final test comes, unless we have this fearlessness in the other hand, I feel sure we shall be found wanting. But let me remind you also that these two qualities may be trained in us[4] in a manner detrimental to ourselves and to those with whom we may come in contact. This is a dangerous statement almost to make, as if truth could be ever so handled, and in making that statement I would like you also to consider that truth comes not as truth but only as truth so called.[5] You will recall the instance of Ravana and Rama and that of Lakshman and Indrajit in that inimitable book the *Ramayana*. Lakshman and Indrajit both possessed the same qualities. Both had performed austerities, both had attained a certain amount of self control. It was therefore most difficult to conquer Indrajit. We find

[1] This paragraph is from Natesan's *Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi.*

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] Natesan has "step".

[4] These two words are from Natesan.

[5] This sentence is from Natesan.

what Indrajit possessed was mere dross and what Lakshman possessed was of great assistance not only to him, not only to the side on whose behalf he was fighting, but to us, to whom he has left a treasure to cherish and to value. What was that additional quality that Lakshman possessed? Lakshman was divinely guided. He had religious perception. His life was guided upon[1] principle and based upon religion, and the life of Indrajit upon irreligion. Indrajit knew not where he was going. Life without religion is life without principle and life without principle is like a ship without a rudder. Just as a ship without a rudder and the helmsman will be tossed about from place to place and will never reach its destination, so will a man without religious backing, without the hard[2] grasp of religion, be tossed about on this stormy ocean of the world without ever reaching its destined goal. So I suggest to every social servant not to run away with the idea that he will be able to serve his fellow-countrymen without these two qualities duly sanctified by religious perception and divine guidance. Immediately we have these two qualities, even our mistakes which we would still commit will not be mistakes that would redound to our discredit or injure the cause that we may handle or the persons of the communities we may want to serve.

Our Chair Lady was good enough to take me to the Pariah Village just behind the compound of the Bishop's house and described to me the condition that little village was in before this League commenced its operations there. After seeing the village, I make bold to state that it is a model of cleanliness and order and it is much cleaner than some of the busiest and the most central parts of Madras. That is undoubtedly a creditable piece of work on the part of the Social Service League; and if the League can penetrate into the recesses of Madras and do the same kind of work, certain things which I have noticed in Madras will be conspicuous by their absence when I next pay my visit to this great city. (Cheers.) These things stare us in the face and have got to be remedied. When our Pariah brethren are amenable to reason and persuasion, shall we say that the so-called higher classes are not equally amenable to reason and persuasion and are not amenable to hygienic laws which are indispensable in order to live the city life? We may do many things with immunity but when we immediately transfer ourselves to crowded streets where we have

[1] Natesan has "by".
[2] Natesan has "heart".

hardly air to breathe, the life becomes changed, and we have to obey another set of laws which immediately come into being. Do we do that?[1] It is no use saddling the Municipality with responsibilities for the condition in which we find not only the central parts of Madras, but of every city in India without exception. No municipality in the world will be able to override the habits of a class of people which have been handed to them from generation to generation. It is a work that can be done only by patient toil and divine guidance. With these two immutable weapons in our hands, it can be done only by such bodies as Social Service Leagues. We are pulsating with a new life and a new vision which will add dignity to our nationality and will carry the banner of progress forward. The question of sanitary reform in big cities is practically a hopeless task if we expect our municipalities to do this unaided by this voluntary work. Far be it from me to absolve the municipalities from their own responsibilities. There is a great deal still left to be done by them. Only the other day I read with a great degree of pain a report about the proceedings of the Bombay Municipality, and the deplorable fact in it is that a large part of the time of the Municipality was devoted to talking over trifles while they neglected matters of great moment.[2] Municipalities will be able to do very little unless there is a demand for further improvement from the people themselves. In one of the model principalities in India, officials and others complained that in spite of their ceaseless vigilance and efforts, it was not possible for them to turn the people away from the ways they had adopted and which had become part of their being. Still the principality showed signs of visible progress. The Dewan of the place assured him that had it not been for the valuable assistance rendered by the Social Service League, people would not have done half of what they had done. Terrorism of officials is of no avail. I agree with that celebrated saint who said: "It is far better that people should even remain drunkards rather than that they should become sober at the point of the sword." If a man, after an appeal is made to his heart and after due effort is made to redeem him from bad ways, continues to believe he must drink himself to death, I am afraid we must allow him to do so; we cannot help it; we are not going to heap evil upon evil. It is no use doing physical harm to the man. He may cease to drink for the time being, but he will return to it again and

[1] These two sentences are from Natesan.

[2] This sentence is from Natesan.

again. There is little merit in the physical denial when there is no mental co-operation. The streets of Kashi, the most sacred place for the Hindus, are dirty. The same dirt was to be seen even in the sanctuary where the din and noise was very great. In such a place there should be perfect orderliness, peace, silence, gentleness and humility. All these things, I regret to say, were conspicuous by their absence. The priests do not accept anything less than a rupee from the devotees. That could not have been the position of Kashi Viswanath in ages gone by. When people are transported to Kashi in a railway Express by millions and when the surroundings are altered, one condition of orderly progress is that people should respond to the new conditions. What is true of Kashi Viswanath is true in the majority of cases in our holy temples. Here is a problem for the Social Service League. It must not be a problem for Government or municipality. Immediately you begin going to schools, you leave temples alone. Before we fit ourselves for this work, we should revolutionise the educational system. We are today in a false position and I promise that we shall incur the curse of the next generation for this great tragedy enacted before us. It is a matter for thinking and redressing. The task may be Herculean, but this reward will be adequate.

I have placed a few thoughts before you at random and I hope that they will sink deep into you and exercise your hearts. You should never rest satisfied until you have put your shoulder to the wheel and assisted to the best of your ability to bring about the necessary reform.

One other word of advice to the students who travel in third class compartments. Do not dominate those who wrongly think they are your inferiors, seeing your costume. If you do so, you will be disqualified for rendering social service.

The Hindu, 17-2-1916

130. REPLY TO MRS. BESANT

[Before *February 17, 1916*]

Mr. M. K. Gandhi writes to us:

Mrs. Besant's reference in *New India* and certain other references to the Benares Incident perhaps render it necessary for me to return to the subject, however disinclined I may be to do so. Mrs. Besant denies my statement with reference to her whispering to the

Princes.[1] I can only say that if I can trust my eyes and my ears, I must adhere to the statement I have made. She occupied a seat on the left of the semi-circle on the other side of the Maharaja of Darbhanga, who occupied the chair, and there was at least one Prince, perhaps, there were two who were sitting on her side. Whilst I was speaking, Mrs. Besant was almost behind me. When the Maharaja rose, Mrs. Besant had also risen. I had ceased speaking before the Rajahs actually left the platform. She was discussing the incident with a group round her on the platform. I gently suggested to her that she might have refrained from interrupting, but that if she disapproved of the speech after it was finished, she could have then dissociated herself from my sentiments. But she, with some degree of warmth, said, "How could we sit still when you were compromising everyone of us on the platform? You ought not to have made the remarks you did." This answer of Mrs. Besant's does not quite tally with her solicitude for me which alone, according to her version of the incident, prompted her to interrupt the speech. I suggest that if she merely meant to protect me, she could have passed a note round or whispered into my ears her advice. And, again, if it was for my protection, why was it necessary for her to rise with the Princes and to leave the hall as I hold she did along with them?

So far as my remarks are concerned, I am yet unable to know what it was in my speech that seems to her to be open to such exception as to warrant her interruption. After referring to the Viceregal visit and the necessary precautions that were taken for the Viceroy's safety, I showed that an assassin's death was anything but an honourable death, and said that anarchism was opposed to our shastras and had no room in India. I said then where there was honourable death, it would go down history as men who died for their conviction. But when a bomb-thrower died, secretly plotting all sorts of things, what could he gain? I then went on to state and deal with the fallacy that had not bomb-throwers thrown bombs, we should never have gained what we did with reference to the Partition Movement. It was at about this stage that Mrs. Besant appealed to the chair to stop me. Personally, I will desire a publication of the whole of my speech[2] whose trend was a sufficient warrant for showing that I could not possibly incite the students to deeds of violence. Indeed it was

[1] *Vide* "Annie besant's Explanation Regarding Benares Incident, 12-2-1916

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Benares Hindu University", 6-2-1916.

conceived in order to carry on a rigorous self-examination.

I began by saying that it was a humiliation for the audience and myself that I should have to speak in English. I said that English having been the medium of instruction, it had done a tremendous injury to the country, and as I conceive I showed successfully that had we received training during the past 50 years in higher thought in our own vernaculars, we would be today within reach of our goal. I then referred to the self-government Resolution passed at the Congress and showed that whilst the All-India Congress Committee and theAll-India Moslem League would be drawing up their paper about the future constitution, their duty was to fit themselves by their own action for self-government. And in order to show how short we fell of our duty, I drew attention to the dirty condition of the labyrinth of lanes surrounding the great temple of Kashi Viswanath and the recently erected palatial buildings without any conception as to the straightness or the width of the streets. I then took the audience to the gorgeous scene that was enacted on the day of the foundation and suggested that if a stranger not knowing anything about Indian life had visited the scene, he would have gone away under the false impression that India was one of the richest countries in the world—such was the display of jewellery worn by our noblemen. And turning to the Maharajas and the Rajahs, I humorously suggested that it was necessary for them to hold those treasures in trust for the nation before we could realise our ideals, and I cited[1] the action of the Japanese noblemen who considered it a glorious privilege, even though there was no necessity for them, to dispossess themselves of treasures and lands which were handed to them from generation to generation. I then asked the audience to consider the humiliating spectacle of he Viceroy's person having to be protected from ourselves when he was our honoured guest. And I was endeavouring to show that the blame for these precautions was also on ourselves, in that they were rendered necessary because of the introduction of organised assassination in India. Thus I was endeavouring to show, on the one hand, how the students could usefully occupy themselves in assisting to rid the society of its proved defects and, on the other, wean themselves even in thought from methods of violence.

I claim that with twenty years' experience of public life in the course of which I had to address on scores of occasions turbulant

[1] Not found in the available version of the speech

audiences, I have some experience of feeling the pulse of my audience. I was following closely how the speech was being taken and I certainly did not notice that the student world was being adversely affected. Indeed some of them came to me the following morning and told me that they perfectly understood my remarks which had gone home. One of them, a keen debater, even subjected me to cross-examination and seemed to feel convinced by a further development of the argument such as I had advanced in the course of my speech. Indeed I have spoken now to thousands of students and others of my countrymen throughout South Africa, England and India; and by precisely the arguments that I used that evening, I claim to have weaned many from their approval of anarchical methods.

Finally, I observe that Mr. S. S. Setlur, of Bombay, who has written on the incident to *The Hindu* in no friendly mood towards me, and who I think in some respects totally unfairly has endeavoured to tear me to pieces, and who was an eye witness to the proceedings, gives a version different from Mrs. Besant's. He thinks that the general impression was not that I was encouraging the anarchists but that I was playing the role of an apologist for the Civilian bureaucrat The whole of Mr. Setlur's attack upon me shows that if he is right I was certainly not guilty of any incitement to violence and that the offence consisted in my reference to jewellery, etc.

In order that the fullest justice might be done both to Mrs. Besant and myself, I would make the following suggestion. She says that she does not propose to defend herself by quoting the sentence which drove the Princes away and that that would be playing into the enemies' hands; according to her previous statement, my speech is already in the hands of detectives so that, so far as my safety is concerned, her forbearance is not going to be of the slightest use. Would it not therefore be better that she should either publish a verbatim report if she has it or reproduce such sentiments in my speech as in her opinion necessitated her interruption and the Princes' withdrawal?

I will, therefore, conclude this statement by repeating what I have said before;[1] that but for Mrs. Besant's interruption, I would have concluded my speech within a few minutes and no possible misconception about my views on anarchism would have arisen.

The Hindu 17-2-1916

[1] *Vide* "Interview to A.P.I. on Benares 'Incident' ", 9-2-1916.

131. LETTER TO "NEW INDIA" ON BENARES 'INCIDENT'

[MADRAS,]
February 17, 1916

In your editorial note of even date, you suggested that I have reverted to the Benares incident under missionary influence. May I say that the missionaries had absolutely nothing to do with my statement[1], and that there has not been my conversation about it between any missionary and myself?

New India, 18-2-1916

132. SPEECH ON VERNACULARS AND EDUCATION, MADRAS

[*February 17, 1916*]

Last evening at the Anderson Hall, Madras, under the auspices of the Christian College Associated Societies, a joint debate was held on the subject, "Shall the Vernaculars be the Media of Instruction in our Schools and Colleges?" with Mr. M. K. Gandhi in the chair.

Mr. A. S. Rajam opened the debate on the subject in a short speech. . . .

The Chairman then wound up the debate and said that certainly the question of racial difference would not occur if vernaculars were to be made the media of instruction in schools and colleges. In our country, they were one Nation, and even before the English advent, they did form one Nation and had one common religion. There were histories to show that our sacred saga had travelled from one part of the country to another in those days for the purpose of religious gatherings, and thus brotherly feelings always existed among the people. For the real progress of the country and for the welfare of the masses, this problem ought to be solved by the authorities concerned at an early date. These objections against the introduction of vernaculars were all baseless and the best thing was for the people themselves to solve this question, and educate the masses of the country through the media of vernaculars. The rulers themselves would then have to learn the vernaculars of the country in the interests of proper administration.

A hearty vote of thanks to the Chairman terminated the proceedings.

New India, 18-2-1916

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

133. SPEECH AT POONA ON GOKHALE ANNIVERSARY

February 19, 1916

A meeting to celebrate the anniversary of the late Mr. Gokhale's death was held in the Kirloskar Theatre, Poona City, on the 19th instant.

There were about 2,000 persons present.

Mr. H. W. Wadia, Bar-at-Law, presided.

Mr. Gandhi, who came down to Poona at the invitation of the Deccan Sabha, hoped that the anniversary would be celebrated with due regularity and it would take the form of stock-taking on the part of those who revered the memory of the deceased and wanted to show their reverence by taking some part of the activity of the deceased.[1] Mr. Gokhale's work in the Imperial Council and on the Public Service Commission showed great ability and patriotism. He worked on the South African question regardless of his health and it had, in Mr. Gandhi's opinion, cost him ten years of his life. The speaker suggested that behind all the work of Mr. Gokhale lay his great spirituality. It was because Mr. Gokhale felt it necessary to spiritualise the political life of the country that he had brought the Servants of India Society into being. Mr. Gokhale once said to the speaker that there were moments when he doubted the efficacy of much of the political work and was distressed by severe disappointments, but he was saved from such a situation by a consciousness of the faith that he had deep down in him in the existence of the permanent element and it was this faith, thought Mr. Gandhi, which made him triumph over all disappointments and persist in the work.[2]

The speaker said that he had toured the country during the past year in accordance with the wishes of Mr. Gokhale, and now without his advice to guide him, he was at a loss to know whether he was drifting in the right or the wrong direction. In the course of his travels, he found that the country was vibrating with a passionate spirit of patriotism, but the bugbear of "fear" loomed large on the horizon. Social endeavour was impeded by the overawing power of spiritual authority, and in the path of political activity lay the barrier of political authority. They were the slaves of circumstances, but they were themselves to blame. It had become impossible for them to voice in public the opinions uttered in their homes. The spiritual liberty of the people was usurped by the priests; in politics they were afraid to give expression to their views. This was a regrettable state of affairs and showed that they were lacking

[1] *New India*, 21-2-1916, adds here: "and the speaker emphasised the fact that the deceased statesman was worthy of such activity on their part".

[2] This paragraph is from *The Bombay Chronicle*, 21-2-1916.

in backbone. Until they had driven out this craven spirit fromtheir hearts, they were unworthy of undertaking the great charge bequeathed to them. The heroes of the past were still with them in spirit. Faith in the lives of the great departed, sincerity, humanity and patriotism would enable them to weather the storm and establish their country in its destined place among the nations of the world.

The president in thanking Mr. Gandhi for his address said that he was not prepared to say anything about the apprehensions and hopes which Mr. Gandhi had spoken of, but would merely mention that he did not agree with him. He had considerable experience of politics and entertained the brightest hopes for India....

The Hon'ble Mr. R. P. Paranjpe proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Gandhi and the Chairman.

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-2-1916 and Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1916, P. 130

134. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI H. PATEL

[*February 21, 1916*][1]

I have expected to leave here[2] today and reach there tomorrow morning. But how can I meet Mr. Robinson today, it being Sunday? So now I shall only leave on Monday and reach there on Tuesday. Most probably I shall leave by the Gujarat Mail. If Santok accompanies me, I shall leave by the Kathiawar Express. Most Probably she will come with me. We shall talk when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10997. Courtesy: Suryakant C. Patel

[1] From the postmark

[2] Gandhiji had gone to Poona for a meeting on the death anniversary of Gokhale; *vide*"Speech at Poona on Gokhale Anniversary", 19-2-1916.

135. SPEECH ON INDIAN WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY[1]

February 23, 1916

Everyone here knows the gentleman who will soon address us. Hence I need not speak at length by way of introducing him. He has taken up the mission of founding a university for Indian women. The task will entail the revival of different regional languages. He proposes to start in June an examining and teaching university. It is said that in our society as it is today men suffer from *ardhangavayu*[2] and this charge is by and large well founded because we are not able to make our 'better halves' keep pace with us. Circumstances are chiefly responsible for this state of affairs. Prof. Karve has undertaken this work in order to improve the condition of women and has set about it briskly. I must indeed admit that his enthusiasm is matchless. If I may introduce him in the words of Mr. Gokhale, he is truth incarnate. We are therefore confident that, even if his work is not crowned with all the success one may hope for, no harm is likely to result from it any time. He has devoted twenty years of service to the Fergusson College and has been managing a widows' home for as many years. Now, at the age of 59, he has started on a new venture, a mark of the highest self-sacrifice and zeal. In Gujarat, we do not have the spirit of self-sacrifice that we find in Poona. This should make us feel ashamed of ourselves; Gujarat has, therefore, much to learn from the life of Prof. Karve.

Concluding the proceedings, Gandhiji said:

Mrs. Vidyagauri['s[3] speech] invites some comments. We shall accept equality of rights for women, but I think their education should differ from men's, as their nature and functions do. In progressive countries, women receive the very highest education but, after it is over, they do not have to perform the same duties as men and in our country women have never to compete with men for a livelihood. The help this institution receives from us, whatever it be, will not gounavailing to us. When we start a school or a college here, we shall

[1] Being the introductory and concluding remarks as Chairman on the occasion of a public lecture in Ahmedabad by Prof. D. K. Karve (1858-1962), founder of the University

[2] Paralysis of one side of the body

[3] Vidyagauri R. Nilkanth, a social worker

get back a part of what we donate. It is my earnest request, therefore, that we should give the best help we can to this institution.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 27-2-1916

136. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
Maha Vad 5 [*February 23, 1916*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have just returned, having been to Madras, where I saw Chi. Maganlal and Jamnadas, and to Bombay, where I saw Shri Khushalbhai and others. Santok and the two girls have come away with me, for their work there was over and Maganlal had to be all over Madras. I have advised him to return, after completing his study of Tamil. He tells me he has done a good job of learning weaving. Jamnadas and his wife will stay on in Madras. One can't say that Jamnadas's health is normal again. The rest are flourishing.

Khushalbhai and all of us wish that you should now come away[2]. It seems improper for you to engage in business there. Do what you think best about the house and the small farm. I don't think anyone can be sent over from here just now, nor has there been any such demand. Rather, Mr. Pragji writes to say that, if anyone were to be sent, Bhaga would have to be relieved.

You need not be much concerned about your coming over here. It is but natural that I should want you to be with me. If you wish, however, I shall make other arrangements. Once you are here, everything will be managed.

I find that Khushalbhai and Devbhabhi[3] have taken very well to Bombay. There is no limit to what I get from them, as though they owe a debt to me. I am not even allowed to feel that we are only cousins.

As to what happened in Kashi[4], I could fill pages with my

[1] Gandhiji returned from Madras on this date in 1916. Maganlal Gandhi referred to in the letter was there at the time.

[2] From South AfricaS

[3] Addressee's mother

[4] The reference is to the 'incident, during Gandhiji's speech at the Benares Hindu University; *vide* "Speech at Benares Hindu University", 6-2-1916. Kashi is another name for Varanasi or Benares.

reflections on it all, but I have no time. You will know when you are here.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

Imam Saheb's[1] father is dead. Write a letter of condolence to him.

From a handwritten copy of the Gujarati original: C. W. 5692. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

137. INDENTURED LABOUR

The question of indentured labour is a seasonable subject for more reasons than one. Messrs Andrews and Pearson have just returned from Fiji after finishing their self-imposed labours for the sake of India which they have learnt to love as they love their mother-land. Their report is about to be issued. There Mr. Malaviya has given notice for leave to move a resolution[2] in the Imperial Council which will, if adopted, commit the Government to a repeal of the system of indentured labour. Mr. Malaviya's resolution will be, it may be recalled, a continuation of the late Mr. Gokhale's work in 1912, when in a speech full of fervour and weighted with facts and figures, he moved his resolution demanding repeal of this form of labour. The deceased statesman's resolution was thrown out only by the force of official majority. The moral victory lay with Mr. Gokhale. The death-knell of the system was rung when that resolution was moved. The Government, as it could not then abolish the system, outvoted Mr. Gokhale but did not fail to note that they must hurry forward to do so at an early date. Mr. Malaviya's proposed resolution and the report of Messrs Andrews and Pearson, which latter, it is known, is to suggest total abolition of the system, will enable Lord Hardinge fittingly to close his most eventful viceroyalty removing this long-standing and acknowledged grievance.

These lines will be merely an attempt to give personal observations and to indulge in a few reflections upon the question. For facts and figures, the readers and the public workers must look up Mr. Gokhale's speech referred to above and Messrs Andrews and

[1] Imam Abdul Kadir Bawazeer

[2] In March, 1916, Madan Mohan Malaviya moved a resolution in the Imperial Legislative Council for the abolition of the indenture system.

Pearson's forthcoming report.

Indentured labour is admittedly a remnant of slavery. The late Sir William Wilson Hunter, when his attention was drawn to it in 1895, was the first to call it a state 'perilously near to slavery'. Most legislation only partly reflects the public opinion of its time. Legislation abolishing slavery was really a bit in advance of public opinion, and that was a big bit. And its effect, like that of all such legislation, was largely neutralized by the dissatisfied slave-owner resorting to the dodge of indentured labour. The yoke, if it fell from the Negro's black neck, was transferred to the brown neck of the Indian. In the process of transfer, it had to be somewhat polished, it had to be lightened in weight and even disguised. Nevertheless, in all its essentials, it retained its original quality. The hideousness of the system was forcefully demonstrated when the curse descended upon South Africa in the shape of indentured labourers from China for working the gold mines. It was no mere election cry that the l ate Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman[1] had taken up when he made the British Isles from end t o end ring with denunciation of t he system. No cost was counted as too great for ridding South Africa of the evil. The great multi-millionaires of Johannesburg spared nothing to be enabled to hold on to the indentured Chinaman. They asked for breathing time. The House of Commons remained unmoved. Mine-owners had to shift for themselves. The interests of humanity overrode all other considerations. The mines were threatened to be closed. The House did not care. The millions promised to Mr. Chamberlain[2] would not be forthcoming. The House laughed. Within six months of the passage of the measure for the abolition of Chinese indentured labour, every Chinese labourer had been repatriated bag and baggage. The mines survived the shock. They discovered other methods of life. And now be it said to the credit of the mine-owners as well as of the Conservatives who opposed the measure, that both these classes recognize that the abolition was a great deliverance.

Indian indentured labour is not less demoralising. It has persisted because its bitterness like that of a sugared pill has been cleverly though unconsciously concealed. The one great distinction between the two classes was that the Chinese were brought in without a

[1] Prime Minister of England, 1905-8

[2] Joseph Chamberlain (1836-1914), British statesman; Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1895

single woman with them, whereas every hundred Indian labourers must include forty women among them. Had the Chinese remained, they would have sapped the very foundations of society. The Indian labourers confine the evil to themselves. This may be unimportant to non-Indians. But for us, the wonder is that we have allowed the sin to continue so long. This business about the women is the weakest and the irremediable part of the evil. It therefore needs a somewhat closer inspection. These women are not necessarily wives. Men and women are huddled together during the voyage. The marriage is a farce. A mere declaration by man and woman made upon landing before the Protector of Immigrants that they are husband and wife constitutes a valid marriage. Naturally enough, divorce is common. The rest must be left to the imagination of the reader. This is certain—that the system does not add to the moral well-being of India. And it is suggested that no amount of figures adduced to show that the labourer is far richer at the end of his contract of labour than when he entered upon it can be allowed to be any set-off against the moral degradation it involves.

There is another most powerful consideration to be urged against the continuance of this system. The relations between Englishmen and Indians in India are not of the happiest. The average Englishman considers himself to be superior to the average Indian and the latter is generally content to be so considered. Such a state of things is demoralizing to both and a menace to the stability of the British Empire. There is no reason why every Englishman should not learn to consider every Indian as his brother, and why every Indian should not cease to think that he is born to fear every Englishman. Be thatas it may, this unnatural relationship is reflected in an exaggerated form outside India when the artificial state of indentured service under the white employer is set up. Unless, therefore, the relation between the English and ourselves is put on a correct footing in India, any transference of Indian labourers to far-off lands, whether parts of the Empire or otherwise, even under a free contract must harm both employer and employed. I happen to have the privilege of knowing most humane employers of Indian labourers in Natal. They were their men. But they do not, they cannot, give them more than the most favoured treatment that their cattle receive. I use this language in no uncharitable spirit. The humanest of employers cannot escape the limitations of his class. He instinctively feels that the Indian labourer is inferior to him and can never be equal to him. Surely no indentured Indian, no matter how clever and faithful he may be, has ever

inherited his master's state. But I know English servants who have risen to their master's state even as Indian servants have risen to their Indian master's state. It is not the Englishman's fault that the relationship with his Indian employees has not been progressive. It is beyond the scope of these lines to distribute the blame, if there is any, on either side, or to examine the causes for the existence of such a state of things. I have been obliged to advert to it to show that apart from all other considerations, the system of indentured labour is demonstrably so degrading to us as a nation that it must be stopped at any cost and that now.

The Leader, 25-2-1916

138. SPEECH AT RECEPTION IN HYDERABAD, SIND

February 26, 1916

About seven thousand people led by the Hon'ble Mr. Bhurgri and the Hon'ble Mr. Ghulam Hussein, both Mahomedan members of the Bombay Legislative Council, gave a public reception to Mr. Gandhi at Hyderabad and a procession of fifty carriages took three hours to pass through the crowded streets owing to numerous stops for Mr. Gandhi to be garlanded. A eulogistic address in a sandalwood casket was presented to Mr. Gandhi at a public meeting, where all the speeches were in English except that of Mr. Gandhi, who preferred to speak in Hindustani.

Mr. Gandhi said that his political guru, the late Mr. Gokhale, had imposed on him one year's silence and had bidden him to travel and see things. The period had passed now and he could speak. Self-government for India was in the air. A scheme was to be framed by the Congress and the League leaders at Allahabad, but how many knew what was wanted? It could not be given and taken mechanically. They could only get as much of swaraj as they fitted themselves for, they had to fulfil certain conditions and they could fulfil them. One condition was that they should adopt swadeshi whole heartedly. Swaraj and swadeshi must go together. Then their motto should be "Fear God rather than man, be the man King or Guru or Moulvi." Then they must treat their depressed and poor brethren as human beings. Mr. Gandhi also reminded his hearers that they could best honour their leaders by copying the virtues which they ascribed to those leaders. He concluded with an appeal for funds being raised for the Servants of India Society.

At the conclusion of his speech, he was loudly cheered. At the end "Vande Mataram" and another national song of the famous Digambar[1] were sung, the audience standing.

The Hindu, 29-2-1916

[1] Vishnu Digambar Paluskar

139. SPEECH AT HYDERABAD, SIND

February 27, 1916

On 27th February, l916, Gandhiji unveiled before a large gathering the portrait of the late Mr. G. K. Gokhale in the Holmstead Hall, Hyderabad (Sind). The Collector was also amongst those present.

Mr. Gandhi, speaking Hindustani, said that character was the cornerstone of Mr. Gokhale's work and success. Not only public men, but Government officials, traders, clerks, coolies and others could elevate and serve the country if duty, and not authority or self, was the ruling motive. Want of a sense of duty and the spirit of service caused their miseries. Mr. Gokhale founded the Servants of India Society for development of character and he wanted to spiritualise political life. The leaders must not seek praise but serve the country as a duty.

If I did not emulate the virtues of Mr. Gokhale, I would prove myself unworthy of this unveiling of his portrait. And if you would not emulate his virtues, you would prove yourself unfit for joining in this ceremony.[1]

In conclusion, Mr. Gandhi appealed for aid for the Servants of India Society.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-2-1916

140. SPEECH AT HYDERABAD ON VACCINATION

February 28, 1916

During the course of the day, Mr. Gandhi visited the Narishala, Navalrai Hiranand Academy, Nava Vidyalaya High School, and Kundanmal Girls' School. In the afternoon, Mr. Gandhi was the guest of the Gujarati and Deccani residents of Hyderabad, who had assembled in the house of Mr. P. G. Mankad in Hirabag. Mr. Gandhi was given an address and garlanded. After that he drove to the Central Jail accompanied by Diwan Wadhumal Belaram and his brothers, and strange to say that the request made to the Superintendent to allow Mr. Gandhi to see the inside of the Jail was ungraciously refused by him for reasons best known to him. Mr. Gandhi then went to the Holmstead Hall where he gave a short discourse on vaccination.

He said that he had not given special attention to the subject, but had bestowed some thought on it. He thought as the vaccine serum was obtained by a process which spelt torture to the cow, vaccination contravened the fundamental principle of

[1] These two sentences are from *Gujarati*, 5-3.1916.

Hinduism which is ahimsa. He said that orthodox Hindus objected to vaccination, since injection through the arm was tantamount to taking through the mouth. He then said that vaccination with human lymph was open to objection not only on the same grounds, but also because it involved the risk of contracting infectious diseases. He said that it was not a fact that all those who were not vaccinated were attacked with small-pox, nor that those who were so attacked succumbed to it. He further stated that it was left to the choice of every individual to go in for vaccination or not. But if the law of compulsory vaccination was in force in a place and if some person objected to vaccination on religious grounds, every Indian should stand by him, for compulsion in one form might lead to compulsion in other directions also.[1]

The Sind Journal, 1-3-1916, as quoted in Bombay Secret Abstracts

141. SPEECH IN REPLY TO ADDRESS, KARACHI

February 29, 1916

In reply to the welcome address presented by the Citizens' Association, Karachi, on February 29, 1916, Mr. Gandhi spoke in Hindi to the following effect:

I have been travelling in various parts of India, and in the course of my travels, I have been struck with the fact that throughout India the hearts of the people are in a special degree drawn towards me. All brothers of Hindustan without distinction of creed or caste have been showing this attachment. But I feel convinced that this remarkable attachment to me is meant not for me but as a fitting tribute of admiration to all those noble brothers and sisters of ours in South Africa, who underwent such immense trouble and sacrifices including incarceration in jails for the service of the Motherland. It is undoubtedly this consideration which leads you to be so very kind to me. It was they who won the struggle and it was by reason of their unflinching determination to "do or die" that so much was achieved. Hence I take it that whatever tribute is paid to me, is in reality and in truth paid to them.

In the course of my tour in India, I have been particularly struck with one thing and that is the awakening of the Indian people. A new hope has filled the hearts of the people, hope that something is

[1]*The Bombay Chronicle*, 1-3-19l6, in its brief report had here: "He recommended passive resistance on the part of those having religious objection and said that the public should support those who were prepared for going to jail."

going to happen which will raise the Motherland to a higher status. But side by side with this spirit of hope, I also had amongst my country-men, awe not only of the Government but also of heads of castes and the priestly class. As a result of this, we are afraid to speak out what is in us. So long as this spirit remains, there will be, and there can be, no true progress. You know that at the last session of the Congress, a re-solution was passed about self-government. For the attainment of that ideal, you and I, all of us, must work and persevere. In pursuance of that resolution, the Committees of the Congress and the Moslem League will soon meet together and they will decide what they think proper. But the attainment of self-government depends not on their saying or doing anything but upon what you and I do. Here in Karachi, commerce is predominant and there are many big merchants. To them, I wish to address a few words. It is a misapprehension to think that there is no scope in commerce for serving the Mother-country. If they are inspired by the spirit of truth, merchants can be immensely useful tothe country. The salvation of our country, remember, is not in the hands of others but of ourselves, and more in the hands of merchants in some respects than the educated people; for I s trongly feel that so long as there is no swadeshism, there can be no self-government ("Hear, hear"), and for the spread of swadeshism Indian merchants are in a position to do a very great deal. The swadeshi wave passed through the country at one time. But I understand that the movement had collapsed largely because Indian merchants had palmed off foreign goods as swadeshi articles. By Indian merchants being honest and straightforward in their business, they could achieve a great deal for the regeneration and uplift of the country. Hence merchants should faithfully observe what Hindus call dharma and Mohammedans call *iman*[1] in their business transactions. Then shall India be uplifted. In South Africa, our merchants rendered valuable help in the struggle and yet because some of them weakened, the struggle was prolonged somewhat. It is the duty of the educated classes to mix freely with Indian merchants and the poor classes. Then will our journey to the common and cherished goal be less irksome. (Prolonged applause.)

Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi (4th Ed.), pp. 327-8

[1] Honesty

142. SPEECH AT KARACHI ON GOKHALE

February 29, 1916

Unveiling the portrait of Gokhale at the Khalihdina Hall, Karachi, on Tuesday the 29th February 1916, Mahatma Gandhi spoke as follows:

In Hyderabad, Sind, also, I was asked to unveil a portrait of Mr. Gokhale; and there I put to myself and to those present a question which I put to myself and to you now. That question is: What right have I to unveil the portrait of Mr. Gokhale and what right have you to join in the ceremony? Of course, to unveil a portrait or to join in it is nothing great or important in itself. But the question really involved in the ceremony is important, viz., are your hearts and is my heart in reality so much moved as to copy the glorious example of the great man? The function will have no real significance unless we follow in his footsteps. And if we do follow him, we shall be able to achieve a great deal. Of course, it is not possible for all of us to achieve what Mr. Gokhale did in the Imperial Legislative Council. But the way in which he served the Motherland, the whole-hearted devotion with which he did it day and night without ceasing all this it is in our power to do as the great one did. And I hope that when you leave this hall, you will bear in mind to follow him and the give expression to your regard for him. You know that the best achievement of Mr. Gokhale according to himself was the establishment of the Servants of India Society. This great institution he has left behind him; and it lies with us to support it and continue its noble work. It would be best if we could join the Society. But that will involve the question of our being fit for it. But if we are not in a position to join the Society, we can all do the next best thing, viz., render pecuniary aid and swell the funds of the Society.

Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi (4th Ed.*)*, p. 1013

143. SPEECH AT KARACHI[1]

February 29, 1916

I am very grateful to the friends from Gujarat for the honour they have done me today. Wherever I have gone, Gujaratis have welcomed me as they have done here. They are more my neighbours—though all the people in the country are my neighbours— and I wish therefore to be of special service to them. However, I must tour the whole of India and it would not be right for me, therefore, to stay in Gujarat all the time. I have observed that Gujaratis have spread out as far as Calcutta, to the Madras as well as the Bengal Presidency for purposes of business. Even in South Africa, the major part of the business community is from Gujarat. In Karachi, the Gujarati population is much larger than at any of these places, so much so that, though the Sindhis are in a majority here, Karachi being a part of Sind, at first sight it might appear that the Gujarati population in the city was larger than the Sindhi.

There are three communities in Gujarat—Gujarati Hindus, Gujarati Parsis and Gujarati Muslims, and all these three have spread over different parts of the country, most of them for business. It is not the right way for a business man merely to earn and lay by money and get rich anyhow by exploiting the poor. In that way, even the Pindaris used to get wealthy by robbing people. I see no difference between a man who cheats in business and one who slaps another and forces him to partwith his money. Business men should follow truth in their business and not bear hard on people through their operations. I don't mean to suggest that this is what you do in your business. Whenever you may have committed sins, you must have felt the fear of God as well and you must have done kindness, too, now and then. It should be the chief aim of a business man to study this virtue of kindness. Our education is no education if it only makes us physicians or lawyers. We should try to develop our business. One living example of this is provided by Sir Dorab[2] and Ratan Tata. Sir Dorab does not educate any of his sons for the profession of a physician or a lawyer. He will perhaps have quite a number of such physicians in his

[1] In reply to an address from the Gujarati Hindus of Karachi

[2] Sir Dorabji Jamshetji Tata (1850-1932), brother of Ratan Tata; elder son of Sir Jamshetji Nasarwanji Tata (1839-1904), industrial pioneer and philanthropist

employment. You should rather emulate the part he has played in the development of trade in this country. India has none to equal this man. Mr. Chamberlain of Birmingham was also a true business man and, though he is no more, his memory is still cherished in the business world. Business men may protest and say that they only know business and do not meddle with other things. They should not, however, take up any such attitude. They, too, should be in tune with the atmosphere around them. In fact, the very scriptures of Muslims, Hindus and Parsis enjoin them to serve the people while they carry on their business. He is no worthy business man who, in times of famine, raises the prices so high that the people simply break down. This kind of thing ruins both the people and the business men. The failure of the swadeshi movement is also to be attributed to the business men. Everyone blames it on the Bombay Presidency where the people, keen only on making money, took no interest in promoting the sale of swadeshi goods. Just as the Kshatriya's duty is not killing [but protecting], so also the business man's duty is not amassing wealth.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarat Mitra ane Gujarat Darpan, 12-3- 1916

144. SPEECH AT KARACHI RECEPTION[1]

March 2, 1916

Everyone should receive education through the mother tongue, giving to a foreign language the place merely of an optional subject. No other language can ever influence our life as powerfully as the mother tongue can.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 12-3-1916

145. INTERVIEW TO PRESS AT KARACHI

March 2, 1916

In the course of my tour, I have observed that there is more of public life in Poona [than anywhere else]. True, public life in Madras is quite on a large scale but this is due to the much greater student population there. In Poona, on the other hand, I saw that there were

[1] By Karachi Bandhu Mandal

men who could identify themselves with the common people. It does not seem to be so in Madras. In the whole of India, it is in Poona that we come across persons from among whom a large number may emerge one day as leaders of the masses. In Bombay, things are so. Public life there depends on only one or two gentlemen. It is the charge of outsiders against Sind that its people are apathetic. I don't think so. There is as much public spirit in this province as in any other. I think the public spirit in Sind will excel that of Bombay.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 11-3-1916; also *Gujarat Mitra ane Gujarat Darpan*, 12-3-1916

146. SPEECH AT RECEPTION AT BADIN, SIND

March 3, 1916

In the course of his reply, Mr. Gandhi quoted Sir Sayed Ahmed to the effect that India must see with both eyes, that is to say, both through the Mohammedan eye and the Hindu eye, otherwise she was partly blind.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1916, pp. 148-50

147. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M.K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
March 11, 1916

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have just come here to revive my breath and prepare for going to Hardwar. I shall be travelling yet for a while. I cannot send you the things you want as both Maganbhai and Manilal are away on business. There is no one else who knows anything about the things that are put away.

My life here is curious. I feel like a stranger in the midst of so many who think they know me. There is kinship only to a certain extent. Everything I say pleases often, sometimes wounds, rarely convinces and still more rarely is conviction followed by action. All this you will see some day when peace takes the place of this seeming-never-to-be-ending war. But I am quite happy in my aloofness. I feel

that I am right. It is this inner happiness which I would like you to have. And your present position is just the experience that should give you the happiness I have described. You have leisure for introspection and no worry save what you will give yourself. 'Man does not live by bread alone.' Animal enjoyment is the least part of one's life. But we have made it the most important of all indeed in some cases it has become the only important part of life. This ought to be changed. Each one of us can do it in our own case. Will you not use your opportunity?

Ramdas is now better. He is not yet sufficiently acclimatized. That accounts for his indifferent health. He is, however, gaining ground and is likely to be all right in a short time. Fakiri is still far from well. He does cause anxiety. He is unable to restrain his palate.

With love,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

148. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Saturday [*March 11, 1916*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Herewith a letter[2] received here. Enclosed with it was an advertisement, which I need not send on. I shall leave on the 15th instead of on the 14th. I am thinking of taking along both Devdas and Prabhudas. Ramdas will of course be there.

You must put your heart in Tamil and get through with it. Shivram has left and there is no one to attend to Tamil now. I think, therefore, that the thing can be done only when one of us gets trained up. At present, I can only think of you. I have it in my mind to send others also to learn Tamil. It seems that Anna will not come at all.

Soyabeans are grown in India. I saw the grain in the farms in Sind. They sell there whatever seed we want.

[1] Gandhiji was in Sind from February 26, l916 and in Karachi on March 2, 1916. He reached Hardwar on the 14th accompanied by Ramdas, Devdas and Prabhudas, Chhaganlal Gandhi's son. The letter seems to have been written a little before that date.

[2] Not available

Is Jamnadas quite all right now? Does he, too, go ahead with Tamil? Call on the Reverends Simon and Lazarus. I am sure you will find among the Christians someone who will be ready to teach. If you have gone far enough, make it a practice to read a newspaper. Krishnasami, it seems, lives there. He is penitent, indeed. See if you can get any help from him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5693. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

149. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI H. PATEL

GURUKUL,

Friday [*March 17, 1916*][1]

DEAR MAGANBHAI,

I cannot forget Fakiri. We have a lot to learn from his death. I shall write about it when I have the leisure. I shall definitely be here till the 20th, and maybe till the 21st. The subsequent programme has not yet been fixed.

Manilal will have gone to Ajmer. If not, he should go at once.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I wish you would make up your mind and come to a decision.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 11002. Courtesy: Suryakant C. Patel

150. SPEECH AT CONFERENCE FOR ELEVATION OF UNTOUCHABLES, GURUKUL

March 18, 1916

Even if Nanak Chand had not told us that the *gotras* of the Untouchables are the same as those of other Rajputs, even then we would not consider them untouchables. For it is our duty to love all.

[1] Gandhiji had stayed at Gurukul Kangri from March 14 to 20, 1916. Friday during this period fell on March 17.

Sir Sankaran Nair told me we had lost India through inequity to the Untouchables. I believe it so. We shall realize it if someone else gave us the same disgraceful treatment. No, we have really sinned grievously. For the sake of our souls, our own good, must we repent and be restored. We must undergo a *prayaschit*. And what is the *prayaschit*? What is the practical solution? I can tell you that in a minute. First, we must clearly realize that we have to attain not their salvation but ours by treating them as equals, by admitting them to our schools, etc. We only copy the missionaries. To those responsible for the active working out of the question, I would suggest simply to think and act more seriously and sincerely and find out what ought to be done.

Vedic Magazine, April-May, 1916

151. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI H. PATEL

Thursday, Phagan 15 [*March 19, 1916*][1]

BHAISHRI MAGANBHAI,

I have your letter. You are worked up. You have done well in expressing to me what you feel deeply. We have to act only according to our capacity. If therefore you cannot follow the pattern of life at the Ashram, it is only proper that you should leave.

It is futile to think about south Africa. You are physically not fit for a long journey. Then, Mr. Polak is not certain about himself. He is in an awkward situation. I am sure you can do nothing there. You cannot join the Servants of India Society with a view to earning money. There is only one way of earning money, which everyone else follows. In your case your health is a hindrance. My opinion is that unless you had resorted to stealing you could not have earned more money openly than you have been able to earn through the Satyagraha Movement. It cannot be said that your economic condition would have been better if you had not joined the struggle. Hence, if you cannot continue in the Ashram with a firm mind, you must explain the situation to your father. You must stay at home and agree to whatever solution your father suggests. You must follow his wishes and do as he says, whatever the gain may be. For your trouble,

[1] From the reference to Fakiri's death it would appear that this letter was written in 1916; *vide* the preceding item. *Phagan 15* fell in this year on March 19.

you should do as he says. In the end even doing this will take you forward. Even in this kind of self-indulgence there is spiritual sublimity.

I feel much sympathy for you. It is as difficult for you to leave the Ashram as it is to continue there. Nobody else is in a situation like yours. Think maturely. I am abandoning the idea going to the Punjab and other places. I hope to reach there by Saturday evening or latest by Sunday.

We shall talk when we meet about what I have been feeling about Fakiri's death.

I can understand that your wife cannot work. She has come this time with an ulterior motive. There really is a snare laid for you. May God help you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 11008. Courtesy: Suryakant C. Patel

152. SPEECH AT PRIZE DISTRIBUTION, GURUKUL[1]

March 20, 1916

These village schools have, I find, no common educational standard. Some are doing as good work as the schools for the rich but some impart very poor education. To be fair to the Untouchables, one must send one's own children to such schools for depressed classes and make sure that the educational standard is not allowed to fall low. But one thing more. Let not the education be such as to transform these village workers into *khansamas*, dirty hands, petty sub-clerks in unhealthy towns. Let the education enable them to follow the occupations of their fathers, to follow them more scientifically, to follow them with greater skill. Let the schools create an attachment for village life, for village crafts, for open air independence and for service among our own.

Vedic Magazine, April-May, 1916

[1] This is the available part of the speech.

153. SPEECH AT GURUKUL ANNIVERSARY

March 20, 1916

The following is the text of Mr. Gandhi's speech at the anniversary of the Gurukul, as written out by himself:

I propose to reproduce only as much of it as in my opinion is worth placing on record with additions where they may be found necessary. The speech, it may be observed, was delivered in Hindi. After thanking Mahatmaji Munshi Ram for his great kindness to my boys to whom he gave shelter on two occasions and acted as father to them and after stating that the time for action had arrived rather than for speeches, I proceeded:

I owe a debt of gratitude to the Arya Samaj. I have often derived inspiration from its activity. I have noticed among the members of the Samaj much self-sacrifice. During my travels in India, I came across many Arya Samajists who were doing excellent work for the country. I am therefore grateful to Mahatmaji, that I am enabled to be in your midst. At the same time, it is but fair to state that I am frankly a Sanatanist. For me Hinduism is all-sufficing. Every variety of belief finds protection under its ample fold. And though the Arya Samajists and the Sikhs and the Brahmo Samajists may choose to be classed differently from the Hindus, I have no doubt that at no distant future they will be all merged in Hinduism and find in it their fullness. Hinduism, like every other human institution, has its drawbacks and its defects. Here is ample scope for any worker to strive for reform, but there is little cause for secession.

SPIRIT OF FEARLESSNESS

Throughout my travels, I have been asked about the immediate need for India. And, perhaps, I would not do better than repeat this afternoon the answer I have given elsewhere. In general terms, a proper religious spirit is the greatest and most immediate need. But I know that this is too general an answer to satisfy anybody. And it is an answer true for all time. What, therefore, I desire to say is, that owing to the religious spirit being dormant in us, we are living in a state of perpetual fear. We fear the temporal as well as the spiritual authority. We dare not speak out our minds before our priests and our pandits. We stand in awe of the temporal power. I am sure that in so doing we do a disservice to them and us. Neither the spiritual teachers nor our

political governors could possibly desire that we should hide the truth from them. Lord Wellington, speaking to a Bombay audience, has been saying recently that he had observed that we hesitated to say 'No' when we really meant it and advised his audience to cultivate a fearless spirit. Of course, fearlessness should never mean want of due respect or regard for the feelings of others. In my humble opinion, fearlessness is the first thing indispensable before we could achieve anything permanent and real. This quality is unattainable without religious consciousness. Let us fear God and we shall cease to fear man. If we grasp the fact that there is a divinity within us which witnesses everything we think or do and which protects us and guides us along the true path, it is clear that we shall cease to have any other fear on the face I if the earth, save the fear of God. Loyalty to the Governor of governors supersedes all other loyalty and gives an intelligent basis to the latter.

MEANING OF SWADESHI

And when we have sufficiently cultivated this spirit of fearlessness, we shall see that there is no salvation for us without true swadeshi, not the swadeshi which can be conveniently put off. Swadeshi for me has a deeper meaning. I would like us to apply it in our religious, political and economic life. It is not, therefore, merely confined to wearing on occasion swadeshi cloth. That we have to do for all time, not out of a spirit of jealousy or revenge, but because it is a duty we owe to our dear country. We commit a breach of the swadeshi spirit certainly if we wear foreign-made cloth, but we do so also if we adopt the foreign cut. Surely, the style of our dress has some correspondence with our environment. In elegance and tastefulness, it is immeasurably superior to the trousers and the jacket. An Indian, wearing a shirt flowing over his pyjamas with a waist-coat on it without a necktie and its flaps hanging loose behind, is not a very graceful spectacle. Swadeshi in religion teaches one to measure the glorious past and re-enact it in the present generation. The pandemonium that is going on in Europe shows that modern civilization represents forces of evil and darkness, whereas the ancient, i. e., Indian, civilization represents in its essence the divine force. Modern civilization is chiefly materialistic, as ours is chiefly spiritual. Modern civilization occupies self in the investigation of the laws of matter, and employs human ingenuity in inventing of discovering means of production and weapons of destruction; ours is chiefly

occupied in exploring spiritual laws. Our shastras lay down unequivocally that a proper observance of truth, chastity, scrupulous regard for all life, abstention from coveting others' possessions and refusal to hoard anything but what is necessary for our daily wants is indispensable for a right life; that without it a knowledge of the divine element is an impossibility. Our civilization tells us with daring certainty that a proper and perfect cultivation of the quality of ahimsa which, in its active form means purest love and pity, brings the whole world to our feet. The author of this discovery gives a wealth of illustration which carries conviction with it.

THE DOCTRINE OF AHIMSA

Examine its result in the political life. There is no gift so valued by our shastras as the gift of life. Consider what our relations would be with our rulers if we gave absolute security of life to them. If they could but feel that, no matter what we might feel about their acts, we would hold their bodies as sacred as our own, there would immediately spring up an atmosphere of mutual trust, and there would be such frankness on either side as to pave the way for an honourable and just solution of many problems that worry us today. It should be remembered that in practising ahimsa, there need not be any reciprocation, though, as a matter of fact, in its final stages, it commands reciprocation. Many of us believe, and I am one of them, that through our civilization we have a message to deliver to the world. I render my loyalty to the British Government quite selfishly. I would like to use the British race for transmitting this mighty message of ahimsa to the whole world. But that can only be done when we have conquered our so-called conquerors; and you, my Arya Samaj friends, are perhaps specially elected for this mission. You claim to examine our scriptures critically; you take nothing for granted and you claim not to fear to reduce your belief to practice. I do not think that there is any room for trifling with or limiting the doctrine of ahimsa. You dare, then, to reduce it to practice regardless of immediate consequences which would certainly test the strength of your convictions. You would not only produce salvation for India, but you would render the noblest service that a man can render to humanity—a service moreover, which you would rightly assert the great Swami[1] was born for. This swadeshi is to be considered as a very active force to be ceaselessly employed with an ever-increasing

[1] Dayanand Saraswati

vigilance, searching self-examination. It is not meant for the lazy, but it is essentially meant for them who would gladly lay down their lives for the sake of truth. It is possible to dilate upon several other phases of swadeshi, but I think I have said enough to enable you to understand what I mean. I only hope that you, who represent a school of reformers in India, will not reject what 1 have said without thorough examination. And, if my word has commended itself to you, your past record entitles me to expect you to enforce in your own lives the things of eternity about which I have ventured to speak to you this afternoon, and cover the whole of India with your activity.

WORK OF THE ARYA SAMAJ

In concluding my report of the above speech, I would like to state what I did not in speaking to that great audience and it is this. I have now twice visited the Gurukul. In spite of some vital difference with my brethren of the Arya Samaj, I have a sneaking regard for them, and it, and perhaps the best result of the activity of the Arya Samaj is to be seen in the establishment and the conduct of the Gurukul. Though it depends for its vitality entirely upon the inspiring presence of Mahatmaji Munshi Ram, it is truly a national and self-governing and self-governed institution. It is totally independent of Government aid or patronage. Its war chest is filled not out of monies received from the privileged few, but from the poor many who make it a point of honour from year to year to make a pilgrimage to Kangri and willingly give their mite for maintaining this National College. Here at every anniversary a huge crowd gathers and the manner in which it is handled, housed and fed evinces no mean power of organisation. But the most wonderful thing about it all is that the crowd consisting of about the thousand men, women and children is managed without the assistance of a single policeman and without any fuss or semblance of force, the only force that subsists between the crowd and the managers of the institution is that of love and mutual esteem. Fourteen years are nothing in the life of a big institution like this. What the collegiates who have been just turned out during the last two or three years will be able to show, remains to be seen. The public will not and cannot judge men or institutions except through the results that they show. It makes no allowance for failures, it is a most exacting judge. The final appeal of the Gurukul as of all popular institutions must be to this judge. Great responsibility therefore rests upon the shoulders of the students who have been discharged from

the college and who have entered upon the thorny path of life. Let them beware. Meanwhile hose who are well-wishers of this great experiment may derive satisfaction from the fact that we have it as an indisputable rule of life, that as the tree is, so will the fruit be. The tree looks lovely enough. He who waters it is a noble soul. Why worry about what the fruit is likely to be?

INDUSTRIAL TRAINING

As a lover of the Gurukul, I may be permitted to offer one or two suggestions to the Committee and the parents. The Gurukul boys need a thorough industrial training if they are to become self-reliant and self-supporting. It seems to me that in our country in which 85 per cent of the population is agricultural and perhaps 10 per cent occupied in supplying the wants of the peasantry, it must be part of the training of every youth that he has a fair practical knowledge of agriculture and hand-weaving. He will lose nothing if he knows a proper use of tools, can saw a piece of board straight and build a wall that will not come down through a faulty handling of the plumber's line. A boy who is thus equipped will never feel helpless in battling with the world and never be in want of employment. A knowledge of the laws of hygiene and sanitation as well as the art of rearing children should also form a necessary part of [the training of] the Gurukul lads. The sanitary arrangements at the fair left much to be desired. The plague of flies told its own tale. These irrepressible sanitary inspectors incessantly warned us that in point of sanitation all was not well with us. They plainly suggested that the remains of our food and excreta needed to be properly buried. It seemed to me to be such a pity that a golden opportunity was being missed of giving to the annual visitors practical lessons on sanitation. But the work must begin with the boys. Then the management would have at the annual gathering three hundred practical sanitary teachers. Last but not least, let the parents and the Committee not spoil their lads by making them ape European dress or modern luxuries. These will hinder them in their afterlife and are antagonistic to *brahmacharya*. They have enough to fight against in the evil inclinations common to us all. Let us not make their fight more difficult by adding to their temptations.

Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi *(4th Ed.),* pp. 329-35

154. SPEECH AT HARDWAR

March 23, 1916

The Dayanand Anglo-Vedic School boys were taken to the Arya Samaj hall in the evening and Mr. Gandhi addressed them for a short time only as he was feeling unwell.

He exhorted the audience to have the courage of their convictions, and in copying or imitating those who directed or ruled, not to be guided by outward show, such as styles, dress, or by customs, such as meat-eating. He exhorted them to be true to themselves and then they would be true to India.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1916, pp. 243-4

155. LETTER TO J. B. PETIT

March 30, 1916

DEAR MR. PETIT,

I have your letter covering check for Rs. 500 on a/c of passive resistance expenses for which I thank you.

I enclose herewith statement required by you. It is not [the] final list. For instance, the widows sometimes require travelling expenses. These are allowed when necessary. Such expenses were incurred only two months ago.

Imam Saheb has just lost his father and he was paid Rs. 300. He has not only lost all he had but he has incurred much odium from his erstwhile friends. The result is that he has lost the trade he used to carry on. He is now here. Until he is suited it may be necessary to give him help from time to time.

Maganlal Gandhi and his brothers are my nephews. They are training under me for national service. One of the brothers[1] who is free is earning but not enough to bear the whole burden of supporting the parents.

Maganbhai Patel's is a similar case. Moreover, he is a chronic sickbed. Then there is the case of Sorabji Adajania. He holds from a friend a scholarship. But owing to unforeseen circumstances he may need additional help up to say [Rs.] 500.

[1] Narandas

The above exhausts the list of Passive Resisters for whom provision may have to be made at this end. What the requirements will be in South Africa I shall ascertain and let you know as soon as I receive the estimate.

I need hardly say that the information I am giving you is confidential. It relates to some public-spirited men who are accepting support after pressure from me. The rule has been never to disclose the names of those who have been receiving maintenance money. The only person apart from the few intimate co-workers in S.A. who knew anything about the support given was Mr. Gokhale. I have no objection to the Committee having the information but beyond them it ought not to march.

Yours sincerely,

	Age	Rs.
Ayamal	35	15 for life
Arulmayee	35	10 for life
Naransamy	14	15 " 10 [yrs.]
Puroh	12	15 "
Bala 10	15 "	
Shivpujan	20	15 "
Sibparsad	5	15 " 15 yrs.
Maganbhai	28	15 " 5 yrs.
Revashankar	18	15 " 10 yrs.
Chhotam	7	15 " 15 [yrs.]
Maganlal	25	
Jamnadas	20	15 " 5 [yrs.]
Imamsaheb	40	
Sorabji	35	

From the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 6306

156. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M.K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
April 1 [*1916*][1]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am at last in Ahmedabad, for some weeks at any rate.Your things are now being collected. The next mail you should receive them. I am trying to manufacture biscuits without an oven. You will like them.

I never previous to the letter under reply received any letter regarding your things.

I never received the wooden pillow you have referred to in several letters of yours.

During the week I resolved not to admit to the Ashram for one year anyone either young or old. Newcomers have taxed me too much and they have disturbed the ever tenor of the life of the Ashram. I know you would have, had you been here, long ago pushed me to this decision. However, I have come to it after bitter experience.

We are now exactly 30, young and old. Of these Maganlal and Jamnadas are in Madras training in Tamil and hand-weaving. Jamnadas's wife is also learning hand-weaving.

The Pariah member's wife having proved untrustworthy has left the Ashram.

During the travels just completed, I went to a place called Dehradun. It is at the base of the Himalayas. You will love the place. The air is bracing and there are so many walks to the Himalayan hills. Of course I was there only for a day but was able to know much about the place. Ramdas, Prabhudas and Devdas were with me.

Have I told you that I have just begun to take cooked food? The price of fruitarian food is prohibitive here and one cannot get even dates and monkey-nuts at certain places for love or money. This is a sad discovery. It tells its own tale. It is there however and one has to put up with it. This is the 6th day of cooked food. I take rice and *dholl*, a vegetable and a lemon. This makes 4 articles. Today I am

[1] From the contents

going to add oil. I have felt extremely weak during the six days and not half as satisfied as with the fruitarian meal. I shall see what the addition of oil does for me. Later on I shall take wheat or some other corn.

Chhaganlal is due here about the middle of the month. West and Pragji are in charge at Phoenix.

I have written to Polak about you. Every one of our company is just now involved in his own special troubles. This war has naturally disturbed individuals in all parts of the world.

Ramdas is getting stronger. Devdas has lost in health. He thinks too much. He has developed a tremendous sense of responsibility. And he has become such a fine student. I have been trying to wean him from his studies. I do not know how far I shall succeed.Budri is due here today. Sivpujan too has become a regular student but not so accurate as Devdas.

Fakiri's death[1] was a glorious death. I have seen few dying such a peaceful death. He was conscious to the last moment. He was screaming with pain. I said, "Fakiri, take the name of God". He began to utter the sacred syllable and went off to sleep from which he never awoke. The cremation ceremony was the simplest. We gave information to nobody. We fasted for half the day. We chanted hymns before the body was taken to the crematorium.

With love to you from us all,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] On March 12, 1916

157. APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP, GUJARAT VERNACULAR SOCIETY[1]

[AHMEDABAD,
April 14, I916][2]

TO

THE HONORARY SECRETARY

GUJARAT VERNACULAR SOCIETY

AHMEDABAD

SIR,

As I desire to be enrolled a life-member of the Gujarat Vernacular Society, I hope my name will be placed before the Committee and I shall be so enrolled.

I send herewith a sum of Rs. 25/- (rupees twenty-five only) as fee for life-membership, which please acknowledge. Name: Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi

Signature: Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi

Age: 46 years

Education: Passed qualifying examination for enrolment as barrister

Address: (Permanent) Satyagraha Ashram

(Present) Near Kochrab

Ahmedabad

Being a teacher living on my labour, I think I may count as one with a pay of less than thirty rupees a month. Accordingly, I send Rs. 25/-[3]

[From Gujarati]

Buddhi Prakash, January-March, 1948

[1] The application was made on a printed form.

[2] The sum of Rs. 25 accompanying the application is found credited to the Deposits Account in the Society's books under this date. The deposit was refunded on April 26 after the Managing Committee had, by a special resolution passed at a meeting held on the 19th, nominated Gandhiji an honorary life member.

[3] A footnote to the printed form says that women and teachers with pay of less than thirty rupees a month will be enrolled life-members on payment of Rs. 25. The ordinary subscription for life-membership was Rs. 50.

158. LETTER TO MOHAMMED ALI

AHMEDABAD,
April 14, 1916

DEAR MR. MOHAMMED ALI[1],

I have a reply from the Commissioner saying that under instructions from the Government of India my application for permissionto see you must be rejected. The authorities have evidently failed to appreciate my motive in wanting to see you. The only thing I as a passive resister can do in circumstances such as these is to bow to the decision of the Government of India.

I do hope your disease is now under control.

With regards to you all,

Your sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: Mohammed Ali Papers: MOH/L2397-8. Courtesy: Jamia Millia Islamia Library

159. SPEECH AT CONDOLENCE MEETING, AHMEDABAD[2]

April 16, 1916

Mr. Patil was one of the ornaments of Ahmedabad. If Ahmedabad had appreciated this, the people would have filled this hall to crowding. When I received the invitation to settle in Ahmedabad, leaving Bombay, one of my friends assured me that, Mr. Patil being one of the signatories to the invitation, it was safe to accept it. This showed that Mr. Patil was true to his word and modest as well. Next, as for the premature death of Mr. Patil, I would suggest that we should inquire[3] why political leaders die at an early age. In my opinion, such deaths are due to their neglecting their health.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 23-4-1916

[1] The addressee, editor of *The Comrade,* had been interned in October, 1914, along with his brother, Shaukat Ali, for publishing an article entitled "Evacuate Egypt".

[2] On the death of Govindrao Appaji Patil, a lawyer and social worker

[3] *Vide* the following item.

160. LETTER TO "PRAJABANDHU"[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
AHMEDABAD,
Chaitra Vad 2, Thursday, April 20, 1916

THE EDITOR,
PRAJABANDHU
SIR,

I write this hoping that you will permit me to place before your readers some of the many reflections which have occurred to me, and still occur, by reason of Bhai Govindrao Appaji Patil's death at a premature age.

I have purposely used the adjective 'premature' to denote the age of the deceased. Any age below 50 should be considered premature, and Bhai Govindrao died before he was 50. It is a matter of no small grief that the untimely death of our first leaders deprives us of the benefit of their ripest years. It seems we suffer from a kindof vanity. We and our leaders seem to believe that there is some virtue in remaining more or less ailing and, accordingly, if the leaders leave us in their premature age, we see an especial virtue in the fact. I think our leaders, and others too, but particularly our leaders, should consider it a sin to be taken ill or to remain ill, even if illness should come to them while serving the public. If we go over all such cases among the leaders, right from the late Justice Telang[2] down to Bhai Govindrao we shall find that the illness of many of them was such as could have been prevented. It is the duty of every one of us, especially of our leaders, to know how to maintain sound health.

I know from experience that we ourselves, in many cases, sow the seeds of premature death in our very childhood and, in some measure, our parents do this for us out of their ignorance and inordinate affection. We generally depart from physical *brahma-charya*, through marriage, or even otherwise, right in our childhood. We choose many articles of food merely for their taste or only for the purpose of putting on fat. The diet of those who have to use mental

[1] Published under the caption, "Why Do We Die Prematurely?"

[2] Of the Bombay High Court, one of the founders of the Indian National Congress

energy and who lead a sedentary life should differ in its composition from that of others. As a matter of fact, the diet of such people is seldom chosen in the light of this consideration. I believe that, in a climate like that of Ahmedabad, excessive use of ghee is sure to damage the health of those who work only with the brain. They should use pulses in very small quantities. Those who have to do physical labour cannot do without a liberal use of pulses, but to others who do little physical work, too much of pulses will be like poison. Almost all students complain of constipation, the reason being that they have in their diet an excessive quantity of spices, pulses and such other things, which are bound to lead to constipation. They then damage their stomach by taking castor oil, Epsom salt or fruit salt, and ultimately fall a prey to death. Our normal diet does not contain the vitamins which fresh fruits provide. If we regularly ate fresh fruits in place of the usual diet, on a particular day of the week, constipation would disappear and our blood would become pure. I do not suggest that a major change should be introduced in our diet at once. I realize that our people would not agree to do so. But they can, in order to ensure good health, reduce the quantity of spices, make a cautious use of pulses and begin taking fruits, etc. It cannot be arguedthat this will require any very strenuous efforts. The habit of taking tea or cocoa is really very dangerous. I think those who insist on having tea would do well to study what the people of the tea drinking countries do and how they prepare tea. But we have made no such study. I do not know if people elsewhere consume all the tannin in tea, as we do here. The Chinese do not allow tea leaves to remain in boiling water for more than half a minute; they strain the tea soon after adding the leaves. The colour of the mixture would show that very little tannin had been absorbed in the water. It should not be allowed to become more yellow than blades of hay, and never reddish in any case. This is the kind of tea which millions of Chinese drink. They never use milk in their tea. They do not know what it is to milk cows. They rarely use sugar in their tea. If at all tea can be prepared so as to cause no harm, this is the way. Here is what a man, highly experienced and famous, Doctor Cantlie by name, has to say. He believes that the Chinese take tea because it is the easiest way of drinking pure water. Below the boiling point, water cannot absorb the colour of tea, and so they take tea in place of simple water; that is, they use water which has been tested [for its temperature].

We are as careless about exercise as about diet. To stroll one or

two miles at a leisurely pace is no exercise. To hit a billiard ball one or two hundred times with a cue is also no exercise. When exercise is taken in this manner in a room with foul-smelling air, the effect is bound to be harmful. In our predicament, when no other form of exercise is convenient, walking is the best exercise. But exercise is worth the name only if one can walk six miles at a stretch in the morning and again in the evening. The walking should be done briskly, at a speed of four miles an hour. Thoreau used to walk for eight hours daily when he wrote his best book. Tolstoy testifies to the fact that while writing his best books he never used to sit at his desk before he had had plenty of exercise. He always used to work on a farm. [Some people say:] 'We cannot spare a minute from the lients' work or from public work, and take exercise." Such talk is s heer vanity. It would seem to proceed from a belief that but for us public work would go to the dogs. The Grand Old Man of India, Dadabhai[1], has been observing all the general rules of hygiene and has never departed from his routine of exercise, etc. Hence, we see him alive to this day, and it would be in no way surprising if this *rishi* were to live a hundred years like those of old times. We violate one of the precepts of the *Gita* and suffer dire consequences. It says that a person who eats without performing *yajna* is a thief;[2] the true meaning of *yajna* here is physical labour on a farm. If we would make it a rule to work hard, to work, that is, with a shovel for four hours every day in a field, for the purpose of digesting our food, and would observe other rules [of hygiene], premature deaths might be far fewer among us.

When we begin to feel ashamed of falling ill, we shall undoubtedly acquire good health. In my humble opinion it is the person, whether man or woman, that has discovered, by experiments, the rules to be followed in order to preserve his or her health even while engaged in public work, who can render any great service to the country.

Yours

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 23-4-1916

[1] Naoroji

[2] *Vide Bhagvad Gita*, III. 12.

161. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M. K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,

April 22 [*1916*][1]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

If you were here, you would go out into the jungle and like Job give way to crying bitterly. Such is the misery we are passing through just now. Naransamy still obstinately clings to his fever, the after-effect of smallpox. Chhotam is down with it and so are Bala and Parthasarathy. Maganlal is sick, Vrajlal (one of the strongest workers) is sick. Two more are on the sick-bed and I have an attack of pleurisy which may develop heaven knows to what extent. The only sound ones are Maganbhai, Manilal, Jamnadas and Mrs. Gandhi. And they may collapse any day. Our trust is in God. He has a right to try us. May we have the strength to go through the fire. And let our sorrows bring you some comfort. Yours are of a different type and avoidable. Do then rise from them and learn that those who are near and dear to you are also suffering in their own way. There is no escape from it in this wide, wide world.

The parcel containing biscuits and sticks is leaving today. I shall await your criticism.

With love,

Yours ever,

OLD FRIEND

[PS.]

Some home-made cloth is being packed in your parcel containing biscuits. Did I ever tell you that I never got the wooden pillow you mentioned?

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] From the contents

162. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M. K.GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,

April 27 [*1916*][1]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Sickness is still there. Thambi has written recalling his other boys. I have told him that if such is his final decision I shall certainly send them.

Round the dark cloud the silver lining just now is made by Mrs. Gandhi, Ramdas and Maganlal. Mrs. Gandhi has just now risen to her fullest height. She keeps well and uses herself for the Ashram. Maganlal is engaged in developing the weaving industry. Ramdas makes an excellent uncomplaining nurse. Manilal is, of course, all right. But I have specially singled out the three as outstanding personalities just now. At the time of writing my pleurisy is still a cause of care if not also of anxiety.

You ask why I have taken up [the] 5 articles vow. Well, Hardwar is a holy place. The Fair I attended occurs only every 13 years. I felt that I ought to do something. Hence the vow. I have now been on cooked food for over a fortnight. I do not know that I feel appreciably the worse for it. Some say in appearance I have improved. Cooked food had not a fair chance yet. I have taken very little oil. In fact mostly I avoid oil altogether. The cost is only 1 d. The difference in cost is tremendous. These are the places I have visited. It is a very rough map[2] but perhaps you will follow:

I have marked only those I can recall at present.

Surely you had a right to ask for biscuits and they are gone. I hope you will receive them in good order. With them has been packed a piece of towel made at the Ashram. A bundle of sticks too has left and so [has] a box containing your clothes. I have asked Maganbhai

[1] From the contents

[2] Reproduced on an art-sheet facing p. 22

to send you a full list.

And now good-bye,

With love,

Yours ever,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

163. LETTER TO GANGADHARRAO DESHPANDE[1]

[Before *April 29, 1916*][2]

Nothing but death can prevent me from going to Belgaum and attending the Conference.[3]

Majhi Jivan Katha

164. SPEECH AT BELGAUM

April 30, 1916

A large gathering of people (about 1,000) assembled in Khotibis Wada in Raviwar Peth, Belgaum, on the night of the 30th of April, to hear Mr. M. K. Gandhi speak on the subject of "The Depressed Classes". The audience was mainly composed of Lingayats and "Untouchables". R. S. Shivmurti Swami Kanabargi presided. . . .

Mr. Gandhi then rose and said that as he was ill, he would only speak to them for a minute. He deprecated their opposition to the holding of the Provincial Conference in Belgaum. The principal object for the holding of the Conference was to effect a reconciliation between the two political parties.[4] Home Rule must be granted to India and all classes should present a united front in demanding it. If Home Rule should be granted, no particular class would dominate, otherwise it would not be Home Rule. He for one would oppose any party or class that wanted to set itself above the others. He made no distinction between the higher and the lower classes and did not look with disdain upon a man simply because he was a sweeper or a barber, nor did

[1] A political worker of Karnatak, popularly known as "Lion of Karnatak

[2] Gandhiji arrived in Belgaum on April 29 to attend the Bombay Provincial Conference.

[3] Gandhiji had accepted the invitation to attend the Conference but later on there were rumours that he might not attend it. On an enquiry from the addressee, Gandhiji wrote this reply.

[4] *Vide* the following item.

he look up to anyone merely because he was a Brahmin. His religion taught him to consider all men alike, without distinction of class or creed. Home Rule would not be granted so long as there were differences between them. He promised to do all in his power to remove their disabilities.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1916, p. 330

165. SPEECH AT BOMBAY PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE AT BELGAUM[1]

May 1, 1916

Mr. Gandhi spoke as follows in Hindustani.... He was an outsider in the sense that he was not a member of the nationalist party or for that matter of any party. He had no mental desire for listening to the speeches or to his own voice but he had felt it his duty as an aspirant for national service to study all the institutions he could and hence it was that he found himself at the Belgaum Conference. He was desirous of being present there as he was anxious to see the inauguration of an era of peace between the two great parties which, he was assured, would take place at Belgaum. It was a matter to him, therefore, of great pleasure that the foundation for unity was being laid at the Conference. He heartily supported the resolution[2] moved by Mr. Tilak. He was sure he was not expected to endorse every word of the resolution on the report that was adopted. It should be enough that he found himself in agreement with the main draft of the resolution. Had the wording of the resolution been in his own hand, he would probably have omitted some expressions. Mr. Tilak's speech left nothing to be desired and he if worked as he was sure he would, and the nationalist party as a whole also worked truly in the spirit of the resolution and Mr.

[1] This Conference, held from 29th April to 1st May, was attended by leading Nationalists from Bombay, C.P. and Berar and was held after the Poona meeting of January 16, 1916, which had postponed settlement of the question of limitation on the number of delegates from political bodies of two years' standing which had received automatic affiliation after the amendment of the Congress constitution in 1915.

[2] Tilak's resolution, carried unanimously, read as follows:

"That this conference adopts the reports of Messrs Belvi, Baptista and Tilak, and as in the interest of our Motherland under the present circumstances it is desirable to unite, resolves to accept, the constitution of the Congress as amended at its last sessions, though the amendment is highly unsatisfactory, and appoints a Committee composed of the following gentlemen, to do further work from within: G. S. Khaparde, J. Baptista, D. V. Belvi, B. G. Tilak and N. C. Kelkar (Secretary)." *Vide Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India* (Bombay Government),"Letter to F.S. Taleyarkhan", 27-3-1897.

Tilak's remarks, he was sure that the coming union would be a great blessing to the motherland. It was for that reason that he found himself in disagreement with Mr. Baptista, who seemed to be so much in tune with the pleaders. If they approached the question in the pleaders' spirit they would be constantly picking holes. What was needed was to approach the national question as common men. They would then overlook the faults and defects in their erstwhile opponents but would ever seek points of agreement and contact. Indeed if the party returned to the Congress fold with an absolutely honest and selfless spirit, ever thinking of the country and its cause and never thinking of party or personal gain, God would be with them and with God with them the nation could then [go] forward in the face of the world's opposition.

The Bengalee, 3-5-1916

166. LETTER TO STUDENTS OF BHAVNAGAR JAIN BOARDING HOUSE[1]

AHMEDABAD,

Vaishakh Sud 11 [*May 13, 1916*][2]

I am sending some wheat-powder to be taken in place of tea. How it may be prepared is explained in my book on Health.[3] It has been only recently published by the Sastun Sahitya.[4] Trusting that you will consult it, I do not say anything about the matter here.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the original postcard in Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5703. Courtesy: Pramod Virchand Shah

[1] Sent in reply to Virchand Shah's enquiry as to what can be taken as a substitute for tea

[2] From the postmark

[3] *Vide* "General Knoowledge about Health [-x]", 8-3-1913

[4] Sastun Sahityavardhak Karayalaya, Ahemedabad, founded by Bhikshu Akhandanand to publish low-priced, good-quality books.

167. LETTER TO KOTWAL

AHEMEDABAD,

Vaishakh Vad 4 [*May 21, 1916*][1]

BHAISHRI KOTWAL,

There is not a single letter of yours which I have not answered. It is not a rule with me to write about happenings in the Ashram myself and so it didn't occur to me to write about Fakiri. His death was sublime.

Anna is lost to us for the present. He says that he will not be able to come over for at least a year and that he doesn't know what he will do thereafter. Maganbhai is also leaving, having found it difficult to follow the Ashram rules. Mama[2] continues here.

I am glad you have found a job, and sorry, too, in equal measure.. You have succumbed to a bad temptation. I wish you could save yourself from that. There is only one way. While in service, make the ultimate good your only concern: indulge in no pleasures and, as much as you can, render disinterested service to others; so, you will have some inward peace. Reflect Constantly on Bharata's life.

Rest assured there is not an hour when you are out of our minds.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

Mr. Shyamji Sahay may certainly come over and bring his wife. There will be no harm if other students also come. As for going to Indore, I don't know when it will be possible.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 3609

[1] Anna and Maganbhai Patel referred to in the letter left the Ashram at this time.

[2] Mamasaheb Phadke, a teacher of the Ganganath Vidyalaya, Baroda, who joined Gandhiji along with Anna *alias* Harihar Sharma

168. LETTER TO VIRCHAND SHAH

AHMEDABAD,

Vaishakh Vad 6 [*May 25, 1916*]

DEAR SHRI VIRCHAND PANACHAND SHAH,

They are good questions[1] you have asked me.

There must be occasions when I feel agitated.

I do get the unworthy thought sometimes that it would have been better if events had followed a different course from what they did. Regret I feel often enough.

I may be guilty of partiality sometimes, but so rarely that I don't recollect any such instance.

I am not able to do everything I want to.

I see my imperfections every moment and am constantly struggling to get rid of them.

You may ask me any further questions you think fit.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5702. Courtesy: Pramod Virchand Shah

[1] The addressee in his letter dated May 20, 1916 had asked:

"(l) Do you ever get agitated?

(2)Do you ever feel that it would have been better had events taken a different course than they did? Do you ever feel regret?

(3) Do you ever become partial?

(4) Are you able to do all that you want to (in matters not dependent on others but concerning your own plans on which you have made up your mind)?

(5) Do you observe any particular imperfections in you? If yes, do you strive to get rid of them?"

169. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M. K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
May 27 [*1916*][1]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have two letters this week from you. You want all the news from here. I think I have supplied you with it. Today Harilal's wife, who has been here for a few days, leaves for Calcutta to join her husband. Manilal goes as escort. We shall be today 20 in the Ashram when Chanchi has gone. Maganlal is doing well with his handloom work. Ramdas and Devdas are going forward with their studies, which consist of Sanskrit, Gujarati, Tamil and Hindi. I am their sole teacher. Pra-bhudas is with his father just now. I do not know what Chhaganlal will do in the end. Maganbhai has left the Ashram for good. He could not as he said bear the responsibility. He could not comply with all the rules. So now Maganlal is the only responsible man left with me barring Manilal. There are other new men. They are good but still untired. What I have said may yet come true everyone may find it necessary to leave me. I think I have strength to face that situation. You say you are morose there. Can you not see much in the above to give you strength and comfort? To be confined ought not to make the difference it seems to make in your life. Oh, if you could but see there are millions much worse off than you are. What of the combatants themselves? What of the families they leave behind? I wish you could get out of the Slough of Despond and make the best use of the situation as it faces you.

With love,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] From the contents

170. SPEECH AT CONFERENCE OF COMMUNITIES AHMEDABAD[1]

June 4, 1916

I am tired of conferences and speeches and now of hearing my own voice as well. When Lord Buddha decided to work for the emancipation of the world, he did not convene a conference and get it to pass resolutions. Nor did Jesus Christ do anything of the sort. But not being blessed with such greatness, we convene such conferences because, I think I am right in this, we lack the requisite strength for our work. This happens all over the country; and so I don't say that yours is the only instance.

There is something novel about the origin of this conference and its procedure of work. I believe at the same time that it does serve a useful purpose. The work here is not done through long speeches. I am glad to see that everyone speaks to the point and keeps himself to the subject. We must have formed the habit of speaking briefly and to the point through the business atmosphere of Gujarat. In the changes taking place today in our communities, we have observed [their] rise and fall through their own actions and deserts. Champaneri *Banias* were once *Vaniks*[2]; then by vocation they became *Ghanchis*[3]. In the caste set-up of India, it is in no way impossible that through better education and economic advance they may again become *Vaniks* or attain even a higher status, or that they may be degraded to a level lower than that of *Ghanchi*.

Our sin in despising the *Antyajas*[4] degrades the entire Hindu society. Dhulabhai[5] Dhed, who stays with me and who has accompanied me here, once asked a woman for some water. On the woman inquiring about his caste, Dhulabhai replied that he was*Dhed*. The lady said: "I don't believe it. You are quite well dressed and clean; you do not look like a *Dhed*. Here is water for you." So saying

[1] At the Conference of Friendly Associations of Communities

[2] Members of a Hindu caste traditionally engaged in trade, commerce and banking

[3] Those who make and sell seed-oils

[4] Lowest caste among Hindus traditionally charged with sanitary duties

[5] Probably a misprint for Dudabhai, who had joined the Ashram on September 26, 1915; *vide* "Diary for 1915"

she gave him water to drink. But Dhulabhai, after drinking the water, told her again that he was a *Dhed* and that he did not wish to deceive her. In bearing with the abuses she then showered on him, Dhulabhai showed courage and strength of mind. In just the same way, the entire Hindu society despises the *Dhed* people and, as long as this does not change, we shall not be able to convince the whites of South Africa and elsewhere of the utter injustice of the aversion they show for us. Today I take a pledge that, if I am wrong in any belief of mine and if someone from amongst you proves it, I will accept the correction in all humility. But, at the same time, I also take another pledge that I will not rest till I make you change this wrong belief of yours in regard to the *Antyajas*.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 11-6-1916

171. SPEECH ON CASTE SYSTEM, AHMEDABAD[1]

June 5, 1916

I am in India to learn what I ought to do and I cannot say how long I shall take to do so. Even in standing now before you to speak, my aim is to learn something. I have not come prepared to speak on the subject; I thank you all the same for this opportunity to express my ideas. Newspapers report my speeches, but sometimes I am not rightly understood and my meaning is distorted, which is not good for a satyagrahi which I claim to be. I shall be happy, therefore, if reports of my speeches are shown to me before they are published: this is my request. I was quite pleased with the work of the Conference yesterday, for people spoke briefly and to the point. I for one believe that the time for conferences is long past and the time has now come for us to show some results and hold our peace; our words, when they follow such action, will have an effect all their own. This was the way of the divinely-inspired Buddha, Jesus, Mahomed and others and of Martin Luther likewise. I have devoted much thought to the subject of the caste system[2] and come to the conclusion that Hindu society cannot dispense with it, that it lives on because of the discipline of caste. Societies all over the world are organized on the principle of

[1] On the second day of the Conference, *vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* also "The Hindu Caste System", October, 1916.

caste or *varnavyavastha*[1]. Our society was organized in this manner for the purpose of self-control, that is, for self-denial. Certainly, there is a difference between *varnavyavastha* in the West and among us; but there is *varnavyavastha* everywhere, all the same. So long as there are among human beings impulses which tend to a godly life and those which tend to a demoniac life, so long will the division of society into communities remain. It is a vain effort to replace this structure by one single community. Communities, too, may be born and may die. Mr. Lyall has affirmed in a book of his not only that among Hindus communities have made their appearance and died out, but also that, while outsiders may have joined the Hindu fold, there is no evidence that the Hindu society converted others to the Hindu faith as Christians did to theirs. Members of non-Hindu faiths and sects became Hindus in course of time. the status of a community depends on its function in society and not on the scriptures. It need not be imagined that caste rests on the idea that members of a community may eat together and marry among themselves. If friendly relations depended on eating together and inter-marriage, the German and the British would not be fighting against each other. The Rajputs[2] of Kathiawar do sit together at meals and marry among themselves but have no end of internecine strife and fighting. Of course, these caste restrictions have something of value in them. It is but natural that a father and daughter want to remain in the same social group and hence communities or groups naturally come to have their distinctive organizations. But the evils which have found their way into the various communities must be eradicated without delay. Though it is important that we apply our minds to the social problems concerning unmarried girls, widows, widowers, etc.,—and they do require capacity to think —this has nothing to do with a knowledge of letters. There are 60 million untouchables in our country. It is necessary to improve their condition, because this is a blot on Hindu society, one which India will have to atone for at a heavy price. During my campaigns in South Africa, the whites used to ask me what right we had to demand better treatment from them when we were guilty of ill-treating the untouchables among us. The late Mr. Gokhale and Sir Sankaran Nair[3]

[1] Division of society into classes on the basis of vocations

[2] Community which formed the ruling class in medieval India

[3] Sir Chettur Sankaran Nair (1857-1934); President, Indian National Congress, 1897; Judge of the Madras High Court; appointed Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council in 1915

held the same view about the imperative need for the uplift of this down-trodden class. In the Punjab, people treat the untouchables fairly well when they need their services but, when the need is over, they return to their old ways. Conduct of this kind has nothing religious in it. We must maintain good relations with these classes all the time; success will assuredly be ours in anything we do from a religious motive.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 11-6-1916

172. LETTER TO NARHAR SHAMBHURAO BHAVE[1]

[AHMEDABAD,
After *June 7, 1916*][2]

Your son Vinoba[3] is with me. Your son has acquired at so tender an age such high-spiritedness and asceticism as took me years of patient labour to do.

[M. K. GANDHI]

Life of Vinoba. p 8

173. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

AHMEDABAD,
June 15 [*1916*][4]

MY DEAR WEST,

We must agree to differ as to the accounts. All I want is passive resistance expenditure after the date of the last account published and bank balance. Surely this is all in your books. I should despair if you told me that we had no passive resistance a/c in our ledgers. I know that this is not so. Will you kindly send me these items? So much for the business part. Your conversational letter I have. It is naturally full

[1] Acharya Vinoba's father, then at Baroda

[2] Vinoba met Gandhiji at the Kochrab Ashram on June 7.

[3] Vinoba Bhave (1895-) "Saint on the march", Sarvodaya leader, founder of the *Bhoodan* movement, author of *Talks on the Gita* and other works

[4] From the reference to the passive resistance accounts in the letter, it could have been written either in 1915 or 1916. In 1915 Gandhiji was not in Ahmedabad on June 15.

of you as I have known you. I never doubted that you would be able to make your way among the officials by your very bluntness. The novelty of resistance may shock them at first but pleases them afterwards. Even they must get tired of 'nodders' if one may coin that noun. And you will have to continue to do that work whether the people appreciate it or not or rather want it or not. Appreciation need not be looked for. Do please send me all the correspondence you wish to. I promise to go through it all. Do not think that South Africa disappears from my mind. How can it? I owe much to S.A., i.e. to friendships formed there. In my moments of sadness recollection of friends working there is no small comfort. Your successes and your failures are alike matters of deepest interest to me.

Is your little school still going on? How is Granny[1] doing? Is she still as fresh as before? The very thought of her and her working away is an inspiration. Just now I am reading to the Ashram at prayer time *Pilgrim's Progress.* I often think of Mrs. West's sweet voice and want her to sing to us "When I survey the wondrous cross"! The whole of Phoenix rises before us whenever we sing our favourite hymns.

With love to you all,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4419. Courtesy: A. H. West

174. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M.K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
June 24 [*1916*][2]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

This letter will make you sick. Yet I must give you the information Manilal has deceived me again. He gave some money to Harilal and disowned all knowledge of it when I questioned him. He had no leg to stand on. He confessed his fault immediately. But the

[1] Mother-in-law of A. H. West whom everyone in Phoenix called "Granny" and "felt that she was really related so to him". *Vide Satyagraha in South Africa* Ch. XXIII.

[2] From the contents

incident showed the boy's extreme weakness. He has therefore left the Ashram for Madras and has to throw himself on his own resources. If he makes proper use of this disciplinary period, one may yet make something of him. He is a very weak boy. I have been fasting during the week. I fasted 3 days. I broke it yesterday. The last day found me very weak and suffering much. I am all right now and not much the worse for the fast. You will please therefore not worry about me or Manilal. Apart from this incident the Ashram is going forward. The handloom-weaving is being pressed forward for all it is worth. We hope to make the place self-supporting in a year's time. This I know you will like immensely.

Of shifting to Dehradun or elsewhere, only when you are here. The climate of Ahmedabad is by no means so bad or at all bad. Only the boys were becoming acclimatised and I had not yet found out the food proper for the climate. Now I think I have hit upon it. All the smallpox patients are now hale and hearty and probably by the time you are here, the marks will have all gone. Naransamy has gained. He has almost lost his deafness and he is daily growing fatter. There are some new men whom you will be delighted to meet. They are strong and conscientious workers. Of old and experienced hands Maganlal is the only one left. But then he is a host in himself and he is not likely to desert me.

I do hope that by this time at least you are in possession of all your things.

Good-bye and much love,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

175. SPEECH AGAINST PRESS ACT[1]

June 24, 1916

A public meeting of the citizens of Bombay was held in the Empire Theatre on the evening of Saturday, the 24th June 1916, 'to uphold the liberty of the Press and protest against the Press Act of 1910', under the auspices of the 'Indian Press Association'. Mr. B. G. Horniman, Editor of the *Bombay Chronicle*, presided.

[1] A brief report of this appeared in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 26-6-1916.

It was a very largely-attended meeting. There were not a few Hindu— Deccani and Gujarati—ladies among the audience. Principal among them was the wife of the Honourable Mr. Chimanlal Setalvad with her daughters and daughters-in-law.

Messrs Gandhi, Horniman and Jamnadas D. Dharamsey were received on arrival with loud cheers. In the case of Mr. Gandhi cheers were called for 'once more' by an occupant of one of the upper galleries. Mr. Gandhi delivered his address in Gujarati, urging that that was the true way of being faithful to his motherland. . . .

Mr. Gandhi said:

MR. PRESIDENT, DEAR SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

I see that in this hall there are several persons laughing, because I have commenced to speak in Gujarati. (Laughter.) You see we want to have swaraj; and when we get it, I am sure you will agree with me that we ought to carry on our business in the Gujarati tongue. (Laughter.) Crores and crores of our people for whom the swaraj will have to be carried on, it is impossible to deal with in English, to which they are quite foreign. It is undoubtedly the fact that in this assembly we have to speak to a majority of English-speaking people, and to them I beg to tender an apology for venturing to address the meeting in my own native tongue. (Laughter.) It may be said that besides those who know English in this hall, there are not a few who speak Marathi. I know that there are those who speak that language, but to them I would respectfully say that hereafter they should learn the Gujarati language, so that when they have occasion to hear my Gujarati speech, they will be able to follow me somehow or other. (Laughter.) The resolution that is placed in my hands runs thus:

That this meeting of loyal and law-abiding Indian subjects of His Majesty the King-Emperor, believing the existence of a free public Press to be one of the first essentials of a healthy and progressive State and necessary to the proper development, political and moral, of civilized peoples; and further that the extension and maintenance of freedom in all departments of public life is the surest guarantee of popular progress and contentment and of mutual trust between the Government and the people, asks that the Press in this country should enjoy the utmost liberty of expression, subject to the legal restraints of the ordinary law and of penalties inflicted only after proper trial and conviction. (Cheers.)

(Mr. Gandhi explained the resolution in Gujarati.)

Up to now, this Press Act was considered to be innocent and

innocuous, so far as the high-class journalists were concerned; in fact, that was the promise given by the Government at the time when this law was passed to the elected members of the Legislative Council of His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General. Those members accepted the enactment under that promise. They were assured thatthe law would be made operative against only offending journalists. But from what has now happened in the case of *New India*, it may be said that the promise was illusory. We are here disillusioned now as to the real character of this law on account of the attack made by the Government against Mrs. Annie Besant. (Cheers.) That circumstance has awakened us to the true nature of the law. Where is the security from this law when *zulum*[1] is practised under it on respectable journalists? Remember that it is said that at this moment our Government are in a troublous condition. Remember also that we, the people of this country, say that what is a troublous condition of the Government is a troublous condition to us. ("Hear, hear.") And yet in the midst of this condition if Government are prepared to drag us into the clutches of these severe laws, what would be our fate after the war is over? What will then happen to us is on the knees of the gods. (Laughter.) What can we do now but to bear our fate with resignation? That is our only duty. We must take heart that our present fate will change for the better in the future. It must. I have no faith in these meetings and in these resolutions. (Laughter.) It is simply a waste of time to hold these meetings and carry these resolutions. But what else can we do? There is no alternative for us—the subject people—to do aught but place on record our view on a given subject. And, therefore, I have come here in response to an invitation. I feel that something should be done in this matter—something done so that our complaint may reach the ears of the Government. (''Hear, hear.") Whatever we may say here with a view to expressing our feelings on the subject, it is an undoubted fact that we cannot express a hundredth part of what we actually feel in our minds on account of this outrageous enactment. We read newspapers. Yes, we do. But are you sure that you read the real thoughts of the editor. I think not. Independent views of writers are not published. What is published is otherwise and, therefore, one can say that it is advisable to read the opposite into the words that appear in the newspapers. (Laughter.) I am not at all exaggerating. I have myself been editor of a newspaper for several years and can

[1] Repression

explain from personal experience the difficulties which the editor has to undergo in the true discharge of his duties I am not disputing the fact that some restraint is necessarily to be exercised on newspapers, but there is this to be remembered that in the exercise of such a restraint, discretion and limit should not be lost sight of. It is only with unwarranted restraint that I quarrel. For flimsy reasons, Government officials ought not to exercise restraint on the people's right to express their views. (Cheers.) Restraint means inducement to indulge in fallacious or misleading thoughts. That leads one to become the enemy of my Government. (Laughter.) My genuine feelings are suppressed; I cannot give free vent to them; I write the reverse of what I feel. By reason of such enactments, there cannot be an unalloyed affection for our rulers among the 30 crores of our countrymen. There should be pure justice administered in India. (Cheers.) The Government are like- our trustees or protectors. To speak the truth I do not like the word 'trustee'. India is no longer in a state of childhood, and, therefore, she does not require a trustee or a protector. India is one of the most ancient countries; she is one of the most experienced countries; can her subjects be said with propriety to be inexperienced or in a state of childhood? No; we Indians stand in no need of a protector. All that he need do for us is to dispense pure justice. We, the people of India, are as liberal in our views as we are innocent of any mischievous tendencies; all that we are is that we are despondent. But we will never be guilty of anything disloyal. Under these circumstances, I beg to appeal to the Government to do everything that is just and righteous; if that is done, there would be no necessity for these meetings. (''Hear, hear" and laughter.) That is a general request. My special request to them is on behalf of the newspaper writers. I say, 'Do not harass the respectable editors and proprietors.' I further say, 'Treat us as generously as you would the English people. We the people of India are not a race of hypocrites. (Laughter.) We are enlightened, good and civilized people.' (''Hear, hear.") To my newspaper-writer brethren I say, 'Say openly whatever you have to say.' ("Hear, hear.") That is our duty. We should rely on ourselves to expatiate on our grievances, but we must not forget that we have to do that under certain restrictions born of politeness and sobriety. Whenever we are face to face with a political catastrophe, we should never hesitate to say in as clear terms as possible what we feel and desire to say. ("Hear, hear.") For such plain-speaking and honest pleading of our cause if we are punished by the Government, well, let

them do so. ("Hear, hear" and laughter.) What can they do if the worst comes to the worst? They will take our bodies at best. (Laughter.) Very well, if our bodies are taken away, our souls will become free. ("Hear, hear" and roars of laughter.)

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1916, p. 506

176. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

AHMEDABAD,

June 30 [*1916*]

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

It is no use having Tota Ram there. I have met him. He will not help. Indenture system has to go because it is bad in itself and is a remnant of slavery. If it can be done away with today, it should be without considering any interest whatsoever.

With love

MOHAN

From the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5734. Courtesy: Rajmohini Rudra, Allahabad

177. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M. K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
July 24, 1916

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The wooden pillow you describe never reached me. I am asking Dr. Jivraj Mehta. All of us appreciated the portrait of yourself and companions you have sent. We all think that you are looking well. But I know that you are not mentally as happy as you ought to be. I have been reading *Pilgrim's Progress* to the boys. Christian and Hopeful are in the grip of Giant Despair. The latter suggests to them suicide. Christian half succumbs to the suggestion. Hopeful strenuously fights against it and argues that when we find ourselves in a tight corner, we should think of those who might be in a still tighter [one]. The argument is good. There are millions in a much worse condition than you are in. And then, after all, happiness is a mental state. And no one

but ourselves can control that state. In the midst of plenty a man may be most miserable and another amid penury may be as happy as the smiling sun. Why worry about your South Africa affairs? After all you were ready to let them go. Let them go. So much the less burden. Whilst under restraint you are looked after. When the restraint is removed, you will come to the Ashram and bring with you a pair of sturdy hand and feet. We are employing ours to make us self-sustained. You will find yourself in such an independent comm- unity and take your natural place.

With love,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

178. RAILWAY PASSENGERS[1]

[Before *July 26, 1916*][2]

No one doubts that railway passengers are put to many hardships. Against many of these, we have the remedy in our own hands. Unity is in the air all over India. If we did no more than resort to this, quite a few of the hardships could be overcome. This article makes some suggestions on how they could be. Those into whose hands this may fall are requested to read it carefully and afterwards to read it out to others who cannot read. The reader will easily guess that the cost of paper and printing must have been met by someone with a public spirit and, in view of that at any rate, he will realize that the article should not be treated lightly merely because he has got it free.

To the authorities, I shall say:

If you are a station master, you can remove many of the hardships of passengers.

Using courtesy in your dealings with poor passengers, you set an example to your subordinates.

If you are a ticket collector, with a little reflection you will realize that the poor should receive the same time and attention that

[1] This was published as a pamphlet and distributed gratis in Gujarat during 1916-17.

[2] A summary of this pamphlet appeared in *Kathiawar Times*, 26-7-1916.

you give to first and second-class passengers.

The railways depend on the poor for their existence and you owe your salaries largely to the money received from them.

Some booking clerks abuse the poor, address them slightingly, and on top of that delay issuing tickets to them as long as they can. This is no way of showing one's importance. Issuing a ticket without delay to anyone asking for it saves the latter's time and you lose nothing by doing so.

If you are a policeman, you should refrain from accepting bribes, resolve not to shove the poor people about but behave towards them with kindness. You should understand that you are servants of the people and not their masters. It is your duty to help them out of their difficulties. That you should yourself become the cause of difficulties is sheer injustice.

To educated passengers, I shall say:

Most of you like showing that you are educated and that you have some patriotism in you. If you use your patriotism in doing good to the illiterate and poor passengers with whom you come into contact, you will be doing national service without having to search for an occasion.

For instance, if a passenger is being ill-treated, you can help him in a number of ways, Even if you do not generally travel third-class, your doing so occasionally just to get experience is likely to benefit the third-class passengers very much.

If you go in their midst, without disclosing your status, for purchasing tickets, etc., it will be easy for you to find a remedy for the difficulties you will experience in the process and the facilities offered to you will be available before long to the people at large.

Sometimes educated people themselves become the cause of injustice to third-class passengers. They are impatient to get their tickets first, may enjoy special facilities in trains and occupy more space than they need; the poor are put to difficulties in consequence. The educated class must certainly refrain from making itself a cause of injustice in this manner, if it can do nothing else.

It is your duty to write to the authorities about any deficiencies that you may observe on stations or trains.

To passengers in general, I shall say:

No matter what category of passengers you belong to, educated

or uneducated, rich or poor, if you bear in mind the following suggestions, 75 per cent of the hardships of passengers will disappear in a moment:

1. You will lose nothing, and others will gain through your restraint, if, instead of pushing yourself forward when getting to the platform or boarding the train, you don't mind being the last and act accordingly.

2. Having taken your seat in the train, you should know that, up to the number indicated, others have as much right to a seat [in the compartment] as you. Hence, if you stop others from entering, you will violate the moral law through falsehood and will also break a Railway regulation.

3. If you have with you only as much luggage as third-class passengers are entitled to carry, others will be able to sit in comfort. If you can afford to carry more luggage, you had better put the excess in the luggage van and pay the additional charge.

4. Your luggage should be of a kind that can be easily stowed away under a bench or placed on the shelf.

5. If you are well-to-do and have no philanthropic intentions, you should seek your comfort by purchasing an upper-class ticket. By purchasing a third class ticket out of sheer miserliness, you will make yourself a burden on the poor. But even if you do not want to travel upper-class, you should certainly not use your funds so as to make your luggage and yourself a nuisance to your fellow-passengers.

6. You should bear in mind that all long-distance passengers are entitled to some facility for sleeping; you can have, therefore, no more than your share of sleep.

7. If you are a smoker, you should consider that, being in a train, you can smoke only with others' permission and so as not to inconvenience them.

8. If, when you want to spit, you do so where the passengers rest their feet, the place will become extremely dirty and there is a risk of one contracting some disease; those other passengers, moreover, who are particular about rules of cleanliness will find your dirty habit intolerably painful.

9. If you use the railway lavatories with due care, everyone will be the happier for that. In using them carelessly, you take no thought of the passengers who may follow you.

10. Instead of making distinctions when you travel, such as that you are a brahmin or a Vaisya or a Sudra and someone else belongs to another class or that you are a Hindu and another a Muslim, or that you are from Bombay Presidency and another from Madras Presidency, and creating ill-will in consequence, if you think of all as children of India who have for the once assembled under one roof, and cherish a brotherly feeling for all, you will be happy this very moment and bring glory to India.

[From Gujarati]

Mahatma Gandhini Vicharsrishti

179. SPEECH ON 'THE SECRET OF SATYAGRAHA IN SOUTH AFRICA'[1]

July 27, 1916

In brief, the significance of satyagraha consists in the quest for a principle of life. We did not say to anyone in so many words that our fight was in pursuance of this quest. If we had said so, the people there would only have laughed at us. We only made known the secondary aim of our movement, which was that the Government there, thinking us lowly and mean, was making laws to oust us from the country, and that it was right for us to defy these laws and show that we were brave. Suppose the Government passes a law saying that Coloured persons shall wear yellow caps; in fact, a law of this kind was made in Rome for the Jews. If the Government intended to treat us in a similar fashion and made a Law that appeared to humiliate us, it was for us to make it clear to the Government that we would not obey such a law. If a child says to his father: 'Please put on your turban the wrong side up for me', the father understands that the child wants to have a laugh at his expense and at once obeys the command. But when someone else, with uncharitable motives, says the same thing, he clearly answers, 'Look, brother, so long as my head is on my shoulders, you cannot humiliate me in this manner. You conquer my head first and then make me wear my turban in any fashion you please.' The Government there in a similar way, thinking the Indians lowly, wanted to treat them as slaves and as far as possible to prevent their coming

[1] In reply to a question during a post-prayer meeting at Satyagraha Ashram near Kochrab, Ahmedabad

into the country. And with this end in view, it began inventing ever new laws such as putting names of Indians in a separate register, making them give finger-prints in the manner of thieves and bandits, forcing them to live in particular areas, forbidding their movement beyond a specified boundary, making rules for them to walk on particular foot-paths and board specified carriages in trains, treating their wives as concubines if they could not produce marriage certificates, levying from them an annual tax of forty-five rupees per capita, etc., etc. Often a disease manifests itself in the body in various forms. The disease in this case, as has been explained, was the evil purpose of the Government of South Africa, and all the rules and regulations mentioned above were the various forms that it took. We, therefore, had to prepare ourselves to fight against these.

There are two ways of countering injustice. One way is to smash the head of the man who perpetrates injustice and to get your own head smashed in the process. All strong people in the world adopt this course. Everywhere wars are fought and millions of people are killed. The consequence is not the progress of a nation but its decline. Soldiers returning from the front have become so bereft of reason that they indulge in various anti-social activities. One does not have to go far for examples. In the Boer War, when the British won a victory at Mafeking, the whole of England, and London in particular, went so mad with joy that for days on end everyone did nothing but dance night and day! They freely indulged in wickednesses and rowdyism and did not leave a single bar with a drop of liquor in it. *The Times*, commenting, said that no words could describe the way those few days were spent, that all that could be said was that "the English nation went amafficking [a-Mafeking]".[1] Pride makes a victorious nation bad-tempered. It falls into luxurious ways of living. Then for a time, it may be conceded, peace prevails. But after a short while, it comes more and more to be realized that the seeds of war have not been destroyed but have become a thousand times more nourished and mighty. No country has ever become, or will ever become, happy through victory in war. A nation does not rise that way, it only falls further. In fact, what comes to it is defeat, not victory. And if, perchance, either our act or our purpose was ill-conceived, it brings disaster to both belligerents.

[1] The London crowds behaved extravagantly on the relief of Mafeking (May 17, 1900).

But through the other method of combating injustice, we alone suffer the consequences of our mistakes, and the other side is wholly spared. This other method is satyagraha. One who resorts to it does not have to break another's head; he may merely have his own head broken. He has to be prepared to die himself suffering all the pain. In opposing the atrocious laws of the Government of South Africa, it was this method that we adopted. We made it clear to the said Government that we would never bow to its outrageous laws. No clapping is possible without two hands to do it, and no quarrel without two persons to make it. Similarly, no State is possible without two entities [the rulers and the ruled]. You are our sovereign, our Government, only so long as we consider ourselves your subjects. When we are not subjects, you are not the sovereign either. So long as it is your endeavour to control us with justice and love, we will let you to do so. But if you wish to strike at us from behind, we cannot permit it. Whatever you do in other matters, you will have to ask our opinion about the laws that concern us. If you make laws to keep us suppressed in a wrongful manner and without taking us into confidence, these laws will merely adorn the statute-books. We will never obey them. Award us for it what punishment you like, we will put up with it. Send us to prison and we will live there as in a paradise. Ask us to mount the scaffold and we will do so laughing. Shower what sufferings you like upon us, we will calmly endure all and not hurt a hair of your body. We will gladly die and will not so much as touch you. But so long as there is yet life in these our bones, we will never comply with your arbitrary laws.

It all began on a Sunday evening in Johannesburg when I sat on a hillock with another gentleman called Hemchandra. The memory of that day is so vivid that it might have been yesterday. At my side lay a Government *Gazette*. It contained the several clauses of the law concerning Indians. As I read it, I shook with rage. What did the Government take us for? Then and there I produced a translation of that portion of the *Gazette* which contained the said laws and wrote under it: "I will never let these laws govern me." This was at once sent for publication to *Indian Opinion* at Phoenix. I did not dream at the time that even a single Indian would be capable of the unprecedented heroism the Indians revealed or that the satyagraha movement would gain the momentum it did.

Immediately, I made my view known to fellow-Indians and

many of them declared their readiness for satyagraha. In the first conflict, people took part under the impression that our aim would be gained after only a few days of suffering. In the second conflict, there were only a very few people to begin with but later many more came along. Afterwards when, on the visit of Mr. Gokhale, the Government of South Africa pledged itself to a settlement, the fight ceased. Later, the Government treacherously refused to honour its pledge; on which a third satyagraha battle became necessary. Gokhale at that time asked me how many people I thought would take part in the satyagraha. I wrote saying they would be between 30 and 60. But I could not find even that number. Only 16 of us took up the challenge. We were firmly decided that so long as the Government did not repeal its atrocious laws or make some settlement, we would accept every penalty but would not submit. We had never hoped that we should find many fellow-fighters. But the readiness of one person without self-interest to offer himself for the cause of truth and country always has its effect. Soon there were twenty thousand people in the movement. There was no room for them in the prisons, and the blood of India boiled. Many people say that if Lord Hardinge had not intervened, a compromise would have been impossible. But these people forget to ask themselves why it was that Lord Hardinge intervened. The sufferings of the Canadian Indians were far greater than those of the South African Indians. Why did he not use his good offices there? Where the spiritual might of thousands of men and women has been mustered, where innumerable men and women are eager to lay down their lives, what indeed is impossible? There was no other course open for Lord Hardinge than to offer mediation and he only showed his wisdom in adopting it. What transpired later is well known to you: the Government of South Africa was compelled to come to terms with us. All of which goes to show that we can gain everything without hurting anybody and through soul-force or satyagraha alone. He who fights with arms has to depend on arms and on support from others. He has to turn from the straight path and seek tortuous tracks. The course that a satyagrahi adopts in his fight is straight and he need look to no one for help. He can, if necessary, fight by himself alone. In that case, it is true, the outcome will be somewhat delayed. If I had not found as many comrades in the South African fight as I did, all that would have happened is that you would not have seen me here in your midst today. Perhaps all my life would have had to be spent in the struggle there. But what of that? The gain

that has been secured would only have been a little late in coming. For the battle of satyagraha one only needs to prepare oneself. We have to have strict self-control. If it is necessary for this preparation to live in forests and caves, we should do so.

The time that may be taken up in this preparation should not be considered wasted. Christ, before he went out to serve the world, spent forty days in the wilderness, preparing himself for his mission. Buddha too spent many years in such preparation. Had Christ and Buddha not undergone this preparation, they would not have been what they were. Similarly, if we want to put this body in the service of truth and humanity, we must first raise our soul by developing virtues like celibacy, non-violence and truth. Then alone may we say that we are fit to render real service to the country.

In brief, the aim of the satyagraha struggle was to infuse manliness in cowards and to develop the really human virtues, and its field was the passive resistance against the Government of South Africa.

[From Hindi]

Mahatma Gandhi by Ramchandra Varma

180. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

AHMEDABAD,
August 8, 1916

DEAR MR. POLAK,

This will introduce to you Mr. Kunverji V. Mehta whom I have known as a public worker chiefly devoting his time to the Patidar community. He is going to S. A. to collect [funds] for his Society[1] among the Patidars there. Please help him to enter the Union.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. S. L. POLAK, ESQ.
BOX 6522
JOHANNESBURG

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 2664.

[1] Known as Patidar Mandal

181. LETTER TO KUNVERJI MEHTA

AHMEDABAD,
[*August 8, 1916*]

DEAR SHRI KUNVERJI,

You may use the enclosed letter[1].

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 2664

182. LETTER TO J. B. PETIT

[AHMEDABAD,]
August 19, 1916

DEAR MR. PETIT,

I have yours of the 11th instant. I have been a few days answering your letter as I have been able only today to spare a few minutes for going into a/cs. As a result I feel that the minimum required for the Passive Resisters here who are receiving support is likely to be Rs. l5,000.

In going through the accounts I observe that I have overdrawn on the Passive Resistance account more than Rs. 500. Will you therefore kindy favour me with the cheque for Rs. 1000 on a/c.

I have not received the balance from South Africa.[2] As I have already informed you,[3] disbursements have still to be made there. It will be some time before they would be able to .say what sum they would require there in South Africa.

I am
Yours sincerely,

From the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 6320

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] *Vide* the following item.
[3] *Vide* "Letter to J. B. Petit", 30-3-1916.

183. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

AHMEDABAD,
September 5 [*1916*][1]

MY DEAR MILLIE,

I have your letter today. Even if Henry comes, you will be there to receive this letter. I had Henry's long letter but I did not wish to interfere with his plans, so I said nothing. I quite share your feeling that if his stay there can only increase the bitterness of his soul, it is better that he should not be so near the fire. All the same it will be a calamity for South Africa, his permanent withdrawal. Both the races will lose a common friend. But at times, it is better to lose one's friends. We sometimes know them only after the are gone.

Yes, you will feel very lonely. I fear very much that you will never have a really settled life. You will, therefore, have to find peace in preparedness to move on when required. I do not share Henry's optimism about the London practice. Anyway I shall be perfectly useless in helping him in that direction. I know not a soul to whom I could appeal for such help. If however, he cannot find his way to settle in London, he will find little difficulty in doing so here. There is ample scope for his energy in India. But I will not anticipate the future. I do not fear the intimate issue. We have a common belief in the goodness of God. Though the path immediately in front of us may be full of darkness, as to the destination to be reached, there never would be any doubt.

Of course, I shall go to Bombay to meet Henry unless his coming synchronizes with the Provincial Conference meeting here.

Morgan-Bush affair is a sad thing. Thambi never wrote again to me. I am ready to send the boys if he wants them.

We are here a busy nine all engaged in hand-weaving. To me it appears as a great thing. But we shall see. Just now we expect that we shall be self-supporting in a year's time through this work.

With love to you all,

Yours,
BHAI

[1] From the references to the Provincial Political Conference which was held in Ahmedabad in October 1916, and Polak's arrival; Gandhiji received him at Bombay on November 13, 1916; vide also the following item.

[PS.]

Manilal does not yet knew his own mind.

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

184. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M.K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,

September 10, 1916

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I was examining yesterday one of your boxes to see if time had done any damage. I did not see much damage done but it brought to mind the old days when we cooked our own meals. I compared those times to the present ones. It saddened me to think that you were not here to share the greater simplicity. Everything in the box that I examined betrayed greater luxury than is allowed at present. I cannot give you an adequate picture of it. The life has to be seen. There is much left undone before the life can become grandly simple. There is a shoddiness about it which I would like to get rid of. But that cannot be until we have built our own cottages.

News from South Africa show that Polak may leave South Africa in October for India. He does not want to settle here. He wants to see if he can get Indian connections for practice in London. There is not much hope of it.

I know you write regularly but the delivery has become irregular. There is again nothing from you this week. I hope mine you receive regularly.

There is again a storm in the Ashram. The Pariah family had temporarily gone. They returned yesterday. Mrs. Maganlal therefore suddenly decided to leave. I offered no opposition and she with her children has gone to Rajkot. Poor Maganlal! He is going through the most terrible times of his life. He feels most keenly this separation from those that [are] nearest him. He does not know what his duty is. He does not want to leave me and he can hardly bear the present blow. The Maganlal of olden days ≈ robust, jovial, quickhanded and quick-witted is no more to be seen. He has aged. He is careworn. He is rarely healthy. He is absent-minded, without hope, without peace. I do not

know what to do for him and how to help him. One can only trust that time will heal all the wounds and that he will yet be his old self again.

Manilal is at Madras ever finding out ways of ease and luxury. The life of discipline is gone for him. That of indulgence has begun. He has seen friends. They have begun to fondle him. He has not been able to resist them. Heaven knows what he will now be when he returns from Madras.

Most of the inmates of the Ashram have gone out for a picnic. They have taken roasted wheat and gram flour with them for food with radishes as a salad. The distance is only five miles. They return in the evening.

Yours ever,
OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

185. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M.K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
September 14, 1916

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I was assisting the carpenter yesterday. Here carpenters have to practically make their own tools. They make their own handles. They turn one tool into some other. The carpenter here wanted a handle to his screwdriver. I had to assist him at that. He made it out of a piece of ebony. I thought he had turned out a piece of art in about two hours. You will probably laugh at it. As I was sitting opposite the carpenter, I thought of you and asked myself what you would say to it all ≈ the manner of working it, pressing two hours in the middle of his work, giving so much time to a mere handle! Such is life here. For me there is poetry in it. There is no mad rush in this sort of life.

Polak is expected here in a month's time. There is no cable yet. I may receive one any day.

Naransamy, Parthasarathy and Bala are all down. The first two have a violent attack of indigestion. Naransamy is out of danger now. The other two have been very severely ill but they were never in the danger zone. All have yielded to home treatment.

I had two letters from you delivered at the same time.

With love,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

186. LETTER TO A. H. WEST:

AHMEDABAD,

September 14, 1916

MY DEAR WEST,

I have your letter and copy of letter to Mr. Rustomjee. You know that my heart is with you. I will say nothing about your letter except to say that it hurts me to think that you felt so hurt. For once you have taken Mr. Rustomjee seriously. I know that you must soon after writing that letter have regained your usual gaiety and philosophic calm. In any event this is merely to say that you have the power to vote to yourself as much as you need per month. Please use it without hesitation. Funds you have there. I shall answer for you and your use of them. I see nothing wrong in your using the funds. They were sent for the struggle. You and a few others now are in the struggle which must be maintained. I hope therefore that you will not argue with me again about the rightness of the act. Imam Saheb now sees the thing properly.

Mr. Petit has asked me more than once for the balance of the fund. What is the balance there now. Do please also send me the items of expenditure after the date up to which the accounts were rendered. We return only the balance which is left after providing for your losses there.

It is sad to think that Polak leaves South Africa. He is a big asset.

We are mad after handloom work. So more later. With love,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4423. Courtesy: A. H. West

187. LETTER TO MRS. A. H. WEST

AHMEDABAD,
September 14, 1916

DEAR. MRS. WEST,

You were right in writing to me and reminding me of my promise. You have never been out of [my] mind. I have not been a regular letter writer as other duties have claimed me almost exclusively.

My heart goes out to you all. You have my full sympathy and support. I entirely agree with you that you must have enough to maintain yourselves. Albert has the power in his own hands, and I am asking him to use it freely.

You will learn more from my letter[1] to Albert. Do let me have a cheerful letter in reply. I would ask you not to mind what Mr. Rustomjee or anybody else says.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4424. Courtesy: A. H. West

188. LETTER TO DURLABHDAS SHYAMJI DHRUVE

AHMEDABAD,
Bhadarva Vad 6, Samvat 1972, Sunday [*September 17, 1916*]

VAIDYA KAVISHRI,

I do not believe that there is need for girls to be taught English. In my view, for women as well as men, Tulsi's *Ramayana* seems the best. All Hindus must be conversant with the *Gita.* Complete education here must include elementary arithmetic and geography. Moral education too is to be included and that would cover the duties of a housewife. I have not found it necessary to give any special importance to music, drawing, etc. Keeping in view the conditions in the country I feel a general knowledge of agriculture, and weaving, and health education should be included in the education for every

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

body. Weaving in my view is a great asset for every family. So long as we cannot create schools giving such education, all parents should themselves educate their children or engage private tutors. Married women should be educated by their husbands who should find time for it.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, pp. 12-14

189. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M. K.GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
October 1 [*1916*][1]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

These sheets are old and pleasant reminders. I am using up all this stock.

I do not know that I shall welcome your exchange. That may mean complete cutting off. At the same time probably you are right in having accepted the exchange when you had the choice. I shall eagerly await your letters until the fate is decided.Yes, Polak is coming. He has not yet left South Africa for there is no cable. He has not been appreciated. Here we are still at the looms more concentrated than ever.

Parthasarathy and Bala I am presently sending to South Africa. They want to go. Mrs. Naidoo asks me to send them. Thambi says nothing.

With love,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] From the contents

190. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M. K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,

October 8, 1916

MY DEAR FRIEND,

My Yours, sorrows are coming thick on me. Sickness I cannot get rid of in spite of the greatest care and precaution. Ramdas is down again. So is Maganlal and two others. Prabhudas is more or less an invalid. Fatima and Amina are rotting with boils. Imam Saheb is just recovering. The three Naidoo boys only just recovered. This means nearly half the company needing attention. If I had only doctoring and nursing to attend to I should not mind but the kitchen and the looms and some public work ≈ this fills the cup. And yet I know I should not mind. I need Job's patience. All this news should make you see that yours is by no means the worst state and yet if you feel miserable it is clearly a case of "mind is its own place, it can make heaven of hell and hell of heaven".[1]

Andrews has returned from Japan and may be coming to Ahmedabad shortly.

With love,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] The quotation from John Milton's Paradise Lost, I, 253, reads thus in full: "The mind is its own place and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven."

191. ON AHIMSA: REPLY TO LALA LAJPAT RAI

October, 1916

Had Lala Lajpat Rai[1] first ascertained what I had actually said on ahimsa, his remarks[2] in *The Modern Review* for last July would not have seen the light of day. Lalaji rightly questioned whether I actually made the statements imputed to me. He says, that if I did not, I should have contradicted them. In the first place, I have not yet seen the papers which have reported the remarks in question or those wherein my remarks were criticised. Secondly, I must confess that I would not undertake to correct all the errors that creep into reports that appear in the public press about my speeches. Lalaji's article has been much quoted in the Gujarati newspapers and magazines; and it is perhaps as well for me to explain my position. With due deference to Lalaji, I must join issue with him when he says that the elevation of the doctrine of *ahimsa* to the highest position contributed to the downfall of India. There seems to be no historical warrant for the belief that an exaggerated practice of *ahimsa* synchronised with our becoming bereft of many virtues. During the past fifteen hundred years, we have as a nation given ample proof of physical courage, but we have been torn by internal dissensions and have been dominated by love of self instead of love of country. We have, that is to say, been swayed by the spirit of irreligion rather than of religion.

I do not know how far the charge of unmanliness can be made good against the Jains. I hold no brief for them. By birth I am a Vaishnavite[3], and was taught *ahimsa* in my childhood. I have derived much religious benefit from Jain religious works, as I have from scriptures of the other great faiths of the world. I owe much to the living company of the deceased philosopher Raja Chand Kavi[4] who was a Jain by birth. Thus though my views on *ahimsa* are a result of my study of most of the faiths of the world, they are now no longer

[1] (1865-1928), social reformer, writer and political leader; deported in 1907; founder of the Servants of People Society; President, Indian National Congress 1920

[2] For the article "Ahimsa Paramo Dharmah—A Truth or a Fad", *vide* "Lane's Letter to Gandhiji", 21-4-1911.

[3] Follower of Vishnu (the Preserver)

[4] Shrimad Rajchandra; *vide* "Speech at Rajchandra Birth Anniversary", 21-11-1915.

dependent upon the authority of these works. They are a partof my life and if I suddenly discovered that the religious books read by me bore a different interpretation from the one I had learnt to give them, I should still hold to the new of *ahimsa* as I am about to set forth here.

Our *shastras* seem to teach that a man who really practises ahimsa in its fullness has the world at his feet, he so affects his surroundings that even the snakes and other venomous reptiles do him no harm. This is said to have been the experience of St. Francis of Assisi.

In its negative form, it means not injuring any living being, whether by body or mind. I may not therefore hurt the person of any wrong-doer, or bear any ill will to him and so cause him mental suffering. This statement does not cover suffering caused to the wrong-doer by natural acts of mine which do not proceed from ill will. It, therefore, does not prevent me from withdrawing from his presence a child whom he, we shall imagine, is about to strike. Indeed the proper practice of ahimsa required me to withdraw the intended victim from the wrong-doer, if I am in any way whatsoever the guardian of such a child. It was therefore most proper for the passive resisters of South Africa to have resisted the evil that the Union Government sought to do to them. They bore no ill will to it. They showed this by helping the Government whenever it needed their help. Their resistance consisted of disobedience of the orders of the Government, even to the extent of suffering death at their hands. Ahimsa requires deliberate self-suffering, not a deliberate injuring of the supposed wrong-doer.

In its positive form, ahimsa means the largest love, the greatest charity. If I am a follower of ahimsa, I must love my enemy. I must apply the same rule to the wrong-doer who is my enemy or a stranger to me, as I would to my wrong-doing father or son. This active *Ahimsa* necessarily includes truth and fearlessness. A man cannot deceive the loved ones; he does not fear or frighten him or her. vHk;nku (Gift of life) is the greatest of all gifts. A man who gives it in reality disarms all hostility. He has paved the way for an honourable understanding. And none who is himself subject to fear can bestow that gift. He must therefore be himself fearless. A man cannot then practise ahimsa and be a coward at the same time. The practice of ahimsa calls forth the greatest courage. It is the most soldierly of a

soldier's virtues. General Gordon[1] has been represented in a famous statue as bearing only a stick. This takes us far on the road to ahimsa. But a soldier, who needs the protection of even a stick, is to that extent so much the less a soldier. He is the true soldier who knows how to die and stand his ground in the midst of a hail of bullets. Such a one was Ambarish who stood his ground without lifting a finger, though Durvasa did his worst? The Moors, who were being powdered by the French gunners, rushed into the guns' mouth with 'Allah' on their lips, showed much the same type of courage. Only theirs was the courage of desperation. Ambarish's was due to love. Yet the Moorish valour, readiness to die, conquered the gunners. They frantically waved their hats, ceased firing and greeted their erstwhile enemies as comrades. And so the South African passive resisters in their thousands were ready to die rather than sell their honour for a little personal ease. This was ahimsa in its active form. It never barters away honour. A helpless girl in the hands of a follower of ahimsa finds better and surer protection than in the hands of one who is prepared to defend her only to the point to which his weapons would carry him. The tyrant, in the first instance, will have to walk to his victim over the dead body of her defender, in the second, he has but to overpower the defender, for it is assumed that the canon of propriety in the second instance will be satisfied when the defender has fought to the extent of his physical valour. In the first instance, as the defender has matched his very soul against the mere body of the tyrant, the odds are that the soul in the latter will be awakened, and the girl will stand an infinitely greater chance of her honour being protected than in any other conceivable circumstance—barring, of course, that of her own personal courage.

If we are unmanly today, we are so, not because we do not know how to strike, but because we fear to die. He is no follower of Mahavira, the apostle of Jainism, or of Buddha or of the Vedas, who being afraid to die, takes flight before any danger, real or imaginary all the while wishing that some body else would remove the danger by destroying the person causing it. He is no follower of ahimsa (I agree with Lalaji) who does not care a straw if he kills a man by inches by deceiving him in trade, or who will protect by force of arms a few cows and make away with the butcher, or who in order to do a

[1] Lord Gordon of Khartoum (1833-85), British soldier and administrator, a Governor-General of the Sudan; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 29-2-1908.

supposed good to his country does not mind killing off a few officials. All these are actuated by hatred, cowardice and fear. Here love of the cow or the country is a vague thing intended to satisfy one's vanity or soothe a stinging conscience.

Ahimsa, truly understood, is, in my humble opinion, apanacea for all evils mundane and extra-mundane. We can never overdo it. Just at present, we are not doing it at all. Ahimsa does not displace the practice of other virtues, but renders their practice imperatively necessary before it can be practised even in its rudiments. Lalaji need not fear the ahimsa of his father's faith. Mahavira and Buddha were soldiers, and so was Tolstoy. Only they saw deeper and truer in their profession, and found the secret of a true, happy, honourable and godly life. Let us be joint sharers with these teachers and this land of ours will once more be the abode of gods

M. K. GANDHI

The Modern Review, October, 1916

192. THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF EDUCATION[1]

The word 'education' is on everyone's lips these days. The schools—whether Government or private—are packed with students. There is not enough accommodation in colleges. A number of students seeking admission to Gujarat College had to go back disappointed. Despite this infatuation for education, hardly anyone pauses to consider what education really is, whether the education we have so far received has done us any good, or good commensurate with the effort put in. We think as little about the meaning of education, as about its aims and objects! For most people the main aim seems to be to qualify for some kind of a job. Usually, people belonging to different trades or vocations, on receiving this education, give up their traditional modes of earning a livelihood and look instead for jobs and, when they succeed, think that they have risen a step higher. In our schools we find boys belonging to various vocational communities such as masons, blacksmiths, carpenters, tailors, cobblers, etc. But, on receiving education, instead of improving the standards of their traditional vocations, they give them up as

[1] The translation is based on that in *The Problem of Education*, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad.

something inherently inferior and consider it an honour to become clerks. The parents too share this false notion. Thus, disloyal both to caste and to the functions most natural to us, we sink deeper into slavery. During my tours, I found this condition prevailing everywhere in India and it has often made my heart bleed.

Education is not an end in itself but only a means and that alone can be called education which makes us men of character. No one can claim that the education being given in our schools produces this result. Rather, we shall come across many instances of young people having dissipated their character while at school. An impartial English writer has said that as long as there is no continuity between schools and homes in India, the pupils will not have the benefit of either. Our youths learn one thing from parents at home and from the general environment, and another at school. The pattern at school is often found incompatible with that in the home. The lessons in our readers are regarded as of little relevance to conduct. We cannot put the knowledge so acquired to any practical use in our daily life. The parents are indifferent to what is taught at school. The labour spent on studies is considered useless drudgery which has to be gone through that one might take the final examination, and once this is over we manage to forget as quickly as possible what we had studied. The charge levelled against us by some Englishmen that we are mere imitators is not entirely baseless. One of them, in his arrogance, has likened us to blotting-paper in relation to civilization. He believes that as blotting-paper absorbs the superfluous ink, even so we take in only the superfluities, that is the evils of Western civilization. That, indeed, we must admit, is our condition to some extent. Thinking about the causes of this condition, I have come to the conclusion that the chief fault lies in education being imparted to us through the medium of English. It takes about twelve years to get the matriculation certificate. We acquire precious little of knowledge over this long period. Our main effort is not directed towards integrating any such knowledge with our work and putting it to practical use, but towards gaining, somehow, command of the English language. It has been stated by experts that, if what has to be taught to the students up to the matriculation class was imparted to them through their own mother tongue, there would be a saving of at least five years. At this rate, on ten thousand matriculates, the people are put to a loss of fifty thousand years! This is a very grave situation. Not only that, we also impoverish our own languages in this way. When I hear people say—

as they often do— that "Gujarati is a poor language", it makes me feel indignant. If Gujarati, a beloved daughter of Sanskrit, is poor, the fault is not that of the language, but of ourselves who are its guardians. We have neglected it and despised it. How can it then acquire the lustre and strength which it ought to have? A gulf has been created between us and our families. To our parents, to others in our families, to our women, and to our domestics—with whom we live for the greater part of our time—our school education is as some hidden wealth. Its use is denied to them. It should be easy enough for us to see that where conditions are so unnatural, the people can never hope to rise. If we were not mere pieces of blotting-paper, after fifty years of this education we should have witnessed a new spirit in our masses. But we have no bond of understanding with them. They look upon us as modernized and keep away from us and we look upon them as an uncivilized lot and despise them.

Turning to higher education being imparted in colleges, we find the same state of affairs. We waste a good deal of our time there, seeking to put our knowledge on a surer foundation. We begin there to grow indifferent to our own language. Many of us even develop a feeling of contempt towards the mother tongue. We communicate with one another in English, full of errors in pronunciation and grammar. We have not yet coined in our own languages correct technical terms for various sciences, and we do not fully understand the English terms. By the time we have done with our college education, our intelligence loses all vigour and our bodies their strength. The medicine bottle becomes our life-long companion. And yet the people think, and we too, that we are their ornament, their guardians and the makers of their future.

If the young men of Gujarat who pass out of various colleges seriously mean to become as guardians to the people, I should regard them as brave. Although I have drawn a very gloomy picture of our system of education, yet in this gloom lie seeds that may grow into hope. I do not mean to suggest in this article that no Indian should know English. Let us; do what they have done in Russia and what they are doing in South Africa and Japan. In Japan, a few selected people acquire a high knowledge of English, translate whatever is worth importing from European civilization into their own language and so make it accessible to all, thus saving the people from the useless labour of having to learn English themselves. Quite a large number among us are familiar with English. They may further increase their

knowledge of it. And those whose health allows it and whose mental vigour is still intact may undertake to translate into Gujarati such ideas from English and other foreign languages as are likely to do good to our masses. If we strive long enough, we can change the present trend of education and impart the knowledge of new sciences and new ideas only through the medium of Gujarati. It is not impossible to impart the knowledge of the sciences of medicine, navigation and electricity through Gujarati. It is absurd to think that one can have a knowledge of anatomy or perform an operation of bone surgery only after one has acquired a knowledge of English.

Not less than eighty-five per cent of India's population are engaged in agriculture. Ten per cent are engaged in various other crafts and a majority of them are weavers. The remaining five per cent belong to the various professions. If these latter really desire to serve the people, they must acquire some knowledge at least about the occupations of the ninety-five per cent of the people. And it should be the duty of the ninety-five per cent to acquire a proper knowledge of their traditional occupations. If this view be correct, our schools must provide for the teaching of these two occupations—agriculture and weaving —to the pupils from childhood onwards. In order to create the right conditions for imparting a good knowledge of agriculture and weaving, all our schools should be located, not in the densely populated parts of towns or cities, but in places where big farms may be developed and where classes may be conducted in the open air. In such schools, sports for the boys will consist in ploughing the fields. The idea that, if our boys and youths do not have football, cricket and such other games, their life should become too drab is completely erroneous. The sons of our peasants never get a chance to play cricket, but there is no dearth of joy or innocent zest in their life. Thus, it is not difficult to change the present trends in education. Public opinion must be in favour of this change. The Government then will have no option but to introduce changes. 'Those who like the above scheme should come forward to undertake experiments on these lines while public opinion is in the making. When the people see the happy results of these experiments, they will of their own accord want to take them up. I think such experiments will not entail much expenditure. I have not, however, written this article with a commercial mentality. My chief object was to ask readers to consider the meaning of real education and I shall hold my effort to have been duly rewarded if this article is of any help to them.

[From Gujarati]

Samalochak, October, 1916; also *The Problem of Education*

193. THE HINDU CASTE SYSTEM[1]

The Hindu social structure has endured, I believe, on the foundation of the caste system. Sir William Hunter says in his *History of India* that, thanks to the continuing existence of the institution of caste, there has been no need for any law for the poor (pauper law) in India. This seems to me a sound view. The caste system contains within it the seed of swaraj. The different castes are so many divisions of an army. The general does not know the soldiers individually but gets them to work through the respective captains. In like manner, we can carry out social reform with ease through the agency of the caste system and order through it our religious, practical and moral affairs as we choose.

The caste system is a perfectly natural institution. In our country, it has been invested with a religious meaning; elsewhere, its utility was not fully realized and so it remained a mere form, with the result that the countries concerned did not derive much benefit from it. These being my views, I am opposed to the movements which are being carried on for the destruction of the system.

However, any defects in the caste system which we may find must certainly be removed and for that purpose we must first study its real nature. As I pointed out earlier, we have given a religious meaning to the system. It is merely an agency for ensuring self-control. The caste defines the limits within which one may enjoy life; that is to say, we are not free to seek any happiness outside the caste. We do not associate with members of other communities for eating or enter into marriage relationships with them. With an arrangement of this kind, there is a good chance that loose conduct will be kept down. The idea that coming together for purposes of eating promotes friendship is contradicted by experience. If it did, the great war being waged today in Europe would never have started. The bitterest quarrels are among relatives. We have needlessly exaggerated the importance of eating. The process of eating is as unclean as evacuation, the only difference being that, while evacuation ends in a sense of relief, eating, if one's tongue is not held in control, brings

[1] The article was originally published in *Bharat Sevak*, a Marathi monthly, in its issue of October, 1916.

discomfort. Just as we attend to evacuation, etc., in private, we should likewise eat and perform other actions common to all animals always in private. The purpose of eating is to sustain the body. If this statement is correct, obviously, the less ostentation we make about it, the better.

The same thing is true of marriage. Prohibition of marriage with anyone not belonging to one's community promotes self-control, and self-control is conducive to happiness in all circumstances. The larger the area over which the net is cast, the greater the risk. That is the reason why I see nothing wrong in the practice of choosing the husband or the wife from among persons of equal birth. Even in countries where class differentiation does not rest on religion, they guard against hybrid unions. This is the meaning of the phrase 'blue blood' in England. Lord Salisbury[1] used to boast that he belonged to the same stock as Elizabeth. It was a fact which seemed to him and the British people worth being proud of.

In this way, the restrictions in regard to eating and marriage are, as a general rule, wholesome. There is, of course, and there will always be, room for exceptions. This has been accepted by Hindu society, whether it knows the fact or not. Rightly considered, however, there are no exceptions. If I eat in the company of a *Bhangi*[2], there being, from my point of view, greater self-control in doing so, the community should have nothing to do in the matter. Or, if I fail to get a suitable bride from my own community and I am likely, if I remain unmarried, to contract vicious habits, it will, in these circumstances, be an act of self-control on my part to marry a girl of my choice from any community and hence my action will not be a violation of the fundamental principle of the caste system. It would be for me to demonstrate that my purpose in taking such a step in disregard of the general rule was discipline of the flesh, and this would appear from my subsequent conduct. Meanwhile? however, I should not resent being denied the usual privileges that go with membership of a community but ought to continue doing my duty by it.

The caste system has other laws besides those relating to eating and marriage. It has, ready at hand, the means for providing primary education. Every community can make its own arrangements for [such] education. It has machinery for election to the Swaraj Sabha

[1] 1830-1903, Prime Minister of England, 1885-6, 1886-92, and 1895-1902
[2] Sweeper

(Parliament). Every community with some standing may elect its own representatives. It has ready provision for arbitration and tribunals to solve disputes. Each community should itself resolve disputes among its own members. If it becomes necessary to raise an army for war, we have already as many battalions as we have communities. The caste system has struck such deep roots in India that I think it will be far more advisable to try to improve it, rather than uproot it. Some may argue that, if these views about the caste system are right, one will have to admit that the more numerous the communities, the better it would be, and that, if that came about, every ten persons would form a community. There is no substance in this argument. The rise and disappearance of communities does not depend upon the will of particular individuals or groups. In Hindu society, communities have been formed, have disappeared and have gone through improvements according to the needs of the times and the process is taking place even today, visibly or invisibly. The Hindu caste system is not merely an inert, lifeless institution but a living one and has been functioning according to its own law. Unfortunately, today we find it full of evils like ostentation and hypocrisy, pleasure seeking and quarrels. But this only proves that people lack character; we cannot conclude from it that the system itself is bad.

[From Gujarati]

Mahatma Gandhini Vicharsrishti

194. LETTER TO PARAMANAND K. KAPADIA

AHMEDABAD,

Aso Sud 12 [*October 8, 1916*][1]

DEAR PARAMANAND,

I have received your letter. You and your friends may come with pleasure and stay in the Ashram. It would be more convenient if you could bring your bedding, plate and bowl and a jug, Bhai Virchand has also written to me about you.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

PARAMANAND KUNVERJI KAPADIA
MANHAR BUILDING
PRINCESS STREET
BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original G.N. 11583

[1] From the postmark

195. SPEECH AT BOMBAY PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE, AHMEDABAD[1]

October 21, 1916

I am grateful to the Reception Committee for giving me this privilege of proposing the election of the President today. When I was in Delhi some days ago, I happened to read a Persian couplet in the beautiful Divan-e-Am and Divan-e-Khas there[2]. The couplet means ; "If there is a paradise anywhere on this earth, it is here, it is here, it is here." The thoughts which the couplet aroused in me then revive in my mind as I move this proposal. The words proceeded from the pride of kingly power and wealth. There can be no such paradise on this earth, because in the course of time even that place is bound to be destroyed. If, however, we turn to good use this occasion of our meeting, we may some time get into the paradise that is invisible. It is a matter of no little pride for us that moderate and extremist leaders have met together today. India is a country situated in the temperate zone. We desire that this conference should give birth to a temperate party which would secure for us all that we demand. Ahmedabad is a commercial city and it is but natural that its business acumen should be manifest in every undertaking. It has chosen as President a person who holds a respected position in the eyes of both parties. It decided accordingly that it would be in the fitness of things to elect as President a learned Muslim gentleman. This is not for the first time that Ahmedabad has shown such wisdom. It has done so on many previous occasions. Our President, Mr. Jinnah, is an eminent lawyer; he is not only a member of the Legislature but also the President of the biggest Islamic Association in India. He has placed us under a great obligation by accepting the presidentship of this small conference. All of you must have rejoiced at it as much as I have done. We should feel, in regard to all, that they belong to us. The feeling which we outwardly show, that moderates or extermists, Surtis or Kathiawaris or Ahmedabadis, Hindus or Muslims, all are our brethren, should be there in our hearts, Muslims and others will then be so enslaved by our love that there will be no need to establish societies for the protection of animals. Instead, our Muslim brethren

[1] Held on October 21, 22 and 23. M. A. Jinnah presided.

[2] At the Red Fort, Delhi

will of their own accord put a stop to animal slaughter in consideration of the religious susceptibilities of their Hindu brethren. If we develop such feeling, this occasion, indeed the whole movement, will yield the expected result as a matter of course. I know the President's job is like walking on the edge of a sword; let him utilize to the full the advantages he enjoys in virtue of the important position which he occupies. I pray to God to grant him the necessary strength, wisdom and ability to guide the work of this conference.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 29-10-1916

196. SPEECH ON DEFENCE OF INDIA ACT

October 22, 1916

At the Bombay Provincial Conference held in Ahmedabad, Gandhiji moved, on October 22, 1916, the following resolution:

That this Conference views with deep concern and alarm the working of the Defence of India Act as exemplified in the recent cases of Mrs. Besant and others and strongly urges upon Government the immediate necessity of providing in connection with the Defence of India Act the same safeguards as exist in England in relation to the Defence of the Realm Act. It respectfully requests that Government may also be pleased to cancel at an early date the order prohibiting Mrs. Annie Besant from entering the limits of this Presidency.

Speaking in Gujarati, Mr. Gandhi said he thought the only thing Mrs. Besant seemed to have done was that she had been actively conducting the Home Rule agitation in India, and if that was the reason why the Bombay Government had prohibited her, then their late Viceroy Lord Hardinge was equally liable to be prohibited from entering the Presidency because it was His Lordship who had first raised this question. Apart from that, there were three other grounds on which they should stand by Mrs. Besant, viz., gallantry, pity, and self-interest. Government had, as it were, laid its hands on a lady and, as a nation noted for chivalry, they should do all they could do to remove the indignity. Then there was the question of pity. They felt pity for Government because, with all its powers to bring the offending person to justice under the existing laws, it had found it necessary to resort to this measure against a lady. Lastly, the question of self-interest lay in the fact that they wanted Mrs. Besant in their Presidency because nobody could carry on the agitation better

than she. The fact that no reason was given for the Government order was significant. He warmly commended the resolution for acceptance.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-10-1916

197. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
Aso Vad 12 [*October 23, 1916*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I received your two letters together. You will receive this on a new year's day. May the new year help you to know your inner self, help you become an outstanding observer of our vows and give you the strength to realize all these. Please convey my similar wish to Santok and tell her that whatever harsh words I had said were said out of love. . .[2]

We will hold here [special prayer] on Saturday, Sunday and Monday[3]. It has been decided that everyone will get up at 4 a.m. daily and from 5 to 6.30 in the morning, will recite the *Bhagavad Gita*. We have ordered . . .[4] special dry fruit for the occasion. I do not want to do anything more than this .

The school is doing very well. Krishna will return today—there is a letter to that effect from him. Jamnalal has not arrived so far.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Teach Tamil music to Fakiri. We have to see that she is very particular about her Tamil.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32924

[1] The year '1916' is as suggested in the source. *Aso Vad* 12 in that year corresponded to October 23.

[2] A few words are illegible here.

[3] Presumably to celebrate the Gujarati New Year to which Gandhiji refers in the 2nd sentence above; the Gujarati New Year in 1916, began on 27th October, a Friday.

[4] A few words here are illegible in the source.

198. RESOLUTION ON INDENTURE SYSTEM, AHMEDABAD

October 23, 1916

On 23rd October, 1916, the third and concluding day of the Bombay Provincial Conference at Ahmedabad, Gandhiji moved the following resolution:

That this Conference strongly urges the necessity of abolition of the indenture system as early as possible, the system being a form of slavery which socially and politically debases labourers and is seriously detrimental to the economic and moral interests of the country.

Mr. Gandhi, in moving the resolution, spoke in Gujarati explaining the various difficulties existing at present.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-10-1916

199. SPEECH ON VIRAMGAM CUSTOMS CORDON[1]

October 23, 1916

Gandhiji moved the following resolution:

This Conference brings to the special notice of Government the inconvenience, hardship and annoyance caused to persons coming from Kathiawar into British territory by levy of customs duties and especially by the stringency of the rules and the manner of their enforcement for such levy at the Viramgam Railway station and at other stations which border on Gujarat and earnestly prays for the removal of the levy at an early date.[2]

Moving the resolution, Gandhiji said:

The people of Kathiawar are under the authority of two governments. They are subjects of Indian Princes and the latter are subject to the authority of the British Government. The idea behind the levy was to prevent the smuggling of goods from foreign countries. Since arrangements for that purpose exist at the ports, why should the people have to bear this tax? A petition was made by Shri Gokuldas against the customs levy at Ranpur This levy is a source of

[1] At the Bombay Provincial Conference

[2] Reproduced from Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1916, p. 907

great hardship to women. We have endured this kind of thing for twelve years.

[From Gujarati]

Kathiawar Times, 1-11-1916

200. LETTER TO AJIT PRASAD

AHMEDABAD,
November 1, 1916

DEAR MR. AJIT PRASAD,

I well remember having met you at Bombay.

I took action about Pandit Arjan Lal in the early part of the year but I understood then that the Government had positive proof in their possession of a damaging nature. Since then I have become lukewarm. I would like to discuss the matter further with you before taking further steps. I know the argument that we ask not for an unconditional discharge but for a proper trial. The most effective appeal can however be based only on real innocence of the party concerned. If I come to Lucknow during the Congress meet, we shall discuss the whole matter.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 100

201. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M.K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
November 6 [*1916*][1]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Today is the Hindu year's last day. We are therefore all busy as you may imagine. I can only therefore send you our greetings and wish that we may soon join.

With love from all,

Yours,
OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

202. SPEECH ON RAJCHANDRA JAYANTI, WADHWAN[2]

November 9, 1916

Shrimad [Rajchandra] led his life in a spirit of the highest detachment. There are two classes of people in this meeting. In one class are those who look upon Shrimad Rajchandra with a feeling of devotion; and in the other those who are here only as spectators at a show. Whether or not this *jayanti* will be successfully celebrated depends essentially on the former. Those who revere Shrimad should show this reverence in their own dealings. If the followers of Shrimad show themselves virtuous in their behaviour, that would have a great effect on society. Religion rests on conduct. If you can improve your manner of living, you will be able to improve society. Shrimad has had a profound influence on me. I would, therefore, say to his followers that Shrimad's name is in their hands. They should emulate, in the right spirit, the ideals and the conduct of Shrimad. Otherwise, an element of hypocrisy will creep into such *jayanti* celebrations. Strive as much as you can to avoid being hypocritical. If there is a true feeling of devotion in them, those who are here as mere spectators will go back infected by it. The success of a *jayanti* celebration depends

[1] The letter has been placed here serial-wise among those of 1916.
[2] In Saurashtra

essentially on the followers. And it is my humble request that they should prove themselves men of the purest character.

[From Gujarati]

Kathiawar Times, 12-11-1916

203. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M.K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,

November 12 [*1916*][1]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am today in an out-of-the-way place. I had your doleful letter. *You* have lost nothing and therefore *you* have gained nothing. That there has been loss in your affairs is no virtue of yours. You would have prevented the loss if you could have. I appreciate your anxiety to be and feel totally independent before you can live in comfort with me.

All I say is when the agony of the war is over, you will first hasten here and then arrange your programme. That is what I shall hope and pray for. Polak is due any day now. When he arrives I shall confer with him and write to you fully. Meanwhile let this be your comfort. The loss that millions have sustained is nothing compared to yours.[2] And a man's worth is tried not in his prosperity but adversity. Do therefore cheer up.

With deep love,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] From the contents. Polak arrived in Bombay on November 16, 1916, and Gandhiji who went there to receive him had stopped by at Umreth on November 12.

[2] The reference obviously is to the ravages of World War I. The sentence, it would appear, should read: "The loss you have sustained is nothing compared to that of the millions"; vide also"Letter to Dr. Pranjivan Mehta", 11-3-1912

204. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M. K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,

November 14 [*1916*][1]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I cannot get rid of illness from the Ashram. I am making experiments but they do not answer completely. The slightest indulgence tells upon the boys. Naicker, Purshottam (a new boy), Parthasarathy and Ramdas are down and so is Anna's wife. Anna is the Tamil friend who has joined the Ashram. They are most of them down with fever. This is the fever season, but we ought to be immune. This illness taxes me much. The introduction of the Pariah family had already put an undue strain on me and now comes the sickness. However we make merry and go on. Only I should like you to be with me on such occasions. But what are we when we consider the thousands who are just now separated! We must make the best of it and exercise the patience of a Job.

The new bookcase is ready and is a complete success. It looks strong and decent. It is easily portable. Sivpujan and Coopoo have been at it. Evidently you too will be learning cabinet-making there in a way you would not have done elsewhere. Your experiences will all be useful in later life.

With love,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] From the contents

205. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M. K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
December 3, 1916

MY DEAR FRIEND,

So, this will reach you in your new surroundings. You are having the richest experiences of your life. Those of us who are unwilling spectators of this mighty tragedy may, if we will, learn the true lesson of life. You say you have lost during these two years.[1] I am sure you will not have when we come to the end of it all. You have never *wanted* to live an aimless and selfish life. Those who want to find happiness in realizing essential oneness of all life, as I know you do, cannot fail to gain a great deal from the experiences such as you are having. Anyway all you learnt is now being tested in a manner least expected by you or me. But do not worry over your South African affairs. It will be time to do so when the war is over. Your next few letters will now be my special care. Remember 'Lead Kindly Light'. Lay stress upon 'one step enough for me'. It is not given to us to peep into the future. If we but take care of the present, the future will take care of itself.

All but Polak, a member, and I have gone a picknicking today. It is a Sunday and it is at the present moment about 4 p.m. This is our winter season and the weather is superb. This is just the time of the year when one could walk out for the whole day.

With love from us all,

Yours always,
OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1]Vide also "Speech at Farewell Meeting", 9-3-1912.

206. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

AHMEDABAD,
December 12, 1916

MY DEAR WEST,

This is not the draft letter that Polak refers to in his letter to you herewith. But what I am now saying is in substance what is in the draft letter.

We have all thought over your proposal and feel that we can no longer rely upon support from the P. R. fund. The Phoenix trustees are not all agreed upon the support being so received. The Committee here will at the most just tolerate the withdrawal of fund[s] for sustaining *Indian Opinion*. And the public there will also look upon such support with strong disfavour. In the circumstances, we can only fall back upon local support or failing that reduce the paper to any extent we choose. In this matter you should have absolute control. By you, I mean you, Devi[1] and Sam[2] and anyone who may be sent from here.

I observe that Pragji must now leave. He wants to. Bhaga too goes. Chhaganlal is ready to come over and work under you loyally. Or if you will not shoulder the responsibility, he will work the paper with your loyal co-operation. I do hope you will agree to Chhaganlal's return. If you don't, Chhaganlal will come with his family to work on the same terms as above. And if you do not favour Maganlal's return, Manilal and Ramdas can be sent. They of course can only work under your directions. Manilal should find no difficulty in gradually editing the Gujarati part. For the time being, he will simply translate what you want him to.

If you favour Chhaganlal's return, cable simply 'Chhaganlal' and I shall know. If you want Maganlal, cable simply 'Maganlal'. And if you want Manilal and Ramdas, cable simply 'Manilal'. If you want only Manilal, you may cable 'Manilal without Ramdas'.

I shall write later about the accounts. We do not need to publish

[1] The addressee's sister, Ada West; Devi was the Indian name given to her by Gandhiji.

[2] "Sam" was Govindaswami, a machine foreman in the International Printing Press at Phoenix and a shikari.

them now. I have only to inform Mr. Petit how we propose to deal with the balance. Transvaal Indian Women's Association funds are not with me. They are in the balance with you. Even if you disagree, you should bank the amount due separately in consultation with Miss Schlesin and hand the receipt to her. They want it banked to bear interest. And they are right.

Polak has gone to Madras. I am preparing for the Congress. I want to write on many matters, not about the press or Phoenix. But this must wait till after my return from Lucknow.

I wrote[1] to Pragji when he told me that you all did not want Chhaganlal, that I would not send him. So said Polak too. But after consultation with Chhaganlal and examining the situation here, I came to the conclusion that I must at least let you know it and let you decide one way or the other.

With love to you all,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4425. Courtesy: A. H. West

207. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M.K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,

December 17, 1916

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have two letters from you together. I hope that by the time this reaches you, uncertainty about your fate will have vanished and that you would feel settled so far as it is possible to feel like that in these times. You have added up your gains and losses. It is a difficult task. We often deceive ourselves and what may appear to be losses may be gains in reality and *vice versa.* The measure of progress is the measure of resistance to temptations. The world may judge us by a single fall. But we might in spite thereof have risen if we have resisted numerous temptations previous to the fall and after the fall we are conscious of it and sincerely desirous of retracing the steps. To count losses and

[1] This letter is not available.

gains therefore is not an easy matter by any means.

Dr. Mehta has been here for a few days. Polak is returning tomorrow from Madras. Manilal and Ramdas will be soon with me, as they will be going to South Africa to help West. I think I have already informed you of this move. Of the four boys I shall therefore have only Devdas.

With best love,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

208. SPEECH AT MUIR COLLEGE ECONOMIC SOCIETY, ALLAHABAD[1]

December 22, 1916

Mr. M. K. Gandhi delivered an instructive lecture on 'Does economic progress clash with real progress?' at a meeting of the Muir Central College Economic Society held on Friday evening in the physical science theatre. The Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya presided. There was a good gathering of ladies and gentlemen, European and Indian, besides a large number of students. Among those present were Dr. E. G. Hill, the Hon. Dr. Sundar Lal, the Hon. Mr. A. W. Pim, the Hon. Mr. H. C. Ferard, the Hon. Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru, the Hon. Mr. E. H. Ashworth, Mr. H. S. L. Polak, Prof. Gidwani, Prof. Stanley Jevons, Prof. Higginbottom, the Hon. Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, Mr. B. H. Bourdillon, Mr. Mackenzie, Prof. Moody, Prof. Dunn, Prof. Redford, Pandit Baldeo Ram Dave, Mr. Lalit Mohan Banerji, Pandit Rama Kant

[1] Amaranatha Jha's Diary has the following entries:

December 22, 1916

From 3 to 5 stayed at Malaviyaji's house, talking to Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Polak. Then to the college physics theatre where Mr. Gandhi read his paper before the Economic Society. I took his paper from him which was written on sheets on which was printed his South African address, "Tolstoy Farm, Johannesburg". He asked me to request Mr. Chintamani [Editor, *The Leader*] to send to him the proofs for correction

December 23, 1916

From 11 to 4 stayed at Malaviyaji's house, talking to Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Polak, Ramdas Gandhi, Mr. Medh (who has been several times to jail for passive resistance). Mr. Chintamani sent the proofs of Mr. Gandhi's lecture for correction. I asked for and obtained from Mr. Gandhi the original manuscript. He said, "This lecture is worthier of the waste-paper basket than your desk." —*Amaranatha Jha: A Memorial Volume,* Ed. K.K. Mehrotra,

Malaviya, Pandit Radha Kant Malaviya, Rai Braj Narain Gurtu, Mr. Kichlu, Mr. Shamnath Mushran, Mr. Iswar Saran, Babu Shiva Prasad Gupta, Prof. Sri Prakash, Prof. Ojha, Prof. Karwell, Prof. Thompson, Dr. M. C. Tandon, Mr. Purushottam Das Tandon, Mr. Jagjivan Nath Takru.

Dr. Hill proposed the Hon. Pandit Malaviya to the chair and welcomed Mr. Gandhi in their midst.

The Hon. Pandit Malaviya in introducing Mr. Gandhi said that his was a name honoured throughout India and wherever Indians lived. His name was also appreciated by a large number of Europeans who understood his character. It was always an instruction to him to read of the work he had done and of the life he had led.

Mr. Gandhi then delivered the following lecture:

When I accepted Mr. Kapildeva Malaviya's invitation to speak to you upon the subject of this evening, I was painfully conscious of my limitations. You are an economic society. You have chosen distinguished specialists for the subjects included in your syllabus for this year and the next. I seem to be the only speaker ill-fitted for the task set before him. Frankly and truly, I know very little of economics, as you naturally understand them. Only the other day, sitting at an evening meal, a civilian friend deluged me with a series of questions on my crankisms. As he proceeded in his cross-examination, I being a willing victim, he found no difficulty in discovering my gross ignorance of the matters. I appeared to him to be handling with a cocksureness worthy only of a man who knows not that he knows not. To his horror and even indignation, I suppose, he found that I had not even read books on economics by such well-known authorities as Mill, Marshall, Adam Smith and a host of such other authors. In despair, he ended by advising me to read these works before experimenting in matters economic at the expense of the public. He little knew that I was a sinner past redemption. My experiments continue at the expense of trusting friends. For, there come to us moments in life when about some things we need no proof from without. A little voice within us tells us, "You are on the right track, move neither to your left nor right, but keep to the straight and narrow way." With such help we march forward slowly indeed, but surely and steadily. That is my position. It may be satisfactory enough for me, but it can in no way answer the requirements of a society such as yours. Still it was no use my struggling against Mr. Kapildeva Malaviya. I knew that he was intent upon having me to engage your attention for one of your

evenings. Perhaps you will treat my intrusion as a welcome diversion from the trodden path. An occasional fast after a series of sumptuous feasts is often a necessity. And as with the body, so, I imagine, is the case with the reason. And if your reason this evening is found fasting instead of feasting, I am sure it will enjoy with the greater avidity the feast that Rao Bahadur Pandit Chandrika Prasad has in store for you for the 12th of January.

Before I take you to the field of my experiences and experiments, it is perhaps best to have a mutual understanding about the title of this evening's address: *Does economic progress clash with real progress*? By economic progress, I take it, we mean material advancement without limit and by real progress we mean moral progress, which again is the same thing as progress of the permanent element in us. The subject may therefore be stated thus: "Does not moral progress increase in the same proportion as material progress?" I know that this is a wider proposition than the one before us. But I venture to think that we always mean the larger one even when we lay down the smaller. For we know enough of science to realise that there is no such thing as perfect rest or repose in this visible universe of ours. If therefore material progress does not clash with moral progress, it must necessarily advance the latter. Nor can we be satisfied with the clumsy way in which sometimes those who cannot defend the larger proposition put their case. They seem to be obsessed with the concrete case of thirty millions of India stated by the late Sir William Wilson Hunter to be living on one meal a day. They say that before we can think or talk of their moral welfare, we must satisfy their daily wants. With these, they say, material progress spells moral progress. And then is taken a sudden jump: what is true of thirty millions is true of the universe. They forget that hard cases make bad law. I need hardly say to you how ludicrously absurd this deduction would be. No one has ever suggested that grinding pauperism can lead to anything else than moral degradation. Every human being has a right to live and therefore to find the wherewithal to feed himself and where necessary to clothe and house himself. But, for this very simple performance, we need no assistance from economists or their laws.

"Take no thought for the morrow"[1] is an injuction which finds an echo in almost all the religious scriptures of the world. In

[1] *St. Matthew*, VI, 34

well-ordered society, the securing of one's livelihood should be and is found to be the easiest thing in the world. Indeed, the test of orderliness in a country is not the number of millionaires it owns, but the absence of starvation among its masses. The only statement that has to be examined is whether it can be laid down as a law of universal application that material advancement means moral progress.

Now let us take a few illustrations. Rome suffered a moral fall when it attained high material affluence. So did Egypt and so perhaps most countries of which we have any historic record. The decendants, kinsmen of the royal and divine Krishna, too, fell when they were rolling in riches. We do not deny to the Rockefellers and the Carnegies possession of an ordinary measure of morality but we gladly judge them indulgently. I mean that we do not even expect them to satisfy the highest standard of morality. With them material gain has not necessarily meant moral gain. In South Africa, where I had the privilege of associating with thousands of our countrymen on most intimate terms, I observed almost invariably that the greater the possession of riches, the greater was their moral turpitude. Our rich men, to say the least, did not advance the moral struggle of passive resistance as did the poor. The rich men's sense of self-respect was not so much injured as that of the poorest. If I were not afraid of treading on dangerous ground, I would even come nearer home and show you that possession of riches has been a hindrance to real growth. I venture to think that the scriptures of the world are far safer and sounder treatises on laws of economics than many of the modern text-books. The question we are asking ourselves this evening is not a new one. It was addressed to Jesus two thousand years ago. St. Mark[1] has vividly described the scene. Jesus is in his solemn mood; he is earnest. He talks of eternity. He knows the world about him. He is himself the greatest economist of his time. He succeeded in economising time and space—he transcended them. It is to him at his best that one comes running, kneels down, and asks: "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" And Jesus said unto him: "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God. Thou knowest the commandments. Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother." And he answered and said unto him: "Master, all these have I observed from my youth." Then Jesus

[1] Ch. X, *verses* 17-31

beholding him, loved him and said unto him: "One thing thou lackest. Go thy way, sell whatever thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven—come take up the cross and follow me." And he was sad at that saying and went away grieved—for he had great possessions. And Jesus looked round about and said unto his disciples: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God." And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again and saith unto them: "Children, how hard it is for them that trust in riches to enter into the kindgom of God. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God !" Here you have an eternal rule of life stated in the noblest words the English language is capable of producing. But the disciples nodded unbelief as we do even to this day. To him they said as we say today: "But look how the law fails in practice. If we sell all and have nothing, we shall have nothing to eat. We must have money or we cannot even be reasonably moral." So they state their case thus. "And they were astonished out of measure saying among themselves: 'Who then can be saved?'" And Jesus looking upon them saith: "With men it is impossible but not with God, for with God all things are possible." Then Peter began to say unto him: "Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee." And Jesus answered and said: "Verily I say unto you there is no man that has left house or brethren or sisters; or father or mother, or wife or children or lands for my sake and the Gospels, but he shall receive one hundred fold, now in this time houses and brethren and sisters and mothers and children and lands with persecutions and in the world to come eternal life. But many that are first shall be last and the last first." You have here the result or reward, if you prefer the term, of following the law. I have not taken the trouble of copying similar passages from the other non Hindu scriptures and I will not insult you by quoting in support of the law stated by Jesus passages from the writings and sayings of our own sages, passages even stronger if possible than the Biblical extracts I have drawn your attention to. Perhaps the strongest of all the testimonies in favour of the affirmative answer to the question before us are the lives of the greatest teachers of the world. Jesus, Mahomed, Buddha, Nanak, Kabir, Chaitanya, Shankara, Dayanand, Ramakrishna were men who exercised an immense influence over and moulded the character of thousands of men. The world is the richer for their having lived in it. And they were all men who deliberately embraced poverty as their lot.

I should not have laboured my point as I have done, if I did not believe that, in so far as we have made the modern materialistic craze our goal, in so far are we going downhill in the path of progress. I hold that economic progress in the sense I have put it is antagonistic to real progress. Hence the ancient ideal has been the limitation of activities promoting wealth. This does not put an end to all material ambition. We should still have, as we have always had, in our midst people who make the pursuit of wealth their aim in life. But we have always recognised that it is a fall from the ideal. It is a beautiful thing to know that the wealthiest among us have often felt that to have remained voluntarily poor would have been a higher state for them. That you cannot serve God and Mammon is an economic truth of the highest value. We have to make our choice. Western nations today are groaning under the heel of the monster-god of materialism. Their moral growth has become stunted. They measure their progress in £. s. d. American wealth has become the standard. She [*sic*] is the envy of the other nations. I have heard many of our countrymen say that we will gain American wealth but avoid its methods. I venture to suggest that such an attempt if it were made is foredoomed to failure. We cannot be 'wise, temperate and furious'[1] in a moment. I would have our leaders to teach us to be morally supreme in the world. This land of ours was once, we are told, the abode of the gods. It is not possible to conceive gods inhabiting a land which is made hideous by the smoke and the din of null chimneys and factories and whose roadways are traversed by rushing engines dragging numerous cars crowded with men mostly who know not what they are after, who are often absent-minded, and whose tempers do not improve by being uncomfortably packed like sardines in boxes and finding themselves in the midst of utter strangers who would oust them if they could and whom they would in their turn oust similarly. I refer to these things because they are held to be symbolical of material progress. But they add not an atom to our happiness. This is what Wallace, the great scientist, has said as his deliberate Judgement.

> In the earliest records which have come down to us from the past, we find ample indications that general ethical considerations and conceptions, the accepted standard of morality, and the conduct resulting from these were in no degree inferior to those which prevail to-day.

[1] "Who can be wise, amazed, temperate and furious,/ Loyal and neutral, in a moment?/No man."—*Macbeth*, II, iii.

In a series of chapters, he then proceeds to examine the position of the English nation under the advance in wealth it has made. He says:

> This rapid growth of wealth and increase of our power over nature put too great a strain upon our crude civilization, on our superficial Christianity, and it was accompanied by various forms of social immorality almost as amazing and unprecedented.

He then shows how factories have risen on the corpses of men, women and children, how as the country has rapidly advanced in riches, it has gone down in morality. He shows this by dealing with insanitation, life-destroying trades, adulteration, bribery and gambling. He shows how, with the advance of wealth, justice has become immoral, deaths from alcoholism and suicide have increased. the average of premature births and congenital defects has increased, and prostitution has become an institution. He concludes his examination by these pregnant remarks:

> The proceedings of the divorce courts show other aspects of the result of wealth and leisure, while a friend who had been good deal inLondon society assured me that both in country houses and in London various kinds of orgies were occasionally to be met with which would hardly have been surpassed in the period of the most dissolute emperors. Of war, too, I need say nothing. It has always been more or less chronic since the rise of the Roman Empire; but there is now undoubtedly a disinclination for war among all civilized peoples. Yet the vast burden of armaments, taken together with the most pious declarations in favour of peace, must be held to show an almost total absence of morality as a guiding principle among the governing classes.

Under the British aegis, we have learnt much, but it is my firm belief that there is little to gain from Britain in intrinsic morality, that if we are not careful, we shall introduce all the vices that she has been a prey to, owing to the disease of materialism. We can profit by that connection only if we keep our civilization, and our morals, straight, i.e., if instead of boasting of the glorious past, we express the ancient moral glory in our own lives and let our lives bear witness to our past. Then we shall benefit her and ourselves. If we copy her because she provides us with rulers, both they and we shall suffer degradation. We need not be afraid of ideals or of reducing them to practice even to the uttermost. Ours will only then be a truly spiritual nation when we shall show more truth than gold, greater fearlessness than pomp of power and wealth, greater charity than love of self. If we will but clean

town houses, our palaces and temples of the attributes of wealth and show in them the attributes of morality, we can offer battle to any combinations of hostile forces without having to carry the burden of a heavy militia. Let us seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and the irrevocable promise is that everything will be added with us. These are real economics. May you and I treasure them and enforce them in our daily life.

An interesting discussion followed in the course of which several students put questions to the lecturer. . . .

Prof. Jevons said . . . . It was necessary for economists to exist. It was not their business to lay down what the end should be. That was the business of philosophers. . . .

Prof. Gidwani, president of the society, thanked the lecturer for his address. . . .

Prof. Higginbottom said that there was no economic problem which could be separated from the moral problem. .

Mr. Gandhi in the course of his remarks referred to Mr. Jevons' remark about the need for economist and said that it was said that dirt was matter misplaced. So also when an economist was misplaced, he was hurtful. He certainly thought that the economist had a place in the economy of nature when he occupied the humble sphere for which he was created. If an economist did not investigate the laws of God and show them how to distribute wealth so that there might not be poverty, he was a most unwelcome intrusion on the Indian soil. He would also suggest for the reflection of their economic students and professors that what might be good for England and America need not necessarily be good for India. He thought that most of the economic laws which were consistent with moral laws were of universal application, but there might be in their restricted application some distinction and difference. So he would utter the note of warning that Indian conditions being in some respects so essentially different from the English and American conditions, it was necessary to bring to bear on the matters that presented themselves to the economists a fresh mind. If they did so, both Indians and the economists would derive benefit. Mr. Higginbottom, he said, was studying the real economics that were so necessary for India and reducing his studies inch by inch to practice and that was the safest guide to follow, whether they were students or professors. Referring to a question by a student, he said that a man should not hoard money for selfish ends, but if he wished to hoard money as a trustee for the millions of India, he would say that he might have as much riches as he could. Ordinarily, economists prescribed laws for the rich people. It was against those economists that he would always cry out.

As regards another question, whether factories should not be replaced by

cottage industries, Mr. Gandhi spoke approvingly of the suggestion but said that the economists should first of all examine with patience their indigenous institutions. If they were rotten, they must be wiped but and if there were remedies which could be suggested for their betterment, they should improve them.

As regards intercourse with other nations, he said that he did not think that they necessarily advanced one little bit in their moral growth by bringing their masses with others into physical contact and pointed to Indians in South Africa as an instance. The rapid locomotion such as steamers, trains and others dislocated so many of their ideals and created a great deal of mischief.

As regards the question what was the minimum and the maximum wealth a man should have—he would answer in the words of Jesus, Ramkrishna and others who said 'none'.

The Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya in his concluding remarks offered a cordial vote of thanks to Mr. Gandhi for his excellent address. The ideals which Mr. Gandhi put before them, he said, were so high that he did not expect that all of them would be prepared to subscribe to all of them. But he was sure they would agree with the main object he put before them, namely, that they should go for the welfare of man as the test of all economic questions with which they dealt. . . .

The Leader, 25-12-1916

209. SPEECH AT ALLAHABAD ON EDUCATION, ANCIENT AND MODERN

December 23, 1916

Mr. Gandhi addressed in Hindi a public meeting at Allahabad at Munshi Ram Prasad's garden under the chairmanship of the Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. The gathering was a record one even for Munshi Ram Prasad's garden where some of the largest public meetings have been held.

Mr. Gandhi, who on rising was greeted with loud and prolonged cheers, said that that he should have felt difficulty—of which he was ashamed—in addressing the meeting in Hindi, was a striking commentary on the system of modern education which was a part of the subject of his lecture that evening. He would, however, prefer to speak in Hindi although he had greater facility of expression in English. Describing the modern system of education, he said that real education was considered to have begun at the college at the age of 16 or 17. The education received in school was not useful. For instance, an Indian student, while he knew well the geography of England, did not possess a sufficient knowledge of the geography of his own country. This history of India which they were taught was greatly distorted. Government

service was the aim of their education. Their highest ambition was to become members of the Imperial Legislative Council. The boys abandoned their hereditary occupations, and forsook their mother tongue. They were adopting the English language, European ideas and European dress. They thought in English, conducted all their political and social work and all commercial transactions, etc., in English and thought that they could not do without the English language. They had come to think that there was no other road. Education through English had created a wide gulf between the educated few and the masses. It had created a gulf in the families also. An English-educated man had no community of feelings and ideas with the ladies of his family. And, as had been said, the aspirations of the English-educated men were fixed on Government service and at the most on membership of the Imperial Legislative Council. He for one could never commend a system of education which produced such a state of things and men educated under such system could not be expected to do any great service to the country. Mr. Gandhi did not mean that the English-educated leaders did not feel for the masses. On the other hand, he acknowledged that the Congress and other great public movements were initiated and conducted by them. But, at the same time, he could not help feeling that the work done during all these years would have been much more and much greater progress would have been made if they had been taught in their mother tongue. It was unfortunate, said the speaker, that a feeling had come over them that there was no path to progress other than that which I was being followed. They found themselves helpless. But it was not manliness to assume all attitude of helplessness.

Mr. Gandhi then described the ancient system of education and said that even elementary education imparted by the village teacher taught the student all that was necessary for their occupations. Those who went in for higher education became fully conversant with the science of wealth, *Artha Shastra*, ethics and religion, *Dharma Shastra*. In ancient times, there were no restrictions on education. It was not controlled by the State but was solely in the hands of the Brahmins who shaped the system of education solely with an eye to the welfare of the people. It was based on restraint and *brahmacharya*. It was due to such a system of education that Indian civilization had outlived so many vicissitudes through thousands of years, while such ancient civilizations as those of Greece, Rome and Egypt had become extinct. No doubt the wave of a new civilization had been passing through India. But he was sure that it was transitory, it would soon pass away and Indian civilization would be revivified. In ancient times, the basis of life was self-restraint but now it was enjoyment. The result was that people had become powerless cowards and forsook the truth. Having come under the influence of another civilization, it might be necessary to adapt our own civilization in certain respects to our new environment but we should not make any radical change in a civilization which was acknowledged even by some western scholars to be the best. It might be urged that it was necessary to

adopt the methods and instruments of western civilization to meet the material forces of that civilization. But the forces born of spirituality, the bedrock of Indian civilization, were more than a match for material forces. India was pre-eminently the land of religion. It was the first and the last duty of Indians to maintain it as such. They should draw their strength from the soul, from God. If they adhered to that path, *swarajya* which they were aspiring to and working for would become their handmaid.

The Leader, 27-12-1916*;* also *Mahatma Gandhi: His Life, Writings & Speeches,* pp. 192-5

210. SPEECH AT LUCKNOW CONGRESS

December 28, 1916

Mr. M. K. Gandhi (Bombay) moving Resolution No. IX on "Indentured Labour" on 28th December 1916 at the 31st Indian National Congress Session held at Lucknow said:

MR. PRESIDENT, BROTHER-DELEGATES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I notice that there is an appeal made to me by my Tamil brethren that I should speak to them in English and I am going partly to accede to their importunity, but I want to make an appeal in return that during the next year if they do not learn the *lingua franca*, which I know will be the *lingua franca* ("Hear, hear"), when swaraj is granted to the whole of India, if you do not do so during the ensuing year, you will do so at your peril, so far as I am concerned. (Cheers.) I shall read the resolution in English, which I propose to read afterwards in Hindi also. The resolution runs as follows: (a) This Congress strongly urges that indentured emigration should be stopped by prohibiting the recruitment of such labour within the ensuing year.

(b) In the opinion of this Congress, it is highly desirable that at least one representative Indian selected after consultation with associations voicing Indian public opinion be appointed by the Government of India to take part in the forthcoming inter-departmental Conference to be held in London for the consideration of this question.

(c) This Congress earnestly requests that the reports of Mr. Marjoribanks and Hon'ble Mr. Thambi Marakkyar and of the inter-departmental Committee be published for general

information and discussion before any action is taken thereupon.

The pressmen and the delegates who have copies of the resolution with them will kindly note that there is a verbal alteration in clause (a), that instead of the word "during", the resolution will read "within". It is made at the instance of a friend who is afraid that the Government might consider that we would be satisfied if indentured emigration was suspended during the ensuing year, whereas our meaning is that it should be abolished for ever. In clause (b) also, you will note that there is an addition of the word "Indian" before the words "public opinion".

Mr. Gandhi read the resolution in Hindi and explained the object of the resolution.

Report of the Thirty-first Indian National Congress, pp. 62-3

211. SPEECH AT ALL-INDIA COMMON SCRIPT AND COMMON LANGUAGE CONFERENCE, LUCKNOW[1]

December 29, 1916

What I have got to say I shall say afterwards. I shall begin with the lessons I have learnt from the speakers who have preceded me. I hail from Gujarat. My Hindi is broken. I speak to you, brothers, in that broken Hindi of mine, because even if I speak a little of English, I have the feeling that I am committing a sin. I need not speak to you about the glories of Hindi. Your desire to hear from me about the glories of Hindi is as if someone who regularly bathes in the Ganga should invoke that river to come to him. If someone living in Rajputana were to make such a supplication, it would be different. That you should study Hindi and master Devnagari is not for me to tell you. It is as absurd as asking Muslims to learn Urdu. You say, I am a man not of speech but of action. Then do what I say. Gentlemen, you see that the Christian Literature Depot and Bible Society is going all round the world. It scatters its books everywhere. It has them translated into all the languages and then distributes them at the right places. Even to the aborigines and working people in Africa it provides the Bible in their own languages. It spends crores of rupees on this job. They do not simply hold conferences like we do.

[1] Gandhi presided at the Conference.

Sometimes they do meet but only to collect money or to submit their reports. If we had men to teach Hindi, to do work, even the people of Madras would be knowing Hindi today. It is not mere conferences but work that we need—work such as the Christian Literature Depot and Bible Society is doing. All work requires money. But there is no paucity of money. There is paucity only of workers. If we have workers, people in Gujarat, Madras, South India and elsewhere can learn Hindi. Let more and more books be translated into Hindi, let people go out and teach, and let those coming in be taught. If workers are sent to the South or to Gujarat to teach and disseminate Hindi, they will not be entirely unpaid, they will get subsistence wages. In olden times, the age of the *rishis*, there was great self-sacrifice, and learning was imparted without payment. I wanted to learn Hindi but found no one in Ahmedabad to teach me. I learnt my Hindi from a Gujarati gentleman who had only a working knowledge of the language and who had spent 15 or 20 years in Benares. If the conference sends out men, a large number of people will be able to learn Hindi. You want swaraj. So do I. But the way to gain swaraj is a different one altogether [from what is usually adopted]. Swaraj cannot be got by mere talking. You must first do some work yourselves and then only seek aid from the Government. Government aid will not be forthcoming before that. If you first go forward on your own, the Government will follow you. A Government never of itself takes the first step. You go out and teach Hindi to people and put in earnest work. Only when you have done some work will the Government listen to you, otherwise it will throw your applications aside. The task is a big one, but if you have the will you can construct the edifice of swaraj. Panditji (Malaviyaji) has dwelt at length on our past glory. English first had a vocabulary of a thousand words. Now it has increased to a hundred thousand. There are books in that language on all subjects, such as jurisprudence, medicine, etc. People say Hindi has nothing and that we cannot do without English. At times people have to put up with great inconvenience owing to ignorance of English. I grant that it is so. On the trains people have to suffer much on account of English. So much so, that people like me get pushed about for speaking Hindi. But those who have work to do cannot take notice of it. However backward Hindi may be as compared to English, we must advance its status. Our ancient *rishis* lived under rigid rules of conduct. They showed great self-sacrifice. We must gird up our loins and do them honour by renouncing all self-interest. In Government

councils English alone counts. It is said that the Viceroy and others know no language except English and that therefore it is necessary to use only English. But I assert that if I know how to speak and if there is something in my speech from which the Viceroy may benefit, he will certainly hear it even if it is made in Hindi. If necessary he will get it translated. Or a C.I.D. man will come and take a report of it. It is from the people themselves that I ask for swaraj If you have received this swaraj from the people, you will get it also from the Government. Once you have done this, you will become truly fearless and your aspirations will be fulfilled.

[From Hindi]

Pratap, 1-1-1917

212. PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS AT ALL-INDIA COMMON SCRIPT AND COMMON LANGUAGE CONFERENCE, LUCKNOW

December 29, 1916

BROTHERS,

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya has dwelt at length on the past glory of Hindi. But this in itself will not make for the spread of the National Language. You cannot get the merit of a dip in the Bhagirathi[1] by merely saying that the glory of the Bhagirathi is great. *Bhagirath prayatna*[2] is required if we want Hindi to spread. Which language do you employ when you petition the Viceroy or the Government? If you have not been employing Hindi, do so now. You may say that you will not be heard if you use that language. I say to you: Speak in your language, write in your language. If they have got to hear what you say, they shall hear. I will say what I have to say in my own language. He who has to listen will listen. If you act on this resolve, the status of Hindi will rise. Hindi has not made much headway in all provinces so far. The *rashtra-bhasha*[3] is not yet popular in the *rashtra-sabha*[4]. Whose fault is it? I say it is yours. I

[1] Bhagirath, after heroic efforts, brought down the Ganga from heaven; hence the river is also called Bhagirathi.

[2] Herculean efforts

[3] National language

[4] National Congress

needed and still need some one knowing Hindi to teach me the language. But there was none to be found in Ahmedabad who could give lessons to me and to those in my Ashram. Hindi has not spread in Madras yet. You have made no effort to that end. Please find five or ten people who will go to Madras and spread Hindi. Pay them proper remuneration. It is not difficult to find the funds for, after all, you spend so much money on these conferences. If such an effort is made, Hindi is bound to spread everywhere.

[From Hindi]

Mahatma Gandhi by Ramchandra Varma

213. INTERVIEW AT LUCKNOW

[About *December 29/31, 1916*]

NATIONAL LANGUAGE

Q. Do you consider it necessary that the business of the Congress should be conducted in Hindi, our national language?

A. I do. So long as public business is not conducted in Hindi, the country cannot make progress. So long as the Congress does not use Hindi for all its work, swaraj is not possible.

Q. But how can it be possible for people of all the provinces all of a sudden to learn Hindi and start speaking it?

A. I do not say that the provinces should all give up their own languages and start speaking, and writing Hindi. In provincial matters, the provincial languages may be used. But national questions ought to be deliberated in the national language only. It is not a very difficult mater. It can be easily done. We should use Hindi for the work that we are today doing in English.

SWARAJ OF CONGRESS

Q. What do you think of the swaraj resolution passed by the Congress and the way it is going to be implemented

A. It may be good or it may be bad, but I do not have any high opinion of it.

Q. Why so?

A. Because ill-will is inherent in it.

Q. There wouldn't seem to be any ill-will in it and if it has it is only towards

the bureaucracy.

A. It may be towards the bureaucracy, but it is ill-will all the same. Therefore I have no high opinion of it. But I cannot say that the venture is unworthy or that it will fail. Ill-will does not everywhere do harm. Ill-will has to be shown towards ill-will when we wish to remove it from our hearts. But this is not my way. This is not the Indian way—the ancient, traditional way; this is the Western way.

Q. Then what is your or rather our own Indian way?

A. We shall not go into it now.

INSTITUTION OF "VARNASHRAM"

Q. What are your views on the system of the four *varnas*?

A. It is a very good institution. It has done much good to the country. It must be preserved.

Q. If there are only four *varnas* in Hindu society and if they are to remain as they are, in which *varna* would you include the untouchable castes?

A. The untouchable castes owe their existence to the excesses of the system. The four *varnas* ostracised them through undue excesses. Their place is inside the system.

Q. If that is so, in which *varna* ought they to be placed?

Answering this question, Gandhiji explained at length how in the normal flow of society they would all find the *varnas* to which they were entitled.

"SHUDDHI" MOVEMENT OF ARYA SAMAJ

Q. What will be the solution of the Hindu-Muslim question?

A. This question cannot be solved finally. What happened in other countries will happen here. Hindus and Muslims will remain as two communities and this will do no harm to the country.

Q. The Arya Samaj converts Muslims to Hinduism through *shuddhi*. If this practice does not violate religion and if one can conceive that through it all the Muslims can become Hindus, will it not solve the question?

A. But it is not the right path. It is not the path of religion. It is not natural and the dream of converting all the Muslims to Hinduism is a vain one.

[From Hindi]

Mahatma Gandhi by Ramchandra Varma

214. SPEECH AT MUSLIM LEAGUE CONFERENCE, LUCKNOW

December 31, 1916

The Muslim League resumed its sitting this morning, the attendance being as large as yesterday. Mr. Wazir Hassan, Secretary of the League, presented the report of the reform committee appointed at Bombay last year. The report was on the same lines as the report that was placed before the National Congress this year.

A resolution protesting against the treatment of Indians in the Colonies was next put from the chair (Mr. Jinnah) and carried.

At this stage, Mr. Gandhi who was present at the meeting was asked to address the meeting.

He exhorted them to conduct their proceedings in Urdu if they wished to carry out their resolution to maintain Urdu as the *lingua franca* of India. He further urged them to take some interest in Hindu literature which would enable them to arrive at a permanent rapprochement with the Hindus. In the Colonies, Hindus and Mussalmans had always co-operated in taking concerted measures and, if that example was followed in India, the coveted prize would soon be theirs. He also advised them that in the course of their propaganda they should not be afraid of the Government because it was in the nature of Englishmen to bow before the strong and ride over the weak.

The Leader, 3-1-1917

215. FRAGMENT OF LETTER[1]

[*1916*][2]

. . keep in. . . . At present, your work is to supervise everything, assign everyone his work and, finishing the accounts, you have to train Mr. Fulchand[3] [in accounts][4]. If buttermilk does not agree with everyone and they all prefer *rab*[5], go back to it. The general level of health is good these days. We don't want to lose it. The harmonium must have arrived by now. Sankalchandbhai[6] had promised to look

[1] The first two pages are not available.

[2] The letter appears to have been written in 1916. The exact date cannot be ascertained.

[3] Fulchand Kasturchand Shah, a political and constructive worker of Saurashtra

[4] *Vide* "Fragment of Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", before 19-2-1917.

[5] A semi-liquid preparation of wheat

[6] Sankalchand Shah, formerly Professor of Physics, Gujarat College, Ahmedabad; later, took charge of Gandhiji's National School

for the land; remind him of that. Go and look at the small farm of the Orphanage. I am trying again to secure it. We should consider whether it will serve our purpose.

Blessings from

BAPU

Read the accompanying letter[1] and send it on to Jamnadas.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5694. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

216. LETTER TO V. G. SARAIYA

AHMEDABAD,

Posh Sud 10 [*January 3, 1917*][2]

I returned from Lucknow[3] only last night. You should bear whatever happens in patience and even submit to death while maintaining moral principles. There is no other consolation I can give.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

BHAI VRIJLAL GOVINDLAL SARAIYA

TODA POLE IN RAJA MEHTA POLE

AHMEDABAD

From the original post card in Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 2820. Courtesy: Vinaychandra Govindlal Saraiy

[1] Not available
[2] From the postmark
[3] After attending the Congress session held in December, 1916

217. LETTER TO SAM HIGGINBOTTOM

AHMEDABAD,
January 4, 1917

DEAR MR. HIGGINBOTTOM,

I have just returned to find the book so kindly sent by you. I thank you for it. Can you now pay the promised visit to the Ashram? If you can come, will you address a public meeting?

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: Higginbottom Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

218. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

AHMEDABAD,
January 11, 1917

DEAR ESTHER[1],

I was delighted to have your note from Bombay. I assure you that we miss you both very much. You were hardly guests to us; you had become members of the family. Hope Miss Peterson[2] is quite herself again. I redirected a batch of letters yesterday and am doing likewise today.

With regards to both of you,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

My Dear Child, p. 3

[1] Miss Esther Faering and Miss Anne Marie Peterson, members of the staff of the Danish Missionary Society in South India, had visited Gandhiji's Ashram as a preparation for their educational work. Esther grew to be like a daughter to Bapu; *vide* "Letter to Esther Faering", 15-4-1917 & 17-4-1917.

[2] *ibid*

219. LETTER TO KALYANJI MEHTA

AHMEDABAD,
Posh Vad 4 [*January 12, 1917*][1]

I write this assuming that you are still in Surat. I wonder if you have purposely dropped the matter about the customs cordon at Viramgam. The rest seems all right. A resolution can also be passed saying that education should be given through the mother tongue. It is very difficult for me just now to leave Ahmedabad. What can I do by going there? I would request you to leave me alone.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

I am returning the copy of the resolutions.

BHAISHRI KALYANJI VITHALBHAI MEHTA[2]
PATEL BANDHU OFFICE
SURAT

From a photostat of the original postcard in Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 2663

220. STATEMENT ON LIONEL CURTIS' LETTER

[Before *January 14, 1917*][3]

It turns out that the discoverer of Mr. Lionel Curtis'[4] letter[5] to the Secretary of the Round Table was Mr. Gandhi. *New India* writes: "An Ahmedabad correspondent writing to the *Hindustan* of Bombay gives details of an explanation given by Mr. Gandhi at his Ashram at Ahmedabad regarding the "private" letter of Mr. Curtis, Mr. Gandhi says:

[1] From the postmark
[2] A Congress leader of Surat district
[3] *Gujarati*, 14-1-1917, also published this
[4] Member of the Round Table group touring India; formerly, Town Clerk, Johannesburg, 1902-3, Assistant Colonial Secretary for Urban Affairs, Transvaal, 1903-6; member, Transvaal Legislative Council, *vide* "Interview to the Star", 6-1-1908.
[5] Dated 13th December 1916, reproduced in *New India*, 27-12-1916. The letter contained proposals "to subordinate India to the control of the Dominions".

It was at Agra that this letter came accidentally to-my hands. It was printed in the Government press and was marked 'private'. But it came to my hands through the mistake of some pressman along with a book. The moment I saw it I was startled, and on seeing the danger that stood before the country, I resolved to expose the conspiracy before the Congress somehow or other, and I handed it over to Mr. Horniman[1]. But at that time l made a suggestion that Mr. Curtis should be given 24 hours' notice to make any explanation which he thought fit. But others thought it was one's duty to publish it then and there, and that there was no necessity to give such a notice; I also agreed to this. If underneath our houses somebody digs a mine and fills it with explosives, and if our enemy thinks of blowing it up when there is a gathering there, and he sends a chit round marked 'Private and confidential', it is our duty to catch hold of it and expose it. I know Mr. Curtis for a long time. His brother was in South Africa. I think that because of the publication of this letter, the game of putting India under the dominance of the Colonies will not come to pass.

The Indian Social Reformer, 21-1-1917

221. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M.K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
January 14, 1917

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Your post has become irregular nowadays. I have missed two weeks. I was at Lucknow and so besieged by visitors and filled with appointments that I had no time left. I hope you will forgive me.

The Ashram has never been so free from illness as it is at present. Everybody is enjoying good health except myself. I suffered from malnutrition in Lucknow and have not thrown off the effect yet. But I too am steadily gaining ground. I tried there to live on monkey-nuts and dates only. It brought on constipation.

Chhaganlal has accepted service in a mill in Baroda. He is leaving us tomorrow. Manilal and Ramdas will leave for Phoenix next month. Mrs. Gandhi has gone to Porbunder to stay with her brother for a few weeks. Imam Saheb returns to us in a week's time. This

[1] B. G. Horniman, Editor, *The Bombay Chronicle*, Bombay

about gives you an idea of the composition of the Ashram at the present moment. Polak is in Allahabad staying with some friends.

With love,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

222. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

AHMEDABAD,

January 15, 1917

DEAR ESTHER,

I was pleased to receive your nice letter and hear that Miss Peterson had thrown off her cold entirely.

I am glad you found peace in the Ashram. Yes, both of you we regard as members of the family. You will come whenever you wish to and can.

Ramdas[1] is a noble boy. He is the one going to South Africa.[2] I feel sure that he will give a good account of himself there. By way of preparation he has been attending a printing press here, practising at the compositor's desk.

I have learnt enough of you to know that you will put your whole heart into your studies and soon be talking enough Tamil for your purpose.

Pray keep the rules[3] as long as you like. There is no occasion to hurry over sending them. With kind regards,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

My Dear Child, pp. 3-4

[1] Gandhiji's third son

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 17-1-1917.

[3] Rules drawn up for the members of the Ashram; *vide* "Draft Constitution for the Ashram", before 20-5-1915.

223. LETTER TO S. HIGGINBOTTOM

AHMEDABAD,
January 16, 1917

DEAR MR. HIGGINBOTTOM,

You will see from the enclosed what fate befell my poor post card. Since writing the post-card, I have read the book. It was a perfect treat for me. It has enabled me almost to take a definite step in matters educational. You will hear about it probably very soon and perhaps give me the benefit of your advice.

Hoping you will be able at an early date to visit the Ashram,

I am,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 8933

224. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
Posh Vad 9 [*January 17, 1917*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have resolved on two changes: one, that in buying land for the farm our object should be to have a good return by way of yield, the object being that even a man with a family may be drawn to this work; two, to start a national school[2], be it on a big scale or small, and engage well-educated teachers for it. Paid men should be engaged for both these purposes and the payment should be at market rates. You can also be taken as a paid man. The idea is to entrust you mainly with the accounts of these departments. This is not final, though. What is certain is that you should be engaged on payment. You will be able to live in the Ashram if you wish to. If you want to live apart, you can do that also. You can be paid a salary which you consider necessary to meet the expenses in Ahmedabad. If you want to join this work, think over the matter and let me know. There is no particular need for

[1] Manilal and Ramdas Gandhi referred to at the end of the letter went to Natal early in 1917.

[2] *Vide* "National Gujarati School", after 18-1-1917.

hurry. If you are favourably inclined, seek Khushalbhai's advice and have a discussion among you brothers. If there is anything more you want to know, write to me or come over on a Sunday. I shall not go into further details just now.

Try to see Harakhchand again. The doctor must get a definite reply.

Krishno[1] and Kashi[2] are here. Chhaganlal is thinking of joining the work I have mentioned above (on payment) and with that end in view he has gone to Baroda to obtain Motichand's permission. There is a letter from him, though, saying that Motichand is putting heavy pressure on him. Let us see what Chhaganlal does.

Manilal and Ramdas will shortly leave for Natal and relieve Pragji.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5691. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

225. LETTER TO KALYANJI MEHTA

AHMEDABAD,
Posh Vad 10 [*January 18, 1917*][3]

[DEAR SHRI KALYANJI,]

I shall further explain my difficulty to you. I am busy these days preparing a big educational scheme[4] and that takes up all my time. I have to meet a number of people and discuss things with them. Please consider whether I should go ahead with this work or interrupt it for four or five days, whether it will be more profitable for me to carry on with it or to attend your conference. Answer this question yourself before you put pressure on me.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 2668

[1] Krishnadas, son of Chhaganlal Gandhi

[2] Wife of Chhaganlal Gandhi

[3] This appears to have been written after "Letter to Kalyanji Mehta", 12-1-1917

[4] *Vide* the following item.

226. NATIONAL GUJARATI SCHOOL

[After *January 18, 1917*][1]

PROSPECTUS

For many years past, several friends and I have felt that our present education is not national and that in consequence people do not get from it the benefit they ought to. Our children languish as a result of this education. They become incapable of any great achievement and the knowledge they acquire does not spread among the masses—not even in their families. Nor do the young people have any aim in mind in taking this modern education except to get a job and make money. It is one of the fundamental principles of education that it should be planned with a view to the needs of the people. This idea finds no place at all in our schools.

Wherever I have travelled in India, I have discussed this question with the leaders and, without exception, almost *every one has admitted that our educational system must change*.

To look to the Government for this will be sheer waste of time. The Government will wait on public opinion and, being foreign, move very timidly; it cannot understand our needs, its advisers may be ill-informed or they may have interests of their own to serve. For a variety of such reasons, it will probably be quite long before there is any serious change in the present system; the time that passes meanwhile is so much loss to the people.

It is, however, not intended to suggest here that we should not try to get the Government to move. Let petitions be made to it and let public opinion be ascertained. But the best petition to the Government will be an actual demonstration by us and this will also be the easiest way of cultivating public opinion. It has accordingly been decided, in consultation with some educated gentlemen, to start a *national school*.
Education in the School

Basic principle: The education will be physical, intellectual and religious.

For physical education, there will be training in agriculture and hand-weaving and in the use of carpenter's and blacksmith's tools incidental to these. That will provide sufficient exercise for the pupils.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

In addition, they will be given drill, which is both an entertainment [and a practical utility][1] and, as part of this, they will be taught how to march in squads and how each one may work with quiet efficiency in case of accidents such as fire.

They will have instruction on how to preserve health and on home remedies for ordinary ailments, with as much of physiology and botany as may be necessary for the purpose.

For intellectual training, they will study Gujarati, Marathi, Hindi and Sanskrit as compulsory subjects. Urdu, Tamil and Bengali will also be taught.

There will be no teaching of English during the first three years.

In addition, the pupils will be taught Mathematics (Arithmetic, Algebra and Geometry). Instruction in multiplication tables, Indian book-keeping and the measures, weights, etc., currently in use will begin at once and the rest of the curriculum will be covered progressively.

There will be instruction in History, Geography, Elements of Astronomy and Elements of Chemistry.

By way of instruction in religion, pupils will be taught general ethical principles and we are hopeful that the teachers will demonstrate by their conduct that the essence of religion is good character.

All teaching will be through Gujarati, right up to the highest stage, and most of it will be oral during the first few years. The intention is to put across to the children, before they learn to read and write, quite a few things orally by way of stories, as was the practice in old days, and so help their minds to grow, and to give them some general knowledge as they play about, rather than repress them by doing nothing more than remarking, “Oh dear, dear! How dirty”, and so on.

EXPLANATION

The aim at present is that after a few years of such education, the student’s equipment will approximate to that of a well-informed graduate. That is, he will have a reduced load by way of learning English and, during the time so saved, he will be given all the useful knowledge a graduate acquires. He will be freed from the fear of examinations. All the students will be tested from time to time, but that

[1] The original is very faint here.

will be by the teachers of the school itself. The use to which the student puts his abilities after leaving school will be the true measure of the worth of his education. Every opportunity will be taken to rid his mind of the fallacious notion that the aim of education is to get employment. And, finally, every pupil joining this school is likely to develop such self-confidence in a few years that he will not be troubled with doubts or fears about how he will make a living. A pupil who has been in the school for five years will be fixed up, if he so desires, in some work in the school itself and be paid for it. The school will make arrangements with some factories, etc., so that they provide training in vocations and give a start to those who wish to set themselves up independently. If, after ten years of study, anyone wants to pursue a subject further, necessary arrangements for the purpose are left to the future.

FREE EDUCATION

No fees will be charged in this school, the expenses being met from donations received.

TEACHERS

Paid teachers will be engaged and will be, all of them, grown-up men who have reached the college level or possess equivalent attainments. The idea is that children should have the best teachers in the early stages.

SYLLABUS FOR FIRST YEAR

The following syllabus is reproduced as a specimen:[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 6195a

227. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M.K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
January 21, 1917

MY DEAR FRIEND,

After some weeks I have a letter from you. It is full of complaints against me regarding absence of any letter from me. Well, I have missed but two weeks. Last week I gave you my reasons for it. Otherwise I have written regularly but to the Switzerland address. You

[1] Not available.

insisted on my writing to you there in view of your impending transfer. We are well here. From the[1] health point of view the condition of the Ashram has been never so good as now. This letter I am sending to your English address. I met Andrews in Lucknow. Polak is in Allahabad. Today everybody has gone out for a picnic. Only Ramdas and I and a friend remain behind. I have already told you in one of my letters that Manilal and Ramdas are about to go to Phoenix to replace Pragji and Bhayat.

With love,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

228. LETTER TO DR. H. S. DEVA

AHMEDABAD,

January 31 [*1917*][2]

DEAR DR. DEVA[3],

I have your p.c. I feel that every time we met to celebrate the anniversary, we should take a step in advance in keeping with the ideals for which Mr. Gokhale stood. Such is the suggestion I have made locally and it has been accepted. This year, therefore, here we shall probably publish a Gujarati translation of all Mr. Gokhale's speeches. I make a similar suggestion for Poona. There we may resolve at the meeting to translate his speeches in Marathi if they are not already translated or do some other practical thing. I would so like that he may live more and more in us and through us and thereby through the whole nation. This will not happen unless at such functions we take progressive steps. I am pulled in opposite directions by two attractions—one from Poona and the other from Ahmedabad. There are reasons for which I should like to be in Ahmedabad that day. There are equally good reasons which tell me I should go to Poona. You shall decide as to what I should do. Friends here have left

[1] The original has "a".

[2] From the reference to the translations of Gokhale's speeches and the indenture meeting, this letter appears to have been written in 1917.

[3] Secretary of the Servants of India Society

me free to do as I think best.

For the business meeting after the celebration, I think there should be two. Both may be the same day with sufficiently long intervals. The first may be confined only to the usual friends. The other may be of a more general character to which the Tilak group may come.

I hope the indenture meeting[1] will be a success.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5789

229. INTRODUCTION TO "VERNACULARS AS MEDIA OF INSTRUCTION"

[*February 1, 1917*][2]

The following is the introduction written by Mr. M. K. Gandhi to Dr. P. J. Mehta's 'Self-Government Series' Pamphlet No. I entitled *Vernaculars as Media of Instruction in Indian Schools and Colleges:*

It is to be hoped that Dr. Mehta's labour of love will receive the serious attention of English-educated India. The following pages were written by him for the *Vedanta Kesari* of Madras and are now printed in their present form for circulation throughout India. The question of vernaculars as media of instruction is of national importance; neglect of the vernaculars means national suicide. One hears many protagonists of the English language being continued as the medium of instruction pointing to the fact that English-educated Indians are the sole custodians of public and patriotic work. It would be monstrous if it were not so. For, the only education given in this country is through the English language. The fact, however, is that the results are not at all proportionate to the time we give to our education. We have not reacted on the masses. But I must not anticipate Dr. Mehta. He is in earnest. He writes feelingly. He has examined the pros and cons and collected a mass of evidence in support of his arguments. The latest pronouncement on the subject is that of the Viceroy. Whilst His Excellency is unable to offer a solution, he is keenly alive to the necessity of imparting instruction in our

[1] In Bombay on 9-2-1917

[2] The printed Gujarati Introduction (S.N. 6341) bears this date.

schools through the vernaculars. The Jews of Middle and Eastern Europe, who are scattered in all parts of the world, finding it necessary to have a common tongue for mutual intercourse, have raised Yiddish to the status of a language and have succeeded in translating into Yiddish the best books to be found in the world's literature. Even they could not satisfy the soul's yearning through the many foreign tongues of which they are masters; nor did the learned few among them wish to tax the masses of the Jewish population with having to learn a foreign language before they could realise their dignity. So they have enriched what was at one time looked upon as a mere jargon—but what the Jewish children learnt from their mothers—by taking special pains to translate into it the best thought of the world. This is a truly marvellous work. It has been done during the present generation, and Webster's Dictionary defines it as a polyglot jargon used for inter-communication by Jews from different nations.

But a Jew of Middle and Eastern Europe would feel insulted if his mother tongue were now so described. If these Jewish scholars have succeeded, within a generation, in giving their masses a language, of which they may feel proud, surely it should be an easy task for us to supply the needs of our own vernaculars which are cultured languages. South Africa teaches us the same lesson. There was a duel there between Taal, a corrupt form of Dutch, and English. The Boer mothers and the Boer fathers were determined that they would not let their children, with whom they in their infancy talked in Taal, be weighed down with having to receive instruction through English. The case of English here was a strong one. It had able pleaders for it. But English had to yield before Boer patriotism. It may be observed that they rejected even the High Dutch. The school masters, therefore, who are accustomed to speak the polished Dutch of Europe, are compelled to teach the easier Taal. And literature of an excellent character is at the present moment growing up in South Africa in the Taal, which was only a few years ago the common medium of speech between simple but brave rustics. If we have lost faith in our vernaculars, it is a sign of want of faith in ourselves; it is the surest sign of decay. And no scheme of Self-Government, however benevolently or generously it may be bestowed upon us, will ever make us a self-governing nation, if we have no respect for the languages our mothers speak.

The Leader, 25-5-1917, quoting *The Rangoon Mail*

230. A FOREWORD[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
AHMEDABAD,
Maha Sud 10, Samvat 1973, [*February 1, 1917*]

I wish Bhai Karsandas[2] success in his endeavour. Eating or drinking, awake or asleep, sitting or standing, Bhai Karsandas Chitalia always has the Bhagini Samaj uppermost in his mind. He believes that the service of women is the service of the country and that the service of women is possible through the Bhagini Samaj. That is why Bhai Karsandas has become the moving spirit of the Bhagini Samaj. In doing so, he is fully keeping the pledge he has taken for the Servants of India Society. This is his belief. Once Bhai Deodhar remarked in jest that some way would have to be found to cure Bhai Karsandas of the obsession. This remark was by way of a homage and the homage was genuine. India badly needs persons who can be so totally dedicated to their work. I know Karsandas to be such a person, so I could not decline his request to write the foreword.

Since I had to write the foreword, I was forced to read the book by Bhogindrarao Divetia. Many problems concerning women have been discussed in this work in a beautiful, easy and concise language. Instead of asserting his views, Devatia has merely expressed them by way of suggestions. It has struck me as a distinctive trait of Divetia's writing. In a book about women, for that matter even about men, meant for the general reader, assertions become a hindrance. I hope that the reader will not infer that because I am writing this introduction I approve of all the reforms the author advocates. Bhai Divetia has placed his views before the reader in an interesting manner. Hence. it may be hoped that his writing will be widely read.

In his dialogues the writer has depicted the husband as a teacher to his wife. This seems pretty realistic. We desire girls' education. But we have yet to discover what type of education it should be. For the present, we are only experimenting. But we are not going to bring about women's education merely through girls' schools. Thousands

[1] To *Striyon ane Samajseva*, written by Bhogindrarao Divetia

[2] Karsandas Chitalia, who was associated with the Bhagini Samaj, Bombay, and the Servants of India Society

of girls disappear from before our eyes by becoming victims to child marriage as early as at the age of twelve. They become housewives! So long as this sinful custom does not disappear from amongst us, men will have to learn to be the teachers of women. [The fulfilment of] many of our hopes lies in their education in this respect. So long as our women do not cease to be objects of our lust and our cooks and do not become our better halves, sharing our happiness and misery, all our efforts will be futile. Some people regard their wives as animals. Some of the things in our old Sanskrit texts, as also a famous couplet of Tulsidas, are to blame for this. Tulsidas has written in one place: "drums, boors, shudras, animals and women, all are fit to be beaten." I am a devotee of Tulsidas. But my devotion is not blind. Either the above couplet is an interpolation, or if it is really by Tulsidas, he must have written it without thought, only expressing the prevalent attitude. As for the utterances in the Sanskrit texts, the idea seems to have become fixed that every verse coined in Sanskrit is the word of the scriptures. We must get rid of this false notion and do away with this age-old attitude that regards women as inferior creatures. On the other hand, some of us, blinded by passion, worship women as a goddess or treat her as a doll and decorate her with ornaments as we decorate the idols every day. It is necessary for us to free ourselves of this wrong worship also. Shiva had Uma, Rama had Sita, Nala had Damayanti. When our women, too, participate in our discussions, argue with us, understand and support our utterances, with their extraordinary intuition, understand and share our external troubles and bring to us the balm of peace, then, and not till then, will our salvation become possible. There is very little chance of bringing about such a situation merely through girls' schools. So long as we carry round our necks the millstone of child-marriage, husbands will have to act as teachers to their wives. And such education must not be confined to a knowledge of letters. Gradually they can be introduced to subjects like polities and social reform. Literacy should not be a precondition to this. Husbands will have to change their attitude towards their wives. Is it not possible for a woman to remain a student till she attains maturity and for the husband to observe *brahmacharya* till such time? Unless we were crushed with insensibility and inertia, we would certainly not subject a girl of twelve or fifteen to the great strain of child-bearing. The very thought should make us shudder.

There are classes for married women and lectures are arranged for them. All this is fine. Those who are engaged in such activities are

sacrificing their time and that too is a matter of credit to them. At the same time so long as men do not do their duty as stated above, we are not likely to get very good results. With a little thought, everyone will find this self-evident. Hence, it may be expected that if the Bhagini Samaj can spread among husbands the desire to educate their wives, its objectives can be attained faster.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Striyon ane Samajseva

231. SPEECH AT ANTI-INDENTURE MEETING, AHMEDABAD[1]

February 4, 1917

Today we, men, have assembled here to register our protest against this system and tomorrow there is to be a meeting of women in the Mahadev[2] temple of *Sathodara Nagars*[3]. These women's meetings started with the one at Kanpur. As Mr. Polak and Mr. Andrews report, women labourers suffer very much in the Colonies and hence women too should join in the protest. I have seen in Natal the conditions of indentured women and know what they suffer. *Girmit* [agreement] is an English term and means binding oneself under a contract to work as a labourer. But the Indian labourers in the Colonies understand by the term *girmitio* a slave, because they feel their condition to be no better than that of slaves. When the British people had succeeded in putting an end to legalized traffic in slaves, they required another race to work as slaves for them. They have been recruiting these from among Negroes and our people. As Mr. Curtis says[4], we are only a little better than Negroes. The law permitting recruitment of indentured labour came into being 50 years ago. It had the result of placing Indians in the same condition as slaves. The late Sir William Hunter himself described it as slavery. It was in 1896 that a protest was first made against this enslaving law. It had no effect then and things remained as they were up to 1911. In that year, the practice was prohibited only in respect of Natal. In Fiji, however, the condition of

[1] As Chairman at the meeting, which was also addressed by Andrews and Polak
[2] God Shiva
[3] A Brahmin community of Gujarat
[4] *Vide* "Statement on Lionel Curtis' Letter", before 14-1-1917.

Indian labourers has been worse than it was in Natal. There was a strong public opinion in Natal, but there is none in Fiji. Lord Hardinge declared last year[1] that the law would be repealed very soon. We had hoped then that it would go after a year or 50. But we hear now, one and a half years after the declaration, that the law will remain for five more years and that afterwards they would see what could be done. This report has revived our concern for the sufferings of our fellow-countrymen and it has become our duty now to raise a strong protest to ensure the immediate repeal of the law. The agitation was launched at Allahabad and, meetings having already been held at Madras, Poona and other places, we also have met here to register our protest. Mr. Andrews has dedicated his life to this struggle. Mr. Gokhale had the fullest confidence in him and, at his instance, Mr. Andrews and Mr. Pearson went to Fiji to see things for themselves. He [Mr. Andrews] had £300 with him—this was all he had —and this he made over to the Satyagraha Fund at Lahore. He no longer wants to be styled Reverend, but thinks it an honour to be known as Tagore's disciple. Mr. Polak is known to you. He is young, and if the young people here were to do even a tenth of what he has done, we should have swaraj this moment.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 11-2-1917

232. STATEMENT ON ABOLITION OF INDENTURED LABOUR

[After *February 7, 1917*]

There is no doubt that we are engaged in a severe struggle for the preservation of our honour and that, if we do not take care, the promise made by Lord Hardinge that indentured labour should soon be a thing of the past may be reduced to a nullity. The Viceregal pronouncement just made[2] seems to set at rest one fear that the system may be prolonged for a further period of five years which, as Sir Ramakrishna Bhandarkar showed at Poona, would in reality mean ten years. We are thankful to Lord Chelmsford for his assurance. And we are thankful, too, to that good Englishman Mr. C.F. Andrews, for the lead that he gave us in the matter. So soon as he gained the

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] During the address to the Imperial Legislative Council on 7-2-1917

information from Fiji that five years' extension was taken by the planters of those lands as a settled fact, he forsook his sick-bed and his rest at Shantiniketan and sounded for us the call of duty.

But if one cloud that threatened to destroy our hopes seems to have disappeared, another equally dangerous looms on the horizon. The conditions of abolition as stated by Lord Hardinge last March[1] are these:

> On behalf of His Majesty's Government, he the Secretary of State has asked us, however, to make it clear that the existing system of recruiting must be maintained until new conditions under which labour should not be permitted to proceed to the Colonies should have been worked out in conjunction with the Colonial Office and the Crown Colonies concerned; until proper safeguards in the Colonies should have been provided and until they should have had reasonable time to adjust themselves to the change, a period which must necessarily depend on circumstances and conditions imperfectly known at present.

Those of us who know anything of the system knew that it was well-nigh impossible to find new conditions which would be economically sound for the planters and morally sound for us. We felt that the Government would soon find this out for themselves and that, in view of Lord Hardinge's whole-hearted disapproval of the system, his view of the nearness of the end would coincide with our[2] own. But now a different situation faces us. Nearly a year has gone by and we discover that the planters of Fiji have been led to believe that they will have five years more of the system and at the end of it new conditions may after all be a change in name but not in substance. Let Mr. Bonar Law's[3] despatch speak for itself. Writing under date March 4, 1916, to the Acting Governor of Fiji, he says:

> The Secretary of State for India is satisfied that it would not be possible for the Government of India to continue to defeat by a bare official majority resolutions in their Legislative Council, urging the abolition of indenture; that in his opinion the strong and universal feeling in India on this

[1] In the Imperial Legislative Council on March 20, 1916, accepting Madan Mohan Malaviya's resolution urging abolition of the indenture system

[2] Andrew Bonar Law (1858-1923), Conservative British statesman, Secretary of State for the Colonies and later Chancellor of the Exchequer and Prime Minister

[3] Andrew Bonar Law (1858-1923), Conservative British statesman, Secretary of State for the Colonies and later Chancellor of the Exchequer and Prime Minister

> subject makes it a question of urgency and that he has accepted the conclusion that indentured emigration must be abolished.

He then proceeds:

> Though, from the point of view of the Colonies concerned, the decision which the Indian Government and the Secretary of State for India have taken is to be regretted, I recognize that the final decision upon this question must rest with the Indian Government.

Thus, the humanities of the question are tacitly supposed to be no concern of the Colonies.

Now mark this significant paragraph culled from the same illuminating despatch:

> I have, therefore, agreed to the appointment of an inter-departmental committee to consider what system should be substituted for the system of indenture, should be allowed for a further period of five years and should cease at the end of that period. . . .The Secretary of State for India is anxious that the change of system should be brought about with as little disturbance as possible to the economic interests of the Colonies and that he has made it clear that the existing system must be maintained until a properly safeguarded system has been devised.

Mr. Andrews has been twitted for having referred to the five years' extension. Let his critics explain away Mr. Bonar Law's emphatic pronouncement published in the Fiji newspapers. What with the official statement and the Secretary of State for India's solicitude for the economic interests of the planters, our cause may easily be lost if we are found unwatchful.

In the light of the Viceregal speech and Mr. Bonar Law's despatch, our duty seems to be clear. We must strengthen the Government's hands where necessary and even stimulate their activity so that this inter-departmental committee is not allowed to frustrate our hopes. It is a body wherein the influence of the Crown Colonies and the Colonial Office will be preponderant. It is a body which has to find a substitute which would be acceptable to us. As I hold, it will be a vain search if the mere well-being of the labourer is to be the primary consideration. But if the planters can have their own way, we know that they will urge an impossible substitute and, in the event of its rejection by us, they will, in accordance with Mr. Bonar Law's despatch, claim continuance of recruiting under indenture. It must therefore be clearly understood that the onus of producing an acceptable substitute rests with them and not with us. They have had

more than a year already. Lord Hardinge's despatch urging total abolition is dated the 15th October 1915. The committee is to sit in May next. This period for finding a substitute is long enough in all conscience. Either Mr. Andrews' harrowing picture of the conditions of life in Fiji is true or it is untrue. We believe it to be true and it has never been seriously attacked. And in waiting for over a year, we shall have waited almost beyond the point of endurance. Substitute or no substitute, we are entitled for the sake of our own honour and reputation and indeed that of the Empire to the unconditional abolition of this last remnant of slavery. Natal stopped[1] the system without the provision of a substitute. Mauritius has done likewise. The Johannesburg mines survived not only the shock of an abrupt termination of Chinese labour but the withdrawal of every Chinese labourer from the country as fast as transport could be got ready.

Capital is both bold and timid. If only we shall do our duty, if only the Government of India will steel their hearts against the blandishments of the Fijian and West Indian planters, there is no doubt that these people will know how to save millions without India's having to go to their rescue.

Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi (4th Ed.), pp. 113-6

233. SPEECH AT ANTI-INDENTURE MEETING, BOMBAY

February 9, 1917

At a public meeting held at the Excelsior Theatre, Bombay, on February 9, 1917, under the presidentship of Sir Jamsetji Jeejibhoy, a resolution, moved by Sir N.G. Chandavarkar, demanding the immediate abolition of indentured labour, was unanimously passed. Mr. H. A. Wadia then proposed that the chairman of the meeting be authorised to communicate the resolution to His Majesty's Secretary of State for India and H. E. the Viceroy and Governor-General of India by telegram.

Mr. M. K. Gandhi supporting the resolution said that, yielding to the command of his friends on the platform, he had undertaken to speak to them in English on that occasion. The resolution which he supported asked that the preceding resolution be sent to the Secretary of State for India and H. E. the Viceroy by telegram. What was the meaning of this? They had fixed with great deliberation the

[1] The indenture system was brought to an end in Natal by the Indian Government's refusal in 1911 to allow recruitment.

31st of May of this year as the last date on which this remnant of slavery should come to an end. (Applause.) It meant that they had slept for nearly 50 years and allowed this system to continue, but that immediately they were awakened to their sense of responsibility and duty, they did not like to sleep for a day longer and it was, therefore, that they wished that the resolution should be wired without a moment's delay. In passing that resolution, they were strengthening the hands of the Government and were awakening the Colonies to a sense of their duty to consider India as an integral part of the Empire. It would also strengthen the Viceroy's hands, and H. E. the Viceroy could say that he would no longer govern India if they were not ready to remove the blot of indentured labour before the 31st of May. (Applause.) The honour of the people of India was at stake and they were bound to think of it, waking or sleeping. He asked them to remember the 31st of May. Till then let them not sleep. (Applause).

The Bombay Chronicle, 10-2-1917

234. SPEECH AT ANTI-INDENTURE MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

February 11, 1917

Announcing that the proceedings of the meeting would be in an Indian language, Gandhiji, who was in the chair, said:

The system of indenture under which helpless, illiterate sisters and brothers from our country are reduced to utter misery must end forthwith. We shall fix May 31 as the date by which it should be stopped. Clapping our hands will not avail us much. We shall succeed in our aim only if we approach the intending recruits themselves in their homes and dissuade them from joining up; and this task is yours.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 18-2-1917

[1] Held under the auspices of the Home Rule League, Bombay

235. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS ON GOKHALE ANNIVERSARY

DELHI,

February 17, 1917

SIR,

Upon the advice of the Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and other friends, I venture to draw public attention to a suggestion I have made to my Ahmedabad friends regarding the celebration of the Gokhale anniversary on the 19th instant. It is to the effect that we should at these meetings take a definite practical step from year to year to promote some public object in keeping with the teachings of the deceased patriot. Ahmedabad will probably raise subscriptions for translating and publishing in Gujarati Mr. Gokhale's speeches to be ready for circulation at the latest on the next anniversary. Other centres may translate other works or may raise subscriptions to found scholarships for some special training. If some such definite and not very ambitious steps are taken at the hundreds of meetings that will be held yearly, the educational advance we shall have in a few years will, it is held, be not inconsiderable.

The Leader, 19-2-1917

236. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

DELHI,

February 17, 1917

MY DEAR SUNDARAM[1],

May your wishes be fulfilled !

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 3174

[1] One of the earliest inmates of Satyagraha Ashram at Kocharab, Ahmedabad

237. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI[1]

Monday [Before *February 19, 1917*][2]

. . . give ... and if, in consequence, you find it necessary to take more milk, do.

You are right in what you say about education. It is good that you should go on harassing me on the subject. That will keep me more vigilant. I shall not misunderstand your worrying me or be impatient with it.

Tell Dr. Hariprasad that it looks as if I can bring along the article for Gokhale's death anniversary only when I go there. He should make the necessary arrangements to get it printed on Monday. Whatever collection is possible, he should make at the meeting itself.

You are right in saying that, since the school curriculum provides for Marathi,[3] we too should start learning it. You may discuss with me this and other points concerning education on the day I return from Godhra. Make a note of such points. It is for you to get Popatlal and Fulchand to do any work connected with teaching.

I hope you have completed the accounts and made Fulchand familiar with them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5709. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

238. SPEECH ON GOKHALE ANNIVERSARY AT GODHRA

February 19, 1917

Gandhiji presided at a crowded meeting held at Godhra on February 19, 1917 in connection with the Gokhale anniversary, when a resolution was moved appointing a committee to take steps to keep green the memory of Gokhale by furthering the cause of education in the district which was so dear to his heart.

[1] The first two pages of the letter are not available.

[2] Gandhiji arrived in Godhra on February 19 and presided over the Gokhale death anniversary meeting.

[3] *Vide* "National Gujarati School", after 18-1-1917.

After the resolution was supported and adopted, Mr. Gandhi rose to deliver his presidential address. The first point he touched was the religious catholicity of Mr. Gokhale, who, on one occasion, rebuked a seeming sadhu who drew a sharp line of difference between Hindus and Mahomedans. Religious convictions were fast dwindling in this country everywhere, but then another religion was developing and that was love of country. Mr. Gokhale cultivated this religion to the highest level to the point where he laid down his life in the service of the Motherland.

Mr. Gandhi dwelt in his own inimitable and impressive manner on two great qualities of Mr. Gokhale which should always go with patriotism: love of truth and fearlessness. Whilst most people expressed opinions which would be palatable to the hearers, Mr. Gokhale always gave to the officials and the public the result of his mature studies and deliberation.

Mr. Gandhi advised all officials, high or low, to take a leaf from the career of Mr. Gokhale who, though highly placed in life as a member of the Imperial Legislative Council, was always kind and gentle towards all his fellow-countrymen. Mr. Gandhi remarked that the feeling of patriotism which pervaded thousands of men, young and old, was running to waste like the river Ganges, which flowed from the Himalayas into the Bay of Bengal, for want of the sterling qualities of truthfulness and fearlessness.

Finally, Mr. Gandhi urged the people of the city to support energetically the Committee which had been appointed to further the cause of education in the district and thanked all who had given him such a magnificent and hearty welcome to the city.

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-2-1917

239. SPEECH AT AHMEDABAD ON SAROJINI NAIDU[1]

February 23, 1917

Seeing sister Sarojini[2] today, I was reminded of Lord Colin Campbell who came out to India as Commander-in-Chief at the time of the Mutiny in 1857. In those days, military officers used camels very freely for transporting luxury articles and they were not available in sufficient number for carrying provisions, etc. Lord Colin Campbell, therefore, kept only one camel for himself and thus tacitly

[1] At a meeting where an address was presented to Sarojini Naidu on behalf of the local "Students' Brotherhood".

[2] Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, (1879-1949), poet, patriot, Congress leader and a close associate of Gandhiji

reminded the other officers of their duty. This had the effect of reducing in some measure the discontent among the troops. Though Sarojini travels first class, the luggage she carries is contained in just two boxes. I have observed her life at home and come to respect her for that. She has had four children, the youngest being now 13. At present, therefore, she lives very nearly like one in the *vanaprastha*[1] stage of life. Though a millionaire's daughter and a millionaire's wife, she runs her house with great skill. She yearns for one thing only, lndia's advance. If she has lashed out at us, it is to urge us to strive for perfection. Hindus and Muslims are the same to her. English has almost become her mother tongue. But she believes we shall make no progress unless Indian languages come into their own. Let us purge ourselves of all our weaknesses and make her lofty ideals our own.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 25-2-1917

240. SPEECH AT SURAT ON INDENTURE[2]

February 26, 1917

SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

It is obvious that I, a resident of Ahmedabad, can have no knowledge of civic affairs in Surat. When I arrived here, it was suggested to me that I should take the chair. I was rather surprised. I felt that I was not the proper person to do so. As I knew little about the civic affairs here, I respected the suggestion of local friends and told them that they could put forward my name if my taking the chair would help matters. I am quite conscious of my responsibility. I cannot claim, moreover, that I have come here prepared for the matters to be debated and the resolutions to be passed. This is why I feel I am not the proper person. I shall request you all, sisters and brothers, to overlook any deficiency that you may observe in me. Before I start the proceedings, I shall deliver Mrs. Sarojini Naidu's message. When she was in Ahmedabad, I told her it would be good if she could go to Surat. But she said she had an important engagement on Sunday. Later, there was a telegram from Dr. Hora and I told her

[1] The third of the four stages of life, when one prepares for complete renunciation

[2] The meeting was held under the auspices of the District Association

again that Surat should not feel disappointed and asked her to come along. I also found out from her the nature of her engagement to see if I could urge her to come. The lady has been in bad health for several years past. She has such strength of mind, however, and such is her love for the motherland, that, when occasion demands, she makes it possible to meet it. God alone knows from where she gets the strength, but she who looked worn out just a moment earlier betrays no signs of suffering on her face when she is at work. So wonderful is her strength. There is to be a big meeting in Bombay on the 27th and she must conserve her health to be able to make a complete success of it. As her coming to Surat would have made this impossible, she did not know how to manage it. Even so, we should make every sacrifice and agitate on this issue; if for no other reason, out of consideration for this lady who, an ornament to India, goes up and down all over the country taking no thought of her health. There is no religion among us which does not forbid our undertaking a second task before we have completed the first. You have come forward at this meeting to take upon yourself a great responsibility. But one has no right to assume an additional burden before one has fully discharged a duty already undertaken. What I have in mind is this: I was here last year and you promised to collect a fund for the saint-like Gokhale. I have heard nothing further about it. Mr. Adwani put down Rs. 50/- and the matter never went beyond that. I met him in Godhra but did not have the courage to mention the subject to him. It is not yet too late for you to raise something for the fund, though, of course, collections for the Fund in the charge of Mr. Jehangir Petit are over. I think even the Trust Deed in respect of that Fund is ready. It is still open to you, however, to send contributions to the Servants of India Society. And so everyone should pay, each according to his means. Perhaps Surat, the object of Narmadashanker's[1] praises, thought that it would either pay in thousands or nothing. But I would say that, if you subscribe Rs. 100/- this time, you will be able to pay Rs. 1,000/- next time. The matter is important for this reason: Mrs. Naidu has been sacrificing herself for the cause. Besides, Mahatma Gokhale was drawn into it in 1896 and in 1912 he made the cause his own. I know also that his speeches at the time affected his health. You should, therefore remind yourselves of your promise to raise a fund in memory of this man who had even sacrificed his life for this cause, and give to it to the best

[1] A Gujarati poet also called Narmad

of your means. The gentleman who proposed me [to the chair] said that, of the two questions, that concerning volunteers [for the Army] was the more important one. I shall say, though, that the question of in- denture is more important. It is of course right that we express satisfaction over the right of offering ourselves as volunteers, but the satisfaction will avail us nothing unless we follow up the expression of it with necessary action. In regard to the issue of indenture, on the other hand, it is our unceasing duty to see that no town or village, known or unknown, goes without a protest against this system. You know that I have come from Delhi. I have had meetings with His Excellency the Viceroy and other leaders of the nation. Like Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and the late Mr. Gokhale, Mr. Andrews too has made sacrifices. As he pondered over this problem, he was so upset in mind that he took ill. Even his speech, which has been translated into every language, had to be read out by Mr. Polak. We should now hold public meetings for the purpose. We do not at all embarrass the Government by doing so; on the contrary, we strengthen its hands. The Government itself has admitted that the system is immoral and brings no benefit whatever. Possibly there is some economic gain but, in view of the moral degradation it has brought about, it must be ended. This is an issue on which there is no difference of opinion. The Editor of *The Times of India* asks who should solve this problem and when. Pat will come the reply: that is exclusively India's right. On this matter, we can imagine things far more vividly than the Viceroy. I shall give only one illustration of this. The worthy Baji Gauri is ill and her younger sister has been attending on her and has suffered in health in consequence. I, as a resident of Ahmedabad, will not feel this as much as people here, and none will feel as much as the younger sister. If it were otherwise, I would be by her bed-side all the time. In the same way, the Viceroy cannot imagine as well as we can the condition of our own brothers and sisters. We should lay down a time-limit and say that we would tolerate the system up to May 31 and that, if it continued even a day longer, thousands will lay down their lives. The system has been in existence for fifty years. It is a matter of shame for us that, in all these years, it is only recently that we have taken up discussion of a resolution like this. I do not, however, wish to go into that matter. I have had 20 years, experience of this problem and it is but natural, therefore, that my heart should cry out before you and my imagination grow active; I hope you will forgive me if I set out these things before you at such length. The system is but a

form[1] of slavery. We have in it, under the British Empire, elements of the very system which England claims proudly to have abolished; this system can be described as slavery for a limited period. All the essential elements of the earlier system are present in this, and one more. It makes one shudder to know all. The system brings India's womanhood to utter ruin, destroys all sense of modesty. That in defence of which millions in this country have laid down their lives in the past is lost under it.

I am not here to excite your feelings. Mr. Andrews can be far more effective in that way than I. He has given quite a vivid picture. I wish that, when you read the literature on this subject which I have here, you feel as excited as I do. I pray for Smt. Baji Gauri again; may God help her to a speedy recovery. However, her suffering is nothing as compared to that of our sisters beyond the seas. If, to our misfortune, Baji Gauri's *atman* should leave her body, it would have ascended to a higher existence. But which astronomer here, in this hall, can predict the future of the thousands of her sisters who suffer moral degradation? Every one of us has it in him to treat this disease. We should be ready to sacrifice our all to that end. We should respectfully tell the Viceroy that the practice must be abolished before May 31. Let us take a pledge today that we will not suffer the thing beyond that date. I shall close this chapter here.

I confess myself ignorant in the matter of the right of joining as volunteers. When I first took up the issue, I wondered why India had been denied this right. Perhaps we did not deserve it. The right is now ours. Today, the educated class in India understands my ideas. I am entirely opposed to fighting with arms. I have no faith in the thing. Possession of arms for our or others' defence will serve no useful purpose; nor have we the requisite strength. I believe that, in place of the strength of a Kshatriya pitted against an armed opponent, soul-force will prove far more potent. There was a great British warrior, General Gordon by name. The man who drew his portrait has won high praise [for his work]. He put into Gordon's hand neither a sword nor a gun, but only a stick: I would even say that, had the painter drawn him with folded hands and put light in his eyes, on the lips and the entire face, to suggest that the whole world could not shake him from his purpose, that would have been the true Kshatriya character. Such are my views, but all do not find them acceptable.

[1] Literally, a shadow

Some of them have little use for these views and others perhaps do not have the strength to follow them in practice. In this matter, your duty is [not to run away from an enemy][1]; it will be a grave lapse if you do, saying in excuse *ahimsa paramo dharmah*[2]. You wish destruction of your enemy some way or other. Because you cherish belief in non-violence, it does not mean that you are effectively observing the rule, for in that rule there is no place for running away in fear. It is your duty to defend those among the Indian people who want themselves, their women, their moral standards and their wealth to be defended. How to do this? Those who have no faith in the principle which is dear to me and which I embrace may certainly take up arms. It is for this reason that I welcome the right of enlisting as volunteers which has been granted to us. I shall advise the people in this hall to join up. If anyone asks me whether he would be offered a commission or not, I would tell him to reserve such grumbling for the future, and not be too particular for the present and so miss the opportunity offered. Let us tell the Government that we are ready. That will be worthy of us. I now request Advocate Mr. Bejanji to move the first resolution.

Concluding, Gandhiji said:

Before dissolving the meeting, I thank you and the organisers. One thing more: I wanted to make a suggestion concerning collections for the Gokhale Fund, a suggestion which I have made elsewhere. Those who are ready to work as volunteers for this purpose should now post themselves at the gate, and anyone who wants to pay something may give it to them. If this is done, the credit for it will go to Surat. I have with me the resolution[3] of which Mr. Thakoreram wanted a translation. I shall send the translation on to him and he can publish it with necessary changes.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarat Mitra ane Gujarat Darpan, 4-3-1917

[1] The report of the speech is defective here,

[2] Non-violence is the highest virtue.

[3] Probably a reference to the resolution on indenture introduced in the Imperial Legislative Council

241. TELEGRAM TO MAHARAJA OF KASIMBAZAR

[AHMEDABAD,
On or after *February 26, 1917*][1]

MAHARAJA OF KASIMBAZAR
CALCUTTA

PROCEEDING KARACHI KEEP APPOINTMENT FRIDAY. SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE, REACH CALCUTTA SIXTH.[2] ACCEPTED KARACHI RELYING ON SEVENTH. WIRE KARACHI CARE DURGADAS ADWANI[3].

GANDHI

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 6347

242. TELEGRAM TO C. F. ANDREWS

[AHMEDABAD,
On or after *February 26, 1917*][4]

PROCEEDING KARACHI KEEP APPOINTMENT FRIDAY. ACCEPTED SAME THINKING CALCUTTA MEETING[5] SEVENTH. FIX BARNES CONFERENCE DATE SUIT ME. WIRE KARACHI CARE DURGADAS ADWANI. LOVE

GANDHI

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 6348

[1] This was sent in reply to the Maharaja's telegram of February 26, which read: "Public meeting sixth March. Kindly stay in Calcutta as my guest. . . ."

[2] Gandhiji could reach Calcutta on March 6; *vide* "Speech at Anti-Indenture Meeting, Calcutta", 6-3-1917.

[3] A Sindhi leader, who suffered imprisonment in the national cause

[4] This was sent in reply to Andrews' telegram of February 26, which read: "Barnes holds conference with Pandit others about March 8th. Needs your presence. . . ."

[5] *Vide* the preceding item; also "Speech at Anti-Indenture Meeting, Calcutta", 6-3-1917.

243. SPEECH AT HOME RULE LEAGUE HEADQUARTERS, KARACHI

March 2, 1917

In the course of the day (2nd instant), Gandhi visited the Home Rule League Headquarters twice. On both occasions he spoke to the members, associates and college students on passive resistance and austerity. The love of dress, which Gandhi has noticed among Sindhis, has impressed him unfavourably. One of the members asked him why he went about bare-footed. He replied that unless he maintained austerity, he could not expect the masses to believe in his sincerity. He said that India was too poor and that those who could afford to spend money on dress should refrain from spending it in that way and give it to the poor. Jethmal[1], of the *Hindvasi*, questioned him about passive resistance and Gandhi explained its value by examples from his South African experiences.

He also visited the Hardevi Bai Girls' Schools and said a few words to the children on education.

He met the Cutchhi and Gujarati community at the Parsi Theatre in the afternoon and told them about indentured labour.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1917, p. 146

244. SPEECH AT PARSI THEATRE, KARACHI

March 2, 1917

On his visit, Mr. Gandhi made a definite pronouncement with regard to the duty of Indians to join the Defence of India Force in the Parsi Theatre public meeting, Karachi. He said that lndians had been pressing for admission in the army, time and again, and now as the permission had been granted, they should join in overwhelming numbers, and thus fulfil their duty to the Motherland. Mr. Gandhi said that, in speaking as he had done, he had spoken not as a Passive Resister, but as one claiming to know the Indian mind and understanding India's present conditions. He held very strong views about the use of weapons even in self-defence but he knew that his views were not shared by those of his countrymen who had for years past been agitating for the reform that had now come. It is an opportunity of a life-time that no lover of his country should miss. Sir Satyendra Sinha[2], in his Presidential address,

[1] Jethmal Parsram, Editor of the *Hindvasi*, a Sindhi man of letters and political worker who later suffered imprisonment in the national cause

[2] Satyendra Prassano Sinha (1864-1928), lawyer, statesman and first Indian to become a member of the Government of India; presided over the Bombay session of the Indian National Congress in 1915

laid stress firstly and chiefly on this point. Sir Krishna Gupta exhorted Indians to first demand entrance in the army, and now as the door had been opened, if they did not avail themselves of this golden opportunity, they would disgrace themselves, their leaders and their country. Business men ought not to allow their business to stand in the way of their duty. Rather, should they know that after all they would be protecting their own business in protecting their own country. If the enemy took possession of their country, because they did not care or were unable to defend it, their business would pass. In Mr. Gandhi's opinion, this Bill[1] was the first instalment of swaraj, and if they rejected the Government's advances, they would be rejecting swaraj. It should be accepted unconditionally. It would be time enough, after the whole-hearted acceptance of the scheme, to attack its defects and to purge it of them.

New India, 5-3-1917

245. SPEECH AT ANTI-INDENTURE MEETING AT KARACHI

March 2, 1917

Under the auspices of the Citizens' Association, Karachi, a public meeting was held in the Khalikdina Hall on the 2nd instant to protest against the continuance of the system of indentured labour. The Hon'ble Mr. Harchandrai, President of the Association, was in the chair....

M. K. Gandhi arrived after the time fixed and informed the audience that he could not attend throughout as he had to catch the mail train to Calcutta, having been invited by the Maharaja of Cassimbazar to be present in that city on the 6th instant.

After speaking in Hindi for half an hour, he left the Hall.

He began by requesting the assembly to send a telegram of condolence to A. M. Kachalia, who had just lost his nephew[2], and explained how much Mr. Kachalia had done for Indians in South Africa. Gandhi then spoke on indentured labour. After mentioning the various evils of the system, he told the audience that Indians must insist on its abolition by the 31st of May this year. If their request were not acceded to, all practical steps should be taken to prevent Indians from leaving the country for labour in Fiji. Every effort should be made to teach the people to hate the system and to clamour for its suppression.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1917, P. 146

[1] The Indian Defence Bill

[2] Son, *vide* the following item.

246. SPEECH AT ANTI-INDENTURE MEETING, CALCUTTA

March 6, 1917

At a public meeting held at the Town Hall, Calcutta, on March 6, 1917, under the presidentship of Maharaja Manindra Chandra Nandi, Gandhiji made a statement on indentured emigration to South Africa.

Mr. M. K. Gandhi, in seconding the resolution moved by the chair, said they all expressed their sympathy to Mahomed Kachalia who had recently lost his son. Mr. Kachalia was the president of the Transvaal British Indian Association. He was one of the passive resisters and went to jail again and again. Mr. Gandhi said that the Government did not allow Mr. Malaviya to introduce his Bill because the Government wanted to introduce a measure which would satisfy the people. They all knew that the Viceroy was in sympathy with them, but the Secretary of State for India was opposed to them. He was to weigh the interests of Colonial planters at [the cost?] of the Indians in a scale of gold. Sitting at a long distance, the Secretary of State could not understand the feeling of the Indians. India believed that Mr. Andrews' report[1] was true. The planters had engaged their best men to go to England and they were pressing for time. If India did not rise to the occasion, the planters would gain the day. It was not the Secretary of State for India but the people who could say when this system should be abolished and they fixed the 31st May for its abolition. They could not contemplate with calmness the shifting of dates from season to season. It was their duty to say that India could not tolerate this wrong a minute longer than the 31st May. No substitute to be brought forward by the London Conference was acceptable to India.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 7-3-1917

247. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
Wednesday [Before *March 7, 1917*][2]

CHI. MANILAL,

It was more painful for me to let you go than it was, perhaps, for you to go. But I have often to make my heart harder than steel, for I

[1] Report on indentured labour in Fiji; *vide* "Speech on Indentured Indian Labour at Bombay", 28-10-1915.

[2] This appears to have been written before the following item.

think that to be in your interest. It will be all to the good if you should get into proper shape there. I want you to learn to think for yourself and, when you find it necessary to resist me, to do so with courage. Make yourself altogether a labourer. That is, I believe, the way to our welfare.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 111. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

248. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

Phagan Sud 14 [*March 7, 1917*][1]

CHI. MANILAL,

You must have by now grown an old hand there. Medh[2] and Pragji will be with you in a few days so that you will feel the atmosphere of India for some time longer yet.

Do not worry yourself but at the same time take proper treatment for your cough. By way of treatment, deep breathing and a teaspoonful of olive oil will suffice. You will be able to increase the quantity by and by. It can be taken as it is, mixed with a tomato. If you can give up tea, coffee and cocoa, that will help all the more in getting rid of the cough completely. Think carefully about these things and carry them out. Do not neglect deep breathing for any reason. Keep up your studies in the way 1 have shown you. Do not give up doing sums on any account. A few must be done every day. I would advise you not to pass over any, believing that you know the method. As you do more and more sums, both of the simple and the difficult kind, you will grow more proficient. Do not be slack about them. The same about Sanskrit, and finally, English. In regard to this last, for the present ponder over what I have taught you from Ruskin. Go on reading *Lycidas*[3] and write to me about anything in it which you may not understand.

If you make it a practice to write to Miss Schlesin in English, she will reply to you in English and will also correct your English and

[1] The addresssee went to South Africa early in 1917.

[2] Surendrarai Medh, a leading satyagrahi during the South African struggle

[3] An elegy by John Milton (1608-74)

return to you the letter with the corrections. It will be hard indeed if you cannot find at least two hours every day for study. It is also necessary to form the habit of reading Gujarati books and reflecting over them. All this will be easy if you become regular and get over the habit of day-dreaming.

Blessings from

BAPU

Do not worry about things here.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 109 Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

249. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKAMJI

AHMEDABAD,

Phagan Vad 11 [*March 19, 1917*]

The news of Chi. Ramkunvar's death gives rise to many reflections. Sister Anand's burden of sorrow is growing heavier, but I know she has the strength to bear it all calmly. You are, yourself, an enlightened man. Make use of your knowledge and preserve your calm.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi

250. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

AHMEDABAD,

March 20, 1917

DEAR ESTHER,

I have an English lady friend[1] and her sister's children who during the hot weather are to live at some hillside place. You are going to some such place. Could you befriend them if they went to the same station as you? Of course they will bear their own expenses. The thing wanted is good companionship. And I thought of you. If you will befriend them, will you please tell me where you would go, when you

[1] Miss Graham; *vide* "Letter to Esther Faering", 31-3-1917.

would leave, where you would stay and whether they could reside and board at the same place as you will? You will also please give me an idea of the expenses there. You have heard of Mr. Polak. The friend is his sister-in-law. While Mr. and Mrs. Polak travel on public business, they are anxious to locate their children in some hillside place where Mr. Polak's sister-in-law could find suitable company. She is a stranger to India.

With much love from us all,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Polaks leave Ahmedabad probably on Monday. I would like you please therefore to wire to me.

If you will address

Gandhi,

Ahmedabad,

the wire will reach me.

M. K. G.

My Dear Child, pp. 4-5

251. OUR SYSTEM OF EDUCAT1ON

March, 24, 1917

It has become customary with us to judge whatever we do by Western standards. We claim that oriental civilization is superior to the occidental, but our behaviour is contrary to what we say. That is why the education of Indian children has become hybrid. Our educational institutions do not produce heirs to the traditions of our saints and seers. It is very sad. I have been thinking on the matter for a long time and I put before the readers the conclusions to which I have come.

No one will quarrel with the principle that pupils should be imparted a general knowledge of the basic occupations of the country. According to this principle, all our boys should be taught farming and weaving, for nearly 95 per cent of the country's population is engaged in agriculture, while 90 per cent of these used to be engaged in weaving.

So long as the educated among us do not pay attention to these two important matters, we cannot have any idea of the misery of our

tens of millions of agriculturists and hundreds of thousands of weavers, nor can there be any improvement in these two pursuits.

We shall not be able to do any work if our body is not healthy. So it is necessary to educate boys in the principles of health and hygiene right from childhood.

Dharma is the basis of everything. A correct knowledge of the scriptures, however, is not possible without a knowledge of Sanskrit. Therefore, every Hindu boy must also learn some Sanskrit. But I think it is very difficult to establish *gurukuls* everywhere. General education should end with the imparting of general knowledge. Special arrangements can be made for boys who are endowed with extraordinary capacities.

In teaching history and geography, the method followed by the Government should be changed. In teaching these subjects, the emphasis should generally be on knowledge concerning India. My experience is that many a boy knows where Middlesex is but he has no idea about Kathiawar or Sorath. In history they are given a comprehensive knowledge of the United Kingdom, but our Shivaji they consider merely a bandit.

Our boys can solve intricate mathematical problems but are ignorant of simple arithmetic useful in business. They have very little knowledge of the indigenous tables.

Instruction to pupils in all provinces should be given in their mother tongue. Besides this, they should acquire knowledge of two or three other Indian languages.

English should be taught only to a small number of boys and as a foreign language. I am convinced that so long as we are not free of our fondness for English, we cannot achieve real swaraj. Some friends tell me that in the ordinary business of life, like travelling by train or reading a telegram, we are at sea if we do not know English. But we ourselves are responsible for this state of affairs. If through a feeling of inferiority we ignore our religion, our serfdom will only become worse. And millions of our brethren who are never likely to learn English will be reduced to slaves and an unbridgeable gulf will form between them and the English-educated.

The education that is in vogue has no impact on our homes either, although as a rule the whole country should be influenced by the lives of students. Even a little of perfume will spread its fragrance all round. It should be so with the life of a student. In my opinion, the

key to swaraj lies not so much in the hands of the Government as in our system of education.

[From Hindi]

Satdharma Pracharak, Gurukul Number, 24-3-1917

252. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

AHMEDABAD,
March 31, 1917

DEAR ESTHER,

I am putting you to a lot of trouble on behalf of Mrs. Polak's sister. But you have chosen the privilege of letting me be your brother. And I have the credit for being most exacting of those who are nearest and dearest to me. Having made the choice, you must be content to suffer.

Miss Graham, that is the sister's name, may be able at once to go to Ooty. It is necessary for her and young Polak to be on a hillside without delay. I much fear that I shall not be able to go to Madras in April. If I am able to do so at all this year, it will be after your descent from the hills.

With love to you and Miss Peterson from us all,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

My Dear Child, p. 5

253. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M.K. GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
March 31, 1917

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have not written to you for the last 4 weeks. I have been incessantly travelling. You will understand this when I tell you that out of 24 days, I was for 17 nights in the train. Every mail day found me out of reach of the mail steamer. And I was too preoccupied to anticipate the mail day. The reason for this rush was the indenture question which took up all my energy. The question is now

satisfactorily solved. The Viceroy has done nobly in the matter.

Your post has become most regular now. For weeks I have only one letter. Health at the Ashram is now quite good. I have partly found the key. Oil did not suit the inmates. From 1/2 lb. per day, I have increased the quantity of milk to 19 lb. per day! Manilal and Ramdas have gone to South Africa to replace Pragji who has returned for his marriage. Maganlal, Devdas, Prabhudas and Maganlal's children are the only old hands now remaining. Chhaganlal may come. Harilal is getting on nicely at Calcutta. Jamnadas is at Rajkot. Revashankar, having finished his training as a weaver, has establi- shed himself at Rajkot.

We have done no agriculture work yet as we have not yet secured a piece of ground.

Polak is in India doing a good deal of travelling. He must have written to you. I shall inquire.

With love,

Yours,

OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

254. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

AHMEDABAD,
April 4 [1917][1]

DEAR MILLIE,

After having conferred with Mr. Ambalal, I have come to the conclusion that it is no use relying on the Tyabjis. Ceilia will definitely leave Bombay on the 6th instant. I am sending Mama of the Ashram with her as far as Ooty. The extra expense is a trifle in comparison. Mama will travel in the servants' compartment attached to the 1st and 2nd-class carriages. He is a most capable and resourceful man for such purposes and he is a much-travelled man.

You will have wires from different places and you need have no anxiety on this score.

[1] From the reference to Ceilia's departure for Ooty and to Gandhiji's Bombay programme; vide "Fragment of Lettter to Mathuradas Trikumji", 19-3-1917, "Letter to Esther Faering", 31-3-1917 and "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 15-4-1917.

I am going to Bombay in advance of Ceilia. I shall not be in Bombay to see her off. But as Mama is with her, I am at ease and I hope you will feel likewise. I must be off now.

With love,

Yours ever,

BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

255. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

BANKIPUR,

Chaitra Vad 3, Samvat 1973, Tuesday [*April 10, 1917*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I got two letters from there, both on the same day. One of them was too heavy and so I had to pay a penalty. I am returning Chi. Narandas's statement of accounts. You will be able to judge whether the credit entries are correct. It is clear that the amounts debited to Narandas are to be credited to Narandas and debited to Polak.Prabhudas has stayed on at Calcutta. He said he was happy there. It was good that I did not bring him here. The man[1] who has brought me here doesn't know anything. He has dumped me in some obscure place. The master of the house is away and the servants take us both to be beggars. They don't even permit usthe use of their latrine, not to speak of inviting us to meals. I take care to provide myself with a stock of the things I need and so I have been able to maintain complete indifference. I have swallowed a good many insults and the queer situation here does not trouble me. If things go on this way I am not likely to see Champaran. So far as I can see, my guide can give me no help and I am in no position to find my own way. In this condition, I cannot give you my address. Even if I had brought anyone from there for help, he would only have been a burden on me. In addition to carrying my own burden, I would have had to carry his as well. I am only describing the uncertainty of my position. None of you need feel anxious, for I am enjoying a kind of solitude. The house is not so bad. There is facility for bathing and so

[1] Rajkumar Shukla, a cultivator of Champaran

the body is served well enough. As for the self, this helps it grow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5710. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

256. REJOINDER TO RAMSAY MACDONALD[1]

April 11, 1917[2]

We would wish to give our own personal evidence in answer to Mr. Ramsay Macdonald's suggestion[3] that Mr. Gokhale would probably have signed the majority report of the Public Services Commission if he had lived. We have both of us distinct recollection of Mr. Gokhale himself saying that though he had not given up all hopes of bringing the other members of the Commission, or at least some of them, to his point of view, yet he was afraid that he would be obliged in the end to draw up a minority report in conjunction with Mr. Abdur Rahim[4].

The Modern Review, May, 1917

257. LETTER TO L. F. MORSHEAD

C/O BABU GAYA PRASAD SINGH,

MUZAFFARPUR,

April 12, 1917

DEAR SIR,

Having heard a great deal about the condition of the Indians working in connection with indigo plantation, I have arrived here to ascertain, so far as is possible, for myself the true position. I would like to do my work with the cognisance and even co-operation, if I

[1] Issued after C. F. Andrews had met Gandhiji at Motihari.

[2] Issued as an Associated Press despatch from Bankipore on April 11, 1917.

[3] Ramsay Macdonald, who was a member of the Royal Commission on Public Services in India, had said: "I am of opinion that he [Gokhale] would have added his signature to ours, and would have contented himself by appending memoranda of his own, indicating detailed points of disagreement."

[4] A judge of the Madras High Court, and a member of the Commission. submitted a separate minute.

can secure it, of the local administration. I shall be obliged if you will kindly grant me an interview so that I may place before you the object of my inquiry and learn whether I may receive any assistance from the local administration in furtherance of my work.

1 am,

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

L. F. MORSHEAD, ESQ.

COMMISSIONER

TIRHUT DIVISION

From the original in Gandhiji's hand in the National Archives of India; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*, No. 13, p. 57

258. LETTER TO L. F. MORSHEAD

MUZAFFARPUR,

April 13, 1917

DEAR MR. MORSHEAD,

In accordance with my promise made this morning I send you a letter[1] addressed to me by the inviting friends who are at present here.

I fear that I might have failed to convey to you the exact scope of my mission. I therefore re-state it here. I am anxious to test the accuracy of the statements made to me by various friends regarding indigo matters and to find out for myself whether I can render useful assistance. My mission is that of making peace with honour.

I am,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

I enclose too a note just given by Babu Arikshan Sinha.

M. K. G.

From the original in Gandhiji's hand in the National Archives of India: also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement* in Champaran, No. 16, p. 59

[1] *Vide"*Enclosures to Gandhiji's Letter to L.F. Morshead", 13-4-1917

259. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

MUZAFFARPUR,
Sunday, April 15, 1917

CHI. MAGANLAL,

The situation here is more serious than I had imagined. It seems to be worse than in Fiji and Natal. However, we shall know better as we proceed with the inquiry.

I have seen the authorities. They may be thinking of apprehending me. I have not a minute to spare here. I am leaving for Champaran right now, and am writing this just as I am leaving. I cannot say when I shall be able to return even if I am not arrested. If I go to jail, this will be my last letter for the present. Whatever happens you will know by wire. Nobody need think of coming here and going to jail. Tell Prof. Shah that we should make the experiment of the national school as planned. Let him begin with Kaka, Fulchand and Chhaganlal. Let somebody from the Ashram help in teaching weaving.

You will receive another Rs. 1,500 from Mr. Petit within a month or two. You may draw Rs. 3,000/- every year. A resolution has been passed to enable us to draw up to Rs. 15,000/- from him. The expenses on account of the satyagrahis and their families have to be met from this amount. If more money is needed, we shall get it.

Help Devdas satisfy his craving for study. Keep writing to the addresses I have given. You may stop after you hear what happens to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

It was very good that I did not bring Prabhudas with me. He was happy in Calcutta. Do write to Doctor.

From a photostat of a handwritten copy of the Gujarati original: S.N. 9815

260. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

MOTIHARI,
Sunday [*April 15, 1917*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I hope you have received my letter from Muzaffarpur. So far nothing has happened. I have arrived at Motihari. Share the news in my letter only with those with whom you deem it proper to do so. If you want to refer anything to me, please do so. I shall reply if I am free. It appears I shall have to stay long here. Let all of you be calm. Share this with all the inmates of the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

Narhari is translating Gokhale's speeches. So also is Govadia. Make inquiries of them and ask them to do it quickly. Chhaganlal may keep in touch [with their progress].

From a photostat of a handwritten copy of the Gujarati original: S.N. 9816

261. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

MOTIHARI,
CHAMPARAN
April 15, 1917

DEAR ESTHER,

Your sweet letter has followed me all the way here. I am almost at the base of the Himalayas. I am studying the condition of the people working under the indigo planters. My work is most difficult. My trust is in God. We can but work and then be careful for nothing.

Pray do not worry about Miss Graham. She has been fixed up at Ooty.

You may address me as Bapu if you like. It means father. In the Ashram it has become a term of endearment. I value your affection very much indeed. You may continue to use the Ahmedabad address.

With love,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

My Dear Child, p. 6

262. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

C/O BABU GORAKH PRASAD,
MOTIHARI, CHAMPARAN,
April 16 [*1917*][1]

DEAR HENRY,

I am here today. Nothing untoward yet. You must have received my letter from Muzaffarpur. I have heard nothing like what I have been experiencing here.

Please forward copy of my letter to Mr. Shastriar and Mr. Petit also. I think that the Imp[erial] Cit[izenship] Ass[ociatio]n should take it up *when* the time comes for it. My letter[2] ought *not* to be made public unless something happens. No private steps too should be taken.

With love,

Yours,
BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] From "Motihari, April 16" in the date-line

[2] To the Private Secretary to the Viceroy; vide "Letter to Private Secretary to Viceroy", 16-4-1917.

263. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

FROM M.K. GANDHI
April 16 [*1917*][1]

MY DEAR HENRY,

The enclosed will tell you its own tale. I have drawn up [a] memorandum of instructions[2] for the workers here. You will get that also. I may get time to write another letter.[3] I have sent copies to Shastriar, Andrews and Natrajan. Am sending one to the Ashram.

With love,

Yours,
BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

264. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

April 16, 1917

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Please send my gold medal by registered parcel to the Private Secretary to H. E. the Viceroy, Simla. An order to leave the District has been served upon me and I have refused to obey. It is likely that a warrant of arrest or something like it will be served upon me any moment. Lakshmi[4] has come to apply the auspicious *tilak*[5] sooner than expected and I have not stopped even to wash my hands. None of us could have imagined that I should be sent to jail in Bihar, a province hallowed by the footsteps of Ramchandra, Bharata[6], Janaka[7]and Sitaji[8]. Even Shri Rama did not know [what would happen

[1] Vide "Letter to J.B. Keiplni", 17-4-1917 This appears to be a slip for 'Maganlal'; ibid

[2] ibid

[3] ibid

[4] Goddess of fortune

[5] Vermilion mark. The saying runs, "When Lakshmi comes to put the *tilak* on you, do not go to wash your face."

[6] Well-known characters in the *Ramayana*

[7] *ibid*

[8] *ibid*

the following morning].

Blessings from

BAPU

If any inquiries are made there about my property, tell them I do not own any.

From a photostat of a handwritten copy of the Gujarati original: S.N. 9818

265. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

MOTIHARI,
Chaitra Vad 9 [*April 16, 1917*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have already dropped you a postcard, which you will get along with this. I wrote it immediately on receiving the order. Since they have not yet arrested me, l am writing more in this. It is literally true that I did not stop even to wash my face. The Police Inspector [actually] said, "You may wash your face, etc., before you send your reply", while I said to myself, "I shall do so only after sending my reply." They arrested me when I was on my way to a village for carrying on the inquiry. They then put me in a bullock-cart and were taking me away. A senior police officer met us on the way and served the order upon me. At first he only said, "The Collector wants you." I turned back saying nothing. I have refused to leave the District. The penalty for this crime is six months' imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 1,000. I am awaiting further developments.

Herewith the statement of accounts up to date. Let Chhaganlal make the credit and debit entries accordingly. I have given the necessary details. Prabhudas not being with me is a great comfort.

This part of the country is worth seeing. I shall describe it to you when we meet. It is less hot than there. People are very poor. What a sad plight for the region where Shri Ramachandra lived, enjoyed himself and performed deeds of valour! To go to jail here under such circumstances is a great joy to me. It suggests an auspicious outcome.

I wish your work goes on with double speed. Carry on the experiment of the school; teach the twelve or more students from Kochrab or elsewhere. Purchase land, if all of you approve. If Shastri's land has sufficient water, I personally like it very much.

Chhaganlal may engage himself in the building work. He may take a monthly payment if he needs it. I wish he takes to his work whole-heartedly and with a glad heart.

Muljibhai ought to stay on in the Ashram until he is quite well. I take it Punjabhai will now be thoroughly engrossed in the Ashram life.

Consult Polak, Andrews or Malaviyaji whenever you feel the need. Do keep writing to Doctor in detail. Write to Mr. Kallenbach giving him all the news. His address is: Dongeas Aliens Camp, No. 3612, Isle of Man. Write to Miss Winterbottom[1] also. More I shall write if I can. I shall send copies, if possible. Inform Dr. Hariprasad and others.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of a handwritten copy of the Gujarati original: S.N. 9817

266. LETTER TO DISTRICT MAGISTRATE, CHAMPARAN

MOTIHARI,
April 16, 1917

SIR,

With reference to the order[2] under section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code just served upon me, I beg to state that I am sorry that you have felt called upon to issue it and I am sorry too that the Commissioner of the Division has totally misinterpreted my position.[3] Out of a sense of public responsibility, I feel it to be my duty to say that I am unable to leave this District but if it so pleases the authorities, I shall submit to the order by suffering the penalty of disobedience.

I must emphatically repudiate the Commissioner's suggestion that my 'object is likely to be agitation'. My desire is purely and simply for a genuine search for knowledge. And this I shall continue

[1] Florence Winterbottom, Secretary, Union of Ethical Societies, *vide* "Letter to Miss F.Winterbottom", 13-11-1906.

[2] *Vide* "Order under Section 144 Cr.P.C.", 16-4-1917.

[3] *ibid*

to satisfy so long as I am left free.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

M. K. GANDHI

THE DISTRICT MAGISTRATE[1]

MOTIHARI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand in the National Archives of India; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*, No. 21, pp. 63-4

267. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CARE DISTRICT MAGISTRATE,

MOTIHARI,

April 16, 1917

DEAR MR. MAFFEY[2],

I have come to this district to learn for myself whether there is truth in the allegations of the ryots against the planters. I saw the Secretary of the Planters' Association and then the Commissioner of the Division[3], and sought their co-operation. Both politely rejected my advances and dissuaded me from my pursuit. I could not accept their advice, and have been proceeding with my work. The Magistrate has served upon me an order[4] asking me to leave the District. The grounds for the order are such as I cannot subscribe to. I have therefore been reluctantly obliged to disobey the order and tell the magistrate that I shall suffer the penalty for the breach.[5]

My motive is national service and that, too, so long as it is consistent with humanitarian dictates. I understand, because my South African work was considered to be humanitarian that I was awarded. the Kaisar-i-Hind Gold Medal.[6] So long as my humanitarian motive is questioned, so long must I remain undeserving of holding the medal.

[1] W. B. Heycock

[2] Private Secretary to the Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford

[3] *Vide* "Letter to L.F. Morshead", 12-4-1917.

[4] *Vide* Order under Section 144 Cr.P.C.", 16-4-1917.

[5] *Vide* the preceding item.

[6] *Vide* entries for June 4 and June 26, "Diary for 1915".

I am therefore asking my people to return the medal to you,[1] and I shall feel honoured to receive it back if it is returned to me when my motive is no longer questioned.

As to the question itself, so far as I have been able to examine the evidence, given to me, it shows that the planters have successfully used the Civil and Criminal Courts and illegal force to enrich themselves at the expense of the ryots, and that the ryots are living under a reign of terror and that their property, their persons, and their minds are all 'under the planters' heels. One man graphically said to me: "We belong to the planters, not to the *Sircar*[2]. Thana[3] is nowhere, the planters are everywhere. We take what they allow, and we keep what they permit." I had hoped that a deeper examination would have toned down the impression formed by me. Had I been left free, I would have concluded my studies and placed the results at the disposal of the authorities. I wish that His Excellency would consider the matter serious enough to have an independent inquiry made. The local administration admit that they are sitting upon a mine so dangerous that they cannot tolerate my presence. And yet they manage to be satisfied with the slow inquiry of a settlement officer. Everything will depend upon swiftness and the proper choice of the members of the Committee of Inquiry. This is the least that the ryots are entitled to. Will you please place this before the Viceroy and ask for his forgiveness for sending such a long letter in the midst of many imperative calls upon his time. The urgency of the matter is the sole excuse for this letter.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the original: C. W. 7596. Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 16-4-1917.
[2] Government
[3] The police office

268. INSTRUCTIONS FOR WORKERS[1]

[*April 16, 1917*][2]

The programme of study should be gone through as if I was not imprisoned, that is

1. Villages should be visited systematically and notes of evidence of everyone examined should be taken.

2. Where the party consents to sign the notes, his signature or thumb impression should be taken.

3. Evidence should be taken even where the parties decline to sign. Reason for refusal should be noted.

4. Evidence of pleaders who had anything to do with the case of the ryots should be requested and it should be after the pattern suggested for Gorakh Babu[3].

For this, evidence as many workers as would come forward should be taken. It is to be wished that many workers who would come forward would not be deterred from pursuing their inquiry even though they may receive notice of removal.

They should quietly go to gaol if they are summoned and tried for disobedience. I suggest that no defence be offered.

The ryots should be instructed definitely not to use violence whether regarding their own grievances or regarding imprisonment of those who may come to assist them. But they can be and should be told that where they know they are being unjustly treated, that is, required to plant indigo when they need not, rather than go to law, they should simply refuse to plant indigo and if for so refusing they are imprisoned they should suffer imprisonment. This requires very careful explanation. Where the workers do not understand the working of this quiet resistance or do not appreciate the force of it, they may drop this point of the programme.

When the workers of this first class are exhausted or not found at all, second class workers should be enlisted to collect evidence at

[1] About continuance of work in Champaran, as Gandhiji, who defied the order of the Magistrate to leave the district, expected he would be imprisoned

[2] Prepared on the night of the 16th; *vide* "Letter to H.S.L. Polak", 17-4-1917.

[3] Gorakh Prasad (1869-1962), a pleader of Motihari, for sometime host of Gandhiji in Motihari

centres where their presence is not resented. Ryots may be quietly asked to come to such centres and give evidence. All documents should be collected and classified. The work ought not to take more than six weeks. At the end of the inquiry the whole of the evidence oral or documentary should be printed for private circulation. In the first instance if no one will print it, it should be typed. All the papers and evidence should be collected at one spot and sifted and marshalled under one man's direction. Babu Brijkishore Prasad[1] should take it up unless Mr. Andrews arrives and does the marshalling.

Further action should be taken after consultation with a small all-India committee under Panditjee[2] or Mr. Shastri[3]. There should be a demand for an impartial inquiry containing a number (equal with that of the planters' representatives) of Indians representing the ryots. Our representatives must be of our choice.

Pending inquiry planters should institute no civil suits for damages, etc., and an impartial person should be present at the time of distribution of wages daily or otherwise.

Workers should be paid where necessary. If funds cannot be raised locally, the Imperial Citizenship Association should be asked.

From a facsimile of the original given in *Mahatma*, Vol. I

269. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

MOTIHARI,
April 17, 1917

MY DEAR ESTHER,

I know you will want me to tell you that I am about to be imprisoned. I have come here to remove some labour grievances. The authorities do not want me. Hence the impending imprisonment. Do ask Mr. M. at the Ashram to send you some papers, and you will know. I am absolutely joyed to think that I shall be imprisoned for the sake of conscience.

Yours
(if you want me to sign)
BAPU

My Dear Child, pp. 6-7

[1] Leading advocate of Darbhanga, member, Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council and active co-worker of Gandhiji

[2] Madan Mohan Malaviya

[3] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri

270. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

FROM M.K. GANDHI

MOTIHARI,
April 17, 1917

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am on one of the loveliest spots of the earth very near the Himalayas and yet I cannot get a glimpse of them. Just now it is 3 a.m. I have been writing the whole night. I have come here to settle some labour troubles. The authorities do not want me. They have asked me to leave. I do not go. I am therefore to be tried for contempt.[1] You will not hear from me now for some months, perhaps. I have asked Chhaganlal[2] to write to you. There is nothing from you.

With love,

Yours,
OLD FRIEND

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

271. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

MOTIHARI,
April 17 [*1917*]

MY DEAR HENRY,

I know you are saying "well done" all the time. I am recalling the best days of South Africa. And to have them in a place where Rama and Janaka lived! The people are rendering all assistance. We shall soon find our Naidoos[3] and Sorabjis[4] and Imams[5]. I don't know that we shall stumble upon a Cachalia[6].

I am still without the necessary summons for contempt. Evidently they little expected the answer[7] I have given.

[1] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri
[2] This appears to be a slip for 'Maganlal'; ibid
[3] Valiant fighters in the satyagraha struggle in South Africa
[4] *ibid*
[5] *ibid*
[6] *ibid*
[7] *Vide* "Letter to District Magistrate, Champaran" 16-4-1917.

I sent you last night the papers to your Allahabad address. The papers ought to have gone to Bankipore last night. But they did not somehow. I am now sending you a special messenger. Please show them to Muzharul Haque[1] too. He has telegraphed offering to come if required. I have replied saying he may come after my imprisonment. Whilst I am free, I want only volunteers who will go from village to village and hear what the people have to say.

From the memorandum of instructions[2] hurriedly drawn up last night you will observe what is wanted. Two things may be done by the leaders there: urgent demand for an impartial quick inquiry, a body of staunch learned volunteers (100) who would go to different villages and live there protecting the people from molestation and gathering information. If the authorities object to the volunteers, they should not take 'no' for an answer. The volunteers should be, so far as possible, Beharees. Theirs should be the credit.

I still feel that so far as you are concerned, you need not throw yourself into the fray. I have asked Andrews to come. I want you to feel free and prepared to go to England and settle there. I cannot go into all the reasons just now.

Gorakh Prasad Babu here will give you all the information during my absence. If there is no summons I disappear in the villages tomorrow and may not return for two days.

With love,

Yours,

BHAI

Later—

You will see from the magistrate's reply that I am to be 'fixed up' tomorrow. So I do not go to the villages.[3]

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 2821

[1] (1866-1930), nationalist leader of Bihar; one of the founders and, later, President of the Muslim League; a member of the Congress delegation to England, 1914; supported Gandhiji during the Champaran and non-co-operation movements

[2] *Vide* "Instructions for Workers", 16-4-1917.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to District Magistrate, Champaran", 17-4-1917

272. LETTER TO J. B. KRIPALANI

MOTIHARI,

April 17 [*1917*]

MY DEAR FRIEND[1],

I read your affection in your eyes, in your expression, in your postures. May I be found worthy of all this deep love! Yes I know you want to help. You shall have your choice. Either go to Ahmedabad and work there for the experimental school or come and work here even at the risk of imprisonment. All this if I am imprisoned. If you want me to choose for you seeing that you are here, your natural place is not to quit the place until the ryots have their freedom to breathe like men. For me now Champaran is my domicile. Every day's inquiry confirms me in my opinion that the position in many respects is worse than in Fiji.

There is no summons yet for contempt.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GandhiProf. Malkani has to give me the statistics.

M. K. G.

I gave to the teacher of the Training School or some school my only copy of the Hindi rules under promise to return. Please trace it and if you find it, send it to Ahmedabad.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: G. N. 2822

273. LETTER TO DISTRICT MAGISTRATE, CHAMPARAN

MOTIHARI,

April 17, 1917

THE DISTRICT MAGISTRATE

MOTIHARI

SIR,

As I have no desire to do anything without the knowledge of the authorities, I beg to inform you that (assuming there is no service of

[1] Acharya J. B. Kripalani; *vide* "Letter to Kaka Kalelkar", 2-5-1917.

summons for appearance before the court tomorrow) I am going to Shampur and the surrounding villages tomorrow morning. The party hopes to start about 3 A.M.

I observed yesterday that a police officer followed the party all the way. I may state that we court the fullest publicity and therefore beg on my own behalf and that of my colleagues to say that we shall welcome the presence, if we may not have the assistance, of the police in the course of our mission.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand in the National Archives of India; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*, No. 23, p. 67

274. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

April 17, 1917

Received a letter from the District Magistrate.

M. K. GANDHI

From the original handwritten signed and dated by Gandhiji in the National Archives of India

275. LETTER TO DISTRICT MAGISTRATE, CHAMPARAN

MOTIHARI,

April 17, 1917

SIR,

In reply to your note of even date, I beg to state that I shall gladly remain in Motihari tomorrow and await summons.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand in the National Archives of India; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*, No. 25, p. 68

276. STATEMENT BEFORE THE COURT

[MOTIHARI,]
April 18, 1917

Mr. Gandhi appeared before the District Magistrate on Wednesday, the 18th instant. He read the statement printed below, and being asked to plead and finding that the case was likely to be unnecessarily prolonged, pleaded guilty. The Magistrate would not award the penalty but postponed judgement till 3 p.m. Meanwhile he was asked to see the Superintendent and then the District Magistrate. The result was that he agreed not to go out to the villages, pending instructions from the Government as to their view of his mission. The case was then postponed up to Saturday, April 21.With the permission of the Court, I would like to make a brief statement showing why I have taken the very serious step of seemingly disobeying the order made under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code. In my humble opinion, it is a question of difference of opinion between the local administration and myself. I have entered the country with motives of rendering humanitarian and national service. I have done so in response to a pressing invitation' to come and help the ryots, who urge they are not being fairly treated by the indigo planters. I could not render any help without studying the problem. I have, therefore, come to study it with the assistance, if possible, of the administration and the planters. I have no other motive and I cannot believe that my coming here can in any way disturb the public peace or cause loss of life. I claim to have considerable experience in such matters. The administration, however, have thought differently. I fully appreciate their difficulty, and I admit too, that they can only proceed upon information they receive. As a law-abiding citizen, my first instinct would be, as it was, to obey the order served upon me. I could not do so without doing violence to my sense of duty to those for whom I have come. I feel that I could just now serve them only by remaining in their midst. I could not, therefore, voluntarily retire. Amid this conflict of duty, I could only throw the responsibility of removing me from them on the administration.

I am fully conscious of the fact that a person, holding in the public life of India a position such as I do, has to be most careful in setting examples. It is my firm belief that in the complex constitution

under which we are living, the only safe and honourable course for a self-respecting man is, in the circumstances such as face me, to do what I have decided to do, that is, to submit without protest to the penalty of disobedience. I have ventured to make this statement not in any way in extenuation of the penalty to be awarded against me, but to show that I have disregarded the order served upon me, not for want of respect for lawful authority, but in obedience of the higher law of our being—the voice of conscience.[1]

The Leader, 22-4-1917, also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*, No. 28, pp. 69-70

277. TELEGRAM TO ASHRAM, AHMEDABAD

MOTIHARI,
April 18, 1917

TO
GANDHI
AHMEDABAD

MAGISTRATE POSTPONED JUDGEMENT DESPITE PLEA GUILTY. HAVE AGREED NOT GO VILLAGES TILL SATURDAY PENDING INSTRUCTIONS GOVT. REGARDING MISSION NO PUBLIC AGITATION SHOULD BE STARTED JUST YET.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the telegram as delivered: S.N. 9819

278. LETTER TO S. K. RUDRA

MOTIHARI,
April 18, 1917

DEAR MR. RUDRA[2],

You will expect a word from me before I am locked up. Our people here are sinking and if I can remain free only by removing myself from the ryots here, I should deem it a privilege to be imprisoned. Of this place, perhaps, it could be truly said what Bishop

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Enclosures to Gandhiji's letter to L.F. Morshead", 13-4-1917.

[2] Sushil Kumar Rudra, Principal, St. Stephen's College, Delhi

Heber[1] (was it not?) wrongly said of Malabar and Ceylon—"Every prospect pleases, man alone is vile."[2] In some respects, conditions are much worse than in Fiji. I assume that you know something about what is happening to me. For more, please ask Andrews to send you the papers. I have not the time to say more.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C. W. 5795. Courtesy: Raj Mohini Rudra

279 LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

BABU GORAKH PRASAD'S RESIDENCE,
MOTIHARI, NORTH BIHAR,
Chaitra Vad 13 [*April 19, 1917*][3]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

God's ways are inscrutable. Those who wish to go to jail are unable to do so. Those who want to keep out, find themselves inside. You are aware of all the facts.[4] Mr. Andrews arrived here last night. Messrs. Polak and Mazharul Haque also called. Mr. Andrews will leave in a day or two. He wanted to stay on, but I did not agree. He will now go to Fiji.

From now on, write to me at the above address. I have got word that Government officials have been asked to co-operate with me fully.[5] So it would seem that my having to go to jail has been postponed for the time being. The work here is heavy. It is very much to my liking. The situation is much like what it was in Natal. I go

[1] Reginald Heber (1782-1826), Bishop of Calcutta

[2] The actual lines are:

"What though the spicy breezes
Blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle,
Though every prospect pleases,
And only man is vile."

[3] The year has been inferred from Gandhiji's stay at Motihari. *Chaitra Vad* 13 corresponded to April in 1917.

[4] Gandhiji was served with a notice to leave Champaran Distriet by the first available train. He appeared in the District Magistrate's Court on April 18 and the case was postponed till April 21; *vide* "Letter to District Magistrate, Champaran", 16-4-1917, "Statement Before the Court", 18-4-1917.

[5] The Government withdrew the proceedings against Gandhiji; *ibid*

about my work surrounded by hundreds of labourers. I have resumed taking cooked food from today. Fruit diet seems very expensive. there is scarcity of fruit even in such a fertile land.

I do not see any chance of my going back in the immediate future. It may be that I shall have to spend six months here. It is another matter that I may go over there briefly for a day or two. In that eventuality we have to consider whether anyone should come here. Whoever comes cannot hope to study. He can only gain experience of the place. In my view, nobody need come. I am able to get whatever help I need. I feel that it is essential that the activities of the Ashram should be carried on well. But I would not interfere. Should anyone decide to come here, he should consider his step from all angles. I think it would be best to withdraw the amount that stands in my name in the bank and credit it to Chhaganlal's account.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 11169. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

280. LETTER TO W. B. HEYCOCK

MOTIHARI,

April 20, 1917

DEAR MR. HEYCOCK,

Will you please tell me where I have to wait on you tomorrow? I forgot to ask you when you gave me the appointment.

I am,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand in the National Archives of India; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*, No. 39, p. 79

281. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LT. GOVERNOR OF BIHAR AND ORISSA, PURI

MOTIHARI,
April 21, 1917

BEG THANK HIS HONOUR WITHDRAWAL PROCEEDINGS AND INSTRUCTIONS LOCAL OFFICIALS GIVE ME FACILITIES DURING INVESTIGATION.

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 41, p. 80

282. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

BANKIPUR,
MOTIHARI,
April 21,1917

The proceedings are withdrawn under instructions from Government. Official assistance during the conduct of my enquiry has been promised and I feel grateful to Government for the withdrawal of the proceedings and promised assistance. I am being splendidly helped by local pleaders and others and messages of sympathy and promise of help have been received from many quarters, which encourage my fellow-workers and myself. During my stay here, I have already visited some villages and seen hundreds of ryots. The officials have shown every courtesy throughout. While I am carrying on this enquiry, no public agitation is necessary. The issues involved are tremendously great. I hope to place my final conclusions before Government and the country.

The Leader, 23-4-1917; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*, No. 46 (E), pp. 86-7

[1] According to Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1917, p. 254, 'on 22nd April in the morning a wire was received at the Ashram from Gandhi, summarising the statement' and adding 'This may be published'. S.N. 9820.

283. LETTER TO W. B. HEYCOCK

MOTIHARI,
April 22, 1917

DEAR MR. HEYCOCK,

I thank you for your kind note of yesterday. I am writing to Mr. Cox[1] today.

I leave for Bettiah this afternoon.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand in the National Archives of India; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*, No. 45, p. 83

284. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

MOTIHARI,
Vaishakh Sud [*1*] [*April 22, 1917*][2]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. You must have received my telegram. Meetings with the Magistrate, etc., have started. I visualize the same situation here as was there in South Africa. Perhaps the result may be quicker here. I am going to Bettiah today and may spend about eight days there. Keep on writing to me at the Motihari address. You would have by now returned the *Kaiser-i-Hind* medal. That news . . .[3] Mr. Andrews has left for Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32885

[1] Herbert Cox, of Paddumkair factory, Secretary of the District Planters' Association

[2] From the contents and 'Motihari' and *Vaishakh Sud* in the date-line. Gandhiji says in the letter that he is "going to Bettiah today". In the year 1917, he left Bettiah on April 22, which corresponded to *Vaishakh Sud* 1. *Also vide* "Letter to W.B. Heycock", 22-4-1917.

[3] A few lines here are illegible in the source.

285. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

BETTIAH,

April 26 [*1917*][1]

DEAR HENRY,

We are getting together extraordinary evidence.[2] No more today than hasty chit. Keith's[3] comments and minutes ought not to be published. Hope Millie and Waldo are better. Mama writes saying that he was not leaving Ceilia before the Petits arrived and that attitude was not nice for her.

With love,

BHAI

H.S.L. POLAK

C/O DOCTOR SAPRU

ALLAHABAD

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] From the post-mark. Gandhiji was in Bettiah on this day.

[2] Gandhiji had begun his investigations into the agrarian conditions of the ryots of Champaran; *vide* also "Statement of Peasants taken by Gandhiji", 19-5-1917& "Government notice inviting Evidence before Champaran Agrarian Enquiry Committee", July 1917.

[3] A.B. Keith, a constitutional lawyer of England

286. LETTER TO MAHATMA MUNSHIRAM

BETTIAH,

Vaishakh Shukla 5 [*April 26, 1917*][1]

MAHATMAJI,

I was very glad to receive your letter. The new name[2] you have adopted is really most appropriate.

The work here is enormous. Tyranny, by God's grace, will end. But I shall certainly have to stay over here for four to six months. Babu Brajkishore Prasad and others who are helping me are all worthy people.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 2209

287. LETTER TO W. H. LEWIS

BETTIAH,

April 28, 1917

DEAR MR. LEWIS[3],

I have your note of even date. I thank you for having sent me your letter[4] to Mr. Heycock for perusal, I appreciate the frankness that pervades it, and it is, on the whole, a very fair summary of what has happened between us.

As to the guns, I think you are somewhat unnecessarily offended. I mentioned the matter to you on Mr. Heycock's suggestion, and if you admit the propriety of my having spoken to you about the matter, I could not be blamed for having told the aggrieved parties that there was a probability of their getting back their guns. This, if anything, was done to create a good impression about yourself— an impression which, I am happy to say, I carried with me [when] I first met you and which I have had no reason to

[1] Gandhiji was in Bettiah on this day.
[2] Swami Shraddhanand
[3] Sub-divisional Officer of Bettiah
[4] Select Document No. 52, not reproduced here

change since. There was certainly no interference on my part with your authority.

I venture to think that your deduction, too, that in the estimation of the *raiyats* I am superseding local authority is hardly warranted by facts. My mission is to invoke the help of local authority in their aid, and to stimulate its interest in them more fully than heretofore.

I anticipate no trouble, because I always make it a point to seek an interview with the planters wherever I go, to tell the people that relief is to come not from me but from the planters and the Government, and that they are in no case to use violence or stop work but continue it as before as if there was no enquiry being made by me, and also because the enquiry is absolutely open and attended by representatives of the police department, as also the planters.

You are less than fair to Babu Brajkishore Prasad. Together with other friends from Bihar, he is helping me very materially. In this enquiry he has no status apart from me: hence he and the other friends have not called on you. But I must state that their assistance has been of the greatest value to me.

Perhaps it is but fair to the planters to say that Mr. Still[1] has of his own motion invited me to visit his *dehat*[2] and remain there aslong as I like and that Mr. Cox has written to me saying that he is arranging a meeting with some leading planters, and concludes "you may be sure that we wish to assist you in your enquiry". This perhaps is in conflict with your statement, "By the planters he (I) is regarded with great suspicion as their natural enemy."

I wish to serve my countrymen and the planters through the Government where their assistance is necessary.

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 51, pp. 98-9

[1] C. Still of Sathi indigo concern

[2] *Dehat* or *dihat* the adjoining area under the influence of an indigo factory

288. LETTER TO DR. H. S. DEVA

BETTIAH,

CHAMPARAN,

April 29 [*1917*][1]

DEAR DR. DEVA,

Your Geography is at fault. This is not Assam. This is North Bihar. This is the land of Janak to which Vishwamitra took those two youngsters, Rama and Lakshman. Nature's bounty has been lavished as unstintingly as man has abused his power. The position is so bad that I dare not leave here even for a day. I have cancelled all appointments. I cannot be with you in Nasik, much as I should like to be.

We are taking the statements of men who come to us as fast as we can. In a few days, I may have something to report. I have kept Mr. Shastriar supplied with all the information to date.

Although I am not in gaol, I shall still look up to you to finish the programme about the translation of Mr. Gokhale's speeches.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5797

289. LETTER TO TURNER

AHMEDABAD,

April 30 [*1917*][2]

DEAR MR. TURNER,

I was indeed delighted to hear from you and hear about our

[1] From the reference to the geographical situation of the place, the letter seems to have been written soon after Gandhiji first visited Champaran.

[2] Inferred from the reference to withdrawal of proceedings against Gandhiji during his tour of Bihar in 1917; *vide* "Letter to W.B. Heycock", 20-4-1917

friend.[1] Yes, I have felt anxious about him these months having heard nothing from or of him. I have been writing most regularly to him. He gave me, when his departure was imminent, his new address and I wrote several letters to that address. Having received no acknowledgement of these letters I resumed writing to his Douglas address. But I have practically no acknowledgment of all these letters of mine. Pray tell him that we all think of him and miss him so often. I miss him most of all. Just now I am in the northern part of India. It is a country "Where every prospect pleases, man alone is vile."[2] Here at first my presence was resented by the local authority. I received a summons to leave the country. I declined. I was summoned to answer a charge of contempt. I pleaded guilty. But the court had not the courage to sentence me. Meanwhile came instructions from the superior authority that the proceedings against me should be withdrawn and that I should be allowed to proceed with my work. My work is to examine the condition of the peasantry who are working under the indigo planters who are alleged to be treating the peasantry in a most high-handed manner. I have been carrying on my inquiry and I find the position to be as bad as it was painted. I am still going on with the inquiry. It is here I miss our friend's presence. I cannot imagine myself doing this class of work without him. I know he would have been delighted to be in the thick of it. He would have walked with me to the villages and lived with me among the simple folk. He would have seen the planters. He would have made friends with them and would have played an important part in bringing about a settlement. But that was not to be. He must pay the penalty that modern civilization exacts from us —man against man to gain man's so-called freedom. It is like darkness being used to dispel darkness. We are living in an age of materialism. We are always hoping for the best to happen though unconsciously doing the opposite to achieve the best. I hope with you that the agony will soon end. But the hope is against my reason. My reason tells me that the peace which we shall have will be mockery; it will be an armed truce to me, it will be the outcome not of one party admitting being in the wrong but both being fairly exhausted and deserving rest. Such a peace is bound to

[1] Herman Kallenbach, who left South Africa for India with Gandhiji was not allowed by the British Government to go to India because of the War and was interned in London.

[2] The actual lines by Reginald Heber are: "Though every prospect pleases/And only man is vile."

lead to a bloodier strife unless the intervening period brings about a change of hearts. Whilst I write this setting on a stool in a hamlet, I am not forgetful of the distress you are passing through there. We are only a glimpse of what you are going through. I wish that all this great sacrifice had been made for a better cause. But nature has her own ways. Good often comes out of evil. Let us hope it will in this case also.

I am glad our friend is flourishing so far as his bodily health goes. Pray tell him not to worry over his South African affairs. He left them in the best hands available and there they must rest. The circumstances that will face him on his release will provide their own remedy.

I hope you will make sure of this reaching our friend even if it means your having to go to him. If you will give me the privilege of paying for your journey, I should be gald to do so.

Now that you have commenced writing, I hope you will allow yourself to be the link between our friend and me. Unless there is anything of importance I shall not write to you until I hear from you. To make sure of this reaching you, I am having the letter sent by registeres post.

Thanking you most sincerely for having written to me about our friend.

Yours ever,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence, Vol. III, pp. 922-7. Courtesy: National Archives of India

290. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI

BETTIAH,

Vaishakh Sud [*April, 1917*][1]

CHI. KASHI,

I have your letter. If you feel it is necessary for you to go to Madhavpur for the sake of your health, do go. Ahmedabad would be very hot these days. Will Krishna have to accompany you or will he stay behind? It will take time for you to get rid of the weakness. At the moment I cannot advise you to take porridge of boiled fruits. There is nothing wrong in your taking almonds. The more you worry about gaining strength enough to do your work, the more time you will take to get well. Come to Ahmedabad as soon as it starts raining there. . . [2]

From the Gujarati original S.N. 33085.

291. LETTER TO W. B. HEYCOCK

MOTIHARI,

May 2, 1917

DEAR MR. HEYCOCK,

I came to Motihari last night. You may be aware that I am to meet the planters this morning at 10.45. You will please let me know if you want me.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand in the National Archives of India; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*, No. 58, p. 110

[1] From 'Bettiah' and *Vaishakh Sud* in the date-line; Gandhiji was at Bettiah in the month of *Vaishakh* only in the year 1916. In 1918, he went there just for a day and is unlikely to have written the letter then.

[2] The letter is incomplete.

292. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

MOTIHARI,
CHAMPARAN,
May 2, 1917

DEAR ESTHER,

I have just received your letter from Ahmedabad. To say 'I thank you' would be in your case an empty form. Your interest is much deeper. My experiences here give the greatest joy. The suffering I see around me gives me equal pain. I know that you feel for me because you would like to be in the thick of it all yourself. But your work is cut out for you. For those who are at a distance from you, you can but pray. And that you are doing with all your heart.

I may not be able to leave this place for six months. One of these days, I shall describe to you the nature of the work I am doing here.

Do please go to the Ashram whenever you can. It is one of your homes if one may have more than one.

You may write to me at the address given at the top.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

My Dear Child, p. 7

293. LETTER TO KAKA KALELKAR

BETTIAH,
MOTIHARI,
Vaishakh Sud 11 [*May 2, 1917*][1]

BHAISHRI KAKA,

I have your letter. It is good you went over to the Ashram. I may perhaps need you here[2] but I will not ask for your help. Your work at present is to lose yourself in the National School experiment.

[1] The addressee went over to the Ashram in 1917.
[2] In Champaran, where Gandhiji later started schools and welfare activities

I think it is a very important experiment. 1 should like you to see Prof. Shah and start work immediately. Write to Mr. Sadashiv to tell him that he may possibly be needed. I will call him up then. Is he ready to come along with his family? He must give at least six months. Perhaps more.

If Shastri's plot is not otherwise inconvenient and the water there is good, it should be secured without any delay. Do you think it will be possible to put up tents or thatched huts while Construction work is under way? I don't care if the analyst's report on the soil is not favourable. The water must be good. For the school, we want 12 to 20 pupils for the present. It will be better if they are drawn from good families. Rather, let them be what they are. If it is decided to settle on Shastri's plot, boys from adjoining villages may be invited. However, so long as we can get them from Ahmedabad city, it will be preferable not to bring in villagers to join the experiment. But one need not be particular in this matter; we should carry on with any boys who may join.

If the teacher has any real worth in him, the mechanical side of education will take care of itself. If they tell stories from the *Ramayana*, everyone will follow them as well as he can. In agriculture, they will acquire equal proficiency. Spiritual awakening will require [a mind disposed that way through] early influences. How can we know whether we shall come upon such influences in cities or villages? Show this to Prof. Shah and request him on my behalf to take up this work in all earnestness. I shall write to him if I find time.

Kripalani is in Muzaffarpur. He wanted to know from me what he should do. I told him[1] that, since he was here, he should join in the work here. There has been no reply from him.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

Reassure [them] about Chintamani Shastri that, so long as Sind needs him, we shall not ask him to join us.

From a copy of the Gujarati original: C.W. 5712. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* "Letter to J. B. Kripalani", 17-4-1917.

294. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

BETTIAH, CHAMPARAN,
Vaishakh Sud 11, [*May 2, 1917*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

It will do if for the present you write to me at the above address. Letters are received both at Motihari and Bettiah. I am enclosing Kaka's[2] letter. Read it and do the needful. Pay whatever salaries, etc., are due. There is no need at all to feel nervous because I am away. Are the Hindi teachers doing well? How are they? How many attend the lessons? Give me all the details.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of Gujarati: C.W. 11170. courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

295. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

BHETTIAH,
May 6 [*1917*][3]

DEAR MILLIE,

Your letter and wire were redirected here and come into my hands today. Henceforth, please write at the above address. Simply Bettiah, Champaran will do.

I am sorry to hear the news about Henry's illness. Somehow I do not share your gloomy forebodings. He has marvellous recuperative powers and I think he will quickly recover his original vigour. What I do feel, however, is that both of you should join Ceilia at Ooty. Mama too wrote saying that Ceilia was not keeping well. But I go further to say that even if she were well, she ought not alone to have charge of a child, especially a child so wonderful as Leon. Ooty will do Henry good and may do you also good. If the high altitude does not suit you all, you should go to Bangalore. It has perhaps the finest climate in India. Even Belgaum or Poona will be alright for

[1] The year has been inferred from Gandhiji's stay at Champaran. *Vaishakh Sud 11* corresponded to May 2 in 1917.

[2] D. B. Kalelkar

[3] From the contents

you. But somehow or other, I prefer Banglore. Change to any such place will be the best tonic for Henry. And he must live on the plainest foods such as we have at the Ashram. Everything simply boiled.

As for Waldo, I must differ from your views. It is because Waldo is a trust that you may not play with him. I would not mind your being vaccinated if you chose to be. But to add a weakness-causing operation to an already weak constitution is to do infinite harm to it. It is not obligatory on you to travel or to live in insanitary surroundings. By all means take all reasonable precautions that the science of hygiene may suggest. If the worst fear is realized and Waldo has smallpox, why should you consider yourself guilty? It is *not* a dangerous disease. And natural smallpox if properly treated does not leave the patient debilitated. But the purest lymph is not as pure as you may imagine. By having him vaccinated, you will expose Waldo to an additional risk to his health. Pock marks, if you are afraid of them, are really nothing. By proper treatment, in course of time they disappear. Did you see Bala and Naransamy? They had confluent smallpox of the most virulent type. The marks are growing or were growing fainter daily under the treatment of anointing with oil and rubbing thereafter. Pray read my plan for Waldo twice, then pray and then do as the voice within you bids you.

Do please write to me frequently if you cannot write to me daily about Henry's health. It is God's mercy that when every member of the family is down, you are keeping well. I do hope you won't have a nervous breakdown after Henry rises from his sick-bed which he will soon do, I am sure.

My work is steadily progressing. I have come in touch with many planters too and often meet the collector, etc. I cannot leave this place for some months to come.

With love to you all,

Yours,

BHAI

[PS.]

Pray remember me to Dr. Sapru[1].

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Tej Bahadur Sapru (1875-1949); lawyer and statesman

296. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

BANKIPORE,
May 11 [*1917*][1]

MY DEAR MILLIE,

Just a line before leaving for Bettiah. Your telegram of yesterday has frightened me. Immediately on receipt of your wire, I wrote to you a long letter about Henry and Ceilia. I do still hope that [you] have received it. The postal hours in Bettiah are most inconvenient. I have to trust to chance friends to post the letters and it is possible that the one who takes the letter might have missed the post for which my letter to you was intended.

It alarms me to find that fever has not yet left Henry and I have telegraphed to you to wire or write to me at Bettiah.

I came in yesterday on the invitation of the Government to see Hon'ble Mr. Maude[2] . I had two hours' interview. I shall write more about this later. The matter is critical. I dare not gone down to you. Please use the wire freely if necessary. I shall expect at least a postcard from you daily.

With love,

Yours,

BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] From the contents
[2] W. Maude, Member of the Executive Council, Bihar and Orissa

297. LETTER TO HARILAL DESAI

BETTIAH,
Vaishakh Vad 5 [*May 11, 1917*][1]

BHAISHRI HARILAL DESAI[2],

Your letter has come to me here. I remember our meeting. You can stay here with me if you wish to. I shall be in this province for some months. If you wish to stay in Ahmedabad in my absence, it could be arranged. Do whatever is convenient to you. You can come here *via* Kanpur or Patna.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

BHAISHRI HARILAL MANEKLAL DESAI

TAPINI KHADKI

KAPADWANJ

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 1867

298. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

BETTIAH,
May 12 [*1917*][3]

MY DEAR MILLIE,

On my return yesterday I found your telegram but not of yesterday's date. I do hope you received my wire from Bankipore and I am sending another one just now. How I wish I could be by Henry's side. But it cannot be. The position here is so serious that I dare not leave this place. I had an important interview with a member of the Government. I am preparing a general letter of which you shall have a copy.[4]

Do you want anybody to come from Ahmedabad? Do please give me the fullest information.

[1] Gandhiji was in Bettiah on this day.

[2] Harilal Maneklal Desai (1881-1927), educationist and social worker. He left his job in 1920 to join the non-co-operation movement under Gandhiji's guidance and dedicated his life to khadi and village uplift work.

[3] From the contents

[4] *Vide* "Report on Condition or Ryots in Champaran", 13-5-1917.

In the hope that you might have received my long letter, I am not repeating what I have said in it.

With love,

Yours,

BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

299. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

BETTIAH,

CHAMPARAN,

Vaishakh Vad 6 [*May 12, 1917*][1]

CHI. JAMNADAS[2],

I had been waiting for a letter from you, as one waits for the rains. I got one and I am satisfied. The same post brought a letter of yours sent on by Narandas. I shall keep on writing to you. I shall be measured by your success. If you should not come up to my expectations, my judgment would be rated at zero; I have staked so much on you. My conscience would also tell me that I am not at all a good judge of men. You will therefore always have my blessings and my encouragement. I pray God may give you all necessary strength. If the two of you live an ideal life, you will be the saving of many a young man. It is very much my desire that all of you, on whom I have placed my hopes, should be not merely what I am but free of all my faults, that you may do better than I. There will be nothing wrong in your aiming so high. It is not much of a miracle that a son should preserve the capital, what pleases the father more and brings greater credit to himself is that he should add to it.

For some time yet I shall have no choice but to stay on here. You must be getting all the news through Doctor Saheb, so I don't give any here. If the food there does not disagree with you, be in no hurry to make too many changes in it. Your duty at present is to see that you flourish in health and that you teach the boys and raise them

[1] Gandhiji was in Bettiah on this day.

[2] Brother of Chhaganlal Gandhi

up and give satisfaction to Doctor Saheb in other ways.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5675. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

300. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

BETTIAH,

May 13, 1917

MY DEAR ESTHER,

Pray do not apologize for writing to me. Your letters are most welcome.

I am sure that your duty is to fulfil your undertaking with the Mission with all your heart. You can come to the Ashram only when they relieve you and when you feel in the clearest possible terms that you will come to render the service of humanity in greater fullness. When that time comes, the Ashram will receive you as one of its own. Meanwhile you are of course always free to go [to] the Ashram and stay there as long as you like.

At the Ashram, we are now trying an experiment in education to serve as a pattern. When you go there, I am sure you will like the teaching staff. They are all, I think, good men and sane.

My work here gives me greater and greater joy day by day. The poor *raiyats* delight in simply sitting round me, feeling that they can trust me to do the right thing. I only hope I am worthy of all this love. I constantly see the planters and do not despair of appealing to their sense of justice on behalf of the *raiyats* who have groaned under the weight of oppression all these long years. I shall send you a copy of my representation[1] to the Government. You may not understand some points in it. Do not hesitate to ask me please.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

My Dear Child, p. 9

[1] *Vide* the following item.

301. REPORT ON CONDITION OF RYOTS IN CHAMPARAN[1]

BETTIAH,
May 13, 1917

In accordance with the suggestions made by Hon'ble Mr. Maude[2], I beg to submit herewith the preliminary conclusions which I have arrived at as a result of the inquiry being made by me into the agrarian condition of the *raiyats* of Champaran.

At the outset I would like to state that it was not possible for me to give the assurance which Mr. Maude would have liked me to have given, viz., that the *vakil* friends who have been assisting me would be withdrawn. I must confess that this request has hurt me deeply. It has been made ever since my arrival here. I have been told, that is, after the withdrawal of the order of removal from the District, that my presence was harmless enough and that my *bona fides* were unquestioned, but that the presence of the *vakil* friends was likely to create 'a dangerous situation'. I venture to submit that if I may be trusted to conduct myself decorously, I may be equally trusted to choose helpers of the same type as myself. I consider it a privilege to have the association, in the difficult tasks before me, of these able, earnest and honourable men. It seems to me that for me to abandon them is to abandon my work. It must be a point of honour with me not to dispense with their help until anything unworthy is proved against them to my satisfaction. I do not share the fear that either my presence or that of my friends can create 'a dangerous situation'. The danger, if any exists, must lie in the causes that have brought about strained relations between the planters and the *raiyats*. And if the causes were removed, there never need be any fear of a dangerous situation arising in Champaran so far as the *raiyats* are concerned.

Coming to the immediate purpose of this representation, I beg to state that nearly four thousand *raiyats* have been examined and their statements taken after careful cross-examination. Several villages have been visited and many judgments of courts studied. And the inquiry is, in my opinion, capable of sustaining the following

[1] This was sent to the Chief Secretary, Bihar & Orissa.

[2] Member of the Executive Council, Bihar & Orissa, in his talk with Gandhiji on 10th May; *vide* "Note By Hon'ble W. Maude on Interview with Gandhiji", 10-5-1917.

conclusions:

Factories or concerns in the district of Champaran may be divided into two classes—(1) those that have never had indigo plantations, and (2) those that have:—

(1) The concerns which have never grown indigo have exacted *abwabs* known by various local names equal in amount at least to the rent paid by the *raiyats*. This exaction, although it has been held to be illegal, has not altogether stopped.

(2) The indigo-growing factories have grown indigo either under the *tinkathia* system or *khuski*. The former has been most prevalent and has caused the greatest hardship. The type has varied with the progress of time. Starting with indigo, it has taken in its sweep all kinds of crops. It may now be defined as an obligation presumed to attach to the *raiyat's* holding whereby the *raiyat* has to grow a crop on 3/20 of the holding at the will of the landlord for a stated consideration. There appears to be no legal warrant for it. The *raiyats* have always fought against it and have only yielded to force. They have not received adequate consideration for the services. When, however, owing to the introduction of synthetic indigo the price of the local product fell, the planters desired to cancel the indigo *sattas*[1]. They, therefore, devised a means of saddling the losses upon the *raiyats*. In lease-hold lands they made the *raiyats* pay *tawan*, i.e., damages to the extent of Rs. 100/- per *bigha* in consideration of their waiving their right toindigo cultivation. This, the *raiyats* claim, was done under coercion. Where the *raiyats* could not find cash, hand-notes and mortgage bonds were made for payment in instalments bearing interest at 12 per cent per annum. In these the balance due has not been described as tawan, i.e., damages, but it has been fictitiously treated as an advance to the *raiyat* for some purpose of his own.

In *mukarrari*[2] lands, the damage has taken the shape of *sharahbeshi sattas*, meaning enhancement of rent in lieu of indigo cultivation. The enhancement according to the survey report has in

[1] Agreements
[2] A permanent tenure.

the case of 5,955 tenancies amounted to Rs. 31,062, the pre-enhancement figure being Rs. 53,865. The total number of tenancies affected is much larger. The *raiyats* claim that these *sattas* were taken from them under coercion. It is inconceivable that the *raiyats* would agree to an enormous perpetual increase in their rents against freedom from liability to grow indigo for a temporary period which freedom they were strenuously fighting to secure and hourly expecting.

Where *tawan* has not been exacted, the factories have forced the *raiyats* to grow oats, sugarcane, or such other crops under the *tinkathia* system.

Under the *tinkathia* system, the *raiyat* has been obliged to give his best land for the landlord's crops; in some cases the land in front of his house has been so used; he has been obliged to give his best time and energy also to it, so that very little time has been left to him for growing his own crops—his means of livelihood.

Cart-hire *sattas* have been forcibly taken from the *raiyats* for supplying carts to the factories on hire insufficient even to cover the actual outlay.

Inadequate wages have been paid to the *raiyats* whose labour has been impressed, and even boys of tender age have been made to work against their will.

Ploughs of the *raiyats* have been impressed and detained by the factories for days together for ploughing factory lands for a trifling consideration and at a time when they required them for cultivating their own lands.

Dasturi[1] has been taken by the notoriously ill-paid factory *amlas*[2] out of the wages received by the labourers, often amounting to a fifth of their daily wage, and also out of the hire paid for carts and ploughs.

In some villages, the *chamars*[3] have been forced to give up to the factories the hides of dead cattle belonging to the *raiyats*. Against the carcases the *chamars* used to supply the *raiyats* with shoes and leather straps for ploughs and their women used to render services to the latter's families at child-birth. Now they have ceased to render

[1] A customary but illegal commission.
[2] Staff.
[3] Member of the caste dealing in hides and skins

these valuable services. Some factories have for the collection of such hides opened hides godowns.

Illegal fines—often of heavy amounts—have been imposed by factories upon *raiyats* who have proved unbending.

Among the other (according to the evidence before me) methods adopted to bend the *raiyats* to their will, the planters have impounded the *raiyats'* cattle, posted peons on their houses, withdrawn from them barbers', dhobis', carpenters', and smiths' services; have prevented the use of village wells and pasture lands by ploughing up the pathway and lands just in front of or behind their homesteads, have brought or promoted civil suits, or criminal complaints against them, and resorted to actual physical force and wrongful confinements. The planters have successfully used the institutions of the country to enforce their will against the *raiyats* and have not hesitated to supplement them by taking the law in their own hands. The result has been that the *raiyats* have shown an abject helplessness such as I have not witnessed in any part of India where I have travelled.

They are members of District Boards and assessors under the Chaukidari Act and keepers of pounds. Their position as such has been felt by the *raiyats*. The roads which the latter pay for at the rate of half an anna per rupee of rent paid by them are hardly available to them. Their carts and bullocks which perhaps most need the roads are rarely allowed to make use of them. That this is not peculiar to Champaran does not in any way mitigate the grievance.

I am aware that there are concerns which form exceptions to the rule laid down, but as a general charge the statements made above are capable of proof.

I am aware, too, that there are some Indian zamindars who are open to the charges made above. Relief is sought for in their cases as in those of the planters. Whilst there can be no doubt the latter have inherited a vicious system, they with their trained minds and superior position have reduced it to an exact science, so that the *raiyats* would not only have been unable to raise their heads above water but would have sunk deeper still had not the Government granted some protection. But that protection has been meagre and provokingly slow and has often come too late to be appreciated by the *raiyats*.

It is true that the Government await the Settlement Officer's report on some of the matters covered by this representation. It is submitted that when the *raiyats* are groaning under the weight of oppression, such as I have described above, an inquiry by the Settlement Officer is a cumbersome method. With him the grievances mentioned herein are but an item in an extensive settlement operation. Nor does his inquiry cover all the points raised above. Moreover, grievances have been set forth herein which are not likely to be disputed. And they are so serious as to require immediate relief.

That *tawan* and *sharahbeshi sattas* and *abwabs* have been exacted cannot be questioned. I hope it will not be argued that the *raiyats* can be fully protected as to these by recourse to law. It is submitted that where there is wholesale exaction, courts are not a sufficient protection for the *raiyats* and the administrative protection of the *Sarkar*[1] as the supreme landlord is an absolute necessity.

The wrongs are twofold. There are wrongs which are accomplished facts and wrongs which continue. The continuing wrongs need to be stopped at once and a small inquiry may be made as to past wrongs, such as damages and *abwabs* already taken and *sharahbeshi* payments already made. The *raiyats* should be told by proclamation and notices distributed broadcast among them that they are not only not bound to pay *abwabs*, *tawan* and *sharahbeshi* charges but that they ought not to pay them, that the *Sarkar* will protect them if any attempt is made to enforce payment thereof. They should further be informed that they are not bound to render any personal service to their landlords and that they are free to sell their services wherever they choose and that they are not bound to grow indigo, sugar-cane or any other crop unless they wish to do so and unless it is profitable for them. The Bettiah Raj leases given to the factories should not be renewed until the wrongs are remedied and should, when renewed, properly safeguard the *raiyats*' rights.

As to *dasturi*, it is clear that better paid and educated men should substitute the present holders of responsible offices and that no countenance should be given to the diminution in *raiyats'* wages by illegal exaction of *dasturi*. I feel sure that the planters are quite capable of dealing with the evil, although it is in their language 'as old as the Himalayas'.

[1] Government

The *raiyats* being secured in their freedom, it would be no longer necessary to investigate the question of the inadequacy or otherwise of the consideration in the indigo *sattas* and cart-hire *sattas*, and the wages. The *raiyats* by common agreement should be advised to finish indigo or other crops for the current year. But thenceforth, whether it is indigo or any other crop, it should be only under a system of absolute free-will.

It will be observed that I have burdened this statement with as little argument as possible. But if it is the desire of the Government that I should prove any of my conclusions, I shall be pleased to tender the proofs on which they are based.

In conclusion, I would like to state that I have no desire to hurt the planters' feelings. I have received every courtesy from them. Believing as I do that the *raiyats* are labouring under a grievous wrong from which they ought to be freed immediately, I have dealt, as calmly as is possible for me to do so, with the system which the planters are working. I have entered upon my mission in the hope that they as Englishmen born to enjoy the fullest personal liberty and freedom will not fail to rise to their status and will not begrudge the *raiyats* the same measure of liberty and freedom.

I am sending copies to the Commissioner of the Tirhut Division, the Collector of Champaran, the Subdivisional Officer of Bettiah, the Manager of the Bettiah Raj, the Secretaries, respectively, of the Bihar Planters' Association and the District Planters' Association. I am circulating them also among those leaders of public opinion in the country who have kept themselves in touch with the work being done by my colleagues and myself. The copies are being marked not for publication, as there is no desire to invite a public discussion of the question unless it becomes absolutely necessary.

I need hardly give the assurance that I am at the disposal of the Government whenever my presence may be required.

Select Documents of Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 72, pp. 126-31

302. NOTES ON THE POSITION IN CHAMPARAN TO DATE[1]

BETTIAH,
May 14, 1917

CONFIDENTIAL

Since the withdrawal of the order of the Magistrate served on Mr. Gandhi, the work of recording statements has continued without interruption. Nearly 4000 statements have been taken. *Rayats* have flocked to the two stations, Motihari and Bettiah. The rush has been so great that the volunteers have not been able to cope with the work from day to day.

The volunteers are all local pleaders who have performed their work with great zeal and devotion. Babu Brajakishore Prasad has superintended this part of the work. The names of the other volunteers are: Babu Rajendra Prasad[2], Babu Dharanidhar[3], Babu Gorakh Prasad, Babu Ramnawami Prasad[4], Babu Sambhusaran[5] and Babu Anugrah Narain Sinha[6]. Chance comers have also assisted occasionally. Several villages have been visited and hundreds of *rayats* have been seen in their homes.

Planters have been always invited to attend the meetings with the *rayats*. They have, however, not attended. Their *jamadars*[7] have. Planters have been individually seen by Mr. Gandhi and there was a conference between representative planters and him. The planters were quite courteous but uncompromising. They overstated their case,

[1] These appear to have been prepared by Gandhiji from time to time to brief his co-workers and also (*vide* Note III) editors of the sympathetic papers to enable them to write with understanding of the real situation in Champaran. Numbers III, V and VI in this series are signed by Gandhiji; No. IV has not become available and it is not clear if this is No. I or II of the series.

[2] (1884-1963), statesman and scholar; Chairman, Constituent Assembly of India, 1946-9; first President of India

[3] A pleader and Congressman of Darbhanga

[4] A Muzaffarpur lawyer who took up cases against Bihar indigo planters; later joined Champaran campaign and non-cooperation movement

[5] (1892-1931), a lawyer and Congressman of Bihar; took part in the Champaran, non-cooperation and Khilafat movements

[6] (1889-1957), a lawyer, legislator and Congress leader of Bihar; took part in the freedom movement; Minister in Bihar, 1946-57

[7] Steward, chief of peons

inasmuch as they claimed that they had always acted as benefactors of their *rayats* and that they had protected them from the rapacity of moneylenders. Frequent interviews have taken place between the local officials and Mr. Gandhi. The former have been more open than the planters and have certainly shown a desire for amicable settlement. The officials have never concealed their opinion that they did not approve of the mission. Some of them only reluctantly carried out the Government instructions to give Mr. Gandhi every facility. The result has been that it has not been always an easy matter to obtain information from them. They have expressed stronger disapproval of the presence of the helpers mentioned above. The Sub-divisional Officer at Bettiah often said[1] that he was afraid of a conflagration taking place any day by reason of the inquiry. He said that the *rayats* had grown bolder and had formed a highly exaggerated notion of the results of the mission. He even reported to the Government that unless the inquiry could be stopped, he could not be responsible for the peace of the district under his charge. Some planters, too, went to Ranchi to complain to the Government that they were afraid of their own safety if the inquiry was continued. It was on account of this that Mr. Gandhi was invited to meet Hon'ble Mr. Maude at Bankipur on the 10th instant.

An outwork has been burnt down.[2] The planters grew nervous and even suggested that it might be due to our inquiry. There seems to be no connection between the fire and the inquiry.

Mr. Maude suggested[3] that the inquiry might now usefully be closed entirely and that Mr. Gandhi might submit his report to the Government. and that if the inquiry could not be stopped, Mr. Gandhi should withdraw the 'pleader-friends' from the district. Mr. Gandhi stated that the inquiry could not be entirely stopped but that he had advanced far enough to enable him to frame preliminary conclusions, that he could not as a point of honour think of dispensing with the help of the pleader-friends whom he considered to be as sober and honourable as himself and who were of the greatest assistance to him in his work. Mr. Maude was quite conciliatory in his conversation.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to W. H. Lewis", 28-4-1917.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to W. B. Hoycock", 14-5-1917.

[3] *Vide* Appendix "Note By Honble W. Maude on Interview with Gandhiji", 10-5-1917

The enclosed representation[1] is the result of the interview. The inquiry continues except to the extent that, instead of statements being recorded as heretofore by the volunteers, Mr. Gandhi will himself, as soon as he is free to be able to do so, sit for a few hours daily among the *rayats* and after hearing their statements[2] record his impressions.

The representation is deliberately an understatement. The condition of the *rayat* is far worse than is pictured there. It is not capable of being understood by a layman. The planters' rule has practically supplanted the rule of the local Government. Nobody has the courage to speak up for the *rayats*. The latter do not readily get the assistance of the local *mukhtars*[3]. Many have privately come to Mr. Gandhi and told him much worse stories of oppression than have been recorded in the statements. In Fiji and Natal, the evil was represented by a single law. The evil was dealt with, if the law could be removed. In Champaran, the evil is like a weed growing everywhere and anyhow and in growing has smothered all law and order. The very laws for the protection of the *rayats* have been used by the planters to reduce them to serfdom. As the planters have placed themselves above law, even decrees of courts have had no binding effect on them in many cases. The evil, therefore, will require a tremendous effort before it is checked. No stone is being left unturned to induce the planters to do justice without the necessity of a great and very serious public agitation. The desire is, by inviting the Government to deal with the planters firmly, to avoid the publication of a report which is bound to stagger India. Public men and women of India will never be able to sit still if the report has ever to be published until the wrongs it will narrate are remedied. The mere narration is calculated to rouse passions and therefore every effort is being made to bring about a settlement without any public agitation.

If the settlement comes or even if it does not, it is necessary to post volunteers in villages to act as links between the planters and *rayats*, to steel the latter's hearts and by their very presence to protect them from the tyranny of the *amlas*, etc. The volunteers will be expected to remain in the villages for at least six months.

Their work will be smooth, if the Government approve of their

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* "Statement of Peasants taken by Gandhiji", 19-5-1917.

[3] Attorneys

pre-sence; it will be risky if they do not. It is to be done in any event. Whilst they are in the villages, they will teach the village boys and girls and will give the *rayats* lessons in elementary sanitation. It may be stated that the *rayat* are the most backward and ignorant of almost any in India. Education is admittedly in the lowest stage in this dis-trict. Sanitation is of the worst type. Children are ill-looking because they are ill fed. The adult population suffers from some disease or other. Many suffer from an ugly growth on the throat called goitre. They have no physical or moral stamina. Even the Rajputs are seized with a fear which it is humiliating to observe. The present volunteers are pledged to the work above sketched. It is not expected that Bihar will contribute many more volunteers of the type required. The greatest care is being exercised in choosing them. They have to be learned, responsible and sober men. Those who will receive these notes are expected kindly to use their influence in securing volunteers and getting them to send their names. At least a hundred such volunteers are required. Those who need support for their families will have it given them, so far as it is on a moderate scale.

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 6352

303. LETTER TO W. MAUDE

BETTIAH,

May 14, 1917

MY DEAR MR. MAUDE,

As promised by me, I have sent today my representation[1] to the Chief Secretary. I do hope that it will receive urgent consideration.

I am making arrangements as fast as possible to alter the method of enquiry also in terms of my undertaking.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 73. p. 131

[1] *Vide* "Report on Condition of Ryots in Champaran", 13-5-1917.

304. LETTER TO L. F. MORSHEAD

BETTIAH,
May 14, 1917

DEAR MR. MORSHEAD,

I beg to send you for your information a copy of my representation to the Government.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand in the National Archives of India; also G. N. 4617

305. LETTER TO W. B. HEYCOCK

BETTIAH,
May 14, 1917

DEAR MR. HEYCOCK,

I beg to send you for your information a copy of my representation to the Government.

Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand in the National Archives of India; also G. N. 4611

306. LETTER TO W. B. HEYCOCK

May 14, 1917

DEAR MR. HEYCOCK,

I beg to refer you to the enclosed. All kinds of rumours have come before me. Pressure is being put upon me to make a statement but I don't want to make any unauthorised statement. Will you kindly let me know for purposes of publication the damage caused by the fire, the nature of the outwork burnt, whether it was inhabited or otherwise protected and whether any connection has been shown between my presence in Champaran and the fire. I am sending a

special messenger who will await answer.

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 79 (A), p. 136

307. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

BETTIAH,
May 14 [*1917*][1]

DEAR MILLIE,

I have just received your letter. Matheran is not habitable in the month of June. And Bombay is likely to suit Ceilia best then. If you are not living with the Petits, a flat in Colaba will give you a splendid breeze.

It is difficult for me to believe that Henry can be so bad as you have described him. It is indeed a great relief that he is where he receives a brotherly attention and has best possible medical advice. I shall anxiously await a daily bulletin from you. If you do not give me a letter, give me only p.c. please.

Is Waldo alright now? How do you find the weather there? Does the doctor say that both Henry and Waldo will be entirely free from the poison? You know what the doctors generally say. They say that once the poison has entered the system, it does not leave it for years. Of course I do not believe it and Henry's body being so pure cannot be so shattered as to be liable to a recurrence of the attack. However, the greatest care has to be used during convalescence if complete cure is to be attained.

Is Leon keeping well?

With love to you both,

Yours,

BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] From the contents

308. LETTER TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

[On or after *May 14, 1917*]

Mr. Gandhi has addressed the following letter to the Associated Press of India:

In view of your recent message to the Press in connection with my mission here, I enclose for publication the following correspondence between the District Magistrate of Champaran and myself.Mr. Gandhi's Letter[1]Reply[2]

The correspondence speaks for itself. It only remains for me to add that, so far as I am aware, there is not the slightest connection between the fire and myself. Your message says that a whole factory has been burnt down, whereas the District Magistrate's letter shows that a portion only of the outworks has been affected by the fire.

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

The Biharee, 17-5-1917, as quoted in *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*, No. 79 (A), pp. 136-7

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Dear Mr. Gandhi,

Your letter of 14th May, 1917. I am able to give you the following information. Olaha factory is an outwork of the Tarkalia concern. The buildings burnt down were the engine room, press house and cake house. The value of the buildings has been roughly estimated at twenty thousand rupees but this is only a very rough estimate. No manager or Assistant Manager is in residence at the outwork. There are, however, factory servants to look after the buildings. The outwork is situated about twenty miles south-west of Motihari. The fact that the buildings were burnt down shortly after you came to the district and that your visit of enquiry has caused considerable excitement, etc., may possibly account for the rumours of all kinds which you say have come before you.

Yours sincerely,

W.B. HEYCOCK

309. LETTER TO J. P. EDWARDS[1]

BETTIAH,
May 17, 1917

DEAR SIR,

Butai Sahu Halwai, Gulli Sahu Kanu, and Bhardul Thakore Badai of Raxaul Bazar have shown me receipts they hold for lands leased them by you. They say that their houses are burnt down and that they are now being prevented from rebuilding and are being asked to vacate the lands in their possession. Will you kindly let me know whether there is any truth in the above statements and if so why they are being prevented from rebuilding?

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 76, p. 133

310. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

BETTIAH,
Vaishakh Vad 11, May 17,1917

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

There is no harm in sending the report of the Benares speech as revised by me.[2]

You need not henceforth send Jamnadas's letters here for he has resumed writing to me. The one you sent this time, I am forwarding to Narandas. He doesn't seem to have seen it. You may inform me if there is anything particular in his letter.

You need not send a puggree for me here. I am carrying on with what I have. If you have not made the dhotis, get them ready. I see that I shall need them. I hope you have supplied more yarn to Umreth. See that you don't drop that work. I am of the opinion that, if Saiyad Mahomed and others agree to come on the same terms as Lalji, they should be admitted. I see that we shall have to produce

[1] Manager of Hardiya Kothi, Champaran
[2] *Vide* "Speech at Benares Hindu University", 6-2-1916.

plenty of cloth. We should also not take upon ourselves the responsibility for winding the bobbins. Let them bring along their children. If any poor people send their children to learn, these should be paid. We may engage them in work only for some time; during the rest of the time we should teach them. In short, I feel it is necessary that we should start a workshop. By and by, we shall see our way. In this connection, I also think sometimes that, if we can get some honest, paid men, it would be advisable to engage them. They can be set to domestic chores and those [of us] who are at present occupied with this work can be released. I think of this again and again. But the idea will have to be carefully weighed. It will perhaps be convenient, for our purpose, to engage an elderly widow, if we know of any. I keep thinking along these lines during moments of leisure; however, since I think of these things so far away from you, you need not attach much weight to them. If you carry them out, it will be on your own responsibility. Seek all possible help from Vrajlal on this question. He will be especially in a position to say something about it since the responsibility is his.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5704. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

311. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

BETTIAH,
Vaishakh Vad 11 [*May 17, 1917*][1]

BHAISHRI NARAHARI,

I have your letter. I went through it carefully. I do believe that you have done nothing wrong in taking the step you have taken. I am writing to Chhaganlal straightaway to pay you Rs. 75 a month. It would be a great thing if you can live in such a way as to be able to carry on without needing more. You will have to exercise enough self-control even to do so. I see that the time has not come yet when we have people who will manage without money or with the barest minimum of it. For that a change in the entire atmosphere in every family is necessary. This criticism is especially applicable to

[1] Gandhiji was in Bettiah on this day.

Gujarat.

I doubt whether you will be able to bear the combined burden of your teaching work and translating Gokhale's speeches. My ideas about education are very exacting. If we want to pour our souls into the pupils, we should constantly exercise our mind on how to teach them. We should not get angry with them. Passing on to them in the best possible language from day to day whatever we wish to give them, will take up much of our time. Moreover, we must for the present think of teaching methods as well. Everything will have to be taught in a new way. All the same, you have no option now but to finish the translations. I say this only to point out your future responsibilities and those of all other teachers.

I have not treated Geography as a separate subject. That is why I have said that those who teach History should also teach Geography. However, if you think that they should be treated as separate subjects for the time being, you may do so. We will make what changes we find on experience to be necessary.

The teachers will have to come together at least once a week to exchange ideas and make such changes as may be called for. The intelligent students should be consulted and their suggestions invited about methods of teaching.

The students' health is the collective responsibility of the teachers; the main responsibility, however, will rest on the teacher in charge of hygiene.

The teachers should read up the subjects in the curriculum which they do not know. Especially Hindi. I can see from my work here how very essential Hindi is. I find that I shall have to ask for volunteers from other places. Difficulties will arise about those of them who do not know Hindi. I see it proved every day that education is altogether incomplete without Hindi.

It would be good, I think, if Anandshankarbhai or Keshavlal-bhai[1] could spare one hour daily or a few hours every week so that the teachers' Gujarati may attain a really high standard and they may follow old Gujarati books without any difficulty. We may consider in this hour what progress we can at present make in Gujarati, which books should be considered good and what equivalents for unfamiliar

[1] Dewan Bahadur Keshavlal Harshadray Dhurva, a Gujarati scholar and writer

[English] words should be adopted. We can enter deep into Akha's[1] or other serious works and resolve the difficulties which the teachers experience from day to day in explaining certain things. These pillars of the Gujarati language will also be better enlightened in this way and have occasion to think about some matters to which they have given no thought. The teachers' technical vocabulary will become uniform and points about spelling, etc., will be settled. At present, each of us has his own rules, or has no rules at all, to go by.

No doubt you will show this to the other teachers as well.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S.N. 6355

312. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

BETTIAH,

May 18 [*1917*][2]

DEAR MILLIE,

Your description of Henry still sounds unbelievable. The mind simply refuses to think that he can be so pulled down. I shall still retain my faith in the vitality of his system and believe that he will quickly regain his original strength.

My heart goes out to poor Waldo. It must be terrible for him to be without a companion.

I like Dr. Sapru's advice which does not apply to Henry at all. He has never dreamt impossible dreams, he has always settled down like a respectable man as a conscientious man can feel settled in this unsettled world and he has always been a practical man of affairs and as such won esteem. His life up to the present is unimpeachable evidence of all this. I have found that most people here and elsewhere are highly unpractical, and falsely believing themselves to be matter-of-fact men, render themselves incapable of dreaming dreams impossible or otherwise and therefore remain totally dry as dust. Good dreams are to the soul what fresh air is to the body.

I am pushing forward. Hundreds of men are being examined

[1] Gujarati poet

[2] From the contents

every day. I have sent the papers bringing the position to date to Mr. Kunzru[1] and have asked him to show them to Henry when he wishes to and is allowed to see them.

With love to you all,

Yours,

BHAI

[PS.]

Mr. Andrews sends his love to you both.

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

313. LETTER TO A. K. HOLTTUM

BETTIAH,

May 19, 1917

DEAR MR. HOLTTUM[2],

I thank you for having come to Sariswa[3] and having sent your carriage.

After you and Mr. Lewis had withdrawn, I sat with the people who must have numbered over 500 and talked to them. I told them that you wanted to do justice, that you were ready to take back the *zirat*[4] lands and that you considered that it was more profitable to you to get it back. I told them too that in your opinion the people had taken the *zirat* lands from your predecessor not only willingly but most eagerly, that it was given to the *raiyats* not in lieu of indigo cultivation but it was given in order to relieve the *raiyats* from liability to supply labour to the landlord. I further told them that you had shown me Mr. Barclay's[5] letter to Mr. Gourlay[6] confirming the view and finally told them, whilst on this point, that if they returned the

[1] Hriday Nath Kunzru

[2] Manager of Dhokraha and Loheria concerns

[3] Gandhiji visited this place on May 16.

[4] Land under the *khas* (special) cultivation of a zamindar

[5] J. Barclay was the proprietor of the concerns.

[6] W. R. Gourlay, Director of Agriculture, Bengal and former S.D.O. of Bettiah, who conducted in 1908 a confidential enquiry into the affairs of indigo plantations in Champaran at the instance of the Bengal Government and submitted his recommendations the following year

zirat lands, you expected them to grow indigo again as before up to the termination of the period of their contracts and I assured them that I would plead with you that it would be quite unfair to ask for *raiyats* to revert to indigo-growing (for reasons to be presently stated). I then invited those who wanted to abandon the *zirat* at once, although they had paid for the full agricultural year. As a result, over 175 gave in their names there and then and men have been streaming in during the two days. The total has reached nearly 500 up to the time of writing.

In going through the *khatians*[1], the receipts and the amounts charged against the *zirat* land, I find in 70 tenancies that on an average the *raiyats* are paying you Rs. 24.5.3 per *bigha*[2] of *zirat* land. The largest amount charged is Rs. 91.7.3 per *bigha* and the smallest is Rs. 7.8.0 per *bigha*. Incidentally, I observe that whilst 27 *bighas* of *kasht*[3] land pay Rs. 59.13.6, 27 *bighas* of *zirat* land pay you Rs. 659.7.0. It seems that in the vast majority of cases, the *raiyats* hold less than one *bigha* of *zirat* land. The rate fixed varies with the extent of their *kasht* holding and not with the quality of the *zirat.* And they are paying as much as Rs. 1-8-0 per *bigha* of *kasht* land in addition to from six annas to 12 annas per *katha*[4] of *zirat.* And the *kathas* of *zirat* seem to vary with the bighas of *kasht* and in no case amounting to more than 3 *kathas* per *bigha*. The average worked out for fifty villagers comes to 1_ *kathas* per *bigha*. This, in my opinion, hardly bears out Mr. Barclay's contention. It rather bears out the *raiyats'* contention that the settlement of *zirat* is another form of the *tinkathia* and was designed to cover the losses suffered by the concern when the price of indigo fell. The *raiyats* insist that pressure was effectively put upon them to take *zirat* land. Their contention seems to be borne out by the readiness with which they have come forward to surrender it. For the last ten years, the *raiyats* have been paying what according to the above view amounts to *tawan* for not growing indigo. And the concern has on that account an average of more than Rs. 100 per *bigha* of *tinkathia*. In the circumstances and regard being had to the fact that you believe it to be advantageous for you to receive back the *zirat* land, I hope you will not press for reversion to indigo-growing.

[1] Records of rights

[2] A measure of land: 1,600 sq. yds. In Champaran, the *bigha* is much larger.

[3] Cultivated land; tenure

[4] One-twentieth part of a *bigha*

I notice that in some cases damages have been settled on *kathas* taken out of the *kasht* land of the *raiyats*. I venture to think that, if you would see your way to accept my suggestion, take back the *zirat* and forgo the future damage whether tacked on to the *zirat* or to the *kasht* land, one of the sorest points of dispute between the concern and the *raiyats* would be amicably settled and you will have set an example which would be advantageously followed by the other planters.

In describing the process adopted by the concern for recovering losses on indigo from the *raiyats*, I have hitherto confined myself to your *mukarrari* land. On *tikka* land, you seem to have accepted the system followed elsewhere. You have taken handnotes for balance of *tawan* payable by the *raiyats* bearing heavy rate of interest. I suggest that the outstanding handnotes may be cancelled. The *raiyats* for the sake of peace and compromise should say nothing as to refund either on the *hunda* above referred to or the *tawan* already collected and of which the handnotes represent the balance.

As to the fines, I must confess that there is overwhelming evidence to show that they have been imposed on recalcitrant *raiyats*. This complaint is almost universal. I told the *raiyats* that you said that only nominal fines were imposed when the *raiyats* came to you for adjustment of their mutual quarrels and that you refunded these to the winners. The *raiyats* resolutely protested and said that the fines even as much as Rs. 25 at a time and more were imposed for the so-called offences against the concern.

The *raiyats* are equally firm in their complaint against your *jamadar*, Gokul Missir, and I would be pleased to place the evidence before you if you will care to go further into the matter.

With reference to the method (I understand only recently adopted) of the charging for permission to build new buildings or to rebuild, you justified the charge on the ground that the earth on the *raiyats'* tenement belonged to the landlord and if the *raiyats* used it for building purposes, they must pay for it. I find, on looking up the Bengal Tenancy Act, that the law allows the *raiyats* to build without any interference from the landlord so long as they build for the benefit of their holdings. It seems to me that the charge is not warranted by law and I hope that you will waive it in future.

There remains then the question of cutting trees. The section of the Bengal Tenancy Act dealing with the subject clearly allows the

raiyat to cut without previous notice to or permission of the landlord. But I understand that of late years the landlords have all over been receiving half of the timber cut. I do not know whether the custom has been proved; this is a large question which can await settlement.

I await papers promised by you regarding Kodai Pan. As to Sitaram Tewari[1], I think Rs. 36 on 11 *kathas* is a clerical error and I venture to suggest that it would be graceful on your part to recognize the error and take the rent at the usual assessment rate.

I would beg of you to carefully consider the points mentioned herein and, if you can grant relief to your *raiyats* in accordance with the suggestions made above, I do not doubt that it will lead to a lasting peace between your concern and its *raiyats* and, what is more, it will be a simple act of justice.

I am,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 83, pp. 141-3

314. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

BETTIAH,
May 19, 1917

MY DEAR ESTHER,

Your letter does credit to your heart. I really do not need the Rs. 501/- at the

Yours,

Bapu present moment. Just now we have more than we need. If you cannot think of using it for any other purpose you can think of, send it to the Ashram to be kept for an emergency fund. The Ashram too has no present need of money. You will not perhaps be surprised to learn that all the pecuniary assistance in my work has come, in a way, in answer to prayer. I have not been obliged to beg, i.e., for conducting the missions I have undertaken. But this is a long story into which l cannot go.

The work here continues as usual.

[1] One of the tenants

Do please remember me to Miss Peterson when you write to her and tell her I shall still expect her promised long letter.

WITH LOVE,

My Dear Child, p. 10

315. LETTER TO W. B. HEYCOCK

BETTIAH,
May 20, 1917

DEAR MR. HEYCOCK,

I have hitherto refrained from bringing to your notice statements, which have continued to stream in, to the effect that the *raiyats* are being prevented from coming in to me and that those who have come in have been subjected to all kinds of pinpricks by the *kothi amlas* and in some cases by the managers themselves. I have discounted some of the statements. I have taken down a few. But if what I have heard about the doings of the Belwa and the Dhokraha concerns is true, it is calculated to end on one side at least, the friendly spirit in which the inquiry has hitherto been carried on. I am most anxious to continue and to increase the friendly spirit. I am straining every [nerve], so far as in me lies, to so conduct my mission that nothing but good-will should be left behind, when its labours are finished. I send you the statements[1] taken regarding the Belwa and the Dhokraha concerns. If the statements are true, they do not reflect any credit upon the concerns in question. I enclose, too, my letter[2] to Mr. Holttum which was written before I heard of the fire and which was despatched before I took the statements of the Dhokraha men last evening after 6.30 P.M.

I can understand and even appreciate the feelings which are bound to fill those who are called upon to contemplate the prospect of having to forego huge incomes which they have hitherto been in the habit for a long time of receiving from their *raiyats*. One cannot, therefore, mind any legitimate effort on their part to hold on to what they have considered as their rights. But what is reported to have happened at the Belwa and Dhokraha *dehats* does not in my opinion fall under such a category.

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Statements of peasants taken by Gandhiji", 19-5-1917.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to A. K. Holttum", 19-5-1917.

It is a known fact that the desire of the planters generally is, that my friends and I should not carry on our work. I can only say that nothing but physical force from the Government or an absolute guarantee that the admitted or provable wrongs of the *raiyats* are to stop for ever, can possibly remove us from the District. What I have seen of the conditions of the *raiyats* is sufficient to convince me that if we withdrew at this stage, we would stand condemned before man and God and, what is most important of all, we would never be able to forgive ourselves.

But the mission is totally of peace. I cannot too often give the assurance that I bear no ill-will against the planters. I have been told that this is true of myself but that my friends are fired with an anti-English feeling and that for them this is an anti-English movement. I can only say that I do not know a body of men who have less of that feeling than my friends. I was not prepared for this pleasant revelation. I was prepared for some degree of ill-will. I would have held it excusable. I do not know that I have not been guilty of it myself under circumstances which have appeared to me most provoking. But if I found that any of my associates were, in the conduct of this mission, actuated by any ill-will at all, I should disassociate myself entirely from them and insist upon their leaving the mission. At the same time, the determination to secure a freedom for the *raiyats* from the yoke that is wearing them down is inflexible.

Cannot the Government secure that freedom? This is a natural exclamation. My answer is that they cannot, in cases like this, without such assistance as is afforded to them by my mission. The Government machinery is designedly slow. It moves, must move, along the line of least resistance. Reformers like myself, who have no other axe to grind but that of reform they are handling for the time being, specialize and create a force which the Government must reckon with. Reformers may go wrong by being overzealous, indiscreet or indolent and ignorant. The Government may go wrong by being impatient of them or over-confident of their ability to do without them. I hope, in this case, neither catastrophe will take place and the grievances, which I have already submitted and which are mostly admitted, will be effectively redressed. Then the planters will have no cause to fear or suspect the mission of which I have the honour to be in charge and they will gladly accept the assistance of volunteers who will carry on the work of education and sanitation among the villagers and act as links between them and the *raiyats*.

Pray, excuse the length of this letter as also its argumentative character. I could not avoid it, if I was to place my true position before you. In bringing the two matters which have necessitated this communication, I have no desire to seek legal relief. But I ask you to use such administrative influence as you can to preserve the friendly spirit which has hitherto prevailed between the *kothis* and my friends and myself.

I do not wish to suggest that the *kothis* in question are responsible for the fire. That is the suspicion of some of the *raiyats*. I have talked to hundreds of them about the two fires. They say that the *raiyats* are not responsible for them, that they have no connection with the mission. I readily accept this repudiation because we are incessantly telling the *raiyats* that this is not a mission of violence or reprisals and that any such thing on their part can only delay relief. But if the *kothis* may not be held responsible for them, they may not seek to establish a connection between them and the mission. Fires have taken place before now, and, mission or no mission, they will take place for ever. Neither party may blame the other without the clearest possible proofs.

There is talk, too, about the lives of the planters being in danger. Surely this cannot be serious talk. Anyway, the mission cannot render them less safe than they are. The character of the mission is wholly against any such activity. It is designed to seek relief by self-suffering, never by doing violence to the supposed or real wrongdoer. And this lesson has been inculcated among the *raiyats* in season and out of season.Lastly, there is, I fear, ample proof of intimidation such as is described in the statements thereto attached. Intimidation can only mean more trouble all round without meaning the slightest relief to the planters in the shape of retention of the present system.

I seek such help as you can vouchsafe in the circumstances I have ventured to place before you.

I am sending a copy to Mr. Lewis.

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original typewritten copy signed by Gandhiji in the National Archives of India; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran* No. 84, pp. 144-6

316. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

BETTIAH,
Vaishakh Vad 14 [*May 20, 1917*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have been waiting for your letter since you reached Rajkot. Hope respected Khushalbhai is well. Doctor writes to say that you have not yet received article No. 3. How can that be? All the articles should be there only. Mr. Polak has nothing with him. He has gone through all the articles. Hope they are not mixed up. You would have given article No. 2 to the press for printing. You would have received the article published in Madras. It is good if a Gujarati write-up on it appears in *Prajabhandhu* and Gujarati *Panch*. Entrust this work to Dr. Hariprasad. Send the copy of the booklet to all the libraries. You can get the list from Akhandanandji. For more addresses, get the *Times of India* directory from the G.V.S.[2] and look for the name of newspapers in that. Make a list of the names where you have sent the booklet and send that to Doctor. Finish the work soon.

You must have seen in my article about this place what 1 have written on volunteers. It is necessary to keep a list of all those who are prepared to come. They should arrive within minutes of receiving intimation.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have again received a letter from D.S.[3] about the land. Take it if you want to.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32860

[1] *Vaishakh Vad* 14 in the year '1917' to which the letter evidently belongs, corresponded to May 20. Also *vide* "Letter to W. Maude", 14-5-1917 and "Note on the situation in Champaran—III", 21-5-1917.

[2] Gujarat Vernacular Society

[3] Doctor Saheb

317. NOTES ON THE SITUATION IN CHAMPARAN-III

(Dated Bettiah, the 20th May 1917)

BETTIAH,
May 21[1]*, 1917*

CONFIDENTIAL

This is the 3rd note on the situation in Champaran.

The planters are, it is evident, trying to quash the mission or to discredit it.

The first remedy to secure their end was to tell the Government that their lives were in danger, owing to the presence of the mission in Champaran, and to suggest that there should be a commission appointed to investigate the relations between the planters and *rayats*.

Their lives are no more in danger now than they were before. The *rayats* are too docile, and too much cowed down to attempt any such thing even if they wished it; moreover, the creed of the mission is absence of violence under every conceivable circumstance.

Mr. Gandhi himself, in his letter[2] to the Viceroy, written just after his arrival, suggested a commission, when he was about to be imprisoned. But in the light of the discoveries since made, any commission can only delay relief. And the leaders, after knowing the situation as it is partly disclosed in the representation to the Government already sent to them, cannot contemplate the possibility of the grievances continuing for an indefinite time. Most of the serious grievances are admitted. They have not disappeared because the Government have been supine. They have been afraid to apply the remedies with firmness. They have placed too much reliance upon the good faith of the planters. And the planters have disregarded both the laws and the Government instructions. No commission can deal with such a situation. The Government alone can do it, if they wish or are forced. It is clear that the planters want a commission, which would supplant and extinguish the activities of the mission. The workers in the cause cannot, without doing the greatest violence to their conscience, retire in favour of a commission. The appointment of the

[1] Gandhiji appears to have begun this note on the 20th and to have concluded it on the 21st.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Viceroy", 16-4-1917.

commission can, therefore, be accepted only if the continuing wrongs are remedied now, and if the members appointed on the commission are such as to inspire confidence, and this on the understanding that the mission is to continue its work. The scope of it will be changed if a commission is appointed, i.e., the mission instead of conducting the enquiry will be collecting evidence to be placed before the commission, and taking the villagers' statements. The wrongs that must be redressed before a commission is accepted are (i) the abolition, not in name but in reality, of *abwabs* or illegal cesses exacted by the planters, (ii) the abolition of the damages in lieu of the indigo cultivations whether in a lump sum or by way of *sharahbeshi*, (iii) the abolition of *tinkanthia* in every shape or form, (iv) the abolition of the custom of imposing fines on *raiyats*, (v) the abolition of force in exacting labour or other obedience to the planters' will.

What, therefore, the commission will enquire into will be: (l) the condition of the tenure of planters; (2) the propriety and possibility of securing for the *rayats* a refund of the illegal cesses already taken by the planters; (3) the condition under which labour has been received by the landlords; (4) the sufficiency or otherwise of the wages received by the labourers; (5) the causes of the deep poverty of the masses and their utter helplessness.

The above points have merely to be mentioned to know that the planters contemplate a commission totally different from the one we should accept.

The safest plan, therefore, for the Press and the public, in so far as it may be necessary to give an opinion, is to insist on the redress of the admitted wrongs first, and then accept appointment of a commission, if found necessary, it being always understood that the workers continue their work, in any event.

The second method adopted by the planters is to seize or create incidents in order to make the Government nervous about the mission and to intimidate the mission and its helpers.

One fire[1] has already been so used. The popular belief is that the damage done is slight and that it is the work of the planters themselves. But that idea may be dismissed. The fire may be accepted as an accident or the act of an incendiary, not in any way connected

[1] At the Olaha factory

with the mission. Mr. Heycock's letter[1], in answer to Mr. Gandhi's question[2], shows that (1) the damage done is at the mostRs. 20,000; he himself emphasises the fact that it is a rough estimate, i.e., given by the planters; (2) he has no evidence that there is the slightest connection between the enquiry and the fire.

To this may be added the fact that no member of the mission has gone to these parts, and that the outwork was not in use, when the fire broke out. Another fire[3] broke out on the 19th instant. A *katcheri*[4] has been burnt down. It is not known whether it has been utilised by the planters for the end suggested above. That fire did take place in a place just newly visited by the mission. Mr. Gandhi went there on Wednesday and the fire broke out, on Friday last. Immediately on the outbreak of the fire, information was brought to Mr. Gandhi that it was probably the work of the *kothi* people. A statement[5] has been recorded to the effect that a factory man was seen the very evening removing a bundle of papers—the inference being that the papers were removed prior to setting the *katcheri* on fire. Support is lent to the story from the fact that the manager and the Sub-Divisional Officer were present at the enquiry for a short time on Wednesday, that the *rayats* mentioned—firmly that they were forcibly made to take *zirat* land, which was made to bear the losses which the concern suffered owing to the fall in the price of indigo, that the manager in bravado said that he would gladly take the *zirat* back, that Mr. Gandhi promptly invited the names of those who wanted to surrender the *zirat* land. This mishap (to the concern) must have (so the theory runs) enraged the manager, and in order to discredit the enquiry, he must have instigated the fire. On Thursday, the day previous to the fire, the manager went to a neighbouring village, and spoke roughly to the people, inasmuch as they had surrendered their *zirat*, and threatened them by saying he would insist on their re-growing indigo. The *rayats* remained unmoved. This would be an additional reason for starting the fire. This, however, is purely an impression which may have no foundation in facts. One thing is certain that the mission has

[1] *Vide* footnote 2 to "Letter to Associated Press of India", on or after 14-5-1917.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to W. B. Heycock", 14-5-1917.

[3] At Dhokraha

[4] An office building

[5] *Vide* Appendix "Statements of Peasants taken by Gandhiji", 19-5-1917.

absolutely nothing to do with the fires. The value of the *katcheri* is unknown. It is not likely to be more than Rs. 200.[1]

The third method adopted is continuous pinpricks administered to the villagers. The latest instance of organised intimidation is where factory *amlas* went to a village, and molested the labourers of a small zamindar, who is a co-sharer in a small zamindari with the factory, and who declines to surrender his share to it, and who is alleged to have circulated among the *rayats* the news of the mission. Statements have been received abundantly proving the alleged intimidation. Reports are continuously being received from individual *rayats* to the effect that they are threatened with all kinds of penalties for going to Mr. Gandhi and they come at considerable risk to themselves.

Needless to say that nothing will deter the workers from continuing their work. To abandon it would mean a terrible wrong done to the *rayats*. The presence of a body of workers, always listening to the simple but pathetic tale of their woes, and the knowledge that they are striving to help them and that the latter would go to them in the hour of need have buoyed them up and have given them hope and courage. The workers will be unworthy of their cause and country, if through fear or anything else, they for a moment thought of withdrawing until the *rayats* are able to breathe free.

Mr. Gandhi has addressed to the District Magistrate of Champaran a letter[2] on the incidents above set forth. Copies of this letter and other documents will be sent herewith or will shortly follow. The precautions thus taken may restrain the planters in their plan of intimidation. But the situation may develop at any moment and lawlessness may break out in intense form. It will now be understood that if this happens, the fault will in no way be that of the members of the mission, and that the public will understand that the mission will continue its work.

The foregoing emphasises the need for getting volunteers ready, so that they may start at a moment's notice. The volunteers must be grown up, responsible, sober and educated men. They should be inured to hardships or ready to bear hardships; they should come prepared to see the struggle through, they must have workable knowledge of Hindi (Tamils alone are, therefore, ineligible, unless

[1] *Vide* enclosure to "Letter to W. B. Heycock", 22-5-1917.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item

they have picked up a little Hindi), they must be prepared to go to the villages and live in the midst of the *rayats*. It is estimated that they will have to work for at least 6 months.

M. K. GANDHI

From the typewritten office copy signed by Gandhiji: S.N. 6352. Courtesy: Gandhi Smarak Nidhi

318. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

BETTIAH,

May 21 [*1917*][1]

MY DEAR MILLIE,

I see that as your labours are about to finish (thank God) the heat is beginning to tell on you. It is ever thus. Somehow or other Providence is the kindest when it puts us through the sorest trials. Please tell Henry he ought to have sent me the speeches to which he has written his eloquent preface. But if the preface is eloquent it is not written from the depth of his heart. If he had, he would have shown the sham underlying it all without wounding anybody. The preface leaves on one the impression that there was no other side to the picture. And yet it obtrudes itself on one wherever we go. So, I shall charitably assume that Henry thought he might for once at least leave it alone.

With love,

Yours,

BHAI

[PS.]

Mr. Kunzru brings you the news from here.

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] From the date-line and post-script; vide also the preceding item.

319. LETTER TO DR. H. S. DEVA

BETTIAH,

May 21 [*1917*][1]

DEAR DR. DEVA,

I observe that you do not open Mr. Shastriar's letters and that therefore you do not see the documents[2] I have been sending. I have therefore put your name down also on the list of those to whom papers are being sent. This enables you to show them to anybody you choose. The object that nothing should appear in the papers at the present juncture should be kept in view. That condition being observed, you may show the papers to anyone you like.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5798

320. LETTER TO J. P. EDWARD

BETTIAH,

May 21, 1917

DEAR MR. EDWARD,

I thank you for your letter of the 20th instant. I have told the men the contents of your letter.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 86, p. 152

[1] It was in 1917 that Gandhiji was in Bettiah on May 21.

[2] Such as the preceding item

321. LETTER TO W. B. HEYCOCK

BETTIAH,
May 22, 1917

DEAR MR. HEYCOCK,

I send herewith a further statement about Dhokraha fire which speaks for itself.

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

[ENCLOSURE]

BETTIAH,
The 21st May, 1917

This morning at about 10 a.m. some men came from Dhokraha and informed Mr. Gandhi that some officers had been there. He was questioning them on the occurrence, when one of them said that he had heard that the doors of the *kachahri* had been removed by the factory men before the fire. I suggested that a local inspection might give us useful information. Mr. Gandhi accepted the suggestion and asked me to go to Dhokraha personally. Accordingly, I proceeded to the scene at once.I reached Dhokraha at about 11.30 a.m. In the *kothi* I found only a cartman. He denied having been present during the time the fire was raging and informed me that the *chaukidar*[1] was. I asked him to fetch the *chaukidar*. Meanwhile I proceeded to inspect the *kachahri*.

This *kachahri* is situated inside the compound of the residential bungalow of the manager of the concern. It consists of a single room about 21 feet by 15 feet roughly. . . .

The entire roof work has come down. The walls are made of bricks, plastered with mud. The whitewash on the walls, both inside and outside, is unaffected. Black was noticeable at the top at four or five places only. The appearance of the upper portion of the wall gives one the impression that the rafter of the roof must have been pulled away to prevent the spreading of the fire. The roof was thatched with straw over which was placed a covering of country tiles. . . .At places in the heap of rubbish were noticeable charred rafters, both outside and inside the room. There was found a heap of partly burnt papers. I examined them. They were all *siahas*[2] and *sattas*. The *siahas* were for the

[1] Watchman
[2] Account books

year *1313* Fasli and the year *1315* Fasli[1]. None of these were completely destroyed. ( ) . . .The doors as well as the frames of the three windows were altogether untouched by fire. The door C was not found in the buildings, nor was its framework there. This door is about 7_ feet by 5 feet. There were clear indications of the framework of the door being removed. The plaster had given way. The mud underneath the framework was quite clean. At the door D, the framework was charred all along, but not damaged much. There were a few hinges sticking to it. I examined them and the fresh removal of the rust from them clearly suggested that the screws had been taken out of them. One or two screws were found still in the holes. The door appertaining to this framework was not there. There were no indications in the debris of the frame or the door in their burnt condition. No panes were found at C. There were about half a dozen small pieces of glass.

This room is said to have been formerly used as an office where rent was collected. About 2 or 3 years back, it was stated, this office was closed and all the papers of the concern were removed to Loheria. Only a *chaukidar* remains in this compound. A house about a hundred yards away from the residential bungalow is occupied by the *kothi* men.

The examination of the debris showed that the contents of the room when the fire broke out could only have been meagre. I estimate the damage to be under Rs. 200.

BINDHYABASINI PRASAD VERMA
B.A., LL.B.

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 92, pp. 158-9

322. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

BETTIAH,
Jeth Sud 1, May 22, 1917

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

This letter is only for you two brothers[2]. We must not turn away from the temper of the times. Whatever your parents may say, deep down they do wish that their devoted son and their daughter-in-law should be with them. One of you two brothers should certainly stay with them. If they are unwilling to come to Ahmedabad you should

[1] A harvest era introduced by Akbar. The year 1315 *Fasli* corresponds to (1315+593) 1908 A.D.

[2] The addressee and his younger brother Maganlal

go to Rajkot. If the times were not awry why would families break up? Hence, I am convinced that if Khushalbhai does not come to Ahmedabad, one of you brothers must stay at Rajkot.

We assume that there is nothing wrong in our women going to their in-laws or their parents for delivery. This too I think is not right. Why should Narandas send Jamna to Rajkot? Why can't you see that if the delivery cannot take place in Bombay, it is not a fit place to live in? Who will see Jamna through her delivery? Had Dev Bhabhi[1] not been an invalid it would have been simple. Now she cannot be expected to attend to such jobs. It is our duty to make our parents feel in their old age that it is not only we who are their children but that they are the progenitors of the world at large. This can happen only when we do not make them slave for us. It is the duty of a husband to be with his wife during child-birth. (This last is a separate idea but I am mentioning it here.)

Why is Santok at Morvi? I am troubled by the information. Her duty solely was to serve the sick at Rajkot. She should not have left the house at Rajkot even for a single moment. That is my view. I realize that if Santok does not feel so she cannot be forced to do it. I am writing this for consideration of the matter to the extent that Maganlal has sympathy with it. Maganlal too is one of us. All that he can say is: 'this is worth doing and this is not.' He cannot go beyond that. It occurs to me that I should put before you two the question whether our education has in some way harmed the purity of filial devotion.

If you think it proper let Narandas read this letter. My mind is otherwise occupied and right now I have some other work to attend to. Hence, I have not found the peace of mind that is requisite for writing this letter. Usually I have peace at this time. It is just six o'clock in the morning. I am hesitating for fear that Narandas may not realize the import of my writing. You two know me quite well and so I do not hesitate to put my jumbled ideas before you. Jamnadas may read this letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 32328. Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] Addressee's mother

323. LETTER TO REVASHANKAR SODHA

BETTIAH,

Jeth Sud 1 [*May 22, 1917*][1]

CHI. REVASHANKAR,

I have your postcard. If the Bhadla property goes, 1 shall blame you alone. You ought to have taken immediate steps. I sent you the reply which had been received. Why did you not apply right then? You should now give the enclosed letter to Behcharbhai. Take him with you and submit an application to the proper authority.

As for the expenses on the looms which you ask for, write to Chi. Maganlal. He will send what he thinks fit. You don't say what progress you have made. I don't know whether you devote all your time to your work. You are growing more proficient in weaving day by day; you should both devote yourselves entirely to that work. Then alone will-you succeed.

You may, if so inclined, send Chi. Chhotam to Ahmedabad. Send him only if he is agreeable. It is necessary to win him over. Don't force him to go. It is because he was very eager to go with you that I allowed him. He will get along in Ahmedabad only if he is himself willing.

I shall never approve of your going to South Africa. I see nothing but harm in your submitting to Ratanshi's[2] desire in this matter. He keeps on writing but so far he has not sent a single pie. If you go there, I think your life will be wasted as his has been. If you wish, you may send this letter to Ratanshi.

I think weaving has a bright future, if only you two devote yourselves to it.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 3421. Courtesy: Revashankar Sodha

[1] Gandhiji was in Bettiah on this day.

[2] Addressee's father

324. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

BETTIAH,

[After *May 22, 1917*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

There is a letter from Revashankar[2] in which he asks for permission to send Chhotalal and also for some monetary help. I have told him that he should write to Chi. Maganlal about money and that he should send Chhotalal only if he is himself willing to come.

The accompanying papers will show that the situation here may take a serious turn any moment. Dr. Hariprasad and others who are ready to come here must give some time to learning Hindi. I think I have already written about this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 6358

325. LETTER TO W. B. HEYCOCK

MOTIHARI,

May 24, 1917

DEAR MR. HEYCOCK,

I arrived here last night and hope to remain in Motihari up to Sunday afternoon. I should be at your disposal during the time.

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand in the National Archives of India; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*, No. 96, p. 165

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's asking Revashankar to write to Maganlal about money, the letter appears to have been written after the preceding item.

[2] Sodha

326. LETTER TO W. S. IRWIN[1]

MOTIHARI,
May 24, 1917

DEAR SIR,

Lakhan Rai and Kawaldhari, both *raiyats* of Baratola village Basatpur, in your *elaka*[2], tell me that their crops were uprooted and removed by your men on Sunday and Monday last, and that the removal took place in your presence. They further state that this was done as a punishment for their having come previously and made statements before my colleagues at Motihari. I may say that several men have come forward who have corroborated Lakhan Rai's statement as to the uprooting and removal of crops. I shall be obliged if you will be good enough to let me know whether there is any truth in the statements made.

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

Select *Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*, No. 98, pp. 165-6

327. LETTER TO CHIEF SECRETARY, BIHAR AND ORISSA

BETTIAH,
May 25, 1917

TO
THE CHIEF SECRETARY
THE GOVERNMENT OF BIHAR AND ORISSA
RANCHI

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 19th and the 21st instant.

I am grateful for the letters and the assurances contained therein.

[1] A leading planter; manager of the Motihari Indigo concern, the oldest in Champaran

[2] Jurisdiction

I am suggesting that [as] the matters complained of by me required immediate treatment, it was not contemplated that the Government could pass orders without receiving reports from the local officers and without hearing the landlords. Had I intended otherwise, the sending of copies of my note[1] to the local officers and the Planters' Associations would have been purposeless. If I may be permitted to say so, the instructions to the local officers and the invitation to the Planters' Associations to send in their reports or observations, as the case may be, before the 30th June next largely meets the situation in point of time.

With reference to the legal aspect and the decisions of courts, they have not escaped attention. But I venture to submit that legal decisions or legal technicalities cannot for a moment be allowed to perpetuate wrongs suffered by vast masses of people. With much respect, but every confidence, I submit that the situation presented by me raises grave moral issues which in order that justice may be done might necessitate disregard of legal technicalities and legal decisions where they are in conflict with real justice. The vast inequality between landlords and *rayats* renders it well-nigh impossible for courts of law or even Settlement Officers to arrive at the truth in cases brought before them. I see illustrations of the proposition just submitted multiplying before me every day. Instances are not wanting of wrongs having been rectified in spite of their having been countenanced by courts of justice.

Regarding *abwabs*, I may be permitted to point out that the inclusion of a penalty clause in the forthcoming Bettiah Raj leases will grant only partial and tardy relief. For the leases will not cover the whole of the tenancies affected, and with respect to a wrong which has been unanimously admitted, the postponement of relief till the termination of and the renewal of the leases means unnecessary delay. I take it that the leases will not be renewed until the agrarian condition is placed on a sound basis. It may be added that a penalty clause in his lease is no remedy against a landlord who places himself above law. In my humble opinion, therefore, the issue of a notice warning landlords against exacting *abwabs*, *salami*[2], fines, etc., or impressing labour, carts, or ploughs and informing *raiyats* that they ought not to pay them and that they are not bound to give their landlords their labour

[1] *Vide* "Report on Condition of Ryots in Champaran", 13-5-1917.

[2] Presents

or carts or ploughs will be most appropriate at the present moment, will ease the *raiyats'* minds and will be an earnest of the Government's desire to grant them speedy relief where relief is deemed necessary.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

M. K. GANDHI

From a typewritten copy. Courtesy: Gandhi Smarak Nidhi

328. LETTER TO W. B. HEYCOCK

MOTIHARI,

May 25, 1917

DEAR MR. HEYCOCK,

I have just now before me men from Ramsingh Chhatauni who tell me that they were beaten by Mr. Irwin on Sunday night. They say there are men too who saw an assault committed on a third man and themselves by the factory men.

Another man tells me that over fifty *bighas* of their own land was taken away from them by the *kothi* in exchange for some other land for which they did not then care and do not now care.If these statements are true, they are serious. As there appears to be some tension, I want as far as is possible to avoid for a little time having to go to the *dehats*. But I feel however that I should visit Chhatauni this evening. And I shall leave here at 5.30 p.m. precisely unless you desire me to adopt any other course.[1]

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand in the National Archives of India; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*, No. 101, p. 168

[1] Heycock replied: "I prefer to leave it to you to do as you think best."

329. LETTER TO W. B. HEYCOCK

MOTIHARI,
May 26, 1917

DEAR MR. HEYCOCK,

I thank you for your note of yesterday's date. I received it at 6.45 a.m. today.

My messenger who took my note told me that you were away and brought the information that you were expected back at about 2 p.m. After waiting up to 6 p.m. I decided to go to Chhatauni as I was anxious to pay a surprise visit and as I had prevented the man who had come to me from preced[ing][1] me.

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand in the National Archives of India; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*, No. 101 (A), p. 169

330. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

BETTIAH,
May 26, 1917

MY DEAR ESTHER,

Your letter is so good that I am taking the liberty of sending it to the Polaks to read and then forward it to Ahmedabad. I hope you, don't mind my having taken the liberty.

Those who do not grow indigo, also want to make illegal gains. Hence they force the *raiyats* on their land to labour for them at a trifling wage or none at all at times and make them pay extras apart from rents. Yes, the condition is no better than that of slaves. The further papers I have sent you will throw more light on the question. I must say that the planters are not alone to blame. The planters happen to be English. Indian landlords are not better and some of them are much worse. It is undoubtedly the ignorance on this point of public men that has permitted the wrong to continue so long. Governments rarely move except under pressure.

[1] The letter is damaged here.

For you no doubt Tamil takes precedence of every other language. But it will be most helpful if you could master the Devanagari script. It is easy and it is the most perfect alphabet in the world in that each letter represents only one sound and almost all the sounds are represented by it.

Yours,

BAPU

My Dear Child, pp. 10-1

331. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

May 26 [*1917*][1]

MY DEAR MILLIE,

This illness of Henry's must have been the greatest trial of his life. He need not allow the illness to upset his belief in a guiding providence. Nala is said to have been bitten by a cobra. The cobra when asked by Nala, told him that he was bitten so as to transform his appearance and so enable him successfully to hide his identity during his banishment.[2] I do believe that our illnesses often comes to us as disciplinary measures.

After a long silence I received a letter from Natesan[3] today in which he says that he has been away in Ooty, etc. This may account for his silence. But he is, I know, very careless about answering letters. I am not excusing him. I am describing his limitations.

You will be glad to read the enclosed letter.[4] I do hope that Kothagiri is near enough for Ceilia to meet Miss Faering. She is a most kind-hearted girl. Do write to her if you feel inclined. Miss Esther Faering, Spring Cottage, Kothagiri. Please send the letter to Ahmedabad after you have done with it.

With love,

Yours,

BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] From the contents

[2] The story is told in the Mahabharata.

[3] G.A. Natesan

[4] This was a letter from Esther Faering; *vide* "Letter to Esther Faering", 26-5-1917.

332. SPREADING HINDI[1]

Hindi alone can become the common language of the educated people of India. All that has to be considered is how this can be brought about. The place that English is trying to usurp today, and which it is impossible for it to take, must be given to Hindi; for it alone has the right to it. This place cannot go to English, for it is a foreign language and very difficult for us to learn. Learning Hindi is child's play in comparison. The number of those speaking Hindi is almost 65 million. The Bengali, Bihari, Oriya, Marathi, Gujarati, Rajasthani, Punjabi and Sindhi languages are sisters of Hindi. People speaking these languages can understand and speak a little of Hindi. If we include these, the number is almost 220 million. How then can English, which even a hundred thousand Indians cannot speak correctly, compete successfully with a language which is so widely used? That to this day we have not even begun conducting our national business in Hindi is because of our cowardice, lack of faith and ignorance of the greatness of the Hindi language. If we give up our cowardice, cultivate faith and realize the greatness of the Hindi language, Hindi will begin to be used for the work of our national and Provincial councils and Government or-ganizations. The beginning should be made in the Provinces. If there is some difficulty in this, it is for people speaking the Dravidian languages like Tamil, etc., but we have the remedy for this too. Hindi-knowing men who are zealous, brave, full of self-respect and energetic should be sent to Madras and other provinces to teach Hindi without receiving payment. With the help of such heroic missionaries, the educated people of Madras, etc. can learn Hindi in a very short time. If we have the right spirit, the solution is as simple as the rule of three.

The more instructors are sent, the faster will be the spread of Hindi. Besides the sending of teachers, self-instruction books should also be prepared. These books should be distributed free. Famous speakers should also be sent to bring home to the people the importance of learning Hindi.

What it is necessary to do in Tamil Nad for the spread of Hindi, it is desirable to do in Bombay and other provinces. Hindi books should be prepared for people speaking Marathi, Gujarati, etc., and

[1] This article in Hindi was sent for publication to various papers in May 1917.

workers should be sent to those areas.

This work requires money. The well-to-do among us should not take it as a burden. It is their duty to assist in this gigantic enterprise. It is necessary to set up a small committee to organize this. It will be proper to see that only active workers are put on it.

One important matter is implied in this submission and that is that no distinction is made between Hindi and Urdu. Indeed, why should we quarrel with our Muslim brethren? They may use the Persian script. A few among us know the Persian script and more will learn it. So long as our Muslim brethren have not learnt the Devnagari, both the scripts will continue to be used for national work. However, this is a matter we can decide in a fraternal spirit with our Muslim brethren. Right now the chief task is to spread the national language throughout India in the Devnagari script.

[From Hindi]

Pratap, 28-5-1917

333. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

BETTIAH,

Tuesday [*May 29, 1917*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I am sending you a letter from Prabhudas. He is not with me at present. I am going to tell him that he has written the letter half-heartedly. He should write on a good paper without smudging it and in detail. I will tell him that. You too may write to him something to that effect. I do not want to hurt him, still I want him to make progress. He is very happy here-goes for walks. He complains of headaches in the afternoon. It seems there is some problem with his eyes. He may require glasses after his eyes are examined. His health is improving here. He is able to eat well. He takes *ghee*, curd, fruit, etc., in plenty.

I am sending Mahatmaji's letter[2] for all of you to read.

[1] The letter appears to have been written before the one to the addressee dated May 30, 1917; *Vide* "Guide to London", 1893-94. The Tuesday preceding May 30 was May 29, which may well be the date when this letter was written.

[2] Presumably the one referred to in "Letter to W.b. Heycock", 22-4-1917 in which Mahatma Munshiram had informed Gandhiji that he had adopted the name 'Shraddhanand'

I hope cleanliness is maintained there scrupulously. There should not be cobwebs and things scattered all over the house, toilets flooded with water and their walls and doors as well as the doors of your room dirty.

The more dirt I see outside, the more I think of the Ashram.

Chi. Maganlal had written to Khushalbhai. What reply has he received?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32871

334. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS ON CHAMPARAN COMMITTEE

BANKIPORE,

May 29, 1917

With reference to *The Pioneer's* statement announcing the Bihar Governments intention to appoint a committee of enquiry into the relations between zamindars and tenants in general and European planters and their ryots in particular, Mr. Gandhi has issued the following statement to the Press.

If the continuing known wrongs are immediately redressed, any inquiry covering definite issues with a time-limit as to its findings is likely to meet the existing situation. The work of my colleagues and myself will then for the time being mostly consist in marshalling leading evidence before the enquiry committee.

The Pioneer, 31-5-1917

335. LETTER TO W. B. HEYCOCK

BETTIAH,
May 30, 1917

DEAR MR. HEYCOCK,

I beg to enclose herewith for your information copy of my letter to Mr. Irwin.

I have received a summon to wait on the L.-G.[1] at Ranchi on the 4th June.

Yours sincerely,

M. K GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand in the National Archives of India; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*, No. 107, p. 173

336. LETTER TO W. S. IRWIN

BETTIAH,
May 30, 1917

DEAR SIR,

Owing to certain statements made by your *raiyats* of Tola Gujpura Ramsingh, Chhatauni, I paid on Friday last a surprise visit to the Tola at about 8 p.m.

I met over fifty villagers and they pointed out to me a piece of land said to be 51 *bighas* in extent which (they said) had been recently converted by you into *zirat*. They said that in most cases they were given an equivalent in extent but not in quality. They pointed out the village pasturage bordering on the converted *zirat* which (they said) had now become practically inaccessible owing to the fear of their cattle being impounded. They showed me also the only way (according to their statement) leading to the cattle pound, and said that they could not for the same fear use it as it passed by the *zirat*. The men bitterly complained that the dispossession which they hold was forcible had caused them a great loss. They stated that at the time of conversion they were made to put their thumb impressions to certain documents the contents of which they did not know and the

[1] Lieutenant-Governor

copies of which they were not given.

Hiraman Lohar, who was one of the party, told me that he was assaulted on Sunday, the 20th instant, by your employees for having remonstrated with them on their trying to take his *bhusa*[1], and that he was only released on the importunity of the villagers who intervened on his behalf. Nepali and Japal, nephew and son, respectively, of Hiraman, told me that as a result of the occurrence they were on their way to me. The cry was raised that they were going to the *thana*. Your men thereupon ran after them, seized them (so it is stated) and took them to you. They added that you whipped them. One of them showed strong marks on his calves and on his back. They were sent by you to the *murghikhana*[2] and were fined Rs. 10 each. They were released at midnight on their promising to secure the fines in the morning. For these fines a guarantee was given by Mahajan Liladhar Sah to your representative the next morning.

Jadu Rai, of village Katha, son of Man Singh Rai, came to me at Motihari on the 26th instant and said that he held six *bighas* of land, that he had paid Rs. 75 as *tawan* in lieu of indigo cultivation, that for failure to supply a plough to the factory and to pay a fine of Rs. 10 in default he was dispossessed of his land and made to sign a document. He showed me a receipt No. 102 dated 1323 [*sic*] for Rs. 14.6.9.

I feel it but right that I should bring to your notice matters of the character above referred to. I should esteem it a favour if you would throw light on the incidents I have described.

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement Champaran, No. 108, pp. 173-4

[1] The husk of grain; chaff

[2] A fowl-house

337. LETTER TO CHIEF SECRETARY, BIHAR

BETTIAH,
May 30, 1917

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th instant on the agrarian situation in Champaran.

I shall be pleased to wait on His Honour at Ranchi on Monday next, the 4th June, at midday.

Your letter raises issues which it is impossible for me to ignore if I am faithfully to serve the cause that keeps me in Champaran.

It is part of the *raiyats'* case that the planters will stop short of nothing to gain their end. I have noticed ever since my arrival the very great and undue influence that the planters enjoy over everybody and in everything. They have striven their best to have me removed from Champaran. They have not hesitated to impute motives to the honourable men who at considerable personal sacrifice have been giving me valuable assistance. They have without doubt used at least "moral suasion" in keeping the *raiyats* from coming to me. At Dhokraha I witnessed the sorrowful spectacle of two or three men declaiming, in the presence of the Manager and the Subdivisional Officer, on the virtues of the *kothi* in front of a crowd of nearly 500 men who complained bitterly against the *kothi* about *zirat* land forced-on them and fines exacted from them for disobedience. These witnesses were brought by the Manager from Loheria to say that Loheria had no complaint and that the Dhokraha complaints were due to the machinations of one or two agitators. Since then many Loheria *raiyats* have come and complained precisely in the same manner as Dhokraha men. It should be noted that if full justice is done to the *raiyats*, planters stand to lose huge yearly incomes and many privileges they have hitherto enjoyed. In the circumstances, I do not entirely discount the statement the *raiyats* make to me that the fires have been instigated by the *kothis* in question to discredit my mission and to remove me from their midst. The *raiyats* add that they might be given some credit for selfishness and that their self-interest should deter them from incendiarism or such other acts. I have submitted to the District Magistrate the results of my inquiry[1] into the Dhokraha fire. I beg to enclose copy of my letter to Mr. Heycock[2]. I

[1] *Vide* "Letter to W.B. Heycock", 22-5-1917.

[2] *ibid*

am, however, willing to disbelieve the *raiyats'* theory and put down the fire to natural accidents. I may add, however, that in the Dhokraha fire, it was the roofing alone that was burnt. But I venture to suggest that even if it is the wilful act of a maniacal *raiyat* done in the excitement caused by my presence; it would be no justification for my removal, unless the Government are satisfied that I have been directly or indirectly instrumental in causing the fires. Finally, there have been fires in the *kothis* before my arrival and that the excitement in Champaran as admitted by the Commissioner was in existence long before I entered Bihar. I wish respectfully to warn the Government that they will have utterly misunderstood the position if they remove me from the *raiyats*. I have no desire to do aught except promote peace between the planters and the *raiyats* so as to secure to the *raiyats* the freedom and dignity that should belong to all mankind.

I ask the Government to dismiss from their minds the theory suggested by the planters that the present excitement is caused by mischievous persons for private reasons. Planters are too powerful to be touched by any person, no matter how mischievous he may be. The *raiyats* say that they never deserved the police guards that were placed in their villages and that they were part of the policy of repression pursued by the planters. It is admitted that in Sathi the Manager was more to blame than the *raiyats*, and yet the *raiyats* had to pay with their blood and money. It is all peace there now, because the Manager knows his work. I have before me statements from over 7,000 *raiyats* from all parts of Champaran. I have seen all of them though I have found it impossible personally to take down their statements. It is difficult for me to believe that they all tell lies at the instigation of a few mischievous men.

I enclose copies of my letters[1] addressed to the Manager of the Motihari concern. I have not had any reply to my first communication. Probably there is the other side to the story, but the incidents described show at what risk the *raiyats* come to me. I quote what Mr. Johnston[2], one time Subdivisional Officer in Bettiah Subdivision, had to say in 1914 regarding the methods adopted by planters to bend the *raiyats* to their will:

> There are four methods prevalent in this subdivision compelling recalcitrant tenants to pay up. The commonest way is by putting peons on, the petitions do not

[1] *Vide* letters to Irwin, 24-5-1917 & 30-5-1917.

[2] Edward Hamilton Johnston, I.C.S., Subdivisional Officer, Bettiah, in 1913-4

allege that this has been done. The next way is to attach crops standing on *khalihan*[1], but this also is not alleged. Then sometimes the barbers and washermen are stopped from rendering their services; the petitioners only fear this, it has not been done yet. Finally, a very effective means is to impound the *raiyats*' cattle either in a private pound or if the D. B. pound is leased out to the landlord then in it.

The report itself is otherwise hostile to the *raiyats*. I am of opinion that it did not do justice to the *raiyats*. I give this opinion in all humility and after having thoroughly gone into the situation. It is often forgotten that it is not necessary for the planters to resort to force actually in every case. The fact that it is there to be used on the slightest attempt at the show of independence is enough to prevent recalcitrancy. I respectfully submit that planters have had it their own way long enough [so] that the *raiyats* are in a condition of paralysis. They are worthy of patient care and attention from the Government. But the latter will not render that help, unless they are prepared to believe the *raiyats'* story (exaggerated no doubt it will be) in preference to the planters'.

I tender my apology for the length of this communication. If I have been over-frank, the cause I espouse must be my excuse. It is too great to admit of tinkering. I hope that at a crisis like the one that faces the Government and the people of India, the Government do not wish me to conceal my feelings.

I am deeply grateful to His Honour that he has decided to have a personal conversation with me. I shall hope for the sake of the *raiyats* that nothing I may say or do will adversely affect their cause, and that I shall find the right word in His Honour's presence so that he can appreciate the awfulness of the *raiyats*' position even as I do.

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 109, pp. 174-7

[1] The threshing floor

338. NOTES ON THE SITUATION IN CHAMPARAN-V

BETTIAH,

May 30, 1917

CONFIDENTIAL

The matters seem to be reaching a crisis as will appear from the enclosed letter[1] from the Government and reply[2] thereto. If Mr. Gandhi and his colleagues are removed, it is expected that the leaders will one after another step into the breach. In order to do this, it is necessary to realize the inner situation here. It is this: *raiyats* are so paralysed and have suffered so long that they had begun to believe that deliverance was never coming. They now feel the warmth of the proximity of their own countrymen who are at least willing to listen to them if they can render no effective help. This has been enough to rouse their drooping-spirits. It will be cruel to leave them unguarded until the question is settled and their independence guaranteed to them. Forcible removal of the mission is likely to lead to terrorism and under it to recantation of the statements hitherto made. A further note with the papers referred to in the reply to the Chief Secretary will follow.

M. K. GANDHI

From the typewritten office copy signed by Gandhiji. Courtesy: Gandhi Smarak Nidhi

[1] Chief Secretary's letter of 27-5-1917; *vide Select Documents*, No.103, p. 170

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

339. LETTER TO SANKALCHAND SHAH

BETTIAH,

Jeth Sud I [*May 30, 1917*][1]

BHAISHRI SANKALCHAND,

I happen to be free at the moment. I read your letter again, and also the time-table[2]. A time-table always gives me a headache. I have made no attempt to remember this one.

I think history and geography, which have been mentioned as separate subjects, should be included under Gujarati. We want to develop the intellect through the Gujarati language. For that purpose, we may use a language book one day and a text on history the next. We should orally go over the matter to be taught and then make [the students] read something on it. This will reduce the quantum of literature by a little, but that should not matter. If the history and the geography being taught are of the same country, the latter will be easy to learn and prove interesting. As for history, to the extent that we treat it as literature, we may give [the students] some well-phrased pithy sentences. For instance, "We look upon Ramachandra as an *avatar*, as God Himself. The term *avatar* is of Sanskrit origin. *Avatru* means to descend. God's descent (to this earth) is his *avatar*. But at the moment we are not thinking of Rama as an *avatar*. We shall only consider the Rama of history." Whether these sentences have any life in them, you teachers know best. But they are good enough to illustrate my point. This will cover literature all right. We may compose many such sentences as we narrate the history of Ramachandra. We may first dictate them or write them out on the blackboard and then tell the story. We may deliberately use some difficult words, as we do so. The pupils will want to know their meanings and so the discussion will proceed. Since he was born in Ayodhya, it will be necessary to explain its geography. There will of course be a map. How far it is from Ahmedabad, how one may arrive there, what it is like today, whether it answers to the poet's description of it—all this is literature, history, and geography combined. You must

[1] Gandhiji was in Bettiah on this day.

[2] Of Gandhiji's National School; *vide* "National Gujarati School", after 18-1-1917.

first make up your mind, while telling a story like this, how much literature you wish to teach, how much of history and how much of geography and then be as one with the pupils. Sanskrit should be simplified and, if it is grouped with Marathi and the two taught on alternate days, there will be some saving of time. It may not be that there will be one or the other of the two languages every day, but the principle will apply. We must reduce the hours for each. So long as we have only the Ashram boys in the school, there is no need to provide separately for religious instruction. It will suffice to tell them the stories we want to at prayer time.

I am of the view that, if Kaka[1] is an expert in drill, the classes should start and end with it. It will be enough to have it for five minutes at the commencement and five minutes at the end. This is to be followed after the movements have been learnt. Time should be found on one of the week days for teaching the movements. What is taught on that day may be practised for a week.

Agricultural work will be difficult till some land has been obtained. Perhaps it will be best to drop it for the time being. The man who teaches us should be one who has himself been a successful farmer. If a gardener is available, he should remain on the farm and teach us various techniques, which we, teachers and pupils, may learn for a year or two. We may then go into the science of agriculture. It will not be possible to provide for some hours of agricultural work to all the boys every day. But they can learn the work only if every week different classes are given two or three days by turns. Forty minutes are not enough for the purpose. They may suffice for learning the science of agriculture theoretically. The same is true of weaving. Both will require constant practice. It will be necessary, therefore, to set apart days on which pupils can give at least two hours at a stretch. If Shri Pandya knows both the theory and the practice of agriculture and if he agrees to join, no doubt he will be very useful. As a rule, a man coming from a Government agricultural school cannot, I believe, be of much help to us. Ask Maganlal to tell the story of Nagin Babu of Santiniketan. It was not his fault. How could he help it?

It is not necessary to teach carpentry till a boy is twelve. A child is not able even to lift or use a hammer. At a later age, we shall have no option but to teach it. It should be treated as a part of agriculture.

[1] Kalelkar

This is not done in India. It is, however, a kind of work which we shall not be able to do till we have moved to our own land.

You must find a Gujarati equivalent for "workshop". Will *karakhanu* do? Someone had mentioned "metric system" in the curriculum. Henceforward, we should be careful about using such terms. There are so many points like these over which we have to break our heads. If you do that, our children will enjoy the fruits.

It will be enough to give every division one hour weekly for hygiene. The teacher should keep a watch whether the things taught in these hours are acted upon during the rest of the week. Because the pupil doesn't have another hour for the subject on the other days, it does not mean that the teacher has forgotten what he taught in that week. If a boy attends the school with his nails grown and filled with dirt, the teacher can ask him, even during the period for arithmetic, why his nails are dirty and what he had been taught on this point.

It is certain that Professor (what is the Gujarati for this? Or, will it have to be retained in the language just as it is?) Kripalani will join. He will take a trial for some time. If the thing is not beyond his capacity, he will join. For the present, he just cannot get away from here.

I have written at length on some points, saying things which may appear rather silly. My anxiety to make myself quite clear was the reason.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

Something remains yet.

Music will have to be left out till we get a teacher for it. Since due weight is not attached to it, the thing has remained with actors and *bhaktas*[1]. We must consider before taking in an actor. A *bhakta* we are not likely to get. Write to the Gandharva [Maha]vidyalaya and see if you succeed. Will you please send a list of the equipment needed for science? I hesitate to buy costly equipment before we have become stable. If any books are wanting, it will be good if you make a list of them as well.

Please treat all my observations as no more than suggestions for consideration. Whether or not they should be implemented is left to the inclinations of you all.

[1] Devotees of God

I am returning your letter and the curriculum.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 6360

340. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

BETTIAH,

Jeth Sud 9, May 30, 1917

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have received letters of both of you. The situation here has taken a serious turn.[1] Hence I shall not be able to write fully.

If it is absolutely necessary to go to Rajkot, it seems proper that you go there. Maganlal certainly cannot leave. I very well realize that even you cannot leave. But I am certain that one of you should be there. If something untoward happened all of us would repent. If Fulchand can be persuaded to go to Ahmedabad you should entrust him with your work and go. And I suggest appointing another clerk.

If it is possible to shift to a new place for the monsoon this should be done. But do not insist upon it too much. If the curriculum seems too strenuous, some adjustments should be made. However, neither weaving nor agriculture should be neglected.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have consulted a doctor for Prabhudas. I have ordered spectacles for him. He has learnt cycling. He cannot go there for the present. He will go if all of us are arrested.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] Attempts were being made by European indigo-planters to remove Gandhiji from Champaran while he was negotiating with the Government for the redress of the peasants' grievances. *Vide* also "Letter to Chief Secretary. Bihar", 30-5-1917.

341. LETTER TO SANKALCHAND SHAH

BETTIAH,

Jeth Sud 9 [*May 30, 1917*][1]

BHAISHRI SANKALCHAND,

I have your letter. The problem here has suddenly taken so serious a turn that it has become doubtful whether I will get the time to look into the papers you have sent me. You will read the report of the whole affair[2].

This at least I feel . . .[3] it can be taken after some time. You too have been informed accordingly. There is no doubt that all this experience we are getting is invaluable. One or two additional teachers will be needed. Look for them. Take care of your health at least for the sake of the school.[4]

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

If Pandya comes, I think it will be right to engage him.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33116

342. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Jeth Sud 10 [*May 31, 1917*][5]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I am sure you would have paid attention to the construction of the houses and factories of the jail also to the condition of kitchen, etc. Someday, when I reach there, I will make arrangement for the

[1] From the combination of place-name and Gujarati month and day, the year is evidently 1917. *Jeth Sud* 9 in that year corresponded to May 30.

[2] Presumably in newspapers regarding progress of the Champaran Satyagraha in which Gandhiji was involved at the time.

[3] Some words here have faded out in the source.

[4] The National School in the Ashram at Kocharab; *vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Sankalchand Shah", 30-5-1917, in which, however, the date is wrongly given as May 30, 1917. *Jeth Sud* 1 was May 22 and not May 30.

[5] *Jeth Sud* 10 in the year 1917 corresponded to May 31. The year is evident from the contents *vide* Vol. Xlll and footnotes 1 and 2 on the following page.

children, too.

I think they do everything except making the woof in the jail. I feel that we should see how a woof made of yarn works. If the instrument meant for use as woof can be made of yarn, it may be necessary to have it for finer work like that of silk.

At present we have to see how much we can weave without the help of machines. Seek the opinion of Lalji also in this connection.

Did you again get information regarding the goods sent to Shivpujan? These things should not get misplaced in transit. Have you again received a letter from Shivpujan? Write to him. Let him return the goods. I have received the bundle of clothes.

I hope you know that one has to obtain permission from the Collector before building a house. I enclose herewith a letter to the bank.

I will leave for Ranchi on Saturday[1] and reach there on Monday. At present, the headquarters of the Bihar government is Ranchi. Keep sending the post as you have been doing till now. There will be some new development in Ranchi[2].

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have written from here a letter of request to respected Khushalbhai.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32923

343. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

BETTIAH

[*May, 1917*][3]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have your letter. You did well in writing to respected Khushalbhai. If you have faith in our common kitchen and no less in Khushalbhai, it is bound to be rewarded. You may even go further and

[1] That is, June 2, 1917

[2] Where Gandhiji was to hold discussions with the Lt. Governor from 4th to 6th June

[3] This is given by the addressee on the letter.

tell him that we may introduce any rules of cleanliness he suggests. You should explain to him politely but firmly that dharma does not consist in these notions about being defiled by contact—with this or the other thing. As Akha has sung: "That one may be defiled by touch of others, like a superfluous limb is this notion." Here, I am being showered with love. There is no end to people's suffering. I am getting a wonderful experience of villages.

If Mavji is otherwise a good man, fix a pay for him. It is necessary that such men get trained and pick up everything about weaving, so that we can employ thousands of them.

Show all the accounts to the gentleman who has come forward to pay the expenses of the Ashram. If he does, I see nothing wrong in accepting what he gives. I am writing[1] to Prabhudas to tell him that he may now come here if he wants to. It is quite true that, had Chhaganlal been late this time, he would have been too late to be of any help. As things have by chance come off in time at the last hour, one feels as if everything has been all right.

You want to know when my work here will be over. From the magnitude of the task, it would seem that it might take years. If I go by my faith, I think it will take six months. I have here men of sterling worth to help me. More are likely to join. I continue to have God's mercy in abundance. It is not true that Prabhudas's brain has grown dull for want of milk. Chi. Chhaganlal wonders if this is so.The reason is to be found in Prabhudas's passing from one phase of growth to another. When passing through an important change of this kind, many people feel disturbed in one way or another. Moreover, as I could see while teaching Prabhudas, he worked very hard competing with Devdas. He has some excellent qualities. He has exerted himself beyond his limits, considering his age and capacity. He feels exhausted now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5711. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] This letter is not available.

344. LETTER TO W. B. HEYCOCK

BETTIAH,
June 1, 1917

DEAR MR. HEYCOCK,

I think I promised to refer you to the report from which I had quoted to you regarding the methods the factories adopted to make the *raiyats* to do their will.[1] This report is dated the 22nd July 1914 and is signed by Mr. E. H. Johnston, S.D.O., Bettiah. It is a report about the Bettiah factory.

Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand in the National Archives of India; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*, No. 110, p. 190

345. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

MOTIHARI,
CHAMPARAN,
June [*1917*]

DEAR MR. SHASTRIAR,

I wonder if the enclosed[2] has reached from another source. I know you would like it. Hoping you are keeping well.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 6296

[1] For this quotation, *vide* "Letter to Chief Secretary, Bihar", 30-5-1917.
[2] Not available.

346. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

BETTIAH,
Jeth Sud 11, Samvat 1973 [*June 1, 1917*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

The friend Kishorelal about whom Chandulal wrote has arrived here. But his health is not too good and I am sending him back. He is a fine man. I have suggested to him that he may join the school. I take it that you will let him join.

In the letter I posted this morning, I could not complete the point towards the end. If Fulchand and Narahari were not included among the inmates, the idea was to suggest that, at the critical hour, they should be free to get some experience of jail here if they so desire. It is because of Sankalchand that the school has started. Even if he wants to, he cannot come here. I cannot imagine the school without Kaka at present. Sankalchand cannot run it by himself. And so Kaka must remain. He doesn't have anything more to learn here. I think he is a veteran. He can work hard enough. What he has to learn is to serve, tied down to one spot, and he has now such an opportunity. Mama can work half the time in the school and half on the loom or he can work all the time on the loom. He is much in the same position as Kaka. All that is to be learnt here is to suffer, when the hour comes, and go to jail. Mama has passed the test in this school. Without Chhotalal, how could you run the loom by yourself? For him, moreover, going to jail is a kind of indulgence, so to say. Jail is no hardship to him. If there is hardship anywhere, it is there. That, too, he bears and will go on bearing. If Santok remains there, the girls will be looked after and Vrajlal can also be free of the kitchen. Chhaganlal can be spared if Khushalbhai has gone over there. Punjabhai will then keep accounts as well as he may. Who will be asking for them? This is the arrangement that occurs to me. No one from among the teachers is obliged to join in work of this kind, nor do I expect them to. All that I have suggested is that, even if any of them want to join, only two can be spared. For the immediate present, however, I don't see the need for anyone besides Devdas to come. When you, Mama and Chhotalal have acquired full mastery over the loom, you yourselves will take up the fight, without depending on me, for the uplift of handloom workers. When Sankalchand and others are in full

command of the National School, the teachers will themselves take up the struggle for the spread of that type of education everywhere. If I am a free man and alive, I shall join in that effort too. If not, this struggle will have shown the way to you all.

One-pointed is the intellect
that functions with a purpose, son of Kuru!
Many-branched and infinite are the movements
of the intellect devoid of purpose.[1]

This covers everything.

Once we have decided what we want and are resolved not to be deterred by anything that may follow, the developments will show us the way. There is not much to be learnt in how I listen to people's tales [of suffering] and take the, statements. This contains a reply to Mama's letter too. Show him the whole letter. It seems you have forgotten about the letter to Narandas, or the one from him, that you were to send to me. You may employ any labour that may be necessary except for weaving. As to the charges, we can go as far as reasonable market rates. What you say about the plan of the house seems all right to me. If you go to live there, put up the hedge immediately. What it will be of, you may consider and decide. I have already given the plan I should like. See that the verandahs around the house are wide enough. It will be all right to have the teachers' rooms in front, as also those for Lalji and others. I can't think [about the arrangement] for respected Khushalbhai. You may do so yourself. It also remains to be seen what he decides in response to my letter[2]. I think we shall have to spend up to Rs. 20,000 on the buildings; we can manage that. We shall be receiving Rs. 2,000 annually from Doctor Saheb. He has not so far paid the sum [for this year] but I take it that he will do so now. Let him know your needs. I am treating the land as a separate item. If you think it necessary to use full-baked bricks for the construction of the buildings, do so. The Executive Engineer there is Mr. Tyobji. He will help you. Punjabhai was with me when he took me to see the jail.

Yes, it is quite right to pay the salaries from the Ashram reserves. We shall see what to do when some one donates money for the school. The teachers' quarters will also be constructed out of

[1] *Bhagvad Gita*, II.41
[2] Not available

the Ashram funds. They should, if they can, pay rent at the rate of six per cent, or any other rate which may be considered reasonable, onthe cost of the land and all the other expenses. This answers all your points.

Blessi ngs from

BAPU

What Chhaganlal says about Jivanlalbhai having been paid up to the 15th is not right. I have already arranged that a fortnight's salary should be remitted to him in advance and that subsequently he should be paid on the first of every month. You can make sure by looking into the cheque book and consulting Fulchand. It is not our idea that we should meet our expenses in the future out of the interest. As far as possible, we shall live within whatever we receive, unasked, for the expenses. But, to the extent that we fail in our *tapascharya*, we shall appeal for donations. This is the way all great undertakings in the world are carried on. Institutions which are maintained out of interest lose vitality in the end. People will maintain any institution that they need. If the Shriji [temple] were without its rich wealth, the priests would be more concerned with their spiritual state. The teachers need not get alarmed by this view of mine or by the proposed arrangement. In the notes lying with Shukla Saheb[1] and Revashankarbhai, there is sufficient reserve to meet their needs for four years. I have, all the same, written to the Doctor asking him to undertake the responsibility of meeting all the expenses for the present, and I think he will. Send him a complete estimate for the year. When I am outside [jail] the question does not arise.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5713. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] D. B. Shukla

347. LETTER TO MAHARAJA BAHADUR SIR RAMESHWAR SINGH

RANCHI,
June 4, 1917

DEAR MAHARAJA SAHEB BAHADUR[1],

In accordance with your suggestion, I reduce to writing my views about the proposed inquiry.

In my opinion, simultaneously with the appointment of a Committee of Enquiry (or arbitration, as suggested herein below), there should be declaration regarding the various points referred to in my letter to the Government dated the 13th May last.[2] *Tinkathia* in every shape and form, hand-notes being balances of *tawan* and *hundas* as in the Dhokraha *kothi*, should be declared as abolished or cancelled.

I have no desire, if I can help it, to lead evidence as to the coercive methods adopted by the planters to bend the *raiyats* to their will except in so far as it may be necessary regarding *sharahbeshi* and *tawan*. I am anxious to see cordial relations established between the planters and the *raiyats*. And in any inquiry that is the result of a mutual understanding, an investigation into methods of coercion can find no place.

There would then remain only the question of *sharahbeshi*, *sattas* and individual hardships, in the shape of *raiyats* having been dispossessed of their lands, etc., and the refund of *tawan* and *sharahbeshi* already taken. These the Committee will investigate. *Sharahbeshi* payments should meanwhile be suspended.

The Committee will confine its attention to *sharahbeshi sattas* not covered by the forthcoming judgment of the High Court, the latter to be accepted as final by both the parties. Inquiry into *sharahbeshi sattas* will then naturally be postponed till after the judgment of the High Court.

Upon the Committee being appointed, the scope of our work will be altered. It will then consist in collecting, collating and leading evidence and in simultaneously carrying out the educative and

[1] Of Darbhanga, Member; Executive Council, Bihar and Orissa
[2] *Vide* "Report on Condition of Ryots in Champaran", 13-5-1917.

protective programme sketched before you.

Such a Committee, then, may be in the nature of an arbitration of which the planters' and the *raiyats'* nominees (one of each) will be members with the right to them to appoint an umpire. The decision of the arbitration should be treated as final and binding on both the parties. Behind it, in the place of judicial authority, will be that of the Government, if either party failed to carry out the award of the arbitration. This is a domestic quarrel and if it is settled in the manner indicated by me, it will create a healthy precedent.

If, however, it may not be in the nature of an arbitration, it will then be a Committee appointed by the Government, two members being the same as under the arbitration scheme and the president being a High Court Judge.

If there is any point herein which requires elucidation and if it is so desired, I shall be prepared to wait on the Council at any time required.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 115, pp. 198-9

348. INTERVIEW WITH LT.-GOVERNOR OF BIHAR[1]

June 5, 1917

I discussed with Mr. Gandhi this afternoon, Chief Secretary being present, the question of the step to be taken in connection with the Champaran situation. I explained to Mr. Gandhi that he had now had ample time to obtain all the information he needed, and that the *raiyats* were getting in an excited state, and it was ecessary in some way to put an end to a situation which was rapidly becoming a d angerous one. It is impossible for Mr. Gandhi himself to settle the questions which have been raised, as the planters would not recognise his authority; also for him to attempt to do so would be assuming the functions of Government. Government had intended to postpone their consideration of the points at issue until the settlement report had been received, but they recognise that, in present circumstances, this is no longer possible. It was decided, therefore, to appoint a Committee consisting of a senior

[1] This is a note by Lt.-Governor, shown to Gandhiji and altered by him.

revenue officer from another province (Mr. Sly) as President, and the following members:—Mr. Rainy, Deputy Secretary, Financial Department, Government of India; Mr. Adami, Legal Remembrancer; Mr. D. Reid, representative of the planters on the Legislative Council; Raja Harihar Prasad Narayan Singh of Amawan, as the representative of the zamindars; and Mr. Gandhi himself as the representative of the *raiyats*. The appointment of the last three gentleman, of course, could only be made with their consent, and I asked Mr. Gandhi if he would agree to serve. He said at first that he would prefer to remain outside the Committee, so that he might lead the evidence. But, after some discussion, he admitted that there were advantages in his being on the Committee, provided that it was recognised by Government that he had his own pronounced views which he might not readily change, and also that he would wish to place his own evidence before the Committee in the form of a written statement, on which the other members of the Committee would of course examine him. He also wished that he might be given freedom to produce witnesses for examination. I said that even if he were on the Committee, he would have as much freedom in these respects as if he had remained outside it. Mr. Gandhi then asked for time to consult Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, and promised to let me know his decision as soon as he had seen that gentleman at Bankipore.

Mr. Gandhi agreed that the following terms of reference to the Committee were suitable, namely:

> "To enquire into the relations between landlord and tenant in the Champaran district as also into all disputes arising out of the manufacture and cultivation of indigo. The Committee to examine the material already available, supplementing it by such further enquiry, local and otherwise, as they consider desirable. They should report their conclusions to Government, if possible by the 15th October, and state the measures they recommend in order to remove any abuse or grievance which they might find to exist."

Mr. Gandhi asked if it might be taken as certain that the above terms of reference covered all the points I mentioned in his note of 13th May[1], including the question of *sharahbeshi sattas*, although a case relating to them is pending in the High Court. I replied in the affirmative.

Mr. Gandhi presumed that the term "material already available" would include any evidence which he might wish to tender. I again replied in the affirmative.

Mr. Gandhi said that in his opinion the proceedings of the Committee should be of an informal and summary nature. I said I was inclined to agree but thought this might be left to the discretion of the Commissioners.

Mr. Gandhi, on his part, undertakes at once to put a stop to his

[1] *Vide* "Report on Condition of Ryots in Champaran", 13-5-1917.

enquiry and to abstain henceforth from taking a single statement, and also from visiting any *dehat* or allowing any of his assistants to do so. Mr. Gandhi does not want the *raiyats* to feel that

'A' he has deserted them, and is unwilling on that account to leave the district altogether, pending the assembly of the Committee. But he undertakes not to go beyond Bettiah and Motihari; after short visits to these places, he will go on a visit to Ahmedabad.

Mr. Gandhi asked that orders should issue at once putting a stop to illegal acts, such as the levy of *abwabs* and the impressment of labour. I said we could not do this unless at the same time we issued a notice which the planters asked us to issue, stating that Mr. Gandhi had no official recognition. Mr. Gandhi said he would be quite willing to see both statements made; but finally he agreed that in lieu of any such notice precise instructions should be issued to the local officers to take vigorous action to prevent all abuses that may come to light. For instance, the taking of *abwabs* must, as far as possible, be finally stopped, use being made where necessary of the power of refusing to renew leases. Similarly, the illegal impressment of labour, carts and ploughs must by all means be prevented wherever it comes to notice.

Mr. Gandhi asked that warnings should be sent to planters not to impress carts or coolies or collect *abwabs*, etc., during the interval which will elapse before the report of the Committee is received. I replied that the planters would take offence, if Government were to issue such a warning, as it would imply a prejudging of their case, but said that when the planter-member of the Committee is appointed, I would point out to him the harm that would be done if such practices occurred, and ask him to consider the desirability of making such a communication to his brother-planters.

The following action should now be taken:—

(1) The Government of India should be informed briefly of the decision arrived at, and it should be mentioned that Mr. Tanner has been selected as Secretary instead of Mr. Tallents.

(2) Mr. Reid and the Raja of Amawan should be asked if they will serve on the Committee.

(3) A letter should be sent to the Commissioner informing him of the fact that it has been decided to refer the whole question of the agrarian conditions in Champaran to a Committee, the constitution of which will be communicated to him as soon as possible and that, meanwhile, Mr. Gandhi has agreed (as at 'A' above). The Planters' Association should also be informed of the decision arrived at.

(4) A short resolution to be drafted appointing the Committee, so that it

may be issued as soon as possible after the constitution has been finally settled.

E. A. G[AIT]
5-6-1917

I have kept original draft signed by His Honour and altered by Mr. Gandhi.

H. MCPHERSON[1]

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 117, pp. 203-6

349. TELEGRAM TO CHIEF SECRETARY, BIHAR

BANKIPORE,
June 7, 1917

SUBJECT RESERVATIONS[2] AGREED I HAVE MUCH PLEASURE IN ACCEPTING NOMINATION PROPOSED COMMITTEE TO DEAL WITH AGRARIAN QUESTION CHAMPARAN. REGRET COULD NOT WIRE EARLIER AS HON'BLE PANDIT MALAVIYA ARRIVED JUST NOW HAVING MISSED TRAIN CONNECTION.

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 118, P. 207

350. TELEGRAM TO CHIEF SECRETARY, BIHAR

BANKIPORE,
June 8, 1917

WHAT PURPORTS TO BE THE AUTHORITATIVE INFORMATION APPEARS AS ASSOCIATED PRESS TELEGRAM TODAY'S "ENGLISHMAN"[3] IF PLANTERS DESIRE OPEN ENQUIRY I AM ENTIRELY SATISFIED; MY SUGGESTION REGARDING PRIVACY WAS WHOLLY IN THEIR INTEREST: CANNOT HELP EXPRESSING REGRET APPEARANCE INFORMATION MAKES MY POSITION DELICATE WITH FRIENDS WHO THOUGH ENTITLED TO INFORMATION CANNOT RECEIVE IT FROM ME PROCEEDING

[1] Chief Secretary to the Government of Bihar and Orissa
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] This mentioned, *inter alia*, the appointment of a Committee of Enquiry, and attributing to Gandhiji suggestions for enquiry in private and a time-limit for the Committee's report.

BETTIAH IMMEDIATELY.

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 120, p. 210

351. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

BETTIAH,
Jeth Vad 3 [*June 8, 1917*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

All of us arrived here today. The indigo planters are out to make trouble and therefore my return might be delayed. l will see.

Herewith a postcard. If, as slated in it, the man comes there, take him in. If he knows Hindi, entrust him with teaching work. Otherwise, any other work you think him fit for. I have asked him to go there directly.

As for your going to Rajkot, do what you think is proper.[2]

Prabhudas's body is getting quite strong. Though he still suffers from headaches, that does not matter.

Very fine work was done at Ranchi.[3] Devdas has given you a full report. I myself am not in a position to write more. The reports which Devdas sends also should not appear in the newspapers.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Bhai Pragji has asked for money. I have told him that volunteers must not be enlisted by paying them. Boarding and lodging is all that may be offered to them. The travelling expenses also should be borne by them. I see no harm in the matter relating to the Doctor being printed in Rajkot. But the cost must not exceed what it would be in Ahmedabad.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33099

[1] From the combination of place-name, Gujarati date-line and contents

[2] Also *vide* "Guide to London".

[3] The Lt. Governor of Bihar had agreed to appoint an Official Committee to inquire into the grievances of the peasants who were compelled to cultivate indigo on 3/20th of the land rented to them by the European indigo planters. Gandhiji was appointed a member of the Committee as a representative of the peasants.

352. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

BETTIAH,
June 9, 1917

MY DEAR ESTHER,

As you will have seen from the papers sent to you, I have been to Ranchi, from which place I returned only yesterday to find your letters.

Yours is a difficult question to answer. The total effect of European activity has not been for the good of India. The general body of Europeans who have come to India have succumbed to the vices of the East instead of imposing their own virtues on the East. It could not well be otherwise. Religion has not made a lasting impression on them, as we see demonstrated even by the present war. My theory is that modern civilization is decidedly anti-Christian. And what Europeans have brought to India is that civilization, not the life of Jesus. You and a handful of others are striving to represent that life. It is bound to leave its mark upon the soil. But it must take time. "The mills of God grind slowly." You and people like you are not affected by the evil that stares you in the face. You get behind it, discover the good lying underneath and add it to your own stock, thus producing a perfect blend. What I want is a reciprocity of that method. And so I welcomed your visit to the Ashram, as I welcome that of many European friends who are true to their best traditions and are broadminded enough to take in the best that this land has to give. Have I made myself clear? Please discuss this further and freely with me.

I am likely to serve on the Committee the Government are about to appoint. I am presently framing a general note[1] which will give you the details of the visit to Ranchi. It was a good thing I went.

Mrs. Gandhi and Devdas are here now and so is Polak. Had I been arrested, Mrs. Gandhi and Devdas would have worked among the poor *raiyats* and heartened them for the struggle. I am most anxious for you to meet Mrs. Gandhi at the earliest moment.

Please don't think that I am killing myself with work.

With love from us all,

Yours,
BAPU

My Dear Child, pp. 11-3

[1] *Vide* "Note on the Situation in Champaran—VI", 17-6-1917.

353. LETTER TO H. McPHERSON

BETTIAH,
June 10, 1917

DEAR MR. McPHERSON,

I thank you for your note[1] enclosing His Honour's note[2].

I enclose herewith the envelope in which your letter was enclosed. I was able to extract the contents without much difficulty.

The taking of statements in Bettiah has been stopped as from yesterday. I am going to Motihari tomorrow to stop the taking of statements there.

I am,
Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand in the National Archives of India; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*, No. 125, pp. 212-3

354. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI M. PATEL

BETTIAH,
Jeth Vad 5,1973 [*June 10, 1917*]

BHAISHRI [RAOJIBHAI],

I have your letter. I was a little sad to read it. You depict your condition to be very miserable. One does so to some extent and then gets out of it. But this letter of yours instead of showing such spirit creates an impression that you are never going to get out of your melancholy. I shall be very much disappointed if such is going to be the result. I have entertained high hopes about you and expected that you will ultimately get strong and will most certainly put up a fight.

There is no need of volunteers just now. They will be required after four months. You will be able to play your part as a volunteer only if you shake off your melancholy and get strong. You will have to do the work without any remuneration. Will M[anibhai] allow you

[1] Of June 8, from Ranchi
[2] *Vide* "Interview with Lt.-Governor of Bihar", 5-6-1917.

to join? If you cannot do so in a commendable way it will be enough if you stay there and become proficient in the work there. Ba, Prabhudas and Devdas are here.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 5788. Courtesy: Raojibhai M. Patel

355. LETTER TO H. McPHERSON

BETTIAH,
June 11, 1917

DEAR MR. McPHERSON,

I thank you for your letter of the 9th instant. The Associated Press message[1] becomes a perfect mystery if it is taken for granted, as I think it must be, that the leakage could not have taken place from my side. Apart from the intrinsic evidence the message bears of not having been received from my side, I may say that I had given the details of the interview to no one in Bankipore before 6 p.m., i.e., till after the arrival of the Hon'ble Pundit Malaviyaji and several things alluded to in the message were not even mentioned during the conversation[2] I had with Mr. Malaviyaji and four other friends.

I am,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand in the National Archives of India; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*, No. 127, p. 216

356. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

MOTIHARI,
June 11, 1917

MY DEAR ESTHER,

I am here for a day. I received your booklet[3] as I was going to the station. It put me in mind of some of the happiest hours I used to

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Chief Secretary, Bihar", 8-6-1917.
[2] On 7th June
[3] *Corinthians*, XIII.

have years ago in South Africa. I read the booklet years ago when I found myself in the company of some very dear Christian friends. I have read it again today with better appreciation if one may write in this manner of a sacred work like this. For me truth and love are interchangeable terms. You may not know that the Gujarati for passive resistance is truth-force. I have variously defined it as truth-force, love-force or soul-force. But truly there is nothing in words. What one has to do is to live a life of love in the midst of the hate we see everywhere. And we cannot do it without unconquerable faith in its efficacy. A great queen named Mirabai lived two or three hundred years ago. She forsook her husband and everything and lived a life of absolute love. Her husband at last became her devotee. We often sing in the Ashram some fine hymns composed by her. You shall hear and one of these days sing them when you come to the Ashram.

Thank you for the precious gift. I need such thoughts as are contained in the work.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

PS.

I am going to follow Drummond's prescription to read the verses on Love[1] daily for three months.

My Dear Child, p. 13-4

[1] *The Greatest Thing in the World by* Henry Drummond

357. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

MOTIHARI ,
Jeth Vad 6 [*June 11, 1917*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have come to Motihari for a day. I have noticed that by mistake, Devdas has put the letter in my bag. I am returning it. I saw here the *Nitishatak* which was sent for Prabhudas. It carries a *shloka*, the meaning of which is given thus: 'Just as a good woman wants her breasts pinched with nails as sharp as sword, similarly a brave man wants his chest—the symbol of victory, attacked by swords as sharp as nails'. I felt very unhappy on reading it. There is hardly any book which does not carry something that needs to be omitted before we put it into the hands of the children. How could Bhartrihari write such *shlokas* in his *Nitishatak*. Only in an age of extreme debauchery can one think of such thoughts. I find it simply impossible that any woman, leading a disciplined life, would want her breasts pinched or any good man would enjoy making such assaults. That suggests a highly debauched state. A good woman can never be in such a state. Such comparison cannot even be thought of while writing *shlokas* for the *Nitishatak*. That such *shlokas* and ideas are found even in good collections, brings to mind two things. First, that in our original books, the periods of debauchery and self-control have been mixed up. Second, that the compilers of this age give little thought to the contents of the literature they place before the society. Under these circumstances, we have to give books to the children after careful consideration of the contents. After reading the above mentioned *shloka*, an innocent child like Prabhudas would feel that to pinch a young woman's breasts is not something bad and that even a righteous man can derive such pleasure. We will have to make great efforts to improve this atmosphere and save our youth. Some of these writings should be shown to the young people and then the viciousness pointed out. For, we cannot keep such vicious books hidden from them for long. So I feel that whatever book we give to

[1] From the place-name, Gujarati day and month as given in the dateline as also the first sentence of the letter; Gandhiji was in Motihari for one day on *Jeth Vad* 6 only in the year 1917 and it corresponded to June 11.

our children should bear our correction and comments. I feel the need for our teachers to deliberate over such books. They, too, have to learn quite a lot and think quite a lot. Even books like the *Bhagawat* should be read out to the children and they may not be allowed to keep it with them.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have received a parcel of cloth. There is a *dhoti* in it. But the *dhotis* woven by Valji have spoiled me. The 'spoiled me' hesitated to wear coarse cloth. I will try to console myself arguing that one should not differentiate between fine and coarse cloth in a gift of hand-woven khadi which is a rare thing.

Devdas too has given me some pieces. It is difficult for me to say whether I will be able to come there or not.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32875

358. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

MOTIHARI,
Jeth Vad 7, June 12, 1917

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

It appears from Bhai Chandulal's postcard that he wants you to get this[1] published. Send it only to the newspaper which. . .[2] They should publish your. . .[3] letter before publishing. . .[4] I believe it will happen that way as you would have already written personal letters to the editors.

There is no need to keep big offices at two places. Also, it is necessary for me to stay in Motihari. So, the office will be shifted there on Friday.[5] I am in Bettiah today. That is why I sent you a

[1] Which read: "We have received the news from the Satyagraha Ashram that the order asking Mr. Gandhi to leave Champaran has been revoked. Subsequently His Excellency the viceroy has also returned the *Kaiser-i-Hind* medal to Mr Gandhi"

[2] The source is damaged at these places.

[3] *ibid*

[4] *ibid*

[5] *Vide* also "Letter to H. Mcpherson", 13-6-1917.

telegram yesterday.

The government decision has not been announced. Therefore it seems to me that there is some manoeuvering going on the part of the indigo merchants, or, the government have not been able to collect all the names. As long as the bill is not drafted, I cannot leave Champaran. These days, considerable debate on it is going on in newspapers like the *Englishman*, *Pioneer*, etc.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32901

359. LETTER TO H. McPHERSON

BETTIAH,
June 13, 1917

DEAR MR. MCPHERSON,

I went over to Motihari yesterday and formally stopped the taking of statements. I have told the *raiyats* that the Government are about to appoint a committee of inquiry which is likely to commence its work about the middle of July next and which will listen to their tale in so far as it may be necessary. And I have told them that in view of the above mentioned decision of the Government, it is no longer necessary for me to take their statements.

I am shifting the headquarters to Motihari where my work and that of my colleagues will consist in studying and analysing the evidence we have already collected and in putting it in a presentable form. The *raiyats* will still continue to come to us for information and guidance. I do notice that to allow them to talk to us in any manner they choose is a great relief to them and they readily accept the advice that is given to them. They are being told not to disturb the existing situation pending the inquiry except where it is manifestly illegal and in no case to take the law in their own hands.

I am not leaving for Ahmedabad till the resolution[1] appointing the committee is published and the hot controversy going on in the Press has subsided a little. If you could please drop me a wire as to when the resolution is likely to be gazetted, I shall be obliged.

[1]*Vide* Appendix "Report of Champaran Agrarian Enquiry Committee", 3-10-1917.

Pray send all letters to Motihari after receipt of this. I am in Bettiah all day tomorrow (Thursday).

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand in the National Archives of India; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*, No. 131, p. 219

360. NOTE ON THE SITUATION IN CHAMPARAN-VI

CONFIDENTIAL AND NOT FOR PUBLICATION MOTIHARI,

June 17, 1917

As it will be remembered, prior to the publication of the Government Resolution[1] appointing the Committee of Inquiry, Mr. Gandhi was summoned to Ranchi, the Government intention then being to remove him and his co-workers from Champaran. There was an exhaustive discussion[2] of the whole situation between the Lieutenant-Governor and Mr. Gandhi. The latter saw also the other members of the Executive Council[3] and after two days' discussion the Government desired to appoint a Committee and suggested that, in that event, Mr. Gandhi should stop taking statements. He readily accepted the suggestion. The Lieutenant-Governor inquired if he would then withdraw his co-workers and himself from Champaran. Mr. Gandhi said he could not do so, and his colleagues and he would be occupied in marshalling the evidence and preparing for the Committee. They could not do this well, out of Champaran. Moreover, he could not let the *raiyats* think that he had, in any way, deserted them. The Lieutenant-Governor then did not press the point but hoped that, pending the meeting of the Committee, neither Mr. Gandhi nor his companions would go to the villages. This, too, was agreed to. The taking of statements and visits to the villages have now been entirely stopped. The headquarters have been removed to

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Report of Champaran Agrarian Enquiry Committee", 3-10-1917.

[2] *Vide* "Interview with Lt.-Governor of Bihar", 5-6-1917.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Maharaja Bahadur Sir Rameshwar Singh", 4-6-1917.

Motihari and one of the workers remains at Bettiah to attend to the *raiyats* who may desire information or assistance. In all cases, they are being advised, pending the result of the inquiry, not to disturb the existing situation and it is Mr. Gandhi's firm opinion that whilst the mission has undoubtedly strengthened the *raiyats* in their resolve to combat coercion and heartened them for a struggle to gain their freedom, its presence serves to restrain any excess on the part of the *raiyats* who without guidance might easily be betrayed into action which might harm them in the end. The Committee meets about the 15th of July.[1] During the interval, Mr. Gandhi is paying a flying visit to Ahmedabad, returning to Motihari at the latest on the 28th instant.

As to the constitution of the Committee, Mr. Gandhi has accepted his own appointment on the clear understanding that he should be free to give his own evidence and prepare and give the evidence of the *raiyats* and be as to this in the same position in which he would be if he was not a member of the Committee. He has done so with the approval of the Hon'ble Pandit Malaviyaji and Bihar friends, whom he met at Bankipore on his return from Ranchi. The other nominations seem to have been made by the Government with much care and with a view to secure an equitable finding by the Committee. There was throughout the discussion at Ranchi a deep desire on the part of the Lieutenant-Governor to arrive at a fair settlement.

An unauthorised statement has been circulated by the Associated Press to the effect that Mr. Gandhi has advised private inquiry. In substance the report is true. Evidence collected is of an inflammatory nature and a heated newspaper discussion of the evidence is bound to create an atmosphere which will interfere with the conducting of a dispassionate inquiry. The mission has no wish to unnecessarily injure the planters' interest and so in their interest and to demonstrate that the mission desired nothing but justice for the *raiyats*, a private inquiry was suggested. The *raiyats* could not be hurt by this procedure. It is not to be inferred that the report was to be withheld from the public. On the appearance, however, of the Associated Press statement, Mr. Gandhi wired[2] to the Government saying that, as the suggestion was wholly in the planters interest, he withdrew

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Government notice inviting evidencee before champaran agrarian enquiry committee", July 1917.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Chief Secretary, Bihar", 8-6-1917.

it and would welcome a public inquiry if the planters so desired. It should be understood that whilst no more volunteers are required at present, no matter what the final result of the Government inquiry is, they will be required soon after the publication of the Government's decision on the Committees report. Their work will be the most important and lasting and therefore it will be the final and essential stage of the mission. Volunteers should, without any advertisement in the Press, be got ready and where they do not know Hindi but possess other qualifications, they should be advised to learn Hindi sufficient for the purpose. They have to be grown up, reliable, hard-working men who would not mind taking the spade and repairing or making village roads and cleaning village cesspools and who will in their dealings with the landlords guide the *raiyats* aright. Six months of such training cannot fail to do incalculable good to the *raiyats*, the workers and the country at large.

M. K. GANDHI

From the typewritten office copy signed by Gandhiji: Courtesy: Gandhi Smarak Nidhi

361. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

MOTIHARI,
June 17, 1917

MY DEAR ESTHER,

I am going to Ahmedabad for 4 days. I return on the 28th instant at the latest. There is no secret about what I have and you have every right to ask. My faith in Truth and Love is as vivid as in the fact that I am writing this to you. To me they are convertible terms Truth and Love conquer all.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

My Dear Child, p. 14

362. TALK WITH TEACHERS OF THE NATIONAL SCHOOL

[AHMEDABAD,
June 23, 1917][1]

I take it that all of you have dedicated your lives to the school and I should like, therefore, to acquaint you with the present state of our finances. We have Rs. 10,000 in cash in the Ashram Fund. Besides this, I have jewellery and other gifts worth Rs. 20,000 given to me when I left for India. A friend, again, has promised to buy and donate land and this should mean Rs. 10,000. We have thus a total of Rs. 40,000 or thereabouts. It is my wish that the gifts l have received should not be put to sale in my life-time, though of course they will be used in the service of the nation and we may dispose of them if we find that necessary. This means that, even if we get no help just now and the position continues as at present, we have enough money to meet our needs for four years. I am confident, though, that we shall get all the money we need. It may happen, however, that we displease everyone as a result of our principles and that we get no money. At such a time, the teachers will have two courses open to them. One that they leave the school and take up some other work. As for this, none of you is so entirely good for nothing that he cannot make a living somehow. The other course is to continue to run the school, no matter what happens, maintaining yourselves, if need be, on no more than the plainest bread. If it becomes necessary for you even to go begging for money, you should. In other words, you should be ready to turn yourselves into beggars for the sake of the school.

OBJECTS OF SCHOOL

l. To adopt a new method of education.
2. To pay special attention to character-building, the aim being that ten per cent of the pupils at any rate get trained for national service.
3. To raise the status of the Gujarati language.
4. To work for the spread of the national language, Hindi.
5. To open schools of the new pattern in every place, and make this school a model for them, and for Government as well, to

[1] Gandhiji was in Ahmedabad on this date, having left Motihari on the 18th. He was in Bombay on the 24th and returned to Motihari on the 28th.

copy. The aim is to have teachers trained in this school who will then go to villages and run schools there.

6. To get the new pattern adopted by the Government.

REQUIREMENTS FOR TEACHERS

1. Knowledge of Hindi and Marathi
2. Proficiency in weaving
3. Well-preserved health
4. Travel in India
5. Readiness for other work besides that in the school, that is, for work in the Ashram or as secretary to Bapu[1]

WORK TO BE ATTENDED TO BY TEACHERS, APART FROM TEACHING

1. Text-books
2. Vocabulary of technical terms

CO-EDUCATION

I am myself in favour of co-education, but I don't insist on it if the teachers hold a different opinion.

I am not in favour of common residence. Girls should not be kept in a hostel. I am of the view that they must live under the constant supervision of their mothers and nowhere else.

There should be holidays in summer and the school should be shifted to a cooler place. This, I believe, will enable the teacher and the pupils to work very much better at other times. The teachers and the pupils should spend the holidays together.

English should be an optional subject. One should know good, at any rate correct, English. It would be excellent if we could get an English teacher for the purpose, but I can think of no one at present except Miss Schlesin. If only she would come, we could want nothing better. She is a very capable person. A pupil of the school should be able to talk in English with any Englishman without being nervous.

Drawing will be taught not as a fine art[2] but because the pupil should be able to draw for practical purposes, draw maps, for instance, and straight lines, have a good hand-writing and should know memory drawing.

[1] Gandhiji, the report being indirect at this point

[2] Gandhiji uses the English terms.

Rules should be framed for discipline[1] in the school, but no compulsion should be used to enforce obedience to them; they [the pupil] should feel inclined to obey them on their own. One should keep a watch on them whether they do. If any of them does not, we should express our disapproval and advise him.

To start with, 100 pupils should be admitted to the school, all of whom can pay for their own expenses. Nothing may be spent from the School Fund for any of the pupils. If there is a good but poor student, we may secure help for him from one of our friends and beg of another for his fees; but the School Fund cannot be used for the purpose.

History, Geography, Science and Hygiene can be part of Gujarati.

We have necessarily to come into contact with people from the South, and this is to our benefit too; everyone should, therefore, know Marathi.

From a photostat of the handwritten copy: S.N. 6318

363. LETTER TO H. McPHERSON

MOTIHARI,
June 29, 1917

DEAR MR. McPHERSON,

Your letter of the 18th instant followed me whilst I was travelling. I returned from Ahmedabad yesterday afternoon after an absence of eleven days. My co-workers have not made it a point of absenting themselves from Champaran but most of them have been absent off and on for their own businesses. They have not been in evidence as their work has been confined to preparing for me a digest of the evidence collected by me and giving information to the inquirers. There is I think complete absence of stir as the taking of evidence and visits to the *dehats* have been religiously avoided.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand in the National Archives of India; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*, No. 138, p. 241

[1] Gandhiji uses the English terms.

364. LETTER TO W. B. HEYCOCK

MOTIHARI,
June 29, 1917

DEAR MR. HEYCOCK,

I have arrived here yesterday afternoon. Dr. Deva of the Servants of India Society has been appointed by the Society to serve with me during the rest of my stay and work in Champaran. Though his services are not required at the present moment, he has come to study my method of work so that his work may be the easier when the volunteers go out to the villages to render assistance. Dr. Deva is naturally anxious to report himself to you and to wait on you whenever you can send an appointment for him.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand in the National Archives of India; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*, No. 139, p. 248

365. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

Ashadh Sud 9 [*June 29, 1917*][1]

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I am impressed by your patriotism. May God grant you good sense, strength, spirit of sacrifice and health.

I have written to Bhai Jehangirji Patel. I enclose a copy of the letter. You must, in all humility but with firmness, have the resolution passed. When the time comes, those who are desirous of going to jail will find innumerable ways to do so. Everyone at Prayag and Bankipur will welcome our resolution.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32712

[1] *Ashadh Sud 9* in 1917 corresponds to this date, when Gandhiji was in Motihari.

366. REPLY REGARDING DRESS TO "THE PIONEER"

MOTIHARI,
June 30, 1917

SIR,

I have hitherto successfully resisted the temptation of either answering your or Mr. Irwin's criticism of the humble work I am doing in Champaran. Nor am I going to succumb now except with regard to a matter which Mr. Irwin has thought fit to dwell upon and about which he has not even taken the trouble of being correctly informed. I refer to his remarks on my manner of dressing.

My "familiarity with the minor amenities of western civilization" has taught me to respect my national costume, and it may interest Mr. Irwin to know that the dress I wear in Champaran is the dress I have always worn in India except that for a very short period in India I fell an easy prey in common with the rest of my countrymen to the wearing of semi-European dress in the courts and elsewhere outside Kathiawar. I appeared before the Kathiawar Courts now 21 years ago in precisely the dress I wear in Champaran.

One change I have made and it is that having taken to the occupation of weaving and agriculture and having taken the vow of swadeshi, my clothing is now entirely hand-woven and hand-sewn and made by me or my fellow-workers. Mr. Irwin's letter suggests that I appear before the ryots in a dress I have temporarily and specially adopted in Champaran to produce an effect. The fact is that I wear the national dress because it is the most natural and the most becoming for an Indian. I believe that our copying of the European dress is a sign of our degradation, humiliation and our weakness; and that we are committing a national sin in discarding a dress which is best suited to the Indian climate and which, for its simplicity, art and cheapness, is not to be beaten on the face of the earth and which answers hygienic requirements. Had it not been for a false pride and equally false notions of prestige, Englishmen here would long ago have adopted the Indian constume. I may mention incidentally that I do not go about Champaran bare-headed. I do avoid shoes for sacred reasons, but I find too that it is more natural and healthier to avoid them whenever possible.

I am sorry to inform Mr. Irwin and your readers that my esteemed friend Babu Brijkishore Prasad, the "Ex-hon. member of council," still remains unregenerate and retains the provincial cap and never walks barefoot and "kicks up" a terrible noise even in the house we are living in by wearing wooden sandals. He has still not the courage, in spite of most admirable contact with me, to discard his semi-anglicised dress and whenever he goes to see officials puts his legs into the bifurcated garment and on his own admission tortures himself by cramping his feet in inelastic shoes. I cannot induce him to believe that his clients won't desert him and the courts won't punish him if he wore his more becoming and less expensive "dhoti". I invite you and Mr. Irwin not to believe the "stories" that the latter hears about me and my friends, but to join me in the crusade against educated Indians abandoning their manners, habits and customs which are not proved to be bad or harmful. Finally, I venture to warn you and Mr. Irwin that you and he will ill-serve the cause both of you consider is in danger by reason of my presence in Champaran if you continue, as you have done, to base your strictures on unproved facts. I ask you to accept my assurance that I should deem myself unworthy of the friendship and confidence of hundreds of my English friends and associates—not all of them fellow-cranks—if in similar circumstances I acted towards them differently from my own countrymen.

M. K. GANDHI

The Pioneer, 5-7-1917

367. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

MOTIHARI,
June 30, 1917

MY DEAR ESTHER,

I have your two letters before me. I returned from Ahmedabad on the 28th. I had a nice time there.

The city life I have always found, to be chilling; the village life, free, invigorating and godly.

'Why has God given us so many gifts, powers, skill to invent if we are not to use them?' You have asked a question which I have asked myself and thousands are always asking. My humble opinion is

that God has placed temptations in our way the strength of which is the same as that of the possibilities of rise in moral grandeur. We may use our inventive faculty either for inward growth or for outward indulgence. I may devote my talents for utilizing the falls from the Himalayas; I only increase mankind's facilities for indulgence. I may use my talents for discovering laws which govern the falls from the Himalayas within me; I serve myself and mankind by adding to the permanent happiness. You will make up for yourself countless illustrations showing that all our talents are to be utilized only for inward growth which can come from self-restraint alone.

Do please remember me to Mr. Bittmann[1] and thank him on my behalf for permitting you to come to the Ashram whenever you are free.

Your experience of the young man is nothing extraordinary. Pray do not be impatient to reform men and women whom you meet. The first and the last thing we have to attend to is to reform ourselves. In trying to reform, we seem to be judging. These young men often become worse for our handling. The safest course is to let such men leave us when they are found wanting. I have not sufficiently expressed myself. But you will understand. If not, please ask.

Yours,

BAPU

My Dear Child, pp. 14-5

368. LETTER TO FULCHAND SHAH

MOTIHARI,
Ashadh Sud 11 [*June 30, 1917*]

BHAI FULCHAND,

I gave you one letter of Mrs. Besant to keep. I am sending you another. I hope you are preserving cuttings from the papers there.

Miss Faering's letter this time is worth reading. Her love for the Ashram adds to our responsibility. We would do well to cultivate and maintain the purity which comes naturally to a heart of transparent honesty like hers. Such striving is the only justification for our existence.

Vandemataram from

[1] A senior member of the Danish Mission in South India

Mohandas The very day I wrote to you, Surendra fell ill. The mistake was mine. I gave him full freedom all at once. His stomach had not improved enough to digest everything. He fasted yesterday. Today he is better. Everyone here has observed *ekadashi*[1] today.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 6364

369. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

MOTIHARI,
June 30 [*1917*]

DEAR MR. SHASTRIAR,

Thank you for sending Dr. Deva and for your letter. I did want encouragement from you. If Dr. Deva does not find himself in gaol, you will know that it won't be for want of effort on my part. He is to see the District Magistrate tomorrow.

I want to write to you at length about your letter to Dr. Sapru[2] and I shall do so if I find the time. Meanwhile I send you copies of draft prepared for the Bombay friends and may write to Mr. Petit[3].

I do want to write a strong letter of protest against your ill-treatment of your body.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 6295

370. LETTER TO J. B. PETIT

MOTIHARI,
June 30, 1917

DEAR MR. PETIT,

After much careful consideration, I am unable to suggest any other act of universal application with a view to inviting imprisonment, save a vigorous propaganda among the masses, going to the villages, speaking to them, distributing among them leaflets, etc. The descent at

[1] Eleventh day of each dark and bright fortnight, observed with a fast
[2] Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru (1875-1949), lawyer and statesman
[3] *Vide* the following item.

the present moment upon the villages by you, Mr. Jinnah and such other leaders cannot but end in arrests. This propaganda must be carried on in spite of Government prohibition and to that extent it may be considered illegal but for a passive resister not unlawful. There are various other methods which I am unwilling to advise until passive resistance in its present form has soaked into us a bit.

This, however, I should like to add that in this method there is no idea of punishment of the wrong-doer. There can, therefore, be no retaliation and no boycott. But there should be swadeshi of the purest type, not as a retaliatory measure but as the law of our being. We are bound in honour, being Indians, to prefer Indian goods to any other.

I do hope that whatever shape our action takes, the time-limit resolution will be accepted by you and our friend, and that we will not rest until the interned[1] are released.

I take it you will show this to Mr. Jinnah.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 6365

371. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

MOTIHARI,
July 1, 1917

MY DEAR ESTHER,

I have just received your letter telling you had entered upon a new year, you do not say what year. I appreciate your passion for the Ashram. May it satisfy all your wants and may it prove a place of joy and peace and of love such as you would find near your parents' hearth. Every year that closes upon us may be so much valuable time gained or lost as we have well or ill used it. To us who want to walk in the fear of God, every added year is added responsibility.

Please tell me what books you are reading for Tamil examination and what you are paying your *munshi*, if you have any.

Yours ever,

BAPU

My Dear Child, p. 16

[1] The reference is to Mrs. Besant and others who were arrested at Madras on June 16 and interned.

372. CIRCULAR LETTER FOR FUNDS FOR ASHRAM

FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION ONLY

MOTIHARI,
CHAMPARAN,
Ashadh Sud 11, Samvat 1973 [*July 1, 1917*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

All these days the expenses on the Satyagraha Ashram and its various activities could be met entirely from help voluntarily given by some friends; but these activities have now expanded so much that it does not seem possible to meet the expenses without asking for help.

The activities of the Ashram can be divided under the following heads:

(1) Boarding and lodging expenses of the Ashram inmates: The present strength of the Ashram, including adults and children, may be put down at 30. The expenses on their account, including rent, amount to Rs. 400/- a month. This figure includes expenditure on guests.

(2) Hand-weaving: No one in the Ashram knew this two years ago. Today practically everyone knows something of it. Some of them may actually be regarded as experts. There are seven looms working in the Ashram and five more under its supervision. This activity has taken up a capital of Rs. 3,000/-. Cloth gets sold as soon as it is produced. Cloth worth Rs. 500/- has been sold up to this time. This work has enabled four families which had given up weaving to resume it and in all 17 persons make their living by it. One family has learnt weaving recently and taken to it for a living. It cannot be said yet that it makes enough for a livelihood. The expectation is that in ten years thousands of weavers who have given up weaving as a profession will have resumed it. It is admitted on all hands that, even if the textile mills stay, there is sufficient scope in the country for hand-weaving. This activity involves some loss at present but ultimately there should benone. The current expenditure may be put down at Rs. 100/- a month.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Fulchand Shah", 3-7-1917, which says: "I sent one copy to Ambalalbhai yesterday." The printed copy, however, bears the date *Ashadh Vad* 9, *Samvat* 1973, corresponding to July 13, 1917.

[(3)] The third activity is the National School. We in the Ashram believe that the great harm that is being done to the country will continue so long as education is not given along national lines. Accordingly, a National School has been started as an experiment. The aim is to give higher education through the mother tongue and in a manner that will impose no strain. If the experiment succeeds, the intention is to ask the Government itself to provide such education, and to carry on ceaseless agitation for the purpose. Likewise, if the success of the experiment can be demonstrated, it is likely that private enterprise may start other experiments of a similar nature. In this experiment, both mental and physical education is provided. A curriculum extending over 13 years is visualized. This will include, besides training corresponding to a graduate's, instruction in the Hindi language, in agriculture and weaving. The responsibility for conducting this experiment has been undertaken by Professor Sankalchand Shah, formerly Professor of Science at Gujarat College. He has worked for ten years with Professor Gajjar[1]. His assistants are Shri Narahari Parikh, LL.B., Shri Dattatreya Kalelkar, B.A., Shri Fulchand Shah, B.A., Shri Kishorelal Mashruwala[2], B.A.,LL.B., and my nephew, Chhaganlal Gandhi. We are looking for one or two more teachers, who should be men of character. In the study of Sanskrit, Shastri Girijashankar of Ahmedabad has been giving help. Professor Anandshankar Dhruva supervises the experiment and makes suggestions. Help is also sought from other men of learning. The teachers draw maintenance allowance according to their needs. The experiment costs at present Rs 500/- a month. This does not include rent since it has been included in the expenditure for the Ashram. The number of students at present is 12. The experiment has reached such a stage that it is proposed to admit day students now. So far, the students were either boys from the Ashram or sons of the teachers.

[(4)] The fourth activity is propagation of the Hindi language. There is no room for any difference of opinion about Hindi being

[1] Tribhuvandas Kalyandas Gajjar (1863-1920), Professor of Chemistry, Baroda College, Baroda; pioneer of chemical industry in Western India

[2] Constructive worker and associate of Gandhiji; Editor of Gandhiji's weekly, *Harijan;* author of *Gandhi and Marx*

entitled to the place which is at present usurped by English, but, to our misfortune, such a difference does exist. The educated class must have a common language and that can only be Hindi. It will be easy to work among the masses through it. And therefore the delay in Hindi gaining its rightful place means so much of harm to the nation. Efforts are being made in the country to stop this harm. The work by the Ashram will add one more to these efforts. The first step in this work consists mainly in securing Hindi teachers and training them. I estimate the monthly expenditure on this work at not less than Rs. 200/-.

[(5)] The fifth category consists of my political activities, on such matters only in which I can see my way. The only expenditure in this is on railway fare for me and my co-workers. It hardly comes to Rs. l00/- a month. So far, I have had to make no effort to find it. All the same, I include it here.

Thus, the total monthly expenditure comes to:

	Rs.
For running Ashram	400
Weaving	100
School	500
Propagation of Hindi	200
My railway fare	100
	1,300

approximately.

The expenditure on the National School will increase by and by, so that it will not be an over-estimate to put the total expenditure at Rs. 1,500/-.

A large plot of land is required for all these activities. Such a plot, admeasuring about 55 *bighas*, has already been purchased on the banks of the Sabarmati near the Sabarmati jail. Efforts are proceeding to buy some more. A workshop for weaving, living rooms, kitchens for the Ashram and a building for the National School are to be constructed on this land. This is likely to cost Rs. 100,000. The responsibility for supervising the building construction has been taken over by Shri Amritlal Thakkar of the Hind Sevak Samaj[1].

My needs, therefore, adding a year's expenses to the cost of the buildings, come to Rs. 118,000. For the land, I have drawn upon

[1] Servants of India Society

the funds with me. There will be a trust for this land and the buildings.

If these ventures meet with your approval, I have no option but to hold out my hand to you and you have none but to give, to the best of your means, and induce others to give to the best of theirs. If you desire to help only in regard to a particular item in the programme, your contribution will be spent accordingly. Even if, however, you see nothing but eccentricity in all my activities, it is my request that all those who know me should help me that I may satisfy my own self. So long as I do not myself see my error, these activities will remain my very life. They sum up my services to the country. I wanted to go myself and see you personally but I see no possibility of my being free to leave Champaran for about nine months. The activities will continue meanwhile and so also the expenses.

I don't want at present to go a-begging through newspapers. Before doing so, it is necessary to make some progress with the work and gather more experience. Kindly send what help you can directly to Satyagraha Ashram, Ahmedabad; alternatively, you may send it to me at the Motihari address. I also request you to obtain some help from your friends, if you possibly can. If you are not in a position yourself to offer monetary help, I would like you to solicit such help from friends who can. I do not want anyone to move outside his own circle for the purpose.

Careful accounts are maintained for all categories of activities. It is intended to circulate an abstract of the accounts among friends every year.

You may ask me any questions you like to.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From the Gujarati original draft in Gandhiji's hand. Courtesy: Radhabebn Choudhri: S. N. 6378. Also a printed copy

373. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

MOTIHARI,
Ashadh Sud 12 [*July 2, 1917*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have written[2] to Mr. Ewbank[3] and told him that my ignorance of the subject is profound. I shall be busy in Champaran for some months. If, all the same, he wants me to speak, in the hope that I shall have the time, and if he sends me literature on the subject, I shall try to write out something[4].

Never mind if you have kept on the house-maid for some time longer. I had a letter from Fakira. In reply[5], I have asked him to go there. You and Chhotalal must get rid of cooking and miscellaneous chores. Unless that is done, I am, afraid, we shall make no progress in weaving. How this can be brought about, it is for you to consider. Set Satyadevji[6] to the quern. It doesn't matter if he has been supplied chillies. That is a *yajna*[7] for us on his account. Let us see if it is rewarded. I wonder. One needn't worry if he takes chillies only for the sake of health. A *yajna* must be performed cheerfully. We have done what we have done because we think it right and so must we do everything and supply him [the chillies] with love and in cheerfulness.

I am sending the enclosed cutting to be preserved. You must have ordered *Pataliputra* there. I heard in Prayag that the best paper is supposed to be *Pratap*. I was also told that its editor[8] is a man of utter self-sacrifice.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5720. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] Gandhiji was in Motihari on this day.
[2] This letter is not available.
[3] Registrar of Co-operative Societies, Bombay
[4] *Vide* "The Moral Basis of Co-operation", 17-9-1917
[5] Not available
[6] Swami Satyadev Parivrajak, who taught Hindi at the Ashram
[7] Act of sacrifice
[8] Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi. He met a martyr's death, being killed during the Hindu-Muslim riots at Kanpur in 1931.

374. LETTER TO FULCHAND SHAH

MOTIHARI,
Ashadh Sud 13 [*July 3, 1917*][1]

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

Let the enclosed letter[2] be read by all of you and then passed on to Punjabhai. More copies are being made ready. It is possible the figures in the letter need to be revised. If so, revise them and let me know. If you have anything to suggest about the ideas, the arguments, etc., do so. I sent one copy to Ambalalbhai[3] yesterday. I am sending one for Punjabhai today. The other copies will be despatched tomorrow. I invite your comments, all the same. The English version[4] is also getting ready.

Did you make the soap? How many come to learn Hindi? How do you find the teaching? How many attend the evening prayers?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 6366

375. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

MOTIHARI, BIHAR,
Ashadh Sud 13, July 3, 1917

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your letter. You need not feel shy in writing to me freely. I have no desire to put any kind of pressure on you. Go on expressing freely your views. I see no difficulty in your taking a salary from Phoenix. Now Phoenix will not get help from the public. It has to depend for its ventures entirely on subscriptions. Still, if you do not wish to continue in the press, you may do what you want after consulting Ch. Manilal and Mr. West. Never make important changes

[1] Gandhiji was in Motihari on this day.

[2] *Vide* "Circular Letter for Funds for Ashram", 1-7-l917.

[3] Ambalal Sarabhai an industrialist of Ahmedabad who took keen interest in Gandhiji's activities

[4] *Vide* the following item.

without sufficient thought. Also do not leave at a time when the press needs help. Whatever the circumstances, remain cheerful. Let me know how your health is now. You can adopt our dress when you have made up your mind. The world will talk and then be quiet. Ba, Devdas and Prabhudas are with me. This time I paid a visit to Madras. I have brought along Surendra from there. He had been suffering from constipation. Here too we have introduced Ashram rules. The work goes on smoothly. The activities the Ashram have expanded considerably. There is hope that the national school will grow into something beautiful. We shall see what the final outcome is. The activity is making good progress. Ba keeps very good health. She appears to be liking it here very much. Let me know if you have kept up any kind of reading or not. Did you write to Cachalia Seth and Mr. Naidu? Do write to Phillips also. Manilal should write to Dr. Gul. What happened to Naransamy Parthasarathi? What does he do? What is Kuppu doing? Does he write sometimes? Have you kept up walking? Send me your daily diary. Do you do the morning prayer? Remember as much as you can of our rules. Follow them to the extent you can. It will be useful in the long run.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Motana Man, pp. 11-12

376. CIRCULAR LETTER FOR FUNDS FOR ASHRAM

MOTIHARI,

CHAMPARAN,

[On or after *July 3, 1917*][1]

DEAR MR. SHASTRIAR,

I have been conducting the Satyagraha Ashram at Ahmedabad now for the last two years. The object of the Ashram is to bring together men, women and children whose aim or whose parents' aim for their children is national service for life. The Ashram at present contains after much weeding out 30 inmates including men, women and children. So long as its activity was confined to self-training, its

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

expenses were met from support given by friends without the necessity of a formal appeal being made to them. The expenses including those of a considerable number of temporary visitors have amounted to Rs. 400/- per month on an average.

But its activity has gradually widened and includes (i) weaving by means of handlooms, (ii) an experiment in evolving a national type of education, (iii) spread of Hindi as a common medium for educated India.

These activities mean much greater expenditure of money than has come to me as above stated. For developing them a permanent habitation on a fairly large plot of land is a necessity. Out of funds already in my possession over fifty *bighas* of land has been purchased on the banks of the Sabarmati on a healthy site some distance from the central gaol. It affords an easy access to the College students who have in ever-increasing numbers been making use of the Ashram Library which contains a fair volume of selected literature and newspapers and magazines, the latter being kindly supplied free of charge by the respective publishers. According to a rough estimate made by Mr. Amritlal Thakkar of the Servants of India Society, who is drawing up the plans, the cost of the buildings will be Rs. 100,000. The educational experiment is costing Rs. 500/- per month. The handloom industry Rs. 100/- per month. The Hindi propaganda for the ensuing year will cost Rs. 200/- per month. The educational and Hindi expenditure are a progressive charge. To these may be added my own travelling expenses Rs. 100/- per month in connection with one public activity or other. These last are easily met. Thus the whole figure comes to capital expenditure of Rs. 100,000 and Rs. 1,300, say Rs. 1500, allowing extra Rs. 200/- per month for progressive expenditure, making rupees 18,000/- for the next twelve months.

I shall attempt only the briefest description of the activities mentioned above.

The handloom weaving is in a dying condition. Everyone admits that whatever may be the future of the mill industry, the handlooms ought not to be allowed to perish. Dr. Mann[1] in his recent pamphlet says that probably one of the causes of the growing poverty observed by him in particular villages was the destruction of handlooms which complemented agricultural occupation. The object of the Ashram, therefore, is for every inmate to learn hand-weaving

[1] Of Poona Agricultural College; author of *Land and Labour in a Deccan Village*

and thus study at first hand the secrets and defects of the art and then find out the means of saving the industry. Every inmate, though none belongs to the weaving class, now knows something of the art. And a few have attained considerable skill in the art. The Ashram is already supporting weaving families numbering 17 souls and one family having learnt the art at the Ashram has set up inde-pendently and is trying to support itself from the business. Seven looms are working at the Ashram. It has involved a capital expenditure of Rs. 3,000/-. It ought soon to be self-supporting. Ne-arly Rs. 500 worth of stuff has already been sold by the Ashram and many who have hitherto used the shoddy mill-made stuff, whether foreign or home-made, are using the durable Ashram-made cloth. This enterprise is expected in 10 years' time to resuscitate hundreds of weavers who have for the moment abandoned their trade in hopeless despair. The system of education at present in vogue is, it is held, wholly unsuited to India's needs, is a bad copy of the western model and it has by reason of the medium of in-struction being a foreign language sapped the energy of the youths who have passed through our schools and colleges and has prduced an army of clerks and office-seekers. It has dried up all originality, impoverished the vernaculars and has deprived the masses of the benefit of higher knowledge which would otherwise have percolated to them through the intercourse of the educated classes with them. The system has resulted in creating a gulf between educated India and the masses. It has stimulated the brain but starved the spirit for want of a religious basis for education and emaciated the body for want of training of handicrafts. It has criminally neglected the greatest need of India in that there is no agricultural training worth the name provided in the course. The experiment now being carried on at the Ashram seeks to avoid all t he defects above noted. The medium of instruction is the provincial vernacular. Hindi is taught as a common medium and handloom-weaving and agriculture are taught from he very commencement. Pupils are taught to look up to these as a means of livelihood and the knowledge of letters as a training for the head and the heart and as a means of national service. The curriculum has been mapped so as to cover all the essentials of the graduate course in the existing institutions within a period of 13 years. The experiment is in the hands of Professor Shah, late of the Gujarat College. Mr. Shah was associated with Professor Gajjar for 10 years. He is assisted by Mr. Narhari, B.A., LL.B., Mr. Fulchand Shah, B.A., Mr. Dattatreya Kalelkar, B.A., Mr. Chhaganlal Gandhi and Mr. Kishorelal Mashruwala, B.A., LL.B. All but the last named have pledged themselves exclusively to he work for life on a pittance enough to support them and their families. Mr. Kishorelal has given

his services free for one year, having means of his own, and will if he finds the work congenial at the end of the year cast in his lot with the rest. The experiment is confined to about 12 lads including two girls belonging to the Ashram or being children of the teachers. It is being supervised by Professor Anandshankar Dhruva, Vice-Principal of the Gujarat College. I build the highest hopes upon it. My faith in it is unquenchable. It may fail but if it does, the fault must not be in the system but with us the workers. If it succeeds, voluntary institutions after its model can be multiplied and the Government called upon to adopt it.

That Hindi ought at the earliest moment to displace English seems to be a self-demonstrated proposition. Hindi can not only become the common medium between the educated classes but it opens the door to the hearts of the masses in a way which no other vernacular does and English certainly never can. Madras alone presents a difficulty but I have sufficient faith in the spirituality and the imaginative faculty of the southerners to know that they will not be long before they take up Hindi as the common medium. No presidency in India has the same aptitude for learning languages that Madras has. That is my South African experience. Although the preponderating element there is Dravidian, the Tamils and the Telugus picked up Hindi instead of the Hindustani- speaking races picking up Tamil or Telugu.

It is then for these experiments that I ask for your pecuniary support. I hope you will send me what you can, if you at all agree with any of the activities. You may earmark your donation if you wish.

A trust will be created of the land and buildings. Accurate account of the expenditure in the various branches is being kept and an abstract will be rendered to the donors.

I do not want if I can help it as yet to make an appeal through the Press. The activities have not advanced far enough to warrant such an appeal. But I do not hesitate to approach with confidence those who know me personally either to assist me themselves or advise their friends to do so.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten original signed by Gandhiji: G. N. 6297; also a photostat of the office copy: S. N. 6378

377. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

BANKIPORE,
July 7, 1917

DEAR MR. MAFFEY,

I am on my way to Ranchi in connection with the work of the Champaran committee. I write this regarding the Annie Besant agitation. As I am taking part in it by keeping myself in touch with the leaders and pressing on their attention my views regarding it,[1] I feel that I could not do so without His Excellency knowing the fact and knowing also my position in the agitation.

In my humble opinion, the internments are a big blunder. Madras was absolutely calm before then. Now it is badly disturbed. India as a whole had not made common cause with Mrs. Besant but now she is on a fair way towards commanding India's identity with her methods. Having had breathing time, I had gone down to Ahmedabad for some work connected with the institution I am conducting there, I passed through Bombay and Allahabad on my return and I was able to gauge the situation. I myself do not like much in Mrs. Besant's method. I have not liked the idea of the political propaganda being carried on during the War. In my opinion, our restraint will have been the best propaganda. But the whole country was against me. And no one could deny Mrs. Besant's great sacrifice and love for India or her desire to be strictly constitutional, nor could the country's right to carry on the propaganda be denied if it chose to do so. Many of us have respectfully differed from Mrs. Besant but all have recognised her powers and devotion. The Congress was trying to 'capture' Mrs. Besant. The latter was trying to 'capture' the former. Now they have almost become one. I plead with all the earnestness I can command for the boldest policy, i.e., to acknowledge the blunder in the frankest manner and to withdraw the orders of internment and to declare that the country has the right to carry on any propaganda that is not subversive of the British Constitution and is totally free from violence. Such an act will be a demonstration of strength, not of weakness. Only a government having the desire always to do the right and the power to crush the wrong can do it.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to J. B. Petit", 30-6-1917.

If unfortunately timid counsels prevail, there will be no rest in the country and the cult of violence will surely spread. Open violence one could understand and deal with. That may not be practised, but secret violence would be attempted. No one would be or feel responsible for it. Young minds without any lead from anybody in particular are, I regretfully observe, drifting in that direction. My life is dedicated to the preventing of the spread of the disease and its uprooting in so far as it has gained a foothold. I have presented to the youths and to Indians in general in my humble way a better and more effective method and that is the method of soul force or truth force or love force which for want of a better term I have described as passive resistance. And I am asking the leaders to adopt this method fully and boldly at this critical juncture. It involves self-suffering and that alone throughout. No government in the world can afford continually to imprison or molest innocent men; the British Government cannot afford it. It is its great secret and character that even when it does wrong, it seeks to justify it before the world on moral grounds.I think I have sufficiently explained myself. I hope, I shall not be misunderstood. I ask for forgiveness for the presumption in writing this letter and earnestly pray for the acceptance of my proposal.

Please place this before His Excellency. If my presence is required at Simla, I am at H.E.'s disposal.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

PS.

I shall be in Ranchi care of Hon'ble Mr. Sahay up to the 11th instant, and then at Motihari, Champaran.

M. K. G.

From a photostat of the original draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 6372

378. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

RANCHI,
July 8, 1917

MY DEAR ESTHER,

I have come here in connection with the Committee work. I leave here on the 11th for Motihari. This is supposed to be a healthy place being on a plateau.

Here is a copy of a letter[1] I wrote to *The Pioneer*. I know you will like it. The letter has created quite a stir here. It has been favourably received so far.

Could you send a copy of *The Greatest Thing in the World*[2] to Mr. Polak? I cannot procure it here. I copied out the verses and sent them to him. He now asks for the booklet. The book with me is being used.

Yours,

BAPU

My Dear Child, pp. 16-7

379. LETTER TO RAMNAVAMI PRASAD

RANCHI,
[*About July 8, 1917*][3]

DEAR SHRI RAMANAVAMI PRASAD,

My heart cries out at what Babu Brij Kishore tells me about your physical condition. You ought not to be ill. There is much work to be done for the country, and what will happen if the country's soldiers become ill? Keeping this in mind, I hope, you will try to rid yourself of the ailment. Physicians will not be able to remove t he ailment. The cause of the illness is self-indulgence, its cure restraint. We are not always able to spot out self-indulgence and do not always know the

[1] *Vide* "Reply regarding Dress to *The Pioneer*", 30-6-1917.
[2] By Henry Drummond; *vide* "Letter to Esther Faering", 11-6-1917.
[3] Gandhiji was in Ranchi between July 8 and 11; *vide* the preceding item.

kind of self-control we should exercise. But on a little reflection we can see both.

Yours

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 734

380. LETTER TO FULCHAND SHAH

RANCHI,
Sunday [*July 8, 1917*][1]

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

A letter[2] similar to the one I sent to Punjabhai has been sent or will be sent to the following persons: Ambalal Sarabhai, Ranchhodbhai Patwari, Becharlal Kalidas, Kunvarji Anandji, Govindji Dahyabhai, Barrister Shukla[3], Barrister Devchandbhai[4]. Dr. Mehta, Mangaldas Sheth[5], Narottamdas Morarji[6], Lallubhai Shamaldas[7], Dr. Edul Behram, Revashankarbhai[8], Mansukhlal, Ramjibhai [of] Madras, Sitaram Pandit[9], Ratilal Sheth, [Mohanlal] Kameshvar Pandya, Amritlal Thakkar, Gopalji Thakkar[10], Krishna Rao, Pattani, and Shankarlal Banker[11]. If you or Maganlal or others think of any names besides these, let me know. I am thinking of sending a copy toMr. Popatlal Chudgar[12] as also to our Popatlal. I am sending an English version[13]

[1] From the reference to the letter sent to Punjabhai, this letter appears to have been written after "Letter to Fulchand Shah", 3-7-1917. Again, Gandhiji was in Ranchi on Sunday, July 8, and from there he reached Motihari on Thursday, July 12.

[2] *Vide* "Circular Letter for Funds for Ashram", 1-7-1917.

[3] Dalpatram Bhavanji Shukla of Rajkot, a fellow-student of Gandhiji in London

[4] Parekh, a fellow-student and life-long friend of Gandhiji

[5] An industrialist of Ahmedabad who gave financial assistance to Gandhiji at the time of the latter's settling down in Ahmedabad

[6] A business man and liberal politician of Bombay who took keen interest in Gandhiji's activities

[7] A business man and liberal politician of Bombay; pioneer of co-operative movement in Western India

[8] Zaveri

[9] A barrister-friend of Gandhiji practising at Rajkot

[10] A business man of Bhavnagar

[11] Shankarlal G. Banker, publisher of *Young India*. He was convicted with Gandhiji in 1922.

[12] A practising barrister of Rajkot; for long associated with the States' People's Movement; retired as Judge of the Saurashtra High Court

herewith. Copies of it have been sent to non-Gujaratis at Madras and other places. If any reply or help is received from them, let me know.

There was a letter in *The Pioneer* from Mr. Irwin. Having got a chance of criticising it, I sent a reply[1] which you must have of course seen there. I have received a good many cuttings, however, and so I send one to you. That letter has proved more effective than any number of speeches could have been. I hope all cuttings are being preserved. You may not have the cutting from *The Bengalee*; I am sending one.

I am here up to Wednesday. I will then go to Motihari. Your letters should continue to be directed there. There is a possibility that I may have to go to Bombay before the 29th in connection with [the internment of] Annie Bai[2]. Do tell me every time how Muljibhai keeps. Punjabhai was to leave for Marwar. Has he left? Have the books expected from Bombay arrived?

Has any arrangement been made concerning Shivpujan's[3] box? Chi. Maganlal knows about this. Are the Ashram inmates able to utilize the presence of Swamiji for learning Hindi? I suppose the women are not able to do so.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

Got your letter after I wrote this. Received the statement. I see that this is a laborious job. You should inform me only when there is some notable item of expenditure or income. . . . Otherwise don't worry. Rs. 20/- is sent [every month] for. . . . 's mother. The amount should be debited to the Ashram account.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 6376

[13] *Vide* "Circular Letter for Funds for Ashram", on or after 3-7-1917.

[1] *Vide* "Reply regarding Dress to *The Pioneer*", 30-6-1917.

[2] Mrs. Annie Besant

[3] A boy who came to India from Phoenix with Maganlal Gandhi in August, 1914

381. A FEW WORDS TO ORPHANAGES[1]

[Before *July 11, 1917*]

In the course of my travels in India, I have examined a number of orphanages, some of them closely and others cursorily, and have expressed my views on some of them before the managers. Like anyone else, I also think well of my ideas and I feel that it will not be amiss to place them before the public.

An *anathashrama* may be correctly defined as a place which gives shelter to those who are *anatha*[2] and makes them *sanatha*[3]. In respect of such institutions, the term *anatha* is especially applied to children who have no living parents or guardians. Their claim is, or ought to be, to make good the want of a guardian. *Anathashram is* a translation of the English term 'orphanage'. Though this is the meaning of the term *anatha*, besides children, young men who can earn their livelihood are also accommodated in orphanages. In addition, the disabled, the lame, the crippled and the blind are also admitted and now even foundling-boxes have been introduced in orphanages. It is my opinion that this way one of the purposes is served fully. Though, superficially considered, it might suggest a more philanthropic attitude, on deeper reflection it will be seen that this state of affairs comes of a commercial mentality. I have no doubt that the future of the orphanages is the same as that of misers who would earn the highest interest on their moneys and so ultimately ruin themselves. I have used the word 'future' only to be on the safe side. Personally, I see their degradation in the present. An arrangement like this is a sign of our fear, of our lack of faith. We assume that, for all our institutions, we get help from the rich only with the utmost efforts. "We cannot but protect the disabled and we are bound to take care of babies born in secret; so let us manage that from *whatever we have received*." This is an abject attitude. I am convinced that for a good cause money will be available even in this poor country of India. It is for those in charge to prove that the cause is good. Institutions have

[1] The article originally appeared in *Chitramaya Jagat*, a Marathi journal, under the title "A Few Words to Orphanages". Its publication was noticed in *Kheda Vartaman* of 11-7-1917.

[2] Unprotected

[3] Protected

declined not for lack of funds but for lack of organizers with steadfastness, faith and integrity. Whether or no this view is right, one thing is certain, that, in trying to ride three horses at once the orphanages succeed in managing none.

In these conditions, how can the 'orphans' cease to be 'orphans'? They are constantly reminded of the fact of their being such. We would never want to leave our children in charge of these institutions. Here is the real test of an orphanage. We would not welcome the companionship of the disabled, the blind, or the crippled for our children. If these institutions were [really] the guardians of those without any guardians, we would find the manager's children among the inmates. They would have no hesitation in placing their children in the midst of the orphans, if for no other reason, at least in order to test themselves. I submit, on the strength of my extensive experience, that this is not too excessive an expectation. That the orphans are placed with the disabled is not all; the other arrangements also are mostly such that the children are constantly reminded of their destitute condition. If orphanages were reserved for orphans alone, they could be self-supporting in a very short time. We have much to learn from the Salvation Army[1] in this respect. The orphanages which they run have a soul in them. Ours are by comparison soulless. They have given refuge to thousands of children, have made men of them, have found employment for them. The children in our orphanages have not been given this sense of security. Some have been found petty jobs. These may be left out of account. The general practice in our orphanages is to send away the children when they come of age. Not so with the Salvation Army. In its institutions the orphans, when they come of age, start working in its factories, in the same way that a son in the family who has grown up is regarded as an additional shield and support for the family. It is necessary that such a family feeling be injected in our institutions too.

We can educate them in the institutions and find work for them in the factories of the institutions even as we provide them with lodging, boarding and clothing. We can launch great national experiments in the institutions, can impart education on national lines, teach them crafts, teach them agriculture, and save the professions which are dying out. If affairs are managed in this manner, the

[1] Organisation for religious philanthropic work founded by William Booth in 1880 .

orphans of today can become teachers, artisans, and leaders in their own orphanages. We can also raise an Indian Defence Force suited to our conditions from among the inmates of such orphanages.

If I am right in these calculations, a common standard can be set up for all the institutions by bringing together the heads of all the institutions, or at least of those in the Bombay Province, and consulting their views. If there is a central executive body for all, it can supervise them and make such changes as are called for by experience. If we are not ready for such an integrated scheme, a policy like the one indicated above can surely be introduced in those institutions which have more of life in them.

In some institutions, I noted a tendency to coax children into staying on there. To me this seems to be an ill-considered thing to do. The boys who do not want to continue in the orphanages are not orphans but free persons [who can look after themselves]. The worth of an orphanage should not be judged by the number of inmates, but rather by the number of citizens it turns out.

There are enough institutions to meet the needs of the disabled. That, wherever necessary, such institutions should be set up separately, requires no elaborate proof.

The problem of admitting foundlings is a serious one. I am not yet convinced that providing for such admissions is ethically sound. I have a kind of feeling that such facilities lead to increase in indulgence. It can in no way be proved that keeping alive every creature that is born, no matter how, is a part of humanitarianism. It is indeed futile to make such an effort. One detects a hidden pride behind it. I, for one, realize every moment from experience that the term 'humanitarianism' is not easy to understand. I have in some measure made that subject my own and hence I have ventured to be so emphatic. Humanitarianism does not mean saving a definite number of lives. It is the very property of the soul. Because of this fact, living creatures in the presence of a compassionate soul have an immediate and direct experience of its compassion. There is no room for arithmetic in humanitarianism. Unclean flour is infested with numberless lives. To preserve such flour is no humanitarianism. It lies rather in covering up the flour with earth or destroying it, though either way the vermin in the flour perish. Numberless vermin perish even in the process of keeping our bodies clean. Pure humanitarianism will seek ways to prevent the infesting of the flour

and keeping the body from becoming unclean. So also, pure humanitarianism will look for the cause of surreptitious admissions and take measures to promote moral purity. It will not encourage and shield laxity by accepting the burden of such admissions.

I need hardly say that my criticism is only meant to be helpful and is not prompted by a desire to cast aspersions. It is also not true that all the comments apply to every institution. The sole purpose of this article is to see that all the institutions attain the highest possible level.

In almost all our institutions, we notice more of the attitude of the *vanik*[1] than anything else. It is imperative to keep this in the background and give prominence to the (venturesome) spirit of the Kshatriya, to the (far-sighted) vision of the Brahmin, above all, to the Sudra's spirit (of service).

[From Gujarati]

Mahatma Gandhini Vicharsrishti

382. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

MOTIHARI,
July 14, 1917

MY DEAR ESTHER,

I have just returned from Ranchi to find your letter awaiting me.

You never told me you had taken to vegetarianism. I am sure it is the proper thing for this climate, apart from its religious value. A convert to vegetarianism is often told to eat of pulses, butter, cheese and milk more than during the meat-eating period. This is a mistake. Pulses may be eaten only sparingly. If one takes a fair quantity of milk, very little butter is required.

In my opinion, it is wrong to possess unnecessary things; they presuppose defence of things possessed against those who may covet them. They require care and attention which might well be devoted to more important matters and loss of them always leaves a pang, no matter how detached you may feel about them.

The sittings of the Committee commence on Monday.

[1] Trader

I was delighted to see your thoughtful gifts to Mrs. Gandhi.

With love from us all,

Yours,

BAPU

My Dear Child, pp. 17-8

383. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

MOTIHARI,

Ashadh Vad 11, Samvat 1973 [*July 15, 1917*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Put into a box whatever cloth, and of whatever type, you can spare there and send it to Motihari.

Have it made into pieces and state the price per yard; you will also do well to attach [price-]slips with gum. Dhotis are needed, as many as you can send, 10 yards by 50 inches and 10 yards by 45 inches. Napkins and handkerchiefs too are needed. Also some kind of cloth for scarves. And caps as well. Can't the women living there be asked to work on these? They may be paid a small amount. The caps must be hand-stitched, even if they cost more. Did you get my letter[1] about Santok? It has not been acknowledged. Tell Fulchand not to send me the accounts every week. It will be enough if he sends, from time to time, items of special note.

1. How much Hindi, and how well, is the Swamiji able to teach?
2. How many turn up to learn it?
3. Have you opened a class in the city?
4. Has Anandshankarbhai turned up again, as he was to? Has he started teaching?
5. What came out of the proposal to buy new land?
6. Has it been possible for Chhotalal to be completely free from cooking?

Either you or Fulchand may please answer these questions.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5719. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] Not available

384. SPEECH AT CHAMPARAN ENQUIRY COMMITTEE MEETING

BETTIAH,
July 19, 1917

The Champaran Agrarian Enquiry Committee resumed their sitting today. At the outset the Chairman[1] said some of the written statements put before them contained events relating to specific acts of coercion alleged to have occurred many years ago. Some were about twenty or twenty-five years old. It was quite impossible for them for their inquiry to extend back to such remote periods. Their inquiry related to the present agrarian conditions of Champaran District and their concern with the past history would be inasmuch as it would elucidate present conditions. He did not think any advantage would accrue by inquiring into individual cases that occurred a long number of years ago and he ruled the Committee should confine itself to more recent events for the reason that there was a special inquiry made by Mr. Gourlay in 1909 which dealt with all agrarian conditions prior to that date and he proposed the Committee should undertake only an inquiry of conditions after Mr. Gourlay's inquiry. That seemed to him to be the reasonable time to adopt. The second point he wished to put forward was that certain incidents referred to matters which had been the subject of decisions of judicial courts of the country. Again, it would be useless for them to attempt to review those cases. Already those cases had been heard and decided by judicial courts and it was not in the province of the Committee to revise the decisions of the judicial courts of the country. Therefore, so far as those cases were concerned, all that they could consider was the judicial record and not any extra facts connected with it.

Mr. Gandhi said he wished to say just a few words on the subject as he was responsible for putting in those statements. He bowed to the Chairman's ruling but he thought it was necessary to put those matters in statement as otherwise he would not have done justice to those men unless he allowed them to give their story in its historical sequence. He did not wish the Committee to go behind judicial decisions, but he thought the Committee should have an opportunity of having the full story of the ryots.

The Chairman said they could not enquire into allegations that judgements of courts were based on false facts.

Mr. Gandhi said he agreed, but he thought it was proper not to withhold anything from the Committee.

The Hindu, 20-7-1917

[1] Sir Frank George Sly

385. QUESTIONS DURING EVIDENCE BEFORE CHAMPARAN ENQUIRY COMMITTEE

July 23, 1917

Mr. Gandhi, who questioned witness [Mr. A. Ammon[1]], said the case about Sant Raut was not that his house was looted, but that when he returned in January he found his field granaries, grain, utensils, sal tree logs, etc. looted.

Witness replied that it was not true, so far as he knew. He did not know that Sant had filed a petition a few days before the alleged occurrence before the magistrate saying he was in fear of these things being looted. He heard of the loot for the first time from the newspapers. . . .

The Pioneer, 25-7-1917

386. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

MOTIHARI,

Shravan Sud 5, 1973 [*July 24, 1917*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Your birthday has come and gone. That means your body has one year less to live. I have built on you hopes much like Shaikhchalli's[2], so that in wishing continuing growth of purity in you, I serve my interest as well. You are all that I have and all I desire. It is my prayer to God and my blessing to you that you realize all your high aspirations, live long and grow healthier, that you become an ideal for your family, for the country and the world at large.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5721. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] Manager of the Belwa Factory

[2] The young man in the folk tale who, going out to sell some ghee, dreamt of setting up a poultry farm with the proceeds and by and by becoming the head of a family.

387. LETTER TO SECRETARY, PASSENGERS' GRIEVANCES COMMITTEE, RANGOON

MOTIHARI,
July 25, 1917

TO
THE SECRETARY
PASSENGERS' GRIEVANCES COMMITTEE
RANGOON

SIR,

I have the honour to submit the enclosed note on the matter before your Committee for its consideration.

I am,
Yours faithfully,

[ENCLOSURE]

NOTE

PART I

GRIEVANCES

The undersigned has considerable experience of travelling, having travelled in several parts of the world during the past 25 years.

The undersigned had occasion during 1901[1] and again in 1915[2] to travel to Burma. The undersigned used to travel, as a rule, first class up to nearly 4 years ago. Latterly he has travelled as a deck passenger. In the opinion of the undersigned:

1. Deck passengers making use of the British India Steam Navigation Service do not receive adequate attention from the Company's employees or the police.
2. The passengers are hustled about by both, are spoken to roughly, often sworn at and not unoften assaulted.
3. The employees do not put themselves out for receiving complaints.
4. The crew maltreat the passengers and almost invariably take

[1] Actually 1902; *vide* "Letter to G.K. Gokhale", 2-2-1902.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Agents of B. I. S. N. Company", 19-3-1915.

bribes.

5. Passengers are huddled together anyhow, there being absolutely no supervision as to how and where they seat themselves; the result is that the strongest or the richest secure the best accommodation.
6. Female passengers are similarly treated as in clause (5) and have no privacy of any kind reserved for them.
7. The deck is often in a filthy condition.
8. There is no control over the passengers' behaviour; the result is that dirty passengers spit and eat anywhere and anyhow, much to the discomfort of the cleanly ones.
9. Closets are filthy beyond description; closets allotted for females are often used by men; Mrs. Gandhi had to be specially accompanied each time she wanted to use the closets. There are, as a rule, no locks to the doors.
10. Bathing accommodation, such as it is, is often taken up by the crew. There is hardly any facility for washing clothes.
11. Accommodation referred to in (9) and (10) is too little for the number of passengers taken.
12. During his voyages, the undersigned felt that the passengers taken were too many for the space reserved for deck passengers.
13. There seemed to be no control over the disposition of the luggage of the passengers; the result was that much space was taken up by the passengers' luggage.
14. The undersigned found that through ignorance, fear, laziness and such other causes, passengers seemed to be reluctant to make complaints.

REMEDIES

PART II

In the opinion of the undersigned:

1. There should be special, trusted representatives of the Company approved by the Government who would go out of their way to understand deck passengers and their grievances.
2. For the wharves assistance of trustworthy volunteers should be sought from known organisations conducted in the interest of the passengers.
3. Deck, closet and bathing accommodation should be increased.

4. The representatives mentioned in clause (1) of Part II should inspect every ship and satisfy themselves as to [clause] (3) [of] Part II.
5. The representatives aforesaid should meet every steamer and inquire of the passengers as to their experiences.
6. Medical Officer on board should be empowered and be expected to look after the physical comforts of the passengers in every way. The undersigned was told by a medical officer that the looking after the accomodation of passengers, their cleanliness, the closet arrangement, their condition did not fall within his province.
7. An instruction book in several vernaculars should be issued for the passengers and a copy handed to each passenger on his receiving his ticket.

Should the Committee desire further information from the undersigned, he will gladly endeavour to give it.

From a photostat of the typewritten draft with corrections in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 6382

388. LETTER TO W. B. HEYCOCK

MOTIHARI,
July 25, 1917

DEAR MR. HEYCOCK,

I thank you for your confidential note[1] of the 23rd instant just received. I had no intention of misconstruing your silence. But I appreciate the absolute fairness of your warning. The step I wish to take after a settlement of the question is, I know, full of possibilities and I wish to give you the assurance that nothing will be done by me without the fullest details being known by the Government and without due regard to every material circumstance.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand in the National Archives of India; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran,* No. 150, pp. 280-1

[1] It was in reply to "Letter to W. B. Heycock", 29-6-1917 and said: ". . . my silence should not be construed as an indication that Government approve of your idea. I am not aware what attitude Government will adopt towards the proposed importation of volunteers. . . ."; *vide* Select Document No. 149.

389. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER AND JAMNADAS GANDHI

BETTIAH,

Shravana Sud 6 [*July 25, 1917*][1]

DEAR SHANKERLAL AND JAMNADAS,

I have already replied to the telegrams from both of you. Except for going there, I have done everything I could. And I would have gone if it had at all been possible. The Champaran Committee has been working without interruption. Its tenure is for three months. The time limit has been set by me. How can I ask it to suspend its functioning for a week? And how can I remain absent? If this task is accomplished you can take it that it will be a great step forward towards *swaraj*. I must not harm it in any way.

However, I am sure that if all of you remain firm on the path of truth, nothing will go wrong there either. I am prepared to fight by your side even in the face of the opposition from the whole country. I do not have the strength to handle the work single-handed. After settling the affairs there, both or either one of you should come over if possible. More I shall explain. I wish you would come.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I shall be at Bettiah from Friday to Monday. I get my mail at both the places. Get acquainted with the geography of the place. Motihari comes first. Bettiah comes later. The two places are thirty miles apart.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32701

[1] The year has been inferred from the contents of the letter.

390. QUESTIONS DURING EVIDENCE BEFORE CHAMPARAN COMMITTEE[1]

MOTIHARI,
July 26, 1917

The only witness examined today by the Champaran Agrarian Enquiry Committee was Mr. W. S. Irwin, Manager of Motihari Limited. Examined by the Chairman, witness said his concern consisted of six factories. It was an indigo concern before, but it was not now. He converted the *tinkathia* system in 1911 by taking their *tawan* of *sharahbeshi.* Under the *tinkathia* obligation every ryot had to work three *cottahs*[2] of indigo. The claim was against every ryot. Witness had taken *sharahbeshi* in *mukarrari* villages and *tawan* in *thikadari* villages.

Asked whether he claimed that an exclusive right was created because the Raj had allowed it, witness said that the Raj had taken a good deal more than they were allowed to collect under the terms of their leases. When he said Government recognised the obligation he meant that they recognised it tacitly, because they said that so long as indigo was grown rents could not be raised.

Witness then gave similar evidence to the previous witnesses about the imposition of fines and employment of labour.

To Mr. Gandhi, witness said he had not fined any person Rs. 500/- when told that Mr. Gandhi had a man who alleged witness had fined him a thousand rupees. Witness said:

"If Mr. Gandhi were to remain in this part of the country for the length of time I have (and it is 35 years), he would be convinced what a consummate liar the Champaran ryot is." There were several good qualities in the Champaran ryot, but certainly truth was not one of them. Before his letter to *The Pioneer*, there was not a single complaint made against him.

Mr. Gandhi said that from Mr. Heycock's (Collector's) summary, it appeared during the last four years, 27 petitions had been sent to the Collector from 20 different villages against the factory.

Witness said he had thirty thousand tenants, and if in four years 27 petitions were sent, it was natural they might not come to his notice.

Witness was next questioned about specific cases of oppression and in one it was alleged he had destroyed the crop of one Lakhan Rai.[3]

[1] This report is included in full as a sample of such reports.
[2] *Katha*, a measurement of land equal to 1/20th of a *bigha*
[3] *Vide* "Letter to W. S. Irwin", 24-5-1917.

Witness said that in November 1914 at a court auction sale he had purchased a certain plot of one Alam. A portion of the holding was in Lakhan Rai's name as a sub-ryot, but at the attestation Lakhan Rai told the SettlementOfficer he was no longer a sub-ryot. Witness here produced a certified copy to substantiate his statement and aid that at the time there was a crop of oats on the land and he let Lakhan Rai have half of it. In May last he ordered the whole of this land to be prepared for indigo and it was then discovered that in two *cottahs* in a corner Lakhan Rai had surreptitiously sown china. This he had absolutely no right to do, and witness' man ploughed up the whole land. The crop was of wry poor quality and the damage was very slight.

With regard to a second incident about which he was asked, witness admitted that to a certain extent he was in the wrong. The story relating to this incident, he said, was that about the 23rd May last his *Gumashta*[1] reported to him that three factory carts had gone to complainant's village to bring the factory's half share of *batai bhusa*. There at the instigation of Bataidar, his cartmen assaulted and the *bhusa* was thrown from the carts. When the men went to witness he admitted he gave them a few cuts on the leg with a light riding cane, but he was very angry at the time. They had assaulted his men badly. It was true he had threatened to fine them, but he had not actually done so. As for their being shut up in witness's hen house, it was absolutely fasle. The men were nowhere near it.

MR. GANDHI: Then half of the ryot's story is true?

It was true he had converted some of the ryots' lands into *zirat* lands, but he had given lands in exchange and there was no complaint about it. On the exchange lands, the ryots had actually sown and reaped their crops. Witness had to convert these lands, as it was necessary to have all *zirat* lands in one place to ensure effective supervision. It was the practice in all *zamindaris* to effect this exchange of lands.

This concluded witness's evidence and the Committee shortly after left for Bettiah to go to villages in the interior where they intend to have local inspection.

The Pioneer, 28-7-1917

[1] Agent

391. EXTRACTS FROM MINUTES OF CHAMPARAN COMMITTEE MEETING

GUEST HOUSE,
BETTIAH,
July 27, 1917

* * *

POUNDS—Mr. Gandhi considered that pounds should be directly managed by the Board and not auctioned. . . .

(1) *Cost of Cultivation:*—Mr. Reid said it cost planters Rs. 7 to Rs. 8 per acre for *zirat* cultivation. Raja Kirtyanand Sinha[1] confirmed this from his own experience. Mr. Gandhi said that *raiyats* estimated it not below Rs. 20 or Rs. 25 per acre, but he would examine the question further after seeing the factory book. . . .

. . . Mr. Gandhi urged that voluntary contracts should be limited to one year. . . .

SHARAHBESHI—As regards enhancement of rent in lieu of *tinkathia* (*sharahbeshi*)recognized at the resettlement, Mr. Gandhi thought that it ought to be revised and reduced to the ordinary enhancement allowed for rise in prices. The President and other members were not prepared to agree and it was pointed out that under the law the enhancement could not be touched in most cases.

TAWAN—All agreed that *tawan* was an unjustifiable practice and should be stopped for the future. The question was then discussed as to what action, if any, should be taken in cases where it had already been taken. Mr. Gandhi thought that where sums had already been paid, no action could be taken, but that factories should be required to cancel all outstanding debts on this account. He recognized that this could only be applied to factories which were still the property of the persons who had taken the bonds and had not been sold in the meantime. This could be enforced by the Court of Wards refusing to renew the leases of *thikadars*[2] who refused to agree to this arrangement. Other members felt that there were difficulties in the proposal which required further consideration.

* * *

[1] Of Banaili, a member of the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council, who was appointed on July 9, 1917 a member of the Champaran Agrarian Enquiry Committee on the resignation of Raja Harihar Prasad Narayan Singh

[2] Contractors

Mr. Gandhi's proposals were:

1. That the Court of Wards should not extend the *thika* system.

2. If in the case of existing *thikas* the estate decided to renew the leases, (they) should contain conditions enforcing the recommendations of the Committee, including

(1) no indigo to be grown except in a voluntary system,

(2) no *abwabs* to be taken,

(3) no *hurja*[1] or *tawan* to be taken.

These proposals were accepted.

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 152, pp. 287-9

392. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

MOTIHARI,

Shravan Shukla 1 [*July 28, 1917*][2]

DEAR SHRI JAMNALALJI[3],

I have your letter and draft for Rs l,500/-. I am grateful. Your donation will be earmarked for the spread of Hindi. If some other people send [money] for this specific purpose and some amount is saved, your donation will also he spent on other activities. I shall let you know if I have to go to Wardha again.

Yours

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 2833

[1] Demurrage

[2] Gandhiji was in Motihari on this day.

[3] (1889-1942), whom Gandhiji regarded as his fifth son; Treasurer of the Indian National Congress for a number of years: identified himself with Gandhiji's constructive activities

393. CONFIDENTIAL NOTE TO CHAMPARAN COMMITTEE MEMBERS ON SHARAHBESHI

BETTIAH,
July 29, 1917

In my humble opinion (1) the existence of the committee is due to the evils of the *tinkathia* system; (2) its chief function is to deal with it in an equitable manner; and (3) it is expected to make such recommendations as would settle the matter once for all, would restore harmony between zamindars or *thikadars* and the *raiyats* andwould prevent future disputes whether in the shape of law suits or otherwise.

If *tinkathia* is abolished for a consideration, the committee will have neglected its primary duty. The committee has been appointed in spite of the *tinkathia* system being the subject-matter of a law suit. The committee has overwhelming proof before it to know that *tinkathia* has bound the *raiyat* like the coil of a serpent from which whether it be legal or not the *raiyats* have ever striven to get free and from which the Government have hitherto made unsuccessful attempts to free them. Official evidence before us goes to show that it has taxed the officials' wit to the utmost in their endeavour to get out of it; they attribute everything to *tinkathia.* There is much truth in Mr. Whitty's remark that though he can produce no direct evidence to show that *tinkathia* is responsible for the *abwabs,* etc., he has felt it to be so. In the circumstances the committee, I venture to submit, is bound to condemn it in unequivocal terms and advise its abolition without any consideration whatsoever being paid by the *raiyats.* The legality of slavery, when once its sinfulness was recognized, did not require a price from the slave for his freedom.

It is submitted therefore that the least the committee can do is:

(1) to abolish *tinkathia* unconditionally;

(2) to abolish *sharahbeshi* without interference with the past collections at the *sharahbeshi* rates;

(3) to cancel *sharahbeshi* whether registered as a matter of contract or compromise subject however to enhancement of the pre-*sharahbeshi* rent as in *kham*[1] or *thika* villages.

[1] An estate under direct management

The result of such a settlement will mean withdrawal of the High Court case and lasting peace so far as *tinkathia* and *sharahbeshi* are concerned.

The result of leaving the matter to be decided as a matter of law pure and simple will be a fruitful source of interminable disputes in which the longest purse alone must win. It will promote bitterness between parties and reopening of many cases in the event of the *raiyats* winning, decided under the Sweeney[1] Settlement and will mean a loss to the landlord of the enhancement offered under the foregoing scheme. Neither the Government nor the committee can contemplate with equanimity such a state of things. Finally, if *tawan* is bad, *sharahbeshi* is worse from the *raiyats'* standpoint. The former has pinched the present party, the latter leaves a legacy to generations yet unborn. We know too that *sharahbeshi* was proposed and taken when indigo was no longer a profitable proposition for the planter and that the Rajpur concern has shown that *khuski* indigo has been taken up practically without any extra cost to the planter. So with *sharahbeshi* he has a fair prospect of having obtained the utmost enhancement in his rents and a continuance of profits from indigo under another form.

M. K. GANDHI

From the typewritten original signed by Gandhiji in the National Archives of India; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*. No. 153, pp. 290-1

394. LETTER TO FULCHAND SHAH

MOTIHARI,
Shravan Sud 13 [*August 1, 1917*][2]

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

Preserve this letter after reading it. The money has been sent to Revashankarbhai. Debit it to his account. All the letters received yesterday have been misplaced by Devdas. One of them gave the figure for cloth. Send it again when you write next. The bale has not been received yet.

You will manage to publish Gokhale's speeches only if you start

[1] J. A. Sweeney, Settlement Officer, North Bihar
[2] Gandhiji was in Motihari on this day.

the work right from today, and you must do so.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

Prabhudas has left today. He should reach there by Saturday, 8.30 p.m.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 6386a

395. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

NADIAD,

August 3, 1917

MY DEAR ESTHER,

You have raised big questions. I think the command of Jesus is unequivocal. All killing is bad for one who is filled with love. He will not need to kill. He will not kill. He who is filled with pity for the snake and does not fear him will not kill him and the snake will not hurt him. This state of innocence is the one we must reach. But only a few can reach it. It seems to me to be impossible for nations to reach it. Equal progress in all is an inconceivable situation. Nations will therefore always fight. One of them will be less wrong than the other. A nation to be in the right can only fight with soul-force. Such a nation has still to be born. I had hoped that India was that nation. I fear I was wrong. The utmost I expect of India is that she may become a great restraining force. But she must acquire the ability to fight and suffer before she can speak to the world with any degree of effect.The pertinent question for you and me is what is our duty as individuals. I have come to this workable decision for myself, 'I will not kill anyone for any cause whatsoever but be killed by him if resistance or his will render my being killed necessary.' I would give similar advice to everybody. But where I know that there is want of will altogether, I would advise him to exert his will and fight. There is no love where there is no will. In India there is not only no love but hatred due to emasculation. There is the strongest desire to fight and kill side by side with utter helplessness. This desire must be satisfied by restoring the capacity for fighting. Then comes the choice.

Yes, the very act of forgiving and loving shows superiority in the doer. But that way of putting the proposition begs the question, who can love? A mouse as mouse cannot love a cat. A mouse cannot

be commonly said to refrain from hurting a cat. You do not love him whom you fear. Immediately you cease to fear, you are ready for your choice—to strike or to refrain. To refrain is proof of awakening of the soul in man; to strike is proof of body-force. The ability to strike must be present when the power of the soul is demonstrated. This does not mean that we must be bodily superior to the adversary.

This is not a satisfactory letter but I think you will follow my argument. But in matters such, as these, prayer is the thing.

With love,

My Dear Child, pp. 18-9

396. LETTER TO POPATLAL

Shravan Vad 5 [*August 7, 1917*][1]

BHAISHRI POPATLAL,

I was extremely happy to read of your going to the Ashram. Take whatever subject suits you after consulting everyone there. Be careful that you do not spoil your eyes.

I hope to be back there next week.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 6384

397. EXTRACTS FROM MINUTES OF CHAMPARAN COMMITTEE MEETING

BETTIAH,
August 8, 1917

* * *

Mr. Gandhi suggested that the report should specify the more general kinds of *abwab*, so that there could be no doubt as to their condemnation. This was agreed to.

* * *

FINES—The outstanding point to be settled about fines was the recommendation in respect of cases to which the landlord was a party. The President

[1] Found with Gandhiji's correspondence of 1917, the letter is placed in that year. Again, Gandhiji left Bettiah for Ahmedabad on August 16.

said that, in his opinion, to adopt Mr. Gandhi's suggestion that in all such cases the matter should go to a court would be injurious to the *raiyats* and would moreover require legislation. He thought Mr. Gandhi's objection might be met if it were clearly laid down and understood—

(1) that the payment was entirely voluntary,

(2) that if the *raiyat* thought he was not liable, or that the payment was excessive, it was open for him to refuse to pay.

. . . Mr. Gandhi said that as the fines were few, so also would be the number of cases in which the landlords would have to report to the court. He thought the power of the landlord over the *raiyats* was so great that it would be difficult to ensure that payments were voluntary. After some discussion it was agreed, on the suggestion of Mr. Reid, that the assessing of damages should be left to arbitration....

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 156, pp. 293-4

398. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

MOTIHARI,

Shravan Vad 7 [*August 9, 1917*]

CHI. [MATHURADAS],

I got your letter. It has been misplaced; moreover, being very busy with my work, I forgot all about it. I can hardly keep an account of births and deaths. In these matters, I have ceased to be of any use to the family. These tides and ebbs scarcely affect me either. This is the third death in the family I have heard of in recent days. I think for a moment and then the thing goes out of my mind. This condition has come to me with no effort on my part but I feel it is worth while cultivating it. Death is but an inevitable transformation of the present state. Why should it occasion fear? Birth is also a sign of the same process of change. Why do we hail it with joy? The aspiration for deliverance from both the contingencies, for us as well as for the whole world, is described as supreme *purushartha*[1], Such being the case, what consolation shall I give to Anand? She is given to religious

[1] Deliverance from both birth and death is the last of the four ends of life, viz., *dharma, artha* (material prosperity), *kama* (pleasure), *moksha* (liberation).

devotions. This is a very good occasion for her to understand the true meaning of religion.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahatma Gandhini Vicharsrishti

399. EXTRACTS FROM MINUTES OF CHAMPARAN COMMITTEE MEETING

August 10, 1917

* * *

(1) *Cost of Cultivation*[1]*:*—Mr. Gandhi said that he had not yet got certain figures from Mr. Jameson[2] but subject to anything new that these might disclose, it was recorded as the conclusion of the Committee that the maximum cost was Rs. 15 per *bigha* (8_ *hath laggi*[3]) or Rs. 10 an acre.

* * *

(2) Mr. Gandhi said the cost of seed of country crops was small but the President remarked that for *rabi*[4] crops, it was a considerable item. . . .

Khuski Indigo—Mr. Gandhi suggested that a minimum rate should be fixed for *khuski* indigo. Mr. Reid thought that there might be a danger of this suggestion extending to other crops, e.g., sugarcane. After discussion it was agreed that during the transition stage in view of the past history of indigo, it was desirable that the Association, with the approval of the Commissioner, should fix a minimum rate for *khuski* indigo, the transition stage being considered to last until Government was satisfied that the *raiyats* knew that they need not grow indigo unless they liked.

* * *

Compensation for abolition of tinkathia—The next point for discussion was whether on abolition of the system, compensation was to be allowed in case where the growing of indigo was recorded as an incident of the tenancy. The President, in putting his view before the Committee, said he was anxious to remove anything unjust to the *raiyats*. . . . He thought that perhaps Mr. Gandhi from his experience of a

[1] The subject under discussion was *tinkathia* indigo.
[2] J. V. Jameson, Manager, Jallaha Factory
[3] A unit of land measurement used in Champaran
[4] Winter crops

raiyatwari tract had not fully appreciated the landlord's position. The proposal he put before the meeting was that a special court should be created to deal with these cases. This court would decide, subject to appeal to a special judge,

(a) if the incident of tenancy existed, and if so

(b) a fair rate for commutation of the incident.

The commutation should be made by an addition to rent and not by a lump sum. In fixing a fair rent as commutation, the court should

(a) consider the loss incurred by the *raiyat* under *tinkathia*

(b) the actual enhanced rents paid in similar circumstances for commutation, and

(c) in no circumstances fix a total rent which was not fair and equitable

The enhancement might be made progressive if it exceeded 25 per cent.

Mr. Gandhi said he did not wish to enter into legal points but merely to regard the question from the point of view of equity. The result of the proposal would be that *raiyats* in villages under direct management would be placed in a better position than *raiyats* in indigo villages, although the latter had borne this heavy burden in the past which was inequitable. He thought that the evil of the system had not been properly recognised by the Committee. Government had never agreed that indigo-growing was an obligation, and all the papers showed that the system and its accompaniments formed an intolerable burden on the *raiyats*. The proposal did not free the *raiyats*; on the other hand, it was a free gift to the planters, it was the planters who wished to give up indigo because, whatever might be the case now, indigo was not paying when the conversions were made, and it was not fair to the *raiyats* to make them pay for giving up indigo. He had considered the matter from the landlords' point of view, as was shown by his agreement in the matter of *tawan*. In the present question, he could not separate the *raiyats* of *mukarrari* villages from those of *thika* villages. They were in the same position and should be regarded in the same way. He could not therefore agree to anything beyond an enhancement of rent under the ordinary provision of the law, and opposed any special enhancement in lieu of *tinkathia.* He foresaw complications in the action proposed. A settlement by a special court would take some months, which was undesirable in the present state of unrest. An immediate and automatic remedy was required, and this would be the merit of his suggestion of an enhancement at a fixed rate on the ground of the rise in prices, that is, of 3 annas in the rupee all round. . . .

The President pointed out that in comparing the position of the non-indigo *raiyats* with the indigo *raiyats,* it had to be considered that in villages where *abwab* were taken, they were higher than *sharahbeshi,* and, that where *abwab* were not taken (e.g., Madhuban Estate), the rent was enhanced to a

higher pitch than elsewhere. Admittedly in Bettiah *kham* villages these considerations did not apply but it was impossible to secure absolute equality, and in any case the proposal would improve the position of the *raiyat* who had been growing indigo. As to the criticism that the proposal was a free gift to planters, he said that it was only proposed to allow an enhancement where the legal property of the planter existed and even then the full value of this property was not being given. He did not think the difficulties of the special court would be great. The settlement records would give a good basis and the area to be dealt with was not large.

. . . Mr. Rainy[1] said the proposal was similar to that adopted in Chhota Nagpur where legislation compelled the computation of predial conditions. He denied that Government had never recognised the fact that the obligation might be an incident of tenancy, for section 29 proviso (iii) was clear evidence that they had and so was the Board's letter No. 5032-R(A) dated the 16th October, 1912, regarding Mr. Irwin's *sharahbeshi.* Mr. Gandhi said that if the legal right was not consistent with equity or had been grossly abused as in this case, no compensation should be given. . . .

Mr. Reid said that most of the *raiyats* took their holdings under an agreement to grow indigo. Mr. Gandhi said the complaint was not against indigo itself but against the manner and method of growing it. . . . the complaint was not against the system but against the moral and intellectual damage caused by it to the *raiyats* by keeping them backward. The President pointed out that his proposal gave much to the *raiyats,* viz., freedom

(1) from growing indigo if they did not wish,

(2) from having their best lands selected for indigo,

(3) from supervision by factory servants,

(4) from paying compensation for this freedom except in cases where the obligation was the legal property of the landlord and even then full compensation would not be given.

Mr. Gandhi said that this included nothing that was not offered by the planters themselves but Mr. Rainy pointed out that whereas the planters offered their own terms, the proposal contemplated that they should be compelled to accept terms fixed by a court.

The President said that Mr. Gandhi's position practically amounted to the proposition that the *raiyats* should get off paying an equitable rent on the ground of past oppression, which position did not appear to him to be sound.

At this stage, the meeting adjourned.

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 158, pp. 296-300

[1] Sir G. Rainy, member, Champaran Agrarian Enquiry Committee

400. EXTRACTS FROM MINUTES OF CHAMPARAN COMMITTEE MEETING

August 11, 1917

Resuming the discussion of the previous day, Mr. Gandhi said that the average amount of *sharahbeshi* taken was about 50 per cent of the rent. The note circulated by Raja Kirtyanand Sinha suggested a compromise of an enhancement of four annas in the rupee to cover *sharahbeshi* and ordinary enhancement on the score of rise in prices. He was anxious to meet the views of his fellow-members so far as that was possible, and he was prepared to agree to a small enhancement over and above that admissible for a rise in prices but would not support a penal enhancement. The greatest difficulty would be as regards the *sharahbeshi* already taken. He thought that anything very much larger than the enhancement allowed for the rise in prices would be near the danger point. . . . The President said that he understood the proposal to be that, in cases where the obligation to grow indigo existed as an incident of tenancy or had been commuted by *sharahbeshi,* a slight enhancement though not a penal one in excess of the enhancement generally admissible for a rise in prices should be allowed. He pointed out that it was impossible to fix a definite figure for the total enhancement, because it was still uncertain what enhancement would eventually be allowed by the courts on account of the rise in prices. The proposal therefore could only refer to the amount of enhancement above this figure. He asked Mr. Gandhi to what extra enhancement he was prepared to agree. Mr. Gandhi said he thought not more than one anna in the rupee.

. . The President said that the facts were that by a settlement between the planters and *raiyats,* there had been a *sharahbeshi* enhancement of 50 per cent, which Mr. Gandhi thought excessive because the legal property in exchange for which this enhancement was taken was inequitable and therefore the enhancement should be reduced. Mr. Gandhi added that there was also the fact that the tenants were not paying rents and in one case their resistance had been successful. By adopting his suggestion, the Committee would put a stop at once to the present trouble and it was not open to the Committee to shift responsibility by suggesting another tribunal. Mr. Adami held the view that one anna was not sufficient and, considering the difficulties which had been pointed out by Mr. Rainy, he would be inclined to adopt the suggestion of a general settlement of rents in *mukarrari* villages by a special tribunal in all cases where the obligation still existed or where it had been converted. Raja Kirtyanand Sinha supported the proposal in his note for an enhancement of four annas in the rupee. Mr. Gandhi remarked that if Mr. Adami's proposal was accepted, the Committee would only have half done its work, but his main objection to it was

that it would add to a ferment which already existed. The Committee had the right to confer with the planters and he thought it would be far better if they could come to some agreement with the planters without the necessity of appointing any tribunal which would delay a final agreement. Mr. Reid pointed out that the three concerns mainly affected were Motihari, Pipra and Turkaulia and he was prepared to put the proposal before these three concerns. The President remarked that it should first be decided whether the proposal was to be put before the planters as a final one which they could adopt or not or merely as a basis for discussion. He inclined to the latter. There was a tremendous advantage in getting the question settled without reference to any court and, as he himself doubted whether one anna was adequate, he thought the suggestion should be used as a basis for discussion. Mr. Gandhi said that he would not go so far as to say that he could not agree to anything above one anna, but at the same time he could not say that he would go beyond this point. The one anna was pure concession on his part, because he did not think the *raiyats* should be called upon to pay any enhancement beyond that allowed by the rise in prices. Mr. Reid doubted if the planters would agree to anything under eight annas enhancement and pointed out that even in Pipra which had taken the biggest enhancement, the rents were only Rs. 2 an acre.

Mr. Reid then suggested that it would be a fairer proposal if the amount of *sharahbeshi* was reduced by a fixed percentage, say, by 25 per cent. Mr. Gandhi said he would be very willing to consider that as a basis for a settlement and would be prepared to go a long way to get good will established. It was generally agreed that this was a fairer basis for discussion than the original proposal, and that Messrs Irwin[1], Hill[2], and Norman[3] should be asked to come on the following day in order that the proposal might be put to them.

Tawan—The proposal left over for decision from the first meeting was that no action should be taken in cases where *tawan* had been already paid but that outstanding bonds on account of *tawan* should be cancelled. The President said one difficulty about this proposal was that some bonds were mixed and included amounts taken on accounts other than *tawan,* and some sort of enquiry would therefore be necessary before the question of these bonds could be finally disposed of. The other difficulty was that the proposal worked unequally both on *raiyats* and planters. Mr. Gandhi pointed out that the first difficulty could be got over by examining the factory books, and he would leave it to the Bettiah Raj to satisfy itself that outstanding amounts on account of *tawan* had been foregone. Mr. Reid said that he thought the only factory where such mixed bonds were taken was

[1] W. S. Irwin of Motihari Factory
[2] J. L. Hill, Manager, Turkaulia Concern
[3] J. B. Norman, Manager, Pipra Indigo Concern

Bairia where in some cases the debts of *raiyats* had been taken over and added to the *tawan*. He would be inclined to apply the same suggestion to *tawan* that he made in the case of *sharahbeshi,* namely, to deduct a percentage from outstandings and to refund a percentage on the *tawan* already paid. This would only apply to *thika* villages. . . .

The next point considered was whether the Raj could claim an enhancement of rent in cases where *tawan* had been taken. Mr. Rainy said he was inclined to agree to the proposal that no enhancement should be applied for in such cases, but the President felt that the interests of the Bettiah Raj also needed consideration. He would propose that the Raj should not be debarred from claiming an enhancement of rent in cases where *tawan* had been taken but that for a period of years, say five, the enhanced rent should not be realized. Mr. Gandhi suggested that the enhancement of rent should be foregone until the following settlement. Mr. Rainy remarked that the 15-year period could not be justified if the amount of *tawan* taken did not cover 15 times the enhancement. His idea was that the Raj should forego enhancement so far as it was covered by the *tawan.* Mr. Reid pointed out that the Raj was to blame to some extent for the position. After discussion, it was decided to recommend that in cases where *tawan* had been taken, the Raj was not to be debarred from claiming enhancement but it would forego realisation of the enhancement for a period of seven years. . . .

* * *

Mr. Gandhi made the following proposals:

(1) That the Committee should make a general recommendation that the orders passed by Government on the Committee's report should be communicated in the vernacular to the *raiyats.* This was accepted.

(2) That the kerosene oil monopoly should be stopped. This was agreed to.

(3) He proposed that *raiyats* should be informed that *dasturi was* illegal. It was agreed to say in the report that it had been brought to notice that *amla* took commissions on payments which were entirely illegal and that every effort should be made to stop them and to recommend that a proclamation should be issued to the *raiyats,* informing them that this *dasturi* was not legally payable.

(4) He suggested that some officer should be deputed to enquire periodically if the orders of Government on the Committee's recommendations were being carried out. It was agreed that a paragraph should be included to emphasise that an important part of the duties of the district staff would be to see that Government orders on the recommendation were carried out which would apply especially to the staff of the Bettiah Raj until Government was satisfied that the full effect of these orders had been secured. . .

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401. EXTRACTS FROM MINUTES OF CHAMPARAN COMMITTEE MEETING

August 12, 1917

At the resumption of the discussion, Messrs Irwin (Motihari), Norman (Pipra) and Hill (Turkaulia) were present by invitation. The President explained that this discussion must be entirely confidential. The Committee had come to the unanimous conclusion that the *tinkathia* system should go and should be replaced by the *khuski* system under short-term agreement. It had, therefore, been necessary to consider the question of the commutation of the indigo obligation both in cases where it still existed and in cases where it had already been commuted . . . . Mr. Gandhi had said that he was prepared to consider the possibility of a settlement on certain lines. He, therefore, asked Mr. Gandhi to put his proposal before the planters present. Mr. Gandhi said that his object was to promote harmony; he had no doubt that *sharahbeshi* had caused considerable difficulty to the *raiyats,* seeing the large numbers that had protested against it. At the time of conversion of the obligation, indigo was not profitable and it was mutually beneficial to both parties to cancel the obligation. Any burden imposed; therefore, on the *raiyats* beyond the ordinary legal enhancements was one against which they were justified in protesting. As to the amount of the ordinary enhancement about which on the previous day there appeared to be some doubt, he referred to the judgment of the special judge in special appeal No. 14 of 1916, and said that it appeared from that that the enhancement eventually decided on would be three annas and not four annas eight pies. He had suggested as a concession an extra anna on account of *sharahbeshi.* The planter would no doubt consider that it called for considerable self-denia1 on their part to give up anything of the *sharahbeshi* which they had already obtained, but he appealed to them to think of the *raiyats'* position; he would be prepared to accept a proposal on the basis of an all-round reduction in the *sharahbeshi* already taken which was perhaps a better basis for discussion. He pointed out how desirable it was that some figure should be agreed upon between the parties because, in the event of this not being done either of the ways suggested, the only course remaining was the settlement of rents by a special tribunal which would give rise to endless quarrels, and would postpone settlement of the disputes over a considerable period. If, however, the planters would prefer to have a special tribunal, he would be prepared to consider the proposal. The President remarked that so far as the discussion had gone, the Committee favoured a settlement on the lines of proportionate reduction of *sharahbeshi* taken rather than the proposal to an all-round enhancement of a certain amount on the original rents, because the former was more equitable table in view of the varying conditions of different concerns. . . . Mr. Reid said he had a long talk that morning with the three planters present. At first they had been averse from agreeing to any decrease to the

enhancement which had been mutually agreed upon and approved by the Settlement Court. Their view was that they had valuable property which the Committee was asking them to give up in part. He had put the view to them that it was extremely desirable to avoid future litigation and t rouble even if it involved some sacrifice on their part. Finally, they had agreed reluctantly to remit a certain proportion. Mr. Hill, however, had pointed out that his enhancements were low and that he thought that the reduction in his case should be less than in that of others. Mr. Gandhi said he was prepared to accept the principle of a different rate of reduction for different concerns but the difficulty was that the Committee had not got the figures before them and he doubted if the settlement records would give them sufficient data for arriving at a proper variation in the reduction without further enquiry. The President said that the advantage of getting a settlement by agreement was immense not only to the planters but also to the *raiyats* . . . . If the Committee could decide on a particular percentage of reduction, they would get a long way towards settlement and he, therefore, thought that an endeavour should be made to get down to a particular figure. The alternative to a settlement by agreement was one which would lead to increased bitterness of feeling and even then the decisions of the special court might not be accepted with good-will. He would, therefore, ask the planters to state what was the outside figure of the reduction of the *sharahbeshi* enhancement to which they are prepared to agree. Messrs Irwin and Norman said they were prepared to forego 25 per cent and Mr. Hill said he was repared to forego 20 per cent as a maximum. Mr. Gandhi said that he was not in a position at present to say off hand what percentage of reduction he would consider to be fair and he was not sure whether the Committee were in a position to arrive at a figure at the present moment. . . . Mr. Gandhi wanted to know if the planters would agree to leave the percentage to be fixed by the Committee. The planters explained their position to be that if the Committee recommended any deduction up to 25 per cent, they would accept it; if the Committee recommended a higher figure than 25 per cent, they would oppose it; and on the understanding that this would be binding on all with no possibility of litigation outside such agreement. The President remarked that he thought that any agreement would require binding by legislation and that it now remained for the Committee to try and arrive at some agreement on the percentage. He pointed out that in all these *sharahbeshi* cases, the enhanced rents had been passed by the Settlement Courts as fair and equitable, so that the Committee could be quite certain that any rents fixed after such a reduction of *sharahbeshi* as was proposed would be *a fortiori* fair to the *raiyats.* In disputed cases, the rent had only been passed as fair and equitable by the Settlement Courts where they held that the *tinkathia* obligation was proved and the original rent was low. He thought, therefore, that there was no fear that the new rents after reduction would not be fair and equitable. Mr. Gandhi observed that the Settlement Officer was, in his opinion, wrong in the decisions he gave and had misinterpreted the law. He doubted

whether the Settlement Court's decisions would stand legal scrutiny. He also thought that the settlement decisions were wrong in equity and again referred to the judgment of the Special Judge in Special Appeal No. 14 of 1916 in which the contention of the Settlement Officer that Re. 0-4-8 per rupee was an unfair enhancement had been upheld by the Special Judge. If the Settlement Courts had considered Re. 0-4-8 to be an unfair enhancement and had allowed only 3 annas, how could they in other cases hold enhancements rising as high as l00 per cent to be fair and equitable? . . . Mr. Rainy thought that Mr. Gandhi was confusing a legal enhancement with a fair and equitable rent. The applications of the Bettiah Raj for the settlement of their rent depended on the presumption that the existing rents were fair and equitable. In the *sharahbeshi* cases, that presumption did not arise because the rents were specially low. It was necessary to distinguish carefully the legal and equitable points of view.

Mr. Gandhi said that in determining what was a fair and equitable rent, the outturn of the soil alone should not be taken into consideration. It did not follow because the rent was only a small proportion of the produce, that it was too low. His difficulty was that his view-point and that of the planters were different and there were no cases so difficult to settle by agreement as those in which the view-point differed. He could not agree to a penal enhancement and the proposal of a 25 per cent reduction at present appeared to him to involve a penal enhancement. He wanted an opportunity to examine the figures before deciding. Mr. Irwin instanced the case of Bisambharpur, a village belonging to petty *maliks*[1] and not in lease to him although entirely surrounded by Bettiah Raj villages which he held in lease; the rates of rent in Biasambharpur varied from Rs. 9 to Rs. 14 a *bigha,* whereas the rate of rent in the surrounding villages in lease to him only averaged Rs. 4 to Rs. 5 a *bigha,* even including the *sharahbeshi.* He did not see how it was possible to contend that from the *raiyats'* standpoint, the proposal was a favourable one, as it would give them a considerable advantage. Mr. Gandhi, however, said that the legal position from the *raiyats'* stand-point was not hopeless.

* * *

Mr. Gandhi said that he worked out the figures as follows:

The *sharahbeshi* enhancement varied from 19 or 20 annas up to 30 or 32 annas per *bigha*. A 25 per cent reduction would reduce these enhancements to amounts varying from 14 annas 9 pies or 15 annas to 22 annas 6 pies or 24 annas. According to his calculation, if the rent rate was Rs. 2-6-0 per *bigha,* the enhancement under his proposal would be 10 annas per *bigha* only and the difference between this and the results of the other proposal was very considerable. The President said that in

[1] Owners or proprietors

Motihari, the *sharahbeshi* was 60 per cent of the former rent. It was now proposed to reduce it to 47 per cent, whereas Mr. Gandhi's proposal would give only 25 per cent; the difference was, therefore, one of 20 per cent. Mr. Rainy pointed out that it was misleading in some cases to judge by percentage because in cases where the percentage was high, e.g., Pipra, the absolute amount of the rent was low. The President pointed out that both in Turkaulia and Motihari the *raiyats* had paid enhanced rents for 6 years with no objections, save in a very few cases, and he thought that a reduction of 25 per cent was a very considerable concession to the *raiyats.* Mr. Gandhi said that he looked at it from the point of view of what the *raiyats* had the right to demand 6 years ago, because it was only through their ignorance of their legal position that they had not raised any objections before. The President said that he saw no other way of avoiding a tribunal except settlement by consent, and it was very uncertain whether the *raiyats* would get such good terms from the tribunal as those now offered. Even if Mr. Gandhi was not satisfied that the present rent including *sharahbeshi* reduced as proposal was fair and equitable, could he not be satisfied that rent was capable of being easily paid? Mr. Gandhi said that he thought the Champaran *raiyat* was poor and he was not prepared to admit that the rent could be paid easily. . . . Mr. Gandhi said that the class of *raiyats* had to be considered as well as the possibilities of the soil and the Champaran *raiyat* was by nature a bad cultivator. In his opinion, if rents were apparently low, there was generally a very good reason for it. He considered that the *raiyats* had fully paid for this concession of abstention from rent enhancement and his view of the legal position was that the *raiyats* could free themselves from the obligation without paying any compensation. In saying this, he did not mean to imply that he wished indigo to disappear; he would advise the *raiyats* to grow indigo, provided they got reasonable rates for it. . . . Mr. Rainy said on the basis of Mr. Sweeney's figures of produce the Pipra rents were very low, the Motihari rents moderate and even the Turkaulia rents were not high; if 25 per cent of the *sharah*beshi, was taken off, it would give an ample margin of safety. Mr. Gandhi said he could not bring himself to accept the proposal of a 25 per cent reduction. Mr. Reid inquired whether the alternative to a settlement by agreement was the suggestion of a tribunal. Mr. Gandhi said that if the Committee could not come to an agreement, he would be prepared to accept the suggestion of a tribunal, but he asked whether the Committee could not recommend a higher reduction. The President said that he thought the Committee had got the highest possible figures out of the planters and he was not prepared to agree to higher figure. He could not imagine that any *raiyats* would ever regret having accepted this proposal; the only *raiyats* who might be discontented were the few *raiyats* who still grew indigo. Mr. Gandhi said that the *raiyats* thought that they could get rid of *sharahbeshi* by legal methods even in cases where it had been settled under section 10 (C). He did not see, therefore, that they would regret not accepting the present proposal.

Mr. Gandhi enquired what was to be done in the case of the Jalaha concern in the event of the Committee reaching a conclusion on the general question. In that concern, *sharahbeshi* had been taken by making tenants surrender their holdings which were then resettled with their relatives on an enhanced rent. The Civil Court had held in some cases that the old tenants should be restored at the former rent. The President said that this was the first occasion that the matter had been brought to his notice and he thought that they ought to ascertain the facts and hear what Mr. Jameson had to say before coming to any conclusion about it. . . .

Returning to the general question, Mr. Adami said that the equity of the position would be to wash out the past 50 years and put the parties back in the position they would have been if indigo had not been grown. Mr. Gandhi said that this could not be done as the *raiyat* had given up far more than he had gained during that period. Mr. Rainy pointed out the high rents in Madhuban Babu's estate. Mr. Gandhi admitted that Indian zamindars had enhanced their *raiyats'* rents. . . . The President then said that as Mr. Gandhi could not agree to the 25 per cent reduction, there were two courses open—the Committee could recommend the view of the majority that a 25 per cent reduction was fair; Mr. Gandhi would in a note of dissent give his reasons for thinking that a higher figure was required and it could be left to Government to decide between these two views and legislate accordingly. That course, however, could only be adopted if he was satisfied that the decision of Government whatever it might be would be accepted. If it was not accepted, the position of strife and unrest would still remain and in that event the Committee would have to recommend the alternative procedure of settlement of rents by a special tribunal. He hoped that in the interest of peace, it would be possible to adopt the first alternative, it being understood that whatever Government decided would be loyally accepted. Mr. Gandhi said that he could promise to accept the decision of Government and would refrain from advising the *raiyats* to resist it. Mr. Reid enquired what should be done as regards pending legislation. Mr. Gandhi said that he thought it desirable to forward their recommendation to Government at once, so that a decision might be reached and pending legislation stopped as soon as possible. Mr. Adami pointed out that the legislation would take time and the President added that Government would probably decide first to publish the Committee's report and give time to the public and the parties to consider the proposals. It would facilitate the preparation of the report and possibly I ncrease the chance of Government being able to arrive at a decision if Mr. Gandhi could put before the Committee the reduction to which he was prepared to go. Mr. Gandhi said that he would go through the figures again and give his minimum figure.

* * *

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 160, pp. 305-12

402. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

BETTIAH,
August 12, 1917

MY DEAR ESTHER,

I have a moment to spare today. The lines you send are good and true. Belief and hope are great. They are indispensable for success. But love is greater. I find here that too great a strain is put upon it. Only this morning a powerfully built man came to me and insisted on my giving him help which was not in my power to give him. He would not leave me. I begged of him. He began weeping and beating his breast. His case is nothing. He came out of hope and love. How would I, wanting to love him, treat him? Assuming that his weeping was sincere, must I put up with his presence and go on talking to him? Such problems arise every day. Love has to be patient. How to apply the injunction in cases such as I have quoted? The only safe guide is the monitor within if one is pure-minded and sure of one's sincerity. We often deceive ourselves.

You may write for the time being to Ahmedabad which I expect to reach within a week from now. The Committee will have finished its deliberations within 3 days from today.

What treatment did you receive when you had the snake bite? How did you manage to get bitten? Where did it bite you? Was the snake caught and killed? I am always interested in the question of snake-bites and snakes.

With love from us all,

Yours,
BAPU

My Dear Child, p. 20

403. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

BETTIAH,
Shravana Vad 10 [*August 12, 1917*][1]

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

1 have your letter. The work of the Committee is likely to be completed in two or three days.[2] After that I shall pay a short visit to Ahmedabad. Perhaps we can meet then.

It is true that you have not been able to come here because of pressure of work. You are carrying on a great campaign. Bear in mind that even if thousands of people have to go to jail there may not be any tangible gain. I am giving this warning so that in future you do not lose patience and faith.

Bhai Chandulal must have received my letter of yesterday.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32711

404. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

BETTIAH,
August 12, 1917

MY DEAR HENRY,

Here are two letters, I cannot think of anyone else. If you do please tell me. You will use the letters as you please.

I am in the thick of committee[3] work. I cannot therefore send you a love letter. That shall be reserved for Millie and she will need it in your absence. Of course she knows that she has more slaves than one to be at her service.

Yes, I will send you duplicates. I may be able to leave for Ahmedabad during the next 4 or 5 days.

With love,

Yours,

BHAI

[1] The year has been inferred from the contents of the letter.
[2] For the minutes of the Champaran Enquiry Committee meeting.
[3] The Champaran Agrarian Enquiry Committee

[PS.]

You will let me know Millie's wants in your absence.

BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

405. LETTER TO CHAIRMAN, CHAMPARAN COMMITTEE

BETTIAH,
August 13, 1917

DEAR MR. SLY,

I have thought, slept, prayed and read 1 Cor. XIII which latter I always do before coming to the committee meetings. I have discussed the question with my friends too. I was surprised to find in Babu Brajkishore the strongest supporter of Mr. Rainy's energetic defence of the fairness of the enhancement so far as it is measured by the outturn. All the others resisted him. Babu Brajkishore to my astonishment held his ground and said that on the score of lowness of rent he was entirely at one with Mr. Sweeney's finding. His argument however is totally unconvincing. But all my friends held that I would sell the *raiyats*' cause, if I agreed to the planters' proposition. They unanimously appreciated the fact that the planters who are so strong in every way had at all accepted the idea of a reduction of *sharahbeshi*. The majority of them would have me to buy peace from the committee even though it may mean a big sacrifice. I thought that I ought to mention these pleasing incidents. They augur well for the future. My friends who represent, as I hold, the culture of Bihar are not fanatics as planter-friends have so often urged. There is no greater fanatic among us than myself.

Now for my offer which is absolutely final. My last state was to accept the Raja Saheb's proposition[1]. That reduced to percentage represents a reduction of 55 per cent as against the planters' 25 per cent. And if I am to write a dissenting minute, I should write in defence of that offer with the clearest conscience. For the sake of securing unanimity among ourselves, I am prepared to accept a reduction of 40 per cent only, i.e., 15 per cent more than the planters'

[1] Raja Kirtyanand Sinha's proposal circulated to members, Select Document No. 161, not given here

offer. For me this borders, in my language, upon the penal. Under the planters' offer, they get Re. 0-6-7 per rupee, under mine Re. 0-5-3 per rupee. My final offer therefore covers all possibilities, the possibility even of Mr. Whitty's[1] appeal succeeding.

My own original offer was a rise of Re. 0-3-0 in the rupee. That is equivalent to a reduction of 66 per cent. My present offer represents a reduction of 40 per cent. I have therefore put up 26 per cent. If then pressure is now to be applied, it must be not to me but to the planters.

Mr. Irwin has without the slightest justification taken large sums in *tawan* and has collected *sharahbeshi* for the past 6 years. He can have little to grumble about if he accepts my offer. For both Turkaulia and Peeprah, there is evidence before the committee of sufficient pressure exerted upon the *raiyats* to vitiate *sharahbeshi.* We have it on record that Mr. Sweeney in coming to his decision on coercion had not read the judgment in Lomraj Singh's case nor had he the full Bench decision before him on undue influence. It is settled law now that there is no distinction between undue influence and coercion. I just mention these facts to show that we as a committee dare not ignore them. It is not possible to base our decision merely on the theoretical ground of the so-called lowness of rent.

I am sure the committee will think a hundred times before putting on the Government the strain of arbitrating upon a figure dispute between its members. I have gone to the furthest limit in order to avoid any such calamity. If you and the other members cannot find it in your conscience to accept my approach, I shall sorrowfully write my minute of dissent but it will be, as I have said, in support of 55 per cent reduction. 40 per cent reduction is for the consideration of the members (and the planters only, if, in your opinion, they should be consulted again).

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

I have omitted decimals in my figures.

M. K. GANDHI

From the typewritten original signed by Gandhiji in the National Archives of India; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran,* No. 162, pp. 313-5

[1] J. T. Whitty, Manager, Bettiah Raj

406. MINUTES OF CHAMPARAN COMMITTEE MEETING

August 14, 1917

The President said that a letter[1] received from Mr. Gandhi stated that a compromise on the basis of a reduction of 25 per cent was outside the possibility of his acceptance. Mr. Gandhi further wrote that provided he obtained the unanimous consent of the Committee, he would agree to a 40 per cent reduction, but if that was not accepted, he would in a note of dissent recommend a reduction of 55 per cent. The President put this proposal to the meeting. Mr. Reid said that he could not recommend the planters to give up more than 25 per cent and it would be useless for him to go to them again. In particular, he referred to the case of Mr. Hill where the reduction of 25 per cent would bring his rents down to little more than he could have got from the ordinary enhancement on the ground of rise in prices. Mr. Gandhi said that he would always be prepared to recognise the principle of a different reduction in different concerns. The President, however, pointed out that it was clear that the proposal for a settlement by compromise had failed. He assumed that Mr. Gandhi would now write a minute of dissent advocating a 55 per cent reduction. He did not wish to press him for further concessions, but asked him to consider one point. Both parties were anxious not to have a special tribunal or to have matters settled by the ordinary courts. If the report went up with the recommendation in its present form, Government would have to arbitrate between a reduction of 25 per cent and one of 55 per cent, and he was very doubtful if Government would consent to arbitrate between such wide limits, though they might possibly be inclined to arbitrate between the narrower limits of 25 per cent and 40 per cent. He, therefore, asked Mr. Gandhi if it would not be possible in his minute of dissent to put his figure at 40 per cent. Mr. Gandhi said he did not see why Government should refuse to arbitrate if the limits were wide. The President then made another suggestion that if he approached Government on the subject of arbitration on the basis that Mr. Gandhi stated in his minute of dissent his willingness to abide by the decision of Government, he asked whether Mr. Gandhi would object to his telling Government that an offer of compromise at 40 per cent had been made from his side. Mr. Gandhi said he was willing to let Government know all the facts including the fact that he had offered to compromise at 40 per cent but was not prepared to agree that the limits for arbitration should be any other than between 25 per cent and 55 per cent. Mr. Reid pointed out that the planters' offer of 25 per cent was final and it should be put in on the same basis as Mr. Gandhi's final offer of 40 per cent. Mr. Gandhi said that he was willing for Government to arbitrate between the extreme limits of no reduction at all and a 100 per cent reduction and also that they should know that the planters were prepared to go as far as 25 per cent and that he was

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

prepared to go as far as 40 per cent. He was also prepared to state this in his minute of dissent in order to show how reasonable he had been. The President then said that he had a final proposal to put forward. He knew that Mr. Gandhi was aware of his personal view that the *raiyats* would be well advised to accept 25 per cent. He had gone through Mr. Gandhi's views and had done his best to realise the *raiyats'* position. He was personally unwilling to put forward any proposal for arbitration by Government, because the Committee would thus have failed in its full task and because the Government could hardly be in a better position to arbitrate than the Committee. As Mr. Gandhi was willing to allow Government to arbitrate, he asked if he would have sufficient trust in him to leave the arbitration in his hands, subject to three conditions:

(1) That in no case would he arbitrate at a figure lower than the mean between 25 per cent and 40 per cent,

(2) He would endeavour to secure the consent of the planters to the figure which he fixed, and

(3) He would endeavour to secure the unanimous consent of the Committee.

Mr. Gandhi agreed that the Committee should bear the burden itself, if possible. He doubted whether it was possible for the President at this stage to bring a fresh mind to bear on the situation, particularly after the President had advocated enhancement of rent in lieu of *abwab* which was diametrically opposed to his views. The President said that he could only arbitrate between the limits of 25 per cent and 40 per cent and, as a matter of fact, had already practically fixed a figure. Mr. Gandhi said that in that case, as the President had made up his mind, he could not agree as there was no hope of his being able to convince the President of the justice of the *raiyats'* case. The President then said that as the offer had not been accepted, he now wished to put before the Committee another proposal. The utmost limit to which the planters would agree was 25 per cent. The utmost limit to which Mr. Gandhi would agree on behalf of the *raiyats* was 40 per cent. There was a difference of 15 per cent. In thinking out a possible means of bridging this chasm, a solution had occurred to him while considering Mr. Gandhi's arguments. Mr. Irwin had, in the course of the discussion on the 12th of August, stated that his *mukarrari* leases were unprofitable on the old rental and Mr. Gandhi's reply to this was that the planters should have squeezed the Bettiah Raj and not the *raiyats.* The lines, therefore, on which he had thought of a solution were that the Committee should recommend a reduction in *sharahbeshi* approximating to 40 per cent, of which the planters would be responsible for 25 per cent and the Bettiah Raj would bear the balance until the next settlement. He proposed a limitation of period as regards the contribution of the Bettiah Estate by analogy with the case of *tawan,* in which it had been decided that the Raj should forego enhanced rents for a certain period. Mr. Gandhi said that the

proposal was attractive in theory but he would want a strong evidence that the *mukarrari* leases were not a paying proposition before he could agree. The President pointed out that Mr. Whitty had told him that on the whole the profit on the *mukarrari* leases was very small. At the time they were given the *jama* was fixed at the full rental or in excess thereof and the increase of rent since that time had been small. Mr. Gandhi thought that they could state in the report that one planter had given evidence that the *mukarrari* leases without indigo involved a loss and that if this was proved to the satisfaction of the Court of Wards to be generally the case, the Committee recommended that the Bettiah Estate should bear part of the burden. He did not think that on the evidence before him they could definitely make a proposal of this nature because hitherto all the enquiries had been directed towards the relations between the planters and the *raiyats* without considering the position of the Bettiah Estate. The President said that his proposition was that whatever balance there was between 25 per cent and the figure agreed upon should be borne by the Raj. This would be done by the Raj reducing their *mukarrari* rental by this figure for a period of years. He had satisfied himself that the proposal was equitable, as far as the Estate was concerned. The *mukarrari jama* received by the Bettiah Estate was high owing to the indigo industry; the Estate had, therefore, profited by the industry and, if the obligation of indigo-growing had to be commuted, it was fair that a portion of this should be borne by the Estate. Moreover, if there was no settlement of the present dispute by agreement, the Estate might find it hard to realise their *jamas* owing to the difficulties of the planters and further from the point of view of a good landlord, the Estate should contribute towards the settlement of the dispute. As the Estate was now getting an enhancement of rents in its *kham* and *thika* villages, its finances would be well able to bear this extra payment. The actual amount of *sharahbeshi,* so far as it could be ascertained, was about Rs. 1_ lakhs, 15 per cent of which was Rs. 22,500, this being the maximum amount which the Estate would have to forego annually if the full reduction of 40 per cent was fixed. He did not think that it was just that the Raj should forego it in perpetuity and for that reason he limited it to a period extending up to the next settlement 15 or 20 years hence. Mr. Gandhi said that before agreeing he would have to satisfy himself that the Estate had not profited by indigo and he would like to know the circumstances under which the leases had originally been given. The President thought that the Estate could equitably bear part of the burden whether the leases had been favourable or not because but for indigo the Estate would not have secured such high *jamas*. Mr. Reid pointed out that in addition to the high *jama*, very large *nazarana* had been paid at the time the leases were given. Mr. Gandhi observed that the taking of the leases was a commercial bargain and, if owing to present circumstances the bargain turned out unprofitable, that was no reason why the Bettiah Raj should suffer now. The President said that it was just because it was a commercial bargain that the Bettiah Estate should now bear a part of the burden of giving up the

obligation on which the bargain was based. Mr. Gandhi replied that the Bettiah Raj and the planters were the only parties to the bargain and he asked why the Raj should pay because accidents had happened. The material before the Committee was he thought, too small to come to a conclusion. The President said that the only additional evidence that was required as far as he could see was information as to the rental paid-in each village and a comparison of that with the *mukkarrari jama*. Mr. Gandhi said that if the planters were going to get the same amount of indigo on the *khuski* system by paying a fair rate he did not see that any loss would accrue to them from the commutation. Mr. Adami pointed out that if a struggle went on between the planters and the *raiyats*, the Bettiah Estate would inevitably lose money by it and it was therefore to the interests of the Estate to make some sacrifice in order to bring about a settlement. Mr. Gandhi replied that these were considerations outside the main point of the equity of making the Raj pay but he was willing to embody in the report a statement of the planters case against the Bettiah Raj but he did not think that the Committee were called upon to decide that case. Mr. Adami said he thought they might state the outside limit to which the two parties would go namely, 25 per cent and 40 per cent. After stating the case for the planters against the Estate he suggested that the Estate should pay the difference if Government found the case to be proved. The President asked if the Committee could not go further and find that it was proved. Mr. Gandhi doubted whether they could get sufficient information as to the *mukarrari* leases. The President pointed out that the information from the Government records was that the Maharaja himself gave the leases in order to get security for the sterling loan.[1]

Mr. Gandhi said that he looked at the matter purely as a commercial transaction and could not see why the Bettiah Raj should pay anything because the transaction had become unprofitable to the planters. He thought that by friendly relations and good will in the district there was a future for indigo. Mr. Reid observed that after the next settlement, the planters would be bearing the full burden. Mr. Gandhi pointed out that they would get the usual enhancement at that time on the ground of rise in prices but the President observed that the planters would never get back the 25 per cent which they were now giving up. Mr. Rainy said that, under

[1] Some indigo planters secured permanent leases from the Bettiah Raj in 1888, taking advantage of the latter's necessity to obtain a loan of £475,000 which was floated in England on the security of the indigo planters. The loan was negotiated through a Calcutta firm with the help of another in London and was within the knowledge of the Government of India and the Lt.-Governor of Bengal. A condition attached to the loan was that the Maharaja of Bettiah could appoint a successor to T. M. Gibbon, the then Manager of the Raj and an ex-planter, only with the approval of the Lt.-Governor of Bengal. *Vide Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*, p. 6.

the provisions of the Bengal Tenancy Act, once the landlord had foregone his rent enhancement, he could never recover it. Mr. Gandhi remarked that Indian *thikadars* were able to drive a coach and four through the Bengal Tenancy Act; although the big estates could not do this, the small estates found it easy to get their tenants to pay enhanced rents. Mr. Reid said that he had no objection to accept the proposal if Mr. Gandhi agreed to it, though he considered it hard on the planters. Mr. Rainy said that he agreed with Mr. Gandhi that it was necessary for the Committee to be sure of its ground. He would not have hesitated to suggest the proposal to the Raj with a view to promoting a settlement of the dispute if there had been a Maharaja but, as Government was trustee for the management of the Estate, it was necessary to consider the proposal carefully before suggesting it. He did not think that the Estate could divest itself of responsibility for the present position. The President asked if it would not be sufficient if the Committee examined the correspondence regarding the *mukarrari* leases and considered the *mukarrari jama* and the rentals of the villages both at the time when the leases were granted and at present. Mr. Gandhi thought that this would not be sufficient as the Court of Wards would want to know if there was going to be a loss to the planters in future; that the Committee was now bringing in a third party and was bound to consider that party's position. Mr. Reid asked why they could not leave it to Government; but the President pointed out that if possible the Committee ought to decide for themselves. He said that if this proposal was not accepted, there was no alternative but to recommend a special tribunal or to leave the decision of cases to the ordinary Court. If there had been only one dissent to the proposal about Government arbitration, it might have been possible to leave it to Government but Raja Kirtyanand Sinha's dissent made arbitration impossible. He thought the planters stood to lose by this course and that the *raiyats* stood to lose even more. Mr. Adami said that it was clearly to the interests of the Raj to agree to the proposal which should be recommended to Government who would naturally consult the Board of Revenue before passing orders. He was prepared to accept the proposal. Raja Kirtyanand Sinha also said he was prepared to accept the proposal, though the ultimate orders of Government would depend on the view taken by the Court of Wards. Mr. Rainy agreed but that the Committee should try and convince Government that the proposal was a fair one. Mr. Gandhi said that even if he satisfied himself that the proposal was fair, he would not agree to let the Raj bear the loss for so long a period as 15 years. Mr. Reid pointed out that it was for Government to satisfy itself on the point. Mr. Gandhi said he thought he would be on dangerous ground if he accepted the proposal without knowing the facts, and even so he could not accept it without knowing what was going to happen in future. He thought that the Committee could not bind down the Raj to a prospective loss. He, therefore, put forward an alternative proposal. He said that the dispute was merely as to figures and that if the Committee had accepted his view, there would have been no need to bring the Bettiah Raj into

consideration. He proposed that the planters on the one side and he on the other on behalf of *raiyats* should put their views to arbitration, not by Government, nor by the Committee but by a separate body. He proposed as arbitrators Mr. Apperley[1] and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya who would select a third arbitrator as an umpire between them, or, if the Committee did not agree to that, he would suggest Mr. Heycock. Both parties would state their case to the arbitrators who would have before them also the views of the Committee. They would then give their decision which would be embodied in the Committee's report. Mr. Reid said that he could not agree to this proposal. The planters had already gone to the full extent of their concession and he was sure that they would not agree to this suggestion of arbitration. Mr. Rainy also thought that the planters would not consent. With a 25 per cent reduction, the average enhancement in the Turkaulia concern would be 4 annas 10 pies; if the rates of permissible enhancement in the Sardar Sub-division worked out at much the same as they had in the Bettiah Sub-division, the Turkaulia concern could go to the Munsif's Court and get the enhancement at 4 annas 8 pies in the rupee; it was clear, therefore, that it would be no advantage to them to consent to an arbitration which would almost certainly involve a loss. The President said that in these circumstances the matter would have to be left in the position that his proposal regarding the Bettiah Raj was supported by the majority of the Committee, and Mr. Gandhi would not oppose it if Government satisfied itself that it was fair to the Bettiah Estate. Failing that, the alternative solution of a special tribunal would be recommended.

. . . . The President then said there was one small point which he desired to bring to notice. Mr. Gandhi had all along agreed that *raiyats* should have their rents enhanced by the amount permissible on account of the rise in prices. There was a possibility of difficulty arising in the Rajghat concern owing to its forbearance. He asked therefore if Mr. Gandhi agreed to a special recommendation that in the Rajghat concern there should be an enhancement of rent on the ground of rise in prices and an increase of rent on the ground of excess area by the application of section 112, Bengal Tenancy Act. Mr. Gandhi agreed.

Tawan: In connection with the question of *tawan*, Mr. Gandhi said that he had been looking up cases of *tawan* in recently leased villages and had made a list of the cases in which he thought indigo *sattas* had been taken merely for the purposes of releasing *tawan* and he suggested that in any case where *tawan* had been taken in villages where indigo had been grown for less than 10 years, the whole of the *tawan* should be refunded. The President asked if the Committee could not agree to a general recommendation that, if *tawan* had been imposed in a village within the last few years which had never grown indigo, the whole should be refunded Mr. Reid suggested that the decision of such cases should be left to the

[1] Perhaps F. W. Apperley, Manager of Rajghat Concern

Bettiah Raj. Mr. Rainy pointed out that the objectionable cases were those in which it was certain that *sattas* had been executed for the purpose of taking *tawan* and nothing else. It was unsafe to rely on dates in this matter and he could not agree to a fixed period of 10 years. He thought that it would be easy to find a form of words to which they could all agree and suggested that they should recommend that when it appeared to the Bettiah Estate that indigo *sattas* were taken with the object of taking *tawan* and not for growing indigo the Estate should insist on the whole of the *tawan* being refunded. The President suggested the addition that where the factory after growing indigo for one year proceeded to take *tawan* it should be presumed that the *sattas* were taken for the purposes of levying *tawan* and nothing else. This was agreed too.

Thika Leases*:* Mr. Gandhi suggested that the Committee should recommend that *thika* leases should be for short periods only. The President said that in his experience short-term leases were a very great temptation to the *thikadars* to fleece the *raiyats.* The policy in the Central Provinces had been to lengthen the leases but to impose strict conditions as to their cancellation and he thought that this policy was much wiser than that of short leases. Mr. Gandhi withdrew his suggestion. . . .

Special Tribunal: As regards the proposals for the special tribunal Mr. Gandhi suggested as an amendment that an appeal should be allowed to the High Court. Mr. Rainy thought that if any amendment was necessary it was in the other direction, his idea being that the tribunal should be composed of a senior Revenue Officer and a senior Judicial Officer and that there should be no appeal from their decision. What was wanted was finality, and several appeals would make matters little better than if they were left to be dealt with by the ordinary courts. Mr. Gandhi said that he would prefer a special court of three members if there was to be no appeal but would like to think the matter over.

The Committee then adjourned.

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 163, pp. 315-22

407. LETTER TO J. B. NORMAN

MOTIHARI,
August 15, 1917

DEAR MR. NORMAN,

Here are some statements from your *raiyats*. I have been sending some of such statements to the Collector. He however is loath to take executive action. From his standpoint he is right. I want to

avoid court cases if I can. I am therefore taking the liberty of sending the enclosure to you for your investigation. If the statement is true, you will admit that your *raiyats* shall be free from molestation.

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand in the National Archives of India; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran,* No. 165, p. 323

408. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

AHMEDABAD,

Bhadrapad Shukla 4 [*August 21, 1917*][1]

DEAR SHRI JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. I have come here for a few days. There is no need for you to go to Champaran. The Committee's work is almost over now.

Yours

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand: C. N. 2834

409. SPEECH AT MEETING OF BUSINESS MEN, AHMEDABAD[2]

August 24, 1917

It would seem that what we have been fighting for was within our reach. The officials think that the lawyers and doctors in the country, having nothing else to do, go on talking endlessly and discussing political matters but this meeting proves them wrong. The Government has prohibited students [from attending political meetings], but that has not kept away all of them.[3] And now the business community is also realizing the importance of political

[1] From the reference to Champaran, the letter appears to have been written in 1917.

[2] The meeting was held under the auspices of the local Home Rule League to demand the release of Mrs. Besant and her co-workers. Gandhiji was in the chair.

[3] In May-June 1917, the Madras, Bombay and Bengal Governments issued orders prohibiting student in schools and colleges from attending or taking part in political meetings.

movements. It is my view that, until the business community takes charge of all public movements in India, no good can be done to the country. British merchants have earned a name by fighting for their freedom. Ahmedabad is the capital of Gujarat and wields much influence. If business men elsewhere start taking livelier interest in political agitations, as you of Ahmedabad are doing, India is sure to achieve her aim.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 26-8-l917

410. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

AHMEDABAD,

Bhadarva Sud 11, August 28, 1917

CHI. RAMDAS,

I still have two of your letters to answer. Do not give up the morning prayer. And I want you to remember Indian dates.

I have to go to Champaran again. Take care of your health. You write nothing about it. You will have received my previous letters.

It does not cause me pain that your thoughts are turning towards marriage. I shall certainly help to the extent I can if you will accept my choice. I am looking around for a girl. No money must be spent on marriage. There will be some little expenditure, but that hardly matters. One thing is certain. You must marry only after you have begun to earn. I do not think it will be difficult for you to find some means of livelihood. My advice is this: for the present you should with a steady mind continue to work for *Indian Opinion.* Make the position of the paper sound. Only when you find that it can carry on without you should you come away. If you can find independent means of livelihood there and can side by side work for *Indian Opinion,* there can be no objection to it. Consult Mr. West. See that your name is not disgraced. Whatever work you may choose to do it will not pain me so long as it does not degrade you. My happiness lies in your satisfaction. You may fearlessly pour out your feelings to me.

Your criticism of . . . [1] appears to be mistaken. If he goes to what are (to him) innocent dances and if no expenditure is involved, there can be no harm. It is true that I do not easily believe bad things said about a person I have come to trust. It is a virtue, not a failing. Still, you must write to me whatever comes to your notice.

Tell Miss Schlesin to write to me. I am awaiting her arrival. Tell her also that there are some ten letters from me she has not answered.

Remember me to all the others. Visit Mr. Phillip and Mr. Doke. Of course if you are already back from Johannesburg that is another thing. In that case write to them. Write to Capetown too.Also, tell Nagarji and Bhaga—or write to them—that these days I have no time at all to spare.

Mr. Polak is leaving for England in a couple of days. I am going to Bombay to see him. Ba and Devdas will not accompany me this time.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Motana Man, pp. 31-4

411. TALK WITH MAHADEV DESAI

August 31, 1917

. . . . On the morning of 31st August, certain words of Bapuji created in me the mixed feelings of love, dismay and joy. I shall now try to pen in this letter my short talk with him on that day, although it cannot be easily put into words. Bapuji said:

It is not without reason that I have asked you to visit my place every day. I want you to come and stay with me. I have seen your capacity during the last three days. I have found in you just the type of young man for whom I have been searching for the last two years. Will you believe me if I tell you that I have got in you the man I wanted—the man to whom I can entrust all my work some day and be at ease, and on whom I can rely with confidence? You have to come to me. Leave the Home Rule League, Shri Jamnadas and everything else. I have spoken like this only to three persons before this, Mr. Polak, Miss Schlesin and Shri Maganlal. Today I am speaking in the same

[1] Omission as in the source

way to you and I am very happy to do so, for I have found three outstanding qualities in you. They are regularity, fidelity and intelligence. When I first picked up Maganlal, to all appearances he had nothing special about him. But today you are surprised by his personality. He was not educated. I trained him first for press work. He learnt composing in Gujarati and then in English, Hindi, Tamil and other languages. I was surprised at the speed at which he mastered the art. Since then he has shown his skill in various kinds of work. Let us, however, leave aside Maganlal. The intelligence I have found in you I did not see in him. I am confident that you will be useful to me in various ways because of your good qualities.

1 listened to all this with surprise and shyness, without speaking a single word. I interrupted by saying, 'I have never shown you anything I have done', to which he answered as follows:

How do you know? I can judge people in a very short time. I judged Polak within five hours. He read my letter published in a newspaper and wrote me a letter. He then came to see me and I at once saw what he was, and since then he became my man. He married and started his practice as a pleader only after he joined me. He told me before marriage that he must earn a little for his children. I told him plainly, 'You are mine and the responsibility to provide for you and your children is mine, not yours. I am getting you married, as I see no objection to your marrying.' His marriage was celebrated at my residence. But to revert to the point under discussion. I advise you to give up all thought about the Home Rule League or Jamnadas. Go to Hyderabad. Enjoy yourself for a year or so. Enjoy the pleasures of life to your satisfaction. The moment you start feeling that you are losing yourself, resign from there and come and join me.

At this I told him that I was prepared even then to join him. But he replied:

I know that you are prepared but I want you to see a little more of life and enjoy yourself. I would need your knowledge of the Co-operative Movement also. We have to free that department from its defects. Do not be anxious about anything and come back to me after enjoying life for a little longer. I need you for me personally, not for the school, nor for any other work. You may continue where you are for a year or six months. I shall manage without you till then.

Send me back this letter after you have read it, for I have given Bapu's talk in his own words. They may be forgotten in course of time.

Mahadev Desai's letter dated 2-9-1917 to Narhari Parikh reproduced in *Mahadev Desai's Early Life,* pp. 52-4

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

ANNIE BESANT'S EXPLANATION REGARDING BENARES INCIDENT

I

MADRAS,
February 10, 1916

As Mr. Gandhi has made a statement[1] which appears by wire in our columns, I think it well to say that my interruption was due to the fact that the Englishman behind me, who, I concluded, was a C.I.D. officer, made the remark, "Everything he says is being taken down and will be sent to the Commissioner." As several things said were capable of a construction that I knew Mr. Gandhi could certainly not mean to convey, I thought it better to suggest to the Chairman that politics were out of place in that meeting. I did not suggest to the Princes to leave nor do I know who did. I am well aware Mr. Gandhi would rather be killed than kill. But I do think that his remarks were capable of misconstruction and I feared for his personal safety under conditions existing in Benares. How far from any wish of his is any disturbance of the public peace was shown by his view that we ought not to embarrass the Government even by holding the Congress.

New India, 10-2-19l6; also The Bengalee, 12-2-1916

II

February 17, 1916

The above[2] came to us from the *Madras Mail*. Mr. Gandhi telephoned to ask if I would put in a statement from him, and I answered yes. I presume that the above from the *Madras Mail* is the statement.

I regret that I must traverse the first paragraph of the statement. I do not see how, "if Mrs. Besant was almost behind me", he could have seen me "whispering" to the princes on the far side of the Maharaja of Darbhanga, nor how they could have heard my whispers; there was one prince on my side, who did not move till after all the rest had gone. I did not leave with the princes, but remained with my friends round me, and in fact Mr. Gandhi says, was discussing with them, while he also says that l left along with the princes. I did not leave till some minutes after the meeting was over, and then not even by the way they went, but by a path which led towards my house from the platform.

[1] *Vide* "Interview to A. P. I. on Benares 'Incident' ", 9-2-1916.

[2] *Vide* "Reply to Mrs. Besant", before 17-2-1916,. which also appears to have been published by the *Madras Mail*.

I have no report of Mr. Gandhi's speech, but he desires me to mention the statements which I thought necessitated the interruption. I answer that I thought that in a non-political meeting, with princes and many others present who would suffer from Government displeasure, he should not have twice spoken of the possibility of the English being driven bag and baggage out of the country and of his being ready, if he thought Indians fit for self-Government which he did not, to march with thousands of his countrymen to the muzzle of English guns and die gloriously; that it was unwise to say bluntly, "I am an anarchist," without explaining what he meant, and to speak of bombs bringing about the annulment of the partition of Bengal, with praise of the heroism of those who threw them. I know very well how such statements would appear in a C.I.D. report, as I have suffered from such reports, and I appealed to the Chairman. If the meeting had been called by Mr. Gandhi, it would have been no one's business but his own what he chose to say; as it was, the University Committee, to which I belong, was responsible to those we had invited. It may be that I ought to have left Mr. Gandhi to go his own way, despite the . . . and the complaints all around me. I meant to do him a kindness and prevent the more violent interruption which would have probably taken place, had I remained silent. l am glad that Mr. Gandhi has explained what he meant to say, though I regret his misstatement about myself.

Mr. S. S. Setlur's letter, which I subjoin from the *Hindu*, gives accurately what occurred.

New India, 17-2-1916

III[1]

Those who have read Mr. Gandhi's statement on his speech, and his request to me to state the remarks to which I objected, will at once recognize his perfect innocence of all wrong intention. . . .

. . . But now that Mr. Gandhi himself has forced my hand, asking for what I had refused to others, I am free to speak out, and to say why words which, from another, would have connoted wrong, were, so far as his intent was concerned, innocent of harm. Moreover, he did not know, as I knew, that the students before him were seething with anger in consequence of the way in which they had been treated by the C.I.D. officers, a number of them interned in the College for the day—a gratuitous and provocative insult—and also of the way in which respectable men in the town had been arrested during previous days, and others, men and even old women, very roughly used. It was a rather "gun-powder" audience, and I feared that some of them, not knowing Mr. Gandhi's principle of non-resistance, might take his remarks on the results of bomb-throwing as a justification for the use of such means, despite his strictures on them.

To consider the remarks themselves, what Mr. Gandhi said as to the English leaving India by compulsion was, I venture to think, unwise, but it did not bear the

[1] This is from what appeared with the caption "In Defence of M. K. Gandhi" under the signature of Annie Besant in the editorial columns.

sense that it would have had in my own mouth, since I am actively working for Home Rule. If I had said it, it would have been a threat, because it would have been naturally connected in the minds of many with my demand that India should be a self-governing nation, and although I work only for the abolition of bureaucratic rule, and hope that many an Englishman will help in the working of the responsible Government of the future, It would naturally have been said: "Why should you suggest such a thing, if you do not want to bring it about?" But no such motive can be imputed to Mr. Gandhi, for he distinctly said: "You are not fit for self-government," and he told the students not to be led away by himself into the idea that they were. IF HE THOUGHT THEM READY, which he did not, he would be willing to march up to the mouth of the guns and die. But it must be remembered that from Mr. Gandhi's lips this does not mean fighting, as it would mean from mine. He has already led a crowd against armed men, willing to die but not to slay. His resistance has always been passive, the heroic endurance of suffering, NEVER the infliction of it. And therefore I say that he cannot be judged as an active politician should be. He has risked the lives of himself and his followers, but never those of his opponents.

It was unwise to say boldly: "I am an anarchist", in a country where "anarchism" connotes bombs. Now Mr. Gandhi is a "philosophic anarchist", like Tolstoy, whom he closely resembles. Many of the noblest and purest men and women in Europe are anarchists in the sense in which Mr. Gandhi used the word. Prince Kropotkin, Edward Carpenter, Walt Whitman, are all men of this school; they are true mystics, and the God within guides them; they need no outside law. The *Madras Mail* was annoyed that Mr. Gandhi was, apparently, compared to Tolstoy, but Mr. Gandhi is the greater of the two—save from the literary standpoint. Tolstoy lived as a peasant and made shoes for his living; Gandhi lives similarly, and helps in the work of his community. Tolstoy was detested by the Russian Government as Gandhi by the South African; but Gandhi has suffered for his people as Tolstoy never did. Tolstay lived a long way off, so Anglo-Indians can afford to admire him, but Gandhi is close at hand, so must be reviled. Both are men of the prophet type and are admired by most people—at a distance.

I have been turning up my speech of 1894, delivered in the pandal of the Madras Congress of that year, and it is curiously applicable, in its remarks on the Prophet, to the philosophic idea of anarchism, the "without Government" of the far-off Golden Age, when none shall teach his brother but "all shall be taught of God". The Prophets, like Tolstoy, Gandhi, Carpenter, proclaim that far-off ideal, but the work-a-day world is not ready for it, nor will be for many thousands of years. Only when a man is guided by an interior compulsion, the divine law within, can he afford to dispense with the compulsion of outer law. But what outer law does Gandhi need, who leads a life of utter selflessness, of purity, of simplicity, of daily, hourly, self-abnegation? Such men are priceless assets of the nation which gives them birth, and they inspire to heroism and to nobility of character. Hence, I say, that while we may consider some of Mr. Gandhi's views as suited better for a far-off posterity than for today, and while we regard his politics—if

we so name them—as impracticable, and even as a hindrance in the path of constitutional change, we would, tens of thousands of us, stand round him, in any attack from Anglo-Indians or from the bureaucracy, as one man, and we honour and venerate him for his life and his lofty ideals, even when we think his words unwise in the difficult circumstances of the time.

New India, 19-2-1916

APPENDIX II

"AHIMSA PARAMO DHARMAH"—A TRUTH OR A FAD?

By Lala Lajpat Rai

There is no religion higher than truth, nor a course of conduct nobler than *Ahimsa Paramo Dharmah*. Rightly understood and rightly applied to life, the latter makes a man a saint and a hero. Misunderstood and misapplied, it makes a man cowardly and craven, base and stupid. There was a time when the Indians understood it rightly and made only the proper use of it and they were a race of truthful, noble and brave people. Then came a time when some good people, thoroughly well-intentioned and otherwise saintly, made a fad of it, placed it not only at the top of all other virtues, but made it the sole test of a good life. They overdid it not only in their own lives but converted it into a supreme national virtue at the cost of everything else. All other virtues which ennoble men and nations were thrown into the background and subordinated to this, according to them, the supreme test of goodness, courage, bravery, heroism, all lapsed. Honour and self-respect were thrown into the shade. Patriotism, love of country, love of family, honour of the race were all extinguished. It was this perverted use or misuse of ahimsa (non-killing), or its exaggerated importance at the cost of everything else, that brought about the social, political and moral downfall of the Hindus. They forgot that manliness was as good a virtue as ahimsa. In fact the former was in no way inconsistent with the latter, if rightly applied. They overlooked the fact that individual as well as national interests made it incumbent that the weak should be protected against the strong, and that the aggressor and the usurper, the thief and the scoundrel, the lustful villain and the infamous violator of women's chastity, the ruffian and the cheat, should be prevented from inflicting injustice and doing harm. They ignored the fact that humanity required that the fear of righteous indignation and of the consequences that flow therefrom, should deter the soul of the evilly disposed people from harming innocence, violating purity and depriving others of their just rights. They failed to realize the importance and the sublimity of the truth that whosoever allows or tolerates forceful dominance of evil or tyranny and oppression, in a way abets and encourages it and is partly responsible for the prosperity and strength of the evil-doer. Ahimsa overdone and misapplied is a gangrene that poisons the system, enervates the faculties and converts men and women into half-lunatic, hysterical, unnerved creatures, good for

nothing that requires the energetic pursuits of noble ends and noble virtues. It converts men into monomaniacs and cowards. The founders of the Jain religion were saintly people, pledged to a life of self-abnegation and self-mortification. Their followers, the Jain sadhus, are amongst the most saintly people who have achieved the greatest possible success in killing passions and subduing desires both of the senses and the mind. The Tolstoyian ahimsa has been known and practised in India for three thousand years. There is no country on the face of the globe which contains so many and such profound ahimsa-ists as India does and which she has been having for centuries. Yet there is no country on the face of the globe which is so downtrodden, so bereft of manly virtues, as India of today is or as India of the last fifteen hundred years has been. Some people may say that it was not the practice of ahimsa that brought about this fall but the desertion of other virtues. I am, however, inclined to insist that the perversion of this truth *was at least one of those causes* that resulted in India's forsaking the path of honour, manliness and virtue. The worst is that people who profess an absolute faith in the doctrine, prove by their own practice that a perverted use of such a truth necessarily leads to a life of hypocrisy, unmanliness and cruelty. I was born in a Jain family. My grandfather had an all-covering faith in ahimsa. He would rather be bitten by a snake than kill it. He would not harm even a vermin. He spent hours in religious exercise. To all appearances, he was a very virtuous person, who held a high position in his fraternity and commanded great respect. One of his brothers was a sadhu, a high priest who was an exalted leader of his order. This last-named gentleman was one of the "noblest" types of ascetics I have ever met with in my life. He lived up to his principles and excelled in the mortification of the flesh and in keeping down his passions and desires. Yet according to the best standards of ethics, his life was barren and unnatural. I loved and respected him, but I could not follow his creed, nor did he ever show any anxiety to make me do it. His brother, however, i.e., my own grandfather, was a different sort of person. He believed in ahimsa, that perverted ahimsa which forbids the *taking of any life under any circumstances whatsoever*, but he considered all kinds of trickeries in his trade and profession as not only valid but good. They were permissible according to the ethics of his business. I have known many persons of that faith who would deprive the minor and the widow of their last morsel of food in dealings with them but who would spend thousands in saving lice or birds or other animals standing in danger of being killed. I do not mean to say that the Jains of India are in any way more immoral than the rest of the Hindus or that ahimsa leads to immorality of that kind. Far be it from me to make such an unfounded insinuation. In their own way the Jains are a great community, charitable, hospitable, and intelligent and shrewd men of business. So are some of the other communities 0among the Hindus. What I mean is that the practice of ahimsa in its extreme form has in no way made them better than or morally superior to the other communities. In fact, they are the people who pre-eminently suffer from hooliganism and other manifestations of force, because they are more helpless than others, on account of their inherited fear and dislike of force. They cannot defend themselves, nor the honour of those dear and

near to them. Europe is the modern incarnation of the divine right of force. It is good for Europe to have given birth to a Tolstoy. But the case of India is different. In India we do not advocate force and violence for purposes of oppression or usurpation or aggression. India, I trust, will never come to that. But we cannot afford to be taught that it is sinful to use legitimate force for purposes of self-defence or for the protection of our honour and the honour of our wives, sisters, daughters and mothers. Such a teaching is unnatural and pernicious. We condemn illegal or unlawful force in the attainment of a lawful object, but we cannot afford to sit silent when a great and a respected man tells our young men that we can only "guard the honour of those who are under our charge by delivering ourselves into the hands of the men who would commit the sacrilege" and that this requires "far great physical and mental courage than delivering blows". Suppose a ruffian assaults our daughter. Mr. Gandhi says that according to his conception of ahimsa, the only way to protect the honour of our daughter is to stand between her and her assailant. But what becomes of the daughter if her assailant fells us and then completes his diabolical intention? According to Mr. Gandhi, it requires greater mental and physical courage to stand still and let him do his worst than to try to stop him by matching our force against his. With great respect for Mr. Gandhi, this has no meaning. I have the greatest respect for the personality of Mr. Gandhi. He is one of those persons whom l idolize. I do not doubt his sincerity. I do not question his motives. But I consider it my duty to raise an emphatic protest against the pernicious doctrine he is reported to have propounded. Even a Gandhi should not be allowed to poison the minds of Young India on this subject. No one should be at liberty to pollute the fountains of national vitality. Not even Buddha, much less Christ, even preached that. I do not know if even the Jains would go to that length. Why! honourable life would be impossible under such conditions. A man who has such a faith cannot consistently resist anyone acting as he likes. Why did Mr. Gandhi then injure the feelings of the white men of South Africa by raising the standard of revolt against their cherished policy of excluding the Indians from that country? To be logical he should have left the country bag and baggage and advised his countrymen to do the same as soon as the South Africans expressed a wish to exclude them. Why, under such circumstances, any *resistance* would be *himsa*. After all physical *himsa* is only a development of mental *himsa*. If it is a sin to contemplate the worsting of a thief or a robber or any enemy, of course, it is a greater sin to resist him by force. The thing is so absurd on the face of it, that I feel inclined to doubt the accuracy of the report of Mr Gandhi's speech. But the Press has been freely commenting on the speech and Mr Gandhi issued no disclaimer. In any case I feel that I cannot sit silent and let this doctrine go as an unquestioned sublime truth to be followed by *Young India*, so long as the speech remains uncontradicted or unexplained Mr. Gandhi wants to create a world of imaginary perfection. Of course he is free to do it, as he is free to ask others to do it. But in the same way I consider it my duty to point out his error.

The Modern Review, July, 1916, pp. 19-21

APPENDIX III

ENCLOSURES TO GANDHIJI'S LETTER TO L. F. MORSHEAD

I

LETTER FROM LOCAL LEADERS TO GANDHIJI

MUZAFFARPUR ,
April 13, 1917

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

We entirely corroborate your statement made by you today to the Commissioner (Tirhut Division) that you have come to this division at the request of the public men of the province to investigate the question of the relations between the indigo planters and Indian *raiyat*s and give us the benefit of your expert assistance in any way you can We were party to the invitation. We further corroborate your statement that you were asked by most of us to move the resolution in the matter before the last Congress but that you declined to do so on the ground that you had not studied the question on the spot. We invited you because we thought that having expert experience you would be the best and most proper person to make a thorough constitutional and impartial inquiry into the matter which would be to the interest of the parties concerned.

Yours sincerely,
BRAJA KISHORE PRASAD
RAMNAVAMI PRASHAD
GAYA PRASHAD SINGH
RAMDAYALU SINHA,

II

NOTE BY BABU ARIKSHAN SINHA

MUZAFFARPUR,
April 13, 1917

I had been to the last Lucknow Congress as a delegate. Nearly all the leading men of this province, numbering about 81, attended the Lucknow Sessions of the Congress as delegates. The Bihar delegates to the Congress at Lucknow requested the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Mr. Gandhi to go to Muzaffarpur and Champaran and study the question about the planters and the *raiyat*s. They promised to visit Muzaffarpur as early as possible. Mr. Gandhi was also requested by Bihar delegates to move a resolution on the subject in the Congress but he declined to do so on the ground that he had not studied the question on the spot.

ARIKSHAN SINHA

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, Nos. 17 & 18, pp. 60-1

APPENDIX IV

ORDER UNDER SECTION 144 Cr.P.C.

April 16, 1917

TO

MR. M. K. GANDHI

AT PRESENT IN MOTIHARI

Whereas it has been made to appear to me from the letter of the Commissioner of the Division, copy of which is attached to this order, that your presence in any part of the District will endanger the public peace and may lead to serious disturbances which may be accompanied by loss of life and whereas urgency is of the utmost importance;

Now therefore I do hereby order you to abstain from remaining in the District which you are required to leave by the next available train.

W. B. HEYCOCK,
DISTRICT MAGISTRATE
CHAMPARAN

To the notice was annexed a copy of a letter from the Commissioner which was as follows:

MUZAFFARPUR,
April 13, 1917

TO

THE DIST. MAGISTRATE OF CHAMPARAN

SIR,

Mr. M. K. Gandhi has come here in response to what he describes as an insistent public demand to inquire into the conditions under which Indians workon indigo plantations and desires the help of the local administration. He came to see me this morning and I explained that the relations between the planters and the ryots had engaged the attention of the administration since the sixties, and that we were particularly concerned with a phase of the problem in Champaran now; but that it was doubtful whether the intervention of a stranger in the middle of the treatment of our case would not prove an embarrassment. I indicated the potentialities of disturbances in Champaran, asked for credentials to show an insistent public demand for his inquiry and said that the matter would probably need reference to Government.

I expected that Mr. Gandhi would communicate with me again before he proceeds to Champaran but I have been informed since our interview that his object is likely to be agitation rather than a genuine search for knowledge and it is possible that he may proceed without further reference. I consider that there is a danger of

disturbance to the public tranquillity should he visit your District. I have the honour to request you to direct him by an order under section 144 Cr. P. C. to leave it at once if he should appear.

I have the honour, etc.,

L. F. MORSHEAD,

COMMISSIONER OF THE TIRHUT DIVISION

Satyagraha in Champaran, pp. 107-8,; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*, No. 19, pp. 61-2

APPENDIX V

NOTE BY HON'BLE W. MAUDE ON INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI

May 10, 1917

* * *

On the 10th May I had a very long talk with Mr. Gandhi....

Our conversation was extremely frank and discursive and I cannot attempt to reproduce the gist of it all. The upshot of it was that when I suggested that he must have got a very considerable amount of evidence together by now and might be in a position to make his report, he consented at once to send up a preliminary report, and in the meantime to stop the recording of evidence by his assistants and only make enquiries quietly by himself, visiting only fresh *dehats* where he is especially invited either by the planter or by the *raiyats*. I suggested that he should dispense with the services of his assistants and he said he could not make any definite promise about that, and that he was really grieved at the want of faith in the motives and intentions of those assistants. He insisted that if anyone believed that they were regarding it or talking about it behind the scenes as an anti-European movement, they would be quite mistaken as there was no suggestion of such a thing. He said he had intended to lay certain definite proposals before the planters which if they accepted he would be able to destroy all his papers and go away; but he admitted that he did not think it would be much use, and that one or two suggestions he had made to planters individually had not met with the response which he had hoped for. I said I did not think it would be the slightest use his approaching the planters, and he could scarcely expect them to regard him as in any way authorised to lay proposals of any kind before them. It would be better if he wrote a report on such materials as he had already collected and sent it to Government or to the Government of India if he preferred that channel. He said he hadn't the slightest desire to go to the Government of India and his idea had been to approach the planters themselves first, if they failed to go to the local officers, if they didn't satisfy him to the Local Government, if they did not satisfy him to the Government of India, and if they didn't satisfy him to appeal as a last resort to pubic opinion in India.

In conclusion, he asked to whom he ought to address his report, to the Collector or Commissioner or Local Government. I said it would perhaps be best if he addressed it to the Government as it would relieve the Collector and Commissioner of the necessity of wondering whether they were called on to discuss it in sending it up. He would send a copy to the local officers as a matter of courtesy, and Government could call for any remarks or information as might appear advisable. I said it had been rumoured that he intended to subject Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga to the same process as Champaran, and he said he had so far never had any such intention, though he might visit other parts of the province in a general way in order to complete his knowledge of India generally. I specially commended to his notice a visit to the South of Gaya and the adjoining parts of Hazaribagh where he would find a condition of tenantry in comparison with which the Champaran *raiyat*s are independent and courageous. We wound up a two hours' conversation with a most interesting talk of the Colonial emigration question which, however, does not concern this file.

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 71, pp. 121-4

APPENDIX VI

STATEMENTS OF PEASANTS TAKEN BY GANDHIJI

(A)

May 19, 1917

Hira Rai of Mauza Chailabhar, Tola Raj Kumar Dhokaraha Kothi, son of Durga Rai.

My age is nearly 50 years, my wife is alive. I have one son and three daughters. I have 5 *bighas* in Chailabhar and 1_ *bighas* under Belwa Kothi. I have had nearly 2_ *kathas* of *zirat* forced on me. I have offered through Mr. Gandhi to surrender the *zirat*. Yesterday about 10 a.m. Mr. Holttum came near my house. On seeing him I went to him. He was on horseback. He had the Patwari Ramlagan Lal and Tahsildar Amla Singh and three peons with him. Several people had collected there. Mr. Holttum addressed us all and said "You have surrendered your *zirat*. What is there now between you and me? You will have to pay for it. I shall charge you annas 12 per buffalo and annas 8 per ox and annas 4 per cow for grazing in the Parti. If you do not pay, I shall impound your cattle. You will also have to grow indigo." We have not been obliged to pay anything up to now for grazing cattle. We listened but said nothing. He spoke to his men and went away.

Taken by M. K. GANDHI

Interpreted by B. Rajendra Pd. where necessary (B)

Janai Mahto Moiri Mauza Dhokaraha, Tola Shikarpur Kothi Dhokaraha, son of

Thakur Mahton.

I have a wife, I have no children. I am 40 years old. I have 3_ *bighas* land in Shikarpur. I have had 2_ *kathas* of *Zirat* forced on me. This was about 10 years ago. I have in common with many others offered through Mr. Gandhi to surrender my *zirat*. I was present on the day Mr. Gandhi came to Saraswa. About 6 o'clock in the evening I was passing by Dhokaraha factory on my way to Shikarpur. The *Kacheri* of the Factory is situated in its compound. A passer-by could get a clear view of the *Kacheri* as I did. I saw Sukhari Mahton on the verandah. He was standing by a bundle of papers on the floor of the verandah. I know that the *Kacheri* has been burnt down. I do not believe that it is the work of the *raiyats*.

Taken by M. K. GANDHI

B. Rajendra Prasad interpreting where necessary

(C)

Devnarain Rai of Chailabhar, Kothi Dhokaraha, son of Thakur Rai.

My age is 40 years. My wife is alive. I have no children. I have 12 *Bighas* of land in Chailabhar. I have had forced on me 8 *kathas* of *zirat*. I have offered to surrender the *zirat* through Mr. Gandhi. Yesterday I was fetched by Mr. Holttum's sepoy to go to Raj Kumar's house and there pay to the Tahsildar Rs. 2/- for thatching straw I had purchased from the *Kothi*. I paid the money and I was standing there when Mr. Holttum was seen coming on horseback. There were many people present. Mr. Holttum was accompanied by his *sepahis* who were there, when he came. The Patwari was also there. Addressing the crowd he said "What is there in common between you and me? You have surrendered the zirat. You will have to pay for it. You will have to grow indigo. You will have to pay 12/- for buffaloes, as. 8 for oxen and as. 4 for cows for grazing. If you do not pay, your cattle will be impounded." Hira Rai was present when the Saheb came. We have not paid anything hitherto for grazing cattle. We listened, we said nothing. He said something to his men and went away.

Taken by M. K. GANDHI

Interpreted by Babu Rajendra Pd. where necessary

(D)

Merkhun Turha of Chailabhar, son of Param Turha, age about 26 years, married, has one son, has 7 *bighas zirat*, 7 *kathas* has surrendered. Support above statement.

M. K. GANDHI

Bettiah, 19th May, 1917

Sivprasad Rai of Chailabhar, son of Pratap Rai, has wife and 3 sons, has 1_ *bighas*, has no *zirat*. Supports above statement.

M. K. GANDHI

Bettiah, 19th May, 1917

Sivanandan of Chailabhar, son of Devnarain Rai, age 30 years, wife, no children, 4_ *bighas*, *zirat* 2 *kathas* has surrendered. Supports above statement.

M. K. GANDHI

Bettiah, 19th May, 1917

Amar Rai, son of Shishupal Rai, age 25 years, wife, no children, 4 *bighas*, 11_ *kathas zirat*. Supports the above statement.

M. K. GANDHI

Bettiah, 19th May, 1917

Courtesy: Gandhi Smarak Nidhi

APPENDIX VII

GOVERNMENT NOTICE INVITING EVIDENCE BEFORE CHAMPARAN AGRARIAN ENQUIRY COMMITTEE

July, 1917

The Committee appointed to enquire into the agrarian conditions in Champaran will commence the enquiry about July 15th. The centres at which the Committee will sit are Bettiah and Motihari (and any others which may be hereafter decided upon) but the precise dates for these centres have not yet been fixed.

The Committee accordingly invite all persons, associations and public bodies, who desire to give written evidence to send the same to the address of the Secretary, Champaran Agrarian Enquiry Committee, Secretariat, Ranchi, before July 10th together with a memorandum stating the qualifications of the writer.

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 143, p. 270

1. INDIAN COLONIAL EMIGRATION

I have carefully read the resolution issued at Simla by the Government of India on the 1st instant, embodying the report of the Inter-Departmental Conference recently held in London.[1] It will be remembered that this was the conference referred to in the Viceregal speech of last year at the opening of the Sessions of the Viceregal Legislative Council. It will be remembered, too, that this was the conference which Sir James Meston and Sir S. P. Sinha were to have attended but were unable to attend owing to their having returned to India before the date of the meeting of the conference.[2] It is stated in the report under discussion that these gentlemen were to discuss the question of emigration to certain English colonies informally with the two Secretaries of State, i.e., the Secretary of State for India and the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Lord Islington[3], Sir A. Steel Maitland[4] and Messrs Seton[5], Crindle[6], Green[7] and Macnaughton[8] constituted the Conference. To take the wording of the Resolution, this Conference sat "to consider the proposals for a new assisted system of emigration to British Guiana, Trinidad, Jamaica and Fiji". The public should therefore note that this assisted emigration is to be confined only to the four Crown Colonies mentioned and not to the self-governing Colonies of South Africa, Canada or Australia, or the Crown Colony of Mauritius.[9] What follows will show the importance of this distinction. It is something to be thankful for, that "the Government of India have not yet considered the report and reserved judgement on all the points raised in it". This is as it should be on a matter so serious as this and one which only last year fairly

[1] In May 1917 to discuss a new system of emigration

[2] Sir James Meston and S. P. Sinha represented India at the Imperial War Conference held in April, 1917. They were also nominated by the Government of India as its representatives to the Inter-Departmental Conference, but both of them had to return to India before the Conference could meet formally.

[3] Chairman

[4] Members of the respective Secretaries of State's establishments

[5] *ibid*

[6] *ibid*

[7] *ibid*

[8] *ibid*

[9] *Vide* also "Statement on Abolition of Indentured Labour", after 7-2 -1917.

convulsed the whole of India and which has in one shape or another agitated the country since 1895.

The declaration too that "His Majesty's Government in agreement with the Government of India have decided that indentured emigration shall not be re-opened" is welcome as is also the one that "no free emigrants[1] can be introduced into any colony until all Indian emigrants already there have been released from existing indentures".

In spite however of so much in the report that fills one with gladness, the substantive part of it which sets forth the scheme which is to replace indentured emigration is so far as one can judge, to say the least of it, disappointing. Stripped of all the phraseology under which the scheme has been veiled, it is nothing less than a system of indentured emigration no doubt on a more humane basis and safeguarded with some conditions beneficial to the emigrants taking advantage of it.

The main point that should be borne in mind is that the conference sat designedly to consider a scheme of emigration not in the interests of the Indian labourer but in those of the Colonial employer. The new system therefore is devised to help the colonies concerned. India needs no outlet at any rate for the present moment for emigration outside the country. It is debatable whether in any event the four colonies will be the most suitable for Indian colonisation. The best thing therefore that can happen from an Indian stand-point is that there should be no assisted emigration from India of any type whatsoever. In the absence of any such assistance, emigration will have to be entirely free and at the risk and expense of the emigrant himself. Past experience shows that, in that event, there will be very little voluntary emigration to distant colonies. In the report, assisted emigration means, to use a mild expression, stimulated emigration; and surely with the industries of India crying out for labour and with her legitimate resources yet undeveloped, it is madness to think of providing a stimulus for the stay-at-home Indian to go out of India. Neither the Government nor any voluntary agency has been found capable of protecting from ill-usage the Indian who emigrates either to Burma or Ceylon, much less can any such protection avail in far-off Fiji or then three other colonies. I hope that

[1] "emigration" in the report published in *The Indian Review,* September 1917

leaders of public opinion in India will therefore take their stand on the one impregnable rock of not wanting any emigration whatsoever to the colonies. It might be argued that we, as a component part of the Empire, are bound to consider the wants of our partners, but this would not be a fair plea to advance so long as India stands in need of all the labour she can produce. If, therefore, India does not assist the colonies, it is not because of want of will, but it is due to want of ability. An additional reason a politician would be justified in using is that, so long as India does not in reality occupy the position of an equal partner with the colonies and so long as her sons continue to be regarded by Englishmen in the colonies and English employers even nearer home to be fit only as hewers of wood and drawers of water, no scheme of emigration to the colonies can be morally advantageous to Indian emigrants. If the badge of inferiority is always to be worn by them, they can never rise to their full status and any material advantage they will gain by emigrating can therefore be of no consideration.

But let us for the moment consider the new system.

> The system to be followed in future will be one of aided emigration[1] and its object will be to encourage the settlement of Indians in certain colonies after a probationary period of employment in those colonies to train and fit them for life and work there and at the same time to acquire[2] a supply of the labour essential to the well-being of the colonists[3] themselves.

So the re-settlement is to be conditional on previous employment under contract and it will be seen in the course of our examination that this contract is to be just as binding as the contracts used to be under indenture. The report has the following humorous passage in it:

> He will be in no way restricted to service under any particular employer except that for his own protection a selected employer will be chosen for him for the first six months.

This has a flavour of the old indentured system. One of the evils complained of about that system was that the labourer was assigned to an employer. He was not free to choose one himself. Under the new system, the employer is to be selected for the protection of the

[1] *The Indian Review* report has "colonization".

[2] *The Indian Review* report has "afford".

[3] *Indian Review* report has "Colonies".

labourer. It is hardly necessary for me to point out that the would-be labourer will never be able to feel the protection devised for him.

The labourer is further

> to be encouraged to work for his first three years in agricultural industries by the offer, should he do so, of numerous and important benefits subsequently as a colonist.

This is another inducement to indenture and I know enough of such schemes to be able to assure both the Government and the public that these so-called inducements in the hands of clever manipulators become nothing short of methods of compulsion in respect of innocent and ignorant Indian labourers. It is due to the framers of the scheme that I should draw attention to the fact that they have avoided all criminal penalties for breach of contract. In India itself if the scheme is adopted, we are promised a revival of the much-dreaded depots and emigration agents, all no doubt on a more respectable basis, but still of the same type and capable of untold mischief.

The rest of the report is not likely to interest the public, but those who wish to study it will, I doubt not, come to the conclusion to which I have been driven, that the framers have done their best to strip the old system of many of the abuses which had crept into it, but they have not succeeded in placing before the Indian public an acceptable scheme. I hold that it was an impossible task. The system of indenture was one of temporary slavery; it was incapable of being amended, it should only be ended and it is to be hoped that India will never consent to its revival in any shape or form.

The Indian Review, September 1917

2. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

BOMBAY,
Bhadarva Sud 15 [*September 1, 1917*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I had made all preparations to leave for that side today, but I am in no position to do so. Mrs. Polak has been running a temperature for the fourth day in succession. I should not leave her in that

[1] From the reference to the building plan to be prepared by Amritlal Thakkar, the letter appears to have been written in 1917. Again, Gandhiji was in Bombay on this day.

condition. That is her wish and I think so too. Mrs. Petit cares for her wonderfully well but Mrs. Polak thinks that, if she is to be laid up for a long time, it should not be at her place. It will not be surprising, therefore, if I have to stay on for two or three days more, or even longer. I shall send you a wire.

Mr. Polak left yesterday.

Matters are proceeding satisfactorily about satyagraha. There is a meeting today at which I have some hope that an agreed resolution will be passed.[1]

Amritlalbhai[2] has fallen ill. That is the reason why he is late. He is somewhat better now and will be ready with the plan for our building in eight or ten days perhaps.

I hope everyone is all right there. Thakorelal is to be paid Rs. 15 every month. I have spoken to Fulchand. Resume forwarding the post [to me here]. You have to send for Mavji's brother yarn worth Rs. 30 for socks at the place that he will indicate. Inquire of him and make the necessary arrangement.

Mangaldas Sheth has promised to supply all our requirements of yarn at two annas less than the market rate.

Blessings from

BAPU

As you did not inform Imam Saheb he felt a little hurt. I had no idea that the cloth was for him. I was wondering for whom it could be.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5722. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

3. SPEECH AT BOMBAY PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE MEETING

September 2, 1917

A heated discussion took place. . . . M. K. Gandhi, on being asked, stated that the campaign of passive resistance could not be carried on by an institution like the Congress. Passive resistance could be described merely as a matter of conscience or force of soul, when it was useless to go to lawyers.

[1] The meeting was adjourned due to differences over the resolution and only an agreed amendment passed; *Vide* the following item.

[2] Amritlal Thakkar

After Gandhi had delivered his opinion, it was suggested that B. G. Tilak should, after consultation with Gandhi, suggest to the meeting some acceptable amendment. On this Gandhi himself suggested an amendment but Tilak insisted on making his own alterations in it before placing it before the meeting. . . . The President, after some discussion with Tilak and his party, declared that a certain amendment had been drawn up in agreement with Tilak and his party. The amendment was as follows:

'Though the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee is of opinion that there is a strong feeling among the people to support the campaign of passive resistance on account of the coercive measures recently taken by the Government, it advises that, taking into consideration the fact that Mr. Montagu[1] is coming on a visit to this country and that the reasons of his coming are well known, the work of the consideration of and giving opinion on the principles underlying passive resistance and the measures necessary to put them into effect, which has been entrusted to this committee by the All-India Congress Committee and the Council of the All-India Muslim League, be for the present held in abeyance, and the meeting expresses the hope that the Government will take the necessary steps to allay the bitter feeling aroused among the people by action of internments and coercive measures taken by the authorities. This course will enable the Secretary of state to fulfil the work entrusted to him under normal conditions.'

. . . it was unanimously passed amidst cheers. . . .

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1917, pp. 620-1

4. LETTER TO SHANKARLAL ON 'IDEAS ABOUT SATYAGRAHA'

[*September 2, 1917*][2]

BHAISHRI SHANKARLAL,

You want to know my ideas about satyagraha. Here they are in brief:

The English phrase "passive resistance" does not suggest the power I wish to write about; "satyagraha" is the right word. Satyagraha is soul-force, as opposed to armed strength. Since it is essentially an ethical weapon, only men inclined to the ethical way of life can use it wisely. Prahlad, Mirabai, and others were satyagrahis. At

[1] E. S. Montagu (1879-1924), Secretary of State for India, 1917-22 and cosponsor of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms

[2] Published in *Gujarati*, 2-9-1917

the time of the Morocco fighting, the Arabs were under fire from French guns. The Arabs were fighting, as they believed, solely for their religion. Reckless of their lives, they advanced running towards the French guns with cries of "Ya Allah"[1]. Here, there was no scope at all for fighting back to kill. The French gunners refused to fire on these Arabs and, throwing up their caps, ran to embrace these brave Arabs with shouts of joy. This is an example of satyagraha and the success it can achieve. The Arabs were not satyagrahis by deliberate choice. They got ready to face death under pressure of a strong impulse, and had no love in their hearts. A satyagrahi bears no ill-will, does not lay down his life in anger, but refuses rather to submit to his "enemy" or oppressor because he has the strength himself to suffer. He should, therefore, have a courageous spirit and a forgiving and compassionate nature. Imam Hassan[2] and Hussain[3] were merely two boys. They felt that an injustice had been done to them. When called upon to surrender, they refused. They knew at the time that this would mean death for them. If, however, they were to submit to injustices they would disgrace their manhood and betray their religion. In these circumstances, they yielded to the embrace of death. The heads of these fine young men rolled on the battlefield. In my view, Islam did not attain its greatness by the power of the sword but entirely through the self-immolation of its fakirs. It is soldierlike to allow oneself to be cut down by a sword, not to use the sword on another. When he comes to realize that he is guilty of murder, the killer, if he has been in the wrong, will feel sorry forever afterwards. The victim, however, will have gained nothing but victory even if he had acted wrongly in courting death. Satyagraha is the way of non-violence. It is, therefore, justified, indeed it is the right course, at all times and all places. The power of arms is violence and condemned as such in all religions. Even those who advocate the use of arms put various limits on it. There are no limits on satyagraha, or rather, none except those placed by the satyagrahi's capacity for *tapascharya*, for voluntary suffering.

Obviously, it is irrelevant to raise issues about the legality of such satyagraha. It is for the satyagrahi to decide. Observers may

[1] Glory to God

[2] Sons of Ali by his wife Fatima, daughter of the prophet. They refused to acknowledge the authority of Yazid (Caliph, 680-3). Hussain revolted against him, but was defeated and killed at Karbala.

[3] *ibid*

judge satyagraha after the event. The world's displeasure will not deter a satyagrahi. Whether or not satyagraha should be started is not decided by any mathematical rule. A man who believes that satyagraha may be started only after weighing the chances of defeat and victory and assuring oneself of the certainty of victory, may be a shrewd enough politician or an intelligent man, but he is no satyagrahi. A satyagrahi acts spontaneously.

Satyagraha and arms have both been in use from time immemorial. We find them praised in the extant scriptures. They are the expressions, one of the *daivi sampad*[1] and the other of the *asuri sampad*[1]. We believe that in former times in India the *daivi sampad* was much the stronger of the two. Even today that is the ideal we cherish. Europe provides the most striking example of the predominance of the *asuri sampad.*

Both these forms of strength are preferable to weakness, to what we know by the rather plain but much apter word 'cowardice'. Without either, swaraj or genuine popular awakening is impossible. Swaraj achieved otherwise than through resort to one or the other will not be true swaraj. Such swaraj can have no effect on the people. Popular awakening cannot be brought about without strength, without manliness. Let the leaders say what they like and the Government strive its utmost, unless they and we, all of us, strengthen the forces of satyagraha, the methods of violence are bound automatically to gain ascendancy. They are like weeds which grow wild in any soil. The crop of satyagraha requires willingness to exert oneself or a venturesome spirit by way of manure. Just as, moreover, the seedlings are likely to be lost among the weeds if the latter are not plucked out, so also will weeds of violence keep growing unless we keep the land free of them by *tapascharya* and, with compassion, pluck out those which have already grown. We can, with the help of satyagraha, win over those young men who have been driven to desperation and anger by what they think to be the tyranny of the Government and utilize their courage and their mettlesome spirit, their capacity for suffering, to strengthen the *daivi sampad* of satyagraha. It is therefore very much to be desired that satyagraha is propagated as quickly as can be. This is in the interest both of the rulers and the ruled. The satyagrahi desires to harass neither the Government nor anyone else. He takes no step without the fullest deliberation. He is never arrogant.

[1] God like equipment and demoniac equipment (*Vide Bhagvad Gita,* XVI. 3, 4)

Consequently, he will keep away from 'boycott' but be always firm in the vow of swadeshi as a matter of duty. He fears God alone, so that no other power can intimidate him. He will never, out of fear of punishment, leave a duty undone.

I need hardly say now that it is our duty to resort to satyagraha to secure the release of the learned Annie Bai and her co-workers. Whether we approve of every or any action of hers is another question. I, for one, certainly do not approve of some of them; all the same, her incarceration by the Government is a great mistake and an act of injustice. I know, of course, that the Government does not think it a mistake. Maybe the people are wrong in desiring her release. The Government has acted according to its lights. What can the people do to express their outraged feelings? Petitions, etc., are good enough when one's suffering is bearable. When it is unbearable, there is no remedy but satyagraha. Only when people find it unbearable will they, and only those who find it unbearable will, devote their all, body, mind and possessions, to securing the release of Annie Bai. This will be a powerful expression of popular feeling. It is my unshakable faith that before so great a self-sacrifice even the power of an emperor will give way. People may certainly restrain their feelings in view of the forthcoming visit of Mr. Montagu. That will be an expression of faith in his sense of justice. If she is not released, however, before his arrival, it will be our duty to resort to satyagraha. We do not want to provoke the Government or put difficulties in its way. By resorting to satyagraha, we reveal the intensity of our injured feelings and thereby serve the Government.

From a photostat of the Gujarati draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 6373

5. SATYAGRAHA—NOT PASSIVE RESISTANCE[1]

[About *September 2, 1917*][2]

The force denoted by the term 'passive resistance' and translated into Hindi as *nishkriya pratirodha is* not very accurately described either by the original English phrase or by its Hindi rendering. Its correct description is 'satyagraha'. Satyagraha was born in South Africa in 1908. There was no word in any Indian language

[1] The original Gujarati is not available.

[2] This article appears to belong to the same date as the preceding item.

denoting the power which our countrymen in South Africa invoked for the redress of their grievances. There was an English equivalent, namely, 'passive resistance', and we carried on with it. However, the need for a word to describe this unique power came to be increasingly felt, and it was decided to award a prize to anyone who could think of an appropriate term. A Gujarati-speaking[1] gentleman submitted the word 'satyagraha', and it was adjudged the best.

'Passive resistance' conveyed the idea of the Suffragette Movement in England. Burning of houses by these women was called 'passive resistance' and so also their fasting in prison. All such acts might very well be 'passive resistance' but they were not 'satyagraha'. It is said of 'passive resistance' that it is the weapon of the weak, but the power which is the subject of this article can be used only by the strong. This power is not 'passive' resistance; indeed it calls for intense activity. The movement in South Africa was not passive but active. The Indians of South Africa believed that Truth was their object, that Truth ever triumphs, and with this definiteness of purpose they persistently held on to Truth. They put up with all the suffering that this persistence implied. With the conviction that Truth is not to be renounced even unto death, they shed the fear of death. In the cause of Truth, the prison was a palace to them and its doors the gateway to freedom.

WHAT IS SATYAGRAHA?

Satyagraha is not physical force. A satyagrahi does not inflict pain on the adversary; he does not seek his destruction. A satyagrahi never resorts to firearms. In the use of satyagraha, there is no ill-will whatever.

Satyagraha is pure soul-force. Truth is the very substance of the soul. That is why this force is called satyagraha. The soul is informed with knowledge. In it burns the flame of love. If someone gives us pain through ignorance, we shall win him through love. "Nonviolence is the supreme dharma"[2] is the proof of this power of love. Non-violence is a dormant state. In the waking state, it is love. Ruled by love, the world goes on. In English there is a saying, "Might is Right". Then there is the doctrine of the survival of the fittest. Both these ideas are contradictory to the above principle. Neither is wholly

[1] The source has 'Hindi-speaking'.
[2] *Ahimsa Paramo Dharmah*

true. If ill-will were the chief motive-force, the world would have been destroyed long ago; and neither would I have had the opportunity to write this article nor would the hopes of the readers be fulfilled. We are alive solely because of love. We are all ourselves the proof of this. Deluded by modern western civilization, we have forgotten our ancient civilization and worship the might of arms.

WORSHIP OF ARMED MIGHT

We forget the principle of non-violence, which is the essence of all religions. The doctrine of arms stands for irreligion. It is due to the sway of that doctrine that a sanguinary war is raging in Europe.

In India also we find worship of arms. We see it even in that great work of Tulsidas. But it is seen in all the books that soul-force is the supreme power.

RAMA AND RAVANA

Rama stands for the soul and Ravana for the non-soul. The immense physical might of Ravana is as nothing compared to the soul-force of Rama. Ravana's ten heads are as straw to Rama. Rama is a yogi, he has conquered self and pride. He is "placid equally in affluence and adversity", he has "neither attachment, nor greed nor the intoxication of status". This represents the ultimate in satyagraha. The banner of saytagraha can again fly in the Indian sky and it is our duty to raise it. If we take recourse to satyagraha, we can conquer our conquerors the English, make them bow before our tremendous soul-force, and the issue will be of benefit to the whole world.

It is certain that India cannot rival Britain or Europe in force of arms. The British worship the war-god and they can all of them become, as they are becoming, bearers of arms. The hundreds of millions in India can never carry arms. They have made the religion of non-violence their own. It is impossible for the *varnashram* system to disappear from India.

WAY OF VARNASHRAM

The way of *varnashram* is a necessary law of nature. India, by making a judicious use of it, derives much benefit. Even the Muslims and the English in India observe this system to some extent. Outside of India, too, people follow it without being aware of it. So long as this institution of *varnashram* exists in India, everyone cannot bear arms here. The highest place in India is assigned to the brahmana dharma—which is soul-force. Even the armed warrior does obeisance to the brahmin. So long as this custom prevails, it is vain for us to aspire for equality with the West in force of arms.

PANACEA FOR ALL ILLS

It is our *kamadhenu*[1]. It brings good both to the satyagrahi and his adversary. It is ever victorious. For instance, Harishchandra was a satyagrahi, Prahlad was a satyagrahi, Mirabai was a satyagrahi. Daniel, Socrates and those Arabs who hurled themselves on the fire of the French artillery were all satyagrahis. We see from these examples that a satyagrahi does not fear for his body, he does not give up what he thinks is Truth; the word 'defeat' is not to be found in his dictionary, he does not wish for the destruction of his antagonist, he does not vent anger on him; but has only compassion for him.

A satyagrahi does not wait for others, but throws himself into the fray, relying entirely on his own resources. He trusts that when the time comes, others will do likewise. His practice is his precept. Like air, satyagraha is all-pervading. It is infectious, which means that all people—big and small, men and women—can become satyagrahis. No one is kept out from the army of satyagrahis. A satyagrahi cannot perpetrate tyranny on anyone; he is not subdued through application of physical force; he does not strike at anyone. Just as anyone can resort to satyagraha, it can be resorted to in almost any situation.

HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

People demand historical evidence in support of satyagraha. History is for the most part a record of armed activities. Natural activities find very little mention in it. Only uncommon activities strike us with wonder. Satyagraha has been used always and in all situations. The father and the son, the man and the wife are perpetually resorting to satyagraha, one towards the other. When a father gets angry and punishes the son, the son does not hit back with a weapon, he conquers his father's anger by submitting to him. The son refuses to be subdued by the unjust rule of his father but he puts up with the punishment that he may incur through disobeying the unjust father. We can similarly free ourselves of the unjust rule of the Government by defying the unjust rule and accepting the punishments that go with it. We do not bear malice towards the Government. When we set its fears at rest, when we do not desire to make armed assaults on the administrators, nor to unseat them from power, but only to get rid of their injustice, they will at once be subdued to our will.

[1] Mythical cow which yielded whatever one wished

The question is asked why we should call any rule unjust. In saying so, we ourselves assume the function of a judge. It is true. But in this world, we always have to act as judges for ourselves. That is why the satyagrahi does not strike his adversary with arms. If he has Truth on his side, he will win, and if his thought is faulty, he will suffer the consequences of his fault.

What is the good, they ask, of only one person opposing injustice; for he will be punished and destroyed, he will languish in prison or meet an untimely end through hanging. The objection is not valid. History shows that all reforms have begun with one person. Fruit is hard to come by without *tapasya*. The suffering that has to be undergone in satyagraha is *tapasya* in its purest form. Only when the *tapasya is* capable of bearing fruit, do we have the fruit. This establishes the fact that when there is insufficient *tapasya*, the fruit is delayed. The *tapasya* of Jesus Christ, boundless though it was, was not sufficient for Europe's need. Europe has disapproved Christ. Through ignorance, it has disregarded Christ's pure way of life. Many Christs will have to offer themselves as sacrifice at the terrible altar of Europe, and only then will realization dawn on that continent. But Jesus will always be the first among these. He has been the sower of the seed and his will therefore be the credit for raising the harvest.

EDUCATING IGNORANT PEASANTS IN SATYAGRAHA

It is said that it is a very difficult, if not an altogether impossible, task to educate ignorant peasants in satyagraha and that it is full of perils, for it is a very arduous business to transform unlettered ignorant people from one condition into another. Both the arguments are just silly. The people of India are perfectly fit to receive the training of satyagraha. India has knowledge of dharma, and where there is knowledge of dharma, satyagraha is a very simple matter. The people of India have drunk of the nectar of devotion. This great people overflows with faith. It is no difficult matter to lead such a people on to the right path of satyagraha. Some have a fear that once people get involved in satyagraha, they may at a later stage take to arms. This fear is illusory. From the path of satyagraha [clinging to Truth], a transition to the path of *a-satyagraha* [clinging to untruth] is impossible. It is possible of course that some people who believe in armed activity may mislead the satyagrahis by infiltrating into their ranks and later making them take to arms. This is possible in all enterprises. But as compared to other activities, it is less likely to

happen in satyagraha, for their motives soon get exposed and when the people are not ready to take up arms, it becomes almost impossible to lead them on to that terrible path. The might of arms is directly opposed to the might of satyagraha. Just as darkness does not abide in light, soulless armed activity cannot enter the sunlike radiance of soul-force. Many Pathans took part in satyagraha in South Africa abiding by all the rules of satyagraha.

Then it is said that much suffering is involved in being a satyagrahi and that the entire people will not be willing to put upwith this suffering. The objection is not valid. People in general always follow in the footsteps of the noble. There is no doubt that it is difficult to produce a satyagrahi leader. Our experience is that a satyagrahi needs many more virtues like self-control, fearlessness, etc., than are requisite for one who believes in armed action. The greatness of the man bearing arms does not lie in the superiority of the arms, nor does it lie in his physical prowess. It lies in his determination and fearlessness in face of death. General Gordon was a mighty warrior of the British Empire. In the statue that has been erected in his memory he has only a small baton in his hand. It goes to show that the strength of a warrior is not measured by reference to his weapons but by his firmness of mind. A satyagrahi needs millions of times more of such firmness than does a bearer of arms. The birth of such a man can bring about the salvation of India in no time. Not only India but the whole world awaits the advent of such a man. We may in the meanwhile prepare the ground as much as we can through satyagraha.

USE OF SATYAGRAHA

How can we make use of satyagraha in the present conditions? Why should we take to satyagraha in the fight for freedom? We are all guilty of killing manliness. So long as our learned Annie Besant is in detention, it is an insult to our manhood. How can we secure her release through satyagraha? It may be that the Government has acted in good faith, that it has sufficient grounds for keeping her under detention. But, at any rate, the people are unhappy at her being deprived of her freedom. Annie Besant cannot be freed through armed action. No Indian will approve of such an action. We cannot secure her freedom by submitting petitions and the like. Much time has passed. We can all humbly inform the Government that if Mrs. Annie Besant is not released within the time limit prescribed by us, we

will all be compelled to follow her path. It is possible that all of us do not like all her actions; but we find nothing in her actions which threatens the "established Government"[1] or the vested interests. Therefore we too by participating in her activities will ask for her lot, that is, we shall all court imprisonment. The members of our Legislative Assembly also can petition the Government and when the petition is not accepted, they can resign their membership.For swaraj also, sat-yagraha is the unfailing weapon. Satyagraha means that what we want is truth, that we deserve it and that we will work for it even untodeath.

Nothing more need be said. Truth alone triumphs. There is no dharma higher than Truth. Truth always wins. We pray to God that in this sacred land we may bring about the reign of dharma by following satyagraha and that this our country may become an example for all to follow.

[From Hindi]

Mahatma Gandhi, Ramchandra Varma

6. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

AHMEDABAD,

September 5, 1917

MY DEAR ESTHER,

I have your two letters really to answer, the last one is most touching. The cause of the terrible pain I have suffered was within myself. I twice ate when I ought not to have. The result was dysentery in a most acute form. I am now much better and am making daily progress. In four or five days, I shall be out of bed.

With love,

BAPU

My Dear Child, p. 21

[1] The English Phrase is used.

7. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI ANOOPCHAND MEHTA

AHMEDABAD,
Bhadarva Vad 4 [*September 5, 1917*][1]

BHAISHRI BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. Many thanks. The decision about Viramgam has been well taken.[2]

The question of small princely states is always present in my mind. For the present it does not seem to advance any further.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

BHAGWANJI ANOOPCHAND VAKIL
RAJKOT

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N 5805. Also C.W. 3028. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

8. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

AHMEDABAD,
September 6, 1917

MY DEAR ESTHER,

I was delighted to receive your note. I hope to be in Madras for a day only on the 14th instant. I shall have to leave on the 15th instant in the evening.

Ever since my arrival here, I have been on the move trying to spread the gospel of satyagraha in the place of methods of violence. It is an uphill task. You will see from the enclosed what I mean by satyagraha.

It was not my intention that your remarks upon dress

[1] The year has been inferred from the reference to the decision regarding Viramgam.

[2] Gandhiji had written to the Government and also discussed the subject of the abolition of the customs levy at Viramgam with the Governor of Bombay and the Viceroy. The levy was abolished on November 7, 1917. *Vide* also. "Speech at Gujarat Political conference—I", 3-11-1917 and "Resolutions at Gujarat Political Conference—II", 5-11-1917.

should be published. I forgot to warn Dr. M. about it. He liked your views so much that he could not restrain himself. I do hope you don't mind my sending to Dr. M. such of your letters as may appear to be helpful.

'To be free from desire' is a technical expression and means desire to be or possess something short of the highest. Thus, love of God is not 'a desire'. It is the natural longing. But to possess a fortune so that I may do good is a desire and therefore to be curbed. Our good acts must be as natural to us as the twinkling of our eyes. Without our desiring, they act automatically. The doing of good should be just as natural to us.

Yours ever,

BAPU

My Dear Child, pp. 21-2

9. LETTER TO BHAGWANJ1 VAKIL

AHMEDABAD,

Bhadarva Vad 9 [*September 9, 1917*][1]

BHAISHRI BHAGWANJI[2],

Will you do one thing to help me? Will you send a brief note on the evils in every State? I must have the freedom to publish it. Even if you don't give me such freedom, send the note at any rate. For instance, I have heard that in Jamnagar there is a tax on the Brahmin's kit and a tax to be paid on the calving of a buffalo. In Wadhwan, hand-spun yarn is taxed in three ways. Mill yarn and mill cloth are exempt. These are the more obvious examples I have mentioned. I want these and the like, even graver ones. Note the hardships resulting from laws and the manner of enforcing them. Send the thing immediately. I shall get it wherever I happen to be.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 3024. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] This appears to have been written before "Letter to Bhagwanji Vakil", 3-10-1917.

[2] Bhagwanji Anoopchand of Rajkot

10. LETTER TO KALYANJI MEHTA

AHMEDABAD,
[*September 11, 1917*][1]

BHAISHRI,

I am leaving for Madras today. I shall be in Poona on the 17th and the 18th. I shall come away from Poona on the 19th morning. You can then see me in Bombay. On the same date I shall leave for Ranchi by Nagpur Mail.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

BHAISHRI KALYANJI MEHTA
Patel Bandhu Office
Surat

From a photostat of the original postcard in Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 2665

11. PETITION TO E. S. MONTAGU

[Before *September 13, 1917*][2]

THE RIGHT HON'BLE MR. E. S. MONTAGU
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

THE PETITION OF THE BRITISH SUBJECTS OF GUJARAT

HUMBLY SHEWETH,

(1) The petitioners have considered and understood the Swaraj Scheme prepared by the Council of the All-India Moslem League and the All-India Congress Committee and unanimously adopted last year by the Indian National Congress and the All-India Moslem League.

(2) The petitioners approve of the Scheme.

(3) In the humble opinion of the petitioners, the reforms

[1] The date is fixed on the basis of Gandhiji's tour itinerary given in the letter.

[2] This was drafted by Gandhiji in Gujarati as stated in "Circular Letter by Gujarat Sabha", 13-9-1917; *Vide* Appendix "Circular Letter By Gujarat Sabha Office", 13-9-1917 Identical petitions were presented in other Indian languages; for example, the Hindi petition reproduced at page 521 of *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran.*

proposed in the aforementioned Scheme are absolutely necessary in the interests of India and the Empire.

(4) It is further the petitioner's belief that without such reforms India will not witness the era of true contentment.

For these reasons the petitioners respectfully pray that you will be pleased to give full consideration and accept the reform proposals and thus render successful your visit taken at great inconvenience and fulfil the national hope.

And for this act of kindness the petitioners shall for ever remain grateful.

Date	Petitioner's signature	Occupation	Address

From facsimile published in *Mahatma*, Vol. I

12. INTRUCTIONS TO VOLUNTEERS[1]

[Before *September 13, 1917*]

Mr. Gandhi also devised the following rules for the Volunteers to obtain signatures:

1. In taking signatures to the petition, first it must be ascertained whether the person signing correctly understands the scheme described in the petition or not.

2. In order to make people understand the scheme, it should be read out to the inhabitants of the place, called together by a notification prepared by the Sabha. If in such reading the people raise any new question, which cannot be answered out of the Foreword, then the Volunteer should not decide the point himself but should refer it to the Chief of his own Circle; and the questioner should not be allowed to sign so long as he has not been satisfied.

3. It should be clearly kept in mind that no kind of pressure is to be used on any inhabitant of any place.

4. Care should be taken that Government servants, as also people

[1] These were framed by Gandhiji; *vide* "Circular Letter by Gujarat Sabha Office", 13-9-1917.

who are unable to understand, do not sign by oversight.

5. Signatures should not be taken from young people, who appear to be under the age of eighteen.

6. Signatures should not be taken from school-going students, whatever their age may be.

7. There is no objection in taking signatures from any man or woman if the Volunteer is convinced that he or she can understand the matter.

8. A man or woman, who is unable to read or write, should be made to put his or her cross and an authentication of it by a well-known person of the place should be placed opposite the cross.

9. It should be kept in mind that each signature is to be taken on two forms.

10. The papers should be preserved without being soiled or crumpled.

11. The papers which are not signed should at once be sent to the Head Office; and a report should at once be sent to the Head Office from the place where a meeting has been held or some attempt made.

12. The Volunteer has no authority to make any speech on any subject outside the scope of petition or on any subject relating to but not included in the Foreword.

13. First the inhabitants of a place should be called together and the Foreword read out to them and their signatures taken. After that as many houses as can as be practicable should be visited and the signatures of the rest of the men and women taken. But these should be taken only after the Foreword has been explained.

14. If while visiting places or calling together people, the police or any other officials object, the Volunteer should politely reply that so long as the Head Office does not direct the cessation of work, he would have to continue his work. If in doing this, he is arrested by the police, he should allow himself to be arrested, but he should not resist the police. And if such a thing happens, he should at once send a detailed report to the Head Office. If people themselves hesitate to gather together through the fear of the police or for any other cause, the Volunteer should give up that place and should at once give information of such an occurrence to the Head Office.

Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi, Natesan (3rd Ed.)

13. A SUGGESTION

[Before *September 16, 1917*]

Gandhiji writes as follows:

On the day the Congress holds its session at Calcutta, meetings should be held in every town and village, the Gujarati translation of the Congress President's[1] speech should be read out and the Congress-League Scheme of Reforms explained to the people.

[From Gujarati]
Gujarati, 16-9-1917

14. LETTER TO SATYANAND BOSE[2]

[Before *September 16, 1917*]

DEAR SATYANAND BABU,

Mr. Polak had sent me your letter of inquiry about Passive Resistance. I have time only to give you the briefest reply to your questions. P. R., as conceived by me, is soul force, and essentially a religious principle. Its scope, therefore, takes in every variety of wrong. It is a force as old as the world itself. Consider the conduct of Prahlad, Daniel, Jesus, Mirabai and others whose guiding principle in life has been religion. Indians in South Africa made use, more or less, of this force, and they were successful only to the extent that they used it to the exclusion of every other force.

From whom did the idea first originate, is your second question. In view of the meaning I have given to the expression, no reply seems to be necessary. But it may be stated that so far as its use on the political platform is concerned, the idea may be said to have originated with me. I knew nothing of it, but Tolstoy drew my attention to it.

At the time of the Controversy on the Education Bill passed by the House of Commons and the so-called Passive Resistance offered by Dr. Clifford[3] and others, Mr. Winston

[1] Mrs. Besant

[2] This was in reply to the addressee's letter dated August 15, 1917 to Polak.

[3] John Clifford (1836-1923), British Non-conformist minister and liberal politician, who led the "Passive Resistance" movement against the Education Bill of 1902 by non-payment of taxes.

Churchill[1] said that P. R. was perfectly constitutional under the British Constitution. A similar pronouncement was made by Gen. Smuts, with regard to our Passive Resistance when demand was made by Senator Whiteside for my deportation side by side with that of the nine Englishmen who were deported in connection with the European Railway strike that had just then ended.

I am unable, offhand, to give any reference from a constitutional lawyer.[2]

Your fifth question requires historical precedents. This is answered in para. 2.

Your sixth question, whether it comes within constitutional methods needs no answer. I am sorry for the delay that has taken place in replying. I am in Ahmedabad up to the 16th September, then prepare to leave for Bihar.

From a photostat of the office copy in Mahadev Desai's hand: S. N. 6385

15. THE MORAL BASIS OF CO-OPERATION[3]

The only claim I have on your indulgence is that some months ago I attended with Mr. Ewbank a meeting of mill-hands to whom he wanted to explain the principles of co-operation. The *chawl*[4] in which they were living was as filthy as it well could be. Recent rains had made matters worse. And I must frankly confess that had not it been for Mr. Ewbank's great zeal for the cause he has made his own, I should have shirked the task. But there we were, seated on a fairly worn out *charpai*[5], surrounded by men, women and children. Mr. Ewbank opened fire on a man who had put himself forward and who wore not a particularly innocent countenance. After he had engaged him and the other people about him in Gujarati conversation,

[1] Sir Winston (Leonard Spencer) Churchill (1874-), British statesman and writer; Under-Secretary for Colonies, 1905-8 (Gandhiji first met him during his deputation to England in 1906); Minister of Munitions, 1917; Secretary for War, 1918-21; Prime Minister, 1940-5, 1951-5; awarded Nobel Prize for Literature, 1953

[2] Questions 4 and 5 were:

"4. Did any constitutional lawyer deal with the subject? (Quote references)

"5. Quote instances of passive resistance from history. . ."

[3] Contributed to the Bombay Provincial Co-operative Conference held on September 17, 1917

[4] Tenement Building

[5] Cot

he wanted me to speak to the people. Owing to the suspicious looks of the man who was first spoken to, I naturally pressed home the moralities of co-operation. I fancy that Mr. Ewbank rather liked the manner in which I handled the subject. Hence, I believe, his kind invitation to me to tax your patience for a few moments upon a consideration of co-operation from a moral standpoint.

My knowledge of the technicality of co-operation is next to nothing. My brother Devdhar has made the subject his own. Whatever he does naturally attracts me and predisposes me to think that there must be something good in it and the handling of it must be fairly difficult. Mr. Ewbank very kindly placed at my disposal some literature too on the subject. And I have had a unique opportunity of watching the effect of some co-operative effort in Champaran. I have gone through Mr. Ewbank's ten main points which are like the commandments, and I have gone through the twelve points of Mr. Collins of Behar, which remind me of the law of the twelve tables. There are so-called agricultural banks in Champaran. They were to me disappointing efforts, if they were meant to be demonstrations of the success of co-operation. On the other hand, there is quiet work in the same direction being done by Mr. Hodge, a missionary whose efforts are leaving their impression on those who come in contact with him. Mr. Hodge is a co-operative enthusiast and probably considers that the results which he sees flowing from his efforts are due to the working of co-operation. I who was able to watch the two efforts had no hesitation in inferring that the personal equation counted for success in the one and failure in the other instance.

I am an enthusiast myself, but twenty-five years of experimenting and experience have made me a cautious and discriminating enthusiast. Workers in a cause necessarily, though quite unconsciously, exaggerate its merits and often succeed in turning its very defects into advantages. In spite of my caution I consider the little institution[1] I am conducting in Ahmedabad as the finest thing in the world. It alone gives me sufficient inspiration. Critics tell me that it represents a soulless soul-force and that its severe discipline has made it merely mechanical. I suppose both—the critics and I—are wrong. It is, at best, a humble attempt to place at the disposal of the nation a home where men and women may have scope for free and unfettered development of character, in keeping with the national genius, and if

[1] Satyagraha Ashram

its controllers do not take care, the discipline that is the foundation of character, may frustrate the very end in view. I would venture, therefore, to warn enthusiasts in co-operation against entertaining false hopes.

With Sir Daniel Hamilton, it has become a religion. On the 13th January last, he addressed the students of the Scottish Churches College, and in order to point a moral he instanced Scotland's poverty of two hundred years ago and showed how that great country was raised from a condition of poverty to plenty. He said:

> There were two powers which raised her—the Scottish Church and the Scottish banks. The Church manufactured the men and the banks manufactured the money to give the men a start in life.... The Church disciplined the nation in the fear of God which is the beginning of wisdom and in the parish schools of the Church, the children learned that the chief end of man's life was to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever. Men were trained to believe in God and in themselves, and on the trustworthy character so created, the Scottish banking system was built.

Sir Daniel then shows that it was possible to build up the marvellous Scottish banking system only on the character so built. So far there can only be perfect agreement with Sir Daniel, for 'Without character there is no co-operation' is a sound maxim. But he would have us go much further. He thus waxes eloquent on co-operation:

> Whatever may be your day-dreams of India's future, never forget this that it is to weld India into one, and so enable her to take her rightful place in the world, that the British Government is here; and the welding hammer in the hand of the Government is the co-operative movement.

In his opinion, it is the panacea of all the evils that afflict India at the present moment. In its extended sense it can justify the claim on one condition which need not be mentioned here; in the limited sense in which Sir Daniel has used it, I venture to think, it is an enthusiast's exaggeration. Mark his peroration:

> Credit which is only Trust and Faith, is becoming more and more the money power of the world, and in the parchment bullet into which is impressed the faith which removes mountains, India will find victory and peace.

Here there is evident confusion of thought. The credit which is becoming the money power of the world has little moral basis and is not a synonym for Trust or Faith, which are purely moral qualities. After twenty years' experience of hundreds of men, who had dealings with banks in South Africa, the opinion I had so often heard expressed has become firmly rooted in me, that the greater the rascal,

the greater the credit he enjoys with his banks. The banks do not pry into his moral character; they are satisfied that he meets his over-drafts and promissory notes punctually. The credit system has encircled this beautiful globe of ours like a serpent's coil, and if we do not mind, it bids fair to crush us out of breath. I have witnessed the ruin of many a home through the system, and it has made no difference whether the credit was labelled co-operative or otherwise. The deadly coil has made possible the devastating spectacle in Europe, which we are helplessly looking on. It was perhaps never so true as it is to-day that as in law so in war the longest purse finally wins. I have ventured to give prominence to the current belief about credit system in order to emphasise the point that the co-operative movement will be a blessing to India only to the extent that it is a moral movement strictly directed by men fired with religious fervour. It follows, therefore, that co-operation should be confined to men wishing to be morally right, but failing to do so, because of grinding poverty or of the grip of the *mahajan*[1]. Facility for obtaining loans at fair rates will not make immoral or unmoral men moral. But the wisdom of the State or philanthropists demands that they should help, on the onward path, men struggling to be good.

Too often do we believe that material prosperity means moral growth. It is necessary that a movement which is fraught with so much good to India should not degenerate into one for merely advancing cheap loans. I was therefore delighted to read the recommendation in the *Report of the Committee on Co-operation in India,* that

> they wish clearly to express their opinion that it is to true co-operation alone, that is, to a co-operation which recognises the moral aspect of the question that Government must look for the amelioration of the masses and not to a pseudo co-operative edifice, however imposing, which is built in ignorance of co-operative, principles.

With this standard before us, we will not measure the success of the movement by the number of co-operative societies formed, but by the moral condition of the co-operators. The Registrars will in that event ensure the moral growth of existing societies before multiplying them. And the Government will make their promotion conditional, not upon the number of societies they have registered, but the moral success of the existing institutions. This will mean tracing the course of every pice lent to the members. Those responsible for

[1] Moneylender

the proper conduct of co-operative societies will see to it that the money advanced does not find its way into the toddy-sellers' till or into the pockets of the keepers of gambling dens. I would excuse the rapacity of the *mahajan* if it has succeeded in keeping the gambling die or toddy from the ryot's home.

A word perhaps about the *mahajan* will not be out of place. Co-operation is not a new device. The ryots co-operate to drum out monkeys or birds that destroy their crops. They co-operate to use a common thrashing floor. I have found them co-operate to protect their cattle to the extent of their devoting their best land for the grazing of their cattle. And they have been found co-operating against a particularly rapacious *mahajan*. Doubt has been-expressed as to the success of co-operation because of the tightness of the *mahajan's* hold on the ryots. I do not share the fears. The mightiest *mahajan* must, if he represents an evil force, bend before co-operation, conceived as an essentially moral movement. But my limited experience of the *mahajan* of Champaran has made me revise the accepted opinion about his 'blighting influence'. I have found him to be not always relentless, not always exacting of the last pie. He sometimes serves his clients in many ways or even comes to their rescue in the hour of their distress. My observation is so limited that I dare not draw any conclusions from it, but I respectfully enquire whether it is not possible to make a serious effort to draw out the good in the *mahajan* and help him or induce him to throw out the evil in him. May he not be induced to join the army of co-operation, or has experience proved that he is past praying for?

I note that the movement takes note of all indigenous industries. I beg publicly to express my gratitude to Government for helping me in my humble effort to improve the lot of the weaver. The experiment I am conducting shows that there is a vast field for work in this direction. No well-wisher of India, no patriot dare look upon the impending destruction of the handloom weaver with equanimity. As Dr. Mann has stated, this industry used to supply the peasant with an additional source of livelihood and an insurance against famine. Every Registrar who will nurse back to life this important and graceful industry will earn the gratitude of India. My humble effort consists of, firstly, in making researches as to the possibilities of simple reforms in the orthodox handlooms, secondly, in weaning the educated youth from the craving for Government or other service and the feeling that

education renders him unfit for independent occupation and inducing him to take to weaving as a calling as honourable as that of a barrister or a doctor, and, thirdly, by helping those who have abandoned their occupation to revert to it. I will not weary the audience with any statement on the first two parts of the experiment. The third may be allowed a few sentences as it has a direct bearing upon the subject before us. I was able to enter upon it only six months ago. Five families that had left off the calling have reverted to it and they are doing a prosperous business. The Ashram supplies them at their door with the yarn they need; it volunteers to take delivery of the cloth woven, paying them cash at the market rate. The Ashram merely loses interest on the loan advanced for the yarn. It has as yet suffered no loss and is able to restrict its loss to a minimum by limiting the loan to a particular figure. All future transactions are strictly cash. We are able to command a ready sale for the cloth received. The loss of interest, therefore, on the transaction is negligible. I would like the audience to note its purely moral character from start to finish. The Ashram depends for its existence on such help as *friends* render it. We, therefore, can have no warrant for charging interest. The weavers could not be saddled with it. Whole families that were breaking to pieces are put together again. The use of the loan is predetermined. And we the middlemen being volunteers obtain the privilege of entering into the lives of these families 1 hope for their and our betterment. We cannot lift them without being lifted ourselves. This last relationship has not yet been developed, but we hope at an early date to take in hand the education too of these families and not rest satisfied till we have touched them at every point. This is not too ambitious a dream. God willing, it will be a reality some day. I have ventured to dilate upon the small experiment to illustrate what I mean by co-operation to present it to others for imitation. Let us be sure of our ideal. We shall ever fail to realise it, but we should never cease to strive for it. Then there need be no fear of "co-operation of scoundrels" that Ruskin so rightly dreaded.

From the original in Gandhiji's hand; S. N. 6412: also *The Indian Review*, October 1917

16. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

RANCHI,
[*Adhik Aso Sud 7, September 23, 1917*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

It is twelve days since I left you. Out of the eleven days, nine I spent on the train and only two nights at a friend's. Despite this, my health has not suffered. I had regular food today after eleven days. I had discussions with Amritlalbhai[2] in Bombay about the Ashram buildings. Chhaganlal must have written to you. He made some very weighty suggestions, the most important being that we cannot escape using wood. There will be some difficulty about the foundation. It just will not hold there, and the only way out is to have wood-work filled in with brick. The library, he said, would have to be lengthened, otherwise there would not be enough light. He will himself write in detail about all this. I hope you remember that you have to carry with you the lamp, with its post, from Jivanlalbhai's bungalow. We shall need them. Amritlalbhai suggested that the wood should be thickly painted all round with coal tar. Provide for good latrines and urinals from the very start. Money spent on them will be well spent. It will also be necessary to provide for quick draining away of sewage. I think it needful that you collect in the Ashram stone, gravel, etc., wherever and in whatever quantity available. Plan the roads fairly broad and get them ready soon. I see that I shall have to stay longer in Ranchi than I had thought. The sittings start on Monday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5716. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] Gandhiji left Ahmedabad on September 11 and arrived at Ranchi, *via* Bombay, Madras and Poona, on September 22, spending nine days on the train. Again, the first meeting of the second session of the Champaran Enquiry Committee, which is referred to at the end of the letter, was held on Monday, September 24 at Ranchi. The original has *Bhadarva Sud 7,* which appears to be a slip for *Adhik Aso Sud* 7.

[2] Thakkar

17. EXTRACTS FROM MINUTES OF CHAMPARAN COMMITTEE MEETING

RANCHI,
September 24, 1917

The President said that he understood that Mr. Gandhi had some remarks to make about the draft report which had been circulated. Mr. Gandhi said that he had an interview with His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor and understood from him that arbitration on the conflicting claims as to *sharahbeshi* was possible. The President said that during the time he had been in Ranchi he had discussed this matter with the local Government and had pointed out that there were three possible courses:

(1) for the local Government to arbitrate,

(2) for the Bettiah estate to meet the difference of 25 per cent, or

(3) for the question to be left to a special tribunal.

He understood that the local Government was not prepared to arbitrate but was prepared to consider the second suggestion after consulting the local officers. The latter were, however, opposed to the idea and when he himself had put it to the planters principally concerned, viz., Messrs Norman, Hill and Irwin, he gathered that they also were not in favour of it. He, therefore, understood that the local Government had abandoned all idea of the first and second alternatives and the report was consequently drafted on the assumption that the third alternative would be adopted. Mr. Gandhi said that he thought that Sir Edward Gait would be prepared to arbitrate and suggested that the matter might be referred to him. Mr. Rainy pointed out that it would he necessary to ascertain first whether the parties were willing. The President said that it was necessary, before the matter was referred to His Honour, to decide one or two points. The first was as to Turkaulia. Mr. Hill had not agreed to a reduction in *sharahbeshi* larger than 20 per cent and Mr. Gandhi had said that he was prepared to consider special cases. The President asked, therefore, whether he would agree in the case of Turkaulia for the arbitration to be between the limits of 20 per cent and 40 per cent. Mr. Gandhi agreed to this. The President said that the second point was, supposing some of the planters agreed and some did not, was the arbitration to be recommended in the case of those who agreed? Mr. Gandhi said that he thought if any concerns preferred to fight out their case in the ordinary courts, he would have no objection to their doing so. Mr. Reid agreed to this. The President then asked whether Mr. Gandhi intended the arbitration to be done by His Honour personally or by the local Government. Mr. Gandhi said that he thought it should be done by His Honour personally and the Committee agreed. Mr. Reid enquired whether His Honour would fix a separate figure for each factory. Mr. Gandhi said he thought it was not necessary

to go into details and that this could be left to His Honour. The President then pointed out that, supposing the arbitration was undertaken, it was necessary to give the planters some assurance that the award would be made binding on the *raiyats*. Mr. Adami said that this would require legislation. Mr. Gandhi, however, thought that it would be simpler and just as binding as legislation, if he got a power of attorney from the *raiyats* to act on their behalf. This would not cause so much delay and probably be less troublesome on the whole than special legislation. The President asked what was to be done in the case of those *raiyats* who were not paying *sharahbeshi* and against whom the indigo obligation was recorded. Mr. Gandhi said that they should have the option of commuting the obligation at whatever rate might eventually be awarded. The President pointed out that the Committee had already agreed that the *tinkathia* system was so bad that it ought to be abolished. Mr. Gandhi said that in spite of that he could not see why *raiyats* should be compelled to pay enhanced rents if they did not wish to. He was prepared to try and get a power of attorney from such *raiyats* but the *raiyats* should not be compelled to agree to the arbitration. Mr. Reid said he thought that there would be great delay in getting the power of attorney and the President asked what would happen if the *raiyats* repudiated it subsequently. Mr. Gandhi said that in that case the *raiyats* would have to fight, but that was not likely. He would agree to the following being put in the report, "In order to protect the planters in the matter of acceptance by the *raiyats* of the Lieutenant-Governor's award, Mr. Gandhi would undertake to obtain a power of attorney from the *raiyats* concerned." He added that it might be simpler if the *raiyats* simply signed an agreement that they would accept the figure fixed by the Lieutenant-Governor. The President enquired whether if arbitration was to take place before this agreement was obtained, it would be right to go to the *raiyats* and ask them to sign it subsequent to the arbitration. Mr. Gandhi said that in that case it would not be a power of attorney but would be a legal acceptance. Mr. Rainy said that what was required was something which the *raiyat* could not question if the planter had to bring a suit for arrears of rent. Mr. Reid pointed out that if the attested rent had to be revised in the record, legislation would be necessary and a separate agreement would be required from each *raiyat* specifying the terms which had been settled in each particular case. The President said that the difficulty was that while with the planters the Committee were dealing with principals, with *raiyats* they were dealing with the representatives. The two methods which had been proposed to get over this were

(1) to get a power of attorney from the *raiyats* before arbitration which would be a lengthy process, and

(2) that Mr. Gandhi should obtain a legal acceptance after arbitration.

Mr. Adami said that if the second suggestion was adopted, an agreement would have to be taken from every *raiyats* and registered, The President pointed out that in

that case the expense would be considerable and it would have to be decided who was to bear it. Mr. Gandhi said that to get the power of attorney, it would take at least a month. Mr. Reid thought that legislation would be preferable. Mr. Rainy pointed out that it would be difficult to have the arbitration before the power of attorney was obtained and asked whether Mr. Gandhi would not agree to recommend that the settlement should be made binding by legislation, if necessary. Mr. Gandhi agreed to that. Mr. Reid said that he understood that in any case legislation was necessary to abolish the *tinkathia* system and he saw no reason therefore why provisions as to *sharahbeshi* should not also be included. The President said he thought that the proposal for special legislation was to some extent gambling on the Legislative Council but the members generally thought there would be no difficulty about this. It was finally agreed that the President should go to His Honour with the unanimous request that he should arbitrate on the following basis:

(l) In the case of Turkaulia between the limits of 20 per cent and 40 per cent reduction in *sharahbeshi*.

(2) In Pipra, Motihari, Jallaha and Sirni between the limits of 25 per cent and 40 per cent reduction.

The arbitration was only to take place where the concerns agreed. Any concern which did not agree would be left to the agency of the ordinary courts. The award might vary for different concerns and although Mr. Gandhi would prefer to omit this qualification, he would prefer to retain it rather than that the arbitration should fail. Where the indigo obligation was recorded, the *raiyat* was to have the option of continuing under the obligation or of commuting it at the rates fixed by the arbitration. Effect was to be given to the award by emergency legislation.

The President then said that in case His Honour agreed to arbitrate, the report would presumably simply state this fact. Mr. Gandhi said that he would prefer the arbitration to take place first of all and the figure arrived at to be incorporated in the report as their recommendation with the additional recommendation that legislation should be undertaken to enforce it. The Committee agreed to this.

The President then said that they had now to consider the report and he asked Mr. Gandhi to put his general views before the meeting. Mr. Gandhi said that he thought that for their purpose, the report was too heavy and that the Committee were not warranted in giving such a lengthy history after a summary enquiry. He pointed out that the materials were all in the Government record and on the terms of reference they had merely to report conclusions without giving the reasons. His experience was that arbitrators who did not give reasons always did well. The President agreed, provided that the report was unanimous.

The President said that one point which had not been dealt with in the report was the case of *tawan* in *mukarrari* villages. The report dealt with the case

of *tawan* in *thika* villages only. He referred specially to the case of Rajpur. Mr. Gandhi said he thought that Mr. Hudson ought to repay part of the *tawan*, as he had lost nothing by replacing *tinkathia* indigo by *khuski* indigo. If necessary, the payment could be enforced by special legislation. . . .

The President then brought forward a note of dissent put in by the Hon'ble Raja Kirtyanand Sinha as to the recommendation made in regard to sections 75 and 58 of the Bengal Tenancy Act. As to the amendment in section 75, Mr. Adami pointed out that the principle of having two alternative procedures for dealing with an infringement had already been accepted by the Legislature in section 58, so that the objection on this ground was not valid. Mr. Gandhi said that the objection on the ground that a legal point might arise seemed more valid but this would be provided for because there would be an appeal to the Commissioner. The President pointed out that the recommendation was practically to make the section the same as in the Chhota Nagpur Tenancy Act and asked the Raja if he would not agree to the recommendation if it was restricted to the Champaran district. Raja Kirtyanand Sinha said that on this condition he was willing to agree.

* * *

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 181, pp. 351-5

18. MINUTES OF CHAMPARAN COMMITTEE MEETING

RANCHI,

September 25, 1917

The President said he had seen the Lieutenant-Governor who had said that he was not prepared to give a definite reply to the proposal that he should arbitrate and pointed out that it would be a somewhat difficult position for him since, as the head of the Government, he would have to deal with the report. The Lieutenant-Governor had, therefore, suggested that it might be preferable if a High Court Judge was appointed to arbitrate. Mr. Gandhi said that he did not contemplate such a stiff and formal arbitration. It was not a legal mind that was required for this arbitration but a business mind. Mr. Reid said that he was doubtful whether Messers Irwin and Hill would agree to arbitration and he was certain that they would not agree to arbitration by a High Court Judge. The President said that in that case it was hardly worthwhile to go on with the proposal to arbitrate. Mr. Gandhi agreed but said he still had hopes of bringing about an arbitration.

Turning to the discussion of the report, the President said that, in considering whether the introductory historical portion should be cut down, it had to be remembered that it was desirable to make the report as a whole intelligent to the

public and not to make it appear as if the Committee had shirked their tasks. Mr. Rainy said he had no objection to cutting down Chapter II. Mr. Adami was inclined to keep Chapter II as it was. Raja Kirtyanand Sinha suggested that the paragraph about the *thikadari* system might be shortened. Mr. Reid said that he saw no objection to Chapter II standing. It was necessary to enable anyone to grasp the problem as it stood at present. Mr. Gandhi said that if the report was not to be unanimous, he could understand and would not resist the desire of the majority to state their argument fully. The President said that Mr. Gandhi should indicate precisely the points to which he objected and the report could then be altered, if possible, to meet the views of everybody. Mr. Rainy pointed out that if there was anything in Chapter II which was contentious, it could be transferred to the contentious part of the report. He added that if the report was to recommend the tribunal, it was unnecessary to discuss the *sharahbeshi* question at length, because that was the very point which the tribunal would have to decide, but if Government was going to decide the question itself, then it would be necessary to give the arguments at some length. Mr. Gandhi thought that Government would have to decide between the views of the majority and his own views, as what he wanted was for Government to decide on the equities of the case and legislate at once. If Government held *sharahbeshi* to be illegal and that *tinkathia*, though legal, was accompanied by so much abuse that it should be abolished, they would legislate against it without the necessity of appointing a tribunal. If he had come on the scene earlier, he would have advised the *raiyats* against compensation, but as it was, compensation had been paid and he had to recognise that Mr. Reid said that he had only agreed to recommend that *tinkathia* should be abolished if there was compensation for it. The President said that the Committee could not bind Government, but he could indicate the view that he thought Government took; if there was a decision by arbitration on the consent of both parties, Government could legislate to give effect to that agreement without any difficulty. If there was no agreement, there were two alternatives:

(1) for Government to decide for itself and legislate accordingly or

(2) for the matter to be referred to a special tribunal or left to the ordinary courts.

As to the first alternative, questions affecting important claims to property were involved which it would be rather arbitrary and high-handed for Government to decide executively. The second alternative would, therefore, be the one probably adopted if no agreements were reached. The President added that until the Committee had before them Mr. Gandhi's specific suggestions as to what he wished to alter in the report, it was impossible to go on. What he wanted was a unanimous report as far as possible, that is to say, that any contentious matter should be confined to the one portion regard*ing sharahbeshi*. Mr. Gandhi said that there was one master idea

running through the report recognising the legality in certain cases of the *tinkathia* obligation and the justification for *sharahbeshi.* The President said that if Mr. Gandhi would go through the report in detail, each portion of it could be dealt with separately.

Discussing the possibility of arbitration, Mr. Gandhi said that he thought if the planters believed they had a good case, it was unbusinesslike for them to refuse arbitration. The President asked whether if only Mr. Norman agreed to arbitration, it was worthwhile taking up his case alone. Mr. Rainy thought that might make one or other of the parties regard the local Government as being incapacitated from dealing with the other cases impartially. He suggested that if a special tribunal was set up, it might be left open to the planters to agree to arbitration by the tribunal instead of detailed trial in each case. The President said he did not think there would be any advantage in that.

The President then suggested that the constitution ant duties of the tribunal should be discussed. Mr. Adami said that it should consist of three members to provide for a difference of opinion and thought that there should be an appeal to the High Court on any legal point but not on the question of what was the fair amount for the commutation of the obligation. The Committee accepted three as the number of members of the tribunal and the personnel was then discussed. The President suggested that the tribunal should consist of:

(1) a Judicial Officer not below the rank of District Judge,

(2) a Revenue Officer not below the rank of Collector, and

(3) another Judge or another Revenue Officer.

As to (1), Mr. Rainy proposed that the Judicial Officer should be a High Court Judge and that there should be no appeal. Mr. Gandhi, however, thought that there should be a right of appeal, as tribunals sometimes went wrong. His view was the same whether the Judicial Officer in the tribunal was a High Court Judge or a District Judge. He agreed that the right of appeal should be confined to legal points. Mr. Adami said that if a High Court Judge was on the tribunal, he would allow no appeal, but there was no technical objection to an appeal being allowed from such a tribunal. Mr. Reid agreed with Mr. Rainy. Raja Kirtyanand Singh said that he would prefer that Mr. Gandhi should agree to a 25 per cent reduction in *sharahbeshi,* which would obviate the appointment of a tribunal, the working of which would obviously give a good deal of trouble. The Committee agreed that the second member of the tribunal should be a Revenue Officer not below the grade of Collector. As to the third member of the tribunal, Mr. Rainy said he would prefer to leave it to the local Government, who might wish to appoint neither a Judge nor a Revenue Officer. Mr. Adami said that he would prefer the third member to be a Judicial Officer. Mr. Gandhi also preferred a

Judicial Officer. He said that the case here was not the same as in arbitration and, for a formal judicial tribunal, he would prefer a majority of Judicial Officers. The President asked if it was possible for a High Court Judge and a District Judge to sit together. Mr. Adami said he thought there was no objection, Mr. Rainy said that Government might wish to put in a barrister or a pleader, and might also desire that one at least of the tribunal should be an Indian. He thought if they made their recommendation as to the personnel in too much detail, it would tie the hands of Government. The President then raised a question of the duties of tribunal. He suggested that the necessary legislation should lay down their duties somewhat as follows:

That on the application of either party within a certain period, the tribunal was to decide

(1) If the obligation to grow indigo existed or not.

(2) If so, what compensation in the form of enhanced rent, if any, should be allowed.

(3) If the tribunal decided that compensation was to be given, it should have regard in fixing that compensation to the following points:

(a) in no case was the rent to be greater than fair and equitable rent;

(b) the existing rent and the period for which it had remained unenhanced; and

(c) the actual rate of *sharahbeshi* which had been taken in the concern or in neighbouring concerns.

Mr. Adami said that if the tribunal had to fix a commutation rate, this was probably the best way. It had been suggested that a fair and equitable rent should be fixed by the tribunal, irrespective of any conditions. Mr. Rainy said that in his view the tribunal should be left entirely free to decide what points to consider. There were limits to their discretion because they could not fix the rent lower than the original rent nor one higher than the existing rent including *sharahbeshi.* The President said that as Revenue Officer, he would hesitate to carry out the rent settlement without some such guidance as he had proposed. Mr. Reid pointed out that the survey record was available and would assist the tribunal. The President said that the survey record was not designed for what in northern India was understood by the settlement of rent; and in his view the proposal would lengthen the proceedings considerably. Mr. Rainy did not press his view but he thought that the decision as to what points should be considered should be left to the tribunal. The President said this might be met if it was laid down that, amongst other considerations, the tribunal should take into account the three points mentioned. Mr. Gandhi pointed out that any recommendation restricting the provisions of the Bengal Tenancy Act would be fought in the Legislative Council, and that as far as possible the Committee's suggestion should aim at liberalising the Act and not restricting it. Mr. Reid said he thought it would be simpler if the tribunal was simply given power to consider

the rent rendered at the settlement and revise it, if necessary. The President pointed out that the special tribunal would only have to consider cases where the obligation had been recorded or where *sharahbeshi* had been taken. It was agreed that the period of time within which applications to the tribunal should be made should be fixed at three months from the date of notification, and that if application was not made within that period, the entry in the settlement record should be final. Mr. Adami was asked to draft a paragraph embodying these decisions to go at the end of paragraph 24 of the report.

Mr. Gandhi wanted provisions to be made that the tribunal should consider cases of coercion and undue influence and other illegal practices, that is to say, that it should go into the past history of the working of the *tinkathia* system. Mr. Adami said that this would take a long time. Mr. Gandhi pointed out that there would be a test case which other cases would follow. The President said he thought that the clause, that the tribunal could decide what compensation, if any, was payable, implied that the *raiyat* in his *plea* would be able to plead that no compensation was due, because in the past the planter had already got sufficient compensation. He thought that Mr. Gandhi by this request was going back to his original case that there should be no tribunal. Whether there was to be a tribunal or not, there was a point that Government would have to decide. Mr. Rainy said that if the tribunal was to consider all these matters, it might be simpler to leave the whole thing to the operation of the ordinary law and merely appoint a Special Judge to try the cases. Mr. Gandhi said that even if Government found that the equities were in favour of the case, they would appoint a tribunal because as the President had said before, they could not take on themselves the responsibility of passing an arbitrary executive order. Mr. Adami said that he thought the widest discretion should be given to the tribunal. Mr. Rainy pointed out that the Turkaulia case had been fought largely on the point of coercion and that this might be raised in *sharahbeshi* cases that came before the tribunal. The tribunal, however, was also to deal with cases where *sharahbeshi* had not been taken, but where applications had been made for the obligation to be commuted. If the tribunal allowed an enhancement of rent in the latter case, why should they not do so in the former case even when the agreement was void on account of coercion? He did not consider, therefore, that the question of coercion came in to any great extent. It was to provide for cases of this sort that he proposed that the tribunal should consider anything that they thought relevant. Mr. Reid enquired as to who would pay the cost of the tribunal. The President said presumably Government would pay the cost and enquired of Mr. Gandhi if he could say how long the tribunal would take. Mr. Gandhi said he thought it would take at least a month in the most favourable circumstances. Mr. Adami thought it would take much longer.

As regards the printed evidence, Mr. Gandhi said that he wanted the enclosures

to the written evidence of the three *raiyats* who had been examined publicly to be printed. The President said that these could be printed as an appendix. Mr. Gandhi also wanted statements of other *raiyats* that he had filed to be printed. Mr. Reid objected to this. The President said that it would be sufficient for Mr. Gandhi's purpose if statements of witnesses who were examined informally were printed. Mr. Gandhi said that he would examine the statements and consider the point. He also wanted copies of judgements that he had filed to be printed. The President said that that would make a very bulky record. The judgements were all public documents and he did not think it more necessary to print them than it was to print Government records that had been placed before them. Mr. Gandhi said he thought that Mr. Gourlay's report should be printed. The President said that was a matter for the Government to decide. Mr. Gandhi said his idea in wanting these documents printed was that he could refer to them in his report. The President pointed out that Mr. Gandhi could refer to them, although they were not printed.

The meeting then adjourned.

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 182, pp. 356-61

19. LETTER TO THE PRESS ON THIRD CLASS TRAVELLING ON INDIAN RAILWAYS[1]

RANCHI,
September 25, 1917

TO

THE EDITOR
THE LEADER

SIR,

I have now been in India for over two years and a half after my return from South Africa. Over one quarter of that time I have passed on the Indian trains travelling 3rd class by choice. I have travelled north as far as Lahore, down south up to Tranquebar, and from Karachi to Calcutta. Having resorted to third class travelling among other reasons for the purpose of studying the conditions under which this class of passengers travel, I have naturally made as critical observations as I could. I have fairly covered the majority of railway systems during this period. Now and then I have entered into

[1] A copy of this was sent by Gandhiji to the Secretary, Department of Commerce and Industries, Delhi, with a letter making practical suggestions for improvement; *vide*, "Letter to Commerce and Industries Secretary", 31-10-1917.

correspondence with the management of the different railways about defects that have come under my notice. But I think that the time has come when I should invite the Press and the public to join in a crusade against a grievance which has too long remained unredressed, though much of it is capable of redress without great difficulty.

On the 12th instant I booked at Bombay for Madras by the mail train and paid Rs. 13-9. It was labelled to carry 22 passengers. These could only have seating accommodation. There were no bunks in this carriage whereon passengers could lie with any degree of safety or comfort. There were two nights to be passed in this train before reaching Madras. If not more than 22 passengers found their way into my carriage before we reached Poona, it was because the bolder ones kept the others at bay. With the exception of two or three insistent passengers, all had to find their sleep, being seated all the time. After reaching Raichur the pressure became unbearable. The rush of passengers could not be stayed. The fighters among us found the task almost beyond them. The guards or other railway servants came in only to push in more passengers.

A defiant Memon merchant protested against this packing of passengers like sardines. In vain did he say that this was his fifth night on the train. The guard insulted him and referred him to the management at the terminus. There were during this night as many as 35 passengers in the carriage during the greater part of it. Some lay on the floor in the midst of dirt and some had to keep standing. A free fight was at one time avoided only by the intervention of some of the older passengers who did not want to add to the discomfort by an exhibition of temper.

On the way, passengers got for tea tannin-water with filthy sugar and a whitish-looking liquid miscalled milk which gave this water a muddy appearance. I can vouch for the appearance, but I cite the testimony of the passengers as to the taste.

Not during the whole of the journey was the compartment once swept or cleaned. The result was every time you walked on the floor or rather cut your way through the passengers seated on the floor, you waded through dirt.

The closet was also not cleaned during the journey and there was no water in the water tank.

Refreshments sold to the passengers were dirty-looking, handed by dirtier hands, coming out of filthy receptacles and weighed in

equally unattractive scales. These were previously sampled by millions of flies. I asked some of the passengers who went in for these dainties to give their opinion. Many of them used choice expressions as to the quality but were satisfied to state that they were helpless in the matter; they had to take things as they came.

On reaching the station, I found that the *ghariwala*[1] would not take me unless I paid the fare he wanted. I mildly protested and told him I would pay him the authorized fare. I had to turn passive resister before I could be taken. I simply told him he would have to pull me out of the *ghari* or call the policeman.

The return journey was performed in no better manner. The carriage was packed already and but for a friend's intervention, I could not have been able to secure even a seat. My admission was certainly beyond the authorized number. This compartment was constructed to carry 9 passengers but it had constantly 12 in it. At one place, an important railway servant swore at a protestant, threatened to strike him and locked the door over the passengers whom he had with difficulty squeezed in. To this compartment there was a closet falsely so called. It was designed as a European closet but could hardly be used as such. There was a pipe in it but no water, and I say without fear of challenge that it was pestilentially dirty.

The compartment itself was evil-looking. Dirt was lying thick upon the wood work and I do not know that it had ever seen soap or water.

The compartment had an exceptional assortment of passengers. There were stalwart Punjabi Mahommedans, two refined Tamilians and two Mahommedan merchants who joined us later. The merchants related [about] the bribes they had to give to procure comfort. One of the Punjabis had already travelled three nights and was weary and fatigued. But he could not stretch himself. He said he had sat the whole day at the Central Station, watching passengers giving bribes to procure their tickets. Another said he had himself to pay Rs. 5 before he could get his ticket and his seat. These three men were bound for Ludhiana and had still more nights of travel in store for them.

What I have described is not exceptional but normal. I have got down at Raichur, Dhond, Sonepur, Chakardharpur, Purulia, Asansol

[1] Driver of the carriage

and other junction stations and been at the *Mosafirkhana*[1] attached to these stations. They are discreditable-looking places where there is no order, no cleanliness but utter confusion and horrible din and noise. Passengers have no benches or not enough to sit on. They squat on dirty floors and eat dirty food. They are permitted to throw the leavings of their food and spit where they like, sit how they like, and smoke everywhere. The closets attached to these places defy description. I have not the power to adequately describe them without committing a breach of the laws of decent speech. Disinfecting powder, ashes or disinfecting fluids are unknown. The army of flies buzzing about them warns you against their use. But a third class traveller is dumb and helpless. He does not want to complain even though to go to these places may be to court death. I know passengers who fast while they are travelling just in order to lessen the misery of their life in the trains. At Sonepur flies having failed, wasps have come forth to warn the public and the authorities, but yet to no purpose. At the Imperial Capital a certain 3rd class booking office is a Black Hole fit only to be destroyed.

Is it any wonder that plague has become endemic in India? Any other result is impossible where passengers always leave some dirt where they go and take more on leaving.

On Indian trains alone passengers smoke with impunity in all carriages irrespective of the presence of the fair sex and irrespective of the protest of non-smokers. And this notwithstanding a bye-law which prevents a passenger from smoking without the permission of his fellows in a compartment which is not allotted to smokers.

The existence of the awful war cannot be allowed to stand in the way of removal of this gigantic evil. War can be no warrant for tolerating dirt and overcrowding. One could understand an entire stoppage of passenger traffic in a crisis like this, but never a continuation or accentuation of insanitation and conditions that must undermine health and morality. Compare the lot of the 1st class passengers with that of the 3rd class. In the Madras case, the 1st class fare is over five times as much as the 3rd class fare. Does the third class passenger get one-fifth, even one-tenth, of the comforts of his first class fellow? It is but simple justice to claim that some relative proportion be observed between the cost and comfort.

[1] Passengers' waiting rooms

It is a known fact that the 3rd class traffic pays for the ever increasing luxuries of 1st and 2nd class travelling. Surely a third class passenger is entitled at least to the bare necessities of life.

In neglecting the 3rd class passengers, opportunity of giving a splendid education to millions in orderliness, sanitation, decent composite life, and cultivation of simple and clean tastes is being lost. Instead of receiving an object lesson in these matters, 3rd class passengers have their sense of decency and cleanliness blunted during their travelling experience.

Among the many suggestions that can be made for dealing with the evil here described, I would respectfully include this: Let the people in high places, the Viceroy, the Commander-in-chief, the Rajas, Maharajas, the Imperial Councillors and others, who generally travel in superior classes, without previous warning, go through the experiences now and then of 3rd class travelling. We would then soon see a remarkable change in the conditions of the 3rd class travelling and the uncomplaining millions will get some return for the fares they pay under the expectation of being carried from place to place with the ordinary creature comforts.

I am,

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Leader, 4-10-1917

20. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

RANCHI,

[*Adhik*] *Ashvin Shukla 9* [*September 25, 1917*][1]

DEAR BHAISHRI,

I got a letter from you in Bombay as I was going to catch the train. I had asked my nephew to go to you in that connection. Now I have Ramnarayanji's letter. He appears worthy of being taken up. I have asked for some more information from him. Two teachers from Maner have offered to come. I have already engaged one of them. I am having talks about the other. They will be able to join after two months. Ramnarayanji will be the third. We should be able to carry on with these.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Panchaven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad

21. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

RANCHI,

Tuesday [On or after *September 25, 1917*][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I am still not free from fever. I am being careful. I don't take any medicine, though. I am confident that I shall get rid of it. There is no need to worry about me.

Tell Narahari that Prof. Balvantrai[3] has undertaken to write the preface to Gokhale's speeches. I know you must be having no end of difficulties. There can be no great achievement without difficulties. I

[1] Gandhiji was in Ranchi on this date. The original has Bhadrapad Shukla 9, which appears to be a slip for Adhik Ashvin Shukla 9, for on the former date Gandhiji was not in Ranchi. In the source also, September 25 is given as the date of this letter.

[2] From the reference to Amritlal Thakkar's suggestions about the Ashram building, the letter appears to have been written after "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 23-9-1917.

[3] Balvantrai Kalyanrai Thakore, a fellow-student of Gandhiji; Gujarati scholar and writer

shall be satisfied if you keep fit. I sent you a telegram[1] today to reassure you; I hope you received it. Let me know how you get the post. What arrangements have you made for living in general, and for the kitchen?

Amritlalbhai believes that, without a framework in wood [for the foundation], it will be impossible to build there. There was a letter from him today, in which he says he will send the plan to you in a day or two. I see that I shall have to be here two or three days more. Ask Ba not to be in the least anxious on my account.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5717. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

22. MINUTES OF CHAMPARAN COMMITTEE MEETING

RANCHI,
September 26, 1917

The President said he had a talk with Mr. Hill on the previous day but found him obdurate. Mr. Hill told him that he was certain that Mr. Irwin would not accept arbitration but probably Mr. Norman would. Mr. Hill also said that he was sorry he had made any offer of reduction and would prefer to have the matter settled by a court. It was not only a matter of money but of reputation. The President thought that, in these circumstances, any idea of arbitration must be dropped, but the question arose as to whether it was worthwhile going on with arbitration in Mr. Norman's case. The difficulty was that two methods of settlement would be going on at the same time and two kinds of legislation would be necessary. Mr. Rainy pointed out that it was open to Mr. Norman to have his case arbitrated separately apart from any recommendation of the Committee and he might be contented to do so without binding legislation. Mr. Gandhi said that in Mr. Norman's case, there would be no difficulty in giving effect to a settlement in his concern by consent. The agreements could be registered village by village. The President observed that it would be difficult to legislate for one concern only. Mr. Adami said that this would not be necessary. The legislation could be on the lines that either the parties could apply to the tribunal for settlement of rent or could go to arbitration, in which case it could be provided that the award should be given effect to by the tribunal. There would be no need in this case to specify any particular concern in the legislation. Mr. Gandhi said that it was doubtful

[1] This is not available.

whether anything could be generally done by consent. Treating the matter now as a difference between himself and the rest of the Committee, he asked whether the difference could be split and adopted as a recommendation of the Committee. The President said that when this matter was discussed before, his view was that there was no case for the planters to give up *sharahbeshi* at all. They had, however, volunteered to give up a certain percentage for the sake of a settlement by goodwill and he was not prepared to recommend Government to go any further without the consent of the planters. Mr. Reid also said that he could not agree to anything beyond the limits already indicated. The President said that there was no chance of settlement by consent unless Mr. Gandhi could bring h imself to agree to these limits. Mr. Reid asked if there was any chance of agreement on a proposal to start at a reduction of 40 per cent and after a period of years to work up to a reduction of 25 per cent. The President said that he thought the planters would not accept that. He added that he gathered that although Mr. Irwin would abide by his promise, he would be glad if he saw any way out of it. He asked Mr. Gandhi whether it was more in the interests of *raiyats* to accept the planters' limits or to leave them to fight it out. He thought that the risks of failure, if they were left to fight, were so great, that it was not worth it. Mr. Gandhi said that he did not see the risk because he had every confidence that he would prove his case. The President asked what that confidence was based on, because Mr. Gandhi had been able to put his case before four members of the Committee and had failed to convince them. Two of the Government witnesses, Mr. Sweeney and Mr. Heycock, were certainly not unsympathetic to the *raiyats* and they were convinced that Mr. Gandhi's view of the case was wrong. The legal view, so far as it had been expressed, was also contrary to Mr. Gandhi's. Mr. Gandhi said that this was not the case. He held that the Turkaulia judgement was in his favour because *kabuliyats*[1] could not be produced except in a few of the cases. The President said that Mr. Hill had told him that, as far as Turkaulia was concerned, he was risking nothing, as registered *kabuliyats* existed in the large majority of cases. Mr. Hill had also told him that he had taken the very best legal advice which was to the effect that he was almost certain to win his case. Mr. Gandhi said that on the *raiyats'* side, there was great confidence also but he did not base his view entirely on that. He based his confidence on the equities of the case. He thought that Mr. Sweeney's views were unfortunately wrong and that his subsequent views were affected by the fact that he had to adhere to his decision. The President said that Mr. Hill held that public discussion had impugned his reputation and for this reason he would welcome the tribunal so as to be given an opportunity for clearing himself. Mr. Gandhi said that in that case, it would probably be necessary to have the tribunal, and an additional reason for this was supplied by the fact that Mr. Irwin felt sorry for his promise, because even if there was a

[1] Agreements (to pay rent)

settlement on the basis of this promise, there would be a certain amount of dissatisfaction and this was what he wanted to avoid. The President said he did not think that the position in respect of Mr. Irwin's promise had been quite understood. The planters had agreed to a reduction not because they thought that their full claim was wrong but because they were willing to give up something in order to get a settlement by consent, and in deference to the wishes of the Committee. There was, therefore, no reason to suppose that any settlement on these terms would be regarded with dissatisfaction. Mr. Gandhi then suggested that he should go and see Mr. Hill, so that he could make his position clear and find out what was in Mr. Hill's mind. The President said that he understood that if Mr. Gandhi was satisfied with the justness of Mr. Hill's attitude, he would agree to his terms. Mr. Gandhi said that this was not what he meant. What he intended was to try and persuade Mr. Hill to agree to arbitration. If he failed and he saw that Mr. Hill had good reasons, he should have to reconsider his position regarding the previous non-acceptance of the planters' offer. The President said that Mr. Hill had told him that he could not agree either to the arbitrator proposed by the Committee or to the arbitration being between the limits of 20 and 40 per cent, but that he would accept as an arbitrator a European Judge of the Patna or the Calcutta High Court acquainted with the Tenancy Act or a commercial man. Mr. Gandhi said that it had given him hope that an arbitration might be possible after all. He asked whether Mr. Hill would disagree to have an arbitrator from Champaran, as it would be an advantage to have someone who knew the question. He had previously[1] suggested a tribunal composed of Mr. Apperley and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya with Mr. Heycock as President; and he would be inclined to accept Mr. Heycock as an arbitrator, if the other side agreed. Mr. Reid said he thought the planters would accept Mr. Heycock but the President was inclined to doubt if they would. Mr. Gandhi said that if they accepted Mr. Heycock as an arbitrator, it would be understood that the arbitration should be between the figures already suggested. Mr. Reid said he did not think that Mr. Hill would accept on that basis. The President said that Mr. Hill's view was that he, either right or wrong, was willing to give up of his own free will 20 per cent, but would not take the risk of being made to give up more by arbitration. If it was put to him that if without prejudice he was prepared to offer more, it would be accepted and he might be inclined to agree to it. He (Mr. Hill) was not prepared to accept what he regarded as a censure on his conduct except by a legally constituted tribunal. It was not a matter of business but of conscience. It was decided that the President and Mr. Reid should see Mr. Hill at once and that Mr. Reid and Mr. Gandhi should see him in the afternoon. The President said he thought that if the interview was successful, that Managers of the other concerns, namely, Messrs

[1] *Vide* "Minutes of Champaran Committee Meeting", 14-8-1917.

Norman, Irwin, Jameson and Bion[1] should be sent for. He thought that if two concerns could be got to agree, the arbitration was worth doing, but if there was one only, it was not worthwhile to go on. He asked whether, assuming Turkaulia and Pipra agreed to a settlement, the Committee were prepared to recommend that a similar settlement should be enforced by legislation on the other three concerns, although the proprietors did not agree. The Committee agreed that this would be done.

Mr. Reid raised the question as to whether the abolition of *tinkathia* should not be made compulsory. Mr. Gandhi said he thought the Legislative Council would not accept this, but in all probability the *raiyats* would apply for commutation voluntarily. Mr. Reid said he doubted if all of them would apply and it would be inconvenient to have one or two *raiyats* with the *tinkathia* obligation still attached. The President said that he understood that His Honour was in favour of having it abolished. Mr. Gandhi said he saw legal difficulties but would be willing to accept the view that it should be abolished as a recommendation of the Committee. The President pointed out that, on the one side, the *raiyat* was not to be allowed to enter into contract and it was reasonable, on the other side, that the *raiyat* should not be allowed to it even if he wanted it. The *raiyat* was fully safeguarded because the tribunal could not fix more than a fair rent. He added that in Turkaulia, five per cent of the *raiyats* was still doing *tinkathia* which was one of the points on which Mr. Hill relied to prove his case. Mr. Gandhi said that, when *khushki* indigo was grown on a large scale, as he hoped it would be, the *raiyats*, under the *tinkathia* obligation, would soon find it to their advantage to commute. Mr. Rainy pointed out that if the old system survived in any case, it might affect prejudicially the working of the new *khushki* system. Mr. Gandhi said he would accept the recommendation as part of the whole compromise but not if a tribunal was appointed. In that case, the legislation would abolish the *tinkathia* obligation and leave the landlord the option of applying for the settlement of additional rent as compensation if he wished.

The Committee then adjourned.

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 183, pp. 361-5

[1] Proprietor of Sirnie Concern

23. FOREWORD TO "WHAT INDIA WANTS: AUTONOMY WITHIN THE EMPIRE"

September 27, 1917[1]

I have read Mr. Natesan's[2] booklet with the greatest pleasure. It is a fine vade-mecum for the busy politician and worker. Mr. Natesan has provided him with a connected narrative of the movement of self-government in a very attractive and acceptable form. By reproducing in their historical sequence the extracts from official records, he has allowed them to speak for themselves. The book is in my opinion a great help to the controversialist and the student of our present day politics who does not care to study musty blue books or has no access to them.

With reference to the joint-scheme[3] of self-Government, though I do not take so much interest in it as our leaders, I feel that from the Government stand-point it must command their attention as a measure which has agitated the public mind as no other has, and I venture to think that there will be no peace in the country until the scheme has been accepted by the Government.

The Indian Review, October, 1917

24. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

RANCHI,

September 27 [*1917*]

DEAR MR. NATESAN,

I have read your booklet[4] with the greatest pleasure. It is a fine vade-mecum for the busy politician and worker. You have provided him with a connected narrative of the movement of self-government in a very attractive and acceptable form. By reproducing in their historical sequence the extracts from official records, you have

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] G. A. Natesan, Editor, The Indian Review

[3] The scheme of Post-War Reforms prepared by the All-India Congress Committee in consultation with the Reform Committee of the Muslim League and passed unanimously at the Lucknow sessions of these bodies held in December. 1916

[4] What India Wants: Autonomy within the Empire

allowed them to speak for themselves. The book is in my opinion a great help to the controversialist and the student of our present day politics who does not care to study musty blue books or has no access to them.

So much for the public eye. Your decision to leave out 'an appeal to the British Democracy' is wise. You will be sorry to learn that I have been laid up with fever since my arrival in Ranchi. It comes on alternate days. Yesterday was the fourth day. It comes only in the afternoon. It has therefore not interfered with the work in hand. But it has weakened me very considerably. The fear I have expressed in my letter[1] to the Press on the Railways has been realized in my own case. I had no notion of it when I drafted the letter.

With regard to my speeches & writings[2] I wish you would not have the time limit. I could then give you translations of some of my recent writings in Gujarati. In my opinion they have considerable merit. I would not have the required leisure before November when perhaps I would tackle the writing.

My fever need not cause you any worry. It must take its time and go.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 2226

25. EXTRACTS FROM MINUTES OF CHAMPARAN COMMITTEE MEETING

RANCHI,
September 28, 1917

The discussion on Chapter IV of the report was taken up.... Mr. Gandhi said he did not like the arrangement of the Chapter. He wanted to omit the first two paragraphs merely stating what *abwab* had been found to be collected, condemning the practice and giving the Committee's recommendations.

The arrangement for meeting Messrs Irwin and Norman was discussed. It was settled that Mr. Reid should see them on Saturday and, if necessary, Mr. Gandhi

[1] *Vide* "Letter to the Press on Third Class Travelling on Indian Railways", 25-9-1917.

[2] These were eventually published with an introduction by C F. Andrews by G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras, in 1917.

should see them on Sunday. The next meeting was fixed for Monday morning.

Referring to the possibility of getting the goodwill of the planters in this settlement, the President asked Mr. Gandhi as to his future plans for Champaran. Mr. Gandhi explained this to the Committee. In the course of the discussion, Mr. Reid raised the question as to what would happen to the indigo crop in the coming year. Mr. Gandhi said he would certainly advise the *raiyats* to grow indigo, provided a fair price was paid for it. Mr. Reid pointed out that the question of price was now raised for the first time. The former decision of the Committee to which Mr. Gandhi had agreed was that indigo in the year 1917-18 should be grown on the old basis to allow the planters time to change the system.

Mr. Gandhi said that his view was that he was quite ready to advise the *raiyats* to go on growing indigo but not on the old terms which were disadvantageous to the *raiyat*. He would use his influence to get the *raiyats* to grow at a reasonable rate. The President asked whether it was possible to tide over this year, by the planters agreeing to pay a certain percentage above the Association rate. Mr. Gandhi said he thought an agreement could be arrived at on those lines. Mr. Reid said he could not accept the proposal until he had an opportunity of consulting the planters.

The Committee then adjourned.

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 185, pp. 366-7

26. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

RANCHI,
September 30 [*1917*]

DEAR MR. SHASTRIAR,

How are the mighty fallen! I thought I could never fall ill. Well I am laid up with malarial fever which comes on alternate days and in the afternoon. This has not interfered with the work in hand. I never knew, when I was penning my remarks on catching illness in that letter[1] of mine on the railway passengers (if you have read it at all) that I would be myself the illustration and that too immediately after the dispatch of that letter. I am applying my own treatment. You need not be anxious. Possibly we shall meet in Allahabad. I say possibly because I nay not have finished the Committee work here. After protracted negotiations, we have settled all the points and there will be

[1] *Vide* "Letter to the Press on Third Class Travelling on Indian Railways", 25-9-1917.

a unanimous report.

Yes, the Gujarat Sabha has selected workers. The Sabha's ambition is to secure 1,00,000 signatures. The Home Rule League is working in Bombay. And I have just received a letter from Mrs. Besant that her workers are doing likewise in Madras. Elaborate instructions[1] have been drafted for the volunteers and the scheme has been fully translated for presentation to the villagers and others whose signatures are asked for. The idea is that the whole of India should take up the petition which should be translated in the vernaculars. The original draft was in Gujarati! The English you have read is a translation. For me the value of it lies in the education that the masses will receive and the opportunity that the educated men and women will have of coming in close touch with the people.

I do hope you are keeping well.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 6294

27. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI VAKIL

RANCHI,
[*Adhik*] *Aso Vad 3* [*October 3, 1917*][2]

BHAISHRI,

I have received the papers you sent. I shall read them and do what I can. I don't think I can go to Kathiawar at present. I just cannot get away from Champaran.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

BHAISHRI BHAGWANJI ANOOPCHAND
RAJKOT CITY
KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the original postcard in Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 5806

[1] *Vide* "Instructions to Volunteers", before 13-9-1917.

[2] From the postmark; the original has Bhadarva Vad 3, which appears to be a slip for Adhik Aso Vad 3. Gandhiji was not in Ranchi on the former date.

28. LETTER TO SIR EDWARD GAIT

RANCHI,
October 4, 1917

DEAR SIR EDWARD GAIT,

I beg to thank you for your letter of the 1st instant. The report was unanimously signed today.[1] May I suggest that it and the Government resolution be published at the earliest possible moment.[2] You will be glad to learn that some of the planters are anxious that I should go to Champaran at an early date and commence the work of pacification. May I tell the ryots what the Committee has reported?

Your extreme goodness to me prompts me to make a request. May I hope that the resolution will be worthy of the occasion and drawn up in no uncertain language? The message to the ryots in the vernacular ought to be full and such as to reach their hearts. If it is not impertinence on my part to say so, I would like to state that my services in this matter are at the disposal of the Government should they require them.

I shall be in Motihari on the 8th and shall be there till the 12th instant. I have an engagement in Bhagalpur on the 15th instant and from that time forward, I shall not be free before the 7th Nov. when I expect to return to Motihari. I am leaving Ranchi today.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand in the National Archives of India; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*, No. 189, pp. 391-2

[1] The report bears the date 3rd October 1917; *vide* Appendix"Report of Champaran Agrarian Enquiry Committee", 3-10-1917.

[2] The Order-in-Council was issued on October 6, 1917; vide Appendix"Order-in-Council", 6-10-1917 and also Champaran Agrarian Bill, Appendix "The Champaran Agrarian Bill, 1917".

29. FRAGMENT OF LETTER[1]

[*October 4, 1917*][2]

. . . present moment.

The report of the Committee was unanimously signed yesterday. I am off again on the tramp.[3]

With love to you all,

Yours

M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand C.W. 5727. Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

30. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

RANCHI,
October 4, 1917

DEAR ESTHER,

I have hot been able to write to you as often as I should like to have. I must let you share one of the richest experiences of life. Contrary to my expectation and owing to great strain, I was down with malaria, just when I could least afford to have illness. I had to attend the Committee work every day. Quinine was the drug prescribed. I would not take it. My faith has saved me. I missed not a single meeting and we signed an unanimous report[4] yesterday. I believe I have seen the last of the illness too. I have not the time to go into greater detail but when we meet you should ask me to give you the details of this experience. I take it you have read my letter to the Press on the railways.[5] If you have missed it, you should ask the Ashram to let you have a copy.

You were quite right [in] not coming to Madras. Love must be patient and humble. It is the rich and leisurly who can afford to be demonstrative in their love. We humble folks have naturally a different

[1] Only the last page of this letter is available.

[2] The report referred to in the letter was the Champaran Agrarian Enquiry Committee Report, which was signed on October 3, 1917.

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

[4] Vide Appendix "Report of Champaran Agrarian Enquiry Committee", 3-10-1917.

[5] *Vide* "Letter to the Press on Third Class Travelling on Indian Railways", 25-9-1917.

and better method of showing love. True love acts when it must, meanwhile it daily grows silently but steadily. In Motihari from 7th to 13th. Then Ahmedabad.

Yours,

BAPU

My Dear Child, pp. 22-3

31. LETTER TO KOTWAL

MOTIHARI,

Aso Vad 9 [*October 9, 1917*][1]

BHAISHRI KOTWAL[2],

I have your letter. I hope you got my telegram[3]. I wanted to write immediately but could not. And then I was on the move all the time and so could not write.

You have had to suffer much. If you see matters in the right light, you will be the better for the suffering. You lost your daughter, then your mother; now, India is all you have, call her daughter or mother, what you will. You can get much from her and give her much. You will receive a hundred times more than you give. She is a *Kamadhuk*[4], but how can she yield milk if we don't so much as feed her with hay? What you may give and how, we shall consider when you are here.

If you agree to come over here, I am here up to the 20th at any rate. After that, there will be some moving about.

I have one speech[5] of mine with me, which I am sending. Others I shall send when I receive copies.

Accompanying me are Ba[6], Devdas[7] and Avantikabehn, as also

[1] After completion of the inquiry into conditions of the indigo labour in Champaran, Gandhiji returned to Motihari from Ranchi on the night of October 8, 1917.

[2] An associate of Gandhiji at Tolstoy Farm, in South Africa

[3] This is not available.

[4] Sacred cow which, according to fable, yielded all that one desired.

[5] This is not available.

[6] Kasturba (1869-1944); Gandhiji's wife

[7] Devdas Gandhi (1900-57); youngest of Gandhiji's sons; was associated with Gandhiji in most of his public activities and suffered imprisonment; Editor, *The Hindustan Times*, 1940-57

her husband Baban Gokhale, and some others.

Vandemataram[1] *from*

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 3613

32. SPEECH ON COW PROTECTION, BETTIAH[2]

[About *October 9, 1917*][3]

I am thankful to the Gaurakshini Sabha and to you all for inviting me to lay the foundation-stone of the *gaushala*[4] in this town. For the Hindus, this is sacred work. Protection of the cow is a primary duty for every Indian. It has been my experience, however, that the way we set about this important work leaves much to be desired. I have given some thought to this serious problem and wish to place before you the conclusions I have formed.

These days cow protection has come to mean only two things: first, to save cows from the hands of our Muslim brethren on occasions like the *Bakr-i-Id*[5] and, secondly, to put up *gaushalas* for decrepit cows.

We do not go the right way to work for protecting the cows against our Muslim brethren. The result has been that these two great communities of India are always at odds with each other and cherish mutual distrust. Occasionally, they even fight. The riot at Shahabad a few days ago bears out my statement. The problem calls for some serious thinking on the part of both the communities. Hundreds of Hindu friends indulged in rioting and looted the property of innocent Muslims. What virtue could there be in this ? In fact, it was a very sinful thing to do.

The activities of the Gaurakshini Sabha result in a far larger number of cows being killed than are saved. Hinduism

[1] "Salutations to the motherland !" This had become a national slogan ever since Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's poem beginning with this phrase, in *Anandmath*, was adopted as a national song by the Indian National Congress.

[2] The meeting was held under the auspices of the Gaurakshini Sabha at Bettiah, a small town in the Champaran district of Bihar, about 25 miles from Motihari.

[3] The date is inferred from the reference, in the speech, to the communal riots in Shahabad, Bihar, which occurred between September 28 and October 9.

[4] Institution for care of infirm and disabled cows

[5] A Muslim festival

attaches special importance to non-violence. It is the very oppositeof religious conduct to kill a Muslim in order to save a cow. If we wish the Muslims not to kill cows, we should bring about a change of heart in them. We shall not succeed by force. We should reach their hearts with prayer and entreaty and achieve our purpose by awakening their sense of compassion. In adopting this course, we should take a pledge that, while seeking to protect the cows, weshall bear no ill-will or malice towards Muslims or be angry with them or fight with them. It is when we have taken up such a reassuring attitude that we shall be qualified to raise the matter with them. It should be remembered that what we regard as sin is not seen in the same light by our Muslim brethren. On the contrary, for them it is a meritorious act to kill cows on certain occasions. Every person should follow his own religion. If it were true that killing of cows was enjoined by Islam, India would have had no genuine peace any time; as I understand the matter, however, killing of cows on occasions like *Bakr-i-Id* is not obligatory, but Muslim friends imagine it their duty to do so when we seek to prevent them by force. Be this as it may, I have no doubt in my mind that this problem can be solved only by *tapascharya*[1]. The height of *tapascharya* on such occasions is to lay down one's life for the sake of cows.

However, all Hindus are not qualified for such supreme *tapascharya*. Those who want to stop others from sinning must be free from sin themselves. Hindu society has been inflicting terrible cruelty on the cow and her progeny. The present condition of our cows is a direct proof of this. My heart bleeds when I see thousands of bullocks with no blood and flesh on them, their bones plainly visible beneath their skin, ill-nourished and made to carry excessive burdens, while the driver twists their tails and goads them on. I shudder when I see all this and ask myself how we can say anything to our Muslim friends so long as we do not refrain from such terrible violence. We are so intensely selfish that we feel no shame in milking the cow to the last drop. If you go to dairies in Calcutta, you will find that the calves there are forced to go without the mother's milk and that all the milk is extracted with the help of a process known as blowing. The proprietors and managers of these dairies are none other than Hindus and most of those who consume the milk are also Hindus. So long as such dairies flourish and we consume the milk supplied by them, what

[1] Originally, constant meditation, such as by ancient sages, on the Supreme in search of enlightenment; here, persistent and painstaking endeavour

right have we to argue with our Muslim brethren? It should be borne in mind, besides, that there are slaughter-houses. in all the big cities of India. Thousands of cows and bullocks are slaughtered in these. It is mostly from them that beef is supplied to the British. Hindu society keeps silent about this slaughter, thinking that it is helpless in the matter.

As long as we do not get this terrible slaughter stopped, I think it is impossible that we can produce any effect on the hearts of Muslims or protect the cows against them. Our second task, therefore, is to carry on agitation among our British friends. We are in no position to use brute strength against them. They also should be won over by *tapascharya* and gentleness. For them eating of beef is no religious act. It should be easier to that extent to persuade them. It is only after we have rid ourselves of the taint of violence which I mentioned earlier and have succeeded in persuading our British friends not to eat beef and kill cows and bullocks, it is only then that we shall be entitled to say something to our Muslim friends. I can assure you that, when we have won over the British, our Muslim brethren will also have more sympathy for us and perform their religious rites with some other kind of offering. Once we admit that we are also guilty of violence, the working of our *gaushalas* will change. We shall not reserve them merely for decrepit cows but maintain there well-nourished cows and bullocks as well. We shall endeavour to improve the breed of cattle and will also be able to produce pure milk, ghee, etc. This is not merely a religious issue. It is an issue on which hinges the economic progress of India. Economists have furnished irrefutable figures to prove that the quality of cattle in India is so poor that the income from their milk is much less than the cost of their maintenance. We can turn our *gaushalas* into centres for the study of economics and for the solution of this big problem. Gaushalas cost a great deal and at present we have to provide the expenses. The *gaushalas* of my conception will become self-supporting in future. They will not be located in the midst of cities. We may buy land in the neighbourhood of a city to the tune of hundreds of acres and locate these *gaushalas* there. We can raise on this land crops to serve as fodder for the cows and every variety of grass. We shall find good use for the valuable manure they yield by way of excrement and urine. I hope you will all give the utmost thought to what I have said. The Gaurakshini Sabha in Motihari has accepted this suggestion. It is my request, in the end, that both these institutions come together and undertake this big task.

[From Gujarati]

Goseva

33. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

MOTIHARI,
CHAMPARAN,
October 10, 1917

CHI. CHHAGANLAL[1],

I have your letter. I take it that you will come to Broach. West[2] keeps on shouting for books. It will be good if you send him a dictionary and other suitable books from time to time. Also, send Doctor's[3] Gujarati book for sale there. Let him keep the proceeds. I have received copies here.

How is it that Prabhudas[4] does not recover?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the original postcard in Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5644. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

34. SPEECH AT BIHAR STUDENTS' CONFERENCE[5]

BHAGALPUR,
October 15, 1917]

You have as it were chained me to you by inviting me to preside over this session of the Students' Conference. For twentyfive years, I have been in close contact with students. It was in South Africa that I first came to know some. While in England, I always maintained

[1] Gandhiji's nephew and co-worker; assisted Gandhiji on the Gujarati section of *Indian Opinion* in South Africa

[2] Albert Henry West, whom Gandhiji first met at a vegetarian restaurant in Johannesburg. He worked with Gandhiji and was the printer of *Indian Opinion* at the Phoenix Settlement, of which his wife, mother and sister also became inmates. Later he joined the passive resistance movement and suffered imprisonment.

[3] Dr. Pranjivan Jagjivan Mehta, a friend of Gandhiji since his student days in London; financed many of Gandhiji's schemes

[4] Prabhudas Gandhi, son of Chhaganlal Gandhi

[5] This is based on *True Education* and a Gujarati version of the speech, the original Hindi report not being available. A portion of the speech was also reproduced in *Matatma Gandhi* in Marathi.

contact with other students. After returning to India, I have been meeting students all over the country. They show me unbounded love. By inviting me to preside over this meeting today and permitting me to speak in Hindi and conduct the proceedings, too, in Hindi, you, students, have given me evidence of your love. I shall think myself fortunate indeed if I can prove myself worthy of this love and be of some service to you. You have shown great wisdom in deciding to carry on the proceedings of this Conference in the regional language of the province—which also happens to be our national language. I congratulate you, and hope that you will continue this practice.

We have been guilty of disrespect to our mother tongue. I am sure we shall have to pay heavily for this act of sin. It has raised a wall of separation between us and our families. All those who are present at this Conference will bear witness to this fact. We do not and cannot explain to our mothers anything of what we learn. We do not and cannot give the benefit of our knowledge to others in our families. One will never find this sad state of affairs in an English family. In England and in other countries where education is imparted through the mother tongue, students, when they return home, discuss with their parents what they learn at school; the servants in the home, and others too, become familiar with it. Thus, the other members of the family also benefit from what the children learn at school. We, on the other hand, leave behind in the school what we learn there. Knowledge, like air, can circulate in no time. But, as a miser keeps his wealth buried in the ground, so we keep our learning to ourselves and others, therefore, do not share in its benefits. Disrespect to the mother tongue is as reprehensible as disrespect to one's mother. No one who is guilty of it deserves to be called a patriot. We hear many people saying that our languages are not rich enough in words to express our highest thinking. Gentlemen, this is no fault of the language. It is for us to develop and enrich our language. There was a time when English was in the same condition [as our languages]. It progressed because the British made progress and strove to develop their language. If we fail to develop our languages, holding that English alone can help us to cultivate and express higher thoughts, there is not the least doubt that we shall continue to be slaves for ever. So long as our languages do not acquire the power to express all our thinking and remain incapable of serving as the medium of communication for the various sciences, the nation will not get modern knowledge. It is self-evident:

1. that the entire body of our people need this knowledge;
2. that it will never be possible for all our people to understand English;
3. that, if only an English-educated individual can acquire new knowledge, it is impossible for all the people to have it.

This means that, if the first two propositions are correct, there is no hope for the masses. For this position, however, the blame does not lie with the languages. Tulsidas was able to express his divine ideas just in Hindi. There are not many books in the world to equal his *Ramayana*. A great patriot Like Bharat Bhushan Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, who, though a house holder, has sacrificed his all for the country, has no difficulty in expressing himself in Hindi. He commands silvery English, but his speeches in Hindi have the brilliance of gold, like the current of the Ganga blazing like gold in sunshine as it pours down from lake Manasa. I have heard some Maulavis delivering their sermons. They find it easy enough to express their most profound ideas in their mother tongue. The language of Tulsidas is perfect, immortal. If we cannot express our thoughts in the speech which was his, surely the fault is ours.

The reason why we cannot do so is clear: the medium of education is English. All of us can help in getting this serious anomaly removed. I feel students can petition the Governments, respectfully, on this matter. There is another remedy which they can simultaneously adopt, and that is, to translate what they learn at school into Hindi, share their knowledge with others in their homes, and pledge themselves to use only their mother tongue in their intercourse with one another. I cannot bear to see one Bihari corresponding with another Bihari in English. I have heard thousands of Englishmen talking to one another. Some of them know other languages, but I have never heard two Englishmen talking in any foreign language among themselves. The inordinate folly that we are guilty of in India has no parallel in the history of the world.

A *Vedantist* poet has said that learning without thinking is useless. But owing to the reasons mentioned above, students' lives seem to be almost bankrupt of thought. They have lost all spirit and energy, are devoid of originality and most of them appear listless and apathetic.

I do not dislike English; its riches are infinite. It is the language of administration and is rich with the wealth of know-ledge. All this notwithstanding, I hold that it is not necessary for every Indian to

learn it. But of this, I do not wish to speak more here. Students have been learning English and they have no option but to do so till some other system is devised and the present schools undergo a revolution. I shall, therefore, end this all-important subject of the mother tongue here, merely saying in conclusion that in their dealings with one another, and whenever possible, people should use only their mother tongue and that others, besides students, who are present here should strive their utmost to make the mother tongue the medium of education.

As I have earlier pointed out, most of the students look listless and devoid of energy. Many of them have asked me what they should do, how they could serve the country and what they had best do to earn their living. I have the impression that they are most anxious about this last. Before answering these questions, it is necessary to consider what the true aim of education is. Huxley has said that education should aim at building character. Our seers aver that, if a man, though well-versed in the Vedas and the shastras, fails to realize the Self and to make himself worthy of liberation from all bonds, all his learning will have been in vain. They have also said: "He who has known the Self knows all." Selfrealization is possible even without knowledge of letters. Prophet Mahomed was illiterate. Jesus Christ never went to school. But it would be foolhardy to assert, therefore, that these great souls had not attained self-realization. Though they never went to our schools and colleges to take any examination, we revere them. They had all that learning and knowledge could bring. They were mahatmas. If, following their example in blind imitation of one another, we leave off attending school, we shall get nowhere, to be sure. But we, too, can attain knowledge of the Self only by cultivating good character. What is character, however ? What are the hall-marks of a virtuous life ? A virtuous man is one who strives to practise truth, non-violence, *brahmacharya*, non-possession, non-stealing fearlessness and such other rules of conduct. He will give up his life rather than truth. He will choose to die rather than kill. He will rather suffer himself than make others suffer. He will be as a friend even to his wife and entertain no carnal thoughts towards her. Thus the man of virtue practises brahmacharya and tries to conserve, as well as he can, the ultimate source of energy in the body. He does not steal, nor take bribes. He does not waste his time nor that of others. He does not accumulate wealth needlessly. He does not seek ease and comfort and does not use things he does not really need but is quite content to live

a simple life. Firm in the belief that ''I am the immortal spirit and not this perishable body and that none in this world can ever kill the spirit", he casts out all fear of suffering of mind and body and of worldly misfortunes and refusing to be held down even by an emperor, goes on doing his duty fearlessly.

If our schools never succeed in producing this result, the students, the system of education and the teachers—all three must share the blame. It is, however, in the students' own hands to make good the want of character. If they are not anxious to develop character, neither teachers nor books will avail them. Thus, as I have said earlier, we must first understand the aim of education. A student who desires to cultivate and build character will learn how to do so from any good book on the subject. As Tulsidas has said:

> The Lord of Creation has made all things in this world, animate and inanimate, an admixture of good and evil. But a good man selects the good and rejects the evil even as the fabled swan is said to help himself to milk leaving out water.[1]

Being devoted to Rama, Tulsidas beheld him even in the image of Krishna. Some of our students attend Bible classes as required by rules but they remain innocent of the teaching of the Bible. One who reads the *Gita* with the intention of discovering errors in it may well succeed in doing so. But to him who desires liberation, the *Gita* shows the surest way thereto. Some people see nothing but imperfection in the *Koran-e-Sharif*, others, by meditating over it, fit themselves to cross the ocean of this earthly life. But I am afraid that most of the students never think as to the real aim of education. They attend school merely because that is the normal thing to do. Some do so in order to be able to obtain employment later on. In my humble opinion, to think of education as a means of earning a living betrays an unworthy disposition of mind. The body is the means of earning a living, while the school is a place for building character. To regard the latter as the means of fulfilling one's bodily needs is like killing a buffalo for a small piece of hide. The body should be maintained through bodily work. How can the *atman*, the spirit, be employed for this purpose? "Thou shalt earn the bread by the sweat of thy brow"—this is a *mahavakya* of Jesus Christ. The *Gita* also seems to say the same. About 99 per cent of the people in this world follow this law and live without fear. "He who has given the teeth will

[1] This has been quoted from the *Ramayana*.

also give the feed" is indeed a true saying. But it is not for the lazy and indolent. Students had better know from the very start that they will have to earn their living through bodily labour and not be ashamed of manual work to that end. I do not mean that all of us should always be plying the hoe. But it is necessary to understand that there is nothing wrong in plying the hoe to earn one's living even though one may be engaged in some other avocation, and that labourers are in no way inferior to us. One who has accepted this as a principle and an ideal, will reveal himself as a man of pure and exceptional character in the way he does his work, no matter what profession he follows. Such a man will not be the slave of wealth; rather, wealth will be his slave. If I am right in this, students will have to acquire the habit of doing physical labour. I have said this for the benefit of those who look upon education as the means of earning their living.

Students who attend school without taking thought as to the true aim of education, should first make sure what it should be. Such a student may resolve this very day that, henceforth, he will regard school as a place for building character. I am sure that he will effect a change for the better in his character in the course of a month and that his companions will also bear witness to his having done so. The shastras assert that we become what we think.

Many students feel that it is not necessary to make any special effort for health. However, regular exercise is absolutely necessary for the body. What can be expected of a student who is not well equipped in health? Just as milk cannot be held in a paper container, so also education is not likely to remain for long in the paper-like bodies of our students. The body is the abode of the spirit and, therefore, holy like a place of pilgrimage. We must see that it is well protected. Walking regularly and energetically for an hour and a half in the morning and for the same period in the evening in open air keeps it healthy and the mind fresh. The time thus spent is not wasted. Such exercise, coupled with rest, will invigorate both the body and the intellect, enabling one to learn things more quickly. I think games like cricket have no place in a poor country like India. We have a number of inexpensive games of our own which afford innocent joy.

The daily life of the student should be above reproach. He alone can experience true delight whose mind is pure. Indeed, to ask such a man to seek delight in worldly pleasures is to deprive him of the real delight which is his. He who has resolved to rise does indeed rise.

Ramachandra, in his innocence, wished for the moon and he got it.

From one point of view, the world seems to be an illusion; from another, it seems real enough. For students, the world does indeed exist, for it is they who have to strive for great achievement in it. He who declares the world to be illusory without knowing what that really means, indulges in pleasures as the fancy takes him and then claims to have renounced the world, is welcome to call himself a sannyasi but in reality he is a deluded man.

This brings me to the subject of dharma. Where there is no dharma, there can be neither knowledge nor wealth, nor health, nor anything else. Where there is no dharma, life is devoid of all joy, is mere emptiness. We have had to go without instruction in dharma; we are in much the same position as the bridegroom's party at a wedding without the bridegroom. Students cannot have innocent joy without a knowledge of dharma. That they may have such joy, it is necessary for them to study the shastras, to reflect over their teaching and bring their conduct in conformity with their ideals. Smoking a cigarette the first thing in the morning or idle gossip does good to nobody. Nazir has said that, even the sparrows as they twitter, sing the name of the Lord morning and evening, when we are still lying in our beds full-length. It is the duty of every student to acquire the knowledge of dharma in any manner he can. Whether or not dharma is taught in schools, it is my prayer to students who have assembled here that they introduce its essential principles in their life. What exactly is dharma? In what manner can instruction in religion be imparted? This is not the place for a discussion of this subject. But I shall give you this practical advice, based on my own experience, that you should take to the *Ramacharitamanasa* [of Tulsidas] and the *Bhagavad Gita* in love and reverence. You have a real jewel in the latter; seize it. But see that you study these two books in order to learn the secret of dharma. The seers who wrote these works did not set out to write history but only to teach dharma and morals. Millions of people read these books and lead pure lives. They read them with a guileless heart and live in this world full of innocent joy. It never occurs to them even in a dream to ask whether or not Ravana was a historical figure or whether they might not kill their enemies as Rama killed Ravana. Even when face to face with enemies, they pray for Ramachandra's protection and remain unafraid. Tulsidas, the author of the *Ramayana*, had nothing but compassion by way of a weapon. He desired to kill none. He who

creates, destroys. Rama was God; He had created Ravana and so had the right to kill him. When any of us becomes God, he may consider whether he is fit to have the power to destroy. I have ventured to say this by way of introduction to these great books. I was, myself, a sceptic once and lived in fear of being destroyed. I have grown out of that stage and become a believer. I have thought it fit here to describe the influence which these books have had on me. For Muslim students, the Koran is the best book in this respect. I would counsel them as well that they study this book in a spirit of devotion. They should understand its true message. I feel, too, that both Hindus and Muslims should study each other's religious scriptures with due respect and try to understand them.

From this most absorbing subject, I shall pass on to a topic of more worldly interest. It is often asked whether it is proper for students to take part in politics. I will let you know my opinion about it without going into the reasons. Politics has two aspects, theoretical study and practical activity. It is essential that students be introduced to the former, but it is harmful for them to concern themselves with the latter. They may attend political meetings or the sessions of the Congress in order to learn the science of politics. Such gatherings are useful as object-lessons. Students should have complete freedom to attend them and every effort should be made to get the recent ban on them removed. Students may not speak or vote at such meetings but may serve as volunteers if that does not interfere with their studies. No student can afford to miss an opportunity of serving Malaviyaji if one comes his way. Students should keep away from party politics. They should remain detached and cultivate respect for the leaders of the nation. It is not for them to judge the latter. Students easily respond to excellences of character, they adore them. They say it is the duty of students to look upon elders with reverence and respect their words. This is well said. He who has not learnt to respect others cannot hope for respect for himself. An attitude of insolence ill becomes students. In this respect, an unusual situation has come about in India. Older folk are careless how they behave, or fail to maintain their dignity. What are the students to do in these circumstances? As I imagine, a student should have regard for dharma. Such a student, when faced with a moral dilemma, should recall the instance of Prahlad. Placed in circumstances in which this boy respectfully disobeyed the commands of his father, we can act in like manner towards elders resembling the

latter. But any disrespect shown to them beyond this will be wrong. It will ruin the community. An elder is so not merely by virtue of his age, but by virtue of the knowledge, experience and wisdom which age brings. Where these are absent, the elder's position depends simply on his age. Nobody, however, worships age as such.

Another question is: How can students serve the country ? The simple answer is that a student should study well, safeguarding his health meanwhile and cherishing the aim of using the fruits of his study in the service of the country. I am quite sure he will thereby serve his country. By living a purposeful life and taking care to be unmindful of our own interests and to work for others, we can achieve much with little effort. I want to tell you of one task of this kind. You must have seen my letter in the newspapers about the difficulties of third-class passengers. I suppose most of you travel third. These passengers spit in the compartment; they also spit out the remains of betel leaves and tobacco which they chew right in the carriage, and likewise throw the skins of bananas, etc., and other leavings on the floor of the carriage; they are careless in the use of the latrine and foul it. They smoke *bidis* and cigarettes without any regard for the convenience of fellow-passengers. We can explain to the other passengers in our compartment the harm that results from their dirtying the place. Most passengers respect students and listen to them. They should not then miss these excellent opportunities of explaining the rules of hygiene to the masses. The eatables sold at stations are dirty. It is the duty of students, when they find the things dirty, to draw the attention of the traffic manager to the fact, whether he replies or no. And take care that you write to him in Hindi. When he receives many such letters, he will be forced to heed them. This is easy work to do but it will yield important results.

I have spoken about the habits of chewing betel leaves and tobacco. In my humble opinion, these habits are both harmful and unclean. Most of us, men and women, have become their slaves. We must be free of this slavery. A stranger visiting India will surely think that we are always eating some thing or the other. That the betel leaf, possibly, helps to digest food may be conceded, but food eaten in the proper quantity and manner is digested without any help from things like the betel leaf. Moreover, it does not have even an agreeable taste. And tobacco chewing must be given up as well. Students should always practise self-control. It is also necessary to consider the habit

of smoking. Our rulers have set a bad example in this respect. They smoke cigarettes anywhere and everywhere. This has led us to consider smoking a fashion, and to turn our mouths into chimneys. Many books have been written to show that smoking is harmful. We call this age *Kaliyuga*. Christians believe that Jesus Christ will come again when selfishness, immorality, addiction to drugs and drink, etc., become rife. I shall not consider to what extent we may accept this as true. But I do feel that the world has been suffering a great deal from evils such as drinking, smoking, addiction to opium, *ganja*, hemp and so on. All of us are caught in this snare and so we cannot truly measure the magnitude of its unhappy consequences. It is my prayer that you, the students, keep away from them.

This Conference has entered its seventeenth year. The speeches of the Presidents in previous years were sent to me I have gone through them. What is the object behind arranging these speeches? If it is that you may learn something from them, ask yourselves what you have learnt. If it is just to hear a beautiful flow of English words and enhance the prestige of the Conference, I feel sorry for you. I take it that these speeches are arranged with the idea that you may learn something from them and put it into practice. How many of you followed Smt. Besant's advice and adopted the Indian mode of dress, simplified your food habits and gave up unclean talk or acted on Prof. Jadunath Sarkar's advice and spent your vacations in teaching the poor, free of charge? I can put many questions. I do not ask for a reply. You may answer these questions to your own conscience. The worth of your learning will be judged by your actions. Stuffing your brains with the contents of hundreds of books may bring its reward but action is of much greater value by far. One's stock of learning is of no more value than the action it leads to. The rest is an unnecessary burden. I would, therefore, always request you and urge you to practise what you learn and what appears to you to be right. That is the only way to progress.

[From Gujarati]

Mahatma Gandhini Vicharsrishti

35. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

MOTHARI,

Tuesday [*October 16, 1917*]

CHI. MAGANLAL[1],

It is not surprising that the sight of funeral pyres made you momentarily nervous. If men had some rule and discipline in their lives, death would come at the right time and funeral pyres would take their natural course. We are upset when a storm brings down unripe fruit. We are content to see ripe fruit fall. The same isthe case with human lives. When people die in consequence of calamities such as the plague, we take the thing to heart. It is *satyayuga*[2] when such things don't happen. It is for us to bring about the times when there will be no reason to fear death. If we do our best, *satyayuga* will have dawned for us. We should always be prepared for death and live without fear. To teach one to live such a life—that is the aim of the Ashram[3]. You are all doing something great indeed. It is an excellent thing to live in tents and put up with hardships. If we had stayed on in the bungalow, we would have had to hang our heads in shame. Living in tents, you are all getting beaten into shape. You are being educated. You are setting an example. You are learning to fight it out with Nature. Anyone who resolves to live such a life can do so.

I am in good cheer. I shall be able to go to the Ashram only after I have finished with Broach.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5718. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] Chhaganlal Gandhi's brother and a close associate of Gandhiji

[2] Age of truth, the "Golden Age"

[3] Satyagraha Ashram, founded by Gandhiji in June 1917, on the banks of the river Sabarmati near Ahmedabad

36. SPEECH AT RECEPTION BY MERCHANTS, BROACH[1]

[After *October 19, 1917*]

Merchants always have the spirit of adventure, intellect and wealth, as without these qualities their business cannot go on. But, now, they must have the fervour of patriotism in them. Patriotism is necessary even for religion. If the spirit of patriotism is awakened through religious fervour, then, that patriotism will shine out brilliantly. So it is necessary that patriotism should be roused in the mercantile community.

The merchants take more part in public affairs now-a-days than before. When merchants take to politics through patriotism, swaraj is as good as obtained. Some of you might be wondering how we can get swaraj. I lay my hand on my heart and say that, when the merchant class understands the spirit of patriotism, then only can we get swaraj quickly. Swaraj then will be quite a natural thing.

Amongst the various keys which will unlock swaraj to us, the swadeshi[2] vow is the golden one. It is in the hands of the merchants to compel the observance of the swadeshi vow in the country, and this is an adventure which can be popularized by the merchants. I humbly request you to undertake this adventure and then you will see what wonders you can do.

This being so, I have to say with regret that it is the merchant class which has brought ruin to the swadeshi practice and the swadeshi movement in this country. Complaints have lately risen in Bengal about the increase of rates, and one of them is against Gujarat. It is complained there that the prices of dhotis have been abnormally increased and dhotis go from Gujarat. No one wants you not to earn money, but it must be earned righteously and not be ill-gotten. Merchants must earn money by fair means. Unfair means must never be used.

India's strength lies with the merchant class. So much does not lie even with the army. Trade is the cause of war, and the merchant

[1] Gandhiji was presented with an address of welcome by the merchants during his visit to Broach, Presumably, the speech was made in Gujarati.

[2] Literally, belonging to one's own country; here, with reference to goods; the movement for boycott of foreign goods was started after the partition of Bengal in 1905; *vide* "The Insult to Sir Mancherji", 7-10-1905.

class has the key of war in their hands. Merchants raise the money and the army is raised on the strength of it. The power of England and Germany rests on their trading class. A country's prosperity depends upon its mercantile community. I consider it as a sign of good luck that I should receive an address from the merchant class. Whenever I remember Broach, I will enquire if the merchants who have given me an address this day have righteous faith and patriotism. If I receive a disappointing reply, I will think that merely a wave of giving addresses had come over India and that I had a share in it.

Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi

37. SPEECH AT SECOND GUJARAT EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

BROACH,
October 20, I917

Gandhiji prefaced the speech with an apology to the audience:

As it is already late, reading my speech will proceed beyond the time-limit fixed for it. I read it because I am under pressure from friends here to do so. When preparing the speech, I took the utmost care to see that it briefly expressed all that I wished to say, but it has become longer than I expected. I hope to be excused, therefore, if in reading it I exceed my time.

Gandhiji then read the speech from a printed text.[1]

DEAR SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

You have done me a great honour in selecting me to be the President of this Conference. I know that I do not have the necessary learning for this office. I know, too, that my work in other spheres in the service of our country does not, and cannot, qualify me for the honour you have conferred on me today. I have but one qualification for it, that I would not, I am perfectly sure, be content with anything but the first place in a contest for demonstrating one's love for Gujarati. Indeed, it is because I am confident of this that I have accepted this onerous responsibility. I hope that the generosity which has prompted you to give me this honour will also prompt you to forgive all my shortcomings, and help me in this work—which is as

[1] The translation which follows is reproduced from *True Education*, with some changes intended to bring it into closer conformity with the Gujarati original.

much yours as mine.

This Conference is but a year old. Just as, in the case of a great man, we often find indications of his future greatness even in his infancy, so it is with this Conference. I have read the report of its work for the last year. It is a report which would do credit to any institution. The Secretaries are to be congratulated on having prepared and published this valuable report in time. It is our good fortune that we have such able secretaries. To those who have not yet read this report, I suggest that they do so and ponder over it. The death of Shri Ranjitram Vavabhai[1] last year has been a great loss to us. It is a matter of deep regret that a man of letters like him was snatched away from our midst in the prime of life; this should make us pause and think. May God grant peace to the departed soul. I would request the members of his family to take strength in the thought that we all share their grief.

The organization[2] which has called this Conference has set three aims before itself:

1. To create and give expression to public opinion on questions of education.
2. To carry on propaganda in regard to educational questions in Gujarat.
3. To undertake concrete activities for promoting education in Gujarat.

I shall endeavour to place before you the results of my thinking, such as it has been, on these three aims.

It should be obvious to everyone that the first thing to do in this connection is to come to a definite decision about the medium of instruction. Unless that is done, all other efforts, I fear, are likely to prove fruitless. To impart education without first considering the question of the medium of instruction will be like raising a building without a foundation.

On this point, two views prevail among educationists. Some hold that education should be imparted through the mother tongue; that is, through Gujarati. Others contend that it should be imparted through

[1] Ranjitram Vavabhai Mehta (1882-1916); in appreciation of his active literary interests, a gold medal has been instituted in Gujarat and awarded annually for outstanding achievements in the field of letters or the art.

[2] Broach Kelavani Mandal

English. Both parties are honest in their views, for both have the welfare of the country at heart. But mere good intentions are not enough to gain the end we desire. It is the experience of the world that good intentions do occasionally take us to unworthy places We must, therefore, critically examine both these views and, if possible, come to a unanimous decision on this great and important question. There is no doubt whatsoever that the issue is of the utmost importance and we cannot consider it too carefully.

This question concerns the whole of India. But each Presidency or Province may decide this matter for itself. It is erroneous to think that, until unanimity has been reached about it, Gujarat cannot go ahead by itself.

We can, however, solve some of our difficulties by considering what they have done about it in other Provinces. At the time of the Bengal partition[1], when the spirit of swadeshi was at its height, an effort was made there to impart education through Bengali. A national school[2] was also started. Money poured forth in plenty. But the experiment failed. In my humble opinion, the sponsors of the movement had no faith in their experiment. The teachers were in the same pitiable condition. In Bengal, the educated classes are blindly in love with English. It has been suggested that the progress made by Bengali literature in recent times is mainly due to the profound knowledge of English language and literature among the Bengalis. But the facts are against this assumption. The bewitching style of our beloved poet—Rabindranath Tagore[3] —does not owe its excellence to his knowledge of English. Its source lies rather in his love for his own language. *Gitanjali* was originally written in Bengali. This great poet always uses his mother tongue when in Bengal. The great speech he recently made at Calcutta on present-day conditions in India was in Bengali. Among those who went to hear him were some of the most prominent men and women from his part of the country. And I have been told by those who heard him on the occasion that he kept the audience literally spell-bound for an hour-and-a-half with the flow of

[1] In 1905, on grounds of administrative convenience, Bengal was divided into two provinces, one of which was predominantly Hindu and the other, Muslim. The partition, which raised a storm of protest throughout India and let to the movement for boycott of British goods, was finally annulled in 1911.

[2] A council and a society for promotion of national education were set up.

[3] 1861-1941; was awarded Nobel Prize for Literature, in 1913, for *Giganjali*; founder of Santiniketan and Vishwabharati University

nectar-like stream of words. He has not borrowed his ideas from English literature. He says, he has acquired them from the atmosphere of this country. He has culled them from the *Upanishads*[1]. It is our glorious Indian sky which has inspired him. I believe it is the same with other Bengali authors.

When Mahatma Munshiram[2], serene and sublime like the Himalayas, speaks in Hindi, men, women and children alike enjoy listening to him and follow him. He has reserved his English for his English friends. He does not make his [Hindi] speeches with English phrases in his mind.

It is said that the English of the revered Madan Mohan Malaviya[3], who, though a householder, has dedicated his all to the country, shines like silver. Even the Viceroy has to take note of anything that Malaviyaji says. But, if his English is like shining silver, his Hindi, the flow of the Ganga that it is, shines like gold even as the latter does when flowing down from Manasarovar.

These three great speakers have acquired this power of eloquence not from their knowledge of English but from the love of their own language. Swami Dayanand[4] did great service to Hindi not because he knew English but because he loved the Hindi language. English had nothing to do with Tukaram[5] and Ramadas[6] shedding lustre on Marathi. Premananda[7] and Shamal Bhatt[8] and, recently,

[1] Concluding portions of the *Veda*, the *Vedanta*; though they do not represent any system, they expound a discernible unity of thought and purpose and bring out a vivid sense of spiritual reality.

[2] Better known as Swami Shraddhanand, founder of the Gurukul at Kangri, near Hadwar, a residential school for imparting education in the traditional Indian style through close communion with a guru

[3] 1861-1946; edited *Hindustan*, 1887-9, *Indian Union*, 1889-92, *Abhyudaya*, 1907-9; President, Indian National Congress, 1909 and 1918; founded the Benares Hindu University in 1916, and was its Vice-Chancellor during 1919-40; member, Imperial Legislative Council, 1910-20; attended the Round Table Conference in London, 1931-2

[4] Swami Dayanand Saraswati (1824-83); founder of the Arya Samaj

[5] Saint-poets of Maharashtra

[6] Same for footnote No. 3.

[7] 1636-1724; Gujarati poet; his narrative poems represent the highest achievement in Gujarati literature during the pre-British period.

[8] 1700-65; Gujarati poet; a stanza from one of his poems became Gandhiji's "guiding principle"; *vide An Autobiography*, Part I, Ch. X.

Dalpatram[1], have greatly enriched Gujarati literature; their glorious success is not to be attributed to their knowledge of English.

The above examples prove beyond doubt that, for the enrichment of the mother tongue, what is needed is not knowledge of English but love for one's own language and faith in it.

We shall arrive at the same conclusion by examining the growth and development of various languages. A language mirrors the character of the people who use it. We acquire information about the manners and customs of the Negroes of South Africa by studying their native tongue. A language takes its form from the character and life of those who speak it. We can say without hesit-ation that the people whose language does not reflect the qualities of courage, truthfulness and compassion are deficient in those virtues. Importing of words expressive of courage or compassion from other tongues will not enrich or widen the content of a language nor make its speakers brave and kind. Courage is not to be had as a gift; if it is there within, covered with rust though it be, it will shine forth when that covering disappears. In our own mother tongue, we find a large number of words denoting an excess of meekness, because we have lived under subjection for many years. Similarly, no other language in the world has as many nautical terms as English. Supposing that an enterprising Gujarati writer were to render books on the subject from English into Gujarati, it would not add one whit to the range and power of our language, nor would it in any way increase our knowledge of ships. But as soon as we start building ships and raise a navy, the necessary technical phraseology will automatically establish itself. The late Rev. Taylor has expressed this same view in his book on Gujarati grammar. He says:

> One frequently hears people arguing whether the Gujarati language is perfect or imperfect. There is a proverb saying: "As the King, so the people", and another "As the teacher, so the disciple". In the same way, we might say, "As the speaker, so the language". It does not appear that poets like Shamal Bhatt and others ever felt handicapped in expressing the innumerable thoughts in their minds because of any sense of deficiency in Gujarati. Indeed, they displayed such fine discrimination in the disposing of new and old words that whatever they said or wrote passed into currency and was incorporated in the speech of the people.

[1] Dalpatram Dahyabhai Travadi (1820-1892)

In some respects, all the languages of the world are imperfect. When speaking of things beyond man's limited intellect, of God and Eternity, we shall find every language imperfect. Language is but a function of man's intellect. Hence, when the intellect fails to reach out to or fully comprehend a subject, the language [expressing the thought] will be imperfect. The general principle concerning a language is that the ideas which find expression in it reflect the minds of the people who speak it. If the people are courteous, so is their language; if the people are foolish, the language is equally so. All English proverb says: "A bad carpenter quarrels with his tools." Those who complain of the imperfection of their language often do much the same. A student with a smattering of the English language and English learning may feel tempted to think that Gujarati is imperfect, for an accurate translation from English into one's own mother tongue is difficult. The fault does not lie with the language but with the people who use it. Inasmuch as the people do not practise exercising their judgment to follow new expressions, new subjects and new styles, the writer hesitates to use them. Who will be foolhardy enough to sing in front of a deaf man? As long as the people are not ready to discriminate between good and bad, or new and old and evaluate things aright, how can we expect a writer's genius to blossom forth ?

Some of those who translate from English seem to labour under the impression that they have imbibed Gujarati with their mother's milk and learnt English through study and are, therefore, perfect bilinguists. Why, they ask, should they study Gujarati? But surely acquisition of proficiency in one's own language is more important than the effort spent over mastering a foreign one. Look up the works of poets like Shamal and others. Every verse bears evidence of study and labour. Gujarati may seem imperfect before one has struggled with it, but afterwards one will find it mature enough. He whose effort is half-hearted will wield the language but imperfectly; the writer or speaker whose effort is unsparing will likewise command Gujarati that is perfect; nay, it may even be polished. Gujarati, of the Aryan family, a daughter of Sanskrit, related to some of the best languages—who dare call her undeveloped?

May God bless her! May she speak, till the end of ages, of wisdom and learning ever the best and of true religion. May God, the Creator, grant us that we hear her praises from the mother and the student, for ever and for ever.

Thus, we see that the failure of the movement to impart education through the medium of Bengali in Bengal does not show any inherent imperfection in that language or the futility of such an

effort. We have considered the point about imperfection; as for futility, the experiment in Bengal does not prove it. If anything, it only shows the incompetence of those who made the effort, or their lack of faith in it.

In the North, Hindi is certainly making good progress. But a persistent effort to use it as the medium of instruction has been made only by the Arya Samajists in the *gurukulas*.

In Madras, the movement for using the mother tongue as the medium of education started only a few years ago. The Telugu people are more active in this respect than the Tamilians. The latter are so dominated by the influence of English that they have little enthusiasm for making an effort to use Tamil as the medium of instruction. In the Telugu-speaking region, English education has not yet penetrated to the same extent. Therefore, the people in that part use the mother tongue more than the Tamilians. The Telugu people are not only carrying on experiments to impart education through their own language but have also started a movement for the redistribution of India on the basis of language. The movement is of recent origin, and is as yet in the initial stage. But so vigorous is their effort that it is not unlikely that we may see the idea being given a practical shape before long. There are rocks on the way, but their leaders have given me the impression that they have the strength all right to break them.

Maharashtra is making the same attempt, sponsored by the great and noble Prof. Karve[1]. Shri Nayak holds the same view. Private schools have taken up the task. With great effort, Prof. Vijapurkar[2] has revived his plan and we shall shortly see his school functioning. He had drawn up a plan for preparing text-books. Some of these have already been printed, others are ready in manuscript. The teachers of that school never wavered in their faith. If, unfortunately, it had not been closed, it would have by now settled the controversy whether or not Marathi can serve as the medium of education even at the highest level.

In Gujarat, too, this movement has got started. We know about it

[1] Dhondo Keshav Karve (1858-1962); social reformer and pioneer educationist; established the Shrimati Nathubai Damodar Thakersey University for Women in Poona (1915); was awarded "Bharat Ratna", the highest Indian award, in 1958; *vide* also "Deed Better than Words", 26-10-1906.

[2] V. G. Vijapurkar (1863-1925); pioneer of national education who founded, in collaboration with Lokamanya Tilak, the Samartha Vidyalaya at Talegaon

from the essay of R. B. Hargovinddas Kantawala[1]. Prof. Gajjar[2] and the late Diwan Bahadur Manibhai Jasbhai may be regarded as the leaders of this movement. It is now for us to decide whether or not we should help the growth of the seeds sown by these persons. To my mind, there is no doubt that the more we delay, the greater our loss.

It requires a minimum of 16 years to complete one's education through the medium of English. If the same subjects were taught through the mother tongue, it would take ten years at the most. This is the opinion expressed by many experienced teachers. A saving of six years for each of the thousands of students means a saving of thousands of years for the nation.

Education through a foreign language entails an excessive strain which only our boys could bear, they must needs pay dearly for it, though. To a large extent, they lose the capacity of shoulder-ing any other burden afterwards. Our graduates, therefore, are a useless lot, weak of body, without any zest for work, and mere imitators. They suffer an atrophy of the creative faculty and of the capacity for original thinking, and grow up without the spirit of enterprise and the qualities of perseverance, courage and fearless-ness. That is why we are unable to make new plans or carry out those we make. A few who do show promise of these qualities usually die young. An Englishman has said that there is the same difference between Europeans and the people of other countries as between an original piece of writing and its impression on a piece of blotting paper. The element of truth in this statement is not to be attributed to any natural or innate incapacity on the part of the Asians. The reason lies, in a large measure, in the unsuitable med-ium of instruction. The natives of South Africa are enterpri-sing, strongly built and endowed with character. They do not have such evils as child marriage, etc., which we have, and yet their condition is similar to ours. Why? Because the medium of their education is Dutch. They are able to acquire mastery over the language within a short period as we do [over English], and like us they, too, become weak of body and mind at the end of their

[1] 1849-1931; was Director of Public Instruction, Baroda State; *vide* "Compulsory Education in India", 7-10-1905.

[2] Tribhuvandas Kalyandas Gajjar (1863-1920); an eminent student of Chemistry; founded Kalabhavan, a technical school, in Baroda in 1890 and served as its Principal; he promoted the establishment of the Alembic Chemical Works in Baroda.

education and often turn out to be mere imitators. From them, too, originality disapp-ears along with the mother tongue. It is only we, the English-educated people, who are unable to assess the great loss that results. Some idea of it may be had if we estimate how little has been our influence on the general mass of our people. The occasional remarks which our parents are led to make about the worthlessness of our education have some point. We get ecstatic over the achieve-ments of Bose[1] and Ray[2]. But I am convinced that, had we been having our education through the mother tongue for 50 years, a Bose or a Ray would have occasioned no surprise among us.

Ignoring for a while the question whether or not the new zeal and energy being exhibited by the Japanese at present is directed into the right channels, we find their enterprise really most remarkable. They have brought about the awakening of their people through the use of the mother tongue. That is why everything that they do bears the stamp of originality. They are now in a position to teach their teachers. They have belied the comparison [of non-Euro-pean peoples] with blotting paper. The life of the Japanese is throb-bing with vitality and the world looks on in amazement. The system under which we are educated through a foreign language results in incalculable harm.

The continuity that should exist, on the one hand, between the culture the child imbibes along with the mother's milk and the sweet words it receives and, on the other, the training school, is broken when education is imparted through a foreign tongue. Those who are responsible for this are enemies of the people, howsoever honest their motives. To be a voluntary victim of this system of education is to betray one's duty to one's mother. The harm done by this educa-tion received through a foreign tongue does not stop here but goes much further. It has created a gulf between the educated classes and the masses. We do not know them and they do not know us. They regard us as sahibs to be feared and may distrust us. If this state of affairs continues very long, the time may come when Lord Curzon's[3] charge

[1] Sir Jagdish Chandra Bose (1858-1937); eminent Indian scientist, author of books on plant physiology; founder, Bose Research Institute, Calcutta

[2] Acharya Prafulla Chandra Ray (1861-1944); professor of Chemistry at Presidency College, Calcutta; author of *History of Hindu Chemistry*, educationist and patriot.

[3] 1859-1925; Viceroy and Governor-General of India, 1899-1905

that the educated classes do not represent the common people would be true.

Fortunately, our educated classes appear to be awakening from their slumber. Now that they are beginning to come in contact with the people, they themselves realize the handicaps described above. How may they infect the people with their own enthusiasm? English certainly will not avail us, whereas we have little or no aptitude to do the thing through Gujarati. I always hear people say that they experience great difficulty in expressing themselves in the mother tongue. This barrier dams up the current of popular life. Macaulay's[1] motive in introducing English education was sincere. He despised our literature. His contempt infected us, too, and we also lost our balance. Indeed, we have left our masters, the English, far behind us in this matter. Macaulay wanted us to become prop-agandists of Western civilization among our masses. His idea was that English education would help us to develop strength of character and then some of us would disseminate new ideas among the people. It would be irrelevant here to consider whether or not those ideas were good enough to be spread among the people. We have only to consider the question of the medium of instruction. We saw in English education an opportunity to earn money and, therefore, gave importance to the use of English. Some learned patriotism from it. Thus the original idea became secondary and we suffered much harm from the use of English which extended beyond Macaulay's original intention.

If we had political power in our hands, we would have discovered the error soon enough and would have found it impossible to give up the mother tongue. The officials did not give it up. Many perhaps do not know that our court language is supposed to be Gujarati. The Government gets the laws translated into Gujarati as well. Speeches read at durbars are translated into Gujarati simultaneously. We know that in currency notes Gujarati is used alongside with English. Mathematical calculations which land-surveyors have to learn are difficult. If they had to do so through English, the work of the Revenue Department would have become very expensive. So they evolved Gujarati terminology for the use of the surveyors. These

[1] Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-59); President of the General Committee of Public Instruction and Law Member of the Governor-General's Executive Council; recommended, in his Education Minute of February 2, 1835, the introduction of English education in India. *Vide* "Compulsory Education in India", 7-10-1905.

terms will give us a pleasant surprise. If we have a sincere love for our language, we can this very moment put to use the resources at our disposal. If lawyers start using Gujarati for their work, much of the clients' money would be saved. Clients would also get the requisite knowledge of law and come to know their rights. The expenses on the services of interpreters would also be saved. Legal terms would pass into current use. Of course, lawyers would have to put themselves to some trouble to do all this. I believe, and the belief is supported by experience, that this will not harm the interests of the client. There is no reason to fear that arguments in Gujarati would carry less weight with the Court than in English. It is compulsory for Collectors and other Government officials to know Gujarati. But, because of our unreasoning craze for English, we allow their knowl-edge to rust.

It has been contended that there was nothing wrong in our people learning English and using it for earning money and cultivating a sense of patriotism through it. But the contention has no bearing on the use of English as the medium of instruction. We shall respect a person who learns English for acquiring wealth or for doing good to the country. But we cannot, on this account, assert that English should be used as the medium of instruction. All that is intended here is to bring out the harmful consequences of English having established itself as the medium of education because of these two developments. There are some who hold that English-knowing people alone have displayed patriotism. For the past two months, we have been witnessing something very different. We may, however, accept this claim with the modification that others never had the opportunity which the English knowing people had. The patriotism induced by the knowledge of English has not been infectious. Real patriotism is an expanding force which is ever propagating itself. The patriotism of English-knowing people lacks this quality.

It is said that, however correct these arguments, the idea is not practicable today. "It is a pity that the study of other subjects should have to suffer because of the excessive importance given to English. And it is to be deplored that much of our mental energy is used up in mastering it. But, in my humble opinion, the way we are placed in relation to English leaves us no alternative but to accept the present arrangement and then find a way out." This is the view not of any ordinary writer but of one of the foremost scholars of Gujarat and a great lover of our mother tongue. We cannot but take into account

anything that Acharya Dhruva[1] says. Few can claim to have the experience that he has. He has rendered great service in the fields of education and literature. He has a perfect right to advise and criti-cize. That being so, a man like me has to think twice before exp-res-sing a different opinion. Shri Anandshankarbhai has expressed in courteous language the view held by the entire body of the advo-cates of English. We are in duty bound to give consideration to this point of view. Besides, my position in respect of this is somewhat awkward. I am conducting an experiment in National Education under his guidance and supenision. In this experiment we are using the mother tongue as the medium of education. In view of such close relations between us, I naturally hesitate to write anything in criticism of his views. Fortunately, Acharya Dhruva has considered education through English and that through the mother tongue only as experiments and has not expressed any definite opinion about either. I do not, therefore, feel as much hesitation in voicing my opposition to the above view as I otherwise would.

We attach excessive importance to our relationship with English. I am aware that we cannot discuss this question with unrest-ricted freedom in this Conference. But it is not improper to tell even those who cannot take part in political affairs that the British rule in India should be for the good of our country. There can be no other justification for it. The British rulers themselves admit that for one nation to rule over another is an intolerable situation for both, that it is evil and harms both. This is accepted in principle in discussions which recognize the altruistic point of view. Therefore, if it is proved to the satisfaction of both the rulers and the ruled that education through English saps the mental energy of our people, then, no time should be lost in changing the medium of instruction. The obstacles that lie in the way will then be a challenge to us. If this view is accepted, it should not be necessary to give any further argument to convince those who, like Acharya Dhruva, admit the [present] drain on our mental energy.

I do not think it necessary to consider whether or not the adoption of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction will have any adverse effect on the knowledge of English. It is not essential for all educated Indians to have a mastery of this alien language. Not only

[1] Anandshankar Bapubhai Dhruva; Sanskrit scholar and man of letters; Vice-Chancellor, Benares Hindu University, 1920-37

that, I even maintain, in all humility, that it is unnecessary to go out of one's way to create the desire for such mastery.

It is true that some Indians will have to learn English. Acharya Dhruva seems to have looked at this question only from the point of view of higher education. If, however, we consider it from all angles, it will be seen that two classes of people will need to learn English:

1. Public-spirited people who possess special aptitude for languages, have time on their hand and want to study English literature in order to put the fruits of their learning before our people, or use them in their contacts with the rulers.

2. Those who want to use their knowledge of English for economic gain.

There is no harm in giving both these groups a thorough knowledge of English as an optional subject. We should even provide the necessary facilities for it. But in this arrangement the medium of instruction will be the mother tongue. Acharya Dhruva fears that, if we do not adopt English as the medium but learn it merely as a foreign language, it will share the fate of Persian, Sanskrit, etc. I must say, with due respect to the Acharya, that this view is not quite correct. There are many Englishmen who know French well and are able to use it satisfactorily for their work even though they received their education through English. In India, too, there are a number of Indians whose knowledge of French is quite good, though they learned it through the medium of English. The truth is that, when English comes to occupy its own place and the mother tongue has gained its rightful status, our minds which are imprisoned at present will be set free from the prison-house and, for brains which are well cultivated, well exercised and yet fresh, learning English will not be too much of a strain. I even believe that the English we learn under such conditions will be more of a credit to us than it is at present. What is more, with our intelligence vigorous and fresh, we shall be able to use it to better advantage. From the practical point of view of gain and loss, the course proposed will be found effective in promoting all our interests.

When we start receiving education through our own language, our relations in the home will take on a different character. Today, we cannot make our wives real life-companions. They have very little idea of what we do outside. Our parents know nothing about what we learn at school. If, however, we were to receive education through our mother tongue, we would find it easy to educate the washerman, the

barber, the *Bhangi*[1] and others who serve us. In England, they discuss politics with the hair-dresser while having a hair-cut. Here, we cannot do so even with the members of our own families. The reason is not that they are ignorant. They, too, know as much as the English barber. We talk with them on the *Mahabharata*, the *Ramayana* and of holy places, because it is these things which our people hear and learn about. But, the knowledge we get at school does not seep down to others, not even to the members of our families, because we cannot impart to them what we learn in English.

At present the proceedings of our Legislative Assemblies are in English. It is the same story with other bodies. Consequently, the riches of our knowledge lie buried in the ground, much like the wealth of the miser. The same thing happens in our courts of law. The judges offer useful counsel. Litigants are eager enough to know what they say, but they get to know nothing except the dry judgment at the end. They cannot even follow the arguments of their lawyers. It is the same with doctors, educated in schools through English. They cannot educate the patients as may be required. They do not even know the Gujarati names for the various parts of the body. In consequence, most of them show no interest in their patients except to write out prescriptions for them. It is said that, in our thoughtlessness, we allow huge masses of water flowing down the hills to go waste. In the same way, we produce precious manure worth millions, but, in the result, we get only diseases. Similarly, crushed under the weight of English and wanting in foresight, we fail to give our people what they are entitled to get. This is no exaggeration. It only expresses the intensity of my feeling on this point. We shall have to pay heavily for our disregard of the mother tongue. This has aIready done us great harm. I consider it the first duty of the educated to save our masses from any further harrn on this account.

There can be no limit to the development of Gujarati, the language of Narasinh Mehta[2], the language in which Nandshankar wrote *Karanghelo*[3], which has been cultivated by writers like

[1] One of the class attending to scavenging work

[2] 1414-79; Saint-poet of Gujarat; one of his poems, *Vaishnava jana to tene kahiye*, describing the character of the true devotee of God, was Gandhiji's favourite hymn.

[3] Pioneer novel in Gujarati about the last independent Hindu king of Gujarat

Navalram[1], Narmadashankar[2], Manilal[3], Malabari[4], in which the late poet Rajchandra[5], uttered his immortal words, a language which has Hindu, Muslim and Parsi communities to serve it, which has had, among those who use it, men of holy lives, men of wealth, and daring sailors voyaging across the seas, and in which heroic stories celebrating Mulu Manek and Jodha Manek[6] even today resound in the hills of Kathiawad. What else can one expect of Gujaratis if they do not use such a language for their education? The pity is that the point needs to be argued.

Finally, while bringing this topic to a close, I draw your attention to the articles of Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta on this subject. Gujarati translations of these articles have been published and I suggest that you read them. You will find in them many ideas which support these views.

If, now, we are convinced that it is good to adopt the mother tongue as the medium of instruc.tion, the next thing is to consider the steps to implement the decision. Without going into any argument, I set down what these steps should be just in the order in which they occur to me:

1. English-knowing Gujaratis should never, intentionally or inadvertently, use English among themselves.
2. Those who possess a sound knowledge of both English and Gujarati should translate into Gujarati good and useful books or ideas in English.
3. Societies for the promotion of education should get text books prepared.
4. The rich among us should start schools in various places for imparting education through Gujarati.

[1] Navalram Laxmishankar Pandya (1836-1888); Gujarati man of letters

[2] Gujarati poet famed for his patriotic compositions; *vide* "The Transvaal Strruggle", 18-5-1907 and 25-5-1907.

[3] Son of Revashankar Jhaveri, friend of Gandhiji; Gujarati thinker and writer. Swami Vivekanand refers in one of his letters to a paper by him which was read at one of the sectional meetings of the Parliament of Religions.

[4] Bekramji Mervanji Malabari (1854-1912); poet, Journalist and social reformer

[5] Rajchandra Raojibhai Mehta, Jain thinker, poet and jeweller; *vide An Autobiography*, Part II, Ch. I.

[6] They fought against the advance of British rule in the manner of medieval outlaws.

5. At the same time, various Conferences and Educational Associations should petition the Government for using the mother tongue as the sole medium of instruction. Courts and legislatures should carry on their proceedings in Gujarati and people should also use Gujarati in all their work. The prevailing practice of selecting only those who know English for lucrative posts should be changed and the candidates should be selected according to merit and without discrimination on the basis of language. A petition should also go to the Government that schools be opened where Government servants may acquire the necessary knowledge of Gujarati.

Exception may be taken to this programme on one count. It will be said that in the Legislative Assembly[1] there are Marathi, Sindhi and Gujarati members and, maybe, from Karnatak as well. The difficulty is serious enough, but not insurmountable. The Telugu-speaking people have already raised this question and there is no doubt that some day there will have to be a reorganization of provinces on the basis of language. But, meanwhile, members of the Assembly should have the right to speak either in Hindi or in their mother tongue. If you find this suggestion ridiculous today; I need only say—with due respect to you—that most radical suggestions seem similarly ridiculous in the beginning and on a superficial view. I am of the opinion that the progress of our country will largely depend on our deciding aright the question of the medium of education. I think, therefore, that my suggestion is of great consequence. When the mother tongue is better esteemed and has been restored to its rightful status—that of an official language—it will reveal powers and capacities undreamt of at present.

As we have had to consider the question of the medium of education, so also is it necessary to consider that of the national language. If this is to be English, it must be made a compulsory subject.

Can English become our national language? Some of our learned men, good patriots, contend that even to argue that English should become the national language betrays ignorance, that it is already so. His Excellency the Viceroy[2] in his recent speech merely expressed the hope that it would occupy this place. His zeal did not

[1] The reference is to the legislature of the Bombay Presidency, which included Sind.

[2] Lord Chelmsford (1868-1933); Viceroy of India, 1916-21

carry him as far as to say that it had already become our national language and that there could be no question about it. He believes, however, that English will spread in the country day by day, enter our homes, and finally attain the exalted status of a national language. On a superficial consideration, this view appears correct. Looking at the educated section of our population, one is likely to gain the impression that, in the absence of English, all our work would come to a stop. But deeper reflection will show that English cannot, and ought not to, become our national language.

Let us see what are the requirements of a national language:

1. It should be easy to learn for Government officials.
2. It should be capable of serving as a medium of religious, economic and political intercourse throughout India.
3. It should be the speech of large numbers of Indians.
4. It should be easy for every Indian to learn.
5. In choosing such a language, considerations of temporary or passing circumstances should not count.

English does not fulfil any of these requirements.

The first point ought to have been placed last, but I have purposely reversed the order because it seems as though English fulfils it. Closer examination will, however, show that even at the present moment it is not for officials an easy language to learn or handle. The Constitution, under which we are being ruled, envisages that the number of British officials will progressively decrease until finally only the Viceroy and a few others are left here. Even now, the majority of people in Government services are Indians and their number will increase as time passes. I think no one will deny that for them English is more difficult than any Indian language.

As regards the second requirement, I think that religious intercourse through English is an impossibility unless our people throughout the land start speaking English. Spreading English among the masses to this extent appears quite impossible.

English simply cannot satisfy the third requirement as it is not the speech of any very large number of Indians.

The fourth also cannot-be met by English because it is not relatively an easy language for all our people to learn.

Considering the fifth point, we see that the status which English

enjoys today is temporary; as a permanent arrangement, the position is that the need for English in national affairs will be, if at all, very slight. It will be required for dealings with the British Empire and will remain the language of diplomacy between different countries within the Empire; this is a different matter. It will certainly remain necessary for such purposes. We do not grudge English anything. We only want that it should not overstep its proper limits; this is all that we insist upon. English will remain the imperial language and accordingly we shall require our Malaviyas, our Shastris and our Banerjeas to learn it,[1] confident that they will enhance the glory of India in other lands. But English cannot be the national language of India. To give it that position will be like introducing Esperanto into our country. To think that English can become our national language betrays weakness, as the attempt to introduce Esperanto would betray sheer ignorance.

Which language, then, fulfils all the five requirements? We shall have to admit that it is Hindi.

I call that language Hindi which Hindus and Muslims in the North speak and which is written either in Devanagari or Urdu script. There has been some objection to this definition.

It is argued that Hindi and Urdu are two different languages. But this is incorrect. Both Hindus and Muslims speak the same language in North India. The difference has been created by the educated classes. That is, educated Hindus Sanskritize their Hindi with the result that Muslims cannot follow it. Muslims of Lucknow Persianize their Urdu and make it unintelligible to Hindus. To the masses both these languages are foreign and so they have no use for them. I have lived in the North and have mixed freely with both Hindus and Muslims, and, though my knowledge of Hindi is limited; I have never found any difficulty in carrying on communication through it with them. Therefore, call it Hindi or Urdu as you like, the language of the people in North India is the same thing—basically. Write it in the Urdu script and call it Urdu, or write it in the Nagari script and call it Hindi.

There now remains the question of the script. For the present, Muslims will certainly use the Urdu script and most of the Hindusthe Devanagari. I say “most” because thousands of Hindus even today

[1] Madan Mohan Malaviya, Rt. Hon’ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri and Sir Surendranath Banerjea were pre-eminent in their masterly use of the English language.

write in the Urdu script and some even do not know the Devanagari script. In the end, when Hindus and Muslims will have ceased to regard each other with distrust, when the causes for such distrust have disappeared, the script which has greater range and is more popular will be more widely used and thus become the national script. In the intervening period, Hindus and Muslims who desire to write their petitions in the Urdu script should be free to do so and these should be accepted at all Government offices.

No other language can compete with Hindi in satisfying these five requirements. Next to Hindi comes Bengali. But the Bengalis themselves make use of Hindi outside Bengal. The Hindi-speaking man speaks Hindi wherever he goes and no one feels surprised at this. The Hindu preachers and the Mahomedan Moulvis always deliver their religious discourses in Hindi and Urdu and even the illiterate masses understand them. Even an unlettered Gujarati, when he goes to the North, attempts to speak a few Hindi words, but the man from the North who works as gate-keeper for the Bombay businessman declines to speak in Gujarati and it is the latter, his employer, who is obliged to speak to him in broken Hindi. I have heard Hindi spoken even in far-off Dravidian provinces[1]. It is not correct to say that in Madras one needs English. Even there, I have used Hindi for all my work. In the trains, I have heard hundreds of Madrasi passengers speaking to others in Hindi. Besides, the Muslims of Madras know good enough Hindi. It should be noted that Muslims throughout India speak Urdu and they are found in large number in every province. Thus Hindi has already established itself as the national language of India. We have been using it as such for a long time. The birth of Urdu itself is due to the aptness of Hindi for this purpose.

Muslim kings could not make Persian or Arabic the national language. They accepted the Hindi grammar and, employing the Urdu script, used more Persian words. They could not use a foreign tongue in their dealings with the masses. It is not as if the British are unaware of this position. Those who know anything about military affairs know that they have had to adopt Hindi and Urdu technical terms for use with the sepoys.

Thus, we see that Hindi alone can become our national language, though the matter presents some difficulty to the educated

[1] These constitute today the Southern States of Andhra, Kerala, Mysore and Madras, the home of people speaking languages of the Dravidian group.

classes of Madras.

For Maharashtrians, Gujaratis, Sindhis and Bengalis, the thing is very easy. In a few months they can acquire enough command of Hindi to be able to use it for all-India intercourse. It is not so easy for Tamil friends. Tamil and other languages of the South belong to the Dravidian group. The structure and the grammar of these languages are different from those of Sanskrit. There is nothing in common between these two groups except certain words. But the difficulty in learning Hindi is confined to the present educated classes only. We are entitled to trust to their patriotic spirit and hope that they will make a special effort to learn Hindi. As for the future, if Hindi attains its due status, it will be introduced in every school in Madras and there will be increased possibilities of contact between Madras and other provinces. English has failed to reach the Dravidian masses, but Hindi will do so in no time. The Telugu people have already started moving in this direction. If this Conference reaches a decision on the question of the national language, we shall have to think of ways and means of implementing the decision. The measures suggested for the promotion of the mother tongue could, with suitable modifications, be applied to the national language as well. The difference is that the responsibility for making Gujarati the medium of instruction in our province will have to be shouldered mainly by us, whereas, in the movement to popularize the national language, the whole country will play its part.

We have discussed the question of the medium of instruction, the national language and, incidentally, the place of English. We have now to consider whether there are any defects in the present system of education in the schools.

There is no difference of opinion on this point. Both the Government and public opinion condemn the present system. There are, however, differences of view regarding what aspects are fit to be preserved and what to be rejected. I am not competent enough to discuss these differences. I shall only venture to place before this Conference my own conclusions.

Since education is not exactly my sphere of work, I feel diffident in saying anything on this subject. When I see a person talk about a thing of which he has no practical experience and which is, therefore, outside his range, I want to tell him off and grow impatient with him. It would be natural for a lawyer to feel impatient and angry

with a physician talking of law. In the same way, I hold that those who have no experience in the field of education have no right to offer criticism on matters connected with it. I should, therefore, like to say a few words about my qualifications to speak on this subject.

I started thinking about modern education[1] twenty-five years ago. I had my children and the children of my brothers and sisters to look after. I was aware of the defects in our schools. I therefore carried out experiments on my children. No doubt, I tossed them about a good deal in the process. Some I sent to one place and some to others. A few I taught myself. My dissatisfaction with the prevailing system remained the same as ever even after I had left for South Africa, and I had to apply my mind further to the subject The management of the Indian Education Society[2] was in my hand for a long time. I never sent my boys to school. My eldest son was a witness to the different stages through which I passed. He left me in disappointment and studied at a school in Ahmedabad for some time. But, as he realized later, this did not benefit him particularly. I am convinced that those whom I did not send to school have not stood to suffer and that they have received a good training indeed. I am conscious of their deficiencies, but these are due to the fact that they grew up while my experiments were in their early stages and they were, therefore, victims of the modifications which the experiments went through despite the continuity of the general pattern. During the satyagraha struggle in South Africa, there were fifty boys studying under my supervision.[3] The general line of work in the school was laid down by me. It had nothing in common with the system in vogue in Government or other schools. A similar effort is now being made here and a National School[4] has been started in Ahmedabad with the blessings of Acharya Dhruva and other scholars. It is now five months old. Prof. Sankalehand Shah, formerly of the Gujarat College, is its Principal. He received his education under Prof. Gajjar and there are many other lovers of the language associated with him. In the main,

[1] For Gandhiji's views on the subject, *vide An Autobiography*, Part IV, Chs. XXXII to XXXVI, also "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", 13-1-1905 and "Phoenix School", 9-1-1909 and "Letter to Manilal Gandhi", 25-3-1909.

[2] The reference is to the Natal Indian Education Association; and *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. VI.

[3] This was at Phoenix School; *vide* "Phoenix School", 2-1-1909,; 9-1-1909.

[4] The Gujarat Vidyapeeth in Ahmedabad

the responsibility for the scheme is mine, but it has the active approval of all the teachers connected with it. They have dedicated themselves to the work, content to receive a salary just enough to meet their needs. Though circumstances do not permit me to undertake actual teaching work in this school, its affairs constantly engage my attention. Thus, my contribution is more like an amateur's but, I believe, not altogether devoid of thought. I would request you to keep this in mind in considering my criticism of the prevailing system of education.

It has always appeared to me that the present system of education pays no attention to the general pattern of life in our families. Naturally enough, our needs were not taken into account when the scheme was drawn up.

Macaulay despised our literature. He thought we were over-much given to superstitions. Most of those who drew up this scheme were utterly ignorant of our religion. Some of them thought that it was a false religion. Our scriptures were regarded as mere collections of superstitions. Our civilization seemed full of defects to them. Because we had fallen on evil times, it was thought that our institutions must be defective. With the best of motives, therefore, they raised a faulty structure. Since a fresh start was being made, the planners could only think of the immediate needs of the situation. The whole thing was devised with this idea in mind, that the rulers would need lawyers, doctors, and clerks to help them and that the people should have the new knowledge. Consequently, books were written without any regard for our way of living. Thus, to use an English proverb, "The cart was placed before the horse".

Shri Malabari said that, if History and Geography were to be taught to children, a beginning should be made with the history and geography of the home. I remember, however, that I was made to memorize the counties of England, with the result that an interesting subject like geography became poison to me. I found nothing in History to enthuse me. History is a good means of inculcating patriotism. But the way it was taught in the school gave me no reason to take pride in this country. To learn that, I have had to read other books.

In teaching Arithmetic and other allied subjects, too, the traditional method hardly finds any place. It is almost completely abandoned. With the disappearance of the indigenous method of learning tables, we have lost the capacity for making speedy

calculations which our elders possessed.

Science tends to be dry and dull. Our children cannot make much use of what they are taught in this field. A science like astronomy which should be taught to the boys in the open by actually showing them the stars in the sky is taught through books. I do not think many boys remernber how to decompose water into its constituent elements once they leave school.

As to Hygiene, it is no exaggeration to say that it is not taught at all. We do not know, after 60 years of education, how to protect ourselves against epidemics like cholera and plague. I consider it a very serious blot on the state of our education that our doctors have not found it possible to eradicate these diseases. I have seen hundreds of homes. I cannot say that I have found any evidence in them of a knowledge of hygiene. I have the greatest doubt whether our graduates know what one should do in case one is bitten by a snake. If our doctors could have started learning medicine at an earlier age, they would not make such a poor show as they do. This is the disastrous result of the system under which we are educated. People in almost all the parts of the world have managed to eradicate the plague. Here it seems to have made a home and thousands of Indians die untimely deaths. If this is to be attributed to poverty, it would still be up to the Education Department to answer why, even after 60 years of education, there is poverty in India.

Let us now turn our attention to the subjects which are not taught at all. All education must aim at building character. I cannot see how this can be done except through religion. We are yet to realize that gradually we are being reduced to a state in which we shall have lost our own without having acquired the new. I cannot go more into this, but I have met hundreds of teachers and they sighed in pain as they told me of their experiences. This is an aspect which the Conference cannot but deeply ponder over. If pupils in schools lose their character, everything will have been lost.

In our country, 85 to 90 per cent of people are engaged in agriculture. Needless to say that no knowledge of this particular field of work can be too much. And yet it has no place at all in the school syllabus up to the end of the high school education. It is only in India that such an anomalous position can exist.

The weaving industry is also falling into ruin. It provided work to farmers during their free hours. The craft finds no place in the

curriculum. Our education can only produce clerks and, its general tendency being what it is, even goldsmiths, blacksmiths and cobblers, once they are caught up in its meshes, be come clerks. We desire that everyone should have a good education. But how will it profit us if our education makes us all clerks ?

Military science finds no place in our education. Personally, I am not unhappy over this. I even regard it as an accidental gain. But the people want to learn the use of arms. Those who do so should not be denied the opportunity of learning it. But this science seems to have been completely lost sight of, as it were, in our scheme of education.

Nowhere do I find a place given to music. It exercises a powerful influence over us. We do not realize this vividly enough, otherwise we would have done everything possible to teach music to our boys and girls. The Vedic hymns seem to follow musical tunes in their composition. Harmonious music has the power to soothe the anguish of the soul. At times, we find restlessness in a large gathering. This can be arrested and calmed if a national song is sung by all. That hundreds of boys may sing a poem full of courage and the spirit of adventure and bravery and be inspired with the spirit of heroism is no commonplace fact. We have an example of the power of music in the fact that boatmen and other labourers raise, in unison, the cry of *Harahar* and *Allabeli* and this helps them in their work. I have seen English friends trying to fight cold by singing songs. Our boys learn to sing songs from popular plays in all manner of tunes and without regard to time and place, and try their hands on noisy harmoniums and Other instruments, and this does them harm. If, instead, they were to be correctly trained in music, they would not waste their time singing, or attempting to sing, music-hall songs. Just as a trained singer never sings out of tune or at the wrong time, even so one who has learnt classical music will not go in for street music. Music must get a place in our efforts at popular awakening. The views of Dr. Ananda Coomaraswami[1] on this subject are worthy of serious study.

I include in the term "physical training" sports, games, etc. These, too, have been little thought of. Indigenous games have been given up and tennis, cricket and football hold sway. Admit-tedly, these games are enjoyable. If, however, we had not been carried away by

[1] 1877-1947; exponent of Oriental art and culture; Curator of Fine Arts Museum, U.S.A; author of *Transformation of Nature in Art, Dance of Shiva*, etc.

enthusiasm for all things Western, we would not have given up our inexpensive but equally interesting games like *gedi-dado, gilli-danda, kho-kho, mag-matali, kabaddi, kharo pat, nava nagelio, sat tali*, etc. Exercises which provided the completest training for every bodily organ and the old style gymnasium where they taught wrestling have almost totally disappeared. I think if anything from the West deserves copying, it is drill. A friend once remarked that we did not know how to walk, particularly when we had to walk in squads and keep step. Silently to walk in step, by hundreds and thousands of us in twos and fours, shifting the directions from time to time is something we can never do. It is not that such drill is useful only in actual battle. It can be of great use in many other activities in the sphere of public service. For example, in extinguishing fire, in rescuing people from drowning, in carrying the sick and disabled in a *doli*[1], etc., [previous practice in] drill is a valuable aid. Thus, it is necessary to introduce in our schools indigenous games, exercises and the Western type of drill.

The education of women is as faulty as that of men. No thought has been given to the relations of men and women or to the place of woman in Indian society.

Primary education for the two sexes can have much in common. There are important differences at all other levels. As Nature has made men and women different, it is necessary to maintain a difference between the education of the two. True, they are equals in life, but their functions differ. It is woman's right to rule the home. Man is master outside it. Man is the earner, woman saves and spends. Woman looks after the feeding of the child. She shapes its future. She is responsible for building its character. She is her children's educator, and hence, mother to the Nation. Man is not father [in that sense]. After a certain period, a father ceases to influence his son; the mother never abdicates her place. The son, even after attaining manhood, will play with the mother even as the child does. He cannot do that with his father.

If this is the scheme of Nature, and it is just as it should be, woman should not have to earn her living. A state of affairs in which women have to work as telegraph clerks, typists or compositors can be, I think, no good, such a people must be bankrupt and living on their capital.

[1] Seat slung from a pole carried by two or more men on shoulders

Hence, just as, on the one hand, it is wrong to keep women in ignorance and under suppression, so, on the other, it is a sign of decadence and it is tyrannical to burden them with work which is ordinarily done by men.

There must be provision, therefore, for separate arrangements for the education of women after their attaining a certain age. They should be taught the management of the home, the things they should or should not do during pregnancy, and the nursing and care of children. Drawing up such a scheme presents difficulties. The idea is new. The right course would be to constitute a committee of men and women, of good character and well-informed, who would think further and arrive at conclusions, and ask them to produce a suitable plan for the purpose.

This committee should consider measures for the education of girls from the time that they cease to be children. There is, however, a very large number of girls who have been married off before puberty, and the number is increasing. Once they are married, they just disappear from the field. I have given my views on this in my foreword to the first book of the "Bhagini Samaj" series. I reproduce them here:

> We shall not solve the problem of women's education merely by educating girls. Victims of child marriage, thousands of girls vanish from view at the early age of twelve. They change into house-wives! Till this wicked custom has disappeared from among us, the husband will have to learn to be the wife's teacher. A great many of our hopes lie in women being educated on matters mentioned above. It seems to me that unless women cease to be a mere means of pleasure or cooks to us and come to be our life-companions, equal partners in the battle of life, sharers in our joys and sorrows, all our efforts are doomed to failure. There are men to whom their women are no better than animals. For, this sad state, some of the Sanskrit sayings and a well-known *doha*[1] of Tulsidas may be held responsible. Tulsidas says at one place: "The drum, the fool, the Sudra, the animal and the woman—all these need beating."[2]
>
> I adore Tulsidasji, but adoration is not blind. Either this couplet is an interpolation, or, if it is his, he must have

[1] Couplet
[2] This is from *Ramacharitamanas*.

to the Sanskrit sayings, people seem to labour under the impression that every verse in that language was a scriptural precept. We must fight this impression and pluck out from its very root the general habit of regarding women as inferior beings. On the other hand, blinded by passion, many among us regard women as beautiful dolls to be adored as so many goddesses and decorate them with ornaments just as we have Thakorji[1] dressed up in new finery every few hours. We must keep away from this evil also. Ultimately, however, there can be salvation for us only when—and not until—our women become to us what Uma[2] was to Shankar[3], Sita to Rama and Damayanti to Nala, joining us in our deliberations, arguing with us, appreciating and nourishing our aspirations, understanding, with their marvellous intuition, the unspoken anxieties of our outward life and sharing in them, bringing us the peace that soothes. This goal can hardly be achieved in the immediate future merely by starting girls' schools. As long as we have around our necks the noose of child marriage, men have to be teachers to their wives, and that not merely to make them literate. Gradually, it should be possible to introduce women to the subjects of politics and social reform. Literacy is not essential for this. The man, in such a case, will have to change his attitude to his wife. If a girl were treated as a pupil till she came of age, the husband observing *brahmacharya* the while, if we had not been pressed down by the weight of inertia, we would never subject a girl of twelve or fifteen to the agony of child-bearing. One ought to shudder at the very thought of it.

Classes are now conducted for married women and lectures arranged. All this is good as far as it goes. Those who are engaged in this work make a sacrifice of their time. This is to the credit side. It seems to me, however, that unless men simultaneously discharge the duty indicated above, these efforts will not produce much result. A little reflection will show this to be self-evident.

Wherever we look, we find heavy structures raised on weak foundations. Those selected as teachers for primary education may in courtesy be termed so, but in doing this we, in fact, misuse this

[1] The idol or image of God

[2] Parvati, spouse of Shiva

[3] Shiva, one of the Hindu trinity of gods

word. Childhood is the most important period of one's life. Knowledge received during this period is never forgotten. But this is the period during which the child is allowed the least time [for learning] and is held prisoner in no matter what manner of school. I hold that, in our equipping high schools and colleges, we incur expense which this poor land can hardly bear. If, instead, primary education were to be given by well-educated and experienced teachers of high character, in surroundings which would reflect some regard for the beauty of Nature and safeguard the health of the pupils, we would see good results in a short time We would not succeed in bringing about the desired change even if we double the monthly salaries of the present teachers. Big results cannot be brought about through such small changes. The very pattern of primary education must change. I know that this is a difficult proposition and that there are several obstacles in the way. All the same, it should not be beyond the power of the Gujarat Kelavani Mandal to find a solution to this problem.

I should, perhaps, say that it is not my intention to find fault with the teachers in primary schools. That they are able to show results beyond their powers is, in my opinion, to be attributed to our noble culture and traditions. I am sure that, given sufficient training and encouragement, these same teachers will show results of which we can have no conception at present.

I think it would be improper for me to say anything about the question, whether or not education should be free and compulsory. My experience is limited. Besides, the idea of imposing anything as duty on our people does not appeal to me and so I cannot reconcile myself to this addition to their obligations. It will be more appropriate at present to make education free but optional and make experiments. I visualize many difficulties in making education compulsory until we have left the days of autocracy behind us. The experience of the Baroda Government may be of some help in coming to a decision on this matter. My own investigation has led me to conclude against the advisability of compulsory education; but the investigation was not thorough and, therefore, no weight can be attached to it. I hope some of the delegates to this Conference will throw helpful light on the point.

I am convinced that petitioning the Government is not the royal road for correcting all the foregoing deficiencies. The Government cannot change things radically in a day. It is for leaders of the people

road for correcting all the foregoing deficiencies. The Government cannot change things radically in a day. It is for leaders of the people to take the initiative in such ventures. The British Constitution leaves particular scope for such initiative. If we think that anything can be done only if the Government moves, we are not likely to realize our aims for ages. As they do in England, we must first make experiments and show results before asking the Government to adopt new measures. Whoever finds a deficiency in any field can try to correct it by his own efforts and, after he has succeeded, can move the Government for the desired improvement. For such pioneering ventures, it is necessary to establish a number of special educational bodies.

There is one great obstacle in the way—the lure of degrees. We think our entire life depends on success at examinations. This results in great harm to the people. We forget that a degree is useful only for those who want to go in for Government service. But the edifice of national life is not to be raised on the salaried class. We also see that people are able to earn money quite well even without taking up any service. When those who are almost illiterate can become millionaires by their intelligence and shrewdness, there is no reason why the educated cannot do the same. If the educated would only give up their fear, they could be as capable as the unlettered.

If this lure of degrees could be shaken off, any number of private schools could flourish. No government can provide fully for all the education which the people need. In America, education is mostly a private enterprise. In England, too, private enterprise runs a number of institutions. They give their own certificates.

It will require Herculean efforts to put our education on a sound foundation. We shall have to make sacrifices and dedicate ourselves body, mind and soul to the task.

I think there is not much that we can learn from America, but one thing we would do well to copy. Some of the biggest educational institutions there are run by a huge Trust. Wealthy Americans have donated millions to this Trust. It runs a number of private schools. If it has a huge fund, it also has at its disposal the services of a number of learned men who love their country and are well-equipped physically. They inspect all these institutions and help them in maintaining academic standards. They provide help wherever and in whatever measure they think necessary. It is available to any

institution which agrees to adopt the approved constitution. An enthusiastic campaign launched by this Trust carried the results of new researches in the field of agriculture to elderly peasants. We can have a similar plan in Gujarat. There is wealth here and scholarship, too, and love of religion has not altogether disappeared. Children are only waiting to be taught. If we can take up this venture, we may show to the Government in a few years that our efforts are in the right direction. I am sure the Government, then, will not fail to adopt the plan. Actual work will speak to better effect than a thousand petitions

This suggestion covers the other two objects of the Gujarat Kelavani Mandal. The establishment of such a Trust will ensure both a continuous campaign for the spread of education and also practical work in that field. This done, everything else will follow. Evidently, therefore, it will not be easy work. Wealthy people are like the Government, in that they wake up only when we prod them. For this, *tapascharya* is the only means we have. It is the first and last step in dharma. I take it that the Gujarat Kelavani Mandal is the embodiment of such *tapascharya*. When its secretaries and members are wholly possessed by the spirit of service and are also men of learning, money will pour forth on its own. Moneyed people are always sceptical. They have reason to be so. Therefore, if we want to please the goddess of wealth, we shall have first to prove our fitness.

Though we shall need plenty of money, we need not stress the matter overmuch. Anyone who would work for the spread of national education will, if uneducated, teach himself as he goes about his daily labour and then, sitting beneath a tree, teach those who want to learn. This is the way of the Brahmin dharma. Anyone who chooses may follow it. When we have such Brahmins, both wealth and power will bow in reverence before them.

I want the Gujarat Kelavani Mandal to have such unshakable faith; may God grant that it have.

In education lies the key to swaraj. Let political leaders wait on Mr. Montagu[1], if they want to. It does not matter if politics is out of bounds for this Conference. But the fact remains that all efforts are futile without the right kind of education, which is the special concern

[1] Edwin Samuel Montagu (1879-1924); Secretary of State for India, 1917-22; visited India in November 1917, and was responsible, along with Lord Chelmsford, the then Viceroy, for the political reforms of 1918, later embodied in the Government of India Act, 1919.

of this Conference. If we succeed in this, we succeed in all other things as well.

[From Gujarati]

Mahatma Gandhini Vicharsrishti

38. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDH1

[After *October 20, 1917*][1]

CHI. BHAI MAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I leave the decision about Guruprasad to you. If you feel that he is really patriotic and can live on in the Ashram without quarrelling with anyone, and that he does the work assigned to him sincerely, I see no objection to sending him anything up to Rs.10. But do that on your responsibility. I do not want it to happen that I take a step and you suffer the consequence. I did not think that we would have to send him anything, nor did I know anything about his needs. All the same, we can accommodate a worthy person. Vrajlalbhai keeps fit enough. Fulchand must have recovered. Ask him to write to me about his wife's condition also. Ask Sankalehand to send me at once translation of the speech at the Educational Conference.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Mahadev Desai's hand: S.N. 6413

39. SCHEME FOR NATIONAL EDUCATION[2]

For many years past, several friends and I have felt that our present education is not national and that, in consequence, people do not get from it the benefit they ought to. Our children languish as a result of this education. They become incapable of any great achievement and the knowledge they acquire does not spread among

[1] The speech at the Educational Conference referred to in the letter was delivered on October 20; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] This article, which appeared as by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, is an elaboration of his earlier article: "National Gujarati School", *vide*"National Gujarati School", After 18-1-1917.

the masses—not even among their families. Nor do the young people have any aim in mind in taking this modern education except to get a job and make money

Prof. Anandshankar Bapubhai Dhruva writes:

> As, during the last five years or so, India stirred out of her sleep and opened her eyes, she found herself faced with the problem of her education. The people of India want to have a share in their government and, to be sure, they will get it. Are three-quarters of her population, then, to remain condemned to illiteracy? They are to pledge themselves to the use of swadeshi goods. Is their education, then, to remain without due provision for instruction in commerce and industry? India will become conscious of her self-respect; is she to be content, then, to have her ancient literature and her arts, her religions and her philosophy, expounded always by foreign scholars ? These and other like aspirations for a fuller life, along with the changed circumstances, have invested the problem of education at the present day with especial importance and till, recognizing the seriousness of this all-important issue, we firmly adhere to certain principles as fundamental to our education, we shall not have done our duty by ourselves and our country, in fact, by the humanity in us.

And again:

> Social reform and religion seemed to be quite simple matters to the leaders of that generation, but the threads which go into the making of a religious life are many-coloured and closely inter-twined. Hindu society derives its vitality from its recognition of these two facts. It is the duty of the new age to understand this truth and order its life accordingly. The system of education in vogue in the last generation was defective as it limited itself to turning out government servants, lawyers and doctors.

Wherever I have travelled in India, I have discussed this question with the leaders and, without exception, everyone has admitted that our educational system must change. The following extract makes it quite clear that the Government did not consider all the needs of the people in devising this system:

> We have, moreover, looked upon the encouragement of education as peculiarly important, because it is calculated not only to produce a higher degree of intellectual fitness, but to raise the moral character of those who partake of its

> advantages and so to supply you with servants to whose probity you may, with increased confidence, commit offices of trust in India.[1]

It is one of the recognized principles of education that it should be planned with a view to the needs of the people. This idea finds no place at all in our schools.

The system of education has to change, but to look to the Government for this will be sheer waste of time. The Government will wait on public opinion and, being foreign, move very timidly; it cannot understand our needs, its advisers may be ill-informed or they may have interests of their own to serve. For a variety of such reasons, it will probably be quite long before there is any serious change in the present system; the time that passes meanwhile, is so much loss to the people. It is, however, not intended to suggest here that we should not try to get the Government to move. Let petitions be made to it and let public opinion be ascertained. But the best petition to the Government will be an actual demonstration by us and this will also be the easiest way of cultivating public opinion. It has accordingly been decided, in consultation with some educated gentlemen, to start a national school.

EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOL

Education in the school will be entirely through the mother tongue. It is surprising that, while among other nations the mother tongue enjoys pride of place, among us this place belongs to English. This state of affairs is ultimately harmful to the people. The President of the first Gujarat Educational Conference, too, expressed the view that the medium of education should be the mother tongue. The Chairman of the Reception Committee was very emphatic in his speech that education should be through the mother tongue. The matter was specifically mentioned in the Government dispatch of 1854. It is not easy to understand how, in spite of that, the basis of education was altered. The dispatch said:

> It is neither our aim nor our desire to substitute the English for the vernacular dialects of the country. We have always been most sensible of the importance of the use of the languages, which alone are understood by the great mass of the population. These languages, not English, have been, put by us in the place of Persian in the administration of justice and in the intercourse between the officers of the Government and the people. It is indispensable, therefore,

[1] This and the subsequent quotations are English passages as quoted by Gandhiji in footnotes in the original Gujarati version of this article.

> that in any general system of education, the studio of vernaculars should be assiduously attended to. And any acquaintance with improved European knowledge which is to be communicated to the great mass of the people whose circumstances prevent them from acquiring a high standard of knowledge and who cannot be expected to overcome the difficulty of a foreign language, can only be conveyed to them through one or other of these vernacular languages. We look, therefore to the English language and the vernacular languages of India together as media for the diffusion of European knowledge, and it is our desire to see them cultivated in all schools in India of a sufficiency high class to maintain a school-master possessing the requisite qualifications.

His Excellency Lord Chelmsford, the Viceroy, also gave an idea, in his address to the Conference of Directors [of Education] held in Delhi on February 22, of the harm that has resulted from English instead of the mother tongue having been assigned the chief place. He asked where the British people would have been if they had had to receive their education through a foreign tongue. His own reply was that many Britons would have given up their studies in sheer despair. He described the present method of imparting education through English as a "vicious system"[1]. These are his words:

> I refer to the relative claims of English and vernacular teaching. At the present moment, we rely on English as the medium of higher instruction. This is due mainly to the fact that English is the passport to employment and that vernacular text-books are not available, but the consequence is obvious. Students endeavour to grapple with abstruse subjects through the medium of a foreign tongue and in many cases, thanks to their mediocre acquaintance with that tongue, have perforce to memorize their text-books. We criticize adversely this tendency to memorize but to my mind it reflects credit on the zeal of the student who, rather than abandon their quest for knowledge, memorize whole pages, whole books which they understand but imperfectly. This is, of course, a mere travesty of education....I would ask you and myself as University men how should we have fared in our education if it had been wholly through the medium of a foreign tongue. I doubt whether we would [not] have abandoned the attempt in despair; and I am lost in admiration for the gift of those boys who made a gallant attempt to surmount the difficulties imposed on them by a vicious system.

An attempt has been made in Poona to impart education through an Indian language, and, in the view of those who run the

[1] Gandhiji uses the English expression,

school, the result has been good. This view is shared by the Government and the public; we, too, aim at providing education through the mother tongue.

The President of the first [Gujarat] Educational Conference had pointed out in his speech that, if the mother tongue was adopted as the medium of instruction, it would require seven years to impart the knowledge which at present requires 11 years in the High School. This is no insignificant saving. The most important advantage of such a policy would be the reduction in the financial burden on the people.

Hindi has been included in the curriculum of this school for the simple reason that it is spoken by about 220 million people. If a language spoken by such large numbers of our countrymen can be taught [to the rest], they would all find it easy to understand the meaning of the various political movements. I am convinced that, in India, Hindi alone can occupy the position of a national language. It has a fine literature, too, and will therefore enrich our literatures.

The schools under the present dispensation make no provision for teaching the science of religion. It has been given a place in the curriculum of this school.

The pupils here will be trained in two occupations: (1) agriculture and (2) weaving. Incidental to these, they will get training in carpentry and smithy. They will also receive instruction in Physics, Chemistry, Botany and Zoology. In India, the foregoing occupations occupy the most important place and anyone who learns them will never have to go in search of a job.

Every pupil will be taught the means of preserving health and home remedies for common ailments. The pupil's physical training will receive no less attention than the education of his mind.

Every pupil will be taught five languages: (1) Gujarati (2) Hindi (3) Marathi (4) Sanskrit and (5) English.

Mathematics will include Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry and Trigonometry. In other words, the pupils will be brought up to the level of the present First Year of the College.

History-Geography: The history to be taught will be of Gujarat, India, England, Greece, Rome, and of modern times. During the last year, Philosophy of History and Sociology will also be taught. In Geography, the standard will not be inferior to what obtains in the schools at present.

In Astronomy, the elements of the subjects will be taught.

A study of Economics is also essential and will, accordingly, be provided for.

Some knowledge of law is useful to every person and provision will, therefore, be made for teaching it for practical purposes.

Drill has been introduced in the first year to provide recreation and exercise to the pupils.

Music has been introduced as an aid to recitation and also that one may understand something of the subject. All instruction in the first year will be oral. Such general knowledge as will help in the development of the child's mind, it is intended to convey to it as it plays about. Knowledge of colours, shapes, size, etc., can be conveyed in this way and, so conveyed, it will stimulate the child's powers of observation. Hence this aid to education will also be utilized as an integral part of the method.

India never knew the institution of examinations. The method is of recent introduction. It received no great importance in the dispatch of 1854. The system has lent itself to serious abuse, every subject being taught with an eye on the examination and the conviction firmly planted in the pupil's mind that passing the examination was all that was necessary. The teacher, too, has got into the habit of doing his work in the same spirit, as so much drudgery. Hence any knowledge that is acquired is superficial. Not a single subject is taught with thoroughness. The following passage is worth quoting in this context:

> In recent years, they [examinations] have grown to extravagant dimension and their influence has been allowed to dominate the whole system of education in India with the result that instruction is confined to the rigid frame of prescribed courses, that all forms of training which do not admit of being tested by a written examination are liable to be neglected, and that most teachers and pupils are tempted to concentrate their energies not so much on genuine study as upon questions likely to be set by the examiner.

Having regard to the view that examinations are quite undesirable, pupils in this institution will be tested periodically from two points of view—whether the teacher has made the right effort and whether the pupil has followed. The pupil will be freed from the fear of examinations. The tests will be held by the teachers of the school and by others familiar with the institution. The expectation is that a pupil who has attended the school for ten years will be as well

equipped as the present-day graduate. In addition, he will have a practical knowledge of agriculture and weaving. The use to which the student puts his abilities after leaving school will be the true measure of the worth of his education. Every opportunity will be taken to rid his mind of the fallacious notion that the aim of education is to get employment. At present, it is the general practice among business men to select for the better posts men who know English, and that from among those educated under the Government-controlled system. But they will have an alternative field for selection when scholars of this school go out on the completion of their studies. The people will then have some idea of the effectiveness of the method of education followed here. A businessman is not in love with a "degree"; his choice will fall on the efficient man.

If, after ten years of study, anyone wants to pursue a subject further, necessary arrangements for the purpose are left to the future.

EDUCATION FREE

No fees will be charged in this school, the expenses being met from donations received.

TEACHERS

Paid teachers will be engaged and will be, all of them, grownup men who have reached the college level or possess equivalent attainments. The idea is that children should have the best teachers in the early stages.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 21-10-1917

40. CONCLUDING SPEECH AT THE CONFERENCE[1]

BROACH ,
October 21, 1917

I have been thanked already. Never and nowhere could I express all that I feel. It is services such as these which, I believe, lead to *moksha*[2]. For these three days, I have been extremely happy. I am thankful to Mr. Haribhai, for day and night he has been busy serving everyone. If anyone has been dissatisfied with him, I apologize to him

[1] This was delivered on the second day of the Second Gujarat Educational Conference.

[2] Liberation as goal of life

on Mr. Haribhai's behalf. From a milch cow you may even bear a kick. I am in love with the mother tongue, crazy over it. I think we just cannot get on without it, can hope for no progress. It is for this reason that I urge its claims wherever I go. Seeing that my pleas have been of some avail here, I offer my thanks to you. Why should you thank me ? If, nonetheless, you do, I shall have no patience to hear what you say. I hope the various committees will carry out what they have been charged with. All obstacles must yield to determined human effort. I am sorry that, for want of time, I have not been able to meet the wishes of the audience for a long speech. I thank you all, sisters and brothers. Only if I die for India shall I know that I was fit to live.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 28-10-1917

41. SPEECH AT CONFERENCE OF HUMANITARIAN LEAGUE[1]

BROACH,

October 21, 1917

Ever since I came to know Mr. Anandashankar Dhruva, I have been all admiration for him. He is a priceless jewel of Gujarat; perhaps, the latter has not yet fully recognized his greatness. When he was elected President, I saw that this body knew its own worth too. Mr. Dhruva has proved to the entire Hindu world that the supreme virtue of non-violence has been accepted by all in India. Jainism and Hinduism are not so different as to justify our treating them as distinct religions. The religion named after Gautam Buddha cherishes the same ideals as Hinduism.

Mr. Dhruva is a jewel not only of Gujarat but of the whole of India. The rest of India does not know him because he has not come out into public life in Gujarat. He is a scholar of great distinction. I could see his scholarship even from his speeches. Practical ability such as his is very necessary in the affairs of this world. I have had much experience of these affairs and gone through a great deal. It was a pleasure to me to listen to his sincere words and I would simply love to be in his company.

[1] Gandhiji spoke on the second day of the Conference, while proposing vote of thanks to the President, A. B. Dhruva.

Mr. Dhruva is a hidden jewel. He is well-informed about ancient and modern Hindu society. For the present generation, which is growing up in luxuries and building castles in the air and is, in its thoughtlessness, carried away by the flood of all these notions of reform, Mr. Dhruva is like a boat, a leader taking them back to the right place. Old men can value a flower aright. In like fashion, Mr. Dhruva, too, has shown due appreciation [of young people] and, mingling with them, given proof of his skill in bringing them round firmly to his views.

That the Humanitarian League could accept Mr. Dhruva as its President proves that the League has been working along sound lines and that it will work more energetically in future to place its humanitarian principles before the people and cultivate public opinion. And now I move the vote of thanks to the President which, I hope, you will all pass with acclamation.

[From Gujarati]

Mumbai Samachar, 23-10-1917

42. LETTER TO COMMERCE AND INDUSTRIES SECRETARY

SATYAGRAHASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 31, 1917

THE SECRETARY TO
THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRIES
DELHI

SIR,

I enclose herewith copy of a letter[1] recently addressed by me to the Press on the hardships of 3rd class railway passengers.

The hardships are of two kinds: those which are due to the neglect of the passengers themselves and those that can only be remedied by the Railway Companies. They may again be divided into those that can be dealt with without any great extra cost and those that can be dealt with only on a large outlay of money.

I recognize that the hardships falling under the last category

[1] *Vide* "Letter to the Press on Third Class Travelling on Indian Railways", 25-9-1917.

cannot be effectively dealt with whilst the War is going on. They are due to insufficiency of accommodation. On this I venture to suggest that some check can certainly be exercised in the issue of tickets, and guards or other officials should be instructed to regulate the traffic. As it is, the strongest find their own seats without any supervision or control by the officials and the weaker ones often find them selves left out. Officials should not only be instructed to regulate the traffic, but they should also be required to examine the state of the compartments from time to time and see that no passengers appropriate space to the discomfort of other passengers.

In so far as the passengers are themselves responsible for the evils I have described, notices should be pasted on the walls of the carriages and put up at the stations giving detailed instructions regarding the use of closets, etc. Bye-laws prohibiting dirty or offensive practices may be cautiously enforced. A book of instructions in the different vernaculars may be issued together with long journey tickets and otherwise given gratis on demand. Co-operation of volunteers should be invited from the general public in the prosecution of this educative work.

As to the other grievances:

Station inspectors or the other officials should be directed tohave the carriages and closets swept and cleaned at every junction or principal station.

Station closets ought to be kept scrupulously clean, earth and disinfectants should be used every time closets are used. This presupposes constant employment of *Bhangis* at every station. In my humble opinion, the importance of the matter demands such employment. It may be a wise thing to set apart special privies which any passenger may use on payment of a nominal fee. At present there is no privacy provided in the station latrines. I think that at a very small cost this can be provided.

There should be bathing facilities at all principal stations.

I understand that only licensed vendors are permitted to sell refreshments at the stations. A written tariff should be provided and cleanliness of refreshments and vendors should be ensured before the granting of licences. Third-class refreshment rooms should not be allowed to be in the dirty state in which they are at present, but should be kept scrupulously clean.

Untold difficulties are put in the way of the passengers getting

their tickets on application. Often they are issued only a short time before the departure of trains. The result is bribery, a fight among passengers for the purchase of tickets and disappointment to many.

Waiting rooms at the principal stations need complete overhauling. There ought to be regulations for the observance of passengers. Benches should be provided in large numbers. They should be cleaned several times during the day. Rooms should be provided for the use of the fair sex.

In my humble opinion, all the evils except the provision of extra carriages can be dealt with at a very small additional cost to the railway administrations. What is needed is sympathy and due recognition of the rights of third-class passengers who provide the largest part of the income from passenger traffic.

Though the grievances here adverted to are old, they are pressing enough to demand immediate attention. I hope that your department will take up the matter at an early date. My services are at its disposal to be utilized in any manner it may deem fit.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 6393; also N. A. I.: Railway Department Records: March 1918: 552-T-17: 1-24

43. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI MEHTA

SABARMATI,
Ashvin Vad 2 [*November 1, 1997*][1]

BHAISHRI,

I have your letter. I had a talk about Viramgam.[2] I am expecting a reply. It ought to go and I have no doubt that it will.

The registered letter is with me. I shall do what you want me to do, in part at least, when the time comes.

Of course, I very much want to go to Kathiawad, but I don't know when I shall be able to. For the present, six months are reserved for Bihar.[3]

You must have recovered.

Yours,
MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

BHAI BHAGWANJI ANOOPCHAND MEHTA
VAKIL
SADAR
RAJKOT

From the postcard in Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 3030. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] From the reference in the letter to Viramgam and "six months reserved for Bihar", the letter appears to have been written in 1917.

[2] The imposition of a Customs cordon at Viramgam, on the border between the Kathiawad States and British Indian territory was causing considerable hardship to railway passengers. Gandhiji's attention to the problem was first drawn by Motilal, a tailor; *vide An Autobiography*, Part V, Ch. III. After thoroughly studying the subject, Gandhiji wrote to the Bombay Government concerning the grievance. Later he discussed it with the Governor, Lord Willingdon, and his secretary. Gandhiji raised the matter, in the course of an interview, with the Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford, who promised redress. The levy was annulled on November 10; *vide* "Speech at Gujarat Political Conference-I", November 3, 1917; also "Resolutions at Gujarat Political Conference-II", November 5, 1917.

[3] Once the indigo labourers' problem in Champaran, Bihar, had been tackled, Gandhiji decided to devote his efforts to educational and sanitation world in the province.

44. SPEECH AT GUJARATI POLITICAL CONFERENCE-I[1]

[GODHRA,]

November 3, 1917

Lokamanya B. G. Tilak[2] having arrived late for the opening session, Gandhiji remarked:,

I am not responsible for his being late. We demand swaraj. If one does not mind arriving late by three-quarters of an hour at a conference summoned for the purpose, one should not mind if swaraj too comes correspondingly late.

Gandhiji then read his speech.[3]

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I am thankful to you all for the exalted position to which you have called me. I am but a baby of two years and a half in Indian politics.[4] I cannot trade here on my experience in South Africa. I know that, in these circumstances, acceptance of the position is to a certain extent an impertinence. I have accepted it, all the samc, unable to resist the pressure of your overwhelming affection.

I am conscious of my responsibility. This Conference is the first of its kind in Gujarat. The time is most critical for the whole of India. The Empire is labouring under a strain never before experienced. My views do not quite take the general course. I feel that some of them run in the opposite direction. Under the circumstances, I am hardly qualified for this privileged position. The president of a meeting is usually its spokesman. I cannot pretend to lay any such claim. It is your kindness that gives me such a unique opportunityof placing my

[1] This was Gandhiji's presidential address at the first Political Conference to be held in Gujarat. It lasted three days and was largely attended by cultivators, petty traders and small land-holders.

[2] Bal Gangadhar Tilak (l856-1920); great Indian political leader, scholar and writers popularly known as 'Lokamanya'; one of the founders of the Deccan Education Society, Poona and of the newspapers the *Kesari* and the *Mahratta*; suffered six years' deportation for his criticism of the Government; took active part in the Home Rule campaign.

[3] The translation which follows is reproduced from *Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi,* with some changes intended to bring it into closer conformity with the Gujarati original.

[4] Gandhiji had returned to India on January 9, 1915.

thoughts before the Gujarat public. I do not see anything wrong in these views being subjected to criticism, dissent and even emphatic protest. I would like them to be freely discussed. I will only say with regard to them that they were not formed today or yesterday. But they were formed years ago. I am enamoured of them, and my Indian experience of two years and a half has not altered them.

I congratulate the originators of the proposal to hold this conference as also those friends who have given practical shape to it. It is a most important event for Gujarat. It is possible for us to make it yield very valuable results. This conference is in the nature of a foundation, and if it is well and truly laid, we need have no anxiety as to the superstructure. Being in the nature of a foundation, it carries a heavy responsibility. I pray that God may bless us with wisdom and that our deliberations will benefit the people.

This is a political conference. Let us pause a moment over the word "political". It is, as a rule, used in a restricted sense, but I believe it is better to give it a wider meaning. If the work of such a conference were to be confined to a consideration of the relations between the rulers and the ruled, it would not only be incomplete, but we should even fail to have an adequate conception of those relations. For instance, the question of *mahwa* flowers[1] is of great importance for a part of Gujarat. If it is considered merely as a question between the Government and the people, it might have unhappy consequences or we might fail in our aim. If we considered the genesis of the law on *mahwa* flowers and also appreciated our duty as individuals in this matter, we would, very probably, succeed sooner in our fight with the Government than otherwise and easily discover the key to successful agitation. You will more clearly perceive my interpretation of the word "political" in the light of the views I shall place before you.

Conferences do not, as a rule at the end of their deliberations, leave behind them an executive body, and even when such a body is appointed, it is, to use the language of the late Mr. Gokhale[2], composed of men who are amateurs; What we need is men who would

[1] Used for preparing a sort of country liquor

[2] Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915); Indian leader. patriot and politician; was associated with the Indian National Congress since its inception. and presided over its Benares session in 1905; founded the Servants of India Society at Poona to train men prepared to dedicate their lives to the cause of the country in a religious spirit; visited South Africa in 1912 at Gandhiji's invitation.

make it their business to give effect to the resolutions of such conferences. If such men come forward in great numbers, then and then only will such conferences be a credit to the country and produce lasting results. At present there is much waste of energy. It is desirable that there should be many institutions of the type of the Servants of India Society. Only when men, fired with the belief that service is the highest religion, come forward in great numbers, could we hope to see great results. Fortunately, India is richly endowed with the religious spirit, and if it is realized that in the present age service of the motherland is the best religion, religiously inclined men and women would take part in public life in larger numbers. When sages and saints take up this work, I believe India will achieve her cherished aims quite easily. At all events, it is incumbent on us that, for the purposes of this conference, we form an executive committee whose business it would be to enforce its resolutions.

The air in the country is thick with cries of swaraj. It is due to Mrs. Besant[1] that swaraj is on the lips of hundreds of thousands of men and women. What was unknown to most men and women only two years ago, has, by her consummate tact and her indefatigable efforts, become common property for them. There cannot be the slightest doubt that her name will take the first rank in history among those who inspired us with the hope that swaraj was attainable at no distant date. Swaraj was, and is, the goal of the Congress. The idea did not originate with her.[2] But the credit of presenting it to us as a goal realizable in the immediate future belongs to that lady alone. For that we could hardly thank her enough. By releasing her and her associates, Messrs Arun dale[3] and Wadia[4], Government have laid us under an obligation, and at

[1] Annie Besant (1847-1933); British theosophist, orator and writer; founded the Theosophical Society in 1907; established the Indian Home Rule League in 1916; presided over the Indian National Congress in 1917, edited a daily, *New India*, and *The Commonweal*, a weekly; author of *The Religious Problem in India* and other books

[2] Gandhiji evidently had in mind, Dadabhai Naoroji who, in 1906, first used the word swaraj to define the goal of the Indian National Congress at its Calcutta Session.

[3] G. S. Arundale was the head of the Society for the Promotion of National Education organized by Annie Besant. He took active part in the Home Rule movement and suffered internment.

[4] B. P. Wadia organized the Home Rule League and took active part in Home Rule movement.

the same time acknowledged the just and reasonable nature of the agitation for swaraj.[1] It is to be wished that the Government extend the same generosity towards our brothers, Mahomed Ali[2] and Shaukat Ali[3]. It is not necessary to inquire how much of what Sir William Vincent[4] has said about them needs to be looked into. It is to be hoped that the Government will accede to the people's desire for their release and leave it to them to see that no untoward results follow. This will place the people under a still greater obligation. The act of generosity will be incomplete so long as these brothers are not released. The grant of freedom to the brothers will gladden the people's hearts and endear the Government to them.[5]

Mr. Montagu will shortly be in our midst. The work of taking signatures to the petition[6] to be submitted to him is going on apace. The chief object of this petition is to educate the people about swaraj. To say that literacy is essential for achieving swaraj betrays ignorance of history. It is not necessary for the purpose of inculcating among people the idea that we ought to manage our own affairs. What is essential is the idea, the desire itself. Hundreds of unlettered kings have ruled kingdoms with great success. To see how far such an idea exists in the minds of the people and to try to create it where it is absent is the object of this petition. It is desirable that millions of men and women should sign it with the fullest understanding of what it means. That such a largely signed petition will naturally have its due

[1] Mrs. Besant and her associates had been interned at Coimbatore and Ootacamand on June 15, 1917. They were released on September 16 in pursuance of the new British policy embodied in the Montagu declaration of August 20.

[2] Editor of *The Comrade*, an English weekly; was imprisoned, soon after the out-break of World War, for publishing an article entitled "Evacuate Egypt"; along with his brother, he was interned in October 1914; attended the second Round Table Conference in London.

[3] Editor of *Hamdard*, suffered internment along with his younger brother, Mahomed Ali.

[4] Sir William Henry Hoare Vincent; distinguished Indian Civil Servant; Member of the Executive Council of the Governor-General of India, 1917; Member of the India Council, 1923-31

[5] The Ali brothers were finally released on December 25, 1919, under the amnesty granted by the Royal Proclamation.

[6] The reference is to the Home-Rule Petition; *vide* "Petition to E.S.Montagu", Before 13-9-1917 A memorandum was also presented by a joint Congress-League deputation to Montagu and Lord Chelmsford on November 26; *vide* Appendix "Congress-League Address", 26-11-1917.

weight with Mr. Montagu is its natural result.

No one has the right to alter the scheme of reforms[1] approved by the Congress and the Moslem League, and one need not, therefore, go into the merits thereof. For our present purposes, we have to understand thoroughly the scheme formulated most thoughtfully by our leaders and, putting our faith in them, do whatever is necessary to get it implemented.

This scheme is not swaraj, but is a great step towards swaraj. Some English critics tell us that we are not fit to enjoy swaraj, because the class that demands it is incapable of defending India. "Is the defence of India to rest with the British alone?" they ask, "and are the reins of Government to be in the hands of the Indians ?" Now this is a question which is both amusing and painful. It is amusing because our British friends fancy that they are not of us, whilst our plan of swaraj is based upon retention of the British connection. We do not want the Englishmen who have settled here to leave this country. They will be our partners in swaraj. And they will have nothing to complain about if, in such a scheme, the burden of the defence of the country falls on them. They are, however, hasty in assuming that we shall not do our share of defending the country. When India decides to acquire military strength, she will attain it in no time. We have but to harden our feelings to be able to strike. To cultivate a hardened feeling does not take ages. It grows like weeds. The question is painful, because it puts in mind the fact that the Government have up to now debarred us from military training. Had they been so minded, they would have had at their disposal today, from among the educated classes, quite a large army. Government have to accept a larger measure of blame than the educated classes for the latter having taken little part in the War. Had the Government policy been shaped differently from the very beginning, they would have today an unconquerable army. But let no one be blamed for the present situation. At the time the British rule was established, it was considered a wise policy for the governance of crores of men to deprive them of arms and military

[1] This scheme of political reforms was originally drawn up and published, towards the end of 1916, by 19 members of the Imperial Legislative Council. Briefly, it sought to subordinate the Executive to the Legislature. The scheme came up for discussion at the sessions of the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League at Lucknow in December 1916. Elaborated and revised, the scheme, as accepted by both bodies in the wake of the Lucknow Pact, provided for the creation of a non-official majority in the Legislative Councils. *Vide* "The Congress-League Scheme",

training. But it is never too late to mend, and both the rulers and the ruled must immediately repair the omission.

In offering these views I have assumed the propriety of the current trend of thought. To me, however, it does not appear to be tending altogether in the right direction. Our agitation is based on the Western model. The swaraj we desire is of a Western type. As a result of it, India will have to enter into competition with the Western nations. Many believe that there is no escape from this. I do not think so. I cannot forget that India is not Europe, India is not Japan, India is not China. The divine word that "India alone is the land of *karma*[1], the rest is the land of *bhoga* (enjoyment)," is indelibly imprinted on my mind. I feel that India's mission is different from that of other countries. India is fitted for the religious supremacy of the world. There is no parallel in the world for the *tapascharya* that this country has voluntarily gone through. India has little use for steel weapons; it has fought with divine weapons; it can still do so. Other nations have been votaries of brute force. The terrible war going on in Europe furnishes an irrefutable proof of this. India can conquer all by soul-force. History supplies numerous instances to prove that brute force is nothing before soul-force. Poets have sung of this and men of wisdom have said so. A thirty-year-old youth behaves like a lamb before his eighty-year-old father. This is an instance of love-force. Love is *atman*[2]: it is the very property of *atman*. If we have faith enough, we can wield that force over the whole world. Religion having lost its hold on us, we are without an anchor to keep us firm amidst the storm of modern civilization, and are, therefore, being tossed to and fro. I shall return to this idea at a later stage.

These views of mine notwithstanding, I have joined the swaraj movement, for India is being governed at present under a modern system. The Government themselves believe that the "Parliament" is the best form of that system. Without such a parliament, we should have neither the modern nor the ancient form. Mrs. Besant is only too true when she says that we shall soon be facing a hunger-strike, if we do not have Home Rule. I do not want to go into statistics. The evidence of my eyes is enough for me. Poverty in India is deepening day by day. No other result is possible. A country that exports its raw produce and imports it back as finished goods, a country which,

[1] Action in pursuance of one's duty

[2] The self unidentifiable with any aspect of human individuality, the soul

though growing its own cotton, has to pay crores of rupees to outsiders for its cloth, cannot be otherwise than poor. A country, in which it is considered extravagance to spend on marriages, etc., can only be described as poor. It must be a terribly poor country that cannot afford to spend enough in carrying out improvements for stamping out epidemics like the plague. In a country whose officials spend most of their earnings outside, the people are bound to grow poorer day by day. What are we to say of the poverty of a country whose people, during cold weather, burn their precious manure for want of woollen clothing in order to warm themselves? Throughout my wanderings in India I have rarely, seen a face exuding strength and joy. The middle classes are groaning under the weight of awful distress. The lowest orders have nothing but the earth below and the sky above. They do not know a bright day. It is pure fiction to say that India's riches are buried underground, or are to be found in her ornaments. What there is of such riches is of no consequence. The nation's expenditure has increased, not so its income. Government have not deliberately brought about this state of things. I believe that their intentions are sincere. It is their honest opinion that the nation's prosperity is daily growing. Their faith in their Blue-books is immovable. It is only too true that statistics can be made to prove anything. The economists deduce India's prosperity from statistics. People like me who follow rough and ready ways of reckoning shake their heads over Blue-book statistics. If the gods were to come down and testify otherwise, I would insist on saying that I see India growing poorer.

What then would our Parliament do if we had one? When we have it, we would have a right to commit blunders and to correct them. In the early stages we are bound to make blunders. But, we, being children of the soil, won't lose time in setting ourselves right. We shall, therefore, soon find out remedies against poverty. Then our existence won't be dependent on Lancashire goods. Then we shall not be found spending untold riches on building Imperial Delhi. It will, then, be in keeping with the cottages of India. There will be some proportion observed between that cottage and our Parliament House. *The nation today is in a helpless condition; it does not possess even the right to err. He who has no right to err can never go forward*. The history of the Commons is a history of blunders. Man, says an Arabian proverb, is error personified. *The freedom to err and the power to correct errors is one definition of swaraj*. Having a parliament means such swaraj.

We ought to have Parliament this very day. We are quite fit for it. We shall, therefore, get it on demand. It rests with us to define "this very day".

Swaraj is not to be attained through an appeal to the British democracy, the British people. They cannot appreciate such an appeal Its reply will be: "We never sought outside help to obtain swaraj. We achieved it with our own strength. You have not received it because you do not deserve it. When you do, nobody can withhold it from you."

How then shall we fit ourselves for it? We have to demand swaraj from our own people. Our appeal must be to them. When the peasantry of India understands what swaraj is, the demand will become irresistible.

The late Sir W. W. Hunters[1] said that, in the British system, victory on the battle-field was the shortest way to one's goal. If educated India had, silently, taken its full share in the present War, I am certain that we would not only have reached our goal already, but the manner of it would have been altogether unique.

We often refer to the fact that many sepoys of Hindustan have lost their lives on the battle-fields of France and Mesopotamia. The educated classes cannot claim the credit for this. They were not sent out by us, nor did they join up through patriotism. They know nothing of swaraj. At the end of the War they will not ask for it. They have gone to demonstrate that they are faithful to the salt they eat. In asking for swaraj, I feel that it is not possible for us to bring into account their services. The only thing we can say is that we are not to blame for not being able to take a big part in the prosecution of the War.

That we have been loyal at a time of stress is no test of fitness for swaraj. Loyalty is no merit. It is a necessity of national existence all the world over. That loyalty can be no passport to swaraj is a self-demonstrated maxim.

Our fitness lies in that we now keenly desire swaraj, and in our clearly realizing that bureaucracy, although it has served India with best intentions, has had its day. And this kind of fitness is sufficient

[1] Sir William Wilson Hunter (1840-1900); Indian administrator and member of British Committee of the Indian National Congress; *vide* Vol. "Speech at London Farewell", 29-11-1906 and "Letter to Lord Ampthill", 4-8-1909.

for our purpose. Without swaraj there is now no possibility of peace in India.

But if we confine our activities for advancing swaraj only to holding meetings, the nation is likely to suffer harm. Meetings and speeches have their own place and time. *But they cannot make a nation*.

In a nation fired with the zeal for swaraj, we should observe an awakening in all departments of life. The first step to swaraj lies in the individual. The great truth, "As with the individual, so with the Universe," is applicable here as elsewhere. If we are ever torn by conflict from within, if we are ever going astray, and if instead of ruling our passions we allow them to rule us, swaraj can have no meaning for us. Government of self, then, is the first step.

Then the family. If dissensions reign supreme in our families, if brothers fight among themselves, if members of a family cannot live together; if joint families, i.e., families enjoying self-government, become divided through family quarrels, how can we be considered fit for swaraj ?

Now for caste. If caste-fellows become jealous of one another, if the castes cannot manage their affairs in an orderly manner, if the elders claim especial importance, if the members become self-opinionated and thus show their unfitness for self-government in this limited sphere, how can they be fit for national government ?

After caste, the city. If we cannot regulate the affairs of our cities, if our streets are not kept clean, if our homes are dilapidated and if our roads are crooked, if we cannot command the services of selfless citizens for civic government, and those who are in charge of affairs are neglectful or selfish, how shall we claim larger powers?

The way to national life lies through the cities. It is, therefore, necessary to linger a little longer on this subject. The plague has found a home in India.[1] Cholera has been always with us. Malaria takes an annual toll of thousands. The plague has been driven out from every other part of the world. Glasgow stamped it out the moment it made its appearance there. In Johannesburg it could appear

[1] Plague appeared in a serious form in 1917 and, between July of that year and June 1918, accounted for over 8,00,000 deaths.

but once.[1] Its municipality made a great effort and stamped it out within a month, whereas we are able to do nothing about it. We cannot blame the Government for this state of things. To tell the truth, we cannot even blame it on our poverty. None can stand in our way in any remedies that we may wish to adopt. Ahmedabad, for instance, cannot evade responsibility by pleading poverty. I am afraid that in regard to the plague, we must shoulder the entire responsibility. It is very significant that when the plague is working havoc in our ruralquarters, cantonments as a rule remain free. The reasons are obvious. In the cantonments the air is pure, houses detached, roads are wide and clean and the sanitary habits of the residents wholesome, whereas ours are as unhygienic as they well could be. Our closets are as filthy as hell. In a country in which ninety per cent of the population go barefoot, people spit anywhere and perform natural functions anywhere and we are obliged to walk on roads and paths thus dirtied. It is no wonder that the plague has found a home in our midst.

Unless we alter the conditions in our cities, rid ourselves of our dirty habits and have improved latrines, swaraj can have no value for us.

It will not be out of place here to refer to another matter. We regard men who render us most useful service, *Bhangis,* as untouchables. The result has been that we let them clean only a part of our closets. In the name of religion, we ourselves would not clean the places for fear of pollution and so, despite our reputation for personal cleanliness, a portion of our houses remains the dirtiest in the world, with the result that we grow up in an air which is laden with disease germs. We were safe so long as we kept to our villages. But in the cities we are ever committing suicide by reason of our insanitary habits.

Where large numbers suffer living death, it is very likely that people know neither true religion nor right action and conduct. I believe that it ought not to be beyond us to banish the plague from India, and if we can do so, we shall have so increased our fitness for swaraj, as it cannot be by any agitation, howsoever powerful. This is a question meriting the serious consideration of our doctors and

[1] In 1904; *vide* “Plague in Johannesburg”, 9-4-1904 ,“The Plague”, 2-4-1904 and “History of the Plague in Johannesburg”, 28-10-1905

vaidyas[1].

Not far from here is the holy centre of pilgrimage, Dakor. I have visited it. Its unholiness is limitless. I consider myself a devout *Vaishnava*[2]. I claim, therefore, a special privilege of criticising the condition of Dakorji. The insanitation of that place is so great that one used to hygienic conditions can hardly bear to pass even twenty-four hours there. The pilgrims pollute the tank and the streets as they choose. The keepers of the shrine quarrel among themselves and, to add insult to injury, a receiver has been appointed to take charge of the jewellery and costly robes of the idol. It is our clear duty to set matters right. How shall we, Gujaratis, out to have swaraj, fare as soldiers in the army fighting for it, if we cannot put our own house in order?

To think of the state of education in our cities also fills us with despair. It is plainly our duty by our own effort to provide education to the masses. But our gaze is fixed upon Government, whilst thousands of children go without education.

In the cities the drink-evil is on the increase, tea-shops are multiplying, gambling is rampant. If we cannot remedy these evils, how can we attain swaraj ? Swaraj means managing our own affairs.

We are approaching a time when we and our children may have to go without milk altogether. Dairies, here in Gujarat, are doing us infinite harm. They buy out practically the whole milk-supply and produce butter, cheese, etc., for sale. How can a nation whose nourishment is chiefly derived from milk permit itself to be deprived of this important article of food? How can men be so selfish as to be heedless of the national health and think of enriching themselves through commercial exploitation of an article of diet ? Milk and its products are of such paramount value to the nation that they deserve to be controlled by the municipalities. What are we doing about them?

I have just returned from the scene of *Bakr-i-Id* riots. For a trivial cause, the two communities fell out with each other, mischievous men joined in the fray and a mere spark became a blaze. We found ourselves helpless. We have been obliged to depend entirely upon Government assistance. This shows how crippled we are.

[1] Physicians practising *Ayurveda*, an indigenous system of medicine

[2] Devotee of Vishnu, one of the Hindu Trinity, and His incarnation, Krishna; a follower of the *bhakti* or devotional cult

It will not be inopportune to dwell for a moment on the question of cow-protection. It is an important question. And yet it is left to be solved by cow-protection societies. Protecting the cows seems to be an ancient practice. It originated in the special needs of this country. Protection of its cows is incumbent upon a country 90 per cent. of whose population lives upon agricu-lture and needs bullocks for it. In such a country, even meat-eaters should abstain from beef-eating. These natural causes should be enough justification for not killing cows. But here we have to face a peculiar situation. The chief meaning of cow-protection seems to be to prevent cows from falling into the hands of our Muslim brethren and being used as food. The rulers need beef. On their account thousands of cows are slaughtered daily. We do nothing to prevent this slaughter. We hardly make any attempt to prevent the cruel torture of cows by certain Hindus of Calcutta, who subject them to a practice known as "blowing" and make them yield the last drop of milk. In Gujarat, Hindu cart-drivers use sharp goads to drive bullocks. We say nothing about this. The condition of bullocks in our cities is pitiable. Indeed, protection of the cow and her progeny is a very great problem. By making it a pretext for quarrelling with the Muslims, we have only ensured greater slaughter of cows. It is not religion, but want of it, to kill a Muslim brother in order to save a cow. I feel sure that if we were to discuss the matter with our Muslim brethren in the spirit of love, they also would appreciate the peculiar condition of India and readily co-operate with us in the protection of cows. By courtesy and through satyagraha, we can bring them to join that mission. But, in order to be able to do this, we shall have to understand the question in its true bearing. Instead of killing our brethren, we should be ready to die ourselves. But we shall be able to do this only when we understand the real value of the cow and have pure love for her. Success in this will ensure several things simulta-neously. Hindus and Muslims will live in peace, the cow will be safe, milk and its products will be available in a pure condition and will be cheaper than now, and our bullocks will become the envy of the world. If our *tapascharya* is pure, we shall succeed in stopping slaughter of cows, whether by the British, Muslims or Hindus. Even this one achievement will bring swaraj nearer.

Many of these issues arise out of civic government. We can clearly see from this that our running the Government of India is dependent upon our upright management of civic affairs.

It will not be incorrect to say that practically there is no swadeshi movement in the country. We do not realize that this movement almost holds the key to swaraj. If we have no regard for our own language, if we feel aversion to cloth made in our country, if our dress repels us, if we are ashamed to wear the sacred *shikha*[1], if our food is distasteful to us, even our climate is not good enough, our people uncouth and unfit for our company, our civilization ugly and the foreign attractive, in short, if everything native is bad and everything foreign pleasing to us, I do not know what swaraj can mean for us. If everything foreign is to be adopted, surely it will be necessary for us to continue long under foreign tutelage, for so far foreign ways have touched the masses but little. It seems to me that, before we can appreciate swaraj, we should have not only love but passion for swadeshi. Every act of ours should bear the swadeshi stamp. Swaraj can only be built upon the assumption that most of what is national is, on the whole, sound. If the view here put forth be correct, we should have a big movement in our country for swadeshi. Every country that has carried on a movement for swaraj has fully appreciated the swadeshi spirit. Scottish Highlanders hold on to their kilts even at the risk of their lives. We humorously call them the"petticoat brigade". But the whole world testifies to the strength that lies behind that "petticoat" and the Highlanders of Scotland will not abandon it, even though it is an inconvenient dress, and an easy target for the enemy. I don't wish to suggest that we should treasure our faults, but that what is national, even though not rich in excellences, should be adhered to, and that what is foreign should be avoided though one may succeed well enough in adopting it. That which is wanting in our civilization can be supplied by proper effort on our part. I do hope that the swadeshi spirit will possess every member in this assembly; if they all take the vow of swadeshi and observe it in the face of any difficulty or inconvenience, swaraj will be easy of attainment.

The foregoing illustrations go to show that our movement should be twofold. We may petition the Government, we may agitate in the Imperial Council for our rights; but for a real awakening of the people, the more important thing is activities directed inwards. There is a possibility of hypocrisy and selfishness tainting activities directed outwards. There is very much less danger of this in activities of the other kind. Not only will the former not be justified unless balanced

[1] Tuft of hair at the back of the head kept by orthodox Hindus

by the latter, they may even be barren of res-ults. It is not my contention that we have no activities at all directed inward, but I submit that we do not lay enough stress upon them.

One sometimes hears it said, "Let us get the government of India in our own hands; everything will be all right afterwards." There could be no greater superstition than this. No nation has gained its independence in this manner. The splendour of the spring is reflected in every tree, the whole earth is then filled with the freshness of youth. Similarly, when the spring of swaraj is on us, a stranger suddenly arriving in our midst will observe the freshness of youth in every walk of life and find servants of the people engaged, each according to his own abilities, in all manner of public activities.

If we admit that our progress has not been what it might have been, we should also admit two reasons for this. We have kept our women away from these activities of ours and have thus become victims of a kind of paralysis. The nation walks with one leg only. All its work appears to be only half or incompletely done. Moreover, the educated section, having received its education through a foreign tongue, has become enervated and is unable to give the nation the benefit of such ability as it acquires. I need not reiterate my views on this subject, as I have elaborated them in my address[1] at the Gujarat Educational Conference. It is a wise decision, that of conducting the proceedings of this conference in Gujarati, and I hope that nothing will induce the people of Gujarat to change it.

The educated class, lovers of swaraj, must freely mix with the masses. We dare not turn away from a single section of the community or disown any. We shall make progress only if we carry all with us. Had the educated class identified itself with the masses, *Bakr-i-Id* riots would have been an impossibility.

Before coming to the last topic, it remains for me to refer to certain events as a matter of duty and to make one or two suggestions.

Every year the god of death exacts his toll from among our leaders. I do not intend to mention the victims claimed by this god all over India during the last 12 months. But it is impossible to omit reference to the sage-like Grand Old Man[2] of India. Who am I to estimate the value of his services to the country ? I am no more than

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Second Gujarat Educational Conference", 20-10-1917.
[2] Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917).

one who sat at his feet. I paid my respects to him when I went to London as a mere lad. I came to revere him from the very moment I waited upon him with a letter of introduction.[1] Dadabh-ai's flawless and uninterrupted service to the country, his impartia-lity, his spotless character, will always furnish India with an ideal to follow. May God give him peace! May He grant his family and the Nation the ability to bear the loss. We can immortalize him by making his character our own, by copying his manner of service and by enthroning him for ever in our hearts. May the great soul of Dadabhai watch over our deliberations !

It is our duty to express our thanks to His Excellency the Viceroy for having announced the decision of the Government of India to abolish the customs levy on the border [between Saurashtra and British Indian territory] at Viramgam. This step should have been taken earlier. The people were groaning under the weight of this impost. It cost large numbers their trade. It has caused much suffering to many women. The decision does not seem to have been brought into effect. It is to be hoped that it will soon be.

I have submitted through the Press my experiences about the hardships of third-class railway passengers.[2] They are, indeed, past endurance. The people of India are docile and trained in silent suffering. Thousands, therefore, put up with the hardships, but they remain unredressed. There is, indeed, merit in such suffering, but it must have its limits. Submission out of weakness is unmanliness. That we tamely put up with the hardships of railway travelling is a sign of our unmanliness. These hardships are of two kinds, those which are due to the remissness of railway administration and those occasioned by the carelessness of the travelling public. The remedies are also, therefore, twofold. Where the railway administration is to blame, complaints should be addressed to it by everyone who suffers. This may be done even in Gujarati. The matter should be ventilated in the Press. Secondly, where the public are to blame, the wiser among passengers should inculcate manners upon their ignorant companions and enlighten them on their carelessness and dirty habits. This will require volunteers. Everyone can do his share according to his ability,

[1] Gandhiji sought his counsel and help during his public life in South Africa. *Vide An Autobiography,* Part I, Ch. XXV.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to the Press on Third Class Travelling on Indian Railways", 25-9-1917.

and leaders might, in order to appreciate the difficulties of third-class travelling, resort to it from time to time without making themselves known and bring their unhappy experiences to the notice of the administration. If these remedies are adopted, we should, in a short time, see great changes.

A committee had been appointed in London to consider certain measures about the supply of indentured labour to Fiji and the other sister islands. The views of that committee have been officially published and the Government of India have invited the opinion of the public upon them. I need not dwell at length upon the matter as I have submitted my views already through the Press. I have given it as my opinion that the recommendations of the committee, if adopted, will result in a kind of indenture. We can, therefore, only come to one conclusion. We do not want to see labourers emigrating under bondage in any shape or form. There is no need for such emigration. The only thing required is a complete repeal of the law of indenture. It is no part of our duty to look to the convenience of the Colonies.

I come now to the last subject. There are two methods of attaining one's goal. Satyagraha[1] and *duragraha*[2]. In our scriptures, they have been described, respectively, as divine and devilish modes of action. In satyagraha, there is always unflinching adherence to truth. It is never to be forsaken on any account. Even for the sake of one's country, it does not permit resort to false-hood. It proceeds on the assumption of the ultimate triumph of truth. A satyagrahi does not abandon his path, even though at times it seems impenetrable and beset with difficulties and dangers, and a slight departure from that straight path may appear full of promise. Even in these circumstances, his faith shines resplendent like the midday sun and he does not despond. With truth for sword, he needs neither a steel sword nor gun-powder. Even an inveterate enemy he conquers by the force of the soul, which is love. Love for a friend is not put to the test. There is nothing surprising in a friend loving a friend; there is no merit in it and it costs no effort. When love is bestowed on the so-called enemy, it is tested, it becomes a virtue and requires an effort, and hence it is an act of manliness and real bravery. We can cultivate such an attitude

[1] Literally, "holding to truth", pursuit of a right cause, a method of political agitation which found expression later in successive civil disobedience campaigns in India.

[2] Pursuit of a wrong cause or in a manner unworthy of the cause

even towards the Government and, doing so, we shall be able to appreciate their beneficial activities and, as for their errors, rather than feel bitter on their account, point them out in love and so get them rectified. Love does not act through fear. Weakness there certainly cannot be. A coward is incapable of bearing love, it is the prerogative of the brave. Looking at everything with love, we shall not regard the Government with suspicion, nor believe that all their actions are inspired with bad motives. And our examination of their actions, being directed by love, will be unerring and is bound, therefore, to carry conviction with them.

Love can fight; often, it is obliged to. In the intoxication of power, man fails to see his error. When that happens, a satyagrahi does not sit still. He suffers. He disobeys the ruler's orders and his laws in a civil manner, and willingly submits to the penalties of such disobedience, for instance, imprisonment and gallows. Thus is the soul disciplined. In this, one never finds that one's time has been wasted and, if it is subsequently realized that such respectful disobedience was an error, the consequences are suffered merely by the satyagrahi and his co-workers. In the event, no bitterness develops between the satyagrahi and those in power; the latter, on the contrary, willingly yield to him. *They discover that they cannot command the satyagrahi's obedience. They cannot make him do anything against his will. And this is the consummation of swaraj, because it means complete independence*. It need not be assumed that such resistance is possible only against civilized rulers. Even a heart of flint will melt in the fire kindled by the power of the soul. Even a Nero becomes a lamb when he faces love. This is no exaggeration. It is as true as an algebraic equation. This satyagraha is India's distinctive weapon. It has had others but satyagraha has been in greater use. It is an unfailing source of strength, and is capable of being used at all times and under all circumstances. It requires no stamp of approval from the Congress or any other body. He who knows its power cannot but use it. Even as the eyelashes automatically protect the eyes, so does satyagraha, when kindled, automatically protect the freedom of the soul.

But *duragraha* is a force with the opposite attributes. As we saw earlier, the terrible War going on in Europe is a case in point. Why should a nation's cause be considered right and another's wrong because it overpowers the latter by sheer brute force? The strong are

often seen preying upon the weak. The wrongness of the latter's cause is not to be inferred from their defeat in a trial of brute strength, nor is the rightness of the strong to be inferred from their success in such a trial. The wielder of brute force does not scruple about the means to be used. He does not question the propriety of means, if he can somehow achieve his purpose. This is not dharma but the opposite of it. In dharma, there can be no room for even a particle of untruth or cruelty, and no injury to life. The measure of dharma is love, compassion, truth. Heaven itself, if attained through sacrifice of these, is to be despised. Swaraj is *useless at the sacrifice of truth*. Such swaraj will ultimately ruin the people. The man who follows the path of *duragraha* becomes impatient and wants to kill the so-called enemy. There can be but one result of this. Hatred increases. The defeated party vows vengeance and simply bides its time. The spirit of revenge thus descends from father to son. It is much to be wished that India never gives predominance to this spirit of *duragraha*. If the members of this assembly deliberately accept satyagraha and chalk out its programme accordingly, they will reach their goal all the more easily for doing so. They may have to face disappointment in the initial stages. They may not see results for a time. But satyagraha will triumph in the end. The *duragrahi*, like the oilman's ox, moves in a circle. His movement is only motion but it is not progress. The satyagrahi is ever moving forward.

A superficial critic of my views may find some contradiction in them. On the one hand, I appeal to the Government to give military training to the people. On the other, I put satyagraha on the pedestal. Surely, there can be no room for the use of arms in satyagraha? Of course there is none. But military training is intended for those who do not believe in satyagraha. That the whole of India will ever accept satyagraha is beyond my imagination. A cowardly refusal to defend the nation, or the weak, is ever to be shunned. In order to protect an innocent woman from the brutal design of a man, we ought to offer ourselves a willing sacrifice and by the force of love conquer the brute in the man. Lacking such strength, we should employ all our physical strength to frustrate those designs. The satyagrahi and the *duragrahi* are both warriors. The latter, bereft of his arms, acknowledges defeat, the former never. He does not depend upon the perishable body and its weapons, but he fights on with the strength of the unconquerable and immortal *atman*. Anyone who is neither of the two is not a man, for he does not recognize the *atman*. If he did, he would not take

fright and run away from danger. Like a miser his wealth, he tries to save his body and loses all; such a one does not know how to die. But the armoured soldier always has death by him as a companion. There is hope of his becoming one day a satyagrahi. The right thing to hope from India is that this great and holy Aryan land will ever give the predominant place to the divine force and employ the weapon of satyagraha, that it will never accept the supremacy of armed strength. India will never respect the principle of might being right. She will ever reserve her allegiance to the principle: "Truth alone triumphs."

On reflection, we find that we can employ satyagraha even for social reform. We can rid ourselves of the many defects of our caste system. We can resolve Hindu-Muslim differences and can solve political problems. It is all right that, for the sake of convenience, we speak of these things as separate subjects. But it should never be forgotten that they are all closely inter-related. It is not true to say that neither religion nor social reform has anything to do with politics. The result obtained by bringing religion into play in the field of politics will be different from that obtained otherwise. When thinking of political matters, we cannot ignore 56,000 ignorant sadhus living as wandering mendicants. Our Muslim brethren cannot lose sight of their fakirs. Nor can we be unmindful of the condition of our widows and the custom of child marriage and the Muslims of the custom of purdah. The two communities cannot, likewise, shut their eyes to scores of questions that arise between them.

Indeed, our difficulties are Himalayan. But we have equally potent means at our disposal for overcoming them. We are children of an ancient nation. We have witnessed the burial of civilizations: those of Rome, Greece and Egypt. Our civilization abides even as the ocean in spite of its ebbs and flows. We have all we need to keep ourselves independent. We have great mountains and rivers. We have the matchless beauty of nature, and the sons and daughters of this land have handed down to us a heritage of deeds of valour. This country is the treasure-house of *tapascharya*. In this country alone do people belonging to different religions live together in amity and the gods of all are venerated. If, despite all this bounty, we fail to work a miracle, bring peace to the world and conquer the British through the play of moral force in our life, we shall have disgraced our heritage. The English nation is full of adventure, the religious spirit guides it, it has unquenchable faith in itself, it is a nation of great soldiers, it treasures

its independence; but it has given the place of honour to its commercial instinct, it has not always narrowly examined the means adopted for seeking wealth. It worships modern civilization. The ancient ideals have lost their hold upon it. If, therefore, instead of imitating that nation, we cherish our past and sincerely value our strength, trust firmly in its supremacy, we shall know how to take the best advantage of our connection with the British and so make it profitable to us, to them and to the entire world. I pray to the Almighty that this assembly may play its part in this great work and thereby shed lustre upon itself, upon Gujarat, and upon the whole of India.

[From Gujarati]

Mahatma Gandhini Vicharsrishti

45. RESOLUTIONS AT GUJARAT POLITICAL CONFERENCE—I[1]

November 4, 1917

1. This Conference places on record its grief at the demise of the Grand Old Man of India, Dadabhai Naoroji, and offers its condolences to the members of his family. It prays to God that the soul of the Mahatma may rest in peace.

2. This Conference places on record its grief at the demise of Mr. Abdul Rasool, a prominent leader of the All-India Muslim League and the Congress, and offers its condolences to the members of his family. It prays to God for the welfare of his soul.

3. The itinerary of Mr. Montagu's tour provides for a stay in Bombay from December 24, 1917, to January 2, 1918, but the leaders of the Province will be in Calcutta during the week, attending sessions of the Congress and the Muslim League there and will therefore be denied the opportunity of joining in the discussions with Mr. Montagu. This Conference therefore requests the Government to arrange for Mr. Montagu to spend that week in Calcutta instead of in Bombay.

4 This Conference earnestly appeals to the various Congress Committees, the branches of the Home Rule League and other

[1] These were proposed from the Chair and were presumably drafted by Gandhiji.

political bodies in Gujarat to work incessantly for the scheme of swaraj adopted by the Congress and the Muslim League and urges Gujaratis to secure as many signatures as possible to the petition[1] to Mr. Montagu which is in circulation for the purpose.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 11-11-1917

46. SPEECH AT GUJARAT POLITICAL CONFERENCE—II

[GODHRA,]

November 4, 1917

Before commencing the proceedings, Gandhiji announced the Government's decision to lift the customs levy at Viramgam:

The matter of the customs levy at Viramgam had been under correspondence and I wrote to inquire when it would be removed. I am glad to tell you that it is to be removed and that the Government Resolution on the subject will be published in the next issue of the *Gazette.*

On Mr. Jinnah[2] moving in Gujarati, the resolution on the Congress League Scheme for Reforms[3], Gandhiji thanked him, saying:

Mr. Jinnah has laid me under an obligation by agreeing to my suggestion. He is at present a member of the Imperial Legislative Council. But, at no distant date, he will have to approach Hindus and

[1] The reference is to the Home Rule petition drafted by Gandhiji and presented to Montagu; *vide* "Petition to E.S. Montagu", Before 13-9-1917 An identical petition was presented on behalf of the people of Bihar and Orissa.

[2] Mahomed Ali Jinnah (1879-1948); barrister and statesman; first Governor-General of Pakistan, of which he was virtually the founder.

[3] The following brief report appeared in *The Bombay Chronicle,* 6-11-1917: "Gandhiji, before he called upon Mr. M. A. Jinnah to move the resolution expressing gratefulness of the Conference at the forthcoming visit of Mr. Montagu and praying for the grant of the Congress-Muslim League scheme of reforms as the first instalment of the policy recently announced by the Secretary of State, made a few remarks in which he explained the reasons why he left the reading of the resolution to the mover himself and exhorted him to speak in Gujarati.

"Later, Gandhiji moved from the chair a resolution urging Mr. Montagu to cancel his visit to Bombay at a time when every leader of note would be absent from the city and praying that he might attend the Congress-Muslim League sittings at Calcutta."

Muslims, *Ghanchis*[1], *Golas*[2] and others not knowing English, for votes. He should, therefore, learn Gujarati if he does not know it.

On Lokamanya B. G. Tilak rising to address the meeting, the question arose in what language he should speak. Gandhiji remarked:

You want to have swaraj; you should then show respect to the man whom you have elected to conduct the meeting. Mr. Tilak understands, but he cannot speak Gujarati. He will only speak in his mother tongue[3]. Though he is advanced in years, it would be but proper if he engages a Gujarati teacher and picks up the language. We belong to the Bombay Presidency and should, therefore, learn both languages in order that we might know what the people feel. Queen Victoria learned Urdu.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 11-11-1917

47. SPEECH AT GUJARAT POLITICAL CONFERENCE—III[4]

November 5, 1917

I am sorry that some of the speakers were not allowed to complete their very fine speeches, and I apologize to them for this. Those who have had to suppress their enthusiasm may show it in other ways. I must leave this very day, denying myself the love of the people of Godhra. I would have had some peace if I had stayed on for a while. These days, however, when a fire is raging, how can one expect peace? The songs were sweet to hear, but they are not the end of the matter. I hope what was sung would be acted upon. If you follow up the songs with sacrifices in the cause of the nation, the hopes[5] expressed by Mr. Talati will be fulfilled. Take the pledge, if you think you can, to achieve swaraj within 12 months. We saw, during

[1] Names of educationally backward communities

[2] *ibid*

[3] Marathi

[4] This was Gandhiji's concluding speech. *The Bombay Chronicle* 7-11-1917, reported that "in dissolving the Conference, Mr. Gandhi, in a short speech, exhorted them to continue their propagandist work and to take signatures in the petition to Mr. Montagu."

[5] These were that the first conference after the attainment of swaraj would be held at Nadiad, in Gujarat.

the Conference, what the mother tongue can do. Our language is in the position of a widow with no one to look after her. Mr. Khaparde[1] and others pointed out the virtues of the mother tongue. Mr. Tilak's speech yesterday was followed by about 75 per cent of the audience. A foreign language may be as beautiful as gold, but it can be of little use to us. Our own language may be mere straw, but it is for us to turn it into gold.

Of the resolutions passed, five relate to matters which we can get settled in a year's time. As for the resolution on forced labour, if the Executive Committee does not get such labour abolished in that time, the members should resign. If, again, they do not succeed in securing improvement in the condition of students, they may as well go about with bangles on their wrists. Of course, it will be no great honour to men to do this. We have to strive to secure the release of Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali. The chair of the Muslim League President should not remain vacant.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 11-11-1917

48. RESOLUTIONS AT GUJARAT POLITICAL CONFERENCE—II[2]

November 5, 1917

5. This Conference tenders its thanks to His Excellency the Viceroy for the decision he has announced to remove the levy, known as Viramgam customs, on certain categories of goods on their entry from Kathiawad into British territory, and earnestly requests him to give immediate effect to the decision.

6. Farmers without adequate means are put to extreme hardships because of the general practice of collecting revenue dues in one instalment instead of two and are obliged to sell their means of livelihood to pay the dues. This Conference therefore requests the Government to see that revenue dues are always collected in two instalments and to fix the time for the collection of instalments with due regard to the crop situation.

[1] G. S. Khaparde, a leader from Berar, supporter of Bal Gangadhar Tilak

[2] These were moved on the third day of the Conference, and were presumably drafted by Gandhiji.

7. This Conference is of the view that the Sub-divisional Officer of every district should have his residence, during the monsoon months, in the principal town of his division instead of at the district headquarters. For some time past, the office of the District Deputy Collector of Dohad is shifted to Godhra during the monsoon months and this results in considerable hardship to the people of Zalod, Bhimdi, etc., and also puts them to heavy expense on transport. This Conference therefore requests the Government that the said office should remain in Dohad as in former years.

8. This Conference requests the Government of India to release all Indians, men and women, who had been detained for political reasons under the Defence of India Act and declares its view that the desire expressed by His Excellency the Viceroy to see peace prevail in India during Mr. Montagu's visit here will be better realized if the detenus are released.

9. In revenue matters as also for the maintenance of peace and order in his district, the Collector is at present dependent on the one-sided reports of the Mamlatdar and the police and this often leads to serious errors in the administration of the district and injustice to the people. This Conference therefore recommends to the Government that it appoint an advisory board of elected members for each district.

10. Recently, some persons have set up, in disregard of the interests of the people, plants for the processing of milk and the Government has also been doing the same, with the result that people have to go without the nourishing items of milk and ghee in their food. This Conference therefore suggests to the Government that such plants be closed forthwith.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 11-11-1917

[1] A pamphlet, dated November 5, 1917 and printed at Godhra, gives a longer version of this resolution which, however, is not likely to have been drafted by Gandhiji. Besides, the version reproduced here is corroborated by *Mumbai Samachar*, 8-11-1917.

49. SPEECH AT SOCIAL CONFERENCE, GODHRA[1]

November 5, 1917

MY DEAR BRETHREN,

We are in the midst of those people, call them *Dheds*, *Bhangis*, *Antyajas*[2], or by whatever appellation you like. Beside me there are lawyers and doctors, I believe, and other gentlemen; we have today joined hands with the so-called backward classes; now we are sure to get swaraj. (Hear, hear.) We, Hindus and Muhammadans, have become one; here we are in association with this *Dhed* community. Do not suppose that that community belongs to a lower status; let the fusion take place between you and that community, and then you will be fit for swaraj. We lost the right to swaraj before, because we committed a sin before God in treating this community with such neglect. Why should we hesitate to touch the *Antyajas?* It is not mentioned in any religious book that this community should not be touched, or treated as we are doing now. It is a fallacy to give that community the lowest place in the scale of castes. Where the union of hearts takes place, there, I am sure, God is present. God is omnipotent, though some of us do not believe it. Therefore, we quarrel among ourselves. Where is the difference between us and this community? There is the same heart, the same nose, the same tongue, the same feeling—everything the same. (Cheers.) Where there is a divided heart, there Ramachandra cannot be. There is no *Imam*. (Laughter.) I do not know whether God was present at the political conference (Laughter.), but I am sure he is here. (Hear, hear.) I have not come here to make a long speech; I came to set an object lesson. (Hear, hear.) This lesson on social reform is not to be had elsewhere. (Cheers.) Here is a vast assemblage. It is like an ocean. Anyone can use this water for cooking his rice. (Laughter.) Let everyone speak. I now call upon the Hon'ble Mr. Patel to speak. (Loud cheers.)

A young *Dhed* then asked permission to speak. He came forward very nervously. He said that he was not an educated man. He was the son of a *Dhed*. He thanked the assembly on behalf of his community and tendered their tribute of love

[1] At the instance of advanced classes assembled for the Gujarat Political Conference, the *Dhed* community held a meeting. Presiding over the meeting, Gandhiji spoke in Gujarati. Abbas Tyabji, Vithalbhai J. Patel, Ratansey Dharamsey, Morarji Gokaldas and others attended.

[2] Name of a low-caste community; etymologically, last-born, lowest on the social scale, the "untouchables"

and gratitude to the Bawaji (Mr. Patel). He gradually grew more confident and endeavoured to substantiate the claim of his community to be among the foremost ranks of the Rajput race.

Mr. Gandhi rose at once to disillusion him of this, and advised him not to believe in such cock-and-bull stories regarding his ancestry. He admonished the *Dheds* to be content with their parentage and to rise by their own efforts, now that the higher classes had lent them a kindly hand.

Other speakers followed—all striving to console and encourage *Dhed* community. . . .

In his final speech Mr. Gandhi asked the upper classes to convert their theoretical sympathy for the *Dheds* into practical one and to subscribe towards opening and maintaining a school for *Dhed* children. Rs. 1,653 were subscribed on the spot.[1]

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1917

50. SPEECH AT "ANTYAJ" CONFERENCE, GODHRA

November 5, 1917

I would say to the gentleman[2], on whom I lean for support as I stand, that, if he is a saint within as he is in the outer garb, we shall have swaraj all the sooner for that. If he carries on the fight in the Legislative Council dressed like a sadhu, as now, our desire will be fulfilled earlier. To my *Antyaj* brethren, I say this: today, you are sitting in the midst of Hindus and Muslims. Hinduism certainly does not say that contact with those who serve us is sinful. Despite this crowd, no one has so much as felt his leg squeezed. God is there where there is such perfect silence. I don't believe the Political Conference or the Social Conference succeeded in proving that God exists everywhere, but here He is certainly present. Where there are hypocrisy, falsehood, inequality and the notion that certain persons may not be touched, Vishnu, Khuda or Rasool cannot be present.

[1] Gandhiji and others were then garlanded and the meeting dissolved amid shouts of *Gandhiji-ki-jai*.

[2] Vithalbhai J. Patel, who later became the first elected Speaker of the Central Legislative Assembly under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. He appeared in the garb of a sannyasi at the meeting.

Speaking again later, Gandhiji requested Smt. Gangabehn[1] to take *Antyajas* under her care and teach them to read and write.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 11-11-1917

51. A STAIN ON INDIA'S FOREHEAD

[GODHRA,
After *November 5, 1917*]

That the untouchables are a separate class is a blot on India's forehead. The caste system is a hindrance, not a sin. But untouchability is a sin, a great crime, and if Hinduism does not destroy this serpent while there is yet time, it will be devoured by it. The untouchables must not be considered as falling outside Hinduism. They should be treated as respectable members of Hindu society and should be assigned their *varnas* according to their vocations.

The *varna* system, as I have defined and described it, is not practised by Hinduism today. Those who call themselves Brahmins have given up the pursuit of learning. They have taken to various other occupations. The same is true more or less of the other *varnas*. As a matter of fact, owing to our subjection to foreign rule, we are all slaves and are, in the eyes of the Westerners, untouchables lower even than the Sudras.

Why does God permit this atrocity? Ravana was a *rakshasa*, but this *rakshasi*[2] of untouchability is even more terrible than Ravana. And when we worship this *rakshasi* in the name of religion, the gravity of our sins is further increased. Even the slavery of the Negroes is better than this. This religion, if it can be called such, stinks in my nostrils. This certainly cannot be the Hindu religion, It was through the Hindu religion that I learnt to respect Christianity and Islam. How then can this sin be a part of the Hindu religion? But then what is to be done?

I shall put up a lone fight, if need be, against this hypocrisy. Alone I shall undergo penance and die with His name on my lips. It is possible that I may go mad and say that I was mistaken in my views

[1] An inmate of Sabarmati Ashram who was later responsible for introducing the popular form of *charkha*, the spinning-wheel.

[2] Female-demon

on the question of untouchability, that I was guilty of a sin in calling untouchability a sin of Hinduism. Then you should take it that I am frightened, that I cannot face the challenge and that I change my views out of cowardice. You should take it, in that event, that I am in delirium.

In my humble opinion, the dirt that soils the scavenger is physical and can be easily removed. But there are those who have become soiled with untruth and hypocrisy, and this dirt is so subtle that it is very difficult to remove it. If there are any untouchables, they are the people who are filled with untruth and hypocrisy.[1]

There has been a lot of comment in *Gujarati* on the convention of *Bhangis, Doms* and other untouchables that was held in the Mahar compound of Godhra. The writers of these comments have given completely distorted versions of the events at the convention and misled the readers. I therefore write the following lines to put things right.

In matters concerning religion, I consider myself not a child but an adult with 35 years of experience. For I have thought and reflected on the question of religion for as many years. Especially, wherever I saw truth, I translated it into action. It is my conviction that mere perusal of the shastras does not lead to an awareness of the true spirit of religion. We see that without following a code of rules, without the study of the shastras, a man's behaviour tends to be wayward. For the meaning of a doctrine I shall not go to a man who has studied the shastras with the desire to be called a pundit. For this reason, for formulating my code of ethics I shall not seek the assistance of the books written after laborious study by such scholars as Max Muller. Nowadays lots of people who profess themselves knowledgeable in the shastras are found to be ignorant and conceited. I seek a guru. That a guru is needed I accept. But, as long as I have not come upon a worthy guru, I shall continue to be my own guru. The path is arduous certainly, but in this sinful age, it seems to be the right one. Hinduism is so great and so wide in sweep that no one has so far succeeded in defining it. I was born in the *Vaishnavisam* sect

[1] The paragraphs that follow were substantially embodied by Gandhiji in a letter which he addressed to *Gujarati* in connection with certain comments in that paper on the *Antyaj* Conference in Godhra on November 5. The letter was published in its issue of 30-12-1917.

and I dearly love its *siddhas*[1] and *siddhantas*[2]. Nowhere, either in Vaishnavism or in Hinduism, have I seen it laid down that *Bhangis, Doms,* etc., are untouchables.[3] Hinduism is hemmed in by many old customs. Some of them are praiseworthy but the rest are to be condemned. The custom of untouchability is, of course, to be condemned altogether. It is because of it that, now for two thousand years, Hinduism has been burdened with a load of sin in the name of religion. I call such orthodoxy hypocrisy. You will have to free yourself of this hypocrisy; the penance for it you are already undergoing. It is no good quoting verses from *Manusmriti* and other scriptures in defence of this orthodoxy. A number of verses in these scriptures are apocryphal, a number of them are quite meaningless. Then again, I have not so far come across any Hindu who obeys or wants to obey every injunction contained in *Manusmriti.* And it is easy to prove that one who does this will, in the end, be himself polluted. The *Sanatana Dharma* will not be saved by defending every verse printed in the scriptures. It will be saved only by putting into action the principles enunciated in them—principles that are eternal. All the religious leaders with whom I have had occasion to discuss the matter have agreed in this. All the preachers who are counted among the learned and who are revered in society have clearly announced that our treatment of *Bhangis, Doms,* etc., has no sanction other than the custom to which it conforms. To be truthful, no one really follows this custom. We touch them in the trains. They are employed in mills where we touch them without the least compunction. Untouchables have found admission in the Fergusson and the Baroda Colleges. Society puts no hindrance so far as these matters are concerned. In English and Muslim homes they are politely welcomed. And we have no hesitation in touching Englishmen and Muslims; in fact, we feel a pride in shaking hands with many of these. When these same untouchables are converted to Christianity, we dare not treat them as untouchables. Thus, it is impossible for a thoughtful Hindu, even if he feels differently in the matter, to uphold a tradition which it is not possible to follow.

I can think of no epithet to describe those who deny the feeling

[1] The enlightened or perfect ones

[2] Principles, established truths

[3] Here the letter in *Gujarati* has: "According to Akha, the prejudice against such contact is like a superfluous limb."

of hatred which underlines untouchability. If a *Bhangi* by mistake finds his way into our compartment, he will hardly escape a beating and, as for abuse, this will fall on him in a shower. The tea-seller will not hand him tea nor the shopkeeper sell him goods. We will not care to touch him even if he be dying. We give him our leavings to eat and our torn and soiled garments to wear. No Hindu is willing to teach him. He cannot dwell in a proper house. On the road, out of fear of our wrath, he has to proclaim his untouchability repeatedly. What treatment can be more indicative of hatred than this ? What does this condition of his show ? Just as in Europe, at one time, slavery was upheld under cover of religion, so now in our society hatred for the untouchables is fostered in the name of religion. Till the very end there were some people in Europe who quoted the Bible in defence of slavery. I include our present supporters of orthodoxy in this category. We shall have to free religion of the sin of untouchability which is imputed to it. Unless we do this, diseases like plague, cholera, etc., cannot be rooted out. There is nothing lowly in the occupations of the untouchables. Doctors as well as our mothers perform similar duties. It may be argued that they cleanse themselves afterwards. Yes, but if *Bhangis,* etc., do not do so, the fault is wholly ours and not theirs. It is clear that the moment we begin lovingly to hug them, they will begin to learn to be clean.

Unlike the movement for inter-dining, this movement does not need to be pushed. This movement will not cause the system of *Varnashram* to disappear. It aims at saving it by doing away with its excesses. It is also not the desire of the initiators of this movement that *Bhangis,* etc., should give up their vocations. They only want to demonstrate that the function of removing garbage and filth is a necessary and sacred function and its performance can impart grace even to a *Vaishnava.* Those who pursue this vocation are not, therefore, degraded but entitled to an equal measure of social privileges with those pursuing other callings; their work protects the country from a number of diseases. They, therefore, deserve the same respect as doctors.

While this country is venerated for its *tapasya*, purity, compassion and other virtues, it is also a play ground of licence, sin, barbarity and other vices. At such a juncture it will be becoming for our fraternity of writers to gird up their loins to oppose and root out hypocrisy. I appeal to you to share in the sacred work that was taken

up at Godhra greeting it as such and participate in the effort that may be undertaken in this cause, so that sixty million people may not break away from us in despair.

Before joining this campaign, I have thoroughly reflected on my religious responsibility. A critic has made the prophecy that, in course of time, my views will change.[1] On this I shall only say that, before such a tune comes, I shall have forsaken not only Hinduism but all religion. But it is my firm conviction that if, in the attempt to free Hinduism of this blot, I have to lay down my life, it will be no great matter. It is altogether impossible for the feeling of untouchability to survive in a religion which produced devotees like Narsi Mehta who saw all men as equals

[From Hindi]

Bapu aur Harijan

52. SPEECH AT MUZAFFARPUR[2]

November 11, 1917

FRIENDS,

I had intended to speak of three things only, but what I saw at the station has added one more. Wherever I go, our people, forgetting everything in their love, so rush at me and throw everything into such confusion that I grow weary of it all. This kind of behaviour makes things unpleasant and obstructs national work. If we wish to honour a public worker, there is a way of doing so and one should learn it. Our people do not even know how to maintain order as they stand on the station platform. We want to work for the nation. We have embarked on the service of Bharat. It is our duty then to learn how to behave in public, how to go about our work and how to honour public servants. We should learn drill for this purpose.

The second thing is about Champaran. The people there have secured what they wanted.[3] We had no quarrel with the indigo-planters; we only wanted to shake off our slavery to them and this is

[1] In *Gujarati*, the example of Narmadashankar has been cited here.

[2] An indirect report, available from Bihar-Orissa Abstracts, 1917, recorded that five to seven thousand people attended the meeting.

[3] The Champaran satyagraha which Gandhiji led resulted in the removal of *tinkathia*, a levy on the indigo labourers.

all we have been able to achieve. The orders issued for the benefit of the people there do not apply to Muzaffarpur; I believe, however, that they will be, by and by. If we fail to secure anything, it is merely because of want of trust between us and those from whom we seek it. When I started my work in Champaran, the indigo-planters and the officials there felt that I was out to fight them; when, ultimately, they realized that I had no such intention, that I only wanted the indigo-planters to be just to the people, there was little difficulty in getting what we wanted.

The work at Champaran is over, but something still more important remains. If a man who has shaken off slavery and gained his freedom is not properly educated, he may possibly abuse his freedom. The people of Champaran have secured local self-government of a sort. How it is to be used is the problem now. For this purpose my co-workers, Babu Brijkishore[1] and others, have jointly decided to open schools all over the place and educate the people in general knowledge, especially in the rules of hygiene. The intention is to give instruction in letters to boys and girls and teach them as much hygiene as they need to keep themselves clean and tidy, and teach adults how to safeguard public health and keep clean the roads, disused wells, latrines, etc. With this object, a school is to be opened in a place called Dhaka on the auspicious day of Tuesday. There is an urgent need of volunteers for this world. Any educated friends who so desire may come forward. Those who do will be examined and such of them as are found fit will be taken up.

The third matter is this. What shall we do to bridge the gulf that exists between Hindus and Muslims and bring together hearts that have become estranged? It is my life's mission to bring about amity between the two communities. For 25 years I have been thinking how this may be done and have been mixing with Muslim friends. What I hear about Shahabad pierces my heart and makes it bleed.[2] If I could, I would have run up to the place and had a heart-to-heart talk with our Muslim brethren there. But I know my limitations. The Champaran

[1] Brijkishore Prasad, leading lawyer of Darbhanga; staunch nationalist and close follower of Gandhiji with whom he worked in 1917 during the Agrarian Movement in Champaran; in 1920, gave up legal practice to join Non-Co-operation Movement

[2] The reference is to the riots which had broken out there during September-October.

matter is not yet out of the way and it is a principle of mine that one must live and die for the work on hand till it is brought to a successful issue. But I have been thinking about the problem, and should like to tell my Hindu brethren that we have grievously erred on this occasion, that we are more to blame. It is the duty of the wiser among the Hindus to heal the Muslims' wounds and compensate them for the losses we have inflicted on them in Arrah. I would even go to the extent of saying that, if Shahabad Hindus cannot do this, Hindus all over the country should combine to do it. The lawyer friends who have been fighting in the courts, on the two sides, should withdraw the cases and inform the Government that they do not now want them to be proceeded with. To Muslim friends, I shall say that the fighting between the two communities in one district need not be made an excuse for fighting all over India. Even two brothers sometimes fight, but they should not be allowed to disrupt the family as a whole. In like manner, the two communities here need not take their quarrel outside the Province. We must, as a matter of religious duty, help the Muslim League and the Congress to accomplish the task they have undertaken. Our leaders have bestowed full thought on what they are doing and we have, therefore, no right to obstruct their efforts. We are preparing ourselves for swaraj and, if we waste our time in fighting in this manner, our descendants will have cause to blame us. It is up to us to settle our differences, but we seem incapable of doing so. One reason for our fighting is that we receive our education through a foreign tongue. This has cost us our courage and our manhood. Besides, we have lost contact with the masses; there is a big gulf separating our educated class and the masses. With better relations between the educated and the rest, such unseemly fighting would be impossible.

The differences between Hindus and Muslims are over the cow. If we want cows to be protected, the thing to do is to save them from slaughter-houses. Not less than 30,000 cows and calves are killed for the British every day. While we have not succeeded in stopping this slaughter, we have no right to raise our hand against Muslims. I should like to tell the Hindus that it is no religious act to kill Muslims in order to save cows. Hinduism prescribes only one way: that of *tapascharya*. To quote Tulsidasji, compassion is the root that sustains one in dharma; we should, accordingly, approach this work in the spirit of compassion. I also want cows to be protected but, for that purpose, I would ask the Muslim friends to apply the knife to my

neck and kill me rather than the cow. I am sure they will respond to this prayerful request. If we cherish our own freedom, we have no right to deprive others of theirs. Interference with one another's freedom leads to strained relations. If a Muslim arrogantly asks Hindus not to play on drums [near a mosque], the latter will never agree. If, however, the Muslims were to say in all humility, "Please do not play on drums and disturb us in the performance of our religious duty, in our devotions; if you do, we will lay down our lives," I am sure there is no Hindu so thoughtless as to act against their wishes. The truth is that in this matter neither the Hindu nor the Muslim is being honest. If we want harmony, we can have it through love; never through intimidation, [for] the other party will not speak out frankly what it really feels.

I have been saying that there should be a single national language, and that this should be Hindi. This, I hear, has created some misunderstanding among Muslims. Some of them imagine that, in advocating Hindi, I ignore the claims of Urdu. By Hindi I mean the language spoken by Hindus and Muslims in North India and written in Nagari and Urdu scripts. I am in no way ill-disposed to the Urdu language. In my view, the two languages are one; they have a common structure and idiom, except for the difference in respect of the use of Sanskrit and Persian words. I bear English no grudge, but it will not help us to mix with the masses and work among them like one of themselves. This is all I mean. Whether you speak of Hindustani or Hindi, to me they mean the same. It is our duty to carry on national work through Hindi. As for the script, no harm will be done if the Hindu boy uses the Nagari and the Muslim boy uses the Urdu; on the contrary, each will have learnt both the scripts. Among ourselves, we should hear only Hindi words, not English. Not only this, our councils, too, should resound with debates in Hindi. I shall struggle all my life to bring this about.

I have but one thing more to say: all over India, we are agitating for swaraj. We have realized from the experience of the Shahabad riots why swaraj is being delayed. It will not come with petitions and speeches. If the Hindu is out to shed Muslim blood in order to save the cow, swaraj will never come. If harmony is restored between the two communities and they declare that they will themselves settle their differences and guarantee that there will be no need for third-party intervention, swaraj will be ours. It does not require spread of

education; the only requisite is amity among us, and strength. We should cultivate fearlessness before we can achieve swaraj. While we have the spark of the Divine in us, never need we fear any human being.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Mahatma Gandhini Vicharsrishti

53. SPEECH AT OPENING OF GOKHALE LIBRARY, UMRETH[2]

November 12, 1917

FRIENDS,

I have been invited to declare open this library, named after Gokhale, and to unveil his portrait. This is a sacred mission, and a solemn one. These days people in the West are obsessed with the idea that in founding a library one renders social service. An American city has a millionaire, Carnegie by name. He is so rich that, even if he were to distribute rupees by the million among the people, his hoard of wealth would not be exhausted. He donates libraries at innumerable places, all named after him. Some Scottish leaders requested him not to import such a practice into their country against their wishes, for [they said] it was likely to do much more harm than good. In Paris, libraries are being increasingly misused. You need not understand from this that I am against libraries. When a library is being started, and before deciding to start it, one should consider after whom it is to be named and what kinds of books it should make available to the townspeople, so that the library may be [suitably] named and its books read to some purpose.

[1] The Bihar-Orissa Police Abstracts recorded that finally Gandhiji spoke about the Home Rule Movement and exhorted all to support the recommendations of the Muslim League and the Indian National Congress. He appealed to the audience to sign the petition prepared for presentation to Montagu, which he explained. Later that evening, Gandhiji attended a Conference of Hindu and Muslim leaders and took part in the discussion. According to a confidential report dated November 12, 1917, from the Superintendent of Police, Muzaffarpur, ‘‘Mr. Gandhi condemned the Shahabad disturbance and expressed his sorrow....Mr. Gandhi said that it is not his intention that Hindi should be adopted and not Urdu. He said that foreign language should not be adopted and only a language be adopted which is understood by all. He said that Hindi and Urdu are mostly spoken and readily understood.”

[2] In Gujarat

And now about the portrait. Not only was Gokhale not hungry for fame, he did not even like being honoured in public. Often, on such occasions, he would cast his eyes down. If you believe that, when his portrait is unveiled, his soul will rest in peace, you are mistaken. This great man, when dying, thus declared his cherished wish: "After I am dead, my biography will be written, my statues will be put up and condolence meetings will be held; all this will avail but little to bring peace to my soul. My only wish is that the whole of India live as I have lived and that the Servants of India Society which I have established prosper." They who are prepared to abide by this testament are entitled to unveil Gokhale's portrait.

Gokhale's was a life of extensive activities. Today, I shall relate some incidents in his domestic life for the benefit of the women assembled here. It is an example for them to follow, for Gokhale served his family very well. He never acted in a manner which would cause pain to anyone in the family. He refused to follow the current practice in Hindu society of marrying off a girl, doll-fashion, as soon as she reached the age of eight and so cast her away to sink in the sea. His daughter is still unmarried. He had to go through much in keeping her so. Moreover, he lost his wife while he was yet in the bloom of youth. He could have married again, but he did not. He served his family in many ways; ordinarily everyone does so. One may, however, serve one's family either out of self-interest or to advance the interests of the nation. Gokhale had renounced all considerations of self-interest. He did his duty by the family, and then the town and then the country, as occasion demanded, with an undaunted spirit, with perseverance and labour.

In Gokhale's mind there was not a trace of the feeling that Hindus and Muslims are different. He regarded all with an equal eye and with affection. He would get angry sometimes, but the anger was provoked only by concern for national interests and it had invariably a wholesome effect on the other party. It even converted many Europeans who had been hostile into close friends.

Anyone who looks at Gokhale's life, the whole of it, will see that he had made it synonymous with national service. He left this world of sorrow before he was fifty, and the only reason for this is that all the twenty-four hours of the day he laboured indefatigably, using up his mental and physical energies in the service of the nation. Never did he allow the petty concern for himself and his family to enter his mind.

The only thing that concerned him was what he could do for the country.

Gokhale, this high-souled man, was also daily exercised over the issue of the uplift of the *Antyaj* communities, who constitute a great source of strength for the country, and he laboured in many ways to raise them up. If anyone commented on this, he would reply plainly that contact with an *Antyaj* was no defilement, that, on the contrary, one committed a heinous sin by entertaining the evil prejudice against such contact.

When I went to see how the *Meghwad*[1] brethren here weave, I was surprised to hear the children accompanying me talk of defilement. While I don't wish to take up on this occasion the subject of caste, I shall certainly say that, unless we assimilate these classes, one can hope for no improvement in one's town or in the country. If you have any hopes for swaraj, you will be disappointed. So long as you have not shaken off unthinking faith, so long as dissensions continue in the home, the family, the town and society as a whole, so long will you shout in vain for swaraj. Formerly, there were 50 looms in Umreth and now only two remain, and even these are none too prosperous. The reason is to be sought in your narrow outlook. It is the duty of the leaders here that they develop the local industries and secure patronage for them. If they do not show such concern, they are not entitled to put up the portrait of a saint like Gokhale, dedicated to service of others. I don't think, however, that Umreth is altogether devoid of spirit. It is a matter of satisfaction that it has expressed regard for Mahatma Gokhale and has recognized his achievements.

[From Gujarati]

Dharmatma Gokhale

[1] A low-caste community

54. NEWS PAPERS

[Before *November 14, 1917*]

I promised the Editor a contribution for the *Diwali*[1] Number of *Hindustan*. I find that I have no time to make good the promise, but, thinking that I must write something, I place before the readers my views on newspapers. Under pressure of circumstances, I had to work in a newspaper office in South Africa and this gave me an opportunity to think on the subject. I have put into practice all the ideas which I venture to advance here.

In my humble opinion, it is wrong to use a newspaper as a means of earning a living. There are certain spheres of work which are of such consequence and have such bearing on public welfare that to undertake them for earning one's livelihood will defeat the primary aim behind them. When, further, a newspaper is treated as a means of making profits, the result is likely to be serious malpractices. It is not necessary to prove to those who have some experience of journalism that such malpractices do prevail on a large scale.

Newspapers are meant primarily to educate the people. They make the latter familiar with contemporary history. This is a work of no mean responsibility. It is a fact, however, that readers cannot always trust newspapers. Often facts are found to be quite the opposite of what has been reported. If newspapers realized that it was their duty to educate the people, they could not but wait to check a report before publishing it. It is true that, often, they have to work under difficult conditions. They have to sift the true from the false in but a short time and can only guess at the truth. Even then, I am of opinion that it is better not to publish a report at all if it has not been found possible to verify it.

The reporting of speeches in Indian newspapers is generally defective. There are very few who can take down a speech verbatim, so that speeches are generally found to be a mere hotchpotch. The best thing to do would be to send the proofs of the reported speech to the speaker for correction and the paper should publish its own report of the speech only if the speaker does not correct anything in the proofs sent to him.

[1] The Hindu festival of lights, celebrated at the end of the autumn harvest with ceremonial worship of Lakshmi, the Goddess of wealth. According to the Gujarati calendar, it is the last day of the year.

It is often observed that newspapers publish any matter that they have, just to fill in space. This practice is almost universal. It is so in the West, too. The reason is that most newspapers have their eye on profits. There is no doubt that newspapers have done great service. Their defects are therefore overlooked. But, to my mind, they have done no less harm. There are newspapers in the West which are so full of trash that it will be a sin even to touch them. Many, full of prejudices, create or increase ill will among people. At times, they produce bitterness and strife even between different families and communities. Thus, newspapers cannot escape criticism merely because they serve the people. On the whole, it would seem that the existence of newspapers promotes good and evil in equal measure.

It is now an established practice with newspapers to depend for revenues mainly on advertisements rather than on subscriptions. The result has been deplorable. The very newspaper which writes against the drink-evil publishes advertisements in praise of drink. In the same issue, we read of the harmful effects of tobacco as also from where to buy it. Or we shall find the same issue of a paper carrying a long advertisement for a certain play and denouncing that play as well. Medical advertisements are the largest source of revenue, though they have done, and are still doing, incalculable harm to the people. These medical advertisements almost wholly offset the services rendered by newspapers. I have been an eye-witness to the harm done by them. Many people are lured into buying harmful medicines. Many of these promote immorality. Such advertisements find a place even in papers run to further the cause of religion. This practice has come entirely from the West. No matter at what cost or effort, we must put an end to this undesirable practice or, at least, reform it. It is the duty of every newspaper to exercise some restraint in the matter of advertisements.

The last question to consider is: What is the duty of newspapers when laws like the Seditious Writings Act and the Defence of India Act are in force? We often find our papers guilty of equivocation. Some have perfected this method into a science. But, in my opinion this harms the country. People become weak and equivocation becomes a habit with them. This changes the form of language: instead of being a medium for the expression of one's thoughts, it becomes a mask for concealing them. I am convinced that this is not the way to develop strength in the people. The people, both collectively and individually, must cultivate the habit of speaking only

what is in their minds. Newspapers are a good means of such education, for those who would evade these laws had better not bring out a paper at all; the other course is to ignore the laws in question and state one's real views fearlessly but respectfully and bear the consequences. Mr. Justice Stephen has said somewhere that a man who has no treason in his heart can speak no treason. If it is there in the heart, one should speak it out. If one does not have the courage for this, one should stop publishing a newspaper. This is in the best interests of all.

[From Gujarati]

Mahatma Gandhini Vicharsrishti

55. MESSAGE TO GUJARATI HINDU STRI MANDAL[1]

[On or before *November 14, 1917*]

The women whom this message reaches are likely to have had some measure of education. I wish, therefore, to consider one thing. What should educated women do for their illiterate sisters ? This is a very important issue. Beyond question, if women choose, they can attain a far greater measure of success in this field than men can ever do. At present, we do not find many women taking to this work. That is, I believe, not their fault but that of their education. The first thing, therefore, which educated women must do is to try and see that their sisters do not fall a victim to it. Modern education fails utterly to prepare women for their distinctive role; this is not questioned by anyone. I do not wish here to examine the shortcomings of modern education or to bother you with the question how they may be overcome. All that I desire is that educated women should make this question their own and that those of them with some experience should dedicate their all to rouse Gujarat over it and focus attention on the right lines [of reform].

Educated women have no contact with those not educated; often, they don't welcome such contacts. This disease must be cured. It is necessary that educated women are made conscious of their most obvious duty. Men also are not free from faults of this kind, but women need not follow in their footsteps. They have the power, denied to men, of creating new ideals and translating them into action. By comparison, man is thoughtless, impatient and given to the pursuit

[1] This was sent before the Gujarati New Year's Day.

of novelty. Woman, it is observed, is serious-minded, patient and inclined generally to cling to old ways. When, therefore, she has a new idea, it seems to have its birth in the tender depths of her heart. An idea born in this manner commands her unshakable faith and, for that reason, it is capable of being rapidly propagated. I believe therefore that, if educated women give up copying the ways of men and think independently about the important questions affecting their sex, we shall find it quite easy to solve many a knotty problem.

The problem of widows is not quite a simple one. It is a worthy cause to which quite a few women can dedicate their lives. It is one thing for a widow to marry again, if she so desires, quite another to waste one's time over persuading a child-widow to do so. If women were to resolve, instead, and induce others to resolve, not to marry a widower or offer one's daughter in marriage to one, and not to sacrifice one's daughter to a child bridegroom, fit enough to be rocked in a cradle, I am confident the fruits will be sweet for India. It is worth considering carefully in what way the country can avail itself of the services of hundreds of widows, young and old; if educated women will not think about this, who else should? I have had an idea for many years; I may as well mention it here. Only a few years ago, our women used to spin cotton, and even weave. Today, the art is about to disappear. India has had to suffer much because of its decline. Millions of rupees have been lost to foreign countries. At present, widows spend their time going to temples or in the service of those claiming to be holy men, or in idle gossip. It does not seem to me that one can live a religious life only by going to a temple, though, of course, I do not wish to suggest that thoughtful visits to a temple may not be profitable. The idea, however, that spending time in a temple, unmindful of other tasks, is the furthest limit of selflessness is sheer superstition. Likewise, to wait on men of holy life, who stand in no need of services from others, and to serve them in all manner of ways, is unwholesome for both parties and waste of one's time. To draw widows away from such activities and induce them to take up the task of serving India, work which will promote their ultimate good, is to help them to remarriage of the purest kind. Why do not the educated women embark upon this mission? Those of them who might think of doing so should themselves take the first lesson in the school of industry, namely, spin cotton and weave.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 2-12-1917

56. LETTER T0 J. L. MERRIMAN

MOTIHARI,

November 14, 1917

DEAR MR. MERRIMAN[1],

I think that I ought to keep you informed of my doings. Having received an offer of a ready-made school building and an invitation to open a school in a Kham village, I opened one today in Barharva Lakhamsen near Daka. I have put there the best volunteer teachers from among those who have offered their assistance. They are Mr. and Mrs. Gokhalay from Bombay. They have their independent means, and Mrs. Gokhalay was doing educational work in Bombay. The nature of the work they will do I have already described to you. I am hoping, with the assistance, if possible, of the heads of the respective concerns to open similar schools, one in the Peeprah *Dehat*[2] and another in the Tarkaulia *Dehat*, and I hope to open one in the Belwa *Dehat*, As this attempt is in the nature of an experiment, I do not want to open more than four or five schools, until some definite result is obtained. I hope that I shall have the co-operation of the local officials in an experiment which, I know, is full of difficulty, but which is fraught with important consequences if it becomes successful.[3]

I am,

Yours truly.

M. K. GANDHI

From the original signed by Gandhiji; also Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran

[1] District Magistrate, Champaran, Bihar

[2] Rural area

[3] To this Merriman replied on November 18 as follows: "I have to acknowledge your letter of 14-11-1917 instt. I am interested to hear of your attempt to found schools. I shall be glad to hear more about this, regarding the class of schools you propose to open, and the type of education to be imparted. Also the places where you open them." For Gandhiji's reply to this, *vide* "Letter to J. L. Merriman", 19-11-1917.

57. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

BETTIAH,
Diwali [*November 14, 1917*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I returned to Bettiah today and read your letters. This letter will be posted on the first[1].

Read the reply[2] to Thakorelal and send it on to his address.

It is enough if Nanubhai has been satisfied. We shall progress even through the mistakes we make. It will be much if we don't make the same mistake again. You may go out for as long as you wish. You would do well to pay a visit to Umreth as well. I take it that Chhaganlal is at Ahmedabad. I suppose none of you have any occasion to go to the town. Convey my humblest greetings to respected Khushalbhai[3] and Devabhabhi[4]. My blessings to you all for the New Year.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5706. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

58. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

MOTIHARI,
November 14, 1917[5]

CHI. HARILAL,

Today is *Diwali* day.May the New Year bring you prosperity. I wish that all your aspirations are fulfilled and that all of you increase in your wealth of character, and pray that you realize more and more that this is the only real Lakshmi and our highest good lies in the worship of this alone.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary Vol. IV

[1] The New Year's Day according to the Gujarati calendar, i.e., November 15

[2] This letter is not available

[3] Parents of the addressees

[4] *ibid.*

[5] Mahadev Desai has quoted this letter in his *Diary* under "November 15", but *Diwali* was on November 14.

59. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

MOTIHARI,
New Year's Day, 1974 [*November 15, 1917*][1]

What shall I give you on this auspicious day? I am trying to give you what you, I and many others lack. If one has that, one has everything. Only he who has it can give it. If that is the truth, what can I give? However, we may strive for it together.[2]

> Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.
>
> And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.
>
> And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not, charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.
>
> Charity never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.
>
> For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.
>
> And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

[1] On this date Gandhiji appears to have communicated with J. T. Whitty, Manager of Bettiah Raj and, later, had an interview with him. Neither the correspondence nor an authorized report of the interview is available; but the gist of both along with Whitty's personal assessment of Gandhiji are available in a letter of his, dated November 17, 1917, addressed to L. F. Morshead, Commissioner of the Tirhut Division, *vide* Appendix "Extract from J.T. Whitty's Letter to L.F. Morshead", 17-11-1917.

[2] What follows is reproduced from the original English source: I C*orinthians*, Ch. 13. Gandhiji had rendered it in Gujarati.

Read this, meditate on it and read it again. Read it in English and translate it into Hindi. Strain every nerve to have at least a brief glimpse of love. Mira[1] had felt the stab of this dagger of love, deep in her heart. If we could but get hold of this dagger and get also the strength to stab ourselves with it, we could shake the world. The thing is there in me, and yet I feel its lack every moment. There is much that is wanting. Sometimes, I behave like a half-filled pot. Only yesterday, I had no time to spare for people who wanted, in their love, to detain me. I felt sore over this all the time. This is no sign of love. That is just the way a half-filled pot spills over. May the New Year bring you prosperity. It is my wish, and my only blessing, that you may grow in your physical, mental and spiritual powers and dedicate them all, with love, to India.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

60. LETTER TO J. L. MERRIMAN

MOTIHARI,
November 17, 1917

DEAR MR. MERRIMAN,

I visited Koeri yesterday and met Shivratan[2] and other people. As, however, the result of the inquiry ordered by you is, I understand, to be announced to Shivratan on the 23rd instant, I postpone submitting my observations till the result is known.

Raiyats[3] from the Siraha *Dehat* inform me that thumb marks are being taken on some contracts by that factory. I am unable to advise them as to the action they should take until I see the draft. I have, therefore, told them that if they wish to follow my advice they ought not to sign any document until I have seen it, as I consider myself entirely unfit to give advice otherwise. I thought that I ought to pass

[1] Saint-poetess of Mewar in Rajasthan; *vide* "Letter to Raojibhai Patel", 10-6-1914, "The Last Satyagraha Campaign: My Experience", After 23-7-1914 & "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 28-7-1914.

[2] Shivratan Nonia

[3] The tenant-farmers.

this information on to you. I would like to add that it would tend to smoothness of relations between the landlords and the *raiyats* if the former showed you the contracts they wish to enter into with the raiyats. As you may be aware, it has been a frequent complaint on the part of the *raiyats* that they are often made or called upon to sign documents which they do not understand.[1]

I remain,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original signed by Gandhiji; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*

61. LETTER TO RANCHHODLAL PATWARI

MOTIHARI,

Kartak Sud 4 [*November 18, 1917*]

RESPECTED BHAISHRI,

Your letter brought the same calm to my mind that one from Kalabhai[2] would have done. I am all love and admiration for the Patwari family. I can never forget the help[3] you gave me at a critical moment. I have looked upon you as an elder brother. No one can say what way I would have gone if you had not helped me in Bombay.

I can make only one return: I can so live as to make you think that the help given to me was well deserved. I have a feeling that you are saddened after I have taken up my work for *Bhangis*. I could not, and I cannot, give up my work for *Bhangis*. But your being unhappy makes me sad and so, when I received your letter, I knew that, though you disapprove of my work for *Bhangis*, on the whole you don't disapprove of all my activities. This came to me as a blessin. But I hope for more. In the name of *Vaishnava* dharma that most sacred

[1] Replying on November 18, Merriman wrote: "They are at liberty to go to the court if they think they have been victimized. I am quite unable to listen to any observations in a case which is before the courts, which might tend to prejudice the merit of the court. . . I am glad therefore that you do not intend to impart your observation to me regarding a case brought by Sheoratan Nonia."

[2] Lakshmidas Gandhi, Gandhiji's elder brother

[3] Patwari's father gave Gandhiji financial assistance for going to England for his legal studies in 1888; *vide* "London Diary", 12-11-1888.

dharma is being destroyed; in the name of cow-protection, destruction of cows is brought about; in the name of religion, the most irreligious practices are prevalent; posing to be men of religion, irreligious people lay down the law on religious matters. If I can see these things, how is it that you, who cherish *Vaishnava* dharma, should not see them? I find myself constantly asking this question. Contact with a *Bhangi* can never be sinful; killing a Muslim for [saving] cows can never be a righteous act; the holy books can never have enjoined untruth; men who give free rein to their desires ought not to rule in matters of religion; all this is axiomatic. How can there be any difference of opinion about this? Would you not like to use the influence you have acquired over the *Vaishnava* community towards this end? Can you not help men like me at least with your verbal support? What *tapascharya* can I go through to make you see things as I see them? I keep asking these questions. Please think [of them] inwardly again.

I send you [reports of] my speeches[1] and should like you to read them again from this point of view.

Though I may not be able just now to read the books you mention, please send them to me.

We have purchased, for the Ashram, 55 *bighas*[2] of land on the banks of the Sabarmati. Construction is proceeding, though the progress is slow because of the plague.

Respectful greetings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 4124

[1] It is not known what these were

[2] A measure of land

62. LETTER TO J.L. MERRIMAN

MOTIHARI,

November 19, 1917

DEAR MR. MERRIMAN,

In the schools I am opening, children under the age of 12 only are admitted. The idea is to get hold of as many children as possible and to give them an all-round education, i.e., a knowledge of Hindi or Urdu and, through that medium, of Arithmetic, rudim-ents of History and Geography, a knowledge of simple scientific principles and some industrial training. No cut and dried syllabus has been yet prepared, because I am going along an unbeaten track. I look upon our own present system with horror and distrust. Instead of developing the moral and the mental faculties of the little children, it dwarfs them. In my experiment, whilst I shall draw upon what is good in it, I shall endeavour to avoid the defects of the present system. The chief thing aimed at is contact of the children with men and women of culture and unimpeachable moral character. That to me is education. Literary training is to be used merely as a means to that end. The industrial training is designed to give the boys and girls who may come to us, an additional means of livelihood. It is not intended that on completing their education, they should leave their hereditary occupation, viz., agriculture, but make use of the knowledge gained in the school to refine agriculture and agricultural life. Our teachers will also touch the lives of the grown-up people and, if at all possible, penetrate the *purdah*. Instructions will, therefore, be given to grown-up people in hygiene and about the advantages of joint action for the promotion of communal welfare, such as the making of village roads proper, the sinking of wells, etc. And as no school will be manned by teachers who are not men or women of good training, we propose to give free medical aid, so far as is possible. In Badharwa for instance, Mrs. Avantikabai Gokhalay who is a trained nurse and midwife and who, assisted by her husband, is in charge of the school, has already dispensed castor oil and quinine to scores of patients during the four days that she has been at work and visited several female patients.

If you desire any further information, I shall be only too glad to supply you with it. My hope is that I shall be able to enlist in my work full co-operation of the local authority. I am opening another school

tomorrow near Shrirampur, about two miles from Amolwa.

Regarding the *raiyats*, complaints about documents, evidently the point I wished to make was not made by me. I know that the *raiyats* can go to court about compulsion. The difficulty is that they are neither trained nor organized enough for orderly work. What is morally compulsion may not be compulsion in law. My experience of the Champaran *raiyat* is that he is extremely unintelligent and is easily made to assent mentally to any proposition. I hold, therefore, that the Government, as the guardian of such people, have to save them from their own ignorance. I do not say that in the Saraiya case brought to your notice, any compulsion has been used. I simply suggested that, in order that there might be no allegation of compulsion after such documents as I have referred to in my previous letter are signed, you might, if you deemed it proper, inquire about the contracts now offered to the *raiyats* for their signatures.

I am,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original signed by Gandhiji; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*

63. LETTER T0 RAMNAVAMI PRASAD[1]

[MOTIHARI,

[*November 21, 1917*][2]

BHAISHRI,

I shall leave this place at 10 a.m. on the 23rd.[3] Meet me on the train at Muzaffarpur. I shall then tell you about the petition. I see no harm in accepting the fees, if offered. Second school was opened yesterday,

Bandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 735

[1] A lawyer who gave up practice and assisted Gandhiji during his Champaran movement; organized non-co-operation movement in Muzaffarpur in 19l9-22

[2] The second school referred to in the letter was opened at Bhitiharva, a village situated in the Nepal Tarai, on November 20, 1917.

[3] Gandhiji was due to meet Montagu in Delhi.

64. LETTER T0 J. L. MERRIMAN

MOTIHARI,
November 22, 1917

DEAR MR. MERRIMAN,

I went over to Bhitiharva on Tuesday last and opened a school there. Mr. Soman, a public worker from Belgaum, and a B.A. LL.B., has been left in charge, and he will be assisted by Mr. Balkrishna, a young man from Gujarat. Mrs. Gandhi will join them on the 24th. Her work will be chiefly confined to moving among the women.

I was in Badharwa yesterday, and Mrs. Gokhalay and my son were just returning from a visit to a dying man. They told me that the people in the District were woefully neglectful of the patients, and they believed that many preventible deaths must occur in the District for want of a simple observance of the rudimentary principles of hygiene. I know that this will not come to you as news, because it is not a peculiar condition of the District in which Mrs. Gokhalay is working, or of Champaran, but it is a chronic condition among the peasantry of India.

I simply mentioned the incidents in order that, as soon as I have advanced a little more in my experiment, I may enlist your active sympathy and help in a Department in which all can meet without reserve.

Dr. Dev[1], who is a qualified and experienced surgeon and physician, and Secretary of the Servants of India Society came on Tuesday. His services have been lent for this work by the Society. He has come with three more volunteers including a lady from Prof. Karwe's Widows' Home. Dr. Dev will chiefly supervise the Medical Branch of the work.

I may state that I shall be away from Champaran for over a fortnight. Babu Brijkishore Prasad will represent me in my absence.[2]

I am,
Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original signed by Gandhiji; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*

[1] Dr. Hari Srikrishna Dev

[2] Merriman reported Gandhiji's activities, even his innocuous educational work, to L F. Morshead, Commissioner of the Tirhut Division. The Bihar and Orissa Government was getting concerned and restive over the situation of agrarian unrest in the Champaran district. *Vide* "Extracts from Official Correspondence and notes", 18-11-1917.

65. LETTER T0 CHANDULAL

MOTIHARI,
Kartak Sud 8 [*November 22, 1917*]

BHAISHRI CHANDULAL,

I have your letter. You have been keeping your vows well enough and they are good ones to take. It is my conviction that one cannot build one's character without the help of vows. They are to a man what anchor is to a ship. A ship without an anchor is tossed to and fro and finally broken on the rocks; without vows, human beings meet a similar fate. The vow of truth includes all others. How would a man who respects truth violate *brahmacharya* or steal anything? " *Brahma* alone is real; all else is non-existent." If this *sutra*[1] is true, knowledge of *Brahma* is implied in the observance of truth.

Non-violence and truth are convertible terms. This seems to be the idea behind the saying, "One must speak truth, truth that is agreeable."[2] That is genuine truth which causes no pain, for that alone is non-violent. Truth may sound harsh but it can never result in suffering. Our employment of truth may offend the other person, but his conscience will tell him that what was said about him was true and was said with the best of motives. We are here interpreting truth in its widest connotation. Truth does not mean merely being truthful in speech; the term "truth" means exactly the same thing as it does in the *sutra* about *Brahma* alone being true. The English word "truth" also carries the same meaning.

I remember to have told you that you are not made to work for women's education. I may be wrong, but I think it is quite a difficult task and I have not felt that you have the strength required for it. From my experience of you, I do not think that you can take up the work by yourself. All the same, if you are so much in love with it, by all means go on with it. I think Sharadabehn also will not be able to manage without you now. It may be just as well, therefore, if you do not give up that work.

[1] An aphorism

[2] An old Sanskrit saying runs: सत्यं ब्रूयात्प्रियं ब्रूयान्न ब्रूयात्सत्यमप्रियम् | प्रियं च नानृतं ब्रूयादेष धर्मः सनातनः ||

I have not noticed much physical energy in you. You need to spend, in the Ashram or elsewhere, two or three months in purely physical work, as much of it as your body can stand—from cleaning food grains to digging pits. This will give you fresh mental energy. Your slowness in work will disappear. The eyes, hands, legs, etc., need to be exercised. I have noticed that you lack energy.

I have read Nandlal Kisan's letter. We shall have a talk about what we can do in the Indian States. You will meet me in Bombay, or in Ahmedabad at any rate, in December.

If you have faith in yourself, you will be able to do much in your family circle. It is for the son to bring round the mother. A mother loves her son so much that she even submits to his wishes. It will be a crime for you not to spare enough time for your daughters.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 3258

66. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

MOTIHARI,

November 23, 1917

MY DEAR MILLIE,

I am just off to Delhi. As I shall be on the move again for a fortnight. I must send you a line before beginning it. I am glad you are making steady progress and have found a friend in Miss Petit.

Mrs. Gokhale[1] is already in charge of a school.[2] Devdas is with them. He is growing a big boy. Mrs. Gandhi is in her element. She is going to assist at another school. This means life in the jungle. She does not mind it. Dr. Deva has come with 3 more volunteers. So we have enough for the time being.

Do please write to Miss Faering. She will come if she can, I

[1] Avantikabai Gokhale

[2] *Vide* "Letter to J.L. Merriman", 14-11-1917.

know.

You will enjoy your visit to Calcutta if you can come.

Do you know that Revashankarbhai has nothing to Henry's credit? I do not know what he arranged. In any case, I have asked Revashankarbhai to supply your needs. This is not for you to worry over. I am seeking information if you know anything about Henry's dispositions.

You will please ask Ceilia to forgive me for not giving her a separate note in reply to hers.

I must try to give you a human letter from Delhi or Calcutta. This is merely a diary and not much at that.

With love to you all,

Yours,
BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

67. REMARKS IN VISITORS' BOOK

Kartik Purnima, 1974 [*November 28, 1917*]

I am very happy to have visited this library. I hope it will continue to make progress.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From the Hindi original C.W. 11268. Courtesy: Marwari Public Library. Delhi

68. SPEEGH AT ALIGARH[1]

November 28, 1917

. . . He gave his hearers to understand that the plea of benefit to the community would be of no avail to procure Home Rule unless unity prevailed among them. In referring to the Arrah riots, he expressed contempt of the contemptible and detestable barbarism exhibited by the Hindus. It was for the Hindus to mend the gap. Hindu-Mohammedan quarrels should be settled like those of [a] private family. He made many references to the Ali brothers . . .

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1917

69. SPEECH AT ALIGARH COLLEGE[2]

November 28, 1917

. . . He said that he had hoped to visit the college in the company of the Ali brothers. He had seen Aligarh working for the nation and the country, but the Mohammedans were not so absorbed in endeavouring to uplift their country as their brothers—the Hindus were. He would like to see some, if not all, of the College students nation uplifters, such as Mr. Gokhale was. He made a reference to his dress (white *kurta*, dhoti and topi) and said that it was the only suitable dress for Indians; the depressed class would listen to and consult persons dressed in the garb of ancient India more readily than they would those dressed in modern clothes....

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1917

[1] On his arrival, Gandhiji was met by a large number of students at the railway station and taken in a procession to the Lyall Library Grounds where he spoke to about 2,000 people on Hindu-Muslim unity. One of the students garlanded Gandiji in the name of Home Rule. *The Leader*, 1-12-1917, reported that, in his speech, Gandhiji "referred to Sir Syed Ahmed's saying that Hindus and Mahomedans were like the two eyes of the motherland."

[2] After his address at the library grounds, *vide* the preceding item, Gandhiji spoke to the students on "Truth and Thrift" with the permission of Reynell, acting Principal of the College. Later, he went to Khwaja Abdul Majid's house and from there to the station and left for Calcutta.

70. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI[1]

[Before *November 30, 1917*]

. . . Both of them have an excessively heavy burden on them. There may be one difference between you and me. Whatever little happiness I get is from the practice of self-control. Without the discipline of self-control, I just cannot live. Whenever I lose it, I feel pained. When I lose temper with Ba, I give myself condign punishment for doing so. At Godhra, I replied rather rudely to one of the delegates. I was satisfied only when I had apologized to him in public.

I shall have to be in Calcutta on the 30th of November and so, most probably, I shall be in Ahmedabad quite early.[2] However, I shall get only two days there. Perhaps, I may not be able to go to Ahmedabad after all. I shall spare no effort, though.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5707. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

71. SOME GENERAL SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING PLAGUE

NADIAD,
December 6, 1917

HOW TO PREVENT 1T ?

1. If one's blood is pure, it has the power of destroying the germs of every type of disease.

2. If, therefore, we maintain our body in a healthy state, thanks to the pure blood, it will remain well protected even in an epidemic of contagious disease.

3. For maintaining purity of blood, one must eat simple food, in limited quantity and at fixed hours. Any diet containing excessive fat or sugar, or cooked with spices, must be avoided. One must eat nothing for at least three hours before bed time. Air too is food. One

[1] The first three pages of the letter are not available.
[2] Gandhiji was in Ahmedabad on December 4 and 5.

should not, therefore, sleep except in a house with proper windows and doors, and these should be kept open. Nor should one sleep with one's face entirely covered with the sheet. If the head feels cold, one may wear a cap, but the face should always be left uncovered. If the mouth is kept closed and air inhaled only through the nostrils, there is no risk of one's feeling cold. Water, too, must be clean. It is an excellent practice always to drink water that has been boiled and strained through thick cloth. The latter should be carefully washed every day. And so, also, the inside of the water-pot should be properly cleaned every day. Every man or woman should have as much exercise daily as may be got by walking for two hours.

4. Even a person who does all this and keeps healthy may have his blood affected if the home and its surroundings are not clean. The doors and windows, the ceiling, the floor, the staircase—in short, every part of the house—should be kept perfectly clean. For this purpose, such part of the house as can be washed should be washed properly and then allowed to dry. Cobwebs, dust, straw and rubbish of every description should every day be carefully swept out of the house. It should be ensured that no part of the house remains wet. Carpets and floor-coverings should be daily taken up [for dusting] and not left in their place day after day. Doctors say that the plague spreads through fleas. In a well-swept house with plenty of air and light, fleas will hardly ever enter. They say, too, that the disease spreads through rats. One should, therefore, examine all the corners of the floor and the entire plastering and see that there are no holes anywhere. This can be done easily enough, and at no expense. It is because of our laziness that rats make their holes in our houses. Keeping a cat in the house will prevent it from being so infested.

5. But the most important cause of illness in India is the defective and extremely harmful methods we follow for answering calls of nature. A large number of people do this in the open. The excreta are not covered over with earth or otherwise, and this leads to the breeding of millions of flies every day. They come into contact, first, with excreta and then with our body, food and clothes. Several kinds of poisonous gases are generated by the excreta all the time and these pollute the air all round. It is obvious that when air, which is men's best food, is being thus continually polluted, they cannot maintain good health. The filth in our latrines is equally or even more harmful. For it is in our very homes. If, therefore, we go out into the open, after

defecating we must cover the excreta with earth as people in other countries do. Latrines should have arrangements for dry dust to be sprinkled in sufficient quantity every time after use. The excreta should be collected in some sort of a bucket. The refuse-pit should be avoided altogether and all conduits should be closed up. Urine and water should also be collected in the bucket. If we did not cherish false notions in the name of religion, we would never tolerate such hellish filth. The latrine should be so constructed as to permit the scavenger access to every part of it. Unless these improvements are carried out, cities in India will never be free from infectious diseases.

6. The air gets polluted also by reason of people urinating or spitting or throwing litter and other rubbish anywhere on the roads. Doctors have discovered that germs spread even from the spittle of certain categories of patients, of tuberculous patients for instance, and infect others. We must certainly consider what we do and where. Millions of people in this country walk bare-foot. It is a sorry state of affairs that they have to walk on filth. Our roads, our streets or the verandahs of our houses should be so clean that one would not hesitate to sit down or even sleep on them,

We would do well to do some careful thinking why it is that, in cities with an English population, the English localities are unaffected even when an epidemic of the plague is raging. The reason is nothing else than the cleanliness of the place. Maintaining cleanliness requires no money but merely intelligent care.

TREATMENT

7. The plague will never spread to cities where these rules are carefully observed. Let us now consider what should be done when it has actually broken out. Whenever a case of plague is detected, one must search out rats and, if one finds any dead ones, they must be removed with a pair of tongs to a distant place and burnt with the help of hay or kerosene or buried in a deep pit far away from human habitation. The place where a dead rat is found should be covered with live ashes and whitewashed, the room emptied of everything, swept clean and fumigated with *neem* leaves. If the walls permit of being whitewashed, they should be. If there are any rat holes, they should be opened up to make sure that there are no dead rats inside and then filled in. Any holes elsewhere in the house should be treated in the same manner. The doors and windows should be kept open and

plenty of light and heat let in; if the roofs are covered with country tiles, they should also be removed so as to let in air and light. Having cleaned up the house in this manner, we should leave it empty and, if possible, live in tents or huts put up in the open. We should avoid contact with other people in the town and even when shopping be careful not to touch the shopkeeper. If in this way immediate remedial measures are taken, the plague will not spread further. It will not affect other families in the same town or neighbouring towns through the families which have already been affected. If, after 31 days outside, one finds that the infection has not spread elsewhere or that no dead rats are found in the unoccupied house, the family can return to it.

8 In any town where a case of the plague has occurred, the other families should immediately inspect their own houses. They should remove the household things outside and look for rats. If they find any dead ones, they should leave the house and go to live outside as advised above. Even if no dead rats are found, the house should be thoroughly swept and kept very clean afterwards. It should be whitewashed. If there are no arrangements for ventilation, the necessary structural improvements should be carried out. Measures should also be adopted to maintain the utmost cleanliness in the surroundings. If the neighbours' houses are not clean, it should be seen to it that they are cleaned.

9. Nothing should be done to put the patient into a fright. No one except the person nursing him should be allowed to go near him. He should be kept only in a room with plenty of air and light. If there is a public hospital, he should be removed there. All food should be discontinued. If he has had no food for three hours at the time the symptoms of the plague are detected, he should be immediately given an enema. He should be placed in a tub, filled with cold water, for two minutes or, if he prefers, for five minutes so that his legs and chest remain out of water, and the portion from the knees to the hips under water. If he feels thirsty, he may be given as much as he needs of water that has been boiled, cooled, and filtered. Apart from this, he should have nothing to eat, or even to drink. If the head feels very hot, a mud poultice or a wet sheet pack should be applied to it. Very likely, these measures will suffice to secure the patient against the risk of death. If he survives the next day and if he feels hungry, he may be given lime juice or orange juice to drink, mixed with boiling water or cold water. When the temperature has become quite normal, he may be started on

milk. If there is a tumour, it should be treated with hot water poultice, which should be changed often. A piece of thick cloth 1_ ft. long and 9 in. broad should be wetted with hot water and the water drained out, placing the cloth in a dry handkerchief. The cloth should then be folded up into four layers and placed on the tumour, as hot as the patient can bear, and the tumour should be bandaged up. The poultice should be changed after every 30 minutes. In this disease, the patient's heart grows very weak and he should, therefore, be given complete rest.

10. The man attending on the patient should keep away from others and avoid any work which requires contacts with them. To ensure his own safety, he should reduce his food to a minimum and otherwise be very careful of his health. He should not worry at all. If he feels constipated, he should take an enema to clear the intestines and live only on fruits.

11. The patient's clothes should not be washed in a river or at any other place where others' clothes are washed. They should be soaked in boiling soap water. If they are very dirty, they should be burnt away. The bedding, etc., should not be used by anyone else and, if clean enough, it should be dried in the sun daily for eight days, exposing both sides by turns to sunshine. If one can afford it, one should have it burnt away.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 6399

72. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

MOTIHARI,

December 10, 1917

MY DEAR WEST,

I have your important letter before me. My view is that if you can turn out *Indian Opinion* only by removing to Town[1], you should suspend publication. I do not like the idea of your competing for jobs or advertisements. I think that when that time comes we shall have outlived our purpose. I would rather that you sold out Phoenix and

[1] Durban; the paper was being printed at Phoenix.

you and Sam[1] were engaged in some other independent work. If you can make of Phoenix something without the Paper, I shall like the idea. But if you cannot even eke out a living from agriculture at Phoenix, Phoenix should be sold. Hilda's education can remain in your own hands. Surely some drastic steps are necessary for a due fulfilment of one's ideals.

If you cannot support yourself out of Phoenix with or without the Paper and cannot secure a decent job for yourself, I must find your maintenance from here. You will then let me know how much you will require and for how long. For I presume that you will try to secure work there. I am quite willing to have Devi[2] here if she would come and even you if you could come alone for a time. But I know that Mrs. Pywell[3] and perhaps Mrs. West too may not like the climate or the surroundings here.

If Manilal wants to try his hand at turning out a sheet himself at any cost, he may be allowed to do it.

This I know that the proposed attempt in Town must become a dismal failure. We left it because we found it unworkable. We have arrived at all the stages after careful deliberation and as they were found necessary. Your methods cannot be those of ordinary business men. You will soon tire. Why try what is foredoomed to failure? I would like to let Manilal have a hand if he will but try. I am writing[4] to him.[5]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4427. Courtesy: A. H. West

[1] Govindswami, engineer in the Phoenix settlement; *vide* also "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 13-5-1905.

[2] Miss Ada West

[3] Addressee's mother-in-law

[4] The letter is not available. However, Gandhiji also wrote to Govindswami the following day in regard to the proposal.

[5] 0n receipt of the letter, West replied by cable and a letter dated March 3; *vide* "Cable to A. H. West'', about February 24, 1918.

73. LETTER TO J. L. MERRIMAN

MOTIHARI,
[*December*][1] *10, 1917*

DEAR MR. MERRIMAN,

I returned from my tours early this morning, and found a letter lying for me. I enclose copy of same[2] herewith.

Dr. Deva tells me that in Mitiharva and the surrounding villages, nearly 50 p.c. of the population is suffering from a fever which often proves fatal. Our workers are rendering all the assistance they can.

I am,
Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhji's hand in the National Archives of India; also *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran*

74. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

MOTIHARI,
December 10 [*1917*][3]

MY DEAR MILLIE,

I arrived here this morning from my peregrinations and found your letter awaiting me. I hope you will not worry about the money. I shall trace the error somehow. Anyway, I have told Revashankarbhai that he is to honour your drawings. You need not therefore put off your visit to Calcutta if you can otherwise manage it. I should like you not to feel hampered by the imaginary pecuniary difficulty.

I am sorry you can no longer take you walks. They are such a tonic and a necessity. I shall therefore hope to hear from you that you have been able to resume them.

Yes, I went to Delhi to see Mr. Montagu and had a good chat with him as also Mr. Roberts. The Viceroy was also present. All the three were nice. There is no doubt that we shall gain something good.

[1] The original has "November" which is a slip. Gandhiji returned to Motihari on December 10 and wrote this letter the same day.

[2] For the enclosure, a letter from Baban Gokhalay, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Baban Gokhalay", 6-12-1917

[3] From the contents

I then went to Calcutta to attend the opening of Sir.J.C. Bose's Institute. It was a spiritual affair rather than a popular show. I was glad to be able to go.

Thence I went to Ahmedabad and Bombay and attended important meetings. But the journeying was trying. The trains were always crowded. Night and day travelling under such conditions must tell.

Devdas and Mrs. G. I have not yet met. They are in their respective schools ≈ fancy Mrs. G. being placed in charge of a school.[1] It is a bold innovation. But it is answering well.

With love,

Yours,
BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

75. LETTER TO GOVINDSWAMI

MOTIHARI,
December, 11, 1917

MY DEAR SAM,

Mr. West has asked me whether it may not be advisable to shift to Town. My answer is in the negative. I would feel deeply hurt if you cannot keep up *Indian Opinion* in Phoenix. In any case you should not remove the works. If you cannot turn out the Paper in Phoenix, it must be stopped. You should then try to get a living from agriculture alone devoting the whole of your time to it. If that too fails, you should earn your living in Town. I have suggested to Manilal that he should, with the assistance of Ram[2], Devi Behn and Nagarji alone, turn out the Gujarati part only. If Ram and even Nagarji cannot be supported they too should go. I do not care even if two sheets only are turned out in Gujarati every week.

You are on your trial. Please do not fail. We cannot compete in

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to J.L. Merriman", 22-11-1917.

[2] Worker in the International Printing Press, *vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 29-9-1905.

job work with the printers in Durban.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4428. Courtesy: A. H. West

76 LETTER T0 ESTHER FAERING[1]

MOTIHARI,

CHAMPARAN,

December 12, 1917

DEAR ESTHER,

Your letter just received grieves me. "Be careful for nothing" comes to my lips as I write these lines. Why fret and worry? You are just now passing through fire.[2] I am sure you will come out unhurt. It is your clear duty just now to obey those to whom you have given the right to control your movements. You can oppose them only when they clearly hinder your spiritual progress. They receive the benefit of any doubt. You could certainly reason with them that just at this time of the year you will have perfect weather in Ahmedabad, loving attention and no worry. The very change of surroundings is likely to do you good. If you still fail, you have to accept their opposition with resignation. Please do not worry over your exam. That is a mere nothing. We are best tried when we are thwarted in what to us are holy purposes. God's ways are strange and inscrutable. Not our will but His must be our Law.

Please write to me frequently and, up to the end of the year, send your letters to Motihari. I should even value a telegram saying

[1] Esther Faering came to India in 1916, as a member of the staff of the Danish Missionary Society. Entrusted with educational work, she visited Sabarmati Ashram in 1917 and was much drawn to it. Her Mission did not approve of her contacts and correspondence with Gandhiji, to whom she became attached as a daughter. Later, in 1919, she resigned and became an inmate of the Ashram for some time. Gandhiji's letters to her over a period of nearly 20 years were published in 1956 under the title *My Dear Child.*

[2] The Mission authorities had refused her permission to spend the Christmas holidays at the Ashram.

you are at peace with yourself, if you are that when you receive this.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

My Dear Child, pp. 23-4

77. LETTER TO KALYANJI VITHALBHAI MEHTA

MOTIHARI,

Kartik Amavasya [*December 14, 1917*][1]

I have no time at all to send any article. There is a lot of work that remains pending. It is the duty of those who understand my situation not to put additional burdens on me. I am sending you something because I could not refuse you. Spare me in future and prevent others from bringing pressure on me. My services can be best utilized only by engaging me in things that are really essential. What simile should we use for a person who spends a rupee for a thing worth only a pice? I believe I am worth a rupee in certain tasks. I have plenty of such tasks on hand. It is essential that I concentrate on them.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Golden Jubilee Issue, Vallabh Vidyarthi Ashram, Surat

[1] The year has been inferred from Gandhiji's stay at Motihari.

78. LETTER TO E. L. L. HAMMOND

MOTIHARI,

December 15, 1917

DEAR MR. HAMMOND[1],

I have just received your note of the 13th instant.[2] Having, after the conversation with you, concluded that my services will not be wanted, I have accepted important engagements up to the end of March next, and have just now entered upon an educational and hygienic experiment[3] to which I attach the greatest importance and which requires my constant attention. I should not like to leave this work and yet I do not want to lose any chance of taking what little share I can in the present War. I may find it practically impossible to raise a corps on which I might not be serving. I would also find it difficult to get men if I could not assure them that they would all work in a body and with me. Will you please tell me in detail what your different requirements are and when you will want the corps and I shall see whether I can fit in. You will please tell me in each case the nature of work required and, if possible, the destination of the proposed corps.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran

[1] Egbert Lawrie Lucas Hammond, I.C.S.; became Chief Secretary to the Government of Bihar and Orissa, 1924; author of *Indian Election Petitions, The Indian Candidate and Returning Officer*

[2] This was about Gandhiji's willingness to raise a labour corps in Champaran for service in Mesopotamia; *vide* Appendix "Letter from E.L.L. Hammond", 13-12-1917

[3] The reference is to the schools which Gandhiji was setting up in Champaran at the time.

79. LETTER T0 "INDIAN OPINION"[1]

MOTIHARI,
December 15, 1917

When I left South Africa, I had fully intended to write to my Indian and English friends there from time to time, but I found my lot in India to be quite different from what I had expected it to be. I had hoped to be able to have comparative peace and leisure but I have been irresistibly drawn into many activities. I hardly cope with them and local daily correspondence. Half of my time is passed in the Indian trains. My South African friends will, I hope, forgive me for my apparent neglect of them. Let me assure them that not a day has passed when I have not thought of them and their kindness. South African associations can never be effaced from my memory.

You will not now be surprised when I tell you that it was only today that I learnt from *Indian Opinion* to hand, about the disastrous floods. During my travels I rarely read newspapers and I have time merely to glance at them whilst I am not travelling. I write this to tender my sympathy to the sufferers. My imagination enables me to draw a true picture of their sufferings. They make one think of God and His might and the utter evanescence of this life. They ought to teach us ever to seek His protection and never to fail in the daily duty before us. In the divine account books only our actions are noted, not what we have spoken. These and similar reflections fill my soul for the moment and I wish to share them with the sufferers. The deep poverty that I experience in this country deters me even from thinking of financial assistance to be sent for those who have been rendered homeless. Even one pie in this country counts. I am, at this very moment, living in the midst of thousands who have nothing but roasted pulse or grain-flour mixed with water and salt. We, therefore, can only send the sufferers an assurance of our heartfelt grief.

I hope that a determined movement will be set on foot to render residence on flats exposed to visitations of death-dealing floods illegal. The poor will, if they can, inhabit even such sites regardless of consequences. It is for the enlightened persons to make it impossible for them to do so.

The issues of *Indian Opinion* that acquainted me with the

[1] This was published under the caption "Advice to South African Indians".

destruction caused by the floods gave me also the sad news of Mr. Abdul Gani's[1] death. Please convey my respectful condolences to the members of our friend's family. Mr. Abdul Gani's services to the community can never be forgotten. His sobriety of judgment and never-failing courtesy would have done credit to anybody. His wise handling of public questions was a demonstration of the fact that services to one's country could be effectively rendered without a knowledge of English or modern training. I note, too, that our people in South Africa are not yet free from difficulties about trade licences and leaving certificates. My Indian experience has confirmed the opinion that there is no remedy like passive resistance against such evils. The community has to exhaust milder remedies, but I hope that it will not allow the sword of passive resistance to get rusty. It is our duty, whilst the terrible war lasts, to be satisfied with petitions, etc., for the desired relief, but I think the Government should know that the community will not rest until the questions above mentioned are satisfactorily solved. It is but right that I should also warn the community against dangers from within. I hear from those who return from South Africa that we are by no means free of those who are engaged in illicit traffic. We, who seek justice, must be above suspicion, and I hope that our leaders will not rest till they have purged the community of internal defects.

The Hindu, 4-3-1918

[1] Prominent Natal business man; Chairman, British Indian Association, 1903-7.

80. SPEECH AT NADIAD[1]

December 16, 1917

. . .He alluded to impending changes and said that all should work solely for their country. If they did this, they should have swaraj without asking Mr. Montagu for it. He condemned the Mohwa Flowers Act and said that Government had been misinformed The lecturer then discoursed on the plague epidemic and gave much good advice about killing rats and observing cleanliness in the name of religion. He also pointed out that many of the present-day epidemics were due to the people not having sufficient milk as the dairies bought it all up....

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1917

81. LETTER T0 MAGANLAL GANDHI

MOTIHARI,

Magshar Sud 4, Samvat 1974 [*December 18, 1917*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

You want a long letter, but I am sorry I cannot manage one just now. Moreover, I have got some work for the Social Service League to attend to. I feel that, while my star is in the ascendant, I should do all I can to spread my ideals. Let us hope that, by being watchful about rats and maintaining cleanliness, we shall prevent the plague from spreading to the Ashram.[2] Read and ponder over *Premal Jyoti Taro Dakhavi*[3]. We may plan for the future, but should not desire to see it.

The teachers' quarters were to be put up immediately. What came of this? Both Narahari[4] and Vrajlal are keeping fit. Devdas

[1] On his arrival, Gandhiji was received at the station by Home Rule Leaguers of Nadiad and led in a procession to the house of Gokaldas Dwarkadas Talati. After attending a private meeting to consider effective measure for implementing resolutions passed at the Gujarat Political Conference, he addressed a public meeting at 8 p.m. About 5,000 people were present. Before leaving Nadiad the same night, Gandhiji visited the Hindu Orphanage.

[2] The plague had broken out in Kochrab village, which had prompted Gandhiji to quit the place and set up the Ashram at Sabarmati; *vide An Autobiography*, Part V, Ch. XXI.

[3] Narasimhrao Divetia's Gujarati translation of Gandhiji's favourite hymn, Newman's *Lead, Kindly Light*

[4] Narahari Dwarkadas Parikh, an associate of Gandhiji

continues [to work] in the School. Surendra[1] also. Ba has joined me.[2]

Take good care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5708. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

82. LETTER T0 REVENUE SECRETARY

MOTIHARI,
December 19, 1917

TO
THE SECRETARY
GOVERNMENT OF BIHAR AND ORISSA
REVENUE DEPARTMENT
[PATNA
SIR,]

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 116-II-T-44-R.T. of the 6th December 1917, enclosing copy of the Champaran Agrarian Bill and inviting my remarks thereon.[3]

I beg to submit as follows:—

(1) With reference to Section 4, I observe that although both sub-sections (a) and (b) apply to the same transaction, sub-section (a) covers a wider area than sub-section (b), I have not been able to conjecture any reason for it. But I suggest that the wording of sub-section (b) may be copied for sub-section (a) and, therefore, the word "condition" occurring in the second line of sub-section (a) be removed. And the words "Section 3" occurring in line 3 thereof may be replaced by "sub-section 2 of Section 3".

(2) With reference to Section 5, I beg to state that the Committee's recommendations cover contracts between landlords and *raiyats*, not their tenants as well as their tenants.

[1] An inmate of Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati

[2] Kasturba Gandhi was working in a school at Motihari.

[3] Copies of the Champaran Agrarian Bill, after it had been referred to the Select Committee were forwarded by the Revenue Secretary to Gandhiji, the Bihar Land Holders' Association and the Bihar Planter's Association for opinion.

There are numerous cases in which *raiyats* enter into contracts with zamindars who are not their landlords. It is necessary, therefore, to amend the wording "a tenant whether holding under him" occurring in line 2 thereof by saying "a tenant whether holding, under him or otherwise", and by removing the words "grown upon the land of his tenancy or any portion thereof" occurring in lines 3 and 4 of the Section.

It is suggested that these last words are redundant. It is intended that the Legislature should protect the *raiyats* in respect of all contracts as between zamindars and the *raiyats* concerning the sale of produce.

(3) With reference to Section 6, I fear that as it stands it is calculated to produce results the reverse of what is contemplated by the Government and the Committee. Under sub-section (1) thereof, an agent who is a mere straw may be put up by an unscrupulous landlord to collect *abwab*[1]. Such an agent, if he is detected, will unhesitatingly suffer the penalties prescribed by the Section, as the landlord of the type mentioned by me will always make [it] worth his while to do so. I, therefore, suggest that it is necessary in every case to make the landlord liable. Sub-section (1), therefore, should be amended by removing the words "or his agent" occurring in line 1 and by adding the words "whether directly or through an agent" after the pronoun "who" in the said line. Sub-section 3 of the said Section should be entirely removed. It is possible for a poor ignorant *raiyat* to be in the right and yet be unable to prove his case. It will be a gross injustice if such an innocent *raiyat* is punished. Moreover, the existence of such sub-section will act as an effective deterrent against any *raiyats* lodging a complaint about *abwab*. It should be added that the power of punishing complainants for lodging false complaints is to be sparingly used. It requires a highly trained judicial mind to arrive at a firm conclusion as to complaints being false. It is, therefore, a dangerous thing to give summary powers to a Collector who will not be acting judicially. Lastly, a single abortion of justice under sub-section 3 is bound to result in an unscrupulous landlord being bolder in his exactions, for he will know that the *raiyats* after proceedings under sub-section 3 will have been cowed down. Considering all the above circumstances, I trust that the sub-section in question will be removed. If, however, it is found difficult to carry the amendments to

[1] Cesses assessed on land over and above the actual rent

Section 6 as proposed by me, I suggest that the whole of the Section be withdrawn. I would far rather have the less effective protection of Section 75 of the Bengal Tenancy Act than have the doubtful protection of Section 6.

(4) I observe that cart *sattas*[1] dealt with by the Committee have been covered by the proposed law. There are such *sattas* running into anything between 7 and 20 years with the same rate of payment throughout. Several planters in reply to questions by the Committee not being able to justify the terms of their *sattas* said that they did not enforce them as a matter of fact. I venture to suggest that there ought to be a section declaring such *sattas* to be void. New *sattas*, if necessary for short periods, may be entered into after the rate of hire is fixed in consultation with the Divisional Commissi-oner. I may state, even at the present moment, proceedings for damages for breach of these *sattas* are pending.

I have read the correspondence in the Press carried on by Messrs Irwin[2] and Jameson[3] and I have read also the speeches delivered by Messrs Jameson and Kennedy[4] in the Council on the Bill. Regarding both I wish merely to state that there is a complete answer to every one of the statements made by these writers and speakers. I have refrained from saying anything about them for fear of unnecessarily burdening the Government. But should any point raised by these gentlemen require elucidation from me, I shall be pleased to offer my views on any such point on hearing from you.

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran

[1] Contracts for the supply of goods involving payment of an advance

[2] W. S. Irwin

[3] J. V. Jameson and Pringle Kennedy, members of the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council, served on the select committee set up to consider the Champaran Agrarian Bill, 1917. Kennedy was a pleader of Muzaffarpur, appointed to the Council, for the period of the pending legislation, as an expert. He had acted as legal adviser to the Bihar Planters' Association.

[4] *ibid*

83. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

MOTIHARI,
BIHAR,
Magsar Sud 7, December 20, 1917

CHI. RAMDAS,

You will have received all my letters to you. Accept whatever bitter experiences you have to go through. I have great faith in you. You are pure of heart, so you will not be trapped anywhere. There is nothing wrong in working for a tailor. Remove its impurity by your purity and the tailor's profession will become even higher than that of the lawyer. If you learn tailoring along with selling clothes, there is nothing wrong even in that. It requires a sharp eye to learn cutting. A good tailor requires much artistic ability. Do freely whatever you think appropriate. Preserve your health and your character and I shall be satisfied. Manilal will be tested now. If you want to go to his aid, do go. I have suggested to him that he should continue to publish *Indian Opinion* even if he should be all alone. He will send to you my letter to him for your information. If he does not, ask for it.

I will go to Calcutta in a day or two. Ba and Devdas will accompany me. Naraharibhai and his wife are at present in Champaran with me. He is a teacher in the National School. Surendra is also here. You may be knowing that Dr. Dev[1] is here. Write to him some time. It will do if you write in Gujarati. Tafazzul Hussain Khan of Aligarh, who joined us from Tundla, was remembering you. I had been to Aligarh[2].

It is very pleasant cold weather here now. The others are new volunteers. You don't know them. Therefore I am not giving you their names. More next time.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

The earlier you start on the *shlokas* the better.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Motana Man, p. 15

[1] Dr. Hari Shrikrishna Dev
[2] On November 28

84. LETTER T0 JAMNADAS GANDHI

MOTIHARI,

Magshar Sud 8 [*December 21, 1917*]

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I have not been able to write to you [as frequently] as I would wish. I sometimes feel like writing to Meva[1] , too. Sometimes I put off writing in the hope of being able to write a good letter and then it happens that I do not even write an indifferent one. I should like you not to be irregular in writing letters. I have not read your translation. I am handing it over to Mahadev[2] today. He at any rate will read it and write to you. I shall also go over it. But I shall take some time. I have one by Valjibhai[3] too. I shall send it to you to have a look at. I am sending you a volume brought out by Natesan.[4]

Stay there without any worry and go on with your work. The Doctor is all love for you. Don't be disheartened. You may not be doing as well as you would like to, but anyone who makes an honest effort is bound to produce a good impression on others. Let me also know how things are with Meva. How is your health ?

My activities are expanding. I am wearing myself out in placing my ideals before the country while my star is in the ascendant.

Mahadev will give you some idea about the situation here. He has joined only recently but is an old hand already.

Manilal is being severely tried in Phoenix. Write to him, as also to Ramdas[5]. The latter has taken up service with a tailor in Johannesburg. Ba and Devdas will go with me to Calcutta. I shall be there up to the 30th.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MEVA,

[1] Addressee's wife

[2] Mahadev Haribhai Desai (1892-1942); Gandhiji's Private Secretary and associate

[3] Valji Govindji Desai, an inmate of Satyagraha Ashram, worked on the editorial staff of *Young India*

[4] The reference is to *Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi.*

[5] Gandhiji's third son.

You should write even if I do not. When you think you can stay with me all by yourself, I shall readily have you at Champaran. But that is a risk to be taken only when you desire it. I know there can be nothing better for you than to stay with Jamnadas at present.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5705. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

85. LETTER T0 AMBALAL SARABHAI

MOTIHARI,
December 21, 1917

DEAR BHAI AMBALALJI,

I do not wish to interfere with your business affairs at all. However, I have had a letter from Krishnalal[1] today which leaves me no option but to write. I think you should satisfy the weavers for the sake of Shrimati Anasuyabehn[2] at any rate. There is no reason to believe that, if you satisfy these, you will have others clamouring. Even if that should happen, you can do what you think fit then. Why should not the mill-owners feel happy paying a little more to the workers? There is only one royal road to remove their discontent: entering their lives and binding them with the silken thread of love. This is not beyond India. Ultimately, the right use of money is to spend it for the country; if you spend money for the country, it is bound to yield fruit. How could a brother be the cause of suffering to a sister?—and that, too, a sister like Anasuyabehn? I have found that she has a soul which is absolutely pure. It would be nothing strange if you took her word to be law. You are, thus, under a double obligation: to please the workers and earn a sister's blessings. My presumption, too, is doubly serious; in a single letter I have meddled in your business and your family affairs. Do forgive me.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, *Vol. IV*

[1] Krishnalal N. Desai, a public worker of Ahmedabad, one of the Secretaries of the Gujarat Sabha

[2] Addressee's sister

86. LETTER T0 H. KALLENBACH[1]

MOTIHARI,

December 21, 1917

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have been irregular of late. I have been wandering so much that I never have the leisure to write love letters especially when they get lost. From you I had had only three letters during the past three months. Polak has however written to me about you and so has Miss Winterbottom[2]. How often do I not want to hug you. Daily do I have novel experiences here which I should like you to share with me. But this monstrous War never seems to be ending. All the peace talk only enhances the agony. However, like all human institutions it must have an end, and our friendship must be a poor affair if it cannot bide its time and be all the stronger and purer for the weary waiting. And what is this physical form after all? As I was whizzing through the air yesterday and looking at the trees, I saw that beneath all the change that these mighty trees daily underwent, there was a something that persisted. Every leaf has its own separate life. It drops and withers. But the tree lives on. Every tree falls in process of time or under the cruel axe, but the forest of which the tree is but a part lives and so with us leaves of the human tree. We may wither, but the eternal in us lives on, changeless and endless. I derived much comfort last evening as I was thus musing. The thoughts went on to you and I sighed, but I regained self-possession and said to myself, "I know my friend not for his form but for that which informs him."

With love,

Your old friend,

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Hermann Kallenbach, German architect, sympathizer of the Indian cause in South Africa and a friend of Gandhiji. He wanted to accompany Gandhiji to India in December 1914, but could not get a passport due to the War and was interned in England; *vide An Autobiography*, Part IV, Ch. XLIII; also "Reception to Mr. Kallenbach", 5-8-1911 and "Letter to C. Roberts", 24-8-1914

[2] Florence A. Winterbottom, corresponding Secretary, Union of Ethical Societies, London; v*ide* "Letter to H.S.L. Polak", 14-7-1909

87. SPEECH AT ALL-INDIA SOCIAL SERVICE CONFERENCE[1]

CALCUTTA ,
December 27, 1917

. . .Mr. Gandhi addressed the gathering, which was by now from one end to the other of the College Square, in Hindi and announced that as the proposed programme of the Conference was impossible to be carried out, it was postponed to some other time and place.

The Bengalee, 28-I2-1917

88. INTERVIEW TO " THE BENGALEE"[2]

CALCUTTA ,
December 27, 1917

. . .Mr. Gandhi, interviewed, said that he was strongly in favour of the Conference being held just after the Congress was over in the Congress pandal, and admission being limited by tickets at certain prices, the sale proceeds going towards social service....

The Bengalee, 28-12-1917

89. RESOLUTION AT INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS[3]

CALCUTTA,
December 29, 1917

This Congress re-expresses its regret that the British Indians of South Africa still labour under disabilities which materially affect their trade and render their residence difficult, and unjustly and unduly restrict their movement to and in these parts of the Empire, and hopes that the local authorities will realise their responsibility to the Indians

[1] The Conference which was scheduled to be held on December 27 at Calcutta University Institute Hall had to be postponed because of difficulty in accommodating the unprecedented crowd of people who had turned up to hear Gandhiji and others.

[2] After the postponement of the Social Service Conference, Gandhiji gave an interview to *The Bengalee*, of which only a brief report is available.

[3] This was the thirteenth resolution passed at the 32nd Indian National Congress Session at Calcutta and was moved by Gandhiji. He spoke in Hindi.

who have, in spite of disabilities, taken their full share in the War by raising corps and otherwise remove the disabilities complained of, and authorises the President to cable the substance of the resolution to the respective authorities.

Report of the 32nd Session of the Indian National Congress, 1917

90. RESOLUTION AT ALL-INDIA SOCIAL SERVICE CONFERENCE[1]

CALCUTTA,
December 30, 1917

That this Conference is of opinion that the measures adopted by the Government and certain associations for the education and elevation of the depressed classes have served the purpose of drawing public attention to the existence of degrading social inequality and to their detrimental influence on the general progress of the country. But in the opinion of this Conference, the measures hitherto adopted are quite inadequate to meet these evils. This Conference, therefore, urges upon the Government and Social Reform Bodies (1) to provide greater facilities for the education of the depressed classes, and (2) to enforce equality of treatment in all public institutions so as to remove the prejudice and disabilities of untouchableness.

The Bengalee, 5-1-1918

[1] Held in the Congress pandal and presided over by Dr. P. C. Ray, the Conference was attended, among others, by Rabindranath Tagore. The resolution which was proposed by Gandhiji was seconded by Nattore Maharaja and supported by M. R. Jayakar.

91. SPEECH AT FIRST BENGAL AGRICULTURISTS' CONFERENCE[1]

CALCUTTA,

December 30, 1917

. . .Mr. Gandhi said agriculture was the principal occupation of the Indians and that it was a most honourable profession. The speaker had worked among agriculturists and knew all their wants, grievances complaints, and needs. He would, however, very soon take to agriculture himself and try to do what he could to improve the lot of the peasantry. He sincerely hoped that the peasants would very soon improve their conditions. As he had come with Pandit Malaviyaji on their way to some other place, he was forced to be very short.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 4-1-1918

92. SPEECH AT NATIONAL LANGUAGE CONFERENCE[2]

December 30, 1917

It would be a great advantage if Lokamanya Tilak would speak in Hindi. He should, like Lord Dufferin and Lady Chelmsford, try to learn Hindi. Even Queen Victoria learned Hindi. It is my submission to Malaviyaji that he should see to it that, at the Congress next year, no speeches are made in any language except Hindi. My complaint is that, at the Congress yesterday, he did not speak in Hindi.

[From Hindi]

Pratap, 7-1-1918

[1] The Conference was held in the Muslim League pandal under the chairmanship of C. R. Das. About 5,000 people were present. Gandhiji, with Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, attended the Conference.

[2] Gandhiji addressed the Conference which was held at the Alfred Theatre, under the presidentship of Bal Gangadhar Tilak. It was attended, among other, by Madan Mohan Malaviya and Sarojini Naidu.

93. RESOLUTION AT NATIONAL LANGUAGE CONFERENCE[1]

CALCUTTA,
December 30, 1917

That, in view of the fact that the Hindi language is very widely used by the people of the different provinces and is easily understood by the majority of them, it seems practicable to take advantage of this language as a common language for India.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 15-1-1918

94. SPEECH AT ALL-INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE[2]

CALCUTTA,
December 31, 1917

Mr. Gandhi, in an Urdu speech, urged the futility of paper resolutions and appealed to them for solid work. Everyone, whether a Mussulman or a Hindu, he said, should tell Government that, if they did not release them [Ali Brothers], they ought themselves to be interned with them. He assured them, amidst loud cheers, that Hindus were, to a man, with them, in the agitation for the release of the Muslims interned.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-1-1918

95. SPEECH AT UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE[3]

CALCUTTA,
December 31, 1917

. . .Mr. Gandhi regretted that there should be a lack of the understanding and knowledge of Hindi by Indians. All were eager, he said, to do national service, but there could be no national service without a national tongue. He regretted that his Bengali friends were committing national suicide by omitting to use their national tongue, without which one cannot reach hearts of the masses. In that sense, the wide use of Hindi would come within the purview of humanitarianism.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Gandiji attended the session of the League on the second day and spoke briefly about the treatment of the Ali Brothers.

[3] Gandhiji took the chair at a meeting held under the auspices of the Bengal and Bombay Humanitarian Funds. In deference to the wish expressed by the audience, he addressed them in English; this is a summary of the speech. Speaking later, in Hindi, Madan Mohan Malaviya deprecated animal sacrifice.

Mr. Gandhi next passed to another phase of humanitarianism, viz., sacrifice of animals before goddesses and slaughter for food. The Hindu shastras do not really advocate animal sacrifice. This current practice is one of the many things which have passed under the name of Hinduism. The Hindu religion aptly finds expression in the two apphorisms—"Harmlessness is the best form of religion" and "There is no force higher than Truth", and these principles are incompatible with the cruel practice of animal sacrifice.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 2-1-1918

96. ADDRESS AT ALL-INDIA SOCIAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

CALCUTTA,
December 31, 1917

Mr. Gandhi in taking the chair spoke as follows:

If I want to hear music, I must come to Bengal. If I want to listen to poetry, I must come to Bengal. India is contained in Bengal, but not Bengal in India. I heard some Marwari boys singing songs. It was like jargon. I told them to associate with the Bengalis.

He then delivered the following presidential address.[1]

FRIENDS.

I thank you for the honour you have conferred upon me. I was totally unprepared for the invitation to preside over the deliberations of this assembly. I do not know that I am fitted for the task. Having fixed views about the use of Hindi at national gatherings, I am always disinclined to speak in English. And I felt that the time was not ripe for me to ask to be allowed to deliver the presidential speech in Hindi. Moreover, I have not much faith in conferences. Social service to be effective has to be rendered without noise. It is best performed when the left hand knoweth not what the right is doing. Sir Gibble's work told because nobody knew it. He could not be spoiled by praise or held back by blame. Would that our service were of this nature !

[1] This presidential address was to have been delivered at the opening session of the conference on December 27, which was postponed; *vide* "Speech at All-India Social Service Conference", 27-12-1917. Taking no notice of the postponement, however, *New India* published it in its issue dated December 28. Gandhiji presided over and addressed the conference in the Y.M.C.A. premises.

Holding such views, it was not without considerable hesitation and misgivings that I obeyed the summons of the Reception Committee. You will, therefore, pardon me if you find in me a candid critic rather than an enthusiast carrying the conference to its goal with confidence and assurance.

It seems to me then that I cannot do better than draw attention to some branches of social service which we have hitherto more or less ignored.

The greatest service we can render society is to free ourselves and it from the superstitious regard we have learnt to pay to the learning of the English language. It is the medium of instruction in our schools and colleges. It is becoming the lingua franca of the country. Our best thoughts are expressed in it. Lord Chelmsford hopes that it will soon take the place of the mother tongue in high families. This belief in the necessity of English training has enslaved us. It has unfitted us for true national service. Were it not for force of habit, we could not fail to see that, by reason of English being the medium of instruction, our intellect has been segregated, we have been isolated from the masses, the best mind of the nation has become gagged and the masses have not received the benefit of the new ideas we have received. We have been engaged these past sixty years in memorizing strange words and their pronunciation instead of assimilating facts. In the place of building upon the foundation, training received from our parents, we have almost unlearnt it. There is no parallel to this in history. It is a national tragedy. The first and the greatest social service we can render is to revert to our vernaculars, to restore Hindi to its natural place as the national language and begin carrying on all our provincial proceedings in our respective vernaculars and national proceedings in Hindi. We ought not to rest till our schools and colleges give us instruction through the vernaculars. It ought not to be necessary even for the sake of our English friends to have to speak in English. Every English civil and military officer has to know Hindi. Most English merchants learn it because they need it for their business. The day must soon come when our legislatures will debate national affairs in the vernaculars or Hindi, as the case may be. Hitherto the masses have been strangers to their proceedings. The vernacular papers have tried to undo the mischief a little. But the task was beyond them. The *Patrika* reserves its biting sarcasm, *The Bengalee* its learning, for ears tuned to English. In this

ancient land of cultured thinkers, the presence in our midst of a Tagore or a Bose or a Ray ought not to excite wonder. Yet the painful fact is that there are so few of them. You will forgive me if I have carried too long on a subject which, in your opinion, may hardly be treated as an item of social service. I have however taken the liberty of mentioning the matter prominently as it is my conviction that all national activity suffers materially owing to this radical defect in our system of education.

Coming to more familiar items of social service, the list is appalling. I shall select only those of which I have any knowledge.

Work in times of sporadic distress such as famine and floods is no doubt necessary and most praiseworthy. But it produces no permanent results. There are fields of social service in which there may be no renown but which may yield lasting results.

In 1914, cholera, fevers and plague together claimed 4,639,663 victims. If so many had died fighting on the battle-field during the War that is at present devastating Europe, we would have covered ourselves with glory and lovers of swaraj would need no further argument in support of their cause. As it is, 4,639,663 have died a lingering death unmourned and their dying has brought us nothing but discredit. A distinguished Englishman said the other day that Englishmen did all the thinking for us whilst we sat supine. He added that most Englishmen basing their opinions on their English experience presented impossible or costly remedies for the evils they investigated. There is much truth in the above statement. In other countries, reformers have successfully grappled with epidemics. Here Englishmen have tried and failed. They have thought along Western lines, ignoring the vast differences, climatic and other, between Europe and India. Our doctors and physicians have practically done nothing. I am sure that half a dozen medical men of the front rank dedicating their lives to the work of eradicating the triple curse would succeed where Englishmen have failed. I venture to suggest that the way lies not through finding out cures but through finding or rather applying preventive methods. I prefer to use the participle “applying”, for I have it on the aforementioned authority that to drive out plague (and I add cholera and malaria) is absurdly simple. There is no conflict of opinion as to the preventive methods. We simply do not apply them. We have made up our minds that the masses will not adopt them. There could be no greater calumny uttered against them. If we would

but stoop to conquer, they can be easily conquered. The truth is that we expect the Government to do the work. In my opinion, in this matter, the Government cannot lead; they can follow and help if we could lead. Here, then, there is work enough for our doctors and an army of workers to help them. I note that you in Bengal are working somewhat in this direction. I may state that a small but earnest band of volunteers is at the present moment engaged in doing such work in Champaran. They are posted in different villages. There they teach the village children, they give medical aid to the sick and they give practical lessons in hygiene to the village folk by cleaning their wells and roads and showing them how to treat human excreta. Nothing can yet be predicted as to results as the experiment is in its infancy. This Conference may usefully appoint a community of doctors who would study rural conditions on the spot and draw up a course of instructions for the guidance of workers and of the people at large.

Nothing perhaps affords such splendid facility to every worker, wholetime or otherwise, for effective service as the relief of agony through which the 3rd class railway passengers are passing. I feel keenly about this grievance not because I am in it, but I have gone to it as I have felt keenly about it. This matter affects millions of our poor and middle-class countrymen. This helpless toleration of every inconvenience and insult is visibly deteriorating the nation, even as the cruel treatment to which we have subjected the so-called depressed classes has made them indifferent to the laws of personal cleanliness and the very idea of self-respect. What else but downright degradation can await those who have to make a scramble always like mad animals for seats in a miserable compar-tment, who have to swear and curse before they can speak through the window in order to get standing room, who have to wallow in dirt during their journey, who are served their food like dogs and eat it like them, who have ever to bend before those who are physically stronger than they and who, being packed like sardines in compartments, have to get such sleep as they can in a sitting posture for nights together ? Railway servants swear at them, cheat them. On the Howrah-Lahore service, our friends from Kabul fill to the brim the cup of the misery of the third-class travellers. They become lords of the compartments they enter. It is not possible for anyone to resist them. They swear at you on the slightest pretext, exhaust the whole of the obscene vocabulary of Hindi language. They do not hesitate to belabour you if you retort or in any way oppose them. They usurp the best seats

and insist on stretching themselves full length even in crowded compartments. No compar-tment is deemed too crowded for them to enter. The travellers pati-ently bear all their awful impertinence out of sheer helplessness. They would, if they could, knock down the man who dared to swear at them as do these Kabulis. But they are physically no match for the Kabulis and every Kabuli considers himself more than a match for any number of travellers from the plains. This is not right. The effect of this terrorizing on the national character cannot but be debasing. We the educated few ought to deliver the travelling public from this scourge or for ever renounce our claim to speak on its behalf or to guide it. I believe the Kabulis to be amenable to reason. They are a God-fearing people. If you know their language, you can successfully appeal to their good sense. But they are spoilt children of nature. Cowards among us have used their undoubted physical strength for our nefarious purposes. And they have now come to think that they can treat poor people as they choose and consider themselves above the law of the land. Here is work enough for social service. Volunteers for this class of work can board trains and educate the people to a sense of their duty, call in guards and other officials in order to remove over-crowding, see that passengers leave and board trains without a scramble. It is clear that until the Kabulis can be patiently taught to behave themselves, they ought to have a compartment all to themselves and they ought not to be permitted to enter any other compartment. With the exception of providing additional plant, every one of the other evils attendant on railway travelling ought to be immediately redressed. It is no answer that we have suffered the wrong so long. Prescriptive rights cannot accrue to wrongs.

No less important is the problem of the depressed classes. To lift them from the position to which Hindu society has reduced them is to remove a big blot on Hinduism. The present treatment of these classes is a sin against religion and humanity.

But the work requires service of the highest order. We shall make little headway by merely throwing schools at them. We must change the attitude of the masses and of orthodoxy. I have already shown that we have cut ourselves adrift from both. We do not react on them. We can do so only if we speak to them in their own language. An anglicized India cannot speak to them with effect. If we believe in Hinduism, we must approach them in the Hindu fashion. We must do

tapasya and keep our Hinduism undefiled. Pure and enlightened orthodoxy must be matched against superstitious and ignorant orthodoxy. To restore to their proper status a fifth of our total population is a task worthy of any social service organization.

The *bustees* of Calcutta and the chawls of Bombay badly demand the devoted services of hundreds of social workers. They send our infants to an early grave and promote vice, degradation and filth.

Apart from the fundamental evil arising out of our defective system of education, I have hitherto dealt with evils calling for service among the masses. The classes perhaps demand no less attention than the masses. It is my opinion that all evils like diseases are symptoms of the same evil or disease. They appear various by being refracted through different media. The root evil is loss of true spirituality brought about through causes I cannot examine from this platform. We have lost the robust faith of our forefathers in the absolute efficacy of *satya* (truth) ahimsa (love) and *brahmacharya* (self-restraint). We certainly believe in them to an extent. They are the best policy but we may deviate from them if our untrained reason suggests deviation. We have not faith enough to feel that, though the present outlook seems bleak, if we follow the dictates of truth or love or exercise self-restraint, the ultimate result must be sound. Men whose spiritual vision has become blurred mostly look to the present rather than conserve the future good. He will render the greatest social service who will reinstate us in our ancient spirituality. But humble men that we are, it is enough for us if we recognize the loss and, by such ways as are open to us, prepare the way for the man who will infect us with his power and enable us to feel clearly through our reason.

Looking then at the classes, I find that our Rajahs and Maharajahs squander their resources after so-called useless sport and drink. I was told the other day that the cocaine habit was sapping the nation's manhood and that, like the drink habit, it was on the increase and in its effect more deadly than drink. It is impossible for a social worker to blind himself to the evil. We dare not ape the West. We are a nation that has lost its prestige and its self-respect. Whilst a tenth of our population is living on the verge of starvation, we have no time for indulging ourselves. What the West may do with impunity is likely in our case to prove our ruin. The evils that are corroding the higher strata of society are difficult for an ordinary worker to tackle. They

have acquired a certain degree of respecta-bility. But they ought not to be beyond the reach of this Conference.

Equally important is the question of the status of women, both Hindu and Mahomedan. Are they or are they not to play their full part in the plan of regeneration alongside their husbands? They must be enfranchised. They can no longer be treated either as dolls or slaves without the social body remaining in a condition of social paralysis. And here again, I would venture to suggest to the reformer that the way to women's freedom is not through education, but through the change of attitude on the part of men and corresponding action. Education is necessary, but it must follow the freedom. We dare not wait for literary education to restore our womanhood to its proper state. Even without literary education, our women are as cultured as any on the face of the earth. The remedy largely lies in the hands of husbands.

It makes my blood boil as I wander through the country and watch lifeless and fleshless oxen, with their ribs sticking through their skins, carrying loads or ploughing our fields. To improve the breed of our cattle, to rescue them from the cruelty practised on them by their cow-worshipping masters and to save them from the slaughter-house is to solve half the problem of our poverty. . . . We have to educate the people to a humane use of their cattle and plead with the Government to conserve the pasture land of the country. Protection of the cow is an economic necessity. It can not be brought about by force. It can only be achieved by an appeal to the finer feelings of our English friends and our Mahomedan countrymen to save the cow from the slaughter-house. This question involves the overhauling of the management of our *pinjrapoles* and cow protection societies. A proper solution of this very difficult problem means establishment of perfect concord between Hindus and Mahomedans and an end of *Bakr-i-Id* riots.

I have glanced at the literature kindly furnished at my request by the several Leagues who are rendering admirable social service. I note that some have included in their programme many of the items mentioned by me. All the Leagues are non-sectarian and they have as their members the most distinguished men and women in the land. the possibilities for services of a far-reaching character are therefore great. But if the work is to leave its impress on the nation, we must have workers who are prepared, in Mr. Gokhale's words, to dedicate

their lives to the cause. Give me such workers and I promise they will rid the land of all the evils that affict it.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 2-1-1918

97. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

SABARMATI,
[*End of 1917*]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have been waiting for your letter. Let me know your daily programme. Give me news about your health and that of Chhotalal and Surendra. Send me a sample of cloth woven there. What work is Avantikabehn doing in the women's school?

As to news from here, what can I write to you now? Mahadev has been flooding you with news.

The Hindi teacher has returned. I believe our school will almost reach perfection. At any rate, no effort will have been spared. We have purchased another piece of land.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Chi. Chhaganlal is now staying with Anasuyabehn.

[PPS.]

I received your letter after the above was written. I am very much pleased with what you have said. I am equally dissatisfied with your handwriting. Do please improve it. I am constantly worried about your cough. The cough has got to go. Do you breathe sufficiently deeply? Whenever you have cough, try salt-free diet for a couple of days. You should dispense with milk and ghee also and subsist on porridge and vegetables only. By this means your body will be rid of all impurities and will begin to function as before. But the main thing is that the root cause of cough should be removed. To this end do your best when you are not actually suffering from it. The best means is correct breathing. Do not breathe perfunctorily. Do you keep your mouth closed and head uncovered while asleep?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 2026

98. LETTER T0 J. L. MAFFEY

AHMEDABAD,
January 1, 1918

TO
J. L. MAFFEY, C.I.E., I.C.S.
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY
DELHI

[DEAR MR MAFFEY,]

It grieves me to have to worry His Excellency in the midst of his many and onerous engagements. But I think that I am rendering a service in writing this letter. It is needless to say that I have been keenly following the agitation for the release of Messrs Muhammad Ali and Shaukat Ali. I met their mother during my stay in Calcutta, and I ascertained the position of the brothers from her. She gave me the fullest assurance that her sons were in no way disloyal to the British Raj, and that in the scheme of Reform they contemplated permanent retention of the British connection. I have been attending the sessions of the Muslim League held there and I have moved freely among the leading Muhammadans. It is my firm opinion that the continued internment of the two brothers and the refusal to discharge them is creating greater and greater dissatisfaction and irritation from day to day. The Muhammadans, and also the Hindus for that matter, bitterly resent the internment. I am sure that it is not a healthy feeling. There is undoubted unrest among the Muham-madans. Discharge of the two brothers will, I am sure, greatly mitigate it. It will not remove it entirely so long as the war lasts. I had the privilege of supporting the resolution passed at the League about the release of the brothers.[1] The audience were weeping whilst their mother's address was being recited.

I am prepared to give due assurances to the Government about their future conduct. I feel that, in order to be able to live a healthy public life, either the brothers should be discharged or should be properly tried and convicted. I recognize the danger at the present moment of having a public trial and all it means. But I am certain that the continued imprisonment is no less dangerous. I therefore suggest that I should be allowed to go to Chindwara and visit the brothers. I

[1] This was at the 1917 session of the Muslim League in Calcutta.

would get from them a public declaration of their loyalty, on the strength of which they may, in my humble opinion, be discharged without risk of public peace being in any way imperilled.

I may add that I know the brothers well. They are intensely devoted to their religion and equally devoted to India. I make bold to say that they will not make to me a statement which they do not fully intend to carry out. I hope, therefore, that the permission I have requested will be granted me. Will you kindly place my request before His Excellency? I need hardly say that I should be pleased to run down to Delhi if my presence is required. My address up to the 10th instant will be Ahmedabad and Motihari, Champaran from the 13th.

Yours sincerely,

N. A. I: Home, Political (Deposit): January 1918, No. 31; also from a photostat of the office copy in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 6424

99. LETTER. T0 BHAGWANJI MEHTA

MOTIHARI,

Magsar Vad 14 [*January 1, 1918*]

BHAISHRI BHAGWANJI,

The problem of Kathiawad is all the time in my mind.[1] I am looking out for an opportunity. I don't propose to associate myself with the activities of the Cutch-Kathiawad Mandal. I think they are premature. I have told the organisers as much.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 3026. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] The addressee, evidently, had been in touch with Gandhiji concerning the Viramgam customs cordon and other Kathiawad problems; *vide* "Letter to Bhagwanji Mehta", November 1, 1917.

100. SPEECH AT AHMEDABAD MEETING[1]

AHMEDABAD,

January 1, 1918

We meet here today on a matter which is important because it is but an aspect of swaraj. In saying this, we are guilty of no exaggeration. Swaraj means rule over oneself. A meeting which asks whether the Ahmedabad Municipality is able to manage its affairs well is surely a meeting in the cause of swaraj. The subject to be discussed at this meeting has a bearing on public health. Air, water and grains are the three chief kinds of food. Air is free to all, but, if it is polluted, it harms our health. Doctors say that bad air is more harmful than bad water. Inhalation of bad air is harmful by itself and this is the reason we [sometimes] need change of air. Next comes water. We are generally very careless about it. If we were to be sufficiently careful about air, water and food, the plague would never make its appearance among us. Some parts of Ahmedabad have been experiencing difficulties about water during the last eight years. For these three months, the whole city has been in difficulty, and we have assembled here to protest against this to the Collector of Ahmedabad, the Commissioner of the Northern Division and the Municipal Commissioner. From now on we must take up the effort to secure water. Councillors are servants of the people and we have a right to question them and, if they fail to discharge their responsibilities properly, even to ask them to resign. Under one of the sections of the [Municipal] Act, the Municipal Commissioner is appointed by the Government. We are also entitled to call the Municipal Commissioner and the Municipal Engineer to account; we have assembled here to take even further steps, if necessary. The larger the attendance at a meeting like this, discussing an issue of public importance, the weightier will be its protest. I should like to request you all not to rest till you have succeeded in this effort. If we approach every problem as seriously as we would a task of the highest importance, we are bound to succeed. We have the right to demand our money back.[2]

We must protest, for, otherwise, the officials will never know what

[1] The meeting was called to protest against insufficient and irregular supply of water. Gandhiji presided.

[2] Following are the remarks made by Gandhiji after the main resolution of the meeting had been moved and discussed.

we suffer; nor need we wait till the new elections, as it is quite likely that they may be delayed by a year.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu 13-1-1918

101. LETTER TO A PUBLIC WORKER

[After *January 11, 1918*]

I liked very much what you did. It did not take the Commissioner[1] more than a moment to come out in his true colours. I am not being censorious but I say it for your future guidance that, when the Commissioner refused to see all the members of the deputation, the secretaries would have done well, out of self-respect, to withdraw[2] ...Mr. Pratt's error will make things easier for the people. If he wants to ignore the Gujarat Sabha, let him.[3] If you are strong enough, stand by the people fearlessly and advise them not to pay the assessment. If you are arrested in consequence, you will have done your duty ....Don't worry about the results. This is what satyagraha means. You may be sure this is the only way to win the fullest respect for ourselves. Quite likely, we may not succeed in the immediate present. It is our supreme duty to take every occasion to show in action the wonderful power of satyagraha.

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Satyagraha

[1] This was the Commissioner of the Northern Division, F. G. Pratt.

[2] Excessive rainfall in 1917 had caused failure of crops in the Kheda district. The Gujarat Sabha, a body established in 1884 to represent people's grievances to the Government, had supported the peasants' demand for postponement of land revenue assessment. On January 1, the Sabha wrote to the Bombay Government urging exemption in some cases and postponement in others. Gandhiji visited Ahmedabad and, after a study of the problem, advised the Sabha of which he was President, to ask the people to suspend payment till a reply had been received from the Bombay Government. He also suggested to the Sabha to lead a deputation to the Commissioner. On January 10, the Sabha sought an appointment. When the deputation called at the office of the Commissioner, he agreed to see only the Secretaries, Krishnalal Desai and G. V. Mavlankar. Gandhiji was informed of this by telegram.

[3] During the interviews the Commissioner had stated that he might recommend to Government that the Sabha be declared an illegal body.

102. LETTER TO A PUBLIC WORKER

[After *January 11, 1918*]

I have your letter and telegram. I was fully reassured by them. Do not back out of the task you have undertaken. In fact you don't need me or anyone else. Those who are unable to pay the land revenue will remain so, whether or no the Government admits their inability. Why should they pay it, then? This is all you have to explain to the people. Even if only one person remains firm, he will have won the battle. From this, we shall be able to raise a new crop. Go ahead fearlessly.

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Satyagraha

103. REPLY TO TEACHERS' DEPUTATION[1]

[SABARMATI,

Before *January 13, 1918*]

To those of you who would like to have jobs, I can at present offer two kind of work: (l) Construction work on a building for this Satyagraha Ashrarm is about to begin. If anyone desiring employment agree to work on this, I shall very much appreciate his help. I can pay him Rs. 15/- p.m. I feel, too, that, if they help to build the Ashram with their labour, they will not only earn much credit for themselves, but also raise the prestige of the Ashram. (2) I can also arrange that those of you who would like to promote swadeshi industries are taught hand-weaving free of charge. I can do more: supply the required yarn and help to market the cloth woven. Those who are so inclined may therefore let me knows I think this is probably the best way of combining self-interest with service to the country.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, l3-1-19l8

[1] The teachers, as reported by the paper, represented to Gandhiji that they had resigned their jobs with effect from January 1, 1918, and that some of them wanted, with his help, to start indigenous industries.

104. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

MOTIHARI,
January 13, 1918[1]

MY DEAR ESTHER,

Having been wandering about, I have not been able to reply to your letters. I was in Calcutta, thence went to Bombay and the Ashram and returned only yesterday. I had varied experiences which I cannot describe for want of time.

To say that perfection is not attainable on this earth is to deny God. The statement about impossibility of ridding ourselves of sin clearly refers to a stage in life. But we need not search scriptures in support of the assertion. We do see men constantly becoming better under effort and discipline. There is no occasion for limiting the capacity for improvement. Life to me would lose all its interest if I feel that I *could* not attain perfect love on earth. After all, what matters is that our capacity for loving ever expands. It is a slow process. How shall you love the men who thwart you even in well-doing? And yet that is the time of supreme test.

I hope that you are now enjoying greater peace of mind. Let your love for the Ashram be a source[2] of strength in your attempt to do your duty there.[3] The Ashram is undoubtedly intended to teach us to do our assigned task with the utmost attention and with cheerfulness. There is meaning in our wishes (however pure) not being fulfilled. Not our will but His will be done.

I hope you are making progress in your Tamil lessons.

Did you receive from Messrs Natesan & Co. a book they have brought out containing my speeches and writings ? I am sending you a copy of my speech in Calcutta on Social Service.[4]

With love.

Yours,

BAPU

My Dear Child, pp. 24-5

[1] The date, November 13, 1918, assigned in Mahadev Desai's published diary, is incorrect.

[2] The original has "service", obviously a misprint.

[3] Tirukoilur , in the South, where Esther Faering was at the time

[4] *Vide* "Address at All-India Social Service Conference" 31-12-1917.

105. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL CHINAIWALA

[MOTIHARI,]
Posh Sud I [*January 13, 1918*]

BHAISHRI CHIMANLAL (CHINAIWALA),

I have your letter. It is our duty to help every class of workers. I have no doubt about this. I have little faith in what goes under the name of "co-operation". I think our first task is to make a careful survey of the conditions of the working class. What does the worker earn? Where does he live? In what condition? How much does he spend ? How much does he save ? What debts does he incur? How many children has he? How does he bring them up? What was he previously? What brought about the change in his life? What is his present condition? It does not seem proper at all to start a co-operative society straightway, without finding answers to all these questions. It is necessary that we go into the midst of the working class. If we do, we can solve a number of problems in a very short time. For the moment, I should just advise you to mix with the workers and make yourself familiar with their condition. More when we meet.

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

106. LETTER T0 E. L. L. HAMMOND

MOTIHARI,
January 14, 1918

TO
E. L. L. HAMMOND, ESQ.
SECRETARY
PROVINCLIAL RECRUITING BOARD
BIHAR AND ORISSA

DEAR MR. HAMMOND,

You will forgive me for not replying earlier to your letter of blank date in December.[1] The fact is that I have been travelling out of Champaran. I returned only on the 12th instant. My difficulty just now is that whilst the agrarian position remains

[1] The letter as reproduced in *Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran* bears the date December 18. For the text of the letter, *vide* Appendix "Letter from E.L.L. Hammond", 18-12-1917.

uncertain, I would make no headway. The Agrarian Bill is now before the Council. My way will be clearer after it is passed. I shall then try to follow out your suggestion and see what can be done.

Yours sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran

107. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[1]

MOTIHARI,

Paus Shukla 2, January 14, 1918

CHI. MATHURADAS,

1 can now understand your criticism of the translation of the section on education. I started reading it[2] with the idea of writing the introduction. The very first sentence put me off. My trepidation increased as I read further on. It seems to me that it would be unfair to put this translation before the public. Hence even though it would mean so much money wasted, we really have no alternative. Right now we need do no more than take the decision. We shall hold back this translation and not get it bound. We shall have the second and third parts published as volume one. The pages should be renumbered. I assume from what you say that we can bring out the volume before 19th February[3]. The Gujarati of the translation should be simple, natural, free from grammatical blemishes and should possess literary beauty. I see none of these qualities in the present translation.

Please feel free to make such critical comments on parts two and three as you consider necessary. I shall start drafting the introduction after I have received at least some of the proofs. Arrange to have the first forme printed after I get the proofs. I shall return the forme immediately. We shall have to make the full payment to the printer. It will be nice if he can reduce the printing charges when we reprint the section on education. If you feel so inclined, you can take up the

[1] Gandhiji's sister's son. He brought out a selection of Gandhiji's writings in Gujarati under the title *Mahatma Gandhini Vicharsrishti*.

[2] The first volume of Gopal Krishna Gokhale's speeches which were being translated into Gujarati

[3] The third death anniversary of Gokhale

translation of the part covering the translation we have rejected. In that case please send me the translation of the first two speeches so that I can go through it.

I can see that you have done very well in correcting the proofs. As a rule, we should work in such a way that we do not have to give errata. From whatever little I have read, I can see that you have been able to follow that rule.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

108. LETTER TO RAMBHAU GOGATE

[MOTIHARI,]

Posh Sud 2 [*January 14, 1918*]

BHAI RAMBHAU,

I have your postcard. It will be all right if you pay me the amount in Indore.[1]

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 3515. Courtesy: Bhai Kotwal

[1] Gandhiji was to address the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan there.

109. LETTER T0 L. F. MORSHEAD

MOTIHARI,

January 15, 1918

TO
L. F. MORSHEAD
COMMISSIONER
TIRHUT DIVISION
BIHAR

DEAR MR. MORSHEAD,

I have your letter[1] of the 14th instant. I have now carefully gone through the Bill. I see that I must revise the view that I took of Mr. Kennedy's amendment[2] in my conversation with you. I fear that his amendment will not meet the case if it is to cover the whole of section 3. I can accept Amendment marked A in place of clause 2, section 3. Mr. Kennedy's proviso marked B by you is wholly unacceptable. Clause 1 of section 3 is necessary for the repeal of contractual *tinkathia*[3]. Section 5 subject to the amendment suggested by me in my letter to the Government, dated l9th December, is necessary to give effect to the other recommendation of the Committee beyond recognition of *khuski*[4] contracts. My position is clear. I would consider pledging of a tenant's land for the growing of particular crops as a revival of *tinkathia*. Mr. Kennedy's effort, if I have understood him correctly, is devoted to securing such pledging. Between these two extremes there is no meeting ground.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran

[1] *Vide* Appendix VIII (a). Morshead had met Gandhiji on January 14 and discussed the matter with him; *vide* Appendix "L.F. Morshead's Letter to H. Coupland", 16-1-1918.

[2] For the text of this, *vide* Appendix "Letter from L.F. Morshead", 14-1-1918.

[3] This was a practice prevailing in the indigo-growing districts of Bihar. The landlords compelled their tenants to grow indigo, oats or sugarcane on three-twentieths of their holdings for paltry wages.

[4] The practice of enforcing unconditional indigo cultivation

110. LETTER TO "THE STATESMAN"

MOTIHARI,
January 16, 1918

TO

THE EDITOR
THE STATESMAN
[CALCUTTA]

SIR,

Mr. Irwin's latest letter published in your issue of the 12th instant[1] compels me to court the hospitality of your columns. So long as your correspondent confined himself to matters directly affecting himself, his misrepresentations did not much matter, as the real facts were as much within the knowledge of the Government and those who are concerned with the agrarian question in Champaran, as within mine. But in the letter under notice, he has travelled outside his jurisdiction as it were, and unchivalrously attacked one of the most innocent women walking on the face of the earth (and this I say although she happens to be my wife) and has unpardonably referred to a question of the greatest moment, I mean, the cow protection question, without taking the precaution, as behoves a gentleman, of ascertaining facts at first hand.

My address to the Gau Rakshini Sabha[2] he could have easily obtained upon application to me. This at least was due to me as between man and man. Your correspondent accuses me of "making a united attack on *Saheb log* (the landlords) who slaughter and eat cows daily". This presupposes I was addressing a comparatively microscopic audience of the planters' ryots. The fact is that the audience was composed chiefly of the non-ryot class. But I had in mind a much bigger audience, and not merely the few thousand hearers before me. I spoke under a full sense of my responsibility. The question of cow protection is, in my opinion, as large as the Empire to which Mr. Irwin and I belong. I know that he is a proud father of a young lad of twenty-four, who has received by his gallantry the unique honour of a colonelcy at his age. Mr. Irwin can, if he will, obtain a greater honour for himself by studying the cow

[1] Irwin's letter of January 8 was published actually on January 11; *vide* Appendix "W.S. Irwin's Letter to The Statesman", 8-1-1918.

[2] *Vide* "Speech on Cow Protection, Bettiah" about October 9, 1917.

question and taking his full share in its solution. He will, I promise, be then much better occupied than when he is dashing off his misrepresentations to be published in the Press and most unnecessarily preparing to bring 2,200 cases against his tenants for the sake of deriving the questionable pleasure of deeming me responsible for those cases.

I said at the meeting that the Hindus had no warrant for resenting the slaughter of cows by their Mahomedan brethren, who kill them from religious conviction, so long as they themselves were a party to the killing by inches of thousands of cattle who were horribly ill-treated by their Hindu owners, to the drinking of milk drawn from cows in the inhuman dairies of Calcutta, and so long as they calmly contemplated the slaughter of thousands of cattle in the slaughter-houses of India for providing beef for the European and Christian residents of India. I suggested that the first step towards procuring full protection for cows was to put their own house in order by securing absolute immunity from ill-treatment of their cattle by Hindus themselves, and then to appeal to the Europeans to abstain from beef-eating whilst resident in India, or at least to procure beef from outside India. I added that in no case could the cow-protection propaganda, if it was to be based upon religious conviction, tolerate a sacrifice of Mahomedans for the sake of saving cows, that the religious method of securing protection from Christians and Mahomedans alike was for Hindus to offer themselves a willing sacrifice of sufficient magnitude to draw out the merciful nature of Christians and Mahomedans. Rightly or wrongly, worship of the cow is ingrained in the Hindu nature and I see no escape from a most bigoted and sanguinary strife over this question between Christians and Mahomedans on the one hand and Hindus on the other except in the fullest recognition and practice by the Hindus of the religion of ahimsa, which it is my self-imposed and humble mission in life to preach. Let the truth be faced. It must not be supposed that Hindus feel nothing about the cow slaughter going on for the European. I know that their wrath is today being buried under the awe inspired by the English rule. But there is not a Hindu throughout the length and breadth of India who does not expect one day to free his land from cow slaughter. But contrary to the genius of Hinduism as I know it, he would not mind forcing, even at the point of the sword, either the Christian or the Mahomedan to abandon cow slaughter. I wish to play my humble part in preventing such a catastrophe and I thank Mr. Irwin for having provided me with

an opportunity of inviting him and your readers to help me in my onerous mission. The mission may fail to prevent cow slaughter. But there is no reason why by patient plodding and consistent practice it should not succeed in showing the folly, the stupidity and the inhumanity of committing the crime of killing a fellow human being for the sake of saving a fellow animal.

So much on behalf of the innocent cow. A word only for my innocent wife who will never even know the wrong your correspondent has done her. If Mr. Irwin would enjoy the honour of being introduced to her he will soon find out that Mrs. Gandhi is a simple woman, almost unlettered, who knows nothing of the two bazaars mentioned by him, even as I knew nothing of them until very recently and some time after the establishment of the rival bazaar referred to by Mr. Irwin. He will then further assure himself that Mrs. Gandhi has had no hand in its establishment and is totally incapable of managing such a bazaar. Lastly, he will at once learn that Mrs. Gandhi's time is occupied in cooking for and serving the teachers conducting the school established in the *dehat* (interior) in question, in distributing medical relief and in moving amongst the women of the *dehat* with a view to giving them an idea of simple hygiene. Mrs. Gandhi, I may add, has not learnt the art of making speeches or addressing letters to the Press.

As to the rest of the letters, the less said the better. It is so full of palpable misrepresentations that it is difficult to deal with them with sufficient self-restraint. I can only say that I am trying to the best of my ability to fulfil the obligation I hold myself under, of promoting good-will between planters and ryots, and if I fail, it would not be due to want of efforts on my part, but it would be largely, if not entirely, due to the mischievous propaganda Mr. Irwin is carrying on openly and some others *sub rosa* in Champaran in order to nullify the effect of the report published by the Agrarian Committee, which was brought into being— not as Mr. Irwin falsely suggests at my request—but by the agitation carried on, as your files would demonstrate, by Mr. Irwin and his friends of the Anglo-Indian Association. If he is wise, he will abide by his written word, voluntarily and after full discussion and deliberation, given by him at Ranchi.

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Statesman, l9-1-1918

111. LETTER T0 S.K. RUDRA

MOTIHARI,
January 16, 1918

DEAR MR. RUDRA,[1]

I am dictating this letter to Mr. Desai as, owing to an acute pain in the left side, I am disinclined to do much writing. What I want from you, if I can get it, is not a hastily written letter about the vernaculars, but a full, enthusiastic and eloquent plea for them which I can use for rousing the public to a sense of its duty in this matter. Why should you have teaching [in] the vernacular and answers in English? Why should every lad have to know English? Is it not enough if some men are specially trained in English in each Province so that they may diffuse among the nation through the vernaculars a knowledge of new discoveries and researches? So doing, our boys and girls will become saturated with the new knowledge and we may expect a rejuvenation such as we have never witnessed during the past sixty years. I feel more and more that, if our boys are to assimilate facts of different sciences, they will only do so if they receive their training through the vernaculars. No half measures will bring about this much needed reform. Until we attain this state of things, I fear that we shall have to let the Englishmen think for us and we must continue slavishly to imitate them. No scheme of self-government can avert the catastrophe if it does not involve this much needed change. If you feel with me, I want your letter expressing the above views in your own language.

I had a very nice time of it in Calcutta, but not in the Congress pandal.[2] It was all outside the pandal. I was enraptured to witness the "Post-Office"[3] performed by the Poet and his company. Even as I dictate this, I seem to hear the exquisitely sweet voice of the Poet and the equally exquisite acting on the part of the sick boy. Bengali music has for me a charm all its own. I did not have enough of it, but what I did have had a most soothing effect upon my nerves which are otherwise always on trial. You will be glad to learn that, at the Social Service Conference, I made full use of my privilege as President and as a lover of so much that is good in the

[1] Sushil Kumar Rudra; Principal, St. Stephen's College, Delhi, and a close associate and friend of C. F. Andrews

[2] The Congress was in session during December 29-31, 1917.

[3] A play by Tagore

Bengali life to speak strongly against Bengali provincialism[1]. The audience did not resent it. It seemed to appreciate my remarks. I am sending you a copy of my address which, of course, does not contain the personal appeal mentioned above.

I have not given you a tenth of my experiences, but Mr. Desai reminds me that I must give you one more. I attended a Humanitarian League meeting. There, too, I was the President and I felt that I should be untrue to myself and the audience if I did not touch upon the devilish worship going on at the Kalighat. I therefore spoke about it without mincing words.[2] I was watching the audience while I was speaking. I am unable to say whether I made any impression upon it. Anyway I eased my conscience by referring to the matter fairly fully. If I had sufficient fire in me, I would stand in front of the lane leading to the Ghat and stop every man and woman from blaspheming God in the name of religion.

I return your letter on the vernaculars to you to refresh your memory.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

112. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

Motihari,

January 16, 1918

MY DEAR MILLIE,

I hope you have received the two letters written to you during the past fortnight. In the one I told you not to worry about the money discrepancy and in the other I gave you a brief account of the Congress. Here the planters are doing their utmost to upset the committee's work. They are carrying on a most unscrupulous agitation. I believe it was at their instance that a case was brought against one of the workers for rash driving. He was unjustly found guilty and has, therefore, by way of protest elected to go to gaol and has become a hero. His sentence is fortnight's imprisonment or Rs. 40 fine.

[1] *Vide* "Address at All-India Social Service Conference", 31-12-1917.
[2] *Vide* "Speech at University Institute", 31-12-1917.

You will be glad to hear that I have four women[1] working with me. They are all doing good work. They go about among the village women, teach them the laws of cleanliness and get hold of their girls. We have opened one girl's school. People here are most reluctant to bring their girls out. They are distributing also medical relief. I know you would love this kind of work. But your time is not yet. I have my eyes upon you. When Waldo and Leon are able to take care of themselves and after you have had a few years of peaceful life together, I should not wonder if you do not feel the call to work among the villagers here. If India is to become the seat in the world of a mighty spiritual force, it would need to have international workers in her midst who are fired with spiritual zeal. Some of India's problems are world problems. They can be solved in a narrow sectional spirit or from a broad humanitarian standpoint.

I know you and Henry will rally round the humanitarian flag.

With love,

Yours ever,

BHAI

[PS.]

I am sending you a copy of my address on Social Service.[2] Please congratulate Waldo on his vegetarian work. When is he going to fulfil his promise to write to me?

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Durga Desai, Avantikabai Gokhale, Anandibai and Manibehn Parikh
[2] Vide "Address at All-India Social Service Conference", 31-12-1917.

113. TELEGRAM T0 GUJARAT SABHA[1]

[MOTIHARI,
After *January 16, 1918*]

SHRIS PAREKH AND PATEL,[2] WHO MADE ENQUIRIES ON THE SPOT, MUST GIVE A CONVINCING REPLY BY ARGUMENT AND BY ILLUSTRATIONS. PRESS FOR AN INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION. THE MOVEMENT HAS STARTED FROM THE PEOPLE AND YOU SHOULD PROVE THAT THE INTERVENTION OF SHRIS PAREKH AND PATEL AND OF THE GUJARAT SABHA HAS BEEN AT THEIR INSTANCE. THAT AGRICULTURISTS WHO HAVE TO BORROW OR TO SELL THEIR CATTLE IN ORDER TO PAY LAND REVENUE SHOULD NOT DO SO IS AN ADVICE WHICH I WOULD NOT HESITATE TO GIVE. THE GOVERNMENT MAY DO WHAT IT LIKES. IF THE HARDSHIP IS GENUINE AND THE WORKERS SKILFUL, THEY CANNOT BUT ACHIEVE SUCCESS.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Vol. I

[1] The Gujarat Sabha advised the Kheda farmers on January 10 to refrain from paying land revenue. This was criticised by the Collector of Kheda district in a statement on January 14: "The Collector has full authority either to recover land revenue or to grant postponement, and I have issued my final orders only after a careful investigation of the crops in the district. In some villages of the district, where I felt relief was necessary, I have issued orders giving postponement of a part of the land revenue. Land holders must now, therefore, pay up their land revenue and the outstanding *taqavi.* If, nevertheless, anyone influenced by the wrong advice which is being given to them refuses to pay up his land revenue dues, I shall be compelled to take stringent legal measures against him." This was followed by a statement from the Government of Bombay on January 16, which supported the Collector's action, questioned the *locus standi* of the Gujarat Sabha in Ahmedabad in advising the farmers of Kheda, described the issue of such advice as "thoughtless and mischievous" and asserted that the Government would not allow "any intervention in the normal work of the collection of land revenue dues" in the "rich and fertile district". On being telegraphically informed of this statement, Gandhiji sent this telegram to the Sabha.

[2] Gokuldas Parekh and Vithalbhai Patel who went to Nadiad on December 12 and visited about 20 villages in Kapadvanj and Thasra talukas and studied the problem first hand. They submitted a report to the Gujarat Sabha.

114. LETTER TO D. J. REID

MOTIHARI,
January 17, 1918

DEAR MR. REID,[1]

I did not know whilst I had the privilege of working with you, what it meant for you to be on that Committee. I know now what risks you ran. I do not offer you my sympathy for I know that you are unaffected by the campaign of calumny Messrs Irwin and Jameson are leading. Public men who wish to work honestly can only rely upon the approbation of their own conscience. No other certificate is worth anything for them. May you have strength to bear the fire through which you are passing.

I hope you had a nice time in Ceylon.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 4447

115. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

MOTIHARI,
Posh Sud 5 [*January 17, 1918*]

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I have your letter. If Meva can stay by herself with me, I can arrange to have her here. The Doctor may send her in the company of some reliable person or with you. After leaving her here, you can go back.

There are four ladies working here, Narhari's wife, Mahadev's, Anandibai[2] (a widow) and Avantikabai. I propose to assign them to different villages. Three of them are even now in villages. Ba, too, is in a village working among the women there.

You have suffered long enough from the injury caused by the

[1] General Secretary, Bihar Planters' Association and member, Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council; he served on the Champaran Enquiry Committee appointed on June 10, 1917, to go into the Indigo labourers' question.

[2] Originally from Mahila Ashram at Poona, she joined the team of social workers in Champaran; later, in February 1918, started teaching in the school at Bhitiharwa.

nail. I hope you are absolutely free from it now.

Ramdas has purposely joined the tailor's. He wants to earn a little and also have some experience of unpleasant conditions. He did not leave in a pique. I was pleased that he went. He will get seasoned. He does not expect and should not expect any monetary help from me.

The question you have asked arises because of the changes that have taken place in my life. If I had been, from the beginning, a poor man with no interest other than in the service of the country, nothing more would have been expected of me. I could then have brought up my children according to my ideals, and they, on their part, would have been free, on growing up, to follow a path different from mine. In that case, they would expect from me nothing more than my blessings. I could have claimed this right if I had always been a poor man; if so, I should be able to claim it even now. Parents may change their ideals; when they do, the children should either follow them or gently part company with them. Only if this happens can everyone enjoy swaraj.

When an employer becomes what you have pictured, the employee has the right to leave his service. He should only take care that the master is not put into difficulty immediately. If the employer becomes an outright brute, the employee may leave his service regardless of what may happen to the master's business. He may also give up service if others under the master behave that way. There cannot be, however, one single rule to fit all circumstances. One can decide only with reference to a given situation.

When a Kshatriya has lost all his weapons, he fights with his bare hands and feet and dies fighting. On this point, too, one cannot lay down an absolute rule. There may be occasions when, losing his weapons, the Kshatriya will surrender and then fight again after securing new ones.

It is not correct to say that the truth is been discovered in the West. One is right in holding that truth and non-violence are the same thing. The one includes the other. If anyone vowed to non-violence speaks or acts untruth, he will be violating his vow. If a man dedicated to truth commits violence, he will sacrifice truth. Even if a man refuses to reply, out of fear, he will be violating the vow of non-violence.

If we think of Shri Krishna as the ground of all being and not as a human figure, all doubts will vanish. He is an imaginary

figure, but He has so taken possession of the Hindu heart that He exists in body more truly than we do. Of a certainty, Shri Krishna will live as long as Hinduism lives.

There is much more I can write, but I shall not now. Even this I have set down in the midst of difficult circumstances.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MEVA,

If you have the courage to stay with me by yourself, do come. I shall improve your health and you may try to be a daughter to me and so help me to forget the want of one.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5724. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

116. LETTER T0 JAMNADAS GANDHI

MOTIHARI,
Posh Sud 6 [*January 18, 1918*]

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I am dictating this letter to you and not writing it myself, for otherwise there may be none at all. You are right in what you say about things being dear. To keep oneself away from relishing food even while living in daily company with it is a great vow to observe. Only an exceptional man can do so and *moksha* is for such a man alone. We may, as yet, only make the attempt. Keep the vow as best as you can. I think I am myself unworthy at present to speak with any very great authority on this subject. Prof. Kripalani[1] went to jail the day before yesterday and we observed a fast. The joy I knew on that day is not mine today. I broke the fast yesterday and had fruits to eat; they were sweet enough, but I ate them without zest and so was full of joy; however, less [than on the previous day]. I know that, trying to find pleasure in food that is not particularly savoury, I ate too much today and in consequence I am ill at ease in my mind, not happy. Thus, despite the fact of my diet being limited to five articles [during

[1] J. B. Kripalani; *vide An Autobiography*, Part V, Ch. XIII & XVII.

the course of a day] and altogether devoid of the savours which make food tasty, the palate continues to extract its pleasure and the *atman* suffers. If, at the age of 49 and despite this effort at discipline, I have not succeeded in bringing my palate fully under control, what may you do, in the prime of youth and living surrounded by all manner of dainties. I can guess the answer well enough. To be sure, it is my intense desire that you and other young men who have understood the importance of self-control in this matter and are endeavouring, in my company, to achieve it, may outdo me. You can. I have struggled long to attain complete mastery. More than this, I shall write when I am worthy enough to do so.

It is quite likely that earth will have no effect on a deep wound. Keep up patiently the treatment you are following, that of inserting a cloth plug. If you cannot manage the insertion well, take the Doctor's help. The wound should not remain unhealed for very long now.

You may put me any questions you like. I shall reply when I find the time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Mahadev Desai's hand, signed by Gandhiji: C.W. 5725. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

117. LETTER T0 K. V. MEHTA

MOTIHARI ,

January 18, 1918

DEAR KALYANBHAI,

I have your letter. I can see only two ways. One, the better of the two, is this: the woman should put her education to the right use and try to improve the husband to whom fate has joined her. Women have done this before now and, if this one shows such a spirit today, all concerned will soon be happy. She must be wise in spirit to succeed in this task. If she is not so well equipped, she should make bold and plainly refuse to go and live with her husband. If there is reason to fear pressure on her in her parents' home, she will have every right to leave it. In that case, some friend should give her shelter. If this cannot be done in a village, she may be removed from there. I should like

you to put your friendship to some use by protecting the woman. Please try the better way first.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

118. LETTER TO JAMNA GANDHI

[*January 18, 1918*][1]

CHI. JAMNA,

I do not consider Rs.25 all told too much for three months' expense for you. I just wanted to know the figure since it would tell me so many things. Even if the money is one's own, one should keep a detailed account of every *kori*[2] spent, for the fact is that nothing in this world is our own. It is our daily experience that everything belongs to God. We should, therefore, be very reasonable in the way we use things and spend our money. He who lives in this way would keep for his own satisfaction an account of every *pie*[3] spent by him. If you have not kept the account of Rs. 125[4] in this manner, make it a rule to do so hereafter. I remember Devbhabhi kept an account of all money spent just by remembering it.

If you cannot keep well, you may once again have to run away. You may engage a maid servant if you feel that you cannot at all do without such help.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 33119

[1] The letter is written on the reverse side of the letter to Prabhudas Gandhi which bears this date.

[2] The lowest denomination of currency in use in Saurashtra and Kutch

[3] The lowest denomination of currency in use before the change over to the present metric system in the fifties

[4] The figure mentioned in the first sentence above is Rs. 25. '125' here may be a slip.

119. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

PATNA,

Paush Sud 6 [*January 18, 1918*][1]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. Keep up the practice of writing. For the present at any rate, your health seems to have improved. If you are careful, the improvement will last.

There is much in the Ashram even without me. I should like you to discover it. It is an unfortunate position if people feel that there is life in the Ashram only when I am physically present there. For, the body is bound to perish sooner or later.

If you feel the need for the presence of my spirit, it is always present there. The more we give up our attachment to the physical presence of the one whom we love, the purer and wider our love becomes. If we ourselves cultivate the spirit which we are all trying to create in the Ashram, we would not only not feel a void in the Ashram but the social spirit also would be created so much the earlier.

Inadvertantly, I have written a letter which will be difficult for you to understand. Ask Chhaganlal to explain what you do not understand in it. Show it to the others also since it is likely to do good to all. Preserve it and read it over and over again and try to understand every word of it. The cordial atmosphere which should prevail in the Ashram and among the inmates of the Ashram will then already be created.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 33119

[1] According to a note in the source, the letter was written during the year 1917-18. In both years, however, Gandhiji was not at Patna on *Paush Sud* 6 as given in the date-line. On January 18, 1918, which corresponds to *Paush Sud* 6, he was in Motihari in Bihar. He may have mentioned Patna as the place at which Prabhudas should address his reply.

120. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

MOTIHARI,
Posh Sud 8 [*January 20, 1918*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I am likely to have a battle royal over Mahomed Ali. If India carries out my plan, the Government of India will be properly humbled. Hindus and Muslims, never united, will become so, mother cow will be safe and we shall hear the triumph of non-violence proclaimed all over the world. Before all this comes to pass, however, I shall have to go through an ordeal myself. A power which has till now brooked opposition from no Indian is sure to fight as if for its very life when defied by a handful of Indians. Its fury then will be almost unbearable. But I am resolved to face it all. I mention this to remind you to be careful that in the storm that will follow we do not lose, whether in our wisdom or folly, the money that we have received for the Ashram. I have already told you there should be nothing in my name, at any place. Keep everything in your name. Transfer everything standing in my name to yours. The receipt for the money which Revashankarbhai has deposited in the bank at Bombay is probably in our joint names, his and mine. My name in it should be replaced by yours. You should make your will to provide against accidents, nominating the Doctor your heir and executor. Your plan of work has been chalked out. You must devote yourself to weaving and agriculture. You should so train Santok[1] that she may join you whole-heartedly in this work. Simultaneously with this and in order that you may succeed in it, you have to address yourself to the almost superhuman task of moulding Radha[2] and Rukhi[3] to be ideal girls. For this, you will need to observe always the highest of dharma. Naturally enough, therefore, you will be daily advancing towards *moksha*, and so in this work your satyagraha and your patriotic services will find their consummation. All the money we have is for these two activities and for the National School. That will also continue to be the position in law. The amounts that will be transferred to your name will not become your property, but will be treated as donations in aid of our activities. But do not rely on my

[1] Addressee's wife
[2] Addressee's daughters
[3] *ibid*

interpretation of the law. Consult Shri Krishnalal, Mavlankar and others. Drink deep the draught of love from anywhere and everywhere, like that cowherd[1] of Dwarka, no matter even if you have to steal the thing. The more you drink of it, the greater will be your bliss and you will have had your heart's desire. If the handloom, which they formerly worked in the pit, had been flourishing today and if we had been spinning all the yarn we require, we would not, with all this cotton available, have to face this terrible rise in the prices of cloth. Here people shiver in the cold for want of clothes. Every moment I realize the value of cloth. Either I have to supply myself with plenty of covering so that I may sleep outside and have oxygen, or for want of such covering suffocate in a box-like room, swallowing again my own carbonic acid gas. My only prayer, and my blessing as well, is that you may have the necessary strength to realize your aspirations and fulfil my hopes. In all that you do, please consult the Ashram inmates and the teachers of the National School. I hope to be there at the latest by the 17th or the 18th of February. But it occurred to me this morning that I had better write about all this immediately to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati original: C. W. 5726. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

121. LETTER T0 J. L. MAFFEY

MOTIHARI,

January 21, 1918

DEAR MR. MAFFEY,

I thank you for your two letters.

I fear that probably I have failed to convey my full meaning in my letter.[2] Matters so delicate as the one regarding Messrs Ali brothers are least satisfactorily handled by correspondence. It would perhaps be better, if you think it advisable, that I should run down to Delhi and first have a chat with you and then, if it is considered necessary, I should wait on His Excellency. Will you

[1] Shri Krishna

[2] *Vide* "Letter to J. L. Maffey", 1-1-1918.

please consider my suggestion and let me know what you think about it?

Yours sincerely,

N. A. I.: Home, Political (Deposit): February 1918, No. 29

122. LETTER TO MESSRS LIENGIER & CO.

MOTIHARI (BIHAR),
January 21, 1918

MESSRS LIENGIER & CO.

MADURA

The method that I have adopted for reinstating those who have left off weaving is to supply them with yarn, at the lowest market rates, to buy out all the cloth they may manufacture, for cash, at the highest market rates, the yarn to be paid for in instalments, without interest, convenient to the weaver. This has enabled them to earn at the rate of about Rs. 17 per month. These weavers do not give their whole time to weaving and their manufacture is confined to the coarsest cloth. They do not want to aspire higher and what they earn is enough for their wants. But I know that a clever weaver manufacturing finer counts, with perhaps a little pattern-work, can make twenty-five rupees per month. Every weaver lost to the country is, in my opinion, so much national waste, and every weaver reinstated is so much national gain. Whatever the plan you may adopt, I would like you to keep me informed of your activity from time to time.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

123. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

MOTIHARI,
January 21, [*1918*]

DEAR GURUDEV,

For my forthcoming address before the Hindi Sammelan[1] at Indore, I am trying to collect the opinions of leaders of thought on the following questions:

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Hindi Sahitya Sammelan", 29-3-1918.

(i) Is not Hindi (as *Bhasha*[1] or Urdu) the only possible national language for inter-provincial intercourse and for all other national proceedings ?

(ii) Should not Hindi be the language principally used at the forthcoming Congress?

(iii) Is it not desirable and possible to give the highest teaching in our schools and colleges through the vernaculars? And should not Hindi be made a compulsory second language in all our post-primary schools?

I feel that if we are to touch the masses and if national servants are to come in contact with the masses all over India, the questions set forth above have to be immediately solved and ought to be treated as of the utmost urgency. Will you kindly favour me with your reply, at your early convenience?[2]

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Mahadev Desai's hand: G.N. 2765

124. LETTER TO A FRIEND

[MOTIHARI,]
January 21, 1918

The question who should write a preface to a volume[3] of my speeches and writings, or whether there should be any preface at all, can be answered after I know the publisher's name and his motive. If the volume is to be brought out by a firm for making profit, it will need a preface by Sarojini[4]. If by a pious *Vaishnava*, to be sure he should approach Ranchhodbhai[5]. If a third party, who does not know me, comes across my writings and he wants someone to under-write sales, he should seek out a friend, that is Dr. Mehta. If you and

[1] Language

[2] Tagore wrote back: "Of course Hindi is the only possible national language for inter-provincial intercourse in India. But. . . I think we cannot enforce it for a long time to come."

[3] *Mahatma Gandhini Vicharsrishti*, edited by Mathuradas Trikumji

[4] Sarojini Naidu, the poetess

[5] Ranchhodlal Patwari

Mathuradas are to father the volume, it would need no preface at all. At present, I am known all over as if I were one of the wild animals in the Felix Circus and, so, it will not be necessary to put a stamp on me except for the reasons mentioned above. The desire that, while the sea of my thoughts is yet in tide, as many people as possible should be enabled to have a plunge in it without loss of time, is the only proper motive for bringing out a volume. I am, of course, in love with these ideas so that I would naturally desire that the largest number of people be given a chance to read them. At present, therefore, I am also one of the sponsors of the plan for publishing a volume. Where, then, is the need for a preface? My life itself is the best preface. Those who can will read it.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

125. LETTER T0 REVENUE SECRETARY

MOTIHARI,
January 24, 1918[1]

TO

THE SECRETARY TO

REVENUE DEPARTMENT

THE GOVERNMENT OF BIHAR AND ORISSA

The Hon'ble Rai Bahadur Purnendu Narayan Sinha[2] has supplied me with the papers given to him about the Champaran Agrarian Bill. I note therein a memorandum submitted by the Champaran members of the Bihar Planters' Association,[3] as also one from the managers of the Sirnie Concern. These memoranda as also certain other papers call for a reply for the consideration of the Select Committee.

Before, however, offering my observations I wish to submit that, if it is at all the intention of the Government to make material alterations in the Bill, a representative on behalf of the *raiyats* should

[1] The original has 1917, which is obviously a misprint.

[2] Member of Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council. He was also on the Select Committee to which the Champaran Agrarian Bill had been referred.

[3] This was on January 5. *Vide* Appendix "Memorandum of Bihar Planters' Association", 5-1-1918.

be appointed to the Council and should also be on the Select Committee. And I feel that nobody is so capable of sufficiently representing these interests as Babu Brajkishore Prasad or myself, and I hope my submission will receive from the Government the attention it deserves.

In considering the provisions of the Bill, it is, in my humble opinion, of paramount importance for all concerned to remember that the Government have proclaimed to the *raiyats* their decision upon the Committee's recommendations.[1] It is respectfully suggested that the Bill is in fulfilment of the assurance issued to the *raiyats* in the said proclamation. The Bill, therefore, does not admit of any alteration in any material respect. As it is, owing to the acrimonious correspondence going on in the Press and all sorts of rumours set afloat by interested parties, the *raiyats* are becoming restive. *Bis dat qui cito dat* applies in the present instance with peculiar force. Any undue delay in passing the Bill may spell disaster. I, therefore, urge that the Bill should be placed on the Statute-book of the province as expeditiously as possible.

Coming to the examination of the papers in question, I shall first take the Champaran Planters' memorandum. Generally speaking, it is a paper containing a series of misrepresentations completely disentitling it to any weight being attached to it. The memorandum states that the Agrarian Committee was "admittedly appointed to allay an artificial agitation". The fact is that it was appointed in answer to the agitation set up by the planters in expectation of the *raiyat*s' agitation being thereby stopped or suppressed. I cite in support the following extract from the *Pioneer*, the leading organ of Anglo-Indian opinion in the country. In its issue of about the middle of May 1917, it said:

> It appears to us that the Government of Bihar and Orissa would do well forthwith to appoint a commission to investigate the differences which exist between the planters and the *raiyats* in the Indigo districts. It is difficult to see what good can come of Mr. Gandhi's investigations. But an enquiry conducted with strict impartiality by a commission containing possibly a non-official element, would give both sides a fair opportunity of stating their case, and ought to result in a lasting peace.

[1] The orders of the Government were embodied in their resolution of October 18, 1917, which along with the Enquiry Committee Report was published in the *Bihar and Orissa Gazette* and in local languages for distribution among *raiyats*.

And by the beginning of June the Government of Bihar and Orissa decided to appoint the Champaran Agrarian Committee. On the 8th of June, 1917, the Secretary[1] of the European Association addressed a letter to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bihar and Orissa saying:

> My Council observe with great satisfaction the decision of your Government to appoint a Committee to enquire and investigate into the relations between landlords and tenants in the Province of Bihar and Orissa.

The memorandum says that the *raiyats'* agitation was, "artificial" and organized outside Champaran. The fact is that it was and has been solely confined to Champaran and an agitation in which large masses of men took part could hardly be called an "artificial agitation". The memorandum says "the agitation was in no way the consequence of any widespread grievances". The Government's own finding and the voluminous papers produced before the Committee by the Government completely contradict this statement.

It would hardly be dignified for me to notice the many uncalled for and groundless aspersions cast upon the Agrarian Committee.

I will now take up the various amendments to the provisions of the Bill proposed by the Champaran planters in the memorandum.

AMENDMENTS TO SECTION 3, CLAUSE (1): Nothing perhaps can surpass in recklessness the statement made in the memorandum that the Bill

> proposes to abolish without compensation and for no adequate reason a system (*tinkathia*) which has been in existence for over a hundred years.

Such a statement is made in face of the fact that the Bill is designed to give partial and, in my opinion, inadequate relief from the extortionate compensation taken by the planter for ending a system when it had ceased to become a paying proposition to them. One planter has even made a boast in the Press of the fact that he has taken Rs. 3,20,000 from his *raiyats* as *tawan*[2] and has made addition to his rent-roll of an annual income of Rs. 52,000 by taking *sharahbeshi*[3]. And there are several such planters.

The whole of the argument advanced in the memorandum

[1] Alec Marsh
[2] Penalty
[3] An increase in the rent

about the *khushki* system simply shows that the signatories desire a modified revival of *tinkathia* under the name of *khushki*. By *khushki* I understand a contract voluntarily entered into by the *raiyat* to supply a particular produce to his landlord for a fair price to be mutually agreed upon. Any clause in the contract binding the *raiyat* to grow a particular crop on the whole or a portion of his land or in a particular plot even selected by himself would immediately rob it of the voluntary nature, and the *raiyat* is deprived of the right to use his land as he chooses. Such a clause would contravene the provisions of Section 23 read with Section 178 (3) (b) of the Bengal Tenancy Act. The system of advances has in the past operated as a bait and as a snare. A *khushki* contract should have nothing to do with the land of the *raiyat*. It should only provide for the delivery by the *raiyat* to the planter of so much of indigo by weight at a rate mutually agreed upon. The *raiyat* may produce the indigo on his own land or purchase it from others or get it from any other source. Once his land is brought in the contract, the inevitable result will be that the same sense of obligation with which the growing of indigo has up to now been connected and which it is the desire of the Agrarian Committee and of the Government to remove, in the interest of the future peace of the district, will gradually creep in the mind of the *raiyat* and will in time overpower him. It might be mentioned that the prime concern of the Legislature is not so much the prosperity or even the existence of an industry as the welfare of the *raiyats*. If the *raiyat* is to be freed entirely from the baneful effects of *tinkathia*, the *khushki* system must (a) leave him free to obtain the particular crop he undertakes to supply where he likes and how he likes, his obligation being limited to supply the quantity agreed upon; (b) make the period of *khushki* contracts as short as possible; and (c) give him the market-rate of the produce supplied by him.

The amendments (b) and (c) to Section 3(1) proposed in the memorandum, as they fail to satisfy the tests set forth above, are wholly unacceptable from the *raiyats'* standpoint.

Coming to the amendment (a) to Section 3(1) proposed in the memorandum extending the period of termination of *tinkathia*, whether as an incident of tenancy or whether arising from *sattas* or agreements, to 1920, it is a most dangerous *proposition* and in breach of the undertaking of the three principal concerns referred to in the Committee's report. The Committee's recommendation that it should stand abolished as from October 1917 is the one recommendation

which is already being acted upon. Acceptance, now, of the proposal of the Champaran planters who have signed the memorandum, would reopen the sore and give rise to unthinkable result[s]. The proposal is designed virtually to nullify the effects of the Committee's report and the Govern-ment proclamation based thereon. The chief reason for continuing the system is said to be that planters have already got seed and made arrangements for the future growing of indigo. It must not, however, be forgotten that *khushki* is at their disposal and they can make use of the seed, machinery and everything under it. It is true that real *khushki* will not give them that hold on the *raiyats* which the *sattas* do and will not give them the exorbitant profits, too, that they have hitherto received. But they never had a right in equity to any such onesided advantages. Consider [it] how we may, it is difficult to find a proper justification for continuing the system.

As to amendment (d) to Section 3(1) which seeks to continue the obligation until advances are repaid, I am sorry to find that even the Board of Revenue has fallen into the trap. A moment's thought will show that such a continuance may even lead to endless continuation of the obligation, to harassments and to [a] crop of law suits. There will be nothing to prevent a planter from never asking a *raiyat* for a refund of the advance and thus an ignorant *raiyat* may for ever remain in serfdom. I hope it will not be contended that the planter should have security for refund of the advances. They do not need it. The *raiyats* are their tenants and they have the fullest hold upon them for any financial obligation, and I cannot help saying that the proposed amendment is merely a device for keeping on foot the pernicious system as long as possible. The whole of the soothing effect of the proposed legislation will be practically neutralized if the amendment in question is accepted and [it] will put Champaran in a ferment.

AMENDMENTS PROPOSED TO SECTION 4 "SHARAHBESHI": The first amendment to this Section is based on a representation made by the managers of Sirnie Concern. But the amendment as it is worded proposes to reopen the question of the rate of reduction to be allowed not only in the case of Sirnie but also of Jalha and Motihari Concerns. There is absolutely no reason why the matter should be reopened. Mr. Irwin of the Motihari Concern was party to the compromise. As to the Sirnie case; I do not know that I am free to interpret the attitude of the Agrarian Committee in the matter. I can only say that, without a fresh reference to the Agrarian Committee, it is not possible to go behind

the figures as they are a result of a solemn compromise, not merely as between the Committee and the planters, but also as between the different interests represented on the Committee itself. The compromise was one and an indivisible whole and one cannot break a part of it without breaking the whole. It is not true as stated in his representation that Mr. Bion[1] was not called to give evidence or given opportunity of having any statements recorded. Not only did he come under the general notice issued to all to send in their statements if they wanted to give any evidence, but he had received a special call from the Committee's report to show that, in fixing the rate of reduction in the enhancements, the sole determining factor was not the rates at which the enhancements were made. The reasoning applied to the case is generally applicable to the case of Jalha also.

AMENDMENT TO SECTION 4(2): There is one point on which it is possible to agree with the Champaran planters' memorandum. That the rental fixed under the Bill should be final and binding is fair; but any amendment that may be made will have to carefully guard the right of appeal on grounds of irregularity and want of jurisdiction.

SECTION 5 OF THE BILL: I have already sent in my amendment to the effect that the words "grown upon the land of his tenancy or any portion thereof" be omitted from the Section. I have explained in the earlier part of this letter, when dealing with *tinkathia*, why in a *khushki* contract no reference to the land of the *raiyat* should be made.

There are two amendments to this Section proposed by the Champaran planters in the memorandum.

The first is that the word "three" of Clause (1) should be substituted by the word "five". In other words, it is urged that *sattas* be limited to five years and not to three years only. The fact that even three years are granted is a concession. The period of *khushki* contracts should be as short as possible. The memorandum deplores the proposed termination of long-term *sattas* forgetting that not a single planter witness before the Committee has the hardihood to defend long-term *sattas* and some of them went even so far as to say that they did not enforce their *sattas*. Speaking of sugarcane *sattas*, Mr. Gordon Canning[2] said that "there were *sattas* entered into when he started sugarcane, but they were not enforced and might be regarded as a dead letter".

[1] Proprietor of Sirnie Concern
[2] Manager of Pursa Concern

The other suggestion in the memorandum is that the *raiyats* should infinitely prefer to be paid at a flat rate based on the area of the land in which the specified crop is grown rather than by weight or appraisement. This is contrary to my experience. The real object, it may be observed, is here too as elsewhere a revival of *tinkathia*.[1]

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran

126. LETTER T0 DR. KULKARNI

[MOTIHARI,]
January 24, 1918

DEAR DR. KULKARNI,

When I posted my last letter to you, I had read the literature [sent by] you, but for me it was not convincing enough to turn me from my experiment. What you say is either true or untrue. If salt is the panacea for all evils, no effort should be spared to double or even to quadruple its consumption. What I require is statistics showing successful treatment of plague, etc., by the saline method. Having read a great deal against the use of salt in books on vegetarianism, I wanted to make the experiment on myself. Nearly 7 years ago Mrs. Gandhi was suffering from copious haemorrhage. I was treating her with Kuhne baths and a strict dietary. When I was almost in despair, I thought of the reasoning applied against salt by Mrs. Wallace and against pulses by Dr. Haig. Salt, Dr. Wallace has argued, is an irritant and a stimulant. Being inorganic it passes out without being assimilated, but in its passage making a great deal of mischief. It unduly excites the salivary glands, irritates the stomach and thus induces men to eat more than they need, and taxing the organs unduly, it impoverishes the blood. Both Mrs. Gandhi and I were, like most people, lovers of salt and ate large quantities of it. I argued to myself that probably the introduction of salt in the system was responsible for the continuation of her illness. I need not enter into the reasoning applied by me to the pulses. I was myself at this time

[1] A week later Gandhiji met W. Maude, Member of the Executive Council, Government of Bihar and Orissa, and had a detailed discussion with him on *khuskhi*, *sharahbeshi* and related matters. No report of the interview other than a note by Maude is available; *vide* Appendix "Note on Interview by W. Maude", 31-1-1918.

ordinarily hale and hearty. Certainly no change on the score of health was called for. But discovering that I could not wean Mrs. Gandhi from the use of salt and pulses without doing so myself, I left them off and so did she. There was no other change made in the treatment. Within a week's time she was free from haemorrhage and she who was, at the time of change, a skeleton quickly put on flesh[1]. I have ever since remained without salt. The condiment has such a hold upon her that she could not resist the temptation when there was no necessity for it. So when she had completely recovered, she took to salt eating. She does have haemorrhages now and then, and leaving off salt and taking friction baths enables her to recover quickly. During the seven years of my experiments, I have treated asthmatics and patients suffering from other lung diseases with a saltless diet, and they have almost invariably responded. As for myself, I have not suffered from serious illnesses any more than those with whom I come in daily contact. This saltless diet has, I believe, materially assisted me in my *brahmacharya* vow. With these experiences before me, your persistent advocacy of salt has come upon me with somewhat of a shock. There is one great change in me which I have been noticing and which I have discussed with medical friends without getting any light from them. If I receive a wound, it heals more quickly than before. I experience no feeling of excessive fatigue after long walks. But I seem to have become a green stick. The skin has become too tender and delicate. A knife would tear it, much more quickly than anybody else's. Although I invariably walk barefoot, the soles of my feet refuse to become tough and hard, as would anybody else's. My gums have become flabby and the few teeth I have left are more ornamental than useful. Is it possible that this delicateness is a result of a saltless diet ? Of course, there are so many other changes that I have made in my life that it is difficult to single out salt for my condemnation. If I had not noticed this deterioration in me— if it is a deterioration—I should have, owing to the many other advantages I have experienced, very actively advocated a saltless diet. If I received some enlightened assistance from you, I would like, if it be for a temporary period, to go back to salt and watch its results upon my system. I was already conferring with Dr. Dev upon the advisability of

[1] Describing his experiment of a saltless diet and this episode in detail, later, Gandhiji writes: "I would like to count this incident as an instance of satyagraha and it is one of the sweetest recollections of my life." *Vide An Autobiography*, Part IV, Ch. XXIX.

interrupting my experiment when your letter came. Hence my last letter to you. If you have an accurate knowledge about the matter and if you are an enthusiast with a scientific mind which would refuse to swerve even by a hair's breadth from the path of truth even in a fit of enthusiasm, I would like to utilize your services both for plague research and for finding out the real value of salt as an article of human consumption. I shall try to secure the books you have mentioned.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

127. LETTER T0 KAKA KALELKAR[1]

[MOTIHARI,]
January 24, 1918

The accused is either guilty or not guilty. If the former, he should go to jail by way of penance; if the latter, he should do so by way of a lesson to the magistrate. If every accused who is innocent were to go to jail after declaring his innocence, it would come about ultimately that an innocent person would hardly ever find himself in jail. So much from the common-sense point of view. The Professor's case has several special features. His riding a horse too fast was not the reason why it was instituted. That merely furnished a pretext. The motive behind the case was to discredit me anyhow, and through me the agitation. The assumption behind the step was that, though I could not be touched, my enemies would be pleased if others associated with me were. At a time like this, it was necessary that the Professor should go to jail and show what he was made of. The people here, moreover, are very much afraid of going to jail. This was a fine opportunity to rid them of their fear. It would not have been right to miss it. For the Professor as well to refuse to go through the experience [of imprisonment], which had offered itself to him unsought, would have been to throw away a golden opportunity. Satyagraha means fighting injustice by voluntarily submitting oneself to suffering. The judgment of the court was naked injustice. The Professor, undertaking to suffer by submitting to imprisonment, offered satyagraha. It is not for a

[1] Dattatreya Balkrishna Kalelkar (b. 1885); educationist, writer and constructive thinker, awarded *Padma Vibhushan*, 1964. The letter was in reply to his question how Professor Kripalani's going to jail could be satyagraha and why it was that an appeal was not preferred.

satyagrahi to prefer an appeal. There is no room for [legal] defence in pure satyagraha. What we see is not pure satyagraha, but its diluted variety. Such dilution is a measure and a sign of our weakness. When we have pure satyagraha, the world will see its miraculous power. I am quite confident of this. From this point of view of satyagraha, therefore, there was no question at all of preferring an appeal. However, the desire to adhere to pure satyagraha was but a secondary consideration in deciding against an appeal. The case was so trivial, as it seemed to me, that we have been able to expose both the partisan spirit and the stupidity of the magistrate by not magnifying its importance through an appeal. Moreover, no lawyer came forward to guarantee success in the appeal, if made. I suggested to them that they could file one on their own responsibility, telling them also that, if they lost, I would certainly blame them. There could be no appeal in this case. Revision was possible. In a revision, the superior court never goes into questions of fact. It only sets matters right if there has been an error of law. There was no scope for legal technicalities in this case. You will see that, in what we have done, the requirements of both satyagraha and the justice that obtains in what the world calls its practical affairs have been met.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. lV

128. LETTER T0 JAMNADAS GANDHI

[MOTIHARI,]

January 24, 1918

CHI. JAMNADAS,

You will gain nothing by giving up your work and staying with me. You will yourself get tired in a few days and remember your old duty.

You should, therefore, find your happiness there. At present, your desire to stay with me is a kind of self-indulgence. Just as, after an act of such indulgence, one feels exhausted and depressed, so just now you will feel depressed after a few days with me. You may keep it in mind that one day you will join me and meanwhile, by way of preparation, attend to the duties that devolve upon you.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

129. LETTER T0 MAGANLAL GANDHI

MOTIHARI,
Posh Sud 12 [*January 24, 1918*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Don't mind the celebration over the Professor's imprisonment. The musician has also been drawn into the thing all right. You will get the particulars about the Professor in the letter[1] to Kaka. If Fakira[2] has, indeed, sent any masons to volunteer their services, that shows that somewhere in the depth of his heart he still has a place for the Ashram. Thakorelal's illness seems to have persisted too long. It will be good if Vrajlal keeps as healthy as he will be when he arrives there. The indigo-planters here are kicking up quite a row. I am as unperturbed as I am vigilant. All that I have to do is to see that the peasants do not take a false step. I will send back Narahari at the earliest opportunity. I also feel that the National School must not suffer. I hope you are keeping very well. Ask Prabhudas to write to me.[3]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the copy in Mahadev Desai's hand: S.N. 6332

130. LETTER T0 CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

MOTIHARI,
Posh Sud 14 [*January 25, 1918*]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. The reason for handing over the material to Mathuradas is that he may then publish it as he thinks fit. English speeches must, of course, be translated. He can do this. He is eager enough and likes the work. He is tempted by the thought that, as he translates, he will discover himself. He is a young man of character,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Kaka Kalelkar", 24-1-1918.

[2] Was in charge of stores at Phoenix; underwent imprisonments and was later deported; *vide* "Diary, 1912".

[3] To this Mahade v Desai added the follow ing note addres sed to Chhaga nlal Gandhi : "Bapuj i asks me to tell you that it will be best to credit Polak's accoun t with Rs. 3,000/ -. Give the accomp anying papers to Mavlan kar"

and is anxious to serve the country. He has clung to me and has made the request with the most admirable motive. For all these various reasons, it seems right that he should be allowed to do this work. He has ample time for proof-reading, etc. Unless you help him, he is like a bird without wings. He can collect the material only if we give him the articles. He too does not want to be content with translating Natesan's volume. If you are free from this translation work, there is much else you can do. There remains now only one thing to consider. If you are committed to Akhandanandji and others and they don't release you, then, Mathuradas will certainly have to be disappointed. Even if they publish [the writings], it will be necessary to make some arrangements about proofs.

I have gone through your list. You can expand it considerably, if you care to. There are a great many articles of mine in *Indian Opinion* which I thought very valuable. You can make a selection from among them. Some of the petitions I drafted in South Africa contain a good amount of history. The open letter[1] I addressed in 1894 and the *Green Pamphlet*[2] which I wrote while here in India are a digest of numerous Blue-books. The petition[3] about indenture which I drafted in 1894 contains the substance of several Government dispatches on the subject. Thus, if you open the trunk of South Africa [papers], you will get plenty of material of every description. Anyone who feels tempted to collect it [in a volume] will have not less than six months' work on his hands. If, however, we publish *Dharmaniti*[4] and other books, that will also make a long list. The articles I wrote in England in 1890-91 are also worth including.[5] I don't know where you will find them. I have a faint idea that Manilal or Harilal preserved them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the original Gujarati in Mahadev Desai's hand: S.N. 6334

[1] *Vide* "Open Letter", December 1894.

[2] *Vide* "The Grievances of The British Indians in South Africa"; August 14, 1896,

[3] Perhaps this refers to "Petition to Lord Ripon", July 17, 1894

[4] Translated under the title *Ethical Religion*.

[5] The first articles Gandhiji wrote were those published in *The Vegetarian* and *The Vegetarian Messenger* in 1891; he contributed occasionally to the former during 1892-5 *Vide* Vol. I.

131. LETTER T0 G. V. MAVLANKAR

[MOTIHARI,]
January 27, 1918

BHAISHRI MAVLANKAR,

I have your letter about the Sabha's draft reply to the Press Note on Kaira. I like the first part of our reply. The second part is as weak [as the first is good]. I am not bothering to revise it. A stronger reply can be given to the Government's contention that any body outside the Kaira District is not competent to do anything in matters relating to that district. Whether or no that district was represented by any member on the Sabha, it is entitled to address the Government concerning any part of Gujarat. It is even its duty to do so. It was necessary to mention the names of the members of the Inquiry Committee. It was not proper to have made a distinction between senior and junior officers; unwittingly, we seem to have admitted that the inquiry would have been more searching and fair if made by senior officers. Our contention is that Government officers, from the very fact of being officers, inspire less confidence than experienced citizens who know their responsibility, for the officers are appointed to safeguard the interests of their class and they have a habit of rejecting anything that the people say. Public workers, on the other hand, have no interest of their own to serve. They are impartial and conscious that an error by them will not be passed over, they are more careful in conducting an inquiry. We ought to have brought out all this very effectively. In taking up this issue, our purpose is to educate [the people] and to show that we are as anxious for our prestige as the Government is for its. The latter often seeks to uphold its prestige by the strength of its authority. We should do ours merely by the justice of our actions. A training to this end in every detail [of conduct] and a definite lead for the purpose will provide the people an excellent education in swaraj. This is why I have concerned myself to offer all this criticism.

Another thing I should like to say is that, at a moment like this, timely action wins appreciation. The Committee must immediately attend to the problem, setting aside all other work, if need be. In short, the Committee can in no circumstances put off its duty. It should have able members, men of responsibility, who can attend at any time. If we are right in our cause, it involves the safeguarding of the interests of thousands of poor people. Every

public worker should think himself bound, as by a pledge, to leave aside all other work in public interest just as he would in his own. I think we are too late with our reply. Often, the Government, just because it is more alert, is able to suppress a popular movement. Justice does not help the ones who slumber but helps only those who are vigilant. This is not a maxim to be mouthed in courts of law but to be applied in every concern of practical life.

It is because you are all doing such fine work and are holding out so firmly that I have honoured you with this criticism. If I had wanted to suggest that you had been negligent, I would have done so by maintaining silence. It is never my practice to waste my time saying anything of the kind in so many words. I have said all this in love, that you may be more vigilant in future and that a body like the Sabha, of thirty years' standing, may gain in stature. Do not think it is a rebuke and do not take it to heart

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

132. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

MOTIHARI,

January 28, 1918

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

247 BAZAR GATE ST

BOMBAY

BEFORE FINALLY PRINTING OFF FIRST PART SEE YESTERDAY'S LETTER. SENDING ADDITIONAL MANUSCRIPT SHORTLY.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

133. LETTER TO SECRETARY, RAILWAY BOARD

MOTIHARI,
January 29, 1918

TO
THE SECRETARY
RAILWAY BOARD

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 552-T-17, of the 22nd instant. I thank you for your long reply. I hope to deal with some of the points in the letter in a later communication.

Meanwhile I enclose herewith a copy of my address delivered before the recently held Social Service Conference in Calcutta.[1] I have marked therein the paragraph relating to the railway grievances. Probably you will agree with me that my reference to the conduct, among the passengers, of the Kabulis, requires immediate attention. I am sure that, if separate accommodation is provided for them, it will relieve the ordinary traveller of a great deal of discomfort.

N. A. I.: Railway, March 1918, 552-T-17/1-24

134. LETTER T0 ADA WEST

[PATNA,]
January 31, 1918

DEAR DEVI,

Manilal's case is sad. I have written to him a consoling letter. It is difficult for me to be reconciled to his marriage. If he can stand a few more years of bachelor life, he will get hardened. I have told him that he is to consider himself entirely as a free man and to receive my advice as from a friend. You are all just now going through fire. May you all come out unburnt.

Here I am in the midst of three imminent battles of passive resistance;[2] which will ultimately take place, it is difficult to say. But they just now absorb all my time and keep me constantly on the

[1] *Vide* "Address at All-India Social Service Conference". 31-12-1917.

[2] The reference is evidently to the Kheda Satyagraha, the Ahmedabad mill-hands' situation and the Home Rule agitation.

wheels. This journeying is an exhausting process. But it has got to be gone through.

With love,

Yours,

BHAI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

135. LETTER FO MANILAL GANDHI

[PATNA,]
January 31, 1918

I hear from Devibehn that you showed yourself unhappy before Sam at being unmarried. Please do not allow anything to stand in the way of your telling me what you think. You are not my prisoner, but my friend. I shall give you my advice honestly; you may think over what I say and then act as it seems best to you. I should not like you to do anything sinful out of fear of me. I want you not to stand in awe of me or anyone else.

In my view, you certainly ought not to marry. Your welfare lies in not marrying. If you find it impossible to continue in your present state, you may come away to India when you are free to leave and think what you should do. Evidently, nothing can be done while you are there. If you have decided that you should marry, I believe you will get a suitable match. I take it that you will not give up your work just in order to get married. You may consider marriage only when you can leave *Indian Opinion* in good order. See that you don't lose your cheerfulness; and don't indulge in day dreams. We have a thousand desires; all of them cannot be satisfied. Remember this and be serene. Be clear in your mind that whatever you do will be above board and done openly. Everything then will be for the best.

I may have to put up a stiff fight over Mahomed Ali; I have come to no decision, though.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

136. LETTER TO G. V. MAVLANKAR

[PATNA,]
January 31, 1918

I can very well realize the moral dilemma in which you find yourself. Damayanti found herself in difficulty only when she was face to face with several persons looking like Nala. Real firmness is displayed in a situation of this kind. That is no easy matter, however, and hence mistakes on such occasions are pardonable. I can see the point in our collecting a hundred thousand rupees and paying the revenues from the amount, but the effort will have no effect on the Government. I don't see how our paying up the dues on behalf of the farmers can ever worry the Government. On the other hand, auctioning their cattle will be a jaw-breaking undertaking. The purpose of satyagraha is not to save our face but to instil courage into the people and make them independent in spirit. If, because of fear, or distrust of us, people lose heart and pay up, they but deserve to pay [compulsorily]. We, on our part, should exert ourselves still more to be worthy of their trust. This is the royal road of satyagraha. If I had a hundred thousand rupees, I would go from house to house telling people to let their cattle be auctioned, but not to borrow money to pay up the revenue dues. At the auction I would use the money to bid for the people's cattle and, in due time, return them to the owners who would have held out through a difficult time. I would not tell the people that I intended to see their cattle safe. As things are, if everything goes all right, the Government will practically have to apologize.

All this will appear as wisdom after the event and hence of little value. Do what you think the situation demands from time to time. I have the invaluable opportunity of watching your work from a distance and you, on your part, are discovering that no one in this world is indispensable.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

137. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[BOMBAY,]
February 2, 1918

Deva, the day you are fit to take my place, no one will dare to prevent you from doing so. All that I want is that you should grow very strong. Don't think you have no aptitude. One learns to do things as they come.

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

138. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI[1]

[BOMBAY,]
February 2, 1918

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

There is much in the Ashram even when I am not there; I should like you to discover it. It would be a sad state of affairs, indeed, if it were my physical presence alone which lent the Ashram its life, for the mere body is bound to perish. The soul is always there, if only you can feel its presence. If we love anyone, the more indifferent we become to his physical presence the purer will be our love for him. The Ashram will not seem lonely if we cultivate in ourselves the spirit that we all strive to create in the atmosphere there; in fact, the community spirit will grow the sooner if we do this.

Without meaning to, I have written a letter rather beyond you. Ask Chi. Chhaganlal to explain anything in it you don't understand. Show it to others, too, for it is one which may do good to all. Preserve it and read it over and over again so that you fully understand every word of it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] The letter was in reply to Prabhudas Gandhi's complaint that he felt lonely without Devdas and that the Ashram, in Gandhiji's absence, appeared to be lifeless.

139. LETTER TO SOMEONE IN RANCHI

[BOMBAY,]
February 2, 1918

Anyone who observes the Ashram rules is of the Ashram, though he may not have actually joined it. On the contrary, he who deliberately violates them is not of the Ashram, though in it.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

140. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MRS. JINARAJADAS

[BOMBAY,]
February 2, 1918

Mrs. Gandhi is an almost illiterate woman; she cannot even sign her name in English. Do you want mere names to adorn your register?[1]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

141. SPEECH ON KHEDA SITUATION, BOMBAY[2]

February 4, 1918

I do not want to say much. I have received a letter asking me to be present at tomorrow's deputation[3] that is going to wait on His Excellency the Governor, and I am sure I will be able to explain to him the true facts. Still, I must make it clear here that the responsibility of the notice[4] issued by the Gujarat Sabha lies on me. I was at Ahmedabad before that notice was issued, where the matter of Kheda district was being discussed, when it was decided that the

[1] This was Gandhiji's comment on being informed that Kasturba Gandhi had been enrolled as a member of the All-India Women's Association; *vide* "Fragment of Letter to Mrs. Jinarajadas"? before 10-2-1918

[2] The public meeting, largely attended by merchants and traders, was held at the Moolji Jetha Market. Jamnadas Dwarkadas presided.

[3] This consisted of Vithalbhai Patel, Dinshah Wacha and Gokuldas Parekh, besides Gandhiji. No report of the discussion is available.

[4] The notice, circulated among the farmers of Kheda district on January 10, had advised them to refrain from paying land revenue.

Gujarat Sabha ought to take part in the matter. I think that, as regards this notice, a mountain has been made out of a molehill. Everyone knew what the notice was when it was being framed. Nobody then even dreamt that Government would misinterpret it. The Sabha had with it sufficient data about the plight of the people. They came to know that Government officials were collecting taxes and the people were even selling their cattle to pay the taxes. The matter had come to such a pass, and, knowing this, the Sabha thought it better to issue a notice to console the people who braved these hardships. And the notice was the result of that information, and I have every hope that, in the deputation that is going to wait on the Governor, the result of the deliberations will end in the success of the people.

If the Commissioner had not been angry with us, and had talked politely with the deputation that waited on him, and had not misinstructed the Bombay Government, such a grave crisis would not have eventuated, and we would not have had the trouble of meeting here this evening. The Sabha's request was to suspend the collection of dues till the negotiations were over. But Government did not take this proper course and issued an angry Press Note. It was my firm belief—and even now I firmly believe—that the representatives of the people and Government could have joined together and taken the proper steps. I regret to have to say that Government has made a mistake. Perhaps subordinate officers of Government would say to Government that the notice was issued not from a pure motive, but from some other ulterior motive. If Government are impressed with this erroneous belief, those who have stood by the people, I hope, will continue to stand by them to the end and will not retreat. Any responsible right-thinking man could have given them the same advice. People possess the same rights as the authorities have, and public men have every right to advise the people of their rights. The people that do not fight for their rights are like slaves ("Hear, hear"), and such people do not deserve Home Rule.[1] When authorities think that they can take anything from the people and can interfere, a difficult situation arises and if such a situation arises, I must plainly say that those who have given the people the right advice will stand by

[1] According to a report of February 10 in *Prajabandhu*, a Gujarati daily, Gandhiji here observed: "We should place our demands before the Government, even if we have to suffer in consequence. India has followers of four different faiths and members of all of these—Hinduism, Islam, Zoroastrianism and Christianity—will need to employ satyagraha often enough."

them till the end.

I have not yet come to any conclusion, and I sincerely trust that those who understand the responsibility will not hesitate to undergo hardships in order to secure justice.(Applause.) And in such an eventuality I hope you will not beat an ignominious retreat. The first and the last principle of passive resistance is that we should not inflict hardships on others, but put up with them ourselves in order to get justice, and Government need not fear anything, if we make up our mind, as we are bent on getting sheer justice from it and nothing else. To get that justice we must fight with the authorities, and the people that do not so fight are but slaves. We can have only two weapons on occasions like this: revolt or passive resistance, and my request is for the second remedy always. The right of suffering hardships, and claiming justice and getting one's demands is from one's birth. Similarly, we have to get justice at the hands of the Government by suffering hardships. We must suffer hardships like brave men. What I have to say is: resort to the right means, and that very firmly, in order to remove the distress through which the people of Gujarat are passing. It is my conviction that if we tell the truth to the British Government it can ultimately be convinced, and if only we are firm in our resolve, rest assured that Kheda people shall suffer wrongs no more. (Loud Cheers.)[1]

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-2-1918

142. LETTER TO J. CRERAR

BOMBAY,
February 5 [*1918*][2]

DEAR SIR,

I shall thank you to place this letter before His Excellency.

The importance of the events that are at present happening in Gujarat is such that I feel I am warranted in addressing this circumstance.

The stories circulated regarding the hardships of the people in the district[3] and the severe pressure being exercised by the local

[1] A shorter report of this speech is also available in *Kheda Satyagraha.*
[2] The source has "1917", evidently a slip.
[3] Excessive rainfall had caused damage to crops in the Kheda district

officials for collecting revenue dues are such as to require an investigation by a person of unimpeachable character. I do not say that there is truth in the above-mentioned stories. It is enough that hundreds of honest men believe them. I therefore hope that the Government will not only grant the inquiry suggested by me but that it would be an absolutely independent committee that will conduct the inquiry. If there are to be five members, I would suggest the names of Messrs. Parekh and Patel. They have already interested themselves in the question and I have reasons for believing that their findings will not be questioned by anybody. As chairman of the committee I venture to think that no name will be so popular as that of Dr. Harold Mann and if he is not available I think Mr. R. L. Ewbank's name will be second best.

I hope that the spirit of my letter will not be misunderstood.

In the event of my presence being required my address for two days will be Sabarmati. I am leaving for Sabarmati tonight.[1]

I am,

Yours truly,

TO

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

TO H.E. THE GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY

BOMBAY

From a copy: C.W. 10746. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] To this Gandhiji received the following reply, dated February 9, from the Secretary to the Governor: "Neither from the discussion which took place between you and His Excellency the Governor on the 5th, nor from the accounts which have appeared in the papers, is it clear to the Governor that the local officers have in any way been harsh. He is not satisfied, therefore, that any advantage would be gained by appointing an independent commission. He is also anxious like you to remove all doubts and suspicions from the minds of the people, and he hopes that as a result of the detailed steps taken by the Collector and the Commissioner, of which an account was given to you on the 5th, you will have been satisfied in this respect and will assist all concerned in removing from people's minds their misapprehensions."

143. LETTER TO F. G. PRATT[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 7, 1918

DEAR MR. PRATT[2],

I have just been shown a few notices issued under the signature of the Mamlatdar of Kapadvanj Taluka stating that the plots of land referred to therein will be forfeited to the Government, if the parties notified do not pay the dues therein mentioned on or before the 11th instant. The notices issued are dated the 2nd instant. I have seen most of the parties who appeared to me to be perfectly respectable men fighting for what they consider to be their rights. I understand, too, that some of the land referred to in the notices is *sanadia* land. 1 hope that it is not the intention of the Government, whatever may be their ultimate decision, to take extreme and, what may be termed vindictive, measures.

I have also been shown a circular over the signature of the same Mamlatdar wherein ryots like those mentioned in the notices above referred to [are described] as *dandia,* meaning, I presume, rascals or loafers. In my opinion the language of the circular is undignified and highly offensive. I am sure that it is not the Government's desire that in drafting Gujarati circulars ordinary rules of courtesy may not be observed by officials in charge of such duties.

I am,

Yours truly,

From a copy: C.W. 10626. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] On his return to Sabarmati Ashram on February 6, Gandhiji was shown copies of notices and circulars issued by the Mamlatdars and the Collector. *Vide* also "Letter to Commissioner. Northern Division", after February 10, 1918.

[2] Commissioner, Northern Division

144. SPEECH TO AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS[1]

February 8, 1918

You should address a letter to the mill-owners about your grievances. We do not want any bitterness to grow between the twoparties. We cannot all at once demand an increase of 50 to 60 per cent. We shall appeal to them with due firmness. If, despite that, they do not agree, we will have five persons nominated by each side and accept their decision. It will be binding on both sides. They are sure to consider our reasonable demands. They, too, are Indians, like us and there is no reason, therefore, to give up hope. You should follow the path of justice and seek a solution without bitterness. This will make your case all the stronger. Anasuyabehn lives only for you. With increased earnings as demanded by you, you should learn to be clean, should get rid of your various addictions and see that your children get education. Place your just demands before your employers without fear. I want to help you in all this as much as I can.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 17-2-1918

145. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MRS. JINARAJADAS[2]

[SABARMATI,

Before *February 10, 1918*]

The sentence about Mrs. Gandhi's signature in English was unhappily worded. The complete thought has not been given in it. Mrs. Gandhi is not educated in any sense of the term. She can hardly read and write Gujarati. That she cannot even sign her name in English was intended to convey to those who prize English education the full measure of Mrs. Gandhi's unfitness to become a member of

[1] Gandhiji had gone to Bombay in connection with the Kheda situation. There he met Ambalal Sarabhai, the Ahmedabad mill-owner, who told him of the discontent among mill-hands over the issue of bonus. Sarabhai requested Gandhiji to intervene. Gandhiji went to Ahmedabad and studied the problem first-hand. The workers apprehended great hardship from an abrupt stoppage of the plague bonus and were demanding a dearness increase of 50 per cent in its place. This was, perhaps, the first meeting of mill-hands that Gandhiji addressed.

[2] The letter was Gandhiji's rejoinder to the addressee's gentle rebuke for his letter to her dated February 2; *vide* "Letter to Someone in Ranchi", 2-2-1918.

an association whose members are scholars, either in their own language or in English.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

146. LETTER T0 H. N. KUNZRU[1]

SATYAGRAHASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

February 10, l918

. .[2] I am handling a most dangerous situation and am preparing to go to a still more dangerous ....[3] You will now understand why I have not gone to the Mela.[4] I was looking forward to having an opportunity of seeing Hinduism at work both in its devilish and divine character. The former, I know, cannot influence me, and I had relied upon the latter doing for me what it did for me at Hardwar.[5] I was also looking forward to meeting you and preaching you a few homely sermons on the necessity of Servants of India not making it a regular habit of getting ill almost every alternate month. But it was not to be.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Hriday Nath Kunzru (b. 1887); President of Servants of India Society since 1936 and of Indian Council for World affairs since 1948

[2] Some portions are omitted in the source.

[3] Some portions are omitted in the source.

[4] He was invited to attend the Kumbha Mela at Allahabad.

[5] Gandhiji is referring to his experience during the Kumbha Mela in 1915. There he took the vow not to eat more than five articles of food in a day and to eat nothing after nightfall; *vide An Autobiography*, Part V, Ch. VII.

147. LETTER TO F. G. PRATT

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 15, 1918

DEAR MR. PRATT,

We were not able on Wednesday last to resume discussion of my complaint about unbecoming language used in Gujarati circulars. l enclose copy of a public notice dated the 14th January over the Collector's signature. I have underlined what I have ventured to term undignified and offensive. The underlined portion insults both the Secretaries[1] and those who have accepted their advice. As I told you I do not think that the Collector had intended to use expressions which in the Gujarati language could not be used about respectable men.

You will find herewith enclosed a copy of a circular over the Mamlatdar's signature. I venture to suggest that the language of this circular is open to grave objection.

As to the anti-dairy activity, I enclose herewith the circular which is being printed specially for distribution. You will notice that it covers the whole ground. There is a slight misunderstanding in your letter. I have not confined my attention to the milk supply to the infants of the sellers only, but my attention extends to the public at large.

In my opinion milk supplied to the dairies is so much milk taken away from the infants' mouths. Could you give me some details as to the coercion alleged to have been used by some people against milk-sellers intending to deal with the dairies? If I knew the villages and perhaps the names of the offenders 1 would try to reach them.

As for the forfeiture notices 1 would venture to say this. To confiscate land worth several thousand rupees' assessment is, in my opinion, a punishment out of all proportion to the default and can therefore only be termed vindictive. I observe that more such notices have been issued. I hope they will be withdrawn[2].

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10629. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1]Of the Gujarat Sabha, *viz*., G. V. Mavalankar and Krishnalal Desai

[2] The Commissioner's reaction to this letter was conveyed on February 16. He wrote: "You have used very strong terms regarding the language of the various statements. I have examined them all myself and I am satisfied that there is no reasonable basis for your complaint."

148. LETTER TO VINOBA BHAVE[1]

[SABARMATI,
After *February 10, 1918*]

I do not know in what terms to praise you. Your love and your character fascinate me and so also your self-examination. I am not fit to measure your worth. I accept your own estimate and assume the position of a father to you. You seem almost to have met a long-felt wish of mine. In my view a father is, in fact, a father only when he has a son who surpasses him in virtue. A real son, likewise, is one who improves on what the father has done; if the father is truthful, firm of mind and compassionate, the son will be all this in a greater measure. This is what you have made yourself. I don't see that you owe your achievement to any effort of mine. Hence, I accept the role you offer to me as a gift of love. I shall strive to be worthy of it; and, if ever I become another Hiranyakashipu, oppose me respectfully as Prahlad, who loved God, disobeyed him.

It is true as you say that, though outside the Ashram, you have scrupulously observed its rules. I never doubted that you would return. Besides, I had your written messages, read out by Mama. May God grant you long life, and use you for the uplift of India.

I don't see any need for changes in your diet just yet. Do not give up milk for the present. On the contrary, increase the quantity, if necessary.

About the railways, no satyagraha is required. What is wanted is intelligent workers to carry on propaganda. On the issue in Kheda District, satyagraha may possibly have to be offered. I am something of a tramp these days. In a day or two, I shall have to leave for Delhi.

More when you arrive. Everyone is looking forward to seeing you.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] On reading Vinoba Bhave's letter explaining why he had not returned to the Ashram for a whole year, Gandhiji remarked: "So Gorakha [the disciple] has gone one better than Machchhindra [the master]. He is a Bhima indeed", and dictated this letter.

[2] When he had finished dictating the letter, Mahadev Desai records Gandhiji as saying, "He is a great man. I have always felt that I am fortunate in my dealings with Maharashtrians and Madrasis. Of the latter, there is none now. But no Maharashtrian has ever disappointed me. And among them all, Vinoba is beyond praise!"

149. LETTER T0 BHAGWANJI MEHTA

ASHRAM,
Posh Vad [*February 11, 1918*]

BHAISHRI BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. It shows that what may have been intended as help has the opposite effect sometimes. That is how I have felt about the article in *Gujarati*. I can do the work in Kathiawad in my own way.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 3027. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

150. LETTER T0 RALIYATBEHN

[SABARMATI,]
February 11, 1918

MY REVERED SISTER,

Though I don't write to you, your image has not been out of my mind even for an hour. Your not being with me has given me a wound that will never heal. You alone can heal it. If you were with me, seeing you I would at least have some recollections of mother. You have deprived me of that also. I have a standing complaint against you. You do not give me an opportunity to claim, with pride, that even my sister is helping me in my work. Even if I should write, I could only pour out my grief and twit you as I am doing now. That is one reason why I put off writing. I know prices have gone up these days, but where am I to find more money? I can only obtain it from a friend. With what face can I approach one? He also will say that my sister should be living with me. What am I to reply, then? The world does not regard me as defiled. I am so to you, however. In these circumstances, there is only one thing I can say. I don't live in greater comfort than you do and so your hardships don't seem unbearable to me. I am not in the least ashamed that you have to find the extra money you need by grinding corn for others. I only pray, if you have any compassion in you, that you come over and live with me and join

me in my work. You will then cease to feel, as you perhaps do at present, that you have no brother and will find not one but many brothers and be a mother to many children. This is true *Vaishnava* dharma. And till you see that it is, we cannot do otherwise than endure separation.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

151. LETTER T0 NIRMALA

[SABARMATI,]

February 11, 1918

CHI. NIRMALA[1]

Show this letter to sister Raliyat. What shall I write to you ? I think of so much work you can do. I can fill your whole life with beauty and help you to forget your being a widow. I have some women helping me. Unfortunately, I cannot have your help. I may not blame you as I do Raliyat, for you have two elders to please, a father and a sister. All the same, if you wish to help me, you can not only obtain their permission for yourself but can also bring over sister Raliyat. Without you, she just cannot live. I am sure I shall have you with me some day. I think you do realize that, had Gokuldas been alive, he would not have found it possible to keep away from me even for a moment. By joining me you will bring peace to his soul as well.

Ba is in Bihar. She thinks of you so often. I shall have to remain here some more time yet.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] Widow of Gokuldas. a nephew of Gandhiji

152. LETTER TO F. G. PRATT

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
February 12, 1918

DEAR MR. PRATT,

I am much obliged to you for your note which I received this morning. As I am asking for an appointment I do not wish to deal with the various matters referred to in your note beyond saying that I have already taken precautions against any departure from the strict instructions given regarding dairies and that I shall gladly adopt your suggestion regarding public repudiation in writing. Kindly send me an appointment.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10627. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

153. LETTER TO A CO-WORKER

[SABARMATI,]
Magha Sud 2 [*February 12, 1918*]

BHAISHRI,

I have your letter. It would serve no purpose to hurt you by using strong words. There are quite a few men who speak of their weaknesses as though they were their virtues. You are one such. It might be claimed that you take part in public life because you have some exceptional gift, but, in your actions, you show yourself weaker than others. You made it out that you had been deeply grieved for your former wife, that her dying words had had a profound effect on you. Then you forgot all about the wound, and the effect of the dying words faded into nothingness. If a man crying in extreme pain had suddenly started laughing aloud he would be considered either an actor or a lunatic. You, who were crying yesterday, are all smiles today. What epithet can describe you? A man whose desires are not under his control, who is incapable of the least self-discipline, is such a man fit to be in public life? Do not answer back that you are better than many others one comes across in public life and thus sink lower than you have already done.

The step you have taken has an important bearing on social reform among Hindus. It is more needful that widowers show some sense of decency than that widows should remarry. You have violated

the most fundamental principle. If a Gujarat Sevamandal comes to be formed and I am[1] required to have close association with it, it would be very difficult for me to decide whether you could be admitted to it or not. God forbid I should judge you—it is for Him alone to judge—but I would not give up my right to decide who shall be my associates in my life's work.

You have let the world know what kind of a wound it was that your former wife's death had inflicted on you. Your action has struck me like a thunderbolt. May God save you and grant you good sense.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

154. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

[SABARMATI,]

February 13, 1918

MY DEAR WEST,

I hope you have received all my letters. I have your two letters to acknowledge. I do not really know what to say. I have read Ritch's and Debeer's letters. From their standpoint they are right. For me, you would better serve the work by being a good agriculturist. Manilal's advice from Johannesburg does not appeal to me. He ought to be in Phoenix to manage the Gujarati portion.[2] But, as I have said, you are the final arbiter and you should do what you think is best. So far as I am concerned the property is as much yours as mine, and so is the cause. Having said so much about Phoenix, I would like to speak to you about my activities here. The very fact that I write so little to you shows how busy I must be here. I think everybody wonders at my output of work. And nothing is of my seeking. I have taken up activities as they have come to me. In Bihar, besides watching the legislative activity, I am opening and managing schools. The teachers are as a rule married people. And both husband and wife work. We teach the village children, give the men lessons in hygiene and sanitation and see the village women, persuade them to break through the purdah and send their girls to our schools. And we give medical

[1] The source has " you are", which is an error.

[2] The reference, evidently, is to *Indian Opinion*.

relief free of charge. Diseases are known and so are remedies. We, therefore, do not hesitate to entrust the work to untrained men and women provided they are reliable. For instance, Mrs. Gandhi is working at one such school and she freely distributes medicine. We have, perhaps, by this time relieved 3,000 malaria patients. We clean village wells and village roads and thus enlist villagers' active co-operation. Three such schools have been opened and they train over 250 boys and girls under 12 years. The teachers are volunteers.

Then there is the work in Gujarat. It consists in carrying out the programme set forth in the Godhra and Broach addresses.[1] At the present moment I am trying to deal with imminent passive resistance. The activities in Gujarat are multifarious. Lastly, I am endeavouring to lead the movement for the release of the Ali Brothers. I am working on a programme for dealing with cow-protection, sanitation, national system of education, hand-weaving and acceptance of Hindi as the lingua franca of India. Of course, the Ashram and the national school continue.

In all this it is my good fortune to be well assisted. This activity involves a great deal of travelling.

The Ashram is beautifully situated on the banks of the Sabarmati river. We daily bathe in it. All the children can swim now. The school is under an able Principal[2] who was a distinguished professor of the Gujarat College. The Ashram, of course, is under Maganlal's management. I do not know what is in store for the Ashram or the school. They are at the present moment popular institutions.

In all these activities I often wish for the co-operation of fellow-workers there. But I know it cannot be. But, believe me, there is not a moment I do not think of one or the other of you. Many of your exploits serve as apt illustrations for me. I am building on the experience gained there.

Please tell Mrs. West that she should not consider for one moment that I have forgotten her or granny. Nor have I forgotten the assurances given by me. New ties and new acquaintances cannot make me forget old ones.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Second Gujarat Educational Conference", 20-10-1917, and "Speech at Gujarat Political Conference-I", 3-11-1917.

[2] Sankalchand Shah

This letter is not for publication. I do not wish to talk publicly of my activities.

With love,

Your sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai. Also from a photostat of a portion of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4426. Courtesy: A. H. West

155. LETTER T0 PARVATHY

[MOTIHARI,]

February 13, 1918

MY DEAR PARVATHY[1],

You see I began your letter in Gujarati as I rarely write [in] English to girls and boys. But I know I must write to you in English. You will say, 'If you had provided for my Gujarati or Hindi tuition, I would also have understood your Gujarati and Hindi letters!' You would be right if you said so. I would however say, 'If you had only gone with me or followed me to India, you would have been truly my daughter and learnt Hindi and Gujarati.'

Please tell Sam that I expect him to make of Phoenix an agricultural success. Do please write to me all about your doings there. Radha and Rukhi have grown wonderfully. Rukhi looks almost as big as Radha. They have both made considerable progress in their tuition.

With love to you all,

Yours,

GANDHI[2]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Daughter of Govindswami, a colleague of Gandhiji in South Africa

[2] The signature in the original is in Tamil.

156. LETTER TO F. G. PRATT

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 15, 1918

DEAR MR. PRATT,

After the most mature deliberation, I have come to the conclusion that I dare not leave Gujarat without satisfying myself personally as to the truth or otherwise of the statements made about the failure of crops in a large part of Kaira. I have, therefore, decided not to leave Gujarat for the time being, and I am proceeding by the one o'clock train today to Nadiad with a party of co-workers. I must confess that convincing proof has not been produced before you to warrant suspension on the scale asked for, but so far as I am aware both Messrs. Parekh and Company and Deodhar[1] and Company believe that though they have not been able to stand the fire of cross-examination, the truth is on their side. Only they have not succeeded in producing convincing proof. I think it is the experience of most of us that there are some facts we know, though we cannot prove them. That has been the position of these friends.

On the strength of the failure of evidence hitherto produced, His Excellency has thrown on my shoulders the responsibility of removing the impression, which people are labouring under, as to the failure of crops in Kaira. But obviously I cannot do so as at present equipped. Whilst it is true that the evidence hitherto produced as to failure of crops to such all extent as to warrant supension under the revenue rules, has not been conclusive, it is not possible for me, without conducting a personal investigation, to declare that the popular belief in such failure is wrong. This investigation is a duty I owe to the people of Kaira, to the Gujarat Sabha, of which I have the privilege of being the President, and, if I may say so, to the Government.

I have entered somewhat into details because I am anxious, if I can do so, to assure you that I have absolutely no desire to encourage or produce a useless agitation and that I am proceeding to Kaira purely and simply in search of truth. You have agreed that if the people are right they are entitled to relief. You very properly declined

[1]G. K. Deodhar

to grant it unless reports of your officials could be successfully challenged. And I, on my part, would be shirking a plain duty in spite of the persistent statements made by responsible people to the contrary, if I did not satisfy myself as to their truth or otherwise.

You will most materially help in allaying the ferment in Kaira, if you could possibly be generous enough to postpone collection pending the result of my self-imposed mission.[1]

And if you think that I may be afforded the usual facilities may I ask you to advise the Collector to help me with information that may be legitimately granted to a public worker. I wish also to add that if you desire that any representative of yours should be present while I am inquiring, I have no objection whatsoever. I trust you will excuse the length of the communication.

In reply to the invitation to attend the Durbar on the 26th instant I was obliged to send a reply in the negative in view of my then impending departure for Delhi. But in the circumstances now altered, I hope to be able to attend, and pay my respects.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10630. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

157. LETTER TO A VISITOR[2]

[SABARMATI ,]
February 15, 1918

BHAISHRI . . . ,

Your letter made painful reading. What you say now was not out of your mind when you took the pledge. Your duty lay in honouring it, even if your entire family were to starve in consequence. Only persons of that stamp can mould a nation. Others are just not to be reckoned as men. You were under no pressure to take the pledge and you had ample time to think the matter over. If we do not make rapid

[1]The Commissioner replied the same day: "I see no reason whatever for postponing the recovery of land revenue until your inquiry is completed. I have no doubt that Mr. Ghoshal, the Collector, will give you all necessary information and assistance if you ask him."

[2] This was addressed to a visitor who had informed Gandhiji that he was unable to keep the Ashram vows he had taken a few days earlier.

progress, the reason is to be found solely in our extreme weakness. I am not writing this letter that you may now honour your pledge. Even if you should come, you would not be accepted. You had better work for your family now. Think of the sin you have committed, be all humility and live a quiet life. Never to take a pledge again without making sure of yourself—this should be your *prayaschita*[1]

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

158. LETTER TO DAHYALAL

[SABARMATI,]

February 15, 1918

BHAISHRI DAHYALAL,

I have your postcard. Reading of Amritlal's death, I was led to think of so many things. But a moment ago, Navalram told me that some others of your co-workers also died while nursing victims of the plague. If such was the manner of their death, there is no reason for grief, only for rejoicing. We should welcome such a death for any of us. The saying that there is no better death than on the field of battle is apposite in this case. The body is bound to perish when it is worn out. One may even welcome that. Let us, therefore, believe that the spirits of Amritlal, Motilal and their co-workers will inhabit new and fitter bodies and serve India when it is their time to do so.

Give my condolences to Amritlal's family.

It will also be a kind of service if you try your best and see that Motilal's widow is sent over here as early as possible.

Vandemataram from

M. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] Atonement

159. LETTER TO F. G. PRATT[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 16, 1918

DEAR MR. PRATT,

After the most mature deliberation, I have come to the conclusion that I dare not leave Gujarat without satisfying myself personally as to the truth or otherwise of the statements made about the failure of crops in a large part of Kaira. I have, therefore, decided not to leave Gujarat for the time being, and I am proceeding by the one o'clock train today to Nadiad with a party of co-workers. I must confess that convincing proof has not been produced before you to warrant suspension on the scale asked for, but so far as I am aware both Messrs. Parekh and Company and Deodhar2 and Company believe that thoughthey have not been able to stand the fire of cross-examination, the truth is on their side. Only they have not succeeded in producing convincing proof. I think it is the experience of most of us that there are some facts we know, though we cannot prove them. That has been the position of these friends.

On the strength of the failure of evidence hitherto produced, His Excellency has thrown on my shoulders the responsibility of removing the impression, which people are labouring under, as to the failure of crops in Kaira. But obviously I cannot do so as at present equipped. Whilst it is true that the evidence hitherto produced as to failure of crops to such all extent as to warrant supension under the revenue rules, has not been conclusive, it is not possible for me, without conducting a personal investigation, to declare that the popular belief in such failure is wrong. This investigation is a duty I owe to the people of Kaira, to the Gujarat Sabha, of which I have the privilege of being the President, and, if I may say so, to the Government.

I have entered somewhat into details because I am anxious, if I can do so, to assure you that I have absolutely no desire to encourage or produce a useless agitation and that I am proceeding to Kaira purely and simply in search of truth. You have agreed that if the

[1] For an edited version of this letter published under February 15, *vide* "Letter to F.G. Pratt", 15-2-1918.

[2] G. K. Deodhar

people are right they are entitled to relief. You very properly declined to grant it unless reports of your officials could be successfully challenged. And I, on my part, would be shirking a plain duty in spite of the persistent statements made by responsible people to the contrary, if I did not satisfy myself as to their truth or otherwise.

You will most materially help in allaying the ferment in Kaira, if you could possibly be generous enough to postpone collection pending the result of my self-imposed mission.[1]

And if you think that I may be afforded the usual facilities may I ask you to advise the Collector to help me with information that may be legitimately granted to a public worker. I wish also to add that if you desire that any representative of yours should be present while I am inquiring, I have no objection whatsoever. I trust you will excuse the length of the communication.

In reply to the invitation to attend the Durbar on the 26th instant I was obliged to send a reply in the negative in view of mythen impending departure for Delhi. But in the circumstances now altered, I hope to be able to attend, and pay my respects.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10630. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

160. LETTER TO J. CRERAR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

February 16, 1918

DEAR MR. CRERAR,

I have delayed acknowledging your letter of the 9th instant conveying His Excellency's decision regarding the submission of the Kaira Deputation[2] as before replying I was desirous of learning the result of the interview that Mr. Deodhar and friends had with Mr. Pratt and at which I was also present. I now beg to enclose herewith copy of a letter I have sent to Mr. Pratt, which explains what I am doing. 1 am

[1] The addressee in his letter of even date, refused to postpone collection of revenue.

[2] Which met the Governor of Bombay on February 5.

proceeding to Kaira in order that I may, so far as in me lies, stop the agitation now going on, if I find the statement as to failure to be not warranted by facts, or direct it on what I venture to consider are healthy and uplifting lines, should the statement appear to me to be true. l cannot still help feeling that had a public inquiry been granted it would have at once put a stop to all agitation. Much the same result is likely to follow if the request made in my letter to Mr. Pratt regarding postponement of collection of the revenue is granted. I need hardly repeat the assurance I have given to H. E. that before taking any extreme step I shall seek an interview and place my position before him.

I am,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10632. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

161. LETTER TO ANANDIBAI

[SABARMATI,]

February 16, 1918

I was extremely sorry to learn of your sister-in-law's death. But I know that you are aware of the *atman* and am therefore sure that you will at once realize that birth and death are in reality states of the same thing. However, it has become part of man's nature to grieve over a death. I want to share your grief in your bereavement. Let this give you what solace it can. For persons like you who have dedicated themselves to service, there is only one way to mourn a death and that is to dedicate themselves all the more to such service.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Marathi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

162. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[SABARMATI,]

February 16, 1918

CHI. DEVDAS,

I came here for a day, but it seems I shall have to stay for about a month. I wanted to go to Delhi today; instead, I shall have to go to Nadiad for the Kaira work. If I back out now, thousands will be put to heavy loss. People will yield and be utterly dispirited. The situation being what it is, I have stayed on for the present. I am hoping that I shall be able to get away in ten days. I keep thinking of you all the time. I know you have plenty of zeal and can interest yourself in anything. Had you been here, you would have every moment observed the supreme wonder and power of truth. This is all the legacy I can leave for you. As I believe, it is an inexhaustible legacy. For him who knows its worth, it is priceless. Such a one would ask to have or desire no other legacy. I think you have realized its worth and will cherish it with love. I dreamt last night that you betrayed my trust in you, stole currency notes from a safe and changed them. You spent the amount on vices. I came to know about it. I took alarm; felt very miserable. Just then I awoke and saw that it was all a dream. I thanked God. This dream bespeaks my attachment to you. You of course want it. You need not fear that it will ever disappear altogether during this present life. I am making a supreme effort to bear equal love to all but, from you, I do hope for something more [than from others].

I am not writing separately to Chi. Chhotalal and Chi. Surendra. You may show this to them, if you like, or tell them of it. You will have equal reason, though, not to show it to them, on the ground that, as it bears on the sacred relationship of father and son, it had better remain in your exclusive possession.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

163. LETTER TO J. GHOSAL

NADIAD,
[*February 17, 1918*][1]

DEAR MR. GHOSAL[2],

Mr. Pratt must have informed you that after all I decided to postpone my departure from Ahmedabad for Delhi and to make personal investigation in your District. I came in yesterday. I went to Wadthal today. I observe that three forfeiture notices have been issued there. The values of the plots which are described in the forfeiture notices is far in excess of the revenue dues. There are two buffaloes also seized in respect of these dues and advertised for sale tomorrow.

I have advised the men to send in a petition to you in respect of these matters and I hope that the petition has been duly delivered to you and I venture to trust that their prayer as to the postponement of the sale will at least be granted. I have got what I consider to be striking proof about the valuation of the crops in Wadthal which I would like, if I may, to discuss with you, and study your own valuation papers, so that I may check and if and when necessary correct myself. I shall thank you if you will favour me with an appointment.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 10634. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

164. FOREWORD TO VOLUME OF GOKHALE'S SPEECHES

[Before *February 19, 1918*]

As I was the first to come by the idea of bringing out a translation of the speeches of the late mahatma Gokhale on his death anniversary, it is in a way appropriate that I myself write the foreword to the first volume. It is hoped that we will keep on celebrating the Gokhale anniversary. Every time to sing devotional songs, make speeches and then disperse is very much of a waste of time with no gain to anyone. In order that people may attach more importance to action than to speech-making and that they may derive some tangible

[1]From the content it is evident that this letter was written the day after Gandhiji's arrival at Nadiad to conduct an investigation into the reported failure of crops in the Kheda district. Gandhiji reached Nadiad on February 16, 1918.

[2]Collector, Kheda District

benefit from the annual celebrations, the organizers of the anniversary resolved last year to publish, on the occasion, a useful book in the mother tongue. They decided, at the same time, what book was to be published and, naturally enough, the choice fell on the speeches of the late mahatma.

It was everyone's wish that the translation should be an outstanding work in Gujarati literature and that every effort should be made to preserve in the translation the beauty of the holy word of the mahatma as it stands in the original. This could not be secured with money but only through voluntary services. These we obtained, but, even so, the future alone can say whether the desired result has been achieved. The part to which this is a foreword has been translated by Shri Mahadev Haribhai Desai. This is no occasion to say anything of him by way of introduction. I shall only mention that he is a lover of Gujarati literature. He is no stranger to the subject; besides, he is one of the thousands of the late mahatma's votaries. He has carried out his task with great enthusiasm and devotion and one may justifiably hope, therefore, that this translation will earn a place in Gujarati literature.

During last year's anniversary celebrations, as soon as the Home Rule League of Bombay learnt that a decision to publish the volume was about to be announced, its secretaries wired an offer of generous help and later sanctioned a big amount, no less than three thousand rupees, for this project; and so the organizing committee had little worry left for collection of funds and its desire to ensure beauty of printing and the general get-up was satisfied even in these times of rising prices. The Home Rule League deserves congratulations on this large-hearted help. The foregoing paragraphs are but a foreword to the Foreword. In the Foreword itself, one must write something about the departed soul. What could a disciple, however, write about his master? How could he write it? It would be presumptuous for a disciple to do so. The true disciple merges himself in the guru and so can never be a critic of the guru. *Bhakti* or devotion has no eye for shortcomings. There can be no cause for complaint if the public do not accept the eulogies of one who refuses to analyse the merits and shortcomings of his subject. The disciple's own actions are, in fact, his commentary on the master. I have often said that Gokhale was my political guru. That is why I consider myself incapable of writing about him. Whatever I write would seem imperfect in my eyes. I believe the relationship between the master and the disciple is purely spiritual. It is not based on arithmetical calculations. The relationship

is formed on the instant, spontaneously, as it were and never snaps once it is formed.

This relationship of ours was formed in the year 1896.[1] I had no idea of its nature then; nor had he. About the same time, I had the good fortune to wait on the master's master [Justice Mahadev Govind Ranade[2]], Lokamanya Tilak, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta[3], Justice Badruddin Tyabji[4], Dr Bhandarkar[5], as also the leaders of Madras and Bengal. I was but a raw youth. Everyone of them showered his love on me. These were among the occasions which I can never forget while I live. But the peace of mind which my contacts with Gokhale gave me, those with others did not. I do not remember that any special affection was shown to me by Gokhale. If I were to measure and compare the love I experienced from them all, I have an impression that no one else showed such love to me as Dr. Bhandarkar did. He told me: "I do not take any part in public affairs now. But, for your sake I will preside over the public meeting on the issue which you have at heart." Still, it was only Gokhale who bound me to himself. Our new relationship did not take shape immediately. But in 1902[6], when I attended the Calcutta Congress, I became fully aware of my being in the position of a disciple. Now, again, I had the privilege of meeting almost all the leaders mentioned above. I saw that Gokhale had not only not forgotten me but had actually taken me under his charge. This had its tangible results. He dragged me to his quarters. During the Subjects Committee meeting, I felt helpless. While the various resolutions were under discussion, I could not, right till the end, gather enough courage to declare that I too had a resolution in my pocket on South Africa. It was not to be expected that the night would halt for my sake. The leaders were impatient to finish the business on hand. I was trembling with the fear that they would rise to leave any moment. I could not summon up courage to remind even Gokhale of my business. Just then he cried out, "Gandhi has a

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Meeting, Madras", 26-10-1896.

[2] 1842-1901; eminent judge, reformer, and a founder of the Indian National Congress; *vid*

[3] 1845-1915; prominent Indian leader, twice president of the Congress.

[4] 1844-1906; judge, legislator, president of the Congress;

[5] R.G. Bhandarkar (1837-1925); orientalist and reformer;.

[6] This is evidently a slip; the year was 1901.

resolution on South Africa; we must take it up."[1] My joy knew no bounds. This was my first experience of the Congress and I put great store by resolutions passed by it. There is no counting the occasions [of our meeting] that followed, and they are all sacred to me. For the present, however, I think I would do well to state what I have believed to be the guiding principle of his life and conclude this Foreword.

In these difficult and degenerate times, the pure spirit of religion is hardly in evidence anywhere. Men who go about the world calling themselves *rishi*, *munis* and sadhus rarely show this spirit in themselves. Obviously, they have no great treasure of the religious spirit to guard. In one beautiful phrase, Narasinha Mehta, best among the lovers of God, has shown in what that spirit consists:

Vain, vain all spiritual effort
Without meditation on the Self.

He said this out of his own vast experience. It tells us that religion does not necessarily dwell even in the man of great austerities or a great yogi who knows all the procedures of Yoga. I have not the least doubt that Gokhale was wise in the truth of the Self. He never pretended to observe any religious practice but his life was full of the true spirit of religion. Every age is known to have its predominant mode of spiritual effort best suited for the attainment of *moksha*. Whenever the religious spirit is on the decline, it is revived through such an effort in tune with the times. In this age, our degradation reveals itself through our political condition. Not taking a comprehensive view of things, we run away with the belief that, if but our political conditions improved, we would rise from this fallen state. This is only partially true. To be sure, we cannot rise again till our political condition changes for the better ; but it is not true that we shall necessarily progress if our political condition undergoes a change, irrespective of the manner in which it is brought about. If the means employed are impure, the change will be not in the direction of progress but very likely the opposite. Only a change brought about in our political condition by pure means can lead to real progress. Gokhale not only perceived this right at the beginning of his public life but also followed the principle in action. Everyone had realized

[1] For Gandhiji's speech while moving the resolution, *vide* "Speech at Calcutta Congress", 27-12-1901.

that popular awakening could be brought about only through political activity. If such activity was spiritualized, it could show the path to *moksha*. He placed this great ideal before his Servants of India Society and before the whole nation. He firmly declared that, unless our political movement was informed with the spirit of religion, it would be barren. The writer who took notice of his death in *The Times of India* drew particular attention to this aspect of Gokhale's mission and, doubting if his efforts to create political *sannyasis* would bear fruit, warned the Servants of India Society, which he left as his legacy, to be vigilant. In this age, only political *sannyasis* can fulfil and adorn the ideal of *sannyasa*, others will more likely than not disgrace the *sannayasi's* saffron garb. No Indian who aspires to follow the way of true religion can afford to remain aloof from politics. In other words, one who aspires to a truly religious life cannot fail to undertake public service as his mission, and we are today so much caught up in the political machine that service of the people is impossible without taking part in politics. In olden days, our peasants, though ignorant of who ruled them, led their simple lives free from fear ; they can no longer afford to be so unconcerned. In the circumstances that obtain today, in following the path of religion they must take into account the political conditions. If our sadhus, *rishis, munis*, maulvis and priests realized the truth of this, we would have a Servants of India Society in every village, the spirit of religion would come to prevail all over India, the political system which has become odious would reform itself, India would regain the spiritual empire which, we know it enjoyed in the days gone by, the bonds which hold India under subjection would be severed in an instant, and the ideal state which an ancient seer described in his immortal words would come into being: "Iron would be used not for forging swords but for forging ploughshares, and the lion and the lamb would be friends and live together in love." Gokhale's ideal in his life was to labour to bring about this state of affairs. That, indeed, is his message and I believe that whoever reads his writings with an open mind will recognize this message in every word of his.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Gopal Krishna Gokhalenan Vyakhyano, Vol. I

165. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

NADIAD,
Wednesday [*February 20, 1918*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Anasuyabehn[2] needs a man badly. So I have decided to put you there. Render her all help. Stay only with her, get acquainted with all the labourers and keep them peaceful. See to all. . . .[3] etc. Keep me informed.

I will see the Collector tomorrow.

I expect to meet you on the 25th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32869

166. SPEECH AT BHAGINI SAMAJ, BOMBAY[4]

[*February 20, 1918*]

DEAR SISTERS AND BROTHERS OF BHAGINI SAMAJ,

I am thankful to you for asking me to preside over this annual function of the Samaj. Your president, I really feel, should be a woman, though you may seek men's help or advice in your work. The Samaj is dedicated to the noble aim of women's regeneration and, in the same way that another's *tapascharya* does not help one to ascend to heaven, men cannot bring about the regeneration of women. I don't mean to suggest that men do not desire it, or that women would not want to have it through men's help;

[1] From *Nadiad* and *Wednesday* in the date-line as also from the contents; Gandhiji met the Kheda Collector on February 21, 1918 and was at Nadiad the previous day which was a Wednesday. *Vide* "Chronology".

[2] Anasuya Sarabhai

[3] One word is illegible here.

[4] Gandhiji presided over the annual gathering of the Bhagini Samaj, a women's welfare organization of Bombay, held in the Morarji Gokuldas Hall. The report of the speech in *The Hindu* is incomplete; the paragraphs not found in it are supplied here from the Gujarati report in *Mahatma Gandhini Vicharsrishti*, and marked by an asterisk.

I merely wish to place before you the principle that it is only through self-help that an individual or a race can rise. This is not a new principle, but we often forget to act upon it.*

The Samaj is at present kept going by the enthusiasm of Bhai Karsandas Chitalia. I am looking forward to a time when one of you will take his place and release him from this Samaj for other work. Having dedicated his life wholly to the service of women, he will find out some work in the same field. The Samaj will come into its own when it elects its office-bearers from among its women members and gives a better account of itself than it does today. I have close associations, as you know, with both men and women, but I find that I can do nothing in the way of service to women without help from women workers. That is why I take ever occasion to protest in no uncertain terms that, so long as women in India remain ever so little suppressed or do not have the same rights [as men], India will not make real progress. Hence it will be all to India's honour if this Samaj succeeds completely in its aims.*

It is necessary to understand what we mean when we talk of the regeneration of women. It presupposes degeneration and, if that is so, we should further consider what led to it and how. It is our primary duty to have some very hard thinking on these points. In travelling all over India, I have come to realize that all the existing agitation is confined to an infinitesimal section of our people who are really a mere speck in the vast firmament. Crores of people of both the sexes live in absolute ignorance of this agitation. Full eighty-five per cent of the people of this country pass their innocent days in a state of total detachment from what is going on around them. These men and women, ignorant as they are, do their bit in life well and properly. Both have the same education or, rather, the absence of education, both are helping each other as they ought to do. If their lives are in any sense incomplete, the cause can be traced to the incompleteness of the lives of the remaining fifteen per cent. If my sisters of the Bhagini Samaj will make a close study of the lives of these 85 per cent of our people, it will provide them ample material for an excellent programme of work for the Samaj.

In the observations that I am going to make, I will confine myself to the 15 percent above mentioned and, even then, it would be out of place to discuss the disabilities that are common both to men and women. The point for us to consider is the

degeneration of our women relatively to our men. Legislation has been mostly the handiwork of men; and man has not always been fair and discriminate in performing that self-appointed task. What the authors of the various *smritis* have said about women can in no wise be defended. Child-marriage, the restrictions on widows and such other evils owe their origin to the injunctions in the *smritis*. Women's being placed on a level with Sudras has done unimaginable harm to Hindu society. These statements of mine may have verbal similarity with the occasional attacks of Christians, but, apart from this similarity, there is no other common ground between us. The Christians, in their attacks, seek to strike at the roots of Hinduism. I look upon myself as an orthodox Hindu and my attack proceeds from the desire to rid Hinduism of its defects and restore it to its pristine glory. The Christian critic, by demonstrating the imperfection of the *smritis*, tries to show that they are just ordinary books. My attempt is to show that the imperfection of the *smritis* comes from interpolated passages, that is to say, verses inserted by persons accepted as *smritikaras*[1] in the period of our degeneration. It is easy to demonstrate the grandeur of the *smritis* minus these verses. I do not have the slightest desire to put up a weak defence of Hinduism, believing out of false pride or in ignorance, and wanting others to believe, that there is no error in the *smritis* or in the other accepted books of the Hindu religion. I am convinced that such an effort will not raise the Hindu religion but will degrade it rather. A religion which gives the foremost place to truth can afford no admixture of untruth.*

The largest part of our effort in promoting the regeneration of women should be directed towards removing those blemishes which are represented in our shastras as the necessary and ingrained characteristics of women. Who will attempt this and how ? In my humble opinion, in order to make the attempt we will have to produce women, pure, firm and self-controlled as Sita, Damayanti and Draupadi. If we do produce them, such modern sisters will receive the same homage from Hindu society as is being paid to their prototypes of yore. Their words will have the same authority as the shastras. We will feel ashamed of the stray reflections on them in our *smritis* and will soon forget them. Such revolutions have occurred in Hinduism in the past and will still take place in the future, leading to the stability of our faith. I pray to God that this Samaj might soon produce such

[1] Authors of *smritis*

women as I have described above.

We have now discussed the root cause of the degeneration of our women and have considered the ideals by the realization of which the present condition of our women can be improved. The number of women who can realize those ideals will be necessarily very few and, therefore, we will now consider what ordinary women can accomplish if they will try. Their first attempt should be directed towards awakening in the minds of as many women as possible a proper sense of their present condition. I am not among those who believe that such an effort can be made through literary education only. To work on that basis would be to postpone indefinitely the accomplishment of our aims ; I have experienced at every step that it is not at all necessary to wait so long. We can bring home to our women the sad realities of their present condition without, in the first instance, giving them any literary education.

I am just returning from a district of Bihar. I once met there a large group of women from respectable families of the place. They all observed purdah. In my presence, they removed the purdah as they would in the presence of a brother. These women had had no education. Just before I went to meet them, an English woman had been to see me. She had called on me where I sat surrounded by a number of men. To meet the Hindu women, on the other hand, I had to go into a room specially set apart. Half seriously, I suggested that we could go to the room where the men were sitting. All enthusiasm, they said that they would be only too happy to do so, but that the custom being what it was, they would need the men's permission. They did not like the purdah at all [they said] and wanted me to see that the custom was ended. While there is tragedy in these words, they also bear out what I have said above. These women had realized their condition without having had any literary education. They were right in asking my help, but I wanted them to have the strength themselves to win their freedom and they admitted, too, that they had such strength. I have come away full of hope that we shall soon hear that these women have flung away the purdah. Women who would ordinarily be considered uneducated are doing excellent work in Champaran. They are waking up their extremely backward sisters to the freedom which they themselves enjoy.*

Woman is the companion of man, gifted with equal mental capacities. She has the right to participate in the very minutest detail in

the activities of man and she has an equal right of freedom and liberty with him. She is entitled to a supreme place in her own sphere of activity as man is in his. This ought to be the natural condition of things and not as a result only of learning to read and write. By sheer force of a vicious custom, even the most ignorant and worthless men have been enjoying a superiority over women which they do not deserve and ought not to have. Many of our movements stop half-way because of the condition of our women. Much of our work does not yield appropriate results ; our lot is like that of the penny-wise and pound-foolish trader who does not employ enough capital in his business.

If I am right, a good many from among you, members of this Samaj, should go out to educate your ignorant sisters about their real condition. In practical terms, this means that you should spare as much time as you can to visit the most backward localities in Bombay and give the women there what you have yourselves received. If you have joined men in their religious, political and social activities, acquaint them with these. If you have gained any special knowledge about the bringing up of children, impart it to them. If you have studied and realized in your own experience the benefits of clean air, clean water, clean and simple food, and exercise, tell these women about them too. In this way, you will raise yourselves and them.*

But although much good and useful work can be done without a knowledge of reading and writing, yet it is my firm belief that you cannot always do without a knowledge thereof. It develops and sharpens one's intellect and it stimulates our power of doing good. I have never placed an unnecessarily high value on the knowledge of reading and writing. I am only attempting to assign its proper place to it. I have pointed out from time to time [that] there is no justification for men to deprive women or to deny to them equal rights on the grounds of their illiteracy ; but education is essential for enabling women to uphold these natural rights, to improve them and to spread them; again, the true knowledge of self is unattainable by the millions who are without such education. Many a book is full of innocent pleasure and this will be denied to us without education. It is no exaggeration to say that a human being without education is not far removed from an animal. Education, therefore, is necessary for women as it is for men. Not that the methods of education should be identical in both cases. In the first place, our State system of education is full of error and productive of harm in many respects. It should be

eschewed by men and women alike. Even if it were free from its present blemishes, I would not regard it as proper for women from all points of view. Man and woman are of equal rank, but they are not identical. They are a peerless pair, being supplementary to one another; each helps the other so that without the one the existence of the other cannot be conceived, and, therefore, it follows as a necessary corollary from these facts that anything that will impair the status of either of them will involve the equal ruin of them both. In framing any scheme of women's education, this cardinal truth must be constantly kept in mind. Man is supreme in the outward activities of a married pair and, therefore, it is in the fitness of things that he should have a greater knowledge there of. On the other hand, home life is entirely the sphere of woman and, therefore, in domestic affairs, in the upbringing and education of children, women ought to have more knowledge. Not that knowledge should be divided into watertight compartments or that some branches of knowledge should be closed to any one ; but unless courses of instruction are based on a discriminating appreciation of these basic principles, the fullest life of man and woman cannot be developed.

I should say a word or two as to whether English education is or is not necessary for our women. I have come to the conclusion that, in the ordinary course of our lives, neither our men nor our women need necessarily have any knowledge of English. True, English is necessary for making a living and for active association in our political movements. I do not believe in women working for a living or undertaking commercial enterprise. The few women who may require or desire to have English education can very easily have their way by joining the schools for men. Introduction of English education in schools meant for women could only lead to a prolongation of our helplessness. I have often read and heard people saying that the rich treasures of English literature should be opened alike to men and women. I submit in all humility that there is some misapprehension in assuming such an attitude. No one intends to close these treasures against women while keeping them open for men. There is none on earth able to prevent you from studying the literature of the whole world if you are fond of literary tastes. But when courses of education have been framed with the needs of a particular society in view, you cannot supply the requirements of the few who have cultivated a literary taste.

Their needs can be met, after we are fully developed, by separate

institutions as in Europe. When, through a well-planned scheme, large numbers of men and women begin to receive education and those who remain without it are looked upon as exceptions, we shall have plenty of writers in our languages to bring to us the pleasures of other literatures. If we seek the pleasure of literature always in English our languages will remain poor, which means that we shall remain a poor people. The habit of deriving enjoyment only from a foreign literature is, I must say, if you will pardon me the simile, like the thief's habit of deriving pleasure from stolen goods. The pleasure which Pope found in the *Iliad* he placed before the people in English of superb beauty. The pleasure which Fitzgerald derived from the *Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam made him render it in English of such power that millions of Englishmen keep his poem with them as they do the Bible. The *Bhagavad Gita* filled Edwin Arnold with transports of joy ; he did not ask the people to learn Sanskrit in order that they may have the same joy, but put the work into English which would stand beside Sanskrit or Pali, pouring his very soul into the language, and thus shared his joy with his people. Our being so very backward is a reason why such work should be undertaken among us on a much larger scale. This will be possible only when a scheme such as I have suggested has been formulated and is firmly adhered to. If only we can give up our infatuation with English and our lack of confidence in ourselves or in the capacity of our languages, the task is not difficult.*

In asking our men and women to spend less time in the study of English than they are doing now, my object is not to deprive them of the pleasure which they are likely to derive from it, but I hold that the same pleasure can be obtained at less cost and trouble if we follow a more natural method. The world is full of many a gem of priceless beauty; but then those gems are not all of English setting. Other languages can well boast of productions of similar excellence; all these should be made available to our common people and that can only be done if our own learned men will undertake to translate them for us in our own languages.

Merely to have outlined a scheme of education as above is not to have removed the bane of child-marriage from our society or to have conferred on our women an equality of rights. Let us now consider the case of our girls who disappear, so to say, from view after marriage. They are not likely to return to our schools. Conscious of

the unspeakable and unthinkable sin of the child-marriage of their daughters, their mothers cannot think of educating them or of otherwise making their dry life a cheerful one. The man who marries a young girl does not do so out of any altruistic motives, but through sheer lust. Who is to rescue these girls ? A proper answer to this question will also be a solution of the woman's problem. The answer is albeit difficult, but it is the only one. There is, of course, none to champion her cause but her husband. It is useless to expect a child-wife to be able to bring round the man who has married her. The difficult work must, therefore, for the present at least, be left to man. If I could, I would take a census of child-wives and would find the friends of their husbands and through such friends, as well as through moral and polite exhortations, I will attempt to bring home to them the enormity of their crimes in linking their fortunes with child-wives and will warn them that there is no expiation for that sin unless and until they have by education made their wives fit not only to bear children but also to bring them up properly, and unless, in the meantime, they live a life of absolute celibacy.

Thus there are many fruitful fields of activity before the members of the Bhagini Samaj for devoting their energies to. The field for work is so vast that, if resolute application is brought to bear thereon, the wider movements for reform may, for the present, well be left to themselves and great service can be done to the cause of Home Rule without so much as even a verbal reference to it. When printing presses were non-existent and scope for speech-making very limited, when one could hardly travel twenty-four miles in the course of a day instead of a thousand miles as now, we had only one agency for propagating our ideals and that was our 'acts'; and acts had immense potency. We are now rushing to and fro with the velocity of air, delivering speeches, writing newspaper articles, and yet we fall short of our accomplishments and the cry of despair fills the air. I for one am of opinion that, as in old days, our acts will have a more powerful influence on the public than any number of speeches and writings. It is my earnest prayer to your Association that its members should give prominence to quiet and unobtrusive work in whatever it does.

The Hindu, 26-2-1918, and *Mahatma Gandhini Vicharsrishti*

167. LETTER TO G. S. ARUNDALE

[SABARMATI,]
February 21, 1918

I have your letter. Just now I am immersed in one or two difficult matters. Thoughts do not come to me for the asking. I have to make my mind play upon a subject before I can write anything readable on it. I can merely say that I shall bear your letter in mind and try to send you something. The odds are that I shall fail unless the things I am handling are finished before the expected time.[1]

From the manuscript Mahadev: Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Dasai

168. LETTER TO FLORENCE A. WINTERBOTTOM[2]

[SABARMATI,]
February 21, 1918

I have allowed weeks to pass by without writing to you. Surely you know the reason why. Before telling you something about my activity, I want to answer an important question you have asked — a question which shows how closely you have been following my doings in this part of the world. You have reminded me of what I used to say in London, viz., that benign autocracy was the best form of Government, and have asked me how I reconcile [this with] my activity in connection with the Home Rule movement. I still retain the position held by me in London. But that form of Government is an impossibility today. India must pass through the throes of Parliamentary Government and, seeing that it is so, I naturally support a movement which will secure the best type of Parliamentary

[1] About this letter Mahadev Desai in his Diary writes: "This was intended for Arundale who, as Secretary of the National Education Promotion Society, requested Gandhiji to write an article for the Education Week. When Gandhiji came to know that the last date for giving the article was February 20, he said 'Thank God for this relief', and asked me to write to Arundale: 'I can't send an article before the date given by you because I received your letter only yesterday.' In a letter written at about this time to Sly, Gandhiji says, 'Anything dropping out is a positive relief."

[2] Secretary of the Union of Ethical Societies, whom Gandhiji met in London in 1906 and 1909; *vide* "Letter to Miss F. Winterbottom", 13-11-1906 & "Letter to T.J. Bennett", 16-11-1906 and "Deputation Notes [—III]", After 10-7-1909 & "Letter to H.S.L. Polak", 14-7-1909.

Government and replace the present bastardism which is neither the one nor the other. What is more, I take part in the movement only to the extent that I can enforce and popularize principles which, I know, must permeate all systems if they are to be of any use. Natesan's publication, a copy of which I have taken the liberty of asking him to send on to you, contains a translation of my address to the Gujarat Political Conference, which will more fully illustrate what I mean. I have delayed [writing] for one week hoping to deal with other matters. I must, however, no longer do so, but take some other opportunity of writing further.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

169. LETTER T0 GORDHANDAS PATEL

[SABARMATI,]
February 21, 1918

DEAR SHRI GORDHANBHAI[1],

The most respected Anasuyabehn, Shankarlal Banker and I have just returned from a meeting of workers. They said the mill-owners wanted them to give something in writing in return for a concession of eight annas. I have told them not to affix their signature to any document without consulting their advisers and also that we would advise them in a day or two what increase they could reasonably demand. They would serve their interests well, I told them, if they went by our advice and accepted the suggested figure. I politely explained yesterday to members of the Mill group my responsibility in the matter. I think the principle of arbitration is of far-reaching consequence and it is not at all desirable that the mill-hands should lose faith in it.[2] I find it impossible, therefore, to run away from this duty which has come to me unsought. Shankarlal Banker and Vallabhbhai Patel agree with me. It is not desirable, from the workers' point of view and yours, in fact from that of us all, that they remain

[1] Secretary, Ahmedabad Mill-owners' Association

[2] An Arbitration Board representing both parties to the dispute, with the Collector as Umpire, had been set up on February 14. The workers in some mills, however, went on strike owing to a misunderstanding.

without work, in a state of uncertainty. Banker has collected figures of what the Bombay mills pay. I shall be obliged if you send me, without delay, a statement of the wages paid by the local mills. I should also be happy if the Mill group could favour us with its views on the different categories of workers without in any way binding itself to accept our decision. If any of you could join us in our deliberations without being committed in any way, our conclusions would be the more reasoned for that. I am not particularly disposed to favour workers as workers; I am on the side of justice and often this is found to be on their side. Hence the general belief that I am on their side. I can never think of harming the great industry of Ahmedabad. I hope, therefore, that your Association will extend its full co-operation to us in this difficult task.[1] I should be happy to have an immediate reply to this letter. I have told the workers that, if possible, we would announce the results of our deliberations by Wednesday at the latest. Hence this hurry.

M.K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

170. LETTER TO J. GHOSAL

NADIAD,
February 22, 1918

DEAR MR. GHOSAL,

After leaving you yesterday, I went to Naika and Nawagam. I find that the condition of the villagers in these two villages is pitiable. I think that they are able to make out a very strong case for total remission. They tell me that they have had three successive bad seasons. I endeavour to find their anna valuation. I think it can be easily proved to be under four annas in every case. They say that their crops were inevitably damaged by the overflow of the Khari canal being turned on to their land. Their *rabi* crops are negligible. This is truer of Nawagam than of Naika and in neither case is the *rabi* crop on their acreage more than four annas and owing to the disease that

[1] On a study of the wage-scales in Ahmedabad and Bombay, Gandhiji later came to the conclusion that a 35 per cent increase in wages would be a fair demand. The mill-owners failed to assist Gandhiji with a definite opinion on this basis. The situation deteriorated.

has overtaken wheat crops any valuation that can be put upon the small area that has been placed under *rabi* cultivation is problematical. I find however that about fifteen notices of forfeitures have been served upon the villagers in Naika for failure to pay the revenue dues. The people in the surrounding villages give the same version as to their crops but I am unable as yet to make any submission on their behalf. I hope to finish my investigation in those parts very soon. May I request that the notices served on some of the inhabitants of Naika may be withdrawn and that the condition in the Daskroi be thoroughly inquired into.

I forgot to ask you, if you could, to furnish me with the names of persons by whom and villages in which undue pressure has been alleged to have been exercised upon persons selling milk to dairies.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10636. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

171. CABLE TO A. H. WEST[1]

[AHMEDABAD,
About *February 24, 1918*][2]

YOU MAY ENFORCE YOUR PLAN. GOOD LUCK.

Extract from a photostat of West's original typewritten letter: G. N. 7605

[1] To Gandhiji's proposal, in his letter of December 10, 1917, that West resort to agriculture for a living the latter replied by cable as follows: "Agriculture impossible. Will you lend Sam myself jobbing plant, papers, earn living Durban? Ultimately complete independence. Paper published English Gujarati Phoenix. Management editorship same time being. Cable reply." Gandhiji responded as above.

[2] In his letter of March 3, 1918, quoting the cable, West had acknowledged having received it a week earlier.

172. LETTER T0 G. K. DEODHAR

NADIAD,
February 26, 1918

MY DEAR DEODHAR[1],

I have your two letters and the report. I do feel that you have unconsciously injured the cause and have allowed yourself to be made a tool in Mr. Pratt's hands. You have based your statement about the undervaluation on the part of the *raiyats* on totally insufficient data. Amritlal Thakkar[2], who went into details, does not think that 3_ annas is an undervaluation. You know that the official valuation has undergone manipulation.

And how can it be said that the substantial concessions have been made when we know that not a single concession has yet been made? He was simply with us when Mr. Pratt said that postponement would be granted when the *rabi*[3] was over 25%. Do you realize that *rabi* does not include cotton, tobacco, *tuvar* [4] and *diveli* [5]?

Where was the necessity for publishing the report at all? When I entered upon the scene, you might well have left the judging of the moment of publication to me.

Lastly, why think that we can only gain what the officials give ? Why not feel that we *must* get what we deserve?

I feel that you are not doing justice to yourself or the cause you handle by attempting too much. You are ailing. You have more irons in the fire than you can handle. You should have boldly said you could not undertake the inquiry.

I know you will not misunderstand my letter. I love you too well to do you conscious injustice. The best expression I can give to my regard for you is to open out the door to my heart and let you see what there is. No friend can do more. He who does less is so much the less a friend.

You ought to listen to my prayer and give Amritlal to the work

[1] Gopal Krishna Deodhar (1879-1935) ; prominent worker of Sevasadan, a women's social service organization of Poona, and of the Servants of India Society

[2] 1869-1951; popularly known as Thakkar Bapa; devoted his life to the uplift or Harijans and aborigines.

[3] Winter crop

[4] Kind of pulse

[5] Castor-oil seed

in Gujarat. He will render great services to the Society because he will shine most in the work in Gujarat. The council work can be done somewhat by a man who has a head about him. The pariah work can only be done by a man with a heart to guide his head. A[mritlal] is that man.

Yours sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

173. LETTER TO J. GHOSAL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 26, 1918

DEAR MR. GHOSAL,

My co-workers and I have so far completed our investigation of a number of villages covering all the *talukas.* I attach hereto a list containing the names of such villages with the annawari found by us and hope shortly to send another containing the remaining villages. I have already explained to you the method adopted for finding the annawari. The *rabi* and the *kharif* now standing furnish tangible material enabling one to arrive at absolutely accurate results. I do not know that it is contended by any of your Talatis that the harvested *kharif* crops were in any but the rarest cases more than four annas. It is submitted that the crops still standing in the majority of the villages will not yield more than a four-anna harvest and I do hope that if you are not satisfied with the first-hand testimony[1] of myself and my co-workers, you will, whilst there is yet time, secure an independent valuation by appointing a joint committee of inspection.

I observe that hundreds of villagers have paid the first instalment as they say under pressure brought to bear upon them. Many have been made, so it appears, even to pay both the instalments at once.

[1] On arrival at Nadiad, on February 16, Gandhiji and his fellow workers had themselves divided into groups, each of which undertook investigation of crop conditions in a number of villages. In a week's time reports in regard to 425 out of 600 villages had become available and Gandhiji had personally investigated conditions in 30 villages. The findings formed the basis of his letter to the District authorities.

Many believe that they have been obliged to sell their cattle and other personal effects for paying the assessment. I am sure that you do not desire to collect on such terms. I hope, therefore that you will be pleased to grant full suspension in the cases of the villages in my list against which the annawari is put down at four annas or under. I am aware that half suspension has been granted in some cases.

Mohwa trees in several localities are being destroyed on a wholesale scale, partly on account of the Mohwa Act and partly also because of the prevailing scarcity. Whatever may be the cause I am sure you will agree with me that such destruction should be prevented so far as possible and you will make it possible by granting the relief suggested by me. In this connection I wish to draw your attention to the fact that the villagers fall back, especially in times of scarcity, on the fruits of their trees for food. They should therefore be allowed at least for the current year unrestricted use of Mohwa flowers.[1]

An additional and strong reason for granting suspension is to be found in the ravages being made by the plague in the Kaira District. Thousands, as you are aware, are living in sheds erected at, to them, no small cost. Many families have lost their wage-earners. The villagers' ordinary activities have been interrupted for the time being.

I fear there will be within a very short period great scarcity of fodder. I have no doubt that this matter has not escaped your attention. In view of the suspense under which everybody in Kaira is living. I shall be obliged if you could let me know as early as is convenient to you your decision regarding the recommendation submitted by me. I need hardly add that I am at your service should you desire my presence. I should perhaps say that I may have to leave for Delhi first of March.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10637. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1]Regarding this the addressee replied that the question was to come up before the Council for consideration.

174. AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS' STRIKE

February 26, 1918

LEAFLET NO. 1[1]

The lock-out commenced on February 22. From that date the workers of the Weaving Department have been compelled to go without work. When the mill-owners issued notices withdrawing the Plague Bonus and there was unrest because of this, the employers resolved to get the dispute settled by arbitration and it was assumed that the workers would agree. Accordingly, the mill-owners resolved, on February 14, to appoint an arbitration board to decide what increase in lieu of the Plague Bonus was justified by the increase in the cost of living. Mahatma Gandhi, Shri Shankarlal Banker and Shri Vallabhbhai Patel representing the workers, and Sheth Ambalal Sarabhai, Sheth Jagabhai Dalpatbhai and Sheth Chandulal representing the employers, with the Collector as Chairman, were appointed to arbitrate. Thereafter, workers in some of the mills struck work owing to a misunder-standing. That was a mistake and the workers were ready to rectify it. The employers, however, thought that the workers were in the wrong in striking before the Award was given by the arbitrators and that, therefore, they would be justified in cancelling their resolution regarding arbitration and this they did. They simultaneously passed a resolution to the effect that workers be paid their due wages and be discharged if they were not content with a 20 per cent increase. The weavers were not satisfied and accepted discharge, and the lock-out by the employers commenced. But the arbitrators for the workers felt it their responsibility to tell the workers, under the circumstances, what increase they could properlydemand. But before doing so, they consulted amongst themselves and, after giving full consideration to the interests of both the mill-owners and

[1] Apart from visits to workers' houses and public meetings for educating the workers about the struggle, it was decided to "issue instructive leaflets every day with a view to fixing firmly in their minds the principles and significance of the struggle, and to supply them with simple but elevating literature which would conduce to their mental and intellectual development and enable them to leave for posterity a heritage of the means for its progress." The leaflets were issued in the name of Anasuyabehn Sarabhai but, as stated by Mahadev Desai in *Ek Dharmayuddha*, of which *A Righteous Struggle* was the English edition, they were in fact written by Gandhiji. This leaflet appeared on the fifth day of the lock-out. The leaflets were read out at the public meetings in the evenings.

the workers and to all the other circumstances, decided that an increase of 35 per cent was justified and that the workers be advised accordingly. But before doing so they intimated their intention to the mill-owners and promised to consider if they had anything to say against it. The employers did not express their view on this matter. The workers, whose demand was for a 50 per cent increase, withdrew it and resolved to ask for a 35 per cent increase.

WORKERS' PLEDGE

The workers have resolved:

(1) that they will not resume work until a 35 per cent increase on the July wages is secured;

(2) that they will not, during the period of the lock-out, cause any disturbance or resort to violence or indulge in looting, nor damage any property of the employers or abuse anyone, but will remain peaceful.

How the workers can succeed in their pledge will be discussed in the next leaflet.

If workers have anything to tell me[1], they are welcome to see me at my place at any hour of the day.

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

175. LETTER ON KHEDA SITUATION [2]

February 26, 1918

I read your letter on the Gujarat Sabha. It is the duty of all of us to do something for the people of Kheda. If the Sabha failed to discharge this duty, I think it would forfeit its right to its name.

The responsibility for the advice that is being given to the people is chiefly mine. Their case is that the crops have been less than four annas. The Government admits that, when the crop is less than four annas, no revenue can be collected from the ryots that year. If the Government does not grant the ryots' demands, they have only one course open to them and that is to refuse to pay revenue to the Government and even let it auction their properties.

[1] Anasuyabehn, to whom workers frequently went for advice during the struggle

[2] Particulars of the addressee are not known.

Assessment is in proportion to the capacity of the land. It is quite plain that, if the land does not yield anything, no tax can be collected. The Government's regulation permitting payment by instalments is not a favour but an absolute necessity.

I perceive, however, that the difference of opinion between you and the Sabha on this issue is likely to remain. For public workers to tolerate such differences is but a part of their job. Both points of view may be placed before the people; it will then be for them to choose.

It seems self-evident to me that there is nothing unlawful if, to express one's sense of injustice, one refuses to pay a tax, in a perfectly civil manner, and lets it be collected [forcibly].

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

176. SPEECH T0 AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS[1]

SABARMATI,

February 26, 1918

Today is the fifth day of the lock-out. Some of you probably think that everything will be all right after a week or two of suffering. I repeat that, though we may hope that our struggle will end early, we must remain firm even if that hope is not realized and must not resume work even if we have to die. Workers have no money but they possess a wealth superior to money—they have their hands, their courage and their fear of God. If a time comes when you have to starve, have confidence that we shall eat only after feeding you. We shall not allow you to die of starvation.[2]

Some workers say that we can demand more than 35 per cent. I say you can demand even a 100 per cent increase. But it would be unjust if you do so. Be content, in the present circumstances, with what you have demanded. If you ask for more, it will pain me. We cannot

[1] The workers gathered every evening, during this time, under a *babul* tree on the banks of the Sabarmati. Gandhiji addressed them. Mahadev Desai records: "Very few except those who attended these meetings know what historic incidents occurred under that *babul* tree."

[2] The workers' advisers had taken a pledge to this effect.

demand anything unreasonable from anybody. I think that the demand for 35 per cent is quite fair.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

177. PRAYER DISCOURSE AT ASHRAM[2]

February 27, 1918

I have always said that it is not only against Government that satyagraha can be employed. It can be employed in any situation, against any person or body. We see examples of this just now. In Kheda, satyagraha has been going on against the Government and in Ahmedabad against the rich and also against the scriptures on the issue of the untouchables. My feeling is that we are bound to win on all these issues. Truth is on our side. In Kheda, the Government was high-handed and we had no option but to offer satyagraha against it. If we don't succeed, the reason will be our own limitations and not anything inherent in satyagraha. We succeeded in Bihar because there I got very sincere co-workers. Here I don't see the same sincerity, but I am having more than I had expected. The situation that has developed in Ahmedabad is also very heart-warming. I feel like repeating to you what the Collector told me yesterday, something which I have not mentioned anywhere else. I think I can say it in the Ashram. The Collector did not mean it as mere formality ; he said what he really felt. For the first time in his life, he said, he saw here a struggle between workers and mill-owners conducted with mutual regard. I, too, don't think I have ever observed as good relations between the parties as here. As you see, Shri Ambalal[3] is on the other side in this struggle but he dined here yesterday. When I told him that he was to do so again today, he understood my meaning. He saw why I wanted him to dine with me and immediately agreed. What could be more beautiful than this ? If we have the firmness and purity and display the single-minded devotion which the circumstances require, I

[1] The rest of the speech is not available. Reports of speeches were deliberately withheld from the newspapers. Portions of Gandhiji's speeches and discourses on the subjects of the leaflets were given by Mahadev Desai in his book.

[2] It was customary for Gandhiji to address the gathering at the early morning prayers.

[3] Ambalal Sarabhai

think we shall not fail. I am not in a position to keep you informed of all that is happening ; you will be the better able to maintain self-discipline for not being so informed. In the present situation, we have only to get ready to work, if required. All that we need to do for the purpose is to cultivate firmness and self-discipline.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

178. AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS' STRIKE

February 27, 1918

LEAFLET NO. 2

We saw in yesterday's leaflet what the workers' pledge was. We have now to consider what we should do to carry out that pledge. We know that the employers have crores of rupees and the workers have nothing. If workers have no money however, they have hands and feet with which they can work, and there is no part of the world which can do without workers. Hence, if only he knows it, the worker holds the key to the situation. Wealth is unavailing without him. If he realizes this, he can be sure of success. But the worker who would wield such power must possess certain qualities of character, without which he would be at the mercy of others. Let us see what these qualities are.

1. The worker should be truthful. There is no reason for him to tell a lie. Even if he tells a lie, he will not get the desired wage. The truthful man can be firm and a worker who is firm is never defeated.

2. He should possess courage. Many of us become permanent slaves through fear of what might happen to us if we lost our jobs.

3. He should have a sense of justice. If he asks for wages higher than his deserts, there will be hardly anyone who will employ him. The increase we have demanded in this struggle is reasonable. We should, therefore, have faith that sooner or later we are bound to get justice.

4. He will not be angry with his employer nor bear him any grudge. After all, when everything is over, the worker is to serve under him. Every human being is liable to err. We think the employers are in the wrong in refusing the increase asked for. If we remain straightforward till the end, the employers are sure to revise their attitude. At present they are angry. Also, they suspect that, if the present demands of the workers are granted, they will repeatedly harass them. To remove this

suspicion, we should do our utmost to reassure the employers by our behaviour. The first thing to that end is to harbour no grudge against them.

5. Every worker should remember that the struggle is bound to involve suffering. But happiness follows suffering voluntarily undertaken. It is but suffering for the worker to be denied a wage sufficient to enable him to make both ends meet. Because of our ignorance, however, we endure this and manage to live somehow. Seeking a remedy against this suffering, we have told the employers that it is not possible for us to maintain ourselves without the wage increase demanded and that, if it is not granted to us and we are not saved from continuous starvation, we would rather starve right now. How long will the employers remain unmoved by our suffering ?

6. Lastly, the poor have their saviour in God. Our duty is to make the effort and then, remain fully assured that we are bound to get what He has ordained for us, remain peaceful while our request is not yet granted.

A worker who behaves in this manner will never find it difficult to keep his pledge. We shall discuss in tomorrow's leaflet how the workers may maintain themselves during the period of the lock-out.

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

179. LETTER TO J. GHOSAL

SABARMATI,

February [*27*][1], *1918*

DEAR MR. GHOSAL,

I had a chat with Mr. Pratt today and I suggested that if it was not presumptuous to ask, I should like to be allowed to accompany you in your tour of inquiry into a few typical villages. Could I do so and if I could will you please give me previous notice?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10639. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] The source has "28", evidently a slip. Gandhiji met F. G. Pratt on February 27.

180. LETTER TO SHUAIB QURESHI

February 27, 1918

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am ashamed of myself. I am most anxious to be there. Yet the facts seem to have conspired against me. The strike is still on and it is of such a delicate nature that I dare not leave it. The Kaira affair, too, involving as it does the rights of several lacs of people, demands my attention. I know that delay about Ali brothers is dangerous. I therefore stay where I am till I feel free. I know you will not have me do otherwise. Will you please apologize to Maulana Saheb ? Do please keep me informed of what goes on there.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

181. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

February 27, 1918

CHI. RAMDAS,

I keep worrying about you these days. I detect a note of despondency in your letters. It seems you feel the want of education. You feel, too, that you have not settled down to anything. If only you were with me, I would take you on my lap and comfort you. In the measure in which I fail to make you happy, I think I must be wanting in something. There must be something lacking in my love. Please think of any wrongs I may have done as unintended and forgive me. Children are entitled to much from their parents, being all submission to them. A mistake on the part of the parents will ruin their lives. Our scriptures place parents on a level with God. It is not always that parents in this world are fit to carry such responsibility. Being but earthly, they pass on the legacy to their children and so from generation to generation mere embodiments of selfishness come into this world. Why should you think that you are an unworthy son? If you are so, don't you see that that would prove that I was unworthy ? I don't want to be reckoned as unworthy ; how could you be so then? You may work for money, but you will not sacrifice truth for its sake and, though you have been thinking of marriage, you will exercise your judgement ; and hence I, for my part, will always think of you as

a worthy son.

You need not ask my forgiveness. You have given me no reason to be unhappy. I want you to come over to me after your experiments there are over. I shall do my part to see you married. If you want to study, I shall help you. If you but train your body to be as strong as steel, we shall see to the rest. At the moment, we are scattered wide apart. You there, Manilal in Phoenix, Deva in Badharwa, Ba in Bhitiharwa, Harilal in Calcutta, and myself ever on the move from place to place. May be, in this separation lies service to the nation and the way to spiritual uplift. Whether that is so or not, let us bear with a cheerful mind what has fallen to our lot.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

182. SPEECH TO AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS

February 27, 1918[1]

There are but few to give you good advice and courage. Many will try to discourage you, and these may include even your friends. Many will advise you to accept as much as you can get and be thankful to God for it. This sounds sweet but really it is very bitter advice. We must not admit helplessness except before God. Do not feel helpless even if you have no money, since, in any case, we have hands and feet, all of us. We shall be masters of our own affairs only if we use our hands and feet. We have to be firm, moreover, in order that we may have good standing with the mill-owners. In the circumstances in which we are placed, we should tell them that we are not prepared to submit to such pressure from them. You may seek my advice or that of somebody else ; in this matter, however, you can succeed without help from anyone. I and a hundred thousand more cannot bring you success. Your success depends on yourselves, upon your sincerity, upon your faith in God and upon your courage. We are merely your helpers. You have to stand on your own strength. Stand by your unwritten and unspoken pledge and success is yours.[2]

[1] The speech was delivered on the sixth day of the lock-out.
[2] The observations that follow related to the leaflet issued on the day.

If you had accepted defeat from the beginning, I would not have come to you, nor would have Anasuyabehn ; but you decided to put up a fight. The news has spread all over India. In due course, the world will know that Ahmedabad workers have taken a pledge, with God as their witness, that they will not resume work until they have achieved their object. In future, your children will look at this tree and say that their fathers took a solemn pledge under it, with God as their witness. If you do not fulfil that pledge, what will your children think of you ? The future of your posterity depends on you. I urge you all, do not allow yourselves to be dissuaded by anyone and give up the pledge ; stand by it firmly. You may have to starve to death. Even so, you should declare that you have taken the pledge with God as your witness ; you have taken it not because Gandhi wanted you to do so, but in the name of God. Stand by your pledge faithfully and continue the struggle. India will then see that you were prepared to be ruined but did not give up your pledge. Remember each word in these leaflets and keep the pledge conscientiously. There is no point in knowing them by heart mechanically. Many can repeat parrot-like the Holy Koran or the *Gita*; some can recite both the *Gita* and the Tulsi *Ramayana*. It is not enough, though, that one knows them by heart. If, having learnt them by heart, you put the teaching into practice, rest assured that none can whittle down your 35 per cent even by a quarter per cent.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

183. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI PATEL

[After *February 27, 1918*]

BHAISHRI RAOJIBHAI,

Bhai Ambalal's[2] death teaches us that we cannot afford to be slack even for a moment on the path of service [that we follow]. The King of Death may send his summons any time and, therefore, if we are content only to build castles in the air about national service but have no particular desire to exert ourselves, we may have to leave empty-handed and all our aspirations will have been to no purpose. Give my condolences to the people whom Ambalal has left behind

[1] Complete text of the speech is not available.

[2] A member of the Charotar Education Society and its first secretary

and tell them that the right way of cherishing his memory is to take his character as a model for us.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Jivanana Jharna

184. AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS' STRIKE

February 28, 1918

LEAFLET NO. 3

We have stated what the workers' pledge is and considered how best they may fulfil it. Today we shall discuss how the workers may keep themselves occupied during the lock-out. There is a proverb among us that an idle man busies himself with mischief. And so it is not at all good that ten thousand men should remain idle here in Ahmedabad. A man who has been working all day feels quite lost if he suddenly finds himself without work. The subject of this leaflet, therefore, is very important to us if we are to succeed in our aim. Let us start by saying what the workers ought not to do:

1. They should not waste time in gambling.
2. They should not spend it sleeping during the day.
3. They should not keep talking, all the time, of the employers and the lock-out.
4. Many are in the habit of frequenting tea-stalls and idling away their time in gossip or eating and drinking when they don't need to. Workers should keep away from such tea-stalls.
5. They should not go to the mills while the lock-out continues.

Now about what the workers should do:

1. Many workers' dwellings and their surroundings are generally dirty. They are unable to attend to this when they are at work. Now that they will have an enforced holiday, they should utilize some of the time in cleaning and repairing their houses and compounds.

2. Those who are literate should spend their time in reading books and increasing their knowledge. They can also teach the illiterate. This way, they will learn to help each other. Those who are fond of reading should go to the Dadabhai Library and Reading-Room or other free

reading-rooms.

3. Those who know skilled work, such as tailoring, cabinet-making or wood-carving and engraving, can seek work for themselves. If they fail to find any, they may approach us for help.

4. Every person ought to have some knowledge of a subsidiary occupation besides the one from which he earns his livelihood. Workers, therefore, can spend their time in learning some new and easy work. They will have our help in this.

In India, a person in one occupation thinks it below his dignity to follow any other. Besides, some occupations are considered low and degrading in themselves. Both these ideas are wrong. There is no question of inferiority or superiority among occupations which are essential for man's existence. Nor should we be ashamed of taking up an occupation other than the one we are used to. We believe that weaving cloth, breaking stones, sawing or splitting wood or working on a farm are all necessary and honourable occupations. We hope, therefore, that instead of wasting their time in doing nothing, workers will utilize it in some such useful work.

Having considered what workers should do, it is necessary to say what they may expect of me. We shall say this in the next leaflet.

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

185. LETTER TO F. G. PRATT

SABARMATI,
February 28, 1918

DEAR MR. PRATT,

Your frank talk of yesterday[1] encourages me to send you this letter.

The following is the position throughout India. A new order of things is replacing the old. It can be established peacefully or it must be preceded by some painful disturbances. What it will be lies largely in the hands of civil servants like yourself, more than in those of the King's representatives quite at the top. You desire to do good, but you rule not by right of love, but by the force of fear. The sum total of the

[1] Evidently, Gandhiji had an interview with the Commissioner on February 27, but no report of the discussion is available.

energy of the civil service represents to the people the British Constitution. You have failed, probably not through any fault of your own, to interpret it to the people as fully as you might have. The result is the people dread your power to punish and they miss the good you desire to do. The home-rulers so named have become impatient of your authority. They are a rapidly increasing power. They find no difficulty in showing to the people the dreadful side of the civil service rule. The people welcome them as their deliverers. With nothing but love of the land and distrust of the officials to guide them, they spread ill will. The order you represent knows this only too well and it naturally resents this insult. And so the gulf widens. I presumptuously believe that I can step into the breach and may succeed in stopping harmful disturbances during our passage to the new state of things. I want, at the end of it, to see established not mutual distrust and the law of force, but mutual trust and the law of love. I can only do so if I can show the people a better and more expeditious way of righting wrongs. It is obviously bad if they submit to your order through fear and harbour ill will. It is worse if, misguided, they resort to violence. The only dignified and truly loyal and uplifting course for them is to show disapproval by disobeying your orders which they may consider to be unjust, and by knowingly and respectfully suffering the penalty of their breach. I venture to think that advice to do so can be safely tendered in almost every conceivable case of a felt wrong, provided that all other recognized remedies have been previously tried. I wish you could see the viewpoint submitted by me. You will, I know, forgive me for my presumption in writing this letter. Of course, I have written this irrespective of the Kaira trouble. It is highly likely that I shall have the privilege of working with you on a more non-contentious platform. But I feel that it is better that you should know me with all my limitations.

Yours,

M.K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

186. SPEECH TO AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS

February 28, 1918

The heat and the strength acquired in breaking stones are not to be had by handling a pen.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

187. AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS' STRIKE

March 1, 1918

LEAFLET NO. 4

We have said how workers can fulfil their pledge and what they should do during the lock-out. In this leaflet we shall explain how we propose to help them. It is our duty to do this.

LET US STATE, FIRST, WHAT WE CANNOT DO:

(1) We shall not help the workers in doing anything which is wrong.

(2) We shall have to abandon the workers and cease helping them if they do anything wrong or make inflated demands or commit violence.

(3) We can never wish ill to the employers ; in all that we do, we are bound to consider their interests. We shall promote the workers' interest while duly safeguarding the employers.

NOW ABOUT WHAT WE SHALL DO FOR THE WORKERS:

(1) We are with the workers so long as they conduct themselves well, as they have done so far.

(2) We shall do all we can to obtain for them 35 per cent increase in wages.

(3) We are, as yet, only entreating the employers. We have not tried so far to win public sympathy or educate public opinion. But we shall be prepared, if the situation demands it, to acquaint the whole of India with the workers' plight and hope that we shall succeed in obtaining public sympathy for our cause.

[1] Gandhiji made this observation while commenting on the last paragraph of Leaflet No. 3. The rest of the speech is not available.

(4) We shall not rest till the workers get what they are entitled to.
(5) We are making an effort to inform ourselves of the condition of the workers in its economic, moral and educational aspects. We shall show the workers how they may improve their economic condition ; we shall strive to raise their moral level; we shall think out and teach them ways and means of living in cleanliness and we shall work for the intellectual improvement of such of them as live in ignorance.

(6) We shall not ourselves eat or dress without providing food and clothing to such of the workers as are reduced to destitution in the course of the struggle.[1]

(7) We shall nurse the sick among them and get for them the services of *vaids* and doctors.

We have undertaken this task with a full sense of our responsibility. We consider the workers' demand to be entirely reasonable and it is because we believe that satisfaction of their demand will eventually serve rather than harm the employers' interests that we have taken up this cause.[2]

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

[1] The following formed part of the advisers' pledge: "If in this struggle any persons are reduced to starvation and are unable to get work, we shall feed and clothe them before we feed and clothe ourselves."

[2] Mahadev Desai in *A Righteous Struggle*, observes: "Every word contained in this leaflet was carried out literally."

188. LETTER TO SIR E. A. GAIT

SABARMATI,

March 1, 1918

SIR. E.A. GAIT[1]

LT.-GOVERNOR OF BIHAR & ORISSA

PATNA

Your kind letter of the 18th ultimo has been redirected here.[2] I have been wandering about in Gujarat attending to one or two rather delicate questions. Hence the delay in replying. Sir Frank Sly's version is quite correct and, as soon as the Bill becomes law, I shall endeavour to have the suits withdrawn. When we discussed the matter, we had not contemplated legalization of the agreement. Now that the enhancements are being legalized, subject to reduction after the year 1325[3], the planters' protection will not rest solely on my influence with the *raiyats*. I would nevertheless strain every nerve to see that the cases are withdrawn without resort to law. There is just a possibility of a few *raiyats* proving obdurate.

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran

[1] Sir Edward Albert Gait, Lt.-Governor, 1915-20

[2] Sir Edward Gait had written: "In connection with the legislation to carry out the recommendations of the Champaran Agrarian Committee Messrs Norman and Hill say that a number of suits are still pending with their *raiyats* in which the *sharahbeshi* enhancement is disputed. We referred the matter to Mr. Sly who says that the question of pending suits was discussed at the meeting between the Committee and the representative planters, and that you then agreed on behalf of the *raiyats* that such suits should be settled in accordance with the terms of the agreement, the *raiyats* no longer contesting the legality of *sharahbeshi* and paying the recorded rent in full up to *Fasli* 1325. Mr. Sly says he is sure that you will support him on this point, and, if so, I would ask you kindly to induce the *raiyats* to carry out the agreement which you made on their behalf."

[3] *Fasli* year, the harvest era introduced by Emperor Akbar, equivalent to 1918

189. LETTER TO AMBALAL SARABHAI

SABARMATI,
March 1, 1918

DEAR FRIEND,

Early this morning as I got up, I fell thinking what we were after. What would be the issue of what I had been doing ? And of what you had been doing ? I suppose, if I succeeded, you would accept the workers' demands; alternatively, if you hold firm till the last, the mill-hands will take to other occupations. If they go back on their resolve and accept the wages proposed by you, my efforts will have ended in nothing. These results, however, have no serious consequences for the people.

What about your efforts, though? If you succeed, the poor, already suppressed, will be suppressed still more, will be more abject than ever and the impression will have been confirmed that money can subdue everyone. If, despite your efforts, the workers succeed in securing the increase, you, and others with you, will regard the result as your failure. Can I possibly wish you success in so far as the first result is concerned ? Is it your desire that the arrogance of money should increase ? Or that the workers be reduced to utter submission ? Would you be so unkindly disposed to them as to see no success for you in their getting what they are entitled to, may be even a few pice more ? Do you not see that in your failure lies your success, that your success is fraught with danger for you ? How if Ravana had succeeded ? Do you not see that your success will have serious consequences for the whole society ? Your efforts are of the nature of *duragraha*[1]. My success everyone will accept as success. My failure, too, will not harm anyone ; it will only prove that the workers were not prepared to go farther than they did. An effort like mine is satyagraha. Kindly look deep into your heart, listen to the still small voice within and obey it, I pray you. Will you dine with me?

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] Holding on to wrong, as opposed to satyagraha, holding on to truth. The mill-owners remained obstinate at this time. Mahadev Desai thus analysed the situation: ". . .it appeared that the non-acceptance of the workers' demand by the employers was not due to their inability to pay 35 per cent, but to sheer obstinacy. They had adopted this perverse attitude fearing that if once the workers succeeded, they would be a source of constant nuisance and the advisers of labour would get a permanent footing."

190. SPEECH TO AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS

March 1, 1918[1]

Hitherto we have discussed the workers' pledge and what the workers are to do. We have now to declare in writing what our pledge is and what we have decided to do. We shall tell you what you should expect from us and what, in the sight of God, we have been planning to do. Whenever you see us committing mistakes or slackening in our efforts to carry out our pledge, you can confront us with it and censure us.[2]

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

191. AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS' STRIKE

March 2, 1918

LEAFLET NO. 5

We have so far considered the situation from our point of view. It is rather difficult to do so from that of the employers Workers' efforts may have one of these two results:

1. They may get a 35 per cent increase in wages, or
2. They may have to resume work without getting such increase.

If the workers get an increase, they will be benefited and the employers will have earned credit. If they have to resume work without any increase, they will be demoralized and obliged to bow before the employers as so many slaves. It is, therefore, in the interests of both sides that the workers get an increase. At any rate, a defeat will cost the workers very much indeed.

Employers' efforts too may have one of these two results:

1. They may concede the workers an increase.
2. They may not do so.

If the employers concede it, the workers will be contented and justice will have been done to them. The employers are afraid that, if the workers' demands are conceded, they will become overbearing. This fear is baseless. Even if workers are suppressed today, it is not impossible that, when opportunity arises, they will take to such ways. It

[1] The speech evidently refers to Leaflet No. 4

[2] The rest of the speech is not available.

is even possible that the workers, on being suppressed, will become vindictive. The history of the world shows that, wherever the workers have been suppressed, they have risen in revolt later when they got an opportunity. The employers feel that conceding the workers' demand will strengthen their advisers' influence on them. If the advisers are right in their stand, if they are devoted to the cause, the workers will never leave them whether they are defeated or victorious, and be it noted that the advisers also will not abandon the workers. Those who have dedicated themselves to service of others will not forsake it even if they have to incur the displeasure of those whom they oppose. The more cause for disappointment they have, the more devoted will they become in their service. Strive as they may, the employers will never succeed in dividing the advisers from the workers. What, then, will they get by defeating the workers ? The only reply can be: nothing but the workers' discontent. The employers will always distrust the suppressed workers.

By granting the increase as demanded, the employers will have contented workers. If the latter fail in their duty, the employers can always rely on the help of the advisers ; this way, they can end the loss now being caused to both sides. The workers, on their part, will ever remain grateful if their demand is met and there will be increased goodwill between them and the employers. Thus, the employers' success lies in that of the workers ; and the latter's defeat, likewise, will be their defeat. As against this way of pure justice, the employers have adopted the Western, or the modern, Satanic notion of justice.

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

192. AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS' STRIKE

[*March 3, 1918*][1]

LEAFLET NO. 6

Pure justice is that which is inspired by fellow-feeling and compassion. We in India call it the Eastern or the ancient way of justice. That way of justice which has no place in it for fellow feeling

[1] Leaflets numbered 5 and 8 have been assigned by Mahadev Desai to March 2 and March 5, respectively. Leaflets numbered 6 and 7 fall naturally on March 3 and March 4.

or compassion is known as Satanic, Western or modern justice. Out of compassion or regard, son and father concede many things to each other to the eventual benefit of both. One takes pride in giving up a claim and thinks of one's action as proceeding from strength, not weakness. There was a time in India when servants, passing from father to son, used to serve in the same family for generations. They were regarded and treated as members of the family. They suffered with the employers in their misfortunes and the latter shared the servants' joys and sorrows. In those days, India was reputed for a social order free from friction, and this order endured for thousands of years on that basis. Even now this sense of fellow-feeling is not altogether absent in our country. Where such an arrangement exists, there is hardly any need for a third party or an arbitrator. Disputes between a master and a servant are settled between themselves amicably. There was no room in this arrangement for increase or reduction in wages according as the changing needs of the two might dictate. Servants did not ask for higher wages when there was a dearth of servants and masters did not reduce wages when servants were available in plenty. This arrangement was based primarily on considerations of mutual regard, propriety, decorum and affection. This sense of mutual obligation was not then, as it is now, considered unpractical but ruled us in most of our affairs. History records that many great things have been achieved by our people because they had made this pure justice the law of their life. This is the Eastern or ancient justice.[1]

A totally different way of life prevails in the West today. It is not to be supposed that all persons in the West approve of the modern idea of justice. There are many saintly persons in the West who lead a blameless life, adopting the ancient standard. But in most public activities of the West at present, there is no place for fellow-feeling or compassion. It is considered just that a master pays his servant what he thinks fit. It is not considered necessary to think of the servants' needs. So also the worker can make his own demand, irrespective of the employer's financial condition and this is considered just. It is

[1] Mahadev Desai wrote, in regard to these observations: "Gandhiji had published these ideas years ago in *Indian Opinion* in his article on *Sarvodaya* based on Ruskin's book, *Unto This Last*. The same ideas, having matured in course of time, he discussed in these leaflets in simple, direct and forceful language." *Vide* "Letter to H.S.L. Polak", 14-10-1909.

just, they think, that everyone should look after his own interests and expect others to take these into account. The present war in Europe is fought on the same principle. No means is considered improper for defeating the enemy. Wars must have been fought even in the past, but the vast masses of the people were not involved in them. We would do well not to introduce into India this despicable idea of justice. When workers make a demand merely because they think themselves strong enough to do so, regardless of the employers' condition, they will have succumbed to the modern, Satanic idea of justice. The employers, in refusing to consider the workers' demands, have accepted this Satanic principle of justice, may be unintentionally or in ignorance. The employers ganging up against the workers is like raising an army of elephants against ants. If they had any regard for dharma, the employers would hesitate to oppose the workers. You will never find in ancient India that a situation in which the workers starved was regarded as the employers' opportunity. That action alone is just which does not harm either party to a dispute. We had confidently hoped that the Jain and *Vaishnava* employers in the capital city of this worthy land of Gujarat would never consider it a victory to bear down the workers or deliberately to give them less than their due. We are sure this wind from the West will pass as quickly as it has come. At any rate, we do not want to teach the workers what they do in the West these days. We wish to follow, and to make the workers follow, our ancient idea of justice as we have known it and to help them in that manner to secure their rights.

We shall consider, in the next leaflet, some of the evil consequences of the policy followed in the West in modern times.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

[1] According to Mahadev Desai, this and some of the succeeding leaflets were intended not only for the workers but also for the employers. Their aim was to convert the mill-owners, if possible, as much as to educate the workers.

193. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,

Maha Vad 5 [*March 3, 1918*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Santok and Ramdas arrived here yesterday. They will leave for Rajkot tomorrow.

Shri Khushalbhai and Narandas are against letting Krishna and Purushottam go, and so the idea has been given up. I too thought they were right. If Purushottam goes to Rajkot, we must also let him go to Morabi. If Krishna goes to Rajkot this time, we should have to let others, too, go to their own places. I thought, therefore, that, though you would have liked them to go, [it would be better] not to let them, especially as the elders, too, were of the same mind ....[1]

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5733

194. FRAGMENT OF LETTER[2]

March 3, 1918

BHAISHRI,

. . . We are so terribly anxious to live on that the hour of death—especially of those dear to us—always fills us with fear. I, for my part, have always felt that such occasions are in the nature of a real test for us. Anyone who is even faintly alive to the reality of the *atman* understands the true meaning of death. Why should such a one grieve needlessly? There is nothing new in these thoughts but, if recalled to us in the hour of misfortunes they bring us consolation. I state them in the hope that they will do this service to you.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] The available text of the letter is incomplete.

[2] The name of the addressee is not known.

195. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

March 3, 1918

x x x[1]

It bores me to see people blindly worshipping me. If they know me as I am and even then honour me, I can turn their honour to account in public work. I desire no honour if I have to conceal my religious beliefs in order to have it. I would even welcome being utterly despised for following the right path....[2]

There are a thousand things we desire. Knowing that one cannot have them all, one must be at peace.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

196. AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS' STRIKE

March 4, 1918

LEAFLET. NO. 7

South Africa is a large British Colony. The Europeans have been settled there for over four hundred years. They enjoy autonomy. Many European workers are employed in the railways of that country. These workers felt that they did not receive just wages. Instead of merely trying to get their wages increased, they thought of capturing the Government. That was unjust; it was Satanic justice. It increased the bitterness between the Government and the labour, and the whole of South Africa was in the grip of fear. Nobody felt secure. Ultimately, there was even open fighting between the parties and some innocent persons were killed. The military took over control everywhere. Both parties suffered heavily. Each desired to defeat the other. Neither cared for justice as such. Each side magnified the other's misdeeds. Neither had regard for the feelings of the other.

While this was going on, our workers behaved justly. When the railway strike was launched, a strike involving 20,000 Indian workers had already begun. We were fighting the Government of that country for justice, pure and simple. The weapon our workers employed was satyagraha. They did not wish to spite the Government, nor did they

[1] Some portion has been omitted in the source.
[2] *ibid*.

wish it ill. They had no desire to dislodge it. The European workers wanted to exploit the strike of the Indians. Our workers refused to be exploited. They said, "Ours is a satyagraha struggle. We do not desire to harass the Government. We will, therefore, suspend our struggle while you are fighting." Accordingly, they called off the strike.[1] We may call this true justice. Eventually, our workers succeeded and the Government, too, got credit because it did justice by accepting our demands. Our workers obeyed sentiment and did not seek to take advantage of the opponent's embarrassment. The end of the struggle saw better mutual regard between the Government and the people and we came to be treated with more respect. Thus, a struggle fought on the basis of true justice benefits both sides.

If we conduct our struggle on the same basis, with a sense of justice, if we bear no malice towards the employers and ask only or what is our right, not only shall we win but there will also be increased goodwill between the workers and the employers.

Another thing to observe from this instance is that, in satyagraha, both the sides need not be followers of truth. Even if one side alone follows it, satyagraha will finally succeed. The party, moreover, which fights with bitterness will lose its bitterness when this is not returned by the other side. If a man violently swings his hand in the air, he only strains it thereby. Similarly, bitterness is fed only by bitterness.

We may, therefore, rest assured that, if we fight on with firmness and courage, we are bound to win in the end.

Tomorrow we shall consider some instances of satyagraha.

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

197. SPEECH T0 AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS

March 4, 1918[2]

Just as our workers did not take advantage of the difficulties of the Government of South Africa, created by the strike of the European workers, but earned praise for themselves by suspending their campaign and thereby helping the Government, in the same way

[1] *Vide* "Interview to "Pretoria Neews", 9-1-1914.

[2] The speech was delivered on the eleventh day of the lock-out.

we should not seek to harass the mill-owners by taking advantage of any sudden crisis in their affairs but should run to their rescue.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

198. AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS' STRIKE

March 5, 1918

LEAFLET NO. 8

In this leaflet, we are not going to talk about satyagrahis who have won fame in the world. It would be more profitable for us and inspire us with strength to know what suffering common men like ourselves have found it possible to go through. Imam Hassan and Hussain were bold and resolute satyagrahis. We revere their names, but merely calling their examples to mind does not help us to become satyagrahis. We feel that there can be no comparison between our capacity and theirs. An equally memorable name is that of the devotee Prahlad. But we think that we are not capable of such devotion, resoluteness, love for truth and courage and so, in the end, we remain what we have been. Therefore, let us on this occasion think of what other persons like ourselves have done. Such a satyagrahi was Hurbatsingh[2]. He was an old man of 75 years. He had gone to South Africa on a five-year contract to work on an agricultural farm on a monthly wage of seven rupees. When the strike of 20,000 Indians, referred to in the last leaflet, commenced, he also joined it. Some strikers were jailed, and Hurbatsingh was among them. His companions pleaded with him and said, "It is not for you to plunge into this sea of suffering. Jail is not the place for you. No one can blame you if you do not join such a struggle." Hurbatsingh replied: "When all of you suffer so much for our honour, what shall I do by remaining outside? What does it matter even if I die in jail?" And, verily, Hurbatsingh died in jail and won undying fame. Had he died outside, no one would have noticed his death. But, as he died in jail, the Indian community asked for his dead body and hundreds of Indians joined his funeral procession.

[1] The rest of the speech is not available.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Indian Opinion", After 5-1-1914, "Immortal Hurbatsingh", 7-1-1914, "Letter to Indian Opinion", 18-3-1914, "The End", 8-7-1914 & "Speech at Farewell Banquet", 14-7-1914.

Like Hurbatsingh, was the Transvaal businessman Ahmed Mahomed Cachalia. By the grace of God he is still alive, and lives in South Africa where he looks after the Indian community and safeguards its honour. During the struggle in which Hurbatsingh sacrificed his life, Cachalia went to prison several times. He allowed his business to be ruined and, though he now lives in poverty, is respected everywhere. He saved his honour, though he had to pay heavily for it.

Just as an old labourer and a middle-aged businessman of repute stood by their word and suffered, so also did a girl of seventeen years. Her name was Valliamah [1]. She also went to jail for the honour of the community during that same struggle. She had been suffering from fever when she was imprisoned. In jail, the fever became worse. The jailer advised her to leave the jail, but Valliamah refused and with an unflinching mind completed her term of imprisonment. She died on the fourth or the fifth day after her release from jail.

The satyagraha of all the three was pure. All of them suffered hardships, went to jail but kept their pledge. There is no such cloud hanging over us. The utmost we have to suffer by keeping our pledge is to give up some of our luxuries and pull on somehow without the wages we earned. This is no very great task. It should not be difficult for us to do what our own brothers and sisters in our own time have done.

We shall consider this matter a little further in the next leaflet.

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

199. SPEECH TO AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS

March 5,1918[2]

In going to jail and defying the Government, these three sought nothing for themselves. These sisters and brothers of ours did not have to pay the tax. Cachalia was a big merchant and did not have to pay it. Hurbatsingh had migrated before the tax was imposed, so he, too, did not have to pay it. The law imposing the tax had not been

[1] Valliamah Moonsamy; *vide* "Letter to Indian Opinion", 18-3-1914, "Speech at Farewell Meeting", 8-7-1914, "Speech at Farewell Banquet", 14-7-1914 & "Tribute to Passive Resistance Martyrs", 15-7-1914.

[2] The remarks evidently refer to leaflet No. 8, and were made on this date.

brought into force at the place where Valliamah lived. And yet all these joined the struggle with the rest for the sake of the honour of Indians in South Africa. Your struggle, on the other hand, is for your own good. It should, therefore, be easier for you to remain firm. May their example strengthen you and make you resolute.

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

200. AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS' STRIKE

March 6, 1918

LEAFLET NO. 9

Yesterday we discussed the examples of three satyagrahis; they were not the only satyagrahis in that struggle. Twenty thousand workers were out of work at a time, and the trouble was not over within twelve days. The entire struggle lasted for seven years and during that period hundreds of men lived under great suspense and anxiety and stuck to their resolve. Twenty thousand workers lived homeless and without wages for three months. Many sold whatever goods they had. They left their huts, sold their beds and mattresses and cattle and marched forth. Hundreds of them marched 20 miles a day for several days, each getting on only on ¾ lb. of flour and an ounce of sugar. There were Muslims as well as Hindus among them. One of them is the son of the Muezzin of the Jumma Masjid of Bombay. His name is Imam Saheb Abdul Kadir Bawazeer[1]. He who had never suffered any hardship before endured the rigours of jail life, labouring, during his terms of imprisonment, on cleaning roads, breaking stones, etc., and for months lived on tasteless and simple food. At present he has not a pie with him. The same is true of Dadamiya Kaji of Surat. Two seventeen-year-old youngsters from Madras, Narayansamy[2] and Nagappen suffered to the utmost and sacrificed their lives, but did not give in. In this same struggle, we may note, women who had never done any manual work before went round hawking and laboured as washerwomen in jails.

Remembering these examples, will any worker among us not be

[1] *Vide* "Imam Saheb", 19-2-1910 & "Letter to Colonial Secretary", 23-2-1910.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Indian Opinion", 18-3-1914, "Speech at Farewell Meeting", 8-7-1914 & "Tribune to Passive Resistance Martyrs", 15-7-1914

prepared to suffer some inconvenience to keep his pledge?

In the leaflets issued by the employers, we find that, in their anger, they have said many unworthy things; many things have been exaggerated, maybe unintentionally, and a few twisted. We may not meet anger with anger. It does not seem right even to correct the mis-statements in them. It is enough to say that we should not allow ourselves either to be misled or provoked by such statements. If the allegations made against the advisers of the workers are true, merely contradicting them here will not prove them false. We know that they are untrue but, rather than attempt to prove them so here, we shall rely on our future behaviour to furnish the proof.

Tomorrow we shall say something which has a bearing on this point.

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

201. LETTER TO M1LLIE GRAHAM POLAK

SABARMATI,

March 6, 1918

DEAR MILLIE [1],

I am here attending to the Kheda trouble as also a big strike. My passive resistance is therefore beginning to have full play in all the departments of life. These two things detain me in Ahmedabad. I am sending Henry some papers about it directly. I have been watching his career. Nothing that Henry does in this direction will surprise me. I should feel sad if I found him doing less. He will feel the loss of Sir Wm. Wedderburn[2]. But he has not left this world before his time. Do you write to Mr. Ambalal ? He is the most stubborn opponent in the strike.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Wife of H. S. L. Polak

[2] President of Indian National Congress, 1910.

202. LETTER T0 G. K. DEODHAR[1]

[AHMEDABAD ,]
Wednesday, March 6, 1918

Do by all means come and we shall discuss. Meanwhile, we must agree to differ. I have come in close touch with both Messrs Pratt and Ghosal and I think I know them. I suppose we shall have to [be] content with half your usefulness. He who remains sick half the time of his life is only half useful. Is he not ? You will not do the one thing needful to regain health.

Very sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

203. LETTER TO J. GHOSAL

March 6, 1918

DEAR MR. GHOSAL,

In your Wadthal annawari I observe you have deducted the double-crop area. Is not this a mistake? If five bighas of land is placed under rice cultivation and then under gram and if the rice annawari is five and that of gram four, surely the annawari of the field is not nine as would be the case if you deducted the double-crop area.[2]

I shall thank you to let me have an early reply as I have come to a standstill ill framing my full letter to you which I suggested I would do on my return to Ahmedabad.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 1645. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] Deodhar, in replying to Gandhiji's letter of February 26, 1918, had refused to accept the latter's observations regarding him, and complained of his ill health. This was Gandhiji's rejoinder.

[2] Regarding this the addressee replied: "We calculate the annawari not by fields but for the whole village. Our object is to get at the total crop raised in the village and divide it by the area on which this was raised. . . .

"According to your argument if a field has a 10-anna *kharif* crop, and the owner thereafter tried to raise *rabi* but failed, the anna valuation would be 10 ÷ 2 = 5 for he would claim suspension because he simply tried to do what could not be done. Also I do not see why we should divide by 2 when he raised the 2nd crop on the same area with the additional advantage that it involved no extra burden of assessment."

204. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

March 6, 1918

It was not intended as a rebuke to you. If there was any rebuke in its humour, it was due to Mahadev. I had no part in it whatever. I have had nothing but satisfaction from your work. I have never felt dissatisfied. There are many things yet which I should like to have done by you.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi

205. AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS' STRIKE

March 7, 1918[1]

LEAFLET NO. 10

In the situation in which we are placed, it is quite necessary to examine the point mentioned in the preceding leaflet. It is just about a fortnight since the lock-out commenced, and yet some say that they have no food, others that they cannot even pay rent. The houses of most of the workers are found to be in a very unsatisfactory condition. They are without proper ventilation. The structures are very old. The surroundings are filthy. The clothes of the workers are dirty. Some wear such clothes because they cannot afford to pay the washerman, others say that they cannot afford soap. The workers' children just play about in the streets. They go without schooling. Some of the workers even set their tender children to work for money. Such extreme poverty is a painful thing indeed. But a 35 per cent increase will not by itself cure it. Even if wages were to be doubled, in all likelihood the abject poverty would remain unless other measures were also adopted. There are many causes for this poverty. We shall consider some of them today. Questioning the workers, we learn that when they are short of money they pay interest ranging from one anna to four annas per rupee per month. The very thought of this makes one shudder. Anyone who agrees to pay such interest even once will find it extremely difficult to extricate himself. Let us consider this a little. Interest on sixteen rupees at one anna per rupee

[1] *Vide* the concluding sentence in Leaflet No.9.

is one rupee. People who pay interest at this rate pay an amount equivalent to the principal in one year and four months. This amounts to 75 per cent interest. Even twelve to sixteen per cent interest is considered exorbitant; how, then, can a man paying 75 per cent interest survive at all? Then, what shall we say of a man who pays four annas a month on a rupee? Such a person pays an amount equal to the principal in four months. This amounts to 300 per cent interest. People who pay interest at such rates are always in debt and are never able to extricate themselves. Prophet Mahomed had realized the crushing burden of interest and so it is that we find in the Holy Koran strict injunctions against charging interest. For similar reasons, the rule of *damdupat*[1] must have been prescribed in the Hindu scriptures. If, as part of the present struggle all workers take an oath not to pay such excessive interest, they will have an unbearable burden lifted from them. Nobody should pay interest at a rate higher than twelve per cent. Some may say: "It is all right for the future, but how shall we pay back what we have already borrowed on interest? We have this thing with us for a lifetime now." The best way out of this situation is to start co-operative credit societies of workers. We found some workers in a position to rescue their brethren who were being crushed under the weight of interest. Outsiders are not likely to take a hand in this. Only those who trust us will help us. The workers should risk everything to free themselves from this scourge. Paying such high rates of interest is a major cause of poverty. Probably all other causes count for less. We shall discuss this point later.

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

206. LETTER TO MANSUKHLAL MEHTA

March 7, 1918

DEAR SHRI MANSUKHLAL,

I am not pained by your criticism. I do not make light of the Kathiawad problem. It seems so big to me that, for the present, it is beyond my capacity. It is not either that I have not thought about it. I have decided to leave it alone after full deliberation. Possibly, it is weakness on my part to have done so. In that case, I need strength

[1] This stipulated that the interest should not be more than twice the principal.

first. That I cannot have as a gift from you. There should be a fire inside, and this is lacking.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

207. LETTER T0 DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

March 7, 1918

BHAI PRANJIVAN,

Be the outcome in the Kheda District what it may, the officials and the people are having a good education. There has been a tremendous awakening among the people. It was disloyalty even to talk of non-payment of taxes, but now people speak of it without fear. Those among the educated, who have been working as volunteers, have also immensely benefited. Men who had never seen a village got an opportunity now and went round nearly 600 villages. The Kheda matter is still not off our hands. Something of the same kind is going on between the workers and the mill-owners. I find myself being drawn into every field of Indian life. It is no small thing that, without our having to spend a single rupee, 10,000 labourers have remained peaceful; this is a fact. People have realized that there is nothing like self help. In both these matters, success lies along the lines summed up in these two slogans: "You will win by your own strength, not ours", and "You will not win except through suffering deliberately endured."

x x x

Whether it is good or bad for you to expand your business[1] depends solely on the end in view. There is no depending on one's life. One may earn money to be able to do good, but, if death comes meanwhile, one would die full of regrets [over things undone]. If, on the other hand, making money is your only aim, if that is regarded as a good thing in itself, or, if it is believed that one should go on expanding one's business as a matter of duty just to make it more profitable, you must need expand it.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] Dr. Mehta had in mind engaging himself in the ship-building industry.

208. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

SABARMATI,
March 8, 1918

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have been most exact in writing to you. All I can therefore say is that my letters have gone astray. I have your second letter immediately on top of the first. So the first I have replied through Millie.

Now that you are editing *India*, I suppose you will send it to me regularly. *Hibbert's Journal* I have read. Malaria no longer troubles me. I am keeping very well.

If nothing reaches you from Hassan Imam, I shall speak to him.

As for my activities, I am asking Mr. Desai[1] to keep you informed. He has thrown in his lot with me. He is a capable helper and his ambition is to replace you. It is a mighty feat. He is making the attempt.

With love,

Yours,

BHAI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 3790

209. LETTER TO J. GHOSAL

SABARMATI,
March 9, 1918

DEAR MR. GHOSAL,

I had a visit early this morning from some of the Kathana cultivators. They brought with them a batch of *chothai* notices. I was somewhat taken aback as I had felt that even though you might insist upon collection, no *chothai* or *khalsa* orders would be issued. I have no justification for this except the feeling that as you permitted me to continue my negotiations about the crops in Kaira District no coercion would be used even it finally collection was decided upon where postponement was urged. I have therefore telegraphed appealing for cancellation of the orders above referred to. I hope my

[1] Mahadev Desai

appeal will have a favourable reception from you. I have taken the liberty, too, as the matter is so very important, of sending a telegram to the Secretariat at Bombay.

I now come to Wadthal. I thank you for your letter in reply to my query as to the deduction of double-cropped area. If for a field which normally grew a *kharif* as well as a *rabi* crop the assessment was based on this fact, in my opinion the crop would be only 16 annas for that field or a group of similar fields in a village, if it gave 16 annas both of *kharif* and *rabi.*

The process of deducting the double-cropped area could only be justified if you held that the field that gave 16 annas of *kharif* crop should be estimated to have given more than 16 annas to the extent of its rabi crop thus leading to the *reductio ad absurdum* suggested by my letter of the 6th instant.

I wholly accept the argument that in finding the annawari there can be no fieldwise calculation except as a sample. And on that ground I venture to suggest that the *rabi* crop as a rule ought not to be taken into consideration, because it is not a general crop. If 90 fields of every 100 grow only a *kharif* crop and have no *rabi* and if the *rabi* crop, where grown be 16 annas, it would be a false average annawari for the hundred fields if the *rabi* crop for the purpose of annawari is a negligible quantity. The staple crops are undoubtedly *kharif* crops and in my humble opinion, agriculturists get less than justice when in order to collect revenue assessments annawari is forced up by taking the *rabi* into account. Indeed my observations supported by my fellow-workers now cover nearly 350 villages and they lead me to think that the cultivators pay their assessment from the *kharif* crops and not out of the *rabi.* No intelligent observer can escape noticing as he passes from field to field that the *rabi* crops are like an oasis in a big desert.

It may be added that not all the fields of individual cultivators can be laid under *rabi* cultivation. The season and crop report for the year 1914-15 shows that the *rabi* crop was only a twelfth and for 1915-16 twentieth of all the other crops. I would venture to suggest too that crops such as spices, vegetables, *variali,* etc., which are grown only by a few cultivators ought not to be taken into account. I would put cotton, too, in the same category until it becomes a general crop among the agriculturists. It would be obviously unfair to put up the annawari of the village because a big land-holder carrying on bold

experiments has succeeded in growing special crops. I desire, too, to protest against the strip grass being included in the calculation. I am told that it is not usual to sell this grass, but that people have as a matter of necessity to keep the borders to allow their cattle to turn about at the end of every journey from one direction to the other. If the object of arriving at the annawari, viz., relief to the average cultivator if his crops have not yielded . . .[1] be kept steadily in view, I submit that this argument would appear to be unanswerable.

I had indeed begged of you to visit Wadhal and test the valuation for yourself. But I had at the same time begged that I should accompany you. I would then have been able to place before you the cultivators' standpoint as I had seen it. For instance, I would certainly have matched Mr. Muljibhai Amin's testimony and shown that his could well be treated as biased. I would have brought you face to face with the... who would have told you that the annawari arrived at by them was 3 during the month of December last. I would have got the people to produce for your inspection *juvar* pods in abundance to show you that they were not only eaten up by rats but that they were attacked by some serious disease. The *juvar* in some of the fields does indeed look tall and majestic, but an examination of the pods tells a different tale.

It gives me pleasure to confess that you have bestowed much pains on the production of your report. But I respectfully submit that based as it is originally upon the Mamlatdar's figure its does [not] do sufficient justice to the cultivators. In my humble opinion the mamlatdar's annawari is totally at variance with the almost universal testimony of the villagers some of whom have a reputation to lose. It is impossible for me to impute either untrustworthiness to them or thoughtlessness. I am strongly supported in my view by Mr. Batukshanker of Nadiad who is himself a considerable land-holder and who is one of the most respectable straightforward men in the Kaira District. He has not said anything about Wadthal but his land is in a condition no less advantageous than the best in Wadthal and yet his annawari brings him under the suspension rules. I cannot help remarking that your annawari of *tuwar*, *kodra*, rice, *bavte*, *sherian* tobacco, *divela* and gram is too high. I venture to suggest they are. . .[2] 4, 2, 2, 5, 4, 6, 5, 2, 4. Acceptance of my figures brings the annawari

[1] The source is damaged here.
[2] *ibid*

under the suspension rules. And if you accept my submission that only the staple crops should be values retention of your annawari in respect of them brings the average to less than 6. Again if the double-cropped area were not deducted the annawari would be less than 6 retaining. . .[1] figures. Thirdly, if the *rabi* crops and the uncommon crops were exempted from the calculation as submitted by me the annawari would be under 6. I have before me a list carefully prepared in consultation with the villagers giving the actual yield of all the crops and the normal yield. It will be admitted that if the figures are correct it will be the most absolute test. The annawari for this village arrived at by this process is 2.7. I adhere to my suggestion that the *rabi* crop including the other standing crop can be easily utilized for testing the accuracy of the figures given by the cultivators. I have suggested to the people of Wadthal that they should not remove the standing crops from the threshing-floors except after duly weighing them in the presence of independent witnesses. I venture to submit that it is worth while your testing the Wadthal crops in this fashion.

Might I also draw your attention to the fact that the annawari for the *kharif* crops arrived at by the Ho. Messrsn. Gokuldas Parekh and Patel and also Mr. Deolker and his party was under 4 annas. So that if my contention about the *kharif* crops be accepted for purposes of inding the true annawari, you have the results of my investigation for nearly 350 villages corroborated by two other independent investigations. You will observe that my investigation embraces all the talukas and covers a large number of villages in each taluka, and I have no hesitation in asking for full suspension in respect of all but a few of . . .[2] cases the first instalment have already been paid and here I wish parenthetically to draw attention to the fact that in some villages even though half-suspension orders were issued both instalments were collected from small holders. I therefore suggest that the villages where the first instalment had already been received, suspension order should be issued for the second instalment. Though you may be precluded from considering any cause for granting suspension other than the failure of crops to the extent of 12 annas I would suggest for the consideration of the Government the fact that the people of the District have been hardest hit perhaps by the plague which is raginlg furiously in it, which has decimated many a home and which has

[1] The source is damaged here.
[2] *ibid.*

driven many people from their houses on to temporary grass structures, built at, for them, considerable expense. In my humble opinion, your argument about the high prices is not fair to the people. It is common cause between us that last year has been very poor for the cultivators. They have not certainly had much grain for sale. Whilst therefore they have been considerably disadvantaged by them as they had to buy food and clothing. Taking therefore everything into consideration even if full suspension be not granted I hope that the Government will be pleased to grant at least half suspension in every case, and if these orders are passed I shall try my utmost to secure without coercion payment of the first instalment from the villages which have hitherto held out.

There still remains the case of the Daskroi villages. There can be no doubt whatsoever that flood did an irreparable damage to their crops and they are entitled to relief under the Local Calamities section. You were pleased to tell me that you were not inclined to grant suspension where the cultivators had grown *rabi* crops. I repeat what I submitted to you at the interview that if you exempt from suspension orders those who have grown *rabi* crops you would be punishing industry. They have told me and I believe their statement that those who have grown *rabi* are actually out of pocket and are therefore worse off than those who never grow it at all. I have inspected the *rabi* crop and I have no hesitation in saying that though the patches of green look tempting to the eye, closer inspection shows that the crops are diseased and will yield very little and in any case I presume you will admit that it is only on limited areas that the occupants have grown *rabi* crop on their fields.

I admit that the Kaira District is naturally "rich and prosperous", its cattle are in a good condition, it has great wealth in its majestic trees. But I fear very much that the District has been progressively going down in prosperity. Their ill-kept, dilapidated houses, their empty barns, and probably the awful destruction that is going on of trees and evidence I possess of the sale of their cattle unmistakably point to the decline in their prosperity. A few more lean years can certainly undo this fair land.

I do not know how far the failure of crops is responsible for the destruction of mohwa trees and how far it is due to the Mohwa Act and how far it is due to the greed to get high prices for coal and wood, for both of which the Mohwa tree is so handy. Whatever may be the

cause I do hope that the Government will remove from the people at least for the time being the fear of the Mohwa Act. I wish further to suggest that during the summer season and during the monsoon hundreds of people in the District would be hard put to it for food and it would be an act of simple justice to permit the fullest use of Mohwa flowers for their food. It would be cruelty to enforce the Act during this year. To recapitulate,

(a) In my opinion by a variety of ways your minimum annawari for Wadthal has been successfully challenged and it is less than 4 annas; the case for the large majority of the villages in the District is similar to Wadthal and therefore the cultivators are entitled to full suspension;

(b) If however my suggestion as to annawari be not accepted l pray that the Government may be pleased to grant half-suspension all round in view (1) of the admittedly partial failure of crops and (2) of the distress caused amongst the people by the plague and the high prices, and if this relief is granted I am prepared to advise holders of *sanadia* lands and others who are well off to pay both the instalments voluntarily. This will confine the relief only to those who are in actual distress;

(c) For Daskroi villages over and above the relief by way of suspension, the Local Calamities section should be fully applied to them;

(d) The operation of the known Act should be suspended and the fact widely made known to the people so that in so far as the Act is an inducement to cut down the trees they may be saved, and so that they may be enabled to make use of Mohwa flowers for food.

May I request you to pass this letter on to the Government with, if possible, favourable recommendation from you.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10647. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] The letter was forwarded to the Government.

210. LETTER TO J. GHOSAL

SABARMATI,
March 10, 1918

DEAR MR. GHOSAL,

A correspondent has sent from Borsad a printed form which purports to be an admission as to the estimate of standing crops and an admission that the crop is enough to pay the Government dues. I cannot help saying that the form is most unfair to the people. They ought not to be called upon to sign any such document. I respectfully suggest that the document be withdrawn. If however you think that it shall be presented to the cultivators for their signatures, I shall be reluctantly obliged to advise them not to sign it.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10649 Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

211. LETTER TO J. CRERAR

SABARMATI,
March 10, 1918

DEAR MR. CRERAR,

In the hope that His excellency is now able to attend to public business with undue strain on him, I am addressing this communication to you. I do however feel ashamed that I should be at all a cause of adding to His Excellency's many anxieties. I would certainly have refrained if I could have helped it. I beg to enclose herewith a copy of my letter to the Collector of Kaira District. I am awaiting his reply. I have personally visited over thirty villages in the various talukas and I must confess that the universal cry is that the crops have been largely a failure. It is impossible therefore to think that all the men are determined to tell an untruth. What is more, the crops still standing confirm the popular view. If they yield a poor return the *kharif* crops already cut must have been poorer still. For it is admitted that the *rabi* crops and the longer-living *kharif* are better

[1] The addressee explained in reply that the form was for a concession whereby a peasant could apply for postponement of the payment of revenue dues and that it was not compulsory to sign it.

than the crops already harvested. In the circumstances I have not hesitated to tell the people that they need not voluntarily pay their *vigoti* but should allow the officials to sell their belongings. I have been invited to make a public statement but have declined to do so pending negotiations with the Government for a settlement. I have declined too to issue notices to the people giving general advice. And I am hoping that if the evidence of my colleagues and myself is not accepted, if even the prevalence of the plague is not accepted as in itself a sufficient excuse for postponing collection as required by me, a joint inquiry might be held. But [if] even the last request is rejected there is for me no recourse left open but to generally advise the cultivators to refuse to pay the revenue dues[1] and to allow their belongings to be sold or confiscated and to issue a public appeal for support of their attitude. In my humble opinion it is better that the people in a dignified and respectful manner disobey the Government orders and knowingly suffer in their own person the consequences of their disobedience than that disappointment should deepen into secretdiscontent. I had promised that I would humbly lay before His Excellency my view on the situation before taking any extreme steps. I hope that my submission will receive His Excellency's due consideration. I shall gladly wait on His Excellency should my presence be desired.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10651. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] Officials had coerced agriculturists saying that the crop yield was adequate to pay the revenue assessment. Gandhiji protested against this coercion. Commissioner Pratt repudiated the opinion expressed by Gandhiji and his associates, and insisted that the right course was for the farmers to pay up their dues. This was the background against which Gandhiji wrote to the Governor.

212. LETTER T0 JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SABARMATI,
Maha Vad 13 [*March 10, 1918*]

DEAR JAMNALALJI[1],

There has been delay in answering your letter. I have been tied up here in two big tasks. Please excuse me. If you think it proper to name the library after me, you may do so.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 2836

213. AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS' STRIKE

March 11, 1918

LEAFLET NO. 11

As days pass, leaflets misleading the workers continue to be issued. It is also rumoured that the lock-out is to be lifted on Tuesday, and that those workers who return will be taken back. We hear, besides, that any worker who persuades five or more other workers to go with him will be given a reward. Nothing needs to be done to counter these tactics. Employers are entitled to get the workers back to work by employing others to persuade them. But what is the workers' duty? They have stated that an increase of 20 per cent is not adequate and have given notices accordingly. They have taken an oath not to accept anything less than 35 per cent. Placed in this predicament, unless a 35 per cent increase is granted, the workers cannot return to work except by violating their pledge, their honour and their manliness. It is possible, however, that every worker may not have such a sense of honour. Some may not even have taken such a pledge. A few hail from outside Gujarat and they may not even be attending meetings. It would be wrong even for such workers to go back to work with a 20 per cent increase. Our duty merely is to find out such unthinking workers and acquaint them with the true state of affairs.

[1] 1889-1942; a close associate of Gandhiji, identified with many of his activities; he chose a life of simplicity despite his wealth. Gandhiji called him his fifth son.

But let it be remembered that even they are not to be coerced in any way.

Tomorrow, i.e., on Tuesday[1], we are to meet at 7.30 in the morning at the usual place. The best way not to be tempted by the employers' reopening the mills is to attend the meeting as usual at 7.30 in the morning. You should also search out the workers from other parts of the country who live as strangers to you and who have hitherto not attended these meetings, and see that they attend them. In these days, when you are facing a temptation, all manner of thoughts will occur to you. It is a miserable thing for a working man to be without a job. The meetings will keep up the patience of all workers who feel so. For those who know their strength, there can be no enforced unemployment. In reality the worker can be so independent that, if he realizes his true worth, he will never worry about losing a job. The wealth of a rich person may disappear or be stolen or be lost in a moment by mismanagement. Thanks to miscalculation, a rich man may have to face bankruptcy. But a worker's capital is inexhaustible, incapable of being stolen, and bound to pay him a generous dividend all the time. His hands and feet, the energy which enables him to work, constitute this inexhaustible capital of his and the wages constitute his dividends. The worker who invests more of his energy in work can easily earn more interest. An idle worker will certainly starve. Such a one may have reason for despair. The industrious has no reason to worry even for a moment. Let everyone be at the usual place in time on Tuesday and there you will learn better yet how independent you really are.

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

[1] This was March 12.

214. LETTER TO JIVANLAL DESAI[1]

[AHMEDABAD,
Before *March 12, 1918*]

DEAR FRIEND,

Why should you have to persuade me?[2] Why do you even doubt that I would not do what you suggest, if I really could? I cannot afford to be obstinate. The world may misunderstand me, but you cannot. I am overwhelmed with sympathy. This lock-out is not a joke for me. I am doing all I can. All my activities and actions are motivated by the desire to find a speedy solution. But the mill-owner friends are prolonging the deadlock. Considering it useless to persuade me, why do you not try to persuade the mill-owners? They do not have to humiliate themselves. Is there anyone who will be happy at the workers' humiliation ? Be assured that there will be no bitterness left between the educated class and the rich. We definitely have no desire to quarrel.

[From Gujarati]
Ek Dharmayuddha

215. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAREKH[3]

AHMEDABAD,
[Before *March 12, 1918*]

Many friends come to me and try to persuade me that I should somehow bring to an end the struggle between the workers and the mill-owners. I would certainly do so if I could, even at the cost of my life. But that is not possible. It is in the hands of the mill-owners to bring it to an end. Why make it a point of prestige not to give 35 per cent because the workers have asked for it? Why is it taken for granted that I can get the workers to accept anything I want? I claim that the workers are under my control because of the means I have adopted.

[1] Barrister and public worker of Ahmedabad

[2] At a crucial moment in the situation, when the mill-hands had begun to feel the real hardship of their struggle, counsels of despair were not wanting, seeking to persuade the workers to abandon it and compromise by accepting a 15 or 20 per cent increase in wages. This and the following letter were written before the lock-out ended on March 12.

[3] A prominent mill-owner of Ahmedabad

Shall I now see to it that they break their pledge? If I do so, why should they not sever my head from my shoulders? I hear that the mill-owners find fault with me. I am unconcerned. Some day they themselves will admit that I was not in the wrong. There can be no bitterness between them and me, since I am not going to be a party to any bitterness. Even bitterness needs encouragement; it won't get any from me. But why don't you participate in this? It does not become you merely to watch this great struggle unconcernedly.

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

216. AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS' STRIKE

[*March 12, 1918*][1]

LEAFLET NO. 12

Today a new chapter begins. The employers have decided to withdraw the lock-out and have expressed their willingness to take back those who are ready to accept a 20 per cent increase. This means that today the employers' lock-out. is at an end and a workers' strike has commenced. You have all seen the announce-ment of the employers' resolution to this effect. They say in it that many workers are ready to resume work but could not do so owing to the lock-out. The information which the employers have received ill accords with the daily meetings of the workers and the oath they have taken. Either their information is true or the presence of the workers in the daily meetings and the oath they have taken are a fact. The workers bore all these things in mind before taking the pledge and now they cannot resume work without securing a 35 per cent increase, whatever the inducement held out and whatever the suffering they may have to go through. Their honour is at stake in this. If you weigh a pledge against a sum of hundreds of thousands, the pledge will be seen to be of greater consequence. We are sure the workers will never forget this. They have no other way to advance themselves except to stand by their oath and it is our conviction that, if only the employers realize it, their welfare too lies in the workers' keeping their oath. Eventually, even the employers will not gain by taking work from workers who are too weak to keep their oath. A religiously-minded person will

[1] The lock-out was lifted on March 12, 1918.

never feel happy in forcing a person to break his pledge or associating himself with such an effort. We have, however, no time now to think of the employers' duty. They know it all right. We can only entreat them. But the workers must think seriously what their duty is at this time. Never again will they get an opportunity like the present one.

Let us consider what the workers are likely to gain by breaking their oath. These days, any honest person in India can earn twenty to twenty-five rupees a month by intelligent work. The worst that can happen to a worker is that his employers may dismiss him and he will have to look for other work. A thoughtful worker should realize that he will get work anywhere after a few days' search. We are sure, however, that the employers do not want to take this extreme step. If workers are firm in their resolve, even the hardest of hearts will relent.

It is possible that the workers from outside Gujarat (i.e., those from the North or the South) are not well informed about this struggle. In public work we do not, and do not wish to, make distinctions of Hindu, Muslim, Gujarati, Madrasi, Punjabi, etc. We are all one or wish to be one. We should, therefore, approach these workers with understanding and enlighten them about the struggle and make them see that it is to their advantage, too, to identify themselves with the rest of us.

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

217. SUBSTANCE OF LETTER TO AMBALAL SARABHAI[1]

March 12, 1918

I got your letter. I have destroyed it after reading it. I never wished that there should be any pressure on the workers. If you send more details about who is bringing it on them, I will certainly look into the matter. It is all the same to me whether the mill-hands resume work or not. I have always given instructions not to use force to prevent any worker from going to his mill. I have certainly no desire that a labourer should be forced against his will to keep away from it.

[1] Mahadev Desai notes in the Diary that Gandhiji did not want a copy of this letter to be preserved, even in the Diary, but that he did not mind his summarizing it from memory.

I am even ready, myself, to escort any worker who says he wants to attend the mill. I am altogether indifferent whether a labourer joins or does not join.

In view of the task you have set me, how can I accept the pleasure of staying with you? I should very much like to see your children. How is that possible at present, though? Let us leave it to the future.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

218. AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS' STRIKE

March 13, 1918

LEAFLET NO. 13 [1]

Rumours are afloat that many workers are willing to resume work, but that others prevent them by coercion and threats of physical assault. Workers should remember our pledge that, if they bring pressure to bear on their fellows and use threats to stop them from going to work, we shall not find it possible to help them. In this struggle, he alone will win who keeps his pledge. No one can be forced to do this. It is essentially a voluntary matter. We want to be faithful to our pledge and go ahead. If a man, being afraid, ventures nothing, he can never advance. Such a one has lost everything. Let every worker, therefore, bear in mind that he is not to use pressure on others in any form or manner. If coercion is used, the whole struggle is likely to be weakened and will collapse. For the success of their struggle, the workers are to rely solely on the rightness of their demand and of their conduct. If their demand is unjust, they cannot succeed. The demand may be just. But even then the worker will lose his case despite all his suffering if, in securing it, he resorts to untruth or falsehood, to violence or coercion, or is apathetic. It is very essential in this struggle that workers do not resort to coercion and that they provide for their maintenance by putting in physical labour.

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

[1] The leaflet was issued on the day following the ending of the lock-out.

219. SPEECH AT AHMEDABAD MEETING[1]

March 13, 1918

I cannot do full justice, nor can anyone else for that matter, I am sure, to the task of introducing Mrs. Besant. I have known her for thirty years, having followed her activities since my youth, though of course I cannot claim that she has known me so long. "Home Rule" has become a household word all over India, in places big and small; the credit for this goes to this lady. I have often said that there have been, and there may still be, differences between her and me; there are quite a few even today. If I had the Home Rule movement under my charge, I would go to work differently. Having said this, I admit I cannot but look up to her with reverence, honour her, pay tribute to her for her excellent qualities, for she has dedicated her very soul to India. She lives only for India to live thus is her sole aspiration. No matter if she commits hundreds of mistakes, we shall honour her. In my view, Ahmedabad has covered itself with unsurpassed honour by honouring one who has rendered such great services as she has. With regard to the subject of today's address, it seems the present audience is not likely to be much interested in it. Mrs. Besant told me a moment ago that she might manage to speak on swaraj before you, but that she wondered what she could say on national education. There are not enough educated people in the audience. She will speak, all the same. I have her permission for speaking in Gujarati. Whatever I wish to tell you, I can say only in Gujarati. Her speech will later be summarized for you in Gujarati. The agitation she has launched in the present circumstances has been useful in several ways. India has benefited from her work, her organizing ability and her eloquence; to honour her, the first thing to do is to hear her in silence.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 17-3-1918

[1] The meeting was arranged to hear Annie Besant on "National Education". Gandhiji was in the chair.

220. SPEECH AT AHMEDABAD MEETING[1]

March 13, 1918

Gandhiji started by requesting the people to maintain silence and stressed the importance of being punctual at a meeting. He suggested that anyone who turned up from that time onwards should remain outside the gate.

The subject of today's speech concerns our own interest; it is about swaraj. Wealth, honour, strength—all these follow from swaraj. One statement of this lady deserves to be engraved in our hearts and in the Government's, that India would have Home Rule or go on hunger-strike. Everyone should ponder over this. Being without political power, India is growing poorer and so abject is this poverty that thousands have been driven by it to inhuman crimes. The idea of hunger-strike is intended to bring home to us that a man who has been starving for some days would stop at nothing. She is speaking today to explain this point. If some of Mrs. Besant's detractors succeed against her, that is only because she believes in action and has no interest except in her work. She has dedicated herself, body and soul, and all she has, to her mission. She has put before us what she had to say but it is not by following her way that we shall succeed in swimming across to the other side, we shall do so only by following our own. If the honour Ahmedabad has accorded her today is sincere, you should pray to God that He may grant the strength she has to us as well. And, with the same regard for her listen to her in silence. Those who cannot follow English may read a translation tomorrow.

Concluding the proceedings, Shri Gandhi suggested that her speech should be translated into Gujarati and copies of the translation distributed among the people. He described the speech as historic. He then read out the names of those who had presented Mrs. Besant with purses and thanked them. He advised everyone to ponder over her speech.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 17-3-1918

[1] Annie Besant addressed a second meeting in the evening, speaking on "Our duty in the present political situation". Gandhiji presided.

221. SPEECH TO AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS

[Before *March 15, 1918*][1]

It is not proper that you ridicule the machines and call them "empty show-cases".[2] These inanimate machines have done you no harm. You had your living through these very machines. I should like to tell our poets that we are not to use bitter words; we should not cast aspersions on the employers. It serves no purpose to say that the rich go about in motor-cars because of us. That way, we only lose our own self-respect. I might as well say that even King-Emperor George V rules because of us; but saying that reflects no credit on us. We do not establish our goodness by calling others bad. There is God above to keep watch over the wrongdoers. He will punish them. Who are we to judge? We need say no more than that the employers are wrong in not giving us the 35 per cent increase.[3]

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

222. REPLY TO SYMPATHIZERS[4]

[Before *March 15, 1918*][5]

What is the meaning of satyagraha if you help the workers with money to carry it on or if, this time, they have joined it in the hope that you will support them with such help? What will be the value of such satyagraha? The essence of satyagraha lies in cheerful submission to the suffering that may follow it. The more a satyagrahi suffers, the more thoroughly he is tested.

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

[1] The speech was evidently made before Gandhiji commenced his fast.

[2] One of the workers had recited at the meeting a satirical verse on machines.

[3] The rest of the speech is not available.

[4] It can not be ascertained whether these remarks were made orally or were part of a letter.

[5] The suggestion and the reply seem to belong to the period before Gandhiji commenced his fast on this date.

223. AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS' STRIKE

March 15, 1918[1]

LEAFLET NO. 14

As the weapon of the rich is money, that of the workers is their labour. Just as a rich man would starve if he did not employ his wealth, even so if the worker did not employ his wealth— did not work—he would also starve. One who does not work is not a worker. A worker who is ashamed of working has no right to eat. If, therefore, the workers desire to fulfil their pledge in this great struggle, they should learn to do some work or other. Those who collect funds and, remaining idle, maintain themselves out of them do not deserve to win. Workers are fighting for their pledge. Those who want food without working for it do not, it may be said, understand what a pledge means. He alone can keep his pledge who can feel shame or has self-respect. Is there anyone who will not look down on those who desire to be maintained on public funds without doing any work? It behoves us, therefore, that we maintain ourselves by doing some work. If a worker does not work, he is like sugar which has lost its sweetness. If the sea water lost its salt, where would we get our salt from? If the worker did not work, the world would come to an end.

This struggle is not merely for a 35 per cent increase; it is to show that workers are prepared to suffer for their rights. We are fighting to uphold our honour. We have launched on this struggle in order to better ourselves. If we start using public funds improperly, we shall grow worse and not better. Consider the matter from any angle you choose, you will see that we must maintain ourselves by our own labour. Farhad[2] broke stones for the sake of Shirin, his beloved. For the workers, their pledge is their Shirin. Why should they not break stones for its sake? For the sake of truth, Harishchandra[3] sold himself; why should workers not suffer hardships for upholding their pledge ? For the sake of their honour, Imam Hassan and Hussain suffered greatly. Should we not be prepared even to die for our honour? If we get money while we remain idle at home and fight with that money, it would be untrue to say that we are fighting.

[1] The leaflet was issued on the day Gandhiji commenced his fast.

[2] Central figure in a Persian poem

[3] Legendary king of Ayodhya who went through many ordeals for the sake of truth

We hope, therefore, that every worker will work to maintain himself so that he may be able to keep his oath and remain firm. If the struggle lengthens, it will be because of weakness on our part. So long as the mill-owners believe that workers will not take to any labour and, therefore, will eventually succumb, they will have no compassion and will continue to resist [the demand]. So long as they are not convinced that workers will never give in, they will not be moved by compassion and will continue to oppose the workers even at the sacrifice of their own profits. When, however, they feel certain that the workers will, under no circumstances, give up their resolve, they will show compassion enough and welcome the workers back. Today the employers believe that the workers will not do any manual labour and so are bound to succumb soon. If the workers depend on others' money for their maintenance, the mill-owners will think that the source is bound to be exhausted sooner or later, and so will not take the workers seriously. If, on the other hand, workers who have no [other] means of subsistence begin to do manual work, the employers will see that they will lose their workers unless they grant the 35 per cent increase forthwith. Thus, it is for us to shorten or lengthen the struggle. We shall be free the sooner by enduring greater suffering just now. If we flinch from suffering, the struggle is bound to be protracted. Those who have weakened will, we hope, consider all these points and become strong again.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTION

Some workers are inclined to believe that those who have weakened cannot be persuaded to become strong. This is a wrong impression altogether. It is the duty of us all—yours and ours—to try, with gentleness, to persuade those who have weakened for one reason or another. It is also our duty to educate those who do not know what the struggle means. What we have been saying is that we may not use threats, tell lies, or resort to violence, or exert pressure in any manner to keep anyone away from work. If, despite persuasion, anyone resumes work, that is no reason for us to lose heart. Even if only one person holds out, we shall never forsake him.

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

224. SPEECH TO AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS

[*Marsh 15, 1918*][1]

You must have heard what happened this morning. Some were shocked, others wept. I do not feel that there was anything wrong, or anything of which I need be ashamed, in this morning's development. I do not feel angry at the criticism made by the residents of Jugaldas Chawl.[2] Rather, I, and others as well who want to serve India, have much to learn from it. I have always believed that, if our capacity for *tapascharya* or voluntary suffering is real enough, we are bound to reap the fruit. You took an oath relying on my advice. In this age the oath has lost its value. Men break their oath at any time and for any reason and I am grieved to have been instrumental in thus lowering the value of an oath. There is nothing else that will bind a man as effectively as an oath does. The meaning of an oath is that we decide to do a particular thing with God in whom we believe as our witness. People who are on a higher plane can perhaps do without oaths, but we who are on a lower one cannot. We who fall a thousand times cannot raise ourselves without oaths. You will admit that, had we not taken the oath and repeated it daily, many of us would have fallen long ago. You yourselves have said that never before have you known a strike as peaceful as this. The reason why some have fallen is that they are faced with starvation. I would advice you to keep your oath even if you have to starve, though it is our pledge, mine and my co-workers', that we will not allow you to starve. If we look on unconcernedly while you are starving, you may give up your pledge by all means. There is one more thing we should have mentioned along with these two. It is that if, while not allowing you to starve, we ask you to beg, we would be guilty in the eyes of God and would prove no better than thieves. But what should I do to persuade you to maintain yourselves with manual labour? I can do manual work, I have been doing it, and would do so even now; but I do not get the opportunity for it. I have a number of things to attend to, and can,

[1] The speech was delivered on the evening of the day on which the fast commenced.

[2] Chhaganlal Gandhi had, the day before, gone to the Chawl to request the workers to attend the morning meeting and had been rebuffed by them with the remark: "What is it to Anasuyabehn and Gandhiji? They come and go in their car; they eat sumptuous food, but we are suffering death-agonies; attending meetings does not prevent starvation." This was reported to Gandhiji.

therefore, do some manual work only by way of exercise. Will it behove you to tell me that you have worked on looms, but cannot do other physical labour ? This notion has taken deep root in India. It is good as a principle that a man should specialize in one type of work only; but it would be improper to use this as an excuse. I have thought much about this. When I came to know of your bitter criticism of me, I felt that, if I wanted to keep you to the path of dharma and show you the worth of an oath and the value of labour, I must set a concrete example before you. We are not out to have fun at your cost or to act a play. How can I prove to you that we are prepared to carry out whatever we tell you? I am not God that I can demonstrate this to you in some way [other than by fasting]. I should very much like to do something which would convince you that you would have to be plain with me, that it would not do for you merely to act a part. Nobody can be induced or coerced to keep his oath. Love is the only inducement that can be offered. You must understand that he alone, who loves his religion, loves his honour and country, will refuse to give up his resolve ....

I am used to taking such pledges. For fear that people may wrongly imitate me, I would rather not take one at all. But I am dealing with hundreds of thousands of workers. I must, therefore, see that my conscience is clean. I wanted to show you that I was not playing with you.

I have attempted to show you by example that you should value your oath in the same manner as I have done. You have already done one thing. You could have said: "What have we to do with your oath, we cannot continue the fight, we must go back''; but you did not do so. You decided to accept our service. And I thought of you the more highly for that. It seemed a beautiful thing to me to sink or swim with you.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

[1] The rest of the speech is not available. Gandhiji's fast became a subject of serious concern. Prof. Anandshankar Dhruva who discussed it with Gandhiji doubted its efficacy for bringing about a real change of heart among the mill-owners. They strove to dissuade him; some offered to concede the demand for a 35 per cent increase for Gandhiji's sake, but. according to Mahadev Desai, he rejected it saying, "Do not give 35 per cent out of pity for me, but do so to respect the workers' pledge, and to give them justice."

225. AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS' STRIKE

[*March 16, 1918*][1]

LEAFLET NO. 15

It is necessary to understand the motive and significance of Gandhiji's vow to fast. The first thing to remember is that this is not intended to influence the employers. If the fast were conceived in that spirit, it would harm our struggle and bring us dishonour. We want justice from the employers, not pity for us. If there is to be any pity, let it be for the workers. We believe that it is but the employers' duty to have pity for the workers. But we shall be ridiculed if we accept 35 per cent granted out of pity for Gandhiji. Workers cannot accept it on that basis. If Gandhiji exploited his relations with the employers or the people in general in this manner, he would be misusing his position and would lose his good name. What connection could there possibly be between Gandhiji's fast and the issue of workers' wages? Even if fifty persons resolve to starve themselves to death on the employers' premises, how can the employers, for that reason, give the workers a 35 per cent increase if they have no right to it? If this becomes a common practice for securing rights, it would be impossible to carry on the affairs of society. Employers cannot and need not pay attention to this fast of Gandhiji, though it is impossible that Gandhiji's action will have no effect on them.

We shall be sorry to the extent the employers are influenced by this action. But, at the same time, we cannot sacrifice other far-reaching results that the fast may possibly bring about. Let us examine the purpose for which the fast has been undertaken. Gandhiji saw that the oath was losing its force with the workers. Some of them were ready to break their pledge out of fear of what they thought would be starvation. It is intolerable that ten thousand men should give up their oath. A man becomes weak by not keeping a vow and ultimately loses his dignity as man. It is, therefore, our duty to do our utmost to help the workers to keep their oath. Gandhiji felt that, if he fasted, he would show through this how much he himself valued a pledge. Moreover, the workers talked of starvation. 'Starve but keep your oath' was Gandhiji's message to them. He at any rate must live

[1] This leaflet appears to have been issued on the day following the fast. On the next day, i.e., March 17, a leaflet was issued by Shankarlal Parikh and a settlement was reached in the morning of March 18.

up to it. That he could do only if he himself was prepared to die fasting. Besides, workers said they would not do manual labour, but said, all the same, they stood in need of financial help. This seemed a terrible thing. If the workers took up such an attitude, there would be utter chaos in the country. There was only one way in which Gandhiji could effectively teach the people to submit to the hardships of physical labour and this was that he himself should suffer. He did manual work, of course, but that was not enough. A fast, he thought, would serve many purposes, and so commenced one. He would break it only when the workers got 35 per cent or if they simply repudiated their pledge. The result was as expected. Those who were present when he took the vow saw this well enough. The workers were roused; they started manual labour and were saved from betraying what was for them a matter of religion.

The workers have now realized that they will secure justice at the hands of the employers only if they remain firm in their oath. Gandhiji's fast has buoyed them up. But they must rely on their own strength to fight. They alone can save themselves.

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

226. LETTER TO GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY

[Before *March 17, 1918*]

I hope that on the basis of facts ascertained by me and my friends, and having regard to the hardships caused by the epidemic and plague and enhanced cost of living, either the recovery of land revenue would be postponed or an inquiry by an independent board would be made, such as the one I had originally asked for. But if this last request of mine is ignored and properties are confiscated or sold, or land forfeited, I shall be compelled to advise the peasants openly not to pay up land revenue.[1]

When I first entered Kheda district, I gave you the assurance that I will let you know before taking any extreme step. I hope that you

[1] Officials had coerced agriculturists saying that the crop yield was adequate to pay the revenue assessment. Gandhiji protested against this coercion. Commissioner Pratt repudiated the opinion expressed by Gandhiji and his associates, and insisted that the right course was for the farmers to pay up their dues. This was the background against which Gandhiji wrote to the Governor.

will bear in mind the various facts which I have set out in this letter. If you desire to see me I shall come immediately.[1]

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Vol. I

227. PRAYER DISCOURSE IN ASHRAM[2]

March 17, 1918

The step I have just now taken is a very grave one, but at the back of it there stands a great idea. It is grave because, on hearing of this all those who know me in India will be very much pained, be almost in an agony of grief. But, at the same time, I have here an opportunity to convey to them a beautiful idea, and I should not miss it. This is the motive behind my action. I have been getting quite impatient for the last two days to explain it to you but I could not get enough quiet time for that. It would make me very unhappy to miss the morning and evening prayers in the Ashram. And, besides, yesterday the music maestro dropped in and so I just would not forgo the pleasure of hearing his strains. I have swum past many a lure but many hungers still persist in me. At present I get here all that I long for by way of music and, therefore, although it was Anasuyabehn's express wish yesterday that I should stay on there, I insisted on coming over to the Ashram. At a time like this, the music here has a very soothing effect on me. This is indeed the best occasion for me to unburden my soul to you. At other hours, you are likely to be busy with your work and to make you leave that and assemble here—that won't be proper either.

From the ancient culture of India, I have gleaned a truth which, even if it is mastered by the few persons here at the moment, would give these few a mastery over the world. Before telling you of it, however, I should like to say another thing. At present, there is only one person in India over whom millions are crazy, for whom millions of our countrymen would lay down their lives. That person is Tilak

[1] To this the Governor replied on March 17, as follows: "The Government has been kept fully informed of what has been happening in the Kheda district and is satisfied that the Collector and the other officers of the Revenue Department while acting strictly according to rules and regulations have the interest of the agriculturists at heart."

[2] In this Gandhiji has explained at length the reasons for his undertaking a fast in connection with the mill-hands' strike.

Maharaj. I often feel that this is a great asset of his, his great treasure. He has written on the inner meaning of the *Gita*[1]. But I have always felt that he has not understood the age-old spirit of India, has not understood her soul and that is the reason why the nation has come to this pass. Deep down in his heart, he would like us all to be what the Europeans are. As Europe stands on top at present, as it seems, that is, to those whose minds are steeped in European notions—he wants India to be in the same position. He underwent six years' internment but only to display a courage of the European variety, with the idea that these people who are tyrannizing over us now may learn how, if it came to that, we too could stand such long terms of internment, be it five years or twenty-five. In the prisons of Siberia, many great men of Russia are wasting their whole lives, but these men did not go to prison in obedience to any spiritual promptings. To be thus prodigal of one's life is to expend our highest treasure to no purpose. If Tilakji had undergone the sufferings of internment with a spiritual motive, things would not have been as they are and the results of his internment would have been far different. This is what I should like to explain to him. I have often, with great respect, spoken about this to him, as much as I could, though I have not put the thing in so many words orally or in writing. I might have, in what I wrote, watered down my meaning, but Tilak Maharaj has so penetrating an intellect that he would understand. This is, however, no matter to be explained orally or in writing. To give him first-hand experience of it, I must furnish a living example. Indirectly, I have spoken to him often enough but, should I get an opportunity of providing a direct demonstration, I should not miss it, and here is one.

Another such person is Madan Mohan Malaviya. Amongst the present leaders of India, he is a man of the holiest character —that is, amongst political personages and amongst those whom we know. Unknown to us, there may be many such indeed. But although he is so holy in his life and so well informed on points of dharma, he has not, it seems to me, properly understood the soul of India in all its grandeur. I am afraid I have said too much. If he were to hear this, Malaviyaji might get angry with me, even think of me as a swollen-headed man and take a dislike to me. But I feel no hesitation in saying what I do because it is quite true. I have spoken to him many times. I am bound to him by ties of affection and hence I have

[1] *Gita Rahasya*, which he wrote in Mandalay Jail, serving a six-year term

even indulged in frequent wranglings with him. At the end of all my arguments, however, he would merely say that all I had said might be true but that he was not convinced of it. I have this opportunity to provide him, too, with a direct demonstration. I owe it to both to show now what India's soul is.

For the last twenty days, I have been mixing with ten thousand mill-hands. In my presence, they took a pledge in the name of God. At the time, they did so with great enthusiasm. Whatever type of people they are, they all believe at any rate that God exists.

They thought that, when they had observed the pledge for twenty days, God was bound to come to their help. When that did not happen and God prolonged the test, their faith faltered. They felt that, led by this one man, they had suffered all these days but gained nothing whatever, that if they had not allowed themselves to be prevailed upon by him but had turned militant, they would have had their 35 per cent, or even more, in a much shorter time. This is my analysis of how their minds work. I can never bear to be in such a situation. That a pledge once taken, at my instance, should be so lightly broken and that faith in God should decline means certain annihilation of dharma. I simply cannot live to be a witness to this in any activity to which I am a party. I must impress upon the minds of the mill-hands what it is to take a pledge. I must show to them what I can do for a pledge; if I did not, I would be a coward. For a man who brags of clearing seven feet, not to clear even one is impotence. Well, then, to keep those ten thousand men from falling, I took this step. This was why I took the vow and its impact was electrifying. I had never expected this. The thousands of men present there shed tears from their eyes. They awoke to the reality of their soul, a new consciousness stirred in them and they got strength to stand by their pledge. I was instantly persuaded that dharma had not vanished from India, that people do respond to an appeal to their soul. If Tilak Maharaj and Malaviyaji would but see this, great things could be done in India.

I am at present overflowing with joy. When, on a former occasion, I took such a vow, my mind did not enjoy the peace it does today. I also felt at that time the pull of the body. This time I experience nothing of the kind. My mind is filled with profound peace. I feel like pouring forth my soul to you all but I am beside myself with joy.

My pledge is directed to making the mill-hands honour theirs and teaching them what value to attach to a pledge. For people in our country to take pledges whenever they fancy and break them at any moment betrays their degraded state. And for ten thousand mill-hands to break faith with themselves would spell ruin for the nation. It would never again be possible to raise the workers' issues. At every turn they would quote this as an example and say that ten thousand mill-hands endured suffering for twenty days with a man like Gandhi to lead them and still they did not win. I was thus forced to consider by what means the mill-hands could be made to remain firm. How could I do this without suffering myself? I saw that it was necessary to show them by example how, for the sake of one's pledge, one had to undergo suffering. So it was that I took this pledge. I am aware that it carries a taint. It is likely that, because of my vow, the mill-owners may be moved by consideration for me and come to grant the workers' [demand for] thirty-five per cent increase. My desire is that they should grant the demand only if they see its justice and not out of charity. But the natural result would be that they would do so out of charity and to that extent this pledge is one which cannot but fill me with shame. I weighed the two things, however, against each other: my sense of shame and the mill-hands' pledge. The balance tilted in favour of the latter and I resolved, for the sake of the mill-hands, to take no thought of my shame. In doing public work, a man must be prepared to put up even with such loss of face. Thus, my pledge is not at all by way of a threat to the mill-owners; on the contrary, I wish they clearly understand this and grant the 35 per cent to the mill-hands only if they think it just to do so. To the mill-hands, too, I would say that they should go to the owners and tell them as much.

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

228. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO AMBALAL SARABHAI

SABARMATI,
[*March 17, 1918*]

Be guided by your sense of justice rather than your desire to see that I break my fast. The latter gives me immense pleasure and, therefore, need not cause pain to anyone. The workers will profit more from what they get as a matter of justice—they will enjoy the

benefit longer. Ordinary men prefer things to be plain. 35 per cent, 20 per cent, and arbitrator—we may go in for such *foolishness*, put up with it, to satisfy *our conscience or our pride*. The workers, being simple-minded, will look upon the thing as calculated deception. I should, therefore, prefer some other way, if we can find any. *If you want me to accept this, I will, but I won't have you decide the matter in haste*. Let the arbitrator meet us and come to a decision right now, and let us announce the wage fixed by him; that is, 35 per cent on the first day, 20 on the second and, on the third, what the arbitrator decides. There is foolishness even in this, but things will be left in no doubt. The wage for the third day should be announced this very day.

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

229. SPEECH TO AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS[1]

[*March 17, 1918*]

The mill-owners came and told me, "We shall give 35 per cent for your sake," but it would cut me to the quick if they did so. I knew they had been thinking that way, but I could not go back on my resolve, for I thought that ten thousand men debasing themselves would be like a curse from on high. It is extremely humiliating to me that they offer you 35 per cent for my sake.

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

[1] Mahadev Desai reports these remarks as having been made during Gandhiji's talk with the mill-owners on the third evening after the commencement of his fast. The last sentence, however, makes it clear that the remarks were part of a speech.

230. LETTER T0 JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SABARMATI,
Magh Krishna [Before *March 18, 1918*][1]

DEAR JAMNALALJI,

I have your letter. My visit to Nagpur has been postponed. At present the work here is taking every moment of my time. The workers' strike is going on and so is Government's tyranny over the peasants in Kheda. Both are mighty tasks.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 2839

231. ADDRESS TO ASHRAM INMATES[2]

March 18, 1918

Most probably, we shall have a settlement today before ten. I am quite clear in my mind what it means and I see that it is something which should be quite unacceptable to me. It is my vow of fasting which is to blame. The vow is open to criticism from many points of view.

This does not mean, of course, that it had very little in its favour and much against it; it means that, if there was much in its favour, there was much against it too. In so far as it affected the workers there was much in its favour and the results have been correspondingly wholesome. In so far as it bore on the mill-owners, it was open to objection and, to that extent, I have had to give in. Deny it as emphatically as I may, the people cannot but feel that the mill-owners have acted under pressure of my fast and the world at large will not believe what I say. My weak condition left the mill-owners no freedom. It is against the principles of justice to get anything in writing from a person or make him agree to any condition or obtain anything whatever under duress. A satyagrahi will never do so. I have had, therefore, to give in on this matter. A man overpowered by a sense of shame, how much, after all, can he do ? I put forward one modest demand after another and had to be content with what they

[1] The Ahmedabad mill-workers' strike ended on this date
[2] This was in the morning on the day of the settlement.

accepted gracefully. If I had insisted on our demand in full, they would have met it. But I could not at all bring myself to secure anything from them by putting them in such a position. If I had done anything of the kind, I would have felt that I was breaking my fast by swallowing something most repulsive; how could I, who would not take even *amrit*[1] except at the proper hour, swallow such a thing?

I feel that some of the teachings of our sacred books are the result of profound experience. Thoreau has said that, where injustice prevails, an upright man simply cannot prosper and that, where justice prevails, such a one would experience no want. Our sacred books go even further and say that, where injustice prevails, an upright man just cannot live. That is why some amongst us withdraw from all activity. They do so not because they have grown weary of active life but simply because they find it impossible to take up any activity. They see so much of hypocrisy in the world that they cannot live in it. If an honest man finds himself surrounded on all sides by crooks, he should either turn his back on them or be as they are. In our world, some good men take to the Himalayas or the Vindhya mountains and mortify their bodies. Some think this body to be unreal; some, believing in the immortality and omnipresence of the soul, give up their bodies on the instant and attain *moksha*. Some do return but only after having so purified themselves that, thereafter, even while living in the midst of the world's hypocrisies, they can follow their own dictates. When I compare my state with that of these illuminated souls, I am such a mere pigmy that I don't know what to say. To be sure, it is not as if I did not know the measure of my strength. But in the outside world, it is esteemed much higher than it ought to be. Every day I discover so much of hypocrisy in the world that many times I feel I just cannot go on being here. At Phoenix, I often told you that, if one day you did not find me in your midst, you should not be surprised. If this feeling comes over me, I will go where you will never be able to seek me out. In that hour, do not feel bewildered, but go on with the tasks on hand as if I were with you all the time.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] Mythological drink of the gods, supposed to confer immortality.

232. SPEECH TO AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS

[*March 18, I 918*][1]

The settlement which I place before you merely upholds the workers' pledge. There is nothing more in it. I pleaded with the mill-owners as well as I could. I asked them to grant a permanent increase of 35 per cent. They felt, however, that that would be too much. Let me say one thing. Our demand, too, was onesided. Before the struggle commenced, we had tried to ascertain their point of view, but they did not respond to our request. The mill-owners now accept the principle of arbitration. I have agreed that the matter be entrusted to an arbitrator[2]. I shall succeed in getting 35 per cent from the arbitrator. If the arbitrator decides on something less, I will own that we had been wrong in making our demand. The mill-owners said that they had their pledge to abide by just as we had ours. I told them that they had no right to take any such pledge, but they insisted that theirs too was equally valid. I thought over the pledges of both. My fast stood in the way. I could not tell them: "I will break my fast only if you concede my demand." I felt that this would have been cowardice on my part. I, therefore, agreed that for the present both may maintain their pledges, and what the arbitrator decides should finally prevail. Our settlement, therefore, is briefly this:

On the first day, an increase of 35 per cent will be given in keeping with our pledge; on the second day, we get 20 per cent in keeping with the mill-owners'. From the third day till the date of the arbitrator's award, an increase of 27_ per cent will be paid and subsequently, if the arbitrator decides on 35 per cent, the mill-owners will give us 7_ per cent more and, if he decides on 20 per cent, we shall refund 7_ per cent.

What I have brought for you is enough to fulfil the letter of the pledge, but not its spirit. Spirit does not mean much to us and so we must rest content with the letter.

We have taken counsel together in this struggle; therefore, do not take an oath hereafter without consulting us. He who has no

[1] The settlement was arrived at on the morning of the 18th. According *to Ek Dharmayuddha*, Gandhiji announced it to the workers gathered in their thousands under the *babul* tree, evidently the same day. The meeting was attended by the Commissioner and prominent men of Ahmedabad.

[2] Prof. Anandshankar Dhruva, who was acceptable to both parties, was appointed.

experience, and has attempted nothing big, has no right to take an oath. After twenty years' experience, I have come to the conclusion that I am qualified to take a pledge. I see that you are not yet so qualified. Do not, therefore, take an oath without consulting your seniors. If the occasion demands one, come to us, assured that we shall be prepared to die for you, as we now are. But remember that we shall help you only in respect of a pledge you have taken with our concurrence. A pledge taken in error can certainly be ignored. You have yet to learn how and when to take a pledge.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

233. SPEECH TO AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS[2]

[*March 18, 1918*]

It appears to me that as days pass, not only Ahmedabad but the whole of India will be proud of this twenty-two days' struggle and India will see that we can hope much from a struggle conducted in this manner. There has been no bitterness in it. I have never come across the like of it. I have had experience of many such conflicts or heard of them, but have not known any in which there was so little ill-will or bitterness as in this. I hope you will always maintain peace in the same way as you did during the strike.

I must apologize to the employers. I have pained them very much. My vow [to fast] was aimed at you, but everything in this world has two sides. Thus, the vow had an effect on the employers as well, I apologize to them humbly for this, I am as much their servant as the workers'. All I ask is that both should utilize my services to the full.

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

[1] The rest of the speech is not available.

[2] On the evening of the day the settlement was arrived at, a meeting was held in the compound of Ambalal Sarabhai's house. The mill-owners distributed sweets among the workers. Gandhiji addressed them after Ambalal Sarabhai had spoken briefly welcoming the settlement. The text is incomplete.

234. TELEGRAM TO ANNIE BESANT

[*March 18, 1918*][1]

THANK GOD, ALL OVER. HONOURABLE SETTLEMENT ARRIVED AT. DIFFICULT WORK OF CONSTRUCTION NOW BEGINS. ALL OF US APPRECIATE YOUR KINDLY FEELING.

GANDHI

New India, 19-3-1918

235. AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS' STRIKE

March 19, 1918

LEAFLET NO. 17

VICTORY FOR BOTH

We have said in earlier leaflets that in satyagraha both the parties invariably succeed. He who fought for truth and attained his object would of course have won. But even he who first opposed the truth and subsequently recognized it as such and conceded it should also be considered to have won. From this point of view, because the workers' pledge has been fulfilled, both the parties have won. The employers had taken an oath that they would not give more than 20 per cent. We have respected their oath, too. Thus the honour of both has been upheld. Let us now see what the settlement is:

1. Workers are to resume work tomorrow, i.e., on the 20th; for that day they will get a 35 per cent increase; and for the 21st, a 20 per cent increase.

2. From the 22nd, they will get an increase not exceeding 35 per cent, as the arbitrator may decide.

3. Prof. Anandshankar Bapubhai Dhruva, M.A., LL.B., a prominent man of letters of Gujarat and a man of saintly character, a professor in Gujarat College and its Vice-Principal, will be the arbitrator.

4. The arbitrator should give his award within three months. During the period, workers will be paid an increase of 27_ per cent, i.e., the workers give up half of their demand and the employers half

[1] Gandhiji probably sent the wire on the day of the settlement. Annie Besant published it with the comment: "It is impossible to tell the relief brought by his message. We can only say with him: 'Thank God'."

of theirs.

5. Whatever amount is decided by the arbitrator will be adjusted against the 27_ per cent, i.e., if the arbitrator awards more than 27_ per cent, the employers will give that increase and, if he awards less than 27_ per cent, the workers will refund the excess.

Two things have been accomplished by this settlement. First, the honour of the workers has been upheld; secondly, it has been accepted as a principle that any serious dispute between the two parties should be settled not by resort to a strike but by arbitration. It is not one of the terms of the settlement that in future the parties will settle their differences by arbitration; but, as the settlement has come about through arbitration, it is presumed that on a similar occasion in future also an arbitrator will be appointed. It should not be understood from this that an arbitrator will be appointed even for trifling differences. It will be humiliating to both parties if a third party has to intervene every time there is a difference between the employers and the workers. Employers cannot tolerate that. They will not do their business under such conditions. The world has always respected wealth and it will always demand respect. Consequently, if workers harass the employers for trifles, the relations that now obtain between them will break. We believe workers will not do anything of the kind. We must also advise them that they should never resort to a strike in thoughtless haste. We can give them no help if they go on strike without consulting us. Doubt has been raised whether we are right in claiming that our pledge has been fulfilled, since we have secured an increase of 35 per cent for one day only. This seems very much like pacifying children. This has certainly happened on some occasions but not in this case. We have accepted 35 per cent for one day deliberately as the best thing to do in the circumstances. “We will not resume work without securing a 35 per cent increase” may mean one of two things; one, that we will not accept anything less than a 35 per cent increase at any time and, two, that we will resume work with a 35 per cent increase, it being enough even if we get it just for a day. Those who may have decided that it is just to demand a permanent increase of 35 per cent and feel sure that they have strength in plenty to fight till they get it will consider their pledge fulfilled only when they get what they want. But that was not what we had resolved. We were always ready to accept an arbitrator’s decision. The figure of 35 per cent was fixed unilaterally. Before we advised workers to demand 35 per cent, we wanted to hear from the employers themselves their

view of the matter. Unfortunately, we did not succeed. So we examined their side as best we could and advised a demand for 35 per cent. But we cannot claim that the figure of 35 per cent was not open to question. We have never said so. If the employers prove that we are mistaken, we may certainly advise workers to accept less. Hence, if the arbitrator decides in favour of a smaller increase and we abide by his decision, our pledge will not have been violated. We always accepted the principle of arbitration. We think we were not wrong in deciding upon a 35 per cent increase; we hope, therefore, that this increase will be granted. If, however, we discover that the figure was wrong, we should willingly accept less.

We ourselves have asked for three months' time. Employers were willing to accept a fortnight's time-limit. We have, however, to make some inquiries in Bombay to prove the justice of our demand. It is also very necessary to show to the arbitrator the conditions prevailing here and to acquaint him fully with the living conditions of workers. Without such information, he cannot have a complete idea. Such detailed work cannot be completed in a few days. We shall see, however, that the work is completed as speedily as possible.

Some workers wanted to be paid for the period of the lock-out. We must say that we are not entitled to ask for this. Since we did not accept the 20 per cent increase, either a strike or a lock-out became necessary. In suffering for 22 days, we did what was merely our duty and was in our own interest. We have had our reward for that suffering, namely, this settlement. How can we now ask for wages for the period of the lock-out? Such demand [if accepted] would amount to our having fought the struggle with the employers' money. The workers should be ashamed to entertain such an idea. A warrior must fight on his own strength. Again, the employers had paid all wages due to the workmen before the lock-out, so that it can be said that workers now begin a new term of employment. They should consider all these points and give up the idea of asking for wages for the period of the lock-out.

The wages will be due only after twenty days. What will be the workers' condition in the meantime? Many may not have a pie left with them. Those who are in need of assistance before the date of payment should politely request their employers for it and we are sure they will make some provision.

The workers should note that their condition hereafter will

depend on the quality of their work. If they work sincerely, obediently and with energy, they will win the employers' goodwill and be helped by them in a great many ways. It would be a mistake to believe that anything could be secured only through us. We are prepared to serve labour in their time of difficulty, but their interests will be best served if they look upon the employers as their parents and approach them for all that they want.

The need now is for peace. Small inconveniences should be tolerated.

If you permit us, we should like to help some of you to overcome your bad habits. We want to provide facilities for your and your children's education. We want to see all-round improvement in you, in your morals, in your and your children's health, and in your economic condition. If you permit us, we will work amongst you towards this end.

The greatest victory for the workers lies in this—God has kept their honour inviolate. He whose honour is preserved has secured all else. Even imperial rule over the world is as dust, if gained at the sacrifice of one's honour.

[From Gujarati]

Ek Dharmayuddha

236. LETTER TO A PUBLIC WORKER

March 19, 1918

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. If indeed you have not got justice at my hands, why don't you give me up? What I told you was only in the nature of advice. I told you that you might follow my advice only if you agreed. If you decided to give up public work, that was because you approved of my advice. If now you find that there is nothing but harshness in it, you can certainly set it aside. I would advise you now to go on with your work as before. I don't say this in anger but because I think it right. You are incapable of remembering what you might have said earlier. I feel, therefore, that for the present you should follow your own independent way. Only so will you prosper. You will sink low if you treat even my advice as an order and believe that you must not depart from it ever so little. The best course for you, it seems to me, is to be engrossed in your Home Rule work, and I

hope that is the course you will adopt. Rest assured I shall not be angry with you for being occupied with conferences, etc. You may also approach me for advice when you know the difference between my advice and my order. I write this letter entirely for your peace of mind, not to make you unhappy.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

237. LETTER TO F. G. PRATT

MIRZAPUR,
March 20, 1918

DEAR MR. PRATT,

Messages have been coming to me, and one has arrived just this very moment, to the effect that in several villages Talatis are putting undue pressure upon the villagers to pay the dues. Representations have come from Matar Taluka asking me to go over to the District and speak to the people. From everywhere in the Kaira District people have been coming in and asking for some public pronouncement. As you are aware beyond speaking to the people as to what they ought to do I have scrupulously refrained from making any public announcement or inviting public agitation. Indeed I have gone so far as to tell friends on whom I exercise any influence to avoid discussion in the press. Before making public declaration and holding meetings, etc., I do want to make a final appeal to you. Is it impossible to anounce a general suspension of the collection of the second instalment, practically for the whole District, coupled with a declaration to the effect that the Government would still expect holders of *sanadia* land to pay the dues in full? This will avoid a ferment and it will be a graceful concession which I verily believe is demanded by the circumstances of the case.[1]

I am at your service should you want it.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10655. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1]The addressee in his letter of even date refused to make any such announcement.

238. SPEECH AT AHMEDABAD MEETING[1]

March 21, 1918

I have had occasion before now to introduce Mr. Andrews to you. He can best be described as a *rishi* for he has all the qualities of a holy sage. He has recently returned from Fiji, where he went on a mission that concerns us. While in Fiji, he did not put up in any hotel or with any well-to-do person; he lived among the labourers, in their own houses, and studied their manner of living. We have, at present, the Kheda affair on hand. I am now in a position to tell you on the basis of my own investigation that, in some of the talukas of that district, the crop has been less than four annas. On the other hand, I am in a great hurry to leave for Delhi, the occasion being quite urgent. I should not, however, like the work in Kheda district to be delayed and I am sure you will be glad to hear that Mr. Andrews has taken it up as his own for the time being. He is leaving today for Bombay to see His Excellency the Governor. He will, on my behalf, place certain facts before him and also convey my request. If anything comes of this, all right; otherwise he will be in Nadiad on Sunday next. Thus, he has started working for our cause as well.[2]

I was happy to hear Mr. Andrews speak in Hindi. I was not responsible for that, however. He speaks very well in English also; what need one say of a Cambridge don's English? If he were addressing a meeting of students on Milton or Shakespeare, it would be quite right for him to speak in English. The first time Mr. Andrews went to Fiji,[3] he was accompanied by Mr. Pearson and on the second occasion he went alone. It was I who advised him to go there to observe things, lest a system as harmful as indenture came to replace it. The hospitals Mr. Andrews mentioned are in fact no hospitals but engines of oppression, as one might say, for the plight of Indian women in these hospitals is miserable indeed. When Mr. Andrews asked the Government to open hospitals for women in that country, it replied that it was for the planters to do so and the latter, on their part, said that the Government would attend to the matter when the system

[1] Gandhiji made these preliminary remarks as Chairman. The meeting was addressed by C. F. Andrews on the condition of Indian indentured labourers in Fiji, where he had spent over four months in 1917, and worked for the Indian community's betterment.

[2] What follow are Gandhiji's observations after Andrews had spoken.

[3] This was in 1915.

of indenture had ended. In schools, children receive instruction in the Christian faith from the very start. This is not good for Hindu and Muslim children. Moreover, the education is through the medium of English and, therefore, our people gain little from it. The same thing obtains in Natal. Indian teachers are not available there, nor in Fiji. We can be of help in this matter. If a few men who will be satisfied with a small income go over to these places as teachers, that will be of some help. One may also help by giving anything from a pie to a hundred thousand rupees. The expenses on the Australian lady who has volunteered to go to Fiji will, for the time being, be borne by Mr. Andrews. He will get some assistance from the Imperial Citizenship Association, but further help will be needed. I don't know how to estimate the value of all these services of Mr. Andrews. He is a man of retiring disposition and service of others is his one mission in life. I have deliberately called him a *rishi*. A great man like him, given to serving others, we cannot thank enough.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 24-3-1918

239. SPEECH AT NADIAD[1]

March 22, 1918

The occasion which has brought us here is so important that it will be enshrined in your memory for ever. For some months past, an agitation has been going on in this district for securing the suspension of land revenue. The crops have been generally less than four annas this year and so the collection of revenue ought to be suspended.

In compliance with the Resolution of the Gujarat Sabha, I toured a number of villages and inquired personally into the matter. My co-workers did the same. The available evidence goes to show that the crops do not exceed four annas in the district as a whole. The Government, too, claims to have made an inquiry, but it is not prepared to give the needed relief to the farmers. It has decided to collect the dues. If people do not pay, it has threatened to adopt coercive measures. Notices have been issued for the collection of

[1] Gandhiji addressed a meeting of about 5,000 people in connection with the situation in Kheda. The meeting marked the inauguration of Kheda satyagraha. This report of Gandhiji's speech has been collated with the one available in Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1918.

chothai[1] and for the confiscation of holdings. Complaints of oppression by *Talatis* are also being received. I have only this to say to the *Talatis* and chiefs of villages who are present at this meeting: "Let them by all means be loyal to the Government but that loyalty does not lie in oppressing [the people]." The land revenue must be realized, as ordered, but the Government certainly would not ask them to beat the people. Surely, the law can never authorize such an order. If there should be any such order, the *Talatis* are not bound to obey it. Anyone acting in this manner will be committing treason against the country, the State and God. They may execute the orders of superiors loyally, but they have no right to molest the people.

If they are convinced that the crop is below four annas they should say so boldly to their superior officers. There are two reasons why I give you this advice. It has been the system of Government to assert that what they have said is true. In a talk with Lord Willingdon I came to know his opinion that the people of India do not give out their correct views; they are not bold enough to say what they mean; they say anything which pleases the other party; they are lacking in moral courage.[2]

What are the people to do in this situation? Those whose crops are less than four annas should tell the Government politely: "It is not possible for us to submit to this injustice; when the crops have, in fact, failed, we cannot pay up our dues and thereby prove ourselves liars. You may realize the dues by force if you choose." It is to give you this advice that this meeting has been called.

This is a very beautiful district. Its people has delightful trees, the like of which I have in this country except in Bihar.

But Bihar has natural beauty, while in this district beauty has been achieved by hard work and perseverance. This is the only district which can boast of intelligent and industrious agriculturists. They have turned their land into a lovely orchard. They can be justly proud of their achievement. It does not, however, follow that they may be called upon to pay land revenue even when their crops have failed. This industrious section of the district's population is steadily growing poorer and many have been compelled to give up agriculture and take to daily labour. This is a distressing thing for anyone to have to do. A country in which the farmers find this necessary is in for a bad time.

[1] One-fourth of the assessment exacted as fine for non-payment of revenue

[2] This additional paragraph is found in Bombay Secret Abstracts.

In fact revenue should be paid from the sale value of the crops; it is intolerable, when the crops have failed, that the Government should recover it forcibly. But, in this country, it has become a practice with the Government to insist that it is always in the right. It is intolerable that, however just the people's case, the Government should have its own way. Justice must prevail and injustice yield. The agriculturists claim, and the evidence collected by those who conducted the inquiry bears them out, that the crops have failed and yet the Government insists that they have been plentiful. In the circumstances, the people have every right to tell the Government that, surely, they could see and judge things as well as the Government, and that they would not submit to injustice done by the officers. That people would tell lies, for the sake of saving at the most a year's interest by asking for a postponement of the assessment, is inconceivable. That the officers should suggest anything of the kind is intolerable. We must show, therefore, that our case is just; placed in the situation that we are, I would tell you that, if the Government does not accept our request, we should declare plainly that we shall not pay land revenue and will be prepared to take the consequences.

All nations which have risen have done so through suffering. If the people have to sacrifice their land, they should be ready to do so and suffer. Some will even argue that this is treason or rebellion; it is nothing of the kind. It means suffering ourselves, no treason. When the crops have failed, to pay up the dues out of fear is cowardice. We are human beings, not animals. To refuse a thing firmly and plainly in the name of truth—that is satyagraha.

We have assembled today to do the spade-work for satyagraha. We don't propose to pay up the revenue to the Government; we want to fight it out. We have to prepare ourselves, then, for the suffering that may follow. We must visualize what we shall have to face:

(1) The Government may recover the assessment by selling our cattle and our movable property.

(2) It may impose fines.

(3) It may confiscate jagirs.

(4) It may even put people in jail on the ground that they are defiant[1].

The word has been used by the Government and I don't like it.

[1] The Gujarati original has *dandai*.

How can they say that you are defiant merely because you speak the truth? Indeed, such a person is brave, not defiant. It is an act of bravery, and no defiance, for a man who, though he can afford to pay, refuses to do so in the interests of the poor. If in the process this man has to leave the village for ever, he will do so; he alone may take the pledge today who is ready for this.

It is very difficult to take the pledge of satyagraha; it is still more difficult to carry out one. I cannot bear to think of any one breaking a pledge once taken, forsaking his God. It would cause me very great pain, indeed, if you took a pledge which you did not mean to keep. In the intensity of my suffering, I may take an extreme step. I may have to fast. I don't suffer when I fast; fasting hurts me less than that people should deceive me by breaking their pledge. In satyagraha, a pledge is the most valuable thing of all; it must be kept up to the very end. A pledge taken in God's name must never be broken. I would not hesitate to sacrifice my life if that might ensure that thousands would keep their pledge. Those who want to fight must make up their minds once for all. I would not mind very much if people just said that they would hold out as long as possible but that they were not sure of themselves in case of severe repression. I would far rather that they cut my throat than that they break my heart by betraying their pledge. The man who cuts my throat, I would pray to God to forgive, but I would not forgive the other man.

I would tell you, therefore, in all humility, whatever you decide, do so with full thought and consideration. Only those who are determined to carry their decision through are able to raise themselves. When you have so raised yourselves, the Government will respect you, for it will know then, that it was dealing with men who would honour their plighted word and not betray it. A man who breaks his word can do no service to his country, or to his Government or to God.

I want, therefore, to know whether you agree; I ask you: "Are you ready to fight ?" I shall prepare a written pledge. Those friends who wish to take it should come to the Ashram and give their signatures. I have only one request: "Suffer everything and honour the pledge; refuse to pay the revenue and prove to the Government thereby that you are prepared for sacrifices." The Government cannot use force against everyone.[1]

[1] What follows is as reported in Bombay Secret Abstracts.

I advise those who have *sanadia* lands to pay the assessment. Mr. Andrews, who has gone to interview the Governor, sends me a wire to go to Delhi to see him. Mr. Andrews and Mr. Vallabhbhai (Patel) will carry on further work here. I am going to Delhi in connection with the work of Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali.

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Satyagraha

240. THE PLEDGE[1]

[NADIAD,
March 22, 1918]

Our village has had crops under four annas. We therefore requested the Government to postpone collection to the next year, but they did not do so. We the undersigned therefore solemnly declare that we shall not pay the assessment for the year whether it be wholly or in part; we shall leave it to the Government to take any legal steps they choose to enforce recovery of the same and we shall undergo all the sufferings that this may involve. We shall also allow our lands to be confiscated should they do so. But we shall not by voluntary payment allow ourselves to be regarded as liars and thus lose our self-respect. If the Government would graciously postpone for all the remaining villages collection of the balance of the revenue, we, who can afford it, would be prepared to pay up revenue, whether it be in full or in part. The reason why the well-to-do amongst us would not pay is that, if they do, the needy ones would, out of fright, sell their chattels or incur debts and pay the revenue and thus suffer. We believe that it is the duty of the well-to-do to protect the needy against such a plight.

Young India, 12-6-1918

[1] Some 200 people signed this pledge after Gandhiji had finished his speech at the Nadiad meeting; *vide* the preceding item. During the days that followed, more people took the pledge.

241. LETTER T0 PRIVATE SECRETARY T0 VICEROY

ST. STEPHEN'S COLLEGE,
DELHI,
March 25, 1918

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY

I can't describe to you how much disturbed I have been over this affair of Ali brothers, but our talk of this morning has given me much comfort and relief. It was a pleasure to see that you had grasped my point in a moment. It would be a wonderful act on the part of the Government if, without the knowledge of anybody, an order was sent for their discharge. Such a manner of discharging them would avoid all delirious demonstration that would otherwise inevitably take place to receive them.

These are some of the reasons for their discharge:

(a) If they are kept interned in order that they may not do anything hostile to the Government, the idea is frustrated because they do correspond with, and otherwise send messages to, whomsoever they choose.

(b) Their detention only increases their influence day after day.

(c) Their detention embitters the feelings of their friends and deepens the discontent of Mahomedans in general, which the Hindus too share to a certain extent.

(d) Moulana Abdul Bari Saheb is a man wielding tremendous power over thousands of Mussalmans. He is their spiritual adviser and the Government would make him theirs by releasing the brothers.

(e) The brothers are, so far as I am aware, men with a strong will, of noble birth, men of culture and learning, possessing great influence over the educated Mahomedans, open-minded and straightforward. It was a great mistake to have interned them. Surely the Government have ever need of such men on their side. Lastly in my humble opinion nothing can possibly be gained by keeping them under detention.

It will be worthy of a great Government to discharge them whilst all the clamour and agitation for their release are under suspense.

If my presence is wanted I shall be at His Excellency's *service any moment*[1] I am required.

Please favour me with a reply. Between the 29th and 31st I shall be in Indore presiding over the deliberations of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. Thereafter at Ahmedabad.

N.A.I.: Home, Political (a): June 1918, Nos. 359-60

242. CIRCULAR REGARDING KHEDA SITUATION[2]

HINDU ANATH ASHRAM,
NADIAD
Phagun Sud 15, March, 27, 1918

THE DUTY OF THE RYOTS OF KAIRA DISTRICT

As the crops in the Kaira district have been poor, that is to say, below 4 annas in most of the villages, the Government rule is that the collection of Land Revenue this year should be postponed. Repeated appeals have been made to the Government on behalf of the ryots to make this postponement. On behalf of the people the Gujarat Sabha, the honourable Messrs G. K. Parekh and V. J. Patel and Messrs Deodhar, Amritlal Thakkar and Joshi of the Servants of India Society made inquiries about the crops and all came to the conclusions that the *Kharif* crop practically came to nothing. With the help of many responsible and respectable assistants, I also made minute inquiries into the crops of about 400 villages and found the same thing that, in almost all the villages the anna valuation was below four annas. I also saw that many of the ryots had no money, and that the granaries of many were empty; further that many poor people were importing maize whole-sale from outside in place of grain grown in this district and living on that. I evensaw this, that wherever the people had paid

[1] In the source this is in capitals.

[2] The circular, originally in Gujarati, was resproduced in *Gujarati*, 31-3-1918. According to the District Magistrate of Kheda, whose note is available in Bombay Secret Abstracts, Gandhiji was busy issuing circulars since his return to Nadiad from Delhi on March 27. The first one which was reported to have been posted all over the district, and which is not available, asked farmers to communicate to Gandhiji details of coercive official measures. This was another circular issued by Gandhiji.

up the Land Revenue they had done so through fear of the *Talati*, etc. At several places people had paid the land revenue by selling their trees, etc. It also came to my notice that the people were groaning under the burden of extremely high prices. Further the people, through fear of plague, are living in huts in a state of anxiety.[1] All these facts have been explained to the Collector and the Commissioner; they have made certain concessions but these are of no account in comparison with the necessities of the people. In such circumstances, only one piece of advice can be given to the people, and it is this that in order to prove their truthfulness, they should not pay the land revenue but let Government collect the land revenue by selling their property if it so desires. It is more advisable to lose all by not paying the land revenue than to pay it up through fear and so prove false. At any rate, this is my definite advice to the people, they should certainly not pay the land revenue and they should bear all the suffering and oppressions (*zulum*) that may result. Government is bound to respect popular opinion, and it is only if people act in this way that Government will learn to respect it. Many leading gentlemen are ready to assist the people in this struggle, and even if anyone is turned out of house and home, arrangements have been made for his food and lodging. Forms of pledge for the signatures of those who have courage enough not to pay the assessment have already been issued, and it is hoped that all agriculturists who have not paid will sign it. My advice is to think well before signing, but it should be remembered that after signing whatever may happen there can be no going back.

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts: 1918

[1] This sentence is not found in the report in *Gujarati*.

243. LETTER TO THE PRESS[1]

NADIAD

TO

THE EDITOR

THE LEADER

ALLAHABAD

SIR,

Perhaps I owe an explanation to the public with regard to my recent fast. Some friends consider the action to have been silly, others cowardly and some others still worse. In my opinion, I would have been untrue to my Maker and to the cause I was espousing, if I had acted otherwise.

When over a month ago I reached Bombay, I was told that Ahmedabad mill-hands had threatened a strike and violence if the bonus that was given to them during the plague was withdrawn. I was asked to intervene and I consented. Owing to the plague the men were getting as much as 70 per cent bonus since August last. An attempt to recall that bonus had resulted in grave dissatisfaction among the labourers. When it was almost too late, the mill-owners offered in the place of the plague bonus and for the sake of the high prices a rise of 20 percent. The labourers were unsatisfied. The matter was referred to arbitration, Mr. Chatfield, the collector, being the umpire. The men in some mills however struck work. The owners, thinking that they had done so without just cause, withdrew from the arbitration and declared a general lock-out to be continued till the labourers were exhausted into accepting 20 per cent increase they had offered. Messrs Shankarlal Banker, V. J. Patel and I, the arbitrators appointed on behalf of the labourers thought that they were to be demoralized if we did not act promptly and decisively. We, therefore, investigated the question of increase they had offered. We sought the mill-owners' assistance. They would not give it. Their one purpose was to organize themselves into a combination that could fight a similar combination of their employees. One-sided technically though our investigation was, we endeavoured to examine the mill-owners' side and came to the conclusion that a 35 percent increase was fair. Before announcing the figure to the mill-hands, we informed the employers of the result

[1] Evidently this was issued generally to the Press, and was also published in *The Hindu*

of our inquiry and told them that we would correct ourselves if they could show any error. The latter would not co-operate. They sent a reply saying as much, but they pointed out in it that the rate of increase granted by the Government as also the employers in Bombay was much less than the one contemplated by us. I felt that the addendum was beside the point and at a huge meeting[1] announced 35 per cent for the mill-hands' acceptance. Be it noted that the plague bonus amounted to 70 per cent of their wages and they had declared their intention of accepting not less than 50 per cent as high prices increase. They were now called upon to accept the mean (the fixing of the mean was quite an accident) between the mill-owners 20 per cent, and their own 50 per cent. After some grumbling, the meeting accepted the 35 per cent increase, it always being understood that they would recognize, at the same time, the principle of arbitration whenever the mill-owners' did so. From that time forward, i.e., 26th February last, day after day thousands of people gathered together under the shade of a tree outside the city walls, people walking long distances in many cases, and solemnly repeated their determination in the name of God not to accept anything less than 35 per cent. No pecuniary assistance was given to them. It was easy enough to understand that many must suffer from the pangs of starvation and that they could not, while they were without employment, get any credit. We who were helping them came, on the other hand, to the conclusion that we would only spoil them if we collected public funds and utilized them for feeding them unless the able-bodied among them were ready to perform bread labour. It was a difficult task to persuade men, who have worked at machines, to shoulder baskets of sand or bricks. They came but they did so grudgingly. The mill-owners hardened their hearts. They were equally determined not to go beyond 20 per cent and they appointed emissaries to persuade the men to give in. Even during the early part of the lock-out, whilst we had declined to help those who would not work, we had assured them that we would feed and clothe ourselves after feeding and clothing them. Twenty-two days had passed by. Hunger and the mill-owners' emissaries were producing their effect and Satan was whispering to the men that there was no such thing as God on earth who would help them and that vows were dodges resorted to by weaklings. One morning instead of an eager and enthusiastic crowd of 5 to 10

[1] *Vide* "Speech to Ahmedabad Mill-hands", February 26, 1918.

thousand men with determination written on their faces, I met a body of 2000 men with despair written on their faces. We had just heard that mill-hands living in a particular chawl had declined to attend the meeting, were preparing to go to work and accept 20 per cent increase and were taunting us (I think very properly) that it was very well for us who had motors at our disposal and plenty of food, to attend their meetings and advise staunchness even unto death. What was I to do? I held the cause to be just. I believe in God as I believe that I am writing this letter. I believe in the necessity of the performance of one's promise at all costs. I knew that the men before us were God-fearing men, but that the long-drawn-out lock-out or strike was putting an undue strain upon them. I had the knowledge before me during my extensive travels in India, hundreds of people were found who as readily broke a promise as they made them. I knew, too, that the best of us have but a vague and indistinct belief in soul-force and in God. I felt that it was a sacred moment for me, my faith was on the anvil, and I had no hesitation to rising and declaring to the men that a breach of their vow so solemnly taken was unendurable by me and that I would not take any food until they had the 35 per cent increase given or until they had fallen. A meeting that was up to now unlike the former meetings, totally unresponsive, woke up as if by magic. Tears trickled down the cheeks of every one of them and men after men rose up saying that they would never go to the mills unless they got the increase and that they would go about the city and steal the hearts of those who had not attended the meeting. It was a privilege to witness the demonstration of the efficacy of truth and love. Every one immediately realized that the protecting power of God was as much with us today as it used to be in the days of yore. I am not sorry for the vow but with the belief that I have, I would have been unworthy of the trust undertaken by me, if I had done anything less. Before I took the vow I knew that there were serious defects about it. For me to take such a vow in order to affect in any shape or form the decision of the mill-owners would be cowardly injustice done to them and that I would prove myself unfit for the friendship which I had the privilege of enjoying with some of them. I knew that I ran the risk of being misunderstood. I could not prevent my fast from affecting their decision. Their knowledge, moreover, put a responsibility on me which I was ill able to bear. From now I disabled myself from gaining concessions for the men, which ordinarily, in a struggle such as this, I would be entirely justified in securing. I knew, too, that I would have

to be satisfied with the minimum I could get from the mill-owners and with a fulfilment of the letter of the men's vow rather than its spirit and so hath it happened. I put the effect of my vow in one scale and the merits of it in the other. There are hardly any acts of human beings which are free from all taint. Mine, I know, was exceptionally tainted but I preferred the ignominy of having unworthily compromised by my vow the position and independence of the mill-owners rather than that it should be said by posterity that 10,000 men had suddenly broken a vow which they had for over twenty days solemnly taken and repeated in the name of God. I am fully convinced that no body of men can make themselves into a nation or perform great tasks unless they become as true as steel and unless their promises come to be regarded by the world like the law of the Medes and Persians, inflexible and unbreakable, and whatever may be the verdict of friends, so far as I can think at present, on given occasions I should not hesitate in future to repeat the humble performance which I have taken the liberty of describing in this communication.

I cannot conclude this letter without mentioning two names of whom India has every reason to be proud. The mill-owners were represented by Mr. Ambalal Sarabhai who is a gentlemen in every sense of the term. He is a man of culture and equally great abilities. He adds to these qualities a resolute will. The mill-hands were represented by his sister Anasuyabehn. She possesses a heart of gold. She is full of pity for the poor. The mill-hands adore her. Her word is law with them. I have not known a struggle fought with so little bitterness and such courtesy on either side. This happy result is principally due to the connections with it of Mr. Ambalal Sarabhai and Anasuyabehn.

I am,

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Leader, 3-4-1918

244. LETTER TO J. B. KRIPALANI[1]

MY DEAR FRIEND[2],

You will forgive me for not writing to you earlier. I hope Girdhari gave you my message. I wanted to give you a letter that would bring you peace and joy. And I waited. I may have failed to give you such a letter even now. But I can no longer keep back writing to you. Your own letter pouring forth the soul's agony stares me in the face. But should death, even when it overtakes our dearest so suddenly, as it has done in your brother's case, paralyse us? Is it not only "a change and a forgetting"? Is it any the less so when it comes all of a sudden? You have been called to a privileged position. Your faith and your philosophy are on their trial. If you feed by honest means two hungry mouths of your family, you are performing a truly national service. What will happen to India if all the bread-winners turned so-called servants of India? You will only now be weighed in the balance and I know you will not be found wanting. All your friends also are now on their trial. Pray let me know of your plans. If you can, do come to see me, and we shall discuss them. Any assistance I can render is, you know, yours.

With deep love and sympathy,

Yours ever,

BAPUJI

From the mauscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

245. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS ON KHEDA SITUATION

NADIAD,
March 28, 1918

In the district of Kheda, the crops for the year 1917-18 have, by common admission, proved a partial failure. Under the Revenue rules

[1] This was in reply to Kripalani's letter conveying news about the deaths of his brother and sister-in-law and expressing the fear that he might have to give up social service.

[2] Jivatram B. Kripalani (b. 1886); educationist, politician and President, Indian National Congress, 1946

if the crops are under four annas, the cultivators are entitled to full suspension of the Revenue assessment for the year; if the crops are under six annas, half the amount of assessment is suspended. So far as I am aware, the Government have been pleased to grant full suspension with regard to one village out of every 600, and half-suspension in the case of over 103 villages. It is claimed on behalf of the ryots that the suspension is not at all adequate to the actuality. The government contended that in the vast majority of villages, crops have been over six annas. The only question before at issue is, whether the crops have been under four annas or six annas, as the case may be, or over the latter figure. Government valuation is in the first instance made by the *Talatis* assisted by the chief men of the villages concerned. As a rule, no check on thier figures is considered necessary, for it is only during partial failure that Government valuation of crops may have been challenged. The *Talatis* are as a class obsequious, unscrupulous and tyrannical. The chief men are especially selected for their docility. The *Talatis'* one aim is naturally to collect full assessment as promptly as possible. We sometimes read accounts of assiduous *Talatis* having been awarded *pugree* for making full collection. In applying to the *Talatis* the adjectives I have given, I wish to cast no reflections on them as men. I merely state the fact. The *Talatis* are not born; they are made; and rent-collectors all the world over have to cultivate a callousness without which they could not do their work to the satisfaction of their masters. It is impossible for me to reproduce the graphic description given by the ryots of the rent collectors which the *Talatis* chiefly are. My purpose in dealing with the *Talatis* is to show that the Governments valuation of the crops is derived in the first instance from the tainted source and is presumably biased against the ryots. As against their valuation, we have the universal testimony of ryots, high and low, some of whom are men of position and considerable wealth, who have a reputation to lose and who have nothing to gain by exaggeration except the odium of *Talatis* and possibly higher officials. I wish to state at once that behind this movement there is no desire to discredit the Government, or an individual official. The movement is intended to assert the right of the people to be effectively heard in matters concerning themselves.

It is known to the public that the Hon'ble Mr. G. K. Parekh and Mr. V. J. Patel, invited and assisted by the Gujarat Sabha, carried on investigations as also Messrs Deodhar, Joshi and Thakkar of the Servants of India Society. Their investigation was necessary

preliminary and brief and therefore confined to a few villages only. But the result of their inquiry went to show that the crops in the majority of cases was under four annas. As their investigation, not being extensive enough, was capable of being challenged, and it was challenged. I undertook a full inquiry with the assistance of over 20 capable, experienced and impartial men of influence and status. I personally visited over 50 villages and met as many men in the villages as I could, inspected in these villages most of the fields belonging to them and after a searching cross-examination of the villagers, came to the conclusion that their crops were under four annas. I found that among the men who surrounded me, there were present those who were ready to check exaggerations and wild statements. Men knew what was at stake if they departed from the truth. As to the *rabi* crops and the still standing *Kharif* crops, I was able by the evidence of my own eyes to check the statements of the agriculturists. The method adopted by my co-workers were exactly the same. In this manner nearly 400 villages were examined and with but a few exceptions, crops were found to be under four annas, and only in three cases they were found to be over six annas. The method adopted by us was, so far as the *Kharif* crops were concerned, to ascertain the actual yield of the whole of the crops of individual villages and the possible yield of the same village in a normal year. Assuming the truth of the statements made by them, this is admittedly an absolute test, and any other method that would bring about the same result must be rejected as untrue and unscientific; and as I have already remarked, all probability of exaggeration was avoided in the above-named investigation. As to the standing *rabi* crops, there was the eye estimate and it was tested by the method above mentioned. The Government method is an eye estimate and therefore a matter largely of guess-work. It is moreover open to fundamental objections which I have endeavoured to set forth in a letter to the Collector of the District. I request him to treat Vadthal--a well-known and ordinary well-to-do village of the district with the railway line passing by it and which is near a trade centre--as a test case and I suggest that if the crops were in that village proved to be under four annas, as I hold they were, it might be assumed that in other villages less fortunately situated, crops were not likely to be more than four annas. I have added to my request a suggestion that I should be permitted to be present at the inquiry. He made the inquiry but rejected my suggestion and therefore it proved to be one-sided. The Collector has made an elaborate report on the crops of that village which, in my opinion, I have successfully challenged. The original Government valuation, I understand, was twelve annas, the Collector's minimum

valuation is seven annas. If the probably wrong methods of valuation to which I have drawn attention and which have been adopted by the Collector are allowed for, the valuation according to his own reckoning would come under six annas and according to the agriculturists it would be under four annas. Both the report and my answer are too technical to be of value to the public. But I have suggested that, as both the Government and agriculturists hold themselves in the right, if the Government have any regard for popular opinion, they should appoint an impartial committee of inquiry with the cultivators' representatives upon it, or gracefully accept the popular view. The Government have rejected both the suggestions and insist upon applying coercive measures for the collection of revenue. It may be mentioned that these measures have never been totally suspended and in many cases the ryots have paid simply under pressure. The *Talatis* have taken away cattle and have returned them only after the payment of assessment. In one case, I witnessed a painful incident. A man having a milch buffalo taken away from him and it was only on my happening to go to the village that the buffalo was released; this buffalo was the most valuable property the man possessed and a source of daily bread for him. Scores of such cases have already happened and many more will no doubt happen hereafter if the public opinion is not ranged on the side of the people. Every means of seeking redress by prayers has been exhausted. Interviews with Collector, the Commissioner and His Excellency have taken place. The final suggestion that was made is this; Although in the majority of cases, people are entitled to full suspension, half suspension should be granted throughout the district except for villages which show, by common consent, crops over six annas. Such a gracious concession may be accompanied by a declaration that the Government would expect those who have ready means voluntarily to pay the dues, we the workers on our part undertaking to persuade such people to pay up the Government dues. This will leave only the poorest people untouched. I venture to submit that acceptance of this suggestion can only bring credit and strength to the Government. Resistance of popular will can only produce discontent which, in the case of fear-stricken peasantry such as of Kaira, can only find an underground passage and thus demoralize them. The present movement is an attempt to get out of such a false position, humiliating alike for the Government and the people. And how do the Government propose to assert their position and so-called prestige? They have a Revenue Code giving them unlimited powers without a right of appeal to the ryots against the decisions of the Revenue Authorities. Exercise of these powers in a case like the one

before us, in which the ryots are fighting for a principle and the authorities for prestige, would be a prostitution of justice, of a disavowal of all fair play. These powers are:

(1) Right of summary execution.

(2) Right of exacting a quarter of the assessment as punishment.

(3) Right of confiscation of land, not merely *rayatwari* but even *inami* or *sanadia*, and the right of keeping a man under *hajat*.

Those remedies may be applied singly or all together, and unbelievable though it may seem to the public, it may be mentioned that the notices of the application of all these remedies but the last have been issued. Thus a man owning two hundred acres of land in perpetuity and valued at thousands of rupees, paying a small assessment rate, may at will of the authority lose the whole of it, because for the sake of principal he respectfully refuses voluntarily to pay the assessment himself and is prepared meekly but under strong protest to penalties that may be inflicted by law. Surely vindictive confiscation of property ought not to be the reward for orderly disobedience which, properly handled, can only result in progress all roung and in giving the Government a bold and frank peasantry with a will of its own.

I venture to invite the Press and the public to assist these cultivators of Kaira who have dared to enter up a fight for what they consider is just and right. Let the public remember this also that unprecedentedly severe plague has decimated the population of Kaira. People are living outside their homes in specially prepared thatched cottages at considerable expense to themselves. In some villages mortality has been tremendous. Prices areruling high of which, owing to the failure of crops, they can but take little advantage and have to suffer all the disadvantages thereof. It is not money they want so much as the voice of a strong unanimous and emphatic public opinion.[1]

The Hindu, 1-4-1918

[1] The statement was published in *Young India*, 3-4-1918

246. SPEECH AT HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN[1]

[INDORE,
March 29, 1918]

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Our most venerable and selfless leader Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya has not found it possible to attend this conference. I had requested him to come if he could and he promised to do so. But though he has not been able to come he has sent us a letter. I was sure that in case he did not come, he would send a letter stating his views, and it would be possible for me to read it out to you. I have received the letter today. I had asked the reception committee to secure views of scholars on two questions in regard to Hindi. Panditji in his letter has replied to these two questions.[2]

The question of language presents a big and indeed a very important problem. Even if all the leaders were to devote themselves entirely to this task turning away from everything else, they well may. If on the other hand, we were to regard it as of secondary importance only and to direct our attention away from it then all the enthusiasm which people now feel for it and the keen interest they are taking in it at present would be in vain.

Language is like our mother. In fact I have no real interest in this sort of a conference. It will be a three days' pageant after which we shall disperse, go away to our respective places and forget all that we said or heard. What is needed is the urge and the resolve to do things. The president's speech cannot give you that urge. It is something which you have to create for yourselves. One of the charges made against us is that our language lacks spirit. Where there is no knowledge there is no spirit. We have neither the urge to know nor to do things. It is only when we acquire dynamic energy that our people and our language also will acquire it. We cannot get the freedom we want through a foreign language for the simple reason that we are not able to use it effectively. I am pleased to know that in Indore you carry on all your dealings through Hindi. But – excuse me please –the letter I have received from your Chief Minister is in

[1] Gandhiji delivered this address in Hindi while presiding over the 8th session of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan held at the Town Hall, Indore.

[2] At this point, Gandhiji read out Pandit Malaviya's letter expressing his conviction that Hindi was the lingua franca of India.

English. The people of Indore perhaps do not know—but I will tell them—that here the courts entertain petitions written in English. I ask why it should be so in Indore. I admit that this movement—the movement for the adoption of Hindi—cannot yet succeed in British India, but there is no reason why it should not succeed in the Indian States. The educated classes, as Pandit Malaviyaji has pointed out in his letter, have unfortunately fallen under the spell of English and have developed a distaste for their own mother tongue,. The milk one gets from the former is adulterated with water and contaminated with poison, while that from the latter is pure. It is impossible to make any advance without this pure milk. But a blind person cannot see and a slave does not know how to break his fetters. We have been living under the spell of the English now for the past fifty years. In the result our people have remained steeped in ignorance. The conference must give special attention to this part of the problem. We should see that within a year conditions are created when not a word of English will be heard in any of our political or social conferences, in the Congress, in the provincial assemblies and the like. Let us abandon the use of English entirely. English has attained the position of a universal language. But that is because the English have spread and established themselves throughout the world. As soon as they lose that position, English will shrink in its extent. We should no more neglect and thus destroy our own language. The English insist on speaking their mother tongue and using it for all their purposes. Let us do the same and thus raise Hindi to the high status of a national language. Only thus shall we discharge our duty to it. Now I will read out my written speech.

MR. PRESIDENT, DELEGATES, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You have done me great honour in conferring on me the presidentship of this conference. I know only too well that from the point of view of the knowledge of Hindi, my qualifications for this honour are almost nil. The only thing which may be said to qualify me for it is my boundless love of Hindi. I hope that I would always be able to pass this test of love.

The extent of a particular literature can only be reckoned on the basis of the region where that language is spoken. If the region of Hindi remains confined to the Northern part of India, the extent of its literature must remain limited. But in case it becomes a national language, the expanse of its literature will become as wide as the

country. As the people speaking a particular language, so the language. If we want that high-souled men from the East and the West, from the North and the South, should come to take a dip in the sea of this language, it is obvious that the sea must acquire sufficient importance. Therefore the place of Hindi from the point of view of developing a national literature needs to be considered.

It is necessary to give some thought to the definition of the Hindi language. I have often said that Hindi is that language which is spoken in the North by both Hindus and Muslims and which is written either in the Nagari or the Persian script. This Hindi is neither too Sanskritized nor too Persianized. The sweetness which I find in the village Hindi is found neither in the speech of the Muslims of Lucknow nor in that of the Hindu pundits of Prayag. The language which is easily understood by the masses is the best. All can easily follow the village Hindi. The source of the river of language lies in the Himalayas of the people. It will always be so. The Ganga arising with the village Hindi which will flow on for ever, while the Sanskritized and Persianized Hindi will dry up and fade away, as does a rivulet springing from a small hillock.

The distinction made between Hindus and Muslims is unreal. The same unreality is found in the distinction between Hindi and Urdu. It is unnecessary for Hindus to reject Persian words and for Muslims to reject Sanskrit words from their speech. A harmonious blend of the two will be as beautiful as the confluence of the Ganga and Yamuna and last for ever. I hope that we will not waste our energy and weaken our strength by entering into the Hindi-Urdu controversy. There is, no doubt, difficulty in regard to script. As things are, Muslims will patronize the Arabic script, while Hindus will mostly use the Nagari script. Both scripts will therefore have to be accorded their due places. Officials must know both scripts. There is no difficulty in this. In the end, the script which is theeasier of the two will prevail. There is no doubt that there ought to be a common language for mutual intercourse between the different parts of India. Once we forget the Hindi-Urdu controversy, we shall realize that for Muslims throughout India Urdu is the lingua franca. This proves that since Moghul times, Hindi or Urdu was well on its way to becoming the national language of India.

Even today, there is no language to rival Hindi in this respect. The question of national language becomes quite easy of solution

once we give up the Hindi-Urdu controversy. Hindus will have to learn some Persian words while Muslims will have to learn some Sanskrit words. This exchange will enrich and strengthen the Islamic language and provide a very fruitful means for bringing Hindus and Muslims closer together. in fact we have to work so hard for dispelling the present fascination for the English language that we must not raise the Hindu-Urdu controversy. Nor must we fight over the script.

Why English cannot become our national language, what harm results from the imposition of English on our people, how our people have suffered and their development has been retarded by the adoption of English as the medium of education--I have dealt with in my speeches at Broach and Bhagalpur. I will not therefore repeat myself here. Indeed there is no doubt that Sir Rabindranath Tagore, Smt. Besant, Lokamanya Tilak and other respected and influential persons entertain similar views regarding this question. There will certainly be difficulties in the way of the achievement of our purpose but it will be for this body to tackle them. Lokamanya Tilak has indeed expressed his views in this regard not only in words but also in action by starting a Hindi section in his papers the *Kesari* and *The Mahratta*. The views of Bharat-ratna Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya on this question are well known. Still, unfortunately, some of our learned leaders hold that for atleast some years to come English must remain the national language. We will respectfully request these leaders to consider that this unreasonable attraction for English is causing much hardship to our people, as they get little benefit out of the knowledge of their English-educated countrymen between whom and them a wide gulf has been created through English.

It is unnecessary to say that I do not hate the English language. I myself have benefited from many of the precious gems of the great treasure of English Literature. We have also to acquire a knowledge of science and suchlike through the English Language. Knowledge of English is therefore necessary for us. But it is one thing to give it its due place and quite another to make a fetish of it.

It is clear that our purpose will not be achieved merely by accepting that Hindi-Urdu should be our national language. We have to consider how we may achieve this goal. The scholars who have graced this assembly by their presence will certainly have something to say on this point. I will make a few suggestions on how we may spread this language. There must first be a handy book--sort of a

"Hindi Teacher" which will meet the needs of those who want to learn Hindi. I have seen a small book of this type for those who want to learn Hindi through Bengali. There is one in Marathi also. But I have not seen any such books for other regional languages. This is as easy to do as it is necessary. I hope that this Sammelan will soon take up this work. Of course, these books should be written by learned and experienced writers.

The greatest difficulty will be felt in the case of the Southern languages. No effort whatever in this direction has yet been made there. We must train good Hindi teachers to take up the work. There is a great scarcity of such teachers. I have secured one such teacher from Prayag through your popular secretary, Bhai Purushottamdasji Tandon.

Similarly, I have not yet seen a single complete grammar of the Hindi language. Such as exist in English and have been written by foreigners. One of these grammars is by Dr. Kellog. There must be a good Hindi grammar which can compare favourably with similar grammars of other Indian languages. It is my humble request to scholars who love Hindi to make up this deficiency.

In our national Councils Hindi alone should be used. Congress workers and leaders can and should do much in this respect. I would suggest that this Conference should make a request to this effect to the Congress at its next session.

In our legislative bodies too the entire proceedings should be conducted through the national language. Our people cannot have training in political affairs so long as this is not done. Our Hindi newspapers are doing something in this respect but the education we want to be imparted to our people cannot be given through translations. Similarly in our courts too the national and provincial languages must be used. Under the existing set-up people are being deprived of the education which they can easily receive from those who administer justice.

The Princes can promote the national language in a way in which the English Government cannot. In the Holkar State, for example, in the Council and in the courts, Hindi and the provincial language alone can be used. The encouragement they thus give to the national language will go a long way in helping it progress. In the schools of this State the entire education from the beginning to the end should be imparted through the mother tongue. In this way our

Princes can render much service to the language. I hope that Maharaja Holkar and his officials will take up this work enthusiastically.[1]

It will be a sad delusion to think that we can achieve our objective merely through conferences. Single-minded devotion and constant application alone will bring success. Only when hundreds of selfless scholars regard this work as their own can it be accomplished.

What I regret is that even the provinces which have Hindi for their mother tongue do not seem to show any enthusiasm for its promotion and propagation. The educated classes in these provinces continue to use English for purposes of conversation and correspondence. A friend has written to me that our newspaper proprietors do all their work in English; they keep their accounts, too, in English. Englishmen living in France use their mother tongue in all their dealings. Is it not a pity that we carry on even some of our most important activities in English? It is my humble but firm opinion that unless we give Hindi its national status and the provincial languages their due place in life of the people, all the talk of swaraj is useless. It is my fervent hope and prayer to God almighty that this Sammelan may be an instrument for the solution of this great question confronting India.

Thoughts on National Language

247. SPEECH ON INDIAN CIVILIZATION

INDORE,

March 30, 1918[2]

We often think that changes of the kind that take place in Europe will also occur in India; that when some big transformation comes about, people who know beforehand how to prepare themselves for it win through and those who fail to take account of this are destroyed; that mere movement is progress and that our advancement lies in it. We think that we shall be able to progress through the great discoveries that have been made in the continent of Europe. But this is an illusion. We are inhabitants of a country which has so long survived with its own civilization. Many a civilization of Europe is destroyed,

[1] According to a report in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 2-4-1918, Gandhiji thanked Maharaja Holkar for his donation of Rs. 10,000 for propagation of Hindi.

[2] The date is according to the tour itinerary.

but India, our country, survives as a witness to its own civilization. All scholars agree in testifying that the civilization of India is the same today as it was thousands of years ago. But, now, there is reason to suspect that we no longer have faith in our civilization. Every morning we do our worship and prayer, recite the verses composed by our forbears, but we do not understand their significance. Our faith is turning in another direction.

So long as the world goes on, the war between the Pandavas and the Kauravas will also continue. The books of almost all the religions say that the war between the gods and Satan goes on for ever. The question is how we are to make our preparations. I have come here to tell you that you should have faith in your civilization and keep to it steadfastly. If you do this, India will one day hold sway over the entire world. (Applause.)

Our leaders say that, in order to fight the West, we have to adopt the ways of the West. But please rest assured that it will mean the end of Indian civilization. India's face is turned away from your modern trend; that India you do not know. I have travelled much and so come to know the mind of India and I have discovered that it has preserved its faith in its ancient civilization. The swaraj of which we hear will not be achieved the way we are working for it. The Congress-League Scheme, or any other scheme which is even better, will not get us swaraj. We shall get swaraj through the way in which we live our lives. It cannot be had for the asking. We can never gain it through copying Europe.

That European civilization is Satanic we see for ourselves. An obvious proof of this is the fierce war that is going on at present. It is so terrible that the Mahabharata War was nothing in comparison. This should be a warning to us and we should remember that our sages have given us the immutable and inviolate principles that our conduct should be godly and that it should be rooted in dharma. We should follow these principles alone. So long as we do not follow dharma, our wish will not be fulfilled, notwithstanding all the grandiose schemes we may devise. Even if Mr. Montagu offers us swaraj today we can in no way benefit from that swaraj. We must make use of the legacy left us by our *rishis* and *munis*.

The whole world knows that the *tapasya* that was practised in ancient India is found nowhere else. Even if we want an empire for India, we can get it through no other method but that of self-

discipline. We can be certain that once the spirit of discipline comes to pervade our lives, we shall be able to get anything we may want.

Truth and non-violence are our goal. Non-violence is the supreme dharma, there is no discovery of greater import than this. So long as we engage in mundane actions, so long as soul and body are together, some violence will continue to occur through our agency. But we must renounce at least the violence that it is possible for us to renounce. We should understand that the less violence a religion permits, the more is the truth contained in it. If we can ensure the deliverance of India, it is only through truth and non-violence. Lord Willingdon, the Governor of Bombay, has said that he feels greatly disappointed when he meets Indians for they do not express what is in their minds but only what would be agreeable to him, so that he never knows the real position. Many people have this habit of hiding their own sentiments while in the presence of an important person and suiting their talk to his pleasure. They do not realize how cruelly they deceive themselves and harm the truth. One must say what one feels. It is impertinence to go against one's reason. One must not hesitate the least to tell what one feels to anyone, be he a Minister of the Government or even a more exalted person. Deal with all with truth and non-violence.

Love is a rare herb that makes a friend even of a sworn enemy and this herb grows out of non-violence. What in a dormant state is non-violence becomes love in the waking state. Love destroys ill will. We should love all—whether Englishmen or Muslims. No doubt, we should protect the cow. But we cannot do so by fighting with Muslims. We cannot save the cow by killing Muslims.. We should act only through love; thus alone shall we succeed. So long as we do not have unshakeable faith in truth, love and non-violence, we can make no progress. If we give up these and imitate European civilisation, we shall be doomed. I pray to Suryanarayan[1] that India may not turn away from her civilization. Be fearless. So long as you live under various kinds of fears, you can never progress, you can never succeed. Please do not forget our ancient civilization. Never, never give up truth and love. Treat all enemies and friends with love. If you wish to make Hindi the national language, you can do so in a short time through the principles of truth and non-violence.

[From Hindi]

Mahatma Gandhi

[1] The Lord in the form of the sun

248. LETTER T0 THE PRESS

INDORE,
March 31,1918

At the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, just closing, a committee consisting of the Hon'ble Rai Bahadur Bishen Dutta Shukla, Rai Bahadur Saryoo Prasad, Babu Shiva Prasad Gupta, Babu Purushottam Das Tandon, Babu Gauri Shanker Prasad, Pandit Venkatesha Narayan Tiwari and myself were appointed as a special committee to give effect to certain resolutions of the Sammelan. One of the instructions given to the committee is to find out six Tamil and Telugu youths of promise and good character who would undertake to learn Hindi with a view to ultimately becoming missionaries for the propagation of Hindi among the Tamil and the Telugu people. It has been proposed to locate them either at Allahabad or at Benares, and to teach them Hindi. Expenses of their board and lodging as well as instruction will be paid for by the committee. It is expected that the course will not take longer than a year at the most and, as soon as they have attained a certain standard of knowledge of Hindi, they would be entrusted with the missionary work, that is, the work of teaching Hindi to the Tamil or the Telugu people, as the case may be, for which they would get a salary to maintain themselves suitably. The committee will guarantee such service for at least a period of three years, and will expect applicants to enter into a Contract with the committee to render the stipulated service faithfully and well for that period. The committee expects that the services of these youths will be indefinitely prolonged and that they will be able to serve themselves as well as the country. The desire of the committee is to offer liberal payment and expect in return absolute faithfulness and steadfastness. I trust that you agree with the Sammelan that Hindi and Hindi alone, whether in Sanskrit form or as Urdu, can become the language of intercourse between the different provinces. It is already that amongst the Mahomedans all over India, as also amongst the Hindus except in the Madras Presidency. I exclude the English-educated Indians who have made English, in my humble opinion, much to the detriment of the country, the language of mutual intercourse. If we are to realize the swaraj ideal, we must find a common language that can be easily learnt and that can be understood by the vast masses. This has always been Hindi or Urdu and is so even now, as I can say from personal experience. I have faith enough in the patriotism, selflessness and the sagacity of the people of the Madras Presidency to know that those, who at all want to render national service or to come in touch with the other Provinces, will undergo the sacrifice, if it is one, of learning Hindi. I suggest that they should consider it a privilege to be able to learn a language that

will enable them to enter into the hearts of millions of their countrymen. The proposal set forth is a temporary makeshift. An agitation of great potency must arise in the country that would compel the educational authorities to introduce Hindi as the second language in the public schools. But it was felt by the Sammelan that no time should be lost in popularizing Hindi in the Madras Presidency. Hence the above-mentioned proposal which, I hope, you will be able to commend to your readers. I may add that the committee proposes to send Hindi teachers to the Tamil as also to the Andhra districts in order to teach Hindi free of charge to those who would care to learn it. I hope that many will take advantage of the proffered tuition. Those youths who wish to apply for the training above mentioned should do so under cover addressed to me care of Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Allahabad, before the end of April.

Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi

249. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

NADIAD,
April 1, 1918[1]

You have perhaps read my statement about Kaira.[2] The struggle is one against the attempt of the officials to crush the spirit of the people. In the circumstances, I think it is our clear duty to assist the cultivators. War cannot be allowed to cover oppression. I understand that there will be a public meeting in Bombay to express sympathy for the people. I hope that, if you at all can, you will attend the meeting and speak at it.[3]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Sastri's reply refers to this.

[2] The reference is to the "Statement to the Press on Kheda Situation", 28-3-1918.

[3] To this Sastri replied as follows: "I have received your letter dated Nadiad on the 1st of April. Need I say I am sensible of the honour it conveys ? I have no desire to pit my judgment against that of people better qualified by experience and local knowledge. But you would not like me to act except as my judgment approved, especially in important matters. Frankly, I am not satisfied of the expediency of passive resistance in the Kaira affair, even allowing that the rights of the case were with the ryots. I do not, however, approve of coercion by Govt. In fact, I pressed the urgent call for a conciliatory policy as strongly as I could both on Sir Ibrahim Rahimtullah and Sir James Duboulay, when I saw them yesterday. I am grieved to hesitate instead of springing to your side at your call. But I know at the same time, you would not wish me in the circumstances to do what I cannot heartily approve." For Gandhiji's reply to this, *Vide* "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri'', 5-4-1918.

250. LETTER TO STANLEY REED

NADIAD,

April 1, 1918

DEAR MR. STANLEY REED,

I am anxious to enlist your active sympathy in the Kaira trouble. I have not embarked upon it without due consideration.[1] The officials in class represent a spirit of intolerance which must spell ultimate ruin for us all. It will be an object lesson for anybody to meet the Talatis in a body. They represent the Viceroy to the people and they represent the rule of fear. This rule must give way to regard for the people's feelings. They may succeed in collecting the revenue by coercion. It will not be a victory. It will be a clear defeat. The price of collection will be deep resentment. War cannot be allowed to cover acts of gross tyranny. I hope you will find time to study the question and see your way to help the people.

Your sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10657. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] Addressing a meeting at Nadiad Gandhiji inaugurated the satyagraha in Kheda on March 22, 1918; *vide* "Speech at Nadiad", 22-3-1918.

251. SPEECH AT KATHANA

April 1, 1918

The Government says it is determined to collect the revenue. I say: "Recover it from our lands, seize our goods or take us into custody, but we do not wish to contradict ourselves by paying up the dues of our own accord." In this fight, those who have justice on their side shall win. As long as I am alive, I will fight for you. There is no talk yet of confiscating lands; they have their eye only on jewellery, buffaloes or movable property. There will be no great loss in this. If the Government, for recovering ten rupees, takes away land worth a thousand rupees through confiscation, even God will not bear it.[1]

You have married your husbands, not their jewellery or the cattle. It is your dharma to help your husbands to observe their pledge.

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Satyagraha

252. LETTER TO RESIDENTS OF KATHANA

[After *April 1, 1918*]

I got the news of the auction of your goods. I can very well understand that you will not find it easy to bear your losses. I feel, all the same, that this is the only way for us to rise. I should like you to bear your grief over your losses patiently and cheerfully. If the Government has inflicted the *chothai*, we shall fight it out and I am confident that we shall get the amounts back. I congratulate you on the courage you have shown in letting your goods be auctioned. I am sure your sacrifice will be duly rewarded. I hope all friends will boldly adhere to their word. May God give you divine strength and fortitude to fight this battle of truth to a successful end.

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Satyagraha

[1] Gandhiji addressed the words that follow to the women present.

253. LETTER TO F. G. PRATT

LIMBASI,
April 2, 1918

DEAR MR. PRATT,

I returned from Indore yesterday. 1 am passing the day at Limbasi. I observe that the whole of the crops of this Division has been placed under distraint. This seems to me to be a cruel procedure. Again complaints are being made that violence is being used against the people in other parts. This, I know, can have no countenance from the higher officials. The Government resist the people, and the latter the former on a matter of principle. I think that the fight can be fought without bitterness. Both will have gained in the end if none but the fairest means be adopted by the parties to gain their respective ends.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10658. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

254. LETTER TO J. GHOSAL

LIMBASI,
April 2, 1918

DEAR MR. GHOSAL,

I arrived at Nadiad yesterday morning and have come here today. I must say that the notice distraining the whole of the crops of the people is a cruel proceeding. The villages are sending a petition seeking relief. I am anxious that this should be and remain a fair fight between the Government and the people. Then at the end of it both will have gained, for there will be no bitterness left behind. I hear that in some cases even physical violence has been used. This, I know, can only be unauthorized. But it can be avoided if the officials at the lowest rung know and feel that the Government has no desire to be harsh.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

My permanent address is Nadiad.

From a copy: C.W. 10660. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

255. SPEECH AT LIMBASI

April 2, 1918

We call the fight satyagraha. We have made truth our weapon; hence, if you tell lies and deceive me, we shall go down and all over the country they will say that ours was a cowardly fight. Let those who have not paid the full amount of the Government dues raise their hands;[1] and those who have paid the full amount raise theirs.[2] This proves that most of the farmers have not paid the dues. Indeed, this is a matter for joy. If such a large number of people remain firm, victory is ours. We should know what we mean by "victory". What are we fighting for? We are fighting so that the Government may suspend the collection of revenue. Where crops are less than four annas, the full amount of the assessment should be suspended and, where they have been between four and six annas, half the amount should be suspended; that is the law. Many have had less than four annas yield, but some of them have paid up half the amount. Our fight is to see that they don't have to pay the remainder. The Government says that, in most places, crops have been more than six annas; that being its view, we request the Government, in the interests o f justice, to appoint a committee of inquiry; this the Government refuses to do. The question, here, is not merely one of land revenue. I am pained to see that the Government should always insist that it is in the right and the people are in the wrong. This bespeaks a state of slavery [for us]. We shall endure it no longer; of course, you won't. That is how you should feel. We are fighting that you may taste the joy of freedom. The people's will is pitted against the Government's. Our stubbornness is in a right cause, hence we call it satyagraha. If, in the fight, the Government attaches all our property and even then we do not pay the revenue, the victory will be ours. Let the women give the same advice to their husbands. If our crops have been less than what the Government says they are, we should stand firm in the truth we have stated. If, out of fear of others, a man does what he ought not to, he will be ruined in his soul. The true end of human effort, real manliness, consists in not acting thus. We are not slaves; we are free. The Government says that, if the people are allowed to raise their heads once, they will always hold them high. But

[1] Some 200 hands were raised.

[2] Only three responded.

people have no time to go about unnecessarily raising their heads in defiance. So much of their time is taken up in earning their bread. We fight through voluntary suffering. If any millionaire should offer to pay up the land revenue for you, you should flatly refuse the offer. Such help brings us down. People should fight with their own strength. They should find their happiness in their suffering. All the help I can give is to share in your suffering, give you my experience and advise you; more than this, I cannot do. It is for you to fight. If you don't have peace or are not happy, we can share in all that you suffer. If you are caught in a fire, how can we be happy ? You may possibly be frightened by the notices and may shake with fear because the crops have been attached but, if you face the situation calmly and smilingly, the Government will find it impossible to act in this manner again. The Government is doing all this to terrorize you. Our Hindu scriptures speak of many examples of sacrifice for the sake of truth.

If the farmers of Limbasi allow themselves to be ruined for the sake of truth, we shall say that the story of Nalaraja was true, that we have today hundreds of Nalarajas in Limbasi. Don't mind if they have attached the barns. Let them confiscate the lands. It will be a golden day for us when, deprived of our lands, we issue forth from our villages with drums joyfully beating before us, for then it will be proved that you had fulfilled your pledge. We shall not permit those who lose their all to starve. If you have to go without food, I and hundreds like me will starve with you. If you submit to suffering, happiness will come seeking you. This is a law of nature.

When people have to submit to oppression by the *Talati*, the village chiefs and *ravanias*[1], what else can we expect from the *mamlatdar*? And the Collector: how dare one set one's eyes on him? This is a mistaken notion under which you are labouring. There is no law requiring you to live in fear of the officers. If we are not afraid, the law cannot punish us either. We should fear only God.

Those who become the victims of oppression need not get frightened. This is the first time we are fighting the Government. Ours is a fight for truth. Indulal[2] and Hariprasad will remain in this taluka. You may keep them informed of what you have to suffer. In other talukas, too, we shall make similar arrangements. We shall issue

[1] Errand-men

[2] Indulal Yagnik; an active political worker; Gandhiji later took over *Navajivan* from him.

handwritten leaflets every day, in which we shall report the developments from day to day. This will assure you that we do not waste a single second, but spend all our time in your cause. A meeting is to be held in Bombay next Friday to discuss this matter.[1] Gradually, the whole of India will wake up and the credit for this will go to you. The Kheda district has shown the way for the good of the whole of India. When the farmers declare that they are men and have courage enough, that they are prepared for sacrifices for the sake of truth, I shall say they are not men, but gods. I wish you victory.

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Satyagraha

256. LETTER TO SIR JAMES DUBOULAY

NADIAD,
April 4, 1918

DEAR SIR JAMES DUBOULAY,

Although the Kaira matter is not under your Department, I feel that as you are a member of the Executive Council and as perhaps of all the members you know me best, I would not hesitate to place the position before you.

The situation is not of my seeking nor is it the work of the Home Rule party in any shape or form. The initiative entirely belongs to the Kaira people. Even at the present moment I am endeavouring as much as possible to keep it outside the political view. The people have tried every means at their disposal of serving what they believe to be justice and they have failed. What was I to advise? Were they quietly to sell their treasured belongings or incur debts to pay the Government dues and be noted liars in the bragain? For be it remembered that the local officials think that their figures are absolutely right and the people's wrong. The people naturally look up to public workers for advice. For me to have advised them to suffer the wrong would have been to increase their weakness and send their discontent underground. What I have done enables the people to state their case boldly and if they are in the wrong or the Government unbending to suffer their property to be sold. This is at best a striking and orderly demonstration of their grief and of their faith in the ultimate triumph

[1] The meeting was later postponed, *vide* the following item.

of truth and in the desire of the Government to do justice. I cannot help saying that the doctrine of infallibility of the officials is alike dangerous and intolerable. I can see nothing wrong in the Government adopting the principle of arbitration as between themselves and the ryots. They can only gain in prestige. The Talati and Mukhi rule which is the rule of fear must give place to the rule of law. Anyway that is what I am striving for throughout India. Will you not assist?

For the facts of the case I enclose herewith my letter to the Press[1]. If you wish to see me I am at your service.

From a copy: C.W. 10662. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

257. SPEECH AT KARAMSAD

April 4, 1918

When we met in Nadiad a few days ago and resolved on satyagraha, I said that I would have to go to Delhi for the sake of Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali. It may seem that I take but a casual interest in this issue but I alone know how much, in fact, I am occupied with it. Of the guests present here, Shri Shuaib[2] is among the same class of persons as the two brothers. I said at the meeting of the Muslim League that, wherever I move in India, I embrace with love all Muslims who have their minds fixed on Allah and who recognize the truth. My friends Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali are in this class. It was in the course of my efforts to get to know these brothers[3] that I encountered Shri Shuaib. He has come here at my instance. He is a man of learning and a friend of truth. He has spared himself no sacrifice.

In what terms shall I introduce to you the other friends ? My own brothers are dead; but we have here Shri Rajendra Babu[4], on seeing whom I forget their loss. He has given me love such as I can never forget. Shri Badrinath Verma also belongs to Bihar, the land of King Janak. Sister Anandibai has made up for my want of a daughter. She is a widow. She is still studying. In Champaran, when I felt the

[1] *Vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909

[2] Shuaib Qureshi, editor of *New Era.*

[3] The original has: "while searching for these brothers".

[4] Rajendra Prasad, (1884-1963); prominent Congress leader, and President of India, 1950-62

need for women workers, Dr. Dev made me a present of Anandibai. Let us plan our satyagraha in the presence of these witnesses.

Bombay is the abode of the rich. It is difficult to explain to them the meaning of satyagraha, and more difficult still to explain it to the Bombay Government, for it always confronts us with some legal point or other. However, as a result of the recent deliberations, a committee has been appointed. They will wait on the Government. The idea of a public meeting in Bombay has been put off for some time. I don't like to leave you and go to Bombay. I can bring myself to go nowhere, leaving you. It is not with Bombay's help that we want to win this fight. If the farmers of Kheda should drop off one by one, out of fear of Government, how will help from Bombay avail ? Tell them the confidently that yours is a struggle in a just cause and that you are prepared for any sacrifice for it.

It was indeed good that I brought with me these guests. This is Vallabhbhai's native place. Vallabhbhai is still in the fire and will have to endure a good deal of heat, but I think out of this all we shall have gold in the end. Let your good wishes go with him. It was good of you to have treated him to a dinner of *ladus*[1] but, to crown it all, you need to offer *dakshina*[2]; this can only be that you do not pay the Government a single pie; let it, if it will, drown you in that lake or throw you into fire.

It is a very good thing that this meeting is being attended by agriculturists from the Baroda State. If we lose our lands in satyagraha, I hope they will offer theirs to us. If we say that the crops have been less than four annas, how can we bear that the Government should exact from us a single pie? There is also another issue in this struggle, and that is whether the Government's view should prevail or the people's. The subjects' loyalty to their Government consists in resisting the obduracy of officers. We have to be men. Now that we have woken up, we must take thought what we do. Great changes are taking place in the country. Abroad, terrible bloodshed is going on. In the war in Europe, the British have proved themselves a brave people. We want to be partners of these heroes. We shall command respect as such only if, in company with them, we make ourselves a heroic people. If we do not, we shall affect them as well with unmanliness. If we become abject, we shall make them so. We are

[1] Sweets
[2] Gift offered to a priest or a Brahmin

waging this fight in order to awaken the country and teach the people the lesson of satyagraha.

In a fight, one does not become brave by taking up arms. Arms may be there, but they will be useless to those who are cowards in their hearts. Heroism-fearlessness-lies in a man bearing sword-cuts without shrinking. This kind of heroism is possible to all men, women and children. I want the agriculturists of Kheda to have it. Our weapon is an uncompromising insistence on truth. Let the agriculturists of Kheda sacrifice their all rather than pay the land revenue. I am confident the agriculturists here, at Karamsad, will never turn their backs. We are to submit to suffering, to sacrifice our possessions. To be sure, we may feel concerned what we shall have for food. He who has given us teethwill provide the food.[1]

We are to sacrifice our all in this struggle. All the same, those who, with motives none too clean, lay their hands on our lands will not be happy with them. If the Government does so, we shall turn ourselves outlaws in defiance. If, to recover revenue of a hundred rupees, they seize land worth ten thousand, the man who bids for it will not profit from it. This Government is not based on robbery, but justice. The day I learn that it is deliberately run for plunder, be sure I shall turn disloyal to it. Why have this fear, what you would do if deprived of your lands? Nobody will ever find it profitable to appropriate our lands.

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Satyagraha

258. LETTER TO K. NATARAJAN

[Before *April 5, 1918*]

DEAR MR. NATARAJAN[2],

It grieves me to find that sometimes you jump to hurried conclusions and will not have the patience to hear the other side. This, I venture to think, adversely affects your capacity for national service which I know you always want to render. Take this Kaira affair. I do not mind your differing from me. On the contrary, I honour you for your stating your convictions even though it may hurt you to have to

[1] At this point, questions were put to Gandhiji. What follows is his reply to one of them.

[2] Kamakshi Natarajan, editor of *Indian Social Reformer*

hold them in opposition to your friends. My complaint however is against the haste with which you form your conclusions. You do not know the inwardness of the Kaira struggle and you have no time to study it. There was the Godhra Conference[1] in which the masses for the first time took an active part. Some of these men, at the end of the Conference, twitted the leaders with these remarks: "What is the use of your holding Conferences and inviting us? Kaira is face to face with practically a failure of crops. The *raiyats* are entitled to suspension. What are you people doing in the matter?" Some of the listeners accepted the rebuke as well deserved and undertook to move in the matter. Hence the petition[2] signed by thousands for suspension. This petition alone should have been sufficient to warrant suspension which would have meant merely loss of interest to the Government, but the gaining of goodwill in return. The officials, however, took a dubious and a devious course. They set about getting *annawari patraks*[3] of which I can say that most of them will not bear a close scrutiny. The *raiyats* have exhausted every means at their disposal for getting relief. Each time these faulty documents are flung in their faces. What are they to do ? To sell their cattle, trees or other belongings and to quietly pay the revenue? I would defy you to be on the scene as I have been and to advise the *raiyats* to do so. You must know the methods that are employed in order to exact payment from *raiyats* when they have no crops. I could not calmly contemplate an emasculation of the *raiyats* taking place in front of me. Nor could you. I hold that it is a perfectly constitutional, just and righteous thing for a people to say, "Since you reject our petitions and if we have to pay, we can only pay by borrowing or selling our belongings." You have only to come and see with what perfectly good humour the fight is being carried on, how the people are steeling their hearts for any kind of loss and how elderly men and women, too, are taking part in the demonstration. You at least ought to see that this self-inflicted suffering must exalt the nation, whereas the same suffering unwillingly undergone hitherto has only degraded the nation. This is a bread-agitation. What is the use of a thousand meetings in India, praying for redress if they are to tell the people calmly to denude

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Social Conference, Godhra", 5-11-1917.

[2] This was first submitted by the agriculturists of Kathalal on November 15, 1917. Later, similar petitions signed by over 18,000 agriculturists were sent to Government.

[3] Statements of assessment on the basis of so many annas in the rupee

themselves of their trees or their cattle or their ornaments whilst a constitutional agitation is being carried on? It is like giving them stone when they asked for bread.

I wish this letter would prick your conscience, stimulate your inquiring spirit, bring you to Kaira and see the campaign in working. I would then not only be prepared to *submit* to, but would *invite*, your report no matter how adverse it may be to the cause. I shall have the satisfaction of knowing that you have at least studied the question. You owe this to yourself, to a friend, and to the nation. If you cannot give this much time to the cause, you must have no business to hold any opinion on the Kaira affair.

I hope you will pardon me for my presumption in writing to you as I have done. As I have told you so often, I always endeavour to secure your co-operation and help in my work and I should be satisfied not to have it if you withhold it after full consideration. You ought not to be led astray by the term "passive resistance". You have got a concrete case. Judge it on its merits.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

259. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

April 5, 1918

I thank you for your note.[2] However anxious I may be to win your approbation for any conduct of mine, I share your anxiety that your conscience may not in any way be coerced. I know that you will keep in touch with the Kaira affairs as they develop from day to day.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Of this letter Mahadev Desai says in his Diary: "Bapu was told that Natarajan will feel bad. Bapu read the letter again. Two sentences were left incomplete. I was rebuked: 'I would take it that at least you would draw my attention to this—why didn't you?' I said: 'I had shown it to Vallabhbhai and Banker.' Bapu said: 'But, it is all right. He will say that I do not know how to write. However, the argument is there. I have written this letter to shock his intellect, not to hurt him. The letter asks: Brother, why your intellect refuses to work?'"

[2] *Vide* footnote to "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 1-4-1918.

260. LETTER TO J. GHOSAL

NADIAD,
April 5, 1918

DEAR MR. GHOSAL,

I have just heard that Agarpura, Od and Nasar cattle have been distrained and in one case a milch buffalo actually removed. The owner writes bitterly complaining that although he pointed out other goods, the distraint upon his animal was insisted on. In some cases officials, so the people say, have entered their cottages including kitchens without putting off shoes.

If you would rob your process of distraint of all tyranny, it is absolutely necessary to stop distraint of cattle, to recall all *chothai* orders and forfeiture notices and to respect popular prejudices when entering their homes.

From a copy: C.W. 10666. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

261. SPEECH AT VADATHAL

April 5, 1918

From the very beginning, the village of Vadathal has taken a leading part in this struggle. I have moved from farm to farm here and assured myself that on the average the crop in this village is less than four annas. The Collector came over for a fresh inquiry. I wrote to him that I had ascertained the facts myself and found that the crop was less than four annas, but he did not agree with me.

I have told him that ours is a struggle through self-suffering. I have seen people suffer in satyagraha much more than you do. I shall have you swallow bitter draughts. You should celebrate the days on which they sell your buffaloes here, auction away your things and confiscate your belongings. If anyone in Vadathal is jailed, the prison will have been sanctified. Especially the women should have a feast when their husbands go to jail.

Notices of confiscation have been issued, by way of threats; in spite of them, we remain the owners of our lands. Whatever the value of these lands, we should not falter ever so little in our duty. In case you should lose your all in this struggle, not one of you will be allowed to starve. We shall go and beg but provide for you. Bear your sufferings for the sake of your pledge.

If I pay you money for the buffaloes, I and all of you will have deceived the people. It will be wrong if we help you financially so that you may join the satyagraha. We can stand by you, keep up your courage and give you our moral support when the Government takes repressive measures against you. I want to rid you of the unmanliness that has come to possess you. I want to bring back the olden days in India.

If in ancient times we had a Sita, this age, too, I believe, should produce one. If at one time we had a Ramachandra, such a one as flowers but once in an age, the modern age, too, should produce another like him in this country. This should be a part of our heritage. You know the stories of Harishchandra and Dhruva. We may not be able to do all that Harishchandra did, but something of him is bound to have come down to us. Let the women here, too, understand the utmost importance of a pledge. If they are not firm enough to hold to a pledge once taken, their children, too, will grow up to have no spirit in them. The God who has created us will have justice done to us. If, moreover, we stand firm in this struggle, we shall by and by be able to secure the reins of Government as well in our hands. If I should have to die for saving the agriculturists of Vadathal, I would be only too happy to do so.

I am not unaware that at present your buffaloes are being sold against land revenue dues. There have been many other cases in which people have paid land revenue by selling off their buffaloes. That you may not have to endure such misery year after year, you may let the Government sell the buffaloes for this once. It is welcome to do so, this year. Next year, rest assured, it will not find it possible to sell your buffaloes or subject you to any other hardships.

Even the birds and beasts have a sense of self-respect and you are human beings. See, therefore, that you do not fail in your pledge. Things were explained to you so very clearly before you took it. Though we have the help of the rich in this struggle, to fight with their help is much like a man looking stout because of swellings on his person. Have faith in God; if we tread the path of right and justice, God will protect us. Be it justice or money, we can have it from none but Him.

Consider, now, the condition of those who are working among you. There is not a single moment in the twenty-four hours when I am not thinking of the satyagraha in Kheda. Dr. Hariprasad has made his

home here. There was no dearth of public work for him in Ahmedabad. He has left aside all these things and has come here to take up the work and live in your midst. As you see, Shri Vallabhbhai and Shri Keshavprasad have just arrived from Mahudha.

Two friends have come all the way from Champaran. They have come from the land of King Janak, eager to see you. I hope you will not forget all these things and bring discredit to Vadathal.

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Satyagraha

262. LETTER T0 A YOUNG MAN

NADIAD,

Phagan Vad 10 [*April 6, 1918*]

BHAISHRI,

I got Polak's cable about you and have also received a reply on the subject. I have had long talks with Shri ....[1] He must have written to you all about it. You had better have some patience. He promises that he will certainly release you. This should suffice. He says it will do harm if the thing is made public right now.

And yes, there is one thing more. We do hope you will get well, and, if you do, it is everyone's wish that you should raise no objections to marrying. I am the first to wish this. I merely want to make this clear about you, that, if you refuse to marry, . . .[2] it will be for reasons of health, that there will be no other reason. This will give the father peace and . . .[3] will be happy in . . .[4] life. Banish all anxiety and improve your health. If you are ever so little unfit, no one will press you [to marry]. I should like you to agree to this cheerfully out of regard for your well-wishers, but not at the risk of your health.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] The omission is in the source.
[2] The omissions are in the source.
[3] *ibid*
[4] *ibid*

263. LETTER TO F. G. PRATT

NADIAD,
April 6, 1918

DEAR MR. PRATT,

Your letter of the 29th ultimo has been redirected to me from Indore. I thank you for it. Evidently it was His Excellency's desire that notwithstanding the final letter I should have sought an interview with you. Do you think that we may usefully meet and discuss the situation? I had a full chat with Mr. Ghosal and Mr. Hood yesterday. We were able to reach a reasonable solution regarding Limbasi. But I am anxious that an equally reasonable solution may be reached on the general question.

Your charge about my taking on too many responsibilities is only too true. I can but plead helplessness. I know that I should be there and handle the mill-hands insetad of leaving them to Miss Anasuya Sarabhai[1]. And yet I dare not leave the Kaira matter. I could not avoid it in the first instance.

I shall look forward to your visit to the school. I am anxious to interest you in my experiment. Do please apologize on my behalf to Miss Green for my having run away from Ahmedabad.

I have your second letter also for which many thanks.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10668. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

264. SPEECH AT KHEDA

April 6, 1918

One had far better lay down one's life for the sake of truth; but, out of fear of economic loss, to submit to oppression like the animals—there is nothing so despicable as this. Let the women do their duty, standing beside their husbands in this fight for truth and holding them firmly to their course.

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Satyagraha

[1] Anasuyabehn Sarabhai, sister of Ambalal Sarabhai. She was on the side of the workers in the dispute between the workers and the mill-owners.

265. SPEECH AT UTTARSANDA[1]

April 6, 1918

It was my hope that women also would be present at this meeting. In this work there is as much need of women as of men. If women join our struggle and share our sufferings, we can do fine work.

I see that people's enthusiasm is mounting. This is a people's fight and, once the people have come to understand things, the Government may fight on as long as it chooses, we shall not be defeated. Now at last the time has come when we can see if people have courage. Our goods are being attached and buffaloes taken away; hardships such as these purify us as fire purifies gold. In this struggle, you are being taught courage, firmness and patience.

The Government has resorted to every possible repressive measure in this town. But we want to show to the world that we have some mettle in us, have the strength to suffer and that, in fulfilling our pledge, we shall spare ourselves nothing. Uttarsanda is all *Patidars* and, if this fight is to be won, it is only your community that will do so. They have seen good days as well as bad. I should like to see you go bravely through this struggle. It bespeaks your sense of honour that you have joined this struggle.

Some may advise you to try your strength with weapons, but remember that he who can wield a stick can also ward off a blow with one. I want you to use your strength well and in a right cause. It is very much to be desired that a 'satyagrahi army' is formed, ever ready to fight for the honour of India. The nation is entitled to expect much from your town, inhabited by so many strong and brave men.

I am having these days a wonderful experience of the amazing strength the people of Kheda District possess. If all friends abide by the sacred pledge they have taken in this struggle, there is not the least doubt that we should have swaraj in twenty-four hours.

And so I have but one request to make to you all. Let the Government auction your household utensils, your bedsteads, your cattle; but don't be shaken in your purpose, ever. I want this promise from you. I crave this gift. You will please me if you give it. To

[1] Gandhiji visited Uttarsanda, accompanied by Kasturba Gandhi, Vallabhbhai Patel, Mahadev Desai, Shankarlal Banker and Anasuyabehn. The audience consisted of a couple of thousand farmers.

honour your pledge, you have to fight on with love in your heart to sustain you. I have drawn you into satyagraha because I have recognized your strength. Do reassure me gladly and unreservedly, with a cheerful face.

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Satyagraha

266. SPEECH AT NAVAGAM[1]

April 7, 1918

We are coming here straight from Torana. The agriculturists there are holding out quite as well as those in Navagam and elsewhere in Dasakosi [taluka]. I am sure that despite the heavy assault on it, Torana will not fall. Keep up this struggle which is based on truth. See that the women go with you in all that you do. Their courage and fortitude will serve us well. If we have to yield, because they are afraid of losing their buffaloes, we shall have no place to stand on. If they give us courage, we shall win. The first step towards swaraj is to abide by the sacred pledge we have taken. Swaraj consists in the very fact of having acquired such strength. It is our duty to know and to safeguard our rights. This is a struggle to compel the Government to respect popular feeling and acknowledge our rights.

We should not cross the bounds of common decency in this struggle. Complaints have been received about some of us having harassed the officers. Untruth, discourtesy and arrogant harassment of others are unbecoming of us. They betray lack of discipline. Through this struggle, we have to learn to behave with respect and courtesy towards others. Satyagraha must display the qualities of truthfulness and courtesy.

Truthfulness, courage and zeal are indispensable in this fight. Again, one cannot hold out unless one puts all one's heart into it. These qualities will not spill over if we cover them with the lid of courtesy.

Our pledge is not for a few months only, but for an indefinite period. So long as the Government does not accede to our request, we shall not retreat a single inch but lose all that we have. You ought to

[1] Gandhiji visited the village along with his party in the course of his tour. Over 3,000 agriculturists had gathered to listen to him.

have immovable faith, not in me or anyone else, but in yourselves. This is not a struggle merely to secure suspension of land revenue, but to see that the pledge behind it is honoured. We are to show through this fight who will have the last word, the Government or we. So long as the Government has not the support of the people, it will not find it possible to hold out. The satisfaction you would derive from having honoured your pledge, you will not get from your lands. Minstrels and bards will sing of your prowess and their songs will inspire your children too to heroism. You will pass on to them, as a priceless legacy, the temper which regards a pledge as a sacred obligation. Fight like brave ones to honour the pledge you have taken. The key to swaraj for India lies in this.

To suffer for the sake of truth and win immortal fame, that is your truest duty today; in that lies your honour and that of India.

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Satyagraha

267. LETTER T0 ESTHER FAERING

ON THE TRAIN,
April 8, 1918

DEAR ESTHER,

I seem to have been cruelly neglectful in my correspondence with you. I could not be satisfied with giving only a line to you. I wanted to give you a long love-letter. I have not the quiet for framing such a letter. And I dare not wait any longer.

I do not know how I can describe my activities not one of which is of my own seeking. They have all come to me with a persistence I dare not oppose. What is a soldier to do if he is hemmed in on all sides ? Is he to concentrate his effort on dealing with one attack only and to court extinction by ignoring the other attacks that are being simultaneously delivered? Obviously safety lies in dealing with all in the best way he can. Such is almost my position. Distress pleads before me from all sides. I dare not refuse help where I know the remedy.

The Ahmedabad strike provided the richest lessons of life. The power of love was never so effectively demonstrated to me as it was during the lock-out. The existence of God was realized by the mass of

men before me as soon as the fast was declared. Your telegram was the most-touching and the truest of all. Those four days were to me days of peace, blessing and spiritual uplifting. There never was the slightest desire to eat during those days.

The Kaira affair you must have understood from my letter to the Press.[1] I wrote one on the fast too.[2] If you have not seen the letters, please let me know.

I hope you are keeping well. In liver complaints nothing answers so well as fasting.

Please address your letters to Ahmedabad or rather Sabarmati.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

My Dear Child, pp. 26-7

268. LETTER TO DURGA DESAI

April 8, 1918

CHI. DURGA[3],

Even if you have forgotten me, I have not forgotten you. Anandibehn gave me news of you. You have been separated from Mahadev longer than I thought. I have told him that he can go there whenever he likes; but if you so wish, I am prepared to send him at once. I should tell you, all the same; that Mahadev has been passing through experiences which will mean so much to him. You will also share in his gain. If you can take comfort in this thought and get over your sadness at separation, he may stay on. But there is one danger in this. If I should get busy with a struggle even greater than the present one, he would not be in a position to go, much as you might desire. This is, therefore, the right time for him to go and see you. If you will bored there, you can come over here, though it is a little doubtful whether you will like being in Nadiad. You will certainly not have

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press on Kheda Situation", 28-3-1918.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to the Press", 27-3-1918.

[3] Mahadev Desai's wife, who joined the teaching staff at Bhitiharwa School in Champaran on February 1. She had volunteered to serve there for six months.

here what you are having there. I should like you to do whatever will please you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

269. LETTER TO HARIBHAI DESAI[1]

April 8, 1918

DEAR FRIEND,

I thought of writing to you many days ago but could not get time; the idea also went out of my mind. I hope you will forgive me.

I beg leave to say that you have committed no mistake in sending over Mahadev to me. This experience was necessary for his growth in life. Money is not always the only thing necessary for one's happiness. It is not in Mahadev's nature to find his happiness in money. I think what is true of him will also be so with Durga, by and by. Mahadev has been passing through invaluable experiences.

So far as I am concerned, the coming over of both has been nothing but a gain. Mahadev has relieved me of many of my worries. I was in search of a loving helpmate of his character and learning. Having got Mahadev, I have succeeded in the search. I did not think even in my dreams that it would be possible for me to find such good use for Chi. Durga's services. Inscrutable are the ways of God.

I wish, I beg of you, that you will not worry yourself on account of these two but give them your full blessings.

Yours, etc.,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] Father of Mahadev Desai

270. MESSAGE ON NATIONAL EDUCATION[1]

April 8, 1910

If people can be made to understand what is truly National Education and to cultivate a taste for it, the Government schools will be empty; and there will be no return thereto until the character of education in Government institutions is so radically altered as to accord with national ideals.

The Indian Review, April 1918

271. SPEECH AT BORSAD[2]

April 8, 1918

Mr. Gandhi said that the Government might take the revenue from the people with their consent and not by harassing them. He emphatically said that the British could not be a blind rule.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-4-1918

272. LETTER TO JAMES DUBOULAY

NADIAD,

April 9, 1918

DEAR SIR JAMES DUBOULAY,

I thank you for your kind letter. I know that we can have honest difference of opinion without questioning one another's motives. I promise not to misunderstand you in anything you say.

When I entered on the Kaira struggle I had no notion that I was attacking the whole revenue system. I felt that I was attacking what in my opinion was a grave injustice to the people. At the same time I confess that I would not have hesitated to enter upon the struggle even if it had meant an attack on the whole revenue system. War had ever been present before me and I know that as a law-abiding citizen and still more as a lover of the British Constitution I should at least hesitate

[1] This was among the messages read out by Annie Besant at the inauguration of the National Education Week at Gokhale Hall, Madras.

[2] Gandhiji, accompanied by his party, visited the village. He addressed a meeting of some 4,000 agriculturists.

to embarrass the Government if I cannot actively co-operate in the prosecution of War. I have tried to do the latter so far as as I could. But should anybody allow the War to cover injustice? Should not the Government refrain from defying honest public opinion? I do not say the people's verdict be accepted in the Kaira matter. But I do say that where there is a sharp difference of opinion, arbitration should be resorted to. It is no pleasure to me to use adjectives for Talatis or for that matter anybody, but I know that it would be prudery in private matters, and a shirking of a painful duty in public matters, to shun adjectives where they describe material facts. I wish you really knew them as I have come to know them. You will then probably use *stronger language* than I have done. Give me the committee I have asked for and I will show you what their estimates are worth and incidentally show you also what they are. But here the fault is not theirs; the system under which they are working makes them so. This however is much too large a question for me to discuss in the course of a letter.

The choice before me is quite clear. I must either see discontent going deeper but being kept secret out of fear, or assist in making it publicly known in a disciplined manner and without fear of consequences.

No government, I agree, can afford to concede to popular clamour, nor can any government afford to ignore a strong public opinion even though the matter may be unreasonable so long as it is not immoral or destructive of the government itself. In this case you may ignore New India but you may not ignore the opinion of the Kaira ryot in a matter concerning itself. A government that will not yield to such public opinion deserves to be destroyed. Indeed it courts destruction. I am endeavouring to show both the Government and the people that all force is utterly useless before the force of the public opinion which disdains to use violence, and is based only on truth as it is apprehended by the people who are prepared to suffer to the uttermost. The people of Kaira are receiving the richest education of their lives. They are being taught not to strike for the right but to suffer for it with quiet but steadfast resignation, and whatever the consequences, they will have gained to the extent of their adherence to the principle I have ventured to enunciate.

I hope to run down to Bombay on Saturday. Will you kindly let me know, either by letter or by wire, whether I could wait on you that

day, and if so at what hour?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10670. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

273. LETTER TO F. G. PRATT

NADIAD,
April 9, 1918

DEAR MR. PRATT,

I thank you for your cordial note. I would wait on you on Thursday the 11th instant at 9 a.m. As to the laying down of weapons before coming to parley[1] I would do much to please you, but I feel that I shall most truly serve you by being disobedient in as orderly a manner as possible. My disobedience is a defensive measure. I would be no friend of law and order if I acted otherwise than I am doing. I wish you were present at the meetings we have been having. But I must not anticipate my pleading of Thursday. This I know that behind my activity there is not a trace of ill will against any man on earth.

If 9 a.m., Thursday, too is inconvenient to you please send me your own time.

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10672. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

274. LETTER TO J. GHOSAL

NADIAD,
April 9, 1918

DEAR MR. GHOSAL,

I thank you for your letter of the 8th instant.

Surely a plea for justice is not inconsistent with my warning to the people to prepare for the worst. I have urged against vindictive or

[1] Inviting Gandhiji for a discussion the addressee in his letter dated April 7, 1918 had written: "And I do not suppose that you would lay down your weapons before coming to parley."

punitive distraint. To take people's milch cattle when other movables are available is, I submit, a vindictive distraint; so are orders for payment of *chothai* and forfeiture. My workers have strict instructions not to interfere with anyone who wants to pay.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10671. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

275. LETTER TO N. M. JOSHI[1]

[NADIAD,]

April 9, 1918

DEAR FRIEND,

I have just heard that you have been saying to friends that it was only out of regard for me that you did not contradict me when I said that the result of your inquiry was the same as mine, so far as the *annawari* was concerned and that you [think] that I was uselessly making the people suffer. I should be sorry if what I have heard is true. You have every right and you owe it to a friend, as I deem myself to be to you, to say what you feel. In public life there may arise hundreds of occasions when friends must differ and still remain friends. Do please therefore tell me what you have been saying to the Committee there and otherwise too what your opinion is on the whole of my activity. I know you will not mind if it does not convince me (assuming it is adverse). You will believe me when I say that it will have due weight with me.

Yours Sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Narayan Malhar Joshi; pioneer of the trade-union movement in India; prominent worker of Servants of India Society

276. MESSAGE TO HINDI CLASS[1]

[NADIAD,]
April 10, 1918

I WISH EVERY SUCCESS (TO) YOUR EFFORT. FEEL SURE (THE) DECCAN WILL LEAD THE WAY AS IN SO MANY CASES IN RECOGNIZING HINDI AS COMMON MEDIUM AND THUS SAVE INDIA LOSS OF IMMENSE NERVE-ENERGY REQUIRED (IN THE) USE OF ENGLISH.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai; also, Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1918

277. LETTER TO J. L. MAFFEY[2]

NADIAD,
April 10, 1918

I am daily expecting your promised reply regarding Ali brothers.

You may know that I am engaged in a domestic quarrel with the local authority on the Kheda crops. I am hoping that the cry of the people will have its due weight and that their opinion will be respected.What vexes me, however, is the case of the brothers Ali. I seem to be ever worrying the administrators in the country when as a respectable citizen of the Empire I should be taking my share in the war. I should have felt happier being in Mesopotamia. or France. I twice offered my services but they were not accepted. I feel ashamed that since my arrival in India I can show no war work record in the conventional sense of the term.

On the contrary I seem to be making myself responsible for embarrassing situations and I may find myself in the midst of an agitation which might from its very magnitude cause grave anxiety to the Government. I entertain too great a regard for Lord Chelmsford to wish to add to his anxieties and yet I dare not shirk an obvious duty

[1] This was sent in reply to a telegram from Dr. Naik reading, "Hindi class opens 11th instant in public meeting under Hon. Kamat wish your blessings." A "Hindi Shikshan Prasarak Mandal" was inaugurated the following day at a gathering presided over by B. S. Kamat, in the premises of the New Poona College, Poona. The words in brackets were added by Mahadev Desai

[2] This was actually sent on April 14 along with another note; *vide* "Letter to J. L. Maffey", 14-4-1918

regarding Ali brothers. Their internment has soured the Muslim section. As a *Hindu* I feel that I must not stand aloof from them. I must assist in securing the release of the brothers, if I cannot justify the Government's action by producing before the public a case against them. If therefore the Government have a real case against the brothers, it should be produced and the atmosphere cleared. If there is no producible cases I cannot help saying that the brothers should be discharged.

If Lord Chelmsford is of opinion that they ought not to be released, the Government must prepare for facing an agitation which must result in the incarceration of the leaders of it. But I plead their discharge with all my strength. The Government can only gain in prestige by responding to public opinion, and so far as danger to the State is concerned I can only say that I should lay down my life for it, if their release should mean any betrayal of trust.

N. A. I.: Home: Political—A: June 1918, No. 359

278. LETTER TO HANUMANTRAO

April 10, 1918

MY DEAR HANUMANTRAO,

If Mr. Shastriar sees eye to eye with me regarding Hindi, I would like you to offer yourself as a scholar under my appeal[1], and select for me two more Telugus. I have already got three Tamils.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

279. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

April 10, 1918

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have not been regularly writing to you. I have neither the time nor the energy for writing. I am just now doing so much creative work that the day leaves me exhausted for further effort. Writing, making speeches and even talking are painful processes for me. I simply want

[1] *Vide* "Letter to the Press", 31-3-1918.

to brood. A series of passive resistances [*sic*] is an agonizing effort—while it lasts. It is an exalting agony. I suppose the agony of childbirth must be somewhat like it.

I am asking Mr. Desai to give you details.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

280. LETTER T0 HARIHAR SHARMA

April 10, 1918

BHAISHRI ANNA[1],

Your letter made me so very happy indeed. It was such a surprise to me to learn that I am never out of your mind. You, Gomatibehn, and a third person of your own choice—what more could one want? Mahadev will write to you about the rest.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

281. SPEECH AT AKLACHA

April 10, 1918

Some of the boys here are waving flags. Among these I see one adopted by the mill-hands of Ahmedabad, bearing the words: "A pledge is a pledge". They alone are entitled to raise this flag who have that motto engraved in their hearts.

At present, all over India people's eyes are fixed on Kheda district. If it goes under in this struggle, then for a long time the people of India will not be able to stand up. There is wisdom in pausing for reflection before undertaking anything; but, having embarked on a thing, if we give it up, we only earn the title of cowards. When the people lose their manliness, the country as a whole grows poor in spirit. This struggle in Kheda is to secure suspension of land revenue. There is a very important idea behind it. That the Government is always in the right and the subjects are wrong: how can

[1] He was a teacher in Ganganath Vidyalaya, Baroda, and had joined Gandhiji in 1915; *vide* "Letter to Kotwal", 13-6-1915.

we tolerate this? The Government says that authority must be respected. Authority is blind and unjust. A Government that says that such authority must be respected cannot last. Under this British rule, we are taught from our childhood that theirs is a rule of justice. This is their ideal. It seems to me that, in place of this ideal, we have these days the rule of despotism. That is why I say that we should rise against this Government. I came over to Kheda district. When we investigated the state of the crops, you proved to me and my co-workers that they have been less than four annas. If what you say is true, it is the duty of the Government to concede our demand. And after all, what is it we have asked for? Merely that collection of land revenue be suspended for a year and that, if they announce the suspension, those of us who have the means are ready to pay up.

If the Government does not concede even such a reasonable demand, what is the duty of the people? The scriptures, too, enjoin that, if a king goes wrong, the people should point out his error to him. Authority is blind and cannot readily see its own mistakes. In this case, the Government is violating truth and doing injustice to the people, whereas we, speaking the truth, are asking for justice. Truth ever prevails. You ought to have this confidence that, if, for the sake of truth, we just abide by our pledge, there is no Government which will ruin its subjects for nothing.[1] I hear people say that they are in misery. But I have come here to tell you that, if we suffer voluntarily, we shall come through in the end. I have placed my trust in the people of Kheda district. Some have gone back on their pledge; to that extent the responsibility of the rest of us has increased. If, of two or three carts one breaks down during a journey, the others will have a heavier load to carry. I want you to bring lustre to the name of Kheda, famous as it is. It is for you to fulfil my wish. The day after tomorrow, you have been called by the Commissioner, to Nadiad. He wants to talk, not to those who have paid up the land revenue, but to those specially who have not done so. These should go positively. Shed all fear, tell him of your pledge and say what you want. The Commissioner will tell you that I am misleading you, that I have not advised you for your good. He may perhaps say that I am a good man but that in this matter I have gone wrong. But it was from you I collected the figures

[1] *The Bombay Chronicle*, 18-4-1918, reports Gandhiji to have said here: "That would raise them in the eyes of the world. They bore no ill will towards Government; on the contrary they had great feelings for it."

and the crops turned out to have been four annas. That was the correct estimate and, therefore, you should corroborate it before Mr. Pratt. None of you need be awed by him. Our salvation lies in clinging to truth. We are fighting for freedom.[1] I would tell the women that they, too, must ask their husbands not to pay the Government's dues, whatever the suffering you may have to go through. If we stand by our pledge and uphold our honour, freedom is bound to follow. Do everything necessary to ensure this. To those who have paid up, my advice is that they should help the others to hold out.

[From Gujarati]
Kheda satyagraha

282. SPEECH AT SINHUJ

April 10, 1918

Before I say what I wish to, I should like to ask you how many of you have not paid the revenue.[2] On coming here I learn that many women have been intimidated by the Government's severity in this fight and that, in consequence, in the last two or three days, a large number have paid up the revenue. I am sorry for those who have done this out of fear and all the more so for such of them who might have taken a pledge and have yet paid up. There is wisdom in not taking a pledge, but a pledge once taken must be honoured. Some will say that this struggle is merely to secure suspension of the Land revenue for a year. Yes, that is true enough; but, in reality, the struggle is for an all-important issue underlying the question of land revenue. We must become absolutely fearless. Fear is not for us, neither for men nor for women; fear is for beasts. The day before yesterday I said by way of illustration that, on seeing the frightened eyes of the bullock when a car passes by, I am moved to pity. As the car comes nearer, the bullock shakes with fear, and sometimes the car is in danger of being overturned. The bullock's fear is groundless. We are in the same condition as this bullock. It is a harsh comparison and does no credit

[1] *The Bombay Chronicle* report here has: "Independence, fearlessness, truth, these are virtues which we have to attain, They are dormant in our soul; if we cannot awaken them in ourselves, then we are not men but brutes. We fight to obtain manliness."

[2] Most of those present raised their hands.

to man, but that is the simple truth of the matter. Why should we fear without any reason? Neither the *Talati* nor the other officers hurt anyone, they simply cannot do so. Even the *ravanias* only put questions and walk away. They are rather scared, thinking that this is the people's day. On one side they are scared and, on the other, we are. What a situation !

Let the Government, if it will, take away our cattle; hand over the ornaments, too, if it wants to seize them. But there is one thing we will not give up and that is our self-respect. No one who does not maintain his self-respect can be called a man of religion. He who is afraid of God is afraid of none else. He whom we have imagined as omnipotent and omniscient protects all and leads all to welfare. How can you give in, betraying all those who, in this fight for truth and dharma, have bound themselves by a pledge? To the friends who took fright, I should say, ''Stand up, if you have courage enough and patriotism in you, and assure the others who are firm in their pledge that you will stand by them and, if they have to part with their lands or cattle, you will share yours with them." Some of the women told me that, if I had come two days earlier, they would not have paid up. I should say to these ladies, "If you would be true to your word, you should tell your husbands to spend their money on the community." I told them in Borsad and Vasad, the day before yesterday, that a man who had yielded would feel like bringing down others and so, instead of admitting his weakness, would try to cover it up. If any of you harbours such an idea, please banish it from your mind and give courage to the satyagrahis who have taken the pledge. That is our sacred duty. If you discharge this duty, at any rate, those who have taken the pledge will stick to it unflinchingly. We want in this way to train and prepare the country, and show the right path to the Government which has chosen to disregard truth and justice; this is our aim in fighting. It is sheer injustice to confiscate land worth ten thousand rupees to recover ten rupees of revenue. If the Government wickedly perpetrates such monstrous injustice, I will go all out against it in the manner of an outlaw and advise you as well to do the same. I cannot imagine the Government acting in this way for the sake of five or ten rupees. These days, the Government rules by threats. It is a wrong notion that a Government can be run on the basis of fear. We should not fall a prey to such fear. We have faith in the justice of Nature. Do not obstruct the Government when it takes away your buffaloes nor hand over anything with your own hands. We have all

these years been giving and obeying in fear, resentful inside. In the result, we have come to be utterly abject. Kheda yields crops of gold and its people are brave. Despite the famine of 1956[1], they have, toiling day and night, turned the land into a garden. How does it happen that the light has fled from their lands and their faces? The only reason is that the people have begun to be afraid of the Government. This fight is to emancipate ourselves from such a condition. The success of this satyagraha in Kheda will have repercussions all over India. Our salvation lies in our own hands. By our own efforts shall we end our suffering.

In this struggle, we shall learn another wonder-working idea, that we do not propose to fight with arms; we do not want to carry guns or spears; we shall fight with the weapon of truth. He who bears this weapon has need of no other. If, without harbouring any fear, we trust to truth and fight, we shall achieve a great success.

I hear that, in this satyagraha struggle against the Government, things are going on which are the opposite of truth. When the officer asks the farmers why they do not pay, instead of telling him that the crops have been less than four annas, they are afraid and make other excuses. We should not be rude to the *mamlatdar* or the Collector, though we need not submit to forced labour or give anything demanded as of right. Indeed, they can order nothing from us. On no account should we omit to extend to them common hospitality. We may not give them anything free, but give them what they want against its full price. We ought not to forget good manners. Yesterday, it was brought to my notice that people refuse things even against money. How can this be in a fight of the nature of satyagraha? I was pained at this. How may those who wish to be rid of tyranny tyrannize over others? A third thing. The Commissioner wants to address you and tell you something the day after tomorrow, at three o'clock, in the *mamlatdar's* court in Nadiad. I would advise all of you to attend. They will even tell you that I am leading you astray. It is not for me to judge whether I am leading you well or ill; I tell you only what seems right to me. If it seems so to you as well, declare with one voice that, by following my advice, you command better respect and are able to safeguard your rights. Mr. Pratt will not be angry at this. He understands that, when the people are aggrieved, they have a right to complain. Satyagraha consists in seeking relief from hardships

[1] Of the Vikram calendar, corresponding to the year 1900 of the Christain Era

through voluntary suffering. Be fearless, all of you, and tell the Commissioner this: "Our lands, cattle or jewellery are not dearer to us than our plighted word, our self-respect or our dharma. Again and again we have pleaded with you and told you that our crops have been less than four annas. Under the law, if the crops are less than four annas, collection of land revenue has to be suspended. You took the *Talatis'* word and not ours. We have only one way open to us to convince you, and that is, not to pay the land revenue willingly." Go to the meeting, all of you. Listen carefully to what the Commissioner says and, if permitted, have your say. Afterwards, come to the Hindu Anathashram. We shall talk there. The Government does not want anyone to be afraid. We have been waving the flag of swaraj. It is with our own efforts that we are to achieve it. We shall certainly get it if we become absolutely fearless. Whatever happens, do not pay the revenue. Let the women give courage to their husbands.[1] If anyone has a question to ask, he may have his doubts answered. The situation demands that you act with due thought and care.

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Satyagraha

283. SPEECH TO SATYAGRAHIS OF VADOD[2]

April 11, 1918

As days pass, our ordeal grows severer. I am coming straight from Ahmedabad after a meeting with the Commissioner. We had a talk lasting an hour. He told me of the proposed public meeting in Nadiad. I assured him that the agriculturists would attend it. I hope all those who have not paid up the land revenue will go to the meeting and see what the Commissioner advises. He may tell you that, despite the failure of crops, it is the people's duty to pay the Government the land revenue. Maybe, he is right. On my part, I shall only tell you that you should remain loyal, till the very end, to the pledge you have taken. Tell him the whole story from the beginning to the end. If you take your pledge seriously, be firm and give him your side of the

[1] A report in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 18-4-1918, here has: "Give courage to your husbands, to your children, to your brethren, like women of old and make them firm in their vow."

[2] The meeting which was held at the Dharmashala in Vadod, a village in the Anand Taluka, was attended by people from the surrounding villages.

case: Why you have taken the pledge; whether you took it knowing full well what you were doing, and also what you hope to gain from it. Tell him all this plainly.

This is not a struggle merely to escape payment of the revenue this year. I have been saying this at every place. Through this struggle we want to bring home to the Government that it ought to yield to the people. No king can remain in power if he sets himself against the people. I have taken it as the chief mission of my life to prove this. Our people have lost their spirit. Their wealth has been drained away. There is no light in their eyes.[1] There is a comparison which comes to my mind again and again. Government is to the subjects what a car approaching a bullock is to the latter, be it the British Government or a native State. As the car comes on, tears gather in the bullock's eyes and he begins to sweat; in the same way, the people shake with fear of the authority of their Government. I cannot bear to see this. You should be able to tell the Government that it may grant relief under its own law. If you can bring it to do this, you will have some life in you in place of this abjectness of yours.

In the morning we repeat the names of innumerable *rishis* and *satis.* We chant the names of Sita and Rama, Nala and Damayaanti, Prahlad and so on. And for what? To get inspiration from their lives. The scriptures say that those human beings who pass their lives as beasts will be born as beasts in their next lives. You went to the Collector, you went to the Commissioner and then to the Bombay Government and gave up the effort at last when you failed everywhere. If that is the truth, I must say that to submit in this helpless fashion is to behave in the manner of a beast. We may find our happiness either in killing or being killed. The first way is that of beasts, the second that of man. The soul of a beast is ever asleep, a man's ever awake. We can never prosper till we are fully grown and awake in our souls.[2] I shall tell you a story from the Puranas. There was a certain *rishi*; the fire emitted from between his brows put an end to all suffering. The point of this text is that, when the soul becomes alive, all miseries end and so the injustices perpetrated by the

[1] Reports in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 16-4-1918, and *New India*, I7-4-1918 have Gandhiji saying here: "The nation is emasculated? and there is no way out of it but that of keeping fast to our anchor while we are passing through a supreme ordeal."

[2] Reports in *The Bombay Chronicle* and *New India* add here: " . . . only by treading down brute force and planting soul-force in its stead was the eternal wakefulness of the soul and consequently our salvation possible,"

Government will be no more when we become alive in our soul. I want to put this truth to you in the plainest terms. We want happiness in place of the present misery; if so, we should suffer voluntarily and lay down our lives for the sake of truth. He who knows the power of truth and has realized it in his being is ever happy. I may lose my all, but none can deprive me of the joy in my soul. I want you to know that joy. We need to become religious-minded. We must learn to speak the truth and walk in the way of truth. The *ravanias* are welcome to come every day and bring orders of attachment. I would tell you, out of regard for your pledge, let them dispossess you of all you have; be as fakirs but do not budge an inch. This is the dharma for a man. I assure the women that we shall not starve. What we lose today we shall get back tomorrow; but, once our pledge is violated, it is violated for ever. We should preserve our good name and our pledge, our dignity and manliness. This is the legacy we should leave to posterity. May God give you strength, and may you make your name ever so glorious! Those friends who have taken the pledge may please reassure us. Let me have it from you that the universe may go to pieces and the sun may fail to rise, but you will not go back on your pledge.[1]

Say: "You may cut off our heads if you please, but we will not pay the land revenue. We shall not submit to the Government's injustice. If, however, you will be kind enough to remit the land revenue and see that the poor people don't suffer, those of us who can afford will pay up."

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Satyagraha

[1] What follows is Gandhiji's answer to a question what the farmers should say at the Commissioner's meeting.

284. LETTER T0 PATRICK GEDDES[1]

[NADIAD,]
April 12, 1918

DEAR PROF. GEDDES[2],

I am truly thankful to you for your very kind letter.

You would not be more pained than I am over our base imitation of the West. I want a great deal from you but nothing indiscriminately. I take part in the spectacles such as the one at Indore[3] in order that I may reach and touch the hearts of the people and wean them from materialism as much as possible. There is a materialistic view of the vernacular question and the religions. I am endeavouring to place the latter before them. The success of the Conference is to be measured by the extent to which I have been able

[1] This was sent in reply to Geddes' letter, the main points of which were as follows, as recorded by Mahadev Desai: (1) It (Conference) was really perfectly English, with the succession of decorous speeches, by the proper persons, in the proper tone and with the proper conviction. (2) No great public conference has yet given English a thought, yet at Stratford on-Avon they play Shakespeare. Your theatres were silent. No sign of Tulsidas. (3) Why not take examples and methods from the West—like the Welsh "Eisteddfod"?—at the one before last I heard Lloyd George in his utmost vigour, his most flavouring mood, since tensely in his own vernacular—He said, "I have come here to *sing*." (4) Their pandal was divided into groups of each quality of voice for collective song. (5) The Irish, reviving their language, may give you hints, e.g., establishment of small vacation gatherings. (6) Look to Provence—a great folk poet—Mistral. They do him honour, they reopened the ancient Graeco-Roman theatres of their region and brought from . . . Sarah Bernhardt and her company not simply to do their plays but to start their own acting at the highest level, and when the Swedes gave old Mistral the Nobel Prize, he built the Musee Provencal—no mere glass case museum. (7) In Denmark a Bishop and a layman laid their heads together and set about re-educating the youths and maidens not with the 3 R's but with plough and cow and tale and song. (8) You want for your meetings no mere transient pandal with its poor acoustics, but the open air theatre and amphitheatre where the Greeks perfected their language and literature. (9) Support strongly the plea of uniting Hindi and Urdu. It is very much like the union of the Saxon and the French vocabulary. English theme gained the best qualities of each—the homely directness and force of the Germanic languages yet gained a new precision, new dignity from the clerical side. Might not therefore the union of Urdu and Hindi be worked up by the institution of essays and prize poems for next conference?"

[2] He was at the time Director, Bombay School of Economics.

[3] The reference is to the Hindi Literary Conference held on March 29-31 over which Gandhiji presided.

to touch the religions in [the] audience before me.

I tried last year to do away with the pandal for the Congress and suggested a meeting on the Maidan early in the morning. That is the Indian style and it is the best. I wonder if the amphitheatre is an improvement. My ideal is speaking to the crowd from under a tree. Never mind if the voice does not reach the thousands, nay millions. They come not to hear but to see. And they see far more than we can imagine. Amphitheatres suggest a limitation to the space capacity. The merit lies in an unlimited number being able to come and yet doing their work in an orderly manner. Such were the annual fairs of old. We have but to introduce religion into the new social and political life and you have a perfect organization in working order to fall back upon.

But what is the use of my writing? Both of us are preoccupied. The wretched fever of the West has taken possession of us. We have no leisure for things eternal. The utmost that can be said of us is that we do hanker after the eternal though our activity may belie our profession.

I shall treasure your letter. May I make public use of it?

And do please tell me how I may build cheap and durable houses—from the foundation to the roof.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev-Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

285. LETTER T0 DEVDAS GANDHI

[NADIAD,]

April 12, 1918

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your letter. I also wrote one to you, which you must have received. You have said nothing about your health. I am greatly pleased to learn that you have been attending on nursing the sister. We read in our holy books that pupils used to volunteer their services to their teachers. Your way of putting the thing is as natural and sweet as in those books. I do not know how to measure the height to which this service will raise you.

It is quite easy to understand why I did not ask for 35 per cent

[increase] for more than one day. It was impossible for me to stretch the matter any further. The employers even now think that they agreed to give so much not because of any firmness on the workers' part but on account of my fast. I would have been guilty of a kind of violence if I had asked for more. In accepting the minimum when I was in a position to ask for more, I showed straight forwardness, modesty and good sense. Had I not fasted, it is certain that the workers would have yielded. They kept firm because of the fast. A pledge so kept [by the workers] can justify only a demand placed at the lowest. We can have it respected merely in the letter. This one was so respected and, because I placed the demand at the minimum, I made up in a way, indeed in great measure, for the flaws which had tainted my fast. Esther understood the significance of the fast very clearly. She wired me a sentence from the Bible. It means:

> Greater love has no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.[1]

I look upon that fast as the best thing I have done so far. The peace which I knew at the time of that fast was no mere human experience.

I do not get here the joy which I found in my work at Ahmedabad. I feel uneasy in mind and keep thinking of all manner of things. Sometimes, I feel people have understood the idea all right; at other times, I fancy that they have not understood it and so feel pained. To be sure, excellent work is being done, but now the mind is fatigued. It is a crushing burden I carry, that of the fight for Mohammed Ali. I have no choice but to bear it. I cherish the hope that God will give me the strength for it and, because of that hope, I am calm in the inmost depths of my heart. Ba is with me.

Tell Chhotalal that his pen appears to have grown stale again. Let me have more details about the progress in weaving.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] *St. John,* XV, 13

286. LETTER TO SHIVDAS AND POPATLAL

NADIAD,
Chaitra Sud 1 [*April 12, 1918*]

DEAR SHRI SHIVDAS[1],

I got both your letter and postcard. I have written to them to send you Rs. 10/-. Let me know if you find that this is not enough. Maintain a diary. Is the plague still raging there?

BHAI POPATLAL[2],

I read your lines. I have not lost my faith in you. Let me know what you have been doing and the state of your eyes; I shall then entrust you with some work you can do there.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[PS.]

The earlier Motilal's[3] family comes over here, the better.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 2857

287. LETTER TO BALVANTRAI THAKORE

[NADIAD,]
April 12, 1918

BHAISHRI BALWANTRAIJI,

I have your letter. It bespeaks your love for me. I am grateful. I have already written to Natarajan that he has been hasty in forming the opinion he has done.[4] Instead of dealing with your arguments, I would rather explain what I mean by "satyagraha". Although I use the phrase "passive resistance", it does not fully connote what I have in mind. Please forget all about it. I apply to political matters the same law which regulates our conduct in the family. In India, I find that people act under the shadow of fear, do not tell the truth out of fear, deceiving themselves and the Government. The juniormost police

[1] Shivdas Chaturbhuj Parikh, later known as Swami Shivanand, a public worker of Kathiawad

[2] A constructive worker of Saurashtra

[3] A public worker of Wadhwan in Saurashtra who first approached Gandhiji regarding the Customs Cordon at Viramgam; *vide An Autobiography*, Part V, Ch. III.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to K. Natarajan", before 5-4-1918.

officer can ruin the reputation of a big man of wealth. I think it is the duty of every leader to get out of this state of mind. The officers are not amenable to the public. They think their actions are divinely inspired and cannot conceivably be opposed. It will be a service to them, and therefore to the State, to help them get rid of this notion. Wherever, therefore, I find people submitting to injustice out of fear, I tell them that, to shake off imposed hardships, they must suffer voluntarily. This is satyagraha. To make others suffer in order to save ourselves from suffering is *duragraha*, brute force. When a bullock is hurt, he kicks. When a man is oppressed, he should employ soul force to fight himself free, suffering voluntarily to that end.

This is not the first time that hell has been let loose on the people of Kheda district. In the past too they have suffered much. Even the womenfolk of that place tell my wife of it. This time, they spoke out against the hardship of having to pay the land revenue. If they pay up, it will be done not willingly but through fear. For doing so, many of them will have to part with their cattle or have their valuable trees cut down. How can one bear to see this suffering? I have seen it with my own eyes. What is the way out? Should I send petitions? I did. Natarajan says that we should approach the Viceroy or proceed to England. What relief will this bring to the riots? The trees will have been cut down meanwhile and the dues paid. What will be the point of agitating thereafter? Let it be understood that the struggle is not for amendment of the law but against the manner of its administration. What is the use of an appeal after a convict is hanged? Many an innocent person has been so hanged and all that through our indifference. We had only two courses open to us. Either resist the tax collector by force or tell him in all civil that we would not pay the tax. "He will recover it, all the same; in what way will you have saved the people, then?" Surely, you will not put this question? If you do, I have given my reply in the very beginning.

It happens, incidentally, that in this struggle the people are being educated about religion, right conduct, unity, truth and non-violence and the Government to respect public opinion. There is no room for hatred at all. We have no desire to seek relief by bringing pressure on the Government, but by awakening its sense of justice. The outcome will in every case be good. In the end, people will have but grown stronger in spirit. What will it matter even if, being weak, the people surrender? Self-suffering never goes in vain.

If they fall, they will fall to rise again.
No step along this path is ever wasted,
No obstacle undoes the progress made;
Even a little of this dharma
Saves one from great danger.[1]

You may write again if there is anything yet which troubles you.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

288. SPEECH AT NADIAD

April 12, 1918

The friends here have come after doing an important piece of work. They told the Commissioner boldly what it was necessary that he should be told. That to my mind is our victory. The aim behind this struggle is to cultivate enough courage to be able to speak to the officers as to friends and equals, and get our demand conceded by the Government. The fact that the Commissioner spoke in a friendly and courteous manner should itself be regarded as our victory. A victory is all the more a victory for 'our having clung to justice and truth through all suffering. The Commissioner had told me, very courteously though, that the Government would confiscate lands and I had replied with equal courtesy and gentleness that it was welcome to do so but that it would not find the business profitable.

In case of a difference between the Government and the people, the principle of *panch*[2] must be accepted. We are fighting for this principle. Considering the matter from the point of view of dharma, it is obligatory to have recourse to a *panch*. The relationship of the Government and its subjects is that of father and son, not of master and slave. It is the duty of a son to resist injustice on the part of his father.

To those who have taken the pledge, it is my advice that they

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II, 40
[2] Literally, "the five"; here an arbitrator

stick to it to the very end. I shall fight on as long as they do not return to you the lands which have been confiscated. I shall not give up the struggle while I live. Only, you must also join it. If you are prepared to suffer, not minding confiscation of your lands, I am with you. Harishchandra suffered in all sorts of ways, got himself sold to a low-caste family and lost everything, but he clung to truth. It is my hope that all of you will be such Harishchandras. It is my unshakeable belief that to follow dharma is to live it. Chanting of devotional songs and prayers does not amount to following dharma. One must have unwavering faith in God. We have thus to cultivate knowledge of the self, that is, knowledge of the powers of the soul.

Mr. Pratt has described me as a sannyasi. He was both right and wrong. I do not claim to be a sannyasi. I am as liable to err as you; the difference is this, that I desire to be a sannyasi and constantly strive to be one. It is my firm conviction that political problems can be solved through satyagraha. That our struggle has brought about a change in Mr. Pratt's attitude—this is soul-force.

To lose one's land in the fight is nothing very great. It is a householder, not a sannyasi, who is in a position to sacrifice land. They are not sannyasis in Europe who are shedding rivers of blood; they are but householders. Mr. Lloyd George, running all over the place, himself and his possessions at the disposal of the country, is he a sannyasi? Is the war which England is fighting one for land? Surely not. Why, she felt, should Germany be allowed to have her way? Germany, too, on her part, is fighting for her self-respect. She wants to vindicate herself. We have been assured by some others that we shall not starve. The only assurance the people of Europe have is the strength of their arms. They see so many of their sons dying every second, but they don't shed tears over them. You will have your lands back with honour in this struggle. If you put up with the loss of your lands, sacrificing your very souls in doing so, you will earn a name for yourselves not only in Kheda district but in the whole of India.

Finally, I have only this to tell you: whatever the cost, honour the pledge you have taken with God as witness and with full knowledge and understanding. And have faith, not in me, but in God.

What does it matter even if you lose your lands? We shall earn greater respect and fame by doing so. The Government will also take pride in ruling over such a brave people.

I once told Mr. Pratt that theirs was a rule of fear and terror

and that, if they were to rule, instead, with love and due respect for the people, their rule would last for ever. I have told you again and again, and do so emphatically even here, that, if you honour your pledge at all costs, victory is assuredly yours.

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Satyagraha

289. LETTER TO J.L. MAFFEY

NADIAD,
April 14, 1918

The above[1] was drafted, as you will observe, on the 10th instant. I have slept over it all these nights. I feel that I can best serve the State by being respectfully frank. During the last four days, the war has taken a graver turn. That strengthens me in my resolve to send the letter. In all humility I ask Lord Chelmsford not only to release the brothers but take them in his counsel, as also Mr. Tilak. They are *not* enemies of the State. Without their help you will not have a contented India.

N. A. I.: Home: Political—A: June 1918, No. 360

290. LETTER TO G. CARMICHAEL

NADIAD,
April 14, 1918

DEAR MR. CARMICHAEL[2],

I met yesterday after the interview with you a small committee consisting of Sir Narayan Chandavarkar[3] and others. I gave them the purport of the patient and prolonged interview you and Sir James Duboulay were good enough to grant me. That committee asked me to give them the main purport in writing for publication. But I feel that I should ask for your confirmation of the purport and permission for its publication. I enclose herewith the purport. Will you kindly endorse it if it represents your views correctly and let me know

[1] The reference is to the letter dated April 10, which was sent with this covering note.

[2] Head of the Revenue Department

[3] Sir Narayan Ganesh Chandavarkar, judge of Bombay High Court and social reformer; President of the Congress session at Lahore in 1900

whether I may allow it to be published?[1] May I ask you to favour me with a telegraphic reply?

From a copy: C.W. 10675. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

291. LETTER TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"[2]

NADIAD
April 15, 1918

TO
THE EDITOR
THE CHRONICLE
BOMBAY

SIR,

The publication of the summary of the Commissioner's Gujarati address to the Kaira cultivators[3] necessitates a reply in justice to the latter as also the workers.

I have before me a verbatim report of the speech. It is more direct than the summary in the laying down of the Government policy. The Commissioner's position is that the revenue authorities' decision regarding suspension is final. They may and do receive and hear complaints from the ryots, but the finality of their decision cannot be questioned. This is the crux of the struggle. It is contended on behalf of the ryots that, where there are, in matters of administrative orders, sharp differences of opinion between local officials and them, the points of differences are and ought to be referred to an impartial committee of inquiry. This, it is held, constitutes the strength of to the British Constitution. The Commissioner has on principle rejected this position and invited a crisis. And he has made such a fetish of it that he armed himself beforehand with a letter from Lord Wellingdon to the effect that even

[1] The addressee in reply wrote that the purport of the interview sent by Gandhiji did not adequately cover all the aspects discussed.

[2] The letter seems to have been released to the Press generally. It was also published in *Young India*, 17-4-1918.

[3] Some 2,000 of the principal agriculturists of the district had gathered at a meeting in Ahmedabad, convened with Gandhiji's assistance, on April 12. It was attended by the Collector and other revenue officials. Gandhiji deputed Vallabhbhai Patel to the meeting, but later found it necessary to speak in order to clear up a misunderstanding created by the commissioner's speech. For the text of this address, *vide* Appendix "Commissioner Pratt's Speech", 12-4-1918.

he should not interfere with the Commissioner's decision. He brings in the War to defend his position and adjures the ryots and me to desist from our cause at this time of peril to the Empire. But I venture to suggest that the Commissioner's attitude constitutes a peril far graver than the German peril, and I am serving the Empire in trying to deliver it from this peril from within. There is no mistaking the fact that India is waking up from its long sleep. The ryots do not need to be literate to appreciate their rights and their duties. They have but to realize their invulnerable power and no Government, however strong, can stand against their will. The Kaira ryots are solving an Imperial problem of the first magnitude in India. They will show that it is impossible to govern men without their consent. Once the Civil Service realizes this position, it will supply to India truly *Civil Servants* who will be the bulwark of the people's rights. Today the Civil Service rule is a rule of fear. The Kaira ryot is fighting for the rule of love. It is the Commissioner who has produced the crisis. It was, as it is now, his duty to placate the people when he saw that they held a different view. The revenue of India will be no more in danger because a Commissioner yields to the popular demands and grants concessions than the administration of justice was in danger, when Mrs. Maybrick was reprieved purely in obedience to the popular will, or the Empire was in danger because a corner of a mosque in Cawnpore was replaced in obedience to the same demand. Had I hesitated to advise the people to stand against the Commissioner's refusal to listen to their prayer, instead of taking the open and healthy course it has taken, their discontent would have burrowed under and bred ill will. That son is a true son of his father, who rather than harbour ill will against him, frankly but respectfully tells him all he feels and equally respectfully resists him, if he cannot truthfully obey his commands. I apply the same law to the relations between the Government and the people. There cannot be seasons when a man must suspend his conscience. But just as a wise father will quickly agree with his son and not incur his ill-will, especially if the family was in danger from without, even so a wise Government will quickly agree with the ryots, rather than incur their displeasure. War cannot be permitted to give a licence to the officials to exact obedience to their orders, even though the ryots may consider them to be unreasonable and unjust.

The Commissioner steels the hearts of the ryots for continuing their course by telling them that for a revenue of four lakhs of rupees, he will for ever confiscate his hundred and fifty thousand acres of

land worth over 3 crores of rupees, and for ever declare the holders, their wives and children unworthy of holding any lands in Kaira. He considers the ryots to be misguided and contumacious in the same breath. These are solemn words:

> Do not be under the impression that our *mamlatdars* and our *Talatis* will realize the assessment by attaching and selling your movable property. We are not going to trouble ourselves so much. Our officers' time is valuable. Only by your bringing in the monies shall the treasuries be filled. This is no threat. You take it from me that parents never threaten their children. They only advise. But if you do not pay the dues, your lands will be confiscated. Many people say that this will not happen. But I say it will. I have no need to take a vow. I shall prove that I mean what I say. The lands of those who do not pay will be confiscated. Those who are contumacious will get no lands in future. Government do not want their names on their Records of Ryots. Those who go out shall never be admitted again.

I hold that it is the sacred duty of every loyal citizen to fight unto death against such a spirit of vindictiveness and tyranny. The Commissioner has done the Ahmedabad strikers and me a cruel wrong in saying that the strikers knowingly broke their vow. He was present at the meeting where the settlement was declared. He may hold that the strikers had broken their vow (though his speech at the meeting produced a contrary impression) but there is nothing to show that the strikers knowingly broke their vow. On the contrary, it was entirely kept by their resuming their work on their getting for the first day wages demanded by them, and the final decision as to wages being referred to arbitration. The strikers had suggested arbitration which the mill-owners had rejected.

Their struggle in its essence was for a 35 per cent increase in their wages or such increase as an arbitration board may decide. And this is what they have got. The hit at the strikers and me is, I regret to have to say, a hit below the belt.

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-4-1918

292. LETTER TO F. G. PRATT

NADIAD,
April 15, 1918

DEAR MR. PRATT,

I thank you for your note.

I venture to think that you are prejudiced against the Home Rulers quite unnecessarily.[1] They are not so bad as you think them to be. In any case I must take the material that I see before me and improve it where it is bad. I find the Home Rulers to be the easiest people to get on with not because I fall in with their views very quickly but because I appeal to their sense of right and wrong and am patient with them. Finding mine to be the superior method they accept it in place of their own. They try to substitute love for hatred. You could do likewise and you can make them yours.

It is likely that both the Nadiad and the Ahmedabad Home Rulers have a valid answer to your charges. Their selflessness in their relations with me disposes me to think that they are not likely to be guided by sordid motives in their conduct of Municipal affairs. I ask you to trust them and secure their co-operation.

The Kheda people do not render blind obedience to me. They are not allowed to do so. And I have no doubt that if they follow my advice to the last they cannot but be elevated morally. For does not conscious suffering always exalt a nation? The passive resisters of South Africa are today the strongest supporters of the Government. Their *resistance* was based on *faith* in the Government's ultimate justice.

Were you not cruelly unjust to the strikers and me? Do you believe that the latter broke their vow? And whatever may be your belief your suggestion that the strikers willingly broke the vow is surely the unkindest cut of all. Your speech at the strikers' meeting did not leave on my mind the impression that you created at the

[1] The addressee had written that "the argument for the protection of the poor did not come well from the Nadiad Home Rulers" who were busy receiving special services for well-to-do people at the cost of the tax-payer. He accused the Ahmedabad Home Rulers of securing special conservancy services at rates far below cost price.

Kheda cultivators' meeting.[1] All the compliments you pay me are undeserved [by] me if I have become party to the strikers' breaking the vow.

From a copy: C.W. 10680. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

293. LETTER TO N. G. CHANDAVARKAR

NADIAD,
April 15, 1918

DEAR SIR NARAYAN,

Here is Mr. Pratt's speech. The version I am sending is a full translation of the verbatim report taken by my reporter. I send also a copy of my reply. I send you also the Wadthal annawari report prepared by Mr. Ghosal and the correspondence thereon. If the latter is not understandable please let me know. The Wadthal correspondence shows clearly how much room there is for honest difference of opinion. Only an impartial inquiry can bring about a satisfactory settlement.

Please let me know if you need further information.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy C.W. 10703. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

294. LETTER TO J. GHOSAL

NADIAD,
April 15, 1918

DEAR MR. GHOSAL,

I observe there are writs of execution still pending. In view of Mr. Pratt's pronouncement are they not to be withdrawn? I brought to your notice the Kathana execution. I told you that the people there assisted the authorities by producing their ornaments under the belief that the *chothai* order would be withdrawn. As you are aware the sale

[1] For the addressee's speech l, *vide* Appendix "Commissioner Pratt's Speech", 12-4-1918 and for Gandhiji's rejoinder,"Letter to "the Bombay Chronicle", 15-4-1918.

covered the *chothai* amounts. Should not the *chothai* amounts be refunded?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10677. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

295. LETTER TO RESIDENTS OF NAYAKA[1]

April 16, 1918

I have just heard that the lands of twenty-five of you have been confiscated. If this is true, I congratulate you on your being the first. I believe the lands will stand confiscated only on paper. However, as you have taken the vow to bear every kind of suffering, I need say nothing to console you. I offer you only congratulations.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

296. SPEECH AT OD

April 16, 1918

If a person whose name we chance to mention appears unexpectedly at the spot, we usually say that he will live to be a hundred years. Thus has it happened here. The moment we thought of Vallabhbhai, we sighted him coming this way. I had hoped to meet you last week, but I could not come here as I had to go to Bombay, and was-then at Ahmedabad to see Mr. Pratt. Before I acquaint you with the talks I have had with the top officers whom I met in Bombay, let me tell you what I heard about you in Nadiad. I was told that the people of Od are quite spirited but that they have, till now, used their courage and strength, not for their good, but in quarrelling and wrangling among themselves. And so it happens that this soil of Kheda, fertile and lovely, which your forefathers had transformed into a land of gold, has been ruined while you have been stubbornly fighting of your claims against one another.[2] We shall not succeed in a struggle of any kind so long as this state of affairs continues. You

[1] A translation of this appeared also in *New India*, 23-4-19l8.

[2] *The Bombay Chronicle*, 20-4-1918, reports Gandhiji as having said: "For years you have been exhausting your energy and fearlessness in fighting each other. For once, rise and be united and use the same strong elements to fight the 'fear of *Sirkar'*, the common enemy."

have taken the pledge to carry on our struggle to the bitter end and secure justice. I can assure you that, if we could forget our past enmities and live together harmoniously, success is ours.

Mr. Pratt, Mr. Carmichael and [Sir James] Duboulay shook heads and strongly disapproved of our struggle. During the course of our talks, they remarked: "You do not know the people of Kheda. We do not agree that this struggle will result in their progress and uplift or raise them morally. Rather, it will teach them to be defiant." I am telling you what opinion the top officials of the Revenue Department hold about you. In the struggle you have embarked upon, you must maintain the utmost truthfulness, not partial. When Prahlad was asked, "Where is your God Vishnu?", he replied: "On land and in water, in the sky and in the nether regions; I see the Almighty Vishnu wherever I look." In the same way, only if we find truth all round us may we call this struggle satyagraha. We cannot have one set of manners in public and another in private. Truth is all pervasive as the Essence that we know as Vishnu. Just as we cannot say that Vishnu is non-existent in a certain place, so also we cannot say that truth exists at one place but not at some other.

As you all belong to the same village and the same community and follow the same profession, you must learn to apologize to one another [for your errors] and live harmoniously. Anyone who says that satyagraha may be used only against the Government has not understood the meaning of satyagraha at all. We do not want to fight the Government with threats and arrogant defiance; we want to fight it by submitting ourselves voluntarily to suffering. Those who suffer with understanding and knowledge to end suffering always succeed. This is the only way for you if you wish to win in this struggle. In Nayaka, notices of confiscation were issued to twenty-five farmers and their lands were confiscated. I wrote a letter[1] to congratulate these brave friends when I heard of this. I told them that the confiscation would remain only in the Government records. All the same, I said, their pledge was that they would remain adamant even if their lands were confiscated, that there was no need to cheer up satyagrahis. They should have nothing but congratulations. This being an occasion for rejoicing, I sent them congratulations, not consolations. I appeal to you also to welcome gladly orders of confiscation. I cannot even dream that the Government will ever be able to confiscate our lands.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

That is impossible under British rule. Should the impossible become possible, I shall have no way open to me but to make myself an outlaw against the British Government, which boils down to this, that the lands will not really be confiscated. You have committed no crime in taking the pledge; on the contrary, by doing so, you have averred your loyalty to the State. The crops having been less than four annas, we appealed for suspension of the collection of land revenue as provided in their law, made petitions, held meetings to ask for some relief and our representatives in the legislature tried all remedies provided in law. The Government turned a deaf ear to all this. What, then, should a brave, manly and loyal people do under the circumstances ? The right relation between the Government and the people is that, in case of difference between the two, the former should always bow to popular opinion.

We do not demand that the Government should accept what we say and yield. We ask that, if our case is proved, justice be done to us. We asked for the appointment of arbitrators, but the Government turned down even that request. Mr. Pratt believes that the people should have no say in the matter. We have been victims of this policy for the last fifty years; we have become impoverished through fear. We have not money enough for repairs to our houses. Our crops grow poorer. How can God look kindly on us either, so long as we remain such cowards? Even the rains are regular where the king and his subjects are truthful in their dealings. The two sides are at odds, each holding to its own view as a matter of prestige. The people insist on their view of the matter being right and the Government on its. We argue that the people are speaking the truth and yet there is no relief. This struggle will show what the Government should do in case of difference between it and the people. All India has its eyes upon you. Have courage and hold out; don't prove yourselves cowards. It is prudence not to embark upon a venture but, having once done so, it is not for a brave man to give it up.

I have been told to beware of *Patidars* and the people of Gujarat in general. But I look upon all as being no better or worse than I am. All have the same *atman* and are equal in their powers. We can have the *atman* grow as we will . . . . Such is my experience. This is to your good and will secure you relief. I hope, therefore, that you will hold on. The *Patidars* are a venturesome community; they are Kshatriyas. They know that their lands are theirs and so it is natural that they should be proud of them. They should

not go back on their plighted word, should not betray their Kshatriya blood but fight on to the last and compel the Government to bow to public opinion. If they can do this, swaraj is in the hollow of our palms. Swaraj consists in knowing our rights and our duties. Mr. Montagu may come over from England and grant us seemingly big rights, but they will avail us nothing unless we grow conscious of our rights and obligations. This requires some education and training. I should think you have some elementary knowledge and understanding of these matters. I know likewise that you have taken the pledge in this struggle after full deliberation. You must abide by it with an intelligent understanding of its spirit. Malice has no place in this struggle; nor the sword, nor the *dhariya*[1]. Our sole weapon is to abide by truth, and our arms are faith and courage. Satyagraha knows no defeat. To be sure, we shall suffer defeat if we value our lands more than our self-respect. I am confident that my faith in the people of Kheda will not prove to have been misplaced. I pray you will give a good fight to the Government and bring glory to the name of Kheda.

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Satyagraha

297. PREFACE TO "ANTYAJ STOTRA"

NADIAD,
Chaitra Sud 7, 1974 [*April 17, 1918*]

The most striking instance of the terrible excesses of Hinduism's our treatment of the *Antyajas*. How degrading and shameful it is, Shri Amritlal Padhiar has set out vividly in his *Antyaj Stotra.* There is some exaggeration in it, thanks to the poet in him, but it is slight. Shri Padhiar has given a heart-rending picture which cannot but fill the reader with horror to the very roots of his being. He has poured forth his indignation in the *stotra*. It should be read out to men and women in their millions, in the same way that works like the *Bhagavat* are read out to them in every square. Till we have rid ourselves of this taint of untouchability, the big question will remain whether we have become fit for swaraj. If slave-owners can be said to be fit, then perhaps we are. Let it not be forgotten that we are ourselves under subjection at present. Those who desire to be free

[1] A curved, sickle-like blade fixed to a long stick

from this state should all the more pay attention to their own evils. The little, mole-like faults of those who have fallen on evil times seem to others as huge as the Himalayas. Something of this kind has happened about our conduct towards the *Antyajas*; what is more to the point, the evil itself is a Himalayan one and hence it obstructs our progress. I have studied, with care and in a spirit of humility, the controversy which has followed in the wake of the *Antyaj* Conference at Godhra.[1] I have not come across a single convincing reason justifying the practice of untouchability. Where the scriptures themselves are under attack, to quote from them is like the blind man denying the existence of what he does not see. If we cannot defend our conduct by reason, the authority of scriptures is no avail. They cannot be above reason and morality. If these latter are given the go-by any fraud can be justified in the name of religion.

We shall have to make such a sustained effort to purge ourselves of this terrible sin that, as Shri Padhiar points out, the effort will by itself raise us very high. If we make it in our traditional manner, we shall have achieved our aim while advancing in the path of dharma; if we follow the method they do in the West, a gulf will be created between us and the *Antyajas*.

It is cowardly for anyone to suggest that the *Antyajas* will be emancipated when the old generation has passed away. Our worth as men consists in doing *tapascharya* and awakening in our elders compassion and the purest sense of dharma. That and nothing less is our duty. If we boldly translate our words into action, the task can be accomplished quite soon. It is a mean desire to wish to kill an enemy so that one may rule over his kingdom afterwards; dharma consists in winning him over to our way of thinking and converting him into a friend. Shri Padhiar will have to shake off his cowardice.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Antyaj Stotra

[1] *Vide* "A Stain on India's Forehead", after 5-11-1917.

298. MESSAGE T0 SATYAGRAHI AGRICULTURISTS[1]

NADIAD,
April 17, 1918

You did well to listen to Mr. Pratt attentively and courageously. That is the right way for satyagrahis. We have had to disobey the orders of the Government about revenue, but we should not fail in the courtesy due to Government officers. We want freedom from fear and slavery, but have no desire to forget our manners. Rude, of course, we can never be. In satyagraha, one should always show due courtesy.

The Commissioner pointed out the rights as also the duties of agriculturists and his advice in regard to both was worthy enough, but the gentleman failed to say that every human being has one fundamental right and obligation. A man owes it as a duty to refuse to do anything out of fear and, therefore, when anyone holds out a threat in order to force him to do something, he has a right to resist. By virtue of this right, the people of Kheda are at present respectfully disobeying the Government's order. We believe that the crops this year have been less than four annas and that, accordingly, the collection of Government dues should be suspended. If, therefore, we pay the assessment which ought to have been suspended, we shall be doing so only out of fear that our movable property or our lands might be confiscated. If we give way to this fear, we shall become incapable of any manly effort. About eighty per cent of the farmers have paid up the dues out of this fear and, therefore, it is for the remaining twenty per cent to redeem the honour of all. Anyone who has lost his manliness cannot even show true loyalty. The difference between animals and man lies only in the latter's manliness. This is a fight for asserting our manliness.

If the orders of the Revenue Department or any other Government orders are not revised despite petitions, it is not the spirit of the British Constitution that they must be obeyed meekly. There is no such political doctrine. It is the birth-right and the duty of the people to disobey orders which, on mature consideration, they regard as unjust or oppressive. The rule which obtains in the affairs of a family is equally applicable to the relations of a Government and its

[1] Gandhiji dealt with Commissioner Pratt's speech in his letter to the Press dated April 15. According to Mahadev Desai, Gandhiji issued this as a pamphlet to elaborate the points he had made in his speech at Nadiad on April 12.

subjects and a violation of this rule leads to a conflict between the two: the subjects turn disloyal in secret and the Government ceases to trust anyone and becomes suspicious. In disobeying an order of the Government, one thing must be remembered. We cannot claim with certainty that the order in question is unjust; though we may think it so, it may in fact be just. Therefore, as in private dealings, so a difference between a Government and its subjects should be settled through a *panch*. This is what our ancient kings used to do. The British Government always does so. Such a *panch* is called a 'commission' or 'committee' and in order to save the prestige of the Government the recommendations of the *panch* are not made enforceable through a court but are left to the discretion of the former. The ultimate result, though, is the same as in arbitration of the usual kind. Government cannot be carried on without taking into account public opinion. What should be done, then, if the Government refuses to appoint a committee or commission ? A people amongst whom brute force is the sole arbiter resorts to violence and seeks justice with arms. My own experience is that this method is futile. I believe also that the scriptures of all religions have denounced this manner of obtaining justice through violence and we certainly do not employ it in our domestic affairs. The straightforward course is to disobey the order and submit patiently and without anger to the consequent suffering. This will serve many purposes. *If it turns out that we were in the wrong, the suffering we may have gone through would be justified; if are right, the other party, that is, the Government, cannot remain unmoved* and ultimately it will have no option but to do justice. This is vouched for by the scriptures; they assert truth to be ever victorious; and time and again we find it is. The people of Kheda have come forward to suffer in this manner for the sake of truth, of dharma.

Lest we should become weak, we have bound ourselves by a pledge. No people can ever rise without doing this. *A pledge means unshakable resolution. The undecided man is swept from this side to that like a rudderless boat, and finally destroyed.* The Commissioner says that the pledge itself was improper and taken without thought. That it was not improper, we saw earlier, inasmuch as we have the right to disobey what we believe to be an unjust order; and that it was not taken thoughtlessly, everyone who took it knows. The course of the sun may alter, but this pledge, just and taken after full deliberation, shall not be abandoned.

I am sorry that Mr. Pratt has misrepresented the facts in his reference to the mill-hands' strike in Ahmedabad and has violated the dictates of courtesy, justice, propriety and friendship. I hope that he has done so inadvertently. If any people in this world have honoured their pledge, the mill-workers of Ahmedabad have. They had always maintained that they would be prepared to accept any wage that the arbitrators fixed. It was because, at the time of the strike, the mill-owners repudiated this principle that the mill-hands demanded thirty-five per cent. Even afterwards, they did not refuse arbitration. They secured thirty-five per cent for the first day and so kept the letter of the pledge. To decide what they should get afterwards, an arbitrator was appointed and the workers agreed to accept whatever he awarded. Pending the award, the wages were fixed at between twenty per cent as offered by the mill-owners and thirty-five per cent as demanded by the workers. Even for this intervening period, adjustments were to be made subsequently in accordance with the arbitrators' award. Thus the spirit of the pledge was kept. However that may be, the mill-hands certainly did not deliberately abandon their pledge, as alleged by Mr. Pratt. He is free to believe that they did; he is his own master. What is material is how the matter appeared to the workers; and this has been misrepresented by Mr. Pratt. He was present when the terms of the agreement were being explained to the mill-hands. It was shown to them how the pledge could be considered to have been kept and the agreement was readily welcomed by the workers. The gentleman was a witness to all this. Speaking on the agreement. he said:

> I am happy that the two parties have arrived at a settlement. So long as you seek and follow Mr. Gandhi's advice, I am sure, you will succeed improving your lot and securing justice. You must bear it in mind that Mr. Gandhi and the ladies and gentlemen who helped him have suffered a great deal for you, have put themselves to trouble and shown their love for you.

With what little intelligence I have, I fail to understand how, despite this, he talks of the pledge having been given the go-by.

The Commissioner uttered many threats and even said that he would carry them out. That means that he will confiscate the lands of all those who have taken this pledge and will even debar their heirs from owning lands in Kheda district.

This is a very fearful, cruel and heartless threat. I believe it issues from intense anger. When the anger has subsided, he will feel sorry for having uttered such a cruel threat. He holds the relationship between the Government and the people to be the same as between parents and children. There is no instance in the whole history of the world of parents having disinherited their children for having resisted them in a non-violent manner. The pledge you have taken may be a mistaken one—that is not inconceivable—but there is not even a trace of discourtesy or insolence or defiance in it. It is still inconceivable to me how punishment of this serious nature could be meted out for taking a pledge in a more or less religious spirit for one's own uplift. India cannot tolerate such punishment nor will the British statesmen ever uphold it. The British public would be horrified at it. If such fearful injustice should be perpetrated in the British Empire, I can live in it only as an outlaw. But I have far greater faith in British statesmanship than the Commissioner has. And I will repeat, what I said to you before, that I consider it impossible that you should lose your lands for anything done with such pure motives as yours. Nevertheless, we too must be ready to lose our lands. On the one hand, there is your pledge and, on the other, there is your property. All that property—both movable and immovable— is nothing as compared to your pledge. Your honouring the pledge will be a far more valuable legacy for your posterity than property worth lakhs of rupees. This is a way by following which the whole of India can raise itself and I am sure you will never abandon it. I pray to God that He may give you the strength to keep the pledge.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

299. INSTRUCTIONS TO VOLUNTEERS

SATYAGRAHA CAMP,
NADIAD,
April 17, 1918

1. The volunteers must remember that, as this is a satyagraha campaign, they must abide by truth under all circumstances.

2. In satyagraha, there can be no room for rancour; which means that a satyagrahi should utter no harsh word about anyone, from a *ravania*

to the Governor himself; if someone does so, it is the volunteer's duty to stop him.

3. Rudeness has no place in satyagraha. Perfect courtesy must be shown even to those who may look upon us as their enemies and the villagers must be taught to do the same. Rudeness may harm our cause and the struggle may be unduly prolonged. The volunteers should give the most serious attention to this matter and think out in their minds as many examples as possible of the advantages accruing from courtesy and the disadvantages resulting from rudeness and explain them to the people.

4. The volunteers must remember that this is a holy war. We embarked upon it because, had we not, we would have failed in our dharma. And so all the rules which are essential for living a religious life must be observed here too.

5. We are opposing the intoxication of power, that is, the blind application of law, and not authority as such. The difference must never be lost sight of. It is, therefore, our duty to help the officers in their other work.

6. We are to apply here the same principle that we follow in a domestic quarrel. We should think of the Government and the people as constituting a large family and act accordingly.

7. We are not to boycott or treat with scorn those who hold different views from ours. It must be our resolve to win them over by courteous behaviour.

8. We must not try to be clever. We must always be frank and straightforward.

9. When they stay in villages, the volunteers should demand the fewest services from the village-folk. Wherever it is possible to reach a place on foot, they should avoid using a vehicle. We must insist on being served the simplest food. Restraining them from preparing dainties will add grace to the service we render.

10. As they move about in villages, the volunteers should observe the economic condition of the people and the deficiencies in their education and try, in their spare time, to make them good.

11. If they can, they should create opportunities when they may teach the village children.

12. If they notice any violation of the rules of good health, they should draw the villagers' attention to the fact.

13. If, at any place, they find people engaged in quarrelling among themselves, the volunteers should try to save them from their quarrels.

14. They should read out to the people, when the latter are free, books which promote satyagraha. They may read out stories of Prahlad, Harishchandra and others. The people should also be made familiar with instances of pure satyagraha to be found in the West and in Islamic literature.

15. At no time and under no circumstances is the use of arms permitted in satyagraha. It should never be forgotten that in this struggle the highest type of non-violence is to be maintained. Satyagraha means fighting oppression through voluntary suffering. There can be no question here of making anyone else suffer. Satyagraha is always successful; it can never meet with defeat: let every volunteer understand this himself and then explain it to the people.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Kheda Satyagraha

300. LETTER T0 A. H. WEST

AS AT SABARMATI,
April 17 [1918]

MY DEAR WEST,

I am writing this at a little village where I have arrived with Mrs. Gandhi and others to preach passive resistance. Here is the cutting.[1] The fight is great but it taxes me to the utmost

I will not discuss your latest letter; I simply want to say, "Do what you like. Phoenix and all it means are just as much yours as mine. You are on the spot. You must do what you think best. I can but advise." You are right; my views about the vernaculars must have coloured my view about *Indian Opinion*. I do want it to appear in English, but I feel that if it could not be published in English it could at least be published in Gujarati. Perhaps you would have me say the reverse. It is enough for me to know that you are on the spot. My affection for you and trust in you remain undiminished. I recall many more of the touching conversations we had in Joubert Park and

[1] There is no clue as to what this was.

elsewhere. Then the question of *I.O.* being published in English at the very least. I was not at all nervous when I received your letter enclosing Manilal's letter. I knew you would keep calm and take a perfectly philosophic view of the whole thing. I shall keenly watch the progress of your new and bold experiments. Please give my love to Granny & Mrs. West. I wonder how Sam has taken all this. Please ask him to write to me.

With love,

Yours

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 4429. Courtesy: A. H. West

301. SPEECH AT DANTALI

April 17, 1918

We are carrying on this struggle to secure justice from the Government. Whilst coming here, I observed people using goads to urge bullocks yoked to carts or ploughs. This cruelty is unforgivable in us, especially as we claim to be protectors of cows. To save the cow we engage in big fights with Muslims, but we do not hesitate to apply goads to bullocks. It is for sins such as these that we have to suffer. I trust the use of goads will disappear from now. When, driving here in a bullock-cart from Petlad station, I saw the bullocks being pricked with a goad, I felt that refraining from wearing shoes yet driving in a cart was a far greater sin than wearing shoes. I am here today not to talk about kindness to animals but about justice; all the same, believing that we must do justice to others if we want justice for ourselves, I took the occasion to say all this. It is not so very difficult to pay the land revenue to the Government. One can borrow the money from someone or some land or a buffalo and pay up. Then why take upon ourselves all this bother of not paying and allowing our goods and lands to be confiscated? This is howthe wise ones advise us. I have given my answer to this at many places. The question is one of principle, not merely of paying the land revenue. We pay because we are afraid of the Government; it is this fear we wish to get rid of. The gist of all that the Commissioner said was this: that the people must not disobey the Government's order. The idea I want to put into you, on the contrary, is that there is no disloyalty in

disobeying an unjust order of the Government; rather, it is the purest loyalty to do so. To submit to an unjust order without even a protest is a sign of weakness; it is sheer cowardice. For instance, even in our domestic life, a son or a daughter, suffering injustice at the hands of parents, has the right to resist; we want to apply the same rule to our dealings with the Government. We do not oppose the Government to bring it down or seek anything from it through unfair means. We seek justice through self-suffering. Till today, we suffered out of fear and timidity and now we wish to suffer on purpose. The Government is entitled to test us. You friends, men and women, have been playing a game with the Government; but, when the Government starts confiscating your lands, it will be seen how many of you can hold out. When it has done its worst by way of repression and sees that you will not bend despite it all, it will climb down all too readily....[1] When the people tell their Government with one voice that they will not submit to its unjust orders, the latter is bound to yield. This has ever been so. It is our duty to be loyal to the Government, What difficulty can there be for a people so loyal in obtaining justice from the British Government? That is why I tell you to remain determined till the very end and not to lose heart.

It is desirable that you should all understand the full meaning of satyagraha. Four days ago, I met Mr. Carmichael in Bombay. He is the head of the Revenue Department. In the course of our conversation, he asked me to consider whether this struggle would ultimately raise or lower the people morally, will teach them respect for law or contempt for it. I told him that there was no fear of their moral sense or loyalty being weakened. In satyagraha, people cannot but gain in moral strength and learn to be more courteous. If we were to suffer moral harm, our struggle would not be satyagraha but *duragraha*. Our crops have been in most places less than four annas and, in some villages, less than six annas. That being so, according to the Revenue Code, the collection of revenue should be suspended to the extent of half the amount. This is all our demand, one which we claim as our right. Accordingly, we requested the Government to order the suspension. It did not accept our assessment of the crops. Thereupon, we asked the appointment of a committee of inquiry. We assured the Government that, if it were proved correct, we would accept the officers' assessment of the crops. Even then, the

[1] The omission is in the source.

Government refused to appoint a committee. Under these circumstances, we should not pay the assessment. If we fail, in this struggle, to get our rights recognized by the Government, we shall never be able again to lift our heads. I notice that your big two-storeyed houses are in a dilapidated condition; the reason for this is that you have not the money with which to carry out the necessary repairs. From this I can see that the people are impoverished. Bad years are a part of our lot; cloth and food are enormously dear; diseases are so rampant that, even when there is no war, people die before their time. Having regard to the times, I have advised the people of Kheda district, who value their self-respects to secure justice by submitting voluntarily to injustice and oppression. We can secure it not through insolence but manliness. Our struggle is so straightforward that it is bound to increase our moral strength. I advise you emphatically, therefore, not to forsake truth on any account. Anyone who has but a glimpse of the truth, will, in every step he takes, follow truth and morality. Make courtesy and truth a part of your life. Caught in a big fire, let us all unite and fight the Government. This is a fine opportunity for us to work for our uplift.

I repeat to all friends: "Remain steadfast." To the ladies, I say: "Give courage to your husbands, brothers, sons."

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Satyagraha

302. SPEECH AT CHIKHODRA

April 17, 1918

I had hoped to meet you all last week, but I went to Ahmedabad to see the Commissioner and then I had to go to Bombay to meet his superior, Mr. Carmichael. I could not, therefore, come earlier as I had hoped to. If Vallabhbhai and I have come here to Chikhodra and the neighbouring villages, where reigns the order of Dayanand Saraswati, it is not, certainly, to give you encouragement but to receive it ourselves from you, or, if I may say so, not to kindle fire in you but to receive some of that divine light from you. I am sure you will prove me right by holding out in this struggle till the very last.

Dayanand Saraswati is among the foremost of the great spiritual teachers India has produced in the past. I hope that this and the surrounding villages, following as they do this great teacher, will

resound with holy chants some the Vedas and also live their life as enjoined by the Vedas.

I hope, moreover, that they will observe the disciplines of *yama*[1]-*niyama*[2] and rigorously keep the vow of swadeshi as well. It would pain me very much to learn that the people of Chikhodra do not wear locally produced cloth, but use other foreign or mill-made cloth. I am taken aback as I see the clothes of many of you here. I see that the cloth is mill-made, either foreign or Indian. To my mind, mill-made cloth is seventy-five per cent foreign. The machinery on which the cloth is woven is foreign and all its benefit goes to foreign workers. Those who wear mill-made cloth may have this satisfaction that the money they pay for its manufacture will go to our mill-hands. But hardly anyone stops to consider that these mill-hands, leaving their agriculture, give up a fine profession and a simple life to join the mills. It is my advice, therefore, that you, in this and the surrounding villages, where Dayanand Saraswati's order holds sway, should use your own cloth and so keep the rule of non-possession and that of non-violence, for both these are included in the law of swadeshi. This latter holds within itself the basic principles of satyagraha. Having explained them in brief, I proceed to the main subject.

In employing satyagraha against the injustice done by the Government, adherence to truth and non-violence is very necessary. Where the crops have been less than six annas, collection of half the revenue should be suspended, as provided in the rules framed by the Government. It refuses to abide by this rule and tells you in these harsh and bitter words: "Nothing will avail you in this; you will rather stand to lose. Nor can the people have any say on the Revenue Code." The Government argues that we cannot take any matter arising out of it to the High Court or any other court, but that the people should petition the Collector, approach the Commissioner in the event of the Collector turning down their petition, and, if the latter refuses to intervene, they may go right up to the Governor. In the present case, however, the Commissioner has spared no threats; not stopping at this, he had a letter of the Governor's brought to the meeting and went to the length of saying that whatever he did would be upheld by the Governor. I have never seen or heard of such

[1] Any moral duty or religious observance; the *yamas* are usually said to be ten, but their names are given differently by deterrent writers. They include celibacy; compassion, truth; charity, non-violence, etc.

[2] Any voluntary or self-imposed religious observance, dependent on external conditions

unlimited authority in the hands of one single officer anywhere. Our kings sometimes used to oppress the subjects and rob them of their possessions, but I cannot believe that such a thing can happen under British rule. If, keeping within the limits of the law, we decide not to pay the land revenue, there is no disloyalty to the Government. Most respectfully we accept the law and want the Government officers also to be governed by it, I would advise you to let your lands be confiscated, even if they be worth not three million but three hundred million. Ours is a fight in the way of satyagraha and we must fight it with the purest soul-force. Its secret lies in bearing anything that may be inflicted on us. This implies the observance of perfect non-violence; and hence it is that we have called it a holy fight. We want to win, not by striking terror in the rulers, but by awakening their sense of justice. We are guilty of no treason in doing so nor do we thereby prove ourselves enemies of religion. Our struggle is based on truth and we claim justice from the Government on humanitarian, religious and ethical grounds. Our action is thus: altogether unexceptionable. I have faith in you, men and women of Chikhodra, that you will understand the principles of satyagraha aright and follow them. There is no remedy like satyagraha to see an end to your suffering. If you use it, you will discover that it alone is the right remedy against our present grievances and those to come. You should hold out till the last in the fight on which you have embarked. If you fail to do so, you will have betrayed your religion and the consequences for India will be unhappy. This struggle will make it clear to the administration here in Kheda district that it cannot ruin by ignoring popular opinion; that only by respecting public opinion can it maintain itself. This is the real aim behind our struggle and it is for you to see that it is attained. You have taken the pledge to uphold truth. If you read the *Ramayana*, you will realize what value to attach to one's word. Abiding by one's word, one may achieve *moksha*. Be loyal to your pledge, no matter how much you suffer, no matter even if the universe should be blown up. To the ladies, I shall say only this: "Even if you have to part with your furniture and other household things, your cattle and your land, do not despair. Help the men in your families to honour their pledge. May God give you the wisdom to be loyal to that pledge."

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Satyagraha

303. SPEECH AT RAS[1]

April 18, 1918

Last week Vallabhbhai and I were to be here, but I had to go to Bombay and Ahmedabad and could not come. I apologize to you for this.

Owing to the heat today, I casually asked how far the venue of the meeting was. I was informed that it was close by, so I decided-to walk down. However, my young friends saw to it that I did not feel the heat. To be sure, that bespeaks their love for me. Their kind turn also suggests that the advice I have been giving has appealed to you all. You know, however, that my advice will let neither you nor me sleep soundly, nor will it permit any rest to my co-workers. It can mean only suffering, sleepless nights and running from village to village. You should let your buffaloes be seized, your jewellery taken away and your lands confiscated. It is because you believe that I advise you for your good that you shower so much love on me. I am very happy at this, but I am also fully aware, at the same time, what responsibility rests on me and how it increases as the fight intensifies. Despite the complexity and the seriousness of the problem, I do not feel even in the inmost depth of my heart that I should withdraw this advice. As days pass and the struggle assumes its real form, I feel that, had I not given the advice I did to the people of Kheda district, I would have failed in my duty to Gujarat. Had I not given this advice, my trying to serve society and the country, while comfortably settled here in Gujarat, would have made me always feel that my dedication was imperfect in that measure. The advice I have given in the present situation will raise the moral standards of men and women. Simultaneously, the people of Kheda will come up and their triumph will be proclaimed all over India.

Looking at the matter from another point of view, the Government has made it a policy not to consult the people or respect their opinions at all. This is our experience in legislatures, municipalities and other public institutions and that is so because they do not have the backing of public opinion behind them.[2] When we are afraid of

[1] A Village in Borsad taluka; the meeting was largely attended by agriculturists from the surrounding villages.

[2] Reports in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 22-4-1918, and *New India*, 24-4-1918, quote words to the same effect, but have in addition the sentence, "We have got no scope there to assert our opinions."

even the petty constable and take to our heels at the mere sight of an approaching *ravania*, how can we ever face a big officer ? We dare not utter a single word before him. This condition is worse even than that of the animals. These, when they have had enough of beating, obstinately refuse to move or do our will. In comparison with them, consider what sort of condition ours is. If, therefore, we would give proof of our being men, we must shed fear; if we do, we shall win in this struggle. In the same way that in Mr. Pratt's meeting at Nadiad the farmers replied to him boldly, we should cultivate sufficient courage to place the facts even before the Governor. We shall not be insolent in our fight; we desire to fight by means of soul-force, to win through self-suffering. This is a divine, immutable law; our scriptures declare that, if we would have happiness, we must go through suffering, do *tapascharya*. King Dasharatha did so, to get sons like Bharata, Rama, Lakshmana and Shatrughna. And so did King Nala, too, for the sake of truth and self-respect, bearing countless afflictions. That is the reason why at early dawn we remind ourselves of these ever memorable holy souls. These divine tales are a part of our heritage....[1] By suffering voluntarily, we seek through truth and non-violence to end our sufferings ....[2] The people of Kheda district have taken upon themselves to demonstrate this principle to the world. It is a principle which will be of great service to the world . . . .[3] Our crop has been less than four annas; and so, according to the Revenue Code, the Government should have suspended the assessment this year. Mr. Pratt argues that our figures are incorrect and wants to enforce the collection. We insist that what we say is one hundred per cent true, that it is the Government's figures which are incorrect, and that, accordingly, the Government should suspend the assessment. There is, thus, an element of petty self-interest in this struggle.

But it also involves a far more important issue than this, namely, that the Government should learn to respect public opinion. As a result of this struggle, it may come about that land revenue is remitted and people may become conscious of their strength; that will be no small gain. We must, therefore, suffer and be loyal to our pledge. We did not resolve on it without thinking. We ventured on the task only after the fullest deliberation. A pledge taken with the purest of motives and for the good of the people can never be betrayed though the sun may rise in the west instead of in the east. I entreat you to cling to it. This is my humble advice. This pledge will purify us and put an end

[1] Omissions are in the source.

[2] *ibid*

[3] The omission is in the source.

to all our sufferings.

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Satyagraha

304. LETTER TO G. CARMICHAEL

NADIAD,

April 19, 1918

DEAR MR. CARMICHAEL,

I thank you for your note. I will not make use of the purport unless I get the true version. Will you please help me if you think that I may allow public use to be made of the interview? If however you think that I may not make use of what was a purely friendly interview I shall entirely respect your wish. I merely thought of making use of it as we discussed large principles and found we had honest but insurmountable difference of opinion.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10683. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

305. LETTER TO KUMBHAKONAM LAWYERS[1]

[NADIAD,]

April 19, 1918

I was delighted to receive your letter signed by so many of you. I shall send you a teacher as fast as I can. I am trying to secure the services of a volunteer who would teach Hindi for the love of it. The success of this great national effort depends almost entirely upon the action of the Presidency of Madras. But I have great faith in the Tamil brethren rising to the occasion. There will be no limit to our power for serving the land as soon as we make Hindi the common medium of expression throughout the length and breadth of India.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] This was in reply to a letter from 23 lawyers and graduate of Kumbhakonam who, eager to learn Hindi, had asked Gandhiji to send a teacher.

306. SPEECH AT KASAR[1]

April 20, 1918

1 do not wish to speak much here. I have informed myself about the condition in the village. Where there is unity and firmness among the people, things are bound to be happy. *Chothai* notices have been served on you, your buffaloes have been seized and your jewellery taken away. We have borne all this. Now, we are threatened with confiscation of lands. Never forget that the respect we enjoy in society will be safe, and so also our lands, only if we keep our pledge. The latter cannot take precedence over the former. If all of you are ready to fight it out with the Government, we shall see what the Government gains by taking over our lands. In Nayaka, one hundred and seventy-eight *bighas* of land have been confiscated; but I do not believe that land has been confiscated because it is entered so in the register. The Government does not intend to enclose the lands with walls, so that we may not be able to reach them, nor will it be able to do anything of the sort in this satyagraha struggle. Hold out tenaciously, therefore; so you will bring glory to yourselves and to India. If you yield, agriculturists all over India will be demoralized. Bear in mind another thing. Those who have recourse to satyagraha must not be overbearing in their conduct towards others. This is an immutable truth, of universal range like the far-spread rays of the sun. Just as we tell the Government not to use its power as a goad with which to drive us, so also you in your turn must deal out perfect justice to people of all the communities in your town or village.

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Satyagraha

307. SPEECH AT AJARPURA

April 20, 1918

I came to your village once before but, yielding to your pressure, we have all come here again. The teacher here sent me a report of the interesting discussion that the people had with the *mamlatdar* and wanted some clarifications. That is the reason for our

[1] Along with Kasturba, Manu Subedar, Vallabhabhai Patel and others, Gandhiji visited Kasar, Ajarpura and Samarkha in the Anand taluka on April 20 and addressed meetings of peasants.

being here again.

First of all, I shall say something about the arguments of the *mamlatdar*. He told you that you should keep the terms under which your ancestors acquired the lands from the Government. Let us consider what these terms are likely to have been.

They could not have been what the *mamlatdar* said they were. The Government passes laws which serve its own convenience and, though they do not serve ours, we submit to them. For instance, we submit to the Revenue Code though we are not very happy with it. What was the practice in olden days? It was that the Government was paid *chothai*; in other words, it claimed one-fourth of the yield, if there was any, but nothing if there was none. This was our old system. The present Government believed that the laws it has passed have been for the benefit of the people. Instead of claiming a share of the produce, this Government introduced the system of collecting the Land revenue in cash. I do not believe that any advantage has accrued to the people by this law of the Government. One of the provisions in the Land Revenue Code is to the effect that, if the crops are less than four annas, collection of the assessment should be suspended. But the officers argue that it is in the discretion of the Government whether or not to order such suspension and that it may use the discretion only if it so chooses. This is naked injustice. Governments can maintain their authority only in one way, and that is by respecting public opinion.

Our struggle is not merely for securing suspension of the land revenue; a struggle for such relief would be a petty affair. In truth, we are fighting for the sake of the important issue which is involved in it. That is the issue of democracy, of the revival of democratic Government. The people have awakened and begun to understand their rights. A full understanding of these rights is what is meant by swaraj. Let us water the seeds of the fundamental issues involved in this struggle, and they will produce sweet fruits for posterity, as sweet as the pleasant shade of this banyan tree. That is the aim this struggle has set before itself. Let the Government ridicule us; but you must realize that this struggle is not for securing a little relief in terms of money, it is in the nature of a foundation for a future democratic structure.

The people will be ruined if they let go their rights out of weakness. Sir William Wedderburn, an ardent and sympathetic friend of the Indian people used to say all his life that, as the village

panchayats gradually disappeared, along with them was lost the key to swaraj. These *panchayats* cannot be revived by writing books. If, in every village, the people learn how to manage their affairs, the true key to swaraj will have been found.

A satyagraha struggle is an all-embracing affair. Truth is the very basis which sustains our life. If they come with an order of attachment and you have nothing with you, tell them so; if you have anything, but do not wish to surrender it, let them know that plainly.

If you would not give provisions to Government servants, you should refuse them straight, but you may not truly say that you have no grain and therefore cannot supply the provisions they need. A satyagrahi must speak the truth on every occasion. You should understand clearly the principles of satyagraha and be guided by truth and other rules of moral conduct all your life. Truth is God. Let your jewellery and your lands be taken from you, but do not betray your dharma. I pray God to give you strength to abide by the pledge you have taken. In the revival of this way of dharma lies the key to swaraj.

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Satyagraha

308. SPEECH AT PALAJ[1]

April 22, 1918

In our daily living two weaknesses are evident. The first is that we do all our work superficially; and the second is that whatever we take in hand, we do it without any understanding of it. We do our work like the actors on a stage who speak out what they have learnt by rote. Consequently we do not get the results we expect. In our daily dealings, we are like the actor playing Harishchandra, whom we cannot expect to be permeated with truth in every pore of his skin. This is exactly what these girls have proved by their manner of singing *Vandemataram*. We have got into the habit of doing our work anyhow; so long as we do not put our whole heart into our work, we shall not succeed.

Our ancestors knew this and that is why they laid special stress on the correct pronunciation of the *mantras*. Any error they counted as a sin. You asked the girls to sing a grand national song like

[1] This was on the occasion of a visit by Gandhiji and his party to Palaj, in the Borsad taluka; over a thousand cultivators listened to Gandhiji's address.

Vandemataram. We do not know in full the greatness of the song, its resonance and its tune. That is the feeling I have about this struggle, that we are fighting it half-heartedly. If that is really so, if we have failed to understand its true import, then like the singing of these girls it will be unavailing. I make these harsh remarks that you may all sit up and be more careful in this struggle.

The second point I wish to make is that we should carry on this struggle with a full understanding of it. Mr. Pratt asked me once whether the people really understand what I have been doing. If they fail to do so [he said] the results cannot but be evil. In such a holy struggle we ought not to work half-heartedly. We are afraid of even petty officials. This should not be so. I keep telling you again and again that, even if we are to meet big and distinguished persons, we need not feel worried. We have only to make up our mind not to be awed by them and to be courteous in addressing them. If there is a difference of opinion, we should put it in proper language. If we get over these shortcomings in our struggle, we should never have to suffer defeat. We must take care that we never act thoughtlessly in this struggle. Nor should fear have any place in it. Truth suffers no harm. You must repeat this at every step.

Vallabhbhai told me that the *mamlatdar* was encamped in this village for four days but had had no success. The farmers remained firm. You have shown this courage and I have nothing more to say. I just told you that I was going to Delhi. I don't like to be away from this district, but I have to go to Delhi in connection with this struggle. The Viceroy is to hold a conference. It will consider how we can render more help in the great war that is being fought in Europe. Perhaps the question of conscription will also come up for discussion. We shall also be advised to put aside all our quarrels with the Government. But this quarrel is not of our seeking, it has been thrust upon us. I will tell them the same thing, that we did not invite this struggle, that it had been forced upon us. When can I say this to the Viceroy? Only if you are firm and true satyagrahis.

We can never lose. It is impossible that they will confiscate our lands, for we have not committed the least offence. Who can ever stop the person who follows the path of truth? Even if your lands should be confiscated, have no fear and do not budge. We are determined to get them back by taking to the ways of outlaws, if need be. It is up to you to preserve the honour of India. This struggle has turned into one

for self-respect and prestige. It is a struggle of the brave people of Kheda district to recover their lost property and prestige. We must, for this purpose, reform our ways of daily living. We must stop fighting with one another and get ready to fight oppression by an alien Government. All suffering, whether of internal or external origin, should be treated with the magic remedy of satyagraha. I would tell you, sisters, give courage to the men and for ever repeat this *mantra*: "The pledge can end only with death."

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Satyagraha

309. SPEECH AT SUNAV

April 22, 1918

I feel tempted to talk about the difference I observed between this village and Palaj. When I entered Palaj, I noticed that there was no band there but instead there were the *zanz*[1] and the *pakhaj*[2]. Hearing them, I remembered my childhood days. The feelings of devotion they express, their sweetness and their art, I do not find in the band. The band is a foreign thing; the *zanz* and the *pakhaj* are our own. The band is an imitation, a novelty. They are ancient. The band may sound pleasant to the English and others, but it certainly does not to me. Our ancestors invented an instrument that suited our country; for us, too, it is the only thing. In our religious ceremonies, both instrumental and vocal music find a place. Our native tunes have the power to elevate people from their fallen state; the band has no such power. Why should we, then, give up such simple, beautiful and sweet things as the *zanz* and the *pakhaj*?

The difference between the band and the *zanz-pakhaj* is the difference between modern and ancient ways. If our struggle is the same kind of thing as this band, it will come to nought. Just as the *zanz-pakhaj* suggest a number of ideas, our struggle also has beautiful truths underlying it. If you grasp them clearly, we shall get wonderful results out of them.

Despite all this enthusiasm I observe in you, I am afraid there appears to be an element of play-acting in this struggle. We declare

[1] Cymbals
[2] Tabor

that we don't mind confiscation of our lands, but deep down in our hearts, it seems to me, there is fear. If this is so, we are bound to lose and that will have unhappy consequences for the whole of India. I wish, therefore, that we carry on this fight, unflinchingly, with the aid of truth and dharma, as becomes our ancient civilisation.

They say Gujarat is slumbering. Sometimes I am asked why this is so. But I think this charge that Gujarat is, like Kumbhakarna[1], in deep sleep, is undeserved. How can anyone say that, when we find so many men and women assembled here in the scorching heat of noon ? All the same, I should like to ask you whether we have really shaken off our slumber or are merely acting awake. The reply should come from the depths of your hearts, that you are no more acting, that you have joined the struggle in all sincerity. This struggle of ours is in the cause of truth. There should not be an iota of falsehood in it. When you succeed in convincing the Government of this, it will conduct itself as our own Government. If, on the contrary, we are trying to be smart or are hypocritical, the Government will not yield. For instance, some friends in Bhavnagar went on a strike, acting hastily. They did not know how to go on with it, not having the strength to suffer. They apologized to the Maharaja. All the world knows that the wages they receive are low but their strike secured them no increase. It gave me a shock to know that they had apologized. I do not understand why they did so. The *mahajan*, too, it may be said, brought humiliation to the strikers by his intervention. I hope that such a situation will not arise here. Ours is an honest request for relief, because the crops have been less than four annas. It is after the fullest deliberation that we declared we would not pay the land revenue. We knew what we were doing. We will never apologize. Our lands may be confiscated and we may be sent to jail; let us weigh this against truth, against our pledge and our self-respect. Which will you find heavier? We are resolved not to surrender, not to betray our pledge.

What is the purpose behind our pledge? To establish our right. Armies which have been fighting sometimes pay tributes; the side that pays is considered to have accepted defeat. It is our request to the Government that it should accept this fact. The voice of the *panch* is the voice of God. Public opinion is always supreme; we shall have won when we make the Government concede that it is the voice of God.

[1] A brother of Ravana, the king of Lanka; he is described in the *Ramayana* having been in the habit of sleeping for half the year at a stretch.

But who can hope to win? There is no need to be afraid of the officer. We should always speak boldly, without reserve. The reserve between the Government and the people must go, as the false reserve between men and women must go.

We can bring this about, not by brute force, but by soul-force or the force of love. He wins who worships soul-force. Brute force has no place in our struggle. We must win only by our soul-force. The true hero is he who is ever ready for death. That is the true Kshatriya quality and to display it is the sole aim of our struggle. When India comes to feel that it has no use for the sword, not only the British but the entire world will come to honour us. By 'us', I mean truth. There is no arrogance in saying this. Where there is truth, there can be no defeat. We have to be very careful that we do not show ourselves wanting in this struggle; for this, we must cease quarrelling among ourselves. Our cause is just, no doubt, but the struggle is due chiefly to Mr. Pratt. Its only aim is to bring the Government to respect public opinion. The Viceroy is to hold a Durbar in Delhi; he will there request the country's leaders to patch up our internal quarrels. I shall tell him in reply that it is not the Kheda people who are fighting, but the Commissioner. We are fighting in self-defence. We have but held up our arm to ward off a blow; we have not attacked anyone. What would be my position, though, if meanwhile you yield? You must, therefore, remain firm and bear any losses you may be put to. Only so can it be proved that the blame lies not with the people, but with the Commissioner.

I assure you that the Government cannot possibly confiscate your lands. They may do so on their records, but, in the absence of our signatures, the lands will not be lost to us. Till now, the responsibility was Vallabhbhai's and mine jointly, but, when I am away in Delhi, the whole of it will be his. You, too, should share it. If you need my presence to keep you free from fear, this satyagraha will not be your struggle but mine. In truth, it is that of the people of Kheda, not mine nor Vallabhbhai's, nor Anasuyabehn's. I can only show you the path. It is for you to tread it. Success depends on the people of Kheda. If you remain firm and cling to truth, you are bound to win. Even the pledge, by itself, has spread your fame all over India; it is your dharma, then, to keep the pledge, to have courage, to maintain truthfulness and courtesy even while you preserve your self-respect, that you may not lose the good name you have won. Dharma is more important than lands. He who has preserved his dharma will

never suffer defeat, will never starve. My first and last advice to you, my prayer, is this: "Never betray your pledge.''

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Satyagraha

310. LETTER T0 COMMISSIONER[1]

NADIAD ,

[Before *April 23, 1918*]

I am a believer in satyagraha. I would gladly give up my weapons and even my all for the matter of that, but I cannot give up my principles.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Vol. I

311. LETTER TO F. G. PRATT

NADIAD,

April 23, 1918

DEAR MR. PRATT,

I thank you for your note[2].

Naturally I accept your assurance that you did not deliberately misrepresent the strikers.

I have been summoned to attend the War Conference[3]. The first object is stated to be to sink domestic differences. This Kheda business falls under that category. I am not ashamed to approach you again and appeal to you in the name of the object of the Conference to recede from the position you have taken up. What a great relief it would be to the Viceroy if I could tell His Excellency that we had settled our domestic quarrel.

I am leaving tonight for Bombay to attend the Begar Conference.

From a copy: C.W. 10684. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] This was in reply to a letter from Commissioner Pratt, whom he had asked for an interview: "If you give up all your weapons and come to discuss, my doors are open to you, but my hands are tied by legal and administrative rules."

[2] Dated April 18

[3] Which was to be held in Delhi from April 27 to 29

312. LETTER TO J. KER

NADIAD,
April 23, 1918

DEAR MR. KER[1],

Mr. Ghosal wrote to me about the Limbasi cotton crop. I agree that my undertaking included the cotton crop also.[2] 1 have now made inquiries and I find that Limbasi people were ready to go to the cotton fields with the Talati, but the latter did not go. I understand that there is little cotton crop on fields that have no wheat crop, and all having the wheat crop have already delivered enough wheat to cover the amount of attachment. If my information is incorrect you will please correct me. I shall be away attending the War Conference. Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel will attend to my correspondence in the meantime.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10685. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

313. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

[ON THE TRAIN TO BOMBAY,]
April 23, 1918]

DEAR KASTUR,

You have to be a mother to Maganlal. He has parted from his parents and made my work his own. At present it is Maganlal, if anyone, who has so trained himself that he can carry on my work after me. Who will give him the needed strength? It is for you to show concern for his suffering, to be solicitous on his meals, to save him from all manner of worries. There is bitter quarrelling in Bhupatrai's family; help them to put an end to it. *I should like you to be active in such things. True learning and greatness lie in this.* Don't object to put on a white sari having no border. I shall try to go there early.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] Collector of Kheda, who had just taken over charge from J. Ghosal

[2] J. Ghosal had written that though he had withdrawn the order of attachment of crops, on Gandhiji's assurance that all the defaulters of Limbasi would produce sufficient wheat or other crops to pay the arrears, the people growing cotton or other crops were refusing to pay.

314. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[ON THE TRAIN TO BOMBAY,]
April 23, 1918

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I hear from Ba that Santok and you have been arguing with each other and that you looked sad. I don't wish this ever to happen to you. Be patient in taking Santok with you. Impatience shows absence of love. It is enough if we refuse to help the other party in doing wrong. Your worrying is consuming you and it bars your progress. You should now come out of this state of mind.

All impressions of sense, O son of Kunti,
Are hot or cold, give pleasure or pain;
They but come and pass, ever fleeting,
Bear them unmoved, O Bharata.[1]

Think on this verse and let it sink into your soul. It is a very powerful one and it has brought, to me at any rate, peace in moments of great anxiety. Use Santok's services in [settling] the family quarrels of Bhupatrai.[2] They can and must be brought to an end.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5983. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri; also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. IV

315. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BOMBAY[3]

April 23, 1918

I wish to add something to what the Chairman has told you about the steps which have been taken to secure relief from the Government. This struggle was not started by outsiders. Nobody instigated the Kheda public to launch it. There is no political motive behind it. It did not originate with the Home Rulers or with any barristers or lawyers as some people allege. I stand here to vouch for this. It was started by the tillers themselves. After the Political

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II, 14

[2] The sentence can also be read to mean: "The family quarrels of Bhupatrai will engulf Santok also."

[3] The meeting was held at Shantaram Chawl, Kandevadi, to acquaint the citizens with the situation in Kheda and to express sympathy with the satyagraha struggle there. Vithalbhai J. Patel presided. The proceedings were mostly in Gujarati and Marathi. A report appeared also in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 24-4-1918.

Conference at Godhra, some agriculturists in Kheda decided to request the Government for relief in view of the excessive rains. They wrote to me, informing me that they were legally entitled to relief and asking me whether I would help. You will thus see that this struggle did not originate with outside agitators, though it is true that it attracted the attention it did because of outside help. The support of our Chairman and the Hon'ble Gokuldasbhai[1] made the people confident of success. Some distinguished members of the Gujarat Sabha also made inquiries and convinced themselves that the crops had failed and that relief was called for. Their testimony was sufficient to justify the people's stand; even so, everything possible was done to convince the officers. I testify to this.

Satyagraha is not a way of fighting to which one can resort unless one has a real grievance. It requires more heroism than does fighting a battle. The soldier has weapons in his hand; his aim is to strike the enemy. The satyagrahi, on the contrary, fights by suffering himself. Surely, this is not for the weak and the diffident. Such a one would not be equal to the suffering. The greater the suffering a satyagrahi goes through, the purer he becomes. As gold is tested in fire, so also does a satyagrahi have to go through a fiery ordeal. His only weapon is uncompromising insistence on truth. A true satyagrahi fears nothing and holds fast to truth as he fights.

Not men only, but women also have joined this struggle. Wonderful scenes are witnessed at the village meetings. The Women declare that even if the Government seize their buffaloes, attach their jewellery or confiscate their lands, the men must honour their pledge. This is a grand struggle, which has fired one and all. Its fragrance is spreading everywhere. It is beyond my power to describe the people of Kheda. They have it in them to help the Government in meeting the present danger. The *Patidar* claims to be a Kshatriya.

The Government Press Note describes Kheda as a prosperous district, and in a sense this is quite true. As they say, "Broach is Broach, though in ruins". When I look at people's buildings, I am reminded of the greatness which was theirs. By their patience and diligence, by self-exertion, they have turned the land of Kheda into a beautiful garden. Tears fill my eyes, though, when I look at their houses. They say they have no money, else their fields would have been a still more pleasant sight.

The Government even now refuses the relief which it ought to

[1] Gokuldas Parekh

have granted to such a brave people at a time of natural calamity. The reason for their lack-lustre eyes is that they have had to go through such calamities time and again. Brothers and sisters who are present at this meeting! Go to Kheda district, inspect the big earthen jars in which they store grain to see if there is any, look for crops in their fields. If they have nothing with them, what are they to do? You can imagine from this how wretched their condition must have been. This is our plight, they said. If they could pay the year's land revenue next year, they would save a year's interest. But saving them interest is not the idea behind this struggle. Any wealthy magnate of Bombay could easily have paid them the amount, but that would not have ended their suffering. The Government would have assumed from this that every year they could raise money on interest and pay up.

In this struggle I wish to establish the principle that the Government cannot decide on collection of land revenue without consulting the people. Merely saying that the Land Revenue Code is bad will not bring us relief. There is only one way to save ourselves from our suffering, and that is, by suffering voluntarily, to end our miseries once for all. Mr. Pratt, the Commissioner, is plain about this matter and says that, if he suspended the collection of land revenue this year, people all over the country would think that they could stand up against the Government even in such matters.

This is an auspicious time for learning self-suffering. We don't get an opportunity like this every day. The people have exercised self-restraint on this occasion as was but proper that they should. The people have transformed [this struggle] into a holy war. They declare that they will suffer voluntarily so that their suffering may end....

My experience in Kheda and Champaran teaches me this one lesson, that, if the leaders move among the people, live with them, eat and drink with them, a momentous change will come about in two years. Make a deep study of this struggle; understand the worth of the people of Kheda; give all help you can by way of sympathy and verbal support. We shall not be arrogant in seeking justice. We seek it by awakening the Government to a sense of truth. The people will keep on fighting till they have secured justice.[1]

[From Gujarati]
Kheda Satyagraha

[1] When Gandhiji had finished his address, Tilak moved a resolution of sympathy for the Kheda cultivators, demanding of Government either revenue suspension for a year or the institution of an impartial inquiry into their grievances. B. G. Horniman later moved a resolution condemning the attitude taken by Commissioner Pratt in a speech on April 12.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

CIRCULAR LETTER BY GUJARAT SABHA OFFICE

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI, ESQ., BAR-AT-LAW

SHIVABHAI MOTIBHAI PATEL, B.A., LL.B.

KISHANLAL N. DESAI, M.A., LL.B.

GANESH VASUDEO MAVALANKER, B.A., LL.B.

SECRETARY

GUJARAT SABHA OFFICE,

KARANJ

AHMEDABAD,

September 13, 1917

DEAR SIR,

The Right Hon'ble Mr. Montagu, the Secretary of State for India, has announced his intention to visit our country for studying at first hand the present political situation in India. He is expected to be in India by the end of October 1917

Mr. Montagu will in due course discuss the question of Reforms with the authorities and will also receive suggestions from representative bodies. But in view of the attitude which the Anglo-lndian Press has begun to take and is sure to take, it is not sufficient for us merely to discuss the question with the Secretaryof State as representative bodies but it is imperatively necessary to strengthen his hands against the reactionary anti-Reform forces by clearly and emphatically bringing to his notice the volume of public opinion in favour of Reforms. The opportunity is unique and to miss it would be almost culpable.

With this view of our Sabha, at the suggestion of its President Mr. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi has resolved to present a petition to Mr. Montagu, signed by the British subjects of Gujarat. The petition is short and is drafted by Mr. M. K. Gandhi in consultation with R. B. Ramanbhai M. Nilkanth. A copy of the petition is enclosed herein.

You will note that the original petition is in Gujarati accompanied by an English translation. The Sabha has advisedly done so, as it is not possible to reach the masses of our countrymen through the medium of English. The Sabha is organising a volunteer corps for lecturing to the masses and explaining to them the Reform Scheme. The instructions to volunteers framed by Mr. Gandhi himself

specially enjoin every volunteer not to take the signature to the petition of any person who does not understand the scheme, and of persons who are minors, students and Government servants. Every volunteer is supplied with a Gujarati translation of the Reform-Scheme with a few introductory remarks printed in pamphlet form and the volunteer is strictly to confine himself to the contents of the pamphlet.

From the facsim ile given in *Mahatm a*, Vol. l

APPENDIX II

MINUTES OF CHAMPARAN COMMITTEE MEETING

September 27. 1917

Messrs Irwin, Hill and Norman to be summoned to Ranchi to consider three alternatives:

A. Each should state the percentage by which he is prepared to reduce the *sharahbeshi*, on conditions:

(1) that it should be a substantial advance on their previous offer; any advance made by the planters will be accepted as being substantial, in the hope of mutual goodwill in the future.

(2) that this will be fully accepted by Mr. Gandhi as a satisfactory settlement and that he will use his influence fully with the *raiyat*s to make them loyally accept it and to bring about future peace in the relations of planters and their tenants.

(3) that fully binding effect will be given to the settlement by legislation.

B. Failing the above, the question of *sharahbeshi* should be submitted to arbitration. Such arbitration to be conducted on one or other of the following alternatives: (1) The appointment of a single arbitrator, who shall have the power to arbitrate between the limits of reduction of 20 and 40 per cent for Turkaulia and 25 and 40 per cent for Motihari and Peeprah. Such arbitrator to be selected with mutual agreement of planters and of Mr Gandhi.

(2) The appointment of three arbitrators, one to be appointed by the planters, one by Mr Gandhi and the umpire to be appointed by these two, and failing agreement between these two, the umpire to be appointed Sir Edward Gait. The arbitration court so appointed shall have power to arbitrate between the limits of no reduction at all and a full reduction of 100 per cent. The arbitrators to be informed that for a settlement by consent the planters have offered a reduction of 20 per cent in Turkaulia and

25 per cent in Motihari and Peeprah, and that Mr. Gandhi on behalf of the *raiyat*s has offered to accept reduction of 40 per cent, but that those offers are now withdrawn and the arbitrators have full power to make any award they may settle.

Under both alternatives, conditions (2) and (3) of A will apply.

In addition under all the proposals, it shall be a condition that the existing obligation recorded in the settlement records shall be abolished and that in lieu thereof *sharahbeshi* shall be fixed at the rate at which it would have stood had commutation in their case taken place together with the others, less reduction that may be agreed upon or awarded by the arbitration.

Under proposals for arbitration, both the planters and Mr. Gandhi would submit written statements of their case, and both would have the option of submitting a written reply to such statements. The parties will not be permitted to be represented by counsel or to be heard personally as of right. The arbitrator or arbitrators to have the power to call for any papers they may desire to question the planters or any other person, and to give their award within one week of the filing of the written statements and rejoinders of the parties.

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 184, pp. 365-6

APPENDIX III

AGREEMENT SIGNED BETWEEN GANDHIJI AND LEADING PLANTERS

September 29, 1917

Under clause A it has been agreed between Messrs. Hill, Norman and Irwin and Mr. Gandhi that the *sharahbeshi* shall be reduced by

(1) 26 per cent in Motihari, Ltd. and Peeprah concerns and

(2) 20 per cent in the Turkaulia, Ltd. Conditions (2) and (3) shall apply.

This settlement to take effect from the commencement of the year 1325 *Fasli*, rents for previous years to remain at Survey Settlement rates. The existing indigo obligation recorded in survey records should be abolished from the commencement of 1325 *Fasli* and in lieu *sharahbeshi* shall be fixed at the rate at which it would have stood had commutation in their cases taken place together with the others less the reduction now agreed upon.

M. K. GANDHI.
J. B. NORMAN,
MANAGER, PEEPRAH CONCERN
W. S. IRWIN,
MANAGER, MOTIHARI LTD.
J. L. HILL,
MANAGER, TURKAULIA LTD.

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 186, pp. 367-8

APPENDIX IV

REPORT OF CHAMPARAN AGRARIAN ENQUIRY COMMITTEE

October 3, 1917

CHAPTER I

CONSTITUTION AND PROCEDURE OF THE COMMITTEE

APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Champaran Agrarian Enquiry Committee was appointed by the Government of Bihar and Orissa in Resolution No. 1890-C, dated the 10th June, 1917, which is reproduced below.

"On various occasions during the past fifty years, the relations of landlords and tenants and the circumstances attending the growing of indigo in the Champaran district have been the cause of considerable anxiety. The conditions under which indigo was cultivated when the industry was flourishing required re-adjustment when it declined simultaneously with a general rise in the prices offoodgrains; and it was partly on this account and partly owing to other local causes that disturbances broke out in certain indigo concerns in 1908. Mr. Gourlay was deputed by the Government of Bengal to investigate the causes of the disturbances; and his report and recommendations were considered at a series of conferences presided over by Sir Edward Baker and attended by the local officers of Government and representatives of the Bihar Planters' Association. As the result of these discussions, revised conditions for the cultivation of indigo, calculated to remove the grievances of the *raiyat*s, were accepted by the Bihar Planters' Association.

"In 1912 fresh agitation arose, connected not so much with the conditions under which indigo was grown as with the action of certain factories which were reducing their indigo manufacture and taking agreements from their tenants for the payment, in lieu of indigo cultivation, of a lump sum in temporarily leased villages or of an increase of rent in villages under permanent lease. Numerous petitions on this subject were presented from time to time to the local officers and to Government, and petitions were at the same time filed by *raiyats* of villages in the north of the Bettiah sub-division in which indigo had never been grown, complaining of the levy of *abwab* or illegal additions to rent by their leaseholders, both Indian and European. The issues raised by all these petitions related primarily to rent and tenancy conditions; and as the revision settlement of the district was about to be undertaken, in the course of which the relations existing between landlords and tenants would come under detailed examination, it was thought advisable to await the report of the settlement officers before passing final orders on the petitions. The revision

settlement was started in the cold weather of 1913. On the 7th April, 1915, a resolution was moved in the local Legislative Council, asking for the appointment of a mixed committee of officials and non-officials to enquire into the complaints of the *raiyats* and to suggest remedies. It was negatived by a large majority, including 12 out of the 16 non-official members of the Council present, on the ground that the appointment of such a committee at that stage was unnecessary, as the settlement officers were engaged in the collection of all the material required for the decision of the questions at issue, and an additional enquiry of the nature proposed would merely have the effect of further exacerbating the relations of landlord and tenant, which were already feeling the strain of the settlement operations.

"The settlement operations have now been completed in the northern portion of the district and are approaching completion in the remainder, and a mass of evidence regarding agricultural conditions and the relations between landlords and tenants has been collected. A preliminary report on the complaints of the tenants in the leased villages in the north of the Bettiah subdivision, in which no indigo is grown, has been received and action has already been taken to prohibit the levy ofillegal cesses and, in the case of the Bettiah Raj, to review the terms of the leases on which the villages concerned are held. As regards the complaints of the *raiyat*s in other parts of the district, the final report of the settlement officer has not yet been received, but recent events have again brought into prominence the whole question of the relations between landlords and tenants and, in particular, the taking of agreements from the *raiyat*s for compensation or for enhanced rent in return for the abandonment of indigo cultivation. In these circumstances, and in deference to representations which have been received from various quarters that the time has come when an enquiry by a joint body of officials and non-officials might materially assist the Local Government in coming to a decision on the problems which have arisen, the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council has decided, without waiting for the final report of the settlement operations, to refer the questions at issue to a Committee of Enquiry, on which all interests concerned will be represented.

"The following committee has accordingly been appointed with the approval of the Government of India:

PRESIDENT

F. G. Sly, Esq., C.S.I., Commissioner, Central Provinces.

MEMBERS

The Hon'ble Mr. L. C. Adami, I.C.S, Superintendent and Remembrancer of Legal Affairs, Bihar and Orissa.

The Hon'ble Raja Harihar Prasad Narayan Singh, Member of the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council.

The Hon'ble Mr. D. J. Reid, Member of the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council.

G. Rainy, Esq., I.C.S., Deputy Secretary in the Finance Department of the Government of India.

M. K. Gandhi, Esq.

SECRETARY

E. L. Tanner, Esq., I.C.S., Settlement Officer, South Bihar.

"The duty of the Committee will be

(1) to inquire into the relations between landlord and tenant in the Champaran district, including all disputes arising out of the manufacture and cultivation of indigo;

(2) to examine the evidence on these subjects already available, supplementing it by such further inquiry, local and otherwise, as they may consider desirable; and

(3) to report their conclusions to Government, stating the measures they recommend in order to remove any abuses or grievances which they may find to exist.

"The Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council desires to leave the Committee a free hand as to the procedure they will adopt in arriving at the facts.

"The Committee will assemble about the 15th July and will, it is hoped, complete their labours within three months."

PROCEDURE FOLLOWED BY THE COMMITTEE

2. A notice was published by the Committee in the provincial newspapers and posted at the Motihari Collectorate and the Bettiah Sub-divisional Office, inviting all persons, associations and public bodies who desired to give written evidence to send the same to the address of the Secretary of the Committee, and stating that the Committee would hold sittings at Bettiah, Motihari and any other centres where it was considered necessary, commencing about the 15th July.

In response to this notice, written statements were received from the Bihar Planters' Association and two managers, one of an indigo and the other of a non-indigo concern, from twenty-five *raiyats*, from Mr. Whitty, C.I.E., I.C.S., Manager of the Bettiah estate, and from Mr. Sweeney, I.C.S., Settlement Officer, North Bihar, Mr. Lewis, I.C.S., Sub-divisional Officer of Bettiah, Mr. L. F. Morshead, I.C.S., Commissioner of Tirhut, and Mr. E. H. Johnston, I.C.S., formerly Sub-divisional Officer of Bettiah. The Bihar Landholders' Association was specially invited to submit a memorandum of its views, but replied that it was not in possession of the material and facts concerning the agrarian conditions in

Champaran and was not therefore in a position to submit a written opinion.

The Committee held a preliminary meeting at Ranchi on the 11th July to decide the procedure and extent of its inquiry, and its public sittings commenced at Bettiah on Tuesday, the 17th July. Eight public sittings were held at Bettiah and Motihari at which nineteen witnesses were examined, consisting of four Government officers (the Settlement Officer, the Sub-divisional Officer of Bettiah, the Collector of the Champaran district, and the Manager of the Bettiah estate), three representatives of the *raiyats* the representative of the Bihar Planters' Association, and twelve managers of concerns. We also made local investigations at eight concerns, where we examined in detail the managers together with the factory registers and accounts and the *raiyats* who had submitted written memoranda, and then made numerous enquiries from the large bodies of *raiyats* assembled to meet us. We desire to acknowledge the great assistance derived by us from the official records placed at our disposal by the local Government and the full information given to us by the managers of concerns and the facilities afforded by them for the examination of their records and registers.

CHAPTER II

GRIEVANCES CONNECTED WITH INDIGO

PRELIMINARY—THE LANDLORDS

3. The Government has supplied us with previous records relating to the history, economic condition and former agrarian disputes of the Champaran district. Our enquiry has not been sufficiently prolonged for us to be able to add usefully to that information, and we do not propose to reproduce in this report the materials already available, but only to state a few broad facts directly relevant to our present enquiry. For historical reasons, the district has always been one of large landed estates, and more than three-fourths of it is still held by three large proprietors, viz., the Bettiah estate which has been under the management of the Court of Wards since 1898, the Ramnagar estate which has also been taken under management, and the Madhuban estate. The system of leasing villages to *thikadars* has always been largely followed by the Bettiah and Ramnagar estates, the number of villages managed direct and leased to *thikadars* now being as follows:

Name of estate	Under direct management	Held by perma-nent lessees	Held by tempo-rary lessees and on other tenures	Total
1	2	3	4	5
Bettiah	252	503	964	1,719*
Ramnagar	31	102	368	501 †

The *thikadari* system has never prevailed to the same extent in the Madhuban estate of 163 villages, but some are also leased.

The European indigo planters form much the most important class of *thikadars* in the district. Some of the older indigo concerns (e.g.. Turkaulia, Peeprah, Motihari and Rajpur) have held many villages continuously in lease from the Bettiah estate since the first decade of the 19th century, while others have been established at later dates. In the north-west of the district there are also European *thikadars* who have never grown indigo or have not done so until the last two years. In the Settlement of 1892-99 it was found that the European *thikadars* exercised landlord rights over 46 per cent of the district, and it seems likely that the area is now slightly larger. Broadly, it may be said that about half the district is in lease to European *thikadars*, and much more than half the district to *thikadars* of all kinds. Permanent leases known as *mukarrari* have in some cases been granted both by the Bettiah and Ramnagar estates. The Bettiah *mukarrari* leases date from the year 1888 and their

*These figures have been supplied by the Manager of the Bettiah estate. The total number of villages in the estate is only 1,630 according to the Settlement Officer, and apparently there is some difference in the village unit.

†These figures have been supplied by the Settlement Officer.

grant formed part of a large transaction for the raising of the sterling loan by which the debts of the estate were consolidated and the rate of interest payable on them reduced. Under the terms of these leases the position of the lease-holder concerns is practically that of a zamindar, the rent being fixed in perpetuity. We have not succeeded in ascertaining the circumstances in which *mukarrari* leases were granted by the Ramnagar estate, but there seems little doubt that as in Bettiah their origin is to be found in the financial embarrassments of the proprietor.

AREA UNDER INDIGO AND METHODS OF CULTIVATION

4. The area under indigo at the time of the Settlement of 1892-99 was 98,000 acres which was 6.63 per cent of the net cropped area, but its importance in the agricultural economy of the district was much greater than this percentage indicates. About one-third of this area was cultivated by the indigo concerns in their own lands and about two-thirds by tenants. Owing to the competition of synthetic indigo the area had fallen to 52,600 acres in 1907 and to 8,100 acres in 1914, but under the stimulus of high prices during the war, the area has again expanded to 21,900 acres in 1916. The cultivation of indigo carried on by the factories in lands which they occupy directly either as proprietors or tenure-holders (commonly known as *zirat* cultivation) does not call for special notice. But the condition under which

indigo is grown by the tenants for the factories has in the past been the cause of disputes on several occasions, and though we do not consider it necessary to enter into the history of these disputes, we cannot explain the causes of the present unrest without giving some account of the system. In essentials it does not appear to have varied during the last 100 years. Under this system, the tenant agrees to grow indigo for the factory in a portion of his holding. The fraction of the holding so cultivated appears at one time to have been as high as five *kathas* in the *bigha* (= one-fourth), but before 1867 it had already been reduced to four *kathas*, and in 1868 it was fixed at three *kathas*, whence the name *tinkathia* which is commonly applied to this system. In 1910 the fraction was fixed at two *kathas* (= one-tenth) by a bye-law of the Planters' Association, but the name *tinkathia* has survived. Where indigo is grown under this system, the terms of the agreement between the landlord and the tenant are usually embodied in a document which is called the *satta*. In it the tenant acknowledges the receipt of an advance and binds himself to cultivate a specified area with indigo annually. The preparation and weeding of the selected fields, and the cutting of the crop when ripe, are done by the cultivator at his own expense the seed is given by the factory, and the sowing is done by the factory and *raiyat* jointly; the green crop is carted from the field to the factory at the factory's expense. The rate to be paid for the *bigha* of indigo is fixed by the *satta* and does not vary with the actual outturn of plant. If owing to ca-uses for which the tenant is not responsible the crop is a failure, only half rates are paid, provided the tenant is allowed to plough up the indigo in time to sow another crop during the same season. A portion of the price is given as an advance free of interest to the tenant at the beginning of the cultivating season, but is usually credited in the rent account and is not paid in cash. The *satta* also contains a penalty clause specifying the amount of the damages which the factory may recover from the tenant if he fails to carry out the agreement, e.g., if he sows other crops in the land measured for indigo.

The *khushki* system by which the *raiyat* grows indigo for the factory but not under factory supervision and sells the produce by weight or some method of appraisement seems to have been rare in Champaran until a very recent date. It will be more fully discussed in a later paragraph.

THE PRICE PAID FOR INDIGO

5. The price paid to the tenants for the indigo so cultivated has varied from time to time. We find that in 1869 after a period of friction and disturbance, the price generally paid by the factories was raised from approximately Rs. 6-8-0 to Rs. 9 per acre and again in 1877 after another troubled period to Rs. 11-5-0. In that year, it was also for the first time distinctly laid down—previous practice had varied—that the rent of the land under indigo was to be remitted. In 1897, the Bihar Planters' Association spontaneously raised the rate to Rs. 12 per acre. Finally, in 1910, after.

Mr. Gourlay's enquiry, the price was raised to Rs. 13 per acre at which it now stands. If the remission of the rent of the indigo lands be taken into account, the price received by the tenant is approximately Rs. 15-8-0 per acre. A general complaint was made to us by the tenant that the cultivation of indigo at this rate of payment caused them substantial pecuniary loss compared to the profits that they could derive from country crop at their present level of prices. Some leading planters have admitted, and it is not, we believe, seriously disputed by any that the direct return to the cultivator in money from indigo is less than from country crops, but stress is laid on certain indirect advantages, such as the undoubted value of indigo as a rotation crop, and also the benefit derived by the tenant from an advance free of interest at the beginning of the cultivating season which amounts to half the price of the crop. Finally, it is urged that the low rates of rent at which the tenants hold their land are directly connected with the growing of indigo and must be taken into account when the fairness of the price is considered. It is unnecessary for us to attempt the difficult task of estimating the pecuniary position of the tenant under the *tinkathia* system of indigo cultivation, because we are satisfied that on other grounds the system is radically defective and should be discontinued.

DEFECTS IN THE SYSTEM UNDER WHICH INDIGO IS GROWN

6. There are several points connected with the system which in our opinion are directly responsible for its worst features. The first is that the price paid to the cultivator is fixed and remains unchanged for a long period of years. We are aware that the prices fixed by the Bihar Planters' Association are minimum prices, but as soon as they have received the *imprimatur* of the Association, they are regarded as the authorized rates and in practice are paid by all concerns. In the course of fifty years, the price paid to the tenant has been doubled in order to adjust the price paid for indigo to the general rise in the level of prices during that period. But the price of indigo being fixed at each stage and the rise in general prices being continuous, it follows that, if the price was fair at the beginning of any period, it had become too low by the end of it. Of itself, this would tend to cause discontent, and it will be noticed that with the exception of the increase made in 1897, every rise in price was preceded by a period of friction and discontent, and a valid objection to the system is that an increase in the price of indigo was seldom effected except by disturbance and agitation.

The second point is that the price is fixed on the area and does not vary with the outturn of the crop. This leads directly to two defects. The selection by the factory of the plots to be cultivated with indigo is a feature of the system which has often been called in question. It is certainly liable to abuse, e.g., it is asserted that homestead lands in the immediate vicinity of the village site and which are consequently the best manured are frequently selected for indigo. The real gravamen of

the charge about the selection of lands does not, however, lie in the possibility of abuse, but in the fact that the system itself is bad. So long as the planter has to pay the same price for a good or a bad crop, he will select for indigo the better lands in the holding. This selection of lands is resented by the cultivator not merely from the fact that the best lands are selected but because it involves interference with his freedom of action. We believe that this is a principal cause of the unpopularity of indigo, and in this respect the system is radically defective.

The payment of a fixed rate per acre leads directly to another feature of the system which is equally responsible for its unpopularity, namely, the close supervision of the indigo cultivation exercised by the factory subordinates. This supervision undoubtedly affords an opportunity for a great deal of petty tyranny, and the cultivator resents being compelled to carry out the various cultivation processes not at the time most convenient to himself, but at the time when the work is considered necessary by factory subordinates. The system gives opportunities to the factory servants to harass cultivators against whom they may have a grudge; or to exact payment as the price of their favour. A good manager accessible to his *raiyat*s may be able to keep the oppression of his subordinates within small limits, but even the best of managers cannot prevent altogether oppressive acts by low-paid subordinates placed in a position of authority. So long as the payment is made on the area and does not vary with the outturn, and the tenant has no interest in the outturn, close supervision will be essential. In this respect also, we consider that the system is inherently bad.

Another important objection to the *tinkathia* system is the fact that the growing of indigo is connected with a sense of obligation. We are satisfied that for the last fifty years the growing of *tinkathia* indigo has been disliked by the *raiyat* and that he would at any time have been glad to relinquish it. Whether such sense of obligation had any legal foundation is a matter for the decision of a legal tribunal, but its unpopularity is shown by the large extent to which the tenants have in recent years purchased their release. In the interests of the future peace of the districts, it is essential that the relations of landlord and tenant should be clearly defined by the law, and that the growing of indigo should cease to be connected with any sense of obligation or any customary right.

PROPOSAL THAT THE "TINKATHIA" SYSTEM SHOULD BE ABOLISHED

7. We find therefore that the *tinkathia* system is unpopular with the *raiyat*s who regard it as unprofitable, is radically defective in some important respects, and is inconsistent with the relations that should exist between landlord and tenant under modern conditions. We accordingly recommend that this system of growing indigo in Champaran should be altogether abolished, and that legislation should be undertaken to effect this change. This proposal will affect tenancies in which the growing of

indigo has been recorded as an incident of the tenancy in the Record of Rights and a recommendation on this point will be made in a later paragraph.

FUTURE SYSTEM OF GROWING INDIGO

8. It is not our intention of course that indigo should cease to be grown but that it should be grown under fair and reasonable conditions. Indigo is already grown by some factories on the voluntary system (*khushki*), and we consider that this is the system which alone should be permitted for the future. The essential features of such a system are:

(1) The tenant must be absolutely free to enter into the contract or to refrain from making it.

(2) The particular plots to be devoted to indigo must be entirely at the option of the *raiyat*.

(3) The price paid for the indigo must be settled by voluntary agreement and entirely on a commercial basis.

(4) The price must be fixed on the weight of the crop, but such weight may, if agreed, be settled by appraisement of the weight by a selected *panch*[1] instead of by actual weighment.

(5) The contract must be for an emphatically short period not exceeding three years.

To the last condition we attach importance. In the interests of the tenant, we do not think that he should be allowed to bind himself to his landlord to grow a particular crop at a rate of payment fixed for many years in advance, and in Champaran long contracts would directly tend to keep alive the sense of obligation which we desire to end.

We are in general averse from fixing by outside authority the minimum prices to be paid for particular crops, because of the strong tendency of such prices to become maximum prices. In view, however, of the past history of the indigo industry, we believe that a safeguard of some kind will be necessary for the first few years. We recommend therefore that, until the Local Government is satisfied that the safeguard can be dispensed with, a minimum price for indigo should be fixed by the Bihar Planters' Association, subject to the approval of the Commissioner of the Division.

CONVERSION OF THE INDIGO OBLIGATION

9. The manufacture in Germany in the middle nineties of synthetic indigo, which enabled the German firms to undersell the natural product, produced a profound

[1] Arbitrator

effect on the indigo industry in Bihar. The price of the natural dye steadily diminished and though efforts were made to reduce the cost of production and to increase the outturn (e.g., by the introduction of the Java plant which gave a larger outturn of colouring matter per acre), these efforts met with but indifferent success. One by one, the factories abandoned the hope of successful competition with the synthetic dye and began to turn their attention to other measures, the principal being the taking of compensation in one form or another for releasing the tenant from the cultivation of indigo.

Two concerns in the north of the district substituted a fixed payment of paddy in lieu of the cultivation of indigo, but this practice was recently abandoned owing to the disapproval expressed by Government. Some other concerns substituted sugarcane or oats for indigo. We have been informed that the Bara concern has in some cases substitued *satta*s for l_ *kathas* of sugar in lieu of 3 *kathas* of indigo. Oats are still grown to a limited extent in lieu of indigo by the Mallahia, Bairia and Kuria concerns. The growing of crops other than indigo under *satta* conditions is expressly forbidden by a bye-law of the Bihar Planters' Association adopted in 1910 at the instance of Government after the disturbances which took place at the end of 1908. Those disturbances affected four factories, of which Mallahia, Bairia and Kuria are three. It is, we think, regrettable that those factories should have continued to act in direct contravention of a bye-law which was passed with special reference to practices in these concerns.

In 1911, a general movement towards the abandonment of indigo began which continued unchecked till the outbreak of the war in 1914, when a large rise in the price of indigo once more made the manufacture a profitable one. Two different methods of commutation were generally adopted. In some cases, agreements were executed by the tenants for the payment of enhanced rents, commonly known as *sharahbeshi*. In other cases, the *raiyat*s purchased freedom from indigo for a lumpsum, sometimes paid in cash and sometimes by a money bond bearing 12 per cent interest. This method is called *tawan* or *tamam*. In both cases, a promise was given to the tenant that in consideration of the payment of *sharahbeshi* or *tawan*, as the case may be, neither the factory itself nor its successors in interests would in future ask him to grow indigo for them under the *tinkathia* conditions.

Sharahbeshi has been taken by only five concerns, viz., Turkaulia, Motihari, Peeprah, Jallaha and Sirni, the two last being outworks of Turkaulia which were sold in recent years, and only in the villages which the factories held in *mukarrari* lease from the Bettiah estate and the very few held by them in proprietary right. In the villages held in temporary lease all these concerns, except Peeprah, took *tawan*, and it was also taken by nine other concerns, of which the most important are Rajpur, Bara, Bairia and Bhelwa. The rates at which *sharahbeshi* was taken varied widely in

the different concerns, but on the average the enhancement amounted to between 50 and 60 per cent of the previous rents. The following table shows the average amount of the enhancement and the proportion it bore to the previous rent in four concerns:

Serial No.	Name of concern	Amount of enhancement per acre			Percentage on previous rents
1	2	3			4
		Rs.	a.	p.	
1	Turkaulia	0	15	0	50
2	Jallaha	1	3	0	55
3	Motihari	1	6	6	60
4	Peeprah	0	15	0	75

The percentage is highest in Peeprah where the previous rents had been exceptionally low. The rate of *tawan* also varied, and was usually calculated on the portion of the holding in which indigo was grown, i.e., three *kathas* in the *bigha*. The payment was frequently fixed on the basis of the amount which the factory had realized in indigo damage suits when the tenant had failed to carry out his agreement. The amount taken as *tawan* varied from Rs. 66 to Rs. 20 per acre and probably on the average was between Rs. 50 and Rs. 60 per acre, which would be equivalent to a payment of Rs. 7-8-0 to Rs. 9 on each acre of the holding.

In the concerns affected by this conversion, about 50,000 acres of indigo were formerly cultivated under *tinkathia* conditions, and of this area over 40,000 acres were released—18,000 acres by taking *tawan* and 22,000 acres by taking *sharahbeshi*. At the recent settlement, *tinkathia* has been recorded as an incident of the tenancy only in the five concerns of Turkaulia, Motihari, Peeprah, Jallaha and Sirni, and the area of indigo over which it is claimed by these factories amounts to 1,910 acres, though we\ have no information as to what extent the incident has been recorded. We have endeavoured to secure statistics of the present indigo cultivation from all factories and, although not quite complete for the whole district, the omissions are insignificant. They show that a total area of 26,848 acres of indigo is made up as follows:

Zirat cultivation	10,697 acres
Tinkathia cultivation	9,542 ,,
Khushki cultivation	6,609 ,,

COMMUTATION BY ENHANCED RENT—"SHARAHBESHI"

10. The enhanced rents taken in lieu of indigo in every case exceeded the limit

of two annas in the rupee to which enhancement contracts are ordinarily restricted by section 29, clause (b) of the Bengal Tenancy Act. Under the third proviso to the section, however, this limit does not apply when the *raiyat* has held his land at a specially low rate of rent in consideration of cultivating a particular crop for the convenience of his landlord. It is contended by the concerns that their tenants were under an obligation to grow indigo in three *katha* in the *bigha* of their holdings, that the rents of holdings had been determined in consideration of this obligation, and that because of the obligation the concerns had refrained from enhancement of rents. It is asserted, in fact, that the obligation to grow indigo was an incident of the tenancy. In support of this contention, the concerns have referred to certain *satta*s and *kabuliyats* executed by some of the tenants before 1880 in which the obligation to grow indigo in three *kathas* in the *bigha* is recorded. On behalf of the *raiyat*s, it is contended that in fact they were under no legal obligation to grow indigo or that if there were any obligation they did not hold their land at a specially low rate of rent because of it. It is also urged that whether the enhancements were legal or not, it is inequitable that the tenants should be called on to pay an enhanced rent as the price of relief from a burden under which they had long suffered. Finally, it is urged that the agreements were executed by the *raiyat*s under coercion or under influence or in ignorance of their true legal position.

Mr. Sweeney, Settlement Officer, informed us that these enhancements had been the subject of enquiry during the Revision Settlement and he described to us the principles followed by the Settlement Department in dealing with these cases. The legality of the enhancements has also been considered by the Civil Court in nine suits brought by tenants of the Turkaulia concern asking for a declaration that the *kabuliyats* in which they agreed to pay the enhanced rents should be declared void on the ground that they were executed under coercion and were not in accordance with the law. These suits are now before the High Court in appeal.

Our enquiries satisfied us that the feeling of the *raiyat*s against enhancements was very strong and that every legal means would be used to upset them. Without special legislation, prolonged and expensive litigation seemed inevitable. However such litigation might end, it would produce a permanent embitterment of feeling on both sides. We are also impressed with the great desirability of an immediate settlement between landlords and tenants of this difficult question. In these circumstances, it seemed to us very important that if possible a settlement should be arranged by consent with mutual concessions made by both parties in the interests of peace and goodwill. With this object, we entered into negotiations with the representatives of the three principal concerns, and we are glad to report that our efforts have been successful. At a meeting held in Ranchi on 29th September at which Messrs Hill, Irwin, and Norman, the managers of Turkaulia Limited, Motihari

Limited, and Peeprah concerns, were present and at which Mr. Gandhi represented the interests of the *raiyat*s, an agreement was reached on the following terms:

(1) The enhancement effected by *sharahbeshi* shall be reduced with effect from the commencement of the *fasli* year 1325 (October 1917) by 20 per cent in the case of Turkaulia Limited, and by 26 per cent in the case of Motihari Limited and the Peeprah concern, the rents for years prior to 1325 *fasli* remaining unchanged at the Survey-Settlement rates.

(2) The existing indigo obligation recorded in the Survey Records shall be abolished from the commencement of the *fasli* year 1325 and in lieu the enhanced rent (*sharahbeshi*) shall be fixed at the rate at which it would have stood had commutation taken place together with the others less the reduction now agreed upon.

As the representative of the *raiyat*s, our colleague Mr. Gandhi fully accepts this arrangement as a satisfactory settlement and he undertakes to use his influence fully with the *raiyat*s to make them loyally accept it and to bring about future peace in the relations of planters and their tenants. This settlement is subject to the condition that full binding effect must be given to it by legislation. We regard this settlement as equitable to all interests concerned and therefore recommend that action should be immediately taken by emergency legislation to render this settlement by consent binding on all the parties concerned.

As regards the two small concerns of Jallaha and Sirni, which are not parties to this settlement by consent, we recommend that the reduction should be fixed at 26 per cent upon the same conditions as in Motihari and Peeprah.

COMMUTATION BY MONEY PAYMENTS—"TAWAN"

11. We have still to consider the cases in which the indigo obligation has been commuted for a lump sum payment which method we regard as distinctly prejudicial to the interests of the tenants. The taking of *tawan* has been defended by the factories in two different ways. Some concerns do not allege that there was anyincident of tenancy or obligation on the tenant to grow indigo apart from the *satta* and urge that the payment was made by the tenants for the termination of a contract on terms mutually satisfactory to the parties. But this theory that the payment was made by the tenants for the termination of a contract appears to us to be exposed to almost insuperable difficulties. It is not obvious why, when both parties desire to terminate a contract, a large payment should be made by one of them, particularly when the proposal to terminate the contract originates with the party who is to receive the money. In no concern, we believe, did the rate of payment vary according to the length of time which the contract had still to run, though this might certainly have been expected had the contract alone been in question. Again, in every

case where *tawan* was taken, it was a part of the bargain that the tenant received a promise that he would never again be required to grow indigo either by the present proprietors of the factory or by any person to whom the factory might be transferred. There is no doubt, in our opinion, that what the *raiyat* paid for was a final release from the obligation to grow indigo and that he would not have voluntarily paid such large sums merely for release from the unexpired period of the *satta*.

The older factories which took *sharahbeshi* in their *mukarrari* villages and *tawan* in the villages in temporary lease give a different explanation. They assert in both cases the existence of an incident of tenancy, i.e., an obligation to grow indigo as a part of the condition on which the tenant held his land. But if the factory enhanced rents in a temporarily-leased village, nine-tenths of the profit would at the next renewal pass to the superior landlord. The result is that a peculiar claim is advanced by the factory. It is asserted that the obligation to grow indigo imposed on the tenant could be claimed only by the factory and not by the superior landlord, and that therefore the factory was entitled to commute the incident and take the whole of the proceeds, in which the superior landlord could claim no share. This assumes that a temporary lease-holder, when setting land with a tenant, can create an incident of tenancy the benefit of which can be claimed only by him. No legal authority for this position was placed before us, and we regard it as wholly untenable. If an incident attaches to the tenancy, then the benefit can be enjoyed by the lease-holder only so long as he holds the lease and no longer. The indigo incident has not been claimed and is not now claimed by the Bettiah estate, and the claim of the factories in the form in which it has been presented to us must, we think, be wholly rejected.

It seems to us, therefore, that whichever theory be adopted, the taking of *tawan* was not justified in temporarily-leased villages. If it be said that the payment was for the termination of a contract, the answer is that that is not what the tenant desired to buy, nor is it the most important thing the factory sold, that is, final release from indigo. If it is said that the tenant was under an obligation to grow indigo as one of the conditions on which he held his land it is evident that the payment was of the nature of capitalized rent and if so the interests of the superior landlord were prejudiced. Since the taking of *tawan* was within the knowledge of the Bettiah estate, which took no action to stop it, we consider that the estate itself must accept some share of the responsibility. We recommend that where *tawan* has been taken in temporarily leased villages, the Bettiah estate should make it a condition of the renewal of the temporary leases that 25 per cent of the *tawan* collected should be paid to the estate, and that the estate should refund it to the tenant concerned. Moreover, since *tawan* must be regarded at least in part as capitalized rent, we recommend that the Bettiah estate should for a period of seven years forgo any enhancement, which may be granted in the Settlement Courts on the ground of the

rise in prices, of the rent of a tenant who has paid *tawan*.

We have been informed that in a few cases where villages had very recently come into lease to a factory, the management procured the execution of *satta*s by the *raiyat*s and, after growing indigo for one or two years, commuted the indigo rights by taking *tawan*. Action of this kind seems to us totally indefensible and the Bettiah estate is bound in the interests of its tenants to interfere. We recommend that in such cases, the Court of Wards should refuse to renew the temporary leases of the concern unless the whole of the *tawan* is refunded.

Tawan was also taken in some of the permanently-leased villages by a few concerns, of which the most important is Rajpur. In view of the fact that a reduction of *sharahbeshi* has been accepted under the settlement by consent in the interests of future peace and goodwill, we consider that the *mukarraridars* should be advised by the Local Government to make a refund on a similar basis of a portion of the *tawan* taken by them. In consideration of the low rate of *tawan* taken by the Rajpur concern, we consider that a reduction of ten per cent would be adequate.

SPECIAL CASE OF RAJGHAT CONCERN

12. Finally, we desire to refer to the peculiar conditions of the Rajghat factory (manager, Mr. Apperley), where no incident of tenancy is claimed but where written contracts had been entered into by the tenants for the growing of indigo in consideration of freedom from rent enhancement. On the expiry of these contracts, this arrangement was continued by mutual consent, and consequently the factory refrained from applying for rent enhancement at the proper time during the revision settlement. At our local enquiry, we were informed by the tenant that they now desired to abandon indigo. Under these circumstances, it is only reasonable that the factory should be enabled to apply for a general enhancement of rents in accordance with the settlement procedure, but as the time-limit for this procedure under section 105 of the Bengal Tenancy Act has already expired, this is impossible unless the Government takes action under section 112 of the Bengal Tenancy Act. Failing this course, we recommend that the special legislation should contain a clause enabling this concern to take advantage of section 105.

CHAPTER III

"ABWAB" AND THE RENEWAL OF "THIKA" LEASES

"ABWAB"

13. Our enquiry has shown that until recently, certain sums were regularly levied from the tenants in addition to the recorded rent by the *thikadars* of the non-indigo concerns in the north-west portion of the district, which unauthorized dues are generally known as *abwab*. The imposition of *abwab* was forbidden by

section 54 of the Decennial Settlement Regulation (VIII of 1793), which definitely laid down that all landlords should consolidate the *abwab* with the rent into one sum before a fixed date and prohibited under penalty the imposition of any new *abwab*. This prohibition was again enforced by section 10 of Act X of 1859, and by section 74 of the Bengal Tenancy Act (VIII of 1885). For many years past, no *abwab* have been realized in villages under the direct management of the Bettiah Estate, but although the estate received no direct benefit therefrom, the *thikadars* of non-indigo concerns continued their realization until this illegal practice was recently brought to notice at the revision settlement, when orders were issued by the Court of Wards prohibiting the levy of anything in excess of the recorded rent and authorized cesses. The evidence taken by us shows that this action has achieved its object. In some indigo concerns we found that the tenants made a small annual payment known as *farkhawan*, which is usually taken direct by the patwari at the time of rent collection. This practice is also contrary to the law, the landlord being responsible for the patwari's emoluments. The systematic levy of *abwab* still prevails in the Ramnagar estate. In one lease produced before us, certain *abwab* are specified as payable by the *thikadar* to the estate, and in addition there is a clause binding him to assist in collecting certain dues "which are realized from the tenants and *banias* according to the ancient custom". The *abwab* realized by the *thikadars* bear many names,[1] most of which are of old standing, but the full development of the system seems to be comparatively recent and does not go back beyond the last quarter of the nineteenth century. It took the form of an amalgamation and an enhancement of the old *abwab*and the consolidated levy thenceforth passed under a single name, usually *salami* or *panikharcha* (irrigation due). Occasionally, as in the Bhasurari concern, this levy is called *tinkathia* by analogy with the indigo obligation although no indigo is grown. The amount of the levy is usually Rs. 3 to Rs. 3-8-0 per *bigha* and is equivalent to an addition to the rent of from 60 to 100 per cent. The collection of *abwab* in this manner has been systematically adopted by the European *thikadars* of this estate who until recently never grew indigo, and also by a number of Indian *thikadars* and petty proprietors. We received no complaint of the systematic collection of *abwab* in the rest of the district, and it appears that at least of recent

[1] The names of the principal *abwab*, according to the report, are *Bandhberi* (embankment due), *Panikharcha* (irrigation due), *Chulhi-awan* and *Kolhu-awan* (taxes on turmeric ovens and sugarcane or oil presses), *Bapahi putahi* (inheritance tax), *Marwach* and *Sagaura* (tax on marriages of girls and windows), *Hisabana* (accountancy fee), *Tahrir* (writing fee), *Jungla-Isamnavisi* (fee for writing forest lists), *Batchhapi* (fee on weights and measures), *Dasahari* and *Chaitnawami* (festival taxes), *Gurubhenti* and *Uprohiti* (priestly dues). These *abwab* were not always levied under these separate names and varied from village to village

years an occasional levy only has been taken by some landlords for a special purpose, such as a marriage in the proprietor's family.

In spite of the general exaction of these irregular dues in the north-west tract of the district, not a single suit has been brought under section 75 of the Bengal Tenancy Act, which provides the legal remedy. The Collector is of opinion that the section remained a dead letter because the tenants did not complain and because there are difficulties in enforcing the law. It has been suggested to us that section 75 should be amended in order to give power to the Collector to deal with cases summarily on the lines of section 58 and we agree that a special remedy is required to meet the peculiar conditions of the Champaran district. We also consider that it should be made more generally known that the exaction of *abwab* is illegal. Connected with this exaction is the practice of landlords' servants levying a commission on payments made by tenants known as *dasturi*, which is equally illegal. We, therefore, recommend that:

(1) Government should issue a proclamation informing all landlords and *raiyat*s that both *abwab* and the *dasturi* taken by landlords' servants are illegal and must be stopped;

(2) the Court of Wards should take steps to enforce those prohibitions in the estates under its charge; and

(3) the special legislation recommended by us for the Champaran district should contain a clause providing that the Collector of his own motion may enquire into and punish the exaction by a landlord from a tenant of any sum in excess of the rent payable, his decision being subject to the ordinary appeal. The penalty might appropriately be fixed at a fine not exceeding Rs. 50 or double the amount of the exaction, whichever is greater. Our colleague, the Hon'ble Rajah Kirtyanand Singh, dissents from this proposal for legislation.

RENT RECEIPT

14. Where *abwab* are systematically levied, the practice is to credit the first payments made by a tenant to that demand and a receipt is not given until he has paid off the whole *abwab* and at least some portion of his rent. This is facilitated by the fact that rent receipt are not usually given until payments for the year have beencompleted. Again, no receipts at all are given for the payment of produce rents. The intention of the Legislature, clearly shown by the form of rent receipt prescribed in schedule II of the Bengal Tenancy Act, was that the first payment of rent in any year should be entered in the receipt given to the *raiyat* who would produce this receipt for the entry of subsequent payments. We were informed during the course of our local enquiries that such a procedure is unsuitable for Champaran because the tenants fail to produce the first receipt at the time of subsequent payments. The alternative procedure, if the law is to be followed, is to give a full receipt for every

payment, which would involve a great increase in clerical labour because rents are frequently paid in small instalments. We consider it essential that some form of receipt should be given for these intermediate payments, though it need not be so elaborate as the prescribed form, and we therefore recommend that the Local Government should use its power under the proviso to section 56 (3) to prescribe a simple form of receipt for intermediate payments, the full receipt being reserved for the final payment. The inter-mediate receipt need only contain the name of the tenant and his *khatian* number, the amount paid with date of payment and the account on which it was paid.

RENEWAL OF "THIKA" LEASES

15. We have already described in paragraph 3 the large extent to which the *thikadari* system prevails in the district. If we believed that the abuses of the past were inseparable from that system, and that good relations between landlord and tenant could not be secured under it in the future, it would be our duty to recommend its abolition. But although we consider that good relations between landlord and tenant can ordinarily best be secured under an efficient system of direct management, which follows the general policy laid down in the Court of Wards Manual, they can also be obtained under a suitable *thikadari* system. We are opposed to any extension of that system, and if for any reason the lease of a village is not renewed, it seems preferable to take it under direct management rather than to lease it to another *thikadar*. The *thikadari* system of the Bettiah and Ramnagar estates was not created by the Court of Wards; many of the *thikadars* are of very old standing, and there may be other reasons arising out of their previous relations which render it inadvisable to make a sudden change of policy. If the conduct of a *thikadar* has been detrimental to the interests of the *raiyat*s or of the superior landlord, his conduct should be scrutinized before the lease is renewed. In cases where the Court of Wards decides to renew the leases, we consider it preferable that they should be granted for moderately long periods, subject to cancellation for breach of the conditions, rather than that the periods should be short. In these circumstances, the commission granted to the lessee should be sufficient to cover the cost of collection (including irrecoverable arrears) and a reasonable remuneration for himself. Unlessthe estate offers its *thikadars* reasonable terms, it cannot evade all responsibility for resulting abuses. What a fair commission would be can no doubt be calculated for each tenure. On the other hand, where the commission to be given to the *thikadar* exceeds the estimated cost of direct management, the renewal of the leases on such terms requires special justification on the merits of each case. Finally, the leases should contain conditions enforcing such recommendations of the Committee as are accepted by Government, including in particular stipulations that no indigo should be grown except on a voluntary system, and that no *abwab* should be taken. We consider that the estate should hold itself responsible for the well-being of tenants in *thika*

villages and when that well-being is in danger, should be responsible for the remedy.

CHAPTER IV
OTHER GRIEVANCES OF TENANTS

FEES ON TRANSFERS

16. It remains for us to deal with various other matters some of which have been sources of trouble in the past and some of which are suggestions made for the improvement of agrarian conditions. The first is the levy of fees on the transfers of occupancy holdings. So far as fees are levied on transfers by inheritance, they are illegal, as the right of inheritance is given by section 26, Bengal Tenancy Act, and no custom exists in derogation of this right. Such fees under the name of *Bapahi Putahi* have been already referred to as an *abwab* in Chapter III. As regards transfers otherwise than by inheritance, it may be noted that the consent of the landlord is required by law to the transfer of a portion of a holding since that involves a sub-division of the tenancy (section 88, Bengal Tenancy Act). The transferability of an occupancy holding depends on custom. In Champaran, the general custom is stated to be that no transfer can be made without the landlord's consent, so that legally landlord can take a fee for recognized transfers otherwise than by inheritance, and this appears to be the usual practice. At the same time, however, we think that it would be desirable in the interests of good management to adopt a uniform scale of fees where it is possible to do so; e.g., in estates under the Court of Wards. This scale might be varied from time to time, if necessary, and its existence would not derogate from the right of veto possessed by the landlord even if the transferee offered the prescribed fee, for it would only be taken where the transfer had been approved. We recommend, therefore, that a moderate scale of fees be fixed from time to time in estates under the Court of Wards which should be enforced in villages held direct or under temporary lease, and that as regards villages let in *mukarrari* lease, the estate should use its best endeavour to induce the lease-holder to adopt the same policy.

The procedure followed by the Bettiah Estate in dealing with applications for mutation of names has been criticised. At present, the attendance of the parties at Bettiah is required, which causes unnecessary inconvenience, as local enquiries are always necessary. At the same time, we do not think it desirable to entrust *thikadars* with the power of disposing of such applications even subject to an appeal to the Manager. We recommend, therefore, that the power of sanctioning mutations should rest with the Estate Manager but that the applications may, if the applicant wishes, be made through the *thikadar*, who would forward it with his report to the Manager and who would communicate to the applicant the orders when received.

RIGHTS IN HIDES

17. A complaint that has become prominent lately refers to the right claimed by the Bettiah and Ramnagar Estates and some of their tenure-holders to all the hides

of dead cattle. With the rise in the value of hides in recent years, the question of ownership has become more important and has led to changes in the old custom under which a *chamar* took from the estate the lease of the right to the hides of a village for a small sum and supplied the tenants with a fixed number of shoes and other articles, whilst in addition his wife gave her service as midwife. The Charsa Mahal as it is called, of the Bettiah Estate was leased out to various persons, some of whom took the right to the hides over a large area and some of whom were *chamars* who took the right in individual villages. The total annual income of the Estate from this source is about Rs. 3,000. This right to hides was made over with other miscellaneous assets to the indigo concerns who were granted *mukarrari* leases in 1887. In the Ramnagar Estate, we understand the income from the Mahal in the past two years has been Rs. 79,000. The Manager of the Bettiah Estate has tried to justify the claim on the ground of custom and supports it on the ground of public policy for the prevention of cattle poisoning. On the other hand, it is urged that the hide is the legal property of the owner of the dead animal and that the present practice grew irregularly out of fees paid by the *chamars* for the use of waste land for skinning dead animals. The question of the validity by custom of such a right is one for legal decision. We doubt, however, whether such a custom even where proved can override the natural right of the owner of the dead animal to dispose of its hide in any way he pleases. Subject, therefore, to any legal right which the landlords may be held to possess, we are of opinion that the hides are the property of the owner of the dead animal who is entitled to dispose of them as he wishes, whether by sale or in exchange for services.

KEROSENE OIL MONOPOLY

18. A somewhat similar claim to the monopoly of the trade in kerosene oil has been abandoned by the Bettiah Estate and we think that the *mukarraridars* who derive their claim from the estate should also abandon the practice of issuing licencesfor the sale of kerosene oil. Such a practice is clearly not legally enforceable and acts detrimentally in restraint of trade.

RIGHTS IN TREES

19. A widespread discontent is manifest among the *raiyat*s in respect of the rights in trees. The legal position has been ascertained both at the settlement of 1892-99 and at the present revision settlement. It appears that trees growing in tenants' holdings cannot be felled without the consent of the landlord, and half the value of the timber of dead or felled trees belongs to him. The tenant urges that he pays rent for the land and the whole produce of it including the trees should belong to him, but, on the other hand, the rent was fixed in consideration of the custom and there is the legal right of the landlord. The tenant undoubtedly feels the restraint in not being able to take wood even from his own holding when he wants it without

obtaining permission and with the possibility of abuse by subordinates. On the other hand, there is the danger that the handing over of all the trees to the *raiyat*s might lead to their rapid destruction. The district is exceptionally well wooded, and we understand that in Saran, where the tenants have full rights in trees in lands for which a cash rent is paid, no evidence of general denudation is apparent. In view of the inconvenience resulting from the present custom, we recommend that in the Bettiah Estate the *raiyat*s should be given the option of purchasing the landlord's half share in the timber, the valuation to be made on fair principles, and, in case of disputes, referred to assessors. If it is found in practice that applications for purchase are received in such large numbers from any particular area as to make it probable that undue denudation might take place, the Estate would be able to limit the option.

GRAZING RIGHTS

20. During our enquiry, we found that practically all the waste land has been recorded as being in the exclusive possession of the landlords, except certain small plots used for communal purposes such as roads, burial grounds, sites for threshing floors and the like. This permits the landlords to break up all waste for cultivation or to enclose it for his exclusive use. It has been urged that this is detrimental to the welfare of the village community and provides a weapon of which unfair use may be made by a bad landlord in cases of dispute with his tenants. There is little doubt that a village is benefited by some land being left for communal use, not necessarily large enough to provide for grazing of all the village cattle but at least adequate to provide the cattle with an exercise ground where they can move about freely without undue risk of trespass on cropped land. We, therefore, recommend that proprietors and permanent tenure-holders should be advised to set apart suitable plots of land for communal use in the way suggested, and that the Court of Wards should do this in the villages under their direct management, while in villages on lease a similar reservation should be made after due enquiry before the renewal of any lease, conditions relating to such reservation being inserted in the lease.

LABOUR

21. Complaints were received by us from some *raiyat*s that the rates paid by the landlords for labour are inadequate. No claim was urged before us by any landlord to any right over the labour, ploughs or carts of his tenants, and it is admitted that labour of all kinds should be taken on a voluntary basis and paid for at local market rates. While it is clearly impossible for us to prescribe suitable rates for all classes of labour, we consider that it would be an advantage for the Bihar Planters' Association to lay down a minimum scale of wages based on the local market rates to be paid by concerns in membership. We recognize the danger that the minimum might in practice be regarded as the maximum, but rates of wages change slowly and the

adoption of the proposal would at least enable the Association to ascertain whether a concern was *prima facie* paying inadequate wages and to exercise a stronger position of control. We, therefore, recommend that all labour should be on a purely voluntary basis and paid for at local market rates, that a minimum tariff of labour wages should be fixed on the basis of local market rates by the Association with the approval of the Commissioner of the Division, and that this tariff should be revised from time to time in accordance with the local rates.

CART "SATTAS"

22. Closely connected with the question of labour is the supply of carts. Most indigo factories require a number of carts at particular seasons of the year for the carting of the indigo crop to the factory and the refuse to the fields. Most factories keep sufficient carts for their ordinary requirements throughout the year, but hire the extra carts required on such special occasions. In order to ensure a regular supply of carts, agreements (*sattas*) are made with the cartmen to supply carts with bullocks at certain seasons for a fixed period of year at a fixed rate, and the consideration for these agreements invariably takes the form of an advance which is in some cases sufficient to cover the initial cost of a cart and pair of bullocks. Generally, however, it is about Rs. 30 or Rs. 40. We recognize that contracts of this nature are essential to the interests of the industry, and the system is unobjectionable provided the rates paid are fair and the periods not too long, but we consider the periods of these contracts extending in some cases to twenty years are prejudicial to the interests of the cartmen. We recommend that the period should be restricted to three years where the advance does not exceed Rs. 50, and to a maximum of five years where it exceeds Rs. 50, and that the Planters' Association should enforce on its members a bye-law to this effect.

FINES

23. We received some complaints that a few landlords had imposed and retained fines on tenants in particular cases where their own interests were not concerned and no damage of any kind was sustained by them. Such a practice is clearly illegal and the levy of fines, properly so called, should be stopped.

POUNDS

24. The question of pound management in the Champaran district has been brought to our notice. The pounds are largely leased to factories, which has given rise to complaints that they are sometimes used as improper means of coercing *raiyat*s by the impounding of cattle without cause. While it was impossible for us to enquire into and record a finding on individual complaints, the leasing of pounds to landlords may give an opportunity for abuse, and recommend that a trial should be made as an

experiment of the direct management of pounds by the District Board.

VILLAGE ADMINISTRATION PAPER

25. We have found that there is no authoritative record of village customs such as exists in other provinces of northern India, the procedure followed at settlement for recording various village customs being to make an entry in the village note which does not form part of the Record of Rights. In most provinces, it has been found desirable to make a regular record of such customs and rights. While we recognize that communal village life in Bihar is not so strong as in some other provinces, and that some of the matters such as irrigation rights recorded in these village administration papers are included in the Record of Rights of Bihar, we think that advantage would result from some better authenticated record than the village note of such matters as the right in hides, grazing rights, customs as to house building and the like. We commend the suggestion to the consideration of Government.

MISCELLANEOUS

26. There are two final recommendations that we desire to make which are designed to secure that full effect is given to the orders which Government may pass. The first is that such orders as may be passed should be communicated in the vernacular to the *raiyat*s by as wide publication as possible. The second is that it should be impressed on the district staff and especially on the staff of the Court of Wards estates that, until Government is satisfied that full effect has been given to these orders, an important part of their duties will be to see that these orders are carried out.

F. G. SLY (PRESIDENT),
L.C. ADAMI,
KIRTYANAND SINHA,
D. J. REID,
G. RAINY,
M. K. GANDHI

Report of the Committee on the Agrarian Condition in Champaran in the National Archives of India

APPENDIX V

ORDER-IN-COUNCIL

October 6, 1917

The report of the Champaran Agrarian Enquiry Committee was discussed in the Council this afternoon, and it was decided to accept generally the Committee's recommendations, and to take steps to give them prompt effect by the issue of a resolution and of necessary executive orders, and by emergent legislation.

Ordered—That a draft resolution on the lines indicated in the course of the discussion be prepared with the least possible delay.

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, No. 190, p. 392

APPENDIX VI
THE CHAMPARAN AGRARIAN BILL, 1917

(AS PASSED IN COUNCIL)

A

BILL

TO

SETTLE AND DETERMINE CERTAIN AGRARIAN DISPUTES IN THE

DISTRICT OF CHAMPARAN

WHEREAS it is expedient to settle and determine disputes subsisting in the district of Champaran between landlords and tenants holding under them regarding certain matters.

4 AND 5 GEO., 5, C. 61

AND WHEREAS the previous sanction of the Government of India has been obtained under section 79 of the Government of India Act, 1915, to the passing of this Act:—

SHORT TITLE AND EXTENT

1. (1) This Act may be called the Champaran Agrarian Act, 1918,

(2) It extends to the district of Champaran.

INTERPRETATION CLAUSE

2. In this Act all words and expressions defined in the Bengal Tenancy Act, 1885, shall have the meanings assigned to them respectively in that Act and theexpression "record-of-rights" shall mean the record-of-rights finally published under sub-section (2) of section 103 of the Bengal Tenancy Act, 1885.

ABOLITION OF CERTAIN CONDITIONS AND INCIDENTS

3. (1) On and after the commencement of this Act any agreement, lease or other contract between a landlord and a tenant holding under him which contains a condition to set apart the land of his tenancy or any portion thereof for the cultivation of a particular crop shall be void to the extent of such condition:

Provided that if the tenant has in consideration of such condition received any advance under an agreement, lease or contract entered into prior to the commencement of this Act, he shall be bound to refund such advance or if the condition has been partially fulfilled, such proportion of that advance as represents the unfulfilled portion of the condition, and the amount of the said advance or proportion thereof which he is bound to refund shall be determined by an authority to be prescribed by the Local Government and the order of such authority shall be final and shall, on application to a civil court, be enforceable as a decree for rent payable in respect of the said tenancy.

(2) On and after the commencement of this Act, a special condition or incident of a tenancy to set apart the land of the tenancy or any portion thereof for the cultivation of a particular crop shall not be valid to any extent.

ALTERATION OF RENT IN VIEW OF SUCH ABOLITION AND NOTE OF THE RESULTING RENT IN THE RECORD-OF-RIGHTS

4. (1)(a) Where, in consideration of the release of a tenant from a condition, special condition or incident of the nature described in section 3, the rent payable by such tenant has, prior to the first day of October, 1917, been enhanced, the amount of such enhancement shall, with effect from the said date, be reduced by twenty per centum in the case of rent payable to Turkaulia, Limited, and by twenty-six per centum in all other cases;

(b) Where a special condition or incident of the nature described in sub-section (2) of section 3 has been entered in the record-of-rights in respect of a tenancy, the entry of such special condition or incident shall be cancelled and the rent of the tenancy shall, with effect from the first day of October, 1917, be enhanced to an extent proportionate to the reduced enhancement allowed under clause (a) in respect of tenancies in the same village or in neighbouring villages belonging to the same

landlord.

(2) A note of the rent of a tenancy resulting from reduction under clause (a) or enhancement under clause (b) of sub-section (1) of the cancellation under clause (b) of that sub-section of an entry and of a special condition or incident shall be made in the record-of-rights and such note shall, with effect from the 1st day of October; 1917, be deemed part of the record-of-rights and be conclusive evidence of the amount of such rent.

(3) The Local Government may by rule prescribe

(a) the authority by whom the proper amount of reduction and of enhancement under the provisions of sub-section (1) and the resulting rent of the tenancy shall be determined in each case;

(b) the authority by whom the note referred to in sub-section (2) shall be made;

(c) the procedure to be followed by any such authority.

(4) The decision of the authority prescribed under clause (a) of sub-section (3) shall be final as regards

(a) whether the rent payable by a tenant has been enhanced in consideration of the release of the tenant from a condition, special condition or incident of the nature described in section 3, and the amount of such enhancement;

(b) whether any entry in the record-of-rights is an entry of special condition or incident of the nature described in sub-section (2) of section 3;

(c) the amount of rent to be noted in the record-of-rights under the provisions of sub-section (2);

and the correctness of any such decision shall not be contested in any suit or proceeding in any court.

(5) In the case of any tenant referred to in clause (a) of sub-section (1), the finally-published entry in the record-of-rights of the rent of his tenancy shall, in any suit or proceeding for the recovery of an arrear or rent which accrued due thereon prior to the first day of October 1917, be conclusive evidence of amount of the yearly rent payable in respect of such tenancy from the date from which the enhancement took effect to the end of the *Fasli* year 1324.

This sub-section shall also apply to such suits and proceedings pending at the commencement of this Act.

SAVING OF CERTAIN SHORT TERM CONTRACTS TO DELIVER A SPECIFIED WEIGHT OF A PARTICULAR CROP

5. Nothing in this Act shall prevent a tenant from contracting to deliver to his landlord a specified weight of a particular crop to be grown on the land of his tenancy or any portion thereof:

Provided

(l) That any claim for damages for the breach of such contract shall be based on a failure to deliver the specified weight and not on a failure to cultivate any portion of land;

(2) That the term of such contract shall not exceed three years; and

(3) That the value of the produce to be supplied shall be determined by weighment thereof or by appraisement by arbitrators of the weight thereof.

PROVISIONS TO HAVE EFFECT NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER ENACTMENT

6. The provisions of this Act shall have effect notwithstanding anything contained in any other enactment.

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran, *pp. 518-20*

APPENDIX VII

CONGRESS-LEAGUE ADDRESS

[DELHI
November 26, 1917]

SIR S,

We, the members of the All-India Committee of the Indian National Congress and of the Council of the All-India Moslem League, welcome you, Sir, His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for India, and approach you and Your Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General, His Imperial Majesty's august representative and the head of his Government in this country, with feelings of gratitude and hope; gratitude, in that proposals of reform formulated by the National Congress and the Moslem League have received the attention of Your Excellency and of His Imperial Majesty's Ministers in Great Britain whom you, Sir, represent; hope, in that we feel that our proposals being just and in full harmony with British history and policy, will meet with favour at your hands.

Sirs, we cannot let this historic occasion pass without acknowledging the great and good work that Great Britain has accomplished in India. The protection of the land from invasion from without and the establishment of peace and order are in themselves no mean achievements; but it is a prouder title to glory that she has produced a new intellectual awakening a national consciousness and an eager longing for freedom among the heirs of ancient civilization who had unfortunately fallen from

their high estate. It was a great truth which Lord Ripon of blessed memory felicitously uttered when he described educated Indians as the children of British Rule, and we can assure you, Sirs, that Sir Bartle Frere's observation is as correct today as when he made it that no section of the people of India appreciate the advantages of that rule more highly than those whose minds have been broadened by the liberal English education which will for all time stand as Britain's most imperishable monument in India. The ir very pol itica l asp irati ons are a tri bute to the suc cess of her mis sion in the Eas t. "Th e pro udest day in the ann als of Eng land" whi ch Lor d Mac aulay for esaw has com e, and Ind ians tod ay dem and tha t Sel f-Gov ernme nt whi ch Eng lishmen hav e alw ays fer ventl y bel ieved to be the ind ispen sable con ditio n of sel f-res pecti ng nat ional lif e. The Ind ian Nat ional Con gress , whi ch a ren owned Ind ian sta tesma n des cribe d as "th e gre atest tri umph of Bri tish adm inist ratio n and a cro wn of glo ry to the gre at Bri tish nat ion" is the highe st exp ressi on of thi s sac red nat ional asp irati on, and the ide al of the Con gress is als o the ide al of the mos t imp ortan t org aniza tion of Ind ian Mus alman s, the All - Ind ia Mos lem Lea gue. The aut horit ative ann ounce ment whi ch was mad e sim ultan eousl y in England and India on the 20th of August last that His Majesty's Government with the complete accord of the Government of India, accept responsible government for India as an integral part of the Empire as the goal of British policy was therefore received by the country with no ordinary feeling of satisfaction. For that epoch-making declaration, Sirs, we Indians of all creeds, classes and communities are deeply beholden to His Majesty's Government as well as to the Government of India.

We submit however that to ensure the early realization of this ideal the reforms that are to be introduced as a first instalment should confer a substantial measure of power on the people acting through their chosen representatives in Councils, and further, that the determination of future progress should not, as has been proposed, be left entirely to the Government in India and England. It ought to be recognized that the people of India themselves, as the party principally affected, have a right to an effective voice in the decision of a question which is of such supreme moment to them. This would be in conformity with the principle of the declaration recently made by the Prime Minister of England "that the wishes of the inhabitants must be the supreme consideration in the resettlement", and that this formula "is to be applied equally in the tropical countries". It is our settled conviction that the best interests of this Country and of the Empire demand that full responsible Government should be established here as early as practicable. We are therefore anxious to be assured that the progress towards the goal shall be reasonably rapid. We hope that this point will be taken into consideration by His Majesty's Government.

We are not less grateful for the decision to introduce a substantial first instalment of reforms at as early a date as may be practicable. We beg leave to observe, Sirs, that the proceedings of the annual sessions of both the Indian National Congress and All-India Moslem League are a living proof of the imperative need of liberal reforms in all directions—constitutional, financial and administrative. Amelioration of the material condition of the masses as well as the satisfaction of the political aspirations of the classes has throughout been the anxious concern of these organizations. They have persistently advocated reforms in land revenue policy and administration; measures for the relief of agricultural indebtedness, agricultural education and agricultural improvement; rapid progress in the construction of irrigation works; an active policy of industrial development and technical education; the wider diffusion of education in all its branches; retrenchment of public expenditure and reduction of taxation, pressing heavily on those least able to bear it; reform of the police, and of the system of administration of justice; temperance reform; lenient forest rules; the improvement of public health, and adequate provision of medical relief; the re-institution of village Panchayats;—all of which are designed and calculated to make life more worth living for the tens of millions of our poorer countrymen, with whose condition as it is no one can affect to be satisfied. We submit with confidence that educated Indians cannot justly be blamed if the remedial measures for which they have been striving have not been introduced. It is true that they have been claiming with equal ardour the practical recognition of the rights which legitimately are theirs in their own country; but in doing so they have been actuated at least as much by the earnest desire to exercise them in the interest of their less favoured brethren as by the prompting of their own national self-respect. If they have insistently pleaded for some measure of real power for the representatives and spokesmen of the people in the government of the country, if they have declined to reconcile themselves to a position of subordination and inferiority in administration, if they have pressed for the removal of all disabilities and distinction based on racial and religious grounds, if they have expressed their dissatisfaction with the share assigned to them in the defence of the country, and if they have protested against reactionary and repressive measures, they have done so because the assertion of their rights as Indians is to them a compelling public duty. Neither the National Congress nor the Moslem League has ever been slow to acknowledge the value of the progressive measures that have been adopted by Government from time to time. And we may therefore be permitted to say with the less hesitation that the experience of years has convinced us that under the existing system social and economic reform has much less chance than the well-being and advancement of the people demands, that

Indian public opinion is more powerless than effectual, service and sectional interests are not always subordinated to the common weal, and that the system should be so altered as to make the will of the people prevail as far as may be in all matters of internal administration.

ESSENTIAL FEATURES OF SCHEME

It is in this conviction, Sirs, that the National Congress and the Moslem League considered the constitutional and administrative reforms which they should respectfully urge on the Government here and in England for present adoption. The Joint Scheme of Reforms is the result of careful deliberation of joint conferences of their committees. It may be mentioned here that the Memorandum which was submitted to Your Excellency by nineteen-elected members of Your Excellency's Legislative Council in the autumn of 1916 is in accord with the proposals of the Congress and the League. We now ask permission, Sirs, to dwell on what may be regarded as the essential features of the Scheme of Reforms. The basal principles on which it is founded are, firstly, that the British connection with India should be safeguarded, and secondly, that, subject to this fundamental reservation the character and constitution of the Government of India and the Provincial Governments should be transformed so as to make them representative of and responsible to the people acting through their elected representatives in Councils. To the former end it is proposed that the Government of India should continue to own responsibility to His Maj esty's Gov ernme nt, and thr ough the m to the Bri tish Par lia ment, in mat ters pertaining to foreign relations and the defence of the country. The Legislature is to have no control over them. Nor will it have any right to interfere with the relations of the Government with the Indian States. This being secured, it is urged that in matters of internal administration the control of the Secretary of State should be replaced by control by the Legislature; the Government of India similarly devolving power on the provincial Governments, which in their turn will own responsibility to their respective Legislatures. It must obviously follow that there should be a strong Indian element in the Executive Governments as well as that the Legislative Councils should be expanded and reformed so as to consist of a substantial majority of members elected directly by the people on as wide a franchise as may be possible. And these Councils should be endowed with real and substantial power, not only over legislation but also over finance and administration. We venture to think that the Congress and the Moslem League make no extravagant proposals when they ask that one-half of the Executive Councillors should be Indians, and that four-fifths of the Legislative Councils should consist of elected members. Nor, we submit, are the powers proposed for the latter bodies excessive or impracticable. Adequate safeguards have been provided in the Scheme to prevent the adoption of hasty or unsuitable measures—legislative, financial or administrative; as well as to protect the interests of minorities. In connection with the latter point we beg to invite attention to the provision that no non-official proposal affecting communal interests to which three-fourths of the members belonging to that community object, should be proceeded with in any Legislative Council.

The reforms relating to the Secretary of State and his Council are suggested as being consequential on the reform of the system of government in the country itself. They will, it is trusted, be found to make for economy and for harmony between the authorities in the two countries, without in any way impairing efficiency.

In the Memorandum in support of the proposals, which we beg to hand with this address, the case for reform is set forth at some length. It discusses, too, the important cognate subject of local self-government and a few urgently needed administrative reforms for the introduction of which both the Congress and the League have long been earnestly appealing to Government. The resolutions of the Congress and the Moslem League, the Joint Scheme of Reforms, and the memorandum of the ninteen members, are appended to our Memorandum to facilitate reference. We hope that the country will not have to wait longer to see Lord Ripon's cherished scheme of real local self-government fully carried out; or for the substantial Indianization of the public services for which our late revered countryman, Mr. Dadabhoy Naoroji, laboured so long and so hard; or for the complete separation of the judicial services and functions from the executive, a reform needed even more in the interest of he backward masses than of the classes; or for such an amendment of the Arms Act and Rules as will not only do away with the invidious racial discrimination against Indians but empower them to possess and carry arms on conditions similar to those which prevail in other civilized countries, in most of the States in this very country, and in the case of Europeans and Americans in British India itself. The country has expressed its gratification at the removal of the bar against the appointment of Indians as commissioned officers in the Army. It trusts that the rules which will regulate their admission will be liberal and open an honourable and patriotic career to the young men of all classes who may satisfy such tests as may be imposed to judge their fitness, that the requisite facilities for their training and examination will be provided in India itself, and that lndians will be appointed in reasonably large numbers. It is a grievance of long standing that Indians are not permitted to enlist as volunteers. If, however, the system of volunteering as it has existed is to disappear, it is believed that the Indian Defence Force will not be disbanded after the war, and it is urged that the Indian section of it may be placed on a level of absolute equality with the European.

INDIA'S STATUS IN THE EMPIRE

Before taking leave of you, Sirs, we would invite attention to the very important subject of India's status in the Empire. Our claim in one word is that she should be lifted from the position of a dependency to that of equalitlity with the Dominions. The relation of the two should be mutual in the complete sense of the term. We submit that if the Dominions are to exercise any rights in relation to India, the latter should have the power to exercise the same rights in relation to them. In

any Council or Parliament of the Empire which may be constituted at a future date, India should be represented in like manner and in an equal measure with the Dominions. Unless this is done, the participation of the Dominions in the governance of our country, without a corresponding right in us to participate in the governance of them, will mean a lowering of even our present unsatisfactory status, which will arouse the strongest opposition in this country. We hope and trust that His Majesty's Government will never entertain any such proposal. In the meantime we request that India may be allowed to be represented in the Imperial Conference (and in the Imperial Cabinet if any such should be constituted) through persons elected by the elected members of our Legislative Councils. We are beholden to His Majesty's Government and the Government of India for the privilege accorded to India in the beginning of this year, of sending three gentlemen to represent her in the Imperial War Conference and the Imperial War Cabinet. Nor are we less sensible of the value of the unanimous resolution recorded by the former body in favour of the regular representation of India at future ordinary sittings of the Imperial Conference. The consti tutional positi on of the Govern ment of India being what it is in relati on to His Majest y's Govern ment on the one side and the people of India on the other, its nomine es cannot have the charac ter of repres entatives or spokes men of the people, as have the Ministers of the Dominions, which are endowed with responsible government. In this view of the matter we are constrained to submit that during the period of transition from the existing system to responsible government, the representatives of this country in the Imperial Conference and the Imperial Cabinet should be allowed to be elected by the elected members of the Legislative Councils in India.

The Leader, 28-11-1917

APPENDIX VIII

THE CONGRESS-LEAGUE SCHEME

(a) That having regard to the fact that the great communities of India are the inheritors of ancient civilisations and have shown great capacity for government and administration, and to the progress in education and public spirit made by them during a century of British Rule, and further having regard to the fact that the present system of Government does not satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the people and has become unsuited to existing conditions and requirements, the Congress is of opinion that the time has come when His Majesty the King-Emperor should be pleased to issue a Proclamation announcing that it is the aim and intention of British policy to confer Self-Government on India at an early date.

(b) That in the reconstruction of the Empire, India shall be lifted towards Self-Government by granting the Reforms contained in the scheme prepared by the All-India Congress Committee in concert with the Reform Committee appointed by the All-India Muslim League (detailed below).

(c) That in the reconstruction of the Empire, India shall be lifted from the position of a dependency to that of an equal partner in the Empire with the Self-Governing Dominions.

REFORM SCHEME

I—PROVINCIAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCILS

1. Provincial Legislative Councils shall consist of four-fifths elected and of one-fifth nominated members.

2. Their strength shall be not less than 125 members in the major Provinces, and from 50 to 75 in the minor Provinces.

3. The members of Councils should be elected directly by the people on as broad a franchise as possible.

4. Adequate provision should be made for the representation of important minori-ties by election, and the Muslims should be represented through special electorates on be Provincial Legislative Councils in the following proportions:

Punjab--One-half of the elected Indian Members.		
United Provinces—30 p.c.	,,	,,
Bengal—40 p.c.	,,	,,
Bihar—25 p.c.	,,	,,
Central Provinces—15 p.c.	,,	,,
Madras—15 p.c.	,,	,,
Bombay--One-third	,,	,,

Provided that no Muslim shall participate in any of the other elections to the Imperial or Provincial Legislative Councils, save and except those by electorates representing special interests.

Provided further that no bill, nor any clause thereof, nor a resolution introduced by a non-official member affecting one or the other community, which question is to be determined by the members of that community in the Legislative Council concerned, shall be proceeded with, if three-fourths of the members of that community in the particular Council, Imperial or Provincial, oppose the bill or any clause thereof or the resolution.

5. The head of the Provincial Government should not be the President of the Legislative Council but the Council should have the right of electing its President.

6. The right of asking supplementary questions should not be restricted to the member putting the original question, but should be allowed to be exercised by any other member.

7 (a) Except customs, post, telegraph, mint, salt, opium, railways, army and navy, and tributes from Indian States, all other sources of revenue should be Provincial.

(b) There should be no divided heads of revenue. The Government of India should be provided with fixed contributions from the Provincial Governments, such fixed contributions being liable to revision when extraordinary and unforeseen contingencies render such revision necessary.

(c) The Provincial Council should have full authority to deal with all matters affecting the internal administration of the Province, including the power to raise loans, to impose and alter taxation and to vote on the Budget. All items of expenditure, and all proposals concerning ways and means for raising the necessary revenue should be embodied in Bills and submitted to the Provincial Council for adoption.

(d) Resolution on all matters within the purview of the Provincial Government should be allowed for discussion in accordance with rules made in that behalf by the Council itself.

(e) A resolution passed by the Provincial Legislative Council shall be binding on the Executive Government, unless vetoed by the Governor-in-Council, provided however that if the resolution is again passed by the Council after an interval of not less than one year, it must be given effect to.

(f) A motion for adjournment may be brought forward for the discussion of a definite matter of urgent public importance, if supported by not less than one-eighth of the members present.

8. A special meeting of the Provincial Council may be summoned on a requisition by not less than one-eighth of the members present.

9. A Bill, other than a Money Bill may be introduced in Council in accordance with rules made in that behalf by the Council itself, and the consent of the Government should not be required therefor.

10. All Bills passed by Provincial Legislatures shall have to receive the assent of the Governor before they become law, but may be vetoed by the Governor-General.

11. The term of office of the members shall be five years.

II-PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS

1. The head of every Provincial Government shall be a Governor who shall not ordinarily belong to the Indian Civil Service or any of the permanent services.

2. There shall be in every Province an Executive Council which, with the Governor, shall constitute the Executive Government of the Province.

3. Members of the Indian Civil Service shall not ordinarily be appointed to the Executive Councils.

4. Not less than one-half of the members of the Executive Council shall consist of Indians to be elected by the elected members of the Provincial Legislative Council.

5. The term of office of the members shall be five years.

III-IMPERIA L LEGISLA TIVE COUNCIL

1. The strength of the Imperial Legislative Council shall be 150.

2. Four-fifths of the members shall be elected.

3. The franchise for the Imperial Legislative Council should be widened as far as possible on the lines of the electorates for Muslims for the Provincial Legislative Councils, and the elected members of the Provincial Legislative Councils should also form an electorate for the return of members of the Imperial Legislative Council.

4. One-third of the Indian elected members should be Muslims elected by separate Muslim electorates in the several Provinces, in the proportion, as nearly as may be, in which they are represented on the Provincial Legislative Councils by separate Muslim electorates. *Vide* provisos to section l, clause 4.

5. The President of the Council shall be elected by the Council itself.

6. The right of asking supplementary questions shall not be restricted to the member putting the original question but should be allow to be exercised by any other member.

7. A special meeting of the Council may be summoned on a requisition by not less than one-eighth of the members.

8. A Bill, other than a Money Bill, may be introduced in Council in accordance with rules made in that behalf by the Council itself, and the consent of the Executive Government should not be required therefor.

9. All Bills passed by the Council shall have to receive the assent of the Governor-General before they become law.

10. All financial proposals relating to sources of income and items of expenditure shall be embodied in Bills. Every such Bill and the Budgets as a whole shall be submitted for the vote of the Imperial Legislative Council.

11. The term of office of members shall be five years.

12. The matters mentioned herein below shall be exclusively under the control of the Imperial Legislative Council.

(a) Matters in regard to which uniform legislation for the whole of India is desirable.

(b) Provincial legislation in so far as it may affect inter-Provincial fiscal relations.

(c) Questions affecting purely Imperial Revenue, excepting tributes from Indian State.

(d) Questions affecting purely Imperial expenditure, except that no resolution of the Imperial Legislative Council shall be binding on the Governor-General-in-Council in respect of military charges for the defence of the country.

(e) The right of revising Indian tariffs and customs duties, of imposing, altering, or removing any tax or cess, modifying the existing system of currency and banking, and granting any aids or bounties to any or all deserving and nascent industries of the country.

(f) Resolutions on all matters relating to the administration of the country as a whole.

13. A resolution passed by the Legislative Council should be binding on the Executive Government unless vetoed by the Governor-General-in-Council; provided however that if the resolution is again passed by the Council after an interval of not less than one year, it must be given effect to.

14. A motion for adjournment may be brought forward for the discussion of a definite matter of urgent public importance if supported by not less than one-eighth of the members present.

15. When the Crown chooses to exercise its power of veto in regard to a Bill passed by the Provincial Legislative Council, or by the Imperial Legislative Council, it should be exercised within twelve months from the date on which it is passed, and the Bill shall cease to have effect as from the date on which the fact of such veto is made known to the Legislative Council concerned.

16. The Imperial Legislative Council shall have no power to interfere with the Government of India's direction of the military affairs and the foreign and political relations of India, including the declaration of war, the making of peace and the entering into treaties.

IV-THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

1. The Governor-General of India will be the head of the Government of India.

2. He will have an Executive Council, half of whom shall be Indians.

3. The Indian members should be elected by the elected members of the Imperial Legislative Council.

4. Members of the Indian Civil Service shall not ordinarily be appointed to the Executive Council of the Governor-General.

5. The power of making all appointments in the Imperial Civil Services shall vest in the Government of India, as constituted under this scheme, due regard being paid to existing interests subject to any laws that may be made by the Imperial Legislative Council.

6. The Government of India shall not ordinarily interfere in the local affairs of a Province, and powers not specifically given to a Provincial Government shall be deemed to be vested in the former. The authority of the Government of India will

ordinarily be limited to general supervision and superintendence over the Provincial Governments.

7. In legislative and administrative matters the Government of India, as constituted under this scheme, shall, as far as possible, be independent of the Secretary of State.

8. A system of independent audit of the accounts of the Government of India should be instituted.

V-THE SECRETARY OF STATE IN COUNCIL

1. The Council of the Secretary of State for India should be abolished.

2. The salary of the Secretary of State should be placed on the British Estimates.

3. The Secretary of State should, as far as possible, occupy the same position in relation to the Government of India, as the Secretary of State for the Colonies does in relation to the Governments of the Self-Governing Dominions.

4. The Secretary of State for India should be assisted by two Permanent Under-Secretaries, one of whom should always be an Indian.

VI—INDIA AND THE EMPIRE

1. In any Council or other body which may be constituted or convened for the settlement or control of Imperial affairs, India shall be adequately represented in like manner with the Dominions and with equal rights.

2. Indians should be placed on a footing of equality in respect of status and rights of citizenship with other subjects of His Majesty the King throughout the Empire.

VII-MILITAR Y AND OTHER MATTERS

1. The military and naval services of His Majesty, both in their commissioned and non-commissioned ranks, should be thrown open to Indians and adequate provision should be made for their selection, training and instruction in India.

2. Indians should be allowed to enlist as volunteers.

3. Executive Officers in India shall have no judicial powers entrusted to them, and the judiciary in every Province shall be placed under the highest Court of that Province.

The History of the Indian National Congress, Vol. I

APPENDIX IX

EXTRACT FROM J.T. WHITTY'S LETTER TO L. F. MORSHEAD

[BETTIAH,
November 17, 1917]

. . . It is a fact that very exaggerated ideas as regards Mr. Gandhi's position are held by the *raiyats*, but I hear it on good authority that in cases where he has given directions of which the *raiyats* disapprove they have refused to obey him. I am told for instance that in the Turkaulia *Dehat* when Mr. Gandhi advised the *raiyats* that they should pay *Sharahbeshi* less the 20 per cent agreed on they said definitely that they would do no such thing and are now saying "Who is Gandhi?"

Two days ago Mr. Gandhi wrote[1] to me to say that he had a number of enquiries from the *raiyats* as to why enhancement suits in villages where *Tawan* had been taken were still going on although no enhancement was to be taken for seven years. It struck me that the enquiry showed an extraordinary lack of knowledge of the law on the subject and the position generally. Obviously we are not going to withdraw our cases as we merely intend to remit the enhancement for seven years but must have it recorded as legal rent and in any case we have as yet no reliable information as to the *raiyats* who have actually paid *Tawan*.

I replied to Mr. Gandhi that he was under a misapprehension which I should be glad to explain to him if he would call on me but that at the same time I wished to point out that the *raiyats* had not been to me and that I did not approve of having an intermediary in matters which I can deal with myself.

His reply was to the effect that he could not understand Government Officers refusing the assistance of public men who are in closer touch with the *raiyats* than they could hope to be when both were working with the same object. He said he did not wish to come and see me on sufferance.

I replied that the matter in which he had intervened between me and my tenants was one of no difficulty whatever, [one] on which I required no assistance from any outsiders and that I objected to the introduction of an intermediary which prevented me from being in direct touch with my own tenants.

Mr. Gandhi refused to admit that his intervention was not justified, but expressed his wish to see me as regards his education policy.

[1] The correspondence referred to in this letter is not available.

I saw him and had a long talk with him and discussed the various points raised in the Commission's report.

As always in conversation I found him generally very reasonable. He expressed regret at the sudden breaking up of indigo cultivation. His own view was that some time might have been given. He told me that the refusal to pay rent is due to the stupidity of the *raiyats* who misinterpreted the orders passed. Whenever they came to him he explained to them that they must pay rent as usual. His own wish he says now is to utilize his position and any gratitude which he has earned from the *raiyats* to introduce sanitary ideas and improve agricultural methods. He wishes to improve the relations of planters and their tenants as far as it is in his power to do so.

He approved of the action of his lieutenant in going out to enquire into the alleged disturbance in Ammon's *dehat*, in which the police were said to be implicated, and this being so he would no doubt be prepared to make similar enquiries if asked to do so by the *raiyats*.

I still consider that Mr. Gandhi himself is disinterested in his ultimate motives, but in order to strengthen and secure his position he has to make use of methods and instruments which are sure to become a danger to the peace of the district.

As regards the non-payment of rent and the interference with landlords' admitted rights, he would certainly be on the side of the law and would advise the *raiyats* accordingly. To this extent at the present time his presence in the district is likely to do good rather than harm. At the same time he must be a continued centre of agitation. He has not been accepted as an arbitrator who will be fair to the interests of all parties, but as a champion of the *raiyats* against the Planters and it will be impossible for him to avoid being a storm-centre.

Yours sincerely,

J. T. WHITTY

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran

APPENDIX X

EXTRACTS FROM OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE AND NOTES

(a) LETTER FROM J. L. MERRIMAN

MOTIHARI

November 18, 1917

DEA R MR. GANDH I,

I have to acknowledge your letter of 14-11-1917 instt.

I am interested to hear of your attempt to found schools. I shall be glad to hear more about this, regarding the class of schools you propose to open, and the type of education to be imparted. Also the places where you open them.

With regard to your letter of 17th instant about the matter of certain ryots' complaints that they had been compelled to sign certain documents. . . they are at liberty to go to the court if they think they have been victimized.

I am quite unable to listen to any observations in a case which is before the courts, which might tend to prejudice the merit of the court . . . I am glad therefore that you do not intend to impart your observations to me regarding a case brought by Sheoratan Nonia.

J. L. MERRIMAN

(b) J. L. MERRIMAN'S LETTER TO L. F. MORSHEAD

MOTIHARI,

November 24, 1917

DEA R MR. MORS HEAD,

My fortnightly confidential report.

The general situation gets no easier, rather the reverse. I regret to report that the recent Government vernacular notice appears to have tended to increase its difficulty. . .

8. . .. there appears to be a recrudescence of excitement coinciding with Mr. Gandhi's return and the announcement of the Government's resolution.

9. Mr. Gandhi is again with us, though he has just written to inform me that he is going away for a fortnight. I informed you of the interview I had with him on 9th November 1917. He has been very active since his arrival early in the month. He has started founding schools at the following places:

(1) Barharwa-ne-Dhaka—in charge of Mr. and Mrs. Gokhalay, the latter being a "trained nurse and midwife".

(2) Mitiharwa—in charge of Mr. Soman, "a public worker from Belgaum", Mr. Balkrishna, "a young man from Gujarat" and Mrs. Gandhi herself.

(3) Belwa, P. S. Shikarpur, near Belwa Factory.

I solicit instructions as to the attitude to be adopted to Mr. Gandhi and his schools and hygienic propaganda. Am I to encourage him in his work before satisfying myself of its character, or am I to adopt a neutral attitude.

I am not prepared as yet to make any comments either on the nature of the instruction given by him or on the character of his followers. I know nothing about them. Personally I think that if they are genuinely interested in the matter they profess, they will soon get sick of trying to teach hygiene to the Bihari cultivator. Mr. Gandhi has been trying to get subscriptions for his schools, but has been met with a very modified enthusiasm from local Indians in this respect.

10. Similarly I would like instructions as to my attitude with regard to Mr. Gandhi's other activities He is not confining himself to hygienic and educational matters only. He has been making personal enquiries at Belwa (the place at which he has also founded a school) concerning the recent case brought by Sheoratan Nonia *v.* Mr. Ammon of Belwa Factory, in connection with which I reported the conduct of Babu Janakdhari Prasad in my official letter of the 27th October last. Mr. Gandhi has offered to make "observations" on the case to me after it has been judicially decided. He has also been enquiring into the question of some agreements executed by the *raiyats* of the Seeraha Factory. I learn from Mr. Ammon that at Belwa Mr. Gandhi held a kind of formal enquiry, and took the depositions of complainant and some witnesses.

As a public officer, I presume, I should welcome friendly assistance from outside. At the same time the practice of independent enquiries into cases actually pending before the course appears to me to be open to grave abuses, especially when the people concerned are, as in Champaran, ignorant, ill-balanced and prone to untruthfulness. Mr. Gandhi himself, quite possibly with justice, claims to be wholly impartial, but the impartiality of many of his assistants is open to suspicion, and I consider them be not above "doctoring" a case to suit themselves. Mr. Gandhi has, I believe, previously given assurance that he would only interfere in cases where he believed the *raiyats* had been clearly victimized. But I submit that Mr. Gandhi's judgment is fallible. It appears to be quite impossible to make such distinction between cases. The practice must be countenanced in all cases or in none. I ask for guidance on this point.

With regard to the importation of "volunteers" from Belgaum, Gujarat and Bombay reported in para 9, I should also like to be informed of the

attitude of Government. Mr. McPherson in a D. O. letter no. 2577C-1571/II of 1917, dated 20th July, 1917, to Heycock, instructed Heycock to inform Mr. Gandhi that he (Heycock) was ''not aware of the attitude Government will adopt towards the importation of "volunteers". May I now enquire if Government will communicate to me their attitude? . .

Yours sincerely,

J. L. MERRIMAN

(*C*) EXTRACT FROM L. F. MORSHEAD'S LETTER TO H. MCPHERSON

November 27, 1917

There are three factors just now tending to upset *raiyats* in the Division, namely, Home Rule propaganda, Gandhi's activities, and the tension between Hindus and Mahomedans: These react upon each other to upset the *raiyats'* minds and promote a disregard of law and authority. As already reported, village to village Home Rule meetings are being held in Saran, and are said to have encouraged the incident at Sipahiya; and, in combination with Gandhi's influence, to be stirring up trouble with the Maniara concern in Gopalganj.

Merriman's letter will show that the refusal to pay rent is becoming serious in Champaran, and that labour troubles are not settled. He asks for instructions as to his attitude towards Gandhi, especially in regard to his educational schemes and his importation of volunteers. I have not, however, had time to consider his letter properly.

(*d*) EXTRACT FROM NOTE BY W. MAUDE

November 27, 1917

I understand Sir William Vincent is coming here in a day or two and I think it might clear the air if H. H. and the two H.Ms. could see him together and point out the state of affairs in the District and ask how far the Government of India is prepared to go. The only effective action that I can see is to get Mr. Gandhi to promise to leave the District absolutely alone for six months or a year at least. If he really does that there is some chance of things settling down. As long as his name and personality keep bobbing up there is no chance of things settling. If we appeal to Mr. Gandhi to give the District a chance and he refuses or does not do so, how far will the Government of India back us up if we have to resort to compulsion? Sir W. Vincent will not of course be able to give us any absolute pledge, but he may be able to give us a glimpse into the mind of the Government of India which we do not possess.

(*e*) SIR E. A. GAIT'S NOTE TO CHIEF SECRETARY

November 28, 1917

CHI EF SE CRETA RY,

Mr. Reid told me yesterday he had heard from Messrs Norman and Hill that all is quiet in their *dehats* and that Mr. Gandhi has helped to bring refractory *raiyats* to reason. He says, however, that considerable unrest is now spreading into Muzaffarpur, owing, it is stated, to the distribution there of the leaflets issued in Muzaffarpur district stating that these leaflets have no reference to that district and concern Champaran only.

The Maharani of Hathwa also told me this morning that there is a tendency in Saran for the *raiyats* to withhold their rents because of the unrest caused by Mr. Gandhi and the Home Rule propaganda. It is worth couidering whether it would not be well to issue proclamation to the *raiyats* enjoining the payment of their lawful rents, and pointing out that they will themselves be the sufferers if they withhold payment.

E. A. GAIT

(*f*) EXTRACT FROM NOTE BY E. C. REYLAND

December 2, 1917

In considering the situation in Champaran we have also to consider the disquieting reports received from other districts north of the river, particularly those from Chapra. There can be no doubt that a wave of unrest has passed through the districts of Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga and Saran. This wave undoubtedly started with Mr. Gandhi's advent. That there was discontent in Champaran there can be no question but with Mr. Gandhi's advent the attitude of the *raiyats* underwent a change for the worse. Rumours of what Mr. Gandhi was going to do spread throughout the districts named and we know it for a fact that *raiyats* from all districts went to Mr. Gandhi with their grievances. At the time not much attention appears to have been paid to the complaints from other districts but the general impression amongst the *raiyats* of other districts seems to be that, Mr. Gandhi, when he has done with Champaran, will take up the cause in other districts; in fact our latest information is that, speaking at recent meeting at Muzaffarpur, he promised that later on the tenants of that district would also enjoy the benefits that he, by his efforts, had secured for Champaran. In these circumstances it is not surprising that the simple folk should in Mr. Gandhi recognize someone all powerful. Whatever Mr. Gandhi's intentions may be, and l am willing to believe they are well meant, the fact remains that he is accompanied by a number of undesirables who are making use of his name to stir up trouble. If Mr. Gandhi's speeches have been correctly reported, they are calculated toencourage disaffection. Such statements as he wished to see tenants partners with the planters and not slaves, that "the interests of the Hindus lay in trying to stop the wholesale

slaughter of cows" appear curious statements for this gentleman to make at the present time, if, as he professes, he is trying to allay unrest. His action in making enquiries into cases that are *sub judice* almost amounts to contempt of court and certainly lowers the prestige of the local officials. I have no hesitation in saying Mr. Gandhi's presence is undesirable at the present time.

(*g*) EXTRACT FROM H. MCPHERSON'S LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT

December 6, 1917

Mr. Gandhi's continued presence in Champaran is a difficult factor in the situation. His objects are doubtless sincere, and he is said to be striving for peace and to have worked with success in certain case to attain this end in co-operation with the more responsible planters. His politics, however, are not within the comprehension of the ordinary cultivator, and the actions of the satellites, with whom he is surrounded, are not in all cases inspired with his own honesty of purpose. Mr. Gandhi is a prominent exponent of Home Rule, and the "monster" petition for which signatures are being collected throughout the mofussil was drafted by him.

There are other development of Mr. Gandhi's work which, however well intentioned they may be, are liable to be misunderstood by the *raiyats*. His activities extend to the foundation of schools where instruction is imparted by educated teachers from Bombay and to the investigation by him and his followers of cases which are being inquired into by the police. Enough is not yet known of his schools and teachers to say what sort of ideas they are instilling into the minds of their pupils, but it is certain that his interference in criminal cases is a cause of embarrassment to the local police and magistracy.

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran

APPENDIX XI

LETTER FROM BABAN GOKHALAY

BARHARWA,

December 6, 1917

MY DEAR MR. GANDHI,

You would have arrived at Motihari by the time this reaches you and would like to know how the work here is progressing.

Since you were here last, we have been able to put almost all the wells in the village in order by removing the drains which being so close to the wells were polluting the drinking-water. In one or two case, it was a difficult task as a drain from

the house could not be diverted unless it passed through a neighbour's property which we managed to divert by appealing to the kindly feeling of the neighbour. In the other case, we had to take assistance of the elders of the village to use some persuasion. Anyhow we have achieved our object.

We are now after them for committing nuisance quite close to their house. This we propose to effect through an elderly Mahomedan preaching against [it at] their usual Friday gathering. We propose to adopt a similar course for the Hindus. I think in the course of a few weeks we shall be able to see good results. In the meantime, we have managed to convince the people that there is no loss of prestige in at least covering the faeces with earth by doing it ourselves for them. You will be glad to know that people have now taken to it.

As for the schools, the number of students has gone up to over 75. The average daily attendance for the last month was over 60. The boys seem to take great delight in learning their songs and also the new outdoor games that are taught to them after their usual drill. Mrs. Gokhalay visits the village in the neighbourhood almost daily as there is always a female patient requiring medical aid.

When the people have gathered their harvest we intend to call them in the evenings and address them on the subjects of hygiene and general culture.

Dr. Deva called here last Wednesday and stayed over a day as there are many patients whom we could not have attended. We cannot get his prescriptions dispensed in Dhaka Dispensary and we shall have to apply to higher authorities to make special case and have them dispensed, which would greatly help the poor folk in the neighbourhood but before that we intend to see Hospital Assistant in Dhaka.

Last Wednesday, we had a preliminary meeting of the prominent villagers of the neighbourhood and formed a strong committee of both Hindus and Mahomedans to organize the work of primary education and village sanitation. As soon as the harvest is gathered we shall call the members of the committee to raise necessary funds for the work in hand.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,

BABAN GOKHALAY

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran

APPENDIX XII

LETTER FROM E. L. L. HAMMOND

CAMP PATNA,

December 13, 1917

DEA R MR. GAND HI,

You may remember discussing with me in Ranchi possibility of your raising a labour corps from Champaran for service in Mesopotamia. I understood that you were prepared to raise a corps of Army Bearers under your own command. I have however been told that you would be willing to raise a *labour corps*. Will you kindly let me know if this is the case, and if so whether you are still willing to do so, and what, if any, conditions you wish to attach. If you wish any force you raise to be a self-contained unit and not drafts to existing units, it will be necessary for me to address Army Headquarters. On the other hand if you do not want to go yourself and could assist us in obtaining men for the railway training depot at Gaya, where we need 500 a month, your assistance will be much appreciated. Kindly address your reply to me at Ranchi.

Yours sincerely,

E. L. L. HAMMOND

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran

APPENDIX XIII

LETTER FROM E. L. L. HAMMOND

RANCHI,

December 18, 1917

MY DEAR MR. G ANDHI ,

Thanks for your letter of the 15th. I note our requirements which you will see are at present limited to drafts for existing units. There is no intention at present of raising a fresh Labour Corps.

We need men for Mesopotamia or for the Railway Training Depots at Gaya and Puri whence after 2 or 3 months' training they would be despatched to Basra. We give an advance of Rs. 30. The men get Rs. 15 p.m. while in India and Rs. 20 when overseas. Rs. 3 capitation fee is paid for each man brought in.

Cannot you in the course of your tours point out the great economic opportunity now offered? If one man from household goes he can remit Rs. 8 p. m. to

his family and still have 100 or 200 according to the duration of war as undisbursed pay to start him in life on his return.

Labourers must be over 20 and under 35, really physically strong. If you can help us in recruiting such men you will not only be doing something towards the war but benefiting the people in whom you are taking personal interest. Three or four lakhs of rupees have been paid out in the Sandal Parganas to the great discomfiture of the mahajan or oppressive landlord.

If you want to raise a corps of army bearers yourself and will let me know how many you could get I will send on your proposal to Army Headquarters.

Yours sincerely,

E. L. L.. HAMMOND

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran

APPENDIX XIV

(a) LETTER FROM L. F. MORSHEAD

MOTIHARI,
January 14, 1918

DEA R MR. GAND HI,

In connection with the Champaran Agrarian Bill, I pointed out to the Government that the first clause of section 3, as at present drafted, prohibits *khuski* agreements, as hitherto understood, no less than *tinkathia*, because the forra of *satta* approved by the Planters' Association contains a stipulation as to the area to be cultivated in order to supply the produce to be paid for by weight.

I have had a letter in reply to say that in the opinion of Government there is nothing in section 5 of the Bill to render invalid a *khuski satta* of the kind hitherto approved, but section 3 would render invalid the penalty for breach of such contract by liquidated damages. *Prima facie* there is no objection to an agreement to grow indigo on two bighas or, I suppose, any other portion of land provided that the *raiyat* has entire freedom to select the actual plots to be cultivated, and it was apparently the intention of the Agrarian Committee that the existing system of *khuski* should be allowed to continue subject to that proviso.

I have been accordingly requested to ascertain the views of the *raiyats* and their representatives both on this point and as to the most suitable way of modifying clause 3, so as not to interfere with *khuski sattas*.

We discussed the matter this morning, and I put before you Mr. Kennedy's amendment, which is as follows:

From the Ist October, 1917, any right, servitude or other interest notwithstanding, all lands within the district of Champaran shall be held by the tenant thereof free from any incident of tenure whereby such tenant is burdened with the obligation to grow any crop for the convenience of his landlord on his land or any part thereof and any previous act or acts permitting such as an incidence of tenure are hereby expressly repealed.

Any agreement, contract or hypothecation whereby a tenant agrees, contracts with or hypothecates to his landlord the crop grown on his holding or any part thereof shall be void as regards such condition save the holding or part of the holding be specially defined in such agreement, contract or hypothecation.

l understand that you take exception to the second portion of this amendment, which I mark B, but thought that the first portion alone, which I mark A, would be acceptable. Will you kindly let me know if I may inform Government accordingly ? They are anxious to have a reply before the meeting of the Select Committee on the 19th. Could you oblige me with a reply before that date? I shall be in camp at Ramgarhwa on the 15th and 16th and at Chainpatya on the 17th and 18th.

Yours sincerely

L. F. MORSHEAD

(B) L. F. MORSHEAD' S LETTER TO H. COUPLAND

CAMP RAMGARHWA,

January 16, 1918

MY DEAR COUPL AND,

. . . Heycock and I saw Mr. Gandhi at Motihari on the 14th on the subject. I pointed out to Mr. Gandhi that the first clause of section 3 prohibits *khuski,* as hitherto understood and approved by the Committee in paragraph 8 of their report, no less than *tinkathia*. Under that system a *raiyat* agrees to grow indigo usually in consideration of an advance. He offers land which the concern approves before giving an advance, and is paid on the produce.

For purpos es of discus sion I took the Rajpor e system , as I unders tand Mr. Sly an d Mr . Ga nd hi ha d ex am ine d th is sy st em at Ra jp ore an d we re sa ti sfi ed wi th it . Mr . Gandhi raised an object ion that if the *raiyat* failed to grow the plots agreed upon, he would be liable to a suit for specif ic perfor mance of the contra ct and liquid ated damage s; and so he would be, of course , if he took the advanc e and did not fulfil his part of the agreem ent and damage result ed.

Mr. Gandhi explained that the Bill was drafted in order to save *khuski* agreements which otherwise were held in accordance with the opinion of Sir S. P. Sinha to be barred under the Tenancy Act. I then suggested that they might be left to the operation of the Tenancy Act, which at any rate would leave the *khuski* system in the position in which it stands now, whereas the Bill prohibits it contrary to the Committee's intention. In order to focus the discussion I showed him Mr. Kennedy's amendment, and asked if he approved of the first part of it, which confines the new legislation to the prohibition of *tinkathia* as a condition of tenancy. Upon reading it he declared himself ready to accept the first part of it as a solution. I told him that I did not wish to 'shoot him sitting' and he had better think it over. I then wrote the attached letter, and enclose a copy of his reply.

I do not myself believe that Mr. Gandhi represents the *raiyats*. So long as there is no compulsion they are competent to understand their own interests, and they both have been and are willing to grow indigo on the *khuski* system in Saran, where there is no *tinkathia* as well as in Champaran and Muzaffarpur a leading advantage of it being that if they require a fairly substantial advance to pay off a mahajan or the like they can get it. They will, however, lose this if they are not allowed to agree upon, at any rate, the description of land to be sown. It might be necessary to stipulate that the rent accounts must be kept entirely separate, but to go beyond this is likely, in my own opinion, to do more harm than good.

Yours sincerely,

L. F. MORSHEAD

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APPENDIX XV

W.S. IRWIN'S LETTER TO ''THE STATESMAN''

January 8, 1918

TO

THE EDITOR

THE STATESMAN

[CALCUTTA]

SIR,

It being quite evident that people outside of Champaran, and least of all the Governments of Behar and Orissa and of India (*vide* the New Year's Honours' List) have no adequate conception of the grievous harm done in that district by Mr. Gandhi's "mission", and the ill-judged recommendations of the egregious Committee

of Enquiry, I am once more tempted to draw attention to and emphasize both cause and effect.

To Government Mr. Gandhi gave an assurance that when he returned to Champaran all his efforts would be concentrated on the promotion (really renewal) of amicable relations between landlords and tenants (of the disruption of which he and his supporters were the main if not the only cause). I hope and intend that this letter well enable you to decide whether or not he had loyally abided by his undertaking.

His instructions to tenants, since his return, have been to resist all the landlords' rent demands, unless granted a reduction of 20 per cent; 26 per cent *Sarabeshi* (as the case may be) or a refund gf 25 per cent *Tawan,*— this in anticipation of the threatened special legislation, and notwithstanding that there is no law at present to that effect. Not only has this advice, which has been closely followed by the tenants, greatly embarrassed factories in their current working expenses, but has also, for the first time in the 32 years since the floating of the Bettiah Sterling Loan, caused the guarantors (or at least some of them) of the interest for that loan, to fail in the payment of the *kist* (instalment) which fell due on December 15th last, and thus has actually forced the Estate to borrow money again for the purpose. The guarantors can hardly be held responsible by the Courts of Wards for a failure directly caused by the mistaken action of Government, in sanctioning the wholly unnecessary (as was stated by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor himself) Committee.

I was asked by the District Officer to submit a rent collection statement for the Ist quarter of the current *Fasli* year (1325) for comparison with the same period of last year, in order no doubt to explain the default of the Mothihari Ltd., share, amounting to Rs. 48,590-8, of the above interest, and I showed a deficit of Rs. 56,086-8-3, which more than accounted for the non-payment. Fisheries which since time immemorial have belonged to the Raj and to the lessees under the Raj have been and are now being stopped ant looted by misguided tenants under, as they have stated in judicial and police inquiries, the instructions of Mr. Gandhi. The average in this concern for the past five years, or ever since *Sarabeshi* and *Tawan* were instituted, of rent suits ant trifling criminal cases, was 21, and less than 3, respectively, per annum. This year, thanks to Mr. Gandhi and the Committee's recommendations, I anticipate not less than, 2,200 of the former, and for the later I cannot of course make any estimate. From the points of view of the lawyers and usurpers who imported Mr. Gandhi this doubtless is satisfactory but alas! I sigh for the happy record of non-litigation now hopelessly broken.

At a lecture delivered by Mr. Gandhi in what is known as the ''Gaurakshini Sabha" or refuge for aged cows, in Motihari, that gentleman, I am informed and believe, exhorted his Hindu and Mohamedan listeners to cease fighting with each other about the killing of one cow per annum, and make a united attack on the

Saheblog (the landlords) who slaughter and eat cows daily. During the absences of her lord and master at Home Rule and suchlike functions Mrs. Gandhi, following in the footsteps of Mrs. Annie Besant, scatters similar advice broadcast, and has recently, under the shallow pretence of opening a school, started a bazaar in the *dehat* of one of the smaller concerns, in which grain and other articles can be purchased without the payment to the *malik* (proprietor) or lessee of the customary bazaar dues, octroi, etc. This is obviously and palpably done to shut down and ruin two neighbouring bazaars belonging to the factory. Can all the above be possibly construed into an honest fulfilment of Mr. Gandhi's undertaking to Government?

Court *chaprassis* have told me that they dare not mention the disloyalty and defiance of all authority which are openly tallced of in villages into which they have to go in the performance of their duties. At least one court peon, whom I know, went into two of my villages to serve summonses, and was there insulted and hustled and turned out, and was told that no authority, civil or criminal, was now recognized other than that of "Gandhi Saheb". And so on and so on. Instances might be indefinitely multiplied, but will these serve any purpose when the Government wilfully shuts its eyes to the contempt of all legally constituted authority, and to the defiance of all civil and criminal law, and blindly persists in trying to pass a special Bill affecting only 5 factories in all Behar and Orissa ? And even these so unfairly and inequitably that those whose tenants are discontented and out of hand, are compulsorily benefited, while those whose tenants have not complained nor have had any cause of complaint, are to be most unjustly penalized. There is no knowing to what extremes this sort of special legislation may not be carried and all zemindars and landholders should take warning that their liberties may at any moment be similarly sacrificed for the pacification of any political agitation, and the Permanent Settlement be as ruthlessly brushed aside as the Bengal Tenancy Act, if thought to be standing in the way of any preacher of thinly-veiled sedition. I would be, perfectly willing to guarantee that if Mr. Gandhi and his satellites were compelled to evacuate the district, in less than two months order and quiet would be re-established, for already the *raiyats* are jeering at the lavishness of his promises to them and the tenuity of their materialisation.

Yours, etc.,

WM. S. IRWIN

The Statesman 11-1-1918

APPENDIX XVI

MEMORANDUM OF BIHAR PLANTERS' ASSOCIATION[1]

January 5, 1918

In the opinion of these members, the Champaran Agrarian Bill is both unnecessary and undesirable for the following reasons:

(a) Because it is based on the recommendations of a Committee of Enquiry which was admittedly appointed to allay an artificial agitation, organized outside Champaran and not in any way the consequence of any widespread grievances. The Committee has been shown to have made no genuine enquiry into agrarian conditions in Champaran as a whole, but merely to have made a superficial examination of the management of a small number of Indigo and Ticcadari Estates holding leases from the Court of Wards, and that at a time when the minds of the *raiyats* were inflamed by an agitation, encouraged by the Government, from which they have been led to expect some sort of Agricultural Millenium. Further, this Committee has been shown to have been actuated solely by a desire to produce a report which one of its members, the leader of the agitation mentioned above, could be induced to sign and not by any wish to report on the full and true facts of the case.

The present Bihar and Orissa Government and its predecessors have been fully aware of every detail mentioned in the Committee's Report, which has neither brought forward any new facts, nor shed any new light on the general position, and have not considered that any special legislation was necessary.

As a result of the unsatisfactory and partial enquiries made by this Committee the information it acquired was not sufficient to show the general position in the district in its true light, and this fact, combined with its biased attitude and anxiety to pacify a mischievous agitator at any cost, even, if necessary, by a misuse of Trust Funds under control of the Government, render the Report and the recommendations contained in it so grossly one-sided and unfair, that no weight whatever should be given to them, and this legislation which is frankly based on them, should be entirely dropped.

(b) Because it singles out one district for invidious and unnecessary legislation.

(c) Because it proposes to invalidate existing contracts and incidents of the *raiyats'* tenancy, both of which have been proved to be perfectly legal, and the former of which received the direct sanction of the Government of Bengal only seven years ago.

[1] This was forwarded by the Board of Revenue to the Secretary, Revenue Department, Government of Bihar and Orissa.

(d) Because it proposes to abolish without compensation and for no adequate reason a system which has been in existence for over a hundred years and which is still carried on without friction in other districts.

(e) Because it proposes, without the consent of the landlord, to forcibly reduce rents which have been declared after an exhaustive enquiry by the Settlement Officials to be perfectly legal, fair and not excessive, and which have been paid willingly for a number of years.

In case the Government persists in pressing this Bill in spite of all the cogent reasons in favour of its abandonment, we will point out some of the chief defects and make certain suggestions which may go some way towards remedying them.

Section 3 (1),—This section, as it stands, will render the growing of Indigo and Sugarcane under what is usually known as the *khuski* system, impossible.

Admitting, for the sake of argument, that it is not considered desirable to allow the *raiyat* to make a contract with his landlord binding himself to sell the produce of a particular crop grown on a fixed proportion of his holding for a long term of years at a flat rate based on the area of the land on which this crop is grown, it is still both desirable and necessary that he should be allowed to agree to sell the produce from a specified plot, selected by himself, at a rate based on the amount of the produce obtained. And this principle is admitted in the statement of objects and reasons attached to the Bill. If as is suggested, he is only to be allowed to bind himself to deliver a certain weight of produce, he is at the mercy of climatic conditions ant renders himself liable to damages if he fails to divert the specified amount, whereas if he contracts to deliver the produce of a certain plot, he is only liable for the amount of the balance of his advance if the crop on that plot does not come up to his expectations.

Further, the *raiyat* almost invariably demands a large advance before he begins to prepare his land, and being an exceedingly thriftless person, if no agreement is permitted binding him to grow the particular crop on a specified plot, he is very likely to take the advance and then fail to sow sufficient suitable land to produce the required amount, and for this reason it will be impossible for the landlord to risk the advance and the price of the seed. Also the *raiyat* instead of getting money from his landlord without interest will be forced to obtain it from the money-lender at an extortionate rate.

It is also obviously grossly unfair that existing contracts should be an nulled without warning and without compensation and that a system of cultivation which has been carried on for over a hundred years should be abolished without giving planters time to arrange for an alternative system to take its place.

Champaran *raiyats* are both stupid and conservative at the best of times, and look on any innovation with suspicion, and the present disturbed state of the district

and the agitation still being carried on by Mr. Gandhi's followers will render the institution of the *khuski* system doubly difficult. We, therefore, wish to urge most strongly that contracts now in force should be allowed to continue for three years more or such time as outstanding advances on the original *sattas* remain unpaid on the understanding that planters will endeavour to replace the *tinkathia* system by the *khuski* system during that period.

It is often very difficult to collect these sums and *raiyats* can cause an infinite amount of trouble and expense if they refuse to pay, as they know that the individual amounts are very often so small as not to be worth suing for, though collectively they may amount to a very large sum.

It is, therefore, recommended that the above condition in favour of the planter shall be allowed to continue until the balance of the advantage received by the *raiyat* shall have been completely restored. This could cause no hardship, as the raiyat can at any time refund it either through the post or the civil courts. ..

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran

APPENDIX XVII

NOTE ON INTERVIEW BY W. MAUDE

January 31, 1918

1. We first discussed the *khuski* system. Mr. Gandhi objected to the hypothecation of any particular plot but said he did not object to the *raiyat* contracting to grow a certain amount of land in indigo. I then suggested substituting in the Champaran Planters' proposed amendment the words "produce of a certain proportion of his holding" ins tead of the wor ds "pr oduce of any spe cifie d fie ld or plo t sel ected by him self". Mr. Gandhi then suggested draft provisions to clauses 3, 4 and 5 (*vide* footnote[1]).

2. We next discussed the proposed amendment making the *satta* obligation continue until advance is paid off. Mr.Gandhi objected altogether to this, though it was explained that it might save much litigation.

3. We then discussed Sirnie. Mr. Gandhi's view was that neither Jallaha nor Sirnie deserved any consideration whatever although Sirnie may have taken a less rate of *sharabeshi* than Turkaulia.

[1] This footnote reads: "3(1) Provided that nothing in this sub-section shall prevent a *raiyat* from entering into a contract to grow a particular crop on any portion of his holding in terms of section 5 thereof.

To section 5 — Provided that nothing in the contract shall take away or limit the *raiyats*' freedom to select the land."

4. We then discussed the proposal to make the *sharabeshi* enhancement as reduced binding. Mr. Gandhi agreed on this point but quoted from his letter of 24th January 1918 in which he said that "any amendment will have to carefully guard the right of appeal on grounds of irregularity or want of jurisdiction", as for instance the Settlement Officer may have wrongly recorded the incident or where there is a manifest clerical error.

5. As to *abwab* Mr. Gandhi has no objection to the proposal to make it applicable to the whole Province.

As to Mr. Gandhi's own amendment to make the landlord liable in all cases it can be put before the Select Committee but Government cannot undertake to withdraw the whole section if it is not accepted. Mr. Gandhi also objects strongly to the retention of sub-clause (3) of the clause.

6. As to cart *sattas* Mr. Gandhi insists that there should be a provision ending these, otherwise there will be [a] crop of law suits on the cart *sattas*.

7. The question of refund of *tawan* was mentioned but not discussed at this interview.

W. MAUDE

Select Documents on Mahatma Gandhi's Movement in Champaran

APPENDIX XVIII

SHANKARLAL BANKER'S LEAFLET

This is the first leaflet l write for you. I wish, therefore, to state at the very outset that my right to advise you is only nominal. I have not done any manual labour. I have not suffered the miseries that workers have to endure, nor can I do anything myself to remove that misery. Therefore, I feel hesitant in giving advice on this occasion. But, even though I have done nothing for you in the past it is my keen desire to do what I can hereafter according to my capacity. I write this with that desire.

Two days ago our situation had taken a serious turn. Some of you were in straitened circumstances, but instead of taking to labour to get relief from those circumstances as urged so often by Gandhiji, it was apprehended that some of you would break the vow and get back to the mills. But that situation has now passed away. Our dull hearts have been quickened by Gandhiji's fast. We have become conscious of the seriousness of our oath. We are convinced that 'we shall not break the oath even at the cost of our lives' is not a slogan merely to be repeated in meetings but has to be demonstrated in action. As a proof of this change in the situation, those who are in financial difficulty have willingly begun to do manual work. Not only so, but also those who are better off have set an example by assisting from their wages those in need, and have removed the possibility of a split among us

for all time. But that is not enough. A very heavy responsibility has come over us by Gandhiji's fast; and if we understand that responsibility fully, we should exert ourselves to the utmost to end this struggle as soon as possible, we should adopt all such means as would shorten the struggle consistently with keeping to our pledge. Our oath is to obtain a 35 per cent increase. And we know that financially it is not difficult for the employers to give the 35 per cent increase. But employers feel that if they gave the 35 per cent, the workers will become domineering and insolent, that they will become unruly at the slightest provocation, and ruin the industry by resorting to strikes on trifling matters. I see no reason for entertaining such a fear. Workers can never desire that an industry which gives them their daily bread should be destroyed. But if workers behave without discretion and without thinking about justice or injustice, such a result is inevitable. If we desire to be saved from it, we should determine to work regularly for the mill-owners in good faith. We should decide not to make unreasonable demands, and not to resort to remedies like strikes to secure justice until all other avenues are exhausted. But our task is not over with such a determination. We have to go to the employers, acquaint them with our decision and win their confidence. We have to remove the misapprehension which restrains them from giving us the 35 per cent increase. I strongly urge upon the workers to take immediate steps in this direction.

A Righteous Struggle

APPENDIX XIX

COMMISSIONER PRATT'S SPEECH

[AHMEDABAD,

April 12, 1918]

I would like you to listen to me attentively and repeat to everybody what I say, when you go back to your villages so that what I say to you now may come to be known throughout the district; for what I am going to say to you today is not only for you but for the whole district. You have been given much advice by Mahatma Gandhi and Vallabhbhai Saheb and other gentlemen who are working with them. They have made speeches from village to village but today I would request you to listen to me.

The rights of the agricu lturists are such that they can keep the land in their posses sion for genera tions. But those rights carry with them the duty to pay regula rly the land revenu e assess ment fixed accord ing to law. It is only on that condit ion that you can contin ue to enjoy the posses sion of your land. It is the Govern ment who determ ines the assess ment throug h the instru mentality of its office rs and withou t the interv ention of any lawyer or barris ter. No one but the

Govern ment has the right to fix the assess ment. It is not a matter of which the civil courts can take cogniz ance. No one can go to a court with a compla int that the land revenu e assess ment is too high. The agriculturists have no legal right to demand or to insist upon the postponement of the assessment. That is entirely within our gift. We issue orders after taking into account the condition of the crop and any complaints and objections that may be raised. After the final order is passed, there is no appeal. It is not a matter for Gandhiji or Vallabhbhai, and on that particular issue your fight will be in vain. That is what I wish to impress upon you and you must pay heed to these words, not merely because they are my words, but because they represent the legal position. It is not merely my order but that of Lord Willingdon. I have in my possession his letter which says that he will accept whatever order I will pass in this matter. You must, therefore, realize that it is not just I who am talking today but His Excellency the Governor.

Mr. Gandhi is a very good man, a very holy man and he gives you advice because he believes genuinely and honestly that it is in your interest. He thinks that by not paying up the land revenue assessment, you will be protecting the poor; that is what he was telling me when he saw me yesterday. But isn't the Government the protector of the poor? Is it the duty of your Governor or is it your duty to protect the poor? Do you not remember the days of the famine? In the famine of 1900, in the famine of 1902 caused by rats, I was the Collector of Ahmedabad and Panchmahal Districts. You will remember how many works had been opened by the Government for assisting the poor. I remember how many hundreds of thousands of rupees were spent for feeding the people, in building tanks and in giving *taqavi* loans. Those amongst you who are old will certainly remember those days. It is against such a Government that today your fight in this district is being waged. There is a big war going on in the world, and the circumstances are such that it is the duty of you all to give the Government every assistance. But instead of that what does the Government get from this District? Does it get assistance, or does it get opposition?

If you continue this fight against the Government it will be you who will have to bear the consequences and not these gentlemen of the Home Rule League. They will not suffer in any way. They are not the people who will go to jail. When a movement of this kind was started in Africa, Mahatma Gandhi went to jail. In this country he will not go to jail. Jail is not a fit place for him. I tell you again that he is a very good and a very holy man.

The Government does not harbour any anger against you. If children kick their parents, the parents are sad, but they do not get angry. Why must you suffer all this loss, forfeiture, *chauthai* fine, confiscation, the disruption of the Narva right? Why do you want to destroy your property by your own hands ? Do you wish to lose your

Narva right ? Do you not care for your women and children? Would you like to be reduced to the status of labourers, and what for ?

I have 28 years' experience of land revenue law. Mahatma Gandhi is my friend. He came to this country from Africa only two or three years ago; he has spent the greater part of his life in Africa. He is well-versed in religion. Whatever advice he gives on that subject is sound, but in political matters, in matters concerning land and land revenu assessment, he knows very little. I know far more about these matters, and I shall be sorry to see you suffer the consequnces of your ill-advised actions. I shall be sorry to see the lands of good Patidars confiscated. Government knows that there has been a misunderstanding regarding the rights of agriculturists. Therefore, the benevolent Government is giving you this final opportunity of listening to its advice.

I have come here to give you this advice, and I have only this to say that it is duty of the agriculturists to pay up their land revenu dues. Do not think that our Mamlatdars and *talatis* will collect money by seizing and selling your property. They will not take so much trouble. Our time is very valuable. They will not go to anybody's house to collect the money. I am not threatening you. You must realize that parents do not threaten but merely give advice. If you will not pay your assessment, your land will be confiscated. Many people tell you that that will not be so. But I tell you that that will be so. It is not necessary for me to take any pledge to that effect, but I have the authority to make good my words. Those who refuse to pay land revenue assessment will not get back their land. The Government does not wish to retain on their books such agriculturists, nor are we anxious to include the names of such in our records of rights. Once those names have been removed they will not be re-entered.

Now, let me tell you one more thing in conclusion. If anyone, through misunderstanding or mistake, takes a pledge, he need not consider himself bound by that pledge. Such a pledge need not be kept. If you break such a pledge no one can say to you that you have sinned or have committed a mistake. The world will regard such a person as innocent. You will recollect what happened in Ahmedabad. Many of you may not read newspapers; therefore I will tell you. There was a struggle recently in Ahmedabad between the mill-owners and the mill-hands. The latter had taken an oath that they would not go back to work until they got an increase of 35 per cent in their wages. But what happened in the end? When they realized that their pledge was not reasonable they could not adhere to it, they broke it and accepted an increase of 27 1/2 per cent and resumed work. In the same way, I tell you that when you took this pledge, you made a mistake. You did it only because you forgot your duty towards the Government. You did not give full weight to the consequences of this pledge; consequences not only to yourself but to your children. Taking into account all this I ask you to think again and decide whether you should do your duty by the Government or adhere to your pledge and suffer the consequences?

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

1. LETTER T0 SIR CLAUDE HILL

ST. STEPHEN'S COLLEGE,
DELHI,
April 26, 1918

DEAR SIR CLAUDE HILL,

It was not without considerable pain that I had to decline the honour of serving on any of the Committee that will be appointed at the eventful Conference[1] or speaking to the main resolution[2].

I feel that the Conference will be largely abortive with the most powerful leaders excluded from it. The absence of Mr. Tilak, Mrs. Besant and Ali Brothers from the Conference deprives it of any real weight.[3] I must confess that not one of us who were present at today's meeting has the influence of these leaders with the masses. Refusal to have them at the Conference shows that there is no real desire to change the attitude hitherto adopted by those who are holding the reins of Government. And without any real alteration in the spirit all your concessions will lose their grace and force and will fail to evoke genuine loyalty from the masses. If I understand the purpose of the Conference aright, you wish to work upon the masses. How to evoke in the Indian the loyalty of the Englishman is the question before the Indian leaders. I submit that it is impossible to do so unless you are prepared to trust the trusted leaders of the people and to do all that such trust means. So far as Ali Brothers are concerned there is no proof of their guilt before the public and they have emphatically repudiated the charge of having corresponded with the enemy. Most Mahomedans think what the Brothers think on the situation.

I feel that for other reasons also I could not effectively serve on

[1] This was the War Conference convened by Lord Chelmsford.

[2] The resolution read as follows: "That this Conference authorizes and requests His Excellency the Viceroy to convey to His Majesty the King-Emperor an expression of India's dutiful and loyal response to his gracious message, and assurance of her determination to continue to do her duty to her utmost capacity in the great crisis through which the Empire is passing."

[3] Tilak had not been invited; but, after an interview with the Viceroy on April 27, Gandhiji wired asking Tilak to attend the Conference. This he declined to do as Government would not rescind the externment order issued against him. Annie Besant, too, had received no invitation, while the Ali Brothers were still in internment.

the Conference. I have just read the Home Mail papers. They deal with the secret Treaties. The revelations make painful reading, I do not know that I could call the Allies' cause to be any longer just if these treaties are truly reported. I do not know what effect the news will produce on the Mahomedans of India. The Government will best serve the Empire if they were boldly to advise His Majesty's Government to recede from the false and immoral position they placed themselves in by these treaties. No one will be more glad than I would be to find that my reading of the papers is totally incorrect.[1]

There will be no domestic peace in India so long as local officials administer affairs as they have been doing in Kaira. I am sure the Viceroy does not wish that the people should not resist injustice and tyranny. I do hope that the contemplated spoliation in Kaira will be stopped at once and the just demand of the Kaira people will be complied with.

I would like to warn the Government against accepting or initiating conscription. I hope it will never flourish on the Indian soil. But, in any case, it ought not to be introduced until all voluntary efforts have been honestly made and failed. You will admit that the leaders have with remarkable self-restraint hushed all the tales of the forcible recruitment that is reported to have gone on hitherto. I venture to think that the danger point has been reached.

Lastly a thorough education in Home Rule has now so widely penetrated the masses that nothing short of very substantial evidence of the near advent of Home Rule will secure the real co-operation of the people.

You will now understand and perhaps appreciate my reluctance

[1] Some light is thrown on the background to these observations of Gandhiji in *Charles Freer Andrews*, p. 132. Gandhiji had asked Andrews to join him on his way to the War Conference. "In the train on his way there Andrews read in the English *New Statesman* an account of the predatory 'secret treaties' unearthed by revolutionaries from the Russian Foreign Office; Great Britain was a signatory of these treaties, notwithstanding her public declarations of the disinterestedness of her fight for freedom. Andrews thrust the papers before Gandhi. 'How can you take part in a war conference while this sort of double-dealing is going on?' he demanded." This was another reason why Gandhiji had initially refused to attend the Conference. Lord Chelmsford, however, in the course of an interview, repudiated the report about the treaties as having emanated from interested quarters and expressed his disbelief that the British Cabinet would enter into a treaty to cede Constantinople to Russia. It was on the basis of this clarification that Gandhiji finally agreed to participate in the Conference.

to speak or to serve on the committees. I can best demonstrate my good wishes by abstaining from the Conference.

Will you please place this letter before the Viceroy at the earliest possible opportunity?

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

2. LETTER T0 J. L. MAFFEY

ST. STEPHEN'S COLLEGE,
DELHI,
April 27, 1918

DEAR MR. MAFFEY,

I duly received your wire as also your note of the l9th instant for both of which I thank you.

The development which the situation has since undergone renders the discharge of the [Ali] Brothers more than ever imperative. After considerable hesitation and much deep thought, I have come to the conclusion that I cannot take part in the Conference and serve the cause for which it has been called. My reasons are set forth in my letter to Sir Claude Hill,[1] copy of which I beg to enclose herewith. I do not know whether His Excellency would still like to see me about the Brothers. I am in Delhi up to the 29th, but can naturally prolong my stay if necessary.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

N.A.I.: Home, War (Deposit): October 1918, No. 26

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

3. LETTER TO J. L. MAFFEY

DELHI,

April 27, 1918

DEAR MR. MAFFEY,

In fear and trembling I have decided as a matter of duty to join the Conference. After the interview with His Excellency[1] and subsequently with you, I feel I could not do otherwise.[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

N.A.I.: Home, War (Deposit): October 1918, No. 26

4. LETTER T0 J.L. MAFFEY

DELHI,

April 28, 1918

DEAR MR. MAFFEY,

I would like you please to secure for me His Excellency's permission to deliver my speech at the Conference today in Urdu. I intended to send a translation of it, but I think that I shall speak most effectively by merely speaking the words necessary to support the resolution in question. The answer to my request you will perhaps send per Mr. Andrews.

[1] This took place on April 27.

[2] Gandhiji received the next day the following message from Maffey: "The Viceroy does not believe in your 'fear and trembling'. Nor do I ! His Excellency is very glad indeed to hear that you will join the Conference. I have written to Sir Claude Hill to inform him that you will join the Man Power Committee which meets at 11 a.m."

Earlier Gandhiji had received, according to *Mahadev Desai's Diary*, Vol. IV, the following message from the Viceroy: "Please assure all your friends that I have already done what I possibly could do. The Scheme submitted will not be exactly the Congress-League Scheme, but will substantially be like it. I hope *tomorrow* there will be no bargaining, no huckstering therefore. The whole world—especially all in England—will be watching with anxiousness what happens *tomorrow*, everybody's eyes are fixed on tomorrow and I do hope there will be no huckstering."

Will you please tell me how long you are going to stay in Delhi ?[1]

Yours sincerely.

M.K. GANDHI

N.A.I.: Home, War (Deposit): October 1918, No. 26

5. SPEECH AT WAR CONFERENCE[2]

DELHI,

April 28, 19I8

I consider myself honoured to find my name among the supporters of this resolution. I realize fully its meaning and I tender my support to it with all my heart.[3]

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 2225

[1] To this Gandhiji received the next day the following reply from Maffey: "I now find that in this morning's rush I did not read the end part of your letter and only dealt with the first question—your speech. If I may deal with that, may I say that I know the Viceroy felt very much touched by your presence, by the simple words you said and the way you said them. I am so glad that you see scope for definite work ahead. It is all wanted and you will not regret it. Standing out for rights is not always the best way of getting them. If you can believe in us, fight for us and don't be impatient with us. We leave tonight, but if at any time I can be of service let me know."

[2] This has been extracted from "Letter to G. A. Natesan", 12-5-1918.

[3] Gandhiji has referred to his speech in the Man-Power Committee in his autobiography as follows: "So I attended the Conference. The Viceroy was very keen on my supporting the resolution about recruiting. I asked for permission to speak in Hindi-Hindustani. The Viceroy acceded to my request, but suggested that I should speak also in English. I had no speech to make. I spoke but one sentence to this effect, 'With a full sense of my responsibility, I beg to support the resolution." *Vide An Autobiography*, Part V; Ch. XXVII

6. LETTER T0 J. L. MAFFEY

DELHI,

April 29, 1918

DEAR MR. MAFFEY,

It was kind of you in spite of your overwhelming work to reread my letter and find time to answer it.[1]

Pray convey my thanks to His Excellency for his kindly sentiments.

I am preparing two letters[2] for you which will follow you to Simla. I hardly think I shall be ready before you leave. One of them will contain definite suggestions in which you may use my services and the other will simply complete my view on the situation.

My trust in you is not to be easily shaken. I entirely endorse what you say about rights. But I have no business to inflict a long letter on you.

I always feel that I am committing a sin when I write to you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

N.A.I.: Home, War, Political: October 1918, No. 27

[1] *Vide* footnote to "Letter to J. L. Maffey", 24-4-1918.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 29-4-1918, and "Letter to J. L. Maffey", 30-4-1918.

7. LETTER TO VICEROY

DELHI,
April 29, 1918[1]

SIR,

As you are aware, after careful consideration, I felt constrained to convey to Your Excellency that I could not attend the Conference for reasons stated in my letter[2] of the 26th instant. But after the interview you were good enough to grant me, I persuaded myself to join it, —if for no other cause, then certainly out of my great regard for yourself.

One of my reasons for abstention,—and perhaps the strongest, —was that Mr. Tilak, Mrs. Besant, and the brothers Ali, whom I regard as among the most powerful leaders of public opinion, were not invited to the Conference. I still feel that it was a grave blunder not to have asked them, and I respectfully suggest that the blunder might be partially repaired if these leaders were invited to assist the Government by giving it the benefit of their advice at the Provincial Conferences which, I understand, are to follow. I venture to submit that no Government can afford to disregard leaders who represent large masses of the people, as these do, even though they may hold views fundamentally different. At the same time, it gives me pleasure to be able to say that the views of all parties were permitted to be freely expressed at the Committees of the Conference. For my own part, I purposely refrained from stating my views, either at the Committee on which I had the honour of serving—or at the Conference itself. I felt that I could best serve the objects of the Conference by simply tendering my support to the resolutions submitted to it,—and this I have done without any reservation. I hope to translate the spoken word into action as early as the Government can see its way to accept my offer, which I am submitting simultaneously herewith in a separate letter. I recognize that, in the hour of its danger, we must give, —as we have decided to give—ungrudging and unequivocal support to the Empire, of which we aspire, in the near future, to be partners in the

[1] Though drafted on this date, it appears to have been sent to the Viceroy at Simla only the following day, with a covering note addressed to J. L, Maffey; *vide* the following item.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Claude Hill'; 26-4-1918.

same sense as the Dominions overseas. But it is the simple truth that our response is due to the expectation that our goal will be reached all the more speedily on that account—even as the performance of a duty automatically confers a corresponding right. The people are entitled to believe that the imminent reforms alluded to in your speech will embody the main, general principles of the Congress-League Scheme, and I am sure that it is this faith which has enabled many members of the Conference to tender to the Government their whole-hearted co-operation.

If I could make my countrymen retrace their steps, I would make them withdraw all the Congress resolutions, and not whisper "Home Rule" or "Responsible Government" during the pendency of the war. I would make India offer all her able-bodied sons as a sacrifice to the Empire at its critical moment; and I know that India by this very act would become the most favoured partner in the Empire and racial distinctions would become a thing of the past. But practically the whole of educated India has decided to take a less effective course, and it is no longer possible to say that educated India does not exercise any influence on the masses. I have been coming into most intimate touch with the ryots ever since my return from South Africa to India, and I wish to assure you that the desire for Home Rule has widely penetrated them. I was present at the sessions of the last Congress, and I was party to the resolution that full Responsible Government should be granted to British India within a period to be fixed definitely by a Parliamentary Statute. I admit that it is a bold step to take, but I feel sure that nothing less than a definite vision of Home Rule—to be realized in the shortest possible time—will satisfy the Indian people. I know that there are many in India who consider no sacrifice too great in order to achieve the end; and they are wakeful enough to realize that they must be equally prepared to sacrifice themselves for the Empire in which they hope and desire to reach their final status. It follows, then, that we can but accelerate our journey towards the goal by silently and simply devoting ourselves, heart and soul, to the work of delivering the Empire from the threatening danger. It will be national suicide not to recognize this elementary truth. We must perceive that, if we serve to save the Empire, we have in that very act secured Home Rule.

Whilst, therefore, it is clear to me that we should give to the Empire every available man for its defence, I fear that I cannot say

the same thing about financial assistance. My intimate intercourse with the ryots convinces me that India has already donated to the Imperial Exchequer beyond her capacity. I know that, in making this statement, I am voicing the opinion of the vast majority of my countrymen.

The Conference means for me, and I believe for many of us, a definite step in the consecration of our lives to the common cause. But ours is a peculiar position. We are today outside the partnership. Ours is a consecration based on the hope of a better future. I should be untrue to you and to my country if I did not clearly and unequivocally tell you what that hope is. I do not bargain for its fulfilment. But you should know it. Disappointment of the hope means disillusion.

There is one thing I may not omit. You have appealed to us to sink domestic differences. If the appeal involves the toleration of tyranny and wrongdoing on the part of officials, I am powerless to respond. I shall resist organized tyranny to the uttermost. The appeal must be to the officials that they do not ill-treat a single soul, and that they consult and respect popular opinion as never before. In Champaran, by resisting an age-long tyranny, I have shown the ultimate sovereignty of British justice. In Kaira, a population that was cursing the Government now feels that it, and not the Government, is the power when it is prepared to suffer for the truth it represents. It is, therefore, losing its bitterness and is saying to itself that the Government must be a Government for the people, for it tolerates orderly and respectful disobedience where injustice is felt. Thus, Champaran and Kaira affairs are my direct, definite, and special contribution to the war. Ask me to suspend my activities in that direction, and you ask me to suspend my life. If I could popularize the use of soul-force, which is but another name for love-force, in the place of brute force, I know that I could present you with an India that could defy the whole world to do its worst. In season and out of season, therefore, I shall discipline myself to express in my life this eternal law of suffering and present it for acceptance to those who care. And if I take part in any other activity, the motive is to show the matchless superiority of that law.

Lastly, I would like you to ask His Majesty's Ministers to give definite assurances about Mahomedan States. I am sure you know that every Mahomedan is deeply interested in them. As a Hindu, I cannot be indifferent to their cause. Their sorrows must be our sorrows. In

the most scrupulous regard for the right of these States, and for the Muslim sentiment as to places of worship and in your just and timely treatment of the Indian claim to Home Rule, lies the safety of the Empire.

I write this, because I love the English Nation, and I wish to evoke in every Indian the loyalty of the Englishman.

I remain,

Your Excellency's faithful servant,

M. K. GANDHI

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8. LETTER T0 J. L. MAFFEY

NADIAD,
April 30, 1918[1]

DEAR MR. MAFFEY,

In pursuance of my declaration at the Conference yesterday, I wish respectfully to state that I place my services at the disposal of the authorities to be utilized by them in any manner they choose, save that I personally will not kill or injure anybody, friend or foe.

But it would be better perhaps if I were to state how, in my opinion, my services may be best used.

In the first place, it is necessary in order to make my work effective that I should receive permission to go to Chindwara and see the brothers Ali. I would like to confer with them and ascertain from them their advice as to the objects of the Conference. I have little doubt that they will approve of co-operation. If the Government would accept the request originally made by me, they would instantaneously soothe both Hindus and Mahomedans by releasing the brothers, if only as a war measure, in order to advance the objects of the Conference. I shall be content for the time being with the permission to see them. I merely state that their release would, from the war standpoint, be a more effective act. Of course I shall reserve to myself the right to press for their release in any case.

Further I desire relief regarding the Kaira trouble. Relief will

[1] The letter appears to have been drafted on April 29 but actually sent on this date.

entirely disengage me from that preoccupation which I may not entirely set aside. It will also enable me to fall back for war purposes upon my co-workers in Kaira and it may enable me to get recruits from the district. The problem there is extremely simple. I have suggested that the revenue—now probably less than four lakhs of rupees—be suspended this year, with the proviso that those who can will be put upon their honour and expected to pay revenue voluntarily. I have already offered myself to see that the well-to-do cultivators pay the revenue. If this offer is not acceptable, I have suggested an impartial committee to inquire into the differences between the authorities and the cultivators. I suggest that action in this matter be taken as a war measure. This will obviate the fear of the relief being regarded as a precedent.

Pray understand that my offer is not conditional upon relief in either case. I merely ask for relief in the two cases in furtherance of the common object.

As for my work, I would like, for the time being, to travel about the country and place before the people the desirability of offering their services and ascertain the possibilities of success. I would, if I am to do this, like detailed information as to the areas in which, in the opinion of the experts, work should be done and some instructions as to the nature of it and any further information that they may consider I should possess.

If it is desired that I should personally wait on any of the officials or meet you, I would be prepared to come up to Simla. You may give me as short a notice as you like after the 4th of May. My address would be Nadiad.

I suppose I must give you something of my past record. I was in charge of the Indian Ambulance Corps consisting of 1,100 men during the Boer Campaign and was present at the battles of Colenso, Spionkop and Vaalkranz.[1] I was specially mentioned in General Buller's despatches.[2] I was in charge of a similar corps[3] of 90 Indians at the time of the Zulu Campaign in 1906, and I was specially thanked

[1] *Vide* "Indian Ambulance Corps in Natal", 14-3-1900, "Indian Ambulance Corps", 18-4-1900,"and Speech at Calcutta Meeting", 19-1-1902.

[2] *Ibid*

[3] Indian Stretcher-bearer Corps, *vide* "Indian Stretcher-Bearer Corps", Before 19-7-1906..

by the then Government of Natal, Lastly, I raised the Ambulance Corps in London consisting of nearly 100 students on the outbreak of the present war, and I returned to India in 1915 only because I was suffering from a bad attack of pleurisy brought about while I was undergoing the necessary training.[1] On my being restored to health, I offered my services to Lord Hardinge, and it was then felt that I should not be sent out to Mesopotamia or France, but that I should remain in India. I omit reference to renewals of my offer to Provincial authorities.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

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9. LETTER TO J.L. SMAFFEY

NADIAD,

April 30, 1918

DEAR MR. MAFFEY,

I would like you please to read the letter to the Viceroy and wire to me at Nadiad whether His Excellency has any reason why it may not be published.[2] It is intended to counteract forces of darkness. I am simply besieged with inquiries as to my position. The people are befogged. Dame rumour is doing all the mischief she can. I want to overtake her. You will forgive me for my apparent impatience.

The other enclosure[3] contains my offer. You will do with it what you like. I would like to do something which Lord Chelmsford would consider to be real war work. I have an idea that, if I became your recruiting agent-in-chief, I might rain men on you. Pardon me for the impertinence.

The Viceroy looked pale yesterday. My whole heart went out to him as I watched him listening to the speeches. My God watch over

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Abdurrahman", 1-10-1914 to "Letter to C. Roberts", 16-10-1914 & "Letter to G.K. Gokhale", 26-11-1914.

[2] On May 2, Maffey telegraphed to Gandhiji: "You may publish letter at your own discretion. No authority for doing so should be quoted."

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

and protect him and you, his faithful and devoted Secretary. I feel you are more than a secretary to him.

Yours sincerely,

M.K. GANDHI

PS. The Reverend Mr. Ireland of St. Stephen's College has kindly offered to deliver this letter into your hands.

M.K.G.

N.A.I.: Home, War (Deposit): October 1918, No. 26

10. LETTER TO SIR WILLIAM VINCENT

April 30, 1918

DEAR SIR WILLIAM VINCENT,

I ruffled you on Sunday. But I really came to further the object for which you have overworked yourself. I merely came to tell you that the release of the Brothers Ali was calculated to encourage recruiting. If I did not believe this, it would have been sinful for me to expect you to give me a single minute of your time.

You asked me whether I had brought the authorities a single recruit. I suggest to you that it was not a fair question and one might truly serve the Empire and yet not bring a single recruit.

I hope you will not resent this letter, but accept it as an honest explanation of a visit which you so hastily misunderstood.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

11. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE[1]

DELHI,
April 30 [*1918*]

DEAR GURUDEV,

Much as I should like to keep Mr. Andrews with me a little longer, I feel sure that he must leave for Calcutta tonight. I know you want his soothing presence by you whilst you are keeping indifferent health. And you must have him while you need him. We are on the threshold of a mighty change in India. I would like all the pure forces to be physically present in the country during the process of her new

[1] Gandhiji sent this letter to Tagore through Andrews, after he heard that the two were to go abroad.

birth. If therefore you would at all find rest anywhere in India, I would ask you and Mr. Andrews to remain in the country and kindly to lend me Mr. Andrews now and then. His guidance at times is most precious to me.

Mr. Ambalal has asked me to say that he will welcome you and your company as his honoured guests in his bungalow at Matheran. The season there ends about the middle of June. Mr. Ambalal is also prepared to secure for you accommodation at Ooty if you so wish. I suggest that it would be better if you come and stay at Matheran for the time being and then decide whether you will pass the rest of the hot season at Ooty.

I do hope you will soon recover from the nervous strain you are suffering from.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 2291

12. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

NADIAD,

[*April-May, 1918*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

The letter from Limbdi is encouraging. What I advise is that you should, yourself go to Limbdi and, having taught them the work, post someone else, if necessary. I am sure in my mind that you should now stir out. If you feel like it, you may leave Limbdi occasionally for a day or two and go to the Ashram. Ultimately, we can put Mama there, if we find it necessary. It won't be possible to teach everything in a month and you will be able to tell them so, or explain it to them, after going there. I would advise you to get Shivlal to come over to us, offering him, even, something more by way of pay. When you go, you can see his father in Wadhwan and pacify him. Explain to him that the Ashram is not for turning everyone into good-for-nothing mendicants. Give him names and other particulars of persons in the Ashram who are earning. If Shivlal comes over, it will be easier for you to leave the place. I should like you to go to Limbdi, whatever the difficulties. It will be better if you take Ba with you. She will look after your meals and will also do some work among the women.

Santok certainly cannot go now. She will mind the accounts and look after the girls. If you have not sent a spinning-wheel to Anasuyabehn by now, please do so. It is time we started spinning in the Ashram. This can be done only after you have paid a visit to Vijapur and seen the thing for yourself. Is respected Khushalbhai fit enough to join any of the activities? Would he like to? Devbhabhi may also be made to take interest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the handwritten original in Gujarati: C. W. 5729. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

13. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

[ON THE TRAIN,]

May 1, 1918

I got your letter in Delhi. What shall I write to you ? Everyone acts according to his nature. The true end of all effort in life is to gain control over the impulses of one's nature; that is dharma. Your faults will be forgotten if you make this effort. Since you are emphatic that you did not commit the theft, I may believe you but the world will not. Bear the world's censure and be more careful in future. You should give up your notion of what the world means. Your world is your employer. Have no fear if you are tried in a court of law. If you take my advice, do not engage a lawyer. Explain everything to the advocate on the other side.

You had in your hand a diamond which you have thrown away, thanks to your rash and impatient nature. You are no child. Not a little have you tasted of the good things of life. If you have had enough Of that, turn back. Don't lose heart. If you are speaking the truth, don't lose your faith in it. There is no God but Truth. One's virtues are no dead matter but are all life. It is a thoughtless and self-willed life you have lived so far. I should like you to bring wisdom and discipline into it.

As things happened, I have done something very big in Delhi.[1] You will find some account of it in the papers. I have no time to write about it. Mahadev will find some time to do so. He was an eyewitness

[1] The reference is obviously to his part in the War Conference.

to it all. He has taken your place, but the wish that it had been you refuses still to die. I would have died broken-hearted if I had no other sons. Even now, if you wish to be an understanding son without displacing anyone who has made himself such to me, your place is assured.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

14. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

[BOMBAY,

May 3, 1918]

Your "No" had a real value to me. The "Ayes" had no value at all.[1]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

15. SPEECH AT ANTYAJ CONFERENCE, BIJAPUR[2]

May 5, 1918

Before moving the resolution extending support to the Congress-League Scheme and recommending to the Government to recognize the place of *Antyajas*, Gandhiji asked twice:

How many *Antyajas* are present at this meeting?

Finding that there was none, he said, in Hindi:

Why are we wasting our time here, then, keeping awake till this hour of twelve? We are like the parrot endlessly repeating *Narayana*,

[1] At a Bombay meeting, Sastri raised a point of order against moving a resolution on the Kheda Satyagraha on the ground that seven days' notice of the resolution had not been given. Gandhiji offered, in that case, to withdraw the resolution. All except Sastri said they did not want this to be done; Sastri regretted he could not agree to the resolution. It was dropped.

[2] This was the second Depressed Classes Mission Conference. B. S. Kamat presided.

Narayana. I would advise Bhai Shinde[1] to give up calling such conferences and to engage himself in some solid work. We can purge ourselves of the sin of untouchability only through purity of heart. Genuine feeling alone will ensure results, not any unnatural efforts. We pass resolution after resolution for the removal of untouchability, but the result has been nil. To prevent the unanimous passage of the resolution, one gentleman argued that the Conference will serve no practical purpose. I say the same thing.

When I read out the resolution recommending acceptance of the Congress-League Scheme, I had hoped that it would be supported by a member of the *Antyaj* community, but there is none here at all. What is then the point of passing it? What weight will it carry with Mr. Montagu? I cannot move it. This Conference has no right to pass such a resolution and, therefore, we cannot bring it up here. It would be enough if we gave up behaving unnaturally and took to straight forward ways. We don't observe the *varnashram*. The Brahmin has given up his dharma, the Kshatriya and the Vaisya theirs, and we cling to what is no part of our religion. We are not fit for swaraj

What should they who demand swaraj do for the *Antyajas*? Our friends like Lord Sydenham are bound to put this question to us, and in reply we shall have to hang our heads in shame. He who demands swaraj must give swaraj to others. It is a principle in law that he who seeks justice should render it to others. I would ask you to give up all this play-acting and in all sincerity of heart offer prayers at this midnight hour so that our sinfulness, our hardness of heart, may disappear.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] V. R. Shinde

16. REPLY T0 GOVERNMENT PRESS NOTE ON KHEDA CRISIS[1]

[AHMEDABAD,]

May 6, 1918

The Government Press Note[2] on the Kaira trouble is remarkable for the sins both of omission and commission. As to the paragraph devoted to Messrs Parikh and Patel's investigations, I wish only to say that, at the interview with His Excellency the Governor, the Commissioner challenged the accuracy of their statements. I Immediately suggested the appointment of a committee of inquiry. Surely, it was the most proper thing that the Government could have done, and the whole of the unseemly executions, the removal of the cultivators' milch cattle and their ornaments, the confiscation orders, could have been avoided. Instead, as the Press Note says, they posted a Collector "of long experience". What could he do? The best of officials have to move in a vicious circle. They have to carry out the traditions of a service which has made of prestige a fetish and which considers itself to be almost infallible, and rarely admits its mistakes.

With reference to the investigation by Mr. Devdhar and his co-workers, the Press Note leaves on the reader the impression that the Commissioner had responded to their suggestions. At the interview at which I was present he challenged the report they had submitted to him and said distinctly that, whatever relief he granted would not be granted because of the report, which, he said in substance, was not true in so far as it contained any new things, and was not new in so far as it contained any true statements.

I cannot weary the public with the tragedy in the Matar Taluqa. In certain villages of the Taluqa which are affected; by the irrigation canals, they have a double grievance: (1) the ordinary failure of crops by reason of the excessive rainfall, and (2) the total destruction of crops by reason of overflooding. In the second case, they are entitled to full remission. So far as I am aware, in many cases it has not been granted.

[1] A brief summary of the statement appeared earlier in *New India* on May 6.

[2] This was issued on April 24.

It is not correct to say that the Servants of India Society stopped investigation in the Thasra Taluqa because there was no case for inquiry, but because they deemed it unnecessary, so their report says, as I had decided to inquire into the crops of almost every village.

The Press Note is less than fair in calling my method of inquiry "Utopian". I do adhere to my contention that, if the cultivators statements may be relied upon, my method cannot but yield absolutely reliable results. Who should know better than the cultivator himself the yield of his crops? I refuse to believe that lakhs of men could conspire to tell an untruth when there was no great gain in view and suffering a certainty. It is impossible for thousands of men to learn by heart figures as to the yield—actual and probable—of even ten crops so that the total in each case would give less than a four-anna crop. I contend that my method contains automatic safeguards against deception. Moreover, I had challenged the official *annawari* alike of *kharif* and *rabi* crops. When I did so, the *rabi* crops were still standing. I had, therefore, suggested that they could cut the *rabi* crops and test the yield and thus find the true *annawari*. I had suggested this specially of Vadthal. My argument was that if the cultivators' *annawari* of such *rabi* crops was found to be correct and the officials' wrong, it was not improper to infer that the cultivators' valuations regarding the *kharif* crops were also right. My offer was not accepted. I may add that I had asked to be allowed to be present when the Collector visited Vadthal which was taken as a test village. This request was also not accepted.

The Note is misleading inasmuch as it states that, in arriving at my *annawari*, I have not taken into account the *rabi* crops or the cotton crop. I have taken these crops into account. I have simply questioned the logic of the official system. The reason is obvious. If out of a population of one thousand men, only two hundred men grew *rabi* crops, it would be highly unjust to the eight hundred men to force up their *annawari* if without the *rabi* crops their crops showed only four annas or under.

I am surprised at the gross inaccuracies in the paragraph devoted to the crops in Limbasi. In the first instance, I was not present when the official inquiry was made, and in the second instance the wheat, which is valued at Rs. 13,445, included wheat also from two neighbouring villages, so that out of the crops estimated at Rs. 13,445 three assessments had to be paid. And what are Rs. 13,445 in a

population of eighteen hundred men? For the matter of that, I am prepared to admit that the Limbasi people had a rice crop which too gave them as many rupees. At the rate of forty rupees per head per year to feed a man, the Limbasi people would require Rs. 72,000 for their food alone. It may interest the public to know that, according to the official *annawari*, the Limbasi wheat alone should have been worth Rs. 83,021. This figure has been supplied to me by the Collector. To demonstrate the recklessness with which the Press Note has been prepared, I may add that if the Limbasi people are to be believed, the whole of the wheat crop was on the threshing floor. According to their statements, nearly one-third was foreign wheat. The Limbasi wheat, therefore, would be under Rs. 9,000. The official *annaweri* is ten annas. Now, according to the actual yield, the wheat *annawari* of Limbasi was eleven annas as against the official ten annas. Moreover, a maund of wheat per *bigha* is required as seed and the Limbasi cultivators had 3,000 (Rs. 3 per maund equals Rs. 9,000) maunds of wheat on 1965 *bighas*; i.e., the wheat crop was a trifle over the seed. Lastly, whilst the crop was under distraint, I had offered to the Collector to go over to Limbasi myself and to have it weighed so that there might be no question of the accuracy or otherwise of the cultivators' statement. But the Collector did not accept my offer. Therefore, I hold that the cultivators' figures must be accepted as true.

Merely to show how hopelessly misleading the Press Note is, I may state that the Gujarat Sabha did not pass a resolution advising passive resistance. Not that it would have shirked it, but I felt myself that passive resistance should not be the subject of a resolution in a Sabha whose constitution was governed by the rule of majority, and so the Gujarat Sabha resolution left it open to individual members to follow their own bent of mind. It is true that most of the active members of the Sabha are engaged in the Kaira trouble.

I must repudiate totally the insinuation that I dissuaded payment by people who wished to pay. The figures given in the Press Note showing the collection in the different talukas, if they prove anything, prove that the hand of the law has hit them hard and that the fears of the *ravanias* and the *talatis* have proved too strong for them. When after confiscation and sales under execution the Government show a clean bill and no arrears, will they contend that there was no case for relief or inquiry?

I admit that the suspension is granted as a matter of grace and

not as a matter of right enforceable by law, but the concession is not based on caprice, but is regulated by properly defined rules, and the Government do not contend that if the crops had been under four annas, they could have withheld suspensions. The sole point throughout has been the difference as to *annawari*. If it is true that, in granting concessions, the Government take into account also other circumstances, e.g., in the words of the Press Note, "the general economic situation's, suspension is doubly necessary this year because of the plague and high prices. The Collector told me definitely that he could not take this last into account. He could grant suspension only under the rules which had reference only to crops and nothing else.

I think I have shown enough here to warrant a committee of inquiry and I submit that, as a matter of principle, it would be worth while granting the inquiry even if one cultivator remains with an arrear against him, because there is nothing found to attach and the Government might be reluctant to sell his lands. The people have challenged the accuracy of *talatis* figures. In some cases there are *talatis* themselves ready to come forward to show that they were asked to put up the *annawari* found by them. But if the inquiry is now held to be unnecessary,[1] why do the Government not grant suspension, especially when, admittedly, there is only a small number left to collect from and more especially when, if suspension is granted, well-to-do cultivators are ready to pay.

It is evident now that Government have surrendered the question of principle for which the Commissioner has stood.

The Viceroy has appealed for the sinking of domestic differences. Is the appeal confined only to the *raiyats* or may the officials also yield to the popular will, when the popular demand is not immoral or unjust and thus produce contentment?

If distress means starvation, I admit that the Kaira people are not starving. But if sale of goods to pay assessment or to buy grain for

[1] The Government note said: "The Government regret their inability to accept the pressing request which Mr. Gandhi and others are making for an indep-endent inquiry. The agriculturists really cannot claim to have the land revenue suspended or remitted. They can only ask for relief as a matter of concession; but even if we were to assume that the Government is prepared to appoint such a committee it is clear that such an inquiry can be of little use, for final authority must vest in the Land Revenue Department."

food be an indication of distress, there is enough of it in the District. I am prepared to show that hundreds have paid their assessment either by incurring debts or by selling their trees, cattle or other valuables. The most grievous omission in the Press Note, however, is that of the fact that collections are being made in a vindictive spirit. The cultivators are being taught a lesson for their contumacy so called. They are under threat to lose their lands worth 3 crores of rupees for an assessment of 4 lakhs of rupees. In many cases a quarter of the assessment has been exacted as a penalty. Is there not in the above narrative room for a doubt that the officials may be in the wrong?

New India, 9-5-1918

17. SPEECH AT BOMBAY PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE

[BIJAPUR,
May 6, 1918][1]

Mahatma Gandhi made a vigorgus speech in support of his resolution on the indenture system at the second day's sitting of the Bombay Provincial Conference. Mr. Gandhi moved:

This Conference emphatically urges that nothing short of a complete abolition of the indenture system of recruitment of labour in any form will meet the evils of the system which is a form of slavery which socially and politically debases the labourers and is detrimental to the economic and moral interests of this country.

Mr. Gandhi spoke in Hindi and giving a resume of the indenture system referred to the degrading effects which it had produced on our people in the Colonies. He also described how it had lowered India and Indians in the estimation of the European peoples. He condemned the Inter-Departmental Committee's recommendations on this question and said in an emphatic manner that the system should go once for all and that no reservations whatsoever should be made.

Young India, 8-5-1918

[1] The Conference, according to Bombay Secret Abstracts was held from May 5 to 8 at Bijapur. Vithalbhai Patel presided.

18. SPEECH AT ANTYAJ CONFERENCE, BIJAPUR

May 6, 1918

I have committed a serious indiscretion. A friend came and said that I was unnecessarily creating a disturbance in Bijapur which is divided into two camps. I did not know the real position. I have not come to throw the apple of discord and to exacerbate the feelings of the parties.

Lokamanya Tilak must be here to guide you and me. I am but a child of three in politics. I have yet to see, to consider, and to learn things. I apologize for creating this disturbance. In common meetings one may explain his views thoroughly freely without being charged with the idea of creating a disturbance. As I propose to put into practice the programme I have mapped out, I should not be anxious to ascertain the feeling running in all parts of India. But as you are all come here with preconceived notions, I cannot discuss my position here. I would like to exchange views and understand your feelings and deciding motives and reach the backs of your minds. But I shall prefer to come here in a calmer atmosphere and shall only then come to steel your hearts when we are not cramped with resolutions before us. I think Mr. Kelkar has taken the most reasonable position and that, at this stage, we must accept the Congress Committee's resolution.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

19. LETTER T0 MAHADEV DESAI[1]

[NADIAD,]

May 9, 1918

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I never dreamt that you would so completely misunderstand what I said out of boundless confidence in you. I did expect that, because you are so much attached to me, it would be something of a shock to you to have to go to Champaran. But how could you possibly imagine that, thinking you unworthy, I had found this

[1] This was in reply to Mahadev Desai's letter of May 8, remonstrating against Gandhiji's wish that the former proceed to Champaran.

indirect way of getting rid of you? I thought you were the only person who could come up to my expectations and, therefore, I suggested your going to Champaran. I believed that the work at Badharwa was not beyond the capacity of Durga. Maybe I was wrong in my estimate. At present, I shall only tell you, for your peace of mind, that all your guesses are wrong. It was my respect for the capacity of you both which prompted me to make the suggestion. I have told both Raojibhai and Devdas that I would be hard put to it without your help. You have made yourself indispensable to me. I meant what I wrote to Polak. You have not disappointed me. It is for your efficiency and your character that I have chosen you to help me in my political work and you have not disappointed me. Add to this the fact that you can cook *khichdi*[1] for me, with so much love. More, when we meet.

[From Gujarati]

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20. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

[SABARMATI,]
May 11, 1918

MY DEAR ESTHER,

I have your letter. I shall—we shall look forward to your coming to the Ashram during Xmas. The main buildings will then have been ready and the weather will be delightful.

I hope you have read my letter[2] to the Viceroy as also my letter[3] in reply to Mr. Pratt's speech. They contain in the briefest form my views on Government and the philosophy of life, and the one to the Viceroy shows in the vividest form the view I take of the law of love and suffering. Passive Resistance expresses the idea in the crudest form. Indeed, I dislike the phrase as a weapon of the weak. It totally misrepresents the law of love. Love is the epitome of strength. Love flows the freeliest [*sic*] only when there is entire absence of fear. Punishments of the loved ones are like balm to the soul.

Will you not try an absolute fast for your liver? You may drink

[1] Boiled rice with pulses, vegetables, etc.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 29-4-1918.
[3] *Vide* "Letter to *The Bombay Chronicle*", 15-4-1918.

boiled water copiously and, if that is not enough, you may drink orange juice diluted with water. If you feel weak and faint, lie in bed, better still take a cold hip bath, i.e., sit in a tub with your legs and the upper part of the body out of water. It is most invigorating. There is nothing like fasting for liver complaints.

Yours sincerely

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

21. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

SABARMATI,

May 12 [*1918*][1]

DEAR MR. NATESAN,

Here is my speech[2].

I consider myself honoured to find my name among the supporters of this resolution. I realize fully its meaning and I tender my support to it with all my heart. I had your note with the Rs. 100. You do not now need any reply to the note!

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 2225

22. SPEECH AT DHUNDAKUVA[3]

May 13, 1918

Mahatmaji began to address the people by saying that the result of their struggle was a nearly complete, if not a complete, victory inasmuch as Mr. Pratt had not been able to execute his threats and carry out his vow. He divided vows into two classes, viz., divine and devilish. Those vows were divine which could not be broken and should be carried out even at the cost of life, and which could stand resistance. Devilish vows were those that required ever to be resisted. A satyagrahi made it his

[1] The speech was the one Gandhiji made at the Man-Power Committee of the War Conference on April 28, 1918.

[2] The speech was the one Gandhiji made at the Man-Power Committee of the War Conference on April 28, 1918.

[3] A village in Borsad taluka

business to offer his resistance to such vows every time and everywhere. And Mr. Pratt's was such a vow, that is, of the devilish type. Mr. Pratt had always been respected by him (the speaker), and he was no bad officer, but those who were not bad officers sometimes committed serious blunders. Mr. Pratt's object was to punish the agriculturists for their disobedience of Government's authority, but he could not punish them as he chose the devilish means.[1] The whole district was now fired with a spirit that was never in the people before. They had awakened to a sense of their rights. Mahatmaji explained to them that in defending themselves against oppression by passive resistance to it, they had blessed the oppressor also, just as Prahlad by his passive resistance blessed his oppressive father. Had Mr. Pratt been allowed to execute his threat, the whole nation would have raised a cry of horror, and Mr. Pratt would no doubt see some day that he was luckily spared that catastrophe.

Before concluding, he said he could not omit to refer to one painful incident that had been brought to his notice. He had been told that the *mukhi* in Dabhasi was using his evil influence to persuade people to evade the effects of attachments by keeping money easily accessible to attaching officers. It was, Mahatmaji said, incredible that people could be so simply deluded. It was nothing short of voluntary mischief on the people's part, and calculated to spoil the whole movement.

We will respect the officers, but we won't assist them; we will give them food and shelter, but surely we will not voluntarily point out to them the things to be attached. He who believes that he can evade the effects of attachment by keeping ready things for being attached, has missed the whole spirit of the struggle.

The Dabhasi incident, he repeated, had shocked him, and he hoped it would nowhere be repeated. One thing more he would add in conclusion. He had heard that revenue officers had to go without food and water from some places. He would like to suggest that passive resistance did not mean molestation of others, but simple and pure voluntary suffering. He feelingly concluded by observing that there ought not to be a single house or village which belonged to a satyagrahi where there was not the practice of truth in word and deed, where no sweet words were spoken, and where one had to go away without food and shelter.

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-5-1918

[1] During the month, Government resorted increasingly to confiscation of land for realization of revenue arrears; but later, forfeiture of land was largely set aside and dues realized through auction of movable property.

23. LETTER T0 HANUMANTRAO

[KATHLAL,]

May 15, l9I8

The *Hindu* comments on Mr. Shastriar's speech[1] are damnable and I think that the best answer to them is not to notice them. Mr. Kasturi Ayyangar[2] is a man who is not to be convinced by any appeal to reason or sense of justice. He has his own notions and he sticks to them with an obstinacy I have rarely seen in any other man. Those who know Mr. Shastriar are not affected by the *Hindu* comments. Those for whom Mr. Kasturi Ayyangar's word is gospel truth will listen to no correction. His (Shastriar's) unapproachable character and his scholarly attainments may be trusted to take care of themselves and to bear down in the end the obsession of his bitterest enemies. I think Mr. Shastriar will give a good account of himself when anyone else is weighed in the balance and found wanting and I think he knows this and he is supremely happy in the consciousness of it. You and I, therefore, have no cause to feel perturbed over the vagaries of Mr. Kasturi Ayyangar or for that matter of anybody else. But all of us have to conspire and, if possible, compel him to look after his body which I hold is not beyond repair.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai:

24. LETTER TO DABHOLKAR

May 15, 1918

I have your letter. I am grateful to you for writing to me so frankly. There is not a trace of "policy" in my letter.[3] I wrote what I believe to be true, every word of it. You have summed up my ideas perfectly. I do believe that, if we were to sacrifice ourselves silently in our thousands, swaraj would be ours today. If you could not see how this can be even after reading that letter of mine, it is hardly possible

[1] Delivered at the War Conference

[2] Kasturi Ranga Ayyangar, editor of *The Hindu*

[3] *Vide* ''Letter to J. L. Maffey", 30-4-1918.

for me to explain it in this one. I would, therefore, request you to read that letter repeatedly and to ponder over every word of it till you have understood it. The effort will not go unrewarded. I did not write that letter in a hurry. I took great pains over it and wrote it in perfect sincerity and entirely out of my love for the country. I think my *tapascharya* must be still imperfect if the letter is not clear enough or seems to lend itself to two interpretations. If the country understands my plan and carries it out, I am sure it embraces everything, swaraj and many other things besides. To say that we shall fight [in the war] after swaraj is granted seems, to me at any rate, to betray complete ignorance of the meaning of swaraj. I do not admit that, as a representative of the people, I am in duty bound to place before the public all the letters that I write to the Viceroy. All through my life, there have been a good many, and to my mind important, actions of mine in my representative capacity which have remained, and will ever remain, unknown. My first letter[1] to His Excellency the Viceroy was meant for him alone. I cannot give publicity to the views which I expressed to him as to a gentleman and a friend. To publish the courteous but bitter language used in that letter would be inviting mischief. I have given publicity to such part of my conversation with him as would bear being made public. My second letter relates to what I intend to do and, in comparison to the first one, is not very important.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

25. LETTER TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

May 15, 1918

As for the struggle in Kheda, what shall I say? It is a very big one. No one is prepared to believe that this agitation can be carried on only with two or three thousand rupees by way of travelling and other expenses. I asked them to return the sums, which had been collected, about Rs. 25,000 and I find I have to refuse offers of money from many quarters. If I accept money, the struggle will lose its purity; dishonesty will creep in and the people will fall morally. By not accepting contributions, I have saved myself from all this and have

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 29-4-1918.

been able to keep the fight clean. The whole of India has watched and appreciated this fight. It has been a matter of regret to me that Shastriar has not done so. He will, in course of time. He is a man of noble soul and I have no fears, therefore. I have no doubt whatever that the fight is justified,

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

26. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

NADIAD,

Vaishakh Sud [On or before *May 16, 1918*][1]

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I spoke to Panditji at length about you. He said that he would soon send for you and accommodate you somewhere. Will you be ready? He will not give less than Rs. 200/- for a start.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 11269. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

27. SPEECH AT SANDESAR[2]

May 16, 1918

The plucky people of this village have shown great courage. The remarkable thing about these gatherings is that women attend them in large numbers and listen to the speeches with great interest. It cannot be said of the Kheda struggle that the men and women do not know what they are doing.

The first duty of a satyagrahi is to ascertain whether he is on the side of truth in what he is about and, if he is assured of that, he should fight for it even at the cost of his life. One who is desirous of giving up his life for the sake of truth is ever ready to do so, when there is occasion to fight for truth. In some of our fights carried on in the

[1] It appears from the contents that this letter was written in 1918. *Vaishakh Sud* corresponds to the period covering May 11 to May 25. During this period Gandhiji was in Nadiad on May 11, 12 and 16.

[2] This has been collated with a Gujarati report in *Kheda Satyagraha*.

name of satyagraha, the reason of our failure lies in our not sticking to the truth on all occasions. They cannot be called satyagrahis who talk of truth, but do not translate it into their actions. They know the value of truth and yet, on occasions, they are not on the path of truth. Those who fight for justice must ever be ready to do justice to others. One has to be true in thoughts as well as in acts. All scriptures say that he who wishes to enter the Temple of Justice must become pure himself. Just as we should enter a temple only after taking a bath and with holy thoughts in the mind, so also, it is only a man of a pure mind who can enter the Temple of Justice. It is a divine law that none with a profane mind may enter there. Those who would have justice should deal out justice to others. That is the first duty of a satyagrahi.

At Agas station, Vallabhbhai handed me a note. If what he said in it is true, I am afraid we show no regard for justice. In that note, members of the *Dhed*[1] community had complained that, for four years, the village people had not given them any part of their share [of the produce]. I do not know whether the complaint is justified or not. If it is, the matter should be settled immediately. Since we demand justice for ourselves, I would request you to do justice to others. I was telling someone this morning that the people of Kheda were happy with this struggle because it was an opportunity for them to rise. We are, at the moment, fighting the Administration and believe that God is on our side. We now refuse our free services to Government officers. We tell *Kumbhars*[2], *Dheds* and *Bhangis* that they need not work so. Even if they offer to pay those who are agreeable may work, others may not. Even if scavengers, potters and barbers are offered the fullest payment, they may or may not serve, as they please; they have a right to decide. If we, too, acknowledge this right of theirs, we shall have qualified ourselves for full swaraj. We may succeed in overthrowing this Government, but, assuming in our arrogance that none dare overthrow us, we shall have taken the tyrant's place ourselves. Some Englishmen tell me that I shall have to regret what I am teaching the people. But I am perfectly clear in my mind about this and I see no error in what I am doing. I am convinced that I have given the right advice to the people so far. What I tell them about their duty to the Government, I would not hesitate to tell one section of the community about its duty to any other. Even if that should cost me my head, I

[1] One of the communities regarded as untouchables

[2] Potters

would not give up truth. As my head is at the disposal of the Government, so also is it at the disposal of the people. When the people abuse their authority over the poor and oppress them, I would advise the poor to resort to satyagraha and not to leave the path of justice. That is the only road to happiness. The weapon that has fallen into your hands is invaluable. No one can stand against it. One who has realized the beauty of it would firmly say that there is no other religion but that of truth. I have already told you that we have won. This struggle is not for the suspension of land revenue only. If it were so, that could have been obtained long ago. In this struggle, there is much more than that. Even Mr. Pratt admits that this struggle is not for suspension of land revenue only, but it involves the interests of thirty crores of people. It is a struggle between the will of the people and the prestige of officials. We must, by now, realize that the authority of Government is nothing before that of the people. No government has ever yet come into existence which could successfully resist the will of the people. When the people are determined to get their rights, they will have them. We do not want to be discourteous and, at the same time, we would not be slaves. A satyagrahi will never forget his manners, nor give up his point; he will not send away a Government officer unfed. He will offer him water, food and accommodation and thus show his nobility. The Government officer has become our guest and, therefore, whether friend or foe, we should treat him with courtesy. He can take away nothing from us against our will. When any of them arrives to execute an order of attachment, it is not for us to place our jewellery and our household utensils before him. If he finds anything of ours and has it attached, we should keep calm and not give way to fear. Justice and truth are to be weighed against money. I would appeal to you to understand all this.

This is a struggle for self-government. We wish that we may get it. But what is the use of that authority in the hands of the weak and the emasculated ? The dead body is unable to make use of the sword in its hand, or of the heap of corn placed before it. So a worthless man is unable to do anything. Such a man has no right to eat. It is said in the *Gita* that he who eats without performing *yajna* is a thief. The meaning of a *yajna* is that the body is for the people, for God. It means that one should sacrifice one's self and give up one's all. That is the real *yajna*. He who eats without performing *mahayajna* is a thief. No authority could ever tyrannize over a nation that has understood this. If the true meaning of this saying could blend with

our blood and flow in our veins, we have nothing else to win. Then we have won everything. Satyagraha is a celestial weapon. That man only can fittingly hold it who possesses manliness and courage. If we all act up to it after having well understood it, it will be said of India that this is not a land of cowards but of thirty crores of gods.

28. LETTER TO RAMBHAU GOGATE

SATYAGRAHASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Vaishakh Sud 6 [May 17, 1918]

BHAISHRI RAMBHAU GOGATE,

Kotwal's sister may come now, if she feels like it. But the heat here is so great these days that it will be terrifying to any one who has been living in Indore. I would therefore advise her to come after June 15. The rains will start soon after that and the air will be a little cooler, or humid at any rate. At present, the sky pours down heat and scorching winds are blowing at all hours. When she comes [in June], Ba will be here and she will assuredly have her company. I am writing this letter after consulting Ba. I hope she has made herself familiar with the customary diet here and the routine of life, etc.

Vandematram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 3614

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-5-1918

29. LETTER T0 J. L. MAFFEY

ON THE TRAIN,
May 18, 1918

In full confidence that the request contained in my letter of the 29th[1] will be accepted, I am busy making recruiting preparations. But I shall not commence work before I have your reply.[2]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

30. LETTER T0 MAGAGANLAL GANDHI

NEARING AGRA,
[May *18, 1918*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have made you thoroughly miserable; my intention, however, was to soothe you. Harshness is conquered by gentleness, hatred by love, lethargy by zeal and darkness by light. Your love flows in driblets; but, as a mere drizzle of rain goes to waste, so, I see, does love oftentimes. It is a heavy downpour of rain which drenches the soil to fullness; likewise, only a profuse shower of love overcomes hatred. Where you go wrong is in expecting justice. Go on doing justice yourself. Love is not love which asks for a return. If one were overflowing with love oneself, where could one store the love others might give? This is the hidden significance of seeing all as one. When Mira felt the stab of love, she was one with God. This is the principle of *advaita* in actual practice. Follow as much of this as you can; keep cheerful at any rate.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5728. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 29-4-1918.

[2] Maffey sent extracts from his correspondence with Gandhiji to Lord Willingdon, Governor of Bombay, and informed Gandhiji of his action. For Gandhiji's correspondence with the Governor of Bombay, *vide* "Letter to J. Crerar", 30-5-1918.

31. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

[MOTIHARI,]
May 23, 1918

I did not feel moved when I read of Willie's[1] arrest. I sympathize too with the Viceroy's feelings. Why should he [be] called upon to investigate matters of this nature when there is a deadly war going on? Willie and we should meekly suffer. There is no principle at stake in Willie's case. There is no question of race prejudice and none of public feeling. Some must be content to be imprisoned for their views or actions. What is necessary is to correspond with Willie. He will fight his way to freedom, if he needs it. To be anxious about him is to do him injustice. I feel sure that he is happy where he is. I think that public agitation is unnecessary. If you feel like me, you would write a manly letter to the Viceroy for worrying him. I sometimes feel that many of these Englishmen who go through the terrible strain of war without collapsing must be *yogis.* They would be fit for *moksha* if their *yoga* was employed for a better cause.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

32. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

MOTIHARI,
[On or before *May 24, 1918*][2]

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I have talked to Panditji about you. He asked me about the salary you would expect. I suggested Rs. 300/-. I got the impression that he thought the amount a little too high. So I want to ask you what is the minimum you will accept.

Bandemataram from.

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 11270. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1] W. W. Pearson

[2] It appears from the contents that this letter was written in 1918 and after the letter written to the addresses from Nadiad on or before May 16; *vide* the preceding item. Gandhiji was in Motihari on May 20, 21, 23 and 24.

33. LETTER TO HANUMANTRAO

May 25, 1918

What I want you to do is not to sever your connection with the Society[1]; but remaining in the Society do the Hindi work. I would like Mr. Shastriar to permit you to go to Allahabad, stay there a year and learn Hindi fairly well, then return to Madras and side by side with your other work spread a knowledge of Hindi among the Telugu people. The fact of your having studied Hindi will enlarge the scope of your work and enable you if the occasion arose to work among the masses outside the Madras Presidency. I do not know whether you have noticed it. I have. There is almost an unbridgeable gulf between the Dravidians and all the other Indians. The shortest and the most effective bridge is undoubtedly the Hindi language. English can never take its place. When Hindi becomes the common language among the cultured classes the Hindi vocabulary will soon filter down to the masses. There is something undefinable about Hindi which makes it the easiest language to learn and somehow or other there is a licence taken about Hindi grammar such as I have not known to be taken about any other language. The result is that the learning of Hindi becomes largely a matter of memory only. Hence do I say that for doing national work a knowledge of Hindi is an absolute necessity. What can be better than that a member of the Society should give himself a training in Hindi? Mr. Gokhale once told me that he wanted a knowledge of Hindi to be obligatory on the part of all the members and that he wanted Hindi to be the language spoken at the Society's meetings. He added that the Tamilians and especially Mr. Shastriar presented the greatest difficulty. He was too old to learn it !!!

You seem to think of Satyagrahashram as something apart from the Society. But I do not. During the last days of Mr. Gokhale's life on this earth his wish was that I should open a branch in Gujarat and bring to life a province which appeared to be politically dead. It fills me with pride to know that I have played a humble part in carrying out the programme. It is a matter not of much moment that Satyagrahashram for very sound reasons cannot be recognized as a branch. The work is there. In so far as it is good in my estimation the credit is the Society's, the failures are due to my limitations and need

[1] Servants of India Society

not be shared by the Society. When in the fullness of time, I have got over my limitations, the Ashram will merge in the Society. Till then even if you wanted to come to the Ashram I would not admit you except as a loan from the Society. So you see that in thinking of you as a candidate for learning Hindi I have not even conceived the possibility of your severance from the Society.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

34. SPEECH AT PATNA

May 25, 1918

Mr. Gandhi returned from Motihari to attend a meeting in Patna City on the 25th ultimo. While in Champaran, he visited the District Magistrate and Sub-Divisional Officer, Bettiah, and then went on and saw his schools at Shikarpur, Madhuban and Dhakka. While at Motihari, he stayed with Babu Gorakh Prasad. Numbers of ryots visited his camp, but most of them were instructed to take their grievances to their local representatives. His visit caused a mild excitement as usual.

The meeting in Patna over which the Hon'ble Mr. Purnendu Narayan Sinha presided was an unusually crowded one, some 8,000 persons attending including over 300 sadhus. It would seem that the people expected a more fiery speech than the one actually delivered, for the enthusiasm evinced at Mr. Gandhi's arrival waned very low as the speech proceeded.

In his opening remarks he referred to the subject of a universal language in India and hoped that within a few years Hindus would learn Persian and Muhammadans would study Sanskrit, so that the two languages might eventually combine. He then went on to say that he had no time to speak to them regarding affairs in Champaran or"the disgraceful episode at Shahabad, but he would say that mutual goodwill between Muhammadans and Hindus would not be attained by recourse to the Special Tribunals; that was a question of mutual consultation and arrangement. The main subject of his speech was"Our Present Condition". The time had arrived for Indians to make their choice. Such opportunities only come once in the lifetime of a nation. He was addressing his remarks more specially to the educated classes. India had been called on for another army; already some seven or eight lakhs were serving outside India and another five lakhs were to be recruited this year. These persons were paid by Government and earned their living by military service. India could not be proud of them, and derived no benefit from their existence. The self-government that the people were clamouring for was not the self-government that he had in mind. They must have a self-government army, and for this it was incumbent on them to supply the five lakhs that Government wanted without waiting for Government to recruit

them. The advise he gave them was to raise a republican army, and he called on the people"to go along with him and go wherever the Government directed". (At this stage a fairly large number of people quietly slipped away from the meeting). If they did not provide the men, Government would obtain them somehow or other if necessary by enforcing legal compulsion.

Another matter that be wished to speak to them about was the idea that self-government meant the dismissal of the British from India—this was impossible. All they wanted was to become a great partner in the British Empire. A great leader of India had said."We are prepared to fight, but on this condition, that you pledge yourself to grant self-government to India." In his opinion, this was not a straight way of obtaining self-government. He advocated that India should provide the men wanted, and impose no conditions— any calamity that overtakes the Empire is one that overtakes India as well. The English race had two outstanding characteristics, they lived in friendship with those who know how to die and those who know how to kill, and they helped those who helped themselves; they would be of one heart with those who claimed their rights at the very first moment they showed their strength and their determination to obtain these rights. Two essentials are necessary in self-government—power over the army and power over the purse, and that is why he repeatedly said that India's ambition to obtain self-government would be blasted if they missed this opportunity of obtaining military training and assisting the Empire, and thereby obtaining self-government. This opportunity would never come again. Only those who are weak are compelled to think of making conditions—the strong impose no conditions.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1918

35. SPEECH AT KHANDHALI[1]

[*May 27, 1918*]

The men and women of Khandhali have shown great pluck and courage. But . . . just as when a river is overflowed we are not able to use the overflowing water and just as it flows away to the sea in vain, so some of your boldness and courage is also wasted away. When a Government official went to attach her property, a woman let loose her buffalo. She has committed a blunder in so doing, so also the Government officer who struck her with his umbrella. But remember that you must not commit such blunders. A true satyagrahi cannot do so. The first thing to do in any struggle of satyagraha is to stick to

[1] After his return from Motihari, Gandhiji visited Khandhali, a village in Matar taluka, and addressed a public meeting on the significance of satyagraha.

truth. If we make a very subtle definition of truth, it includes many things. But because our definition of truth is rather narrow, we are compelled to add a little to it. In this struggle we are not to oppose anybody, we are not to abuse anybody. If the opponent abuses us, we have to tolerate it. If he gives a blow to us with a stick, we have to bear it without giving a blow in return.

Secondly, a satyagrahi has to be fearless. He has only to perform his duty. You know that so long as we stick to truth, we remain absolutely free from fear. You will always get protection if your dealings will be straightforward. When we are in the wrong, we feel very nervous about us. Those gentlemen who have committed the crime[1] have run away from the village. But you have not run away in the struggle of satyagraha. Always stick to truth; never be mischievous. A satyagrahi will always welcome imprisonment or a warrant, if he has committed a crime. Even if he has not committed it, he should welcome it. What if it is not committed and yet it be proved in Court? The Government has authority over this body, not over the soul. The soul can be conquered through love. A satyagrahi understands this and, therefore, whether he has committed a crime or not, he remains fearless. The gentleman who has removed the cattle unlawfully, will, I hope, admit his mistake and boldly say that he will undergo any punishment that may be ordered for him. Only thus shall you be elevated.

It is no theft if we do not allow our goods to go into the hands of Government officers. So long as they have not fallen in their hands, you can take them to another village, you can bury them, you can remove your cattle and take them anywhere you like. But no sooner are they attached, either by a horde of Government officials or by any one of them, we should not even touch them. We are not going to help Government in attachments, we do not protect our cattle for them, but as soon as any Government officer attaches our buffalo, we have no right to take it back. Brothers and sisters, I appeal to you to act accordingly. It is not our business to speak insolently to officers or to let loose our cattle when they come to us.

The Collector told me that the *raiyats* are very gracefully acting in the struggle, but such tricks as are played by some Khandhali people mar the beauty of the struggle. I beg of you not to do so again. Real bravery lies in receiving rather than in giving blows.

[1] This consisted in letting loose the buffaloes attached by revenue officials.

Yesterday, I was reading my *Gita*. Therein I saw that one of the characteristics of a Kshatriya was *'apalayanam'* ! It means that in face of danger a Kshatriya does not fall back, but, on the contrary, sticks to his post. If our Government will not fight with the Germans as it does now, if our soldiers go and stand before them weaponless and will not use explosives and say,"We will die of your blows", then, I am sure our Government will win the war at once. But such an action requires *samskar* and India possesses most of it. The vegetables that grow in India will not grow properly in England. The seeds of *samskar* will flourish in India. Pure bravery lies in the power of endurance. It is real satyagraha. It is mean to run away in face of danger.

Then he appealed to the gentleman who had committed the crime to admit it and to undergo the punishment that the law might inflict on him. He then asked the *raiyats* to act cautiously but courageously and requested them to be hospitable towards Government officers. Finally he said that they had already attained success in their struggle and congratulated them on their great pluck and courage.

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-6-1918

36. LETTER TO J. KER

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
May 29, 1918

DEAR MR. KER,

I passed yesterday afternoon at Navli. As you may be aware, a boy is being prosecuted under the charge of having devised means of hurting the officials during the performance of their duty. The boy, I am convinced, is utterly innocent. The culprit, I am grieved to say, is a rather important personage, Chaturbhai Patel. He made a clean confession yesterday and gave me authority to disclose the name to you. His excuse is that he was misled into thinking that there would be no attachments on a particular morning but the attachments were there all the same. This excited him and by way of revenge he put stinging nightshade on the quilts that were to be used by the officials. Of course this is no defence at all and I tender my apology for any inconvenience that might have been caused by Chaturbhai's thoughtless action. I believe, as a matter of fact, the officials escaped scot-free and some men of our own party were stung when I came upon the scene, but after the rest of the Navli people joined the struggle, Chaturbhai began to help them. He and the officials are, I am

told, on friendly terms and it is evident that Chaturbhai had planned a practical joke. He is now thoroughly repentent. I suggest withdrawal of prosecution against the boy referred to and I venture to suggest also that no notice be taken of Chaturbhai's action. But if you disagree, Chaturbhai is quite prepared to stand trial. The hearing of the case against the boy is to resume tomorrow.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10690. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

37. LETTER TO J. CRERAR

SABARMATI,
May 30, 1918

DEAR MR. CRERAR[1],

I have just received Mr. Maffey's letter in which he refers me to His Excellency the Governor regarding the offer of my services which I made immediately after the Conference at Delhi.[2] From Mr. Maffey's letter I gather that he sent extracts from the correspondence between him and me to His Excellency. Will you kindly let me know His Excellency's wishes regarding my offer and the suggestions made in my letter to Mr. Maffey in so far as they refer to Kaira?[3]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

India Office Judicial and Public Records: 3412/18

[1] James Crerar, Secretary to the Governor of Bombay

[2] *Vide* "Letter to J.L. Maffey", 30-4-1918.

[3] Acknowledging this letter, Crerar wrote in his reply of June 1: "His Excellency will cordially welcome your co-operation, which he hopes will be directed more particularly to the encouragement of recruiting in the Northern Division, though there will be a wide field for effort in regard to the development of resources and in other directions. Government are at present engaged in working out a scheme for giving effect to the resolution of the Delhi Conference and these measures will be considered at the Conference to be held in Bombay on June 10th. His Excellency hopes that you will be able to attend the Conference and that he will have an opportunity of seeing you personally.

38. LETTER TO MAHATMA MUNSHIRAM

SABARMATI,
Vaishakh Vad 5 [*May 30, 1918*]

DEAR MAHATAMAJI,

I have your affectionate and moving letter. I am late in answering it for lack of time. [Only the other day] in Delhi I was saying to Chi. Indra,"Has Mahatmaji forgotten me?" Two or three days later I got your letter. I was so happy. The land of the Kheda district ryots that had been attached has been given back. They will have little pecuniary loss now. They have gained much strength from this struggle.

Your letter gives me strength. When funds from work run low, I shall certainly remember you.

I hope you have some relief from your pain. May God keep you.

All the members of the Ashram are looking forward to your visit. We shall all become impatient if you exceed the time limit.

All the Ashramites send you their *namaskars.*

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 2207

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at that time. As suggested in you letter of April 30th to Mr. Maffey, he will be glad, when the organizations which will, it is hoped, result from the Conference, have been set on foot, to indicate in more detail the directions in which you services can be most profitably utilized. As regards the revenue situation in Kaira, His Excellency considers that this, like all other questions of internal administration, must be dealt with separately on its merits, and that there should be no confusion of issues in regard to the great and urgent purposes of the Conference, but a whole-hearted and united effort without distinction of race, class or creed. He feels sure that you will concur in this view and by your example and influence support his endeavour to secure the most complete unanimity and co-operation which the present grave crisis requires."

39. LETTER TO J. KER

NADIAD,
May 31, 1918

DEAR MR. KER,

I observe that my two letters regarding the Navli and Khandli[1] incidents have proved misfires. I have failed in driving home the point I wished to make. I appreciate and accept the legal position you have taken up. The parties are being advised to make the necessary confessions before the court. The case I give below is much simpler than the Navli and the Khandli ones. I worry you with it as I have no desire to take any undue advantage of legal plans or to advise the *ryot* wilfully to disregard lawful orders. Bhula Desai owns among others survey No. 711/1 in Nawagam. This has not been declared forfeited in the notice of forfeiture dated the 31st March, 1918 which refers to 591,596 and others. Since the forfeiture notice and that dated the 20th instant had been issued for the sale of onion crop standing in the field, the sale was advertised for the 29th but it did not take place. The holder had meanwhile pointed out the illegality of the notice and had urged that it might be withdrawn. But the Assistant Collector has passed an order dated the 28th instant to the effect that removal of crop would be treated as theft. The onion crop is ready to be cut and may be seriously damaged if the threatening rain pours down. The law seems to me to be on the holders's side. I am therefore advising him to remove the onion crop. I observe too that another notice of the sale of his fields has been issued in common with the fields belonging to other cultivators of Nawagam.

In the circumstances and in view of the fact mentioned by you that the land is not be forfeited, I hope you will consider my advice to be right and proper.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy : C.W. 10692. Courtesy : Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] The letter regarding Khandli is not traceable.

40. LETTER T0 MAGANLAL GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
May, 1918[1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

The Government is fighting a war. It is in difficulties. We, that is to say, the people, want swaraj through its co-operation. We cannot have swaraj until we have made ourselves fit for it. One aspect of this fitness is surely that we should share its burdens. Our object in running the Ashram is to strengthen the character of the inmates. Is it not, then, the duty of the Ashram to offer its help? The end of the war will see us better qualified [for swaraj]. I think we young people should go. One of us will stay behind with the children. Let us know, soon, what you think of this.

Blessings from
BAPU

PS. If we go, we take others as well.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5731. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

41. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

SABARMATI,
Vaishakh Vad 7 [*June 1, 1918*][2]

CHI. RAMDAS,

I very much wish to write to you but cannot do so because of much pressure of work. Two letters from you have remained unanswered. I feel sad when writing to you is delayed. Of course we both think of you everyday.

Today, Ba and Devdas are with me. Devdas's health is excellent. He has grown very strong. As the climate there has suited you, the climate here has suited him. Devo teaches and learns, both. He has got the knack now. He has learnt 9 chapters from the *Gita* by heart and

[1] The day on which this letter was written is not known.

[2] As suggested in the source; *Vaishakh Vad* 7 in the year 1918 corresponded to June 1.

read many books. He is now going to Madras where he will teach Hindi and learn Tamil. He remains quite cheerful. He has become as neat as you are and washes his clothes, too, almost as clean as you do yours.

Ba also keeps quite well. She has changed her nature and become straightforward and pleasing in her ways.

You did well in expressing your views about Mr. West[1] and also in levelling charges against me the way you have done. I am not displeased but I think your charges are not justified. Mr. West is not proud and he has not left the Press. What Manilal did. . .[2]

I see that you are still not at peace. When you get tired of the place, come over here. But you can do so only if Manilal does not need your help. Remain there as long as it suits you . . . .[3] I wish that you return having earned enough and having made your body sufficiently strong.

Miss Schlesin must be very fine. Tell her that I am eagerly waiting for a letter from her. Have you met Mr. Philips? Let me know the names of all the persons whom you have met. Tell me all about what you have learnt and what you feel you have learnt only half as well as you should have liked to do.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Albert West, Gandhiji's co-worker who looked after *Indian Opinion* on the Phoenix Farm

[2] The rest of the paragraph is illegible.

[3] One sentence here is illegible.

42. LETTER TO J. L. MAFFEY

SABARMATI,
June 1, 1918

DEAR MR. MAFFEY[1],

I thank you for your letter of the 21st ultimo which was redirected here from Motihari. I have already placed myself in correspondence with His Excellency Lord Willingdon[2].

You told me in Delhi that probably in a month's time the brothers Ali might be discharged.[3] It is now a trifle more than a month. Would you please let me know whether I might look forward to their release at an early date?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Chelmsford Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

43. LETTER TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"[4]

SABARMATI,
June 2, 1918

THE EDITOR
THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE

SIR,

I offer no apology for seeking the hospitality of your columns for the enclosed extracts from *Indian Opinion*. They deal with the well-being of over two lakhs of emigrants from India. Mr. Ahmed Mohammed Cachalia, the esteemed President of the British Indian Association of Johannesburg, has sent from that place the following cablegram regarding one of the matters referred to in the extracts:

> Mass meeting, fifth, strongly protested section nineteen Railway Regulations. Resolved cable supporters India. Regulations impose statutory

[1] Private Secretary to the Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford
[2] Then Governor of Bombay; *vide* "Letter to J. Crerar", 30-5-1918.
[3] *Ibid*
[4] This was published under the caption, "Anti-Indian Legislation in South Africa". The letter appears to have been released generally to the Press.

colour bar in regard to issue of tickets, placing in, and removing from compartments, occupation of place on station platforms, empower minor officials remove without assigning reason. Please make suitable representation appropriate quarters. Community unanimous assert rights unless relief sought granted.

Mr. Cachalia was one of the staunchest workers during the passive resistance campaign that raged for eight years in South Africa. During that campaign, he reduced himself to poverty, and accepted imprisonment for the sake of India's honour. One can, therefore, easily understand what is meant by the words"Community unanimous assert rights unless relief sought granted." It is not a threat, it is the burning cry of distress felt by a community whose self-respect has been injured.

It is evident that the white people of South Africa have not been visibly impressed by the war which is claimed to be waged for the protection of the ryots or weaker or minor nationalities. Their prejudice against colour is not restrained even by the fact that local Indians have raised a volunteer bearer corps which is gallantly serving in East Africa with the column that was taken to East Africa by General Smuts.

The problem is difficult—it is complex. Prejudices cannot be removed by legislation. They will yield only to patient toil and education. But what of the Union Government? It is feeding the prejudice by legalizing it. Indians would have been content if the popular prejudice had been left to work itself out, care being taken to guard against violence on either side. Indians of South Africa could not complain even against a boycott on the part of the whites. It is there already. In social life, they are completely ostracized. They feel the ostracism, but they silently bear it. But the situation alters when the Government steps in and gives legal recognition to the anti-colour campaign. It is impossible for the Indian settlers to submit to an insulting restraint upon their movements. They will not allow booking clerks to decide as to whether they are becomingly dressed. They cannot allow a platform inspector to restrict them to a reserved part of the platform. They will not, as if they were ticket-of-leave men, produce their certificates in order to secure railway tickets.

The pendency of the war cannot be used as an effective shield to cover fresh wrongs and insults. The plucky custodians of India's honour are doing their share in South Africa. We are here bound to help them. Meetings throughout India should inform the

white inhabitants of South Africa that India resents their treatment of her sons. They should call upon the Government of India and the Imperial Government to secure effective protection for our countrymen in South Africa. I hope that Englishmen in India will not be behindhand in lending their valuable support to the movement to redress the wrong.

Mr. Cachalia's cable is silent on the grievance disclosed in the second batch of extracts. It is not less serious. In its effect it is far more deadly. But the community is hoping to right the wrong by an appeal to the highest legal tribunal in the Union. But really the question is above that tribunal. Let me state it in a sentence. A reactionary Attorney-General has obtained a ruling from the Natal Supreme Court to the effect that subjects of 'Native States' are aliens and not British subjects and are, therefore not entitled to its protection so far as appeals under a particular section of the Immigrants' Restriction Act are concerned. Thus, if the local Court's ruling is correct, thousands of Indians settled in South Africa will be deprived of the security of residence in South Africa, for which they fought for eight years and which they thought they had won. At least a quarter of the Indian settlers of South Africa are subjects of the Baroda and Kathiawad States. If any law considers them as aliens, surely it has to be altered. It is an insult to the States and their subjects to treat the latter as aliens.

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-6-1918; also, *Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*

44. LETTER TO SIR GEORGE BARNES

SABARMATI,
June 2, 1918

DEAR SIR GEORGE BARNES,

I believe matters affecting the status of emigrants to the Colonies fall under your department. If so, I beg to invite your attention to the attached papers.[1]

You will note from the papers that the Union Government is again succumbing to the white prejudice against colour and that what

[1] These are not available.

is claimed to be a war for principles and for the defence of weaker nationalities has produced but little impression upon the whites of South Africa.

The problem, I know, is difficult. Prejudices cannot be removed by legislation. They will yield only to patient toil and education. But what I fear is that the Union Government, instead of holding the scales evenly between conflicting interests, is itself feeding this race prejudice. If my view be correct, it is a question as to how far it can use the protection of the Union Jack in its anti-Imperial course. Might not the Government of India effectively move the Imperial Government to make an energetic protest against this indecent exhibition of pride and race prejudice?

I suppose you are aware that the small Indian colony in South Africa has rendered and is still rendering, as is admitted by all, much useful service during the war. A bearer corps has been serving in East Africa from the time that General Smuts proceeded there.

The papers are divided into two parts. One part deals with the newly framed railway regulations which speak for themselves. It is unthinkable that an Indian should have to confine himself to a reserved portion of a station platform, reserved carriage, a reserved ticket-office, etc., etc., and even then depend for a first or second-class ticket on the caprice of the booking clerk who is authorized to refuse to issue a ticket to an Indian if, in his opinion, the latter is not becomingly dressed.

The second part shows how, by the ill-judged action of the Union Government, Indians, born in Native States and domiciled in South Africa, have been deprived of valuable legal rights. If the Supreme Court's decision is sound, the law is clearly bad and should be altered. If it is unsound, the Union Government should have it set aside by supporting an appeal to the local Privy Council. Thousands of Indians from the Baroda State have settled in South Africa for years. The Government must have known when they resisted the application of the aggrieved party that they ran the risk of endangering the just rights of Indians who are, to all intents and purposes, British subjects.

I do hope you will set the cable in motion and take the necessary steps to undo the wrong referred to in the papers herewith presented.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

N. A. I.: Commerce and Industry: June 1918: No. 5

45. LETTER TO J. KER

NADIAD,
June 3, 1918

DEAR MR. KER,

I thank you for your assurance regarding the Navli and Khandli cases.[1]

As to the Nawagam case, my reading of the law is that forfeiture should be by name. No such order has been passed regarding 311/1. It is a vital point of law. In my opinion the phrase"and others" cannot be availed of to adversely affect large interests.

I had understood the position regarding forfeiture as you have put it in your letter under reply.[2]

I was at Uttarsanda this afternoon. The Mamlatdar has passed orders to the effect that only the well-to-do holders need pay the revenue and the needy ones will have their assessment suspended on their inability being satisfactorily established. This is what I submitted to you at our interview. I have strongly advised the Uttarsanda people who are able to pay at once.[3] It will now be my duty to assist the Government to collect from these cultivators. Could you not pass general orders after the style of the Mamlatdar? It will save your time and ours, to say the least. And the Government will have revenue and the people their honour. 1 should like to be able to tell H.E. on the 10th[4] that we had settled our domestic differences. Should you see your way to pass such orders, I assume that there would be no *chothai* to be collected.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10694. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] The addressee had written that in the Navli and Khandli cases if the persons were convicted on their own plea of guilty the prosecution would not press for heavy sentences.

[2] The addressee had clarified the position regarding forfeiture by saying: "There is no question of permanently forfeiting, if it can be avoided, valuable holdings for trifling arrears. The lands which have already been forfeited will be given back (i) on payment of the arrears, (ii) on the recovery by distraint or by sale of so much of the holding only as is necesary to recover the whole amount due."

[3] *Vide* "Letter to People of Kheda", 6-6-1918.

[4] At the meeting of the Provincial War Conference at Bombay

46. SPEECH AT UTTARSANDA[1]

June 3, 1918

You have heard the order issued by the Mamlatdar. The order is made as a result of our consultation. A few days back, when I had an interview with the Collectors I had made suggestions to that effect. I told him that if he would act up to my suggestions, the struggle would soon terminate. Such an order has now been issued by the Mamlatdar. It was the first condition of our struggle that the day the assessment dues of the poor were suspended, those who can afford to pay shall at once pay up the revenue. In the beginning, Government was obstinate enough to say that it could not be done. Government said that the assessment that was fixed by them must be paid up at the proper time. The Mamlatdar has issued an order to the effect that those of you who can afford to pay up the assessment should pay it up and those who are really unable to pay will get suspension. Thus the Government will get the revenue; the people will preserve their self-respect and they will also be true to their vow. We must thank the Mamlatdar for this kind order, but how? By understanding the true significance of the order, i.e., by paying up your dues without any hesitation. Those of you who are able to pay the assessment must pay it up today or tomorrow, and you must make a list of those who are not able to pay. You must convince your *Talati* that they are really poor. Then the Mamlatdar will issue an order for the suspension of their revenue. I have to make[2] . . . amongst you. It is this . Do not put down those who are able to pay the assessment as poor. Make a list of those only who, if they paid, would have to borrow money from the *sahukar*[3] at an abnormal rate of interest, or of those who would have to sell their cattle or ornaments. The smaller the list of such persons, the greater will be our credit. The world will laugh at those who are able and who ought to pay according to their vow and yet would not pay. And we must see that we are not thus ridiculed. We must not wish to misuse the

[1] On his return from Bihar, Gandhiji, accompanied by V. J. Patel, visited Uttarsanda, a village three miles distant from Nadiad. The Mamlatdar's order, to the effect that the rich agriculturists of the village should pay up their dues and the poor *khatedars* would be given a suspension of the assessment till the next year, was read out by the *talati*. Gandhiji then addressed the gathering.

[2] Some words are missing here.

[3] Money-lender

order of the Mamlatdar saheb. If you will act according to my advice, I am sure, your vow will be a great gain for you, and you will be respected by others. We must act with a clean conscience. How bitterly did we feel when we were told that the Government was right and that we were wrong? Now the Government say that they leave it to us whether to pay the revenue or not. So our duty is two-fold. Those who are able to pay the revenue must pay it up at once. If they do not pay up, we must bring our influence to bear upon them. And, secondly, you must make a list of the poor *khatedars* and after making it, pay up your assessment. On the 10th June, there is a War Conference in Bombay. And I hope such orders as are given in this village will also be issued in other villages and I shall be able to tell the Governor that our struggle is over.[1]

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-6-1918

47. SPEECH AT NAVAGAM

June 3, 1918

I am not well and shall not, therefore, speak long. I must say, though, that the people of Navagam and Nayaka have shown great courage and done good work. Some persons at Navali and Khandhali broke all bounds. They set free the buffaloes which had been attached and led them back. They also rubbed the officer's beds with *kavach*. This is not satyagraha but *duragraha*. Our pledge was only to the effect that we would not pay. Officers believe that they have come among us from the heavens. The idea behind our struggle is to make everyone see that being an officer does not mean anything in special. You have had to pay *chothai*, but we shall have to get the amount back; no harm will follow, however, if we do not succeed. The people of Kheda have earned much and learnt much. If you have had to pay *chothai* as a price for all this, it is not much that you have suffered. We were fighting for our pledge.Every effort will be made to see that the *chothai* is refunded. If we remain courteous and truthful, it will be possible to appeal to the Government for its refund. Because people refuse to pay land revenue despite their having to pay *chothai*, they

[1] It appears that Gandhiji wrote to the Collector that, if an order on the lines of that issued by the Mamlatdar could be published and made applicable to the whole district and the *chothai* and other fines withdrawn, the struggle would cease. On the Collector acting on Gandhiji's suggestion, the satyagraha came to an end.

come to be better respected and truth is held in greater honour. The Government seems to have changed its mind about confiscating lands. If it had carried out its idea, it would have utterly disgraced itself and lost people's regard. In view of the people's strength, any attempt at confiscation of lands would have weakened the Government. Naked injustice cannot command much strength.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 9-6-1918

48. LETTER TO J. KER

NADIAD,
June 5, 1918

DEAR MR. KER,

I thank you for your letter of the 4th inst. As to the Nawagam case, if a mistake has been made, it is mine and I shall tender apology.[1] As I am writing this letter I have a visit from some Nawagam men. They bring me the information that whilst the holder was digging the onion, it was attached and removed by the amlatdar. My first concern is to save this onion and I can only do so if I receive your assistance. I suggest to you apart from the other equities under the settlement that is taking place there is no meaning in attaching the onion and that it be immediately returned to the holder. If there is a criminal or other case to be instituted against Bhulabhai, it will not be affected by the return of the onion. In my humble opinion this onion order is an unwarranted abuse of authority. Any one of the fields was enough to cover the assessment. The land was obviously not for forfeiture. The onion was not sold on the day advertised for sale. The holder did not know where he stood. I still claim that this particular number 711/1 has not been forfeited. On the modalities, I have the clearest conscience. If you did not represent a mighty Government and Bhulabhai was not a simple frightened peasant, apology would become due to him for the vexatious harassment to which he has been subjected. In view of the Mamlatdar's orders I am advising Bhulabhai to stop cutting any more onion. But I do hope that you will be good

[1] The addressee had written that Bhula Desai's field at Nawagam had been forfeited and if the onion crop had been removed it would be for Gandhiji "to decide whether to come and apologize and pay his arrears".

enough to order the return of the onion removed by the Mamlatdar. Everything else can be easily settled afterwards.[1]

From a copy: C.W. 10695. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

49. LETTER TO PEOPLE OF KHEDA[2]

SATYAGRAHA CAMP,
NADIAD,
June 6 [1918]

TO
THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF
KAIRA DISTRICT

The struggle that the people of the district of Kaira entered upon on the 22nd of March last, has come to an end. The people took the following vow on that day.[3]

The meaning of this vow is that the Government suspending collection of the revenue from the poor, the well-to-do should pay the assessment due from them. The Mamlatdar of Nadiad at Uttersanda, on the 3rd of June issued such orders, whereupon the people of Uttersanda, who could afford, were advised to pay up. Payments have already commenced there.

On the foregoing order having been passed at Uttarsanda a letter was addressed to the Collector[4] stating that if orders like the one in Uttarsanda were passed everywhere the struggle would come to an end, and it would be possible to inform His Excellency the Governor on the 10th instant—the day of the sitting of the Provincial War Conference—that the domestic difference in Kaira was settled. The Collector has replied to the effect that the order like the one in Uttarsanda is applicable to the whole district. Thus the people's prayer has at last been granted. The Collector has also stated in reply to a query about *chothai* orders that the orders will not be enforced

[1] For the further development of the case and settlement, *vide* the following item and "Speech at Nadiad", 8-6-1918.

[2] This was used in Gujarati as manifesto jointly by Gandhiji and Vallabhbhai Patel, and the English version was published in *Young India* under the caption, "An End without Grace". It was also published in other English newspapers.

[3] For the text of the pledge, which is not reproduced here, *vide* "The Pledge", 22-3-1918.

[4] This letter is not available.

against those who may voluntarily pay up. Our thanks are due to the Collector for this concession.

We are obliged to say with sorrow that although the struggle has come to an end it is an end without grace. It lacks dignity. The above orders have not been passed either with generosity or with the heart in them. It very much looks as if the orders have been passed with the greatest reluctance. The Collector says:

> Orders were issued to all mamlatdars on the 25th April that no pressure should be put on those unable to pay. Their attention was again drawn to these orders in a proper circular issued by me on the 22nd of May and to ensure that proper effect was given to them, the mamlatdars were advised to divide the defaulters in each village into two classes, those who could pay and those who were unable to pay on account of poverty.

If this was so, why were these orders not published to the people? Had they known them on the 25th April what sufferings would they not have been saved from! The expenses that were unnecessarily incurred by the Government in engaging the officials of the district in effecting executions would have been saved. Wherever the assessment was uncollected the people lived with their lives in their hands. They have lived away from their homes to avoid attachments. They have not had even enough food. The women have suffered what they ought not to have. At times, they have been obliged to put up with insults from insolent Circle Inspectors, and to helplessly watch their milch buffaloes being taken away from them. They have paid *chothai* fines and, had they known the foregoing orders, they would have been saved all the miseries. The officials knew that this relief for the poor was the crux of the struggle. The Commissioner would not even look at this difficulty. Many letters were addressed to him but he remained unbending. He said,"Individual relief cannot be granted, it is not the law." Now the Collector says:

> The orders of April 25, so far as it [*sic*] related to putting pressure on those who were really unable to pay on account of poverty, were merely a restatement of what are publicly known to be the standing orders of Government on that subject.

If this is really true, the people have suffered deliberately and through sheer obstinacy! At the time of going to Delhi, Mr. Gandhi wrote to the Commissioner requesting him to grant or to issue orders to the above effect so that the good news could be given to His Excellency the Viceroy. The Commissioner gave no heed to the

request.

"We are moved by the sufferings of the people, we perceive our mistake and in order to placate the people we are now prepared to grant individual relief," the officials could have generously said all this and endeared themselves to the people, but they have obstinately avoided this method (of winning them over). And even now relief has been granted in a niggardly manner involuntarily and without admission of any mistake. It is even claimed that what has now been granted is nothing new. And hence we say that there is little grace in the settlement.[1]

The officials have failed to be popular because of their obstinacy, because of their mistaken belief that they should never admit being in the wrong and because of their having made it a fetish that it should never be said of them that they had yielded to anything like popular agitation. It grieves us to offer this criticism. But we have permitted ourselves to do so as their friends,

But though the official attitude is thus unsatisfactory, our prayer has been granted and it is our duty to accept the concession with thankfulness. Now, there is only 8 per cent of the assessment remaining unpaid. It was a point of honour with us till now to refuse payment. Conditions having materially altered it is a point of honour for a satyagrahi to pay up the assessment. Those who can afford should pay without causing the Government the slightest trouble and thus show that where there is no conflict between the dictates of conscience and those of man-made law, they are second to none in obeying the law of the land. A satyagrahi sometimes appears momentarily to disobey laws and the constituted authority, only to prove in the end his regard for both.

In making a list of those who are unable to pay we should apply a test so rigid that no one can challenge our findings. Those whose incapacity for payment is at all in doubt should consider it their duty to pay. The final decision as to the incapacity for payment will rest with the authorities, but we believe that the judgement of the people will have its full weight.

By their courage the people of Kaira have drawn the attention of the whole of India. During the last six months they have had full taste of the fruits of observing truth, fearlessness, unity, determination and

[1] This paragraph is available only in the English version.

self-sacrifice. We hope that they will still further cultivate these great qualities, will move forward on the path of progress, and shed lustre on the name of the Motherland. It is our firm belief that the people of Kaira have truly served their own cause, as well as the cause of swaraj and the Empire.

May God bless you!

We remain,

Always in your service,

M. K. GANDHI

VALLABHBHAI J. PATEL

Young India, 12-6-1918

50. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

NADIAD,
June 7 [*1918*][1]

MY DEAR MILLIE,

I was glad to have your letter. I was looking forward to it.

Pearson[2] has written a book which is undoubtedly seditious in the sense that he desires separation, not home rule within the Empire. I have not read the book but this is what I am told. The book is prohibited.[3] There is nothing wrong in Pearson's activity if he believes in it. And it must be conceded that there is nothing wrong in the Government trying to crush the rebellious spirit. P. was in China. This gave the Government an easy way of getting hold of P. They have got him and now he is probably on his way to England where I suppose he will be comparatively free to preach separation. From what I hear, he is quite happy and almost expected the result.

Yes, the letter to the Viceroy cost many an anxious hour ≈ I could not help writing the letter. The story of its creation is worth telling but I have not the time to reproduce it here. When we meet and have leisure you shall have it if it has not become too stale then.

You will see my letter about S.A. You should write to Cachalia.

I wonder why Anasuyabehn has not replied. I shall speak to her. She is by no means so lazy or discourteous.

[1] From the contents; *ibid*

[2] W.W. Pearson

[3] *Vide* "Letter to C.F. Andrews", 23-5-1918.

I am going to Bombay on the 10th instant. I must then see about your trunk. Narandas is there now. He was away in Kathiawad. I will see to the proper labelling and have the carriage prepaid.

I hope you are all keeping well. So the Kaira struggle has ended. You will see my final letter on it.

I have not had practically a single acknowledgement of my many letters. They have evidently been sunk or miscarried. Please pass this on to him. I have not heard from him otherwise either.

With love to you all,

Yours,

BHAI

[PS.]

Do you know that Manilal is now all alone in Phoenix? Mr. West and Sam are in Durban doing commercial printing. Of course West is helping Manilal. *I.O.* is now truly independent. I understand Manilal is working day and night. West could not do otherwise than what he has done.

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

51. LETTER TO J. KER

NADIAD,

June 8, 1918

DEAR MR. KER,

I addressed a big meeting in Nadiad and explained the settlement. The speakers got up one after another and then said that executions and forfeiture orders still continued. I could understand this as your orders might not yet have been passed on to the Mamlatdars. But I trust that you will be good enough to order the stopping of executions, whilst the people are paying, to instruct Mamlatdars not to charge *chothai* when the people make voluntary payments whether there be execution pending or not and to cancel forfeiture orders when voluntary payment is forthcoming. I have asked the cultivators to be very strict in asking for suspension on the ground of poverty. May I ask you to ask the Mamlatdars to be generous in dealing with such cases? In Wadthal three writs have been recently issued for the collection of *chothai* to all intents and

purposes. It is claimed that the first proceeds of a sale were credited in the *chothai* column. Surely this was wrong. If you restore this to the revenue column there is nothing due. Should these executions not be withdrawn?

In three cases in Wadthal forfeiture notices have been issued. Two men are ready to pay the assessment. Should not these orders be cancelled against payment? In the third case the holder is dead. The holder was in strained circumstances. The heir is still less able to pay. l trust that in this case forfeiture will be cancelled and suspension granted on the ground of poverty. I have approached the Mamlatdar regarding these cases. He says he cannot grant relief without your orders.

In Nadiad a holder owed only two annas on account of principal. He tendered the amount and asked for return of his pots which were distrained. The Mamlatdar refused to restore the pots unless *chothai* was paid. The holder has paid the *chothai* under protest and prevented the threatened sale of his pots. Should not *chothai* be refunded in this case?

Orders of forfeiture have been issued in Sinnaj also and payments offered after the date of settlement have not been accepted.

I am going to Bombay for the Conference. I hope to return by the 16th instant. Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel will be at your service meanwhile.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10698. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

52. SPEECH AT NADIAD[1]

June 8, 1918

In the Court of the Collector of Nadiad, acting as District Magistrate, Mr. Mohanlal Pandya and five others from Navagam were charged on June 8, 1918, with the theft of onions from a field.[2] The accused asserted that they honestly believed that there was nothing illegal in their action.

[1] This has been collated with a Gujarati report in *Kheda Satyagraha*.

[2] The field had been declared forfeited by Government order, but Gandhiji had pointed out to the Collector that, as the survey number of the field was not stated in the notice of forfeiture, it could not be regarded as forfeited. He had advised the collection of the onion crop on the field in view of the imminent monsoon. *Vide An Autobiography*, Part V, Ch. XXIV.

Gandhiji too said in his evidence that the sole responsibility for the action lay with him, and it was he who had advised the accused to remove the onions. If it was an offence to have removed them, justice required that the sentence should be passed against him. After the case was over,[1] Mahatmaji addressed a large gathering of people outside the compound of the court. [He said :]

Two feelings are uppermost in my heart just now: one of them fills me with gladness, the other with pain. I am glad because the people of Kaira, true satyagrahis that they are, got this opportunity of going to jail. My doubt whether the agriculturists of Kaira would be ready to go to jail has been removed. I am pained because though British officers are good men generally, some of them show want of generosity and vision. The Collector, having awarded a sentence of imprisonment, is welcome to think of jail as degrading and in the nature of a terrible hardship; it is nothing of the kind to us. In spite of this, the experience that the people have got is, indeed, splendid. So long as we do not learn how to endure jail-sufferings and do not perceive the true meaning and lesson of jail-pilgrimage, we do not understand the real meaning of satyagraha. This is the fittest opportunity for all to understand it and we should feel sorry that we are not so fortunate as our brethren who went to jail. I tried my utmost to go to jail. I said that the responsibility from the beginning to the end was solely mine. Bhulabhai[2] had acted after full consideration. If there is any mistake it is mine, and yet I do not feel I am at all in the wrong. I got the case transferred to the Collector with great effort. This was a test case. I had previously informed the Collector that I was not going to appeal from his judgement; and I am still of the same mind. The Court's finding is unjust and the sentence harsh. One cannot expect a man occupying the chair of a judge to be a satyagrahi, for law does not recognize satyagraha. This is a case in which we are bound to succeed if we go in appeal. We have lost the case not because Vallabhbhai or myself did not cross-examine any witness. Any impartial judge with legal knowledge could say that the facts do not constitute any offence. In spite of that, we are not going to appeal. A satyagrahi cannot do that. For him, the best way is to go to jail. I would have been more glad if the sentence had been even more severe. The Collector has ordered the onions to be confiscated.

[1] Two of the accused were sentenced to ten days' imprisonment and the rest to twenty days' imprisonment each.

[2] The owner of the onion field

If the Government can dare pocket the onions, let them do. But what I want to tell the many Navagam friends present here is that the revenue arrears of Bhulabhai, Rs. 94/-, must be paid up to the Mamlatdar by tomorrow. We have to respect the settlement. I am going to say the same in the district meeting at Nadiad.

This incident may possibly create bitterness but, if we are large-hearted enough to forget it, the Government will ever remain sorry for its breach of promise. The Collector has acted in anger. Punishment was called for, he thought, for their digging up the onions despite his orders to the contrary. If he had quietly thought over the case and studied the law a little more carefully, he would have seen that there was no offence in the act. If we mean to educate the officers, we must act in this manner again and again; and then they will understand that there cannot be any punishment for such a heroic people, that they deserve a loving handshake. If we want to win over officers, we should be honest and courteous in our dealings with them. We may never bow down to blind authority but, if necessary, remove onions and go to jail a thousand times.

My brothers of Navagam, consider this opportunity to be a blessed one. Five friends from your town have gone to jail with a pure and bold heart, and for that we shall all congratulate them. As Mohanlal Pandya is with them, I have no anxiety for the rest. He it was who took the lead in this struggle and this is, therefore, a golden opportunity for him. This is not the first time when I have advised against an appeal. In South Africa, when thousands went to jail, I never appealed. There can be no appeal when we wish to go to jail by way of *tapascharya*. Perhaps the Kaira people have not risen so high. But if they have, I would advise them not to offer any defence and to allow the Court to do what it pleases. There are two or three other cases pending in the district. I advise you not to defend yourselves but to suffer imprisonment. There is so much to be learnt in that; and it is my firm belief that we can advance the country by acting in this manner.

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-6-1918

53. LETTER T0 L. ROBERTSON

BOMBAY,

June 9, 1918

L. ROBERTSON, ESQ.
CHIEF SECRETARY
POLITICAL DEPARTMENT
GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

DEAR MR. ROBERTSON,

Your telegram No. 4630[1] was received by me at Nadiad only yesterday evening on my return from Kaira. Before I undertake to support the resolution given in your telegram I should like to know more fully about it. I should like also to see the scheme. My addr-ess is care of Mr. Rewashankar Jagjiwan, Laburnum Road, Chowpati.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

India Office Judicial and Public Records: 3412/18, also Bombay Government Home Department Special File No. 1788 of 1918

[1] Dated June 7, 1918, it read: "His Excellency would be glad if you would consent to support at Conference 10th instant the following resolution. Begins. This Conference is of opinion that the manpower and resources of this Presidency should be utilized and developed to the fullest possible extent. With this object in view it recommends that a War Purposes Board be appointed consisting of official and non-official members and that the scheme outlined in the memorandum attached to the agenda be approved and adopted. Ends. The Memorandum referred to will be ready tomorrow and will be sent to your Bombay address, which kindly communicate by telegram."

54. LETTER TO L. ROBERTSON

BOMBAY,

June 9, 1918

DEAR MR. ROBERTSON,

I am sorry I was away when your note[1] was received. I feel that I should not speak to the resolution. I hope therefore that His Excellency will excuse me. I observe that my name is included in the man-power committee. I note that men like Mr. Tilak are not included. I fear that my usefulness will be materially curtailed if I could not have the benefit of his co-operation and that of other Home Rulers of his calibre. It is hopeless to expect a truly national response and a national army, unless the Government are prepared to trust them to do their duty. I should gladly serve on the man-power committee if these leaders are invited to join it. If additions to the committee can be moved, I would be prepared to move that some of these gentlemen may be included in one or more of these committees.

Yours sincerely,

India Office Judicial and Public Records: 3412/18; also Bombay Government Home Department Special File No. 1788 of 1918

[1] This was a letter dated June 9, which read: "In reply to your letter of today, I enclose a copy of the Agenda with Memorandum (except the note on recruiting which is in the Press) which explains the scheme. You will see that His Excellency has assumed that you will consent to speak. If you don't wish to do so, would you be so good as to inform me by bearer, so that your name may be deleted from the Agenda." Gandhiji's decision not to address the Conference on June 10 appears to have been taken after an interview with Lokamanya Tilak.

55. LETTER TO LORD WILLINGDON

BOMBAY,

June 11, 1918

DEAR LORD WILLINGDON,

I trust you will not misunderstand this note.

I venture to think that your stopping of Messrs Tilak and Kelkar[1] yesterday was a serious blunder.[2] They had been informed on your behalf that they could offer criticism but they could not move an amendment. Your having stopped them will be resented as an insult to a great and growing party in the country. Your action has made the position of workers delicate and difficult and if Mr. Tilak is an enemy of the Government or of the Empire you have undoubtedly strengthened his hands in the pursuit of his course. But if you had allowed him and Mr. Kelkar to have their say, they would have gone away satisfied and it could have been said that you had given fair play to all. Will you not publicly express your regret for the blunder or send for both of them, expressing your regret to them, and invite their co-operation and discuss their viewpoint? You will lose nothing and you will gain greatly in the estimation of the people, enhance your prestige, increase your capacity for securing help from the people and possibly win over the Home Rule party, and also nip in the bud an agitation that is bound to spring up[3] in the country.

I repeat my request that you will not misunderstand this note,

[1] Narasimh Chintaman Kelkar; nationalist leader, associate and biographer of Tilak, and editor of *The Mahratta*, Poona

[2] The incident occurred on June 10 at the Bombay Provincial War Conference, over which Lord Willingdon presided.

[3] Eventually this happened; *vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Bombay", 16-6-1918.

which is prompted by nothing but goodwill.[1]

I remain,

Your faithful friend,

M. K. GANDHI

India Office Judicial and Public Records: 3412/18

56. LETTER TO J. CRERAR

BOMBAY,

June 11, 1918

DEAR MR. CRERAR,

Pray convey my thanks to His Excellency for the frank and full reply to my letter of this morning. I am just leaving for Poona to attend the celebration of the Servants of India Society. I return on Thursday and I would like to avail myself of His Excellency's kind offer to see me. Could you please wire to me at Poona City, care of the Society, the time (afternoon) when I could wait on His Excellency if it is at all convenient for him for that day. Meanwhile, I wish to assure His Excellency that my letter was not intended to suggest even

[1] Gandhiji received the following reply from Crerar the same day: "His Excellency desires me to acknowledge your letter of today's date, at the Contents of which he cannot refrain from expressing some surprise and disappointment. While he is always ready to recognize legitimate difference of opinion on public matters, he cannot conceive of two opinions on the propriety of admitting a contentious political discussion on a resolution expressing loyalty to His Majesty the King-Emperor. Still less can he understand that any loyal citizen of the Empire should at this juncture desire to attach conditions to his offers of service. Mr. Tilak and some of his friends attach conditions which they know, and everybody knows, to be impossible of fulfilment by His Excellency's Government. The offer of co-operation on such terms only differs from an open refusal to co-operate by its lack of candour. His Excellency is convinced that on reflection you wil recognixe that these are the only views he can entertain and on which he is bound ot act. His Excellency is the more convinced of this in view of the fact that your own offer of your own offer of your services to the Viceroy, to which he attaches the highest value, was made uncvonditionally and welcomed by him on that express understanding. He is confident that the different and, as he regards it, the lower view of the responsibilities of a citizen of the Empire which others may entertain will not induce you to modify your own observance of the pledge, which he was so glad to receive from you. I am to add that if you desire to see His Excellency again on this matter, he will be pleased to receive a visit from you."

a possibility of any change of views or alteration in my offer which I am preparing every moment to reduce to practice.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

India Office Judicial and Public Records: 3412/18

57. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

[Before *June 13, 1918*][1]

MY DEAR NATESAN,

I have sent Devdas to learn Tamil. You have only to keep him in your place under your care. You should not show any special favour to him because he is my son. He must earn his food and learn Tamil.

The Mail, 2-11-1968

58. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

BOMBAY,
June 13 [*1918*]

DEAR MR. NATESAN,

Devdas, my son, will be with you ere this reaches you. I am anxious for him to be with you as a member of your family while he is there. If it is inconvenient for you, you will not hesitate to say so. I do not want him to be with a Gujarati family. He should be with a Tamil family. He has to learn Tamil and teach Hindi. I have sent him in response to the Indian Service League. His ultimate goal is Kumbakonam to which I have promised Devdas. But as the Kumbakonam friends are not ready to receive him before July, I thought he should start with the Indian Service League. I have given Devdas Rs. 30/-. He will have about Rs. 15 with him when he reaches there. When he needs any cash will you please let him have it and debit me with same? I know you do not do it. I would like you to make the commencement with Devdas. Your refusal will compel me to send him cash from here. I cannot allow you each time such occasions arise to bear the burden yourself.

Yours sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 2227

[1] It appears from the contents that this letter was written before the one to the addressee dated June 13, 1918; *vide* "Letter to G.A. Natesan", 13-6-1918.

59. LETTER TO J. KER

NADIAD,
June 14, 1918

DEAR MR. KER,

I have just returned from Bombay and read your letter of the 10th instant to Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel.

It is clear that your instructions have not yet reached the Mamlatdars and the Talatis, for they have collected *chothai* from those whose goods were distrained but not sold. I assume that in all such cases *chothai* collected would be refunded.

Your decision to collect *chothai* from those against whom forfeiture orders are passed creates a position different from the one taken up by you in your letter of the 4th instant and the impression left by you upon my mind in the course of our conversations. My letter of the 3rd instant says,"Should you see your way to pass such orders, i.e., like those of the Uttarsanda Mamlatdar, I assume that there would be no *chothai* to be collected". You said in reply,"No quarter-fine will of course be levied from those who come forward to pay even now." In the circumstances your letter under reply means a revision of a previous intention. I trust that you will give effect to the original intention. I may add that at the public meeting at Nadiad held on the 8th instant I made the announcement in the terms of the original intention and told the people that the only outstanding question was as to the refund of *chothai* collected before the date of settlement. I said the possibility of success in getting refund lay in their prompt payment of the assessment wherever they were able to pay.

In regard to the 3 Wadthal cases I admit the fact that in one case the villagers succeeded in preventing bidding to the full value of the property distrained. But in the other two they failed in their plan and competitive bidding took place up to the full value of the buffaloes so that the *chothai* in the two cases remained unpaid for natural causes. Your argument that if the bidding had resulted in the whole amount of execution being realized the question of refund would have arisen, applies equally to the other cases in which *chothai* is not to be executed. The distinction can be drawn only where"tricking" can be proved. I respectfully deny that in the third case there was any

tricking. It was part of the game by all legitimate means to prevent the Government from collecting.

As to the forfeiture cases, I thank you for the consideration you propose to show regarding the forfeiture where the original holder has recently died. As to the other two cases they fall under my request for a revision of your orders regarding *chothai*.

As to the case in which *chothai* execution has been levied for the sake of two anna arrears, I am making further inquiries.

Regarding the last paragraph of your letter, I can only say that throughout our conversations and my conversation with the Mamlatadar I spoke of suspension. It is referred to in my letter of the 3rd instant. I have described the order of the Mamlatdar as a suspension order. In your letter of the 4th instant you have not repudiated my interpretation. In fact the Mamlatdar's order is clearly a suspension order made as a result of the conversation between him and me and in my humble opinion it is impossible to revise a decision on which people have already acted. You may be aware that people have commenced voluntary payments all over except in Uttarsanda where we are having some difficulty. There too payment has commenced but not as fully as is possible. I hope therefore that you will be good enough to revise your view regarding the settlement.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10700. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

60. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

June 16, 1918

It was not without very considerable hesitation that I accepted the invitation to preside over the deliberations of this great and important meeting. We have met in order respectfully to protest against His Excellency Lord Willingdon's conduct in the chair at the War Conference that met in the Town Hall on the 10th instant. I

[1] Gandhiji presided over the meeting which was held in the evening at Shantaram Chawl in Girgaon, in the heart of Bombay city, and was attended by some 12,000 people. The meeting was organized as an anti-Willingdon demonstration to protest against the Governor's provocative statements, at the Bombay Provincial War Conference, regarding Home Rule League leaders. The meeting adopted two resolutions. The day was observed as 'Home Rule Day'.

entertain high regard for Lord Willingdon. Of all the Governors in India, probably Lord Willingdon is the most popular. He is known to hold liberal views regarding our aspirations. It is, therefore, difficult for me to contemplate the proceedings of this meeting without sorrow, but I feel that I may not allow personal regard to interfere with the performance of an obvious duty, no matter how painful it may be. The duty is plain. Lord Willingdon convened the Conference, deliberately invited the prominent and leading members of the Home Rule Leagues. They, not wishing to court insult on the one hand, and on the other, desiring to give ample previous notice to His Excellency of their intention to plead their views before the Conference, asked for information about the programme of the Conference. Lord Willingdon had before him the experience of the Delhi Conference[1]. He knew that the Home Rule League members had the first scope given them for discussion during the sittings of the Committees that were then formed. He knew that many members of that Conference had delivered political speeches at its first sitting. With all this knowledge in his possession, now mark what happened at the Conference. In his opening remarks, he delivered a deliberate attack upon the Home Rule Leagues. He accused them of constant obstruction. He was not sure of the sincerity of their support. The Conference platform was hardly the platform for such remarks. If he did not want their co-operation, he ought not to have invited the members of the Home Rule Leagues. If he desired their co-operation, it was hardly the way to tell them beforehand that he did not trust them. He ought to have remembered that Home Rule Leaguers gave material assistance in one way. Their organ, the *Chronicle*, has always urged upon the people to give all the help they can. I venture to suggest to His Excellency that his aspersion upon the Leagues was, at the very least, a tactical blunder. But this was not enough. He wrote in reply to Mr. Kelkar's inquiry as follows:

> A certain number of speakers will be invited beforehand to move, second and support the resolutions to be laid before the Conference. After these speakers have concluded their remarks, an open discussion will follow.
>
> The resolutions laid before the Conference will be framed to give effect to the resolutions of the Delhi Conference and will betwo in number, the first in general terms and the second making specific proposals. Formal amendments will not be admitted, but any criticism or suggestions which

[1] The Viceroy's War Conference held in Delhi on April 27-29

speakers may make in the course of discussion will receive careful consideration of Government.

There is no reservation here about political discussion. Mr. Tilak and Mr. Kelkar together with others sent in their names as speakers. In due course, Mr. Tilak rose to speak and hardly had he uttered three sentences, two of which consisted of an absolute declaration of loyalty, when he was stopped on the ground that he was speaking politics on the loyalty resolution. In vain did Mr Tilak protest that the loyalty resolution had an addendum to it which entitled him to offer relevant criticism. Mr. Kelkar followed and he shared the same fate with the result that there was immediately a dramatic withdrawal from the Town Hall led by Mr. Tilak.[1] In my humble opinion, His Excellency, in giving the ruling that he did, committed a grave blunder and did a disservice to the cause which he had come to espouse. He offered a gratuitous insult to Messrs Tilak and Kelkar, and thereby, to a great, powerful organization in the country. It is impossible to ignore or insult Mr. Tilak and his followers. Mr. Tilak is an idol of the people. He wields over thousands of men an unrivalled influence, his word is law to them. I have great differences of opinion with him, but I would be untrue to myself if I failed to acknowledge that his burning love of his country, his immense sacrifices and a resolute advocacy of the popular cause have earned for him a place in the politics of India which no other leader has. The insult offered to him, and through him to the Home Rule Leagues, is, therefore, an insult to the nation at large. Whether, therefore, we differ from him in politics or not, it is the duty of us all, who feel that Lord Willingdon's treatment of Messrs Tilak and Kelkar was wrong, to protest against it. I am prepared to admit that it would have been better if Mr. Tilak had risen to speak to the said resolution. It is my special and personal opinion, not shared perhaps by any one else, that it would have been better still if he had preserved dignified silence; but, in my opinion, he had a right to speak to the loyalty resolution and offer criticism. I must dissent from the view that a loyalty revolution debars a free expression of one's sentiments. That loyalty must indeed, be skindeep which requires a wall of protection against criticism. I hold it to be perfectly consistent with my loyalty to the King to tell him that things are done in his name which ought not to be done. My declaration of loyalty will

[1] Along with Tilak, Gandhiji, Jinnah, B. G. Horniman, then editor of *The Bombay Chronicle,* N. C. Kelkar and R. P. Karandikar left the Conference Hall.

sound all the truer for the warning and I think that among the many services rendered by the Home Rule Leagues, special mention deserves to be made of their having emboldened the people to speak out their minds: and I doubt not that if they but do their duty to the fullest extent, they would place India's loyalty above suspicion. For, with a true Home Ruler it must be an article of faith that the Empire must be saved; for, in its safety lies the fruition of his fondest hopes. Not to help the Empire is to commit national suicide. How can we wish harm to our would-be partner without hurting ourselves?

So, whilst I fully share the opinion of the members of the Home Rule Leagues that we must protect national honour by asking for an expression of regret for His Excellency's *faux pas*, we must, at the same time, redouble our efforts to help the authority in the prosecution of the war. We must not be angered by Lord Willingdon's mistake into taking a false step ourselves. We have too much at stake; we want Home Rule and we want [it] in the quickest time possible, and I wish I could still persuade the country to accept my view that absolutely unconditional and whole-hearted co-operation with the Government on the part of educated India will bring us within sight of our goal as nothing else will. I do not for a single minute share the distrust of my countrymen that, like so many other hopes of ours, this one of swaraj is also doomed to disappointment. Not that the Government here, as also the Imperial Government, have done nothing to shake our trust; only, my trust rests not in their change of policy, but it rests upon the solid foundation of our own struggle. Surely it must be easy for anyone to see that, if we succeed in controlling the development of manpower and resources, we will have attained to an irresistible position and power; for, in my humble plan for the attainment of Home Rule, I aspire to nothing less than a complete control over these two departments. The Government seek our co-operation herein, let us take them at their word. They cannot reject help willingly and honestly offered. Our supplying recruits means in spirit, though not in law, yet a national army instead of a hired army. I have never been able to claim for ourselves any credit for the thousands who have been recruited by the official department. These recruits have gone not as patriots, not for the sake of the country, not for the Empire but for the money and other inducements held out to them. Recruits whom we would raise would be Home Rulers. They would go to fight for the Empire; but they would so fight because they aspire to become partners in it. They would not

consider it with Sir Narayan[1] a humiliation to fight for their hearths and their homes, but they would consider it a perfectly honourable ambition to gain freedom for their country by fighting for the Empire.

I hope that H.E. will see his way to concede to the wishes of this great meeting; but if he fails today, if the Viceroy also fails, I for one shall not despair of H.E. voluntarily apologizing to the Home Rule Leaguers in the near future. For I know they mean to co-operate in the prosecution of war. And when he sees this, he will realize his mistake and, like a gentleman that he is, will offer apology. Difficulties there are, many of the Government's creation. Thus, indifference to popular opinion, their rejection of our advice tendered for the attainment of the common aim, namely gaining of recruits, have made our task well-nigh impossible of fulfilment; but our duty is clear. Undaunted by these and many other difficulties, we should press forward and bear down their indifference to our opinion by demonstrating in practice the harm that they do to the Empire by their persistent defiance of popular will. I, therefore, regard the second resolution, that will be placed before you, not in any sense as so many conditions of our co-operation, but as a statement of the difficulties lying in our path. There are only two ways whereby we can attain our goal, co-operation or obstruction. Under the British Constitution, obstruction is a perfectly legitimate and well-known method for securing rights; but obstruction at a crisis like the one facing the Empire can only end in enraging the Government who are responsible for the conduct of the war; whereas, co-operation will not only disarm their opposition but it will give us a strength and a confidence which cannot but take us to our goal. The occasion for which we have met is a unique one; we are asking a popular Governor to put himself right with us by repenting of his mistakes; we are also providing that, if we fail to get redress, we pledge ourselves not to attend any public meeting over whose deliberations Lord Willingdon may preside in future. This is a serious step, but, I think, warranted by events that have taken place. The justice of our step will be proved by our future conduct, i.e., by disproving H.E.'s charges by a determined effort at co-operation.

I observe that today is the Home Rule Day anniversary. It is, or ought to be, a solemn day for Home Rule Leaguers. Lord Willingdon

[1] Sir Narayan Ganesh Chandavarkar

has presented them with the expression 'Home Rule Leaguers' distinguished from 'Home Rulers'. I cannot conceive the existence of an Indian who is not a Home Ruler; but there are millions like myself who are not Home Rule Leaguers. Although I am not a member of any Home Rule League, I wish to pay on this auspicious day my humble tribute to numerous Home Rule Leaguers whose association I have ever sought in my work and which has been extended to me ungrudgingly. I have found many of them to be capable of any sacrifice for the sake of the Motherland. Some of them, I have noticed, are extremely capable young men, for I am not thinking, in offering my tribute, of the front-rank leaders of the movement. I am simply thinking of the rank and file with whom it has been my privilege to work. I wish to testify to their loyalty to the British Constitution and the British connection, and also testify to their impatience of bureaucratic control. They show an eminent degree of all the virtues and vices of youth. Their language is sometimes strong, sometimes even wild, not parliamentary. They betray excessive zeal. Men of age and experience, we often may find occasions to stand aghast at some of their actions; but their hearts are strong and pure. They have succeeded to a certain extent in clearing the atmosphere of cant and humbug. Their truth has sometimes hurt, but I must say that although, when the Leagues were first established, I looked upon them with scepticism and even doubted their usefulness, a careful examination of their work has convinced me that the Leagues have supplied a felt want. They have put light into the people. They have filled them with hope and courage; and, had the authorities not misunderstood them, I am certain they could have availed themselves of this inexhaustible reservoir of man-power. They need not be told that the members of the Leagues realize their own responsibility, and come forward with it. It was hardly to be expected of high-souled youths who had all along chaffed under bureaucratic domination.

It was the duty of the authorities who, being more experienced, should have known better, to have made the Home Rule Leaguers their own. Whatsoever the error may be, let the Home Rule Leaguers, having now realized it, correct it. Let them not lose faith in even the bureaucrats. Want of faith is a betrayal of weakness. Bureaucracy is bad, it is doomed, but all bureaucrats are not bad. Our triumph will be in reforming the bureaucrats. If we need not say"Jo-hukum" and fall down at their feet, we may not shame them or insult them. Let us meet the tricks of the bureaucracy with the greatest frankness and honesty.

That we should return good for evil was not said of angels but of men. The manliest course is never to deviate by a hair's breadth from the straight and narrow path; and Home Rule Leaguers are nothing if they cannot be manly. During the coming year of probation, let the Home Rule Leaguers discharge themselves as efficiently in the work of construction as they have in the work of destruction and they will make this a day for universal celebration throughout the length and breadth of India.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-6-1918

61. LETTER TO SHANKARLAL BANKER

June 16, 1918

I have your letter. Of course I would not ask you to leave the League[1] and work with me; on the contrary, I wish that you remain in the League and guide its policy too in the right direction. You are satisfied with the present position. To me, it seems dangerous. If the League refuses to help in recruitment, it will be going against the Bombay resolution.[2] If all the members of the League believed that it was not permissible to anyone to help in recruitment while being in the League, the Bombay resolutions should not have been passed and I should not have been given the chairmanship of the meeting. When the League accepted me, it indicated that any of its members who desired to help in recruitment could do so.

My faith is not merely in the British people, but in human nature as such. Every human being has some truth in him. It is our duty to nurse this. If, in the process, the person concerned plays foul, it is he and not we who will suffer the consequences.

You may be sure people are not so bad as you think.

I will explain this further when we meet. In my view, it is the duty of members of the League all over India to plunge into this work. Simultaneously, you may carry on any agitation that you want to against the misdeeds of the Government. By following this course, you will have served both ends. The Home Rule League will suffer a

[1] The Home Rule League
[2] *Vide* the following item.

serious set-back if it does nothing to help recruitment. . .[1]

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

62. CABLE TO BRITISH PRIME MINISTER[2]

BOMBAY
[After *June 16, 1918*]

I HAVE THE HONOUR TO COMMUNICATE THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE PUBLIC MEETING OF THE CITIZENS OF BOMBAY HELD ON THE 16TH JUNE UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE BOMBAY BRANCHES OF THE HOME RULE LEAGUES.

FIRST RESOLUTION

THAT THIS MEETING OF THE CITIZENS OF BOMBAY PROTESTS AGAINST THE PUBLIC INSULT LEVELLED BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY AGAINST THE MEMBERS OF SOME RULE LEAGUES IN GENERAL BY CHALLENGING THE SINCERITY OF THEIR SUPPORT TO THE EMPIRE BY THUS THROWING A DOUBT ON THEIRLOYALTY TO THE CROWN. MORE ESPECIALLY IT CONDEMNS HIS TREATMENT OF THE HOME RULE LEADERS IN INVITING THEM TO THE WAR CONFERENCE, ATTACKING THEM IN HIS OPENING SPEECH AND DENYING THEM AN PPORT-UNITYOF DEFINING THEIR ATTITUDE AND IT CALLS UPON HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR TO WITHDRAW THE ASPERSIONS CAST AGAINST THE HOME RULE LEAGUES AND ITS MEMBERS AND TO EXPRESS HIS REGRET FOR HIS CONDUCT AND FAILING SUCH WITHDRAWAL THIS MEETING APPEALS TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY TO REPUDIATE THE STATEMENT OF THE GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY AND DESIRES TO POINT OUT THAT SUCH PROVOCATIVE LANGUAGE IS CALCULATED TO RAISE A BARR-IERIN THE WAY OF THE HEARTY CO-OPERATION TO THE GOVERNMENT AND THAT, UNTIL SUCH AMENDS HAVE BEEN

[1] The omission is in the source.

[2] This communication, embodying the resolutions adopted at the public meting of June 16, was also sent to the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy.

MADE, MEMBERS OF THE HOME RULE LEAGUES WILL BE UNABLE TO TAKE PART IN ANY MEETING IN FUTURE PRESIDED OVER BY LORD WLLLINGDON WITHOUT IN ANY WAY PREV ENTING THEM FROM DOING THEIR DUTY TO THEIR COUNTRY AND THE EMPIRE AT THIS CRITICAL JUNCTURE.

SECOND RESOLUTION

THAT THIS MEETING IS OF OPINION THAT THE METHODS AND THE MEASURES OF GOVERNMENT FOR UTILIZATION OF MANPOWER AND THE RESOURCES OF INDIA IN WAR ARE NOT SUCH AS TO SECURE THEIR FULLEST POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT IN THAT, FIRST, THERE IS A SPIRIT OF DISTRUST FOR THE PEOPLE RUNNING THROUGHOUT THEIR HANDLING OF THAT GREAT NATIONAL WORK. SECOND, OFFICIALS IN CHARGE OF THE RESPECTIVE DEPARTMENTS FAIL TO SEEK IN SPIRIT OF EQUALITY THE CO-OPERATION OF THE PEOPLE IN PROSECUTION OF THE WAR. THIRD, INTERMINABLE DELAY IS TAKING PLACE IN THE AMENDMENTS OF THE ARMS ACT IN ORDER TO ENABLE THE GENERAL BODY OF PEOPLE TO TAKE AND CARRY ARMS IF THEY SO DESIRE, FOURTH, THE COMMISSION RANKS IN THE INDIAN ARMY ARE NOT YET THROWN OPEN TO THE INDIANS NOR RACIAL BARS AND DISTINCTIONS REMOVED. FIFTH, THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE IMPERIAL WAR CONFERENCE AT DELHI FOR ADMITTING INDIANS TO THE EXISTING MILITARY COLLEGES AND FOR ESTABLISHING NEW COLLEGES FORTHWITH HAVE NOT [BEEN] GIVEN EFFECT TO. THIS MEETING IS OF OPINION THAT THOUGH EVERY LOYAL CITIZEN OF INDIA DESIRES WHOLE-HEARTEDLY TO RESPOND TO THE CALL OF THE PREMIER, IT IS DIFFICULT FOR THE LEADERS TO SECURE FULL AND FREE RESPONSE FROM PEOPLE IN REGARD TO THE MILITARY SERVICES UNLESS THE PRESENT POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA IS CHANGED BY REMOVING THE ABOVE-MENTIONED DEFECTS.

M. K. GANDHI

PRESIDENT 0F THE MEETING

Young India, 2-10-1918

63. SPEECH AT NADIAD[1]

June 17, 1918

In the course of his speech, Mr. Gandhi observed that it was the first and most important duty of the ryots to assist Government. Full assistance should be given in order to overthrow the Germans. The English were better than the Germans. They had come into close contact with the English and they knew each other well, so it was their first duty to assist the English. Some said that they should help only if they were given Home Rule. He believed they could not preserve the country so long as they had no military traditions. In due course they would get Home Rule. By the mere fact of giving assistance they would get it. Half a million men were required from India for active service during a year, and if they did not come forward to supply these men, Government would themselves enlist them and the army so raised will be called the Government army. But if the men were supplied by them they should be called the national army. The same rules and regulations that were heretofore in force would apply to the men so raised. Home Rule without military power was useless, and this was the best opportunity to get it. They should not, therefore, lose this opportunity. He had had a talk with [Mr.] Tilak, Mrs. Annie Besant, Mr. Madan Mohan Malaviya and Mr. Motilal Nehru in this connection, and they were all of opinion that it was a good idea, but they doubted whether the ryots would accept these views. He had faith in ryots. Many men died of plague and cholera and so it would not be a hard thing to die in the war. He was ready to go to the war if the people would come forward. He was not a member of the Home Rule League. To receive military training was the stepping-stone to acquire Home Rule, and so each and every member of the Home Rule League should join. It was rumoured the Indians were placed in the first row and were killed, but he did not believe this. The English were a fighting race and he did not believe that such a people would remain in the rear and send others to the front. If, however, such a time came he would himself object, and unless he were shot, he would not allow

[1] Forwarding this report to the Government of Bombay, the District Magistrate of Kheda wrote: "On June 17th, Mr. M. K. Gandhi held a small meeting of his more immediate followers at Nadiad in connection with recruitment . . . about 50 persons were present."

all the men to be so killed. Before appealing to the whole country for the national army, he had a mind to appeal first to the Kaira people who had become satyagrahis. Nadiad was an important town in the Kaira District and so he had called them together in private. If they agreed with him, the matter would be taken in hand: sothey should think well, and then get themselves enrolled. If he were satisfied, a public meeting would be called in two or three days.

Bombay Government Records, 1918

64. LETTER TO J. KER

NADIAD,
June 18, 1918

DEAR MR. KER,

I have your letter of the 17th instant in reply to mine of the 14th instant regarding certain points arising from the settlement. As to paragraph 3 of your letter I can only say that the rules of interpretation require that that meaning should be attached to one's language which one's hearer is reasonably entitled to put upon it. Your answer as to *chothai* was clearly in reply to my query and it left no room for doubt either in my mind or Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel's that *chothai* was to be excused in every case in which it was not yet collected. What is more, when one in good faith has already acted upon such interpretation, if the line you propose to adopt is sound, every order would be interpreted not as the readers, according to the natural meaning of words, understand it, but as the issuer has intended his language to mean. Surely you do not ask for any such canon of interpretation.

Similarly for suspension, I feel that you are importing a most dangerous principle of interpretation of orders. Suspension to me could only bear one meaning; 'unauthorized arrears' is not an unfamiliar expression to me. I did not need to approach you for any such concession. It would have been no concession. You would not need time for consideration in issuing order for unauthorized arrears as you said you needed. I brought the Mamlatdar's order to your notice. You confirmed it. It is now open to you to go behind it and claim that the word bears not its natural meaning but a meaning which you now desire to give. After your confirmation of the Mamlatdar's

order, it is irrelevant whether he had authority to issue the order or not. But I would add that I asked him whether he had authority for what he was saying. On his saying he had, I asked him to issue written orders which he did.

I do hope that in the circumstances you will not allow yourself to be in the wrong and let the natural and just view prevail.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 10701. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

65. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SABARMATI,
Jeth Sud 10 [*June 19, 1918*]

BHAI SHRI JAMNALALJI,

I insisted on paying your man the money for the ticket. If I didn't pay, I wouldn't be able to entrust work again without hesitation.

I looked into the building account after coming here. I have received Rs. 28,000. The expenditure already incurred amounts to Rs. 40,000, The balance has been met from the funds earmarked for the other activities of the Ashram. What I need most at present is money for the construction work. The expenditure will be Rs. one lakh. If you feel like contributing anything, kindly do so.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

This is more important than bearing my travelling expenses.

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand. G. N. 2199

66. SPEECH AT NADIAD[1]

June 21, 1918

SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

I am sorry to see that very few women are present today. What I have to say is meant for both. I have not come here to preach, but to give you what seems to me right advice. This meeting in Nadiad is the first of its kind in Gujarat. It was here that the first meeting for satyagraha was held. We displayed good strength and much capacity for suffering during that struggle. It brought me into close contact with the people. I feel, therefore, that in saying what I have to say to the whole of the country, I should make a start with this place.

We put up a determined fight against the Government, said many harsh and bitter things to it. All this was necessary, but whether or not we had the right to do it, we have now an opportunity to show. There is no room for vindictiveness in satyagraha; I am sure there was none in our struggle. Let us consider whether it is desirable at all in any circumstances that we should associate ourselves with the Government. I have closely watched its shortcomings during our struggle as also on other occasions, and have pointed them out too. I have had, however, no opportunity at all in India to present its better side. From my personal experience of dealings with it, I have learnt this at any rate: that we would do well not to be content with a subordinate position in the Empire. It is a characteristic trait of the British that they would treat people who did so as beasts of burden. We can benefit by our connection with them only if we live as their friends or partners. They will protect the honour of their allies and be loyal to them unto death. As a nation, they have some virtues. They love justice; they have shielded men against oppression. The liberty of the individual is very dear to them. Why, then, should we think of breaking off our connection with them altogether? Everyone needs a friend. Japan, America, England—they are all obliged to maintain friendship with some nation or other. Every country maintains a connection with another with which it is temperamentally allied. India can be no exception to this. We aspire to independence, but on this basis. In this context, the examples of Australia and Canada are

[1] The meeting, which inaugurated Gandhiji's recruitment campaign in Gujarat, was held at Moghul Kotiwadi and was attended by about a thousand people.

generally cited; we demand a status like theirs. They enjoy protection and, likewise, help in the defence effort. That is exactly what we want for ourselves. If we think a status such as this is really worth having, we should do what is necessary to achieve it. If [on the contrary] we believe that our connection with the British is harmful to us, the advice I am giving can be of little use. It may even dishonour us, if followed. If, however, we want to live as equal partners with the British, I think my advice will prove invaluable. India cannot stand on her own feet. If the British left us, we would not be able to defend ourselves. We could not protect ourselves against the criminal tribes or stand against an invading foreign army. If anyone blames the British for this terrible state of affairs, he will be quite right. That nation has many such things to answer for. But our task is to turn their virtues to account for our uplift.

It is the misfortune of India that she is in no position to make progress without outside help. We ought to get rid of this helplessness of ours. It is essential that the country should come to be entrusted with her defence, that she should become capable of defending her people. We shall not be fit for swaraj till we have acquired the capacity to defend ourselves. That India should always have to depend on the British for her defence—this is her helplessness. To remove this is a sacred duty which we should first attend to.

Only equals can be partners. There can be no partnership between the cat and the mouse, between the ant and the elephant. We look upon the British as the elephant and ourselves as the ant. So long as we do not get rid of this idea, swaraj can have no meaning for us. Any stout fellow can successfully intimidate us. If a Pathan were to come here and start hitting out with the lathi, we would all run away. An overbearing Kabuli, entering a compartment already overcrowded, will get the people to vacate their seats and find a seat though none was vacant before; he will go further and occupy the room for four. People feel helpless before him.

With this cowardly fear in us, how can we be the equals of the British? If I see a *Dhed* and ask him to sit by my side and offer him something to eat, he will shake with fear. He will be my equal only when he feels sufficiently strong in himself to have no fear of me. To describe him as my equal [when he lacks such strength] is like adding

insult to injury.[1] We occupy the position of the *Bhangi* in the Empire. Now we have an opportunity to emancipate ourselves from such a state and we can use it in either of two ways—in a spirit of friendliness or that of hostility. If we would follow the latter course, we should not help them with a single man or with a single pie; we should even stop others from helping. We should hope for a defeat of the Allies and fight the British and drive them out. All this, even if desirable, is impossible. Though we, advocates of swaraj, may not help the Government, other sections of the country have been helping it. We have no strength to fight the Government, or anyone else for that matter. It has succeeded in securing help from India to the tune of a million men and crores of rupees. Evidently, therefore, if we now propose to push the British out of India in a spirit of hostility and be *Bhangis* no more, it does not seem likely that we shall in the foreseeable future succeed in breaking off the British connection through physical force.

We can, therefore, free ourselves only through a friendly approach. This is not possible unless we render all possible help to the Government at the present juncture. We want to be partners in the Empire. If there were no Empire, with whom would we be partners? Our hopes lie in the survival of the Empire. By all means, let us fight its evils. A brother fights the wrongs done by a brother. If one brother seeks to deprive another of his right, the latter will resist, but will go all out to help the former in time of difficulty and so prove the fact of their being brothers, wiping out, sometimes, even old animosities. There is no reason to believe that we cannot bring about such a result by dealing with the British in the right manner. To be sure, we may fight the iniquities of the Empire. Even today we may do so, if they were to inflict anything afresh. At the same time, we should spare no effort in helping it to meet the danger which threatens it.

Besides, we shall learn military discipline as we help the Empire, gain military experience and acquire the strength to defend ourselves. With that strength, we may even fight the Empire, should it play foul with us. It knows this, and, therefore, it will prove the *bona fides* of the British Government if they permit us to enlist. By raising an army now, we shall be insuring against future eventualities.

[1] The Gujarati, phrase literally means: branding one who has already sustained burns.

If the British people have the ability to rule, they do not owe it merely to their physical strength. They have the art [of government], they have skill and foresight, shrewdness and wisdom. They know how to deal with people according to their deserts. They know that, if we help, it will be in expectation of getting swaraj. The difference between their point of view and that of some of us is this: we say we will have swaraj first and then fight; they say they will not be coerced, that swaraj will be ours if we help. They invite us to examine their history. The Boers got swaraj because they could fight the British. When we can do so, they say, we too shall have swaraj.

We can count only on our own military strength. The Indians who are fighting now do not represent our strength but the Government's. If we, who would have swaraj, can train ourselves to be their equals as soldiers, if we renounce the fear of death, we shall be soldiers in a national army. When that happens, there will be no distinction of superior and inferior as between the Government and us.

Mr. Montagu's scheme will be announced shortly.[1] Whether the scheme, if we accept it, goes through or the improvements, if any, desired by us are carried out, will depend on us. If, at this juncture, they hear in England that the whole of India has lined up for enlistment, the House of Commons will rejoice at the news and concede all our reasonable demands. Even if it does not, what then? It is they who will have reason to be sorry afterwards. An India trained for fighting will be able to wrest freedom in a moment. But the Government is not so foolish as all that. The British are a nation of heroes. They will recognize heroism. If we but rouse the heroic spirit which has been slumbering in us, we can have everything today. It is, therefore, my request to everyone of you to give up all hesitation and join up. I have no doubt in my mind that, just now, this should be the first and the last plank in the movement carried on by the Home Rule League.[2]

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 7-7-1918

[1] The Montagu-Chelmsford Report on Constitutional Reforms was published on July 8, 1918.

[2] According to a despatch in the Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1918, Gandhiji asked at the end that "no report of the meeting need be sent to the Press" until they were able to secure recruits.

67. APPEAL FOR ENLISTMENT

NADIAD,
June 22, 1918

LEAFLET NO. 1[1]

SISTERS AND BROTHERS OF KHEDA DISTRICT:

You have just emerged successful from a glorious satyagraha campaign. You have, in the course of this struggle, given such evidence of fearlessness, tact and other virtues that I venture to advise and urge you to undertake a still greater campaign.

You have successfully demonstrated how you can resist Government with civility, and how you can retain your self-respect without hurting theirs. I now place before you an opportunity of proving that you bear no hostility to Government despite your having given it a strenuous fight.

You are all lovers of swaraj; some of you are members of the Home Rule League. One meaning of Home Rule is that we should become *partners in the Empire*. Today we are a subject people. We do not enjoy all the rights of Englishmen. We are not today partners in the Empire as are Canada, South Africa and Australia. We are a dependency. We want the rights of Englishmen, and we aspire to be as much partners in the Empire as the Dominions overseas. We look forward to a time when we may aspire to the Viceregal office. To bring about such a state of things we should have the ability to defend ourselves, that is, the ability to bear arms and to use them. As long as we have to look to Englishmen for our defence, as long as we are not free from the fear of the military, so long we cannot be regarded as equal partners with Englishmen. It behoves us, therefore, to learn the use of arms and to acquire the ability to defend ourselves. *If we want to learn the use of arms with the greatest possible despatch, it is our duty to enlist ourselves in the army.*

There can be no friendship between the brave and the effeminate. We are regarded as a cowardly people. If we want to become free from that reproach, we should learn the use of arms.

[1] Probably used by Gandhiji for the text of his address at a meeting, this went into wide circulation in the printed form. An English version was also published, in the Press, but is not available.

Partnership in the Empire is our definite goal. We should suffer to the utmost of our ability and even lay down our lives to defend the Empire. If the Empire perishes, with it perish our cherished aspirations.

Hence the easiest and the straightest way to win swaraj is to participate in the defence of the Empire. It is not within our power to give much money. Moreover, it is not money that will win the war. Only an army inexhaustible in number can do it. That army India can supply. If the Empire wins mainly with the help of our army, it is obvious that we would secure the rights we want.

Some will say that, if we do not secure those rights just now, we would be cheated of them afterwards. The strength we employ in defending the Empire now can secure those rights. Rights won by making an opportunity of the Empire's weakness are likely to be lost when the Empire regains its strength. We shall not succeed in becoming partners in the Empire by trying to embarrass it. Embarrassing it in its hour of crisis will not help us to secure the rights which we must win by serving it. To distrust the statesmen of the Empire is to distrust our own strength; it is a sign of our own weakness. We should not depend for our rights on the goodness or the weakness of the statesmen, we should depend on our fitness and our strength.

The Native States are helping the Empire and they are getting their reward. The rich are rendering full financial assistance to the Government and they are likewise getting their reward. The assistance in neither case is rendered conditionally. The sepoys are rendering their services for their salt and for their livelihood. They get their livelihood, and prizes and honours in addition. All these classes are a part of us, but they cannot be regarded as lovers of swaraj, their goal is not swaraj. The help they render is not out of love for the country. If we seek to win swaraj in a spirit of hostility, it may well be that the Imperial statesmen will use these three forces against us and defeat us.

If we want swaraj, it is our duty to help the Empire and we shall undoubtedly get the reward of that help. If our motive is honest, the Government will behave honestly with us. Assuming for a moment that it will not do so, our honesty should make us confident of our success. It is no mark of greatness to be good only with the good. Greatness lies in returning good for evil.

The Government does not give us commissions in the Army, it

does not repeal the Arms Act; it does not open schools for military training. How can we then co-operate with it? These are valid objections.

In not granting reforms in these matters, the Government is committing a serious blunder. The British have many acts of goodness to their credit. For these, God's grace be with them. But the heinous sin perpetrated by the British administrators in the name of their people will, if they do not take care betimes, undo the effect of all these acts of goodness. If the worst happens to India, which God forbid, and she passes into the hands of some other nation, India's piteous cry will make England hang her head in shame before the world, and a curse will descend upon her for having emasculated a nation of thirty crores. I believe the statesmen of England have realized this and have taken the warning, but they are unable to alter all of a sudden the situation created by themselves. Every Englishman upon entering India is trained to despise us, to regard himself as our superior and to keep himself aloof from us. They imbibe these ideas from the very atmosphere in which they move. Those at the higher levels of administration try to free themselves and their subordinates from this atmosphere but their effort does not bear immediate fruit. If there were no crisis for the Empire, we should be fighting against this domineering spirit. But to sit back at this crisis, waiting for commissions, etc., is like cutting off one's nose to spite one's face. It may well be that, while we are waiting for commissions, the opportunity to help the Empire may slip away.

It is my firm belief that even if the Government desires to prevent us from enlisting in the army and rendering other help by refusing us commissions or by delay in granting them, it is our duty to insist upon joining the army.

The Government at present wants half a million men for the army. They will certainly succeed in raising this number somehow. If we supply this number, the credit will be ours, we will be rendering a service and the reports that we often hear of improper methods adopted by recruiting agents will become things of the past. It is no small thing to have the whole work of recruiting in our hands. If the Government have no trust in us, if their intentions are not pure, they would not recruitment through us.

The foregoing argument will show that by enlisting in the army we help the Empire, we qualify ourselves for swaraj, we learn to

defend India and to a certain extent regain our lost manhood.

I admit it is because of my faith in the British people that I can advise as I am doing. I believe that, though this nation has done India much harm, it is to our advantage to retain connection with it. Their virtues seem to me to outweigh their vices. It is painful to remain in subjection to that nation. The British have the great vice of depriving a subject nation of its self-respect, but they have also the virtue of treating their equals with due respect and of loyalty towards them. We have seen that they have many times helped those groaning under the tyranny of others. As their partners, there is much we can receive and much that we can give and our connection with them based on that relationship is likely to benefit the world. If such was not my faith and if I thought it desirable to become absolutely independent of that nation, I would not only not advise co-operation but would on the contrary ask the people to beware, advising them to rebel, and paying the penalty for doing so. We are not in a position today to stand on our own feet unaided and alone. I believe that our good lies in becoming and remaining equal partners in the Empire and I have seen it throughout India that all those who demand swaraj are of the same view. I expect from Kheda and Gujarat not 500 or 700 recruits but thousands. If Gujarat wants to save herself from the reproach of effeminacy, she should be prepared to contribute thousands of sepoys. These must include the educated classes, the *Patidars*, the *Dharalas*, the *Vagharis* and I hope they all will fight side by side as comrades. Unless the educated classes or the *elite* of the community take the lead, it is idle to expect the other classes to come forward. I hope those among the educated classes who are above the prescribed age but who are able-bodied will be eligible to enlist themselves. Their services will be utilized, if not for actual fighting, for related purposes and for looking after the welfare of the sepoys. I hope also that those who have grown-up sons will not hesitate to send them as recruits. To sacrifice sons in the war ought to be a cause not of pain but of pleasure to brave men. Sacrifice of sons at this hour will be a sacrifice for swaraj.

To the women, my request is that they should not be alarmed by this appeal but should welcome it. It contains the key to their protection and their honour.

There are 600 villages in Kheda district. Every village has on an average a population of over 1,000. If every village gave at least

twenty men, Kheda district would be able to raise an army of 12,000 men. The population of the whole district is seven lakhs and this number will then work out at 1.7 per cent, a rate which is lower than the death rate. If we are not prepared to make even this sacrifice for the Empire, for the sake of swaraj, no wonder that we should be regarded unworthy of it. If every village gives at least twenty men, on their return from the war they will be the living bulwarks of their village. If they fall on the battle-field, they will immortalize themselves, their village and their country, and twenty fresh men will follow their example and offer themselves for national defence.

If we mean to do this, we have no time to lose. I desire that the fittest and the strongest in every village should be selected and their names forwarded. I ask this of you, brothers and sisters. To explain things to you and to answer the many questions that may be raised, meetings will be held in important villages. Volunteers will also go round.

Messrs Vallabhbhai Jhaverbhai Patel, Barrister-at-law, Krishnalal Narasilal Desai, M.A.LL.B., Indulal Kanhaiyalal Yagnik, B.A.LL.B., Hariprasad Pitambardas Mehta, Manager of the Hitechchhu Press, Pragji Khandubhai Desai, Mohanlal Kameshwar Pandya, B.Ag., Ganesh Vasudeo Mavlankar, M.A.LL.B., Kalidsas Jashkaran Zaveri, B.A.LL.B., Fulchand Bapuji Shah, Gokuldas B. Talati, B.A.LL.B., Shivabhai Bhailal Patel, B.A.LL.B., Raojibhai Manibhai Patel and others are cooperating.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

68. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

[NADIAD,
Before *June 23, 1918*][1]

As for my offer you know that, in my letter to Maffey,[2] I have said I should kill; neither friend nor foe. Regarding those who want to fight but will not, either out of cowardice or spite against the British, what is my duty? Must I not say,"If you can follow my path, so much the better, but if you cannot, you ought to give up cowardice or spite and fight. You cannot teach *ahimsa* to a man who cannot kill. You cannot make a dumb man appreciate the beauty and the merit of silence.[3] Although I know that silence is most excellent, I do not hesitate to take means that would enable the dumb man to regain his speech. I do not believe in any Government, —but Parliamentary Government is perhaps better than capricious rule. I think it will be clear to you that I shall best spread the gospel of ahimsa, or satyagraha by asking the *himsak* (militant) men to work out their *himsa* in the least offensive manner, and may succeed, in the very act, in making them realize the better worth of ahinsa. If I have not made the position clear, you should try if you can to come down.[4]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] C. F. Andrews replied to this letter on June 23.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to J. L. Maffey", 30 4-1918.

[3] Andrews observed in regard to this point: "I do not see the analogy of the dumb man in your letter. It seems dangerously near the argument that the Indian who has forgotten altogether the blood-lust might be encouraged to learn it again first and then repudiate it afterwards of his own account."

[4] Andrews wrote back: "At the same time I do agree with you entirely that it is a free India choosing her own path which can give the world the highest example of ahinsa, not the present subjected India. But even then— cannot you conceive on that very freedom being won by moral force only, not by the creation of a standing army to meet the army of occupation."

69. LETTER TO REV. F. Z. HODGE

[NADIAD,]

June 23, 1918

Pray accept my heartfelt thanks for your kind letter. We do regard ourselves as members of the inner circle in your family. It was a joy always to be able to pass a few hours with you. I am taking the liberty of sending your letter to Babu Brajkishore for its reference to my co-workers as also for the warning that we may not allow the schools to languish. You know that Dr. Deva, before he left, put up a pucca building in Bhitiharwa. I find it most difficult to secure a lady teacher. But I do not despair of finding one. I would so like you to visit the schools now and then. You should ask Babu Gorakhprasad to find you a conveyance.

Devdas is now in Madras conducting a Hindi class for the Tamils.

The Kaira quarrel was settled some time ago. Did you see my letter[1] announcing the settlement? I am now commencing a recruiting campaign.

Please remember us both to Mrs. Hodge. I hope she has entirely regained her former strength.

I trust the boys will have left off their shyness with me when I next meet them. It is my intention to visit Champaran at least once in three months.

Yours sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] *Vide* "Letter to People of Kheda", 6-6-1918.

70. LETTER T0 B. G. HORNIMAN

[NADIAD,]

June 23, 1918

I wonder whether I shall succeed in engaging your pen in behalf of my appeal[1] herewith. I shall value it. I need it. I do feel that we shall truly serve the common cause if we help the Government with sepoys and yet give battle on their wrongdoings. The two can go side by side. The stupidity of administrators makes recruiting difficult. That need not dismay us. We ought to do our best. That is how I read the resolutions of the Protest Meetings.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

71. LETTER T0 MRS. WEST

[NADIAD,]

June 23, 1918

DEAR MRS. WEST,

I was glad to receive your note. I wish you will not worry about your financial affairs. Albert[2] is a brother to me. Nothing can shake my trust in him. If I despaired of Albert, I should have to despair of the world. I have already written to him.[3] I know that he has done what was best in the circumstances. I am glad, too, that both you and Sam are now able to have suitable education for the children. I wonder if Hilda remembers me. I do not know what has come over Manilal. He had such high regard for all of you and had so much affection showered on him by you all. He has developed a suspicious nature. I still think that he will be soon himself again. I know that your love will turn away his suspicion. I hope you will make advances to him, reason with him, speak to him, and win him over. I cannot bear the idea of Manilal having an evil thought about you.

We are just now building new premises for the Ashram. I wish

[1] *Vide* "Appeal for Enlistment", 22-6-1948.

[2] Albert H. West

[3] This letter is not available.

you were here to watch the progress of the buildings. The ground is beautifully situated. Maganlal is doing it all. He is doing what Albert was doing there whilst Phoenix was building. For him there is no pleasure outside the Ashram.

With love to you all,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

72. LETTER T0 SONJA SCHLESIN

[NADIAD,]
June 23, 1918

DEAR MISS SCHELSIN[1],

The long expected letter has come. We have all been looking forward to a letter from you.

Of course, Phoenix is not going to be sold. You can have 5 acres of ground in the centre. I like your dream specially as it includes a visit to India.

It delights me to find you getting tired of the typewriter....[2]

I have not asked Ramdas to become a tailor; not that there is no poetry in tailoring. Ramdas may become a living *Sartor Resartus*. But he is a conscientious boy. He wants to gain all kinds of experiences. If he becomes a poet he will be one not of words and in words, but of actions and in actions. Ramdas is a visionary. And I like visionaries. I hope you will guide him, and befriend him. I wish you would live with Manilal for a while. You could carry on your studies there.

How are the Vogls[3], the Phillipses[4] and the Dokes[5]? Do you ever

[1] Sonja Schlesin joined Gandhiji as a steno-typist and later played an important role in the satyagraha struggle in South Africa; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", Before 10-1-1908.

[2] Some words are missing here in the source.

[3] Mrs. Vogl conducted classes for Indian women and organized Indian Bazaars in Johannesburg. She, as also her husband, a draper, took keen interest in the cause of Indians in South Africa.

[4] Charles Phillips, congregational minister in the Transvaal

[5] Mrs. J. J. Doke and Olive Doke

meet them? Where is MacIntyre[1]? What do you think of the community? Do you meet Thumbi[2]? What has come over him? These are questions which I should expect discussed in your letters. But something is better than nothing.

My life has become very complex. You must have read at least my important public letters. Now I am entering upon a big recruiting campaign. My work has involved constant railway travelling. I am longing for solitude and rest. They may never be my lot. Mrs. Gandhi has developed remarkably. She has beautifully resigned herself to things she used to fight. But I must [not] describe things. You must see them for yourself.

With love,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

73. LETTER T0 DEVDAS GANDHI

[NADIAD,]
June 23, 1918

I see that you have made a good beginning with the work of teaching. I sent you some instructions yesterday. Take up grammar quite early. They will find it interesting. It will also be well to teach inflections as you start. They should be compared with the Tamil forms. Let me have some idea about the age of those who join and the progress they make.

The first pamphlet on enlistment[3] has been issued here. I send you three copies. It has also been translated into English. Let me know what you think of it after reading it. Lately, I have come to see the principle of non-violence in a somewhat different light, sublime none the less. Simultaneously, I also realize my shortcomings in the matter of self-control. My *tapascharya* is quite inadequate for this task. In this age, we do not get by our experiments one millionth part of the direct experience which they could formerly attain by

[1] An articled clerk with Gandhiji when he was in South Africa
[2] Thambi Naidoo, a passive resister
[3] *Vide* "Appeal for Enlistment", 22-6-1918.

tapascharya. Even if we find in thousands of instances that water is made up of two parts of hydrogen and one part of oxygen, it cannot be said finally that this is its composition. The conclusion is only an inference. If, however, I take two parts of hydrogen and one part of oxygen and combine them to produce water, that would be definitive knowledge. It is knowledge verified in experience. Even if water can be made in any other manner, I have definitely shown with one experiment that it can be made by compounding [hydrogen and oxygen] in this way. We frequently act on inference but come to no harm. In matters of moment, we realize the inadequacy of inference and the supreme worth of direct experience. It is for this reason that observance of *yama-niyama*, etc., is essential. This is the only way to knowledge based on experience.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

74. LETTER TO MOHANDAS NAGJI

[NADIAD,]

June 23, 1918

My view about remarriage is that it would be proper for a man or a woman not to marry again after the death of the partner. The basis of Hinduism is self-control. Of course, self-control is enjoined in every religion, but Hinduism has attached to it especial importance. In such a religion, remarriage can be only an exception. These views of mine notwithstanding, so long as the practice of child-marriage continues and so long as men are free to marry as often as they choose, we should not stop a girl, who has become a widow while yet a child, from remarrying if she so desires, but should respect her wishes. I would not, however, put it into the head of even a child widow to remarry, though, if she did marry again, I would not regard her action as sinful.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

75. LETTER TO VITHALBHAI PATEL

[NADIAD,]
June 23, 1918

BHAISHRI VITHALBHAI,

I have your letter. I think it is better for persons like you to keep out of the Home Rule [League] and do what service you can. The Home Rule League is in a difficult plight at present. This is not owing to external difficulties; there are many internal problems. They have not been able to decide what line to follow: obstruction or co-operation. Enough has been done by way of the former. It is necessary now to stop it and do something constructive. The League's capacity for service will not grow to its best unless this is done. Join the League by all means, if you want to do so merely that you may be able to guide it towards the path of service. But the members of the League will not welcome your entry if you fight with one and all. It is simple treachery to join any institution with the object of wrecking it. You will also be doing a great service to the country if you but learn the art of safeguarding your health.

How do you like Vallabhbhai's new profession? He has become a recruiting sergeant.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

76. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

NADIAD,
Jeth Sud 15 [*June 24, 1918*][1]

REVERED ANASUYABEHN,

Herewith Gordhanbhai's[2] letter. Last night a mill worker stopped me and asked:"What have you done for us?" I thought of you then. I was saddened and said to myself, 'Anasuyabehn is forsaking

[1] *Jeth Sud 15* in 1918 corresponded to this date, when Gandhiji was in Nadiad.
[2] Gordhandas Patel, Secretary, Ahmedabad Mill-owners' Association

her dharma.' Could you give up working for mill workers? You have taken on yourself the task of educating them, weaning them fromtheir addictions, reforming them generally and taking them forward in all respects. This is your life's work and can well take up all your time. How can you give it up? You seem to be unmindful of what the arbitration is doing or not doing. You shouldn't be. You must do other things only after taking care of your main activity.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati Original: S.N. 32839

77. SPEECH AT AHMEDABAD

June 24, 1918

You all know the purpose of this meeting. You also know that Bombay has protested against the insulting behaviour of His Excellency the Governor towards members of the Home Rule League at the War Conference. At the Bombay meeting, too, I was in the chair and, having expressed my views there, I shall not take much of your time. This meeting is for two things: one, to support the action of Bombay and, two, to explain the position to those who do not read newspapers and, since even newspaper reports are often fragmentary and incorrect, to place the facts before newspaper readers as well. This is what today's meeting is for. His Excellency the Governor was faced with the question whether or not to invite Mr. Tilak and other swarajists to the War Conference. Since Mr.Tilak and Mrs. Besant had not been invited to the Delhi Conference, the question was an unusual one for Lord Willingdon and he gave it careful consideration. In the end, he invited them and Mr. Tilak accepted the invitation. The latter enquired whether he would be free to address the Conference and whether any amendments would be in order. He was told in reply that no amendments to the resolutions could be moved but that, after selected speakers had addressed the Conference on the resolutions, he would be free to speak and comment on their views. His Excellency sincerely meant what he said and there was no ambiguity in his words. And so Mr. Tilak and others went to the Conference. But what was their exper-ience there? Before Mr. Tilak had completed his second sentence His Excellency the Governor interrupted him—stopped him from making any criticism. He did not know what Mr. Tilak wished to

say. He knew nothing, of course, about what the speech would be like. And yet, believing that the sentence which Mr. Tilak had commenced with a 'but' would be objectionable, the Governor did not allow him to complete it and stopped him from proceeding further. Not that His Excellency would not have been within his rights in doing so, on some other occasion. It was, however, improper of him to have thus stopped a guest whom he had invited to his place to address a meeting and, in doing so, he has offered a gross insult to Mr. Tilak and the other distinguished guests, in fact to all the people of India. Mr. Tilak is no ordinary man. He is adored by the whole of India. It is really in tolerable that he should have been ordered in this manner to resume his seat. We have assembled here today to demonstrate that the people of Ahmedabad too cannot tolerate this and to support Bombay's action.

In this we are but doing our duty and showing ourselves to be true swarajists. It must be one of the implications of swaraj that any insult to India should be treated as an insult to Indian independence. We have come together today to call the Governor to account for having insulted Indian independence. We should tell him that he has offered us a serious insult and that he should apologize for that. With few exceptions, there is no newspaper in India which has approved of the Governor's action. They have all condemned it. Even *The Pioneer* has done so and said that when the need of the hour is to enlist the co-operation of the people such an incident should not have taken place. It has gone further and advised the Governor to swallow the bitter draught and get on with the work. The object of this meeting in Ahmedabad and the resolutions it is to pass are quite in order. One of the resolutions calls upon the Governor to apologize and says that, should he fail to do so, His Excellency the Viceroy should intervene and express his disapproval of the Governor's action, and further that, unless this is done, Home Rulers will not attend any meeting presided over by Lord Willingdon. We do not wish to extend our displeasure with him to the Empire nor to run away from our present duties. In the second resolution, we point out the difficulties we encounter in helping the Government. Our intention in it is to assert that we wish to help it, but cannot do so fully because there are certain things which need to be done, and which only the Government can do, before we can help. In saying that it cannot afford to ignore the educated classes and that the Indian soldier will not rest satisfied with rights inferior to those enjoyed by the British soldier, we also point to our difficulties and argue that, if we have not been able to help, the

reason lies with the Government itself. Let this cause be removed and we shall then withdraw our charge against it. This is not enough, however. There are certain things we must ourselves do. If we do not, we shall fail in our duty as swarajists. We pray to God to grant us swaraj this very day. But God tells us that we shall get it when we deserve it. If He were to give us all that we pray for, there would be complete chaos in the world. We have to prove our fitness for swaraj. We have ample material with which to silence our enemies, but it is our duty to see our defects as they are. If, being angry with the Government for these defects, we keep thinking of its shortcomings and sit back with folded hands, we shall never come to enjoy swaraj. Travelling all over India, I have gathered that her people want to live, as those of Canada and Australia do, as citizens having equal rights with the Government. We want it to obtain our consent for carrying on the war and only then ask us to contribute men and money. If our intention is not to leave the Empire, it is to our advantage to work with the British as partners. Our first and last duty is to join the Empire in making sacrifices and to make them courageously. It is only thus that we shall succeed in getting swaraj early. Our duty is two-fold: to resist injustice and take the necessary steps to end it and, at the same time, to stand by the Government in its hour of difficulty. If we mind these two duties, we shall have proved our *bona fides*. If we want to disprove the charge against us, we should give it no reason to doubt our loyalty—this is the only real way to punish it. There is another aspect to this resolution, which, too, you should consider. I have had a letter from Mr. Tilak in which he says that, if the Government of India would place the Indian soldier on the same footing as the British soldier, he would be prepared to give 5,000 men in six months and, should he fail, to pay a penalty of Rs. 100/- for every man [short of that figure]. For this purpose, he has also sent me a cheque for Rs. 50,000.[1] I have had talks with Mr. Jinnah and Mrs. Besant, too, on this subject. They have admitted that we should supply the required number of men to the Empire. Mr. Tilak believes that, if we make definite conditions with the Government for helping it, no room would be left for any misunderstanding afterwards and that, therefore, that is the course we should adopt. I hold, on the contrary, that we lose nothing by trusting, and so I have no hesitation in advising people to join up. We shall, by doing so, get what we have been demanding. I

[1] The cheque was returned to Tilak.

believe in trusting people and my advice, therefore, is that we should proceed on the basis of trust. I have attended this meeting to tell you that, if your chanting of the swaraj *mantra* is to be efficacious, you should do your duty. To wipe out the blot on the face of Gujarat, people should take to careers in the army. This is the best way of learning to defect Ahmedabad, should it ever be raided. We do not propose to turn this into a recruitment meeting but, when such a meeting is called, you should not fail in your duty.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 30-6-1918

78. LETTER TO J. L. MAFFEY

NADIAD,
June 25, 1918

DEAR MR. MAFFEY,

I have purposely refrained from acknowledging your letter of the 4th instant, as I was desirous of reporting to you on the several matters referred to in our correspondence or our conversation.

The Kaira affair was settled locally. I have called it a settlement without grace.[1] You might have seen my note upon it. If not, I will not tax you with it. Did I not want to commence recruiting at the earliest moment, I would not have been satisfied with several aspects of the settlement.

I duly attended the Bombay Conference. I did what I could to heal the breach caused by Lord Willingdon's blunder.[2] You may not agree that it was a blunder at all. I still feel that Lord Willingdon could gracefully admit his mistake and I have not hesitated to say as much to him. It has certainly added to my difficulty. That however need not daunt me. I shall persevere.

Ever since my return from Delhi I have been engaged in

[1] *Vide"*Letter to People of Kheda", 6-6-1918

[2] The reference is to Lord Willingdon's stopping of B. G. Tilak and Kelkar from speaking on the Loyalty Resolution at the Provincial War Conference, Bombay on June 10. B. G. Tilak, Gandhiji, M. A. Jinnah, B. G. Horniman, N. C. Kelkar and R. P. Karandikar left the Conference Hall in protest. For Gandhiji's correspondence and speech in this respect, *vide* "Letter to Lord Willingdon:, 11-6-1918 and "Speech at Public Meeting, Bombay", 16-6-1918..

organizing public opinion in Gujarat in favour of an active, ceaseless recruiting campaign. We on this side do not supply soldiers. I am trying my hardest to remove the blemish. Several private meetings have been held to induce the people to come forward. The campaign was publicly started on the 21st instant. No tangible result can yet be reported. Our workers have now gone over to villages to talk among the people. I am addressing a meeting tomorrow, having been invited thereto by the villagers. In a few days I shall know whether I shall get any response. Anyway no stone will be left unturned by me to obtain recruits in their thousands, Nothing less will satisfy me. My first leaflet[1] you will see in translation in the Press. As a specimen, I enclose a Gujarati copy.

And now for the brothers Ali. I was not thinking of a time limit. But I did gather from you that if I waited for about a month I would probably find them released.[2] Whether I carried with me a false impression or a true one does not much matter. Naturally I shall accept your version of your words in preference to mine. But it is essential that either the necessity for their internment should be judicially or otherwise publicly proved, or they should be discharged. A big agitation has been held in abeyance only on my word that I am trying through your good offices to secure their release. Will you not therefore exert yourself in this matter? In our circles the talk is that the brothers are held up only to satisfy Sir William Vincent[3] and Sir Charles Cleveland. I endeavoured to move the former, but I rubbed him up the wrong way. A mere mention of their names was a red rag. And I completely collapsed. You (the Government) have asked for a calm atmosphere in order to prosecute the War. You are entitled to it so long as you do not ruffle it yourselves. But may I for my"tinpot" recruiting ask for an equally calm atmosphere by either releasing the brothers or furnishing your avowed friends with a proper justification?

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Chelmsford Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] "Appeal for Enlistment", *ibid*, pp. 439-43.

[2] The Ali Brothers were finally released on December 25, 1919, under the amnesty granted by a Royal Proclamation.

[3] Sir William Henry Hoare Vincent, Member (Home), Viceroy's Executive Council

79. SPEECH AT RAS

June 26, 1918

Gandhiji began with the assurance that he had not come with the intention of forcing anyone to join the army. As a man trying to practise *ahimsadharma*, he could compel them not by physical force but only by the force of his love, as also by awakening the feelings of patriotism and true self-interest. He was there to advise them to join the army. The same advice he had taken to himself and had tendered his eldest son, who was married and had five children. He continued:

Voluntary recruiting is a key to swaraj and will give us honour and manhood. The honour of women is bound up with it. Today we are unable to protect our women and children even against wild animals. The best way of acquiring the capacity of self-protection is joining the army. Some will ask, 'Why get killed in France?' But there is a meaning in being thus killed. When we send our dear ones to the battle-field, the courage and the strength which they will acquire will transform all the villages. The training we can get today we may never get again.

Mr. Gandhi spoke of *Dharala*, *Vaghris* and *Patidars* in the same breath, as the qualities of Kshatriyas were common to them. He exhorted them to use for the protection of the motherland their valour, which otherwise led to mutual quarrels.

Taking the population of a village at one thousand we should have twenty recruits from each village or two per hundred. What are two in a hundred? How many men do cholera and such other diseases take away every year? These men die unmourned except by their relatives. On the other hand, soldiers' death on the battle-field makes them immortal, if the scriptures are right, and becomes a source of joy and pride to those left behind. From the death of Kshatriyas will be born the guardians of the nation and no Government can withhold arms from such men.

One of their friends was ready to enlist that day, he said, but could not do so for two months on account of debts. Many similar cases might be found. Mr. Gandhi requested the village leaders to inquire into the cases of such men, find out their pecuniary condition and undertake the management of their business and the maintenance of their families. He continued:

You could then inspire young men to enlist. *A national army could be thus created instead of a mercenary one*. There is not a

family in England, rich or poor, which does not mourn the loss of a relative. It has now been decided there to call up men up to the age of 51. If we desire to govern our country and defend it, every young man should join the army.

He expressed the hope that the village people will discuss the matter and resolve to give two men for every hundred.

For years we have been deprived of our fighting capacity. How are we to acquire the use of arms for which our ancestors practised penances and took severe pledges?

Some argue that we would be deprived of arms after the war. Now, there is no power on earth that could, against our will, deprive us of arms after we have once been trained. Government is not foolish or it could not govern. Our mightiest weapon, satyagraha, is always with us. But he cannot be a satyagrahi who is afraid of death. The ability to use physical force is necessary for a true appreciation of satyagraha. He alone can practise ahimsa who knows how to kill, i.e., knows what *himsa* is.

In conclusion, Mr. Gandhi said:

Sisters, you should encourage your husbands and brothers and sons and not to worry them with your objections. If you want them to be true men, send them to the army with your blessings. Don't be anxious about what may happen to them on the battle-field. Your piety will watch over them there. And if they fall, console yourselves with the thought that they have fallen in the discharge of their duty and that they will be yours in your next incarnation.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-7-1918

80. SPEECH AT KHEDA[1]

June 27, 1918

We generally believe that having to go to jail is a disgrace; anyone who has to do so is all the time nervous with fear when he is inside and keeps counting his days, thinking when he would complete

[1] The meeting was held to welcome satyagrahis released form jail, after serving a term of imprisonment for removing onion crops from fields forfeited to Government for non-payment of land revenue. According to a newspaper report, Gandhiji went on foot form Mehmedabad to Kheda to receive the satyagrahis.

his term there and be able to get out. This is the mental condition of the prisoner who has violated a law of the country and society, but it is different with a satyagrahi. That is why, in this struggle for upholding our self-respect and rights, we advocate jail-going. There is not the least trace of suffering or depression on the faces of those friends here who have been released from jail. The whole of Kheda looks up to them with pride and is celebrating this occasion as a mark of respect for them. To one type of person, going to jail is a matter of disgrace; to another, it is a matter of pride. The former returns from jail a hardened man. While in jail, he resorts to deceit and becomes unruly; our friends on the other hand have sanctified the jail by their presence. Not only did they respect the regulations in jail, but the opportunity which their imprisonment offered, they utilised for calm thinking, took solemn vows to give up tea and smoking and resolved to dedicate their lives to the service of the country. All the time they were in jail, the one constant thought in their minds was what they should do for the country. Thus they used their twenty days in jail in a manner no one had done before them; imprisonment, therefore, is not a matter of disgrace for us, but rather of honour. May we all have to serve such terms of imprisonment. My brothers and sisters, pray for this only so that we may all be able to render the purest service to the country.

This great change in our friends while in jail is solely due to Shri Mohanlal Pandya. His life is evidence of how much but one truthful man among the people can achieve and to what extent he can influence others. I do not wish to give less credit to the other friends, but it cannot be gainsaid that, had it not been for Pandya, the results would not have been so happy.

Jail-going is not the crowning step in satyagraha; it is, in a sense, only the foundation. There is a fundamental difference between going to jail through satyagraha and doing so for some crime.

For instance, if one lands in jail for assaulting anyone while refusing to pay the land revenue, that cannot be called satyagraha. The assault and the imprisonment are both a matter of disgrace. However, a man may sincerely repent for the assault and his term in jail will then be a *prayashchit*, though, even so, it will not be satyagraha.

On this occasion of the return of our friends from jail, let us consider what satyagraha means. He who deliberately takes suffering

on himself is called a satyagrahi. The rule of justice which holds between two brothers holds also between the Government and the people. A satyagrahi cannot please society every time; he has sometimes to incur its displeasure and offer satyagraha against it too. We want to see the principles of satyagraha spread all over India as rapidly as possible. Even if a single part of India, ever so small, were to embrace satyagraha, very great things could be achieved. Many of those who are present here are advocates of swaraj. They should not forsake truth even for a moment. If they do, they will have to go through utter darkness, without so much as a glimpse of the holy sun. It is the duty of a satyagrahi to place the principles of truth fearlessly before the country. He will, in the process, serve the whole world.

My brothers and sisters, I would say to you: If we have decided to dedicate ourselves to satyagraha in all sincerity of heart, we have only one duty: to cling to truth till the last breath. If you are convinced that the country will not suffer because of our insistence on truth, then, with God as witness, resolve that you would not forsake the truth, even if this earth should sink into the bottomless pit. Then alone will you be real lovers of swaraj, will you deserve to wear *genuine badges* of swaraj.

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Satyagraha

81. SPEECH AT NAVAGAM[1]

June 27, 1918

The man who should stand before you today, after having been released from jail, is myself; it was I who advised the onions to be dug up. I told them they could boldly go ahead with the digging, and so they did. The Government stopped them and, not satisfied with that, sent six of these friends to jail. The one who should have been imprisoned was left free and the credit has gone to those who were sent to jail. We have assembled here today from all over the surrounding villages to celebrate the occasion and welcome them back.

Navagam's renown has spread all over Gujarat today. By going

[1] The passive resisters, released and greeted at Kheda, were taken in procession to Navagam, their home village.

to jail our friends here have taken the crowning step in satyagraha. The sisters have also understood that, since we committed no crime, there was no disgrace in having gone to jail. I should like to see this spirit spread over the whole of Kheda district.

We fought the battle of land revenue, but had no chance of going to jail. This, too, we have had now, by God's grace. It does not seem from their faces that they had suffered anything at all. Being happy or otherwise depends on one's mind. What the mind takes to be happiness is happiness and what it takes to be misery is misery. Our friends here felt no pain in having to go to jail, for they were convinced of the need to do so for the sake of the country and their pledge, and they welcomed the sentence of imprisonment. To them the jail was like a palace, and while there, they learned to practise self-control. You should welcome imprisonment in this way, learn self-control in jail, taking vows.

The path of satyagraha is a very hard one but, to the extent that we succeed in following it, we shall be more of men.

This will be a blessed day and our descendants will celebrate it as such if this occasion teaches us to live for the country, to work for her, to die for her.

Had it not been for Mohanlal Pandya, you could not have achieved what you have done. Let us hope that men and women of Navagam will be imbued with the same courage as Mohanlal's, so that they stand in no need of outside help. Navagam has had the advantage of Mohanlal Pandya's experience and also earned the credit which, otherwise, some other place might have had the good fortune to do. I should like you to turn his experience to good account.

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Satyagraha

82. SPEECH AT KATHLAL[1]

June 28, 1918

The longer I am in India, the more I see that some people believe I have set myself up as a guru. I cautioned them against this in South Africa and caution you here again. I know uttering such a

[1] At this meeting an address was presented to Mohanlal Pandya.

caution can itself be a way of seeking honour. Even at the risk of seeming to do so, I shall say that it is not for me to be anyone's guru. I am not fit to be that. Even in South Africa, when there were hallowed occasions like the present one, I had refused the position and do so today once more. I am myself in search of a guru. How can a man, himself in search of a guru, be a guru to anyone else? I had my political guru in Gokhale, but I cannot be one to anybody else because I am still a child in matters of politics. Again, if I agreed to be a guru and accepted someone as my disciple, and the latter did not come up to my expectations or ran away, I would be very much hurt.

I hold that a man should think, not once, but many times before declaring himself anyone's disciple. A disciple proves his discipleship by carrying out any order of the guru the moment it is uttered, much as a paid servant would. Whether or not he has made himself such a servant will be known only when he shows that he has fully carried out the order. The work I have been doing has brought me in the public eye. It has been such as would appeal to the people. If I have shown any skill in this struggle, it has been only in seeing the direction in which the current of popular feeling was flowing and trying to direct it into the right channel with happy results.

I am trying to be a satyagrahi. It is not always that a satyagrahi acts in accordance with popular opinion. He may even have to oppose it. In satyagraha, there can be no room for any falsehood. Everyone is welcome to plunge into it. The lives of us all are full of experiments. If we go on making experiments, we shall always stand to gain something or other from them. Weeds are ever mixed with grass as chaff with grains of wheat. In the same way, every effort has two results. Just as we throw away the chaff and use the wheat, so in life we must embrace the truth and reject falsehood. There are many things I should like to do and I want to do them all, carrying you with me as brothers and sisters. Take me for your elder brother, if you like. I shall be satisfied with that. That is the role I would assign to myself.

All that has been said about Mohanlal Pandya and other friends who went to jail is quite correct. The fear of jail brings tears to our eyes, but these friends went to jail, stayed there and returned, all with smiles on their faces. We cannot, therefore, congratulate them well enough on this occasion. Mohanlal Pandya had his first lesson in satyagraha in this struggle and at the end of it he is found to have passed an advanced examination in it. By honouring him, you have, in

fact, honoured yourselves.

You will have properly understood satyagraha only if, in the wake of the struggle, the village of Kathlal comes to have a new look and has numerous good works to show in future. If we guard the jewel that we have discovered, it will ever, like the *Kalpavriksha*[1], bear any fruit we would have.

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Satyagraha

83. FRAGMENT OF LETTER[2]

[NADIAD,]
June 29, 1918

I also do not think that the boy[3] is innocent. If you would please me, see that he has justice in a court.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

84. SPEECH AT NADIAD[4]

June 29, 1918

First, let me draw your attention to the lesson of satyagraha taught by some of our sisters here. Some others we cannot see because they are in purdah. I say to them and to those brothers who are responsible for their remaining in purdah that, in a state such as this where half our body is constricted, we cannot work for India. The sisters here who have ignored the arrangement for them to keep behind the purdah and have preferred to sit out in the open in freedom, deserve our congratulations.

I thank you for the address you have presented; but one who is wedded to service cannot accept any kind of honour. Such a person has dedicated his all to Krishna. Consequently, the honour I get can

[1] Mythical tree which fulfilled every wish

[2] Addressee's name is not given in the source.

[3] Harilal, Gandhiji's eldest son, whose speculative dealings seem to have involved some party in a business loss.

[4] This was in reply to an address presented to Gandhiji on the successful outcome of the satyagraha campaign.

only be offered up to Krishna. He who is dedicated to service cannot hanker after honour. The moment he desires honour, he has betrayed his dedication to service. I have often seen that many work for money, many others for honour, and still others for fame. Yearning for money is bad enough, but the desire for honour is worse still. Sometimes a man commits more sins for honour and reputation than he would for the sake of money. It is one thing to maintain self-respect, and quite another to desire honour from either the people or the Government. A man hankering after praise does grave harm not only to himself but also to the people. Praise is a thing which will cloud the judgement of even very great men. If you wish to maintain your self-respect, I request you in all humility not to overload me with honours. The best way to honour me is to accept my advice and act upon it intelligently. Only then will you have honoured me truly. . .[1]

The sagacity of a general lies in his choice of lieutenants. Certain objectives having been decided upon and rules framed, results will be achieved only if the army goes ahead with its work guided by these. If it fails to do so, the general by himself cannot accomplish anything great....[2] Not that I have accomplished anything great....[3] Many people were ready to follow my advice....[4] I wondered who the deputy general should be. My eye fell upon Shri Vallabhbhai. I must admit that the first time I saw him I wondered who that stiff man could be. What could he do! But, as I came in contact with him, I knew that I must have him. Vallabhbhai saw that this work was far more important than his practice and his work in the municipality, of much account though they were. He was flourishing in his profession then, he thought, but things might change any day, his money might be squandered; rather than that his heirs should do this, he would leave them a better legacy. With these thoughts in his mind, he took a plunge. Had I not chanced on Vallabhbhai, what has been achieved would not have been achieved, so happy has been my experience of him.

I feel that the other friends are automatically honoured when honour is rendered to Vallabhbhai and so I do not mention their names. The Chairman actually published a list of awards the way the

[1] Omissions are in the source.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*
[4] *ibid*

Emperor does. I am acting merely as his agent. There are names which do not occur, they cannot occur, in his imperial list. I shall declare these names here. The peace and joy of those who accept the mission of service are beyond description. I have tasted the joys of life to the utmost and I have come to the conclusion that the *atman* has its highest bliss only in dedication to service. As the truest examples of such dedication, I shall mention my friends, the sweepers of Anathashram. The love they have showered on me has been beyond words. Similarly, the children in the orphanage always vied with one another in serving me. I never conversed with them without a little merriment. What shall I offer to them? I do not possess a single pice. They are as my children. The selfless service I have had from them I do not receive even from barristers and advocates.

We have passed through many experiences. Kheda has not had the suffering which is, often, a satyagrahi's portion. It had seemed to me that the struggle might remain incomplete, but these friends here who went to jail saw that it did not. Their short term of imprisonment was not enough for the purpose, though. So sweet is the taste of satyagraha that one who has known it will ask for nothing else. If Kheda has had this experience, it is thanks to its energy and strength, its efficiency. It is entirely because of these that Kheda has achieved good results. It is a mere trifle that we have won on the issue of land revenue, but, as I have often told you, the important gains are fearlessness and the feeling that we are the equals of even the highest officers—in no way inferior to them. I hope this struggle will have made you permanently conscious of your strength to employ satyagraha at any time. Once the flame is kindled, it cannot be extinguished but burns ever more brightly. Let this be the abiding result of satyagraha. If it remains with you, we shall always see satyagraha in some village or other of Kheda. It is my earnest wish that such happy results may ever bless Kheda.

In your address you have said something about giving *gurudakshina*[1] to me. I do not accept the role of a *guru*. If, however, you wish to render me any service, I certainly want it. It will cost you a lot.

For the love showered on me by Kheda, and for the service the volunteers have done me, I pray to God to grant me wisdom and

[1] The disciple's offering to a teacher at the end of his studies

vouchsafe me greater strength in following the ideal of service. Only so can I express my boundless Love. If ever I have spoken bitter words to you, kindly forgive me. I have said nothing in malice but all in the service of the country.

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Satagraha

85. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING[1]

NADIAD,

June 30, 1918

MY DEAR ESTHER,

I had no time to write to you ere this. I wonder if you have read all I have been writing and saying just now. What am I to advise a man to do who wants to kill but is unable owing to his being maimed? Before I can make him feel the virtue of not killing, I must restore to him the arm he has lost. I have always advised young Indians to join the army, but have hitherto refrained from actively asking them to do so, because I did not feel sufficiently interested in the purely political life of the country or in the war itself. But a different and difficult situation faced me in Delhi. I felt at once that I was playing with the greatest problem of life in not tackling the question of joining the army seriously. Either we must renounce the benefits of the State or help it to the best of our ability to prosecute the war. We are not ready to renounce. Indians have a double duty to perform. If they are to preach the mission of peace, they must first prove their ability in war. This is a terrible discovery but it is true. A nation that is unfit to fight cannot from experience prove the virtue of not fighting. I do not infer from this that India must fight. But I do say that India must know how to fight. Ahimsa is the eradication of the desire to injure or to kill. Ahimsa can be practised only towards those that are inferior to you in every way. It follows therefore that to become a full ahimsaist you have to attain absolute perfection. Must we all then first try to become Sandows before we can love perfectly? This seems to be unnecessary. It is enough if we can face the world without flinching. It is personal courage that is an absolute necessity. And some will acquire that

[1] This was in reply to Esther Faering's question: "How can one, who believes firmly and has given his own life for the sake of exercising passive resistance always and everywhere, ask others to join the war and fight ?"

courage only after they have been trained to fight. I know I have put the argument most clumsily. I am passing through new experiences. I am struggling to express myself. Some things are still obscure to me. And I am trying to find words for others which are plain to me. I am praying for light and guidance and am acting with the greatest deliberation. Do please write and fight every inch of the ground that to you may appear untenable. That will enable me to find the way.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

Devdas is in Madras now and, if you are in Madras, you should meet him. His address is.... He is taking Hindi classes.

My Dear Child, pp. 28-9

86. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

NADIAD,
Jyeshtha Krishna 6 [*June 30, 1918*]

DEAR JAMNALALJI,

I have your letter. If you can allow me to use the money set apart for railway expenses for building work,[1] my trouble will be over. I have written to other friends also. Shankarlal Banker has sent Rs. 4,000. Ambalalji is sending Rs. 5,000. This helps towards expenses already incurred. I hope for some help from two other friends also. If you will give the Rs. 25,000 for building work, I can be free from anxiety to a great extent. There is no need to provide for railway expenses. These expenses are met from the normal receipts.

Please do not think that you must give the money because I write. Give it only if you can do so for building work without any reservation.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 2839

[1] The Sabarmati Ashram was under construction

87. LETTER TO G. K. DEVADHAR

[NADIAD,]
July 2, 1918

MY DEAR DEVADHAR,

I thank you for sending me your report of the Sewa Sadan work. It is a monument to your industry, nationalism of a constructive type and your love of service. The progress is indeed phenomenal. There is probably nothing quite like it in all India. If you have a lady teacher whom you can spare, I want one, even two, to replace Avantikabai and Anandibai from Champaran.

And now for suggestions. A smattering of English is worse than useless; it is an unnecessary tax on our women. When we cease to make use of English where we ought not to use it, believe me, the Englishmen will talk to us in our own language, as they ought. Lord Chelmsford was quite pleased when I spoke at the Conference[1] in Urdu. By all means teach a select few ladies all the English you can so that they might translate the best English thought to their other sisters. This is what I call economy of languages. I would therefore replace English by Hindi. The latter will liberalize the Deccan woman who like the rest of her sisters, is today parochial and it will add to her usefulness as a national worker.

Harmonium is only a stage removed from the concertina. I should give them the *vina* and the *sita*. These are cheap, national and infinitely superior to the harmonium. Lastly, I would like everyone to learn cotton-spinning and hand-weaving to the exclusion of fancy work. Through the instrumentality of two workers I have got 100 *rentias* working, providing a livelihood for probably 300 women. When India regains her natural calm and quiet dignity, mills will be a thing of the past. We shall then find our Ranis spinning yarn of the finest count as they used to before. I would like you to hasten that day. Believe me we shall soon have a surfeit of these things.

The ordinary tendency is to move with the times. We who must continually elect and select may not always follow the times spirit; we may, we should, anticipate the future. He who runs may see, if he would also think, that the future lies with handicraftsmanship.

[1] The War Conference at Delhi

Anyway, you cannot go wrong by encouraging the women to go in for hand-spinning and weaving. They will be helping to clothe the naked.

I have given you more than you bargained for. Many thanks for giving Amratlal and Kesariprasad. Tell Mrs. Devadhar I shall expect her to come and stay at the Ashram for a few days.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

88. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[NADIAD,]

JULY 2, 1918

I am very glad that you write so very regularly. I also wish to be regular, but you should not wait for my letters. There was no letter from you today. The conversation about Natesan was interesting. Do as suits you best. The work in which you are engaged at present is very important, how very important you may not perhaps realize just now. Generally, such work would be entrusted only to a very intelligent and mature person. Even if that were done, it is doubtful whether enough people will come forward to learn [Hindi] in a place like Madras. If you succeed in getting the people of the province of Madras to accept your gift of Hindi, you will have solved a difficult problem. You will then have joined Madras with other parts of India. This bridge which you have undertaken to build requires greater skill and patience than would be required in building a bridge across the Ganga. The task of making Hindi simple and interesting will exercise all your skill. To succeed in this, you will do well to read, during your leisure hours, books on Hindi, Gujarati, English and Tamil grammars. This might reveal to you some key which will enable you to impart more knowledge with less effort. Teach a large number of derivative words [at the same time as the root word]. That will tax the memory less. I have told you to consider what arrangements can be made for the Hindi-speaking people whom we want to send there to learn Tamil. You should discuss this with Mr. Natesan, Hanumantrao and others. Revashankar Sodha and Chhotam have returned to the Ashram. I welcome this, although it adds to the responsibility. Harilal will pass through by the night train today on his way from Rajkot. We

have had news of the death of . . .'s[1] mother. Write to her from your end. I brought up the matter yesterday and we had a purifying discussion. I call the discussion purifying because everyone gave truthful answers, with the utmost civility and reverence. The question was this: Now . . .[2] will like to go for the customary mourning visit on her mother's death. This will cost eighty rupees. Can the Ashram afford the expense? Should it agree to bear it? A person who has embraced poverty in the cause of the country and has dedicated himself to service of others can never lose his mother by death, because all women, old enough to be so, are his mothers. The father also does not die because every elder is like a father to him. Service is his wife; can she ever know death? The rest of the world are like brothers and sisters to him. To go on a mourning visit on the death of one's mother is only a formality. Should money be wasted to follow it out of deference to the world? This was the question discussed. Everyone replied, in all solemnity, that such an expenditure would be unjustified. Santok and Ba were also present. It was unanimously decided, though, that the idea should not be acted upon this time and the matter should be left entirely to the discretion of. . .[3] and . . .[4] behn. Most probably they will go.

Do you read any newspapers there? May I send you any from here?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] Names have been omitted in the source.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*
[4] *ibid*

89. LETTER TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

[NADIAD,]
July 2, 1918

BHAISHRI PRANJIVAN,

I have not been able to write to you for some time past. I carry on with the money I get here and do not go out to beg. I am in utmost need of money at present. Construction work is in progress. I have already spent forty thousand rupees on it. Sixty thousand more will be required. I have to provide accommodation for at least a hundred and fifty persons and install sixteen looms. Work on cloth is expanding rapidly. After the Ahmedabad strike, I have come into contact with a number of weavers. About three hundred women have started working the *rentia*. I believe we shall get, before long, about two maunds of handspun yarn every day. These women were unemployed. They are employed now. About thirty weavers outside have also found employment. Some of these are *Dheds*. They used to labour for wages but now they have found an independent vocation. I think this is a very important activity. For it, too, I need more money. I reckon I shall have to invest ten thousand rupees in this. The National School activity is, I think, equally important. It is my impression that even at present the boys of this school compare favourably with other boys at the same stage of education. The qualities of fearlessness, etc., which they have acquired are there for all to see. I can see that the school will require one thousand rupees every month, though just now the expenses are lower. If I were to look after both these activities myself I am sure I could expand them considerably. But I cannot manage that. Even as it is, I find that good progress is being made in both. I have to tax you for a large amount just now and should like you, as a permanent arrangement, to make good any deficit that may remain after contributions from elsewhere have been received. Please give, if you can, what I have asked for, so that my anxieties may end. If you disapprove of my work, I certainly cannot ask you for anything. But do not stint if you think that it is along the right lines.

You must be watching my work of recruitment. Of all my activities, I regard this as the most difficult and the most important. If I succeed in it, genuine swaraj is assured.

Vendemataram from
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

90. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[NADIAD,]
July 3, 1918

I think you must get the books there. You would do well to arrange for the other things also to be brought over there. It seems we have abused . . .'s[1] goodness. Because she does not insist, we let things go on. I want you to act now as if you had been served with a twenty-four hour's notice. There is nothing like our serving notice on ourselves.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

91. REMARKS ON ENLISTMENT[2]

[NADIAD,]
July 4, 1918

Swaraj means—complete independence in association with Britain. If we can help in this war, instead of her ruling over us we shall have the upper hand. It is essential for us to get military training. I have come across none in India who adheres to non-violence so scrupulously as I do. I am overfull of love. Nobody has noted the wicked things the British have done as well as I have, nor their deeds of goodness. To him who wants to learn the art of fighting, who would know how to kill, I would even teach the use of force. If I fail in the attempt this time, you may conclude that my *tapascharya* is imperfect as yet. He who does not know how to lay down his life without killing others may learn how to die killing.

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] The name is omitted in the source
[2] Made in the course of a discussion with visitors

92. LETTER TO ANNIE BESANT

[NADIAD,]

July 4, 1918

I search *New India* in vain for an emphatic declaration from you in favour of unconditional recruiting. Surely it must be plain that, if every Home Rule Leaguer became an active recruiting depot, we would ensure the passing of the Congress-League Scheme with only such modifications as we may agree to. I think this is the time when we must give the people [a] lead and not await their opinion. I would like to see you with your old fire growing the stronger in face of opposition. If we supplied recruits, we should dictate terms. But if we wait for the terms, the War may close, India may remain without a real military training and we should be face to face with a military dictatorship. This is taking the most selfish view of the situation and self-interest suggests the course I have ventured to place before the country as the only effective course.

I know you will not consider my letter as a presumption.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

93. LETTER T0 M. A. JINNAH

[NADIAD,]

July 4, 1918

DEAR MR. JINNAH,

I do wish you would make an emphatic declaration regarding recruitment. Can you not see that if every Home Rule Leaguer became a potent recruiting agency whilst, at the same time, fighting for constitutional rights, we would ensure the passing of the Congress-League Scheme, with only such modifications (if any) that we may agree to? We would then speak far more effectively than we do today."Seek ye first the Recruiting Office and everything will be added unto you." We must give the lead to the people and not think how the people will take what we say. What I ask for is an emphatic declaration, not a halting one.

I know you will not mind my letter.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

94. LETTER TO C. S. RANGA IYER

[NADIAD ,]

July 4, 1918

DEAR MR. RANGA IYER[1],

I thank you for your congratulations.[2] I shall not misunderstand your inability to hold numerous meetings in the villages.[3] I know how difficult the thing is. And yet without our penetration into the villages our Home Rule schemes are of little value. With the people really at our back, we should make our march to our goal irresistibly. That we do not see such a simple truth is the saddest part of the tragedy being enacted in front of us. If you would get out of it, you would, even at the risk of closing your paper, learn Hindi and, then, work among the villages. I know you have laboured valiantly for your paper. But it was labour almost mis-spent. We must give the fruits of our Western learning to our millions, whereas we, circulating ideas among ourselves, describe, like the blindfolded ox, the same circle and mistake it for motion forward.

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Member, Central Legislative Council; author of *Father India, India in the Crucible,* etc.

[2] On the success of the Kheda Satyagraha

[3] C. S. Ranga Iyer had promised to hold 40 meetings in villages in support of the Kheda Satyagraha.

95. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

[NADIAD,]
July 4, 1918

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I read your letter with great care and interest. You did wisely in writing that letter. I find no immodesty in it. The language is courteous and graced with the spirit of independence and very sweet to me on that account. The letter shows your fearles-sness . . .[1]

I was ignorant of some of the things and had a vague idea about the others that you mention. You have given me a clearer picture. I did not know enough to be able to set matters right. I shall be able to do so in the light of what you have said. . .[2]

My being deceived does no harm to us. For instance, your character or your studies have not been affected. If we ourselves stick to our high ideal, no harm results. If one keeps one's house clean, neither the plague nor any other infection can ever enter it. Even if it does, it cannot stay there long. Similarly, as long as we remain pure, the plague of wickedness, even if it should ever infect our family, cannot possess it for long. You must have observed that persons who have come in contact with me had their vices discovered sooner or later.

With your permission, I wish to show your letter to all concerned. They will not be angry with you—they ought not to be. In the Ashram, we want that you and others, should express openly whatever you think at any time. If possible, I shall be in the Ashram for two nights and will return by the morning train on the following day, so that we may have an evening at our disposal.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] Some words are omitted in the source.
[2] *ibid*

96. LETTER T0 G. A. NATESAN

NADIAD ,
July 5, 1918

DEAR MR. NATESAN,

So Devdas is now receiving at your hands a nurse's affection and care. I am truly sorry for this addition to your burdens. I had hoped that Devdas would not behave quite so indecently as to fall ill. Pray thank Dr. Krishnaswami on my behalf for attending to Devdas. I hope for your sakes that he will soon be himself again. I understand your mother's scruples. If you were strong enough, she would waive them in favour of Devdas and that would be a precedent for the future. You saw how nobly she behaved, over Naicker? You doubted your own ability to carry her with you. It is a habit into which we reformers have fallen— never to think of beginning with our own homes. We now find it difficult to mend ourselves. What was intended to be a letter of thanks has ended in a sermon. Please pardon the offence.

I know you will wire if there is anything serious with Devdas.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 2230

97. LETTER TO V.S SRINIVASA SASTRI

[NADIAD,]
July 5, 1918

I do not know what report you have read in the *Chronicle*. There is an official Recruiting Agent who has the effrontery to be my namesake. It may be a glowing report of his which you may have read. So far I have not a single recruit to my credit apart from the co-workers who are all under promise to serve or to find substitutes. The task is most difficult. It is the toughest job I have yet handled in my life. However, it is yet too early to forecast any result.

Yours sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

98. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[NADIAD,]
July 5, 1918

I feel worried. You know our rule. One must not fall sick. Self-restraint is all that is necessary to ensure that one does not. Sufficient exercise and only as much food as one needs: if one keeps in mind these two things, one will never suffer in health.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, *Vol. IV*

99. LETTER T0 MANIBHAI PATEL

[NADIAD,]
July 5, 1918

BHAISHRI MANIBHAI[1],

I have your letter. I can understand your feelings but can offer no help. Time does its work. It will bring you peace.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

100. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

[NADIAD,]
July 6, 1918

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letters.[2] I prize them. They give me only partial consolation. My difficulties are deeper than you have put them. All you raise I can answer. I must attempt in this letter to reduce my own to writing. They just now possess me to the exclusion of everything else. All the other things I seem to be doing purely mechanically. This hard thinking has told upon my physical system. I hardly want to talk to anybody. I do not want even to write anything, not even these thoughts of mine. I am therefore falling back upon dictation to see

[1] Father of Raojibhai Patel
[2] *Vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", before 23-6-1918.

whether I can clearly express them. I have not yet reached the bottom of my difficulties, much less have I solved them. The solution is not likely to affect my immediate work. But of the failure I can now say nothing. If my life is spared I must reach the secret somehow.

You say:"Indians as a race did repudiate it, bloodlust, with full consciousness in days gone by and deliberately took their choice to stand on the side of humanity." Is this historically true? I see no sign of it either in the *Mahabharata* or the *Ramayana*, not even in my favourite Tulsidas which is much superior in spirituality to Valmiki[1]. I am not now thinking of these works in their spiritual meanings. The incarnations are described as certainly bloodthirsty, revengeful and merciless to the enemy. They have been credited with having resorted to tricks also for the sake of overcoming the enemy. The battles are described with no less zest than now, and the warriors are equipped with weapons of destruction such as could be possibly conceived by the human imagination. The finest hymn composed by Tulsidas in praise of Rama gives the first place to his ability to strike down the enemy. Then take the Mohamedan period. The Hindus were not less eager than the Mahomedans to fight. They were simply disorganized, physically weakened and torn by internal dissensions. The code of Manu prescribes no such renunciation that you impute to the race. Buddhism, conceived as a doctrine of universal forbearance, signally failed, and, if the legends are true, the great Shankaracharya did not hesitate to use unspeakable cruelty in banishing Buddhism out of India. And he succeeded ! Then the English period. There has been compulsory renunciation of arms but not the desire to kill. Even 'among the Jains the doctrine has signally failed. They have a superstitious horror of blood (shed), but they have as little regard for the life of the enemy as an European. What I mean to say is that they would rejoice equally with anybody on earth over the destruction of the enemy. All then that can be said of India is that individuals have made serious attempts, with greater success than elsewhere, to popularize the doctrine. But there is no warrant for the belief that it has taken deep root among the people.

You say further:"My point is that it has become an unconscious instinct, which can be awakened any time as you yourself have shown." I wish it was true. But I see that I have shown nothing of the kind. When friends told me here that passive resistance was taken up

[1] The author of the original *Ramayana* in Sanskrit

by the people as a weapon of the weak, I laughed at the libel, as I called it then. But they were right and I was wrong. With me alone and a few other co-workers it came out of our strength and was described as satyagraha, but with the majority it was purely and simply passive resistance what they resorted to, because they were too weak to undertake methods of violence. This discovery was forced on me repeatedly in Kaira. The people here, being comparatively freer, talked to me without reserve, and told me plainly that they took up my remedy because they were not strong enough to take up the other, which they undoubtedly held to be far more manly than mine. I fear that the people whether in Champaran or in Kaira would not fearlessly walk to the gallows, or stand a shower of bullets and yet say, in one case, 'we will not pay the revenue', and in the other, 'we will not work for you'. They have it not in them. And I contend that they will not regain the fearless spirit until they have received the training to defend themselves. *Ahimsa* was preached to man when he was in full vigour of life and able to look his adversaries straight in the face. It seems to me that full development of body-force is a *sine qua non* of full appreciation and assimilation of *ahimsa*.

I do agree with you that India with her moral force could hold back from her shores any combination of armies from the West or the East or the North or the South. The question is, how can she cultivate this moral force? Will she have to be strong in body before she can understand even the first principles of this moral force? This is how millions blashpheme the Lord of the Universe every morning before sunrise.

"I am changeless Brahma, not a collection of the five elements—earth, etc.—I am that Brahma whom I recall every morning as the spirit residing in the innermost sanctuary of my heart, by whose grace the whole speech is adorned, and whom the Vedas have described as '*Neti, neti*'."

I say we blaspheme the Lord of the Universe in reciting the above verse because it is a parrot recitation without any consideration of its grand significance. One Indian realizing in himself all that the verse means is enough to repel the mightiest army that can approach the shores of India. But it is not in us today and it will not come until there is an atmosphere of freedom and fearlessness on the soil. How to produce that atmosphere? Not without the majority of the inhabitants feeling that they are well able to protect themselves from the violence

of man or beast. Now I think I can state my difficulty. It is clear that before I can give a child an idea of *moksha*, I must let it grow into full manhood. I must allow it to a certain extent to be even attached to the body, and then when it has understood the body and so the world around it, may I easily demonstrate the transitory nature of the body and the world, and make it *feel* that the body is given not for the indulgence of self but for its liberation. Even so must I wait for instilling into any mind the doctrine of ahimsa, i.e., perfect love, when it has grown to maturity by having its full play through a vigorous body. My difficulty now arises in the practical application of the idea. What is the meaning of having a vigorous body? How far should India have to go in for a training in arms-bearing? Must every individual go through the practice or is it enough that a free atmosphere is created and the people will, without having to bear arms, etc., imbibe the necessary personal courage from their surroundings? I believe that the last is the correct view, and, therefore, I am absolutely right as things are in calling upon every Indian to join the army, always telling him at the same time that he is doing so not for the lust of blood, but for the sake of learning not to fear death. Look at this from Sir Henry Vane. I copy it from Morley's *Recollections* (Vol. II):

> Death holds a high place in the policy of great communities of the world.... It is the part of a valiant and generous mind to prefer some thing before life, as things for which a man should not doubt, nor fear to die.... True natural wisdom pursueth the learning and practice old dying well, as the very end of life, and indeed he hath not spent his life ill that hath learnt to die well. It is the chiefest thing and duty of life. The knowledge of dying is the knowledge of liberty, the state of true freedom, the way to fear nothing, to live well, contentedly, and peaceable.... It is a good time to die when to live is rather a burden than a blessing, and there is more ill in life than good.

"When his hour came, Vane's actual carriage on Tower Hill was as noble and resolute as his words" is Morley's commentary. There is not a single recruiting speech in which I have not laid the greatest stress upon this part of a warrior's duty. There is no speech in which I have yet said,"Let us go to kill the Germans." My refrain is,"Let us go and die for the sake of India and the Empire", and I feel that, supposing that the response to my call is overwhelming and we all go to France and turn the scales against the Germans, India will then have a claim to be heard and she may then dictate a peace that will last. Suppose further that I have succeeded in raising an army of fearless

men, they fill the trenches and with hearts of love lay down their guns and challenge the Germans to shoot them—their fellow men—I say that even the German heart will melt. I refuse to credit it with exclusive fiendishness. So it comes to this, that under exceptional circumstances, war may have to be resorted to as a necessary evil, even as the body is. If the motive is right, it may be turned to the profit of mankind and that an ahimsaist may not stand aside and look on with indifference but must make his choice and actively co-operate or actively resist.

Your fear about my being engrossed in the political strife and intrigues may be entirely set aside. I have no stomach for them, least at the present moment, had none even in South Africa. I was in the political life because therethrough lay my own liberation. Montagu said,"I am surprised to find you taking part in the political life of the country!" Without a moment's thought I replied,"I am in it because without it I cannot do my religious and social work," and I think the reply will stand good to the end of my life.

You can't complain of my having given you only a scrap of a letter. Instead of a letter, I have inflicted upon you what may almost read like an essay. But it was necessary that you should know what is passing in my mind at the present moment. You may now pronounce your judgement and mercilessly tear my ideas to pieces where you find them to be wrong.

I hope you are getting better and stronger. I need hardly say that we shall all welcome you when you are quite able to undertake a journey.

With love,

MOHAN

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

101. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

NADIAD,
July 9, 1918

MY DEAR ESTHER,

Of course you were quite right in putting me the question you did. I am looking forward to your reply to my explanation.

I appreciate your preference for country life and country children. They are more innocent and hence more loveable.

Yes, it is your duty to continue your work to the end of your contract. I know the girls[1] will gain by your very contact. And for that matter I don't mind their receiving faulty education.

Devdas has just risen from a sick-bed. I know he will be delighted to meet you. Do please find him out, if he has not found you out. And if you have the time, I would like you to meet him as often as possible.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

My Dear child, pp. 29-30

102. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

[NADIAD,]
July 9, 1918

. . . What a proud thing it would be if we recruited and, at the same time, insisted on amendments in the Reform Scheme! . . .

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

103. LETTER TO DATTATREYA DABHOLKAR

[NADIAD,
July 9, 1918]

CHI. DATTATREYA,

I congratulate you on your standing first in the examination of standard five. I want that you should rank high in character just as you maintain the first place in your studies.

I was happy that you donated the first month's amount of the scholarship of the Ashram. When I go there, I shall explain to those in the Ashram the meaning of your gift. These generous inclinations which your father inculcates in you from this early age are a noble inheritance. See that you nourish them.

Blessing from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] Pupils in the Danish Mission Boarding School, Tirukoilur

104. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[NADIAD,]

July 9, 1918

CHI. DEVDAS,

Natesan's telegram today has relieved me of my anxiety in the absence of a letter from you. Find out the exact cause of illness and see that you do not fall ill again. What did the students of Hindi do during your illness? Did any of them continue to come to you? Were there any who continued their study?

I have not had a single recruit so far, so deplorable is the plight of the country.

The telegram you saw there was all a misunderstanding. This occurred because there was a recruiting officer of the Government who was my namesake. My failure so far suggests that people are not ready to follow my advice. They are ready, however, to accept my services in a cause which suits them. This is as it should be. It is through such service that one earns the right to give advice. Three years' service, and that too in different parts of the country, is not enough. Even then, on the question of recruitment I could have done nothing else. I needed the satisfaction of having taken the initiative on an occasion of this kind. My efforts continue. What I have said is about the results achieved so far.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

105. LETTER T0 HARILAL GANDHI

[NADIAD,]

July 9, 1918

I have your letter. If it was cruel to say what I felt was true, then certainly my letter was cruel. I repeat that the world will most emphatically not consider you innocent. Whatever you may have said

in your sincerity[1], Narottam Sheth could have had no idea about your speculation. You have followed one wrong thing with another. It was not enough for you that you had lost ten thousand rupees. But there is no use arguing with you. May God give you wisdom. If I have made a mistake, I will set it right. If you think you can point out any, do so even now.

I understand what you say about your enlisting. I made the suggestion at a time when I did not doubt your truthfulness. I do not think I have any interest in it now. I can give you no idea of what my condition has been since I began to doubt your truthfulness.

May God bless you, I pray, and show you the right path.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

106. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[NADIAD,]
July 9, 1918

Please do everything necessary so that Shri Khushalbhai and Devbhabhi may have peace. I certainly fear that the fact of Prabhudas and others taking their meals there may have unwelcome results. It must be all very painful for Keshu and Radha. Use your judgement and do what you think best.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

107. LETTER TO A CO-WORKER

[NADIAD,]
July 10, 1918

I am in a fright about you. I am wrestling with Harilal as I am doing with you. He writes to say that the remedy I have suggested is cruel. How can I say that he is telling the truth, when I

[1] The original is not clear at this point.

know that he is not? That is the position in which I find myself in relation to you. In your case, too, I see things turning to anger. You are charged with deception. That time you talked about my ideals. And now you write to say that you wasted your time even in going to . . .[1] Again, you have deceived me. You misled . . .[2] too. You put it to him that I should send him to Chinchvad. He told me this. I did not attach any weight to his words. As I remember these things now, I shiver. What shall I say to you? I am not fit to sit in judgement over you. It gives me pain to have to tell you that you have been lying. If a man like you is capable of deceiving and shirking work to this extent, whom else may one trust? If you have not been deceiving, how is it that suddenly I got such an impression? . . .[3] is not at fault. He only happened to be the immediate cause. My suspicion began when you did not remain in . . .[4] but I suppressed it the moment it occurred. I thought you would never act in that manner and dismissed the idea from my mind. But I was not satisfied. That suspicion and the discussion I have had with you come vividly before me. I am in a fright. Save me from this suffering. Establish your innocence fully or repent sincerely and learn to be straightforward. I cannot bear to go on suspecting you. I had built high hopes on you. I had visualized the foremost place for you in the future satyagrahi army of India. All this lies shattered at the moment.

From the Gujarati in the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

108. LETTER T0 MAGANLAL GANDHI

BOMBAY ,

Ashadh Sud 6 [*July 14, 1918*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I could not return [to the Ashram] after seeing Mr. Pratt, for I heard that Jagjivandas had been taken ill and I had to go to Nadiad. At Pratt's, a number of Englishmen surrounded me and started talking very pleasantly. They expressed a desire to go and see the

[1] Omissions are in the source.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*
[4] *ibid*

Ashram. I invited them to come over on Saturday. Most probably, I shall be there. If I can start in time, 1 may arrive by the afternoon train on that day. Even if I don't, you should expect them. They may be there any time in the evening after five. I have told them that they would see things better if they could stay till prayer time. See that the boys, or the leading ones among them, are taught the English hymns. Sing *Lead Kindly Light*. If they come at five, show them the kitchen, etc., and the food.

I write this letter from Bombay. I came here directly from Karamsad. Tilak Maharaj is here. As it has been suggested to me that I should give out my views on the Reform Scheme only after seeing Tilak Maharaj in Bombay, I am busy seeing people. I shall be back in Nadiad on Wednesday evening. I shall leave here on Tuesday evening but shall be going to Godhra on my way. From there, I shall go to Nadiad the same day.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You must be putting the accounts in order. Get someone to help you in this, if necessary, and do so.

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 5732. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

109. SPEECH AT KARAMSAD[1]

July 14, 1918

[Gandhiji] said at the outset that he was there to give them an unpalatable dose and he hoped that they would not turn away from it all at once, bearing in mind that one of the principal characteristics of a self-governing and liberty-loving people was to give ear to all counsel and to choose one that appealed to them most. What, he asked them, was the meaning of swarajya?

Our villages are no better than dung-hills; we cannot defend ourselves and our families against robbers or wild beasts; *mukhis* and *rawanias* coerce and oppress us as they will; we have no arms and we do not know the use of arms. Is this swarajya? And yet, this is the natural order throughout India. Imagine the tidiness and the atmosphere of quiet and healthy independence of an English village

[1] This was Gandhiji's third speech in the recruiting campaign delivered in Karamsad, a village in the Anand taluka of Kheda district.

and think how miserably an Indian village compares with it. It is because every Englishman can stand on his legs and can defend his home and his village against any invader that the English village appears so incomparably superior to ours.

The first essential of swarajya is, thus, the power of self-protection. I am fit for swarajya only when I am able to defend myself and to shed my blood for my country, and India could be said to be living only if five lakhs of men lay down their lives for her. A seed must lose itself in earth in order that numerous seeds may spring up from it. Even so, from the ashes of the thousands dying for India, will spring up a living India. We Indians visit temples every morning and evening and pay our obeisance to gods —gods who, we say, descend on earth to protect the weak and succour the oppressed, when virtue subsides and vice prevails. It then ill becomes us to go to these temples, if we have not the spirit and the capacity of self-defence in us. And what verily did our Ramachandra and Krishna d? They modelled heroes out of common clay and equipped them for self-defence. The golden opportunity for acquiring the power of self-defence has come to us and it behoves us to seize it and profit by it. An Empire that has been defending India and of which India aspires to be the equal partner is in great peril and it ill befits India to stand aloof at the hour of its destiny. The argument that a Government that had behaved unsympathetically towards us does not deserve any help is idle, because helping the Government means nothing but helping ourselves. And India too is under grave stress. India would be nowhere without Englishmen. If the British do not win, whom shall we go to for claiming equal partnership? Shall we go to the victorious German, or the Turk or the Afghan for it? We shall have no right to do so; the victorious nation will set its mind on imposing taxes, on repressing, harassing and tyrannising over the vanquished. Only after making its position secure will it listen to our demands, whereas the liberty-loving English will surely yield, when they have seen that we have laid down our lives for them. The thought that our hearths, our homes, our fields and cattle will go to rack and ruin if we all go to the war, need not stop us. Our old men and women will take care of these, as they naturally must, and it will be a great training for them. One feeling and one only should be uppermost in the mind of each of us: No one dare invade my country; if he does, he dare take nothing out of it, excepting my dead body fallen in defence thereof.

Towards the conclusion, he reiterated that enlistment was the surest and the straight way to self-government and he exhorted the brave people of Karamsad, who had acquitted themselves so splendidly during the Kaira campaign, to send at least a hundred men to the war.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-7-1918

110. LETTER TO HANUMANTRAO

July 17, 1918

I have been thinking of writing to you for a long time, but my recruiting peregrinations have seriously interfered with my correspondence. Today happens to be an off day, and is being devoted to letter-writing. I thank you most heartily for all you have done and are doing for Devdas. In every one of his letters Devdas has mentioned your affection for him. In his illness, he tells me, you have been a real friend. I shall now select Hindi candidates for Tamil tuition.

I knew that my recruiting campaign was bound to pain friends for a variety of reasons, political as well as religious. But I know that both are wrong in their condemnation. My views have been before the country for a long time. But it is always one's action that matters, rarely one's speech. But I may not therefore summarily dismiss their objections. They are honest in their statement and they criticise out of affection. It is my practice of ahimsa and failure to get our people even to understand the first principles of ahimsa that have led to the discovery that all killing is not *himsa*, that, sometimes, practice of ahimsa may even necessitate killing and that we as a nation have lost the true power of killing. It is clear that he who has lost the power to kill cannot practice non-killing. Ahimsa is a renunciation of the highest type. A weak and an effeminate nation cannot perform this grand act of renunciation, even as a mouse cannot be properly said to renounce the power of killing a cat. It may look terrible but it is true that we must, by a well-sustained, conscious effort, regain this power, and, then, if we can only do so, deliver the world from its travail of *himsa* by a continuous abdication of this power. I cannot describe to you in sufficiently telling language the grief I often used to feel as I watched my failure to carry conviction about ahimsa even to the members of the Ashram. Not that they were unwilling listeners, but I could perceive, as I now think plainly, that they had not the capacity

for apprehending the truth. It was like singing the finest music to ears unturned to any music. But today practically everyone at the Ashram understands it, and is aglow with the expectation that ahimsa is a renunciation out of strength and not out of weakness. It is not possible to make any distinction between organized warfare and individual fighting. There must be an organized opposition and, therefore, even organized bloodshed, say, in the case of bandits. The noblest warrior is he who stands fearless in the face of immense odds. He then feels not the power to kill, but he is supremely triumphant in the knowledge that he has the willingness to die when by taking to his heels he might easily have saved his life. I do believe that we shall have to teach our children the art of self-defence. I see more and more clearly that we shall be unfit for swaraj for generations to come if we do not regain the power of self-defence. This means for me a rearrangement of so many ideas about self-development and India's development. I must not carry the point further than I have done today. You are an earnest seeker. I am most anxious that you should understand this new view of ahimsa. It is not a fall but it is a rise. The measure of love evoked by this discovery is infinitely greater than ever it was before.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

111. LETTER T0 V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI[1]

[NADIAD,]

July 17, 1918

DEAR MR. SHASTRIAR,

I am glad you were able to go to Bombay. I think it will be most valiant of you if you can attend the Congress[2]. I must confess I sympathize with the Panditji's attitude if it is truly reported of him.

[1] This was in reply to Sastri's letter which said: "I marvel at Mrs. Besant and Tilak taking a position very near yours and mine after having written as they have done in the Press. I do not like all this talk about abstention from the Congress. I do not understand it."

[2] The special session of the Indian National Congress at Bombay on August 29—September 1, which, it was feared, might create a schism on the issue of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, but actually adopted a policy which commanded wide support.

Indeed, for him it will be one of the boldest acts of his life to refrain from appearing on a Congress platform. What I feel is this. How can I appear in an assembly which I know is to be misled and in which the principal movers do not believe what they say and will *denounce* in the Press the very Resolutions for which they would have voted! I know there is the other side. But, for the moment, I lean towards abstention. I hope you are keeping well.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

112. LETTER T0 V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

[NADIAD,]
July 18, 1918

You have pressed me for my opinion on the Reform Scheme[1] just published. As you know, I did not feel called upon to take an active part in the framing of the Congress-League scheme. I have not taken an all-absorbing interest in controversial politics. I do not pretend that even now I have studied the reform proposals as a keen politician would. I feel, therefore, very great hesitation in expressing my opinion on it. But I recognize the weight of your argument in favour of my expressing such opinion as I can form on the scheme.

In my opinion, then, as an artistic production, the scheme now published is superior to the Congress-League scheme. I further consider that both Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford have been inspired by an honest desire for a due fulfilment of the declaration of the 20th August and for the welfare of India. They have taken great pains over their most difficult and delicate task and I cannot but think that any hasty rejection of their effort will be a misfortune for the country. In my humble opinion, the scheme deserves a sympathetic handling rather than a summary rejection. But it would need to be considerably improved before it is accepted by the reformers. After all, our standard of measurement must be the Congress-League scheme, crude though it is. I think that we should with all the vehemence and skill that we can command press for the incorporation into it of the essentials of our own.

[1] Sastri had invited Gandhiji's views for publication in *The Servant of India.*

I would, therefore, for instance, ask for the rejection of the doctrine of compartments. I very much fear that the dual system in provinces will be fatal to the success of the experiment, and as it may be only success of the experiment that can take us to the next—and I hope the final stage, we cannot be too insistent that the idea of reservation should be dropped. One cannot help noticing an unfortunate suspicion of our intentions regarding the purely British, as distinguished from the purely Indian interest. Hence there is to be seen in the scheme elaborate reservations on behalf of these interests. I think that more than anything else it is necessary to have an honest, frank and straightforward understanding about these interests and for me, personally, this is of much greater importance than any legislative feat that British talent alone or a combination of British and Indian talent may be capable of performing. I would certainly, in as courteous terms as possible but equally emphatic, say that these interests will be held subservient to those of India as a whole and that, therefore, they are certainly in jeopardy in so far as they may be inconsistent with the general advance of India. Thus, if I had my way, I would cut down the military expenditure. I would protect local industries by heavily taxing goods that compete against products of our industries, and I would reduce to a minimum the British element in our services, retaining only those that may be needed for our instruction and guidance. I do not think that they had or have any claims upon our attention save by right of conquest. That claim must clearly go by the board as soon as we are awakened to a consciousness of our national existence and possess the strength to vindicate our right to the restoration of what we have lost. To their credit let it be said that they do not themselves advance any claim by right of conquest. One can readily join in the tribute of praise bestowed upon the Indian Civil Service for their devotion to duty and great organising ability. So far as material reward is concerned, that service has been more than handsomely paid and our gratitude otherwise can be best expressed by assimilating their virtues ourselves.

No scheme of reform can possibly benefit India that does not recognize that the present administration is top heavy and ruinously expensive and for me even law, order and good government would be too dearly purchased if the price to be paid for it is to be the grinding poverty of the masses. The watchword of our reform councils will have to be, not increase of taxation for the growing needs of a growing country, but a decrease of the financial burdens that are

sapping the foundation itself of the organic growth. If this fundamental fact is recognized, there need be no suspicion of our motives and, I think I am perfectly safe in asserting that in every other respect British interests will be as secure in Indian hands as they are in their own. It follows from what I have said above that we must respectfully press for the Congress-League claim for the immediate granting to Indians of 50 per cent of the higher posts in the Civil Service. The above is but an indication of my view on the scheme. It is a considered view so far as it goes, but it does not embody all the improvements that I should suggest for submission to His Majesty's Government. In due course, I take it, we shall endeavour to issue a representative criticism of the scheme. It is, therefore, hardly necessary for me to enter into an exhaustive treatment even if I was capable of doing so.

I cannot, however, conclude my observations without stating what I consider to be the best means of enforcing our opinion, whatever shape it may finally take. I entirely endorse the concluding remarks of the authors of the historic document that thousands of Indian reformers are today studying with avidity."If anything could enter the sense of responsibility under which our recommendations are made, in a matter fraught with consequences so immense, it would be the knowledge that, even as we are bringing our report to an end, far greater issues still hang in the balance upon the battle-field of France. It is there and not in Delhi or Whitehall that the ultimate decision of India's future will be taken." May God grant us, Home Rulers, the wisdom to see this simple truth. The gateway to our freedom is situated on the French soil. No victory worth the name has yet been won without the shedding of blood. If we could but crowd the battle-fields of France with an indomitable army of Home Rulers fighting for victory for the cause of the Allies, it will also be a fight for our own cause. We would then have made out an unanswerable case for the granting of Home Rule not in any distant time or near future but immediately. My advice, therefore, to the country would be, fight unconditionally unto death with the Briton for the victory and agitate simultaneously also unto death, if we must, for the reforms that we deserve. This is the surest method of gaining an honourable victory for ourselves over the strongest opposition of bureaucratic forces and, at the end of it, there would be no ill will left. It may not be impossible to gain our end by sheer obstructive and destructive agitation. But it is easy enough to see that we shall at the same time

reap ill will between the British and the Indian elements, not a particularly cohesive cement for binding would-be partners.

The Leader, 24-7-1918

113. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

NADIAD,
Ashadh Shukla 10 [*July 18, 1918*]

DEAR JAMNALALJI,

I returned from Bombay last night. Being on tour I could not write to you earlier. Your letter has taken a burden off my mind. Bhai Ambalalji has sent Rs. 5,000 and Bhai Shankarlal Banker has given Rs. 4,000. I feel some hesitation in speaking of my wants to friends who do not turn down my requests and yet I cannot help making them. I therefore strongly feel that, when there is any difficulty in conceding my request, it will be a kindness to me not to grant it.

I hope your pain has now completely disappeared.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 2840

114. LETTER T0 ANANDSHANKAR DHRUVA

[NADIAD]
July 18, 1918

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. How is it that, in all your wide studies, you have not discovered any medicine which would ensure that, no matter if relations died or fell ill, if a window-shutter in a railway compartment crashed on one's hand or if one stumbled while walking,—one would not mind any of these things but be always happy? Can studies, however, relieve the pain in the hand, or is it only a doctor who can help? You need reply only when we meet, after you have recovered. The workers are patient and will wait. If prayers can avail, please pray that your hand may be soon restored to a serviceable condition. Meanwhile, many of them have been receiving not 35 but 50 per cent increase. Ambalalbhai said he had something to whisper

to you. He has already done so to me. But you had better hear it direct from him.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

115. LETTER T0 JAGJIVANDAS MEHTA

[NADIAD,]

July 18, 1918

Got your letter. I was sorry to hear of the theft of your coat and money. It is as if a weak cow should be infested with too many gadflies.[1] There is a thief around here in the Anathashram. The thing has happened twice or thrice before now. Somebody should have warned you but it seems this did not occur to anyone.

Your fever must have left you completely. I could write to Jivraj[2] only today. The letter is enclosed. You may despatch it if you think it proper.

I could, this time, get some idea of the condition of your business. I am not happy about the source of the money with which you have started it. If my advice is of any value, wind up your business this very day, return the money to the person from whom you have borrowed it and secure a job. I am sure you will have no difficulty in getting one. If you would live the simple life, the Ashram is always open to you. I do not press, though. If, however, you want to work for things which the world regards worth striving for, you may, but on your own strength. The longer you take to act in this matter, the more reason you will have for regret afterwards.

Everywhere people bring misery on themselves by their own actions but, the more I look into the net in which your family affairs are caught, the more I realize this to be especially true of you all. I wish you would free yourself from this. Be satisfied with the normal risks which attend an enterprise and do not go in for anything more.

[1] A Gujarati saying, meaning: "Misfortunes never come singly." Mehta had gone to Nadiad to see Gandhiji and had fallen ill while in the Anathashram. His coat, with a purse in it, was stolen.

[2] Jivraj Mehta, Gandhiji's friend and physician

See that your relations with everyone are above reproach. As for father, he goes out of his way to heap misery upon misery on himself. Living a life of religious devotion, why should he have so many desires? Why should you encourage him in them? ....[1] We should be happier than the gods if we respected the voice of conscience as much as we respect public opinion. We don't recognize the happiness at our door-step and go searching for it in all directions. Why do you bother yourself so?

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

116. LETTER TO MRS. JAGJIVANDAS MEHTA

NADIAD,
July 18, 1918

DEAR SISTER,

I could not bear to see your distress but, at the same time, the innocent happiness I noticed in you I saw neither in father[2] nor in Bhai Jagjivandas. This cut me to the quick and I have addressed a letter[3] to Bhai Jagiivandas. You should, both of you, get it by heart, deeply ponder over it and then strive jointly in life. The letter is meant for you both.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

117. LETTER TO KOTWAL'S SISTER

NADIAD,
Ashadh Sud 10 [*July 18, 1918*]

DEAR SISTER,

I have your postcard. Gogate's did not reach me. It may have been lost because of my wanderings. When I wrote to you, I had not plunged into this arduous war effort. Now, I don't know when

[1] Some words are omitted here in the source.

[2] Mrs. Mehta's father-in-law

[3] The source does not mention the addressee's name. But from the references to Gogate and Kotwal, the letter appears to have been addressed to the latter's sister; *vide* "Letter to Rambhau Gogate", 17-5-1918.

I shall rest in the Ashram. If you go to stay there in my absence, you are likely to find things difficult; besides, I think your presence will also embarrass the Ashram inmates. At present, it does not have enough room either. We have not been able to go ahead with construction as fast as I had hoped to. Hence, I hesitate to welcome you. If, however, you can endure the inconveniences there, accept human nature in all its variety and do not think my presence essential even when you are there for the first time, you may go. Discuss the matter with Kotwal if he is there and write to me afterwards. He will explain to you what I have written. I do want you in the Ashram. All that I desire is that you may go there after it has developed such an atmosphere that you will never feel like leaving it.

Vandematram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: G. N. 3617

118. SPEECH AT NADIAD[1]

July 18, 1918

He pointed out how two hundred years of disease had weakened the martial spirit of the people of Gujarat and emphasized the necessity of recognizing this fact as a preliminary to the work of recruitment. While fully appreciating the difficulties before him, he was determined to see them through, as he had recognized since he attended the Delhi War conference that recruiting work was the first duty of an Indian patriot in these times. He had received invitations from many parts of India to go and help them in their recruiting campaign, but he could not do so with a clear conscience when his own people of Gujarat hung back.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-7-1918

119. APPEAL FOR ENLISTMENT

NADIAD,
July 22, 1918

LEAFLET NO. 2

It is a month today since the first leaflet[2] was written. During that time my fellow workers and myself have had a good deal of

[1] The meeting was presided over by F. G. Pratt, Commissioner of the Northern Division, and attended by a large number of District officials and leading citizens.

[2] *Vide* "Appeal for Enlistment", 22-6-1918.

experience. We held meetings at Nadiad, Karamsad, Ras, Kathlal, Jambusar and other places and talked with hundreds of men and women.

I take the liberty to put before you the experiences we have had. Barely a hundred men have come forward. I find this to be too small a figure, considering the one month that has gone into it and the travelling it has entailed. When I think of the condition of the people, I feel that it is a wonder that even so many men have come forward. These are men from a class of society which has not seen any fighting, men who have never so much as lifted a stick. So, if we could but rouse the fighting classes, an inexhaustible supply of recruits could be assured.

The shortcomings of the thinking sections are plain on this occasion. I use the word"thinking" in place of"educated". If such men and women were to do their duty, they could influence the classes fitted by nature to join up. My experience goes to testify to a great weakness on the part of the thinking section. Their not taking sufficient interest in national work makes the task of recruitment difficult. Those among them into whose hands this leaflet may find its way should, if they have faith in this work, prepare themselves and inspire the illiterate and ignorant sections for this great task.

But, in the thinking section I have come across persons who have no faith in this. This leaflet is addressed to them. It is my request to them to read it carefully. It is up to the wise man to sketch out the right line of action in the light of existing circumstances. If it is our intention to break off our connection with the British, to be sure we must not go to their help. Very few come out with the opinion that we do want to break this tie. It is plain enough to everyone that even those who are for breaking it just cannot do so at the present moment. Be that as it may, today our salvation lies in helping the British. To help them is to help ourselves. When the interests of the two lie in the same direction, it would be the very height of recklessness for either side to keep thinking of the other's faults and refuse to go to its help. If a raid were to descend on an enemy of ours in the village in which we are living, and if it threatened the whole village, we would forget our enmity and run to the succour of that enemy and beat back the raiders. The same holds true in this war today. To rise against the common danger is not only expediency but our duty as well. Another objection that has been raised is: what kind of a dharma is it to send

the best of our men to the war and get them killed? This way, all those who are working for swaraj may be killed; how would we win swaraj, then? I would have branded this objection as ridiculous had it not been raised by men considered intelligent. It is clear that, if India could boast of only five lakhs of men demanding swaraj, we do not deserve it. But those who raise the objection mean to say that, whatever be the number of such men, the discerning few who carry on an agitation for swaraj number even less than five lakhs. This is true enough. Only, one thing is overlooked. In preparing five lakhs of men who would be willing to fight to death, we shall have made fifty lakhs familiar with"war","swaraj", etc. We want to train five lakhs of free men. They will be going with open eyes, of their own free will. They will have taken counsel with their friends and relations; so the five lakhs who depart will have left behind them lakhs of other like-minded people. The plain fact is that we have lost the very capacity to fight and our valour has ebbed away. We don't have the strength even to protect our women-folk. Running after so-called dharma, we forgot the claim of karma (duty). We cannot stand up and fight even if there is a raid on our village in broad daylight. That some eight men can pillage a population of a thousand with impunity can happen—in all the world—only in India. Those in the villages are not so weak of body that they cannot beat back a mere eight. But they stand in terrible fear of death."Who would risk his life or limb by going out to fight? Let them loot. Leave it to the Government, whose job it is." So they think and stay at home. If the house of a neighbour is set on fire, if he is dishonoured and his property looted, that is no concern of these philosophers. So long as this philosophy (darkness) has not perished, India will never know genuine peace. That we should have to wait for the arrival of the police or the army before the village becomes safe is an intolerable situation for anyone with self-respect. An instant means of getting out of this predicament is ready at hand. By enlisting in the army, we shall learn the use of weapons, shall have the spirit of patriotism kindled in us and shall be strong enough to defend our villages.

What about our wives and children if we go? Everyone will naturally ask this question. A recruit gets a fixed pay, in addition to food and clothing. The minimum he gets is eighteen rupees and, according to merit, he rises in rank and scale. If he is killed, the Government provides for the maintenance of his wife and children. Those who return from the war get prizes and rewards. It is my view

that, in the final analysis, soldiering is more paying than other professions.

"But such privileges are available only to the British; when do they ever come to us?"—I have heard people say. To them I would say:"It is not likely that an army of five lakhs of intelligent men raised by our efforts would be denied equal rights with the British. If they should be, that would only go to prove the incapacity of those five lakhs and of the leaders. If an army of lakhs were raised, it would be a match for the British army and would win equal rights. The very fact of our having raised an army of five lakhs will ensure the rights."

"You bid us to go and join the war unconditionally. Another advises us to join on promise of equal rights. A third says we are not bound to go—why bargain away your sleep and go out of your way to suffer sleeplessness? We get confused by these three different counsels. In such a predicament, it seems to us that discretion lies in not venturing beyond our depths." My modest reply to this is:"Sentiments such as these bespeak a coward. As time passes, different parties will come into being and a variety of opinions come to prevail. You will have to take them all into consideration. I would call it a betrayal of the swaraj to which we are all pledged if we refuse to participate in the war at any rate for the sake of that pledge."

In laying down conditions for joining the army, there is a danger that the occasion to join may slip past and the scheme for swaraj may be shelved. The security of our nation, as also the certainty of swaraj, lies only in our joining up. All the parties would agree that our enlisting in the army will in no way harm the cause of swaraj. So, even on a comparative view, of the three the one counsel which advocates enlistment seems to me the best. It is my hope that the comrades of Kheda district will be true to the call of duty and give their names to the volunteers or send them directly to the Ashram.

Women will also, I trust, help in this work. I know that some of them dissuade their husbands and sons from enlisting. If they reflect over the matter carefully enough, they will see that it is in their own interests, and certainly in the interests of the nation, that their husbands and sons should be brave men.

For ever your servant,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Dairy, Vol. IV

120. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

BOMBAY,

JULY 22, 1918

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have been debating with myself whether to write to you or not to. Your letter made painful reading. I am today at the Ashram and have just worn the second vest sent by you. I came to know of it only today. It does not fit well. The sleeves are too short. But that matters little. I am wearing it and shall wear it out.

I am quite sure that you must quietly go through your contract even though you may be prohibited from coming to the Ashram or writing to me. You will gain greater strength of will and purpose by the enforced discipline and restraint.

It will be a privilege if you are permitted to write to me and receive letters. Do please tell me what final decision has been arrived at.

I have suspended Civil Disobedience for the time being. You will see my letter to the Press.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

My Dear Child, pp. 30-l

121. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

NADIAD,

July 22 [1918]

DEAR MILLIE,

The enclosed is just to cheer you. I have been corresponding with Dr. Mehta too. Of course, I do not expect Henry will have to do war work.[1] And if he has, you know that you have no cause for anxiety. I am undergoing a revolution in my outlook upon life. As it

[1] *Vide* also "Fragment of Letter to Ambalal Sarabhai", 17-3-1918.

seems to me some old cobwebs are falling away. But of these when I have more time.[2]

With love,

Yours,
BHAI

[PS.]

Do write to me please. Devdas is in Madras, do you know? Write to him a line care Natesan. He is teaching Hindi.

From the original : Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy : National Archives of India

122. LETTER TO GOVIND MALAVIYA

[BOMBAY,]
July 22, 1918

I was very glad to get your letter. We can lay bare our heart to those whom we consider our elders. Such laying bare is necessary. You have done right in writing to me. I do not know what excesses are committed in recruitment. If they are many, it is all the more necessary for me to go in for it.

The Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme is, in my opinion, very good. We can have its shortcomings removed through agitation. Whatever the merits of the Scheme, however, I definitely hold that we should join the war. We do not join it for the good of the British people; we want to go in for recruitment to do service to the country, and with an eye to its interests. What shall I say about the miserable plight of India? I see clearly that India cannot attain real swarajya. I hold that by joining the army we can accomplish two things: we shall become brave and we shall learn something about the handling of arms; and we shall prove our worth by helping those with whom we wish to become partners. Resisting their excesses and sharing their troubles—both these things are worth our doing. I want you to think very calmly on this question. I suggest your sending this letter to Devdas and also discussing the matter with him

Yours sincerely,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Hindi]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. lV

[2] For an extract from this letter, *vide* "Letterto Esther Faering", 22-7-1918.

123. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI SHAH

[BOMBAY,]
July 22, 1918

DEAR PUNJABHAI,

What we have taken as dharma is not dharma. We commit violence on a large scale in the name of non-violence. Fearing to shed blood, we torment people every day and dry up their blood. A *Bania*[1] can never practise non-violence. Dharma does not consist in the outward renunciation practised by some *Shravakas*[2] or in feeding ants. There can be no *moksha* or knowledge of the Self unless one renounces love of body. If you are convinced of this and would discover the true road to *moksha,* I should advise you to identify yourself with the Ashram. See the proposed construction work through and relieve Maganlal for the present. You will need a servant. Engage Parasaram. I think it necessary that Maganlal be relieved. Think over this carefully. Undertake this only if the truth of this is as clear to you as daylight. If it is, you will experience great peace in the Ashram. Otherwise you will tire out soon. You, Fulchand and Maganlal may discuss this among yourselves. But, first, think over it yourself.

Pious remembrances from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

124. LETTER T0 MAHADEV DESAI

NAVAGAM,
Purnima [*July 23, 1918*]

DEAR MAHADEV,

The result of your losing your temper was that you could not come, nor could Shivabhai. We two enjoyed walking down to this place. We arrived at 10.15. The people were surprised. The poison which the Circle Inspector has sown here must be dug out. We shall, therefore, stay on here for three or four days. You or Shivabhai may bring over the mail.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] Trader
[2] Followers of Jainism

[PS.]

Inform Anasuyabehn that we are here up to Thursday at any rate.

Bring, or send, postal covers, postcards and plain envelopes.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 5790 Courtesy: C. K. Bhatt

125. LETTER TO SIR S. SUBRAMANIAM

[NAVAGAM,]
July 24, 1918

DEAR SIR SUBRAMANIAM[1],

I hope you will not regard this letter as a presumption on my part. I have long felt that your language was unrestrained and not worthy of a *yogi*. Your charges have appeared to me to be in many respects reckless. In my humble opinion you would have rendered much greater service to the country than you have if you had been as scrupulously truthful as you have been frank and fearless. In you an unguarded and uncharitable expression would be an untruth. Your politics are not of the demagogue. They are religious. I beseech you to give the country a pure example of an Indian gentleman. It is in your power to do so.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

126. LETTER TO VINOBA BHAVE

[NAVAGAM,]
July 24, 1918

I have your thought-provoking letter.

The ideal is of course what you have stated. It is also true that, to achieve it, there should be a Gujarati teacher. But in the absence of such a teacher, it would not be wrong to avail ourselves of a teacher from Maharashtra. Also, I would prefer a Marathi teacher who has character, to a Gujarati who has none. At present it is difficult to find Gujaratis who can teach according to my method. The situation is so

[1] Retired Judge, Madras High Court

pathetic that, without you, Sanskrit teaching will have to stop or be resumed by Kaka[1]. For the present, therefore, you will have to continue teaching it while keeping the ideal in view.

I am eager to enter Maharashtra, but the time is not ripe yet. I am not fit. We don't have the required number of men. May there not be some divine providence in the fact that you, Kaka and Mama have come to work with me? My relations with Deshpande[2], my faith in the Servants of India Society, my especial admiration for Maharashtra, the great assistance they rendered in Champaran, the arrival of a music expert from Maharashtra, the expected entry, in the near future, of Kotwal's sister, my acquaintance with Narayanrao—all these things suggest that I am likely to do something special in Maharashtra, be it ever so little. However,"if man had his way, none would remain in misery, everyone would kill his enemies and see that only his friends remained." And so, this ambition notwithstanding, who knows what will happen?

I will keep your wishes in mind. I also desire to keep you close to me but I see that it cannot be at present. You are certainly an inmate of the Ashram; there can be no doubt about that.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

127. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[NAVAGAM,]
July 24, 1918

CHI. DEVDAS,

This letter brings you extremely distressing news. Bhai Sorabji passed away in Johannesburg after a brief but severe illness. We have, in some measure at least, risen above the fear of death and yet a death such as this cannot but grieve. Everyone had hoped that Sorabji would act as a shield in South Africa and do great things, but this hope now lies shattered. There is gloom in South Africa, as I can gather from the telegrams received from there. God's ways are inscrutable. Karma can never be undone. All action bears fruit, good or bad, and what we call

[1] Kaka Kalelkar
[2] Keshavrao Deshpande, Bar-at-law, founder of Ganganath Bharati Vidyalaya

an accident is not one in fact. It but seems so to us. No one dies before his time. Death, besides, is only the final transformation of the same entity, it is not a total annihilation. The *atman* is immortal. Even the transformation is only of the body. The state changes, not the *atman*. Knowing all this should be enough to console us; whether or no we have digested this knowledge is tested at a moment like the present one. Sorabji has become immortal. All he did was for the glory of his native land. If we but go on doing our duty, his passing away should make no difference to us. When the deaths of dear ones make us more keenly alive to our duty, separation from them causes no pain.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. lV

128. LETTER TO BALVANTRAI THAKORE

[NAVAGAM,]
July 24, 1918

Your letter. I see that it will be necessary to agitate for introducing a new section in the Penal Code when we have a Parliament of our own. When two parties know the same Indian language, and one of them writes to the other or talks with him in English, the party so doing will be liable to a minimum of six months' rigorous imprisonment. Let me know what you think of such a section and also, before we gain swaraj, what action should meanwhile be taken against those who commit the offence.

I have understood your view on how military expenditure can be reduced. But swaraj is far away yet. Much will depend upon the situation obtaining at the time we get it.

Cannot we gradually prepare for self-government? To my mind, this is a status which from its very nature can be attained only gradually. A marriage must be preceded by engagement. In England, there is always a long period of courting. Either way, the simile of marriage seems to be inapt. A revolution is a sudden change and such a change never occurs in a peaceful manner. Hence a peaceful revolution is a contradiction in terms. India wants both peace and revolution. How is this possible?

I understand your desire that no public use should be made of your letter. We [both] wish that, after some time, there should be no need to use the word"private".

I am here today for some inquiry in the villages. Having a little time on hand, I permitted myself this banter as well. But something remains yet. As you are still unconvinced that the agitation in Kheda was justified, I invite you, on behalf of the people, to come over here to see things for yourself and have your doubts removed. You are the only person, among those whom I know, whose doubt still persists.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

129. LETTER T0 MAGANLAL GANDHI

NAVAGAM,
Thursday [*July 25, 1918*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

You have been frightened by Raojibhai as he was by me. He read too much into my words.

No, my ideals have not changed. Despite my bitter experiences in India, my conviction remains the same as ever, that we have but little to learn from the West. The evils I have seen here have made no change in my fundamental idea nor has this war. The old idea has developed into something purer. I have certainly not come to feel that we shall have to introduce Western civilization. Nor do I suppose that we shall have to take to drinking and meat-eating. To be sure, I have felt, in all seriousness, that Swaminaryana[1] and Vallabha-charya[2] have robbed us of our manliness. They made the people incapable of self-defence. It was all to the good, of course, that people gave up drinking, smoking, etc; this, however, is not an end in itself, it is only a means. If a smoker happens to be a man of character, his company is worth cultivating. If, on the contrary, a man who has never smoked in his life is an adulterer, he can be of little service. The love taught by

[1] Swami Sahajanand (1781-1833) ; founder of a *Vaishnava* sect of this name

[2] 1473-1531 ; teacher, principally responsible for spreading the *bhakti* cult in Gujarat

Swaminarayana and Vallabh is all sentimentalism. It cannot make one a man of true love. Swaminarayana and Vallabh simply did not reflect over the true nature of non-violence. Non-violence consists in holding in check all impulses in the *chitta*[1]. It comes into play especially in men's relations with one another. There is not even a suggestion of this idea in their writings. Having been born in this degenerate age of ours, they could not remain unaffected by its atmosphere and had, in consequence, quite an undesirable effect on Gujarat. Tukaram and Ramdas had no such effect. The *abhangas* of the former and the *shlokas* of the latter admit ample scope for manly striving. They, too, were *Vaishnavas*. Do not mix up the *Vaishnava* tradition with the teaching of Vallabh and Swaminarayana. Vaishnavism is an age-old truth.

I have come to see, what I did not so clearly before, that there is non-violence in violence. This is the big change which has come about. I had not fully realized the duty of restraining a drunkard from doing evil, of killing a dog in agony or one infected with rabies. In all these instances, violence is in fact non-violence. Violence is a function of the body. *Brahmacharya* consists in refraining from sexual indulgence, but we do not bring up our children to be impotent. They will have observed *brahmacharya* only if, though possessed of the highest virility, they can master the physical urge. In the same way, our offspring must be strong in physique. If they cannot completely renounce the urge to violence, we may permit them to commit violence, to use their strength to fight and thus make them non-violent. Non-violence was taught by a Kshatriya to a Kshatriya.

The difference between the West and the East is what I have explained it to be,[2] and it is a great one. The civilization of the West is based on self-indulgence, ours on self-control. If we commit violence, it will be as a last resort and with a view to' *lokasangraha*[3]. The West will indulge in violence in self-will. My taking part in [the movement for] a Parliament and similar activities is not a new development; it is quite an old thing and is only intended to ensure a check on these bodies. You will see this if you read my article on Mr. Montagu's scheme. I simply cannot bring myself to take interest in the

[1] Mind

[2] *Vide* ''Speech on Indian Civilization", 30-3-1918.

[3] That which promotes the conservation of society; *vide Bhagavad Gita,* III: 20.

movement, but I can spread my ideals by working in it. When I saw that I could continue in it only by sacrificing ideals, I decided to retire from the movement.

I think you have your reply in what I have said. I cannot explain much when I am there for a day and so I have set down the thing in writing. This will enable you to think and ask me questions, if fresh doubts occur to you.

I continue to be in Navagam. I wanted to leave here today, but perhaps I may not be able to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

130. LETTER TO RAJIBHAI PATEL

[NAVAGAM,]
July 25, 1918

DEAR RAOJIBHAI,

I did not mind your letter. You may ask any questions you have. And I shall give you a written reply so that you may have something to think over. I know very well that you are doing your whole duty by Manibhai and the boys. That is what reconciles me to separation from you. I think that by living with them you would harm both yourself and them. You will not be serving Vimala's[1] interests by staying in Sojitra and carrying out Manibhai's wishes in all matters. On the contrary, you will be able to serve everybody by staying away and strengthening your character through *tapascharya*. Against Manibhai, you are only offering satyagraha and satyagraha can never be wrong. It is not any ill-will towards Manibhai but your love for him which keeps you away. Mirabai forsook her husband out of her love and so, in his love, did Lord Buddha leave his devoted wife and his parents. What is true for you is also true for Shivabhai. Supposing you return from the war unhurt, may it not be that things will have changed for the better for you, that you will be in a better position then to look after the children? We are not joining the army for the pleasure

[1] Addressee's daughter

of doing so but to seek an end to our agony and that of the country. Even if we commit an error in pursuit of this aim, no harm is done.

You are not likely to get peace by seeing me. While we are engaged in cleaning things up, there is bound to be commotion. We must find peace in the midst of it all. When washing clothes, we strike them but feel happy doing so because we know that this makes them clean.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

131. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

NADIAD,
July 26, 1918

MY DEAR MILLIE,

Sorabji is no more. A cable has just arrived from Johannesburg giving the sad news. There is nothing striking about this death. Many like Sorabji have died before now. But Sorabji has played such an important part in our lives that his sudden death comes like a rude shock. It is only one's faith in the indestructibility of energy and continuity of effort that reconciles one to activity in life. An event is a shock when we do not understand its purpose and its seasonableness. But is God's plan, I suppose, there is nothing unseasonable and nothing purposeless.[1] Do please write to his wife Kunverbai Sorabji Adajania, Surat.

I hope you received the few lines I sent you the other day at the back of Mr. Hasan Imam's letter.

I am just now at a little village to avenge an insult offered to the villagers by a petty official. In any other place, there would have been bloodshed over such an insult. Here I may end with doing nothing. I return to Nadiad today.

With love to you all,

Yours,

BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] The letter up to here appears in "Letter to C.F. Andrews", 29-7-1918.

132. THE LATE SORABJI SHAPURJI ADAJANIA

[NADIAD,]
July 27, 1918

THE EDITOR
THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE

SIR,

One of the best of Indians has just passed away in Johannesburg in the person of Sorabji Shapurji of Adajan, near Surat, at the age of thirty-five. And it is my mournful duty to pay a humble tribute to a fellow-worker. Mr. Sorabji, though known to a select company of friends, was unknown to the Indian public. His work lay in South Africa. He was a prince among passive resisters. He joined their ranks when the struggle in South Africa was at its highest and when it had travelled beyond the confines of the Transvaal. When he joined the struggle, I must confess, I had my doubts about his ability to go through it. But he soon made his mark as a front-rank satyagrahi. Neither he nor I ever expected that he would have to undergo a series of imprisonments amounting in all to over 18 months with hard labour. But he went through it manfully and cheerfully. Mr. Sorabji was a small trader when he took to public life in South Africa. He had a High School education. But such as it was, he made the most effective use of it in the Transvaal. During the struggle, he showed a steadfastness of purpose, probity of character, coolness of temper, courage in the midst of adverse circumstances, such as the best of us do not often show. There were occasions when the stoutest hearts might have broken—Sorabji never wavered.

After the struggle was closed, it was my intention to send to England some one from among a band of young Indians who had proved themselves capable warriors. A friend had offered the needful funds. The choice, for a variety of reasons, fell upon Mr. Sorabji. It was a question, whether having abandoned the life of a student for over eight years, he could take to it again. He was, however, determined. His ambition was to become a barrister and fit himself for fuller service. To England he went. He had come in close touch with Mr. Gokhale when he was in South Africa. He came in closer touch in London. And I knew that Mr. Gokhale had the highest opinion of Mr. Sorabji's worth. He had invited him to become a member of his

Society. The deceased took an active part in all the leading movements among Indians in London. He was for some time Secretary of the London Indian Society. He was the first to join the Indian Ambulance Corps that was formed in London at the inauguration of the war and served at Netley, nursing the sick and the wounded. After being called to the Bar, he proceeded to South Africa, where he intended to practise the profession and return to India after he had given a number of years to South Africa and found a substitute. But alas! fate has willed it otherwise and a career full of promise had to come to an abrupt end. The deceased was only 35 when he died.

In all I have said above, I have hardly described the man in Sorabji. He was faithful to a degree. He was a true Parsee, because he was a true Indian. He knew no distinctions of creed or caste. Love of India was a passion with him, her service an article of faith. He was indeed a rare man. He leaves a young widow to mourn his death. I am sure there are many friends of Sorabji to share her grief.

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-7-1918

133. LETTER T0 SIR WILLIAM VINCENT

NADIAD,
July 27, 1918

TO

THE HONOURABLE SIR W. H. VINCENT, KT., K.C.S.I.

I thank you for your letter dated the 22nd instant. I venture to hope that the tribunal will be thoroughly impartial and that it will be appointed in good time. May I expect another letter from you in due course?

N. A. 1.: Home, Political (A): January 1919: Nos. 3-16

134. LETTER T0 JAMNALAL BAJAJ

NADIAD,

Ashadh Krishna 4 [*July 27, 1918*]

DEAR JAMNALALJI,

Your love makes me feel ashamed. I wish—I ask of God—that I may deserve all that love. I hope that your devotion will ever lead you forward on the path of virtue.

For success in the task of spreading education in Marwar a good organizer is needed.

The work of recruitment is going on very slowly. So far the number may be about 150. No one has yet been sent. I am trying to raise a battalion of Gujaratis.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 2841

135. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

NADIAD, GUJARAT,

Ashad Vad 5, July 28, 1918

CHI. RAMDAS,

I received your letter. It is certainly regrettable that you have to leave service again and again. It will be good if you don't make a change now. Umiyashankar was telling me that your accommodation can easily be arranged in his shop. There will be no harm if you go there. You can certainly come to me whenever you want. Go to England if they send you from there. There is nothing wrong in that either. Besides Sorabji[1] is now gone. I cannot forget him. The moment I am idle innumerable recollections of Sorabji flood me.

If it is your wish that you should go to England for studies and then work in South Africa you may do so. The course there is indeed

[1] Sorabji Shapurji Adajania. For Gandhiji's tributes to him, *vide* "The Late Sorabji Shapurji Adajania", 27-7-1918.

tough. If you had been here and if you had agreed, I would have sent you to the War. I have come to realize that this is our paramount duty. A young man must learn self-defence. I have not forgotten the insults inflicted upon you by that Pathan. I had defended you but that gave me no satisfaction. How can you understand ahimsa fully at this tender age? It is possible that some extraordinary young man may acquire the knowledge early and become an ocean of compassion. But generally a young man must know how to defend himself. Ahimsa is the extreme limit of human strength. It is not a quality of weak or cowardly persons. What do they know of ahimsa? Devdas is impatient to get himself recruited for the War, but he is doing such good work in Madras that he cannot be spared from there.[1] I gave the same advice to Harilal. But of course how can he undertake such labours? I shall try for you. But it will be wholly your choice. You may gladly come if you are tired there and if you want to become a soldier. You alone must consider the matter. I would have enticed Manilal too. Only his case is similar to that of Devdas. So he should not be enticed away.

You can get an idea of the situation here from the enclosed pamphlet[2]. From the Ashram Nanubhai, Shankerlal, Surendra, Ramanand and Ramjibhai will come.

You should not fret. You should consider yourself free and do as you want. Only thus will you rise. If you do not know something do not be scared. If you want to learn it you must put in the requisite labour.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Motana Man, pp. 16-17

[1] Devdas Gandhi was teaching Hindi in Madras.

[2] Presumably "Appeal for Enlistment", Leaflet No. 2 issued on July 22, 1918; *vide* "Appeal for Enlistment", 22-7-1918.

136. LETTER T0 C. F. ANDREWS

[NADIAD,]

July 29, 1918

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I must indulge myself again. I begin to perceive a deep meaning behind the Japanese reluctance to listen to the message of a Prophet from a defeated nation.[1] War will be always with us. There seems to be no possibility of the whole human nature becoming transformed. *Moksha* and ahimsa [are] for individuals to attain. Full practice of ahimsa is inconsistent with possession of wealth, land or rearing of children. There is real ahimsa in defending my wife and children even at the risk of striking down the wrongdoer. It is perfect ahimsa not to strike him but intervene to receive his blows. India did neither on the field of Plassey.[2] We were a cowardly mob warring against one another, hungering for the Company's[3] silver and selling our souls for a mess of pottage. And so have we remained more or less—more rather then less—up to today. There was no ahimsa in their miserable performance, not withstanding examples of personal bravery and later corrections of the exaggerated accounts of those days. Yes the Japanese reluctance was right. I do not know sufficiently what the fathers of old did. They suffered, I expect, not out of their weakness, but out of their strength. The *rishis* of old stipulated that their religious practices were to be protected by the Kshatriyas. Rama protected Vishwamitra from the *rakshasas* disturbing his meditations. He could later on dispense with this protection. I find great difficulties in recruiting but do you know that not one man has yet objected because he would not kill. They object because they fear to die. This unnatural fear of death is ruining the nation. For the moment, I am simply thinking of the Hindus. Total disregard of death in a Mahomedan lad is a wonderful possession.

I have not written a coherent letter today but I have given you

[1] The reference is to Rabindranath Tagore whose speech in Tokyo against Japan's imitating the West was greeted with unbecoming derision.

[2] In 1757 at the battle of Plassey, British forces under Clive gained a decisive victory over the much larger forces of Siraj-ud-Daula because of the treachery of his own chieftain, Mir Ja'far, who had conspired with the British.

[3] East India Company

indications of my mental struggle.

Do you know that Sorabji is dead. He died in Johannesburg. A life full of promise has come to an abrupt end. The ways of God are inscrutable.

With deep love,

Yours,

MOHAN

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

137. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

[NADIAD,]
July 29, 1918

MY DEAR MILLIE,

Sorabji is no more. A cable has just arrived from Johannesburg giving the sad news. There is nothing striking about this death. Many like Sorabji have died before now. But Sorabji has played such an important part in our lives that his sudden death comes like a rude shock. It is only one's faith in the indestructibility of energy and continuity of effort that reconciles one to activity in life. An event is a shock when we do not understand its purpose and its seasonableness. But in God's plan, I suppose, there is nothing unseasonable and nothing purposeless.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

138. LETTER TO S.K. RUDRA

[NADIAD,]
July 29, 1918

DEAR MR. RUDRA,

I thank you for letting me share your happiness.[1] Sudhir is a brick. Yes he is doing good work, and so are the other boys each on his own line. It is a result of orderly training.

While you approve of my recruiting campaign, Charlie is fighting it out with me. He thinks it is just likely that I am deluding

[1] His son had been appointed Second Lieutenant and his son-in-law had secured a first class in Natural Science tripos.

myself. He thinks that this activity of mine may injure my service to the cause of ahimsa. I have taken it up to serve that very cause. I know that my responsibility is great. It was equally great when I was supine, feeling that recruiting was not my line. There was a danger of those who put faith in my word becoming or remaining utterly unmanly, falsely believing that it was ahimsa. We must have the ability in the fullest measure to strike and then perceive the inability of brute force and renounce the power. Jesus had the power to consume his enemies to ashes but he refrained and permitted himself to be killed for he so loved, etc.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

139. LETTER T0 V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

[NADIAD,]
July 29, 1918

DEAR MR. SHASTRIAR,

Thakor has just arrived. He tells me you were again down with illness. You need a cruel doctor who would mercilessly order a complete fast and water treatment. But you can expect nothing but licensed murders from that most empirical of professions. Whenever I hear of your illness, I feel like shooting some doctor or other but my ahimsa comes in the way. Happily for you and India I have no parliamentary ambition. Otherwise I should introduce a Bill disqualifying people getting continuously ill from membership.

Here is a cable[1] from Polak. I cannot understand its full significance. But I suppose there is no danger of the scheme[2] being rejected by the country.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] This is not available.
[2] The reference presumably is to the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme.

140. LETTER T0 DEVDAS GANDHI

[NADIAD,]
July 29, 1918

In the summer, living in a village appears grand indeed, but it is doubtful whether one would enjoy it in the monsoon. Personally, I think it would be very difficult for me to go to any place I like during the rainy season. My dislike of dirt is increasing, not diminishing. I feel suffocated if the lavatory is the least bit un-clean. Here, I go to an open space to answer the call of nature, carrying a hoe with me. I dig up before passing stools and, when I have finished, I leave the place after covering it with plenty of earth. I have realized that, because of our failure to observe this rule, innumerable diseases are spread, millions of flies bred. Those who are not particularly sensitive to lack of cleanliness are, I find, happy enough in a village. Last evening, two *bhajan*[1] parties came to see me. Their musical instruments must be worth some 5 or 10 rupees. These included drums, cymbals, *kartals*[2] and one single-stringed *tamboor*[3]. With these, they produced music which was all sweetness. All the songs were about Shri Krishna, how he provided Draupadi with an unending sari, ate the dish of greens with Vidur, humbled Duryodhana's pride and so on. All this is put in a language so sweet that it cannot but spread round the spirit of love and devotion. Why all this devotion to Krishna? As far as I can see, it must be because of his heroism and his unfailing solicitude for others. It is because he, with his infinite strength, helped the little Pandava kingdom to victory, destroyed the wicked Kauravas and freed the people from suffering, that he came to be sung of in songs and gained a place among the immortals. He cared nothing for the favour of one so mighty as Duryodhana. He was not tempted by his wealth, but relished Sudama's rice with gusto, such was his simplicity. It is a miracle the poet has wrought in the story of Krishna. There is no doubt that a man of such wisdom did exist. I wish you could read the whole *Mahabharata* in Sanskrit. You will then get a joy that I have missed. My subject was the grandeur of village life but I strayed into the story of Krishna. It was last night's

[1] Devotional Song
[2] Indian musical instruments
[3] *ibid*

music which made me think of it. I found that music even better than ours. It was natural and sweet. It was not very loud. The drum and the other instruments played low. The moon was full. We all sat under a tree. Everyone was in country clothes. The people spread out carpets and sat on them. They were all farmers. After having laboured all day, they were having innocent pleasure, drinking draughts of sweetness from the music of God's name. I said to one of them:"Friend, you are enjoying yourselves thoroughly." He replied:"Well, what else should we do? We prefer to pass our time in *bhajans* and *kirtans* rather than just gossip." These people, being *Baraiya* by caste, would ordinarily be looked upon as uncivilized, but they were not so in the least. They may be called uneducated but, in truth, they were nothing of the sort. I felt that, if the educated classes drew these people closer to themselves and poured new zest into them, one could put them to any task one chose. Their wisdom is boundless. One should only know how to utilize it. We are like the bad carpenter who finds fault with his tools. Well, I have written quite a long letter to you. Pass it on to Manilal after reading it. I do not know when I shall write another like this again. It is morning time, I have some leisure and my brain is brimful of ideas; I have emptied it a little before you. If you, too, can taste from this a measure of the happiness which was mine, I would have, in a real sense, given you a portion of your inheritance. We claim our share from the Government; on the same principle, if I share with you what I possess, I shall be free of my debt.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

141. LETTER T0 KASTURBA GANDHI

[NADIAD,]

July 29, 1918

BELOVED KASTUR,

I know you are pining to stay with me. I feel, though, that we must go on with our tasks. At present, it is right that you remain where you are. If you but look upon all the children there as your own, quite soon you will cease to feel the absence of the latter. This is the least

one can do as one gets older. As you come to love others and serve them, you will have a joy welling up from within. You should make it a point to visit early in the morning all those who may be sick, and nurse them. Special food should be prepared or kept apart for anyone who needs such food. You should visit the Maharashtrian ladies, amuse their children or take them out for a walk. You should make them feel that they are no strangers. Their health should improve.

You should converse with Nirmala on useful subjects, that is, on religious matters and the like. You may ask her to read out the *Bhagavat* to you. She will even find the thing interesting. If you thus keep yourself busy in the service of others, believe me the mind will always be full of joy. And you must not omit to look after Punjabhai's meals and other requirements.

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

142. LETTER T0 KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

[NADIAD,]

July 29, 1918

DEAR KISHORELAL,

This letter is meant for you and Shri Narahari. To the extent that Shri Narayanarao's charge that distinctions are made between Maharashtrians and Gujaratis is justified, it is our duty to try to remove the causes. Here is a field for the exercise of non-violence. The first step to take is for you all to come together and examine how much of truth there is in the charge. The Gujarati ladies should try to mix freely with the Maharashtrian ladies. The most important thing is to see that the children make no such distinction. It is not necessary to give exaggerated importance to what I have said; just reflect over it for a moment and do all that may need to be done.

As for prayers, I place this before you for consideration. We should not take the plea of inability so far that, in the end, we find ourselves incapable of doing anything at all. We should do the teaching as well as we can and overcome our shortcomings by gradual effort. Do you think I would use the plea of inability if I was myself required to teach Sanskrit? I know that my Sanskrit is no Sanskrit. But

I would certainly teach it if no other person was available and I would get over my deficiency day by day. It was in this way that Parnell topped them all in his knowledge of the rules of business in the House of Commons. You always think of your weakness and are afraid of doing anything. Would you not be happier if, using all your strength, you disposed of every task that fell to you?

In what manner should the children learn to use their strength? It is a difficult thing to teach them to defend themselves and yet not be overbearing. Till now, we used to teach them not to fight back if anyone beat them. Can we go on doing so now? What will be the effect of such teaching on a child? Will he, in his youth, be a forgiving or a timid man? My powers of thinking fail me. Use yours. This new aspect of non-violence which has revealed itself to me has enmeshed me in no end of problems. I have not found one master-key for all the riddles, but it must be found. Shall we teach our boys to return two blows for one, or tolerate a blow from anyone weaker than themselves but to fight back, should a stronger one attack them, and take the beating that might follow? What should one do if assaulted by a Government official? Should the boy submit to the beating at the moment and then come to us for advice, or should he do what might seem best in the circumstances and take the consequences? These are the problems which face us if we give up the royal road of turning the other cheek. Is the first course the right one because it is easier to take? Or is it that we shall come upon the right path only by treading through a dangerous one? The foot-tracks which go up the Himalayas lead in all directions, sometimes even away from the destination and yet an experienced guide will take us in the end to the summit. One cannot climb the Himalayas in a straight line. Can it be that, in like fashion, the path of non-violence, too, is difficult? May God protect us, may He indeed.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

143. LETTER T0 PUNJABHAI SHAH

[NADIAD,]

July 29, 1918

DEAR PUNJABHHAI,

Your decision is good.[1] All activity inspired by concern for *paramartha*[2] is in fact withdrawal from activity and ensures moksha. *Paramartha* lies in serving others. It requires a supreme effort to withdraw interest from oneself and direct it to others. One should have nothing but pleasure in doing one's best for others in the Ashram. Someone or other is ill there all the time. One should go visiting them during the day or keep the children amused by playing with them. Activity such as this brings no pain and leads to no bickerings. This is the only way to knowledge of the Self. You will realize this soon enough. Make it a daily practice to be for a while with the ailing ones like Bhuvarji and others.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] During Maganlal Gandhi's absence, who was at Allahabad, Punjabhai took his place in the Ashram.

[2] *Summum bonum*

144. LETTER TO ABDUL KADIR BAWAZIR

NADIAD,
Monday, July 29, [*1918*][1]

BHAISHRI IMAM SAHEB,

Bhai Sorabji is Sorabji Shapurji, who qualified as a barrister. It is very good that you have decided to find some work. I am aware that you have been doing some reading, but for you and me it is not sufficient. Give my regards to Khatib Saheb. *Vandemataram* to Haji Sahab and Fatimabehn.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

BHAISHRI IMAM SAHEB ABDUL KADIR BAWAZIR

KHATIB SAHEB'S HOUSE

KAREDIWADI

BOMBAY—2

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10783. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

145. LETTER KASTURBA GANDHI

[NADIAD,]
July 31, 1918

BELOVED KASTUR,

Your being unhappy makes me unhappy. If it had been possible to bring ladies, I would have brought you. Why should you lose your head because I may have to go out? We have learnt to find our happiness in separation. If God has so willed, we shall meet again and live together. There are many useful things one can do in the Ashram and you are bound to keep happy if you occupy yourself with them.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] Only "July 30" is decipherable in the postmark. From Gandhiji's itinerary covering his stay at Nadiad, it appears that the letter belongs to the year 1918. Monday prior to July 30, 1918 correspxonds to July 29.

146. LETTER T0 MANILAL GANDHI

[NADIAD,]

July 31,1918

CHI. MANILAL,

I have had no letter from you recently. Herewith a letter from Sam for you to read and ponder over. Whatever their fauIt, I am afraid you have been guilty of far too much anger and shown extreme malice. You were free to stand on your rights but should not have forgotten your manners. While insisting on order, you could have spared yourself the anger. None of them has put by any great sum of money, or appropriated any. What is Devibehn's fault? It is too much that Mr. West and Mr. Sam have had to sacrifice their children's education. It seems to me that you have vented on them your anger with me. You do not even visit them. Surely, you should not behave thus. I think you should apologize to them. Do this, however, only if you think that that is the right course, and not because it will please me. Anything you do without giving up your freedom will seem best to me.

I think I have given you many reasons to be angry with me. Please forgive me for this. I have pushed you about a good deal and that has interrupted your regular education. You can, however, forgive me only if you realize that this was inevitable. I have passed my whole life in pursuit of self-knowledge, in discovering where my duty lay. My work has been appreciated because I have acted as I believe. This has saved me from many a pitfall. But, looking at the matter superficially, your interests have suffered from a worldly point of view. Just as I have had to pay for my experiments, so have you and Ba. Ba has understood this and has therefore gained what no other woman has done. You have not understood this fully yet and therefore, harbour anger. I would still say that the service I have rendered to you brothers, no other man in my place would have done. I got you to share in my experiences on the path of dharma. What more can anyone do? Like other parents, I could have allowed you to go the way of the world and shaped my life in my own way. If I had done so, there would have been no bond left between you and me by now and we would have been to each other what Gokibehn is to me, a sister only in name. I could not have acted otherwise than I have

because, in my pursuit of truth, I would have been where I am and you would have wandered off the path. This would not have been for your good. If you think over this patiently, you will be able to get over your anger with me. Consider, there has been a rift between Harilal and me. His life follows a course all its own. A father and son are truly so when both follow a common mode of life, each supporting the other. I can take no interest in Harilal's life and he in mine. The fault is not his. The way he thinks is governed by his past actions. I am not angry with Harilal. But the chain which bound him and me together is broken and the sweetness which should inform the relations of father and son is no more. Such things happen often enough in the world. What is uncommon about me is that I could not draw Harilal after me in my search for dharma and so he kept away. He has, in sheer folly, lost his employer Rs. 30,000, has passed a disgraceful letter to him and is now without employment. As they know that he is my son he is not in jail. You have stayed on in my life, but are discontented. You can't bring yourself to go out of it, and yet do not altogether like being in it. This is why you are not at peace with yourself. If you can somehow manage to be contented, you will also have peace. I have not harmed you intentionally. All I have done I did in the belief that it was for your good. Is not this enough to bring down your anger against me? What I have said will surely not make you more angry. I was only too happy that you told me what you think. All the management must be in your hands now.

You will see my second appeal in connection with recruitment for the war. I have offered the services of five persons from the Ashram. There are others also eager to go, but it is not possible to send them. The five who are to be sent are Ramanandan, Surendra, Thakorlal, Nanubhai and Raojibhai. I shall of course be there. I believe a depot will soon be started here. Had Devdas not been doing the work of Hindi, he too would have joined. He is eager to do so. I have written to Harilal, but he is not likely to go. You are doing important work there; I cannot therefore ask you. Ramdas remains. He can certainly join if he wishes. Ramdas does not feel happy if he has to leave one job and take another. You may ask him.

Nirmala is in the Ashram at present. She has come of her own choice. How long she will stay, one cannot say. She will most probably bring in Gokibehn also.

Khushalbhai has come to stay in the Ashram. Chhaganlal and

he live separately. Chhaganlal has joined the national school.

The buildings are still under construction. The weaving shed is ready. It is used for living also. The library and other buildings are yet to be constructed.

I feel the loss of Sorabji very keenly. We have now to begin from the scratch, as it were.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 115. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

147. LETTER TO MOHANLAL KHANDERIA

NADIAD

Ashadh Vad 8 [*July 31, 1918*][1]

DEAR SHRI MOHANLAL,

I have your letter concerning Kheda district. I have not received the money yet. I will use it for some work I have to do in connection with the war.

I should like you to do something to perpetuate Bhai Sorabji's memory. It will be difficult to get a worker like him. I think it will be best to institute a scholarship and send people to England.

Umiyashankar tells me that you are doing well. I am glad.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: G. N. 6210

[1] The mention of war effort makes it clear that the letter was written in 1918.

148. LETTER TO ADA WEST

[NADIAD,]
July 31, 1918

MY DEAR DEVI,

. . .[1] What a tragedy this death of Sorabji ! I was feeling most comfortable about South Africa and hoping that now that Sorabji was there all would go well. My hopes have come to nothing . . .[2]

I do not know what you all think of my recruiting activity. I am working all the time at it. My argument is briefly this : India has lost the power to strike. She must learn to strike before she can voluntarily renounce the power of striking. She may never renounce. Then she will be as bad as the West, or, better still, the modernists. Today she is neither. The ancients in India knew the art of warfare—the art of killing—and yet reduced the activity to a minimum and taught the world that it is better to refrain than to strike. Today I find that everybody is desirous of killing but most are afraid of doing so or powerless to do so. Whatever is to be the result I feel certain that the power must be restored to India. The result may be carnage. Then India must go through it. Today's condition is intolerable.

Yours,

BHAI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

149. SPEECH AT SURAT

August 1, 1918

I have not come to Surat today to make a speech, but went to Adajan to pay my respects and offer condolences to the wife of a personal friend of mine, Mr. Sorabji Shapurji, who was my co-worker in South Africa during the satyagraha campaign and who has, as you must have read in the newspapers, passed away.[3] Being, meanwhile, pressed to make a speech, I have this opportunity today. As you know, swaraj has become a household word all over India. Mr. Montagu's[4]

[1] Some words are omitted in the source.

[2] *ibid*

[3] *Vide* "The Late sorabji Shapurji Adajania", 27-7-1918.

[4] E. S. Montagu (1879-1924); Secretary of State for India, 1917-22 and co-sponsor of Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, published on July 8, 1918.

scheme of political reforms has been published and people differ in their views on it. Newspapers, too, have been expressing themselves on it. The scheme is good in parts but also strange in some ways. I have already expressed my views on it. It is necessary that we press for improvements which we desire in it. If we rest content with whatever is offered to us out of the many things we may have demanded, it would not seem that we were earnest in our demands. My opinion is that in anything that we demand by way of swaraj, we should agitate to get it as a matter of right, staking our very lives on it, and, simultaneously, stand by the Government and help it. In other words, in the war that is going on, we should send our men to France and Mesopotamia. We are not entitled to demand swaraj till we come forward to enlist in the army. It is futile to expect any results when we have not done our duty. It is extremely difficult to mention this in a public speech in Gujarat, especially in Surat, for the citizens of Surat see nothing about which they have to think and come to conclusions. It would seem from the attendance today that they had made up their mind on the subject. The first duty of a people all too eager for swaraj is to listen attentively and courteously to what is said on occasions like the present and accept whatever appeals to them and reject the rest. Till the people have learnt this, they will be unfit not only to enjoy swaraj but even to ask for it. All the 30 crores cannot go and listen to speeches but they may read newspapers and accept from them whatever they think best.

I do not advocate a go-slow policy in asking for swaraj; on the other hand, I am a staunch fighter in its cause. We would have equal rights in the Empire; if so, we should rescue it from the threat to which it is now exposed and then alone shall we be considered fit for them. There is a party which argues that the British Government should first concede our right to swaraj, grant equal rights in the army and in other matters, and then alone should we help it. The party making this demand is not to be dismissed out of hand. But the snag in this argument is that the Empire is not dependent on your help. At present our relationship with it is that of an owner and his slave, or a king and his subjects. It depends upon its own will whether it would change this relationship and make us its partners. Assuming, therefore, that it is inclined to do nothing of the kind, how do you think we are to lay down our terms before it? Some believe that, when its difficulties increase still further, it will accept all our conditions and we shall then come forward to help. But in this we run a great risk. We should rather wish that it never gets into such difficulty. We have got the

opportunity we were looking for to help the Empire and we shall do well to avail ourselves of it fully. I have been travelling all over India these days and I tell you, from what I have seen for myself, that India has altogether lost the capacity to fight. It has not a particle of the courage it should have. If even a tiger should make its appearance in a village, the people would not have the strength to go and kill it and so they petition the Collector to have it killed. Nor do they have the strength to fight back dacoits, should any descend on the village. Can a nation, whose citizens are incapable of self-defence, enjoy swaraj? Swaraj is not for lawyers and doctors but only for those who possess strength of arms. How in a people who are incapable of defending their lives, their women and children, their cattle and their lands, ever enjoy swaraj? This is no time to go into the question of how our people fell on such evil times and who is to blame for this state of affairs; what is necessary is to find a remedy. When the people become physically fit and strong enough to wield the sword, swaraj will be theirs for the asking. How can people who have lost their strength defend their religion? From my experience during the last three months, I know that we are utterly timid. People afraid of even a squirrel had much better think of improving their own condition than of getting swaraj. Here we have an invaluable opportunity for getting back the capacity to fight which we have lost and we should not miss it. If a people who do not know in what direction to look for a fort, do not know how to fire a gun, have no knowledge of the state of fortification on the border,—if they wish to know all this, they should certainly not miss this supreme opportunity which India has of supplying half a million men. We should not believe, either, that in availing ourselves of this opportunity we are helping the Government; we should believe, rather, that we are using it to acquire the strength to fight and get training in doing so. You will regret it afterwards if you miss this priceless opportunity. Mr. Tilak[1] advises us not to take part in the war unconditionally. I have greater reverence for Mr. Tilak than you have; in fact, one cannot show him enough reverence. If, once half a million men had joined, they refused higher posts [to Indians], there would be revolts everywhere and rivers of blood would flow. This is no time to pay attention to what Mr. Tilak says. The very services we render will answer his doubts. The half a million men whom we shall raise will go with love of swaraj in their hearts. When they come back, they are bound to get swaraj. If they have learnt military discipline, half a million others will be roused. And so parents

[1] "Lokamanya" Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920); patriot, politician and scholar.

should be told that, in offering recruits, they show their love for the country. This is what I do. America helps with three hundred thousand [men] every month; if we refuse, that will cost us our rights. I, therefore, entreat you again and again to ponder over what I have said today, for, if this thing [opportunity for military experience] which has offered itself to us slips away from our hands, there will be no possibility of our getting the other [swaraj]. Think over what I have told you and, if the idea appeals to you, come forward for sacrifices. If, however, you lay down terms, following Mr. Tilak, I would take no offence. With these words, I should like to resume my seat.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarat Mitra and Gujarat Darpan, 4-8-1918

150. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

NADIAD,
Ashad Vad 11 [*August 2, 1918*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Try to get *Bhagirathkosh* (Urdu-Hindi Dictionary) by Dina Nath Kaul, Munshi Naval Kishore Press, Lucknow, price as. 12/- and *Complete Urdu Course* by R. C. Bhushan, Longmans Green & Co., price Re. 1/12/. If you are able to get these two books, send them to Devdas by registered post. His address is: C/o Ramji Kalyanji, Sowcarpeth, Madras. Take the money from Chi. Narandas.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

You will have read the other journal.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The postmark bears the date August 3, 1918. However, *Ashad Vad 11* corresponds to August 2.

151. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

NADIAD,
August 2 [1918][1]

MY DEAR HENRY,

You must have duly received my letters passed on to you through Millie. Among these is a letter from Hassan Imam wherein he says he is going to fulfil his promise to you and that your complaint must have been received before he forwarded some funds and a brief.

I have a letter now from Dr. Mehta who has promised to do his share if it becomes necessary to support Millie through your incarceration. But I do not believe you will ever have to go through the fiery ordeal. If you have, sufficient for me to say that you need have no anxiety about Millie.

But I wish to utter a note of warning about your duty towards Pater. Are you bound to support him in his speculations or in his artificial style of life? Do you not spoil him? And may you do this especially when the funds you receive are largely received by you in your public character? You may not divide the legal profession from your other activities. Have you not renounced the right to earn more than your needs including humble family needs! You are a reformer at home as well as abroad. Your life must influence the family life or it must stand separately as a protest against its orthodoxy and present-day shortcomings. I do not pretend to solve these riddles for you. I merely point out that they exist for you and me and that you may not overlook them.

So, Sorabji is no more. These shocks sometimes so shake me that I do not want to live on this earth. But my faith in the justice of Providence enables me to regain my sanity. I have cabled you about Sorabji. You will have read my tribute in the *Times* and the *Chronicle*.[2] You will have sent me the Will and the policy and all the other papers Sorabji may have left with you. I went over to Surat to meet the widow. Sorabji has left a most lovely daughter.

[1] From the contents; *ibid*

[2] *Vide* "The Late Sorabjji Shapurji Adajania", 27-7-1918

I have your cable about the scheme.[1] No one will reject it *in toto*. But no one here seems disposed to accept it as it is. There is too much compromise in it. India is not getting what is right but what is expedient. Has the Civil Service any rights? Have the European merchants any rights as against the indigenous population? But they evidently think they have. There must be ceaseless warfare raged against this preposterous claim. I like the scheme as an honest effort. I should not care for it without substantial amendment. I should not weep if it is not passed. I would not be overcautious lest nothing may seemingly be achieved.

What do you say to my recruiting campaign?[2] It is for me religious activity undertaken for the sacred doctrine of ahimsa. I have made the discovery that India has lost the power of fight - not the inclination. She must regain the power and then if she will deliver to a groaning world the doctrine of ahimsa. She must give abundantly out of her strength, not out of her weakness. She may never do it. That to me would mean her effacement. She would lose her individuality and would be like the other nations ≈ a worshipper of brute force. This recruiting work is perhaps the hardest task undertaken by me. I may fail to gain recruits. I shall still have given the best political education to the people.

As you know, I am building the Ashram on a new site. The building work is slow.[3] It is so difficult to get men and material.

With love from us all,

Yours,

BHAI

From the original : Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy : National Archives of India

[1] The Montagu-Chelmsford Reform Scheme.

[2] *ibid*

[3] *Vide* also "Letter to Mrs. West", 23-6-1918.

152. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

[*August 2, 1918*][1]

MY DEAR MILLIE,

Will you please read this and then send to Henry if you approve? I want you carefully to read the paragraph about Pater.

With love,

Yours,

BHAI

From the original : Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy : National Archives of India

153. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

NADIAD,

Ashadha Vad 13 [*August 4, 1918*][2]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

On inquiring from Prabhudas, I came to know that Kashi[3] works in the kitchen. I feel that she should be completely free of that work. She can do only light household chores. Truly speaking, stitching, cleaning grains and reading are the right activities for her, that is to say, for keeping her occupied. She should devote as much time as she can to taking slow walks. My advice is that she should completely give up taking medicines and observe control over her diet. It will do her good if she takes only rice *kanji*[4] for the present. I have observed that milk is no good when one is ill. There is nothing better than milk for building up the body on recovery from illness. The diet for illness is fruit juice, green vegetables and things made of wheat but without *ghee*. Wheat *kanji* can be made the same way as the rice *kanji*. Barley water is also good. It is possible to remain fit by taking light food which helps to move bowels. If all this does not help, one should

[1] The foregoing item is an enclosure to this letter.

[2] From *Nadiad* in the date-line; Gandhiji was at Nadiad on *Ashadha Vad* 13 only in the year '1918' and it corresponded to August 4.

[3] Wife of the addressee

[4] A kind of sour gruel made by steeping a substance in water and letting the liquor ferment

reconcile to one's state of health instead of trying in vain for cures. My suggestion would certainly do you no harm. On the contrary, it has the maximum potential for doing you good. Medicines hardly help and there is no limit to the harm they cause. A person like Dr. Jivraj Mehta, in spite of having worked under first-rate doctors abroad, has to struggle hard. Thanks to the conditions here and our attachment for the medicines, he earns money and name for himself.

Rubbing tobacco on teeth may do good. *Drakshasav*[1], if given to Kashi, will certainly help her. It is not a medicine. It is food. It is a diet which acts but slowly. We can experiment with it. It seems Jatashankar Vaidya prepares it hyginically.

Kashi cannot digest solid food. She should for sometime be on liquid diet only.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32895

154. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

August 6, 1918

MY DEAR CHARLIE[2],

I shall be good this time and not accuse you of crimes against the laws of God and man regarding health. But there is no doubt that you need a curator euphemistically called a nurse. And how I should like to occupy that post! If you cannot have a nurselike me, who would make love to you but at the same time enforce strict obedi-ence to doctor's orders, you need a wife who would see that you had your food properly served, you never went out without an abdo-minal bandage and who would not allow you to overworry yourself about bad news of the sickness of relatives. But marriage is probably too late. And not being able to nurse you myself I can only fret. I can do better if I pray and that is precisely what I am going to do. He must keep you well and free from harm so that you may glorify Him in your strength, if such be His will.

I am quietly settling down to my task as if it was the most

[1] An Ayurvedic medicine for building up strength

[2] 1871-1940; British missionary; co-worker of Tagore and Gandhiji; honoured as "Deenabandhu" (brother of the poor)

natural for me. The side issues do puzzle me but I shall soon cease to think about them. They are not before me for immediate solution. My life has never been fashioned thus. I have always declined to work out to my satisfaction all the possible deductions. I have taken up things as they have come to me and always in trembling and fear. I did not work out the possibilities in Champaran, Kheda or Ahmedabad nor yet when I made an unconditional offer of service in 1914. I fancy that I followed His will and no other and He will lead me"amid the encircling gloom". It delights my heart to know that the Poet[1] is himself teaching the boys. For me it is worth far more than his visit to America and I equally enjoy the idea of your sharing that burden of his. May God bless you both and keep you well.

Do please convey my respects to Baradada[2].

With love,

Yours,

MOHAN

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

155. LETTER TO O. S. GHATE

August 6, 1918

DEAR MR. GHATE [3],

Please assure Mataji[4] as also our friends that I am leaving no stone unturned to secure a quick but perfectly honourable release. Iknow everything about Mr. Mahomed Ali's[5] illness. And I wish I could hasten the discharge even on that ground. But I hate making appeals ad *misericordiam*. I take it that in due course they will get copies of my correspondence with Sir Wm. Vincent[6] through Mr.

[1] Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941); awarded Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913; founder of Shantiniketan, now a University

[2] Dwijendranath Tagore; eldest brother of Rabindranath Tagore; he was affectionately called "Borodada".

[3] Counsel for the Ali Brothers

[4] Mother of Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali

[5] Younger brother of Shaukat Ali and editor of the weekly, *The Comrade.* Both the brothers were interned by the Government soon after the outbreak of the First World War.

[6] Home Member, Government of India

Shuaib[1]. Sir Wm. talks of a tribunal of inquiry. I do not want to boycott it. Before throwing the country in a very big agitation I want to give the Government every opportunity of a proper and decent retreat. I hope the Brothers will, if called upon, appear before the committee. Should, however, an agitation become necessary I shall certainly interview the Mataji before embarking upon it. I suppose that is what she desires....[2]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

156. LETTER TO DEV

August 6, 1918

DEAR MR. DEV[3],

I have your resolution[4] about the threatened split. I do think we are overvaluing a mechanical and unnatural unity. If there are two definite parties representing definitely different policies why should they not have their separate and distinct platforms? Each may press its own policy for the country's acceptance. The people can only gain thereby. If one party goes stronger than another, the advent of swaraj will not be retarded. If either is feeble or half-hearted we should suffer and we shall deserve to. The remedy lies in both becoming strong and firm. At the present moment there is too much hypocrisy among us. This corrupts the people. No one will be deceived by a patched-up peace between the different sections.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Shuaib Qureshi, editor of *New Era*

[2] Words omitted in the source

[3] Brother of Dr. H. S. Dev, secretary, Servants of India Society

[4] Passed at a Dhulia meeting deploring the rift in the Congress

157. LETTER TO SANTOK GANDHI

[SURAT,]

August 6, 1918

CHI. SANTOK [1],

Why should Rukhi[2] fall ill so frequently? I know she is weak from her birth but that only means that we should take all the greater care of her. To bring up children is a great art. It calls for much self-discipline on the part of parents. I should like you to submit yourself to it all if only you can thereby help the children to grow well. I have already told you that you may use turmeric if you think its absence is to blame; you may use it to prepare things specially for Rukhi. If, this way, you succeed in improving her health, we may allow the use of turmeric for others as well. If you can but improve the children's physique, even by introducing anything else besides turmeric, I should like you to do so. My own impression is that Rukhi keeps eating what she cannot digest or more than she can digest. This overloads her stomach and brings on illness. When she has recovered, put her on milk, rice and vegetables and very likely she will be all right. For some time yet she will not be able to digest *roti*[3]. This is my belief; I don't know what your experience has been. Do anything you like. All that I want is that you make her as strong as steel.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] Wife of Maganlal Gandhi

[2] Addressee's daughter

[3] Indian bread

158. LETTER TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

August 6, 1918

BHAISHRI PRANJIVAN[1],

Today I started reading your article on smallpox. I have still to read some of it. It is quite a long one. You repeat things over and over again. In fact, the article may even be considered beyond the terms of reference. However, you have taken great pains over it, and the article is a valuable document. You have given a very good idea, but could have given a far better one, of the number of children sacrificed through the superstitious insistence on smallpox vaccin-ation. While the Goddess of smallpox has been laid to rest, another, equally terrible, has taken her place. Your article should be published in the form of a book and distributed to municipalities. If you would shorten it for popular consumption or write another in the form of a price of it and permit me to print that, I should like to circulate it. If you write another independent article in Gujarati, a short one, we may print and distribute that one too. I shall finish reading this today or tomorrow but I am putting down this suggestion because I thought it necessary to send it at once.

Send me a few copies right now. I want to give them to some doctors and obtain their opinion on it.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] M.D., Bar-at-Law, and jeweller; his association with Gandhiji began when he received Gandhiji on his arrival in England for the first time as a student. He rendered financial help to Gandhiji in his activities from the days of the Phoenix Settlement till his death in 1933,

159. LETTER TO RAMNANDAN

August 6, 1918[1]

CHI. RAMNANDAN[2],

I have your letter. I can give you money for your journey and debit it to your account. When you join up, I shall send you the money for your journey here if I am able to get it from the authorities. I shall not be able to call you back until the time of your joining up. You heard about what happened in the case of Shyamji. It is improper to impose on the Ashram the burden of your travel expenses. I can understand your aspirations. I feel that those who would keep up family bonds ought not to be admitted to the Ashram. It does not look nice to refuse you, nor does it seem proper to pay you the expenses. That is my dilemma. You alone can help me out of it. If you are agreeable to going on the terms indicated above, please show this letter to Fulchand[3]. He will give you the money for the journey.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhai ki Diary, Part I

160. LETTER TO HANMANTRAO

August 7, 1918

MY DEAR MR. HANMANTRAO [4],

I am sorry about your health. I know that the greatest desideratum is exercise. And when there is little exercise, the food ought to be low, free from much nitrogen and fat. Wheat, fruit, rice and vegetables—these ensure good health. They may fail to give vigour. The latter when wanted can be acquired by adding pulses including groundnuts. Can you not go to Bangalore or the Nilgiris? If you can but get invigorating climate, you will soon pick up. Baths and mental rest will do something for you but will not give you the

[1] From the entry in the *Diary*

[2] An inmate of Sabarmati Ashram

[3] Fulchand Kasturchand Shah; an inmate of the Ashram in its early days; political ant constructive worker of Saurashtra

[4] Member, Servants of India Society

original frame. You ought yet to grow. Devdas[1] tells me you have been very good to him. I know he will miss you when you go away. Take a Hindi book with you, in preference to any other literature. Do write to me after you get the change, wherever it is.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

161. LETTER TO SHANKARLAL BANKER[2]

August 7, 1918

I have read your telegram to the revered sister[3]. I should not like you to be so concerned about me. It is your love which prompts your words. Whether or not I join will be determined solely by the interests of the country. I am certainly not likely to keep away out of resentment. Will you maintain that I must join even if it is clear to me that I would serve better by not doing so?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

162. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

August 9, 1918

DEAR MR. NATESAN[4],

May I thank you for looking after Devdas during his illness and will you please convey my thanks to Dr. Krishnasamy for his great attention to Devdas.

You will not hesitate to criticize my writings and doing[s] when you feel the necessity.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 2231

[1] Devdas Gandhi (1900-56); youngest son of Gandhiji

[2] Came in close contact with Gandhiji during the Ahmedabad textile mill workers' strike; publisher of *Young India*; secretary, All-India Spinners' Association; was convicted with Gandhiji in 1922

[3] Anasuyabehn Sarabhai

[4] Editor, *The Indian Review,* Madras

163. LETTER TO G.K DEVADHAR[1]

August 9, 1918

Miss Winterbottom[2] is an old lady of high culture. She takes a prominent part in many ethical movements. But of course Polak[3] will be your guide, friend and philosopher. He will take you to all Englishmen I know politically. Lest he forget, remind him to take you to the polytechnic, Barnardo's Home[4] and allied institutions. Some of these at close quarters, you may not quite like. You will, of course, approach them all with a critical eye. All is not gold that glitters. A safe voyage, pleasant sojourn, and safe return.

I hope Mrs. Devadhar is better.

Yours sincerely,

M.K.GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

164. LETTER TO FULCHAND SHAH

[NADIAD,]
August 9, 1918

I wanted your criticism. And you need not have taken so long [to offer it]. Your comments are on the whole just. If I had not started the Ashram such as it is, I would have been able to achieve nothing at all. My hope has been that good men will join it. The lapses in the Ashram prove that even such men are not without their faults and are evidence of its imperfect state. Without Maganlal[5], the Ashram would never have come to be founded. His shortcomings bespeak mine. When I said that I, too, was a novice, I meant it. The

[1] Member of the Servants of India Society, Poona; succeeded V. S. Srinivasa Sastri as its president

[2] Secretary of the Union of Ethical Societies, London; *vide* "Letter to Miss F. Winterbottom", 13-11-1908.

[3] H.S.L. Polak; friend and co-worker of Gandhiji; editor of *Indian Opinion*; *vide* "Interview to Reuter", 31-1-1908.

[4] Institution for destitute children founded by Thomas John Barnardo (1845-1905) with headquarters in London

[5] Maganlal Gandhi; second son of Khushalchand Gandhi, Gandhiji's cousin; sometime manager of the Phoenix Settlement and later of the Satyagraha Ashram at Sabarmati

activities of the Ashram are a recreation for me and my experiments. There is bound to be some breaking of things in the course of an experiment. Out of all this the real thing will emerge. But only he who goes searching for it will secure it. If persons like you continually function as oxygen, the carbonic acid gas[1] can be eliminated. Such gas will always appear and oxygen will always purify it. What is true of the body is true of the universe. Tell Maganlal and the teachers what you have told me and the thing will be on the rails. I should not like you to give way to despair. Your criticism will be fruitful if it results in your taking a determined stand and urges you on to fight for purification. You ought not to allow it to lead you to frustration.

We are not now going to build the library. The school building will take time yet. My intention is to stop after building the hostels. We shall make additions to the loom-house sufficient to accommodate us. It seems to me that we cannot escape having to spend on the teachers. We shall, of course, not invite any more, though I think one or two may be needed. Weaving and agriculture were introduced because we wanted to do constructive work. I am not sorry that we bought all this land. I am worried about the weaving programme. Its accounts must be as clear as light. There should be proper supervision over the work and that is why Maganlal has been asked to go round.

We shall certainly have to start weaving dhotis and saris as well. They are needed. Those who wear them include the poor too. We shall not succeed in making others forget beauty altogether. Not that we are to forget khadi. Our desire, rather, is to seek out every weaver of khadi. The effort may indeed cost us some money.

I have written to you a rambling letter. You stated one side. I have given the other, the ideal. Both are true. One man of character can tilt the balance on the side of virtue. I should like you to acquire that strength of character and use it.

We must, to be sure, correct mistakes where we find them, and wind up what we cannot manage. I did this in South Africa and Charnparan, and will do so here if necessary. Though I have written all this, there is still need for a personal discussion.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] Gandhiji uses the English expression.

165. LETTER TO A FRIEND[1]

August 9, 1918[2]

If you read my book[3] again you will find the answers to many of your questions,—what fruits to take, for instance.

The question of the use of oils, etc., is a difficult one. My experience is that not more than half an ounce [of these] should he taken. We do not have olive oil in this country. Sesame oil is good as a substitute but it is not quite as harmless. Dates and peanuts are no doubt hard, but if they are made part of one's diet they can be tolerated. Of almonds very few should be taken. It is not good to eat too many milk products. One can subsist quite well on peanuts taken with guavas, etc. Peanuts are no substitute for almonds. Wheat is fruit in a way. But the word"fruit" is used in a technical sense in my book and is precisely defined. More will be found about vegetables than about fruits in my book. But I see that vegetables are necessary in India. Pulses are difficult to digest. On further experience I have come to the conclusion that the best diet for India is wheat and vegetables. Those who have to do much physical labour may well use pulses too. From a religious point of view what I said about milk still stands. But, from the point of view of health and under Indian conditions, giving up of milk seems an impossibility. It is many years since I gave up milk and I am under a vow never to take it in this life. But I cannot advise others to give up milk so long as I have not a substitute having the qualities of milk. I had hoped that it would be possible to manage on sesame and peanuts, and it is in a way possible, but as compared with milk these are somewhat deficient.

My advice to you is that, if you are in good health, you may take in the normal way wheat, milk, rice, etc., and on *ekadashi*[4] days take such fruits as may be easily available. You should fast when you feel indisposed and have a ten-mile constitutional early in the morning every day. One question is left unanswered. It is quite the right thing to chew sesame seeds, etc., instead of taking the oil. Eating more than two or three tolas of anything containing fat can be harmful. It seems better to eschew salt for two or three months in the

[1] This letter was written in reply to an enquiry about diet.

[2] From the entry in the *Diary*

[3] "General Knowledge about Health", a series of articles which appeared in the Gujarati section of *Indian Opinion* and were later published in the form of a book.

[4] The eleventh day of each. dark and bright fortnight observed with a fast

year than to give it up altogether. I have been watching for the last three days what effects the eating of salt has on my body. If you write after a month or two I shall give you my experience.

Yours sincerely,

MOHANDAS

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhai ki Diary Part I

166. LETTER TO"THE TIMES OF INDIA"

NADIAD,
August 10, 1918

TO
THE EDITOR
THE TIMES OF INDIA

SIR,

Your report of my recruiting address to a Surat meeting shows how dangerous it is for a public man to deliver anything but a written speech. My experiences of the reporting of my own speeches make my sympathy go out to Mr. Tilak and I certainly think that so long as reporting remains what it is in India, the safest thing is to challenge against them, and to accept their repudiation if they repudiate what is imputed to them. And it is quite likely that Mr. Tilak has been unjustly gagged. I hardly think that his gagging will improve recruiting in Maharashtra. But I know that here in Gujarat my own position becomes difficult. Many people will keep aloof simply as a protest against Mr. Tilak's gag. I hold no brief for him and I differ from his views and have told him that the conditions he requires are assured in the act of recruiting by men like him, and it hastens the grant of responsible government because it inspires confidence in us and gives us a power and strength which we do not possess today. I can only hope that Government will reconsider their decision and remove the gag and thus also remove a serious obstacle in the path of recruiters.

I have, however, digressed from my main theme. I wish to point out that I never said that those who ask for conditions should be"cast out from their party" nor did I lay stress on the help to the Empire. On the contrary, after showing the differences between Mr. Tilak's views and mine on the question of recruiting, I sympathized

with the audience in their dilemma in having to choose between the advice of a great distinguished and self-sacrificing patriot like Mr. Tilak and mine. I told them, however, that in their march towards responsible government, they could no longer be satisfied with the *ipse dixit* of leaders, no matter how great they might be, but that they would continuously have to weigh conflicting opinions and make their choice without in any way diminishing their regard for those leaders whose opinion they felt constrained to reject. And I then told them how it was to their whole interest that they should join the army. Then finally I put my facorite idea before the audience that if they wanted partnership with the British, the most becoming manner of effecting their purpose was to help them during the war. Your correspondent, however, makes the helping of the Empire the central point of my speech. I do not mind it. But I do wish to emphasize the fact that if public men were to be judged in accordance with the newspaper reports of their speeches, in the majority of cases they would make a poor show. Could you, a great journal, not insure the appearance of only accurate reports of public speeches in your columns?

M. K. GANDHI

The Times of India, 13-8-1918

167. LETTER TO SIR SURENDRANATH BANERJEA

August 10, 1918

DEAR MR. BANERJEA[1],

I have your telegram redirected from Ahmedabad where I am at present engaged in recruiting. A visit to Calcutta means at least a week simply in going and coming back. If I am to do my work at all satisfactorily, it is impossible for me to absent myself for such a long time, and at the present moment I dare not do so, for I have just heard from the government that they have acceded to my proposal to open a training depot in Gujarat and to form a Gujarat Company. You will agree that I cannot leave this work.

But even if I could have come, I do not know that I could have rendered much assistance. I hold strong, and probably peculiar, views

[1] 1848-1925; one of the founders of the Indian National Congress and president of its Poona session of 1895; member of the Central Legislature

not shared by many of the leaders. I implicitly believed that if we were to devote our attention exclusively to recruiting, we should gain full responsible government in a year's time, if not sooner. And instead of allowing our utterly ignorant countrymen to enlist *nolens volens*, we should get an army of Home Rulers who could be willing soldiers with the knowledge that they will be soldiering for the sake of the country. I do, at the same time, believe that we should declare our opinion about the Montagu Chelmsford Scheme in unequivocal terms, we should fix the minimum of our demands and seek to en-force them at all costs. I consider the scheme to be good in its con-ception. It requires much modification. We should have no difficulty in arriving at a unanimous conclusion. I should like a party in the country that would be simply pledged to these two propositions, helping the Government on the one hand in the prosecution of the war, and enforcing the national demands on the other.

I do not believe that at a critical moment like this we should be satisfied with a patched-up truce between the so-called extremists and the so-called moderates, each giving up a little in favour of the other. I should like a clear enunciation of the policy of each group or party and naturally those who, by the intrinsic merit of their case and ceaseless agitation, make themselves a power in the land will carry the day before the House of Commons.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

168. LETTER TO PROF. JEVONS[1]

August 11, 1918

DEAR PROF. JEVONS[2],

I have gone through your note. I like it in the main. We should supply as many men as may be needed and this not through the official agency, but by Home Rule organizations. If we do this, we have Home Rule. I do not agree with your financial side. The comparison between England and India is hopelessly misleading.

[1] This is in reply to Prof. Jevons' note on "India's Share in the War", in which he had suggested enhancement of taxes.

[2] Herbert Stanley Jevons (1875-1955); Professor of Political Economy, Allahabad University; founder of *The Indian Journal of Economics*

England can afford. India is poverty-stricken. A few have enriched themselves during the war. But the masses? I have come in the clo-sest touch with them in Kaira and Champaran. They have nothing. In Kaira, the exorbitant demands of the Government have impoverished a people who were once rich and powerful. In Champaran, the Planters have sucked the life-blood out of the people. You talk of a rise in the salt tax and send a shudder through my body. If you knew what is happening to the people owing to the tax, you would say,"Whatever else is done, the tax must go today". It is not the heaviness of it which oppresses, but the monopoly has artificially raised the price of salt and today the poor find it most difflcult to procure salt at a reasonable price. To them salt is as necessary as water and air.

As for the publication of the note, I think it need not be. The Reformers have no faith in the Government and they feel that even now there is no honesty in their dealings with the people. It is a curious phenomenon. We do not trust you and yet we want you. It shows a consciousness of the wrongs done to the people but their utter incapacity to remedy them. Enslavement of the nation is thorough. The Englishmen have not deliberately meant it but they could not have done more if they had. I only cling to England because I belive her to be sound at heart and because I believe that India can deliver her mission to the world better through England. If I had not this faith, I so thoroughly detest her act of disarming India, her haughty and exclusive military policy and her sacrifice of India's riches and art on the altar of commercial greed, that I should declare myself a rebel.

I did not want to give you a long letter but my pen would not be checked.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

169. LETTER TO B. G. HORNIMAN[1]

[NADIAD,]
August 12, 1918

I have your peremptory letter. Though it was written on the 8th, it was received yesterday. I suppose we have to put up with these vagaries of the Postal Department during this time of stress. Really I am recruiting mad. I do nothing else, think of nothing else, talk of nothing else and therefore feel ill-fitted to discharge any presidential function, save one on recruiting. Will you not therefore excuse me?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

170. LETTER TO RASIKMANI[2]

[NADIAD,]
August 12, 1918

I could read your letter to my wife only yesterday and hence the delay in replying. Kindly forgive me. Though we two are independent and have equal rights, we have dicided our spheres of work for the sake of convenience. Moreover, at the time of our marriage, my wife was altogether illiterate. I gave her some education with great effort, but, for several reasons, I have not been able to do so to my satisfaction. It is not possible, therefore, for her to accept your proposal. I don't think my wife can read out her speech from the chair. She will certainly not be able to prepare her own speech. She is not at all conversant with your activities and hence cannot say anything extempore either. Very regretfully, therefore, we have both to request you all to excuse us.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, VoL IV

[1] This was in reply to Horniman's invitation to Gandhiji to become the president of the Humanitarian Conference. Horniman was editor of *The Bombay Chronicle.*

[2] Secretary, Hindu Stri Mandal. The letter was in reply to her invitation to Kasturba Gandhi to preside over the annual function of the Mandal and the Dadabhai Naoroji birthday celebrations.

171. LETTER TO FULCHAND SHAH

August 12, 1918

BHAISHRI PULCHAND,

We had a very important discussion yesterday. If even one person works patiently to see that my suggestions are acted upon, we should soon have the Ashram in the condition in which you desire to see it, and rightly. At present you are that person. Please hold meetings at once and settle the matter.

I kept my sense up to a quarter to six yesterday and added to my store of health. Then, all a-tremble, I broke the fast and brought great trouble on myself. Nor did I exercise self-restraint in deciding what to eat; I ate *ghens*[1]. If I had taken vegetable soup only, the painful result would certainly not have followed. Today I am too weak to get up or walk. I have almost to crawl to reach the lavatory and I have such griping pain there that I feel like screaming. Though in such pain, I am very happy indeed. I am getting a vivid idea of what well-deserved, immediate punishment can be. I am sure my pain will subside at a quarter to six. If I committed an error in eating, it is no excessive punishment to suffer for 24 hours. And the punishment will be so short because I have fasted today. Don't worry on my account. I believe by tomorrow I shall be completely free from the pain at any rate. If I am not careless in diet, I shall be my normal self in three or four days.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, VoL IV

[1] A semi-liquid preparation of rice

172. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[NADIAD,

On or about *August 14, 1918*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I am realizing in my own experience the principle that satyagraha has a universal application. Ba's[2] letter gives the news about my health. Devdas has made a mistake and that must have set all of you worrying. I have been taking stringent measures and, with God's grace, will get over the thing. Today is the third day of a near-fast and because of that the pain is getting less severe.

I know you are not likely to have a moment free. Mind your health in all you do. Have no scruples about taking milk or ghee. Ask anyone to write and describe things to me, and give other news as well. If all the others keep busy in manual work, ask Santok. Even Radha, Keshu or Krishna may write. Or Giridhari, if he gets any time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5767. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] The letter was written on the third day of the "near-fast" which, in all probability, began when he was taken ill with dysentery on August 12, 1918.

[2] Kasturba Gandhi (1869-1942); Gandhiji's wife

173. IMPERIAL CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS

August 15, 1918

The following contribution of Mahatma Gandhi sent to Mr. G. A. Natesan for the current issue of *The Indian Review* has been sent to us for publication in advance:

The Imperial Conference Resolution[1] on the status of our countrymen emigrating to the Colonies reads well on the surface but it is highly deceptive. We need not consider it a great achievement that we can pass the same laws against the colonials that they may pass against us. It is like a giant telling a dwarf that the latter is free to give blow for blow. Who is to refuse permission and passports to the colonials desiring to enter India? But Indians, no matter what their attainments are, are constantly being refused permission to enter the Colonies even for temporary periods. South Africa legislation of emigration was purged of the racial taint by the passive resistance

[1] The following is a summary of the proceedings of the Conference cabled by the Secretary of State to the Viceroy "The fifteenth meeting of the Conference was held on July 25th. The first subject discussed was reciprocity of treatment between India and the Dominions. This discussion followed on the resolution passed by the Conference last year, accepting the principle of reciprocity and a further resolution passed to that effect . . . in pursuance of which the Conference agreed as follows: (I) It is the inherent function of the Governments of several communities of the British Commonwealth including India that each should enjoy complete control in the composition of its own population by means of restriction on immigration from any other communitics. (2) British citizens domiciled in any British country including India should be admitted into any other British country for visits for the purposes of pleasure or commerce including temporary residence for the purpose of education. The conditions of such visits should be regulated on the principle of reciprocity as follows: (a) The right of the Government of India is recognized to enact laws which shall have the effect of subjecting British citizens domiciled in any other British country to the same conditions in visiting India as those imposed on Indians desiring to visit such country. (b) Such right of visit or temporary residence shall, in each individual case, be embodied in the passport or written permit issued by the country of domicile and subject to *vise* there by an officer appointed by and acting on behalf of the country to be visited. If such a country so desires, such right shall not extend to the visit or temporary residence for labour purpose or to permanent settlement. (3) Indians already permanently domiciled in other British countries should be allowed to bring in their wives and minor children on condition (a) that no more than one wife and her children shall be admitted for each such Indian, and (b) that each individual so admitted shall be certified by the Government of India as being the lawful wife or child of such Indian. The Conference recommends other questions covered by the Memoranda presented to the Conference by the representatives of India."

movement. But the administrative principles still continue and will do so, so long as India remains both in name and substance a dependency.

The agreement arrived at regarding those who are already domiciled practically restates the terms of the Settlement of 1914. If it extends to Canada and Australia, it is a decided gain, for in Canada till recently there was a big agitation owing to the refusal of its Government to admit the wives and children of its Sikh settlers. I may perhaps add that the South African Settlement provides for the protection of those who had plural wives before the Settlement, especially if the latter had at any time entered South Africa. It may be the proper thing in a predominantly Christian country to confine the legality to only one wife. But it is necessary even for that country, in the interest of humanity and for the sake of friendship for members of the same Imperial Federation to which they belong administratively, to allow the admission of plural wives and their progeny.

The above agreement still evades the qutstion of inequality of status in other matters. Thus, the difficulty of obtaining licences throughout South Africa, the prohibition to hold landed property in the Transvaal and the Free State, and virtual prohibition within the Union itself of the entry of Indians into the Free State, the prohibition of Indian children to enter the ordinary Government schools, deprivation of municipal franchise in the Transvaal and the Free State, and practical deprivation of the Union franchise throughout South Africa, barring perhaps the Cape. The resolutions of the Imperial Conference therefore are decidedly an eyewash. There is no change of heart in the Colonies and decidedly no recognition of Imperial obligations regarding India. The Fijian atrocities, to which Mr. Andrews has drawn pointed attention, show what is possible even in the Crown Colonies which are under direct Imperial control.

New India, 15-8-1918

174. LETTER TO ROBERT HENDERSON[1]

[NADIAD,]
August 17, 1918

DEAR MR. HENDERSON,

I am on my back. I am passing through the severest illness of my life and I was incapable of sending you a letter earlier. I was charmed with your simple, frank, straightforward letter. I thank you for it. I rarely take notice of incorrections [*sic*] in my reported speeches. I have so little opportunity even of reading them, but as this one in the *Times* was, I knew, calculated to do so much mischief, I felt I must correct the inaccuracies. I am glad I did so[2] for it has silenced the evil tongue and provided [me] an opportunity of becoming acquainted with you.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

175. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[NADIAD,]

August 17, 1918

CHI. DEVDAS,

My health today is as good as it can be Still, I shall have to stay in bed. I suffered very much. It was all my fault. It is no exaggeration to say this. The punishment has been commensurate with the fault. Please don't worry about me at all. The nursing leaves nothing to be desired. For every service required, there are ten persons waiting to offer it and everyone showers the utmost love. This naturally puts me in mind of you. However, I have not felt your absence. You serve me best by going on with your work there[3]; and, besides, that is our strict

[1] Regarding this letter Mahadev Desai writes in his Diary:" [Gandhiji] delieed a speech on recruiting at Surat in the begining od th month. Some one sent a report of it to the *Times*. In it there were sentences that gave an impression of being critial of Talik Maharaj. The report was very defective. [Gandhiji] wrote a stiff letter to the *Times* about this. Reading that letter. Mr. Henderson, a civilian from Surat, wrote a letter to Gandhiji Expressing his regret fpr cpmmitting 'a serious mistake'".

[2] *Vide* "Letter to *The Times of India*", 10-8-1918.

[3] In Madras

rule. We must conscientiously observe the rigid rule that no one can forsake his post even on account of illness. I don't feel that I had lost my peace of mind even for a moment during all this terrible pain. Ba has come down here. Let us hope that in a few days I shall be enjoying better health than I used to and observing the rule of tasteless food more scrupulously.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

176. LETTER TO JAMNADAS DWARKADAS

August 17, 1918

BHAISHRI JAMNADAS[1],

Though very anxious to write to you, being in severe pain I could not do so earlier and even today I can only dictate. I am still confined to bed but am sufficiently restored to be able to dictate letters. I am well on the way to recovery and so there is no cause for anxiety.

I was very much distressed to hear of your affair. Untruth does not become truth because of purity of motive. Just as a moneyed man is said to have but one eye for watching things, there is only one path of truth. Likewise, there are many paths of untruth, in the same way that a thief has as many as four eyes, as the saying goes. A person lost in this mazy network of paths is ruined and, if he happens to be a guardian or trustee, he also ruins the person whose interests he is appointed to protect. You will see this borne out by your experience, and that of others, on hundreds of occasions. No one has ever come, or will come, to harm through truth. How can you give up this highway? Why did you?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] A leading member of the Home Rule League

177. LETTER TO ANANDSHANKAR DHRUVA

August 17, 1918

BHAISHRI ANANDSHANKARBHAI[1],

Your worrying on my account bespeaks your love for me. Here is an exact description of what I have been through: On Monday and Tuesday, I suffered unbearable pain, even worse, if I could apply a stronger adjective still. I remained almost unconscious on those two days. I wanted to scream all the time, but controlled the urge with great effort. On Wednesday I felt better comparatively, and since then I have been improving day by day. Movement is still out of the question, thanks to extreme weakness. I shall have to be in bed for some days, but I am hopeful that everything will be all right in the end. The position being this, the question of taking medicine, as suggested by you, does not arise. If you indeed want to know my views on medicine, I shall certainly let you have them some day. Any doctor will admit that it would have been almost impossible to overcome an ailment such as mine in so short a time. What I have said should suffice to reassure you.

I have read your award. The workers were waiting for it as people do for the rains and now they will have peace. I, too, was awaiting it. Although they have been getting 35 per cent, I believed your award would greatly strengthen their position.

I must tell you the cause of my ailment. I have often revolved in my mind, while lying in bed, a line from a *bhajan*[2] we often sing in the Ashram. Shri Krishna says to Uddhav:

Mysterious is the way karma works itself out.

To be sure, we cannot do otherwise than sing to this effect, for our ignorance of many things is boundless, but, in fact, the working of karma is not so mysterious as all that. It is quite straight and simple. We reap as we sow. We get what we deserve. In this illness, I can see my own fault at every step. I must admit that nature had given me many warnings. I paid no heed to them and persisted in my ways, committing one mistake after another. I got punished for the first

[1] 1869-1942; Sanskrit scholar and Gujarati writer; Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the Benares Hindu University

[2] Devotional song

mistake; the punishment for the second was severer still. This went on, the severity of the punishment increasing with every lapse, as was but just. I see most clearly that there is no kindness like nature's. Nature is God and God is love; and every mistake is punished in love. I am learning much through this illness.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahavevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

178. LETTER TO GOKULDAS PAREKH[1]

August 17, 1918

DEAR FRIEND,

As your letter written in the month of June was addressed to me c/o the War Conference[2], I got it only two days ago. You will therefore understand why you did not receive even so much as an acknowledgement from me. Though I got the letter so late, its value is no less to me on that account. I am, naturally, always eager to see you pleased. I see that you are, and think myself fortunate. I have realized from experience that the people of Kheda are strong enough for a good many tasks. I have learnt, and have been learning, much by my public contacts with these men and women. I trust you are well.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] Member of the Bombay Legislative Council from the Kaira District

[2] The War Conference held at Bombay on June 10, 1918, under the chairmanship of the Governor, Lord Willingdon

179. LETTER TO MANASUKHLAL RAOJIBHAI MEHTA

August 17, 1918

BHAISHRI MANASUKHLAL,

I got your letter today. I am down with serious illness these days. I am confined to bed. Perhaps this will be my deliverance. Treatments continue, my own. The mind is perfectly at peace. The knowledge that I have invited this illness by my own stupidity makes the pain I am going through seem less severe than it is.

I think the present condition of the educated young men is pitiable. If there is anything by which I can rouse this class of people to useful work, I can now do it, but it seems to me that the time is not ripe. That class is now lost in a delusion of its own creation. I am convinced that this delusion[1] would never have come to possess them simply through the policies of Tilak and Besant[2]. Both these not only keep aside moral principles in politics but believe that sometimes that is the right thing to do."Tit for tat" is a principle which they have deliberately and openly accepted. I don't think I can at present persuade this class which has embraced their policy to accept anything from me, do what I will. Let them adopt—and they will—whatever they can indirectly from my work, my writings and my speeches. If I come forward to give anything, they will reject it, as they well might. The policy of Mrs. Besant and Tilak Maharaj is mistaken, very much so indeed, but their achievement has been simply heroic. Their services it is impossible to measure. It is from them that the young got the message of patriotism. How can they, all so suddenly, disown these gurus? I would never ask them to do so, either. All the same, a time will surely come when the educated will turn away from the policy I have mentioned, though not ceasing to regard the two with reverence, such is my faith in the ancient greatness of India. It is not the Kauravas[3], but the Pandavas who triumphed in those times and the five

[1] The original is not clear at this point, as indicated by a mark of interrogation in the source.

[2] Annie Besant (1847-1933); president of the Theosophical Society; founder of the Central Hindu College at Benares; president Indian National Congress, 1917

[3] Cousins of the Pandavas—the five sons of Pandu and heroes of the *Mahabharata*. The great war between the Kauravas and the Pandavas forms the central theme of the epic.

men were imagined to be capable of holding their own against those hundreds of thousands. It is inconceivable to me that the youth of such a country will accept the perverted rule of"tit for tat". I shall be patient. For my part, I have been pleading with these two persons, too, but in doing all this I can only follow my own way. Sometimes this seems to bring about great delay but that is inevitable. There are things which are done, ought to be done, only behind the scene. I have decided, this time, not to attend the Congress, and for the reasons shown above. Nor do I intend to attend the Conference of the Moderate party. My absence itself will strike the people. Everyone will begin to ask questions; if necessary, I will state my views then.

I have written a long enough letter. It is not to be published. It is only for you to ponder over.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

180. LETTER TO SHANKARLAL BANKER

August 17, 1918

BHAISHRI SHANKARLAL,

I have your letter. My health is not yet restored completely. I am afraid it will take time. The thing has gone deeper than I had thought. You need not worry. I do not have to think about Jamnadas any more. Vithalbhai,[1] according to his lights, thought it good and advised withdrawal of resignation. I suggest that he should keep to the decision to resign, facing the storm that may follow. You will remember what I told you, that I had not advised Jamnadas to stop working altogether, but that he must certainly give up a post of big responsibility. That would be in his own interest and in public interest as well. The Congress will! suffer in no way. Why should we consider the harm we have repeatedly done it before now through our own lapses? What further harm will it suffer now through a straightforward action? If Jamnadas sticks to his decision, his capacity for service will

[1] Vithalbhai J. Patel (1873-1933); elder brother of Vallabhbhai Patel; called to the Bar in 1908; member of the Bombay Legislative Council and the Imperial Legislative Council; the first elected president of Indian Legislative Assembly, 1925-30

increase immensely. Remain firm yourself, and keep him firm. My respectful greetings to your mother.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

181. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

August 17, 1918

CHI. DEVDAS,

I read your two months' report about the Hindi class and was satisfied. You have come to like the work as if you were born for it and proved yourself so fit for it that it has become difficult to replace you. Besides, I cannot imagine that anyone else can do better. May God keep you firm in your determination. Preserve your health, and may you live long so that the Madras Presidency reverberates to the unifying tunes of Hindi, the great gulf which exists at present between the South and the North disappears and the people in the two parts become one. Anyone who brings this about will, through that single achievement, rise to be among the immortals. May you attain that position. You have the capacity for this and should not give it up on any account. Increase your knowledge of Hindi day by day and strengthen your moral character. One who is truthful, chaste, who observes the rule of nonhoarding and is full of compassion and valour will make his power felt in the whole world. Through it, you will be able to draw people towards you. You will then find it easy enough to teach them Hindi. Holding these views, how can I think of sending you to the war? you are as good as in the war, though working there. Do not lose patience. It does not matter in the least that you cannot go to the war. How can I ask the other brothers, either, to do so? Harilal[1] is no more a brother and Manialal[2] cannot come; I have written to Ramdas[3] to come, if he can. If you have not continued the morning prayers and the *sandhya*[4], start them at once. Be sure they will be a great support to you. Any person or nation that discards without

[1] Gandhiji's eldest son, who had separated

[2] Gandhiji's second son, who was in South Africa

[3] Gandhiji's third son

[4] Prayer with a set formula

sufficient reason a practice coming down from a distant past loses something of great value. In this modern age, great oceanic waves are rising above us all; morning and evening *sandhya* is the means whereby we may save ourselves from being submerged by them, if, that is, we understand their significance and follow the practice intelligently.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhani Diary, Vol. IV

182. LETTER TO N. M. SAMARTH

August 20, 1918

DEAR MR. SAMARTH [1],

Many many thanks for your letter. I do believe in the religious treatment and that is what I have applied in the main, but I believe also in nature cure and fasting. Nature cure is hydropathy and enema. The only food I am taking is fruit juices, principally orange juice. I am free to confess that nature cure means to that extent want of faith in the purely religious cure. I have not the courage to keep myself exclusively to the latter when I know that the disease is due to a breach of nature's laws.

I am sorry I cannot be with you tomorrow nor can I give my name to the movement. I wish to hold myself aloof from both the movements, for I hold views which are acceptable to neither party. I feel that at the present moment all the leaders should concentrate their efforts upon recruiting to the exclusion practically of every other activity. I know that the Extremists do not agree with me and I hardly think the Moderates go as far as I go. Whilst I accept the M. C. Scheme[2] in the main, to make it acceptable I should insist upon certain modifications and my insistence would go the length of wrecking the Scheme if the modifications were not accepted after exhausting every means at my disposal. To get the modifications accepted, I should not therefore hesitate to use what has been commonly called passive resistance. The Moderates will not accept this condition. I must

[1] A member of the 1914 Congress Deputation to England

[2] The Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme of Reforms

therefore bide my time patiently and plough my own solitary furrow.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

183. LETTER TO B. CHAKRAVARTY[1]

August 25, 1918

DEAR MR. CHAKRAVARTY[2],

I have your letter for which I thank you. I am abstaining from the Congress because I know that I hold views which are not acceptable to the principal leaders. Indeed when I discussed my position with Mrs. Besant, she agreed with me that I should abstain. Nor am I going to attend the Moderates' Conference. I believe that we should render the greatest service to the country by devoting ourselves exclusively to recruiting work. Neither party would be prepared to go the length that I go. Then I would accept principles of the M. C. Scheme and definitely state the minimum of improvements I should require and fight for their attainment unto death. For this, Moderates are certainly not prepared and the Extremists, in so far as they may be prepared, are not in the sense I mean. I therefore feel that I should do nothing at the present moment. So far as the bringing together of the two parties is concerned, I should do nothing by violence and therefore I do not approve of any give and take. These are two definite parties in the country. They should put their programme boldly before the Government and the country and agitate for its acceptance. Then only in my opinion shall we make real headway. Just now we seem to be moving in a vicious circle.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] In reply to Chakravarty's letter in which he had said that Gandhiji's letter to Surendranath Banerjea was being misunderstood and that he should make a statement to say that he was not against the Congress

[2] A Congress leader; chairman of the Reception Committee for the special session of the Congress in Calcutta in 1920

184. LETTER TO B. G. TILAK

[*August 25, 1918*][1]

I have your letter. I am grateful to you for your sympathy. How can you not be concerned about my health? God be thanked I am now well. Of course I shall not be able to leave my bed for a few days. There was great pain. It has only now subsided.

I do not propose to attend the Congress or the Moderates' Conference either. I see that my views are different from those of either. I have already told you about them. My view is that if all of us take up the work of recruitment for the war and enlist hundreds of thousands of recruits we can render a very great service to India. I know that Mrs. Besant and you do not share this view. The Moderates also will not take up the work earnestly. This is one thing. My other point is that we accept the substance of the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme, explain clearly the improvements that we wish to be made in it and fight till death to have these improvements accepted. That the Moderates will not accept this is clear enough. Even if Mrs. Besant and you accept it, you will certainly not fight in the way I wish to fight. Mrs. Besant has declared that she is not a satyagrahi. You recognize satyagraha as [only] a weapon of the weak. I do not wish to get caught in this false position. And I do not wish to carry on an agitation in the Congress in opposition to you both. I have unshakable faith in my own formula. And it is my conviction that if my *tapasya*[2] is complete, both Mrs. Besant and you will accept my formula. I can be patient.

That the Moderates and the Extremists should each abandon some minor positions and come together is a thing repugnant to me. There are two wings in the country. I do not believe that it will do any harm to make the positions of both clear to the Government and the people. I do not at all like the attempt to bring together the Extremists and the Moderates. It will do much good if both the parties boldly proclaim their respective positions before the Govern-ment and the people. May God help you in your undertaking.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhai ki Diary, Part I

[1] The letter is given under this date in the *Diary.*

[2] Spiritual discipline

185. LETTER TO P. C. RAY[1]

August 27, 1918

DEAR DR. RAY,

You may have heard of my illness. It was a very serious attack of dysentery. Though I seem to be convalescent, I am utterly prostrate with weakness. I can scarcely move out of my bed or even sit in it for any length of time. The great question is how to build up this broken-up body. I have abstained from milk and its products for a number of years and vowed to do so for life. I therefore need a substitute for milk and butter. Hitherto in my strength, I have found an excellent substitute in groundnuts, walnuts and such other nuts, but fats obtained from all these nuts are too strong for my delicate stomach. I need an exact vegetable substitute for ghee and milk. I have tried *kopra* milk and almond milk before now. The physiological action of these milks is totally different from that of cow's milk. Do you know any vegetable substitutes for ghee or butter and for milk? If you do, kindly name them, or better still, if you can procure them, send them. I am told that up in the north they manufacture ghee out of delicate *mhoura* seed which is not the same as the ordinary ghee but is the same as olive oil. Please enlighten me if you can. It hurts me to think that my only letter of a recent date addressed to you should be of so utterly doleful and selfish character. Forgive me if you can.

Yours sincerely,

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] This letter is presumably addressed to Dr. P. C. Ray (1861-1944) the eminent chemist.

186. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

AHMEDABAD,
Shravan Krishna 7 [*August 28, 1918*]

DEAR JAMNALALJI[1],

I have your letter and draft for Rs. 5,000. No harm has been caused by the delay. Have no anxiety about my health. It is improving day by day. I shall have to be in bed a few days more. I have become very weak.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Panchaven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad

187. INDIANS AND THE TRANSVAAL

August 29, 1918

Mr. M. K. Gandhi writes to the Press under date 29th August:

Mr. Ahmed Mahomed Kachalia, President of the British Indian Association, Transvaal, cables me to invite the attention of those educated Indians who may desire go to the Transvaal, to the fact that six such men can, for the needs of the local community in the Transvaal, enter that Colony. If there be any such in the Presidency, they should apply to the President, British Indian Association, Transvaal, P.O. Box No. 6522, Johannesburg, stating their educational and other qualifications, age and place of residence, the applications to reach the President on or before the 30th October, 1918.

The Indian Review, September, 1918

[1] 1889-1942; whom Gandhiji regarded as his fifth son; Treasurer of the Indian National Congress for a number of years

188. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

August 29, 1918

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have suffered indeed, but no more than I have deserved to. I can trace definitely and directly the causes of this illness. They do me no credit and show how weak I am in spite of all my attempts to overcome those weaknesses. This illness shows me all the more clearly how continuously we break the known laws of nature. There is no temptation so difficult to overcome as that of the palate and it is because it is so difficult that we think so little about it. In my opinion, mastery of the palate means mastery of everything. But of this more later. I am steadily progressing. My peace has never been disturbed. Pray do not have any anxiety about me. I would not have you leave Shantiniketan on any account whatsoever. I think that both you and Gurudev are doing the finest work of your lives. You are now writing real poems. They are living poems. I wish I was in Shantiniketan sitting side by side with the privileged boys listening to Gurudev's discourses and also yours.

Yours,

MOHAN

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

189. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

[AHMEDABAD,]
August 29, 1918

The news you give about Malaviyaji's[1] efforts for unity has also appeared in the papers. That Panditji would make some such move was expected. But I am afraid all the resolutions will now be half-hearted. A little reflection should convince us that we may demand less but must demand it firmly. The people will rise as, and in the measure that, they are enabled to realize that they are strong enough to secure what they demand. This is not asking for the moon but a very practical proposition.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. lV

190. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

August 29, 1918

CHI. DEVDAS,

After long waiting, I got your two letters simultaneously today. My health is improving. There is no cause at all for anxiety. Today it is very good indeed. Never, from first to last, did I lose control over it and never did I worry about the end. While the illness lasted, I was afraid of the pain but the fear of death did not touch me even in my dreams. When, moreover, the pain was extreme, I longed to die and be free from it all. My wanting to remain active while I live is one thing, but I have no desire to live just that I may work. May be I desire *moksha*[2], but it is not to be had by desiring it. One must be fit for it.

I consider your work so important that you should not leave it even for coming over to see how I am. Rest assured that I am being looked after quite well. I see no possibility now of my going to France; it seems, rather, that I shall not have to go to the front at all. We find the Allies winning every day in the battlefields of France. In this situation, it does not seem likely that they will take us there. We shall know in about a month. Even if I have to go, I cannot hope that it will be to France. Possibly, I may have to go to Mesopotamia.

[1] Madan Mohan Malaviya (1861 1946); founder of the Benares Hindu University; member, Imperial Legislative Council; twice president of the Indian National Congress

[2] Deliverance from phenomenal existence

Anandshankarbhai has written a primer[1] of Hindu religion but it is a book which even the old can read with interest and find instructive. To me it appears to be a unique book. Mahadev[2] reads from it to me every morning. I find it of absorbing interest. You will hardly come across an elementary book like this in any other language. It is the distilled essence of Anandshankarbhai's wide reading and thinking. You should read it over and over again. If you cannot follow any of the episodes, ask [someone] and find out what they mean. I am arranging to have the book sent to you. I see no improvement in your handwriting.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

191. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

August 29, 1918

CHI. HARILAL,

I have your letter. My health is improving. There is no cause for anxiety. I shall have to be in bed for some days more. The nursing leaves nothing to be desired. I cannot imagine even an emperor being better looked after. I was very pleased to learn that you cook your own food and that you enjoy doing so. Maybe you will find this an instructive experience; understand through it the secret of life and, repairing past mistakes, bring light into your life. I wish you do so. I shall be happy if you keep writing regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] In Gujarati entitled *Hindu Dharmani Balpothi*

[2] Mahadev Desai (1892-1942); Gandhiji's secretary for 25 years

192. LETTER TO PUNDALIK

AHMEDABAD,
Shravan, Janmashtami [*August 29, 1918*]

MY DEAR PUNDALIK[1],

Your letters to Kakaji and to me have given me much satisfaction. It is a very good decision not to leave Bhitiharwa without my advice or permission. I see the Superintendent wants to give trouble. It is right that you have answered him patiently. Do not talk much to anyone. Do go round the village and instruct people in keeping the lanes, houses, etc., clean. Write to me regularly. I shall answer your letters.

At present, of course, I am ill. There is too much weakness. After I have recovered, I intend to go to Champaran if only for a short time. God protect you.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5216

193. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

August 30, 1918

Your love messages are all before me. They are like a soothing balm. The more I contemplate this illness, the more deeply I realize what love of man to man must be and therefore love of God to man. I see nothing but the beneficent hand of nature and it seems to me that what appears to us on the surface to be violent visitations of nature are in reality nothing but so many acts of love

I do wish you will not worry about me. It would be a calamity if on any account your glorious work of Shantiniketan were to be interrupted. I cannot describe to you what a great delight it is to me to hear about your and Gurudev's work in Shantiniketan and I must tell you that I approach every one of your letters with a shudder, lest anything might have interrupted this noble work of Gurudev's. It would be a great relief to me to find that both of you had finished a

[1] Narayan Tamaji Katagade, a volunteer from Maharashtra, who managed the Bhitiharwa Pathashala in Champaran for some time

full term teaching the boys without interruption and in full possession of your health.

Pray thank Barodada for his blessings which I value and I thank Gurudev for his good wishes. Remember me to Mr. Rudra[1].

With love of us all,

Yours,

MOHAN

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

194. LETTER TO PUNDALIK

AHMEDABAD,
August 30 [*1918*]

DEAR MR. PUNDALIK,

As you have been questioned regarding your status, you may use this letter in proof of the fact that you have been sent to Champaran by me to conduct the school at Bhitiharwa and to the work of sanitation and education amongst the people in the surrounding villages or to conduct any other school in Champaran to which I may send you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5215

195. LETTER TO MILLIE POLAK[2]

August 31, 1918

As I am writing this, I am watching the glorious rain descending in torrents before me. It will gladden the hearts of millions of men and women. There was a great dread of a most severe famine overtaking Western India. In the twinkling of an eye, all that fear has gone. It has given place to boundless joy; this rain is a veritable deliverance for millions upon millions of cattle. There is probably no place on earth that is so dependent on rain as India. You will now understand what part this rain must have played in giving me health. I

[1] S. K. Rudra, Principal, St. Stephen's College, Delhi

[2] Millie Graham Polak, wife of H. S. L,. Polak; author of *Mr. Gandhi: The Man* (1930)

have suffered agonies—all due to my own follies. The punishment was adequate to the wrong done by me to the body. Through a faulty experiment, I was suffering from dysentery. Whilst I was getting over it, I ate when I should have refrained and that brought on the inevitable crisis. I am so reduced in body that I have now to build anew but there is no cause for anxiety. I am convalescent and regularly taking some nourishment and am daily increasing the quantity and I hope to be able to walk about in ten days' time. You ask me about nursing. Everything that human lovecan do has been done for me. It was my privilege and my pain to be on the sickbed—privilege to find so much love rained on me, pained that I should need it all through my weakness and folly. This rich experiencing of love makes an added call on such service as I may be capable of rendering to humanity. But service to humanity is service of self and service of self is self-purification. How shall I purify myself? It is the question that has been agitating me thro-ughout my sickness; Pray for me.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

196. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS[1]

August 31, 1918

You have given me an agreeable surprise. I never knew that the Gujarati Marwaris' Colony was so strong at Shantiniketan. If all these boys remain there their full time, what a link they must form between Gujarat and Bengal and I have no doubt that if the Poet continues as he has begun, he will hold all the Gujaratis that are there to the end of their time and many more must follow. I do feel tempted to ask: Is there anyone looking after the sanitation of the place? Had water supply been put in order?

For me I think I am getting on. Progress is vexingly slow. The body has almost to be built anew. Naturally it takes time; especially when it has got to be done out [of] ingredients from day to day, and that without milk and its products. But I feel that I should be able to do so. I assure you neither recruiting nor the Congress proceedings in the slightest degree worry me. I cannot say with you that I will not look at the papers about them. On the contrary, I am eagerly

[1] In reply to Andrews' letter saying that there were 70 Gujarati and Marwari students in Shantiniketan and that Tagore looked after them lovingly and welcomed their parents

following the Congress proceedings. But I do not allow them to worry me.

I know Mr. Rudra's anxiety for me. You will tell him all about my health and assure him that the joint prayers of you all cannot fail to give me health and comfort.

With love,

Yours,

MOHAN

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai 45.

197. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[AHMEDABAD,]
August 31, 1918

The reason why I did not attend the Congress was that I sensed an atmosphere of extreme unreality after my talks with Mrs. Besant and Tilak Maharaj. I thought it imperative that, at a great moment like this, instead of indulging in fruitless controversies about the Scheme, we thought out ways and means of getting our demands accepted and employed them. I placed my views on the subject before them and suggested that we had two great weapons. One was that we should go all out to make sacrifices in the war and win the testimony of the Self in us as to our fitness. When the *atman*[1] stands testimony, it gives such inner strength that nothing can withstand it. The second way was that we should make up our minds once for all about what we want and cling to it like fanatics and fight till death to get it accepted. The two leaders rejected both suggestions. I felt, therefore, that it was useless for me to attend the Congress and that, by not going, I could make my view known silently but effectively. It was with this thought that I gave up the idea of attending.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] The Self

198. LETTER TO KARSANDAS CHITALIA[1]

August 31, 1918

I was sorry to hear of Kesariprasad's[2] resignation. He was very keen on attending the Congress and had a talk with me too. I told him, though, that he would do well to suppress the desire, if he was not permitted, and obey the instructions that might be issued. But he could not suppress his desire. I am afraid Kesariprasad felt discontented all the time. The Society[3] afforded no scope for his activities. The prohibition against attending the Congress brought his discontent to a head. The absence of Gujaratis or of any others will certainly not mean an end of this Society. It will remain for ever. A leader of character like Shastriar[4] cannot but attract others like him. If God grants him long life, India will realize his worth by and by. All manner of activities are going on and attracting people, each one according to his inclinations. This has given rise to a kind of purposeless discontent. There is bound to be frustration in the end. A man like Shastriar will come to be remembered then and people in anguish will turn to him and be comforted.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] Associated with Bhagini Samaj, Bombay, and Servants of India Society

[2] Kesariprasad Manilal Thakore of Ahmedabad; a signatory to the Satyagraha Pledge (1919)

[3] The Servants of India Society

[4] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri (1869-1946); scholar, statesman; president, Servants of India Society, 1915-27

199. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

Shravan Vad 10 [*August 31, 1918*][1]

WITH HUMBLE RESPECTS TO MU. BHAISHRI,

Your letter arrived just a little while ago and I am replying immediately. You have a right to write to me even in bitter words. Who else would write to me in this manner if not you? I also understand your being shocked. But there seems to be some misunderstanding as to the fact of the case. I do not at all desire that kind of change in the society at large. In the Ashram, however, from the beginning, it has been our rule not to observe the *Varnavyavastha*[2] because the position of the Ashram is different from that of the society outside. When you were here on a visit, the same practice was followed. Dudhabhai, his wife and L[akshmi] all three lived with me at Kocharab and had their meals with me. Dudhabhai's wife used to enter the kitchen, too. There was also another *antyaj*[3] boy. What we are doing at present is not new. I really believed that nobody had any objection to L(akshmi). It was only by chance that I discovered that such objections to her existed, and that too in a manner which was rather amusing. I have said all this to show to you that the present position is not new. That Chi. Kashi looks after that girl is a new position, but in itself, it is not a new practice. Now about the propriety or otherwise of the practice. If I had insisted that the inmates of the Ashram should observe the *Varnadharma*, I would have been guilty of the impropriety you have imputed to me. However, for those who have renounced *Grihasthashram*[4], who have accepted a particular ideal and observe the rules of self-control, to behave towards the *antyajas* differently from

[1] The letter was evidently written after an untouchable family, Dudhabhai, his wife and infant daughter Lakshmi, were admitted to the Kocharab Ashram on September 11, 1915 and the Ashram was shifted from Kocharab to the western bank of the Sabarmati in July 1917. *Shravan Vad* 10 in 1917 fell on August 12, when Gandhiji was in Bettiah in Bihar; in 1918 on August 31 when Gandhiji was in Ahmedabad; in 1919 and 1920, on August 20 and 9 respectively; on both of which days Gandhiji was in Bombay. The letter was, therefore, presumably written on August 31,1918.

[2] The traditional Indian social system based on birth and hereditary occupation

[3] Untouchable

[4] The householder's stage of life

the way they behave towards others would be *adharma*[1], not dharma, violence and not ahimsa, expression not of love but of hatred. In the Ashram kitchen, *Luharas*, *Bhatiyas*, Brahmins, *Khatris*, Rajputs, Mussalmans, *Banias* all have been taking their meals together. You know of course that all these classes of people inter-dine with one another; the whole of India knows it. Nobody has expressed disapproval of the practice. Why, then, should anybody be shocked by it now? If you have not considered the practice such as I have described above a radical one, what objection can there be against an innocent girl L[akshmi] having her meals in our kitchen? It is but proper to respect custo-mary practices as long as they are not contrary to universal princi-ples of morality. If, however, they are contrary to such principle, their violation is the real dharma. I, at any rate, have learnt this from our shastras themselves. Since, therefore, this practice is not new, I beg of you not to consider it as such and feel hurt, and if you consider it to be an old one, regard it as unavoidable and so not feel hurt. Please believe that I have not taken a single step out of self-will or thoughtlessly, but have done what I have done only after the most careful consideration of its moral propriety or otherwise and only because I believed it to be dharma. And, therefore, I wish you to have patience with me. If our caste-men are offended by my step, I will ask their forgiveness, and all of us will patiently suffer their boycott. From you, I ask for a blessing, and it is this:"My own brother is fearlessly doing what he believes to be dharma. O God, help him in that". I do beg this much of you that you should not in the least feel hurt by this step and bear with what you cannot understand. Very often, we simply cannot understand what is dharma and what is *adharma*. Vyasji has with great skill presented numerous instances of such confusion in the *Shantiparva*[2]. When such is the position, what should one do? Only that one should fearlessly go on doing what one's conscience bids one to do and bear the sufferings which follow as a result of doing so.

Respectful prostration by

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 33104

[1] The opposite of dharma

[2] Of the *Mahabharata*

200. RESOLUTION BY GUJARAT SABHA, AHMEDABAD[1]

[*September, 1918*]

The Gujarat Sabha, of which Mr. Gandhi is the President, issued some time ago the following translation of a resolution unanimously passed at its general meeting held at Ahmedabad:

In the opinion of the Sabha, the easiest and straightest method of attaining swarajya is to help the Empire in the hour of danger by supplying all available men for fighting and other purposes in connection with the war, and therefore this Sabha resolves that it should with all possible despatch undertake recruiting and for that purpose obtain the necessary sanction, and advises other kindred associations to do likewise. The Sabha authorizes the President and the Secretaries to take all necessary steps with a view to enforcing the foregoing resolution.

The Indian Review, September, 1918

201. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

September 3, 1918

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I am daily getting better. Please have no anxiety for me. Though we do not meet in the body, communion of the spirit is ever there. Just at present I am doing a bit of reading. The book I am reading is a collection of remarkable essays on religion by Prof. Anandshankar Dhruva of the Gujarat College. You have seen him. The essays are pure gold. He is one of the greatest Sanskrit scholars of this Presidency. These essays have given me great comfort and they help me more fully to realize the meaning of communion of the spirit and it is in that deeper and fuller [meaning] that I use the expression regarding ourselves.

As I have said before, I would not have you leave Bolpur on any account whatsoever. Your work is there and nowhere else at the present moment.

Why did you write that wretched introduction of yours to the Hindi book on emigration to the colonies? I have only just glanced at

[1] Presumably drafted by Gandhiji

it and I feel that you have given an undeserved certificate. You do not want to give currency to inaccuracies, fulsome flattery and advertisements. I propose to go through the book carefully and note down for your edification some of the glaring inaccuracies contained in the work. There is really no merit in an author remaining unknown. He does not remain unknown to those who he wishes should know him. The introduction does credit to your heart. You are an Indian and, as Lord Willingdon[1] will say, you are always afraid to say"no". I would far rather that you retained the English characteristics and said"no" when it is"no" which should really be said. I suppose it is sometimes the privilege of love sternly to say"no". I do not want to sermonize, but you must really reform yourself in this matter. Otherwise I must pass on to you all the rascals I meet. You will then settle your accounts with Gurudev and them.

With love to you all,

Yours,

MOHAN

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtay: Narayan Desai

202. LETTER TO SHANKARLAL BANKER

[AHMEDABAD,]

September 7, 1918

I see from your letter to Anasuyabehn[2] that when writing to me you had concealed a great deal about your health. It was not necessary. I wish you would not take undue liberty with the body, putting your trust in medicines. My experience in life has increasingly strengthened me in the idea that one ought not to do so. I took such liberty to please my palate and have been paying the penalty. I believe it is the same story in ninety-nine out of a hundred cases of illness. I admit that this discipline of the body is extremely difficult, but all the same, it is the true end of human effort. It is easier to conquer the entire world than to subdue the enemies in our body. And, therefore, for the man who succeeds in this conquest, the former will be easy

[1] Governor of Bombay, 1913-8; of Madras, 1919-24, and Viceroy, 1931-6

[2] Anasuyabehn Sarabhai, sister of Ambalal Sarabhai; a leading millowner of Ahmedabad; she was on the side of the workers in the dispute between the workers and the millowners.

enough. The self-government which you, I and all others have to attain is in fact this. Need I say more? The point of it all is that you can serve the country only with this body. Your ideals are noble, but the noblest of them would be in vain without the requisite strength of spirit.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

203. LETTER TO P. C. RAY[1]

September 9, 1918

The milk problem with me is not quite so simple as you have stated it. It is not regard for the calf that in my illness prevents me from taking milk, but I have taken a definite *vow* not to take milk or its products even in illness and I feel that it is better to die than to break a vow knowingly and deliberately taken. Every consequence that I am taking today was before me when I took the vow. I know too that it was most difficult to find a substitute for milk. Can you not refine some of our oils so as to make them easily digestible? You know that the American chemists have done so with cottonseed oil. Cottonseed oil without being refined is not eatable but now people eat it with impunity. I do not say that they have refined it to the extent I want; that is a question of degree.

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

[1] In reply to Dr. Ray's letter in which he had said that, though some of the ingredients of milk were available in other items, there was no good substitute for milk. Dr. Ray, as an old friend, urged Gandhiji to take milk.

204. LETTER TO RANCHHODLAL PATWARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

Monday, Ganesh Chaturthi [*September 9, 1918*]

RESPECTED SHRI RANCHHODBHAI[1],

I have your letter. I am improving. There is much weakness, though, and hence I am confined to bed. There is no reason for worry. Just when my health was returning to normal, I got fever for a few days and that increased the weakness. There is no fever now. I am ashamed of this illness of mine. I thought I would never get a disease like dysentery. I was myself to blame for it. Though I kept well enough, my skin had grown too soft and, though I did not feel handicapped, the calf-muscles were not as hard as they should be. Doctor friends have always told me that I should not go without salt. I thought it was better that the skin should be a little rough, in case I had to go to France or Mesopotamia, and with this idea I started taking salt. This brought on diarrhoea. I should have taken this as a warning that I should stop eating, but I fasted only partially. The result was acute dysentery. In this disease, food is like poison; despite that, I continued to eat. Thus I have had to pay for my lack of self-control.

No doubt, people will have a hard time of it for lack of rains. On this side, there has been some rain at any rate. About Kathiawad I keep inquiring from visitors and also read the news in the papers. I gather from all this that conditions there are much worse than here.

I quite see that you cannot leave the work there and come over here. I shall get hold of a copy of *Pataka* and read the article about untouchables. I want to understand the other side fully and, if I find dharma in it, I shall not hesitate for a moment to give up my view. The arguments I have so far come across are all based on tradition. I have yet to hear an argument based on true dharma. I have taken up the problem of the untouchables purely out of considerations of dharma. It has nothing to do with politics. It certainly has political implications, but I have never looked at it from that point of view. I should also like to add that it is not my intention that tradition should never be

[1] Life-long friend of Gandhiji; served as Dewan in princely States of Western India

respected. The true dharma is unchanging, while tradition may change with time. If we were to follow some of the tenets of *Manusmriti*[1], there would be moral anarchy. We have quietly discarded them altogether.

With regards from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2793. Courtesy: Patwari

205. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[AHMEDABAD,]

September 9, 1918

Surely you know that I am against the use of pulses by weak persons. You know my fears about oil as well. All the doctors suggested the use of *mung*[2] and *mung* soup, and oil too. It is difficult, without the use of fats and what they call proteins, to rebuild a body grown weak because of the vow not to take milk. Milk protein and the fat it contains are easily absorbed in the blood stream, but not so the fat in oils. All pulses contain protein, but this protein is impossible [for a weak person] to digest. And yet both [pulses and oil] were consumed, as I said above[3]. I think that was a mistake. Such mistakes are bound to occur while I am searching for a substitute for milk. It is just not possible to carry on without some oil or other. The quantity to be taken will have to be determined. In the process, mistakes are bound to occur, and there will be set-backs, too, occasionally.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] Laws of Manu, the Hindu lawgiver

[2] An Indian pulse

[3] Presumably in the part of the letter not reproduced in the source. According to Mahadev Desai, it described an upset caused by wrong food.

206. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

September 9, 1918

It is true that cooking takes some time but I believe that this time is not wasted. It is also generally not true that some more important work could be done during that time. Ninety-five per cent of the people waste more time every day than is taken up in cooking. I am being rather liberal in my estimate in saying ninety-five per cent. You will be surprised in how short a time a person doing his own cooking finishes it when he is very busy. If I give my own example, when I was very busy with studies in England I did not take more than half an hour in the morning and in the evening for cooking. In the morning, I used to prepare porridge, and this took exactly twenty minutes; if I cooked in the evening, I prepared soup. As it did not require stirring, the only time spent was in getting the materials ready. After putting the thing on the fire, I would sit by and read. Occasionally, students come to me from Benares. I ask all of them what they do. Most Brahrnins cook their own food. One of them told me that he only prepared *khichdi*[1] and ate it with milk and pickles. While he was eating the meal, the *bhakhri*[2] would be getting baked. This *bhakhri* he would eat with milk in the evening. In this, he spent three-quarters of an hour in all. This is an extreme case I have cited. I do not want you to be all that particular. This is only to illustrate that it is possible to do one's cooking in a very short time. That student was quite healthy and strong, because *khichdi*, milk or curds and pickles gave him all the nourishment he needed. Anyone who can get good milk or curds will care little for other things. Do not imagine that I write this to suggest that you should always cook yourself. I have said all this only in order that, on occasion, you should not hesitate in the least to do your own cooking and [when you have to do it] be so unhappy, all without reason, that you were wasting your time. Otherwise, when you have mended your ways, I can have no objection to your calling Chanchi[3], having good things to eat and enjoying life, within limits. Only see that you do not repeat your mistakes. I want you not to be too eager to get rich quickly.

[1] Preparation of rice, pulses, etc., cooked together

[2] A kind of thick bread

[3] Chanchalbehn Gandhi, wife of Gandhiji's eldest son, Harilal

Think of Sorabji's death, of Dr. Jivraj's being on his death-bed, of the passing away of Sir Ratan Tata[1]. When life is so transitory, why all this restlessness? Why this running after money? Get what-ever money you can earn by ordinary but steady efforts. Resolve in mind, though, that you will not forsake the path of truth in pursuit of wealth. Make your mind as firm as you can and then go ahead making money.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

207. LETTER TO RANCHHODDAS PATWARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
Ganesh Chaturthi, Monday [*September 9, 1918*][2]

RESPECTED RANCHHODBHAI,

I have your letter. My health is gradually improving but I am still to weak and so am confined to bed. There is no cause for worry though. I had quite recovered, but in the meantime I had fever, which increased the weakness. Now there is no fever at all. I feel ashamed of my disease. I had thought I could never have a disease such as dysentery. I am myself responsible for the disease, of course. I had been keeping fairly good health, but my skin had become rather tender. I had been able to manage without salt for a long time; but my legs were still not as sturdy as they should have been. Doctor friends had been constantly telling me to take salt. I may well have to go to France or Mesopotamia in which case it would not do to have a tender skin. So I started the salt experiment. That gave me dysentery. I should have taken the warning and fasted. Yet I fasted only partially. The result was that I developed acute dysentery. Taking food when you are having dysentery is like taking poison. Still I ate. Thus I am suffering the punishment for not observing restraint. People will have to undergo a lot of suffering because of the failure of rains. There has been a little rain this side at least. I ask for news about Kathiawar from

[1] 1871-1918; Parsi philanthropist

[2] The year has been inferred from the reference to Gandhiji's having had a severe attack of dysentery; *vide* "An Autobiography—Part V, Chapeter XXVIII" In 1918 *Ganesh Chaturthi* fell on September 9.

the people passing by here. I also get information from the newspapers. From all that I gather that the situation there is even more difficult than it is here.

I can very well understand that you cannot leave the work there and come here. I shall see the *Pataka* for the article on the untouchables and read it. I want to understand fully the opposite point of view. And if I find dharma in it I will not hesitate even for a moment to give up my view. All the arguments I have so far come across proceed from the orthodox doctrine. I have not heard so far a single argument resting on true religion. I have raised the question of untouchability purely from the religious point of view. It has nothing to do with the political problem. It can certainly have political consequences, but I have never had that in view. I also wish to add that I do not intend suggesting that orthodox religion should not be given the slightest recognition. True religion is firm like a rock. Orthodox religion should change with the change in times. If we were to live according to some of the things mentioned in the *Manusmriti,* we should be committing immorality. We have silently abandoned those things.

With regards,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4119

208. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU[1]

September 20, 1918

DEAR SISTER,

From the inquiries you have made about me, I know that you know about my humiliation, I mean my illness. I am getting better, but am too weak yet to move about beyond a few minutes' stroll on the verandah. Much as I should like to be with you at Poornea as the men there desire my presence, it is impossible for me to do so. I hope, however, that you are going to behave yourself and deliver your address[2] in Hindi or Urdu, whatever the national language may be called. Let the young men learn through your example the value of cultivating their mother tongue, for to them Hindi or Urdu is not only

[1] 1879-1949; poet, patriot, Congress leader and a close associate of Gandhiji

[2] As president of the Bihar Students' Conference

the national language, but their mother tongue. Do let me have a line.

Yours,

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai55.

209. LETTER TO PUNDALIK

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Bhadrapad Sud 15 [*September 20, 1918*]

BHAISHRI PUNDALIK,

I read all your letters very carefully. All your answers are very good. Such always is the effect of truth. The courage that is called for in putting up with an insult from the Superintendent does not lie in meeting insult with insult.

The Superintendent would not have had to endure in your insults even a hundredth part of what he will have to endure in your forbearance. He in fact wants that you should become excited and give vent to unbecoming speech. Now I answer your questions:

1. If you receive a written notice from the Government to leave the school or Bhitiharwa you should leave the school or Bhitiharwa and telegraph to me.
2. You should answer any questions that the Superintendent may ask in the way you have been doing. Speak the whole truth. There is no harm in telling him all that I write. I have full faith in your truthfulness.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5217; also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. lV

210. TELEGRAM TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

September 21, 1918

CONSIDER ARTICLE SHOULD NOT BE PUBLISHED.[1] IF PUBLISHED ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY OMIT REFERENCES ABOUT SPECIAL FITNESS OF GUJARAT. WRITING FULLY.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

211. LETTER TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

[AHMEDABAD,]
September 21, 1918

I have read your letter carefully. I sent you a telegram yesterday and another today. Your idea[2] is excellent but there is no possibility of its being carried out in the present atmosphere. No other province is likely to support it. You must he aware that Bengal has been working hard to such an end. It has even been trying secretly to secure full independence for itself before others. Will there be any in Gujarat who will not try to secure it first for Gujarat? Sarma made the same suggestion as yours, in a slightly different form, in the Central Legislature.[3] It was laughed out by all the members, very improperly, I must admit. Mr. Montagu has attached weight to it but suggested that it was not for the present British administration to make so important a change, that the new Councils which would come into existence could consider it. So much about your proposal.

The arguments you have advanced to establish the superiority of Gujarat can only lead to bitterness. As things stand, it is a controversial idea. Maharashtra will be able to put forward stronger evidence than we can to claim swaraj for itself. Madras will maintain that it had taken to Western modes so completely that no other province could be fitter than it. Gujarat is generally considered a very backward area; and the

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] Dr. Mehta, taking a hint from a speech of Montagu's, had written an article elaborating the idea of swaraj for Gujarat.

[3] On February 6, 1918, B. N. Sarma moved a resolution in the Imperial Legislative Council recommending the redistribution of provincial areas on a language basis. The resolution was defeated by a large majority; *vide* India in 1917-18.

arguments you use on our side will be used against us. Not that you need be deterred by these arguments on the other side. It is essential, though, to consider whether it would be proper to start this campaign for swaraj in the prevailing atmosphere. Take this into account and write what you think best. I shall be ready to carry out what you say.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

212. SPEECH ON "THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS"

September 21, 1918

Commencing readings from *The Pilgrim's Progress* after Ashram prayers :

Now then, friends, look, who was the author of this? One John Bunyan. Do you know who he was? A man with a will, like our Prahlad[1], he suffered imprisonment for the sake of truth, much as Prahlad submitted to ordeals for its sake; and as our Tilak Maharaj wrote his *Gita Rahasya* in jail, so this Bunyan wrote in jail this story of a pilgrim's journey. Call it a journey or progress or rise, what you will— he wrote that.

Like the commentaries on the *Gita* that we have, *The Pilgrim's Progress* is a commentary on the Bible. No, one cannot describe it even as a commentary. It is, rather an exposition of the most beautiful portions of the Bible. In English, the book is esteemed as a great classic and placed almost on a level with the Bible. And Bunyan has written it in such simple and beautiful language for children to follow that, wherever English is spoken, it is considered a most wonderful book for them. Even more, he says in his preface to the book, as Tulsidas in his *Ramayana*, that in time to come it will be read by one and all. And indeed it is as good as the *Ramayana*. Tulsi's *Ramayana* is a fountain of delight for children while grown-ups go messing around, and so likewise this book is of absorbing interest to children. But, now, let us read a little from the book. Hear what he says :

"As I walked through the wilderness of this world . . . ." In our books, too, life in this world is described as a forest of impenetrable

[1] Prahlad was a devotee of God persecuted by his unbelieving father, the demon king Hiranyakashipu. Gandhiji often spoke of him as an ideal satyagrhahi.

darkness, and likewise he has described it as a wilderness. He goes on to say that, in that labyrinthine wilderness of life, all tired, he lighted on a fearful den—tired out, that is, not only with physical fatigue, but also in his *atman*. He had turned over a great many thoughts in his mind, had heard countless things from countless sources, but had failed to come by the truth. So this poor man, all tired in spirit and bewildered, fell asleep in his exhaustion. He slept and dreamt a dream. In this dream, whom did he see, do you think? Do you know, Rukhi, who it was that he saw? A man in rags. Well, then, kiddies, tell me, how was Sudama[1] dressed when he went to Lord Krishna? Had he put on a dhoti with a silken border, or a coat of lace or a jolly flat Maharashtrian puggree and a scarf of brocade? Oh, no ! He was only in rags, and so was this one, too. Here, Rukhi, do you know what Sudama had on? You may not, but I do, for I was born in Porbandar, the home of Sudama. Well, then, which way was Sudama facing? Homewards? Brother dear, he had left his home and was making his way to where the Lord dwelt. Even so, our Pilgrim had turned his face away from home and taken a road that led elsewhere. And, again, what did he carry on his shoulder? See, Rukhi, he had a burden on his back, like the gunny-bag, weighing five maunds, which that labourer used to bring on his back when we were at Kochrab. He used to be all drenched with perspiration and bent so low, how could I ask him to stand erect? This man, here, had a book in his hand. It was none other than the Bible. Tears flowed from his eyes as he read it. Do you know the story of Gopichand? As he sat bathing, his mother stood looking at him from above, tears from her eyes dropping on his body. There was not a cloud to be seen; whence this rain, then? Gopichand looked up and saw that it fell from his mother's eyes. Why had she tears in her eyes? Well, I shall explain that some other time. This good man, too, had tears falling from his eyes. He had set out for the House of God, he was a prince among the lovers of God and hence the tears in his eyes.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] Sudama and Krishna, disciples of the same guru, Sandipani, were friends. Sudama had a large family and was very poor. His wife chided him for his other-worldliness and persuaded him to go to Krishna for help. Yet once in the presence of the Lord, he forgot to ask for help. But when he returned home, he found it transformed by riches.

213. LETTER TO SHUAIB QURESHI

September 24, 1918

I wish I had sufficient strength in my fingers and my wrists to give you my own hieroglyphics. As it is, I must rest content with the help of a friendly wrist and equally friendly fingers. You know all about the Committee to investigate the Brothers' case. We are creeping, whether the motion is upward or downward I do not know. For a satyagrahi, all motion is upward. If the Government have meant well, it is well for us all. If they have meant ill, by the infallible law of causation it must react upon them and therefore it must go ill with them and not with us, the only condition being that we do not act even as they. It is only because in the vast majority of cases we meet evil by evil that it continues to grow like weeds. Resist not evil is the law of our being. We come into the world with a double nature, that of the brute and man. The latter has continually to gain ascendancy over the former, but this is a digression, and for me a diversion which, however, I do not wish to indulge in this letter. To return to our immediate purpose, I am keeping in close touch with the Brothers through Mr. Ghate.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

214. LETTER TO NANUBHAI

[AHMEDABAD,]
September 24, 1918

There is no reason to go as far as to conclude that the need for joining up is over. But the signs I see indicate that this will be so. One need not assume that heroism is to be acquired only by fighting in a war. One can do so even while keeping out of it. War is one powerful means, among many others. But, if it is a powerful means, it is also an evil one. We can cultivate manliness in a blameless way. If, through the fight we are carrying on with the body, we can develop the strength for the war which the *atman* must wage against the *anatman*[1], we shall have acquired manliness.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV .

[1] Non-self

215. LETTER TO KALYANJI MEHTA

ASHRAM,
Bhadrapad, Krishna Paksh 4 [*September*] *24*[*, 1918*]

DEAR SHRI KALYANJI[1],

It was like me to have told you that you could certainly send your wife, that she could manage to live on the verandah outside. But I find this does not find favour with anyone else in the Ashram. The womenfolk will have none of it. Everyone believes that she must have some privacy at least; as long as this cannot be assured to your wife, her arrival is likely to displease the other ladies very much. I am now considering if I can find a spot where she could have some privacy. You had better wait till I find one.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2667

216. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

September 24, 1918

CHI. MATHURADAS,

There has been no letter from you for a long time. There having been no occasion I too have not written to you. I am gradually regaining strength. A season of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, similar to the one held in Indore[2] is to be held in Bombay. I cannot think of anyone there who can work for it. Very few may be interested. Bhai Jamnadas had said that he would shoulder this responsibility. I wrote to him in the matter but he has not answered. So I take it that he may not volunteer his services. Still, you should go to him and find out. Also find out who else are likely to take up the work. A reception committee must be set up at once. The session may be held after December.[3] It is necessary that the preparations for it should start

[1] Kalyanji Vithalbhai Mehta, a Congress leader of Surat District

[2] On March 29, 1918; *vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909.

[3] The session was held in Bombay from April 19 to 21, 1919

from now. I wish you would undertake this work. I shall give the necessary instructions from here. I shall be able to write more after you inform me whether or not you will be willing. Bhai Ram Naresh Tripathi has gone there on behalf of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan (Allahabad). Meet him and write to me what he says and what his views are. His address is: Seth Har Dayal Nevatia, Bombay—2.

Blessing from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

After Bapu wrote this letter, he heard from Jamnadas that you had just recovered from a serious illness. How is your health now? Bapu wants me to say that if you have not fully recovered, that is, if you have not recovered enough to undergo the strain, you may decline without any hesitation. Why did you not write about your health?

MAHADEV DESAI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

217. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI ANOOPCHAND MEHTA

SABARMATI,
Bhadarva Vad 7 [*September 26, 1918*][1]

DEAR BHAGWANJI,

I am still bed-ridden. I have gained only enough strength to move about a little in the Ashram. Even otherwise there would still be the question of what I would do after coming there. Kathiawar is not out of my thoughts, The only question is about what can be done. I am constantly thinking about it.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5802. Also C.W. 3025. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] It appears from the contents that this letter was written in 1918.

218. REPLY TO BIRTHDAY GREETINGS IN THE ASHRAM

October 1, 1918[1]

Am I worthy of the love which you have shown me by all of you coming over here this morning? I don't think I am. As a rule, even outside the Ashram, I do not say anything merely in deference to convention and here surely I would not do so. My words, there-fore, are not just a form of good manners. I simply feel in the depth of my soul that I am not worthy of the boundless love you proffer to me. From one who has dedicated himself to the service of others, a great deal may he expected. In comparison, the little that I have done is of no account. You, too, all of you, have dedicated your-selves to service. I enjoin you all to hold back your veneration. It is not in the fitness of things to express it before a person is dead. For, how can we measure the worth of his work before his death, before we have seen it in its entirety? Even after his death, it takes some time to assess it. There is no point, therefore, in our celebrating the birth anniversary of a man before his death.

What more shall I say to you? This morning, before four, I was immersed in thought. Surendra[2] had put a question to me: what was the utmost I expected of him? And of Devdas? Of Chhotalal[3] as well? Instead of telling you what I expect of each one of you individually, let me tell you what I expect from you all. It is that you should observe to perfection our first and last vow, the vow of truth. We must sincerely practise what we believe to be the means of *moksha*. Working accordingly, you should carry out as well as you can the aims with which the Ashram has been established and bring all glory to it. The Ashram will be judged by your actions and your character. It has been established for the service of India and, through it, of one's *atman*. We have many critics. Critics there will always be, but their criticism need not make us nervous, provided we are faithful to our vow of truth, the first and the last of our vows. If we were indulging in hypocrisy and fraud, it would have been a different

[1] The birthday fell on this date according to the Indian calendar.

[2] Surendralal, a member of Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, Ahmedabad. He served as a teacher in Gandhiji's school at Barharwa, Champaran.

[3] Chhotalal, a member of Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati. He was a weaving master and teacher of Hindi in Gandhiji's school at Barharwa, Champaran

matter. But I am sure no one has a doubt that our aim is anything but truth. The Ashram is the sum-total of the character of us all. I wish, therefore, that every one of us has so high a character that the sum-total will be large enough. I keep a constant vigil to observe how far I live up to, or can live up to, the vow and I find many failings in me. I cannot tell whether I shall succeed in getting rid of them in this present life. Whatever shortcomings have developed in you or in the Ashram have come to be there solely because of me. I want you, therefore, to pray to God to free you and me of our failings and grant me success in my mission. I will strive to be worthy of the love you bear me and the veneration you show towards me. I pray to God that He may grant me the necessary strength. May you, too, succeed in doing your duty ! I pray that we, you and I, may be of help to one another. What else shall I say? Your devotion will not fail to have its reward. Go, therefore, and let each of you occupy himself or herself with his or her duty.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

219. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

October 2, 1918

CHI. HARILAL,

I have a feeling that I am now going. I have very little time left. The body is becoming weaker and weaker. I am not able to eat anything. But my heart is at peace and so I do not find the going at all difficult. I think whatever inheritance I am leaving to you brothers is appropriate. What would you have gained if I had left money? But the inheritance of character which I am leaving to you is invaluable in my view. I wish you to cherish it. Follow the path of religion. I have written a letter to Devdas.[1] Ask for a copy of it. If you think you can apply that letter to yourself, do so.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 11272. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] *Vide* the following item.

220. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM,

Bhadrapad, October 2, 1918

DEVDAS,

I have sent you a telegram today. It must have scared you. I want you not to be scared. I cannot expect you to have that degree of equanimity. My health, instead of improving, is steadily declining. I am not able to take any cereals. Taking only fruit cannot sustain the body and hence it must necessarily succumb. In that event, you must have forbearance and show the strength of a Kshatriya. If you keep me alive in your actions, you will be judged not as having loved the body but as having loved the soul. And then, you will have maintained a pure relationship with me. I have placed great hopes in you. Strengthen your character and follow the path of non-violence. Observe *brahmacharya* as far as possible. Proceed with your studies to the extent necessary and carry on my activities. Help Chi. Maganlal to the utmost. Consider Bhai Mahadev your elder. He will have much to give you. I have sent you the wire to come if you cannot hold yourself. But my advice is: stay where you are. That is the true test of your devotion. What more are you going to gain by coming here? What more service can I have from you? You are already rendering great service to me. But do as you think proper. Send copies of this letter to Manilal and Ramdas. I hope that they too will engage themselves in my work. My body has become like an old garment and that is why it is not at all difficult for me to discard it. I do not wish to acquire the burden of a new garment. But I do not think I have qualified myself to be freed of that burden. But the time is not past yet. That qualification can be acquired even in a moment.

May God bless you.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 11271. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

221. LETTER TO GANGABEHN MAJMUNDAR[1]

[AHMEDABAD,]
October 11, 1918

I read only today the postcard giving the news that you, Kiki and others have fallen ill. I was, however, glad to read that, by the grace of God, you were all improving. The bodies of those who have accepted the way of service should be as strong as steel. There was a time when our forefathers could thus harden their bodies. Today we have become pathetically weak and succumb to the innumerable poisonous germs in the atmosphere. The only way to escape from this, despite our fallen state, is self-control, moderation, call it what you will. It is the opinion of doctors, and they are right, that the body will run least risk if two things are attended to. Even after one feels that one has recovered from an illness, one should take only liquid and bland food easy to digest, and should continue to rest in bed. Many patients, deceived when the fever comes down on the second or third day, resume their work and start eating as usual. This brings on the attack again, and generally it proves fatal. I would, therefore, request you all to remain confined to bed. Write to me every day to give me news of your health. I am still in bed and will have to remain there for many days; but it can be said that my health is improving. The doctors have forbidden even writing letters; but how can I help writing to you? If you are inconvenienced there and want to come over here, by all means do. There are ten sick-beds in the Ashram just now, but the only serious case appears to be that of Shankarlal. Even he seems to have taken a turn for the better today.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] An enterprising widow who discovered for Gandhiji the old spinning wheel in Vijapur in the former Baroda State and started a khadi production centre there; *vide An Autobiography*.

222. LETTER TO THE PRESS : THE LATE A. M. KACHALIA[1]

October 20, 1918[2]

TO
THE EDITOR
THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE

SIR,

It is my mournful duty to bring to public notice another South African Indian whose death has been just cabled to me. He bore the honoured name of Ahmed Mahomed Kachalia. He was for a number of years President of the British Indian Association of the Transvaal. It was during the passive resistance campaign that Mr. Kachalia suddenly leapt to fame and acquired among the Indians of South Africa a prestige unequalled by any other Indian. It was on the 31st day of July 1907, under the shadow of a tree in the holy mosque of Pretoria, that Mr. Kachalia hurled defiance at the might of General Botha and his Government. Mr. Hosken[3] had brought a message from the General to be delivered to the great mass meeting that was held in the mosque compound, to the effect that in resisting the Transvaal Government, the Indians were breaking their heads against a stone. Mr. Kachalia was one of the speakers. As I am dictating these few words of humble tribute, his voice rings in my ears. He said:"In the name of Allah, I wish to state that though my head may be severed from the trunk, I shall never obey the Asiatic Registration Act. I consider it unmanly and dishonourable to subscribe to a law which virtually reduces me to slavery." And he was among the very few who never flinched through those long and weary eight years of untold sufferings. Mr. Kachalia was by no means amongst the least of the sufferers. He felt that as a leader his sacrifice should be striking, and that he should stop at nothing if thereby the honour of this country

[1] Also published in *Prajabandhu*, 27-10-1918, and *The Indian Review*, October, 1918

[2] A. M. Cachalia passed away on this date.

[3] William Hosken, M.L.A. (Transvaal) and ex-president of the Association of Chamber of Commerce of South Africa. He was sympathetic to the cause of British Indians; *vide* "The Transvaal Immigratopm Bill Debate", 20-7-1907; Johannesburg Letter", 31-12-1907 and ; Before 10-1-1908

might be saved. He reduced himself to poverty. He said goodbye to all the comforts of life towhich he was used, and night and day worked for a cause he held sacred. Naturally he acquired a wonderful hold over the Indian community throughout South Africa and his was a name to conjure with amongst them. As may be imagined, there were often disputes among Mahomedans and Hindus and other sections of the community. Mr. Kachalia held the scales even between the conflicting interests and everyone knew that his decisions would be absolutely just and sound. Mr. Kachalia was practically illiterate. He was a self-made man. But his common sense was of the rarest order. It always stood him in good stead and he was able to command the confidence and respect of many Europeans who came in contact with him.

The loss is irreparable and it would be doubly felt by the community, coming as it does, closely after Mr. Sorabji's death.[1] May God Almighty give this noble soul the rest and peace which, I am sure, he fully deserves.

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-10-1918

223. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

SABARMATI,
AHMEDABAD,
October 20, 1918

DEAR MR. SASTRIAR,

Though being on sick-bed, I cannot restrain myself from adding my own humble tribute to your own and other friends' to Dr. Deva's[2] memory. Both the society and the country have lost a true servant. Of all the members of the Society, it was with Dr. Deva that I came in closest touch and the more I knew him the more I loved him. If I may say so, Dr. Deva found fuller scope in Champaran for self-expression. There he was placed amid surroundings which tested all his great qualities including his medical knowledge. He never flinched

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Surat", 1-8-1918.

[2] Dr. Hari Shrikrishna Deva (died October 8, 1918); a Durbar surgeon of Sangli, he joined the Servants of India Society in 1914 and worked with Gandhiji in the Champaran campaign.

and never failed. Though he started his relations with the authorities and the planters with suspicion, he disarmed them at the end of his stay. The Sub-Divisional Officer at Bettiah with whom he came in close contact often told me that he likedDr. Deva for his selflessness and his devotion to his work. How could he do otherwise? For he was not only medical adviser to the helpless villagers but was his own dispenser. He took medicines to their homes. He attended to their sanitation. He bent his own body to clean the village wells, to fix up the village road. With Messrs Soman and Randive, in place of the burnt down grass-hut, which was used as school at Bhitiharwa, he raised in a few days' time, to the marvel of everybody, a pucca school building and, comparatively delicate though he was in body, he worked side by side with able-bodied villagers who, touched by his enthusiasm, responded to his call for help in building the school which was designed for their sake. What, however, is the pleasantest of all my experiences of Dr. Deva is the tribute Mr. Soman, a B.A., LL.B. of Belgaum, pays to his memory in a letter just received from him. He belongs to the Nationalists' school. He was one of the volunteers in Champaran. He is himself a staunch and true worker. He says in the letter that he approached Dr. Deva with a great deal of suspicion and distrust to his attitude towards the Nationalists, but he adds that"it did not take many days before the suspicion and mistrust gave place to perfect confidence and respect." Indeed they, retaining their own views to the end, became fast friends. Dr. Deva was never a fanatic. He had boundless charity in him, and therefore both had the rare gift of seeing the bright side of his opponent's case. The Society has certainly lost in him a fine collector and advertiser. He was a true man.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Servant of India, 31-10-1918

224. TELEGRAM TO VICEROY[1]

October 29, 1918

WHILST THE SABHA YIELDS TO NO ONE IN ITS DESIRE TO HELP THE PROSECUTION OF THE WAR IN EVERY POSSIBLE MANNER AND CONSIDERS THIS TO BE THE DUTY OF INDIA, WHICH ASPIRES TO EQUAL PARTNERSHIP WITH BRITAIN IN THE IMPERIAL FEDERATION, IT IS ITS DELIBERATE AND CONSIDERED OPINION THAT INDIA IS NOT ABLE TO ASSUME ANY FURTHER PECUNIARY BURDENS. IT IS THE CONFIRMED OPINION OF THE SABHA THAT THE DEEP AND EVER-DEEPENING POVERTY OF INDIA IS NOT FULLY REALIZED BY THE OFFICIALS. THE SABHA HAS THEREFORE UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTION PASSED AT THE IMPERIAL COUNCIL MEETING ON 10TH SEPTEMBER, IF CARRIED INTO EFFECT, IS SURE TO TELL HEAVILY UPON INDIA IN THE OPINION OF THE SABHA, THE BEST METHOD OF RECEIVING FURTHER FINANCIAL AID FROM INDIA IS TO DEPEND PURELY UPON NON-STATUTORY VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS. THE SABHA THEREFORE HOPES THAT ITS APPEAL NOT TO ENFORCE THE SAID RESOLUTION WILL RECEIVE FAVOURABLE RESPONSE OF THE GOVERNMENT.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-10-1918

[1] Sent by Gandhiji as president of the Gujarat Sabha

225. LETTER TO PUNDALIK

ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 29 [*1918*]

DEAR PUNDALIK,

Your letter was shown to Bapuji. It has not pleased him. He sends you the following message:

One comes across a variety of things in the world, but one is not required to get involved in every one of them. One ought only to concern oneself with things that are part of one's duty. A man who meddles with what is not his job is not prompted by any concern for the right—he is merely conceited. Your duty is only to impart instruction to children and to look after matters of hygiene and sanitation and you may not transgress its limits. Therefore your action in stopping the police and getting the cattle released was not right. It may be that they will not prosecute you for stopping the police, but not prosecuting you will only involve you in further trouble. It is well that you write to me about everything. Continue to write in this manner. But do not ever leave the field of school work to meddle with something else. Your duty is only that and nothing else, It is not right of you to be angry with the Saheb either. I hope you will be very cautious in your behaviour in future.

This is Mahatmaji's message. You will accept it with reverence. He would himself have written, but his hand and fingers have not the strength.

Kaka Saheb[1] is unwell today. It must be influenza.

Yours,

MAHADEV DESAI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5221

[1] Dattatraya Balkrishna Kalelkar was so called in the Ganganath Vidyalaya —a school in Baroda State where he served as a teacher before joining Gandhiji as a co-worker; *vide An Autobiography.*

226. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

[AHMEDABAD,]
October 31, 1918

I got your postcard. There is nothing particular to write about today. I am always thinking how you may come to be at peace with yourself, and remain so. If I could help you by any word of mine and if I knew that word, I would write it at once. I do not know whether you have understood what this world means, but I have the clearest vision of it every moment and I see it exactly as it has been described by the sages, and that so vividly that I feel no interest in it. Activity is inescapable so long as there is this body and, therefore, the only thing that pleases me is to be ever occupied with activity of the utmost purity. It is no exaggeration to say that I experience wave after wave of joy from the practice of self-restraint which such work requires. One will find true happiness in the measure that one understands this and lives accordingly. If this calamity[1] puts you in a frame of mind in which such happiness will be yours, we may even regard it as welcome. If your mind can ever disengage itself from its concerns, ponder over all this. We are all well. Those who were ill are all on the way to recovery—I too am doing well. I take it that you show all the letters to Ba and hence I do not write separately to her.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

227. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
November 5 [*1918*][2]

DEAR GURUDEV,

Charlie left the Ashram yesterday and we are the poorer for his absence. I very much miss his sunny face. You will therefore understand what I mean when I tell you how deeply grateful I feel for

[1] A reference to the recent death of the addressee's wife

[2] During the years 1918 to 1921 it was only in 1918 that Gandhiji was at the Ashram on November 5.

your having allowed him to pass a few days at the Ashram.

I hope you are keeping good health under the heavy strain which the school work in Shantiniketan places upon yon.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm of the original. Courtesy: National Archives of India

228. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

November 5, 1918

DEAR MR. SHASTRIAR,

I thank you for your note and I fully appreciate and understand the spirit that has prompted it. I assure you that I take the greatest possible care I can of my health. It is no joke for a man who has rarely been laid up in bed to have more than three months' experience of it. And if my sickness is still further prolonged, it will be due to my ignorance or folly, or both. I cannot ascribe any relapse to want of skill or attention of medical friends. They are helpless by reason of what to them are my crankisms. But they have become part of myself and give me the greatest comfort and joy even when I am suffering excruciating pain. Here is an extract about the late Dr. Deva from a letter from the Rev. F. Z. Hodge of Motihari. He is a missionary of exceptional independence and liberal thought. I hope you are keeping well or rather as well as you can under the strain that exacting public work imposes upon you.

Yours,

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

229. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM,

Kartik Sud 2 [*November 5, 1918*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I hope you are well. I feel I am regaining strength. Do you know Jamnalalji? Once or twice he came to see me at

[1] It appears from the contents that this letter was written after the one to the addressee dated September 24, 1918.

Revashankarbhai's[1] place, and it is my impression that you were present. He will co-operate fully in the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan work. Please see him. We must now start the work immediately. Swami Satyadevji[2] is also there at present and will be there for another two days. He will proceed to Madras on Thursday night. Keep me informed of whatever you may be doing.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

230. DRAFT TELEGRAM TO H. S. L. POLAK

November 9, 1918

POLAK
CARE IMMORTAL
BOMBAY

GO AFRICA IF WISH. BUT POSSIBILITY SHIPPING DIFFICULTY THERE. UNDESIRABLE HERE BEFORE SPRING. CONSULT FULLY.

GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 10955. Courtesy: Not known

231. MESSAGE ON OPENING SWADESHI STORE[3]

November 14, 1918

Being bed-ridden, I am unable to be present, but my spirit is there, of course. If you have faith in swadeshi goods, it is bound to bear fruit. If our love for the country is sincere, we just cannot use foreign goods. I should like the store to be on a larger scale still. The country will prosper only when the people cultivate the spirit of swadeshi with religious devotion.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 17-11-1918

[1] Revashankar Jagjivan Jhaveri
[2] Swami Satyadev Parivrajak
[3] Gujarat Swadeshi Store at Ahmedabad

232. MESSAGE TO FIRST RAILWAY CONFERENCE[1]

[Before *November 16, 1918*]

I am sorry that, not being well, I am unable to be present. Improvement on railways falls under two heads: one, securing relief from the Government and, two, removing the ignorance of passengers. The key to swaraj lies in self-help.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 24-11-1918

233. LETTER TO PUNDALIK

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
November 17 [*1918*]

DEAR PUNDALIK,

Gandhiji has received your letter. He has also read all your letters to Kaka Saheb. He thinks that you should calmly wait and watch and go on working with your mind unperturbed. Whatever has to be done about you will be done by Babu Brajkishore[2] and Babu Rajendra Prasad[3]. Letters have been written to them from here. You also should see Gorakh Babu[4] and keep both of them informed. It has been decided to put up a strong defence on your behalf. It will not be proper to write to the Government about you just yet.

Yours,

MAHADEV DESAI
(Under Gandhiji's direction)

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5219

[1] Held in Nadiad, along with the Gujarat Political Conference

[2] Prasad, advocate of Darbhanga; member, Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council; active co-worker of Gandhiji in Champaran

[3] 1884-1963; statesman and scholar; chairman Constituent Assembly of India, 1946-9; President of India, 1950-62

[4] Gorakh Prasad (1869-1962); a pleader of Motihari; for some time host of Gandhiji in Champaran

234. LETTER TO MAHOMED ALI

THE ASHRAM,

November 18, 1918

MY DEAR FRIEND,

It was a perfect delight to receive a letter from you after ages as it were. The letters from you all are evidence of your great affection for me for which I am deeply grateful and if, as some return for it, I could strain the letter of my vow and do what you suggest I should gladly do so. But there is no getting out of the self-imposed restraint. I should be false to God and man and to myself if I disregarded the vow taken after the fullest deliberation and in anticipation of all the consequences that have followed it. All my usefulness will be entirely gone if yielding to so many friends' advice I reconsider my position. I regard this sickness as a time of trial and temptation for me, and what I need is the prayerful support and encouragement of friends. I assure you that within the four corners of the restriction I take every precaution possible in order to preserve the body. Just now a medical friend has appeared on the scene who has undertaken to give me physical strength by massage, ice application and deep breathing. He thinks that in two months' time I shall have put on sufficient flesh and weight to be able to move out and undertake ordinary mental strain. His treatment is rational and natural. What is more, I have confidence in it and with proper dietetic changes I do hope that the friend's prophecy will be fulfilled. I have had the charges against you read to me. I have never read a weaker or flimsier indictment and think that your reply will be decisive, straight and dignified. It is evident to me that the Committee has been appointed to furnish the Government with anescape. Anyway we can now contemplate the findings of the Com-mittee with complete indifference. Your defence is so overwhelmingly strong that if the Committee's finding is hostile an agitation can be raised which will make India resound with indignation over the monstrous injustice under which you have laboured so long and so patiently. I wish I was with you in Chhindwara to assist in drawing up your reply, but that was not to be.

Please give my respects to Amma Saheb. I am pining to meet you all and to meet the children and to come in closer touch with you. As I said at the Lucknow meeting, my interest in your release is quite

selfish. We have a common goal and I want to utilize your services to the uttermost, in order to reach that goal. In the proper solution of the Mahomedan question lies the realization of swaraj. However, of this when we meet, as I hope we shall soon do.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai; also N.A.I.: Home: Political (Deposit): December, 1918: No. 3

235. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

November 18, 1918

DEAR SISTER,

I appreciated your little note. I observe that you have survived the operation. I hope that it will be entirely successful, so that India may for many a year to come continue to hear your songs. For me I do not know when I shall be able to leave this sick-bed of mine. Somehow or other, I cannot put on flesh and gain more strength than I have. I am making a mighty attack. The doctors of course despair in face of the self-imposed restrictions under which I am labouring. I assure you that they have been my greatest consolation during this protracted illness. I have no desire whatsoever to live upon condition of breaking those disciplinary and invigorating restrictions. For me, although they restrict the body somewhat, they free the soul and they give me a consciousness of it which I should not otherwise possess."You can't serve God and Mammon" has a clearer and deeper meaning for me after those vows. I do not infer that they are necessary for all, but they are for me. If I broke them I feel that I should be perfectly worthless. Do let me have an occasional line from you.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

236. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Kartak Vad 5 [*November 23, 1918*][1]

BHAISHRI HARILAL,

I have your letter and the translation. I am still confined to bed. But I have gone through your corrections. Once again I have to hurt you. If I had been satisfied with your corrections, I would not have been so impudent as to reject the translation after it was printed. But I withheld the publication of your translation only when I was convinced that your translation needed drastic changes. It still retains what appear to me to be mistakes. My complaint is that the translation cannot pass as good Gujarati. This defect remains even after your corrections. Lest I be unfair to you even unwittingly, I placed the translation before the teachers. They went through it carefully and expressed the view that the Gujarati of the translation did not do justice to the original, that it did not convey the strict sense of the original, and the language appeared clumsy. While they were going through the translation, an inmate of the Ashram having only passable familiarity with Gujarati was sitting by. He was not aware of what the teachers were doing. But when he heard the translation, he commented that he was not able to follow the Gujarati language. Under these circumstances it seems only proper not to take the risk of publishing the translation as it is. I had hoped that you would discard your translation and do it afresh. Instead of going over the same translation thrice, if you had laboured as much over a fresh translation, both of us would have been satisfied. But how could you do a fresh translation so long as you do not see the faults that we see in your translation?

I am returning you translation. After I recover, if you can spend a few days at the Ashram, we shall go over the translation together and I shall give my comments. I naturally wish that you should be able to see the faults in it.

I felt sad for a moment when I learnt that your family were afflicted with influenza and there was even a death. But such news is pouring in from everywhere so that now the mind is hardly affected.

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 19990

[1] The year has been inferred from the reference to Gandhiji's illness.

237. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

[AHMEDABAD,]
November 26, 1918

CHI. HARILAL,

I gave you some news about myself yesterday. I give you more today. My health is both good and bad. I feel that the improvement which should have taken place in some respects has not come about. I cannot complain about food now. Everyone says that it would be better for me to go out for some time, and I also think I should. I have been, therefore, thinking of doing so, and am making arrangements. It will be good if you come over before I leave. Whatever you wish to say, you may pour out before me without any hesitation. If you cannot give vent to your feelings before me, before whom else can you do so? I shall be a true friend to you. What would it matter if there should be any difference of opinion between us about any scheme of yours? We shall have a quiet talk. The final decision will rest with you. I fully realize that your state at present is like that of a man dreaming. Your responsibilities have increased, your trials have increased and your temptations will increase likewise. To a man with a family, the fact of being such, that is, having a wife, is a great check. This check over you has disappeared.[1] Two paths branch out from where you stand now. You have to decide which you will take. There is a *bhajan* we often sing in the Ashram; its first line runs: *Nirbalke bala Rama*.[2]

One cannot pray to God for help in a spirit of pride but only if one confesses oneself as helpless. As I lie in bed, every day I realize how insignificant we are, how very full of attachments and aversions, and what evil desires sway us. Often I am filled with shame by the unworthiness of my mind. Many a time I fall intodespair because of the attention my body craves and wish that it should perish. From my condition, I can very well judge that of others. I shall give you the full benefit of my experience; you may accept what you can. All this after you come.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

[1] Harilal had lost his wife some time ago.

[2] Refrain of Surdas's famous hymn, "He is the help of the helpless, the strength of the weak."

238. REPLIES TO QUESTIONS ON MONTAGU-CHELMSFORD SCHEME

[*December, 1918*]

In the *Hindustan*, a Gujarati daily published at Bombay, a writer has addressed the following open questions to Mahatma Gandhi:

(I) On behalf of Gujarat you sent a monster petition[1] to Mr. Montagu in which you asked for certain rights for India. Does the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme fall short of those rights or not?

(2) If it does fall short, why is it that you did not attend the special Congress[2] to support the demand for granting these rights?

(3) If you believe that the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme satisfies the Indian public, why did you not attend the Moderate Conference[3]?

To those questions, Mr. Gandhi has sent the following replies:

(I) All the rights asked for in the Congress-League Scheme[4] are *not* conceded in the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme.

(2) I did not attend the Special Congress, because I had differences of opinion on certain principles with the leaders and under such circumstances I thought it improper to place my views from the Congress platform. As I did not want to convey even my dumb acceptance of the matters in dispute, I chose to remain absent.

(3) Just as I had differences of opinion on principles with the Extremist leaders, so I had differences with the Moderate leaders also. And so I thought it proper not to attend their Conference, too.

Here I cannot enter into discussion as to what is my difference of opinion on the principles, because that is acomplicated subject. That I am on sick-bed is sufficient reason for my refusing discussion about my personal opinion.

The Indian Review, December, 1918 quoting *The New Times*

[1] *Vide* "Petition to E. S. Montagu", before 13-9-1917.

[2] The special session of the Indian National Congress held at Bombay in August-September, 1918, under the presidentship of Syed Hasan Imam

[3] Of November, 1918

[4] Of 1916

239. TELEGRAM TO MILL-HANDS AT MADRAS[1]

[*December 2*,] *1918*

NOT YET OUT OF BED, THOUGH RECOVERING. THEREFORE UNABLE TO COME TO MADRAS OR OTHERWISE HELP MILL-HANDS.

M. K. GANDHI

The Bengalee, 4-12-1918

240. LETTER TO INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS[2]

December 26, 1918

I regret being unable to attend the Congress this time. My health is too poor. I hope delegates from both sides will be there at the Congress. I pray to God that the Congress may succeed in its labours.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Pratap, 30-12-1918

[1] This was read out on the evening of December 2 at the meeting of Mill-Hands held under the auspices of the Madras Labour Union Employment Bureau.

[2] Substance of a letter read out at the Delhi session of the Indian National Congress by Madan Mohan Malaviya.

241. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

C/O REVASHANKAR JAGJIVAN, LABURNUM ROAD,
GOREGAUM,
BOMBAY,
December 29 [*1918*][1]

MY DEAR MILLIE,

I can still write with great difficulty. I have to move my pen like a schoolboy. This is there to send X'mas greetings and all good wishes for the next year. I expect you in Bombay before long. I am possibly making a little progress. I have had so many setbacks that I do not now predict anything. I simply wait upon God, making every attempt to get better and then trusting Him to the uttermost.

With love,

Yours,

BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

242. LETTER TO COLLECTOR OF CHAMPARAN[2]

SABARMATI,
[*1918*]

As Mr. Pundalik who is in charge of the school at Bhitiharwa tells me that he is being often questioned about hisrepresentative character and his activity, I write this to say that Mr. Pundalik represents me and has been selected by me for the work he is doing on the recommendation of Dr. Deva of the Servants of India Society. He is a voluntary unpaid worker.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G N. 5220

[1] From "Bombay, December 29" in the date-line as also from the reference to Gandhiji's ill-health; *vide* "Telegram to Mill-Hands at Madras", 2-12-1918 to "Letter to Maganlal Mehta", 10-1-1919.

[2] Quoted by Mahadev Desai in letter to Pundalik in Hindi which stated: "Your letters continue to come. You should go on working steadfastly. Mahatmaji has sent to the Collector the following letter about you."

243. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

MARWAR JUNCTION,
Tuesday [*1918*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I heard that some thieves had attempted to steal things from the room. Someone should be asked to sleep in the verandah. I sent Lallubhai last night. It would be a good arrangement to send him and some others with him. Put away all anxiety and work on with faith and courage.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5714. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

244. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

BOMBAY,
1918

MY DEAR ESTHER [1],

This is my first attempt to write after the relapse.

Though I am not quite clear about your course of duty, I suppose it is as well that you responded to Mr. Andrews' appeal[2]. I myself doubt the utility of your going there. Your letters to follow will make this point clear. I am very, very sorry that you are not at the Ashram, during this long vacation. The enforced separation however brings you closer to the Ashram.

You will be glad to hear that I daily wear the vests made by you. They are a perpetual reminder of your long service. I am feeling better for the last two days but no progress like this can be considered reliable until it lasts a fortnight or so.

More from Mahadev.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

My Dear Child, p. 31

[1] A member of the staff of the Danish Missionary Society in South India. She had visited Sabarmati Ashram as a preparation for her educational work.

[2] That Esther Faering should work at Shantiniketan

245. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

January 6, 1919

I suppose I must get used to having ups and downs and not feel any the worse for them, because it appears that before I have done with this protracted illness I am likely still to have many ups and downs. Just at the present moment I seem to be all right. The hypodermic injections to which I thought I must reconcile myself are producing the expected results. They are intended to whet my appetite and I must confess that my food today is the envy of a gourmand, both as to quantity and quality. But no one knows when I may have a set-back. I dare say a careful observer could even cast a table and prognosticate the next relapse and the others to follow. I am under the hands of a very eminent doctor. He wants to give 15 injections out of which he has given four. The prospect before me is therefore by no means very pleasant and the needle-pricks are decidedly unpleasant. What are we not prepared to bear in order that we may live?

I observe that the Bishop of Calcutta is dead. It must be a great wrench for you, but I suppose it is well that he is free from pain. So far as my convenience is concerned your having sent Miss Faering to Bolpur was all right. But I did consider your action impulsive. As you assure me that she entirely filled your place I can have nothing more to say. But I felt upon Miss Faering's letter that she could not very well take the higher English classes, or for that matter, even the lower classes at Shantiniketan. I suppose there is nothing insurm ountable for one possessing the faith that Miss Faering does abundantly and she has succeeded where thousands would have failed. Has she taken her discharge from the Danish Mission, because you talk of her coming to me after her finishing Bolpur. If she has got her discharge without causing any bad feeling, it is a great thing. I am in Bombay at least up to the 15th. I shall then have to consider the propriety of my going to Colombo. You need not worry about my election as a Congress delegate. I have not come to any final conclusion. When the actuality faces me, I know that the way will be as clear to me as the blue skies. I am, therefore,"careful for nothing". I am not anxious to go as a deputee, but I shall not avoid the task if I must perform it. I hope you are doing well.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

246. LETTER TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

[BOMBAY,]
January 9, 1919

My health, like the moon, has its phases; it waxes and it wanes; only it jumps the new moon day. The pain caused by piles has disappeared completely, but I have no appetite and feel weak in the body and to that extent the illness persists.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

247. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Wednesday, [*After January 9, 1919*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. It cannot be concluded that because the goat is a restless animal,the person who drinks goat's milk will also become restless.

I am already taking milk twice a day. If I do so three times a day, it will only give me loose motions. Putting soda into curd certainly changes its properties.

I do not have rheumatism at all. But many people have pain in the joints from exhaustion. Such is the case with me. But now the pain is very much reduced. Had it been due to rheumatism it would have become aggravated rather than subsided. The reason why I am writing all this is that you should learn to come to correct conclusions. Many people draw incomplete conclusions. It is like one-sided judgement. Do you understand?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Ask Reench if he remembers me.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 3728

[1] From the reference to consumption of goat's milk which Gandhiji began from January 9, 1919; *vide* also "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 10-1-1919, "Letter to Narhari Parikh", 21-1-1919 and"Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 5-2-1919.

248. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[BOMBAY,]

January 10, 1919

These days, I have been thinking so much about all sorts of things that I often feel a strong urge to share some of my thoughts with you all. But, thanks to physical weakness and mental torpor, I can neither write nor dictate. Today I cannot help dictating. In the changes I am making at present, my *atman* bears witness that I am showing no weakness. I am making them with a detached mind and out of my strength, *the main purpose being to satisfy all of you and the other friends*. I simply cannot bear to look at Ba's face. The expression is often like that on the face of a meek cow and gives one the feeling, as a cow occasionally does, that in her own dumb man-ner she was saying something. I see, too, that there is selfishness in this suffering of hers; even so, her gentleness overpowers me and I feel inclined to relax in all matters in which I possibly may. Only four days ago, she was making herself miserable about milk, and, on the - impulse of the moment, asked me why, if I might not take cow's milk, I would not take goat's milk. This went home. When I took the vow, I was not thinking of the goat at all. I knew nothing, then, about the use of goat's milk and it was not a goat's suffering which was so vividly before my mind. My vow related only to cow's milk. I was not thinking about the buffalo either. But taking buffalo's milk would kill my chief aim [in taking the vow]. It was different with goat's milk, and I felt I could relieve friends of much of their concern. I, therefore, decided to take goat's milk. Though, from one point of view, my vow does not retain its full value, now that I know all about goat's milk, it does not lose its value altogether. Be that as it may, I am glad the thing is over and done with, for friends' agony was increasing day by day and Dr. Mehta kept bombarding me with telegrams. There is no difference between cow's milk and goat's milk, if the goat is well looked after. It is even on record that in England the goat's milk is richer than the cow's. The milk from our goats is considered lighter, but this is an advantage rather than otherwise. Be the fact of the matter what it is, I have done all I could. I even let the doctor to inject arsenic, strychnine and iron. If my health does not come round after all this, we certainly cannot say that it will if I give up the vow [restricting me to the use] of no more than five articles [a day]. No one, therefore, has anything now to complain of. We shall have to be patient and watch what effect all these changes have. Though I have allowed myself this

freedom, my conscience does not, for a single moment, cease asking me,"Why all this labour?","What would you do with life?","What is it you would so much exert yourself to reform?" When I think of the plight of Germany's Kaiser, I feel as if a great Being were playing with us as we play with cowries. We are infinitely smaller, in relation to the globe on which we move, than the ants moving on a ball are in relation to that ball and like them, ever ignorant, we press forward and get crushed. Despite such thoughts, I have not even a moment's doubt about our duty. We cannot cease wholly from activity and, therefore, everything we do must tend to *paramartha*[1]. A man so active can attain the most perfect peace. In the Ashram, too, we must undertake such activity. Do what you think best in regard to the suggestion you have received about sowing *jowar*, and about weaving. Let me know what you do. And remember that you can engage a servant for the kitchen, if you feel the need.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. IV

249. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

January 10, 1919

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

So you have been suffering from influenza. To me the marvel is that you can keep so well in spite of incessant wanderings. But I suppose God protects those whom He wants to use as His instruments, especially when they let Him do the guiding without any opposition. I therefore entertain no anxiety on your behalf. I feel certain that you may have all the strength you need for your mission. For me, I am still going through ups and downs. I am not clear, as you seem to be, about the desirability of my going to England, either for the public work I may be able to do, or for the sake of my health. I am, however, gradually feeling my way and taking it step by step.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] The highest good

250. LETTER TO SWAMI SATYADEV

BOMBAY,
January 10, [*1919*][1]

अव्यवस्थितचित्तस्यप्रसादोऽपि भयंकर:[2]

SWAMI SATYADEVJI,

I have dictated the above *shloka* with great sorrow. Your letters have startled me. A learned and experienced person like you cannot give up any work after having started it. Devdas is a child. He does not want to leave me till he is absolutely sure about my health. I cannot make him give up this sacred feeling by coercion. Nor do I want to. I firmly believe that whatever my state of health, Devdas should be in Madras. But Devdas does not think so. He believes that so long as there is the slightest doubt about my health, his duty is to be with me. What I can I tell him? Even so, there was much argument with him today and Devdas has agreed that if your reply, which he is awaiting, is not satisfactory, he will leave this place and go to Madras. I shall hope that you will not give up your work in Madras any time. I would like to believe that the letters you have written me are only an expression of your anger. You must give up the anger and be calm. That is my prayer.

My health continues to have ups and downs.[3] There is no cause for worry. I do have the confidence that even if I do not keep perfect health, there cannot be any sudden decline either. I have now agreed to take goat's milk. Hence there is every chance of my regaining health quickly.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11909

[1] From the reference in the text to Devdas's work in Madras and to Gandhiji's agreeing to take goat's milk, which he started in 1919

[2] 'Coming from one with a disturbed mind even a boon is frightening.'

[3] Gandhiji had been suffering from piles.

251. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

BOMBAY,

Paush Sud 15 [*January 16, 1919*][1]

CHI. RAMDAS[2],

After some days I am again trying to write you. I am still unable to write,[3] but l feel like writing to you and so am writing this. You complain about absence of letters from me, but I have been regular in dictating letters to you. There is so much confusion on the steamship that sometimes letters even get lost in transit. Just as some others did not get the letters I wrote to them, you also may not have got them. It is not right, whenever you fail to get a letter from me, to assume that I must have been displeased by something you did or wrote. It is not in my nature to get hurt over such things. Moreover, you have done or said nothing which might have displeased me.

I have no doubt in my mind that Manilal has been working hard, and for the present you should continue to help him. He will be able to raise the level of *I.O.* gradually. If you have confidence in your ability to write on your own, you may do so. Only one thing is required for it, and that is knowledge of facts. If you know anything about agriculture, do write a good article on that subject. Many aspiring writers who have no grasp of the subject they write on, are foolhardy enough to try to write on it and fail in their attempt. If you master an easy subject and begin writing on it, you are sure to succeed. You could have written a vivid account of the passing away of Sheth Cachalia[4]. If you start writing that way, you will get trained and will be able, by and by, to write very well. When Mr. Polak[5] joined me, his writings were dull and too long. After about four months' experience, he was able to write better and by the end of the year, had made excellent progress. Your great misfortune is that you lack

[1]As suggested in the source. Also *vide* "Fragment of Letter to Ramdas Gandhi", 16-1-1919 where the 2nd para of this letter is already reproduced under the same date.

[2] Ramdas was at this time in Natal on the Phoenix Farm with Manilal.

[3] Gandhiji had been ailing for a long time and had to finally undergo an operation for piles on January 20, 1919.

[4] Sheth Ahmed Mohomed Cachalia who had died in South Africa on October 20, 1918

[5] H.S.L. Polak

confidence in your ability. There is no reason at all for you to believe that you have no brains. If only you cultivate interest in reading and writing, you have ability enough to do both.[1]

My health seems to be improving. I have started taking goat's milk[2]. That seems to be doing me much good. I must be daily drinking about four and a half seers of it. Besides drinking milk, I eat some dry fruits and rice twice every day. If I can digest the quantity of milk I am taking, my weight is likely to increase very fast.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

252. LETTER TO HARILAL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Pause Krishna Chaturdashi [*January 20, 1919*][3]

BHAISHRI,

The tragedy that has befallen you distresses me. We are so eager to live that the moment of death, particularly that of a dear one, always frightens us. I have often felt that it is at such a moment that we are truly tested. Anyone even the least little bit aware of the *atman* is able to understand the nature of death. It is futile to mourn. These thoughts are not new but if someone voices them in times of trouble, they console us. It is with that purpose in mind that I write this.

I wish you not to be distressed at all over the translation. Your translation does not give the impression that you have rushed through it anyhow; but only a few display the love that one should feel for one's mother tongue. I notice in your translation the mistakes that everybody commits. I am sure you will notice them now that I have pointed them out . . .[4] Unfortunately, I noticed the translation after the

[1] This para is already reproduced in "Fragment of Letter to Ramdas Gandhi", 16-1-1919.

[2] Gandhiji started this on January 9, 1919

[3] It appears from the contents that this letter was written after the one preceding it. *Paush Krishna Chaturdashi* corresponded to January 20 in 1919.

[4] Omission as in the source

whole of it had already been printed. I urge you to do the translation afresh instead of revising what you have done. It will not take much time and the translation will be readable.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 19991

253. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

[BOMBAY,]
January 21, 1919

BHAISHRI NARAHARI[1],

It is 12.30 a.m. just now. I got the piles removed yesterday. When I had suffered enough, I was given morphia by injection. I felt drowsy in consequence and fell asleep. I slept from 2 p.m. onwards and have just awakened, at midnight. Hence the mind is calm, and I am not likely to get sleep again for some time. Besides, it is Mahadev's turn to watch, and therefore, feeling inclined to write to you, I am dictating this letter.

Everyone hopes that after the operation I shall be free of piles for good. If that happens, my health is likely to improve very fast. I shall have to remain here for at least a month, and then, before going elsewhere, I shall first visit the Ashram. No one, I beg, should worry about my health.

I was very glad to read your criticism[2] of the freedom I have allowed myself in regard to milk. If any person feels that a friend of his has shown weakness, through illness maybe, or for any other reason, it is his duty to draw the friend's attention to the weakness he has observed. A man is under so strong a temptation to fall, and Nature herself has made it so very easy for him to indulge in self-deception, that even a vigilant person, if he is weak, or if his abstinences lack the genuine spirit of renunciation, is sure to fall. Therefore, as I have said above, friends must keep an eye on one another and I wish that all of you maintain such watch ever so thoroughly. It is in this that our elevation lies, yours and mine. Before making any great change, I invariably consult Mahadev at any rate,

[1] Co-worker of Gandhiji

[2] Which, in the letter to Mahadev Desai, as quoted in *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, was: "We are all happy that you have started taking goat's milk. But strength lies in giving up the vow straightaway instead of putting new constructions upon it in this manner and violating it gradually."

but I have always felt that, because of his boundless love for me, he is incapable of noting any shortcomings in me and that, when he does, he condones them. I do not, therefore, get full benefit out of my consultations with him. Had you made your remarks in your letter to me, I would have felt happier. I am sure of this, at any rate, that when friends place the argument on the other side, I understand it very well because I take an entirely detached view. That is why I feel that, whenever we do not think alike, you should all come out with your disagreement immediately. That will not disturb me very much; rather, I shall be free from the unhappy position of having to be my own judge. Personally, I feel convinced that I have fully succeeded in observing my vows with the utmost strictness. I deliberated for twenty-four hours before I commenced taking goat's milk; I would even say that, whenever I have allowed myself any freedom, there have always been strong reasons for doing so. I am not at all anxious to live on and, though more than five months have elapsed since I fell ill, this indifference of mine remains. When I took the vow of not taking milk, I had, or could have, no thought in my mind of any milk other than that of the cow or the buffalo. I had considered the matter very carefully when I took the vow to refrain from milk. I was painfully aware of the ill-treatment of cows and buffaloes[1] and that was the reason for my taking the vow concerning milk. What is my duty in the present circumstances? Should I accept the natural meaning that suggests itself or the one that is drawn out with much hair-splitting? It appears to me that I should allow myself as much freedom as is consistent with a very liberal construction of my vows. I will not admit that, through the freedom I have allowed myself, I am in any way violating my vow, even on the strictest view of it. The medical experiment [of a milkless diet] I was making may indeed receive a great setback, but an experiment in medical science is no affair of the spirit. The ideal of self-control and the spiritual intention behind the renunciation of milk have remained quite unaffected. With the passing of days, friends become more insistent. Dr. Mehta goes on sending telegrams. Thousands of other Indians areextremelyagitated over my illness. Though Ba is not always weeping and grieving over my illness, yet I know that her soul is in torment. What should I do under such circumstances? The question can have only one answer. Without detracting ever so little from my vow, I should adopt a liberal attitude

[1] *Vide An Autobiography,* Part V, Ch. XXIX.

wherever possible and allow myself some freedom. I shall stop here today. There are many other arguments, but I have placed only the main one before you. If my argument does not satisfy you, and if you still see weakness in my action, do let me have your criticism. If you do so, moreover, after consulting others, I shall be happy indeed. Even if your criticism appears just to me, for the present I shall continue taking milk. Do not, therefore, hesitate out of fear that I might give it up.

I am very glad that you teach Manibehn[1] with care. If we could place all our women in the forefront, we would produce big results.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

254. LETTER TO BALI

January 21, 1919

CHI. BALI[2],

I have your letter. My health continues to be so-so. For four days I suffered torments because of piles. Yesterday the doctor operated upon them, so now I shall know whether I get relief. The children are enjoying themselves. The day before yesterday, we allowed them to go with Kumi[3]. We don't allow them to go at night and sleep at her place. There was a letter from Harilal in which he says that the place where the children sleep should not be changed. You both feel very unhappy because I cannot make arrangements for the children as desired by you; all the same, I feel constrained to refuse to send the children over to you, even if I have to be cruel in the process. It is absolutely necessary for them not to have to change the place too often. A tutor has also been engaged to teach them from tomorrow. As a result of the treatment being given to Manu[4], she is growing fast. And the same about Rami[5]. Under these circumstances, if you consider merely the interests of the children, you will not insist on having them sent over to you. I should like you, instead, once in a month or two, or three at the longest, to go to Sabarmati, stay in the

[1] Addressee's wife

[2] Sister-in-law of Harilal Gandhi

[3] *ibid*

[4] Harilal's daughters

[5] Harilal's mother-in-law

Ashram and be happy with the children. That I shall have your company will be an additional advantage. The passing away of both Chhabalbhabhi[1] and Chanchal has been a great blow to you. If it were in any way possible, I would take your suffering on myself and see that you were free from the suffering which you have gone through in your life. You are like a daughter to me and may, therefore, write with the utmost freedom. Do write now and then. Ba sends you her blessings.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

255. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING[2]

BOMBAY

January 25, 1919

MY DEAR ESTHER,

I shall try to answer your very very pertinent question as fully as possible. A vow is nothing but a fixed resolution to do or abstain from doing a particular thing. During the self-denial week, the members of the Salvation Army take a vow to abstain from taking jam or other eatable for a fixed period. During Lent, the Roman Catholics undergo certain privations. That is also a vow. In each case, the result expected is the same, viz., purification and expression of the soul. By these resolutions, you bring the body under subjection. Body is matter, soul is spirit, and there is internal conflict between matter and spirit. Triumph of matter over the spirit means destruction of the latter. It is common knowledge that [this is] in the same proportion that we indulge the body or mortify the soul. Body or matter has undoubtedly its uses. The spirit can express itself only through matter

[1] In reply to the following letter from Esther Faering: "Do we take a vow in order to help and strengthen our character? Does God require us to take any kind of vows? Can a vow not become fatal? I do ask you Bapu in all reverence because I desire to get more light over this question. I believe that God suffers because you now are suffering, Bapu, although you suffer with joy. But if God is a father, and if God is perfect love, does it not then cause suffering to Him when His children take burden upon them, which they are not asked to carry? If you could explain [to] me the deeper meaning of the vow it might help me in my own life."

[2] Organization for religious philanthropic work founded by William Booth in 1880

or body. But that result can be obtained only when the body is used as an instrument for the uplifting of the soul. The vast majority of the human family do not use the body in that manner. The result is triumph of the body or matter over the spirit or the soul. We who know the soul to be imperishable living in a body which ever changes its substance and is perishable must by making fixed resolutions bring our bodies under such control that finally we may be able to use them for the fullest service of the soul. This idea is fairly clearly brought out in the New Testament. But I have seen it nowhere explained as fully and clearly as in the Hindu scriptures. You will find this law of self-denial written in every page of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. Have you read these two books? If not, you should one of these days read them carefully and with the eye of faith. There is a great deal of fabulous matter about these two books. They are designed for the masses and the authors have deliberately chosen to write them in a manner that would make them acceptable to the people. They have hit upon the easiest method of carrying the truth to the millions, and experience of ages shows that they have been marvellously successful. If I have not made myself sufficiently understood or written convincingly, please tell me so and I shall endeavour again. I have undergone an operation. Today is the sixth day. I do not know whether it is a successful operation. It was performed by an eminent surgeon[1]. He is undoubtedly a very careful man, It would be no fault of his if I have to continue to suffer pain in spite of the operation.

With love,

Ever yours,

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Dr. Dalal

256. GOKHALE'S MISSION OF SERVICE[1]

[*January 27, 1919*]

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale's work in connection with the issue of indenture reveals his single-minded devotion better than his other activities do. His tour of South Africa[2] and the agitation he subsequently carried on in India give us a very good idea of his ability to identify himself with the work on hand. It is because of this ability of his that I have often said that one could see an underlying religious impulse in all his work.

Let us go over his work in South Africa in some detail. When he announced his intention of paying a visit to South Africa, there was a commotion in the official circles in India. What would happen if a man like Gokhale should be insulted in South Africa? Should he not drop the idea? But there was no one who could muster courage to suggest this to him. While yet in England, Gokhale had a foretaste of what he might expect in South Africa. He asked for a ticket but the officials of the *Union Castle* company would not oblige. The report reached India Office. The latter issued premptory instructions to Sir Owen Tudor, manager of the company, that Gokhale should be treated with the respect due to hisstatus. In the event, Gokhale was able to go on the ship like an honoured guest. He told me, when describing the incident:"I was not very particular about respect to me as an individual, but the honour of my nation is dear to me as my very life and, since I was going on this occasion in my public capacity, I felt that any insult to me would be an insult to India, and hence I tried to secure for me facilities in keeping with my status." The wiser for this incident, India Office had seen to it through the Colonial Office that Gokhale should also be properly received in South Africa and the Union Government had made advance arrangements for the purpose. They kept a saloon ready for him and also provided a cook to accompany him on his tour. An officer was detailed to look after him. The Indian community, on its part, had made arrangements to accord him more than royal honours. Gokhale accepted the Union Government's hospitality only in Pretoria, capital of the Union. Everywhere else, he

[1] The original has, literally, *mantra* of service.

[2] Gokhale visited South Africa in October-November, 1912.

was the guest of the Indian community. The moment he arrived in Cape Town, he took up a careful study of the South African issue. Even the general information on the subject with which he arrived in Cape Town was of no mean order, but that was not enough to satisfy him. During his four weeks' stay in South Africa, he went so deep into the question of Indians there, that everyone who met him was surprised by the vastness of his knowledge. When he was to meet Generals Botha and Smuts, so numerous were the notes he wanted to be prepared that I wondered why he would take all that trouble. He was in indifferent health all the time and needed the utmost care. Despite this, he would keep awake working till midnight, and get up again at four o'clock in the morning and ask for papers. In the result, the meeting he had with Generals Botha and Smuts led ultimately to the satyagraha campaign for the repeal of the £3 tax on the indentured labourers. This tax had been imposed, since 1893, on the labourers whose indenture had expired and on their wives and children. If any labourer did not wish to pay the tax, he was obliged under the law to return to India. This reduced the Indians who had been trapped into indenture, rather, into slavery, to a miserable plight. A man who had given up everything and gone over to South Africa with his entire family, what could he do on returning? Here he would have nothing but starvation to face. How, on the other hand, could he remain in indenture for a life-time? When free men around him earned as much as £4 or 5 or 10 a month, how could he be content with 14 or 15s? If he wanted to remain free, he would have, assuming that he had one son and one daughter, to pay £12 every year by way of tax, including the tax on his wife. How could he pay this exorbitant tax? The Indian community had been fighting against this tax from the very beginning. There had been repercussions in India too. But the tax had yet to be repealed then. Along with many other things, Gokhale was to demand repeal of this tax. He had been boiling over as if this tax on his poor brethren were a tax on himself. He brought into play the entire strength of his spirit when he met General Botha. So strong was the impression that his words created on Generals Botha and Smuts that they yielded and gave him a promise to repeal the tax during the ensuing session of the Parliament. Gokhale announced the news to me with great joy. These two Ministers had given other promises as well. As, however, we are considering only the question of indenture, I restrict myself here to this part of his meeting with the Union Government. The Parliament commenced its sittings. Gokhale

had left South Africa by then and the Indians there discovered that the £3 tax was not to be repealed. To be sure, General Smuts had made a lukewarm effort to bring round the Natal members; in my judgement, however, he had not done all that he should have. The Indian community informed the Union Govern-ment that the latter had bound itself before Gokhale to repeal the tax and that therefore if the tax was not repealed, it would be included among the issues on which they had been offering satyagraha since 1906. At the same time, Gokhale was informed telegraphically. He approved of this step. The Union Government ignored the warning given by the Indian community. Everyone knows what followed. 40,000 indentured Indians started satyagraha, went on strike and endured hardships past all bearing. Quite a few of them were killed. Ultimately, however, the promise given to Gokhale was fulfilled and the tax was repealed.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Dharmatma Gokhale

257. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

[BOMBAY,]

January 27, 1919

I have followed your letter[2] read out to me. I very much like your writing frankly. I am replying, expecting that you will write further. My vow, in its broadest sense, can only mean what you say it does. And so, the day I resolved to take goat's milk, I remarked that the zest with which I kept up the vow would be no more. I cannot experiment with milkless diet any more, nor can I pride myself upon not taking any food of animal origin. All the same, even after following your letter, I don't feel that my vow has been violated. It appears to me that the restricted meaning of my vow is as I have given it. When I took the vow, goat's milk was not in my mind at all. *And I would even go so far as to maintain that the fact of big loopholes having been left in both my vows is evidence of their utter sincerity*. As

[1] By the Indians' Relief Act of 1914.

[2] As quoted in *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, it read: "To be sure, the freedom you have taken interprets the vow in the most liberal spirit, but in the process the vow is preserved only in its letter. If we put milk on level with meat, goat's milk is as much so as cow's milk."

for the vow [restricting me to only] five articles [during a single day], going to any foreign country, as it turns out, will rele-ase me from it; in regard to the vow concerning milk, the goat has proved a mother to me. There are many instances in our scriptures of vows having been kept, though interpreted in a restricted sense. I understand the significance of these instances better now. It is to be preferred that a person placed as I am should be known to have kept a vow of his in its literal meaning, at any rate, rather than to have violated it all-together. I believe I shall be able to keep myself going on goat's milk. However, there are those who say, and there will be many more to say it, that I shall not regain complete strength without taking cow's milk. I shall certainly not, for that reason, take cow's milk. Nor, again, am I likely to get goat's milk at every place. Thus, even in the literal observance of the vow, some inconvenience will be there. At the moment, however, the question I am putting before you and me is not that of convenience or inconvenience. We have only to consider whether my vow can bear the restricted meaning I am giving it. If it can, it is my duty in this difficult situation to accept such meaning, relieve my friends and save my body. Personally, I feel that so long as a person sees no error or sin in his vow, he is not free to violate it on anyone's account. If once it is allowed that a vow may be broken, no vows will ever be kept and they will lose all their significance. Even so, I don't see any harm in placing upon a vow every sense it will bear and using the fact to one's advantage. It is not self-deception when people persuade themselves that they have kept the *ekadashi*, using rock salt in place of common salt on that day. Common salt is of course forbidden; but anyone who, finding it impossible to do without the savour which salt imparts to food, substitutes any one of the other available salts and keeps the *ekadashi* that way, has yet exercised a sort of self-control. One day he may give up even rock salt.

I shall not make this reply any longer. Think over what I have said and, if there is anything to write, do when you have the time.

We shall all learn something by this exchange of letters and, if I have been making a mistake, I shall know what it is.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

258. LETTER TO REVASHANKAR SODHA[1]

January 27, 1919

I have your letter. I like your desire to acquire knowledge. I wish to respect it, too, but at the moment I shall have to restrain it. The desire for knowledge has sometimes to be renounced. Person-ally, I feel my inadequacy in Sanskrit, and my eagerness to study Marathi, Bengali and Tamil is more than I can describe. And yet I have had to check my greedy desire, thanks to the tasks which fell to my lot one after another. I often wish to give Chi. Devdas ever so much knowledge. He has a gift for learning and I am confident that he would turn his learning to good account. Even so, I have stopped his studies because the work he is doing, teaching Hindi to our brethren in Madras, is more important. Take the case of Chi. Magan-lal himself. His deficiency in the matter of education has no limit. I think we would all admit that, if he could study further he would make excellent use of his knowledge. I often realize his lack of adequate education. Despite this, ever since he joined me, I have had to employ him on other tasks and therefore I could not let him study further. I could recount many more instances, but I have given eno-ugh to satisfy you. Just at present we have so many things to be done through the Ashram that we must set every available person to work. And so I think that, for the present, you must attend, with single-minded devotion, to whatever work is entrusted to you and give full satisfaction in it. I shall always keep in mind the question of your studies and, when I feel that the time has come for it, I shall not let the opportunity go. If this reply does not satisfy you, write to me whatever you would. I want to take work from you after satisfying you.

Take good care of your health. My health, it seems, is imp-roving. When the doctor's treatment here is over, I intend to visit the Ashram before going elsewhere. But that may well take a month. Hence you may write to me whatever you want to. Do not put it off, thinking that we shall talk things over when we meet. You must write with the utmost freedom.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

[1] Son of Ratanshi Mulji Sodha, an ardent satyagrahi who suffered imprison-ment during the campaign in South Africa

259. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO VITHALBHAI PATEL

[BOMBAY,]
January 28, 1919

. . Considering all this commotion among the Hindus, do you still think that your Bill[1] will be useful to the community? I should like you to come over and discuss this.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

260. LETTER TO SYED HUSSAIN[2]

January 30, 1919

In wishing you success in your new enterprise, I would like to say how I hope your writings would be worthy of the title you have chosen for your journal; and may I further hope that to a robust independence you will add an equal measure of self-restraint and the strictest adherence to truth? Too often in our journals as in others do we get fiction instead of fact and declamation in place of sober reasoning. You would make *The Independent*[3] a power in the land and a means of education for the people by avoiding the errors I have drawn attention to.

Yours sincerely,

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

261. LETTER TO O. S. GHATE

January 30, 1919

I was glad to receive your letter although it is a doleful one. I was wondering why I did not hear from you. My eye is fixed on Ali Brothers. I am simply waiting for the result of the Government inquiry. Nothing should be done until the Report of that Committee

[1] Inter-caste Marriage Bill; *vide* "Letter to *The Indian Social Reformer*", 26-2-1919.

[2] In reply to the following telegram from Syed Hussain on 29-1-1919: "*Independent* appearing fifth Feb[ruar]y. Kindly send autographed message for publication first issue."

[3] English daily from Allahabad

has been presented to the Government. Is the inquiry over? If as a result of the inquiry the Brothers are not released, the time for action will have arrived. The responsibility [of] taking such action as will be necessary I know rests on my shoulders and if I am at all well I shall not allow a single moment to pass in taking action and from the present state of my health I have every reason to hope that within a month's time I should be able to take up this work if it becomes necessary. My medical adviser expects me to take fully three months' rest outside India after he discharges me. But for the sake of this work, I should certainly forgo the three months' rest. I agree with you that the new Bill[1] for the preservation of internal tranquillity is damnable and no stone may be left unturned by us to kill the measure. But I strongly feel that because of its very severity it will never become law. I think that all the Indian members of the Imperial Council will strenuously oppose it. But all this is no reason for the country not taking up vigorous agitation. I am myself preparing to do my humble share in it. I am watching its course. There is no fear of its immediately becoming law. There will therefore be ample time to direct and develop the strongest possible agitation. In any event, I would like the Brothers to keep absolutely clear of the agitation until they have gained their full freedom. I shall hope that they will take no action without consultation with me.

Yours sincerely,

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

262. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

BOMBAY,

[Last week of *January, 1919*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I always have your letters read out. There are ups and downs in my health. If I don't leave this place, it is because I get better facilities here. Don't be worried on my account.

All the deficiencies in the Ashram will end when farm-work prospers, whether with hired labour or that of the Ashram inmates and the atmosphere is loud with weaving. If Gulbadan and Kamla do not work well, it is necessary to have a talk with them and tell them so

[1] The Rowlatt Bill

plainly. If you experience any difficulty about flour, you may get the wheat cleaned and take it to a mill for grinding. At present, we are in a position to keep the vow of swadeshi in respect of cloth. If necessary, you may pay to get the wheat cleaned.

It is surprising that Rukhi is ill so often. You ought to do a bit of research and set her health right.

Parvati should be asked to have plenty of water and take deep breaths. How does Prabhudas keep? What is the physical instructor doing? Have you resumed any construction work? How is the school running? Who are the visitors to the Ashram? What work does Mama do? And Chhotalal?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5769. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

263. SUMMARY OF LETTER TO SHANKARLAL BANKER

[Before *February 2, 1919*]

Under the joint auspices of the Bombay branches of the Home Rule League, a public meeting was held on February 2, 1919, at Shantaram's Chawl, Bombay, to protest against the introduction of the Criminal Law Amendment Bill and the Criminal Law Emergency Powers Bill, Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya presiding. A letter from Gandhiji addressed to Mr. Shankarlal Banker, Secretary of the Home Rule League, was read out to the meeting by Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas.

In the course of his letter, he felt that the Rowlatt Committee[1] Report afforded not the slightest warrant for the proposed Bills, and that it was their duty to educate public opinion to oppose the Bills with patience and firm determination. If the Rowlatt Bills were passed into law, the Reforms, whatever their value, would be absolutely worthless. It was absurd to find on one side the enlargement of the powers of the public and, on the other, to put unbearable restraints on their powers. If he were not ill, he would surely have done his share in the agitation against the Bills.

The Bombay Chronicle, 4-2-1919

[1] Appointed by the Government of India in 1917 with Justice Rowlatt of the Supreme Court of Judicature in England as president, to investigate and report on the sedition movement in India. Its recommendations were published in 1918 soon after the publication of the Montford Reforms, and favoured the enactment of special measures after the Defence of India Act had ceased to operate.

264. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[BOMBAY,]
February 2, 1919

CHI. DEVDAS,

I expected a letter from you today, but did not get any. I have felt no little sorrow in parting from you, but I saw that your interest and your duty required that you should go. And therefore I hardened myself against the pain [of separation], born of my attachment, and urged you to leave at any cost. When your task in Madras is over, I shall satisfy your desire for studies. But believe me, the experience you have gained, very few must have. Our whole life must be, as it were, a student's life. If you take this as the guiding principle of your life, you will never be too old for studies....[1] Write regularly and be regular in your prayers.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

265. TALK WITH CHANDRASHANKAR PANDYA2

BOMBAY,
February 2, 1919

Why should a handful of people hurt the feelings of the largest section of society? If the vast majority of Hindus prefer certain restraints in regard to marriage, it is the duty of individuals, if they wish to continue to be part of Hindu society, to respect the wishes of the majority.

[From Gujarati]

Samalochak, February 1919

[1] Some words are omitted here in the source.

[2] Extracted from a write-up by Chandrashankar Pandya. Gandhiji was speaking in the context of Namdev Patel's bill concerning Hindu marriage.

266. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

BOMBAY,

Basant Panchami, [*February 5*][1] *1919*

DEAR NARAHARI,

I have your letter. Even though we are meeting on Monday, I am writing to you so that you can do some more thinking. According to you, giving a literal meaning to a vow amounts to special pleading. I do not agree, because I am not aware of any special pleading at all. I gave it the meaning that with the utmost humility and purity of mind I thought it bore. Moreover, I also feel that our too strict adherence to the words of the scriptures was not entirely special pleading, but an admission of the fact that men are strong as well as weak. For a man of strength, the literal meaning as well as the implied meaning was kept. For a man given to weakness, the literal meaning was considered sufficient, and the significance of vows was retained. One cannot find fault with this by saying that hypocrites would stand to gain by this. The scriptures were written with such people in view. Any loophole in a vow indicates the uniqueness and completeness of the vow. Mere abstention from milk[2] does notserve the purpose for which the vow had been taken. One must either prove that one can live without milk or find a substitute for milk. And I shall continue my efforts to find a substitute for milk.[3] Even if I die in my search without succeeding it will not matter; because, if I am fated to be born again, I shall re-enter the world with the same desires with which I die. In writing all this, I am trying to show that under some circumstances, even if we give up the implied meaning of a vow and stick only to the literal meaning, we will have followed the vow perfectly. The basis is the same. Those who follow both the literal and the implied meaning of a vow would no doubt occupy a higher place. Those who follow the literal meaning will have to be content with being at the ground

[1] The source has "January". However, in 1919, *Basant Panchami* fell on February 5.

[2] Gandhiji had taken a vow at the Tolstoy Farm in 1912 to abstain from milk and milk products; *vide* "An Autobiography—Part IV, chapter XXX".

[3] After the very serious attack of dysentery in August, Gandhiji was not able to recover his strength. He had been writing to friends to find a substitute for milk. *Vide* "Letter to P.C. Ray", 27-8-1918 and "Letter to Narahari Parikh", 27-1-1919.

level. But a person living at Matheran can take full advantage of the place even if he lives in a hut. Similarly a person following the literal meaning can find the strength which comes from the observance of a vow. Consider all this, and when there is leisure, cross-examine me fully without any hesitation. It is possible that wittingly or unwittingly I am being partial to the step I have taken. It is up to my colleagues to save me from this fault. Maybe I have been wrong about something still I shall be making fewer mistakes than others. But I know that that very knowledge can give me a terrible blow. It is up to all of you to save me from that, I have dictated this letter while eating and while giving a sitting for a bust. There will be no time even to revise it. If there is anything that is not clear, ask me when I come.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11912

267. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

BOMBAY,

Vasant Panchami [*February 5, 1919*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Mahadev left last evening. In his absence, I dictate to Chi. Mathuradas[1] I hope to arrive there on Monday morning. The experiment of 7 lbs. of milk turned out to be a bit more than I could stand. I swallowed the lot as a dose of medicine. No harm was done, though. Today, therefore, I shall take about six pounds. For the first time after coming here, I walked today for about an hour and a quarter at a stretch. I went to Malabar Hill. Nothing untoward happened. I have come to know a few things about the Ashram through Bhai Mavji. But very soon I shall see things for myself; so I won't ask any more questions, nor, for the same reason, say anything on the subject here. Mahadev will also be there on Wednesday. He will bring along Durgabehn[2]. He has seen to it that I depend entirely on him. He has come to be my hands and feet, and my brain as well, so that without him I feel like one who has lost the use of legs and speech. The more I know him, the more I see his virtues. And he is as learned

[1]Trikumji, Gandhiji's nephew

[2] Wife of Mahadev Desai

as virtuous. I am pleased, therefore, more than I can say.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI[1]

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 5723. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

268. LETTER TO ANASUYABHEN SARABHAI

BOMBAY,

Basant Panchami [*February 5, 1919*][2]

PUJYA ANASUYABEHN,

Bhai Mahadev went away to Dehan yesterday. So I am dictating this letter to my nephew Chi. Mathuradas. I have decided to go to the Ashram by the Gujarat Mail on Sunday after having a talk with Dr. Dalal. God willing, I shall reach there on Monday morning. I shall need two cars or carriages because Harilal's children too will be accompanying me. Bhai Mahadev will reach the Ashram with Durga-behn on Wednesday. A goat or goats costing Rs. 40/- and yiel-ding seven seers of milk will be needed or that much milk will be needed. I have written about it to Maganlal as well. Here there is talk of the mill-workers' strike in the air again. But in my view, our field is only Ahmedabad for the present. If we can handle it well, it will easily lead to concrete results elsewhere. I have not been able to forget even for a moment that we have not been able to take possession even of the land with the sacred tree. If God wills it, some day we shall take possession of it. We shall talk more when we meet.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 11577

[1] The signature is in Mathuradas Trikumji's hand.

[2] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 5-2-1919.

269. LETTER TO SWAMI SATYADEV

BOMBAY,

Thursday, Magh Sud 6 [*February 6, 1919*]

DEAR SWAMIJI[1],

I have your letter. You are right in saying that you could not be satisfied with a message sent through Devdas. The only reason for not writing a letter was my laziness. Please forgive me. I had told Devdas that if you did not feel satisfied I would certainly send a written reply. You may make all the appropriate arrangements for teaching Hindi in the Madras Presidency. You may tour the whole Presidency. You may establish schools in different places. You may select teachers of your choice for these schools. You may not do the teaching yourself, but you must inspect the schools from time to time. When schools have been opened throughout the Presidency to your satisfaction and when you can say with certainty that these schools can run independently of you, you may leave the Madras Presidency. You may spend up to Rs. 10,000 on this undertaking. The responsibility for sending you the money is mine. You will not have anything to do with the Sahitya Committee[2] at Prayag. But I want to ask for all the expenses from Prayag. If there are difficulties in the way I will make some other arrangement. Now I think I have answered all your questions. You will tell me if there is anything left out. I have written to Devdas a long letter about Surendra. At the moment he is suffering from a mental affliction. He has become enamoured of the English-style schools. It seems necessary to get him out of the spell. You may be able to calm him. If you like his idea, please explain it to me.

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 6438

[1] Swami Satyadev Parivrajak

[2] Hindi Sahitya Sammelan or its executive committee

270. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

February 6, 1919

From the experience of these two days I find that when I recite the verses in solitude, it has greater effect for my peace of mind. I want you to have the same joy which I find in reciting Sanskrit verses. Just as we cannot do without food and sleep, so also we cannot do without what is food for the soul—the morning and evening prayers. Let us understand and follow this. . . .[1] We cannot respect the wishes of a person uttered while he is half asleep or when he is under the influence of drink or drug. We serve him by refusing his wishes. In the same way, we must not bow to the wishes of a man who is a prey to attachment. I think Surendra is in such a state of mind at present. It is my duty to shake him out of it, even if I have to administer him a shock for the purpose. I know that the exper-ience will be painful to him for a while but, when he is ultimately free from his attachment, he will understand why I restrained him and see that it was for his good. My plan, in the last analysis, respects everyone's freedom, for always what 1 say is entirely by way of advice. When my associates take up any activity which does not appeal to me, they may expect no encouragement from me but they can do as they wish. If you have followed what I have said and appreciate it, have a talk with Surendra and console him.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 6425

271. LETTER TO BHIMJIBHAI NARANJI NAYAK

February 7, 1919

I have your letter. If you send a reply to this letter address it to Sabarmati. I write this from Bombay. The teachers' salaries are undoubtedly low. But I do not know if you have taken the steps that ought to be taken before launching satyagraha. It is necessary moreover to know whether those who wish to experiment with Satyagraha have the requisite strength. It is better not to start a satyagraha thoughtlessly and without the strength for it than to abandon it in the middle out of cowardice and give it a bad name. I cannot find anything special or meritorious in teaching without a

[1] Omission as in the source

salary. Teachers do not teach for the sake of teaching but for earning a livelihood. If they do not get a salary at all or are inadequately paid, they can give up their jobs without bothering about what would become of the pupils. Normally a month's notice should be given before quitting service for starting a satyagraha or for any other reason. If I take up only your two questions then I feel certain that you should tender your resignation after giving due notice. In a satyagraha of this kind, the result hoped for cannot be achieved without unity. Perhaps it would be better for you not to resign if a majority of the teachers are not of one mind. But before giving any positive opinion on the subject, I should know many more things. Before taking any step it would be better if as many of the teachers as possible could see me at the Ashram.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 6426

272. LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

BOMBAY,

Saturday, Magh Sud 8 [*February 8, 1919*]

DEAR BROTHER,

I read all the speeches on the Rowlatt Bills today. I was much distressed. The Viceroy's speech is disappointing. Under the circumstances, I hope, at any rate, that all the Indian members will leave the Select Committee or, if necessary, even the Council, and launch a countrywide agitation. You and other members have said that if the Rowlatt Bills are passed a massive agitation would be launched the like of which has not beep seen in India. Mr. Lowndes[1] said that the Government were not afraid of the agitation that is going on. He is right. Even if you held a hundred thousand meetings all over India what difference would it make? I am not yet fully decided but I feel that when the Government bring in an obnoxious law the people will be entitled to defy their other laws as well. If we do not now show the strength of the people, even the reforms we are to get will be useless. In my opinion you should all make it clear to the Government that so long as the Rowlatt Bills are there you will pay no taxes and will advise the people also not to pay them. I know that to give such advice is to assume a great responsibility. But unless we do something really big

[1] Sir George Lowndes, Law Member, Government of India

they will not feel any respect for us. And we cannot hope to get anything from people who do not respect us. What the Viceroy has said about the Civil Service and about British trade does not seem right to me. The power of the Civil Service must be drastically curtailed. And it is certain that the protection the British are giving to their trade will not be available to it after India becomes independent. Today they enjoy far more rights than we do.

Tomorrow I go to the Ashram. Kindly send your reply there.

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 6439

273. LETTER FO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

BOMBAY,
February 9, 1919

DEAR MR. SASTRIAR,

I have just read your forcible speech on the Rowlatt Bills. This is none too strong. The Bills coupled with the Viceroy's, Sir William Vincent's and Sir George Lowndes' speeches have stirred me to the very depths; and though I have not left my bed still, I feel I can no longer watch the progress of the Bills lying in the bed. To me, the Bills are the aggravated symptoms of the deep-seated disease. They are a striking demonstration of the determination of the Civil Service to retain its grip of our necks. There is not the slightest desire to give up an iota of its unlimited powers and if the Civil Service is to retain its iron rule over us and if the British commerce is to enjoy its present unholy and privileged position, I feel that the Reforms will not be worth having. I consider the Bills to be an open challenge to us. If we succumb we are done for. If we may prove our word that the Government will see an agitation such that they have never witnessed before, we shall have proved our capacity for resistance to autocracy or tyrannical rule. When petitions [and] resolutions of gigantic mass meetings fail, there are but two courses open—the ordinary rough and ready course is an armed rebellion, and the second is civil disobedience to all the laws of the land or to a selection of them. If the Bills were but a stray example of lapse of righteousness and justice, I should not mind them but when they are clearly an evidence of a determined policy of repression, civil disobedience seems to be a duty imposed upon every lover of personal and public liberty. I wrote

yesterday to Panditji[1] suggesting on the part of all the Indian members or so many of them as would do so resignation of their positions on the Select Committee and a resignation of their positions even on the Council, if they would take the latter step also. I think their resignations will shake the Government's confidence in its ability to disregard public sentiment, and will be an education of great value to the people. For myself if the Bills were to be proceeded with, I feel I can no longer render peaceful obedience to the laws of a power that is capable of such a piece of devilish legislation as these two Bills, and I would not hesitate to invite those who think with me to join me in the struggle. It is possible that you will not see eye to eye with me in the position I wish to take up. But I know that you would not like me to stifle what may be to me the voice of conscience. Naturally I would like to secure the approbation of the very few friends whose advice I value. If, therefore, you have the time, I would like you to drop me a line telling me what you think about my contemplated step. I want to give this assurance that I shall do nothing in haste and I shall do nothing without giving a previous confidential warning couched in as gentle language as I can command.

I hope you will keep sound health during the very critical times that are ahead of us.

From a photostat: S.N. 6433

274. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO PRAGJI DESAI[2]

[BOMBAY ,

February 9, 1919]

. . . In putting a thing firmly one seems harsh sometimes, on a superficial view. In truth, however, the purest kindness consists in such firmness. A doctor operating upon a patient with trembling hands will have, ultimately, inflicted more pain on him; the one who makes a clean job of the work may seem at first to cause pain but in the end his action will have brought relief.

The Rowlatt Bills have agitated me very much. It seems I shall have to fight the greatest battle of my life. I have been discussing

[1] Madan Mohan Malaviya

[2] Pragji Khandubhai Desai, a satyagrahi in the South African campaign; often contributed to *Indian Opinion* in Gujarati

things. I shall be able to come to a decision in two or three days. The work in which you are engaged is also, as you say, a kind of fight. I have not the least doubt that upright business is an effort well worth making. It requires a full measure of truthfulness, fortitude, firmness, patient endurance, capacity to forgive, compassion and contentment. Any business man who displays these virtues is bound to rise to the top.

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 6427

275. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Tuesday, Maha Sud 11 [*February 11, 1919*][1]

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I did not write to you yesterday because there was nothing definite to write. We were to meet today at 7 p.m. and we met. Ambalalbhai, Vallabhbhai, Bachubhai, etc., were present. The discussion was quite good. Ultimately, signatures were given for the following Pledge.[2] Ambalalbhai, Bachubhai, etc., asked for 48 hours to consider. Bhai Subedar was also present. But he left a little early because it was time for his train. It appears that there will be at least as many more signatures coming. 1 think I shall be sending the letter to the Viceroy today. I have kept the draft of the letter ready. But my mind is still undecided about sending it.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I have just read that the law[3] will be valid for three years. Now the struggle seems to me necessary.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32736

[1] From the contents of the letter it is evident that this was written in 1919.

[2] The Satyagraha Pledge; *vide"*The Satyagraha Pledge", 24-2-1919.

[3] Criminal Law (Emergency Powers) Bill No. 2 of 1919

276. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

AHMEDABAD,

Maha Sud 12 [*February 11, 1919*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your two letters. My swelling had begun even while I was there. It is still there, but it is very much reduced. Otherwise my health is all right. You will have taken the money from Revash-ankarbhai. You will have paid one rupee to Bhai Karsandas Chitalia. The signatures were obtained for the following pledge about the struggle. Bill No. 2 would be in force only for three years after the compromise. Let us see how India reacts to this news.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

277. LETTER TO SIR WILLIAM VINCENT

ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

February 12, 1919

I observe that the Committee appointed to investigate the cases of Messrs Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali has completed its deliberations. I wonder whether the Government have now arrived at any decision over this case.

N. A. I.: Home: Political—A: July 1919: No. I & K. W.

[1] From the contents this letter appears to have been written in 1919.

278. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Maha Sud 13 [*February 12, 1919*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

My health had suffered some upset even while I was there.

I had started having some swelling, which persists. I must say it is somewhat reduced.

I hope you are getting on with the work for the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. There is no reply from Prof. Karve[2] yet. I have even sent him a telegram. It is surprising that he does not answer. I am now doubtful about the struggle continuing.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

279. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

[BOMBAY,]
Thursday [*February 13, 1919*][3]

BHAISHRI NARAHARI,

I have sent you today an article by the poet[4]. It is worth serious study. I think our endeavour is to attain the ideal he has set forth. The future pattern of education in India will depend upon the efforts we make during the next ten years. All of you should ponder over that article. My impression is that the poet does little to put his own ideal into practice.

I will be there on Sunday and leave the same day.

[1] It appears from the contents that this letter was written in 1919.

[2] Dhondu Keshav Karve (1858-1962); social reformer and pioneer educationist

[3] Mahadev Desai's visit to Bijolia took place about the second week of February.

[4] Rabindranath Tagore. The reference is presumably to his essay, "The Centre of Indian Culture".

Pay attention to the handwriting of every pupil. I hope you are making every effort to get up early.

I very much liked the second part of *D. S.*[1] for its content. The art described therein will vanish, all of it.

I am getting acquainted here with an expert musician.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev has not yet returned from Bijolia[2].

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 6416

280. LETTER TO O. S. GHATE

February 16, 1919

I have your valuable letter. I had telegraphed[3] to you saying that I had already written to the Home Member inquiring about Government's decision. I passed that information on to Mrs. Shuaib some time ago and thought that in due course it would filter down to you and to our friends. At that time, Mr. Desai was not by me and I restricted my correspondence as much as possible. At the time I wrote to Mr. Shuaib, I said also that in the event of an unfavourable reply, the fight must commence. I [was] then under the belief that my health would in a way permit of my undertaking that activity. Unfortunately it has become like a pendulum swinging to and fro and just at the present moment there is again a set-back and the doctors tell me that I dare not undertake any exertion for three months. I am, however, trying to speed recovery and I still hope that by the time I receive the reply from Delhi I shall be ready for work.

Your letter gives me a greater insight into the Rowlatt Bills. I detest them entirely and for me the Reforms will be useless if the measures are passed. I am carefully watching the progress of events in

[1] Probably a reference to *Dalpat Sar*, a selection of poems by Dalpatram, edited by Narahari Parikh

[2] A small principality in the State of Mewar, now part of Rajasthan. Mahadev Desai was specially deputed by Gandhiji to inquire into the people's grievances in Bijolia. Gandhiji had at one stage agreed to lead a satyagraha movement there for redressing the grievances of the people.

[3] The telegram is not available.

the country and I feel sure that the Brothers need not yet take any steps about them. It is heart-rending three domestic losses they have suffered. There is hardly a family left in India that has not lost some dear ones. One's feelings almost become blunt when the same news comes from anywhere with merciless regularity.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

281. ADDRESS TO ASHRAM INMATES

February 17, 1919

The inmates are satisfied with nothing in the Ashram. The reason? Dissatisfaction over Maganlal's ideas and conduct, over his manner of speaking and over a certain partiality in his actions. Lack of faith in the Ashram on the part of others, those in the school. What is my position in these circumstances?

I must place before you some strict principles. I have not invited the ladies, but they, too, feel disgusted, and are thinking of leaving. I have told them that they will not get anywhere else what they have gained here. You may remain in the Ashram only if you think you can put up with all that life here means. So think well before you decide to remain or leave. Why do you stick on here des-pite your dissatisfaction? Surely, none of you is too weak to leave. It is, then, out of your love for me and blind attachment to me.

The first principle, then, which emerges is that to be attached to a person apart from his work is blind attachment. I knew persons in South Africa who were blindly attached to me. I made it clear to them that, if they found Phoenix[1], which was my creation, of no worth, then I, too, had none. If they lacked faith in my creation, then, naturally, they were bound to lose faith in me as well. I am a good judge of men but I cannot prove this to you just now. Nevertheless, if you have no faith in the Ashram, if you are dissatisfied with it, you had better leave it. Only those of you may remain who have joined it to give

[1] The Phoenix Settlement near Durban founded by Gandhiji in association with his co-workers and European friends in 1904. It sought to put into practice the essential teachings of Ruskin and Tolstoy and to assist in the removal of the grievances of Indians in South Africa. *Indian Opinion* was also published from Phoenix.

something or to point out to Gandhi his follies and errors. But I find none such. All of you have come here to give and to receive. It is from the whole lot of us that the worth of the Ashram will be judged. We cannot measure a man's worth independently of his work.

In South Africa, my best creation was Phoenix. Without it, there would have been no satyagraha in that country. Without the Ashram here, satyagraha will be impossible in India. I may be making a mistake in this; if so, I ought to be deserted. I am going to ask the country not to judge me by either Champaran or Kheda but only by the Ashram. If you find lack of order in this place, and blindness of ignorance, then you will find the same in all my work. I am the founder inmate of the Ashram and it runs so long as I am faithful to its ideals. If I find that I cannot hold anyone here, I will undertake a searching examination of myself and will try to make a sacrifice which will be of the purest. Do not attribute greatness to me for other works of mine; judge me only by the Ashram. One of my creations here in the Ashram is Maganlal. If I have found from experience five million shortcomings in Maganlal, I have found ten million virtues in him. Beside him, Polak is a mere child; the blows that Maganlal has endured, Polak has not. Maganlal has offered all his work as sacrifice, not for my sake but for the sake of an ideal. It is not for me he is slaving; he is wedded to an ideal. Once he was ready to bid good-bye, and leave me.

It boils down to this, that I cannot run the Ashram after sending away Maganlal. If I send him away, I would be the only one left in the Ashram. For the tasks we have undertaken, Maganlal, too, is fully needed. I have yet to see a better man than he. To be sure, he is short-tempered, has his imperfections, but on the whole he is a fine man. As for his honesty, I have no doubt. You must take it as proved that I am bad to the extent that Maganlal is bad.

Just as, if I quarrelled with my brother or parents, I would not go out to complain about it to others, so also, we should not take to outsiders our complaints against anyone in the institution where we are members. The moment one begins to suspect or dislike another, one should leave him. When, following this course, he has left the entire world, he will find himself all alone; and will then commit suicide, or, realizing his own imperfections, get rid of his dislikes. One should not only not speak ill, before others, of the institution in which one stays, but one should not think ill of it even in one's mind. The

moment such a thought occurs, one should banish it. There should be joy in the Ashram, especially when I am out. If you think of me as an elder, you should conduct yourselves worthily, mindful of my instructions. Now that I am here, you may take some freedom and do as you please, but once I am out, you should allow yourselves no freedom. If there is no harmony here in my absence, something is lacking in me and, therefore, you should leave me.

If I removed the causes of discontent in the Ashram, it would be to bring peace to Maganlal; or rather, not for his peace but for the sake of the country, because I have offered Maganlal as a sacrifice to the country.

You may persuade me to give up either the Ashram or Maganlal. I shall not send him away so long as I have not come to feel that he goes about setting one against another. To measure a man's worth, the world has no other yardstick than his work. As the work, so the man. This very charge was levelled by an intimate friend of mine, Mr. Kitchin[1]. However, the fine, systematic work which Magan-lal has done, none else has.

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

282. MESSAGE ON GOKHALE ANNIVERSARY

February 19, 1919

I had looked forward to attending today's meeting, but for reasons of health I am not able to do so. Even so, my spirit is there. The meeting will have been to some purpose only if it helps us to take a step forward in public service. Make an earnest appeal to the people to buy copies of the book[2] which is being published today or, if anyone cannot afford to do so, to borrow a copy from someone else and read it.

[From Gujarati]
Prajabandhu, 23-2-1919

[1] Herbert Kitchin, a theosophist who edited *Indian Opinion* after the death of Manasukhlal Nazar. He lived with Gandhiji for a time and worked with him during the Boer War.

[2] A Gujarati translation of Gokhale's speeches

283. LETTER TO J. L. MAFFEY[1]

SABARMATI,
February 20, 1919

As I am not still quite out of the wood regarding my health and as, if am to obey doctors' orders, I must not undertake any activity requiring considerable exertion, I thought I would refrain from such activity till I was better. But the events that have recently happened impel me to submit the following for His Excellency's consideration:

I feel tempted to write about the Rowlatt Bills, but I am checking myself for the moment and awaiting the course of the Bills and the agitation about them in the country. I wish to confine myself today to a matter that specially interests me—the case of the Brothers Ali.

You will recall that I made a submission about them on the New Year's day of 1917[2]. Though the Viceroy may not feel inclined to interfere in the matter, he should know the present position from the popular standpoint.

After the exchange of the final letters between us, I entered into correspondence with Sir William Vincent. The result was that a Committee to advise the Government about the Brothers was appointed. This Committee has duly reported to the Government but so far as I am aware, although nearly two months have elapsed after the submission of the Committee's Report, the Government's decision has not yet been pronounced. I wrote to Sir William Vincent about it on the 12th instant. I have been informed on behalf of the Brothers that from the manner in which they are being treated in the matter of their requests for visits to certain places for urgent business and other circumstances, they infer that the decision is likely to be adverse to them. I have read most of the correspondence between the Brothers and the Committee. I have read the communication em-bodying the charges against them. I have read their reply. I must assume that the memorandum of charges supplied to the Brothers was exhaustive. The impression left upon my mind is that the Brothers have been interned and subjected to numerous hardships without the slightest justification. The charges in my humble opinion did not warrant

[1] Private secretary to the Viceroy

[2] This is obviously slip for "1918".

action under the Defence of India Act. I submit that under a free Government they would hold in it a prominent position instead of being treated as a danger to it. They are brave, perfectly straightforward, they are out-spoken, God-fearing, and able men, commanding the respect alike of the Mahomedans and the Hindus. It would be difficult to find throughout India better specimens of joint Hindu and Mahomedan culture. In a position which to them is exasperating, they have evinced wonderful self-restraint and patience. Their very virtues seem to have been regarded as an offence. They deserved a better treatment.

I must disclose one fact to Lord Chelmsford although it hurts my sense of modesty. They have ever since the meeting of the Muslim League at Calcutta in the December of 1917 implicitly accepted the advice I tendered to them, and so have the leading Mahomedans, who would, but for my advice, gladly have carried on a powerful and embarrassing agitation long ere this. I advised them that if relief was not granted, satyagraha—I abhor the expression"passive resistance", as it very incompletely expresses the grand truth conveyed by the easily understood Sanskrit word"satya-graha"—should be resorted to. I assured them that I was in commu-nication with the Government about the Brothers' release. As a satyagrahi, I told them that before engaging in a public agitation about it, we should know the Government side of the question, and we should exhaust all milder remedies and be able to demonstrate to the satisfaction of impartial observers the untenability of the Government position before embarking on satyagraha in which, once it is undertaken, there is no turning back. I feel thankful to the Brothers and to the gentlemen, with whom it has been a privilege to be associated, that they have abided by my advice, though the delay has almost reached a dangerous point. I do must earnestly trust that the Government will by releasing the Brothers prevent a powerful agitation in the country.

I shall anxiously await your reply.

I hope that you are enjoying the best of health and it would so please me to learn from you that Lord Chelmsford is keeping good health in spite of the great strain under which, I know, he is working.

With kind regards,

N. A. I.: Home Political—A: July 1919: No. 1 & K.W.

284. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR[1]

February 23, 1919

I appreciate your letter[2] and it makes me feel like running down to Madras immediately. I have been thinking of going there for a long time. The delicate state of my health has come in the way, as it still does. But unless the campaign starts immediately or unless I am obliged to go to Lucknow regarding the Brothers Ali, I would certainly take earliest opportunity of visiting Madras. I do feel that unless the Bills are radically altered in the Select Committee, resistance of a most stubborn character ought to be offered. I detest the Bills not so much for their deadliness as for their being the surest symptom of deep-seated disease from which the Government of India must be free if we are to enjoy a real measure of freedom under the Reforms. I hope to write to you again very soon. We are having a conference of the Gujaratis tomorrow to consider the ques-tion of satyagraha. Passive resistance poorly expresses the meaning conveyed by satyagraha.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

285. LETTER TO SONJA SCHLESIN[3]

February 23, 1919

It was so good of you to give me credit if only for once for being business-like. My own opinion of myself is that I am the most business-like man upon the earth and, so long as no one can disillusion me, I shall continue to derive pleasure from the belief and to have a stray certificate from you only adds to the pleasure. I present you another illustration of my business-likeness. I know I would wound your vanity, self-esteem, glorious womanliness, whatever you like to call it, by making friend my carrier instead of a bank, for

[1] 1852-1943; a leading lawyer and active Congressman; presided over the Nagpur Congress session, 1920

[2] This was dated February 19, and marked Private and urged Gandhiji to visit a few important centres in southern India.

[3] A Jewish girl, steno-typist and Gandhiji's private secretary for many years in South Africa; made herself useful to *Indian Opinion*; was ardently interested in the Indian cause

this very simple purpose of lending you money. Had I taken your impractical advice, it would have taken me much longer to send you the money because you must know that I am living in India where we do things in a fairly leisurely manner befitting the climate and the surroundings. Here bankers are not the servants of their clients but their masters except when the clients happen to belong to the ruling race and probably it would have cost you £15 to send £50. You with your poetic instinct set no value on money, whereas I, a simple prosaic business-like man, realize that it requires £150 to finish the education of someone. Therefore, if I spend away £15, I waste one-tenth of that sum if I can avoid having to spend it. Q.E.D.

You shall certainly treat what you have received as a loan. I believe I have already told Mr. Rustomji[1] as much but I cannot swear as I cannot keep copies of my correspondence as a rule and I shall accept repayment whenever you choose to send it, with compound interest if you will, provided that you do not borrow to pay me. You will infer from what has preceded that my health is better. I am still bed-ridden. My head is supposed to be weak and I may not undertake any great exertion. But the feel is all right and I am cheerful.

Devibehn[2] writes to me regularly and tells me that you rarely [do so]. That is not how people treat their goddesses, or had women the privilege of acting different?

Yes, Harilal has been sorely stricken. Chanchi was far superior to me. I did not specially write to you as I felt my cable to Ramdas in reply to his was enough for all. At the time, moreover, I was too ill to think of writing to anybody. All Harilal's children are here and are playing about me while I am dictating this letter.

Passive resistance is on the topics regarding certain legislation that the Government of India are passing through the Council. The war council meets tomorrow at the Ashram. You may depend upon it that it won't be a bad copy of similar councils in which you were both an actor (or actress?) and a fairly intelligent spectatress. You won't therefore need from me a description of the council meeting.

I am surprised at your remark about Ashrams here prohibiting the entry of women. It betrays your lack of interest in the Ashram. We

[1] Parsi Rustomjee, Indian merchant of Natal; took prominent part in Gandhiji's satyagraha campaign in South Africa.

[2] Ada West, sister of Gandhiji's friend and co-worker, A. H. West

have so many women here at the Ashram. We are educating them all, including three girls. The latter are no doubt our own girls. But that is not our limitation. It is due to the disinclination of the people to send their girls under the conditions that we impose. It will delight your heart to see the transformation that the women undergo here after a few days' stay. The *purdah* and all other unnatural restraints fall away as if by magic. I know you will hug most them when you come here. Only you will have to revive your knowledge of Gujarati.

Imam Saheb is today here, and naturally also his daughter and his wife.

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

286. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[AHMEDABAD,]

February 23, 1919

I got your letters. Give no assurance to anyone without taking thought, lest you should become guilty of breach of promise. Harilal used to write a very bad hand; he saw to it that it improved. Three of the brothers, at last, have acquired a beautiful handwriting. But your hand goes from bad to worse. It was with the utmost difficulty that Mahadev could decipher the Hindi letter you wrote on behalf of Swamiji. I could not read it at all. Bad handwriting is a serious defect. A good hand is an accomplishment. By writing a bad hand, we place a heavy burden on our friends and elders and harm our work. You know well enough that I cannot easily read a letter written in a muddled hand. I would urge you, therefore, to improve your handwriting.

I keep well. I take four pounds of unboiled milk during the day, spread over four meals. Two goats are being maintained. I have had practically nothing except milk for seven days. Today Dr. Ice[1] recommended seven raisins with every meal. I cannot move about as yet. Dr. Ice believes, though, that I shall be up and moving in a few days. We are thinking of giving him a third name, Dudhabhai [Brother Milk], as these days he has gone milk-crazy. He believes that milk is the best of all foods. So I told him that he should take only

[1] Dr. Kelkar; so named because of his faith in ice-treatment

milk all his life. He is taking it, for the present at any rate. Let us see what happens hereafter.

I hope to be there by the end of March.

A meeting of satyagraha warriors is to take place in the Ashram on Monday. The final decision will be reached after considering what weapons each has and how much of ammunition. If you have read Shamalbhatt's[1] description of Ravana's war council, Mahadevbhai will not have to recount Monday's history.

Manu[2] has been stealing fat from all and sundry in the Ashram, except from me, so that she looks like the largest water melon in the Ashram. When there is an occasion for installing Ganapati, an elephant's trunk should be secured and stuck on her face, and she would indeed look quite a beauty. Her radiance is ever growing brighter, with the result that she has become everyone's doll. Rasik[3] [one full of zest] often demonstrates his zestfulness by employing the stick. Kanti[4] is growing calmer. Rami's health continues so-so. Ba's time is taken up in ministering to them all. I notice that she even finds the thing irksome and, in consequence, her temper is often snappy, and just as the potter, when angry, twists the ears of his donkey, his wife, I infer, must be doing the same to the donkey's master. After this jesting, I shall give something serious to balance it.

"It is my firm belief that every Indian ought to know well his mother tongue and Hindi-Urdu, which is without doubt the only common medium of expression between lacs of Indians belonging to different Provinces. There can be no self-expression without this necessary equipment."[5]

This is a translation of what you have sent. Give this in Tamil as the motto: *Karka Kasadara Karpavai*.[6] Beneath this, give the Hindi equivalent, which Swamiji will provide, of"Drop by drop fills the lake", and beneath it still, give in English:"Constant dropping wears

[1] Popular 18th century Gujarati poet; author of several narrative, religious and didactic works

[2] Daughter of Harilal

[3] Harilal's son

[4] *ibid*

[5] This passage is in English, followed by a translation in Gujarati.

[6] What you learn, learn faultlessly [and then act up to it].

away stones". The Tamil saying occurs on the first page of Pope's[1] book. Find its equivalent in Telugu and give that too.

If you send your Primer here for our comments before printing it, Kaka and the others will go through it. And also, if you send the proofs, while it is being printed, they will be able to examine the design of the motto, etc., from the artistic point of view. You need not send them if you are in a great hurry over the thing.

Surendra used to make the same comments about the school here as he has done about the one there. Often, at first sight, a thing makes a certain impression on a straightforward man, and this is natural. Miss Molteno[2] described Phoenix as heaven upon earth. Had she stayed longer there, I am sure she would have changed her opinion. At first sight, Bean thought Phoenix was the best thing he had ever seen. After a few months' stay there, he could not imagine an institution anywhere as bad as Phoenix.

Enough for today.[3]

Probably this too will go all right as a saying:

"Rasiklal Harilal Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi,
Had a goat in his keeping;
The goat would not be milked
And Gandhi would not stop his weeping."[4]

—Rasik, Poet of Poets

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

[1] G. U. Pope (1820-1908); missionary in South India, lecturer in Tamil and Telugu at Oxford, 1884-96; author of several works on Tamil

[2] A European co-worker of Gandhiji in South Africa

[3] Up to this point, the letter was dictated. What follows was added by Gandhiji in his own hand.

[4] In Gujarati, the stanza rhymes aabb.

287. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

February 23, 1919

TO

THE MOST WORTHY FIRM OF SATYAGRAHIS [1]

Just as I was about to start this letter, I had to hold a court. The accused was Rasik, and the complainant an innocent dog. The latter declared by his wailing that he had been assaulted by som-eone. I discovered that the guilty party was Rasik. The accused admitted his guilt and confessed previous offences as well. I thought of Lord Krishna and Shishupal. Shri Krishnachandra had forgiven a hundred[2] offences, of the latter. And so the court had compassion and forgave the accused, Rasik, five offences, warning him at the same time that, if he repeated the offence again, it would not be forgiven and that he would be made to realize, in his own person, the dog's suffering when stoned.

As I write this, Kantilal is holding the inkstand. He and Ramibehn read the letter as I proceed and correct me. The accused, too, is here, meekly standing by the bed. Manubai interrupts now and then to give us the benefit of her laughter. And now she has started crying, wanting to climb up the bed. The scene reminds me of your childhood, of that of Jadibehn and others.

Though I am confined to bed, you will see from the foregoing that my health can pass as good.

Satyagraha is in the air here. Mahadev will write to you about it all—or I, if I can.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

[1] Gandhiji used this expression jocularly for Harilal and some of his friends who went to jail with him in South Africa.

[2] Ninety-nine, according to the *Mahabharata*

288. THE SATYAGRAHA PLEDGE[1]

AHMEDABAD,

February 24, 1919

Being conscientiously of opinion that the Bills known as the Indian Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill No. I of 1919 and the Criminal Law (Emergency Powers) Bill No. II of 1919 are unjust, subversive of the principle of liberty and justice, and destructive of the elementary rights of individuals on which the safety of the community as a whole and the State itself is based, we solemnly affirm that, in the event of these Bills becoming law and until they are withdrawn, we shall refuse civilly to obey these laws and such other laws as a Committee[2] to be hereafter appointed may think fit and we further affirm that in this struggle we will faithfully follow truth and refrain from violence to life, person or property.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI,
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM SABARMATI
VALLABHBHAI J. PATEL, BAR-AT-LAW,
AHMEDABAD
CHANDULAL MANILAL DESAI, L.D.S.,
AHMEDABAD
KESARIPRASAD MANILAL THAKOOR,
AHMEDABAD
(BEHN) ANASUYABAI SARABHAI,
SECRETARY, WOMEN'S BRANCH OF THE
HOME RULE LEAGUE, AHMEDABAD AND
OTHERS

New India, 3-3-1919

[1] The pledge was drafted on 24-2-1919 and signed by those present at a meeting held at Sabarmati Ashram.

[2] For laws selected by this Committee for disobeying *vide* "Statement on Laws for Civil Disobedience", 7-4-1919.

289. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

AHMEDABAD,
February 24, I919

EVER SINCE PUBLICATION ROWLATT BILLS HAVE BEEN CONSIDERING MY POSITION REGARDING THEM. HAVE BEEN CONFERRING WITH FRIENDS. IN MY OPINION BAD IN THEMSEL VES BILLS ARE BUT SYMPTOM OF DEEP-SEATED DISEASE AMONG THE RULING CLASS, COMING AS THEY DO ON EVE REFORMS BILLS AUGUR ILL FOR THEIR SUCCESS. THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH ME IN PUBLIC WORK AND OTHER FRIENDS MET TODAY AND AFTER THE GREATEST DELIBERATION HAVE DECIDED TO OFFER SATYAGRAHA AND COMMIT CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE OF SUCH LAWS AS COMMITTEE TO BE FORMED FROM OURSELVES MAY DECIDE. AFTER SIR GEORGE LOWNDES' SPEECH IT IS NECESSARY TO DEMONSTRATE TO GOVERNMENT THAT EVEN A GOVERNMENT THE MOST AUTOCRATIC FINALLY OWES ITS POWER TO THE WILL OF THE GOVERNED. WITHOUT RECOGNITION OF THIS PRINCIPLE AND CONSEQUENTLY WITHDRAWAL BILLS MANY OF US CONSIDER REFORMS VALUELESS. I WISH TO MAKE AN HUMBLE BUT STRONG APPEAL TO HIS EXCELLENCY TO RECONSIDER GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO PROCEED WITH BILLS, AND RELUCTANTLY ADD THAT IN EVENT OF UNFAVOURABLE REPLY THE PLEDGE MUST BE PUBLISHED AND THE SIGNATORIES MUST INVITE ADDITIONS. I AM AWARE OF SERIOUSNESS OF THE PROPOSED STEP. IT IS, HOWEVER, MUCH BETTER THAT PEOPLE SAY OPENLY WHAT THEY THINK IN THEIR HEARTS AND WITHOUT FEAR OF CONSEQUENCES ENFORCE THE DICTATES OF EXPECT EARLY THEIR OWN CONSCIENCE. MAY I EXPECT EARLY REPLY?

N. A. I.: Home: Political—A: March 1919: No 250; also from a photostat: S.N. 6434

290. TELEGRAM TO VICEROY[1]

[*After February 24, 1919*][2]

THE GUJARAT SABHA EMPHATICALLY PROTESTS AGAINST THE INTRODUCTION OF BILLS NOS. 1 AND 2 OF 1919. THE BILLS ARE REPRESSIVE AND RETROGRADE AND ARE SUBVERSIVE OF THE ELEMENTARY RIGHTS OF CITIZENSHIP, LEAVING INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY AT THE MERCY OF THE EXECUTIVE. THE SABHA EARNESTLY URGES UPON GOVERNMENT TO ABANDON THE BILLS IN THE INTERESTS OF THE EMPIRE AND THE PEACEFUL CONSTITUTIONAL PROGRESS OF INDIA.

Gujarat Sabhano San Unneesso Unneesno Varshik Report

291. ON SATYAGRAHA

[*February 25, 1919*][3]

For dealing with a crisis, everyone has a choice between two forces—physical force and soul-force or satyagraha. India's civilization can be saved only through satyagraha.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 6436

292. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA[4]

[*February 25, 1919*]

NO HEART NO CONFIDENCE IN DEPUTATION. ROWLATT BILLS BLOCK ALL PROGRESS.

GANDHI

The Leader, 27-2-1919

[1] Presumably this was drafted by Gandhiji as President on the Gujarat Sabha.

[2] The Satyagraha Pledge regarding the Rowlatt Bills was drafted and signed at the Ashram on February 24, 1919.

[3] Found on the same sheet as the "Telegram to C. F. Andrews", 25-2-1919

[4] This was in reply to an inquiry as to when Gandhiji would start for England as a member of the Congress deputation. *New India* 26-2-1919, published this telegram beginning: "Have no confidence...." Both *New India* and *The Leader* received the news from Delhi under date 25-2-1919.

293. TELEGRAM TO C. F. ANDREWS

February 25, 1919

HAVE BEEN IRRESISTIBLY DRIVEN ADOPT SATYA-GRAHA ROWLATT BILLS. FIFTY MEN WOMEN SIGN PLEDGE BEFORE PUBLISHING WIRED VICEROY GIVEN PRAYERFUL CONSIDERATION. WISH YOU WERE HERE YESTERDAY. SENDING PAPERS AFTER PERUSAL. WIRE OPINION GURUDEO'S BLESSING IF POSSIBLE.

From a photostat: S.N. 6436

294. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

February 25, 1919

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have telegraphed to you today. I could not write the letter that I contemplated doing when I sent my first wire. I have been passing through perfect agony, doctors telling me that I should not undertake any exertion, the voice within me telling me that I must speak out on the Rowlatt Bills and the Viceregal pronouncement. Conflicting views pressed themselves on me and I did not know what to do. Many friends have looked to me for guidance. How could I desert them? We met yesterday at the Ashram. It was a good meeting. The desire was to take the plunge even if we were only a few. The last word rested with me. I felt that the cause was true. Was I to forsake them? I could not do so and remain true to myself. You know the result. The papers herewith will give you fuller information. God only knows how I felt the need of your presence whilst the soul was in travail. I am now quite at peace with myself. The telegram to the Viceroy eased me considerably. He has the warning. He can stop what bids fare to become a mighty conflagration. If it comes, and if the satyagrahis remain true to their Pledge, it can but purify the atmosphere and bring in real swaraj. Have you noticed an unconscious betrayal of the true nature of modern civilization in Mr. Wilson's[1] speech explaining the League of Nations' covenant?[2] You will remember his saying that if

[1] Thomas Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924); 28th President of the United States of America

[2] At the Paris Peace Conference; *vide* "Speech on Satyagraha, Madras", 20-3-1919.

the moral pressure to be exerted against a recalcitrant party failed, the members of the League would not hesitate to use the last remedy, viz., brute force.

The Pledge is a sufficient answer to the doctrine of force.

But this does not close the chapter. I have received a long cablegram[1] from Mr. Aswat. The situation for the Indians in the Union is very serious indeed. The lesson of the late struggle is practically lost upon them. If we here can render no help, Indians in the Union will be reduced to an absolutely servile state. If they through their weakness cannot offer satyagraha, we must all call upon the Government to redress the grievance and to offer satyagraha if they proclaim their helplessness. You cannot have hostile interests in the same partnership. I have written to the Government and I am sending a Press letter today.

There is still a third chapter. The committee that was appointed to advise the Government upon the case of the Brothers Ali reported two months ago. I have read the papers. There is nothing in the charge to warrant their detention. If they are still not released, there would be a third case for satyagraha for me.

I am bearing the burden rightly enough because the last two have caused no struggle with my conscience. If the main struggle starts, I may tuck on to it the last two and thus complete the trinity.

I shall eagerly await your telegraphic opinion and then a detailed written opinion to follow. You will not wonder when I tell you that the women at the Ashram have all voluntarily signed the Pledge. . .

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

295. LETTER TO K. NATARAJAN[2]

February 25, 1919

I send you copies of the Satyagraha Pledge and the wire sent by me to the Viceroy. I know you regard the Bills with the horror that I do. But you may not agree with me as to the remedy to be applied. I hope, however, that you will not summarily dismiss the Pledge from your mind. If you do not provide the rising generation with an

[1] *Vide* "Letter to the Press on South African Situation", 25-2-1919.

[2] Editor of *The Indian Social Reformer*, Bombay

effective remedy against the excesses of authority, you will let loose the powers of vengeance and the doctrines of the Little Bengal Cult of violence will spread with a rapidity which all will deplore. Repression answers only so long as you can overawe people. But even cowards have been known to exhibit extraordinary courage under equally extraordinary stress. In offering the remedy of self-suffering which is one meaning of satyagraha, I follow the spirit of our civilization and present the young portion with a remedy of which he need never despair.

The papers are to be treated as confidential. After the receipt of a reply from the Viceroy, I may be able to authorize publication. The wire to the Viceroy is not to be published at all. I have supplied you with a copy because I entertain much regard for your opinion. Will you please share this letter with Sir Narayan[1]?

You will presently see my letter to the Press on the South African situation. There perhaps there will be agreement between you and me that if the Government proclaim their helplessness, we must offer satyagraha and prevent the impending ruin of the countrymen in South Africa.

Yours, etc.,

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

296. LETTER TO SIR STANLEY REED[2]

February 25, 1919

It is not without some hesitation that I am sending the enclosed papers to you. But I feel that the right course for me to adopt is not to withhold them from you. Probably you will totally disagree with me as to my opinion of the Bills as also the method proposed to be adopted for securing redress. I will not argue about the matter because I can carry the argument no further than I have done in my telegram to the Viceroy.

All the papers are confidential.

I shall value your frank opinion in the matter.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Sir N G. Chandavarkar, social reformer and judge of the Bombay High Court; presided over the Congress session at Lahore in 1900

[2] Editor, *The Times of India*

297. LETTER TO SIR DINSHAW WACHHA[1]

[AHMEDABAD,]
February 25, 1919

I told Shankarlal Banker yesterday to show you the Satyagraha Pledge and also the letter to His Excellency the Viceroy. You must have seen both. How can I ask you to join this struggle ? But I certainly ask for your blessings. I shall do nothing in haste. The Pledge will be published only after the Viceroy's reply is received. I think the growing generation will not be satisfied with petitions, etc. We must give them something effective. Satyagraha is the only way, it seems to me, to stop terrorism. From this point of view, I am justified in seeking your help.

How shall I thank you for your unfailing solicitude for my health? I am better now. The heart is still weak, though. Perhaps this struggle will act as a tonic and my health will come round by itself.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

298. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
Maha Vad 10 [*February 25, 1919*][2]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I have a letter from Anandanand3 also. This is in answer to both. There is no time to write separately to each.

There is no reason to assume that Panditji will not come.

Anandanand has suggested two good names for the standing Committee. Please have them nominated.

I have written again to Prof. Karve. I shall write to you again after I hear from him.

We shall be in a position to take a decision about the resolutions

[1] 1844-1936; prominent Parsi politician; president of the Indian National Congress, 1901; member, Viceroy's Council

[2] Inferred from the reference to "the foundation of the struggle" having been laid the previous day.

[3] Swami Anand

only after you get the drafts from Purushottam Dasji.

The foundation of the struggle was laid yesterday. In my view, it is a good beginning. I am sending you the documents. Treat them as confidential. I shall let you know what the Viceroy's reply is. Now that I am preoccupied with this matter the burden of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan rests on the two of you. All you can have from me is advice.

It would be a good idea to invite essays in English, Hindi or any other language, from persons considered qualified on the need for Hindi to be made the national language. The essays should be invited on behalf of the Secretary. Prepare a list of the persons whom you approach and sand it to me.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I am well but still weak in spirit. I hope I shall be going there in two or three days.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

299. LETTER TO THE PRESS OF SOUTH AFRICAN SITUATION [1]

[AHMEDABAD,
February 25, 1919]

TO
THE EDITOR
THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE
BOMBAY

SIR,

The cable received by me from Mr. Aswat, Chairman of the Transvaal British Indian Association, and given below, shows that a revival of satyagraha with all the attendant sufferings is imminent in

[1] This was published under the caption "Ill-treatment of Indians in South Africa" in *The Bombay Chronicle*. *The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 28-2-1919 and *New India*, 27-2-1919 also published it.

South Africa, unless the danger that threatens to overwhelm the Indians of the Transvaal is averted by prompt and effective action by the Government of India, and if necessary, by the public also.[1] The situation warrants a repetition of Lord Hardinge's action[2], and the immediate despatch to South Africa of a mission consisting of, say, a distinguished civilian, and an equally distinguished Indian publicist.

What is the situation? The Precious and Base Metals Act referred to in the cable affects the gold area of the Transvaal in the largest part of its Indian population. Krugersdorp is an important town near Johannesburg, and contains many Indian merchants, some of them owning stock probably worth 3 lakhs of rupees. If no relief is provided, it means ruin for the merchants and for those residing in the whole of the gold area. The goal of the Union Government seems to be, as has been openly declared by several Union statesmen, to reduce its Indian settlers to the position of hewers of wood and drawers of water. It is possible that the Court's interpretation is correct. If so, the Act itself must be changed and the Indian community must be saved, not merely because of their status as British subjects, but also because of the Passive Resistance Settlement of 1914, which protects vested or existing rights.

[1] The cable requested: "Legal proceedings under Precious Base Metals Act, 1908 resulted against Indian Merchants: Long-standing Krugersdorp area affect judgment. Virtual ruination mercantile community throughout Witwatersrand. Transvaal Ordinance 9, 1912, Relief Act and other laws affecting Indian community rigorously enforced object being elimination Indian trade benefit European competitors British community emphatically protest against cruel and reactionary policy. Significant that action taken almost simultaneously with Armistice. Community subject such policy poor mark appreciation under Indian sacrifices for Empire during war. Community earnestly appeals for protection meanwhile endeavouring get matter verificated before Bar assembly Capetown. Please help every possible way. Colonel Shaw maintains being present when Hon. Gokhale and self made voluntary statement to Smuts that persons outside Union even on urgent matters need not be admitted on temporary or visiting permits provided those within Union are treated fairly. One Mohammed Essak, Durban died leaving estate forty thousand relatives. Mauritius Interior refuses temporary permits for administration purpose notwithstanding any deposit. Government started policy based on late Hon. Gokhale's statement. Kindly clear up point. Government object harass Indian every possible way. Community in great distress unless matters improve reluctantly resist, maintenance self-respect, honour motherland, advise."

[2] Sir Benjamin Robertson was deputed by the Viceroy to represent the Government of India in the negotiations with the South African Government on the Indian question preceding the Gandhi-Smuts settlement of 1914.

The judgment is a direct attack upon Indian liberty in pursuance of the policy referred to by me. The Government want further to harass the community throughout the Union by refusing facilities for conservation of its present Indian population. They cannot remain in it, if they may not receive occasional visitors, if, on the death of a propertied man, his trusted relatives may not enter the Union in order to administer his affairs. I can understand the dominant community in South Africa not wishing to have an unlimited influx of people alien to them in civilization. But it is impossible to understand a policy of ruthless extermination, side by side, with a profession of loyalty to a common Empire. Moreover, this refusal to issue temporary permits is a breach of the Settlement. It has been all along understood that temporary permits would be granted, whenever the necessity arose. Surely nobody could question it in the late Mr. Mahommed Essak's case quoted by Mr. Aswat in his cablegram. The reference to the late Mr. Gokhale in this connection is a libel on a sacred name. After the termination of the interview, Mr. Gokhale came directly to the hotel where we were staying. I had the privilege of being his secretary and he related to me the whole of the conversation between ministers and himself and there was not a word about his having consented to the stoppage of temporary permits under any circumstances whatsoever. He had no authority to enter into any agreement. He went only to learn and to plead. Your readers will recall that at the historic meeting field in Bombay upon his return from South Africa, he declared publicly that he had no authority to negotiate a settlement and that he had agreed to nothing. As representing the Indian community, I was party to the Settlement of 1914. If any such agreement had been made, surely it would at least have formed part of the many discussions between General Smuts and myself. It is worthy of note that General Smuts is not now in South Africa. If he was asked, I doubt not that he would repudiate Colonel Shaw's allegation.

The cablegram adds that there are many other harassments going on throughout the Union. We are supposed to be on the eve of embarkation upon Reforms that are to eventuate in the near future in full Responsible Government. What answer has India to give to Mr. Aswat's pathetic appeal? The hundred thousand Indians of the Union have a right to look up to the Government of India and the people for the protection of their elementary rights.

Yours, etc.,

M. K . GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-2-1919

300. SUMMARY OF ROWLATT BILLS

[Before *February 26, 1919*][1]

These Bills have come to be known as the Black Bills. A strong agitation has been going on against them all over India and the Bills have been felt to be so oppressive that satyagraha has been started against them. Several men and women have taken the Satyagraha Pledge. A body known as the Satyagraha Sabha has been formed and the people in general have also been advised to take this Pledge. The pledge commits the satyagrahi to sacrifice his all for his honour. People who take such an extreme Pledge and those advising them to do so must have strong reasons for acting as they do. The satyagrahis have declared in their Pledge that these Bills are unjust, that they are subversive of the principle of the liberty of the subject and destructive of the elementary rights of an individual. It is necessary to prove to the people the propriety of these adjectives and the evidence must be in the Bills themselves—so that [they may see how] submission to laws which deserve such epithets is forfeiting one's humanity and accepting slavery, and those who form such an impression after going through the summary below owe it as a duty to sign the Satyagraha Pledge. It is a summary of the Bills, with those Sections omitted which are irrelevant for the purpose of our criticism and whose omission does no injustice to the Government, and with those Sections printed in black type which we have felt to be especially oppressive. Both the Bills are before the Legislature and have been named in the *Gazette* Bill No. 1 and Bill No. 2 of 1919. Bill No. 2, as its preamble suggests, goes further than the ordinary criminal law. This second Bill seems to us to be the more dangerous of the two and a summary of it is therefore given first.

SUMMARY OF BILL NO. 2 OF 1919

The object of the Bill is to make provision that the ordinary criminal law should be supplemented and emergency powers should be exercisable by the Government for the purpose of dealing with dangerous situations.

The Government has obtained the previous approval of the Secretary of State-in-Council in England for enacting this law.

[1] *Vide* reference in the following item.

Section 1. This Bill may be called The Criminal Law Emergency Powers Bill.

It extends to the whole of India.

SOME NOTEWORTHY SECTIONS

[Section 3.] If the Governor-General-in-Council is satisfied that offences of a certain character[1] are prevalent in the whole or any part of India and that, in the interest of public safety, it is necessary to provide for speedy trial of such offences, he may, by notification in the *Gazette* [*of India*], bring this Act into force in the area specified in the notification.

Section 4. Where the Local Government is of opinion that any person should be tried in accordance with the provisions of this Act, it may order any officer of the Government to prefer a written information to the Chief Justice against that person.

Such order may be made in respect of any [scheduled] offence *even if such offence was committed before the issue of the notification* in the *Gazette* bringing the Act into force in a particular area.

The information shall state the offence charged and, so far as known, the name, place of residence, and the time and place when and where the offence is alleged to have been committed and all particulars within the knowledge of the prosecuting officer so that the accused might know the offence he is charged with.

The Chief Justice may by order require any information to be amended so as to supply further particulars and such information or amended information shall be served upon the accused.

Section 5 provides that, upon such information being served, the Chief Justice shall nominate three of the High Court Judges for the trial of the information.

Section 6. The court may sit at such place or places in the Province as it may consider desirable, though the Governor-General in-Council has the power, by a notification, to order the transfer of the trial to any other place if considered necessary in the interest of justice.

Section 9. After the charge is framed, the accused shall be entitled to ask for an adjournment for a period not exceeding ten days. Section 10 provides that the court is bound to arrange for the

[1] In the Bill "Scheduled Offences"

evidence of each witness to be recorded only in summary.

Comment : Even a layman will readily see that recording only the summary of evidence can lead to serious miscarriage of justice. No judge can know in advance, before all the witnesses have been examined, what weight to attach to which part of evidence.

Section 11. The court, if it is of opinion that such a course is necessary in the public interest or for the protection of a witness, may prohibit or restrict the publication or disclosure of its proceedings or any part thereof.

Section 12. No questions shall be put by the court to the accused until the close of the case for the prosecution. Thereafter, and before the accused enters on his defence, the court shall inform the accused that he is entitled, if he so desires, to give evidence on oath on his own behalf, and shall at the same time inform him that if he does so he will be liable to cross-examination.

If the accused states that he desired to give evidence on oath, the court may put any question to him the reply to which may prove his guilt.

Section 14 provides that in the event of any difference of opinion among the members of the court, the opinion of the majority shall prevail.

Section 15. If in the course of the trial, the accused is discovered to have committed any offences other than the one he is charged with, he may be charged with and convicted of these as well.

Section 17. The judgment of the court shall be final and conclusive and no High Court shall have authority to revise any order or sentence of the court.

PART II

Section 20. If the Governor-General-in-Council is satisfied that movements which, in his opinion, are likely to lead to the commission of offences against the State are being promoted in the whole or any part of India, he may, by a notification, bring the provisions of this Part into effect in the area specified in it.

Section 21. Where, in the opinion of the Local Government, there are reasonable grounds for believing that any person is or has been actively concerned in any movement of the nature referred to above, it may give all or any of the following directions: That such person

(a) shall execute a bond for good conduct for a period not exceeding one year;

(b) shall remain or reside in any area specified in the order;

(c) shall notify his residence and any change of residence as ordered;

(d) shall abstain from any act which, in the opinion of the Local Government, is calculated to disturb the public peace or is prejudicial to the public safety;

(e) shall report himself to such police officer and at such periods as may be specified in the order.

Comment: Under this Section, an order of this kind may be passed against any person merely on suspicion and without a trial.

Section 23. Any officer [authorized by the Government] may use all means reasonably necessary to enforce compliance with an order as above.

Section 24. An order issued under Section 21 above shall continue in force for a period of one month only.

Section 25. When the Local Government makes an order as above, such Government shall, as soon as may be, forward to the investigating authority to be constituted under this Act a concise statement in writing setting forth all particulars relevant to the order and the grounds for making it.

The investigating authority shall then hold an inquiry *in camera*, summon the person in question at some stage in its proceedings and hear any explanation he may have to offer, provided that the investigating authority shall not disclose to the person any fact the communication of which might endanger the public safety or the safety of any individual, and provided further *that neither the Local Government nor the person in question shall be entitled to be represented at such inquiry by a pleader.*

The inquiry shall be conducted in such manner as the investigating authority considers best suited to elicit the facts of the case *and, in making the inquiry, such authority shall not be bound to observe the rules of the law of evidence.*

On completion of the inquiry, the investigating authority shall report its conclusions to the Local Government.

If the investigating authority has not completed the inquiry within the period for which the duration of the order is limited the

Local Government may extend the period on a recommendation to that effect by the investigating authority.

Section 26. On receipt of the report of the investigating authority, the Local Government may discharge the order made by it or may make any other order which it is authorized to make; any order so made shall recite the conclusions of the investigating authority and a copy of the order shall be furnished to the person in question.

No order made by the Local Government shall continue in force for more than one year, provided that, on the expiry of the order, it may make another order if it is satisfied that such a course is necessary in the interests of public safety.

No order made as herein provided shall continue in force for more than a year from the date on which it was made, though on the expiry of such an order the Local Government may renew it for a further period of one year. An order may also be discharged at any time by the Local Government, or altered or substituted by any other order without reference to the investigating authority mentioned above.

Comment: This means that the Local Government may issue any order at its discretion and that even the nominal investigating authority will serve no useful purpose.

Section 27. Any person who fails to comply with an order as above shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months, or with fine which may extend to a thousand rupees, or with both.

Section 29. The investigating authority shall consist of three persons of whom one shall be a person having held a judicial office not inferior to that of a District and Sessions Judge and one shall be a person not in the service of the Government.

Section 30. The Local Government shall appoint Visiting Committees to interview the persons under restraint at specified periods and shall by rules prescribe the functions of such committees.

PART III

Section 32. If the Governor-General-in-Council is satisfied that in the whole or any part of India offences of a certain character are prevalent to such an extent as to endanger the public safety, he may, by notification in the *Gazette*, bring this Part into force in the area

specified therein.

Section 33. Where, in the opinion of the Local Government, any person has been or is concerned in such area in any offence of that kind, it may make in respect of such person any order authorized in Part II and may further order (a) the arrest of any such person without warrant; (b) the confinement of any such person in such place and under such conditions and restrictions as it may specify; (c) the search of any place specified in the order which, in the opinion of the Local Government has been, is being or is about to be used by any such person in such a manner as to endanger the public safety. The arrest of such a person may be effected at any place where he may be found by any police officer or any other officer to whom the order may be directed.

An order for confinement of a person or the search of a place may be carried out by any officer to whom it may be directed and such officer may use all reasonable means for enforcing the same. The person so arrested may, pending further orders, be committed in custody by the arresting officer for a period not exceeding fifteen days.

An officer executing an order for the search of any place may seize and dispose of anything found in such place, which he has reason to believe is being used or is likely to be used for any purpose prejudicial to the public safety.

Section 36. Where an order has been made under Section 33, the provisions of Sections 22 to 26 shall apply in the same way as if the order were an order made under Section 21.

Comment: See comment on Sections 22 to 26.

Section 37. Any person who fails to comply with any order made under the provisions of Part III shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year or with fine, or with both.

PARTS IV AND V

On the expiration of the Defence of India Act, every person who was held prisoner under Section 37 [at the time of the expiration of the Act] and who has in the opinion of the Local Government been concerned in any scheduled offence, and every person who is [on such expiration] in confinement in accordance with the provisions of the Bengal State Prisoners Regulation, 1818, shall be deemed to be in

prison under [the provisions of] Part III above.

No order under this Act shall be called in question in any court, and no suit or prosecution or other legal proceedings shall lie against any person for anything which is in good faith done or intended to be done under this Act. All powers given by this Act shall be in addition to any other powers conferred by or under any enactment.

BILL NO. 1 OF 1919

The object of this Bill is to amend the Indian Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code so as to put effective curbs on activities dangerous to the State. It creates a new offence, as under:

Any person found in possession of a seditious document or intending to publish or circulate such document will, unless he proves that it was in his possession for a lawful purpose, be punishable with imprisonment extending to a period of two years or with fine, or with both.

In this Section, a seditious document is defined as a document containing any writing or sign inciting violence against the Crown or its Government or against officers or any class of officers or any individual officer in the service of the Government, or inciting anyone to wage war against the Crown or to assemble weapons with the intention of waging such war.

Comment: This means that, if any book or paper believed to be seditious is found in the pocket of an innocent youth ignorant of its contents, he would be taken to be guilty unless he proves that he was carrying it for a lawful purpose. This new offence alters one of the fundamental principles of British justice inasmuch as, instead of the prosecution having to prove the guilt of the accused, it is the latter who will have to establish his innocence. If I am charged with anything, how can I prove that I am not guilty? This can only mean that I shall be in jail.

When trying offences against the State mentioned in the Indian Penal Code, the court is free to order, if it thinks fit, that the accused, even after he has served the sentence of imprisonment passed on him, should execute a bond of good conduct for two years thereafter. Any person who, having been served with a restraint order, under the provisions of this Bill, to report, subsequent to his release, his place of residence and any change therein, may be directed by the Local

Government by an order in writing to abide by any of the following conditions:

(a) the person in question must not enter or reside or stop in any specified area;

(b) he should confine himself to a particular part of British India;

(c) he must not address any public meeting called to discuss issues which might lead to breach of the peace or public excitement or to circulate any written or printed information relating to such issues or to extend support to any political matter.

Comment: This means that, even after a person has suffered eno-ugh for an alleged offence, he may not expect to be free from harassment by the Government.

ALTERATIONS MADE BY SELECT COMMITTEE[1]

Its report was published on March 1. We list below the important changes which follow from the part of the report which has received the approval of a majority. It has not been signed by the Hon'ble Pandit Malaviya, the Hon'ble Vithalbhai Patel and the Hon'ble Mr. Khaparde. The Hon'ble Mr. Surendranath Banerjea, the Hon'ble Mr. Shastriar and the Hon'ble Mr. M. Shafi have appended a minute of dissent in which they have suggested several important changes.

The Committee points out that, though it has made a few changes in Bill No. 2, it has hesitated to alter its basic principles. If at all, they can be altered only by the Imperial Legislative Council.

The Bill, in its original form, was intended to be a permanent measure; the Committee has recommended that it be limited to three years.

The Bill, in its original form, applied to any type of scheduled offence. The Select Committee has recommended that it should apply only to the offences of waging war and inciting rebellion against the State.

Section 9 of the draft Bill enabled the accused to ask for an adjournment of ten days; this has now been changed to 14 days.

Under Section 10, the Judge was required to record a summary of the evidence. Now the evidence will have to be recorded in full

[1] What follows was evidently added after March 1.

either by the Judge or by a clerk appointed by him.

Section 12 will be so amended that, if the accused declines to tender evidence himself, the advocate for the prosecution will not be permitted to comment on the fact.

Under Section 21, the Government is authorized to demand a bond of good conduct without showing any reason. Now it will be required to state the reason and make out a case.

Under Section 23, the officer was authorized to use any means. Now, he will not be able to employ unreasonable force.

Section 25 lays down what may be adduced against the accused. In the draft Bill it appeared to give freedom to the Government to adduce any facts it chose. This will now be amended so that the Government will be able to adduce only such facts as are relevant to the case.

Under Section 26, the accused could be detained for a period extending to three years. Now the Government will have power to do so for a period extending to two years and the case will have to be referred to the investigating authority on every occasion.

Section 33 seemed to imply that the accused could even be confined with the ordinary criminals. It is now made clear that he will have to be kept apart.

In Section 34, the period for which the accused could be held in custody without orders from the Government has been fixed at seven days.

In Section 40, the period of one month has been reduced to 21 days.

Comment: It must be admitted that the alterations suggested by the Select Committee do effect some improvements in the original Bill but they leave the basic principle of the Bill untouched, and the Bill can be used to harass people so much that, as the Hon'ble Mr. Shastriar has pointed out, even the members of the new Councils with enlarged powers which are to come into being will tremble while making any comments and be able to avail themselves of their nominal freedom only by turning themselves flatterers. If this is true as regards members of the Legislature, what will be the condition of the defenceless, ignorant people? It is the duty of every thinking Indian to save the people from this danger, a duty one can discharge only by offering satyagraha.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 9-3-1919

301. INSTRUCTIONS TO VOLUNTEERS

February 26, 1919[1]

The following instructions to satyagraha volunteers have been issued by the Committee of the Sabha to be strictly followed in taking signatures.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

Volunteers shall read and explain the Satyagraha Pledge to every intending signatory before taking his signature to the vow. The Pledge is in three parts: The first lays down the objects of the Pledge. It declares that the signatories are of opinion that the Rowlatt Bills are "unjust, subversive of the principle of liberty and justice, and destructive of the elementary rights of individuals". In order to be able to make this statement one must fully understand the Rowlatt Bills, hence it is the duty of the volunteers to explain the Bills clearly to the intending signatory.

The vow forms the second part of the Pledge. Here the signatory solemnly affirms that he will refuse civilly to disobey certain laws. Volunteers must explain to the signatory the full significance of the word "civilly". For instance, to break moral laws is not civil disobedience. Nor is it civil disobedience to be discourteous to officials with whom one may have to deal, while disobeying laws. On the other hand the possession and distribution to the public of literature proscribed by Government and which one sincerely believes to be harmless, would be civil disobedience. Volunteers must explain to the would-be signatory with the help of such illustrations the full significance of the Pledge.

Volunteers must explain to every intending signatory that he must be prepared to bear every kind of suffering and to sacrifice, if necessary, both his person and property. He should also be made to understand that he must be prepared to carry on the struggle single-handed even if left alone. The volunteer must accept the signature only after satisfying himself that the signatory is prepared to take all these risks.

The third part of the Pledge declares that the satyagrahi will during the struggle, fearlessly adhere to truth and *ahimsa* for instance

[1] *Vide Mahadevbhaini Diary*.

he must not misrepresent anything or hurt anybody's feelings. Volunteers must urge upon people necessity of fully realizing the grave responsibility of adhering to truth and *ahimsa* before signing the Pledge. Volunteers must not speak of things they do not understand and must not hold out false hopes to anybody. If they find themselves unable to explain anything, they must consult the Committee or refer the would-be signatory to it. Ahimsa includes *advesha*. Volunteers therefore must never resort to unfair criticism of the movement. If in performing their duties they are obstructed by the police or others, they must not lose their temper but must courteously explain to those opposing them, their (volunteers') duty and their determination under any circumstances to perform the same.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Every volunteer taking signatures has to remember that a single intelligent recruit to satyagraha is worth a hundred signatories who have not realized their responsibility. Volunteers must therefore never aim at merely increasing the number of signatories.

2. The volunteer shall have to carefully read and understand the summary[1] of the Rowlatt Bills published by the Sabha[2] and must explain the same to such would-be signatories as have not read the Bills or the summary.

3. In explaining the Pledge the volunteer must lay due emphasis upon the fact that the real strength, the true test of the satyagraha, lies in his capacity to bear pain and must warn the signatory that resort to satyagraha may lead to loss of personal liberty and property and ask him to sign the Pledge only if he is prepared for these sacrifices. If the volunteer is then convinced that the would-be signatory has made up his mind he will take his signature.

4. Volunteers must not accept the signatures of persons under 18 and students. And even in the case of those over 18 he must make sure that the signatory has decided after careful consideration. Volunteers must not induce persons to sign, upon whose earnings their families are solely dependent for their maintenance.

5. After taking the signature, the volunteer must himself take down the designation and full address of the signatory in neat and legible

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The words "published by the Sabha" do not occur in the Gujarati version of the instructions in *Mahadevbhaini Diary*.

handwriting. If the signature is not legible the volunteer should copy it down neatly. He must note the date on which the signature is taken.

6. The volunteer must attest every signature.

The Bombay Chronicle 12-3-1919; also Young India, 12-3-1919

302. LETTER TO THE PRESS ON SATYAGRAHA PLEDGE

[*February 26, 1919*][1]

I enclose herewith the Satyagraha Pledge regarding the Rowlatt Bills. The step taken is probably the most momentous in the history of India. I give my assurance that it has not been hastily taken. Personally I have passed many a sleepless night over it. I have weighed the consequences of the act. I have endeavoured duly to appreciate Government's position. But I have been unable to find any justification for the extraordinary Bills. I have read the Rowlatt Committee's Report. I have gone through its narrative with admiration. Its reading has driven me to conclusions just the opposite of the Committee's. I should conclude from the Report that secret violence is confined to isolated and very small parts of India, and to a microscopic body of people. The existence of such men is truly a danger to society. But the passing of the Bills designed to affect the whole of India and its people arms the Government with powers, out of all proportion to the situation sought to be dealt with, is a greater danger and the Committee utterly ignore the historical fact that the millions in India are by nature the gentlest on earth.

Now look at the setting of the Bills. Their introduction is accompanied by certain assurances given by the Viceroy regarding the Civil Service and the British commercial interests. Many of us are filled with the greatest misgivings about the Viceregal utterance. I frankly confess I do not understand its full scope and intention. If it means that the Civil Service and the British commercial interests are to be held superior to those of India and its political and commercial requirements, no Indian can accept the doctrine. It can but end in a fratricidal struggle within the Empire. Reforms may or may not come. The need of the moment is a proper and just understanding upon this vital issue. No tinkering with it will produce real satisfaction. Let the great Civil Service Corporation understand that it can remain in India

[1] *Vide Mahadevbhai ki Diary*, Part I.

only as its trustee and servant not in name but in deed and let the British commercial houses understand that they can remain in India only to supplement her requirements and not to destroy indigenous art, trade and manufacture, and you have two measures to replace the Rowlatt Bills. They, I promise, will successfully deal with any conspiracy against the State. Sir George Lowndes simply added fuel to the fire when he flouted public opinion. He has forgotten his Indian history or he would have known that the Government he represents has before now surrendered its own considered opinion to the force of public opinion.

It will be now easy to see why I consider the Bills to be an unmistakable symptom of a deep-seated disease in the governing body. It needs, therefore, to be drastically treated. Subterranean violence will be the remedy applied by impetuous hot-headed youths who will have grown impatient of the spirit underlying the Bills and the circumstances attending their introduction. The Bills must intensify the hatred and ill-will against the State of which the deeds of violence are undoubtedly an evidence. The Indian covenanters by their determination to undergo every form of suffering make an irresistible appeal for justice to the Government towards which they bear no ill will and provide to the believers in the efficacy of violence as a means of securing redress of grievances with an infallible remedy, and withal a remedy that blesses those that use it and also those against whom it is used. If the covenanters know the use of this remedy, I fear no ill from it. I have no business to doubt their ability. They must ascertain whether the disease is sufficiently great to justify the strong remedy, and whether all milder ones have been tried. They have convinced themselves that the disease is serious enough, and that milder measures have utterly failed. The rest lies in the lap of the gods.

I am,

Yours,

From a photostat: S.N. 6440; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 1-3-1919

303. LETTER TO ''THE INDIAN SOCIAL REFORMER"

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 26, 1919

TO
THE EDITOR
THE INDIAN SOCIAL REFORMER

SIR,

I have read the paragraph in your issue of the 23rd instant[1] about the Patel Marriage Bill. I have never yet given an interview to anybody on the Bill, and the views attributed to me represent but a partial truth. Being laid up in bed, I had not taxed myself about the Bill, but having been asked by several people to express my opinion, I began to study the Bill, and as is my wont, I tried first to understand the author's position. The Hon. Mr. Patel told me there was no occasion for me to be in a hurry to form my views, as the Bill was not likely to come up for discussion before September, and in order to help me to study the Bill, he sent Mr. Daftari to me. Mr. Daftari has supplied me with a long and exhaustive memorandum on the subject. I have not yet been able to study it, and with the present programme of work before me, I do not know when I shall be able to study the memorandum which requires looking up old law cases. My position,

[1] In this issue, *The Indian Social Reformer* had quoted from a despatch of the Ahmedabad correspondent of *The Bombay Chronicle* in which the correspondent had written: "He (Mr. Gandhi) sees no objection in inter-marriages among the sub-castes of the Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra communities. There would, he held, be an infusion of fresh vigour among the present degenerate Rajputs if inter-marriages were frequent among the Rajputs, *Bhatias, Lohanas and Patidars*. There can conceivably be nothing wrong if inter-marriages among the *Modh and Srimali Bania* communities were the rule rather than the exception, but-on no account should the existing (*sic*) fourfold division be broken through. It is desirable to weld together the four main castes comprising twenty crores of Hindus, by neutralizing the centrifugal tendencies at present separating the various sub-castes in any main caste. Mr. Gandhi said, subject to the above modification, the Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya had promised his whole-hearted support when the Inter-Caste Marriage Bill would be referred to the Select Committee in the Imperial Legislative Council. In conclusion, Mahatma Gandhi pointed out how a wide chasm yawned between the Brahmin and the *Dhed* and warned the ardent advocates of marriage reform against short cuts to progress."

so far as I can state it, without the aforementioned study, is this: In my opinion, the question specially as between Brahmins and *Dheds*[1] does not arise in this connection at all. *Dheds* stand in the same relation to Brahmins as Kshatriyas, Vaishyas or Shoodras. Their peculiar disability is not affected either one way or the other by the Bill. If the Bill constitutes an attack upon *Varnashram*, as a believer in *Varnashram-dharma*, I should oppose it. I am told by orthodox friends that it does constitute such an attack. I am told by the supporters of the Bill that not only does it not interfere with *Varnashram*, but it merely seeks to restore the pre-British state of Hindu Law, which was wrongly interpreted by judges, who being ignorant of it, were guided by biassed or corrupt Pandits. Both sides have very able lawyers. Without deciding one way or the other, I have suggested that the effect of the Bill should be restricted to inter-marriages among sub-castes. This might satisfy the most ardent reformer at least as a first step, and would enable men like the Hon. Pandit Malaviya to support it.

I am,

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Indian Social Reformer, 2-3-1919

304. LETTER TO THE PRESS ON NATIONAL SCHOOL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

Magh Krishna Ekadashi, Samvat 1975 [*February 26, 1919*]

TO

THE EDITOR

SIR,

I am sure your readers know that a National School is being conducted in the Satyagraha Ashram for the past two years. Further admissions have been stopped, mainly because the teachers on the staff of the school wish to prepare and equip themselves fully for the requirements of the National School curriculum and because their number is not large enough. Just now the School needs at least five additional teachers. All teaching is done through Gujarati. Hence, even persons who possess a high proficiency only in Gujarati will serve the purpose. Since, however, higher education is given entirely

[1] An untouchable caste

through English, the need for men with proficiency in English will remain till such time as we have teachers who can impart higher education through Gujarati. Even so, the teachers at present on the staff being well-equipped in English, the School can take on men with high proficiency in Gujarati; in fact, it wants to encourage such men.

A few words about the School: It has three graduates [on its staff], with one music expert and an equally competent Sanskrit scholar. The Ashram and the School are situated on a beautiful spot on the banks of the Sabarmati. Quarters have been built for teachers here. They are paid enough to keep them above want. Two of the teachers draw no salary, since they do not need any, and, of the remaining three, the highest salary drawn by any one is Rs. 75. The School is in a position to pay up to this maximum to a competent teacher. In my view, anyone who works in this School will be taking part in an experiment which seems small enough at present but which, as time passes, will produce ever bigger results. If the experiment fails, it will not be for lack of effort. I trust that those who love the profession of teaching and who, though making their living through teaching, are interested primarily in teaching for itself and only incidentally as a means of livelihood will come forward to help this School.

Candidates must necessarily be in a fit state of health, for they are to learn as well as teach. They must know the fundamentals of agriculture, on which 80 per cent of India's population depends for its livelihood, and also of weaving, which used to be a means of living for hundreds of thousands of people. A knowledge of Hindi, too, is essential for those who undertake to work for national education. In my humble opinion, even from the point of view of their long-range economic interests, young men fresh from college will also do well to plunge into this experiment of national education. They will stand to lose nothing, and may possibly gain in some ways.

MOHANDAS K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 6430

305. TELEGRAM TO SYED HUSSAIN [1]

March 2, 1919

PLEDGE SHOULD BE SIGNED PRESENT FORM. IT GIVES WIDEST LATITUDE ANY DEFINITION LAWS COULD RESTRICT SCOPE PREVIOUS DEFINITION THEREFORE IMPOSSIBLE. COMMITTEE APPOINTED IN ORDER GUARD AGAINST HASTY INDIVIDUAL ACTION. LAWS FOR DISOBEDIENCE WILL BE MENTIONED TIME TO TIME AS PROGRESS CAMPAIGN MAY DEMAND. YOUR COMMITTEE MAY EITHER BE PART OF COMMITTEE HERE WHICH MAY BE CALLED CENTRAL COMMITTEE OR YOU MAY FORM YOUR INDEPENDENT COMMITTEE. GANDHI LEAVING FOR DELHI TOMORROW. SOME ONE MAY MEET HIM THERE IF NECESSARY.

From a photostat: S.N. 6441

306. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI [2]

[DELHI,
On or after *March 5, 1919*] [3]

I have not been able to write to you after the struggle commenced. I have simply had no time since then. You are probably thinking hard about the struggle, and may be wanting to join it too. But it is necessary that you go on with your task of teaching Hindi.

I have seen the Viceroy. The talk was extremely cordial and friendly. I got the impression that both of us understand each other but neither succeeded in convincing the other. An Englishman will not be argued into yielding; he yields only under compulsion of events. He is not worried about the result, and bears what he must. Knowing that events will take their course, he remains unconcerned and goes his way resolutely. He is very much in love with the strength

[1] Sent on behalf of Gandhiji

[2] The name of the addressee is inferred from the reference to Hindi teaching. Devdas had been in charge of this work in Madras.

[3] Satyagraha started in February 1919. Gandhiji met the Viceroy on March 5, 1919.

of his body and with armed might, is even proud of them a great deal. He readily yields to such strength and respects it. However, he recognizes moral force and, voluntarily or involuntarily, perhaps even against his will, yields to it. It is this moral force we are employing and, if it is genuinely moral, we shall win.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 6458

307. SPEECH OF ROWLATT BILLS, DELHI

March 7, 1919

Mr. Gandhi was prevented from delivering his address owing to weakness, but he asked Mr. Mahadev Desai to read it out for him. He did not think there was any necessity for him to comment on the Bills, which were the subject of severe criticism in the Press, but he would say something about the remedy of the disease appearing in the form of the Rowlatt Bills. The remedy was the satyagraha movement already launched in Bombay. Many well-known men and women had signed the Pledge. Satyagraha was a harmless, but unfailing remedy. It presupposed a superior sort of courage in those who adopted it— not the courage of the fighter. The soldier was undoubtedly ever ready to die, but he also wanted to kill the enemy. A satyagrahi was ever ready to endure suffering and ever lays down his life to demonstrate to the world the integrity of his purpose and the justice of his demands. His weapon was faith in God and he lived and worked in faith. In his faith, there was no room for killing or violence and none for untruth. It was the only weapon with which India could be rid of the Bills. He did not admit the Government's position that these Bills were necessary to cope with anarchy. He was convinced that they would bring more anarchy in their train. Certain acts of the Government were bound to be disliked by the people and redress was sought in the usual way by holding protest meetings and petitioning the Government, failing which, like the raw youths of Bengal, they resorted to violence and violence was disastrous to the country. The Bills themselves had arisen out of violence. The only alternative was satyagraha or civil disobedience of the laws of the Government and enduring all the sufferings such disobedience might entail. By satyagraha alone could India be rid of violence and her patient suffering was bound to bend the mightiest power. He hoped and prayed that by the aid of this spiritual weapon, India might demonstrate to the world the supreme difference between the Eastern and the Western civilizations and concluded with warning the people against hasty steps. No one should sign the Pledge without fully realizing the significance of the Rowlatt Bills or the Satyagraha Vow with all the suffering it might entail.

The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 13-3-1919

308. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

[DELHI,]

March 8, 1919

I am leaving this evening for Allahabad and I proceed thence to Bombay. Had I been in a fit state, I should certainly have waited on most of the signatories to the manifesto[1] against the satyagarha movement inaugurated against the Rowlatt Bills. I had hoped yesterday, as I was calling on Sir James Dubouley[2], to come down to you after leaving Sir James, but the interview lasted beyond 6 o'clock, and as I did not wish to miss my last meal, I hurried to Mr. Rudra's. I wanted to tell you yesterday, which I now do, that you would please tell the signatories that it was my desire to explain my position fully to them, more fully than I could through the Press, and that for the reasons above stated I could not do so. I wish to add—though it is perhaps superfluous —that my regard for those of the signatories whom I have the privilege of knowing is not affected in the slightest degree by the manifesto. It is my misfortune that I have failed to secure the concurrence of those whose opinion I value. Nevertheless, I am not without hope that as the struggle develops, they will see the brighter side of it and think with me that nothing but an energizing activity which satyagraha certainly is could have prevented the ambitious and high-spirited youths of the country from seeking questionable activities for want of a better.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6446

[1] Issued on March 2, by Sir D. E. Wachha, Sir Surendranath Banerjea, V. S. Srinivasa Sastri and other Moderate leaders

[2] Home Secretary, Government of India

309. SPEECH ON SATYAGRAHA, LUCKNOW

March 11, 1919

A public meeting of the supporters of the satyagraha movement inaugurated by Mr. Gandhi was held this morning at 8.30 in the Rifahaam Hall to hear Mr. Gandhi....

Then Mr. Gandhi, who was in too weak a condition of health to deliver a speech, in a few words explained the basic principles of satyagraha, and asked the audience to abstain from crying shame, as such behaviour went against satyagraha. Besides, all people could not reasonably be expected to join or approve of the movement. . . .

. . . Altogether eleven people including the Chairman took the Pledge. . . .

The Leader, I3-3-1919

310. TELEGRAM TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

IN THE TRAIN FROM LUCKNOW,

March 11, 1919

SO FAR AS ABLE GAUGE PUBLIC OPINION DURING WANDERINGS, I STATE IT IS INTENSELY STRONG. BEING UNUSED TO SACRIFICE THEMSELVES FOR PUBLIC GOOD, THEY MAY SEEM TO REMAIN IN-ACTIVE, BUT THE CUP OF BITTERNESS WILL BE FILLED TO THE BRIM IF THE BILLS ARE PER-SISTED IN. I HOPE THAT THOUGH WE DIFFER AS TO THE METHODS OF OPPOSING, I HOPE YOU WILL DULY VOICE PUBLIC OPINION BY OPPOSING PASSAGE OF THE BILLS.

From a photostat: S.N. 6451

311. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY[1]

CARE PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU,
ALLAHABAD,
March 11, 1919

EVEN AT THIS ELEVENTH HOUR I RESPECTFULLY ASK HIS EXCELLENCY AND HIS GOVERNMENT TO PAUSE AND CONSIDER BEFORE PASSING ROWLATT BILLS. WHETHER JUSTIFIED OR NOT THERE IS NO MISTAKING THE STRENGTH OF PUBLIC OPINION ON THE MEASURES. I AM SURE GOVERNMENT DO NOT INTEND INTENSIFYING EXISTING BITTERNESS. GOVERNMENT WILL RISK NOTHING BY DELAY, BUT BY EXPRESSLY BOWING TO PUBLIC OPINION WILL SMOOTH DOWN FEELING AND ENHANCE REAL PRESTIGE. I AM PROCEEDING TO BOMBAY TO-MORROW BY JUBBULPORE MAIL.

N. A. I.: Home: Political—A: March 1919: No. 250

312. LETTER TO J. L. MAFFEY

IN THE TRAIN FROM LUCKNOW,
March 11, 1919

DEAR MR. MAFFEY,

Here is copy of a telegram I have just sent to you. I do not wish to add anything to it, except a very personal word. All the time that satyagraha was going on in South Africa, I had the privilege of addressing General Smuts through his P.S., Mr. Lane. As the struggle developed, Mr. Lane veritably became the angel of peace between the Government as represented by Gen. Smuts and aliens as represented by me. Without his unfailing good nature and courtesy, probably the satisfactory result which was arrived at might not have been possible. May I hope for similar services from you? For as in South Africa, so in India, I shall ever have to worry you if the struggle is unfortunately prolonged, and I shall seize every occasion to bring Government and

[1] The letter as received and preserved in the National Archives of India bears the date line—Allahabad, March 12, 1919.

those I may represent, closer together.

I shall [be] in Bombay on the 13th instant, whilst Sabarmati (Ahmedabad) remains my permanent address. Letters addressed Laburnum [Road], Chowpati, Bombay, will reach me a day earlier for the time being.

I need hardly say that I had a prolonged interview with Mr. Shastriar. But in this business, there is a difference of ideals between him and me, and I could discover no meeting-ground between us.

I hope, Lord Chelmsford is free from fever now and that all its effects have disappeared.

Such a personal note should have been written in my own hand. But my recent sickness has left me disabled in more ways than one. My hand shakes as I write and it soon gets fatigued. I am therefore obliged to fall back upon dictation even for most intimate correspondence.[1]

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6449

313. SPEECH ON SATYAGRAHA, ALLAHABAD[2]

March 11, 1919

I am sorry that I am unable to speak to you myself. It is utterly impossible for my voice to reach the farthest end of this meeting. I have therefore to content myself with writing a few lines to be read for me.

It behoves everyone who wishes to take the Satyagraha Pledge to seriously consider all its factors before taking it. It is necessary to understand the principles of satyagraha, to understand the main features of the Bills known as the Rowlatt Bills and to be satisfied that they are so objectionable as to warrant the very powerful remedy of satyagraha being applied and finally to be convinced of one's ability to undergo every form of bodily suffering so that the soul may be set free and be under no fear from any human being or institution. Once in it there is no looking back. Therefore, there is no conception of defeat in satyagraha. A satyagrahi fights even unto death. It is thus

[1] The last paragraph is in Gandhiji's hand.

[2] This was read in English by the chairman, Syed Hussain, and in Hindi by Gandhiji's secretary, Mahadev Desai.

not an easy thing for everybody to enter upon it.

It therefore behoves a satyagrahi to be tolerant of those who do not join him. In reading reports of satyagraha meetings I often notice that ridicule is poured upon those who do not join our movement. This is entirely against the spirit of the Pledge. In satyagraha we expect to win over our opponents by self-suffering i.e., by love. The process whereby we hope to reach our goal is by so conducting ourselves as gradually and in an unperceived manner to disarm all opposition. Opponents as a rule expect irritation even violence from one another when both parties are equally matched. But when satyagraha comes into play the expectation is transformed into agreeable surprise in the mind of the party towards whom satyagraha is addressed till at last he relents and recalls the act which necessitated satyagraha. I venture to promise that if we act up to our Pledge day after day, the atmosphere around us will be purified and those who differ from us from honest motives, as I verily believe they do, will perceive that their alarm was unjustified. The violationists wherever they may be, will realize that they have in satyagraha a far more potent instrument for achieving reform than violence whether secret or open, and that it gives them enough work for their inexhaustible energy. And the Government will have no case left in defence of their measures, if as a result of our activity the cult of violence is notably on the wane if it has not entirely died out. I hope therefore that at satyagraha meetings we shall have no cries of shame, and no language betraying irritation or impatience either against the Government or our countrymen who differ from us and some of whom have for years been devoting themselves to the country's cause according to the best *of their ability.*

The Leader, 13-3-1919

314. SATYAGRAHA SABHA RULES[1]

The following are the draft rules of the Satyagraha Sabha.

CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTORY

1. This association shall be called the Satyagraha Sabha.
2. Its head office shall be situated in Bombay.
3. Its objects are to oppose until they are withdrawn the Bills

[1] Presumably drafted by Gandhiji

popularly known as Rowlatt Bills (Acts I & II of 1919), by,

(i) resort to satyagraha in terms of the Pledge[1] which is attached as Schedule A hereto and all other lawful means not inconsistent with satyagrahis.

4. The work of the Sabha shall be carried on by means of voluntary contributions from Members and non-Members.

5. Any person qualified under Rule 6 can become a Member of the Sabha.

CHAPTER II : CONSTITUTION

6. Any person who has signed the Satyagraha Pledge (Schedule A hereto), who has attained the age of 18 years and who is not a student in some school or college and who has been attested by a Member of the Sabha, duly authorized thereto by the Executive Committee, is entitled to become a Member of the Sabha.

7. The Sabha shall have an elected President, Vice-Presidents not exceeding three, three Hon. Secretaries two Hon. Treasurers.

8. The President of the Sabha shall be the ex-officio Chairman of the Executive Committee which shall appoint its own Vice-Chairman.

9. The Executive Committee shall consist of not more than 50 Members including a Chairman and Vice-Chairman not exceeding three. The office-bearers of the Sabha shall be ex-officio Members of the Executive Committee.

10. The Hon. Secretaries of the Sabha shall be the ex-officio Secretaries of the Executive Committee.

CHAPTER III : POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

11. The Executive Committee shall be in charge of all the Books and records of the Sabha; it shall stand possessed of all its funds.

12. The Executive Committee shall have the power to consider and decide from time to time what steps should be taken to give effect to the Pledge (Schedule A)[2].

13. The Executive Committee shall have the powers to do each and everything necessary to effect the objects of the Sabha.

14. The Executive Committee may recognize and start Branches of

[1] *Vide* "The Satyagraha Pledge", 24-2-1919.

[2] *The Bombay Chronicle*, 28-3-1919 here adds: "and shall be the Committee referred to in the Pledge".

the Sabha in the whole of the Bombay Presidency and may co-operate with the Satyagraha Societies and Associations in other parts of India having similar objects.

15. The Executive Committee shall meet at least once a week[1] and shall do so more often if the Hon. Secretaries call an urgent meeting. Special meeting of the Committee shall also be called on a requisition signed by 3 or more Members of the Committee specifying the object of the special meeting.

16. The Executive Committee may without assigning any reason by a 2/3rd majority of the total number of its Members expel any Member of the Sabha.

17. The quorum of meeting of the Executive Committee shall be 8 and at meetings of the General Body of Members 25.

18. The foregoing rules shall be subject to such alterations and additions as may be made from time to time by the Executive Committee and ratified by the Sabha.

19. A general meeting of the Members of the Sabha shall be held at least once a month or at any time at the instance of the Executive Committee or on requisition to the Honorary Secretaries which is signed by not less than ten Members provided that not less than 3 days' [notice is given].

Young India, 12-3-1919; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 28-3-1919

315. TELEGRAM TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

ALLAHABAD,
March 12, 1919

C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR
SALEM

AM DELIGHTED OVER YOUR DOINGS. HOPE REACH MADRAS END MONTH. ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY PASS FEW DAYS BOMBAY. JUST LEAVING FOR BOMBAY.

GANDHI

From the original: C. Vijayaraghavachariar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *The Bombay Chronicle* here has: "at not less than three days' notice.", omitting the rest of Rule 15.

316. LETTER TO SIR JAMES DUBOULAY

March 12, 1919

With reference to the Ali Brothers, I should like to say just one word. After the interview with you,[1] I have seen Maulana Abdul Bari Saheb of Lucknow whose disciples the Brothers are. And I must state that by still longer detaining the Brothers, the Government would be adding injustice to injustice. I do not know the art of Government and what I have seen of it throughout the world makes me look upon it not with any favour. But it does seem curious that the Government should ignore what is patent to everybody outside it, viz., the increasing intensity of the smouldering fire which they are simply hiding under the ashes called repression. And is it good Government to imprison ability, honesty, and religious conviction ? I do wish I could convince you of the necessity of setting the Brothers free, and you in your turn could convince the Government.

I am leaving for Bombay today. My permanent address is Sabarmati, Ahmedabad, but for some days my address will be Laburnum Road, Gamdevi, Bombay.

N. A. I.: Home: Political—A: July 1919: No. 1 & K.W.

317. CABLE TO H. S. L. POLAK

BOMBAY,[2]
March 12, I919[3]

TO
HENRY POLAK
[LONDON]

—LCO KALOPH[4] STRAND LN—

ROWLATT BILLS PASSING. NINETY WELL-KNOWN MEN WOMEN DECLARE CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE LAWS THEIR COMMITTEE SELECTS. STEP TAKEN DELIBERATION. NOTICE VICEROY. VICEREGAL ASSURANCES CIVIL SERVICE BRITISH COMMERCE

[1] On March 7 at Delhi; *vide* "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 8-3-1919.

[2] As in the source

[3] *ibid*

[4] Telegraphic address of H. S. L. Polak, anagram (H. Polak = KALOPH)

ALARMING. REQUIRE CLEAR ENUNCIATION. HOPE YOU MOVING TRANSVAAL INDIAN SITUATION.

GANDHI

From the original cablegram: C.W. 1117. Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

318. SPEECH ON ROWLATT BILLS, BOMBAY

March 14, 1919

At the Bombay meeting against the Rowlatt Bills on 14th March, 1919, Mr. Gandhi's speech which was in Gujarati was read out by his secretary.

I am sorry that owing to my illness, I am unable to speak to you myself and have to have my remarks read to you. You will be glad to know that Sannayasi Shraddhanandji is gracing the audience today by his presence. He is better known to us as Mahatma Munshiramji, the Governor of Gurukul. His joining our army is a source of strength to us. Many of you have perhaps been keenly following the proceedings of the Viceregal Council. Bill No. 2 is being steamrollered by means of the official majority of the Government and in the teeth of the unanimous opposition from the non-official members. I deem it to be an insult to the latter, and through them to the whole of India. Satyagraha has become necessary as much to ensure respect for duly expressed public opinion, as to have the mischievous Bills withdrawn. Grave responsibility rests upon the shoulders of the satyagrahis though, as I have so often said, there is no such thing as defeat in satyagraha, it does not mean that victory can be achieved without satyagrahis to fight for it, i.e., to suffer for it. The use of this matchless force is comparatively a novelty. It is not the same thing as passive resistance which has been conceived to be a weapon that can be wielded most effectively only by the strongest-minded, and you may depend upon it that six hundred men and women who in this Presidency have signed the Pledge are more than enough for our purpose, if they have strong wills and invincible faith in their mission, and that [it] is in the power of truth to conquer untruth which satyagrahis believe the Bills represent. I use the word "untruth" in its widest sense. We may expect often to be told—as we have been told already by Sir William Vincent—that the Government will not yield to any threat of passive resistance. Satyagraha is not a threat, it is a fact; and even such a mighty Government as the Government of India will have to yield if we are true to our Pledge. For, the Pledge is not a

small thing. It means a change of heart. It is an attempt to introduce the religious spirit into politics. We may no longer believe in the doctrine of tit for tat; we may not meet hatred by hatred, violence by violence, evil by evil; but we have to make a continuous and persistent effort to return good for evil. It is of no consequence that I give utterance to these sentiments. Every satyagrahi has to live up to them. It is a difficult task, but with the help of God, nothing is impossible. (Loud cheers.)

Mahatma Gandhi: His Life, Writings & Speeches, pp. 341-2

319. TELEGRAM TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

GRANT ROAD,
March 15, 1919

VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR
SALEM

REACHING MADRAS TUESDAY MORNING. PLEASE AVOID ALL PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS.[1] HEALTH TOO WEAK FOR THEM.

GANDHI

From the original: C. Vijayaraghavachariar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

320. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
Fagan Sud 15 [*March 16, 1919*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have your letter. Don't at all expect a long letter from me these days. Santok will soon be there and you will have some relief. Moreover, she will be returning successful from Rajkot and will therefore be more cheerful. Mahatma Munshiram will leave Surat by the evening train on the l9th and arrive in Ahmedabad the next

[1] In protest against the Rowlatt Bills; *vide* "Speech on Satyagraha, Madras", 20-3-1919.

morning. The train reaches there at six. He will of course stay in the Ashram. He will be there on the 20th and the 21st. For these two days, you, or someone else whom he knows, should attend on him. Accompany him wherever he goes. Take him to the place in Ahmedabad where good work on the handloom is being done. In any case, acquaint him with all the activities of the Ashram. It is necessary that he should have a separate session with the teachers and understand everything. Drench him with love. He will attend the annual function of the workers on the 20th evening, will address a public meeting on the 21st and leave for Ajmer or Surat the same evening. Arrangements for a car will be made by Anasuyabehn. In case she forgets, do so yourself. Take him by car from Ahmedabad to the Ashram. Give him a sample of Ashram cloth as a gift. When he leaves . . . on you ....[1]

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5773. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

321. SPEECH ON SATYAGRAHA, MADRAS[2]

March 18, 1919

You will forgive me for saying the few words that I want to say just now sitting in the chair. I am under strict medical orders not to exert myself, having got a weak heart. I am, therefore, compelled to have some assistance and to get my remarks read to you. I wish to say one word to you. Beware before you sign the Pledge. But if you do, you will see to it that you shall never undo the Pledge you have signed. May God help you and me in carrying out the Pledge.

[Mahadev Desai, after a few words of introduction, read out the following message:]

I regret that owing to heart-weakness, I am unable to speak to you personally. You have no doubt attended many meetings, but those that you have been attending of late are different from the others in that at the meetings to which I have referred some immediate tangible action, some immediate definite sacrifice has been demanded of you for the purpose of averting a serious calamity that has overtaken us in the shape of what are known as the Rowlatt Bills. One of them, Bill No. 1, has undergone material alterations and its further

[1] The rest of the letter is not available.

[2] The meeting was held at Triplicane Beach S. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar presided.

consideration has been postponed. In spite, however, of the alteration, it is mis-chievous enough to demand opposition. The second Bill has probably at this very moment been finally passed by that Council, for in reality you can hardly call the Bill as having been passed by that august body when all its non-official members unanimously and in strong language opposed it. The Bills require to be resisted not only because they are in themselves bad, but also because Government, who are responsible for their introduction, have seen fit practically to ignore public opinion and some of its members have made it a boast that they can so ignore that opinion. So far, it is common cause between the different schools of thought in the country. I have, however, after much prayerful consideration, and after very careful examination of the Government's standpoint, pledged myself to offer satyagraha against the Bills, and invited all men and women who think and feel with me to do likewise. Some of our countrymen, including those who are among the best of the leaders, have uttered a note of warning, and even gone so far as to say that this satyagraha movement is against the best interests of the country. I have naturally the highest regard for them and their opinion. I have worked under some of them. I was a babe when Sir Dinshaw Wachha and Babu Surendranath Banerjea were among the accepted leaders of public opinion in India. Mr. Sastriar is a politician who has dedicated his all to the country's cause. His sincerity, his probity are all his own. He will yield to no one in the love of the country. There is a sacred and indissoluble tie binding me to him. My upbringing draws me to the signatories of the two Manifestoes[1]. It is not, therefore, without the greatest grief and much searching of heart that I have to place myself in opposition to their wishes. But there are times when you have to obey a call which is the highest of all, i.e., the voice of conscience, even though such obedience may cost many a bitter tear, nay, even more, separation from friends, from family, from the State to which you may belong, from all that you have held as dear as life itself. For, this obedience is the law of our being. I have no further and other defence to offer for my conduct. My regard for the signatories to the Manifesto remains undiminished, and my faith in the efficiency of satyagraha is so great that I feel that if those who have taken the Pledge will be true to it, we

[1] Issued by Sir D. E. Wachha, Sir Surendranath Banerjea, V. S. Srinivasa Sastriar and other Moderate leaders on March 2, and by the Madras Moderates on March 18.

shall be able to show to them that they will find when we have come to the end of this struggle that there was no cause for alarm or misgivings. There is, I know, resentment felt, even by some satyagrahis over the Manifestoes. I would warn satyagrahis that such resentment is against the spirit of satyagraha. I would personally welcome an honest expression of difference of opinion from any quarter and more so from friends because it puts us on our guard. There is too much recrimination, innuendo and insinuation in our public life, and if the satyagraha movement purges it of this grave defect, as it ought to, it will be a very desirable by-product. I wish further to suggest to satyagrahis that any resentment of the two Manifestoes would be but a sign of weakness on our part. Every movement, and satyagraha most of all, must depend upon its own inherent strength, but not upon the weakness or silence of its critics.

Let us, therefore, see wherein lies the strength of satyagraha. As the name implies, it is in an insistence on truth which dynamically expressed means love; and by the law of love we are required not to return hatred for hatred, violence for violence but to return good for evil. As Shrimati Sarojini Devi told you yesterday, the strength lies in a definite recognition of the true religious spirit and action corresponding to it, and when once you introduce the religious element in politics, you revolutionize the whole of your political outlook. You achieve reform then not by imposing suffering on those who resist it, but by taking the suffering upon yourselves and so in this movement we hope by the intensity of our sufferings to affect and alter the Government's resolution not to withdraw these objectionable Bills. It has, however, been suggested that the Government will leave the handful of satyagrahis severely alone and not make martyrs of them. But there is here, in my humble opinion, bad logic and an unwarranted assumption of fact. If satyagrahis are left alone, they have won a complete victory, because they will have succeeded in disregarding the Rowlatt Bills and even other laws of the country and in having thus shown that civil disobedience of a Government is held perfectly harmless. I regard the statement as an unwarranted assumption of fact, because it contemplates the restriction of the movement only to a handful of men and women. My experience of satyagraha leads me to believe that it is such a potent force that, once set in motion, it ever spreads till at last it becomes a dominant factor in the community in which it is brought into play, and if it so spreads, no Government can neglect it. Either it must yield to it or imprison the workers in the

movement. But I have no desire to argue. As the English proverb says, the proof of the pudding lies in the eating. The movement for better or for worse has been launched. We shall be judged not by our words, but solely by our deeds. It is, therefore, not enough that we sign the Pledge. Our signing it is but an earnest of our determination to act up to it, and if all who sign the Pledge act according to it, I make bold to promise that we shall bring about the withdrawal of the two Bills and neither the Government nor our critics will have a word to say against us. The cause is great, the remedy is equally great; let us prove worthy of them both.

Mahatma Gandhi: His Life, Writings & Speeches, pp. 343-7

322. SPEECH AT MADRAS LABOUR UNION[1]

March 19, 1919

I am very pleased to meet you this evening. I should have loved to speak to you in Tamil, but unfortunately, all my attempts to learn Tamil have so far failed. You will please therefore forgive me for my inability to address you in your mother tongue. As I look at the faces before me, I see that many of them resemble those that I was used to see in South Africa. I have worked with them, I have lived with them, I have eaten with them, and company with you puts me in mind of the days I have spent with them.

You know that money cannot do without labour nor labour do without money. Part of what your masters earn with your labour is distributed to you. You thus enjoy a position of privilege. But there are also responsibilities attaching to it and I shall tell you some of them.

First and foremost, you should be truthful, for a man without truth is, like a base coin, worthless, and in order that truth may shine in you, you should be educated. I see that Mr. Wadia has very kindly provided you with a library and a reading room and I have no doubt that if you expressed your desire to him, be could find you teachers also. No man is too old to learn and if you will learn and study what ought to be studied, you will become better men. You will then better know your rights as well as your duties. You can either waste your time and money by devoting both to drinking and gambling or you

[1] This speech was translated into Tamil by Dandapani Pillay. B. P. Wadia was in the chair.

can use both usefully in educating yourselves and your children. I hope you will remember the few words I have spoken this evening and try to act according to what I have said. I thank you for giving me the opportunity of meeting you. May God bless you and yours and may you become citizens of India.

From a photostat: S.N. 6462

323. SPEECH ON SATYAGRAHA, MADRAS[1]

March 20, 1919

This afternoon I propose to deal with that of the objections that have been raised against satyagraha. After saying that it was a matter of regret that men like myself "should have embarked on this movement", Sir William Vincent, in winding up the debate on Bill No. 2, said:

> . . . they could only hope that it (i.e., satyagraha) would not materialize. Mr. Gandhi might exercise great self-restraint in action, but there would be other young hot-headed men who might be led into violence which could not but end in disaster. Yielding to this threat, however, would be tantamount to complete abolition of the authority of the Governor-General - in-Council.

If Sir William's fear as to violence is realized, it would undoubtedly be a disaster. It is for every satyagrahi to guard against that danger. I entertain no such fear because our creed requires us to eschew all violence and to resort to truth and self-suffering as the only weapons in our armoury. Indeed, the satyagraha movement is, among other things, an invitation to those who believe in the efficacy of violence for redress of grievances to join our ranks and honestly to follow our methods. I have suggested elsewhere what the Rowlatt Bills are intended to do and what, I verily believe, they are bound to fail in achieving, exactly what the satyagraha movement is pre-eminently

[1] At a meeting on Triplicane Beach, with C. Vijayaraghavachari in the chair. This was read by Mahadev Desai due to Gandhiji's ill-health.

The following resolution was put from the chair and passed unanimously:

"In view of the unanimous opposition of India to Rowlatt Bills and the fact that not a single non-official member voted with the Government for the passing of the Bill, this public meeting appeals to H.E. the Viceroy to withhold his assent to the Act for the signification of His Majaty's pleasure under Section 68 of the Government of India Act."

capable of achieving. By demonstrating to the party of violence the infallible power of Satyagraha and by giving them ample scope for inexhaustible energy, we hope to wean that party from the suicidal method of violence. What can be more potent than an absolute statement accompanied by corresponding action presented in the clearest terms possible that violence is never necessary for the purpose of securing reforms. Sir William says that the movement has great potentialities of evil. The Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya is said to have retorted, "and also of good". I would venture to improve upon the retort by saying "only of good". It constitutes an attempt to revolutionize politics and to restore moral force to its original station. After all, the Government do not believe in an entire avoidance of violence, i.e., physical force. The message of the West which the Government of India, I presume, represent, is succinctly put by President Wilson in his speech delivered to the Peace Conference at the time of introducing the League of Nations Covenant:

> Armed force is in the background in this programme, but it is in the background, and if the moral force of the world will not suffice physical force of the world, shall.

We hope to reverse the process, and by our action show that physical force is nothing compared to the moral force, and that moral force never fails. It is my firm belief that this is the fundamental difference between the modern civilization and the ancient, of which India, fallen though it is, I venture to claim is a living representative. We, her educated children, seem to have lost faith in the supremacy of moral force; we shall have made a priceless contribution to the British Empire and we shall, without fail, obtain the reforms we desire and to which we may be entitled. Entertaining such views, it is not difficult for me to answer Sir William's second fear as to the complete abolition of the authority of the Governor-General-in-Council. This movement is undoubtedly designed effectively to prove to the Government that its authority is finally dependent upon the will of the people and not upon force of arms, especially when that will is expressed in terms of satyagraha. To yield to a clear moral force cannot but enhance the prestige and dignity of the yielder.

It is to such a movement that every man and woman in this great country is invited, but a movement that is intended to produce far-reaching results, and which depended for success on the purity and the capacity for the self-suffering of those who are engaged in it, can

only be joined after a searching and prayerful self-examination. I may not too often give the warning I have given at satyagraha meetings, that everyone should think a thousand times before coming to it, but having come to it he must remain in it, cost what it may. A friend came to me yesterday and told me that he did not know that it meant all that was explained at a gathering of a few satyagrahi friends and wanted to withdraw. I told him that he could certainly do so if he had signed without understanding the full consequences of the Pledge, and I would ask everyone who did not understand the Pledge as it has been explained at various meetings, to copy this example. It is not numbers so much as quality that we want. Let me, therefore, note down the qualities required of a satyagrahi. He must follow truth at any cost and in all circumstances. He must take a continuous effort to love his opponents. He must be prepared to go through every form of suffering, whether imposed upon him by the Government which he is civilly resisting for the time being, or by those who may differ from him. This movement is thus a process of purification and penance. Believe me that if we go through it in the right spirit, all the fears expressed by the Government and some of our friends will be proved to be groundless and we will not only see the Rowlatt Bills withdrawn, but the country will recognize in satyagraha a powerful and religious weapon for securing reforms and redress of legitimate grievances.

New India, 21-3-1919

324. SPEECH AT TRAMWAYMEN'S MEETING, MADRAS

March 21, 1919

This morning at 8 a.m. about 150 strikers had assembled at No. 2, St. George's Cathedral Road, to see Mahatma Gandhi and to take his advice. Mr. Gandhi spoke in English and his speech was translated to the strikers in Tamil by Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar.

Mr. Gandhi first of all asked one of them whether he was not tired of the strike and how long he could prolong it. He replied that he was not and that he could stand for 10 or 15 days more. Questioned again as to what he would do if the strike be prolonged beyond that period, he replied that he would like to remain like that even for 10 days afterwards.

Mr. Gandhi then spoke as follows:

I have heard something about your strike. I know on the surface what your demands are. But I have not deeply gone into the whole

matter. Nor do I know the Company's side of the question. I therefore cannot say whether your demands are absolutely just or not. But, assuming that your demands are just, I am sure that you are quite justified in declaring a strike. Whenever a body of workmen take their legitimate grievances before their employers and the employers do not listen to them, the only clean weapon in their hands is a strike. So, for a good and successful strike, the first thing essential is that the cause should be good and just. The second thing is that the strikers should never resort to violence. That is to say, you may not hurt your employers nor may you hurt those who do not join you in the strike. And you should always, no matter what difficulties you have to suffer, stick to truth. And in going through the strike, you must be prepared always to suffer whatever difficulties you may have to go through, even deprivations. That strike is a religious strike and is always bound to be successful. I hope that your strike is of that character. I am simply filled with delight that you are all acting in such perfect co-operation that not a single employee here is at present working. I am also delighted that you are conducting yourselves in a most orderly manner. And having gone so far, I hope you will continue your strike till your demands are granted. I would like you to bear this in mind that your demands should be reduced to writing, that every one of you should know what those demands are and when the time for a settlement comes, not to increase your demands. If you increase your demands from time to time or change them, you will place yourselves in the wrong. If an arbitration is suggested, through men in whom you can place perfect reliance, I would advise you to agree to the arbitration, because the arbitrators will be able to say to you, to the Company and to the world, whether your demands are just or not. Lastly, granting that your demands are just, that you are fulfilling the conditions that I have laid down, what are you to do when the strike is prolonged is a fair question. I know that all of you do not possess money enough to go out with an indefinitely prolonged strike. You are workers and able-bodied men and I would advise you not to rely for your bread and butter on public support. It is beneath the dignity of a man who has got strength of arms and legs to depend for his bread and butter upon public support. I would therefore advise you to seek some work which all of you can do of a temporary nature. No honest work is dishonourable for any man on this earth. If I were you, I would do spade work indefinitely. I have not got the time to tell you the history of a recent strike in Ahmedabad where the people

continued their strike for 23 days. You will ask some friend what that strike was. But this I want to tell you about that strike, that the men earning Rs. 40 per month did not mind doing spade work, taking earth and carrying it on their heads in baskets from one place to another. So they were able to support themselves with four annas a day. The result was that 10,000 men who were engaged in it were entirely successful. I hope that your demands are just. I hope that you will behave in the manner that I have ventured to advise you. In that case, you may depend upon it you shall have success. I thank you very much for having come here all the way to see me. May God bless you.

The Hindu, 21-3-1919

325. LETTER TO THE PRESS ON SATYAGRAHA MOVEMENT[1]

MADRAS,
March 23, 1919

Satyagraha, as I have endeavoured to explain at several meetings, is essentially a religious movement. It is a process of purification and penance. It seeks to secure reforms or redress of grievances by self-suffering. I therefore venture to suggest that the second Sunday after the publication of the Viceregal assent to Bill No. 2 of 1919 (i.e., 6th April) may be observed as a day of humiliation and prayer. As there must be an effective public demonstration in keeping with the character of the observance, I beg to advise as follows:

(i) A twenty-four hours' fast counting from the last meal on the preceding night should be observed by all adults, unless prevented from so doing by consideration of religion or health. The fast is not to be regarded, in any shape or form, in the nature of a hunger-strike, or as designed to put any pressure upon the Government. It is to be regarded, for the satyagrahis, as the necessary discipline to fit them for civil disobedience, contemplated in their Pledge, and for all others, as some slight token of the intensity of their wounded feelings.

(ii) All work, except such as may be necessary in the public interest, should be suspended for the day. Markets and other business

[1] This was also published in *The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 25-3-1919, as released by the Associated Press of India.

places should be closed. Employees who are required to work even on Sundays may only suspend work after obtaining previous leave.

I do not hesitate to recommend these two suggestions for adoption by public servants. For though it is unquestionably the right thing for them not to take part in political discussions and gatherings, in my opinion they have an undoubted right to express upon vital matters their feelings in the very limited manner herein suggested.

(iii) Public meetings should be held on that day in all parts of India, not excluding villages, at which resolutions praying for the withdrawal of the two measures should be passed.

If my advice is deemed worthy of acceptance, the responsibility will lie, in the first instance, on the various Satyagraha Associations for undertaking the necessary work of organization, but all other associations will, I hope, join hands in making this demonstration a success.

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 24-3-1919; also a photostat: S. N. 6469

326. LETTER TO ANNIE BESANT

2, CATHEDRAL STREET,
[MADRAS,]
March 23, 1919

DEAR MRS. BESANT,

There appeared in yesterday's *New India* a letter sighed by [1]. The correspondent has given some information about the proceedings of a private meeting of satyagrahis. May I say, for future guidance, that the proceedings of the Sabha or its Com-mittee are to be regarded as private unless when publication is offici-ally authorised? I am sure that you will respect the Committee's wish.[2]

From a photostat: S.N. 6464

[1] This space is blank in the source.

[2] Mrs. Besant replied : "Certainly, I took the letter as ordinary news from one of your people."

327. LETTER TO SIR S. SUBRAMANIA IYER[1]

March 23, 1919

I am extremely grateful for your candid note[2]. I shall certainly respect your wishes. I can't misunderstand and I am sure that the friends who are associated with me in this work will not do so either.

Will you please tell Mrs. Besant, this movement is not a party movement, and those who belong to particular parties after joining the movement cease to be party men? She will find, as the movement progresses, that satyagrahis will endeavour to purge themselves of acrimony and other such delinquencies. I entirely agree with you that however much we may differ from her, no Indian can help feeling grateful to her for her wonderful services to India.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6466

328. NOTES TAKEN DOWN BY MAHADEV DESAI

[MADRAS,
March 23, 1919][3]

Met together to discuss future work.

What has Bombay done: Committee. Publication of important literature. Closing of the markets.

Political statutes may be taken first.

i. Printing & publishing of clean prohibited literature.

ii. Issue of a written newspaper without licence.

I have deliberately asked the Bombay Committee [not] to put anything more than this before the public. I don't think it is wise to put a complete programme, just yet, without knowing what turn events take. I have other laws as L. R. Law, Salt Act and Revenue Law in my programme.

[1] Retired Judge of the Madras High Court; honorary president of the All-India Home Rule League and an old Congressman; he renounced his knighthood in protest against the arrest of Annie Besant and her co-workers in 1917 and addressed a letter to President Wilson. He drafted and signed a pledge the same year advocating passive resistance against the repressive laws; *vide The History of the Indian National Congress* by B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, "Deputation to Natal Premier", 29-6-1894.

[2] Declining the offer of vice-presidentship of the Satyagraha Sabha

[3] These Notes are on the reverse of the letter appearing as the preceding item.

The best course is each Province to have its separate independent organization and for all those different organizations to co-operate. Difficulties of an All-India Central Committee.

Difficulties of meeting together.

Question of representation.

I would certainly suggest that every one of us who guide the people would be the first to go and for that purpose you can stop your paper.

Satyagrahis must reside within the area of operations.

The occupation of the satyagrahi shall occupy a secondary place. Conceive ourselves an army not of destruction but of construction or if necessary, of self-destruction and all the rules that apply to that army apply to our Sabha.

MAHADEV H. DESAI

Certain this Presidency till Wednesday[1], probably Sunday[2].

From a photostat: S.N. 6467

329. SPEECH ON SATYAGRAHA MOVEMENT, TANJORE[3]

March 24, 1919

The acceptance, by the country, of the new criminal laws was a degradation, a humiliation. When a nation felt that any particular legislation was a national degradation, they had a clear duty to discharge. In the countries of the West, when the governors did a wrong, there ensued bloodshed. In India, on the other hand, the people instinctively abhorred the doctrine of violence. Therefore, they had to find out by what other means they could enforce their will upon the Government. They had found that speeches at public meetings and the resolutions of the Legislative Councils had been of no avail. The official majority had rejected the national will expressed through the elected members. In such circumstances, by what other means could they impose their will on the Government ? He suggested that what Prahlad did towards his father, Hiranyakashyapu, should be done by them towards the Government. Hiranyakashyapu issued a command to his son which conflicted with his conscience. The voice of a disciplined conscience was the voice of the divine; and any man who refused to listen to that voice degraded human dignity. The conscience

[1] 26th March

[2] 30th March

[3] At an open air meeting held at Besant Lodge. V. P. Madhava Rao presided

of the speaker told him that they should act even as Prahlad acted against his father's order; and if their conscience also told the same thing, they should do the same. Prahlad disobeyed his father's command without any irreverence or ill will or disaffection for him. He continued to love his father as he was still disobeying his order, and the very love he bore his father made him point out to him his wrong which he dutifully resisted under the dictates of his conscience. This was what was called civil disobedience or satyagraha, which mean the force of truth, the force of soul. If they accepted satyagraha, they rejected the doctrine of physical violence. He hoped that they who were the descendants of Prahlad would not send him away empty-handed. He had just then received a telegram that the Viceroy had given his consent to Bill No. 2. They could not better begin the use of soul-force than by adopting some rigorous measures of discipline. He had suggested in a letter to the Press that the second Sunday, after the Viceroy had given his consent to the Bills, which would be the 6th April, should be observed as a day of fast by all adults, men and women, who could fast. That was not to be mixed up with the hunger-strikes in England known in connection with the movement for suffrage for women. It was merely an expression of grief, an act of self-denial, a process of purification. It trained the satyagrahi to begin and carry on his civil disobedience. On that day, they should suspend all transaction of business. He had even ventured to suggest that public servants also could participate in the general fast. He entirely conceded the doctrine that Government servants should not take part in politics, but, it did not mean the suppression of their conscience and their freedom to share in national grief or national joy. In organizing public meetings or in making speeches thereat, they should employ the most respectful and dignified language in speaking of the Government and of their laws. In becoming language, they should appeal to the Viceroy and to the Secretary of State to withdraw the new laws in question. In taking the Pledge, they should understand that they were to do no harm to life or to property, but work in peace and goodwill to all. Satyagraha would do what this legislation could not do, namely, rid the country of violence. He hoped they would decide to accept it; and accepting it, never to retrace their steps from the vow after it had once been taken. They need not sign the Pledge at the meeting but might take time to consider the matter calmly, not once or twice but fifty times, whether, in view of what was expected of them, they possessed the capacity for it, for the discipline and the sacrifice that it required of them. They should remember that it was a sacred vow and that no Indian could break it with impunity. If they disapproved of it now, they would ere long find cause to regret that they did not join the movement. If, from weakness or from any other cause, they could not advance to the centre of the fight, they might, at least, remain at the circumference and along many of its lines help it in various ways. He hoped that God had given them sufficient strength and wisdom to take the vow and conscientiously discharge their duties at this critical moment in the fortunes of their

country.

The Chairman said that satyagraha, practised rigorously as taught by Gandhiji, was a straight road to swaraj.

Mr. Gandhi's speech was rendered into Tamil by Dr. T. S. S. Rajan of Trichinopoly who is accompanying him through his tour in South India.

About fifty signed the Pledge at the meeting, the larger half of the signatories being some of the Mahomedans, merchants of Rajagiri, and it is confidently expected that the ranks of the satyagraha army in the Tanjore district would swell to huge numbers.

The Hindu, 26-3-1919

330. TELEGRAM TO SATYAGRAHA SABHA, BOMBAY

TEPPAKULAM,
TRICHY,
[*March 25, 1919*]

HAVE SUGGESTED SUNDAY WEEK FOR FASTING SUSPENSION WORK AND PUBLIC MEETINGS. PRAYING WITHDRAWAL ROWLATT LEGISLATION. HOPE COMMITTEE APPROVES WILL ADOPT ADVICE WE COMMENCE BREACH OF LAWS MONDAY AFTER OBSERVANCE MUCH WORK HERE TODAY TRICHY. TOMORROW MADURA. THURSDAY TUTICORIN SATURDAY NAGAPATAN REACHING THERE WEDNESDAY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6476

331. TELEGRAM[1]

[*March 25, 1919*]

FORGIVE INABILITY REPLY. OVERWHELMED WITH WORK WRITING TODAY.

From a photostat: S.N. 6476

[1] The telegram was presumably addressed to O. S. Ghate *vide* the following item.

332. LETTER TO O. S. GHATE

TRICHINOPOLY,
[*March 25, 1919*]

DEAR MR. GHATE,

I am very sorry I have not been able to reply to your letter earlier than now. Upon reaching Madras, I was so much immersed in satyagraha work that I could not attend to any correspondence at all. I am ashamed of myself that I have taken so long to reply to your important letter. You will forgive me for this delay. What happened between Sir James Duboulay and myself was briefly this: He said the Government were not able to come to any decision, they were considering it. He would not let me see the Committee's Report, but he himself was not satisfied with it. At the end of the interview, I could see that our friends were being kept under internment for the very qualities I have described in my letter. As you are aware, I was in Lucknow and after the conversation there, as also with the friends in Delhi, I have come to the conclusion that you should not fog people and confuse the issue by resorting to separate satyagraha for the release of the Brothers. The present movement impliedly includes this question also and I propose to refer to it at a later stage of the struggle. I am still not without hope that they may be released. Do not think that their proposals to withdraw from India for the time being or actual withdrawal would be helpful. When the time comes, if it ever does, my strong advice would be that they should disregard the internment orders and invite imprisonment. But that they will do with me. If their step is decided, I would go over to Chhindwara myself, so that they would break the law together with me. But now that the movement about the Rowlatt legislation is going on, we should be doubly patient about our friends. Do not think that the correspondence between Government and myself can be published. It is in the nature of a personal correspondence. When I have publicly to refer to the question, I shall bring out all the facts, but without some equally important consideration, that correspondence should, I think, not be published. The Brothers may write whatever they choose about the religious question. But I would like their representation to be free from argument or hatred. A colourless representation purely setting forth facts will be infinitely stronger thanan argumentative representation. I take it that our friends know all about the discussion I had with Bari Saheb.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6478

333. SPEECH ON SATYAGRAHA MOVEMENT, TRICHINOPOLY[1]

March 25, 1919

FRIENDS,

You will forgive me for not standing to speak to you. I am physically too weak to do so. You will also forgive me for speaking to you not in Tamil, but in English. It will give me some pleasure if I were to talk to you in Hindi, but it is a misfortune that you have not yet taken to the study of the national language. As you are aware, the opportunity is now offered to you of studying that language free of charge, and I hope that as many of you as you can will take advantage of the opportunity thus offered. However, I am on a different mission today.

I was yesterday in Tanjore. I ventured to extend to the community of Tanjore an invitation which I wish to extend to you also; but before I do so, I wish to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the beautiful address, the beautiful casket and the Tamil address that have been presented to me. As I do not accept any costly presents, the beautiful casket will go to the trust that has been formed which contains all the costly presents that I have ever received in my life, and there, converted into money, it will be used for some national purpose or other.

You say in the English address that there was a demonstration in the Transvaal or South Africa of the triumph of the spirit over matter. Your own belief in the triumph of the spirit over matter will be shortly put to the test. My invitation to you will ensure that test. You know the Rowlatt Bills perhaps as much as I do. I need not explain them. You all want them to be withdrawn. The Indian councillors in the Imperial Council tried their best to have this legislation withdrawn. They failed. The Bills are bad, but this flouting of the unanimous voice of the Indian members is worse and it is for you and for me, whose representatives those councillors are, to right this double wrong. How can it b righted? When the governors of a country do a great wrong to the people whom they govern, history teaches us that they have resorted to violence, sometimes with apparent success, often they have

[1] At a public meeting. Dr. T. S. S. Rajan rendered this speech into Tamil, sentence by sentence.

been defeated; but violence can only result in violence, as darkness added to darkness really deepens it. The doctrine of violence is of the earth, earthy, merely material, and can be no guide for a human being who at all believes in the existence of the soul. If, as I am sure you will reject the doctrine of violence, you have to consider other means for seeking redress, and that, as I would translate, would mean *shatham prati satyam*[1]. You have an instance given of it in the name mentioned this evening, i.e., of Prahlad. But some of you may be inclined to think that after all Prahlad is not a historical personage. That story may be a mere fable. I therefore propose to give you this evening a living instance, living in the sense that it has happened within recent memory. The authoress is dead. The name of the heroine is Valliamma[2]. She was born in South Africa of Indian parents. She in common with many of our countrywomen in South Africa, joined the satyagraha struggle that was raging there and that raged there for over eight years. She had a faith so absolute in the triumph of the spirit over matter that you and I are not privileged to possess. She knew nothing of the intricacies of the laws that we resisted in that country. It was enough for her that thousands of her countrymen and countrywomen were suffering for something she did not know, but she knew, she realized instinctively that out of the travail of the soul is a nation born and so she voluntarily suffered the hardships of a South African prisoner. She was 18 years old. In a weakly body she held a spirit that was indomitable. She got daily typhoid fever, whilst she was in jail. Her friends in the prison suggested that she should pay the fine to pay which she had the option, but she resolutely declined to pay the fine. She preferred to die in the prison, but she did not die. She was discharged in an ailing condition. She was discharged after she had completed the full term of her imprisonment. Then a few days after her discharge she died, mourned by the whole of the Indian community of South Africa as a heroine and martyr. Before she entered the prison gates, she was a poor girl unknown to fame. Today she has risen to [be] one of the very best of her nation. I have come here to invite you to follow the example of that beautiful girl, Valliamma, in order that you may successfully resist this Rowlatt

[1] Truth against a rogue. The original Sanskrit phrase is *shatham prati shaathyam*, roguery against a rogue.

[2] Valliamma R. Munuswami Mudaliar. She succumbed to fever on February 22, 1914, within a few days of her release from prison.

legislation, and I promise that, if you will approach the question with even a little of the faith of Valliamma, you will see that in a very short time these Bills are destroyed.

The Bills have violated the national conscience, and resistance to those commands which are in violation of one's conscience is a sacred privilege and a beauty, and it is not this law or this command of the governor that we resist, but it is our duty, it is open to us to resist all his commands which are not moral commands, and when we respectfully disobey wrongful things of these governors, we serve not only them but the whole nation. I have been asked wherever I have gone what law, what other laws, shall we disobey. The only answer I am able to give you today is that it is open to us to disobey all the laws which do not involve any moral sanction. That being so, it is totally unnecessary for you to know what laws we shall disobey. The aim of a satyagrahi is to invite upon his own devoted head all the suffering that he is capable of undertaking. Those of you, therefore, who disapprove of the Rowlatt legislation and who have faith in the efficacy of satyagraha, I have come to invite in order that you might sign this Pledge, but I will ask you to consider a thousand times before signing the Pledge. It is no discredit to you that you do not sign the Pledge, either because you do not disapprove of the legislation or you have not got the strength and the will, and it is not open to any satyagrahi to resent your refraining from signing the Pledge. But if you once sign the Pledge, remember that even as that poor girl Valliamma in spite of her illness underwent the full term of her imprisonment, even so shall you never detract from the Pledge.

You might have seen from today's papers received here that I have addressed to the Press a letter embodying some suggestions. I will, however, repeat them this evening. My first suggestion is, that on Sunday week, i.e., 6th day of April, we shall all observe a 24 hours' fast. It is a fitting preliminary for satyagrahis before they commence civil disobedience of the laws. For all others, it will be an expression of their deep grief over the wrong committed by the Government. I have regarded this movement as a purely religious movement and fast is an ancient institution amongst us. You will not mistake it for a hunger-strike (Laughter.) nor will you consider it as designed for exerting any pressure upon the Government. It is a measure of self-discipline, it will be an expression of the anguish of the soul, and when the soul is anguished, nobody could resist. I hope that all adults will take up the

task unless they are prevented from doing so by ill-health or religious conviction. I have also suggested that on that Sunday all work should be suspended, all markets and all business places should be closed. Apart from the spiritual value of these two acts, they will form an education of first-class value for the masses. I have ventured to include in my suggestions even public servants, because I think that we have to credit them with conscience as also their independence and ability and privilege to associate themselves with wrongs which the nation may want to resent. It is right that they should not take part in political meetings and political discussions, but their individual conscience must have full and free play. My third suggestion in which public servants may not take part is that on that day, we should visit every hamlet, if we can, and hold meetings and pass resolutions asking the Secretary of State for India to veto this legislation. I would not ask you to resort to these public meetings and resolutions, but for one reason, and the reason is that behind these meetings and resolutions lies the force of satyagraha to enforce the national will. In these three suggestions, whether you are satyagrahis or not, so long as you disapprove of the Rowlatt legislation, all can join and I hope that there will be such a response throughout the length and breadth of India as would convince the Government that we are alive to what is going on in our midst.

I thank you for the very great patience with which you have given me this hearing. A thousand thanks are due to you for the various ways in which you are showering your affection upon me, but I ask you with all the emphasis at my command to translate this personal affection into real action, and I venture to promise to you that all who join this movement, I have not the slightest doubt, will come out of it all the purer for it. Finally, please remember that if those in this great audience who are satyagrahis wish to convert others to their creed, the best way of doing so is not to bear the slightest ill will against them, but to conquer them by their sweetness, gentleness and a spirit of love. I thank you once more.

The Hindu, 27-3-1919

334. SPEECH ON SATYAGRAHA MOVEMENT, MADURA

March 26, 1919

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

You will pardon me for not standing up whilst I speak to you, because I am too weak to do so. I owe you a thousand apologies also for my inability to speak to you in Tamil. But I cannot entirely acquit you of blame in that I have to speak to you in the English language. If those of you who have received a liberal education had recognized that Hindi and Hindi alone could become the national language of India, you would have learnt it at any cost before this. But it is never too late to mend our mistake. You have in your midst today—only in Madras and a few other places—an opportunity offered to you of learning Hindi. It is probably the easiest language to learn in the world. I know something of the Tamil language; it is most beautiful and musical; but its grammar is most difficult to master, whereas the grammar of Hindi is merely a child's work. I hope, therefore, that you will all avail yourselves of the opportunity that is before you. But I cannot detain you on the topic of Hindi and I must hasten on to my subject.

I have come here after visiting Tanjore and Trichinopoly, as you know, to extend to you an invitation which I have already extended in those two places. I have come to ask you to sign the Satyagraha Pledge. You know its contents; it is designed to offer resistance to the Rowlatt legislation. It is not necessary for me to describe the effect of the legislation. The public Press and our orators have been before you and you have gathered from them the contents of that legislation and also its far-reaching effects. It is enough for me to say that the legislation is of such a character that no self-respecting nation can accept it. It is calculated to degrade the nation against whom it is brought into operation. It was carried in the teeth of unanimous opposition on our behalf. The Government have committed a double wrong and it is your duty, it is my duty and that of every man and woman in this country, to undo the wrong by every legitimate means in his or her power. We have exhausted all the orthodox measures in order to gain the end. We have passed resolutions; we have petitioned and our representatives in the Imperial Legislative Council have endeavoured their best to secure a withdrawal of this legislation and all our attempts have failed. And yet we must somehow or other undo

this wrong because it is like poison corroding the whole of the body politic. When the national conscience is hurt, people whose conscience is hurt either seek redress through methods of violence or through methods which I have described as satyagraha. I consider that methods of violence prove in the end to be of absolute failure. They are moreover wholly unsuited to the genius of our people. Methods of violence are not consistent with human dignity. It is no answer to say that this day Europe is saturated with the belief in brute force. True *paurusha*, true bravery, consists in driving out the brute in us and then only can you give freest play to your conscience. The other force which I have in various places described as satyagraha, soul-force or love-force, is best illustrated in the story of Prahlad. Prahlad, as you know, offered respectful disobedience to the laws and orders of his own father. He did not resort to violence; but he had unquenchable belief in what he was doing. He obeyed a higher call in disobeying the orders of his father. And in applying satyagraha to this movement, we shall be only copying the brilliant and eternal insistence of Prahlad. But we are living today in a world of unbelief. We are sceptical about our past records and many of you may be inclined to consider the story of Prahlad to be a mere fable. I therefore propose to give to you this evening two instances that have happened practically before your eyes. The one instance I related last evening and that was of a beautiful Tamil girl called Valliamma, eighteen years old, who died as a satyagrahi. She had joined the satyagraha movement in South Africa which lasted for eight years. She was arrested and imprisoned during the struggle. In her prison, she got typhoid fever and died of it. It was she and her fellow-satyagrahis who secured the relief that you all are aware of in South Africa. There was a lad of about the same age as Valliamma's whose name was *Nagappan*[1] and who suffered imprisonment in the same struggle. He did not reason why he should join the struggle. He had an instinctive faith in its righteousness. He instinctively believed that the remedy adopted was the only true and effective remedy.

The climate of South Africa is not so beneficent as the climate of the Indian plains. The South African winter is inclement and it was

[1] Sammy Nagappen, a satyagrahi, who was sentenced on June 21, 1909 to be imprisoned for 10 days with hard labour, was discharged from a Transvaal prison on June 30 in a dying condition. He died on July. 6, 1909; *vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909

winter time when Nagappan was imprisoned. He was exposed to the inclemencies of the weather because he was put under a tent life. As a prisoner, he was made to work with the spade. He had the option of paying fine at any time he might have chosen. He would not pay the fine. He believed that the gateway to liberty lay through the prison door and he died of cold and fever contracted during his prison life. Nagappan was an uneducated lad born of indentured parents. But he had a brave heart. And I have come this afternoon to ask everyone of you, man and woman, if you disapprove of the Rowlatt legislation to copy the examples not of Prahlad but of Valliamma and Nagappan. There is, however, one other condition; it is not enough that you disapprove of the Rowlatt legislation. You must have also faith in the efficacy of this remedy and ability to undergo the suffering that it may involve. But I am sure you will agree with me that no nation has as yet become great without having undergone suffering, whether it is through inflicting violence on others or whether it is by way of satyagraha. Satyagraha is essentially a religious force. Unless we have faith in the inviolable and immutable force of the spirit, we shall not be able to carry the struggle to a successful end. The fault then would be not of the movement or the force I have ventured to describe; but it would lie in our own imperfection. I ask you all, therefore, to approach the question with a careful consideration. But after having once signed the Pledge, you will appreciate the great obligation that you will have taken on your shoulders and you will not flinch. It follows from the Satyagraha Pledge that those who take the Pledge will not treat with any disrespect those who will not be able to take the Pledge. They may refrain from signing the Pledge either because they do not disapprove of the Bills or they do not believe in the struggle or they are too weak. As time passes, we hope even to win them over to the movement. You may have seen the letter I have addressed to the Press. In it I have suggested that we should observe Sunday week as a day of humiliation and prayer and I have made three suggestions. I have suggested fasting, total abstention of work including markets and business places and holding meetings all over India to pass resolutions. The proposed fast is not a hunger strike but it is an act of self-denial. In these suggestions all, whether satyagrahis or not, can participate. And I do hope that in this holy city of Madura the whole of the population will participate in this sacred observance. I have up to now simply described the nature of the movement of satyagraha. I would draw your attention to one other effect that is likely to follow

from this movement. The Government contend that this Rowlatt legislation will rid the country finally of the anarchical movement. As I have said elsewhere, it will do nothing of the kind. But I venture to suggest to you that this movement of satyagraha, offering as it does something to provide for the inexhaustible energy of the members of the school of anarchism, will alter their very nature and bring them to this cleaner method of obtaining redress of grievances. In these circumstances, I trust the movement should command the respect and support of all. I thank you all for the very great patience with which you have listened to my remarks. I hope you will ponder well over what is going on today in this country and do what you may conceive to be your duty. I pray to God that He may give you the wisdom to see your way. Once again I thank you.

The Hindu, 29-3-1919

335. SPEECH ON SATYAGRAHA MOVEMENT, TUTICORIN

March 28, 1919

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

You will forgive me for not speaking to you standing, as I am too weak to do so. Forgive me also for not being able to speak to you in Tamil. When you have learnt the lingua franca, the national language of India, that is Hindi, I shall have much pleasure in addressing you in Hindi. And it is open to all of you to avail yourselves of the opportunity now offered in Madras and other places of learning Hindi. Until you do so, you really shut yourself out from the rest of India. I thank you very much for presenting this address to me. I have come to you this evening to extend to you an invitation. This is almost the southernmost part of India. And I have been forcibly struck throughout my progress from Madras down here by the religious sentiment and the religious element predominant in these parts. This southern part of India is filled with temples in a manner in which no other part of India is. Untold wealth has been spent upon these marvels of architecture. And they demonstrate to me as nothing else does that we are a people deeply religious and that the people of India will be best appealed to by religion. I have come to say to you a religious sentiment. Many of us think that in the political life, we need not bring the religious element at all. Some even go so far as to say that politics should have nothing to do with religion. Our past shows that we have rejected that doctrine, and we have always touched every

form of activity with the religious spirit. You all know or ought to know what the Rowlatt legislation is. I therefore do not propose to occupy your time by going into the history of that legislation. It is common cause throughout the length and breadth of India that that legislation, if it remains on the Statute-book will disgrace the whole nation. We have asked our rulers not to continue that legislation. But they have absolutely disregarded the petition. They have therefore inflicted a double wrong on the whole nation. We have seen that all our meetings, all our resolutions and all the speeches of our councillors in the Imperial Legislative Council have proved to be of practically no avail. In these circumstances, what should we do? As I have already said, we must somehow or other get this legislation removed. There are two ways and only two ways open to us. One is the modern or the Western method of violence upon the wrongdoers. I hold that India will reject that proposition. The vast masses of India have never been taught by our religious preceptors to resort to violence. The other method is the method known to us of old. And that is of not giving obedience to the wrongful things of the rulers but to suffer the consequences. The way of so suffering is satyagraha. It is the wave of Prahlad. And it is, I respectfully venture to suggest to you, the only way open to us. In it there is no defeat; for, we continue the battle till we die or till we obtain victory. But today we are moved by the spirit of scepticism. And many of us may reject the story of Prahlad as a fable.

I, therefore, propose to give you as briefly as I can the story of modern historical satyagrahis. I have only singled out the names of those who have died. Three of them were Tamilians and one a Mahomedan from the Bombay Presidency. One of the Tamilians was a beautiful girl called Valliamma, eighteen years old. She was born in South Africa, as were the other two lads whose names I shall presently mention to you. She was sent to jail, she caught typhoid fever and she declined to be released. It was through the typhoid fever that she died while she was in jail.[1] The other two were aged 18 and 17 and they died after their discharge from their prisons. They were all born of indentured parents. They did not receive the liberal education that many of us have. They had only a hazy notion of the story of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*.. There were in South Africa no

[1] She died after release; *vide* "Speech on Satyagraha Movement, Trichinopoly," 25-3-1919.

religious teachers to instil into their minds the indomitable deeds of Prahlad. But today they find their names engraved among the heroes and heroines of South Africa. The name of the fourth was Ahmed Mahomed Kachalia. He was the bravest among the brave. He was one of the truest men I have known. He was a merchant of very substantial means. When this satyagraha battle was raging in South Africa, he was in the midst of the fight. He was the President of the British Indian Association in the Transvaal. He not only went to jail but he was reduced to the utmost poverty. He sacrificed every earthly possession for the sake of his own honour ever and that of his motherland. He knew the force of satyagraha. He died only a few months ago mourned by the whole of South Africa. He, too, in the commonly accepted sense of the word, was an illiterate man but he had a fund of common sense which you would not see in ordinary people. And he saw with an unerring instinct that the way to liberty lay not through violence but through self-suffering. I have no doubt that what was possible for Valliamma, Nagappan, Narayansami[1] and Ahmed Mahomed is possible for every one of you today. I ask you in the name of these modern satyagrahis to follow in their foot-steps, sign the Satyagraha Pledge and repeal the legislation. The taking of the Pledge is a sacred act undertaken in the name of the Almighty. Whilst therefore I invite every man and woman to sign the Pledge, I beseech them also to consider it deeply and a number of times before signing it. But if you do decide to sign the Pledge, you will see to it like Valliamma and Ahmed Mahomed to observe it at the sacrifice of your lives. The satyagrahi when he signs the Pledge changes his very nature. He relies solely upon the truth which is another word for love. Before he signs the Pledge, he might get irritated against those who differ from him but not so afterwards. After all, we expect everyone to come over to us as the struggle progresses. We shall succeed in doing so if we are not bitter against them but are perfectly loving and respectful. You will have seen in the papers that I have made three definite suggestions in order to start my campaign. The adoption of my suggestions will also mark the religious character of the movement. The first suggestion is that on the 6th of April, which is a

[1] A Tamil satyagrahi, who was deported to India from Transvaal, was not allowed to disembark at several ports on return and died on October 16, 1910 after remaining on board for nearly two months; *vide*"Letter to the Press", 17-10-1910 & "Narayansamy", 22-10-1910.

Sunday, we should observe a fast. The second suggestion is that we should all suspend our ordinary business that day. Those who are employed, if they are called upon even to work on Sundays, should cease work after receiving due permission. The two suggestions are of universal application and take in also public servants. The third suggestion is to hold in every hamlet of India public meetings, protesting against the Rowlatt legislation and asking the Secretary of State for India to repeal that legislation. All the suggestions are designed by way of self-denial, self-discipline and education. In the fast we expect our women, our servants and everyone to join us. If you accept my humble suggestions, I hope you will carry them out in the spirit in which I have made them. You have kindly refrained from applauding, whistling or making a noisy demonstration while I have been speaking, out of regard for my health. I ask you to transfer that regard to all satyagrahis. If you will not divert your attention by applauding or crying ''Shame, shame!" or "Hear, hear!", you will concentrate better on the topic before you. You will not also disturb the thought of the person speaking. I would even go so far as to suggest that in all our meetings, whether of satyagrahis or otherwise, there should not be this new-fangled demonstration. But whether you accept my advice as of universal application or no, I hope that you will accept it so far as satyagraha meetings are concerned. The only weapon before us is to rely upon truth and self-sacrifice. I hope you will always rely upon that and that alone. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for giving me such a patient hearing. And I pray to God that He will give you strength to carry on the mission that we have undertaken.

The Hindu, 2-4-1919

336. SPEECH ON CAPITAL AND LABOUR AND ROWLATT BILLS, NAGAPATAM

March 29, 1919

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I must once more ask forgiveness that I cannot speak standing being too weak to do so. I am sorry also that I cannot address you in beautiful Tamil. I am sorry that the majority of you do not know Hindi, to enable me to speak in the national language. I thank you for the beautiful address presented to me this afternoon and my thanks would have been still more warm if your address had been written in

Tamil. You may have given me an English or Hindi translation or I would certainly have had the address translated for me. I do hope that when the next occasion arises, no matter who the visitor may be, you will recognize the dignity of your own mother tongue.

CAPITAL AND LABOUR

I have come here principally on the invitation of the labourers' Union. I understand, too, that the majority of this meeting are labourers. The others therefore will forgive me whilst I say a few words specially addressed to the labourers. Practically the whole of my life has been passed among labourers. I know something about labour problems. I hope I fully realize the dignity of labour. I hope, too, that those who are guiding the great labour movement in this important War will enable the labourers to appreciate the dignity of labour. Labourers are not the least important among the citizens of India. Indeed, if we include the peasantry, they form by far the vast majority. It is but a truism when I say that the future of India and for that matter of any country depends more upon the masses than upon the classes. It is therefore necessary that the labourers should recognize their own status in society. And it is necessary also that the classes who are instructors of the masses should recognize their obligations towards the masses. Also, in our own system we see many defects and it is my firm conviction that our system will not allow of the struggle for existence that is going on in the West between labour and capital. In the West, practically capital and labour are at opposite interest [*sic*]. Each distrusts the other. It was not so in ancient India, and I am glad the leaders of the labour movement here had not introduced the Western form of agitation between capital and labour. They would teach the labourers that they are in no way slaves of capital and they should hold themselves [erect]. There is only one occasion to be given in asking the labourers [*sic*] to understand and recognize that they, after all, are the predominant power and the predominant partners and they should recognize their strength. They should know that labour without capital is entirely useless. [They should also know that] large organizations in India would be utterly impossible without adequate capital. They should therefore recognize their obligations to capital. The labourers are going to play an important part in the future. Taking India, it is not enough that they regulate their own [Unions] in a satisfactory manner. They must therefore look beyond the concerns of their Unions. They should

understand that they are after all part of the larger wholes[1]. It adds to their dignity when they understand that they are members and citizens of the Empire and if they only do so they will also tend to understand the national activities.

ROWLATT BILLS

Of one such activity, I propose to give a brief description the afternoon. You may know that the Government have just now embarked upon a piece of legislation which I hold and the country holds to be most hurtful to the nation. It is the duty of everyone of us whether we belong to the classes, whether we are men or women, to understand this legislation that may be passed by the rulers. I hope therefore that the leaders will go amongst the masses and inform them of what this legislation is. It is but natural and necessary that the hurtful legislation should be removed. We have therefore to so act as to enable us to secure the removal of this legislation. We have held meetings all over India, we have passed resolutions and have appealed to the Viceroy to remove this legislation; but all these appeals have fallen upon deaf ears. Our governors have therefore done a double wrong, in that they are making a piece of harmful legislation and they have flouted public opinion. When people are hurt and become angry and do not believe in God, they take up arms and fight with the wrongdoers. That is the doctrine of violence. As a whole, India has not adopted that doctrine. India has therefore believed in the absolute triumph of hope [*sic*]. India has believed in God and His righteousness and therefore in our hour of trial we have depended upon God. It is part of our duty to disobey the wrongdoer when he inflicts unjust things upon us, But we must resist them in the manner Prahlad resisted [by suffering] the penalty for disobedience. So should we do in the present instance, with measures contrary to the method of violence. This is called satyagraha.

It is the doctrine of self-suffering in which there is therefore no defeat. Our countrymen in South Africa, where they were labouring, copied these examples with the results you probably know. In that movement all joined hands but the majority were the common people. There were two beautiful boys and one beautiful girl in South Africa who lost their lives for the cause of national honour. You should know their sacred names, which will be remembered from day to day so

[1] The source has “homes”.

long as this struggle lasts and even after. The girl's name is Valliamma, the boys' names are Nagappan and Narayansami. They were all about 15 years old and they were drawn from the labouring classes. They did not receive liberal education nor had they read of the deeds of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*—Indian blood flowed through their veins. The law of suffering was engraved upon their hearts and I ask everyone present here to copy the example of these two heroes and heroine. If you and I are in suffering, if our properties are taken away from us, no matter, for we preserve our dignity and national honour. You will learn more of this struggle from the leaders here. As this is purely a religious struggle we propose to make a beginning next Sunday week, the 6th day of April. I have suggested that all men, women, labourers and moneyed men and everyone who has Indian blood in him should fast for 24 hours from the last night's meal. We begin our civil disobedience and it is a purely religious movement. This fast is not a show but a sincere prayer to the Almighty that we may receive proper strength and proper wisdom in going through these struggles. I have also suggested that we should stop all business and work for that day. I hope that our merchant friends will fall in with this plan. If there are any labourers who are called upon to work on Sundays, they will cease work only if they receive permission from their masters. It is not part of civil disobedience that we should disobey our employers' just orders. We should hold meetings on that day and [reports of the] proceedings should be sent to the Viceroy and the Secretary of State to remove this objectionable legislation. It will not be an idle prayer but it is by the force of satyagraha and I assure you that if many of us approach this struggle in a proper and becoming spirit, we can have the legislation destroyed in a short space of time.

CONCLUSION

I thank you sincerely for inviting me to Nagapatam. I thank you also for giving me a patient hearing. I cannot find sufficient words to describe the great affection that has been showered upon me throughout the Madras Presidency. I learnt in South Africa to have boundless faith in the Indians. More than any other part of India, you have preserved the national traditions in a superior manner. You have preserved most decidedly the outward form. You have also great faith in divinity. When I look at you, my mind reminds me of our great

rishis[1]. I am sure they could not have lived simpler lives, but one thing is simple [*sic*]. You have to infuse into the form, that you have so beautifully preserved, the spirit of the *rishis.* Then you will be a power in the land and you will preserve the dignity of the nation and realize her future destiny. I hope that God will give you sufficient strength for this,

The Hindu, 3-4-1919

337. MESSAGE TO MADRAS MEETING

March 30, 1919

DEAR MR. RANGASWAMI[2],

I am sorry that I shall not be with you for this evening's meeting, as I must take the train for Bezwada in order to keep my engagement with our Andhra friends. But before my departure, I would like to reduce to writing my impressions of the tour through the southern part of the Presidency, which I have just completed, and to answer some criticism and some doubts that have been offered by friends.

I have visited Tanojre, Trichinopoly, Madura, Tuticorin and Nagapatam; and taking the lowest estimate, the people addressed must have been not less than thirty thousand. Those who have a right to give us warnings, to express misgivings and who have just as great a love of the motherland as we claim to have feared the danger that, however well-meaning we may be, and however anxious we may be to avoid violence, the people who may join the movement under an enthusiastic impulse may not be able to exercise sufficient self-control and break out into violence, resulting in needless loss of life and, what is more, injury to the national cause. After embarking upon the movement, I began addressing meetings with Delhi. I passed then through Lucknow, Allahabad and Bombay to Madras. My experience of all these meetings shows that the advent of satyagraha has already altered the spirit of those who attend the satyagraha meetings. In Lucknow, upon an innocent remark by the Chairman as to the manifes to signed by some of the members of the Imperial Legislative Council disapproving of our movement, the audience cried out

[1] Sages

[2] K. V. Rangaswami Iyengar, chairman of the public meeting held on the Triplicane Beach under the auspices of the Madras Satyagraha Sabha

"Shame, shame!" I drew their attention to the fact that satyagrahis and those who attend satyagraha meetings should not use such expressions and that the speeches at our meetings ought not to be punctuated with either marks of disapproval or of approval. The audience immediately understood the spirit of my remarks and never afterwards made any demonstration of their opinion. In the towns of this Presidency as elsewhere, whilst it is true that the large crowds have refrained from any noisy demonstration out of regard for my health, they have fully understood the necessity of refraining from it on the higher ground. The leaders in the movement have also fully understood the necessity for self-restraint. These experiences of mine fill me with the greatest hope for the future. I never had any apprehension of the danger our friends fear; and the various meetings I have described confirm my optimism. But I would venture further to state that every precaution that is humanly possible is being and will be taken to avert any such danger. It is for that reason that our Pledge commits the signatories to the breach of those laws that may be selected for the purpose by a committee of satyagrahis[1]; and I am glad that our Sind friends have understood their Pledge, and obeyed the prohibition of the Hyderabad Commissioner of Police to hold their inoffensive procession, for it is no part of the present movement to break all the laws of the land the breach of which is not inconsistent with the Pledge. A satyagrahi is nothing if not instinctively law-abiding, and it is his law-abiding nature which exacts from him implicit obedience of the highest law, i.e., the voice of conscience, which overrides all other laws. His civil disobedience even of certain laws only is only seeming disobedience. Every law gives the subject an option, either to obey the primary sanction or the secondary; and I venture to suggest that the satyagrahi by inviting the secondary sanction obeys the law. He does not act like the ordinary offender who not only commits a breach of the laws of the land, whether good or bad, but wishes to avoid the consequences of that breach. It will seem therefore that everything that prudence may dictate has been done to avoid any untoward results.

Some friends have said, "We understand your breach of the Rowlatt legislation, but as a satyagrahi there is nothing for you in it to break. How can you however break the other laws which you have hitherto obeyed, and which may also be good?" So far as the good

[1] *Vide* ''Statement on Laws for Civil Disobedience", 7-4-1919,

laws are concerned, i.e., laws which lay down moral principles, the satyagrahi may not break them, and their breach is not contemplated under the Pledge. But the other laws are neither good nor bad, moral nor immoral. They may be useful, or may even be harmful. These laws one obeys for the supposed good government of the country. Such laws are laws framed for purposes of revenue, or political laws creating statutory offences. These laws enable the Government to continue its power. When therefore a Government goes wrong to the extent of hurting the national fibre itself, as does the Rowlatt legislation, it becomes the right of the subject, indeed it is his duty, to withdraw his obedience to such laws, to the extent it may be required to bend the Government to the national will.

A doubt has been expressed during my tour, and by friends who have written to me, as to the validity in terms of satyagraha of the entrustment of the selection of the laws for breach to a committee. For, it is argued that it amounts to a surrender of one's conscience to leave such selection to others. This doubt betrays a misunderstanding of the Pledge. A signatory to the Pledge undertakes, so far as he is concerned, to break if necessary all the laws which it would be lawful for a satyagrahi to break. It is not, however, obligatory on him to break all such laws. He can therefore perfectly conscientiously leave the selection of the laws to be broken to the judgment of those who are experts in the matter and who in their turn are necessarily subject to the limitations imposed by the Pledge. The worst that can happen to any signatory is that the selection may not be exhaustive enough for him.

I have been told that I am diverting the attention of the country from the one and only thing that matters, viz., the forthcoming Reforms. In my opinion, the Rowlatt legislation, in spite of the amendments which, as the Select Committee very properly says, do not affect its principles, blocks the way to progress, and therefore the attainment of substantial reforms. To my mind, the first thing needful is to secure a frank and full recognition of the principle that public opinion properly expressed shall be respected by the Government. I am no believer in the doctrine that the same power can at the same time trust and distrust, grant liberty and repress it. I have a right to interpret the coming Reforms by the light that the Rowlatt legislation throws upon them; and I make bold to promise that if we do not gather sufficient force to remove from our path this great obstacle in

the shape of the Rowlatt legislation, we shall find the Reforms to be a whitened sepulchre.

Yet another objection to answer. Some friends have argued, "Your satyagraha movement only accentuates the fear we have of the onrush of Bolshevism." The fact, however, is that if anything can possibly prevent this calamity descending upon our country, it is satyagraha. Bolshevism is the necessary result of modern materialistic civilization. Its insensate worship of matter has given rise to a school which has been brought up to look upon material advancement as the goal and which has lost all touch with the finer things of life. Self-indulgence is the Bolshevic creed, self-restraint is the satyagraha creed. If I can but induce the nation to accept satyagraha if only as a predominant factor in life, whether social or political, we need have no fear of the Bolshevic propaganda. In asking the nation to accept satyagraha, I am asking for the introduction in reality of nothing new. I have coined a new word for an ancient law that has hitherto mainly governed our lives, and I do prophesy that if we disobey the law of the final supremacy of the spirit over matter, of truth and love over brute force, in a few years' time we shall have Bolshevism rampant in this land, which was once so holy.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6483

338. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SECUNDERABAD,
April 1, 1919

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I am dictating a letter to you, it seems, after ages, and I might not have been able even now, but for an accident that has befallen us. We left Bezwada early this morning, hoping to catch the Bombay Mail at Wadi Junction. Our train reached Secunderabad too late for the special train which it joins in order to take the train at [*sic*] Wadi Junction. And so we have to bake here for 24 hours. Secunderabad is like an oven, but the vexatious delay has its amenities. (I do not know that I have used the word amenities to correctly express what I mean. Can it mean "relieving features" ?) It is no small thing to me to be able to give you what I hope will turn out to be a love letter.

You fill me with grief by the news about Gurudev's health. What is the matter with him? I do hope, he is much better now. I reach Bombay on Thursday morning, i.e., the 3rd instant. I hope to pass the month practically up to the 22nd instant between Bombay and Ahmedabad and I wish we could meet during that time. Meanwhile, I must try to explain to you what I mean by the Pledge. It somewhat surprises me that you have missed its obvious meaning. The signatory undertakes to break, if necessary, all the laws that may not enunciate eternal verities. But as a check upon individual extravagance, he surrenders his judgment to that of experts as to the selection of such breakable laws and the order in which they are to be broken. That surely is not a matter of conscience. If the committee which is bound by the same Pledge that binds the individual satyagrahi commits an error and selects laws whose breach will be inconsistent with satyagraha, naturally, the individual signatory who conscientiously thinks so refrains from breaking such a law. In all satyagraha organi-zations, this final liberty is understood. Is not my meaning clear? The entrustment of selection to the committee is the happiest part of the Pledge. But for that there would have been confusion worse confounded. Take the Sindh incident. There the Police Commissioner prohibits an innocent procession. The satyagrahis obey because they are bound by the Pledge not to commit disobedience except where authorized by the committee. Their first impulse would be to disre-gard the prohibition and the consequences of such hasty disregard might be most serious. In South Africa, they surrendered to my judgment as to the selection of the laws and the time of breaking them. Here the committee was thought of at my instance. But of every such committee, I am the President. I hope, you find time to read the cuttings I have been sending you. I must now end this letter as visitors are waiting to see me.

I am most anxious to publish something from Gurudev and something from you if both of you can give it.

With love,

Yours,

From a photostat: S.N. 6489

339. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

SECUNDERABAD,
April 1, 1919

MY DEAR CHILD,

My hand is still too shaky for steady and continuous writing. But I feel I must make the attempt to give you something in my own hand. I was so sorry I did not see you at the station[1]. I felt keenly for you and poor Mahadev. Both of you are sensitive, almost cast in the same mould. I was shuddering as I looked through the window when the train steamed out. I felt that he would run so madly to catch the train that he might drop down from sheer exhaustion. I was glad to see him at Bezwada.

I hope you wrote to the Collector as you had agreed you would. Please let me know whether he said anything in reply.

Please tell the girls[2] I am going to make daily use of the blanket sheet they have sent me. But I expect them soon to be able to weave hand-spun cotton and spin it themselves. The music of the spinning-wheel is superior to any I know; for it is the music that finally clothes the naked. Even when the machines will be rusting from disuse (for man will some day be sick unto death of the maddening speed of the machines), posterity will still require clothing and hand-spun yarn will be the fashion. I am asking Maganlal to send you some hand-spun yarn.

Our train was late and we missed the connection here. So we have an idle day. This enables me to write to you.

I wish you could introduce Hindi in your school. You may consult the Superintendent about it. Have you read my plea for Hindi ?

With deep love,

Yours,

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] In Madras

[2] Of the Danish Mission Boarding School, where the addressee was working

340. TELEGRAM TO S. KASTURI RANGA IYENGAR

[BOMBAY,
April 3, 1919]

KASTURI RANGA IYANGAR[1]
[*THE*] *HINDU*
MADRAS

JUST ARRIVED[2] HAVING MISSED CONNECTION AT SECUNDERABAD. CONSIDERING PROPOSAL REG. MEETING[3] DELHI. HOPE DELHI TRAGEDY[4] WILL MAKE SATYAGRAHIS STEEL THEIR HEARTS AND WAVERERS RECONSIDER THEIR POSITION. I HAVE NOT A SHADOW OF DOUBT THAT BY REMAINING TRUE TO OUR PLEDGE WE SHALL NOT ONLY SECURE WITHDRAWAL ROWLATT LEGISLATION BUT WE SHALL KILL SPIRIT OF TERRORISM LYING BEHIND. HOPE SPEECHES SUNDAY[5] WILL BE FREE FROM ANGER OR UNWORTHY PASSION. CAUSE TOO GREAT AND SACRED TO BE DAMAGED BY EXHIBITION PASSION. WE HAVE NO RIGHT CRY OUT AGAINST SUFFERINGS SELF-INVITED. UNDOUBTEDLY THERE SHOULD BE NO COERGION FOR SUSPENSION BUSINESS OR FAST. YOU MAY PUBLISH THIS.

From a photostat: S.N. 6496

341. TELEGRAM TO SWAMI SHRADDHANAND

April 3, 1919

SANNYASI SWAMI SHRADDHANANDJI
ARYA SAMAJ
DELHI

JUST ARRIVED FROM MADRAS TOUR. READ SCRAPPY ACCOUNTS TRAGEDY YESTERDAY TRAIN. READ ALSO YOUR SPIRITED STATEMENT PRESS. FEEL PROUD OF IT. TENDER MY CONGRATULATIONS TO YOU AND PEOPLE

[1] Editor of *The Hindu* and vice-president of Satyagraha Sabha, Madras
[2] *New India* here has "here from Bezwada".
[3] *New India* here has "All-India Satyagraha Conference in Delhi".
[4] Firing by the police on March 30
[5] April 6

OF DELHI FOR EXEMPLARY PATIENCE IN OPPOSING ROWLATT LEGISLATION. WE ARE RESISTING SPIRIT OF TERRORISM LYING BEHIND. NO EASY TASK. WE MAY HAVE TO GIVE MUCH MORE SUCH INNOCENT BLOOD AS DELHI GAVE SUNDAY LAST. FOR SATYAGRAHIS IT IS A FURTHER CALL TO SACRIFICE THEMSELVES TO THE UTTERMOST. PLEASE WIRE IF POSSIBLE EXACT NUMBER HINDU MOHAMMEDAN DEATHS TO DATE AND WOUNDED. IT WILL BE UNNECESSARY FOR DELHI TO FAST AGAIN NEXT SUNDAY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6494; also *The Hindu*, 5-4-1919

342. TELEGRAM TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

April 3, 1919

HON. SRINIVASA SHASTRIAR
ROYAPPETTA
MADRAS

DOES NOT DELHI TRAGEDY MAKE IT INCUMBENT ON YOU OTHER FRIENDS SPEAK OUT NO UNCERTAIN TERMS? HOPE DIFFERENCE OF OPINION ABOUT SATYAGRAHA DOES NOT MEAN DIFFERENCE OF OPINION ON METHODS USED BY DELHI POLICE. IN OPPOSING ROWLATT LEGISLATION WE ARE FIGHTING SPIRIT TERRORISM LYING BEHIND.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6493

343. TELEGRAM TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

April 3, 1919

TO
DR. ANSARI[1]
DELHI

JUST RETURNED FROM TOUR READ LETTER. YOU SHALL CERTAINLY GO ENGLAND. PLEASE WIRE DATE DEPARTURE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6497

[1] 1880-1936; physician, president, Indian National Congress, 1927

344. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

April 3, 1919

AM HERE[1] AT LEAST WEEK.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6498

345. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
[On or after *April 3, 1919*]

HON. PANDIT MALAVIYAJI
BHARATI BHAWAN
ALLAHABAD

IN VIEW OF WHAT APPEARS TO BE SLAUGHTER OF INNOCENTS AT DELHI, IN MY OPINION YOU CANNOT REMAIN SILENT ON IT WHETHER YOU JOIN THE MOVEMENT OR NOT, I HOPE YOU AND ALL LEADERS WILL SPEAK OUT WHAT YOU FEEL IN NO UNCERTAIN TERMS. IN OPPOSING ROWLATT LEGISLATION, SATYAGRAHIS ARE RESISTING THE SPIRIT OF TERRORISM THAT LIES BEHIND IT. THE BLOOD OF THE INNOCENTS HAS LAID A HEAVY RESPONSIBILITY UPON SATYAGRAHIS AND I DOUBT NOT THAT THEY WILL GIVE A GOOD ACCOUNT OF THEMSELVES. PLEASE SHARE THIS WITH PANDIT NEHRU[2] AND OTHER FRIENDS.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6495

[1] In Bombay
[2] Motilal Nehru

346. LETTER TO THE PRESS ON DELHI TRAGEDY[1]

BOMBAY,
April 3, 1919

TO
THE EDITOR
THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE
BOMBAY

SIR,

I venture to seek the hospitality of your columns to make a few remarks on the Delhi tragedy. It is alleged against the Delhi people who were assembled at the Delhi railway station, 1. that some of them were trying to coerce the sweetmeat- sellers into closing their stalls;

2. that some of them were forcibly preventing people from boarding tram-cars and other vehicles;

3. that some of them threw brickbats;

4 that the whole crowd that marched to the station demanded the release of the men who are said to be the coercers and who were for that reason arrested at the instance of the railway authorities;

5. that the crowd declined to disperse, when the Magistrate gave the order to disperse.

I have read Sannyasi Swami Shraddhanandji's account of the tragedy. I am bound to accept it as true, unless it is authoritatively proved to be otherwise, and his account seems to me to deny allegations, 1, 2 and 3. But assuming the truth of all the allegations, it does appear to me that the local authorities in Delhi have made use of a Nasmyth hammer to crush a fly. On their action however, in firing on the crowd, I shall seek another opportunity of saying more.

My purpose in writing this letter is merely to issue a note of warning to all satyagrahis. I would therefore like to observe that the conduct described in allegations 1 to 4, if true, would be inconsistent with the Satyagraha Pledge. The conduct described in allegation 5 can be consistent with the Pledge, but if the allegation is true, the conduct was premature, because the committee contemplated in the Pledge has

[1] This was released through the Associated Press of India and published also in *New India*, 4-4-1919 and *The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 5-4-1919.

not decided upon the disobedience of order that may be issued by Magistrates under the Riot Act. I am anxious to make it as clear as I can that in this movement, no pressure can be put upon people who do not wish to accept our suggestions and advice. The movement being essentially one to secure the greatest freedom for all, satyagrahis cannot forcibly demand the release of those who might be arrested, whether justly or unjustly. The essence of the Pledge is to invite imprisonment and until the committee decides upon the breach of the Riot Act, it is the duty of satyagrahis to obey, without making the slightest ado, magisterial order to disperse, etc., and thus to demonstrate their law-abiding nature. I hope that next Sunday at satyagraha meetings, all speeches will be free from passion, anger or resentment. The movement depends for its success entirely upon perfect self-possession, self-restraint, absolute adherence to truth and an unlimited capacity for self-suffering.

Before closing this letter, I would add that in opposing the Rowlatt legislation, the satyagrahis are resisting the spirit of terrorism which lies behind it and of which it is a most glaring symptom. The Delhi tragedy imposes an added responsibility upon satyagrahis of steeling their hearts and going on with their struggle until the Rowlatt legislation is withdrawn.

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 4-4-1919

347. LETTER TO DR. M. B. VELKAR

April 3, 1919

DEAR DR. VELKAR[1],

I thank you and Mr. Mandlik[2] for your candid note. I thought that at the preliminary meeting we had in Bombay, I explained the meaning of satyagraha as fully as I could. I remember having stated that satyagraha was an attempt to introduce the religious element in

[1] Dr. M. B. Velkar, secretary of the Indian Home Rule League, Bombay, and a member of the executive committee of the Satyagraha Sabha

[2] R. N. Mandlik, a member of the executive committee, Satyagraha Sabha, Bombay

politics. But I appreciate your position and if you do not believe in the prison door being the gateway to liberty, I am sure you cannot remain in the movement. It is not my opinion of today but I expressed it years ago in the booklet, *Indian Home Rule*[1], that boycott was totally inconsistent with satyagraha. Satyagraha in the political field is an extension of the law that governs the members of a family. But it is impossible for me to argue out the pros and cons in the course of a letter. If you will care to call, I shall be pleased to discuss the question with you. In any case, you will let me know your final decision.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6492

348. BLACK SUNDAY[2]

GREAT POPULAR DEMONSTRATION AGAINST THE BLACK ACT

The following is the programme of the demonstrations which have been arranged for Sunday next:

SUNDAY, 6TH APRIL, 1919

SEA BATH 7 A.M.—8 A.M. CHOWPATTY

PROCESSION 8.15—10 A.M.:

Chowpatty Sea Face	Girgaum Back Road
Sandhurst Bridge	C. P. Tank Road
Sandhurst Road	Madhav Baug

3.30—LADIES' MEETING,

CHINA BAUG,

Mrs. Jayakar Presiding.

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mahatma Gandhi: Speakers,

6.30—MASS MEETING—FRENCH BRIDGE

* * *

IF YOU VALUE YOUR FREEDOM, YOU WILL JOIN

The Bombay Chronicle, 4-4-1919

[1] *Hind Swaraj* published in January 1910; *vide* "Hind Swaraj", 22-11-1909.

[2] Presumably drafted by Gandhiji

349. DIRECTIONS TO DEMONSTRATORS

April 5, 1919

We have received the following communication from the secretaries of the Satyagraha Sabha:

It should be remembered that tomorrow is a day of humiliation and prayer and also of mourning by reason of the Delhi tragedy. It is therefore absolutely necessary that when the demonstrators go out to bathe and form the procession there will be no noise, no talking, amongst themselves, but that they will march in absolute silence and disperse likewise.

At all the meetings that may be held there should be no demonstration made by cheers, applause, or cries of approval or disapproval or of any other character. The behaviour of the mourners should be worthy of the occasion.

The demonstrators should carry out the instructions that might be given to them by volunteers.

No pressure of any kind whatever should be put upon those who do not fast or suspend work and all those who may not desire to participate in the national mourning and demonstrations should be left absolutely undisturbed.

It is the duty of the demonstrators to obey and carry out all police instructions as it is as yet no part of the movement to offer civil disobedience against police orders that may be given in connection with demonstrations, processions organized by Satyagraha Associations.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-4-1919

350. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

[BOMBAY,]
April 5, 1919

TO
RAJENDRA PRASAD
PATNA

THANKS YOUR DECISION RELIEVES ME, WHAT ABOUT HAQ[1] BRIJKISHORE[2] AND COMPANY?

From a photostat: S.N. 6503

351. TELEGRAM TO SWAMI SHRADDHANAND

[BOMBAY,]
April 5, 1919

TO
SHRADDHANANDJI
DELHI

YOUR WIRE[3] RECEIVED. PRAY WIRE WHETHER DEPENDANTS OF DECEASED AND SERIOUSLY WOUNDE REQUIRE SUPPORT. IF THEY DO, WHETHER YOU HAVE COLLECTED ENOUGH FOR THEM.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N.6502

[1] Mazharul Haque (1866-1930); nationalist leader of Bihar; one of the founders and, later, president of the Muslim League; supported Gandhiji during Champaran and non-co-operation movements

[2] Brajkishore Prasad

[3] In reply to Gandhiji's telegram of April 3. It gave an account of the happenings in Delhi.

352. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

[BOMBAY,]
April 5, 1919

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

For 24 hours I was sad beyond measure over the Delhi tragedy.

I am now happy beyond measure over it. The blood spilt at Delhi was innocent. It is possible that the satyagrahis in Delhi made mistakes. But on the whole, they have covered themselves with glory. There can be no redemption without sacrifice. And it fills me with a glow to find that full measure was given even on the first day and that too at the very seat of the power of Satan. I want to share this happiness with you if you can take it.

I hope you received my letter answering your doubts. I have filed an appeal against you and here is a copy[1] thereof. You can do what you like [with] it. But I must have Gurudev's opinion.

With deep love,

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

353. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

[BOMBAY,]
April 5, 1919

DEAR GURUDEV,

This is an appeal to you against our mutual friend, Charlie Andrews. I have been pleading with him for a message from you for publication in the national struggle which, though in form it is only directed against a single piece of legislation, is in reality a struggle for liberty worthy of a self-respecting nation. I have waited long and patiently. Charlie's description of your illness made me hesitate to write to you personally. Your health is a national treasure and Charlie's devotion to you is superhuman. It is divine and I know that if he could help it he would not allow a single person, whether by writing or his presence, to disturb your quiet and rest. I have respected this lofty desire of his to protect you from all harm. But I find that

[1] *Vide* the following item.

you are lecturing in Benares. I have, therefore, in the light of this fact corrected Charlie's description of your health which somewhat alarmed me and I venture to ask you for a message from you—a message of hope and inspiration for those who have to go through the fire. I do it because you were good enough to send me your blessings when I embarked upon the struggle. The forces arrayed against me are, as you know, enormous. I do not dread them, for I have an unquenchable belief that they are supporting untruth and that if we have sufficient faith in truth[1], it will enable us to overpower the former. But all forces work through human agency. I am therefore anxious to gather round this mighty struggle the ennobling assistance of those who approve it. I will not be happy until I have received your considered opinion[2] on this endeavour to purify the political life of the country. If you have seen anything to alter your first opinion of it, I hope you will not hesitate to make it known. I value even adverse opinions from friends, for though they may not make me change my course, they serve the purpose of so many lighthouses to give out warnings of dangers lying in the stormy paths of life. Charlie's friendship has been to me on this account an invaluable treasure, because he does not hesitate to share with me even his unconsidered notes of dissent. This I count a great privilege. May I ask you to extend at this critical moment the same privilege that Charlie has?

I hope that you are keeping well and that you have thoroughly recuperated after your fatiguing journey through the Madras Presidency.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] The source has "it".

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Rabindranath Tagore's Letter to Gandhiji", 12-4-1919

354. MESSAGE TO MADRAS[1]

[BOMBAY,]
April 6, 1919

I DO HOPE THAT PRESIDENCY THAT PRODUCED BEAUTIFUL VALLIAMMA, NAGAPPAN, NARAYANSAMI AND SO MANY OTHERS OF YOUR PRESIDENCY WITH WHOM I WAS PRIVILEGED TO WORK IN SOUTH AFRICA WILL NOT QUAIL IN PRESENCE OF SACRIFICE DEMANDED OF US ALL. I FEEL CONVINCED THAT REFORMS WILL BE OF NO AVAIL UNLESS OUR WOULD-BE PARTNERS RESPECT US AND WE KNOW THAT THEY ONLY RESPECT THOSE WHO ARE CAPABLE OF SACRIFICE FOR IDEALS AS THEMSELVES. SEE HOW UNSTINTINGLY THEY POURED OUT TREASURE AND BLOOD DURING THE WAR. OURS IS A NOBLER CAUSE AND OUR MEANS INFINITELY SUPERIOR IN THAT WE EVER REFRAIN FROM SHEDDING BLOOD OTHER THAN OUR OWN.

From a photostat: S.N. 6500

355. TELEGRAM TO SWAMI SHRADDHANAND

[BOMBAY,]
April 6, 1919

TO
SHRADDHANANDJI
DELHI

HOPE LEAVE TUESDAY[2] FOR DELHI. WILL THAT DO ?

From a photostat: S.N. 6504

[1] This was in reply to the following telegram from Madras: "Pray telegraph message for satyagraha day. Arranging translation vernaculars here —Rangasamy." S.N. 6500.

[2] April 8

356. LETTER TO B. G. HORNIMAN

[BOMBAY,]
April 6, 1919

DEAR HORNIMAN,

The accompanying is a great letter[1]. You know Dwijendrababu. He is the eldest brother of Sir R. Tagore and is leading, like his father the late Devendranath Tagore, practically the life of a sannyasi. I think he is over eighty years old. The letter therefore is, I think, worth reproducing. I would even suggest a photoprint of the letter. But the object of my writing this is not merely to send the enclosed to you. It is to ask you, if I may, to dip your pen in the ink of love for tomorrow's leading article in the *Chronicle*. I know I have now come to know you enough to know that you are quite capable of writing such an article and, if you will accept my suggestion, I would like you also to make it a signed leader.

Yours sincerely,

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] It ran :

March 31, 1919

MY MOST REVERED FRIEND MR. GANDHI,

I wish with all my heart that you will go on, unflinchingly, with your work of helping our misguided people to overcome Evil by Good. At times, it seems to me that the penance and fastings, etc., which you enjoin [on] me are not quite the things that are necessary and therefore may be dispensed with. But on the second thought I find that we are not competent to judge the matter aright from our standpoint. You are deriving your inspiration from such a high source, that instead of calling in question the appropriateness of your sayings and doings, we ought to thankfully recognise in them the fatherly call of Providence full of divine wisdom and power.

May the Almighty and All-merciful God be your shield and strength in this awful crisis.

Your affectionate old
BORODADA DWIJENDRANATH TAGORE

357. SPEECH AT CHOWPATTY, BOMBAY

April 6, 1919

Bombay presented the sight of a city in mourning on the occasion of the day of national humiliation, prayers and sorrow at the passing of the Rowlatt Bills. . .and kept the twenty-four hours' fast.

SEA BATH AND PRAYERS AT CHOWPATTY

Long before the sun had- rises, the Back Bay foreshore was humming and throbbing with life, for it was full of people. From an early hour in the morning, people had come to Chowpatty to bathe in the sea....It was a Black Sunday, and the day's programme had to begin with a sea bath....

Mr. M. K. Gandhi was one of the first arrivals at Chowpatty with several volunteers, and by 6.30 a.m., or earlier he had taken his seat on one of the stone benches with about a hundred satyagrahis around him....As the day advanced people kept pouring in on the seashore. Every new arrival took his bath in the sea first and then came and sat round Mr. Gandhi. In this manner the crowd swelled and swelled until it became one huge mass of people. Mr. Gandhi, as the time for the meeting on Chowpatty sands neared, moved in that direction, where he was shortly joined by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas, Mr. Horniman and others. There were also about twenty-five ladies. It was a splendid sight at this time, for the whole Sandhurst Bridge swarmed with people and there must have been approximately one-and-a-half lakhs of people.... All communities were represented there— Mahomedans, Hindus, Parsis, etc., and one Englishman. Mahomedans joined the main body of the people at Chowpatty in strong numbers....At exactly eight o'clock, Mr. Gandhi made his speech. As he was too ill, the speech was read for him by Mr. Jamnadas.

MR. GANDHI'S EXHORTATION TO TAKE SWADESHI VOW

Mr. Gandhi in the beginning said those who wanted to take the swadeshi vow could do so on the *Ramnavmi* day[1] after taking their bath early in the morning. But this particular meeting was not the proper occasion for that; if there were any people there who wanted to take the vow, they were welcome to do that. There was a world of difference between boycott and swadeshi, for boycott was a sort of punishment, while the swadeshi *vrat*[2] was a religious duty. If they wanted to take the swadeshi vow they should do so with due and deliberate consideration. He himself was one of the staunchest swadeshists and perhaps the strictest, but if the people wanted to move in

[1] April 9
[2] Vow

the matter they should do so only after careful consideration of all points. On *Ramnavmi*, they could all of them, if they so desired, take the swadeshi vow. This was repeated by Mr. Jamnadas, sentence by sentence, as Mr. Gandhi instructed him. Mr. Jamnadas then read the speech of Mr. Gandhi.

Mr. Gandhi in his speech said:

I am anxious to say as little as possible on this occasion, which is perhaps the most solemn of our lives for most of us. And I know that this great demonstration could be made more eloquent if we could do away with speeches. But it is impossible to ignore the tragedy that was enacted at the capital of India last Sunday.

We have before us two authoritative versions of the episode. Swami Shraddhanandji's on behalf of the people and that of the Government on behalf of the local authorities. The two do not tally. They differ as to some of the main particulars. An impartial observer will regard both as party statements. I, being of the popular party, shall, therefore, for the purposes of my criticism, assume the truth of the official narrative; but there are remarkable gaps in it, amounting to an evasion of some of the charges brought against the local authorities by Sannyasi Shraddhanandji. It should be remembered that the Sannyasi's statement was first on the field. The Sannyasi appeared on the scene immediately after the first firing. He says, "I went to some Europeans, of whom one was Mr. Currie, City Magistrate, and asked them to tell me the true facts. They treated me with indifference, Mr. Currie actually turning his back upon me. I told him that I was taking the people away to the meeting ground, although early, and he ought not to threaten people by making a display of military and machine-guns."

In my humble opinion, it was the duty of the Government to deal with this charge. Mr. Currie must have, or ought to have, known the Sannyasi. He is not a young man unknown to fame. He occupies a recognized status in the Indian world and it was common knowledge at the time the occurrence took place that he was one of the principal leaders in the satyagraha movement in Delhi. Did Mr. Currie ignore the Sannyasi? The Sannyasi has described in graphic language the threat used by the Gurkhas. Were rifles pointed at him and was he insolently told *Tum ko chhed denge*[1] ? Did a Gurkha brandish

[1] "We shall pierce you"

before him his naked *kukri*[1] right and left? It would appear that had the authorities endeavoured to regulate the crowd through its natural leaders, there need have been no display or use of military force. But the authorities last Sunday simply followed out the traditional policy of ignoring leaders and of overawing the people. Assuming every one of the statements in the official communique to be correct, as I have remarked in my letter to the Press, there was no warrant for firing on innocent people. At the worst, what was it that the men could have done ? It is clear that the men were absolutely unarmed. An Indian crowd is the easiest in the world to disperse. In any other place but India, the police would have been deemed sufficient to meet an emergency of the Delhi type and then, too, they would have been armed with nothing more than batons.

AN INCIDENT AT DURBAN

I remember an occasion when a mob of 6,000 Europeans, who had been previously inflamed by their leaders, tried to lynch one who, I believe, had given no cause for it. After a hot pursuit by the lynchers, he found shelter in a friend's house, which was also the latter's shop. Towards evening, the crowd in a determined manner marched to the house, and demanded delivery of the victim of their wrath on pain of burning down the shop. Lives of nearly twenty men, women and children were at stake. Goods worth £20,000 might have been destroyed. Here, if at any time, the use of the military would have been justified. But the Superintendent of Police would not summon any such aid. He alone with his dozen constables scattered amongst the crowd, defended the lives and property that were in danger, and after three hours' contending with the crowd, he succeeded in stealing the victim through the crowd to the police station, and finally in dispersing the lynchers. This happened on the 13th day of January, 1897, in Durban.[2] Unlike the Durban crowd, the Delhi crowd was without a mind of its own. It threatened to do nothing beyond, as alleged in the communique, refusing to disperse.

The authorities could have without the aid of the military surely succeeded in guarding the station, and could then have left the crowd to its own resources. But unfortunately, almost throughout India, it has

[1] Curved knife

[2] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies" and *An Autobiography*, Part III, Ch. III.

become customary to summon the military on the slightest pretext. I have, however, no desire to labour this question any further. It is enough for us to know that no harm was done to anybody by any action of the crowd and, that on this occasion the crowd was neither overawed nor infuriated. It covered itself with glory by remaining firm and self-possessed and by holding a meeting said to have been attended by 40,000 men almost immediately after the deadly fire. It was truly an event of which, when time has done its work, India will be proud. All honour to Sannyasi Shraddhanandji and Hakimji Ajmal Khan[1] for their effective and brave leadership. During the last few days, I have often stated that I have no fear of any excesses or violence breaking out among people who may take part in the struggle. The doings in Delhi only confirm my optimism. However, I never contemplated that those who are our associates would not have our own blood spilt, though I do confess that I was totally unprepared for the "stern measures" of the Delhi authorities. But to satyagrahis, they must be welcome. The sterner they are, the better. They have undertaken to suffer even unto death. We have therefore no right to complain of those measures directed against us.

NO NATION HAS RISEN WITHOUT SACRIFICE

I have a telegram from Shraddhanandji saying that four Mahomedan and five Hindu corpses have up to now been traced and dealt with according to the rites prescribed by the respective religions and that about 20 are believed to be missing and 13 badly wounded cases are receiving attention in the hospital. This is not a bad beginning. No country has ever risen, no nation has ever been made without sacrifice, and we are trying an experiment of building up ourselves by self-sacrifice without resorting to violence in any shape or form. This is satyagraha. From the pure satyagraha standard, our case in Delhi is weak in one respect. The crowd undoubtedly demanded the release of the men who were arrested at the instance of the station authorities and declined to disperse until they were given up. Both these acts were wrong. It was wrong to demand the release of the arrested men. It is arrest and imprisonment that we seek by civil disobedience. It therefore ill becomes us to resent either. And it was wrong not to disperse. In this movement, it is open to satyagrahis to

[1] 1865-1927; physician and politician; president, Indian National Congress, 1921

disobey only those laws[1] which are selected for the purpose by the committee contemplated in the Pledge. When we have acquired habits of discipline, self-control, qualities of leadership and obedience, we shall be better able to offer collective civil disobedience, but untill we have developed these qualities, I have advised that we should select for disobedience only such laws as can be disobeyed by individuals. It is, therefore, necessary for us till we are sufficiently disciplined and till the spirit of satyagraha has permeated large bodies of men and women to obey all regulations regarding processions and gatherings. Whilst we disobey certain selected laws, it is incumbent on us to show our law-abiding character by respecting all other laws. And then when we have reached the necessary standard of knowledge and discipline, we shall find that machine-guns and all other weapons, even the plague of aeroplanes, will cease to afflict us.

A SACRED DUTY

It now requires for me to place before you for your acceptance two resolutions. The first is a sacred duty. In it we express our deep sympathy with those who have lost their dear ones and congratulate the Delhi people and the organizers of the demonstration upon their exemplary self-restraint. A wire has been sent to Shraddhanandji inquiring about the financial circumstances of the bereaved families and inquiring whether, in the event of pecuniary help being necessary, Delhi is able to cope with it. The least that we owe to the memory of our deceased brethren is that we should support their dependants to the required extent and I have no doubt that the rich people of Bombay will not fail if called upon for the purpose to put their hands into their pockets.

A SIMPLE PRAYER

The second resolution is a simple prayer to the Secretary of State for India that he will be pleased to advise His Majesty the King-Emperor to disallow the Revolutionary and Anarchical Crimes Act and an equally simple prayer to H.E. the Viceroy that he will be pleased to withdraw Rowlatt Bill No. 1. This prayer will go forward weighted with the blood of the innocents of Delhi and the promise that we shall continue to suffer by civil disobedience till the hearts of the rulers are softened and till they accept the principle that they may not violate enlightened and unanimously expressed public opinion

[1] *Vide* "Statement on Laws for Civil Disobedience", 7-4-1919.

even as they have done in the case of the Rowlatt legislation.

RESOLUTIONS

The following two resolutions were then passed amidst silence:

I. This meeting of the inhabitants of Bombay tenders its congratulations to the inhabitants of Delhi for showing exemplary self-restraint under circumstances the most trying and to Sannyasi Swami Shree Shraddhanandji and to Hakimji Ajmal Khan for their admirable leadership and offers its respectful condolences to the families of those innocent men who were killed by the firing ordered by the local authorities.

II. This meeting of the inhabitants of Bombay respectfully requests the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for India to advise H.M. the King-Emperor to veto the Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act of 1919, inasmuch as apart from its being intrinsically bad and totally uncalled for, it was passed in defiance of unanimously expresed public opinion; and this meeting respectfully requests the Viceroy to withdraw the Criminal Law Amendments Bill No. 1 of 1919.

After the speech was over, Mr. Gandhi announced that they would form a procession and go over to the Madhav Baug Temple and offer their prayers there. Mrs. Naidu, who was ill, would return home in a car.

A procession was then formed and without the least exaggeration it could be stated that from the seashore to Madhav Baug it was a solid mass of humanity, gathering strength on its way. The houses on both sides were crowded with women and men and children.

The volunteers formed themselves into a cordon round the leaders, for the crush was too much, and slowly marched towards Madhav Baug. Mr. Horniman, who was ill, could only walk with some difficulty and was in a weak condition of health. It took considerable time to reach Madhav Baug on account of the huge crowd. At Madhav Baug itself, the people distributed themselves all over the place and the compound was completely filled. Mr. Gandhi came there and, after offering prayers, requested the crowd to disperse quietly which they did.

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-4-1919

358. SPEECH ON HINDU-MUSLIM FRIENDSHIP, BOMBAY

April 6, 1919

After the prayers were over at Madhav Baug, Jamnadas Dwarkadas announced that their Mahomedan brethren were holding a meeting at Grant Road and he asked those present to proceed there to show their friendship towards their great sister-community.... No less than five thousand Mahomedans were present at the meeting, which was held on the open space in front of the Mosque, and the vast concourse of

Mahomedans got up and cordially received their Hindu brethren... Mahatma Gandhi, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas and other leaders were taken to the balcony of the Mosque and accommodated there amid scenes of utmost enthusiasm...

Mahatma Gandhi also dwelt on the unique spectacle of the meeting. He appealed to his Mahomedan bretheren to join the satyagraha movement in large numbers. He said satyagraha was like a banyan tree, the roots and branches of which went deep into the ground and in course of time it became such a mighty tree that nobody on earth could uproot it. Satyagraha was the essence of human life and conduct, and he was sure that the movement would unite the two great communities of India as nothing else could do. Hindus and Mahomedans should treat each other as their own brothers. The Hindus must sympathize with the Mahomedans in their troubles and the Mahomedans should feel the same pain as their Hindu brethren did in their troubles. They should by every means in their power strengthen their friendship and reduce to a nullity any cause of difference of opinion among them. He, however, did not think that the fraternization which they witnessed there that morning and that which had taken place at Delhi the other day meant that the Mahomedans and Hindus all over the country had fraternized. In order to cement the bond of friendship which now existed, he suggested that they would in the near future meet at a mosque or some other place of worship or any other place and take a vow of eternal friendship. He concluded by thanking the Mahomedans for the opportunity they had given the Hindus that morning of meeting them and showing them their friendship.

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-4-1919

359. SPEECH AT LADIES' PROTEST MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

April 6, 1919

Mahatma Gandhi, addressing the meeting, said he had intended to speak before them at some length, but he was sorry he was not able to do so as he had just received an urgent message calling him on some very important business. He hat just heard that some untoward incident had occurred near the Market.[2] The police seemed to have made some mistake or possibly the people had committed the mistake; but before leaving the meeting, he would appeal to the women of India to co-operate with the men in the constitutional fight which they were waging against the Rowlatt legislation. Just as a man, with one half of his body inactive, could not do anything properly, so the Indian body would not be able to do its work properly if one half of it, namely, the women, remained inactive, and so he would appeal to his sisters of India to join the satyagraha movement in large numbers.

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-4-1919

[1] Ladies of all classes and communities held a meeting at the China Baug to record their emphatic protest against the Rowlatt legislation. Mrs. Jayakar presided.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoolla", 8-4-1919.

360. "SATYAGRAHI" : I

BOMBAY,
April 7, 1919

The following are the contents of the *Satyagrahi*, the unregistered newspaper, which Mahatma Gandhi issued on Monday in defiance of the Indian Press Act:

(Please read, copy and circulate among friends; and also request them to copy and circulate this paper)

No. 1Price: one pice

SATYAGRAHI

(Editor: Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Laburnum Road, Gamdevi, Bombay)

Published every Monday at 10 a.m.

Bombay, 7th April, 1919

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS

This paper has not been registered according to law. So there can be no annual subscription. Nor can it be guaranteed that the paper will be published without interruption. The editor is liable at any moment to be arrested by the Government and it is impossible to ensure continuity of publication until India is in the happy position of supplying editors enough to take the place of those arrested. We shall leave no stone unturned to secure a ceaseless succession of editors.

It is not our intention to break for all time the law governing publication of newspapers. This paper will, therefore, exist so long only as the Rowlatt legislation is not withdrawn.

OUR CREDENTIALS

Our credentials are best supplied by answering the question, What will the *Satyagrahi* do ? *Satyagrahi* has come into being for the sake of ensuring withdrawal of the Rowlatt legislation. Its business, therefore, is to show the people ways of bringing about such withdrawal in accordance with the principles of satyagraha. The Satyagraha Pledge requires the signatories to court imprisonment by offering civil disobedience by committing a civil breach of certain laws. This publication can, therefore, show the best remedy in one way and that is by committing civil disobedience in the very act of publishing this journal. In other forms of pubic activity, the speaker is not

obliged to act as he preaches. The object is to draw attention to this contradiction as a fault. It is a method of doing pubic work. The method of satyagraha is unique. In it example alone is precept. Therefore, whatever are suggested herein will be those that have been tested by personal experience, and remedies thus tested will be like well-tried medicine more valuable than new. We hope therefore that our readers will not hesitate to adopt our advice based as it will be on experience.

NEWS

Yesterday many great events took place; but none was as great as that owing to the ceaseless efforts of satyagrahis the mill-hands celebrated the National Day by working in their respective mills as they were unable to get permission of their employers.

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-4-1919

361. INSTRUCTIONS TO SATYAGRAHIS[1]

[BOMBAY,
April 7, 1919]

We are now in a position to expect to be arrested any moment, It is, therefore, necessary to bear in mind that, if anyone is arrested, he should without causing any difficulty allow himself to be arrested and, if summoned to appear before a court, he should do so. No defence should be offered and no pleaders engaged in the matter. If a fine is imposed with the alternative of imprisonment, imprisonment should be accepted. If only a fine is imposed, it ought not to be paid but that his property, if he has any, should be allowed to be sold. There should be no demonstration of grief or otherwise made by the remaining satyagrahis by reason of the arrest and imprisonment of their comrade. It cannot be too often repeated that we court imprisonment and we may not complain of it when we actually receive it. When once imprisoned, it is our duty to conform to all prison regulations, as prison reform is no part of our campaign at the present moment. A satyagrahi may not resort to surreptitious practices, of which ordinary prisoners are often found to be guilty. All a satyagrahi does can only and must be done openly.

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-4 1919

[1] Issued as a leaflet along with *Satyagrahi*, 7-4-1919

362. STATEMENT ON LAWS FOR CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

[*April 7, 19I9*]

The following statement has been issued by the Satyagraha Sabha:

The committee contemplated by the Satyagraha Pledge has advised that for the time being laws regarding prohibited literature and registration of newspapers may be civilly disobeyed.

With reference to prohibited literature, the committee has selected the following prohibited works[1] for dissemination:

Hind Swarajya by M. K. Gandhi.

Sarvodaya or *Universal Dawn* by M. K. Gandhi (being a paraphrase of *Unto This Last*).

The Story of a Satyagrahi by M. K. Gandhi (being a paraphrase of the *Defence and Death of Socrates* by Plato).

The Life and Address of Mustafa Kamal Pasha (printed at the International Printing Press).

In making this selection, the community has been guided by the following considerations:

(1) To cause as little disturbance as possible among the governors and the governed;

(2) Until satyagrahis have become seasoned, disciplined and capable of handling delicately organized movements, to select such laws only as can be disobeyed individually;

(3) To select, as a first step, laws that have evoked popular disapproval and that from the satyagraha standpoint, are the most open to attack;

(4) To select laws whose civil breach would constitute an education for the people, showing them a clear way out of the difficulties that lie in the path of honest men desiring to do public work;

(5) Regarding prohibited literature, to select such books and pamphlets as are not inconsistent with satyagraha, and which are, therefore, of a clean type and which do not, either directly or indirectly, approve of or encourage violence.

[1] These publications were proscribed by the Bombay Government in March 1910 for containing "seditious" matter; *vide* "Our Publifcations", 7-5-1910.

Satyagrahis should receive copies of prohibited literature for distribution. A limited number of copies can be had from the secretaries of the Satyagraha Sabha. Satyagrahis should, so far as possible, write their names and addresses as sellers, so that they may be traced easily when wanted by Government for prosecution. Naturally there can be no question of secret sale of this literature. At the same time there should be no forwardness, either, in distributing it.

It is open to satyagrahis to form small groups of men and women to whom they may read this class of literature. The object in selected prohibited literature is not merely to commit a civil breach of the law regarding it, but it is also to supply people with clean literature of a high moral value. It is expected that the Government will confiscate such literature. Satyagraha is and has to be as independent of finance as possible. When, therefore, copies are confiscated, satyagrahis are required to make copies of prohibited literature themselves or by securing the assistance of willing friends and to make use of it until it is confiscated by giving readings to the people from it. It is stated that such readings would amount to dissemination of prohibited literature. When whole copies are exhausted by dissemination or confiscation, satyagrahis may continue civil disobedience by writing out and distributing extracts from accessible books.

Regarding civil breach of the law governing the publication of newspapers, the idea is to publish in every satyagraha centre a written newspaper, without registering it. It need not occupy more than one side of half a foolscap. When such a newspaper is edited, it will be found how difficult it is to fill up half a sheet. It is a well-known fact that a vast majority of newspapers contain much padding. Further, it cannot be denied that newspaper articles written under the terror of the very strict newspaper law have a double meaning[1]. A satyagrahi, for whom punishments provided by law have lost all terror, can give only in an unregistered newspaper his thoughts and opinions unhampered by any other consideration than that of his own conscience. His newspaper, therefore, if otherwise well edited, can become a most powerful vehicle for transmitting pure ideas in a concise manner, and there need be no fear of inability to circulate a handwritten newspaper; for it will be the duty of those who may receive the first copies to recopy till at last the process of multiplication is made to cover, if necessary, the whole of the masses of India. And it must not be

[1] For Gandhiji's views on the mission of a newspaper, *vide* "Newspapers", before 14-11-1917.

forgotten that we have in India the tradition of imparting instruction by oral teaching.

M. K. GANDHI
PRESIDENT,
SATYAGRAHA SABHA
D. D. SATHYE
UMAR SOBANI
SHANKARLAL GHELABHAI[1]
SECRETARIES

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-4-1919

363. TELEGRAM TO DR. SATYAPAL

[BOMBAY,]
April 7, 1919

TO
DR. SATYAPAL[2]
DELHI

REACHING DELHI WEDNESDAY[3] PUNJAB MAIL. PLEASE MEET.

From a photostat: S.N. 6508

364. TELEGRAM TO S. K. RUDRA

[BOMBAY,]
April 7, 1919

TO
RUDRA
ST. STEPHEN'S COLLEGE
DELHI

REACHING THERE WEDNESDAY PUNJAB MAIL.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6508

[1] Banker
[2] Medical practitioner and a Congress leader of Punjab
[3] April 9

365. LETTER TO F. C. GRIFFITH

LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
April 7, 1919

DEAR MR. GRIFFITH[1],

May I send you a copy of the unregistered newspaper issued today by me as its Editor?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original letter in Mahadev Desai's hand: Bombay Government Records—C. P. File No. 2001/H/19

366. THE SWADESHI VOW-I

[*April 8, 1919*][2]

Although the desire for swadeshi animating a large number of people at the present moment is worthy of all praise, it seems to me that they have not fully realized the difficulty in the way of its observance. Vows are always taken only in respect of matters otherwise difficult of accomplishment. When after a series of efforts we fail in doing certain things, by taking a vow to do them we draw a cordon round ourselves, from which we may never be free and thus we avoid failures. Anything less than such inflexible determination cannot be called a vow. It is not a pledge or vow when we say we shall so far as possible do certain acts. If by saying that we shall so far as we can only use swadeshi articles, we can be deemed to have taken the swadeshi vow, then from the Viceroy down to the labouring man very few people would be found who could not be considered to have taken the pledge, but we want to go outside this circle and aim at a much higher goal. And there is as much difference between the act

[1] Commissioner of Police, Bombay

[2] *Vide* the Associated Press of India report dated Bombay, April 8, which read: "Mr. M. K. Gandhi has left for Delhi. In his absence the ceremony of taking swadeshi vow which was fixed for today has been postponed. Mr. Gandhi before his departure left a message for those desiring to take the vow explaining the difference between swadeshi and boycott."

contemplated by us and the acts above described as there is between a right angle and all other angles. And if we decide to take the swadeshi vow in this spirit, it is clear that it is well nigh impossible to take an all-comprehensive vow.

After having given deep consideration to the matter for a number of years, it is sufficiently demonstrated to me that we can take the full swadeshi vow only in respect of our clothing, whether made of cotton, silk or wool. Even in observing this vow, we shall have to face many difficulties in the initial stages and that is only proper. By patronizing foreign cloth we have committed a deep sin. We have condoned an occupation which in point of importance is second only to agriculture, and we are face to face with a total disruption of a calling to which Kabir was born and which he adorned. One meaning of the swadeshi vow suggested by me is that in taking it we desire to do penance for our sins, that we desire to resuscitate the almost lost art of hand-weaving, and that we are determined to save our Hindustan crores of rupees which go out of it annually in exchange for the cloth we receive. Such high results cannot be attained without difficulties; there must be obstacles in the way. Things easily obtained are practically of no value, but however difficult of observance that pledge may be, some day or other there is no escape from it if we want our country to rise to its full height. And we shall then accomplish the vow when we shall deem it a religious duty to use only that cloth which is entirely produced in the country and refrain from using any other.

A HASTY GENERALIZATION

Friends tell me that at the present moment we have not enough swadeshi cloth to supply our wants and that the existing mills are too few for the purpose. This appears to me to be a hasty generalization. We can hardly expect such good fortune as to have thirty crores of covenanters for swadeshi. A hardened optimist dare not expect more than a few lakhs and I anticipate no difficulty in providing them with swadeshi cloth, but where there is a question of religion there is no room for thoughts of difficulties. The general climate of India is such that we require very little clothing. It is an exaggeration to say that three-fourths of the middle class population use much unnecessary clothing. Moreover, when many men take the vow, there would be set up many spinning wheels and handlooms. India can produce innumerable weavers. They are merely awaiting encouragement. Mainly two

things are needful, viz., self-denial and honsety. It is self-evident that the covenanter must possess these two qualities, but in order to enable people to observe such a great vow comparatively easily, our merchants also will need to be blessed with these qualities. An honest and self-denying merchant will spin his yarn only from Indian cotton and confine weaving only to such cotton. He will only use those dyes which are made in India. When a man desires to do a thing he cultivates the necessary ability to remove difficulties in his path.

DESTROY ALL FOREIGN CLOTHING

It is not enough that we manage if necessary with as little clothing as possible, but for a full observance it is further necessary to destroy all foreign clothing in our possession. If we are satisfied that we erred in making use of foreign cloth, that we have done an immense injury to India, that we have all but destroyed the race of weavers, cloth stained with such sin is only fit to be destroyed. In this connection, it is necessary to understand the distinction between swadeshi and boycott. Swadeshi is a religious conception. It is the natural duty imposed upon every men. The well-being of people depends upon it and the swadeshi vow cannot be taken in a punitive or revengeful spirit. The swadeshi vow is not derived from any extraneous happening, whereas boycott is a purely worldly and political weapon. It is rooted in ill will and a desire for punishment, and I can see nothing but harm in the end for a nation that resorts to boycott. One who wishes to be a satyagrahi forever cannot participate in any boycott movement and a perpetual satyagraha is impossible without swadeshi. This is the meaning I have understood to be given to boycott. It has been suggested that we should boycott British goods till the Rowlatt legislation is withdrawn and that the boycott should terminate with the removal of that legislation. In such a scheme of boycott, it is open to us to take Japanese or other foreign goods even though they may be rotten. If I must use foreign goods, having political relations with England, I would only take English goods and consider such conduct to be proper.

In proclaiming a boycott of British goods, we expose ourselves to the charge of desiring to punish the English but we have no quarrel with them; our quarrel is with the governors. And, according to the law of satyagraha, we may not harbour any ill will even against the rulers, and as we may harbour no ill will, I cannot see the propriety of resorting to boycott.

For a complete observance of the restricted swadeshi vow suggested above, I would advise the following text: "With God as my witness, I solemnly declare that from today I shall confine myself, for my personal requirements, to the use of cloth, manufactured in India from Indian cotton, silk and wool; and I shall altogether abstain from using foreign cloth, and I shall destroy all foreign cloth in my possession."

I hope that many men and women will be ready to take this vow, and the public taking of the pledge will be desirable only if many men and women are ready for it. Even a few men and women may publicly take the pledge, but in order to make swadeshi a national movement, it is necessary that many should join it. Those who approve of the proposed movement should, in my opinion, lose no time in taking effective steps to begin it. It is necessary to interview merchants. At the same time, there need be no undue haste. The foundation of swadeshi should be well and truly laid. This is the right time for it as I have found that when a purifying movement like satyagraha is going on allied activities have an easy chance of success.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-4-1919; also *New India*, 19-4-1919

367. THE SWADESHI VOW-II

[*April 8, 1919*]

The following is the text of the swadeshi vow:

"With God as my witness, I solemnly declare that from today I shall confine myself, for my personal requirements, to the use of cloth manufactured in India from Indian cotton, silk or wool and I shall altogether abstain from using foreign cloth, and I shall destroy all foreign cloth in my possession."

For a proper observance of the pledge, it is really necessary to use only hand-woven cloth made out of hand-spun yarn. Imported yarn, even though spun out of Indian cotton and woven in India, is not swadeshi cloth. We shall reach perfection only when our cotton is spun in India on indigenous spinning-wheels and yarn so spun is woven on similarly made handlooms. But requirements of the foregoing pledge are met, if we all only use cloth woven by means of imported machinery from yarn spun from Indian cotton by means of similar machinery.

I may add that covenanters to the restricted swadeshi referred to here will not rest satisfied with swadeshi clothing only. They will extend the vow to all other things as far as possible.

ENGLISH-OWNED MILLS

I am told that there are in India English-owned mills which do not admit Indian share-holders. If this information be true, I would consider cloth manufactured in such mills to be foreign cloth. Moreover, such cloth bears the taint of ill will. However well made such cloth may be, it should be avoided. The majority do not give thought to such matters. All cannot be expected to consider whether their actions promote or retard the welfare of their country, but it behoves those, who are learned, those who are thoughtful, whose intellects are trained or who are desirous of serving their country, to test every action of theirs, whether public or private, in the manner aforesaid, and when ideals which appear to be of national importance and which have been tested by practical experience should be placed before the people as has been said in the Divine Song, "the multitude will copy the actions of the enlightened". Even thoughtful men and women have not hitherto generally carried on the above-mentioned self-examination. The nation has therefore suffered by reason of this neglect. In my opinion, such self-examination is only possible where there is religious perception.

Thousands of men believe that by using cloth woven in Indian mills, they comply with the requirements of the swadeshi vow. The fact is that most fine cloth is made of foreign cotton spun outside. Therefore the only satisfaction to be derived from the use of such cloth is that it is woven in India. Even on handlooms for very fine cloth only foreign yarn is used. The use of such cloth does not amount to an observance of swadeshi. To say so is simple self-deception. Satyagraha, i.e., insistence on truth is necessary even in swadeshi. When men will say, "we shall confine ourselves to pure swadeshi cloth, even though we may have to remain satisfied with a mere loin cloth", and when women will resolutely say, "we shall observe pure swadeshi even though we may have to restrict ourselves to clothing just enough to satisfy the sense of modesty", then shall we be successful in the observance of the great swadeshi vow. If a few thousand men and women were to take the swadeshi vow in this spirit, others will try to imitate them so far as possible. They will then begin to examine their wardrobes in the light of swadeshi. Those who are

not attached to pleasures and personal adornment, I venture to say, can give a great impetus to swadeshi.

KEY TO ECONOMIC SALVATION

Generally speaking, there are very few villages in India without weavers. From time immemorial, we have had village farmers and village weavers, as we have village carpenters, shoemakers, blacksmiths, etc., but our farmers have become poverty-stricken and our weavers have patronage only from the poor classes. By supplying them with Indian cloth spun in India, we can obtain the cloth we may need. For the time being it may be coarse, but by constant endeavours, we can get our weavers to weave out of fine yarn and so doing we shall raise our weavers to a better status, and if we would go a step still further, we can easily cross the sea of difficulties lying in our path. We can easily teach our women and our children to spin and weave cotton, and what can be purer than cloth woven in our own home? I tell it from my experience that acting in this way we shall be saved from many a hardship, we shall be ridding ourselves of many an unnecessary need, and our life will be one song of joy and beauty. I always hear divine voices telling me in my ears that such life was a matter of fact once in India, but even if such an India be the idle dream of the poet, it does not matter. Is it not necessary to create such an India now, does not our *purushartha* lie therein ? I have been travelling throughout India. I cannot bear the heart-rending cry of the poor. The young and old all tell me, "We cannot get cheap cloth, we have not the means wherewith to purchase dear cloth. Everything is dear—provisions, cloth and all. What are we to do?" And they heave a sigh of despair. It is my duty to give these men a satisfactory reply. It is the duty of every servant of the country but I am unable to give a satisfactory reply. It should be intolerable for all thinking Indians that our raw materials should be exported to Europe and that we have to pay heavy prices therefor. The first and the last remedy for this is swadeshi. We are not bound to sell our cotton to anybody and when Hindustan rings with the echoes of swadeshi, no producer of cotton will sell it for its being manufactured in foreign countries. When swadeshi pervades the country, everyone will be set a-thinking why cotton should not be refined and spun and woven in the place where it is produced, and when the swadeshi *mantra* resounds in every ear, millions of men will have in their hands the key to the economic salvation of India. Training for this does not require hundreds of years. When the

religious sense is awakened, people's thoughts undergo a revolution in a single moment. Only selfless sacrifice is the *sine qua non*. The spirit of sacrifice pervades the Indian atmosphere at the present moment. If we fail to preach swadeshi at this supreme moment, we shall have to wring our hands in despair. I beseech every Hindu, Mussulman, Sikh, Parsi, Christian and Jew, who believes that he belongs to this country, to take the swadeshi vow and to ask others also to do likewise. It is my humble belief that if we cannot do even this little for our country, we are born in it in vain. Those who think deep will see that such swadeshi contains pure economics. I hope that every man and woman will give serious thought to my humble suggestion. Imitation of English economics will spell our ruin.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-4-1919*;* also *New India,* 22-4-1919

368. THE VOW OF HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

April 8, 1919[1]

The following is a free translation, approved by Mr. Gandhi, of his leaflet[2] on Hindu-Muslim unity:

In the huge mass meeting of Hindus and Mahomedans held in the Sonapur Masjid compound on Sunday, the 6th April, the day of humiliation and prayer, a vow of Hindu-Muslim unity was proposed to be taken as in the case of swadeshi proposed at the Chowpatty meeting and I had to utter a note of warning on both the occasions. At times in a fit of joyous passion we are spurred on to certain courses of action for which we have afterwards to repent. A vow is a purely religious act which cannot be taken in a fit of passion. It can be taken only with a mind purified and composed and with God as witness. Most of what I have said whilst writing about the swadeshi vow applies here. Acts which are not possible by ordinary self-denial become possible with the aid of vows which require extraordinary self-denial. It is hence believed that vows can only uplift us. If the Hindu and Muslim communities could be united in one bond of mutual friendship, and if each could act towards the other even as children of the same mother, it would be a consummation devoutely to be wished.

[1] *Vide Mahadevbhaini* Diary.

[2] This appears to be Satyagraha Leaflet No. 2.

But before this unity becomes a reality, both the communities will have to give up a good deal, and will have to make radical changes in ideas held heretofore. Members of one community when talking about those of the other at times indulge in terms so vulgar that they but acerbate the relations between the two. In Hindu society we do not hesitate to indulge in unbecoming language when talking of the Mahomedans and *vice versa*. Many believe that an ingrained and ineradicable animosity exists between the Hindus and Mahomedans. In many places we see that each community harbours distrust against the other. Each fears the other. It is an undoubted fact that this anomalous and wretched state of things is improving day by day. The Time-Spirit is ceaselessly working on unchecked, and willy-nilly we have to live together. But the object of taking a vow is speedily to bring about, by the power of self-denial, a state of things which can only be expected to come in the fulness of time. How is this possible? Meetings should be called of Hindus—I mean the orthodox Hindus—where this question should be seriously considered. The standing complaint of the Hindus against the Mussulmans is that the latter are beef-eaters and that they purposely sacrifice cows on the *Bakr-i-ld* day. Now it is impossible to unite the Hindus and Mahomedans so long as the Hinuds do not hesitate to kill their Mahomedan brethren in order to protect a cow. For I think it is futile to expect that our violence will ever compel the Mahomedans to refrain from cow-slaughter. I do not believe the efforts of our cow-protection societies have availed in the least to lessen the number of cows killed every day. I have had no reason to believe so. I believe myself to be an orthodox Hindu and it is my conviction that no one who scrupulously practises the Hindu religion may kill a cow-killer to protect a cow. There is one and only one means open to a Hindu to protect a cow and that is that he should offer himself a sacrifice if he cannot stand its slaughter. Even if a very few enlightened Hindus thus sacrificed themselves, I have no doubt that our Mussulman brethren would abandon cow-slaughter. But this is satyagraha; this is equity; even as, if I want my brother to redress a grievance, I must do so by taking upon my head a certain amount of sacrifice and not by inflicting injury on him. I may not demand it as of right. My only right against my brother is that I can offer myself a sacrifice.

It is only when the Hindus are inspired with a feeling of pure love of this type that Hindu-Muslim unity can be expected. As with

the Hindus, so with the Musssulmans. The leaders among the latter should meet together and consider their duty towards the Hindus. When both are inspired by a spirit of sacrifice, when both try to do their duty towards one another instead of pressing their rights, then and then only would the long-standing differences between the two communities cease. Each must respect the other's religion, must refrain from even secretly thinking ill of the other. We must politely dissuade members of both the communities from indulging in bad language against one another. Only a serious endeavour in this direction can remove the estrangement between us. Our vow would have value only when masses of Hindus and Mussulmans join in the endeavour. I think I have now made sufficiently clear the seriousness and magnitude of this vow. I hope that on this auspicious occasion and surely the occasion must be auspicious when a wave of satyagraha is sweeping over the whole country—we could all take this vow of unity. For this it is further necessary that leading Hindus and Mahomedans should meet together and seriously consider the question and then pass a unanimous resolution at a public meeting. This consummation will certainly be reached if our present efforts are vigorously continued. I think the vow may be taken individually even now and I expect that numerous people will do so every day. My warnings have reference to the taking of the vow publicly by masses of men. If it is taken by the masses, it should, in my humble opinion, be as follows:

"With God as witness we Hindus and Mahomedans declare that we shall behave towards one another as children of the same parents, that we shall have no differences, that the sorrows of each shall be the sorrows of the other and that each shall help the other in removing them. We shall respect each other's religion and religious feelings and shall not-stand in the way of our respective religious practices. We shall always refrain from violence to each other in the name of religion."

Young India 7-5-1919

369. TELEGRAM TO C. R. DAS

[BOMBAY,]
April 8, 1919

TO
C. R. DAS[1]
CALCUTTA

MOVEMENTS DEPENDENT ON EXTERNAL CIRCUMSTANCES. SHALL TRY ATTEND FIFTEENTH INSTANT. NEWSPAPERS REPORT SUNDAY DEMONSTRATORS AFTER SOME PROVOCATION RUSHED TOWARDS BRISTOL HOTEL THREW STONES SMASHED WINDOWPANES, TOWARDS EVENING KOMTOLLA MOB RESCUED ORIYA ACCUSED FROM CUSTODY CONSTABLES, SEVERELY ASSAULTED POLICE. PLEASE WIRE EXACT SITUATION. NEED HARDLY POINT OUT IN SATYAGRAHA THERE NEVER IS DANGER FROM OUTSIDE, DANGER ALWAYS FROM DEPARTURE FROM TRUTH AND NON-VIOLENCE UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES MOST TEMPTING AND PROVOKING WILL DAMN MOVEMENT IF WE CANNOT RESTRAIN CROWDS AND TILL WE CAN, WE ARE BOUND REFRAIN PROCESSION LARGE GATHERINGS ENTERTAIN ABSOLUTE CONVICTION SMALLEST BODY OF TRUE SATYAGRAHIS WILL ACHIEVE VICTORY. SATYAGRAHA ADMITS OF NO COMPROMISE WITH ITSELF. PRAY REPLY EXPRESS.[2]

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 6509

[1] Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das (1870-1925); president of the Gaya Congress, 1922; founded the Swarajya Party in 1923

[2] C. R. Das replied: "Newspapers report misleading. Satyagraha Sunday passed off here quietly and peacefully. All shops and markets closed; business suspended. After prayer and fasting public meeting of over two lacs at the maidan. Processions orderly, crowd dispersed peacefully. All local newspapers friendly and hostile declare demonstration peaceful and orderly. Bristol Hotel incident grossly exaggerated. After meeting dispersed from maidan, refuse matters and brick pieces were thrown by some European from Bristol Hotel upon a *sankirtan* party returning home whereat some got excited whom others restrained falling at their feet. Even Anglo-Indian papers have treated the incident as negligible and trivial. Alleged incident of rescuing prisoners is unauthenticated and unconnected with our demonstration."

370. TELEGRAM TO SWAMI SHRADDHANAND

April 8, 1919

REACHING TOMORROW EVENING. PLEASE KEEP MY ARRIVAL STRICTLY PRIVATE; CAN BEAR NO PUBLIC DEMONSTRATION.

Evidence Taken before the Disorders inquiry Committee, Vol. l, p. 191

371. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

[BOMBAY,]
April 8, 1919

TO
RAJENDRABABU
PATNA

REACHING DELHI TOMORROW. SHALL WIRE FURTHER PROGRAMME THENCE.

From a photostat: S.N. 6501

372. LETTER TO F. C. GRIFFITH

BOMBAY,
April 8, 1919

DEAR MR. GRIFFITH,

I have now before me statements from the principal men who took part in the impromptu procession. I enclose herewith a copy of their statement[1]. You will observe from it:

(1) That they emphatically deny the truth of the allegation regarding the holding up of tram-cars.

(2) That they deny that the crowd either declined to disperse or threatened to march past Mr. Harker. On the contrary, they implicitly and promptly obeyed his directions.

(3) That they assert that the recruits with their bamboo-sticks and armed police fell upon the crowd without any cause being given therefor and that they desisted only upon being restrained by

[1] Not included here

Mr. Harker.

Of the men who were injured during the charge alleged above, I have seen two who have fair-sized bruises on their heads. One of them I saw on Sunday in his own house and the other was produced before me yesterday morning at my residence. If the crowd, as you seem to think, was composed mainly of *badmashes*[1], it does seem remarkable that they should have dispersed without any retaliation whatsoever and, if it was composed of respectable middle-class men, as I am inclined to think it was, it is hard to believe that they would ever have held up the tram-cars in the manner you described the alleged holding up to me.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6510

373. LETTER TO SIR IBRAHIM RAHIMTOOLLA

[BOMBAY
April 8, 1919]

DEAR SIR IBRAHIM RAHIMTOOLLA[2],

I think we can say things passed off wonderfully well on Sunday. There was a mixed Hindu-Muslim procession near Crawford Market. Some members of the procession were assaulted and they sustained injuries. The incident was nothing serious, I believe; all the same, that no one in the procession was at fault, though the Police Commissioner says that the men had disregarded the Deputy Commissioner's order. The respectable gentlemen who told me of the incident absolve the processionists of all blame. I send you a copy of my letter to Mr. Griffith, and also copies of the statements I have taken from the leading men and which have accompanied my letter to Mr. Griffith; you will be able to see from them that, if these gentlemen are right in their facts, the police certainly are to blame somewhat.

I am leaving for Delhi today. It will be some time before I return from there, so that, if you want any further information, I can supply it only on my return. My only object in writing this letter and taking statements from the leading men is to see that people are not

[1] Bad characters

[2] Member, Governor's Executive Council, Bombay

blamed when there is not the slightest reason for complaint against them and that we do not have the thief turning round on thewatchman, as they say.

If you want, you may show this letter to His Excellency the Governor. I beg you to excuse me for this trouble.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 6507

374. TELEGRAM TO O. S. GHATE

April 9, 1919

TO
O. S. GRATE
CHHINDWARA

TOO OVERWHELMED WITH WORK TO WRITE. PROCEEDING DELHI SENDING THEREFROM IMPORTANT LETTER WITH DETAILED OPINION.

From a photostat: S.N. 6511

375. LETTER TO IMAM ABDUL KADIR BAWAZEER

Wednesday morning, [*April 9, 1919*][1]

DEAR IMAM SAHEB,

I shall be going to jail today. I have kept awake all night. Now it is three o'clock in the morning. But how can I help writing to you? If the reason for my imprisonment is not given in the press, ask me to write. You do not have to come now.

I have neglected Fatima. Andrews continues to take the strain. I have found a very good young man here. His age is twenty-two years. His physique is good. He was a teacher. He is participating in the struggle here. Hence he is jobless. He is poor. Right now I am very much impressed by him. He has no father. His mother is not the kind who would interfere. So, if he agrees, it would be as if I had come here just to see him. Still I shall investigate more. He will be in

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's arrest; he was arrested on April 9, 1919 while on his way to Delhi from Bombay, for defying the order of the Punjab Government banning his entry into Punjab; *vide* also "Message to Countrymen", 9-4-1919.

frequent touch with me[1].

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I find I have mislaid your address. So I am sending [the letter] at the Jumma Masjid.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 10785. Courtesy : Ghulam Rasool Qureshi

376. MESSAGE TO COUNTRYMEN

April 9, 1919

Mr. Desai, Secretary to Mahatma Gandhi, writes:

Mahatma Gandhi on his way to Delhi was served with an order at Kosi not to enter the Punjab, not to enter Delhi and restrict himself to Bombay. The officer serving the order treated him most politely assuring him that it would be his most painful duty to arrest him if he elected to disobey, but that there would be no ill will between them. Mr. Gandhi smilingly said, he must elect to disobey as it was his duty and that the officer ought also to do what was his duty. In the few minutes that were left to us, he dictated the following message, laying special emphasis on his oral message to me, as in the written message that none should resent his arrest or do anything tainted with untruth or violence which were sure to damn the sacred cause.

The message reads:[1]

TO

MY COUNTRYMEN

It is a matter of the highest satisfaction to me, as I hope to you, that I have received an order from the Punjab Government not to enter that province and another from the Delhi Government not to enter Delhi, while an order[2] of the Government of India, served on me

[1] Fatima Bibi was married to Saiyad Hussain Miya Uraizee on April 26, 1920; *vide* "Invitation to Wedding", 20-4-1920

[1] Up to this the report is from *The Leader*, 12-4-1919

[2] The order dated Lahore, April 9, 1919, read: "WHEREAS in the opinion of the Local Government, there are reasonable grounds for believing that Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, son of, _____ , resident of village Rajkot, Kathiawar, in the Bombay Presidency, has acted in a manner prejudicial to the public safety, the Lieutenant-Governor, with the previous sanction of the Governor-General-

immediately after, restricts me to Bombay. I had no hesitation in saying to the officer who served the order on me that I was bound in virtue of my Pledge to disregard it which I have done and I shall presently find myself a free man, my body being taken by them into their custody. It was galling to me to remain free whilst the Rowlatt legislation disfigured the Statute-book. My arrest makes me free. It now remains for you to do your duty which is clearly stated in the Satyagraha Pledge. Follow it and you will find it will be your *Kamadhenu*[1].

I hope there will be no resentment about my arrest. I have received what I was seeking, either withdrawal of the Rowlatt legislation or imprisonment. The departure from truth by a hair's breadth or violence committed against anybody, whether Englishman or Indian, will surely damn the great cause the satyagrahis are handling. I hope the Hindu-Muslim unity, which seems now to have taken a firm hold of the people, will become a reality and I feel convinced that it will only be a reality if the suggestions I have ventured to make in my communication to the Press are carried out. The responsibility of the Hindus in the matter is greater than that of the Mahomedans, they being in the minority, and I hope they will discharge their responsibility in a manner worthy of their country. I have also made certain suggestions regarding the proposed swadeshi vow. Now, I commend them to your serious attention and you will find that, as your ideas of satyagraha become matured, Hindu-Muslim unity becomes part of satyagraha.

Finally, it is my firm belief that we shall obtain salvation only through suffering and not by reforms dropping on us from England, no matter how unstintingly they might be granted. The English are a great nation, but the weaker also go to the wall if they come in contact with them. When they are themselves courageous, they have borne untold sufferings, and they only respond to courage and suffering, and partnership with them is only possible after we have developed

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in-Council, is pleased hereby to direct that the said Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi shall forthwith return to Bombay and, until further orders, reside within the limits of the Bombay Presidency.

By order of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab,

Ashghar Ali,

Additional Secretary"

[1] Mythical cow yielding whatever is wished for

indomitable courage and a faculty for unlimited suffering. There is a fundamental difference between their civilization and ours. They believe in the doctrine of violence or brute force as the final arbiter. My reading of our civilization is that we are expected to believe in soul-force or moral force as the final arbiter and this is satyagraha. We are groaning under the sufferings which we would avoid if we could, because we have swerved from the path laid down for us by our ancient civilization.

I hope that Hindus, Mahomedans, Sikhs, Parsees, Christians, Jews and all who are born in India or who have made India their land of adoption will fully participate in these national observances and I hope, too, that women will take therein as full a share as men.

The Hindu, 10-4-1919

377. REPLY TO RESTRAINT ORDER[1]

April 10, 1919

I regret to have to say that I shall be unable to comply with the foregoing order.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6513

378. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

ON THE WAY TO BOMBAY UNDER ARREST,

April 10, 1919

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your bank note. I only hope you will not deny yourself the necessaries of life. I am handing the note to the Ashram. Is that right?

I received last night on my way to Delhi an order not to enter the Punjab. I disobeyed it there and then and I was arrested. I received two further orders—one not to enter the Province of Delhi and the other to confine myself to Bombay. They are now taking me to Bombay. If they set me free I shall immediately disobey the order of

[1] Gandhiji wrote this reply in his own hand on the order itself. For text of the order, *vide* footnote 2, p. 207.

confinement. I am perhaps the happiest man on earth today. I have during these two months experienced boundless love. And now I find myself arrested although I bear no ill will to anybody and although I am the one man who can today preserve the peace in India as no other man can. My imprisonment therefore will show the wrongdoer in his nakedness. And he can do me no harm for my spirit remains calm and unruffled.

You will rejoice that you have a friend to whom God has given the power to love even those who call themselves his enemies and to rejoice in sufferings. I say this because I do not want you to grieve over the impending imprisonment. The officer in charge of me is very kind and attentive.

More form Mahadev if he remains free for any length of time.

With love,

Yours eve,

BAPU

[PS.]

Did you receive my letter written in Bezwada or some place[1] on my way to Bombay from Madras?

BAPU

My Dear Child, p. 34

379. TELEGRAM TO SWAMI SHRADDHANAND

April 11, 1919

JUST ARRIVED AND DISCHARGED FROM CUSTODY[2]. . . . WILL INFORM LATER. REGRET LOSS LIFE SOME PLACES. ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY PEOPLE RESTRAIN THEMSELVES AND AVOID VIOLENCE. PLEASE REPORT THIS LAHORE, AMRITSAR, ETC.

GANDHI

Punjab Unrest-Before and After, p. 104

[1] Secunderabad, *vide* "Letter to Esther Faering' 1-4-1919.

[2] At Bombay

380. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET[1]: NO. 3

April 11, 1919

MAHATMA GANDHI'S WARNING TO SATYAGRAHIS AND SYMPATHIZERS

On Friday evening the 12th day[2] of April, 1919, on the Chawpati sea beach, Mahatma Gandhi sounded the following note of warning to satyagrahis and sympathizers assembled in a mass meeting:

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

This is not the moment for me to enter into the near past. I must refer to what has just happened. As you see I have been set free by the Government. The two days' detention was no detention for me. It was like heavenly bliss. The officials in charge of me were all attention and all kindness to me. Whatever I needed was supplied to me, and I was afforded greater comforts than I am used to when free. I have not been able to understand so much excitement and disturbance that followed my detention. It is not satyagraha. It is worse than *duragraha*[3].

Those who join satyagraha demonstration are bound at all hazards to refrain from violence, not to throw stones or in any way whatsoever to injure anybody. But in Bombay, we have been throwing stones. We have obstructed tram-cars by putting obstacles in the way. This is not satyagraha.

We have demanded the release of about 50 men who have been arrested for committing deeds of violence. Our duty is quietly to submit to being arrested. *It is a breach of religion or duty to endeavour to secure the release of those who have committed deeds of violence*. We are not therefore justified on any grounds whatsoever for demanding the release of those who have been arrested.

I have been asked whether a satyagrahi is liable for the results that follow from that movement. I have replied that they are. I therefore wish to suggest that if we cannot conduct this movement without the slightest violence from our side, the movement might have

[1] The original has "Satyagraha Series". For Satyagraha Leaflet No. 1, *vide* "Satyagraha Leaflet No. 1", March 1919 and for No. 2 *vide* "The Vow of Hindu-Muslim Unity", 8-4-1919.

[2] Obviously a slip for 11th, which was a Friday.

[3] Opposite of satyagraha

to be abandoned or it may be necessary to give it a different and still more restricted shape. *The time may come for me to offer satyagraha against ourselves.*

I would not deem it a disgrace that we die. I shall be pained to hear of the death of a satyagrahi. But I shall consider it to be a proper sacrifice given for the sake of the struggle. But if those who are not satyagrahis, who have not joined the movement, who are even against it, receive any injury at all, every satyagrahi will be responsible for that sinful injury. My responsibility will be a million times heavier. I have embarked upon the struggle with a due sense of such responsibility.

I have even just heard that some Englishmen have been injured. Some may have died from such injuries. If so, it would be a great blot upon satyagraha. For me Englishmen too are our brethren. We can have nothing against them. And for me sins such as I have described are simply unbearable.

But I know how to offer satyagraha against ourselves as against the rulers. *What kind of satyagraha can I offer gainst ourselves on such occasions? What penance can I do for such sins? The satyagraha and the penance I can conceive can only be one and that is for me to fast and if need be by so doing to give up this body and thus to prove the truth of satyagraha.*

I appealed to you that you will all quietly disperse, keep the peace and even refrain from acts that may in any way bring disgrace upon the people of Bombay.

We need not consider the conduct of the police, nor is this the occasion for such consideration. We are beholden to H.E. the Governor and the police for the entire absence of rifle fire, or gunfire. But the one thing to be remembered is that *we should learn how to observe perfect peace and how to undergo intelligent suffering. Without this there is no satyagraha.*

SATYAGRAHA SABHA,

APOLLO STREET

The Hindustan Press, Fort, Bombay

From the printed original preserved in Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Delhi.
Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

381. TALK TO MAHOMEDANS, BOMBAY

April 11, 1919

On Friday a number of Mahomedans called at Mr. Gandhi's place in connection with the arrests that had been made that day. Mahatma Gandhi, explaining to them the true meaning of satyagraha, said if they were arrested whilst practising *duragraha*, they deserved no sympathy, and if they were arrested whilst offering satyagraha, they should consider it their duty to go to jail; so that neither way would anybody be justified in demanding the release of those who had been arrested. The Mahatma then dwelt upon the supreme necessity of Hindu-Muslim unity.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-4-l919

382. INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING SATYAGRAHA

[*April 12, 1919*]

In order that satyagraha may have full play and a chance of permeating the masses, in my humble opinion, the following instructions should be STRICTLY obeyed. Some of the items may require change later. The rest are inviolable principles of satyagraha.

No processions.

No organized demonstrations.

No hartals on any account whatsoever without previous instructions of the committee.

All police orders to be implicitly obeyed.

No violence.

No stone-throwing.

No obstruction of tram-cars or traffic.

No pressure to be exercised against anyone.

AT PUBLIC MEETINGS

No clapping of hands.

No demonstrations of approval or disapproval.

No cries of "Shame!".

No cheers.

Perfect stillness.

Perfect obedience to instructions of volunteers or management.

MOHANDAS K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-4-1919

383. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

April 12, 1919

In an interview given to Press representatives, Mahatma Gandhi is reported to have said that he had as yet come to no definite decision as to whether or not he would go to Delhi. He once again appealed to the public to conduct the struggle against the Rowlatt Bills in a spirit of true satyagraha and to refrain from any acts of violence. They should all sympathize with those who might be arrested whilst carrying on the satyagraha struggle but they should not demand their release, for it was the duty of true satyagrahis to go to jail. He had absolutely no sympathy whatever with those who were *duragrahis*. They must be punished for their misdeeds and they could claim no sympathy from the public. He added he firmly believed that if they conducted their struggle in the true spirit of satyagraha, without any acts of violence, the Rowlatt Bills would quickly disappear from the Statute-book. Considering all circumstances, the satyagraha movement might have to be given a different and still more restricted shape. The satyagraha struggle must be conducted in a quiet and peaceful manner and in the true spirit of satyagraha. He concluded with another earnest appeal to the public to behave in a peaceful manner and refrain from any acts of violence.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-4-1919

384. SPEECH AT MEETING OF CLOTH MERCHANTS, BOMBAY

April 12, 1919

Mahatma Gandhi was deeply affected by the news of the disturbances that broke out in some parts of the country last week. Before starting for Ahmedabad, he attended a meeting of cloth merchants which was called at his instance, when he made an earnest appeal to the public to refrain from acts of violence. He added he had been greatly distressed by the news of the disturbances. His arrest would in no way have stopped the satyagraha work and people should not have created disturbances. Even if he proceeded to Delhi and was arrested a second time, there should be no disturbance. People should be prepared to suffer in the true spirit of satyagraha. Even if a strike occurred anywhere, no coercion should be used towards those who did not wish to join in it. Their attitude should be one of goodwill towards all men.

At Mr. Gandhi's suggestion a committee of leading men was appointed to raise a body of volunteers to assist in the preservation of order at the cloth market and the surrounding locality.

Mahatma Gandhi next visited several other associations where also he emphasized the supreme necessity of conducting the struggle against the Row1att Bills in the true spirit of satyagraha. He also attended a meeting held at the Marwari Chamber where he was deeply moved and actually broke down on hearing the news of the disturbance at Ahmedabad, and he went without food the next day. The same night he was to have addressed a meeting at the Morarji Gokuldas Hall, which however he was not able to do as he left Bombay for Ahmedabad. In his absence Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas laid before the meeting the suggestions which Mr. Gandhi was to have made about conducting the struggle in a peaceful and orderly manner.

The Bombay Chronicle, 15-4-1919

385. MESSAGE TO PEOPLE OF AHMEDABAD

April 13, 1919

Bai Anasuya Behn and I have arrived in Ahmedabad this morning. Bai Anasuya Behn was never arrested. I also was absolutely free on Friday, and went to Bombay. During the time I was in custody, I suffered no kind of trouble, my condition was such as if I was enjoying heavenly happiness. After getting free, I became extremely sorry on hearing of the occurrences at Ahmedabad. Behn's heart bled. We both felt exceedingly ashamed. Now, we both have come to meet you. It is necessary to say a couple of words; therefore, I don't wish to say anything now. I also wish, as all of you must be wishing, that martial law should be instantly removed. It is in our own hands to get it removed. I want to show the key with which this can be done. Those who can do so should come to the Ashram at 4 p.m. on Monday. While coming take the routes where there are no military pickets. Do not come in groups of more than two or three persons. Obey whatever orders the police give you. It is my request that you do not shout or make any kind of noise on the road, and if you will all preserve silence at the Ashram, I shall be able to explain all that I wish to explain. It is extremely desirable that all shopkeepers should open their shops and all mill-hands resume their work. In conclusion, I wish to say that I am so sure about satyagraha that, if the mistakes which have been committed here and at other places had not been committed, the Rowlatt Bill would have been cancelled today. May God give you all good understanding and peace.

Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. II (1885-1920), pp. 763, 766-7

386. "SATYAGRAHI": II[1]

April 14, 1919

No. 2Price: 1 pice

(EDITOR: MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI,
LABURNUM ROAD, GAMDEVI, BOMBAY.)

SELF-EXAMINATION

Satyagraha has made unexpectedly rapid progress in course of one short week. But it is necessary to consider whether the movement is progressing in the right direction or not. Several very regrettable and untoward incidents have occurred.

It has been brought home to satyagrahis that satyagraha is not an easy weapon to handle. Satyagrahis have been often asked if they are not responsible for the varied consequences of this struggle. We have always answered this inquiry in the affirmative. Satyagrahis will always follow truth, and will not by thought, word or deed hurt anybody. They will carry on the struggle with such self-restraint and discipline as will enable them to acquire firm control over the people whose sympathy and co-operation they desire and have already been successful in winning in such an appreciable degree. The experience of the last week has clearly shown that satyagrahis are not yet in a position to control the masses. The true spirit of satyagraha has not yet permeated the people with the result that they are not yet able to express their feelings in a manner worthy of satyagraha. This undoubtedly casts a slur upon satyagraha.

All the same the satyagrahi will not be discouraged. It is only when the Rowlatt legislation is withdrawn or when he has sacrificed himself at the altar of truth that he will rest. He will learn from his daily experience during the struggle, educate the people, explain to them in public and in private the secret of satyagraha. He will make it clear to them what priceless happiness can be found in suffering in refraining from returning evil for evil, in adhering to truth, in

[1] Further issues did not come out due to the suspension of satyagraha, *vide The Bombay Chronicle*, 22-4-1919, which read: "We have been informed by the Satyagraha Sabha that as civil disobedience has been temporarily suspended the publication of the weekly *Satyagrahi* will be discontinued and the unlicensed printing press will also be closed during the suspension period."

sacrificing himself. He will capture their hearts with love and will show them how to conquer our enemies by love. The path of a satyagrahi is beset with insurmountable difficulties. But in true satyagraha there is neither disappointment nor defeat. As truth is all-powerful, satyagraha can never be defeated. India is a vast country and the ancient law of satyagraha appears new to our countrymen, but this cannot deter us. Satyagrahis will work day and night to educate the people and will show to them that true satyagraha can be our *Kamdhenu*. If he is not heeded, he will plead with the people, will offer satyagraha even to them, by fasting to death and so will induce his countrymen to join in the crusade, which must end in victory.

NEWS

MAHATMA GANDHI

Mahatma Gandhi was arrested on his way to Delhi for refusing to obey the orders prohibiting him from entering the Punjab and Delhi, and was escorted back to Bombay, where he was set free. He has now gone to Ahmedabad.

PUNJAB DEPORTATIONS

Serious disturbances have occurred at Lahore and Amritsar owing to the deportation of Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal.

THE MOVEMENT IN BOMBAY

The sale of proscribed literature is proceeding in Bombay. The Mahomedans are beginning to be interested in the movement.

A new press called the Satyagraha Press has been established where this paper will henceforth be printed.

SATYAGRAHA IN BIHAR

The Hon. Mazharul Haque and Mr. Hassan Imam, the president of the special session of the Congress in Bombay, have signed the Satyagraha Pledge.

RESIGNATION FROM THE IMPERIAL COUNCIL

The Hon. Mr. B. N. Shukul the representative of the landholders of C. P., has resigned from the Imperial Council as a protest against the Rowlatt Bill.

The Bombay Chronicle, 15-4-1919

387. LETTER TO G. E. CHATFIELD

ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 14 [*1919*]

DEAR MR. CHATFIELD[1],

I heard from many lips yesterday that one or two women were killed in the course of the day by the military and some men also were killed, all without just cause. Will you please give me the true facts? I am most anxious, and I know you share the anxiety, that there should be no untoward incidents today.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6531

388. LETTER TO J. L. MAFFEY

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 14, 1919

DEAR MR. MAFFEY,

You will not consider that I was discourteous in not sending even an acknowledgment of your last letter. The fact is that I have treasured that letter as worthy of you and the friendship that I hope will ever exist between us, no matter what differences of opinion and standpoint there may be between us. I did not wish to send you a mere acknow-ledgment, I wanted to reach a decided stage before writing to you again, and I have also reached more than a decided stage, and in the place I have made my abode I find utter lawlessness bordering almost on Bolshevism. Englishmen and women have found it necessary to leave their bungalows and to confine themselves to a few well-guarded houses. It is a matter of the deepest humiliation and regret for me. I see that I over-calculated the measure of permeation of satyagraha amongst the people. I underrated the power of hatred and ill will. My faith in satyagraha remains undiminished, but I am only a poor creature just as liable to err as any other. I am correcting the error. I have somewhat retraced my steps for the time being. Until

[1] Collector of Ahmedabad

I feel convinced that my co-workers can regulate and restrain crowds, and keep them peaceful, I promise to refrain from seeking to enter Delhi or the other parts of the Punjab. My satyagraha, therefore, will, at the present moment, be directed against my own countrymen. I do want, however, to say that it was a grievous blunder of the Government of India to have served those orders on me. Surely they knew me too well to make such a mistake. I could not disregard my Pledge and I was not going to Delhi or to the Punjab to create any disturbance. Wherever I have gone, my presence has had a demonstrably restraining and soothing influence. I was going to Delhi, Lahore and Amritsar—to the latter places, if certain conditions of mine had been fulfilled—for the purpose of insuring peace, and though the events at Amritsar are, so far as I can see, unconnected with satyagraha and my arrest, I feel sure that had I been able to proceed to these places, the awful occurrences could have been avoided, and I think there would be perfect agreement with me when I say that the mad incendiarism that has taken place in Ahmedabad would have never occurred, if the orders had not been served upon me. I venture to suggest therefore that the orders may be withdrawn. Rightly or wrongly, I seem to command, at the present moment, in an excessive degree the respect and affection of the people all over India. The non-withdrawal of the orders would be resented by them. In order that the resentment may not grow by reason of any avoidable action of mine, I have even refrained from describing them and the manner in which they were served. I have even not corrected the inaccuracies that have appeared in the Press—inaccuracies which are designed to make light of my arrest.

So much for the orders. I know you will accept my assurance when I tell you that ever since my being brought to Bombay, and liberated there, I have done nothing but assist in securing order, first in Bombay and secondly in Ahmedabad. Even as I am dictating this letter, visitors are pouring in at the Ashram at my invitation. I hope to send you, if not with this letter, under separate cover, by the next post the text[1] of my address to the Bombay meeting and to the meeting to be held here today.

I would like, too, to place before you my reading of the situation. The ferment among the Mahomedans is too great to be checked for ever. It may burst like a torrent at any moment and behind the

[1] *Vide* "Satyagraha Leaflet No. 3", 11-4-1919.

present disturbances are to be traced the results of extreme dissatisfaction. It is not confined to classes, but it most decidedly permeates the masses. I venture to submit that it will be a most disastrous thing if the questions affecting Islam are not settled by the League of Nations in accordance with enlightened Mahomedan opinion, and I suggest that the Brothers Ali may be invited to give their opinion. You cannot do better than having the Brothers in London to give the Home Government the benefit of their advice. They are amongst the honestest of Mahomedans. They are independent and able. It is their opinion and that of such Mahomedans which will count in the end with the vast masses of the Mahomedan population. I have not hesitated to tell the Mahomedans, whom I meet, that rather than harbour discontent, ill will and finally hatred, and depend upon methods of violence, it behoves them to depend on the peaceful and royal way of satyagraha. My reliance upon satyagraha is so great that I do not despair of securing its acceptance by all the classes and communities of India on the one hand, and Government on the other. For to me it is the rule of life to which to subscribe, more or less, consciously or unconsciously, often even against our will.

Lastly, the Rowlatt legislation has passed the stage of controversy on merits. In my opinion, everything happening in India today points to the desirability of the withdrawal of that legislation, and the Government will only enhance its prestige by definitely announcing its withdrawal out of regard for Indian opinion so definitely expressed. I felt that I should pass these thoughts on to you. You will do what you like with them.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6534

389. SPEECH AT MASS MEETING, AHMEDABAD[1]

April 14, 1919

BROTHERS,

I mean to address myself mainly to you. Brothers, the events that have happened in the course of the last few days have been most

[1] At Gandhiji's Ashram, Sabarmati. Copies of the speech in Gujarati were distributed in thousands.

disgraceful to Ahmedabad, and as all these things have happened in my name, I am ashamed of them, and those who have been responsible for them have thereby not honored me but disgraced me. A rapier run through my body could hardly have pained me more. I have said times without number that satyagraha admits of no violence, no pillage, no incendiarism; and still in the name of satyagraha, we burnt down buildings, forcibly captured weapons, extorted money, stopped trains, cut off telegraph wires, killed innocent people and plundered shops and private houses. If deeds such as these could save me from the prison-house or the scaffold, I should not like to be so saved. I do wish to say in all earnestness that violence has not secured my discharge. A most brutal rumour was set afloat that Anasuya Bai was arrested. The crowds were infuriated all the more, and disturbance increased. You have thereby disgraced Anasuya Bai and, under the cloak of her arrest, heinous deeds have been done.

These deeds have not benefited the people in any way. They have done nothing but harm. The buildings burnt down were public property and they will naturally be rebuilt at our expense. The loss due to the shops remaining closed is also our loss. The terrorism prevailing in the city due to martial law is also the result of this violence. It has been said that many innocent lives have been lost as a result of the operation of martial law. If this is a fact, then for that, too, the deeds described above are responsible. It will be seen that the events that have happened have done nothing but harm to us. Moreover, they have most seriously damaged the satyagraha movement. Had an entirely peaceful agitation followed my arrest, the Rowlatt Act would have been out or on the point of being out of the Statute-book today. It should not be a matter for surprise if the withdrawal of the Act is now delayed. When I was released on Friday, my plan was to start for Delhi again on Saturday to seek re-arrest, and that would have been an accession of strength to the movement. Now, instead of going to Delhi, it remains to me to offer satyagraha against our people, and as it is my determination to offer satyagraha even unto death for securing the withdrawal of the Rowlatt legislation, I think the occasion has arrived when I should offer satyagraha against ourselves for the violence that has occurred. And I shall do so at the sacrifice of my body, so long as we do not keep perfect peace and cease from violence to person and property How can I seek imprisonment unless I have absolute confidence that we shall no longer be guilty of such errors? Those desirous of joining the

satyagraha movement or of helping it must entirely abstain from violence. They may not resort to violence even on my being re-arrested or on some such events happening. Englishmen and women have been compelled to leave their homes and confine themselves to places of protection in Shahi Baug, because their trust in our harmlessness has received a rude shock. A little thinking should convince us that this is a matter of humiliation for us all. The sooner this state of things stops, the better for us. They are our brethren and it is our duty to inspire them with the belief that their persons are as sacred to us as our own and this is what we call *abhayadan*[1], the first requisite of true religion. Satyagraha without this is *duragraha*.

There are two distinct duties now before us. One is that we should firmly resolve upon refraining from all violence, and the other is that we should repent and do penance for our sins. So long as we do not repent and do not realize our errors and make an open confession of them, we shall not truly change our course. The first step is that those of us who have captured weapons should surrender them. To show that we are really patient, we will contribute each of us not less than eight annas towards helping the families of those who have been killed by our acts. Though no amount of money contribution can altogether undo the results of the furious deeds of the past few days, our contribution will be a slight token of our repentance. I hope and pray that no one will evade this contribution on the plea that he has had no part in those wicked acts. For if such as those who were no party to these deeds had all courageously and bravely gone forward to put down the lawlessness, the mob would have been checked in their career and would have immediately realized the wickedness of their doings. I venture to say that if, instead of giving money to the mob out of fear, we had rushed out to protect buildings and to save the innocent without fear of death, we could have succeeded in so doing. Unless we have this sort of courage, mischief-makers will always try to intimidate us into participating in their misdeeds. Fear of death makes us devoid both of valour and religion. For, want of valour is want of religious faith. And having done little to stop the violence, we have been all participators in the sins that have been committed. And we ought, therefore, to contribute our mite as a mark of our repentance. Each group can collect its own contributions and send them on to me through its collectors. I would also advise, if it is possible for you, to

[1] Assurance of safety

observe a twenty-four hours' fast in slight expiation of these sins. This fast should be observed in private and there is no need for crowds to go to the bathing ghats.

I have thus far drawn attention to what appears to be your duty. I must now consider my own. My responsibility is a million times greater than yours. I have placed satyagraha before people for their acceptance, and I have lived in your midst for four years. I have also given some contribution to the special service of Ahmedabad. Its citizens are not quite unfamiliar with my views.

It is alleged that I have, without proper consideration, persuaded thousands to join the movement. That allegation is, I admit, true to a certain extent, but to a certain extent only. It is open to anybody to say that but for the satyagraha campaign, there would not have been this violence. For this, I have already done a penance, to my mind an unendurable one, namely, that I have had to postpone my visit to Delhi to seek re-arrest and I have also been obliged to suggest a temporary restriction of satyagraha to a limited field. This has been more painful to me than a wound, but this penance is not enough, and I have, therefore, decided to fast for three days, i.e., 72 hours. I hope my fast will pain no one. I believe a seventy-two hours' fast is easier for me than a twenty-four hours' fast for you. And I have imposed on me a discipline which I can bear. If you really feel pity for the suffering that will be caused to me, I request that that pity should always restrain you from ever again being party to the criminal acts of which I have complained. Take it from me that we are not going to win swarajya or benefit our country in the least by violence and terrorism. I am of opinion that if we have to wade through violence to obtain swarajya and if a redress of grievances were to be only possible by means of ill will for and slaughter of Englishmen, I, for one, would do without that swarajya and without a redress of those grievances. For me life would not be worth living if Ahmedabad continues to countenance violence in the name of truth. The poet has called Gujarat *garvi* (great and glorious) Gujarat. Ahmedabad, its capital, is the residence of many religious Hindus and Mahomedans. Deeds of public violence in a city like this are like an ocean being on fire. Who can quench that fire ? I can only offer myself as a sacrifice to be burnt in that fire, and I therefore ask you all to help in the attainment of the result that I desire out of my fast. May the love that lured you into unworthy acts awaken you to a sense of the reality, and if that

love does continue to animate you, beware that I may not have to fast myself to death.

It seems that the deeds I have complained of have been done in an organized manner. There seems to be a definite design about them, and I am sure that there must be some educated and clever man or men behind them. They may be educated, but their education has not enlightened them. You have been misled into doing these deeds by such people. I advise you never to be so misguided, and I would ask them seriously to reconsider their views. To them and you I commend my book *Hind Swaraj* which, as I understand, may be printed and published without infringing the law thereby.

Among the mill-hands, the spinners have been on strike for some days. I advise them to resume work immediately and to ask for increase if they want any, only after resuming work, and in a reasonable manner. To resort to the use of force to get any increase is suicidal. I would specially advise all mill-hands to altogether eschew violence. It is [in] their interest to do so and I remind them of the promises made to do so and I remind them of the promises made to Anasuya Bai and me that they would ever refrain from violence. I hope that all will now resume work.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-4-1919; *also Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, pp. 473-8

390. LETTER TO G. E. CHATFIELD

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI ,
April 15, 1919

DEAR MR. CHATFIELD,

Would you please give me the name and address of the sergeant who was murdered during the tragic occurrences. I understand that there was only one English death. If there are any other English casualties, I should like to know them and the names and addresses of their families. As you are aware, I asked yesterday for contributions towards maintenance of the bereaved families and I know that the contributors desire to tender pecuniary assistance to the families of Englishmen who might have died or become seriously disabled during mob-rule.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6535

391. LETTER TO J. L. MAFFEY

SABARMATI,
April 15, 1919

I beg to send herewith, as promised yesterday, copies of my speech in Bombay and Ahmedabad. They are both translations from the vernacular, either done by me or by others under my supervision. I also send a copy of my letter of yesterday—all these by registered post as many letters have been found to have gone astray of late.

N. A. I.: Home: Political—A: May 1919: Nos. 455-72

392. LETTER TO SIR IBRAHIM RAHIMTOOLLA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 15, 1919

DEAR SIR IBRAHIM RAHIMTOOLLA,

Contrary to my wont, I write this letter to you in English, as I would like you to submit it to His Excellency for perusal and consideration. As you may know, I arrived in Ahmedabad, accompanied by Anasuya Behn on Sunday. There was a very largely attended meeting yesterday at the Satyagraha Ashram, although it is far away from the city. It is estimated that 10 to 15 thousand people must have attended. There is once more perfect quiet in Ahmedabad, and although I have to say it of myself, I do wish to state that the sudden quiet is due largely, if not entirely, to the soothing effect produced by the presence of Anasuya Behn and myself. I enclose herewith copy of my speech in Gujarati and its English translation prepared under my supervision. In response to my invitation, money has begun to pour in, and thousands have observed the fast. I have already written[1] to the Collec-tor, enquiring about the names and addresses of the families of Englishmen who have lost their lives or have been disabled during mob-rule. Happily, I understand that these cases are not more than 2 or 3. My main purpose, however, in writing this letter is to suggest that no further punitive measures may be taken, and that no prosecutions be undertaken in respect of the tragedy. Any arrest and trials would

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G.E. Chatfield", 15-4-1919.

simply cause another ferment. In my humble opinion, it would be most impolitic and unwise to select a few individuals as scapegoats, when a whole mob has taken the law in its own hands. I performed today the painful duty of visiting the army of wounded men, including little children, in the Civil Hospital. I understand that at least 22 have died of the wounds, but probably the real number of those who died during martial law will never be known, for I am told that some dead bodies were actually cremated in the *poles*[1] of Ahmedabad. I simply wish to urge that sufficiently stern punishment has been already dealt out to Ahmedabad.

I ask the Government to believe me when I say that the ebullition was in no way due to satyagraha. It was due to causes which came into being before the satyagraha movement was inaugurated and to the grave blunder in arresting me whilst I was on my way to Delhi, and on a most pacific mission. I do not know within the whole of my public experience a single occasion where my presence has had anything but a soothing effect on the elements of disturbance. My arrest gave a handle to all discontented forces to gather together and those who were sincerely mourning over my arrest out of personal affection for me involuntarily found themselves drawn into the lawless proceedings. I wish also to state that almost every known satyagrahi was simply assisting at the peril of his life in taming the mad fury of the mob. It was due to their work that probably the mob did not indulge in further excesses, though what has happened is bad enough. I may be mistaken in my last deduction, but there is no mistake about the fact, that satyagrahis did their utmost best to prevent the tragedy. But we are yet a handful. Time may show that neither India nor the world can have anything better than satyagraha as a restraining force and a force ranged on the side of law and order. Civil disobedience alone can inspire sincere and manly obedience. My duty as a satyagrahi at the present moment is to refrain from doing anything that may add fuel to the fire. I have therefore restrained myself from giving what I hold is a true analysis of the tragedy enacted in Ahmedabad. I wish to say nothing of the events in the other parts of India. The other causes referred to by me are three in number. First and foremost is the profound dissatisfaction of the Mahomedans over what they fear would be the settlement of Islamic questions at the time of the Peace. I venture to speak of this with some authority because I

[1] Residential streets

have taken great pains to ascertain Mahomedan feelings. I have moved among Mahomedans high and low practically throughout India, and I have deemed it my duty as a Hindu to understand their position and to share their sorrows. The second cause is the fear—vague, I know—that the Reforms that are to come will be only in name. And the third cause is bitter resentment over the passing of the Rowlatt legislation in violent defiance of unanimously expressed-public opinion.

I admit that there has been often great exaggeration indulged in by indifferent, ignorant and irresponsible speakers, but as an experienced public man of over 25 years' standing, I know that exaggerations will not cause ebullitions such as we have witnessed in Ahmedabad, unless there is a substantial grievance behind them.

I felt that it was due to the Government that I should submit for their consideration the state of things that has come to my knowledge. I cannot conclude this letter without expressing my gratitude for the absolute absence of firing in Bombay on Friday last.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6534

393. LETTER TO SIR STANLEY REED

THE ASHRAM,

April 15, 1919

DEAR SIR STANLEY READ

According to my usual custom, the time has come for me to place before you things, which, in the interests of public peace, I do not wish to ventilate in the Press. The atmosphere is so surcharged with distrust, disaffection and ill will, that I do not want to add to the forces of evil by saying anything which may even remotely produce that result, and which it is not obligatory on me to say in public.

Though it is a small matter, may I correct the statement of your informant that I was not arrested in reality? This is what exactly happened: An officer boarded the train[1] at Palwal, and, laying his hands on me, said, "Mr. Gandhi, I arrest you". I was then immedi-

[1] On the night of April 9-10

ately handed to an Indian sepoy—I suppose he was that—and I was taken by the arm and marched out of the train. I was guarded by four sepoys on four sides of the cot, on which I lay in Palwal on the station platform. I was brought to the platform out of the waiting-room at my request, and I was sharply pulled up as I passed one of the guards probably two feet from him to clear my throat. I was taken to Muttra during the night, and a guard was put in my compartment, which was a second-class compartment. We had to wait at Muttra for another train. Early in the morning, I was again put in the second-class compartment, in which accompanied by the guard, I travelled to Sawai Madhopur. There we waited for the mail train, and on its arrival Mr. Bowring of Lahore took charge of me, put me in a first-class compartment with him, but in that carriage too a guard was kept during whole of the night whilst both he and I were sleeping. I do not wish to complain of what happened to me. I am simply stating the naked facts to demonstrate that I was under arrest. I would have declined to begin the return journey had I not been arrested, as I did actually mention to the officer, who served the first order upon me. There are some other incidents which I wish to omit. But nothing that I have said is intended to qualify or detract from the public acknowledgement of the extreme personal courtesy that was extended to me by the three officers, who were concerned with the service of the orders, the arrest and the deportation.

I hastened to Ahmedabad in company with Anasuya Behn in order that the people may be calmed and in all humility I may say that the effect of our arrival on the populace was electrical. I placed myself unreservedly at the service of the authorities. You will have observed that I spoke at the Monday meeting with the utmost caution. I would like you to go through my speech sent to you for publication. I deliberately refrained from narrating the acts done by the military under martial law. I doubt not that there was much avoidable loss of life. I have seen the wounded at the Civil Hospital. I spoke to every one of them. All of them gave me frank statements. Many admitted that they were part of large crowds, not crowds that had any evil designs, but crowds of men, who had hardly realized what the law was. They could not immediately upon its being proclaimed have informed themselves of the conditions. I know that although eager crowds gathered round me to listen to my speech, and although I had printed 25 thousand copies, it has not reached all. How then could the martial law notices indifferently distributed amongst a sullen

population inform vast bodies of men ? These crowds, therefore, did gather. I understand that they were fired at after due notice being given to them, but you will agree with me when I say that they could not all understand the notice to disperse. In the hospital, I saw a few little children 10 or 11 years old. I asked them what they were doing, and they said they had gone out to play. A husband and wife were shot in their own house. The wife died of the wounds. The husband who described the affair does not say that they were deliberately aimed at, but that the bullets whizzed through the house and struck them. Some of them told me that they were alone. The rule was that if ten people collected together, they could be fired at. In one case, I was told, a man, who wanted to be extra-cautious, first asked the permission to pass the pickets, he got it and he passed the pickets with his friends, and as soon as they had proceeded a few paces, they received bullet wounds. The one who asked for permission dropped down dead, and the other is in danger of losing his life. The wound is so serious. The view I have taken of this is that the people of Ahmedabad have no right to complain of these sad occurrences, after the ruthlessness with which the mob destroyed the property, hacked to pieces Sergeant Fraser, and committed many other excesses. It is highly likely that the English lads—I call them lads, because they looked like lads—who were posted as pickets during martial law, had arrived on the scene with the knowledge that a wicked plot was hatched in order to kill the force that was sent from Bombay, of which these lads were members. I refer to the derailing near Nadiad, and in their fury to wreak vengeance upon the Ahmedabad people without any nice or exact discrimination, they may have been too free with their rifles. I describe this shooting in order to show that the people have been sufficiently punished, and there should be no further punitive measures taken and no prosecutions undertaken.

I shall now turn to the causes of this upheaval. I have talked to over a hundred people myself, my associates of the Satyagraha Ashram and my co-workers living in the city have each talked to as many, if not more, and I find that satyagraha had nothing to do with the excesses, that is to say, that it was not the alleged inculcation of the spirit of disobedience which let loose the fury of the mob. During the seven weeks that the satyagraha campaign has been going on, there was not a word uttered to encourage ill will against a single Englishman, and I can state positively that whenever I addressed the people, the audience addressed by me became sobered, and there was

an appreciable change in their attitude towards the English, as also towards those Indian leaders whose policy they disliked. My chief work, however, is done through private conversation with people who visit me wherever I go. I have noticed the vehemence of feelings against British administration, and have noticed too that it was transferred to the administrators themselves. After a searching cross-examination, I found that they admitted their mistake and I can recall many conversions of people, who came in to express their curses, and went away, if not [with] blessings on their lips, with no unfriendliness towards the British. I found mental lawlessness existing everywhere, and it was with the greatest difficulty that I was able to drive home the necessity for restraining this habit of continuous disparagement of law and order, and to replace it by a disciplined and conscientious disobedience, whose effect was to be confined to self-suffering and not to involve any destruction of the life or property of their lawgivers or anyone else. The lawless spirit then was already there. There was not much time given to the spirit of satyagraha, i.e., the spirit of self-restraint, to have its effect upon the people, when the Government of India criminally blundered in serving these orders upon me and in arresting me. Nor were the forces of discontent weak. Here they are: (1) Every Mahomedan is filled with bitterness over questions affecting Islam, and every Mahomedan thoroughly distrusts England in this matter. The association of all classes of Mahomedans with the Hindus is significant, and the upheavals, wherever they have taken place, have, as is perfectly apparent, strong Mahomedan backing. (2) The people have been taught to distrust Reforms in anticipation. The masses are no longer inert. They have a general understanding of the situation. (3) The alarm produced by the Rowlatt legislation and deep resentment over utter defiance of public opinion. I freely admit that there has been much ignorant and even in some cases wilful exaggeration of the effects of the Rowlatt legislation. But after you account for all, there is a residue left, which in my opinion makes Rowlatt legislation impossible of acceptance. I wonder if it has ever struck you that the amendment of the Preamble is of little consequence. As Sir William Vincent very perfectly pointed out, the spirit of the legislation was that it should have operation only in cases where anarchical crime was found to exist. The whole question turns upon, who is to be the judge? The judge is to be the Executive Government, and is not this the procedure which the Executive has always followed in forming its judgments on these matters? A petty

official of the C.I.D. submits a report stating the existence of anarchical crime to his superior officer, who endorses the report. The chief of the C.I.D. then handles it and he will be an exceptionally bold Home Member who will challenge a report from the chief of the C.I.D. He will naturally therefore advise notification of the application of the Act to the area of anarchical disturbance so called. Nobody has questioned the drastic character of the legislation. But I must not labour this point and make the letter long. These causes were bound sooner or later to bring about furious deeds of violence, and I can only say that satyagraha has served as a check, no matter how slight, upon them. It is clear that the tragedy at Ahmedabad and Viramgam could have been absolutely avoided had I not been served with those orders and subsequently arrested. The vast demonstrations took place not because it was the satyagraha movement that was in jeopardy but because it was I who was arrested. Such is the blind affection of the people towards me.

My suggestions therefore would be that the Government should recognize satyagraha as an estimable weapon in the armoury of reformer; they should seek the assistance of Messrs Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali, who, so far as I am aware, are able, equally upright and well informed, and solve the Islamic question to the entire satisfaction of the intelligent Mahomedan population. There should be some assuring declaration about the Reforms, and the Rowlatt legislation should be withdrawn. Until these things are done, I apprehend there will be no peace in India. The feeling in India today is like a barometer, sensitive to the slightest atmospheric pressure or change in the political field. If you at all accept my suggestions, I know you will do all you can to secure their adoption in your own special way. I may add. that I have passed on most of these suggestions to the Viceroy, and those that can be locally handled to the Governor of Bombay.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6534

394. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET[1] NO. 4

[*April 16, 1919*][2]

MY SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

I could not speak to you at length in my address at the Satyagrahashram on Monday last; but I wish to place my thoughts before the public through a few leaflets. Let me first render accounts. I had received till yesterday Rs. 770 towards the fund suggested by me. I request that there should be no delay with regard to this fund, and that none in Ahmedabad should be found wanting in his duty. This fund has had its origin in the idea of penance, but its public utility is no less than its penitential value. I visited the Civil Hospital yesterday in company with Behn Anasuya and Mr. Krishnalal Desai[3], and spoke to all the patients there. I see that we shall have to get pecuniary help to the families of the many of the wounded. I learnt on the spot that 22 of the men brought there had died of the wounds. There is no doubt, there have been many more deaths. A clear duty, therefore, lies upon us, as citizens, to find out the families of the deceased and to give them what help we can. I have been asked as to who will be the beneficiaries of these moneys. I am afraid that we could not compensate those who have sustained loss of property; we can render some little help only to the families of the dead and wounded. These include two or three Englishmen (now ascertained to be one); our first duty is to render help to their families, since we are responsible for their deaths. We had no excuse whatsoever for killing them. They have been killed simply out of animosity. If we do really repent for what we have done, it is our duty to aid their families. That is the least penance we can do. I have been able to see that most at our brethren, too, who have died were altogether innocent. I saw amongst the wounded several boys of 10 or 11. Our next duty is to help all these. A man from Viramgam came to me complaining that he had lost two of his brothers. Very likely many more such cases will be forthcoming. If Viramgam also pays its quota to the fund, we might be able to extend our help to them. If it fails, I am afraid, we shall not be able to render that assistance.

[1] The original has "Satyagraha Series".

[2] *Vide Mahadevbhaini Diary*.

[3] High Court *vakil*, Ahmedabad

Some of us believe that we can obtain our rights by such acts of terrorization, violence and arson. Satyagraha, on the contrary, holds that the rights so obtained should be rejected. I admit that of the two parties using brute force, the one possessing more of it than the other apparently gains its ends. My 40 years' experience tells me that objects so attained do not permanently benefit the winner. There may well be two opinions on this point. But there can be no difference of opinion on the fact that so far as brute force is concerned, we are no match for the Government. Our physical force is as nought before theirs. I would dare say, therefore, that those who advise us to use physical force are sadly mistaken, and we should never listen to their advice. Expediency tells us that there is one and only one recourse for us and that is satyagraha or *dharmabal* (i.e., spirit-force). Now *dharmabal* can spring only from suffering. Oppressing, harassing, or assaulting others cannot add to our spiritual strength. The events in Ahmedabad would have been impossible, had we but a true sense of dharma. It is one of our duties to prevent mischief. If the men and women of Ahmedabad could be brave, all mischief would cease. It is obviously a far greater thing to overcome mischief by spirit-force, than to do so by brute force. We have seen that violent outbreaks have not benefited us at all. I have already said that they had nothing to do with my release. The outbreaks commenced on the 10th. The decision to release me in Bombay was arrived at on the 9th. It cannot therefore have been in any way the result of those outbreaks. Moreover, those who have faith in satyagraha should be the last men to resort to violence to secure my release.

Let us now consider what further loss we have sustained. I reminded you on Monday that the offices which were burnt down belonged to ourselves. But we have an indirect ownership therein, and the fact that the expenses of re-building them may perhaps not fall directly on us may make us indifferent to the mischief done. The loss to our commerce by the closing of the Telegraph Office may also fail to affect us. But consider the consequences of burning down the University Examination Pandal. I understand that it was erected by a contractor, it was his property and was worth about Rs. 18,000. Who will compensate the contractor ? Can we imagine the soreness of his feelings ? Surely the incendiaries must never have thought of making up for the loss. I am informed that there were many ornaments deposited in the District Court Treasury as being matter of dispute in Civil cases and otherwise. Some estimate their value at Rs. 50,000,

while others value them at a higher figure still. We know nothing about the owners of these ornaments. They have lost them for good. Government may not compensate them; and even if they do, it will be from our money. The poor innocent people, who have thus lost their ornaments, will not perhaps so much as approach the Government to demand them. Where was the justice of our ferreting out from Rao Bahadur Bulakhidas' house all the things therein and making a bonfire of them? I have been told the Rao Bahadur's career has been far from good; that he harasses the people. Granting that this is so, may we, therefore, burn the property of such officers? If people were thus to take the law into their own hands, there would be an end of peace and public safety and a perpetual reign of terror would prevail. If any and every person, aggrieved by an officer's conduct were to be regarded as within his rights to violate the person and property of that officer, no officer would be safe. A country, where such a state of affairs prevails, is not considered to be civilized, and the people there live in constant fear. Consider the hideous barbarity of burning alive the *Aval Karkun* of Viramgam. What offense had he committed ? Or, if he had committed any, why had we not the courage to obtain his dismissal? Sergeant Fraser, an innocent Englishman who had sought refuge in an Indian house, was marched out of the house and hacked to pieces. What can India gain out of such a piece of brutality? One direct result we have already had, and that is, the bitterness of feeling between the English and ourselves has been augmented, and several innocent lives have been lost. The only result to obtain rights through association and co-operation with such hooligans can be that if such attempts succeed, the rights so obtained could be enjoyed only on conditions imposed by the hooligans. Rights so obtained are not rights at all, they are rather the signs of our enslavement. The events of Ahmedabad and Viramgam are no indication of our heroism; they do not in any way prove our manliness; they have simply disgraced us; our movement has received a set-back; satyagraha has had to be restricted. In giving you this bare picture, my purpose is to show how thousands of people, who disliked such violence, put up with it as helpless and powerless creatures. It indicates that at this moment, we do not possess the true force of dharma and truth. It is therefore that I have said that there is no salvation for India except through satyagraha. I shall endeavour as best as I can to explain what this satyagraha is in later leaflets, which I entreat my sisters and brothers to carefully read and understand and ponder upon and carry out the

suggestions made therein.

M. K. GANDHI

Printed by M. N. Kulkarni at the Karnatak Printing Press, 434, Thakurdwar, Bombay and published by S. G. Banker, 72, Apollo Street, Fort, Bombay.

From the printed original preserved in Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Delhi. Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

395. LETTER TO G. E. CHATFIELD

ASHRAM,
April 16, 1919

DEAR MR. CHATFIELD,

I thank you for your note. I recognize the force of what you say in the last paragraph[1] of it, and shall give effect to your wish.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 6542

396. LETTER TO G. E. CHATFIELD

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 16, 1919

DEAR MR. CHATFIELD,

I understand that in Shahpur there are some *badmashes* who have looted during the tragic events and who were even now worrying the life out of the peaceful residents in that neighborhood. The latter have to keep awake during the night for fear of the *badmashes* making their depradation. Will it be possible to post a few police there?

Though the Government, if I understood Mr. Pratt[2] rightly, neither invite my services nor desire it even if rendered uninvited, as I said to Mr. Pratt, I must continue to render to the State what service I

[1] The last paragraph of the note dated 16-4-1919 read: "If anybody has any complaint to make, as I gather from another note of yours, will you please direct them to me direct? I am too busy to listen to any but direct complaints, at least in cases where people are able to make them."

[2] F. G. Pratt, Commissioner, Northern Division, Bombay Presidency

can according to my lights. In order more fully to popularize the ideas set forth in my speech to the meeting, I am having it read to small parties of men and women in *poles* and inviting remarks from the people if they wish to make them.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6543

397. LETTER TO F. G. PRATT

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 16, 1919

DEAR MR. PRATT,

I thank you for your note. My movements at the present moment are that I leave Ahmedabad for Bombay tomorrow in connection with the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan meetings that are to be held on the 19th, 20th and 21st. instant. I hope to return on the 22nd, at the outside on the 23rd. If I return on the 23rd, it is my intention to halt at Nadiad for about 2 hours. After my return, I want to continue organizing work in Ahmedabad along the lines I have informed Mr. Chatfield of. I am anxious that the people should become saturated with the absolutely peaceful nature of satyagraha before I commence what might be termed the "offensive". If you have any wish to express in connection with my programme, I do hope you will not hesitate to let me know, even confidentially if necessary, and I need hardly say that I shall endeavour to carry it out so far as possible. Even though the Government may not desire my co-operation, as a satyagrahi it will be my duty to do acts of co-operation and assist in restoring order and removing lust for violence.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 6540

398. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET[1] NO. 5

[*April 17, 1919*][2]

CHARACTERISTICS OF MAHATMA GANDHI'S WRITINGS

There are two poems published and being distributed entitled "Mahatma Gandhino Satyagraha" and "Mahatma Gandhina Udgar." They bear the signature of Labhshanker Harjiwandas Dihorkar. The ideas expressed in these verses are not mine. Some of them are poisonous, calculated to promote ill will and excite passions. They are, therefore, opposed to satyagraha. I therefore advise all brothers and sisters not to accept anything as written by me unless it is signed by me. The present times are so critical that one cannot be too cautious about anything lest one might be led astray.

My writings cannot be poisonous, they must be free from anger, for it is my special religious conviction that we cannot truly attain our goal by promoting ill will against the .rulers or anyone else. There can be no room for untruth in my writings, because it is my unshakable belief that there is no religion other than truth and because I am capable of rejecting aught obtained at the cost of truth. My writings cannot but be free from hatred towards any individual because it is my firm belief that it is love that sustains the earth. There only is life where there is love. Life without love is death. Love is the reverse of the coin of which the obverse is truth. It is my firm faith and it is my experience of forty years that we can conquer the world by truth and love. I believe that we can remedy the mistakes of our rulers by means of truth and love and my writings can therefore have no incitement to violence to person or property. It is obviously not possible for me to read everything that is written or printed in, my name and I would therefore ask everyone to apply the above mentioned test to all that purports to be published in my name and I further wish and pray that everyone should reject anything that has the slightest trace of untruth, disaffection, hatred, violence and the like. I do not know the author of the poems mentioned above, but should he see this leaflet I advise him that it is necessary for him before attributing any words or statements to anyone to show them to him and obtain his permission to publish

[1] The original has "Satyagraha Series".

[2] *Vide Mahadevbhaini Diary*.

them as his. This is the least that prudence and self-restraint demand.

M. K. GANDHI

Printed by M. N. Kulkarni at the Karnatak Printing Press, 434, Thakurdwar, Bombay and published by S. G. Banker, 72, Apollo Street, Fort, Bombay.

From the printed original preserved in Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Delhi. Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

399. LETTER TO SWAMI SHRADDHANAND

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 17, 1919

DEAR SHRADDHANANDJI,

I write this in English as Mr. Shuaib desires that I should do so for the sake of the company before which it is to be read. The questions[1] to which I am required to reply may be before you. I shall, therefore, only refer to the numbers.

To question No. 1, my answer is—non-satyagrahis who join satyagraha demonstrations must for the occasion subscribe to the rules of satyagraha. They are, therefore, bound to refrain from retaliation under the gravest provocation. For the occasion in which non-satyagrahis participate, there can be no distinction between satyagrahis and non-satyagrahis. Non-satyagrahis can only join if they give an undertaking that, for the particular occasion on which we seek their association, they will subscribe to our doctrine. I, therefore, hold that we are just as responsible for the action of non-satyagrahis when they act with us as we are for our own. I think it will be evident to you that without this understanding, satyagraha can easily be smothered by non-satyagraha. You cannot have a combination of non-compatibles without an explosion.

My answer to question No. 2 is really to be inferred from the foregoing. I think we must apply to ourselves the ordinary rule of law more strictly because we are satyagrahis. That a man is to be presumed to have intended the consequences that can reasonably be proved to have followed from his conduct. I think that I at least

[1] Based on Satyagraha Leaflet No. 3; *vide* "Questions on Satyagraha", Before 17-4-1919.

should have foreseen some of the consequences, specially in view of the gravest warnings that were given to me by friends whose advice I have always sought and valued. But I confess that I am dense. I am not joking. So many friends have told me that I am incapable of profiting by other people's experiences and that in every case I want to go through the fire myself and learn only after bitter experience. There is exaggeration in this charge, but there is also a substance of truth in it. This denseness in me is at once a weakness and a strength. I could not have remained a satyagrahi had I not cultivated the quality of stubborn resistance and such resistance can only come from experience and, not from inference. Pursuit of truth is any day a dangerous occupation. It is much more so when you are working as we have to work in an atmosphere surcharged with untruth and all the weakness that follow from it. You will now understand why I consider that we are responsible for the happenings in Delhi and Bombay not very serious from our standpoint, and the very serious and discreditable events in Ahmedabad and Viramgam. I acquit ourselves of all blame so far as the happenings in the Punjab outside Delhi are concerned. They would have taken place without satyagraha, if Drs. Satyapal and Kitchlew had been arrested on any other occasion. I would, however, add that the events in the Punjab give us an indication as to our future course.

My answer to question No. 3 is also involved in the answer to No. 1. My answers are really inherent in the movement. Satyagraha means all I have said and nothing less. Without the conditions I have spoken of, it is impossible to ensure success.

Answer to No. 4: Did you get the full text of my speech? You will see there the meaning of what I have said as to the possible abandonment. The movement can never be abandoned in the sense you have understood it. But our satyagraha may have to take, as it has already taken in Ahmedabad, such a turn that in popular language it will mean an abandonment. But we shall never be guilty of suicide—moral or political—because here we have already begun what you have advised. We have as yet not even postponed the breaking of all the laws selected by the committee, but my seeking re-arrest by trying to enter Delhi has been postponed. We are now giving instruction in satyagraha in a most active form, of course, openly, both in Bombay and Ahmedabad, and the workers are hoping that they will be able to

bring the masses in a disciplined control in a short time. It may be necessary from what I have heard today to go a step further and suspend breach of all laws until we are sure of an atmosphere in which we can work. I hope to issue a statement for publication as soon as I reach Bombay. That would be tomorrow (Friday). There is one item of serious news from Bombay. Mr. Jamnadas writes to say that at a meeting of Mahomedan friends which I was to address, but which I could not as I was suddenly called away to Ahmedabad, he gathered that the Mahomedan friends conceived satyagraha merely as a weapon of the weak. They said that immediately they got the opportunity, they would certainly not refrain from violence. This to my mind is a dangerous attitude. Talking in terms of politics and not of satyagraha, it seems to me that no movement of violence can possibly succeed here so as to restore to Islam what it is entitled to, whereas real satyagraha, if it permeates the masses, can do so in a day. Such is my unshakable conviction.

No. 5: I think the question is variously answered in the foregoing paragraphs.

A letter was posted to you yesterday, giving full replies to the one received from you yesterday. I may sum up the advice tendered in that letter. Suspend civil disobedience until, in the opinion of your committee, the time has arrived for offering it, and work incessantly amongst the population and by all acts of service inspire them with faith in satyagraha.

From a photostat: S. N. 6546

400. SPEECH AT PREPARATORY MEETING FOR HINDI CONFERENCE, BOMBAY[1]

[Before *April 18, 1919*]

Consistently with the object of our meeting today, I must speak in Hindi. On this occasion, however, I deliberately avoid using it because I want to explain its importance to you and that I shall do in Gujarati. I think I can explain the reasons better thus. The satyagraha now going on in India covers the issue of the Hindi language.

[1] Ninth Hindi Literary Conference; Gandhiji was in the chair but owing to his indifferent health the speech was read out on his behalf from a prepared text. The report purports to reproduce only its more important portions.

Satyagraha is essentially a fight for truth and, if we have regard for truth, we shall have to admit that Hindi is the only language we can use as a national language. There is no other regional language with equal claims.

We should pause and think what Hindi means. I don't think the Sanskritized language they use is Hindi; it is an artificial product. Nor is Persianized Urdu Hindi. The language we want to adopt as our national language is a mixture of Hindi and Urdu. It is the language spoken, by and large, in Bihar, Delhi and the Punjab. The two languages came to be treated as rivals of each other when the idea spread that Hindus and Muslims were not one people and there developed ill will between the two. Some would regard that alone as Hindi which was full of Sanskrit words, and the Muslims would accept that alone as Urdu which used Persian and Arabic words. But the language spoken by the average Hindu or Muslim is not of this kind. Wherever we go and hear Hindus and Muslims speak, we find them, whether Hindus or Muslims, using Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic words, not going out of their way to avoid any. When we have accepted this mixed language, we, Hindus and Muslims, shall have been cleansed in our hearts. This language I speak of is understood by Muslims everywhere in North and South India, though they also know the regional language. Look at the map again and [you will find that], except for a small part, Madras, the Hindus in the rest of India also understand it. If we go further and think of the various regions separately, Hindi is spoken in all the provinces except Maharashtra, Gujarat, Bengal and Sind. Even in these other provinces, including Gujarat, maulvis[1] and Hindu preachers have spread both the languages. You will hardly find anyone not familiar with the Tulsi *Ramayana*. You may call the languages Hindi and Urdu, if you like; both have the same grammar. If there is any language in India which can become its national language, it is Hindi-Urdu. No one should conclude from this that he may neglect his own, the regional language. For national purposes, we should select a language which can be used in all provinces. And so our educated classes at any rate should pick up the Hindi-Urdu mixture which I have recommended. I am aware, in all humility, that some eminent men of learning in this country believe that in English we have the language we need. No language in the position of English is known to have become a

[1] Muslim preachers

national language, for it has no affinity with any of the Indian languages. A national language must be easy for everyone to learn. Were it not that we are a subject people, we would readily admit the need for such a common language. Even as it is, despite the millions of rupees spent in teaching English, only a handful of people succeed in learning it and, from among these, those who acquire a command over it are fewer still.

The effort we have to make in learning this language is, I believe, a drain on our intellectual powers.

The issue has an intimate bearing on the progress of India. A nation which has despised its own language pays for doing so with the loss of its nationhood. Most of us are in this plight. India is the one country in the world in which parents would rather not speak to their children in their own language....[1] I bear English no grudge. I even feel that, for certain purposes, some of us will have to learn English. One should learn it and be an interpreter to the rest. I admit that such people should know English well enough. However, we should have Hindi as the national language to serve other purposes, for use in courts and the central legislature. The nation will stand to suffer by the use of any other language for such purposes. All our labour [in other spheres] will be in vain till we recognize this truth. Hence I said last year[2] that it would have been better if the Hindi Conference had been held in Bombay. We see that this has been done. The Conference is to be held on the 18th, l9th and 20th.[3] The presidentship of the Conference has been accepted by Pandit Malaviya and you should, therefore, help the Conference.[4] The secretaries have said that it will cost Rs. 10,000. By contributing something towards this cost, you will have helped the Conference. This is help of inferior kind. The best help will be for those who are present here to pick up this language soon. This can be done if you spend one hour every night, with a teacher to help you. I shall not take more time. I hope you will think

[1] The Gujarati report is defective at this point. The Hindi report of the speech here has: ". . . would write to their children in English, rather than in their own language".

[2] Probably at the 8th session of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan at Indore on 29-3-1918, over which Gandhiji presided.

[3] The Hindi report says: ". . . on the l9th, the 20th and the 21st."

[4] The Hindi report adds: "Shri Swami Shankaracharya of Karavir Peeth has been kind enough to accept the chairmanship of the Reception Committee."

over my views, and, if you find them right, act upon them. We often find among us, and elsewhere, too, that we hear and approve but do not follow up with action. It is to our benefit to act upon anything which has appealed to us. We ensure our progress by doing so.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 20-4-1919

401. TELEGRAM TO G. A. NATESAN[1]

BOMBAY,
April 18, 1919

DECIDED SUSPEND CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE TEMPORARILY OWING CRITICAL SITUATION THAT HAS DEVELOPED REALLY OPERATIVE PART MOVEMENT NAMELY PREACHING PRACTICE OF TRUTH NON-VIOLENCE CONTINUES YOU WILL BE GLAD READ MY PRESS STATEMENT.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2232

402. PRESS STATEMENT ON SUSPENSION OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE[2]

BOMBAY,
April 18, 1919

It is not without sorrow that I feel compelled to advise the temporary suspension of civil disobedience. I give this advice not because I have less faith now in its efficacy, but because I have, if possible, greater faith than before. It is my perception of the law of satyagraha which impels me to suggest the suspension. I am sorry, when I embarked upon a mass movement, I underrated the forces of evil and I must now pause and consider how best to meet the situation. But whilst doing so, I wish to say that from a careful examination of

[1] In reply to Natesan's telegram of 14th April, urging suspension of civil disobedience because of breaking out of riots. A copy of this reply telegram was also sent to C. Rajagopalachari, who was secretary, Satyagraha Sabha, Madras; *vide The Hindu*, 19-4-1919.

[2] Gandhiji addressed this as a letter to the secretaries of the Satyagraha Sabha, Bombay, and released it to the Press, *vide* the preceding item.

the tragedy at Ahmedabad and Viramgam, I am convinced that satyagraha had nothing to do with the violence of the mob and that many swarmed round the banner of mischief raised by the mob, largely because of their affection for Anasuyabai and myself. Had the Government in an unwise manner not prevented me from entering Delhi and so compelled me to disobey their order, I feel certain that Ahmedabad and Viramgam would have remained free from the horrors of the past week. In other words, satyagraha has neither been the cause nor the occasion of the upheaval. If anything, the presence of satyagraha has acted as a check even so slight upon the previously existing lawless elements. As regards events in the Punjab, it is admitted that they are unconnected with the satyagraha movement.

SOUTH AFRICAN PARALLEL

In the course of the satyagraha struggle in South Africa, several thousands of indentured Indians had struck work. This was a satyagraha strike and therefore entirely peaceful and voluntary. Whilst the strike was going on, a strike of European miners, railway employees, etc., was declared. Overtures were made to me to make common cause with the European strikers. As a satyagrahi, I did not require a moment's consideration to decline to do so. I went further and for fear of our strike being classed with the strike of Europeans in which methods of violence and use of arms found a prominent place, ours was suspended and satyagraha from that moment came to be recognized by the Europeans of South Africa as an honourable and honest movement—in the words of General Smuts, a constitutional movement. I can do no less at the present critical moment. I would be untrue to satyagraha, if I allowed it by any action of mine to be used as an occasion for feeding violence for embittering relations between the English and the Indians. Our satyagraha must therefore now consist in ceaselessly helping the authorities in all the ways available to us as satyagrahis to restore order and to curb lawlessness. We can turn the tragedies going on before us to good account if we could but succeed in gaining the adherence of the masses to the fundamental principles of satyagraha. Satyagraha is like a banyan tree with innumerable branches. Civil disobedience is one such branch, *satya* (truth) and ahimsa (non-violence) together make the parent trunk from which all innumerable branches shoot out. We have found by bitter experience that whilst in an atmosphere of lawlessness, civil disobedience found ready acceptance. *Satya* and ahimsa, from which

alone civil disobedience can worthily spring, have commanded little or no respect. Ours then is a Herculean task, but we may not shirk it. We must fearlessly spread the doctrine of *satya* and ahimsa and then, and not till then, shall we be able to undertake mass satyagraha.

ROWLATT LAWS

My attitude towards the Rowlatt legislation remains unchanged. Indeed, I do feel that the Rowlatt legislation is one of the many causes of the present unrest. But in a surcharged atmosphere, I must refrain from examining these causes. The main and only purpose of this letter is to advise all satyagrahis to temporarily suspend civil disobedience, to give Government effective co-operation in restoring order and by preaching and practice to gain adherence to the fundamental principles mentioned above.

The Hindu, 21-4-1919

403. SPEECH AT HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN, BOMBAY

April 19, 1919

I propose Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya as president of this Sammelan. Who in India today does not know Malaviyaji? He is a great leader of India. He has rendered great service to his country. In the service of the national language also he is in the forefront. I feel that there is no one who has that power of service which he commands. This is the first session of the Sammelan outside North India. The task of presiding at this session should be entrusted to Malaviyaji. This will guarantee the success of our work.

[From Hindi]

Ninth Hindi Sahitya Sammelan Report, Part I

404. SPEECH AT HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN, BOMBAY

April 20, 1919

The activities of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan are many and varied. The chief one consists in disseminating literature, conducting examinations in Hindi literature, awarding degrees and spreading Hindi in North India and outside it. All this work requires money. In the last session at Indore a sum of nearly Rs. 30,000 was collected. I hope Bombay too will take part in this great effort. There are many

very rich men in Bombay. I hope our brethren in Bombay will join in this national effort.

[From Hindi]

Ninth Hindi Sahitya Sammelan Report, Part I

405. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

BOMBAY,
April 21, 1919

JUST READ ASSOCIATED PRESS WIRE DATED 19TH SAYING PERSONS ARRESTED FOR DISOBEYING ORDERS ISSUED UNDER MARTIAL LAW ARE BEING WHIPPED IN PUBLIC STREETS. UNDERSTAND ORDERS HAVE REFERENCE TO OPENING SHOPS. IF PRESS WIRE CORRECT, RESPECTFULLY SUBMIT THAT SUCH WHIPPING WOULD ROUSE GRAVEST INDIGNATION. HOPE THERE IS SOME EXPLANATION THAT WOULD REMOVE ALL CAUSE FOR ANXIETY AND IN ANY CAUSE I WOULD LIKE TO BE ASSURED THAT NO AUTHORITY HAS BEEN GIVEN TO GENERAL OFFICER COMMANDING, MARTIAL LAW OPERATIONS, TO WHIP PEOPLE PUBLICLY OR PRIVATELY FOR OFFENCE DESCRIBED ABOVE.

N.A.I.: Home: Political (Deposit): May—1919: No. 4

406. LETTER TO G. E. CHATFIELD

April 21, 1919

DEAR MR. CHATFIELD,

A friend has just drawn my attention to the fact that the mill-hands will be doubly hit by the levy. They have already been made to pay from their wages. Now, as I understand, they will be made to pay through the water rate. For every little tenement is liable to pay if the occupant draws more than Rs. 7 per month. Thus, almost all the mill-hands will have to contribute to the levy twice over. Probably you have not considered this point. You have the power of exemption. Could you not exempt the mill-hands from the double levy if the view submitted by me is correct?

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6555

407. LETTER TO GILLESPI

THE ASHRAM,
April 22, 1919

DEAR MR. GILLESPI[1],

I arrived here yesterday and received your kind letter. You will see that I anticipated the advice given by you. I take it you have read the manifesto declaring temporary suspension of civil disobedience. I shall esteem your advice and criticism, whenever you may find it to be necessary. I do not know whether you have read the two articles I have written on swadeshi. Some of us wish to take the final step and I would certainly like English friends to associate with the movement and encourage it. In my opinion, no country can live honourably without swadeshi.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 6558

408. LETTER TO G. E. CHATFIELD

THE ASHRAM,
April 24, 1919

DEAR MR. CHATFIELD,

I have just discovered my failure to pass on definite instructions as to sending the leaflets[2] published after my speech of the 14th. I send you copies herewith for your perusal.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S. N. 6563

[1] Of Ahmedabad
[2] Nos. 4 & 5

409. LETTER TO F. G. PRATT

[SABARMATI,
April 24, 1919][1]

DEAR MR. PRATT,

Through some bungling on my part, I see that copies of the last three leaflets were not delivered to you. I know you will excuse me for the unintentional omission. Probably you have already seen them. I send you a few copies herewith of each of the leaflets. I am going to Bombay today hoping to return on Monday. I stop at Nadiad for a few hours on my way to Bombay.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6563

410. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET[2] *NO. 6*

[*April 25, 1919*][3]

SATYAGRAHA : ITS SIGNIFICANCE

In the first leaflet[4], I hinted that I would consider the meaning of satyagraha in a later number of this series. I feel that the time has now arrived to examine the meaning of satyagraha. The word was newly coined some years ago, but the principle which it denotes is as ancient as time. This is the literal meaning of satyagraha—insistence on truth, and force derivable from such insistence. In the present movement, we are making use of satyagraha as a force: that is to say, in order to cure the evil in the shape of the Rowlatt legislation, we have been making use of the force generated by satyagraha, that is, insistence on truth. One of the axioms of religion is, there is no religion other than truth. Another is, religion is love. And as there can be only one religion, it follows that truth is love and love is truth. We shall find too, on further reflection, that conduct based on truth is impossible without love.

[1] The similarity of the contents of this letter and of "Letter to G. E. Chatfield", 24-4-1919 suggests that both were written on the same day.

[2] The original has: "Satyagraha Leaflet Series".

[3] According to *The Indian Review*, the date of issue of this leaflet is April 25.

[4] *Vide* Leaflet No. 4.

Truth-force then is love-force. We cannot remedy evil by harbouring ill will against the evil-doer. This is not difficult of comprehension. It is easy enough to understand. In thousands of our acts, the propelling power is truth or love. The relations between father and son, husband and wife, indeed our family relations are largely guided by truth or love. And we therefore consciously or unconsciously apply satyagraha in regulating these relations.

If we were to cast a retrospective glance over our past life, we would find that out of a thousand of our acts affecting our families, in nine hundred and ninety-nine we were dominated by truth, that in our deeds, it is not right to say we generally resort to untruth or ill will. It is only where a conflict of interests arises, then arise the progeny of untruth, viz., anger, ill will, etc., and then we see nothing but poison in our midst. A little hard thinking will show us that the standard that we apply to the regulation of domestic relations is the standard that should be applied to regulate the relations between rulers and the ruled, and between man and man. Those men and women who do not recognize the domestic tie are considered to be very like brutes or barbarous, even though they in form have the human body. They have never known the law of satyagraha. Those who recognize the domestic tie and its obligations have to a certain extent gone beyond that brute stage. But if challenged, they would say "what do we care though the whole universe may perish so long as we guard the family interest?" The measure of their satyagraha, therefore, is less than that of a drop in the ocean.

When men and women have gone a stage further, they would extend the law of love, i.e., satyagraha, from the family to the village. A still further stage away from the brute life is reached when the law of satyagraha is applied to provincial life, and the people inhabiting a province regulate their relations by love rather than by hatred. And when as in Hindustan we recognize the law of satyagraha as a binding force even between province and province and the millions of Hindustan treat one another as brothers and sisters, we have advanced a stage further still from the brute nature.

In modern times, in no part of the earth have the people gone beyond the nation stage in the application of satyagraha. In reality, however, there need be no reason for the clashing of interest between nation and nation, thus arresting the operation of the great law. If we were not in the habit generally of giving no thought to our

daily conduct, if we did not accept local custom and habit as matters of course, as we accept the current coin, we would immediately perceive that to the extent that we bear ill will towards other nations or show disregard at all for life, to that extent we disregard the law of satyagraha or love, and to that extent we are still not free from the brute nature. But there is no religion apart from that which enables us entirely to rid ourselves of the brute nature. All religious sects and divisions, all churches and temples, are useful only so long as they serve as a means towards enabling us to recognize the universality of satyagraha. In India we have been trained from ages past in this teaching and hence it is that we are taught to consider the whole universe as one family. I do wish to submit as a matter of experience that it is not only possible to live the full national life, by rendering obedience to the law of satyagraha, but that the fullness of national life is impossible without satyagraha, i.e., without a life of true religion. That nation which wars against another has to an extent disregarded the great law of life. I shall never abandon the faith I have that India is capable of delivering this truth to the whole world, and I wish that all Indians, men and women, whether they are Hindus or Mahomedans, Parsis, Christians or Jews will share with me this unquenchable faith.

M. K. GANDHI

Printed by M. N. Kulkarni at the Karnatak Printing Press, 434, Thakurdwar, Bombay, and published by S. G. Banker, 72, Apollo Street, Fort, Bombay.

From the printed original preserved in Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Delhi. Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

411. SPEECH AT BOMBAY

April 25, 1919

People should do nothing contrary to the spirit of satyagraha. We have all to take a lesson from the incidents in Ahmedabad. What was the result of the riots there? About 250 persons were wounded and more than 50 killed. For this, I do not blame the Government. We ourselves are to blame. I want you all to learn this lesson. The satyagraha has not stopped. It has been merely suspended and will be resumed only when I am sure that people have understood its real meaning.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 4-5-1919

412. LETTER TO CHANDRASHANKAR PANDYA

April 26, 1919

I was very happy indeed to read your letter, as I was anxious to know how you were keeping. What is this ailment of yours, from which you have still not recovered? There is an institution in Agra giving Kuhne baths. I have heard Pandit Hridayanath Kunzru praise it very much. Since you are there, you may perhaps benefit if you go in for a few of these baths.

I am returning your poem for being revised. I see from it your deep affection for me, but I expect something better from you, specially as you are ill. Substitute another word for "black" to describe the law; you may call it "harsh", if you like. "Black" is suggestive of anger. One's language, too, must be worthy of satyagraha. The sentiment expressed in "Trusting the British wholly" is out of place in a description of satyagraha. We did nothing wrong in trusting the British; our fault lay in having no faith in ourselves. God helps those alone who help themselves, and so too the British. Can they be better than God? To bear invisible blows is the satyagrahi's *mantra*, though he does so in order that his suffering may end. In composing a poem on satyagraha, I would bring in no comparison with the Liberals and others. I am sending you my latest leaflet. Go through it and, if the Goddess Saraswati inspires you with verses conveying the boundless power of truth and nonviolence, as also the difference between civil disobedience and ignorant, arrogant disobedience, if you can compose such verses, I should like you to do so.

Going again through your letter, I find that you had feared there might be satyagraha against your poem too. The fear has virtually come true. Don't mind, though. How can the poor satyagrahi help? My hands do not give me full service, else I would have written this letter myself. You need be in no hurry to send me another poem. Write only when your health permits. How much time did it take Keats to write the immortal line "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever" ?

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

413. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET NO. 7

[*April 26, 1919*][1]

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

With great sorrow and equal pleasure I have to inform you that the Government have today[2] removed Mr. Horniman from Bombay and he has been placed on board a steamer bound for England. Mr. Horniman is a very brave and generous English-man. He has given us the *mantra* of liberty, he has fearlessly exposed wrong wherever he has seen it and thus been an ornament to the race to which he belongs, and rendered it a great service. Every Indian knows his services to India. I am sorry for the event because a brave satyagrahi has been deported while I retain my physical liberty. I am glad because Mr. Horniman has been given the occasion of fulfilling his Pledge.

The publication of the *Chronicle* will for the time being be discontinued, because the Directors have wisely decided not to accede to the improper demands of the Government. In reality, however, the continuance of the *Chronicle* without Mr. Horniman would be like an attempt to sustain a body when the soul has departed.

The condition I have described is truly serious. Satyagraha is on the anvil. At the same time, this is a fine opportunity for demonstrating its purity and its invincibility. It will rest with satyagrahis and other inhabitants of India to take advantage of the opportunity. I can fully appreciate the deep wound that will be caused to every satyagrahi by the separation of a dear comrade. The nation will certainly feel hurt to find that the one who presented it with a daily draught of liberty is no more in itsmidst. At a time like this satyagrahis and others will, in my opinion, demonstrate their true affection for Mr. Horniman only by remaining perfectly calm. It will be sheer thoughtlessness to break the peace. Modern civilization challenges the ancient. Satyagraha now going on is based upon the teachings of the ancient civilization and if India accepts satyagraha the superiority of the ancient civilization will be indicated. The world will see modern civilization in its nakedness and there is no doubt that its votaries will retrace their steps.

[1] *Vide* Mahadevbhaini Diary.

[2] The deportation of B. G. Horniman took place on April 26, 1919.

The following are the practical suggestions I venture to place before you. There should be no stoppage of business anywhere in Hindustan, there should be no large public meeting of protests, no processions, no violence of any kind whatsoever and every effort should be made to stop any tendency thereto. I ask satyagrahis and the sympathizers not to lose faith in the efficacy of satyagraha and firmly to believe that the Satyagraha Pledge will be carried in its entirety.

More later.

M. K. GANDHI

Printed by M. N. Kulkarni, at the Karnatak Printing Press, 434, Thakurdwar, Bombay. Published by S. G. Banker, 72 Apollo Street, Fort, Bombay.

From the printed original preserved in Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Delhi. Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

414. SPEECH AT MEETING OF MARWARIS, BOMBAY[1]

April 27, 1919

I regret that I could not be punctual in attending this meeting. I was however engaged in our own work. (Note: He was engaged in an interview with me)[2]. When I received the information which led me to come to Bombay, I did not know that brother Horniman would be deported. I have realized that we have not fully grasped the principles of satyagraha. If we had not known this defect, we would have done something different about brother Horniman. So I must advise you that in spite of the separation from a great servant of the public like brother Horniman we should do nothing which would harm anyone.

We cannot close the shops or suspend business, because that would mean risk of disturbances. Disturbances are not part of satyagraha. The foundation of satyagraha is based on truth and non-violence. He who abides by truth and does not wish to harm anybody can be called a satyagrahi. You know how we are going to resort to satyagraha against the Rowlatt Act. We have declared that we will not submit to the Rowlatt Act and that we will civilly disobey other laws. That civil disobedience of law can only be practised by one who

[1] At Nar Narayan temple, Kalbadevi Road, at 5.30 p.m. The speech was read by Jamnadas Dwarkadas as Gandhiji was unable to stand up and address the meeting.

[2] This seems to be an addition by the police officer.

adheres to truth and non-violence. Without that civil disobedience is foolish and could not help us to achieve anything for the public good.

The aim of satyagraha at present is to place before the public the principles of truth and non-violence as far as possible, and when we are sure that these principles have been grasped, we will again break the law civilly.[1] Every man and woman who takes this vow must understand that truth and non-violence are to be adhered to in this struggle. We have to disobey the law civilly as Prahlad did. Like Prahlad also we must not depart from truth. Without these two things civil disobedience of law is irreligious. As will be seen from the manifesto issued by me about Horniman, our struggle is concerned with modern civilization. The history of the world speaks of the time spent by the nations in the development of physical force. We have observed this in Europe.[2]

I would put it to Hindus and others that they should not sink to the condition of modern Europe. Yet I have observed that India is inclined towards that condition. Otherwise we would not have seen the outrages that we have seen.

I have my duty to point out, without going into the merits or demerits of these outrages, that through outrages and disturbances [we] will never achieve any good for India. From the study of other religions I have learnt that the man who depends on physical force spreads irreligion, and he who depends on soul-force understands the true religion. So sisters and brothers bear in mind what has been said about this movement and help the cause.[3] From this it need not be supposed that what I have said will take years and years to fulfil. It is only necessary to understand that we should not take part in disturbances when the movement progresses.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1919, pp. 339-40; also *Gujarati*, 4-5-1919

[1] The Gujarati report of the speech adds here: "For this reason, this leaflet has placed another pledge before the public, called the sympathizers' pledge."

[2] According to the Gujarati report: "The history of the world speaks of no nation which has spent all its time in the development of physical force. We see this being done only in present-day Europe."

[3] The Gujarati report adds here: "If it were to make a practical suggestion, I would say that, if you approve of the principles I have placed before you, give as much of your time as you can for propagating them. If you do, they will be with the people soon enough."

415. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET[1] NO. 8

BOMBAY,
April 28,[2] 1919

It is a good omen for satyagraha that Bombay has preserved peace in spite of the unendurable separation of Mr. Horniman from us. I hope that it will be preserved whenever our other friends are arrested and even if I am arrested. The Government are entitled to arrest those whom they suspect. Moreover in our movement we consider it the proper thing to be arrested and imprisoned, when before our conscience we are found guiltless. How can we therefore be angry when any satyagrahi is arrested? We ought to know that the sooner innocent men are arrested, the sooner will this struggle end. I have heard some people say that in satyagraha also the end is achieved by violence. They argue that when satyagrahis are arrested, people become excited, resort to violence and thus get their demands acceded to. I held this to be a dreadful superstition. The reverse is the truth. By the arrest of satyagrahis, violence ensued in Ahmedabad and we have experienced the results of that violence. The people there are cowed down. Gujarat which never had the military in its midst has had an experience of it. It is my firm conviction that the victory of satyagraha is attainable only by adherence to truth, avoidance of violence and by suffering. My experience in South Africa, Champaran, Kaira and other places fully bears out the truth of my statement. So long as we do not appreciate this truth, we are in no way fitted for satyagraha. The question arises:"What then ought we to do? Are we to sit with folded hands in spite of Mr. Horniman's deportation?" I reply that the observance of perfect calm is itself a demonstration of our grief over the separation, and of our intense activity along satyagraha lines and by maintaining[3] the same calmness of spirit we shall be better able to reach our goal and to welcome back our friend. When Hindustan [is] accustomed in the course of this struggle to rely only upon truth and non-violence, we shall be able to begin civil disobedience. Some say that it will take years before India recognizes the supremacy of truth and non-violence and therefore it must take years to bring this

[1] The original has "Satyagraha Series Leaflet".

[2] April 27 in Mahadevbhaini Diary.

[3] The source has "containing".

struggle to a successful end. I would content myself with saying that when once the forces of truth and ahimsa are set in motion, the speed as they move becomes so accelerated that they take no time in permeating millions. For what is needful is to produce an impression of truth and non-violence upon their hearts and to infect them with faith in the efficacy of these two forces. [If] the satyagrahis are true, it need not take longer than a month or two to bring about this result.

I venture to tender the following advice in order that as suggested above truth and non-violence may permeate the masses with an ever-increasing velocity. Great movements all the world over depend for their success largely upon the mercantile class. Bombay is a great emporium of trade in Hindustan, indeed in the world. With what rapidity would the force of truth move if the merchants of Bombay were to avoid untruth and all the faults flowing from it even though introduction of truth in their business may mean smaller profits or even loss. What greater honour can we pay to Mr. Horniman than by adopting honesty as our watchword in our mercantile transactions? The foundation of our success rests in truth and if it pervades mercantile affairs it will be a plaything to pull down the other citadels of untruth. Feel convinced that it is not difficult for those merchants of Bombay who have regard for Mr. Horniman to act according to the advice tendered by me that if we can impress the Government with the truth in us and by strictly observing the principle of non-violence assure them of their harmlessness, it may not be necessary for us to resume civil disobedience.

M. K. GANDHI

From the printed original preserved in Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Delhi. Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

416. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET[1] NO. 9

BOMBAY,
April 28, 1919[2]

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Friends have been incessantly telling me, a strong feeling prevails that some way ought to be found to give expression to

[1] The original has "Satyagraha Series Leaflet".

[2] This leaflet was printed on the reverse of Leaflet No. 8.

popular feeling in the matter of Mr. Horniman's deportation. The desire is quite natural. But as I have already observed, the fact that we have preserved peace is itself an eloquent demonstration of our feelings. It is my special opinion that such preservation of peace is only possible where satyagraha is going on. I believe that the authorities have also been amazed at the profound peace prevailing throughout the city. And no wonder. The Government know that popular feeling regarding Mr. Horniman runs high. In order that a demonstration of this feeling may not run in undesirable channels, the Government have made elaborate military dispositions. But it is highly creditable to Bombay that the military have had to remain idle. It is a worthy achievement for satyagraha. I have no doubt that if people could thus restrain themselves on all occasions, the nation would occupy a much higher status. No one need assume that we have not been taking or that we shall no longer take measures for getting Mr. Horniman back in our midst. Of all measures, the present calmness is the greatest. Yet I suggest that those who are keen on suspension of business may devote a day's profits to some public activity. But the chief thing I am desirous of in this leaflet is the following: The agitation hitherto adopted in this country is as different from satyagraha as the North Pole is from the South. An appreciation of this fact will of itself remove many of our perplexities. We have seen that there is a difference between satyagraha meetings and others. Satyagraha is based upon religion. In it only truth, calmness, serenity, patience, fearlessness, etc., should alone be seen. A satyagraha strike must differ from the others. I have already quoted an occasion when a satyagraha strike had to be suspended when a different strike was declared. What we expect to attain by acclamations in ordinary movements, we often gain by silence in satyagraha. The human voice can never reach the distance that is covered by the still small voice of conscience. lnstances to show the unique character of satyagraha can easily be multiplied and we ought not to be surprised to see things not going in the orthodox fashion And I therefore beseech all not to be agitated because they see no outward demonstration over Mr. Horniman's deportation. I ask them to be patient and to have full faith that by going along the path of satyagraha, we shall meet our brother all the sooner for it.

M. K. GANDHI

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From the printed original preserved in Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Delhi. Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

417. TELEGRAM TO PUNDALIK

BOMBAY,
April 28, 1919

TO
PUNDALIK
C/O GORAKHPRASAD
MOTIHARI

ACT AND SPEAK ABSOLUTELY PEACEFULLY WITHOUT FLINCHING FROM TRUTH.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5222

418. LETTER TO"THE TIMES OF INDIA"

BOMBAY,
April 28, 1919

TO
THE EDITOR
THE TIMES OF INDIA
SIR,

With reference to my address to the meeting held at Ahmedabad on Monday, the 14th instant, I observe that my remarks therein about the organized manner of violence have been misunderstood and have been applied to the deeds of violence committed elsewhere. My reference, however, was only to the violence of Ahmedabad. This is the language of the translation of the original address which was in Gujarati.

> It seems that the deeds I have complained of (i.e., deeds of violence in Ahmedabad) have been done in an organized manner. There seems to be a definite design about them and I am sure that there must be some educated and clever men behind them.

My statement is too definite to apply to violence in any other part of India. I simply could not refer to other parts as I had then, and in fact even now, no knowledge about them save what one can gather from newspaper scraps. Indeed my remarks did not extend even to Viramgam as I then knew so little about its violence.

M. K. GANDHI

The Times of India, 30-4-1919

419. LETTER TO J. CRERAR

BOMBAY,
April 29, 1919

DEAR MR. CRERAR[1],

It is perhaps due to Government and to my co-workers in the city that I should place before H. E. the very difficult situation that has arisen out of Mr. Horniman's deportation and the suspension of the publication of *The Bombay Chronicle* by reason of the censorship orders. In my humble opinion, Mr. Horniman's deportation is totally unjustifiable and the censorship orders quite unnecessary after his deportation. Fuel has been added to the fire by the order of forfeiture of security. And all this when civil disobedience has been totally suspended ! Herculean efforts are being made by satyagrahis to help in every way they can to restore peace. I might be permitted to say that but for the incessant labours of the satyagrahis, excited demonstrations would certainly have taken place in spite of the military precaution. Complaints ever increasing in volume have been hourly coming to me against my advice not to have any demonstrations regarding the deportation. I do not know that the Satyagraha Sabha will be able altogether to prevent some demonstration. I would therefore respectfully suggest that a statement may be made reassuring the public that the deportation orders will be withdrawn at an early date and that censorship and forfeiture orders may be altogether recalled. I understand that the government are about to effect further arrests in Bombay of noted satyagrahis. I hope that my information is not true. From a public standpoint, any further arrests during the suspension of civil disobedience will be a calamity. I believe that all my efforts to restrain the pent-up fury of the people will be vain, nor shall I be able to hold myself or the movement responsible (morally or otherwise) for any untoward results that may follow any such arrest.

Mrs. Naidu has received a communication from Sind informing her of the state of things there. The arrests that have been made in Karachi seem to have produced a profound impression on the public mind there.

In the interests of peace, I plead for forbearance during suspension of civil disobedience.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6574

[1] Secretary to the Government of Bombay, Judicial Department

420. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET[1] NO. 10

BOMBAY,
April 30, 1919

SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

I have two letters from Mr. Horniman which I expect you must all be anxious to read. The one addressed to me reads:

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

> They are taking me away at last. I have been rushed off without notice. This is only to say *au revoir* and to ask your blessings. God speed you in your work for the Indian people.
>
> I shall do what I can wherever I am.
>
> *Ever yours affectionately,*
>
> B. G. HORNIMAN

That to Mr. Jamnadas is as follows:

MY DEAR JAMNADAS,

> I hope whatever happens, Bombay will remain quiet.
>
> I don't know whether this letter will reach you, but if it does, give my love to everybody. In the meanwhile, I shall work for India wherever I may be.
>
> *Ever yours,*
>
> B. G. HORNIMAN

Both these letters were written by him from s.s. *Takada*. Further news is that his health is all right, that he is being well looked after and that the officers have treated him with all courtesy. The order of deportation means that Mr. Horniman will be absolutely free on reaching England, that there will no restrictions whatsoever on his liberty, and as he is resolved to work for India, wherever he is, it is likely that he will render great service to India while in England. This, however, is but a poor consolation for the people. They would be satisfied only if the order of deportation is withdrawn, and we cannot sit still till we find him back in our midst. We know how we can get him back in our midst. The first and the foremost thing is to observe self-restraint and to learn to keep peace. If we break the peace, we

[1] The original has "Satyagraha Series Leaflet".

shall only be delaying Mr Horniman's return and paining him.

M. K. GANDHI

Printed by M. N. Kulkarni at the Karnatak Printing Press, 434, Thakurdwar, Bombay and published by S. G. Banker, 72, Apollo Street, Fort, Bombay.

From the printed original preserved in Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Delhi. Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

421. LETTER TO SIR STANLEY REED

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY ,
April 30, 1919

DEAR SIR STANLEY REED,

I enclose herewith form of the swadeshi pledge. I am anxious, if I can, to secure English supporters. I am the more so at the present moment in order to emphasize in a concrete manner the fact that swadeshi is being taken up not in any spirit of antagonism or retaliation, but that it is being taken up as a matter of necessity for the well-being of India. I would be delighted if you could see your way to sign the pledge, and if you approve of it, I would like you to secure further English signatures.[1]

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 6575

422. LETTER TO N. P. COWIE

LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
April 30, 1919

DEAR MR. COWIE[2],

I beg to enclose herewith for His Excellency's perusal form of the swadeshi pledge which is now ready for issuing. I would esteem it as an event of great significance if His Excellency could see his way to sign the pledge unless his official position precludes him from doing

[1] For Reed's reply, *vide* Appendix "Sir Stanley Reed's Letter to Gandhiji", 2-5-1919.

[2] Private Secretary to the Governor of Bombay

so. His Excellency's endorsement of swadeshi would at once emphasize the fact that the swadeshi vow is not being taken up in any spirit of hostility, but that it is a long-deferred recognition of an economic necessity.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6576

423. LETTER TO SIND SATYAGRAHIS

BOMBAY,
April 30, 1919

DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I have heard and read about what is going on in Sind. I see that some arrests have been made. If the arrests have been made by reason of satyagraha, nothing can be better or more welcome for satyagrahis than such arrests and satyagrahis so arrested will, if convicted, cheerfully go to prison and those who remain behind will share in their sufferings by observing perfect peace and calmness. If they are arrested for doing anything in violation of satyagraha, i.e., for breach of laws which have also moral sanction, and are proved guilty of them by an impartial tribunal, they will deserve the punishment that may be awarded against them. In either event, therefore, we can have no cause for complaint. I understand, however, that many people are excited over these arrests. To these, I would say that they have not understood the law of satyagraha. We want to employ only truth in all that we say and do. We undertake to refrain from injury to any person or property while acting in accordance with the principles of truth and non-violence. If we find ourselves in trouble those who associate with us have little reason to complain or grumble. The essence of satyagraha is that we never resort to any violence even though there may be great provocation. The struggle is lost the moment we do any violence whatsoever. I, therefore, hope that no matter what prosecutions take place, all will remain quiet and calm.

From a photostat: S.N. 6577

424. LETTER TO KER

[*April, 1919*][1]

DEAR MR. KER[2],

I had hoped to be able to be in Nadiad on Monday, but the critical situation here has detained me in Bombay. Some of the friends from Nadiad have been here and they tell me that those who were involved in the cutting of telegraph wires are ready to make a full confession but they want me to be in Nadiad at the time they do so. I do not know when I shall be free to go over there. I hope, however, that there will be no difficulty about complying with the wishes of the people concerned.

From a photostat: G.N. 8227

[1] From the circumstances referred to in the letter, it appears to have been written in April, 1919.

[2] Collector of Kaira

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

RAB INDRA NATH TAGO RE'S LETTE R TO G ANDHI JI

SHANTI NIKETAN,
April 12, 1919

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

Power in all its forms is irrational,—it is like the horse that drags the carriage blindfolded. The moral element in it is only represented in the man who drives the horse. Passive resistance is a force which is not necessarily moral in itself; it can be used against truth as well as for it. the danger inherent in all force grows stronger when it is likely to gain success, for then it becomes temptation.

I know your teaching is to fight against evil by the help of the good. But such a fight is for heroes and not for men led by impulses of the moment. Evil on one side naturally begets evil on the other, injustice leading to violence and insult to vengefulness. Unfortunately such a force has already been started, and either through panic or through wrath our authorities have shown us the claws whose sure effect is to drive some of us into the secret path of resentment and others into utter demoralization. In this crisis you, as a great leader of men, have stood among us to proclaim your faith in the ideal which you know to be that of India, the ideal which is both against the cowardliness of hidden revenge and the cowed submissiveness of the terror-stricken. You have said, as Lord Buddha has done in his time and for all time to come,—

Akkodhena jine kodham, asadhum sadhuna jine,—" Conquer anger by the power of non-anger and evil by the power of good".

This power of good must prove its truth and strength by its fearlessness, by its refusal to accept any imposition which depends for its success upon its power to produce frightfulness and is not ashamed to use its machines of destruction to terrorize a population completely disarmed. We must know that moral conquest does not consist in success, that failure does not deprive it of its dignity and worth. Those. who believe in spiritual life know that to stand against wrong which has overwhelming material power behind it is victory itself,—it is the victory of the active faith in the ideal in the teeth of evident defeat.

I have always felt, and said accordingly, that the great gift of freedom can never come to a people through charity. We must win it before we can own it. And India's opportunity for winning it will come to her when she can prove that she is

morally superior to the people who rule her by their right of conquest. She must willingly accept her penance of suffering—the suffering which is the crown of the great. Armed with her utter faith in goodness she must stand unabashed before the arrogance that scoffs at the power of spirit.

And you have come to your motherland in the time of her need to remind her of her mission to lead her in the true path of conquest, to purge her present day politics of its feebleness which imagines that it has gained its purpose when it struts in the borrowed feathers of diplomatic dishonesty.

This is why I pray most fervently that nothing that tends to weaken our spiritual freedom may intrude into your marching line, that martyrdom for the cause of truth may never degenerate into/fanaticism for mere verbal forms descending into the self-deception that hides itself behind sacred names.

With these few words for an introduction allow me to offer the following as a poet's contribution to your noble work:

I

Let me hold my head high in this faith that thou art our shelter, that all fear is mean distrust of these.

Fear of man ? But what man is there in this world, what king, King of kings, who is thy rival, who has hold of me for all time and in all time and in all truth?

What power is there in this world to rob me of my freedom ? For do not thy arms reach the captive through the dungeon-walls, bringing unfettered release to the soul?

And must I cling to this body in fear of death, as a miser to his barren treasure? Has not this spirit of mine the eternal call to thy feast of everlasting life?

Let me know that all pain and death are shadows of the moment; that the dark force which sweeps between me and thy truth is but the mist before the sunrise; that thou alone art mine for ever and greater than all pride of strength that dares to mock my manhood with its menace.

II

Give me the supreme courage of love, this is my prayer,—the courage to spare, to do, to suffer at thy will, to leave all thing or be by alone.

Give me the supreme faith of love, this is my prayer,—the faith of the life in death, of the victory in defeat, of the power hidden in the frailness of beauty, of the dignity of pain that accepts hurt, but disdains to return it.

Very sincerely yours,

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

From a photos tat: G.N. 4583

APPENDIX II

SATYAGR AHA LE AFLET N0 . 1

March 1919

EXTR ACTS FROM THE DUTY OF CIVI L DISO BEDIE NCE BY HENR Y THOR EAU (SCHO OLMAS TER OF MASS ACHUS ETTS) DATE D 184 9

I heartily the motto: "That government is best which governs least"; and I should like to see it acted up to more rapidly and systematically. Carried out, it finally amounts to this, which also I believe: "That government is best which governs not at all"; and when men are prepared for it, that will be the kind of government which they will have. Government is at best but an expedient but most governments are Dually, and all governments are sometimes, in-expedient. The objections which have been brought against a standing army, and they are many and weighty and deserve to prevail, may also at last be brought against a standing government. The standing army is only an arm of the standing government. The government itself, which is only the mode which the people have chosen to execute their will, is equally liable to be abused and perverted . . . .

Must the citizen ever for a moment, or in the least degree. resign his conscience to the legislator ? Why has every man a conscience, then ? I think that we should be men first and subject afterwards. It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for the law, so much as for the right. The only obligation which I have a right to assume is to do at any time what I think right. It is truly enough said that a corporation has no conscience; but a corporation of coinscientious men is a corporation with a conscience. Law never made men a whit more just; and, by means of their respect for it, even the well-disposed are daily made the agents of injustice. A common and natural result of an undue respect for law is that you may see a file of soldiers: colonel, captain, corporal, privates, powder-monkeys, and all, marching in admirable order over hill and dale to the wars, against their wills, aye, against their common sense and consciences, which make it very steep marching indeed, and produces a palpitation of the heart. They have no doubt that it is a damnable business in which they are concerned; they are all peaceably inclined. Now, what are they? Men at all ? or small movable forts ammagazing, at the service of some unscrupulous man in power? . . .

The mass of men serve the State thus, not as men mainly but as machines, with their bodies.

They are the standing army, and the militia, gaolers, constables, *posse comitatus,* etc. In most cases there is no free exercise whatever of the judgment or of the moral sense: but they put themselves on a level with wood and earth and stones; and wooden men can perhaps be manufactured that will serve the purpose as well. Such

command no more respect than men of straw or a lump of dirt. They have the same sort of worth only as horses and dogs. Yet such as these even are commonly esteemed good citizens. Others—as most legislators, politicians, lawyers, ministers and office-holders serve the State chiefly with their heads; and as they rarely make any moral distinctions they are as likely to serve the devil, without intending it, as God. A very few—as heroes, patriots, martyrs, reformers in the great sense and men — serve the State with their consciences also, and so necessarily resist it for the most part; and they are commonly treated as enemies by it.

* * *

All men recognize the right of revolution; that is, the right to refuse allegiance to, and to resist, the government, when its tyranny or its inefficiency are great and unendurable.

* * *

All machines have their friction; and possibly this does enough good to counterbalance the evil. At any rate, it is a great evil to make a stir about it. But when the friction comes to have its machine, and oppression and robbery are organized, I say, let us not have such a machine any longer.

What is the price current of an honest man and patriot today? They hesitate, and they regret, and sometimes they petition; but they do nothing in earnest and with effect. They will wait, well disposed for others to remedy the evil, that they may no longer have it to regret. At most, they give only a cheap vote, and a feeble countenance and Godspeed, to the right, as it goes by them. There are nine hundred and ninety-nine patrons of virtue to one virtuous man. But it is easier to deal with the real possessor of a thing than with the temporary guardian of it....

Even voting for the right is doing nothing for it. It is only expressing to men feebly your desire that it should prevail. A wise man will not leave the right to the mercy of chance.

O for a man who is a man, and, as my neighbour says, has a bone in his back which you cannot pass your hand through! Our statistics are at fault: the population has been returned too large. How many men are there to a square thousand miles in this country? Hardly one . . .

* * *

Action from principle, the perception anfl the performance of right, changes things and relations; it is essentially revolutionary, and does not consist wholly with anything which was. It not only divides states and churches; it divides families; aye, it divides the *individual*, separating the diabolical in him from the divine.

Unjust laws exist; shall we be content to obey them, or shall we endeavour to amend them, and obey them until we have succeeded, or shall owe trans-gress them at once?

* * *

They think that, if they should resist, the remedy would be worse than the evil. But it is the fault of the government itself that the remedy is worse than the evil. It makes it worse. Why is it not more apt to anticipate and provide for reform ?

Why does it cry and resist before it is hurt? Why does it not encourage its citizens to be on the alert to point out its faults and do better than it would have them? Why does it always crucify Christ, and excommunicate Coper-nicus and Luther, and pronounce Washington and Franklin rebels?

* * *

If the injustice is part of the necessary friction of the machine of government, let it go, let it go; perchance it will wear smooth—certainly the machine will wear out. If the injustice has a spring, or a pulley, or a rope or a crank, exclusively for itself, then perhaps you may consider whether the remedy will not be worse than the evil; but if it is of such a nature that it requires you to be the agent of injustice to another, then, I say, break the law.

As for adopting the ways which the State has provided for remedying the evil, I know not of such ways. They take too much time, and a man's life will be gone. I have other affairs to attend to. I came into this world, not chiefly to make this a good place to live in, but to live in it, be it good or bad. A man has not everything to do, but something; and because he cannot do *everything* it is not necessary that he should do *something* wrong. It is not my business to be petitioning the Governor or the Legislature any more than it is theirs to petition me: and if they should not hear my petition, what should I do then? But in this case the State has provided no way: its very Constitution is the evil. This may seem to be harsh and stubborn and unconciliatory; but it is to treat with the utmost kindness and consideration the only spirit that can appreciate or deserves it. So is all change for the better, like birth and death, which convulse the body.

* * *

I meet this American Government, or its representative, the State Government, directly, and face to face, once a year—no more—in the person of its tax-gatherer; this is the only mode in which a man situated as I am necessarily meets it; and it then says distinctly, "Recognize me"; and the simplest, the most effectual, and, in the present posture of affairs, the indispensablest mode of treating with it on this head, of expressing your little satisfaction with and love for it, is to deny it then.

I know this well, that if one thousand, if one hundred, if ten men who whom I could name,—if *ten honest men only—aye, if one honest man is* (were to be) locked up in the country gaol therefor, it would be the abolition of slavery in America. For it matters not how small the beginning may seem to be; what is once well done is done

for ever....

Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison. The proper place today, the only place which (Massachusetts) has provided for her freer and less desponding spirits, is in her prisons, to be put out and locked out of the State by her own act, as they have already put themselves out by their principles. It is there that the fugitive slave, and the Mexican prisoner on parole, and the Indian come to plead the wrongs of his race, should find them, on that separate but more free and honourable ground, where the State places those who are not *with* her but against her—the only house in a slave State in which a free man can abide with honour. If any think that their influence would be lost there, and their voices no longer affect the ear of the State that they would not be as an enemy within its walls, they do not know by how much truth is stronger than error nor how much more eloquently and effectively he can combat injustice who has experienced a little in his own person....

If a thousand men were not to pay their tax bills this year that would not be a violent and bloody measure, as it would be to pay them and enable the State to commit violence and shed innocent blood. This is, in fact, the definition of a peaceable Revolution, if any such is possible. If the tax-gatherer or any other public officer asks me as one has done: "But what shall I do", my answer: "if you really wish to do anything resign your office." When the subject has refused allegiance and the officer has resigned his office, then the Revolution is accomplished. But even suppose blood should flow. Is there not, a sort of bloodshed when the conscience is wounded ? Through this wound a man's real manhood and immortality flow out and he bleeds to an everlasting death. I see this blood flowing now.

I have contemplated the imprisonment of the offender rather than the seizure of his goods, though both will serve the same purpose,—because they who assert the purest right, and consequently are most dangerous to a corrupt state, commonly have not spent much time in accumulating property....

I have paid no poll-tax for six years. I was put into a gaol once on this account for one night; and as I stood considering the walls of solid stones, two or three feet thick, the door of wood and iron, a foot thick, and the iron grating which strained the light, I could not help being struck with the foolishness of that institution which treated me as if I were men flesh and blood and bones, to be locked up. I wondered that it should have concluded at length that this was the best use it could put me to, and had never thought to avail itself of my services in some way. I saw that, if there was a wall of stone between me and my townsmen, there was a still more difficult one to climb or break through before they could get to be as free as I was. I did not for a moment feel confined, and the walls seemed a great waste of stone and mortar. I felt as if I alone of all my townsmen had paid my tax. They plainly

did not know how to treat me, but behaved like persons who are underbred. In every threat and in every compliment there was blunder; for they thought that my chief desire was to stand on the other side of that stone wall. I could not but smile to see how industriously they locked the door on my meditations, which followed them out again without let or hindrance and *they* were really all that was dangerous. As they could not reach me, they had resolved to punish my body; just as boys, if they cannot come at some person against whom they have a spite, will abuse his dog. I saw that the state was half-witted, that it was timid as a lone woman with her silver spoons, and that it did not know its friends from its foes, and I lost all my remaining respect for it, and pitied it.

* * *

It is for no particular item in the tax bill that I refuse to pay it. I simply wish to refuse allegiance to the State, to withdraw and stand aloof from it effectually. I do not care to trace the courses of my dollar, if I could, till it buys a man or a musket to shoot with—the dollar is innocent—but I am concerned to trace the effects of my allegiance. In fact, I quietly declare war with the State, after my fashion, though I will still make what use and get what advantage of her I can, as is usual in such cases.

If others pay the tax which is demanded of me from a sympathy with the State, they do but what they have already done in their own case, or rather they abet injustice to a greater extent than the State requires. If they pay the tax from a mistaken interest in the individual taxed, to save his property, or prevent his going to gaol, it is because they have not considered wisely how far they let their private feelings interfere with the public good.

This, then is my position at present. But one cannot be too much on his guard in such a case, lest his action be biased by obstinacy or an undue regard for the opinions of men. Let him see that he does only what belongs to himself and to the hour.

* * *

They who know of no purer sources of truth, who have traced up its stream no higher, stand, and wisely stand, by the Bible, and Constitution, and drink at it there with reverence and humility; but they who behold where it comes trickling into this lake or that pool, gird up their loins once more, and continue their pilgrimage towards its fountainhead.

* * *

The authority of Government, even such as I am willing to submit to —for I will cheerfully obey those who know and can do better than I, and in many things even those who neither know nor can do well,—is still an impure one: to be strictly

just, it must have the sanction and consent of the governed. It can have no pure right over my person and property, but what I concede to it. The progress from an absolute to a limited monarchy, from a limited monarchy to a democracy, is a progress towards a true respect for the individual. Even the Chinese philosopher was wise enough to regard the individual as the basis of the empire. Is a democracy, such as we know it, the last improvement possible in Government? Is it not possible to take a step further towards recognizing and organizing the rights of man ? There will never be a really free and enlightened State until the State comes to recognize the individual as a higher and independent power, from which all its own power and authority are derived, and treats him accordingly. I please myself with imagining a State at last which can afford to be just to all men, and to treat the individual with respect as a neighbour; which even would not think it inconsistent with its own repose if a few were to live aloof from it, not meddling with it, nor embraced by it, who fulfilled all the duties of neighbours and fellow-men. A state which bore this kind of fruit, and suffered it to drop off as fast as it ripened would prepare the way for a still more perfect and glorious state, which also I have imagined, but not yet anywhere seen.

N. A. I.: Home: Politi cal—B: Februa ry 1920: No. 373

APPENDIX III

QUE STION S ON SATYAGR AHA

[Before *April 17, 1919*][1]

SIR ,

We fail to understand fully some points in the statement that has been recently published in your name and would feel obliged if you would kindly elucidate them to us.

(l) In your statement you say "Those who *join* the satyagraha *demons-tration* are bound at all hazards to refrain from violence, not to throw stones or *in any way whatsoever*, to injure anybody." We should like to know if in those who "join the satyagraha demonstration" you include the non-satyagrahi sympathizers of the satyagrahis ? If so, as is evident, are they bound to act as satyagrahis even when violence is started by the other side ? We should not be understood to be advocating or even tolerating the use of violence by our sympathizers. What we should like to be explained is whether there should or should not be any difference between a satyagrahi and a non-satyagrahi when provocation comes from the side opposite. Non-satyagrahis may not begin violence and much though we should wish to see them exercise perfect restraint at the provocation or violence received at the hands of

[1] *Vide* "Satyagraha Leaflet No- 3", 11-4-1919.

the authorities. At any rate how can satyagrahis be held responsible for the feelings of a non-satyagrahi under the circumstances ? There should be a difference between the responsibilities of the two. Your statement does not contemplate any.

(2) Further on you say "I have been asked whether a satyagrahi is liable for the results that follow from the movement. I have replied that they are." What we should be explained in this connection is what results can be said to follow from the satyagraha. Will the unlawful or even violent conduct on the part of non-satyagrahis sympathizing with us or opposing us due to the tactlessness, offensive attitude or violence of authorities or the aggressive attitude of our opponents unattended by any retaliation on our part constitute "results" contemplated to "follow from the movement"? If so the question arises: is it reasonable to hold the satyagrahis responsible for the results of the actions of the authorities against unprovoking non-satyagrahis or for the results of the actions of the opponents of satyagraha to themselves?

(3) Proceeding further you say "If we cannot conduct this movement without the slightest violence *on our side*...." Does our include non-satyagrahi sympathizers of satyagrahis ? If so, questions put in Nos. (I) and (2) arise {again. Further, does "from our side" include unsatyagrahi conduct on the part of non-satyagrahi in consequence of circumstances mentioned in Nos. (I) and (2) ?

(4) In continuation of No. (3) you suggest "the movement might have to be abandoned". We should like to lay special emphasis and all possible force on this as to us it will mean complete suicide—moral and political to leave the movement at this stage. We could and did contemplate all this at the start and real remedy in our opinion is not to drop the movement but postpone the breaking of laws for sometime and in the mean time educate and train the public to conduct the satyagraha movement properly.

(5) "But if those who are not . . . sinful injury" Nos. (1), (2) and (3) apply with equal force to this also and it appears hart to visit the sins of the opponent of satyagraha on the heads of the satyagrahis.

From a photos tat: S.N. 6546

APPENDIX IV

SIR STANLEY REED'S LETTER TO GANDHI JI

Apropos of the Swadeshi movement, the following letter addressed to Mr. Gandhi, by Sir Stanley Reed on the eve of his departure to England, will be of interest. (The italics are ours).

BOMBAY,
2nd May 1919

MY DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Your letter of April 30th. It would be to me the greatest possible pleasure to co-operate whole-heartedly with you in any of your work, but on the swadeshi issue I should like to explain my position.

I have been from the day of my arrival in India, a convinced and strong supporter of everything connected with the swadeshi movement. Long before the Congress and the political leaders generally took more than a lukewarm interest in the industrial movement, I wed such influence as l possessed to press in season and out of season the importance of our industrial and commercial movement. *The Times of India* has fought consistently against the cotton excise duties, and also for fiscal freedom for India. Such time as I can spare from my newspaper work is devoted to the furtherance of Indian enterprise; *personally, I never buy anything which is made outside India if it can be purchased in India. I wear a good deal more swadeshi clothing than many of Indian friends.*

But I am convinced that the commercial and industrial future of India can be secured only if it is mainly on an economic basis. We have to make the demand for Indian goods became they are the best at the money. To do that, we have to persuade the educated classes that commerce and industry are just as patriotic and dignified as the professions and politics. *We have to press for the highest standard of commercial morality in India*.

I am confident of the future. Apart from the great stirring in India, we have the natural protection which accrues from command of most of the raw materials of manufacture on the spot. If we can keep alive the present educated interest in industrial development and if we can coax into circulation the rupees which now go into the ground, I am convinced that our shady progress is assured.

Perhaps I am mistaking your ideal, that ideal is to prevent the increase of the factory system and to conserve and develop the cottage industries of the country. With that ideal I am in most complete sympathy. *None can survey factory conditions, either here or in the West, and be anything but dismayed at their ugliness.* But here

again I am convinced that true time solution is the organization of the cottage industries on a co-operative basis with cheap capital and co-operative distribution. It has been my privilege to assist in some small measure in this work as one of the original directors of the Central Co-operative Bank.

If, therefore, I cannot take the Swadeshi [Vow], I know that you will accept my assurance that it is not because I lack sympathy with the swadeshi movement, for my sympathy with and interest in it are acute. But I must work for it in my own way and if the *handloom weavers want any assistance in the way of capital, my best efforts will be used to secure it.*

Yours very sincerely,

STANLEY REED

Young India. 11-6-1919

APPENDIX V

NOTE BY DISTRICT MAGISTRATE, AHMEDABAD, ON INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI

[After *May 11, 1919*]

Mr. Gandhi states that he has not forbidden the members of his Ashram to give evidence as regards identification of rioters. Such as have asked his advice have been advised by him to follow their own conscience; but that his opinion was that those who entirely followed the rule of the Ashram could not consistently give evidence incriminating others. He had also warned them of the risk each one ran of incurring the penalty of the law for refusing to give evidence. He does not consider this a rule of life which everyone would be justified in adopting; it is only justified on those who whilst refusing to give evidence would strain every nerve honestly to induce the guilty to make full confession before the authorities, and who on principle refrain from invoking the assistance of the law in their own cases. This view of Mr. Gandhi's is of long standing—in fact, goes back to a period before 1897 when he first put it into practice in a manner which became known to the public (in South Africa).

Mr. Gandhi has therefore not passed any order as regards the giving of evidence. Nor is the refusal to give evidence a fundamental rule of the Ashram. Supposing a member were to give evidence, he would not be turned out. He would not even reason with him. It is a matter which is left entirely to the conscience of the individual and Mr. Gandhi himself arrived at this point of view after considerable mental struggle and effort (i e., before 1897). It was one of the reasons why he threw over his practice as a Barrister in 1908. Apart from the delicacy of the question (which is one for the individual's conscience), Mr. Gandhi realizes the danger of indiscriminate acceptance of this view by those who have not attained the complete

discipline of satyagraha.

Mr. Gandhi expressly states that his opinion in this case is in no way due to any feeling of delicacy in the sense that he was directly or indirectly responsible for the fury of the mob. It is due to a general principle, the corollary of the doctrine of ahimsa. His desire is that the guilty should be punished but that they should undergo their punishment voluntarily.

Mr. Gandhi admits that this principle leads to the result that there is one rule for himself and his followers and another for the rest of the world, but accepts this as inevitable.

N. A. I: Home: Politi cal—A: August 1919: Nos. 261-72 & K. W.

1. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET NO. 11

May 1, 1919

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Letters continue to pour in containing complaints about the so-called inactivity regarding Mr. Horniman's deportation. Most of these letters are anonymous. One of them states that it does not matter even if violence be the result of our holding large meetings, etc. It adds that we shall gain nothing without violence and that without it we shall not be able to bring Mr. Horniman back to India.

It is simple enough to give a reply to the foregoing along the lines of satyagraha: If violence be the condition of Mr. Horniman's return to India, then satyagrahis have to be content with separation. But there is absolutely no fear of any such result from non-violence. We can certainly bring about his return by satyagraha. Indeed we can hasten it by satyagraha alone—satyagraha consists at times in civil disobedience and other times in civil obedience. It consists at times in declaring hartal, or holding large public meetings or arranging processions and other times in refraining from any one or all of these things. Satyagrahis may not do a single thing that would bring about or encourage violence. At the present moment people are in a ferment, they are angry and it is likely that large meetings, processions, hartals may increase excitement and even end in violence. Both the people and the police are liable to err and both may have to suffer for the mistake of either. It is therefore clear that satyagrahis ought to prevent such untoward results by every means at their disposal. Therein lies their satyagraha. The nation can only rise higher by reason of the effort to be put forth, the discipline to be undergone and the soul-force to be exerted for the attainment of such an end. When the people have disciplined themselves to remain calm, to curb anger, to handle processions with self-restraint, to bring about hartals without threat or violence, when volunteers are so trained that the people listen to and act according to their instructions, we are in a position to hold meetings, declare hartals and arrange processions. It is enough to see that the just demands of a people so trained become irresistible. The present activity is directed towards the attainment of that end and I urge all to read this leaflet and those who are able to help, to go to the Satyagraha Sabha offices and have their names registered as helpers.

Now let us for a moment examine, not from the satyagraha but from the ordinary standpoint the proposition that we can by violence bring about Mr. Horniman's early return or accomplish our other objects. I believe that what is true and possible in other countries is not necessarily true and possible in Hindustan. India has from time immemorial received a different training. In India one cannot recall a time when the whole people were engaged in the use of brute force. It is my belief that India deliberately abandoned universal use of brute-force. We have noted the results of violence in the Punjab. Ahmedabad is still suffering. We shall hereafter be able to measure the full dreadful effect of violence. One such effect is the suspension of civil disobedience. We ought, therefore, to consider as erroneous the belief that by violence we can hasten Mr. Horniman's return or gain other objects.

In one of the letters received by me it is argued that satyagrahis have no right to advise others to refrain from demonstrations, etc., even if they choose to do so. But we observe at the present moment in Hindustan a vast number of people desirous of taking part in all satyagraha activities other than civil disobedience. This state of things causes as much anxiety as pleasure. It throws a tremendous responsibility upon satyagrahis. One of them is this: If the people are interested in satyagraha and are desirous of experiencing its wonderful results, satyagrahis have to so act that the people may become trained to participate in the movement in strict accordance with its principles and its fundamental principle is adherence to truth and non-violence to person or property and when the people have accepted this principle the whole world will have a demonstration of the efficacy of satyagraha.

M. K. GANDHI

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From the printed original preserved in Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Delhi. Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

2. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET NO. 12

May 2, 1919

WHEN IS SATYAGRAHA GOING TO BE RESUMED ?

"When is satyagraha going to be resumed?" is the question many have been asking me. There are two answers. One is that satyagraha has not at all ceased. As long as we practise truth, and ask others to do so, so long satyagraha can never be said to have ceased. And if all practise truth, and refrain from violence to person and property, we would immediately get what we want. But when all are not prepared to do so, when satyagrahis are only a handful, then we have to devise other methods deducible from satyagraha. One such method is *Civil Disobedience*. I have already explained the reason why this civil disobedience has been for the time being suspended. As long as we know that there is every likelihood, bordering on certainty, of rioting and violence following civil disobedience, so long disobedience of laws cannot be regarded as civil disobedience, but it is disobedience that is thoughtless, uncivil, and devoid of truth. Satyagrahis may never commit such disobedience. The resumption of civil disobedience can, however, be hastened by the satyagrahis completely fulfilling their duty. My confidence in satyagrahis has led me to assume that we shall be fitted for resuming civil disobedience in about two months, i.e., if the Rowlatt legislation is not withdrawn in the meantime, we may resume civil disobedience by the beginning of July next. In provisionally fixing this period, I am guided by the following considerations: One of them is that we shall have by that time spread our message throughout the country, viz., that during the pendency of civil disobedience, no one, under cover of satyagraha, or the pretence of helping it, should resort to rioting or violence. It may be hoped that the people being convinced that the true interest of the country will be served by acting in accordance with the message will preserve peace. And peace thus voluntarily sustained will materially contribute towards India's progress. But it is possible that India may not understand satyagraha to this extent. In that case, there is one more hope of the non-recurrence of violence, though the condition upon which the hope is based is humiliating for us. It is open to the satyagrahis, however, to avail of this condition. Indeed, it becomes their duty to resume satyagraha under such conditions. The military

dispositions that are now going on will naturally ensure non-recurrence of violence that is so detrimental to the country. The recent outbreaks were all so sudden that the Government were not prepared to cope with them there and then. But the Government arrangements are quite likely to be completed in two months' time and breach of public peace will then be well-nigh impossible, and therefore also conscious or unconscious abuse of satyagraha. Under such a state of things, the satyagrahis may, without any fear of disturbance, commit civil disobedience and thereby demonstrate that not violence but satyagraha alone can help us to secure justice.

M. K. GANDHI

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3. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET NO. 13

May 3, 1919

SATYAGRAHA MOVEMENT

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

A proper understanding of two things in satyagraha enables one to solve without effort many doubts. One of them is that a satyagrahi never does anything out of fear from without. He should fear only God. By bearing this thing in mind, we shall clearly see why we have suspended civil disobedience, why over Mr. Horniman's deportation we have not declared hartal, not held Iarge meetings and not arranged processions. In so refraining we have not been actuated, if we are true satyagrahis, by fear, but purely by a sense of duty. The more a satyagrahi fulfils his duty as such, the nearer he brings victory. The other thing to be remembered and which is at the present moment perhaps of greater importance than the first is that a satyagrahi never desires to reach the goal by harbouring or increasing ill will or hatred against his opponent. He will look upon him even as a friend and yet ever resist the wrong done by him without bearing malice towards him. By such conduct worthy of a satyagrahi, causes conducing to enmity will decrease and both parties will acknowledge and avoid mistakes. We know the Rowlatt legislation to be altogether bad, but

that is no reason for harbouring ill will against the Government. The harbouring of it will in no way enable us the better to assess that evil legislation, or to advance the movement against it. On the contrary, such ill will can only damage the movement. For, obsessed by it, we refuse to understand or weigh the opponent's argument. We thus disable ourselves from producing the necessary impression upon the opponent and to that extent retard victory if we do not make it impossible. We are aware that the questions regarding Turkey, etc., have caused greater hurt to our Mahomedan brethren than has been caused to Hindus, Mahomedans and others by the Rowlatt legislation. But they cannot solve their difficulties by ill will. These difficulties can only be solved by proper deliberation, by properly framing and publishing their demands and by firm adherence thereto. So doing, they can enlist the help of the Hindus, Parsis, Christians, in fact, the whole world, and thus make their demands irresistible. If we harbour anger or ill will against the Government on account of the Rowlatt legislation, or Islamic or other questions, and therefore resort to violence, we shall be powerless even to consolidate Indian opinion, let alone the world's opinion. The gulf between the English and ourselves will widen and we shall be no nearer the goal. Victory attained by violence is tantamount to a defeat, for it is momentary. Then there is increase of ill will between both the parties and each prepares to give battle to the other. There is no such untoward end to satyagraha. A satyagrahi by reason of suffering for his principles draws towards himself universal sympathy and even melts the heart of the so-called enemy. Had we not erred in Ahmedabad and Viramgam, the history of the movement would have been written differently. There would have been no increase of ill will between the English and ourselves, no military dispositions such as we see about us and yet our determination to get rid of the Rowlatt legislation would have remained just as firm, the movement against it would have gone much further forward, probably by this time it might have been crowned with success, resulting at the same time in a bridging of the gulf between the English and ourselves. It is, however, never too late to mend. We can retrace our steps. The retracing consists in curbing anger and ill will against the English and therefore refraining from violence. As a matter of fact, the mistake in passing the Rowlatt legislation is not of the English nation, nor of the English in India. It is purely of those in authority. Nations are often ignorant of what is done in their names. The powers that be do not make deliberate

mistakes, they act as they think fit. That fact, however, does not cause the people any the less harm and therefore, whilst we harbour no ill will against those in authority, we spare no pains in taking effective steps for mending the mistake, but regarding it only as such and no more, we refrain from violence and secure its reversal by self-suffering.

M. K. GANDHI

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4. LETTER TO J. M. WILSON

May 3, 1919

I have read the Bihar Planters' Association Memorial[1] to the Government. Your Association has done itself and me a cruel injustice. But I will not answer the charge brought by your Association. Time is on my side and it will show you the error of a judgment hastily pronounced.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 6578

5. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET NO. 14

May 4, 1919

SATYAGRAHA IS IMPOSSIBLE SO LONG AS THERE IS ILL WILL

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

We have seen in our last leaflet that the actions of a satyagrahi should not be prompted by fear from without but by the voice from within, and that a satyagrahi should not think of attaining his objects by harbouring ill will towards his opponent but should win him over by his friendliness. I see that many hesitate to accept the second proposition. They argue: "How can we help being angry with wrong-doers? It is against human nature to do otherwise. How can we

[1] From J. M. Wilson, secretary, Bihar Planters' Association, to the secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, Simla, dated 26-4-1919, criticizing Gandhiji's activities. S.N. 6578

separate the wrong from the wrong-doer? How is it possible to direct our anger against the wrong without directing it against the wrongdoer?" A father, far from getting angry with his son, often expresses his disapproval of wrong action by taking suffering on his own person. Only on such mutual conduct is continuance of friendly relations between father and son possible. These relations cease with the ceasing of such conduct. It is our daily lot to go through these experiences and hence the proverb, "Let quarrels perish." We can live in peace and be free from our fearful position only if we apply the domestic law to our relations with the Government. The doubt need not be raised whether the domestic law can at all be extended to our relations with the Government, and whether the law of love does not for its operation require reciprocity. In satyagraha, both the parties need not be satyagrahis. Where both the parties are satyagrahis, there is no play for satyagraha, no opportunity for the test of love. Insistence on truth can come into play only when one party practises untruth or injustice. Only then can love be tested. True friendship is put to the test only when one party disregards the obligations of friendship. We stand to lose everything when we are angry against the Government. Mutual distrust and mutual ill will are thereby augmented. But if we act without in the least being angry with the Government, but also without being cowed down by their armed force, and without submitting to what we believe to be injustice, injustice would of itself be removed and we would easily attain the equality which is our goal. This equality does not depend on our power to answer their brute force with brute force, but on our ability to stand our ground without fear of brute force, and real fearlessness is not possible without love. A clear victory for satyagraha is impossible so long as there is ill will. But those who believe themselves to be weak are incapable of loving. Let then our first act every morning be to make the following resolve for the day: "I shall not fear anyone on earth. I shall fear only God; I shall not bear ill will towards anyone. I shall not submit to injustice from anyone. I shall conquer untruth by truth and in resisting untruth I shall put up with all suffering."

M. K. GANDHI

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6. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

BOMBAY,
[*May 4, 1919*]

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I cannot get the time to send you a book—a mere letter gives me no satisfaction. I feel so confident that your view of vows can be shown to be wrong. Your interpretation of the action of Rama shows that you have not understood it properly. And what is the meaning of "Swean" in the passage from the Bible quoted by you? May not your interpretation of that passage also be at fault? To me the life of Jesus was one simple vow from which no earthly power could oust him. Your two vows mentioned in your letter were parody. They were no subjects for taking vows over. Why should a man hesitate to stand before his Maker and say: "Please, Sir, with your help I shall never tell an untruth"? But I can't stand before my Maker and say, "I shall never forsake this sty or that." I may not be clear enough, but you will admit I am frank enough, and how can Love help being that ?

Did you ascertain why the flogging was administered? I should like to know.

As you know *The* [*Bombay*] *Chronicle* has suspended publication by reason of the order of pre-censorship. *Young India* will therefore be turned into a bi-weekly. Later it may become a daily. It is to be published under my supervision. Can you find time to write for it? You may write on swadeshi, Hindu-Muslim unity, satyagraha, Rowlatt legislation.

We cannot accept the Rowlatt Bill even under the reservation suggested by you, namely, that it is not to be enforced without the previous sanction of the Legislative Council. Our objection is not merely that it may be misapplied, but we object also to the arbitrary procedure laid down in it for the trial of offences enumerated in it. I would not let even a supposed anarchist be tried summarily or under a special procedural subversion of judicial checks and certainly not under any ordinary law giving extraordinary powers. Exceptional powers have been reserved for exceptional situations. Executive authority cannot be allowed to deal with exceptional situations in anticipation.

Do please remain by the side of Shraddhanandji as long as it is necessary. And when you are free, I would so like you to come

down, so that we may review that situation.

Yes, in the midst of all the carnage, prosecutions, martial law, military dispositions, I find the law of love answering fully and being abundantly proved.

With love to you and Swamiji,

Ever yours,

MOHAN

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

7. LETTER TO MAULANA ABDUL BARI

[BOMBAY,
May 4, 1919]

MAULANA ABDUL BARI[1],

I think there is a lack of consolidated Mahomedan opinion on Islamic questions. Everybody feels keenly and nobody comes forward with a reasoned and representative statement. I wish there were one by the ulema. It would not matter a bit if it was presented in Urdu or Arabic. An accurate translation can be easily made. I immensely like your idea of a mixed Hindu-Mahomedan commission to investigate causes of discord among the two communities and to suggest remedies leading to permanent unity. I think however that this is not the proper time for it. The energy of everybody is and must be concentrated upon the Rowlatt legislation, Islamic questions and Reforms. Probably we shall come much closer together in the process of getting these questions solved to the satisfaction of the whole of India and, at the end of a settlement of these questions, a commission such as you have suggested can do much effective work.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Nationalist Muslim divine of Lucknow who took active part in the Khilafat movement

8. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET NO. 15

May 5, 1919

SATYAGRAHA HARTAL NEXT SUNDAY

FASTING FOR 24 HOURS AND RELIGIOUS DEVOTION IN EVERY HOME

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Bombay has borne with great calmness the separation of Mr. Horniman. The long-sustained calmness observed by Bombay under unendurable circumstances had demonstrated its capacity for self-restraint. But the discussions at the meetings of the Satyagraha Sabha and reports of popular discussions show that the minds of the people are by no means appeased. They are desirous of publicly expressing their grief and feelings in some way or other. The desire is and must be irrepressible. The people will never forget what Mr. Horni-man has done for them. He has given them a new life, a new hope and there is no doubt that they have remained calm in the hope that an occasion would be provided for them to mark their pure affection for Mr. Horniman. The Satyagraha Sabha last night decided after mature deliberation that next Sunday, 11th instant, should be the day of observance of hartal, fasting for 24 hours reckoning from previous evening, and private religious devotion in every home.

The first suggestion, i.e., hartal, is applicable to the city of Bombay. In times of unrest, such as we are passing through, it does not seem proper to declare hartal in other places. Not to observe it in other places is for the people thereof an act of self restraint and in the city of Bombay, too, it is to be confined to independent business men. Those who are employed in public or private offices are in no way to suspend business unless they obtain leave. There should be no pressure exerted upon anybody, no force used against anyone with a view to inducing suspension. For suspension brought about by force is no suspension, for a mind acted upon by force continues to contemplate the act from which it is restrained by force. We are bound not only not to interfere with a man who wants to open a shop or a *ghariwalla* who wishes to ply for hire, but to afford him every protection. I hope that both men and women in Bombay and elsewhere who have no religious or medical objection will observe the fast and devote the day to religious contemplation and try to

understand the true nature of satyagraha by recalling the illustrations of satyagraha from their own scriptures. We shall consider hereafter the efficacy of fasting as an aid to national progress, to the development of national ideals and to the attainment of restraint over our passions such as hunger, etc. For the time being, it is enough that we observe an absolutely voluntary satyagraha hartal next Sunday in the city of Bombay; we observe a fast everywhere and engage in private religious devotion in a spirit of calmness and love. We shall thereby add to our honour and speed Mr. Horniman's return.

M. K. GANDHI

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9. LETTER TO J. L. MAFFEY

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
May 5, I919

DEAR MR. MAFFEY,

I thank you for your two letters and your telegram. Your assurance has given me the greatest relief. It saddens me to hear that the Viceroy had to give up his holiday. I hope, however, that the strain has not proved too much for his health.

I enclose herewith some of my recent leaflets. You will glance through them only if you have a few moments to spare.

I observe that Moulvi Rafiuddin Ahmed has suggested that some definite reassuring announcement be made regarding Islamic questions. What is an armed peace worth if it is not followed up by real contentment and you will never have real contentment unless Mahomedan sentiment is conciliated and Rowlatt legislation with drawn. Probably you know that Mahomedan women and children too take the liveliest interest in the questions of Khilafat, Palestine and the Holy Mecca.

Regarding the Rowlatt legislation, it may be argued that agitators have poisoned the public mind, but whether such be the case or not, the fact is that the public thoroughly distrust that legislation and how

can you withstand emphatically expressed public opinion? What you see in India today is not a revolutionary plot. I am not prepared to say that there are no men entertaining wild dreams of revolution. But I do say that the large bodies of men who have taken part in the acts of violence have simply in a wild and furious manner given vent to their pentup feelings which is a mad protest but nothing more. Bolshevism has not yet entered India. But I would like you to consider whether you can prevent its entry or prevent mad acts of violence without endorsing the doctrine of satyagraha. I ask you to believe with me that it is not so much the military dispositions as satyagraha that is the restraining force. I think, it is commonly admitted that violence could not have been avoided in spite of the elaborate military precautions if the restraining and sobering influence of satyagraha had not been there when Mr. Horniman was deported.

Now I come to a less thorny topic, probably a topic on which we may meet. I enclose herewith the form containing the swadeshi vow. What a great thing it would be if the Viceroy would take the vow! You will see that Englishmen can take it just as easily as Indians. Do please submit it to H. E. when you think he has time to go through it. Even if the Viceroy cannot see his way to take the vow, but if he approves of the scheme, I would like you to let me have a separate letter for publication.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6589

10. LETTER TO J. A. GUIDER

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
May 5, 1919

DEAR MR. GUIDER[1],

Dame Rumour reports you to have been displeased with your staff for their inability to trace the educated men behind the tragedy at Ahmedabad, although I was able to do so. The same lady further has it that you interpret "educated Indians" to mean only *Vakils*, Barristers, Doctors, etc. I am, therefore, being torn to pieces by friends

[1] District Magistrate, Ahmedabad

and others for having created much mischief and caused needless suffering by use of unguarded language. Naturally, I have to take the consequences of my words as I have of my deeds. I do not know how far the rumours reported to me are true, but I would like to observe that the word I have used in the original is *bhanela*, and *bhanela* by no means means only a "highly educated" Indian. For me, *bhanela* means all those who have received any education whatsoever, whether vernacular or English. For instance, the anonymous author of an inflammatory vernacular poem which I have lately seen I would undoubtedly consider to be *bhanela*, i.e., educated and it is exactly in that sense that I have used the word "educated" in the translation of my speech. As a matter of fact, if I had received evidence as to the complicity of highly educated men, I would certainly have not hesitated to make use of language to show that I meant such men. My attention was directed yesterday to Mr. Pratt's speech at Ahmedabad wherein he referred to the complicity of educated leaders. I take it that he had not my speech in mind when he made the remark.

I may also add that "by organized manner" and "design", I mean this: Some educated man or men believing in the efficacy of violence for securing redress saw the temper of the mob on Friday, immediately seized the situation and directed operations through gang leaders and that is exactly what I know from evidence before me happened on that awful day. You can see therefore that it is possible for these men to remain absolutely concealed.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6590

11. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

BOMBAY,
May 5, 1919

CHI. MAGANLAL,[1]

I have sent Jivan[2] for Ba and Rami[3]. It contains two bottles being specially sent by Bhai Jugatram. They have plenty of *Jivan* there. It is good if Prabhudas also takes it. Take it from Ba. Give it to Rami and Prabhudas in the morning but not more than one spoon. The correct

[1] The letter is in a different hand but the subscription is by Gandhiji.
[2] A kind of Ayurvedic tonic
[3] Harilal Gandhi's daughter, later married to Kunvarji Khetsi Parekh

procedure is: after brushing the teeth and cleaning the mouth one should lick one spoon of *Jivan* and then drink a glass of milk. However, my purpose of writing this letter is different. I was reminded of *Jivan* and so began the letter with it.[1]

Swadeshi movement will gather great force but the tragedy is that we are not ready for it. After talking to Sir Fazalbhai, I am convinced of one thing, i.e., the biggest swadeshi movement lies in producing indigenous cloth. And so, I have come back to our original position. We should start spinning cotton and weaving clothes in every home. My advice to Santok is that she should go to Vijapur and return after learning to spin yarn. Whatever hand spun yarn is there, get it woven soon. Get as much cloth as you can, woven in Ahmedabad from the mill-spun yarn. *Dakshini Maharastrian* sarees are woven there but in those, mainly imported yarn and imported silk are used. Cannot we get them made from the indigenous yarn? Avantikabehn has told me that even if they are thick, Maharastrian women will wear them. We are not at all prepared to make clothes for women—so bad is our plight. Think about this and do whatever you can. Show this letter to Kaka and others. For me, you must get the *dhotis* made from yarn spun by you, in time. The work of spinning yarn must be taken up in the Ashram. I do not think I will be able to come there for sometime yet.

How is your health?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original S.N. 32930

12. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

May 5, 1919

I got your letter of *Chaitra Vad* 10. My health has begun to feel the strain now. There is much too heavy a pressure on the brain. God will keep this body going as long as He wants work from it. I have not read *The Englishman* and I do not read it generally. Yes, I think it will be good if you keep sending me cuttings from there.

Mrs. Beast is in a pitiable condition. She is completely at a loss what course to adopt.

How could you ask whether the Government would really

[1] The remaining portion of this letter is already reproduced in Vol. "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 5-5-1919.

disallow [*sic*] the Rowlatt Bill?[1] How can the Bill remain [on the Statute-book] while satyagrahis are alive? Personally, I believe that, if no violence breaks out, the Bills will be repealed in no more than a few months. I do not say this from inside knowledge, but from my unshakable faith in satyagraha.

I did not stop Pragji. I have left him to himself entirely. It seems he has now decided on going to Madras. He is taking Parvati with him. I did not stand in his way in this either.

I do not like your idea of going to South Africa. My own wish is that all of you, having called yourselves satyagrahis, should content yourselves with lower profits and do business only in swadeshi goods.

The children are quite happy. I did not notice that they were particularly homesick for Rajkot or Calcutta. The thing to be most happy about is that the climate has suited them. Rami seems to be improving gradually. I have sent some *jeevan*[2] of the best quality for her from here.

Madhavdas told me of your financial difficulties. He has accepted my advice. It was that you should go forward without monetary help from anyone, that is what I would have you do. Medh, a man of sudden impulses that he is, is naturally apt to do things without thinking and enter into too many forward deals; you think nothing of risks and want to get rich quickly. Pragji cannot resist the temptation of joining a public movement. In these circumstances, you will find yourself in trouble before you know where you are. Hence it would always be my wish that you did not depend on other people's money for your ventures. Moreover, they may send me out of the country or imprison me at any time and I take it that you will not be able to continue in business then. How can you, in this situation, invest others' money? In a country where injustice prevails, there is no dignity except in poverty. It is impossible, in the prevailing condition, to amass wealth without being a party, directly or indirectly, to injustice.

Blessings from,

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

[1] Of the two Rowlatt Bills, one was withdrawn earlier and the second passed into an Act on March 18, 1919.

[2] Ayurvedic tonic preparation

13. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET NO. 16

May 6, 1919

SUNDAY'S HARTAL : ITS RELIGIOUS SPIRIT

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

To declare a hartal is no small matter. It requires strong reasons to support it. Let us therefore examine the justification for it. The citizens of Bombay are impatient to give some outward evidence of their deep affection for Mr. Horniman. They can provide it in a striking manner by means of hartal. Everybody's feelings will be tested thereby. Moreover, hartal is an ancient Indian institution for expressing national sorrow and we can therefore demonstrate through hartal our grief over the deportation and hartal is the best method of marking our strong disapproval of the action of the Government. It is a means, more powerful than monster meetings, of expressing national opinion. Thus, we serve three purposes by hartal and all of them are so great that we do not expose ourselves to the charge of exaggeration in declaring hartal.

This much is clear that none of the purposes above named will be served if suspension of business is brought about through fear of public opprobrium or physical pressure. If suspension were to be brought about by terrorism and if Mr. Horniman came to know [of] it, he could not but be displeased and grieved by the knowledge, and such artificial hartal would fail to produce any effect upon the Government. Hartal forcibly brought about cannot be considered satyagrahi hartal. In anything satyagrahi, there should be purity of motive, means and end. I, therefore, hope that no man or woman who is unwilling to suspend business will in any way be interfered with, but that he or she will be guaranteed protection from any harm whatsoever. *I would far rather wish that people did not suspend business on Sunday in the city of Bombay and that the organizers were exposed to ridicule than that force was used upon a single person in order to make him suspend business*. In order to avoid all risk of commotion in Bombay on Sunday, the idea of holding public meetings has been discountenanced and all have been advised to remain indoors. As all satyagraha activity should be guided by the religious spirit, I have suggested that we should fast for twenty-four hours and devote the day to religious contemplation, and it is to be hoped that all the members of families including children and servants

will take part in the religious observance. Hindus may have the *Bhagavad Gita* read to them. It takes four hours to read through it with clear pronunciation and other Hindu religious books might be read in addition [to] or in place of it. The Mahomedans and others may have their own scriptures read to them. It will be a proper way of spending the day to read the stories of great satyagrahis such as Prahlad, Harishchandra, Mirabai, Imams Hasan and Hoosein, Socrates and others. It will be opportune also to explain to family gatherings Mr. Horniman's title to our affection. The chief thing to be remembered is that we may not fritter away next Sunday in playing cards, *chowpat*, gambling or in sheer laziness, but that it should be so spent as to make us better men and women for national service. Better-placed and well-to-do families will, I hope, invite such of their neighbours as may be poor, solitary or ignorant, to participate in the religious devotion. A brotherly spirit is cultivated not by words but only by deeds.

Mr. Motilal Dahyabhai Zaveri of Kalbadevi Road has just dropped in and informed me that before the news of the declaration of hartal next Sunday, he had issued invitations for a wedding party on that day. He also said there were many such parties to be given on the same day. Mr. Motilal was most anxious that he and his friends should take part in the observance. I venture to advise that so far as the religious part of the wedding ceremonial was concerned, it should be gone through without disturbance, but that dinner parties and other rejoicings might be postponed to Monday. His patriotic affection for Mr. Horniman was such that he immediately accepted the advice and I tender it for the acceptance of those who may be similarly situated.

M. K. GANDHI

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From the printed original preserved in Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Delhi. Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

14. LETTER TO F. C. GRIFFITH

BOMBAY,
May 6, 1919

DEAR MR. GRIFFITH,

I hope you have been glancing at the leaflets being published from day to day. I want particularly however to draw your attention to yesterday's leaflet declaring hartal for next Sunday. I am hoping that all will go well.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6592

15. LETTER TO NIRMALA

May 6, 1919

CHI. NIRMALA[1],

I have not started the real fight yet, but it will start by and by. On Sunday all are to fast. I wish you also do. Horniman, for whose sake the fast is being undertaken, is a man of many qualities and has rendered great service to India.

I cannot help you now to carry out improvements in your houses. It is for Chi. Shamaldas[2] and Chi. Kaku to do so. I have renounced all claim on the property.

What can be dearer to me than that my revered sister[3] and you both live in the Ashram and help me in my work? She has had such a happy experience there; everyone used to carry out every wish of hers and treat her with respect. On my part, I used to be reminded of mother's and father's faces every morning as I looked upon her and felt myself sanctified. I want you both to go over to the Ashram as early as possible and it is my earnest desire that you especially pick up weaving and spinning well. I look upon it as pious and sacred work. Giving of food and clothes in charity is considered excellent gifts

[1] Widow of Gokuldas, a nephew of Gandhiji
[2] Son of Lakshmidas, Gandhiji's elder brother
[3] Raliatbehn

among us. It is my conviction that any man or woman who produces cloth for the people will have earned the highest *punya*[1].

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

16. SPEECH AT MEETING IN BOMBAY[2]

May 6, 1919

FRIENDS,

I think we need not wait for anyone. You may tell others who come what I shall tell you.

The step we are taking on Sunday is a very important one and involves a great responsibility. Bombay has maintained the utmost patience during all this time and I should abuse it no longer. I have had some anonymous letters in which the writers, forgetting their manners, have made harsh attacks on me for doing nothing so far about Mr. Horniman. This has not hurt me in the least; on the contrary, I have been able to see people's love for Mr. Horniman and I felt that I should provide expression to their feelings. On the night following the day of Horniman's arrest, there was a strong move to call for a strike on the next day. Peace was maintained, however, thanks to the strenuous efforts of some. I told those people that I would give my approval when I was sure of one thing. You must be reading my leaflets. In these, I have said nothing to fill anyone with frustration. We have done much during the last ten days. In maintaining patience all these days, we have exercised great self-control and Bombay deserves congratulations on that. Some even level the charge that Indians have started no agitation because Mr. Horniman was an Englishman. But those who make such charges should know that, if Bombay feels for Mr. Horniman, it will certainly show its feelings at the right time. How can India ever forget a man who has always been for freedom for everyone? And the time which I said would come has now come, and I repeat that the step we are to take on Sunday is a very important one. It will be a great test for us. In anything we do now we should consider how we may

[1] Spiritual merit

[2] The meeting, held in the Morarji Gokuldas Market Hall, was called by Gandhiji to explain how people should observe Sunday, May 11, in honour of Horniman.

preserve peace. I am confident that no one who honours Mr. Horniman will do anything improper. If we force anyone to close his shop, we can have no regard for Mr. Horniman. Rather, everyone should stop work of his own accord. Then alone can we say that the man honours Mr. Horniman. To show that we honour him, we should see that our message reaches every corner in the city. In honour of Mr. Horniman, every community should stop work on Sunday of its own free will. No pressure should be put upon anyone. I am afraid, all the time, that some people, in the blindness of their love, will use coercion. If they do, they will have done no honour to Mr. Horniman. The right thing would be that cabmen themselves refuse, of their own free will, to put the cabs on the roads. Even the poorest shopkeeper should forgo his earnings on that day and keep his shop closed. We must not stop the trams or force any passengers to come out.

What I would say is that on Sunday we stop work ourselves and tell others that they should do the same spontaneously. Yes, we may explain things to those who may not have heard Mr. Horniman's name, and tell them: "Friend, have you heard of Horniman? He kept alive the spirit of patriotism in the people of Bombay and India and was a sincere friend of the country. He has been deported by the Government and his paper suspended, for putting it under censorship is as good as suspending it. Moreover, his security of Rs. 2,000/- has also been forfeited. If you respect a man such as he was, you should voluntarily stop your work today." If these words have no effect on the man, we need not force him to suspend work, for we shall gain nothing if he does so out of fear.

Another thing we should do is to observe a fast on that day. About this, I intend to issue a leaflet tomorrow. Go through it carefully, and also explain it to those who do not understand it. I do not want to spend time over it just now. I also advise you to read the other leaflets I have recently issued. If we spend the whole day in devotions, anger cannot enter into us. I have suggested to the Hindus that they should read and reflect over the holy *Gita* on that day. Those who cannot follow it should take others' help to understand it. People can gain much from a simple book like the *Gita*. Quite a few persons have given their interpretations of the *Gita*, all different from one another. I have also read it and pondered over it, and have discovered a truth in it. I want to place it before you some day. Those who are keen enough on reading it will certainly do so. If they cannot

do so themselves, they will have a learned Brahmin to read it to them. If there are any who say that they cannot understand it themselves, and that they are too poor to secure the services of a learned man, others who are in a position to help them should do so, invite them to their homes and offer to read the *Gita* with them. When such a sense of brotherhood has developed in you, no one dare say a word against India. If you would spend Sunday wholly in devotions, read the *Gita* attentively. It often happens that, while one reads from a holy book, the rest talk. This Sunday, however, attend to the reading carefully. The eldest one in the home should watch whether those who have assembled for the hearing listen carefully. If you do not listen so, you will be able to do no good to Mr. Horniman, nor will it appear that you honour him.

Everyone should know the duty he owes, should ask himself what, having been born in India, he ought to do for her and how. What, having been born in Bombay, did he owe to her? To what end was he a satyagrahi? What was his duty as one? And so on.

If all the people in Bombay thus spend the coming Sunday in devotions, how much can we not profit? I am sure none of you believes that the Government has passed laws like the Rowlatt Acts on purpose. If anyone does, he is mistaken. We have given no cause to the Government to adopt such a mistaken course. How, then, can we believe anything of the kind?

When a great idea permeates the atmosphere, it produces a powerful effect. I have observed this myself in the course of the eight years' struggle in South Africa. A miracle took place among the people of that continent. A few men having gone to jail, the others too abandoned work of their own accord and chose to go to jail. You know the result. People had this idealism in them, and it is what is needed in India. It is satyagrahis who will create such powerful idealism, though I admit that they, too, are not all they should be. Even so, no matter how imperfect we are, God will help us if we have love and our motives are of the best. Our deficiency will be made good by the people.

And so, this coming Sunday is to be spent in devotions and perfect peace. Many people ask how they can suppress their anger and refrain from violence. To be sure, in the prevailing atmosphere, it is likely that many will feel that way. However, anyone who exercises self-restraint and keeps ever thinking of the law of non-violence will

soon have his doubt vanish and his views will change. This Sunday, we should cover Bombay with glory and control the people, for all are not of the same mind. If anyone tries to force a shop to close down or stop a tram, we should humbly approach him and say: "Friend, you surely honour Horniman; if you do, we forbid you, in his name, to act in this manner." We should thus work as policemen and preserve peace. The volunteers, too, will need to do their best. It is your duty to explain this to those of them who have not been able to attend this meeting[1].

That was my desire, but I don't have courage enough. Our masses have not yet been disciplined and trained. The control we are able to exercise in this meeting would not be possible when dealing with millions of human beings. There may be people who think in other ways and like to create trouble. For the present, therefore, we would do well to give up this idea.

It has become easy these days to hold large meetings in Bombay, for there is plenty of enthusiasm among the people. But we need not have such meetings at present. Formerly, people followed the leaders. Now, if any leader is found half-hearted, the people will immediately criticize him and tell him that he had better lead or that otherwise they would go ahead without caring for him.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 11-5-1919

17. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET NO. 17

May 7, 1919

SUNDAY'S HARTAL AND FASTING

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

By hartal, fasting and religious devotion on Sunday next, the people propose to demonstrate to the Government in terms of satyagraha that it is not possible for them to bring about true contentment by force of arms. So long as the Rowlatt legislation is not withdrawn, so long as the Government continue to suppress men like Mr. Horniman who carry on innocent agitations against such acts of the

[1] Gandhiji then asked the audience if they had any doubts. What follows is in reply to a question whether they would not do better to assemble, after bath, in a temple or at Chowpatty.

Government, not only is true contentment impossible, but discontent must increase. All the world over a true peace depends not upon gunpowder but upon pure justice. When Government perpetrate injustice and fortify it by the use of arms, such acts are a sign of anger and they add injustice to injustice. If people also become angry by reason of such acts on the part of the Government, they resort to violence and the result is bad for both, mutual ill will increases. But whenever people regard particular acts of the Government as unjust and express their strong disapproval by self-suffering, the Government cannot help granting redress. This is the way of satyagraha and the people of Bombay will have an opportunity on Sunday next of giving expression in a clean manner to such disapproval.

A hartal brought about voluntarily and without pressure is a powerful means of showing popular disapproval, but fasting is even more so. When people fast in a religious spirit and thus demonstrate their grief before God, it receives a certain response. Hardest hearts are impressed by it. Fasting is regarded by all religions as a great discipline. Those who voluntarily fast become gentle and purified by it. A pure fast is a very powerful prayer. It is no small thing for lakhs of people voluntarily to abstain from food and such a fast is a satyagrahi fast. It ennobles individuals and nations. In it there should be no intention of exercising undue pressure upon the Government. But we do observe that like so many other good acts, this one of fasting too is sometimes abused. In India we often see beggars threatening to fast, fasting, or pretending to fast, until they receive what they ask for. This is *duragrahi* fasting and the person so fasting degrades himself and it will be the proper thing to let such people fast. It is false kindness to give anything under pressure of such fasting. If it were to be otherwise, fasting may be resorted to even for securing unlawful demands. Where it is a question of determining the justice or otherwise of a particular act, there is no room for any other force but that of reason regulated by the voice of conscience. The coming fast is thus in no way to be interpreted as designed to put pressure upon the Government.

M. K. GANDHI

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From the printed original preserved in Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Delhi. Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

18. APPEAL TO CITIZENS OF BOMBAY

BOMBAY,
May 7, 1919

In honour of Mr. Horniman on next Sunday the 11th instant,

1. The citizens should observe hartal.
2. All should fast for 24 hours.
3. People should remain indoors and pass their time in religious devotion.

BUT

1. There should be no pressure put upon anyone regarding suspension of business.
2. Tram-cars and other vehicles should not be impeded.
3. Passengers should in no way be interfered with.
4. There should be no large crowds in the streets.
5. There should be no street demonstrations.
6. Police orders and volunteers' instructions should be implicitly carried out.

In perfect preservation of peace consists real honour to Mr. Horniman and on it depends his speedy return.

Young India, 7-5-1919

19. LETTER TO ROW

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
May 7, 1919

DEAR MR. ROW,

I was delighted to receive your note about the late Sergeant Fraser. Will you kindly give me some more particulars about the deceased? Was he an orphan? Was he the only son? What were his parents? How did Mrs. Row come to adopt the deceased? What was his age when he was killed? From your name I infer that you are an Indian. Is Mrs. Row also Indian? I trust, you will excuse these questions. I am simply anxious to have the full history of the

deceased, if only for me to keep as a treasure.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6595

20. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET NO. 18

May 8, 1919

SUNDAY'S HARTAL

TRUE MEANING OF "BHAGAVAD GITA'S" TEACHINGS

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Even *The Times of India*, which is ordinarily regarded as the impartial newspaper, has seen fit to ridicule the forthcoming hartal and to distrust the religious character of fasting. It is our duty patiently to endure the ridicule and distrust. We can turn both into repentance by our own action, i.e., by observing the hartal in a satyagrahi spirit and by true religious devotion. But the more grievous criticism of this well-known newspaper consists in misinterpreting our calmness and inferring from it that we have felt no grief over Mr. Horniman's separation. By observing full hartal on Sunday in a quiet manner and by devoting the day to sincere religious contem-plation, we can demonstrate the mistake made by *The Times of India*.

I shall now endeavour to consider in all humility a doubt raised by some Hindu friends regarding the meaning of the *Bhagavad Gita*. They say that in the *Bhagavad Gita* Sri Krishna has encouraged Arjuna to slay his relations and they therefore argue that there is warrant in that work for violence and that there is no satyagraha in it. Now the *Bhagavad Gita* is not a historical work, it is a great religious book, summing up the teaching of all religions. The poet has seized the occasion of the war between the Pandavas and the Kauravas on the field of Kurukshetra for drawing attention to the war going on in our bodies between the forces of Good (Pandavas) and the forces of Evil (Kauravas) and has shown that the latter should be destroyed and there should be no remissness in carrying on the battle against the forces of Evil, mistaking them through ignorance for forces of Good.

[1] The reply to this received from Mrs. E. C. Row read: "My husband has made the greatest mistake of his life if he wrote to you....We are no Indians."

In Islam, Christianity, Judaism, it is a war between God and Satan, in Zoroastrianism between Aurmazd and Ahriman. To confuse the description of this universally acknowledged spiritual war with a momentary world strife is to call holy unholy. We, who are saturated with the teachings of the *Bhagavad Gita* but who do not pretend to any special spiritual qualifications, do not draw out sword against our relations whenever they perpetrate injustice but we win them over by our affection for them. If the physical interpretation alluded to of the *Bhagavad Gita* be correct, we sin against it in not inflicting physical punishment upon our relatives whom we consider to have done us injustice. Everywhere in that Divine Song, we note the following advice given to Arjuna: *Fight without anger, conquer the two great enemies, desire and anger, be the same to friend and foe; physical objects cause pleasure and pain, they are fleeting; endure them.* That one cannot strike down an adversary without anger is universal experience. Only an Arujna who destroys the devil within him can live without attachment. It was Ramdas brought up in the teaching of the *Bhagavad Gita* who not only endured the lashes of a wrongdoer but actually produced for him a Jagir. Narsinh Mehta, the first poet of Gujarat and the prince among *bhaktas*, was nurtured in the *Bhagavad Gita* teaching. He conquered his enemies only by love and has given through one single poem of matchless beauty the great text of their conduct to his fellow-*Vaishnavas*. That encouragement from violence can be deduced from the *Bhagavad Gita* demonstrates the deadliness of *Kaliyuga*. It is only too true that we often find an echo of our sentiments in what we read and see. If it is true that God made men in his own image, it is equally true that man makes God also in his own image. I have found nothing but love in every page of the *Gita* and I hope and pray that everyone will have similar experience of Sunday.

M. K. GANDHI

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From the printed original preserved in Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Delhi. Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

21. LETTER TO O. S. GHATE

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
May 8, 1919

DEAR MR. GHATE,

I have seen the Brothers' representation to the Government. If it has not been yet despatched, I hope it won't be at all. It lacks dignity, it is unrestrained in language and is an overstatement of the case. The Mahomedan claim includes pre-war questions. Surely, it is an excessive demand. What I would like them to prepare is a statement of the minimum of demands. Everyone of the friends with whom I discussed the question of hijra rejected the idea and so did the Maulana Saheb. What I should so much like is an authoritative reasoned statement of the minimum demands of Islam. I would like our friends' views on the developments in Afghanistan.[1] A time may have come when the greatest wisdom and coolness of judgment could alone pull us out of the fire.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6598

22. LETTER T0 ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

BOMBAY,
Vaishakh Sud 9, 1975 [*May 8, 1919*]

REVERED ANASUYABEHN,

I have made you very unhappy but what can I do? My love always expresses itself in this manner. That I suffered more before I made you unhappy is the only solace I can offer you. Bhai Shankerlal had told me that you were not well. Bhai Indulal, however, brings good news today. Come over for a visit if you are well and not needed there.

The women's meeting on swadeshi2 was very well organized. I missed you very much on that day.

It seems everything is going on smoothly.

[1] The Afghan War
[2] *Ibid*

This letter is my first attempt, after many days, to write in my own hand.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32815

23. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, BOMBAY

May 8, 1919

DEAR SISTERS,

Not being well today, I shall talk to you sitting. Those among you who are educated will have read about the swadeshi vow in the papers. The one thing I have been saying over and over again ever since my return from South Africa is this: So long as women in India do not take equal part with men in the affairs of the world and in religious and political matters, we shall not see India's star rising. To take an illustration, men who suffer from paralysis of one side of the body can do no work. Similarly, if women do not share in men's tasks, the country is bound to remain in a wretched state. What conditions can we expect in a country where the women remain ignorant of the joys and sorrows of men?

I feel tempted to talk about all these matters, but I do not have the time to do so. I want you to make your full contribution to the cause about which I shall speak today. All I mean is that it is essential that women make their contribution to the developments taking place in the country. This requires no knowledge of letters. It is not true that, without such knowledge, one cannot take part in national work. Women work in their homes well enough. I have to work among farmers and weavers. We can inspire more enthusiasm in them than in the educated classes. In the satyagraha in Kheda district, if men worked, women helped as much. Had they not done so, had they yielded to fear and held back the men, where would we have been?

The swadeshi vow, too, cannot be kept fully if women do not help. Men alone will be able to do nothing in the matter. They can have no control over the children; that is the women's sphere. To look after children, to dress them, is the mother's duty and, therefore, it is necessary that women should be fired with the spirit of swadeshi. So long as that does not happen, men will not be in a position to take the vow. Woman is the mistress of the home and lives in royal style; if this

does not change, what can man do? Women's clothing costs more than men's.

India has to part with 60 crores of rupees [annually] to foreign countries. Four crores are wasted in this manner on silk and the remaining 56 crores on cotton fabrics. India has a population of 30 crores and this means that every person throws away, on an average, Rs. 2/- [annually] over foreign cloth. Further, there are three crores in India who get only one meal a day. Formerly, our mothers and sisters used to spin in the homes and that helped preserve India's self-respect and honour. That work is now taken over by the mills. Outside the Bombay Presidency, women are now observing the swadeshi vow. In Madras, Bengal and other parts, cloth for women is made by Indian weavers. Here, however, women generally use expensive foreign cloth.

It is men who are responsible for the idea that women must have English cloth. It is they who tell women about such cloth and suggest that it is good to wear. This has given the women their wrong idea, but we must correct it now. We ought not to allow our own art to perish, running after foreign art. All this has had unhappy consequences and we must help India to get rid of them. However bad the climate and soil of our country, we do not run away from it. We should use cloth made in our country, however coarse it may be. The eye will get used to it by and by. It is the soul we should care to make beautiful. We need not go after external adornment.

Our country, moreover, is miserably poor. We have frequent famines. The plague and cholera are ever with us. If the country were really rich, there would be some propriety in our living in style. At present, however, when there are some who do not even get enough clothing, this ostentation is not in good taste. Bear in mind that, if we do not act in this manner now, we shall be compelled by circumstances to do so. Posterity will feel sad for us and the country will grow poorer. If you do not want the country to remain poor, observe the swadeshi vow, and wear swadeshi cloth, however coarse it be. There was a time when a piece of Dacca muslin could be packed into a little box and yet served to cover one's nakedness well enough. Where do we find such craftsmen and such weavers? That muslin was not made on any machine. How is it that they have lost the skill now? They have been utterly ruined. The fine variety of foreign cloth which we get these days is cloth only in name. It does not serve to cover one's limbs. If everyone takes the vow of swadeshi, we shall be able

again to produce the same kind of muslin. A large number of men are ruled by women. This is my own experience, as it is that of many others. But, then, I want the women to have tenacity of purpose, a religious disposition and love for India. At the time of the war in South Africa, the Boer women showed a spirit such as no other women have ever done. My present demand is briefly stated. It is that you throw away your stocks of foreign cloth or make them over to others who may not have taken the vow of swadeshi. I should like all women to follow this course. It will sound harsh if I say that all women should take the vow this very day. But you may think of taking the vow from tomorrow, and I pray to God that He may so incline you.[1]

You can take the vow a day later, but make up your mind today. It would be too long if you were to wait till all the dresses had worn out. One or two saris may be excused, but how if you have heaps of clothes? You ought to make this sacrifice for the progress of the country. What would you have done if all those clothes had been stolen? Well, think that they are stolen. This sacrifice must be made for the country. If, retaining your clothes, you are likely to feel rather sore about the thing and to feel tempted to wear them, hand them over to me. I shall put them to good use. Those who find it impossible to take this vow may take the vow of partial swadeshi but, as far as possible, they should keep the vow in full.

[From Gujarati]

Kheda Vartaman, 21-5-1919

24. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET NO. 19

May 9, 1919

BOMBAY WILL BE TESTED ON SUNDAY

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Bombay will be tested on Sunday. To observe hartal, fast [and] religious contemplation are easy enough for sensible people. Bombay will prove her sensibility on Sunday. In England, more especially in

[1] Gandhiji then asked the women in the audience if they had any questions to ask. Thereupon, one of them suggested that, the foreign cloth with them being expensive, they should keep it and resolve not to buy any more in future. Another said that they needed eight days' time to have new dresses made. What follows is Gandhiji's reply.

Scotland, business is suspended every Sunday for religious reasons. Trains too are running most sparingly. Even in India, public offices are closed on Sundays. There would, therefore, generally be no occasion for anxiety over hartal. There is just a little anxiety about our hartal because of the present unrest and because ours is intended to be an expression of our grief and respect. From the news received from different quarters and from the impression gathered from meetings that have been held to explain the reasons for the Sunday observance, there is every reason to hope that Bombay will do credit to herself and India by observing perfect calm on Sunday.

It is to be wished that in every mosque, church and temple and in every assembly, visitors will be told to suspend business and advised to fast, and devote the day to religious contemplation and observe peace.

I have stated in the first leaflet[1] on the hartal that employees may only suspend work on receiving permission from their employers. But those who are working in hospitals, or in connection with the sanitation of the town, dock labourers handling the grain to be despatched to famine areas ought not to suspend work at all. In a satyagrahi hartal, we are bound to give the first place to public weal, more especially the requirements of the poor. And whenwe use the sense of discrimination fully in all our activities, our difficulties will disappear even as the mist before the morning sun.

M. K. GANDHI

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From the printed original preserved in Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Delhi. Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

25. LETTER TO F. C. GRIFFITH

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
May 9, 1919

DEAR MR. GRIFFITH,

With reference to the mill-hands, I understand that they provision themselves on the pay day. This they did on the 3rd instant. I understand, too, that some of them even resented the idea of having

[1] No. 15

any shops kept open for them. I can however understand that if shops were open, many of them might make odd purchases. But I see more danger in advising all shopkeepers in the north of Bombay to keep their shops open than in leaving the present position undisturbed. I am, therefore, not doing anything in this matter beyond taking all possible precautions to avoid untowardness.

I received your message late last night, for which I thank you. I am issuing a leaflet of which I send you copy herewith. You will see that I have given full effect to H. E.'s desire.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 6599

26. LETTER TO DR. POWELL

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
May 9, 1919

DEAR DR. POWELL[1],

I thank you for your note[2]. I have only seen Anantram Radhakishen for once. He has not presented me with any car whatsoever. I have absolutely no knowledge about his possessions. I have no money with me belonging to him. I do not think he has gone mad through satyagraha. But it is quite likely that we have more than one mad man on our list.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 6600

[1] Police Surgeon, Bombay
[2] Of May 9

27. SPEECH ON KHILAFAT, BOMBAY[1]

May 9, 1919

What the Chairman has said about me is true, for I have, ever since the days of my youth, had a longing to see differences between Hindus and Mahomedans obliterated. When I was in South Africa, I came in close touch with Muslim brethren. I went there in connection with a Mahomedan case and there I was able to learn their habits, thoughts and aspirations. In 1914, I sailed from South Africa, reaching London on the 6th of August, i.e., two days after the declaration of war between England and Germany. Soon after, I read a series of articles in the [London] *Times*, speculating on Turkey's choice. I found the Mahomedans residing in London equally agitated. One morning we read the news that Turkey had joined Germany. I had no leisure then to study the Turkish question and pronounce judgement on the Turkish action, I simply prayed that India might be saved from the turmoil. Having had to explain to the Mahomedan friends in South Africa the events of the Tripolitan war and having understood their sentiments, I had no difficulty in gauging Mahomedan sentiment over the Turkish choice. Theirs became a much difficult position. I landed next year in India with ideas of Hindu-Mahomedan unity and the Turkish question and I felt when I landed that I would like to assist in securing a proper solution of these questions. There are two things to which I am devoting my life—permanent unity between Hindus and Mahomedans, and satyagraha; to satyagraha probably more, for it covers a much wider field. It is an all-embracing movement and if we accept the law of satyagraha, unity will come of itself. The question that I have to answer this evening is: How can I help in having a Mahomedan question emerging out of the late war properly solved? After my arrival in India, I began to find out good Mahomedan leaders. My desire was satisfied when I reached

[1] Delivered in Gujarati at a special meeting of the Anjuman Ziaul Islam under the presidentship of M. T. Kadarbhai, Barrister-at-law, to consider the question of the Caliphate. A large number of Muslims was present. Gandhiji, Jamnadas Dwarkadas and Shankarlal Banker were among those specially invited. Kadarbhai, in introducing Gandhiji to the. meeting, said that the latter had throughout his life tried to see that the differences between the Hindus and the Mahomedans were obliterated, and that his passive resistance struggle in South Africa was principally for the Mahomedans, because three-fourths of the Indian commerce was in the hands of the Mahomedans and that he had done in one day what years of British rule could not achieve in the union of the Hindus and the Mahomedans.

Delhi, and found the Brothers Ali, whom I had the privilege of knowing before. It was a question of love at first sight between us. When I met Dr. Ansari, the circle of Mahomedan friends widened and at last it even included Maulana Abdul Bari of Lucknow. I have discussed the Mahomedan question with all these friends and many other Mahomedans throughout India and I feel that this question is the greatest of all, greater even than that of the repeal of the Rowlatt legislation; for it affects the religious susceptibilities of millions of Mahomedans. It is a remarkable fact, but it is true that Mahomedan women and children too are interested in this question. There is at the present moment suspicion, deep-rooted in the minds of the Mahomedans, regarding the intentions of the Imperial Government on this question. Though the Viceroy is not unmindful of the gravity of the situation, I do feel that a declaration of British policy is necessary in order to conciliate the Mahomedan sentiment.

So far as I am aware, there are three points involved: first, the one regarding the Khilaphate and the possession of Turkey; second, regarding Holy Mecca and Medina; third, regarding Palestine. Briefly put, your contention is that the pre-war status should be restored. With the Mahomedan countrymen, the temporal and spiritual power go hand in hand. I can, therefore, understand the Mahomedan sentiment against any dismemberment of Turkey. But it has been stated by *The Times of India* amongst others that there is as yet no authoritative and representative statement of the Mahomedan claim. You and you alone can mend this omission. There should be a calm, dispassionate and reasoned statement of the Mahomedan claim. In my humble opinion, you should set forth your minimum demands in such a way as to appeal to any impartial student of such matters. Time is running fast and unless you make a move at once in the desired direction, it may be too late to do anything; for the League of Nations is making rapid progress, as rapid as it is possible to make in view of world interests that are to be affected by its deliberations. And when you have drawn up the statement of your claim, you have to see how to enforce it.

It may be asked why I, a Hindu, bother my head about the Mahomedan question. The answer is that as you are my neighbours and my countrymen, it is my duty to share your sorrows. I cannot talk about Hindu-Mahomedan unity and fail in giving effect to the idea when the test has come. And you know that I touched the Mahomedan question in my published letter addressed to H. E. the

Viceroy immediately after the war conference that was held at Delhi.[1] Since then I have never failed, whenever the occasion has arisen, to submit my views to the proper quarters. It now remains for me to consider how your claim may be enforced. Naturally the chosen method is to make representations to the Government. Sometimes the Government do not see eye to eye with us. What are we to do under such circumstances? If we had the franchise and responsible Government, we could by our vote turn that Government out of power. But in the absence of any such effective methods of making our will felt, what are we to do? When people have become enraged against governments for a deliberate failure to carry out their wishes, they have resorted to violence and I know that many consider that violence is the only remedy open to them when ordinary agitation has failed. This is an age-long remedy. I consider it to be barbarous and I have endeavoured to place before the people and the Government another remedy which does away with violence in any shape or form and is infinitely more successful than the latter. I feel we are not justified in resorting to violence for asserting our rights. It is noble by far to diethan to kill. Had it not been for my talks with Barisahib, I would have hesitated to talk to you on a subject which is deeply religious. But he assured me that there was warrant enough for satyagraha in the Holy Koran. He agreed with the interpretation of the Koran to the effect that whilst violence under certain well-defined circumstances is permissible, self-restraint is dearer to God than violence, and that is the law of love. That is satyagraha—violence is a concession to human weakness, satyagraha is an obligation. Even from a practical standpoint, it is easy enough to see that violence can do no good and can only do infinite harm, as we have seen in Ahmedabad and Viramgam. You will have further illustration on Sunday. I have advised a satyagraha hartal accompanied by fasting and prayer. I hope that you will all join the great demonstration of honour, sorrow and protest—honour to an Englishman who has served India so well and so faithfully, sorrow that he has been deported and protest against the ill-advised action of the Government. These are common causes among us and I hope that you will take your full share in this demonstration. Its success lies in its being absolutely peaceful and voluntary and if we are that we need neither the police nor the military. When satyagraha becomes the accepted

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy" 29-4-1918.

creed of India, the aeroplanes will cease to frighten us and when we provide no occasion for the use of machine-guns at Colaba and elsewhere, they would be overlaid with earth, grass will grow upon them and our children will play upon them.

Maulvi Abdul Raoof then moved the following resolution:

Resolved that the Viceroy and Governor-General of India be requested to announce a British policy in concert with the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for India and the Prime Minister, which may be laid before the Peace Conference through the British representatives whose object would be (I) to settle the question of the Khalifate in accordance with the wishes of the Muslims in India; (2) to entrust the guardianship of the holy places, such as Mecca, Medina, Jerusalem, Najaf, Kerbala, Kaxomaina, Baghdad, etc., to the Khalifatul Mussalmin; (3) to desist from the proposed dismemberment of the Turkish Empire; (4) that Constantinople, which has been the seat of the Khalifate for four centuries and which is predominantly Muslim by faith and Turkish by race must remain the capital of the Turkish Empire. That the fulfilment of the above questions in their entirety will bring about the restoration of normal feelings among the Muslims of India, and remove the tremendous discontent and unrest that exist, and that therefore this meeting earnestly prays that His Majesty's Britannic Government will cause a declaration to be issued at an early date in India, bearing on the question, as such declarat on will bring forth an era of peace, calmness and tranquillity so very essential to the good and orderly governance of India.

The resolution was carried.

Young India, 14-5-1919

28. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET NO. 20

May 10, 1919

HATRED EVER KILLS—LOVE EVER DIES

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

My one request to Hindus, Mahomedans, Parsis, Christians and Jews is that by our conduct tomorrow we may demonstrate to the Government our absolutely harmless intentions and show that nobody in Bombay wishes to commit a breach of the peace, and further show that Bombay is capable of discharging heavy responsibilities with patient calmness. We should at the same time demonstrate that we are

capable of acting in perfect unity and determined to secure a fulfilment of our cherished will. But we do not desire to obtain justice by harbouring ill will against the Government but by goodwill. Hatred ever kills, love ever dies. Such is the vast difference between the two. What is obtained by love is retained for all time. What is obtained by hatred proves a burden in reality, for it increases hatred. The duty of human beings is to diminish hatred and to promote love. I pray that Bombay will observe full hartal, fast and pray and do all this in a loving spirit.

M. K. GANDHI

Printed by Rustom N. Vatchaghandy at the Sanj Vartaman Press, Nos. 22-24-26, Mint Road, Fort, Bombay.

From the printed original preserved in Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Delhi. Courtesy: H. S. L. Polak

29. TELEGRAM TO J. L. MAFFEY[1]

May 10, 1919

JUST RECEIVED LETTER. WILL CERTAINLY SERVE UTMOST OF MY ABILITY.[2] WRITING.

From a microfilm: Lord Chelmsford Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The telegram was quoted in a draft of the letter to the addressee dated May 10, 1919. The version, however, of the same letter which appeared in "Letter to J.L. Maffey", 11-5-1919, under the date May 11, 1919, quotes another telegram to the addressee. It is likely the letter was dictated on May 10 and despatched after revision the next day.

[2] In his letter dated May 7 the addressee, inter alia, had written: "Can we look to you for help? I believe you could be of immense assistance in stabilizing Indian opinion. I am writing this of my own initiative though I shall show it to the Viceroy. Hoping you are well."

30. TELEGRAM TO S. K. RUDRA

BOMBAY,
May 10, 1919

TO
PRINCIPAL RUDRA
STEPHEN'S COLLEGE
DELHI

STRONGLY ADVISE CHARLIE NOT PROCEED LAHORE WITHOUT SANCTION PRESENT JUNCTURE.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1919, p. 416

31. LETTER TO ANNIE BESANT

BOMBAY,
May10, 1919

DEAR MRS. BESANT,

I thank you for your note. Dr. Subramaniam[1] was not overpersuaded, so far as I am aware, by anybody. He had published his interview about satyagraha before he saw me. He took the pledge of his own free will, saying that he had been all his life a satyagrahi. I remember the occasion during your internment when I met him at his bungalow; many of your followers were there and they, one and all, accepted the plan that was unfolded by me before them. I understood then from them all that satyagraha had your full approval, and that you had advised that it should be conducted under my guidance.

It saddens me to see in your writings a new Mrs. Besant, and not the old Mrs. Besant who in utter disregard of man-made laws, whether social or political, stood for Truth against the whole world. It is tragic to think that you should now turn back upon your own teachings and accuse me of "leading young men of good impulses to break their most solemn pledges". I cannot accept the charge, but I would certainly advise everyone to break all the pledges he might have taken if they are contrary to Truth. You deprive a fellow-being of his or her human dignity when you interpose between him and his conscience,

[1] Sir S. Subramania Iyer

an outsider, no matter how high-placed in spirituality he may appear to be. Those of your followers who obey the voice of conscience in preference even to your own instructions are loyal to you as truly as Prahlad was to his father. Surely, your past life is a striking demonstration of the truth of my remark. Is not every reformer an avowed law-breaker?

But I do not want to strive with you. I shall continue to think of the Mrs. Besant whom from my youth I had come to regard as a great and living illustration of fearlessness, courage and truth

You have written your note in grief. You do not know what greater grief you have caused and are causing to those who know your services to India and who love you for them.

Should you want to see me, I am at your service. I have not a free hour today. I am free only after 10 p.m. I am free tomorrow morning.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6605

32. TELEGRAM TO J. A. GUIDER

BOMBAY,
May 11[1]*, 1919*

INMATES OF ASHRAM HAVE REFERRED FOR MY ADVICE QUESTION OF THEIR HAVING TO IDENTIFY THOSE WHOM THEY WERE TRYING PREVENT INCENDIARISM. I HOPE YOU WILL NOT PRESS THEM FOR IDENTIFICATION. THEY CANNOT CONSISTENTLY WITH ASHRAM PRINCIPLES GIVE EVIDENCE AGAINST PEOPLE.[2] OUR BUSINESS IS PROMOTE GOODWILL BETWEEN RULERS AND RULED AND PREVENT VIOLENCE WHEREVER WE MAY FIND IT. IT WILL BE BREACH OF PRIVILEGE FOR US GIVE EVIDENCE AGAINST PRISONERS WHOM WE WERE PREVENTING FROM COMMITTING CRIMES. I WOULD PLEAD WITH YOU NOT TO

[1] The source has 12, but Cf. the following item.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Note By District Magistrate, Ahmedabad, on Interview with Gandhiji", After 11-5-1919.

DRAW PUBLIC ATTENTION TO OUR PRINCIPLE BY FORCING MATTERS FOR I DO NOT DESIRE THAT OUR EXAMPLE SHOULD BE COPIED BY THOSE WHO MAY NOT FOLLOW WHOLE OF OUR PLAN OF LIFE AND WHO MIGHT SIMPLY MAKE OF IT A CONVENIENCE TO SCREEN OFFENDERS.

N. A. I.: Home : Political-A : August 1919 : Nos. 261-72 & K. W.

33. TELEGRAM TO SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI

BOMBAY,
May 11, 1919

EVERYONE FREE IDENTIFY IF HIS CONSCIENCE DOES NOT PREVENT. MY OWN OPINION IS THOSE FOLLOWING ASHRAM PRINCIPLES MAY NOT GIVE EVIDENCE INCRIMINATING THOSE WHOM THEY ARE WEANING FROM CRIME. HAVE SENT FULL TELEGRAM MR. GUIDER ASKING NOT FORCE YOU. THOSE WHO WILL DECLINE IDENTIFY RUN RISK OF BEING IMPRISONED.

N. A. I.: Home: Political-A: August 1919: Nos. 261-72 & K. W.

34. LETTER TO J. L. MAFFEY

BOMBAY,
May 11, 1919

DEAR MR. MAFFEY,

I received your letter[1] this morning. It was redirected from Ahmedabad. I thank you for it. I telegraphed in reply as follows:

> Things are indeed moving fast in India. We are sitting on many mines any one of which may explode any moment. The Afghan news adds to the

[1] The reference is to the P.S.'s letter of May 7, in which he had written:

"The Afghan news will surprise you. Excited by grossly exaggerated stories of disorders in India, the hot-headed, inexperienced Amanullah has decided that 'the Afghan sword shall shine in India'. It is a new complication. Militarily it is not a serious proposition for us and we are doing our best to act with all restraint towards this young man in his midsummer madness.

" . . . Can we look to you for help? I believe you could be of immense assistance in stabilizing Indian opinion. I am writing this of my own initiative though I shall show it to the Viceroy. Hoping you are well."

existing complications. May God grant H. E. strength to bear these heavy burdens.

I had before the receipt of your letter already begun to move in my own way in the direction of securing a peaceful atmosphere within our own border. I confess that it is a delicate situation. I need hardly assure you that the whole of my weight will be thrown absolutely on the side of preserving internal peace. The Viceroy has the right to rely upon my doing no less. But my weight will be absolutely nothing if I receive no support from the Government. The support I need is a satisfactory declaration on the Mahomedan question and withdrawal of the Rowlatt legislation. If it is possible to give this support, I feel that you could have without a shadow of a doubt a contented India. I hope, I do not irritate by mentioning these two matters. I would so like even to go to the Punjab if my suggestion is adopted. You will not hesitate to wire for me if a personal discussion is necessary.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6606

35. SATYAGRAHA LEAFLET NO. 21

May 12, 1919

PEACEFUL HARTAL: BOMBAY'S WORTHY EXAMPLE

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Bombay covered itself with glory by preserving perfect calm, and the citizens have shown by their peaceful hartal [that] they have understood a portion of satyagraha. They have done true honour to Mr. Horniman and demonstrated to the Government that they disapprove of his deportation. Bombay has set a worthy example to the whole of India. It is a matter of pride for Bombay, from the satyagraha standpoint, that some shops were open. This fact proved the voluntary character of the hartal. Many causes contributed to the success of this remarkable demonstration, but the chief among them was the performance of their duty by volunteers under Mr. Vithaldas Jerajani. They had commenced operations from the commencement of the talk of hartal, and we had the results of their efforts yesterday. Our thanks are due also to the police. If aggressive military dispositions had been made, the people would have become excited and the task of preserving peace would have been much more difficult.

A nation enjoying or desiring to enjoy swaraj must possess the

following four attributes:

(1) The police should be the least needed for self-protection and there should be concord between them and the people;

(2) jails should be the least patronized;

(3) the hospitals should have few cases; and

(4) the law courts should have the least work.

Where people do violence, commit crimes, and not exercising control over their senses and committing a breach of nature's laws become diseased and engage in perpetual quarrels resulting in law-suits, they are not free but in bondage. We shall learn the first chapter of swaraj and liberty when India adopts the example of Bombay as a permanent way of life.

M. K. GANDHI

Printed by Rustom N. Vatchaghandy, at the Sanj Vartaman Press, Fort, Bombay.

From the printed original preserved in Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Delhi. Courtesy: H.S.L. Polak

36. LETTER TO REV. M. WELLS BRANCH

LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
May 12, 1919

DEAR REV. BRANCH[1],

I thank you for your letter[2]. I think that some of the principles of Christianity are bound to leave their impress upon the future development of India.

If by the modern movement you mean the agitation for Reforms, it is a result of modern civilization and modern education. If by the modern movement you mean satyagraha, it is an extended application of the ancient teaching. I do not think that either has anything to do with Christian teaching.

I believe that Jesus Christ was one of the greatest teachers of the world. I consider him as an incarnation in the Hindu sense of the

[1] Manager, Lucknow School of Commerce, Lucknow

[2] Dated 9-5-1919, wherein three questions were asked. S.N. 6608

term. I do not believe him to be the World Saviour in the sense in which orthodox Christianity understands the expression but he was a saviour in the same sense as Buddha, Zoroaster, Mohammed, and many other teachers were. In other words, I do not believe in the exclusive divinity of Jesus. *The Sermon on the Mount* left a deep impression on my mind when I read it. I do believe with you that the real meaning of the teachings of Jesus will be delivered from India. I have moved among thousands upon thousands of Indians, but I have not found any secret follower of Jesus. This does not mean that there are not secret followers of his in India. But there could not be many. However, I entirely subscribe to your opinion that such followers should come out in the open and declare their faith.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6608

37. THE SWADESHI VOW[1]

May 13,[2] *1915*

PURE AND MIXED VOWS EXPLAINED
SIGNATORIES TO THE PLEDGE[3]

The idea of swadeshi was first broached at the 6th of April meeting at Chowpati where thousands of men and some women met together, but the swadeshi vow was not taken on that day. It has now been fully thrashed out and the way is clear. It is our duty to take the swadeshi vow; in it lies the true prosperity of India. To use foreign articles rejecting those produced or manufactured in India is to be untrue to India, it is an unwarranted indulgence. To use foreign articles because we do not like indigenous ones is to be a foreigner. It is obvious that we cannot reject indigenous articles even as we cannot reject the native air and the native soil because they are inferior to foreign air and soil. Cotton imports amounted to about Rs. 57,00,00,000 and silk import to Rs. 4,00,00,000 in the year 1917-18. India has a population of three hundred millions and so it [means] that we sent out in that year about Rs. 2 per head, with starvation as the

[1] This was the first leaflet on swadeshi, *vide* "The Swadeshi Vow", 16-6-1919.

[2] May 13 according to Young India but May 14 according to Mahadevbhai ki Diary which describes this as second leaflet on swadeshi vow.

[3] The first two names were those of Gandhiji and Kasturba and the other signatories included Vinoba Bhave.

result. More than thirty million men in India hardly get more than one meal a day. Such starvation must have been unknown when every house in India had its spinning-wheel and when thousands of people were busy with their handlooms. No wonder that starvation and other ills arise whenever people depart from the path of duty. One of the remedies for these ills is swadeshi. The swadeshi vow of which the text is given at the foot of this article has therefore been proposed and it has been divided into two classes. The first represents purer swadeshi vow, but the purest is that under which those taking it restrict themselves to the use of hand-woven clothes made out of hand-spun yarn. The ruin of the handloom industry makes such a vow for the time being impossible. But if those who take the first vow keep the ideal swadeshi as their goal, we shall ere long be able to obtain sufficient hand-woven cloth. I have already pointed out the great difference between swadeshi and boycott.[1] I for one am sure that boycott cannot benefit India in the least. Resorting to boycott amounts to cutting off the nose to spite the face. Shall we open our door wider for Japan boycotting British goods in order to rid ourselves of the evil of the Rowlatt Bill? The fact is that swadeshi has nothing to do with the agitation against the Rowlatt Bills. A great movement like satyagraha sets the people a-thinking about their duties and it is thus that the idea of the swadeshi has possessed the people. We shall continue to observe the vow even after the repeal of the Rowlatt legislation and after India becomes an honoured partner in the British Empire. And our vow will then not be the limited swadeshi vow today, it will be a far wider one as we shall then have been capable of meeting in India itself many of our requirements. We shall appeal[2] to our English brethren also to join us in this swadeshi vow.

In order to enable lacs of men and women to take and observe the swadeshi vow, commercial honesty will be *sine qua non*. The mill-owners will have to fix their rates in a patriotic spirit. Merchants, great and small, will also likewise have to keep honest dealings. I have no doubt that swadeshi cannot advance unless thousands of petty shopkeepers from whom the poor millions buy introduce honesty into their dealings. The organizers of swadeshi have ventured to place before the nation the swadeshi pledge for its acceptance upon the

[1] *Vide* "Swadeshi Vow-I", 8-4-1919.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Stanley Reed", 30-4-1919 and "Letter to J. L. Maffey", 5-5-1919.

belief that our merchants possess the patriotic spirit and that for the sake of the country they will be kind to the poor and truthful towards them.

Those who have foreign clothing seem to hesitate to take the pledge. Though this is natural, it is also painful. We want swadeshi to produce big results. These cannot be attained without sacrifice. Moreover, it is hoped that the spirit of swadeshi will bring in that of simplicity, and those who take to simple, though more durable clothing, will be able to recoup themselves for any loss sustained by reason of the giving up of foreign articles.

It is necessary to give the warning that none should lay by a large stock of swadeshi clothing. There is not enough cloth in Hindustan to enable many of us to have a stock to last four or five years. When there are many swadeshists, there is no doubt that we will have many swadeshi shops and that day by day we shall have more cloth woven in India. Those who take the pledge should have faith in the possibility of their being able to buy swadeshi cloth whenever they need it. As a matter of fact, everyone should learn to weave his own cloth and those who cannot should engage their own weavers. So doing, they would avoid all cause for deceit and they would be able to have durable and pure cloth for their use. This is what we used to do in days gone by.

Swadeshi depends upon women adopting it. I hope that thousands of them will give up foreign cloth in their possession and take the swadeshi pledge. It behoves us to suffer some inconvenience if only by way of penance for our past mistakes. Moreover, it is possible to put foreign cloth to other uses. It can even be sold for despatch out of India. Further the nation has a right to expect its women to clothe their children in swadeshi garments.

M. K. GANDHI

PURE SWADESHI VOW

I solemnly declare that henceforth in Hindustan I shall not wear clothing except such as is made in India out of Indian cotton, silk or wool spun in India.

This vow shall be binding on me for life/years.

MIXED SWADESHI VOW

I solemnly declare that henceforth in Hindustan I shall not wear

any clothing except such as is woven in India whether made out of foreign or Indian yarn, silk or wool.

This vow shall be binding on me for life/years.

Explanation—The true swadeshi ideal consists in the use of hand-woven cloth only made out of hand-spun yarn, but it is physically impossible today to secure a supply of such cloth for any large number of people. It is expected, however, that true lovers of swadeshi and real art will not only themselves, even at some inconvenience, wear hand-woven cloth made out of hand-spun yarn but will also endeavour to set going as many handlooms and spinning-wheels as possible.

Note 1—It should be remembered that this movement has nothing to do with the agitation for securing repeal of the Rowlatt legislation. Repeal of that legislation or the granting of other concessions or reforms will make no alteration whatsoever in the swadeshi vow or the movement for the spread of swadeshi.

Note 2—The suggestion for destruction of foreign cloth in the possession of the signatories to the pledge has been totally abandoned lest a mistaken interpretation of the suggestion may lead to the growth or the promotion of ill will against Europeans, the idea of ill will being entirely foreign to the originators of the present swadeshi movement. But the pledge precludes the use of any personal clothing of foreign make that the signatory may possess at the time of taking the vow.

Note 3—Mahomedans, Parsis, Christians and Jews taking the swadeshi pledge are not precluded from using and wearing foreign cloth having a religious significance.

Young India, 17-5-1919

38. LETTER TO F. C. GRIFFITH

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
May 14, 1919

DEAR MR. GRIFFITH,

I thank you for sending me the name of the party who sells the *Life of Mustafa Kamal Pasha*. I find that it is not a reprint of one of the prohibited books, but it was reprinted in mistake for a copy of Mustafa Kamal Pasha's speech which is a book included in the list of

prohibited literature.[1] Subject therefore to anything you might have to say to the contrary, I am not taking any steps to prevent further sales of the book in question. I enclose herewith a copy for your perusal and I think you agree with me that it is perfectly harmless.

I might add with reference to my books that have come under the ban that after the conversation with you at our first interview, I had the legal position re-examined and I found that the opinion of Government Law Officers was more correct than mine, viz., that reprints did not come under the forfeiture orders. But as we had commenced sale of these books for the sake of civil disobedience, I felt that whilst excitement lasted, it was better for me not to enter upon long explanations to the public in order to justify these sales.

You will have noticed that there was no hartal in Surat or other places. I was wrong too in thinking that Dr. Hora was a satyagrahi.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 6611

39. LETTER TO SIR. S. SUBRAMANIA IYER

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
May 14, 1919

DEAR DR. SUBRAMANIAM,

I enclose herewith a copy of Mrs. Besant's letter addressed to me on your behalf and also of my reply[2] to it. I have found it difficult to believe the statements made in it. For I know nothing of over-persuasion, nor can I believe that you can possibly deviate from the true path even at the dictation of a great *rishi*. And can any pledge prevent a man from following truth? But of course you shall say whether statements imputed to me are correct. For me satyagraha has never shone so brightly as it does today. It has weathered the storm of repression from Government and it is now facing the storm from those who want to start civil disobedience to cover their practice of violence. It is satyagraha that has localized the disturbances and that has made possible for Bombay to exercise amazing self-restraint in

[1] *Vide* "Statement on Laws for Civil Disobedience", 7-4-1919.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Annie Besant", 10-5-1919.

spite of the most irritating temptation presented by Mr. Horniman's deportation. I hope you are keeping well.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 6605

40. REMARKS ON SATYAGRAHA

[*May 15, 1919*][1]

Just as I have a passionate desire for living at peace with you, so have I for living at peace with Englishmen and for that matter the whole of the universe. But I want peace with honour and such peace it is obvious can only and easily be attained by satyagraha.

From a photostat: S.N. 6612

41. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

BOMBAY,
May 15, 1919

TO
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY
SIMLA

MR. GOVARDHANDAS OF LAHORE WAS ARRESTED IN MADRAS ON THE 12TH INSTANT AS APPEARS FROM "THE HINDU" OF SAME DATE. HE WAS ARRESTED UNDER ORDER OF THE MILITARY COMMANDANT LAHORE. HIS VAKIL IS REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN REFUSED PERMISSION TO SEE ORDER. GOVARDHANDAS, SO FAR AS IS KNOWN, DID NOT KNOW UPON WHAT GROUNDS HE WAS ARRESTED. VAKIL'S APPLICATION TO COMMISSIONER POLICE FOR DETENTION OF GOVARDHANDAS PENDING RECEIPT INFORMATION REGARDING NATURE OF OFFENCE WAS REFUSED. BAIL TOO WAS REFUSED. IT IS CONJECTURED THAT GOVARDHANDAS HAS BEEN ARRESTED FOR STATEMENTS ABOUT PUNJAB MADE IN BOMBAY AND ELSEWHERE.

[1] These lines were found on the sheet proceeding "Telegram to Private Secretary to Viceroy", 15-5-1919.

NEWS PUBLISHED THIS MORNING THAT MESSRS NORTON AND ROY HAVE BEEN REFUSED PERMISSION DEFEND EDITOR "TRIBUNE" FILLS ONE WITH MISGIVINGS REGARDING PROPER TREATMENT OR TRIAL OF GOVARDHANDAS IN PUNJAB. REQUEST INFORMATION REGARDING NATURE OFFENCE GOVARDHANDAS WHETHER HE WILL BE ALLOWED PERMISSION TO BE DEFENDED BY COUNSEL FROM OUTSIDE PUNJAB. FURTHER WHY PERMISSION REFUSED NORTON ROY DEFEND EDITOR "TRIBUNE".

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6613

42. LETTER TO J. L. MAFFEY

BOMBAY,
May 16, 1919

DEAR MR. MAFFEY,

Enclosed is a copy of the telegram I sent you yesterday. I have said not a word about the events in the Punjab, not because I have up to now not thought or felt over them, but because I have not known what to believe and what not to believe. Even the official communiques have not been over-frank. I was, as I am still, hoping that very soon there would be the fullest investigation made as to the causes of disturbances and the measures adopted to quell them.

But a shock like the one caused by the reported flogging has been delivered by the arrest with the attendant circumstances of Mr. Govardhandas and the prohibition order against Messrs Norton and Roy engaged as counsel for the defence of the Editor of *The Tribune*.

You will forgive me for troubling you at the present juncture. But I know, you will recognize the urgency of my inquiry.

I observe that the storm[1] from Afghanistan has almost blown over.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 6615

[1] *Vide* "Letter to J. L. Maffey", 11-5-1919.

43. LETTER TO SAKARLAL DAVE

ON THE TRAIN TO BOMBAY,
May 19, 1919

BHAISHRI SAKARLAL[1],

I have taken longer to write this letter than I had expected. I am looking out for Amritlal. I am confident that Mama will be there in June, and I know that he will acquit himself well enough. We must be able to run the school well.

I was very glad that you pointed out all those grammatical errors. Mahadev will write to you further about them. I make every effort to write correctly but it is quite likely the mistakes remain, for, what command I have over Gujarati is the fruit of my love. I had no time to learn the language systematically. My use of the root *shak* [be able to] is deliberate. *Nirbhaya* and other words have not been so used but I find Mahadev defending them. I shall accept any decision on which you two agree and correct myself accordingly. Where there is a difference of opinion between you, I shall accept your view till I get further light on the point, for I think yours will be more objective. Please do keep suggesting improvements in my language. I shall take it as a sign of your pure love.

Now, as for the meaning I have read in the *Bhagavad Gita*, if I had not found it in the work independently of all else, I would have certainly said that the principle of satyagraha was right, despite the contrary teaching of the *Bhagavad Gita*. The work is being put to an utterly wrong use, and so it is that, now that the time is ripe, I have placed before the people the meaning I have accepted for so many years.

I very much respect Anandshankarbhai's views, but I would not give up any opinion of mine which has stood the test of experience even if it were contested by him. It is certainly the *Bhagavad Gita's* intention that one should go on working without attachment to the fruits of work. I deduce the principle of satyagraha from this. He who is free from such attachment will not kill the enemy but rather sacrifice himself. Killing an enemy proceeds from impatience and impatience proceeds from attachment. This is but one point in my argument, but I have no desire to convince you or anyone else with the help of arguments. Even if I wished, I do not think I have the

[1] Sakarlal Amritlal Dave, Gujarati educationist

ability. I have something far more powerful than argument, namely, experience. As far back as 1889, when I had my first contact with the *Gita*, it gave me a hint of satyagraha and, as I read it more and more, the hint developed into a full revelation of satyagraha. That a man of Krishna's intelligence should indulge in all this wisdom of the *Gita* for the benefit of an Arjuna in flesh and blood, would be like killing the buffalo for a leather-strap. To believe he did so is to tarnish his name, if it is true that he was the Supreme God, and to do injustice to Arjuna if he was a warrior of experience and judgment.

I know you will not dismiss these ideas off-hand. I would rather you embraced and developed them. You will readily admit, I am sure, that learned commentaries are of much less value than the experience of one limited intelligence.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

44. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PARIKH

ON THE TRAIN TO BOMBAY,
May 19, 1919

DEAR MANIBEHN,

I heard yesterday of your father's passing away, but could not go and see you to offer my condolences. Separation from our dear ones is bound to give pain, for "but selfish are the friends of this one who has his abode in the body, in the end they will go their way". So sings one of our poets. I forget his name. If we examine the matter closely, [we shall see that] it is not love which causes the pain, but our selfishness. Otherwise, just as we are happy changing from an old house to a new one, we have no cause, surely, to mourn when an *atman*-friend gives up a worn-out body and assumes a new one. This would be true, whether the person died young or old. When exactly a body ceases to be serviceable, its Creator alone knows. We may not aspire to know it. I had not thought of saying all this to you. It came out because, at the moment, my thoughts flow in a rather unusual direction. What I wanted to say was this. We should wish that everyone meets a death as grand as your father's. It is not often we hear of a person dying a painless death, dropping off, as it were, without exacting service from anyone. Your father will always be remembered as one who had such a death. It is in vain that we mourn any death; a

death such as this ought not to be mourned. And so I offer you, not condolences but congratulations.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

45. LETTER TO SATYAGRAHIS OF SURAT

BOMBAY,
May 20, 1919

Your letter wandered from place to place and came to my hand only today. I think it is wrong of you to covet my signature. My physical condition being what it is, I cannot sign, nor dictate, all letters.

So long as India has not understood the true nature of satyagraha, the doubts you have raised are bound to occur and you will have to have patience.

Satyagraha, once started, ends only when it has achieved its aim. At times it does seem to have ended, but in fact it has not. When satyagraha is likely to be confused with *duragraha*, suspending it will be a way of launching true satyagraha. It is such a subtle thing that only through experience and constant reflection do we come to understand a little of it. As I see things today, satyagraha in the form of disobedience to laws is likely to start in July. Circumstances may, however, arise even earlier in which it may be resumed.

Some of the forms of satyagraha may conceivably have to be suspended repeatedly. I think it is impossible, beyond a certain point, to explain to you what power there is in fasts and other religious practices; since you have been keeping fasts all these years—I am sure you have been—and you would not have thought of saying some of the things you have said if there had been any satyagraha in your fasts. If you could see no difference between the fasts you kept in the past and the one on Sunday for Horniman, I must say you have deceived yourselves. I am emphatically of the view that our struggle grows protracted in the measure that our satyagraha is deficient. Renunciation is no renunciation if the desire for the things renounced has not disappeared. Those of you who have sacrificed their jobs and all will have done so to no purpose if they think they have gained nothing as a result. He alone has truly given up his job who could not do otherwise. Those who gave up their jobs should have felt happy

doing so, not unhappy, but I see that that is not how they felt. This is why you feel yourselves in the position of Trishanku[1].

Who am I that I should provide an opportunity for satyagraha? A satyagrahi is ever his own master. You can discuss things with me. It is quite true that, when an organization offers satyagraha, individuals should submit themselves to its discipline. But, once a person has become a satyagrahi, he will always find opportunities for offering satyagraha. How can those who are full of doubts and fears be reckoned as satyagrahis? To be a satyagrahi is like walking on the blade of a sword.

If I have not succeeded, despite what I have said, in solving your doubts, I can only counsel patience. If you think that satyagraha only means courting imprisonment somehow, you can go to jail by breaking any law. If one can offer satyagraha in this way, every prisoner is a satyagrahi.

There can be satyagraha only in civilly disobeying a law, for sufficient reason, without violating a moral law. If I could show any such way to you, I would myself offer satyagraha.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

[1] Sent to heaven alive by Vishwamitra, but Indra would not permit him to enter it. In the result, he found himself in midspace, unable either to enter heaven or descend to the earth.

46. CIRCULAR LETTER ON CONFERENCE OF SATYAGRAHIS

NOT FOR PUBLICATION IN THE PRESS

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
May 21, 1919

DEAR MR.

It has become necessary to consider the question of extending satyagraha, in necessary, to the events in the Punjab and it has been suggested that there should be a small informal private conference of satyagrahis from the different centres. This conference will take place on Wednesday the 28th instant in Bombay. Please let me know whether your Province could send one or more representatives for the conference. The time and the place of meeting will be notified later.

Yours sincerely,

SHRADDHANANDJI.
HUSSAIN IMAM
SUNDERLAL
KASTURI RANGA AIENGAR
JERAMDAS
VALLABHBHAI

From a photostat: S.N. 6618

47. LETTER TO F. C. GRIFFITH

BOMBAY,
May 23 [*1919*]

DEAR MR. GRIFFITH,

Could you please lend me or procure for me a loan of the Regulations named under the Defence of India Act today? I will return them towards evening.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Mahadev Desai's hand signed by Gandhiji: Bombay Government Records: Bombay Commissioner of Police File No. 3001/H/19, p. 129

48. LETTER TO F. C. GRIFFITH

BOMBAY,
May 23 [*1919*]

DEAR MR. GRIFFITH,

Many thanks for the great pains you have taken to procure the D. I. Regulations for me.

I received your message that you would like to see me tomorrow. I am, however, going to Ahmedabad under appointment by tonight's mail. I could see you anytime today between 4.30 and 5 or on Tuesday at any time you like, for I return that day morning.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Mahadev Desai's hand signed by Gandhiji: Bombay Government Records: Bombay Commissioner of Police File No. 3001/H/19, p. 125

49. LETTER TO F. C. GRIFFITH

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
May 23 [*1919*]

DEAR MR. GRIFFITH,

Thanks for your note. Tuesday between 2 and 4 p.m. will suit me al! right.

I return herewith "Legislation and Orders relating to the War" containing the D. I. Regulations.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. Gandhi

From the original in Mahadev Desai's hand signed by Gandhiji: Bombay Government Records: Bombay Commissioner of Police File No. 3001/H/19, p.127

50. LETTER TO ALI BROTHERS

LABURNUM ROAD
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
May 23, I919

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

I write with a heavy heart, for I see that I have disagreed with you on these things and my disagreement must pain you, as it has already considerably pained me. I wonder whether Mr. Ghate ever received my letter[1] which was meant for you, and whether if he did, you got it. That letter explains my position regarding your memorial to the Viceroy. I shall try briefly to re-explain it, as having received no reply from you, I fear that you have not seen my letter to Mr. Ghate.

I consider that your memorial was too undignified for the great cause you are espousing and of which I have felt you are pre-eminently the embodiment and for which you have suffered without a murmur all the long years and are still suffering. Your language was inflammatory and too full of declamation for a memorial. Your statement of the Mohammedan claim instead of representing an irreducible minimum was an exaggeration. I am sure, you do not propose to raise questions affecting issues that were rightly or wrongly settled long before the war. You have a right to claim the restoration of the temporal status of Islam as it existed at the time of the outbreak of war. I would like you even now to redraft your memorial, make a reasoned and logical statement that must arrest and command the attention of the world. The success of any cause naturally necessarily depends finally upon the will of God. But that will is almost conditioned by the manner in which we who approach the throne of the Almighty conduct ourselves and nothing avails there but cold reason sanctified by truth, humility and strictest moderation. In the new memorial, I would omit all mention of personal suffering. It stands as a living record speaking for itself. If you adopt my proposal, I would love to revise your draft.

The two other things in which I have disagreed with you are

[1] Dated 8-5-1919

your two letters sent to the Press for publication. You now know why I stopped the publication of your first letter. The second letter just received has also been stopped for the same reasons, but the additional reason for not printing it is that your plea for Mr. Nazim is unmerited. When the crucial movement came, he stood not for truth but for untruth. I am sorry for him, but I cannot feel with you that the action [the] authorities took was wrong. He made a deliberately false statement, when he was challenged and when it was his special duty to make a correct statement. I will not weary you with the full particulars of this painful episode.

I must confess too that I do not like your half disobedience of the order of the internment. I do not know that you got my message sent to you, after my discharge at Bombay, that you need not disobey the order of internment and I would like you, if you could summon up the courage, to recall the notice of disobedience and tell the Viceroy that upon mature consideration and for the sake of the cause for which you stand, you have decided not to disobey the order for the time being.

You may not know that in my recent confidential letters to the Viceroy and the Governor of Bombay, I have definitely raised the Mohammedan question confining it to Khilafat and the holy places. Please remember me to Aman Sahib and ask the children—I forget the names of the blessed ones—to write to me as they did before.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6622

51. LETTER TO N. P. COWIE

[BOMBAY,]
May 25, 1919

DEAR MR. COWIE,

One Mr. Manilal Jadavji Vyas of Kathiawar and Dr. Popatlal, also of Kathiawar, who were resident in Karachi have, I understand, received orders under Act 3 of 1864 to leave British India, being classed as "foreigners" under that Act. In virtue of these orders the parties left Sind and are now in Kathiawar. I venture to consider that this act of the local authority in Karachi was high-handed in treating subjects of native States as foreigners for the purpose of summarily

deporting them from Karachi. My submission, however, receives legal justification from a perusal of the amendment of Section 1 of Act 3 of 1864. It appears to me that the Sind authorities were not cognisant of the recent amendment of that Act. I observe that in 1914 that was thus amended:

> In Section 1 of the Foreigners Act, 1864, for the words "not being either or natural born subject of Her Majesty within the meaning of Statute 3 and 4 William IV, Chapter 85, Section 81, or a Native of British India", the following words shall be substituted namely:
>
> "(a) who is not a natural-born British subject as defined in sub-sections
>
> (1) and (2) of Section 1 of the British Nationality & Status of Aliens Act, 1914, or
>
> (b) who has not been granted a certificate of naturalization as a British subject under any law for the time being in force in British India;
>
> Provided that any British subject who, under any law for the time being in force in British India, ceases to be a British subject, shall thereupon be deemed to be a foreigner."

The operative part of Section 1 of the British Nationality and Aliens Act referred to in the above amendment reads as follows:

> (I) The following persons shall be deemed to be natural-born British subjects, namely,
>
> (a) any person born within H. M.'s dominions and allegiance;
>
> (b) provided that the child of a British subject, whether that child was born before or after the passing of the Act, shall be deemed to have been born within H. M.'s allegiance if born in a place where by treaty, capitulation, grant, usage, sufferance or other lawful means, H. M. exercises jurisdiction over British subjects.

It is quite clear that both these Native States subjects could not be treated as foreigners but being born in British Dominions or allegiance are natural-born British subjects. Alike therefore on grounds of equity and justice, I venture to submit that these deportees and such other deportees, if any, are entitled to return to their places of business and residence in Sind. I trust therefore that H. E. will be pleased to order cancellation of the orders above mentioned.

From a photostat: S.N. 6624

52. LETTER TO COL.TUKE

THE ASHRAM,
May 25, 1919

DEAR COL. TUKE,

I thank you for your letter of the 24th instant. Regarding those who were wounded at the time of the military operations to quell the recent disturbances, I would like you, if you could, to give me an idea of the expenses likely to be incurred. I do not anticipate any difficulty in meeting them, but perhaps it is as well to know the requirements. Will you kindly send your reply to Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel, Bhadra, who will deal with the matter? I am leaving tonight for Bombay.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6625

53. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

SURAT,
May 26, 1919

CHI. MAGANLAL,

After leaving you, I have been thinking a good deal about weaving. I think we can justify our existence only if we keep four steps ahead of the people in their efforts at self-discipline. People will not need our services very much in keeping the vow of pure swadeshi, for those who take the vow will carry on somehow, obtaining yarn from Indian mills and getting it woven. But it is the Ashram alone, at present, which can help them to keep the pure swadeshi vow in its ideal form.[1] Hence we need not exert ourselves overmuch to help the observance of the first vow.[2] But we ought to make a Herculean effort to enable a large number of men and women to attain the ideal of pure swadeshi in the near future. The first step in this effort is for us to start spinning and weaving ourselves. If Santok cannot go, let Durga go alone. If she, too, does not go, send a man. You must run down to Vijapur without any delay. Jagannath and Chhotalal should be put entirely on to weaving. Consult Bhurarji and make some

[1] Using hand-spun and hand-woven cloth
[2] Using hand-woven cloth made from mill-yarn

arrangements for cooking. Write to Gokibehn. Do what you like. But regard it a sin to employ Jagannath and Chhotalal in any other work. Any shopping that may need to be done for the Ashram can be left to Revashankar or someone else. If they make mistakes, bear with them. But do not spend a rupee over work which can be got done for a pice. When Imam Saheb has recovered, find some way of using his services in weaving. When you introduce spinning it will be easy to use everyone's services. Spend the major part of your time, too, in thinking out how to help forward this ideal of pure swadeshi and taking action accordingly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5774. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

54. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, SURAT

May 26, 1919

SISTERS,

Kindly excuse me for not being able to address you standing. I am not fit enough for that. My whole body shakes when I stand. I shall, therefore, say the few words I wish to, sitting. I believe myself fortunate that I have this occasion to meet you all. The time is not yet when, having had our say, we may worry no more. The country is passing through a time when it is necessary that all men and women attend with dispatch to the tasks that may fall to them and have them off their hands. Talking and singing songs and shouting in all manner of ways—this is necessary, but only to the extent that it focusses our attention on the main task. Now that we know what needs to be done, I have not the slightest doubt that we shall fall into the lowest state if we are content merely to talk and listen. At present, we need to work on silently and let the work speak. When I put satyagraha before all the people of the country, I did not know their real temper and so, today, satyagraha has become something altogether different from what it should be. I want to explain its significance to all. There are two ways of offering satyagraha, but the basic principle is the same, namely, that we cling to truth so tenaciously that, though our hand should break and fall apart, we would not let go our hold. Let this principle be deeply engraved in our hearts as the only truth. Those women who have understood by satyagraha no more than civilly disobeying the

Government's laws have failed to understand its meaning. There are occasions when, for the sake of truth, laws may have to be disobeyed. Such was the occasion provided by the Rowlatt Bills. I advised the people then to think who would be entitled to disobey laws and when, but they did not understand, though women followed the idea better than men. If anyone asks whether women have any choice in the matter, I would take no notice of him. Women have to suffer more than men. Men and women are, of course, equal in authority—I myself believe in the idea—or rather, in the matter of suffering, women have a greater right than men. In this world, man has never suffered more than woman, nor displayed the gentleness she has done. At the moment, all that I want to say is that satyagraha against the Rowlatt Act has not ended. The number of those who have signed [the Satyagraha Pledge] is small, whether in Surat or elsewhere, but the tune has been taken up and this very fact has proved to be the source of a certain weakness. The tune has been taken up readily enough but the idea has not been examined with equal care. Anyone who has signed the Pledge may not violate it, no matter whether he has or has not understood it. When laws may be disobeyed and when satyagraha consists in obeying a law—this also needs to be considered. At present, we understand neither. Satyagraha should be offered against the Government or the people as occasion may require. The idea that, while satyagraha is going on in the country, no one should indulge in violence is not to be ridiculed. It is being asked whether this can ever be ensured in the whole of the country. I testify that it can. Whether or no people have this faith in satyagraha, it is a sacred principle in itself that no injury should be done to person or property. India has understood this principle. If it has not been understood in a few obscure or isolated spots, well, let us start again, the wiser for the lesson. These days we have been explaining to the people that, till we can be confident that no violence will be done to anyone, it will be impossible to start satyagraha. I shall not take you into these deep waters. Only let no one think that satyagraha is abandoned. I say this deliberately. Satyagraha has not ended, it can end only when the Government repeals the Rowlatt Act.

I want to talk to you about another matter besides this. It is as important as satyagraha. It grows out of satyagraha, though not out of the Rowlatt Acts. When satyagraha is going on, men and women come to think about truth. If we have followed truth even in a small measure, we shall want to overcome the imperfections in us and in our

environment. One such imperfection is our violation of the principle of swadeshi. What does the vow of swadeshi mean? Who should observe it? The vow means that we shall refrain from using things produced outside India, so long as similar articles [of Indian make] are available, no matter whether of good quality or bad. Not only this; if such foreign articles do not meet any basic need of ours [and if similar articles of Indian make are not available], we may stop using them altogether. An essential need, like food grains, we may import from outside if the crop has failed. If we do not have sufficient cloth to cover our limbs, we may certainly import some. India is a country which has all its needs. He who has given us the teeth will also give something to chew. India produces enough of everything to meet our needs. Gujarat is so fertile that it never knew famines—we can raise crops here with little effort—so that we do not have a complete idea of what starvation conditions mean. But Gujarat is not India. All over India, large numbers of people get only one meal a day, and that too consisting of rice and dhal. They get no ghee nor good pickles, only salt, none too clean. There was a time in India when hunger was unknown. A great leader of ours, Sir Sankaran Nair[1], has said in an article that, a hundred years ago, there was no starvation in the country such as we find today. It is a present-day phenomenon.

The reason is our violation of the law of swadeshi. While our own workers and craftsmen starve, we import goods from outside. What other punishment for this sin can there be, if not starvation? I have placed the swadeshi vow before the people of India to rid them of this sin. It is no very difficult vow to observe which I have put before them. Apart from food, the other biggest need in India is cloth. Last year, we paid 60 crores of rupees to foreign countries for this purpose. If we but think of this, we shall feel ashamed of ourselves. There is a place named Bavla, near Ahmedabad, where these days famine-stricken people spin and take payment for their labour, instead of accepting free supplies of grain. This prevents them from becoming a burden on others.

The scarcity in India is not of foodgrains but of money. And consider the labour these people [in Bavla] did—it was not making roads. The first task, ever so much more important than building roads, is producing food and next to that cloth. And so these people

[1] 1857-1934; a judge of the Madras High Court and president of the Indian National Congress in 1897

produced, with their labour, food for themselves and cloth with which they covered others—a doubly profitable work. When you do this, India will be all glory. You will not win it with Japanese or British saris. They will not help you to preserve your dharma. It is *adharma*[1], not dharma, which they help you to preserve. I most earnestly entreat my sisters to forsake *adharma*. Some women plead helplessness, saying that they are subject to men. Some men, on the contrary, argue that they are helpless because women would not give up their love of fashion, that three-quarters of their expenditure is over women's dresses and so they ask me to persuade women first. I have met a large number of women. I have also had a hand in running a home. It has always seemed to me that I took second place to my wife. I discovered this when I invited Dudhabhai to come and live in theAshram. I could not keep him with me. As you work to prepare good dishes and would kick up a row if it was suggested that you could have the things from a hotel or eating-house—would take it as an affront—so also you should work to make your own saris and likewise your children's clothes. If all women cannot do this, have a weaver of your own, in the same way that you have a washerman and a barber. How stupid we are, how disloyal to India, to have sent out Rs. 60 crores to foreign countries! There was a time, not so very long ago—for 100 years is nothing in the life of a nation—when India produced enough cloth for itself and even exported some. The position today is that we manufacture one-fourth of our requirements. What can be more shameful than this? In those days, all our women, rich or poor, had a spinning-wheel in the home and worked on it, listening to its sweet music the while. From the yarn, saris as delicate as silk could be manufactured. Now, on the other hand, women spend their time in cooking all manner of fine dishes and, if any time is left, in gossiping. I have come here to tell you, in all humility, that we do not live to eat, but should be content with what little we get to keep the body going.

At the present time, the people of India are growing ever more feeble. The children do not look handsome, as they should, but all rickety, so much so that but one push would send them to the ground. The reason lies in our pleasure-seeking ways. We may enjoy pleasures and eat food which will not harm the body but make us brave rather. If you spare some time from what you spend in preparing meals and in gossiping, have the spinning-wheel in the home and spin, you will

[1] The opposite of dharma

be able to compete with the mills. When you weave your cloth on the looms, India's freedom will be near, she will have dharma and starvation will disappear. If you are not satisfied with your weaver's saris, make do with them to start with and ask him to improve. Who do you think made these clothes of mine? One Gangabehn, there in Vijapur. First, she gave me coarse khadi. I did not ask her for anything finer for the summer, but the sister had pity on the brother. She appealed to the other women to turn out fine yarn. We can in this way work for one another, there is love, satyagraha, in doing so. Fill the weavers' houses in Surat with money and ask them to weave, not with English or Japanese yarn, but with yarn provided by you. Then alone can you claim to have kept the vow of swadeshi. You have already got a copy of this pledge. It would be very good if you could observe the one which is given first. It is in two forms, one for life and another for a limited period. We are so utterly devoid of resourcefulness that we cannot procure yarn except through the mills. I have seen here that more than 75 per cent of the women wear mill-made saris. This is a matter for shame. We do not want our workers to stand before machines, like so many soulless things. There is dharma in wearing a sari in which the worker has revealed his skill and poured out his heart. Choose an auspicious day and sign this pledge on that day. Our Shastras say that, when a good idea occurs to one, that is the auspicious day and the auspicious hour and moment. We need not go to an astrologer for the purpose. You may approach one when you have something wicked to do, but then approach one who will not recommend any hour for such a purpose. This is no time in India for me or anyone else to make speeches and for you to listen. The need of the hour is work. I shall deem myself rewarded when some of the women here start spinning and weaving.

[From Gujarati]
Gujarat Mitra ane Gujarat Darpan, 1-6-1919

55. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, SURAT

May 26, 1919

I am extremely sorry I have to talk to you sitting, and I apologize to you. The fact is that I am not quite fit. I hear it said, I get reports from all over India, that the satyagraha in the country has been abandoned. This proceeds from sheer lack of understanding. I have been able to see that even satyagrahis in India have not understood

what satyagraha means. It is easy enough to see then that others, the vast majority of the people who have not studied satyagraha and have not signed the Satyagraha Pledge, cannot understand it. I should have thought of this in the very beginning. That I did not do so was my error and I have admitted as much. Let no one conclude from this admission that satyagraha can ever stop even for a moment. Those who have taken the Satyagraha Pledge and understood its meaning very well will know that it has not at all been abandoned, not even for a moment. I shall try to explain what it means. It has been stated in the Satyagraha Pledge itself that, so long as the Rowlatt Bills are not repealed, civil disobedience should be committed in respect of such laws as the committee may decide. This, however, is only one part of the Pledge, and not a very important one at that. Moreover, a satyagrahi should have certain qualities to be entitled to disobey laws.

We should consider, before everything else, what comes first in satyagraha. Till we have thought this out and acted on it, disobeying laws will take us nowhere. The first thing, then, is to employ nothing but truth in any agitation we may carry on to secure permanent repeal of this Act, and the second thing is to refrain from injuring anyone in person or property. It seems to me that even satyagrahis have not followed these two things scrupulously. I am sure that, if the more than 2,000 satyagrahis in the different parts of India had loyally carried out the Pledge, the things that happened would not have happened. Their satyagraha would have had such an effect on the whole of India that the people would have understood its meaning quite well. I admit, at the same time, that it is difficult to practise such satyagraha. To refrain from injuring anyone means that even in our mind we should have no feeling of hostility against anyone. This requires *tapascharya*[1]. It is, then, of the very essence of satyagraha that, even while we resist oppression uncompromisingly, we may harbour no desire for revenge against the oppressor. It is the weak in the world who seek revenge. The strong can master the desire. Strength does not mean physical strength. He is a strong man or she a strong woman who knows how to die. So it all comes to this, that, clinging to truth, we should lay down our lives, unafraid, and even at the moment of death feel no desire for revenge or no anger against the person whom we oppose with satyagraha.

In regard to the second pledge which has been placed before the

[1] Self-suffering as moral discipline

people in connection with satyagraha, we have been asking them to sign it and to be faithful to the spirit of satyagraha while it is going on. The people may, if they choose, dishonour the Pledge, but the satyagrahi will not, at that time, declare his bankruptcy. His resources are inexhaustible. His effort ceases only with his death. When, however, the people are in no mood to follow this line, we must think of other methods. I do not like processions. They do not at all make me happy. But, apart from whether I like processions or not, the sort of procession you had today bespoke the people's feelings, their unthinking love as also their support for satyagraha. If the people so often give evidence that they are on the side of satyagraha, one is entitled to hope that, while it is going on, they will not indulge in violence. If they cannot refrain from doing so, they should leave the satyagrahis and me alone. Even then, satyagraha will not stop. When the people thus support satyagraha [in the right manner] or leave it to follow its own course, there will be satyagraha of an altogether different kind.

I want to tell the people—and I am confident about this—that, if they can show the spirit I want them to, the Government will see clearly enough that they do not require a Rowlatt Act even for an hour. Let us, for a while, consider the origin of this Act. It lies in distrust of the people and, though reasons have occasionally been given for this distrust, I have pointed out again and again that they are not so strong as to leave the Government with no choice but to enact dangerous legislation like the Rowlatt Act. I have gone even further and said that, no matter how strong the reasons, a Government which enacts such dangerous legislation will be none too secure. If, in the conditions we find prevailing today, the people can show that they have no anger or animosity, what effect this will have on the Government is as simple to understand as the rule of three. Thus, the moment we understand this truth about satyagraha, we shall have qualified to disobey laws. No one, however, need be alarmed at this, thinking that we would in that case have to wait for thousands of years. I have confidence in the power of satyagraha, that, once it has started moving in the right direction, it will take no time to spread throughout India. I am confident that we shall be able to commit civil disobedience on July 1. There is nothing in the circumstances to shake this confidence of mine. On the contrary, everything I see leads me to believe that India has come to understand the meaning of satyagraha. I do not want to persuade you that India is ready to

practise it. But I certainly want to assert that, when satyagrahis start civil disobedience, India will maintain peace and have patience. I also hope, at the same time, that, during the one month and a quarter that remain [between now and July 1], we shall be able to so impress the Government that there may even be no need to resume satyagraha for securing the repeal of the Rowlatt Act.

I have already said that, when satyagraha is going on, it does not consist merely in disobeying laws. In its universal form, it is so wide in meaning that it includes a great many things, and the most important of these is the principle of swadeshi, more important even than this agitation of ours against the Rowlatt Act, which is a mere trifle. The two have no connection with each other. Everyone must have seen the text of the vow. It is in two forms, only one of which is of real worth, the second being less important, comparatively speaking. The first vow requires us to use cloth manufactured out of cotton or wool or silk produced in India, either hand-woven or mill-made. It is our moral obligation to observe this vow. For those who are unable to observe it, there is an alternative vow, one, however, which will confess our weakness. If we observe the first vow, we have another duty arising out of it. In former times, India produced her own needs of cloth and also exported some. Today, on the contrary, we produce only one-fourth of our requirements. In other words, we fail to discharge three-fourths of our duty. In consequence of this, more than three crores of people go starving. I know that there are other reasons as well for this, but the most important cause is our violation of the principle of swadeshi. I am, therefore, justified in requesting you to do *prayashchitta*[1] for the sin we have committed in violating that principle. The *prayashchitta* consists in wearing khadi, since it is our fault that India does not produce fine cloth at the present day but produces only khadi. I do not mean that nothing except khadi is available. It must be our resolve, however, to make do with khadi should it be the only kind of cloth available. This is our *prayashchitta*. It is our plain duty to follow the rule of swadeshi henceforth. By doing so, we shall save a sum of 60 crores of rupees, which was what we paid abroad during 1917-18. We shall keep our money in this country to the extent that we follow this rule. There may be risk or difference of opinion about disobeying laws by way of satyagraha, but there can be no such risk in following the rule of

[1] Atonement

swadeshi. Even a child can follow it. To do so is our duty; there can be no two opinions about this. It is not we alone who say this. Some Englishmen also say the same thing and we shall see in a short time that quite a number of them will even help us in this matter. I am confident that, if we follow the rule of pure swadeshi and if there is no element of boycott in what we do, we shall succeed in getting the Viceroy himself to follow the same rule. This is one aspect.

The country produces only one-quarter of our needs. How, then, are we to produce enough for such a large number? If we depend entirely on the cloth being produced at present, we put the poor to loss. If we are not to do so, the person taking this vow will see that he produces his own cloth. This means that we spin in every home and also start working on the looms. With folded hands, we may entreat the weavers who are still alive and help them to revive their craft. Even in days gone by, there were innumerable women who used to spin in their homes. Such women are still alive and we can entreat them as well to resume their very useful work. If we do this, our vow of swadeshi will prove its full worth and we shall be able to reap the best fruits from it.

I do not want to take more of your time. I hope you will bear in mind the request I have made. The first thing is to understand the meaning of satyagraha and explain it to others; the second thing is to take the pledge of swadeshi and persuade others to take it and see that they keep it. This means that we ourselves produce cloth or help others to produce it. By doing this, we shall be putting no one to loss. I am thankful to you for having listened to my humble request with so much patience and in such silence, and I shall be more thankful still if you act on it, in case it has appealed to you.

[From Gujarati]
Gujarati, 1-6-1919

56. FOREWORD TO "INDIAN HOME RULE"

BOMBAY,
May 28, 1919

I have re-read this booklet[1] more than once. The value at the present moment lies in re-printing it as it is. But if I had to revise it, there is only one word I would alter in accordance with a promise made to an English friend. She took exception to my use of the word "prostitute" in speaking of the Parliament. Her fine taste recoiled from the indelicacy of the expression. I remind the reader that the booklet purports to be a free translation of original which is in Gujarati.

After years of endeavour to put into practice the views expressed in the following pages, I feel that the way shown therein is the only true way to swaraj. Satyagraha—the law of love—is the law of life. Departure from it leads to disintegration. A firm adherence to it leads to regeneration.

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Home Rule (Ganesh & Co., 4th Ed.)

57. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

BOMBAY,
Wednesday [*May 28, 1919*]

MY DEAR CHILD,

Mahadev has made himself ill by his self-will. A self-willed friend, brother, son or secretary often fails at the critical moment. Mahadev is all these four rolled into one. At first I thought I would revenge myself upon him by fasting. In that case you would have come down upon me with that remarkable text from the Bible "Vengeance is mine". I am therefore adopting a less drastic method—doing the letter writing myself. It is a pleasurable sensation for me to do continuous writing for any length of time. My hand too works fairly steadily.

I wish you would not torture yourself so for not sharing the

[1] First published in 1910; *vide* "Hind Swaraj", 22-11-1909.

sorrows of those you love. For you to finish your agreement[1] is severe enough self-restraint. It is absolutely necessary. If you have real love, as I know you have, it must silently but more than less surely affect your present surroundings. In thought no act is lost, says the *Bhagavad Gita*. You are therefore doing your duty to the full by patiently and conscientiously doing your present work. Even the fresh energy you will get on the hills is to be used for the sake of your work. Why then worry?

The swadeshi vow extends to personal clothing only. I dare not ask you to deny yourself the use of Danish gifts from loved ones. It is enough if in future you buy only swadeshi cloth and let your other things also be swadeshi so far as possible. We shall discuss greater changes when we meet again.

Mr. Andrews passed a few days with me. He is now in Delhi. Do tell Sundaram I was pained to hear of his illness. He must make himself healthy and strong.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary Courtesy: Narayan Desai

58. LETTER TO VALJI DESAI

BOMBAY,
Wednesday [*May 28, 1919*][2]

BHAISHRI VALJI[3],

I have been wanting to write to you. I find it possible to do so today. May your married life be happy and prove beneficial to the country. Let me know to whom you got married. I trust you are quite well.

I should like you to write something for *Young India*.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: C.W. 3164. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

[1] With the Danish Mission

[2] The date is supplied from the postal cancellation mark.

[3] Lecturer, Gujarat College, Ahmedabad; resigned from service and joined Gandhiji; translated Satyagraha in South Africa and other books

59. NOTE ON THE INFORMAL PRIVATE SATYAGRAHA CONFERENCE[1]

BOMBAY,
May 30, 1919

This Conference met in Bombay on the 28th instant. It was attended by delegates from Sind, Ahmedabad, Allahabad and Lucknow.

Mr. Gandhi explained the situation about the Punjab and said that in view of the impending abolition of martial law, time had arrived to consider the position from the satyagraha standpoint. He added that technically speaking the Satyagraha Pledge on the Rowlatt legislation could not cover any contemplated action regarding the Punjab. Every satyagrahi, therefore, had to consider the Punjab question on its own merits untrammelled by the Rowlatt Pledge. Mr. Gandhi wanted the advice of those present on his proposal that he should approach the Viceroy with a view to the appointment of an independent and impartial committee of enquiry to examine the causes of the Punjab disturbances, the administration of martial law, and to revise the sentences passed by the Martial Law Tribunal and that, failing to secure the appointment of such a committee after carrying on a public agitation to the extent of an appeal to the Secretary of State for India, satyagraha should be taken up. Mr. Gandhi said that he did not fear any outbreak of violence upon satyagraha (civil disobedience) being started, whether on the Punjab matter or on the Rowlatt legislation. His advice would be in either case to confine civil disobedience to the satyagrahis for the time being of the Bombay Presidency. There should be no hartal on any account whatsoever in connection with the movement, not even on prominent satyagrahis being arrested for civil disobedience. No demonstration of any kind whatsoever should be made whilst there was the slightest danger of violence being committed by anybody. Such undemonstrative satyagraha would be almost the purest form. To be able to offer such satyagraha required faith on the part of satyagrahis in the efficacy of silent suffering. Mr. Gandhi anticipated no difficulty in the resumption of civil disobedience on the Rowlatt legislation, and he

[1] This was dated May 30, marked "Not for Publication" and was signed "M. K. Gandhi".

said in answer to a question that it was possible that satyagraha on the Punjab matter might have to be undertaken after two weeks at the earliest, but he was not without hope that the Viceroy would grant the request for the appointment of a committee of inquiry. After some discussion, with the exception of Mr. Jamnadas, all present approved of Mr. Gandhi's proposal. Mr. Jamnadas[1], whilst he liked the idea itself, could not approve of the proposal, as he felt certain that imprisonment of Mr. Gandhi or any prominent satyagrahi would be followed by violence.

A letter from Sannyasi Swami Shraddhanandji was read withdrawing himself from the movement and giving the information that the Delhi Committee was disbanded nearly a month ago. A letter was also read from Mr. Hassan Imam who, whilst he was prepared to abide by the decision that Mr. Gandhi might arrive at, himself opined that, in view of the past experience, it would be wise to drop civil disobedience.

Mr. Gandhi has written to the Private Secretary to His Excellency.

From a photostat: S.N. 6628

60. LETTER TO S. R. HIGNELL

LABURNUM ROAD
BOMBAY,
May 30, 1919

DEAR MR. HIGNELL[2],

It is within His Excellency's knowledge that I have made no public declaration regarding the events in the Punjab. Even at the risk of being misunderstood by my countrymen, I have refrained from saying anything in public because I had no reliable data to enable me to form an opinion. I was not prepared to condemn martial law as such; I was unwilling to do anything calculated needlessly to irritate local authority; and lastly I was not prepared to infer from Sir Michael O'Dwyer's[3] reported severe administration during peace period that martial law measures would be unduly hard.

[1] He resigned from the Satyagraha Sabha due to these differences.
[2] Private Secretary to the Viceroy
[3] Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, 1913-9

But the virtual abolition of martial law in the Punjab in so far as it was the result of mob violence of April last makes it possible to refer to its administration without any impropriety. I must own too that the official explanation regarding flogging and the bar against legal practitioners living outside the Punjab, together with the inspired justification therefor appearing in the *Civil and Military Gazette*, fill me with the greatest misgivings. The official communiques have not been overfrank. Some of them are remarkable for omissions and admissions. The secrecy that has surrounded the events in the Punjab has given rise to much hostile criticism. The complete gagging of the Indian Press has created the greatest resentment. And the heavy sentences passed against the accused persons there have filled the public mind with consternation.

No one can dispute the right of the State to declare martial law under certain circumstances, but it will be conceded on behalf of the State that it should justify to the public the measures adopted under it, specially under circumstances described above. I therefore venture to associate myself with the request made by the Press for an impartial and independent committee of inquiry to examine the causes of disturbances in the Punjab and the administration of martial law in the Province, including the sentences passed by the Martial Law Tribunal. I am sure that if such a committee is appointed, it would calm the public mind and restore confidence (much shaken by the events in the Punjab) in the good intentions of the Government. If the principle of granting such a committee of inquiry be accepted, as I hope it will, I trust that the committee to be appointed will be composed of such official and non-official members as to inspire full confidence.

May I ask you to place this letter before His Excellency and to favour me with an early reply.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6629

61. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
May 30, 1919

MY DEAR HENRY,

I know you nowadays only through your work in the columns of *India*. I had a sweet letter from Millie[1] which I cannot separately reply to for the present. Through the weakness of the heart, my hands shake. I have just enough energy to go through the struggle. I hope you are making the two ends meet and that you are all keeping well. Do please tell Pater, Mater, Maud and Sally that I often think of them and their many kindnesses. The Ashram is making steady progress and so is the Rashtriya School.

Now for business:

Herewith my letter to the Viceroy and notes on the Satyagraha Conference. None of these is meant for publication.

Mrs. Naidu is coming there shortly for her health. She is a wonderful woman. Do come close to her.

I see that Mr. Montagu has made a speech approving of the Rowlatt legislation, and defending it. Well, he may defend it as much as he pleases. It has got to go. The study of the present struggle is a wonderful repetition of that of South Africa. There are some who will die in the attempt to secure its repeal. The Government want to show that they can afford to disregard public opinion. We must show that they cannot do so. In soul-force *v.* brute force, there can only be one result. Only soul's forces are all so scattered and faithless. The brute is well organized and disciplined. Though therefore the issue is certain, the battle is naturally being prolonged.

It is likely that Mr. Montagu will tell the army of delegates that is going there to choose between Reforms and the repeal of the Rowlatt legislation. I hope, you will tell them what their choice should be. Repeal is Reform. No reform is worth anything so long as the bureaucracy remains unbending.

I hope, you have sought out Mr. Horniman if he has not sought you out. Please keep him informed of all the doings here. Mahadev

[1] Wife of addressee

writes to him and Mr. Shastriar every week. He is on the sick list. And I am too exhausted to write any more letters just now.

With love,

Yours,

BHAI

From a photostat: S.N. 6627

62. TRIBUTE TO B. G. TILAK BOMBAY

BOMBAY,
May 31, 1919

A public meeting was held on Saturday evening at Shantaram's Chawl, Girgaum, Bombay, under the presidency of Mr. Gandhi, for the purpose of expressing appreciation of the services rendered by Mr. Tilak to India and calling upon his countrymen to contribute to the expenses incurred by him in his case against Sir Valentine Chirol. The following is a full translation of his speech in Gujarati:

I am thankful to the organizers of the meeting for asking me to preside. The goal of every thinking Indian must be the same, though the methods for its attainment may be different and it is a matter known to all that my ways differ from Mr. Tilak's. And yet I would wish to heartily associate myself with every occasion to pay a tribute to his great services to the country, his self-sacrifice, and his learning—and with the present occasion in especial. The nation does not honour him any the less for his defeat in his case against Sir Valentine Chirol. It honours him, if that were possible, all the more, and this meeting is but a token of it. I have come to offer my hearty support to it.

Truly speaking, I am in no love with fighting in law courts. Victory there does not depend on the truth of your case. Any experienced *vakil* will bear me out that it depends more on the judge, the counsel, and the venue of the court. In English there is a proverb that it is always the man with the longest purse that wins. And there is a good deal of truth in this, as there is exaggeration in it. The Lokamanya's defeat therefore made me only wish he was a satyagrahi like me, so that he would have saved himself the bother of victory or defeat. And when I saw that far from losing heart at the result of his case, far from being disappointed, he faced the English public with cool resignation and expressed his views to them with equal

fearlessness, I was proud of him. He has been in his life acting to the very letter up to what he has believed to be the essential teaching of the *Gita*. He devotes himself entirely to what he believes to be his karma, and leaves the result thereof to God. Who could withhold admiration from one so great?

I think it our duty to contribute to the expenses of his suit. He surely did not fight for his personal ends, he fought in the public interests. I am sure, therefore, that you will accept the resolution that is going to be proposed this evening to find for Mr. Tilak the expenses of his suit, and to express our gratefulness for his services to the country.[1]

Young India, 7-6-1919

63. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM,
June 1, 1919

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your letter. Surely, I do dictate letters for you. Hardly does a month pass without one. You have done well in taking up service with Mohanlal. I know, of course, that you will not abuse his generosity, his goodness and his love which you describe so well. But I want more, that you should be twice as painstaking and careful at a place such as his and make some return for that love. There is as much disadvantage as advantage in serving under a relative or afriend. The advantage is that we may have certain facilities in such a place which would not be available elsewhere; the disadvantage is that we may abuse the facilities because of his goodness and yield to the temptation of shirking work. I should like you to be most careful. I also want to say, at the same time, that I have no fear on your account. I know from experience that you deserve to be loved and am sure that you will earn nothing but a good name there. Attend to everything in the shop as if the shop were your very own. If there is anything about

[1] Sarojini Naidu read out in English the following resolution: "This meeting puts on record its appreciation of the selfless and devoted services rendered by Lokamanya Tilak to the Motherland during the last forty years of his life, and calls upon his countrymen generously to contribute to the Tilak Purse Fund started with the object of defraying the expenses incurred by him in the prosecution of a case, which was undertaken by him purely in the public interest."

which you do not know what to do, ask others at once. Never try, out of a false sense of shame, to conceal your ignorance in any matter. When I first went to South Africa, I did not know what a P. Note meant. I managed to conceal my ignorance for a few days; but, as days passed, I became more nervous and saw that unless I knew what a P. Note meant, I would not understand Dada Abdulla Sheth's case. And so I declared my ignorance without losing any more time. When I knew that a P. Note meant a Promissory Note, I burst out laughing, not at my ignorance but at my false sense of shame, for I could not find the phrase P. Note even in a dictionary. Hence the royal road for us, if there is anything which we do not know, is immediately to consult someone and be instructed. It will do no harm if people think us foolish, but it will do real harm if, in our ignorance, we commit an error.

I hope you are keeping well. Be at peace there and earn anything you can in honest ways. Let me know whenever there is anything you would like to tell me or anything you desire. Ba often tells me that you have grown up, that I should have you here and get you married. I have emphatically refused to call you over here and told her that, if any time you wanted to marry, you would tell me so plainly. I have also told her that I have asked you to be frank with me. This has reassured her. I have often said that, in these difficult times, when India is so poor and in such wretched plight, every Indian has an especial duty not to marry, a duty one has in a time of distress. Hence, ordinarily I would want you to exercise self-control and observe inviolate *brahmacharya* for life. With the passing of time, desire will grow weaker, your physical and mental strength will increase and you will forget the thought of marriage. But I know this is applying my standard to you. I have promised you that, whatever my own ideas on the subject, if you think of marrying, I shall give all help I can. You should, therefore, have confidence in me and let me know, without fear, if you want to marry. In this matter, forget that I am your father and treat me as a good friend and see whether I pass the test.

I am keeping well enough for my work. I take goat's milk twice and fruits thrice. There is less physical energy but the brain does not seem to have lost any of its power. I am occupied with some work or other from six in the morning to ten in the evening. I cannot do now without a nap of 30 to 40 minutes during the day. Despite so much work, the brain is not particularly tired at ten in the evening. The

struggle is on. Civil disobedience will be shortly resumed. I am getting some new experiences, besides the same old ones. Hope and disappointment have been nearly in the same measure.

You write frequently enough, but Manilal seems to be lethargic. I have heard nothing about his case, either from him or from you. I am eager to know how he defended himself. Though I do intend to write to Manilal, I may well fail to do so and, therefore, you should send this letter on to him in any case. I shall be happy to have photographs of you two brothers. Do you read anything? Do you say your morning prayers? If you have not been saying them, I remind you again to start doing so unfailingly, for I am convinced that the practice is most beneficial. You will know its value in the hour of difficulty; actually, the value of morning prayers and *sandhya*[1], gone through thoughtfully, is realized from day to day. They are so much food you serve to the soul. Just as without food the body gets emaciated, so also does the soul famish without the right kind of food.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

64. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

June 1, 1919

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I heard about your having gone to Vijapur on my arrival here. You did well, though I was quite eager to see you. My remark about yarn was not meant as a rebuke. How can I rebuke you? It was intended to make you more alert, that you may put on spinning the same value as I do. What I wanted to say, and would still say, is that we should be ready to curtail as many of the other activities as possible. Who should curtail which, is for you to consider and decide. To be sure, my initial demand was that you should get plenty of cloth woven out of indigenous yarn, but I thought I had corrected it in the letter I wrote from Surat. On further reflection, I realized that this earlier demand was mistaken. We should drop or curtail, one by one, those of our activities which we think others are likely to take up; and pay

[1] Prayer with set formula

more attention to those in which others have less faith, or none, but which are all the same essential. Spinning is one such activity. Besides, the more experience I gain, the more I realize that machinery will keep us in permanent slavery, and I find that what I said about it in *Hind Swaraj* is literally true. About satyagraha, too, I have been discovering new truths. I see that, for the weakest as for the strongest, it is a weapon of the utmost purity. There will be many business men to attend to the weaving of cloth from indigenous mill-made yarn. I shall be able to get others to do that work sooner, but hand-spinning we ourselves should start. The day before yesterday, some Punjabis came to see me. They told me that, on their side, women of all castes, high and low, spin at home and get weavers to make cloth out of the yarn. Thus, the cost of yarn comes to no more than that of cotton. The fact is worth reflecting over carefully. You did well in taking Keshu with you. If he learns spinning there, he will be able to teach it to others when he gets back. If anyone from among us picks it up there, our needs will be supplied.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

65. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

BOMBAY,
[After *June 1, 1919*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I hope you got the two letters I addressed to you at Vijapur from there. They contain the reply to your question. Your main work, at present, is to look after weaving and agriculture. I have no doubt in my mind that you should give some of your time to weaving. If you approve of the changes I have introduced, I think theweaving will be much better. If we can revive the craft, we shall have completed one task.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 7329

[1] One of the two letters mentioned by Gandhiji in this letter was written from Ahmedabad on June 1, 1919; *vide* the preceding item.

66. LETTER TO SONJA SCHLESIN

June 2, 1919

DEAR MISS SCHLESIN,

Ramdas advises me that you have passed your teacher's examination with some distinction. You do not want me to congratulate you, I know. I am simply anxious that you should get through your final examination, because I expect you one of these days to take your place in India. The summer months are trying enough, but the winter months give you sufficient compensation. I hope you had all you wanted without any inconvenience. You will not hesitate to come to me for more, if necessary.

Satyagraha is going on merrily. Civil disobedience is expected to commence very soon. How I often wish you were here for more reasons than one! But I must plough the lonely furrow. It often makes me sad when I think of all my helpers of South Africa. I have no Doke here. I have no Kallenbach. Don't know where he is at the present moment. Polak in England. No counterpart of Kachalia or Sorabji. Impossible to get the second edition of Rustomji. Strange as it may appear, I feel lonelier here than in South Africa. This does not mean that I am without co-workers. But between the majority of them and me, there is not that perfect correspondence which used to exist in South Africa. I do not enjoy the same sense of security which you all gave me there. I do not know the people here; nor they, me. This is all gloomy, if I were to brood over it. But I do not. I have not the time for it. I have a few moments of leisure just now. Ramdas' letter reminds me of your existence in South Africa, and I am giving myself the momentary pleasure of sharing my innermost thoughts with you. But now no more.

From a photostat: S.N. 6635

67. SPEECH ON SWADESHI VOW, BOMBAY

June 4, 1919

Gandhiji presided at the inaugural ceremony of "The Hindi Vastra Prasarak Mandali" at the Morarji Gokuldas Hall, Bombay, on June 4, 1919.

Mr. Gandhi explained in a few words what Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer[1] had said in English, for the benefit of those who did not know English. He said that unless they—every one of them—resolved to use only swadeshi goods as much as possible, there could not be any hope for the country. If they could take the swadeshi vow, so much the better; but if they could not, then they must firmly resolve to use swadeshi goods as much as possible. They must also resolve to use Indian-made cotton goods, so that not only India's weavers might get employment, but their wives and children also. He hoped they would take to heart all that Mr. Aiyer had told them that evening and act accordingly.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-6-1919

68. LETTER TO ALI BROTHERS

BOMBAY,
June 5, 1919

I have your letters and I was delighted to receive them. I am surprised that Mr. Ghate never received my letter.[2] I quite agree with you that so long as I cannot convince you, you must act according as you feel right. I can only add to what I have already said that I have discussed the contents of your letter to the Viceroy with several friends and they all practically without exception agree that the statement of claim does not represent the irreducible minimum and that withdrawal from India is not a practical step. With your permission, I shall venture to discuss the Koranic precedent you are using to the support of your proposed withdrawal from India. The circumstances that attended the Prophet's flight were totally different from those that attend your contemplated action. He took with him the whole of the Mahomedans to Medina Sheriff. It was his satyagraha against the un-believers of Mecca Sheriff. The plant of Islam was then extremely delicate and required protection from storms from within

[1] 1879- ; Dewan of Travancore; Vice-Chancellor, Benares Hindu University
[2] *Vide* "Letter to O. S. Ghate", 8-5-l919.

and from without. Rather than court what might have been certain destruction for his little band of stalwarts, he withdrew himself and them to a safe retreat till the ignorant wrath of the unbelievers of Mecca had spent itself. I can see absolutely no parallel between the case of the Prophet and yours. But I must not presume unduly upon your kindness. I have no right whatsoever to enter into a religious discussion with you based on an interpretation of the Koran. I can claim no intimacy with its teachings that you rightly possess. I have made bold to say as much as I have because I am fortified in my interpretation by the agreement of some of our common friends. Do please however give the matter further prayerful consideration. I need hardly assure you that I shall labour for a proper adjustment of the Mahomedan claims as adumbrated in my letter to the Viceroy[1] and I have little doubt that if all the leading Mahomedans unitedly presented the claim in becoming language, it will create a world opinion in its favour such that the League dare not resist it and England must surely press before it.

I hope you are all keeping well.

With my love to you all.

N. A. I. : Home : Political: September 1919, Nos. 406-28-A (Confi-dential)

69. LETTER TO N. P. COWIE

BOMBAY,
June 5 [*1919*]

DEAR MR. COWIE,

I beg to remind you of my letter of . . .[2] regarding orders passed by the Sind Authorities against certain subjects of Kathiawar States. I shall be obliged if you will kindly favour me with an early reply.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6636

[1] *Vide* "Letter to J. L. Maffey", 5-5-1919.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to N. P, Cowie" 25-5-1919.

70. LETTER TO B. G. HORNIMAN

[BOMBAY,]
June 6, 1919

DEAR MR. HORNIMAN,

I was much relieved to hear of your safe arrival. I was deeply hurt to read Mr. Montagu's reference to you. I dare say you have vindicated yourself. You will see my reference[1] to the matter in *Young India*.

Mrs. Naidu will tell you all about the situation here. There will be no peace in India until the Rowlatt legislation is withdrawn. Mahomedan sentiment must be appeased and the Punjab sentences revised. Will you write for *Young India*?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

71. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
[*June 6, 1919*]

MY DEAR HENRY,

I see you have been wrestling with Cotton. I think he has floored you with his quotation from *The Servant of India*. But both you and I have survived the fall. I rejoice (almost) in the wreckage about me. Shraddhanandji gone. Mr. Jamnadas has left. Some others may follow suit. These occurrences do not baffle me as does violence from the people. But I approach the 1st of July with confidence. The Government are prepared for emergencies. And I shall avoid all demonstration. Civil disobedience will be intensive, not extensive, this time. Please make it clear to Mr. Montagu that there can be no peace in India without the withdrawal of Rowlatt legislation. He is badly served by the permanent officials here. Take the horrible misrepresentations about Mr. Horniman. The real reason for his deportation will probably be never given. Read *Young India* carefully. Most of the

[1] *Vide* "Mr. Horniman" 7-6-1919.

leading articles are mine[1]. I am virtually editing it. See the Sind article.[2] More revelations are yet to come. If Mr. Montagu wants to do justice, he has to do things with better eyes than those of the officials who, wishing to support a system to which they owe their present position, cannot be expected to give him an impartial version of affairs. Rowlatt Act must go. Mahomedans should be satisfied and substantial reforms granted. For the Punjab tragedy, an impartial committee with the power to revise sentences is an absolute necessity. Give these 4 things, and peace can be had in this unhappy land. There will be no plenty so long as India is exploited for Britain's sake. Take the second increase in the rate of exchange. It means a loss to India ofcrores of rupees without any corresponding gain. It means a bonus to Lancashire and to the Civilians. But these matters can be adjusted if people's minds are eased by the relief above mentioned. Rowlatt legislation represents the Government determination to defy public opinion. The attitude is intolerable on the eve of Reforms.

This will be presented to you by Mrs. Naidu. She is a wonderful woman. I have compared her to Mirabai. I have seen nothing to alter that opinion. She will give all my messages of love to you and the family.

Yours,

BHAI

PS.

Will you contribute to *Young India*? I wish you would.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

72. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

[BOMBAY,]
June 6, 1919

DEAR MR. SHASTRIAR,

I would like you to glance at the leading columns of *Young India*. Most of the leading articles are either written by me or under my supervision. I can vouch for all the facts stated therein. The state of things revealed there shows the true official attitude. Rowlatt

[1] Only articles signed by Gandhiji or proved as his from other evidence are reproduced in this volume.

[2] *Vide* "Sind Illegality", Young India, 28-5-1919.

legislation is its embodiment. Hence my unbending opposition. The Government do not need it to stamp out revolutionary crime. They need it to harass people. The administration of the Defence of India Act shows the way people can be harassed. There can be—will be—no peace in the land unless that legislation is withdrawn. Mr. Montagu's defence of it is untenable. His remarks about Mr. Horniman are totally unjust and untrue. The Punjab horrors have produced a burning letter[1] from the Poet. I personally think it is premature. But he cannot be blamed for it. May I hope that you and other friends will refuse to take the Reforms if they are not given to a people made contented by removing substantial causes of discontent?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

[PS.]

I hope you have benefited by the change.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

73. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

BOMBAY,
Friday [*June 6, 1919*][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have your letter. You must have received the two letters I addressed to you at Vijapur. Let not the women or the men take fright. In the Ashram, we shall use only hand-spun yarn for weaving but, till we are able to make wearable dhotis or saris from such yarn, we shall get them woven from outside with mill yarn. The idea is that in the Ashram we should not spend our time in weaving cloth with mill yarn. Only thus shall we realize our aim, that we should restrict ourselves, as soon as practicable, to the use of home-spun yarn for our own cloth.

I have already written to you to say that we certainly cannot give any money to aunt[3] to help her repair the house.

[1] Rabindranath Tagore's letter to the Viceroy renouncing his knighthood was published in Young India, 7-6-1919.

[2] The letter seems to have been written a few days after Maganlal's visit to Vijapur referred to in "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 1-6-1919.

[3] Gandhiji's sister Gokibehn

I have, personally, no doubt at all that with their little hands children will be able to spin best. See that everyone learns it with the utmost speed. I would say that, if Ranchhodbhai gets a fixed monthly pay, he should not charge any commission. I do not know what his understanding has been so far. Settle the matter as you think best. If, henceforth, he does not follow the course I have suggested, I think he will have to give up the work there. I am sure that, if Ranchhodbhai works from an entirely business point of view, we cannot spend public money. If he wants to earn something more than a bare living, he should do some independent business. We would buy what yarn we needed. What is the arrangement with Gangabehn? I do not remember having agreed on any such arrangement with her. She works entirely in a spirit of service. I should like her to take a little for this work, enough to meet her needs. But I do not know if she does even this.

It seems quite right to charge Mavji's pay to the Famine Committee. Do in this matter as Vallabhbhai or Indulal may advise.

See that Chhotalal and Jagannath learn spinning immediately. These two and Mavji should be employed wholly on weaving.

You hope to raise the money for the Ashram expenses through agriculture. Work on it as much as necessary for this purpose and no more. Please consider it our duty to give most of our time at present to spinning and weaving, for we do not lose to other countries crores of rupees because of agriculture. Thanks to the disappearance of weaving, we lost sixty crores during last year alone. Certainly, we do not want to give up agriculture; in fact we want to improve and develop it. But we cannot work on two things at a time and, therefore, it will be proper to attend to what is more important for the immediate present. Even then, you may certainly work on agriculture as much as it is possible to do with hired men, without loss to us. Ask the boys to give some of their time to this work. I hope you have followed my point. We shall also be generally in difficulty for money. I can ask for only as much as I may get with little effort. Personally, I very much like the changes we have introduced in regard to weaving. They will also help us to be free, to a very great extent, from difficulties about money.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S.N. 7326

74. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[Before *June 7, 1919*][1]

DEAR MAHADEV,

I have sent with the peon the lead article about Horniman which will please you. He came with the newspapers. He must have seen you. It is good you took notes. See that there are no mistakes and the article is well composed.

I have received a letter from Simla that I should send the reply at my earliest. Its language raises hopes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9855

75. MR. ANDREWS' APPEAL[2]

June 7, 1919

There are obvious difficulties in the way of Mr. Andrews' appeal on behalf of the Punjab prisoners being taken up by the public. There is no appeal to the Privy Council in the ordinary course against decisions of Martial Law Tribunals. We understand from an eminent lawyer that a prisoner sentenced by such a Court might appeal to the King-in-Council who might—ask the judicial committee of the Privy Council to review the Martial Law Court proceedings. The King has naturally to be advised by his ministers. The first act therefore has to be of a political nature in other words the decisions of the King-in-Council will be influenced by what the Viceroy might have to say in the first instance. It was therefore better to move H. E. the Viceroy to grant a committee of inquiry with power to revise the sentences passed by the Martial Law Tribunal. The petition to the King-in-Council can only be from the prisoners concerned; the appeal to the Viceroy goes from the public. The latter is in every way therefore a more expeditious and effective process though the former if successful undoubtedly carries greater weight by reason of the

[1] The date has been inferred from the reference to the article about B. G. Horniman which appeared in Young India, 7-6-1919; *vide* "Mr. Horniman", 7-6-1919.

[2] This appealed among the editorial notes in Young India, 7-6-1919.

eminent traditions of the august body examining the cases. No matter what method is adopted it is common cause that a way out of the difficulty must be found and the affairs under martial law duly investigated and overhauled. Mr. Montagu seems to have promised as much. The public must see to it that what is given is the substance of an impartial and representative committee not the shadow of a whitewashing committee composed of members enjoying no confidence of the public.

From a photostat: S.N. 6724

76. MR. HORNIMAN

Mr. Montagu's references to Mr. Horniman bear out the remarks we made in our last issue[1] about the difficulty of getting justice at the centre, where only one side of questions presented there is really represented. Mr. Montagu made out a complete case for Mr. Horniman's deportation on statements which he assumed to be true, but which in reality are not true.

> When Mr. Horniman began to use his paper, in the midst of riots, to fan the flame and published an accusation that British troops had used soft-nosed bullets in Delhi and his paper was distributed free to British troops in Bombay, hoping to excite insubordination, it was high time that he left India. In normal times he would have been tried but in view of the riots prompt, swift action for restoration of order was necessary.

It would be difficult to pack more mis-statements into two sentences than Mr. Montagu has managed to into the above two. There were no riots in Bombay, he never fanned the flame, he actually advised suspension of civil disobedience when it was in danger of being unscrupulously used. The statement regarding soft-nosed bullets, as Mr. Jinnah's cable to Mr. Montagu shows, would have been promptly withdrawn had the censor allowed the telegram correcting the error to be sent or delivered without delay; lastly, the *Chronicle* was not distributed free, or at all, to British troops, and there could be no question of hoping to excite insubordination. That Mr. Montagu, when he uttered the mis-statements, did not know them to be such, does not lessen the severity of the punishment inflicted on Mr. Horniman and the public of Bombay. His Excellency the Governor

[1] *Vide* the editorial entitled "Indians in South Africa" published in Young India on June 4, 1919.

can, and we hope he will, at least correct the gross mis-statements into which Mr. Montagu has been unknowingly betrayed. It is the clear duty of the Bombay public not to rest satisfied until the wrong done is righted by the order against Mr. Horniman being withdrawn.

Young India, 7-6-1919

77. LETTER TO A YOUNG JOURNALIST

BOMBAY,
June 7, 1919

It is dangerous to call me "Revered Father", as you will see presently. I have no doubt about your prodigality. The very slovenliness of your writing is eloquent proof of it and it certainly requires a prodigal son to write to his adopted "Revered Father" a letter containing almost as many corrections as there are lines in it written anyhow and unrevised. A son frugal in his adjectives, obedient in reality, would write to his father, especially when he is deliberately adopted, a careful letter written in his best handwriting. If he has not enough time, he will write only a line, but he would write it neatly.

Your article on Mr. Jamnadas was ill-conceived and hurriedly written. It could not be printed in *Young India*, nor is it worth printing in any other paper. You will not reform Jamnadas by letters of that character, nor will you benefit the public thereby. Your second article is not much better.... You really lose yourself in the exuberance of your own verbosity. If you will give more attention to the thought than a mere lengthening out of your story, you will produce readable matter.

Why have you inflicted certificates on me? How can they influence me when I know you so well? I neither consider you "well-informed" nor "forceful" as a writer and Mr. Menon must know very little of journalistic capacity if he really considered that you were able to acquit yourself with credit in any journalistic capacity. Now you see how difficult it will be for you to please me and yet it will be easy enough. If you will take pains in future, I would certainly take you as helper for *Young India* in spite of your many limitations as soon as you are free from your Ahmedabad obligation. I think you owe it to Mr. Chatterjee and the A.P. to finish the work you have. You can even help from Ahmedabad by giving me bright and graphic notes on the trials, not in the nature of carping criticism of the

Government or of the local legal talent. You should try to give pen pictures of men and manners. Surely there must be many humourous touches about the proceedings; but probably you will have little time for writing anything for me at the present moment.

Yours sincerely,

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

78. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

BOMBAY,
June 7, 1919

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. In my view, no one from Calcutta or elsewhere on that side is likely to order khadi from us. A few here and there who may want it will order it from Bombay or Ahmedabad. I do not think it at all right that we should add five per cent. Our labour must be altogether free. Only so shall we be able to persuade the Swadeshi Store to be content with a profit of five per cent. How can we charge profit when trying to popularize a new thing? We get food to eat all right. If you have not sent any stock to Bombay, do not till you hear from me. It will be better to do so only after I have a talk with Vithaldas. I have heard that, in the old Swadeshi Store, no one looks at our khadi. If this is so, we shall have to think about the matter. You may use anyone you like, but I hope you will not use Chhotalal or Jagannath. If you do not get from the Swadeshi Store the amount due from it, let me know and I shall arrange.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 6638

79. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

BOMBAY,
Saturday [*June 7, 1919*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I could not write this to you yesterday. There was a letter from Ba today, in which she says that Keshu has again fallen ill and Rukhi, too. There must be reasons for this illness. You alone can discover them. If children repeatedly fall ill, how can they go forward? It is likely that something is wrong with the water there. It seems that unsuitability of water and similar factors which will not upset those who do only manual work may upset mental workers. It is not very likely that there is any other reason, apart from unclean water, or unsuitable or excessive food.

Chi. Shamaldas has decided to go over there. Shanti will also go with him. The intention is that he should become an expert in the matter of cloth. He will acquire the necessary knowledge about looms. He will go and bring his mother in a few days. See if you can rent for him some rooms in Miyakhan's buildings. Failing this, if he can get something else in that locality, that will suit him. Shanti will also go with him. If the arrangement suits all, I for one would be very happy. I think Shamaldas should be able to work.

There is a gentleman named Chandrashankar who will also go there to see our weaving factory. He is the man who has supplied the money and arranged for the spinning of cotton here till this day. I think the work here has been fast enough, but not sound. The gentleman who has undertaken it has his heart in it all right, but does not know much. In his ignorance, he has squandered the money. The yarn produced does not seem likely to be useful. It will be some time before weaving is taken in hand. We should have a good number of indigenous looms at our disposal. There must be plenty of them in Kathiawad. In Umreth, too, there are some, I know. All of them have not started working. Show everything to Bhai Chandrashankar there. Let him also see how yarn is sprayed with water. Afterwards, suggest to him that he should go and see things at Vijapur. From there he will

[1] Evidently, this letter preceded the letters to Maganlal dated June 12 and June 15, in both of which Gandhiji refers to Shamaldas's plan of taking up work in the Ashram.

proceed to Kota. I have advised him to spend further only after he has acquainted himself with everything.

The khadi dispatched to the old Swadeshi Store has been bought up for the new Store. The money will be credited in account here against the goods, The other amounts, too, will be paid in. In all, Rs. 10,000 will be paid in. The stock lying there may be packed and kept aside. They say that the Store here does not have enough room for all that stock and so it should be kept there. Send me the invoice, with a description of the goods and the quantity of each item. I shall hand it over to Bhai Vithaldas. You will not then be entitled to sell this stock. Pack it all into a bale, with a label on each item, describing hand-spun and hand-woven goods as No. 1, those with hand-spun woof and mill-produced warp as No. 2, and those with both warp and woof mill-produced as No. 3, and stating the length in yards. He will buy up whatever we produce. It is not desirable, I think, to produce any more stock of No. 3. Vithaldas is ready to sell the goods at the prices we charge. He does not want to earn a single pie by way of profit. On other goods, too, he will charge a profit of no more than five per cent. We also should not charge any profit. This is the only way in which we can popularize pure swadeshi. Vithaldas also wants us to get some khadi dyed red for *choliyu*[1]. With all these facilities, do you see any need for selling stocks from there directly? Vithaldas has undertaken to tell the manager of the old Store that he should directlyremit [to you], from that Store, the payment for bills in respect of goods other than khadi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 7021

[1] A kind of cloth used by women in Kathiawar

80. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

BOMBAY,
[After *June 7, 1919*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I think it is proper that Chhotalal and Jagannath are wholly occupied in weaving. You are doing right in training up Kantilal and Ramnandan. I am trying here to see what can be done about the stocks which have accumulated. I should like to see even Kantilal and Ramnandan set to work exclusively on the loom. I should like it still more if a paid employee from outside were put on this work. From now on, you should not accept cloth from outside either, if it is not hand-spun and hand-woven. You may, if necessary, make an exception in favour of the people at Umreth.

I shall speak to someone about the money due from the Swadeshi Store.

Mavji Jetani was to see about that thing; what happened in the matter? If he has not succeeded, what do you propose to do?

Have you received the money for the stocks sent to Meghani? It is a good practice not to send any goods on credit as far as possible. About direct bargains for wholesale buyers, I have already given my opinion. You may arrange them if you can do so without engaging the Ashram men too much in this work

The amount in the Fast Fund[2] may as well remain where it is. You must be getting interest on it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 7325

[1] The remarks about Jagannath and Chhotalal and the Swadeshi Store probably refer to what Chhaganlal may have said in reply to "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 7-6-1919.

[2] The reference is not traceable.

81. LETTER TO S. R. HIGNELL

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
June 9, 1919

DEAR MR. HIGNELL,

I thank you for your letters in reply to my letter[1] suggesting the appointment of a committee regarding the Punjab disturbances, and I thank you, too, for your inquiry about my health which is tolerable.

I have just been studying the case of Babu Kalinath Roy, Editor of *The Tribune* of Lahore. I have read the articles on which, and on which alone, he was tried under Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code. A study of the case has left me with the impression that a very great wrong has been done to Babu Kalinath Roy. I have gone through the file of *The Tribune* from the 1st of April and I have not seen another newspaper to surpass it for sobriety of statement and self-restraint. I commend the case to the very serious attention of His Excellency the Viceroy. A glaring injustice like this ought not to be allowed to continue. I therefore hope that a way would be found, and that soon, of releasing Mr. Roy. The judgment says that Mr. Roy even tendered an apology. I have not seen a single sentence in the articles concerned for which an apology need have been given. But it is a thousand pities that even the apology of a gentleman was brushed aside. I hope you will kindly place this letter before His Excellency as early as possible. I enclose herewith for His Excellency's perusal a portion of *Young India* referring to Mr. Roy's Case.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6640

[1] Of May 30, 1919
[2] This sentence is in Gandhiji's hand.

82. LETTER TO N. P. COWIE

BOMBAY,
[On or after *June 9, 1919*]

DEAR MR. COWIE,

I thank you for your letter of the 9th instant. (I am asking Mr. Manilal Vyas himself to make a representation to His Excellency regarding his case.) But I venture to draw H.E.'s attention to the fact that I did not write seeking for mere individual relief; I brought the case to H.E.'s notice[1] as the case involved an important general principle. Your letter however seems to question the right of a public man to request relief even in such cases. The hardship caused by shutting off public men in the manner I appear to have been, is made apparent even in the present instance. As I happen to know Mr. Manilal Vyas' address, though I do not know him personally, I am able to write to him and suggest what he should do to secure relief. I have, as stated in my previous letter, heard of other similar cases but I do not know the names of all the parties. In Mr. Manilal Vyas' own case, too, the matter will now take time. Meanwhile the parties aggrieved have to continue to suffer although they might subsequently be proved to have done no wrong. I would therefore still respectfully urge that the policy of treating subjects of Native States as foreigners under Act 3 of 1861 be examined and revised by His Excellency's Government without waiting for representations from the individuals affected by the orders of the Sind authorities.

Yours sincerely.

From a photostat: S.N. 6654

83. LETTER TO N. P. COWIE

[After *June 9, 1919*]

DEAR MR. COWIE,

In continuation of my letter regarding Mr. Manilal Vyas, I learnt from him that he has already forwarded his petition regarding his case. I do hope that it will receive H.E.'s early and favourable consideration.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6655

[1] *Vide* "Letter to N. P. Cowie", 25-5-1919.

84. BABU KALINATH ROY

By the courtesy of the *Young India* syndicate, composed as it is largely of satyagrahis since the deportation of Mr. Horniman, I have been permitted to supervise the editing of this journal. I asked for such supervision because I was anxious that nothing should appear in it that was in any way inconsistent with the general principles of satyagraha, i.e., of truth and non-violence to person or property. In pursuance of the plan, I have hitherto also written some leading articles in the usual editorial style. But for this issue I wish to take the sole responsibility, if there be any, of writing on the case of Babu Kalinath Roy, the Editor of the now defunct *Tribune*. Personally, I consider that even from the point of view of the authorities, there is nothing wrong or out of the way in what I am about to say. But lest they may think otherwise, it is due to the public and to the *Young India* syndicate that the authorship of this writing should be known.

With reference to the Punjab disturbances, by my complete silence over them I have allowed myself to be misunderstood by many friends, and, as is now well known, I have been deprived of the co-operation, though never the friendship, of so respected and renowned a leader and co-worker as Sannyasi Swami Shri Shraddhanandji. But I still believe that I have done well in persisting in my silence, for I had no conclusive data to go upon. No public declaration of mine could have in any way affected for the better the action of the authorities. But Babu Kalinath Roy's case materially alters the situation. In my humble opinion, the .... [1] represents a manifest and cruel wrong. I have not the honour of knowing him personally. When I took up the judgment in the case, I approached it with a feeling that there would be at least a *prima facie* case made out against the accused on some isolated passages in his writings. But as I proceeded with it, the impression grew on me that it was a kind of special pleading in order to justify a conviction and a heavy sentence. In order to check myself, I took up the numbers of *The Tribune* referred to in the judgment and on which the serious charge against Babu Kalinath Roy under Sec. I24A of the Indian Penal Code was based, and a careful reading of every one of the writings in *The Tribune* more than confirmed the impression produced by a perusal of the judgment and led me to

[1] Some words are missing here in the source which is damaged.

think that the Martial Law Court had allowed its judgment to be warped and clouded by the atmosphere of suspicion and distrust surrounding it. The best proof of my statement must be the judgment and the writings on which it is based. They are therefore reproduced in this issue in full. I have prefaced the judgment and the offending articles in *The Tribune* with extracts from the other numbers showing the whole tendency and tone of the writings from the beginning of April just after the Delhi affairs. They are not extracts torn from their context but they are representative of the issue of *The Tribune* published after the 30th March last. The dominant note pervading all the issues is that the agitation against the Rowlatt legislation should be conducted with sobriety, truth and non-violence. I could nowhere trace in them ill will, either against Englishmen in general, or against the English Government in particular. Indeed, it would be difficult to surpass *The Tribune* in calmness and self-restraint in the face of circumstances brought about by the Delhi affairs.

This is the test that the Special Tribunal put before itself for its guidance:

> You will have to consider whether this publication was or was not a calm and temperate discussion of the events that had occurred. The people have a right to discuss any grievances that they may have to complain of, but they must not do it in a way to excite tumult. You may point out to the Government their errors . . . .
>
> The question is always as to the manner. A question is made whether they (writings) show an intention to instruct by appealing to the judgment or to irritate and excite to sedition. In other words, whether they appeal to the sense or the passions.

Judged by the standard set before the Court, the articles complained against do not warrant a conviction. They cannot excite tumult, when daily during a period of exceeding stress the writer asks his readers to refrain from all violence, telling them in unmistakable terms that disturbance can only damage their cause. The Editor has continuously appealed to the judgment of the readers by asking them not to prejudge, but to await the results of an inquiry which he persistently asked for. The Court's discussion of the passages and articles fails to convince one of the propriety of its decision. The Court has resented the use of the term "Delhi Martyrs" in the issues of the 6th and the 8th April. When you read the contents under the headings, the one has reference to prayer at the Jumma Masjid and the

other to a Relief and Memorial Fund. The Crime in the language of the Court was that "the accused chose to emphasize the memorial for martyrs and not the relief", and the Court proceeds, "the inference from this is plain." The plain inference from this that whoever put the heading felt that those who were shot down at Delhi were so dealt with, without sufficient cause. Why this should be considered seditious passes comprehension. And if such an inference shows, as it undoubtedly does, that the action of the magistrate who gave the order for firing was wrong, is the drawing of such a deduction to be punished? We are told by the Court that one may point out to Government their errors. I submit that Mr. Roy justly pointed out the error of one of the local authorities. (Incidentally, I may mention that there is no such Editorial heading as "Memorial to Delhi Martyrs" referred to in the judgment.) The next indictment consists in the Editor having used the word "dupe" in connection with the action of some honorary magistrates and Municipal Commissioners who tried to dissuade shopkeepers from closing their shops. This is what the article describing the demonstration of the 6th April says:

> The masses of India are no fools....That they cannot be successfully duped ought to be clear from the very ignominious failure in this very case of certain Municipal Commissioners and honorary magistrates and several others who went round the city trying to persuade shopkeepers to keep their shops open.

This is a bare statement of fact as the accused knew it. Then follows an examination of the other articles as to which the gravamen of the charge is the assertion of the Editor that the action of the Punjab Government was both "unjust and unwarranted", and that it had "exposed itself to the severest criticisms at the bar of public opinion". Here, too, the Editor has after having reasoned to the reader led him to the conclusion to which he himself has arrived—a procedure held to be entirely justifiable under the test accepted by the Court itself. The wrong would undoubtedly be if the Editor had mis-stated facts. But in every case, as would appear from the articles reproduced herewith, the writer has fortified himself with what he believed to be facts, and which so far as the judgment allows us to see, have not been controverted. The other two articles referred to by the Court are "Delhi Tragedy" in the issue of the 9th, and "Blazing Indiscretion" in the issue of the 10th April. The "Delhi Tragedy" is a dispassionate review of the tragedy of the 30th March, and ends with an exhortation to the Government of India to appoint a public

inquiry. “Blazing Indiscretion” is undoubtedly an indictment against Sir Michael O’Dwyer about his speech before the Punjab Legislative Council. The speech analysed in the article in question certainly contains more than “blazing indiscretion”. The truth of the matter is that the wrong man was in the wrong box, the right man to have been in the box of the accused should certainly have been Sir Michael O’Dwyer. Had he not made inflammatory and irritating speeches, had he not belittled leaders, had he not in a most cruel manner flouted public opinion and had he not arrested Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal, the history of the last two months would have been differently written. My purpose however is not to prove Sir Michael O’Dwyer’s guilt, but it is to prove Babu Kalinath Roy’s complete innocence, and to show that he has suffered a grievous wrong in the name of British justice, and I do not hesitate to ask Englishmen as I ask my countrymen to join me in the prayer for Babu Kalinath Roy’s immediate release. As Mr. Norton has shown, and quite recently Sir P. S. Shivaswami Aiyer, that a Martial Law Tribunal was never contemplated to be one for the trial of cases involving delicate interpretations of difficult sections of ordinary enactments. Such tribunals are properly designed only for summary justice being meted out to men who are caught red-handed in acts of rebellion or crimes which means, if left unchecked, complete disruption of society.

One thing more remains to be considered. Why should this case be singled out for special treatment when it is highly likely that an independent and impartial committee is likely to be appointed to overhaul the martial law administration in the Punjab and to revise the sentences passed by the Martial Law Court? My answer is that Mr. Roy’s case does not admit of any doubt about it. It is capable of being immediately considered by the Government and if the articles on which the charge against Mr. Roy was based do not amount to sedition—as I hold they do not—he should be immediately set free. Moreover, time is an important consideration in this case, for Mr. Roy, as Mr. Andrews has pointed out, has a very delicate constitution.

GANDHI

Young India, 11-6-1919

85. MEMORIAL TO VICEROY[1]

BOMBAY,
[*June 11, 1919*]

We, the undersigned citizens of the Bombay Presidency, crave leave to approach Your Excellency with their humble prayer that Your Excellency may be graciously pleased, in the exercise of your prerogative, to direct the release from prison of Babu Kalinath Roy, late Editor of *The Tribune* newspaper of Lahore, who has been convicted by a Martial Law Commission of the offence of seditious writings under Section 124 A of the Indian Penal Code and sentenced to 2 years' rigorous imprisonment together with a fine of Rs. 1,000 or, in default, six months' further rigorous imprisonment.

In so praying, the petitioners have no desire to enter into the legal merits of the case or of the judgment of the Commission, beyond submitting grounds strictly appropriate as relevant to the prayer for the exercise of the prerogative.

The first ground is that the articles in *The Tribune* indicated as seditious and held by the Commission to be such, contain no words of disaffection or incitement to violence, lawlessness, or rebellion. They are the criticism of certain Acts and measures of the Punjab Government, expressly made with a view to an impartial inquiry by Government. The sole legal justification for the Commission's finding that they are seditious must, therefore, be sought in the extreme of the law of sedition, that whether any words and writings, are seditious as endangering peace, depends on the character of the times when they are published. That legal theory renders the law as to sedition so uncertain as to prove (according to some eminent English jurists and lawyers) a pitfall even to innocent journalists, and makes no distinction between criticisms, right or wrong, of specific measures of Government and deliberate attacks on it with a view to endanger peace.

To that ground the petitioners beg to add these further considerations in favour of Mr. Roy, viz., (1) the habitually sober character of his writings in *The Tribune* during his editorship; (2) the

[1] Presented on behalf of the citizens of Bombay, this was signed by Gandhiji and others including Sir Narayan G. Chandavarkar, Sir Dinshaw Wachha, G. K. Parekh and K. Natarajan. Gandhiji sent it to the Viceroy on June 27, 1919; vide "Letter to S. R. Hignell", 27-6-1919.

poor state of his health, and the effect any prolonged incarceration is likely to produce on it; and (3) the apology he tendered previous to his trial before the Commission.

Young India, 25-6-1919

86. MEMORIAL TO CHELMSFORD[1]

BOMBAY,
[*June 11, 1919*][2]

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HON'BLE BARON CHELMSFORD,
P.C., G.M.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.M.l.E., G.C.B.E.

VICEROY AND GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA IN COUNCIL,
SIMLA

MAY IT PLEASE. YOUR EXCELLENCY,

(1) We, the undersigned, representing the journalists of the BombayPresidency, hereby beg to state that we have carefully perused the judgement of the Punjab Martial Law Tribunal and the articles of *The Tribune* on which the judgment is based.

(2) In our humble opinion, all of these writings are perfectly capable of entirely innocent interpretation and we respect-fully submit to Your Excellency that, in the light of the habitually sober character of Mr. Roy's writing in *The Tribune* during the period of his editorship, it is but just and fair that they should be understood in a liberal and unconstrained sense.

(3) We understand that Babu Kalinath Roy is in a poor state of health and we fear that his continued incarceration may permanently impair his constitution.

(4) Regard being had to these circumstances and to the fact that he tendered an apology although none was needed in so far as the articles in question are concerned, we respectfully pray that in the interest of justice, Babu Kalinath Roy may be discharged from prison.

Copies were forwarded to Subramania Aiyar, Rangaswamy Aiengar, George Arundale and C. Rajagopalachari.[3]

From a photostat: S.N. 6642

[1] Presumably drafted by Gandhiji
[2] *Vide* the following item.
[3] This sentence is in Gandhiji's hand.

87. CIRCULAR LETTER ON KALINATH ROY'S CASE

June 11, 1919

DEAR

I enclose herewith a portion of *Young India* containing full text of the judgment in Babu Kalinath Roy's case, the articles on which it is based and my remarks thereon. In my opinion, there should be wide and prompt agitation throughout the country for the release of Babu Kalinath Roy on grounds of simple justice. I venture to suggest (1) a memorial by local lawyers (2) a memorial by local editors and (3) resolutions at public meetings for the release of Babu Kalinath Roy to His Excellency the Viceroy. The lawyers' memorial will show that the conviction is a legal wrong. The editors' memorial will show that they would have written nothing less than Mr. Roy wrote and public meetings will pass resolution requesting release of Babu Kalinath Roy on grounds of justice. If you fall in with my suggestion, I would suggest your writings to the traders in your district to adopt similar memorials and resolutions. We ought to invite Englishmen to associate with us, if they will, in asking for the redress of a clearly demonstrable injustice.

Time is of the essence in this matter. Whatever is done must be done promptly. If it is a shame that the Government should permit this manifest wrong to continue, it will be an equal shame after knowing the existence of a proven wrong for the public to rest still and satisfied until it is removed.

Yours sincerely,

M. K, G.

From a photostat: S.N. 6646

88. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

June 11, 1919

No lawyer has yet held out any hope of success before the Privy Council. By properly educating the public, we can secure Kali Babu's release. I suggest your going to Calcutta and other places and canvassing signatures and public meetings in support of an agitation for release not on grounds of mercy but justice and that only. I would suggest your even going to the Bishop of Calcutta and other

Englishmen to join. I do not want you to lose faith in the local men whether official or unofficial. And in any case, there is no other way of carrying on an agitation of this character. What though the Privy Council decision went against us? Those who disapproved of the Meybrook misdeed did not go to the Privy Council but forced the hand of the Home Secretary by creating solid public opinion in their favour.

Yours,

MOHAN

[PS.]

Suggestions as in Rudra's.

From a photostat: S.N. 6645

89. LETTER TO N. P. COWIE

AHMEDABAD,
[After *June 11, 1919*]

DEAR MR. COWIE,

I take the liberty of reminding H. E. of my letter of the 30th April last regarding swadeshi. Since then the movement has made much headway and, if I could secure some expression of sympathy from H. E., it would be most valuable for pushing the movement forward, and in this connection I would like to commend to H.E.'s attention Sir Stanley Reed's letter[1] addressed to me and reproduced in *Young India* of the 11th June 1919. Writing from Ahmedabad I have not got a copy by me to send.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6703

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Sir Stanley Reed's Letter to Gandhiji", 22-5-1919

90. LETTER TO GILLESPIE

AHMEDABAD,
[After *June 11, 1919*]

DEAR MR. GILLESPIE,

I was delighted to receive your letter. Indeed I have been thinking of writing to you to beseech your help for swadeshi. I entirely agree with you regarding the necessity of mercantile honesty. I am straining every nerve to keep the movement on the right path.

Could you sign the pledge or do what Sir Stanley Reed did? Herewith copy of *Young India*[1] containing his letter.

Satyagraha is a more difficult matter. I shall be in Ahmedabad on Sunday and if you could come to the Ashram, 1 should be delighted to meet you.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6683 a

91. LETTER TO SECRETARIES, SATYAGRAHA COMMITTEE

LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
June 12, 1919

DEAR SECRETARIES,

I would like the Executive Committee to consider and decide upon the question of the renewal of civil disobedience which I think should take place in the beginning of July next. After carefully weighing all the considerations that have been urged against such a renewal, I have come to the conclusion that, consistent with the Satyagraha Pledge, there is nothing so far as I can see today to warrant a further postponement. Causes that operated in favour of suspension in the month of April no longer operated today. People know what is expected of them. The Government are fully prepared on their own showing against all emergencies. A movement like satyagraha, designed as it is to work a moral revolution in society so far as the

[1] Dated 11-6-1919, *vide* also the preceding item.

method of attaining reforms are concerned, cannot be stopped for the vague fear of unscrupulous or ignorant persons misusing it. At the same time, every possible precaution must be taken by us against any such misuse. I shall therefore propose at the meeting that I should be given the power to select the exact moment of starting civil disobedience and the satyagrahis who should take part in it and to decide upon the manner of offering civil disobedience. I contemplate restriction of civil disobedience to areas as also to persons. The other satyagrahis will be taking their share in the movement by attending to the activity that may be assigned to them.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6649

92. LETTER TO S. T. SHEPPARD

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
June 12, 1919

DEAR MR. SHEPPARD[1],

I enclose herewith a portion of *Young India* containing a reference to Babu Kalinath Roy's case. I hope you will find time to peruse the case and if you agree with my view that a gross injustice has been done to Mr. Roy, I trust you will join the movement for his release. I enclose also copy of a letter[2] addressed to a few friends outside Bombay for their support. The letter will indicate the manner in which agitation for Mr. Roy's release might be carried out.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6647

[1] Editor, The Times of India, Bombay
[2] *Vide* "Circular Letter on Kalinath Roy's Case", 11-6-1919.

93. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

BOMBAY,
Thursday [*June 12, 1919*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have your second letter.

Chi. Shamaldas will be going there. He is leaving for Rajkot today. He will stay there for two days and then go to the Ashram. I have fixed no pay for him. Just now, give him some work. Fix the pay after you have had some experience together. I know there is much other work of a miscellaneous nature. To extricate oneself out of it all and recognize the most important thing to do is what I call zeal. This zeal cannot be imparted. When you have it, you can act in no other way.

Narahari was right in refusing to do the translation. We shall succeed only when we are possessed by the loom. It was I who asked the thing to be sent there for translation but, since he is busy with spinning and weaving[2], he need not attend to other work.

Who will look after Imam Saheb? Durgabehn has again pain in the back. There is no better treatment for this than Kuhne bath and simple food. I shall arrange to send her to Mathura.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 5770. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

94. LETTER TO E. W. FRITCHLEY

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
June 13, 1919

DEAR MR. FRITCHLEY[3],

I enclose herewith a portion of *Young India* containing a reference to Babu Kalinath Roy's case and copy of a general letter

[1] Evidently this letter preceded the letter to Maganlal, dated June 15, 1919, in which Gandhiji refers to Shamaldas' expected arrival in Ahmedabad on that date.

[2] Literally, "on yarn"

[3] Architect, Fort, Bombay

addressed by me in the matter. I wish I could interest you in this case. I think you will agree with me that this is a case of manifest injustice.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6650

95. LETTER TO E. S. MONTAGU

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
June, 14, 1919

DEAR MR. MONTAGU,

At the time I sent you a message through Sir Prabhashankar Pattani[1], I told him I would probably be writing to you on the subject 1 discussed with him. But I have refrained till now, as I was loath to trouble you more than I could help in the midst of your multifarious duties. I however did send another message through Mr. Shastriar as also Dr. Sir Stanley Reed.

Your kindly reference to me as also your hope that I would act more responsibly necessitates my writing to you. Our common interest in an Empire to which both you and I belong is my excuse for asking you to spare a few moments for this letter.

I would like to assure you that I have acted with the greatest deliberation and with a due sense of responsibility. I had not the vaguest notion of the deep-seated and widespread anger against the Government. When I suggested the Sunday demonstration and fast, I thought I would be laughed at by most people as a lunatic. But the idea struck the religious imagination of an angry people. They thought that deliverance lay through some such demonstrative and penitential act. I was unprepared for this universal response as I was unprepared for the shooting (in my opinion, totally uncalled for) at Delhi and much more so for my arrest and deportation and various orders of exclusion and internment. I was proceeding to Delhi not to offer civil disobedience but was going at the instance of the Delhi leaders to calm the popular mind there and thence to the Punjab on a similar mission. The seizing of Drs. Satyapal and Kitchlew was a criminal blunder of the first magnitude. I had no warrant for imputing

[1] 1862-1937; Dewan of former Bhavnagar State; member, India Council, 1917-9

such madness to the Punjab Government or weakness to the Government of India which sanctioned the action of the Punjab Government. Both knew that I was proceeding on a mission of peace and both ought to have known that the arrest of the two doctors and myself was bound to incense a mob that had already become infuriated at the actions of the authorities at Delhi and Amritsar. But for these blunders, you will believe me, the awful acts of the mob would never have occurred. The fury of Ahmedabad was more personal than otherwise. The people could not tolerate my arrest and the rumoured arrest of Anasuyabehn.

I have however taken my due share of responsibility for the criminal misdeeds of the people. But I remain unrepentant about my creed or its preaching. Disobedience of some sort is the right and duty of human beings when they see a wrong and are otherwise unable to right it. In the vast majority of cases, they resort to criminal disobedience. This I think is wrong in every case. I have attempted unceasingly for the last 12 years with more or less success to replace criminal by civil disobedience as a method for securing reform. And had the doctrine sufficiently permeated the masses, there would have been no violence from the people in any event whatsoever. It is the advent of satyagraha which localized the disturbances and which has been such a powerful aid on the side of law and order.

1 beg to assure you that there will be no peace in India until Rowlatt legislation is repealed and Mahomedan sentiment is satisfied. I venture to suggest too that the inquiry contemplated by you should include revision of sentences passed by the Martial Law Tribunal in the Punjab.

This retention of Rowlatt legislation in the teeth of universal opposition is an affront to the nation. Its repeal is necessary to appease national honour. Conciliation of the Mahomedans is necessary to appease their religious sentiment. The reforms will fall flat if they are not accompanied or preceded by an announcement onthese two points.

In conclusion, may I congratulate you on your great and generous speech on the second reading of the Reforms Bill? It will, I know, be hailed with acclamation throughout India. I hope the Bill and the regulations will come up to the standard of your speech.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6658

96. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
June 14, 1919

MY DEAR HENRY,

I am adding to your burdens. You will read the two issues of *Young India* for the week. You have to attend to

1 The South African situation
2. The Rowlatt legislation
3. The status of subjects of Native States (read Vyas' case[1] reported in *Young India*)
4. The Punjab inquiry with the power to revise sentences
5. The release of Kalinath Roy

The last is at present the most urgent. Kali Babu is ailing and is ill able to bear imprisonment. Vyas' case raises an issue of the highest importance. See Sir Prabhashankar Pattani. Unless Rowlatt Act is withdrawn earlier, I propose starting civil disobedience next July. Needless to say I shall take every precaution against violence breaking out. More of this later.

With love,

Yours,
BHAI

[PS.]

Here is a copy not for public use of my letter to Mr. Montagu.

From a photostat: G.N. 3793

[1] *Vide* "Letter to N. P. Cowie", 25-5-1919.

97. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

BOMBAY,
June 15, 1919

CHI. MAGANLAL,

In my letter of yesterday I said that Chi. Shamaldas would most probably arrive there today. My condition with him is this that he should learn weaving, sufficient for his purpose, do all that may need to be done about it and go wherever necessary. I expect him to cultivate contacts with weavers all over India, to set them working and find out capable men among them, as also women who can spin. I think he can do all this. Another condition I have made is that he should bring over Shanti to the Ashram. Shanti will perhaps agree to live there, but I do not think, nor does Shamaldas, that Nandkorbhabhi[1] will. If I remain free and succeed in wining her over and bringing her to the Ashram, persuading her that the activities there are wholly concerned with dharma, that will be another story. Meanwhile, however, Shamaldas must stay with Nandkorbhabhi. I think it will be possible for him to rent the out-houses in Miyakhan's bungalow. Anasuyabehn tells me that, apart from these rooms, some other house will also be available. Do what you think best in this matter. Shamaldas believes that in 15 to 20 days Nandkorbhabhi will agree to come over there. The condition I have agreed upon with him is that I should provide hit 80 to 90 rupees a month. Give the amount to him and enter them in the books accordingly. I think I shall be able to obtain this from Dr. Mehta. It is for you, Chhaganlal and Shamaldas himself to see that he is wholly absorbed in the Ashram activities. You can ask me for any help that may be needed. I am very keel that all the three brothers should join me in my work. I had a very good letter from Ranchhod. He says that he would certainly love to take an examination and that, accordingly, I should let him satisfy his desires; he is sure, though, that, after taking his B.A. he will come over there. He has no doubt that he loves all the activities I have undertaken. Ranchhod's language is very beautiful. I see from this that he has improved his Gujarati.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 6661

[1] Widow of Lakshmidas Gandhi

98. LETTER TO GANGABEHN

"MANI BHUVAN",
LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI, BOMBAY,
Sunday, Jeth Vad 2 [*June 15, 1919*]

DEAR SISTER,

A school for teaching spinning has been started here today. It will work every day from 12 to 3. I should like you to attend. Behn Ramibai showed me hand-woven cloth. It was excellent,

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

GANGA SWARUP[1] BEHN GANGABAI MEGHAJI[2]
KANJI KARSANDAS BUILDING
HOLI CHAKLA
FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5736. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

99. LETTER TO ZAFAR-UL-MULK ALAWI[3]

[After *June 15, 1919*]

I thank you for your letter of the 15th instant. Do please keep me informed of the proceedings in appeal against the conviction of Saiyid Fazl-ul Rahman.

The picture you gave me of Lucknow is the picture I am receiving about almost every part of India. It does not dishearten me, for we have now got the correct perspective. If you tell me that you have to stand there alone in the midst of the social and political debris, you may come down to Bombay and take part in the constructive programme that is being shaped. *Ramzan* is fast drawing to a close and I suppose you will be at liberty thereafter to leave Lucknow.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[1] Literally, in a state like Ganga's; according to the Mahabharata, the sacred river took human form and lived as wife of King Shantanu for some time. Among the Hindus, the term is prefixed to the name of a widow.

[2] Later joined the Satyagraha Ashram and was a member of its Managing Committee

[3] Editor, Alnazir

PS.

I shall see that you get the literature you want. Do you get *Young India*?

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1919, pp. 601-2. Courtesy: Maharashtra State Committee for the History of the Freedom Movement in India

100. THE SWADESHI VOW[1]

Monday, June 16, 1919

We advisedly deferred issuing this leaflet so long, for the reason that we thought it necessary to make some provision for the supply of cloth to intending signatories before giving the vow wider publicity.

Mr. Naranji Purushottam has succeeded in securing the co-operation of Mr. Vithaldas Jerajani, lately manager of the Swadeshi Co-operative Stores, and has invested his own capital in starting a Pure Swadeshi Cloth Store, the opening ceremony of which will take place on Wednesday next. Any person will be able to get at this Store pure swadeshi cloth woven from yarn spun out of indigenous cotton, wool or silk. Messrs Narandas and Jerajani have vowed not to charge more than 5 per cent on cost price as profits. A fixed rate of prices will be strictly observed. These gentlemen have also vowed not to charge anything by way of profits on hand-woven cloth out of hand-spun yarn.

Pure swadeshi cloth within the meaning of our vow, as also cloth which alone can be called pure swadeshi, but which is not yet available enough for a large number of vow-takers, will thus be obtainable at this Store from Thursday next. As this Store is going to be run on purely patriotic lines, and not on business lines, nothing but cloth necessary for swadeshi vow No. 1 and No. 2 will be sold at the Store. Only shops run on these lines and a hearty public response to them can materially promote swadeshi. We hope other liberal-minded merchants will copy Mr. Naranji Purushottam's example, and provide facilities for these taking the swadeshi vow.

But it must be fully borne in mind that merely opening swadeshi stores will never satisfy the objects of swadeshi. One great object of the propagation of swadeshi is to prevent the country's wealth

[1] Described as the second leaflet in the source. For the first leaflet, *vide* "The Swadeshi Vow", 13-5-1919.

fromgoing out of it. And this can be attained only if import of foreign cloth is stopped and more cloth produced at home. The thing to be borne in mind in this connection is not that swadeshi cloth produced in the country remains unsold for want of buyers. The fact is that we do *not* produce enough cloth to meet our needs. Every man and woman taking the swadeshi vow must therefore keep one aim in view, viz., that he or she should produce, or get somebody to produce, cloth necessary for his or her requirements. If lakhs of men and women were to do this, much of the money going out of our country would remain here, and the exorbitant prices of cloth our poor people have to pay would be saved. In view of these considerations, it is clear that he helps swadeshi more who *produces* or helps to produce more swadeshi cloth, than one who simply rests satisfied with *using* swadeshi cloth.

Let us now consider how production of cloth can be increased in the country. I here are three ways of doing this: (1) by starting more mills; (2) by purchasing foreign yarn and weaving it on handlooms; (3) by weaving oneself or getting woven cloth out of yarn spun by oneself or by someone else in one's own country.

Now apart from any views against machine-made cloth, it will be seen that it is no easy thing to start mills as quickly as we would It certainly takes some time to erect buildings for the mill, to get machines from abroad and to procure labour. Assuming, therefore, for a moment that there would be no difficulty in obtaining capital, it is not possible for us to add to the stock of our cloth by means of having new mills.

It is no doubt possible to weave cloth from yarn obtained from abroad, and the second swadeshi vow was devised with the view that it is far better to use cloth woven in our country out of foreign yarn, and thus to save some money at least going out of the country, than not to use swadeshi cloth at all.

But the more I think, the more I see dangers in this. Our demand for foreign yarn in a quantity sufficient for cloth necessary for lakhs of men is likely to send up the prices of foreign yarn to such an extent that the rise will be equal to the wages we have to pay for labour here, which would mean that we had gone ahead, only to fall back. If, therefore, we could find some way out, we would not have to depend on foreign yarn.

This brings us to the third way, viz., to get yarn spun here, and

to get it woven on handlooms. This is the royal road, and the surest to lead us to the goal. If this is adopted by the people, the goal will be reached with the least possible labour and in the shortest possible time. This would also provide thousands of men with an independent calling, and hundreds of thousands of poor women and widows with a means of livelihood to be pursued in their own homes. The experiment does not require any very large capital, but it does require two things to be successful. The first thing necessary is a number of volunteers. They need not be highly educated or highly intelligent. Honesty and perseverance are indispensable. Education and intelligence cannot be had at will, but honesty and perseverance can be had if one but makes up one's mind for them. The volunteers can be useful in two ways: (1) They can learn spinning and/or weaving and can dedicate some hours of their labour to the country, or (2) they can find out men knowing spinning and weaving and introduce them to the public. If a number of such volunteers came forward, we would within a very short time produce cloth worth thousands of rupees.

But of more importance than even the volunteers is pure love of country, a sacrifice of some luxuries which it entails. It will take a long time, of course, to raise the art of spinning to its original level and to produce yarn sufficiently fine to weave fine muslin out of it. At the present moment, numerous men and women can learn the art of spinning to start with. Spinning fine yarn is a matter of practice and careful effort. In the meantime, people will have to be satisfied with what cloth they can get made out of hand-spun yarn. If they are not ready even for this little sacrifice, it will not be possible for us to fulfil a great pledge like the swadeshi. We hope to consider this third method of increasing the stock of our cloth at some more length in our next leaflet.

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 18-6-1919

101. EXAMINATION ON COMMISSION IN CONNECTION WITH DR. KITCHLEW'S TRIAL AT LAHORE

BOMBAY,
June 16, 1919

In connection with Dr. Kitchlew's trial before the Martial Law Commission at Lahore, Mahatma Gandhi was called upon to give evidence; on Monday, before Mr. Aston, the Chief Presidency Magistrate, Bombay.

Asked as to his occupation, Mr. Gandhi described himself as a farmer and a weaver.

At this, Mr. Aston smiled and said, "You were summoned as a Barrister-at-Law."

MR. GANDHI: I was a Barrister, but am not practising at present.

Mr. Aston said he would describe him as a farmer, weaver and a Barrister not practising at present.

Mr. Gandhi was next asked if he knew Dr. Kitchlew, to which question he replied that he did not know Dr. Kitchlew personally, except by report. Questioned whether the satyagraha movement had anything to do with the Rowlatt legislation, Mr. Gandhi gave an affirmative answer. He was then asked whether, to hisknowledge, Dr. Kitchlew was a law-abiding subject. Mr. Gandhi said he could not say. He did not know that.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-6-1919

102. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, BOMBAY[1]

June 17, 1919

The ideas which I used to express piecemeal since the year 1900 have been confirmed by my experience here in India. So long as we do not bring ourselves to observe scrupulously the rule of swadeshi, we shall not succeed in attaining swaraj. Those who have read any book on Indian history will instantly recall that the Dutch, the French and the British came to India for the sole purpose of trade. We had no navy at that time, though of course we had a merchant fleet. The concern of our people for dharma is evidence enough that India depended entirely on her skills for defending her trade. The kind of fine cloth which India produced then no other country did, and it was

[1] The meeting was held near Carnac Bunder, Gandhiji was in the chair.

this which attracted foreign merchants to India. The tracery-work formerly done in India was so good and artistic that it had no equal anywhere else. With the advance of research, European scholars testify that our sciences, and even our holy books, went abroad following the very lines of our trade. This caught the eyes of merchants from all the three countries and they took shiploads of wonders from India. So wonderful were the things produced in the country in those days that these merchants thought it profitable to carry away shiploads of them. They also carried spices and herbs from here. This very India which was reputed to be a prosperous country, leading in trade, has fallen into the present plight, being obliged to import her needs from abroad. In no other country will you find such a state of affairs.

The chief reason, in my view, for this miserable condition is our loss of interest in swadeshi goods, and you, too, if you but think, will feel the same way; for you will find no country which advanced by turning its back upon its own goods. Not many centuries have passed since free trade was introduced in England; even then, she has never permitted herself to be in the same condition in which we find ourselves [today]. The people of Australia, New Zealand and of South Africa, of which I have personal experience, freely use goods produced in their own countries and impose customs duties as they think best on imported goods; for they are not dependent on such goods. We in India lost even our freedom only because we abandoned swadeshi. Though the Moghul Emperors are in a sense regarded as foreigners, under their rule India was not reduced to the plight which she is in today; for at that time India flourished in trade and industry and even the luxuries which surrounded the Emperors were the produce of indigenous craftsmanship so that the country's wealth remained in the country. The sight of our old monuments like the Taj Mahal, the Kutub Minar, etc., cannot but recall to us the prosperity of our by-gone days. When we scrupulously follow the law of swadeshi, even British rule will cease to be foreign rule and will become swadeshi rule. When we cease to import any goods from outside, our relations with foreign countries will no longer be based on considerations of self-interest but will be inspired by concern for general welfare. Only when all the nations of the world seek their welfare with a sense of kinship among themselves as among members of a family, will England adopt such an attitude towards us. We are not even able to follow our dharma of using swadeshi; how, then, can we compare ourselves with England? Swadeshi is our primary dharma;

not to follow it and yet hope for India's progress is like hoping to find a flower in the sky.

When swadeshi was introduced in Bengal, the people there were not ready for it, nor the traders. The leaders then embarked upon the task of spreading swadeshi far and wide among the people, and gave it up, for, in the attempt to take too big a step, they lost everything. We should embrace again what we have abandoned all these 200 years. If we think of using everything swadeshi all at once, the result will be that we shall succeed in using none. I am placing before the people a programme which they can assimilate and carry out. If we start using only swadeshi cloth, we shall prevent the loss of 60 crores of rupees to foreign countries on that account. This will be no small gain.

The purest swadeshi vow will be to use cloth made out of yarn spun by one's wife, sisters and children in the home.

Even mill-made cloth cannot be treated as pure swadeshi, for the yarn [used in it] is produced here and [finished] on costly machines abroad with foreigners' intelligence. That means that we are entirely dependent [in respect of mill-made cloth] on foreign sources.

You will see at Narandas's shop on Thursday a stock of swadeshi goods which will supply the cloth required to observe the vow of undiluted swadeshi. The chief reason so far for our being in such a state is our lethargy and lack of patriotic sentiment. There was a time in India when they worked on perfect machines which a carpenter of ordinary abilities could make in a day.

Shri Narandas and Shri Vithaldas have undertaken to run this pure swadeshi store and spread the idea throughout the country. I hope you will take advantage of this *shuddha*[1] Swadeshi Store.

[From Gujarati]
Gujarati, 22-6-1919

[1] Pure

103. LETTER TO S. R. HIGNELL

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
June 18, 1919

DEAR MR. HIGNELL,

It is just likely that this letter will cause pain to His Excellency. But I fear that it is my duty to inform H.E. that I contemplate renewing civil disobedience in July next unless circumstances alter my plans.

The awful experiences of the past two months and a half have shown me that there is nothing save satyagraha of which civil disobedience is an integral part, that can possibly save India from Bolshevism and even a worse fate. In spite of the indications to a superficial observer may appear to be contrary, satyagraha alone can smooth the relations between Englishmen and Indians. I would like His Excellency to believe with me that the exhibition of anti-English feeling during the second week of April was not due to the advent of satyagraha which is designed among other things to remove the acerbity[1] between the two members of the Empire but to pre-existing causes and the further belief (and this is the more important) that the madness was confined to certain small parts only of this great continent because satyagraha had arrived and it was doing its silent but most efficient and effective work during the critical period. I will not deny that the military preparations had, too, something to do with the preservation of peace in the other parts of India. But I venture to suggest that satyagraha had a greater deal to do with it.

Anyway, such being my opinion of satyagraha and its efficacy, I would be no longer justified in further suspending civil disobedience. I wish I could persuade the Viceroy to see eye to eye with me in the matter of the Rowlatt legislation. It is legislation which irrespective of merits ought not to stand after the expression of public feeling against it during the months of March and April. No doubt, there were many causes operating in favour of the vast demonstrations witnessed on the 6th of April last. But the Rowlatt legislation was the *causa causans.* I trust that His Excellency will see his way to withdraw the legislation.

[1] The source has “acerbation”.

My letter regarding the appointment of a committee of inquiry[1] is already before H.E. as also my letter requesting the release of Babu Kalinath Roy.[2] Both these are matters of the greatest importance and have an intimate connection with the Rowlatt legislation agitation. I hope that both my requests will receive H.E.'s favourable consideration.

It now remains for me to add that should a renewal of civil disobedience become necessary, it will be confined only to myself, the other satyagrahis will qualify themselves for civil disobedience by assisting to preserve peace and by other services of an ennobling character. My earnest desire is in the present circumstances of the country to confine civil disobedience to the narrowest limits possible. For the time being, all demonstrations including hartal will be avoided.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6666

104. SPEECH ON OPENING SHUDDHA SWADESHI VASTRA BHANDAR, BOMBAY[3]

June 18, 1919

Mr. Gandhi, addressing the meeting, said that the first thing that he would like to point out was that the idea of making money was farthest from the organizers of the Store whose only end and aim was to minister to the needs of the people, charging the least possible rates. The Store deserved their most active sympathy and support which could only be proved if a number of rich merchants followed by opening many such stores not only in Bombay, but in other parts of India.

Mr. Gandhi next read a letter from Mr. Jamnadas wherein he had expressed his inability to attend the function as he had to be away at Poona, and expressed a wish that many of his brethren in Bombay would follow Mr. Narandas[4] example.

Proceeding, Mr. Gandhi said that there were no two opinions as to the importance of swadeshi. It was as much a necessity of daily life

[1] *Vide* "Letter to J. L. Maffey", 16-5-1919.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to S. R. Hignell", 9-6-1919.
[3] At the Morarji Gokuldas Cloth Market
[4] One of the proprietors of the Store

as air, water and food. The truth of this could only be realized by looking at swadeshi in a religious spirit. No nation on earth had risen without adopting swadeshi as a principle of life. It was beyond his purpose to dilate any more on the necessity and importance of swadeshi, he only wanted to offer a few suggestions as to how swadeshi could be put into practice and how it could be promoted.

This first thing was to understand one's limitations, and in the present wretchedly dependent state of the country, one could not but restrict the principle to clothing alone. India produced only twenty five per cent of cloth necessary to clothe its people. It was therefore their principal duty to produce more cloth. He wished to point out to all the members of the mercantile community present, with all the force that he could command, that without producing a sufficient stock of pure swadeshi cloth, their salvation was impossible. He hoped, therefore, that those who had money and those who had expert knowledge would place their money and their knowledge at the disposal of the country.

He asked those present to hark back to the past when swadeshi was practised without any effort, as effortlessly as one took in air and water, and he asked them to consider how that was possible. The simplest and the most effective contrivance of handloom rendered that possible. He did not for a moment think Europe had a monopoly of intellect and enterprise. When other nations were leading the most primitive life, when they could find no better clothing than the bark of trees or hides of animals, Indians invented the art of growing cotton, of spinning cotton and weaving it into cloth. He believed that the intellect of the man who devised the simple spinning-wheel and the handloom was far greater than that of the man who invented the power-spindle and the power-loom.

He was glad to inform them that in the Punjab at the present moment thousands of ladies even of high families were spinning yarn in their own homes, that he had himself secured the willing service of a Punjabi lady who conducted a spinning class at his own residence in Bombay. He referred with touching effect to the fine music of the spinning-wheel that he had the privilege to hear nowadays and invited them to share that privilege with him and to convince themselves what a jarring contrast was produced by the harsh noise of the spindles and looms in a modern factory. He was pained to point out that there were 56,00,000 sadhus in India who lived entirely on begging. It was their

clear duty to tempt these sadhus out of their idleness and to persuade them to employ themselves in spinning and weaving. There were, besides the sadhus, many widows who spent most of their time in temples and idle ritual. He would most earnestly advise these and other ladies of rich families who had no other work to do to take to spinning and weaving and give some hours of their labour to the country.

He added that he did not need to point out to them that swadeshi cloth was much more durable than foreign cloth, as that was a matter of everyone's experience.

Mr. Gandhi then said that he had prepared after some consultation and discussion with Mrs. Ramibai Kamdar and others a third vow[1] which allowed those taking it to continue the use of foreign clothes that were in their possession before taking the vow. He had done this in deference to the earnest wishes of some ladies, and he was not sure there were no dangers in that vow. He therefore emphasized that those taking the third vow would keep as their goal the first vow and try to dispose of the foreign clothes in their possession as speedilyas they could, by using them for daily use and reserving pure swadeshi cloth for important ceremonial occasions.

Mr. Gandhi exhorted the audience to realize the importance of commercial morality.

He laid special emphasis on the fact that so long as speculation was rife in Bombay, it was bound to be a great barrier in the success of swadeshi. It was high time that they resolved to keep studiously aloof from it. The Japan magnates laid their titles and their treasures at the disposal of their country. The magnates of India could also copy their example and render lasting service to their country. Humanity and honesty should be their watchwords and true patriotism which was the only effective motive force should guide them. Swadeshi, he concluded, was one of the very few subjects on which there was absolutely no difference of opinion and he expected all who were concerned in some way or other with the shaping of the country's destiny to grasp the fact and actively move in the direction of propagating swadeshi which only could rid people of their poverty.

Young India, 21-6-1919

[1] *Vide* "Swadeshi Sabha Rules", before 1-7-1919.

105. LETTER TO A LADY FRIEND IN SOUTH AFRICA

[After *June 18, 1919*][1]

At the rapid pace things are moving, it is difficult to do full justice to any particular movement. Economic distress, political repression and an awakening amongst the masses in particular in all countries have all played an important part in bringing about the present world conditions where, enquiring of every country, you find them affected without exception by unrest of a deep-seated character. In America, it is class warfare; in England, it is labour unrest; in Russia, Bolshevism, and in India, it is an all round unrest due to repression, famine and other causes. The situation which now faces the western nations was inevitable; for western civilization, based on the basic principle of brute force as a guiding motive, could have ultimately led only to mutual destruction. But in India against all odds, the high principles of our hoary civilization have still a strong hold on the masses; and if the rapidly widespread growth of Bolshevism which is attacking one nation after another in Europe was to be successfully arrested in India, and even any possibility of its finding a congenial soil safeguarded against, it was necessary that the people of India should be reminded of the legacy of their civilization and culture, which is comprised in the one word "satyagraha"—the highest *mantra* one can know of.

In the last week of January, 1919, the Government of India published the text of two Bills, now popularly known here as the Rowlatt Bills. The Bills secured to the Government of India arbitrary powers which they had under the Defence of India Act, specially passed as a war measure for the duration of the war and six months after. But what could be tolerated in a time of war cannot be permitted in times of peace when the Government should solely devote their attention to problems of reconstruction and not instead be over-anxious and stubborn in claiming arbitrary powers as essential for maintenance of peace and order. At a time when the Parliament itself has felt the need of indianizing the administration of this country and the Montagu-Chelmsford Reform proposals were before the country for criticism, and when the member of the Civil Service and the

[1] The Swadeshi Store to which there is a reference in the last paragraph of this letter was opened on June 18, 1919.

Anglo-Indian capitalists, fearing that they may lose the privileged positions they have been holding at the expense of the Indian masses, employ fair and unfair means to nullify the utility of the Reform proposals, and the Viceroy, the highest authority in India, openly countenances them by an announcement in the Imperial Council akin to a surrender to the clamour of vested interests, no Indian can calmly contemplate the future of public life in this country, with the Rowlatt legislation in the Statute-book. The opposition in the country to the Rowlatt legislation has been unanimous beyond comparison, and in the Imperial Council when the Rowlatt Bill No. 1 was passed into law, on March 18th, not a single Indian member voted for it. On account of the strong opposition to the Bill, the Rowlatt Act No. 1 was made temporary for three years and also specially designated as "The Revolutionary and Anarchical Crimes Act". But these concessions amounted to nothing practically.

After consideration of all the circumstances, I came to the conclusion to inaugurate the offering of "satyagraha" against the Rowlatt Act. At the end of February, 1919, the Satyagraha Pledge was taken by me and other leaders and the people were also invited to take the Pledge, which states that, being conscientiously convinced of the injustice of the Rowlatt legislation, until it is repealed, the signatories will resort to civil disobedience and binding themselves to follow Truth and refrain from violence. I toured over India preaching the principles of satyagraha, and after the passing of the Rowlatt Act No. 1, recommended, as a first step, a hartal and 24 hours' fast and 30thMarch, 1919 was fixed for the same. Later, it was postponed to 6th April, but in some places it was observed on 30th March, and on that day, at Delhi the mob was fired upon, on some ground or other, by the authorities, resulting in some deaths and many wounded. This incident roused such feeling in the country that the demonstration arranged for 6th April was largely attended and even Anglo-Indian critics had to admit it was an unprecedented demonstration. On 7th April, copies of proscribed literature, including *Hind Swaraj*, were sold by the satyagrahis in all the centres. On the evening of 8th April, I left for Delhi to personally acquaint myself with the conditions at Delhi, and I was served with an order by the Punjab Government and the Government of India, not to enter the Punjab by the former and to reside within Bombay Presidency by the latter. As a satyagrahi, I could not obey the order, and, on entering the Punjab, was arrested. I felt so glad at it, for the soul was now free while the body was taken

care of by the Government. I sent message to the people asking them to welcome it as happy news and celebrate the event. But, instead of being kept in confinement, I was brought into the Bombay Presidency and set free. I returned to Bombay only to find the city full of disturbances. That evening, I addressed a huge mass meeting on the sea sands, where I gave expression to my keen disappointment at the misguided action of the people and characterized their action as *duragraha*, and told them that, if they should again betray the trust reposed in them by acting as *duragrahis*, the only course open to me would be to offer satyagraha against them by observing *dharana*[1] and giving up this body as a penance for inaugurating satyagraha and taking the huge moral responsibility for the good conduct of the movement and its followers. But disturbances in the Punjab at Lahore, Amritsar and other places and at Ahmedabad, near which the Ashram is situated, have been of very grave character, involving the proclamation of martial law. Loss to life and property has been enormous. But the disturbances in the Punjab are not due to the satyagraha movement but the outbreaks in Bombay and Ahmedabad were sufficient to show to me that real satyagraha would consist in suspending the civil disobedience programme and in preaching the principle of *ahimsa*. The Satyagraha Sabhas, accordingly, suspended civil disobedience on 20th April, which event was shortly followed by the deportation of Mr. B. G. Horniman, a noble-hearted Englishman and fearless Editor of *The Bombay Chronicle*. Orders of forfeiture of security and pre-censorship were passed on the *Chronicle* and it is only for the last fortnight the *Chronicle* has been appearing without comments under pre-censorship and it is only a few days ago the censorship has been removed from the paper, the maximum security of Rs. 10,000, having been deposited by the proprietors. During the six weeks from 20th April, the events in the Punjab have been of an unprecedently cruel character. Martial law had been proclaimed in several areas and was withdrawn only a week or two ago. Aeroplanes have been used to throw bombs, machine-guns have been used, and educated public leaders have been arrested under serious charges of waging war against the King, etc., and are being tried by a Martial Law Commission. Mr. K. N. Roy, Editor of *The Tribune*, has been tried for seditious writings and tried by a Special Tribunal and denied legal

[1] Sitting at one spot without food or drink for the purpose of exerting moral pressure. The source has “dharama”, evidently a misprint.

help of his choice and sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment. After perusing the connected records, I am convinced that in Mr. K. N. Roy's case, a serious miscarriage of justice has occurred. The actions of the mobs during the disturbances also have been unworthy and of a highly condemnable character.

The circumstances that led to the suspension of civil disobedience exist no longer and the civil disobedience campaign might be safely begun now with sufficient safeguards to see the satyagrahis do their part of duty in keeping the peace.

In order to keep the people fully engaged and teach them that the best way of expressing one's sympathy with the principles of satyagraha is to practise them, I have begun an active swadeshi campaign; and within the short period of six weeks, it has spread very rapidly. Many Indian sisters have bravely volunteered in the cause, of the movement, and, in addition to themselves observing the vow by wearing Indian-made clothes woven from Indian yarn and also setting up handlooms, have found men to work them. A true sympathizer's duty with the swadeshi movement is not only to wear swadeshi clothes but also to help in producing them. In Bombay, the *shuddha* Swadeshi Stores have been already opened and other centres will also be opening similar stores soon. *Shuddha* swadeshi consists in wearing clothes hand-woven from hand-spun yarn. Of course, at this early stage, it will not be possible to get fine *shuddha* swadeshi clothes but one should not mind that.

Indian Opinion, 12-9-1919

106. TRIBUTE TO B. G. HORNIMAN

BOMBAY,
June 19, 1919

Of Mr. Horniman, I can say that the more I knew him, the more I loved him. Few Englishmen have served journalism, and through that gift India, with such fearlessness and strength of conviction as Mr. Horniman, and this I am able to say, although I often disapproved of his strong language and invective of which he was a master.

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-6-1919

107. LETTER TO E. L. SALE

LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
June 19, 1919

DEAR SIR,

I have put certain young men to the study of different subjects. Mr. S. P. Patwardhan, M.A., is one of these young men who has been put to a study of salt-tax. The public libraries do not keep all available literature on the subject. I expect your office library contains certain books unavailable in the local libraries. Mr. Patwardhan will, according to your wishes, either do the reading in your office or take away books if they can be lent. He specially wants the Report by Captain Peddar about 1871-2 and the Report of the Commission appointed by the Bombay Government about 1905.

Yours faithfully,

TO
E. L. SALE, ESQ.
COMMISSIONER OF CUSTOMS, SALT & EXCISE

From a photostat: S.N. 6667

108. SPEECH AT SWADESHI SABHA MEETING, BOMBAY

June 19, 1919

A crowded meeting was held under the auspices of the Swadeshi Sabha at the Morarji Gokuldas Hall on Thursday evening to hear addresses on swadeshi. Mr. Gandhi was in the chair....

The chairman, winding up the proceedings, said that it was a happy augury for the future that according to the information given to him by Mr. Jerajani the sales at the *shuddha* Swadeshi Bhandar amounted for the very first day over Rs. 1,800 whereas they had expected much less. The purchasers included a large and an equal number of Hindu and Parsee ladies. There were also many Mohammedan buyers who bought swadeshi cloth especially for the approaching *Id* festival. Salesmen were kept busy throughout the day. Mr. Gandhi hoped that all who had not taken the vow would go to the Swadeshi Sabha office and take the vow. He then drew attention to Mr. Jamnadas' impending departure to England and invited the audience to associate with him in wishing Mr. Jamnadas a safe voyage and success in his mission. He remarked that he

had received letters adversely criticizing Mr. Jamnadas' resignation from the Satyagraha Sabha. Mr. Gandhi said that Mr. Jamnadas had honest difference of opinion with him. He had grave fears that the approaching renewal of civil disobedience might result in violence. He (Mr. Gandhi) did not share Mr. Jamnadas' fear but holding the view that Mr. Jamnadas did he was entitled to secede from the Satyagraha Sabha without in any way laying himself open to the charge of ceasing to be a satyagrahi. Mr. Gandhi said that his regard for Mr. Jamnadas remained absolutely undiminished in spite of his resignation. The chairman thanked the speakers[1] for having responded to the invitation of the Swadeshi Sabha to speak at the meeting and the audience for giving them a patient hearing.

Young India, 21-6-1919

109. LETTER TO N. P. COWIE

AS AT LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
June 22, 1919

DEAR MR. COWIE[2],

I have just seen the petition submitted to His Excellency for mercy in the case of one Chand, a lad of 15 or 16 years, who has been sentenced to be hanged for the murder of the late Sergeant Fraser[3]. There is in my opinion no doubt that the young boy was one of the murderers of an innocent police officer. I do not share the view taken by Chand's pleader in his petition. But I do respectfully share the view taken by the prosecuting counsel who is reported by *The Times of India* (12th instant Dak Edition) to have said in his address before the Court: "The only extenuating circumstance in favour of the 1st accused (Chand) was his age." There is no doubt too that this was not a murder deliberately planned by Chand or anybody else but that Chand evidently did the act in a fit of mad excitement. Regard being had to all the circumstances of the case I venture to submit that the ends of justice will be better met by tempering it with His Excellency's prerogative of mercy and by commutation of the sentence in any manner that may appear to His Excellency to be most proper. I may observe that Chand has a widowed mother. I trust that

[1] Messrs Khadilkar, Dewji Dwarkadas, Chinoy and Jamnadas Dwarkadas

[2] Private Secretary to the Governor of Bombay

[3] Who was killed in a mob violence at Ahmedabad on April 11; *vide* "Letter to Sir Stanley Reed", 15-4-1919.

His Excellency will be pleased to give favourable consideration to the petition for mercy.[1]

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6670

110. LETTER TO SADIQ ALI KHAN

[*June 23, 1919*][2]

MY DEAR SADIQ ALI KHAN,

I have your letter. I am glad grandmother and all the children have reached there safely and glad that the Begum Sahiba had the opportunity of seeing the Brothers. I never had any doubt that they will be treated in the gaol with every consideration. I am most anxious to get a most correct answer to the charge made in the Government communique; as I have already said, for the present, we should avoid all agitation in the Press regarding the Brothers. I do not know what action can lie against the Government of India. I would like to know more about it. Civil disobedience may now be commenced any day, but it wouldn't be before Monday week. But even then I do not want any other satyagrahi but myself to actually commence civil disobedience, i.e., to say, not for one month after my incarceration. Some instructions[3] are being printed, of which I shall send you a copy, and which you may explain to Azimuddin Khan. Please remember me to the Begum Sahiba and all other friends.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6656

[1] The sentence was commuted to transportation; *vide* "Speech at Chowpatty, Bombay", 6-4-1919.

[2] *Vide* reference to commencement of civil disobedience before Monday week.

[3] *Vide* "Instructions for Satyagrahis", 30-6-1919.

111. CABLE TO E. S. MONTAGU

LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
June 24, 1919[1]

TO

RIGHT HON'BLE E. S. MONTAGU

I FEEL I OUGHT TO INFORM YOU THAT UNLESS CIRCUMSTANCES ALTER SITUATION I PROPOSE RESUMING CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE EARLY JULY STOP WITH ME IT IS A CREED STOP WHILST PROSPERITY, JUST LAWS JUST ADMINISTRATION LARGELY PREVENT CRIMINAL DISOBEDIENCE I FIRMLY BELIEVE NOTHING BUT CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE WITH TRUTH AND NON-INJURY AS INDISPENSABLE OBSERVANCES WILL EVER REPLACE CRIMINAL DISOBEDIENCE AND ONRUSH BOLSHEVISM STOP GOVERNMENTS WHETHER ALIEN OR INDIGENOUS WILL SOMETIMES GRIEVOUSLY ERR EVEN TO EXTENT FLOUTING PUBLIC OPINION AS HAS HAPPENED IN CASE ROWLATT LEGISLATION. IN SUCH CASE DISCONTENT MUST EITHER TAKE FORM CRIMINAL DISOBEDIENCE AND ANARCHICAL CRIME OR MAY BE AND CAN BE DIRECTED HEALTHY CHANNEL BY CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE WHICH IS NOTHING BUT PARTIAL OR TOTAL WITHDRAWAL OF SUPPORT BY CIVIL RESISTERS FROM GOVERNMENT IN AN ORDERLY MANNER AND WITHOUT ANGER OR ILL WILL STOP I WISH HOWEVER THAT ROWLATT LEGISLATION COULD BE WITHDRAWN AND COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY BE APPOINTED TO INVESTIGATE CAUSES DISTURBANCES PUNJAB AND ADMINISTRATION MARTIAL LAW WITH POWER TO REVISE SENTENCES AND THAT KALINATH ROY EDITOR "TRIBUNE" BE RELEASED STOP I HAVE ALREADY SENT LETTER VICEROY REQUESTING ABOVE MENTIONED RELIEF.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6675 R

[1] This was actually sent on June 27, vide "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 27-6-1919.

112. SPEECH AT SATYAGRAHA SABHA MEETING, BOMBAY

June 24, 1919

Under the auspices of the Satyagraha Sabha, a public meeting was held on June 24, 1919, at the Morarji Gokuldas Hall to protest against the Rowlatt Act and Bill and Mr. B. G. Horniman's deportation. Mr. Gandhi presided.

Mr. Gandhi, after apologizing for being late, said there were many reasons of an important kind for meeting there that night. One of them was the Rowlatt Act and Bill and they had to pass a resolution protesting against them. The second was the resolution against the deportation of Mr. Horniman. The meeting was held under the auspices of the Satyagraha Sabha and he requested all the speakers to speak in such a manner as would become true satyagrahis. At these satyagraha meetings, it was desirable that all the speakers should be satyagrahis, but they had not definitely decided on that question. He then called upon Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta to move the first resolution. . . .

Mr. Gandhi put Mr. V. Jerajani's resolution [relating to Mr. Horniman] to vote and asked them to pass it in silence, all standing to show their respect to Mr. Horniman.

He then said if they could hold similar meetings all over India and conduct them in as orderly a manner as they had done that night, the Government would have to cancel their order against Mr. Horniman. Let the people do their duty and the Government would have to do theirs. Let them hold meetings and pass similar resolutions, and their objects would be easily attained.

The Bombay Chronicle, 25-6-1919

113. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

BOMBAY,
June 25, 1919

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Here are instructions[1] issued for this Presidency. You will see they have been issued in virtue of power given to me by the Working Committee.[2] I suggest the same thing for Madras with the necessary

[1] *Vide* "Instructions for Satyagrahis", 30-6-1919, the draft whereof appears to have been sent. These were to be followed after Gandhiji's incarceration; also "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 27-6-1919.

[2] *Vide* Satyagraha Sabha resolution of June 15, 1919, not reproduced here; also "Letter to Secretaries, Satyagraha Committee", 12-6-1919.

changes. The only centres I know are Trichinopoly and Madura, besides Madras itself. But you know better. I therefore leave you to do what you may think best for your Presidency. It would not matter in the least if no other civil resister courts imprisonment. Remember what I have often said, "One real satyagrahi is enough for victory". This is becoming clear to me day by day. Even as a true coin fetches its full value, so does a true satyagrahi fetch his full value, i.e., attain the intended result. And even as false coins or coins of lesser value mixing with the true may diminish for the time being the value of the true coin, it seems to me that a Satyagraha Sangh (Sabha) being a mixture is a weakness from the pure satyagraha standpoint. I do not therefore regret the mixture but I point out the spiritual cause of the temporary setback we received in April. Good often cometh out of evil. It always does in satyagraha. But I must pause now. I have written so much in order to share with you my inmost thoughts as they come to me this morning. (It is now 6.30 a.m.) For on you and the few we are will lie the burden. I enclose also copy of a cable which is being sent to Mr. Montagu.

You may send copies of this to fellow-satyagrahis. Please show this to Devdas.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6681

114. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

LABURNUM ROAD, GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
June 25, 1919

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Here are instructions issued for this Presidency. You will see they have been issued in virtue of power given to me by the Executive Committee. I suggest the same thing for Madras with the necessary changes. The only centres I know are Trichinopoly and Madura, besides Madras itself. But you know better. I therefore leave you to do what you may think best for your Presidency. It would not matter in the least if no other civil resister courts imprisonment. Remember what I have often said: one real satyagrahi is enough for victory. This is becoming clearer to me day by day. Even as a true coin fetches its full

value so does a true satyagrahi fetch his full value, i.e., attain theintended result; and even as false coins or coins of lesser value mixing with the true may diminish for the time being the value of the true coin, so it seems to me that a Satyagraha Sangh (Sabha) being a mixture is a weakness from the pure satyagraha standpoint. I do not therefore regret the mixture, but I point out the spiritual cause of the temporary set-back we received in April. Good often cometh out of evil. It always does in satyagraha. But I must pause now. I have written so much in order to share with you my inmost thoughts as they come to me this morning. For on you and the few we are, will lie the burden.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C. Vijayaraghavachariar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

115. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

SATYAGRAHA SABHA,
72, APPOLO STREET,
FORT, BOMBAY,
June 26, 1919

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY
SIMLA

SIR,

I have the honour to communicate the following resolution unanimously passed at a public meeting held here on the 24th instant under the auspices of the Satyagraha Sabha:

> That this meeting convened under the auspices of the Satyagraha Sabha prays to His Excellency the viceroy to withdraw the order of deportation against Mr. Benjamin Guy Horniman, lately the Editor of *The Bombay Chronicle*, in view especially of the fact that the reasons given by the Rt. Hon. the Secretary of State for India in justification of that order have been found to be not capable of being substantiated and that there is perfect peace throughout the Bombay Presidency.

May I also request that the said resolution be conveyed to the Rt. Hon. the Secretary of State for India.

I have the honour, &c.,

From a photostat: S.N. 6685

116. LETTER TO S. R. HIGNELL

[BOMBAY,]
June 26, 1919

DEAR MR. HIGNELL,

I enclose herewith petition (petition for submission) to His Excellency praying for Babu Kalinath Roy's release. This petition, as per Sir Narayan Chandavarkar's telegram, should have gone forward on Monday last. My secretary had the matter of despatching in his hands, but he fell ill, and is now in Ahmedabad. The work of taking signatures was in other hands, and I know nothing about the contents of the telegram sent until this morning when Sir Narayan Chandavarkar dropped in and asked me whether the petition had been duly forwarded. He was naturally hurt when I told him that it had not yet gone forward as friends were still taking signatures. Even now, I cannot send you the copy signed by Sir Narayan, Sir Dinshaw Wachha and others. I hope to get hold of it tomorrow and forward it. I apologize for the delay but I know that it will receive that consideration from His Excellency to which it is entitled weighted as it is by the name of a jurist of Sir Narayan Chandavarkar's eminence.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6686

117. LETTER TO SIR N. G. CHANDAVARKAR

[BOMBAY,
June 26, 1919]

DEAR SIR NARAYAN,

I was deeply grieved this morning to see you so grieved over the unpardonable delay about sending the Kalinath Roy petition. I remain so overwhelmed with work that when a particular thing is entrusted to one of my co-workers, I do not enquire or worry any more about it. Had I known of the contents of the telegram to Simla, I would

certainly have personally attended to the matter. I hope you will distrust the incident from your mind.

I send you copy of a letter I have written to the Private Secretary to the Viceroy. I enjoy fairly intimate relations with him and we often write freely to each other. You will be glad to learn that the copies that were in circulation have been extensively signed. I am hoping too that you will see the signatures in the *Chronicle* tomorrow morning. These copies, as I have stated in my letter to Mr. Hignell, will leave tomorrow without fail. Sir Dinshaw Petit[1], I am sorry to say, has declined to sign the petition. I have not despaired of securing Sir Chimanlal's signature.

As you were in a hurry and also evidently affected that the promise made to you by Mr. Desai had not been carried out, I did not ask you about Lady Chandavarkar's health. I hope she is doing well.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6683

118. CABLE TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

[BOMBAY,]
June 27, 1919

SHASTRIAR
CARE INDIA OFFICE
LONDON
KALOPH[2]
STRAND
LONDON

HAVE CABLED MONTAGU SAYING MUST RESUME CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE EARLY JULY IF ROWLATT LEGISLATION NOT WITHDRAWN. HAVE ALSO ASKED FOR INQUIRY PUNJAB DISTURBANCES INCLUDING POWER OF REVISION SENTENCESAND RELEASE KALINATH ROY.

From a photostat: S.N. 6691

[1] 1873-1933; mill-owner and merchant M. L. C., Bombay
[2] H. S. L. Polak

119. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

[BOMBAY,]
June 27, 1919

HON'BLE PANDIT MALAVIYAJI
ROCK HOUSE
SIMLA

ANOTHER TELGRAM LAHORE

LADIES DECIDE PERFORM CEREMONY SUNDAY[1] AM GOING ON YOUR BEHALF PLEASE SEND MESSAGE HERE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6692

120. LETTER TO S. R. HIGNELL

LABURNUM ROAD,
[BOMBAY,]
June 27, 1919

DEAR MR. HIGNELL,

I am just now going through what may be termed domestic fire. I feel ashamed of myself. But circumstances sometimes happen which you cannot control. I have just discovered that the copy I thought was sent to you yesterday did not as a matter of fact go because of the mistake made by my amanuensis. I now send that copy and the one signed by Sir Narayan Chandavarkar and others. There is a third copy in circulation which will be in your hands a day later.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6687

[1]*Vide* "Speech at Foundation Laying of Vanita Vishram, Ahmedabad", 29-6-1919

121. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
June 27, 1919

MY DEAR CHILD,

Your letter just received makes me extremely sad. I cannot conceive the possibility of their deporting you. But if they should, you have to cheerfully submit to the fate. If you wish me to, I shall gladly correspond with the Government. I may fail in my attempt. That would not matter. My advice to you also is that if they impose conditions on which alone you could stay, you should accept the conditions in so far as they are not humiliating.

I may commence in my person civil disobedience next week. It is therefore at the present moment hardly possible for us to meet.

As for swadeshi, there is no need for you to discard what you have from home. It is enough for you to confine all your present need to swadeshi things. The vow is only restricted to personal clothing.

Subject to your Board's[1] consent, you should introduce spinning-wheels in your school.

Regarding yourself, I suggest also your consulting Mr. Bittmann and being guided by him. Shall I write to him? I am so anxious that not a single step be taken by you in haste or in anger. Then whatsoever happens will be for the best. Please write to me often.

With deep love,

Written in haste and unrevised.

Yours,

BAPU

My Dear Child, pp. 36-7

[1] Of the Danish Missionary Society

122. LETTER TO GILLESPIE

LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
June 27, 1919

DEAR MR. GILLESPIE,

I thank you for your letter. I know it will be a great trouble for you to come to the Ashram on a Sunday, and yet I am so anxious to have a chat with you that I have not the heart to ask you not to come. I shall discuss with you the points you raised about swadeshi. I never knew that you were born in a place[1] where father served as Diwan for many years and where he passed the last days of his life.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6693

123. LETTER TO MUKERJI

LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
June 27, 1919

DEAR MR. MUKERJI,

Many thanks for your letter of the 24th instant, enclosing the petition to H.E. the Viceroy. I am publishing the petition *in extenso* in *Young India*. I am also publishing the bit of information about Mr. Kalinath Roy's health contained [in] your letter. I am hoping that our friend will regain his liberty at an early date.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6694

[1] Porbunder

124. LETTER TO S. T. SHEPPARD

June 27, 1919

DEAR MR. SHEPPARD,

I thank you for your letter and more especially for yourdrawing attention to what has appeared to you to be a discrepancy between the trading article and the Bill. I have certainly not wished to exaggerate the effect of the Section in question. If you deprive the Indians from having controlling interest in a company, in my opinion, you prevent them from holding fixed property in the Transvaal as shareholders of a duly registered company. My reading of the Bill is that under it the majority of shareholders cannot be Indians. Today the majority can be and, as a matter of fact, are Indians in all such companies. The object of the Bill is to stop and de-legalize the present practice.

I have sent for the law you want and hope to let you have it soon.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 6484 b

125. POST-SCRIPT TO LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK[1]

LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
June 27, 1919

You will please pass this on to Mr. Horniman. Please share the copy of instructions with Mr. Jinnah. Mr. Shastriar, Mrs. Naidu and other friends as there are no more copies ready.

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] For the text of the letter, *vide* "Letter to H.S.L. Polak", 27-7-1919.

126. SPEECH AT SATYAGRAHA SABHA MEETING,BOMBAY

June 27, 1919

Gandhiji presided over a public meeting held on June 27, 1919, at Shantaram's Chawl, Bombay, under the auspices of the Satyagraha, to protest against the Rowlatt Act and the deportation of Mr. B. G. Horniman.

Mr. Gandhi said many persons had not come to the meeting on account of the rain, and he thought that they were not real and staunch satyagrahis. The two resolutions were to protest against the Rowlatt Bill and the deportation of Mr. Horniman. He requested the speakers to be as brief as possible.

Mr. Gandhi put the resolution to vote and it was carried unanimously.

The Bombay Chronicle, 28-6-1919

127. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
June 27, 1919

MY DEAR HENRY,

I am dictating this after 11 p.m. You will not therefore expect anything lengthy from me. I hope you received my cable in fairly good time. Here is a copy of my cable to Mr. Montagu.[1] I delayed sending it for four days. I enclose copy of instructions[2] issued by me to be followed after my incarceration. By the time this reaches you, many things would have happened here. The only thing therefore that I need say to you is that I am embarking on civil disobedience because I am no longer able to bear the agony of remaining free while the Rowlatt Act is on the Statute-book; add to this the events in the Punjab, the martial law proceedings, the heavy sentences, the iniquitous conviction of Babu Kalinath Roy. The only thing that deterred me from offering civil disobedience was the recrudescence of violence and it is that fear which has made me restrict civil disobedience to myself. To send others to jail would have caused less stir, but it would not have been satyagraha. The more I think into

[1] *Vide* "Cable to E. S. Montagu", 24-6-1919.
[2] *Vide* "Instructions for Satyagrahis", 30-6-1919.

the thing, the more truly I perceive the beauty and the strength of my own statement that one satyagrahi, if he is a genuine article is enough for a win.

Please show this to Mr. Shastriar to whom also I sent the cable that I sent to you.

Remember me to everybody. My love to you and Millie. The Transvaal Bill[1] is wretched. I have written to the Viceroy. It is too terrible for words.

From a photostat: S.N. 6690

128. LETTER TO S. R. HIGNELL

LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
June 28, 1919

DEAR MR. HIGNELL,

I have your letter of the 25th instant for which I thank you. After much consideration, I thought that I should send a cablegram to Mr. Montagu which I did yesterday and of which I send you a copy herewith.[2]

Your letter was not unexpected by me. I share the Viceroy's regret but sometimes in life duty compels one to do things, although one may regret having to do them. May I, however, draw His Excellency's attention to the fact that the unfortunate events that happened in April last were not precipitated by any manifestation of satyagraha? The Government well knew that I was proceeding to Delhi purely and simply on an errand of peace, not to offer civil disobedience. And looking back upon the black days of April, I cannot help feeling that if the Government had not committed the error of serving the orders that it did upon me, the history of that month might have been written differently. Moreover, I am taking extraordinary precautions in order to avoid any excitement that may follow upon my arrest and imprisonment. You will observe from the proof copy of the instructions that I am issuing for the fellow-satyagrahis that for the time being civil disobedience is to be confined

[1] Asiatic Land and Trading Amendment Bill
[2] *Vide* "Cable to E. S. Montagu", 24-6-1919.

only to me and not to be taken up by the others unless there is a certainty of absence of violence.

And lastly, must the subject always be in the wrong and the Government always in the right? Is it not a proper thing for a Government to recognize an evident mistake and retrace its steps? I respectfully submit that it is time that the Government revise and reconsider that position regarding Rowlatt legislation.

I am grateful for the assurance contained in the last paragraph of your letter and I hope that the forthcoming committee will be thoroughly representative and independent possessing the power of revision of sentences and that Mr. Roy will be soon granted his liberty.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6697

129. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

BOMBAY,
June 28, 1919

DEAR MR. JINNAH[1],

I was delighted to receive your letter. I shall certainly keep you informed of the doings here. I cannot say anything about the Reforms Bill. I have hardly studied it. My preoccupation is Rowlatt legislation; add to that the Punjab, Kalinath Roy, Transvaal and swadeshi and I have more hay on my work than I can carry. Our Reforms will be practically worthless, if we cannot repeal Rowlatt legislation, if a strong committee of enquiry is not appointed to investigate the Punjab affairs and to revise what appear to be excessive sentences, if the glaring wrong done to Kalinath Roy is not redressed and the Transvaal Indians not protected from further encroachments on their liberty, and if India does not take up and appreciate the work of swadeshi. The first four are needed as much to test our strength as to test the measure of the goodwill of Englishmen, and the last, viz., swadeshi, is an earnest of our love for our country, and I am, therefore, concentrating all my energy upon these things. And as I can imagine no form of resistance to the Government than civil disobedience, I

[1] Mohammed Ali Jinnah (1876-1948); Muslim leader; founder and first Governor-General of Pakistan

propose, God willing, to resume it next week. I have taken all precautions, that are humanly possible to take, against recrudescence of violence. I have duly informed the authorities of my intentions and I have even sent a cable to Mr. Montagu.

I enclose proof copy of the instructions I shall be leaving behind. They will give you the further information I should like you to possess.

Pray tell Mrs. Jinnah that I shall expect her on her return to join the hand-spinning class that Mrs. Banker Senior and Mrs. Ramabai, a Punjabi lady, are conducting. And, of course, I have your promise that you would take up Gujarati and Hindi as quickly as possible. May I then suggest that like Macaulay you learn at least one of these languages on your return voyage ? You will not have Macaulay's time during the voyage, i.e., six months, but then you have not the same difficulty that Macaulay had. I hope you will both keep well during your stay.

If you get the time, please turn over the pages of *Young India* sent under separate cover. It is wretchedly printed because I have no kained help yet, and I am training helpers at the expense of indulgent subscribers.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6698

130. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, BOMBAY[1]

June 28, 1919

The idea of swadeshi is of great importance and the progress of the country in dharma is bound up with it. A country which has forsaken swadeshi can be said to have no patriotic sentiment and will never be able to follow its dharma. We do not find this said in our shastras; on the contrary, it is even deduced from them that patriotism may be an obstacle on the path of dharma. This is an utterly absurd and misleading idea. Everyone ought to be mindful of his duty and failure to do so is to reduce the path of karma to sheer confusion. In

[1] The meeting was held in Jain Upashraya at Lalbaug under the auspices of the Cutchchi Jain Mandal.

Jainism, the secret of this path is explained with much greater insight than in any other faith. The friends who have assembled here do not need to be told what it is. If a man is born in India, there must be some reason behind the fact; that being so, we need to consider what is our especial duty. That duty is swadeshi and is included in dharma. Jainism teaches compassion towards living creatures and the duty of non-violence; it even teaches the protection of violent animals against small creatures. This, however, is no justification for our neglecting the duty of compassion and non-violence towards human beings. If our neighbours are in pain or misfortune, it is our duty to share their suffering and help them. All over the world, the religious life has lost importance to such an extent that irreligion is spreading in the name of religion and men everywhere are deceiving themselves. We claim to be men of dharma, whereas all our actions are tainted with *adharma*. We cannot claim to have followed dharma by earning money through *adharma*, and giving it in charity for promoting pious causes. Most of the people assembled here are traders by profession. We are told that trade cannot be carried on without some admixture of dishonesty. I shall be plain and tell you that, if that is so, you had better give up trade. One's dharma lies in refusing to forsake truth even if that means starving, and, unless we live in this manner, dharma will not be the central purpose of our lives.

There is a painful thing I am obliged to mention, and it is that our religious leaders, whose duty it is to enlighten people, have forgotten that duty. This is true, however much it may hurt us. Religious leaders have it in them to set an example to their followers by their conduct. Mere preaching will have no effect on those who assemble to listen to their discourses. Religious leaders, too, should follow the rule of swadeshi. They have plenty of time on hand. They should take to the spinning-wheel and spin and thus set an example to their followers. More than in the repetition of Rama as they tell the beads, in the music of the spinning-wheel will they hear the voice of the *atman* with a beauty all its own.

Swadeshi is our primary obligation because natural to us. We have forsaken this natural obligation. Because of its neglect of swadeshi, the nation has been ruined. Three crores in India, that is, a tenth of the total population of the country, get only one meal a day, just plain bread and no more. Crores of rupees are annually lost to foreign countries. If this wealth of crores could remain in the country, we would be able to save our starving countrymen. Thus, our

economic well-being is also bound up with swadeshi, and in its observance there lies compassion for living beings. Moreover, swadeshi cloth is likely to be cheaper than English cloth. I submit to you that you should make your own cloth or get it made. The vow of swadeshi is not a difficult one to keep. Through it, we shall remove the hardships of our countrymen. If we work at the spinning-wheel for eight hours, we can spin one pound of yarn. The cloth being produced in India today can meet the needs of only 25 per cent of the population; we should therefore produce enough to meet the needs of the remaining 75 per cent. If, thus, people take to turning the spinning-wheel, not only we shall succeed in keeping the vow of swadeshi but shall also ensure production of cloth in plenty.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 6-7-1919

131. OBSERVATIONS ON SWADESHI AT MEETING IN BOMBAY[1]

June 28, 1919

We should take the first vow, that of pure swadeshi, and always follow the rule of swadeshi. Any person placing himself under a vow should take all possible steps to ensure that he is able to keep it, otherwise there is every danger of its having to be violated at some future time. He should, therefore, use foresight and take all necessary steps for being able to keep it. We should make an effort to promote the production of hand-woven cloth and handspun yarn so that we may succeed in keeping our vow. Today I went to a women's meeting at half past four and, following my request to them, it is likely that most of them will start working at the spinning-wheel. If both women and men join this movement for swadeshi, it will be a great success and we shall be able to follow the rule of swadeshi with ease. This movement has nothing to do with boycott. I have placed this rule before the people because I think it to be our duty and a part of our dharma. I request my countrymen not to mix up the movement for swadeshi with boycott.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarat Mitra ane Gujarat Darpan, 6-7-1919

[1] The meeting was addressed by Gangadharrao Deshpande, with Gandhiji in the chair.

132. QUESTIONS ON COTTON INDUSTRY[1]

[Before *June 29, 1919*]

INFORMATION REQUIRED BY MAHATMA M. K. GANDHI
[ON] COTTON INDUSTRY

Questions	
1. Different varieties of cotton, cultivated in India—their names.	*Vide* Statement A[2]
2. Localities of those cottons and average yield.	*Vide* Statement B.
3. Average rates.	Vide Statement C and page 26 & 28 of Appendix B.
4. Total area under cultivation. Total yield.	14 million acres. 4 million bales of 400 lb. each.

[1] This is given as an enclosure to the following letter:

THE INDIAN INDUSTRIAL CONFERENCE
OFFICE OF THE HON. JOINT SECRETARY,
23, CHURCH GATE STREET,
FORT, BOMBAY,
29 JUNE 1919

TO
MAHATMA M. K. GANDHI,
BOMBAY
DEAR SIR,

In compliance with your wishes, I have tried to answer your queries to the best of my ability and the sources of information available to our office.

Some queries are under reference and the information called for therein will be forwarded on receipt.

Hoping to be excused for delay,

Yours faithfully,
M. B. Sant
Asstt. Secy.

[2] The statements and other enclosures referred to here are not reproduced.

5.	Results of experiments in introducingforeign varieties. Causes of failure.	Vide page 19 of the Cotton Committee's Report & pages 31 to 33 of the Appendix B to the Industrial Commissions's Report.
6.	Results arrived at by the Cotton Commission.	*Vid*e reply to Question 5.
7.	Places and firms manufacturing Handloom	(1) Mr. Tikekar of Sholapur. (2) The Salvation Ginning Loom Factory, Bombay. (3) Shri Shiwaji Metal Factory, Sholapur. There was a loom factory at Baroda, called Sayajee Loom Works. You may consult Rao Bahadur Raojibhai Patel of Baroda.
8.	Varieties of different spinning machines where prepared and their prices.	—do—
9.	Varieties of ginning machines their manufacturers and prices.	Exports of raw cotton cwt.8_ million. [*sic*]
10.	Cost of labour for yarn-weaving per lb.	Under inquiry.
11.	Difference in cost between the mill-made and hand-spun yarn.	
12.	Total production of cotton cloth in the country.	381 million Ibs. 1,614 million yards
13.	Total production of yarn in the country.	$6^1/_2$ million pounds & its quantity upto 60 S (Sta. E)
14.	Total imports and exports of yarn and manufactured cloth.	*Vide* Statement D. Mill-made yarn available to Indian weavers 252 million lbs.

15.	No. of spinning mills in India.	Total No. of mills 263, 6 million spindles, 114,621 looms.
16.	No. of weaving mills in India.	
17.	Minimum capital required for the starting of a weaving mill.	About 10 lakhs.
18.	Minimum capital required for the starting of spinning mill.	—do—
19.	Average No. of workmen required for spinning as well as weaving mills.	1,200 per mill.
20.	Cost of machinery and building required for spinning and weaving mills.	Under inquiry.
21.	Places suitable for starting new spinning and weaving mills.	*Vide* page 223 of the Cotton Committee's Report.
22.	Average cost of production for dhotis, towels and other important articles.	Not possible to give information as there are numerous varieties and sizes of cloth towels, &c
	Total population of hand-spinners, weavers, &c., engaged in cloth trade in the whole country.	32 lakhs.
	Excise Duty of Indian Cloth.	79 lakhs.

From the enclosure to M.B. Sant's letter: S.N. 6700

133. LETTER TO MAHOMED ALI

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
June 29, 1919

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have been following everything about you since your being taken to the Betul Jail. I still retain the opinion I had formed regarding your memorial. Any way, if you are permitted to write letters, I would like to have your views about the Government communique issued in justification of the orders of imprisonment. I have advised friends to keep absolutely quiet about yourself, as I am most anxious that not a single false step is taken. I hear that you are keeping well, and that you are receiving all the consideration that can be given in a prison. I shall look forward to your letter. I need hardly say that you are never out of my mind, although we may not for some time come to meet face to face. I am in close touch with our public men, as also with those in authority regarding the Moslem question.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

N.A.I.: Home: Political: Sept. 1919: Nos. 406-28 A (Confidential)

134. LETTER TO N. P. COWIE

AS AT LABURNUM ROAD, GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
June 29, 1919

DEAR MR. COWIE,

I received your letter about Chand as I was leaving for Ahmedabad. I have just received news that the sentence against Chand has been commuted into transportation. May I say that this great act of mercy will be much appreciated not only amongst the poor family of the lad, but widely amongst all those thousands of men and women who have been following the proceedings of the Tribunal with more or less interest, amongst whom I count myself as one. Will you please place this letter before His Excellency?

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6704

135. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, AHMEDABAD[1]

June 29, 1919

A movement for swadeshi was launched on a large scale at the time of the Bengal Partition during Lord Curzon's regime, but, as I have said at many places, it left much to be desired. There are bound to be deficiencies in every new movement. I have no desire to harp on such deficiencies; we only consider how we may avoid them. If there were any faults in the movement at that time, there were also plenty of enthusiasm and other virtues.

Those who would do sound and beautiful work, or would learn well, should examine the deficiencies to which experience has drawn attention and, after due inquiry, sift these deficiencies and prepare a truthful account.

The fault, then, which I have noticed in the earlier movement is this, that it was organized on too large a scale. It is plain enough that we cannot have everything swadeshi all at once. A vow is a vow in fact only if it is such as we can keep. This will be easy to understand with the help of an illustration, that of a right angle. We cannot have everything swadeshi, which will meet all our needs at the same time and in equal measure, and if we take a vow which will require this, the result cannot but be imperfect. If, however, we are inspired with the necessary moral fervour, we may take a vow of perfect swadeshi and resolve to do without things of any kind which we cannot get swadeshi—such firmness will yield the desired result in future.

I have felt since 1908 that we can start the experiment in this respect with cloth. There was a time when India was on top of other countries. If we can form a definite idea of the kind of arrangements which obtained then, the way to success in the experiment will have been opened.

The population of India was divided mainly into two classes, some were agriculturists and others weavers. I shall go further and assert that the people who followed the profession of agriculture also occupied themselves with weaving in their spare time. I address this to the ladies, for it is on them that the development of this craft depends.

[1] At the meeting under the auspices of the Swadeshi Sabha, with Gandhiji in the chair. A summary of the speech appeared in *Young India*, 2-7-1919.

You are perhaps no strangers to Dr. Harold Mann[1]. He carried out a survey of villages in the neighbourhood of Poona and published two books. He has proved, on the basis of his observations, that during the six months following the period of *Ashadh*[2] to *Margashirsha*[3] the agricultural class spend their time doing nothing. They can take up weaving during the period when they have no work. Thanks to the ruin of the weavers' occupation, 80 per cent of the population is left unemployed and their idleness is ever on the increase. It is not that the people themselves remain lethargic. They get no opportunity to take up any such occupation [as weaving]. If it is said that the burden of taxation on the farmers is much heavier than it used to be, I shall agree. But this is no justification for their remaining idle.

During 1917-18, cloth worth Rs. 60 crores was imported into India. This is the condition of a country which, once upon a time, was at the peak of prosperity and exported goods on a large scale. The figure of 60 crores relates to 1917-18. It is for consideration how much larger the figure would have been if there had been no war and if shipping facilities had remained normal.

Today, the people go even without their minimum needs by way of a shirt, a jacket, a head-gear and a dhoti or half-length sari and make do with just one article of clothing where they need three or four. I once asked such a person the reason for this. In reply, he asked me how he could spare the five to seven rupees that would be needed. This is what the use of foreign cloth has reduced us to.

It is the aim of this body to revive occupations which have died out. By way of an experiment, a start has been made with a movement for producing cloth. We can start the movement only with cloth. Then followed the idea that people should take a vow. For the sake of convenience, the vow has been divided into three categories: one pure, another mixed, and the third requiring that cloth bought in future must be swadeshi. Really speaking, once the vow is taken, the use of foreign cloth should be regarded as totally forbidden. But an issue was raised by Ramibai Kamdar, that it would put them to a heavy loss if they discarded their costly saris and other dresses; hence it would be

[1] Of the Poona Agricultural College; author of *Land and Labour in a Deccan Village*

[2] Months in the Indian calendar, corresponding roughly to July and December, respectively.

[3] Same as Footnote No. 2

better [she said] to insist on buying swadeshi cloth only after they had used up the dresses in stock with them. And so the third category was introduced. If we are unable to keep a vow once taken, we would invite upon ourselves the same disgrace which was ours before taking the vow.

When the Indian people come to a firm decision that, in the absence of swadeshi cloth, they would make do with no more than a loin-cloth, India will have risen high indeed. I do not hope for so much right now. Hence the three categories.

Knowing that a beginning is made, those who are well disposed to us will express their sympathy or offer congratulations and the only profit will be that we shall feel gratified or happy. If, however, youwould learn something from the beginning you have made, you should turn to your critics and listen to what they say. They will point out your deficiencies which, then, it will be possible for us to overcome, so that our experiment becomes perfect. I saw Mr. Wadia and Mr. Fazalbhai Karimbhai in Bombay. The latter cautioned me, asking me what it was I expected to achieve by inviting the people to take the vow and saying that they were not yet in a position to produce sufficient cloth to meet the people's needs. That [he said] would require 50 years more. Shri Wadia took up an extreme position. He said their duty was to supply the quality of cloth people wanted. The view was in keeping with his extreme position. I, of course, replied that just as they did not mind spending lakhs in other ways for promoting their business, so also they should spend crores to satisfy public taste and popularize swadeshi on a large scale, and should create the necessary means. The reply, however, in no way satisfied me. The country produces, even today, good varieties such as muslin and *atlas*[1]. Other varieties, too, can be produced but we do not have skilled workers, nor men to promote such crafts. There is a dearth of people who would encourage them.[2]

So powerful is the effect of the vow of swadeshi that it will be a source of strength to those who take it and, with this strength, it will be possible to promote the growth of the industry. It has already made a beginning in Bombay and is about to make it elsewhere. I realized this when I conducted classes for spinning on the spinning-wheel. When I

[1] A kind of silk

[2] Gandhiji then proceeded to reply to an argument which had appeared in *The Leader*. This part of the speech is not available,

myself sat down to work for an hour, I learnt spinning and discovered the art which lay in it. The thing seemed to me quite easy.

Shankarlal Banker's mother and Ramabai are the two who have especially set to work in this field. They hold demonstration classes in spinning. It will not take one more than six months to be proficient in working the spinning-wheel. No fees have to be paid for the training. Personally, I wish that the kind of industrial activity which is presently growing among the people of Japan be not followed by India and do not become her ideal. Industrial Commissions hold meetings and publish their reports. But their approach is different from mine. I cannot afford to wait for years. After full deliberation, our sages came to the conclusion that one must produce yarn, since covering for the body is a primary need next only to food.

Work in this field has been going on for a year in the Satyagraha Ashram. During this period, cloth worth 20,000 rupees was produced. I invite your attention to the work of the Famine Relief Community. It adopted the method of helping the people by providing them with work, weaving, instead of offering them free doles. This prevented large numbers from turning beggars and gave them an occupation. I do not ask you to give up your present profession, if you have any, and take wholly to this one. Even if you use your spare time in this work, you will profit much. Introduce spinning-wheels in the homes. Men or, if it is not possible for them, women should teach spinning.

If only a million women all over India were to spend daily one hour each on this work, what progress could be made? In one hour, a person can spin two tolas[1] of cotton. This is but the first step, by way of demonstration. When people find the work quite profitable, they will take to it in large numbers and make it their occupation.

A branch of the Swadeshi Sabha has been established in Ahmedabad in Shri Chimanlal Chinai's office in Maskati Market. Volunteers may have their names registered there and obtain all information. They can serve by themselves spinning or persuading others to spin, by cultivating public opinion and in various other ways.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 13-7-1919

[1] A measure of weight, $2^1/_2$ tolas making an ounce avoirdupois

136. SPEECH AT FOUNDATION LAYING OF VANITA VISHRAM, AHMEDABAD[1]

June 29, 1919

You are sorry, I know, that the great patriot, Bharatbhushan Pandit Malaviyaji, who treats me as an elder brother, is not here today, but I am more sorry than you are. This ceremony should have been performed by him. We can understand how much it must have hurt Sulochanabehn and Rukshmanibehn that this could not be. Panditji could have possibly come here some time ago. He had come as far as Bombay. But this function was then postponed owing to the events which occurred and which we were unable to control. Even on this occasion, it was my wish that this ceremony should be performed by Malaviyaji. But he has had to go to Lahore and it is his own order that I should perform it. I therefore do this as his representative. His words are worth noting.[2] I agree with what he says about how much men owe to women.

I have been touring all over India since 1915 and saying everywhere that, till woman takes her place by the side of man and claims her rights, she will not come into her own. And till she does so, there can be no progress for us. If one of the two wheels of a carriage remains in a working condition but the other goes out of order, the carriage will not run properly. This was the burden of the ladies' song here before us, and it is true. Opinions differ, and probably that is so in regard to this subject. Men carry all manner of plans in their pockets, as if they had them ready-made, and they produce plans about women's education, all different from one another. They seem to me like the leaflets which they dropped in this place from aeroplanes. This, of course, is no reason for the founders of the Vanita Vishram to be uneasy. With patience and experimenting, they will reach the goal. One need not be afraid of making mistakes, nor of experimenting. If we do not move forward, we shall lag behind. Hence

[1] Gandhiji laid the foundation stone of an independent building for the Vanita Vishram, a school for girls.

[2] In his message, he had said:

"Great is man's debt to woman as mother, sister, wife and daughter. Nothing we can do to honour and comfort womankind can repay the countless self-sacrificing acts of affection and devotion with which women influence lives of men for good and contribute to our richest happiness."

the founders should go on making experiments within the frame-work of their principles. If we correct the mistakes we make, we shall succeed in our aim.

We see from this report of the Vanita Vishram that Sulochanabehn has brought lustre into her widow's life. There is beauty in widowhood, if only we can see it. It is well known that there are two difirerent views about widowhood; in any case, however, it remains true that, in the measure one has strength and nobility of soul, one can promote one's own and others' good. Every widow owes it as an especial duty to dedicate her strength and her soul to the motherland. If we like, we may say that, becoming a widow, Behn Sulochana has, as Narasinh Mehta would have said,[1] shaken off herburden; but, then, in her widowhood, she has taken the motherland to husband. Thanks to her indefatigable efforts, this institution is making good progress.

In this great task, Shri Somnath's donation has been a good help. With reference to what was said here about donations, I should like to say that, if we are sincere in our work, donations will come seeking us. I found disappointment in the report. It is an unhappy thing for the founders that, for a matter like money, they had to go begging for this small institution as far as Africa; for Ahmedabad, it is a matter of shame. The people here should have said that, while they were alive, they would never permit the founders to go to foreign countries for money. They owe it as a duty to give such a re-assuring promise. In my view, those in charge of the institution (do not need to go to Africa. They ought to collect the money from the citizens and, should they refuse, resort to satyagraha against them. I am afraid the men on the managing body are not seasoned enough. They have everything in them but self-confidence. With faith in their own strength, they should melt the citizens' hearts and get from them the money they need.

This institution needs scholars as much as it needs money and widows to manage it. That is, we require learned teachers. I have been all this time looking at the motto in front of me: "Learning owes its worth to dharma." What the motto says is true. I have discovered in the course of my travels in India that, without dharma, learning is barren. This raises the question: "What is right learning?" I have given my reply often enough. We shall settle afterwards the issue of

[1] In a verse attributed to him, the poet welcomes his wife's death as it has set him free to devote himself entirely to worship of God.

what manner of learning to provide. For the present, we may follow one definite method and include religious instruction in it. Religion is not a matter for reflection but of conduct. It is not a subject for talking about, be it noted. Teachers can create the thing only by their conduct. Gujarat itself should produce such teachers; it is shameful to go looking for them outside.

It was said here, by way of complaint, that Ahmedabad has an excess of *Vanik* shrewdness; but I am not unhappy about this. Along with the shrewdness of a *Vanik*, one should have a venturesome spirit, knowledge and readiness for service, that is, the qualities of a Kshatriya, a Brahmin and a Sudra. It is the *Vanik* who in fact gives the country its wealth. He is the best *Vanik* who has dedicated his skill in commerce to the country and is carrying on trade accordingly. The spirit of patriotism does not come unless one has a true sense of dharma. By the compassion which the *Gita* teaches, I only understand that we should dedicate ourselves wholly, body, mind and possessions, to relieving the suffering of those around us whom we find in distress.

In Gujarat, we may embark upon any kind of ventures. It is my prayer to God that the venture on which this institution has embarked may prove the best among them all and be followed by similar ones elsewhere in the province.

It is my especial wish that the scholars and men of letters of Gujarat should be put to use in this or similar institutions. It is but right that the wealth which the people of Gujarat accumulate with their commercial shrewdness should be used by them with the same shrewdness for philanthropic purposes.

To the pupils in the school, I have only this to say: "Bring credit to your education. When you enter on family life, see that you bring credit to your home and country."

The widows who have been taking advantage of this Ashram should dedicate to the service of the country the training of body and spirit which they receive here.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 13-7-1919

137. INSTRUCTIONS FOR SATYAGRAHIS

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
BOMBAY,

June 30, 1919

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SATYAGRAHIS IN TERMS AND IN VIRTUE OF THE RESOLUTION OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE SABHA PASSED ON THE 15TH JUNE '19

(TRANSLATED FROM GUJARATI)

(1) As it is or should be the belief of satyagrahis that those are the best fitted for offering civil disobedience who are the most free from anger, untruth and ill will or hatred and as I consider myself to be from this point of view the best fitted amongst the satyagrahis, I have decided that I should be the first to offer civil disobedience.

(2) The manner in which I propose to offer civil disobedience about the beginning of July is by disobeying the orders against me of internment and externment.

(3) I firmly believe that our victory lies in the nation preserving perfect peace and equanimity at the time of, after and during my incarceration. Such preservation will be the best way of bringing about the withdrawal of the Rowlatt legislation.

(4) I therefore advise that upon my incarceration there should be no demonstration of any kind whatsoever, no hartal and no mass meetings.

(5) I advise that civil disobedience by the others be not resumed at least for one month after the day of my incarceration as distinguished from my arrest or some such final act on the part of the Government.

(6) This month should be treated as one of discipline and preparation for civil disobedience and, assuming that no disturbances take place after my incarceration, it should be devoted to the following constructive programme:

(a) The preaching of the cardinal principles of the doctrine of satyagraha, namely, the necessity of strictest adherence to truth and ahimsa and the duty of civil disobedience as the natural corollary and the equally paramount duty of

refraining from criminal disobedience and, with this end in view, literature such as Thoreau's *Civil Disobedience, Hind Swaraj, Defence of Socrates* by me, Tolstoy's *Letter to Russian Liberals* and Ruskin's *Unto this Last* should be widely distributed. It is true that we sold some of this literature as part of the plan of actual civil disobedience. But now we have the knowledge that the Government have been advised that reprints and the sale of prohibited literature is not an offence except in so far as such or any literature may be covered by Section 124A. We should therefore now sell this literature as part of our propaganda but not as an act rendering us liable to penalty for breach of any law.

(b) Propaganda of swadeshi should be taken up on an intensive and extensive scale. It should cover so far as possible the whole of India. Propaganda should be free from all bitterness and from even a suspicion of boycott, swadeshi being regarded as an economic, political and even religious necessity for all time. And this propaganda should include in an equal degree both the presentation of the different pledges to the public for acceptance and activity for the new production of cotton cloth, principally by the encouragement of hand-spinning and weaving,even though it may be for the time being at a loss.

(c) The advocating of the Hindu-Muslim unity not by means of public speeches but by concrete acts of help and kindness on the part of Hindus towards Mohammedans and on the part of the latter towards the former. Hindus would, therefore, naturally give enthusiastic support to the Mohammedans in their just claims regarding the retention of Turkey as a Mohammedan sovereign State with full regard for their feelings as to the holy places and the Khaliphate.

(d) Meetings should be held to pass resolutions praying for the repeal of the Rowlatt legislation, the appointment of an independent impartial committee of enquiry with the power to enquire into the causes of the Punjab disturbances, the administration of martial law and to revise the sentences passed by the Punjab Martial Law

Tribunal, the release of Babu Kalinath Roy without the necessity of an enquiry and cancellation of the order of deportation against Mr. Horniman.

(7) If full peace is observed for one month as per para three and it has been ascertained that the people have understood the doctrine of satyagraha, time will have arrived for offering further civil disobedience assuming, of course, that the Rowlatt legislation has not been repealed.

(8) Civil disobedience may then be offered by those who may be selected by the leaders appointed in para 15. I, however, advise that not more than two at a time should offer civil disobedience from any one centre nor should civil disobedience be commenced simultaneously at all the centres. But the effect of resumption of civil disobedience in one or more centres on the public mind should be watched before resuming it in the other centres.

(9) The recommending of the laws for civil disobedience is a most difficult task. In the present state of the country, when it is highly debatable whether the spirit of civil disobedience replacing and entirely superseding crininal disobedience has been understood by the masses, I am unable to advise civil disobedience of the revenue laws, i.e., the salt tax, land tax and the forest laws. I also feel that the satyagrahis may not disobey any orders issued by the Government regarding processions and mass meetings.

(10) The income-tax is a feasible proposition on the ground of safety from any violent disturbance but I am more than doubtful as to any response being made by those who pay the income-tax. Nevertheless, if any satyagrahi desires to offer satyagraha by not paying this tax, he may do so at his own cost with the permission of his leader. There remain, therefore, the political laws, and only the Press Act and other laws regarding printing lend themselves to civil disobedience but there also the only possible manner of civil breach is the establishing of unlicensed printing presses or of issuing an unlicensed newspaper, to do so at his own cost with the permission of his leader.

(11) I can, therefore, only advise that individual satyagrahis when they receive orders of internment or orders prohibiting them from speaking or publishing any matter which the Government may consider to be obnoxious but which from the satyagraha standpoint may be flawless, such orders should be disregarded.

(12) It may be that the Government may not view with indifference the propaganda of the doctrine of civil disobedience or the distribution of reprints of prohibited literature, although such literature from the moral, i.e., satyagraha standpoint are perfectly innocuous. In that even civil disobedience is offered in the easiest and most dignified way. It is open, however, to the leaders to add the ways above mentioned by thinking out other laws which may have escaped my notice.

But it will be no fault in them to confine themselves to the limits mentioned in these paragraphs but it would be considered agrave indiscretion on their part if they select laws which do not hold proper matter for civil disobedience or a civil breach of which is likely to lead to a criminal breach.

(13) In the event of a prosecution for civil disobedience, a satyagrahi, if he has committed it, should plead guilty, offer no defence and invite the severest penalty. If he is falsely charged with civil disobedience, he should make that statement but not enter upon any further defence and accept the penalty he receives. If a satyagrahi is prosecuted for criminal breach as, for instance, for having actually uttered sedition or incited to sedition, he should make a statement denying the guilt and producing his witness. It is open to him also to engage a lawyer if he wishes to, but it is no part of the duty of the Sabha or of co-satyagrahis to find funds for engaging lawyers, as the essence of satyagraha lies in inviting penalty for deliberate civil disobedience and in accepting penalty where one is falsely charged with criminal disobedience because a satyagrahi is indifferent to the pain of imprisonment. He glories in it when it is self-invited and resigns to it when a false and malicious charge has been brought against him. That he may, by not making effort to get the best lawyer possible, be found guilty not only by the court but be considered such by the public should not concern a satyagrahi. The voice of a clear disciplined conscience is the final arbiter for him.

(14) I have come to the conclusion that it is better to divide the Bombay Presidency into so many independent self-sustained centres, each seeking co-operation with the advice from the rest but none being under the orders of any, and I select Bombay, Surat, Broach, Nadiad and Ahmedabad as such centres. I make no selection in the other Presidencies, for the Bombay Sabha's jurisdiction is limited only to that Presidency and the resolutions giving me extensive

powers can refer only to this Presidency.

(15) I, therefore, propose to give separate brief instructions using this as a basis to be adopted by the centres outside the Presidency. The centres appointed under this paragraph will be responsible each for its own district, for instance, Nadiad for the whole of Kaira. For Bombay, I appoint Mrs. Naidu if she has returned in time, Messrs Umar Sobhani, Shankarlal G. Banker and I. K. Yajnik if he can be spared from Ahmedabad, successively, as leaders. In Surat, Messrs Dayalji Manubhai Desai and Kalyanji Vithalbhai Mehta. In Broach, Mr. Haribhai Javerbhai Amin. In Nadiad, Messrs Foolchand Bapooji Shah and Mohanlal K. Pandya. In Ahmedabad, Messrs Vallabhbhai J. Patel, Balwantrai Narasingh Prasad Kanuga, Indulal Kannaiyalal Yajnik, all successively leaders as in Bombay. I advise the leaders to form small committees and for their guidance consult the feelings of such committees and other fellow-satyagrahis.

(16) All along I have assumed that there will be no disturbance. If, however, the worst happens and there is a disturbance, every satyagrahi living in the disturbed centre will be expected to lose his life in preventing loss of other lives, whether English or Indian. He will at the same peril prevent destruction of property and if he thought there was shooting of innocent men, he will offer himself also to be shot.

(17) Wherever there are individual satyagrahis whether within the Presidency or outside who either for want of ability, confidence in themselves or otherwise are unable to remain in their respective places, it is open to them to go preferably to Bombay or to some other active centre and work under the direction of the leader acting for the time being.

(18) The above instructions are for general guidance but in emergencies every leader is free to depart from them at his own risk. Read paragraph 11 in this connection.

(19) Satyagraha in action is in some respects like physical warfare. The laws of discipline, for instance, are most common to satyagraha (spiritual) warfare and the physical warfare. Therefore, a satyagrahi is expected to render implicit obedience to the instructions of the leader and is not to reason why. He must obey instructions first and then question the leader as to the propriety of a particular action but, unlike as in physical warfare, a satyagrahi does retain his final independence in vital matters and then on occasions of such vital

difference as a true satyagrahi yielding to the leader the same right of independent judgment will without irritation place his resignation in his hands. But it should be remembered that in the vast majority of cases, differences arise not on vital matters but on trifles. A satyagrahi, therefore, will not mistake the voice of Satan for the voice of conscience and dignify trifles into things of the essence and then precipitate differences. My experience is that it is only he who has obeyed in nine hundred and ninety-nine things finds the thousandth perhaps to be a legitimate matter for difference. With him everyone else is first, himself last.

M. K. GANDHI

From a printed copy: S.N. 6662

138. MESSAGE

[About *June 30, 1919*][1]

As my arrest may come upon me unawares, I wish to leave the following as my message.

I appeal to all my countryrnen and countrywomen throughout India to observe absolute calmness and to refrain from violence to person and property in any shape or from. The greatest injury that can be done to me is deeds of violence after my arrest and for my sake. Those who love me will show their true affection only by becoming satyagrahis, i.e., believers in Truth and *ahimsa* (non-violence) and self-suffering as the only means for securing redress of grievances. To the Government of India, I respectfully wish to submit that they will never establish peace in India by ignoring the causes of the present discontent. Satyagraha has not bred lawlessness and violence. It is a vital force and it has certainly hastened the crisis that was inevitable. But it has also acted as a restraining force of the first magnitude. Government as well as the people should recognize this fact and feel thankful for it. Without the purifying and soothing effect of satyagraha, violence would have been infinitely greater, for mutual retaliation would have produced nothing but chaos. Mahomedans are deeply resentful of what they believe to be England's attitude towards the question of Turkey, Palestine and Mecca Sharif. The people are deeply distrustful of England's attitude towards the forthcoming Reforms and they want repeal of the Rowlatt legislation. No repression

[1] The date of this item appears to be the same as that of the preceding item.

can possibly avail to secure even a shadow of peace in the land. Substantial peace can only be had by conciliating Mahomedan religious sentiments by granting reforms in a liberal and trusting spirit, even as was done by the late Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman in the case of South Africa and by recognizing the sacredness of public opinion by immediate repeal of the Rowlatt legislation. But the British Government all the world over have demanded proof of a people's earnestness. The chosen European method of expressing earnestness is to create disorder by violence. The Government have given a crushing reply to this method. It may prosper in Europe, but not in India. To satyagraha, there can be no reply but that of acceding to satyagraha demands. Government of a country is possible when people support it by contributing revenue, by filling public services and such like actions symbolic of approval. When a Government does justice, i.e., is broadbased upon the will of a people, such support is a duty in spite of its temporary aberrations. Withdrawal—total or partial—of such support becomes equally a duty when Government is carried on in defiance of people's will and such withdrawal of support is pure satyagraha when it is unaccompanied by violence in any shape or form and unadulterated by untruth. Satyagrahis, then, knowing the sanctity and invincibility of satyagraha will not lend themselves to violence and untruth and will refrain from offering civil disobedience until they are assured that there will be no violence on the part of the people, whether such a state of things was brought about by the peoples' willing acceptance of the doctrine of Truth and non-violence or by the military dispositions of the Government. In the former case, the whole of India will have participated in the joy of satyagraha and will have given a lesson to the world. In the latter case, the Government will realize that no physical force that they can summon to their aid will ever bend the spirit of satyagrahis.

From a photostat: S.N. 6713

139. LETTER TO D. HEALY

ASHRAM,
June 30, 1919

DEAR MR. HEALY[1],

I thank you for your note. I am leaving tonight for Bombay, expecting to return on Sunday. If the inquiry is in connection with the proposed civil disobedience, I wish to add further that I do not intend at present to renew civil disobedience till after the end of this week, and when I do, I shall give ample notice to the local authorities. I am hoping to disclose the whole of my plan to the Government. If there is any further information required, please assure Mr. Pratt that I shall make every endeavour to supply it.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6705

140. TELEGRAM[2]

June, 1919

HAVE JUST READ OF TWO DEATH SENTENCES ALONG WITH OTHERS, IN GUJARANWALA CONSPIRACY CASE. I DO NOT SAY SENTENCES ARE WRONG OR HARSH. I RESPECTFULLY SUBMIT THAT ALL EXECUTION DEATH SENTENCES BE STAYED PENDING RESULT OF COMMITTEE INQUIRY WHICH I HOPE WILL BE APPOINTED.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6706

[1] Deputy Superintendent of Police, Ahmedabad
[2] Presumably to the Viceroy

141. LETTER TO E. W. FRITCHLEY

June, 1919

DEAR MR. FRITCHLEY,

I was delighted to receive your long letter and in accordance with it I had hoped to have the pleasure of meeting you at Laburnum Road. I returned to Bombay on Tuesday. I hope that you will drop in during the week.

Yours sincerely,

E. W. FRITCHLEY, ESQ.
ARCHITECT
FORT [BOMBAY]

From a photostat: S.N. 6702

142. LETTER TO RANCHHODDAS PATWARI[1]

Wednesday, [*June 1919*][2]

RESPECTED BHAISHRI,

I do not remember to have received your letter earlier. I was myself wondering if you had forgotten me.

If a person like you would adopt swadeshi, it can be spread in India in no time. The work which the native states can do in the . . . condition cannot be done in British India.

I think it is difficult to visit Kathiawar at present.

If one spinning-wheel is plied for 360 days and it is done everyday, 180 lbs. of yarn would be spun, and if one loom weaves cloth from 360 lbs. of yarn and every man (villager) takes 12 yards of cloth . . .that one loom would provide cloth for 30 persons in a year.

The mill yarn which is suitable for khadi costs Rs. 37 per maund at present. This yarn is made from the waste cotton left after preparing fine yarn. The mill spends Rs. 15 per maund for this cotton. Thus, the mill makes a profit of Rs. 22, or takes Rs. 22 as spinning charge for the cotton worth Rs. 15. Cotton for hand-spinning must be of good quality and it costs Rs. 25. Deducting from that figure the labour and

[1] Omissions in the letter are as in the source.

[2] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Ranchhodlal Patwari", 9-9-1918 and "Speech on Swadeshi, Ahmedabad", 29-6-1919.

waste, it would come to Rs. 15. Thus, looking at the prices at present, we have to spend Rs. 3 more. But the cloth made from hand-spun yarn is twice more durable. There is likelihood of much difference in this price, because the cotton market keeps on changing every day.

If good cotton is used for spinning there, the Ashram is prepared to buy the whole stock of that yarn at the rate of three annas a *seer*. I have no provision if the stock is very large. Thus, with the increased price of cotton, one would get three annas per *seer* as the spinning charge. This is the way I get the work done by 200 women at Bijapur. These women were sitting idle before they got this job. Altogether, cloth worth Rs. 20,000 was prepared in the Ashram or under the auspices of the Ashram during the last year. It provided employment to 400 men and women.

Apart from this cloth worth Rs. . . .was ordered to be woven for the Famine [Relief] Committee. This was done in an atmosphere of hostility. People are very much attracted by machinery. Hence I have rarely found help except from the poor people. A couple of friends have given financial help. It is only now that hand-weaving has become a 'fashion'. If you can adopt this work for Kathiawar, the people would be prosperous and they would easily be delivered from the state of dependence. The nation whose needs are provided from outside either remains dependent, or it has to be prepared to fight with force by maintaining an army.

Jaishrikrishna from
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I have written in pencil. Please excuse me.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4122

143. "NAVAJIVAN" WEEKLY

At the time of Horniman's deportation, *Young India*, published from Bombay in English, was a weekly. Simultaneously with his deportation, *The* [*Bombay*] *Chronicle* was put under censorship.

In the circumstances, the management stopped publication of the *Chronicle*. Thereupon the management of *Young India* decided to make it a bi-weekly, so that it might serve, partly, the purpose which the Chronicle had served and entrusted me with supervision of its contents. Though the *Chronicle* has now resumed publication as usual,

Young India continues to be brought out as a bi-weekly. Some friends posed a question to me whether it was not my duty, seeing that I was burdening myself with the supervision of an English paper, to bring out a similar paper in Gujarati. This same question had occurred to me. I think I have a service to render to India by delivering a message to her. Some ideas I have come by as a result of my thinking are such as will advance us towards our welfare. It has ever been my endeavour to explain these. I have not succeeded as well as I should have liked to for want of ability or time or favourable circumstances. For instance, even about satyagraha, I see a great deal of misunderstanding prevailing yet. I am convinced that I have no gift better than this for India. I have always been avid of placing before the people this priceless thing, and several others of which I have had ample experience. One powerful modern means for this purpose is the newspaper. The founders of *Navajivan ane Satya* have agreed to place it under my supervision and undertaken to secure facilities for its publication as a weekly. Shri Indulal Kannaiyalal Yajnik is a busy man in the public life of Gujarat. Even so, he has pledged himself to make *Navajivan* his chief concern and help it to the utmost. These circumstances are no mere accident. I would be ashamed not to welcome them. And so, though my health is not what it used to be a year ago, I have ventured to assume the burden of running *Navajivan*. I seek the blessings of Gujarat in this and invite the help of its men of letters in running the paper and of others in ensuring a wide circulation for it, and I am perfectly confident that I shall get it.

Navajivan will be published every Sunday and arrangements have been made to see that it is available on the same day at a number of places in Gujarat.

The management has no desire to run the paper for profit. Accordingly, it has decided to keep the rate of subscription as low as possible, at Rs. 3-8-0 a year including postage. This is the very figure which had been decided upon for the monthly *Navajivan* from its July issue onwards, with some increase in its size. A copy of *Navajivan* will be priced at 1 anna and the first number will be issued on Sunday, September 7.

The subscription rate mentioned above is regarded as the minimum for the reason, mainly, that the weekly will carry no advertisements. I realized from my experience of running *Indian Opinion* in South Africa for many years that advertisements bring

little profit to the people. Ultimately, they are paid for by the public itself, and all sorts of them appear, moral and immoral.

For this reason, *Indian Opinion* has been running for years without carrying any advertisements. For the present, *Navajivan* will have eight pages of foolscap size. As circulation increases and facilities improve, the size, too, will be enlarged.

Those, other than subscribers of the monthly *Navajivan*, who desire to enrol themselves as such should send their names to the Manager at Ahmedabad. I earnestly hope that *Navajivan* will have a great many subscribers.

MOHANDAS K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan ane Satya, July, 1919

144. SWADESHI SABHA RULES[1]

[Before *July 1, 1919*][2]

1. This Association shall be called the Swadeshi Sabha.
2. Its head office shall be situated in Bombay.
3. Its objects are:
   (a) to popularize the swadeshi vow attached as schedule hereto by explaining fully the meaning and importance of it;
   (b) to devise schemes for an increased production of swadeshi cloth, whether silk, woollen or cotton, and to make every effort to carry them into effect;
   (c) to devise methods for the introduction of swadeshi regarding other articles of use besides cloth and for the manufacture of all such articles in the country.
4. Any person who has taken the swadeshi vow, pure or mixed, referred to in Rule 3, can become an A, B, C, D class member of the Sabha by paying an annual subscription of Rs. 25, Rs. 12, Rs. 6, Re. 1, respectively, the subscription being payable for the whole official

[1] Presumably drafted by Gandhiji

[2] The Central Swadeshi Sabha was inaugurated at Bombay on July 1, 1919.

year. Members of all the classes shall have the same rights and privileges.

5. Any person who has taken the swadeshi vow, pure or mixed, referred to in Rule 3, can become a life member of the Sabha by contributing Rs. 500 or more to the Sabha.

6. Donations will be accepted from sympathizers of the swadeshi movement even though they have not taken the swadeshi vow.

7. Persons under 18 and school and college students shall not be admitted as members of the Sabha but they can take the swadeshi vow.

8. The Sabha shall have a president, a vice-president, three secretaries, and two treasurers.

9. The Managing Committee of the Sabha shall consist of 30 members including the office-bearers.

10. All vacancies in the Managing Committee, office-bearers, and auditors due to resignation or any other cause shall be filled up by the Committee.

11. The Managing Committee shall be in charge of all the books and records of the Sabha and it shall stand possessed of all its funds.

12. The Managing Committee shall have the power to do each and everything necessary to effect the objects of the Sabha.

13. The Managing Committee may recognize and start branches of the Sabha in the Bombay Presidency. Each branch shall have at least ten members. The Managing Committee shall have the power to supervise the work and examine the accounts of the branches but shall not incur any responsibility for their debts.

14. The Managing Committee shall meet at least once a fortnight.

15. A special meeting of the Managing Committee shall be called on a written requisition of four or more members of the Committee within three days of the receipt of such requisition.

16. At all meetings of the Managing Committee, five members and at all general meetings 12 members shall form a quorum. No quorum shall be necessary at any meeting adjourned for want of quorum.

17. A general meeting of the members of the Sabha shall be held at least once a month. A special meeting shall be called on a suggestion

from the Managing Committee or on a written requisition of not less than ten members, within eight days of the receipt of the requisition.

18. The official year of the Sabha shall commence from the 1st of June.

19. The annual general meeting of the Sabha shall be held in the month of August to transact the following business:

(a) to receive and adopt the annual report and the audited statement of accounts,

(b) to elect president, a vice-president, three secretaries, two treasurers, two auditors and the Managing Committee,

(c) to transact such other business as may have been duly notified.

20. The secretaries shall keep a list of members with their addresses; they shall also keep a list of the names and addresses of those who have not joined the Sabha but have taken the swadeshi vow.

21. The secretaries shall record the minutes of the proceedings of all meetings of the Managing Committee and of the general meetings of the Sabha.

22. The treasurers shall collect all subscriptions, be the custodians of the funds of the Sabha subject to the directions of the Managing Committee, shall keep regular accounts, and furnish a quarterly statement of accounts in which they shall bring to the notice of the Managing Committee all defaults in the payments to be made to the Sabha.

23. The Managing Committee may without assigning any reason expel any member of the Sabha by a two-third majority of the total number of its members.

24. All subscriptions shall be paid within three months from the date of joining the Sabha and thence forward from the commencement of the official year. If the subscription of a member be in arrears, the secretaries shall give him notice to pay, and if he fails to pay within a month after such notice, the Managing Committee shall remove his name from the list of members.

25. The foregoing rules shall be subject to alterations and additions as may be made from time to time by the Sabha.

SCHEDULE

SWADESHI VOW

PURE SWADESHI VOW[1]

MIXED SWADESEHI VOW[2]

THIRD VOW

I solemnly declare that henceforth I will buy for my use only such cloth as is woven in India, from Indian and foreign cotton, wool or silk, spun-in India, and outside.

Explanation: Those desirous of buying only pure swadeshi cloth will remove the words "and foreign" and "and outside" from the pledge.

Note: The pledge has been prepared for the convenience of those who do not desire or are unable to discard such foreign cloth as they already possess; but it is hoped that those taking this vow will discard foreign clothes as early as possible and at all auspicious occasions will use only swadeshi clothes.

Indian National Printing Work, 306, Bora Bazar, Fort, Bombay.

Signature _____

Full Name _____

Address _____

Vow _____

Date of Observance _____

Period _____

Date of Signing _____

Volunteer _____

From the printed pamphlet: S.N. 6485

[1] *Vide* "The Swadeshi Vow", 13-5-l919.

[2] *ibid*

145. WRITTEN STATEMENT ON FUTURE PLANS[1]

BOMBAY,
July 1, 1919

I have received through Mr. Robertson[2] the message kindly sent by the Government of India with reference to my plans. I wish to state that whenever I actually resume civil disobedience, I shall give due notice to the local authority. Civil disobedience will be restricted only to myself and my co-workers will not take it up for at least one month after my incarceration except at their own risk. As I have written to His Excellency the Viceroy a letter[3] to which I expect a reply and as I have sent a cable[4] to Mr. Montagu in order to wait for reply to these two communications, I do not propose to offer civil disobedience up to Tuesday[5] next. The manner in which I propose to offer civil disobedience is by crossing the border of this Presidency at some point. So far as I can think at present, it is not my desire to cross the border by attempting to go to the Punjab, as I feel that I would be unnecessarily disturbing the process of peace going on there at present and doing an act which might irritate the local Government. If the Government of India or the local Government would wish me to cross the border of the Presidency at any particular point, I would gladly do so. My movements up to Tuesday are as follows:

I intend to take the Gujarat Mail on Saturday evening and reach Nadiad on Sunday morning, staying in the Kaira District practically the whole of Sunday, during that time if necessary pay a visit to Kathlal for the sake of delivering an address at Kathlal on swadeshi. In that event, I would take the evening train from Nadiad to Ahmedabad on Sunday and stay in Ahmedabad during the whole of Monday, taking the return Gujarat Mail from Ahmedabad to Bombay, which accordingly I reach on Tuesday morning at 8 o'clock. The day in

[1] This was made during Gandhiji's interview with Griffith, Commissioner of Police, Bombay, on July 1, 1919; *vide* Griffith's report of the interview, which read: "In conclusion Gandhi made a statement which was reduced to writing of which I attach a copy. His plans for the future are detailed in that statement." *Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India*.

[2] L. Robertson, Inspector General of Police, Bombay Presidency

[3] *Vide* "Letter to S. R. Hignell", 28-6-1919.

[4] *Vide* "Cable to E. S, Montagu", 24-6-1919.

[5] July 8

Ahmedabad I propose to pass by talking to my friends about the manner of preserving peace after my civil disobedience and I propose to address the same day a meeting of women in Ahmedabad on swadeshi.

I would like respectfully to state that if the Government desire that I should suspend the resumption of civil disobedience for any definite time not too distant, I would consider it my duty to respect their wish, as I am most anxious that no action on my part should in any shape or form cause embarrassment to Government, save what embarrassment is inevitable by reason of civil disobedience on the ground of the refusal of Government to listen to the appeal for withdrawal of the Rowlatt legislation. I have heard on, what is in my opinion, good authority that it is the intention of the Government of India as also the Secretary of State for India to revise their opinion on the Rowlatt legislation and at a suitable time not very far distant they propose to withdraw the Rowlatt Act and that they have abandoned the intention of processing with the sister Bill. If my information is correct and if the Government will so far as they can at present give the assurance, not for publication, that such is their intention, I would indefinitely postpone civil disobedience.

M. K. GANDHI

Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. II, pp. 794-5

146. LETTER TO S. T. SHEPPARD

[BOMBAY,]
July 2, 1919

Pray accept my warmest thanks for your prompt attention to the South African question and your very excellent leading article in today's *Times of India*. I am sure it will do good and will lead the way to a consolidation of public opinion in India.

I duly received the law book.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6484 b

[1] Volume of Transvaal Laws

147. LETTER TO JEHANGIR B. PETIT

LABURNUM ROAD,
[BOMBAY ,]
July 2 [*1919*]

DEAR SHRI JEHANGIRJI,

I am thankful to you for the courteous hearing you gave to the message I sent you. Your failure to do anything in the matter of South Africa has hurt me very much. I wrote to the editor of *The Times of India* four days ago; he immediately sent for literature, read it, and today we have a fine article. Compare this promptness with your indifference. I had expected much from you. Even now, I entreat you to shake off your apathy on this issue and do your duty.

This was one thing, and not so very important either. I have some money with me, given by friends to help me in my activities, and I manage with it to meet my requirements; but don't you think it was improper of you to have unnecessarily kept me all these days without the money offered to Mrs. Polak?

I have already incurred some expenses on affairs concerning South Africa. I want to send them a long cable today. You have promised to meet all the expenditure that may be incurred on this account, but I have grown nervous because of your indifference. How can I go begging elsewhere for money which it is for the Imperial Citizenship Association to provide? If, therefore, you think it right that the Association should pay the money, you have to send me Rs. 1,000 towards this expenditure. I shall send you the account. A good many cables have to be sent.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 6484

148. LETTER TO THE PRESS ON SOUTH AFRICAN QUESTION[1]

[BOMBAY,
July 3, 1919][2]

TO
THE EDITOR
THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE

SIR,

The Times of India has led the way in showing that in the midst of sharp differences between us—the English and Indians—there are points of contact on which we can act with unison. Such is the South African Indian question. Notwithstanding our preoccupations, we may not—dare not—forget this big question.

Even whilst the Maharaja of Bikaner was hoping and appealing to the Dominions' statesmen that the Indian settlers in the Colonies would receive fair and liberal treatment, a scheme was being hatched by the responsible officials of South Africa to deprive the Indians of the Transvaal of vested rights in breach of the compact of 1914, to which the Government of India was witness, if not party.

The Bill, which is now being discussed in the Press and which, according to the latest papers received, has passed the committee stage of the Union House of Assembly at the end of May last, virtually deprives the Indians of the Transvaal from [*sic*] holding fixed property even as shareholders of companies or as mortgagees, as they have hitherto successfully and legally done. It further deprives them of the right of obtaining new trade licences throughout the Transvaal. This means that Indian settlers, if they are not now efficiently protected, will be reduced to the status of menial servants, no matter what their capacity might be. It was bad enough to restrict so as almost to prohibit fresh immigration. It is intolerable to confiscate the economic and material rights of legally admitted immigrants and their descendants.

The duty of Englishmen residing in India and Indians is, in my

[1] This was published also in *New India*, 4-7-l919. *Young India*, 5-7-1919 and *The Hindu*, 7-7-1919.

[2] The Associated Press of India released it on July 3, from Bombay.

humble opinion, clear. We can create such an emphatic public opinion that we can shame the Europeans of South Africa into doing the right thing. We can also by our united protest strengthen the hands of the Government of India in its endeavour, which it will make as trustee effectively, to protect the Indian settlers of the Transvaal from impending extinction.

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 4-7-1919

149. LETTER TO SIR GEORGE BARNES

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
July 3, 1919

DEAR SIR GEORGE BARNES[1],

You were good enough to write to me some months ago that you were inquiring about the South African Indian situation. It has since gone from bad to worse. You will gauge it from the enclosed cuttings. Briefly, the position, if the Bill referred to in the enclosed becomes law, will be that Indians in the Transvaal will not be able to trade and hold fixed property, as they have hitherto been legally able to. This is a manifest and direct breach of the compact of l914 to which the Government of India was witness, if not party. And party or no party, can it for a moment tolerate legal confiscation of economic and material, as distinguushed from political, rights? It is one thing to stop or restrict immigration, it is another to deprive legally admitted immigrants of the means of honest and honourable livelihood. I know you will act, and that promptly. The Bill might even have passed all stages. I trust you will put the cable in motion and inquire.

Hoping you have benefited by the change.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 6484 b

[1] Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council in charge of the Department of Commerce and Industry

150. LETTER TO R. B. EWBANK

BOMBAY,
July 3, 1919

DEAR MR. EWBANK[1],

I have long intended to write to you but something or other has intervened to prevent me from doing so.

You have perhaps followed the swadeshi propaganda going on in the Presidency. I enclosed the rules and the pledges. Could I interest you in the movement?

My desire is to introduce hand-spinning and hand-weaving among the peasants who have no profitable employment practically during half the year and among lakhs of women and men who have spare time on their hands and who will not and do not do any profitable and honourable work. If you approve of the idea, your active co-operation will give a powerful impetus to the movement. It is in this branch of our work that I would like you to join the movement. It is totally non-political in character and if you could take one of the pledges or, if not that, you could become an associate, I should greatly esteem it. I enclose for your perusal copy of a letter from Sir Stanley Reed.[2]

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6717

151. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[3]

July 3, 1919

You must add to Kalinath Roy the South African question and again get together Mr. Natesan, the Diwan Bahadur and others representing different groups. I see that we will have to extend the scope of satyagraha activity to all spheres of life and to all other questions. I am seriously thinking of altering the constitution of the Sabha and make it a permanent body. The whole thing is in a

[1] Registrar of Co-operative Societies, Bombay

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Sir Stanley Reed's Letter to Gandhiji", 2-5-1919.

[3] Chakravarti Rajagopalachari (b.1879); statesman and first Indian Governor-General

nebulous state. The South African question has compelled attention to this aspect of our activity. We who are representing no party must try wherever we can to bring the groups on a common platform where there are or can be no differences of opinion.

You will see my letter to the Press on the South African question. We should hold meetings and pass resolutions calling upon the Government to do their duty. Cables should be sent to the Secretary of State also. You will see *The Times of India* has come right round to us. You should try on your side to get the English element to go with us in this matter. I am still in correspondence with the Viceroy on the Rowlatt legislation. Civil disobedience has therefore been delayed. I do not propose to attempt to go to the Punjab but cross the Bombay border at some other point. I hardly think it right to challenge prosecution formally regarding the Punjab. I ought to do so, if there was any doubt about my position. What I mean is any such challenge will appear theatrical and I abhor such display. The Punjab authorities have looked sufficiently foolish by naming me as a conspirator and yet leaving me alone. I would take away from that effect by committing the folly of saying "Why do you not prosecute me ?" when I know they do not want to and dare not. Do you follow my argument? I am anxious to convince you that it would be wrong to adopt your suggestion.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

152. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Thursday, Ashadh 1975 [*July 3, 1919*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I forgot to tell you that the man who has arrived from Bagasra should be asked not only to teach but also to look after weaving.

Look after Shankarlal properly. Tell him all about the work. I have told Ba that he should have greens and other things with his meals.

[1] It appears from the first sentence that Gandhiji wrote this letter soon after he had left Ahmedabad, which he did on June 30. July 3 fell on a Thursday.

Tell Kishorelal that I have sent him a loaf today for Surendra. Thinking that Balubhai may not send it in time, I send one today. If needed in future, I shall be able to send more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 6716

153. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, BOMBAY[1]

July 4, 1919

Shri Jerajani has shown in his speech that India is not an industrially backward country. He and Narandas have done a great service by opening the Swadeshi Store. From now onwards, I shall ask the people at every meeting how many of them have taken one of the swadeshi vows. The vow of the third category is so simple that I even felt ashamed when including it, for there can be no vow which does not entail some suffering. I cannot understand why people have not taken such a simple vow in large numbers. There should be none in Bombay who has not taken one or other of the three vows. If a majority of the people take the vow, some of them will start thinking from where they will get so much cloth and, in the result, they will themselves set to work or make others work. Those friends, therefore, who have not taken the vow so far, should go to the office of the Swadeshi Sabha tomorrow and do so. However, the person who takes the vow should resolve in his mind that he would himself spin the quantity of yarn he might need or arrange to get it spun, and weave his own cloth or get it woven. If the person lacks this spirit, he will have taken the vow in vain. The well-to-do should not think that they will pay and buy ready-made cloth for themselves; they too should resolve as above. If we remain sunk in lethargy, the country will be still further impoverished. Finally, I shall merely say that you should, without delay, take the swadeshi vow which is within your capacity and see that you positively keep it. Rather than take a vow without thinking and then fail to keep it, better not to take it at all.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarat Mitra ane Gujarat Darpan, 13-7-1919

[1] The meeting was held under the auspices of the Swadahi Sabha. Gandhiji was in the chair.

154. SMUTS-GANDHI AGREEMENT

So long as the *Young India* syndicate continue to permit me to supervise its contents and policy, so long do I propose to use this journal for placing before the country a programme of work which I hold to be of primary importance and in which I possess a special knowledge, and so long shall I continue to use these columns for a criticism, where such is necessary, of the Government doings—a criticism which shall often be helpful, but sometimes temporarily obstructive, when the Government needs obstruction in its progress towards something which is in reality harmful to the country at large.

I trust the readers of *Young India* will not grumble if they for the time being find its pages filled with references to the position of our countrymen in South Africa. It is better that I allow its columns to be occupied with something useful, authentic and requiring immediate attention than that it should contain matters of which neither the contributors nor I may possess any special knowledge, or in which neither they nor I may be specially interested. This does not mean that I claim any superiority for this manner of conducting a journal. I merely state the aim for the time being of this journal. I do hold however that no well-conducted journal should contain irresponsible or ill-informed criticism or deal with matters of which its conductors do not possess an adequate knowledge.

This question of the status of our countrymen in South Africa is a matter of no small importance. The measure of our capacity for self-government is the measure of our ability to feel for the meanest of ourselves. The cause being just, the wrong being clearly demonstrable, we have to be the readier to act when the cause is of the helpless. It is the magnitude of the wrong, not the person, that should arrest attention. According to the above test, this question of the status of our countrymen in South Africa is of more immediate importance than even the all-absorbing question of Reforms. This question cannot await solution till after the Reforms are granted. It must be dealt with now or never. It is to be hoped therefore that India will witness a revival of the agitation that was started by the late Mr. Gokhale in 1913 and which culminated in the settlement of 1914.

What, then, is the Smuts-Gandhi agreement? It is remarkable but it is true that every amelioration in the status of the Transvaal Indians

has been used afterwards often successfully by their opponents to take away further rights from them. The Indian settlers have therefore always been engaged in resisting encroachment on their liberty. Their progress thus has been negative. The agreement is set forth in the two letters dated 30th June 1914, the one addressed to me on General Smuts' behalf and the other being my reply thereto. There is another letter from me written to Mr. Gorges, the then Secretary for the Interior, setting forth my interpretation of the term "vested rights". Anyone may see for himself that the reply of the 30th June was written in my representative capacity, the letter of the 7th July in my private capacity showing what I thought of "vested rights" in connection with the Gold Law and Township Amendment Act. The curious reader will see the correspondence for himself reproduced elsewhere and will find no difficulty in interpreting it. I would not press for the insertion of a definition of vested rights in the representative correspondence, because I felt that any definition in the correspondence might result in restricting the future action of my countrymen. Thus my letter could not be used for the curtailment of our rights. But the definition given by me as a matter of fact does not in any way whatsoever curtail existing rights. There was even in 1914 and prior to it an attempt being made to interpret the two laws mentioned in my letter of the 7th July 1914 so as adversely to affect the rights of the Indians residing in the Gold area. I therefore contended that the terms of the settlement required that no rights that were exercised by the Indians at the time of the passing of the two laws could be taken away even though the legal interpretation thereof went against our countrymen. In support of my contention, I used Mr. Jaup de Villers' own statement prepared for the Imperial Government. If, therefore, my letter be part of the settlement, it could only protect Indians from statutory infringement of their liberty. That letter could not be used, as it has been used, even by the Committee of the House of Assembly for creating a legal restriction. Mr. Duncan's independent interpretation of it will bear repetition.

He did not regard the Smuts-Gandhi agreement as an agreement or an assertion that no more Indian licences should be obtained after that date. The agreement was a protective agreement, under which an undertaking was given that the law should be administered with due respect to vested rights and that the Gold Law would not be put into force against the Indian community.

Whatever the interpretation of my letter or the whole settlement, the only question before India—the Government and the people—is: "Are Indians of the Transvaal who have served the Empire as faithfully as any of the other inhabitants of South Africa to be deprived of the right to reside and trade freely and to hold fixed property therein at least as they have done hitherto?" The Government of India and the people can only answer it in one way. And I hope that before the week is out, India will send a message of hope to her children who are battling against heavy odds.

Young India, 5-7-1919

155. LETTER TO F. C. GRIFFITH

LABURNUM ROAD,
[BOMBAY,]
July 5, 1919

DEAR MR. GRIFFITH,

I acknowledge with thanks your letter just received, and I was about to acknowledge your letter received yesterday giving me Mr. Crerar's message which I now do hereby. I shall gladly come over to you an Tuesday[1] as soon as I can after 12 o'clock, on the assumption that the train reaches in time, when the time for waiting on H.E. can be easily fixed up. Meanwhile, I need hardly say that a day's delay would not matter to me if thereby I can better consult His Excellency's convenience.

Thank you for so promptly sending me the Khan Saheb. He has given me much hope and if it is realized, and if you would not mind, you shall give away Fatima the poor girl, especially if the happy event comes off whilst I am locked up in some place or other under the Defence of India Order.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6725

[1] July 8

156. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

July 5 [*1919*]

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have your confidential memorandum. I must confess that I do not like it. We cannot accept merely formal legal equality with the full knowledge that administratively trade licences will be taken away. We must take up an unbending and unbendable attitude on the question of trade and fixed property. The existing law and the existing practice, and so far as the latter is in our favour, must be at least maintained and where the present law adversely interferes with the existing practice, as for instance in case of Dada [Osman], the law must be altered to accord with the practice. I am moving here in that direction.

You will see from the columns of *Young India* what is being done. Mr. Sheppard of *The Times of India* has responded satisfactorily in the matter.

As for civil disobedience, I am awaiting some news from you and the reply from the Viceroy to my letter. You must have noticed in *Young India* Manilal Vyas' petition regarding the order of deportation against him from Br[itish] India. What do you think of Mr. Jehangir Petit calling a meeting of the Committee of the Imperial Citizenship Association today in response to a letter of mine addressed to him in the middle of February last for the consideration of the South African question?

Please forward the enclosed to the respective addressees.

From a photostat: S.N. 6484 b

157. THE DUTY OF SATYAGRAHIS

NADIAD,
July 6, 1919

The above was the title given by Mr. Gandhi to the address which he delivered before a Nadiad audience on Sunday last. Mr. Gokuldas D. Talati, President of the Nadiad Municipality, presided. Between two and three thousand people were present. The following is the substance of Mr. Gandhi's speech as edited by himself:

Mr. Gandhi, speaking on the subject, said that he had a special claim on the people of Nadiad in particular and the population of Kaira in general, as he had lived

for so long in their midst and was surrounded with so much affection from them. His largest experiments were carried out in Kaira. It was no small matter for law-abiding people to suspend the payment of revenue. It was a very serious responsibility he had taken upon his shoulders of advising them to do so. The actual working of that experiment showed that there was no cause for regret. It was acknowledged by officers concerned that this was a most peaceful, orderly and becoming demonstration of their grievance. It was this exemplary and successful act of civil disobedience which betrayed him into the miscalculation of April last and, if he then considered his mistake to be as big as the Vindhya Range, now after longer experience he felt that it was a Himalayan miscalculation. Not only, however, was his claim upon the Kaira people based upon the revenue struggle, but also upon the recruiting campaign.

Mr. Gandhi further said:

The first was to the people's liking; recruiting by reason of long disuse in the training of arms and of absence of real affection was unattractive and unpleasant, and yet I know that you had begun to respond nobly and I feel confident that had the war been prolonged, Kaira would have quite voluntarily contributed from the middle classes probably not less than 1,000 recruits. I had therefore hoped, as I still hope, that Kaira would play no mean part in the work of national regeneration and that my services to the motherland will be rendered largely through you or, perhaps more correctly speaking, Gujarat. And so as I may have to offer civil disobedience at a very early date, I thought I would speak to you today about the duty of satyagrahis. It is hardly possible to understand this duty without a correct appreciation of the meaning of satyagraha. I have already given its definition but the mere definition often fails to convey the true meaning. Unfortunately, popular imagination has pictured satyagraha as purely and simply civil disobedience, if not in some cases even criminal disobedience. The latter, as you all know, is the very opposite of satyagraha. The former, i.e., civil disobedience, is undoubtedly an important but by no means always the main part of satyagraha. Today, for instance, on the question of Rowlatt legislation, civil disobedience has gone into the background. As satyagraha is being brought into play on a large scale on the political field for the first time, it is in an experimental stage. I am therefore ever making new discoveries. And my error in trying to let civil disobedience take the people by storm appears to me to be Himalayan because of the discovery I have made, namely, that he only is able and attains the right to offer civil disobedience who has known how to offer

voluntary and deliberate obedience to the laws of the State in which he is living. It is only after one has voluntarily obeyed such laws a thousand times that an occasion rightly comes to one civilly to disobey certain laws. Nor is it necessary for voluntary obedience that the laws to be obeyed must be good. There are many unjust laws which a good citizen obeys so long as they do not hurt his self respect or the moral being, and when I look back upon my life, I cannot recall a single occasion when I have obeyed a law whether of society or the State because of the fear of punishment. I have obeyed bad laws of the society as well as of the State, believing that it was good for me and the State or the society to which I belonged to do so, and I feel that having regularly and in a disciplined manner done so, the call for disobedience to a law of society came when I went to England in 1888 and to a law of the State in South Africa when the Asiatic Registration Act was passed by the Transvaal Government. I have therefore come to the conclusion that civil disobedience, if it has to be renewed, shall be offered in the first instance only by me as being the fittest to do so and the duty of fellow-satyagrahis will be to assimilate for the time being the first essential just mentioned of civil disobedience. In the instructions I have drawn up, I have suggested that civil disobedience by the others should not be taken up for at least one month after I have been taken charge of by the Government. And then, too, by one or two chosen satyagrahis chosen in the sense above mentioned and only if it is found that no violence has been offered after my incarceration by the satyagrahis so called or others acting in co-operation with them. The next duty then is for the remaining satyagrahis themselves to observe perfect calm and quiet and to see that others do likewise. You will, therefore, see to it that after I have offered civil disobedience, if I do, there is no hartal, no public meetings, and no demonstrations of any kind whatsoever so to give excitement. And I feel sure that if perfect peace is observed after my incarceration, Rowlatt legislation will go by reason of that very fact. But it is quite likely that the Government may remain perfectly obstinate. In that event under the conditions I have already mentioned, it will be open to the satyagrahis to offer further civil disobedience and continue to do so till every satyagrahi has rendered a good account of himself.

For the intervening period, I have drawn up constructive work in the instructions. I have suggested the swadeshi movement as an item—swadeshi in a religious and true spirit without even a suspicion of

boycott, —swadeshi which would enable the Viceroy down to the humblest ryot to take part in. At the lowest estimate, 80 per cent of the population of India is agricultural. This makes over 24 crores. It is well known that, during half the year, this population remains practically idle or has at least many hours at its disposal for useful work. If this population is given an easy, substantial and profitable work to do, one of the higher economic problems will have been solved. In my humble opinion, such an occupation is hand-spinning. It can be easily learned by everybody and it is the most perfect way in my opinion of utilizing the idle hours of the nation. Swadeshi is mainly a matter of production and manufacture. The more goods we manufacture the more swadeshi there is in the country. The vows have been framed in order to serve as an incentive to manufacture and production. This work requires a large number of volunteers whose sole qualification needs to be perfect honesty and love of the country. I would like every man and woman in India to devote themselves heart and soul to this work. And I doubt not that in an incredibly short time we would have restored to its original vigour the lost art of weaving the finest cloth of the most effective design.

There is one more subject I have to touch upon. Painful as it were, in their consequences, the tragic events of the mad mob in Ahmedabad and Viramgam in April last, some of the doings in Kaira were, if possible, still more tragic if you contemplate what might have happened. I refer to the cutting down of the telegraph wires and the tearing down of the railway. The acts of the mob in Ahmedabad betoken mad frenzy. The acts in Kaira betoken deliberation. They were also done in anger but even in anger there can be thoughtlessness or thoughtfulness. The Kaira crimes, though far less disastrous in consequences than those of Ahmedabad, were from a satyagraha standpoint more inexcusable, if there can be any excuse for any crime whatsoever. I understand that those who were responsible for the misdeeds of April have not all come forward to boldly confess the crime. It was a pity that Kaira behaved so nobly during the revenue struggle should have forgotten itself during April, but it is a greater pity that the guilty ones should now try to hide themselves. It is therefore the plain duty of satyagrahis to make an open confession if any of them is in any shape or form responsible for the crime and to persuade, if they have the knowledge, those who have committed the crimes to make the confession. It is cowardly enough to tear down the railway and thus endanger the lives of

soldiers who were proceeding to restore peace and order. It is still more cowardly not to come forward boldly and admit the wrong. A hidden sin is like poison corrupting the whole body. The sooner the poison is thrown off, the better it is for society. And just as a bit of arsenic mixed with milk renders it none the less vitiating for the addition of pure milk, so also do good deed in a society fail to cover unexpiated sins. I hope that you will strain every nerve to find out those whose mad grief betrayed them into unpardonable crimes and appeal to them to own up like men and thus purify the social, moral and political atmosphere of this district.

(I have considerably abridged the speech but added one or two sentences to complete or amplify my meaning.)

M. K. G.

Young India, 9-7-1919

158. SPEECH ON SWADESHI AT WOMEN'S MEETING, NADIAD

July 6, 1919

SISTERS,

I am happy to see such a large number of my sisters of Nadiad present here. I am thankful to you all for attending. I shall speak as loudly as I can; even so, I cannot continue speaking unless you maintain silence. I have not come here to make a speech, but to explain things to you. What I have to say has an especial bearing on our dharma. It has an economic aspect and also a political one. Today, however, I shall place before you the idea of swadeshi from the point of view of dharma, that is, explain how through swadeshi you will follow your dharma. It will be useless for me to make a speech if you understand nothing, and it is plain that, if you do not hear, you cannot understand.

There was a time in India when, following our belief, we could not drink water offered anywhere except in a Hindu home or, rather, by anyone not our own caste. In the fair at Hardwar, water was fetched by Brahmins and Muslims. The Muslims accepted the water fetched by Brahmins but the Hindus would not touch water fetched by Muslims. It was a matter of dharma for them to believe and act so, despite all the heat of the day. And so they would not drink water offered by a Muslim.

I have stayed in the place where Ramachandra was born, and in that place, in Bihar, and its neighbourhood, where Sita grew up and played. There are many there who will not eat in a train, but fast. To be sure, it is a valuable religious sentiment which will not permit a man to eat in a train, not to speak of other places. There is self-control in this, self-control meaning deliberate refraining from the use of certain things. No one is under pressure from anyone else in this matter. This cultivates strength of the *atman*, takes one higher. There is self-control in rules about eating and not eating, drinking and not drinking. If we treated anyone with contempt, we should be committing a sin. There is dharma, I believe, in refusing to eat food cooked by a particular person, if we do so not because we doubt whether we would get it to our liking[1] but because we believe such food to be forbidden.

Formerly, men and women in India used cloth made with their own hands. Among the extracts from the shastras which some *shastris*[2] have sent me, I find that the bridegroom used to say something to this effect to the bride when offering her the wedding garment: "I give you these garments made by the guardian goddesses of my family; may you and I be happy, wearing them." There are verses to this effect in the shastras, but we do not need them at the moment.

We have our sisters in the Punjab. Those ladies who believe that Nadiad and Gujarat are not the whole country, that our country is India and so the Punjab, too, is our land, for them the Punjab is their land. There, they spin and weave with their own hands and wear the clothes so made. This was formerly the practice all over India. Evenwomen in big wealthy families used to spin. People of every caste did so. Our people, the elders among them, discovered that, if they would clothe the millions in the country, they should learn to make cotton into yarn. We cannot go without food, and so women should know cooking; this is so everywhere on the earth. We cannot go without clothes and everyone should know weaving. This was the way Indian civilization was built. The elders in the country did not think that they would import cloth from abroad and use it here. A country which does so will go to ruin.

If this course is not followed, one country will have to fight with another. People must cultivate friendship for Ahmedabad for the sake of its cloth. If a country depends on another for its needs, the former

[1] The *Gujarati* report is not clear at this point.

[2] Men learned in the shastras

should be friends with the latter; otherwise it should be prepared for war. The cause of wars in this world is trade. Our forefathers used great foresight and decided that India should have two things. If people get food and clothing, they can live happily. These two things should be available in India. They raised cotton, invented simple machines for spinning and weaving and thus we got plain clothes to wear.

A hundred and fifty years ago, i.e., five generations ago, we used cotton grown in this country, yarn spun with one's own hands and cloth woven by the weaver. Compared to the cloth you wear now, that of former times was of priceless worth. It had a soul in it. Today, you have reason to envy me. You ought to want to wear cloth like mine. You are deceived if you think that it is of fine texture or in any way beautiful. If you offered me your clothes, I would throw them into the fire. My cloth is the product of dharma, yours is the product of *adharma*.

Using foreign cloth for the last hundred and fifty years, we have violated dharma and morals and lost our industries. Dharma consists in compassion. Tulsidas describes compassion as the root of dharma. If the men and women of India had compassion on India, they would not import cloth from abroad. Suppose I were your neighbour and lived by weaving cloth, and suppose I requested you to buy some. You would perhaps send me away with a word of abuse or, if you happened to be polite, tell me that you would rather have Chinese cloth. Would you say this was compassion, or cruelty? You may advise me to give up weaving, but I know it is the only thing I can do. In the result, the weaver who is your neighbour will have been ruined and your own sisters will have lost what they can earn through spinning. In what way can they have earned ? Formerly, we used to spin with our own hands and that itself meant some earning. If we get the spinning done by an outsider, we have to pay him something. If we do it ourselves, we shall have yarn for the cost of cotton. Further, if we ourselves weave, we shall have cloth for the price of cotton. A hundred and fifty years ago, they followed this straightforward course. We serve both our economic interest and our dharma through swadeshi, the former because our wealth remains in the country and the latter because we take work from our neighbour, so that his talents may have scope. There is no dharma in your neglecting your neighbour and giving your work to someone else. Your neighbour will lose his

dharma and you will lose yours. To abandon swadeshi amounts to plucking out dharma by its very root. Your swadeshi industry is the occupation of millions. The agriculturists and *Patidars* of Kheda own farms and raise crops. If anyone told you that they were off their heads and, giving up this work, started getting grains from the Punjab, what would you say? "Their days are numbered".

What sort of wisdom is there in transporting grains from the Punjab when you have *bajra* and other crops growing right in front of your homes? If there were [real] teachers of religion, they would knock the people so hard that the latter could not but take notice. Just as it would not be right for Kheda district to give up agriculture, so it is not right for India as a whole to give up weaving her own cloth. We can do so if we do not mind going naked. So long as we would cover our nakedness, dharma requires us to use cloth produced with our own hands from our own cotton. As parents do not abandon their ugly child or a husband his ugly wife, for God has created love for one's children and one's wife, so also one may not abandon one's occupation. We say it is cruel of an *aghori*[1] to abandon his child. Because of imported cloth, the people are getting impoverished. You are all well dressed. Not travelling about in India, you have no idea of the starvation which prevails. This itself shows that the country is going the wrong way. The better houses in prosperous villages are growing dilapidated. The wooden rafter in the huts are not being replaced. I saw in the course of my tour of Kheda last time that people had no grains in their big earthen jars. This bespeaks famine conditions. Anyone who goes round will see this for himself. If these conditions had come about a hundred and fifty years ago, they would not have tolerated them. On cloth, we lose, on an average, two rupees a head annually. This makes 300 rupees for 150 years. How utterly ruined must be the men and women who have lost so much of their wealth!

The nation has thus been gradually ruined. For want of suitable occupation, men and women lost their all as time went by. Farmers and their womenfolk could, during the three months from Fagan[2], spin enough yarn to meet the family's needs [for the year]. If you spin with your own hands, you will have yarn at no more than the cost of cotton. Again, if you do the weaving yourselves, you will have the

[1] A sect of mendicants following very harsh practices

[2] Name of month in the Indian calendar, roughly corresponding to March

cloth, too, for the price of cotton. The person whom you pay will then be richer. If, instead, you have the money yourselves, weaving with your own hands, you will earn more than the assessment [you pay]. What this comes to is this, that you can earn the amount of three years' assessment in one year. Even little girls can understand this simple calculation.

If you wish a prosperous future for your children, you should leave them, as legacy, the idea that it is *adharma* to obtain our needs by imports. They should want to use cloth made in this country.

Do not choose your dresses in imitation of those of the British.

If your husband brings any such garments for you and asks you to go about dressed in unbecoming fashions, you should say you will have none of this husbandly assumption of authority, that your sari must be one made in this country. They will ask how it is possible to have a sari of fine texture made here. However, if you indeed want saris of such quality, you will have them. A sister once came to me; she wanted money. I asked her of what material her skirt was made. She said it was made from the covering of her bedding, so much the wiser she was.

You should use cloth produced in Nadiad. Do not think it will be much too heavy on the body. If it is, you should see to it that the quality improves and it is no longer heavy. If a child is ill, you will give him medicine, and not abandon him. Likewise, you should accept a piece of work and then get it improved by the weaver-physician. You should wear only such cloth which is made by our weavers. You should not discard the clothes you have with you. Wear them out. But the new ones you buy henceforth should be swadeshi. Use and encourage swadeshi cloth. Get swadeshi saris made. Win over your husbands and, helping one another, be independent. If you, ladies, understand this idea well and act upon it, you will say after two years that Gandhi was right.

The day after tomorrow is *Bhima ekadashi*[1]. People will be taking the *chaturmas*[2] vow on that day. What is the vow you will take on that *ekadashi*?—that you will not wear cloth which has not been made in India, that you will wear out what you have, but will not buy any more foreign material. You should take the *chaturmas* vow with a

[1] Eleventh day of the bright half of *Ashadh*, roughly corresponding to July

[2] Literally, a period of four months; the term signifies a vow of fasting and semi-fasting during the four monsoon months.

pledge to this effect. Your taking the pledge to use cloth made in Nadiad will not by itself satisfy me; you should also persuade others to wear Nadiad cloth. I cannot estimate the resulting increase in prosperity if everyone were to make such a resolution. We should have this result in no more than a year or two.

Everyone among you should learn spinning. It is easy work. I know this because I have done spinning myself. On my right side is Gangabehn and on this side Anasuyabehn; they have experience of the work.

Do what some other ladies do. You have two or three hours in which you do nothing. You spend them in temples. Telling the beads in temple is dharma, but at the present time real *bhakti* consists in this work for cloth. To till the land for love of others and make the produce available to the people, to spin for the good of India, sitting in the home, and that too not for money—this is the highest dharma. If you do less, you will have followed less of dharma. Even a person who spins for money will have followed dharma. Women in rich families should spin two or three hours every day and pass it on to the Store here, gift it to the venture which the friends here have undertaken. The cloth will be cheap then. Next, gift it to Kheda. When Nadiad has had enough, give it to some other place. As God has created you that you may live in Nadiad, service of the people here is India's service. It is your dharma to see that Nadiad does not become a burden on other parts or on a foreign country.

It is, therefore, my request to the ladies in well-to-do families that they should spin and gift the yarn. Anyone who spins for money will get three annas a pound [of yarn]. Every pice earned is useful. With the money so earned, you can buy your needs. You can buy things like medicine which you may need. The more you earn, the more the gain. This is an excellent means of earning. The effort is small, the machine simple. The spinning-wheel is priced at two rupees eight annas. This is cheap. If you cannot afford this price, under the plan here they will supply a spinning-wheel. A deduction of four annas a month will cover the cost gradually and be fair to you.

This swadeshi dharma is a very important one. Through it alone will India become prosperous. Everything else is mere bookish theory. This alone is swaraj. The *Gita* teaches that where dharma prevails, other things follow. Walking in the way of the swadeshi dharma will ensure our uplift. We have no desire to be millionaires.

We can be so only by doing injustice. The whole population of 30 crores cannot have millions, but all can be prosperous. I am here today to show you the way.

I thank you for hearing me attentively. If you see anything in the idea, swallow this dose. I wish such women to come forward. Out of the 24 hours of the day, you should spend some at the spinning-wheel. Speak about it to your neighbours and your husband. Just as a good family should have a quern, so also it should have a spinning-wheel. If this comes about, Nadiad can produce its needs. There will be no more hunger. Swadeshi is the only right way of passing your time in doing dharma. Use swadeshi. Produce swadeshi. If we use swadeshi, there is not enough cloth to go round. We can have it, if we take to weaving. If all men and women agree, we can see to it that foreign cloth disappears in 11 days. If we but make up our mind, the way is simple. We shall have to produce the 75 per cent [of our requirements] at present imported from outside. If all the women embrace this dharma, be sure our emancipation is near at hand, within 15 days.

May you embrace this dharma, I pray. And I pray to God, likewise, that He may dispose you all to this and prompt you to work for this right cause.

[From Gujarati]
Gujarati, 20-7-1919

159. LETTER TO RANCHHODDAS PATWARI

ASHRAM,
Monday, Ashadh Sud 9 [*July 7, 1919*][1]

RESPECTED RANCHHODBHAI,

For several reasons I have postponed resorting to civil disobedience. You will see those reasons in the newspapers. I know that the news will make you happy. But my purpose in giving you this information is to let you know that I am now ready to come to Gondal for the swadeshi work. So long as I was contemplating to resort to civil

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's proposed visit to Gondal, which he visited in September 1919; also from reference to civil disobedience which was suspended by Gandhiji in that year. The source has *Ashadh Sud 9*, which seems to be a slip for *Ashadh Sud 10*, which was a Monday and corresponded to July 7.

disobedience, I had been wondering whether I should tour Kathiawar or not. I kept thinking that I might be embarrassing friends to a certain extent. Now I do not feel handicapped that way. Nevertheless, consult the respected Thakore Saheb. I would like to come only if he consents. For if the native states extend whole-hearted co-operation, the swadeshi movement will really flourish and the subjects of the states will gain in prosperity. Most probably I shall be only at the Ashram till Friday. I have sent Chi. Maganlal to Kathiawar. I have also asked him to meet you so that he can fully explain to you this easy way.

Yours respectfully,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4118. Also C.W. 2794

160. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY

[On or after *July 8, 1919*]

I thank you for your letter.[1] I shall duly wait on H. E. on Saturday the 12th at 3 p.m. I was sorry to hear from Mr. Griffith that H. E. was indisposed. I do hope he has now been completely restored [to health].

From a photostat: S.N. 6732

161. LALA RADHA KRISHNA'S CASE

When Babu Kalinath Roy's case was taken up in these columns, I was asked by several Punjabi friends why I had not taken up Lala Radha Krishna's[2] case which was equally strong, if not stronger than Babu Kalinath Roy's. I respectfully told the friends that I did not know Lala Radha Krishna's case and that I would be glad to study it if the papers were sent to me. I have now received the papers, namely, the charge, the defence statement, the judgment, Lala Radha Krishna's petitions and the translations of portions of the *Pratap* from which the statements in the charge-sheet were taken. These are all published in

[1] Of July 8 conveying the Governor's desire to meet Gandhiji at Poona on Saturday

[2] Editor of *Pratap*

this issue. The reader, therefore, has complete data for coming to a definite conclusion.

In my humble opinion, the judgment is a travesty of justice. The case is in some respects worse even than Babu Kalinath Roy's. There are no startling headlines as in *The Tribune* case. The accused has been sentenced not on a section of the Indian Penal Code but on a rule temporarily framed as a war measure. My meaning will be clear when the reader has the rule itself before him. Let me remind him that it is not a rule passed by the Legislative Council. It is a rule promulgated by the Government under the powers granted to it by the Defence of India Act. Here is the whole of it:

> (1) Whoever by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representations or otherwise, publishes or circulates any statement, rumour or report—
>
> (a) which is false and which he has no reasonable ground to believe to be true, with intent to cause, or which is likely to cause, fear or alarm to the public or to any section of the public; or
>
> (b) with intent to jeopardize, or which is likely to jeopardize, the success of His Majesty's forces by land or sea, or the success of the forces of any power in alliance with His Majesty; or
>
> (c) with intent to prejudice, or which is likely to prejudice, His Majesty's relations with Foreign Powers; or
>
> (d) with intent to promote, or which is likely to promote, feelings of enmity and hatred between different classes of His Majesty's subjects—
>
> shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years, and shall also be liable to fine, or if it is proved that he did so with intent to assist the King's enemies with death, transportation for life or imprisonment for a term which may extend to ten years.
>
> (2) No court shall take cognisance of any offence against this rule save upon complaint made by order of, or under authority from, the Governor-General-in-Council, the Local Government or some officer empowered by the Governor-General-in-Council in this behalf.

It will be noticed that the rule is so drastic that an offence against it could not be taken cognisance of except under special orders of the Government or some officer appointed in this behalf.

Let us turn to the indictment. Now a charge-sheet should contain no avoidable inaccuracies and no innuendoes. But we find that this indictment contains material inaccuracies. One of the three statements claimed by the prosecution to be false is that the accused said in his paper that "they (the crowd) were fired at in Delhi without any cause". Now this is a dangerous inaccuracy. The passage in question reads, "they were, *at least from their point of view*, fired at without any cause."

The words italicized have been omitted from the charge, thus giving a different meaning to the writing from the one intended by the writer. From the third item, too, the relevant portion which alters the accused's meaning in his favour has been omitted. The third count concludes, "the people threw stones and brickbats at the time when the authorities had already taken the initiative." The relevant and qualifying sentence in the article from which the above is extracted is: "*But it is possible that somebody among this huge crowd might have thrown stones on the police officers (before they resorted to firing*). Even admitting this to be true, we say that the wisdom and prudence of the authorities demanded that some other method than firing guns should have been adopted with a view to suppress this disturbance." This sentence with the portion italicized again alters the whole meaning. If such an ommission was made by a defendant, it would amount to *suppressio veri*, and he would rightly put himself out of court. Done by the prosecution, the omission has passed muster, but in reality it is far more dangerous than *suppressio veri* on the part of a defendant. The Crown by a material omission, intended or otherwise, may succeed in bringing about an unjust conviction, as it appears to have done in this case.

The last paragraph of the charge contains an unpardonable innuendo:

> The accused has published a number of seditious and inflammatory articles, but the Crown prefers to proceed under Rule 25.

The suggestion that the accused has written "seditious and inflammatory" articles could only be calculated to prejudice the defence. I have never seen an indictment so loosely drawn up and so argumentative as this. In a properly constituted court of law, I venture to think that it would have been ruled out of order and the accused set free without having to enter upon any defence.

The judgment, too, I am sorry to say, leaves the same impression

on one's mind that the charge does—an impression of prejudice and haste. It says: "The prosecution have also established that each of these statements is false." Now I have, I hope, already demonstrated that two of the statements in the indictment would not be false, for they are statements *torn from their context and incomplete*. No amount of evidence to prove the falsity of such incomplete statements could possibly be permitted to injure the accused. There remain only two statements to be examined. The first statement is, "By the evening of the 31st March, forty Hindus and Mussulmans had been killed." Now it would be quite clear to anybody perusing the judgment that even now it is not known how many persons were killed. I suggest that the deciding factor in examining the falseness or otherwise of the above statement is not the number killed but whether any people were killed at all. If anything could then alarm the people, it was the fact of firing, not necessarily the number killed. And the fact of firing is not denied. As to the number, the newspapers including the Anglo-Indian Press had different versions. The learned judge dismisses the plea that other respectable papers contained about the same statements that the *Pratap* did. I submit that it was a relevant plea in order to establish the defendant's *bona fides* with a view to showing that he had reasonable grounds for believing the statements he published. The second statement made by the accused is, "It cannot be denied that most who were killed or wounded were innocent." Lala Radha Krishna in his petition pertinently observes that "the Delhi authorities themselves took this view and in order to provide for the innocent sufferers in the riots opened a public fund". Let me add to this that no attempt was made by the Crown to show that even one man killed or wounded among the crowd was guilty of any act of violence himself. The court seems merely to have relied upon the fact that those who were killed were "members of a violent and dangerous mob". That fact does not necessarily prove that those actually killed were guilty of violence nor has the accused in his articles complained that the innocent suffered with the guilty. His complaint naturally was that the firing was at all resorted to.

It is now necessary to examine the rule under which the accused was charged. Lala Radha Krishna was charged under sub-clause (a) of sub-section I of Rule 25. In order to establish the guilt of the accused, it is necessary to prove

(a) that the statement is false;

(b) that the accused "has no reasonable ground to believe it to be true";

(c) that it is published "with intent to cause", or it "is likely to cause fear or alarm to the public".

It has been made abundantly clear in the foregoing that the statements have not been proved to be false, and that even if they were, it has not been proved that the accused "had no reasonable ground for believing them to be proved". On the contrary, the defence statement gives clearly the grounds of his belief and lastly the prosecution never proved that there was any "intent to cause fear or alarm", or that "there was likely to be any fear or alarm to the public, we are satisfied that the publishing and circulating of these false statements did actually cause fear and alarm to the public." Lala Radha Krishna observes on this point, "The prosecution witnesses were unable to cite any specific instances of such alarm having been caused by the articles in question."

The judgment takes no note of the antecedents of Lala Radha Krishna, of the fact that although there was not the slightest reason for expressing regret for anything he had written, he expressed it in his statement to the court for any unconscious exaggerations and of the very material fact that the error, if error it was, regarding the number of the dead was corrected by him as soon as the official communique was published and that he published too the *Civil and Military Gazette* version. This seems to be a question of manifest injustice. We understand that Lala Radha Krishna's petition for release is still engaging the attention of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab. We hope that the public and the Press throughout India will support the prayer for justice and that it will not go in vain.

Young India, 12-7-1919

162. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

[*July 12, 1919*]

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
HIS HONOUR THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR
LAHORE

DEAR SIR,

I enclose herewith copy of *Young India*[1] dealing with the case of Lala Radha Krishna, the Editor of the *Pratap*, for submission to His Honour. I understand that the case is under His Honour's consideration at the present moment. May I hope that Lala Radha Krishna's sentence will be remitted ?

I am,
Yours faithfully,

From a photostat: S.N. 6765

163. LETTER TO SUNDER LAL[2]

LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
July 12, 1919

Herewith I enclose copy of *Young India* referring to Lala Radha Krishna's case. In my opinion, it is as bad as, if not worse than, Babu Kalinath Roy's case, and I think you should respond all the quicker for Lala Radha Krishna, he not being as influential as Mr. Roy. I think that the same procedure should be followed as in the case of Mr. Roy. Perhaps a single memorial instead of separate ones from lawyers, editors, and the general public, will answer the purpose. Meetings should certainly be held, as the matter is still under the consideration of the Punjab Government. Resolutions at public meetings may be addressed to the Viceroy and the Lieutenant-Governor. I need hardly say that promptitude is necessary to secure a ready relief.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6741

[1] Dated 12-7-1919
[2] Of Uttar Pradesh

164. SPEECH ON SWADESHI AT FERGUSSON COLLEGE, POONA[1]

July 12, 1919

In addressing the students in Hindi, Mr. Gandhi said the question of swadeshi included the question of language, and he would prefer to address them in their lingua franca, Hindi, rather than in English; but it was about swadeshi in respect to clothing that he was there to speak to them.

Dr. Harold Mann had surveyed the conditions in a Deccan village near Poona and he had observed that a large part of the population was without work for a large part of the year and had to depend on daily labour, e.g., carrying milk to Poona, working in the Ammunition Factory, etc., and that for the most part it was the males only who found work in this direction. How, asked Mr. Gandhi, did the women employ themselves? They had no work, or they employed themselves with unprofitable work. That was the condition all over India. Sir Dinsha Wachha had calculated that during the period of the war, they had much less cloth for their consumption than they had in the five years preceding the war. Should they wait for more mills to supply the shortage of cloth from which they were suffering ? asked Mr. Gandhi. It would take years before the mills could come effectively to their rescue. Swadeshi alone could effectively and without loss of time supplement their supply of cloth. Sir William Hunter[2] had calculated that one-tenth of their population scarcely got one meal per day. The speaker's own experience of the peasant in Champaran proved the truth of the calculation. He could say that most of the peasants in Champaran had to rest satisfied with scanty meals. He said Mrs. Gandhi herself went about in the villages of the Champaran District and she revealed to him the painful fact that many of the women had not sufficient clothing to cover themselves with, and some of them had not had their bath for days together for want of clothing to change for the dirty scanty clothing on their bodies, which they could ill afford to wash! Thousands of peasants burnt away their precious manure in winter to warm themselves with, only because they had nothing wherewith to buy warm clothing. And what was at the root of all this misery? One hundred and fifty years ago, they produced their own cotton, spun it and wove out of it their own cloth; today they had to depend on foreign market. It would be tormenting to him to relate, and to them to hear, the painful process of the extinction of their handicrafts ill the past. It was for

[1] Under the auspices of the Philosophical Club, R. P. Paranjapye, the Principal of the College presiding

[2] 1840-l900; historian, an authority on Indian affairs; author of *Indian Empire;* served in India for 25 years, and was sympathetic to Indian aspirations; member of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress in London

them—the students, who were the hope of the future—to study the conditions of the agriculturists, to think of how their lot could be improved and to set to them the example of their own lives. They themselves could learn spinning and weaving in a short time, and go from village to village preaching to the peasants the need of swadeshi and explaining to them how they could fight starvation and famine by filling their time with spinning yarn and weaving cloth out of it. It was a serious state of affairs for any country if its peasant population had to remain without work for six months in the year. He explained to them the three vows that he had placed before the public, but told them that the purest swadeshi consisted in using cloth woven on handlooms out of hand-spun yarn. The question of machine-made cloth apart, Mr. Gandhi said it was undoubted that the clothing he wore was more artistic than what the students wore. Art, he explained, lay in producing something which could not be exactly imitated, which had on it the stamp of some ideal, which in short, had the soul of the artist in it. Machine-made cloth had no soul in it. As to the greater durability of hand-woven cloth, there was scarcely any doubt. But if the audience did not share his views on art, they had the Indian mill-made cloth to fall back upon while the peasants could manufacture their own yarn and cloth in their cottages.

From the point of view, then, of rejuvenation of their lost art, of service of the Motherland, and of protection of their peasant population, swadeshi was a thing without which none of them could do. For some time to come, they would have to rest satisfied with cloth of a coarse texture, but it was little sacrifice on their part, considering the mighty issues involved.

The speaker emphasized that he did not hold out the handloom as a competitor of the power-loom. The objective was not that the former should supplant the latter. It was rather that the former should supplement the latter. What he meant to say, however, was that any amount of progress in our mill industry could not improve the condition of our agriculturists. Only a revival of cottage industries, viz., hand-spinning and hand-weaving, could work their economic salvation. He hoped they would discuss the whole question with their professors and that both they and the professors would see their way to support swadeshi in a religious spirit.

Principal Paranjapye, in rising to thank Mr. Gandhi, said that as Mr. Gandhi spoke in Hindi, he could not follow him fully. He could only get the gist of his remarks. But he could guess the rest. He then mentioned some of the grounds on which, he said, he was opposed to the idea of what he thought to be a crusade of an unpractical nature. One hundred years ago, he said, they might have produced their own cloth; similarly, they travelled large distances by means of primitive bullock-carts and their caravans brought in and took out commodities to and from their country in that primitive fashion. The railways had then come and ruined the profession of those carters. Did Mr. Gandhi wish that the railways should be

destroyed and the primitive means of trade and communications be restored instead? It was vain, he maintained, to strive to turn back the tide of time, and to seek solution of an economic question in a sentimental way. Similarly, it would be absurd to say that the printing presses which had supplanted the copyists of the olden time should go, and allow the copyists to minister again to our needs of writing. . . .He had not made up his mind in the matter, but Mr. Gandhi had left him unconvinced.[1]

Young India, 16-7-1919

165. SPEECH ON SWADESHI AT CITIZENS' MEETING, POONA

July 12, 1919

Mr. Gandhi, who was introduced to the audience by Mr. Khadilkar, said speaking in Hindi, that at the outset he wanted to discuss swadeshi not from a political standpoint, but from an economic and religious one. Swadeshi, as he understood it, was broad-based on certain religious and economic principles according to which all men from the Viceroy to his peons downwards might accept it. It recognized no distinction as of the Moderates or the Extremists among its votaries, and it was such that it was possible to bring men of all races, castes and creeds under its influence. There was thus no place in it for boycott, which was the predominant element in, or which practically meant, the swadeshi of a few years ago. He therefore wished to request them with all the force that he could command to keep the thought of boycott away from their minds while thinking of swadeshi.

He recalled a day when just after his return from South Africa he visited Poona and there said at a meetingthat what Poona thought one day, the rest of India would think on the next. He said he was still of the same opinion. He believed that no city in India could compare with Poona in its learning and its self-sacrifice, and he had no doubt that if Poona saw eye to eye with him in the matter of swadeshi, it would relieve him from half of the task. What, in his opinion, Poona lacked was faith and self-confidence. Poona still believed, be thought, that there was no salvation without their being Westernized. It was only when Poona disabused itself of this belief that it could truly help in raising the country from its despondency.

Proceeding to explain swadeshi, Mr. Gandhi drew a homely analogy. Supposing, he said, a man had ample provisions and a wife to prepare out of them dainty dishes for him, and if in spite of it he sent for his dishes from an outside hotel how should they describe him? They should, he said, regard him as one out of his

[1] Here followed a few remarks by Gandhiji as editor, *Young India*, while publishing the report of his speech; *vide* "Note on Principal Paranjapye's Observations", 16-7-1919.

senses. Similarly, a nation, which acted in the way this man did, could not but be characterized as one out of its senses, and India was an instance in point. A hundred-and fifty years ago, she produced her own cloth and produced fabrics of cotton and silk woven into a texture the fineness of which no cloth produced anywhere else in the world could compete with. And today she depended on foreign countries for a large part of her cloth. Last year, for instance, India paid 60 crores of rupees for the cloth imported from abroad. This dependence was at once an act of folly and of sin. If having given up their old profession of producing their own cloth, they had busied themselves with something more profitable, Mr. Gandhi said, he would have no quarrel. But the fact was that they had not done so. The peasant population, i.e., two hundred and forty million of our whole population, spent six months in the year idly. He had lived among the agriculturists of Kaira and Champaran and he knew that they remained without work for half the part of the year. The condition of these people could not be improved unless they became self-supporting which for them meant the earning of their living and manufacture of their cloth by hand-spinning and hand-weaving. And here he instanced the case of Vijapur, a village near Ahmedabad, where owing to the indefatigable efforts of Mrs. Gangabai Mazumdar, a widow of fine patriotism and selflessness, four hundred Mussulman women who had before nothing to do and who on account of the *purdah* could not go out to work, added to their income by spinning cotton in their own homes. It was Gangabai who brought employment to those unemployed and her example deserved to be copied everywhere. And, argued Mr. Gandhi, they should bethink themselves of England and Germany, how they tackled their food problem during the war, how they turned fallow land into arable and grew potatoes on it in six months' time. Spinning and weaving their own cloth was surely a less difficult task than growing potatoes. That, however, was the economic aspect of the question. He had still to put before them the question from a religious standpoint. He had defined swadeshi as restricting oneself to the use and service of one's immediate surroundings to the exclusion of the more remote. He thought it was scarcely humane for people to prefer remote surroundings to those nearest themselves, and humanity, said the great Tulsidas, was the basis of all religion. He felt that the first and elementary duty of man was to use and serve his neighbours and that if he went farther for his needs and services, it argued on his part more regard for self than for others. Mr Gandhi said:

> We have wasted a considerable part of our precious spare time, and it behoves us now to bestir ourselves to utilize it and to dedicate our labour to the land of our birth.

Mr. Gandhi then explained to them three swadeshi vows.[1] He wished they could share his view that there was more art in hand-spun and hand-woven cloth than cloth manufactured in factories. Even supposing that there could be one day in India mills enough to supply all the cloth they needed, there was nothing wherewith the women of the country could employ their sparetime better, or wherewith those who

[1] *Vide* "Swadeshi Sabha Rules' before 1-7-1919.

had no means of honourable living could get a means more honourable than spinning and weaving. The chief part of swadeshi activity was production of. as much cloth as possible, and the need of it could not be overestimated. Perseverance, patriotism and self-sacrifice were the essentials of success in their programme and Mr. Gandhi hoped that Poona would respond enthusiastically to his call and justify its proud traditions.

Young India, 16-7-1919

166. LETTER TO R. B. EWBANK

[After *July 12, 1919*][1]

DEAR MR. EWBANK[2],

I thank you so much for your letter of the 12th instant and for your offer to meet the Committee of the Swadeshi Sabha[3]. I had a talk in the matter with His Excellency[4] who promised to discuss it with you. I expect to wait on the Governor again very soon and go into the matter more fully with him. I hope then to write [to] you to meet the Committee on a day that will suit you.

I appreciate your reasons for not taking the Swadeshi vow. All I am anxious for is your general and active support in the work of production by the agricultural population. I feel that that way lies aneasy solution of our present and future difficulties about cloth and about the poverty of the masses. But I shall not anticipate our discussion. I am glad and thankful for your promised support in this direction.

I thank you for your inquiry about my health. I am as well as I can be without the rest I need for some months and which for the moment I cannot give myself.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6744

[1] The letter acknowledges the addressee's letter dated July 12. For an earlier letter dated July 3 to the addressee, *vide* "Letter to R.B. Ewbank", 3-7-1919

[2] Registrar of Co-operative Societies, Bombay

[3] The Central Swadeshi Sabha which was inaugurated on July 1, 1919; *vide* "Swadeshi Sabha Rules", Before 1-7-1919.

[4] Gandhiji had met the Governor of Bombay on July 12.

167. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
Sunday, Ashadh Vad I [*July 13, 1919*]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I returned from Poona only today. I had a talk with the Governor for nearly two hours. The result is that the struggle will be suspended. I must wait for the Viceroy's letter. I said that, if the latter wanted me to suspend the satyagraha for the present, I was ready to do so. I shall know in a day or two what I am to do. What often happened in the Transvaal is happening here. The sum of Rs. 2,500 which was received is to be credited to the satyagraha account. The money is to be used at my discretion for the purpose of the struggle. Write to Chi. Maganlal wherever he happens to be, and tell him to go and spend a day or more at Gondal. He should see Ranchhodbhai and have a talk with him. If Ranchhodbhai understands the thing in a personal talk, he can do something immediately. He can also help about looms, etc. I think we shall need quite a number of them.

I remember to have been told by Anasuyabehn that some money had been handed to you on behalf of Ambalal. About Somanath Rupji, talk to Girjashankar and do as he advises.

I hope you are both well.

It looks as though I cannot go there this week. I see that I must stay on in Bombay. Most probably I shall be able to leave next Saturday.

Give the news about the struggle to everyone in the Ashram.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati; S.N. 6743

168. SPEECH AT BOMBAY ON INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA[1]

July 13, 1919

The problem which has brought us together today is a very important one and calls for an urgent solution. If we do not come forward to share the suffering of Indians, wherever they may be,- it can be said that we are not fit to be an independent nation. The hardships of Indians in South Africa can be imagined only by those who have had to suffer them. It was many years ago that Indians started going to South Africa. In those days the way lay through Morocco. Forty years ago, Indians in good numbers started going there under contract as indentured labourers. On the expiry of their contract, they lived on as free citizens. Many Indians, especially our Memon brethren, went there as traders to supply the needs of these indentured Indians.

When gold was discovered in the Transvaal, a large number of Englishmen from surrounding areas descended on it and succeeded, too, in making their fortunes. Indians also earned, some more, some less. Following this, a few people suggested to President Kruger that Indians should be expelled from the Transvaal. He could not do this at the time, but later in 1885 a law was passed as a result of which our Indian brethren there were put to much hardship. This law contained two important provisions, one which prohibited Indian settlers in the Transvaal from holding immovable property and another which required an Indian to pay £3 for taking out a trading licence. One more law was passed later which is known as the Gold Act. This also interfered with the enjoyment of their rights by Indians.

An agreement was arrived at in 1914, which however did not remove all the hardships of Indians. The anti-Indian laws which the Government had recently passed were repealed. One of them was the Registration Act against which the satyagraha campaign had been directed. This agreement between Mr. Smuts and me contained a provision to the effect that the existing rights of Indians would not be disturbed. This provision is being interpreted by Indians in one sense and by the Transvaal authorities in another. In 1913, when I had got

[1] Under the auspices of the Home Rule League with Faiz B, Tyabji in the chair

Indians ready to march into the Transvaal, Lord Hardinge, the then Viceroy of India, sent Mr. Benjamin Robertson to South Africa. At that time, even here everyone felt that this would bring the desired results. Then followed correspondence between Mr. Smuts and me which brought about some understanding. Moreover, some Englishmen had also suggested that Indians should be refused licences in the "Gold Area". No one has succeeded so far in securing the repeal of the Act of 1885, which bears on the. Indians' right of ownership of immovable property. But, in my capacity as a lawyer, I used to advise people that we were entitled to the use of lands mortgaged to us. In this way, many of our Indian brethren came to hold lands. Besides, two or more people forming a company could acquire land. Because of this freedom, our Indian brethren have been holding lands there by forming corporations.

But now they have been depriving us of these rights too. I admit of course that there was a provision to the effect that, without prejudice to their rights to the lands and immovable properties already held by them, Indians would not in future be able to acquire lands, even in the name of companies. What is happening, however, is altogether unjust.

A law has been passed as a result of which, after May 31, no Indian will be able to carry on trade. In this way, they are being deprived of trade rights which they have been enjoying for many years. As Indians, it is our duty to raise a united voice and call the attention of the Government of India to this intolerable situation. Our fight is not against the Indian Government; we have only to strengthen its hands. It does not stand to lose anything by our doing so. If at all the Imperial Government has been helping the South African Government in this matter, our raising a strong protest here will oblige it as well to take our side. The South African Government accepted my contention that there should be no racial discrimination in the Immigration Act. But today we find that the white population there has come forward to deprive people of their rights.

Unfortunately, the three able men who worked indefatigably for Indians in South Africa are no more. One of them was Mr. Sorabji Shapurji Adajania. As fate would have it, he has passed away. Another

was Mr. Ahmad Mahomed Cachalia. He also has passed away. The third was Mr. Polak who has left South Africa and has settled in London. There is still one person there, but he has to attend to this matter in addition to his own work.

In short, I shall merely say that when we find Indians in South Africa being unjustly deprived of their rights, we should help them. I hope you will pass these resolutions with acclaim.

> (1) That this public meeting of the Bombay citizens respectfully protests against the Asiatic Land and Trading Amendment Bill reported passed by the-Parliament of the Union of South Africa as it contravenes the Smuts-Gandhi Agreement of 1914 and it violates the elementary rights of the British Indians lawfully resident in the Transvaal and, therefore, calls upon the Government of India and the Imperial Government to intervene so as to secure the repeal or the veto of the said Bill.
>
> (2) That this meeting tenders its heartfelt sympathy and assurance of support to their Indian fellow-citizens in the Transvaal who are heroically struggling against the unjust and the unwarrantable encroachments made by the said Bill upon their rights as citizens of the Empire.[1]

[From Gujarati]
Gujarati, 20-7-1919

[1] The resolutions are supplied from *New India*, 14-7-1919.

169. LETTER TO F. C. GRIFFITH

BOMBAY,
July 14, 1919

DEAR MR. GRIFFITH,

I have your note[1]. I have made no statement to the Press and shall certainly make none until I hear further. I am not responsible even for the A. P.[2] message that appears in the Press today.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 6746

170. LETTER TO R. P. PARANJAPYE

[BOMBAY,
July 14, 19l9]

DEAR PROF.PARANJAPYE,

It was good of you to have permitted me in spite of differences of ideals between us to address your pupils. I was therefore deeply pained to see them hiss [at] your criticism. Having permitted me to speak to the students, you could have done nothing less than you did and I wish you could let the students know my own feelings in the matter. I do think that it is no part of their training either to applaud or to hiss. The period of study requires a calmness of mind that shall

[1] This read:

URGENT

HEAD POLICE OFFICE,
BOMBAY
14-7-1919

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I have just received a telegram from Mr. Crerar which runs as follows:

"Please inform Mr. Gandhi that His Excellency presumes that he will make no statement regarding his interview on Saturday pending further communication which will shortly be made."

Yours sincerely,
F. C. GRIFFITH

PS.

Will you kindly acknowledge receipt of this letter by the bearer?

[2] Associated Press of India

not be swayed or dismayed by argument addressed to sentiment or passion. Their duty is prayerfully to weigh, consider and weave into their lives what appeals to cold reason.

And now a word in reply to your criticism.[1] As you addressed yourself to what you thought I must have said, knowing, as you do, my views on machinery, not to what I actually did say. I am keeping swadeshi propaganda free of the application of my special views on machinery, as will appear from the various pledges drawn up by me. The carters' or the copyists' fate has therefore no bearing on the movement. Both these classes have found other employment. My point about swadeshi is that our farmers, whose wives formerly spun yarn and who themselves wove it, have ceased to do so without finding any other employment. I propose to utilize this spare time of the nation even as a hydraulic engineer utilizes enormous waterfalls. Surely you will not have our women to cease to make pastry, even though you may get better and cheaper machinemade pastry, unless you can utilize the labour thus set free for a higher end. The problem before you and me is how to use the six months of the 24 crores of the peasants of Hindustan, the months during which they at the present moment do practically nothing. It is this enforced idleness which is in my opinion responsible for the growing poverty of the masses if not chiefly at least equally with the heavy assessments. Your argument that if the votaries used up our mill-made cloth, the poor would suffer is, I think, sufficiently answered in the plan suggested by me. Under it, the mill-made cloth will be used by the 20 p.c. of the population which may not be satisfied with the coarser though more artistic cloth woven from hand-spun yarn.

If I have not made my position clear, I would like you to spare a few moments and put down your counter argument. You know I value your criticism. I shall learn much from friendly and informed criticism like yours. And I need hardly assure you that I shall not be slow to own and correct any proved errors.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6747

[1] *Vide* "Speech on Swadeshi at Fergusson College, Poona", 12-7-1919.

171. LETTER TO D. N. NAGARKATTI

[*July 14, 1919*][1]

DEAR SIR,

Could you please let me know whether in the Nizam's Dominions, the industry of cotton-spinning by hand is still going and if it is what counts are spun and what quantity of yarn is so turned out annually? Please also let me know how many handlooms are working in His Exalted Highness' Dominions and what quantity and value of cloth is being manufactured annually.

Yours sincerely,

D. N. NAGARKATTI
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF INDUSTRY
HYDERABAD, DECCAN

From a photostat: S.N. 6748

172. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[BOMBAY,
July 14, 1919][2]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter.

The cheque for Rs. 100 which you sent was received at Revashankarbhais. You must have got the intimation from him. Besides this, a second cheque for Rs. 4,000 on Polak's account was also received, and another for Rs. 1,000 on account of the expenses in connection with South Africa. These, too, have been paid here. You must have debited the sums to their respective accounts. I am doing something about the amount due from the Swadeshi Store.

I am waiting for the Viceroy's final reply. Till I get it I can not decide. I expect to be able to start for that side on Saturday. Today, Lady Tata, Lady Petit and Mrs. Jehangir Petit came over to learn [spinning]. They will also take away one spinning wheel each. I don't

[1] From addressee's reply dated 10-8-1919 to Gandhiji. S.N. 6795

[2] This letter seems to have followed the letter to him dated July 13, but preceded the letter to Mama dated July 15, in which Gandhiji says he would be in Ahmedabad on Tuesday or Wednesday of the following week.

know how it happens, but women have the spinning-wheel as a fish takes to water.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

How is the pressure of work on you? How does Revashankar work?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 6745

173. LETTER TO MAMA PHADKE[1]

BOMBAY,
Tuesday, July 15, 1919

BHAISHRI MAMA,

I got your postcard. It seems I shall be able to go there next week. According to my present programme, I shall be there on Tuesday or Wednesday. Give this information to Vamanrao also. Everything depends on a letter I am expecting from the Governor. How are things going with you? How is your health?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3808

174. NOTE ON PRINCIPAL PARANJAPYE'S OBSERVATIONS2

[*July 16, 1919*]

It is evident that the learned and popular Principal of the Fergusson College, as he himself admitted, could not follow Mr. Gandhi in detail. He evidently thought that Mr. Gandhi was endeavouring to bring his known views on machinery into the swadeshi propaganda. The fact is that he had deliberately refrained from doing so. All the three vows prepared by him recognized the use

[1] A teacher of the Ganganath Bharati Vidyalaya, Baroda, who joined Gandhiji.

[2] Published as editor's remarks along with the report of the function held at Fergusson College, Poona, on July 12; *vide* "Speech on Swadeshi at Fergusson College, Poona", 12-7-1919.

of mill-made goods. He [had] said in his address that the city people could use the mill-made cloth only if the peasant population produced and used hand-made coarse cloth. The illustration of the carters and the copyists has really no bearing on the questions. These two classes have found other occupations; whereas the peasantry, especially the women-folk of the villages, remain largely idle for want of work at home. Mr. Gandhi has suggested hand-spinning and hand-weaving for the millions who have to pass nearly half the year in enforced idleness. Referring to Shri Dinsha Wachha's letter to *The Times of India* on the shortage of cloth and his prognostication that "no relief by way of increased output from Indian mills can be expected owing to the difficulty of strengthening the mills by additional spindles and looms", *The Modern Review* remarks, "Cannot handlooms and the indigenous spinning-wheels render any further help than they do? We think they can."

EDITOR,
Young India

Young India, 16-7-1919

175. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Wednesday [*July 16, 1919*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

This note will be brought by one Mr. Venkat Krishnama. He has been sent by Rajagopalachari, the well-known satyagrahi. He wants to do manual work. He says he will be able to get us Rs. 10 every month. He will be satisfied, he says, if he gets a verandah to himself, and is ready for any kind of work. His own wish is to learn weaving. You may put him on to any labour you like, starting him, at the same time, on spinning. He may stay if he works well and leave if he is not happy. I may, thus, send on any person I think fit; if you find the thing embarrassing any time, let me know immediately.

I am to see the Governor on Friday. I shall know better on that

[1] From the reference to the meeting with the Governor, which was expected to take place "at the latest on Saturday", July 19; *vide* "Letter to F. C. Griffth", 18-7-1919.

day what the future holds for me. I hope you are looking for a house for Shamaldas.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5771. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

176. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
July 17, 1919

MY DEAR WEST,

I have your undated letter from Durban expressing your keen disappointment at the absence of any news from me. I simply cannot understand it. I have written to you, Mrs. West and Devi, not many letters it is true, but enough to show you all that you are never away from my thoughts. In one of the letters I expressed my difficulties and wished how glad I should be if you were by my side. I have not left a single business letter of yours unanswered, even when I was practically on death-bed. I remember having advised Mr. Rustomjee to debit me with all the payments made to you in terms of your letter to me. I remember, too, that in one of your letters you asked me to cable to Mr. Rustomjee about funds. I refrained because at that time I felt by computation, and in this I was supported by Mahadev Desai, that Mr. Rustomjee must have received my letter. But it is likely that my letters get lost in transit and it is also likely that the posting volunteer might have carelessly lost some of my letters. For I have received complaints not only from you but from Polak, Ramdas and others, and I must write to you, what I have written to other friends, that they should bear with me and never think that I am neglectful about writing. I wish I had more leisure to write as much as and as often as I would like to but that is not vouchsafed to me at the present moment. I am writing to Mr. Rustomjee again regarding the £70.

Recently I wrote to Manilal about *Indian Opinion.* He asked me to supply him with funds or to let him revert to advertisements and business printing. I still retain the view I held there and the more I see of the jobbery that goes on here, the indiscriminate manner in which

advertisements are taken and the more I think how these advertisements, etc., are nothing but an insidious method of indirect voluntary taxation, how all this debases journalism and how it makes of it largely a business concern, I feel more and more convinced of the rightness of my view. Any way it would not be proper to blow hot and cold. Either you must make *Indian Opinion* a business concern and then not expect the public to take philanthropic or patriotic interest in it, or to make it merely an organ representative of Indian aspirations in South Africa and then rely entirely upon public support and goodwill. I have dissuaded Manilal from making it a business concern. I have not sent him there to do business but to render public service. I feel that *Indian Opinion* has served its purpose if only partially. It has brought into being several Indian presses and several Indian newspapers. They all in some shape or other somewhat serve the public. Manilal lacks the ability, through no fault of his own, for leadership and for original work. His effort, therefore, cannot be impressive. I have therefore advised him, in consultation with you and Mr. Rustomjee and consistently with the obligations to the subscribers who have already paid, to wind up *Indian Opinion,* to get up Phoenix, to let you have what you want of the Printing Press, to parcel out the land as you will think best and to use the income also, as you consider advisable, to bring here most part of the books unless they are wanted there for a better purpose and himself to come away with them. Ramdas has gone there primarily for business. He seems to be well fixed, well cared for and happy in the thought that he is at last earning something without doing violence to his conscience. He may stay as long as he likes.

I do not think I have made one suggestion in my letter [to] Manilal which occurred to me possibly after I wrote to him. I make it now. If you think that you would like to add to your *business,* the turning out *of Indian Opinion* you may do so. Perhaps it would not be a bad thing. You cannot give the Gujarati portion. Give only the English portion, thus becoming a vehicle for transmission of authentic news to India and England about Indian disabilities and Indian doings in South Africa. I would like you to consider it purely as a business proposition. If you find it workable, then only elaborate my proposal. If you find that as a business proposition it is useless, dismiss it altogether from your mind.

I am moving heaven and earth for getting redress about the

Trade and Land Bill regarding Transvaal. But I am handicapped for want of information. Ritch[1] has written to me, Naidu wrote to me butonce, there was cablegram from Asvat on which I took immediate action[2] but there is no reply to a cablegram[3] I sent now nearly a fortnight ago. I am anxious to know the latest news about the Bill. Will you please collect the information and write to me? Or ask the proper parties to write? Of the doings here you should know from *Young India* which is practically under my charge. I wonder if you see the paper. It is being sent to Phoenix. Do please write to Devi telling her that I have written to her also fairly regularly. How is she doing? Is she in Martitzburg? Where is Mrs. Doke[4] living now? And Mr. Phillips[5]? Please tell Parvati that she never wrote to me again as she promised: I wonder whether she received my letter which I wrote to her months and months ago. I believe it was written when I was last in Champaran. Do you find Manilal any better towards you than before? Hilda must have grown up into a big girl. Why can't shefavour me with a line? Please remember me to Grannie[6]. She must be a perfect wonder to all about her. And remember me also to Mrs. West and Sam[7]. I wonder what he is doing with his gun!

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the handwritten copy signed by Gandhiji: C.W. 4431. Courtesy: A. H. West

[1] L. W. Ritch, an articled clerk under Gandhiji in South Africa and secretary, South Africa British Indian Committee, London.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to the Press on South African Situation", 25-2-1919.

[3] Also in "Letter to Jehangir B. Petit", 2-7-1919, Gandhiji says "I want to send them a long cable today." This cable, however, is not available.

[4] Wife of Rev. Joseph J. Doke (1861-1913), minister of Johannesburg Baptist Church.

[5] Rev. Charles Philips, Congregational minister

[6] Mother-in-law of A. H. West

[7] Govindswami, machine foreman in the International Printing Press, Phoenix

177. LETTER TO F. C. GRIFFITH

[BOMBAY,]
July 18, 1919

DEAR MR. GRIFFITH,

H.E. told me when I was in Poona that he would see me unfailingly at the latest on Saturday, i.e., tomorrow, and he told me also that I should let you know for his information when I proposed to leave Bombay. It is surprising that I have hot yet heard from H.E. as I had expected. I am therefore somewhat in a quandary in the matter of regulating my movement. I wish, if possible, to leave for Ahmedabad tomorrow. Will you please inform H. E. and ascertain whether I shall be wanted in the near future ?

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6758

178. LETTER T0 CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

BOMBAY,
Friday [*July 18, 1919*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

We shall decide about sending money to Gangabehn when I am there. I am writing to her.

I may not perhaps be able to start even tomorrow. An interview with the Governor may be fixed for Sunday.

Yes, you may give Durgabehn's room to Shamaldas. But let it be understood that he must pay rent. I see that for the present Durgabehn will have to stay on here. The magistrate did not even have the courage to demand security from *Young India.* It would not have been furnished, if he had demanded it. We had assumed that he certainly would, and so expected that Mahadev would become free. But it is the Lord's will that prevails.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 784

[1] In the letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi, dated July 13, 1919, Gandhiji said he would be leaving for Ahmedabad on Saturday next, i.e., on 19-7-1919. This letter was evidently written on Friday, the 18th.

179. SPEECH ON GANDHI-SMUTS AGREEMENT, BOMBAY

July 18, 1919

Under the auspices of the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association, a public meeting was held in the Excelsior Theatre, Bombay, on July 18, 1919, to protest against the Asiatic Land and Trading Amendment Act recently passed by the South African Union Legislature. The Hon. Sir Dinshaw M. Petit, Bart., presided.

Mahatma Gandhi, seconding the first resolution moved by Sir N. G. Chandavarkar, said that when the Boer War broke out some years ago, Lord Lansdowne, one of His Majesty's ministers, declared that one of the causes which had led to that war was the treatment meted out to Indians residing in the Transvaal by the Government of the country, and Lord Lansdowne added that it never pained him so much as when he remembered the hardships to which the Indians were subjected by the Transvaal Government. This was said by Lord Lansdowne in 1899, and he (Mr. Gandhi) said the condition of their brethren in South Africa should certainly be not allowed to be worse than what it was in 1899. It should have been better than what it was before that war, but, on the contrary, the Indians in the Transvaal stood, on account of the new legislation, in a much worse position, as regards the right of acquiring land and trading, than they did before that war; for, before 1899, they enjoyed those rights with the help of the British Agent in that country. They could trade freely and have mortgages on land and could even own land, but now this legislation proposed to deprive them of both these rights.

And to the question of the insistence, on a strictly legal interpretation of the agreement arrived at between General Smuts and him, he (the speaker) recalled the case of the late Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, who had asked Lord Kitchner in regard to the Peace Treaty with the Boers to interpret the agreement from the point of view of the weaker party. Mr. Gandhi urged that the agreement he had referred to should be interpreted in the same generous manner, namely, from the point of view of the Indians, who were the weaker party in this case.

Continuing, he said, H. E. the Viceroy had been exerting himself to his utmost on behalf of the Indians. H. E. had made strong representations to the Imperial Government in this matter, and it was the duty of the whole of India to support H. E. He hoped H. E. would soon make a statement of what steps he had already taken and what he was still taking.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-7-1919

180. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
July 19 [*1919*][1]

MY DEAR HENRY,

Jamnadas, his wife and two friends with him leave per s. s. *Chindwara* for London on the 26th instant. Jamnadas wants to assist me in my work but feels that he has not the capacity for the task. He has a friend who has advanced enough money (not repayable) for his studies. His wife shares his views. He does not know, I do not know, what they should do to fit themselves. I am not sure that training there is necessary but it is enough for me that Jamnadas thinks it is. And he and his wife go there with my consent and blessing. Please receive them at the Docks or the station ≈ yourself or by deputy. Advise him[2] as to lodgings to an expensive hotel. Finally please advise Jamnadas as to the best course he should follow. Be sure that in all he does, he retains his and his wife's health. He is, as you know, a willing, able, honest young man. He will be in need of guidance in that strange land. You are there and I am satisfied.

I am working for the Transvaal case for all I am worth. Yesterday we had the Imperial Citizenship Association meeting.[3] Sir George Barnes[4] writes to me saying the Viceroy is doing all he can. Let us see.

[PS.]

As I am posting it after the ordinary hour, I am enclosing the other letters for you to post or deliver.[5]

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] From the contents; ibid., p. 467 Vide also p. 269-70.

[2] The source has "his".

[3] *Vide* "Speech on Gandhi-Smuts Agreement, Bombay", 18-7-1919.

[4] Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council in charge of the Department of Commerce and Industry

[5] The post-script has been struck out.

181. LETTER TO THE PRESS ON SUSPENSION OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE[1]

LABIJRNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
July 21, 1919

SIR,

The Government of India have given me, through His Excellency the Governor of Bombay, grave warning[2] that resumption of Civil Disobedience is likely to be attended with serious consequences to the public security. This warning has been enforced by His Excellency the Governor himself at interviews to which I was summoned. In response to this warning and to the urgent desire publicly expressed by Dewan Bahadur Govinda Raghava Iyer, Sir Narayan Chandavarkar and several editors, I have, after deep consideration, decided not to resume Civil Resistance for the time being. I may add that several prominent friends belonging to what is called the Extremist Party have given me the same advice on the sole ground of their fear of recrudescence of violence on the part of those who might not have understood the doctrine of Civil Resistance. When, in common with most other satyagrahis, I came to the conclusion that the time was ripe for the resumption of the Civil Resis-

[1] This letter was published also in *New India* and *The Bombay Chronicle* both dated 22-7-1919.

[2] This was as follows:

Bombay, *20th* July *1919*

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

I am to inform you that the Government of India have desired His Excellency the Governor of Bombay to convey to you a grave warning of the consequences which must inevitably be anticipated from the resumption of any action or propaganda involving disobedience of the law and of the heavy moral responsibility that must lie on those who take or advise this course.

In making this communication to you, I am to say that His Excellency would add a further warning that any assumption that such action can be undertaken without most serious consequences to the public security, is entirely unwarranted by the situation in his presidency.

for Political Secretary to Government

—*Source Material for A History of the Freedom Movement in India.*

tance part of satyagraha, I sent a respectful letter[1] to His Excellency the Viceroy, advising him of my intention to do so and urging that Rowlatt legislation should be withdrawn, that an early declaration be made as to the appointment of a strong and impartial committee to investigate the Punjab disturbances with power to revise the sentences passed, and that Babu Kalinath Roy who was, as could be proved from the record of the case, unjustly convicted, should be released. The Government of India deserve thanks for the decision[2] in Mr. Roy's case. Though it does not do full justice to Mr. Roy, the very material reduction in the sentence is a substantial measure of justice. I have been assured that the Committee of Inquiry, such as I have urged, is in the process of being appointed. With these indications of goodwill, it would be unwise on my part not to listen to the warning given by the Government. Indeed, my acceptance of the Govern-ment's advice is a further demonstration of the true nature of Civil Resistance. A civil resister never seeks to embarrass Government. He often co-operates and does not hesitate civilly to resist where resis-tance becomes a duty. He attains the goal by creating goodwill believing as he does that unfailing exercise of goodwill even in the face of unjust acts of a Government can only result in goodwill being ultimately returned by the Government. Further suspension of Civil Resistance is, therefore, nothing but a practical application of satyagraha.

Yet it is no small matter for me to suspend Civil Resistance even for a day while Rowlatt legislation continues to disfigure our Statute-book. The Lahore and Amritsar judgments make suspension still more difficult. Those judgments, read by me with an unbiassed mind, have left an indelible impression that most of the Punjab leaders have been convicted without sufficient proof and that the punishments inflicted on them are inhuman and outrageous. The judgments go to show that they have been convicted for no other reason than that they were connected with stubborn agitation against the Rowlatt legislation. I would, if I had my way, have therefore preferred to court imprison-ment to retaining the restricted liberty vouchsafed to me by the Government of India. But a satyagrahi has to swallow many a bitter

[1] *Vide* "Letter to S. R. Hignell", 18-6-1919

[2] The Governor-General-in-Council reduced on July 6 Kalinath Roy's term of imprisonment from 2 years to 3 months.

pill and the present suspension is one such. I feel that I shall better serve the country and the Government and those Punjabi leaders who, in my opinion, have been so unjustly convicted and so cruelly sentenced, by suspension of Civil Resistance for the time being. But this suspension, while it lightens my responsibility by reason of the feared outbreak of violence, makes it incumbent upon the Government and the eminent public men who have advised suspen-sion to see that the Rowlatt legislation is removed without delay.

I have been accused of throwing lighted matches. If my occasional Civil Resistance be a lighted match, Rowlatt legislation and persistence in retaining it on the Statute-book are a thousand matches scattered throughout India, and the only way to avoid Civil Resistance altogether is to withdraw that legislation. Nothing that the Government have published in justification of that legislation has moved the Indian public from the attitude of opposition to it.

I have thus suspended Civil Resistance to hasten the end of that legislation. But satyagrahis will pay for its removal by their lives if it cannot be removed by lesser means. The period of suspension is for satyagrahis an opportunity for further discipline in an enlightened and willing obedience to the laws of the State. The right of Civil Resistance is derived from the duty of obedience voluntarily performed. And satyagraha consists not merely, or even chiefly, in civilly resisting laws, but mainly in promoting national welfare by strict adherence to Truth. I would respectfully advise fellowsatyagrahis and seek the co-operation of all great and small in the propagation of pure swadeshi and promotion of Hindu-Muslim unity. Swadeshi is, I hold, a necessity of national existence. No Englishman or Indian can view with equanimity the huge enforced waste of the labour of twenty crore peasants during half the year. That labour can be quickly and immediately utilized only by restoring to the women their spinning-wheels and to the men their handlooms. This means the elimination of unnatural Lancashire interest and the Japanese menace. The elimination of the unnatural Lancashire interest purifies the British connection and makes the position of equality possible. The elimination of the Japanese menace will avert a national and Imperial disaster. Extension of Japan's hold upon India through her commerce can end only in India's degradation or a bloody war.

The Hindu-Muslim unity is equally a national and Imperial necessity. A voluntary league between Hindus, Mahomedans and

Englishmen is a league in my conception infinitely superior to and purer than the League of Nations just formed. Permanent union between the Hindus and Mahomedans is the preliminary to such Triple Union. That unity can be materially advanced by the Hindus whole-heartedly associating themselves with the Mahomedans in their very just aspirations regarding the Caliphate, holy Mecca and other holy places of Islam.

The swadeshi propaganda and work for Hindu-Muslim unity require powers of organization, honesty of purpose, integrity in trade, and immense self-sacrifice and self-restraint. It is, therefore, easy enough to perceive that swadeshi propaganda on the purest lines and promotion of Hindu-Muslim unity cannot but have an indirect, though none the less effective, bearing on the movement for securing withdrawal of the Rowlatt legislation for which the Government can claim no justification—little as they can claim even now—when we give an unexampled demonstration of the qualities named above.

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 23-7-1919

182. LETTER TO S. R. HIGNELL

LABURNUM ROAD, GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
July 21, 1919

DEAR MR. HIGNELL,

I enclose herewith a petition signed by Sir Narayan Chandavarkar, Sir Dinshaw Wacha and others praying for the release of Lala Radhakrishna[1]. I think that this case is worse than Babu Kalinath Roy's[2]. I understand that the matter is still engaging the attention of

[1] Editor of *Pratap* who had been sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment. For details *vide* "Lala Radha Krishna's Case", 12-7-1919.

[2] Editor of *The Tribune*, who had been sentenced to 2 years' imprisonment. His petition for mercy had earlier been rejected but the sentence had been reduced to 3 months on July 6. For details *vide*"Babu Kalinath Roy", 11-6-1919, "Memorial to Viceroy", 11-6-1919, "Memorial to Chelmsford", 11-6-1919 and "Cable to E.S. Montagu", 24-6-1919.

the Punjab Government. I venture to hope that speedy justice will be done in this matter.[1]

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6764

183. LETTER TO S. R. HIGNELL

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
July 22, 1919

DEAR MR. HIGNELL,

After a long and courteous interview with His Excellency the Governor of Bombay to which he had invited me, I have decided tosuspend Civil Disobedience for the time being. The public letter[2], a copy of which I enclose herewith, will show that the suspension is for me a further demonstration of Civil Resistance being perfectly compatible with respectful obedience to and co-operation with authority. But the letter will also show the determination to bring about by all lawful means including Civil Resistance the withdrawal of Rowlatt Legislation and I hope that the Government of India will not persist in flouting public opinion.

I would like further to bring to His Excellency's notice the Lahore and Amritsar judgments. His Excellency. [3] [th]at even at the risk of. [m]isunderstood by my. 'publicly referring. [M]artial law proceedings in the Pun[jab]. publicly dealing with the [ca]ses in which on the face of the judgments the injustice could not be proved. I am grateful for the substantial though partial justice being done in the case of Babu Kalinath Roy.[4] I fully expect that justice will be done in La[la] Radhakrishna's case. But the Lahore and Amritsar cases[5], I know, stand on a different footing. They deal with leaders who have taken an active part in the recent agitation. The verdict rests partly upon documentary and partly upon oral evidence. But there is enough in the two judgments to show an impartial student that they

[1] Radhakrishna's sentence was subsequently reduced to 2 months by the Lt. Governor on July 25, 1919.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to the Press on Suspension of Civil Disobedience", 21-7-1919.

[3] The letter is damaged at places.

[4] *Vide* the preceding item.

[5] *Vide* "The Lahore Judgment", 23-7-1919

are more in the nature of political pronouncements than judicial, and that there is not a tittle of evidence to show, with the exception of Dr. Bashir, that anyone of the leaders either brought about or encouraged violence. I am glad that the death penalty against Dr. Bashir has been commuted. Though. . .evidence to prove encourage[ment]. it was stoutly rebutted . . . of Dr. Bashir.These sentences have cast a profound gloom all over India. The Government may underrate the intensity of Indian feeling regar[ding] them. But many of tho[se] who deplore the sentences are unconnected with any political agitation. And theirs is the severest condemnation of these trials and the sentences. One such critic is Mr. Burjorji Padsha, the well-known manager of Messrs. Tata and Sons. He has been writing in the columns of *The Bombay Chronicle* open letters whose main theme is the Punjab affairs. I trust that they have been brought to H.E.'s notice. They . . . what resentment is. . . over these trials [sente]nces. . . It is a serious... leaders of open. . . over lose confidence in . . . justice whether special or otherwise. These cases are not such as to await the decision of the forthcoming Committee of Inquiry[1]. [I] would therefore respectfully urge that [su]ch. . .action as has been taken in the case of Babu Kalinath Roy may be promptly taken in the matter of these two judgments.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6769

184. LETTER TO CHHOTALAL TEJPAL

SABARMATI,
Ashadh Vad 10 [*July 22, 1919*][2]

DEAR SHRI CHHOTALAL,

I cannot praise your enthusiasm too much. Send me a brief account of the reform you have introduced;[3] I will then see if I can publish it and give my views on the subject. When did you start? What is the evidence? If formerly a cart was used, why do we carry [the bier] on shoulders now? How many dead bodies have been removed

[1] The Punjab Disorders Inquiry Committee

[2] The postmark, however, bears the date July 26, 1919.

[3] The addressee had been trying to persuade people to we carts for removing bodies of the dead.

by cart so far? How much does it cost to employ a cart? Who drives the cart? How is the thing arranged? Is there any association for the purpose or do you alone bear the burden? Do you work in Rajkot only or elsewhere too? St only facts without going into reasons.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

BHAI CHHOTALAL TEJPAL,
ARTIST
RAJKOT

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2590

185. THE LAHORE JUDGMENT

Whoever wages war against the Queen, or attempts to wage war, or abets the waging of such war, shall be punished with death or transportation for life, and shall forfeit all his property.

— Section 121, Indian Penal Code.

Lala Harkishan Lal, Bar-at-Law, Chaudhari Rambhaj Dutt, *Vakil*, and Mr. Duni Chand, Bar-at-Law and Messrs Allah Din and Mota Singh have been convicted by one of the Special Tribunals under Section 121 and 121A of the Indian Penal Code and have been sentenced to transportation for life and forfeiture. The reader may dismiss from his mind Section 121A for the time being. Having convicted the accused under Section 121, the Tribunal had no option but to pronounce the sentence of transportation for life and forfeiture. That, it will be seen, is the lowest penalty the court could inflict, the highest being the penalty of death by hanging. The Judges felt the severity to be so great in the last two cases that they were constrained to remark,

Allah Din and Mota Singh are minor offenders, and had it been in our power, we should in their cases have awarded much lighter sentences.

The learned judges had it in their power not to convict any of the accused at all or to convict them on other charges. But they have said, "We do not consider it necessary to record findings on other charges."

Though the judgment covers twenty seven sides of the foolscap size, it is being presented to the readers of *Young India*, and I would urge every reader to go through it word by word. For the Judges have made it the *cause celebre* of all the cases and shown to the world what

the Punjab, and incidentally the whole of India, is in their estimation.

This judgment, read together with the Amritsar one, forms the saddest commentary on British justice, when the judges are ruled by passion and prejudice and not by a sense of justice. To me, the judgments are a proof of the contention I have ventured to urge that we need not be enamoured of British justice and that it, in its essence, is no better than any other justice. We deceive ourselves into a false belief when we think that British Courts are the palladia of liberty. Justice in British Courts is an expensive luxury. It is often "the longest purse that wins". It is the crucial moments which provide the surest test. The judges' business is to rise superior to their surroundings. The Punjab Tribunal, in my opinion, has signally failed to do so. Mr. Winston Churchill at the time of the education crusade permitted himself to admit that even the judges were not free from political bias. It is possible, though highly improbable, in this case that the Privy Council will or can set the matter right but if it does, what then? At what cost will it have been done? How many tens of thousands feeling, and having cause to feel, aggrieved by decisions of lower courts, can afford to go to appellate courts and finally to the Privy Council? It is much to be wished that people would avoid litigation. "Agree with thine adversary quickly" is the soundest legal maxim ever uttered. The author knew what he was saying. But it will be asked, what when we are dragged, as we often are, to the courts? I would say: "Do not defend." If you are in the wrong, you will deserve the sentence, whatever it may be. If you are wrongly brought to the court and yet penalized, let your innocence soothe you in your unmerited suffering. Undefended, you will in every case suffer the least and, what is more, you will have the satisfaction of sharing the fate of the majority of your fellow-beings who *cannot* get themselves defended.

But I have digressed. I do not wish to inflict on the reader my special views on law courts, though I hold them to be thoroughly sound. This Lahore judgment shows clearly what our duty is as to the Rowlatt Act and as to the sentences. The judgment is designed to condemn the Rowlatt legislation agitation.

The opening paragraphs of the judgments set forth in some detail the "public agitation against the Rowlatt Bills" which "begin

with a protest meeting held at the Bradlaugh Hall on the 4th of February, 1919". They refer to my letter[1] of the 1st March, including the Satyagraha Vow, and bring up the events to the 15th April, including the firing in Delhi, the disturbances at Amritsar, and the meetings at the Badshahi Mosque and say,

Such are the main facts and the prosecution sets out to combine and connect these facts with the accused in such a way as to show that there was a conspiracy to secure the repeal of the Rowlatt Act by criminal means. The Court indicates the criminal means in the very next sentence.

> The defence has asked us to believe that there was no sort of organization of the hartal and that every individual shopkeeper in Lahore, Muzang and Bhagwanpura decided of his own accord that he must close his shop as a protest.

It then describes what it calls to be violent posters in order to show that the hartal was organized. I can see no violence in any of them, but I can detect in them the agony of an embittered soul. The criminality consists in the hartal having been organized and continued, *langurkhanas*[2] having been opened during its continuance and meetings having been held during the time. I venture to think that hartal is the inherent right of the people when they are deeply grieved by any action of the authorities. From time immemorial, it has been held to be meritorious to organize hartals without using force as a means of protest against acts of the governing authority. And when merit becomes a crime, it is a sacred duty to commit that crime, and imprisonment for it, instead of being a disgrace, becomes an honour that every good citizen should cherish. And the least that he can do is to continue the agitation against the Rowlatt legislation so intense and formidable that Government must withdraw the Act or withdraw the liberty of the agitators. And were I not afraid of an outbreak of violence in the present state of tension, I would certainly advise hartals again. The tension was no doubt brought about, not by the advent of satyagraha, but by the folly of the Government in precipitating and almost inviting violence by arresting me whilst I was proceeding to Delhi, and if necessary to Lahore and Amritsar with the deliberate intention of calming the atmosphere and bringing about peace. The Government invited violence by the mad act of arresting Drs. Kitchlew

[1] *Vide* "Letter to the Press on Satyagraha Pledged", 26-2-1919.

[2] Community kitchens or places of congregation of the poorer people to have their frugal daily meals

and Satyapal, who were leaders of the people, but who whilst they were no doubt carrying on a stubborn agitation against the Rowlatt legislation, were able to curb the temper of the people and were entirely on the side of law and order. The tension must some day go. And if the Government persist in the folly of retaining the Rowlatt legislation, they must prepare for a repetition of hartals well organized but without any force being used and without a drop of blood being shed by the people. When the masses have imbibed the message of satyagraha, we shall repeat from a thousand platforms Chaudhri Rambhaj Datta's formula which has been interpreted into threat by the Tribunal in order to prove the existence of criminal conspiracy. The formula is: "Remove our sufferings or we close our shops, suspend our business and we ourselves shall starve." There is no doubt that a great and effective demonstration was degraded by cries such as "*Hai Hai* Rowlatt Bill"[1], "*Hai Hai* George *mar gaya*"[2], or by an inspector of the C.I.D. having been beaten and driven out; or by disgraceful sheets like the *Danda Akhbar* or by the destruction of pictures of Their Majesties. The accused could not be held responsible for them any more than Mr. Shafi and others who were endeavouring to bring about peace. What right had the Government to launch out a prosecution for criminal conspiracy or, what is worse, for waging war against the King in respect of men who are not proved to have brought about any of these excesses, whose whole character and status make them almost proof against any such incitements? Whatever may be the technical view of expression "waging war", to dub a powerful agitation against an odious law an act of war is descent to the ludicrous. One might as well incriminate a Government for the unauthorized crimes of its servants. If the acts of Lala Duni Chand, Lala Harkishan Lal and his co-accused were acts of wary no organized agitation is possible in the country. And as organized agitation must be the breath of public life when there is stagnation in the body politic, whether of a social, economic, or political character, it must be counted as a "merit" to wage war after the style of the Lahore accused.

The whole of the judgment is tinged with a political bias. This is how the judges dismiss from their consideration the previous record of the accused:

> Before proceeding to consider the case of each accused, it is necessary to

[1] "Damn the Rowlatt Bill"

[2] "Damn George; he is dead".

> remark that each of them according to their station in life have been able to produce testimonials from more or less eminent members of the society to their moderation and loyalty. These could doubtless have been multiplied as often as they wished. Some of them again have been able to show that in recent times they have not merely prayed for the success of the British arms but have advocated War Loans, helped in recruiting and have even "given" relatives to the Indian Defence Force or clerks for Mesopotamia. Perhaps all of these efforts were not very valuable, and it has to be remembered that some of the accused are men who are always in the limelight; but we have no doubt thatevery one of them, however much he may dislike the existing Government, at least preferred it to the prospect of German rule. None of these things, however, really affect the matter before us.

When one's judgment is so warped, as is evident was the judges', from the passages above quoted, it is impossible to expect an impartial decision.

The issue raised by the case is abundantly clear, though not stated. Can we, or can we not, legally carry on a sustained powerful agitation involving processions, hartals, fasting, etc., but eschewing, always and invariably violence in any shape or form? The implication in the judgment is that we may not do so. If the sentences are allowed by the Government to stand, it is quite clear that they are of the same opinion as the judges. I for one would not welcome the release of the accused on any side-issue or as an act of clemency. There is nothing in the judgment to show that any of the accused either directly or indirectly encouraged violence. And where there is absence of intent to do violence, it is absurd to call a peaceful combination a criminal conspiracy even though uncontrollable spirits may find their way into that combination and do mischief. The happening of untoward incidents may be used as a warning to leaders. They may be used for justifying the declaration of martial law but they ought not to be used for the purpose of making out peaceful, law-abiding citizens as criminals and liars. The duty of the Indian public is clear: by a quiet, persistent and powerful agitation, but without violence and irritation, to secure repeal of the Rowlatt legislation and the reversal of the sentences.

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 23-7-1919

186. CERTIFICATE TO A. VENKATARAMAN

SABARMATI,

July 24, 1919

Mr. A. Venkataraman, Bar-at-Law, of King's Inns, Dublin, was a member of the volunteer Indian Ambulance Corps that was formed in 1914 in London immediately on the outbreak of hostilities. He was one of the earliest to join and helped considerably in the recruiting work. He was a member of the Executive Committee which was formed with the approval of the War Office. He served as a non-commissioned officer in Military Hospitals at Netley and Barton-on-Sea to the satisfaction of the superior officers. He bears to my knowledge an irreproachable character. Mr. Venkataraman is now seeking to obtain some responsible post under the Government of Madras. I hope that his efforts will meet with success.

M. K. GANDHI
CHAIRMAN OF THE VOLUNTEER
COMMITTEE

From a photostat: S.N. 7100

187. LETTER TO SIR GEORGE BARNES ON TRANSVAAL ASIATIC LAW

BOMBAY,
July 26, 1919

DEAR SIR GEORGE BARNES,

I thank you for your full letter[1] of the 18th instant regarding the recently enacted Transvaal Asiatic Law.

In view of the last sentence[2] of your letter, I am publishing it together with my reply[3]. I am deeply grateful that H.E. the Viceroy and you have been moving in the matter. I am, however, sorry to have

[1] This letter reviewed at length the position in South Africa and regretted that protests from the Indian Government had been unavailing. It also gave assurance that the Government would consider further action to be taken when the full text of the new statute was received.

[2] "Of course, you are welcome to make any use you may think fit of this letter."

[3] Published also in *The Bombay Chronicle* and *New India*, both of 29-7-1919.

to observe that the information placed at your disposal as to the true nature of the Bill is incomplete, if not misleading, and so is the information regarding the judgment of the Transvaal Supreme Court referred to in your letter.

Here is the true position regarding the Supreme Court judgment, Sections 130 and 131 of the Transvaal Precious and Base Metals Act, 1908, merely refer to residential rights. They have no reference to trade rights which another judgment of the same Supreme Court has held to be inviolable so far as the existing Transvaal laws are concerned. You will, therefore, see that the new law deprives the Indian settler in the Transvaal of his existing trading right. Sections 130 and 131 of the Law of 1908 attempted to curtail residential rights; the new law superadds the curtailment of trade rights and thus completes the virtual ruin of Indians lawfully resident within the gold area of the Transvaal. How can the Union Government with any cogency claim to have scrupulously observed the compact of 1914? Let me add that the law of 1908 has always been a bone of contention between the Transvaal Government and the Indian community, and it was, I am thankful to say, because of the strenuous fight that the Imperial Government put up in our behalf that the provisions of Sections 130 and 131 remained practically nugatory. You will perhaps now see what is meant by the promise, in General Smuts' letter to me, "to see that they (the existing laws) are administered in a just manner and with due regard to vested rights". The vested rights regarding residence were the rights which were exercised and enjoyed by the Indians even before 1908, viz., the right of holding fixed property under leases throughout the Transvaal. Let me recall a bit of old history. Law 3 of 1885 itself had become a matter of protracted correspondence between the South African Republic and His Majesty's Government through the British Agent at Pretoria. The matter was then referred to the arbitration to the then Chief Justice of the Orange Free State. He declared all legislation apart from Law 3 of 1885 as amended in 1886 to be contrary to the London Convention. All laws, therefore, passed after the award in further restrictions of the liberty of British Indian settlers of the Transvaal were contrary to it and it was, I expect, for that reason, apart from the equity of the case, that Mr. Harcourt declared on 27th June, 1911, from his place in the House of Commons:

Complaints against that legislation (the Gold Law and Townships Amendment

> Act) have been made and are now being investigated by the Government of the Union of South Africa, who have lately stated that there is no intention of interfering with any business or right to carry on business acquired ant exercised by Indians prior to the date of legislation.

Similarly, in 1912, Mr. De Villiers, the then Attorney-General of the Transvaal said: "No right or privilege which a Coloured person has at the present time is taken away by the new Act." Indians had a right to rely upon Mr. Harcourt's assurance and Mr. De Villiers' interpretation of the Act in question, and if the Transvaal judgment has gone against us, it is the duty of the Union Government not merely in virtue of the compact of 1914, but also of the assurance and the interpretation above referred to, now to amend the law of l908 and not to put a further restriction upon Indian liberty as the new law does.

I know you are overworked. My only fear is that as you have to act upon briefs prepared for you, and as a powerful Government like the Union Government can far more easily gain your ear than a handful of British Indians of South Africa, their case may suffer simply from want of information. Do you know that the Indians of South Africa raised an Ambulance Corps which served under General Smuts in South Africa? Is the new law to be their reward? I ought not to have to bring in the War services in order to secure the protection of an elementary right which considerations alike of honour and justice entitle them to. I commend to your attention the Report of the Select Committee of the Union House of Assembly. I will gladly lend you a copy, if you do not have one yourself.

Regarding fixed property, I see you have not got full information I know you will share my sorrow that the Union Government, unmindful of their trust and equally unmindful of the written word, accepted an amendment

> prohibiting the holding of mortgages by Asiatics on property, except as security for a *bona fide* loan for investment and providing that any Asiatic company which acquired fixed property after the 1st instant should dispose of the same within two years or . a further period as fixed by a competent Court with a rider that in the event of failure to do so, the property might be sold by order of the court.

I am quoting from Reuter cable, dated the 23rd May, from Cape Town. You will see that this completes legalized confiscation of property rights throughout the Transvaal and virtually the trade rights

within the gold area of Indian settlers. There was no evasion of Law 3 of 1885. The Indians did openly what the law permitted them to do, and they should be left free to do so.

I do not wish to prolong this tale of agony. The Government of India are bound to protect the rights of the 5,000 Indian settlers of the Transvaal at any cost.

Here is my solution. Law 3 of 1885 authorizes the Government to appoint wards and streets in which Indians can hold fixed property. In virtue of this authority, they can declare streets and wards of gold area township for Asiatic residence and ownership, and they can instruct receivers of revenue to issue trade licences in respect of such streets and wards to lawful Indian applicants. This will be pending the Commission promised by the Acting Prime Minister, Mr. Malan. The Government of India can see (by sending a strong representative) that the Commission does not prove as abortive as the Select Committee of the House of Assembly. The Dominions may have the right to regulate immigration. But as part of a professedly civilized Europe, they cannot restrict or take away the trading and property rights of lawfully resident settlers. The proposed Commission should result in the abolition of all racial restrictions upon such settlers.

Young India, 30-7-1919

188. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

NOT REVISED
LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
July 26 [*1919*][1]

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have taken to writing to you regularly but I find no response from you. You are paying me in my own coin only not with the same reason that I had. But I know that you are all the same attending to my letters.

I have sent you a long cable today with copies to Mrs. Naidu and Shastriar. You will see in *Young India* my letter regarding suspension.[2] I felt that I ought not to resist the Viceregal appeal to

[1] From the contents
[2] *Vide* "Letter to the Press on suspension of Civil Disobedience", 21-7-1919.

refrain. But there is not getting away from the fact that if the Rowlatt Act is not repealed, Civil Resistance is a certainty.

Regarding South Africa, there is the news today that our people mean Civil Resistance if any equal status is not granted to them. I have a long letter just now from Sir George Barnes. It is not satisfactory. You shall have all that next week. I am dealing with it.[1] You have, I hope, reports of all the meetings that are being held here. It is a wretched situation.

The Punjab sentences are monstrous.[2] They must be revised. To me the reforms are worthless if the spirit of the men on the spot is not changed.

The Mahomedan question means trouble so far as I can see. Evidently a decision has been arrived at regarding Turkey but it is being suppressed. This is a suicidal policy. I simply cannot understand this diplomacy that is satisfied with....[3]

I had an interview with the Governor. Montagu has sent a nasty message. He opens well and ends ill. It is confidential. He says if it was folly to take up civil disobedience, it is wickedness to renew it. One may return in his own words if it was folly for the Government to pass the Rowlatt legislation, it is wickedness to persist in it. And yet Montagu says in the same message that the Act will not be repealed. We are used to that kind of language. All I know is that the Act has got to go and some of us have to die in the attempt. It has cost treasures of blood. Let them keep it if they dare. They do not understand the ABC of civil disobedience. I must be patient. I have therefore told the Governor that if the Government desire that I should further suspend C.D. for the time being, I shall do so but they should reckon upon my renewing it in the near future if they will not repeal the Rowlatt Act.

You have Manilal Vyas's case[4] before you. You have also the Punjab Committee of inquiry. It must have the power of revision of sentences.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to the Press on suspension of Civil Disobedience", 21-7-1919.
[2] *ibid*.
[3] This sentence, occuring at the end of a page, is left incomplete in the source
[4] *Vide* "Letter to N.P.Cowie"

You will be interested to learn that at last the great Jehangir Petit has paid a portion of the funds I furnished Millie.[1] The rest he will pay in time.

With love to you all,

Yours,

BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

189. LETTER TO KALYANJI MEHTA

BOMBAY
July 26, 1919

BHAISHRI KALYANJI,

I clean forgot to write to you. I will start tomorrow (Sunday) and be definitely there. I shall travel by the passenger train which arrives there at 6 or thereabouts. If it is not necessary, don't keep me for two days. You may, though, if absolutely necessary. For the moment, I leave the matter at that.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2670

190. CIVIL. DISOBEDIENCE IS NOT SEDITIOUS

[*July 27, 1919*][2]

The Mahratta, quoting from the judgment in the *Hindwasi* case, had suggested that Gandhiji should clear up the point raised by the magistrate in the passage quoted. Mr. Gandhi responded to the suggestion by the letter to *The Mahratta*. The passage from the judgment is given below:

> There is another aspect of satyagraha in its political garb which shows as plainly as the events at Delhi the inherent—the law-breaking— character of the doctrine. The substance of the Satyagraha Vow is a matter of common knowledge. By the Vow the individual claims the right to disobey civilly any

[1] *Vide* "Letter to N.P.Cowie"

[2] The letter to The *Mahratta* was published on this date.

laws which the Satyagraha Sabha decides should be disobeyed. Now "civil disobedience" has never been explained. In Bombay, it is well known, "civil disobedience" tools the form of selling proscribed literature, an offence under section 124-A., I.P.C., or in other words, an active disobedience of a criminal law. Furthermore, "civil disobedience" of any law which safeguards the right of others is plainly subversive of all law and order, and is *ipso facto* calculated to bring Government, as the guardian of law and order, into hatred and contempt. That is to say, this aspect of political satyagraha is in essence and effect seditious.

And here is Mr. Gandhi's reply:

After quoting from the magisterial judgment in the *Hindwasi* case, the dissertation of the magistrate on Civil Disobedience, you have asked me to clear the point raised in the judgment. I gladly respond to your wish.

It is difficult to crowd into a paragraph more misconceptions about a grand doctrine of life, or mis-statements of facts, than has been done in the paragraphs you have quoted. The paragraph referred to begins:

> There is another aspect of satyagraha in its political garb which shows as plainly as the events at Delhi the inherent—the law-breaking— character of the doctrine.

Until the mystery about Delhi is cleared up by an impartial judgment, we shall never know whose fault it was for the events that happened at Delhi. Let it, however, be remembered that Civil Disobedience had not commenced on the 30th March last, nor on the 6th April. Swami Shraddhanand contends that the law was broken by the authorities and that the handful of satyagrahis were busy, even at the peril of their lives, restraining the fury, alike of the mob and the local authority. The judgment proceeds:

> By the vow, the individual claims the right to disobey any law that the Satyagraha Sabha decides should be disobeyed.

Now in this sentence there is the sin of commission ant omission. The Vow gives the votary the right to disobey civilly, not any laws which the Satyagraha Sabha decides upon, but such laws as may be selected by the Special Committee to be appointed by the votaries. The distinction is important. The learned magistrate has omitted to mention that in committing Civil Disobedience the Civil Resister is pledged to truth and nonviolence to person and property—

not an unimportant qualification. The next sentence betrays ignorance that is unpardonable in a judge. He says, "Civil Disobedience has never been explained." If he proposed to convict on the grounds of Civil Disobedience, it was his duty to have understood it thoroughly. He had the whole of the Satyagraha Leaflet Series including, Thoreau's Classic on Civil Disobedience,[1] at his disposal.

WHAT IS CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE?

I must endeavour here to explain briefly what is meant by Civil Disobedience before I can show the absurdity of the sentences that follow. Civil Disobedience is opposed to criminal or immoral disobedience. Civil Disobedience therefore can be confined only to those laws which do not carry any moral sanction. Laws in themselves may be either criminal or civil. But a Civil Resister will not hesitate to commit a civil breach of artificial crime (law ?), e.g., Section 124 A of the Indian Penal Code, under which anything according to the vagaries or predilections of a judge may be termed sedition. He will not commit any attack upon the rights of others. He will never do an act which is calculated to bring any person or corporation in hatred or contempt but he will not hesitate to disregard or expose, irrespective of consequences to himself, any hateful or contemptible act of such person or corporation; and by so doing, he will protect such person or corporation from all undeserved hatred and contempt. The law of sedition could never mean [that] tyranny or high-handedness, even though they may be enshrined in a Statute-book, should be submitted to, for fear of the tyrant being held in contempt. A Civil Resister will therefore not impute motives but examine each act on merits. Civil Disobedience is therefore based upon love and fellow-feeling whereas criminal disobedience upon hatred and ill will. Civil Disobedience therefore is to criminal disobedience what light is to darkness; and when the spirit of Civil Disobedience permeates, as I hope it will very soon permeate, the people of India, crimes or violence will be practically things of the past.

OBJECTION ANSWERED

What has been urged by friends and the Government is that whilst Civil Disobedience as a doctrine of life is admirable in itself, unthinking people not being able to distinguish between Civil and

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Satyagraha Leaflet No. 1", March 1919.

Criminal disobedience and being mentally disobedient as to what they do not relish are likely to mistake Civil Disobedience of the enlightened for any disobedience and thus resort to lawlessness. This is an argument which has appealed, but it has not disproved the necessity or the grandeur of Civil Disobedience. It emphasizes the necessity for caution in one like myself trying to practise Civil Disobedience on a new and extensive plane.

Your readers now will be able to assess at their true value the following concluding passage from the paragraph in question:

> In Bombay, it is well known that Civil Disobedience took the form of selling proscribed literature, an offence under Section 124-A I.P.C., or in other words an active disobedience of a criminal law.

The sale of proscribed literature was undertaken not for committing an active disobedience of criminal law but for questioning a prohibitory order of the executive authority and, as it has now turned out, the sale did not amount even to Civil Disobedience. For, it did not attack any law or order. The Civil Resister had misread (?) the prohibitory orders.

The paragraph then proceeds:

> Furthermore, Civil Disobedience of any law which safeguards the rights of others is plainly subversive of all law and order and is *ipso facto* calculated to bring the Government as a guardian of law and order into hatred and contempt, that is to say, the aspect of political satyagraha is in essence and effect seditious.

After the explanation that I have offered of Civil Disobedience, further comment is superfluous. And if Mr. Jethmal[1] had been convicted upon a total misconception of the doctrine of Satyagraha, he ought to be set free without delay.

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 2-8-1919

[1] Jethmal Parasram, editor of *Hindwasi,* a Sindhi periodical

191. LETTER TO S. R. HIGNELL

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
July 27, 1919

DEAR MR. HIGNELL,

As you are aware, I am supervising and controlling the policy of *Young India* by the courtesy of its syndicate. I have seen a confidential notice dated the 23rd instant served upon Young India as on other newspapers. It runs as follows1:

I shall see to it that the desire of the Government of India is observed by Young India to the fullest extent.

But the notice gives rise to disturbing reflections which I would like to lay before His Excellency. Why is there this hypersensitiveness regarding news about Turkey? Why should the terms of peace with Turkey, if they are honourable, cause the slightest excitement in India? I was further disturbed as I came upon the letter addressed to the Prime Minister by influential Mahomedans at present residing in London. Among the signatories I notice H. H. the Aga Khan, Chief of Bombay, Ex-Justice Ameer Ali, Sir Abbas Ali Baig and others. I have no doubt H. E. has seen that very weighty communication "on the subject of the threatened dismemberment of Turkey and on the grave situation of anxiety and uneasiness that this report has created among the Mahomedans", which the signatories go on to say will become aggravated if the design attributed to the Peace Conference is carried into effect.

I have said I was disturbed, because I am daily receiving communications or seeing Mahomedan friends who tell me that they are going to be sold. I have reassured them that H. E. is straining every nerve to place the correct view before His Majesty's ministers and that there is no occasion for them to distrust the latter. They have received my assurances with incredulity. I feel that I ought to place the very serious position before H. E. Is it not possible to make some definite reassuring pronouncement? If the worst fears of the Mahomedans are realized, there can only be an armed peace in India, not a real peace. I am sure that no Reforms, however generously

[1] The notice has not been reproduced here.

granted, will ever reconcile the Mahomedans to any dismemberment of Turkey or an encroachment upon their holy places. I know that all these matters cannot be out of H. E.'s mind, but considering myself as I do to be a well-wisher of the Empire I should be failing in my duty if I did not bring to H. E.'s notice serious matters that come within my knowledge. May I hope that if it is at all possible a statement will be made regarding Turkish matters?

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 6777

192. CABLE TO POLAK AND OTHERS[1]

BOMBAY,
July 28, 1919

TO
KALOPH, STRAND
HON. SHASTRI, INDIA HOUSE
MRS. NAIDU, LYCAEUM HOTEL,
PICCADILLY
LONDON .

RESPONSE VICEREGAL AND FRIENDS ADVICE SUSPENDED CIVIL RESISTANCE TIME BEING. THIS THROWS RESPONSIBILITY LEADERS CARRYING REDOUBLED AGITATION SECURE WITHDRAWAL ROWLATT LEGISLATION. IF NOT WITHDRAWN REASONABLE TIME, RENEWAL CIVIL RESISTANCE INEVITABLE.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1919, pp. 679-80; also a photostat: S.N. 6770

193. ADDRESS TO STUDENTS, SURAT

July 28, 1919

In the afternoon he addressed the students of the Sarvajanik College, and Sarvajanik School, laying particular stress on the students' duty to be as careful of their time as of money. He also exhorted the boys that it was none of their business to criticise the fitness of teachers just as it was not children's duty to judge their

[1] This was intercepted.

parents. Their bounden duty was to respect them. He explained to the boys why they were receiving education. The main object was to build up character. Education was not the means of earning a livelihood. Its purpose was to enlarge the mind.

Service is not the right way of earning a living. We should earn it only through the labour of our bodies. A Russian writer has employed a beautiful expression, *bread labours*[1] which you will not find in any dictionary. Education is for developing the mind and the mind should develop so that the heart may develop and not in order that we may learn how to steal ant murder as it happens in America and France these days.[2]

He further said that the quality of fearlessness should be acquired.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-8-1919; also *Gujarat Mitra ane Gujarat Darpan,* 328-1919

194. SPEECH AT INAUGURATION OF SWADESHI STORE, SURAT

July 28, 1919

I shall say a few words sitting. The inauguration ceremony of this Store has been performed by me. I wish it ever to prosper, it being understood that the organizers will always maintain honesty and run the Store for the service of the people. Mr. Kalyanji has told me that the Store will charge six and a quarter per cent profit on cloth for those who keep the vow of pure swadeshi and seven and a half per cent on cloth for those who have taken the vow of part-swadeshi. We need not feel for the other shops which may go out of business because of the opening of the Store. These other shops will run if they compete in doing service or, in the alternative, only if the people of Surat lack sincerity, cherish no ideals and are inclined to foreign materials; in this latter case, they will run, no matter what percentage they charge as profit. I will always pray to God that, right from a peon—I shall go further and say, a sweeper—to the Collector, everyone will refrain from buying foreign material and encourage swadeshi products, and you should join me in this prayer. He alone prays sincerely who acts as he prays. If you join me in the prayer, you will come to act accordingly. Place noble ideals before others, cherish

[1] Gandhiji uses the English expression.
[2] This paragraph is from *Gujarat Mitra ane Gujarat Darpan.*

such ideals' yourselves and live by them. As I suggested, let everyone in this district take this vow and keep it. It is a big problem how to bring round the sweeper, but in no way difficult to persuade the Collector to follow this ideal. I shall now explain to you how the prosperity of the country depends entirely on our doing this. I have read the history of some countries. We see from it that all countries, in Europe, in America, and elsewhere attained prosperity only when the spirit of swadeshi had developed in them. Without such a spirit, a country cannot prosper economically. It helps progress from the religious point of view as well. I shall speak about the economic aspect on this occasion. History tells us that begums and queens used to spin. You must have heard the words *spinster*[1] and *wife*[2]. *Spinster* means one who spins. *Wife* does not mean a spouse; it means one who weaves. Every woman born used to spin while a girl; on becoming a wife, she used to weave and spin. We come across these ideas in the shastras. The countries which have reached this stage of economic 'development have prospered. Seventy three per cent of India's population lives on agriculture. I have been saying that we should be precise in the language we use; some speak of eighty per cent, but a careful study of figures shows that 73 per cent, i.e., 21 crores of men and women are dependent on agriculture. In this profession, people are idle for half the year or four months. The zamindars acquire means which yield them income all the year round, but the cultivators do not work for the whole year and so earn less. In Europe, wives have given up weaving and *spinsters* have given up spinning. But they have done so because they have other industries. I shall not go into the question whether these other industries are good or bad. Be that as it may, the rulers in India are now trying to find subsidiary occupations for the cultivators which will put them on their feet If this is not done, in a few years it will so happen that they will stop paying the assessment they do. I have been telling the people, politely and firmly, that, if they wish to prosper, they should popularize the use of swadeshi in such fashion that the cultivators will be enabled to spin and weave. Everyone knows that all of us desire India's prosperity. Is there anyone who does not? If you resolve to keep the vow of swadeshi you will know how to produce such cloth. Instead of buying our cloth from the mills, it is more profitable to spin the cotton with

[1] Gandhi uses the English words
[2] *ibid*

our own hands and then weave the yarn into cloth; we can have it at the price of cotton. Women have enough time on hand, as you and I, and the women present here will testify. As we cook our food, so we should produce the cloth we need. If you want India to have swaraj and independence, swadeshi is the foundation. In conclusion I wish prosperity to this Store and hope that honesty, service of the country and patriotism will be the guiding motives in running the industry.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarat Mitra ane Gujarat Darpan, 3-8-1919

195. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, SURAT

July, 28, 1919

Mr. Gandhi was on a visit to Surat the week before last. While there, he opened a Pure Swadeshi Cloth Store and delivered on the evening of July 28, a lengthy address on the "Principles of Swadeshi". A detailed report of the speech, which was one of the most important till now delivered on the subject, is given below :

Before beginning the subject, Mr. Gandhi entered into a short, instructive digression. A speaker who had preceded him had regretted the apathy of certain gentlemen towards satyagrahis, and observed that they seemed to shun them as though they feared the very name of satyagraha. Adverting to these remarks, Mr. Gandhi said there were people and people, there were some who were subject to the feeling of fear, while there were others who were more fortunate and who were free from it. But those who were free from the feeling had no right to be angry with those who were subject to the feeling. When they felt, said Mr. Gandhi, that others should be fearless like them, and got irritated because they could not come up to their expectations, they needed to exercise—what in English has felicitously expressed "charity". The best thing for a man who got angry was to spend his anger on himself and to try to understand that time, place and circumstance went a great way in the making of man.

SWARAJ IN SWADESHI

Turning to the subject proper, Mr. Gandhi said it was truly said that in swadeshi consisted our swaraj. The country of which the people could not well order their own needs of food and clothing was not at all fitted to enjoy swaraj. This was a self-evident truth. There was not a country on earth which was unable to provide for its food and clothing and was still enjoying swaraj. However swaraj might be defined, it was undoubted that only those countries that were self-sufficient enjoyed swaraj. Even the uncivilized tribes of South Africa were enjoying swaraj. These negroes

produced their own food-stuffs and their clothing. They lived on maize and game. They clothed themselves in the hides of animals killed by them. When these people began to get "civilized", and thus to depend on others for their food and clothing, they lost even the paltry swaraj they were enjoying. Every nation that thus became dependent on others for its two principal needs was reduced to such a plight.

JAPANESE MENACE

In a letter which he sent to the Press some days ago declaring continuance of suspension of civil resistance, Mr. Gandhi had said that swadeshi would eliminate the unnatural Lancashire interest- and would help in purifying the British connection. But he believed he had said a greater thing in the same letter, viz., that swadeshi would rid them of the Japanese menace.

If, said Mr. Gandhi, they did not realize what the Japanese menace meant for them, they did not know the first lesson of swaraj. Japan was gradually and steadily extending its hold over them. In the course of the last four years, it had increased its exports by several hundred per cent. Wherever they turned their eye, they saw Japanese articles, Japanese matches, Japanese saris, Japanese soaps, Japanese umbrellas and so on. What was the meaning of this? It meant increasing domination of Japan. Just as the *sowcar*[1] exploited and impoverished the poor agriculturist, even so, said the speaker, was Japan, exploiting and impoverishing India. Japan was fast becoming India's *sowcar*. England must either fight or accept Japanese domination. What was the object of the "opium" war[2] with China? If China produced her own opium, the opium war would not have been waged. Students of history knew that it was a war of blind self-interest on the part of England. So long as England's relation with the Colonies was based on England's self-interest, it was not a pure relation. But the Colonies took a very timely hint. They taught themselves and they taught England also a lesson.

FISCAL AUTONOMY

They were talking of fiscal autonomy, said Mr. Gandhi. He for one did not believe that fiscal autonomy would be worth anything if it was a gift from England. Real fiscal autonomy lay in swadeshi. Even the economists said that without fiscal autonomy, swaraj was meaningless. But these very economists, when a remedy like the swadeshi was proposed to them by a man like himself, demurred to it. Mr. Gandhi said he must disregard their objections, for it was his faith that in swadeshi lay fiscal

[1] Moneylender

[2] The war of 1840 between China and Great Britain caused by the import of opium into China by foreign traders. Fifteen years later another war broke out owing to the huge smuggling trade in opium whereafter the cultivation of opium in China was permitted and import from India was made legal.

autonomy as ample and vast and inexhaustible as the sea and it was such fiscal autonomy that they wanted. And, continued Mr. Gandhi, even though England gave them fiscal autonomy, whom should they have to blame if they did not follow the eternal principles of swadeshi2? Without swadeshi, they would fall into the meshes of Japan after being free from those of England, which would be tantamount to going from the frying pan into fire. It would be impossible for them to set at naught the treaty obligations of England with Japan. Their Government would warn them against imposing any duties on Japanese imports, on the ground that that would pave the way for another war. Such a catastrophe might occur in the course of the next five years. How, asked Mr. Gandhi, were they to save themselves from that catastrophe? Only by grasping and following the principles of pure economics. If there was a country on earth that did not produce its own food and clothing it deserved to be deserted, or no hopes of swaraj might be entertained with regard to it. If swaraj could exist in such a country, it was bound to be nothing but what might be termed devilish swaraj. The people of that country must either deceive and exploit other countries by their act and their diplomacy and obtain their food and clothing, or they must do so by force. England was the only exception to the rule that every country that was civilized produced its own food and clothing. She produced her own food-stuffs, but she imported them also; she produced her cloth, but she imported it also. And for this England had to maintain a great navy. England was proud of her navy but that pride was, in the opinion of Mr. Gandhi, transient. She could only be proud in that she could maintain such a navy, but the position she enjoyed thereby was purchased at the cost of heavy taxation on her people and of keeping a close watch on international highways. If, said Mr. Gandhi, they wanted to purify British connection, purging it of all unnatural interest, they should demolish her economic theories. The speaker was never enamoured of the British navy and had never thought of such a navy being necessary for India. For England and Scotland, he observed, were small islands. They abounded in vast country and it was therefore easy for them to maintain a navy. India, on the contrary, was a vast country and not an island, but a peninsula. It had no big coalfields, it was open to the invasion of the Afghan and the Tartar, of the Chinese and the Tibetan. India, therefore, even if she could possess a navy could not rely solely upon it, she would have to maintain an army in addition and the expense of maintaining both would empty her resources.

BRITISH FISCAL POLICY

In the time of Queen Elizabeth, said the speaker, turning to a consideration of the fiscal policy of England, England also had to rely on swadeshi, so much so that the use of swadeshi articles was made obligatory by her. Cloth coarser than the speaker was wearing used to be worn in royal households. England's adoption of the policy of free trade was but a recent affair. Considerations that led to the adoption of

that policy were by no means mean. But the defects therein imposed the load of a large navy on England which had crushed the nation. England had adopted the free trade policy, but she was now veering in the other direction. Mr. Joseph Chamberlain died fighting against Free Trade policy and a day would soon come when England would have to abandon the policy, or face a civil war.

A patient study of European history should, Mr. Gandhi thoughts wean them away from a blind imitation of Europe. India should not imitate an experimenting nation, she should make her own experiments. Using Mr. Sidgwick's phrase, the speaker said, India should not be the blotting-sheet of European civilization. She should not adorn herself with the cast-off apparel of Europe.

A study of the history of other nations showed that those nations that had failed to maintain their economic independence for want of a policy of swadeshi had fallen. In the same way, the nations that had been able to remain economically independent had always enjoyed swaraj. Mr. Gandhi instanced the smaller European States. They were, aid he, independent economic units because they followed swadeshi. Every independent nation was a follower of swadeshi in its own way. Switzerland and Denmark kept the trades and manufactures suited to their own people to themselves, and allowed no outsiders to interfere with them. India's swadeshi lay in producing her foodstuffs and he cloth. As regards food-stuffs they had fortunately no need to take a vow, as people used, for the most part, food-stuffs produced in the country, excepting a very few who might be in need of "Scotch oats". As regards clothing, they were in a serious predicament. Once the producers of the finest cotton and silken fabrics, today they were dependent on Japan and Lancashire. And only swadeshi, repeated Mr. Gandhi, could free them from the unnatural Lancashire interest and the Japanese peril.

UNITED EFFORTS

But the speaker did not expect to achieve any great results working single-handed He had no desire to work alone. He earnestly desired the co-operation of the 31 crores of his countryrnen, as also of Englishmen. He confessed he was swadeshi-mad. Like Vaidarbhi rambling in search of Nala, and asking even the trees and stones that she passed by to show her Nala , he asked every little thing that he came across to show him the way to swadeshi. He asked the people to gird up their loins with him even for a year, and he promised them that they could surprise the world by the results that would be achieved. And he assured them they needed not the help of boycott or any such thing; they only needed to produce and to restrict themselves to the use of their own cloth.

There were many things that were essential for success in that direction. Two of these were commercial morality in the producer and sympathy and fellow-feeling in

the rich for their poorer brethren. The rich should feel that the poor in the country should not be suffered to remain ill-clad and they should be fired with an enthusiasm to provide cloth for them. Every woman should resolve to give at least one of her spare hours to spinning cotton. If indeed honesty, industry, patriotism and riches could combine. W hat results would be achieved !

Mr. Gandhi asked the audience to fling away the superstition that the country could not do without a network of mills. The speaker was not against mills. But he maintained, and Sir Fazulbhai also admitted it, that it would take some 50 years before they could think of providing the whole of their country with mill-made cloth. As it was, there were figures to show there was more cloth produced in the country on handlooms than was being turned out by the mills. And the speaker had no doubt that hand-spinning and hand-weaving, if introduced everywhere, would make the country self-sufficing in a very small period. The agricultural population of India was 21 crores; if every one of them spun and wove cotton during the idle period of four months in the year, a very large stock of cloth could be produced. In conclusion, Mr. Gandhi emphasized the fact that every village in India was self-sufficient in the olden times, and that they could be made such even now if people took keenly to the two suggestions of hand-spinning and hand-weaving he had made. He exhorted the Surat people to send out large bands of volunteers to every village to preach and bring the idea of swadeshi home to them so as to cover the villages with a network of spinning-wheels and handlooms.

Young India, 16-8-19l9

196. JAGANNATH'S CASE

It is not without extreme sorrow that I have to invite public attention to a third miscarriage of justice in the Punjab. This time it is not a case of a celebrity like Babu Kalinath Roy or a lesser light like Lala Radha Krishna, the Editor of the *Pratap.* The case of which the papers have been furnished me relates to one Mr. Jagannath, unknown to fame and unconnected with any public activity. He has been sentenced by one of the Martial Law Tribunals to transportation for life, with forfeiture of property, under Section 121 of the Indian Penal Code, i.e., for waging war against His Majesty. The facts of the case are lucidly set forth in his petition to be found elsewhere. It is addressed to the Hon. Sir Edward Maclagan, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab. The reader will find also the judgment in the Gujranwalla case in respect of fifteen accused of whom Mr. Jagannath was one. The following is the text in the judgment dealing with the case:

> Jagannath, accused 10, had the notices convening the meeting of the 5th, printed in Lahore and was present at the meetings of the 12th and 13th. But we have no hesitation in holding that he was present at both and that his defence is worthless. There is ample evidence to show that on the 14th April, he took a very active part in having the shops closed. We are satisfied of his guilt and convict him under Sec. 121, I.P.C.

I submit that it was no crime on the accused's part to have the notices convening the meeting of the 5th printed, nor to have been present at the meeting was of an incriminating character. This is what the Court has to say about the meeting of the 5th April:

> It is alleged that the people of Gujranwalla knew little and cared less about the Rowlatt Act and that on the 4th April certain of the accused decided to start an agitation against this Act on the same lines as had been adopted in other parts of the country at the instance of Gandhi. A mass meeting was accordingly convened and held on the evening of the 5th April when the Rowlatt Act was condemned.

Under no statute known could these facts be held to involve any crime. The judges themselves have stated as much:

> We are not however satisfied in this case, that prior to the 12th April any indictable conspiracy had come into existence. We therefore feel constrained to acquit those of the accused who are shown only to have taken part in the proceedings prior to that date.

It is difficult therefore to understand the reference of the Court to the accused's presence at the meeting of the 5th or his having been an agent for getting the notices printed. The Court proceeds,

> On the evening of the 12th and during the day of 13th, certain of the accused in consultation with Bhagat agreed that they should follow the example set at Amritsar [of] burning bridges and cutting telegraph wires.

Now these facts, it is plain, undoubtedly prove a criminal conspiracy but the Court is silent as to which accused agreed upon the crimes recited in the paragraph. It should be remembered that there was a meeting on the 12th of the District Congress Committee held prior to the evening meeting of the 12th referred to in the sentence quoted above. I submit that it was necessary for the Court definitely to find that the accused was present at the agreement alleged to have been arrived at for burning bridges and cutting telegraph wires. But there is nothing in the finding of the Court beyond a vague general statement about the accused's presence at the meetings of the 12th

and 13th. I would suggest that even if the accused was in Gujranwalla on the 14th April and took a very active part in having the shops closed, it would be no offence, unless he could be proved to have been party to the criminal agreement referred to. Whilst, therefore, the judgment seems to afford no evidence of the accused's crime, statements most damaging to the Court and conclusively in favour of the accused's defence rested upon an *alibi.* He stated that he left Gujranwalla on the 12th April by the 5 p.m. train *en route* for Kathiawar where he had a case. Now I admit that it is as easy to set up an *alibi* as it is difficult to prove it. But anyone reading the petition can only come to one conclusion, viz., that the defence of *alibi* was completely established. Mr. Jagannath produced local respectable witnesses to show that he had left Gujranwalla on the 12th. He applied for subpoenas to summon witnesses from Kathiawar to show that he was in Dhoraji on the 16th April. The Court rejected the application, but granted interrogatories, put the accused, a poor man, to the expense of Rs. 250 for the expenses of the Commission, and yet strange as it may appear, pronounced judgment against the accused without waiting for the return of the Commission. He made an application for the stay of argument till after the receipt of replies to interrogatories. The application was rejected. In a second application, he urged that the Court should ascertain by telegram the result of the interrogatories. Even that application proved unavailing. The accused has rightly contended in the petition that on this ground alone the conviction was illegal and ought to be set aside. The petition refers to the register of the *Foujdar* of Dhoraji seeing that he reached Dhoraji on the 16th April. The accused shows also by the examination of 10 independent witnesses that he was in Dhoraji on that date. He shows further by extracts from Railway Time Tables, that it takes 44 hours to reach Dhoraji from Delhi by the fastest train, and shows conclusively that it was physically impossible for him to be in Gujranwalla after 6 p.m. on the 13th; though as a matter of fact he shows by other conclusive evidence that he left Gujranwalla on the 12th. He produces proceedings of Jetpur Court where he had his case in Kathiawar. There is therefore no ground whatsoever for keeping the accused in jail for a single moment. The accused on his own showing is

> a petty shopkeeper at Gujaranwalla, paying no income-tax, being ignorant of Urdu as well as English and not possessed of any influence in big towns like Gujranwalla with a populations of 30,000 persons. He being a man of humble position and status in life, with no education, has never taken part in politics,

nor was he a member of the local District Congress Committee or any other political body or association.

The humbleness of his position makes the injustice all the more galling and makes it doubly incumbent on the public to see that the meanest of the subjects of the King suffers no wrong. The decision of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor in the case of Lala Radha Krishna raises the hope that speedy justice will be done in this case. Bad as Babu Kalinath Roy's and Lala Radha Krishna's cases were, this, if possible, is worse in that Martial Law Judges in their impatience, shall I say, to convict, declined to wait for a return of the Commission they themselves had granted—a Commission on whose return hung the liberty, and might have been, even the life of the accused.

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 30-7-1919

197. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

LABURNUK ROAD,
[On or after *July 30, 1919*][1]

TO
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
HIS HONOUR THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR
LAHORE

DEAR SIR,

I beg to enclose herewith a copy of *Young India* dealing with the case of one Jagannath who has been recently convicted and sentenced to transportation for life with forfeiture of property. His petition for revision of the case and quashing the sentence, is, I understand, already engaging His Honour's attention. In my humble opinion palpable injustice has been done in this case. The hasty pronouncement of judgment, by the Martial Law Tribunal without waiting for the return of the Commission issued by it is in itself fatal to the conviction. The facts set forth in the petition seem completely to establish the defence of *alibi*. Both therefore in substance and in law, I submit that the conviction is bad. I therefore respectfully trust that His Honour will be pleased to set aside the conviction and restore the liberty of the poor petitioner.

Yours faithfully,

From a photostat: S.N. 6766

[1] *Young India* referred to in this letter was dated 30-7-1919.

198. TELEGRAM TO SWAMI SHARADDHANAND

[Before *August 2, 1919*][1]

SWAMI SHRADDHANANDJI[2]

CARE LALA DHARMACHAND, VAKIL

ANARKALI

LAHORE

WILL CERTAINLY SUPPORT YOUR APPEAL FOR SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR BEREAVED FAMILIES. I PUBLISH YOUR LETTER OR WILL YOU SEND ANOTHER MORE DETAILED. PLEASE REPLY EXPRESS.

From a photostat of a handwritten copy : S. N. 6731

199. AN APPEAL FROM THE PUNJAB

Sannyasi Swami Shri Shraddhanandji, writing from Delhi regarding the Punjab, says :

> I have been to the Punjab twice (i.e., since the tragedies of April last).[3] I have been to Amritsar, Lahore, Gujranwalla, Sekhupura and Chachadkhana and heard and seen much. On the 13th April in Amritsar not less than fifteen hundred persons must have been killed. In the other places also many, though not so many as at Amritsar, must have been killed. Of these, hundred were the sole wage-earners of their families. Some have been hanged or sentenced to transportation for life, others have been sentenced to undergo imprisonment for from ten to twenty years. There must be one thousand families in the Punjab which are left only with their womenfolk and children. It is our duty to reach them food and clothing. Pundit Malaviyaji[4] has appealed to the public for one lac of rupees. But I believe that we shall have to support many of these families for six months at least. If so, we shall need one and a half lacs of rupees. This estimate is based on the supposition that most of

[1] "An appeal from the Punjab" was published in *Young India*, 2-8-1919; *vide* the following item.

[2] 1856- 1926; earlier known as Mahatma Munshiram; nationalist leader, Arya Samajist and educationist. He the founder of Gurukul Kangri, near Hardwar.

[3] The reference is to the disturbance and the martial law atrocities in the Punjab.

[4] Madan Mohan Malaviya (1861-19460; nationalist leader, educationist and founder of Banaras Hindu University

> those suffering imprisonment will, during that time, have been discharged. If you are in agreement with this proposal of mine, please beg of the rich people of Bombay donations and send the money to me. I shall need also trustworthy volunteers for the work of distribution. You can send such volunteers. If possible, please send four or five such men.

The Swami's appeal is eloquent for its brevity and I hope that it will strike the right chord in many a breast. I hardly think that it needs any commendation from me. There cannot be two opinions about the necessity of support and the duty of the generous public of Bombay. I hope that there will be no question of scruples about supporting the families. That many who lost their lives in Amritsar and elsewhere were innocent cannot be doubted. Their families deserve the support of all without distinction of party or race. The Commissioner of Delhi, it will be remembered, appealed for subscriptions for the families of those who were wounded or shot during the firing on the 30th March last. But if there is any question as to the propriety of supporting the families of those who have been sentenced for doing violence or worse, I would respectfully suggest that the families of such men have committed no crimes and the families of even the worst offenders—persons who are guilty of committing private crimes and, therefore, whose motives are far worse than those of political offenders—deserve public support. Society is bound to support the needy and the indigent irrespective of the character of their pedigree. I trust, therefore, that the wealthy people of Bombay will generously respond to Swamiji's appeal. Quickness is essential in this matter. I have a wire from him saying that money is needed at once. All amounts received will be duly acknowledged. There is another matter equally important in Swamiji's letter. He requires trustworthy volunteers who would go to the Punjab and help him in the work of distribution. I invite the help of those who have the means and the time enabling them to go to the Punjab. The one indispensable quality in such a volunteer is that he will go merely as a trustee to distribute funds under the guidance and directions of Shraddhanandji. He is not to air his political views or to combine two missions in one trip. Real success in national work can only be assured when workers develop the quality of losing themselves in their work to the exclusion of every other work for the time being. By trying to do many things at the same time we succeed

in doing nothing well or satisfactorily and often give occasion for suspicions being raised about our motives. The readers will share my anxiety that the humanitarian work undertaken by the Swami should not be marred by any action of the volunteers who may be selected to proceed to the Punjab.

Young India, 2-8-1919

200. INTERVIEW TO A JOURNALIST[1]

[BOMBAY,
August 4, 1919]

As soon as he finished his letter, he turned round to me again and asked me what had brought me all the way from Madras. I told him I had come to see Mr. R≈ off on his way to England and then we fell to discussing the general situation. I asked him whether he had any near idea of resuming civil disobedience. He said it all depended on the Government and what they did to relieve the situation in the near future. He did not want to complicate matters by any precipitate action of his as it might easily lend itself to mask real issues. If the Government do not move in the matter pretty soon, relieve the situation in the Punjab and repeal the Rowlatt Act[2] , it will be his painful duty to resort to passive resistance again. Should this contingency arise, he intends to break his internment order on the Madras border as being much the quieter side so that there may be no excuse for the Government to set in motion any positive measures on the plea of disorder or violence.

[1] This was published as by "C.R.S." and was preceded by the following remarks: ". . . I went in and found Mr.Gandhi seated cross-legged on his couch, dressed in his usual coarse hand-woven clothes and with his spectacles on, busy writing a letter to some friend of his in Gujarati. The letter-paper, pencil and envelope were apparently of the more common swadeshi type, for I noticed the paper was none too fine, the pencil had to be pressed hard to make an impression, and the envelope would not easily open in the prevailing weather . I noticed also that one of the curls of his spectacles had broken midway and was being held in position by a piece of thread knotted round his head. I was wondering why a fresh curl had not been put in, but soon found a broken curl was not without its uses, as it served well enough for a toothpick on occasions. Well, when Mr. Gandhi looked up from his writing and saw me, his thin asetic face lighted up with a charming smile as he recognized me, and bade me sit down and excuse him for a few minutes as he finised his letter."

[2] This was one of the two Bills recommended by the Rowlatt Committee in 1918 ostensibly for curbing seditious activity and was passed in 1919, in the face of public opposition. It gave occasion for the Rowlatt Act Satyagraha in April

I asked him if he had any special message for the time for the people in South India and any special duty for the satyagrahis.

Yes, I want every man, woman and child to learn handspinning and weaving. I want every satyagrahi to help to propagate this work. Let every man learn to provide for his clothing in his house and many of our current problems will resolve themselves. I am asking you to do nothing new. It is not as though you have to skip over the centuries and go to ancient India for this kind of work. Even a few decades back, every village had its hand-looms and the people were wearing only clothes woven therefrom. Spinning was being done normally in every house. It is not neecha [mean] work. Ranis [queens] in palaces have done this. If this is resumed again we shall have done well by our country. I am quite hopeful of results. I have already set a thousand looms going in Gujarat and leading people like Mrs. Banker[1], Mrs. Petit[2] , Miss Anasuyabehn[3] have taken up spinning enthusiastically. The mechanism is quite simple and a spinning outfit costs only about Rs. 3-8-0 to Rs. 4. The work is easily learnt in a couple of days. For example you will find in the next room Mrs. T.A. Chettiar learning to spin. She has been at it only from yesterday and a few more hours practice will make her quite fit for the work and quite competent to put other people in the way as I expect her to do. . . .[4]

The Hindu 9-8-1919

[1] Wife of Shankarlal Banker, associate of Gandhiji

[2] Wife of J. B. Petit, Parsi philanthropist of Bombay, Gandhiji's friend and host

[3] Anasuyabehn Sarabhai, social worker and educationist; sister of Ambalal Sarabhai, Ahmedabad Mill-owner

[4] At this point Madan Mohan Malaviya called on Gandhiji. The latter part of the report which covers the writer's interview with the former is not reproduced here.

201. LETTER TO G.S. ARUNDALE[1]

LABURNUM ROAD
BOMBAY,
August 4, 1919

DEAR MR. ARUNDALE[2],

I have read and re-read your kind letter for which I thank you. I am publishing the letter[3] in *Young India* together with this reply.

Much as I should like to follow your advice, I feel that I am incompetent for the task set forth by you in your letter. I am fuly aware of my limitations. My bent is not political but religious and I take part in politics because I feel that there is no department of life which can be divorced from religion and because politics touch the vital being of India almost at every point. It is therefore absolutely necessary that the political relations between Englishmen and ourselves should be put on a sound basis. I am endeavouring to the best of my ability to assist in the process. I do not take much interest in the reforms because they are in safe hands and because reforms cum Rowlatt legislation mean to my mind a stalemate. Rowlatt legislation represents a poisonous spirit. After all, the English civilians can, unless Indian opinion produces a healthy reaction upon them, reduce the reforms practically to a nullity. They distrust us and we distrust them. Each considers the other as his natural enemy. Hence the Rowlatt legislation. The Civil Service has devised the legislation to keep us down. In my opinion, that legislation is like the coil of the snake round the Indian body. The obstinacy of the Government in clinging to the hateful legislation in spite of the clearest possible demonstration they have had of public opinion against it makes me suspect the worst. With the views enunciated above, you will not wonder at my inability to interest myself in the reforms. Rowlatt legislation blocks the way. And my life is dedicated among other things to removing the block.

[1] Thid was in reply to his letter of July 26, appealing to Gandhiji that since civil disobedience had been suspended, he should join in working the Montagu-Chelmsford Constitutional Reforms.

[2] Theosophist, and editor of *New India*

[3] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from G.S. Arundale", 26-7-1919

Let there be no mistake. Civil resistance has come to stay. It is an eternal doctrine of life which we follow consciously or unconsciously in many walks of life. It is the new and extended application of it which has caused misgivings and excitement. Its suspension is designed to demonstrate its true nature, and to throw the responsibility for the removal of the Rowlatt legislation on the Government as also the leaders (you among them) who have advised me to suspend it. But if within a resonable time the legislation is not removed, civil resistance will follow as surely as day follows night. No weapon in the Government armoury can either overcome or destroy that eternal force. Indeed a time must come when civil resistance will be recognized as the most efficacious, if also the most harmless, remedy for securing redress of grievances.

You suggest the desirability of unity. I think unity of goal we have. But parties we shall always have—and we may not find a common denominator for improvement. For some will want to go further than some others. I see no harm in a wholesome variety. What I would rid ourselves of is distrust of one another and imputation of motive. Our besetting sin is not our differences but our littleness. We wrangle over words, we fight often for shadow and lose the substance. As Mr. Gokhale used to say, our politics are a pastime of our leisure hours when they are not undertaken as a stepping-stone to a career in life.

I would invite you and every editor to insist on introducing charity, seriousness and selflessness in our politics. And our disunion will not jar as it does today. It is not our differences that really matter. It is the meanness behind that is undoubtedly ugly.

The Punjab sentences are inextricably mixed up with the Rowlatt agitation. It is therefore as imperatively necessary to have them revised as it is to have the Act removed. I agree with you that the Press Act requires overhauling. The Government are actually promoting sedition by high-handed executive action. And I was sorry to learn that Lord Willingdon[1] is reported to have taken the sole responsibility for the— in my opinion unwarranted—action[2] against *The Hindu* and the *Swadesha Mitran*. By it, they have not lost in prestige or popularity. They have gained in both. Surely there are judges enough

[1] 1866-1941; Governor of Bombay; later Viceroy of India, 1931-6

[2] The Government demanded a security of Rs. 2,000 from each of these Madras newspapers and banned *The Hindu* in the Punjab and in Burma.

in the land who would convict where a journalist has overstepped the bounds of legitimate criticism and uttered sedition. I am not enamoured of the Declaration of Rights business. When we have changed the spirit of the English civilian, we shall have made considerable headway with the Declaration of Rights. We must be honourable friends, or equally honourable enemies. We shall be neither, unless we are manly, fearless and independent. I would have us to treasure Lord Willingdon's advice and say "no" when we mean "no" without fear of consequences. This is unadulterated civil resistance. It is the way to friendliness and friendship. The other is the age-worn method of open violence on honourable lines in so far as violence can be allowed to be honourable. For me the roots of violence are in dishounour. I have therefore ventured to present to India the former, in its complete form called satyagraha, whose roots are always in honour.

Yours sincerely,

M.K. GANDHI

Young India, 6-8-1919

202. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

BOMBAY,
Monday [*August 4, 1919*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL[2] ,

I have your letter.

Bhai Hanumantrao was a member of the Servants of India Society. Look after him; give him a room near Ba's. I have written to him that he may stay as long as he likes.

The bank-note for Rs. 600/- is to be credited to the Famine account. The sum has been received from England. Mention this too.

Sundaram has reached [home]. It seems now the rains are a little too much.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand : S. N. 6785

[1] In the source, below Monhay appear the dates: 3 August 1919, *Shravan Sud* 7, 1975, in a handwriting other than Gandhiji's In August 1919, however, the first Monday fell on the 4th, which corresponds to *Shravan Sud* 8 in the Indian calendar.

[2] Gandhiji's newphew and associate

203. LETTER TO MANUBHAI NANDSHANKAR MEHTA

LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
[*August 4, 1919*][1]

BHAISHRI MANUBHAI,

I was in Vijapur last Thursday. There, and on the way, I met thousands of men and women. It was the movement for swadeshi which took me there.

There is a prominent lady from Broach, a widow, in Vijapur. Spinning, and now weaving as well, is being promoted there through her. Her name is Gangabehn[2] . The aim behind this programme is to increase the production of cloth in the country. Women, and men too, who have free time should devote it to spinning and, if they can, to weaving. In this way, it is hoped to restore to the agriculturists an old-time subsidiary occupation of theirs. As part of this programme, at present 125 women spin in Vijapur and, depending on how much they work, earn daily two to four pice or even more. These women did no work before they took this up. Gangabehn and others work for the love of God.

A loom has also been installed recently. I saw that the institution was very much short of space. My request to the State is this. Make one or two acres of land available near the station and immediately get a building ready, in which people may live and work. I am prepared to pay rent for it. If you can see to this, the work there will progress better. If the Maharaja thinks well of this work, I should like him to advise the officers also to help. If I get some encouragement, I am hopeful that, in a very short time, we shall have plenty of cloth produced in Vijapur taluka and the agriculturists and others will have a means of supplementing their income.

This is one matter on which I have to trouble you.

[1] Gandhiji was in Bombay On August 4, 1919, after having visited Vijapur, and later in the day left for Ahmedabad.

[2] It is to her that Gandhiji ascribes the discovery of the spinning-wheel in Vijapur; *vide and Autobiography*, part V, Ch. XL.

I saw that the passengers in the train were packed like so many goats. The carriages are too few and there is only one train. That is not enough. I should like you to do something about this, too, if possible.

I beg to be excused for this letter.

Yours,

SHRI MANUBHAI NANDEHANKAR
DIWAN
BARODA

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand : S. N. 6796

204. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMNATI,
August 4, [*1919*]

MY DEAR WEST,[1]

I have just read your letter on my return from Bombay. And as you want me to give you a letter in my own hand, I lost no time lest my reply may be pressed out.

My heart goes out to you in all your mental worries. I am sorry about your mother's death.

When I asked Mahadev inquiring about Devi, there was no letter from her for some time. And as she is a most regular correspondent, I grew anxious.

I do read *Indian Opinion* when I am in the Ashram. What I wanted was what you could not give me through I.O.

I am positive that I instructed P[arsi] R [ustumjee][2] long before my second letter. But my post going through many hands at times does miscarry.

Please give Manilal[3] a month's notice and stop editing for him. I quite agree with you that if he has not acquired the habit of writing gven now, the paper may stop.

[1] Manager, International Printing Press, Phoenix; a close friend and associate of Gandhiji in South Africa; *vide* "Our Trial", 31-12-1904

[2] *Vide* "Letter to A.H. West", 17-7-1919

[3] Gandhiji's second son

I do not still approve of job or advertisements, but as I do not want to finance Manilal, I have said he could do what he liked on his own responsibility.

Mr. Andrews[1] is no good for details. He therefore gave me only general information. But I waive your weekly letter, private or public. You will write when you can. About South Africa letter I suggested your name to the *Chronicle*. They will pay you if you could write. I see no harm in your accepting payment.

I am immersed in work as ever. My arrest is reported to be imminent.

The Ashram is increasing. Harilal[2] is in Calcutta. His children are with me. Devdas[4] is just now travelling with me. Chhaganlal and Maganlal[4] are with me. Anandlal[5] is managing the Navajivan Press. The schools and weaving are making steady progress. I wish you could see these things one day with your own hands[6] .

With love to you all,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photstate of the original in Gandhiji's hand : C. W. 4432. Courtesy: A.H. West

205. SHAKING CIVIL RESISTERS

The Hon. Mr. C.Y. Chintamani[7] in his special contribution to India of the 4th July says that Sir Michael O'Dwyer[8]

> is said to have declared his intention of taking note of the anti-Rowlatt legislation agitation and passive resistance demonstration before there was any disturbance of peace.

We know what kind of note he took of both the cause and the effect, and we know, too, what he succeeded to an eminent degree in disturbing the peace in the Punjab. And though Sir Michael is no

[1] C. F. Andrews (1871-1940); British missionary whose humanitarian work in India won him the name "Deenabandhu", i.e.; friend of the poor; *vide* "Speech at Maritzburg", 27-12-1913

[2] Gandhiji's eldest son

[3] His fourth and youngest son

[4] Chhaganlal Gandhi's brother

[5] Son of Amritlal Gandhi, a cousin of Gandhiji

[6] This is evidently a slip for 'eyes'.

[7] 1880-1914; editor of *The Leader*

[8] Governor of the Punjab

longer in India in body, he is certainly in our midst in spirit. Witness the many Punjab cases that have been discussed in these columns. The Martial Law judges will certainly not be to blame if the spirit of civil resistance is not dead either in the Punjab or in India. But the O'Dwyerean spirit has travelled to far-off Burma and touched the Lieut.-Governor of the Province of British India[1] For, the Chief Secretary to Government of Burma, the A.P.I.[2] informs us, "has written to the two Indian promoters of the All-Burma mass meeting" that was to be held in Burma on the first of August that, whilst there is no objection to the meeting discussing the Reform Scheme in Burma,

> serious objection would be taken if extraneous matters are introduced either under the colour of the published resolutions, or as separate resolutions not on the agenda. In particular,

the Secretary goes on to say,

> the Lieut.-Governor has no intention of permitting meetings at which the adoption of passive resistance is advocated, or at which the policy of Government, in connection with the passing of the Rowlatt Act or the suppression of the recent disturbances in the Punjab, is called in question.

The public of Burma in discussing the political Reforms which should be adopted in Burma are in no way concerned with the events in the Punjab. The Government of Burma have certainly taken time by the forelock. We do not know what happened on the 1st of August in Rangoon nor do we know what reply the Indian promoters of the meeting returned to the Chief Secretary. But it is clear that, so long as the spirit embodied in the words of the letter from which we have quoted remains alive, the Reforms that the people of Burma might get would not be worth having.

But an echo of the spirit is heard nearer Bombay also. We now know, more fully than we did before, the cause of the High Court notice served upon some of the satyagrahi lawyers of Ahmedabad. The notice was prompted by a letter addressed by the District Judge of Ahmedabad to the Registrar of the Bombay High Court. We give the full text of the letter elsewhere.[3] It remains to be seen what action the

[1] Burma became an independent state in 1935.

[2] The Associated Press of India

[3] This is not reproduced here. The District Judge of Ahmedabad had in his letter dated April 22, 1919, raised the question of the property of two barristers and three pleaders of Ahmedabad taking the satyagraha pledge. According to this the lawyers undertook "to refuse civilly to obey these laws (viz., the Rowlatt Act) and such other laws as a committee to be hereafter appointed may think fir." The judge

High Court will take when the case is argued before it on the 25th instant. But it is curious the way the District Judge has pre-judged the issue. He considers the activities of the "League"—we suppose he means the Satyagrahe Sabha[1]–to be illegal. He does not hesitate to make the impudent suggestion that

> there can be no doubt that the suspension is merely a device to avoid the possibility of punishment falling on the satyagrahis in respect of acts directly or indirectly due to their teaching and influence.

We use the adjective "impundent" advisedly, for the very next paragraph of this precious letter states the belief of the writer that

> the above gentlemen are sincerely and conscientiously under the impression that the Rowlatt legislation is a crime. As they have that impression, I would not blame them for going to the edge of the law to oppose it.

The imputaion of an unworthy motive to such men would be ungentlemanly in a stranger, it is unpardonable in one who claims to have the high opinion that the learned District Judge claims to have of the lawyers in question. The last paragraph of the letter clearly discloses the feelings of the District Judge in the matter. He says he has "no power to deal with the two Barristers", and adds, "very likely recent events in Ahmedabad may make it unnecessary to proceed against them", meaning, we presume, that they would be charged and convicted by the Special Tribunal. They have not been charged, it is true. But that was no fault of the District Judge. He had made up his mind that they had committed a criminal breach of the law of the land.

Thus we see that the attempts are being made with more or less vigour to suppress civil resisters. Those who are making the attempt are beating against the wind. The spirit of civil resistance thrives under suffering. Here and there a civil resister so called may succumb and

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considered such conduct inconsistent with their professional status and duties in terms terms of their *sanad.* On this submission, the Bombay High Court served notices on the lawyers, on July 12, in its desciplinary jurisdiction. A copy of the District Judge's letter reached Gandhiji, who published it in Young India along with his terms of their *sanad.* On this submission, the Bombay High Court served notices on the lawyers, on July 12, in its desciplinary jurisdiction. A copy of the District Judge's letter reached Gandhiji, who published it in Young India along with his comments. The High Court gave its ruling in the case against the lawyers on October 15. For Gandhiji's comments on the judgment, vide "The Satyagrahi Lawyers", 22-10-1919

[1] A body formed in ahmedabad on March 3, 1919, with Gandhiji as President, to organize satyagraha against the Rowlatt Act.

under the pressure of suffering deny his doctrine. But when once kindled it is impossible to kill the spirit of civil resistance. The only pity of it is these traducers of civil resistance and civil resisters are consciously or unconsciously becoming the instruments for propagating Bolshevism as it is interpreted to us in India, i.e., the spirit of lawlessness accompained with violence. Bolshevism is nothing but an extension of the present method of forcibly imposing one's doctrine or will upon others. The Government of Burma, the Government of Punjab, the District Judge of Ahmedabad are all in their own way endeavouring forcibly to impose their will upon others, in this case, civil resisters. But they forget that the essence of civil resistance is to resist the will of the wrongdoer by patient endurance of the penalty of resistance. Civil resistance is, therefore, a most powerful antidote against Bolshevism and those who are trying to crush the spirit of civil resistance are but fanning the fire of Bolshevism.[1]

Young India 6-8-1919

206. LETTER TO SIR S. R. HIGNELL

[*August 7, 1919*][2]

DEAR MR. HIGNELL,

In continuation of my letter[3] of 27th July on the Turkish question I enclose herewith copy of an astounding article appearing in

[1] This article became, later, a cause for action against Gandhiji for " Contempt of Court"; *vide* "Letter to the Registar, Bombay High Court", 22-10-1919.

[2] This and the following letter appear to have been written on the same day.

[3] In the course of this letter, which was located too late for inclusion in Volume XV, Gandhiji had observed: " . . . Why is there this hypersensitiveness regarding news about Turkey? Why should the terms of Peace with Turkey, if they are honourable, cause the slightest excitement in India? I was further disturbed as I came upon the letter addressed to the Prime Minister by influential Mohammedans at present residing in London. Among the signatories I notice H. H. the Aga Khan, Chief to Bombay [*sic*], Ex-Justice Ameer Ali, Sir Abbas Ali Baig and others. I have no doubt H. E. has seen that very weighty communication on the subject of the threatened dismemberment of Turkey and on the grave situation of anxiety and uneasiness that this report has created among the Mohammedans, which the signatories go on to say 'will become aggravated if the design attributed to the Peace Conference is carried into effect'.

"I have said I was disturbed, because I am daily receiving communications or seeing Mohammedan friends who tell me that they are going to be sold. I have reassured them that H. E. is straining every nerve to place the correct view before His Majesty's ministers and that there is no occasion for them to distrust the latter. They

the *New Age* of 10th July from the pen of Mr. Marmaduke Pickthall. The information given in it seems to be authentic. If it is really so, it is sad. I feel that it ought not to be withheld from the public. I venture to press with all the emphasis that I can command upon the attention of H.E. the Viceroy the urgent necessity of making a soothing public declaration, if such is at all possible. In my humble opinion, the peace will be a mockery if weak nations are to be treated in the manner in which Turkey, it seems, is to be treated. But apart from the justice of the case, are the Government of India prepared to stand the sullen discontent of millions of the citizens of the Empire? I cannot believe that it is beyond H.E.'s power to secure a proper solution of the Khilafat question.

I may add that I have applied to the Government of Bombay, in terms of the notice referred to in my previous communication, for permission to publish Mr. Pickthall's article.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of a handwritten draft : S. N. 6790

207. LETTER TO J. CRERAR

[*August 7, 1919*][1]

DEAR MR. CRERAR,

I have just come across an astounding article in the *New Age* of 10th July from the pen of Mr. Marmaduke Pickthall. *Young India* in common with other papers has received a confidential notice No. 4515 dated 23rd July last from the Political Department, expressing the desire of the Govt. of India that the terms of Peace with Turkey or any item of news on the subject which is likely to cause excitement in

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have received my assurances with incredulity. I feel that I ought to place the very serious position before H. E. Is it not possible to make some definite reassuring pronouncement? If the worst fears of the Mohammedans are realised, there can only be an armed peace in India, not a real peace. I am sure that no Reforms, however generously granted, will ever reconcile the Mohammedans to any dismemberment of Turkey or an encroachment upon their holy places. I know that all these matters cannot be out of H. E.'s mind, but considering myself as I do to be a well-wisher of the Empire, I shall be failing in my duty if I did not bring to H. E.'s notice serious matters that come within my knowledge. May I hope that, if it is at all possible, a statement will be made regarding Turkish matters." (S. N. 6777)

[1] The date is derived from the addressee's acknowledgement dated September 5, 1919.

India should not be published in newspapers in India without the previous approval of the Govt. of India for such publication. I have already submitted my views of H.E. the Viceroy on the question and the necessity of some satisfying public declaration in the matter. As you are aware, I am supervising in detail the policy of *Young India* and controlling everything appearing in it. It seems to me that I ought not to keep back from the public Mr. Pickthall's analysis of the question. It is hard to me to believe that the information contained in it is true. But evidently Mr. Pickthall writes with authority and his quotations are given in inverted commas. Please let me know as early as you can what the wishes of the Government are in the matter of publication. For ready reference I enclose herewith the original article.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From a photostat of a handwritten draft: S. N. 6789

208. LETTER TO ABDUL AZIZ

BOMBAY,
August 8, 1919

DEAR MR. ABDUL AZIZ,

When Sir Narayan Chandavarkar[1] wrote his open letter to me and the Government expostulated with me upon the then proposed renewal of civil-wrongly called passive-resistance, I respectfully responded by suspension for the time being, and therefore did not attempt any other reply. Your open letter[2] however raises fundamental issues and requires a detailed reply to the various objections to civil resistance discussed in it.

At the outset, I wish to thank you for your kindness in thinking of me. You will be interested to know that I had stalwart Pathans from your district working with me as civil resisters during the eight long years of the struggle in South Africa. One of them was working in a Natal mine. He was severely beaten by his foreman apparently for no other cause then that he had joined the civil resistance movement.

[1] 1825-1923; judge of the Bombay High Court

[2] This was published in The pioneer, 27-7-1919; *vide* Appendix "Letter from M. Abdul Aziz", 27-7-1919

Being under the pledge not to resist the wrongdoer and yet to disobey his will, he meekly suffered the punishment for disobedience. He came to me and bared his striped back as he was saying, "I have suffered this for the sake of my pledge and you. I am a Pathan and the man who laid his cruel hands upon me would not have gone unscathed any other time." His suffering and that of thousands like him secured, among other things, repeal of the abominadble poll-tax of £3 which our poor countrymen, their wives and the grown-up children had to pay annually as the price of freedom for the principal member to reside in Natal without indenture.

You ask me to give up "the idea that wrought the freedon of the dumb labourers of Natal". You wish me to give up the idea that has made Islam a living faith among the great faiths of the world. No evil followed my civil disobedience of the order of expulsion served upon me by the authorities in Champaran in 1917. I claim that my resistance laid the foundation for the partial awakening of the poor ryots of Champaran and the Government of Bihar. How shall I give up an idea which I have treasured for the past forty years and which I have consciously enforced in my own life with no mean success for the last thirty years?

But you cite the awful experiences of April last. Have you really analysed the situation? The sixth of April was observed from Cape Comorin to Peshawar and from Karachi to Calcutta by millions of men, womon and children an event the like of which has not occurred within living memory. I do not know what happened that day in Peshawar. But I do know that it passed off peacefully in all the chief cities and in thousands of hamlets of India. I suggest to you that it was a striking demonstration of the possibilities of civil resistance. On the 6th, there was no civil resistance actually offered. It was a preparation day. Any other Government in the world would have recognized this incoming new force, would have courageously yielded to it and removed the *causa causans*—the Rowlatt Act. But the Punjab Government went mad. They "dictated" terms to the Government of India and the policy of ruthless repression was commenced. Two leaders were interned and deported. I was prevented from proceeding to what they knew was a mission of peace to Delhi and, if necessary, to the Punjab, arrested[1] and brought under arrest to Bombay and there

[1] The arrest took place near Delhi on April 9; Gandhiji was released at Bombay the following day.

set free. And there was a conflagration. I submit that if the Punjab Government had deliberately and with malice aforethought planned an insurrection in the Punjab, they could not have taken more effective steps to do so. And yet such was the efficacy of satyagraha that the whole of India outside the Punjab and three centres in Gujarat remained partically calm in the midst of the gravest provocation. I have admitted my mistake. What was it? I miscalculated the capacity of the people to stand *any* amount of suffering and *provocation*. It was *possible* for the Punjab people to remain quiet in spite of the provocation offered by the arrests I have mentioned. But what happened was beyond endurance. The people of Amritsar could not restrain themselves and brook the deportation of their leaders. Neither you nor I can apportion the blame for what followed. Satyagraha apart, the question will have to be solved whether the people were provoked into madness by the firing or whether the military were provoked to action by the mob.

Be that, however, as it may, how can I abandon the idea of resuming civil resistance because people in April, in some parts of Hindustan, owing to special causes resorted to violence? Must I cease to do right because some people are likely at the same time to do wrong? I admit the the question is not quite so simple as I have put it. All action is controlled by a complexity of circumstances some of which are under the doer's control and the others beyond his control. He can therefore restrain himself only till he has obtained the maximum of control over the surrounding circumstances, and then trust to the Almighty to see him through. And that is exactly what I have done in suspending. I have shown that civil resistance in diametrically opposed to criminal resistance, that it is perfectly compatible with co-operation and respect for the Government.

You cite Peshawar to show, I suppose, that the people unthinkingly, or actuated by mischievous people, jointed the demonstration of the 6th April. They may have done so. My reading of the events is different from yours. Had ther been no Rowlatt legislation, there would have been no demonstration, and therfore no handle given to the mischievous elements. The wrong consisted not in the organizing of the demonstration or civil resistnace, but in the Government so defying public opinion as to produce an agitation they had little anticipated.

Is not the moral obvious? The Government must bow to the force of public opinion and retrace their steps. Assuming that the

powers of the Rowlatt Act are necessary, they must patiently cultivate public opinion and adopt such means and powers that enlightened public opinion will tolerate. As it is, they have ignored the advice of their friends and held them up to ridicule by showing their incapacity for influencing the Government on matters of moment. In my humble opinion, your letters,open and private, and those of other leders, should be addressed to the Government, asking them to right the wrong, not to me, tempting me away from the path of duty. I hope it is common cause between us that the Rowlatt Act which has roused such opposition and which has cost treasures of blood must be removed. If you have a remedy other than civil resistance, by all means apply it, and if you are successful, civil resistance falls away automatically. The period of suspension is the period during which you and all the leaders who dread or disapprove of civil resistance can work with all your might to bring about the desired result.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 9-8-1919

209. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

M.K. GANDHI

ON THE WAY TO POONA,
August 8 [*1919*][1]

MY DEAR HENRY,

I am on my way to Poona to deliver an address on the Transvaal question and chat with the moderate leaders on swadeshi. I have your letter. If you will read my reply to Arundale published in *Young India*[2] you will find in it my reasons for remaining in politics. The more I observe and the longer I live, the more do I find that you cannot divide your energies into watertight compartments. You deny religion when you plead on the ground of your exclusive religious nature inability to help, say, a man so unjustly treated as Kallenbach. I say that you fulfil your religious mission only when you take part in and alleviate human sorrow as often as you see it and are able to share it. I know that Rowlatt Act takes away manliness from a nation. I know that I have the ability to do something to secure its repeal. I *must* act. I

[1] From the contents; *vide* "Speech at Deccan Sabha, Poona", 8-8-1919
[2] *ibid*

take so much part in politics as is necessary for the due fulfilment of my religion.

My sympathies go out to you in your trials there surrounded as you are by so many conflicting elements. I know you will do the right thing. In my opinion you are mistaken about my estimates of people. But I need not discuss them. I do hope you have received Manilal Vyas's papers, i.e., *Young India* containing all the facts and arguments. The matter is still engaging the attention of the Government of Bombay.

The Punjab sentences are being materially reduced. They produce in me no satisfaction. It is like robbing a man of all his property and giving him back portion of it.

Mr. Montagu is reported to have said that Rowlatt Act is necessary. Well, as I can say is that civil disobedience is equally necessary in that event.[1] It is an insolent declaration to make that an Act which has involved such brutality is necessary. I hope you will raise a great agitation over it. Anyway, you will presently see a great agitation here.

Jamnadas left on Wednesday last, the 6th of August for *Chindwara.* He has his wife and two friends with him. They will all live together for the time being. You will please do the needful. You and Millie will not fail to make Jamnadas feel at home in that big city of yours. He will in the initial stages require all the warmth that love can give in that, to him as to many, lonely place. You will find out when *Chindwara* reaches London. Someone must go and receive him at the Docks or at Waterloo where I suppose he will arrive.

The Ashram is looking superb. Shankerlal Banker and Anasuyabehn[2] are regularly learning weaving. They are giving much time to it. Spinning is becoming fashionable. I wish Millie will write to me something on it for publication if she has at all followed what I have been writing.

Did you ever receive my cablegrams about civil resistance?[3]

With love,

Yours sincerely,

BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] From the contents; *vide* "Speech at Deccan Sabha, Poona", 8-8-1919

[2] Anasuyabehn Sarabhai

[3] *Vide* "Cable to Pokaj and Others", 28-7-1919

210. SPEECH AT DECCAN SABHA, POONA[1]

Friday, August 8, 1919

Mr. Gandhi got up amidst loud cheers, and moved the following resolution :

The public meeting of the citizens of Poona, held under the auspices of the Deccan Sabha, hereby places on record its deep sympathy with the Brithsh Indian settlers in Sough Africa struggling for the elementary rights of citizenship, congratulates them on the brave and sustained struggle carried on by them, and assures them of hearty support from the motherland. This meeting further desires to thank the Government of India for their advocacy of the Indian's case and trusts that the Government of India and the Imperial Government will not rest satisfied until full justice has been done to the British Indian settlers in South Africa by the withdrawal of the Act recently passed and by the restoration of full rights of residence, trade and ownership.

Mr. Gandhi, speaking in Hindi, told the audience that it was impossible for them to have an adequate idea as to how severely the recently passed iniquitous measure had affected the interests of the Indians in South Africa. It was a subject worthy of their serious consideration and it was their duty to help their suffering countrymen in every way. Mr. Gandhi said he had a telegram from Bombay informing him of Sir George Barnes' letter to him wherein the latter promised that the Government of India would give careful consideration to all that Mr. Gandhi had to say and that they were already in communication with the secretary of state in the matter. He said he was grateful to the Government of India for their sympathetic attiude. The new law, Mr. Gandhi declared, robbed the Indians of their clementary rights such as those of being domiciled citizens of South Africa, trading as others did, holding landed property, etc. He recalled a Poona meeting held in 1896 under the chairmanship of Dr. Sir Ramkrishna Gopal Bandarkar, to protest against a similarly iniquitous enactment.[2] Dr. Bandarkar on the occasion said that he never took part in politics, nor did he ever desire to do so, but as he was assured that the Indians in the Transvaal were suffering intolerable wrong, he had decided to preside at the meeting with the greatest pleasure. Poona, the speaker reminded the audience, was a great centre of political, social and educational movements and its contribution therfore in the agitation in question should be very substantial. Mr. Gandhi then

[1] The Deccan Sabha, held a meeting of the citizens in Kirloskar Theatre to protest against the Transaal legislation. In the absence of the President of the Sabha, Hormusjee Wadia, Rao Bahadur Khopkar, retired Deputy collectore and Vice-President, presided.

[2] *Vide* "Appeal for Funds", 3-2-1897

referred to the encomiums paid to India for her sacrifices in war by Gen. Smuts, on leaving for South Africa, and said that Gen. Smuts recommended in effect that India should be accorded a treatment of equality, and still it was the Union Government, of which he was a member, that was passing the obnoxious legisation. The Indians in South Africa were not, Mr. Gandhi emphasized, asking for political rights from the Union Government, nor were they demanding the right to sit in the South African Parliament. There was, again, no fear of unrestricted immigration into the country. It was a thousand pities that the Transvaalers grudged the Indians even the simple rights to reside and trade, or the right to purchase land with money out of their own pockets. Did it become then to deprive Indians of their bare elementary right or snatching from the Indian's mouths their scanty morsel? Mr. Gandhi told the audience that the Indians there had now resolved[1] to reply by asking for full civil rights and to resort to civil resistance until those rights were granted. The Transvaalers sought by the new legislation to rob the Indians of rights of trading in the gold area that were expressly given them by a Supreme Court decision. They maintained that the new legislation did recognize vested rights and even attributed to the speaker his having tacitly given his consent to the legislation. It was, said Mrs. Gandhi, a downright lie. But they did not rest satisfied with that legislation. Some of them, said Mr. Gandhi, were then striving for excluding the Indians altogether, by asking them to restrict their trade and business to their own locations≈which the speaker likened to *Maharwadas* and *Bhangiwadas*[2] in Indian villages ≈ i.e., by asking them to trade among themselves! In conclusion, Mrs. Gandhi said that the time had come for Indians in South Africa to resort to the civil resistance that they resorted to some years ago, and which was approved of and blessed by the late Mrs. Gokhale.[3] While the Indians there were on the threshold of such a crisis, it behoved them here to understand the question thoroughly it behoved the Maharashtra perople, more than others, as they were noted for their learning and studiousness, to give their serious study to the situation in South Africa and to strive by body, speech and mind to bring about a solution of the question. The resolution was supported by Prof. Kale[4], Mr. Bhopatkar[5] , Mr. Deodhar[6], and unanimously carried.

Young India, 13-8-1919

[1] According to a report in the Bombay Secret Abstracts, Gandhiji referred to a meeting of Indians in South Africa held on Agust 4.

[2] Areas, generally on the outskirts of a town or village, where the untouchables, working as scavengers, were compelled to reside.

[3] The reference is to the passive resistance campaign of 1913-14.

[4] Prof. V. G. Kale; economist and author, founder editor of *Artha*, a Marathi Weekly

[5] L. B. Bhopatkar; editor of *Bhala, Lokasangraha* and *Lokamanas*; Lawyer and politician

[6] G. K. Deodhar (1879-1935); member, Servants of India Society

211. SPEECH AT GUJARATI BANDHU SABHA, POONA

[*August 8, 1919*]

These days the theme of my addresses is swadeshi. I save time from other activities and give all of it to swadeshi. It is through swadeshi that we shall get swaraj. When I spoke on "Swadeshi and Swaraj" at Surat,[1] it occurred to me that I shold explain to the people how swadeshi would cover all that I had at heart. At the present time, I want to propagate this idea and it is my hope that, in a few days or maybe months, everyone in India, from the Viceroy down to this sweeper, will realize that swadeshi can bring swaraj.

To this end, it is imperative that the ideal of swadeshi should be kept pure; it is so great a thing that it should not be debased.

India is suffering at present from afflictions of three kinds:

1. DISEASE : At no time in the past were the people of India afflicted with so many diseases as at present. The number of people rotting with disease in this country is greater than that in all the rest of the world.

2. HUNGER : The simple fact borne out by experience during the past few years is that a large section of the Indian people do not have enough to eat. Sir William Wilson Hunter said categorically forty years ago that three crores in India got only one meal a day, and that too consisting of no more than plain bread and salt. More than this, they got no ghee, oil or chillies. This was our misfortune forty years ago. Every official has been obliged to admit in the blue books that India's poverty is increasing day by day, and the cultivator's lot, especially, is the worst, as they alone know who move in villages. If you inquire of the people in Gujarat, you will know what great difficulty they experience in getting milk. They are hard put to it to get milk even for an infant six months old. Whenever I questioned the people in the villages around Ahmedabad, I was told that, let alone themselves, even their children could get no milk. You will see from this that our present plight is much worse than it was forty years ago.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at inaguration of swadeshi store, surat", 28-7-1919

3. INSUFFICIENT COVERING FOR THE BODY : At present India is also afficited with a cloth famine. According to Sir Dinshaw Wacha's[1] estimate, four years ago people in India got 13 yards of cloth per head, whereas now they get only 9. That is, there has been a reduction of four yards per head and to that extent our poverty has increased.

When I was working in Champaran two yeras ago, I had personal experience of women protesting to me, without mincing words, that they did not have even a piece of cloth with which to cover their bare limbs; how, then, [they asked,] could they bathe and wash to keep themselves clean? My heart bled to see our pure-hearted sisters in such a pitiable condition.

A land afflicted with this triple disease loses the qualities of courage, fortitude and truthfulness. The people of such a country have no dharma in them and I would even employ the term "unmanly" to describe them. Here in India, too, we have been using this term these days.

When, with this idea in mind, I questioned people, one reply I got was that dharma should be restored. No doubt we have lost our dharma, but, in the present circumstances, restoring it is quite a difficult job, for it is extraordinarily difficult for a man in utter misery to follow dharma. Only a rare soul can do so. I call such persons yogis. Not all people, however, can become yogis. And thus, for the purity of the atman, purity of the body is also essentral. "A pure atman can dwell only in a pure body." In order to revive the qualities of courage, and so on, this triple affliction should be got rid of. A man who follows dharma in the midst of such suffering I would call a yogi.

For curing the disease, a bold effort, requiring knowledge, is called for. We shall have to sacrifice our time to save people afflicted with such diseases. We should first ascertain whether people go hungry because of their lethargy or because of want. Of food, there is plenty in India; the hungry should have it. But they need money with which to buy it, and it is for want of money that India is poor.

Swadeshi is needed to fight this state of affairs. By swadeshi we mean protecting our cotton and silk. This is my restricted definition of swadeshi in the circumstances which obtain today. Last year, we

[1] Sir Dinshaw Edulji Wacha (1844-1936); prominent Indian Parsi politcian; President, the Indian National Congress, 1901

paid to foreign countries 56 crores of rupees for cotton goods and four for silk goods. The revered Dadabhai Naoroji used to say that India was being drained of the funds. It is true that a good deal of this money is spent on the military department and in paying pensions; personally, however, I would say that in no other way is so much money drained as on account of the absence of swadeshi. Eighteen crores were paid last year for sugar. There is much drain in other ways which I do not care to mention at the moment. I want to get hold of the trunk and once that is done the drain in other ways will stop by itself. Our first duty then, in the present circumstances, is to follow swadeshi in its restricted meaning; to this end, the three vows which I have given should be kept. Get control of the trade in yarn and you will get the rest easily enough. We are unable today to produce sufficient cloth to meet our needs. Our mills cannot supply as much. We should take steps so that India is enabled to produce things which she does not do at present; this is one problem. I am at present discussing this problem with mill-owners and, in the course of our conversation, Sir Fazalbhai Karimbhai told me that it would take fifty years still before the mills could supply cloth in the required quantity. Should we then wait for fifty years? We see from the report of the Industrial Commssion that in the country one-third the quantity of cloth can be produced through hand-weaving and that, if this industry is developed, things will become easier for us. Mills require machinery and for this we are dependent on others. Foreign countries do not have all that machinery to spare. Some say that it takes a mill one year to obtain one machine and installing it presents much difficulty. Having regard to all these obstacles, hand-weaving seems very easy, for it does not require all this effort. A man of average ability can learn the work in six month's time and one with some intelligence can pick it up in three months. The method of making yarn is altogether simple. I took not more than 15 days to learn it.

A hundred and fifty years ago, we ourselves produced [our cloth]. Every mother in India did the work for the love of God. Traces of this age-old desire of the Indian woman for spinning are still visible. When recently, I went to Vijapur and Kalol, I met nearly 20,000 men and women. In the talks we had, the women told me that this was a good experiment, and an easy one. If they were provided with a spinning-wheel [they said] they too would work. At present, a hundred and fifty women in Vijapur spin half a maund of cotton daily and, if supplied with cotton, four hundred women are ready to

work. The women at Kalol give the same reply. My dear friend Mr. Chettiar came to see me from Madras. When I saw that Mrs. Chettiar had also come, I told Mrs. Chettiar that I would detain her for eight days, for it would be quite a good thing if she learned spinning before she left. She accepted my suggestion immediately and left after she had learnt the work. She accepted it not because of her regard for me personally but because she loved the work. This shows that spinning is a hereditary activity with us. Those who read Darwin understand the theory of heredity. If we refuse to take up this work, we shall lose this inheritance. I appeal to you not to give up faith. If we but try, a favourable environment will be created and we shall get back the inheritance we have disowned. Principal Paranjapye[1] said that we would fail in the competition with the rest of the world. But there is no question of competition in this. This is a question, rather, of the economic freedom of peasants and of the poor. The farmer is the father of the world. Take the example of America or Japan. They help the cultivator there. Our Governor, too, is anxious [to know] how the cultivator may be helped. The problem can be solved in accordance with the principle of economics.

It is my advice to young people to take up this work. It is easy enough and requries no special effort, nor does it require much intelligence. All that is necessary is some experience. One enjoys greater freedom through this work. The man who spins earns three annas daily, but the man who weaves earns eight annas. Talking to the weavers of Madanwadi in Bombay, I came to know that many of them earned as much as one rupee, even two rupees, daily. This industry is useful to us. It should be widely popularized. Even the educated class shuld learn a little of the craft. In the same way as every boy in England knows some naval work, we should all learn this work.

If, thus, India understands this *mantra*[2] and starts working as a matter of religious duty, the country's economic condition will improve and hunger and disease will disappear from our midst. Since you understand the idea, it is my prayer that you will put it into practice.

[From Gujarati]

Indian Opionion, 10-10-1919

[1] R. P. Paranjapye, Principal, Fergusson College, Poona

[2] Magic formula, but here "message"

212. THE ROWLATT ACT

Mr. Montagu has spoken. He "believes that the powers given to the executive by the Rowaltt Act are necessary". And many friends ask whether, in view of this statement, the Act will be repealed. My answer is that the Rowlatt Act will be repealed in the same manner as Mrs. Morley's "Settled fact"—the Bengal Partition[1] —was unsettled. General Smuts had emphatically declared more than once that the Asiatic Regisration Act[2] would never be repealed. It had to go in the year 1914. Whilst, therefore, I am certain that the Rowlatt Act will go because of my belief in the power of suffering, i.e., civil resistance, to overcome mountains, I cannot help feeling sad that even Mr. Montagu should have to support what is clearly insupportable, alike from the view of the evil in it and for the reason that public opionion hascondemned it in unmeasured terms. Mrs. Montagu has to resort to bad logic and distortion of facts to sustain his position. Surely the powers given to the executive are not necessary at present, for the simple reason that the Defence of India Act is still in operation and will be for some months to come. And if the powers are really necessary, they can be given in another and less offensive and more restricted manner. Mr. Montagu is the joint author with Lord Chelmsford of the reforms scheme such as it is. It lies ill in his mouth to defend a measure which can only neutralize what good the reforms may be intended to produce.

But the purpose of writing this is not to argue about the untenability of the position taken up by Mrs. Montagu. My purpose is to show that if the Rowaltt Act is to be persisted in, the Government must prepare for civil resistance which shall be perfectly respectful but which shall be unbending. The issue is remarkably simple : *Is the will of the people to prevail or that of the Government?* I venture to urge that a government, be it ever so powerful and autocratic, is bound to yield to unanimous public opinion. It is a bad outlook before us if truth and justice have to surrender to mere physical force, whether it is wielded by an individual or a government. My purpose in life is to demonstrate that the strongest physical force bends before moral

[1] Bengal was partitioned in 1905. Intense public agitation, involving boycott of British goods, ultimately led to the annulment of the Bengal Partition in 1911.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Asiatics Registration Amendment Act (1908).

force when it is used in defence of truth. If violence had not been offered by the people in April, notwithstanding provocation, the Rowlatt Act would have been withdrawn by now, as certainly as that I am penning these remarks. I still hope that Mr. Montagu, Lord Chelmsford and those who have the power, will perceive that true prestige lies in doing justice and respecting public opinion. But it may happen that they will think otherwise. In that event, I would like those who are interested in the speedy success of civil resistance to prepare the atmosphere for its smooth working. It will be a great trial of strength if we must engage in it. But the result is a certainty. That is the matchless beauty of civil resistance. A people that has no remedy in the last resort for securing redress perishes. The surest and the safest remedy is civil resistnace. Europe furnishes a living warning against the method of violence. Peace has brought no rest to that continent. Wherever you look, there are strikes, there is violence and looting. England, the greatest perhaps of all the victors, is not free from turmoil. Victory has brought no satisfaction to the great mass of the people. India has her choice between the broken reed of violence and the unbreakable, peaceful and elevating weapon of civil resistance, i.e., resistance by self-suffering.

Young India, 9-8-1919

213. LETTER TO G.A. NATESAN

BOMBAY,
August 9, [*1919*]

DEAR MR. NATESAN,

May I thank you for looking after Devdas[1] during his illness and will you please convey my thanks to Dr. Krishnasamy for his great attention to Devdas.

You will not hesitate to criticize my writings and doings when you feel the necessity.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostate of the original in Gandhiji's hand : G. N. 2931

[1] Devdas Gandhi had been staying in Madras since 1918, carrying on work for spread of Hind.

214. LETTER TO MOHANLAL PANDYA

ASHRAM,
Tuesday [*August 12, 1919*][1]

BHAISHRI MOHANAL PANDYA[2] ,

I am so busy that I get no free time at all and so could not write to you. The figure for cotton was left out merely through oversight. I am now writing to Bombay. You must have seen that it is not necessary for anyone to go to the Punjab. How are things going on there? I cannot be happy unless we have swaraj in Kathlal. Swaraj for Kathlal means that it should meet its own needs in food, clothing and other things. We have lost our way because we did not follow this course. We can achieve such swaraj by our own efforts. You and Shankarlal should dedicate yourselves wholly to that end. You have the capacity and the will, and there are people to help you. I am leaving for Godhra on Thursday. From there I shall leave for Bombay on Friday.

I hope shortly to be able to give a Gujarati paper to the people.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand : G.N. 2172

215. NOTE ON LALA LAJPAT RAI'S LETTER[3]

[Before *August 13, 1919*]

This letter[4] , though it is clearly from Lala Lajpat Rai and meant for publication, in presumably by an oversight unsigned. In spite of the oversight, I allow it to be published for its intrinsic merit.

M. K. G.

Young India, 13-8-1919; also from a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand : S. N. 6669

[1] The letter was evidently written shortly before Gandhiji started *Navajivan* is September 1919. During the year, Gandhiji was in Godhra on August 14, which fell on a Thursday.

[2] A co-worker during Kheda satyagraha; *vide* "Speech at Nadiad", 8-6-1918.

[3] This note scribbled by Gandhiji on Lala Lajpat Rai's letter appeared below it in *Young India*. The photostat bears, at the top of the letter, the following lines in Gandhiji's hand: "Lala Rai's creed. The following has been received.

[4] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Lala Lajpat Rai", 20-6-1919.

216. LETTER TO THE PRESS[1]

[POONA,
August 13, 1919]

I have just received the following cablegram from Mr. Ibrahim Ismail Aswat, Chairman of the British Indian Association, Johannesburg :

> Bill assented 23rd June, promulgated 3rd instant. Restricts compaines acquiring further fixed properties and holding bonds as prior to company law. Reaffirms Gold and Townships Acts operating on new licences after 1st May and restricting present traders and successors to particular townships. Deputation waiting His Excellency urging withhold assent on ground class legislation. Government promised another commission during recess investigate Indian question throughout Union as concession (to) the detractors in Parliament. Fear futher restrictive legislation. Community request you appeal Viceroy propose Royal Commission India representing Union (local) Indian (interests). Convened Union Indian Conference 4th August, great success. Decided united action. Many of (the) associations pledged resist any cost. . . Aswat.

The words in parentheses have been added by me to make the meaning clear. The cablegram bears out what I have said in my letter to Sir George Barnes and what I have said in my letter to Sir George Barnes and what I said at the recent meeting at Poona.[2] The restrictions are clear: (1) no further holding of landed property in the Transvaal; (2) no new trade licences within the area affected by the Gold Law and the Townships Act; (3) the present holders and their successors in title to be restricted as to trade to the townships in which they are now trading.

As I have already remarked, this means virtual ruin of the Indian settlers in the Transvaal. The only means of livelihood to the largest number is trade, and the largest number of Indians is to be found probably within the gold area. If the Act stands, they must die out in the natural course.

[1] This was published also in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 14-8-1919, and *The Indian Review*, August 1919.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Deccan Sabha, Poona", 8-8-1919.

In the cablegram, the word "assent" occurs twice. It says the Bill has been assented to and it refers to a deputation that is to wait on H. E. the Governor-General of South Africa requesting him to withhold assent. The second use of the word "assent" refers probably to a clause in the Letters Patent providing for the vetoing of class legislation. The clause is undoubtedly to be used under exceptional circumstances. No one can deny that the Asiatics Act constitutes a very exceptional circumstance warranting the exrcise of the Royal veto.

The most important part of the cablegram, however, is the fact that the commission promised by the Union Government is to be appointed as a "concession" to "the detractors" of Indians in the Union Parliament. Unless, therefore, the Government of India take care, there is every likelihood of the commission, like the committee of the South African Assembly, proving to the British Indians a curse instead of a blessing. It is, therefore, not unnatural that the British Indian Association urges that H. E. the Viceroy should propose a Royal Commission upon which both the Union and the Indian interests are represented. Nothing can be fairer than the proposal made by Mr. Aswat. I say so becasue, as a matter of right, no commission is really needed to decide that Indian settlers are entitled to trade in South Africa where they like and hold landed property on the same terms as the European settlers. This is the minimum they can claim. But under the complex constitution of this great Empire, justice is and has often to be done in a round-about manner. A wise captain, instead of sailing against a headwind, tacks and yet reaches his destination sooner than he otherwise would have. Even so, Mr. Aswat wisely accepts the principle of a commission on a matter that is self-evident, but equally wisely wants a commission that would not prove abrotive and that will dare to tell the ruling race in South Africa that, as members in an Empire which has more Coloured people than white, they may not treat their Indian fellow-subjects as helots. Whether the above proposal is accepted or some other is adopted by the Imperial Government, it must be made clear to them that public opinion in India will not tolerate confiscation of the primary rights of the British Indian settlers in South Africa.

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 16-8-1919

217. LETTER TO THE PRESS[1]

August 14, 1919

Following close on the heels of the cable[2] from South Africa comes one from Fiji which reads as follows :

> Indian Imperial Association regrets Government postpone cancellation Indian Indentures. Association strongly protests prays immediate abolition indenture.

I thought, after the Viceregal pronouncemen[3] about Fiji, that we had seen the last of Fiji indentures with which Messrs Andrews and Pearson have made us so familiar. It is evident from the cablegram that the Government in Fiji Islands had decided upon immediate cancellation, and that they have now altered their decision and intend postponing the cancellation. It is to be hoped that the Government of India would throw some light on this change of programme. The public are entitled to view with strongest suspicious any postponement of the cancellation of indentures.

The Bombay Chronicle, 15-8-1919

218. SPEECH AT SWADESHI BHANDAR GODHRA

August 14, 1919

Before the interview[4] was performed the opening ceremony of the store [Swadeshi Bhandar]. A silver lock and key locally made were presented to Mr. Gandhi. The owners, who have taken up the enterprises purely from a public standpoint, asked Mr. Gandhi to announce that they would not charge more that 7 p.c. on the cost price of the goods in Godhra, i.e., the price in Bombay and the railage and packing. This applies only to the articles required for the Swadeshi Vows. The store was opened before a large audience. Mr. Gandhi said the enterprise depended for its success on the integrity of the managers and the patriotism of the Godhra public.

Young India, 20-8-1919

[1] This was also published as a note in *Young India*, 16-8-1919, and *The Indian Review* August 1919.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] On April 12, 1917 the Viceroy had put a ban on emigration of labour to Fiji for the duration of the War.

[4] This was given at Godhra by Clayton, the Collector, to local leaders on the question of forced labour.

219. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, GODHRA

August 14, 1919

The women's meeting came off at 4 p.m. Over one thousand women must have been present at the meeting. Mrs. Jerbanu Merwanji Kothawala, the accomplished wife of Khan Saheb Kothawala, presided. The following is the precis of Mr. Gandhi's address to the ladies :

Mr. Gandhi said he was grateful to Mrs. Clayton for her presence at the gathering and he was sure he had his audience with him in expressing the sentiment. After briefly introducting Mrs. Clayton to the ladies persent, the speaker said swadeshi was that spirit in them which required them to serve their immediate neighbours before others and to use things produced in their neighbourhood in preference to those more remote. So doing, they served humanity to the best of their capacity. They could not serve humanity neglecting their neighbours. Similarly with their wants. They were bound to supply them through the agency of their neighbours and therefore preferred their labour and wares to those of others. India abandoned swadeshi a hundred years ago and had consequently become comparatively poor and helpless. They were well able to supply all their cloth and to supply the world's market to a certain extent when they were observing the law of swadeshi. During that period, the majority of the women of India spun yarn as a national duty and the men wove the yarn so spun. Now the 21 crore peasants of India had at least four months out of the year thrown on their hands. They did not shirk work. They had none to occupy their time and to supplement their earnings from cultivation. Swadeshi therefore was a question of finding a subsidiary industry for their farmers. No country in the world could prosper that had one-third of time of the vast majority of its inhabitants lying unutilized. Moreover, there were other men and women who had many hours in the day at their disposal. If these idle hours of the nation were fully occupied in producing yarn and weaving it, they could manufacture the whole of their cloth and thus save crores of rupees going out of the country every year. The condition of success was that cultured men and women took up spining and weaving. The poorer people would follow their example. Lady Dorab Tata, Lady Petit and Mrs. Jayji Petit had promised to learn the art of spinning and introduce it to their sisters Mrs. Ramabai Ranade proposed to introduce the music of the spinning-wheel in her Seva Sadan. Mrs. Banker worked six hours a day and produced fine yarn and made of it a gift to the nation. They could expect no less from the sisters of Godhra. Mr. Gandhi did not hesitate to recommend it to his European friends. One such sister had already undertaken to work. He hoped that those who did not need pecuniary assistance would make it a point of honour to give at least one hour a day to the nation for producing

yarn. As an encouragement in this direction, he called upon his hearers to pledge themselves henceforth not to buy foreign cloth. Every village of Indian would thus become self-supporting and self-producing, so far as the two main wants of life…food and clothing…were concerned.

The chairwoman exhorted the ladies present to help the movement in the direction Mr. Gandhi indicated. Mrs. Clayton said she was glad she was able to be present at the meeting. She always was in favour of home industries.

Young India, 20-8-1919

220. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, GODHRA

August 14, 1919

The women's meeing[1] was followed by a brief recess.

The Vanita Vishram was visited at 6.30 p.m. The public meeting came off at 9.15 p.m. There was a very large audience. It was held in open air. Mr. Gandhi's address dealt with the religious and the economic aspect.

At the outset, he said he was deeply grateful to Mrs. Clayton for president at the meeting. He knew and appreciated the condition under which he had accepted the invitation of the organizers. And he would endeavour faithfully to carry out the compact. To him the economic and the religious aspects of swadeshi were far more attractive than the political, and as it was his dream that all, from the Viceroy down to the sweeper, should accept swadeshi, he was desirous of conducting swadeshi propaganda from the economic and religious standpoints. He was thankful too that Mrs. Clayton had permitted the officials to be present at the meeting. To him the religious aspect was all sufficient. That elementary religion which was common to mankind taught him to be kind and attentive to their neighbours. An individual's service to his country and humanity consisted in serving his neighbours. If that was true, it was their religious duty to support their farmers, their artisans, such as weavers, carpenters, etc. And so long as the Godhra farmers and weavers could supply the wants of the Godhra citizens, the latter had no right to go outside Godhra and support even (say) the Bombay farmers and weavers. He could not starve his neighbour and claim to serve his distant cousin in the North Pole. This was the basic principle of all religions and they would find it was also of true and humane economics. India was suffering from a triple curse, the curse of disease…disease not of a normal but of an abnormal kind, the curse of want of food, and, lastly, that of want of clothing. All proceeded largely from the same cause…poverty, and poverty was due largely to the economic drain. They gave to the producers outside India in

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

1917-18 the enormous sum of sixty crores of rupees. And they had not in any measure worthy of consideration provided the millions of our spinners and weavers with any other occupation. The whole of the labour thus unwillingly set free was running to waste like a mightly torrent of water. The evil could only be corrected by their reversion to swadeshi and by rehabilitating their spinners and weavers in their former honourable occupation. He sought, in this gigantic task, the help of the officials, the millionaires and the other leaders of society. It was the most urgent need of the country. They had twenty-one crore farmers. His own experience and the experience of authoritative writers showed that they had nearly four months of the year lying idle on their hands. This was a huge economic waste. No wonder that they were poor. Swadeshi therefore was the problem of inducing and enabling the farmers to take up the supplementary industry of spinning and weaving. Their shastras and the history of spinning and weaving throughout the world showed that the queens down to their maids considered it an honour to spin cotton. Weaving was largely specialized. In those halcyon days when their mothers spun for the nation, they were able to produce the finest muslin. They could still regain the lost art and with it the lost prosperity. But one thing was needful for the people: to insist on getting only swadeshi cloth and on producing it themselves, as far as possible. In the Punjab, thousands of women of high birth spun their own yarn and got it woven by professional weavers. The swadeshi vows were designed to create a taste for swadeshi. They must not be ashamed of coarse cloth. As a matter of fact, there was more art about hand-spun and hand-woven cloth, however coarse, than about machine-made cloth, however fine. But art apart, they were bound by every tie of honour, every consideration of prudence and economics, to wear what cloth every village could produce and be satisfied with it, till their skill, industry and enterprise could produce a better quality.

At the close of the proceedings, the chairman said he was glad to be able to preside at the meeting. He thanked Mr. Gandhi for his instructive address and exhorted the audience to support home manufacture. A vote of thanks to their chair brought the meeting to a close.

Young India, 20-8-1919

221. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, GODHRA

August 15, 1919

Mr. Gandhi then addressed a crowded meeting of the public on the situation in the Punjab. He briefly reviewed the events of April last and said that it would be a blot upon British justice if the sentences and convictions, many of which he believed were bad, were not reversed. It would be a greater blot on their patriotism if they did not insist upon an impartial investigation of the whole of the proceedings in the Punjab.

The speaker did not doubt that such a committee would be appointed in the near future. He asked his hearers too to subscribe to the fund opened for the relief of the sufferers in the Punjab.A resolution was then passed calling upon the Government to appoint an independent committee to inquire into the cause of discontent and to review the convictions and sentences and asking the public to support the Punjab fund.

Young India, 20-8-1919

222. SIR SANKARAN NAIR AND GOVERNMENT

It is difficult to understand what possessed his fellow member of the Viceregal Executive Council to attempt a refutation of Sir Sankaran Nair's irrefutable notes on Kaira and Champaran. They have exposed nothing but their own incapacity to understand or appreciate their colleague's view-point. By their reply to Sir Sankaran's notes, they have demonstrated the "wooden" nature of the bureaucratic system. In trying to discredit Sir Sankaran Nair, they have evoked from him crushing rejoinders and still further discredited themselves. If I have understood him rightly, Sir Sankaran Nair successfully endeavoured to prove the inelasticity of the present system and to answer the charge that the Congress or the educated Indians did not represent or care for the interests of the masses.

Let me take the Kaira affair. I propose to deal with the note[1] from the Bombay Government.

The Governor-in-Council considers that the account given by Sir C. Sankaran Nair is so misleading that some authoritative correction of the views therein conveyed is essential before communication to the Secretary of State or Parliament.

They set about the work by sympathizing with Sir Sankaran over the difficulties of dealing with "so complex and specialized a subject" as the Land Revenue system. I respectfully submit that this is a highly misleading statement. There is nothing complex and specialized about the Land Revenue system except in so far as the administrators have made it so. Sir Sankaran has left 'the complexity and specialization' to the specialists and merely dealt with the main principles which even a layman can easily understand. I had to undergo the torture of going through the bewildering Revenue Rules and their amendments made from time to time, which, I would full grant, can only be remembered and recalled, as occasion may require,

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Note on the Kaira Case",12-8-1919

by specialists. But those rules are really devised not for the relief of distress but for ensuring a scientific, rigorous and regular collection of land-tax levied almost to the highest margin. And I would freely admit further that it will tax even the great ability of Sir Sankaran Nair if he had to find out how best to collect revenue from cultivators who can ill afford to pay. But not much ability was required to understand the simple problem whether there was failure of crops in Kaira in the year 1917, and whether the damage done by the excessive rains was such as to entitle the ryots to relief by way of suspension. The Bombay Government's note frightens the laymen . . . and in this category must be classed the Secretary of State and the Parliament by authoritatively saying that the resolution submitted to the Legislative Council and referred to by Sir Sankaran was "thoroughly impracticable". The impracticability consisted in the Hon'ble Mr. Kamat proposing that "the expert agency of the agricultural department" should find the anna valuation. The Government ask the reader on their mere *ipse dixit* to consider this very practicable suggestion as thoroughly impracticable. The Hon'ble Mr. Kamat suggested a comparatively independent—though still Government—agency, to do the work instead of an interested Government agency, viz., the circle inspectors, and other officials in the lower ranks whose very promotion depends upon their ability to make full collection of the revenue even by "coercive" measures. In further proof of Sir Sankaran Nair's "misconception of fact and policy", the Government criticize his acceptance of my testimony "based on the mere statement of interested cultivators". As the framers of the note claim to be specialists having an intimate knowledge of the Revenue Department, I find it difficult to characterize this passage. I can only say that they have been ill-served by their subordinates. If the cultivators, whose statements I accepted, were interested in one way, the circle inspectors, as I have already shown, were far more interested the opposite way. The note omits, however, to mention that I did not rely upon the evidence of interested cultivators but checked their statements, in some cases, where it was possible, with my own eyes, in all cases with the evidence of disinterested and respectable men who were not concerned for their own sake in securing a suspension of the revenue collection. I thus applied a threefold test and I venture to say that, when the same evidence was given in thousands of cases by thousands of men and women, it was impossible to question that testimony, and the Government, in order to support the interested

statements of their officials and in order also to be able to collect the revenue which they wanted, were obliged to discredit not only the testimony of the villagers concerned but that of practically the whole of the Kaira population. Any authority, in any shape or form responsible to the people, would have recoiled from any such imputation. Under our system, however, the word of the Government has come to be regarded with superstitious awe and it has to be accepted as the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth even though large masses of people require to be damned for that purpose. The Government summarily reject Sir Sankaran Nair's appreciation of the past economic situation of the tract. I challenge the framers of the note to go through the villages of the district, and find out for themselves from the dumb testimony of the dilapidated buildings in the villages and say, with hands on their hearts, what evidence those buildings bespeak. The Government then take delight in being able to say that the agitation in Kaira did not have "any considerable effects on the measures of relief actually sanctioned", and that the result was not to "leave the decision as regards payment of the Government demand to the *raiyats* themselves". I can only say so much the worse for the Government and the broken word of their accredited officers, one of whom, in the presence of nearly two hundred people including myself, said that suspension would be granted in cases of poor cultivators and that the question of inability on the ground of poverty would be decided in consultation with the leading men of villages.[1] This was confirmed by the Collector of the District. That suspension was confined to the fewest cultivators possible, that the orders of suspension were suppressed from the public for over a month and that they were only discovered when the departmant was at its wit's end as to what to do, even after having sold the cattle of absentee cultivators, attached and removed their jewellery, imposed chothai fines, attached valuable crops wroth a few thousand rupees for a paltry balance and after the statement of the Commissioners that he did not need, like his ignorant audience, the binding effect of a vow to make good his threat, that he would sell their crops, confiscate their holdings and never restore the names of the contumacious holders, is a tale too thoroughly discreditable to require any further elaboration, and I feel sorry that the new Governor, who has given evidence of his anxiety to hear both sides and to be as impartial as he can, has been, no doubt

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Uttarsanda", 3-6-1918

unconsciously, made a vehicle for passing to the Imperial Parliament a note that is brimful of misleading statements, and innuendoes. I never took advantage of this so-called concession, meaning the orders discovered in June. I merely made use of the knowledge gained at Uttersanda, and, as befits a satyagrahi, stopped the struggle. Had I prolonged it, I would have been guilty of contumacy, incivility to the Government and indifference to the distress of those whom I had the privilege of guiding. In the note[1] informing the people of the result, my colleague and I thus described the whole settlement:

> The Mamlatdar of Nadiad at Uttersanda, on the 3rd day of June issued such orders, whereupon the people of Uttersanda, who could afford, were advised to pay up. Payments have already commenced there.
>
> On the foregoing order having been passed at Uttersanda a letter was addressed to the Collector stating that, if orders like the one in Uttersanda were passed everywhere, the struggle would come to an end, and it would be possible to inform His Excellency the Governor on the 10th instant, the day of the sitting of the Provincial War Conference, that the domestic difference in Kaira was settled. The Governor has replied to the effect that the order like the one in Uttersanda is applicable to the whole district. Thus the people's prayer has at last been granted. The Collector has also stated in reply to a query about *chothai* orders that the orders will not be enforced against those who may voluntarily pay up. Our thanks are due to the Collector for this concession.
>
> We are obliged to say with sorrow that although the struggle has come to an end, it is an end without grace. It lacks dignity. The above orders have not been passed either with generosity or with the heart in them. It very much looks as if the order have been passed with the greatest reluctance. The Collector says : "Orders were issued to all Mamlatdars on the 25th April tht no pressure should be put on those unable to pay. Their attention was again drawn to these order in a proper circular issued by me on the 22nd of May, and to ensure that proper effect was given to them, the Mamlatdars were advised to divide the defaulters in each village into two classes ≈ those who could pay and those who were unable to pay on account of poverty."
>
> If this was so, why were these orders not published to the people? Had they known them on the 25th April, what suffering would they not have been saved from? The expenses that were unnecessarily incurred by the Government in engaging the officials of the district in effecting executions would have been saved. Wherever the assessment was uncollected the people lived with

[1] *Vide* "Letter to People of Kheda", 6-6-1918

their lives in their hands. They have lived away from their homes to avoid attachments. They have not had even enough food. The women have suffered what they ought not to have. At times they have been obliged to put up with insults from insolent circle inspectors, and to helplessly watch their milch buffaloes being taken away from them. They have paid chothai fines. Had they known the foregoing orders, they would have been saved all the miseries. The officials knew that this relief of the poor was the crux of the struggle. The Commissioner would not even look at this difficulty. Many letter were addressed to him, but he remained unbending. He said, "Individual relief cannot be granted, it is not the law." Now the Collector says : "The orders of April 25, so far as they related to putting pressure on those who were really unable to pay on account of poverty were merely a re-statement of what are publicly known to be the standing orders of Government on the subject."

If this is really true, the people have suffered deliberately and through sheer obstinacy! At the time of going to Delhi, Mr. Gandhi wrote to the Commissioner requesting him to issue orders to the above effect, so that the good news could be given to His Excellency the Viceroy. The Commissiner gave no heed to the request.

"We are moved by the sufferings of the people, we perceive our mistake and in order to placate the people we are now prepared to grant individual relief" — the officials could have generously said all this and endeared themelves to the people, but they have obstinately avoided this method (of winning them over). And even now relief has been granted in a niggardly manner, involuntarily and without admission of mistake. It is even claimed that what has now been granted is nothing new. And hence we say there is little grace in the settlement.

The officials have failed to be popular because of their obstainacy, because of their mistaken belief that they should never admit being in the wrong and because of their having made it a fetish that it should never be said of them that they had yielded to anything like popular agiation. It grieves us to offer this criticism. But we have permitted ourselves to do so as their friends.

Thus, if the end was without grace, the Government, in their persistence in their self-congratulation upon the manner in which they succeeded in drawing all but the last drop, turn their action into a criminal blunder. Their note leaves untouched the contention of Sir Sankaran Nair that the tendency of the present system of Government is too scientific to be human and therefore tyrannical, and that justice has been generally wrung from an unwilling bureaucracy by

persistent agitation carried on by the much-maligned educated class mainly through their annual assembly and its offshoots.

I must refer to Champaran in another issue,[1] reluctant as I am to revive memories of painful events. But the extraordinary attitude taken by the Government makes it incumbent upon me as the only person, barring my colleagues, capable of placing the facts before the public, to do so.

Young India, 16-8-1919

223. WHAT TO DO?

That the Rowlatt Act must not stand in the face of the opposition of the whole country is or should be clear to everyone who has any regard for national honour. As I have said so often, to secure its repeal is more important than the passing of the Reforms Bill. It will be an object lesson in self-government without a parliamentary statute. We must obtain the repeal by orderly agitation. What is an orderly agitation? If it is meetings, resolutions and memorials, it will be said, we have already had these in abundance. The argument will not be without force. But governments have short memories. If there are no meeeting and no resolutions, there will be officials enough to say that the people do not desire repeal of the Rowlatt Act nor do they bother about it. Though it was well known that the silence over Mr. Horniman's deportation was deliberately brought about to restore quiet and equilibrium, there were not wanting responsible people to infer that the absence of noise over the deportation was due to the people's acquiescence in the 'violence' of the authorities.

It is moreover certain that the Act is not going to be repealed without serious and sustained effort. My implicit belief in the certainty of repeal is based upon the equal certainty of serious and very powerful agitation going on in the country. The belief is also based upon my conviction that the Act is harmful to the free growth of the people. I would even contemplate with comparative equanimity isolated revolutinary crime rather than see a whole people living under the terror of an Act like the Rowlatt Act. It deals with effects, leaving the cause severely alone. It arms the police and the executive with arbitrary and demoralizing powers. An executive that asks for extraordinary powers is as a rule to be distrusted. Extraordinary

[1] *Vide* "Sir Sankaran Nair and Champaran", 27-8-1919.

powers are asked by those who wish to cover their inefficiency or inability to cope with an evil. It is like an unskilled surgeon wanting to use the knife where a lancet in a skilled hand would do equally well. Often extraordinary powers are taken to cover wrongs done by authority, as I fear was done by the Punjab Government in April. History would have been written differently if the Central Government had asked the Punjab Government to deal with the situation in the ordinary manner. It is said that in two places at least the Governor told the police that the latter would be held responsible if any disturbance took place in their jurisdiction. Believing then, as I do, that the Rowlatt Act is bad in every respect and that nothing bad can outlast honest effort, I entertain no misgivings about the Act being repealed long before the expiry of the time limit. But that honest effort during the suspension period consists in meetings, memorials and resolutions. I respectfully appeal to the leaders who have advised me to suspend civil resistance to do their duty. Sir Narayan Chandavarkar even said that method other than civil resistance were open to the people. Will he and the other leaders give the lead? In addition to their work, I suggest a memorial, after the style of the Congress-League Scheme Memorial[1], to be signed by thousands of people. Such memorial, as the late Mr. Ranade used to say, have an educative value and are quite useful for the purpose of focussing public opinion. Moreover, when civil resistance was started, I was told that it was premature, we had not exhausted all the other means at our disposal. I ventured to say we had. Adoption of the programme suggested by me avoids the possibility of a repetition of the charge of premature resumption of civil resistance, if unfortunately it has to be resumed. From every point of view, therefore, I feel that we should for the time being revert to the old method of agitation and education of public opinion, always insisting on speakers confining themselves to facts, avoiding declamation or inflammatory language. A proper explanatin of the Rowlatt Act is itself its severest condemnation.

Young India, 16-8-1919

[1] *Vide* Appendix Congress-League Address", 26-11-1917

224. LETTER TO V.S. SUNDARAM

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
August 17, 1919

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

Please write legibly. It is better to write a clerical hand than a fashionable hand.

You must recite some hymn, Sanskrit or Telugu, to send you to sleep. You must be ashamed to own a weak body.

When are you going to Miss Faering? I had a brief note from her. Tell her I am not writing in reply.

Have your people commenced to learn spinning?

I had your wire about Devdas. You may contribute articles to *The Hindu*, *Swadesh Mitran*, etc., on the progress of swadeshi and spinning as you saw it here. Do not write laudatory articels but mere facts. They are more eloquent than anyting else.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand : S.N. 3199

225. LETTER TO C. ROBERTS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
AHMEDABAD,
August 17, 1919

DEAR MR. ROBERTS[1],

I write this to you rather than to Mr. Montagu because I do not wish to worry him when he is already over-weighted with other worries and because I do not enjoy the privilege of knowing him so well as I have of knowing you.

When I was about to renew civil resistance, I felt I ought to send Mr. Montagu a personal cable[2] which I did. I have written to him too

[1] Charles Roberts, Under-Secretary of State for India; *vide* "Letter to C. Roberts", 24-8-1914

[2] *Vide* "Cable to E.S. Montagu", 24-6-1919

on the subject.[1] He sent a confidential reply to the cablegram through the Governor of Bombay. The reply strongly dissuaded me from resuming civil resistance and said that, if it was a mistake for me to have embarked upon it, it would be a crime to resume it. It added that I ought to know that the Act would not be repealed or withdrawn. So far as the "crime" is concerned I must commit it, if I am driven to it, and take the consequences. For I must frankly say that I remain unrepentant. It is my firm belief that nothing but civil resistance can replace criminal resisitance. And it is surprising that Mr. Montagu, with his very fine imagination, should not have seen the simple beauty of the absolute efficacy and the necessity of civil resistance. However, time will do its work and show that it was not civil resistance that was responsible for the circumscribed violence of the people in April. In the Punjab, the people were goaded into violence. In Ahmedabad, they went mad to think that one who had served them was arrested without reason. All the other parts of India remained perfectly calm. My admission of my mistake is limited to the underrating of the forces of evil pervading both the Government and the people.

What however pained me most was Mr. Montagu's message that I must know that Rowlatt Act was not going to be repealed. I know nothing of this absoluteness about the non-repeal of the Act. I know that I shall give all I have towards securing its repeal. It was conceived in unworthy distrust of the people; it was brought forth amid the universal opposition of Indian opinion and it was nurtured in repression. This is enough to condemn it. Does Mr. Montagu propose to inaugurate reforms in the midst of a people whose pride has been deeply wounded, whose opinion flouted and many of whom have been wrong[ly] tried and convicted? Is that a fit prelude to liberal reforms? Should they not be heralded by repeal of the Act?

And what is the Rowlatt Act? It is an Act from start to finish designed to rob the subject of his liberty without the slightest necessity for it. Revolutionary crime is (or was) admittedly confined to such a small area that it is an insult to the people to fling in their face a repressive measure like the Rowlatt Act.

I would therefore like to paraphrase Mr. Montagu's warning and say that, if it was folly to have passed the Rowlatt Act in the face

[1] *Vide* "Cable to E.S. Montagu", 24-6-1919

of Indian opposition, it is a crime to continue it, notwithstanding the persistence of such opposition.

Will you please read this letter to [Mr.] Montagu when you find he has leisure to listen to it?

Pray remember me to Lady Cecilia Roberts and tell her that both Mrs. Gandhi and I often think with gratefulness of her overwhelming kindness to us both during my sever illness in 1914.[1]

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the copy in Gandhiji's hand : S.N. 6806

226. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
August 17, 1919

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have your letter. You are unnecessarily reserved. I should know the whole situation. If they do not like your policy there need be no intrigue. They have a right to ask you to resign. If they did not mind your policy but wanted to put someone in by way of favouritism, it was despicable. I should like to know the truth. I do not want your invaluable services to be lost sight of. You and I belong to no party, we can but serve and follow truth as we know it. The two letters received from you do not clear the position. Thinking in these terms I would like you to remain on the British Committee so long as it is understood that you are not considered as belonging to one party or the other. Who is the lady to be the joint editor with Kelkar? You will see that I am saying nothing in *Young India* until I can firmly handle the subject. As it is I do not know the facts.

I share your joy that you are free from the heavy responsibility. Will you now find time to give me an occasional if not a regular contribution to *Young India*? You can be paid, if the briefs do not pour in as they ought [to] by this time. You have most of the poor sisters there.

[1] This was when Gandhiji spent a few months in London on his way home to India.

There is nothing new politically to report. You will read all my thought in my letters to Arundale and Abdul Aziz.[1]

With love to you both,

Yours,
BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

227. LETTER TO INDRA VIDYALANKAR[2]

BOMBAY,
Shravan Vad 6 [*August 17, 1919*]

DEAR INDRA,

I am cleaning up my office and I see there is a letter from you. I think I have replied to it. In case, however, you have not received the reply, please let me know and I shall try to write to you.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand : C.W. 4856. Courtesy : Chandragupta Vidyalankar

228. LETTER TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"[3]

BOMBAY,
August 18, 1919

THE EDITOR
THE TIMES OF INDIA
[BOMBAY]

SIR,

No possible exception can be taken to the impartial manner in which your South African correspondent has given a summary of the Indian position in the Transvaal in your issue of the 18th instant. He has put as fairly as it was possible for him to do both sides of the question.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G.S. Arundale", 4-8-1919 and "Letter to Abdul Aziz", 8-8-1919

[2] This item should be read after item 25

[3] This was reproduced in *Young India*, 20-8-1919, *The Hindu* and *New India*, dated 22-8-1919.

It is not the additional "brown burden on the top of the black one" which agitates the European Colonists in South Africa, but the crux of the whole question is, as your correspondent puts it, "that South Africa cannot be run economically with the Indian in it, and the white people who have made the country, cannot be expected to commit race suicide". This is not the problem that presents itself to the Boer living on the Veldt to whom the Indian trader is a blessing, nor to the European housewife in the big towns of the Transvaal who depends solely upon the Indian vegetable-vendor for the the vegetables brought to her door. But the problem presents itself in the manner put by your correspondent to the petty European trader who finds in the thrifty and resourceful Indian a formidable rival, and with his vote, which counts a great deal, and with his influence as a member of the ruling race, he has succeeded in making his own economic problem a race problem for South Africa. In reality, the problem is whether the petty trader for his selfish end is to be allowed to override every consideration of justice, fair play, Imperial policy and all that goes to make a nation good and great.

In support of the gradual but certain squeezing-out process, what has been called the Smuts-Gandhi agreement has been pressed into service. Now that agreement is embodied in two letters and two only of the 30th June, 1914:[1] the first one addressed to me on behalf of General Smuts by Mr. Gorges, Secretary for the Interior, and the second my acknowledgment of it bearing the same date. The agreement, as the letters conclusively show, is an agreement on questions which were the subject of civil—in the correspondence described as passive—resistance. The settlement stipulates only for an extension—never a restriction—of existing rights, and, as it was intended only to cover questions arising out of civil resistance, it left open all the other questions. Hence the reservation in my letter of the 30th June, viz:

> As the Minister is aware, some of my countrymen have wished me to go further. They are dissatisfied that trade licences, laws of the different Provinces, the Transvaal Gold Law, the Transvaal Law 3 of 1885, have not been altered so as to give them full rights of residence, trade and ownership of land. Some of them are dissatisfied that full interprovincial migration is not permitted, and some are dissatisfied that, on the marriage question, the Relief

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E.M. Gorges", 30-6-1914and Appendix Letter from E.M. Gorges", 30-6-1914.

Bill goes no further than it does.

In this correspondence, there is not a word about the Indian settlers not getting trade licences or [not] holding fixed property in the mining or any other area. And the Indians had a perfect right to apply for and get as many trade licences as they could secure and as much fixed property as they could hold, whether through forming registered companies or through mortgages. After a strenuous fight for eight years, it was not likely that I would give away any legal rights, and if I did, the community I had the honour to represent would naturally and quite properly have dismissed me as an unworthy, if not a traitorous, representative.

But there is a third letter, totally irrelevant considered as part of the agreement, which has been used for the curtailment of trade rights. It is my letter of the 7th July addressed to Mr. Gorges.[1] The whole tone of it shows that it is purely a personal letter, setting forth only my individual views about "vested rights in connection with the Gold Law and Township Amendment Act". I have therein stated definitely that I do not wish to restrict the future action of my countrymen and I have simply recorded the definition of "vested rights" I discussed with Sir Benjamin Robertson on the 4th March, 1914, saying that by "vested rights I understand the right of an Indian and his successors to live and trade in the township in which he was living and trading, no matter how often he shifts his residence or business from place to place in the same township".[2] This is the definition on which the whole of the theory of evasion of law and breach of faith has been based. Apart from the question of irrelevance of the letter, I claim that it could not be used, even if it could be admitted as part of the agreement, in the manner it has been. As I have already stated on previous occasions, there was a prospect of an adverse interpretation of the Gold Law as to trade licences, and there was the tangible difficulty in getting land or leases of buildings and it was by the most strenuous efforts that Indians were able within Gold Areas to retain their foothold. I was anxious to protect the existing traders and their successors *even though the legal interpretation of the law might be adverse to the Indian claim.* The vested right, therefore, referred to in

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E.M. Gorges", 7-7-1914

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Benjamin Robertson", 4-3-1914

my letter of the 7th July was a right created in spite of the law. And it was this right that had to be protected in the administration of the then existing laws. Even if, therefore, my said letter can be incorporated in the agreement, by no canon of interpretation that I know can it be said to prevent the Indians *morally* (for that is the meaning of the charge of breach of faith) from getting new trade licences in virtue of the law of the land. Indians openly and in a fair fight gained in their favour a legal decision to the effect that they could obtain trade licences against tender of the licence fee even within the Gold Area. To this they were perfectly morally entitled. There cannot be any question of a legal breach. Their trade rivals would long ago have made short work of any legal breach. Lastly, supposing that the law was adverse to the Indian claim, my definition could not be pleaded to bar any agitation for amendment of the law, for the whole of the settlement, in the nature of it, was of a temporary character; and the Indians, as definitely stated in my letter of the 30th June, "could not be expected to rest content until full civic rights had been conceded". The whole of the plea, therefore, of breach of faith is, I venture to submit, an utterly dishonest and shameless piece of tactics, which ought not to be allowed to interfere with a proper adjustment of the question.

M.K. GANDHI

The Times of India, 19-8-1919

229. LETTER TO P.S. TO GOVERNOR, BOMBAY

LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
August 19, 1919

DEAR MR. COWIE [1],

I see from the papers that His Excellency will be in Bombay tomorrow. When I last had the pleasure of waiting on him, he told me that he would grant me another interview, this time for the discussion of swadeshi. This is, therefore, merely to serve as a reminder to His Excellency. I am in Bombay till Friday next and I want to be absent

[1] Private Secretary to Sir George Lloyod, Governor of Bombay

practically the whole of next week if I can. Naturally, however, I shall suit myself to His Excellency's convenience. If, therefore, I can secure the appointment before I leave Bombay, I should feel very grateful.[1]

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of a handwritten copy : S.N. 6815

230. ANOTHER SCANDAL

It is my unpleasant duty to present another batch of cases to the reader from the Punjab which reveal a state of things that is utterly unbearable. It is to be wished that H.E. the Viceroy will end the growing anxiety by appointing the promised Committee of Inquiry without delay. Mr. Montagu has said from his place in the House of Commons that at least two out of the three judges of the Punjab Special Tribunals were judges of the High Court of three years, standing. The public have been recently informed that, where the members were not High Court judges, they were eligible for that high post. The poignancy of the sorrow that the atrocious injustices, such as I have had the painful duty of exposing, have caused is increased by the knowledge that the perpetrators of these injustices are judges in whose judgments the people have been accustomed to put the utmost trust. This unevenness of temperament can only be accounted for by the supposition that the trained judicial intellect of the judges must have suffered temporary aberration by the events of the Punjab. The desire to secure for Englishmen almost absolute immunity from physical harm from the "natives", by inflicting exemplary punishments on someone or other, appears to have been the master passion overruling discretion, wisdom and justice. It is not possible for me to understand the judgements that have come under my notice on any other hypothesis. These reflections are caused by a perusal of the judgement and the evidence in the Hafizabad case. The full text of the judgement and the evidence material to the case to be examined will be found printed elsewhere in this issue. During the whole course of my practice of law, by no means inconsiderable, extending over an unbroken period of nearly twenty years, I have never come across cases in which capital punishment has been so lightly pronounced on

[1] Cowie replied on August 22, stating that the Governor was preoccupied with a conference on housing but would see Gandhiji before leaving Bombay, if possible.

the flimsiest evidence taken down in a most perfunctory manner, as appears to me to have been done in the Hafizabad case.

The case has been sent to me in regard to only one of the nineteen accused tried, viz., Karamchand, the 19th accused, a student of the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College. But I have no hesitation in saying that there was no evidence before the Court to warrant a conviction against any of the accued for waging war. The judges had a choice of offences for conviction. The accused were charged under Sections 121, 147, 307, 486 (?), 149 of the Indian Penal Code. Section 147 relates to rioting, carrying with it a maximum penalty of two years' imprisonment. Section 149 renders members of an unlawful assembly liable to the same penalty as any other member thereof. Section 307 relates to attempts to murder, carrying the maximum penalty of ten years. Section 486 appears to be an erroneous copy; it has no relevance to the evidence led before the court. It was thus easy enough to convict on any of the milder sections if the judges had so chosen. They however "scented" war in every act of the crowd during those three or four days of April.

Whilst therefore it is clear to me, as I hope it will be clear to every impartial student of the case, that the charge of "waging war against the King" is unsustainable in the absence of the specific evidence against the other accused, it is difficult to form a conclusive opinion as to their cases on the minor charges. I cannot however conceal from myself or the reader the very strong suspicion that the full text of the evidence[1] will not disclose any ground for the statement of the judges to the effect that "the orators had incited the crowd to take immediate and vigorous steps to overthrow the Government by raising as much opposition to it as possible". Nowhere have I seen any attempt during those days of April to "overthrow the Government".

But I must confine myself to the case of Karamchand. These are the full remarks in the judgment about him:

> Karamchand, No. 19, was peculiarly guilty. He brought down the news of the Lahore riots. He gave a most garbled account of it. And by representing that the Lahore crowd had succeeded in beating the military, he gave the Hafizabad crowd reason to believe that their insurrection would be successful.

[1] The report of evidence in the case Gandhiji had received from Karamchand's father; vide "Letter to Ishardas Khanna", 20-8-1919.

"We think," the judges proceed, "that these four men deserve the extreme penalty." The three men who are bracketed together with him for capitalpunishment are supposed to have been among the active assailants of Lieutenant Tatam. Not so Karamchand, as is clear from the passage from the judgment just quoted.

Let us look at the evidence against the accused. Two of the prosecution witnesses who were on the train that carried Lieutenant Tatam have given only identifying evidence. They are unable to say that Karamchand himself did anything at all. Prosecution witness No. 5 first identified Karamchand 18 or 20 days after the 14th April. Witness No. 6 identified him 10 or 18 days after the said date. Both the witnesses, it is admitted, were utter strangers to Karamchand. The gravamen of the charge against Karamchand is, not that he did anything on the 14th, but that he brought some news from Lahore on the 11th. This is the exclusive evidence about Karamchand given by the Head Master of the D.B. School:

> Karamchand is a student of the D.A.V. College, Lahore. I saw him on 11th evening. He was talking about the riots of Lahore that the people are being fired upon with a machine-gun at Lahori Gate are not retreating.

(I have taken the sentence exactly as it occurs in the original copy before me).

> He was going to say more but I stopped him. I advised him that it is not good to say such things at Hafizabad. He was my old pupil. 6 or 7 people were present. This was outside the town on footpath. He was excited. I left on the 12th.
>
> Cross-examination . . . Accused does not belong to Hafizabad. He went away when I warned him. I had not asked him waht had happened at Lahore.

Prosecution witness 27 gave evidence corroborating that of the Head Master. This is all the evidence against Karamchand. It stands out clear as daylight that Karamchand's alleged talk about the Lahore riots took place on the 11th, that he spoke outside the town on a footpath in the presence of 6 or 7 people and that he stopped as soon as his old schoolmaster advised him to do so and went away; and that he does not belong to Hafizabad. I hold that the judges' paraphrase of the above evidence is totally unwarranted. There is nothing in all the evidence about Karamchand to show that the crowd near the railway station on the 14th was the same as the 6 or 7 people before whom he talked outside the town on the 11th about the Lahore riots. One fails to see what peculiarity the judges found in Karamchand's

case. Let me note here that the Head Master and the corroborating witness give us no information regarding Karamchand's doing or whereabouts on the 14th April. Even if, therefore, Karamchand was present on the 14th April at the station, so far as the evidence enables one to see, he was a silent spectator of the cowardly conduct of the mob. But Karamchand says he was not there. He says he went to his village on the 12th. He produced four witnesses to prove that he was in his village, Udhoki, on the 14th April. I venture to suggest that there is just as much probability of Karamchand and his witnesses having told the truth as there is of the two witnesses for the prosecution being mistaken about the identity of Karamchand, regard being had to the fact that they had never seen him before, that they were taken to the jail to identify him 10 or 18 days after the event and especially when they never saw Karamchand doing anything active. Add to this the fact that the prosecution witnesses were only for a few minutes in the midst of the crowd and whilst, according to the evidence of the Crown, stones were being thrown at the first-class compartment. It is not justice to sentence a man to be hanged on the very inconclusive testimony as to identity. Karamchand's father gives me further details to prove that the former was at his village on the 14th April. Naturally I am unable to make use of this…extraneous, though important…evidence to prove his innocence. The father says in his letter that Karamchand's sentence has been commuted to 10 years' rigorous imprisonment.[1] He is naturally not satisfied with it. I hope that His Honour the Lieut-Governor of the Punjab will study the case personally and, if he does, I doubt not that Karamchand will be discharged. I hope, too, that his co-accused who were sentenced to be hanged are at least alive, so that their case may be reviewed by the forthcoming Committee of Inquiry.

We, who are living in this Presidency, cannot but contrast the Punjab proceedings with those at present going on in Ahmedabad. Nothing that was done in Hafizabad could surpass the wicked and wanton cruelty of the mad mob at Viramgam. And yet this tribunal, I am thankful to be able to note, has carried on the enquiry with judicial calmness, giving every opportunity to the counsel for the defence to bring every fact to light and have not found it in their hearts to impose the capital punishment on a single person in that case. So far as I know, its judgments have not provoked much hostile criticism,

[1] The term was later reduced to one year; *vide* "Letter to P.S. to Lt. Governor, Punjab", 22-8-1919.

whereas almost every judgment of the Punjab tribunals that has come to light has been subjected to the severest comment. Only the promised Committee of Inquiry can solve the discrepancy. Meanwhile, I hope the public will demand full and unconditional discharge in cases of palpable injustice like that of poor Karamchand.

Young India, 20-8-1919

231. LETTER TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"[1]

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
August 20, 1919

THE EDITOR
THE TIMES OF INDIA

SIR,

You will perhaps permit me to reply to "Pennsylvanian" 's well-meant advice to me. I am aware that many Englishmen honestly hold the opinion "Pennsylyanian" does, and I thank him for providing me with an opportunity for removing some of the misunderstanding that exists about satyagraha.

"Pennsylvanian" has commended to me the example of his illustrious countryman, Abraham Lincoln. I have endeavoured to the best of my ability to translate into my life one of his sayings, namely,

> Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith, let us, to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it.[2]

"Pennsylyanian" rightly insists on a "moral revolution". Now, satyagraha is that and nothing else. Civil resistance is but a part, though a necessary part, of it. Its root meaning is "insistence on truth at all cost". Life-satyagrahis are under the pledge of absolute adherence to truth, non-violence, poverty and chastity. An institution is at present in existence at which practically the whole of the programme sketched by "Pennsylyanian" is being carried out.[3]

[1] This letter, also published in *Young India* And *New India* of 23-8-1919, was written in reply to an open letter in The Times of India, a Few days earlier, in which the writer, "Pennsylvanian", had appealed to Gandhiji to concentrate his efforts on the improvement of soc ety by a ceaseless propaganda for social education and revenue reform. For the text, *vide* Appendix "Letter from "Pennsylvanian", 13-8-1919

[2] These are the concluding words of Licoln's address at Cooper Institute, New York City on February 27, 1860.

[3] The reference is obviously to the Satyagraha Ashram founded by Gandhiji at Sabarmati in 1917.

English and American friends have visited it. I invite "Pennsylvanian" to visit it and report upon it to the public. He will find there that men and women belonging to all stations in life are living on terms of perfect equality, that the unlettered receive literary education in so far as the daily toil permits it, and that the lettered members do not hesitate to take up the pickaxe and the shovel. He will find there that, besides agriculture, the inmates are under the obligation to learn the art of spinning and weaving. By exploring the records of its past, he will discover that its members helped with medicine the people of the surrounding villages during the influenza epidemic, that they helped the famine committee to distribute grain among the poor, that they distributed again for the same agency several thousand rupees against manufacture by the needy weavers and thus added to the production in the country, that through their labour several women, who were but the other day earning nothing, are able, by spinning cotton during their leisure hours, to earn a few coppers daily. In short, he will find that [some] of the items in the comprehensive programme skethced by "Pennsylvanian" are being worked there to the utmost extent of the capacity of the satyagrahis. This is the silent moral revolution going on in our midst. It suffers by advertisement and it is not without some hesitation that I have placed before the public the constructive work that is being done by life-satyagrahis.

Let me add further that the advent of satyagraha has, to my knowledge, weaned many an anarchist from his blood-thirstydoctrine. He has found that secret societies and methods of secret murder have brought nothing but a military and economic burden on this unhappy land, that it has tightened the coil of the Criminal Investigation Department, and that it has demoralized and wrecked the lives of hundreds of youths who have been led astray by it. Satyagraha has presented the rising generation with a new hope, an open road and an infallible remedy for most ills of life. It has armed that generation with an indestructible and mathcless force which anyone may wield with impunity. Satyagraha tells the Youth of India, self-suffering is the only sure road to salvation . . . economic, political and spiritual.

For the most part, satyagraha *is* "evil resistance" and "civil assistance". But sometimes it *has* to be "civil resistance". Here I must call to my assistance another illustrious countryman of "Pennsylyanian", Henry Thoreau. He asks,

> Must the citizen ever for a moment, or in the least degree, resign his conscience to the legislators?

He answers,

I think that we should be men first and subjects afterwards. It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for the law so much as for the right.[1]

I think that the position taken up by Thoreau is unassailable. The only question is that of the remedy to be applied for vindicating the rights of conscience. The remedy in vogue is that of inflicitng violence on those who wish to wound your conscience. Thoreau in his immortal eassy shows that civil disobedience, not violence, is the true remedy. In civil disobedience, the resister suffers the consequences of disobedience. This was what Danial did when he disobeyed the law of the Medes and Persians. That is what John Bunyan[1] did and that is what the raiyats have done in India from time immemorial. It is the law of our being. Violence is the law of the best in us. Self-suffering, i.e., civil resistance, is the law of the man in us. It is rarely that the occasion for civil resistance arises in a well-ordered State. But when it does, it becomes a duty that cannot be shirked by one who counts his honour, i.e., conscience, above everything. Rowlatt Act is legislation that affects the conscience of thousands of us, and I respectfully suggest that an appeal should be addressed by Englishmen to the Government that they withdraw an Act that hurts the self-respect of the nation and that has roused such unanimous opposition, rather than that I should be asked to refrain from civil resistance in respect of it.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Times of India, 22-8-1919

232. LETTER TO ISHARDAS KHANNA

LABURNUM ROAD,

BOMBAY,

August 20, 1919

DEAR SIR,

I have your letter with the judgment and the evidence in the case of your son Karamchand. Please let me have copy of the petition submitted to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor. Why did you not give evidence in the case to support the statement that your son was not in Hafizabad on the 14th April? Please send me also copy of the full text of evidence. Please let me know also what happened to the three other who were sentenced to be hanged.

Yours sincerely,

From the typewritten office copy : S.N. 6814

233. LETTER TO LALA LAJPAT RAI

August 20, 1919

DEAR LALA LAJPAT RAI,

I was delighted to receive your letter. I considered it to be so valuable that I have published it. It has served to remove misconceptions about your views. The letter was unsigned. I considered that it was an oversight. I would like you, if you will, to develop your views and give me a detailed letter for publication.[3] It is to me intolerable that one like you should have to remain outside India at the present moment.[4] In my opinion, the place of every true Indian is in India. The doctrine of satyagraha, i.e., resistance without violence, requires as much strength as it can receive. In my opinion, it will not only solve India's problems but it will solve the world's problems.

I take it that you get *Young India* regularly.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary Courtesy : Narayan Desai

234. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[BOMBAY,]

Shravan Vad 9 [*August 20, 1919*]

Why should anyone take offence at the publication of Lala Lajpat Rai's letter[3]? It was written to be published. The letter adds to his stature. We, on our part, should patiently listen to any criticism that may be made.

Lalaji's letter was really meant to be published. What it says about Hardayal is public knowledge. Men have grown so timid that they fear even their shadows. I think, by publishing the letter, I have opened the door a little for Lalaji's return to India. In a very short time, satyagraha will have ceased to be a purely Gujarati word.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

235. LETTER TO LALLUBHAI SAMALDAS MEHTA[1]

LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
Shravan Vad 10, 1975 [*August 20, 1919*]

DEAR FRIEND,

I have not troubled you any time, but today I cannot help it. Perhaps you are not altogether a stranger to the case of Manilal Jadavji Vyas. He is a subject of the Rajkot State. He had a business in Karachi. He signed the satyagraha pledge in March or April. In May, the Commissioner at Karachi deported him from British India under the Act of 1864. The man wrote to me and appealed to the Bombay Government. The latter has confirmed the order. You will find this action of the Government commented upon in *Young India*. I take it that you read it. If you don't get a copy, let me know and I shall see to it that you do. If you choose, you can do much in this matter. I should like you to.

From a handwritten copy of the Gujarati original : S. N. 6810

236. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR[2]

LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
August 21 [1919]

DEAR DEWAN BAHADUR,

During the suspension of civil resistance, I feel that there should be sustained agitation to remove the Rowlatt Act. I suggest that reasoned memorial may be sent by leaders either to the Viceroy or to Mr. Montagu. I am moving the leaders here. But some of them think that even to send a memorial may jeopardize reforms! Will Madras lead?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

237. LETTER TO LADY TATA

LABURNUM ROAD,
[BOMBAY,]
August 21, 1919

DEAR LADY TATA,

No apology was necessary regarding the spinning-wheel. I am sorry you remained without one so long. If you would send your car about noon (Friday), I shall send one machine and some dressed cotton with Govind Baboo who will be able to give you a few tips about spinning and keeping the machine in order, if you could give him a little time.

I shall treasure that story about the Governor. It is too good to be hawked about. You need not therefore fear publicity. God willing, your prophecy shall come true.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

238. LETTER TO DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, BOMBAY

BOMBAY,
August 21, 1919

DEAR SIR,

I had occasion to visit Godhra last week and, during my stay there, to visit the Stewart Library. I found that several newspapers were regarded as undesirable for being placed on the library table. I venture to suggest that the list of undesirable newspapers is quite arbitrary. I find, for instance, that *Young India* is prohibited. Now, that paper is today being published under my close supervision and I make bold [to] say that it is a journal which could be placed in the hands of a child. It was prohibited on the 19th June, 1917. Since that day it has undergone many vicissitudes. There is *The Mahratta*[1] alsounder the ban. It is one of the oldest established English weeklies largely read in Indian circles. The *Gujarati* again is one of the oldest Gujarati papers. One may not agree with the policy of these journals,

but I cannot help saying that it is a serious matter to withhold a journal from a pubic library for its policy. I have simply chosen a few examples from the list. So far as I know, not one of the newspapers, listed can be objected to on any defensible ground. In my opinion, assuming that there should be censorship as to the periodicals, the matter should be placed in the hands of a Library Committee chosen by the local residents, of which your local representative may be an ex-officio member, with the strict understanding that a newspaper or a book may be excluded only if, in the opinion of the Committee, it offends public morals.

I trust that you will give this very important matter your earnest and early consideration.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 17-9-1919

239. LETTER TO P.S. TO LT.-GOVERNOR, PUNJAB

LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
August 22, 1919

TO

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
HIS HONOUR THE LIEUT.-GOVERNOR OF THE PUNJAB
LAHORE

DEAR SIR,

It is my painful duty to bring to His Honour's notice another case of patent failure of justice. I refer to the case of Karamchand, one of the accused in the Hafizabad batch. I understand that His Honour was pleased to commute the death sentence to ten years' imprisonment and subsequently ten years to one year, but in a case where there is not a tittle of supportable evidence against the accused, it would be agreed that nothing but full discharge can meet the ends of justice. I therefore venture to commend this case for further attention and trust that His Honour will be pleased to order young Karamchand's discharge. I enclose herewith copy of Young India

containing my analysis[1] of the judgment, together with the full text of it and the evidence bearing on Karamchand's case. I understand that young Karamchand has been recently married and that his father is broken-hearted over his son's unmerited incarceration.

Yours faithfully,
M.K. GANDHI

Encl. : 1, (Copy of *Young India*)

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 6819

240. LETTER TO P.S. TO LORD WILLINGDON

LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
August 22, 1919

DEAR SIR,

I write this for submission to His Excellency on a somewhat personal matter of urgency.

Probably the name of Miss Esther Faering, of Danish extraction and, up to recently, if not still, working as Superintendent of a Girls' School belonging to the mission in Tirucoilur, has been brought to His Excellency's notice. It was probably two years ago that she, along with another Danish lady[1], visted my Ashram at Ahmedabad. Both the ladies took a special fancy for the Ashram and its ideals. Miss Faering has since then met me three or four times and she has visted the Ashram, I believe, once after her first visit. She has been a fairly regular correspondent and I believe she is attached to me like a child to its father, simply because, in her opinion, I represent in action the ideals she would fain enforce in her own life and is ever trying to. She loves India as her own motherland and I know it would be a terrible wrench to her if she is ever banished from India, as she dreads she might. Latterly, it seems she has been a suspect, very much shadowed. It was her intention some time ago to leave the Danish mission, if she could. I think I succeeded in weaning her from the desire. I told her that it was her duty to fulfil her contract with the mission, so long as she was permitted to do so. I have just heard that she is no longer in the mission. If this is true and if she is permitted, I would be pleased to take her into the Ashram where she would be associated with me in

my non-political work. I believe her to be as truthful and straight a person as is to be found anywhere. She ever lives in the fear of God and does her best to live a Christian life. As her desire is to pass her life mostly in the midst of the people of India, I advised her to become naturalized. I know she took steps in the direction and I revised for her the petition for naturalization. But I do not know whether she has sent it. I can only hope that His Excellency will meet her and form the same opinion about her that I have. If any undertaking is required about her, it can be easily given. If an assurance is necessary, I wish to assure His Excellency that I have not the slightest desire to avail myself of her services in the political field. As probably Lord Willingdon is aware, the largest part of my work is social and moral or religious. My most intimate associates take hardly any part in my political work. The inmates of the Ashram are engaged in agricultural, industrial and educaional work, and if Miss Faering comes to the Ashram, she will take part in these activities, and if need be, I will undertake, in no other.

Miss Faering knows nothing about this letter but I am sending her a copy for the consolation that I am not unmindful of my duty to her as a privileged friend, as also for her endorsement of the undertaking I am promising herein.

I tender my apology for troubling His Excellency on a matter of a partly personal nature.

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of a copy : S. N. 6823

241. LETTER TO C.F. ANDREWS

LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY
August 22, 1919

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have most disquieting news about Miss Faering from Sundaram. I asked him specially to go and see her. He has been there and he tells me she is no longer in the Danish mission and that she is in distress lest she might have to leave India. It would be almost death

to her if she is forced to do so. Here is a copy of my letter to Lord Willingdon. I feel most keenly about her. Will you not immediately go to Madras and do what you can to prevent her banishment?

I am more and more becoming convinced of the correctness of the non-violence doctrine. The greater the possession of brute force, the greater coward does the possessor become. Fancy moving the contemptible machinery of the C.I.D. to watch over the doings of one of the most harmless persons living. I would be riddled by bullets a hundred times rather than, in trying to be bullet-proof, be party to injuring innocent people, whether in body or mind.

Today our Government stops at nothing. It does not require a philosopher to understand the utter futility of physical force. But you may not agree with my conclusions or inferences. I do want you to agree with me that it is just as important to do our best to protect Miss Faering from harm as it is for me to resist the Rowlatt Act with my life and for you to be at Shantiniketan.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

Enclo : 1

From a photostat of a typewritten copy : S. N. 6822

242. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
August 24, 1919

MY DEAR CHILD,

Sundaram's letter about you had made me very gloomy. My heart goes out to you in your sorrow. But I know that if we trust in God when we are weakest, somehow He makes us strong. Deep down in me therefore there is the feeling that all would be well with you no matter what happens to you. I could not, however, restrain myself from writing to the Governor. Here is a copy of my letter[1] to him. If you are free, you would come down at once to the Ashram. I want to write to Mr. Bittmann but I shall await reply to this. You will know the rest from my letter to the Governor. If it does not represent the situation correctly in any way, you will please let me know. You will

be an unworthy child if you will not let me know your pecuniary wants.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also my Dear Child, p. 37

243. LETTER TO P.S. TO GOVERNOR, BOMBAY

AS AT LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMEDVI,
BOMBAY
August 25, 1919

DEAR MR. COWIE,

I see that I may not get an interview with H.E. for some time.[1] I am however anxious to get some pronouncement on swadeshi from H.E. as early as possible. I, therefore, propose to present for H. E.'s consideration my conception of and arguments on swadeshi. I do hope he will make time for reading it and, if possible, be pleased to comply with my request made at the end of the argument.

SWADESHI

Swadeshi as conceived by me consists in producing cloth enough for the wants of India and in distributing it; and for the purpose of stimulating home production, it consists in inducing people to pledge themselves to the use of swadeshi cloth only, the right being retained where necessary to continue the use of foreign cloth at present in possession of the pledgee/votary. The swadeshi is conceived only as a religious and an economic necessity; and although it is fraught with political consequences of a lofty, moral type in order that all may take part in it, the swadeshi propaganda is restricted to the religious and economic aspects only.

Swadeshi goods can be produced either through spinning and weaving mills or by hand-spinning and hand-weaving. At the present moment, we are concentrating on hand-spinning and hand-weaving.

ARGUMENT

We are so doing because the need of the peasantry, i.e., 73 p.c. of the population, is an industry supplementary to agriculture. This population has nearly four months in the year paractically idle on its

hands. A humdred years ago, the majority of the women of India spun yarn either for profit or for pleasure and thousands upon thousands of professional weavers wove cloth enough for home consumption. Whether the same can be done today, or not, it is unnecessary to inquire. It is beyond question that if these millions of peasants can be induced to take to spinning and weaving, it will materially decrease the economic drain and enable them to supplement their earnings. My own experience in several centres and among hundreds of women tells me that they are glad enough to revive the occupation of spinning and to get a few coppers. I know that they were a blessing to many poor women of Vijapur during the late famine. About 150 women, in that village alone, are today spinning about half a maund of yarn per day and getting on an average three pice each, enough for them to buy milk for their children. I consider hand-spinning and hand-weaving as an automatic famine insurance. Only last Friday I was surprised to find Miss Latham of East Khandesh telling me that the women of that district were pining for some home occupation that would enable them to turn a few honest coppers. All that is necessary is to provide them with cheap spinning-wheels and with dressed cotton. Arrangements have already been made on a limited scale to supply both these things. Both men and women are taking up the idea eagerly, but the thing can move far more rapidly if the movement receives patronage from high places.

REQUEST

I, therefore, request as follows :

1. H. E. may be pleased to give us a letter for publication approving of the swadeshi movement and especially of the introduction of hand-spinning and hand-weaving.

2. The Registrar of Co-operative Societies may be authorized to encourage hand-spinning and hand-weaving and devise means therefor.

3. Collectors and other officials may be advised to encourage the movement and especially to encourage the cultivators to take up hand-spinning and hand-weaving.

4. And if it is not a presumption, I would respectfully ask H.E. on my behalf to secure Lady George Lloyd's patronage for my spinning classes. Several titled ladies are, with a view to encouraging the industry among the poor classes, taking spinning lessons. I would

consider it an honour to be allowed to present a spinning-wheel to Her Excellency and to send her a lady teacher or to give her the lessons myself. I may mention that the art of spinning is incredibly simple to learn.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten copy : S.N. 6826

244. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

[*After August 25, 1919*]

MY DEAR CHILD,

You have been writing fairly regularly but I have been unable to do so. You know the reason why.

The pain I suffered was really nothing. Chhotalal made more of it than was deserved. I am taking all reasonable care of the body.

I take it that there is no hurry about your giving a final answer to the Board or Mr. Bittmann. Yours is a difficult case. I am most anxious that you should be absolutely true and faithful to the Board and that they should not in any way feel that you had done anything unworthy. Shall I write to Mr. Bittmann (am I spelling his name correctly? I have not your letter by me) even as I wrote to the Governor?[3] Your service to India should be rendered as a true Dane and a Christian. You are serving because your Christianity prompts you to do so. And it is not enough that you feel so, it is necessary that your people should realize it through your love, humility and nobility. I do not know how best it can be done. Anyway your letters to them should be gentle, true and charitable . . . never harsh, bitter or reproachful. After all, yours in a way is a rebellion and it can only be justified by success in the religious sense of the term, even as Daniel's and Bunyan's were justified.

I am glad you are keeping well. Are you comfortable? You will be a bad child if you fail to express your wants to me. If you are in need of money, you will not hesitate to tell me so.

It is a strange phenomenon—everybody wanting to learn English. You should satisfy their desire within bounds. Do tell me a little more fully as to who wants it.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child*, pp. 38-9

245. SIR SANKARAN NAIR AND CHAMPARAN

The argument on either side . . . his colleagues on the one and Sir Sankaran himself on the other . . . is the same as for Kaira. Sir Sankaran has argued that the bureaucracy took action only when it was moved by the driving force of the Congress, in other words, educated Indians. His colleagues have argued that the bureaucracy has been ever vigilant of the interests of the masses whom educated Indians have never respresented and for whom they have cared little. Further, the case for bureaucracy, so far as Kaira is concerned, is that, in the first place, they did nothing at all for the cultivators because they did not believe in their grievance, and secondly, if it be argued that something was done, it was done not because the Hon'ble Gokuldas and other educated Indians, and in the last stages, Mr. Gandhi intervened, but because it was what they would have done without any such intervention. In the Champaran case, the grievance is admitted, but it is stated on behalf of bureaucracy that Mr. Gandhi's intervention did not in any way affect the course of action. Sir Sankaran Nair's contention in both the cases is that whatever was done by the bureaucracy was wrung from them by the strenuous effort of educated Indians who have ever held the interests of the masses dear to their hearts.

I hope I have been able to show clearly that the grievance of the Kaira cultivators was real, and that whatever was given was after a very tough fight, and that the smallness of the relief granted was evidence of the smallness of the bureaucratic mind. In Kaira, again, the grievance was not of long standing and there was callous indifference even at the fountainhead. Lord Willingdon, well-intentioned himself, allowed himself to be ruled by his unbending councillors who were immediately concerned with the Kaira affair. My task, therefore, in dealing with Kaira was easy enough. In Champaran, the grievance was old. The contest was three-cornered, in which tremendous interests were arrayed against the *raiyat.* But I am happy to be able to bear testimony to the fact that the head of the Government, Sir Edwad Gait, was a strong man, who ruled instead of being ruled by his councillors and who did not hesitate to use his strength on behalf of the *raiyats* to the best of his ability. Had there been any other or less sympathetic or less strong ruler, the course of history would have taken a different, and a tragic, turn. The consequences would have been disastrous. It is

therefore, painful for me to criticize the Bihar Government Note on Champaran in answer to Sir Sankaran Nair's minute of dissent. They do not deny the grievance, but they claim that they were waiting in order to be able to redress the grievance for the result of the settlement operations they had undertaken and that my intervention was practically of no consequence. My position in dealing with the matter is rendered difficult by reason of my having been a member of the Committee of Inquiry. I may not make use of records which were placed before the Committee by the Government, but which naturally have not been published as part of the Committee's report. I must confine myself, therefore, to the published reports only. The Bihar Note makes much of the settlement operations. I venture to submit that the settlement operations had little to do with the very large issues involved. According to the Bangal Tenancy Act, which is applicable to Bihar, these operations automatically take place at stated intervals with a view to regulating the enhancement of rent payable by each individual tenant to the permanent holder. The permanent settlement of Bengal has brought little permanence to the *raiyats* amongst whom the vast permanent holdings are parcelled out. In Champaran, the majority of permanent holders are European planters. They are like Rajas; although they are not clothed by law with any civil or criminal jurisdiction over the *raiyats*—their tenants—they succeed in exercising practically both jurisdictions over the objectly helpless tenantry of Champaran. In this, they differ in no wise from Indian permanent holders. But, as I said in one of my earliest notes[1] submitted to the Government, in the course of my independent investigation, "whilst there can be no doubt that the latter (meaning the planters) have inherited a vicious system, they with their trained minds and superior position have reduced it to an exact science." These landlords have been given by the Bengal Tenancy Act the right, under stated circumstances, to enhance rents, with an equal right to the tenant to seek reduction under certain other circumstances. as might be well imagined, reduction would be a rare thing. Enhancement is an actuality haunting the tenant throughout his life. And the settlement officer's chief business is to revise these rents, re-survey the plots occupied by each tenant and to investigate some of the disputes between landlord and tenants incidental to the tenancy. Beyond this, the settlement officer cannot go. He had no jurisdiction to investigate or decide upon any of the most important issues that were before the Champaran Committee for decision. My own investigation was

confined only to grievances that were common to the majority of the Champaran *raiyats* regarding which no settlement operations were necessary, because no individual investigation was required or called for. These grievances forced themselves on my notice as soon as I set my foot in Champaran, and I was not there many weeks before I had overwhelming evidence to prove them. The chiefest of them was practically of a hundred years' standing. It had reduced the *raiyats* to the position of mere serfs. This was the indigo grievance. It was called the system of *Tinkathia* cultivation of indigo under which the *raiyats* were obliged to set apart a certain portion of their holding chosen by the landlord on which he had to grow indigo and later any other crop that the landlord required him to grow, and this he had to sell to his landlord at a price which hardly paid him for his labour. Let the report of the Committee speak upon it :

> The conditions under which indigo is grown by the tenants for the factories has in the past been the cause of disputes on several occasions, and though we do not consider it necessary to enter into the history of these disputes, we cannot explain the causes of the present unrest without giving some account of the system. In essentials, it does not appear to have varied during the last 100 years.[2]

During these hundred years, whenever the grievance became unbearable, the *raiyats* sought relief by open violence. Each time there was rioting, there was only a patchwork done. The violence made their position, as a matter of fact, much worse than before. The planters were able to bring the armed authority of law to their aid to quell it and the grievance which gave rise to violence was almost totally forgotten. Sometimes punitive police was imposed upon the *raiyats*, and the only consolation that the latter were able to take for their madness was a little rise in the price they received for indigo. But the forced growing of indigo and all the misery that it meant, continued without abatement, and the hold of the planters upon the *raiyats* grew tighter. And when they found that violence was useless, they tried to resort to law courts with as little success as attended their efforts at rioting. Sometimes they would get an equitable ruling, but in the unequal struggle they were bound to be worsted. With the unliminted resources of the planters, the slender purse of the *raiyats* had a poor chance. The records of the law courts of Champaran are there any day to support my statement. The settlement officer could see or say nothing regarding this double failure. I state with all the emphasis that I can command that the stroy of the last hundred years

of the Champaran *raiyats* is also the story of the failure of the authorities either to understand the inwardness of the situation or to grapple with it. Every *raiyat* gave them a terrible warning, but to no purpose. They tampered with the problem, never went to the heart of it. And had it not been for my appearance in Champaran, had I not insisted on my right to remain there in the face of tremendous difficulties, and had I not brushed aside the advice of some friends to obtain a solution through law courts, and, what is more, had I not gone to the *raiyats* themselves to find out what they wanted, I make bold to say that the great relief that the Bihar Government gave would never have been given. They would never have had the courage to bolt out the curse of forced indigo. They knew that it was a curse, they knew that although the *raiyats* could not express it in words, it was the *Tinkathia* that ate into the very vitals of the community, and sapped their moral and material strength. The Bihar Government are not ashamed to say that the majority of the Bihar Legislative Council, as ignorant as themselves, rejected the resolution brought forward by the only councillor who knew what he was talking— I mean, Babu Brijkishore Prasad—one of the truest men of Bihar. The Government ought to have known then that the settlement officer could throw little light on this burning question. Indeed, had there been no settlement operations, there would probably have been no *Sarahbeshi*—enhancement of rent in lieu of indigo. I admit that the settlement officer himself was a courteous and sympathetic officer desirous of doing his duty; I admit also that because of his impartiality he succeeded in giving justice to the *raiyats*, when other officers would have failed; but he could throw no more light, because he was a settlement officer, than he otherwise would have done on the many question that the Committee had to decide. It was not his province. The comprehensive recommendations of the Committee are based, not upon the evidence of the settlement officer, but upon the records that were in possession of the Government, most of them bearing a date prior even to the date on which the settlement officer began his operation. All the vices of forced indigo, which the Committee has brought to light, were already known to the Government. The opposite question, therefore, arises: why did they not abolish the system before? There were several settlement operations before the last one; why did they not avail themselves of these operations to redress the grievances dealt with by the Committee? I do not wish to burden the reader with a detailed list of

the grievances found by the Committee to exist. I content myself with saying that the Committee could have dealt with every one of them without the settlement, and what is more to the point, on the question of *Sarahbeshi* and *Tawan*, if the Government had listened to Babu Brijkishore's voice in the wilderness, the *raiyats* would have been saved the robbery in the shape of *Tawan*, and the veiled robbery in the shape of *Sarahbeshi*. I must explain these two terms for the edification of reader outside Bihar. *Tawan* was the so-called damages taken by the lease-holding planter from his tenants for commutation of the indigo obligation *at a time when the planter did not need indigo*. *Sarahbeshi* was an increase in rent taken by permanent holders *under the same circumstance*. So *Tawan* and *Sarahbeshi* are the same as if a party to a supposed contract, finding it to be burdensome, releases himself from the burden, and takes damages in [to] the bargain from the other party for his own release. Under ordianry conditions, he who wants a release pays for it. That the *raiyats* also wanted it is beside the point. They were helpless. The Bihar Government almost give away their case when they say:

> the position was further complicated by the fact that the system was based on contracts between the planters and the raiyats, and interference in an elaborate system of contractual relations is obviously a matter of extreme delicacy, and no Government could venture on such interference except on the clearest proofs of necessity. Mr. Gandhi's intervention, by bringing the discontent of the raiyats to a head and thus threatening the district with an outburst of lawlessness, compelled the Government to anticipate the programme which it had mapped out, but by that time the information which the local Government had always insisted on as being essential had been collected by the settlement staff, and it was only because they had this information at their disposal that the Committee were able to bring their labours to so speedy a conclusion.

It is true that my presence in Champaran brought the discontent of the *raiyats* to a head; had they not been granted relief, they would certainly have ceased to labour for the planters, which they were in no way bound to. But I deny that my intervention threatened the district with an outbreak of lawlessness,—if by lawlessness is meant that of *raiyats*; for my presence, I say without hesitation, was the greatest restraining force against any such outbreak. My condition with the *raiyats* was that I would leave them the moment they resorted to violence. I mixed with thousands of them, and I do not know a single instance in which my presence had any but the most sobering effect

upon the *raiyats.* I deny also that it was "because the Committee had the information contained in the Settlement Records that they were able to bring their labours to so speedy a conclusion". As a matter of fact, the planters never ceased to agitate for my expulsion during my stay in Champaran. I make no complaint about it—I made none then. But in declining to remove myself or my Bihar friends from Champaran, I had often to address the Government and myself the question whether, since it was their duty to deal justly by every subject, they would not of themselves redress the grievances of Champaran *raiyats*; and this is what I said, on the 31st[1] May, in one of my letter to a Government official:

> Cannot the Government secure that freedom? This is a natural exclamation. My answer is that they cannot, in cases like this, without such assistance as is afforded to them by my mission. The Government machinery is designedly slow. It moves, must move, along the line of least resistance. Reformers like myself who have no other axe to grind but that of the reform they are handing for the time being, specialize and create a force which the Government must reckon with. Reformers may go wrong by being overzealous, indiscreet or indolent and ignorant. The Government may go wrong by being impatient of them or over-confident of their ability to do without them. I hope, in this case, neither catastrophe will take place and the grievances, which I have already submitted and which are mostly admitted, will be effectively redressed. Then the planters will have no cause to fcar or suspect the mission of which I have the honour to be in charge, and they will gladly accept the assistance of voluteers who will carry on the work of education and sanitation among the villagers and act as links between them and the *raiyats*.

It is not without great grief that I have felt compelled to criticize the Bihar Government note, but I cannot help feeling sad that, in their anxiety to sustain a bad cause, they should have belittled a mission that was in no sense political—a mission that was undertaken solely in the cause of humanity, and a mission that included not merely the removal of the grievances of the *raiyats*, but which included the devising of methods for their education, their sanitation, and their general uplift, whether with or without the help of the Government and the planters. That constructive programme, although other activities have claimed my attention, has not yet stopped. Here and there, volunteers are still conducting their schools among the *raiyats* in face of heavy odds. The local Government know this, and they know also that I had endeavoured to keep the mission outside the

political arena. I kept its doings as much from the public press as was possible for me to do; and I would not still yield to the temptation of publishing the many letters I had the privilege of writing to the local Government on behalf of the *raiyats*. The Government of India very much resemble a man cutting the very branch on which he is sitting. Sir Sankaran Nair has stated the obvious truth. In support of it he brought forward two most telling illustrations. It would have been graceful and dignified if they had at least remained silent, if they could not have acknowledged it.

Young India, 27-8-1919

246. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO ABDUL BARI

ON THE TRAIN,
EN ROUTE TO BOMBAY,
August 27, 1919

I fear that it is not yet time for asking for the [Ali] Brothers' release. We have to be satisfied with the orders for maintenance money. I do not think our efforts will succeed until the Turkish peace terms are disclosed.

In my message, I sent you my thoughts in the matter. I fear that the matter is already settled; if the reports contained in the English newspapers are true, I believe that there will be international control over Constantinople and partition of Thrace. I am already in communication with His Excellency the Viceroy. I know what the Mohammedans feel, but I have no status to voice specially their feelings. The time for joint and firm action on our part is now. There will be deep disappointment and resentment after. But it will be to no purpose; everything is possible now, nothing *after* the publication of the terms. I feel most keenly the awful position and I feel deeply humiliated that we are seen to be so careless and negligent. Violence now or after is no remedy. I know you are ever preaching against it. But much greater activity on the part of many is necessary. Satyagraha is the only remedy that cannot be taken after all is done, when we do nothing while the tragedy is being enacted before us. Satyagraha is a matter of soul and the soul never sleeps, never rests and acts when it must, come what may. In the dignity of Satyagraha in action lies the future of Islam, the future of India and parenthetically, the furture of the ali Brothers.

N.A. I. : Home, Political-A, October 1919, Nos. 426-440

247. LETTER TO G.E. CHATFIELD

LABURANUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
August 28, 1919

DEAR MR. CHATFIELD,

In view of H.E. the Governor's pronouncement that he would like by every means in his power to encourage decent house building on behalf of the mill-hands and such other workers, Anasuyabehn has thought of a suggestion which she thinks I should place before you. There is a certain survey number being Govt. porperty situated outside Delhi Darwaja on the Dudheshwar Road in the limits of Dariapur Kazipur. This number is Revenue Survey No. 441. If it can be given on a long lease, she will be prepared, in conjunction with some of the labourers, to build suitable lodgeings for them and a school for their children. The idea is to locate the school and the houses on the same piece of ground. I understand that several mill-hands are ready to put up their savings for the promotion of the scheme. You may not know that she is already conducting one or two co-operative societies in conjunction with Mr. Ewbank, Registrar of such societies. Her societies having achieved a fair measure of success, she is anxious to proceed a step further and make with your help the experiment above described. If the proposal commends itself to you, as I hope it will, and if you wish to discuss the matter further with Anasuyabehn, you have but to drop her a note and she tells me she would see you. If, on the other hand, you would far rather discuss it with her and me jointly, rather than carry on a correspondence, on hearing from you I shall give you the exact date of my coming to Ahmedabad.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. G.

[PS.]

I reach Ahmedabad on Monday next.

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 6827

248. LETTER TO MRS. CLAYTON

LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
August 28, 1919

DEAR MRS. CLAYTON[1]

I hope you received the *precis* of my address in Godhra as I had promised. A lady teacher has been sent to Godhra to open a spinning class. Will you not encourage the class by taking up spinning yourself? The lady, Mrs. Desai, who is at present in Godhra, has been teaching Lady Dinshaw Petit. I do not want you to give much time to spinning, but even if you spun for half an hour a day, it would be your free offering to the poor and the needy.

Will you please remember me to Mr. Clayton and tell him how much I appreciate his prompt issue of notice regarding *veth*[2] .

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy : S. N. 6828

249. LETTER TO DR. SATYAPAL

LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
August 28, 1919

DEAR MR. SATYAPAL[3] ,

I was delighted to see your letter. I shall certainly attend to the matter as fast as I can. Will you please convey to all the leaders that at the present moment the situation in the Punjab occupies a predominant position in my thoughts and actions, and assure them,especially the ladies whose husbands are at present undergoing unmerited incarceration, that I shall leave no stone unturned to secure

[1] Wife of the Collector of the Panch Mahais District in Gujarat

[2] Forced unpaid labour

[3] Congress leader of the Punjab; took an active part in the Rowlatt Act agitation

justice. It is no joke for me to be outside the prison walls when so many leaders of the Punjab are suffering imprisonment for no fault save that of daring to serve their country to the best of their ability.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostate of the typewritten office copy : S.N. 6829

250. LETTER TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"[1]

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
August 29, 1919

SIR,

I know that it can only be by patient efforts that one can hope to remove the ignorance that must necessarily attach to all questions arising a few thousand miles from us. "Eureka" 's letter published in your issue of the 28th instant is a case in point. He has raised many issues. I propose to confine myself only to the South African. The question before the public today is not one of emigration but that of the livelihood and status of those who have legally settled in South Africa, and neither Lord Sinha nor H.H. the Maharaja of Bikaner could give away inherent rights of citizens of the Empire, nor did they do any such thing. Indians have settled in South Africa for over 50 years; they are not known to have lowered the standard of living. Will "Eureka" please remember that the first Indian settlers were imported by the Europeans of South Africa? I refer to the introduction of indentured Indians. I said in 1894, as I repeat now, that it was a criminal blunder on the part of the greedy Europeans of Natal to have imported indentured labour from India at miserably low wages when they had 400,000 stalwart Zulus in their midst who would gladly have worked if the employers had not wanted to make enormous profits. Can South Africa, with any right on its side, starve the descendants of the original settlers and the brethren out of existence?

It is purposeless for me to go into the question how and by whom South Africa was won; but let me correct "Eureka" by informing him that it was aid sent from India under the late Sir

[1] "Eureka" had written advising Gandhiji not to agitate about British Indian rights in South Africa and argued that Indians had practically nothing to complain of as only Europeans had fought for and retained South Africa.

George White which saves Ladysmith and which probably turned the fortunes of war. Let me further inform "Eureka" that the 10,000 troops that Sir George White took with him included many Indian followers who were just as indispensable for the military operations as any soldier. Nor is this all. When the fate of Ladysmith trembled in the balance, when the late Lieut. Roberts, fighting against heavy odds, lost his guns at the battle of Colenso, I had the honour to be in charge of the ambulance corps of nearly 1,200 Indians, free and indentured, literate and illiterate, drawn from all classes.[1] Some of the men who are now in peril of losing the means of their livelihood had the privilege of bearing the stretcher that carried the dying Lieutenant. The corps served too at the reverse of Spionkop. We were engaged to work without the range of fire, not because we had objected but because the authorities would not risk our lives, as we were not trained for military operations. But Col. Gallway sent the message that, whilst we were not obliged to work under fire, General Buller would be glad if we could remove the wounded that were lying at the Field Hospital at the base of the hill. There was danger of the Boers descending from the hill. Without the slightest hesitation and indeed with gladness for the opportunity, every one of the men with me responded to the call and removed the wounded to the base hospital at Frere Comp, a distance of 24 miles. The wounded included the late General Woodgate and the brave officers under him. The English newspapers and the politicians were so enthusiastic about this purely voluntary work of the Indians that even laudatory verses were composed, whose refrain was "We are sons of the Empire after all". Are these Indians of whom these verses were written now to sing "We are helots of the Empire after all", for that is what Indian settlers in south Africa would be totally reduced to if the English and the Indian public of India do not make a great effort to ward off the impending calamity. In my opinion, the case for the European traders of South Africa is so hopelessly bad that it has only to be persistently, truthfully and calmly exposed to the whole of the Empire and it must fall to pieces.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 3-9-1919

[1] *Vide* "Indian Ambulance Corps in Natal", 14-3-1900 & "Indian Ambulance Corps", 18-4-1900.

251. "AUDI ALTERAM PARTEM"

The public have recently received many a shock from the Punjab and I had hoped that we shall be spared rude shocks regarding the events of April from any other quarter. But the papers received from Nadiad and published elsewhere provide disillusionment. On the 21st of April last, the Collector of Kaira wrote to the Nadiad Municipality as follows:

> I have the honour to address the Municipal Board of Nadiad as representative of the people of the town, and in the first place to convey to them through the Board my appreciation of the very general respect for law and order which they maintained during the period of strain and excitement which is now happily passed away; special thanks are due to those of the leaders who used their influence in the direction of moderation.

It is on these people, the readers will be surprised, an additional police is to be imposed in connection with the very incidents on which they have been congratulated. And the expenses are to be collected from the *Patidars* and the *Banias* of Nadiad and landowners of Barejadi. To my knowledge, the Collector, who was during the period of disturbace stationed at Nadiad, was in close touch with the leaders who were acting in co-operation with him and who were no less successful than the Collector himself in preventing any distrubance whatsoever in Nadiad. Nobody can be more sorry than I for the derailment. I have in the strongest language possible criticized before a large Nadian audience the dastrdly act and the cowardice of the actors in hiding themselves. I have spoken freely to them about the miscarriage of justice, in this instance on account of the perpetrators themselves, by reason of the absence of evidence. There is no doubt about a conspiracy of silence on the part of the actors. But it is one thing to condemn offences, it is a totally different thing to punish men who cannot be proved to have had any connection with the guilt, I know that some of these *Patidars* and *Banias* have strained every nerve to get hold of the real offenders and to induce them to confess. And the Collector knows this too. Why should they be fined for assistance they have given? Out of a population of 31,483 in Nadiad, 6,093 men are *Patidars*, 3,652 are *Banias*. Should these men be punished because a few ruffians in a fit of madness go to the station and pull down the rails? There is absolutely no connection

established between the *Patidars* and the *Banias*, and the perpertators of the crime. The very instructive papers I am able to publish show the real reason. The Inspector-General of Police, without a tittle of evidence, has the audacity to say regarding the various crimes:

> In so far as the investigations have proceeded, it appears that each was a separate manifestation of the spirit of lawlessness that has been diffused in the Kara and Ahmedabad districts by the teachings of Mr. M.K. Gandhi and his followers.

This is on a par with the argument that because a crow sat upon a branch and the branch fell, it was the crow that did it. My teaching has been before the country for the last four years and the only pity is that I am without much following. If I had a staunch band of followers in appreciable numbers, I would make lawlessness impossible, and the Inspector-General of Police would have little work left for him to do. My teaching is, "Follow truth at any cost and never do violence to person or property." There was no lawlessness whilst my teaching was being actively enforced in Kaira or amid the thousands of mill-hands in Ahmedabad. They did not hurt a fly. The recklessnes running through the Collector's letter out-rivals that of the Inspector-General of Police. One of his grounds for advising imposition of the additional police and communal responsibility is:

> The derailment was undoubtedly caused by Nadiad people who will shortly be placed before the special tribunal. They are mostly *Patidars.*

The letter from which this is taken is dated the 26th May when the men arrested were not even tried and yet, with amazing self-assurance, he states that the derailment was caused by Nadiad people, mostly Patidars. There was no necessity for this indecent haste. In one breath as the record shows, he himself suggests:

> I will deprecate any appearance of haste in arriving at a conclusion as cases are pending before the special tribunal in respect of all the offences and the results of these trials may affect the issue. If, for example, in any particular case, the ringleaders are convicted and adequately punished, it may be a question whether it is necessary or desirable to impose any additional police at all.

And in the next paragraph but one he recommends communal responsibility before the trial. The other ground given by him is really the crux. The Collector says:

> This offence is clearly the direct outcome of the persistent agitation against Government which has been going on among the people of Nadiad for some years and, to my perosnal knowledge, since the beginning of 1918. Nadiad is

the centre of the agitation in the district. It was the headquarters of Mr. M.K. Gandhi last year during the passive resistance movement-a movement of opposition to the payment of Government dues-and thus directly calculated to undermine, as it did in fact undermine, all respect for the officers of Government and for Government itself.

This is a misleading statement. I deny that respect for the officers of the Government, or for the Government itself, was at all undermined by the movement I had the privilege of leading, unless the Collector means to convey that the people ceased to fear the *Ravanias*, the *Talatis* and the *Mukhis*.[1] When I went to Kaira, I found that many people were in constant terror of these petty officials and I am glad to be able to testify that these very men now no longer fear them or even the higher officials. I advised them to distinguish between respect and fear, and I would challenge the Collector to show that any of the men who took part in the movement, whilst they ceased to fear, showed the slightest disrespect to authority. I submit that it is wrong to punish people unheard. The people of Nadiad, and specially the *Patidars* and the *Banias*, who are the parties concerned, and the landowners of Barejadi ought at least in decency to be called upon to show why they should not be fined Rs. 22,000, bacause that is what the order amounts to. Moreover, it is dishonest to fasten the guilt of a dozen drunkards of a big town on a whole population when the real cause of punishment is not the crime but the political activity of the people.

The paragraph regarding *Banias* is too amusing to cause indignation. But I cannot help pitying the Collector of Nadiad for his ignorance of the true situation; for I know Mr. Ker well enough to understand that he does not wish to do wilful injustice. I have no doubt he believes that I, being a *Bania*, leagued with Messrs Talati and Shah to mislead the *Patidars* into offering civil resistance. The fact, however, is that it was only a month ago that I understood Mr. Shah was a *Bania* and it was the Collector's letter under discussion which enables me to find that Mr. Talati is also a *Bania*. Up to the present moment, I had taken him to be a *Patidar*. I have not gone about the world preaching satyagraha because I am a *Bania*. My life companions in the development of satyagraha are Europeans and Indians drawn from all the corners of India. Satyagraha is a soldierly instinct, and *Banias* are largely associated with money-making rather

[1] Various revenue officals

than with fighting for a cause. Hence I have had the fewest co-workers from among fellow *Banias*. My purpose, however, in dealing with the personal matter is to show how cruelly isolated the officials remain from us and thus deprive themselves of opportunity of knowing the people and, therefore, of serving them truly. I hope that His Excellency the Governor will with his usual application personally investigate the matter. In my humble opinion, no additonal police is required in Nadiad, but if it is considered by the Government that it is required for public safety, I claim that no case has been made out for making the *Patidars* and *Banias* of Nadiad and the landowners of Barejadi pay for it. It is not the payment that wounds, but the unmerited slur cast upon men without being heard.

Young India, 30-8-1919

252. LETTER TO THE PRESS

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY
August 30, 1919

SIR,

It has been my misfortune from time to time to report to the public deaths of Indians who have worked for and served India in far-off South Africa. One of the ablest of them, a cable from Mr. Rustomjee tells me, has just departed this life. His name was Dawood Mahomed. Mr. Dawood Mahomed rose from the ranks. He never received any English education. I am not sure that he passed through more than two standards in a vernacular school in India. But his versatile ability and perseverance gave him such a wonderful grasp over languages without any book-learning whatsoever, that I have known him hold discourse with people in Tamil, Hindi, Creole, French, Dutch and English, besides his mother tongue, Gujarati. His native wit made him a popular speaker. He was as keen a politician as he was a merchant. And when the critical moment for decision came, he threw in his lot with the South African civil resisters, crossed the border and together with other merchants of note presented himself for arrest for crossing the sacred border of the Transvaal.[1] Having carried on an extensive business with European business houses, he

[1] *Vide* "The Late Mr. Hoosen Dawad", 24-9-1913

was well known to many Europeans and, owing to his great ability, commanded their respect. And I am happy to be able to testify that for him, who was used to a luxurious life and who was at the time 50 years old, to have risked imprisonment for the sake of conscience was an act which raised him still further in the estimation of his many European friends rather than otherwise. It was a privilege for me to find men in South Africa drawn from the commercial class giving freely of their time, their money and even voluntarily risking loss of personal freedom, by undergoing imprisonment, and property. Mr. Dawood Mohomed was one of the best among these. He was President of the Natal Indian Congress for a number of years and known to Indians all over South Africa. In my humble opinion, though India knew him not, she has every reason to be proud of having produced Dawood Mahomed. Indians in South Africa badly needed his service at the present moment. They are the poorer for Mr. Dawood Mahomed's death and, may I add, poorer also for the death of that brave statesman, General Botha[1] . The duty of India is, therefore, all the greater to see that the interests of her sons struggling for freedom are fully protected.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-9-1919

253. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, DOHAD [2]

August 31, 1919

In the afternoon, Mr. Gandhi addressed a meting of women on swadeshi and the importance of hand-spinning. Hundreds of women attended the meeting. The following is the gist of Mr. Gandhi's address:

The protection of dharma is in the hands of women as men, being too much engrossed in worldly cares, often forget it and sometimes neglect it. It is for the women to protect it as dearly as their children. Hence, I have ever believed that the salvation of India lies in the elevation of her women. Swadeshi is a great dharma which has been forsaken by most of the women of Gujarat. None who neglects a neighbour can serve a distant man. He who serves his neighbour

[1] Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa (1910-19) he passed away on August 28.

[2] One of the principal towns of the Panch Mahals, a district in Gujarat.

serves the world. It is irreligious to neglect our own artisans and encourage the foreign ones. For a century we have been guilty of that sin through the stress of various circumstances. As a result, we have deprived our own artisans of crores of rupees and transferred them into foreign hands. And hence it is that India is suffering from starvation. Our greatest needs are only two, viz., food and colthing. Fortunately, the food we eat is produced in out own country. But the cloth that we wear comes mostly from foreign countries. As a result, we sent away sixty crores of rupees last year to foreign countries. This is a matter of great shame. It is our duty to be free from this position and the easiest way to do so is to do exactly as we did a hundred years ago. Women should mainly take to spinning, while men must weave. I have met hundreds of women since the launching of the swadeshi movement, and some of them have told me that they used to spin cotton, or that their mothers did so. My own mother used to spin yarn and wear coarse cloth, though she could afford to purchase finer cloth and she did so simply out of love of it. Spinning was not then regarded as a mean occupation. Even queens in royal families used to spin out of pure love of it or out of fellow-feeling. It behoves our sisters in Dohad to revive that ancient and holy art. I do not ask that a poor woman should give up her own present honest calling and take to spinning. What I say is that as spinning is a simple and beautiful art and can be learnt easily, it can be taken up and left off at will. If our poor sisters do a little spinning in their leisure hours, they can have a little income of their own, and give an impetus to a most essential indigenous handicraft. In order to spread widely the gospel of swadeshi, women's earnestness is very essential. Everyone of you should decide henceforth to wear swadeshi clothes. To spin daily some quantity of yarn at least for the sake of your country must be your net resolve. If the women of Dohad would but make up their minds, all their clothing could be obtained from Dohad itself. Not only that the people of Dohad will be free from the trouble of importing cloth from abroad but most of the money they spend on cloth will flow into the pockets of the women and weavers of Dohad. It requires some little sacrifice to bring about this result. We shall have, for the time being at least, to rest content with coarse cloth woven by our people and be thankful to God, and banishing all idleness, should work the wheel in our moments of leisure. I hope that every woman will be interested in this work.

At the close of the meeting, many women expressed a desire to begin

spinning immediately and some who knew that art volunteered to teach it to the new aspirants.

Young India, 10-9-1919

254. SPEECH AT WEAVERS' MEETING, DOHAD[1]

August 31, 1919

I am much pained to see [some][2] *Antyaja*[3] brothers [standing away from others]. I have studied Hindu religion [according] to my lights and I try to carry out its principles so far as I can. I believe that no nation can really progress without religion. But I cannot believe that there is any religion in regarding it a sin to touch any particular community. To me even to *think* that it is pollution to touch any creation of God is sinful. To me it is the height of irreligion to look upon every custom as part and parcel of religion. Customs may be good or bad. I think it to be a bad custom not to touch the *Antyajas*. A little thinking would show that it is improper not to touch them on the score of their occupation. If their occupation is dishonourable, ask them to leave it off. If it is a sin to sweep our latrines, have done with it, and imagine the plight of your town under that circumstance. Every mother removes the excreta of her child, she does it with pleasure and thinks it to be her duty. And all of us bow to our mothers. I do not use the language of exaggeration when I say that the *Bhangis* are a dirty people, that they eat meat and drink, I may say that we touch many who do such things, and that we do not refuse to associate with men and women who are dirtier than the *Antyajas*. I do not want to put the prejudice of untouchability on a level with food and marriage regulations based on caste distinctions. The latter is a matter admitting of differences of opinion. For it is a question of choice. We are not bound to subscribe to promiscuous inter-dining and intermarriage. But to regard any of God's creatures as untouchable appears to me to be a sin. I wish that the Hindus of Dohad may be free from this sin.

[1] In the afternoon, Gandhiji addressed a meeting of weavers who had come from Mewar and settled there. The audience included a number of Mohammedans and *Antyajas*.

[2] Words in square brackets are supplied from the report of the speech in *Navavivan*, 7-9-1919.

[3] Literally the "last-born", the "untouchables"

I see also some Mussulman brethren before me. Both of us (meaning Hindus and Mohammedans) are one. We have common joys and common sorrows. There can be no cause for strife amongst us. Hindus cannot do without Mussulmans nor can Mussulmans do without Hindus. That is our experience. If a feeling of only serving one another is created, the feeling of bitterness between the two communities will automatically vanish. Hindus should respect the feelings of Mussulmans and Mussulmans, of the Hindus. That is what we owe to ourselves. Both the questions-that of the suppressed classes and of Hindu-Moslem unity-come under swadeshi which says, "Thou shalt serve thy neighbours first.

But really speaking, I have made digression, though advisedly. At present, my main work lies in the propagation of swadeshi as regards cloth. We are never going to be economically independent without accepting swadeshism in its fulness. The old craft has not yet vanished from Dohad. It can still boast of clever men and women and skilful artisans. You can prepare the cloth that you want with a little labour and I hope you will do it. I have held conversation with the weavers. They have already pledged themselves to weave hand-spun yarn and I am sure that they will make good their pledge. What can be nobler than that the weavers of Dohad should weave the yarn spun by the women of Dohad and the people of Dohad should put on that swadeshi cloth?

Young India, 10-9-1919

255. SPEECH AT MEETING OF ANTYAJAS, DOHAD

August 31, 1919

The words of Mr. Gandhi on the matter of untouchability went deep into the hearts of the people. Brahmins, Vaisyas and Mussulmans all filled up the *Antyaja* quarters before. Mr. Gandhi reached there and were sitting cheek by jowl. All the cloth woven by the *Antyajas* was exhibited in a picturesque manner. The following is the substance of the address delivered at the *Antyaja* quarters.

I am immensely pleased whenever I come in contact with an *Antyaja* member or get an opportunity of visiting them in their own place. It has been my custom to practise what I believe. Hence to come in contact with and touch the *Antyajas* is with me an object lesson. It is my request to the *Antyajas* to keep patience. The Hindu atmosphere is changing, though slowly but steadily. Even the

orthodox Hindus have begun to realize the sin of untouchability, and it is very probable that this sin will not last long. I also wish that the *Antyajas* should make great efforts to remedy their own shortcomings. When I was at Godhra last year, many *Antyajas* decided to give up their habit of drinking. I also wish the *Antyajas* of this place will follow suit. It is my hope that all of you will evince great enthusiasm for weaving and act as you have promised me. There are difficulties in the way of weaving hand-spun yarn, but if you go on weaving with patience undismayed by failures, I feel sure that you will improve your own condition as well as that of your country. Mr. K. N. Desai, the well-known merchant of your place, has consented to supply you with hand-spun yarn. He will buy up the cloth woven by you at a reasonable price.

Young India, 10-9-1919

256. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Monday, Bhadarva Sud 7 [*September 1, 1919*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I am sending herewith a postcard. Do the needful about it. I am enclosing Shuklaji's letter. Please send him *Young India*. Write to him that it is being sent at my behest. Ask him if he would like to be a subscriber. Write the letter only in Hindi. Have the Hindi corrected.

The meeting at Dahod[2] was wonderful. Why should Taramati not go out to teach as Durgabehn does? It is greatly desirable that women should engage themselves in such altruistic activities. If you take up the idea, gradually Taramati too will accept it mentally.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The man from the Swadeshi Store has not yet sent the amount in balance. Go there and check. Nearly Rs. 2,000 is due.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the contents. Monday after August 31 fell on September 1.

[2] On August 31, 1919; *vide* "Speech at Women's Meeting, Dohad", 31-8-1919

257. VICTIMS, NOT GUILTY

The readers will recall our Lahore correspondent's remarks about the Ramnager cases. I have a file of papers in these cases, but I was unprepared to discuss them until I got at least the text of the judgement. This is not before the readers. The able petition on behalf of Lala Karamchand…not the same as the lad Karamchand who was sentenced to be hanged…presented by his old mother Ganga Devi shows in the graphic language of his son Devidas's letter that the accused in the case are 'victims, not guilty'. If the simple narrative of Lala Karamchand's son be true, and I think there is no reason to doubt its accuracy, the whole proceedings were a farce. They constituted not a legal trial but a mockery of it. The accused, twenty-eight in number, were all tried together, the trial was finished in one day during which altogether 150 defence witnesses were examined, the accused were not informed of the charge against them except through the mouths of the prosecution witnesses. How the judge could examine so many witnesses in a day passes comprehension. In spite of repeated applications copy of notes of evidence or of the statements of the accused is not furnished. The only inference is that no notes were kept.

Why were these cases rushed so? The accused were arrested eight days after the alleged offence. Order was completely restored throughout the Punjab by that time. The trial took place on the 22nd May, five weeks after the alleged offence. There was no occasion, then, for indecently rushing through the trial.

On the 17th April, a police officer notes in his diary that all was quiet, save that there was a partial hartal. It is rightly suggested in the papers that mention would surely have been made in the diary of any serious offence. The offence alleged is not such as could be committed in secret. It is stated to have been openly committed. Here at least there is enough to throw doubt on the prosecution story. But the Judge had no doubt about it!

The story of the prosecution is varied from time to time. Five maunds of fuel said to have been required for burning His Majesty's effigy became reduced to a few straws!

At best all but one of the accused appear to have been mere spectators.

These facts are common to all the accused. I have been supplied also with the papers regarding Lala Daulatram. The facts therein set forth tally with those furnished in Lala Karmachand's case. I am convinced that twenty-eight innocent men have been ignorantly condemned. They should be set free.

Lala Karamchand is an old retired servant. He has never taken part in politics. For years past, he has been passing his time between Ramnagar and Hardwar, devoting it to religious pursuits. Lala Daulatram is the son of one who has rendered meritorious service to the Government for a long period. In fact, the whole family seems to belong to the official class. It is cruel to think that such men should have been so shamelessly punished.

The judgement is self-condemned. It breathes vindictiveness and anger. The rejection of the defence evidence, the explaining away of the weak points in the prosecution, the punishment of solitary confinement, the heavy fines point unmistakably to loss of balance and unfitness to judge. The cases are now before His Excellency the Viceroy. Let him do unto these humble men even as he would wish to be done unto himself, if he were in their place.

Young India, 3-9-1919

258. DR. SATYAPAL'S CASE

Dr. Satyapal's statement, which is published in another column, shows what a gross injustice has been done in his case as in that of Dr. Kitchlew[1]. They had to be absolved from any participation in the violence that occurred after their arrest. What violence there ever was in Amritsar took place after they were arrested. They were, therefore, accused of all sorts of things which they had never done, of speeches they had never made. Dr. Satyapal's clear, emphatic and courageous statement is a categorical denial of the whole string of charge against him. He shows clearly that the speeches he made were incorrectly reported by the C.I.D. officials, and that every time he spoke, he preached the gospel of truth and non-violence, and unceasingly warned the people against losing their temper and going in for any excesses.

[1] Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew (1887-1963); Barrister and Congress leader of the Punjab

I have purposely refrained from printing a spirited letter addressed to me by Dr. Satyapal's father in which he gives his own impressions of the case. I cannot, however, resist the temptation of quoting some of the facts stated in it. For instance, he says :

> At first, it was not the intention of the Government to prosecute Drs. Ktchlew and Satyapal who had been deported on the 10th April and, therefore, his (the approver's) confessional statement before the Magistrate of Amritsar did not incriminate them. But as soon as there was a change in the intention of the Government, an additional statement by way of an 'improvement' was obtained which implicated both of these gentlemen.

If this allegation is true, it is a severe reflection on the methods of [the] prosecution and it vitiates the whole of the proceedings. Again, this letter says :

> Dr. Satyapal was restricted from public speaking, etc., on the 29th March. The Commissioners have sentenced him to transportation for life on the ground that he was a member of conspiracy formed for disseminating sedition. But it is curious to the highest degree that he did not even attend the meeting of the 30th March≈not to say of his having addressed the meeting≈as held by the judges, and it is the meeting in which sedition has been said to have been disseminated in pursuance of that conspiracy.

It is true that Dr. Satyapal signed the handbill convening the meeting that was held on 30th March. That was on the 28th March. But if there was any conspiracy, it became one not on the 28th but on the 30th. A platform ticket agitation carried on by Dr. Satyapal in January and February last was shamelessly brought into the trial to prejudice him, an agitation that was entirely harmless and successful, and about which Dr. Satyapal even received thanks from the station authorities.

The letter concludes :

> For your information I may mention that Dr. Satyapal offered himself for military service in 1915 and was granted a temporary commission as a lieutenant, I.M.S. He was posted at Aden where, under very trying circumstances, he worked for one year to the satisfaction of his superior officers who gave him eulogizing testimonials at the time of his departure. In 1918 he again volunteered for service but the arrangement fell through. During the influenza and malaria epidemics he did his level best in his humble way to mitigate the suffering of his fellow-townsmen, and was awarded non-official sanads. It is indeed a befitting sequel to be convicted under section 124A after such a record of services to the Government and public both.

As I have already observed, the Lahore and Amritsar cases are not cases in which a commutation can carry any merit or give satisfaction. It is not mercy that the distinguished accused ask for. It is justice that they seek and on which public must insist. Reduction in the sentences is a blind, however unintended it may be. It must not be allowed to lull the public to sleep. There can be no contentment unless there is a complete and honourable discharge for the leaders of Lahore and Amritsar.

Young India, 3-9-1919

259. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Bhadrapad Sud 9 [*September 3, 1919*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I wish you would make it a habit to go for walks both morning and evening. Drag Mahadev also along with you.

What you write about Taramati is exaggerated. Even so, if we constantly nurse the idea, it may bear fruit some day. Ignorance too is darkness. It is a kind of untruth. Hence, it cannot persist in the face of knowledge and truth. Because of your persevering care Anand[2] took to spinning and Taramati is spinning beautifully. I have only advanced some suggestions. You should only act upon those that are practicable.

Anandanand has not come even today. It is most bewildering.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From *Bapuni Prasadi*

[2] Addressee's mother

260. INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Mr. Montagu's reply to the deputations[1] that waited on him on the South African question is reassuring so far as it goes. It is a matterfor great satisfaction that he will secure Indian representation upon the Commission, provided, of course, that that representation is equal to that of the anti-Asiatic party and provided further that the Commission has no power to diminish the existing rights of British Indians, and provided further that the Asiatic Bill just passed remains in abeyance and that the Commission is given the power to recommend its withdrawal. The resolution of the managing committee of the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association published in another column runs along the lines suggested by us.

Past promises, considerations of equity and justice, the exemplary conduct of the Indian settlers of South Africa, their contribution to the late South Africa war, at the time of the Zulu rebellion and the European war, make an overwhelming case against any diminution of existing rights. The Commission, in order to be just and effective, can only contemplate the relaxation, if not total removal, of the present restrictions for which the justification is the strong prejudice only against Indians on the part of the European traders. But such unreasoning prejudice may be pleaded as a cause is a system of government that is inefficient and corrupt. The Imperial Government to be truly Imperial must have, under certain circumstances, be they ever so rare, powers of effective intervention for the protection of weaker interests. It is therefore not possible for Indian public opinion to accept Mr. Montagu's dictum that an exercise of the veto is politically unfeasible. The veto is not merely a moral check but, in exceptional cases, it must prove a very material and tangible check upon excesses and upon injustice. The Empire to hold together must have some basic principles from which no member dare depart. If Mr. Montagu is convinced, as he apparently is, of the injustice of the Asiatic Act and of its controverting the principles of the British Constitution, where is the difficulty about vetoing the Act? The utmost that can happen is that South Africa may secede from the Imperial partnership. Surely it were a thousand times better that South

[1] This was led by Surendranath Banerjea, on August 28; *vide* also "Indians in South Africa", 7-9-1919.

Africa should cease to be a member of the Empire than that it should corrupt and undermine the whole of the Imperial fabric. It is infinitely better that the Empire has fewer partners than there are, but all working together in the same upward direction than that it should, by coquetting with legalized confiscations and such other immoralities, sow the seeds of its own disruption. And, after all, selfishness, greed and injustice are handmaids of cowardice. There is no reason to fear that a wholesome and timely exercise of the Royal veto will create any great stir in South Africa. The late Sir Henry Parkes, if my recollection serves me right, did issue a threat of secession or some such thing when the late Mr. Chamberlain dared to veto the Australian Immigration Restriction Act containing a racial bar.

But I am free to confess that so long as milder measures are available, the extreme remedy of vetoing ought not to be applied. It is undoubtedly like a strong blister causing great though momentary pain, and, therefore, to be sparingly used. The proposed Commission, if there is a strong Indian representation upon it, should prove effective enough for the purpose to be attained. The thing, therefore, for the time being is to concentrate public opinion upon a strong Commission and a proper safeguarding reference under which it should act.

It was a great relief to find Mr. Montagu not falling into the Reciprocity trap prepared by Sir William Meyer, let me hope, in a hasty moment. I am sorry Mr. Banerjea so easily fell into it. It is murdering the language to use so good a word as reciprocity for so bad a cause as the one under notice. If we must go in for a bad thing, we must at least recognize it by its correct name which is retaliation. Personally, I do not believe in retaliation at all. It always in the end returns with redoubled force on the retaliator. But as *The Times of India,* which is rendering signal service to the cause of our countrymen in South Africa, very rightly points out, retaliation miscalled reciprocity can serve no earthly purpose in the present case. "Its main objection is its utter futility," and if we ever embark upon this very unpractical method, it will be hailed with satisfaction by the anti-Asiatic party in South Africa, and we shall be cursed by the hundred and fifty thousand Indians whose very existence is at stake. One may retaliate when the stake is good. It is terrible to think of it when it is men and women who constitute the stake. What comfort can it be to our countrymen in South Africa for India to be able to send to South Africa a few tons of coal and to shut the gates of India in the

face of a stray South African tourist as against the banishment—for that is virtually the goal of the anti-Asiatic party—of a hundred and fifty thousand Indian settlers, or at least their reduction to helotry. The issue was stated by the late Sir William Wilson Hunter in clear and unmistakable language in 1896 or '95. Writing on this very question of British Indians in South Africa, he said, are they or not to enjoy the full status of British citizens in His Majesty's Dominions? It cannot be solved by the make-shift of retaliation or reciprocity by whatever term it is recognized. It can only be solved by correct statesmanship and correct conduct on our part.

Young India, 6-9-1919

261. LETTER TO THE PRESS

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
September 6, 1919

THE EDITOR
THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE

SIR,

I had the privilege of being a guest of Maulana Abdul Bari Saheb of Firangi Mahal some time ago. We on this side of India, barring the Mohammedans, know little of this great and good man. He is one of the foremost religious preceptors in Islam and has thousands of followers all over India. His unassuming and truthful nature turns his opponents into friends when they begin to understand him. He and I discussed many problems of mutual interest, in the course of which I told him that so far as I could interpret Hindu opinion, I had no doubt that it would be solidly for the Mohammedans in the very difficult task of securing justice on the Turkish claims, difficult because the question was burdened with so many European complications that the Allied Powers might in a weak moment fail to decide it on grounds of justice alone. He said to me with calm deliberation, but without any hesitation, "If we do not help you and do justice to you, Hindus, I for one cannot claim nor even take for my fellow-religionists your active help." I said, "Surely, you do not for one moment consider that I have spoken in any spirit of bargaining. The question that is behind the thought you have just now expressed, viz., that of cow-killing, can be decided on its own merits

and can await solution, for the ripening of true friendship between us and for an impartial discussion." He immediately intervened as soon as I had finished the sentence and said, "Please excuse me. I know you want to help, because our cause is just and because we are children of the same soil, and not because you want any *quid pro quo*. But do we not owe a duty to ourselves? Islam will fall to pieces if it ever takes and never gives. It must be faithful above all. The nobilityof our creed (he used the expression *khandani*) requires us to be strictly just to our neighbours. Here it is a question of taking service. The Hindus will judge our faith, and rightly, by our conduct towards them. That is why I say: if we take from you, we must give to you." I have only given the tiniest bit of the wonderful conversation I had with a priest who combines in him learning, true wisdom and humility. The Maulana has been true to his word. I know ever since this conversation, he has been preaching amongst his followers and friends the necessity of abstention from cow-killing and today of all days, one of the most sacred of Islam, he has thought of the Hindus and sent me the following telegram :

> In celebration of Hindu-Muslim unity no cow sacrifices in Firangi Mahal this Bakrid—Abdul Bari.

To which I have sent the following reply:

> Delighted with your great act of renunciation. Pray, accept Id Mubarak.

Would to God that all of us, Hindus, Mohmmedans, Christians, Parsis, Jews, belonging to all races, have the same virtue of charity, justness and breadth of vision. The world will surely be the better for it.

Your, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-9-1919

262. TELEGRAM TO P.S. TO VICEROY

BOMBAY,
September 6, 1919

DOES REFERENCE DISTURBANCES COMMISSIONERS INCLUDE POWER INVESTIGATE JUDGMENT AND RECOMMEND CANCELLATION OR REVISION OF SENTANCES.[1]

GANDHI

Bombay Government Records

263. OUR AIM

When I undertook to supervise the editing of *Young India*, it occurred to my friends and me whether it would not be more proper for me to run a Gujarati newspaper than to spend my time on writing Engish articles, revising them, thinking over them and summarizing them. A more important question, however, was…how could I serve India best?

I saw then that it was clearly my duty to continue *Young India*. I know I can use my knowledge of English for the service of the people. But my friends felt, and so did I, that it was necessary for me to run a Gujarati paper as well. Favourable circumstances presented themselves. I have owned a press. I ran *Indian Opinion* for a long time,[2] though I did not allow myself to be known as its editor. This is the first occasion when I appear in public as an editor. I have welcomed it, but I am nervous. I am fully aware of the responsibility I am undertaking. This is not South Africa. There I used to manage things somehow. But here? There is no lack of newspapers. Of writers there are many. My command of the language is severely limited. Having stayed out of India for twenty years, my information about Indian problems is bound to be inadequate. This is no mere language of modesty but a vivid picture of my condition.

[1] The Assistant Private Secretary, in his letter of September 7, quoting Gandhiji's above telegram, informed him that it had been transferred to the Home department of the Government of India for disposal.

[2] From 1903 to 1914; H.S.L. Polak was the declared editor.

Despite these limitations of mine, I clearly see that I have something to give to India which no one else has in equal measure. With much striving I have formulated some principles for my life and put them into practice. The happiness I have found that way, I think, I have not seen in others. Many a friend has testified to this. It is my sincere aspiration to place these principles before India and share my happiness with her. A newspaper is one means to that end.

For me, satyagraha is not a mere copy-book maxim : it is my very life. To me nothing but truth has any interest. I am convinced that the country can never benefit by untruth. In any case, I am firmly of the view that, even if untruth should seem profitable for the time being, we must not abandon truth.

I have been a seeker of this truth ever since I began to understand things. I have been trying to practise it for 40 years. Even so, I know that I have not attained perfect harmony in thought, word and deed.

What does it matter, though? The more we strive to realize an ideal, the farther it recedes. To pursue it the more vigorously is the only object worthy of endeavour. We may stumble and fall, but shall rise again; it should be enough if we did not run away from the battle.

In the course of my seeking I have come by innumerable gems, which I want to place before India. *Navajivan* is intended to be a sort of advertisement for them.

I saw, during my pursuit of truth, that it was our duty to give willing obedience to laws. But I also saw, while doing this duty, that it was equally a duty to disobey a law if it fostered untruth. What form should such disobedience take? We should suffer the penalty for the breach of law involved in acting according to the truth. This is known as civil disobedience. Who is qualified for such disobedience and which law should be considered as fostering untruth cannot be decided by laying down definite rules. Experience alone will help one to decide. For that we need both time and means. Let *Navajivan* be the means.

Even when fighting in circumstances none too favourable to them, the satyagrahis were able to maintain amicable relations with the officials, for in satyagraha there is no room for anger or ill will. Truth has its effect on the other party, with the result that he harbours no distrust. This ensures mutual respect and amicable relations between the two parties though they fight. *Navajivan* will show with facts and

arguments that, in India too, though fighting in regard to matters on which we differ from the officials, we may still co-operate with them on others.

But satyagraha is not limited to the relationship between the rulers and the ruled. For social reform, too, it is a priceless weapon, one without a parallel. The condition of women, our many evil customs, the difficulties which arise between Hindus and Muslims, the hardships of the "untouchables"—a great many of such problems can be solved in this way. *Navajivan* will therefore discuss these matters whenever occasion arises.

The agitation against the Rowlatt Act was an object lesson in satyagraha. Hence *Navajivan* will keep it alive before the public. I have no doubt that the Act will be repealed before its time, for I have full faith in truth and in the strength of the satyagrahis.

It is my conviction that India's economic regeneration lies only through swadeshi. Swadeshi promotes dharma. No country has ever prospered, or ever will, by turning its back on dharma. *Navajivan* will, therefore, work strenuously to propagate the idea of swadeshi.

If anyone asks why, if I wished to serve India, I should not pour out my soul through English, I would say in reply that, being a Gujarati by birth and way of life, I can serve India best only by identifying myself completely with the life of Gujarat. Even from a business point of view, I think I can put my gifts to the best use if I take Gujarat as the main field of my activities. Moreover, to whom should I address my message in English? *Navajivan* will take every possible occasion to show that it is in vain that we are so infatuated with English. I do not mean to say that English has no place at all in our studies or in our life. I only insist that our present use of English is indiscriminate.

India lives in farmers' huts. The weavers' skill is a reminder of India's glory, and so I feel proud in describing myself as a farmer and weaver. I wish to see *Navajivan* reach the farmers and weavers in their huts and dwelling. I want it to be in their language. Hence *Navajivan* will always describe the joys and sorrows of the farmers and the others in their language. If the farmers continue to live in fear, buried under heavy debt, if they are diseased in body, I see nothing but ruin in store for India.

I will always pray to God that in every home women read *Navajivan*. Who will preserve dharma, if not women? What would be

the fate of the future generation if the women remain in a state of ignorance and darkness and know nothing about India's plight? *Navajivan* will, therefore, arouse the women and will try to awaken the men to a sense of their duty towards them.

These are but a few of my aspirations. To summarize what I have said, I shall state that *Navajivan* will be so run as to see that the animosity between the ruler and the ruled is replaced by friendship and the distrust between them by trust, that there is unity of heart between Hindus and Muslims, that India achieves economic freedom and that, all over the country, there is nothing but love. The universe exists in love. Even destruction is a preparation for creation.

This is a rather ambitious programme. Maybe. I shall however cling to the assurance in the scripture that no effort in this direction is ever wasted.[1] A pessimist may ask : can a message of this nature be ever delivered to an illiterate India, especially when there are repressive Press laws in force? Who does not know from experience that love can break the chains of ignorance? Why should love—truth—ear the Act? The manager, the editor, the assistant editor, and the other members of the *Navajivan* set-up have pledged to tell the truth exactly as they see it without fear of the Press Act. *Navajivan* will never hesitate to say what needs to be said for fear of forfeiting security or exposing its staff to personal risks. But in telling the truth, it will not depart from courtesy. *Navajivan* will contain no careless statement, no unnecessary adjective. In fact, truth needs no embellishment by way of adjectives. The art which lies in a plain statement of facts is not to be found in facts disfigured by superfluous adjectives.

I pray to God that the mothers and the learned men of Gujarat welcome and bless *Navajivan* and that *Navajivan* may deserve their blessings!

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-9-1919

[1] *Vide Bhagavad Gita*, II, 40.

264. STORY OF KHEDA

To the many services to his credit, the Hon'ble Mr. Gokuldas Kahandas Parekh[1] has added one more by writing a note on the Bombay Government's reply to Sir Sankaran Nair's minute[2] . The note is a long one; we shall therefore content ourselves with giving the main points made by the Hon'ble Mr. Parekh. Sir Sankaran Nair had said that it was the educated classes and their organ, the Congress, which had been responsible for whatever reforms there had been and the relief that the people had succeeded in obtaining from the Government. Officials have always accused the educated classes of being indiffernt to the condition of the masses and argued that they could not be accepted as the leaders of the people. Replying to this charge, Sir Sankaran Nair has mentioned the two convincing instances of Champaran and Kheda agitations, showing that in both these places people's rights had been defended by the educated and that relief had been obtained from officials with the utmost difficulty. Replying to the points about Kheda, the Government stated that whatever relief it gave it did on its own, advancing several arguments in proof. The Hon'ble Mr. Parekh's note is in reply to this. The reader will now be able to follow the summary below.

1. In all the districts of Gujarat, except the Panch Mahals, land revenue collection has been ordered at the maximum rate, that is, the Government is collecting twenty per cent of the average annual produce.

2. Before 1907, the Government never remitted land revenue or deferred its collection even in bad years. It was after the second of the two Famine Commissions which were appointed, that is after the Commission of 1901, that the Government framed rules for this purpose. Even this measure of justice was offered after agitation by the people.

3. During the 1899 famine, there had been many complaints against the tyranny of officials in Broach and Surat districts. The question was also raised by members in the Bombay Legislature. The

[1] Member, Bombay Legislative Council. Along with Vithalbhai Patel, he took interest in moving the Government to adopt a considrate stand on the question of kheda farmers.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Note on the Kaira Case", 12-8-1919.

Government had declared the complaints to be unfounded. In the end, one of the gentlemen who had made the complaints toured these districts and conducted a private inquiry and collected and published evidence. This obliged the Government to order an inquiry. Mr. Maconochie was appointed the inquiry officer and he found most of the complaints justified. Ultimately the Government was obliged to notify rules for remission and suspension in 1907.

4. The Bombay Government has stated that no failure of crops was known to have occurred in the years preceding the Kheda agitation. Citing instances from the Government reports, the Hon'ble Mr. Parekh has shown conclusively that cultivators in Kheda district had been suffering losses all along from 1911 to 1916. With the help of the same reports, he shows that the Government had to resort to increasing pressure on the people, such as the auctioning of their cattle and household chattels, to realize land-revenue dues.

5. Failure of crops was not all that the people of Kheda district had to bear; the plague and other similar diseases were also endemic among the cultivators.

6. In 1917, excessive rains had damaged the *bajra* crop as also the *bavta* and *kodra* crops. Subsidiary crops had also been damaged by rats and, at some places, paddy as well.

7. The Hon'ble Mr. Parekh has argued from this that revenue officers, from the highest to the lowest, take no account of people's sufferings and do not stop revenue collection even if people have to incur debts or sell their cattle in consequence.

8. There are no rules for determining the percentge of the crop-yield; only rough estimates are made.

9. Because members of the Home Rule League chose to describe the Government as the servant of the people, they incurred the displeasure of the officials and the latter discounted the genuine grievances of the people of Kheda, saying that these had been magnified by outsiders.

10. The Government note makes it appear that Mr. Parekh himself and the Hon'ble Mr. Patel had approached the Collector in a legal capacity. The fact is that both of them, being residents of Kheda, had gone in their capacity as leaders and without fees, to show that they shared the people's suffering.

11. The Government's charges against the Gujarat Sabha were unfounded. The members of the Sabha are respectabe gentlemen and

they are fully entitled to work in Kheda. Its sphere of activities is the whole of Gujarat.

12. The view that the Government does a favour every time it suspends land revenue collection is not correct. The basic principles of such suspension were laid down by the Central Government. Rules have been framed in keeping with these principles and it is not open to officials to disregard them at will.

13. It was incumbent on the Bombay Government to have appointed a committee following the inquiry by the Hon'ble Mr. Parekh, the Hon'ble Mr. Patel, the Servants of India Society and Mr. Gandhi. Its failure to do so is nothing but sheer injustice; had the Central Government not intervened, the people of Kheda would not have had even the relief they got.

Mr. Parekh has thus, with unanswerable arguments, lent strong support to Sir Sankaran Nair's minute and exposed the fallacies of the Bombay Government. What is surprising is that, despite the weakness of its case, the Government should have clung to it so desperately. Much like a coir rope that will not be untwisted even when burnt,[1] the Government, though in the wrong, is not prepared to admit its error, increasing by this refusal the distance between the ruler and the ruled.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-9-1919

265. FINE ON NADIAD AND BAREJADI

The *Patidars* and *Banias* of Nadiad and the landowners of Barejadi are in trouble. A Government Resolution has been published ordering the stationing of additional police, under section 25 of the District Police Act, at Nadiad and Barejadi for a period of one year, and the recovery of the expenditure on this acount in Nadiad from the *Patidars* and *Banias* of that town and, in Barejadi, from the landowners of Barejadi and Nandej. The expenditure in Nadiad has been estimated by the Government at Rs. 15,556 and that in Barejadi at Rs. 6,028. The general rule is that the person to be punished should be informed beforehand and given an opportunity to explain why he should not be punished. Still more just, the accused should be duly prosecuted and a court's judgment obtained. But the Government did

[1] Gujarati saying

neither. Orders of fines have been passed against the accused without any prior intimation to them. Even this information about the fines has come out because papers were sent to the Nadiad Municipality for effecting recovery of fines.

Let us now go into the genesis of the fine.

It originated with the letter, dated June 7, from Mr. Robertson, the Inspector-General of Police, and the letters of May 16 and 26 from Mr. Ker, the Collector of Kheda. Prior to this, on April 21, in a letter addressed to Shri Gokuldas, the President of the Nadiad Municipality, Mr. Ker had congratulated the people of Nadiad in the following words on their preserving peace:

"I have the honour to convey my appreciation of the respect for law and order which the people of Nadiad showed during the period of strain and excitement, now happily over."[1] We are entitled to assume that, since the Collector chose to convey his views through Shri Gokuldas Talati[2] , he, too, was included among the people complimented. But the ship changed course on May 16. Between April 21 and May 16, consultations had taken place between the Collector, Mr. Robertson and Mr. Pratt, the Commissioner of Northern Division. At the instance of Mr. Robertson, the Collector supplied the number of additional police required and, on May 26, addressed a long letter to the Commissioner suggesting that the expenditure on account of the additional police force should be recovered from *Patidars* and *Banias* of Nadiad. The principles which he accepts in paragraph 2, he violates in paragraph 3. In paragraph 2 he states :

> I will deprecate any appearance of haste in arriving at a conclusion as cases are pending before the special tribunal in respect of all the offences and the results of these trials may affect the issue.

Nevertheless, in paragraph 3, he says that it had been decided to impose a fine on Nadiad. The Nadiad cases had not concluded by the 26th. They had not even been heard. The Court pronounced judgment on them on August 12. And yet the decision to impose a fine on Nadiad was reached on May 16. In paragraph 4 of his letter[3] the Collector gives five reasons for imposing the fine:

1. The derailment was undoubtedly caused by Nadiad people. They are mostly

[1] *Vide "Audi Alteram Partem"*, 30-8-1919.

[2] He later gave evidence before the Disorders Inquiry Committee.

[3] The letter was published in Young India, 30-8-1919.

Patidars.

2. This offence is clearly the direct outcome of the persistent agitation against Government which has been going on among the people of Nadiad for some years. Nadiad was the headquarters of Mr. Gandhi last year during the passive resistance movement, a movement directly calculated to undermine, as it did in fact undermine, all respect for the officers of Government and for Government itself.

3. The *Patidars* of Kaira district affect to despise the *Banias* as their clerks, but the agitation against the payment of land revenue, organized by the latter, became popular with the *Patidars* as it held out to them the prospect of some advantage. When things came to a head the active part was naturally taken by the more enterprising *Patidars,* while the *Banias* remained in the background. Mr. Gandhi, Mr. Gokuldas Talati and Mr. Fulchand Shah are all *Banias*.

4. The people of Nadiad were given an opportunity of assisting in bringing the offenders to justice. Except for the perfunctory offer of a reward of Rs. 500, they have done nothing; no leader of the Nadiad public has given me any information worth having. It is clear, thus, that they have not taken the opportunity which was offered to them, and that they have done nothing to absolve themselves of responsibility.

5. Special blame attaches to *Banias* for two reasons : first because the leaders who created the spirit of opposition to Government belong to that community and secondly because by closing their shops all the shopkeepers, who are mostly *Banias,* gave the signal for commotion and excitement to the unruly elements. In Nadiad the first hartal took place on April 6 without any reason whatever and thus prepared the way for the disturbances of the 11th.

One thing which stands out from the reasons given above is that the great crime of Nadiad was to have harboured Mr. Gandhi and allowed itself to be made the headquarters of the satyagraha campaign. As regards the first reason, the Collector has usurped the functions of a judge, for, before the Court which was entrusted with the Nadiad cases had pronounced judgment on them, he decided, himself, that the people of Nadiad were guilty, especially the *Patidars*, but, according to paragraph 2 of his letter, this was not sufficient reason to justify a fine on them. The third reason has been advanced specially to victimize the *Patidars* and the *Banias*. If the former had merely been duped by the latter, the penalty should have been imposed exclusively on the latter. The fact of the matter is that neither the revenue agitation nor the political movement was carried on by any one community, but all communities had a hand in it.

We see that, throughout India, Hindus and Muslims took equal part in the strike. Mr. Gandhi has made it clear in an article in *Young India* that he had not entered this and other similar movements as a *Bania*. It was from Mr. Ker's letter that he first discovered that Mr. Gokuldas Talati was a *Bania* and only a month ago he came to know of Mr. Fulchand being one. In holding the *Banias* and *Patidars* guilty, the Collector has done injustice to himself, to them and to the other communities. We are sure that, instead of being pleased that the *Patidars* and the *Banias* had been singled out for the fine, the other communities must have felt insulted, for how can those who have taken equal part in public work with these two communities tolerate the charge that they have not? Finally, while considering this reason, we should state that, if Mr. Gandhi's movement was the cause of the crimes in Nadiad, he alone deserved the fine of Rs. 15,000 and other punishments. A well-known Calcutta newspaper, *Englishman*, expressed itself to this same effect, and rightly, while commenting on Mr. Horniman's deportation. The fourth reason given by the Collector reflects on his sense of justice. It simply means that the people of Nadiad were held responsible because they refused to do the work of the C.I.D. According to the principle followed in it, at any place where a crime has been committed, if the criminal is not apprehended or, after being apprehended, is acquitted and if the people have not helped to apprehend him or, having tried, have failed in their efforts, the people themselves should be fined. The fifth reason has been advanced to prove the responsibility of the *Banias*. A part of it is covered in the third reason; the remaining part is to the effect that, though there was no reason for doing so, the *Banias* closed their shops and the others had, therefore, to follow suit. Both the premises are false. It is an undeniable fact that people all over India had joined in closing their shops. In saying that the shops were closed when there was no reason for doing so, the Collector has been incredibly blind; for, at the suggestion of Mr. Gandhi, shops were closed everywhere and a fast kept to mark the commencement of satyagraha, and he seems to have forgotten altogether that, had the Government not committed the serious blunders it did between April 6 and 11, the events which shook India between April 10 and 15[1] would not have occurred. The Government had no reason whatever to

[1] The reference is to the widespread disturbances in the Punjab, Ahmedabad, Nadiad and Bombay.

arrest Mr. Gandhi while he was proceeding to help in preserving peace. The people could not tolerate it that, notwithstanding this, he was arrested; strikes followed everywhere, and even excesses. What court shall sit in judgment over the acts of the Government? Even so, the Collector could have expressed his view; in failing to do this he has done injustice to the people of his district when he should have exonerated them.

It now only remains to be considered what the people of Nadiad and Barejadi should do. We fail to see any need for stationing additional police at either place. The excesses committed by the people at these two places and elsewhere cannot be condemned strongly enough. They only betrayed the people's madness. Instead of gaining anything, the people as a whole suffered. Their money went up in flames. They were made to pay a fine and satyagraha was brought into disrepute. The repeal of the Rowlatt Act, which was in sight, will need still more efforts. It is also a matter of shame for us that the guilty in Nadiad have remained undiscovered. It is, however, one thing to admit that in Nadiad we have done wrong things as the Government has in the Punjab, and quite another to submit to punishment inflicted without regard for justice. The principle that no one who has not been proved guilty should be punished must remain inviolate. Keeping it so is to the advantage and benefit of both the ruler and the ruled. We find English books on law again and again quoting judges to the effect that it is better that a hundred guilty persons escape than that even one innocent man should suffer. This is truth. We must cling to this principle. Accordingly, we strongly advise the people of Nadiad to make unremitting efforts to see that they don't have to pay the fine, to draw up petitions stating the facts and send them on to the Government. No separate argument is necessary for Barejadi. Its case is even stronger than that of Nadiad. If the landowners of Barejadi are to be held responsible for what happened at the station, why should they not be held responsible also for the incidents at the Ahmedabad and Viramgam stations? Until it has been established that they were in fact connected with the incidents at the station, they certainly cannot be held responsible. They, too, should send a petition. We hope that the two places will get full help from other parts of Gujarat in this matter, and we entreat the Government to withdraw the unjust orders it has passed against Nadiad and Barejadi.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-9-1919

266 THE PUNJAB SITUATION

The thundering clouds have burst at last. The much-disussed Punjab Commission has now been appointed. It consists of Lord Hunter, Mr. Rankin, Mr. Rice, Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, Sahibzada Sultan Ahmed and Sir George Burrow. The Commission will inquire into the causes of the disturbances which broke out in April in the Punjab and other places, and into the steps which were taken to control them and will make recommendations. The Commission will commence its sessions next month. We gather this from the speech of His Excellency the Viceroy at the opening of the Legislative Assembly. Lord Hunter was Solicitor General of Scotland in 1910-11. Mr. Rankin is a Judge of the Calcutta High Court. All Gujaratis know Sir Chimanlal Setalvad. Sahibzada Sultan Ahmed is a brother of Sahibzada Aftab Ahmed Khan, a member of the India Council. He was in the Justice Department of the Gwalior State for a long time; Mr. Rice is a member of the Services and was for several year Chief Secretary in Burma. Sir George Burrow is a Major-General. Thus we find persons from all fields appointed on the Commission as members. It must be said that a good balance has been maintained. Only experience will show whether the members prove themselves independent. Sir Chimanlal Setalvad is a friend and pupil of that able leader, the late Sir Pherozeshah[1]; hence we may take it that he will remain impartial and independent. What we know about Sahibzada Sultan Ahmed is not much and the same can be said about the other members. As Lord Hunter comes from an outside atmosphere, we may hope that he will display the qualities of firmness and impartiality which a chairman ought to possess. That the work of the Committee will be generally open to the public will go a long way in ensuring justice. Whether or no we get justice will, ultimately, depend largely on ourselves. There is no doubt that members of the Commission cannot but do justice if everywhere experienced men give evidence before it. If the people fearlessly present the facts as they know them, we are confident that the truth about the atrocities perpetrated in the Punjab will fully come out. From the published speech of the Viceroy, it can be inferred that the terms of reference of the Commission include a

[1] Sir Pherozeshah Mehta (1845-1915); President, Indian National Congress, 1890, 1909

review of the sentences already passed. But the position will be known more definitely by and by.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-9-1919

267. UNHAPPY PUNJAB

On one side, we hear of injustice in case after case in the Punjab; on the other, stories of the people's sufferings reach us from Swami Shraddhanandji. A young student named Karamchand was sentenced to be hanged, without any evidence, as has been shown in *Young India* by an analysis of the published record of the case. Fortunately, the young man was not hanged, and now he has been given one year's imprisonment. But, in such cases, the reduction of a sentence cannot be taken as evidence that justice has been done. Where no offence has been committed and a guiltless person is declared guilty, to show mercy by reducing the sentence is like plundering someone's property and then returning a part of it to him by way of kindness. The nation returning a part of it to him by way of kindness. The nation asks, or rather those guiltless persons who are undergoing prison terms ask, not for kindness but for justice. If they are in fact guilty, in the case of crimes such as those alleged against them, we have no right to ask for mercy nor is the Government bound to show any. Let us take the case of Dr. Satyapal himself. The information his father has given in his letter to Mr. Gandhi is so painful that it makes a man's hair stand on end. Dr. Satyapal served the Government well during the War. At the time of the alleged conspiracy, both Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapal were under restraint orders prohibiting them from speaking in public. Moreover, Dr. Satyapal was not even present when the conspiracy is supposed to have been hatched on March 30. Before he was arrested, no violent incidents had taken place in Amritsar. Even the report of Dr. Satyapal's speeches produced before the Court was false. Thus, without any substantial evidence, sentences have been passed on able leaders. In these circumstances, it is certain that the people will get no justice without an independent inquiry and will not be satisfied without one. The nation cannot tolerate such injustices. We hope that the Government will soon

appoint an Inquiry Committee and end the discontent prevailing among the people.

Even if this is done, it will still be necessary to provide relief to those whose dear ones have been hanged or are suffering imprisonment. With the help of volunteers, the Sannyasi Swami [Shraddhanand] is active, sharing with the afficted families in their sufferings. Plenty of money is needed for this work. Already about a lakh of rupees has been offered in Calcutta and one lakh in Bombay. According to Swamiji's calculations, yet more money will be needed. The accounts given by him have been published in the papers. We hope that all Gujaratis will contribute their mite to this meritorious cause. We trust everyone will give as much as he can.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-9-1919

268. TURKEY

The Turkish question concerns eight crores of Indian Muslims; and a question that concerns nearly one-fourth of the nation must concern the whole of India. It is impossible that one of the four limbsof the nation be wounded and the rest of the nation remain unconcerned. We cannot be called one nation, we cannot be a single body, if such a wound has no effect on us. Hence it is the duty of all, Hindus and Muslims alike, to understand the main points of the Turkish question. It is Turkey's demand and the demand of our Muslim brethren in India that the territory of Turkey as it was at the start of the War in August 1914 must remain inviolate, and this demand has been forcefully presented by leading Muslims in England. Quoting the words of the Prime Minister, Mr. Lloyd George, they have shown that he, too, had agreed to respect this sentiment. President Wilson also gave expression to similar views. His fourteen principles and five points also imply this. The other nations involved in the War have had their rights preserved to a large extent. What is Turkey's fault then? The issue still remains to be settled but there are hints in the British Press which create doubt in the mind of every Muslim. They fear that Turkey, that is the Muslim world, will not get justice from the Allies, and that the Turkish Empire will be dismembered.

This is no ordinary problem. The problem of the Turkish Empire involve a serious issue for Islam. Islam makes no distinction between the secular and the religious. The Turkish Sultan is himself

the holy Khalifa of Islam; and, if the Sultanate disappears, then according to the Muslim faith the Khalifate will lose all meaning, so strict are the injunctions of the Koran. Hence this has become a serious religious issue for all the Muslim nations.

As he set foot in Bombay, the Maharaja of Bikaner[1] said that Mr. Montagu and Lord Sinha[2] were giving full attention to this question. They say even Lord Chelmsford[3] kept writing strongly about it to Mr. Lloyd George. But merely writing in strong language is not likely to do any good. We believe that Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford owe it, as a duty, to see that the Muslims get the justice to which they are entitled, or, as a mark of protest against the injustice, to give up their posts as Secretary of State for India and as the Crown's Representative [in India].

It is the duty of Muslims to present their case before the world peacefully but firmly and stick to it unflinchingly. There should be no exaggeration in it; nor should it be so presented as to leave room for bargaining. They should demand only that without which, it may be said and proved, the Islamic way of life would lose its meaning. Where it is a question of ethics, that is, of religion, where the deeper emotions are concerned, there can be no scope for compromise, give and take or bargaining. Truth can be only one, and ultimately all see it as such. Turkey's case has justice on its side, the pledge of a British Minister and President Wilson's promise. If the Allies' claim that they fought to protect the right of small States against injustice has any substance in it, then neither Turkey nor the Muslims nor any of us have reason to feel suspicious. But he alone can shake off suspicion who works on tirelessly. Like the Muslims, the Hindus and the other communities also have their duty to do. If they regard the Muslims as their respected neighbours and brethren, they should extend their full support to the latter's demand which concerns their religion. All those born in India have to live and die together. No community can rise at the cost of another, or preserve its rights if it permits those of others to be sacrificed.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-9-1919

[1] Indian representative at the Peace Conference

[2] Lord Satyendra Prasanno Sinha (1864-1928); lawyer and statesman; Under-Secretary of State for India, 1919-20; Governor of Bihar and Orissa, 1920-21; first Indian member of Viceroy's Executive Council

[3] Viceroy and Governor-General of India, 1916-21

269. INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The outcome of the deputation which the Hon'ble Surendranath Banerjea led to the Secretary of State for India on the South African [question] may be regarded on the whole as successful and we can now hope that our fellow-countrymen in that far away land will get justice without having to resort to satyagraha by way of civil disobedience. Mr. Montagu has admitted that our case is perfectly just and assured us that the Commission to be appointed in South Africa will have Indian representatives. If the representatives appointed are in truth representatives and if the four conditions laid down by the Imperial Citizenship Association are fulfilled, we shall have no need to worry over the outcome of the Commission. The conditions are: (1) that there should be an equal number of Indian and white representatives, (2) that the Commission should have no power to reduce the existing rights, (3) that the Commission should have the power to recommend the withdrawal of the law just passed for depriving [Indians] of land and trade rights and (4) that this law should remain in abeyance pending the recommendations of the Commission. The conditions are as necessary as they are reasonable. Our countrymen fear that the Commission has not been appointed to ensure them justice by granting them further rights but to eliminate them from the whole of South Africa, or permit them to stay on only as helots, as has happened in the Transvaal. The best form which popular agitation on this issue can take at present is to secure Indian representation [on the Commission] on these conditions.

We are sorry that Mr. Surendranath Banerjea walked into the trap laid by Sir William Meyer. It was good that Mr. Montagu did not do so too. We trust that Sir William Meyer laid the trap of "reciprocity" in a hasty moment and unintentionally. What it amounts to is that, if in the end our countrymen in South Africa fail to secure justice, we should punish the whites of South Africa. That is, if ever a white tourist happens to come this way, he should be refused entry into India and should be debarred from acquiring land here and the export of a ton or two of coal, if even that much, from India to South Africa should be stopped. Even from a practical point of view, this suggestion serves no purpose. If there is no discourtesy in saying so, acting on it would be like the barking of dogs at an elephant from behind. The whites of South Africa will welcome it, of course. South Africa's trade with India is so insignificant and South African whites

settled in India are so few that this kind of retaliation by us will be pointless. We shall not only make ourselves ridiculous by advancing such a suggestion but also invite uponourselves the curses of our countrymen. A hundred and fifty thousand children of India settled there will have to come away, leaving their property behind, or live on merely as helots. What comfort can it be to them that the export of a few tons of coal to South Africa will have been stopped or that a stray white from there will be denied entry into India? *The Times of India*, which has been ably advocating this cause, has also ridiculed Sir William Meyer's suggestion.

If we go deeper, we shall see that any act of retaliation, even if severe enough in comparison with the original wrong, only recoils upon the person who resorts to it. What the hand does but hurts one's own heart.[1] An injustice can never be cured by another in return. Injustice cannot remove injustice. Even if a hundred and fifty thousand whites were settled in India and we could pass against them, and did in fact pass, the same kind of laws as obtained in South Africa, how would that prevent the ruin of the hundred and fifty thousand Indians? The principle of tit for tat is based on the assumption that the other party is deterred from doing injustice when we have the ability and the will to pay him back in his own coin. This does indeed happen sometimes. It is well known, however, that the total result does not advance the cause of justice; for, countless men have acted on the age-old principle of a tooth for a tooth and an eye for an eye, but injustice has not yet disappeared. Besides, far-sighted writers in the West, too, have been saying that, despite the great advance of science in Europe and the opportunities for education which exist there, hatred and injustice have not diminished. We have direct evidence of this before our very eyes. But we have strayed from the subject. That we can see no meaning in Sir William Meyer's suggestion even from a practical point of view as a means of retaliation is sufficient to show that it deserves to be rejected.

Mr. Montagu has stated that an exercise of the veto is politically unfeasible. "Veto" signifies the power retained by the King to disallow a law passed in any Dominion of the British Empire. Mr. Montagu's statement amounts in effect to saying that the Dominion of south Africa is so strong and enjoys such freedom that, if the King's Ministers advised him to disallow the law passed by it and if the King accepted such advice, there would perhaps be a commotion in the Dominion. This means merely that a partner in the British

[1] Gujarati saying

Empire would secede from the partnership. In this Empire even the weakest person should be protected from injustice and if, in the process, any of the partners secede, the result should be wholly welcome. The British Empire cannot no Empire can endure if it holds even its weakest subjects as slaves for ever, as mere hewers of wood and drawers of water. An Empire that would last has therefore no choice but to abandon those parts of it that always act in opposition to its aims. As a matter of fact, there is no strong reason to believe that the whites of South Africa will raise an outcry if the veto is used. Injustrice, immorality and the like are always cowardly and timid. To start with, such fanatics make a great show of strength and finally yield before the force of justice. The anti-Indian movement in South Africa is based on such rank injustice that, if the Imperial Government were to display even a little strength, it cannot survive. To ensure that the Imperial government displays such strength, only one thing needs to be done. If we raise a dignified but powerful protest and act likewise with strength on behalf of our countrymen overseas living their lives in difficult conditions, we shall strengthen the hands of the Imperial Government and enable it to secure justice for them.

Though we have shown that the Royal veto can be used effectively, we must confess that it is a weapon which must be used sparingly. We believe, as Mr. Montagu does, that a Royal Commission will secure justice. At the present time, therefore, we must concentrate on efforts to see that everything goes well with the Commission.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-9-1919

270. SIGNIFICANCE OF FIJI STRUGGLE

A number of issues are involved in the Fiji problem but, for educating public opinion at present, it is essential to know only one thing. Indentured labourers emigrated from India to Fiji in 1877. To speak plainly, indentured labour means a state of semi-slavery. This meaning is not given by us; it is a phrase used by the late Sir William Wilson Hunter to describe Indian indentured labourers. From that day to this, the outrages committed on the womenfolk of the Indian labourers have been possible simply because of our lethargy or, may be, our ignorance. We have before us the testimony of the good

Mr. Andrews that each woman has to serve three males.[1] These three are indentured labourers; there may be others occasionally. We have translated Mr. Andrews' language, but the readers will easily guess the meaning of the word "serve". A telegram to Mr. Gandhi from Fiji demands that this monstrous outrage should stop. The Fiji Indians say in the telegram that it seems the hope that the Fiji Government will end the present system of indenture will be belied. They fear that the Government has given up the idea of abolishing indenture. If it isabolished, our helpless sisters will be saved from dishonour or, at any rate, we shall be free of the responsibility. It is plainly our duty to see this done. So long as we are ignorant of the snake under our bed, we can sleep in peace, but only till then. The moment we become aware of the presence of the venomous companion, we get alarmed; we should react in similar fashion to indenture in Fiji. So long as we were ignorant of the horrible conditions of our sisters living in Fiji, we could rest and sleep in peace. But now? It is a sin to keep quiet even for a moment. When the whole of India understands this, the immorality in Fiji will not go on for an hour longer. There are lawyers who ask how we can end lawful contracts of indenture, how we can put pressure on the Fiji whites. There can be only one answer to this. A law contrary to morality, a law which upholds immorality, is no law. To respect such a law is to be a partner in immorality. How did it ever happen that a law which served as an instrument of immorality continued to this day? This is a pertinent question. We hope an appeal will reach the Government immediately from every village and town of Gujarat, demanding that the system of indenture in Fiji be abolished forthwith. Mr. Andrews has fixed December 31 as the final date for its abolition. He does not have the power of a government in his hands; but he has greater power than that: the solemn voice of his grief-stricken soul. We wish every man and every woman hears this voice and does his or her duty.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-9-1919

[1] Andrews had waited on the Secretary of State for India, Edwin Montagu, when the latter was in India during March 1918, and placed before him the official medical report of the Fiji Government. " 'When one indentured Indian woman,' ran the damning admission, 'has to serve three indentured men as well as various outsiders, the result as regards syphilis and gonorrhoea cannot be in doubt.' 'That settles it,' said Montagu. 'Ask what you like.' On January 1, 1920, the last indentured labourer was free." *Charles Freer Andrews.*

271. NOTES

SECURITY FROM "NAVAJIVAN"

The monthly *Navajivan*, it may be said, was looked upon with kindness, but the weekly *Navajivan* has not succeeded in remaining worthy of the same kindness. Every newspaper, when changing the frequency of publication or the press, etc., has to make a new declaration and, on that occasion, indeed at any time, the magistrate is authorized to demand security or, if a security has already been taken, even to increase its amount. The *Navajivan* having become a weekly, a declaration had to be made, and the magistrate sent the following order.[1]

Has the *Navajivan* lost its freedom because Mr. Gandhi has accepted its editorship?

FORCED LABOUR IN THE PANCH MAHALS

We often hear it said that the evil of forced labour is more prevalent in the Panch Mahals than in any other district. The matter even went to the Court once. The thing came in for a good deal of discussion at the political conference in Godhra.[2] Now the issue has been setled, so far as the Panch Mahals is concerned. Congratulations are due to Mr. Clayton, Collector of the Panch Mahals, for the circular he has issued, as also to the office-bearers of the Godhra Home Rule League. It was, indeed, very good of Mr. Clayton to have announced his decision soon after his discussion with the local Home Rule Committee. He has made it clear in his order that no one is bound to serve an official at anything less than the prevailing rate of payment and that, if any official brings pressure on the people or harasses them, he will render himself liable to disciplinary action. What has happend is an illustration of how the officials and the people can, by joint discussion, solve such a complicated problem as that of forced labour. We hope complaints of forced labour in the Panch Mahals will now disappear and that the officials will fully respect Mr. Clayton's orders. We would also suggest, at the same time, that people should render proper services to the officials when paid for at the market rate.

[1] This is not reproduced here. It demanded a security of Rs. 500.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Gujarat Political Conference—I", 3-11-1917 & "Speech at Gujarat Political Conference—II", 4-11-1917.

It is our duty to help Government officers and make things easy for them when they are out touring. The officers' duty is not to commandeer services from the people but secure them by polite request and against full payment. Flattery, servility and fear should for ever be shunned; but impudence and rudeness are to be shunned as much.

THE LATE SHETH DAWOOD MAHOMED

Everyone must have read the life sketch of the well-known South African leader, Sheth Dawood-Mahomed, which Mr. Gandhi wrote for the papers.[1] There is no doubt that his death is a great loss to the Indians of South Africa. It is not surprising that the whole of Gujarat should be proud of him, considering that he was born in a village near Surat. His shrewdness and his ability in affairs were such that, had he been born in Europe, he would have become a famous figure. India barely knows him. One who, though illiterate, rose from an ordinary condition and handled business of lakhs, who trained any number of men for business and spent his old age in the service of the people, gave a good education to his son and, by his ability, gained control over thousands of people≈what more could he have done to become famous? Many a famous man has acquired fame without deserving it, and many who never acquired fame have served the people and lived for God. We send our condolences to the family of Sheth Dawood Mahomed and to the Indians of South Africa.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-9-1919

272. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, BOMBAY[2]

September 7, 1919

Some people have been saying that the cry of swadeshi has been taken up all over India, but I don't believe this. I get letters from many places telling me that, if I went to open stores there, the people would start using swadeshi cloth. That, however, does not happen. It wil come about only if people first make up their mind firmly to do so. One gentleman said that we should manufacture cloth finer than English or Japanese cloth and sell it cheaper. But this is not possible.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to the Press", 30-8-1919.

[2] The occasion was the opening of the Gujarat Swadeshi Store.

If we want to spread the movement for the swadeshi vow, we should put up with the hardships which follow for the time being. No cloth anywhere in the world can stand comparison with what I am wearing. Surely, the *Bhagavad Gita* doesn't say that we should dress ourselves in delicate Japanese fabrics. Every shastra says that only our own dharma can save us, and it is our dharma, in our country, to wear cloth made by our workers in their homes, singing hymns as they work. We should accept what our mother gives us, be it plain bread and no more, and to offer thanks to her. This is our first duty. It is undeniable that we don't have enough cloth for all. We should so work as to start a spinning class in every home; we should then have a mill in each home. We shall need no money for this; we need incur no expenditure. If you all want India to prosper, this is the best way. I don't believe that there is anyone who will give up fine dresses straightway and take to wearing khadi. If the young people take up [this work], we shall gradually succeed in improving our condition. We should think before embarking on anything. I place before you this idea which has come to me, hoping that all of you will take it up. The Government, however, has clipped my wings and confined me to Bombay Presidency.[1] If the men and women of this Presidency alone take up the work, they will be able to meet the needs of the whole of India. If the swadeshi movement were flourishing in India as we want it to flourish, we would have swaraj this very day. But, friends, it is not. I am indebted to you for your having listened to what I had to say. In the end, I only pray that God should prosper the enterprise of these friends.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarat Mitra ane Gujarat Darpan, 14-9-1919

[1] An order was served on Gandhiji on April 9, prohibiting his entry into the Punjab; *vide* "Teleegram to O.S. Ghate", 9-4-1919

273. TELEGRAM TO HOME SECRETARY

SATYAGRHA ASHRAM,
SABARAMTI,
[After *September 7, 1919*]

TO
THE SECRETARY
HOME DEPARTMENT
SIMLA

COULD YOU PLEASE WIRE REPLY MY ENQUIRY ADDRESSED P.V.S.[1] AND TRANSFERRED BY HIM TO YOU, REGARDING INTERPRETATION REFERENCE LORD HUNTER'S COMMITTEE.[2]

GANDHI

From a photostat of the handwritten draft : S. N. 6866

274. THE VICEROY'S SPEECH : INQUIRY COMMITTEE

His Excellency the Viceroys speech at the time of the opening[3] of the session of the Imperial Legislative Council is naturally a very important pronouncement, coming as it does after very troublous times through which we have just passed and from whose effects we have hardly emerged. The fact of the actual appointment of the Commission gives relief, though I observe that the Indian Press is not over-enthusiastic upon the personnel or upon the fact that it is not a Royal Commission, but it is one that is to report to Delhi. In my humble opinion, a commission appointed from Delhi can be just as effective as a Royal Commission. And Royal Commissions have been known in our own times to have been perfectly abortive. Lord Morley, when he was in active service, used to say that his experience of them was so unhappy that he did not believe in them at all. He became an unwilling party to them because it was an English weakness. In a case, however, like that of the Punjab, an inquiry is the necessary sequel. We need not, therefore, complain of the inquiry not being a Royal

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to P. S. to Viceroy", 6-9-1919.

[2] Gandhiji received on September 16 a telegram from the Deputy Secretary, Government of India, saying that "the intentions of Government will very shortly be made public. The Government of India cannot intimate them to you in advance."

[3] This was on September 3, at Simla.

Commission, but we have every right to examine its personnel and, though Lord Hunter does not enjoy a world-wide reputation, it need not be doubted that he has a reputation to lose. After all, he must be pre-eminently Mr. Montagu's choice and I would hesitate to distrust his choice or his intentions even though he has quite unjustly and unwarrantedly put in an energetic defence of some of the measures adopted or approved by the Government of India. Nor may one cavil at the appointment of the other members. We in Bombay, however, can derive the greatest satisfaction from the appointment of Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, not because he is a Bombay man but because he is an able advocate and what is more, because he is a pupil and an ardent follower of the late Sir Pherozeshah Mehta. We may trust him to act as fearlessly and as impartially as the late Sir Pherozeshah Mehta and to hold his own against odds. His appointment, moreover, furnishes perhaps an indication of the desire of the Government of India to secure impartial men who have not formed, or rather expressed, opinions one way or other. We have a right to expect Sahebzada Sultan Mehomed Khan to do no less. And I would take leave to add, too, that where Englishmen have not formed preconceived notions or where they have not gone, as all of us sometimes do go, mad over some things, they dispense fearless justice and expose wrong even though the perpetrators may be their own people. I would, therefore, respectfully suggest suspension of judgment over the personnel of the Commission. Trust it and respond to the Viceregal appeal for a calm atmosphere.

I derive, however, much greater satisfaction from the knowledge that, after all, the securing of a proper finding by the Commission is in the largest measure dependent upon our countrymen in the Punjab. If those who know the facts will come forward fearlessly to tell the truth and if there are no degraded beings in the Punjab ready enough to sell themselves for the sake of personal gain, we need have no misgivings. Our case is so excellent, the injustices that have been already brought to light are so glaring that we need not fear an abortion if the people of the Punjab will but do their duty. Why was there justice done in the case of Champaran? It was primarily and principally because the poor, ground-down ryots of Champaran dared to tell the truth. Will the free people of the Punjab do less? There can be but one answer. But we must help them and we shall best do so, not by spilling ink over showing the weakness of the personnel of the Committee or over its not being a Royal Commission, but by

concentrating ourselves upon seeing that there is no espionage either on the one side or the other, that the people of the Punjab are permitted to have a free atomoshere to work in, and there is comfort in the thought that the ever-vigilant and ubiquitous Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji is there, assisted by Sannyasi Swami Shri Shraddhanandji and the indomitable Pandit Motilal Nehru. We need not fear the consequences.

It is noteworthy that the Committee is to investigate not only the affairs in the Punjab, but also in this Presidency. There should be no difficulty in our being able to show the real causes of the discontent as also the happy distinction, on the whole, between the aftermath here and the Punjab. There is one more thing about the Committee before it can be dismissed from consideration. What is the meaning of the reference to the Committee? It seems to me broad enough to cover an examination of the judgments of the Punjab Special Tribunals, whether the Special Commissions or the Martial Law Courts, and to include the power for the Committee to recommend total or partial remission of sentences. But we may not leave anything understood on a matter so vital as this. We must therefore have this point satisfactorily cleared up some way or other.

As regards the Indemnity Bill, though I think that it would have been graceful, even tactful, on the part of the Viceroy not to have mentioned the Indemnity Bill in the same breath as [the] Commission, I submit it is well to suspend judgment till we have seen the full text of the Bill proposed to be introduced by the Government.

ROWLATT ACT AND AFTER

I now come to the debatable part of the Viceregal speech on the events of April. These are H. E.'s words :

> Last session certain hon'ble members during the passage of the Rowlatt Bill gave me warnings of an almost minatory character that if that Bill passed into law there would be agitation of a serious nature. I think the hon'ble members will realize that no Government could deviate from a policy which it regarded as essential on account of any threat of agitation. However, there were those who thought that it was necessary to make good this threat, and as a consequence, the deplorable events occurred which are to be the subject of an enquiry. It is not my intention to discuss these events but I would point out this that it is easy to minimize their gravity. After the disorders have been put down no one who had the responsibility of dealing with them is likely to forget the issue which they had to face. Murders and arson were

committed, telegraph wires were cut, railway lines were torn up and for some days my only sure communication with the Government of the Punjab was by means of the wireless. Ocular proof of the gravity of the situation with which we were then faced and of the damage done is still manifest in many of the districts which suffered, and to anyone who would attempt to minimize the trouble I would say : 'Go into these districts and see for yourself the vestiges of senseless destruction which are still there.'

What does the Viceroy mean by "the minatory character" of the warnings given by the Indian Councillors? Is a warning 'minatory' when it is actually carried into effect? Is His Excellency not going too far in prejudging the issue that is to be submitted to the Commission of his own creation? The warning was that of friends. It was open to the members to make good their warnings by creating an agitation in the country that could tell upon the Government and it would have done so already, had the Government hastily and foolishly not precipitated complications. Why does His Excellency tack the violence after the 10th of April on to the orderly, religious and clear agitation that culminated in the day of humiliation and prayer on the 6th of April? Is it not permissible to us to retort that the Government found that their pet Act was slipping out of their hands, that they went mad and, setting aside their own previous knowledge and canons of propriety, resorted to disorderly acts which brought about the regrettable violence and consequent loss of innocent lives, both European and Indian? It is for the Commission to judge the issue whether the Rowlatt agitation brought about the mob violence or whether the Government incensed the mob to violence. I respectfully suggest that inasmuch as he of his own showing gave the Punjab Government a blank card and even issued orders on their recommendation, His Excellency stands in the same box as the Punjab Government to be judged by the Commission.

His Excellency has done gross injustice to me by tearing from their context words of mine and applying them to a different situation altogether. His Excellency has not read the whole of my speech before the Ahmedabad audience on the 14th of April in which the passage quoted by him occurred.[1] It was due from him to the public and me to have sent for the speech and read it. He would then have seen that my speech applied only to the events in Ahmedabad which I

[1] For the text of this speech: *vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting, Ahmedabad", 14-4-1919.

was able to investigate personally. That speech would have shown to him, as it would show to him now, that my remarks refer to Ahmedabad and Ahmedabad alone, not even to Viramgam or Kaira, for of these I knew nothing then. I wish wholly to dissociate myself from holding the view imputed to me by His Excellency the Viceroy. I still know nothing definite at first hand of the Punjab and of "educated or clever men" in that province.[1] Whilst, therefore, I alter nothing of my speech in Ahmedabad, I form no judgment about the Punjab. I have, however, received sufficient evidence from the Punjab to show me that the Punjab Government have resorted to measures that nothing can condone.

CLEMENCY

The talk of clemency comes with ill grace, and comes upon a public that asks for no clemency, no mercy, but asks for simple justice. If there has been a plot really to wage war against the King or to overthrow the Government, let those who are found guilty by a properly constituted court be hanged. I have certainly no desire that Lala Harkishen Lal, Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Choudhri, Dr. Kitchlew, Dr. Satyapal and some other men of ripe years, being well-known public men, should be saved from the gallows if they have incited directly or indirectly the mob to violence and plotted against constituted authority. Let the Commission decide, and there will be time enough to talk of clemency, if there is to be any. If the Government of India are sincerely desirous of doing justice, let them set all the political offenders free, save those men who were caught red-handed in the act of violence and have unquestionably been found guilty of the offence they might have committed. If His Excellency wishes really to see justice done, and nothing more, but nothing less, let him follow what was done by the Government of South Africa.[2] When, as a result of the Satyagraha struggle in South Africa a Commission was appointed

[1] The Viceroy had said in the course of his speech: "It is my desire now and it is that of His Honour the Lt.-Governor of the Punjab to exercise clemency towards the unfortunate misguided men who were led away, by some 'educated and clever man or men', to use Mr. Gandhi's words, to commit outrages." *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, quoting this in its issue of 6-9-1919, took exception to the statement and asked that Gandhiji should, if he believed in this assertion, disclose the source of his information or else contradict the Viceroy.

[2] The reference is to the appointment of the Solomon Commission by the Union Government of South Africa in December 1913; *vide* "Speech at Johannesburg", 18-12-1913.

there, some of my fellow-prisoners and I were discharged from prison on the advice of the Commissioners, with the deliberate intention that they and I might be able to help the Commission to a right judgment by leading evidence on behalf of those whom we represented. I hope that if His Excellency cannot see his [way] to follow the South African prece[dent] of his own accord, the Commission will strongly advise him to do so.

SOUTH AFRICAN SITUATION

It is now my pleasant duty to come to those portions of the Viceregal speech which are not open to exception. His Excellency's pronouncement on the South African question is satisfactory so far as it goes. Sir Benjamin Robertson who is already personally known to General Smuts can, in many respects, by his tact and diplomacy, smooth the way for a just and honourable settlement. I take it naturally that whilst Sir Benjamin Robertson will go as a representative of the Government of India to put their case before the South African Government and generally to assist the Commission to be appointed, Mr. Montagu's announcement that two representatives on behalf of the Indian interest will be appointed on the Commission stands intact, and that we shall soon have the names of proper representatives announced. I venture entirely to associate myself with the sentiments expressed by H. E. the Viceroy that "it behoves us to see that our words and actions are not such as may embitter the existing sentiment and make a settlement more difficult."

FIJI INDENTURES

The announcement about Fiji, too, is unexceptionable, indeed highly satisfactory, and we are entitled to hope that before long, and certainly before the year is out, we shall see the last of the indentures in Fiji.

But we may sleep neither over the South African nor the Fiji question. We must agitate, until the degrading immorality of Fiji is wiped out and the impending destruction of Indians in South Africa is averted beyond doubt.

Young India, 10-9-1919

275. LALA LABHU RAM

Bad as are the cases from the Punjab which it has been my misfortune to examine from time to time, that of Lala Labhu Ram is no better. Isolated cases of injustice will happen [in] the best regulated society and [under] a model Government. But when injustice becomes the order of the day, it is time for honest men not merely to protest against it but to withdraw their support from a system of Government under which such organized injustice is possible, unless that system is changed and systematic injustice becomes an impossibility. I have no desire to exaggerate the picture. Nothing can be further from my intention than to exacerbate the relations between the two races. And if I could prevent exacerbation by remaining silent, I should do so with the greatest gladness. But I should fail in my duty if I did not draw the attention of the Government to injustices as they come under my notice. They are like poison corrupting the whole system. The poison must be expelled or the body perishes.

What is this case of Lala Labhu Ram then? The reader had the facts of the case last week. The evidence for the defence does not appear to be complete and yet it seems to be the whole of the evidence received by Lala Labhu Ram's solicitors. It is quite possible that that evidence was not recorded, for does not the judgment of the Court commence with the pregnant sentence: "The evidence for the defence is worthless"? In one place the notes of evidence contain the remark: "Cross-examination for accused No. 9. Nothing relevant"! The judges might have considered the defence evidence too as irrelevant. Fortunately, one has the exhaustive petition of Mrs. Labhu Ram to fall back upon. It must be accepted as a correct statement of the evidence in the absence of contradiction.

Mr. Labhu Ram is not a poor student lad like Karamchand or a petty trader like Jagannath. He is a Civil Engineer; he belongs, says Malandevi, "to a very respectable and loyal family of Lahore. Several relations of his occupy responsible positions in the service of Government." He finished his studies in Glasgow. He returned from England in 1912. He was for some time State Engineer in the Poonch State,

> where he not only discharged his professional duties to the entire satisfaction of his superiors but materially helped the authorities in recruiting work. He

> was not a member of any political society or of any Samaj or Sabha nor did he even take part in any propaganda of any kind whatsoever. He was not in the habit of attending any lectures even. He took no part whatever in the recent hartal.

I have dealt with Mr. Labhu Ram's position in society somewhat fully, because the case at the worst turns upon the credibility of witnesses. Several of the accused, of whom Lala Labhu Ram was one, pleaded an alibi and, as I have had to remark in connection with one case, courts always look upon the defence of alibi with considerable distrust. It is, therefore, necessary to dispose of the case at its worst and give the Court credit for fairness in weighing evidence. I submit then that unless the Court has overwhelming and unimpeachable testimony against that of Lala Labhu Ram, who said he was not present at the Badshahi Mosque meeting and who was respectably supported, the Court was bound to accept his evidence and grant him an honourable discharge. In such cases the status of the accused is a material consideration in coming to a decision, and I claim that Lala Labhu Ram enjoyed a status in society which should have stood him in good stead.

But the reader may dismiss the plea of respectability from his mind. It would not be perhaps an unfair reasoning on the part of the opponents the upholders of the Punjab proceedings to say that, when the very best of men in the Punjab were under severe suspicion and were drawn into the turmoil of April last, the queston of respectability should be ruled out of account. But the Punjab Commissions have gone infinitely further and in many cases, as the reader of these pages has by this time seen, ruled out practically the whole of the defence. Mr. Labhu Ram was arrested on the 20th April, i.e., eight days after the day of the alleged offence. He is supposed to have been one of the hundred men who were charged with a simultaneous assault on one of the police officer. He was not known to this officer before, nor was there a single prosecution witness who had known the accused at all intimately before. Identification is difficult at best of times. It is most difficult, if not almost impossible, when it is a matter of picking out men from an excited crowd of several thousands. Mr. Labhu Ram's name does not occur in the police diary in which the names of the assaulters were noted down. Out of 11 prosecution witnesses 6 had nothing to say about the accused Mr. Labhu Ram. "Witnesses," says Mrs. Labhu Ram,

> who identified the petitioner's husband are police employees or interested in them. Most of them have appeared as prosecution witnesses in other Martial Law cases also.

This is a most damaging statement, if it is true. It means that they were professional witnesses. One would think that, as the accused was arrested eight days after the event, there would be some explanation given by the prosecution of the delay. This is what the petitioner says about it :

> The name of the petitioner's husband not having been entered in the diary of the complainant, it is not stated how and when the Police came to know of his complicity.

This is a sample of the case for the prosecution. The case for the defence is overwhelming.

> Dr. Bodhraj, a well-known physician of Lahore, Dr. Bholaram and his compounder gave evidence that Labhu Ram was busy with them in connection with the treatment of his ailing son at the time of the alleged assault.

The reader will be shocked to know that Mr. Labhu Ram's sentence of transportation, with forfeiture of property has been commuted to 14 years. Though I can appreciate and fully share a wife's sorrow and agony over an unmerited separation from her husband and, therefore, while I understand Mrs. Labhu Ram's position in asking for a commutation, if a complete discharge might not be possible, I am unable to derive the slightest satisfaction from the fact of the commutation. Mr. Labhu Ram is not a child. He is a man of the world, of culture and fully aware of his responsibility. If he took part in a cowardly assault on an inoffensive man who was but doing his duty, he deserves stern justice and no mercy. For to the crime of an assault he has added that of deliberate perjury. If, therefore, his case is not true, it is not one for mercy, and if it is true, justice would be hardly satisfied when he is discharged.

I do not deal with the monstrous method of the Court in taking judicial notice of a "state of rebellion". It is really an abuse of legal terms to consider the state of Lahore on the 12th of April as one of rebellion and a martial proclamation of the Government to be a document for judicial notice in the manner it has been. The evidence before the Court does not sustain a charge of waging war against the King. Only recently the people of Liverpool went much further than the Badshahi Mosque meeting. But the long-expected Commission has now been appointed, and if the reference includes the power to

revise the sentences, the members of the Commission will have an opportunity of pronouncing upon cases like Mr. Labhu Ram's. But I submit to the Punjab Government as also to the Government of India that, in cases where the recorded evidence itself shows a patent miscarriage of justice, they are bound in honour to discharge the accused without hiding themselves behind the Commission.

Young India, 10-9-1919

276. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Friday [*September 10, 1919*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Abiding by your letter and that of Mahadev, I have abandoned the idea of coming. It is a pity that the meeting about Padhiar[2] is also on Sunday. Please be present at the meeting, Apologize to Bhai Mavji Govindji. But let the meeting be held. I would even ask that themeeting about the Satyagraha should also be held. I would consider it enough if such a meeting was held and you attended it.

You must not worry about my health. I do take such care of it as is necessary, even greater care where I can. I have made certain changes right away. I work only as much as I must.

I do not mind what you have written. Love can only make you write as you do.

I am writing this letter for both you and Mahadev assuming that he will now be there.

For the sake of my health do this much: Meet Umar and ask him to permit the printing of *Young India* at Ahmedabad.[3] If that is not possible then I shall detain Mahadev here. The matter can be sent there and Bhai Nandlal and Bhai Yadvadkar can take up the responsibility of reading proofs, etc. Sending the matter there is quite a strain for me.

[1] The addressee received this letter on September 12, 1919. Friday prior to that date was September 10.

[2] Amritlal Sunderji Padhiar who died on July 18, 1919

[3] The syndicate controlling *Young India* was managed by Umar Sobhani and Shankerlal Banker.

You have fully understood the work of the Swadeshi Sabha. I think it is necessary to carry on that work through the Sabha. In my view, the Sabha should be made to do a lot of work.

You must so improve your health that I can entrust you with jobs without any hesitation.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

What has happened to Govind Babu?

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

277. SATYAGRAHA

[*September 11, 1919*][1]

I notice so much misunderstanding still prevailing about satyagraha, both among ourselves and the British, that, though I have written and spoken at great length about it, I think it necessary to say something more even at the risk of repeating myself.

The word "satyagraha" was coined in South Africa to describe a certain mode of action. The great fight in which our brethren there were engaged was at first known, even in Gujarati, as "passive resistance". I once spoke about this struggle to a British audience;[2] the English chairman on the occasion observed that the helpless Indians, without a vote and without arms, had no alternative to "passive resistance". The chairman was a friend of mine. He stated his view in all sincerity of heart, but I felt humiliated. I knew for a fact that the struggle carried on by the Indian people in South Africa was no expression of their weakness. The community there had deliberately chosen that particular form of struggle. When it was my turn to speak, I corrected my friend's idea and explained that a struggle such as was carrried on by the South African Indians could never be carried on by the weak and that I saw greater courage in that way of fighting than what the soldier needed.

[1] The article first appeared in the Pateti (Parsi New Year) Number of *Sanj Vartaman*, a Gujarati evening newspaper of Bombay. In 1919, Pateti fell on September 11.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Germiston", 7-6-1909.

When I was in England in connection with that very struggle, I saw that the suffragettes would set buildings on fire or assault officers with whips, and this sort of struggle, too, they described as passive resistance, and the public knew it by that name. In the struggle carried on in South Africa, there was no room at all for such assaults.Hence I felt that there was a great danger in describing the struggle in South Africa as passive resistance. In South Africa itself, I could not think of an English word which could become current. At the meeting of Englishmen mentioned before, I used the expression "soul force" to describe our struggle; but I had not the courage to use it always to denote our struggle. Intelligent English friends also realized the inadequacy of the expression "passive resistance", but they could not give me another expression. "Civil resistance" describes the struggle perfectly. The phrase occurred to me by chance only a few days ago and I have been using it in English. "Civil resistance" is wider in meaning than "civil disobedience", though it suggests less than "satyagraha".

Moreover, I saw in South Africa that our struggle had pure truth and justice in it and the force we employed was not brute force but soul-force. In however small a measure it may have been, it was yet soul-force. We do not find such force employed by animals. Besides, there is always some energy of the soul flowing through truth and so we started describing the struggle in South Africa as satyagraha.

Thus, there is no exaggeration in asserting that the term satyagraha had its origin in the idea of purity. We shall be able to understand now that satyagraha does not consist merely in a civil disobedience of law; often, it may consist in not committing such disobedience. When we feel it to be our duty to commit civil disobedience, when we feel that not to do so would be a blot on our manliness and a degradation of the soul, saytagraha can consist only in such disobedience. Such satyagraha may be employed not only against the Government but also against society; it can be employed as between husband and wife, father and son, friend and friend; in short, this valuable weapon may be used for almost any reform in any sphere. It is a weapon which sanctifies both him who wields it and him against whom it is employed. Its rightful use can never have an untoward result. It is invariably attended with success. If people employ *duragraha* in the name of satyagraha and unpleasant consequences follow, the latter is certainly not to blame.

Such satyagraha is often resorted to in families, whether people know it or not; that is, if a son feels that his father has been unjust, he does not give in to the injustice but cheerfully bears the punishment the father may mete out to him and, in this way, he ultimately succeeds in winning over the father, even if he were a formidable one, and securing justice from him. But, slaves of inertia that we are, we hesitate to apply this law outside the domestic sphere. Hence it is that I have considered satyagraha in social and political matters a new experiment. The late Tolstoy[1] was the first to draw my attention, in a letter of his to me, to its being such.

It is the belief of many that satyagraha can be used only in matters concerning religion. My wide experience proves just the contrary. By employing it in other spheres, we introduce religion into them and by doing so we succeed the sooner in fact and save ourselves from no end of hypocrisy.

It is my firm conviction that some of the most imperceptible laws of economics are at work in satyagraha. In this sense I believe satyagraha to be a practical method. Maybe it will take some time before people accept it as such, since, being a new method in the sense indicated above, they may not understand it. Is it any wonder, besides, that, when we are working for the best results, the thing should take some time? When satyagraha has become an accepted method in India, political and social reforms, which at present take such a long time to bring about, will be effected in a much shorter period; the distance between the rulers and the ruled and their distrust of each other will disappear and in their place will grow love and trust. It will be the same, we may be sure, as between the different sections of society.

Only one thing is necessary to ensure that the method spreads widely among the people. I feel convinced that, if the leaders understand it in its purity and place it before the people, the latter will respond readily. In order to understand it rightly, one must have faith in truth and non-violence. There is no need to define truth; of non-violence. I do not demand any very exacting interpretation in this context. We should bear no ill will towards those from whom we wish to obtain justice; we should not seek our end by using violence against them or causing them any injury, but through courtesy, though

[1] For the correspondence between Gandhiji and him, *vide* "Letter to Leo Tolstoy", 1-10-1909 & Appendix "Tolstoy's Letter to Gandhiji", 7-10-1909.

remaining unshaken in our resolve; this is all I mean by non-violence here and only so much of it is necessary for bringing about reforms of this kind.

All our activities will take on a new form when the people have accepted satyagraha. We shall spare ourselves much fuss, all too many pompous speeches, petitions and resolutions and much scheming. Personally, the social, economic and political progress of the nation, which I see in satyagraha, I can see in nothing else.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-9-1919

278. SWADESHI IN A NUTSHELL

[*September 11, 1919*]

WHAT IS SWADESHI?

Mr. Gandhi puts his position regarding "swadeshi" in a nutshell in the Pateti number of the *Sanj Vartaman*:

Swadeshi restricts all Indians to the exclusive use of articles made in India. It contains our economic independence; swadeshi therefore means fiscal autonomy. Without fiscal autonomy swaraj has no meaning; swadeshi therefore may be called swaraj also.

But India is in such a ruined condition that we are not in a position to produce all our necessaries. It is, therefore, open to us to restrict swadeshi only to the most pressing of our necessaries.

The most pressing of our necessaries is clothing, and hence swadeshi consists, at present, in restricting ourselves to the use of cloth produced in India.

This swadeshi is a religion and it is not only for the Hindus or for Bombay; it is for all India and for all residents of India, Hindus, Mussulmans, Parsis, Christians, Europeans or Asiatics [men and women][1].

HOW TO PROMOTE SWADESHI?

1. By taking a vow to use exclusively swadeshi cloth.

2. By helping in and increasing the production of cloth, as we do not at present produce cloth sufficient for our needs.

[1] The words in square brackets have been taken from *Navajivan*, 14-9-1919.

3. It is the duty of every one of us to help in the production of cloth, be we rich or poor. The rich may do by means of mills, but for the poor there should be means suitable to themselves wherewith theymay help in this great work. These means are our old spinning-wheels and handlooms.

If every woman understands it to be her duty to devote all her spare hours to spinning cotton, we can have yarn at the price of cotton.It every man devotes all his spare hours to weaving hand-spun yarn, we can have cloth at the price of cotton.

Every man and woman can learn both these arts. Spinning takes a week to learn; weaving eight weeks.

A spinning-wheel costs 4 rupees. A handloom cost from 25 to 40 rupees. Both these can be easily made by our carpenters.

Those who cannot spin cotton gratis can get 3 annas for spinning a lb. of yarn. Those who cannot weave yarn gratis can get one anna at least for weaving a yard of cloth 24 inches broad.

I wish no one will raise the question of despair, viz., when and how can the whole country engage itself in spinning and weaving?

If every reader determines to spin and weave himself, he will give to the country at least the yarn that he has spun and woven.

And why should we not expect others also to muster the same courage and patriotism that is in us. [If we are good, the whole world is good; likewise, if we are industrious, the whole world will be so.]

As a result of the present movement about 2,000 wheels are working and about 200 weavers have begun to weave afresh.

Lady Tata, Lady Petit, Mrs. Jaiji Petit and other ladies have already begun or are to begin spinning. So many of our Hindu sisters have learnt the art that it would be invidious to mention names.

I ask every reader to bethink himself of his duty.

Young India, 13-9-1919

279. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Thursday [*September 11, 1919*][1]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I have your letter and your comments. Your arguments about Indemnity[2] were considered and answered while we were in the train. It does not matter if the paragraph, nevertheless, has been omitted. We can write about it again if we think it necessary.

Polak's letter is ominous. If the Princes are not to be examined, what use will a Commission be? This important issue has been deliberately ignored.

I was also not happy with "gouri" after "Durga". Anyway that is what I wrote and noticed the thing only when I saw the issue. I wrote "gouri" after "Mani" but crossed it out. Durga Mahadev didn't sound well. But we cannot, I think, be concerned with how things look or sound. Some of the other mistakes to which you have drawn attention could have been avoided. I showed all of them to Indulal.

I am a little better than I was yesterday.

I hope you are all right.

I shall arrive there on Saturday.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S. N. 11405

280. LETTER TO J. CRERAR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 12, 1919

DEAR MR. CRERAR,

Your letter has followed me to the Ashram. I was wondering why I was not receiving a reply, but I felt that you must have mis-read

[1] The articles by Durgagouri and Mani, references to which occur in this item, were published in the first issue of *Navajivan*, 7-9-1919. The letter appears to have been written on the following Thursday, i.e., September 11.

[2] *Vide* "Viceroy's Speech", 14-9-1919 and "The Indemnity Bill", 20-9-1919.

the letter[1]. I thank you, however, for your reply[2] . In view of your letter, I certianly refrained from publishing the article in question. Imay, however, state that I saw it reproduced, I believe *in toto*, in some newspaper or other.[3] The document too, quoted by Mr. Pickthall, I observe, was reproduced in the English Press.

Yours sincerely,

J. CRERAR, ESQ.
SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT
JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT
POONA

From a photostat of the handwritten office copy : S. N. 6850

281. GUJARATIMAL'S CASE

Gujaratimal is a lad eighteen years old, having received no more than Middle School education. At the age of sixteen he got himself appointed as a dresser in the Military Department. After working for about a year in Multan Cantonment, he went to Egypt and spent one year there, also on service. He subsequently returned to the Punjab, taking one month's leave. He reached Madhranwala, his native village five miles from Hafizabad, on the 8th April. He remained at his village getting his shop repaired. But

> to our astonishment some policemen came there on the 16th with warrants issued against him, and prosecuted him accordingly, leaving us in utter amazement, for we could not understand what the matter was.

Thus writes the seventy years old father of Gujaratimal. This is not one of those cases in which a stranger can arrive at a firm decision merely on reading the evidence, which was reproduced in the last issue of *Young India*. It will be remembered that the case of Gujaratimal is

[1] It referred to the Government's ban on the publication, of any matter relating to the terms of peace with Turkey which was likely to cause excitement in India. For the text of the letter, *vide* Addenda.

[2] Crerar had written: "I am not in possession of the document, but his statement at the end of his article that there was any disposition on the part of the Conference to ridicule arguments based on Muslim sentiments is opposed to all known facts of the case and its publication in India would be calculated to produce a totally erroneous impression."

[3] Marmaduke Pickthall's article on Turkey was published in the *New Age*, 10-7-1919.

one out of nineteen tried together. I had occasion to analyse the judgment in the case in connection with that of Karamchand,[1] and all I have said about that judgment naturally applies in this case, as in that of the lad Karamchand. But upon reading the evidence, it is not possible to come to a positive conclusion that the defence of alibi was completely established. The whole of the evidence, as the reader must have observed, has been taken in such a scrappy manner that one is unable to know what has been omitted. It is also clear from the evidence that the prosecution witnesses are mostly policemen orconnected with the police, and that the accused were not arrested red-handed, but most of them were arrested some time after the affair. Certainly Gujaratimal, who is said to have been the principal speaker and one of the assailants, was not arrested red-handed, but two days after the date of the alleged assault. Gujaratimal was sentenced to be hanged. His sentence was subsequently commuted to transportation, and still more subsequently, according to what his father has heard, to seven years' rigorous imprisonment. It is a serious matter to sentence a lad of eighteen years, who denies his guilt, who denies having been present at the scene itself and who has only lately rendered service to the Crown, to be hanged on the strength of the very questionable evidence of identification by witnesses of no standing.

To these observations I would add a summary of the facts supplied by the father of Gujaratimal, and respectfully submit that if the facts supplied by the father be true, he is entitled to a complete discharge without further investigation. And even without those, the whole case requires a thorough investigation. The father says :

> on the 23rd May, i.e., five weeks after the event, the Deputy Commissioner of the District ordered all the residents to assemble in one place to be identified by the prosecution witnesses, and Lieutenant Tatam.

Gujaratimal was also among the crowd. Now comes the most material part of the father's statement.

> At this occasion none of the prosecution witnesses Nos. 3,4,7,8,9,15,16,18,19, who aftewards gave evidence against him could identify him, nor even Lieutenant Tatam.

If this is true, Gujaratimal has certainly been wrongly convicted. And what shall we say of the value of all the identification evidence when

[1] *Vide* "Victims, Not Guilty", 3-9-1919.

we read such a shocking deposition as this of prosecution witness No. 13 :

> Mr. Tatam identified Karam Singh, Jiwan Kishen, Mul Chand. Mr. Tatam even pointed me out as one of the assailants, and when the Deputy Commissioner said that I was Tehsildar, Mr. Tatam said that the man he remembered was fatter than I.

If this is true and the prosecution surely cannot question its truth this is a circumstance which must raise gravest doubts about the value of the identification evidence led by the prosecution. The father adds that prosecution witness No. 3 says that Gujaratimal delivered an oration at the station, whereas P.W. No. 16 says that it was Gian Singh who delivered it. This discrepancy can be proved from the recorded evidence. Again the father says, prosecution witness No. 15, who could not identify Gujaratimal on the 3rd May, said at the trial that Gujaratimal carried a flag, etc. The father has submitted already several petitions to the authorities. He is a man of poor circumstances. The accused is an insignificant lad. In my opinion, therefore, the case becomes all the stronger for a searching inquiry. His Excellency the Viceroy was pleased to say in his speech :

> For those cases which have come before the Government of India, I have no hesitation in claiming that they received the most careful consideration, and that orders were passed with the greatest possible dispatch.

The letter before me says that the father has petitioned His Excellency also. It is not impertinent to inquire what was the result of the "most careful consideration" given to the most damaging statements made in the father's petition. If his statements were considered to be worthless, he was, and still is, entitled to know on what ground the decision was based.

Young India, 13-9-1919

282. A SHAMEFUL SIN

[*September 14, 1919*][1]

TO MY SISTERS :

I want to talk to you on a matter simple and yet of very great importance, a matter on which depends, and without which is impossible, the salvation of India. Man in his stupidity may forget his

[1] The Gujarati original was published in *Navajivan*, 14-9-1919.

duty towards woman, but should that prevent woman from doing her duty towards her sisters?

I have received a letter from Dohad giving news which is shameful to us all. The correspondent writes that the women of the *Dhed* community there who cannot procure work which may be done at home go out for labour, which they procure at the price of their chastity. The male members of these women's families craven creatures know this fact, but are sleeping over it. I have used the word *Dhed* for this community, but they are weavers. I do not know why some weavers are known as *Dheds*. But if we always keep in mind the sad fact that, in spite of their clean calling, these people are regarded as untouchables, some of us are sure some day to be free from the sin of untouchability. As women for want of other work have to go out for labour, so also have men. Hence, when they saw that I was ready to supply them with yarn, they pledged themselves to do no other work than weaving, provided I guaranteed to them a regular daily supply of a maund of yarn. My correspondent further informs me that the chief reason why they took this pledge was their knowledge of the immorality I have referred to. You may rest assured Dohad is not a solitary sink of this iniquity. When I was in Umreth, I was told that most of the women there added to their little income by winnowing pulses for merchants. They have to go to them to receive and return the pulses and there they have to put up with all sorts of indecent jokes and abuse. It has been my misfortune to hear this tale of woe at numerous places during the course of my four years' wanderings throughout India. It seems to me that a hundred years ago, when millions of our mothers used to spin cotton, such things must not have been happening. I therefore beg to request my wealthy and educated sisters that, if they are anxious to protect the chastity of their poor sisters, they must take a prominent part in the movement for handspinning and handweaving. I do not desire at this place to repeat all the arguments why I prefer these occupations to any other. Suffice it to say that spinning has been regarded as an ancient, noble calling which even queens made their own. It is very easy to learn spinning. Any ordinary carpenter can make a spinning-wheel. If millions of our sisters work the wheel, all the yarn they may produce can be consumed in India alone. And that being almost as useful as food-stuffs, spinning cannot be regarded as a temporary occupation. It does not require great physical labour and it can be left off and taken up at will and hence it is an occupation to fill our leisure hours with. If

some good women were to take up this work, they would be able to put an end to the enormities I have mentioned above. They will thereby be ensuring for some of our sisters suitable work for want of which they may have to seek other work in which their chastity is jeopardized.

Sister reader, even if you be rolling in wealth, you are bound to protect the chastity of your poor sisters. I have pointed you out the royal road. I hope you will think over it this week : I hope to show next week the various ways in which every woman can help in this work.

Young India, 17-9-1919

283. HOW TO REMOVE THE BLOT

[*September 14, 1919*][1]

TO MY SISTERS :

Last time I showed by some illustrations how, on account of our negligence, idleness or indifference, our poor sisters fall an easy prey to temptation for want of some independent work.

It is quite proper that we are horrified at the plight of thousands of our sisters in far off Fiji. For that we are accusing the Government of Fiji and asking the Government of India to make strenuous efforts to put a stop to the indentures which breed immorality in Fiji. To do so is our clear duty. But what are we doing for the women, more numerous than in Fiji, suffering before our very eyes?

For removing the blot nearer home we do not need to pass resolutions demanding justice from Government. For that we ourselves have to work to the utmost of our capacity. Every one of you, sisters, has to find out a remedy to end this evil. It is the object of this paper to help you in thinking out the remedies.

As we found last week, the best protection for the chastity of our poor women, and to tell the truth, of all women, is the spinning [-wheel]. Perhaps you will say, "we can understand that for poor women, but what have other women to do with the spinning-wheel?" There is a proverb among us, a very good proverb, that, "an idle man ruins himself and his country". I can say from my own experience that idleness feeds our passions. If our monied sisters were to devote

[1] This is in continuation of the preceding item.

their leisure to some useful work instead of gossiping or some other needless activity, they would engage their mind, hands and feet in a fruitful manner and [if] they were to take to spinning, they would serve a double purpose. A sister became a widow only a few days ago. She came to know of the work of spinning. As she cannot go out of her house for at least one year, belonging as she does to a good family, she has taken up the work of hand-spinning. Within six days she has been able to send half a pound of fine spun yarn. It is her devout wish that she might be able to spin enough yarn for her family before she leaves the widow's corner.

But I have digressed. We are considering how to help poor women who go astray on account of force of circumstances. If you are able to devote all your time to the work of reclamation, you would go to the villages, find out what your poor sisters are doing there, teach them, if they do not know, how to spin, supply them dressed cotton, paying them the labour [charges] for spinning it into yarn. The Bombay Swadeshi Sabha has undertaken the work of supplying cotton and, in a short time, many places will be selected for that purpose. The local Sabha also has opened such a branch and provides facilities for supplying such cotton. I do confess that all cannot give all their time for such work. Those who can devote only [a few] hours and are not in a position to [leave] their own native village or city [may] well take care of their own locality. Large-hearted women cannot be satisfied with merely taking care of themselves. They must infect others with their purity. Hence, such sisters will try to understand and better the lot of their neighbours. They may open a club for spinning in their own locality, supporting and instructing their less fortunate sisters.

If you cannot do that much, if you do not believe in your capacity for persuading your other sisters or have no heart for it, you can at least learn spinning for yourself and, by doing that work for a fixed period every day, you can set an example to your other sisters and, if you spin your yarn free of charge, you can to the extent help your poor sisters by making it possible to pay them a higher rate. You will see in *Navajivan* from time to time examples of sisters who have already begun such work. It is my hope that you would all take part in such a movement according to your capacity a movement which nourishes the life of the nation, which helps its poor, which protects the chastity of its women and which is calculated to bring economic independence to India in a simple and easy manner.

Young India, 1-10-1919

284. ADVERTISEMENTS

[*September 14, 1919*][1]

We have reproduced this letter because the criticism Shri Khandwala makes is also made by other friends. Shri Khandwala's fear is unnecessary. Labouring under the false belief that advertisement can be secured by money alone, the correspondent believes that swadeshi articles will not get support from *Navajivan*, which accepts no advertisements. Money is not at all required to spread information as to the place of getting a thing when it is needed by the country. When the scope of *Navajivan* is properly known and its workers organized, it will be our endeavour to bring to light the obscure industries of our country in these columns even at some expense to the proprietor, if necessary. When advertisements are inserted by payment, it is well-nigh impossible to control their matter or language. Of the various advertisements that have come under our notice, ninety-nine per cent are totally useless. The advertisements that are most paying relate to medicine and it is our belief that the deceitfulness and obscenity that are often found in such advertisements are harmful to the country. We know many friends who have contracted disease by using advertised medicines. Who has not been deceived by advertisements regarding other things? It is our mistaken belief that we get newspapers cheap because they take advertisements. It is forgotten that the things that are advertised are bought by the readers and it is the readers who have ultimately to pay for the advertisement charges. The price of medicine does not lie in the drug so much as in the bottle, the cork and most of all in the advertisement. Hence, sometimes, we pay one rupee for a medicine worth a pice only. If there were no system of advertisements, we are sure to save at least half the price.

Young India, 24-9-1919

[1] The first two sentences of this and the following item have been taken from *Navajivan*, 14-9-1919, in which they originally appeared in Gujarati.

285. SWADESHI V. MACHINERY?

[*September 14, 1919*]

In reply to a correspondent, Mr. Gandhi expresses his views about the compatibility or otherwise of machinery with swadeshi :

I have observed that this doubt is felt by many people, and accordingly I have given the reply too. Pure swadeshi is not at all opposed to machinery. The swadeshi movement is meant only against the use of foreign cloth. There is no objection to weaving mill-made cloth. But I do not myself wear mill-made cloth and in the explanations to the swadeshi vow I have certainly suggested that it should be the ideal of every Indian to wear hand-spun and hand-woven cloth. If, fortunately for India, crores of people happen to translate this ideal into practice, the mills may perhaps have to suffer some loss. But if the whole of India makes that pure resolve, I am sure that even our mill-owners would welcome that resolve, respect its purity and associate themselves with it. But it takes long to outgrow inveterate habits. There is thus room in the country for both the mill industry and the handlooms weaving. So let mills increase as also spinning-wheels and handlooms. And I should think that these latter are no doubt machines. The handloom is a miniature weaving mill. The spinning-wheel is a miniature spinning-mill. I would wish to see such beautiful little mills in every home. But the country is fully in need of the hand-spinning and hand-weaving industry. Agriculturists in no country can live without some industry to supplement agriculture. And in India, which is entirely dependent on favourable monsoons, the spinning-wheel and the handloom are like *Kamadhenus*[1] . This movement is thus intended in the interests of 21 crore peasants of India. Even if we have sufficient mills in the country to produce cloth enough for the whole country, we are bound to provide our peasantry, daily being more and more impoverished, with some supplementary industry, and that which can be suitable to crores of people is hand-spinning and hand-weaving. Opposition to mills or machinery is not the point. What suits our country most is the point. I am not opposed to the movement of manufacturing machines in the country, nor to making improvements in machinery. I am only concerned with what these machines are meant for. I may ask, in the

[1] Kamadhenu is the mythical cow which bestowed anything one wished for.

words of Ruskin, whether these machines will be such as would blow off a million men in a minute or they will be such as would turn waste lands into arable and fertile land. And if legislation were in my hands, I would penalize the manufacture of [labour-saving][1] machines and protect the industry which manufactures nice ploughs which can be handled by every man.

Young India, 17-9-1919

286. TELEGRAM TO SIR GEORGE BARNES

AHMEDABAD,
September 14, 1919

SIR GEORGE BARNES
SIMLA
MANY FRIENDS QUESTION MY INTERPRETATION VICEREGAL PROGRAMME MERIT REGARDING SIR BENJAMIN ROBERTSON PROCEEDING SOUTH AFRICA. DOES SIR BENJAMIN'S APPOINTMENT REPLACE MR. MONTAGU'S STATEMENT ABOUT TWO REPRESENTATIVES ON FORTHCOMING SOUTH AFRICAN COMMISSION OR ARE THEY STILL TO BE APPOINTED. IF SO CAN YOU GIVE INDICATION THEIR NAMES. PRAY REPLY.

GANDHI

From the original pencil draft in Gandhiji's hand : S. N. 6484(b)

287. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Sunday [*September 14, 1919*][2]

DEAR MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. It is not good that your health is not improving. If you forget Anand and come here for some time you are bound to get better. And if you do not there is nothing to prevent you

[1] The source is damaged. These words are taken from the Gujarati version.

[2] From the reference to raisins in the postscript, it appears that the letter was written before the one dated September 16, 1919. Sunday before September 16 was September 14.

from going back. Minor illnesses grow into serious illnesses. Hence I wish you would not take your health lightly.

I am sure that Bombay is not the place for you. I am always having attacks of migraine. But I am taking good care. It appears that I shall have to come there on Friday in connection with the South African issue.

I am returning herewith Shraddhanandji's letter. Get copies made of the list of names contained in the letter and send them to the newspapers, with a note saying that the names on the list are as given in Shraddhanandji's letter. Do not mention the telegram, but say something to the effect that the demand has been made by those who have paid money. What matters is that the names should be published. If anyone raises the question why the names have not been published in *Navajivan*, say that the demand is to have them published in the daily newspapers. When the names are published send cuttings to Krishnadas and Swamiji.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

If Bhai Anandanand starts out for here tomorrow, send with him 5 seers of raisins.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

288. VICEROY'S SPEECH

His Excellency the Viceroy's speech at the time of the opening of the session of the Legislative Council deserves attention. Generally, such speeches have something to tell us. But in this speech there is more to think over and act upon than to learn. From among the many points covered in the speech, for the present I wish to draw the people's attention only to the following: (1) the problem of Turkey, (2) the problem of the Punjab and, incidentally, that of the Commission and of Indemnity, (3) the problem of South Africa and (4) that of Fiji.

PROBLEM OF TURKEY

I am sorry to say that the most disappointing part of the entire speech of the Viceroy is that which refers to the problem of Turkey.

In reporting the speech telegraphically, newspaper correspondents say that out of the 55 minutes which the Viceroy took to read out his speech, he took hardly a minute over the sentences which referred to Turkey. I should admit that even in a minute the speaker can say much, that is, can make an important point. But in these sentences which the Viceroy took a minute to read out, I find nothing but disappointment. His Excellency has stated that he had done his best to see that the fullest possible expression was given to the feelings of Muslims, that not only had the Government of India made strong representations to the Imperial Government, urging the views of the Indian Muslims, but that these views had also been presented directly to the Peace Conference by our representatives. Moreover, lest sufficient weight might be not attached to their words, three prominent Muslims, selected to accompany these representatives of ours to the Peace Conference, had also been associated with them. Indian Muslims [he said] might rest assured that their feelings had been fully conveyed. His Excellency has in this way evaded an important question. What comfort can it be to the Muslims that he did his best to convey their feelings? It is not only the Muslims who feel on this issue, but the Hindus too, their blood-brothers. Let us hope that the Viceroy conveyed their feelings as well. Even if he has, what does it profit us? What one would like to know is whether the British statesmen have made this question their own. That they have advocated the cause of the Muslims does not mean much. Do they feel in the matter as the Muslims feel? And if they do, the question is, what stand are they going to take before the Peace Conference? To give a hungry man full opportunity to say that he is hungry is like branding a man who has sustained burns. Muslims do not want vakils to express their feelings. They want water to quench the fire of their suffering. And the Viceroy has provided no reply to the important question whether the British statesmen are ready to give them this water or whether the Muslims will get it. It is the duty of the people and of the leaders, as also of the Maharaja of Bikaner, to have this matter clarified.

THE PUNJAB

In his reference to this issue, the Viceroy has taken no account of the people's feelings. Just as, at the time of the passing of the Rowlatt Act, popular feeling were brushed aside as so much rubbish, so now His Excellency has dismissed the agitation which followed in

much the same manner, and has laid down a principle which I very much hope the people will fight. That principle is this : "The members of this Council will agree that no Government should deviate from a policy which it regards as essential, on account of any threat of agitation." The right principle, as against this, one which recognizes public opinion and exalts both the rulers and the ruled, is this : "All governments must abandon a policy against which people carry on a sustained agitation." That is why I have been saying all along that, so long as the Rowlatt Act exists on the Statute Book, that is to say, so long as the Government stubbornly persists in its opinion in opposition to public opinion, even the best Reforms imported from Engand are worthless. It is, therefore, essential that the people make Herculean efforts to demolish the fearful principle laid down by the Viceroy. Even history is against His Excellency. I need not go far into the past for instances. The reductions in the sentences against Babu Kalinath Roy, Lala Radhakishan and others, held in high respect in the Punjab, are due to popular agitation. We have no reason to doubt that the policy considered essential by the Government was to pass heavy sentences and to uphold them. Had Lala Goverdhandas not come from the Punjab, had we not known about Kalinath Roy and others and had public resentment not been expressed with one voice throughout the country, I am sure there would have been no reduction in these sentences. But the Viceroy seems to think it humiliating to submit to public opinion. In the West the officials have to submit to public opinion, whether they like it or not, as we learn in our schools and read in the papers. If the Viceroy believes that in India submitting to popular opinion is a humiliation for the Government, we can easily show to him that this is his delusion. Poets have sung praises of Ramachandra for abandoning Sita in deference to public opinion,[1] not publicly expressed, and that is what has made him a revered figure right to this day. Unless and until respect for public opinion is revived in India, the people will not be contented and happy. If the principle laid down by the Viceroy is not only his personal view but that of his Government as well, the later ought to change it and the people will see to it that it does.

[1] According to the last book of Valmiki's *Ramayana*, believed by modern scholars to be a later addition, Rama, when he was king of Ayodhya, came to know that some of his subjects thought ill of Sita for having lived in the custody of Ravana, her abductor. On his orders, she was taken to the forest and abandoned on the banks of the Ganga, where she found shelter in Valmiki's hermitage.

But His Excellency did not stop with laying down this principle. He said that those who had held out threats of agitation thought it necessary to carry out their threats and unhappy results followed. In saying this, His Excellency has acted as judge, though he himself has appointed a Commission to see that justice is done. It is the Commission which will decide whether the violence was the result of the agitation or of the serious mistakes of the Government. It is surprising that, in the face of this, the Viceroy should assert that the painful events which occurred were the result of the agitation.

"EDUCATED AND CLEVER MEN"

I must also say that the Viceroy has done me an injustice. In my speech in April about the incidents in Ahmedabad, I had said that those incidents would not have occurred if some educated and clever men had not had a hand in them. Everyone who reads the speech will see that my words did not apply to any other place. I still adhere to what I said, but the Viceroy had no right to apply my words to any place other than Ahmedabad. He did apply them to the Punjab, however. I still know nothing about the Punjab at first hand. From my study of some cases there which have come to my knowledge, it is clear to me that, despite incitement by any number of educated and clever men, the violence which broke out would never have broken out were it not for the serious errors of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, whether he did all that he did deliberately or otherwise. When, on April 6, people all over India, in cities and in small villages, fasted and observed a hartal, we witnessed a peaceful and solemn demonstration such as we have never known in the country at any time in the past. Hundreds of thousands of men and women proved to the world that we are one nation, that we suffer with one another and that we are swayed by the same emotions. Till this date, however, people had done nothing particularly reprehensible. The demonstration on the 6th incensed the Punjab Government and Sir Michael O'Dwyer committed a series of inexcusable blunders. This provoked the people and they too made mistakes. The Commission will judge these incidents, not by the standard of satyagraha but by standards which are universally accepted in the West in these days and, instead of deciding whether or not people made mistakes, will decide who committed the first mistake.

His Excellency the Viceroy has informed us in his speech that a Commission has been appointed for the purpose. I have seen criticism regretting that this is a Committee and not a Royal Commission, and that some injustice has been done by the refusal to appoint a Royal Commission. It seems to me that there is no great difference between a Royal Commission and a Committee appointed by the Viceroy. The appointment of a Royal Commission is notified in England and the Commission submits its report to the Imperial Government. In the present case the appointment of the Committee is notified by the Government of India and it will submit its report to the Viceroy. Even so, the members of the Commission appointed in India cannot be nominated without the consent of the Secretary of State of India. We have had experience of Royal Commissions having been appointed, which proved unavailing, and of local Committees having been appointed and of justice done by them. To me, therefore, there seems to be no great difference between a Royal Commission and a Committee appointed by the local Government. The outcome of the Committee's labours depends in some measure on the members who constitute it. Examining these names, we see that, though we cannot be enthusiastic over all the names, we cannot say, on the whole, that the members are biased men or that they are not men of independent judgment. The Chairman is Lord Hunter. He is not a man of Imperial standing, but he was Solicitor-General of Scotland and we have, therefore, no reason to fear that he will hesitate to express independent views. As for the other members, we have a standard of reference by which to judge them, and that is Sir Chimanlal Setalvad. We have no reason to criticize his appointment; on the contrary, we would enthusiastically welcome the Committee if all the other members were of the same calibre. Sir Chimanlal Setalvad is an advocate of established reputation and, what is more, takes part in public life. He was also a follower, a supporter and a friend of an able man and lover of freedom like Sir Pherozeshah Mehta. We may, therefore, trust to his acting impartially and fearlessly in doing justice and carrying others with him as well. If, thus, from Bombay they have selected an independent-minded and capable leader, we may assume that in selecting others too a like standard has been followed more or less. Sahibzada Sultan Ahmed is a brother of Sahibzada Aftab Ahmed Khan, a member of the India Council. However, what the Committee's report is will depend on us, that is, on our brethren in the Punjab. If

they come forward to tell the truth without fear and if no Indian comes to give us false evidence to further his own base interests, we need have no fear about the Committee's report. Though the Committee can hold secret sessions for reasons which may appear sufficient to it, it will generally take evidence in public. It will have, thus, to base its report only on this evidence. In some of the cases in the Punjab, the injustice has been so patent that even an illiterate person can see it. What other opinion can the Committee express about them? I should admit that I entertain no fear about what its report will be. The only fear is about our ability to lead evidence properly. Personally, I do not have this fear either, and want the reader, too, not to have it. The Hon'ble Madan Mohan Malaviya, Sannyasi Swami Shri Shraddhanand and the brave Pandit Motilal Nehru have taken upon themselves to collect evidence and there is no reason, therefore, to fear that evidence would not be presented properly. Thus, instead of concerning ourselves with what kind of a Committee it is, we should really direct our attention to how we can place all the facts before it. It is also for us to see that the question whether the Committee's terms of reference include a review of the judgements already pronounced and the sentences already passed is clarified beyond doubt. Though the Viceroy's words seem to imply as much, any doubt on an important issue like this must be removed. The reader will remember that the Committee is not only for the Punjab, but that Bombay province is also included in the scope of its inquiry. We shall, therefore, have to prepare for it. To me it seems that we need to give our main attention to obtaining an unambiguous statement of the Committee's terms of reference and preparing ourselves for presenting our case to it.

"INDEMNITY"

And now remains the question of "indemnity". Indemnity means the immunity of officers against civil or criminal proceedings for their actions. The Viceroy has said that they intend to introduce in the present session a Bill granting such immunity and there has been a good deal of protest against this. Even telegrams have been sent to the Viceroy on behalf of certain public bodies to say that such an Indemnity Bill ought not be passed before the Committee's report is published. I wish to place before readers my understanding of a law of this nature. The officers should not be held personally responsible for their actions under Martial Law. Even apart from Martial Law,

officers are not liable to criminal or civil proceedings for any orders passed by them under the oridinary law, even if those orders are subsequently proved to be wrong or to have been passed out of prejudice or malice. The Government may, however, hold a departmental inquiry and can dismiss them, but they cannot be made answerable in any court of law. Acts under Martial Law are always protected through special legislation and everyone accepts this as a general principle. That is why I say that we need have no fear if the Government wants to pass an Indemnity Act right now. We should allow the Bill to be passed if its provisions are unobjectionable. We do not want to send to the gallows the officers who gave or issued wrong orders and the judges who wrongly passed death sentences. Even if we ask for such power, we shall not get it. They will remain immune against such punishment. Every State needs such protection. Even when we come to enjoy swaraj, the State will retain this power. The officers will then too commit grave mistakes and the public will get excited; even under swaraj the people will resort to violence; if the spirit of pure satyagraha has not come to prevail in India by then, there will be Martial Law and firing, followed by appointment of Commissions. Even under swaraj Indemnity Acts will be passed to protect the authority of the State. But then, as now, the actual provisions will need to be looked into. About this Bill, too, I would therefore say that, rather than complain that it has been brought in prematurely, we had better have a careful look at its provisions. For instance, we may not object to a clause providing that the officers who issued orders for firing would not be liable to prosecution for murder or that they could not be sued for damages. But we should strenuously oppose any provision making such officers immune against departmental inquiry or dismissal for misconduct or incompetence. We should also oppose a provision to the effect that all sentences and orders, whether just or unjust, would remain and could not be modified. These are only some illustrations. Thus, my humble view is that we are only justified in opposing undesirable provisions in the Bill.

SOUTH AFRICA

His Excellency's pronouncement on this question will not be considered unsatisfactory. The decision to send Sir Benjamin Robertson to present our case is a welcome one. His presence there cannot but have a powerful effect on the whites of South Africa. The

cables we have received from that country suggest that the white traders there are still bent on mischief and complain that the new law is not being properly administered. In these circumstances, the presence of a representative of the Indian Government will prove useful on issues of this kind. According to my understanding of His Excellency the Viceroy's pronouncement, the representatives referred to in Mr. Montagu's announcement will also be appointed. If these representatives are strong and independent men, I have no doubt that they can be very effective and the injustices from which our countrymen suffer will be very much mitigated.

FIJI

The Viceroy's announcement about Fiji is entirely satisfactory and we can now hope that, before the year is out, the conditions in which our sisters suffer outrage will have disappeared, and the indentured labourers will have been set free from their bondage. We need not believe, of course, that with the ending of the system of indenture, the immorality which has taken root will disappear forthwith. The ending of the system will absolve the Government and the people from the ever-increasing blame which is being laid at their door. For the past, of course, our shame remains.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-9-1919

289. A DIALOGUE[2]

We publish here a dialogue exactly as it took place only a few days ago. To make it interesting to the readers, some of the sentences have been broken up and the picture of Hind Devi has been touched up a little. Except for these changes, the questions and answers are reproduced exactly as they occurred. The value of the dialogue lies in the fact that it actually took place. The names of the speakers have been purposely left out.

A : Jai Sachchidananda. I wonder if you recognize me?

B : You did not have this ochre robe on then!

A : True, father, I was initiated into this dress by a certain mahatma.

B : Did you not give any thought to the matter?

A : I had faith in the mahatma. I used to reflect a little on religion, and so I knew that what the mahatma advised could be done.

B : Do people reverence you when they see you in this dress?

A : Yes, father, they do, to be sure.

B : Are you worthy of such reverence?

A : Oh, no ! How can I claim that I am? I am full of attachments and aversions.

B : You beg for alms, no doubt?

A : Yes, I do.

B : Do you say anything when receiving the alms?

A : Not much, but occasionally I do preach.

B : Have you done any study?

A : Only a little. I have read a few shastras in Prakrit.

B : Are you happy leading such a life?

A : I wish I were! This is an idle quest in which I am engaged. I would certainly do what is good for me. Can you show me the way?

B : I should very much like to ask you to discard this dress, and that is easily done. But now it is better to think how best you may live so as to be worthy of it.

A : Indeed, that would be best.

B : I know well enough that you are a devotee of Hind Devi.

A : That certainly is my ambition.

B : Have you beheld the Goddess?

A : I do not catch the point.

B : Do you have a mental picture of Hind Devi?

A : I have not thought about the matter.

B : I fancy that the Goddess wears a sari made in Japan. The sleeves of her satin blouse made in Paris are bordered with Parisian lace. On her forehead is a small vermilion mark made with imported stuff. On her wrists are English bangles. In her right hand are spikes of *bajri,* glittering like gold and of *jowar* with grains like pearls. In her left hand is a bit of rotten, dusty cotton thread. The Devi has the colour of the wheat near by; her face is downcast; she looks as if she had been crying. Around her, her children, evidently famished, are with painful slowness working in the fields. On the left are spinning-wheels covered with white ants; the cotton-strings round the wheels have snapped, the spindle-holders are about to drop down; around her are seated our womenfolk, dozing. A few weavers are engaged in weaving bits of cloth.

A : Yes, that is a faithful picture of the Goddess.

B : Do you understand, then, what the Goddess is saying to both you and me?

A : To be sure, that we must work.

B : Yes, of course, it is that. He who performs no *yajna*, does no physical work, is a thief. That is what the *Gita* says.[1] But don't you think the Goddess is telling us something more than that?

A : Oh, do tell me, yourself.

B : From her looks, the Goddess seems to appeal to us that we should help her to be rid of those foreign garments, to clean the spinning-wheels for those sleepy women and set them spinning again.

A : What you say sounds as true as gold.

B : Well then, we shall succeed in determining what you should do, so that you may live as befits your ochre robe. Many a sadhu dishonours his robe. These are a burden on the nation; you will surely admit as much!

A : No one can deny it.

B : Then, you should learn spinning and weaving, teach them to others and so ensure their and your regeneration. Your spinning-wheel will preach for you.

A : Indeed, I feel I have been rather hasty in donning this robe. My intention was good, but now I shall lose no time to pick up spinning and weaving.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-9-1919

290. NOTES

THE TRANSVAAL ASIATICS

The news received last week from the Transvaal adds fat to the fire. At a Congress of the representatives of municipalities in the Transvaal, merchants associations, trade unions and other institutions, a resolution was passed to the effect that the administration of the anti-Asiatic laws was slack and needed tightening up. The Congress has protested against giving citizenship rights to Asiatics. It has, moreover, decided to establish a South Africans' league, in other words, an

[1] III, 12

association of the whites of South Africa. The object of this association will be to acquire the immovable property at present owned by Asiatics after paying them reasonable compensation and to take all possible measures to eliminate skilfully the Asiatics living and doing business in the Transvaal.

Another telegram received from Pretoria is also suggestive of the feelings of the whites. Representatives of municipalities, merchants' associations and other institutions gathered at a mammoth meeting, where the question of the Transvaal Asiatics was discussed. The chairman painted a dark future for South Africa if the problem remained unsolved. The meeting passed a resolution moved by Mr. Munnik, to the effect that the ever-increasing influence of Asiatics held a serious threat to the economic and social life of the Transvaal whites. Hence immediate legislation to solve the problem was advocated.

The Cape Times, severely criticizing Mr. Montagu's reply to the deputation which waited on him under the leadership of Mr. Surendranath Banerjea, says that the Secretary of State for India was not well-informed about the difficult and delicate problem in the Transvaal. The paper reminds him that the Government had cast all its weight against the amendment moved by Mr. Collins to the law recently passed in the Transvaal in which he sought to prevent Indians from carrying on trade in any part of the Transvaal. Mr. Montagu should have made it clearer to the deputation that the Union Parliament had very much appreciated India's help to the Empire and should have detailed with greater understanding the difficulties experienced by the Government of South Africa in solving the Indian problem.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-9-1919

291. TELEGRAM TO MAHADEV DESAI

AHMEDABAD,
September 15, 1919

MAHADEV DESAI
CARE DR. JIVRAJ
BHATWADI
BOMBAY

PRINT CORRESPONDENCE RE LIBRARIES.

GANDHI

From a copy of the original: S. N. 6877

292. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Monday [*September 15, 1919*][1]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I have your letter. We do not get the *Social Reformer* and so I do not read the criticism in it. Write to Natarajan and tell him that he should arrange, without fail, to send a copy to the Ashram. This time, please send the copy yourself.

Herewith the Director's note. I have sent a telegram about publishing the letters. You ought to have sent the criticism on *Navajivan*. You should send the comments which appear in every issue. Whether I am ill or well, so long as I busy myself with *Navajivan's* editorship, I cannot do otherwise, can I, than ask to see comments on it.

We can get *Young India* printed here in some other press. I feel every moment how necessary it is to bring out both paper from the same place. I am trying to see if this can be done.

You should translate Gomati's article. I think it is wonderful. "A Dialogue" is on a lower level, but it is an important piece. It is a salutary thing for sadhus. Godess India's picture especially, simply refuses to disappear from before my eyes. The printing errors are so

[1] The letter seems to have been written on the Monday following the appearance of "A Dialogue" in *Navajivan*, 14-9-1919; *vide* "A Dialogue", 14-9-1919

insignificant as to be readily pardoned. The workers did not have an hour's rest.

Take care of your health. Nanalal's[1] article applies to you. His ideas also deserve to be presented in English.

Nanalal has not understood me at all. He simply does not comprehend satyagraha. My *tapascharya*[2] has been inordinately praised and my *brahmacharya*[3] extolled to the skies. I myself feel that both are imperfect. One who started sex gratification with his wife at the age of 15 and continued to indulge in it fairly often for 30 years, what praise does such a one's *brahmacharya* merit? It is like the cat which, after having killed several hundreds of mice, decided to go on a pilgrimage to Mecca. It is Devdas, rather, who seems to be observing *brahmacharya* worth speaking of. I set no great store at all by my *tapascharya*. It seems to come easily to me. My truthfulness, I feel, is peculiarly my own. My ahimsa[4] is an intense feeling and the satyagraha born of a blending of the two is indeed indescribable. How can Nanalal understand it? You have been trying to understand it. Both these things in me are growing stronger every day. I do not know how far they will take me. Nanalal's poem gives no idea of this at all. It shines with his love, but gives no evidence of spiritual understanding. *Tapascharya, brahmacharya* and so on are the means and satyagraha is the end. Truth is the same thing as *moksha*[5] . Anyone who does not display *agraha*[6] for *moksha* is no man; he is only a brute.

You have had more than you bargained for and so let us stop here.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] Eminent Gujarati poet (1877-1946). The reference is to the article "Decay and Renewal in National Life", which was serialized in *Navajivan,* starting with its first issue dated September 7. The article stressed the need for fulness of joy in national life.

[2] Self-suffering accepted as moral discipline

[3] Purity of mind and body in regard to sex

[4] Concern for all life and refraining from injuring any of its manifestations. The term is usually translated as "non-violence".

[5] Deliverance from phenomenal existence, regarded as the supreme end of life

[6] Literally, firm insistence. Gandhiji has in mind the second element in *Satyagraha,* the first, *satya,* meaning truth.

[PS.]

I am in agony without Sorabji's will. Kindly free me from it. Where can it be? There is another telegram from Rustomjee Sheth.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11406

293. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM,

Monday, Bhadarva Vad 6 [*September 15, 1919*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. Inquire at the Karnatak Press, etc., and find out the maximum number of copies of *Navajivan* that can be printed there. It seems to me that there is every chance that we may have to go up to 50,000 copies.

Saw the comment of *Gujarati*—what does it know about Satyagraha?

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

294. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

AHMEDABAD,

September 16, 1919

MATHURADAS

247 BAZAR GATE ST.

BOMBAY

TELL MAHADEV POSTED ARTICLE DIRECTOR'S LETTER. COMMENT INDEMNITY BILL NEXT ISSUE.[2]

GANDHI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the reference to increasing the number of *Navajivan* copies being printed, it is clear that the letter was written in 1919; *vide* "To the Public Outside Gujarat", 24-9-1919.

[2] *Vide* "The indemnity Bill", 20-9-1919

295. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Bhadarva Vad 7 [*September 16, l919*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. If you have not sent the raisins do not send them by post. I shall take them when I go there. I am afraid I shall have to return on Friday night itself. Right now *Navajivan* takes up the whole of my time. I am sure I shall be able to regain my health. Bhai Shankerlal fully endorses the idea of bringing out *Young India* from here. You must learn the trick of improving your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

296. LABH SINGH[4]

> No mere reduction of sentence, it is most humbly submitted, can be a consolation to Your Excellency's memorialist or in an adequate measure will right the wrong that has been done him or meet the ends of justice.

This is an extract from the latest petition of Mr. Labh Singh, Barrister-at-Law. I am sure this petition will not fail to evoke from the reader both sympathy and admiration; sympathy because of the wrong that has been done him and admiration because the jail has not broken the spirit of the young Barrister. He asks for no mercy; he pleads for justice, if he can secure it. But in spite of H. E. the Viceroy's remarks to the contrary, the spirit of justice is moving so slow and there seems to be such a disinclination even in the high quarters to do real justice that one almost despairs of getting it. Look at Sir Edward Maclagan's speech in reply to the Hon'ble Pandit Malaviyaji's resolution for the appointment of a Commission. He

[1] It appears from the contents that this letter was written about the same time as the letter to the addressee dated "Before September 21, 1919".

[2] The title in the original carries the suffix: "M.A., L.L.B. (Cantab), Barrister-at-Law."

recalls the warning of the Viceroy against the temptation "to minimize the events of last April." "I do not think", His Honour proceeds, "that even while the disorders were in progress, people outside the Punjab fully realized the extreme gravity of the situation." He adds,

> Had it not been for the rapidity with which the disturbances were made, had they been allowed to proceed but a little further than they did, the lives and property of all classes of people would have been in the most imminent danger.

This is merely begging the question and anticipating the verdict of the Committee of Enquiry. Regarding the sentences, His Honour again begs the question by saying that the findings of the Special Courts should be accepted because "they represent the unanimous conclusions, in each case, of three experienced officers". But the unanimity and experience are beside the point when behind them lies a temporary aberration of the intellect. His Honour, however, attempts to silence his critics by saying,

> Although I have examined many cases, I have not found one in which I felt justified in impugning the substantial correctness of the finding of the Court.

In the face of this emphatic opinion I despair of securing or expecting justice either for Mr. Labh Singh or for any of the great Punjab leaders, who are at present adorning the Punjab jails. I do however feel tempted to say, with due deference to the Lieut.-Governor of the Punjab that, if he has not found a single case for challenging the correctness of the findings of the Special Courts, of all the many cases that have come before the public, it has not been my good fortune to find many judgments to inspire confidence in their correctness. Let me illustrate my point by taking this very case of Mr. Labh Singh. He is not a man of straw. This is the full text of the Judges' remarks in his case :

> Labh Singh, accused 4, took an active part in the inception of the agitation against the Rowlatt Act and was present at meetings of the 12th and the 13th. On the latter date, he is said to have at first opposed the commission of acts of violence, but finally agreed. He was seen in several places with the mob on the 14th but appears to have rendered assistance to the authorities on that date. We find him guilty under section 121, I.P.C.

The whole of this judgment, the reader will find reproduced in the issue of *Young India*, July 30th. I ask where is, in the above remarks, anything but good, said even by the Judges about Mr. Labh

Singh, except the expression "but finally agreed"? On the Judges' own showing there was nothing indictable in the acts prior to the 12th April. The whole of the conviction is based upon the uncorroborated testimony of an approver, notwithstanding the fact that there was incontestable evidence to show that he "endeavoured to render assistance to the authorities" (I am quoting the Judges' words) after the supposed approval by him of acts of violence. But, in order to accept the approver's testimony, the Court says at the end of the judgment, "Labh Singh evidently repented of his action." Let the reader remember that this is the same judgment in which poor Jagannath was sentenced in the face of a clearly established alibi, and even before replies to the interrogatories issued by the Commissioner had been received. No wonder Mr. Labh Singh says,

> The order of the Lieut.-Governor, it is humbly submitted, goes only to confirm and perpetuate what is a great and serious miscarriage of justice.

It is admitted that, beyond signing the notice for the 5th April, Mr. Labh Singh neither convened nor addressed a public meeting "at Gujranwala or elsewhere at any time within 12 to 15 months preceding the occurrence of the 14th April". Mr. Labh Singh further says,

> The court proceeded to the judgment with inordinate haste and without waiting for the answers to the interrogatories issued to some of the witnesses for the defence.

I do not wish to burden these notes with more quotations from the very able and convincing statements of Mr. Labh Singh and his two petitions, but I would ask every lover of India and every public man to carefully study these three documents together with the judgment in the case. I think that we owe a very plain duty to Mr. Labh Singh and his co-prisoners. According to Sir Edward Maclagan, they are all clearly guilty. According to the evidence before the public, they are all clearly innocent. We may not allow young men of brilliant ability and moral worth to have their careers blasted for life by our indifference. Posterity will judge us by our ability to secure justice in the cases such as I have had the painful duty of placing before the public. For me, justice for the individual, be he the humblest, is everything. All else comes after. And I hope that the public will take the same view. If the convictions stand, it will not be because we are unable to secure justice but because we are unwilling and incompetent, for I feel that even the Government of India and the

Punjab Government will find it hard to withstand a unanimously expressed public opinion based on facts and couched in the language of moderation.

Young India, 17-9-1919

297. TELEGRAM TO KHILAFAT COMMITTEE

[SABARMATI,]
September 17, 1919

THANKS WIRE[1] LEAVING TODAY. PLEASE MEET ME THURSDAY MORNING LABURNUM ROAD.

From a copy of the original in Gandhiji's hand : S. N. 6881

298. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

AHMEDABAD,
September 17, 1919

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
247 BAZAR GATE ST.
BOMBAY

LEAVING TODAY MEET MUSLIM FRIENDS REGARDING KHILAFAT. INFORM MANIBHUVAN MAHADEV AND SHIVLAL VARDHMAN PUBLISH PRESS. I SHALL BE BOMBAY THURSDAY FRIDAY.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] This was as follows: "The President and Members of the Khilafat Committee of Bombay request the pleasure of the presence of Mahatma M.K. Gandhi at a public meeting of the Mussulmans of Bombay which will be held on Thursday the 18th September, 1919, at 8.30 p.m. Bombay time at the Masan Shah Tank, Bellasis Road, to further consider over the question of Khilafat and the holy places of Islam and the present Islamic situation . . . Please reply."

299. LETTER TO CHHOTALAL TEJPAL

ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Wednesday [*September 17, 1919*][1]

BHAISHRI CHHOTALAL,

I have your letter. If you send me a factual statement which will take up one column in *Navajivan*, I will publish it. What you have sent is too long.[2] I have no time at present to shorten it.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

CHHOTALAL TEJPAL
ARTIST
RAJKOT

From a photostat of the postcard in Gujarati in Gandhiji's hand : S. N. 2588

300. SPEECH ON KHILAFAT, BOMBAY[3]

September 18, 1919

I am glad to be able to be present at this gathering and I thank you for inviting me. The question we have met to discuss this evening is not new to me. Ever since my arrival, I have been mixing among Mohammedans of all shades of opinion and I know that it is a question among questions. On a right solution of it depends the future peace of this land. It therefore affects not only the Mohammedans of India but it affects the Hindus and other as well. It is a great Empire question. I was therefore pained to see that H.E. the Viceroy had only one minute out of fifty-five of his speech to the Legislative Council to devote to this question. He might usefully and legitimately have reversed the order. I have publicly and respectfully warned His Excellency of the gravity of this question. With it is bound up all that is most sacred in Islam. I can enter into your feelings for I know that Hindus would feel if their religious honour was at stake. I know that

[1] The date is derived from the postal cancellation mark.
[2] *Vide* "Notes", 5-10-1919.
[3] Gandhiji addressed a predominantly Muslim meeting on a resolution on the threatened dismemberment of Turkey. Miya Mahomed Haji Jan Mahomed Chhotani, J. P., presided.

with you Khilafat is all in all today. I am sure therefore that you have the whole of the Hindus with you in this your just struggle. I have pleaded with His Excellency in a recent writing[1] of mine that it is not enough that he has represented your case, that he secured representation before the Peace Conference. This is good but not enough. He has to feel with you. He has to make your cause his own. I respectfully suggest that both His Excellency and Mr. Montagu, if they know your feelings properly, should tell His Majesty that they should be relieved of the charge entrusted to them if this great question is not solved to your satisfaction. His Majesty's ministers are bound, representing as they do a great Mohammedan interest, to secure a proper adjustment of the case. We are on the eve of obtaining a measure of responsibility. It will be wholly inconsistent with a disregard of the Mohammedan sentiment. But I confess I do not fear the ministerial neglect of duty so much as I fear yours the leaders' on the platform and this vast audience. If you and I do not do our duty today, we shall rightly deserve the courses of the millions of Mohammedans who are hoping that somehow things will come out right. Deep will be the disappointment if and when they find that things have not come right. The British rulers are shrewd and sagacious. And they take no time to find out whether we are serious or at play. I want therefore to ask you to ask yourselves whether you are serious about this very serious matter. Believe me that, if you are, nothing is yet lost. Our best thanks are due to those noble men like Lord Ampthill[2] and others who are championing your case. You have only seen one letter from that good Englishman, Mr. Andrews. Let me assure you that it is the least of his ceaseless effort on your behalf. But his services and those of the Englishman whom I have just mentioned will be of no avail, if you do not feel about it. You have opened with a prayer and you will close with a prayer. We cannot deceive Him, the ever wakeful and omnipresent witness. He will surely answer the prayers of the just. Your cause, all the best opinion of the world has borne witness, is just. Are you just? Are you sincere? The test is simple. A sincere and a true man is ready to sacrifice himself for a cause. Are you ready to sacrifice yourself for a cause? Are you ready to sacrifice your case, comfort, commerce and even your life? Then

[1] *Vide* "Viceroy's Speech", 14-9-1919.

[2] *Vide* "Interview to "Cape Times", 23-6-1909 & "Letter to Lord Ampthill", 30-10-1909.

you are satyagrahis and you will win. Hindus and Mohammedans sometimes come and ask whether secret violence may not sometimes be satyagraha. I have answered, violence whether secret or open is the very reverse of satyagraha. Absolute calmness and a [firm][1] resolve allied to a just cause always [brings][2] victory. To die for a cause is the law of man, to kill is that of the beast.

Young India, 20-9-1919

301. RESOLUTION AT KHILAFAT MEETING

[BOMBAY,
September 18, 1919]

This meeting of Mohammedans, gathered in the Juma Musjid of Bombay, expresses the greatest anxiety over the threatened dismemberment of Turkey and removal of the Holy places of Islam from the Caliph's control and trusts that His Majesty's Ministers will secure fulfilment of the pledged word of the Rt. Hon'ble Lloyd George regarding Turkey and thereby restore the confidence of the Mohammedan subjects of His Majesty.

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand : S. N. 6952.

302. THE INDEMNITY BILL

The much talked of Indemnity Bill is now before the public. I observe that the fact of the Bill being now brought forward is still being attacked. Sir Narayan Chandavarkar, with his great legal knowledge, has joined the attacking army in fine form. He considers that constitutional law and precedent alike require that an Indemnity Bill can be properly passed only by the Imperial Parliament and not by the local legislation, and that the former can only do so after a Royal Commission has reported to it. He is able to quote in support of his contention Dicey's opinion. It is not therefore without a deep sense of humility that I express a different opinion. I hold strong views about parliamentary interference. No doubt, at times, that interference becomes a blessing, but I contemplate a time, not far distant, when we shall have a legislature wholly responsible to the

[1] The source is damaged.
[2] *ibid*

people in all that is of vital importance to them. Parliamentary interference then, would be as intolerable to us as it is to Australia, Canada or South Africa. When we have regained full national consciousness, we shall not hang on to the leading string even of "the mother of parliaments". We shall wade, if necessary, as others have done, to purity and peace through strife, passion and prejudice. I am quite prepared for rude shocks, when properly elected popular representatives meet for the first time untrammelled by official frown and untempted by official favour. That being my view, I am able to contemplate with equanimity the passage of an Indemnity Bill even through the present legislature, which has only a shadow of popular representation and control. Moreover, to take a practical view of the question, I imagine we shall find it fairly tough work to set up a precedent in India and secure the passage of an Indemnity Bill through the Imperial Parliament.

I must respectfully dissent also from the view that such a Bill can only be properly passed after a Commission has reported. I venture to submit that the Bill as published is almost harmless and it is a Bill we should be bound to pass as it is even after the Commission has reported. I do not for a moment doubt that the officer who ordered the inhuman floggings did so under the *bonafide* belief that he was saving the Empire. I would not have us as individuals to exercise the right of suing that officer for damages. I would have him dismissed, if I had the power, for incompetence, and this right of administrative action is preserved intact by the Bill. After all, we do not wish to be vindictive or to make scapegoats of subordinate officers. Popular imagination and belief hold the Punjab Government and the Government of India to be the real offenders. I believe that they have not protected themselves under the Bill. The Viceroy cannot get a certificate of good faith from his Secretary nor Sir Michael O'Dwyer from his. They would therefore be obliged to discharge the burden of proving that they adopted extraordinary powers for a good and sufficient cause. Lastly, in my humble opinion, we shall but unnecessarily irritate our English friends by seeming, as we would seem to them, to oppose an indemnity being granted to subordinate officers. They would appreciate our fight against the Punjab satrap and the Viceroy. They will not understand even our delay in granting protection to under-officers against actions at law.

And we have so many good fights to fight that I would reserve all our powder and shot for a fight which we must fight. We must hold

the honour of innocent victims from Lala Harkishan Lal down to the young lad Karamchand, as a sacred trust. The Privy Council may, for technical reasons, throw out the appeals that are now pending. All, again, may not be able to appeal. And the Government may prove unyielding and grant relief only in the cases actually disposed of by the Privy Council. We dare not rest satisfied with that. We must, therefore, see to it that we obtain a full, public and impartial investigation of all the cases in which we believe that palpable injustice has been done. The question therefore to consider is : Has Lord Hunter's Committee the ample power of entering upon such an investigation? If it has not, I would unhesitatingly tender the advice I did in South Africa, namely, that of abstaining from any participation in giving evidence before the Committee. Secondly, I would agitate for the release of the political offenders so called, such as Lala Harkishan Lal, Lala Goverdhan Das, Dr. Satyapal, Dr. Kitchlew and others. They must be able to give their evidence with the same freedom and the same dignity as the viceroy and Sir Michael O'Dwyer if the latter will condescend, as they ought, to give evidence before the Committee. Thirdly, we should concentrate our energy upon collecting, marshalling and sifting evidence of the witnesses in the Punjab and elsewhere. This work requires a sustained effort, organizing ability, harnessing of the best talent of the country and absolute fearlessness and integrity in presenting the case before the Committee. And if we can prove but a fourth of the charges that are suggested by the formidable list of questions framed by the ever-watchful Panditji, we shall have vindicated the position that we have taken up all along the line. Punishment of the erring officers is not our goal. An honourable discharge of the men whom we hold to be innocent and whom we believe to be wrongly convicted is our deliberate aim.

Young India, 20-9-1919

303. LETTER TO G.S. ARUNDALE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 20, 1919

DEAR MR. ARUNDALE,

Regarding your request[1] for something from me on the Punjab Week, I can only say that it is our clear duty to secure full justice and expose the wrong we fell has been done to the people of that unhappy province.

There are three ways of doing it :

(1) To contribute towards the expenses.

(2) To study the facts as they gradually percolate to us and to publish them.

(3) To hold meeting in every street and corner to pass resolutions demanding an open and impartial inquiry into the affairs of April and the aftermath.

I observe that Lord Hunter's Committee will not investigate individual cases and that two judges will be appointed for the purpose. We must see to it that the judges are judges whom we can trust and that they have ample powers including the power to take fresh evidence. And in order that both the investigations are properly conducted, we must demand the release, on parole, if need be, of political prisoners.

In my humble opinion, all reform will be worthless if we cannot secure the needed redress and the repeal of an Act to keep which, as I believe, justice has been flung to the winds.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

New India, 26-9-1919

[1] This was made on September 13 in connection with the organizing of a "Punjab Distress Week" from September 28 to October 5, for raising funds to relieve distress and carry on a vigorous Press campaign. Arundale had observed: "A message from you would not merely stimulate our own Presidency, but would be a clarion call as well to the whole of India."

304. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM,
[Before *September 21, 1919*][1]

DEAR MATHURADAS,

You must give thought to your health. Help *Young India* as long as you are there. I am trying to shift *Young India* here soon. I have sent some matter to Bhai Nandlal only today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

305. NOTES

NATIONAL EDUCATION

We draw the reader's attention to the article[2] on the ancient educational centres of India. So long as education in the country is not imparted by persons of integrity and conditions are not created in which the highest knowledge will be available to the poorest of Indians, so long as a perfect confluence of education and dharma has not taken place and education has not been brought into relation with conditions in India, so long as the intolerable burden imposed on the minds of the young by imparting education through a foreign medium has not been lifted, so long will there be no upsurge of national life; there is no denying this.

Purely national education should be imparted in the regional language. The teachers must be of a high calibre. The school should be situated in surroundings where the student has fresh air and water, where he enjoys peace, where the building and the adjoining land are object lessons in healthful living; and the educational pattern must

[1] The addressee received this letter on September 21, 1919.

[2] This was written by Mavji Damji Shah, and published in *Navajivan*, 21-9-1919. It purported to be a translation of a Marathi original.

beone which will instruct [the pupil] in the main professions and religions of India. A friend has expressed his willingness to bear all the expenses of such a school. He desires that in this school free primary education should be provided to children in Ahmedabad. He wants that there should be not one but many such schools in Ahmedabad. We think land will be available near Ahmedabad and a building can be put up, but we know that it will be difficult to find well-educated teachers possessing good character. We submit to the educated classes of Gujarat that they would do well to turn their eyes in this direction. In Gujarat, these classes do not make one-fourth the self-sacrifice they do in Maharashtra. It is not suggested at all in our friend's scheme that no salaries should be paid. It provides for the teacher's livelihood, but a teacher who cannot fix a limit for his income cannot identify himself completely with the school. If anyone from the educated classes of Gujarat wish to devote their life to such education, they should write to the Secretary, the National Education Section. If we get teachers of the right kind, we shall shortly see in Ahmedabad such a school imparting national education. The children attending this school will live in their homes; they will attend school only during school hours. The same may be understood for the teachers. The National School running as part of the Satyagraha Ashram will have no connection with our friend's scheme save that the same educational pattern will obtain in both. In the Satyagraha Ashram school, the aim is to obtain complete control of the pupils and train teachers from among them. The object of the school now under consideration will be merely to impart primary education to children in Ahmedabad.

BUSINESS MEN'S DUTY TO THEIR ASSISTANTS

We draw the attention of the business community to the letter from a correspondent writing under the pseudonym of "Sarvodaya". Our correspondent is himself a respectable business man of Bombay. We have often heard painful complaints from assistants in Bombay. They are made to work from early morning till ten at night, with the result that they find no time for devotions, or for reading, nor can they attend to their health. This pitiable condition of those who serve the people argues a deficiency in national life. The relationship between a business man and his servant must be one of mutual regard and loyalty, like that between father and son. Such regard and loyalty should prompt the assistant to give up his dear life for his master, if

need be. He should ever remain honest towards his master. The master's loyalty lies in being kind to the assistant while taking work from him, in being mindful of his health and in improving his lot. Wherever there is a realization of this mutual obligation, we shall observe that results are excellent. In this respect, we would do well to emulate the British. Generally, the assistant has fixed hours of work, short enough to leave him time for his household work, for exercise, and for devotions if he is religiously inclined. The work that an English master can get from his assistant in eight hours, the employers among us, sometimes, cannot exact even in sixteen hours.

We would place before the masters their own interests. In exacting work from the assistants for eight or twelve or fourteen hours, they have to keep working themselves. We are not in this world that we may think of our business the whole day. Business is a means; when it comes to be an end and dominates all our thoughts, we become its slaves. It is the duty of the business man to emancipate himself from such a state in time.

The problem Kavi Nanalal is trying to solve in his valuable articles has a close bearing on this subject. We have already grasped the general trend of his articles that a nation without the time or the means for innocent joy in its life will have its vitality slowly drained away. Just as man needs sleep, so also he needs to be free from anxiety, such as that which attends on business, etc., to have innocent, childlike fun and be light-hearted. If this comes about, the nation will be born anew every day and just as the daily rising of the sun appears ever fresh to us, so where the people have the means and the time for innocent joy the national life will ever be found radiant and full-blown, not lack-lustre and faded. We present this idea with our compliments to the business men, appeal to them to think over the matter and advise them to implement the suggestions of "Sarvodya" in some way or other.

OF TEMPORARY AND PERMANENT VALUE

People are busy with two kinds of activities in this world. One kind is of temporary value, and aims only at momentary happiness. Good people eschew such activity or work but slightly towards this end. The other is of permanent value and is eschewed by the cowardly because it requires continuous effort.

Today in India, too, there are these two kinds of activities going on. We see the people too much occupied with thoughts of the minor injustices and oppressions of the Government. We find this interesting because we have occasion to employ or hear spicy words. By keeping itself too absorbed in such activity a nation does not rise, but falls rather. This does not mean that one need not so fight oppression that it will never happen again. All that is meant here is that we should not make oppression the main concern of public life. This will have no interest for the millions either. Of course, where oppression is the main thing, the people are for ever occupied with defending themselves and, in such circumstances, to talk to the people about any other activity is like singing before one suffering the pangs of hunger.

In India we have not yet reached that stage. The policy of the British Government is a mixed affair; it has both justice and injustice. In its conception the policy must be admitted to be just, but those who carry it out make mistakes time and again and injustice results; the people have to work to get these mistakes rectified. It is but their duty to do so.

It is, however, the duty of newspapers to find out which activity will conduce to the enduring happiness of the people and to help them to carry it on and to guide them. It is our emphatic view that among all such activities of enduring value, the swadeshi movement is the chief. It is their duty, likewise, to discover the way of providing the best education to the people, the means whereby the peasants' life of want may be made worth while and to ascertain the causes of, and seek remedies for, the innumerable diseases which afflict the people. All these activities tend towards the uplift of the people. Hence the reader will see by and by that we employ *Navajivan* more especially to further these activities of enduring value. So long as all the aspects of the nation's life are not developed, its real uplift will be impossible. Only if the people take up such activities will they achieve and enjoy pure swaraj.

Therefore, though we shall vigorously oppose injustice wherever we find it and point out the way which seems best to us, we shall employ the pages of *Navajivan* to consider how the activities of enduring value may be promoted and we hope readers will welcome this decision of ours.

"NAVAJIVAN" CLUB

If we are to realize the aims of *Navajivan*, it is not enough that we go on merely writing articles or dispatching copies to subscribers. We would never feel that we were doing our work well until the message of *Navajivan* reached all the men and women of Gujarat, educated and uneducated. This great task cannot be accomplished by the contributors and the managers of *Navajivan*, all by themselves. It needs the fullest co-operation of the readers and subscribers of *Navajivan*. We want that they do not rest satisfied with reading the copy themselves but read it aloud to the uneducated members of their family. Our suggestion goes even further than this. We know that there are many persons who cannot afford even an anna a week. There are many more who, though they can read, have no desire to know what developments are taking place in the country, do not want to read newspapers and, if they read at all, they read things which do not cost them the least effort. Those of our readers who are fired with enthusiasm and who approve of the aims of *Navajivan* can carry its message to both these classes. We suggest to such readers that they start *Navajivan* clubs or associations, keeping before them a limited object. The members of such a club should meet on a fixed day, at a fixed hour, at a fixed place, read an issue of *Navajivan* from the beginning to the end and have a discussion over it. The thing is easily done, but grand results may be obtained from it. Every reader would be able to evaluate these at the end of the year if he kept a diary. Pure thoughts, pure actions and pure sentiments have a profound effect on the people. Were we to make pure ideals our daily companion, we could tread with ease the difficult path of this world. It will be our constant endeavour to see that *Navajivan* does not become the means of conveying a single unworthy or low sentiment or incorrect news or of indulging in rude language, and we charge the reader with keeping watch over us lest we stray from this. We take our readers' relation with us to be not a commercial but an intimate and normal one.

WELL DONE

Recently, when Mr. Gandhi visited Godhra, it came to his knowledge that certain newspapers were not allowed in registered reading-rooms; and these included some popular ones. This matter was discussed in *Young India* and Mr. Gandhi had correspondence about it with the director of Public Instruction. This correspondence is now published in *Young India* and it shows that the ban on

newspapers in registered reading-rooms has been removed. We congratulate the Director of Public Instruction on this wise decision. No doubt it is desirable that only harmless literature is placed before the people. It is also desirable that the people keep away from poisonous writings. Such reforms, however, cannot be brought about by compulsion. What people read depends on their education; that is, the taste of the people cannot be cultivated by severe restrictions on their reading of newspapers and books, nor is this the right education in loyalty. People who always get justice and whose minds are nourished by knowledge will remain loyal as a matter of course. The quality of loyalty, unlike truthfulness and such other virtues, is not self-sustained. Loyalty cannot survive without support. Mr. Covernton's[1], therefore, is in every way a commendable step. In fact, if the Government always took such wise steps, there would be no room at all for disloyalty.

SACRIFICE TO GODDESS

We have received four or five poems from a Bhil gentleman in which he humbly but earnestly requests members of his community and other Hindus to desist from the cruel slaughter of goats before the Mother on the sacred eighth day in *Navaratri*[2] , the day of sacrifice, and on the auspicious Dashera day. We are unable to publish these poems themselves, but we must take note of his commendable effort. We believe it to be the duty of every Hindu to stop, as early as possible, this violence which some Hindus, believers in the duty of compassion, commit on the pretext of offering a sacrifice to the Goddess. If we appeal to our Muslim brethren to stop cow-slaughter, we on our part must stop this violence.

SPINNING-WHEEL IN VIJAPUR[3]

When I requested the ladies concerned for articles on the spinning movement in Vijapur and other related activities, they felt embarrassed and asked me how I could wish their names to be made public. Till now, I allowed their work to remain unknown. I, too, felt a little embarrassed in bringing work such as this to public notice, but I

[1] Director of Public Instruction, Bombay Presidency

[2] The first nine days of the bright half of *Ashvin*, roughly corresponding to October-November

[3] The comments which follow were appended to an article by Mrs. Gangabehn Majumdar, who helped Gandhiji to organize the spinning-wheel movement. It described how she came to take up the work and the progress made till then.

feel it is necessary for the people to know that the spinning programme can prosper, that it is popular, that it is profitable economically and in other ways and that ladies of respectable families have also been working in it. Even if I had not had the medium of *Navajivan*, I had decided to bring the work of these ladies to public notice. This was why I published, with their permission, the names of Lady Tata, Lady Petit and Mrs. Jaiji Petit in the *Pateti* issue of *Sanj Vartaman*.[1] In my humble opinion, the work of Mrs. Gangabehn is of the highest importance and the nation ought to know about it. She has dedicated her all to this work. Only when, having invested some of her own money, she had achieved a measure of success in the movement did she ask for, and receive, monetary help from others to further it. The fact such a spinning programme can flourish on so large a scale in a small place like Vijapur suggests that, if the work is done properly, in a short while every village will start spinning and the weavers who have been deprived of their vocation will be standing on their feet again. I hope that Gangabehn's example will be followed by all women who can spare some time.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 21-9-1919

[1] *Vide* "Swadeshi in a Nutshell", 11-9-1919.

306. DISAPPOINTMENT

Those who read papers will have guessed whose views these are.[1] As the people need to understand them fully, we have translated almost every word and every sentence. Only a few sentences, those which have no bearing on the rest and in leaving out which no injustice is done to the speaker, have been omitted so as not to take up space unnecessarily. These are the views of Sir Edward Maclagan, the Lieut. Governor of the Punjab, and they were stated as a rejoinder to a resolution tabled by the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya.

These views go to prove that the new Governor proposes fully to stand by the action of Sir Michael O'Dwyer. The worthy officer believes that the sentence which have been inflicted are just and also that the judgments pronounced are correct. Reductions in the sentences have been made by way of mercy and with a view to bringing about amicable relations between the Government and the people. I must say that in these reductions I see no mercy, nor any justice, nor in the views reproduced above do I see any change in the Government's attitude. I see a great mental distance between the ruler and the ruled. I can bear the officials being absolved of blame. I can acquiesce in the Commission as appointed. But the kind of attitude these sentiments reflect I find intolerable and I wish that it should be equally so to the people, for in this attitude I see the ruin of both, and a widening of the distrust and division between them.

If the Government is convinced that it has done no wrong, that all the fault lies with the people, where, then, was the need for a Commission? What will it inquire into? Two worthies have already given their judgment in favour of the Government and against the people≈His Excellency the Viceroy and the Governor of the Punjab. If it is the view of the Government that the Commission's function simply is to whitewash the actions of the officials, the Commission had better be left alone by us. The people's case is this: that Sir Michael O'Dwyer proved himself unfit as Governor. The disturbances in the Punjab had their origin in his previous record. If he had not issued

[1] The comments were preceded by a Gujarati translation of part of a speech by the Lieut.-Governor of the Punjab on Madan Mohan Malaviya's motion in the Legislative Council for a commission consisting of persons unconnected with the Indian administration. The speech was published in *Young India,* 17-9-1919.

repressive orders against Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal, if he had not prevented me from going to Delhi, the disturbances would not have taken such a violent turn. Even afterwards, if there had been no shooting, the people would never have committed the mistakes they did. The orders of Sir Michael O'Dwyer were evidently instrumental in arousing the worst passions of the people.

I do not say that this case of the people is right. Maybe it is overstated, maybe it is totally wrong. Even so, the Government, which is in the defendant's box, which stands charged which all this, cannot get away by simply denying the charges. It is the chief duty of the Commission to decide on these charges. Public opinion is not happy with the Commission as it is constituted. If, now, the Government has made up its mind about its actions, there is no need whatever for a commission. Or, again, how is it that, having appointed a Commission, they are trying to prejudice it right from now by making speeches condemning the people? The Government's duty is to refrain from commenting on the events of April, to present whatever evidence it has and to help the people to present their evidence and so facilitate the work of the Commission.

Sir Edward Maclagan, by his speech, has only sought to prove that Babu Kalinath Roy, Lala Harkishan Lal, Dr. Satyapal and others were in fact guilty. By saying this, he has hurt the people's feelings, poured oil on fire as it were and, claiming to pacify the people, has only succeeded in angering them.

The people do not want mercy. If Lala Harkishan Lal and others have committed any crime, they deserve no mercy but only punishment. If they have in fact committed no crime, they should get pure justice.

The people's duty is clear. If the people do not have it in them to secure justice, they do not deserve to obtain responsible government. If the people want to be strong enough to secure justice, they should act without being provoked, calmly but firmly. Those from whom the people seek justice should be ready to grant it. Our case, in my humble view, is so sound that it requires little adorning with adjectives. If it is spoilt, it will be so only through our anger or our apathy. Anger clouds one's perception, this obscures the memory, from that comes loss of reason and, reason lost, one is utterly

destroyed.[1] I should like the people to keep in mind this truth enunciated in the scripture.

What are the things we can peacefully do? We may hold meetings at all places and express our resentment at the Viceroy's speech and at the speeches on behalf of the Punjab Government. If the Government does not act with a sense of justice, we may even desist from giving evidence before the Commission. We may, from now on at any rate, avoid the errors we committed in the Punjab and elsewhere. The Government, by its actions, will still give us many more grounds for provocation. We would be invincible if, instead of being provoked, we were to think earnestly and refuse to help the Government in doing injustice. Swaraj lies in the truthfulness of the people, in their firmness and their fortitude. Our ability to secure justice is the measure of our capacity to enjoy freedom. If the people show this strength in them, rays of hope will shine from out of the disappointment which the speeches of Sir Edward Maclagan and the Viceroy are likely to produce.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-9-1919

307. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

AHMEDABAD,
September 22, 1919

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
247 BAZAR GATE
BOMBAY

HAVE TELEGRAPHED HON'BLE GOKULDAS PAREKH ACCEPT NOMINATION PRESIDENT FORTHCOMING GUJARAT CONFERENCE.[2] PLEASE SEE HIM. WIRE RESULT. IF ANY DIFFICULTY SECURE INTERVENTION UTTAMLAL TRIVEDI. IF PAREKH NOT THERE ASK HIS PEOPLE REWIRE MY WIRE.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II, 63
[2] Gujarat Political Conference

308. MORE PUNJAB TRAGEDIES

It is my misfortune to have to present two more cases from the land of sorrow to the reader of *Young India*. I call Punjab the land of sorrow because I find, on the one hand, a series of cases in which, if the records of cases are to be believed, a manifest injustice has been done and, on the other, an apparent determination on the part of the Punjab Government not to undo the wrong. For, as I have already said in these columns, a mere reduction of sentences without admission of at least an error of judgment is no comfort to the men who protest their innocence or to the people at large who believe in their innocence and wish to see justice done. I must confess that I am uninterested in reduction of sentences if the prisoners are guilty and it is a crime to keep them in duress if they are innocent. The reader will see the petitions on behalf of Mr. Gurdial Singh and Dr. Mahomed Bashir. Both are high-spirited men…one a Sikh of culture, the other a Mohammedan doctor having before him a life full of promise. If they have waged war, if they have incited to murder, there can be no question of remission of the sentences passed against them. Thereforethe fact that Dr. Bashir's sentence of death has been commuted, whilst it must be a matter of some feeble consolation to Mrs. Bashir, can be none to Dr. Bashir or to the public.

Let us glance at Mr. Gurdial Singh's case. His brother has sent me a long letter asking me even to publish it. As the main facts are contained in the petition, I refrain from publishing the letter for fear of tiring the reader, but I will make use of such statements from it as may be necessary to demonstrate the enormity of the injustice done in the case. Says the brother,

> He only attended the constitutional and the orderly meeting of the 6th April. He was on the 14th and 15th confined to bed. The local sub-assistant surgeon (Government employee) attended on him, gave his prescription, which I am sending to you in the original along with the papers.

I have seen this prescription.

> Seriously sick with appendicitis, my brother could not join the so-called unruly mob in breaking the glass panes of the Tehsil windows. As regards prosecution witnesses against my brother, I have only to add that my brother was not informed of the names of such persons. He knew them by seeing them in the Court. . . . My brother was, as a matter of fact, not informed of the

charge against him except through the mouth of the prosecution witnesses.

I hold that if this statement is correct, it is enough to ensure Mr. Gurdial Singh's discharge. No accused could thus be taken by surprise and expected where and when to plead. Surely he was entitled to see the charge, and not gather it through the prosecution witnesses. The letter in my possession then analyses the antecedents of the witnesses for the prosecution and shows the animus they had against the accused. Naturally the public cannot be expected to judge the credibility of witnesses upon *exparte* statements made by or on behalf of the accused, but these statements show, if they are true, that an immense amount of perjury must have taken place on the part of the prosecution witnesses. I admit that this case is not as clearly established on behalf of the prisoner as many others I have examined, for I have not the whole of the papers for presentation to the public. But assuming the truth of the statements made authentically on behalf of the prisoner, it is clear that the case requires looking into.

Dr. Mahomed Bashir's is another such case. The pathetic petition by his wife and Dr. Bashir's statement itself before the Court, which sentenced him to death, if true, show that the court's judgement had been completely warped. Dr. Bashir may or may not have lied butthe Court had most decidedly nothing before it to warrant the remark that the defence evidence was worthless; for Dr. Bashir, as will be seen from the statement published in another column, categorically denied many of the statements and facts imputed to him. I do not intend to burden this criticism with any extracts from the very brief and business-like statement presented to the Court by Dr. Bashir, but I would commend it to the careful attention of the reader. He cannot help the conclusion that the statement deserved a better fate than a contemptuous dismissal from the Court.

Young India, 24-9-1919

309. TO THE PUBLIC OUTSIDE GUJARAT

Unexpected interest is being taken in *Navajivan* by the Gujarati-speaking population. It is not possible to cope with the demand made upon it. So far as I can see, twenty thousand copies are not enough to supply the want. But we were able to print only twelve thousand copies. The printers we are able to get in Ahmedabad can hardly print 10,000 copies. Those who can, being afraid of the Press Act, will not

print *Navajivan*. But on the top of this comes a demand for a Hindi edition of *Navajivan*. Indeed, I am myself hatching schemes to enable me to publish Hindi, Urdu, Marathi and, finally, Tamil editions. But there is a dearth of real workers. If I can possibly secure suitable Hindi, Marathi, Urdu and Tamil helpers, nothing would please me better than to be able to deliver my message to those who speak these tongues. I need hardly say that English is no medium save for reaching a microscopic minority. My ambition is to reach the masses. This one can do only through the vernaculars. I therefore appeal to self-sacrificing young men of ability to come forward with their assistance in the work if they are sufficiently interested in it.

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 24-9-1919

310. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, RAJKOT[1]

September 25, 1919

Mr. Gandhi then commenced this sermon, in the course of which he said that he had at present started the movement for the manufacture of swadeshi cloth. It was a matter of vital necessity to the people; next to food, clothing is a necessity of life and it should be supplied from the country itself. At present our dependence on other countries has made us helpless and poor. In the year 1917-18, the country had to send away 60 crores of rupees for foreign cloth only. This is in no way edifying to them and steps must be taken to arrest the drain. This can be done only with a sustained and energetic movement which will also demand a degree of sacrifice from them. He had discussed the question with eminent Indian experts who said that it would take a period of fifty years to supply swadeshi cloth to the whole country through mills. Under the circumstances, he had been urging the manufacture of cloth through handloom. The idea had become already extremely popular and high-class Indian ladies had taken zealously to spinning cotton and swadeshi Bhandars were being opened at different places. In Kathiawar, similar ways and means should be adopted for the spread of swadeshi. The movement was in no way harmful to any and therefore it should be carried on peacefully. Women should utilize their spare time and begin spinning. The native spinning-wheels can be had cheaply and if they wished their welfare they should without waste of time introduce into every house spinning-wheels and handlooms. It alone would ensure happiness and economic contentment.

Kathiawar Times, 28-9-1919

[1] Gandhiji was given a rousing reception on his arrival at Rajkot. After a few introductory remarks by D.B. Shukla, Gandhiji addressed the gathering

311. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, RAJKOT[1]

September 25, 1919

He told them that women as a rule had been using foreign cloth for fashion, etc., more widely. The women of India were intensely religious, but as illiteracy was prevalent among them, they were unaware of what was going on in the world of today. If they had been roused to a sense of their duty, he was sure that their women would not remain what they were. He would therefore tell them the fact that their dependence on foreign countries in the matter of cloth and other things was responsible for their present degradation. The Indian women should realize it in all its gravity. Their comparative poverty should stimulate them to work out their own destiny. The most efficacious remedy was that they should start spinning wheels, the harder sex [should take] to weaving. It would give honourable employment to women at their very homes and, at the same time, enable them to render a valuable service in the cause of country. He saw them on the present occasion clad in fancy and fine sarees. They should so set themselves to work that the spinning and weaving industry might reach that level in India. Nothing was impossible to a resolute will and persevering nature. He finally appealed to women assembled to translate their momentary zeal into continued action in the service of the motherland in the way he had indicated.

Kathiawar Times, 28-9-1919

312. SPEECH AT RAJKOT MEETING[2]

[*September 25, 1919*][3]

Mr. Gandhi said he was pleased to find Major Moss in the chair. It was good for both that Englishmen and Indians should meet on a common platform on all non-contentious and non-political matters. Such meetings lessened the acerbities of political life and promoted harmony between the two races.

The speaker congratulated the Sahayya Mandal for their splendid work during the influenza epidemic and the late famine. He however ventured to suggest that true and lasting social service lay in organizing preventive measures. Whilst it was good to relieve suffering in times of the plague or famine, it was better to band together in

[1] In the afternoon, Gandhiji addressed a meeting of about 500 women at Banik Bhojanshala.

[2] In the evening Gandhiji spoke at a meeting held in Connaught Hall. Major Moss, Political Agent, Halar, presided.

[3] *Young India* reported this speech as dated September 24, which appears to be a slip. The date given here is as reported in *Kathiawar Times*, 28-9-1919.

order to prevent a recurrence of plague or famine. He is a wise and philanthropic doctor or lawyer who prevents diseases or quarrels. Social servants ought not to wait for influenza or famine for giving their service to the nation.

Truer service of the constructive and preventive type could be rendered in the villages. And if we succeeded in keeping our villages pure, clean, healthy and prosperous, the big cities would take care of themselves. He therefore suggested to Mr. Nanalal Kavi, who was the head and the heart of the movement in Rajkot, to go to some villages and, by living among and like them, to study their wants and their habits. Then he would discover the best method of rendering social service.

The speaker at one time thought that social service was best known and organized in Europe. Experience had taught him otherwise. He was of opinion that nowhere was social service treated so much a religious duty as in Indian. He instanced the marvellous manner in which the Kumbh at Hardwar was organized. The Himalayas were a standing testimony to our organizing ability and our instinct for social service. Thousands of pilgrims who ascended the Himalayas up to Jamnotri were catered for without difficulty in a spirit of service and not of commercial gain. The matchless caste organization was an instance of vast social service organization. The late Sir W.W. Hunter used to say that India was remarkable for the absence of any need of Poor Law. Castes regulated service in the event of disease, death and poverty. He did not wish to glorify caste. He recognized its defects and its excesses as it at present existed. He merely mentioned it as an illustration to prove his proposition that social service was recognized in India as a duty. Unfortunately most of our old institutions had petrified. His point was that the old institutions and methods should be studied, revivified and reorganized in so far as it may be necessary to suit new conditions. We were likely to go wrong if we rejected the old without due examination.

Young India, 8-10-1919

313. HOW NOT TO DO IT

At the very earnest request of Mayadevi, 16-year-old wife of Kesar Mal, I reproduce elsewhere her picturesque petition praying for the release of her young husband, 21 years old. The case presented seems to be unanswerable, but a good cause has been spoiled by a bad advocate. Though the petition is that of Mayadevi, it is quite clear that it is the handiwork of a draughts-man who has written in a fit of rage against what he has, undoubtedly and with good cause, believed to be a monstrous injustice. But anger is short madness and noblest causes have been damaged by advocates affected with temporary lunacy. The petition is overlaid with useless adjectives and declamation. Whilst it

has been a pleasure to me to dissect the many business like petitions that have come from that land of sorrow, in the present instance I have been obliged to labour through violent language to what I consider to be a right conclusion. I do not happen to know the draughtsman of the petition. Mayadevi, who has sent a covering letter equally violently worded, gives me no information about the draughtsman. But I do wish as a practised draughtsman to warn writers of petitions, whether they be pleaders or otherwise, to think of the cause they may be espousing for the time being. I assure them that a bare statement of facts unembellished with adjectives is far more eloquent and effective than a narrative glowing with exuberant language. Petition writers must understand that they address busy men, not necessarily sympathetic, sometimes prejudiced, and almost invariably prone to sustain the decisions of their subordinates. In the case of the Punjab, they approach a Viceroy and a Lieutenant-Governor who have preconceived ideas. Petitions have to be read and analysed by public workers and journalists who have none too much time at their disposal. I know to my cost how difficult it is for me to do full justice to the value of the papers that pour in upon me week to week from the Punjab. I make a present of my valuable experience to young patriots who wish to try the art of advocating public causes by writing petitions or otherwise. I had the privilege of serving under the late Mr. Gokhale and, for a time, under the G.O.M. of India. Both told me that if I wanted to be heard I must be brief, I must write to the point and adhere to facts, and never travel beyond the cause under notice, and I must be most sparing in my adjectives. And if some success has attended my effort, it is due to my acceptance of the golden advice given to me by the two illustrious deceased. With this preface and warning, I proceed to the analysis of the case of young Kesar Mal.

I am anxious that the excellent case of young Kesar Mal might not be overlooked by reason of bad draughtsmanship of the petition. The wonder to me is that so many petitions have been written with a marked ability and amazing self-restraint. But when a badly drawn [up] document comes their way, it is the business of public workers to sift the grain from the chaff and present the former to the public.

Let it be remembered that this is one of the Hafizabad cases arising out of the tumult that took place at Hafizabad station during which Lieut. Tatam is alleged to have been the object of the mischievous attention of the crowd that had gathered at that station. Kesar Mal was sentenced to be hanged, the sentence being

subsequently commuted to ten years' imprisonment. The wife's petition says, "It is justice which Your Excellency's petitioner most humbly seeks and on justice Your Excellency's petitioner insists." And on that account she asks for the release of her young husband. The grounds as can be collected from the petition are:

(1) The prosecution evidence is inconsistent with itself.

(2) The charge against Kesar Mal is that he was trying to snatch Lieut. Tatam's child from him; but according to the petition, the police produced Kesar Mal a dozen times before the Lieutenant, but "Mr. Tatam would as many times nod his head meaning positive and complete nay and added each time 'none tried to snatch the child from me' ".

(3) Lieut. Tatam did not identify Kesar Mal even as one of the men concerned in assaulting him.

(4) Identification parade was held some time after the occurrence.

(5) Lieut. Tatam is reported to have said, "Your Deputy Commissioner Lieut.-Col. O'Brien is a very strong man and he has unnecessarily compelled me to make too much of the case."

(6) The petition charges the police with having given colour to the proceedings which they did not deserve.

(7) The prosecution witnesses were nearly all Government servants, i.e., chaprasis, *moharrirs*, railway staff, police staff, and also pedlars, confectioners, etc., who are alleged to have been made to give evidence.

(8) Prosecution witnesses against Kesar Mal were either prejudiced or themselves feared "implications" or expected favours.

(9) Lieut. Tatam himself had nothing against Kesar Mal. Bashir Haiyat stated, "Only Kesar Mal was wounded by the glass of the window." Haveli Ram identified Kesar Mal but Commission remarked about him, "demeanour bad≈not to be trusted." Similar was the case with Wadhawa Mal. Kishan Dayal was another prosecution witness who is stated to have perjured himself and given evidence flatly in contradiction of Lt. Tatam's. Kishan Dayal appears to have been a boon companion of Kesar Mal and yet is said to have stated to the Court that he did not know Kesar Mal before. Chapter and verse are given in

the petition to prove Kishan Dayal's intimacy with Kesar Mal. Kishan Dayal is stated to have yielded to police influence and, it is said, he is now sorry "for his wrong and cruel statement".

(10) The defence evidence was entirely ignored although the defence witnesses were impartial men of position.

(11) Young Kesar Mal belongs to a family which rendered services to the Government.

If these allegations are true, it is clear that Kesar Mal has been wrongly convicted and is entitled to be discharged. Cases like this prove the great need there is for an impartial commission to investigate them. Sir William Vincent has sprung a surprise upon the community by stating that two judges would be appointed to investigate such cases and report upon them to the Government. One would have thought that Lord Hunter's Committee would be able to do this work. But I take it that the public would be satisfied with this separate committee provided that the judges to be appointed are strong, independent and able men. Sir William Vincent might have been more communicative than he was. He evidently does not realize the pain and the torture under which the relatives of men who, in their opinion, are wrongly convicted, are passing their days.

AN UNWORTHY DEFENCE

One almost despairs of getting justice when one reads the debates that have taken place in the Viceregal Council and the defence put forth for every vile and vindictive act done in the Punjab in the name of prestige, law and order. Even the "hands and knees" order has been sought to be justified by Lieut.-General Sir Havelock Hudson. The action of the crowd against an innocent lady doctor cannot be condemned too strongly or too vehemently. I do not know whether all the facts stated by the gallant General are true, but for the purpose of my argument, I shall assume them to be true. I venture to submit, however, that no act on the part of an infuriated mob can possibly be held to justify the issuing of a barbarous order in cold blood requiring that "those who wished to pass the scene of the assault on Miss Sherwood should be made to crawl on their hands and knees". The scene of assault was not an out-of-the-way corner which nobody need visit or which people could avoid if they chose. There was therefore no question of people's 'wishing' to pass the scene of the assault. It was one of *being obliged* to pass the scene. Why should people who had no hand in the act of violence have "to crawl on their

hands and knees" in passing the scene of the assault? The General proceeds thus to justify the order:

> I think that the Council will agree that it is not surprising that the officer in command at Amritsar took the view that some unusual measures were necessary to bring home to the mob that such acts of violence directed against defenceless women could not be tolerated. Something was required to strike the imagination and impress on all the determination of the military authorities to protect European women.

The whole of the speech is worth reading as an example of bad taste. It is speeches such as Sir Havelock Hudson's which create bad blood and give unbridled licence to the soldiery. I was totally unprepared for this defence from high quarters of acts of vengeance, unworthy of true soldiers. Surely there are nobler methods of ensuring protection for European women. Have their lives been in such danger in India as to require any special protection? Why should the life of a European woman be held more sacred than that of an Indian woman? Has she not the same sense of honour, the same feelings? What is the British flag worth if a British soldier, wearing the King's uniform, rise from his seat in the Viceregal Council and insults the people of India by language such as Lieut.-General Sir Havelock Hudson has used? I still do not share the cry against the Indemnity Bill. I think with due deference to the great experienced leaders of opinion in India that, to put it at its worst, it was bad tactics to have opposed the Indemnity Bill, but the speech of General Hudson, if it reflects, as I fear it does, the sentiments of the English members of the Council, must cause the gravest misgivings as to the ultimate result of Lord Hunter's Committee and its offshoot.

Young India, 27-9-1919

314. LETTER OF THANKS

[*September 28, 1919*][1]

DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I have received numerous telegrams, letters and postcards congratulating me upon my 51st birthday. How shall I requite all this love? In what words should I express my gratefulness? There is no doubt that I appreciate discriminating and wise affection and that I

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 28-9-1919.

shun blind affection. It has, therefore, given me much pleasure to find that the affection has in many places taken a partical and beneficent form. I have such a vivid experience of India's deep proverty that, whenever money is uselessly spent, it seems to me that so much has been taken away from the poor. If all the money that has been spent over sending me telegrams had been devoted towards purchasingswadeshi khadi and therewith clothing the deserving naked or towards feeding the helpless, would not they have blessed the donors? The course of the poor has destroyed nations, has deprived kings of their crowns and the rich of their riches. Retributive justice is inexorable. The blessings of the poor have made kingdoms flourish.

The true method of bestowing affection on me is to copy such actions of mine as may seem to be worthy of imitation. No higher compliment can be paid to a man than to follow him. Many took the swadeshi vow on my birthday. Many sisters have sent many parcels containing yarn spun by themselves. Many took the vow of serving the suppressed classes. The Ahmedabad Swadeshi Store managers broke through the many difficulties that faced them and decided that day to lower their prices. The managers of the Swadeshi Bhandar in Surat have done likewise. Such methods of celebrating birthdays are a sign of enlightened affection and one would welcome such birthdays for ever so as to enable men and women to take forward steps from day to day.

Bhagini Samaj has decided to present me with a purse. This places a heavy responsibility upon me. It requires me to solve the difficulty of making the best use of it. But this I am able to say without much forethought that I shall make use of it for some service of the women of India. I shall feel grateful to those sisters and brothers who will give me benefit of their advice as to the best way of utilizing the funds.

All have wished me long life. My desire is to close this life searching for truth, acting truth and thinking truth and that alone, and I request the blessings of the nation that desire of mine may be fulfilled.

I hope that those who have sent me telegrams and letters will excuse me for my inability to send them separate acknowledgments.

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 4-10-1919

315. FINES IMPOSED ON NADIAD AND BAREJADI

The questions, regarding the posting of an additional police force, tabled by the Hon'ble Rao Bahadur Harilal Desai in the Bombay Legislative Assembly and the Government's reply to them are worth nothing. We can see from them how subordinate officers can mislead the Government. We can also see how one wrong leads to another. The first step of the Government was wrong. Misled by the Collector's report, the Government stationed additional police at Nadiad and Barejadi. It realized that this was a mistake, but was not prepared to admit as much. The Government thus found itself in a position in which it had no choice but to defend the mistake anyhow. Let us examine whether, in the process, the Government has had to do another wrong.

Among the questions asked by the Rao Bahadur, one was whether there were any disturbances in Nadiad on the 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th of April. This was a significant question and in asking it the Rao Bahadur's point was that there had been no disturbances in Nadiad on those dates and that, therefore, the Government had no justification for stationing additional police. How could the Government make such an admission? Hence it adopted a wrong line in its reply and said that a large crowd had assembled on the morning of the 11th with the object of compelling the Head Master of the English School, by show of criminal force, to close the school. There is no reason to believe the Government story simply because it is so positive about it. The Government has not come to this conclusion after a public inquiry of any nature. It gave this information in the Legislative Assembly on the basis of the one-sided police report it had received. Had it exercised its judgment, it would have used some kind of a qualifying expression and presented the information less positively. The Government is all too ready with its criticism if a one-sided case is presented on behalf of the people; what right has it, then, to come to any conclusion on the basis of a one-sided report? There are courts in existence to adjudicate between the Government and the people, and the principle of setting up an independent Commission of Inquiry[1] is also an accepted policy at present. I have made inquiries and have an altogether different account from prominent citizens of

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 28-9-1919.

Nadiad. They say, on their side, that no crowd had collected on purpose to force the school to close. Other schools being closed on that day, the boys of the English School, too, were engaged in an argument with their Head Master and a few persons from the town had joined them, but no undue pressure was used.

Let us take the second reply of the Government. The latter asserts that one of the ring-leaders in the crowd was found, when arrested, to be in possession of a violently inflammatory pamphlet inciting to murder for which he has since been convicted. This information is likely to mislead the reader. The reader gets the impression that this ring-leader had that leaflet with him on the 11th itself and that he was arrested on that date. The fact as established and accepted by both sides is that this ring-leader was arrested not on the 11th but on the 17th and that the leaflet came into his possession on the latter date. So this second statement of the Government also turns out to be a misleading one.

Now let us examine the third statement. It has been said on behalf of the Government that a party had assembled on the 12th of April with the intention of attacking the Dairy in Nadiad, but that it was dispersed by the police. The report which I have received goes to show that a party did go there with a view to persuading the manager to close the Dairy. The crowd had dispersed at the mere request of prominent citizens of Nadiad. The police did not have to make the least effort to disperse it, nor was there any need for them to make any.

The fourth statement, to the effect that the railway track near Nadiad was removed on the 12th, is correct. This was a terrible and shameful act and it is all the more shameful that the guilty have not been discovered and arrested.

We now take the fifth statement that the railway track was damaged on the 13th and the telegraph wires were cut. This statement, being ambiguous, creates a false impression and, therefore, reflects on the integrity of the Government.

That on the 13th rails were damaged and wires were cut at some place is a fact. The Rao Bahadur's question was about Nadiad and so the reader may gather the impression that the incident on the 13th also took place within the limits of Nadiad. As a matter of fact, the track was damaged and wires were cut at a considerable distance from Nadiad. It has not even been hinted that any resident of Nadiad had a

hand in this misdeed, and it is a painful thing that, nevertheless, the Government mentions the incident of the 13th in reply to a question about Nadiad.

The Government commands great power. In answer to yet another of the questions asked by the Rao Bahadur, the Government gave him and the people a complete idea of what this power is. To show with what great sleekness the Government has replied to an innocent question, I give here a literal translation of the question and the reply :

> Q : Whether the employment of additional police in Nadiad is not in fact a punitive rather than a preventive measure?
>
> A : The Hon'ble member is referred to section 25(1) of the Bombay District Police Act, 1890, which specifies the grounds on which additional police may be employed.[1]

If it is possible to be plain without being rude, this reply of the Government can be described as insolent. It betrays the arrogance of power. The reply is evasive and in the language of the rustic it means : "We did as we pleased; do your worst."

What can a poor Rao Bahadur do when faced with the potent might of the Government? It was the duty of the Government to give a plain reply to a plain question and, if it could not justify its action in a straightforward manner, it ought to have rectified its error. I submit that the power and dignity which lie in honestly rectifying an error are not to be found in irresponsible insolence and in evasion.

The people cannot leave the matter there. It is not merely that Nadiad or Barejadi has been fined. The issue here is one of justice and of Government policy. It is incumbent upon the Government to dispense pure justice and to follow irreproachable policies, and on the public to see that the Government does so. If it is Nadiad today, it may be Gujarat tomorrow and India the day after. A policy of this kind is like a disease and, as a disease, ought to be checked before it has progressed far, people should take steps to see that an immoral policy is immediately given up.

A great responsibility rests on the citizens of Nadiad and on the landowners in Barejadi. They should spare no effort to have this question discussed with the Government and in the public. Wherever they find inaccuracies in statements by the Government, they should

[1] The question and the answer are reproduced from *Young India.*

point them out. I am convinced that, if the people go to work patiently, with due courtesy and never over-stepping the limits but firmly and fearlessly all the same, the Government will admit its error. It is not a question of 20 or 25 thousand rupees, but of the blot that is cast on Nadiad and Barejadi. It is the duty of the citizens of Nadiad and of the landowners of Barejadi to remove that blot, and it is our duty to help them to do so.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-9-1919

316. THE PUNJAB COMMITTEE

Surprising changes keep taking place in the Punjab Committee. It seems the agitation about the Punjab has had some effect on the Government. What fruit the Committee will yield it is diffcult to say. If our agitation had been still more powerful, there would have been no cause left for fear. We have felt grieved about the Punjab, but we are not equally well-informed about it; we have not tried to be. It is no small matter that, even then, as Sannyasi Shraddhanandji has observed, people all around are overflowing with sympathy for it. From every side we hear people saying, "The Punjab is ours, Punjabis are our brethren." This bespeaks a national spirit among us, our unity.

Sir William Vincent has announced, on behalf of the Government, that two additional members will be appointed on the Punjab Committee≈one Indian and one European. From one point of view this news is satisfying. It signifies that popular feeling has been respected to some extent. From another point of view it causes concern. What type of persons will be appointed as members? If they are honest, independent and intelligent, they will strengthen the Committee and we may have greater hope that justice will be done. If self-interest counts for more with them than honesty, if they care more for flattery of others than for independence, if they are of the kind who make up in cleverness what they lack in intelligence, we shall have fallen from the frying pan into the fire. We shall not have to remian long in doubt, as the names will be out soon enough.

Out of this Committee is to come into existence another. We have all along asked whether the Committee is empowered to go into the sentences awarded in the Punjab. The second Committee is in reply to this question. Sir William Vincent has announced that two

High Court Judges will be appointed to inquire into the sentences. One of these will be an Indian, the other an Englishman. The foregoing comments apply to this announcement as well. High Court Judges were appointed in the Punjab too. There were Indians on the Punjab Commission as well. A High Court Judge may allow himself to be guided by his personal feelings and do injustice, knowingly or unknowingly. We cannot claim that an Indian judge would always do justice. It is only after knowing the names of the judges that we shall know whether to be satisfied or to take this as an additional cause for anxiety.

One thing stands out as our duty. Whetever the nature and strength of the Committees appointed by the Government, what can they do if we are not able to lead proper evidence before them? If persons like Lala Harkishan Lal remain in prison, how can they come out with the facts? All those persons who are being held, not for any actual crimes but principally as political prisoners, should be released. There can be a proper inquiry on the Punjab incidents only if this is done.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-9-1919

317. REQUEST TO CONTRIBUTORS

So many writers send their articles to us. We congratulate them on their enthusiasm and on their love for *Navajivan*. We shall certainly find room for the kind of articles which, in our humble view, the people are eager to read. Since we cannot write to every contributor separately, we make a few suggestions here.

For the present, we are not inclined to give much space to essays. Whenever we are favoured with contributions by writers of established reputation, we shall include them. The principal need of the people is not good thoughts but good deeds. *Navajivan* could be stuffed with beautiful translations from the ancient classics if the purpose were to place the best thoughts before the people. The public seems to have had enough of such things. It is, therefore, our attempt, by presenting before the public concrete instances of ideas which have been put into practice, to win faith in them. Accordingly we propose to put before the people experiences which have something of use to

them. Thus reports of the activities of all those who have been doing some sincere work will find a place in *Navajivan*.

The contributors should have some pity for the editor and the poor compositors. It is therefore required of them that they write only on one side. It is also very necessary for them to write in as good a hand as they possibly can, for we cannot copy out the articles they send us. Some are under the impression that any kind of handwriting is good enough in Gujarati. This suggests want of patriotism on their part. We should take pride in writing a clear and beautiful hand in our own language and be ashamed of writing a slovenly hand. Especially when writing for publication, everyone should regard it as his sacred duty to be doubly careful.

We are reminded, in this context, of a poem by a veteran writer. It is to this effect : Never write anything without giving thought to it; having written something, go through it carefully and write it over again; in rewriting, cut it down to half its length; go through this once more, think again and reduce the half to a half again; read over yet again the one-fourth that now remains and, if you are the least in doubt cut out something still further. Even after all this, you will find the editor so merciless that he will have to cut out something more. This advice is for those learning to write, but veteran writers have profited a great deal from it. We importune every writer to try out this well-tested advice and note the results. The late Mr. Gokhale, when he wanted to write even a short letter, would first turn it over in his mind for five to ten minutes, think out the words and then write it out; he would cancel it to write out a second one, show it to friends, politely listen to their comments and only then would he take his letter to have been finalized. The result was that he acquired control over a foreign language which few have had. His writing was replete with courage, truth and such other qualities, and yet one found no sting in it anywhere. In a wall which a clever artisan builds, not a single brick will be seen to have been wrongly set; those who read the writings of this builder in language have the same experience with regard to the edifice of words he constructs. We should have greater love still for our mother tongue.

If our enthusiastic and kind contributors keep these suggestions in mind, their contributions will stand greater chance of being accepted; besides, writings so shaped under the hammer of thought will prove useful to the people.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-9-1919

318. FATHER OF THE WORLD [I]

"O farmer! You, indeed, are the father of the world."

We learn this line in our primary schools. Shri Chandulal's article, published in this issue, reminds us of the significance of these worlds and of how little we honour this "father".

Shri Chandulal has briefly but graphically described the condition of the agriculturist. He has written about the agriculturists of Kathiawar, but what applies to the Kathiawar farmer applies in one form or another to peasants all over India. So long as the educated classes refuse to give thought to the condition of farmers, no improvement in it is possible.

Our leaders have collected a certain amount of information regarding the conditions of our peasantry, have written a little about it and have also discussed the question in the Legislative Assembly. However, no substantial improvement has taken place because we have no direct experience of their condition.

Government officers are certainly aware of it, but these officers are in a truly pitiable state. They look at the farmer as officers, i.e., as men concerned with collection of revenue. He who can squeeze out the largest amount is promoted, honoured and regarded as a capable officer. A fact appears to us in a particular way depending upon how we look at it. Therefore, so long as no one examines the peasant's condition from the peasant's point of view, we cannot obtain a realistic picture of it.

We can, however, form at least a partial idea of his circumstances. India is a land of extreme poverty. Hundreds of thousands in India can get only one meal a day. This only means that Indian peasants are destitute and that a majority of them have only one meal a day. Who are these cultivators? The proprietor of thousands of acres is a cultivator; the man who owns only a *bigha*[1] is also a cultivator; he who does not own even a *bigha*, but earns his food by working on another's land, is also called a cultivator and, finally, in Champaran, I have observed thousands of cultivators who were virtually slaves both of the Sahibs and of our people and could never hope to free themselves from their bondage. We shall never

[1] A measure of land

know the real numbers of these different kinds of cultivators. There are particular ways of making a census report. If it is prepared for the purpose of discovering the real condition of the rural population, we would be amazed and ashmed by the information it would disclose. It is my experience that this condition, instead of showing improvement, is deteriorating from day to day. Even in the Kheda district, which is supposed to be prosperous, man who had in the past built a decent house for himself is now no longer in a position to keep it in good repair. There is no glow of hope on the people's faces. Their bodies are not as strong as they should be. Their children are rickety. The plague has reached villages and the inhabitants suffer from other infectious diseases as well. Big landowners are ground down under a burden of debt. One shudders as one enters a Madras village, though I have not as thorough an experience of Madras as of Kheda and Champaran. But judging from the villages I saw there, I could get a fairly clear idea of the stark poverty of the rural population of Madras.

This is India's biggest problem. How shall it be solved? How can the cultivators' lot be improved? These are questions we ought to ask ourselves at every step. India does not live in her towns. She lives in her villages. The aggregate of all the residents of Bombay, Calcutta, Madras and other small and big cities would come to less than one crore. If we count the number of big towns in the country, we shall find it is less than a hundred. On the other hand, the number of villages with a population of 100 to 1000 is countless. Consequently, even if we are able to improve the towns and make them prosperous, these efforts can have very little effect on the villages. Even if we improve the condition of a ditch or a pond, this does not remove the filth from an adjacent river, should it be dirty. So it is with the towns. But just as an improvement in the river automatically brings about an improvement in the ditches around it, so if the living conditions of the farmers are improved and their standards raised, all else will follow.

Navajivan will always concentrate on the cultivators' lot. We shall later consider how this can be improved, how young and old, all, can help in the task, and how, if we can form even a small band of volunteers who, clinging to truth, go on doing their duty, we can make quick progress.

[From Gujarati]

Novajivan, 28-9-1919

319. NOTES

INTOLERANCE OF INJUSTICE

Mr. Mulshankar Mavji Yagnik reports from Bombay that on September 17 some whites forcibly took possession of a hackney carriage, ordered the removal of the luggage of the Bhatia gentleman who had hired it and gave the driver two or three strokes with a cane for protesting that the carriage had already been engaged. He adds that the crowd which had collected did not show even so much courage as to see that the poor driver and the Bhatia gentleman got justice. It is an important question how they could have done this. In any other country, such insolent conduct would have invited the intervention of the spectators and they would have put a stop to it. We do not know how to protect the victims of injustice, while remaining within our limits. As individuals, we have so little courage that no man will come forward alone to defend a helpless person at some risk to himself. In a situation like the one described above, we have three easy ways open to us. If the driver is a man with a sense of justice and some spirit, he should drive the whites straight to the police station and register a complaint on the spot; if he has courage enough, he should note the address of the whites and, having dropped them at their destination, go and lodge a complaint. The Bhatia gentleman, the victim of the injustice, can initiate either civil or criminal proceedings or both. And, thirdly, the spectators can also help both the driver and the Bhatia gentleman in lodging their complaints. If Mr. Mulshankar did not do his duty as a spectator and did not offer to help the driver and the Bhatia gentleman, we take it that, on another occasion of injustice, this is the least he will do. We have suggested this, looking at the matter from a general point of view. If we all cultivate intolerance of injustice and learn to take such trivial but appropriate and correct steps as the occasion may require, even that will assuredly stop such acts of injustice.

SWADESHI SUGAR

Mr. Popatlal Damodar Pujara has sent an article on the need for using swadeshi sugar. Though at present we do not give it space in *Navajivan*, we have no doubt about such need. If we have not included it, it is because we considered how much burden we couldcarry. Barring cloth, however, foreign sugar causes the heaviest

drain on our money, nearly 17 crores of rupees [annually]. One hope, an ambitious one, is that if we succeed in the great task of stopping the imports of foreign cloth into our country, this success and the energy resulting from the effort will certainly make us give up other foreign things of the kind we can produce in our own country. At present our condition is so pitiable that we just meet our needs. It is our firm conviction that this inability does not proceed from lack of resources, or even of money. It springs from lack of knowledge, spirit of enterprise, patriotism and zeal.

MORAL DILEMMA OVERCOME[1]

I have allowed an article of this nature to appear in *Navajivan* because all of us find ourselves [some time or other] in the kind of moral dilemma which faced, and still faces, Santokbehn. One's manhood or womanhood lies in fighting one's way through such dilemmas successfully. I hope, moreover, that no one will understand this article to admit anywhere the indiscriminate mingling of classes. Moral energy has its ebb and flow in Hindu society. In the Satyagraha Ashram, everyone is subject to a definite way of living and a definite aim; to admit caste-distinctions in a place like this is, in my humble view, to fail to understand the meaning of Hinduism.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-9-1919

320. SPEECH AT KATHIAWAR PATIDAR CONFERENCE[2]

September 28, 1919

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I hope you will all maintain perfect silence and listen to what I have to say. I hope everyone can hear me. I give my thanks to you all for inviting me to be the President.

I must not omit formalities. I first express my grief at the passing away of the Rani Saheba of Gondal. It was but proper that, in view of the mourning, you did not take out a procession in my honour. I do not approve of processions. I do not think they help us

[1] The comments which follow were appended to an article by Santokbehn, wife of Maganlal Gandhi.

[2] At Moti Marad, in the Gondal State in Saurashtra. Gandhiji presided over the conference.

in serving the nation. It was good that you showed the wisdom to cut out the procession. May God grant peace to the soul of the late Rani Saheba.

You need not applaud my words when they appeal to you, nor should you express your disapproval of what does not appeal to you. Follow the ancient tradition of India: approval or disapproval of the speaker's words should not be expressed by the clapping of hand or by mere gestures, but in action.

India has passed through the three Ages mentioned in the shastras and is now in the fourth Age. The modes of life attributed to *Satyayuga*[1], those of them which really obtained, were indeed the right ones. The present Age is a hard one, the very reverse of *Satyayuga*. To define *Satyayuga* or reveal its nature, it is necessary to point out that truth occupied the pride of place in that Age, that everyone spoke the truth. In the *Kaliyuga*[2], when truth is followed only by people who will not let things be, one needs to insist that truth must prevail, to offer satyagraha, that is. In the *Satyayuga*, where would be the need to insist on truth? There can be no excess of truth. However scrupulously one followed it, some imperfection would still remain. In the days of *Satyayuga* there was truth everywhere. Truth prevailed in all fields. Women could look at men with undisturbed eyes. They had no need to veil themselves. Men could look at women likewise and remain undisturbed. No man or woman can do so now, with the result that all have become sinful. With ever so much talk of pleasures, we lose our balance of mind and, in consequence, forget who we are. With memory, reason is lost and reason lost, one is utterly destroyed.

I see a kind of destruction overtaking India and the world; lust has increased, and my heart quakes as I see it. Man and woman are not born for the pleasures of the flesh. To develop and reveal the best in man and woman, we must restrain the desire for pleasure, must struggle and not give it free rein. Our condition today is bad. We are being enslaved by lust. When we have got out of this condition, it will be possible for all to be fearless. Today, men and women live in fear. If we can but exercise self-control and stop running after pleasure, there will be *Satyayuga* in India.

India is a land with a population of 30 crores. It has villages numbering seven and a half lakh, each with a population of 400 [on

[1] The Age of Truth
[2] The Age of Strife

an average]. Here it may be two and a half thousand and elsewhere five thousand. By and large, however, it is less than a thousand. At some places, it is just 50. One need not believe that places with such small populations are in a pitiable plight. Since generally every person pulls in a direction all his own, a thousand men in a village will be pulling in a thousand directions and this cannot but lead to ruin. One need not be sorry that a village is small. It is its condition which may make one sorry. If we think of the *Satyayuga*, Ayodhya was the best city in that Age. They did not have cities like Bombay then. Though we do not see what need there is for a civilization such as Bombay's, let us not mind its existence. India depends on her villages, in which the farmer is the man who counts; seventy three men in every hundred are farmers. If, therefore, the Indian farmer is unintelligent and poor, it means India is so. Whether India is rich or poor is measured not by reference to the income of the multi-millionaire but by that of the farmer; whether she is moral or otherwise is judged not from the prostitutes but by reference to the farmer's wife.

What must have been the condition of India's cities when it was a holy land? Men were sincere and frank of heart, and the homes in the country were pure and clean. The men who lived in these homes filled them with their sweet fragrance. What provides shelter to five men is a home and where 50 men live is a village. I saw rain water leaking through the roofs all over.[1] If we are so idle, we should at least arrange for the water leaking through to be collected. I found the lanes here full of dirt. Even when it has been raining, a farmer's house must be clean and the streets such as would not make walking in them quite a task. It should not happen that when it rains a little they become all slush. If the streets in a village are bad, it would be painfulfor the bullocks to walk on them. We are the Government in the village. We should not be lethargic and wooden. If the subjects are straightforward and truthful, the king cannot be otherwise. If the subjects are unjust and extravagant, the king is bound to be so. The king is the sky over the people. The control of affairs in your village ought to be in your hands. You should look after all the arrangements in your own village. The Government will not succeed in cleaning seven and a half lakh villages.

[1] The *Gujarati* report has been collated here with the one in *The Kathiawar Times*.

Marad belongs to the people who live here. If the mistress of the house does not keep it clean, she must be an indolent hussy; in like manner, if the inhabitants of the village do not keep it clean, they must be indolent louts. I am your guest. You have been showering your love on me. Despite Marad's being such a fine village, I have had to say all this about the cleanliness of its lanes. Marad is no different from other villages in this matter. Things are the same in all the seven and a half lakh villages of India. Conditions here are not worse than elsewhere. Since, however, you have put me in this chair, I owe it to you to tell you that others may go to hell, if they will, but you must start cleaning up the village this very day. We shall be judged by the state of our lanes. We look after our families, but we have not proceeded from the affairs of the family to those of the village or the town and, finally, of India.

A man like Shankaracharya toured all over the land from the extreme south to the extreme north. This shows that India has been one country right from ancient times. The roads were as good as one could desire. Villages were well managed. The cleanliness of the streets and lanes in those days is a part of our heritage which we are throwing away. We keep moving round and round like the bullock yoked to the oil-press. We ought to move forward in a straight line. I am sure we shall overcome our shortcomings. We ought to embrace what is good in others. We should be receptive to good things. Villages should be made self-reliant. To seek help from others is to be dependent on others. Do not depend on others and expect them to clean your village. Live a moral life. Run to the help of anyone who falls ill. If there is a death, go and help. Next, keep your homes and the roads and water clean. See that the wells do not have leaves falling into them. Whenever necessary, clean them. The water must be as clear as a pearl. Keep the temple clean. The priest should not be a blockhead either. He must be a man of wisdom. The musical instruments [for the puja] should be sweet to the ear. The image must be draped in pure khadi or *atlas*[1] and not in rags imported from Japan. I for one would not bow to an image so draped. If you expectTulsidas to kneel, the image of Rama should hold a bow in its hands. I would judge the people by the state of the image in the temple.

[1] A kind of silk

The flag [over the temple] on one side, and the mosque, the garden and the Parsi temple on the other. Elsewhere people would not permit this, but in India religion breathes a liberal spirit. The attitude which prevailed was that one should be generous to a Parsi temple or a Christian church. We should make education available to everyone in the village. The teacher must be one born in the village. The *shastri*[1] must not be a man who teaches for money. His livelihood should be provided for by the village. We would be good servants if we look after the disabled and the poor in the village. The cattle should not look starved. All our needs should be produced in the village itself. If we got all our things from outside, we would not be loyal to the village.

Farmers have yet to learn how to use their savings. It is good to use them for providing education. What kind of a school should we have? Not such as others want us to have, but such as we ourselves would have. A school is no school [merely] because it teaches English or other worthless stuff. A true school is that in which we learn dharma. Just as people living on the coast-line should learn swimming, so people in India should learn agriculture and weaving, if nothing else. It requires no very great effort to manage them well. I have not found them difficult to manage; I have not failed. If there were four or five good men in a village, they could bring the rest together. Only, they should have the spirit of service in them.

If anything stands in the way, it is the fear in us. We keep ourselves miles away from officials. We should respect them duly, look upon them as our brothers and behave towards them with courtesy. But we should not, as we do at present, allow them to press us into any shape they like. We should not make ourselves an india-rubber ball, but a ball as hard as stone. He who has tried to kick a stone will know what happens when one strikes it with one's foot. The point is, an officer will try to put pressure on you if you are one who will yield to this pressure. This is not the former's fault. We can be fearless only if we have truth and compassion in us. How can we expect to be so in the absence of these? If we want the world to have compassion on us, we should first have it in ourselves. If 73 men, farmers, are cruel as monsters, they can reduce the remaining 27 to

[1] A learned Brahmin; in the villages, he officiated at religious ceremonies and also looked after the children's education.

nothing; and afterwards you will kill one another, as the Yadawas[1] did, and so be destroyed. Your strength is the land.

It certainly cannot happen that 27 per cent will drive out the 73 per cent and then cultivate the land themselves. As things are, they can be driven out only if they are willing to be driven out. There has been no king any time who has deprived you of your lands. Really speaking, it is you who are the king. How is it that you, king-makers, have become so abject? If you have lost your truthfulness and spirit of renunciation, your capacity for discriminating between right and wrong and your understanding of the higher things, regain them. That is not a school where the teacher takes Rs. 8 as pay and teaches the tables. The best school is that in which illiterate adults are taught to write. Even if my wife were not educated, I would entrust our children to her. A teacher from outside cannot inculcate truthfulness and right judgment as well as you can. If desired, you may provide education in the letters through paid teachers and, having given instruction in the alphabet, you need not do anything more in that way but simply go on with your duty; the children will then learn to think rightly. Keep the whole of India in your mind. Think of the 30 crores.

One last thing now, about swadeshi. A hundered years ago, the farmers used to wear cotton clothes made in India. Indian weavers could make cloth of the finest texture. Its beauty lay in this, that very fine though the Dacca muslin was, it served to cover one's limbs. That was the beauty of it; it did not reveal the limbs. If you would rather have that you looked uncovered though wearing clothes, use Japanese cloth.

Your mothers and sisters spend their free time in sleeping or quarrelling; how much better would it be, instead, to spend it in spinning, which is the purest and holiest dharma? I do not mind if you own gold ornaments. May you have more of them! But the beauty which will be yours if you spin you will never get from Japan orFrance or England. Think of the miserable plight to which we have been reduced, thanks to the ruin of this home industry. Remember these words of a man who has had wide experience. If you do not, you will be sorry afterwards. I have seen what you have not seen. No one dare cast glances at your mother. But do you know what is her

[1] Lord Krishna's kinsmen; with the advent of the *Kaliyuga*, they were possessed by the spirit of evil and, after an orgy of drinking, destroyed themselves by fighting against one another.

condition when she goes out to work? The many mothers and sisters who go out to work in the mills for want of an occupation in the home…the indignities men inflict on them everywhere, unafraid, are heart-rending. In Dohad, the overseers on the roads being lecherous and given to wicked ways, the sisters employed in building the roads have to pay with their honour. I do not ask you to kill such men. But you can lay down your own lives. You are there, brave men, to protect women's honour when they work in the fields, and yet you allow them to go out. Fie on that man who fails to protect the honour of his mother or sisters. If you cannot protect it, you had better kill yourselves!

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 12-10-1919

321. SPEECH AT KATHIAWAR PATIDAR CONFERENCE[1]

[*September 28, 1919*]

Your duty does not end with the passing of resolutions. They must be put into practice and that with loss of time. You have seen tears in my eyes. Marad has not alone caused them, but the abject condition prevailing all over the country has done so. You may contribute your quota to wipe them, but India as a whole should come forward to wipe them out entirely and to quench the fire that is consuming me. Kathiawar is my birth-place and as such I have the greatest claim upon it. Be up, and take a vow that you and your women will spin your own cotton and weave your own cloth if you think it necessary. It gives me great pleasure to see so many men and women standing up to take the vow.

The work of the Conference has ended. I wish I were worthy of the love Kathiawar and India are showering upon me. My last message to you is to entreat you to read the paper I am editing. I wish I were in a position to give it free to the poor. A careful reading of it will help you to put your vow into practice. If learned men do not read my paper, I can overlook the omission; but its neglect by the cultivator and the artisan will sorely touch my heart. Procure a copy every week and hold a public reading thereof at your *chora*[2]. Its annual

[1] This was Gandhiji's concluding speech at the Conference.

[2] *Chowk* or square

subscription is Rs. 3-8-0. A free supply of it can be arranged, and if you want it free, just ask for it through Mr. Chandulal. The object of starting this paper is not money. Its object is to do social service and help the progress of our dear motherland.

Once again I thank the members and the volunteers.

The Bombay Chronicle, 15-10-1919

322. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

[About *September 28, 1919*][1]

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your fine letter concerning Moti Marad. I see that you examine everything very closely and also that you have started taking interest in them all. Did you know that I had gone to Moti Marad? Devchandbhai is an old man now. One cannot convince old people with arguments. They will learn only from experience, and that is as it should be. He will learn. . .[2] If you succeed in your work, that will be an object lesson to others. It would not be very easy to find a man of transparent sincerity like Devchandbhai. You may certainly tell him courteously what you think if it is necessary to tell him. Harilal had called on me. His affairs are getting worse. He goes about begging everywhere. He has even wired to Manilal for money. It was he who told me to write to the elderly aunt[3]. But now he is not at all willing to keep her with him. He says he has no money to do that. He does not like even Ba to be with him. He has called on me only once.[4]

From the Gujarati original : Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1]As suggested in the source. It is also substantiated by reference to Gandhiji's visit to Moti Marad which he visited on September 27, 1919.

[2] The rest of the sentence is illegible.

[3] Probably Gandhiji's elder sister, Raliyatbehn

[4] The letter is incomplete.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

REV. M. WELLS BRANCH'S LETTER TO GANDHIJI

REV. M. WELLS BRANCH, MANAGER,
LUCKNOW CHRISTIAN SCHOOL OF COMMERCE,
LUCKNOW,
INDIA,
May 2, 1919

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.,
BOMBAY

MY DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I have read with a great deal of interest your statements concerning the power of love and truth to bring about social and political transformations. This teaching is so eminently biblical and finds its embodiment so completely in the life and personality of Jesus Christ, that I have been induced to write you this letter and ask you the following questions:

1. What part do you think Christianity (not necessarily the Western form of it) will play in the future development of India?
2. Is the modern movement in India the result of Christian teaching, or does it emanate from other religions?
3. What is your personal attitude toward Jesus Christ as (I) a teacher, (2) an incarnation, (3) the world's Saviour?

I am not asking this information for the sake of publication but to gratify my own desire to know your real position on these equations. I love India and I love India's people and it is my personal opinion that India will yet show to the world the meaning of a real Christian faith as promulgated by our dear Saviour, Jesus Christ. It seems to me that the need of the present time is for His secret followers, of which there are thousands in India, to come out into the open and declare their allegiance to Him.

Your brother in Christ Jesus,
M. WELLS BRANCH

From a photostat: S.N. 6608

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM G.S. ARUNDALE

2ND LINE BEACH,
MADRAS,
July 26, 1919

DEAR MR. GANDHI

Now that you have temporarily suspended Civil Disobedience, may I venture to urge with all the earnestness at my command that you should devote some of your attention and power towards strengthening the efforts being made by so many of our most eminent leaders in London to secure for India a substantial measure of political freedom?

I am well aware of the fact that the removal of the Rowlatt Act from the Statute Book is your first duty. I entirely agree that continuous agitation against it is of vital importance. I would add that of equally vital importance is agitation against the Press Act. But now that you have for the moment given up the Civil Disobedience method of constitutional agitation, do you not think that we might all join in one great common movement having as its objective:

(1) The improvement of the Indian Reform Bill.

(2) The abolition of the Rowlatt Act and the Press Act.

(3) The insistence on the safeguarding of the rights of the Indian citizen as set forth in the Declaration of Rights originally propounded at a Madras Provinvial Conference, and adopted at the Bombay Special Sessions of the Indian National Congress and of the All-India Muslim League in August-September, 1918.

I do not suggest that the order in which I have placed the various aspects of this objective need necessarily be kept; but I would most earnestly urge that unity is India's need of needs, and that we are all bound to establish and maintain that unity by every means within our power.

At present, there are two roads of service≈the road of satyagrahis and the road of those who are concentrating their efforts on the Indian Reform Bill. Can we not join together for the time being, or at least for some common work?

I know well that some of your followers have no faith in any good coming out of the Indian Reform Bill. But is there not just a chance that it may be a useful stepping stone, and ought we not to support the many leaders in London who, representing India's National Assemblies and the movements, are striving hard to make the Bill worthy of the land it is intended to serve?

I am so eager in India's service, and so passionately anxious that even the

smallest chance should not be over looked, that I do not hesitate to place these considerations before you. How glorious a testimony of India's greatness were we able to make at this critical moment a united India working hard towards a common goal? I know it could be done with your help and guidance and inspiration. In a conversation the other day with Sir Sankaran Nair he told me of those essential improvements which would make the Indian Reform Bill really worth having, and which he thought could be gained. Mrs. Besant, after a long interview with Mr. Montagu, wrote to me that the outlook was distinctly hopeful. Could we in India not give our strength in this direction also? Could we not join hands and work together? Could there not, at least for a few months, be one great movement, with yourself as one of its principal leaders?

As one of the rank and file, let me say that we look with sadness upon the fact that there is so little union among our leaders. We desire united action with all our hearts. Ought it not to be given to us for India's sake, and could it not come on the basis of a combined agitation in favour of the abolition of the two obnoxious Acts, of the modification of the Reform Bill, and of the Declaration of Rights? A noble and inspiring programme this, to which, I believe, there is not a single patriotic Indian who would not adhere. Your temporary suspension of Civil Disobedience should make it possible for us all to work together without the slightest reservation; and I beg you to consider whether we could not, at least for the time being, go forward together.

With all respect,

Yours sincere admirer,

GEORGE ARUNDALE

P.S. You may, of course, make any use of this letter you think proper, giving it publicity if you desire.

Young India, 6-8-1919

APPENDIX III

LETTER FROM M. ABDUL AZIZ

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

During the last two months, several public men from different provinces of India, enjoying undoubted influence and esteem, have addressed you, both openly as well as by means of private letters, requesting you in the name of the country you love so much, and the people whom you consider to be the highest privilege of your life to serve, to abandon and finally relinquish the passive resistance idea. I had thought that these sincere and respectful protestations would weigh with you and ultimately compel you to give up once and for all the idea of resistance to laws

through personal suffering that you introduced for the first time in the political history of this country, since it came under the sway of Britain, as a weapon wherewith to combat the Rowlatt legislation. It appears, however, a general programme, you are, yet, bent upon setting an example by practising it yourself, forgetting altogether, that example is the mightiest and greatest factor to induce a general adoption of the principle for which, you yourself admit, the people are little fit. I am afraid that the "Himalayan Miscalculation" you so frankly acknowledged is still upon you, and that its effects have not completely left you. To me it is really inexplicable that you with your shrewd and penetrating judgement should still persevere in a course which has been productive of greatest private and public suffering within living memory in this country. You say that you don't want others to practise passive resistance, because they are not for it, but that you, as the only person fittest and best trained in the school, will practise it. What difference will this make with the man in the street? If anything, his frenzy will rise higher and the pitch of his excitement will grow stronger when he notices that his "rishi", his "guru", the object of his adoration and the centre of his affections, throws himself into the fire, while he stands out. Will he not leap into the burning "ghat", and will not the solitary fire, fed by the fuel of a frail body, blaze up in a general conflagration? I ask you, as a sincere patriot and a devoted worker to the cause of your motherland, to reflect on this, and after remembering all that has happened subsequent to the ill-fated 6th of April, to question yourself whether you will be a party again to that general upheaval, shaking society to its very foundations, which must inevitably follow the course you intend to adopt?

I will ask you also to consider another aspect of the matter. I belong to Peshawar, the capital of N.W. Frontier Province. I have seen with my own eyes the excitement that prevailed in the bazaars and by-lanes of that hitherto most peaceful and unagitating town. Would you believe me when I tell you that the people who organised this orgy of sheer lawlessness had not the remotest comprehension of the spiritual philosophy that you offer in the formula of passive resistance? Nor had they any the least idea or fear of the Rowlatt Act which was convulsing the rest of the country. My statement that the people of the Frontier Province had no idea of fear of the Rowlatt Act might cause bewildering surprise both to you and some of the readers of this letter, but I will justify my statement by a brief mention of the conditions of life prevailing Regulations, the provisions of which are inconceivably more drastic and draconian than the provisions of the Rowlatt Act in question. Obviously people who live subject to such laws, though quite peacefully I admit, can have no unctuous fears or constitutional scruples of a grave character in respect to a legislation comparatively much milder and incapable of application to them. Why, then, should they have thrown themselves into convulsions of frenzy over the Rowlatt legislation? To state the naked truth, there were not wanting people, selfish and

extremely unpatriotic, who to work out their own ends, took advantage of the uneasiness of the times and brought about a spurious agitation to throw dust into the eyes of others at a distance, unacquainted with the subtle and subterranean forces which had rendered this agitation possible in the Frontier Province. You will be surprised to hear from me that in the Frontier Province not a single meeting was ever held before the 6th of April to agitate on political matters. In fact, when the province itself was separated from the Punjab about 20 years ago, the people did not then raise and have not since raised their little finger by way of protest, while at the same time Bengal was writhing with indignation over its dismemberment. Even in the matter of the Rowlatt legislation no protest was ever uttered before the 6th of April in this calm and peaceful province. And yet all of a sudden it seemed on the 6th April that Peshawar was in the throes of a most violent agitation against a legislation which could not possibly touch its people. This state of lawlessness grew day by day [and] that lasted for one month without any hindrance. I will be treading on dangerous ground if I attempt to unmask the secret selfish forces that were working to this end, apparently with countenance, but I would ask you were working to this end, apparently with countenance, but I would ask you to draw a moral from this tale and recognize that passive resistance as you preach it, is incapable of being understood and appreciated by the people in any other sense than that of open unabashed violation of laws, the very laws that ensure us internal peace and safety and have rendered possible the dawn in India of that hopeful future, bright with the promise of freedom and leading to the partnership of this ancient country on terms of absolute equality with the autonomous nations that make up the Confederation of the League of Nations within the British Empire.

In conclusion I trust that you will fully ponder my respectful submission and will at an early date announce the complete and final abandonment of the passive resistance movement.

Yours truly,

M. ABDUL AZIZ

Barrister-at-Law of Peshawar

The Pioneer, 27-7-1919

APPENDIX IV

LETTER FROM LALA LAJPATRAI

TELEPHONE-GREELEY 6175,
1,400 BROADWAY,
NEW YORK,
June 20, 1919

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

Circumstances beyond my control have prevented my taking part in the great movement that you are leading for the uplift of our common motherland. I am, however, desirous of conveying to you my hearty admiration for your noble stand, and my unqualified appreciation of your high-souled patriotism.

During my absence from India, I have learnt and unlearnt a great deal. This is no place to make a full confession of faith. But I want to say that, although I do not fully agree with your line of thought, I am in substantial agreement with your conclusions as to what we should do. Never before have I been more convinced of the futility of attempts to bring about a forcible revolution in India. Terrorism, too, in my judgment, is not only futile but sinful. Secret propaganda and secret societies may have some justification in the Government's desire to prohibit and penalize all kinds of open work, but in the long run this ends in the demoralization of those who take part in them. I believe that no nation deserves or will win freedom which is not prepared to suffer for it. When I say that, I mean the suffering in pursuit of freedom, and not for lack of it. In India we have plenty of the latter and not sufficient of the former. We have so far done precious little to deserve freedom and we have done still less to educate our people as to what constitutes real freedom. The sacrifices and sufferings we have so far undergone in our fight for freedom are too trivial to be crowned with success.

I am therefore in full sympathy with the general spirit of your propaganda. I may be unable to sign the full pledge of a satyagrahi but if and when I return to India I shall sign the "pure Swadeshi Vow".

You will be pleased to learn that most of the young Indians in this country have a deep sentiment of reverence for you. One of them, at one time a faithful follower of Hardayal, writes:

"What we need now are the leaders of the type of Mahatma Gandhi. We do not want armed resistance. We do not want passive resistance. What we want is something super, and that is what Mahatma is advocating. I have concluded that the methods which Hardayal advocated are not wise and sane for any part of the world. We

want to get away from murder, assassination, conflagration, and terrorism. The foundation in the past was laid upon bloodshed, and we have had enough of it, but now the foundation must be laid on justice and freedom to individuals, so that the same be palpable in the future. Hardayal has, by giving these ideas, degraded himself and I am afraid it may affect some of the young men who always followed him blindly. It is our misfortune that our leaders instead of going up are going down. The crying need of India is leaders of the type of Gandhi, staunch in their principles, which can be applied to almost every part of the world."

How I wish I had been in India to share in full the misfortunes of my countrymen. My heart bleeds for them, but more for myself in having been deprived of the opportunity to serve and suffer.

Very sincerely,

Young India,13-8-1919

APPENDIX V

NOTE ON THE KAIRA CASE

The Kaira agitation arose out of the land revenue demand for the year 1917-18. Prior to this the revenue condition of the district was excellent, revenue suspensions from previous years being nil in the three talukes to which the crop failure of 1917-18 was practically confined. In 1917 heavy late rains considerably damaged some of the *kharif* crops, especially, *bajri*, in parts of the district; while on the other hand, the rice and other later crops were unusually good. The Bombay rules relating to suspensions and remissions of land revenue, which were approved by the Government of India in 1907, proceed on the principles that in the case of general calamities circumstances being avoided in the interests of expeditious disposal, that in the first instance relief should invariably be given in the form of suspension and not of remission, and that suspensions should be granted on the following scale, viz., in full if the crop is one-third of a normal[1] crop or less, to the extent of one-half the demand if the crop is more than one-third, but less than one-half the demand if the crop is more than one-third, but less than one-half of a normal crop; and not at all in other cases. In accordance with these rules the Collector (himself an Indian) after local investigation granted varying degrees of suspension in 104 villages in three talukas, the amounts supended being about 20 per cent of their total revenue demand and 7.4 per cent of the demand for the whole district. Shortly before he passed his formal orders, a deputation headed by two Bombay lawyers waited on him on

[1] Under the system of notation followed in the Bombay Presidency a normal crop is described as "12 annas".

December 15, 1917, and alleging an almost entire failure of all crops, demanded immediate remission in the majoritiy of cases, and suspension in full in others. The Collector pointed out that the former request was against the rules, but promised to consider the case for suspensions, as the result of which he passed the above orders. The matter was thereupon taken up by the Gujarat Sabha whose headquarters are at Ahmedabad, outside the Kaira district altogether. Its method of operations was to ignore the local officers, and to address petitions and telegrams direct to the local Government claiming an independent inquiry. About the beginning of January it issued a circular to the villagers of Kaira stating that, as no reply had been received from the Bombay Government, those whose crops had failed entirely or who had not got more than one-third of a normal crop should withhold payment of land revenue. On this the local Government issued its first Press Note of January 16, 1918, detailing the facts and warning the revenue assessees against any attempt to refuse payment in the face of formal orders to pay.

2. Mr. Gandhi began to interest himself in the matter during the month of February, after the *Kharif* harvest in question had been reaped and removed from the field. He contended, however, that reliable results could be obtained by asking cultivators to say what crops they had obtained that year and what crops they expected to obtain in a normal year. He also took the view that *rabi* crops, even cotton crops, should not be taken into consideration in determining the average crop valuation of a village. These representations were personally discussed with the Commissioner and collector, and the latter re-examined the estimates of outturn in villages in the neighbourhood of Mr. Gandhi's own inquiries. Mr. Gandhi was invited to be present at this re-examination and in one case was present. It was decided that there was no ground for modification of the orders already passed and Mr. Gandhi was so informed on March 20, 1918.

3. On the following day the Gujarat Sabha, presided over by Mr. Gandhi, passed a resolution that resort should be had to passive resistance; and Mr. Gandhi proceeded to initiate the campaign on March 22, by advising a large meeting of agriculturists of the Kaira district that, if they really and honestly believed that their crops were less than one-third of a normal crop, they should resort to passive resistance by refusing to pay the revenue and allow Government to recover it in any manner it pleased. An undertaking to this effect is said to have been signed by some 200 agriculturists "small and big" at the meeting. The campaign was continued in March and April, and according to Press reports had attained its maximum of 2,337 signatories by April 21.

4. Meanwhile the collection of land revenue was being effected to a large extent in the district. In a speech at Nadiad on April 12, the Commissioner announced that not less than 80 per cent, had already been paid, while the Collector reported on

April 10, that some persons who had signed Mr. Gandhi's pledge were already beginning to pay up and that Mr. Gandhi appeared to be ready to make a compromise. On April 24th, the commissioner pointed out to the Collector that the position had been "to a great extent changed within the last few days by reason of the issue of the Viceroy's order that every effort should be made to sink domestic differences and to bring about the cessation of political propaganda at a time of national crisis" (the great German offensive was then at its height). In these circumstances he considered it the duty of Government to make any concession which does not involve a sacrifice of the essential rights of the State. The objective should be the early and complete collection of all arrears, and he directed in supersession of all previous orders that:

(1) Recovery of arrears by means of forfeiture of the land under Section 150(b) of the Bombay Land Revenue Code should be dropped.

(2) If full payment was tendered, payment of the "chothai" fine, i.e., the penalty, not exceeding one-fourth of the arrear, leviable under Section 148 of the Bombay Land Revenu Code, need not be insisted on.

(3) In all cases recovery should be effected preferably by distraint of the defaulter's movable property (Section 150 (c) of the Code).

(4) Lands already forfeited might be restored at any time during the current revenue year if the arrears were tendered.

He added that there need be no pressure on those who were really unable to pay, and that such arrears might be carried on to the next year's accounts.

5. The next day (April 25) the Bombay Government issued its second Press Note, pointing out that the bulk of the revenue had already been paid in, and that the outstandings were mainly due from those who could afford to pay, but had been induced to refuse payment, and stating that in these circumstances Government could not comply with Mr. Gandhi's request for an independent inquiry. They emphasised the fact that suspensions and remissions cannot be claimed as a matter of right, but are a measure of relief granted as matter of grace; and announced that all their estimates and calculations on which the revenue demand was based were open to inspection.

6. The Commissioner's orders were duly passed on by the Collector to the mamlatdars, but the latter appear to have had some hesitation in forbearing to put pressure on those who were really unable to pay; with the result that the Collector repeated the orders on May 22, 1918, by which time the revenue realised had risen to 93 per cent of the total demand. This reminder had its effect, and the mamlatdar of Nadiad after an interview with Mr. Gandhi issued an order on June 3 to the village officials of Uttersanda, directing them to inform the villagers that such of them as were able to pay should do so without delay, but that "against those who are really poor, and whose poverty is proved, no coercive measures will be used and their land

revenue will be suspended till the next year". The order was read out to the villagers and Mr. Gandhi then strongly urged the people to pay up. After this the agitation rapidly came to an end. There was still some correspondence between the Collector and Mr. Gandhi regarding the reformers' action in levying "Chothai" fine in the case of persons against whom forfeiture orders had already been passed; and regarding the question whether the arrears of persons finanlly declared to be too poor to pay during the year should be classed as "suspensions" or as "unauthorised arrears". On the latter point the Collector considered that there had been a genuine misunderstanding, and on his recommendation Government reluctantly agreed to concede the point and to class the arrears as suspensions. By the end of July, colloections had risen to 98.5 per cent of the total demand.

7. To appreciate the question of justification for this agitation it is necessary to bear in mind that under British rule in India the system of fixed assessments over a series of years was delilberately adopted. The principle underlyling these periodical assessments is that they have "been fixed so as to allow, so far as the assessing officers could judge, for ordinary variations of season during the period of settlement, and the demand ought in theory to be paid in bad years as well as in good" (para 5 of the Government of India, Revenue and Agricultural Department Resolution of March 25, 1905). While, therefore, recognising that in practice some elasticity in collection is required, the Government of India remarked that it was no part of their intentions that the system to which they gave their adherence in this resolution should authorise anything in the shape of laxity or carelessness in the collection of the fixed demand, nor did they contemplate that the system of suspensions and remissions should form, as had been proposed, "a regular feature of the revenue administration". It was to be recognised as a measure, purely of grace and not of right, to be exercised only in exceptional cases of calamity so severe as to justify and necessitate a relaxation of the settlement contract. They added that it was "wholesome and legitimate to expect him (the cultivator) to take the bad with the good in years of ordinary fluctuation". The above principles are repeated in the preface to the Bombay Rules. Rule 1 of these rules authorises (it does not, be it noted, direct) the Collector, when he has ascertained by local inquiries that, owing to a partial or total failure or destruction of the crops throughout any tract on account of drought or any other cause, it will be necessary to suspend the collection of revenue, to grant suspensions according to the scale indicated above (para 1) to all occupants alike without inquiry into the circumstances of individuals. The use to which these scales should be put is laid down in para 10 of the Government of India's Resolultion of March 25, 1905. They deprecated anything in the shape of servile adherence to formula; but were of opinion that a standard scale of relief on an arithmetical basis should be prescribed for general guidance. The agitation in Kaira ignored these principles. Mr. Gandhi, it is true, early in May admitted that "suspension is granted as a matter of grace and not

as a matter of right enforceable by law"; but he shows no appreciation of the fact that this essential distinction is due, not to any arbitrary refusal on the part of Government to concede the legal right, but to the simple fact that under the present system of fixed assssments the assessee accepting the periodical settlement for a term of years undertakes to pay that assessment in bad years no less than in good. Thus he actually states the case for the agitation as follows: "Where there are, in matters of administrative orders, sharp differences of opinion between local officials and the ryots, the points of difference are and ought to be referred to an impartial committee of inquiry." He even goes so far as to say that it was the Commissioner's duty to please the people when he saw that they differed from him regarding the extent of relief required. This seems essentially a denial of his former admission that suspensions are a matter of grace. Again Mr. Gandhi is wrong in insisting on a rigid adherence to the scale of suspensions prescribed in the rules. In his letter of March 29, 1918, he writes :"Under the Revenue rules, if the crops are under four annas (i.e., one-third of a normal crop) the cultivators are entitled to full suspensions of the revenue assessment for the year." They are not "entitled to" anything; and the scale appealed to is not an absolute formula, but a general guide to the Collector . As the Government of India said in para 9 of their Resolution of March 25, 1905, "it does not necessarily follow that the failure of more than half a crop will always justify relief, as much depends upon the nature of the harvest immediately preceding and upon the importance of the harvest in question}-another point which the agitation consistently ignored. Apart from the question whether the assessees in certain circumstances have a claim to suspension, the Government could not accept the further contention of the agitators that the assessees have a right to challenge the Collector's estimate of crop failures on which his orders for suspensions are passed, and either to have those orders modified at their dictation or to demand an independent inquiry. The responsibility made as to justify organised protest, and a contrary inference may reasonably be drawn from the progress of actual collections during the revenue year and even while the passive resistance movement was at its height. The figures have been given already in paras 4 and 6 above.

8. It remains to consider how far the agitation was in fact successful. From the fact that the Gujarat Sabha found it necessary at its meeting of March 21, 1918, to repeat in the form of a resolution the advice it had already issued in circular form at the beginning of January, it may be inferred that in its earlier stages, at any rate prior to Mr. Gandhi's intervention, the agitation was not very effectual. Moreover, it was not until after his Excellency the Viceroy had issued his appeal to sink domestic differences that the local Government and its local officers relaxed in any way the firm attitude hitherto adopted by them. The extent of this relaxation is indicated in para 4 above. In the main it consisted of the substitution of the milder for the more rigorous of the recognised methods of revenue recovery and to this extent involved

no surrender to Mr. Gandhi's demands. The Commissioner's direction that no pressure should be put on those who were really unable to pay, while not covered by any specific provision in the rules for suspension in times of general calamity, was in accordance with the revenue practice of the presidency, and it was only the subsequent conversion of these outstanding from "unauthorised arrears" to "suspension" (*vide* para 6 above) which involved any unusual concession. This concession, however, formed only a small part of what the agitation was avowedly designed to obtain. Its main object was that either an independent inquiry into the extent of crop failure should be instituted, or Government should accept the ryots' own estimate of their crops as the basis on which suspensions should be granted. Neither of these demands was conceded. Even in the individual cases to which the above concession was extended, it was the Government officials alone who decided the question whether assessee was or was not, too poor to pay; and Mr. Gandhi agreed to abandon the agitation and took an active part to secure payment by the recusant minority before any steps had been taken to determine who were too poor to pay. It is true that even here Mr. Gandhi appears at first to have been under a misapprehension, as in his speech at Uttersanda on June 3, which inaugurated the abandonment of the agitation, he is reported to have said to the villagers that "the Government had left it to them to decide who should not pay". But there was no authority for this statement, and the commissioner on July 1, 1918, stated definitely that "those who will receive the concession in question are the poorest holders, and they have been selected by the collector and his subordinate officers and not by any extraneous agency".

9. The above facts point to the conclusion that there was no valid ground for the Kaira agitation, and that it did not succeed in its object.

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-8-1919

APPENDIX VI

LETTER FROM "PENNSYLVANIAN"

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Your work in the interests of the people at large has been observed by many persons of whom you know nothing. Nevertheless, all good work is appreciated. You have chosen some very high ideals, you have made some mistakes. These stand out all the more in contrast with the very praiseworthy in your work. Excuse me, Gandhiji, if I who am a son of the Great Republic where you have never been, offer to you for your kind and careful consideration, some of the thoughts I have been a-thinking. Your recent letter renouncing civil resistance for the present was timely. It was well advised indeed, but pardon me, that letter is full of fight against the Rowlatt Bills. No matter what else [is done], the Rowlatt Bills must be wirhdrawn! That's the

idea. Is it not?

Now, my dear Gandhiji, I have learned on general principles that when a man attacks a job like that in the way you are attacking it, that man defeats his own purpose. If you were Government, and any man put it up to you that he will concede every point but one, you would ask him to concede that one. If he then would say he will not, then you would say, he will! That is the way men are made, Gandhiji, you know that. Now if I may venture a suggestion you won't like, it is that you discontinue your effort against the Rowlatt Bills. You will make more progress in the end.

Let me tell you a story common in Christian circles. In an English country chapel an organ was brought in secretly by some of the congregation. Others of the congregation felt very badly about it≈very badly indeed. There was a feeling of awakening all round,≈interest in the contest over the organ. Presently, one of those who brought it in, said that he had no idea it would cause so much offence, therefore he was quite willing to have it taken out. In reply to which, the leading deacon of the opposition arose and said : "If that is the way you feel about it, I gladly withdraw my objections to having it remain."

The other day a friend asked me if the Great Republic would do so cruelly as is being done with the accused in the Punjab. I told him this : I have a friend in the States. He is a dentist by profession. He was talking too much on one occasion during the War, and was criticising Government. Well, he was called to appear before a court, when he was fined Rs. 3,000. He paid his fine, so far as I have learned, and since then has not been talking so much. And so far as I know, his friends feel that he acted wisely≈latterly.

Let me suggest, Gandhiji, that civil resistance is a very good thing, a very wise thing, and that it ought to be continued by you and your friends, but first, I beg to suggest that you revise it a bit. It is too good to drop. It is too potential for good to be quietly laid aside. But I would revise it. As it is, its potentialities for evil are too many. Revise it. Cut out the evil, increase the good. How would this please you? Make too great divisions, one positive, one negative. Beginning with the negative, which is always the most dramatic you know, let us consider.

1. EVIL RESISTANCE

(1) Oppose ever telling a lie. Get good men who never tell a lie to join up with satyagraha, thus inducing others to do so, all pledging themselves never to tell a lie under any circumstances. Teach that it is better to go to jail telling the truth than to enjoy freedom with their heads full of lies.

(2) Oppose all bribing. Get satyagrahis to pledge themselves to stand against it so definitely that they will feel bound to expose every rascal who takes or gives a

bribe. Teach that it is better to tell the fellow who compels a bribe before he will do his duty, even if the one who gave it, that is, who was forced to give it, has to go to jail. Those who give and those who take the bribe are alike guilty before the law. If satyagrahis by the score will report this sort of thing, there will be a moral revolution in the life-time of us all. You cannot be ignorant of the extent of this shameful evil.

(3) Oppose religious mendicantism. The idea of three millions of religious beggars eating up the food of the land, and giving nothing in return, is to me, Gandhiji, most abhorrent. You have been opposing it. Good for you. We are getting together. But they will beg as long as people give. Get satyagrahis to be liberal givers, but not to able-bodied men who refuse to do any sort of work. That will help the situation tremendously.

(4) Oppose slavery. If there is anyone in India who is now where he can shape public opinion, it is you Gandhiji. It would be a tremendously fine thing if you could lead men to feel the shame and disgrace of keeping in their employed men or women or children on such a pitiful low wage that they can never be else than in slavery to them. Have you ever heard of a young fellow borrowing fifty rupees from his employer to get married, giving a written promise on stamped paper to pay the debt by labour for which he receives his board and ten rupees per year credit on account? I have heard of many such, but not in my country. I call that slavery. No satyagrahi should be guilty of such a thing. If even the poor fellow is treated kindly, it is still a benevolent sort of slavery.

(5) Oppose the liquor traffic. This is much a nefarious business that good men can well afford to spend their time and money fighting the evil. My country has taken the lead in the fight. Gandhiji, do you know how that fight was won in America? Forty or fifty years ago, a lot of good people had determined to quit playing with the temperance question, and go to work. They held meetings, made speeches, got men and women and children to sign total abstinence pledges, got pictures of good-heart and liquor-heart into the school buildings, got lessons on temperance inserted in all the school readers, got temperance information in all the newspapers,≈ Gandhiji, after a while these school children became men and women. They had convictions as to the immensity of the evil. It is these men who have driven the thing from my country. These men and women have cleansed the Great Republic of the infamous liquor traffic! But before this last act they were again and again defeated. However, because he was defeated no member of Congress ever resigned his seat. Not much. He stuck to it. And got ready for another shot. The idea of resigning and pouting and runnning away, because one has failed to get what he wanted, does not appeal to Americans as the proper way to play the game.

Civil resistance divided into positive and negative, gives us in the first place,

as I see it, evil resistance, as stated above, and

II. CIVIL RESISTANCE

(1) Home industries have already been suggested by you. It would be splendid if people were to weave much of their own cloth. It would be excellent if farmers were to gin their own cotton, even as they do now thresh out their own wheat. If this kind of thing were entered into whole-heartedly, there would be no need to cry out against foreign-made goods. Eighty per cent of the people will buy what is the cheapest. Produce it, and you have won the day. In Kaira, where you spent some time, how many villages have a carpenter in them? How many have a blacksmith[1]? How many a *shimpi*? The village consists largely of farmers and servants of farmers.

(2) Good roads are essential to the progress of any country. But here again, shall we blame Government? I would not. Get the people to be satyagrahis, who stand for good roads and healthy villages. Get every farmer to be a satyagrahi, to carry a pick or hoe or axe with him in his cart every time he takes to the road, and to pledge himself to stop once on every trip and fix up the worst place he finds. Gentlemen in the towns I think would raise the money to buy such tools to give every farmer, who would take the pledge. Try something, Gandhiji. Just think of the country roads while it rains!

EDUCATION

(3) Go in for primary Universal Education, Gandhiji. But here it is again. People say, if Government would enact a law! Why bother Government like that? You are a man of the people, go after the people. Get students to pledge themselves that during vacation everyone will teach some ignorant soul how to read. Every student should cultivate a feeling of shame and confess a lack of interest in the general welfare of his country so long as there is in his father's house or employ, one person who cannot read! But servants who can't read, they say, are better servants? There you are, Sir. Lincoln says that a country cannot stand half slave and half free. I shout for Lincoln. I would have all free. I would have the treasures of the printed page unlocked for the meanest servant.

(4) Go in for higher education abroad. You know Japan is an ancient country. How many of her present leaders have been educated abroad? At the present time it is said there are 1,200 Japanese students in American institutions. China is an ancient country. Do you know, Gandhiji, that every year there are 50 high school Chinese graduates, the flower of that land, chosen by competitive examination, and sent (by the indemnity fund) to America for education, with the distinct understanding that they continue their studies there seven years and then return to China? The young men and women thus sent are given each one about Rs. 2,500 per year for all expenses, plus free passage both ways. It seems good to me. That means 750 Chinese students study in American institutions all the while, competing with American young men

and women for first place. They are welcome. They study what they wish, and return to China with the highest ideals which America can give them. Does that sound good to you, Gandhiji? I heard once that in the city of Surat there is a Bora fund of fifty lakhs of rupees without any special designation. There is lot of money lying thus unemployed in India. Suppose fifty lakhs at five per cent interest were set to work educating young men and women in foreign colleges. Giving them Rs. 2,500 per annum, a hundred such could be kept searching the secrets of the Universities of the world. Does it grip you Gandhiji? It pains me when I think about it, pains me that instead of this we have nothing, absolutely nothing to show for these crores of rupees which lie idle! And meanwhile our bright young men and women are often found struggling against fate to advance a little. A few things, would be essential to the success of such a proposition; that entrance be by competitive examination, that they be allowed to go where they choose and study what they like, provided they return to India.

(5) I hold my breath as I pen this paragraph, but Gandhiji, let me tell you a story of Abraham Lincoln. When he was admitted to the bar, he openly declared that he would not take a case until he had first satisfied himself that it was a true case. And Lincoln,≈There is no name of mortal man whose name is sweeter today to an American than the name of Lincoln≈never swerved from that original decision of his. This contains a suggestion to the Vakil-Sabha. Get them all to be satyagrahis, to feel that it is better to fight out a case honourably and lose, than to win a case in the German way. Lincoln said : "I am not bound to win, but I am bound to be true."

(6) When Booker Washington made his famous speech at Atlanta, he stood at the height of his popularity. He had a mixed audience, and both sides were doubtful as to the probable outcome. Among other things, he said : "In all things purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress," and that whole vast audience which filled the large exposition hall, aristocracy not excepted, rose to their feet and indulged in a delirium of applause. The editor of the *Atlanta Constitution* sitting by the side of the *New York World* correspondent, Mr. James Creelman, tuned to him and said: "That speech is the beginning of moral revolution," Gandhiji, there is the thing in a nutshell. If you spend your splendid energies in working for a moral revolution, you will have a chance of seeing both moral and political advances of a phenomenal nature. If you spend your strength on political revolution, you may see neither. Thus it appears to me.

(7) Include in satyagraha the idea of giving more than you take. This may be done for the love of country, or for the love of humanity, or for the love of God. For example, I considered the worthy professor in Fergusson College whose market value is Rs. 800 per month, and who takes but Rs. 150 as making long strides towards

leading a moral revolution. I personally know not less than 50 such gracious souls, who are taking pay at a rate far below their market value. They are sacrificing for the general good. Herein is a suggestion for spiritual leadership. This is different from the normal, quite different from the usual, which takes all it can get, and then asks for more. India can teach the world some points on spiritual life, some points on sacrifice for the good of others, but it won't be done through any system of civil resistance; it may be done through first, Evil Resistance, and second, Civil Assistance. This means moral revolution, which lacks the comouflage and publicity of civil resistance, but presents the greatest possible challenge to men of faith and vision. I take it, Gandhji, you are such a man, a man of faith and vision. Therefore, have I written.

Now I guess I have said enough; so I reckon I had better stop.

Yours very truly,

PENNSYLVANIAN

The Times of India, 13-8-1919

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PENNSYLVANIAN

The Times of India, 13-8-1919

1. LETTER TO G.E. CHATFIELD

ASHRAM,
September 29 [*1919*]

DEAR MR. CHATFIELD,

Anasuyabehn has just shown me the order regarding the levy to be made from the inhabitants of Ahmedabad including the millhands on account of the April disturbances. I observe that the levy from the mill-hands is to be collected today by the mill-owners paying to the Hazur Deputy Collector one week's wages out of the amount held by them as caution money on their account. I venture to think that this levy will come upon the mill-hands as a perfect surprise. Will it not be better to give them some time to realize the situation and to make individual or collective payments themselves. The proposed summary procedure may be suitable from the Government standpoint, nay, even be agreeable to the mill-owners. But the principle of leaving totally out of consideration the party that is to pay seems to me to be dangerous and demoralizing. I should imagine that the Government are interested in the mill-hands realizing and recognizing their own dignity and becoming conscious of their own responsibility.

Moreover, I do not know whether you are aware that the coming days are auspicious days for both Mohammedans and Hindus. The Moharram festival is always, all over India, a time of anxiety for the Government. I have no doubt that this matter has been overlooked by you as well as others who are responsible for fixing the time of levy. But you will agree with me that the mill-hands who are even ordinarily suspicious will jump to the conclusion that the time chosen for collecting the levy has been specially selected in order to wound their feelings and cause them embarrassment. I therefore venture to suggest that the collection from the mill-hands may be deferred till after the Diwali holidays. Meanwhile I need hardly assure you that you will depend upon those who are at all connected with the mill-hands doing their best to facilitate collection. I know that you will treat this matter

as very urgent and, if you at all agree with my argument, issue the necessary orders.[1]

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the handwritten draft : S. N. 6904

2. LETTER TO P.S. TO VICEROY

SABARMATI,
September 30, 1919

TO
THE HON'BLE MR. S.R. HIGNELL, C.I.E., I.C.S.
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY

DEAR MR. HIGNELL,

As His Excellency is aware, there are orders against me which, among others, prohibit me from entering the Punjab and from leaving the Bombay Presidency. Hitherto, I have not been keen about the orders being withdrawn, if only because, so long as the Government persists in retaining on the Statute Book the Rowlatt Act, so long must my civil resistance continue *in esse* or *in posse*. But the situation has altered somewhat now. In my humble opinion, it is necessary for me to be in the Punjab when and some time before the forthcoming Committees begin their sittings. I claim that my presence can only help to elucidate truth. There is an urgent demand from the Punjab that I should be in that province before and at the time of the inquiry. I see that so many things are alleged to have happened in my name that I am naturally interested in the proceedings. I hope, therefore, that the orders against me, so far as the Punjab is concerned, will be removed.[2]

N.A.I. : Home Department : Political A : October 1919 : File Nos. 426-440; also from a photostat of the draft : S. N. 6911

[1] In his reply, G.E. Chatfield wrote the same day : "I am afraid I cannot accept the principle of recovering the amount from the mill-hands by individual and collective contributions or agree that it is unreasonable to levy a fine from them without consulting them first. I quite understand your point of view and I am sure you will understand mine and how they must inevitably differ." The Collector agreed that the timing of the levy was awkward, but believed that delay involved even more danger, observed that he was making arrangements to avoid disturbances and appealed to Gandhiji to use his influence with the mill-hands to keep the peace.

[2] Gandhiji followed this up with a telegram on October 2; the prohibitory order was withdrawn on October 15.

3. LETTER TO SHUAIB QURESHI

[*September 1919*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

You will not consider me discourteous for not having replied to the letter signed by you and other friends regarding the Ali Brothers and addressed to the Editor, *Young India*. The fact is I have been overwhelmed with the care of having to edit two important news-papers.[2] I must confess that I do not like your letter at all. It is a lawyer's letter containing quibbles. But even that would not matter. Do you sincerely take up the position that a Mussulman may never kill a Mussulman no matter what crimes the latter may commit? I would not be surprised if you took up that attitude, for then the rule of the Brahmin law-givers will descend upon you. They have made the life of the Brahmin, as they think, absolutely sacred, and, as the others consider possible, by providing that no matter what his crime is, a Brahmin may not be killed. It is true that the rule has been observed more in the breach than in the performance. For, in war, we have not hesitated to kill Brahmins. My quarrel is, therefore, not with a mental attitude, but with your impressing a Koranic text into service for defending the position of our friends. I would like, then, to have a letter that would appeal to reason. Before your letter was received, I wrote to Bari Saheb[3] saying that, in my opinion, no agitation for the release of the Brothers was likely to be successful before the Turkish Peace terms were declared. I do not know whether your letter, which I see is addressed to the Press in general, has been published elsewhere.

QURESHI, SHUAIB
C/O DR. [M.A.] ANSARI
DELHI

From the original pencilled draft : S. N. 6864

[1] The exact date of this letter is not known. It is, however, likely that it was written some time towards the end of September 1919.

[2] The reference is to the weeklies *Navajivan* and *Young India*. Though the journals appeared under his full-fledged editorship only on October 7 and October 8, 1919, respectively, Gandhiji did a considerable amount of editorial writing for them even before they passed under his full control.

[3] *Vide* "Exact from Letter to Abdul Bari", 27-8-1919.

4. LETTER TO JETHALAL SAMPAT

ASHRAM,
SABHARMATI,
Wednesday, [*September, 1919*][1]

DEAR JETHALAL,

The doubt you raise has been answered in my reply. So I do not reproduce it in *Navajivan.* We have got to stick to swadeshi in all things. So I cling to the trunk of the tree. I can have no interest in electricity, etc. Others can take that up. What I am doing harms no one. And the handloom and the spinning-wheel can never harm anyone. Even today handlooms are working side by side with the mills. I am developing them. We should create conditions where, 21 crores, sitting at home, can carry on their occupation. For further clarification of your doubt, you must regularly see the *Navajivan.* Everyone certainly cannot do everything. Activities should be distributed.

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati in Devanagari script: C. W. 9843. Courtesy: Narayan Jethalal Sampat

5. THE PUNJAB STUDENTS

The letter from "One who feels" published in the *Leader* of the 22nd instant is an important communication confirming the many letters I have received from the Punjab, some of which have already appeared in *Young India*. The action of the college authorities reflects but little credit on them. "One who feels" is, as the *Leader* tells the public, "one of the most respected and foremost men in the educational world in the Punjab". At the worst the action of the students consisted in absenting themselves from their respective colleges. It amounts to nothing but a boyish method of demonstrating their opinion over the action of the Government and their affection for those whom they loved. In any place but India, such action would

[1] The period has been inferred from the reference to *Navajivan,* the first issue of which appeared in September 1919 under the editorship of Gandhiji, who wrote widely on the subject of handloom and spinning-wheel during the year 1919; *vide* also"Swadeshi V. Machinery", 14-9-1919.

have passed unnoticed or college professors would have made common cause with the students and warned the authorities of the unpopularity of their action. But the action of the authorities shows in a forcible manner what part terrorism has played in the public life of the Punjab. The college authorities have given an object lesson to the students in unmanliness. They have not hesitated to obtain by threat of punishment the names of the ring-leaders in the strike. It is evident that the strike was popular and spontaneous and all were practically ring-leaders. The prudent course in such an event is not to tempt weak students to buy exemption from penalty by blaming their fellows, but to regulate and direct their enthusiasm in the right channel. The authorities could not have adopted a more effective course than they did if they intended to rouse the bad blood of the students and make them seek crooked ways.

His Honour the Lieut.-Governor has now appointed a committee of inquiry which, according to the *Leader's* correspondent, is not quite satisfactory. The Lahore Medical College, however, will have nothing to do with the committee. The authorities will not have their action reviewed. This unrestrained lust for power and punishment is intolerable. I hope that His Honour will intervene, that the whole of India will insist on an inquiry into these cases. But if the authorities prove unbending, it would, in my opinion, be necessary to find out a remedy. If education is to be bought at the price of manliness and self-respect, the price is too heavy. "Man does not live by bread alone." Self-respect and character are above means of livelihood or a career. I am sorry that so many students have taken their expulsion so much to heart. The parents as well as students must revise their ideas about education. Education is treated merely as a means of earning a livelihood and acquiring a status in society. These are not unworthy ambitions. But they are not everything in life. There are many other honourable means of acquiring wealth and status. There are many independent activities in life which one many undertake without having to contemplate loss of self-respect. And there is no better or cleaner passport to status in society than honesty and selfless service of fellow-beings. If, therefore, after due effort, the college door remains banged in the students' faces, they should not lose heart but seek other means of livelihood. And if the other students will empty the recalcitrant colleges as a matter of respectful protest, they and India will not be losers, but both will be considerable gainers.

Young India, 1-10-1919

6. NATIVE STATES' SUBJECTS

Mr. M.T. Doshi has furnished me with detailed notes of an interview he had with the District Magistrate of Karachi on the 13th August last.

Mr. Doshi is a native of Vankaner in Kathiawar. He is an accountant and commercial instructor and has been manager of a firm in Karachi. The interview took place in virtue of a memorandum issued by the District Magistrate requesting Mr. Doshi to call on him. I cannot help remarking that there is too much of this kind of gratuitous calling of people by means of Memoranda. It is demoralizing alike for the officials and the public. It is an improper way of conducting public affairs. District Magistrates have no legal right to summon people in this manner. If Mr. Doshi had committed anything wrong, he should have been judicially dealt with. But to issue a non-judicial, political warning causes unnecessary fright and no man can regard himself safe under a system of what may be called political espionage.

After a few preliminary questions, Mr. Doshi was asked whether he had taken the satyagraha vow and whether he had been writing letters to the newspapers. He was told that he wanted "to stir up political agitation and satyagraha in spite of the troubles caused thereby in April last". The following conversation, being interesting, I give verbatim as supplied to me in Mr. Doshi's notes.

> DOSHI : I do want political and all other kinds of national activities to go on here as elsewhere. I have no intention to cause troubles nor do I advocate any measures that might bring about troubles. I have done nothing to endanger the position of anybody.
>
> D[ISTRICT] M[AGISTRATE] : Mr. Gandhi, when he started the satyagraha, never wanted to endanger anybody, but you know what happened in the Punjab and elsewhere; you want the same thing again here.
>
> D : Troubles in the Punjab were not, in my opinion, due to any acts of Mahatma Gandhi, but to the peculiar attitude of the officials there. However, I do nothing that might cause trouble. And you know there never was any trouble here though here also we had the Saytagraha Day.
>
> D. M. : You must be knowing that some time back I have called some of your Kathiawari people and warned them not to take any part in any movement against the Government or the laws of the place which afford them

protection here, for if they did not obey the laws, they shall have to be expelled to their own States. And you are doing just the same thing. Your case is just analogous to those of the other Kathiawaris already deported. They were asked to leave the country not only because they agitated themselves but they also tried to make others agitate, as you do now. . . . You have not yet given up the satyagraha vow. Have you?

D : I have not as I cannot. . . .

D.M. : Well, I tell you that I give you this warning personally. I am not moved by the authorities…the Commissioner. I just read your letters in the paper, two of which bear your signature and the third only initials and I thought it better to advise you as a good man.

D : Oh, I thank you for that.

D.M. : (while taking note on the paper) You say that "you are not prepared to cease taking part in political activities".

D : I would rather word it differently. I would say, "I am not prepared to cease taking part in any activities connected with the Indian national welfare."

D.M. : Why do you work here and not within the bounds of your State?

D : My State is only a part of India and it is only a narrow field whereas this is a vast one. If we make any progress here, sure enough that goes for progress in my own State which is well-up.

D.M. : Besides trying to stir up agitation, you try to help those that have been externed and want to take up their cause, but you must be careful, lest you meet with a similar fate.

D : I must try to help my friends as much as I can. I don't mind the rest.

D.M. : When the whole city is quiet you try to stir up troubles. I will make you responsible if anything occurs.

D : I am not attempting to stir up troubles. There have been never any troubles in Karachi and none likely to be. I don't understand why I shall be responsible.

D.M. : You are a subject of another State, and His Majesty's Government and its laws afford you protection here, so you must obey its laws, otherwise you must depart.

D : How do you call us subjects of another State and treat us as foreigners? Is not our State within India?

D.M. : I do not wish to argue with you on the matter; such is the law and law is law. I am not here to explain that, I only want you to stop partaking in such works.

D : May I know what works you mean? Do you include satyagraha and ordinary national political work in what you say?

D.M. : You should not take part in the political movements, surely you should not partake in the satyagraha or the disobedience of the law and such other matters.

D : I do not think satyagraha is criminal or illegal. It is not harmful.

D.M. : I do not want to discuss and argue over the case. I only want to warn you to stop writing to the Press and such other works as trying to help the externees and so on. I warn you that, if you persist in attempting to stir up *violent* political agitation and movements for breaking the laws in British India where you enjoy the protection of its laws and Government, I shall have to recommend action against you.

D : I have never tried to stir up nor will stir up *violent* political agitation, but I cannot in any case give up working for the activities connected with the Indian national welfare. For I consider that my own good and the good of my State lie in the good of my country-India.

The above extracts from Mr. Doshi's notes make painful reading and show the difficulty of carrying on political agitation. Any day the District Magistrate may prove as good as his word and expel Mr. Doshi from British India and thus ruin his career, as has been done in the case of Mr. Manilal Vyas and others.

Apart from the general question of the propriety of such notices and conversations, the question of the status of the subjects of native States is of very great importance. A law that makes it possible to coop up people without any trial in small areas must surely be altered. It is obvious that imprisonment is better than internment without provision for maintenance. On the one hand, the Government appoint subjects of native States to high office and on the other subordinate officials are permitted to treat them as foreigners. Sir Prabhashanker Pattani can become an honoured colleague of Mr. Montagu. The Hon'ble Mr. Lallubhai Samaldas is a trusted councillor. The Government welcome the financial and other assistance of subjects of native States and shower titles on them. They are dubbed 'loyal'. What can be the meaning of the loyalty of foreigners? Can foreigners be or be expected to be 'loyal' to a State to which they do not belong? Must the *suzerain* power take everything from the people of the States in alliance and give nothing? It is a suicidal policy that has been laid down in Sindh. Let one hope that His Excellency's Government will nip the evil in the bud.

Young India, 1-10-1919

7. TELEGRAM TO P.S. TO GOVERNOR, BOMBAY

LABURNUM ROAD,
[BOMBAY,
October 1, 1919][1]

PRIVATE SECRETARY
HIS EXCELLENCY
POONA

EIGHT LACS RUPEES ORDERED TO BE COLLECTED FROM AHMEDABAD REGARDING APRIL DISTURBANCES OF WHICH ONE LAC SEVENTY-FIVE THOUSAND TO BE COLLECTED FROM MILL-HANDS. THIS SUM ORDERED TO BE COLLECTED THROUGH MILL-OWNERS WHO WERE REQUIRED TO PAY ON 29TH ULTIMO TO DISTRICT MAGISTRATE ENOUGH TO COVER LEVY OUT OF CAUTION MONEY. MILL-OWNERS IT IS UNDERSTOOD WILL RECOUP THEMSELVES BY DEDUCTING FROM WAGES ON PAY DAY. THIS MONTH IS AUSPICIOUS BOTH HINDUS MOHAMMEDANS. ALTHOUGH TIME SELECTED UNINTENTIONAL LABOURERS WILL CONSIDER THAT PRESENT OCCASION SELECTED SPECIALLY WOUND FEELINGS. MOREOVER THIS SUDDEN LEVY WITHOUT NOTICE TO LABOURERS IN MY HUMBLE OPINION DEMORALIZES. DIRECT COL-LECTION SHOULD BE TRIED BEFORE RESORT TO FORCIBLE LEVY. SUGGESTED THESE CONSIDERATIONS COLLECTOR BUT HE HAS REFUSED CONSIDER. RESPECTFULLY REQUEST HIS EXCELLENCY AT LEAST POSTPONE COLLECTION TILL AFTER HINDU NEW YEAR'S DAY. I PROPOSE SUBMITTING ARGUMENT BY LETTER AGAINST COLLECTION FROM LABOURERS ESPECIALLY THE SUM AND MANNER SUGGESTED.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 6906

[1] In the “Letter to N.P. Cowie”, 4-10-1919, Gandhiji refers to this telegram as sent on Wednesday, i.e., October 1.

8. SPEECH AT ANNIE BESANT FELICITATION MEETING[1]

BOMBAY,
October 1, 1919

In opening the proceedings, Mr. Gandhi said that it gave him great pleasure to attending the meeting to celebrate the anniversary of the person who had devoted the greater part of her life for the public cause and they could feel justly proud in celebrating the event. He first knew her in England in 1889. He was introduced to her at the Blavatsky Lodge in England. He saw her answering the various queries and giving reasons for renouncing atheism and adopting Theosophy. After replying to all the allegations, she had then said that she would be satisfied if, after her death, it would be said that she lived for truth and died for the cause of truth. When he had been to South Africa, he came in contact with many Theosophists there and from them he came to know the work of Mrs. Besant, and they furnished him with more particulars of the work of Mrs. Besant, which information was not contained in the books published by Mrs. Besant. From all this, he was convinced that Mrs. Besant continued to work according to her own convictions, little caring whether she was praised or abused.

Coming to the satyagraha movement, Mr. Gandhi pointed out to the audience how Mrs. Besant stood by her own convictions, which made her believe that satyagraha had its shortcomings and the common people were not able to grasp the full significance of satyagraha. That furnished another instance that she cared for convictions of the inner soul more. She did not care whether these convictions were liked by the public or not.

He then referred to Mrs. Besant's work and said that he never in his life found Mrs. Besant at leisure, but found her always toiling for the public cause even when she was travelling in trains. Though he found her in her 73rd year, he was glad to see her working with such zeal and earnestness as none of them could equal. In his opinion, the services that Mrs. Besant had rendered to India were immense and invaluable. She had dedicated her whole life and all her own for the good of India.

Referring to the present political differences with Mrs. Besant, Mr. Gandhi was pleased to see that even those who differed from her were proud to testify to the great services that she was rendering in England for India. By espousing the cause of Indians, she had suffered much in body and mind. Her company was even shunned by

[1] Gandhiji presided over a public meeting held at the Excelsior Theatre to celebrate the 73rd birthday of Annie Besant. The report was reproduced in *New India*, 4-10-1919.

Europeans. But the greatest services, to the speaker's mind, which she rendered and which will ever remain a monument to her memorable career in India, was the introduction of Home Rule propaganda. It was only by her initiation that the movement was set afoot and now it had spread to every nook and corner of India, so that in whatever village he went, he found the villagers there awakened to the necessity of winning Home Rule for India.

Concluding, Mr. Gandhi said that Mrs. Besant had inculcated the *Mantra* of Home Rule into the minds of Indians and it was his fervent prayer to Almighty God that she might live long for India's sake and might be able to see India secure Home Rule in her lifetime, so that contentment might reign supreme everywhere in India and India would achieve her pristine glory once again.

After two other speakers had paid tributes to the work of Mrs. Besant, Gandhiji asked the audience to give him permission to send a suitable message to Mrs. Besant, which was agreed to.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-10-1919

9. MESSAGE ON ANNIE BESANT'S BIRTHDAY[1]

BOMBAY,
October 1, 1919

I gladly respond to the request to add my humble quota to the many appreciations that would be tendered to the Editor of *New India* on Mrs. Besant's birthday. It was in 1889 that I first paid my respects to Mrs. Besant when I was studying as a lad in London. I was privileged to do so by the courtesy of two English friends who were at the time ardent Theosophical students. She had only just joined the Theosophical Society there. Not much impression was created on my mind then. I really went not to have impressions but out of mere curiosity to see what this lady who was once an atheist looked like. My friends had told me that she was the best among the living women orators in the world, and that Madame Blavatsky was in great joy over this big "capture". But when, immediately after, I went to Queen's Hall, I went not to look at Mrs. Besant but to listen to her. And the words she uttered then as she rose to answer the charge of inconsistency have never faded from my memory. She said as she wound up her great speech which held her audience spell-bound that she would be quite satisfied to have the epitaph written on her tomb that she lived for

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

truth and she died for truth. I had from my childhood an instinctive fascination for truth. The utter sincerity with which, I felt, she spoke these words captivated me and ever since I have followed her career with unabated interest and always with admiration for her boundless energy, her great organizing ability and her devotion to the work she might have made her own for the moment. I have sharp differences of opinion with her as to methods of work. I have also been hurt to feel at times that she has lost her robust independence of 1888 and her uncompromising search after and adherence to truth at all cost. But in the midst of all my doubts I have never wavered in my belief in her great devotion to India. It is no small gain for India to have her many gifts dedicated to her cause with a single-mindedness few of her natural-born sons and daughters can claim. I have no doubt that she has popularized Home Rule in a manner no other person has. May she be spared for many a long year to serve the country she has made her own.

From a photostat of the handwritten draft with corrections in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 6903

10. SPEECH AT FELICITATION MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

October 2, 1919

In accepting it, Mr. Gandhi said that he was grateful to them for what they had done for him on his birthday, and we would utilize the sum for some object for the amelioration of the condition of Indian womanhood after careful consideration, and would ask for suggestions from them.

The Indian Review, October 1919

[1] A meeting to felicitate Gandhiji on his 51st birthday was organized by the Bhagini Samaj, at which a purse was presented to him.

11. TELEGRAM TO P.S. TO VICEROY

[*October 2, 1919*]

IN VIEW FORTHCOMING DISTURBANCES INQUIRY I WROTE[1] FROM AHMEDABAD APPLYING FOR REVOCATION OF ORDERS INTERNMENT AND EXTERNMENT AGAINST ME. HAVE JUST LEARNT COMMITTEE BEGINNING ENQUIRY END THIS MONTH. I THEREFORE REQUEST URGENT AND TELEGRAPHIC REPLY.[2]

GANDHI
AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of a copy : S. N. 6918; also Bombay Government Records

12. TELEGRAM TO SWAMI SHRADDHANAND[3]

October 2, 1919

SWAMI SHRADDHANANDJI
PRAKASH OFFICE
LAHORE

PLEASE WIRE AHMEDABAD WHAT BEING DONE LEAD EVIDENCE BEFORE DISTURBANCES COMMITTEE. SUGGEST CENTRAL BODY EXCLUSIVELY DEVOTED TO COLLECTING SUBMITTING EVIDENCE PROPER COUNSEL SHOULD BE RETAINED. AM TRYING SECURE PERMISSION ENTER PUNJAB.

From a photostat of the handwritten draft : S. N. 6917

[1] *Vide* "Letter to P. S. to Viceroy", 30-9-1919.

[2] Maffey telegraphed back on October 3: "Orders to which you refer will be withdrawn on October fifteenth. Lord Hunter had not left London on October first but hoped to sail yesterday." Notice withdrawing the order was received by Gandhiji on October 16; *vide* "Letter to the Press", 17-10-1919.

[3] A similar telegram was sent to C.F. Andrews at the *Tribune* Office, Lahore.

13. SPEECH AT BHAGINI SAMAJ[1]

BOMBAY,
October 2, 1919

President, ladies and gentlemen, as I have said in the *Navajivan,* I cannot find words to express to you my gratitude.[2] Presentation of this purse places on me a great responsibility. On the occasion of my birthday, many men and women have done some work or other which I have liked. At every such function I have said that if we have respect and affection for somebody, the best way of expressing that respect and affection is to follow in his footsteps.

The best way to celebrate my birthday is to absorb whatever appears good in my life. If I go out to beg in India I can collect lakhs and crores of rupees. But that will not make for progress. This does not mean that money has no importance. It only means that everything has importance in its own place. If something made of gold goes to a wrong place, we have to discard it.

Many people have piles and piles of money, but if they cannot spend it for a good purpose, their having the money is of no consequence.

There is scarcity of food and clothing in our country. People have to satisfy themselves with one meal a day and many people go naked. You ladies do not know what cold means. But if you come with me to the fields, I will show you that some women use straw and cowdung to keep themselves warm. I want to be known as a farmer and a weaver. If some people, instead of spending a single paisa on milk for their children, squander money on gambling, how can they rise at all? With my head bared and my hand stretched I am begging from the rich in India. I tell them about my experiments and they help me. I intend to use this money for a good purpose and so I have agreed to accept this present. A large number of women have contributed towards it. Smt. Avantikabai and I can tell the story of Champaran. The women there told me that they went without bath and

[1] The Bhagini Samaj had collected a sum of Rs. 23,000 for the Golden Jubilee Fund in connection with Gandhiji's 51st birthday. The purse was presented to him on October 2. For a brief account of Gandhi's speech on the occasion, *vide* "Speech att Felicitation meeting, Bombay", 2-10-1919

[2] *Ibid*

remained dirty because they did not have any change of clothes. I felt sad that I had no extra clothes with me. The responsibilities I have to shoulder at present are beyond telling. I believe I shall be able to account for it to you and to God. I have solicited the views of many men and women as to the use of this money, and I hope to use it accordingly. What I am seeking is the resurgence of *Satya Yuga* in India. We had a Golden Age at one time. In that age men and women in India spontaneously and automatically spoke only the truth. Women in those days maintained their chastity. In those days even when men and women got together, they did not have lustful thoughts in their minds. That is how things were in the *Satya Yuga* or the Golden Age.

In this *Kali Yuga* it is difficult for women to remain chaste. When I went to the Harijan quarters at Dahod, I was told that in the past the women there had not worked for wages but that lately they had started working. Earlier the men had been weavers and their women assisted them. Hence they were able to preserve their chastity. Lately they have not been doing any spinning and have taken to working as labonrers. The condition of women there is very sad. The overseers tyrannize over them.

Education of women is the paramount task in India. With education women can remain chaste. For such education we do not require great learning. All that is needed is character. It needs no money. Four hundred Muslim women are today helping themselves, and they are earning adequate wages from spinning.

Since you have shown me so much love today, I appeal to you to show me the love that will bring back *Satya Yuga*. India is in a position to take care of itself. If we use only the cloth produced in the country, we shall be able to make the country secure in a very short time. I have been campaigning for the spinning-wheel. The chastity of women can be protected with the help of the spinning-wheel. There is no other occupation in which our millions of women can engage themselves while staying at home. This does not call for much intelligence. India must learn to be self-reliant. When India produces brave men and women we shall become self-reliant. We have to show the gallantry of satyagraha. This needs more bravery than the bravery of arms. If that happens we shall be free right away. Protect your women and save those millions of rupees being drained out of India. You can work wonders even if you work only for an hour every day. You have shown me boundless affection. You call this money a small

amount but it is bountiful. This gift given willingly and with good intention is bound to bear fruit. To me it has the value of a billion rupees. Hence, do not think that this is inadequate. If you find my appeal for work appropriate, prepare to train yourselves for that work in the interest of your country.

[From Gujarati]

Bapujini Sheetal Chhayaman, pp. 91-5

14. TELEGRAM TO P.S. TO VICEROY

October 3, 1919

P.S.V.
SIMLA

"TIMES OF INDIA" REPORTS RUMOUR THAT JUSTICES CHINIS AND RAUF ARE TO REVISE JUDGMENTS SUMMARY TRIALS. SUBMIT THAT THESE APPOINTMENTS WILL CAUSE SERIOUS DIS-APPOINTMENT. ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY APPOINT EMINENT JUDGES OF PROVED INDEPENDENCE OR SUCH LAWYERS AND THEY SHOULD BE ASKED TO REVISE JUDGMENTS BOTH COM-MISSIONS AND SUMMARY COURTS AND NOT RESTRICT THEMSELVES TO SUMMARY TRIALS ONLY.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand : S.N. 6920

15. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Friday, October 3, 1919

CHI. MATHURADAS,

The draft of a telegram was to be sent to Ahmed Haji Siddiq Khatri. It has been sent. I am also sending a copy to you. His address is: Hilal Manzil, 85 Abdur Rehman Street. Take the draft to him and find out whether or not he has received my letter.

Some important books have been left behind there. Mahadev will write about it.

The Press has been acquired. Mahadev has gone today to make the declaration. The Government’s permission for *Navajivan* has also

been received. So, for the present at any rate, the cloud has lifted.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The compositors should keep themselves ready to come here in a day or two. You discuss the matter with them.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

16. LETTER TO TEHMINA KHAMBATTA

BAZAR GATE STREET,
BOMBAY,
[*October 2, 1919*][1]

DEAR MRS. KHAMBATTA,

Your letter was redirected to me at Sabarmati. I am glad you are going to assist in the national undertaking[2]. I am endeavouring to popularize [spinning]. I am arranging to send you 4 spinning-wheels. The price is Rs. 4 each. A lady teacher could attend from Saturday next for one hour between 2 and 3 p.m. Needless to say she is a volunteer. Will you please drop a line to Mr. Mathuradas Trikumji at the address given above as to the appointment and he will bring the teacher to you. I am leaving Bombay tomorrow evening.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G. N. 75636; also C. W. 5038. Courtesy : Tehminabehn Khambatta

[1] From the contents; *vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Assembly", Before 5-5-1895. Gandhiji left Bombay for Ahmedabad on this day.

[2] Swadeshi

17. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM,
Friday, October 3, 1919

CHI. MATHURADAS,

The Press has been acquired. It has all the facilities to bring out *Young India*. Hence, pack all the types that the owner of the Press has purchased under instructions from Shankerlal and the other types that the owner of the Press may insist on our buying and send them here. See that the types do not get mixed up. The bill for the types will be paid later making deductions for depreciation. If the owner of the Press demands any guarantee in this matter, give it. Money will be paid only after the amount has been settled. Send the compositors who have agreed to come on Saturday. The types will still be in 'chase'. If they have not been distributed, the best way would be to bring them packed as 'chase'. If any types belonging to the owner of the Press have got mixed up, we shall return those types. We do not need the 'chase' of advertisements. No new types will have been used in them. Take the necessary trouble and settle the matter by tomorrow. Tell the compositors that they will be paid the maximum salary possible in Ahmedabad. Carry out this job at all cost. Keshav (head compositor) should bring with him as many selected compositors as he thinks necessary for *Young India*. Let Yadvadkar also come immediately if he can make it. Inform me telegraphically.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

18. FINING THE LABOURERS

Ahmedabad, the Government has decided, has to pay a fine of nearly nine lacs of rupees in connection with the April disturbances. This is under the same section of the British Police Act[1] as Nadiad has been dealt with. A law that allows a Government thus arbitrarily to impose a penalty is bad law. All laws that place a Government above

[1] The Bombay District Police Act IV of 1890 as amended by Act III of 1915.

law and enable them to impose their will upon people without consultation with them or without the authority of a properly constituted judicial tribunal are bad, and should not be tolerated where there is an enlightened and liberal Government or where the people are jealous of their freedom. But it is not my purpose to discuss the badness of the law. My object at the present moment is to bring to public notice an unwise and untimely and an almost despotic application of that bad law. The principle that the wanton damage done to life and property by crowds of people should be made good by them is beyond dispute. But acceptance of that principle cannot and does not involve acceptance of arbitrary powers. In the case of the Ahmedabad mill-hands a fine of 176 thousand rupees has been fixed. Recovery is to be made from all mill-hands employed during September 1919, within the Municipal limits. Now the disturbances took place in April last. It is a notorious fact that mill-hands have changed somewhat and new-comers constantly come in. Why should those who joined after the disturbances and have no connection with them be made to pay anything whatsoever? Why should women and children of whom there is a considerable number in the mills have to pay? There are probably sixty thousand labourers in the mills. Is it right to fine them nearly two lacs of rupees?

The manner of collection and the time chosen are still more unfortunate. The order is dated 26th September, 1919, and on the same day the following was served upon the mill-owners:

> The Collector of Ahmedabad hereby calls upon the agents of the . . . mill to pay to the Huzur Deputy Collector, Ahmedabad, on Monday, September 29th, before 3 p.m., an amount equal to one week's wages of the manual labourers employed during September, 1919, in the . . . mill out of the amount held by him as caution money on their account.

The law contemplates the possibility of an appeal to the Government against such orders by the parties aggrieved. The order has not been served upon the mill-hands. They have not been given the chance of appeal nor have they been given the option of paying the fine themselves. The caution money, i.e., the money retained by the mill-owners out of the wages due to the mill-hands, has been summarily attached without notice to or consent of the labourers concerned. Such treatment of labourers debases them, needlessly irritates them and keeps them in a helpless condition. This manner of dealing

with the labourers shows that they are not considered responsible human beings.

It is almost like collecting fine from owners of cattle for trespass without referrence to the latter, the difference being that the labourers are not dumb like cattle and, unlike cattle, the burden ultimately falls on their shoulders. It is surprising that the mill-owners have, as I understand they have, become willing parties to such a monstrous procedure.

Information in my possession goes to show that the mill-owners are to recoup themselves for the above payment out of the wages immediately to fall due. This means that the enormous sum of one hundred and seventy six thousand rupees is to be collected during a festival season common to both the Hindus and Mohammedans. The impropriety of such a step can hardly be questioned. The coincidence is no doubt unintended but the unsophisticated labourers will conclude that the festival season has been intentionally chosen to wound their feelings.

The Collector of Ahmedabad is a gentleman. He has given every satisfaction to the inhabitants of the district. At a time of intense excitement, he acted with remarkable coolness. He is a man full of broad humanity. It is a matter, therefore, of special regret to me to have to criticize his actions and I cannot help saying that, if he was not a slave to a system which makes arbitrary procedure possible at almost every step of national life, he could not have helped seeing the absurdity and the injustice of the action taken by him. The matter is now before His Excellency the Governor and I venture to express the hope that the wrong done to the labourers of Ahmedabad will be redressed. The sum apportioned for the labourers is too much for them. It should be reduced. Women and boys should be exempted and the payment received by easy stages. I admit the difficulty of collection by instalment from a large number of labourers but that difficulty is nothing compared to the infliction of a serious injustice upon a large number of human beings. Terrorizing punishment is hardly the best method of weaning offenders from wrongdoing and, in the present instance, the punishment will fall upon many innocent shoulders.

The authorities have recognized the delicacy of the situation in that they have drafted special police to Ahmedabad and taken

extraordinary precautions in order to avoid unruliness on the part of the labourers and to cow them down into submission.

Young India, 4-10-1919

19. PRAYER AND FASTING

In spite of the Herculean efforts made by the Punjab Government to crush the spirit of the people, prayer and fasting and hartal are institutions as old as the hills and cannot be stopped. Two illuminating abstracts from the bulky volumes published by the Government and containing a record of sentences inflicted by Martial Law Commissions and Summary Courts show, although dimly, what has happened during the past few months to the people of the Punjab. The leading cases examined by me have shaken my faith in the justice of these sentences. The sentence of stripes is beyond recall as are the 18 death sentences. Who will answer for them if they are proved to have been unjustly pronounced?

But sentences or no sentences, the spirit of the people is unbreakable. The Moslem Conference of Lucknow has proclaimed Friday the 17th instant as a day of fasting and prayer. The preliminaries will be presently arranged. The day is to be called the Khilafat Day. Mr. Andrews' letter shows clearly what the Khilafat question is and how just is the case of the Mohammedans. He agrees with the suggestion I have ventured to make, viz., that if justice cannot be obtained for Turkey, Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford must resign. But better than resignations, better than protests, are prayers of the just. I therefore welcome the Lucknow resolution. Prayer expresses the soul's longing and fasting sets the soul free for efficacious prayer. In my opinion, a national fast and national prayer should be accompanied by suspension of business. I therefore without hesitation advice suspension of business provided it is carried out with calmness and dignity and provided it is entirely voluntary. Those who are required for necessary work such as hospital, sanitation, off-loading of steamers, etc., should not be entitled to suspend work. And I suggest that to this day of fast there are no processions, no meetings. People should remain indoors and devote themselves entirely to prayer.

It goes without saying that it is the bounden duty of the Hindus and other religious denominations to associate themselves with their Mohammedan brethren. It is the surest and simplest method of

bringing about the Hindu-Mohammedan unity. It is the privilege of friendship to extend the hand of fellowship, and adversity is the crucible in which friendship is tested. Let millions of Hindus show to the Mohammedans that they are one with them in sorrow.

I would respectfully urge the Government to make common cause with the people and encourage and regulate this peaceful exhibition of their feelings. Let the people not think that Government will put any obstacles directly or indirectly in their way.

I would urge the modern generation not to regard fasting and prayer with scepticism or distrust. The greatest teachers of the world have derived extraordinary powers for the good of humanity and attained clarity of vision through fasting and prayer. Much of this discipline runs to waste because instead of being matter of the heart, it is often resorted to for stage effect. I would therefore warn the bodies of this movement against any such suicidal manoeuvring. Let them have a living faith in what they urge or let them drop it. We are now beginning to attract millions of our countrymen. We shall deserve their curses if we consciously lead them astray. Whether Hindus or Mohammedans, we have all got the religious spirit in us. Let it not be undermined by our playing at relgion.

Young India, 4-10-1919

20. TELEGRAM TO P. S. TO GOVERNOR, MADRAS

[AHMEDABAD,
October 4, 1919]

HIS EXCELLENCY GOVERNOR
MADRAS

MR. ANDREWS WROTE SAYING HIS EXCELLENCY WOULD EXPEDITE MISS FAERING'S COMING TO ME. SHE IS NOW WITHOUT OCCUPATION AND MOST ANXIOUS JOIN ME. WILL HIS EXCELLENCY PLEASE PERMIT MISS FAERING TO JOIN ME PENDING ANY INVESTIGATIONS HIS EXCELLENCY MIGHT BE MAKING.[1]

GANDHI

From a photostat of the handwritten draft : S. N. 6931

[1] The reply stated: " . . . if Miss Faering will apply in the usual way to Government for permission to travel to Bombay, there will be no difficulty in granting it." Gandhiji acknowledged this letter on October 22; *vide* "Letter to P. S. to Governor, Madras", 22-10-1919.

21. TELEGRAM TO ESTHER FAERING

[AHMEDABAD,
October 4, 1919][1]

PLEASE HAVE PATIENCE,[2] HAVE MYSELF TELEGRAPHED GOVERNOR MADRAS EXPEDITE YOUR COMING.

From a photostat of the handwritten draft : S. N. 6932

22. LETTER TO G.E. CHATFIELD

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 4, 1919

DEAR MR. CHATFIELD,

Messrs Banker and Desai have described to me the whole of the discussion they had with you over your proposal to demand security regarding *Navajivan* and *Young India*. I know that what ever decision you will give would be actuated by nothing but a strict sense of duty. Nor have I the slightest desire to seek any special exemption. I would however like to put just one thought before you. People and, I venture to think, the Government consider that my acts are not actuated by any enmity to the latter, and if I find myself in opposition to many measurers of the latter, it is because I want what I consider to be the wrong to be righted. Any security therefore taken in connection with newspapers whose policy I am permitted entirely to control will excite strong ill feeling amongst the people and therefore diminish to that extent the prestige of the Government. If you agree with me in the views submitted by me I would ask you not to impose any security. But if you do impose it, as I have already said, I shall not misunderstand your action. And if you do and if you could see your way, I would like you to give your grounds for imposing security. I may add

[1] The date is mentioned in the official acknowledgment, dated October 6, addressed to Gandhiji from the Madras Governor's camp.

[2] In her letters dated September 15 and 21, Esther Faering had expressed her longing to go to the Sabarmati Ashram early. On September 28, she had written of her impatience and asked Gandhiji to allow her to go to Bombay and intercede with the Governor.

that when security was imposed upon *Navajivan* only recently,[1] I wrote to His Excellency almost in the same strain as above and the matter is still engaging his attention.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the handwritten draft : S. N. 6925

23. LETTER TO N.P. COWIE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 4, 1919

DEAR MR. COWIE,

I sent you a telegram on Wednesday last regarding the levy of rupees one hundred and seventy-six thousand from the mill-hands of Ahmedabad. I said in the telegram that I would submit for His Excellency's consideraton the argument against the amount of the levy, as also the class of labourers from whom it is being or to be exacted. It seems to me that the labourers have been put on a par with the wealthiest citizens of Ahmedabad; and whilst the payment to be made by the latter will take some time before it is collected, the labourers are being required to pay the (to them) terrible sum of Rs. 1,76,000 at once. I hope it will not be replied that the Government's duty is finished as soon as they have paid themselves out of the caution-money retained by the mill-owners and that the mill-owners may collect as they choose.

It is a well-known fact that labourers are continuously changed. All, therefore, who were employed in April were not necessarily under employment in September. It is therefore difficult to understand the justice of levying from the labourers to be found on the books of the mill-owners in the month of September.

In my humble opinion, justice demands that any levy imposed should be recovered from the labourers on the books of the several mills on the 10th of April. I venture to think, too, that collection from women and boys employed in the mills is also an injustice. I submit therefore that the amount to be collected should be reduced; that all the labourers who were not employed on the 10th of April, women and boys under the age of eighteen, should be exempted from

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 5-10-1919.

payment; and as submitted in my telegram, the payment ought not to be recovered during the current festival month but the recovery should be spread over a long enough period to enable the labourers to pay without extreme inconvenience to them.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of a handwritten draft : S. N. 6926

24. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Wednesday [*On or before October 5, 1919*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

We are to purchase some press and Chi. Chhotalal has been urgently dispatched there for the purpose. Go and inspect the press, with Shri Popatlal of the Diamond Press. Make an inventory. Have a careful look at the machinery, etc. Make sure that all the machines work. See that the types are not worn out. If you find everything all right, close the bargain. The transaction should be in the name of Shri Shankerlal Banker. They have offered to sell [the press] for six thousand rupees and it includes one double royal machine, two treadles, one hand-case and types. There are Gujarati and English types sufficient for running two papers, *Navajivan* and *Young India*, as we understand the telegram to say. I send the telegram[2] herewith.

Perhaps a man will go specially from here to inspect the machines. If he does, keep him with you. Go to the town the moment you get this letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand : C.W. 5772. Courtesy : Radhabehn Choudhri

25. FORTHCOMING SESSION OF GUJARAT POLITICAL CONFERENCE

On the election of the Hon'ble Gokuldas Kahandas Parekh as president of the forthcoming session of the Gujarat Political Confe-

[1] The first issue of *Young India*, as a weekly, was published from Ahmedabad on October 8; the Wednesday before it was October 5.

[2] This is not available.

rence to be held in Surat, we congratulate him as well as the Reception Committee. The Hon'ble Mr. Parekh has rendered no mean service to Gujarat. At a time when very few Gujaratis used to come forward for public service, being afraid of expressing their thoughts before the Government, the Hon'ble Mr. Parekh would fight the Government and apprise it of public opinion. These days we often find a tendency among us that, if the older people refuse to go along in every matter with the young, the growing generation, and declare their differences with them, they are treated as of no account and their earlier services are forgotten. It is our conviction that our customary practice of respecting elders is an invaluable one, that giving it up will harm the nation. Maybe we have a difference of opinion with someone on some matter; we can politely express it, but we should not feel any the less respect for him. Hence we welcome the choice of the Reception Committee as an instance worthy of emulation and congratulate the Hon'ble Mr. Parekh, too, on having been duly honoured by Gujarat and on his services having been appreciated.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR CONFERENCE

On this occasion, we shall take the liberty of making some suggestions to the Reception Committee. Our experience tells us that we incur some unnecessary expenses during these conferences. We have with us some very fine observations of Professor Patrick Geddes[1] which we hope to give some other time. On many matters, we always imitate the West blindly and harm our country. In fact, our knowledge of the West is very little. The West means England, America, France and Germany; these countries are very prosperous. We can never rival them in prosperity. The expense that they can afford is entirely beyond India's means. Hence, in making arrangements for conferences, we ought to give due consideration to India's climate, her economic condition and her manners and customs. Looking at the matter from this point of view, we cannot approve of the spending of thousands of rupees on pandals and countless flags and buntings. If cleanliness and comfort are ensured, beauty will follow as a matter of course. If we have a clean and open plot, with plenty of trees at the right spots, we cannot imagine a better pandal than this. We want lakhs of people to attend our conferences. If we do not, we ought to. Even in England pandals are not erected when lakhs attend. A wooden framework is erected in the middle for the president and some leading

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Patrick Geddes", 12-4-1918

figures and round this seating arrangements are made for the general public. The audience takes up very little space, a large number can hear the speeches made from the platform and the arrangements cost very little. Where thousands assemble, we cannot detain them for long. The main work of the Conference should be done in committee. The resolutions should be finalized there and the arguments should be presented [in the plenary session] in the fewest words possible, in simple language, free of all pomposity, such as the people can understand. In this way we can go through the work of the Conference, working only from 7 to 9 in the morning and from 5 to 7 in the evening, and save time for the committee. If we fear excessive heat even during these hours, we can have lights and finish the work of the Conference at a sitting from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., or even later.

EXHIBITION AT CONFERENCE

We also take the liberty to make another suggesion. Mr. Wamanrao Mukadam[1] has suggested a swadeshi conference at the time of the [Political] Conference. We amend this and suggest a swadesi exhibition. We believe that we can easily arrange such an exhibition within the short time at our disposal. Only recently an exhibition was held at Amreli and we have been told that not only did everything go off very well but that it was visited by thousands of men and women with great interest. We hope that the Reception Committee and the enterprising citizens of Surat will do their best to carry out this suggestion.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-10-1919

26. FATHER OF THE WORLD [-II]

In the last issue we briefly described the peasant's lot. We have now to consider ways and means of improving it.

Mr. Lionel Curtis[2] , who came into limelight during the Lucknow Congress, has in one place drawn a realistic picture of the Indian villages. He says that the villages of India are situated on dunghills. The huts are in ruins and the inhabitants feeble. Temples are to be

[1] Public worker, Panch Mahals district, Gujarat

[2] Member, Transvaal Legislative Council; *vide* "Interview to the Star", 6-1-1908.

found at all sorts of places. Cleanliness is non-existent. The lanes are full of dust. The general appearance would suggest that no one was responsible for the management of the village.

There is little exaggeration in this account; in fact it could be extended. There ought to be some method in the lay-out of a well-ordered village. The streets should follow a definite pattern and not be laid out in the present arbitrary fashion. And in India, where crores of people walk bare-foot, the roads should be so clean that walking or even lying on them should not seem disagreeable. The streets should be metalled and have gutters to drain away the water. The temples and mosques should be clean and look ever fresh and should evoke in those who enter them a sense of peace and sanctity. In and around the village there should be useful trees and orchards. There should be a dharmashala, a school and a small hospital for the treatment of the sick. Arrangements should be made for the bodily needs of the inhabitants so that the air, the streets, etc., are not polluted. The inhabitants of every village should be able to raise their own food and produce their own cloth and should be capable of defending themselves from thieves, marauders or wild beasts. Most of these things were to be seen in the Indian village in olden days. Those which were wanting were probably unnecessary at that time. In any case, whether once they existed or not, no one can deny that villages should be planned on the lines I have indicated above. It is only such villages that can be regarded as self-sufficient. And, if all our villages could be so organized, there is little that can afflict the country.

Not only is it possible to bring about such conditions, but it is not even as difficult as we imagine. It is said that there are seven and a half lakhs of villages in India. In that case the average population of a village is 400. In many villages the population is less than 1,000. It is my firm conviction that to make proper arrangements in a village with such a small population is a very easy matter. It does not need long speeches or legislative assemblies or laws. All that is required is a few sincere and willing workers, both men and women, as many as may be counted on the fingers of one hand. These will be able, by their own exemplary conduct and spirit of service, to bring about the necessary transformation in every village. Nor does this mean that these men and women must confine themselves day and night exclusively to this task. Even while earning their livelihood they can, through their spirit of service, bring about important changes in the village.

It is not at all necessary that these workers be highly educated. Village uplift can be undertaken even by the illiterate. Neither the Government nor the princes can obstruct such efforts and there is little need for their help. If such volunteers come forward in each village, the work of the entire nation can be done without any fuss or big movement. Even a limited effort will produce results far beyond our expectations. The reader will easily realize that even money would not be necessary for such work. What is indispensable is character and religious zeal.

I know from experience that this is the easiest way of ameliorating the peasant's lot. In making such an effort, it is not necessary for any village or for any individual to wait for another to make a beginning. If in any village there is even one man or woman with the sincere desire to serve the people, he or she can immediately start such work. Such service will amount to the service of the entire nation. I hope that those village-dwellers into whose hands this issue of *Navajivan* falls will give a trial to the experiments suggested by me and, within a short time, demonstrate the results of their experiments to the rest of the country. In the next issue I plan to place before my readers some of my experiences which may suggest how to make a beginning with these experiments. But I also hope that any worker who has realized the importance of this task will start work on his own initiative without waiting even for a week.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-10-1919

27. NOTES

LONG LIVE MRS. BESANT!

Mrs. Besant entered her 73rd year last Wednesday. On that day thousands of Indians must have prayed to God to grant this great lady many more years on this earth. Few among us can, at the age of 33, show the diligence and industry Mrs. Besant continues to do at the age of 73. It is indisputable that the service rendered to India by Mrs. Besant will ever remain memorable in the country's history. The enthusiasm with which the Indians seized the term "Home Rule" is due solely to this good lady and it was due to her courage that branches of the Home Rule League were established everywhere. She has had a great share in the political education of India. Even in England Mrs.

Besant is agitating for Home Rule for India. She is using all her resources for the cause of Home Rule. There may be differences of opinion about Mrs. Besant's ideas and her methods of work, but there can be none about her service to India. Not only is she considered the best woman speaker in the world, very few even among men could rival her eloquence. Her pen, too, has great force. For many years, this lady has been using all these great powers in the service of India, and for this the country will ever remain grateful to her. And so the prayer, "Long live Mrs. Besant!" is, really speaking, a prayer for our benefit.

CLOUD OVER "NAVAJIVAN"

As the *navajivan*[1] of India progresses extremely slowly and comes upon many a check on the way, so does *Navajivan*, the paper. It has to contend against both internal and external difficulties. The external difficulty consists in harassment by the government and, deterred by this harassment, people hesitate to help in printing the paper and in other ways. The reader is aware of some of the facts of the official harassment.

When the Government asked questions and pointed out that, *Navajivan* being a new paper, it was necessary under the regulations framed under the Defence of India Act to obtain the Bombay Government's permission for publishing it, Mr. Indulal Yagnik, believing that the Government's interpretation must be correct, admitted straightaway that a mistake had been made in publishing Navajivan. At that time I was in Dhoraji. On reaching the Ashram and reading the Act, I felt that Mr. Indulal was wrong. Being a satyagrahi, he frankly admitted what he believed to be true, so that his action in admitting the error does him nothing but credit. But I could see that this admission was the result of a mistake. *Navajivan* cannot be described as a new paper. Everyone recognizes and knows it as a fact that the monthly *Navajivan* has been changed into this weekly. The dropping of the words *Ane Satya*[2] , as redundant, from the title of the monthly *Navajivan* does not make it a new journal. Accordingly, with his consent, I decided that *Navajivan* ought not to be withheld from the public till the Government had made up its mind.

[1] New life
[2] "And Truth"

After telegraphically[1] withdrawing Shri Indulal's letter, I waited for 36 hours for the Government's reply. The number is being placed before the public. But this does not relieve *Navajivan* of its worries. Really speaking, we have invited the worries, but on a battle-field that has to be done. However, in case *Navajivan* incurs the Government's displeasure, why should a poor printer take the risk of printing it? For this reason, *Navajivan* must have its own press and hence Mr. Shankerlal Banker, who is shouldering the financial responsibility, has purchased a new printing press. A declaration will now have to be made before a magistrate, after which another declaration will have to be made for publishing *Navajivan* in that press.

For these reasons and owing to some damage to the machinery because of the large number of copies to be printed, there has been delay [in publishing this number]; I hope the reader will excuse this and have patience.

(Since this was written, the Government's permission has been received; I thank the Government for it and congratulate the readers.)

SPINNING-WHEEL

The success of the swadeshi movement depends in a large measure on our producing simple but quick-working machines for ginning cotton, on our making the process of carding easy and effecting possible improvements in the spinning-wheel and the loom.

It seems a few people believe that, in Mr. Gandhi's movement, there is no scope for improvement in ancient or modern machines.This is a mistaken belief. His opinion is this. The machines or the improvements in the machines must be such as will suit our country and lend themselves to use in one's home. Keeping this in mind, Mr. Gandhi is ever on the watch for possible improvements. No farmer, and not all artisans, can work in big factories. The farmers cannot leave their fields; it is the duty of every well-wisher of India to discover some means and take steps for intorducing an industry in their homes in addition to their work in the fields.

Hence we announce in this number and welcome the prize offered by Mr. Rewashankar Jagjivan Mehta.[2] Improvement in the

[1] This telegram is not available.

[2] The prize of Rs. 5,000 was offered to anyone inventing a portable spinning-wheel of indigenous components, as far as possible, which could take on ten spindles at a time. The model was to reach the Satyagraha Ashram before January 1, 1920.

spinning-wheel is our first need. Of course, even without improvement spinning will go on. Even so, it is evident that, if the spinning-wheel could be so improved as to make it do double the work it does now, the movement would gather more speed and the spinners' income would increase. There is absolutely no doubt that the type of spinning-wheel in use at present can be improved. Some patriotic artisans are already working to that end. An expert artisan from Gondal has made a delicate spinning-wheel of brass. His aim is not to increase the turn-out of yarn but to produce a wheel that will be easy to carry from place to place and be also durable. This artisan is still at work devising improvements in that model.

An artisan in Rajkot is developing a spinning-wheel which can take four spindles simultaneously, that is, one which will turn out four times the quantity of yarn during a given period. In Broach, a spinning-wheel with two spindles working simultanously has already been invented. There should, therefore, be no difficulty in inventing a spinning-wheel which will win the prize. We hope our readers will carry the news of this prize to the artisan class. This means that the educated people need to take interest in the lives of the artisans and give them the benefit of the knowledge they have acquired, instead of remaining cut off from them. Our country is not devoid of craftsmanship or the inventive faculty but it is denied the benefit of these talents for lack of encouragement. We hope that a great many competent artisans will strive to win the prize offered by Mr. Rewashankar Mehta.

IMPROVEMENT IN METHOD OF CREMATION

We have had two or three letters from Shri Chhotalal Tejpal, and also some literature on the movement he is carrying on. There is so much of it and so thick-laid with secondary details that we are unable to publish it[1] Hence we intend merely to describe here his purpose, which has appeared useful to us.

Day by day the difficulties of disposing of dead bodies are increasing. Those of the poor are greater. Many lack even the facilities for carrying the bodies. The plague and such other epidemics break out frequently in the country and at such times the condition of the people is indeed pitiable. Moreover, time is wasted in waiting for

[1] *Vide* “Letter to Chhotalal Tejpal”, 17-9-1919.

the body to be fully consumed. Sometimes the logs on the pyre are so arranged that the body is not even fully covered by them.

Hence Mr. Chhotalal has been trying for some time to reform the manner of carrying the dead body and of cremating it. We think the enterprise deserves encouragement. He suggests that the body should be removed in a vehicle and that the crematorium should be cons-tructed scientifically so that the body will be put into a furnace and be quickly reduced to ashes by a strong fire. This will save money and time without hurting religious sentiment in any way. All the same, it would be better for the present not to make it compulsory for dead bodies to be carried in vehicles and scientifically cremated, but to leave them to people's choice. In such matters, it is necessary to educate the people. Customs, even when undesirable, can be reformed but slowly. Real reform lies in the people's willing acceptance of the change, in full knowledge of what it means, or on faith. Therefore, if there are a few venturesome persons in a place, money is readily available and some persons at any rate are ready to accept the new method of cremation, if at such a place vehicles for transport and facilities for [scientific] cremation are provided and these are good enough, this important change will soon become popular and, in times of epidemics, the poor in any case are bound to welcome it gratefully.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-10-1919

28. TELEGRAM TO KISAN SABHA, KHAJAULI

[AHMEDABAD,
October 5, 1919]

DIFFICULT ADVICE ON STRENGTH WIRE. YOU SHOULD HAVE PATIENCE. CONSULT BRIJKISHORE BABU.

From the pencilled draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 6971 A

29. LETTER TO HAROLD MANN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,
October 7, 1919

DEAR SIR HAROLD MANN[1],

You may be aware that I am editing a Gujarati weekly called *Navajivan*. It is only a five-weeks-old infant. But it has several thousand readers already. Farmers write to me inquiring where they can get good and cheap seed. Can you direct me?

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the handwritten draft: S. N. 6937

30. LETTER TO P.S. TO GOVERNOR, BOMBAY

[*After October 7, 1919*]

DEAR MR. COWIE,

I thank you for your letter of the 7th October.[2]

Regarding swadeshi, I am anxious to get a word of encouragement for publication for the work now being done to increase production by inducing chiefly women to devote their spare time to hand-spinning and ask chiefly men to [do] hand-weaving.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of a copy in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 6936

[1] Director of Agriculture, Bombay Presidency
[2] *Vide* footnote 1 to "Letter to P. S. to Governor, Bombay", 25-8-1919.

31. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
[Before *October 8, 1919*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. *Young India* will certainly appear from here. We are working hard. It will reach there every Thursday. I am not worried if the compositors do not come from there. It is best not to have them if it means having to flatter them.

Ask Nandlal in what way he can help us now.

Send all the old issues of *Young India* here. We must not allow even a single copy to go waste.

If Vasumati has gone to Poona, can Taramati not go to give tuition to Mrs. Khambatta? If she does not go, Anand can go. Ask Trivenibehn and Avantikabehn.

Find out if the charkhas have reached Godhra. Has Manibhai gone to Trivenibehn's?

You must try to write for *Navajivan.* It will be good if you can read about land revenue and write about it. Carry on the Swadeshi campaign there. Keep yourself informed about the different schools running there. You yourself should sit at the spinning-wheel. See what is being taught in the technical school. It is a wide and sacred field.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

32. WE ARE APT TO MAKE MISTAKES

The Hon'ble Mr. Sinha, whilst he was speaking on the Indemnity Bill, was led into a confusion of terms. He was pulled up by Sir George Lowndes, and His Excellency the President defended Mr.

[1] From the contents. The first issue of *Young India* as a weekly was published from Ahmedabad on October 8, 1919 with Gandhiji as editor.

Sinha saying it was a slip of the tongue. Mr. Sinha then made these frank and dignified remarks:

> It is hard for Your Excellency to realize what our difficulties are in speaking a foreign tongue in this Council. We are apt to make mistakes.

This is only too true. We are apt to make mistakes in our own mother tongue. But they are never so ludicrous as when we attempt to speak in a foreign tongue. Professor Jadunath Sarkar has remarked that our having to speak and think in English puts a strain upon us from which we never fully recover. The remedy for the evil is that we must begin self-government by introducing our own speech in our own assemblies provincial vernaculars in the provincial legislatures, and Hindustani a resultant of Hindi and Urdu in the Imperial Council. We cannot make a better beginning than by adopting the change in the Congress and the conferences. In adopting English as the medium at these gatherings we have done a positive disservice to the masses who have but a vague idea of the proceedings of these annual gatherings. By persisting to conduct them in English we have actually put obstacles in the way of the masses getting political education. I imagine what would have happened if we had, during the thirty-five years' existence of the National Congress, deliberated in Hindustani instead of English which is understood only by a microscopic minority of our countrymen.

Young India, 8-10-1919

33. TO THE SUBSCRIBERS AND THE READERS

Young India from this week enters upon a new stage. It became a bi-weekly when Mr. Horniman was deported and the *Chronicle* was strangled. Ever since the *Chronicle's* rebirth, the syndicate and I have been considering the advisability of reverting to the weekly issue. The conversion of *Navajivan* into a weekly and its coming under my charge has hastened the decision. The burden of conducting a bi-weekly and a weekly is too great a strain on me and a weekly *Young India* will now serve almost as well as a bi-weekly. An endeavour will be made to give as much matter as was given in the bi-weekly. The annual subscription will now be Rs. 4 instead of Rs. 8 and the price of single copy will be one anna instead of two without postage. Subscribers may either have the balance due to this change returned to them or the amount may be credited to the next year's account.

Those subscribers who may be dissatisfied with the change can have the proportionate payment refunded to them on application.

The headquarters of *Young India* have been transferred to Ahmedabad for better management, and in order to enable me to devote some time to the Satyagraha Ashram which, owing to my continued absence from it, was being somewhat neglected by me. Moreover, it was obviously uneconomical in every respect to edit two papers at two different places. This deprives me of the privilege of being with Bombay friends as much as I have lately been. But I hope they will forgive me, if the new arrangement results, as I hope it will, in greater service to the country.

Young India has hitherto been chiefly occupied in dealing with the Punjab affairs. But one may reasonably hope that the cloud will lift in the near future.

What will *Young India* then present to its readers? I frankly confess that to me, editing a newspaper in English is no pleasure. I feel that, in occupying myself with that work, I am not making the best use of my time. And but for the Madras Presidency, I should now leave the work of editing *Young India*. It is true that I should at times like to make my views in matters of general interest known to the Government. But I do not need to control a newspaper merely for that purpose.

The editing of *Navajivan* has been a perfect revelation to me. Whilst *Young India* has a little more than 1,200 subscribers, *Navajivan* has 12,000. The number would leap to 20,000 if we would but get printers to print that number. It shows that a vernacular newspaper is a felt want. I am proud to think that I have numerous readers among farmers and workers. They make India. Their poverty is India's curse and crime. Their prosperity alone can make India a country fit to live. They represent nearly 80 per cent of India's population. The English journals touch but the fringe of the ocean of India's population.

Whilst, therefore, I hold it to be the duty of every English-knowing Indian to translate the best of the English thought in the vernaculars for the benefit of the masses, I recognize that for a few years to come, i.e., until we have accepted Hindustani as the common medium among the cultured classes and until Hindustani becomes compulsory in our schools as a second language, educated India, especially in the Madras Presidency, must be addressed in English.

But I will not be party to editing a newspaper that does not pay its way. *Young India* cannot pay its way unless it has at least 2,500 paying subscriber. I must appeal to my Tamil friends to see to it that the requisite number of subscribers are found, if they wish to see *Young India* continued.

The more so now because the proprietors of *Young India* have decided to give up all advertisements. I know that they have not been entirely, if at all, converted to my view that a newspaper ought to be conducted without advertisements. But they are willing to let me make the experiment. I invited those who wish to see *Young India* free from the curse of advertisements to help me to make the venture a success. The Gujarati *Navajivan* has already demonstrated the possibility of conducting a newspaper without advertisements soiling its pages. What a financial gain it would be to the country if there was for each province only one advertising medium not a newspaper containing innocent unvarnished notices of things useful for the public. But for our criminal indifference, we would decline to pay the huge indirect taxation by way of mischievous advertisements. Some readers who are interested in the purity of journalism recently sent me a most indecent advertisement extracted from a well-known newspaper. I have refused to soil the pages of *Navajivan* by reproducing it. But anyone turning to the advertisement sheets of even leading journals can verify the aptness of my criticism.

A word as to the policy of *Young India*. Apart from its duty of drawing attention to injustices to individuals, it will devote its attention to constructive satyagraha as also sometimes cleansing satyagraha. Cleansing satyagraha is civil resistance where resistance becomes a duty to remove a persistent and degrading injustice such as the Rowlatt Act.

Young India, 8-10-1919

34. SPEECH AT BARODA

[*October 9, 1919*]

We have enthusiasm; we also have good ideals; but these will not ensure us our freedom. They will not bring us what we seek. Our deeds alone will go with us and decide the shape of the future. If we do not translate our enthusiasm into action and see that it yields excellent results, it will have been to no purpose. It is good to inspire

people with idealism. There are times when this too is necessary. But instead of occupying ourselves with rousing idealism in people, if we applied ourselves to work, the effect would be better and we would succeed in awakening a steadier idealism through the example of work.

Yesterday there was great disorder at the station. With orderliness, men can work quietly , however large their number. It is not enough that I came to no harm. So many friends worked hard trying to ensure my safety. What is necessary, however, is to maintain conditions in which no one would come to harm. However large the crowd, if there is good order peace will be preserved. Here conditions are favourable for this purpose. This place has a fine gymnasium. I have always said that drill is essential in any system of education. If lakhs of people went ahead calmly according to a fixed plan, if at a sign they knew what was to be done, they could do things. We ought to get such strength.

In the straits in which we find ourselves at present, we must learn how to finish the job on hand expeditiously. Yesterday, two hours were wasted in taking out the procession. I do not mean to say that such processions should be altogether dispensed with. But we should be alive to the times. India is in such a plight today that we cannot afford to waste our time in processions and such public demonstrations. We shall not serve the motherland by parading in processions, raising slogans of "Vande Mataram" and shouting "Glory to the Motherland!" Today our India is aflame with a triple fire. To rescue her from it, what is needed is not processions but physicians, not demonstrations but effective remedies. We need heroic men and heroic mothers. The time which belongs to the leaders of the people is the people's own and we should save it. I make a simple reckoning. Yesterday there must have been no less than four to five thousand people in the procession. At the rate of two hours each, some eight to ten thousand hours from people's time were wasted. If these many hours had been utilized at the spinning-wheel…this being on my mind at the present time, I can speak of nothing else…or on the loom, what an amount of work could have been turned out? Instead of wasting one's time thus, I think one would employ it to better purpose by sitting quietly in one's little cottage and thinking a few good thoughts. We shall be able to compete with America, Japan and Europe only if we learn the value of time.

Those among us who know about the triple fire blazing in our country should work to put it out. When a fire has broken out, we cannot afford to go looking for principles or formulating rules how to quench it; we fetch water and put it out and afterwards formulate rules for future guidance. Today, therefore, those zealous to serve, who have found the master-key to serivce, should apply themselves straight to work rather than go rousing idealism in the people. They ought to make work their first, second and last duty. Only after they have done their work, or while they are doing it, can they deliver their message convincingly.

I want to tell you do not repeat what you did last evening. The leaders of the people are their servants. If they have been attracted to service by the thought of processions, their service leaves something to be desired. One who is out to serve should expect no gifts and no burning of incense before him. Service rendered with an eye to such worship is no service at all and, if indeed the people must worship them, they should get properly trained for the purpose. They should know how to offer the worship. The leaders' feelings ought to be respected.

What is the triple fire I mentioned? First, starvation. The millionaires and multi-millionaires of Bombay are no true index of the conditions prevailing in India. We cannot adjudge India to be prosperous or otherwise on the basis of their condition. Assuredly, as long as the condition of the weavers and farmers in the seven and a half lakh villages in India is one of utter destitution, we cannot describe the country as prosperous. I see wide-spread starvation in it. Large numbers of people are obliged to live on no more than plain bread and salt and, perhaps, there are many to whom even that much is denied. The reason is the shortage of food in the country.

Another thing in short supply is cloth. My heart bleeds as I think of this shortage and I am sure I could make yours bleed, too, if I described it. So many men in India live with nothing on but a loin-cloth. It is no pain to those who live thus by choice. A great many, however, are obliged to live in that condition for want of clothes. Men can live in that way, but surely we would not wish that women should. But I have seen many of our sisters who are obliged to go about in such a state. I saw large numbers of men and women, in Champaran,

in the condition of Nala and Damayanti.[1] I have conversed with these people. They cannot even wash their clothes for want of another dress into which to change.[2] The Ganga flows near by. So there is no scarcity of water. But, having washed their garment, what should they put on [while it is drying]? If we go naked these days, it is for want of cloth.

The third kind of fire is a product of these two. India is plagued by countless diseases because of starvation and lack of clothes. But I have not come here to talk about this. If the first two were put out, the third would go out by itself. I, therefore, leave the subject aside. Even the first fire not everyone of us can work to put out. In order to work for overcoming the shortage of food, we must have in us the strength of the cultivator; we must have land and so many things besides. Everyone cannot have them. But, for quenching the second kind of fire, all of us have the necessary means. For that, all can work, even boys and girls. It is not as difficult to get that much cloth produced through women and children as it is to set up a mill. I have discussed the matter with so many mill-owners. They say it would take some fifty years to set up enough mills to produce cloth for the whole of India. But these very owners say that, if women started spinning and the weavers started weaving and did their best, within two or three years we would be in a position to produce our own cloth.

Even today there are places in India where women rich as well as poor spin with their own hands, get the yarn woven into cloth by weavers and wear it. In the Punjab, it is customary, on auspicious occasions like marriages, to wear dresses made out of yarn spun by oneself. Such cloth is supposed to be sacred. There are many such places in the country. Only, we do not know about them.

There is no difficulty at all in the way of our producing cloth sufficient to meet our needs. The only hurdle is our own sloth and inertia. The effort requires no money, only zeal and great love combined with knowledge.

As a weaver myself, I assert that, working on a handloom for eight hours daily, one can certainly earn a rupee. Does one get so much even after wearing oneself out in working for the matriculation

[1] The husband and the wife were obliged to share one single garment between them. The story is told in the *Mahabharata*.

[2] Gandhiji had this experience in a village near Bhitiharwa; *vide An Autobiography*, Part V, Ch. XVIII.

examination? I have seen graduates slaving for a salary of Rs. 30/- a month, and they rot thus even after their exhausting work for examinations. Surely, the weaver's lot is better than the graduate's.

It is not at all difficult to produce yarn if the countless women and lakhs of widows in India, feeling the presence of Rama and Krishna in their heart, make up their mind to work in their spare time.

I entreat India to follow this dharma at the present day.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-10-1919

35. TELEGRAM TO P.S. TO VICEROY

AMRELI,
October 10, 1919

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE VICEROY

MOTHER ALI BROTHERS REPORTED SERIOUSLY ILL. RESPECTFULLY TRUST BROTHERS WILL BE PERMITTED VISIT MOTHER. I UNDERSTAND THEY HAVE ALREADY APPROACHED HIS EXCELLENCY.[1]

GANDHI
AHMEDABAD

N.A.I. Home : Political: January 1920: Nos. 493-502 B; also from a photostat : S. N. 19826

[1] Since the Ali Brothers, in detention at Rampur, had themselves not applied for parole, the Home Department considered no action was called for and no reply by Viceroy's Private Secretary to Gandhiji's telegram was necessary.

36. LETTER TO THE PRESS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 10, 1919

TO
THE EDITOR
THE [BOMBAY] CHRONICLE

SIR,

The Khilafat Conference at Lucknow has decided to observe Friday next, the 17th instant, as a day of fasting and prayer. There can be no doubt about the intensity of Moslem feeling on this very important matter. There is no doubt also that the intentions of the league are distrusted. In one's darkest hour, God is the only refuge and it is to Him that millions of Moslems all over India are expected to turn for comfort, guidance and relief. Millions of mouths will, that day, ask the Almighty if it be His will to avert the impending doom. A true Moslem can no more contemplate with equanimity the dismemberment of Turkey than a Christian can so contemplate the desecration of what is dearest and nearest to him.

What are the Hindus to do? I feel that they could do no less than their Mohammedan brethren. Their fast and prayer will be the truest test of friendship and fellow-feeling. I hope that every Hindu, man and woman, will observe the 17th instant and thus put a sacred seal on the Hindu-Mohammedan bond.

There is also to be a hartal. It is intended to impress upon His Majesty's Ministers the seriousness of the position. But, in order to be impressive, it has to be absolutely peaceful and voluntary. Any exercise of force will make it thoroughly useless for the purpose for which it is intended. If the Mohammedans really feel, and if the Hindus are sincere in their professions of friendship, naturally they will both voluntarily stop work on the 17th. I have ventured tenderly to advise that, in view of past experience, there should be no processions, no meetings.[1] Everyone must remain indoors except

[1] *Vide* the following item.

volunteers and Mohammedans who will visit the Juma Masjid. Any breach of the peace will simply mar a most excellent cause. I have, therefore, further suggested that the mill-hands should in no way be encouraged to stop work, nor those who are engaged in the interests of the public health.

I venture to hope that the Government will rise to the occasion. Indeed, they could make common cause with the people and, thereby, tell His Majesty's Ministers that we consider the Khilafat question as a sacred trust which must not be betrayed. But whether the Government go so far or not, they can at least issue instructions to all the officials not to interfere either directly or indirectly with forthcoming peaceful demonstration.[1]

Iam

YOURS, ETC.
M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 13-10-1919

[1] A statement released by the organizers of the Khilafat Day on the same day said: "Mahatma Gandhi advised that it is absolutely incumbent upon the Hindus to signify their sympathy with their Mohammedan brethren by joining with them in observing the 17th of October as a day of prayer and protest by closing their shops and suspending their business." According to the Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1919, 30,000 copies of the above text, issued as a manifesto, were prepared in the form of a handbill by the Satyagraha Sabha, but the period of fasting mentioned in it was 12 hours.

37. CIRCULAR LETTER[1]

SABARMATI,
October 10, 1919

I hope you have seen my remarks in *Young India* of 4th October 1919 as also my public letter[2] regarding demonstration of the 17th. I think all non-Mohammedans should join the Mohammedans in fasting, prayer and hartal. Fasting and prayer I regard as a purely religious function and no part of demonstration. Hartal is intended to be purely a demonstration. It must be voluntary. Personally I do not care if only a few Hindus join, and I should be exceedingly sorry if any join out of fear be they ever so many. In order to avoid untoward consequences, I have suggested that there should be no processions, no meetings, people should keep indoors and that volunteers should parade business quarters in order to protect those who might wish to keep their shops open. Mill-hands should not be called out and those who may be required for sanitary and such other daily work should be specially advised not to stop work. I hope you will take what steps you may consider necessary to give effect to my proposal if you agree with me.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the handwritten draft : S.N. 19827

[1] This was issued as "A Circular Letter of Instructions guiding public demonstration of 17th October", and was sent to the following persons: Rajagopalachari; Kasturi Ranga Ayengar; Natesan; Dr. Rajan, Trichinopoly; Joseph, Barrister, Madura; Harilal Gandhi, Calcutta; Satyanand Bose, Calcutta; Swami Shraddhanand; Pandit Motilal Nehru; Professor J.B. Kripalani, Allahabad; Rajendra Prasad; Brijkishore Babu; Jamshedji Mehta, Karachi; Durgadas Adwani, Karachi; Dr. Choithram Gidwani, Hyderabad (Sind); Krishnalal A. Desai, Delhi; Pandit Sundarlal, Allahabad; Jawaharlal Nehru, Barrister, Allahabad; Pandit Kunzru, Agra; Pandit B.D. Shukla, Jabalpur; C.F. Andrews, Lahore; V.A. Sundaram, Triplicane; Devdas Gandhi; G.S. Arundale; Gangadharrao Deshpande, Belgaum; Khadilkar, Kesari Office, Poona; S.V. Vaze, Servants of India Society, Poona; Gokaran Nath Mishra, Harkaran Nath Mishra, Lucknow. The letter was also released to the Press.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

38. TELEGRAM TO SADIQ ALI

[On or after *October 10, 1919*]

SADIQ ALI
RAMPORE

HAVE TELEGRAPHED SIMLA ABOUT PERMISSION BROTHERS. PLEASE WIRE CONDITION.

GANDHI
AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of the handwritten draft : S.N. 19824

39. LETTER TO ABDUL BARI

[After *October 10, 1919*]

DEAR MAULANA SAHIB,

You will have seen my letters about the 17th instant.[1] I am hoping that all Hindus will join and that the demonstration will pass off in a most peaceful manner. In the peaceful passing off of the demonstration lies its possible success. I hope, therefore, that you will issue necessary public instructions, as also private, to the effect that those who take part in the demonstration will all remain indoors, and that those who go to the mosques will do so in a perfectly peaceful and prayerful manner.

Yours sincerely,

TIVANGI MAHAL
LUCKNOW

From a photostat of the handwritten draft : S.N. 19825

40. FASTING AND PRAYER

It is my conviction and my experience that, if fasting and prayer are done with a sincere heart and in a religious spirit, marvellous results could be obtained from them. There is nothing as purifying as a fast, but fasting without prayer is barren; it may result in a diseased person being restored to health or may only mean a healthy person

[1] *Vide* "Letter to the Press" and "Circular Letter", 10-10-1919.

suffering unnecessarily. A fast undertaken purely for ostentation or to inflict pain on others is an unmitigated sin. Hence, it is only a prayerful fast undertaken by way of penance to produce some effect on oneself which can be called a religious fast. Prayer does not mean begging God for worldly happiness or for the things which advance one's interests; it is the earnest cry of a soul in anguish. It cannot but influence the whole world and cannot but make itself heard in the divine court. When an individual or a nation suffers because of a great calamity, the true awareness of that suffering is prayer; in the presence of this purifying knowledge, physical functions like eating, etc., become less urgent. A mother suffers when her only son dies. She has no desire for eating. A nation is born when all feel the same sort of grief at the suffering of any one among them; such a nation deserves to be immortal. We are well aware that quite a large number of our brothers and sisters in India live in great suffering and so, truly speaking, we have occasion at every step for prayerful fasting. But our national life has not attained to this degree of intensity and purity. Even so, occasions arise when we suffer acutely.

Such an occasion has arisen for our Muslim brethren. Readers of *Navajivan* know what it is: if Turkey is partitioned, the Khilafat will disappear. If the Khilafat disappears, Islam will lose its vitality. This the Muslims can never tolerate. Supporting my view, the good Mr. Andrews said that, if the Muslims feel they have not received justice, then Mr. Montagu and His Excellency the Viceroy should resign. This remedy is essential, but external. A far, far more powerful remedy lies in the hands of our Muslim brethren themselves. It has been decided that on Friday, October 17, Muslims should observe a *roza*, that is, a fast of twenty-four hours; accordingly, beginning from the evening of the 16th, they should spend the whole of the 17th in prayers. This is a beautiful idea. The peace and the good that ensue from turning our thoughts to God in a time of sorrow are not to be had in any other way.

The duty of Hindus at such a time is obvious. If they regard the Muslims as their brethren, they should fully share their suffering. This is the best and the easiest method of promoting unity between Hindus and Muslims. Sharing another's sorrow is the only real sign of brotherly regard. I hope, therefore, that every man and woman in India will spend October 17 in prayer and fasting. The *Gita* is universally accepted among Hindus. They should read it through from the beginning to the end, along with a rendering of its meaning.

This way the whole day will be spent in a religious spirit, and that will be the prayer of the Hindus.

I think we may, without fear, observe a hartal on that day. Those who are independent should stop their work. People in service, the labourers and those who serve in hospitals, etc., need not stop work. If people remain within doors on the day and take out no processions, there will be no cause for fear. There can be no coercion in fasting and prayer; and this should also be true about stopping work. A hartal can be effective only if it is purely voluntary. Such a hartal alone can provide the true measure of the feelings of Hindus and Muslims. In order that the hartal may remain voluntary, those who are appointed volunteers may move about. It should be their duty to see that no one offers violence to, or exerts undue pressure on, those who open their shops or attend to their work.

If the Government is wise, it will encourage the people in this step. It is the duty of His Excellency the Viceroy, if he would demonstrate to the Muslims his sympathy for them, to instruct the officers not to come in the way of the people observing a hartal. If His Excellency can go further, he could stop work on that day and thereby assuage the people a great deal. Whether the Government does this or not, the duty of the people is clear. Hindus and Muslims should unite to observe October 17 in the manner suggested above.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-10-1919

41. WIDOWS' OUTPOURING

Eleven sisters from Surat have written two letters, pouring out their suffering. They begin their letters with the words: "We are *Vaishnava, Vanik* widows, widowed in childhood." They have given their own names but concealed the names of their parents and their addresses. I am sorry that they have not given full particulars about themselves. The law governing newspapers requires that the editor should pay no attention to anonymous letters, and this law is necessary. It is the editor's duty, if a correspondent does not desire his name to be published, to respect it fully, but the writer must give his full name for the information of the editor. If this is not done, the editor, despite his keenness to help, cannot help as much as he otherwise could. In the case of these sisters themselves, I see that, if I

knew their names and addresses, I could inquire for more details and also find persons who would befriend them in their suffering. Notwithstanding the incompleteness of the letters in this and other respects, they mention some general things which all should know. Of these eleven sisters, three have had some education and eight are utterly illiterate. One of them can barely manage to read the *Navajivan* once in eight days. Members of the community shoo them away as ill-omened, and dub them "husband-devourers"; they have to live dependent on who knows that kind of men; by way of education, they have had nil, and they get little ghee and sugar in their food. There are forty-two *Vanik* communities in Surat, among which there must be not less than 700 widows. No one knows what dharma is.

> We know our dharma, but are denied the means which may enable us to preserve it. If we are maintained in some Ashram and given some education, taught how to serve, we are ready to follow the widow's dharma. In the absence of this, we are exposed to so many temptations that we feel it necessary for us to have a husband's intimate company. . . . When the path of knowledge declined, Vallabh[1] propagated the path of *bhakti*. With the passing of time, customs have changed. This should happen in regard to widows too.

There is much more than this in their letters. They also describe how widows come to lose their virtue. I have tried to give, mostly in my own words, the gist of what I could from the two letters. The question of widows is no ordinary problem for the Hindu society. There will hardly be any Hindu family which does not have the responsibility of maintaining a widow. The reformers have recommended a one-side solution. Remarriage is the only solution, they say. To me, that idea appears terrible. I read profound meaning in widowhood; equally, I also see how it can be turned to good account. Would it not be better if men, too, refused to marry again on becoming widowers? Nowhere, though, do we see any agitation to this end. And yet, how can this idea, even if implemented, end the sufferings of child-widows? Even if thousands of widowers should refuse of their own free will to marry again, how does that help the young girl who has to live a life of enforced widowhood? Can there be dharma in forcibly preventing a widow from remarrying? Can

[1] Vaishnava teacher (1473-1531); principally responsible for spreading the *bhakti* cult in Gujarat

purity be expected of widows without placing them in conditions in which they could live a life if illustrious widowhood?

These complex problems are not easy to solve. There is an element of truth on either side. Without entering into argument I wish to place before the Hindu society the following conclusions:

1. The attempt to end the practice of widowhood is injurious to religion.

2. Marriage is a sacrament. Love can marry only once.

3. A widow deserves to be looked upon with reverence.

It is a sin to despise her. The sight of a pure widow is a good omen. It is a sin to count it as an ill omen.

4. If marriage is, or is considered to be, a sacrament, and if it is a symbol of pure love, then marrying children and ill-matched partners must be considered a sin. If it is not wrong for a man of fifty to marry a girl of nine, and if such a man is not excommunicated, then it is also a sin to excommunicate or otherwise punish that girl if, becomming a widow, she marries again.

There is no room for coercion in the matter of dharma. And therefore, my advice to the *Vaishnava* and other Hindu families regarding child-widows in Surat is that they should think out a plan to keep to minds and bodies of the widows occupied and save them from temptations, and put the plan into action. Even so, if it is important that a child-widow should not be induced to remarry, it is equally important that, should such a widow want to remarry, she should not be prevented from doing so. To live a widow's life is a holy thing, but it is not entirely sinful for a widow to remarry. If the various communities would live so as to bring credit to *varnashrama*, if they do not want it to disappear, they will have to eliminate the innumerable evils that have arisen in it and see that the problems which arise in practice are solved with due regard for dharma. To the widows, therefore, I would say: "Look upon your widowhood as sacred and live a life worthy of it. There are many instances of such widows in Hindu society." To people of the various communities I would say: "If any child-widows want to remarry, do not despise or outcast them."

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-10-1919

42. NOTES

EXEMPTION FROM SECURITY

The reader probably remembers that, when *Navajivan* was turned into a weekly, a security of five hundred rupees was ordered. We have also told him of the cloud that subsequently gathered over us and dispersed.[1] The management realized that a paper like *Navajivan*, in printing which one must be prepared for risks and copies of which should be made available to the public regularly and in large numbers, could be printed unhindered only in its own printing-press; that is, only in this way can its external difficulties be reduced to a minimum. And so Mr. Shankerlal Ghelabhai Banker, who shoulders the financial responsibility, has purchased the Manahar Press and it will henceforth be known as "Navajivan Mudranalaya". Moreover, it was felt to be a difficult arrangement under which *Young India*, for which the editor of *Navajivan* is responsible, was published in Bombay while the latter was published in Ahmedabad. It was, therefore, decided to publish *Young India*, too, in Ahmedabad. This made it necessary to make declarations in respect of *Young India*, *Navajivan* and the Navajivan Press. These declarations were made before the Magistrate in Ahmedabad. He decided not to ask for security from either of the papers or from the Press. We congratulate the District Magistrate on this decision of his. So long as the sword of the unjust provisions in the Press Act continues to flash over Indian newspapers, we can feel or express no joy at *Young India* and *Navajivan* having been exempted from security. A security cannot place any kind of check on our pen. Exemption from it does not increase by one jot our freedom from inhibition; it increases our responsibility a little, lest we express, knowingly or unknowingly, views which may once again make them think that we deserved being called upon to furnish a security. No matter whether our responsibility has increased or decreased, we will strive hard to place before the public our views with politeness and restraint, but without fear.

[1] *Vide* “Notes”, 5-10-1919.

"YOU CANNOT UNDERSTAND OUR DIFFICULTIES"

The Hon'ble Mr. Sachchidanada Sinha, the well-known journalist[1] of Bihar and member of the Imperial Legislative Council, while speaking on the Indemnity Bill made some mistake. Sir George Lowndes tried to correct him. His Excellency the Viceroy observed that it was a slip. But the Hon'ble Mr. Sinha replied: "You can have no idea of the difficulty we experience in speaking in a foreign tongue. We commit mistakes again and again." These words are worthy of Mr. Sinha. Obliged to speak in a foreign tongue, even the ablest members find themselves in difficulties and time and again we are worsted when it comes to returning a quick retort. This happens not because our case is weak or our knowledge is less but because we have to speak in a foreign language. Every Indian who has been to England knows how even those among them who are proficient in English fumble when speaking it in English families of even ordinary education and often become the butt of ridicule. Prof. Jadunath Sircar has shown that having to think and speak in English imposes a heavy burden on the educated class, so heavy, indeed, that it has lost its vigour and is ailing. Justice Ranade, likewise, pointed out several years ago that many of them came to an untimely end and they possessed little inventive power. Sooner or later we shall have to find a remedy for this painful situation, and the sooner the better. The business of provincial legislatures should be conducted in their respective languages and that of the Imperial Legislative Council in the national language, namely, Hindustani. The movement should start with the sessions of the Congress and various conferences. If the former would take its message to the millions, it can never do so through English but only through Hindustani.

FINE ON BAREJADI

We give elsewhere the petition presented by the people of Barejadi against the order of the Government for the collection of Rs. 7,200 on account of the additional police stationed there. The petition, it is evident, was not drafted by a lawyer. The petitioners have not advanced any logical arguments but have expressed their feelings in such language as they knew. We congratulate the people of Barejadi on what they have done. We think it is a valuable petition; and this is the way men and women who suffer can always make their protests

[1] He was editor of the *Hindustan Review*, a monthly magazine of Patna.

heard by the Government and the public. Such work does not require the services of lawyers of experienced draftsmen. No one can put the suffering of a man pricked by a thorn in stronger language than the man himself. Only, we must take care to give facts as they are and not to exaggerate. Where is the need to embellish truth?

Barejadi's case is straight. The issues raised are brief and to the point.

> We are not guilty; we have suffered from two famines; we are hardly in a position to pay the Government's assessment. The posting of additional police at our place is unnecessary and hence we should not be burdened with [the fine of] Rs. 7,200. The Government is welcome to inquire into our conduct.

This is sample justice. While discussing the position at Nadiad, we wrote about Barejadi too.[1] Nothing more is necessary. We hope that the Government will pay full attention to the petitioners' representation and that non-official members of the Legislative Council from Gujarat and other areas will take up the matter and secure justice for the innocent landowners.

PETITION AGAINST ROWLATT ACT

We draw the readers' attention to the petition published by the All-India Home Rule League. It states the chief objections against the Rowlatt Act, the most important being that it is unanimously condemned by the people. To retain that Act after all the popular agitation against it and the suffering of the people in the course of that agitation will be a blow to the self-respect of the people and make the Government's autocratic attitude almost intolerable. Every Indian living in British India can sign it and we hope every adult man and woman will do so and forward the petition to the Home rule League, Bombay.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-10-1919

[1] He was editor of the *Hindustan Review*, a monthly magazine of Patna.

43. TELEGRAM TO C.F. ANDREWS

AHMEDABAD,
October 13, 1919

C.F. ANDREWS
FEROZEPORE ROAD
LAHORE

JUST RETURNED FROM KATHIAWAR. WON'T BE TOO LATE IF YOU START MIDDLE NOVEMBER EVEN LATER.[1]

Bombay Government Records

GANDHI

44. SPEECH AT GUJARAT COLLEGE, AHMEDABAD[2]

[*October 13, 1919*]

MR. CHAIRMAN, SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

The English ladies and gentlemen present here will excuse me for speaking to you in your own language. It is difficult for me to say anything about Anandshankarbhai. I do not like to express my love for him, and he would not like my doing so either. I think it is my duty, all the same, to say something. In the address which the students presented to him they said: "Though you have been before us and with us all these years, we did not know you." These words state the truth. From the day that I settled in Gujarat, I have seen that we have failed to recognize him for what he is and to appreciate him at his true worth. Though, of course, he has lost nothing in consequence, Gujarat has lost a great deal. As for his learning, men who know more than I do can testify to it. To me his character, his bearing and his way of living are his true learning.

Anandshankarbhai is a priceless treasure of Gujarat. We have not availed ourselves of this treasure as well as we should have. Thanks

[1] Andrews proposed to visit East Africa to study the situation there. He replied from Gujranwala on October 17 : "Delighted come both immediately starting South Africa. Have wired Jehangir Petit."

[2] Gandhiji spoke at a farewell function in honour of Prof. Anandshankar Dhruva who was leaving the College on his appointment as Vice-Chancellor of Banaras Hindu University.

to his ability, informed with a liberal spirit, his intelligence and tact, he has succeeded in solving many a knotty problem. I have read, and still read, his writings and I feel that we have much to learn from him. How much Gujarat would have gone forward if it had profited fully by his writings, I cannot measure. Anandshankarbhai is Gujarat's gift to India. I would have envied Bombay if he had chosen to migrate there. It is better that he stayed in Ahmedabad than go away to Bombay. No doubt, Bombay would have learnt more from him, but Bombay is Gujarat and Gujarat is Bombay.

By sending Anandshankarbhai to Kashi, Gujarat is making an invaluable present to India. We cannot be proud enough of the profit India will derive from this gift. We cannot say, as we may of an Englishman, that he is in the prime of his life. His family has made great sacrifices.

Panditji[1] did not cast his eye on Anandshankarbhai merely because of his learning; he has selected him to manage the affairs there and to show whether or not Indians possess organizing capacity and administrative ability. If there is any person in India who can solve the all-too-delicate problems in the Banaras Hindu University, it is Anandshankarbhai. And it is my prayer, finally, that God may grant him a long life, that the University may attain the height it ought to and that India and Gujarat may duly profit from this.

From a handwritten Gujarati report : S.N. 6414

45. A PUNJAB VICTIM

Behari Lal Sachdeva is a young man of twenty-four with a young wife and an aged father of seventy-two years old. He belongs to the Gujaranwala batch and was sentenced to transportation with forfeiture of property. He had "waged war against the King". So said the prosecution and so found the Court. His honour the Lieut-Governor has commuted the sentence to that of four years' imprisonment. Poor comfort to a prisoner who is innocent or to his father who is on the verge of death.

And so poor Behari Lal Sachdeva has sent another petition as "he believes that through some serious mistake his case has not been carefully gone into". The petition is convincing enough. It is so well

[1] Madan Mohan Malaviya

drawn that it will repay perusal. It is almost free from rhetoric or superfluous adjectives and is brief enough even for a busy reader.[1]

A friend told me the other day that, after forty years of life devoted to the praising of British justice, the Punjab had undeceived him. He no longer believed in British Justice. He added with distinct energy:

> I do not care straw for your reforms; what can they do for us if our lives and our honour be not safe and we stand in peril of being wrongly imprisoned?

Well, the case of Behari Lal Sachdeva seems to be one such. It is probably one of mistaken identity. The young man would appear to be perfectly innocent. The prisoner is not stated to have been connected with or present at the meeting on the 4th and the 5th April or on the 12th or the 13th April. The principal witness's evidence is merely hearsay. The other evidence is stated to be tainted, and even if true, the facts sworn to do not disclose any offence. The evidence given for the prisoner by respectable and impartial witnesses was discarded by the Court. The reader has by this time known sufficient of the Punjab judgments not to feel surprised at such attitude of the special courts. What is, however, surprising is the fact that even now when perfect quiet reigns in the Punjab these cases of injustice do not receive the attention they deserve at the hands of the Lieut.-Governor. No government deserves repsect which holds cheap the liberty of the subjects as the Punjab Government seems to do.

Young India, 15-10-1919

46 LETTER TO THE PRESS[2]

[BOMBAY,]
Khilafat Day [*October 17, 1919*]

SIR,

The following order was served upon me yesterday:

Whereas under Rule 3 of the Defence of India (Consolidated) Rules, 1915 and with the previous sanction of the Governor-General-in-Council, the Lieut. Governor of the Punjab was pleased on the 9th April, 1919, to prohibit the entry of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi into the Punjab and was further pleased to order him to return to and reside within the limits of the Bombay Presidency;

[1] The petition was reproduced in the same issue of *Young India*.

[2] This was published in several leading newspapers.

And whereas the necessity for this order has ceased to exist;

Now therefore the Lieut.-Governor is pleased with the sanction of the Governor-General hereby to cancel the said order with effect from this day, the 15th Oct. 1919.[1]

I am naturally thankful for it in that it enables me to visit the Punjab and to render such service as I may be capable of rendering. At the same time, I cannot help saying that it was not with unmixed pleasure that I received the release order. The order of internment and externment was no discredit to me; my conscience was absolutely clear. When it was served upon me, it appeared to me to be an act of criminal folly on the part of the Government. And now, though the release order is creditable to Government, it cannot recall the precious lives for whose loss the prohibitory order must be held responsible. Moreover, so long as the Rowlatt Act remains on the statute-book, the release order can be no joy for me. In the internment order I had a ready-made weapon for offering civil resistance. I hear people saying that satyagraha is as dead as Queen Anne,[2] and that Mr. Montagu will never repeal the Rowlatt Act, although he is quite sure that the act will never be enforced. Those who make the first statement do not know what satyagraha is and how it works. Those who make the second do not know the power of satyagraha. He who make the second do not know the power of satyagraha. He who runs may see that satyagraha is slowly but surely pervading the land. So far as Mr. Montagu's

[1] The removal of restriction on Gandhiji was, in fact, being seriously considered as early as September. A confidential telegram (No. 1917, Home Department) of the Government of India, dated September 8, observed: "Conditions are now comparatively normal and there seems no immediate intention on his part of advocating civil disobedience. In view of His Excellency's opening speech in the Imperial Legislative Council, the Government of India think that a suitable opportunity now presents itself to relax the existing orders and that there is not sufficient ground for maintaining the restrictions on him and they propose that, when Lord Hunter lands in India, all restrictions should be relaxed."

[2] This reflected the official reading of the situation. The Bombay Government wrote on September 12, in a confidential note to the Chief Secretary, Madras Government: "His Excellency-in-Council considers that Gandhi's satyagraha movement may, for the present, be regarded as extinct. Even in Gujarat, which is Gandhi's headquarters and where the movement originated, the local organization have fallen to pieces. It is doubtful whether Gandhi, even if he so desired, could revive the movement with anything like its former vigour. Gandhi's own declared attitude is that the movement is, so far as civil disobedience is concerned, suspended *sine die*.."

supposed declaration is concerned, the strongest man of South Africa had to yield to that matchless force. It was in 1909 that General Smuts, backed by Gen. Botha and the European opinion of South Africa, said that, although the Transvaal Asiatic Act would not be enforced, he would never formally repeal it, but in 1914 he proved his strength by repealing that Act and removing the legal racial bar from the Immigration Law. I have not the slightest doubt that Mr. Montagu and the Viceroy will yield to the same ancient force and repeal the Rowlatt Act long before the expiry of its time limit. But whether they do or not the lives of the satyagrahis are dedicated to securing among other things the repeal of that Act.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-10-1919

47. LETTER TO H.S.L. AND MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

M.K. GANDHI

Khilafat Day, October 17 [*1919*][1]

MY DEAR HENRY AND MILLIE,

You have both blessed me with your letters. I thank you. I know that Henry did what was the right thing about 'India'. We have only one taskmaster to please and that is conscience.

Henry may not agree with me on the Khilafat question.[2] I am content to differ. If I had the time, I would argue it out.

I was sorry to hear about Millie's health. She must take rest. She has too vivid an imagination to take complete rest anywhere. Merely bodily rest is not enough. However, that at least must be given to her.

I am glad you are there to look after Jamnadas and his wife. The orders against me have been repealed[3] and I am presently going to the Punjab.

With love,

Yours,
BHAI

From the original : Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy : National Archives of India

[1] From the contents
[2] *Vide* "Father of theWorld [—IV]",2-11-1919 and "Notes", 2-11-1919
[3] *Vide* "Letter to thePress", 17-10-1919

48. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 18, 1919

DEAR GURUDEV,

There is to be a literary conference in Ahmedabad in December.[1] The dates are 13th, 14th and 15th Dec. The organizers are most anxious that you should grace the occasion by your presence that I hope that if you could at all manage it, you will not disappoint Gujarat.

It was good of you to have permitted Andrews to go to South Africa. I have just received a telegram from him saying he is free to go. This relieves me considerably and I am sure that his going there will do the utmost good.

I hope that you are keeping good health.

Your sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the handwritten orginal : G.N. 4625

49. LETTER TO U. K. TRIVEDI[2]

[After *October 18, 1919*]

DEAR SIR,

I have your letter[3] .

I suggest the enclosed cable[4] to Johannesburg. I suggest further that you should address the Commerce and Industry Department drawing attention to the fact that the whole question of disabilities regarding ownership of land and right to trade shall be sifted. The matter is rather delicate. It would be useless to press for opening the whole question, political and commercial, throughout South Africa.

[1] This was later postponed to suit Tagore's convenience.
[2] Assistant Secretary, Imperial Citizenship Association
[3] This was dated October 18. Enclosed with it was Aswat's cable from South Africa seeking Gandhiji's advice.
[4] This is not available.

As Mr. Shastriar is almost certain to be appointed there is no anxi[ety] regarding commission.

Yours faithfully,

From the pencilled draft in Gandhiji's hand : S. N. 6484

50. FATHER OF THE WORLD [-III]

I have promised to give some of my experiences in connection with village uplift. Dr. Hariprasad, describing how Sister Nivedita improved a lane in Calcutta, has illustrated by this example what one man or woman can do if he or she so wills. To do this sort of work in villages is even easier than improving lanes in a city. When it was decided to open self-sufficient schools in Champaran,[1] I appealed for volunteers. Among those who arrived were the late Dr. Dev and Mr. Soman, a lawyer from Belgaum. These volunteers had to perform only three tasks…teach any boys and girls who came, show the villagers how to maintain cleanliness in the streets, in the village and their homes, etc., and give medicine to any patients who might come for it. Mr. Soman was sent to a village called Bhitiharva and Dr. Dev was to organize medical aid in villages having schools. He happened to stay for a longer period at the school in Bhitiharva. It was very difficult to induce the people there to effect any improvements. Dr. Dev showed them that improvements were necessary. But the villagers paid no attention to him. His proposal was about cleaning the streets and constructing a sloping platform round the well and removing the mud from around it. Dr. Dev and Mr. Soman then took pickaxes in their hands and began to make a sloping platform round the well and to clean the streets. The news spread like wildfire through the tiny village and the villagers understood Dr. Dev's advice. His action were more potent than his words. The villagers than sallied forth themselves to do the cleaning and very soon the well and streets of Bhitiharva took on an attractive appearance. Rubbish heaps disappeared. Meanwhile, the thatched school-house which had been erected was burnt down by some miscreants. This posed a serious problem. Should a similar construction be put up and a fire risked again? Mr. Soman and Dr. Dev decided to put up a brick structure for the school. By now both of them had learnt the art of public speaking. They begged for the requisite materials. When necesssary they supplied

[1] *Vide* “Letter to J.l. Merriman”, 22-11-1917.

money themselves and both began to work as labourers. By the time they had completed the foundation for a durable school building, the villagers joined them. Artisans gave all possible assistance, and even today the Bhitiharva school stands there as an example of what can be achieved if one or two individuals make up their mind to do a thing. This sort of work was done not only in one village but to a greater or less extent in every place where a school was established and everywhere the villagers' response was in proportion to the teacher's capacity to inspire co-operation. The service did not demand any great intelligence. What was needed was ardour and perseverance. Intelligence and skill were available from others.

In the Kheda district, the crop had to be valued. This could not be done unless all the villagers co-operated. Volunteers were detailed, one for each village, to collect the information; they not only succeeded in doing so but also won the affection of the villagers. I can multiply such examples from many other places.

Now we can see how a start may be made by one who wants to organize a village properly. He should select the place where he himself lives. He should get acquainted with all the other residents and share in their tribulations without making a show of any kind. He would then appeal for their help in cleaning the lanes. The worker would bear the neighbour's ridicule and insults and continue, in spite of them, to share in their suffering and would clean the streets single-handed. His wife, mother and sister should, by and by, join in this work. Whether the neighbours join or not, the road would be cleaned and experience would show that this does not require much time. At last the neighbours would start working themselves and the fragrance of one lane would sweeten the entire village.

If this volunteer has further enthusiasm and is himself an educated man, he would teach boys and unlettered adults in his street to read and write. If anyone in the street falls ill and is unable to take medical treatment, the worker would find a good *vaid* for him. If there is no one to look after the patient, he would do so himself. While doing these things he would get an intimate knowledge of the economic and moral condition of his neighbours. Having obtained this knowledge, he would plan how to bring about the desired improvement in them. Working on in this manner he would gradually get an insight into the political inclination of his neighbours and through them of the entire village. If, along with this insight, he also

develops the capacity to evoke co-operation in the people, he could improve their political condition as well. I have seen in Africa, Champaran, Kheda and elsewhere that those whom we regard as uneducated have, by dine of sheer perseverance and sympathy, been able to do great service and also make a fine impact on the public. In every village where I found even one zealous man or woman, I have also discovered that he or she was doing excellent work in that village.

We shall examine next certain rules of cleanliness and of physical, moral, and economic health. I hope that those who approve of them will start work on those lines in their respective villages. If this happens, we shall be able to produce a powerful effect on the condition of some villages in a very short time.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-10-1919

51. GUJARAT'S GIFT

The friends of Prof. Anandshankar Bapubhai Dhruva knew for some time that this jewel from Gujarat was joining the Banaras University, ending his 27 years' connnection with the Gujarat College. The thing became public at two functions held during this week, one under the auspices of the Sahitya Sabha and the other organized by the students of Gujarat College. At the second function, the Principal of the College was in the chair. Addresses were presented to Prof. Dhruva at both these functions. By honouring him in this way, Gujaratis have honoured themselves.

We come across very few Indians who combine learning and dharma in the measure in which Prof. Dhruva does. He has not taken to the profession of teaching with a mercenary motive. I believe he became a professor because he thought that thereby he would be able to serve the country better. As an author, he has maintained his integrity with the utmost conscientiousness. It is no ordinary responsibility which rests on an author, and that of one who would dive into the sea of ancient literature to bring up pearls is all the greater. Sanskrit literature is like a sea, difficult to fathom. Very few possess even a cursory knowledge of this literature. It offers much scope for laziness and dishonesty. We see at every step instances of this in our modern literature. How many translations of the *Bhagavad Gita* do we have! It is difficult to be pleased with any of them. The translations of Manusmriti at the disposal of the people of Gujarat are

not entirely reliable. Thanks to laziness, ignorance and sometimes deliberate mischief, people get faulty and incomplete translations of Sanskrit works. At a time like this, everything which Anandshankarbhai has given stands like a beacon. With regard to his interpretations, it is impossible to suspect dishonesty, ignorance, haste or laziness. He has written whatever he has in a liberal and objective spirit believing in all good faith that it is true. And, therefore, people need have no fear in accepting it.

Moreover, those who have come into contact with him have observed in his personal life the same qualities of character which he has shown in his public actions and in publc life. By the force of his character, he has been able to maintain his influence both on the old and the new generations. Though duly respecting old ideas, the ancient way of life and ancient traditions, he has never sought to check the waves of modern life and its enthusiasms. Rather, he has tried to correct the excesses of both. Gujarat has not till now made full use of Prof. Dhruva's services, as was stated in the address presented by the students. We have not freely availed ourselves of the treasure he possesses. We have not recognized his full worth.

He is now entering a larger field. The Banaras University is but an infant. Its father is the celebrated Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, known all over India, who looks like the patriarch of Hinduism and is endowed with qualities of character signified by his name. By the tireless efforts of one person, an amount of one crore has been collected. The University owes its existence to the labours of this one man. His child has however not learnt to walk. It can only move about on its knees. It needs someone to look after it. Panditji was on the look-out for such a person. There are all kinds of difficulties in running a university; besides, a university which seeks to give its due place to religion is bound to be in the utmost need of men of religion. Gujarat can be proud that Panditji found such a man here. The university will provide full scope to Anandshankarbhai's intelligence, his earnestness, his integrity, his straightforwardness, his large-heartedness and his imperturbable temper. We congratulate Gujarat on making this incomparable gift and the university on receiving it, and we are confident that Anandshankarbhai will render excellent services to India in this wider field. We pray to God to grant him a long life and all the strength which he will need in this difficult task.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-10-1919

52. NOTES

FOOLISH EXPENDITURE

We draw our readers' attention to Shri Gopalji's letter. The custom of sending a card for the New Year's Day has no meaning whatever and involves an unnecessary expenditure besides. Shri Gopalji's point is that, instead of wasting money in this way, we should donate the amount to the Punjab Relief Fund. If all of us do what he and his friends have done, we shall have shared the sufferings of the Punjab at no cost to ourselves.

Is it an old custom to get New Year cards printed and send them? We do not know if it is. We do not say either that we should not introduce new customs or that everything old is good. We should think before giving up anything old. It is wise not to be hasty in introducing a new custom. The practice of sending cards has come from Europe. Had we not been blinded by Europe, we would not have adopted this practice of sending cards and friends would have taken no pleasure in receiving them. The practice is something like the prayer-circles in Tibet. Some people there want to repeat a prayer or *jai* lakhs of times over but, unable to spare so much time, keep wheels and count the number of its rotations as so many repetitions of the prayer.

In the same manner, we offer our greetings to friends through cards, at no trouble to ourselves. To us this seems to be a barbarous custom. It is understandable that we write letters specially to people whom we would remember. Sending a card has become so common a practice that it can have no value. Maybe sending the same type of card to one's father, brothers, sisters, wife, friend is treated as a sign of equal regard for all; to us it appears an insult to them all. Hence we altogether disapprove of the practice of sending cards. Be that as it may, the alternative to sending cards, suggested on the present occasion, deserves to be welcomed.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-10-1919

53. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

AHMEDABAD,
October 21, 1919

MATHURADAS
247 BAZAR GATE STREET
BOMBAY

START PUNJAB MAIL TOMORROW. WILL JOIN YOU NAVSARI. BOOK AS FROM NAVSARI.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

54. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

AHMEDABAD,
October 21, 1919

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
247 BAZAR GATE ST.
BOMBAY

NOT GOING NAVSARI. TAKING PUNJAB MAIL TO-MORROW BARODA. ENGAGE AS FROM BARODA. BUYING TICKET HERE. YOU MAY JOIN LATER.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

55. LETTER TO WATTAL

[AHMEDABAD,
Before *October 22, 1919*][1]

DEAR MR. WATTAL,

You will pardon me for some delay in replying to your letter, which was received in Bombay. I wanted on my return from Bombay to search my papers, to see what I could find. You have asked me for papers regarding an event that happened nearly 18 years ago. I have searched my old files and I have not succeeded in getting all you want. You will, however, have some idea of the impression created in S. Africa by the action of the Indian Community at the time of the Boer War. Mr. Escombe, who addressed us, was sometime Premier of Natal and commander of the Natal militia, and so was the late Sir John Robinson, Premier at another time. I give you these references, because you will find these names in the papers[2] I am sending you. We were present at the battle of Colenso, Spion Kop and the action at Vaalkranz. We had to carry the wounded on our stretchers a distance of about 20 miles, feed and nurse them on the way. I was mentioned in Gen. Buller's Despatch, on the relief of Ladysmith. The leaders of the Corps were recipients of the South African War Medal. In Ladysmith itself, an indentured Indian named Ganga Singh[3] sat perched up in a tree facing the hill from which the Boers were shelling Ladysmith with their pom-pom. He watched the flash of the gun each time it was fired, and rang a gong, informing the besieged of the coming shell, and warning them to seek shelter. He performed his dangerous and onerous task with unfailing regularity, and for this brave and faithful service Lord Curzon sent him a toga, which was publicly presented to him, on Lord Curzon's behalf, by the Mayor of Durban at the Durban Town Hall.

I am sorry I have not been able to trace the verses referred to in your letter. I am asking my friends in Durban to send them. At the

[1] The letter appears to have been written from Ahmedabad. The exact date is not known. It is, however, likely that this and the following item were written some time before October 22, 1919, after which Gandhiji was away in the Punjab for the rest of the year.

[2] These are not available.

[3] This should be Prabhu Singh; *vide* "Letter to Dadabhai Naoroji", 8-10-1900

time of the Boer War, we were over 1,000 strong. So much for the Boer War.

In 1906, there was the Zulu rebellion. At that time also we offered our services. They required only a small number. We were about 20 strong, a compact body of the Nurse, Orderly and Stretcher-bearers. We had to carry the wounded many miles at a time and march behind the cavalry sometimes at the rate of 40 miles per day. At this time there was no restriction as to the zone of fire. This little party took all the risks of war. A personal letter eulogizing the services of the Corps was addressed by the then Governor of Natal, Sir Henry MacCullum.

And then there was the European War. Indians formed a corps. I forget the number that served in East Africa directly under General Smuts, and I hear from one of the friends in S.A., who was a memeber of the Corps, that they gave entire satisfaction to their officer. If any further information is required, please let me know. After perusal, will you kindly return the papers punctually?

Yours sincerely,

WATTAL

PRIVATE SECRETARY

BIKANER

From a photostat of the handwritten draft : S. N. 6853

56. LETTER TO A FRIEND

[Before *October 22, 1919*]

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. There was no occasion for apology. If I understand you correctly, you wish that I had brought the Viceroy under the pillory. If you do, I assure you that if you read my articles you will see that I have done so. Indeed I have suggested that the under-officials should be left severely alone[1]. Our business is to impale the V[iceroy] and the G[overnor]. I cannot subscribe to the charge that I hide the truth, either out of consideration or goodwill or goodwill or desire for co-operation. All these three in my case are conditioned by truthfulness. And if I have appeared to friends to have

[1] *Vide* "The Indemnity Bill", 20-9-1919.

failed, it has never been a conscious lapse. I have not joined the cry for recall of the V[iceroy], because I never direct my shafts aimlessly. I am not so much concerned with the recall of a V[iceroy] as with securing justice. I know the exquisite story of the Prophet related by you and in my very humble manner I have indeed endeavoured to imitate his staunchness be it ever so imperfectly. You do yourself and me a wrong by thinking that I have yielded to any threat in suspending C[ivil] D[isobedience]. I suspended it in obedience to the canons of satyagraha as I know it. And you have, I feel, blundered because I think you have not yet assimilated the principles of satyagraha. A satyagrahi is the strongest when he appears to the outsider to have weakened. I suspended [it] because I have thereby accelerated the repeal of the R[owlatt] A[ct], that Act has to be removed from the S[tatute] B[ook]. Its mere suspension will not satisfy me. I shall pay for its removal with my life if need be, for, I repeat, satyagraha is the very breath of my nostrils. And you may be assured that no matter what activities I might be indulging in for the moment, the question of repeal of the R[owlatt] A[ct] is ever present with me. I am glad you are interesting yourself in swadeshi. I am sorry to gather that you have rather an unhappy time at a B[omba]y stores. You can have all the cloth you need at the S[wadeshi] Bhandar at the cheapest rate. The address is. . . . .

If there is any difficulty, you will write to me. Do please send me the two Urdu papers in exchange for *Y*[*oung*] *I*[*ndia*].

Imam Saheb Bawazeer who is living with me will read them occasionally to me. I am opposed to advertisements because they are so untrue. Every decent paper should, free of charge, advertise books which it considers the public should read. It is, in my opinion, one of the necessary functions of a N[ews] p[aper]. I feel too that we should have a general advertising agency which for a payment will advertise all useful things. But I abhor the idea of a newspaper making money out of advertisements. It is a fraud on the public. I hope to leave for the Punjab next week. If I am not required in the P[unja]b during the whole of Nov[ember], you wll certainly find me either at Bombay or at Ah[me]d[abad]. I shall be delighted to meet you again and exchange views. I need hardly assure you that I value your frankness and independent spirit. I think this answers your letter in full.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the handwritten draft : S. N. 11706

57. THE SATYAGRAHI LAWYERS[1]

The judgment[2] of the High Court in the case of the Satyagrahi lawyers is, to say the least, highly unsatisfactory. It has shirked the issue. The logical outcome of the judgment should have been punishment and not a postponement of it. The lawyers in question had shown no repentance. So far as the public know, they will be ready to offer civil disobedience should the occasion arise. The issue having been raised, the lawyers did not ask for mercy but a clear decision. As it is, they do not know where they are.

The learned Judges have laid down principles of legal conduct which, in our humble opinion, are open to question. For instance, what is the meaning of "those who live by the law must keep the law"? If it means that no lawyer may ever commit a civil breach without incurring the displeasure of the Court, it means utter stagnation. Lawyers are the persons most able to appreciate the dangers of bad legislation and it must be with them a sacred duty by committing civil breach to prevent a crminal breach. Lawyers should be guardians of law and liberty and as such are interested in keeping the statute-book of the country 'pure and undefiled'. But the Judges of the Bombay High Court have presented to them a mercenary view of their profession and have even confounded the functions of judges and lawyers. The only escape from the intolerable situation created by the

[1] This appeared among the “Notes”.

[2] This was reproduced in the same issue, and read as follows: “Separate but concurring judgments were delivered by the Chief Justice and Justices Heaton and Kajiji of the Bombay High Court in the case of the satyagrahi lawyers of Ahmedabad on 15th October, 1919. In summing up, the Chief Justice in his judgment said: ‘I wish to make it perfectly clear that, apart from any other considerations, those who are enrolled as advocates or pleaders of this High Court or of the District Courts cannot serve two masters. It may be that after due consideration of this expression of our opinion, the respondents may see the force of it. We have no desire to deal harshly with them and for the present we shall content ourselves with giving them the warning. We do so because we are told that the Satyagraha Sabha since the riots of April has been quiescent. Whether we shall take any further action depends entirely on the development, if any, of the satyagraha movement, so that these notices will be adjourned with leave to the Advocate-General and the respondents to move for their restoration to the Board should occasion arise.’ ”

judgment is for the respondents to have the case restored to the Board, reargued, and to ask for a final decision. Fortunately, the Judges have left the course open to the satyagrahi lawyers.

Young India, 22-10-1919

58. LETTER TO P.S. TO GOVERNOR, MADRAS

AHMEDABAD,
October 22, 1919

DEAR MR. DROFF,

Will you please convey to His Excellency my thanks for the consideration shown about Miss Esther Faering who has now arrived at the Satyagraha Ashram?[1]

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand : S. N. 6933

[1] On October 4, Gandhiji had wired the Private Secretary to the Governor of Madras to facilitate Esther Faering's early departure for Ahmedabad.

59. LETTER TO REGISTRAR, HIGH COURT, BOMBAY[1]

SABARMATI,
October 22, 1919

TO
THE REGISTRAR
HIGH COURT
BOMBAY

DEAR SIR,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 20th instant regarding the "publication in *Young India* on the 6th August of a private letter addressed by Mr. Kennedy, Dt. Judge of Ahmedabad" and comments thereon in *Young India*.

I am grateful to the Hon'ble the Chief Justice for not interrupting my preparations for going to the Punjab. The letter in question was in no way understood by me to be private, nor did the contents lead me to think so. It came into my possession in the ordinary course, and I decided to publish it only after I understood that it was received by the giver in a proper, regular and open manner. In my humble opinion I was within the rights of a journalist in publishing the letter in question and making comments thereon. I believed the letter to be of great public importance and one that called for public criticism.

[1] On October 18, Gandhiji received a letter from the Registrar of the Bombay High Court as follows: “I am directed by the Hon’ble the Chief Justice to request you to attend His Lordship’s Chamber on Monday the 20th instant at 11 a.m. so that you may have opportunity of giving an explanation regarding the publication in *Young India* on the 6th August of a private letter addressed by Mr. Kennedy, District Judge of Ahmedabad, to the Registrar, Bombay High Court, together with certain comments thereon.” Gandhiji appears to have sent a telegraphic reply saying in substance that “he was unable to attend as he was going to the Punjab and asked whether an explanation in writing would do.” The actual text of the telegram is not available. The Registrar wrote in reply: “With reference to your telegram of the 20th instant, I am directed by the Hon’ble the Chief Justice to say that His Lordship does not want to interfere with your preparations for going to the Punjab. His Lordship is therefore willing, for the present, to receive a written explanation. The point I am directed to state is that the letter and the comments thereon were published without the permission of this Court at a time when proceedings were pending in the court in connection with the said letter.” To this communication the above was Gandhiji’s rejoinder.

I trust that His Lordship will be satisfied with the explanation submitted by me.

My address in Lahore will be Care Mrs. Sarladevi Choudhrani.[1]

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the handwritten original : S. N. 6956

60. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

ON THE TRAIN,

Thursday [*October 23, 1919*][2]

MY DEAR CHILD,

I do want you to feel at home at the Ashram. I do not want you to feel or think you are in the midst of strangers. Pick up a few words in Hindustani daily and the linguistic barrier will vanish.

If the Ashram is your home, you must reproduce the necessary home comfort. Pray demand them. Send me a line daily.

Remember that love is never afraid, it has *no secrets.* You will therefore open your heart to all and you will, I doubt not, find a response in every heart. Love will not be denied for it is ever patient and ever suffering. And love is service, therefore, it ever rejoices in service.

Do keep your health.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child,* p. 41

[1] The Registrar replied on October 31 informing Gandhiji that the Chief Justice did not consider his explanation satisfactory, and forwarding the text of an apology to be submitted by Gandhiji; *vide* "Telegram to Registrar, High Court, Bombay," 7-11-1919.

[2] The letter appears to have been written after Gandhiji left Ahmedabad on his tour of the Punjab, soon after Esther Faering had arrived at the Ashram.

61. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[*October 23, 1919*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

After reading the accompanying letter[1], make what arrangements you think best for Miss Faering. I think Narahari's last sentence is perfectly correct. I had thought of sending him a telegram about her while on my way here, but gave up the idea. If you take her out for a walk every morning, as I used to take you out, this flower will bloom the better and will give sweet fragrance.

You are looking after Mahadev, I am sure.

Blessing from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand : C.W. 5778. Courtesy : Radhabehn Choudhri

62. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Diwali, [*October 23, 1919*][2]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

May the New Year be propitious to you. May you be healthy and have good character.

Now you go to Lahore only after the Surat Conference, for I shall try to go there at that time. My address will be c/o *The Tribune.*

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Presumably, this was the preceding item.
[2] The year has been inferred from the contents. In 1919 *Diwali* fell on October

63. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

C/O SARLA DEVI CHOUDHRANI,
LAHORE,
October 24, 1919

MY DEAR CHILD,

This is just to tell you you are with me in thought. I had a most wonderful experience here.[1]

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child,* p. 44

64. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

LAHORE,
October 25, 1919

MATHURADAS
247 BAZAR GATE ST.
BOMBAY

DO NOT COME JUST NOW.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

65. TO THE PEOPLE OF KATHIAWAR

A gentleman from Kathiawar has given Rs. 25,000 as a gift. His original aim was that I should use the sum in propagating swadeshi in one definite place only. I felt that such a large sum could not be spent in that way. Then he suggested my utilizing the amount [for promoting swadeshi] among the people in the particular State. Under this restriction, too, I felt I could not use it to good purpose. He has,

[1] The reference apparently is to the reception accorded to Gandhiji on arrival at Lahore.

therefore, given me the freedom to spend the sum for the whole of Kathiawar and I have agreed.

Even so I visualize difficulties in using the amount in a way which would be worthy of this gentleman's liberality. If the people of Kathiawar do not help me to the utmost, I would not be able to utilize the sum satisfactorily.

It is to be used only for promoting swadeshi. He has accepted my definition of swadeshi, which is, to increase the production of cloth in the country mainly by promoting hand-spinning and hand-weaving, and thereby saving the crores of rupees going out every year on account of cloth.

Promoting hand-spinning and hand-weaving is the easiest thing if spinners and weavers are available. If the Indian States take up the matter, the work can be done easily enough. The following are my humble suggestions to the States and their Diwans:

1. Remove the levy in your State, if any, on hand-made cloth produced in Kathiawar.

2. Do not tax hand-spun yarn produced elsewhere or yarn from Indian mills.

3. Do not encourage the peasants to sell cotton; encourage them rather to store it.

4. Improve the cotton. This can easily be done.

5. Encourage the use of cloth woven in your own State from yarn spun there. You, too, should wear only such cloth.

6. Have Indian-style spinning-wheels and looms manufactured in your State and offer them to your subjects at cost price.

7. Introduce the spinning-wheel and the loom in your primary schools and let the boys and girls be taught this craft as a compulsory subject.

If the Rajas, Maharajas and the Diwans take up this work, I can keep the foregoing donation unspent; I may then have to request the donor to permit me to use it for another purpose.

However, it cannot be expected that all the States will accept so very readily the importance of the swadeshi dharma.

It is likely, therefore, that the amount will have to be used among the people.

Men can do a lot if they will. They may find out the weavers in various places and give them encouragement.

They may advise the peasants to store their cotton.

They may advise the women among their relations to take to spinning.

For this purpose, it is necessary to make arrangements

1. to supply spinning-wheels;

2. to supply slivers; and

3. to collect yarn in exchange for the slivers and pay for it.

Then, for weaving, it is necessary to make arrangements

1. to supply yarn; and

2. to collect an equal quantity of cloth and pay for it.

Finally, it is necessary to promote its use, that is, to run a shop for its sale.

For all this work, diligent and honest workers are required. Since people cannot afford to work without payment, the donation can be used to pay a living wage to honest workers, if available. The associations of voluntary workers in Kathiawar can give the fullest help in this matter. If a large committee consisting of respectable men and women, who would be prepared to work, can be formed for this purpose and if a sub-committee is appointed under it, the work can be done promptly. It is hoped that people willing to join in this work, with or without payment, will immediately write to us at the Ashram address.

However, until the women take a leading part in this movement it will not gather momentum. It is women mostly who do spinning. They are in possession of an inexhaustible treasure of the nation, having plenty of time on their hands. By utilizing it, they will be serving the nation, even if they ask to be paid.

Whenever I go to Kathiawar, I receive much love. As a token of their love, I want all of them…the old and the young, the high and the low, the Rajas and their subjects…to observe strict swadeshi dharma and this they can easily do.

From Kathiawar, I expect cloth worth one crore of rupees annually; that is, I am endeavouring to put one crore of rupees into circulation among the people there. I wish to spend the foregoing Rs. 25,000 for this purpose. There are many intelligent women and weavers in Kathiawar; what is needed is men who will bring them together and set them working.

I feel pained to see large numbers of men and women from Kathiawar crowding every train going to Bombay in a mad rush to get their. Unable to earn their livelihood in Kathiawar, they go running about. So many of them, at any rate, who may set a crore of rupees in circulation during a year, have no need at all to leave Kathiawar for a living.

There are indeed few places in India which people may leave as affording no means of making a living. I know fully well that the number of our railway passengers is no index of the country's prosperity. The giving up of swadeshi is a potent cause of our miserable condition. Our prosperity lies in its revival.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-10-1919

66. NOTES

WOMEN LABOURERS

In writing about women labourers, Mrs. Vidyagouri[1] has not touched upon a new subject. However, when our attention is drawn to any matter of which we knew but had taken no notice, it should be treated as a new subject. The solution offered by Mrs. Vidyagouri is as difficult, it seems to us, as the two remedies which she found to be almost impracticable. It is too much to expect that employers will be kind to women labourers. We think it possible for masons, etc., to be civilized without making themselves angels. Women labourers can learn to protect their honour. All three need education; they all need to be enlightened as to their condition. The group which we approach first will be the first to have decency and self-respect introduced among them. We must necessarily approach all three; those who have patriotism in them and have occasion for contact with all three classes may entreat members of each class. If Mrs. Vidyagouri were to start an association of thoughtful women like herself and go among women labourers, what seems impossible to her will become possible.

DIFFICULTIES OF CLERKS

Shri Popatlal Nanji sends us for our readers a letter on the hardships of clerks in which he says that a good many shopowners are rude, say all manner of harsh things to clerks and exact excessive

[1] Vidyagouri Nilkanth, a social worker

work from them. Shop-owners should look kindly upon their employees, whether clerks or gate-keepers, and be polite to them. But can it be that the masters alone are to blame? In keeping up slavery, slaves too play no less important a part any day. A servant's loyalty consists in his honesty and industry; he is not bound to tolerate unseemly behaviour. Servants show themselves to be so completely broken in spirit that they look upon service as their all in all. They ought to shake off this helplessness. We believe that a man who is sincerely ready to work, has sound health and is not ashamed to work with his body will never find it difficult to earn enough for his livelihood. The many movements in our country make no progress for want of sincere and diligent workers. These movements can absorb men who live by service. We, therefore, advise such men not to be submissive but to stand up. There is no need for them at all to continue in service where they are insulted, where they have to drudge and where their health is undermined. Before national life can make progress, it is necessary that a great many men and women acquire self-respect.

RELIEF TO THOSE IN DISTRESS

It is our moral duty to think, as the new years begins, of the people who suffer. That is in our interest. We can be happy only by making happy the people who suffer. To have this happiness, we should look around and send relief wherever we find suffering.

At present it is the Punjab which suffers especially, and Bengal, where, borne away by floods, many people have become homeless and go naked. It is our particular duty, at the beginning of the new year, to send them what help we can. We spend a great deal, giving dinners to friends and sending costly gifts and sweets to them. People are welcome to do so if they can afford it. But, in everything we do, it is our duty to remember that those who suffer have the first claim on us.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-10-1919

67. "RING OUT THE OLD, RING IN THE NEW"[1]

[*October 26, 1919*]

(THE YEAR WHICH HAS ENDED)

It is difficult to strike the last year's balance. The War has ended but with little result. The hopes it nourished have remained unfulfilled. The Peace, which was expected to be a permanent one, has turned out to be one in name. The War which was greater than the *Mahabharat* war has been proved to be but a prelude to a still greater war. Widespread discontent all over France, America and England after the War ≈ enough to bewilder one. All that has followed seems to be a huge enigma. Here in India we are faced with despair everywhere. It was confidently hoped that, at the close of the War, India would get something substantial, but the hope turned out to be false. For aught we know the reforms may not come. Even if they do, they will be worthless. The Congress-League Scheme, then the Delhi Congress Scheme and subsequent schemes are now airy nothings. We have to wait and see. The Punjab has been a scene of most revolting episodes. Innocent lives have been lost. There reigned a reign of terror. The gulf between the rulers and the ruled has been widened. In these matters it is impossible to strike a correct balance. What is the sum total on the credit side? Or is there something to be debited, and if so, what? Or is it that there is no credit side at all and we have simply to sum up the debit figures?

Was there any silver lining to such a thick, dark cloud of despair? The sun of satyagraha dawned all over India on the 6th of April. The clouds were scattered and the rays could be distinctly seen. But the sun underwent an eclipse in the Punjab and Ahmedabad and its shadows are still haunting us. And yet satyagraha is again seen dawning on most minds, though slowly. There was hartal in many parts of India on the 17th of October amid perfect peace and quiet. Those who believe in God passed that day in fasting and prayer. The Hindus participated in the Moslems' mourning, strengthened the latter's hopes and the bonds of union with them. It may now be very difficult to break the bonds.

[1] The original of this article appeared in two parts in *Navajivan*, 26-10-1919. The occasion was the new year's day according to the Vikram Era.

If someone were to ask: "What was the greatest event of the last year?", we would unhesitatingly say, "It was the acceptance of satyagraha, however slightly and consciously or unconsciously, both by the rulers and the ruled." And in proof of the statement we would cite *October the 17th.*

(THE YEAR WHICH HAS COMMENCED)

The hope of India lies in satyagraha. And what is satyagraha? It has often been described. But just as the sun cannot be fully described even by the myriad-tongued *sheshnaga*, so also the sun of satyagraha cannot be adequately described. And though we always see the sun but know really very little of it, even so we do ever seem to see the sun of satyagraha but we know precious little about it.

The spheres of satyagraha are swadeshi, social reforms and political reform. And in so far as these are based on satyagraha, so far only, and no further, is their permanence assured. The way of satyagraha is distinct from the beaten track and it is not always easy to discover it. Few have ventured along that path and the footprints on it are few and far between and indistinct, and hence the people's dread of it. And still we clearly find people taking that course, be it ever so slowly.

He to whom satyagraha means nothing more than civil disobedience has never understood satyagraha. No doubt the rigid interpretation of satyagraha does include within its meaning civil disobedience. But only he who has mastered the art of obedience to law knows the art of disobedience to law. Only he who thoroughly knows how to construct may destroy. The poet has sung,

The path of Truth is the path of the brave,

It is beyond the power of the cowards.

Swadeshi is satyagraha. It is beyond the power of cowardly spirits to observe or to propagate swadeshi. It is impossible for a coward to foster Hindu-Moslem unity. It takes anyone but a cowardly Mussulman to receive a wound from a Hindu's dagger and *vice versa* and to preserve his mental balance. If both could muster this much forbearance, swarajya would be instantaneously obtained. There is none to forbid us the path of satyagraha, and both swadeshi and Hindu-Moslem unity being in their essence religious, India would incidentally perform an act of religion. This, then, is our prayer for the new year:

"Lord, lead India towards the path of Truth, this doing teach her the religion of swadeshi, and knit the Hindus, Mussulmans, Parsis, Christians and Jews living in India closer together."

Young India, 5-11-1919

68. MESSAGE TO PEOPLE OF AMRITSAR[1]

[LAHORE,
October 27, 1919]

Please tell the public that I have been simply unable to go, because the mission on which I have come requires my presence in Lahore. I hope to see the friends in Amritsar shortly.

The Leader, 2-11-1919

69. PUNJAB LETTER

[*October 27, 1919*][2]

When I tried to go to the Punjab last April, I had imagined that my going to Delhi and Lahore would result in restoring peace. In Delhi Swami Shraddhanand had sought permission to go to the Punjab as had Dr. Satyapal from Amritsar. Both had hoped to pacify the people. Meanwhile Dr. Satyapal and Dr. Kichlew received orders restraining them from speaking in public and they obeyed, too. Before I could reach Delhi, I was stopped and taken into custody. Finally, I was ordered to remain in Bombay Presidency and not go to the Punjab. We know the result. If I had not been arrested, the subsequent disturbances would not have occurred.

The restriction on my movements was later removed and I was at last able to go to the Punjab. I reached Lahore on the 24th of October. There was a vast concourse at the station. The Hon'ble Pandit Malaviyaji was there. It took us 40 minutes to go from the station to the car. It was extremely difficult to make one's way through the crowd. Twice or thrice I was convinced that someone would be crushed. But where men are overwhelmed with love, accidents are few.

[1] Gandhiji was expected to visit Amritsar on the afternoon of October 27. This teleprinter message was sent at 8 p.m.

[2] Gandhiji's interview with the Lt.-Governor mentioned in the last paragraph took place on this date. It was Monday, and some of the subsequent instalments in the series were also written on Mondays.

This was the case here. Yet there is no doubt that it is very necessary that we learn to make proper arrangements where such crowds gather. As awakening grows day by day, the people will take greater interest in national activities and there will be ever larger crowds. If people learn one extremely simple rule, there need be no accident. When we gather in order to meet someone, those who are behind him and on either side of him should remain at a distance and those in front of him should press forward. Today we do exactly the opposite. Those at the back rush upon the front lines so that the people in between are squeezed between the two. People are pushed about and there is risk of accidents. Consequently, it becomes necessary to protect the person in the centre by holding him right in one's embrace. Everyone will agree that this should not happen. All that is necessary is to give the people some training. And it is imperative that such training be given to the people through volunteers as soon as possible.

In Lahore, I am staying at the house of Sarladevi Choudhrani, the wife of Pandit Rambhuj Dutt. Readers will recollect that Pandit Rambhuj is in jail.

As the Punjab Committee will start meeting from the 29th October[1], I have had very regretfully to cancel my proposed visit to Surat. Discussions are afoot regarding three requests to be made to the Government, viz., that the leaders be released during the Committee's investigations; that among the judges to be appointed to review the cases, one at least should be from outside the Punjab; and that, if the judges feel it necessary to take fresh evidence, they should have the power to do so. These matters are under discussion and Pandit Malaviya is giving them serious thought. It is also rumoured that our lawyers will not be allowed to appear before the Committee.[2] It is expected that some settlement will be arrived at on this point also. If this does not happen, I at any rate am of the opinion that we should refuse to lead evidence before the Committee.

If it is decided to lead evidence, it is likely that Mr. C.R. Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru will be our counsel. Apart from these, a British lawyer also has been invited. His name is Mr. Neville. It is learnt that it will take 15 or 20 days for him to arrive from England.

It is universally acknowledged that Pandit Malaviya and Pandit Motilal Nehru have rendered unique services to the Punjab. At a time

[1] The Committee held its first sitting, however, on October 31 at Delhi.

[2] C.R. Das and Madan Mohan Malaviya were, however, later permitted.

when the people were panic-stricken, these two leaders brought them solace and strength. Pandit Motilal has even neglected his legal practice. Swami Shraddhanandji belongs to the Punjab and nothing need be said about his services. Several less known leaders of the Punjab are also labouring for the cause to the best of their ability. The services rendered by Mr. Andrews it is impossible to measure. His ceaseless work continues unobtrusively. It may be truly said that his left hand does not know what his right hand is doing. I see that his service is the purest charity given in secret. Mr. Andrews can reach places which would be difficult of access to others.

We meet hundreds of men and women here every day. We experience the wonderful faith of India. Among the officers, I have already had interviews with the Dy. Commissioner, Mr. Butler, and the Lt.-Governor. I am making efforts to meet the leaders who are in jail and I hope to succeed fairly soon.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 2-11-1919

70. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

LAHORE,
Monday [*October 27*] *1919*

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your letter.

I am having a precious time here. I may not be able to come in the early part of November after all.

Mr. Andrews is here and we often talk of you.

Keep good health please.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also My Dear Child, p. 43.

71. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

LAHORE,
Monday [*October 27, 1919*][1]

REVERED ANASUYABEHN,

I did not get the time to read and correct the statement you have sent me, but the matter is not out of my mind. I will certainly send it in time.

I am keeping well. Organizing the boycott was very difficult but it appears to have passed off successfully.

I intend to come there to tender my evidence[2]. I hope the statements by Vallabhbhai and others have all been filed.

Saraladevi's[3] company is very endearing. She looks after me very well.

Do you ever go to the Ashram? Please do go if you have not been there .

Does Bhai Shankerlal look after himself? Tell him that the paper used in *Young India* and *Navajivan* should be of better quality.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original S.N. 32817

[1] From the contents of the letter. Monday, during Gandhiji's five-day stay at Lahore in October, 1919 was the 27th.

[2] Before the Punjab Disorders Inquiry Committee which was to start meeting form October 29

[3] Saraladevi Chowdharani

72. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

LAHORE,
Monday, [*October 27, 1919*][1]

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I have received your letter. Of course, you have my blessings. I think your straightforwardness will take you far. I wish all your great aspirations are fulfilled. Take care of your health.

It seems I will not be able to come there for the present. There is a lot of work to do. I have met the Governor. But right now there is no time to write in detail. I shall leave for Delhi tomorrow. See the letter regarding the application that has been sent to Chandulal. Make the necessary changes in it.

I wish you would carry on all the work to be done there. Relieve me from the anxiety about things there.

Vandema

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati : S. N. 32710

73. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

LAHORE,
[*October 28, 1919*]

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your two letters. I have [for] Delhi today with Mr. Andrews.

I am glad you are feeling at home there. I am most anxious that you should retain your health and get stronger than you are. The best thing of course is not to worry about anything. Be careful for nothing and to take or prepare the diet that suits you.

Ba wrote to me you were looking after her.

I may some time describe the work here. It is difficult work but it is useful and people gain by it.

[1] From the reference to the meeting with the Governor, which took place on October 27, 1919. Gandhiji left Lahore for Delhi on October 28, a Tuesday.

Please do not write for *Young India* at present. I do not want to disturb the Government though there is nothing wrong about your writing on the educational system. For the time being let your life speak to your surroundings.

With love,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child*, pp. 42-3

74. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

AS AT DELHI,
C/O PRINCIPAL RUDRA,
October 28 [*1919*]

DEAR GURUDEV,

I have just arrived in the Punjab and I feel happy that I have been able at last to visit this unhappy land. I am today in Lahore. Tonight both Andrews and I are going to Delhi in connection with the Committee.

I write this to tell you how great have been Andrews' services to the people of this Province. He has done work which no other person could have done. And with him it is a matter of the right hand not knowing what the left hand doeth. It was good of you to have spared him for the Punjab. I am now pleading with him to go to South Africa as soon as he has *finished* the Punjab work. His own intention is not to stir out of Shantiniketan. I tell him the South African work is his speciality and he may not neglect it, when the call has come. Of course he has told me that you have left him free to do as he pleases. And I am hoping that he will go to South Africa. He won't have to be there for any length of time. Two months' stay would suffice.

I have an appeal for funds for the distress in East Bengal. Could you please let me have a pen picture?[1] It will enable me to approach the people more effectively.

Hoping you are keeping well,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm of the original in Gandhiji's hand in N.A.I.

[1] It is not known if Tagore sent this.

75. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

LAHORE,
Kartik Sud 4 [*October 28, 1919*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

A great deal is going on here. I have no time to go into details. I have demanded that of the two revision judges[2] onebe appointed from outside the Punjab. Most probably this will be conceded. I have suggested three names: Faiz Tyabji, Sir Narayan Chandavarkar and Dr. Sapru. Please see Faiz Tyabji and tell him that if he gets the invitation he should not decline it. I think Bhai Umar should be informed. You give him this information. Meet Sir Narayan if you think it is necessary. This matter should not be discussed very widely.

I expect that things will take a good turn. My interview[3] with the Governor passed off well.

Blessings form

BAPU

[PS.]

If it is necessary to go to cyclone-affected Bengal I wish you would go there. It is necessary to find out the extent of the damage and what remedial measures might be needed. We must arrange for this. I have wired to Bhai Umar.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The year has been inferred form Gandhiji's meeting the Governor in Lahore.

[2] For Gandhiji's earlier telegram in this connection, *vide* "Telegram to P.S. to Viceroy", 3-10-1919.

[3] On October 27

76. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

LAHORE,
Tuesday, October 28, 1919

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I got your letters. My movements have become very uncertain. That is why I have been putting off calling you here. I shall not be able to go to Surat. But I do expect to be free earlier than I had supposed. Look after all the Swadeshi work there properly. I am off to Delhi today. My address their is c/o Principal Rudra, Stephen's College.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

77. SPEECH TO LAHORE STUDENTS

[*October 28, 1919*]

On 28th October at 3.30 p.m. Mahatma Gandhi addressed a large number of students of Lahore at Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chaudhri's house. Preluding his remarks with a few questions as to which of the colleges they belonged to, what was the numerical strength of the latter and how many students were still under the ban of expulsion…to all of which he received answers…, the speaker proceeded further. To get degrees, he said, was not the be-all and end-all of education; moreover, it spoiled their health as well as their pecuniary prospects. Lest he might be misunderstood he explained himself by saying that education, as at present imparted, was too theoretical. Now they ought to supplement it by practical instruction in arts and crafts so that they might be sure of an independent livelihood. They should curtail their needs to a minimum. Ninety-five per cent of India's population was agriculturists, who could not improve their agriculature as long as they remained uneducated.

Mahatma Gandhi continuing said he was sorry to see students living under a cloud of fear. He admonished them to practise *nirbhaya* (fearlessness) which was, according to him, an essential adjunct of education. Let them study the problem of their poverty. They should refuse "to become blotting sheets of civilization", but instead be trustful and self-reliant. He appealed to them first to know what the duty of

each of them was and then to perform it. He concluded with the advice that they should observe the five *yamas* and *niyamas*, i.e., ahimsa, *Satya*, etc. He laid great stress on the practice of *brahmacharya* which was sure to remove all their difficulties.

The Tribune, 30-10-1919

78. ANOTHER MARTIAL LAW CASE FROM THE PUNJAB

Mr. Parshotam Singh, son of Mr. Jamiat Singh Bagga of Wazirabad, has sent me a statement of his father's case, and what is miscalled record of his case and judgment. Mr. Jamiat Singh Bagga is a merchant and banker of Wazirabad. He is 62 years old and suffering from a bad cataract in the eye. He was sentenced to 18 months' rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 1,000 or in default to undergo further rigorous imprisonment for six months. I have no hesitation in saying that the judgment is utterly unworthy of anybody calling himself a judge. It is devoid of reasoning and full of imputations and bad logic and if the facts set forth in the son's statement are true, the convicting Magistrate is utterly unfit to sit as a judge. Mr. Jamiat Singh's crime seems to have been that he was present at the mosque meeting and advocated hartal, and that he was a rich man, for the Magistrate disbelieves the testimony of impartial witnesses because "Jamiat Singh is a rich man". It is sufficient for the Magistrate that the accused was with the mob that stoned the troopers, that "if he prevented boys from breaking fencing, there may have been some other reason, but he certainly was in the mob." Thus, everything in favour of the accused is deliberately disregarded by the Magistrate. The reader must go through the judgment to feel the force of my remarks regarding its incoherence. But the son's statement makes what seems apparently to be an injustice appear blacker still. Is it true that the Magistrate confiscated the accused's property without a moment's notice, that the inmates were subjected to the treatment described in the statement, and if it is true, was it not a lawless act? Is it true that the witnesses cited for the defence were not called, that the defence counsel was not allowed to appear, when the charge was framed against the accused? So much for the precious judgment.

The treatment received by the accused before and after judgment seems to have been in keeping with the proceedings of the court. It was an inhuman act to make him walk handcuffed with his bedding under his armpit. It reminds one of General Hudson's speech about the hand and knee order, which, by the way, should be,

according to the correction made by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, described as the crawling order. It is evident that the proceedings taken by the authorities were intended, like the crawling order, to produce an impression on the people. It is difficult on any other ground to understand the insulting and cruel treatment to which the accused was subjected. Even the help he rendered the Government during the war period by subscribing the largest amount in Wazirabad to the war loan, and by recruiting, was of no avail. The *sanad* granted to him for his loyal services was of no service to him when he was put in the dock, and treated as a common felon.

I cannot congratulate the Punjab Government on the reduction of the sentence to six months, when the accused seems clearly to be entitled to a full discharge. The case, as appears from the statement, is now to be investigated by the Revision Judges. I have already ventured to express my misgivings about this Revision Tribunal. Its composition cannot inspire any confidence or hope. If the Government fail to repair the irreparable mistakes, create tribunals merely in order to cover themselves, they will forfeit all title to respect and intelligent co-operation. The dead are buried and gone, but it is intolerable that the living, who are now suffering undeserved punishment, are not given an opportunity of showing their innocence before a tribunal in which they and the public can have full confidence.

Young India, 29-10-1919

79. SPEECH AT DELHI MEETING[1]

[*October 29, 1919*]

Mr. Gandhi said he was quite sick of making and hearing speeches. There was need for action and truth and not for speeches. His only message to the people was that they should insist on truth, for untruth had introduced cowardice among Indians. They seemed to be afraid of telling the truth before authorities. That was a grave defect of character in India. Only truth and action were needed.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 31-10-1919

80. TELEGRAM TO SABARMATI ASHRAM

[DELHI,
October 31, 1919]

NO PEACE CELEBRATIONS UNTIL KHILAFAT QUESTION SATISFACTORILY SETTLED.

Bombay Government Records

81. LETTER TO SIR GEORGE BARNES[2]

DELHI,
October 31, 1919

Your kind letter of the 21st instant has been redirected to me at Delhi.

Though I can't yet take the view you take of the changed position, I am prepared to consider it the second best and I shall do what I can to prevent agitation for realizing Mr. Montagu's original declaration. Could you announce the name of the Indian member? I

[1] A public meeting under Swami Shraddhanand's chairmanship passed resolutions urging the Hunter Committee to allow representation of various interests before it through Counsel. It urged the release of principal leaders, undergoing imprisonment in the Punjab, for the duration of the Committee's sittings, and the revision of sentences passed by the Punjab courts by two judges with power to admit fresh evidence where records were insufficient. Due to indisposition, the report stated, Gandhiji addressed the gathering seated.

[2] Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council

have heard it is to be Mr. Shastriar. I venture to say that no other better choice could be made. Could you also say when Sir Benjamin Robertson is likely to sail for South Africa?

India Office : Judicial & Public Records : 6140/19

82. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

DELHI,

Friday [*October 31*] *1919*

MY DEAR CHILD,

You will teach the children[1] not so much reading and writing as what is character and what it means. It therefore gives me much joy to know that you will soon be coming in close touch with the children.

Please tell Sundaram to write to me as also Krishna and Manidatta.

I am not likely to return yet for a fortnight.

Mr. Andrews is with me and we are both trying to bring about peace.

I wonder if the coming of the children causes some over-crowding and inconvenience.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child*, pp. 41-2

[1] In the Ashram

83. LETTER TO A FRIEND

[DELHI,]
Kartik Sud 7 [*October 31, 1919*]

DEAR FRIEND,

Chi. Chhaganlal writes to me to say that you have been waiting to receive 50 spinning-wheels from me. I don't recollect anything about this. All the same, if you want any in addition to the ten I sent, I shall certainly be in a position to supply them. You should, however, get them made there. I am at present in the Punjab.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand : G.N. 5714

84. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

DELHI,
October 31, 1919

REVERED SISTER,

I received two of your letters together and then I sent a telegram. I shall revise your statement when received. I find it difficult to draft one and send it on to you.

My health is tolerably good. There is no cause for worry at all. The boil has quite healed.

I saw Lord Hunter today. We had a long talk. He intends to leave for Lahore in a day or two. I don't think I shall be able to get away from here for time being. For there is no one here. Panditji is in Banaras. Nehru[1] is indisposed and is in Allahabad. Das[2] hasn't arrived.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32799

[1] Motilal Nehru

[2] C. R. Das who was one of the counsel to review the cases before the Punjab Committee

85. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

DELHI,
Friday [On or after *October 31, 1919*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

My visit to Surat is stalled. It seems I shall not be able to stir out of here. Still, I have not the courage to call you here. I shall not be able to use you much and there is also the difficulty of accommodation. Food will be a real difficulty. I shall be in Delhi only for two or three days. Otherwise mostly I shall be in Lahore and other parts of the Punjab. Things will be very difficult in Lahore. That is why I am not sending for you. The food wills put you off. Besides, it is very cold there.

I am trying for the release of some leaders. I am also trying for the appointment of one judge from outside the Punjab. I am hoping both will be achieved. I hope the Swadeshi work is proceeding well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

86. LETTER TO HIRST

October 1919[2]

DEAR MR. HIRST,

I thank you for your letter. I quite agree with you that there should be no unrestrained or violent language at the meeting today. And you may entirely depend upon my using my best endeavour to prevent the use of such language.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the handwritten draft: S. N. 19828

[1] From the contents. Gandhiji had reached Delhi on Oct. 29. The Friday following was October 31.

[2] It is not clear which the meetings referred to in the letter are, the date cannot therefore be fixed

87. LETTER TO THE PRESS[1]

DELHI,
November 1, 1919

Several friends have inquired what should be the position regarding the forthcoming peace celebrations. On the Khilafat Day, I know that resolutions were passed at some meetings to the effect that Mohammedans could not participate in the celebrations if the Khilafat question was not satisfactorily settled. There can be no peace in Indian estimation so long as the great question remains unsolved and the Mohammedan sentiment is in danger of being lacerated, and millions of Mohammedans remaining in suspense or grief, it is hardly possible for the Hindus, Parsis, Christians, Jews and others for whom India is the land of their adoption or birth to take part in the forthcoming rejoicing. I venture to think that His Excellency the Viceroy can, if he will, tell His Majesty's ministers that Indians cannot participate in the celebration, so long as the Khilafat question remains unsettled. And I do hope that His Majesty's ministers will recognize the necessity of securing and publishing an honourable settlement of the question before asking us to take part in peace celebrations.

The Leader, 3-11-1919

88. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[2]

[DELHI,
November 1, 1919]

It is a matter of very great regret that Mr. Montagu's message to His Excellency the Viceroy so materially alters the position. I do, however, feel that any agitation insisting upon the appointment on the Commission[3] of Indian representative may damage our case which is so overwhelmingly strong. If a representative, like Mr. Sastri, is appointed along with Sir Benjamin Robertson to put before the South African Government and the forthcoming Commission the Indian

[1] This was published in several leading newspapers and also in *Young India*, 5-11-1919.

[2] This was published in several leading newspapers.

[3] The reference is to the Commission appointed by the Union Government to go into the question of Asiatics trading and holding lands in South Africa.

case, it would be the next best thing. In my opinion, our effort should be concentrated upon securing a proper reference to the Commission in the place of the very narrow one, which we are led to believe, is likely to be suggested by the Union Government. *The Times of India* is really rendering a great service in moulding and consolidating public opinion on this question, irrespective of class or race. It is not enough that merely the trade question is referred to the Commission. The whole of the Law 3 of 1885 must come under review, leaving aside, for the time being, the question of the political status. Our goal must be the restoration of full trading and property rights of Indians lawfully settled in South Africa. This is what even Australia has allowed, although it was Australia which led the anti-Asiatic cry. We must also guard against the Commission whittling down any of the rights already being enjoyed by the settlers. By no canon of justice or propriety can the existing rights be taken away from the Indian settlers, but if we do not take care and provide beforehand, there is every danger of such a catastrophe happening. It actually happened with the Select Committee of the Union Parliament whose findings produced the new legislation we so much deplore.

New India, 2-11-1919

89. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

DELHI,
Kartik Sud 8 [*November 1, 1919*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. How old was your uncle? Had I met him? Is your aunt alive? I proceed on the assumption that you are not frightened of death. The young and the old, all die only when their time comes. All do their part during their physical existence and then depart. The souls residing in the body of a child may be enlightened and that in the body of an old man may be wrapped in ignorance. In such a situation, whose death should we mourn?

I am abandoning altogether the idea of asking you here. There are many difficulties. But I should like you to take up the responsibility for the Swadeshi work. I also wish to arrange that the

[1] The year has been inferred from the contents. Gandhiji left Delhi for Lahore on November 1.

letter coming for me at Ahmedabad should be sent on to you. I cannot attend to them while I am on tour. And duties at the Ashram have been distributed among the inmates. I wish you to see to the smallest details. You should only consult me. In other words, you should shoulder the chief burden for Swadeshi. Consider this matter and send me your reply at Lahore. I am going to Lahore *via* Amritsar today. If you agree to take up this work I shall send instructions that a few letters lying at the Ashram should be sent on to you.

I am keeping very busy here. You will find some reports in the *Navajivan*.[1] Let me know how the work of spinning-classes, etc., is progressing there.

Has the poet Shyam arrived there? How is the work at Nara-Narayana going on?

I have sent a telegram to Bhai Umar concerning the damage at Dacca. I have already written to you about it.[2] What has he done about it?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

90. FATHER OF THE WORLD [-IV]

We have, so far, given some thought to the peasant's condition. We have also seen that the rules of cleanliness are not followed in villages. The saying that good health is the first condition of happiness has much truth in it. Men and women who have reached a high position can look after themselves even when they fall ill. But we who have yet to rise to the top, will fall by the way if we do not keep fit.

There is a saying in English: "One cannot reach heaven with cold feet." In a cold country like England, if the feet remain cold one can suffer agonies. One cannot remember God in such a state. It is said that "cleanliness is next to godliness". There is no reason why

[1] For the series of reports about Punjab, *vide* "Punjab Letter", 27-10-1919, "Punjab Letter", 3-11-1919. ; 17-11-1919, ; 25-11-1919, ; About 1-12-1919, ; 7-12-1919, ; About 15-12-1919, ; 27-1-1920

[2] *Vide"Telegram to P.S. to Viceroy"*, 3-10-1919

we should be dirty or live in dirty surroundings. There is no sanctity in dirt! Filth is a sign of ignorance and sloth. How, then, are peasants to be rescued from it? Let us examine the rules of cleanliness.

1. Many of our diseases originate from our latrines or from our custom of going to the fields for evacuation. Every house must have a latrine. Only able-bodied adults can go out. If there is no latrine available, the rest turn their courtyard, lanes or houses into latrines, dirtying the place and poisoning the air. We can, therefore, lay down two rules. If anyone wants to evacuate in the open, it must be a distance of a mile from the village. There must be no habitation in its vicinity, nor any human traffic near by. The person must dig a hole and after using it must cover the faeces with earth. If all the earth that has been dug out is put back, the faeces will be properly covered. By taking this little trouble, we can observe an important rule of cleanliness. Sensible peasants may evacuate in their fields and obtain free manure. This is one rule.

Even if the open space is thus availed of, every house should necessarily have a latrine. This should have a bucket. Here also every person should, after use, cover the faeces with earth in order to obviate offensive odours, prevent buzzing of flies and the breeding of vermin. This bucket must be regularly cleaned. A pit sunk to serve as a latrine is useless. The earth's crust, to the depth of one foot, is swarming with germs. The refuse buried in this portion is immediately transformed into manure. Earth very deep down does not contain enough germs to turn filth into manure. Consequently, filth which has been buried very deep produces foul gases and pollutes the air. The bucket may be of iron or earth coated with paint. This also requires not money but industry. Urine too should not be passed in any and every place. It should be regarded a sin to pass urine in the street. There should be ditches for the purpose and, if there is plenty of earth in them, no bad smell will be produced, there will be no splashing and the earth will turn into manure. This, then, is the second rule. If every peasant follows it, not only will his health improve but he will also profit materially thereby as, without labour, he will obtain valuable manure.

2. No one should spit or clean his nose on the streets. In some cases the sputum is so harmful that germs are carried from it and they infect others with tuberculosis. In some places spitting on the road is a criminal offence. Those who spit after chewing betel leaves and

tobacco have no consideration for the feelings of others. Spittle, mucus from the nose, etc., should also be covered with earth.

3. Peasants are very careless about water. The well or pond from which drinking and cooking water is taken must be kept clean. It should contain no leaves. No one may bathe there, nor should cattle or clothes be washed in it. Here also all that is needed is a little effort in the beginning. It is easy enough to keep a well clean. It is slightly more difficult to keep a pond clean, but this also will be easy if people are properly educated. If drinking filthy or polluted water caused disgust, it would be easy to follow the rules of hygiene with regard to water. Water must always be strained through a thick, clean cloth.

An old woman was once dusting a table. She washed it with soap and wiped it with a rag; and yet it refused to be clean, try how hard she might. She would change the soap and the rag but the table remained the same. Someone said, "Old lady, if you take a clean cloth in place of that rag, the table will be clean in no time." The old woman understood. Similarly, rather than use a dirty cloth to filter water it is better not to filter it at all.

4. It is scarcely necessary to enlarge upon the rule that dirt must not be thrown on the street. Disposal of refuse is also a science. Glass, iron, etc., should be buried deep. Twigs and sticks used for cleaning teeth should be washed, dried and used for fuel. Rags may be sold. Left-over food, peelings, etc., should be buried and turned into manure. I have seen many a heap of manure prepared in this way. Paper can be made from rags. It should not be necessary to employ anyone to remove refuse in a village, because there is very little of it and most of it can be converted into manure.

5. Near the village or dwellings, there should be no ditches in which water can collect. Mosquitoes do not breed where water does not stagnate. Where there are no mosquitoes, the incidence of malaria is low. At one time, water used to collect around Delhi. After the hollows were filled, mosquitoes were greatly reduced and so also was malaria.

6. I hope no one will ask why I filled this article with rules of cleanliness. It is on the observance of these rules that the health of 21 crores of peasants depends.

7. The worker who teaches the peasants of his village these rules will increase the life-span of the residents and will have taken a great step towards prevention of diseases. This is the most difficult task of

all because there are few who take interest in it. Even so, it will have to be attended to some day. One cannot go wrong in the performance of this solemn duty. However little the effort, the fruit will be in proportion. He who wishes may start the work and he will find that he is able to improve the health of the village within a year.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-11-1919

91. NOTES

ROWLATT PETITION

We publish the Rowlatt petition[1] as a supplement to this issue. It has to be despatched with all possible haste. It would have a good many signatures on it. All men and women living in British India can sign it. Readers of *Navajivan* can help a great deal in getting this done. The petition must contain particulars of the signatory's occupation, name and address in full. It would be better if the name of the volunteer was also entered but those who sign the petition without being approached by a volunteer need not give such a name. After signing the petition, the signatory should send it to the *Navajivan* office; we shall forward it to the proper quarters. We hope that readers of *Navajivan* will give us all help in this matter, and that immediately.

Let it not be thought that the petition will serve no purpose. A petition, by itself, is a kind of education. It can help to focus the attention of the people on its subject. A petiton not backed by strength or action, which itself comes to be looked upon as strength or action, comes to nothing, but a petition backed by strength and action serves a most useful purpose. This Rowlatt petition is of the latter type. Behind it is the incomparable power of satyagraha; those who have taken the lead in this matter do not intend to go to sleep after having taken the signatures on it. We hope, therefore, that thousands will work to obtain signatures on it, realizing how valuable it is.

HELP TO THE PUNJAB

We publish elsewhere in this issue an account of the work done in Madras for the relief of the families, now left without support, of those who have been sentenced by the different courts or killed or wounded in the disturbances in the Punjab in April. There being more

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Rowlatt Petition", 13-11-1919.

rich people in Calcutta and Bombay, a larger fund has been collected in these places. But the credit for the best collection drive among the average middle class goes, more or less, to Madras. The figures for contributions to the fund received from this city up to date are also published in this issue. We are sure that, on reading them, the true Ahmedabadis will feel ashamed of themselves. The contributions received during the last week or two merely prove that we have still to make a real effort about this. On every side we see people discussing the Punjab incidents with a good deal of interest. But we fear there is very little realization of the need to give practical shape to the abundant sympathy for the thousands of helpless people, especially women and children, of this unhappy province. A Committee has been appointed to inquire into the administration of Martial Law in the Punjab, and, when eminent men like the revered Pandit Malaviya, Pandit Motilal Nehru, Swami Shraddhanand and Mr. Andrews are working hard to present before it the case of the people of the Punjab, there is little need for resolutions on the subject or discussions about it. Rather, the poor and the rich, men and women, all may offer what little they can for the relief of the destitute families in the Punjab. No one need hold back at the thought that this would be helping the families of those who had taken part in the disturbances or had received sentences. Even the enemy troops wounded in fighting are nursed carefully. We hope, then, that everyone will embrace the duty, dictated by love, of succouring the innocent families of the guilty.

CENTRE OF PILGRIMAGE

We know from our own experience that there is no exaggeration in the picture of Dakorji given by Dr. Lakshmiprasad. Its condition is such that no person who wants to observe the rules of cleanliness can stay there for 24 hours. No one bothers about people dirtying the banks of the lake. The pilgrims spend their time somehow. As we take no pride in Dakorji, even the station there looks like a building in ruins. In a place visited by hundreds of thousands of people every year, the comforts are of the fewest!

If we look at the inside of the temple, even there we find filth. The priests look dull and inert. A receiver has been appointed for Dakorji's jewellery. How can *Vaishnavas*[1] bear the affairs of a holy place of pilgrimage being taken to a court of law? A religious

[1] Worshippers of Vishnu, the Preserver in the Hindu Trinity

tradition which promotes morality and which has been graced by persons like Narasinha Mehta and Mirabai seems, at present, to have become the enemy of morality.

Who are the people visiting Dakorji? There is no doubt that some of them are simple-hearted and unsuspecting pilgrims, but it is certain that impostors also visit the place to further their own hypocritical designs.

How can this darkness of immorality and filthiness be got rid of? What is the duty of *Vaishnavas*? It is not that Dakorji is the only centre of pilgrimage which is being desecrated. We observe the same condition in Kashi Vishvanath. Were the *Vaishnava* trustees to behave like true heirs of Prahlad, they could kick out the numerous Hiranyakashipus in Dakor. If they would bring lustre to the *Vaishnava* way of life, there are many reforms they could introduce. The real power is with the pilgrims, if they became enlightened enough. That they should be enlightened means, however, that crores of Hindus should understand the profound wisdom of their religion and its essential principles. That hour is far away.

The *Bhatia*[1] battalion has started going there. These, too, could do something, were Ranchhodji[2] to dwell in their hearts. Their duty is not only to keep order…they should not be content merely with that…but to suppress immorality wherever they find it. For this they can get suitable literature distributed among the people.

Maharajas[3] can do much indeed, but we doubt if a copy of *Navajivan* ever finds its way into their hands. *Vaishnava* readers can draw their attention to this state of rot. And *Vaishnava bhaktas*[4] can explain to them their duty.

The question which should especially exercise swarajists is this: "If we can bring about no improvements in our centres of pilgrimage, what shall we be able to do when we get swaraj?" Surely, no one believes that these places will improve automatically on our getting swaraj. Dr. Lakshmiprasad has suggested that the Dakor Municipality can do something about it. A municipality means the people. Institutions like these have no soul in them. They are like so many

[1] Name of a community in Cutch. Its members used to attend the temple as volunteers to keep order.

[2] The deity in the Dakorji temple.

[3] Heads of *Vaishnava* temples, here used in a special sense

[4] Devotees

carts. They go the way the driver takes them. The municipality will bring about cleanliness only when people are roused and ask for it. Again, even where there is no municipality elected by the people themselves, unexpectedly some improvement comes about. Improvements do not take place because of a municipality but because of the intelligence and interest of some individuals.

INDIGENOUS SPINNING-WHEEL

We publish under this head an article by Shri Biharilal Kantawala and we draw the attention of every patriotic reader to it. If others exercise their minds and give their views as Shri Biharilal has done, the needed improvements will be made the sooner.

We believe it possible that a spinning-wheel may remain what it is and yet be improved in some ways so that it will spin increased quantities of yarn. We are entirely in agreement with the writer's view that the element of intelligence which the old-style spinning-wheel requires on the part of the spinner should remain in the improved model. We think it worth while to offer the prize donated by Shri Revashankar Mehta.[1] The efforts of those who are trying to increase the quantities of yarn spun will not go entirely in vain. These people should avail themselves of Shri Biharilal's experience. If they bear the suggestion in mind, they will get the results the sooner or abandon unavailing efforts.

We do not agree with the view that cotton cannot be carded by hand. Even today it is so carded in many places and, if the essential features of the present movement come to stay, it will be increasingly carded by hand, for the assumption in this movement is that, by and large, cotton will be used locally where it is produced. For the mills, it may be carded in ginning factories, but to get it carded in such factories for hand-spinning will mean double labour and waste of cotton-seeds.

We welcome the idea of offering prizes for improving the tools so as to make carding easier and discovering simpler means of starching, and we shall certainly secure donations to award prizes to persons doing this. We hope, as well, to be able to announce a definite amount for the prize after obtaining suggestions for a practicable scheme for the purpose. We should say to our readers, however, that they need to interest skilled workers in these matters. People who

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 5-10-1919.

come into contact with them will find it easy to engage their interest in such inventions.

SPINNING-WHEEL MOVEMENT

We invite reader' attention to the report, published in this issue, of the spinning-wheel movement started by the Ahmedabad Swadeshi Sabha. Some important conclusions may easily be drawn from it. First of all, as in Bombay, there is a class of women in Ahmedabad who find it worth their while to spin and earn two or three annas a day. Secondly, a large number of spinning-wheels are being plied in Lunsawad[1] ; in fact, so far the number has been increasing every month. In Khadia[2], on the other hand, the number seems to have decreased a little during the third month. Drawing up a list, community-wise, of the women who have bought spinning-wheels will throw some light on this rise and fall in numbers. On a superficial view, it may seem that the residents of Lunsawad, being poorer, have resorted to the spinning-wheel in greater number and on a larger scale. It cannot be denied that there is an element of truth in this conclusion. But it is also worth considering to what extent these figures provide an example of the tendency of the higher-castes, proud of their superior status, to shrink from work generally regarded as mean even when they feel the pinch of poverty, and of the relatively lower communities to welcome suitable work, under the pressure of necessity. Another question, the answer to which will be more instructive, is this: As between the women, on the one hand, in cities like Bombay, Ahmedabad, Surat, etc., and in smaller places, who at present work on the spinning-wheel and, on the other, the thousands and hundreds of thousands of other women of the same class, what percentage earns how much in which work? We request everyone to start immediately collecting figures to find the reply to this instructive question and hope that, meanwhile, all the volunteers and [Swadeshi] Sabhas will oblige us by sending us detailed reports, on the lines of the Ahmedabad report, on the spinning-wheel movements at various places.

[1] Localities in Ahmedabad
[2] *ibid*

TANNERIES

Tanneries[1] means the shops and establishments of *Chamars*[2] . A correspondent informs us that a good many such firms are coming up in the country these days. He adds that it is not desirable that India's trade should increase in this way because this involves the destruction of our cattle wealth.

In saying this, the correspondent has in his goodness raised the issue of compassion to animals. We do not think that tanneries will mean more destruction. There is no reason to believe that increase in the number of tanneries will mean destruction of cattle in greater numbers. In our view, the use of hide from cattle dying in the natural course is no sin. The *Chamar's* profession is an essential one. Man cannot do without shoes. In agriculture, hide is needed at every turn. The countless scoops for drawing water are made of hide. Earnings through this occupation amount to lakhs.

At present this occupation is in the hands of *Chamars* and *Mochis*[3]. We should see to it that it does not pass on to firms and leave these starving.

If we do not wake up betimes, the result will be as we have feared. We have never been careful of the interests of our artisans. Looking upon them as dependent on other classes, we have despised them and done the country harm. We treated skilled work as low and exalted clerical work, and thus invited slavery for ourselves. We looked upon masons, shoe-makers, carpenters, blacksmiths and barbers as inferior to us and kept them suppressed. From their trades and their homes we have taken away all courtesy, learning, decency and culture. In the result, their life has become dull and they themselves do not think highly of it. Hence, if they receive school education, they give up their profession; the tailor, likewise, will have nothing to do with the needle; the weaver swears at the loom; as for the scavenger, is it ever possible that, after being educated, he will clean latrines? If we had not despised professions which required one to use one's hands and feet, we would not have fallen into this unhappy state and graduates would have felt no shame in working even as scavengers.

[1] Gandhiji uses the English word.
[2] A community of tanners
[3] A community of shoe-makers

About compassion to animals, too, we have strange notions. Compassion should begin with our own species, that is, with mankind; instead, we believe that it means no more than refusing to kill an animal with a knife. It is needful, of course, to have compassion towards animals, but it is equally needful to have it towards human beings; we should remember, moreover, not to be deceived by anything said under pretext of compassion towards animals. There is no justice or truth in speaking of the use of hide from dead animals as "skinning a live animal".

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-11-1919

92. MESSAGE TO CHRISTIANS[1]

DELHI,

[Before *November 3, 1919*]

[1st.] All Christians, leaders and all, must begin to live more like Jesus.

2nd. You must practise your Christianity without adulterating it or toning it down.

3rd. You must lay greater emphasis upon your central principle Love.

4th. You must study more sympathetically non-Christian religions and try to discover the good in them.

From a photostat of the typewritten letter : S.N. 6974

[1] Rev. E. Stanley Jones, a Christian missionary, appears to have interviewed Gandhiji at Delhi *prior* to November 3, on which date he sent Gandhiji a copy of Moffatt's translation of some verses from the 13th Chapter of *1 Corinthians*. The text of Gandhiji's message is extracted from a letter dated November 7 in which Rev. Jones wrote to Gandhiji: "When I had a talk with you the other day and asked you what we might do to make Christianity naturalized and a part of the national life of India, you replied: [Here followed the message.] I would like to ask permission of you to use the above statements. I am sure they would be a means of blessing to us Christians to have this message from you, but I do not want to use it without your permission. . . ."

93. NOTE OF INTERVIEW ON SOUTH AFRICA[1]

November 3, 1919

He [Gandhiji] said that he was very sorry that the Union Government were unwilling to allow representatives from India to sit upon the Commission. He said that he was going to do what I had asked him to do in my letter, namely, not to raise an agitation himself on the subject, and to do all he could to repress any agitation raised by others. He told me that he had been interviewed during the last day or two, and he had said that he regarded the arrangement made as second best.

I asked him whether he had any strong views on the point, whether the terms of reference to the Commission ought to be enlarged beyond trading rights, and pointed out to him that the recent effort of the Indians to get an enquiry had resulted in what might be regarded as a restriction of the existing rights. He said that he felt strongly that the enquiry ought to extend to the Law of 1885, and considered that an extension in this direction could not possibly result in a restriction of the existing rights.

I asked him his views on the subject of inter-provincial emigration. He said:

I would not ask for this, for I know that we shall not get it. Freedom of emigration between the Provinces would mean freedom to migrate from the Transvaal into the Orange Free State. The Orange Free State has always prohibited the entry of Indians, and there is hardly any Indian in the whole State.

I further asked him what he felt about movement from one Province to another with the intention of returning. A man might, for instance, want to attend the funeral of a relative living over the border. He said:

This is a very small matter, and I think we can rely upon General Smuts to deal with it by executive order.

No legislation, he said, would be required.

He said he was starting for Amritsar (November 3rd), but would consider the question of the enlargement of the terms of reference very carefully, and would let me have his considered views. He said:

I know the South African people, and I fully realize the diffculties which exist. I do not want to fall into the error of asking for what is unwise and what we know we shall not get.

[1] This is evidently Sir George Barnes' report of the interview Gandhiji had had with him in connection with the South African Commission; *vide* "Letter to Sir George Barnes", 7-11-1919.

He asked me who was to be the Indian representative before the Commission. I told him that the Union Government had not yet consented to any Indian, but that both the Viceroy and the Secretary of State were entirely at one in wishing for an Indian representative and had urged that one should be received. He asked me whether it was true that Mr. Sastri's name had been suggested by the Viceroy and the Secretary of State. I told him that this was true. He said:

I do not think a better selection could possibly have been made.

Mr. Gandhi said that he hoped that I would send for him at any time I thought he would be useful, and said that he was quite willing to leave Amritsar or Lahore, wherever he was, to give help over the S. African question.

India Office : Judicial & Public Records : 6140/19

94. LETTER TO JIVANLAL B. VYAS[1]

[DELHI,]
November 3, 1919

One rupee as commission for a maund of cloth. If desired, a salary may also be paid. Yarn must be hand-spun only.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand : S.N. 6803

95. PUNJAB LETTER

DELHI,
Monday, Kartak Sud 8[2] [*November 3, 1919*]

The affection that I am receiving from men and women here in Lahore puts me to shame, while at the same time the unique faith of India and the frankness and generosity of our people enchant me. Young and old continue to come all day to have *darshan*[3] of me. It is impossible for me to go out anywhere alone. As soon as the people catch sight of me, they crowd round. I simply cannot check them. I know of nothing in me which may make me worthy of giving *darshan*. Man's instinctive urge to worship is admirable. But that people should crowd round to have *darshan* of a mere servant is

[1] The draft reply was scribbled on a letter dated October 29 from the addressee, in which he had said that if they were permitted to buy yarn packed in boxes and get it woven, they could get yarn of excellent quality on order.

[2] This should be 10

[3] Sight of a person, place or thing considered holy

intolerable to me. If I keep on giving *darshan*, my work will suffer. I do not believe that people profit in any way by having *darshan*. The condition of him who gives it is even worse. On one occasion, a friend of mine asked me, "Are you sure that the people's adulation does not make you vain?" He asked the question in all sincerity. What could I reply? I said, "God forbid!" This friend was a prominent Muslim. However, it is no ordinary responsibility which rests on him who gives *darshan*. No man is great enough to give it. I can say truthfully that this only embarrasses me and, if I could put a stop to this practice without hurting people's feelings, I would do so immediately. I have not yet found it possible to do this. I have failed either because my courage is inadequate or my judgment is yet clouded or, perhaps, my principle of non-violence does not allow me to hurt people's feelings. My opinion is that I suffer from both the defects and also that I have a strong inclination to non-violence. I do indeed make every effort to extricate myself from this dilemma. At present, even when people come for *darshan*, I continue to write and do other work. Even as I write this, people come and go but I do not interrupt my work. I salute them and go on with my writing.

It is perfectly clear to me that this is the miracle wrought by even a small measure of devoting to truth and service. I cannot claim that I always conduct myself, in thought, word and deed, according to the truth as I know it. Nor can I say that I always follow the principle of service as I understand it. My only claim is that I am making a prodigious effort to live up to these two principles. And the incomparable love that I have received has made it clear to me that they in whom truth and the spirit of service are manifested in their fulness will assuredly sway the hearts of men and so accomplish their chosen task. I have also come to realize that, in these difficult times, the observance of the principles of truth, service and compassion gives infinite peace to men.

PREPARATIONS FOR COMMITTEE

Having met the Lt.-Governor and the Dy. Commissioner in Lahore, I proceeded to Delhi together with Mr. Andrews as a meeting of the Committee had been fixed for the 29th in Delhi. There Mr. Andrews and I met Lord Hunter and had interviews with local officers. All appeared to be keen that the real facts should come to light. The questionnaire which has been issued by the Committee is also so framed as to facilitate the disclosure of what-ever information the

various parties possess. Two things yet remain, viz., the release of the leaders and the appointment of a judge from outside the Punjab. Efforts are going on towards this end.

PANDIT MALAVIYA

Pandit Malaviya arrived from Kashi on Sunday. He has already sent a telegram to the Lt.-Governor about these two points. Mr. C.R. Das arrived on Monday and will stay with Panditji. The only cause for regret at this juncture is that Pandit Motilal Nehru is taken ill. He has worked hard for the Punjab affair. There must be few who have collected as much information as he. At the moment he is confined to bed, but it is hoped that he will recover in a week or so. He has had an attack of asthma.

DELHI MEETING

A large meeting was convened in Delhi on Saturday. The purpose of the meeting was to meet me and also to collect money to erect a hall in memory of those who were killed in the firing in April. The meeting was held in the open air but the crowd was so dense that people were constantly falling on one another. I was in the chair. There was loud noise. I felt that in these conditions the meeting could not be conducted at all. No speeches could be audible in this tumult. I, therefore, asked the people to disperse and suggested that volunteers should be employed, the people should be cautioned and instructed in advance in the rules for conducting meetings. On the following day, Sunday, the meeting was called again and the same crowds sat quietly for about two and a half hours. They listened attentively to all the speeches.[1] The collection was also good. Hundreds either gave small amounts in cash or promised contributions. I give all these details here because the further we penetrate into the common and poorer sections of society, the larger will be the crowds. We ought to develop the capacity so to conduct these meetings that quiet is maintained. If suitable arrangements are made in advance, if the volunteers are active and the people are properly instructed, it will be possible to maintain quiet without much effort.

FIRST OPEN SESSION

The first open session of the Committee is fixed for today (Monday)[2] . As I am writing this, it has yet to take place. Today

[1] No separate report of the speeches is available.

[2] November 3

evidence is to be given by Mr. Barron, Chief Commissioner of Delhi Province. It is the general impression that if this alert and worthy Commissioner had not been present last April, the results would have been even more terrible. Witnesses from outside include Swami Shraddhanand, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Dr. Ansari, Dr. Abdur Rehman, Shri Krishnalal Ambalal Desai and others. Shri Krishnalal is the son of the late Diwan Bahadur Ambalalbhai. He carries on business in these parts.

SPINNING-WHEEL

To the women who came to visit me in Lahore I spoke at great length about the spinning-wheel, and also begged yarn from them. Hundreds of women came to see me and there was rarely one among them who said she did not know spinning. As soon as I asked for yarn, they began to bring it to me and many of them promised to take up spinning again. There is not much difference between the Punjab spinning-wheel and the old spinning-wheel of Gujarat. The more I discover the similarity in the spinning-wheels and spinning processes all over the country, the more I am convinced that India was one nation in the past and that the people were conscious of their being one nation. So far I have met few men or women who see any harm in spinning.

TORNADO IN EAST BENGAL

Mr. C.R. Das informs us that there has been a violent tornado in Bengal which has caused serious damage in nearly three-quarters of the Province. Hundreds have been carried away in floods, thousands have been rendered homeless. Many have been reduced to a state of destitution. Committees have been working to render assistance to them. Mr. Das has collected Rs. 2 lakhs and Rs. 3 lakhs more are wanted. He and Sir Rabindranath Tagore have also issued an appeal and I hope that wealthy men from the Bombay Presidency will respond to it. I would suggest that we send a very reliable person on behalf of the Bombay Presidency and organize the relief measures through him. If one of the wealthy persons from there would undertake this work, he could both help the local committee and obtain first-hand information. At the time of the famine in 1956,[1] the people of America sent shiploads of grain to India and even sent their own representatives to see to its distribution.

[1] Year according to the Vikram era, corresponding to 1900 A.D.

We were afraid that the Muslim League may not meet in Amritsar this time. Not only has this apprehension been removed, but even the president has been elected. The well-known Hakim Ajmal Khan of Delhi has been unanimously elected by the Lucknow Committee. Hakimji's family has lived in Delhi for three generations. It is both an old and a distinguished family. Hakimji gives medicine gratis to the poor. He is known to be such an expert in his profession that even princes invite him for their treatment. He is greatly interested in both the Unani and Ayurvedic systems of medicine. During Lord Hardinge's regime, he invited Hakimji to lay the foundation stone of a college[1] which would impart instruction in both these systems. This college has been built on a seven-and-a-half acre plot of land. It is two miles from Delhi, and the building is nearly complete. It contains accommodation for 120 patients. The Western system of medicine also finds a place there. Hakimji plans to introduce a certain amount of instruction in Western surgery. He holds Hindus and Muslims in equal regard and the two communities pay him the same respect. His political views are similar to those of the Congress. His election should be welcomed by Hindus and Muslims alike.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-11-1919

96. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, AMRITSAR[2]

November 4, 1919

SISTERS,

Amritsar has become a place of pilgrimage not only for me but for evey Indian. No penance will suffice for the evil that has been wrought by our hand in Amritsar. It is true that a large number of our people were killed in Jallianwala Bagh. But we ought to have maintained peace even if everyone present had been killed. It is not right, in my opinion, to take blood for blood. Our religion teaches us not to inflict pain on anyone. I regard Amritsar as a place of pilgrimage because our brethren here have recently suffered much. The Government had detained me at Bombay, and I had been

[1] The Tibbia College

[2] The meeting was held at the house of Lala Girdhari Lal, a Congress leader of Amritsar.

wondering when I would have my freedom and be able to visit Amritsar. Now, having been freed, I have had the good fortune of meeting you. I will have peace only when I have done the work that I ought to do. You mothers, who must have had either a son, a brother or other relative killed or imprisoned and for whom you sorrow, should not regard it as an infliction. For we shall not become free of pain so long as we have not accustomed ourselves to putting up with hardships. We will have to endure much for the good of the country. In the late War in Europe millions had to sacrifice their lives for the sake of their country's freedom. India cannot become free if we are not ready to endure hardships so long as we live. The joy of freedom is only for those who are ready to face death. In 1896-97 hundreds of thousands died of plague in the Punjab. No one treated the punjab as a place of pilgrimage then. Now Amritsar and various other places in the Punjab have become centres of pilgrimage because the people here have endured hardships for the good of the country. Being situated in the north, the Punjab is like the crown of India. The Punjabis, therefore, should not give up the use of swadeshi cloth, even if the other provinces do so. The Punjabi brethren I have been meeting in Bombay told me that the women in the Punjab ply the spinning-wheel. It is a matter of joy. But I shall be fully satisfied only when all the men in the Punjab use cloth made from Punjab's yarn. If you cannot find cloth made in your province, get some from another province, but do not wear foreign cloth even if you had to go about naked. Poverty in India is increasing because of our not using swadeshi goods. Tens of millions of our countrymen suffer from want of food and clothing. To relieve their suffering we must make the country prosperous by using swadeshi goods. It is my appeal to all mothers and sisters of the Punjab that they should all use cloth made in the Punjab. We look more graceful if we wear swadeshi instead of foreign cloth. I beg of my Punjabi brethren the boon that they take a vow to spin. I shall feel immensely grateful if you grant me this boon.

[From Hindi]

Mahatma Gandhi

97. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

LAHORE,
[*After November 4, 1919*][1]

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your sweet letters. But you will not expect regular replies from me for the time being. I am having rich experiences of life. When you render yourself a willing instrument of service, inexpressible joy is the reward. But more later or when we meet.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child*, p. 43

98. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

LAHORE,
[After *November 5, 1919*][2]

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I have your letter. Umar has left today. At the moment I am tied down here and cannot say when I shall be able to come. We shall attend to the question of Hindi only when I come. The struggle may be an intense one. Do you sometimes go to the Ashram? Chhotalal has written a long letter. I wish you to read it.

All that you write about the mill workers is correct. May you have the capacity to impart to them real training.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati : S. N. 32706

[1] This letter appears to have been written after Gandhiji's visit to Amritsar in November, where the people greeted him with great affection.

[2] From the contents. Gandhiji was in Lahore from November 5 to November 16 and then again from December 12 to December 22, 1919.

99. TELEGRAM TO REGISTRAR, HIGH COURT, BOMBAY

[LAHORE,
November 7, 1919]

LETTER 31ST ULTIMO[1] JUST RECEIVED LAHORE. REGRET UNSATISFACTORY. AM REFERRING MATTER TO COUNSEL.[2] HOPEADDRESS ON RECEIPT COUNSEL'S OPINION.

The Bombay Law Reporter, Vol. XXII, 1920, p. 371

100. LETTER TO SIR GEORGE BARNES

2, MOZANG ROAD,
LAHORE,
[*November 7, 1919*]

TO

THE HON'BLE SIR GEORGE BARNES, K.C.B.
MEMBER VICEROY'S EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

[DELHI]

With reference to our conversation,[3] I enclose herewith my note as to the minimum to be included in the reference to the forthcoming South African Commission.

[1]The letter ran as follows: "I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 22nd instant, and to inform you that the Hon'ble the Chief Justice regrets that he cannot regard your explanation as satisfactory. However, His Lordship is willing to concede that you were unaware that you were exceeding the privilege of a journalist provided that you publish in the next issue of *Young India* an apology in the accompanying form."

The apology was worded thus: "Whereas on th 6th August 1919, we published in *Young India* a private letter written by Mr. Kennedy, District Judge of Ahmedabad, to the Registrar of the High Court of Justice at Bombay, and whereas on the same date we also published certain comments on the said letter and whereas it has been pointed out to us that pending certain proceedings in the said High Court in connection with the said letter, we were not justified in publishing the said letter or in commenting thereon. Now we do hereby express our regret and apologise to the Hon'ble the Chief Justice and Judges of the said High Court for the publication of the said letter and the comments thereon." For Gandhiji's reaction to the form of the apology, *vide* "Letter to Registrar, High Court, Bombay", 11-12-1919.

[2] Gandhiji sought Vallabhbhai Patel's advice. On November 16, Mahadev Desai wired to Gandhiji at Lahore: "Saw Vallabhbhai. He thinks publication letter within rights. However case being subjudice clearly contempt of court."

[3] *Vide* "Note of Interview on South Africa", 3-11-1919.

It is assumed for the purpose of this note that General Smuts contemplates referring to the Commission the question of trading rights of Indians in the Transvaal only.

If so, it will not in any way settle the most urgent questions.

The new Act deals with and adversely affects the rights of owning land and trading. It is therefore suggested that the question of trading and owning land, i.e., the laws of 1885 and the Townships Act and the Gold Law in so far as the latter two affect the rights of Indians to own land and to trade within the townships or the Gold areas be referred to the Commission.

It should be clearly understood as between the Union Government and the Government of India that the new Act in so far as it diminishes existing rights should be revised and that the findings of the Commission should not in any way restrict existing rights. The Commission is likely to prove injurious to the existing rights, small as they are, if the above two conditions are not fulfilled.My proposal should be taken and treated as a whole or rejected altogether.

In making the proposal, I am going against the most moderate public opinion here and against the demands made by the South Africa Indians' Conference recently held at Johannesburg.

Public opinion here as expressed by *The Times of India* requires the restoration of trading rights and ownership of land throughout the Union and the inter-provincial migration. This means entry into the Orange Free State and the rights to trade and own land there. In the present state of public feeling this may be difficult for General Smuts to achieve even if he himself is willing.

The demand of the Conference is wider still and includes the restoration of the political status and the abolition of all legal disabilities. Though this and this alone must be the goal to be aimed at, I recognize that it is not practical politics to strive for it as an immediate aim.

But, if neither the Indian demand nor the lesser one expressed by *The Times of India* is to be urged, it must be clearly understood that there should be no diminution of the existing status.

The Union Government having already opened the question of trade and ownership of property in the Transvaal, through the Select Committee and then the recent legislation, the Commission can well be asked to entertain both these questions without ruffling the prejudices of the white population. It should be remembered that, at the time of

the passage of the recent Act, Indians in the Transvaal had the right to Europeans and could under the existing law becom receive licenses to trade practically on the same footing as the virtual owners of land by taking mortgages or forming limited liability companies. I contemplate statutory recognition of the right to trade under general sanitary control and the direct ownership of land in the Transvaal. This is not claiming much or more than they have virtually enjoyed.

So far regarding the reference.

There is the unsatisfactory administration of the Immigrant's Restriction Act which can be improved by diplomatic action without troubling the Commission. The points requiring attention are:

(1) The movement of the Indian settler from one province to another not for residing but for ceremonial or business visits or for mere passage to the province of domicile. Full facilities without fee should be granted.

(2) The entry of fresh Indians for supplying the needs of the resident population should be placed on a better and more liberal basis.

(3) There should be greater liberality in permitting plural wives to visit their husbands without creating any legal rights for them or their issue.

(4) Restrictions on passports from India or from the Union require complete overhauling whether regarding identification or otherwise.

(5) Men and women of status and students should have freedom to travel to South Africa.

These matters, if they cannot be dealt with diplomatically, should be included in the reference to the forthcoming Commission.

M. K. GANDHI

India Office : Judicial and Public Records : 6140/19

101. LETTER T0 MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

LAHORE,
Friday [On or after *November 7, 1919*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I had received your letter. About Khilafat you will know my views fully from *Navajivan*.

What are you doing about Swadeshi? Arrange to repair all the available charkhas. What about the [spinning-] classes there? What is happening at Nara-Narayana? I have not yet sent you the letters regarding Swadeshi because the solution of some of the problems lies there. If the arrangement has to be made at the Ashram, I think it can be done only through the Ashram. Still, I am considering what to do.

In the meantime, I want you to do the work of the Swadeshi Sabha. I think good works can be done if you devote yourself to it. It will be good if you and Umar together can carry forword the activities of the Sabha.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Are you planning to come at the time of the Congress session[2]?

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

102. SOUTH AFRICA

The news about South Africa appearing in the papers is both startling and distressing. We were led by Mr. Montagu's words to believe that the Commission on the rights of Indians, which is to be appointed in South Africa, would have some members to represent us. Mr. Montagu now informs us that his words were misunderstood and

[1] The year has been inferred form the contents. The letter appears to have been written about the same time as the letter to the addressee dated November 1, 1919. The Friday following fell on November 7. Gandhiji's notes on Khilafat appeared in *Navajivan*, 9-11-1919 and 7-12-1919; *vide* "Notes", Before 12-11-1919 and "Punjab Letter", About 1-12-1919.

[2] Scheduled to be held form December 29, 1919 to January 1, 1920

that no one will be appointed on the Commission to represent India. However, Sir Benjamin Robertson will be accompanied by a non-official and the two will present our case. This is disappointing news for us. We think General Smuts did not have his way and it did not become possible to include anyone from India. So we have had to telegraph[1] Mr. Montagu to set the matter right. But we shall not succeed, through agitation, in getting our men appointed on the Commission. Mr. Montagu can insist on justice being done to us, but it is the South African Government alone which can decide the manner of doing it. Hence, we cannot compel it to appoint anybody from here on its Commission. Even then, if an able man like Mr. Shastriar is appointed by the Government, he and Sir Benjamin Robertson together will be able to secure justice.

The more startling news which we have received is that the Commission will investigate only the issue of trading licences. Such a limited inquiry will not serve the purpose. We shall have to carry on a strong agitation about this. The Commission should be given more powers. The Indians in South Africa have demanded that the inquiry should cover all their rights. We think it will be difficult to bring this about. But we can certainly demand that the inquiry should cover rights of trading and ownership of land; these are our minimum rights. What we have to be more vigilant about is lest the Commission should be empowered to recommend deprivation of the existing rights. It should have no power to recommend abrogation of any of the rights which existed at the time of the passing of the new law. Indians have now almost stopped emigrating to South Africa. The system of indentured labour having been discontinued, the resulting increase in the Indian population there has also stopped. Hence the only question that remains is that of the rights of Indians settled there. They must be allowed to trade honestly and to acquire and dispose of land. There is no room for difference of opinion on this point. The whites of South Africa cannot keep the Indians there merely as slaves or coolies.

Fortunately, the good Mr. Andrews has come forward to help our brethren and is proceeding there. The service he has rendered it is impossible to estimate. Wherever he hears the cry of Indians in distress, he runs to their help. Fiji,, Ceylon and the Punjab bear witness

[1] The telegram is not available.

to this. In South Africa, he is well known both to the whites and the Indians. And so his going there will inspire courage in our brethren and give us hope that justice will be done.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-11-1919

103. FIJI

Only a few days ago it was feared that our indentured brothers and sisters in Fiji would not be released, even at the end of the current years, from their slavery. The Fiji legislature has passed a resolution to the effect that the indenture of the Indian labourers will be terminated in August. We cannot tolerate for a single moment a practice that does not safeguard the modesty of our women. Had the good Mr. Andrews not visited Fiji and brought this evil to our notice, we should still be in the dark about it. Fortunately, fresh news has arrived removing our fear of the prolongation of this slavery and the Indian government has been informed that those firms which are unable to introduce the reforms suggested by Mr. Andrews will terminate the indentures by the 1st January. On the other hand, those firms which are prepared to introduce these reforms will not terminate the indentures without compensation.

The reader will probably fail to follow this complicated point. Under a Fiji law, many whites hold indentured Indian labourers. These labourers are under contract to serve for a period of five years. Emigration of fresh indentured labourers stopped in 1917, but, after Mr. Andrews report, we demanded that even those serving terms of indenture should be released before the expiry of the five-year term. A contract which is based on immorality or which leads to immorality must be terminated and there can be no question of paying compensation for terminating it. But the Fiji planters are not prepared to forgo any part of their legal rights. Hence the question of compensation which I have referred to above. It is our bounden duty to secure the release of the Indian labourers even by paying this compensation. The question is merely that of paying £20,000 at the most. I hope that the Government of India will pay this amount and get them released soon. Congratulations on this are due to Sir George Barnes, the Secretary of the Department. Had he not taken a firm stand, the happy results we can expect now would not have been

possible. What shall I say about Mr. Andrews? In what way may I congratulate him? He has dedicated his whole life to us. He finds his happiness in the service of India. The Fiji Indians will bless him from the depths of their being.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-11-1919

104. NOTES

KHILAFAT AND PEACE CELEBRATIONS

Friends have asked me what we should do during the forthcoming Peace Celebrations. I know that, in some of the meetings held on Khilafat Day, a resolution was passed to the effect that, if the Khilafat problem was not solved to their satisfaction, Muslims would not be able to take part in these celebrations since Indians would, in those circumstances, have no peace of mind. So long as this important problem remains unsolved and there is a fear that Muslim sentiment would be hurt, and so long as our Muslim brethren suffer in suspense and are worried, so long Hindus, Parsis, Christians, Jews and all others for whom India is their land of birth or adoption, can hardly take part in the forthcoming Peace Celebrations. I am bold enough even to imagine. His Excellency the Viceroy informing the Ministers of the King-emperor that, while the Khilafat problem remains unsolved, Indians would not be able to take part in the Peace Celebrations, and I am confident that before inviting us to join the celebrations the Ministers would accept the need for finding an honourable solution and announcing it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-11-1919

105. GIST OF LETTER TO LT. GOVERNOR, PUNJAB[1]

[LAHORE,
Before *November 12, 1919*]

Firstly the right of public body or bodies to lead evidence should be definitely recogized and such bodies as well as the parties themselves should be allowed to be represented by counsel who should be permitted to help in the elucidation of facts by cross-examination. Secondly, some at any rate of the more prominent leaders, now in jail, should be released, if necessary on adequate security alike with a view to giving their own evidence from a position of comparative freedom and to their leading evidence on the non-official side and inspiring confidence in the people by their presence.

Thirdly, the tribunal already appointed to revise sentences of summary courts should be so reconstituted and should follow such a procedure as to command public confidence.[2]

The Leader, 14-11-1919

106. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

LAHORE,
November 12, 1919

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have your letters. Owing to my wanderings in the Punjab, I have not been able to write to you.

In my opinion, your attitude regarding the S.A. affairs and the committee is quite correct. I shall speak to Dr. Mehta about it when he returns. You may have my name if it is of my use to your committee. I am asking Chhotalal to send you copies of my letters to Sir George

[1] The report stated *inter alia*: "Some time ago the Congress Sub-committee requested the Government to concede three things in connection with the enquiry." That Gandhiji wrote a letter on the above lines is indicated in the "Punjab Letter", 17-11-1919.

[2] The report stated *inter alia*: "Some time ago the Congress Sub-committee requested the Government to concede three things in connection with the enquiry." That Gandhiji wrote a letter on the above lines is indicated in the "Punjab Letter", 17-11-1919.

Barnes. I had a long interview with him yesterday. I met also Sir Benjamin Robertson.

Regarding Mrs. Sorabji, she has been hasty and I have been continuously writing to her. Both Palanji and Rustomji have asked me not to raise any subscriptions.1 If Palanji does not assist, she can easily be assisted. However, I shall ask Jehangir to pay what you have sent. Why did you not send the money directly to me in July? Having sent it to Jehangir, why did you not even advise me?

The High Court has issued a rule nisi to show cause why I should not be committed for contempt for the publication of the Ahmedabad judge's letter to the Registrar regarding the satyagrahi lawyers. They asked me to apologize. I cannot see my way to do [ing] so. You need not therefore be surprised if you find me imprisoned.

With love to you all,

Yours,

BHAI

From the original : Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy : National Archives of India

107. TELEGRAM TO RAOJIBHAI MEHTA

RADHANPUR,
November 13, 1919

RAOJIBHAI JAGJIVANDAS

24, OLD MODIKHANA

BOMBAY

TERMS SETTLED. HIS HIGHNESS DESIRES SEEING YOU 13TH AND 15TH DECEMBER. CAN YOU COME POSTING?

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1919

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Narahari Parikh", After 25-1-1920

108. LETTER TO P.S. TO LT.-GOVERNOR, PUNJAB

LAHORE,

November 15, 1919

Will you please tell His Honour that I informed the members of the Congress Sub-committee yesterday that he had kindly consented to consider the principle advanced by the Sub-committee to the extent that six leaders could be released on parole for the day or days they might actually be giving evidence before the Disorders Inquiry Committee. Members admitted that the concession satisfied the principle just barely, but was of no practical value if, no other days, they were not permitted, as prisoners in custody, to attend the Committee meetings in order to instruct counsel in matters specially within their knowledge. This would mean the attendance of say, Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal in custody during the Amritsar hearing generally and their release on parole on the day or days they might be examined. I felt that the point raised was clear and covered by Lord Hunter's letter[1] to Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, but Mr. Andrews offered to have it definitely cleared. Deep, therefore, was the disappointment when he returned to say that His Honour would not allow leaders to attend even in the manner suggested. The Congress Sub-committee had, therefore, no course left open to it but to adhere to its decision not to appear before Lord Hunter's Committee.[2]

I cannot help expressing my great regret that His Honour should have declined to grant what an ordinary criminal could claim as a matter of right.

The Leader, 19-11-1919

[1] For this letter, *vide* Appendix "Letter fro Secretary, Hunter Committee, to Malaviya", 19-11-1919.

[2] For the Congress Sub-committee's Statement in this regard, *vide* "Statement on the Punjab by Congress Enquiry Committee", 17-11-1919.

109. SPEECH AT FAREWELL TO ANDREWS[1]

LAHORE,
November 15, 1919

He [Gandhiji] said that it was not possible for him to say much about Mr. Andrews who was like a brother to him. The sacred bond between them prevented him from giving expression to his feelings on that occasion. He would, however, like to say one thing: Mr. Andrews, a true Englishman that he was, had given his whole life to the cause of India and through his actions and his love for India seemed to say to us: "You may feel you are oppressed by my countrymen, but do not think ill of them; look at me." If the audience wanted to show their regard for Mr. Andrews, they should copy his love and he pleaded not for a blind love but for an enlightened love, the same that was shown by Bhakta Prahlad in his dealing with his own father. The lesson that Mr. Andrews' life taught them was that though we would and must resent and resist injustice and oppression wherever we found them, we were to bear no ill will towards the wrongdoer. They were placed by the Government in a most difficult position. They had made it impossible for them, by their refusal to release leaders, to co-operate with Lord Hunter's Committee, as they had hoped to do. Inspite, however, of the imprudent action of the Government, whilst they would not yield to it, they would not be angry. Mr. Andrews had done more for India than many Indians. He had not spared his countrymen, but he did not on that account love them the less, and so could they, without harbouring ill will against Englishmen or the Government, go on fighting for the sake of justice and their honour.[2]

Young India, 26-11-1919

[1] Y*oung India* prefaced authorized versions of Gandhiji's and Andrews' speeches as follows: "A most impressive and touching function was the meeting held at Lahore in the Bradlaugh Hall on the 15th instant to bid farewell to Mr. Andrews who was leaving for South Africa . . . .Mr. Gandhi, on being called upon to propose the resolution recording grateful appreciation of Mr. Andrews' very valuable services rendered to the Punjab in its hour of distress, addressed the meeting in Hindi." Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya presided. Among those who attended the meeting were Pandit Motilal Nehru and C.R. Das.

[2] Gandhiji then moved the following resolution: "This meeting of the citizens of Lahore hereby places on record its grateful appreciation of the very valuable services rendered to the Punjab in its hour of distress by Mr. C.F. Andrews and wishes him success in his humanitarian mission to South Africa." C.R. Das supported the resolution.

110. PUNJAB LETTER

LAHORE,
Monday, Kartak Vad 11[1] [*November 17, 1919*]

AMRITSAR'S LOVE

From Delhi, I went to Amritsar with Mr. Andrews. What I experienced there was truly unique. It was well-nigh impossible to make our way through the crowds. The entire area outside the station was packed with the citizens of Amritsar. Their cheers and shouts almost overwhelmed me. This huge procession proceeded towards the city. The people filled the car with flowers. I was taken to the mosque, which was thronged with Hindus and Muslims. With great difficulty I made my way from the mosque back to the car, and it was a long time before it reached the Golden Temple of the Sikhs. They call this temple the Durbar Sahib. Its dome and some other parts are gilt and there is a large lake by its side. The adjoining area is also fairly extensive. I found it an impossible feat to cross this open space and reach the main temple. Thousands stood on all sides. There was no dearth of women. I saw them boldly joining this thick crowd. Yet the men were conducting themselves with the utmost courtesy and restraint. This made me particularly happy. This should not, of course, be any special cause for joy. But I know only too well that this is not the usual state of affairs in India. It is my experience that in such crowds restraint is not always observed. We have read that it is disappearing even from the pilgrim bands which proceed to Dakor. Consequently, I was greatly pleased to see it at Durbar Sahib and I should very much like to see it at every place.

I took it upon myself, in this multitude, to teach discipline for a while. Just as the crowd surged forward I would stop, ask the men and women to be seated and remain so until I reached the Durbar Sahib. As long as I stood before them, they remained sitting, but the minute I began to walk, all would sudddenly stand up and try to follow me. I made five or six such attempts. I even walked backwards, but the people could not control themselves. Finally, I decided to go ahead and, by the end of about an hour, I had covered the distance of a few

[1] This should be 10.

steps. This was obstinacy on the people's parts. They could not repress their affection. Those who had suffered much washed away their grief with the waters of love.

But what about me? How much of this did I deserve? Those who showered their love were of course blessed, but what about the one on whom it was showered? Many women whose relatives were in jail expected, perhaps, that they would be released through my efforts. But who was I to secure their release? All I can say is that I offer all this love at the feet of the Lord in whose name I serve.

When I had paid my respects at the shrine, I was presented with a scarf and turban; I tied the turban over my cap and put the scarf round my neck. It was no less difficult to go out of the temple than it had been to enter it. This going and coming in a procession took five hours. Yet the people were not satisfied. I was taken to Lala Girdhari Lal's. Thousands remained round the house till six in the evening and I had repeatedly to go out to meet them. Both men and women came. The people of Amritsar say that never before had women come out in such large numbers. They refused to disperse without *upadesh*[1] "Let us have *upadesh*" is a phrase in common use here. I tried to comfort the women in their sorrow and encouraged them to abandon fear. I requested them not to grieve for those who were in jail and told them that, as long as we did not have thousands of Indians courting the hardships of jail deliberately, we could not make progress. I then advised them to use only swadeshi and suggested that they should spin every day, for some time at least, as a religious duty.

FLOOD OF ENERGY

These were solemn scenes. Just as the Americans get energy from the Niagara Falls for their use, so can we also make use of the energy which exists at Amritsar and other places. Today this energy flows to waste like that of a waterfall. But it can be turned to valuable use. Patriotic pride has been awakened in the hearts of thousands of men and women. They realize, too, that this patriotism should be informed with the spirit of dharma. They have time, but no discipline, no knowledge, nor have they the zeal and diligence which will endure. Even more than reading and writing, they require the knowledge that touches the heart and the diligence that such knowledge brings. In real fact, however, there is a vast gap between the

[1] Spiritual counsel or advice

educated and the people generally regarded as illiterate. There were educated people, too, in this procession. They also were proud of their country. But their way of life differs from that of the illiterate and they believe that, until the latter are given education, the country can make no progress. But, for the uplift of the nation, nothing more is required than love for one's country and readiness to serve her or, in other words, a spiritual awakening. A spiritual awakening means devotion to duty. If each individual understands his present duty and performs it, the next duty will of itself become clear to him.

Today's duty is this:

(1) to fear no man;

(2) to follow the truth always;

(3) to follow the swadeshi dharma for fighting starvation in the country;

(4) that this dharma may be easily followed, to introduce the spinning-wheel into our homes, help in increasing the production of hand-made cloth and to wear garments made of it.

One who fears God will never fear man; hence he will not fear the Government or kings or officers. And who can frighten him who has no fear? None can rule over such a one by force. The Government and similar embodiments of authority will then realize their true functions and prove a beneficial power for subjects who are unafraid. The State's power of punishing is an instrument of fear. When the subjects have abandoned fear, this instrument loses its effectiveness. This fearlessness can be cultivated only through irreproachable conduct and such purity of conduct is impossible without truth. Thus, practice of truth is the only gateway to our freedom.

Every year we send 60 crores of rupees abroad for our cloth. That is why we need swadeshi. It can spread rapidly only through the spinning-wheel and the handloom. The wheel and the loom, therefore, hold the key to our developing a trade worth 60 crores.

There can be no fearlessness without truth and no wealth without swadeshi. Swaraj, therefore, lies in the practice of these two. If we have the right kind of workers, these two ideas can be taught to be people in no time. In the villages where such workers exist, a beginning should be made to teach these two principles. For this no large buildings or funds are required. What is necessary is zeal and sincerity of purpose.

These thoughts come repeatedly to me after my experiences at Lahore and Amritsar. I present them here to my readers.

IN LAHORE

We stayed for a day in Amritsar and then came to Lahore. There was much to be done here. Both the Pandits were still away Motilalji in Prayag and Malaviyaji in Delhi. I therefore busied myself in doing all I could about the evidence to be presented. I also wrote a letter to the Lt.-Governor reminding him that two of the three conditions were yet to be fulfilled.

TWO CONDITIONS

The first was that one of the judges who are to review the cases tried in the summary courts should be from outside the Punjab. The second was that the leaders who are in jail should be released during the time that the Committee sat. Explaining the reasons for this condition, I said that without them evidence could not be properly presented. Even their temporary release would give the people courage to give evidence and create faith in the Government's *bona fides*.

In the meanwhile, Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Das arrived from Delhi and Motilalji from Prayag. The members of the Committee also arrived. They inspected Jallianwala Bagh and other places in Amritsar where the people had suffered most. The Committee commenced its sittings on Thursday, the 13th, and the examination of witnesses about the Amritsar incidents started.

COMMITTEE BOYCOTTED

From our side, however, the Committee is being boycotted. On Monday, the 10th, a reply came from the Lt.-Governor that a judge from outside the Punjab had been appointed. He was Justice Mullik of the Bihar High Court. The Government had not however, agreed to the third condition. The Governor said that only prisoners required by the Committee would be brought before it to give evidence. This letter was addressed to Malaviyaji and I, too, received the same reply. The Congress Sub-committee met and Panditji explained the situation. I also made some observations. After much discussion, Panditji as Chairman wrote letters to the Lt.-Governor and Lord Hunter. These have now been released to the Press. They make it clear that, as long as the chief leaders were not released, the Hunter Committee would be boycotted by the people. The reasons for this were stated in the letter

to Lord Hunter and a request was made to him that the leaders should be released just as I and some others had been freed in South Africa. Lord Hunter has also replied in the negative. Meanwhile, Mr. Andrews called on the Governor and pressed him to accede to the request. Then I saw the Governor. As a result there was a further small concession.: It was agreed that, when the leaders were brought out to give evidence, they would be set free on condition that they returned to sleep in jail. In this the principle behind our demand was being conceded in part and so the Congress Committee met again to consider the issue. It was resolved that the Lt.-Governor's offer be accepted, provided the prisoners were left free on the other days as on parole and permitted to be present in the court to assist our lawyers. Mr. Andrews then went to finalize the matter, but the Governor refused to agree. Panditji has written again to Lord Hunter. The Government officials whose actions are under scrutiny, the Government Pleader among them, are permitted to attend the sittings of the Hunter Committee. Malaviyaji has pointed out that the Congress Committee cannot possibly agree to a partial arrangement whereby Government officers who are in the position of defendants are allowed to be present while our imprisoned leaders may not come to assist our lawyer. The result is that our boycott continues.

EVIDENCE BEFORE HUNTER COMMITTEE

Evidence is still being taken from the Amritsar officers. It seems they admit the main charges. All three Indian members are doing good work. Pandit Jagat Narain's cross-examination is extremely severe. I feel that at times it is harsher than it need be. Those who know him say that this is his usual manner. Having conducted criminal cases for a long time, he has got into this habit. Sir Chimanlal Setalvad also asks questions in great detail. Sahebzada Sultan Ahmed asks few questions, but these are very much to the point. The British members do not appear to be partial in their questions. The general feeling is that the members of the Committee are not such as would deliberately do an injustice. Whether or not this is so, it is admitted by all that the Indian members are no 'yes-men'.

OUR COMMITTEE

As we are boycotting the Committee, it is necessary that we do something else instead. The Congress Sub-committee has appointed five Commissioners. These are to study the evidence so far collected and any other that can be obtained, sift it and prepare a report. The

five Commissioners are Pandit Motilal Nehru, Mr. Chitta Ranjan Das, Mr. Abbas Tayabji, Mr. Fazl Hussain and myself. Mr. Tayabji will come from Baroda tomorrow and Mr. Fazl Hussain from Calcutta in a few days. These Commissioners have appointed Mr. Santanam of this place as their Secretary. Some local lawyers and others are also working as volunteers.

ANDREWS' DEPARTURE

A large meeting was held in Bradlaugh Hall yesterday to bid farewell to Mr. Andrews who is proceeding to South Africa. Tickets were sold and a sum of over Rs. 2,000 was collected and presented to Mr. Andrews. Pandit Malaviya was in the chair and a resolution was passed appreciating Mr. Andrews' services in the cause of the Punjab and wishing him success in his task in South Africa. Mr. Andrews made a wonderul speech in a voice choked with emotion. I was entrusted with the resolution to be moved at the meeting. Both these speeches are worth reading. I therefore hope to give them in the next letter. The other speeches were mainly formal and, therefore, I propose to omit them.

APOLOGY TO READERS

I had hoped that, during the early stages of the weekly *Navajivan*, I would myself contribute most of the matter or at least have a hand in much that was published. I had not foreseen that work in the Punjab would turn out to be so important or that I would be detained there so long. I do not now know when I shall be free to leave the Punjab. I shall not for the present be able to work as hard as I had meant to do on *Navajivan*. I hope my readers will forgive me for this. I take it that every reader will wish me to serve the Punjab and, in the meanwhile, I would request them to accept the service which Shri Indulal Yagnik may render.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-11-1919

111. LETTER TO G.E. CHATFIELD

[After *November 17, 1919*]

DEAR MR. CHATFIELD,

I had your previous letter regarding the evidence to be given to Lord Hunter's Committee. I thank you for your letter of the 17th instant,[1] received at Gujranwala. I note that it is not necessary for me to submit notes of my evidence to you.

Yours sincerely,

G.E. CHATFIELD, ESQ., I.C.S.
DISTRICT MAGISTRATE
AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of the handwritten draft : S. N. 6981

112. TELEGRAM TO C.F. ANDREWS

[LAHORE,
November 18, 1919]

ANDREWS
[CARE] MRS. JEHANGIR PETIT
PEDDAR ROAD
BOMBAY

CERTAINLY RETURN VIA ENGLAND.[2] STAY AFRICA TILL MISSION[3] REACHES.

Bombay Government Records

[1] This read as follows: "I am instructed to inform you that Government has not yet selected the witnesses to be cited by them before the coming Commission. Will you please consider this office Notice No. P.O.L.I., dated 28th October 1919 as cancelled? I am sorry to have troubled you unnecessarily in the matter. If you desire to tender evidence, will you kindly apply to the Committee direct in the manner indicated in the Press *Communique* issued by it?"

[2] In his letter of November 17, Andrews had written: "I should propose to wait for Shastri, explain, then, everything to him as far as I could and go to England to report there and then come back to you here as soon as possible."

[3] The reference is to the Commission of Enquiry appointed by the Union Government. Andrews had mentioned that it was to start its sittings about the middle of February 1920.

113. BHAI PARMANAND

Mr. Andrews has dealt with the case of Bhai Parmanand in pathetic language in the columns of the *Tribune.* Bhai Parmanand belongs to the band of Indians daily growing in numbers who have set apart their lives for India's service and have accepted comparative poverty as their lot. It was in that spirit that, under the influence of Lala Hansraj, he joined the D.A.V. College at Lahore as a professor. By his unassuming manners, industry and sterling character he made himself popular with the students as also the staff. He then paid a visit to South Africa and preached on the necessity of religion as a factor in life-building. He left on my mind a deep impression as a man full of truth and nobility. He came in close touch with me during his visit to that sub-continent and was for nearly a month my honoured guest. I had many a chat with hiim on various matters and I believe that his patriotism was of a lofty type a patriotism that would disdain to use violence to serve national ends. He went to England from South Africa. There he came in touch with the school of violence headed by Pandit Shyamji Krishnavarma[1]. But the truth in him burnt as brightly as ever even in the midst of temptation. His frank and fearless statement before the court shows that he has hidden nothing. He has made admissions which are damaging to him. He was not bound to make any statement, but he would not flinch. He felt that he would hide nothing even though his statement involved a conviction. His statement itself provides no material for a conviction. But the special court tacked to it other evidence and condemned him.

The able petition presented by his wife and reproduced elsewhere contains a convincing analysis of the case. I do not propose to refer to it for the moment. My purpose is to show that the Government have greviously erred in treating an honourable man as a common felon. Assume his guilt. It was still wrong to send hiim to the Andamans. It was easy, if he was an enemy, to turn him into a friend by humane treatment. If he was really dangerous, it was right to deprive him of his liberty. But it was cruel to herd him with ordinary prisoners or to send him to the Andamans. I have taken care to ask many men in Lahore and elsewhere about Bhai Parmanand. Not one man believed in his guilt. Every one of them considers him to be

[1] Editor of *The Indian Sociologist; vide* "An Indian Philanthropist", 3-6-1905

innocent of the crime imputed to him. A government that exists by terror does not deserve to exist at all. For such a government has cowards, not brave men and women, to govern. Bhai Parmanand has been long enough in jail. His wife and children were deprived (I think illegally) of their personal effects under the order of forefeiture. His letters show that Bhai Parmanand, instead of being embittered, has been leading in the Andamans a life of religious introspection. It is not right for the government to keep such a man in prison. I trust that His Honour the Lieut.-Governor of the Punjab will examine the case, and what is more, inquire about Bhai Parmanand's record in the Andamans and discharge him without delay. I trust, too, that the public and the press will study this case and urge the Government to release Bhai Parmanand.[1]

Young India, 19-11-1919

114. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

GUJRANWALA,
[*November 22*][2] *1919*

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I have your telegram about Lala Lajpat Rai. I do not understand how he can have asked for money. He has plenty with him. All the same, I shall see his son and make sure. You must have received all my articles.

There was a letter from Narahari today, from which I learnt about your visit to Sojitra. I do not know what took you there.

Narahari writes about the progress of the construction work. I was indeed very happy to read about it. If a few buildings get ready, we shall have some relief. I am leaving for Delhi today and shall reach Lahore on Tuesday morning. You will be able to see my itinerary in *Navajivan* itself.

Blessing from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 9856

[1] He was later released in 1920.

[2] Gandhiji left Gujranwala for Delhi on this date and arrived in Lahore on November 25, which was a Tuesday.

115. HOW TO PROTECT THE COW

I have been receiving letters from many people on the question of cow protection. The latest of them says that I should work for the cause, even giving up that of swadeshi for the purpose. I formed my views on this subject many years ago. They run contrary to the current efforts. I feel that, in the name of cow protection, we knowingly or unknowingly kill cows. But I have no desire, just now, to place before the reader all my views on cow protection. I merely want to place before him some portion of the letter I have received from Maulana Abdul Bari Saheb. He says:

> I thank you for the success of the day of prayer for Khilafat appointed for promoting unity between Hindus and Muslims. The stand you have taken in this matter has made a deep impression on the Muslims, especially on those among them who are religious-minded. Some *Ulemas* have particularly asked me in their letters to convey their congratulations to you. One of them is Maulana Suleman Saheb of Fulwari. He writes to say that he has decided not to kill cows in future and to dissuade others likewise from doing so. If people like you go on working for unity, the country will progress the sooner and the causes of discord will disappear.

Let us leave aside what part I have played in bringing about unity. The lesson I want to draw for the reader from this letter is that, if we would protect cows, we could do so only through service of our Muslim brethren. A gentleman sent me a message to the effect that we should help the Muslims on the Khilafat issue only on condition that they stop killing cows. The letter referred to above gives a reply to that gentleman. There can be no zest or point in giving help in expectation of a return. Our Muslim brethren have not sought our help on the issue of Khilafat. If, however, we want their friendship, if we regard them as our brethren, it is our duty to help them. If, as a result, they stop cow-slaughter, it will be a different matter. That will not be surprising. But we cannot offer them our help on condition that they stop cow-slaughter. Duty seeks no reward. But it is the obvious duty of those who are eager to protect cows to give all possible help to the Muslims on the Khilafat issue.

In December, we shall again have occasion for giving this help. There will be Peace Celebrations from the 13th to the 16th December. I am convinced that, so long as the Muslims have not been satisfied,

we ought not to participate in those celebrations. So long as those who have a heavy stake in the outcome of the War do not know what their position will be, so long as they entertain the utmost fears about it, Peace Celebrations can have no meaning for them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-11-1919

116. SPEECH AT KHILAFAT CONFERENCE, DELHI[1]

[*November 23, 1919*]

PRESIDENT AND BRETHREN,

You will pardon me for keeping my seat for I cannot address standing. It had been said that Hindus have laid Mussulmans under a debt by sharing their feelings of sorrow and protest, but I maintain that they have done no more than their duty. You have passed a resolution of thanks to Hindus, but the fulfilment of duty and the settlement of debts deserve no thanks. It was their duty because there has been much talk of unity lately. But the test of unity and real fraternal feeling lies in sharing one another's sorrow and happiness alike. How can twenty-two crore Hindus have peace and happiness if eight crore of their Muslim brethren are torn in anguish? The pain of eight crores is also the pain of the other twenty-two crore inhabitants of India; therefore, although peace has been concluded, India has not known any real peace.

He then continued to say that he had been telling the Viceroy and Government to secure a just and honourable peace for Turkey, if it was intended that Mussulmans should be satisfied and then all Indians would join the rejoicings in the best spirit. He then admonished his hearers not to lose faith in their spiritual potency nor to lose hope.

Theirs was a just cause and if they meant to succeed, it was their duty to be prepared for sacrifices, for sacrifices would be demanded by so sacred a cause as theirs. They should not play at religion or trifle with such great issues, but embark on their task in all humility, firmness, sincerity and a determination to succeed. He further declared that after having resolved to abstain from the forthcoming rejoicings, it was incumbent on all Hindus and Mussulmans to observe their vow with scrupulous regard. No alms and treats should be accepted and no one should go to witness fire-works and illuminations, if any. But no one should interfere in any way with those who voluntarily participate in the carnival. . . .

Mr. Gandhi was also requested to express his views.[1] He spoke with evident earnestness, and opposing the resolution, said that he was there to offer his opinion not from a religious, but a secular point of view. He was a satyagrahi and his creed was to avoid injury of any kind. Boycott meant economic punishment and he would countenance no idea of punishment. He was sure that Maulana Hasrat was an advocate of practical work, but this kind of practical work might lead to nothing really useful. He was opposed to the idea of boycott.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-11-1919

117. SPEECH AT KHILAFAT CONFERENCE, DELHI[2]

November 24, 1919

HAKIM SAHIB[3] AND BROTHERS,

You will pardon me for not being able to address you standing, as my health does not permit me to keep standing for long. I always feel ashamed to have to ask you to excuse me for addressing you sitting. I am grateful to you all for doing me all this honour today. I have always been writing and saying that those who want to serve the country require no thanks. The service of the country carries its own guerdon. Those dedicated to the service of the motherland derive happiness from their devotion to the country. For them there is no happiness beyond that. The reason for us all, Christians, Parsis, Hindus and Mussulmans, to come together is to consider the Khilafat question and to determine what we ought to do. The Moslems held an exclusive conference yesterday and passed a number of resolutions. Today representatives of all other communities born in and inhabiting India have assembled here to deliberate over the same question. Some people wonder at the reciprocity of friendly feelings between Hindus and Moslems, but born of the same mother, belonging to the same soil; what, indeed, must they do, if not love one another! When it is said that Hindus should join the Moslems in regard to the Khilafat question some people express surprise, but I say that, if Hindus and Moslems are brothers, it is their duty to share one another's sorrow.

[1] Gandhiji was asked to speak on the resolution calling for boycott of British goods.

[2] Gandhiji presided over the joint session of the conference, attended by Hindus and Muslims. He spoke in Hindi. Brief reports of the speech appeared in *Young India*, 3-12-1919 and 10-12-1919.

[3] Hakim Ajmal Khan

There can be but only one question and it is whether the Moslems are in the right and their cause is just. If it is legitimate, then every child of the soil must sympathise with them as a matter of duty. We must not say that the question of Khilafat is exclusively for the Moslems to grieve over. No, it belongs to all Indians.

I shall now address myself to my Hindu brothers who are present here. Today our friend, Mr. Asaf Ali, addressed me two letters in which he said that he hoped it would be possible for the Khilafat Committee to be instrumental in solving the question of preservation of the cows. But I should like to affirm that, if one brother is in trouble, it is the duty of the other to render him all possible help. When Hindus are in trouble, Moslems should help them and, if Moslems are in trouble, Hindus should come to their rescue. We want no return for our assistance and sympathy. If you Moslems are in the right, we shall offer you unconditional help. This is a hereditary privilege of the Hindus. If the Moslems themselves voluntarily conceded anything it would be welcome, but we would not care to play the role of mercenary soldiers. Whatever we give we give for duty and ask its reward of God only. Let me tell my Hindu brothers that I hold the cows as dear as any of you do, but we cannot save the cows by quarrelling with Moslems. You can save the cows only by following my example, by doing your duty. (Cheers.) Please hear me out. There is no occasion for cheers. If you have any doubts as to justice of the cause for which the Moslems are standing out, let me call Mr. Lloyd George, the Premier, to witness. When soldiers and recruits were needed, an assurance was vouchsafed that nobody had an eye on Moslems' provinces which would remain with Moslems themselves. Now justice should be done if Muslims' dissatisfaction and grief are to be dispelled. They are struggling in respect to the Khilafat question on just grounds, and all Hindus and Parsis should share their sorrow. It is our duty to demonstrate to the British people, the King and responsible Ministers that we regard the sentiments of Mussulmans with respect and consider their cause just. It is not right that eight crore Mussulmans should have to face mental torment. They are in the right and they should be helped. On 17th October, the whole of India excepting the Punjab observed a fast and hartal and prayed. But this will not be adequate. The Khilafat question is a very big one and it belongs to the whole of India. It will require a corresponding degree of sincere devotion. Let me here tell Indians not to despair. Despondence robs one of all energy. We can yet demonstrate to

Britain how deeply we are affected by this problem and they must listen to us without our willingness to sacrifice. We need have no hope for the fulfilment of our desire. But the readiness of 30 crores for sacrifice can obtain them the fulfilment of any of their desires in the world. Neither the Government nor anyone in the world can maintain that there is any peace for us. On the contrary, we are under the shadow of a calamity. Where is peace? I do not see it. No peace has yet been concluded with Turkey, and so long as an honourable peace has not been concluded with Turkey, Mussulmans cannot possibly join the celebrations. And it would mean unhappiness for us all.

In the first place, with a heart oppressed with grief they cannot possibly participate in the forthcoming rejoicings, and, if they are forced to do so, their feelings would be far from those of genuine rejoicings. There is no sense in a hypocritical display. Since eight crore Moslems regard the Sultan of Turkey their religious head, we, as their neighbours and compatriots realising the justice of their feelings, should join them in the resolution[1] they passed yesterday. God knows we are with them, because we know them to be justly aggrieved. We would not be with them otherwise.

The Mahatmaji then said that if Alsace and Lorraine were not restored to France, there would be no peace for France. Similarly, Indians could say that so long as eight crore Indian Moslems were not relieved of their anguish regarding the Khilafat question, Indians could have nothing to do with the celebrations. If, however, that question were satisfactorily settled, all Indians would spontaneously and respectfully join the rejoicing. He continued :

Rich people say, that, if we refrain from taking part in the celebrations, the Sircar will be angry with them. They regard money as their God. Some people seem to be afraid that, without the big people they can do nothing, but they do not realise that God is with them, if theirs is a righteous cause. Even the big ones will be with us one day if we are all united in our purpose and demand. We shall witness quite another India on 13th December. Mr. Lloyd George shall have to yield to us, but should it not come to pass, we must do our duty. The Mussulmans have, therefore, resolved that, if the Government fail to secure them the fulfilment of their righteous demand, then they will cease to lend Government co-operation. In this they are within their rights. It is a very difficult thing indeed. But they have put their inmost thoughts before Government in plain words. It

[1] This called upon the people not to participate in the Peace Celebrations.

amounts to this: 'If you cannot help us, it is our privilege to withdraw our help from you. Let it be said in plain language that we do not want to cooperate with you to help you to crush us. Spare us your help. Let there be no reciprocation of any kind between us. We do not help you and want none of your help.' This is a sublime decision and Mussulmans have already adopted it.

But they have also adopted a step which looks ridiculous, for they have also decided to observe a progressive boycott of British goods in the event apprehended. I advise them to abrogate this decision. Let me tell them once again that there is a world of difference between withdrawal of co-operation and boycott. It is a man's privilege to withhold co-operation when he likes, but we must have regard for the opinion of the world before adopting any political step. What we intend to do cannot be effected through boycott. We must enlist the sympathy of the world and, therefore, I respectfully request you to forgo boycott in preference to withdrawal of co-operation. We have only one resolution before us today which deals with non-participation in peace jubilee. Hindus must join Mussulmans in this resolution.

Some people say that we must include our grief for Punjab horrors among our reasons for abstaining from forthcoming celebrations. But I will not yield on this point. For, I hold a contrary opinion. Nobody can be more deeply grieved for the Punjab than myself; but, my grief notwithstanding, I would not mix up the question of the Punjab with that of peace celebrations as they affect the Khilafat question. I hold that the Khilafat question is so intimately connected with peace that, so long as it is not satisfactorily settled, we have the right to say that we shall have nothing to do with a celebration which relates to an incomplete peace. Nor would it be in our power to visit the celebrations even if the Punjab were at this hour in the grip of horrors. As it happens, the affliction of which we complain regarding the Punjab cannot be undone. It can be healed. All we want in respect of it now is justice and two Committees are doing their work with that end in view. The Hunter Committee is one and the other committee is working under Pandit Malaviya. Their findings are awaited. We shall have the right to comment on their findings as to whether they are just and right or otherwise. We can wait for these findings. But we cannot wait regarding the Khilafat question as its decision is in view and we must place our feelings before the world before final settlement. We must deal with this question at once,

as it is sure to be finally settled before three months are out. Therefore, these two questions are distinct, and again, we have met today primarily to consider the Khilafat question. In the usual order of things, the Punjab question is beyond our scope. Another conference can be convened to deal with this question separately and to decide that we do not propose to participate in peace jubilee until the Punjab question is definitely settled. Nor must we forget that we have no right to say so in regard to the Punjab question. But we can certainly say so in respect of the Khilafat question. The Punjab has nothing to do with peace, particularly as we have various other ways of having our grievances redressed. But when peace is incomplete and has not been concluded according to justice, we can refuse to be party to it and thereby prove our non-acquiescence in it.

Now I am nearing the conclusion. We have not come here today to listen to famous speakers. We are often treated to great disquisitions by our brother Hasrat Mohani. He tells us our duties and if we were to look into his heart, we would find that there is no distinction between Hindus and Mussulmans there. He wishes that we should achieve something practical and I, too, shall request you not to forget this when you leave this hall. Trust in God and pray to him every morning. If the Khilafat question is based on right and justice, God will do justice and you, too, should be prepared to make sacrifices which are necessary for obtaining justice. If you pray to God, He will turn all the kings of the earth in favour of justice and, Mr. Lloyd George, too, will yield when he realises that doing justice to Turkey means also doing justice to the sentiments of 30 crores of Hindus and Mussulmans of India. You have to be active to achieve something. You have to read the *Gita*, the Quran and the Bible and the Zend to go to Paradise. You will, if you mean to achieve your object, have to be active and all will come right. I shall be profoundly grateful to you if you listen to what I am about to say and act upon it. Whether it is the Khilafat or the Punjab question, remember that whosover is in the right gets his right. You should not be angry or use [harsh] words. By anger man degrades himself and, although in the right, fails to obtain his right. I shall, therefore, request you not to forget your human duties nor to lose patience. Don't forget that the sword alone does not kill, but words can do the same. You should be violent neither in deeds nor even in words. You should utter not a word not thoroughly weighed and considered. You can inspire, you can injure your country's cause and your object by one wrong word, and now I pray

to God in all earnestness that He may so direct Hindus and Moslems that they may serve one another. (Loud cheers.) And all united may die serving their country [and lead it] to progress. (Long and continued applause.)[1]

The Bombay Chronicle, 6-12-1919

118. PUNJAB LETTER

LAHORE,
November 25, 1919

MR. ANDREWS' SPEECH

In the last issue I had promised to give my readers the speech delivered by Mr. Andrews on the occasion of his departure from Lahore for South Africa, and my own speech, as both are of great importance. The following is the gist of Mr. Andrews' speech:[2]

> It is a very difficult thing to say goodbye after months of such close and intimate fellowship in work, as we have had together both in Delhi and in the Punjab. My words will therefore be few. Except for matters of immediate practical urgency, I have kept my lips sealed on all controversial points (both on the platform and in the Press during the time I have been personally working). But now that I am leaving immediately for South Africa and shall not be returning for at least four months, I don't think it would be honest on my part to go away silently without any statement at all (of what I have seen and witnessed). I wish to go at once to the main issues and I think I can put my own position quite briefly in the following manner: I hold as strongly as possible (after my inquiry) that no provocation whatever can excuse the cowardly and brutal murders of Englishmen by the mob which occurred at Amritsar and elsewhere, nor the burning of the holy places of the Christian religion. Most cowardly and dastardly of all I regard the murderous attack on

[1] At the conclusion of the address, the following resolution was adopted:

"That this meeting of Muslim and non-Muslim representatives of India convened to consider the Khilafat question is of opinion that in as much as the Khilafat question, which is part of the Peace programme and affects the vital interest of eight crores of Mussulmans of India and is therefore a national question, is still unsettled, it is not possible for Indians to participate in the forthcoming celebrations, and further respectfully requests His Excellency the Viceroy of India to postpone the celebration of Peace pending a satisfactory and honoured settlement of the Khilafat question."

[2] What follows is the English report of the speech found in *Young India*, 26-11-1919. The portions in brackets were omitted in the Gujarati version.

Miss Sherwood who was loved by every Indian[1] who knew her and who was a true follower and disciple of (the gentle Saviour) Christ. But just as I condemn, without one single word of palliation or excuse, these acts, so all the more utterly and entirely do I condemn the cold and calculated massacre of Jallianwala Bagh.

The massacre of Glenco in English history is no greater a blot on the fair name of my country than the massacre at Amritsar. I am not speaking from idle rumour. I have gone into every single detail with all the care and thoroughness (that a personal investigation could command) and it remains to me an unspeakable disgrace, indefensible, unpardonable, inexcusable. And I am obliged to go on from that incident to what followed under Martial Law. I have seen with my own eyes the very men who have endured the crawling order, the compulsion to grovel on their bellies in the dust, the public flogging which was administered to hundreds of men and hundred other desecrations of man's image which according to our Christian scriptures is made in the likeness of God. This ruthless and deliberate emasculation of manhood by the brute force of the military and the police appears to me no less an indelible stain on the fair honour of my country than the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh itself. These are the very few words which I have felt compelled as an Englishman to say with regard to the culminating acts of the Disturbance. Every day that I have been working side by side with my Indian fellow-workers, the deep sense of the wrong done has come home to me, and each act has been in very truth an act of penance, of atonement, an act of reparation for my country.

When in Lahore, I have gone out each morning to watch the sun rise over (the great and noble Eucalyptus trees in the Montgomery) gardens and have walked there all alone trying to collect my thoughts for the day's work. And this morning there came to me (out of the stormy time I have been passing through) these words from my own scriptures:

"He maketh His sun to rise upon the just and upon the unjust.

Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect."[2]

These were the very words of Christ, my Master, which taught his disciples that forgiveness was the final thing in life, not vengeance, love was the end, not hate.

That same word was uttered long ago in India itself by Buddha who came to save and help mankind. It was this and this alone which was given to me on

[1] The Gujarati version has "who loved Indians".
[2] *St. Matthew*, V, 45, 48.

this last day in Lahore before my voyage out.

We must probe down to the depth the wounds that have been made in order to draw out all the evil from them. But the last is not probing but binding up the wounds ≈ the work of healing.

And I would urge you as you go forward and face all the facts of evil which have been done, not to dwell merely upon vengeance but rather upon forgiveness, not to linger in the dark night of hate but to come out into glorious sunshine of (God's) love.

MY WORDS

This was Mr. Andrews' speech. My speech came before his as I was to propose the resolution expressing gratitude to him. I had not read his speech in advance. Since, however, mine turned out to be in the nature of an introduction or explanation of his and both speeches were made in order to place an important truth before the people, I propose to reproduce my speech here. The following is the gist.

"Mr. Andrews is like a brother to me. I therefore find it difficult to say anything about him. The sacred relationship between us stands in the way. I can, however, say this, that Mr. Andrews is a staunch Englishman but has dedicated his life to India. Through his actions he tells us: 'Even if you feel that you are oppressed by my countrymen, do not think ill of them, look at me.' If we revere Mr. Andrews, it behoves us to imitate his love. Our love must not be blind, but such as Prahlad showed for his father. Mr. Andrews' life teaches us that, although we must resent and resist oppression and injustice, it is also our duty to bear no enmity towards the wrongdoer. The Government has placed us in a difficult position. They have refused even a temporary release of the prisoners. We had intended to give evidence before Lord Hunter's Committee but the Government has made this impossible. We must not, however, yield to anger on account of this thoughtless step of the Government's. Mr. Andrews has done far more for India than many Indians have done. He has not spared his countrymen but that does not mean that his love for the English is any the less. In like manner, we, too, can fight for justice and self-respect without harbouring ill will against the British or the Government.

OUR DUTY

"Mr. Andrews has poured out his very life for India. He is no ordinary Englishman. He is a man of great learning, comes of an illustrious family, is a poet and a theologian. If he had wished, he

could have become a high dignitary, he could have been the Principal of a big college or, if he had wanted, he could have been in a high position as priest. But he has not cared for wealth or for position and, today, wanting nothing for himself, he is ever on his feet in the service of India. What is our duty towards such an Englishman? As long as there is even one Andrews among the British people, we must, for the sake of such a one, bear no hatred to them. If we hate them, we cannot bear real love for Mr. Andrews and we shall forfeit the right to accept his service. This is clear enough.

"The question is: When massacres like the one at Jallianwala Bagh take place, when British soldiers abuse us, kick us, debar us from sitting with them in trains, British officers want to keep all power to themselves and British merchants try to monopolize the principal trade of India, how can we help being angry with them? How can we ever feel affection for them? The difficulty is obvious. Wherever one turns, one finds hatred, anger, scorn and falsehood. When Indians do not always feel affection for one another, what can we expect from them with regard to the British? But these doubts arise from want of faith in God. An intellectual acceptance of the existence of God does not make one a believer. To believe in God but not to love people is a contradiction in terms. Faith implies truth and love. If these qualities could shine forth within us in their perfection, we would ourselves be God.

"Accepting this truth, we should move in its direction. This is the lesson to be learnt from Mr. Andrews' life: his penance is for this, it is the true meaning of his *tapascharya* hidden from the eyes of men. I have seen him sitting silent for hours in our homes. Even when we have disregarded him I have seen that he has shown no anger. I have seen him eating contentedly whatever was offered him in our homes. I have known him setting out for South Africa at a moment's notice at the late Mr. Gokhale's behest.[1] This is true and silent *tapascharya*. His work on our behalf in South Africa and other countries is there for us all to see and, therefore, we recognize it as such. But the invisible sacrifices that he is ever making are even more precious.

"But it is not only out of respect for Mr. Andrews that we must banish all hatred for the British. By doing so we shall ensure early success of our efforts for if we work on in patience, as he does with

[1] In December 1913

perseverance and with all regard for truth, the British will have no occasion to visit their evil propensities on us. And just as he is able to do the work of many, standing alone, so also if even one Indian follows in his footsteps, he will do as much alone, and will accelerate our progress."

GUJRANWALA

Last week I visited Gujranwala. It is a township with a population of 30,000. There also I found the same love as in Amritsar. As I had to examine the evidence there, I had taken Mr. Purushottamdas Tandon and Dr. Parasaram with me. We stayed at the house of Divan Mangalsen, who is at present in jail. I had, therefore, the privilege of meeting his wife and was indebted to her for her hospitality. In Lahore I am the guest of Smt. Sarladevi Choudhrani and have been bathing in her deep affection. I first met Sarladevi in 1901. She comes from the famous Tagore family. Of her learning and sincerity, too, I get evidence in ever so many ways. In Amritsar, I also met the wives of Dr. Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapal. All these ladies bear their sorrow with great fortitude.

Two large meetings were held in Gujranwala ≈ one for women, the other for men. I explained the philosophy of the spinning-wheel to the women and they, in their turn, promised to take up spinning.

Gujranwala is the birthplace of Ranjit Singh. I saw the house in which he was born and in which he lived. I drew the people's attention to the extensive damage done to this place. I observe that I meet with no difficulty in consequence of my pointing out to people their lapses at every place. All acknowledge the fact that they have made mistakes. In Gujranwala the officers stopped at nothing by way of revenge and cruelty. It is not necessary to describe these.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-11-1919

119. SPEECH AT KASUR

[*November 26, 1919*]

After referring to the unfortunate incident[1], Mr. Gandhi explained why the Congress Sub-committee had decided to withdraw co-operation from Lord Hunter's Committee and invited those who had not already made their statements before the Sub-committee to do so now. The speaker also dwelt strongly on the excesses committed by the mob and said that India's deliverance lay through resistance of wrong by quiet and dignified suffering. Truth and fearlessness were necessary for the removal of all wrongs.

Young India, 10-12-1919

120. LETTER TO VALJI GOVINDJI DESAI

LAHORE,
Magshar Sud 5 [*November 27, 1919*][2]

BHAISHRI VALJI,

Undoubtedly, you have been overwhelmed by a great misfortune. What consolation can I give you? May your *jnan* help you; it will, of course. If you do not possess all the virtues of your brother which you have recounted, make them your own and make him live in you. But what advice can I give you? What do you intend to do now? Will you stay on in Ahmedabad or look for other means of livelihood? If you intend to put any of the boys in the national school, you may do so.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 3165

[1] Two Indians were beaten by Marsden, the Sub-Divisional Officer, at Kasur for displaying Khilafat notices. Marsden later realized that the notices were quite inoffensive. He apologized and paid Rs. 10/- to one of the injured as compensation. Gandhiji discussed the incident with Marsden and declared at the meeting that the officer had apologized in a "handsome manner" for the error committed by him.

[2] Sunderji Govindji Desai, the addressee's elder brother, died sometime between November 8 and November 22, 1919. This letter was written soon after.

121. LETTER TO BENARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

SATYAGRAH ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

[*November 1919*][1]

BHAI BENARASIDAS,

I have your letter. The English article will be published. Readers of *Young India* read only English. *Young India* is published for Englishmen and for those given to reading only English. By publishing Hindi article in it I can neither promote Hindi nor stress the subjects of those articles. The purpose of *Y.I.* should be understood. The telegram from Fiji means what it says because abolition of the indenture system was on the cards and the Viceroy had clearly said that those under indenture would shortly be freed. Even if the telegram from Fiji means this, there is no harm in publishing your letter. I consider it a poignant utterance. Where it Totaramji?[2] An article written by him in his own hand will give much more. It does not matter if it is in Hindi. I shall translate it and publish it with the original. The article should avoid all adjectives; it should be adorned only with facts and arguments.

Yours sincerely,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2554. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] The letter is most likely to have been written in November 1919 about the time Gandhiji's article on Fiji appeared in the *Navajivan* (*vide* "Fiji", 9-11-1919), wherein he says "fresh news has arrived removing our fear of the prolongation of this slavery," namely, the system of indenture.

[2] Totaram Sanadhya, who had lived twenty-one years in Fiji and written a book on his life there

122. PUNJAB LETTER

[About *December 1, 1919*][1]

KHILAFAT MEETING

From Gujranwala we proceeded direct to Delhi. On the 23rd a meeting was held there only for Muslims and on the 24th there was a public meeting for both Hindus and Muslims. The meeting of the 23rd was private and there were very few non-Muslims present. I was present by special invitation. The Hon. Maulvi Fazlul Haq presided over the meeting. It will be recalled that he has also been appointed one of the Commissioners in connection with the work in the Punjab. A number of resolutions were to be passed in the meeting and a Subjects Committee had been appointed for drafting them. This Committee sat from 4 to 9.30 in the evening. There was a great deal of discussion. One resolution, in which the Hindus were thanked, was unanimously accepted. The second resolution, calling for non-participation in the Peace Celebrations, was also passed. The third important resolution was about boycott and was hotly debated. Many violent speeches were made and it was suggested that the boycott should cover articles from other countries of Europe also, but few were agreeable to this. My advice was sought and my suggestions listened to with great attention and courtesy. Many agreed with my view. I explained that boycott implied bitterness and enmity. As a result, our task would be made difficult rather than easy. The resolution, however, was accepted by a majority.

I suggested that, instead of advising boycott, they could, if they had the strength, resolve to withhold co-operation. We had the right to pass such a resolution and it could also be regarded as our duty. This suggestion too met with general approval and was accepted.

Finally, the general meeting commenced at night. The resolutions prepared by the Subjects Committee were placed before it and there was much discussion on the boycott resolution. Usually, the resolutions presented by the Subjects Committee are not debated at any length in the general meeting, but on this occasion

[1] Gandhiji visited Kasur and the other places mentioned in the letter on November 26, 1919. Probably he wrote this letter on the Monday of the following week, which fell on this date.

permission was given for an exhaustive debate. The Hon'ble. Mr. Reza Ali, Mr. Abdulla Haroon, Mr. Syed Hussain and I spoke against boycott and made an effective impression on the audience, which gave us a patient hearing. Finally, however, the boycott resolution was passed. This meeting continued till 3 a.m. Many well-known Muslims such as Haji-ul-Mulk Hakim Ajmal Khan, Dr. Ansari, Maulana Abdul Bari Saheb and others were present.

JOINT MEETING OF HINDUS AND MUSLIMS

A joint meeting was held on the following day to which pressmen were invited. Mr. Sheppard of *The Times of India* was also present. I was in the chair. The meeting was held in the Sangram Theatre which was filled to capacity. Admission was by tickets. Sannyasi Swami Shraddhanand, Mr. Bomanji of Saharanpur, Dr. Choithram[1] of Sind, Mr. Krishnakant Malaviya of Prayag and others were present. The Hon'ble Pandit Motilal Nehru, Mr. C.R. Das, and others had sent telegrams intimating their moral support.

The Secretary of the Conference, Mr. Asaf Ali, had intimated in the papers circulated by him that the issues of cow-protection and the Punjab would also be considered at this meeting. Many had looked forward to their being discussed. My ideas on both had been already formed. If I allowed the issue of cow-protection to be discussed, the cause would be harmed. If I threw open the Punjab issue for debate, both the Punjab and the Khilafat causes would suffer. I could not let this happen. My position, therefore, was extremely delicate. I had to take upon myself the responsibility of causing pain to people whom I knew. I was obliged, therefore, to refer to all these matters in my speech, the gist of which I give here so that readers will understand my intentions. The English report of it which has been published was also prepared by me. But it does not contain all the arguments. My speeches here, as also those of others, were in Urdu and I could see that those present followed everything well.

MY SPEECH

"I am grateful for the resolution passed yesterday thanking the Hindus in general and me in particular. I wish also to say that whatever help the Hindus and others have rendered in connection with the Khilafat is no more than their duty. Duty is a kind of debt. There can be no return for its payment. Mr. Asaf Ali has, in the notices he

[1] Dr. Choithram Gidwani

sent about this meeting, mentioned the subject of cow-protection. My humble opinion is that the issue of cow-protection may not be raised on this occasion by the Hindus. If we are one people, if we regard one another as brothers, then Hindus, Parsis, Christians and Jews born in India have the clear duty of helping the Muslims, their fellow-countrymen, in their suffering. That help which demands a return is mercenary and can never be a symbol of brotherhood. Just as adulterated cement cannot hold bricks together, so mercenary help cannot make for brotherhood. The noble traditions of the Hindus require that they help their Muslim brethren. If the Muslims feel themselves bound in honour to spare the feelings of Hindus, then, whether we help in the matter of the Khilafat or not, they may stop the slaughter of cows. Though, therefore, I yield to none in my reverence for the cow, I do not wish to make my help in the Khilafat conditional on anything. On the contrary, I feel that there is greater protection for cows in help given unconditionally. Only if we serve one another without laying down conditions can affection and fraternal love grow amongst us and the path to cow-protection be cleared. I, therefore, hope that all Hindus will make the Khilafat cause their own without insisting on any conditions.

"Our second problem is the issue of the Punjab. A demand has been made by several persons that we keep away from the Peace Celebrations because of the sufferings of the Punjab. I differ here also. I have probed deeply into these sufferings of the Punjab. Others may have felt these equally, but I will not admit that anyone was more grieved than I was. Even so, I am of the opinion that we cannot mix up this issue with that of the Khilafat. Personally, I feel that, whatever the sufferings of the Punjab, we cannot, on a local issue, dissociate ourselves from a celebration which concerns the whole Empire. We have other means by which to publicize the wrongs of the Punjab. Nor can we dissociate ourselves from the celebrations on the ground that justice has not been done in the matter of the Punjab, because we still hope for justice. It is for this purpose that the Hunter Committee is sitting and our Commissioners are working. We may abstain from the Peace Celebrations only if we have any cause for dissatisfaction or doubt arising directly from the peace terms. The Khilafat is the only issue of this kind. Though it is among the issues to be settled in the peace terms, not only are we quite in the dark about it but we have good reasons to suspect that the final settlement will not be satisfactory to us. Hence it is only on the Khilafat issue that we can

refuse to join the Peace Celebrations. If we mix up the Punjab issue with this one, we shall be accused of thoughtlessness and of lacking a sense of proportion, and the causes, both of the Khilafat and the Punjab, will suffer in consequence. The Khilafat issue is a grave matter and one which demands immediate solution. A decision in this regard will soon be taken. We may not, therefore, risk harm to this cause by dragging in other issues on this occasion. I, therefore, hope that the Punjab issue will not be brought up for consideration here.

"The question now is whether or not on the Khilafat issue our Muslim brethren have justice on their side. If their demand has no justice in it, then, neither the Hindus nor any others should help them, nor can they expect help. Even if they receive help, they will not succeed. But the Prime Minister of England has himself testified to the justice of the Muslim demand, as also some former distinguished officers of India. We have a right, therefore, to keep away from the Peace Celebrations. So long as the future of Turkey is not known, peace has no meaning either for the Muslims or for the rest of us. It would not be surprising if France refrained from joining the Peace Celebrations in case the matter of the Alsace-Lorraine were not settled. The Khilafat issue affects the Muslims in the same way. I hope that the Viceroy will himself postpone the Peace Celebrations until after the problem of Turkey is settled.

"The Muslims took one more important decision also last night. Should the conditions for peace go against them, which God forbid, they would no longer co-operate with the Government. In my opinion, subjects have this right. No one is bound to accept titles or employment from the Government. This is a matter of one's own free choice. It is clear that there can be no obligation to help anyone whose actions are not for our good. We accept Government employment for the purpose of livelihood and, if we are alive to the good of society, then, in order to serve it. If, on the contrary , there is a likelihood of our being harmed instead of benefited, we should certainly not serve [the Government]. How, then, can we assist a Government which harms us on an urgent, religious cause like the Khilafat? If, therefore, the decision about the Khilafat goes against us, we have the right to refuse our co-operation.

"But to proceed from non-co-operation to boycott is like abandoning a seat on an elephant to ride on a donkey. To refuse co-operation is our right and we can, by this method, bring about striking

results. But we have no right to resort to boycott; and its result is bound to be undesirable. We do not have this right because boycott implies an intention to punish the British people, and such an intention ought to be eschewed. Our grievance is against the Government. The results, too, will be unfortunate because a satisfactory solution to a problem like that of the Khilafat can be secured by winning world opinion over to our side. By resorting to boycott it is very likely, on the contrary, that we may antagonize it. Thus, boycott is as much objectionable as non-co-operation is advisable. Moreover, the British have extra-ordinary commercial skill and they can, by many devious means, ensure that their goods reach us. They can do that by way of Japan. Thus, the effect of boycott will be to invite the hold of other foreign powers on our country, rather than to keep out British goods.

"Boycott is a sign of anger; to refuse co-operation, on the other hand, is a sign of firmness. Boycott indicates our weakness; non-co-operation proves our strength. The solution to a momentous issue like the Khilafat can be secured not by weakness but only through strength.

"I would therefore submit to the people that, if we want a happy solution to this problem, we should develop qualities such as patience, firmness, truth and fearlessness. We have all come across examples of worthy causes being spoilt by the weakness, ignorance, foolishness or impatience of the workers. It is not enough that we merely refrain from acts of violence. We have known of murders committed by words. Therefore, just as our hands and feet should be kept under control, so should our tongue be. Our struggle has truth on its side. I am, therefore, confident that, if we fight on in the faith that truth is ever victorious, we may still succeed in securing a happy solution to this problem."

RESOLUTION PASSED BY MEETING

I could see that this speech had very good effect. My fears that many objections would be raised at the meeting turned out to be mistaken and the resolution was passed without a single dissident comment. In fact it was passed enthusiastically, all standing. The resolution was to the effect that, as the Khilafat issue was a part of the peace settlement and was one which intimately affected one-fourth of India's population, viz., the Muslims, and, as such, the whole country, no Indian would be able to take part in the Peace Celebrations. The

meeting, therefore, requested H.E. the Viceroy that he be pleased to postpone these celebrations until such time as the question of the Khilafat was satisfactorily settled.

RS. 501 FOR ONE PICE

Great enthusiasm was evident among the audience. A committee has been appointed to instruct the public how to keep away from the Peace Celebrations. I proposed that money be collected for the purpose and I was asked to contribute one pice. I did not in fact possess even that. It was given by Khwaja Sahib Hasan Nizami. The coin was then auctioned by Brother Syed Hussain and Mia Chhotani bought it for Rs. 501. In ten minutes Rs. 2,000 were collected on the spot in cash and many others promised contributions. Hakim Ajmal Khan, Swami Shraddhanand, Shri Krishnakant Malaviya, Shri Bomanji and others spoke on the resolutions. All the speeches were restrained but forceful.

MAULANA ABDUL BARI

Maulana Abdul Bari Sahib then stood up to thank the Chair. He said:

> Mahatma Gandhi may say what he pleases with regard to keeping the subject of cow-protection out of the matter in hand. It is to his credit and to that of our Hindu brethren. Should the Muslims, however, forget the assistance rendered by their Hindu brethren, they will have forgotten their noble traditions. I say that, whether they help us in the Khilafat issue or not, we and they are of one land and, therefore, it behoves us to stop the slaughter of cows. As a Maulvi, I say that, in refraining from cow-slaughter of our own free will, we in no way go against our faith. Nothing else has created so real a spirit of brotherhood between us as the magnanimity shown by the Hindus on the Khilafat issue. I pray that God may preserve for ever this friendship between the two communities.

The audience responded to this speech with cries of “Amen”. After this, Bari Sahib spoke very feelingly about the Khilafat and made a deep impression.

HINDUS’ DUTY

Thus, the Khilafat Conference came to an end. But this does not mean that everything is now over. On the contrary, the responsibility of each one of us has increased. But here I want to address a few words exclusively to the Hindus. They can help a great deal in this matter and, by doing so they will succeed in drawing the Muslims

closer to them than by any other means. To bring about unity between Hindus and Muslims will be no mean achievement. That eight crores of people live in genuine amity with 22 crores of another community is a consummation greatly to be desired. It is certain, too, that for either to live suppressed by the other will do no good. We have, therefore, to promote mutual affection by living in equality and independence. The Khilafat movement alone provides the opportunity for this. From the 13th to the 16th December neither we nor our children should take part in the fireworks or illuminations. We should keep ourselves at home. If the highly placed could refrain from accepting titles on that day, they would have done a great thing. Maulana Abdul Bari Sahib has shown us that this is a far simpler and easier way to ensure the protection of cows than to spend huge sums and quarrel with the Muslims for the purpose.

VISIT TO KASUR

When I went to Delhi, a wire had arrived from Kasur that the local Deputy Collector had severely belaboured a Muslim. The reason was that a notice of the Khilafat Conference had been pasted on his wall. The notice was entirely harmless and, in any case, had not been put up by the man himself. I felt that what the Deputy Collector had done was a terrible thing. It was intolerable that a British officer should have taken the law into his own hands. I, therefore, returned from Delhi and proceeded to Kasur, accompanied by Dr. Parasram who is acquainted with that place. There we recorded the evidence of the man and another Muslim who also had been beaten. Meanwhile, a note came from Mr. Marsden, the Deputy Collector, inviting us for a talk. I met him and had a long conversation. He informed me that he had apologized to the Muslims and had also paid him Rs. 10. I replied that, as he had severely beaten an innocent man, it behoved him to make a public apology. It was undesirable that people should be beaten up by British officers. He thereupon gave me permission to make his apology public. He had already ordered the notice to be put up again. Immediately after this interview, I had to go to a meeting. Three or four thousand people had already collected on the maidan. There were as many women as men present. I announced Mr. Marsden's unqualified apology and the people were greatly pleasured. Kasur is 35 miles from Lahore and had a population of about 20,000. In April people had committed most reprehensible things there. I referred to these in the meeting and, as I was not going

to have an opportunity to meet the women again, I also requested them to take to the spinning-wheel.

WAZIRABAD

From there, I went to Wazirabad on the following day. I had to investigate what had happened there during the Martial Law. Wazirabad is a small town but it is a railway junction, through which, moreover, all main-line trains pass. The town is more than 50 miles from Lahore. The people there were in such a state of panic that in many places we were refused accommodation and were finally put up in a Sikh temple. Even so the popular enthusiasm was as boundless as ever. All day men came for *darshan*. By now I have myself grown tired of *darshan*. It is not possible simultaneously to work and to give *darshan*. In the end we had to keep the doors closed. The whole day was passed in listening to the tales of people's sufferings.

VISIT TO NIZAMABAD

Nizamabad is scarcely three-quarters of a mile from Wazirabad. The people there are held responsible for the same crime as the people at Wazirabad. Nizamabad may be said to be a village consisting of a narrow lane. Its population is 2,000 and is mainly Muslim. Most of them are blacksmiths. The best knives in India are made here. I had a look at the shops; almost all tools were old but the work had a finish and was of the best quantity. Excellent wooden handles are also made here and the finest guns are manufactured by hand. A double-barrelled gun which I saw had elaborate carving too. The craftsmen told me that it took him one month to produce a gun of this kind. The price, he said, was Rs. 200. I felt proud of the skill of our craftsmen when I saw this workmanship and felt extremely grieved that we should have turned our back on swadeshi. When we do not make full use of such skill, what can we expect but starvation? The craftsmanship of Nizamabad ought to be known all over India, whereas even a man like me so much in love with swadeshi had not heard of this small village.

OUR FILTHINESS

But the craftsmanship of Nizamabad was equalled by its filth. It has only one lane. Seeing the filth in it, the 15 minutes which I had to spend there seemed like a punishment to me. There was a drain in the centre of the street and filth was showing in it. The street was full of refuse.

Having made our pilgrimage to this lane, we proceeded to the place of a certain gentleman there and examined witnesses. I was then asked to make a speech. I talked about the filthy conditions and about swadeshi. What do those people prove who keep their shops clean but the streets dirty [I asked]? If I clean my house and throw the refuse on to the street, or keep my urinal clean and dirty the street, it shows that I have no consideration for the feelings of my neighbour, no pity or love for him. When this is so, how can I claim to be one with the people? Can those whose streets are dirty have clean minds? If I am highly skilled in a craft but my skill has no effect on the condition of my lane, it will only prove that there is no limit to my selfishness. The Nizamabad street is so short and narrow that every day it could be cleaned in 15 minutes. If people so active as they cannot arrange that much, it shows that they are not fit even to manage their small affairs; how, then, would they manage bigger ones? Swaraj ought to begin with our streets. And so I concluded my speech by saying that, when I came again to Nizamabad, I hoped to see the street as clean as the shops and their contents.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-12-1919

123. DURGADAS ADWANI

Durgadas Adwani is one of the best workers I have had the privilege of meeting. I came to know him through correspondence,[1] immediately on my arrival in India in 1915. The occasion that gave rise to the correspondence showed the true man in Durgadas. He has been a consistent, conscientious and zealous worker in Sind for many years. He has now gone to jail for one year with hard labour. I have been asked to give my opinion on the judgment of the Appellate Court. In my humble opinion the judgment is unsound. The Court has erred in holding that "New Call" was a seditious leaflet and it has strained the analysis of evidence to record a finding against Durgadas. But in giving this opinion, I admit I may be biased in favour of Durgadas. I do not believe him to be capable of telling an untruth in order to avoid imprisonment. The evidence may bear the meaning placed upon it by the Appellate Court.

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Maharaja of Kasimbazar", 4-3-1917.

But as a friend and as a satyagrahi, I must decline to condole with Durgadas or his family upon his incarceration. Durgadas has after great deliberation taken the Satyagraha Pledge. And I seize the opportunity offered by this case of placing before the reader my views about such cases. We spend too much money in litigation and in appeals. We have an excessive dread of prisons. I have not a shadow of doubt that society will be much cleaner and healthier if there was less resort to law courts than there is. The rush after the best counsel is undignified. It is unpardonable when it is indulged in at public expense. But it is sinful when a satyagrahi spends money after the best legal talent or after appeals. I was therefore pained when I heard of appeals in the "New Call" convictions. If one has committed an offence, one must plead guilty and suffer the penalty. If he has not and is still found guilty, imprisonment for him is no disgrace. And if he is a satyagrahi, he has 'no business' to fear the hardships of jail life.

We in India, whilst we are living in an atmosphere surcharged with suspicion and distrust and in the midst of a secret police department unrivalled, perhaps, in the world, for its duplicity and unscrupulousness, must use ourselves [*sic*] to the gaol life if we want to mend that department and remove distrust and suspicion.

The best and quickest way to deliverance from the distrust and secret police department is to rid the country of false fear and all violence. But till that far-off day arrives, the handful of satyagrahis must be prepared to treat the prison as their second home.

I hope therefore that the friends of Durgadas will not advise him or his wife to petition for mercy nor add to the wife's unhappiness by commiserating with her. On the contrary, it is our duty to ask her to steel her heart and feel glad that her husband is in jail for no fault of his own. The truest service that we can render to Durgadas would be to offer Mrs. Durgadas such assistance, pecuniary or otherwise, as she may need. I understand that the"New Call" cases have cost nearly Rs. 15,000. The money could certainly have been utilised to better purpose. It is not right to beggar ourselves by fighting against odds. It is hardly manful to be over-anxious about the result of political trials that involve no disgrace.

Here in the Punjab I find mothers with stricken hearts coming and shedding tears over the imprisonment of their sons whom they regard as innocent. I know I am helpless. But it is so difficult to

comfort them. To give them false hope would be a sin. To ask them patiently to endure what cannot be cured brings no comfort. I am therefore endeavouring to perform the uphill task of asking them to be satyagrahis enough to realise that we shall only perpetuate political convictions so long as we fret and foam and worry over the imprisonment of our dear ones. Needless to say I am not here thinking of imprisonments for acts of actual incendiarism or murder.

Young India, 3-12-1919

124. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

LAHORE,
December 4, 1919

MY DEAR CHILD,

Why have you become ill? You ought not to take upon yourself tasks which are beyond you. You are not capable of going 3rd class to Bombay. Indeed you need not have gone to Bombay. However do be well quickly by asking for all the service you may need. What was the matter with you? Mr. Mahadev has described your malady somewhat. Please tell me all about it.

With love and prayers.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child*, p. 24.

125. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

LAHORE,

Monday [*December 15, 1919*][1]

PUJYA BEHN,

Pandit Jagat Narain[2] asked me where he should stay. I have suggested your brother's bungalow. Please sound him and if he agrees to invite Pandit Jagat Narain, tell him to send a telegram. Pandit Jagat Narain will be in Lucknow by the 22nd. You will receive this letter on the 17th, so you will be in time if you send the wire here. If you send the telegram after the 20th, then it should be sent to Lucknow. He will reach Ahmedabad on January 27. Please arrange for him to stay somewhere else if Brother is not willing to accommodate him. I have suggested your house too. He is willing to stay with you. Please let me know by wire whatever you decide to do.

I am sure I shall reach there be the 1st.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 32831

[1] From the reference to the letter reaching its destination on the 17th and from 'Monday' and 'Lahore' in the dateline. 15th December, 1919 was a Monday and Gandhiji was in Lahore. This date is further confirmed by reference to Gandhiji's reaching Ahmedabad by the 1st of the following month. He reached Ahmedabad from Lahore on January 4, 1920.

[2] Member of the Legislative Council of the United Provinces; one of the three Indian members of the Hunter Committee.

126. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

LAHORE,
Magsar Sud 14 [*December 6, 1919*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Bhai Ratanlal of *Hindustan* has passed away. Please go and look up his family. Let me have an idea of their situation. Also let me know who now looks after *Hindustan*. You should also meet Bhai Mavji Govindji and inform me of the latest position regarding the Padhiar memorial.

CHI. MATHURADAS TRIKUMDAS
247 BAZAR GATE STREET
FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

127. PUNJAB LETTER

SHEIKHUPURA,
Magshar Sud 15 [*December 7, 1919*]

VISIT TO OTHER PLACES

From Wazirabad, we proceeded to Akalgarh and then to Ramnagar. The two places are close by; Ramnagar is about four miles from Akalgarh. The population of the latter is not likely to be more than 4,000, it may even be less; that of Ramnagar may be 3,000. At one time, both were prosperous villages and as such enjoyed the favour of Ranjit Singh. They are both so small that one can go round either in ten minutes. In Akalgarh live the grand-children of Mulraj, the well-known Nizam Diwan of Multan. Both the places have fallen on evil days now. I was touched by the sight of Ramnagar. There were, here, the beautiful mansion and the garden of a governor of Ranjit Singh's. Today they are inhabited only by birds. The mansion is slowly crumbling away. One storey has come down altogether and

[1] The year and month are from the postmark, and *Magsar Sud 14* corresponded to December 6 in 1919.

the remainder is gradually decaying. The garden looks like a waste land. One sees other ruined building too. At one time Ramnagar had a flourishing trade in leather bottles for carrying ghee. One entire street was inhabited by people who made these. That street is now desolate. There is only one worker living there now. Tin cans have taken the place of leather bottles and, in consequence, India loses that amount of money to foreign countries.

Similarly, formerly there were many weavers in Ramnagar. This class has not yet been completely wiped out. A few looms are still working, but their business is declining day by day. At one time Ramnagar produced all the cloth it needed, and some more for others. The people of this same Ramnagar now get their cloth from abroad. To be sure, it is not that Akalgarh, Ramnagar and similar other towns do not have enough workers with courage and a spirit of service in them. Only, everyone labours under the delusion that, as a matter of course, cloth must be imported and that ghee must be stored in tin cans. To be in the fashion, one should engage oneself in some kind of political activity, or work to provide relief in times of epidemics such as the plague and, if possible, collect money and start a school, forgetting all about it afterwards. Consequently, these are the things on which workers waste their time.

Of course, they are not satisfied with these things and so, when I speak of truth, fearlessness, swadeshi and national education to them, those to whom these things appeal listen to me attentively and do not like to leave my side. If I am ready to give *darshan* all day, they would willingly sit by me all the time. That is the state of both men and women.

At Akalgarh and Ramnagar, both men and women were beside themselves with love. They showered flowers on me. At both places, besides collecting evidence, I spoke at great length on swadeshi and other matters.

GARLANDS OF YARN

I am distressed with these masses of flowers and the useless expenditure incurred on them. I have, therefore, started asking for garlands of hand-spun yarn and I have been getting them. In Akalgarh, they piled up by my side heaps of yarn spun by ladies of good family, and of cloth woven from such yarn, which included beautiful khadi sheets and towels.

THESE INNOCENT VILLAGES

I got the impression that the people of Akalgarh and Ramnagar were entirely innocent. The best among them have been arrested and put to harassment. They have been imprisoned, insulted, abused and fined. We in Bombay Presidency cannot even imagine some of the things which I saw here.

HAFIZABAD

I do not, however, want to keep the reader too long over the tale of suffering of the Punjab people. Having forged a bond of love with these two villages, we moved on to Hafizabad. This is, comparatively, a larger village. It has rice mills and has a brisk trade in other things as well. In consequence, the place looks more like a town than a village and has an air of prosperity. The people here cannot be held altogether blameless, but the punishment meted out to them has been out of all proportion to their transgressions. The officers seem to have but one idea put into their head to humiliate the leaders of the people and, if possible, to ruin them altogether.

THE LORD'S WILL PREVAILS

But man does not always have his way. One recalls on this occasion Narasinh Mehta's poem "If man's efforts could avail, we would find none in misery". The officers thought that they would now be able to suppress the people totally and be free to do as they liked. But their efforts at suppression have had the opposite effect. The leaders have not been cowed down nor have the people abandoned them. Slowly people are shedding their fear. Thus, man proposed one thing and God disposed it otherwise. Those who at one time were timid have now given up all fear.

I think the officials, too, are repenting. They may not do so in public, and General Dyer may say what he likes; they do feel ashamed, none the less. They dimly realize that they have made a mistake and, I am certain that, if we go about our task in a clean way, the time will come when they will repent openly.

In Hafizabad, I also got an opportunity of addressing some students. I pointed out to them that their education, being exclusively of the intellect, was incomplete, that if it could be intellectual, emotional and physical, it would nourish all three the mind, the soul and the body, ≈ and that it was such education which would profit India. The mind [I said] could be developed only through one's own

language, the heart and the soul only through dharma; this latter the pupils would imbibe only if the teacher's conduct was informed with it, if they saw it in every word and act of his. Physical education could be given by teaching the pupil agriculture and weaving and hardening his body through them. Every teacher or school or town which was taken could make a beginning in this programme. No one need wait for others or for the establishment of swaraj. If the seed is sown anywhere, it will bear fruit and will have an effect somewhere else. The head master is planning to make an experiment in his school.

WOMEN'S MEETING

The women in Hafizabad could not attend the men's meeting as the time and place did not suit them. Hence, they asked for a separate meeting and I agreed to it. The result was that the women came in even greater numbers than the men. I always confine myself to two subjects when addressing women one, that they should exert themselves for the sake of those of their dear ones who are in jail, but abandon all anxiety and grieving, and, two, that they should take up the spinning-wheel as a religious duty. At the end of my talk, there was a heap of hand-spun yarn before me. There were garlands of yarn, too, ever so many of them. Several women vowed always to wear hand-woven cloth made from hand-spun yarn.

REQUEST TO GUJARATI WOMEN

The women of Gujarat have much to learn from their sisters in the Punjab. Punjabi women are extremely simple in their attire. Very few wear ornaments, or materials such as gold lace, and all know spinning. Not all these women are poor. It is quite likely that they possess as much money as their sisters in Gujarat. But they love the spinning-wheel and prefer simplicity. Their freedom and modesty appeal to me very much. The men show them great respect. When I arrived at Ramnagar, men and women came a mile out to meet me and the men always made way for the women. I have already referred to this courtesy and restraint and I still have the same experience. If any women in Gujarat have a doubt regarding the spinning-wheel, I would request them to follow the example of their sisters in the Punjab and I would ask the men to emulate the Punjabis' courtesy towards their womenfolk.

SANGLA HILL

From Hafizabad we went to Sangla Hill. This is a new village and, consequently, I did not observe here the seriousness I did in the other three villages. The people seemed to be new settlers, rather than long-established and mature residents. But there was nothing wanting in their love. As we reached there at night, the whole village was lighted up with little candles and there were thousands of them illuminating every street.

We were accommodated in the Thakurdwara Temple. The people felt that it would be fitting to welcome me in a religious institution. The reason why I was put up in a temple in Hafizabad did not, in fact, exist in the case of Sangla Hill. The idea there was to do me greater honour. I was, of course, happy, except that I feared that the people were showing me too blind a regard.

As in Akalgarh and Ramnagar, in Sangla also the people had been spared no suffering though they had done nothing wrong.

IN LAHORE

From here we went for a day to Lahore. It was necessary to meet Panditji. Shri Uttamlal Trivedi happened to be there with his wife and nephew. He had come on behalf of the Presidency Association to ascertain the reasons why the local committee here had boycotted the Hunter Committee. I could have a talk with him. Panditji had already had a talk with him.

MEETING WITH MR. NEVILLE

Mr. Neville has been invited by the Sub-committee. He is a well-known solicitor from England and has come to help in the collection of evidence. I had a meeting with him, too. He has met the Lt.-Governor and also seen the work of the Hunter Committee. For the present, he will remain in the Punjab. Pandit Motilal has recovered and has come down. He has now taken a separate house for himself and stays with his family. As he has been elected President of the Congress, he is busy preparing his speech.

SHEIKHUPURA

Having stayed 36 hours in Lahore, we proceeded to Sheikhupura, from where I am writing this letter. This is a tiny village 25 miles from Lahore. Here, too, the position is the same as that at Sangla Hill. The people are innocent. Gujranwala and the other

villages I have mentioned are all in the same district and, therefore, under one administrative officer who, it seems, knows no difference between justice and injustice. Consequently, Sheikhupura is in the same plight as Akalgarh and other villages, having had to suffer the same repression.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, *14-12-1919*

128. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

LAHORE,
[*December 7*] *1919*

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your two letters including the long one. You have done well in sending it. As I have already said, you have come to the Ashram not to lose your Christianity, but to perfect it.

If you don't feel the presence of God at the prayer meetings, then remember that the names Rama and Krishna signify the same as Jesus to you.

You should most decidedly not attend these meetings and you should pray in your private chamber. The prayer meetings are not meant to force anyone into a position. They are meant for free men and women. The children must attend. Those who abstain from sheer laziness must attend. But for you, no one can misunderstand your abstinence. You will therefore please do that which gives you the greatest peace. The Ashram is nothing if it does to enable you to realize God more and more fully day by day. If on Sundays or any other days you would go to Church, of course you shall do so.

I am so glad you have given me that long and beautiful letter and enabled me to enter more fully into your heart. Your coming is a joy to me. It will be a greater joy, if upon experience you find it gives you peace, health and real joy and if it thereby enables the other Christians to see that God and Christianity can be found also in institutions that do not call themselves Christian and that truth is the same in all religious though through refraction it appears for the time being variegated even as light does through a prism.

I feel like you that it is too early for you to go to Madras even to meet Miss Petersen. Will she not come to the Ashram? She ought

to. Let her come and see it in its new habitation and feel its progress if there is any made. Please give her my love.

I do hope you have now completely recovered. You should not trifle with your body. You cannot take the liberties that those born on the soil can. You must therefore insist on the comforts your body needs.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child*, pp. 45-6

129. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

CHUDKHANA,

Sunday [*December 7, 1919*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I got your letter while I was touring. I shall return to Lahore the day after tomorrow, Tuesday. I had a telegram from Harilal to say that he was coming to see me.

With Ba things are as you say and I am unhappy about it. So long as she does not consider you all with the same regard as Harilal, her staying in the Ashram is in vain. But we cannot escape the situation and, therefore, must submit to it and feel compassion for Ba.

There was no help but to send Santok. I do not expect the results which you do, for the thing is extremely difficult. Keep up your efforts, though. It will not be convenient to build a house for me outside the Ashram. I think it will be desirable to have one in the Ashram itself, which would give me some privacy. This is already included in our plan. It will suffice if the house is a part of the library.

I have sent a telegram so that I may know what Chi. Anandlal has to say. I do not think it possible to revise the prices. Anandlal must have in mind the prices in Kathiawar. However, it would be better to make sure.

As for the kitchen, we are not to prepare any vegetables. I think that is the best course if it helps us to save and to keep better health.

[1] The date has been inferred from the fact that the letter was received by the addressee on December 10.

At any rate, this should be the ultimate goal. Just as we do not look out for company when going for evacuation, we should have no one to keep us company at meals. If we can really regard eating as in no way different from evacuation, we would attend to this also in private. It would be shameful for us to arrange for separate cooking for ourselves, so that we might indulge our palate. But I know that our experiment is not inspired by the high ideal mentioned above. If, therefore, such separate cooking has unhappy consequences, we should certainly stop it.

Plan your work yourself. If only we can achieve our aim somehow, that is all we want.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5780. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

130. SWARAJ IN SWADESHI

The much-talked-of Reforms Bill[1] will become the law of the land within a few days and in due course the new legislatures will take the place of the old. H.E. the Viceroy has announced that he is going loyally to abide by the new scheme and that he will try to make it a success. I have refrained from expressing an opinion on the report of the Joint Committee for, I do not feel sufficiently interested in it. It is not possible to be enthused over a thing which when analysed means little for the people. So far, therefore, as the Reform Scheme is concerned, I would simply urge that we should take the fullest advantage of it and, like the Viceroy, loyally work to make it a success. That it is an improvement upon the original measure is admitted by all.

But the real reform that India needs is swadeshi in its true sense. The immediate problem before us is not how to run the government of the country, but how to feed and clothe ourselves. In 1918 we sent sixty crores of rupees out of India for buying cloth. If we continue to purchase foreign cloth at that rate, we deprive the Indian weaver and spinner of that amount from year to year *without practically giving*

[1] The Government of India Act, 1919, embodying the Montagu-Chelmsford proposals for constitutional reforms

him or her any other work in exchange. No wonder a tenth at least of the population is cruelly half-starved and the majority of the rest underfed. He who has eyes may see for himself that *the middle-class people are already being underfed and our babies are not getting enough milk for themselves.* The Reform Scheme, no matter how liberal it is, will not help to solve the problem in the immediate future. But swadeshi can solve it *now*.

The Punjab has made the solution still clearer to me. God be thanked that the beautiful women of the Punjab have not yet lost the cunning of their fingers. High or low, they still know the art of spinning. They have not yet burnt their spinning-wheels as many Gujarati women have done. It is to me a perfect delight to find them throwing balls of yarn into my lap. They admit they have time at their disposal for spinning. They admit that the khaddar woven from their hand-spun yarn is superior to the machine-spun yarn. Our forefathers were well able to clothe themselves with little effort and with perfect comfort without having to buy from the foreign markets.

This beautiful art and yet so simple is in danger of being lost if we do not wake up betimes. The Punjab gives proof of its possibilities. But the Punjab too is fast losing her hold of it. Every year witnesses a decrease in the output of hand-spun yarn. It means greater poverty in our homes and greater idleness. The women who have ceased to spin are not utilising their time in any other or better manner than gossiping.

But one thing is needful to undo the mischief. If every educated Indian will realise his clear primary duty, he will straightway present the women of his household with a spinning-wheel and provide the facilities for learning the art of spinning. Millions of yards of yarn can be produced from day to day. And if every educated Indian will condescend to wear the cloth produced from such yarn, he will support and assist in rebuilding the only possible cottage industry of India.

Without a cottage industry the Indian peasant is doomed. He cannot maintain himself from the produce of the land. He needs a supplementary industry. Spinning is the easiest, the cheapest and the best.

I know this means a revolution in our mental outlook. And it is because it is a revolution that I claim that the way to swaraj lies through swadeshi. A nation that can save sixty crores of rupees per

year and distribute that large sum amongst its spinners and weavers in their own homes will have acquired powers of organisation and industry that must enable it to do everything else necessary for its organic growth.

The dreamy reformer whispers, "Wait till I get responsible government and I will protect India's industry, without our women having to spin and our weaver having to weave." This has been actually said by thinking men. I venture to suggest that there is a double fallacy underlying the proposition. India cannot wait for a protective tariff and protection will not reduce the cost of clothing. Secondly, mere protection will not benefit the starving millions. They can only be helped by being enabled to supplement their earnings by having a spinning industry restored to them. So whether we have a protective tariff or not, we shall still have to revive the hand-spinning industry and stimulate hand-weaving.

When the War was raging, all available hands in America and England were utilized in the naval yards for building ships and they built them, too, at an amazing pace. If I would have my way, I would make every available Indian learn spinning or weaving and make him or her do that work for a certain fixed portion of every day. I would start with schools and colleges presenting as they do ready-made organised units.

Multiplication of mills cannot solve the problem. They will take too long to overtake the drain and they *cannot distribute* the sixty crores in our homes. They can only cause concentration of money and labour and thus make confusion worse confounded.

Young India, 10-12-1919

131. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

LAHORE,
Wednesday [*December 10, 1919*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I got your letter.

Chhotalal is not able to move about. He has a boil on his thigh. Actually it was only a pimple. It has been opened. He will be all right in a day or two. I am put to no inconvenience.

[1] From the reference to Harilal being with Gandhiji, it appears the letter was written on the Wednesday following December 7. *Vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 7-12-1919.

Harilal has come here. He will leave tomorrow. He has only come to see me about his business.

The Ashram inmates have not at all grown strong enough in body yet to satisfy me. I feel worried. Personally, I take full care of my health. I have no doubt about this at all. If I exercised greater control on myself, I think I could be fitter still. I eat twice a day, for that is the only way I can keep the body fit. I have realized from experience that, when under pressure of work or touring, eating less does no harm to the body at all. We cannot run away from work which comes to us unasked. If a man is being burnt to death, we should run to his help even at the risk of our life. If a serpent runs towards a child to bite it, we would even sacrifice our life to save it. Only a body which has been put to use in this manner and has survived can be of any service. The Ashram inmates have a duty to build up sound health. I have done so and now I use the body, but with due care. We may take only as much care of it as is consistent with its full use. If I exercise self-control so as to be more regular still and thus save time, I can safeguard my health better. That requires plenty of courage. I must be blunt with the people and tell them that I have had enough. This is not always possible. This. . . .[1]

I think it impossible, and improper as well, to meet each and every need. More, you may decide yourself.

I thought we used to get some money from Krishnamma, rather than the other way about. I see no objection to his being given sixteen rupees. Give it on the Ashram account. Manindra's also should be on the Ashram account. However, make a note about those who work in the press and draw according to the fixed rate of payment, so that the entries balance. Anything given in excess of what a person has earned through his work should be drawn from the Ashram.

I think we cannot give more than ninety rupees a month to Shamaldas. So long as he has not written to me, I do not write to him. Do what you think best. I shall certainly write, if you wish.

I understand what you say about the buildings.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 7021

[1] A page is missing here.

132. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

LAHORE,
Wednesday [*December 10, 1919*][1]

BHAISHRI NARAHARI,

I have your letter. I congratulate you on your losing the cook. Let the boys have some training in cooking their own meals. If Dwarakanath takes over cooking as well, it will be still better. He may have a servant to help him. Dwarakanath is not a Brahmin, of course. These are, however, fanciful suggestions. Do what you think best. Why should it not be possible to get an educated Brahmin to cook? Our ship the nation's ship itself is going in the wrong direction.

Tell Girjashankar that I have not forgotten about the hotel trust; only I have had no time.

We shall now be meeting in a few days, I think. Tell Kishorelal that even when in Bombay he should not forget the work of the school and that it will certainly be possible for him to attend to the work for swadeshi.

Blessings from

BAPU

BALKRISHNA

Iron, arsenic and quinine.[2] Two pills to be swallowed half an hour after meals. Take one tea-spoonful of maltine[3] with milk thrice a day.

Walking for exercise.

DURGA

Liquor arsenicalis acidus[4] .

Two drops after meals in a glass with an ounce of water twice a day. To be increased up to four drops. After eight days, stop taking for four days.

Exercise, very little; may go out for a walk, no fetching of water.

[1] From the post-script to this letter, it seems likely that it was written on the same day as the letter to Maganlal Gandhi; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] Gandhiji gives the names in English

[3] *ibid*

[4] Gandhiji uses the Latin term.

PRABHUDAS

Take injections again. After a month, a little exercise. Not to read much.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 7014

133. LETTER TO REGISTRAR, HIGH COURT, BOMBAY[1]

[DELHI]

December 11, 1919

With reference to your letter regarding the publication of the letter of the District Judge, Ahmedabad, in the matter of the satyagrahi lawyers, I beg to state that I have now consulted legal friends and given much anxious consideration to the suggestion made by His Lordship the Chief Justice. But I regret to state that I find myself unable to publish the suggested apology. The document in question came into my possession in the ordinary course and being of great public importance I decided to publish and comment upon it. In doing so I performed in my humble opinion a useful public duty at a time when there was great tension and when even the judiciary was being affected by the popular prejudice. I need hardly say that I had no desire whatsoever to prejudge the issues that their Lordships had to decide.

I am anxious to assure His Lordship the Chief Justice that at the time I decided to publish the document in question, I had fully in mind the honour of journalism as also the fact that I was a member of the Bombay Bar and as such expected to be aware of the tradition thereof. But thinking of my action in the light of what has happened I am unable to say that in similar circumstances I would act differently from what I did when I decided to publish and comment upon Mr. Kennedy's letter. Much, therefore, as I would like to act upon His Lordship's suggestion, I feel that I could not conscientiously offer any apology for my action. Should this explanation be not considered sufficient by His Lordship, I shall respectfully suffer the penalty that their Lordships may be pleased to impose upon me.

[1] This was published also in *Young India*, 10-3-1920.

I beg to apologise for the delay caused in replying to your letter. I have been touring continuously in the Punjab, and am not likely to be free before the beginning of the next month.[1]

From a photostat of a copy: S. N. 7128a; also *The Bombay Law Reporter*, Vol. XXII

134. REFORMS

By the time this article appears in print, the Reforms Bill will have become or will be about to become law. What shall we do with these reforms? The answer to this question depends on the kind of reforms they are.

If we measure them with the yardstick of the Congress League Scheme[2], we ought to reject them; if we accept the resolutions passes at the last Congress, we shall find an ocean of difference between them and the reforms.

What do we mean by "rejecting" the reforms? "Rejecting" them means refusing to work them. Not working them means abstaining from voting, from enlisting ourselves as voters or standing for election as members. No one is ready for such rejection, nor have we made any efforts towards that end. The deputations[3] which went to England gave no indications to that effect.

It must also be admitted that the nation is not yet ready for such rejection; it has not had the required political education. Whenever something is disapproved by us so utterly that its acceptance will kill the soul, then we are entitled, we owe it as a duty, to reject that thing; the idea that it is only by such rejection that we can raise ourselves in the shortest possible time has not yet taken root in us.

[1] Before however this letter reached the Registrar, he had, on the same day, " *suo moto* applied for a rule *nisi* calling upon Messrs Gandhi and Desai to show cause why they should not be committed or otherwise dealt with according to law for contempt of court in respect of the publication of the said letter". The application was granted by Justices Shah and Crump on that day, but the rule itself was not actually issued till December 19.

[2] *Vide* "The Congress-League Scheme".

[3] The reference is to the several deputations which visited Britain to represent the reactions of different schools of political thought to the Government of India Bill, which was introduced in the House of Commons in July, 1919. These were: the Congress deputation, among whose members were Vithalbhai Patel, Lokamanya Tilak, B.C. Pal and V.P. Madhava Rao, the Moderate deputation, the Justice Party deputation and two Home Rule deputations representing the division of opinion in the All-India Home Rule League.

According to the canon 'the doubter goes to destruction,'[1] we shall not be ready for great sacrifices so long as we doubt this idea. We are able to experiment thus only in small matters. By "small" we mean such matters as those in which sacrifice brings immediate result and involves no risk of serious danger. If we reject the reforms, it seems more likely that we shall get no immediate benefit. Hence, it will not be advisable for us to reject them.

We may certainly criticize the reforms, but the criticism should be moderate and intended only as an expression of our disappointment. We can and must say that we will struggle for more.

But the more important thing is to find out how we can make the best use of these reforms and use them so.

We must acknowledge here that the Bill introduced in the House of Commons has been amended and important rights have been conceded to us. At one time we had very little hope of securing them. It even used to be said that the Reforms Bill would not be passed at all at present. Instead, the Bill will now pass with some welcome amendments. We may derive what comfort we can from these things. There is no doubt that the real credit for these improvements goes to Mr. Montagu. That the Reforms Bill will pass in no more than a few days now should also be credited to Mr. Montagu's account.

After studying the reforms, the nation should try to send honest and competent representatives to the legislatures.To the extent that the representatives care little for honour, for position and consequential material benefits, to the extent that the service of the people is their chief aim, the reforms will be better used and we shall be qualified the sooner for full responsibility and succeed in securing it.

What about the Rowlatt Act? What about the Punjab? We had the best remedy for these, if we could have rejected the reforms. Now the only course for us is to make good use of the new councils for securing justice in both these matters. The Rowlatt Act ought to be repealed and agitation to that end can be carried on in the Legislative Assembly. If we fail, our weapon is ever ready with us. The same about the Punjab. It has yet to get justice and the place where we can secure this, too, is the Legislative Assembly. In both these matters, the new representatives and the reforms will be on their trial.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-12-1919

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, IV, 40

135. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

LAHORE,
Sunday [*December 14*] *1919*

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your letter and had the vest also. May I thank you for it? I am having it washed.

Have you commenced spinning? I would like you to study my article on swadeshi in *Young India*.[1] Will you please learn spinning and religiously give it one hour every day? Your and my forefathers wore only hand-spun and hand-woven clothing. The words spinster (from spinning) and wife (from weaving) are highly significant. I would like you to set an example to the ladies of the Ashram in regular spinning. Is Fatima doing any now? If not please tell her and Amina not to neglect it. They were to do it for a fixed time every day and so were all the ladies for that matter.

I am glad they all nursed you during your illness. Mutual help and service is really the first step to a truly godly life.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child*, pp. 46-7

[1] *Vide* "Swaraj in Swadeshi", 10-12-1919.

136. LETTER TO EDMUND CANDLER

2, MOZANG ROAD,
LAHORE,
December 15, 1919

DEAR MR. CANDLER,

I thank you for your letter[1] of the 12th instant. I appreciate the friendliness underlying it and I entirely accept your assurance that no offence whatsoever was intended by you.

My attention was drawn to the article in question and I did consider that it was unwisely worded. I felt too that both Hindus and Mahomedans were likely to be offended by the manner in which I was caricatured. But your letter must silence all hostile criticism. Modern journalism certainly permits attacks on the supposed weak points of those whose policy is criticised and I grant that you intended to do no more. I thank you too for putting me the questions you have. They enable me to explain my position more fully than perhaps it has been by my writings and speeches.

As to your first question I do not wish and have never wished to embarrass Government and I have never worked up an anti-British campaign for any cause whatsoever. My personal religion would forbid me to do either the one or the other. But sometimes one's right conduct does embarrass those who do not for the moment appreciate it and in that sense I admit that my conduct like that of any reformer has embarrassed people. But I cannot be accused of partiality. Relentless pursuits of truth and conduct flowing from it have embarrassed the dearest ones not excluding my wife and children. But I was no more anti- the dear ones than I am anti-British. I have the privilege of the friendship or the goodwill of hundreds of Englishmen and Englishwomen. I would be unworthy of their friendship or goodwill if I harboured anti-British feelings. My stubborn opposition to some acts of the British Government must not be mistaken for unfriendliness. Such peculiar notions are entertained about friendliness and loyalty in India that any strong expression of displeasure in regard to acts of Government passes for disloyalty. You

[1] *Vide* "Swaraj in Swadeshi", 10-12-1919.

will agree with me that real loyalty that dares to utter unpalatable truths must in such an atmosphere be a rare virtue.

As to your second question, I confess that my regard for the claims of the Turk is derived totally from my regard for my fellow-countrymen, the Mahomedans. I should forfeit the right to call them fellow-countrymen if I did not feel for them in everything vitally affecting them provided that their cause was just. The peace of my country is likely to be placed in jeopardy, not by my earnest effort to guide the Mahomedan feeling in the right channel, but it certainly will be by any thoughtless or ignorant action of British Ministers. I venture to claim that I have rendered a service of the highest order by advising the Mahomedans of India to express their sentiments in a restrained manner and by advising the Hindus to make common cause with them.

You are right, however, in questioning the wisdom of going against the opinions of men like Gladstone, Morley and Bryce, for whom I certainly entertain high regard, but the necessity for the question really arises from your not knowing the Mahomedan claim for Turkey. I invite you to study their view-point. They ask for nothing that has not been granted to the other Powers or that was not vouchsafed to them by the British Ministers themselves. Their claims, as you may be aware, has been backed by the majority of the ex-Governors and other distinguished Anglo-Indians. What has the treatment or ill-treatment by Turks of subject races to do with the Khilafat question, i.e., the integrity of Turkey or the Turk's custody of the holy places of Islam? Must Constantinople be wrenched from the Turks in order to safeguard the rights of subject races? If you as a journalist and an Englishman would preserve the peace of India and would have India to celebrate peace in a true manner, you would ask Englishmen living in India to make common cause with the Mahomedans and thus let the British Ministers know the real feeling of India so that justice might be done whilst there is yet time.

As you have permitted me to publish your letter, I am sending it and my reply to the Press.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Tribune, 18-12-1919

137. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

LAHORE,
Monday [*December 15, 1919*][1]

PUJYA BEHN,

Pandit Jagat Narain[2] asked me where he should stay. I have suggested your brother's bungalow. Please sound him and if he agrees to invite Pandit Jagat Narain, tell him to send a telegram. Pandit Jagat Narain will be in Lucknow by the 22nd. You will receive this letter on the 17th, so you will be in time if you send the wire here. If you send the telegram after the 20th, then it should be sent to Lucknow. He will reach Ahmedabad on January 27. Please arrange for him to stay somewhere else if Brother is not willing to accommodate him. I have suggested your house too. He is willing to stay with you. Please let me know by wire whatever you decide to do.

I am sure I shall reach there be the 1st.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 32831

138. PUNJAB LETTER

[About *December 15, 1919*][3]

CHUHARKANA

I wrote my last letter from Sheikhupura. This town was built by the Emperor Jehangir and has a fort and a large temple. They are said to be worth a visit though, of course, I did not have the time to go there. It is said that the Golden Temple at Amritsar is a copy of this one, and smaller.

[1] From the reference to the letter reaching its destination on the 17th and from 'Monday' and 'Lahore' in the dateline. 15th December, 1919 was a Monday and Gandhiji was in Lahore. This date is further confirmed by reference to Gandhiji's reaching Ahmedabad by the 1st of the following month. He reached Ahmedabad from Lahore on January 4, 1920.

[2] Member of the Legislative Council of the United Provinces; one of the three Indian members of the Hunter Committee.

[3] Gandhiji's visit to Delhi, referred to in the letter, took place on December 11. Probably he wrote it on the following Monday, which fell on this date.

From Sheikhupura we went to Chuharkana. This village is some distance from the station. Our work was in the Chuharkana *mandi*. Here the market is called *mandi*. But there is a difference between the bazaar of Gujarat and the *mandi* of the Punjab. Here the *mandi* means a large square surrounded by houses. All kinds of goods are brought to the square and the shops are situated round it. The *mandi* in Chuharkana is comparatively large and goods worth thousands lie there. Some big canals start from near Chuharkana and, as a result, there is a large yield of cotton and other crops. We noticed that the people had set the station on fire and had done other damage also. As usual, a large meeting was arranged near the *mandi*. Crowds had collected at the Chuharkana station and we have to walk with them to the place where we were to stay. But the crowd surged towards me with such force that we could scarcely proceed. The people around me tried their best to protect me but my bare feet were crushed all the same. Every person coveted *darshan*. There is always much dust near a village and not a little of it went into our mouths, noses and ears. The noise was no less. At the meeting, therefore, I spoke to the people at great length about the need for discipline. I said that it was certainly to be welcomed that people feel respect for those whom they look upon as great, but that, unless this feeling of respect expressed itself in the right manner it was bound to harm the country. There is greater inconvenience, moreover, where proper arrangements have not been made and people trained in advance. It is easy to ensure, with a little training, that people make way for others and walk behind and at some distance from the person whom they wish to honour, make no unnecessary noise and follow the directions of a leader.

DISORDER AT MEETING

When the meeting commenced, the uproar was beyond description. Everyone was shouting. This state of affairs became intolerable to me. I immediately made a polite appeal to the people, telling them that, if they did not become quiet and sit down, they would prevent themselves from hearing the very words for which all this noise was being made. The people then sat down and became perfectly quiet. I pointed out the mistakes they had, out of their love, made when we were near the station. When the meeting ended, the crowd dispersed quietly and did not press round me. There is no lack of understanding or power of thinking among the people, they only need someone to guide them. I explained to them in this meeting that

the mistakes they had committed in attempting to set fire to buildings were also the result of lack of training. Many had had no intention of setting fire to buildings but, when one person started doing so, another followed suit. If the people had been trained to think before doing anything and to follow a responsible leader, such incidents would not have occurred.

A SCENE IN DELHI

On December 11, I had occasion to pay a flying visit to Delhi. I was to go there for work in connection with South Africa, but I accepted an invitation to preside over a function of the Seva Mandal established by Shri Ram, a well-known barrister there. It became known that I was to preside. Consequently, uninvited guests flocked in their thousands and pushed their way in through the entrance. They could not tolerate the idea that only ticket-holders should be allowed entry on such an occasion. All were embarrassed. So was I. How unseemly that these people who had come to see and honour me should not have been able to behave with greater restraint!

LEADERS AND PUBLIC

But this was not due to discourtesy. Are we taught anywhere that our habit of rushing towards a person whose *darshan* we seek is improper? Not in places of pilgrimage. Whether in temples or in *havelis*[1], "first come first served" and "might is right" are the laws that prevail. The educated or highly placed either avoid such places or, if they visit them at all, make special arrangements for themselves. The evils remain as they are. The Seva Mandal gave assistance during the plague, arranged for cremation of dead bodies and provided medicines. All this is certainly necessary. If even this had not been made available all over the country, we would have been wiped out long ago. But this is not enough. It is very limited service. Prizes and certificates were to be distributed at the Seva Mandal meeting. These were all in English! The reason for the rush then became clear to me. There is no close touch between the leaders and the people. We do not realize the need to provide the people the most necessary training, nor have we secured the means for it. Those who had forced their way in did not know English. We gave medicine but, when the patients were cured, we did not know how to teach them to play their part in a democracy. We think that for this they must first learn English

[1] *Vaishnava* temples

because we think we ourselves have got the training through English. And so the common people rushed in today, as is their wont. I placed these facts before the meeting. The audience understood my meaning and was ashamed. There is a new awakening in the country. The common people now want to play their part, are ready for self-sacrifice, but do not know the way. And so long as we do not speak to the people in their own language, what can they understand? How can they understand?

LYALLPUR

I shall now revert to Chuharkana. From there we went to Lyallpur. This is a separate district and is one of the five where Martial Law had been proclaimed. The district takes its name from Lyallpur, which is quite a new town named after Sir Charles Lyall[1]. The town came into being in 1896. There is a clock tower at the centre of the city, set in a large circle from which eight roads fan out. Houses and shops have been built along them. We can see that all these have been newly built. This is the place known as the main canal colony. The finest wheat and cotton crops grow in this canal area and the people are fairly prosperous. Lyallpur has a population of about 30,000. During the Martial Law, hell had been let loose here. The people had done no harm whatsoever, yet many prominent persons were arrested and unnecessarily harassed. Here also there was a huge meeting. There was a separate meeting for women and, although the men's meeting was held far from the town, women were present in large numbers. The arrangements at Lyallpur were comparatively good. Wherever the people have received even a little training, the effects are immediately apparent. I have been informed that the spinning programme can succeed very well in the Lyallpur area.

SPINNING-WHEEL WITH TEN SPINDLES

A craftsman from Ludhiana has left a ten-spindled spinning-wheel with me. The design is quite good, simple and cheap. But he could not spin on all the spindles simultaneously. He was intelligent but had not been able to make progress for want of experience. When the thing was explained to him, he followed it all right, and he has promised to try again. Having seen this spinning-wheel, I have a hope that we may see a ten-spindled spinning-wheel in India. Someone

[1] Sir Charles James Lyall (1845-1920); English orientalist; served in Bengal Civil Service, Chief Commissioner of Central Provinces, 1895-98; Secretary, Judicial and Public Department, India Office, 1898-1910

from Kanpur has also informed me that he has constructed such a model. I hope that craftsmen familiar with this work will make efforts and produce, within the time limit, a spinning-wheel which will win the prize.

JOURNEY ENDS

The visit to Lyallpur was the last lap of my journey. Still the Gujarat district remains. But I have decided to devote time now to writing the report. After giving a week to this, I hope to tour the Gujarat district.

ARRIVAL OF MR. JAYAKAR

Mr. Jayakar[1] has come from Bombay to assist the Congress Sub-committee. At the moment he is helping Mr. Abbas Tayabji[2] . Mr. C.R. Das has done with Amritsar and come to Lahore. Pandit Motilal Nehru, having accepted the Presidentship of the Congress, has resigned as Commissioner and Pandit Malaviyaji has accepted the resignation. The Hon'ble Fazlul Huq who went to Bengal has not yet returned. Pandit Motilal Nehru is busy preparing his speech. It is expected that he will deliver it in Hindi-Urdu. Copies of the English translation will be kept ready and will be distributed to those who do not know Hindi or Urdu. Though the report of the Sub-committee will be completed early, it will not be published till after the report of Lord Hunter's Committee is released. This is only proper because it will be discourteous to make our report public before Lord Hunter submits his.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-12-1919

[1] Dr. Mukund R. Jayakar; Barrister; Member, Bombay Legislative Council; worked with Gandhiji in 1919 on Congress inquiry into Punjab repression; Federal Court Judge, 1937-9; Vice-Chancellor, Poona University

[2] Abbas Tayabji, Gandhiji's friend and lieutenant in the earlier civil disobedience campaigns in India

139. INDIAN SITUATION IN EAST AFRICA[1]

LAHORE,
December 16, 1919

Mr. Gandhi, in explaining the position, states that:

The anti-Indian agitation in East Africa is utterly unscrupulous and lacks even the plausibility that attached to the kindred agitation in South Africa, for the European colonist in South Africa claims South Africa as his home and further claims that he is the pioneer settler, whereas in East Africa the European can advance no such claims. He is there purely and simply for exploitation. It is the Indian who was the pioneer settler in East Africa long before a single European set foot on the East African soil. Before the uplands of East Africa were developed through Indian labour, European greed had found no scope for itself; but now that Nairobi affords a beautiful climate and an unlimited opportunity for game, the European has become impatient of the Indian merchant and landed proprietor. It is impossible to tolerate any diminution in our right in East Africa to settle there and to exercise even political influence. It is to be hoped that the Government of India and the Imperial Government will jealously guard the rights of Indians in East Africa and that the public bodies throughout India will speak with no uncertain voice upon the question.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-12-1919

[1] This was Gandhiji's explanatory note with reference to the following message received from C.F. Andrews, from Nairobi: "The East African Indian situation is most critically dangerous because a united attempt is being made by European Associations to close the door against future immigration and to stop Indian franchise. The chief reason is stated to be that through the Indian contact depravity is the result, but advance under Christian Western civilization. The Government Economic Commission report recently published takes the same attitude mentioning specifically the Indian moral depravity and approving the South African exclusion policy. Intense indignation was expressed here by the local Indian Congress gathering which was remarkable for its weight and numbers. I have decided, on urgent request, to stay till January here. The Congress Committee decided on my suggestion to abandon the claim for preferential treatment in German East Africa while demanding complete continuance of all existing rights. Circulate and explain the situation." The statement appears to have been released generally to the Press as an Associated Press message and was published in several newspapers. The text of the cable quoted here has verbal variations from that quoted by Gandhiji in the following item.

140. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[Before *December 17, 1919*][1]

I am enclosing an article on Indians abroad for *Young India,* as also a report of the Deputation's discussions with Smuts. They are in no way confidential. It does not seem likely that I shall be there before January. But I hope to reach there when the Hunter Committee commences work. The text of my statement is ready in my mind.[2] I will put it on paper when I get some time.

I got the two large envelopes you had sent containing numerous letters. They are badly torn. This convinces me that we cannot escape spending more money. The cloth-lined envelopes are stronger and you should use them.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 7928 A

141. INDIANS ABROAD

South Africa, East Africa and Fiji present to-day problems for solution and test our capacity for nationalism. Not until we feel for the meanest of our countrymen as each one of us feels for himself, can we be said to have a consciousness of our nationality. Those of our countrymen who have settled in the different parts of the world look to us for guidance, help and protection.

And just as the spirit of nationality is being tested, so is that of imperialism. If imperialism means anything, it must mean and include the capacity for protecting all interests that belong to it. According to that test, Indians who have settled abroad claim double protection, viz., from us and from the Imperial Government.

And yet, both seem so far to have mainly failed in the discharge of their trust.

For though we may gain before the end of the year a final declaration that the Fiji indentures are over once and for all, it reflects no credit either on the Imperial power or on us that the corrupt and immoral system could persist for so many years. And if we gain the

[1] From the reference to the article "Indians Abroad", published in *Young India,* 17.12.1919; *vide* "Indians abroad", 17-12-1919.

[2] For Gandhiji's statement to the Disorders Inquiry Committee,

end, it would have been due largely to the single-minded efforts of those two gentle Englishmen Messrs Andrews and Pearson. But much more yet remains to be done. The Fiji Government has so cruelly neglected the welfare of these unhappy labourers that they are without proper facilities for education. They are in search of men who would educate them and guide them. Frankly we have not men enough in India who would do such work as a labour of love.

The problem in East Africa is becoming more and more serious, as the following cablegram, received by Mr. Gandhi from Mr. Andrews who is at Nairobi, shows:

> East African Indian situation is now most critically dangerous because united attempt is being made by European associations to close the door against future immigration and to stop Indian franchise. The chief reason is stated to be that Africans morally deteriorate through Indian contact but advance under Christian Western civilization. Government Economic Commission's report recently published takes the same attitude mentioning specifically Indian moral depravity, approving the South African exclusion policy. Intense indignation was expressed here by the local Indian Congress gathering which was remarkable for its weight and numbers. I have decided on urgent request to stay till January here. The local Congress Committee has decided on my suggestion to abandon the claim for preferential treatment in German East Africa while demanding complete continuance of all existing rights. Circulate and explain situation in the Press and the Congress.

The cablegram shows the unscrupulousness of the agitation against the Indians. Those who prate about the Christian civilization are strangers to the Christian teaching and know nothing of the manner in which the Indian settler has raised the native of Africa. They ignore the teaching of history that the Indian settler penetrated East Africa when there was no European there and affected for the better manners and customs of the people. The Indians who went to South Africa did not force their customs upon the Africans nor did they take the brandy bottle in the one hand and the gun in the other, for they did not go to East Africa with the intention of "civilizing" the barbarians. They frankly went there to trade among the natives of the soil with their permission and left traces of their civilization among them in the same manner as any two sets of people are bound silently to be affected by each other's conduct. It is a simple misrepresentation of known facts to say that the presence of Indians in the

midst of East Africans has been in any shape or form detrimental to the latter.

What are we to do in the teeth of this unscrupulous agitation? In East Africa the European has not even the plausible argument, that he has in South Africa, of being the pioneer settler, for the Indian is the pioneer. The development of East Africa is due to Indian labour which worked in the midst of grave danger to health. If the Imperial Government surrenders an iota of the rights of Indians to the interested agitation of the European rivals, it would be a betrayal of trust. Mr. Andrews mentions the claim of domiciled Indians to preferential treatment. They have wisely give it up; not that they are not entitled to it in accordance with the standard of their detractors, but they give it up in order to smooth the situation an in order to keep themselves absolutely in the right. Here then is another problem for us and the Imperial Government, if we are to justify our respective claims.

Then there remains South Africa, which is really the most difficult of all. We reproduce in this issue the text of General Smuts' not unsympathetic reply[1] to the Indian Deputation that waited on him. Never has a community been engaged in an unequal fight such as our countrymen are in South Africa. Compared to their rivals they are poor. They have no political power and they have been engaged ever since 1880 in protecting the right to exist with self-respect a right which any civilized Government would not deny even to utter strangers. It speaks volumes for their courage and resourcefulness that they have been able to hold their own in the manner they have.

Young India, 17-12-1919

[1] *Vide* Appendix "General Smuts' Reply to Deputation", 24-12-1919

142. LETTER TO SIR GEORGE BARNES

[After *December 19, 1919*]

[SIR GEORGE BARNES
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
NEW DELHI]

DEAR SIR GEORGE BARNES,

Several postal clerks have been to me. They have been asking for an increase since 1918 but none has yet been granted. They have recently learned that an increase has been granted to the telegraphists. That has made them more restless. The latest reply given to them is over the signature of the Postmaster General, Punjab, as follows:

POST AND TELEGRAPHS
SPECIAL CIRCULAR NO. 11

LAHORE,
December 19, 1919

TO
ALL SUPERINTENDENTS, HEADS AND SUB-POSTMASTERS
PUNJAB AND N.W.F. CIRCLE

I have received a number of telegrams and representation from the staff regarding the revision of pay of the clerical establishment. These representations give the impression that nothing has been done in the matter. This is not the case. The question was taken up by the Director-General early in the calendar year and his proposals were placed before the Government of India. The scheme is a large one and is now before the Secretary of State. It is hoped that his orders will be received by the end of the current month and that the new scale of pay will have retrospective effect. I much regret the delay for which the Director-General is not responsible. Meanwhile it is merely waste of time and money to send telegrams and representations to the Government of India and the Viceroy.

P.G. ROGERS,
POSTMASTER-GENERAL,
PUNJAB AND N.W.F. CIRCLE.

The reply can hardly satisfy those who have not enough for bread and butter. I have asked the clerks to exercise patience. But I

trust you will treat this as a matter of urgency and issue some reassuring declaration.

Yours sincerely,

From the pencilled draft in Gandhiji's hand : S. N. 7082

143. FRAGMENT OF NOTE[1]

[After *December 19, 1919*]

But the best part of Mr. Shastri's work for his country is being done behind the curtain. When however the history of the reforms comes to be written, the country will know what part Mr. Shastri has played in the advancement of the cause we have all at heart. There is a great deal too. . . .

From a photostat of a copy in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 7082

144. PUNJAB LETTER

LAHORE,
Sunday [*December 21, 1919*][2]

JALLIANWALA BAGH

I accompanied the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Mr. Neville to Amritsar, Jallianwala Bagh and the streets where passers-by were made to crawl on their stomachs. We travelled by car and, on the way, got down to see the Khalsa College. This College has an extensive campus. The students are mostly Sikhs. There is an attached hostel. The College owns 100 acres of land. The buildings are still under construction. Mr. Wathen is the Principal. The students are taught agriculture too, the training being of a practical nature. I hope to give further information about this some other time.

We went on to Jallianwala Bagh. The name Bagh is a misnomer. Jallianwala is a surname and belonged to the original owner of the Bagh. This Bagh is now the property of about 40 people. It is not a garden but a rubbish dump. It is flanked on all sides by the backs of

[1] It is not clear whether this formed part of a letter or other writing. It was written at the back of "Letter to Sir George Barnes"; *vide* the preceding item. The reference to Shastri is to V.S. Srinivasa Sastri.

[2] The letter was evidently written on the Sunday preceding the Congress session.

houses and people throw refuse on to it from their rear windows. It contains three trees and one small tomb. It is an open space which can be approached by a narrow lane. It was through this that General Dyer made his entry. Hence the people who had collected there on April 13 were virtually trapped. There are 3 or 4 exits, but to use them one has to jump over a wall. It was in this way that thousands that day saved their lives.

There flowed in this Bagh a river of blood, the holy blood of innocent people. Because of this the spot has become sanctified. Efforts are being made to obtain this spot for the nation. It will, indeed, be a matter of shame for us if we do not succeed.

PREPARATIONS FOR CONGRESS

By the time this letter is published, the first session of the Congress will have been over. All preparations are under way. Thousands are expected to attend. Pandit Motilal is working on his speech. Swami Shri Shraddhanand is ready with his. It is in Hindi.

MISCELLANEOUS

Mr. Jayakar, who is here, has been appointed Commissioner in place of Pandit Motilal.

The Hunter Committee's work in these parts is nearly over. It will commence its sittings in Ahmedabad on January 5.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-12-1919

145. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

LAHORE,

[On or before *December 22, 1919*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter.

You can come any time you like. It will no doubt be better to come at the time of the Congress session. Of course I shall not be able to provide you all the facilities you may need. But one can put up with anything for a few days. Bring a lot of warm clothing. It is very cold here. I find that a quilt gives greater warmth. Bring your woollen

[1] The year has been inferred from the contents. Monday prior to December 29, 1919, when the Congress session was scheduled to begin, was December 22.

coat. You may even need to wear socks. Of course I do not wear socks. But then, I do not have to go about at night and I keep my feet covered with a blanket. When you decide to come send me a telegram. Come only by the B. B. & C. I. train.

The additional work of the swadeshi Sabha has got to be done. I am surprised by the reply of the Gokhale Society members. If you have faith in the spinning-wheel, keep on Working to the best of your capacity. What about Taramati? Is she continuing to work or taking it easy?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

146. SPEECH AT ALL-INDIA HUMANITARIAN CONFERENCE[1]

AMRITSAR,
December 28, 1919

Before dissolving the Conference, Mahatma Gandhi said that he could not conduct the proceedings when there was so much confusion and noise and it would be cruel on his part to prolong the sitting in that state. He considered himself the most unfortunate in that he could not address the Conference at that stage, but he appealed to them, if they had any regard for him, to follow vegetarianism and to abstain from killing animals of any sort. People of the Punjab, he was told, were flesh-eaters and it would be a happy day, indeed, to see them understand the value of vegetarianism. He also spoke of ahimsa in detail and the importance of preserving milch and dry cattle, which were the real wealth of the country. He then declared the Conference dissolved.

The Tribune, 31-12-1919

[1] Held under the auspices of the Bombay Humanitarian League, it drew such a vast concourse of people that it was difficult to address them. After the resolution had been adopted, Gandhiji spoke briefly.

147. SPEECH AT AMRITSAR CONGRESS[1]

December 29, 1919

Mahatma Gandhi rose[2] amid tremendous cheering and in proposing the second resolution said the resolution[3] entrusted to him was a very important one. All the Indians were agreed that India was entitled to responsible Government. If that was so, they must render help to their brothers and sisters who were at that time suffering in South Africa. The atrocities to which their brethren in the Punjab had been subjected this year were heart-rending, and there was not a man in India who did not sympathise with them in their troubles. But the conditions in South and East Africa were still worse and demanded their immediate attention. Mahatma Gandhi traced the introduction of the indentured system to the request of the whitemen of Natal in South Africa to the Indian Government for Indian labour. That system, he was bound to say, was enormously worse than life in the Indian jails. Sir William Hunter had called it a system of slavery. Under this system their brethren had gone to South Africa.[4] The success of Indians in trade had given rise to those tyrannies under which they were now suffering. Their trade was crushed. It was ruled that indentured labourers could not enter into trade but must live under indenture. It was said that Indians were of dirty habits, and being of a different civilization from the whitemen's, the latter could not live with them. False charges were laid against them and it was tried to send them back to India. South Africa was the place where the Indians had fought in order to keep up the honour of their country and twenty thousand[5] men had to go to jail for it. The result was that they were allowed to remain there. In 1914 several privileges were granted to the Indians. Similar was the case of the Transvaal. The Indians there wanted proprietary rights and rights of trade, but these were denied to them. They wanted the Indian Government to secure those rights for them and to use means to maintain the honour of India. The second part of the resolution related to East Africa. There the people had not gone under indenture, but for purposes of trade. Several Mohammedan brethren had gone to Zanzibar and had succeeded so well in trade that even the

[1] The Indian National Congress held its session at Amritsar during December 27, 1919 and January 1, 1920. Gandhiji first spoke in Hindi.

[2] Gandhiji was reported to have made the speech seated because of indisposition.

[3] This was on Indian settlers in South Africa. The second part of the resolution dealt with conditions in East Africa.

[4] According to reports in *The Leader, The Tribuns and New India,* Gandhiji here cited the example of Ali Bakar Ahmed who had migrated to the Transvaal and prospered.

[5] This is obviously an error; the figure is 2,000, as mentioned in newspaper reports.

Africans had come under their influence. They had to cross wild, dense and dangerous jungles to reach those places and began by means of love with the natives to trade there. After a time the whitemen too plucked courage to go to those places. They then called the Indians for their help. Our Sikh brethren went to Uganda, etc.; and it was through Indian labour that the construction of the Railway was made possible there. After all this the whitemen wanted to turn the Indians out of the place which they had made habitable with their labour. Mahatma Gandhi proceeded to say that they asked the Indian Government, who was a trustee for India, and the Indian National Congress, which was a representative body, to interfere[1] in the matter and to save their suffering Indian brethren in Africa. Mahatma Gandhi then read the resolution which was as follows:

(a) This Congress protests against the attempt being made in South Africa and particularly to deprive the Indian settlers of the right of property and trade hitherto enjoyed by them and trusts that the Government of India will secure the repeal of the recently enacted legislation and otherwise ensure the protection of the status of the Indian settlers in South Africa.

(b) This Congress is of opinion that the anti-Indian agitation now going on in East Africa is utterly unscrupulous and trusts that the Government of India will safeguard the right of free and unrestricted emigration from India to East Africa and the full civic and political rights of the Indian settlers in East Africa including the East African territory conquered from Germany.

Mahatma M.K. Gandhi speaking in English said:

This is the letter addressed to the Congress by Mr. C.F. Andrews.[2] As you know, he was at the time in East Africa investigating the position there. He writes:

> Gentlemen of the Indian National Congress, you will understand the deep pain and indignation which the following challenge to Indian residents in East Africa on the part of the European settlers has caused me. I enclose at the end of this letter a copy of the two principal documents dealing with the subject. My indignation has grown deeper still since I have seen with my own eyes how unjustified the attack on Indian moral character has been. If the challenge had been made merely on economic grounds, the attack could have been met without any feeling of resentment. There is no dishonour in being

[1] Perhaps, this should be 'intervene'.

[2] This was published in *The Indian Review*, January 1920. Verbal discrepancies in this version, extracted from the Congress Report, have been corrected in the light of the text in the *Review*.

called more industrious and thrifty than other people, and hitherto, this has been the only ground, openly alleged, for refusing Indian immigration. But this new challenge from East Africa is of an entirely different nature. Here the main line of attack is against the Indian moral character itself. It is brutally stated, the Indian moral depravity is so great that Indians cannot be allowed to contaminate the Africans any longer. Let me quote from the two main documents which have levelled this gross charge against us. The first is a declaration of the Convention of Associations of East Africa, the most important non-official body of Europeans in the country, which has often gone by the name of the Whiteman's Parliament. The declaration beings as follows: "This Convention wishes to point out to the Government that during the discussion of a petition regarding Indians as also those affecting the native peoples of this country, they had the assistance of four missionaries, one being a Roman Catholic and three being from the Missionary Conference which was sitting in Nairobi at the same time as the Convention."

It proceeds in this way: "That whereas our national ideals of enlightenment and progress are crystallised in our Christian Western civilisation and it is our duty to make sure that the best contained therein is readily available for the needs of awakening Africa, and whereas the maintenance of this country depends entirely on the prestige and force of character of the white man, and, whereas certain Indians have entered this country as traders, clerks and assistants and whereas these people follow in all things a civilisation which is Eastern and in many respects repugnant to ours." Here then is the main charge stated in somewhat guarded language. It is more openly explained in the conclusion. The Declaration proceeds: "We conceive short of the retrocession of the territory to Germany, of no transaction more immoral and more certain to recoil on our heads than the betrayal to the Asiatic of a section of the African peoples whose destinies have fallen into our hands and who at present are unable to protect themselves. We submit that to buy off Indian or other agitation at the expense of the natives of Africa would be a policy neither wise nor honourable."

The second document is of even greater practical significance. It is, to all intents and purposes, an official record. It forms part of the report of the Economic Commission which was presided over by one of the leading Government officials. The findings were unanimous. I quote the following:

"There are", again I am quoting from the Declaration, "unfortunately other reasons of even greater weight against all Indian immigration into this or, indeed, any part of Africa. Physically, the Indian is not a wholesome influence because of his incurable repugnance to sanitation and hygiene. The

moral depravity of the Indian is equally damaging to the African who, in his natural state, is at least innocent of the worst vices of the East. The Indian is the inciter to crime as well as to violence. It is our firm conviction that the justification of our occupation of this country lies in our ability to adapt the native to our own civilization. If we further complicate this task by continuing to expose the African to the antagonistic influence of the Asiatic as distinct from European philosophy, we shall be guilty of a breach of trust."

Mr. Andrews proceeds:

The only minority report on the Indian question was an additional note ofMr. Powys Cobb. He states that the quotation which he makes about Indians was drafted by the whole body of the Commission but was omitted at the last meeting. But Mr. Powys Cobb would not be satisfied with its omission, and inserts it under his own signature as a note. It is significantly similar to the Declaration of the Convention of Associations, and proves that there is practically no difference between the official and the non-official view of Indian morality among Europeans generally. Mr. Powys Cobb's quotation which, you might as well have, is as follow:

"We (i.e., the Commissioners) have already stated in Chapter VII what we submit are final reasons against the betrayal to the Asiatic of any section of the African peoples, the responsibility for whose destinies has fallen into our hands. Short of the retrocession of the territory in question to Germany (Mr. Cobb's advice is) . . . if India requires an outlet, there are vast empty spaces in Asia awaiting development to which it might now be practicable for her to apply her energies."

Mr. Andrews concludes:

Gentlemen of the Congress, if there had been valid grounds for this attack upon the moral character of the Indian community, I should not have hesitated to expose the facts. On a former occasion, in Fiji, I had to do this very thing with regard to Indians labouring under the indenture system. I did not shrink then, as you all know, from telling you the plain unvarnished truth. But here, after the most careful examination on the spot, I am convinced that the attack is groundless in its main challenge. I have found young Gujaratis, who now form the main body of those that have come from India to East Africa, leading a domestic and social life which, taken as a whole, is a credit to their Motherland. I cannot do more in this letter than state emphatically this conclusion to which I have come. If it had been possible for me, I should *have returned* myself to lay before you the whole matter. But I must proceed immediately to South Africa. I trust that you yourselves, gentlemen, will

accept the challenge and uphold the character of the children of the Motherland. I trust also that you will protest both at the Congress itself and at the All-India Muslim League and throughout the length and breadth of India against this deliberate policy of excluding Indians on the ground of moral unfitness from the whole of Africa.

I commend both the resolutions to the Congress, and I hope, and I have not the slightest doubt, that the Congress will take up the challenge and return the reply that is deserved by the Europeans in East Africa.[1]

Report of the Thirty-fourth Session of the Indian National Congress

148. RESOLUTION FOR CONGRESS

AMRITSAR,
[*December 30, 1919*][2]

This Congress offers its respectful sympathy and condolences to the relatives of those whether English or Indian who were killed or wounded during the April disturbances.

This Congress resolves that the site known as Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar be acquired for the nation and be registered in the names of the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and the Hon'ble Pandit Motilal Nehru and that it be used as a memorial to perpetuate the memory of those who were killed or wounded on the 13th day of April last during the massacre by General Dyer and in order to give effect to the intention of the Congress the following are appointed a committee: Madan Mohan Malaviya, Motilal Nehru, C. R. Das and Swami Shraddhanand, with power to devise the best method of perpetuating the memory of the dead, to have a proper trust prepared, and to collect subscriptions for the purpose and otherwise to carry out the trust.

This Congress is of opinion that it is impossible to have real peace in India until the legislation popularly known the Rowlatt Act which was passed in the face of the unanimous opposition of the country [is withdrawn]. This Congress therefore respectfully urges upon the Rt. Hon. the Secretary of State for India to advise His Majesty to veto the said Act.

[1] The resolution was seconded by Nadirshah Cama from South Africa and supported by K. Natarajan, editor of *The Indian Social Reformer*, and others.

[2] The resolution was moved by Gandhiji at the Congress session at Amritsar on December 30, 1919.

This Congress enters its emphatic protest against the action of the Government of India in prematurely passing the Indemnity Bill even though the acts in respect of which indemnity was granted wereto be the subject of investigation by an official inquiry and in spite of the strong opposition by the Press, numerous public bodies and the majority of the non-official members of the Imperial Legislative Council.

From a copy: A.I.C.C. File. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

149. THE ROYAL PROCLAMATION

The Proclamation issued by the Sovereign on the 24th inst. is a document of which the British people have every reason to be proud, and with which every Indian ought to feel satisfied. Coming on the top of the disclosures made before Lord Hunter's Committee, the Proclamation gives one an insight into the true British character. For, as the Proclamation shows it at its best, General Dyer's inhumanity shows it at its worst. The Proclamation is the evidence of the intention to do justice, as General Dyer's deed is proof of man becoming devil under fear and excitement. I believe that the juxtaposition of the two events is a pure accident. The Proclamation was the inevitable consequence of the great measure which has received Royal assent. It was the finishing touch. The Reforms Act coupled with the Proclamation is an earnest of the intention of the British people to do justice to India. And it ought to remove suspicion on that score. But that does not mean that we may sit with folded hands and may still expect to get what we want. Under the British Constitution no one gets anything without a hard fight for it. No one for a moment believes the statements made in the Parliament that the reforms have not been granted because of the agitation. We must lay to heart the advice of the President of the Congress that we shall gain nothing without agitation. We would have been nowhere if there had been no Congress to agitate for the rights of the people. Agitation means no more than movement towards something. But just as all movement does not mean progress, so does all agitation not mean success. Undisciplined agitation, which is a paraphrase of violence of speech or deed, can only retard national growth and bring about even unmerited retribution such as the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre. Disciplined agitation is the condition of national growth. The most correct agitation, therefore, consists in the most correct action and we have

little doubt that the Royal Proclamation and the Reforms mean not less agitation and less work but more agitation and more work of the correct type.

The Reforms are undoubtedly incomplete; they do not give us enough; we were entitled to more, we could have managed more. But the Reforms are not such as we may reject. On the contrary they are such as to enable us to expand. Our duty, therefore, is not to subject them to carping criticism, but to settle down quietly to work so as to make them a thorough success and thus anticipate the time for a full measure of responsibility. Our work, therefore, may now well consist in agitation turned inward. Let us concentrate on riding ourselves of social abuses, on producing a strong electorate and on sending to the councils men who would seek election not for self-advertisement but for national service.

There has been much mutual distrust between us ≈ the English and ourselves. General Dyer forgot the dignity of man and became unmanly because he was seized with distrust and consequent fear. He feared that he might be "assaulted". The Proclamation, more than the Reforms, replaces distrust by trust. It remains to be seen whether the trust will filter down to the Civil Service. But let us assume that it will, and let us respond in the fullest measure. We cannot be wrong in so doing. To trust is a virtue. It is weakness that begets distrust. The best satisfaction we can show is undoubtedly to work gracefully and ungrudgingly. Our honest work will constitute the best guarantee for quickening the pace of progress towards the goal.

Throughout all these years, the one figure that has laboured for India without, for a single moment, turning back is Mr. Montagu. We have had many Secretaries of State who have adorned their office. But no Secretary has so well adorned it as Mr. Montagu. He has been a true friend of India. He has earned our gratitude. And for Lord Sinha? He has added lustre to his country. India has every reason to be proud of him.

Young India, 31-12-1919

150. LETTER TO ANASUYABHEN SARABHAI

Wednesday [*December 31, 1919*][1]

PUJYA BEHN,

I have sent a wire about the prisoners. I had some discussion with the judges. I shall not go into it here but shall tell you about it in person when we meet.

I have your letter. I shall fully abide by it.

I shall arrive there on Sunday. There is no time for more. I hope you are in touch with Saraladevi.[2]

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 32832

151. LETTER TO STUDENTS

[1919][3]

A student means one who is hungry for learning. Learning is knowledge of what is worth knowing about. The only thing worth knowing about is the *atman*. True knowledge is thus knowledge of the Self. But in order to attain this knowledge, one has to know Literature, History, Geography, Mathematics, etc. All these are by way of means. Knowledge of letters is considered essential in order that one might acquire knowledge of these subjects. It is not as if men of knowledge without this equipment do not exist within our experience. One who knows this would not go mad after knowledge of letters or of literature and other subjects; he would become mad only after knowledge of the Self. He will give up anything which proves an obstacle in the pursuit of this knowledge and dedicate himself only to that which helps him in that pursuit. The student-life of one who realizes this never ends and, whether eating, drinking, sleeping,

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's talk with the judges, presumably of the Hunter Committee; also from the reference to Gandhiji's reaching Ahmedabad on Sunday. Gandhiji reached Ahmedabad on January 4, 1920, which was a Sunday and the Wednesday preceding this date fell on December 31, 1919.

[2] Saraladevi Chowdharani

[3] The date of this letter is not available.

playing, digging, weaving, spinning or doing any other work, he is all the time growing in this knowledge. For this purpose, one has to develop one's faculty of observation. One would not, then, always need a multitude of teachers or, rather, would look upon the whole world as one's teacher and accept everything in it which is good.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5982

152. SPEECH ON REFORMS RESOLUTION AT AMRITSAR CONGRESS[1]

January 1, 1920

Mr. Gandhi, speaking in Hindi, said that he was pained to speak against the resolution moved by Mr. Das and seconded by Mr. Tilak. He agreed with the resolution to a great extent but he was not prepared to characterize the Reform as "disappointing"[2] .

By "disappointing" it was meant that one was unable to do any work in that connection. But those who called the Reforms "disappointing" had said that they would fill the Council with their own candidates. Mr. Gandhi asked the Congress to consider that. If they wanted to utilize the Reforms Act, why should they call it "disappointing"?

He, then, moved his amendment which different from the one printed in the agenda paper yesterday. Mr. Gandhi's altered amendment omitted the word

[1] Gandhiji spoke on the resolution moved by C.R. Das which read as follows:
(a) "That this Congress reiterates its declaration of last year that India is fit for full Responsible Government and repudiates all assumptions and assertions to the contrary wherever made.
(b) That this Congress adheres to the resolutions passed at Delhi Congress regarding Constitutional Reforms and is of opinion that the Reforms Act is inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing.
(c) That this Congress further urges that Parliament should take early steps to establish full Responsible Government in India in accordance with the principle of self-determination."
The resolution was supported by S. Satyamurti, Hasrat Mohani, Rambhuj Dutt Choudhry and Chandra Bansi Sahai. The report of Gandhiji's speech in Hindi is taken from *The Tribune*, 3-1-1920.

[2] Tilak had observed in his speech that "the expressions 'inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing' were not at all new. They had expressed them in previous Congresses and their objection still remained. Some people would have liked to take away the word 'disappointing'. He saw no reason for this. Nothing had happened in the interim to change their view."

"disappointing" at the end[1] and ran:

Pending such introduction [of Responsible Government] this Congress begs loyally to respond to the sentiments expressed in the Royal Proclamation, namely, "Let it (the new era) begin with a common determination among my people and my officers to work together for a common purpose" and trusts that both the authorities and the people will co-operate so to work the Reforms as to secure an early establishment of full responsible government and this Congress offers its warmest thanks to the Right Hon'ble E.S. Montagu for his labours in connection with them.[2]

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

I have done with Hindi, and by the indulgence of the President of this Congress who has laboured for us throughout all these anxious days in the midst of the greatest difficulties of which you can have no conception, I shall occupy a little more of your time and make a final appeal to those friends who have not been able to follow me in this matter. You have heard those who spoke in English. I do not need to read my amendment to them. You have seen the amendment that stands in my name. I want to give you the fullest assurance that nothing could have pleased me more than not to have appeared before you in order to divide this House, but when I found that duty demanded of me that I should say a word, even against revered countrymen of mine, even against those who have sacrificed themselves for the sake of the country, when I found that they did not make sufficient appeal to my head or to my heart, and when I felt that an acceptance of the position that underlay their proposition would mean something not good for the country, I felt I at least should have my own say and make my own position clear to the country. Throughout my life I have understood the principle of compromise; I have understood the spirit of democracy. I yield to no one in my regard for both these things, but throughout my life I have also found that there come occasions in a man's life who wants to regulate his life according to the voice of his own conscience, according to the immutable laws of God as he understands them; I say there come occasions in the life of such a man when he must grasp and embrace, as he would embrace a brother parting with his dearest friends, and

[1] As a consequential change the word "and" after "unsatisfactory" was shifted and placed after "inadequate".

[2] Gandhiji then spoke in English.

that time stared me in the face two days ago. It is not a matter of removing a word here and a word there. If I could have managed to have the word "disappointing", believe me, I would not have risen before this audience, wasted your time and my nation's valuable time in higgling over a word. I say to you it is not right to have the word "disappointing". You saw an amendment[1] in my name yesterday which I have withdrawn. It expressed my opinion in more graceful language: I do not claim any better knowledge of English on that account, but I had pinned my heart on it, and that is my estimation of my own phraseology. I contend that that amendment expresses the same thing in more graceful language, but I say to myself, and I said to myself yesterday, "Never mind the grace. If you can get the substance in another language, you shall take it." I have, therefore, taken those three paragraphs in the resolution in their entirety with the exception of the adjective "disappointing", because that also entirely represents my feeling. I do believe with Tilak Maharaj, Mr. Das and all the other friends, that we are fit for responsible government fully to-day. (Hear, hear). I do believe that what we are getting falls far short of the Congress ideal. (Hear, hear). I do believe that at the earliest possible moment we should have responsible government. I am in accord with them. What then? All that is gone. But how are we to build our future? That is a question to which they addressed themselves and I addressed myself, and their conclusion was, let the country go as it will. We shall not give the lead to the country from this platform. What was the meaning of it? The meaning as I gave to it was, our policy must be obstructive, 'co-operation', yes, but in the mind, it shall not be in the air. If there is to be co-operation under definite conditions, then I say, let us lay down those conditions. But let us make our point perfectly clear. Their position again was, why should we thank a servant of ours? After all, who is Mr. Montagu? He is our servant. If he has done a little bit of his duty, why do you want

[1] The amendment was to the following effect: "In the opinion of the Congress, whilst the Reforms Act falls short of the requirements of the situation in India and therefore inadequate and unsatisfactory, the Congress recognizes, it is a definite step towards Responsible Governmentand without prejudice to its full rights to agitate at the earliest opportunity for remedying the glaring omissions in the said Act, it calls upon the people to co-operate with the authorities in making the Reforms a success and that this Congress expresses its cordial thanks to the Right Hon'ble E.S. Montagu and Lord Sinha for their labours on behalf of India in connection with the constitutional reforms."

to thank him? It is an attitude you may sympathize with sometimes, but I say to this great audience that that is not an attitude which is worthy of yourselves. If in the heart of your hearts you can say that Mr. Montagu, throughout his career as Secretary of State for India, has done one thing, namely, he has overborne the opposition led by Lord Sydenham against this Bill and he has resisted all encroachments upon the liberal provisions, few enough I admit, but liberal provisions of that Bill, then I say to that extent and that extent only, Mr. Montagu deserves our whole-hearted thanks. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) That is all that my amendment means.

My amendment also means that we may not say these reforms are disappointing in the sense in which that word is used there. I suggest to you that if a man comes to me and disappoints me, I do not co-operate with him. If I get a sour loaf, I reject it; I don't take it. But if I get a loaf which is not enough or which does not contain sufficient condiments in it, I shall see to it that I get condiments too at a later stage, but I take a bite; then it is not disappointing. Therefore, my amendment means nothing more and nothing less than that. We should stare the situation in the face as it exists before the country today, and if, as I say, Tilak Maharaj tells you that we are going to make use of the Reforms Act, as he must, and as he has already told Mr. Montagu, as he has told the country, that we are going to take the fullest advantage of the Reforms, then I say be true to yourselves, be true to the country and tell the country you are going to do it. But if you want to say, after having gone there, you shall put any obstruction, say that also. But on the question of the propriety of obstruction, I say, that the Indian culture demands that we shall trust the man who extends the hand of fellowship. The King-Emperor has extended the hand of fellowship. (Hear, hear.) I suggest to you that Mr. Montagu has extended the hand of fellowship, and if he has extended the hand of fellowship, do not reject his advances. Indian culture demands trust, and full trust, and if we are sufficiently manly, we shall not be afraid of the future, but face the future in manly manner and say, All right, Mr. Montagu, all right, all officials of the bureaucracy, we are going to trust you; we shall put you in a corner, and when you resist us, when you resist the advance of the country, you shall do so at your peril.' That is the manly attitude that I suggest to you. I therefore say you are bound that, if in the heart of your hearts you consider that these reforms enable you to advance further to your goal, if you believe that these reforms can be used as a

stepping-stone to full responsible government, then I say, give Mr. Montagu his due and tell him, 'We thank you'. But if you say to Mr. Montagu, 'We thank you', the corollary to that is that we shall co-operate with him. If you say to Mr. Montagu, 'We do not thank you, we know what your reforms are, we know your intentions, we shall frustrate those intentions by obstructing you at every stage;' if that is your position, make it clear before the world and work for it. I shall challenge that position, and I shall go across from one end of India to the other and say we shall fail in our culture, we shall fall from our position if we do not do our duty that culture demands, if we do not respond to the hand that has been extended to us. I decline to distrust him, and I say we shall co-operate in so far as the country's good is advanced. We shall obstruct you, we shall fail you, we shall defeat your purpose, if your purpose is in any shape or form to diminish the glory of India. That is the amendment that I have come to place before you. I again appeal to Tilak Maharaj, and I appeal to Mr. Das and to every one of you, not on the strength of my service ≈ it counts for nothing, not on the strength of my experience ≈ but on the strength of inexorable logic. If you accept your own civilization, I ask the author of the commentaries on *Bhagavad Gita*[1], if he accepts the teachings of *Bhagavad Gita,* then let him extend the hand of fellowship to Mr. Montagu (Here, hear, and applause.)[2]

Report of the Thirty-fourth Session of the Indian National Congress

153. TELEGRAM TO HABIBUDDIN[3]

[AMRITSAR,]
January 3, 1920

UNABLE COME. EXPLAINED FULLY YOUR REPRESENTATIVE.

From the pencilled draft: S.N. 7024

[1] *Gitarahasya,* which Tilak wrote during his incarceration at Mandalay.

[2] The resolution was seconded by M.A. Jinnah and supported by Madan Mohan Malaviya, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya and C.S. Ranga Iyer.

[3] Gandhiji was invited to visit Jamshedpur in connection with a strike.

154. LETTER TO DY. REGISTRAR, HIGH COURT, BOMBAY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 4, 1920

MR. GHARDA,
DEPUTY REGISTRAR
BOMBAY

DEAR MR. GHARDA,

I have just arrived from the Punjab to find the rule *nisi* served on me. I take it you received my letter[1] addressed to you from Delhi in the matter. It is evident that the order was granted about the time I wrote my letter from Delhi. I observe that I have to appear on or after 21st day after the service of your notice. The notice was served on the 2nd instant. Does it mean that the matter will not be heard on the 23rd instant? All I wish to say is that I have not yet finished my work in the Punjab. I expect to be in the Punjab about the 20th instant and to be there for nearly two months. I shall therefore esteem it a favour if His Lordship the Chief Justice will accommodate me for that period.

I may mention too that I do not desire to engage counsel or to offer any defence, save for a statement like the one embodied in my letter from Delhi of 11th Dec.' 19, and I am anxious, too, that the date of hearing may not be known to the public. Will you therefore kindly see His Lordship and let me know whether a date for the hearing can be fixed sometime in April?[2]

I take it that the matter against the publisher, Mr. Desai, will be heard the same day as against me.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the handwritten office copy: S. N. 7128-A

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Registrar, High Court, Bombay", 11-12-1919.

[2] The hearing was fixed for March 3; *vide* "Letter to Registrar, High Court, Bombay", 24-1-1920.

155. STATEMENT TO DISORDERS INQUIRY COMMITTEE

[SABARMATI,
January 5, 1920]

For the past thirty years I have been preaching and practising satyagraha. The principles of satyagraha, as I know it today, constitute a gradual evolution.

Satyagraha differs from passive resistance as North Pole from South. The latter has been conceived as a weapon of the weak and does not exclude the use of physical force or violence for the purpose of gaining one's end, whereas the former has been conceived as a weapon of the strongest and excludes the use of violence in any shape or form.

The term satyagraha was coined by me in South Africa to express the force that the Indians there used for full eight years and it was coined in order to distinguish it from the movement then going on in the United Kingdom and South Africa under the name of passive resistance.[1]

Its root meaning is holding on to truth, hence truth-force. I have also called it love-force or soul-force. In the application of satyagraha, I discovered in the earliest stages that pursuit of truth did not admit of violence being inflicted on one's opponent but that he must be weaned from error by patience and sympathy. For what appears to be truth to the one may appear to be error to the other. And patience means self-suffering. So the doctrine came to mean vindication of truth, not by infliction of suffering on the opponent, but on one's self.

But on the political field, the struggle on behalf of the people mostly consists in opposing error in the shape of unjust laws. When you have failed to bring the error home to the law-giver by way of petitions and the like, the only remedy open to you, if you do not wish to submit to error, is to compel him by physical force to yield to you or by suffering in your own person by inviting the penalty for the breach of the law. Hence satyagraha largely appears to the public as civil disobedience or civil resistance. It is civil in the sense that it is not criminal.

[1] *Vide* "Gujarati Equivalents forPassive Resistance Etc.", 7-3-1908 and *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Ch. XII.

The law-breaker breaks the law surreptitiously and tries to avoid the penalty; not so the civil resister. He ever obeys the laws of the State to which he belongs not out of fear of the sanctions but because he considers them to be good for the welfare of society. But there come occasion, generally rare, when he considers certain laws to be so unjust as to render obedience to them a dishonour. He then openly and civilly breaks them and quietly suffers the penalty for their breach. And in order to register his protest against the action of the law-givers, it is open to him to withdraw his co-operation from the State by disobeying such other laws whose breach does not involve moral turpitude. In my opinion, the beauty and efficacy of satyagraha are so great and the doctrine so simple that it can be preached even to children. It was preached by me to thousands of men, women and children commonly called indentured Indians, with excellent results.

When the Rowlatt Bills were published I felt that they were so restrictive of human liberty that they must be resisted to the utmost. I observed too that the opposition to them was universal among Indians. I submit that no State however despotic has the right to enact laws which are repugnant to the whole body of the people, much less a government guided by constitutional usage and precedent such as the Indian Government. I felt too that the oncoming agitation needed a definite direction if it was neither to collapse not to run into violent channels.

I ventured therefore to present satyagraha to the country emphasizing its civil resistance aspect. And as it is purely an inward and purifying movement, I suggested the observance of fast, prayer and suspension of all work for one day the 6th of April. There was a magnificent response throughout the length and breadth of India, even in little villages, although there was no organization and no great previous preparation. The idea was given to the public as soon as it was conceived. On the 6th April there was no violence used by the people and no collision with the police worth naming. The hartal was purely voluntary and spontaneous. I attach here to the letter[1] in which the idea was announced.

The observance of the 6th April was to be followed by civil disobedience. For the purpose the Committee of the Satyagraha Sabha had selected certain political laws for disobedience. And we

[1] This was given as Annexure A; *vide* "Letter to the Press on Satyagraha Movement", 23-3-1919.

commenced the distribution of prohibited literature of a perfectly healthy type, e.g., a pamphlet[1] written by me on Home Rule, a translation of Ruskin's *Unto This Last, The Defence and Death of Socrates*, etc.

But there is no doubt that the 6th of April found India vitalized as never before. The people who were fear-stricken ceased to fear authority. Moreover, hitherto the masses had lain inert. The leaders had not really acted upon them. They were undisciplined. They had found a new force but they did not know what it was and how to use it.

At Delhi, the leaders found it difficult to restrain the very large number of people who had remained unmoved before. At Amritsar, Dr. Satyapal was anxious that I should go there and show to the people the peaceful nature of satyagraha. Swami Shraddhanandji from Delhi and Dr. Satyapal from Amritsar wrote to me asking me to go to their respective places for pacifying the people and for explaining to them the nature of satyagraha. I had never been to Amritsar and, for that matter, to the Punjab before. These two messages were seen by the authorities and they knew that I was invited to both the places for peaceful purposes.

I left Bombay for Delhi and the Punjab on the 8th April and had telegraphed to Dr. Satyapal, whom I had never met before, to meet me at Delhi. But after passing Muttra[2] I was served with an order prohibiting me from entering the province of Delhi. I felt that I was bound to disregard this order and I proceeded on my journey. At Palwal, I was served with an[other] order prohibiting me from entering the Punjab and confining me to the Bombay Presidency. And I was arrested by a party of police and taken off the train at that station. The Superintendent of Police who arrested me acted with every courtesy. I was taken to Muttra by the first available train the thence by goods trains early in the morning to Sawai Madhopur, where I joined the Bombay Mail from Peshawar and was taken charge of by Superintendent Bowring. I was discharged at Bombay on the 10th April.

But the people of Ahmedabad and Viramgam and in Gujarat generally had heard of my arrest. They became furious, shops were

[1] *Vide* "Hind Swaraj",22-11-1909

[2] Mathura. The order was served at Kosi.

closed, crowds gathered, and murder, arson, pillage, wire-cutting and attempt at derailment followed.

I had worked in the midst of Kaira *raiyats* just before and had mixed among thousands of men and women. I had worked at the instance of and with Miss Anasuya Sarabhai among the mill-hands of Ahmedabad. The mill-hands appreciated her philanthropic work and adored her. The fury of the labourers in Ahmedabad reached white heat when a false rumour was started that she too was arrested. Both of us had visited and interceded for the mill-hands of Viramgam when they were in trouble. And it is my firm belief that the excesses were due to the great resentment of the mobs over my arrest and the rumoured arrest of Miss Anasuya Sarabhai.

I have mixed with the masses in practically the whole of India and talked to them freely. I do not believe that there was any revolutionary movement behind the excesses. They could hardly be dignified by the term 'rebellion'.

And, in my opinion, the Government erred in prosecuting the offenders for waging war. This hasty view has caused unmerited or disproportionate suffering. The fine imposed on poor Ahmedabad was heavy and the manner of collecting it from the labourers was unnecessarily harsh and irritating. I doubt the justice of inflicting on the labourers a fine so large as 1,76,000 (one hundred and seventy-six thousand) rupees. The imposition of the cost from the farmers of Barejadi and from the *Banias* and *Patidars* of Nadiad was totally unjustified and even vindictive. I think that the introduction of Martial Law in Ahmedabad was also unjustified and its thoughtless administration resulted in the loss of several innocent lives.

At the same time, and subject to the reservations mentioned by me, I have no doubt that, in the Bombay Presidency, the authorities acted with considerable restraint at a time when the atmosphere was surcharged with mutual suspicion and the attempt at wrecking the train which was bringing the troops to restore order had naturally angered the authorities.[1]

Evidence Before Disorders Inquiry Committee, Vol. II, pp. 251-4

[1] The statement was accompanied by three other annexures; for Annexures B and C, *vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting, Ahmedabad", 14-4-1919 and "Message to Countrymen", 9-4-1919, respectively. Annexure D is not available. The statement was also published in *Young India*, 14-1-1920.

156. LETTER TO SECRETARY, DISORDERS INQUIRY COMMITTEE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
[*January 5, 1920*][1]

DEAR SIR,

I beg to enclose herewith my statement[2] for submission to the Disorders Inquiry Committee. If the Committee wish to entertain my evidence I shall esteem it a favour if I am given *an early day* so as to free me for my other engagements.

I wish to apologize for the delay in sending my statement. My other preoccupations are my only excuse. I arrived in Ahmedabad only yesterday.

Yours s[incere]ly,

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 6988

157. THE CONGRESS

The Congress this time was for many of us a pilgrimage because of its having been held in Amritsar. Jallianwala Bagh was visited during the Congress week by the thousands of delegates and visitors with the pilgrim mind. It is said that some touched the blood-stained earth with their foreheads, some took away with them a little of that earth to be preserved as a sacred treasure. Some used it as *vibhuti*[3] and smeared their foreheads with it. All went to the Bagh as a sacred duty. There is no doubt many went to the Congress only as a mark of their respect for the memory of the innocent dead.

The speeches of Swami Shri Shraddhanandji, the chairman of the Reception Committee, and of the Hon'ble Pandit Motilal Nehru were models of sobriety and breathed an earnest spirit. Each bore the individuality of its author. The Swami's had a religious ring about it. He was full of goodwill towards mankind. "How can we hate Englishmen if we love Andrews, Wedderburn, Hume, Hardinge and others? We must conquer the English with our love," said the Swami.

[1] The original has "5th April", which is evidently a slip.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] Sacred ashes

The Pandit's language, though perfectly courteous and restrained, is bitter. He compels a tear from the eye as he takes you with him through the different acts of the Punjab tragedy. He has examined the events of the Punjab with his legal acumen. Iron has entered his soul. He demands stern justice against the culprits.

The Presidential speech suffers for being in English. It was painful to see him labouring through his speech spoken in a foreign tongue before an audience of nearly 15,000 people not one-seventh of which could follow his English. The Congress proceedings have conclusively demonstrated the necessity of their being mainly, if not entirely, conducted in Hindi. That is the only course left open to us if we would work for the masses and draw upon them for delegates. In the Central Provinces, the United Provinces, Delhi, the Punjab and Bihar, only Hindustani is spoken and in all the other parts of India except the Presidency of Madras, Hindi can be generally understood. For it is a language cognate to the vernaculars of the other provinces. Madras alone presents any difficulty and, for the sake of a few hundred delegates from that Presidency, it would not be proper to do violence to thousands who cannot understand English but who can more or less understand Hindustani. The only straight, economical and politically sound course is to make the proceedings of the Congress predominantly Hindustani, the Dravidian members being free to speak in English or, for that matter, in Tamil or Telgu. I grant that for a few years the Subjects Committee must deliberate in English, but if we are to give a proper political education to the country through the medium of the Congress, it must be clear to everyone that it can only be done through Hindi. I trust, therefore, that those in the Madras Presidency who are desirous of doing all-India public work outside their Presidency and of aspiring after becoming delegates of the Congress will make haste to learn Hindi. They have got facilities in the Madras Presidency for learning Hindi, and if they will begin now and give at least one hour per day regularly to it, they will, by the end of the year, be able generally to follow the proceedings of the Congress. All must recognize that the insistent demand of the delegates from year to year for Hindustani cannot be resisted for any length of time.

Another absurdity which is becoming more and more grave needs also to be removed. Very few people could follow the President while he was reading his speech. The very best of leaders may not occupy the attention of the audience for longer than an hour. The

President's address was necessarily long. It occupied thirty-eight foolscap pages in print. Fortunately, Pandit Nehru skipped over many pages whilst he was reading it, but he would have taken no less than three hours if he had insisted on reading the whole of the thirty-eight pages. It is highly necessary, therefore, that the addresses of the chairman of the Reception Committee and the president should be printed in Hindustani (both in Devanagri and Urdu scripts), English and the vernacular of the province in which the Congress is held, and distributed at the entrance either gratis or for the cost price. They ought not to be distributed in the pandal, as is often done much to the inconvenience of everybody. Both the chairman and the president might read or orally give the summary of their addresses, each occupying no longer than thirty minutes.

The third absurdity is the terrible, evergrowing waste of money in creating a huge pandal. The Indian climate admits of holding meetings in the open air. But I refrain from saying more on this matter as the All-India Congress Committee has appointed a Sub-committee consisting of Messrs Kelkar I.B. Sen, A. Rangaswami, Iyengar, the Hon'ble V.J. Patel and myself to consider the whole constitution of the Congress.

The resolutions of the Congress show that there are very sharp divisions and, as time goes forward, parties are inevitable. Hitherto, the Congress has represented only one party but it cannot be kept any longer as a one-party organisation if it is not to have seceders from it on an increasing scale from year to year. Measures must be devised whereby all parties can be represented on it and the annual assembly can retain its truly national character.

Let us consider the resolutions. Take the condemnation of the excesses. There is no doubt that without that resolution some of the resolutions would have lost all force and value. We could not with any justification condemn the excesses of the authorities and therefore urge the dismissal of General Dyer or Sir Michael O'Dwyer or even the Viceroy's recall, if we were not ready to condemn our own. That resolution was the necessary *prayashchitta* for the mob frenzy in April. If we are to make orderly progress, we must unequivocally disapprove of violence being committed by the people in any shape or form. It is true that often in the West mob violence is resorted to, but by creating a strong popular opinion against it we must make such violence impossible in India. Few can deny that on the sixth of April India found itself in possession of a new force and a new power ≈ a

force that could prove irresistible under almost every conceivable circumstance provided that truth was on our side. It is my firm belief that had the development of satyagraha not been interrupted in April by our own folly, not only would the Rowlatt Act have been removed from the statute-book but we would have been spared the humiliating and degrading spectacle of a British general running amuck. Indeed, we shall find it impossible, when we have full control over our national affairs, to carry on the government of the country without self-restraint. In a vast country like India where the people are ordinarily peaceful, we shall find it impossible to carry on the government if mob rule becomes the custom of the land and, in order to check that tendency, popular opinion is a far greater and more potent instrument than the employment of physical force. I would, therefore, give the first place in point of importance to this resolution as a token of the correctness of our conduct and for the sake of a lead to the country. These resolutions of the Congress, especially those that require any action on the part of the people, are valuable for the formation of public opinion and I hope that workers, recognizing the full force of the truth underlying the resolution, will on due occasion impress upon the people the necessity of refraining from violence.

Only less in importance than the resolution on condemnation was the resolution on Reforms. Whilst I subscribe entirely to the proposition that India is fit now for Responsible Government, I do not for one moment believe that we can get it without working for it. We can work either by adopting obstructive tactics or by co-operation. Healthy obstruction is a condition of our being. We must ever obstruct untruth, injustice and evil. It was because I did not consider, and do not consider, the Reforms to be an evil or unjust and because I consider them to be a progressive step towards Responsible Government, that I decline to consider them to be disappointing, however inadequate and unsatisfactory they may be. I endorse Mr. Bepin Chandra Pal's opinion that for me to decline to consider the Reforms disappointing means that I did not expect them. I had certainly much fear that the Reforms might not go through when they did and I was unprepared for material improvements in the measure as it was originally published. The opponents of the amendment admitted that they would co-operate when co-operation was essential for the country's good and not hesitate to obstruct when obstruction

advanced it. That no doubt was the only meaning, and no other, of the amendment of which I had the honour to be in charge. But let it be said to the credit of the opponents that they resisted the amendment as long as they could because they frankly said that they had no faith in the bureaucracy even under the altered conditions. In my humble opinion it is a wrong attitude. The Royal Proclamation has been framed in a most liberal spirit. It is full of goodwill and it would have been wrong on the part of the Congress not to have responded to the King's call for co-operation. My faith in human nature is irrepressible and, even under the circumstances of a most adverse character, I have found Englishmen amenable to reason and persuasion, and as they always wish to appear to be just even when they are in reality unjust, it is easier to shame them than others into doing the right thing. Be that however as it may, it would be a fall from our culture and it would be unwise not to grasp the hand of fellowship extended through the Proclamation. If we are strong, we shall lose nothing by beginning with co-operation. We at once place the bureaucracy in the wrong by our readiness to co-operate for the common purpose.

It was equally important for us to thank Mr. Montagu for his valuable services in connection with the Reforms. The Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Mr. Jinnah and I therefore felt that, even at the risk of dividing the house, we were bound to press the amendment home. That ultimately there was a compromise shows the good nature of Lokamanya Tilak and Mr. Das. It was a perfect pleasure to see both of them, whilst holding to their views, anxious not to divide the house. And it was equally a pleasure to see so many on the platform working to secure a compromise.

Young India, 7-1-1920

158. LETTER TO G.E. CHATFIELD

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
January 8, 1920

DEAR MR. CHATFIELD,

The manager of the Ashram, Mr. Maganlal Gandhi, has applied for some time for permission to build a stable in the non-Inami[1] Ashram ground, but the permission has not yet been received. The stable is to be used for keeping cattle. I understand that some inquiry has been made about the use to be made of the cattle. This question would have been unnecessary if it had been recognized that we are essentially an agricultural colony. The manner in which the whole ground is being used shows it. We have now a fairly large number of cattle. And it is risky to keep them without proper shelter for any length of time. I shall therefore thank you if you could see your way to issue the permission at once. I shall be able to satisfy you any day that we are not using the cattle for trade purposes. We keep cattle for ploughing for the manure they give, and the cows and buffaloes for the milk they give for our food in addition to the manure.[2]

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of a draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 7037

[1] State lands

[2] Chatfield replied the same day: "If it is simply a matter of using your own agricultural land for cattle byres or cattle stands, I shall not have the least objection. Indeed if the cattle are for use on your land here, such buildings are farm buildings and as such do not require my permission under the LRA."

159. EVIDENCE BEFORE DISORDERS INQUIRY COMMITTEE

[AHMEDABAD,
January 9, 1920]

MR. M.K. GANDHI, BAR-AT-LAW, AHMEDABAD

By the President[1]:

Q. Mr. Gandhi, we have been informed that you are the author of the satyagraha movement?

A. Yes, sir.

I would like you to give us an explanation of what that movement is.

It is a movement intended to replace methods of violence. It is a movement based entirely on truth. It is, as I have conceived it, an extension of the domestic law on the political field, and my own experience has led me to the conclusion that that movement and that movement alone can rid India of the possibilities of violence spreading throughout the length and breadth of the land for the redress of grievances, supposed or real.

So far as it has any bearing upon our enquiry, you adopted it in connection with the opposition to the Rowlatt Bill?

Yes.

And in connection with it you asked people to pledge themselves by what is

[1] The Disorders Inquiry Committee was presided over by Lord Hunter. The Committee consisted of Justice Rankin, W.F. Rice, Major-General Sir George Barrow, Jagat Narayan, Thomas Smith, Sir C.H. Setalvad, Sultan Ahmad Khan, and N. Williamson as Secretary. The Committee first met at Delhi on October 31 and from November 3 to 10, 1919; it then collected evidence at Lahore from November 13 to 21 and again on December 11. Among the non-official witnesses examined at Delhi were Hakim Ajmal Khan, S.K. Rudra, Lala Shankerlal and Swami Shraddhanand. Brigadier-General Dyer appeared before the Committee at Lahore. The session at Ahmedabad lasted from January 5 to 10. Chief among non-official witnesses who testified before the Committee were, apart from Gandhiji, Haribhai Desaibhai Desai, President, District Local Board, Jivanlal Vrajrai Desai, Secretary, Ahmedabad branch of the Home Rule League, Krishnalal N. Desai, Secretary, Gujarat Sabha, Ramanbhai M. Nilkanth, President, Ahmedabad Municipality, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Secretary, Satyagraha Sabha, Ambalal Sarabhai and Anasuyabehn Sarabhai. Gandhiji's evidence before the Committee was taken on January 9. The Committee held a one-day sitting at Bombay on January 15. A condensed version of Gandhiji's evidence before the Committee appeared in *Young India*, 21-1-1920 and 28-1-1920.

known as the satyagraha vow?

I did.

Am I correct in holding that the satyagraha vow is this? Starting with the narrative as to the objectionable paragraphs of the Rowlatt legislation, satyagrahis pledge themselves to civilly disobey the Rowlatt Act and such other acts as the Committee to be appointed may determine. Was it your intention to enlist as many satyagrahis as possible?

Yes, consistently with the carrying on of the movement in a proper way, that is to say, if I found a million men who were capable of understanding the truth and adhering by it and never using violence, I would certainly be glad to have the million men.

You will get as many satyagrahis as possible if you are satisfied that they understand the nature of the movement?

Yes.

Is not your movement a movement essentially antagonistic to Government? Don't you substitute the determination of this Committee for the will of Government?

Not in my opinion. This is not the spirit in which the movement has been conceived, and that is not the spirit in which the movement, wherever I have led it, has been understood by the people.

Look at it from the point of view of Government, Mr. Gandhi. If you are the Government yourself, what would you say to a movement that was started by someone to the effect that none of your laws were to be obeyed and instead the will of some committee was to be obeyed?

That would not be stating the whole of the case for satyagrahis. I would put it this way. If I was in charge of the Government of a country and I found myself face to face with a body of men who were determined to find out the truth, who were determined to seek redress in connection with unjust laws without inflicting violence, without rioting, without arson, I would welcome the body of men and I would consider that they were the best constitutionalists, as Governor, I could get by my side, because they would keep me in the right track.

I suppose it is the case in India as elsewhere that people differ as to the justice or injustice of particular laws?

Yes; and that is the reason, the main reason, why violence is eliminated here. The satyagrahi gives his opponent the same right of independence and feeling of truth that he reserves to himself, seeing that he wants to fight for truth he will do so by inviting injury upon his own person.

Before you come to the question of violence, I was looking at it from the point of view of the continuing of Government. Would it be possible to continue Government if a body of men stood up against Government who were to accept not the Government's view of what was right or what was wrong, but the view of an independent committee?

I think that it would be quite impossible, and I have found within my experience of 8 years of continuous struggle in South Africa that it was so. I found General Smuts who went through the whole of that campaign, said in the end, that if all conducted themselves as the satyagrahis had done, he should have nothing to say.

That was in connection with a particular campaign. There was nothing objectionable, but, so far as I recollect ≈ I may be wrong ≈ there was no such pledge as was given here?

Certainly. Every satyagrahi was bound to resist all those laws which he considered to be unjust and all those laws which were not of a criminal character in order to bend Government to the will of the people.

You see in your present pledge[1], you have gone a step further. It is not what laws the satyagrahi considers unjust but it is what the Committee considers unjust that he has got to disobey?

I was only this morning discussing about it. That pledge or part of the pledge is really restraint. If you will re-read it, you will find that that pledge or that part of the pledge is designed to be a restraint upon individual liberty so far as the breach of laws was concerned; and as I intended to make it a mass movement, I felt that some such step[2] was necessary that no man should become the lord of the masses, so far as the satyagrahis were concerned. Therefore I conceived this plan that

[1] This formed part of the manifesto drawn up at a meeting of the Satyagraha Sabha at Ahmedabad on February 23, and read as follows: "Being conscientiously of opinion that the Bills known as the Indian Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill No. I of 1919 and the Criminal Law (Emergency Powers) Bill No. II of 1919 are unjust, subversive of the principle of liberty and justice, and destructive of the elementary rights of individuals on which the safety of the community as a whole and the State itself is based, we solemnly affirm that, in the event of these Bills becoming law and until they are withdrawn, we shall refuse civilly to obey these laws and such other laws as a committee to be hereafter appointed may think fit and we further affirm that, in this struggle, we will faithfully follow truth and refrain from violence to life, person or property."

[2] According to the report in *Young India*, this referred to "the constitution of some such committee" as the Satyagraha Committee.

the Committee should be able to say what laws may be broken *en masse.*

We know the saying that doctors differ, and I understand from Mr. Desai that even satyagrahis differ occasionally?[1]

I have not the slightest doubt and I have found it to my cost.

I put this case to you. Supposing a satyagrahi was satisfied in his own mind that a particular law was a just law and ought to be obeyed but the Committee of satyagrahis said 'disobey this law', what was the satyagrahi who signed such a pledge to do?

He is not bound to disobey that law which he does not consider to be unjust and we had such satyagrahis in abundance.

According to the terms of the pledge, as I understand, he would be bound to disobey that?

Not as I have conceived the pledge and not as I have interpreted it. If the Committee will say that my interpretation of the pledge is faulty, all I can say is I should mend the error the next time I start a satyagraha campaign.

I do not wish to give you advice Mr. Gandhi, I know that you would not take it, if I did. But this satyagraha is a rather dangerous campaign.

I wish I could disabuse the Committee really of this attitude that it is a dangerous campaign. If you will conceive the campaign as designed in order to rid the country of the school of violence, then you will share the same concern that I have that, at any cost, a movement of this character should remain in the country and purify it certainly.

In connection with the Rowlatt legislation, I know we have been told that there was a very general widespread Indian opposition to the Rowlatt legislation. Look at that legislation from an independent standard, apart altogether from the Indian or European standpoint. Would you indicate briefly to me what the essence of your objection to the legislation is?

As I read the Rowlatt Committee's report and came to the end of it, and I saw the legislation that was fore-shadowed, I felt that it was not warranted by the facts that were produced by the Committee. As I read the legislation itself, I felt that it was so restrictive of human

[1] The reference is to the view of Jivanlal Vrajrai Desai, Secretary of the Home Rule League, Ahmedabad and a member of the Satyagraha Sabha. In his evidence before the Committee on January 8, he had expressed the opinion that the satyagraha movement "should be strictly confined to the educated classes".

liberty, that no self-respecting person or no self-respecting nation could allow such legislation to appear on its regular statute-book. When I saw the debates in the Legislative Council, I felt that the opposition against it was universal and when I found that agitation or that opposition flouted by the Government, I felt that for me, as a self-respecting individual, as a member of a vast Empire, there was no course left open but to resist that law to the utmost.

So far as the objects of that legislation are concerned, have you any doubt that the objects were to put down revolutionary and anarchical crimes?

I have no doubt that the object was laudable.

Those are quite laudable objects?

Quite so.

Your complaint, then, must be as regards the methods adopted?

Entirely that.

If I have understood it rightly, what you complain of is that greater power has been given to the executive than they enjoyed before?

That is so.

I understand that the executive had these powers during the period of the European War under the Defence of India Act?

That is true. The Defence of India Act was an emergency legislation. The Defence of India Act was designed to secure the co-operation of everybody in order to put down any violence that might be offered by any school at the moment; and it was with the greatest reluctance that the people really accepted the Defence of India Act, but the Rowlatt legislation was of a different character altogether as I apprehended; then the people had the additional advantage of having the experience of the working of the Defence of India Act.[1]

Suppose now, Mr. Gandhi, that the Rowlatt legislation was to be put into operation; in the first instance, the Local Government should be satisfied that there was a state of anarchy existing, and in the second place, the Government of India had to take that attitude. Would you see any serious objection to it?

I would see most serious objection. I would not as legislator leave that power in the hands of an executive which I had repeatedly found wanting. I have known the executive Government in India to

[1] *Young India* here has: " . . . now the experience of the working of the former Act has strengthened my objections to the Rowlatt Act."

have run mad. I would certainly not arm a Government of that character with any such arbitrary powers.

Then your objection really comes back to this, that you think that the Government of India in the prosecution of a laudable object adopted a wrong measure. Is not the proper method of dealing with that from a constitutional point of view to endeavour to get the legislation remedied by satisfying the Government of the inexpediency of the measure?

I tried to get that done. On bended knee I pleaded before Lord Chelmsford, and before other English officers I had the pleasure of meeting, and placed my view-point before him also. I am glad to say that some of them accepted the view that I placed before them, but they said that the Rowlatt Committee made these recommendations and they were helpless. I think we exhausted all the resources open to us.

If an honest opponent differs from your view, you cannot expect to satisfy him of the rightness of your cause all of a sudden. You must do so by degrees?

Yes.

Is not refusing to obey that or any other law you choose to select a rather drastic way of attempting to do that?

I respectfully differ. When I find that even my father has imposed upon me a law which is repugnant to my conscience, I think it is the least drastic course that I adopt by respectfully telling him, "Father, I cannot obey this." I do nothing but justice to my father when I do that. If I may say so without any disrespect to the Committee, I have simply followed that in my own domestic circle, and I found I had done so with the greatest advantage. I have placed that before Indians and everybody for acceptance. Rather than feel angry with my father, I would respectfully tell him, "I cannot obey this law." I see nothing wrong in that. If it is not wrong for me to say so to my father, there is nothing wrong for me to say so to a friend or to a Government.

Now, in the prosecution of your satyagraha movement against the Rowlatt legislation, you resolved to open a hartal throughout India?

Yes.

When the hartal was on, no business was to be done, thereby to show disapproval of Government's action?

Yes.

Hartal means then general cessation of business throughout the whole

country?

Yes.

If you have a general cessation of business for a brief time nothing harmful might result. But if the cessation is for a lengthened period, will it not be productive of great harm to the people?

Very great.

As regards your hartal, it was originally to be held on the 30th March?

I had simply said the second Sunday after the publication.

The second Sunday was the 6th April. Some people seemed to have made a miscalculation?

No miscalculation. Those who came to know of the Viceregal assent immediately after it was given, for them the calculation would be 30th March. That was brought to the notice of the people in Madras. I immediately sent a telegram fixing the 6th April, but at the end of the day telegrams had gone all over India when this letter[1] was published fixing the second Sunday after the Viceregal assent was given in Delhi. Unfortunately, the hartal came prematurely.

When the hartal came in Delhi, unfortunately serious riots took place?

Yes.

As regards the hartal, is it your view that the abstention from business should be entirely passive?

Entirely.

Then anything like what I may call active persuasion on the part of those who observed any hartal, to get others to follow their example, would be disapproved?

Entirely; if that active persuasion was exerted on the day of the hartal. In any case that would be disapproved. It will not be disapproved if in preparing the people for the hartal leaflets were distributed and people were told from platforms, in their different houses also, that it was a proper thing for them to do.

We know as a fact that there were a great number of meetings held in connection with your movement when gentlemen in sympathy with your views endeavoured to persuade the people generally as to the propriety of adopting the course you advocated; and in consequence of that general agitation, there was a very general campaign throughout the country to observe the hartal conforming to your views?

[1] Gandhiji issued the text of this to the Press on March 23, 1919. This was given as Annexure A to Gandhiji's written statement; *vide* "Statement to Disorders Inquiry Committee", 5-1-1920.

Yes.

But now if I follow you aright, you disapproved of any people observing the hartal endeavouring to make people to get down on the day of the hartal from their tongas or motor cars in which they happened to be driving?

I felt very much grieved when I heard that.

That would be fully against your doctrine?

Very fully.

And if anything of that sort occurred, inevitably violence or riot would ensue?

Yes, that would.

May I take it, that you won't disapprove of the action of the police or civil authority in interfering with those who were observing the hartal and also endeavouring to force others to adopt a similar course, so long as the police acted with sufficient restraint and forbearance?

I saw no recourse was open to the police but to do that.

And if that is your view, from what happened *a fortiori*, I take it as your view that it was improper on the part of any people to go to the shop-keepers and tell them to close their shops?

On the day it was highly improper.

It would be still more highly improper to jostle the unfortunate shop-keepers who have not been willing to close their shops, from the satyagraha standpoint?

I will hold it to be criminal.

In connection with the hartal on the 6th, there was no violence, but we had a considerable amount of evidence on all these times of persuasion being brought to bear upon people to make them observe the hartal?

There was that.

Those were indications of improper action?

Certainly.

Your lieutenant in Delhi is Swami Shraddhanand. . . .?

I would hardly call him my lieutenant. I would like to call him my esteemed co-worker.

He wrote to you a letter[1] upon the subject of hartal. He indicated to you that after what occurred in Delhi and, I think also in the, Punjab it was manifest that you could not have a general hartal without violence inevitably ensuing?

[1] The letter could not be traced by Gandhiji. Swami Shraddhanand produced only a draft, while giving evidence before the Committee at Delhi on November 5. He summed up the purportf his letter to Gandhiji as follows: "I thought the satyagraha started by Mr. Gandhi civil disobedience of laws was unsuited. The movement of Mr. Gandhi as regards civil disobedience being part of satyagraha was unsuited to the conditions in this country."

I do not think he said that in so many words. I cannot recall the contents of that letter

It was very much to that effect?

I think what he said was he went much further - that it was not responsible; he was not referring to the hartal, but the law-breaking campaign; he suggested that the satyagraha campaign could not be carried on with impunity among the masses of people, but there was really a difference between him and me. When I suspended civil disobedience he thought that I ought not to suspend civil disobedience, but when I found it necessary to suspend civil disobedience, because I had not obtained sufficient control over the people in order to prevent violence, then he said: "If this is the position you take up, the moral for me to draw is that satyagraha can never be put into action as a mass movement." I think that is the drift of his letter. I had to discuss it with him also.

Did he agree with you?

I do not know whether he is still holding that view today. Facts might have converted him. I feel that suspension of civil disobedience is as much a necessity as prosecuting civil disobedience.

You see, if you have complete abstention from work and simultaneously you have the application of such a doctrine as civil disobedience of law among the masses of idle people, there will be great difficulty in distinguishing between passive and active resistance, Mr. Gandhi.

I will like Your Lordship to draw a sharp distinction between hartal and satyagraha proper. Hartal may sometimes be satyagrahic or may not be. Here civil disobedience as such had absolutely nothing to do with hartal. Hartal had a two-fold purpose; one to strike the imagination of the people as also to strike the imagination of the Government; but the second was a discipline for those who have to offer disobedience. I had no method of understanding the mind of India except by some such striking thing. If I had simply satisfied myself with fasting. I would not have known how many fasted, or with prayer, I would have not known how many prayed. The hartal is a proper index to show how far I could carry my principle.

I quite follow the difference between the two things. But if you have the hartal in the same time as satyagraha doctrine is being preached? It was being preached at public meetings?

Certainly, on that very day.

Do you not create a condition of very great danger to peace and order?

On the contrary, I promote peace. And I have done it myself on the 6th of April, because I was there in Bombay, and there was some fear of people themselves offering violence. And I am here to tell you that no violence, no real violence was offered by the people, because people were being told the true nature of satyagraha. It was an amazing sight for me to see thousands of people behaving in a perfectly peaceful manner. That would not have been the case if the satyagraha doctrine had not been preached in the right key. It all depends on the doctrine of satyagraha or the doctrine of hate in the form of satyagraha. But to enforce satyagraha and call upon those who are engaged in hartal to break the law is a different application and it is that which I am trying to distinguish.

Coming to the occurrences in which you yourself were implicated, you intended to proceed to Delhi and to the Punjab and you were met at Palwal and escorted back to Bombay?

Yes.

As I understand, were you formally arrested?

I was absolutely in form and substance arrested and I was surprised to find it so often said that it was not so.[1] The train pulled up between Muttra and Palwal and the order was served on me when we reached the border and the police officer exceedingly courteously reasoned with me saying how bad it would be for them to arrest me at a wayside station and how it would not be possible to have a magistrate and that he did not know what proceedings would be adopted. We reached Palwal. At that station, I saw not only the Superintendent of Police, I think it was the Delhi Superintendent of Police, but also a party of officers. I suppose they were police constables, I cannot say exactly who they were and the officer placing his hand on my shoulder said, "Mr. Gandhi, I arrest you." He served two orders on me, then he asked me quickly to remove my luggage, not myself personally, but he had the luggage removed and I was called upon to point out the things that had to be removed. He asked whether there was any man who wanted to be with me. Then there was a friend who came with me. There was a police guard. I intended to

[1] In his evidence before the Committee on November 5, the Chief Commissioner of Delhi had parried the question whether Gandhiji was not in fact arrested and replied that "he was taken under surveillance".

go to the platform to clear my throat and the police challenged me. They were right. There were all the simple ingredients of proper arrest.

We heard of far-reaching ingredients.

I do not say it was anything bad. The police performed, as they themselves said, the painful duty, as gently and as courteously as any gentleman could possibly do.

Do not you understand that all that was required of you was, in consequence of the order of Government, you were not to proceed to Delhi or the Punjab but you should go back to Bombay?

Yes; that was what the police said at the place where the train was held up. By the time I was arrested I had actually committed an offence. Therefore I was arrested. The officer arresting me did not know how I was to be dealt with. When I came to Muttra I received further orders.

And the nature of the further orders was that you were asked to go back to Bombay?

Not at all. I was taken under escort. There were two changes at Muttra. There was this police officer. He did not know what was to be done. He said I would have to be taken straight to the Secretary and therefore I would have to await orders as to what would be done to me. Then he exchanged some words with Mr. Bowring at Sawai Madhopur where the Peshawar train joined the Bombay train. I was taken to the Commissioner who had certain orders and it was he who produced the order when I was taken to Bombay. But Mr. Bowring himself was unaware of what was to happen to me when I was to be taken to Bombay. He was met, I believe, at Surat by an officer who came there from Bombay. He had a chat with me. It was daybreak. Mr. Bowring had a conversation with this officer, then he told me that I would be free in Bombay.

It amount to this, that in consequence of an order of Government it was made clear to you that would not be allowed to proceed to Delhi or the Punjab, but if you remained at Bombay you will be allowed perfect freedom?

Certainly in the Bombay Presidency.

Of course that is a little different from the idea that you have been taken and forcibly thrown into jail?

I do not know if anybody charged Government with forcibly throwing me into jail. Everybody asked what is the truth, when I was

arrested. I do not think that anybody had made it a matter of complaint against Government, except that Government had no business to turn me away from a mission of peace which Government knew I was bent on.

There may be a difference of opinion, quite as honest difference of opinion, between you and the Government?

I have accepted that position.

Rightly or wrongly, if they had thought that if you were allowed to proceed to Delhi in order to propagate the doctrine, riot might ensue, they would be justified in taking that action?

From their own view. From their standpoint I have absolutely nothing to say.

Subsequently to your arrest, very unfortunately serious incidents occurred in Delhi and the Punjab and also in Ahmedabad here? The only matter we have got to deal with here is as regards Ahmedabad itself. In Ahmedabad, as we have been told, you enjoyed great popularity among the mill-workers on account of the fact that you intervened successfully in one of their disputes[1] and your arrest seems to have created a great resentment on their part, and very unfortunately again, on the part of the mob, on the 11th and 12th at Ahmedabad and Viramgam. So far as these incidents are concerned, you have no personal knowledge?

I have no personal knowledge.

I do not know whether there is any matter in connection with them on which you would like to present your views which would be useful in enabling us to form our opinion?

I would venture to present this thing in connection with these riots. I consider that the action of this mob, whether in Ahmedabad or in Viramgam, was totally unjustified, and I have thought that it was a very sad thing that they lost self-control.[1] I do not wish to offer the slightest defence for the acts of the mob, but at the same time I would like to say that the people amongst whom, rightly or wrongly, I was popular were put to such severe stress by Government who should have known better. I think that Government committed an unpardonable error of judgment and the mob committed a similar unpardonable error, but more unpardonable on the part of the mob than on the part of the Government. I wish to say that also as a satyagrahi, I cannot find a single thing done by the mob which I can

[1] The reference is to the Ahmedabad mill-hands' dispute during February-March 1918.

defend or justify. No amount of provocation, however great, could justify people from doing as they have done. It has been suggested to me that all those who did it were not satyagrahis. That is true. But they chose to take part in the satyagraha movement and came under the satyagraha discipline. These were the terms in which I have spoken to the people; and it gives me the greatest pleasure and also pain to declare my settled conviction before this Committee also. I have said this elsewhere. I would proceed further with what I have come to know.

Very well.

As soon as I came here I endeavoured to do what I was capable of doing in order to repair the mischief and the error, as I sensed at the time. I placed it before the people and at the disposal of the authorities also, and I had a very long interview with Mr. Pratt and with other officers. I was to have held a meeting by their consent. I think Mr. Robertson also was present at the time, on the 13th; but I thought that it would not be possible for me to hold the meeting that day. Whether it was Martial Law or whatever it was, that was not the deciding factor; my co-workers were not able to reach the people; they sent volunteers to send notices. I conferred with Mr. Pratt and he said, "Yes, you could hold the meeting on the 14th." So the meeting took place on the 14th.[1] There I adumbrated what I felt. It happened that there I used the words "organisation" and "education" both of which terms have been so much quoted against me and against the people.[2] If against me, it is no matter; but if against the people, it matters very materially. The speech itself was in Gujarati. If you will read it ≈ of course, you won't, but Sir Chimanlal[3] will.

He will be able to guide the Committee there and he will correct me if I am misunderstanding or misinterpreting the meaning of the terms. I have translated a Gujarati word which simply means those who know how to read and write, *shikhela*, and I chose the word *bhanela* as I sensed the thing before me at the time. I had no time to

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting Ahmedabad", 14-4-1919.

[1] The actual passage under reference was: "It seems that the deeds I have complained of have been done in an organised manner. There seems to be a definite design about them, and I am sure that there must be some educated and clever man or men behind them."

[3] Sir Chimanlal H. Setalvad (1865-1947); leading lawyer and member of the Disorders Inquiry Committee

keep together all the evidence that could have come before me. I used the word *bhanela* in the sense of "leader", "a man who can read and write". I have spoken not of "organisation" but I might have said this thing: "done in an organised manner." I do not wish to withdraw a single word from that. But I want the Committee to understand, if I could make the Committee understand, that I referred only to the events in Ahmedabad. I had then no knowledge even of what had happened in Viramgam; but at Ahmedabad, looking at the whole picture and talking to the people, because I had talked to a large number of people who were before me, not merely at the meeting but also before the meeting, I felt that this thing was organised and I hold on to that even now. I had no hesitation in saying to Mr. Guider[1] , I had no hesitation in saying it to Mr. Chatfield. I am here to repeat that statement. In my opinion, the thing was organised, but there it stands. There was no question whether it was a deep-laid conspiracy through the length and breadth of India or a deep-rooted organisation of which this was a part. The organisation was hastily constructed; the organisation was not in the sense in which we understand the word organisation. There is my expression, "This thing has been done in an organised manner." I certainly felt strengthened in my supposition as I marched along with the facts I was getting. I wish also to place my position before the Committee. When I was addressing many people, I was not concerned with what steps the Government will take and it was necessary for me to diagnose the situation before the people. I was not concerned with giving any information to the police and when Mr. Guider came to me, I said, "It was none of my business. I was simply a reformer, and if I could wean the people from the error of their ways," my position was justified and my task was finished; if he thought that he could get a single name from me he was mistaken. I said I was taking a serious responsibility as a citizen and also I understood that responsibility. So you would put a proper valuation on my work. It is an improper valuation on that word to hitch it on to any organisation, real or fancied. If I confined that word to Ahmedabad alone, to masses of absolutely unlettered men, who would be able to make no fine distinctions ≈ then you have got the idea of what that organisation is. This exactly is my opinion as given to him, and I have no hesitation in giving that opinion to the Committee.

[1] J.A. Guider, Deputy Inspector-General of Police, C.I.D. Bombay. He was entrusted with the investigation of the riots in Ahmedabad.

There were those poor deluded labourers whose one business was to see me released and see Anasuyabai released. That it was a wicked rumour deliberately started by somebody I have not the slightest doubt. As soon as these things happened the people thought there should be something behind it. Then there were the half-educated raw youths. This is the work of these, I am grieved to have to say. These youths possessed themselves with false ideas gathered from shows, such as the cinematograph shows that they have seen, gathered from silly novels and from the political literature of Europe. I know that school. I have mixed with these men and I have endeavoured to wean them. I may, however, tell the Committee that there are today, I won't be able to say 100, but I will not be surprised if I count it by the 20, men who have ceased to belong to the school of violence because of this. But it was an organisation of this character. I think I have now given the full meaning of what I have said. I want deliberately to except those who go by the name of university men or degree men. I do not for one moment wish the Committee to understand that the degree men and the university men are incapable of doing that. On the contrary, the university men have also often implicated themselves in these things but not in Ahmedabad, not for this purpose. I am not aware of a single university man having instigated these things.

As regards the organisation, you think it started on the 10th?

Mr. Chatfield has said that.[1] I have not really taxed my mind on it, but it was an organisation or attempt made before the rioting took place.

I am not going to ask you to name any people in connection with this matter. Your view in so expressing yourself was apparently that there was a common purpose among the people who were affected on the 10th and 11th?

I would not say there was a common purpose, I think I would be then exaggerating it on the other side. Not a common purpose that fired the whole mob, but I think Your Lordship will agree with me that a common purpose may be restricted to two or three men and they are able to affect a whole mass of people, but once they have affected the people with their ideas, although originally they are the responsible people, the whole people are affected.

[1] Chatfield had testified, during his examination on January 5: "Mr. Gandhi told me in private conversation that he knew that this was organised on the night of the 10th and that he knew who organised it."

On this particular occasion on the 10th, 11th and 12th the affection took the form of the obliteration of all trace of Government; was not that so?

I think it was certainly anti-Government and I had not yet been able to make up my mind whether it was anti-European also. I am not really able to assist the Committee on that point. I would like to believe that it was not anti-European. There were certainly silver lines to this cloud.[1] But I should certainly feel exceedingly hurt if I made the discovery, but I would place it before the Committee if I found that.

I am not sure whether you desire to answer this question or not. According to satyagraha doctrine, is it right that people who have committed crimes should be punished by the civil authorities?

I am not prepared to say that it is wrong but there is a better method. It is really a difficult question to answer, because you do not anticipate any pressure from outside. But on the whole I think that it would be the proper thing to say that a satyagrahi cannot possibly quarrel with any punishment that might be meted out to offenders and therefore he cannot be anti-Government in that sense.

But apparently it is against the doctrine of the satyagraha to give assistance to Government by way of placing information that would lead to the conviction of offenders?[2]

According to the [principles of] satyagraha you say it is inconsistent.

It is inconsistent?

That would be inconsistent.

Why?

For the simple reason that a satyagrahi's business is not to assist the police by that particular method which is open to the police or which the police adopts, but he helps the authorities and the police by making the people more law-abiding and more respectful to authority. But when he sees lapses, it is no part of his duty to combine

[1] For instance, certain European missionaries were spared by the mob.

[2] Gandhiji had telegraphed to J.A. Guider on May 11, 1919, that the inmates "cannot consistently with Ashram principles give evidence against people"; "Telegram to J.A.Guider", 11-5-1919

his reform work with police work. The two are contradictory and inconsistent. I know, Mr. Guider has challenged that.[1]

You gave an answer to Mr. Guider and it was really on that answer that I was asking this question?

And he has not been able to dislodge me from that position.[2] And I am fully aware that I have not dislodged him from his position.

Supposing a satyagrahi had seen one of the more serious crimes committed in the course of these riots, actually committed in his own presence, would there be no obligation upon him to inform the police?

Of course I have answered that before Mr. Guider and I think I must answer that here also. I do not want to misguide the youth of the country, but my answer is that even then he cannot go and give evidence against his brother, and when I say against his brother there is no distinction here of country or anything of that kind at all.

As I understand your satyagrahi vow, it is wholly independent of India or European nationality?

Certainly. And what I would suggest is that it is inherent in the thing. He cannot do the two things. I have now mixed with criminals of the deadliest type for a number of years and I know that I have been instrumental, however poorly, but still I have been instrumental in weaning them over. I should forfeit their confidence if I disclosed the name of a single man. My business ends there. I should pay with my life, if I have the courage, in weaning the man who is about to do a criminal act, but if I have done that or after I have found myself unable to do it, the other duty does not devolve upon me, viz., of going and straightaway lodging the information before the police.

Of course, you see there is a distinction, Mr. Gandhi, between divulging a communication that has been made to you in confidence and making a statement as regards a crime that has been committed in your presence? And you say it is not the duty of a satyagrahi to assist the police?

[1] Guider had interviewed Gandhiji on April 17. His testimony before the Committee on January 7 was that Gandhiji had told him "that certain things had been known to him but he was not disposed to disclose them without the permission of the persons who had communicated them to him".

[2] Guider had reported this to Chatfield, who interviewed Gandhiji towards the end of May, but failed to persuade him to divulge the information. Similar attempts made by Commissioner Pratt had proved equally infructuous.

I would say that it is the straightest conduct of a satyagrahi not to do so and not to give evidence in a court of law even in connection with a crime which has been committed under his own nose and which he has assisted in preventing, but I do not want to carry that doctrine to that dangerous limit. I think it is open only in the rarest cases possible, but it would be a prostitution of the doctrine if a satyagrahi, having signed a pledge, absolved himself from bringing criminals to justice; nor does that follow from the satyagrahi pledge. But if a man modelled his life according to the principles of satyagraha as I venture to think I have conceived them, I think there is no room for him to do so. But in order that I may not be misunderstood, I am not able to say today that I will not give information against a man whom I have seen in the act of committing a crime because I do not claim to be a perfected satyagrahi, I am aiming at becoming it and when I have become that, probably God will never put such temptations in my way, but if they were there, I would certainly not give evidence. But today I am unable to say of myself that I would not do so.

Now there is one other point on which you may desire to express your views. As regards the measures which were taken by the Government to repress the riot, what have you to say about them?

In Ahmedabad I think that, whether there was technically Martial Law or whether there was not, the impression left on my mind by Mr. Pratt and the other gentlemen who were there was clearly that there was Martial Law. I feel that Martial Law was not necessary, but I am not really competent to judge that. I think that the Government acted with the greatest restraint and with forbearance under provocation of a serious character. In the case of a troop train, coming to suppress disorders, being in danger of being derailed and escaping derailment, I can understand troops of that character dealing destruction in a fit of fury.[1] It would be mad, but I would find it in my heart to excuse an act of that fury. I think, therefore, there was self-restraint on the part of Government and on the part of those who were actually conducting the business. I think, at the same time, that the terms in which the military notice was couched were open to very serious objections. I think they were totally unwarranted by the situation as it faced the military, and I do believe that as a result of that several inoffensive lives were lost. If the military rule or semi-military

[1] A train bringing reinforcements from Bombay was derailed near Nadiad on April 11; another escaped derailment at Barejadi station.

rule had been carried on for any length of time, I do not know what would have happened.

Do you know of any case where groups of people were fired on without first having been asked to disperse?

If I am to believe the statements that were made before me, I think that that has happened, and I should certainly not be surprised if that has happened. I saw the troops that were posted. Some of them were mere lads. Mr. Pratt brought that danger face to face with me. It is one thing, he said, to issue these orders; it is another thing to have these orders carried in the spirit in which they have been issued, and he himself did anticipate the danger of these young lads simply playing with the people and playing with fire and I do feel that some such thing has happened.

You think something of the sort may have occurred?

I do not say "may have", I think something of that kind has occurred. I think the people who came to me did not exaggerate and I cross-examined them very severely and they said, "No, we have not received warnings." It does not matter if you have got a group of 9 people, that is not a crime; a 10th man comes without wanting to be the 10th and the military fire, and what is the value even of a warning being given to men who do not know the thing?

Of course, the object of that order was to prevent groups of people going and indulging in acts of violence?

I think there was a much better way of doing that.

What better way?

A better way would be not to fire. To give these directions to irresponsible lads was the height of folly.

If a complaint is to be made that any irresponsible lad has acted contrary to the way in which he had instructions to act, we should know what that incident was and also the facts?

I quite agree with Your Lordship. I can only give you my impression. I am unable to prove the thing and I understand the responsibility rests on my shoulders; but if you ask me to give my impression, it is that such things must have happened. What I feel is that any civilian should have realised that as inevitable in the nature of things.

Is there any other matter in this connection?

I have said in my statement, and I should like to repeat it, that I do not know that the people were not sufficiently punished, though I would again make the admission, and make it with the greatest pleasure, that the work of the troops here was done consistently with the laws of civilised justice. There was nothing to be said against that. I have urged already that the sections under which the prosecutions were undertaken ought not to have been brought into use. There was nothing to warrant that, and certainly nothing to warrant that when the trial took place.

You mean the sections as regards waging war; of course, that is after all a legal question?

It is, but I place it before this Committee in order that they may have a proper bearing in so far as I can enable the Committee to have that, as to the measures taken by the Government. And as I have paid, and I think a deserved, tribute to the Government for their forbearance, I do not want myself to be misunderstood as endorsing all that has been done, and so I am as gently as possible urging upon the Committee these defects, even in this admirable handling by the administration.

But that looks very like as though you were making a complaint against the Government Advocate that he did not understand the proper charge?

I think it was more than that, it was not the Government Advocate who merely chose, though technically it was. But that is not how the thing happened. That is within my experience and quite rightly. No Advocate would take upon his shoulders the entire responsibility of choosing the section, but he would be naturally guided by the administrative bent at the time and the Government might have instructed the Advocate, the Government Counsel, not to do that; but I do ask myself whether it was necessary for them to impose that heavy contribution upon Ahmedabad.[1] But the most sorest point with me is that they should have imposed that very severe contribution upon the labourers and in the manner they did. The manner in which it was executed, in my opinion, was unforgivable.

We had a statement from Mr. Ambalal Sarabhai.[1]

[1] Sarabhai had observed, *inter alia*: "The method of levy though inequitable and unjustifiable has been, in my opinion, the least provocative."

And I ventured to differ from him in spite of my regard for him and his fairness. I think he erred, and erred grievously, against his own people, the labourers.

I am not sure that you are not going a bit beyond the scope of our enquiry?

You have put before me a sore point.

There may be difficulties of course between employers and employees, but we have nothing to do with that.

I fully understood that and no man can more fully appreciate Mr. Ambalal's difficulty than I can. And I wish to finish this part of my statement by saying that I think that the action of the Government in connection with the Nadiad and Barejadi case was totally unjustified, and I would ask the Committee to read the correspondence[1] between Government and the Collector of Nadiad and you will find there arguments urged for inflicting that fine totally irrelevant to the scope.

It is a question really of the laws of India, but is it not in accordance with those laws that, if an additional police force has to be got for any particular district, that district has to pay for it?

Surely, Sir, it is not obligatory upon the Government to do that. It is open to the Government to make the people pay; it is open to the Government to single out a class of people for that treatment, but it is nowhere, according to my reading of that law, giving such wide discretion to the Government, obligatory upon the Government to take that expense from the people.

How are they to recoup themselves?

Recoup from the general revenue. If they consider a particular district is insufficiently policed, surely they do that. They get it from the general revenue. And I certainly hold very strong opinions, knowing as I do the people of Nadiad and the people of Barejadi, that there was no occasion whatsoever for posting a single additional policeman. The people of Nadiad under the most difficult circumstances acted with the greatest self-restraint, and I have investigated that matter as fully as I was capable of doing in conjunction with Mr. Ker, the Collector, and I am here to tell the Committee that it is my deliberate opinion that the people of Nadiad were not in league with those who went there to derail, but that they exercised all the powers that were at their disposal in order to restrain

[1] This is not available.

them, and they got a handsome tribute from the Collector and a compliment for their assistance. And I would say the same thing for the people of Barejadi.

That I think deals with the points you wish to bring before our notice?

I think so, Sir.

By the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Rankin:

Mr. Gandhi, you have given us your views about civil disobedience and I do not want in the least to make you argue the point over again with me. But I want to get some facts and dates roughly from you if I can. I think the satyagraha vow was settled somewhere about the third week in February?

I think that is very nearly right.

I think what has been called your *hukm* was dated somewhere about the 23rd of February?

Yes.

At that time the Rowlatt Bill No. 2 had not yet been passed, it was passed later on in March?

Possibly.

The vow[1] as printed, which is before us, shows that it was known that the Bill would be passed, but it had not yet been passed?

Yes.

And for some time before the 23rd of February I think the Press in India, not that it was any part of my duty to know this at that time, but from the papers put before us, the Press in India, seems to have been ringing with proposals about the way in which to protest against those Acts if they were passed. And I daresay you had to consider a great many suggestions before you made up your mind about the form of your protest, and among the suggestions you had to consider was there a suggestion, widely spread throughout India, that it would be a good method of protest if people were to refuse to pay their land revenue and taxes? I think you had a good many forms of protest suggested to you by irresponsible people, and the satyagraha vow which you settled in the third week of February was what you thought the best method of protest at that time?

Yes.

Now did you have to consider I ask you this because of a speech of yours which I think I have read ≈ were you asked to consider whether it should be laid down that orders passed by local magistrates under the Criminal Procedure Code should be

[1] This was the Satyagraha Pledge, quoted in the statement of the Government of Bombay to the Committee.

disobeyed?

Of course that was placed before me.

You never committed yourself to that? You thought it might be inadvisable?

Not only I never committed myself, but I opposed it strenuously.

Had you expressed, by the 8th of April let us say, a view on that subject one way or the other?

By the 8th of April I had sufficiently expressed that view, because it was urged upon me by friends that we should commit a breach of the laws governing processions and so on, and I had suggested that we could not possibly do that, we ought not to do it. I had even issued instructions that all police orders should be scrupulously obeyed and carried out.

Can you give me the date of my instructions that were issued publicly, either by yourself or the Bombay Sabha on that point?

I can only say it was between the 6th and the actual civil disobedience. I can only offer to the Committee to send all the papers that I can trace.

I do not want to put you to any undue trouble, but speaking for myself, if you can give me some document which shows that you have repudiated the notion that there was to be any disobedience against local magistrates, I shall be very glad.

I shall, if it is there, do that.[1]

I am rather anxious, Mr. Gandhi, to find out from you exactly what made you start upon your journey to Delhi, which was interrupted. Will you tell me shortly in your own way the facts that led up to that act and what exactly you intended to do when you got to Delhi?

I think it was about the 1st of April, or even a little before, I had received a letter from Dr. Satyapal from Amritsar saying he had been trying to follow the satyagraha movement, that he appreciated the thing and he liked it immensely, but that he himself did not fully understand it, nor did the people. Would I not go over to Amritsar, be his guest, and deliver a few speeches explaining the doctrine of satyagraha, as they were, on a superficial observation of it, enamoured of the thing? As I happened to know from information given to me by the police officers that this letter was intercepted, copied by them

[1] Gandhiji sent some extracts with "Letter to Justice Rankin", 11-1-1920. The enclosures are not available.

and then given to me, I told Dr. Satyapal that I should do so at the very first opportunity that I had. Meanwhile I received a letter from Swami Shraddhanand saying that I shall go to Delhi. The people of Delhi were becoming unamenable to the control of the leaders. Really all these people never responded in Delhi, least of all the big cities of India, that is my impression and that is the information they have given me. He said if you only come here, even if it is for a day, I should be pleased, and he sent not only one telegram but he sent two or three, at least two I know.[1]

About what date? Was it after the events of the 30th in Delhi?

Yes, after the events of the 30th of March and before the hartal of the 6th, and so I think I sent a telegram to him saying I would do so, but I would come immediately after the hartal.[2] I was most anxious for the thing to pass off nicely in Bombay and so it did. I was most anxious we should start our civil disobedience while the whole thing was arranged, so we did that for one day, and on the 8th I took the train. But I got his first wire between the 30th of March and the 6th of April.

Again, I do not want to put you to any trouble about it, but do you happen to have these wires or copies to them?

If I have them, I shall certainly let you have them. My general routine is to destroy all these documents, simply because I do not want to burden myself. But it is likely that I may have those telegrams. If I have them, I will furnish them.[3]

As I gather, the attitude the Swami adopted in writing to you was that, in order that the satyagraha movement might have the benefit of a further extension of influence through your going to Delhi, he wished you to go there?

Certainly.

[1] Swami Shraddhanand referred to the telegrams in his written statement to the Committee. In sending the first telegram, he "was certain that Mahatma Gandhi's personal contact with the people will make our task of infusing the principles of satyagraha into them easy". The second wire thanked Gandhiji for agreeing to visit Delhi.

[2] According to Swami Shraddhanand, Gandhiji replied that he would leave Bombay on the evening of Tuesday, i.e., 8th. On that day he wired again: "Reaching tomorrow evening. Please keep my arrival strictly private; can bear no public demonstration."

[3] The source carries here a footnote: "Not traceable by Mr. Gandhi or elsewhere."

He was not inviting you to go to Delhi for the express purpose of pacifying the crowds that had got riotous and out of hand, but in the ordinary course of the satyagraha propaganda?

Not in the same manner that it was arranged for me to be in Amritsar. He definitely mentioned that "we may not be able to restrain the crowd". He said, "I have tried my utmost up to now, but I may fail and so I would like you to come up. Your presence will have a pacifying influence." If I can get those letters, I shall be pleased to give them to you.

Am I right in supposing that, so far as you are concerned, it was no part of your intention in going to Delhi for the first time in order to have a collision with the authorities in the interests of the satyagraha movement?

None at all.

You knew, I think, at that time, that the Swamiji was having difficulty in getting the crowds in Delhi to do what he wanted and that the police authorities were having an anxious time of it?

Yes.

You say you had no intention of proceeding to Delhi to make the position worse but to make it better?

I was proceeding to Delhi to help the authorities.

There are just one or two things that I would like to ask you about. I do not believe in quoting speeches, Mr. Gandhi, I have some reports before me and I cannot read through the whole, but I will read a few lines from your speeches at Ahmedabad on the 13th April.

On the 13th or 14th?

On the 14th. You were speaking in Gujarati and it is a speech[1] which you began by saying that what had happened in Ahmedabad during the past 4 or 5 days had disgraced the city. What you appeared to have said according to this report is, "he told them that these disturbances had done no good to Ahmedabad, that they had done considerable harm to the passive resistance. If after his arrest people had preserved peace, the Rowlatt Bill would have been cancelled or on the verge of being cancelled. It would not be a matter of wonder now if there was delay in the cancellation of the Bill. When he got free on Friday, he intended to start again for Delhi on Sunday to try and get himself re-arrested as the cause of passive resistance would have been greatly strengthened. Now instead of going to Delhi he had to carry on passive resistance against themselves." Was that simply a passing thought in your mind or had you in a

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting, Ahmedabad", 14-4-19119

cooler moment formed the determination really to go back to get yourself re-arrested?

I had done that. I had told Mr. Griffith, the Commissioner of Police, that it was my intention to do so unless I found something serious.

Do you mean Mr. Jeffries?

Mr. Griffith, the Commissioner of Police in Bombay. I mentioned that fact to Mr. Pratt also.

I have not heard of him yet. He is new to us. Now let us take it that you had been unjustly turned back from Delhi, but what was the object of going back to get yourself re-arrested?

As a satyagrahi having once been arrested and set free, it is our duty to seek re-arrest and seek imprisonment again and again. That was the object and nothing else.

I do not know ≈ of course you know better than I do ≈ it is not the object of a satyagrahi to go and get himself imprisoned always, is it?

No, it is not always.

What is the particular reason from your point of view to get yourself re-arrested?

To invite self-suffering. If I embark upon a campaign of civil breach that is the only way by which I can make good that campaign.

Was it your idea that if you went back to Delhi and you were arrested, that that would inflame the country or parts of it and have a greater effect in stopping the Rowlatt Bill?

Not at all. If that was so, I would have proceeded straight, without the slightest hesitation or consideration. Here I just want to supplement my information by saying that, at that time, I had no idea to what had occurred in Amritsar or elsewhere.

The events at Amritsar occurred on the 10th[1] which was when you were travelling back in the train. At what time did you actually arrive back in Bombay?

On the 11th.

At that time I take it that there were urgent messages for you to come to Ahmedabad?

Yes.

Did they meet you immediately on your arrival at home?

[1] There were acts of mob violence involving arson, looting and murder of some Europeans.

No. I was not met by any friend so far as I am aware.

Did you get a message to come to Ahmedabad the moment you arrived in Bombay?

I got the message the next day. I arrived on the 11th. I got the message on the 12th.

Your facilities for keeping abreast of what was happening all over the country during those days were very bad, and you were not fully posted up with what was happening?

No.

That point about going back to Delhi I put it to you again, because it was only a few days after you had been arrested and turned back. What I understood you to say was for the first time when you went to Delhi it was not part of your object to get into collision with the police but you went there to make the position better?

Yes.

I don't think I have before me in an authoritative form the facts as to the action you took to bring to an end the practice of what is called civil disobedience. I think you did feel yourself compelled to advise the temporary suspension of civil disobedience, and according to the document before me, that was done about the 18th April?

Yes.

And that was done after you got back from Ahmedabad, and you addressed a letter to the Secretaries of the Sabha in which you said that "it is not without sorrow that I feel compelled to advise the temporary suspension of civil disobedience. I give this advice not because I have less faith now in its efficacy, but because, I have, if possible, greater faith than before. It is my perception of the law of satyagraha movement that impels me to suggest suspension. I am sorry that when I embarked upon a mass movement, I understand the forces of evil, and I must now pause and consider how best to meet the situation."[1] Now, you seem to have stated there very frankly that, when on the 23rd of February you embarked upon satyagraha and civil disobedience as a mass movement, you had underrated the forces of evil, and I suppose that the experiences through which India had passed during the intervening period led you to think that it was doing more harm than good in that form?

Yes.

After that date, the 18th April, I think from time to time you were requested for instructions whether it was going to be restarted again; was it ever in fact restarted again?

[1] *Vide* "Press Statement on Suspension of Civil Disobedience", 18-4-1919.

No.

You have kept it in suspension since that date?

And then a notice was issued that it will be started, I think, on the 1st of August or the 1st of July. I forgot now the exact month, when I saw there was a fair control over the situation, but yielding to the better knowledge and the better information of the Government of India, it was Lord Chelmsford's desire conveyed to me through His Excellency the Governor of Bombay and supplemented by the advice of the Governor of Bombay also, I felt that, in order to make good my claim as a satyagrahi, I should yield and I yielded.

I think there is a letter over your signature in which you put the matter thus: "As long as we practise truth and ask others to do so, satyagraha can never be said to have ceased. And if all practise truth, and refrain from violence to person and property, we would immediately get what we want. But when all are not prepared to do so, when satyagrahis are only a handful, then we have to devise other methods deducible from satyagraha. One such method is *civil disobedience*. I have already explained the reason why this civil disobedience has been for the time being suspended. As long as we know that there is every likelihood, bordening on certainty, of rioting and violence following civil disobedience, so long disobedience of laws cannot be regarded as civil disobedience, but it is disobedience that is thoughtless, uncivil and devoid of truth."[1] And for those reasons you suspended it after experience had shown you that the line between civil disobedience and other disobedience was more difficult to draw for other people than you had thought?

Yes.

I want to ask you, Mr. Gandhi. You have been taking an interest in politics all over India, and I want you to speak, so far as you can, for the whole of India as regards this point. Looking back upon what happened in the Punjab and Delhi and other places, do you think that, by a misinterpretation of the principles of satyagraha, there has been a tendency all over India in April and May of last year to have an undue sympathy with lawlessness and an inadequate perception of the necessity of obedience to law?

So far as I have been able to gauge the public feeling, I do not think that would be a correct statement.

Do you feel guilty yourself of having done anything to damage the law-abiding instinct of the Indian people by the satyagraha movement?

[1] *Vide* "Satyagraha Leaflet No. 12", 2-5-1919.

I feel guilty of having temporarily damaged that instinct in some people. I do feel that. But I do not feel for one moment that there has been a spirit of lawlessness amongst the people as a whole.

Of course in some parts of India there was greater reason than in others for being in a state of excitement. The Punjab is an instance, and there are other instances which I need not mention, but I understand it, or rather put it, that where people got more excited, there they were more liable to misinterpret what you wanted?

I think where the people did not understand the doctrine there they were liable to misinterpret it. I found to my most agreeable surprise that, for the first time people from the Punjab came to me voluntarily and said, "Oh, if only we had understood the doctrine, how differently we would have acted."

And it is the case, is it not, that before you started this particular movement in the third week of February, a campaign had been going on for a substantial time in which the disobedience of law had played a prominent part in the papers all over India?

Oh, yes, certainly.

Your view was to appoint a committee which should decide what laws to disobey . . .?

This is so, and we often discussed it at our meetings, and I made it as plain as it was possible for me to do so.

Your intention was to have a committee in Bombay both for Bombay and Ahmedabad?

That is all.

And, of course, your intention was that this civil disobedience should be practised in parts of India where they would have such sabhas. Did you intend that each place should have its own sabha to prescribe particular laws to be disobeyed?

That was done, but I think it was only nominally done, because the sabhas, in each place where it was actually done, appointed me as the President, because they felt, and very naturally too, they felt in that respect they should be guided by me. There was a local committee formed in Madras and they made me President, and I rather like the idea, and that was the same thing in the United Provinces, so that we should have the same policy all over.

Did you contemplate that different laws should be prescribed for different areas for the purposes of being broken?

I contemplated that if the necessity arose, but not otherwise.

I see in your speeches that your movement is referred to sometimes by the phrase "civil disobedience" which comes apparently from Thoreau, and sometimes by the phrase, which is more familiar to an Englishman, "passive resistance". Now if an order comes to a man from Government or from anybody else, and if his conscience says that it is not right, it may be up to him simply to do nothing if not to obey, but civil disobedience goes further than that. Does it not?

Certainly.

First of all, civil disobedience as a propaganda was a means, as you put it speaking of South Africa, of bending the Government to the will of the people?

Certainly.

Secondly, the disobedience may be active as well as passive, but still be civil according to your satyagraha doctrine?

Yes.

And thirdly, the Committee may fail to prescribe the law to be broken which is against one's conscience or prescribe a law which is not against one's conscience to be broken?

Certainly.

Those differences as I understood you to say you perceived from your former propaganda and this is your way of putting the passive resistance doctrine into force?

That is why I have not called it a passive doctrine, because there is nothing passive about this thing. It is active, but not in the physical sense.

For instance, if there is a law which says that you must not publish a newspaper unless you register it, and you publish it, is it not passive resistance?

It is active and intensely active.

In the same way you go and get yourself arrested when you are told not to go to Delhi and that would be active resistance?

Certainly.

What I want to know is whether you appreciate the fact, as it appears to me is the case, the civil disobedience as understood by you and what is called passive resistance are really two very different things?

I accept that. There is a fundamental distinction.

You said it was an extension of the domestic law on the political field, that what is repugnant to one's conscience he has a right to refuse?

That is true.

By Sir C.H. Setalvad:

You were asked about the Rowlatt Bills and you were told that the Rowlatt Act

that was passed really re-enacted the provisions of the Defence of India Act to a certain extent. The Defence of India Act provisions were submitted to merely as an emergency for the period of the War, but that would not justify keeping all those provisions after the War was over. That was one of the objections to the Bill?

Yes.

Then it was pointed out that the extension of the Rowlatt Act as passed to any particular province or locality could only be if the Government of India extended it. Have you found that similar extensions under other Acts that were made were based on what the people considered to be very insufficient grounds?

Yes.

And the main objection to the Rowlatt Bills was not this, but that it attempted to place a considerable power in the hands of the executive uncontrolled by the judiciary?

Yes.

And also the manner in which the Act was passed in the Legislative Council in the teeth of all combined non-official opposition and that too on the eve of a substantial measure of self-government being granted created the greatest resentment throughout the country?

Yes.

With regard to your satyagraha doctrine, as far as I am able to understand it, it involves a pursuit of truth?

Yes.

And in the pursuit of truth to invite suffering on oneself and not to cause violence to anybody else?

Yes.

That I understand is the main principle underlying?

That is so.

Now in that doctrine, who is to determine the truth? That individual himself?

Yes, that individual himself.

So each one that adopts this doctrine has to determine for himself what is the truth that he will pursue?

Most decidedly.

And in doing that different individuals will take very different views as to what is the truth to be pursued?

Certainly.

It might, on that footing, cause considerable confusion?

I won't accept that. It need not lead to any confusion if you accept the proposition that a man is honestly in search after truth and that he will never inflict violence upon him who holds to truth. Then there is no possibility of confusion.

A man may honestly strive after truth, but however honestly a man may strive, his notions of truth will be quite different from the notions of truth of some other people or his intellectual equipment may be of such a character that his conclusion as regards truth may be entirely opposite to the conclusion of somebody else?

That was precisely the reason why in answer to Lord Hunter I suggested that non-violence was the necessary corollary to the acceptance of satyagraha doctrine.

I quite see that non-violence is a common factor to all but what truth a particular person should pursue, on that there will be immense difference of opinion?

Certainly.

You recognise, I suppose, Mr. Gandhi, that in order properly to follow in the right spirit in which you conceive the doctrine of satyagraha, pursuit after truth, in the manner you describe, the person must be equipped with high moral and intellectual equipment?

Certainly, a man who wants to pursue truth independently has to be equipped with high moral and intellectual equipment.

Now do you expect that standard of moral and intellectual equipment in the ordinary man?

It is not necessary for me to have that standard from all who accept the thing. If, for instance, A has evolved a conception of truth which B, C and 50 others accepted implicity from him, then, I need not expect from them that high standard which I would expect from A, but the others will follow that. They will know that they are not to inflict any violence, and you create a large body.

It comes to this, that the person or persons with high moral and intellectual equipment that I have spoken of would come to a particular conclusion. Then, a large number of other people have to blindly follow him?

Not blindly, I would not say blindly, but I would not expect the same standard of intellectual or moral equipment from them as I would expect from A.

I thought you agreed with me that, in order to practice in the right spirit your doctrine of satyagraha, a person should be fitted with high moral and intellectual equipment, but you say it is not necessary to exact that standard from all people because all that they need do is to follow what a person of that high intellectual and

moral equipment has decided?

You may put it that way if you wish to. But all I wish to urge is that each individual, unless he wants to carry on his pursuit independently, does not need to do so. I simply say that if one man conceives a plan of life, it is not necessary for all the others, before they can follow that, to have the same intellectual and moral equipment. If you have appreciated that from what I have said, I have nothing more to say.

I take it that your scheme, as you conceive it, involves the determination of what is the right path and the true path by people who are capable of high intellectual and moral equipment and a large number of other people following them without themselves being able to arrive at similar conclusions by reason of their lower moral and intellectual equipment?

I cannot subscribe to that, because I have not said that I do not say that they are not to exercise their judgment, but I simply say that, in order that they may exercise their judgment, the same mental and moral equipment is not necessary.

Because they are to accept the judgment of people who are capable of exercising better judgment and equipped with better moral and intellectual standard?

Naturally, but I think that is in human nature, but I exact nothing more than I would exact from an ordinary human being.

I will put it in another way. The success of your propaganda must depend upon a large number of people accepting the conclusion of people in whom they have faith and who are fortunate enough to have that high moral and intellectual equipment. If everybody without that moral and intellectual equipment begins to think out for himself what is the right path, you will end in confusion. So the success of your scheme implies and must involve this, that a certain number of people endowed with that high moral and intellectual equipment will pursue the truth and determine what it is, then, a large number not so endowed will accept their conclusion and follow them?

I do not accept that as a natural conclusion, that the success of the movement depends upon that. In satyagraha the success of the movement depends upon the existence of one full satyagrahi. One satyagrahi can achieve success in the manner and in the sense that in the plan of violence numbers of people cannot do.

The first part of it, I understood, Mr. Gandhi, is that it is a doctrine of pursuit of truth in the sense that you have suggested and it can only be rightly worked out by a person fitted with high moral and intellectual equipment which the ordinary masses do not possess?

Of making an independent search, that is how I would like to put it.

Therefore, so far as they are concerned, they have to accept the conclusions of people who are capable of doing it?

Not without sufficiently exercising their judgment.

They can only exercise such judgment as they have?

Certainly.

And as you have said, the real pursuit of truth in the manner you have described requires such high moral and intellectual equipment that it is beyond the ordinary individual?

That is true with reference to any original thing.

I am not pointing this as a reproach against the movement. I am only understanding the position.

Perhaps, I am reading actually more in your words than I am entitled to.

You need not view my questions with undue suspicion?

It is not suspicion, Sir Chimanlal, but I simply do not want the Committee or you, for that matter, to misunderstand my position. That is all.

I understand you to say, Mr. Gandhi, you do not consider yourself a perfect satyagrahi yet?

No.

If that is so, Mr. Gandhi, it is almost impossible for ordinary people to ever hope to be that?

I do not by any means consider myself to be an extraordinary man.

You may not consider yourself, but looking to your life and your habits the people know that you are an extraordinary man and can pursue a doctrine such as the satyagraha perfectly. But are there not many people for whom it is almost impossible to hope to pursue it correctly?

They perhaps in that case would not have understood the scope of satyagraha at all. It would mean that they had felt quite disgusted. Now, take for instance, the 40,000 Indians in South Africa who are totally uncultured and illiterate, and these people never come to that conclusion.

I may be wrong. But when you speak of the 40,000 in South Africa, I think they simply followed your lead ?

Yes, followed my lead after having examined the position. If I take you through the streets of South Africa, and should you have the time to do it, you will find that your countrymen were capable of doing it because they did not follow me blindly.

True, but there in South Africa you had a broad simple issue?

Yes.

And it was an issue with regard to which the sympathy of the civilized world was with the people who were following satyagraha and that very much differentiates the situation from the situation that you have here?

Not on the concrete instance of satyagrahi control. I have had to consolidate more information here on my side than I had in South Africa. They were divided in two forces of hostile camps there.

That may be, but still you had a clean-out issue?

So also here.

Here you say you had on this particular occasion the Rowlatt Bill agitation, but once you start this doctrine of satyagraha and introduce it into political campaigns and activities in a country like India, situated as we are, it is not one clean-out issue that we arrive at. There would be varied and complicated situations to which you would have to apply this doctrine?

I do not apply the doctrine to every situation in life. I simply present satyagraha as an instrument of infinitely greater power and infinitely purer than violence.

Then I take it, you will agree that it is not a doctrine that you would apply to every grievance or every situation that may arise?

Most certainly not. Not if only because of the automatic limits of the doctrine imposed, because everyone is not ready to suffer. Everyone is ready to strike a blow if he would receive one in return.

You say that an ordinary man is quite ready to strike a blow, so your doctrine involves eschewing that altogether and, on the contrary, the suffering ones go on suffering. Now, does not that require very extraordinary control over ordinary human passions?

Not to my experience. It does not really require that extra-ordinary control for sufferings that you imagine. Every mother suffers and she is not exceptionally gifted with any great virtue.

Now, take a case in ordinary life. If you get a blow and you determine to suffer it according to your doctrine, surely that does require extraordinary control over ordinary human passions?

Then, your countrymen have got that extraordinary control.

Do you think they have exercised it or exhibited it in all these places?

Yes, they have exhibited that in a very large measure.

Take Ahmedabad. Do you think they exhibited that control over their passions when on hearing of your arrest they burst forth and committed all these atrocities which you clearly denounced? Do you think they exhibited this self-control and self-restraint?

All I say is that throughout India where you find these isolated instances, you find innumerable instances where the people exercise the most exemplary self-restraint and hence we have earned the title of the "mild Hindu".

I daresay many people did not take part in these disturbances and in that sense it is self-restraint. But you see the point is how, on hearing of your arrest, which was the first provocation to them, they burst into ebullitions, and these atrocities in Ahmedabad followed almost at once.

To me it just shows that even we have not gone far enough I moved 7 lakhs of people in Kaira, they are high-spirited people, and yet they acted with the greatest self-restraint in the face of very grave provocation at the time of the Kaira trouble, which was not for one day but continued for six months.

So you consider these many manifestations of violence in different parts as merely an accidental or a passing phase which is not likely to recur?

I do not say so, but it will certainly be rare and rarer still from a clear conception that the country has now got of satyagraha. I have no doubt in my mind about it.

Do you think that the country has now realized the high ideals that you have placed before them?

Not in its full sense, but the country has sufficiently realized the high ideal to enable a man like myself to try it again and, I would not hesitate to try it again if a situation warranting such control faced me, but as I have said, it is not every day that you want to break laws.

Do you feel sure that if you started it again, similar disturbances would not result in any place?

It is very difficult to say beforehand when such a situation faces me, but I do feel sure that the country is all the purer and better for having gone through the fire of satyagraha.

Now, as I understand you from your statement, the satyagraha doctrine is used in the political sphere to oppose unjust laws?

Yes.

And that is to be done by inviting penalties under that law, by breaking that law. And you say your doctrine inculcates this with regard to such laws in connection with which the rendering of obedience be a dishonour, and you go so far as to say that in order to register your protest against any such law one would be entitled to withdraw co-operation altogether from the State?

I have not said that there, i.e., "to withdraw co-operation". But I would accept that proposition also when a situation may be reached in which case it would be a proper thing to withdraw complete co-operation from the State.

Now ordinarily I take it that your doctrine is co-operation with Government?

Yes.

I mean to say, in the very interest of the country for its ordered development, for which there ought to be co-operation?

Yes.

And there ought to be an elimination as far as possible of any race hatred or race feeling or bitterness of that kind?

Yes.

Tested in this way, when your doctrine says with regard to any particular law or laws to invite suffering and go to jail by breaking them, you hope thereby ultimately to excite the sympathy of the people in authority and to make them see the correct view of it?

I should eliminate the hope. That hope is not a necessary ingredient.

If I remember, I think, in your statement you mention it?

When I place the doctrine before the people I place that also before them, but it is not an essential part of the doctrine. The essential part is not to accept and obey a law to obey which is a dishonour, therefore, it becomes a necessity of the situation for us to do that, but that by itself is the register of a protest by honest action, which brings about the sympathy of the world and the repeal of that legislation. It is one of the conditions of that act. A man may say, "No, the whole world will rise against me", but he must still make good his protest.

It is true the result may also be that, though it may not be the strict ideal of satyagraha. According to you one should not do it for achieving that result, but the hope may be that, if you can get a number of people going to jail and suffering, then, the authorities may be moved by sympathy and may realize the correct point of view as you consider it. Now, if that is done on any particular occasion and if several

people went to jail in this way and suffered, will it not also create to a certain extent a feeling of hatred against the Government in the minds of people who would naturally feel that they were so helpless before this Government that the only thing they could do was to go to jail. Would it not naturally create, in these circumstances, although you may restrain yourself and not proceed to violence, in your mind, a certain feeling against the authority with regard to whom you have to take this action of inviting suffering on yourself?

It is totally contrary to my 30 years' experience. I myself, and all those who have been associated with me, have not by reason of suffering been filled, at least, with any greater ill will than is professed to be, but I know of scores of instances in which they have got rid of the ill will, because this is a doctrine in which you get rid of that kind of passion and ill will in the quickest manner possible. See what is happening today in South Africa after the close of such a bitter struggle causing the suffering of innocent men. The Governors and the Indians have gone on the best of terms and even when they were labouring under very serious disabilities at the time of the War, the Indians offered their services absolutely voluntarily and there you had no recruitment or anything of that kind. It was all optional, and those who cared to go did so and they served under the very gentle men who, in their opinion, had subjected them to the greatest hardship; and General Smuts, when he returned, was the recipient of an address from the people who voluntarily voted that address to him, and whom he had, in their estimation, oppressed during the passive resistance struggle.

Then when the Rowlatt Bills were passed, you decided to present the satyagraha doctrine to the country?

Yes.

And you wanted the masses to be satyagrahis in that sense?

To take part in the movement without pledging themselves to the satyagraha vow.

True, they may or may not take the vow, but you wanted them to be satyagrahis in spirit, to follow the doctrines of the satyagraha movement?

That part of the movement not devoted to civil disobedience, that is to say, I would warn them and invite them to take part in meetings to be organized, but I would not invite them to take part in the civil breach of the laws, and I would not make them to force others who do not wish to take part.

You never intended that the masses should take part in the civil disobedience

part of the movement?

Unless they definitely took the pledge. I would then take the masses also with me.

But you did want them to follow the satyagraha doctrine?

Certainly. You may perhaps recall I framed another statement of pledge to be signed by all after this violence which omitted mention of civil resistance but simply mentioned the following of truth at all costs and asking others also to do that. I omitted from that even the taking of self-suffering.

By whom was this statement to be signed?

It was a pledge to be signed by a large number of people who are not in my circle and who are not civil resisters.

Your idea is this that the masses or a large number of people should not be asked to subscribe to civil disobedience?

I do not say that. I simply say that, in opposition of the violent movement, I issued another pledge which was intended to be signed by everybody who cared to do so, which simply bound him to observe the truth in all his dealings and not to inflict violence, i.e., to omit civil disobedience and, therefore, the inviting of suffering.

Because you considered civil disobedience in consequence of the suffering following on that, to be not quite suited to the ordinary masses?

No. I had suspended the movement at the time and yet I wanted to place something before the country. Naturally, a leader would sometimes emphasize one part of his propaganda and sometimes another. At this time when I saw that the civil disobedience part was misunderstood by the people, I suspended that, but I wanted to emphasize the principle a part of it the non-violence part of it, and so I eliminated civil disobedience, not because it was unsuited to the masses, but because it was unsuited to the season, in other words, it was not in season to preach it.

Because of your experience of the occurrences that took place in April, you came to the conclusion that civil disobedience propaganda was unsuited to the occasion?

For that season, I have not come to any such conclusion as you postulate.

I do not suggest that but you came to the conclusion that looking to the circumstances then existing satyagraha was unsuited?

Yes.

And therefore you suspended it?

Yes.

And you came to that conclusion because the events showed you that the people had not really understood what you meant by civil [dis]obedience?

Yes.

And they had thereby misled themselves?

Yes.

When you first decided about civil disobedience I suppose it was in connection with the Rowlatt Act?

No, when the pledge was first signed, the whole thing was contemplated at the very first sitting in Ahmedabad at the Ashram.

The disobedience of the Rowlatt Act as well as other laws?

Yes.

You see, I just want to correct my impression.

Yes, many have really thought that the other laws came in after. That is not so.

If I remember aright, Mrs. Besant first took the vow?

Well, there are two versions to it. She took the vow and she did not. I was told that she had really taken the vow in *toto* less the Committee clause. She did not want to be dominated by a committee. As you have now seen it was a question of limitation, but she misunderstood that.

Was it not like this, viz., that she pointed out that it was not possible to disobey the Rowlatt Act, unless you brought yourself under the provisions of the Act by becoming a seditionist or an anarchist?

I remember to have read it in the papers, but that was previous to the telegram and conversation of hers, so far as I recollect.

She did point that out?

Of course, there she misread the law, but she did say that.

What I want to be clear about is whether it was on her pointing out what I have stated that the determination was arrived at to disobey other laws?

Not at all. It was some days at least after the pledge was published that Mrs. Besant wrote what you have stated. Mrs. Besant knew nothing of the pledge then at the time it was signed at Ahmedabad.

I simply want to know whether my recollection is correct. She pointed out that the very nature of the Act did not lend itself to such disobedience, but as regards

disobedience of any other laws, she refused to join that because she said that it would lead to chaos?

Yes, I know she advanced that argument and she refuted the movement so far as it related to the disobedience of other laws, but I do not know on what grounds ultimately she refused to join the movement.

The ground was put forward by her in her paper?

Certainly, she wrote an article to that effect in her *New India.*

That is, that disobedience of laws in that manner must inevitably lead to chaos?

Yes.

Now with regard to civil disobedience of various laws, was the idea underlying it thus to a certain extent, that if you disobeyed various laws the result would be to embarrass the Government or to make ordered Government impossible, that Government would be obliged to yield to the demand of the people with regard to the Rowlatt Bill and, thus, would be effected what you yourself described as bending the Government to the will of the people? Was that the idea underlying it?

It is not embarrassment of the Government, but the idea is the exercise of your right to withdraw your co-operation from Government that has forfeited all confidence and esteem, and it will all depend upon the measure of forfeiture of confidence.

Take this particular case we are dealing with ≈ the Rowlatt Act. By the passing of the Rowlatt Act, did you and your co-workers come to the conclusion that in doing that the Government had so acted that they had forfeited their confidence and, therefore, all claim for co-operation?

Oh, no. Not at all.

I want to be clear.

The determining consideration was that the Rowlatt Act itself would not lend itself to active disobedience from moment to moment and, therefore, if we want to impress ourselves upon the Government, we must stick to some other channel and we did so by actively breaking other laws which did not involve moral turpitude.

Now, if you actually break other laws, would you grant that it would make, in a certain measure, ordered Government impossible?

I would not say that. Ordered Government would not be impossible in the case of totally inoffensive people. Naturally we have to assume that condition to be in existence with the people.

The laws that you determined to be disobeyed were laws that were obeyed by

you and other people all these years?

Yes.

When they were enacted, they were not considered by you to be so outrageous that you should not obey them. Then, determining now to disobey the laws which you had all these years obeyed, would it not look as if meant to make Government impossible?

It would, if it covered a wide area. I would make Government impossible if I found that Government had taken leave of its senses entirely.

On that 10th April, Mr. Gandhi, you were not in Ahmedabad?

No.

You were on your way to Bombay.

On my way back to Bombay.

When did you arrive in Bombay?

On the 11th.

On the 9th you were arrested at Palwal and you sent a message?

Before I was arrested I had dictated the message[1].

Are you aware that on the 10th in Ahmedabad a meeting was held where your message was read?

Yes.

In that message you had exhorted the people not to commit violence?

Yes.

And that message was, I understand, explained to the meeting?

Yes.

That was a very big meeting in Ahmedabad?

So I have heard.

In spite of that exhortation of yours, which was communicated to the people not to commit violence, the mob burst out into violence on the 11th?

Yes.

Doesn't it show, Mr. Gandhi, that it is very difficult to make the ordinary masses, as they are, grasp this theory of no violence and suffering on oneself?

I admit the difficulty of it certainly.

It is very difficult for them to practise that, i.e., no violence and suffering on

[1] This was annexed to "Statement to Disorders Inquiry Committee", 5-1-1920. For the text of the message, *vide* "Message to Counntrymen", 9-4-1919.

oneself?

After having been used to methods of violence, one does find it difficult to exercise self-restraint.

In the circumstances, as they are at present, it is very difficult to practise abstention from violence in that manner?

Certainly.

The other part is easy for them to grasp, viz. that they are to oppose certain legislation or to oppose Government in enforcing that legislation. That is a thing which the ordinary mind very easily grasps?

I think you are right; but I do not think that I have found it easy to explain to the people and make them understand that it was very difficult to oppose unjust laws. On the contrary, it has cost me considerable energy and industry before I have been able to drive the truth home.

What I mean is if you tell the people that the Rowlatt Act is an unjust Act, or some other Act is an unjust Act, and we must oppose that, that is a suggestion which the ordinary mind will easily grasp and follow?

Certainly.

Coupled with that, if you tell them that they should oppose that but abstain from violence, that part is very difficult, as they are constituted at present to grasp and follow?

Certainly.

Then you arrived in Ahmedabad on the 12th?

On the 13th.

You explained to the President what you meant by the statement you are reported to have made that this was organized by educated people. You have told us that you meant by that that there was no general conspiracy, but it was organized on the 10th, and that the people who organized it were people who could read and write. You do not mean the better educated classes had any hand in it?

No.

When you say that this was organized by some one, have you any evidence in support of that statement?

Yes; I have evidence in support of that statement.

I think you are not prepared to place that either before the authorities or before this Committee?

I am not prepared to give the names of the informants.

I do not want the names of the informants. But the informants must have given

you certain facts or certain materials which led you to conclude that this was organized on the 10th. Have you any objection to place those materials before the Committee?

I do not know what you mean by material, but I have no objection to describing the nature of the things that were done on the 10th or whenever the thing was suggested to the crowds as to how they should act in the matter. There were some people who suggested to them the burning of the *chowkies*[1] and some people suggested how to do it.

Let us go step by step. As regards such information as you are prepared to give about the organization of the 10th, was there any meeting held on the 10th where they were told to do this?

I have no evidence of any meeting held in any house or anything of that kind, but I have evidence of people who were themselves told what to do.

Was that on the 10th?

I am not able to tax my memory to that extent, but if I said to Mr. Chatfield it was on the 10th, it is the 10th.

I want to be quite clear about this. We have been told that on the 11th people on the spot were told to do various things. That is different from their being told deliberately on the night previous to do certain things?

Yes. I understand the distinction. As to the 11th, it is also equally true.

Let us first take the evening of the 10th. Have you got any information in proof of your statement?

I have.

On the 10th some people, whoever they were, went about telling people to work out a programme, which they had thought out. Is that so?

Perhaps I would not put it so strongly, I would put it this way, because this is what was impressed upon my mind at the time. I was told that during that night there were people who said, "You are fools, this is what you should do and this is how you should do the thing." What the whole conversation was I am unable to reproduce today, because I took no notes. On the whole the conversation which was described to me came to this that it was suggested to those who were about them that this is what they should do.

[1] Police posts

Did individuals go about on the night of the 10th for this purpose?

I would not even put it so strongly as that, because I have no evidence, but they seized the opportunity which offered itself to them.

The opportunity was on the 10th?

Supposing I was in my shop for instance and I saw people gathering round me, naturally on a day like that there would be a discussion and there would be crowds of people discussing as to how these things should be done or what was to be done. Somebody would say, "Don't you know what should be done? This is how things have been done and you ought to do this." I want to say, also that there was no destruction of life suggested by anybody so far as I know, but there was certainly destruction of property suggested.

Then this must have been done during the day on the 10th and the night of the 10th?

I do not know about the day on the 10th. I do know about the evening of the 10th but I have more abundant and clear proof about the 11th.

We are coming to the 11th presently. Let us confine attention to the 10th now. On the evening of the 10th, say it happened in this way, that people congregated somewhere near shops or in some other place and somebody told them, "Now, this is how you ought to proceed." That would be only when people by accident came there and when a man got an opportunity. Such an accident in that manner would not occur ordinarily in the evening or the night. It may happen during the day?

I do not know.

If it happened in the evening or on the night, it must be more organized in that people deliberately went about telling people what to do?

I would not be surprised if that were also true that some people might have deliberately gone about from place to place. I can certainly imagine the possibility of such a thing, but I have not got evidence to the effect that some people actually went about from place to place, but I have with me unimpeachable testimony that some people actually incited the people to this kind of violence.

On the 10th?

Yes.

You are the best judge of what you call unimpeachable evidence. Is it any evidence on which ordinary human beings in ordinary life can base their conclusions?

I think so. I have not employed any extraordinary method of reasoning before I accepted it. On the contrary I think that I would act with the greatest caution before I would accept any such testimony.

Were the people who gave you the information people who actually heard that or saw that done or did they hear it from somebody?

I have the testimony of those deluded people who were told this thing, and I have the testimony of some who did know also.

People who heard this being said?

Who were told themselves to do the thing and I have the testimony of some who themselves did it also.

Was this on a large scale or in an isolated manner?

It is difficult to say whether it was on a large scale. In a way I am prepared to say that it was on a large scale. Certainly there were isolated cases. These men did not busy themselves to that extent, that they made it a point to go about from end to end, but they certainly seized the opportunity of the temper of the people and put this idea into their minds. That is the real meaning of what I am saying.

What you say is really that the people burst out on your arrest on the 10th?

Yes.

They had no plan before that at all?

They had no plan before that.

Some persons saw that the crowds were excited in that manner and they took hold of that opportunity and misled them or diverted them into these actions?

I have not the shadow of a doubt about that.

And for that you say you have got direct evidence?

I have direct evidence.

Of people who saw that being done or who themselves had done it?

Yes.

I take it that your principles forbid you from giving that information to the authorities or to the Committee?

I could not give the names of the people who have done so, just as if I was acting as counsel for these people. My principles and law also would forbid that, and I occupy with them a position unfortunately more sacred than that of a counsel. I had people coming to me who wanted to surrender the swords that they had got from the Swami Narayan Temple, but unfortunately they had not the courage and the pluck to do so.

You have evidence before you that on the 11th some people led the mobs or suggested to them what to do?

I have no evidence as to people leading the mobs, but I have evidence again equally strong, perhaps stronger than the evidence with reference to the 10th, that youngsters and youths rebuked those who were idle and who would not go and assist in the work of destruction.

You have also definite information as to who those people were?

I cannot say that I have definite information, but I have had the names. I do not know them; I may have seen them, but I would not be able to identify them, that is to say, the people who said so. I do not know that at this distance of time I could even identify my informants.

You cannot identify your informants?

I cannot. One man was not saying this to me. For instance, a party from a village came to me and I said, "Hullo, this is what you have done and that is how you have understood my mission." They begged pardon of me. This is what happened on the morning of the 14th. They said they were exceedingly sorry but I would not find them doing the same thing again. I asked them to describe how they did it; then they described. If you ask me to identify them, I would not be able to do so, because I do not know them by names; I have not seen them either for any length of time, whereas I can identify some of my informants certainly.

The informants with regard to the 10th, you can identify?

With regard to the 11th, more clearly, but I think I can identify some with reference to the 10th also.

You say that some villagers came to you?

Quite a number.

And you rebuked them for having acted in that manner?

I simply took them to task. I asked them, "Why didn't you interfere? Why did you allow these things to happen under your very nose?"

Then they said that they were instigated or were asked by others?

No. They said, "Prem." That was the exact word. They said, "Our love for you made us do this thing." Then I asked them to describe how they did it; then they described.

So far as you have described, it only comes to this, that they said they had done it and nobody asked them to do it?

I have given you three illustrations. One, of those men who knew the thing, but who were not themselves told to do the thing, another party who saw these things being done, the inciting and the act, whilst they themselves were mere spectators, and the third class of people who themselves were actors but not the incitors. I have not got any testimony or any confession from the instigators themselves.

There may not be confession by the instigators. But if you rebuked certain people for having done certain things, they would naturally shoulder responsibility on somebody else by saying, "True, I did it, but somebody else asked me to do it."

They may do that, but I think I should be able to discriminate between that and a true thing.

You formed your own conclusions?

That is all I can say.

You still adhere to them?

I do and as I am gaining experience, day after day, it confirms me in that conclusion.

I understood that with regard to the Kaira disturbances and the derailments, there also you had certain information?

Yes.

Was that in your view an organized movement?

It was not organized, and it was done certainly by a definite party of people some of whom were really drunkards. They went to the station. Whether they went to the station with that intention or not, I have no clear evidence but having reached the station they said, "Let us do this thing."

It was not organized in the sense that the people of the town were behind it?

No; on the contrary, it is my conviction that, if the people in the town had come to know of any such thing, they would have gone and turned these men away. I may be mistaken, but that is my view and my view is based on the testimony of those for whom I entertain a very high regard. I do not think they will willingly deceive me.

About those people who were reported to you as having taken part in the derailment, they have never been prosecuted?

Whether they have been prosecuted or some others I do not know, because I do not know the names.

Then when these disturbances occurred, Mr. Gandhi, you suspended your satyagraha propaganda, so far as civil disobedience was concerned. That was on the 18th April?

Yes.

When you issued that notice, you realized, I think, that civil disobedience as a mass movement under the existing circumstances was not advisable?

Under those circumstances, it was not opportune at the time. I could not restrain the violence of the mob.

In the circumstances then existing you realized that it was not advisable that this movement should proceed as a mass movement?

Yes.

Then at that stage you merely suspended and you notified, if I remember correctly, that you proposed to resume it some time in July?

On the 1st of July.

Have you got the notice that you issued on that occasion?

I have, but I do not have it in my possession just now. But Mr. Justice Rankin had it.

Then you thought in two months people will come up to the standard and Government military arrangements would be complete?

I said that. That is the letter.

Then you suspended it till July in the hope that before that time, the masses would be educated as regards the correct principles of satyagraha and there would be no danger then to resume civil disobedience movement?

That is correct as a partial statement. What I felt was that if I suspended the thing for two months, I shall be able to overtake the misinterpretation and misunderstanding about it, and I shall be able to make the position much more clear than I had done or had been able to do before the people and Government.

I will come to the Government in a minute. I want to understand first this. When you suspended it you believed that the people had not fully understood your propaganda or creed and that they were not yet fit to exercise satyagraha, and certainly its offshoot of civil disobedience in the real manner in which you desired and you believed that they would be fit to do so within two months?

I did not believe they would be fit to do so within two months.

I want the actual expression used.

(Reads) "I am sorry that when I embarked upon a mass movement, I under-rated the forces of evil and I must now pause and consider how best to meet the situation. But whilst doing so I wish to say that from a careful examination of the tragedy at Ahmedabad and Viramgam, I am convinced that satyagraha had nothing to do with the

violence of the mob, and that many swarmed round the banner of mischief largely because of their affection for Anasuyabai and myself. Had the Government, in an unwise manner, not prevented me from entering Delhi and so compelled me to disobey their orders, I feel certain that Ahmedabad and Viramgam would have remained free from the horrors of the last week. In other words, satyagraha has neither been the cause nor the occasion of the upheaval. If anything, the presence of satyagrahis has acted as a check, ever so light, upon the previously existing lawless elements. As regards the events in the Punjab, it is admitted that they are unconnected with the satyagraha movement.

"In the course of the satyagraha struggle in South Africa, several thousands of indentured Indians had struck work.[1] This was a satyagraha strike and, therefore, entirely peaceful and voluntary. Whilst the strike was going on, the strike of the European miners and railway employees, etc., was declared."

Take that portion where you refer to the reason for suspending it for two months.

I am coming to that.

"Overtures were made to me to make common cause with the European strikers. As a satyagrahi, I did not require a moment's consideration to decline to do so. I went further, and for fear of our strike being classed with the strike of the Europeans, in which methods of violence and the use of arms found a prominent place, ours was suspended and satyagraha from that moment came to be recognised by the Europeans of South Africa as an honourable and honest movement and in the words of General Smuts, 'a constitutional movement'. I can do no less at the present critical moment. I would be untrue to satyagraha if I allowed it, by any action of mine, to be used as an occasion for feeding violence; for embittering the relations between the English and the Indians. Our satyagraha must, therefore, now consist in ceaselessly helping the authorities in all the ways available to us as satyagrahis to restore order and to curb lawlessness. We can turn the tragedies going on before us to good account, if we could but succeed in gaining the adherence of the masses to the fundamental principles of satyagraha.

[1] This was in October 1913.

"Satyagraha is like a banian-tree with innumerable branches. Civil disobedience is one such branch. *Satya* (truth) and ahimsa (non-violence) together make the parent trunk from which *all* the innumerable branches shoot out. We have found by bitter experience that, whilst in an atmosphere of lawlessness, civil disobedience found ready acceptance. *Satya* (truth) and ahimsa (non-violence), from which alone civil disobedience can worthily spring, have commanded little or no respect. Ours then is a Herculean task, but we may not shirk it. We must fearlessly spread the doctrine of *satya* and ahimsa, and then and not till then shall we be able to undertake mass-s*atyag*raha. My attitude towards the Rowlatt legislation remains unchanged. Indeed, I do feel that the Rowlatt legislation is one of the many causes of the present unrest. But in a surcharged atmosphere, I must refrain from examining these causes. The main and only purpose of this letter is to advise all satyagrahis to temporarily suspend civil disobedience, to give the Government effective co-operation in restoring order, and by preaching and practice to gain adherence to the fundamental principles mentioned above."[1]

" 'When is satyagraha going to be resumed,' is the question many have asked me. There are two answers. One is that satyagraha has not at all ceased as long as we practise truth and ask others to do so, so long satyagraha can never be said to have ceased. And if all practise truth and refrain from violence to person and property, we would get all we want. When all are not prepared to do so, we have to devise other methods. One such method is civil disobedience. I have already explained the reason why this civil disobedience has been for the time being suspended. As long as we know that there is every likelihood bordering on certainty to rioting and violence following civil disobedience, so long disobedience of laws cannot be regarded as civil disobedience but is disobedience that is thoughtless, uncivil and devoid of truth. Satyagrahis may never commit such disobedience. My confidence in satyagrahis has led me to say that we shall be fitted to resume civil disobedience in about two months if the Rowlatt legislation is not withdrawn in the meantime. We may resume by the beginning of July next. In provisionally fixing this period, I am guided by the following considerations: One of them is that we shall have by that time spread our message throughout the country, namely, that during the tenure of civil disobedience, no one under the cover of

[1] *Vide* "Press Statement on Suspension of Civil Disobedience", 18-4-1919

Satyagraha, under a pretence to help it, should resort to violence, and it may be hoped that the people, convinced that the true interests of the country will be served by acting in accordance with the message of peace, will materially contribute towards India's progress, but it is possible that India may not understand satyagraha to this extent. In that case, there is one more way to help the non-recurrence of violence. Though the condition upon which it is based is humiliating, it is open to a satyagrahi to avail himself of this advantage. Now it becomes their duty to resume satyagraha under such conditions. The military dispositions that are now going on will ensure non-recurrence of violence. The recent outbreaks were so sudden that the Government were not prepared to cope with them; but the Government arrangements are likely to be effected in two months and breach of public peace will be well-nigh impossible, and therefore conscious or unconscious of the past, the satyagrahi, under that state of things, may without fear of any disturbance commit civil disobedience and thereby demonstrate that not violence but satyagraha alone can help us to secure justice."[1]

Then you hoped that within two months' time people would be fitted for the proper civil disobedience campaign. Has that hope been fulfilled?

Personally I consider that the hope would have been fulfilled if I had resumed satyagraha at the moment. I made that altogether bold experiment on the 17th October. In fact, it has not been fulfilled. If all people become quite fitted to practise satyagraha doctrines ≈ pardon me, I have not said that in my letter. What I have said is that we shall have the passive help of the people; they will not egg others to violence and will not do violence themselves.

If I heard you correctly, you used the words "fitted in two months, they would practise satyagraha"?

I have described here the sense in which 'fitted' is used. Fitted, because the people will have received the message, and they will be passive sympathizers with the movement along with the movement to go forward.

In the first part, you explained that people did not realize the real inwardness of your creed and therefore civil disobedience got associated with violence, and therefore you came to the conclusion that it was imperative in the interests of the country, of law and order, that it should be suspended?

[1] *Vide* "Satyagraha Leaflet No. 12", 2-5-1919

Questions have been asked when it is going to be resumed. Then you say you would be able to resume it on the 1st July. In giving the reasons, you say "within that time people would become fitted".

By receiving the message of satyagraha.

You mean by that time people would realize the real inwardness of satyagraha and would be able to practise civil disobedience.

I won't expect the people to realize the inwardness of satyagraha but I would expect the people to realize that it is better for them to join the movement again, at least to refrain from disturbing the movement.

That is far different from saying "that I expect the people to be fitted, etc."

That is the meaning conveyed by the word 'fitted'. I would ask you to accept my interpretation of it. I think you will find it here; if not that is the interpretation.

Then you go on to express the apprehension that people may not get so fitted in the manner you have explained now, in which event also there will be no harm in restarting civil disobedience because the military dispositions by that time would have been so completely organized that any violence would be effectively dealt with; and therefore you advocate it, the restarting of civil disobedience, even if people did not quite get fitted in the sense you mean?

Certainly.

Just see what that means. The military dispositions should be kept in all parts of the country or certainly in some parts of the country in order that some people may have the pleasure of breaking certain laws and violence may not result? Does it not involve that?

Not the interpretation warranted by this letter. I have not meant that. I simply say that I see the dispositions going on and I have every right to seize the opportunity.

If you will kindly read it again. You give two reasons, two circumstances on which you hope to start the movement again on the 1st of July. One is your hope that people would get fitted and therefore the chance of violence would be avoided. Secondly, even if they were not so fit and even if they were as before prone to go to violence, still the military dispositions now taking place in the country would be so complete within the two months that, even if people not fitted in that manner resorted in the old way to violence, there would be no great harm done to law and order because the military dispositions were there?

That is totally different from my wishing the military dispositions in order.

That is the meaning of what you say. I did not say you wished?

Then you are correct.

Whether you wish it or not, you say in fact, the military dispositions would be so completed in two months that you can then, even though the people were not quite fitted, without apprehension of disorder, restart civil disobedience because no great harm or violence will be done as the military is there to cope with it.

Certainly I meant that.

I ask you to follow me, and to see what that means. That involves that assuming that the people have not got so fitted within the two months, Government must maintain these military disposition in various parts of the country in order that some people who have taken the vow - only some people - could have the pleasure of breaking some laws. Going further, it involves that in order that these few people who have taken this vow might be able to break the laws, certain laws, without any serious consequences to society, these military dispositions must be maintained at a considerable cost which must be paid for by the large masses of innocent people who have nothing to do with that. It must result in that?

That will be the result if the man who pretended to be a satyagrahi had really said good-bye to his senses. It could not otherwise result.

You yourself apprehended that it is possible that within two months men cannot be got so fitted as to avoid violence. Even then passive civil disobedience will be started, or ought to be started, on the 1st July, because, even though people may be minded to do violence, they will be prevented from doing so because of the effective military dispositions?

Quite right. I am taking advantage there of a circumstance that is happening before me irrespective of what I may do. But I think it will obviate the necessity of asking questions on this score if I am making the position clear. As a satyagrahi I would never say I would not be guilty of doing any such thing, that in order that I may go with a handful of men breaking laws, the Government may impose a military force on the country. Then I would understand that the atmosphere had not been prepared for the reception of the doctrine and I must not do so.

I take it so far then you modified what you said?

I did so. I did not start the campaign as I had expected to on the 1st July, much to the disappointment of my co-workers who were with me in this letter of the 2nd May, only because the Governor-General and the Governor of Bombay felt that I had not sufficient data before me and this was how it was put to me: “Do you want India to be an

armed camp?" I said, "No". "Then if you do not want India to be an armed camp, won't you suspend the satyagraha?" On this I suspended [it].

That shows that you on the representation that were made to you, modified the position you took up in this manifesto?

Certainly I postponed the time.

You would start civil disobedience only when you are satisfied that the people have got so fitted that it would not result in violence?

Or otherwise some other circumstance presents itself to me which has fulfilled the propagation of that doctrine.

But that you would not start if the people do not become fitted, and if violence could only be prevented by military organisation?

Military organization got for the purpose.

You say with regard to the events in Ahmedabad on the 10th and 11th, that the action of the mob was no doubt unjustifiable and indefensible, but you speak of an unpardonable error of judgment on the part of the Government. Would you specify the acts of Government you characterize in that way?

I said that it was an unpardonable error of judgment on the part of the Government in having arrested me. That is what I am referring to. I am not thinking of any errors committed here. I have heard about cause being given to the mob by those two gentlemen I forgot their names I did not consider that in any way justified the mob in taking the law into their own hands.

You do not attribute any error of judgment to the actual measures taken in Ahmedabad?

I won't go so far as to say that. I am not prepared to say that there was an error of judgment. I have not troubled myself to find out what was true. Having made up my mind to consider that not even any excess by the people is pardonable, it was no part of my duty to put the thing in the scales. I am not prepared to say whether there was an error or no error.

I understand you to complain of the method of compensation, of recoveries made for the destruction of property?

From the labourers.

Do I understand you to say that the levy was made about the time of the Moharram, somewhere in September or October?

Yes.

Is it a fact that the labourers then on work whose eight days' wages were

confiscated, a good number of them, were people who had not been in Ahmedabad in April at all?

Absolutely new men who had come from the villages later and who did not belong to the city of Ahmedabad and who were not in the city of Ahmedabad when these events occurred, and who newly joined the mills, came from other places outside Ahmedabad.

And you consider that very wrong ≈ that these wages should be confiscated for events which occurred at that time?

Not only that, I want to add to the fact, which I can prove even today, that a large number of men, when this kind of campaign went on, simply went out of Ahmedabad, taking no part. They are also made to pay.

With regard to this it can be said that the residents of Ahmedabad, those who belonged to the mill population, are responsible for the excess though individually they might not be, but with regard to those who came afterwards there was no semblance of excuse of that kind. That is your complaint? What is the other complaint with regard to the mill labourers?

The other complaint is that the manner of collection was so wholly bad, as also the amount. I think it was the distribution *per capita*. The mill labourers could ill afford to pay a week's wage. That was how it was calculated. I saw no calculation.

I do not follow you.

That it was a week's wages in each case. It was first of all not fixing the amount I am speaking under correction. It was *per capita* of the whole city of Ahmedabad. That was bad, that a labourer should pay individually precisely the same as the mill-owner himself. Have I made myself understood?

If I understand you aright, it is the incidence of the amount that you talk of, that the labourers as the richer classes had to pay the same amount? Is that really so? In addition to this, the income-tax people have been made to pay?

Yes; I am speaking under correction, but my impression as it was then left on mind was that. I am quite prepared to study the thing and submit my reason on the score. But all I wanted to submit before the Committee was, that the fine imposed on the labourers was excessive and as you have pointed out was exacted from many of those here who were not here at the time and the time chosen for exacting the fine was most inopportune. And there I wish to say that the authorities are not to blame for selecting that time. They did not select that time, because it was Moharram time; it accidently happened

to be so. It was too late for them to make any alteration, but whatever it was, it was difficult for the labourers to understand that it was not deliberately chosen. So the time was inopportune and to take away a week's wage from the labourers was not a proper thing.

It was very heavy?

I did feel it.

Do you object to the exemptions as they were given?

I won't say anything about exemptions. I am not prepared to dispute the discretion vested in the authorities with reference to that. I am not prepared to say I have not seen any such glaring injustice in that. It would perhaps not be quite fair if I do not put my testimony to the handsomest manner in which the present Collector of Ahmedabad had dealt with anything that has gone before him and wherever he has committed errors of judgment that have appeared to me to be errors, they have been partly explained, and so it goes against my course to complain even of this tax upon the labourers, but as it so happened unfortunately, it was their misfortune; but he in the most gentlemanly manner possible took the whole of the blame, if it was blameworthy, on his shoulders. This was what he said: "It is my act; I must take the sole responsibility." But I, as a citizen, am here to say that, having definite information from the responsible men, he thought that that was the only manner in which he can make the collection from the labourers and that would be the proper sum to exact from.

By the Hon'ble Pandit Jagat Narayan:

You have been asked certain questions about the Rowlatt legislation. Will you permit me to ask one or two more? You have said that you had no objection to the Government putting down anarchical crime. It is the duty of the Government to do so. Then you were asked what were your objections to the Rowlatt Bill and you have given certain reasons. I would like to know whether Rowlatt Bill No. II did not create a new crime at all or was only a procedure?

The Rowlatt Bill No. I did create a new crime. No. II concerns itself with the trial of anarchical crimes. That is how I heard it put. As a matter of fact, these anarchical crimes could have been punished by the ordinary law of the land and they were so punished. It was only during the 3 years of the War that by special legislation the Defence of India Act was passed.

And you thought that during the time of the War, though the whole nation showed its loyalty, it had been passed. When after the War was finished this procedure might be adopted for normal times. So, practically, your objection was not to the

punishment of anarchical crimes but it was that the fundamental principles of justice as administered in every civilized country were departed from in this legislation.

With regard to the second point, you have mentioned to the Committee, and I have also gathered from your speeches, that during the last eight or ten years they had also similar safeguards.

Then as regards Bill No. II. What is your position?

I have certainly regarded the safeguards provided in this Rowlatt Bill to be not merely illusory but as dangerous traps. That is my impression of the safeguards provided for in the Rowlatt Act. Really I feel that it makes the executive still more responsible because it deludes itself into the belief that they are safeguarding the subjects whereas there are really no safeguards. That is my opinion.

As you are the fountain-head of the satyagraha movement I will ask you one or two more questions. I will deal only with the political aspect of the satyagraha movement. You will agree with me that every political movement for its success depends upon the number of its followers?

Every political movement.

I am only dealing here with the political aspect of the satyagraha movement.

Depends for its success on the number of its followers, yes.

Therefore [for] that portion of the satyagraha movement which dealt with political matters, the natural idea would be to get as many followers as possible?

Yes.

And the underlying idea of having a large number of followers is that, if a certain thing be done not by one person or two persons but be done by a large number of persons, the Government will be attracted?

I won't agree with you there.

I will take the example of a strike. Do I understand you as saying that, supposing only one or two persons strike, will that have any effect? Or for the purpose of having an effective result is it not necessary for a large number of people to strike?

I do not subscribe to that doctrine. When you are engaged in a political movement which is based on the strictest principles of morality, any single isolated good act has its consequence, no matter whether it is done by the humblest or the highest; that is my deliberate conviction.

I do not dispute that. You have stated here that your idea was to accomplish everything by spiritual force, or soul-force; that was the underlying idea. But in order to achieve any political object, it is necessary to have the force of numbers?

That is to say if you will ask me to say 'yes' to a non-moral political movement, yes, but not to a movement which is emphatically moral and goes on to the political platform because it must.

So far as the moral aspect of it is concerned, I understand that follows the truth. Assuming this, you would depend for the success of your movement on a very large following? If the soul-force of one man accomplishes a thing in two months, probably the soul-force of 10,000 persons would accomplish it in ten days?

You cannot have an arithmetical calculation for a force like that. It is not like the question of an ordinary soldier, that if one man can shoot ten, then ten men will be able to shoot 100.

Anyhow 100 men, if they are of the same quality, will be able to shoot more than ten.

Imagine that ten satyagrahis with the same power behind them are working, then certainly they will be able to produce better results than one.

Having regard to the constitution of our Government here or in England, I think you will agree with me that there is no use fighting shy of the word "embarrassment" because the word has been used and you said so?

Not at all.

You will agree with me that any agitation, the most loyal and constitutional agitation, if it is against something done by authority, is bound to embarrass the authorities. Therefore in your satyagraha agitation, it may be that you are fighting with soul-force, but one consequence is that you do embarrass the Government and you do not fight shy of that?

It is no question of fighting shy; when I was trying to dispute the use of the word embarrassment I meant that that was not the intention. I think the intention is a definite ingredient in determining the value of the embarrassment.

You do not say that any political agitation should not embarrass the Government?

No, I do not say that for one moment.

But it must be conducted, according to you, with truth and no violence?

But I would like to emphasize the distinction that ordinary political agitation starts with the definite intention of embarrassing the Government. The satyagraha agitation never starts with the intention of embarrassing anybody, but if embarrassment is the result, it faces it.

Therefore the embarrassment would be the result either of soul-force or the result of numbers, is it not so?

What I say is a satyagrahi would not shirk that issue, but would never want to embarrass.

But taking that example of a strike. I have not much experience of strikes, but I have a little. Do you think any strike has ever succeeded in which one or two persons who are against mill-owners say they will not work? Has that ever succeeded?

Oh yes, I can show you scores of instances, and I think any mill-owner will come here and say that, if the head man who controls a department strikes, it is quite enough to bend the mill-owner.

There again there is that force of numbers behind his back. I quite understand that, if a Gandhi strikes and goes to jail, it may cause a stir in the whole country, but supposing a common man, even a man who is not going to have recourse to violence, a man who is going to follow truth, a common man, says he will not pay taxes, a poor man, and he goes to jail, do you mean to say the Viceroy, the Governor-General or the King-Emperor would hear of what had happened?

I can certainly lay my hands on many a Viceroy of India who, if he found that there was a man whom he would value purely for his strictest morality, honesty and truth, would not sacrifice that man, and if that man struck he would consider that he would rather have a million men strike than that one man.

You will agree with that hardly one in a million will be such a man as will come to the notice of the Viceroy or the King-Emperor?

I do not know that. I think a man who is strictly moral and who is working on a field which is touched by a Viceroy, would certainly make his impression, as did, I think Keshub Chunder Sen when Lord William Bentinck was Viceroy.

You are again talking of the highest men India has produced?

I cannot help that. It must be the desire of every citizen that India should multiply top men.

SIR C.H. SETALVAD: Panditji forgets that Mr. Gandhi by fasting for three days brought the mill-owners to their knees.

I am sorry, I am humiliated by the fact of my having brought the mill-owners down by my fast.[1]

A man who is loved like you or a person like Anasuyaben, supposing they are arrested again, do you mean to say that during the last four or five months you have so much prepared the people of Ahmedabad and Bombay that if they hear of your arrest, there will be no unrest?

[1] *Vide* "Address to Ashram Inmates", 18-3-1918.

There will be unrest enough. I think both Anasuyaben and I would be seriously disappointed if there was no unrest, but that unrest would take a different shape altogether.

That is your opinion, that that unrest would take the form of mourning and fasting and would not take the form of violence?

I am not able to say that with confidence, but I really do expect that we have very nearly reached that stage.

And certainly I think you will agree with me that, having regard to the percentage of education so far as India is concerned, it is very difficult to expect that illiterate men who love you will be able to control their passions and look upon things in that philosophic light?

Not at all, it is not that class of education which you have in mind which I need for the propagation of satyagraha.

In course of time you may prepare them for that; I am talking of the present time.

I would not say the propagation of the satyagraha doctrine is more difficult here because of our illiteracy. Illiteracy I hold to be deplorable in common with all our countrymen, but I do not consider that illiteracy is a bar to the propagation of satyagraha. If I fear any danger, I fear that danger from the half-lettered men.

I will give up the word illiterate. Do you say it is very easy to control a city which contains more than 300,000 inhabitants and Bombay city which contains more than 1,200,000 inhabitants? Supposing all these people were to revere and love you and respect you, will they stand and look upon your arrest from a philosophical point of view?

I have admitted the difficulty of the task, but I dispute the impossibility of it, nor do I consider it is so difficult that it is well-nigh impossible. I consider that it is difficult but it is not at all insurmountable.

Then I take it that hartal is not an essential part of the satyagraha movement at all?

It is no integral part of it.

And, therefore, so far as hartal is concerned, it is not necessary for the propagation of the satyagraha movement to order a hartal every second day or every month?

Not at all.

And having regard to the experience that we have had, it is probable that the satyagraha movement will continue without a hartal?

If it is necessary. I have contemplated a hartal and, in order that I might try it in connection with Mr. Horniman, I ordered it and in connection with the Khilafat movement, and on both occasions we were wholly successful, although there was a hartal on an extensive scale and of its type absolutely complete in so many places in India.

I may be wrong in my facts, but am I right in supposing that the success of your movement in Africa depended on large bodies of persons going to jail?

Yes, or rather because they did not use any violence.

And at the same time very large numbers of them went to jail?

Certainly.

You did not get what you wanted because a handful of them went to jail?

Well, when we had got what we wanted, there were not that large number of men in jail as you imagine. I do not dispute the point that the largeness of the number of people going to jail had its due effect. Of course, the South African statesmen can speak with better authority, but my own impression is that it was the correctness of the movement which really gained adherents in the highest ranks of society in South Africa. We were after all a handful who would have been blotted out of existence if we had deviated by a hair's breadth from the correct path.

I do not know if you agree with me that the largeness of the number was a great factor in the success?

I would say it had its due weight.

Now with regard to one other matter you have touched upon, I want to make it clear, because I find you have mentioned that fact in one of your Madras speeches. One of your objects in starting the satyagraha movement was that you found in India there was an extremist class, a certain class bent upon violence and anarchy, and your object was to give this class of persons a better platform to work on, a more spiritual and more moral platform?

Certainly.

A question was put to you by Sir C.H. Setalvad, and as I don't agree with him, I want to have your opinion. Supposing individuals be prepared to disobey any law according to their own lights, I do not understand how that can possibly cause any embarrassment to anybody. Supposing I live in a municipality and I find a tax that has been imposed is not a good tax and if in the following of that truth I am required to go to jail, I do not think I require any moral training. If a man is required to go to jail according to the dictates of his conscience, he does not require any moral training. I think he is the best possible man for being a citizen. Do you agree with me

that the mere fact of different individuals breaking different laws in different parts and going to jail cannot possibly embarrass Government unless and until it is a mass movement?

That is so.

It would not create any hopeless position at all?

No, certainly, but I won't say that it would create a hopeless situation if there was a mass movement.

What I mean to say is that I do not see any difficulty; I think that is the highest principle that can be inculcated and I think, if I have judged your speeches aright, that one of the underlying ideas of the satyagraha movement was that you found that one of the besetting sins of the present-day Indians is that, owing to their long slavery, they cannot stand up for the right, and they servilely do things which are against their own conscience and I have seen it stated you wanted them to become more straightforward and more moral. You make a difference between a straightforward man and a man who only for the pleasure of breaking laws breaks them?

I think that is obvious.

I think that is your principle?

I would draw a sharp distinction between lawlessness and assertiveness.

You have been accused of inconsistency and I will put that before you and I want your explanation. It appears that you made a statement to the officials that you did not want to drag the mill-hands into this movement?

Yes.

And at the same time, in one of your speeches, you have said the mill-hands should come to your meetings, but they should first obtain the permission of the mill-owners, and from this the inference is drawn that here is Mr. Gandhi who in one breath says he does not want to drag the mill-hands into this movement and in the next breath he incites them to come to his meetings and become satyagrahis?

I should like to see the passages. I can recall two occasions. There was an occasion when I said I did not want the mill-hands to join this movement at all.

And on the second occasion you said they should not come to the meetings until they got permission?

True, and as a matter of fact, between these two positions I see no inconsistency whatsoever, because I was anxious that the mill-hands should not come to us holus-bolus; I said no mill-hand. The instructions given to the secretaries of the Satyagraha Sabha were that

they were not to take in a single mill-hand on the satyagraha pledge unless he was seen by me or better still, by Anasuyaben because she would know, she would guarantee that that man under-stood the position, and he would be able to do so.

Then there is another matter about your helping the authorities with evidence. Your objection is to disclose the names?

That is so.

And you had no other objection in helping the authorities for the procuring of evidence. I find here, as a matter of fact, that you went to certain people who were in jail?

I did.

And you exhorted them to confess their guilt?

Not only that, I very nearly succeeded but for two mishaps. I would have completely succeeded in getting every one of the wire-cutters to make a confession. But I saw them together with Mr. Ker. It was nearly 11 o'clock at night, and his assistant was also present, and the men said if they were sent under escort or somehow among the people, they would get the real men, and if some of them themselves had done the thing, they would say so.

And, therefore, you did propose that they should make a clean breast of it and help the authorities?

I went much further than that in trying to do that. I wanted to go to Nadiad to finish the work, but an equally important matter in connection with helping the authorities engaged me and kept me in Bombay. Meanwhile, some proceedings were taken here, and a third attempt was made when I really did not succeed because of the sections under which they were tried. The men were so frightened that they would not listen to me when I suggested that they should make a confession. Of course I did not see them directly then, but Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel, a co-worker of mine, tried. He took the message from me, he saw the men in person but he did not succeed.

I think you will agree with me that if respect for law is diminished in the mass mind, that would be a hopeless position, however good, bad or indifferent the laws may be?

I won't say that respect for law and order means respect for such law and order that promotes the well-being of a nation; but that presupposes discrimination on the part of the people. People will become lawless; they have become lawless for ages past. In that

question what I had to address myself to was whether they should continue to become lawless in the manner in which they have been, that is, either surreptitiously breaking a law and if arrested putting up any kind of defence, or resorting to secret violence or open violence, none of which things can possibly promote the well-being of a community.

My point is, having regard to the circumstances, a sort of sanctity attaches to the laws of the Government of the time being?

Not in my estimation.

I do not mean that philosophers look upon things in this way?

I look upon it as a practical man.

That is not the best check on the masses?

Not a blind adherence to laws, no check whatsoever. It is because either they blindly adhere or they blindly commit violence. Either event is undesirable.

So long as every individual is not fit to judge for himself, he would have to follow somebody?

Certainly, he would have to follow somebody. The masses will have to choose their leaders most decidedly.

Supposing your own ministers pass any law, would it be open to anybody and everybody to break them?

Will it be open to the masses? I think it will be more open to the masses when India has her own ministers, because whilst English ministers have at least the benefit of ignorance on their side, unintentionally, our own ministers will have absolutely no such excuse.

Is not the remedy to turn those ministers out and not to break the laws?

I have known in most democratic countries ministers who have made themselves irremovable somehow or other. In that event what is a poor respectable minority to do? That minority will certainly bring down the tallest minister by offering stubborn civil resistance, and such a position I do anticipate happening in India also.

I am troubling you but I do not understand. Supposing your own minister, your own representative Government, passes a law, that is a guarantee that it is a good law, and do you mean to say that under your satyagraha principles it is open to any body of men to preach the breaking of those laws and to break those laws? The remedy is to turn out those ministers?

A satyagrahi would exhaust all means possible, but I simply gave you a concrete instance of a minister under a democracy having made himself practically irremovable because he would not listen to those who have got the voice of conscience in them. What are those people who have got that voice within them then, to do; although it is their own domestic affair of their Government, even so it would be not only open but it would be the duty of a body of satyagrahis to offer civil disobedience, but when they can turn out the minister, naturally let them do so. If I could have turned out Lord Chelmsford, I would have said, "Lord Chelmsford, you go if you do not remove the Rowlatt Act," and I would have got some other Viceroy from England.

I hope you are not going to give evidence in Bombay.

The Committee has two functions here, I do not know. I have no evidence to give in Bombay.

I wanted to ask you one thing about Bombay which you witnessed yourself.

Certainly everything about Bombay, or if the Committee wishes to travel outside Bombay, I am at the Committee's disposal.

I know as a matter of fact you are not keeping very good health?

I am not keeping very good health just now.

During the last two or three years?

During the last two years.

And at different times you were in so indifferent health that you were not able to read even your address?

Yes.

And you asked other people to read your address?

Yes.

And you were not shamming?

I hope so.

You were at Bombay when some of these things were going on at Bombay?

Yes, I was there.

And you wanted to address a meeting?

Yes.

On what date?

On the 6th I addressed several meetings.

Any subsequent to that?

I addressed a meeting on the 11th on my return from Delhi.

And you got the sanction of the authorities there?

Oh, yes.

But the military or the police were in possession of the streets and you could not pass without a permit being obtained?

No, I do not think the military or the police were in possession of the streets.

The streets through which you had a pass?

No, the crowd gathered at Chowpati.

I am talking of Pydhownie.

Oh, yes, they were there.

And when your motor passed that street you had the sanction of the authorities to pass?

No, I did not receive any sanction. I simply went there as there was danger of violence breaking out. Messages came to me immediately I reached my house and I sent some friends informing the crowd that I was free and that did not answer, and I think Mr. Hansraj came and asked me to go there, otherwise the crowd would not be pacified.

Did you succeed in pacifying the crowd?

I think the crowd was pacified enough.

If it be said the attempt was futile?

I do not think it would be correct to say my attempt to control the crowd was futile. The crowd was insistent on passing the street; their passage was prevented by the military or the police whosoever these officials were, and I was in front in the car with Anasuyaben, and I was reasoning with the people who were within the reach of my voice asking them to go by the lane that the officials had pointed out, and they were turning. Meanwhile, the police had ceased resisting and a portion of the crowd was making way in the direction also because the police had ceased to resist, but I do not mean to imply therefore that the police had ceased to resist because they wanted to, but I think they felt the pressure of the crowd so much that they ceased to resist, when suddenly there was a dash from the cavalry or the horsemen.

Here it is said that Mr. Gandhi was held up, the crowd was extremely angry, and the police officer, seeing the cavalry in possession, used his discretion and allowed him to pass?

Allowed me to pass? I do not know what they did; I certainly passed. The motor did not stop for a single minute.

And when the cavalry saw the excited crowd, they charged on the crowd?

They charged upon the crowd but they charged at the point I have mentioned.

Did you complain of this charge to anybody?

Yes.

In your opinion was that charge justifiable?

My own opinion as an onlooker is, they could have avoided the charge. It was not necessary for them to make the charge because the crowd was turning in the other direction.

Even your life was in danger and you had to leave your motor-car?

No.

Here it is said: "It is interesting to note that while Gandhi has regularly adopted the pose of the interesting invalid when addressing meetings, the officer in command of the armed police reports that he showed wonderful agility and nimbleness in escaping from his car when the cavalry were charging."

Anyhow, that is untrue.

You have deposed to the evidence of which you were in possession about this organization on the evening of the 10th, and also about the firing that took place under the Martial Law orders, and you said that, in your opinion, certain innocent persons were wounded or shot down. May I take it that according to you both these facts are equally reliable?

I think so.

You also believe that evidence in the same way as you believe the evidence with regard to the conspiracy and organization?

I do believe so.

You make no difference between the two sets of circumstances?

No.

By Sardar Sahibzada Sultan Ahmed Khan:

I want to ask you a few questions, Mr. Gandhi. Now going back for a moment to the Rowlatt legislation, you are no doubt aware that, before the War, there were a great many anarchical crimes in India?

I would not subscribe to the statement that there were a great many anarchical crimes in India.

There were at any rate dacoities and murders in Bengal by people who were not afraid of Government. There was a bomb thrown on the Viceroy at Delhi?

Certainly.

There were a great many trials held in Bengal?

Certainly.

And it was due to these occurrences and to keep law and order a Commission was appointed consisting of three eminent judges presided over by Mr. Justice Rowlatt?

Yes.

They went into the question very carefully and after a very careful investigation of the whole case, they submitted a report to the Government, and in that report, I understand, they made certain recommendations for a certain kind of legislation. I heard you to say that you did not agree with the conclusions of that report?

I said that.

What are your grounds for not agreeing with that legislation?

Because the facts that have been marshalled in the Rowlatt Committee's report did not irresistibly lead me to the conclusion that any such legislation was at all necessary. On the contrary, upon those facts I would have written a report totally contrary to the Rowlatt report. That was the impression left on my mind.

But you do not deny that, so far as the information in the hands of the Government was concerned, it is a fact that serious crime was happening in the country?

No more serious than in any other country, and certainly there is no serious crime in India. This anarchy proper has been confined to Bengal. You have had an outburst here and there, but after all Bengal is not India.

Anarchy and crime prevailed very largely in Bengal?

I would not underrate the significance of it. It was there and serious enough to warrant strong Government measures. I do not deny that at all. But at the time the Rowlatt Committee framed its report and took evidence, I venture to submit that the material before that Committee did not warrant the conclusions. I may be totally wrong in that, but the Rowlatt Committee's report is tainted with one very serious defect, in that it is evidence which was taken practically in secret and it was all official evidence.

Assuming for argument's sake that the facts as marshalled by the Rowlatt Committee did not warrant the report which they made, you say that the conditions in Bengal were such as made the adoption of such strong measures necessary, and you

admit, independent of the report, such strong measures were necessary?

I admit that.

What measures would you suggest that Government should have adopted to meet the situation?

But the Government have actually adopted measures which I do not approve of entirely. I simply say that the Government would be entitled, and it would be its duty, to adopt strong measures to root out crime of that nature. In answer to the question what measures should be adopted by the Government, I can only say, not the Rowlatt Act of course, it is not for me to suggest that measures Government should adopt ≈ but if I were to point out what measures Government should adopt, then all the measures that I would be capable of suggesting would be of a reformatory character and not of a repressive character, whereas the Government measures were all of a repressive character.

You will surely agree that, in the existing state of human nature, Government who are responsible for keeping law and order are compelled, however much it may be against their wishes, to adopt repressive legislation?

Certainly. Therefore I can only say, constituted as I am, that I am prepared to examine any measures that the Government may submit and criticize. But it is not possible for me to say what measures Government should adopt because my mind would immediately work at reforming the criminal and not at punishing the criminal. If I had to frame a legislative measure, it would be of that character, but I would not deny the right of a Government to adopt repressive measures also.

When you admit the right of Government to adopt strong measures and you criticize the particular measures that Government have adopted, surely I am entitled to ask what repressive legislation in your opinion Government should have undertaken to meet the circumstances?

It is very difficult for me to answer that. I can only give a negative answer, certainly not the Rowlatt Act, and I would give my reasons for it. The Viceroy has got sufficient powers independently of the Rowlatt legislation not to warrant his disfiguring the statute-book with an enactment of such nature. Anybody reading such a law, if he had never lived in India and had opened the statute-book and read the Rowlatt legislation, the irresistible conclusion that would be left on his mind would be that India must be a country simply infested with anarchy. I do not for one moment believe that India is a country which is infested with anarchy. Therefore, I believe that the powers the

Viceroy has got are absolutely ample in order to stamp out anarchy, and if the Viceroy does not use those powers and takes other powers, I think he is wrong. He has got powers of emergency legislation, and I think that that is the proper thing to do.

By ordinances you mean?

Yes, and I think he would be justified in doing so, and I shall give my reasons for it, because I have discussed it thoroughly and given many an anxious night to the thing as to why it was that a man with the cool head of Lord Chelmsford had run into the trap. He has got this emergency legislation power; he could use those powers and he could use those powers without the slightest hesitation and need not go to the legislature. He takes a responsible step and he should justify his step subsequently to the legislature or to the country or to the public opinion such as it is today in the country and not anticipate events and put a law on the ordinary statute-book of the country. I think that there the executive went much further than was warranted by the facts.

I have not had the benefit of reading the Rowlatt Act, but I suppose it is merely an enabling statute, i.e., by passing it the Government of India have not necessarily brought it into operation. It can only be brought into operation if the Governor-General-in-Council thinks it necessary?

Except that part of it.

The Governor-General certifies that the law has to be extended to a certain area, but don't think that it is a sufficient safeguard?

I do not think for one moment that it is so, knowing so well as I do the manner in which these sanctions are given. The origin of the sanction makes it really a tainted sanction. The origin would be through a humble police officer, or not even an officer, but a humble policeman. He goes and tells his superior, 'Oh, such and such things are happening here.' Now the police goes into the thing deeply, he would examine the things through the spectacles of the policeman who gave him the information. Then after that the original taint in it travels upward till at last it goes to the Viceroy. With all this ceremonial sanctity of an investigation which is so tainted, I say it is wrong, and therefore the Viceroy should not have taken the power ordinarily to declare those things. If he wants to make himself responsible, then let him be the author of the legislation, and not the legislature.

Do I understand you correctly that in such important matters, because a thing

has originated from a policeman, that will be taken up by all the officials above him right through to the Viceroy without they themselves minutely scrutinizing the thing based on the light of their own experience and knowledge whether the representation is worth giving attention to or not?

I do not say that it is not possible to manage things in any other manner. In a Government constituted as ours is, that is the only possible step to take, but knowing that, I would not arm the executive with powers so deadly in connection with a crime which is not endemic in India. If anarchy had become endemic throughout the length and breadth of India, I would not probably have said much against the Rowlatt legislation; then I would condescend to examine the details. Today I would not condescend to examine the legislation and even to talk of it because I consider that the principle itself is at bottom unsound. In ordinary affairs I can understand it, but not when it is a matter of simply dealing with a whole community because that is what the powers mean; anybody may be commanded and called upon to lodge security.

You know that during the War under the Defence of India Act there were a great many people who were interned as a necessary measure of safety and that after signing the peace, I suppose *ipso facto*, after a lapse of six months those people must come out. Then the question would certainly arise as to how the Government should deal with people of a dangerous character. Would you not approve of the Government having a certain weapon in their hands to deal with the situation that might be created any moment?

I respectfully contend that the Government have such a weapon. They have it already in the powers granted to the Viceroy to pass ordinances. The Defence of India Act cannot really be used, in my humble opinion, as a stepping-stone to legislation of the Rowlatt Act type in times of peace. It was pre-eminently a war measure, and what you would allow in war time you would certainly not allow in times of peace.

But the legislation is merely an enabling measure and it is also limited to three years?

I understand that, but I cannot contemplate with equanimity a whole people being condemned even for three years.

Now I want to know what was the object of starting the satyagraha movement? Was is started with a view to bring about a better political condition or as a means to oppose the immoral legislation which is not approved of by the country. What was the necessity for it?

The necessity lay in the intense desire to have that legislation repealed. If you fail to get redress through the ordinary channels of petition and so on, you must examine whether there are other ways open to you extraordinary, still not unconstitutional, and I found that this was the only way to combat the mischief and the evil.

Could you not do it by constitutional means?

I fail to discover any other less[1] effective constitutional means. It has been suggested to me by a very great friend that I should have at least promoted a petition and awaited an answer to the petition to the House of Commons before embarking upon it. I beg to differ from him, and I still hold that while it was open to me to do it constitutionally, it would have been totally ineffective. I could not have secured a repeal of the Rowlatt Act by those means.

Why?

Because of my political experience. A petition after its having gone through all the stages in India, I have not known to have succeeded.

Therefore you think that the only means open to you was the satyagraha movement?

The only other honourable means open to me was that. Certainly.

If I heard you correctly you said you feared half literacy more than illiteracy. Did I hear you correctly?

That was quite right.

I would like to know the reasons for holding that view?

Because I have noticed travelling throughout India that youths with ill-digested education are far more irresponsible and thoughtless than the illiterate masses. I think that the illiterate masses are much better balanced than the half-educated youths of the country, and I believe that if the latter could be reclaimed from the error into which they have today fallen the problem before India could become infinitely simpler than it is today.

Whom would you call half-educated men?

Take a boy who has passed to the High School and has a little knowledge of English, a still less knowledge of English history. He reads newspapers which he only half understands and feeds on his own predilections instead of checking them. Such a man is far more

[1] This should perhaps be “more”.

dangerous to the peace and well-being of India than the totally illiterate masses.

How would you meet the situation?

I have been trying to meet the situation, and I flatter myself with the belief that I have attained success which I had not anticipated in that direction.

In what way?

Because even such men, when you appeal to them, tax your patience more than illiterate people, but if you are patient enough with them, they are certainly amenable to reason and control also.

Do I understand you correctly to say that those people who go through High Schools are patient enough to receive further teaching but that they tax your patience when you try to put them on the right path?

I think the very foundation of the educational system today in India is so unsound that it does not tend to make a man balanced after he has even finished his education. As a matter of fact we have not so many highly educated Indians as to be able to form universal conclusions, and so I do not dread to lay down any definite conclusions about that, because I have got sufficient data, a large number of men to work with and work upon, and so I have come to the conclusion that our educational system is rotten to the core and requires overhauling.

I want to know the big defects of that educational system.

The one defect is, that there is no real moral or religious education in the schools. The second defect is that, seeing that the medium of instruction is English which places such a strain upon the intellectual resources of the youths who are reviving the education, they really do not assimilate the noblest ideas that are imparted to them through the schools. They have got nothing but parrot's training, the very best of them.

What would you substitute? In your view the medium of instruction should be the vernacular and religious teaching should be introduced?

I think these two defects must be remedied and then there is the personal element; the personal touch on the part of the teachers is also lacking. A better class of teachers with much better traditions than are in vogue today is required. These three things will certainly bring about the needful change.

Do I understand it correctly that the satyagraha movement is concerned

principally or mainly with the inculcation of truth and high morality without regard to the number of people who will follow it?

Certainly, that is the idea.

The essence of the thing is in itself, apart from the number?

It does not matter whether there are two members or one member.

Has this movement also spread to the Punjab?

I think it has spread to the Punjab as a leaven. I cannot lay my hands upon any who has signed the satyagraha pledge, but I have come to the conclusion that the Punjab is just as capable of receiving and responding to the doctrine as any other part of India, if not perhaps more so; but there I may be mistaken, but certainly the Punjab is just as receptive as any other part of India.

By Mr. Kemp, Counsel to the Government of Bombay:

I am not trying your patience, Mr. Gandhi, by asking many questions about the satyagraha movement. I do not mean by that I am convinced at all by what you have said. Now I am afraid that on the view you take of the Rowlatt Committee's recommendations, we do not see eye to eye. There are two points which I must ask you to explain. One is this: you say that the Martial Law order of the 12th was absolutely unjustifiable. With regard to that, do you know the circumstances under which it was brought about?

I was not here on the 12th but I heard about it.

Yes, you were not here on the 12th, but you came here on the 13th. On the night of the 12th, you may take it from me, this is what happened. The person who was in charge of the military command decided, taking all things into consideration, that things could not go on very well. The mobs could not be held in hand, anywhere else riots might break out, and he and his men then available would not be able to cope with them properly. He therefore passed orders which in the result were successful. What have you to say first with regard to that?

I would not like to say anything, because as I said, when I spoke about it as an outsider it did not appeal to me, the necessity of it did not appeal to me, and certainly not the terms of the orders that were issued.

As an outsider, you mean?

As an outsider, as a non-military man; naturally I would concede a great deal to the authorities who have got to deal with the situation.

Supposing you and I were there on the spot in charge of the military, would

you consider that order justifiable?

I consider it fair enough giving my opinion for what it is worth, always with the caution that I concede that the military would be the better judges of the situation, but if I may be permitted to give my judgement after examining the circumstances and the facts; I say these facts do not warrant the orders that were issued.

By these facts, do you mean the facts that you have elicited from information as against the facts which were present in the military commander's mind?

I do not say that against the facts, but from what I have now heard and also from what little I have read, it leads me to the conclusion that certainly on those facts if I had any military training I would not issue those orders.

I see we do not see eye to eye there also?

I am afraid, not there.

There is only one other point. Mr. Gandhi, with regard to the instances of indiscriminate and wanton firing on the 12th under this order.

I have not used all those adjectives, but I simply said.

I think what you said was that a number of innocent people were fired upon?

That I said.

You base that on what?

On the evidence of those people who came to me hot from the thing.

Who were wounded?

I say wounded people also. I went over to the hostel, and I saw every one of the wounded people.

Just consider what impulse would there be at the back of these people's minds to make them tell you the truth as regards how their wounds were received. What was there to make these people tell you the absolute truth when you saw them wounded?

When he is speaking to me I would certainly consider that the most natural thing for him would be to tell me the unvarnished truth.

He could gain nothing by saying that he was in the right and he could gain something by saying he was not?

I know there is that point to be considered, but I have not gone in forming my conclusion upon the testimony of those who told me. I had the testimony of those who witnessed the firing, and I think I have a hazy recollection that I brought to the notice of Mr. Pratt one instance.

Do you remember that on the 14th of April you wrote to Mr. Chatfield and said that you had heard that one or two women were killed by the military and some men also? Will you please give me the pure facts, as I am myself anxious to know under what circumstances it had happened, or whether it did happen at all? Mr. Chatfield wrote back asking for any data and if possible for the people to come and tell him all about it.

Yes. I remember it.

Well now, Mr. Chatfield is still in the dark about this.

It was simply because we had not collected sufficient material to place before him and the orders were withdrawn by that time and I did not wish to prosecute it any further.

Could you have given any names of persons who were wounded?

Yes, if I had been so reminded then I could have done that.

But Mr. Chatfield asked you, did he not?

Yes, but when I saw that these orders were withdrawn I did not want to prosecute the thing any further, because I knew that, in a matter of that character there must have been a certain amount of accidents to look to and I did not want to go any further into the matter. Nor did I stay in Ahmedabad for any length of time after that.

On this point of your information, I just want to say to you that the suggestion that you made in various other evidences with regard to such organizations as there were on the 10th, was meant to correspond exactly with what you have told us. But I just like also to point out that the evidence on which you base that is rather different to the evidence on which you base these instances of being wounded without a just cause. For this reason that people who came and told you that they had organized little bits of riots would gain nothing but opprobrium from you. And people who came to you and said they had been wounded under that cause, could not run the risk of any opprobrium from you?

No.

So there is that distinction between the two classes of evidences. I think you based that statement.

It is not for me to value both classes of evidence differently. I mean to say a man would not come to me straight and appreciate a thing and describe the incident differently from what he had actually seen it.

I am afraid we cannot take it any further?

No, but I would really ask you and ask the Committee also not to feel the least of it that I wish to labour this point. I do not really

suggest that it is there placed by way of any complaint, but as I am bound to give my view I have simply given it.

There is this other point that you did not hear anything from the military side. If you knew the circumstances on the military side, then would you be able to find out whether they fired at anybody? A stray bullet might ricochet and go off at right angles and a man standing at right angles may be wounded. But the suggestion that that was the fault of the military is not quite fair, is it?

Not in the manner you put it.

Well, I think that is the manner it has got to be put.

The case I have brought to the notice of the Committee, and on which I have based my conclusion that these orders were obeyed, is that some of these young men actually shot into a party of men, whether 10 or 11 or even under 10, without any notice that would enable the people to understand what they were asked to do.

Well, as I say, you cannot give any instance that has really occurred?

Because I have no desire to labour that point. Otherwise I would come prepared and I have no desire to make a big thing out of a little thing in a large movement in which the Government have covered themselves with nothing but credit. I did not want to magnify that incident nor did I wish to trouble Mr. Chatfield any further about it.

TO PRESIDENT: There is only one point further with regard to this Bombay case. At present there is nobody actually appearing for this case as it was not known whether this was going to be taken and the result is that no one has been instructed to ask Mr. Gandhi questions on it.

PRESIDENT: Mr. Gandhi's evidence so far as it has been given does not amount to a great deal.

MR. KEMP: The only point he contended was that particular charge of cavalry was not justified.

PRESIDENT: I did not hear whether there were any casualties in that case?

There is no suggestion of casualties in that case. In the course of the demonstrations one or two men were trampled and that is natural if there was a charge of that character. I do not think there were any deaths and the injuries sustained even by the men who were trampled were by no means serious so far as I understood it. After the whole event had finished I went to Mr. Griffith's to protest against the cavalry being sent. And he really demurred to my using the word 'cavalry', but not being a military man I did not know what it was.

By Mr. Jivanlal V. Desai, Counsel to the Gujarat Sabha, Ahmedabad:

Mahatma Gandhiji, you left Bombay on the 8th of April?

Yes, in the evening.

When was the order served on you?

In the evening at 9 between Palwal and Muttra. That was the first order.

Not to enter the province of Punjab or Delhi, I think?

I forget which it was, I think it was Delhi.

Subsequent to that a second order was served upon you at the next station?

Two more orders at the next station.

At about what time?

Probably at half-past seven or 8 or even 9. It was between that time.

Then you dictated a message?

Yes, before reaching Palwal, after the first order was served and after knowing that I was to be arrested at Palwal.

And the gentleman who took down this message is a graduate in Arts and Law?[1]

Yes.

There was no mistake in the message taken [down] by him?

No, because I had read the message.

You simply exhorted your Ashram people to hold that day as a day of rejoicing?

Not only they but everybody.

You did not want the Ashram people or passengers to observe the hartal? It seems that the words "with redoubled zeal" had been mentioned therein and had been interpreted in a different way?

There is nothing in my statement with regard to the hartal. But if you want to examine my mental condition, I did not want to say at that time that I wanted the hartal or not.

Could your message be construed in the light that people were to observe the hartal and to go about the streets creating mischief?

Most decidedly not.

Do you know that the message was never construed by the Ashram people or

[1] The reference is to Mahadev Desai.

by the Satyagraha Sabha as such?

So I was told. Mr. Vallabhbahi Patel told me emphatically that he told the people that they were not to have the hartal.

Now you were brought back to Bombay on the 11th?

Yes.

The train was stopped at Marine Lines station?

It was accidently stopped and then I suggested to Mr. Bowring that I should get down at Marine Lines station in order to avoid any demonstration at Colaba.

And nobody in Bombay knew that you were going by that train?

No.

When you reached Marine Lines station were there no people to meet you there?

Naturally none.

And casually you got into a passing victoria?

No. A friend was passing by and he saw me and gave me a lift.

And you wanted to avoid all demonstration in Bombay as far as you could?

Yes.

And when you traced the disturbances you went to pacify the people?

Certainly.

When did you hear of the incidents at Ahmedabad, on the morning of the 12th?

I think for the first time on the morning of the 12th. A friend came and said that something had happened there. No, if I now recollect, I heard something from Mr. Griffith himself because he was discussing the situation with me and he said, "Do not know what is happening in Ahmedabad, but he could not give me the details because the wires were cut. But he did let me have an inkling that there was something amiss in Ahmedabad.

As soon as you heard that you were wanted there you came down?

Yes, by the first available train.

Were there any citizens to meet you at the station?

I do not think there were any friends. Mr. Boyd[1] was there and some other officer whose name I do not know.

Then from the station, you went to Mr. Ambalal's house?

[1] R.R. Boyd, Superintendent of Police, Ahmedabad

To the Commissioner straight.

And you stopped with him for about two hours, I suppose?

Probably.

And from Mr. Pratt you went to Ambalal's?

Yes, I think I went to him for a few minutes.

Were you accompanied by any military officers when you were coming back from there?

Yes, purely for my protection.

Because of the existence of Martial Law?

Because of the pickets that might challenge me.

You found everything quiet on the 13th?

Yes.

You wanted to hold a meeting on that day?

Yes.

And you had instructed Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel and others to organize a meeting if possible?

Yes.

But it could not be organized because of the existence of Martial Law?

Not purely. There were difficulties. It was suggested that there were such difficulties that we might not get a large gathering and without a large gathering I could not deliver my message.

So you directed them to arrange the meeting for the next day?

Yes.

And you did not know then that Martial Law would be withdrawn?

Certainly, I did not know.

On the 13th you gave instructions to Messrs Vallabhbhai Patel and others to show to the people a particular path of going to the Ashram to avoid the military pickets and to come by side-streets?

Yes.

At what time did you go to the Ashram on that day?

I think I must have reached there at 2 o'clock on the 13th.

Then among other non-official people, you met Messrs Vallabhbhai Patel and others?

Yes.

When you joined the meeting did any other people see you till you saw Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel?

No.

When did you deliver your speech?

Some time during the night.

Did you have many callers from the time you went to the Ashram?

Not on the 13th.

I think the statement that you made in your speech on the 13th is more or less an impression created upon your mind?

I think the speech puts it like that.

From the fact that certain particular wires were cut, and buildings burnt, it was the impression in your mind that there was some sort of organized attempt?

Yes.

Were there any particular statements made to you by any of the rioters?

I would not say they were made to me by any of the rioters on the 13th, but some endorsement of the view that I suggested was certainly forthcoming at that time. I said to myself, "This is what appears to have happened," and I discussed with those friends who called there and instead of disputing the proposition, they said, "Yes".

Was that an impression or was it knowledge?

I did not cross-examine them so as to know whether they were speaking out of their impression or knowledge. I would not be able to say that, but they certainly endorsed the views I expressed.

That may have been merely an impression also?

Yes.

You had a sort of conference on the morning of the 14th at the district court house with Mr. Pratt and Mr. Chatfield and the Officer Commanding. And it was resolved that what was known as Martial Law was to be withdrawn?

I was told that it would be.

And as a result of that only, the meeting in the Ashram in the afternoon was so well attended?

No, not because the orders were withdrawn.

Now you noticed that on the 6th the crowds that were going to your Ashram were very orderly?

I think absolutely orderly, and I think I saw the Rev. Mr. Gillespie there?

Yes. And your speech was read out by Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel because you were not in a fit condition of health?

My voice could not reach the audience at that time.

When did you have an interview with Mr. Chatfield? Was it before or after the meeting?

Before that on the 13th and on the 14th in the morning at about 9 o' clock.

When did you have an interview with Mr. Guider?

He honoured me with a visit some day after the meeting.

Your conversation at that honourable interview was all *bona fide*. There was no shamming on your part.

Certainly none on my part nor any on his part.

Mr. Guider says in his report of what happened at that interview that "the impression he gave me was that though he was prepared to denounce the rioters for his own benefit, that is to say, to swell the ranks of his followers, he had no intention of denouncing them to the authorities".

Well, I can only say that Mr. Guider has done (though unintentionally perhaps) violence to me.

THE PRESIDENT: That is, to your satyagraha doctrine?

Yes.

MR. DESAI: You told him that there were certain persons in the crowd inviting them actually to take part?

Doing what?

Certain men among the leaders who were the instigators of the riots or present among them.

But I have a distinct recollection that I told Mr. Guider that the leaders were there trying to restrain the mob. That is my impression.

After this meeting of the 14th you addressed several other meetings through your *Devas* in the streets?

Yes.

And you wrote out your speeches and got them read by several of the audience in the city and that had a pacifying effect on the minds of the people?

Yes.

And that was from the 11th till again the meetings were prohibited?

Yes.

And what we might call the so-called educated people of Ahmedabad, did they take any active part in the propaganda work?

Some of them.

Now you have been for a fairly long time in Ahmedabad, for 5 years. What is your estimate about the educated people of Ahmedabad? Do they take part in such riotous movements, burning buildings and cutting wires at Ahmedabad?

I have not found them to be doing that.

Of course, they might be intent upon menacing Government by making speeches and criticizing the Rowlatt Bill and such legislations. Apart from that you found them to be a quiet sort of people?

Yes.

Now you know there was some trouble between the mill-hands and mill-owners in 1918?

I suppose it was in 1918.

And large crowds of these mill-hands used to assemble day after day and you used to preach to them sermons, and Anasuya Bai and others did likewise.

Yes.

During all these days thousands of mill-hands met and they were very orderly even till the very last when the question of wages was a disquieting factor. They took part in large processions through the city and the crowds were always very orderly, and the mill-hands were well behaved and orderly?

Certainly. I found them so.

Now did you tell Mr. Chatfield or give him any reason to think that you told him that the Home Rule League either in Ahmedabad or up-country had made any organizations for these troubles on the 11th?

I do not think that I did say so. I should be very much surprised indeed if he did say so.

You have come into contact with the Home Rule League agitation in the provinces?

Yes.

There is also a constant agitation among the people?

Yes.

Do you know that the satyagraha movement against the Rowlatt Act had a rather pacifying effect on the people?

It is my deliberate conviction that but for satyagraha, India would have witnessed scenes perhaps more terrible than it has passed through.

Evidence before Disorders Inquiry Committee Vol. II, pp. 107-32

160. LETTER TO THE PRESS[1]

SABARMATI,
January 10, 1920

TO
THE EDITOR
THE [BOMBAY] CHRONICLE
[BOMBAY]

SIR,

Mr. Andrews cabling from Mombasa says :

Full draft proposed ordinance menacing Indian political freedom reads thus:

"Firstly, the Bill may be cited as Removal of Undesirables Ordinance, 1919.

"Secondly, any person within East African Protectorate not being a native, who from information officially received is deemed by Governor-in-Council undesirable, may be ordered by Governor to remove himself from the Protectorate before the date prescribed in such order.

"Thirdly, any person contravening such order shall be liable on conviction to a fine up to Rs. 1,500 or to imprisonment of either description not exceeding six months or both together. Such conviction shall not affect Governor's power to issue further order under preceding section against same person."

Legislative Council meets January 19th. This ordinance entirely lacks safeguards against political misuse. Economic Commission's volume of evidence contains no valid substantiation of Indian moral depravity. Our vindication of Indian character has carried conviction but European determination to follow south African policy still gravely serious.

Hardly any comment is necessary on this cablegram. There is a dead set against the Indian settler in East Africa. The proposed ordinance is, in my humble opinion, most mischievous in character and leaves every Indian at the mercy of an executive subservient to the interested European agitator against the Indian. The unscrupulous nature of the agitation is manifest from the utterly false charges flung about moral depravity against the Indian settler. I regard the proposed ordinance as the first definite legal step towards the reduction of the Indian to complete servility. He has dared to claim an equal status with the recently arrived European settler. He has dared to dispute the

[1] This was released to the Press generally and was published in *Young India*, 14-1-1920.

haughty position taken up by his European rival in trade. The latter has therefore captured the executive. The East African position admits of no compromise such as was possible and perhaps necessary in South Africa where the condition was totally different from the East African condition. The Indian adds the right of priority to the ordinary natural right to live on terms of equality with every other kind of settler in East Africa. And I venture to hope that his claim will be universally supported in India for the preservation of his full political and municipal status, and that the Government of India will exercise to the full its undoubted right and perform the duty of protecting the British Indian settler in East Africa.

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-1-1920

161. THE CONGRESS

The last Congress having been held there, Amritsar became a place of pilgrimage. Thousands of people came to Amritsar solely because the Congress was held there, and the first thing they did on arrival was to visit Jallianwala Bagh. Hundreds of people who came to see me told me in reply to my questions: "Directly on our arrival, we visited Jallianwala Bagh." Many applied to their foreheads the dust of the place, as if it were sacred ash; many took away with them some earth made holy by the blood of innocent people. In this way everyone, from south, east and west, felt sanctified by paying homage to their dead brethren and believed that their purpose in coming to attend the Congress had been fulfilled.

In Amritsar, it usually rains in December. As the city is on a low level, the water collects on the ground when there is rain. As the rain started just with the commencement of the Congress session, there was much inconvenience.

The Congress *pandal*[1] and the tents for accommodating people were in Acheson Park, which, being on a low level, was flooded with water and it was a job putting up the visitors. The residents of Amritsar, however, treated the visitors as their own people. The Hindi

[1] Temporary canopied structure

word for this, *apanaya*[1] is a very apt one. If we render it into Gujarati, we should say *apanayya*. Those who could accommodate any of them in their homes, did so and treated them hospitably, and thus it seemed as if the delegates and the spectators had arrived on a condolence visit. This hospitality, besides, was no mere manners but was sincerely felt. There was no limit to the generosity of the residents.

This is one side of the picture, the beautiful one. Its other side was the expense of Rs. 22,000 incurred for putting up a *pandal* for the Congress and the tents. This expense was not unavoidable and I do not believe, either, that after all this expenditure, we gave anything special to the people. I think we can go on well enough without a *pandal*. If we hold the meeting in the open air instead of in a *pandal*, many more people can be accommodated and the expense will be less. The *pandal* protects us from the heat, but this in December is not severe. Moreover, one can protect oneself against the heat at less expense than required in putting up a *pandal*. I mentioned rain but that also is no excuse for it was because of the rain that the Congress session had to be postponed by a day. Erecting a roof for protection against rain would have cost still more.

And the same thing about the tents. Instead of incurring expense on them, arrangements for accommodation could have been made with the citizens from the very outset. But we cannot change the habit which we have formed from the beginning [of the congress] and so the Congress, though it is such a big national gathering, has not yet fully entered the life of the people. The fair in Amritsar on the first day of every *Vaishakh*[2] attracts many more people than the number attending the Congress, and yet they are all accommodated; no special arrangements have to be made for them and no heavy expenditure has to be incurred in advance. Such is our age-old way. It ensures grand results with little effort. With modern ways of working, we produce a small result after a big effort.

But why complain in this way when describing a happy occasion, someone may ask. I complain simply with the idea that, in future, we may make better arrangements. These thoughts have occurred to others as well and, in consequence, the All-India Congress has even appointed a Committee for the purpose. Its tasks are as under :

[1] Accepted as one of themselves
[2] Month in Indian calendar, roughly corresponding to April-May

1. To examine the Congress constitution and consider necessary changes in it.

2. To examine and consider the financial transactions of the different departments of the congress.

3. To make suggestions for the next year's session of the Congress.

Mr. Kelkar, Mr. Rangaswami Ayyangar, Mr. I.B. Sen, the Hon'ble Mr. Vithalbhai Patel and I have been appointed on this committee and it has been asked to submit its report before June 30.

I have yet another complaint to make. The speeches of the chairman of the Reception Committee and the congress President are generally so lengthy that it would be an infliction to read them out to anyone on any occasion; but it is nothing less than torture to read out long speeches to 15,000 persons. The speeches are bound to be lengthy. It is but natural that a detailed discussion of several topics should fill pages. What is the way out, then? I think both these speeches should be printed in Hindustani (in both Urdu and Devnagari script), in English and in the regional language of the province where the Congress is to be held and copies supplied to the delegates and the audience at the entrance gate. Later, both could read out, in half an hour, the main part of their speeches or explain their substance.

The speeches themselves were thought-provoking. That of Swami Shraddhanandji was touched with his religious zeal. How can we hate the English? They gave us Andrews, Hume, Wedderburn and others. In this way, they have shown their goodwill for us. There was bitterness in Pandit Motilal's speech. He has seen the suffering of the Punjab, and has suffered in his soul. He let this be seen in his speech. Since the Swamiji's speech was in Hindi, people followed it very attentively, though some were bored towards the end. As Motilal's speech was read out in English, people were not prepared to hear him at all. It was all noise in the beginning but, thanks to Pandit Malaviya's persuasion, quiet was restored somewhat. Much of the speech had to be omitted in the reading.

RESOLUTIONS

The Congress resolutions were of great importance. The first offered thanks to the Emperor. There was discussion enough even on that resolution, but in the end it was passed. The liberal spirit noticeable in the Emperor's Proclamation was absent in the earlier

Proclamation. It is no small gain, we can see, that those who had been rotting [in jail] merely because of suspicion have been released. There may have been injustice in throwing them into jail, but doubtless there was generosity in releasing them. It was our duty, therefore, to express our thanks for this.

The most important resolution, however, was the one in which we admitted and condemned our lapses. It was a little difficult to understand the unwillingness to pass this. That in Ahmedabad, Viramgam, Amritsar, Gujranwala and Kasur, our own people set fire to buildings, killed people, burnt down bridges, removed rail tracks and cut wires needs no proof. Maybe there is truth in what some people say, that the C.I.D. instigated the mobs, that it had a hand in it; even then, the fact remains that some of us played into their hands and did unforgivable things. We must denounce these. The individual or nation that refuses to see his or its lapses or fears to admit them can never progress. So long as we refuse to see the evil around us, we do not acquire the strength to fight it and the evil goes deep. Moreover, we have no right whatsoever either to notice or condemn other people's faults so long as we do not roundly denounce our own. We cannot be purified unless we feel sorry for having set Government buildings on fire and atone for it; until then we have no right to condemn General Dyer's terrible crime and, if we fail to admit our faults, we dare not demand the dismissal of Sir Michael O'Dwyer and the recall of Lord Chelmsford.

It is also asked whether we should not take into account the nature of the provocation to the people. The answer to this is that, even so, we are bound to denounce our misdeeds such as setting fire to buildings and killing innocent people. That man alone wins who, whatever the cause, refuses to be provoked and such a one alone may be said to be a law-abiding man. The nation which does not know how to obey laws has no right to protest against injustice. The Government arrested me and the people were enraged; well, what did they gain by burning down police stations? How did they profit by setting fire to the students' examination *pandal*? The loss is obvious enough. We had to pay the fine, many went to jail, and many suffered the agonies of suspense. Personally, I am convinced that, had we not committed the mistakes we did on April 10, we would have made great advances by now and the Rowlatt Act would have long since been repealed. The

innocent persons, almost one thousand of them, who were killed at Jallianwala Bagh would not have been killed and other innocent persons would not have had to suffer in prison. Looking at the matter from any angle we choose, we can come to only one conclusion. It is that we were in duty bound to condemn the violence and arson committed by our people. If we tolerate such misdeeds when we become fully independent, we would show ourselves to be barbarians.

The third important resolution related to the Reforms Act. The differences on this resolution were so strong that the Congress came to the point of putting it to the vote in the open session. Without going into the whole story, it will be enough to understand the differences which had remained unresolved. There were three clauses in the resolution moved by Mr. Das. One of them stated that we were fit for swaraj this very day; the second that the Reforms were inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing, and the third that the Parliament should grant full independence as early as possible. The Hon'ble Pandit Malaviya, Mr. Jinnah and I felt that the nation would not know what it was to do if we said no more than this. If in fact we want to avail ourselves of the Reforms, they could not be described as disappointing; if we want to do so, we should frankly admit it. Likewise, if we admit that Mr. Montagu worked hard for India to secure the Reforms which have been granted, we ought to thank him. I saw that everyone wanted to work the Reforms. We should, therefore, admit this fact and delete the word "disappointing", and we should also thank Mr. Montagu. Ultimately, the adjective "disappointing" was retained and the amendment suggested by me, worded suitably so as to be acceptable to both sides, was passed unanimously. But prior to that, the preparations for the taking of votes were a great thing, a credit to the people of India. Including the spectators, there were no less than 15,000 men in the *pandal* and there was not even enough room to move about. Among all these people, there were as many who were not entitled to vote as those who were. Counting of votes, in these circumstances, would generally be considered impossible. This was the first time, therefore, in the 34 years of the life of the Congress, that excellent arrangements were made to do the counting after keeping out the spectators and the representatives of peasants. For practically five hours, speeches by people holding different opinions went on.

Meanwhile, all the parties came to the conclusion that it would be better to have a compromise and dispense with the taking of votes. Consultations began. Ultimately a compromise was reached and a resolution, thanking Mr. Montagu and advising the people to work the Reforms, was passed without a vote.

The wording of the resolution which Mr. Das's party agreed upon was not quite to my liking. Retaining the word "disappointing" was also a little hard; nevertheless, where the essence was maintained, I thought it advisable not to create divisions and Panditji, Mr. Jinnah and others agreed with me. Thus, the amendment was passed in a form acceptable to both the parties. Had the congress not accepted this amendment, it would have been, in my humble opinion, a matter of shame for us. Indeed, a person like me would have had nothing to say if we did not want to work the Reforms or had the courage to reject them. When it was agreed, however, that they should be worked, not to say this in public and not to thank the gentlemen who had been instrumental in our getting them seemed to me dishonest, and it also seemed disgraceful not to respond to sentiments expressed in the Emperor's Proclamation. To think of withholding co-operation with the officers because of fear is a sign of weakness. It bespeaks manliness to co-operate with them and trust them on all matters which advance the country's interests. Thus, from every point of view, we can say that the amendment accepted by the Congress is a good one and I am sure that, if we use all the provisions of the Reforms wisely and secure appropriate improvements in them, we should achieve full swaraj in no more than a few years.

Apart from this, resolutions were passed about Lord Chelmsford and other officers. It seems to me that it would have been better if the resolutions on Lord Chelmsford and Sir Michael O'Dwyer had been postponed till after the Congress Sub-committee's report was published. However, we have the right, on strong grounds, to demand the removal of any officer from his post and, therefore, though I believe that these two resolutions were passed prematurely, now that they have been passed there is no need to comment on them further. However, the speeches on the resolution for the recall of Lord Chelmsford were shameful and deserve condemnation. To regard Lord Chelmsford unfit for his post is one thing; but it is quite another to insult him and to use discourteous and unmannerly language about

the Emperor's representative. We shall lower ourselves in the estimation of others thereby and such language, if it became common among the people, would be a blot on the virtues of humanity, courtesy and magnanimity which still remain ours. I just do not believe that the nation can gain anything through exaggeration. Exaggeration is a particularly bad species of falsehood; even if the nation can advance through untruthfulness, it would be better for us to refuse to advance in such a manner because, ultimately, such advance will bring about our fall.

Besides these, the other resolutions which were passed to give a lead to the nation should be considered excellent. The Congress welcomed the current movement for swadeshi and has given a place in its programme to hand-spinning and hand-weaving. The All-India Congress Committee was requested to investigate the conditions of the peasants and a resolution was passed to support the Muslims on the Khilafat issue: similar other useful resolutions which were passed will help us forward and, if the nation implements them, good results cannot but follow. The country must be proud that Jallianwala Bagh has passed into its possession. The price of the Bagh will come to almost five lakhs of rupees and five lakhs more will be needed to erect a memorial column which, without expressing ill will or hostility to anyone, will remind us of the sacrifices, through death, of the innocent; will be a symbol of the people's grief and promote Hindu-Muslim unity, and thus convert the heap of refuse which today goes under the name of a garden into a garden indeed.[1] It is my hope that readers of *Navajivan* will play their part in this task and contribute to making the Jallianwala Bagh a place of pilgrimage for the Hindus, Muslims and people of all other religions, fully worthy of India.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-1-1920

[1] A 45-foot high national memorial, depicting the "Flame of Liberty", now marks the site of the tragedy.

162. CHILD MORTALITY

We wish to draw the particular attention of readers to Mr. Kanchanlal Khandwala's letter about the relative figures of child mortality. In New Zealand, 51 children out of one thousand die in a year. In Bombay 320 and in the United Provinces 352. Whatever way we look at these figures, they make us shudder. There are quite strong reasons for this state of affairs but the causes are such as can be remedied and so deserve attention. Besides, the unfavourable factors continue to increase in number. Some of these factors are as follows:

(1) Climate, (2) diet, (3) child-marriage and ill-matched unions, (4) self-indulgence, (5) ignorance about sanitation and, now, (6) excessively high prices.

Of all these factors, the Government can be held responsible at present for the last one only; the reason for our making this distinction is that, for our innumerable ailments and shortcomings we blame the Government. It has become a habit with us to argue that, if we get swaraj, all our maladies, even the heavy rate of child mortality, will vanish instantly. It is true in a general way that starvation, which is becoming more widespread in the country, will probably decrease after we get swaraj. Even then, many of our ailments will persist, despite swaraj, if we do not adopt remedial measures. One such ailment is our present subject.

We cannot change climate of the country. New Zealand is among the countries with the best climate. Relatively, the climate in India is generally believed to be enervating. It is difficult to develop a good constitution in intense heat. It is the general experience that moist air is even more injurious than heat. Even so, God has given man such strength that, by and large, he succeeds in overcoming such obstacles. To a greater or less extent, all of us do. To the extent that the climate is among the unfavourable factors which militate against reduction in the rate of child mortality, we can take suitable measures to counteract the harmfulness of the climate. Our poverty is the greatest obstacle in this. Our ignorance about how children should be brought up is another obstacle of like magnitude.

The child does not always get the food it needs. The requirements of infant diet are easy to understand. The child should be brought up on mother's milk and, when it is no longer available, it

should get cow's milk. Instead, the child is switched on to cooked food even before it has cut teeth. It is fed on cereals even before its stomach is ready for them. Consequently, the child is attacked by diseases, grows weak and often dies an untimely death. Our poverty and ignorance are the main reasons for the unsuitable food [of our children].

An even more important reason than the two mentioned above is child-marriage and ill-matched unions. A girl of fifteen can never be fit for delivery. A child born of such a girl is deficient in vitality. Our children are so sickly that bringing them up becomes a veritable job indeed, with the result that many children die within a year of their birth. Along with child-marriage, we should hold ill-matched unions responsible for the deaths of a great many infants. It is not at all surprising that the children of men who marry when they are no longer fit for marriage do not survive.

It is also certain that excessive indulgence increases the rate of infant mortality. People in the West limit births, not with any religious idea, to be sure, but for reasons of health and for fear of having to bring up too many children. For us, such fear is not enough of a check on self-indulgence. However, we in India lay great claim to being more religious in our lives than people in the West, and yet we ignore the restraints imposed by religion. Hence it is that many parents, regardless of both dharma and worldly considerations, remain steeped in carnal pleasures and bring forth children regardless of circumstances. In the result, whether we want them or not, diseased children are born and die in their infancy.

The fifth reason is our colossal ignorance of the rules of health. Neither the mother nor the father knows anything about them. People who have knowledge are disinclined to profit by it or lack the means of doing so. The result is the same; infant deaths keep increasing. Often, an ignorant midwife becomes the cause of an infant'a death. She has no notion of how a woman in confinement should be looked after. She does not make the mother observe even simple rules. Hence, from its very birth the infant is looked after miserably and succumbs. If it survives the first two months the mother, as ignorant as the midwife, brings it up as well as she knows how to and, though she may not kill it, harms its health all right.

The last reason is the excessively high prices, ever soaring higher. Because of the high prices, milk and ghee have become scarce. Where people need wheat in their diet, they do not get it either. Consequently, the mother's milk continues to deteriorate in quality day by day and, when it stops altogether, the baby has to go without good milk, or a sufficient quantity of it, though the mother may well be aware of its needs. During the cold days, sufficient clothing is not available. The comforts in the house are also inadequate. Thus, there are so many adverse circumstances that it is difficult to bring down the terrific rate of child mortality pointed out by Mr. Khandwala.

Even so, remedial measures must be taken. They are easy enough. If the education of the people is put on a sound footing, they will easily acquire some general knowledge about child care. Meanwhile, small booklets explaining rules of child care may be written in very simple language and circulated, and parents may be educated through lectures. Everyone can, with a little effort, save himself from moist air to some extent. The moisture within and round about the house can be removed by our own efforts. It should not be impossible to buy milk for the children, even by economizing in other matters, if need be. More than anything else, milk is a perfect food. Every man should exercise self-control in the matter of sex and have children only when he is fit for the purpose and capable of looking after them. Knowing, at least, that to bring forth chidren in such difficult times is a terrible violence, one needs to control one's desire. It is not at all difficult to understand the rules of sound health. The high cost of living is an evil for which, we believe, a remedy will somehow be found. If the people's income increases, the high prices would be easy to bear. We have no doubt, then, that either the prices will come down or people's income will increase. Our duty, all the same, is to take steps to bring down the prices. This, however, is quite a separate problem and a big one. We shall consider it some other time. We hope that every reader who is a public worker will take all the steps he can to reduce the rate of mortality among infants.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan 11-1-1920

163. LETTER TO JUSTICE RANKIN

[SABARMATI ASHRAM,]
January 11, 1920

DEAR JUSTICE RANKIN,

Here are the extracts[1] I promised regarding my declarations in connection with civil disobedience. I regret to say that I have not been able to trace Swami Shraddhanandji's telegrams or his letters received just after the 30th March. If you consider them to be very material evidence in connection with any point I suppose you could get copies of the telegrams through the Telegraph Department and possibly a copy of Dr. Satyapal's letter through the C.I.D. in the Punjab. The Superintendent who took me to Bombay from Sawai Madhopur told me that he had seen Dr. Satyapal's letter to me.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the pencilled draft in Mahadev Desai's hand: S. N. 6988

164. LETTER TO SECRETARY, DISORDERS INQUIRY COMMITTEE

ASHRAM,
January 11, 1920

DEAR MR. WILLIAMSON,

It is my diffidence which has deterred me up to now from inviting Lord Hunter, other members of the Committee and the whole staff to visit the Ashram. Pandit Jagatnarayan and Sahebjada Sultan Ahmed Khan paid me the honour of a visit and I felt that in spite of my diffidence I should say to Lord Hunter and the other members of the Committee how pleased I would be to show them over the Ashram ground and tell them what it is. I know how hard pressed all of you are for time. Therefore I trust no one will feel bound to accept my invitation.[2] Will you please read this to Lord Hunter and the others for whom this is meant? No appointment need be made. I shall be at the

[1] These are not available.
[2] The Committee members visited the Ashram the next day.

Ashram up to half past two tomorrow, Monday. I have to keep an appointment at 3 o'clock in the city.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the pencilled draft in Mahadev Desai' hand: S. N. 6988

165. LETTER TO SECRETARY, DISORDERS INQUIRY COMMITTEE

ASHRAM,
January 11, 1920

DEAR MR. WILLIAMSON,

I must confess to you that the extract read to me by Pandit Jagatnarayan referring to myself in connection with the little occurrence in Bombay has not yet ceased to worry me.[1] I simply wish to say that if Lord Hunter wishes to examine me in Bombay on the events there, I would gladly run down to Bombay to give evidence.[2] I am certainly anxious to answer all allegations against me or the cause I have the honour to represent so that the latter may not suffer for want of effort on my part.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the pencilled draft in Mahadev Desai's hand: S. N. 6988

[1] In the course of Gandhiji's examination by the Committee on January 9, Pandit Jagat Narayan had confronted Gandhiji with an official report of what had happened on April 11 when Gandhiji was pacifying an angry crowd in Pydhonie, a Bombay locality. The report had stated *inter alia*: "It is interesting to note that while Gandhi has regularly adopted the poseof the interesting invalid when addressing meetings, the officer in command of the armed police reports that he showed wonderful agility and nimbleness in escaping from his car when the cavalry were charging." Gandhiji had stated that this was untrue.

[2] The Committee did not examine Gandhiji in Bombay where it met on January

166. LETTER TO REGISTRAR, HIGH COURT, BOMBAY

[SABARMATI,]
January 11, 1920

DEAR SIR,

With reference to your letter of the 8th inst., in the circumstances mentioned by you, I shall endeavour to appear before the Court on the 28th February.[1] Will you kindly set the rule down for hearing on that date? I take it that the Publisher, Mr. Mahadeo Desai, will be dealt with at the same time.

Yours faithfully,

From the pencilled draft in Gandhiji's hand : S.N. 7128 (d)

167. SPEECH AT ARYA SAMAJ MEETING, AHMEDABAD

[*January 12, 1920*]

I am sorry that I could not attend this function on all the days. When my old teacher insisted on my coming, I could not but yield to his pressure but I asked him, at the same time, not to detain me for more than half an hour at the meeting, as I keep busy the whole day trying to finish some work which I have taken upon myself. I have often attended functions of this Samaj and moreover, I have recently returned from a pilgrimage to the land of the Arya Samaj. On this occasion, I should tell you frankly the views I have formed about the Arya Samaj; then, I would have attended this meeting to some purpose.

I am not quite sure, but I think I said on the occasion of the first function of the Arya Samaj[2] that Swami Dayanand Saraswati can be placed among the most prominent teachers of all the modern religious

[1] The case came up for hearing on March 3.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Arya Samaj Annual Celeebrations, Surat", 2-1-1916 to "Speech at Surat Reception", 3-1-1916.

sects in India. This has been my conviction and it has grown stronger with experience. I know that, very likely, my words will not be fully understood by those here since the Arya Samaj is not as strong elsewhere as it is in the Punjab in the north. But, what with the various writings, sermons and speeches which I had the opportunity of studying while in South Africa, I can tell you this truth from my own experience. I shall tell you what experience has led me to believe.

I have especially observed two defects in the present Arya Samaj movement. One of them is *asahishnuta;* in English it is described as intolerance. I do not go to the length of saying that this is found in the Arya Samaj alone, but certain it is that the Arya Samaj has allowed itself to be carried away by the prevailing wind.

Propagating religion in a spirit of intolerance defeats its own purpose. The religion so propagated cannot endure for long. It is for dharma to counteract any trend which may do even the smallest harm to the people. I have never seen any good coming out of intolerance. Propagation of religion in such spirit is only an imitation of missionaries and takes the same form as their activities, with the result that propagation comes to be the be-all and end-all of dharma. This idea of propagation obtains among Muslims and Christians and intolerance has entered the Arya Samaj because it has adopted the same method.

Sir Alfred Lyall writes in the book of his that real dharma spreads so silently that the people do not even know that it does. At present the Arya Samaj is just one of the many religious sects. If it is asked how religion can spread so silently, Nature gives the answer.

Look at the wonder of Nature. Think of a tree. Can you observe its growth? You find your limbs growing without your ever bothering about them. Religion spreads in just the same manner.

Real dharma has no place for intolerance. The excellences of such religion we shall not find elsewhere. No other religion has succeeded in keeping away from violence, remaining immune against it, as well as Hinduism has. Hatred is alien to its very spirit. Hinduism, too, has relied on the sword and has taken to fighting, but in other religions, these things have been carried to extremes.

The other defect which I observed in the Samaj is lack of restraint on the tongue. These days the tongue is in greater use than

the sword and, the way it is used, the wound it inflicts is more painful than that by a sword. I have often noticed in the sermons that the Samajists exercise no control over their tongue. Let everyone realize that we can never deny the truth.

Think and reflect over the temper of the *rishis* and *munis*. You will see that they preached the truth with the utmost gentleness, without ever getting excited and with the purest feelings in their hearts. Even when, sometimes, they said unpalatable things, their words had sweetness and truth in them. The Samajists would do well to give up the method of propagation which obtains among Christians. It is not worth copying.

I have not said this by way of criticism, but in a friendly spirit. I have expressed my opinion and no more.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 25-1-1920

168. LETTER TO ADA WEST

January 13, 1920

MY DEAR DEVI,

I have your letter. Each time I see your handwriting, I feel like being with you and just at the present moment, when I have a lot of children on hand, I feel your absence more keenly than ever, but I know that I cannot have you with me in my Indian work. I cannot understand your complaint about the absence of any letter from me[1]. I wrote to you the other day from Lahore. I have been sending you my letters c/o. Mr. Rustomji. Do you know that you never put down your address at the top and therefore I am at sea as to directing your letters.I hope you will make it a point to see Mr. Andrews when he reaches Natal. He is coming to a very difficult task this time. The people of South Africa have become more selfish than they were before the War. They do order to find a solution for the difficulties of

[1] The original has 'you', evidently a slip.

a married life that I have prescribed the rule in the Ashram and the rule which without prescribing I advised in Phoenix for willing people. As I write this, the striking example of Miss Hobhouse[1] occurs to me. She could never have performed the Herculean task that she did in South Africa had she been burdened with the cares of married life. I shall still hope that you will share in my conclusion by an unbroken experience extending over a period of nearly 40 years that one need not change one's faith in order to appreciate the beauties of another and that one becomes better and stronger in one's faith for appreciating beauties of another's faith. My Hinduism does not debar me from taking what is best in Christianity nor does it blind me to the imperfections in practice. You will now understand the strength of the remark that Miss F[aering] should be able to live her own Christian life without the slightest hindrance in the Ashram. I do expect you whenever you find the time to pay us another visit and I hope that Miss F[aering]'s description of the beautiful surroundings in which we are living has but whetted your desire to visit us. I shall esteem it a privilege if you will give me your own impressions of Miss F[aering] both regarding her physique and her mentality. She is such a self-denying girl that I really sometimes do not know what she does want. You will perhaps also be able to give me your confidence in this matter.

With kindest regards and best wishes for a happy new year,

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the handwritten copy : S. N. 7027

[1] Emily Hobhouse

169. LETTER TO ANNE MARIE PETERSEN

January 13, 1920

DEAR MISS PETERSEN,

I was delighted to hear from you after a long absence. As soon as I heard that you wanted Miss Faering to join you during Xmas, I had no hesitation in saying that she should respond to your wish. I can thoroughly appreciate the Christian sentiment that friends and relations should gather together and have sweet communion during the Xmas season. I must confess to you that Miss Faering's presence in the Ashram is uplifting for us all. She is such a good-natured loving girl with all the loftiest aspirations that anyone can be capable of. We are all looking forward to meeting her again. I only wish that she will be able to keep her health here and become a better and a stronger Christian for her presence at the Ashram. As I have so often told her, her living at the Ashram can be justified only if she not only retains undiminished her Christianity but that, in the environment of the Ashram, it becomes purer and more ref[ined] than ever before. I consider myself a Hindu of Hindus. I believe that I have a fine perception of the truth of Hinduism and the priceless lesson I have learnt from it is that I should not wish that others may become Hindus but that they become best specimens in their own faith. I hold an unfortified day cast in your lot with me here. Let not the Indian summer frighten you. I can easily arrange for you to pass the two hottest months of the year in a cool place. There are many such in India. They are not inaccessible.

From a photostat of a handwritten copy : S. N. 7052

170. LETTER TO SIR GEORGE BARNES

January 13, 1920

DEAR SIR GEORGE BARNES,

I enclose herewith a cablegram[1] I have received from South Africa. You will perhaps easily understand reference to the Krugerdorp Case[2] . It means that the partial protection that was attempted to be secured by the new Act has been undone by the latest judgment. The judgment is under appeal, that assuming that the appeal also is decided against us the verdict cannot be accepted. Courts of law provide no remedy where the law itself is defective. This was forcibly illustrated when a High Court judgment [3] upset the South African practice which recognized Indians' marriages as lawful and you know that the legislation of 1914[4] remedied the mischief created by the judgment in question and I trust that you will see to it and instruct Sir Benjamin Roberston that the right of Indians to hold landed property by forming corporations otherwise is not in any way interfered with.

The second point raised in the cablegram is in connection with the Commission that is now sitting to consider the proposed extension *of the power of the Municipalities.* It does seem strange that one should ever have to dread extension of popular power, but here where the power is sought in order to crush the very life of the unrepresented people, any further extension of such power is really a crime. I hope therefore that Sir Benjamin Robertson will see that any law that may be passed to extend the existing power of the municipalities of South Africa will duly safe guard the rights of Indians who are totally unrepresented in the municipalities of the Transvaal and the [Orange] Free State and only partially at the Cape and Natal.

The East African question is, you may have noticed, becoming more and more troublesome. I enclose herewith a letter I have

[1] This is not available.

[2] *Krugersdorp Municipality*. v. *Dadoo Ltd.*; *vide* "Letter to the Press", before 25-1-1920.

[3] The reference is to the Searle Judgment of March 14, 1913; *vide* Appendix "Text of the Searle Judgment", 21-6-1913.

[4] Indians' Relief Act, 1914; *vide* Appendix "The Indians Relief Act", 1914.

addressed to the Press.[1] You may have seen it. Will you not, if it is at all possible, give me something for publication on it as you so kindly did regarding South Africa? I hope, you received my telegram in reply to yours. Will you kindly give my regards to Lady Barnes, Miss Barnes.

Wishing you all a happy new year,

Yours, sincerely,

From a photostat of a handwritten copy : S. N. 7053

171. LETTER TO C.P. RAMASWAMI AIYER

January 13, 1920

DEAR MR. RAMASWAMI,

I thank you for your letter[2]. I entirely agree with you that the amendment[3] finally carried was not what it might have been, but is it not the essence of compromise that it satisfies neither party. It exacts a surrender of something each holds dear and yet not an integral part of any principle. My amendment[4] was certainly graceful and did fair justice to Mr. Montagu's great services. Mr. Pal's on the other hand was offensive owing to the use of the expression using the reforms. The amendment agreed to by all struck the middle course and I felt that it was enough, and only just enough, to give a lead to the country.I have not had the time to read your article in the *Madras*

[1] *Vide* "Letter to the Press", 10-1-1920.

[2] This was dated January 7

[3] The reference is to the amendment to the Reforms Resolution adopted in the annual session of the Indian National Congress. C.P. Ramaswami Aiyer had observed in his letter: " . . . but for your influence, the Congress would have taken a more violent and irresponsible turn than it had actually done. But I must say that I am very grieved that you accepted an amendment which actually makes the proposition itself nugatory. Can any of us honestly say that enough had not been given for enabling us to demonstrate our capacity to govern ourselves and is it possible to say that what has been granted would have been impossible but for the pertinacious advocacy under very trying circumstances of Mr. Montagu to whom a left-handed compliment has been paid and of Lord Sinha whom it is the fashion to slight?"

[4] *Vide* "Speech on Reforms Resolution at Amritsar Congress", 1-1-1920.

Mail.[1] I shall read it and hope to write to you in due course.

Yours sincerely,

From the handwritten draft in pencil : S. N. 7034 a

172. LETTER TO LUCHMAYA

MAURITIUS[2]

January 13, 1920

DEAR MR. LUCHMAYA,

I have your letter. I hope to be in Bombay on the 16th. Will you be able to see me at Mr. Revashankar's bungalow? I have gone through Mr. Wilberforce's letter but I shall learn from you the postition more fully. I shall be so busy in Bombay that I would like you not to take up much time. You will pardon my saying this, but I am doing so in order that you may collect your thoughts and so arrange them that you may be able to tell me all you wish in a few minutes' time.

From a photostat of a handwritten copy : S. N. 7051

173. IS BOYCOTT SWADESHI?

Mr. Baptista[3] has addressed himself to showing that boycott is not only the same as swadeshi in effect but is superior to it. His reasons for saying so are that, whilst it fully serves the purpose of swadeshi in that it stimulates the use of home-made articles, it produces an effect upon the British merchant and manufacturer by touching his pocket. Mr. Baptista adds that my opposition to boycott being purely a spiritual conception, is not understood by the British people, whereas they have always recognized boycott as a perfectly constitutional and legitimate weapon which they understand. To say that boycott is the same as swadeshi even in effect is not to understand either. Swadeshi is an eternal principle whose neglect has brought

[1] The reference is to the article "The Parties of the Future" which Aiyer had requested Gandhiji to glance over.

[2] This, in Gandhiji's hand, indicates the file in which the letter was to be placed.

[3] Joseph Baptista; nationalist leader who was associated with the Home Rule Movement

untold grief to mankind. It means production and distribution of articles manufactured in one's own country. In its narrow and present form it means the saving of sixty crore rupees annually through the instrumentality of the peasant population. It therefore also means giving 72 p.c. of the population a much-needed supplementary industry. Swadeshi is a constructive programme. Boycott, on the other hand, is a temporary makeshift resorted to in order to compel the hands of the British people by deliberately making an attempt to inflict a monetary loss upon them. Boycott, therefore, operates as an undue influence brought in to secure one's purpose. It may indirectly result, but not unless it is persistent and prolonged, in greater manufacture at home, but it certainly means the introduction of another disturbing factor, for, boycott does not mean exclusion of all foreign goods. It means exclusion of British goods only. It, therefore, involves greater encouragement of other foreign agencies, as for instance, Japanese and American. I certainly do not contemplate with equanimity the evergrowing influence of Japan upon Indian trade and commerce. Boycott to the effective has to be fairly universal whereas the observance of swadeshi by a single person is so much to the national good. One can make boycott successful only by an appeal to angry passions. It may therefore result in unintended consequences and may even lead to a permanent estrangement between parties. Mr. Baptista, however, denies that appeal to angry passions is a necessary consequence of boycott especially if some one like me were to manage the movement. I venture to challenge the position. A man suffering from an injustice is exposed to the temptations of having his worst passions roused on the slightest pretext. By asking him to boycott British goods you inculcate the idea of punishing the wrongdoer. And punishment necessarily evokes anger.

Mr. Zahoor Ahmed who has also written to combat my position says that withdrawal of co-operation is the same in essence as boycott, only it is far less effective because it is almost impossible of execution. Now, if I am serving co-operating with a wrongdoer, I am participating in the wrong. Therefore withdrawal of co-operation becomes a duty when a wrong is serious. And even if one man ceases to co-operate it is effective to that extent because of the performance of his duty by even one man. But since boycott is a punishment and as no punishment can be a duty, boycott unless it produces its effect is wasted energy. And boycott by half a dozen persons is like hitting an elephant with a straw.

I admit, however, that my fundamental opposition to boycott is based on a spiritual conception. But that is to say that I am endeavouring to extend the spiritual law to the political world. I deny however that the British people will not understand it. I had no difficulty in making the Europeans of South Africa understand and appreciate it. Nor, in order to render it effective, is it necessary to follow the spiritual conception of a spiritual act. My contention is that an act purely spiritual is the simplest to understand and the easiest to execute. Spirituality is nothing if it is not eminently practical. It is not difficult to understand that we must wash our hands when they are dirty. It is equally simple to do so, yet it is essentially a spiritual practice. *Mens sana in corpore sano* is a doctrine of the soul. And even if we accept the necessity of cleaning dirty hands without a spiritual conception of cleanliness, so may we accept the practical failure of boycott and the practical necessity under definite conditions of non-co-operation without waiting to understand their spiritual basis.

Is boycott, then, practical? Mr. Baptista has approved of boycott of the British goods. I hold that if the highest and permanent good of the country cannot be sufficient incentive to our merchants for supporting swadeshi to the exclusion of foreign goods an appeal to the merchants that, in order to bring justice from the British people, they shall temporarily stop their custom, will, I venture to submit, fall flat. Boycott after the event is of no consequence. Boycott to influence the result must be instant action. The area of boycott is too large for any organization that can be brought into being at a moment's notice. And I can see no difficulty about British manufacturers introducing their wares into India through Japan or America even as Germany years ago introduced into India her goods through England.

I swear by swadeshi because it is an evolutionary process gaining strength as it goes forward. Any organization can serve it. It is independent of the justice or the injustice of the rulers or the British people. It is its own reward. "There is no waste of energy; no failure, even a little practice of this dharma saves one from a great danger." Swadeshi and boycott are, therefore, not the same but are at the opposite poles.

Young India, 14-1-1920

174. THE REFORMS RESOLUTION IN THE CONGRESS

The divergence of views on the Reforms Resolution, summarized in one of our notes[1], is not to be wondered at. Compromises never give complete satisfaction to all parties. In their very nature they must just fall short of that and yet be acceptable to all. In our opinion the country did get the lead through the Congress that it was possible to give it. The Congress must, if it is to serve the country, more and more tend to represent not one view but many, and that not merely in the Subjects Committee, but on the open platform. There is no denying the fact there are several parties in the country. Extremist and Moderate do not cover all parties. There are, for instance, in the Extremist camp Mr. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar's, Mr. Das', and Lokamanya Tilak's parties. No doubt they sailed under the Extremist flag. But as differences become accentured, as they must be in course of time, each group will begin to assert itself. The Hon'ble Pandit Malaviyaji represents a body of opinion distinct from the Extremist. Similarly in the Moderate camp there are undoubtedly divisions, which as time goes on will become sharper, rather than otherwise, and with a proper constitution there is no reason why the Congress should not represent a resultant of all these different views thrashed out with calmness and becoming dignity on the Congress an open and reasoned discussion took place before the delegates, on a matter of the greatest importance to the country, and for the first time were those elaborate preparations made in order to ascertain by their votes the decision of the Congress. That in itself, in our opinion, was something worth attaining. But there was more than this. No doubt it was open to either party to push the matter to a division. We cannot accept Mrs. Besant's view that L[okamanya] Tilak had told his followers to vote for Mr. Gandhi's amendment if he had held out, and even if Mrs. Besant's information is correct, it would hardly have been proper for Mr. Gandhi to have pushed the matters to such an extreme. His amendment alone brought forth Mr. Pal's. The latter was a purely tactical move. Had the audience been called upon merely to decide between the original proposition, i.e., without co-operation and thanks, and Mr. Gandhi's, with thanks, a division would have been a duty. But

[1] These have not been reproduced here. For a detailed discussion on the subject, however, *vide* "The Congress", 11-1-1920.

Mr. Pal's amendment came as a feeler and also was an earnest of the extremist groups to conciliate an opposing amendment, so long as they could consistently do so. Mr. Pal's amendment could not be accepted because of the offensive word 'use' in it. Naturally therefore a third amendment providing a middle course had to be framed, and comfort lies not merely in the fact of the compromise but in the fact that all were anxious to avoid an open division. Surely, for the country it means that the Congress desires to co-operate with the authorities in so far as that co-operation can hasten the advent of the responsible government, and to thank Mr. Montagu for his valuable labours on the Reforms. We would certainly have liked it better if the graceful language of the original amendment had been accepted, if thanks had been expressed in warmer terms and extended to Lord Sinha. But it would have been wrong to divide the house after the principle of co-operation and thanks were granted by the three leaders. We are unable to associate ourselves with the suggestion that L. Tilak in accepting the amendment wanted to use Messrs Malaviya and Gandhi as his tools, and if they allowed themselves to be so used, it would not be the Lokamanya who would be to blame, but Messrs Malaviya and Gandhi would be clearly held blameworthy for their simplicity. For as party formation progresses, we suppose it would be considered quite the proper thing for party leaders to use others as tools so long as there are any to be used. Care will therefore have to be taken rather to purify our politics, than, for fear of being used as tools, to hesitate to take the right course. L. Tilak represents a definite school of thought of which he makes no secret. He considers that everything is fair in politics. We have joined issue with him in that conception of political life. We consider that political life of the country will become thoroughly corrupt if we import Western tactics and methods. We believe that nothing but the strictest adherence to honesty, fairplay and charity can advance the true interests of the country. But we refuse, because of the essential difference just pointed out, to believe that, in accepting the amendment, L. Tilak was guided by any motive other than that of meeting his opponents' views so far as it was possible. On the whole, therefore, in our opinion, the analysis given by *The Times of India* is the only true analysis of the position ultimately arrived at under the compromise.

Young India, 14-1-1920

175. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

AHMEDABAD,
January 14, 1920

MATHURADAS
247 BAZAR GATE
BOMBAY

GOING DELHI TOMORROW RAJPUTANA LINE. JOINS THERE.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

176. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 14, 1920

DEAR GURUDEV,

I had no idea up to today that the Gujarat Literary Conference had not met at the time it was expected to. The chief organiser Dr. Hari Prasad, however, tells me that, as one of the reasons for your inability to attend was the shortness of notice given to you, it was decided to postpone the holding of the Conference to Easter. It could be done without violating any canon of propriety as the Conference is not an annual fixture meeting at an appointed time. I know that you would come if your health and other considerations make it possible for you to accept the invitation and I sincerely hope that the capital of Gujarat will have the honour of receiving you during Easter.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the handwritten original signed by Gandhiji: G.N. 4926

[1] Tagore addressed the Conference on April 2.

177. LETTER TO SYED HUSSEN IMAM

[SABARMATI ASHRAM,
Before *January 15, 1920*][1]

DEAR SYED HUSSEN IMAM,

B. Shri Krishna Singh, a Vakil from Monghyr, and a railway employee from J. W. S.[2] of the E. I. R. have been here to see me in connection with a strike of the workmen of the locmotive department that has gone [on] now for the last 10 days. I should love to go to Monghyr and study the situation locally. But it is impossible in view of the necessity of my going to the Punjab at once to complete my work there. The demands of the men seem to me to be reasonable. Can you not help them? I am writing to Rajendra Babu also.

Yours sincerely,

From a handwritten draft in pencil : S. N. 7024

178. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

DELHI,
[On or after *January 16, 1920*][3]

MY DEAR CHILD,

I was sorry to leave the Ashram as soon as you came. I wanted so to have a long chat with you and to comfort you if you were anxious about anything. I felt more sorry when Devdas told me you had not enough to cover yourself [with]. I hope you asked what you wanted or that someone anticipated your wants.

You know the changes that have been made regarding cooking. Bhuvarjee will be out of the kitchen. I would like you to help Ba in the kitchen. But you shall not do so if it costs over-much patience. Ba has not an even temper. She is not always sweet. And she can be petty. At the present moment she is weak in body too. You will therefore have to summon to your aid all your Christian charity to be able to return largeness against pettiness. And we are truly large only when

[1] The letter appears to have been written some time before Gandhiji left Ahmedabad on January 15.

[2] Jamalpur Railway Workshop

[3] Gandhiji left Ahmedabad on January 15, and reached Delhi the next day. This letter appears to have been written soon after.

we are that joyfully. I have known friends being generous in a miserable spirit. Their generosity has become a kind of martyrdom. To rejoice in suffering, to pity the person who slights you and to love him all the more for his weakness is real charity. But we may not be able to reach that stage. Then, we should not experiment. And so, my dear Esther, if you find Mrs. Gandhi trying your nerves, you must avoid the close association I am suggesting to you.[1] On no account shall I have you to lose your inward peace and joy. I want you so to order your life that the Ashram gives you greater joy, greater happiness and finer preception of truth. I want you to be a greater Christian for being in the Ashram. You were with me the whole of yesterday and during the night. I shall pray that you may be healthier in mind, body and spirit so as to be a better instrument of His service.

And I want you to befriend Deepak. He is another big experiment. Mahadev will tell you who he is. I have not the time for writing more.

You may share this letter with Mahadev if you wish to. This has come to me in answer to prayer. Early this morning I wanted to send you a word of cheer. I feel for poor Mahadev just the same. He has an unequal burden to carry and thank God he has a most sensitive conscience that is unforgiving towards him. But he is fretful. He has not that abundant experience of the divine in him and so he worries. Help him please and derive help from him.

Write to me of your experience of your Madras visit and tell me how you felt there.

With deep love.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat of the handwritten original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child,* pp. 39-40

[1] Replying on January 20, Esther Faering wrote that it was difficult to please Ba, who would always look upon her as a stranger and that she herself found it difficult to cross the barriers that seemed to exist between them.

179. THE HUNTER COMMITTEE

This Committee has completed its work in regard to Ahmedabad. The evidence placed before it goes to prove that the first mistake was made by the people and not by the Government. We should ignore the fact of

Mr. Gandhi's arrest, for, when the Government arrests a person who happens to be popular among the people if the belief comes to prevail that on no account can the Government arrest such a person, the work of Government just cannot be carried on. True, the Government should have valid reason for arresting the person. It is also true that, before making the arrest the Government must have made adequate arrangements to preserve order. Even so, because the Government arrests a particular person, the people do not get the right to start killing and burning. Besides, the police had not done anything in Ahmedabad on April 11 which could provide the people with even the semblance of an excuse for doing what they did.

Thus, the evidence goes to prove that, in killing and setting buildings on fire, the people erred grievously and harmed Ahmedabad.

We also hear it said that the Government released Mr. Gandhi only because of the riots. A look at the dates will show that this is not true, since, when Mr. Gandhi was released, there had been no violence in Ahmedabad. He was released in the afternoon of April 11. The decision to set him free in Bombay was made on the evening of the 10th. Nothing had happened in Ahmedabad up to that time.

We know, however, that much harm was done because of the violence and arson. Many people have had to go to jail; a large fine has been imposed on Ahmedabad and the city has had reason to feel ashamed.

It would be somewhat brazen-faced to criticize or denounce the Government for the steps it took to quell the riots. Compared to the Punjab, the Government here has been so forbearing that it would not be right on our part to condemn its minor lapses; even so, when we are examining the question from all points of views, we are bound to point out the lapses too.

There was no need for Martial Law and for the order issued under it. It resulted in the death of innocent people. An unjust and one-sided order of fine on Nadiad and Barejadi was issued. These

were evident mistakes by the Government. The Hunter Committee is to some extent the means of getting them rectified.

The discussion on satyagraha between the members of the Committee on the one hand and Mr. Gandhi on the other is noteworthy. We shall, therefore, try to reproduce it, as faithfully as possible. The discussion brings out effectively that satyagraha is a remedy for violence and a means of safeguarding the rights of the people.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 18-1-1920

180. LETTER TO AZMATULLAH KHAN

[DELHI,
January 18, 1920][1]

DEAR CAPTAIN AZMATULLAH KHAN,

I have not forgotten the promise[2] made by me. I have gone through the papers[3] , and I am ready to give my award[4] . My reading of the papers goes against you, and as I am otherwise unassisted, I would like you to say anything you wish to convince me to the contrary. And as soon as I receive your reply, I shall be prepared to deliver my award unless a reference to the other party becomes necessary by reason of anything you say. I am in Allahabad on the 20th. I leave Allahabad on the 21st. I reach Lahore on the 23rd and remain there for some time. My Allahabad address is : C/o The Honourable Pundit Motilal Nehru. My Lahore address is Mozang Road.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the handwritten draft: S. N. 7056

[1] The date is derived from the acknowledgement by the addressee.

[2] In his letter of January 15, Azmatullah Khan had written to Gandhiji : "The time for the matter promised by you is approaching and I am sure you would have given notice to the opposite party."

[3] These concerned a dispute between Capt. Azmatullah Khan and the Patan Pinjrapole; *vide* "Letter to Motichand & Devidas, Solicitors", 26-1-1920.

[4] This was dispatched on January 26; *vide* "Letter to Azmatullah Khan". For the text of the award, *vide* "An Award", 26-1-1920.

181. LETTER TO J. L. MAFFEY

DELHI,
January 18, 1920

J. L. MAFFEY, ESQ., C.I.E.
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY

I have come here in connection with the Khilafat Deputation and to form part of the deputation that is to wait on His Excellency tomorrow. I had now read the Statement[1] to be submitted to His Excellency before I was invited. I did not like the manner of presentation of the case. It is vague and in general terms, whereas at a critical moment like this, the statement should have been dignified, brief, precise, as unargumentative as possible, confining itself merely to bare facts and presenting the case from the highest platform and not from the platform of diplomacy. But I observe that it is now too late to redraw the whole statement and to take up any more of His Excellency's time. I therefore suggested that there should be at least an accurate statement of what is about the least that will satisfy Moslem sentiment. They have now drawn up an addendum which is incorporated in the statement. I venture to trust that His Excellency will have no objection to the addendum. I enclose herewith copy of the statement with the addition. I am sorry that it is written in a slovenly manner. I hope to send you a reprint in the course of the day but, in order to save time, I am sending you meanwhile what I have.

I hope that you are keeping well.

I was distressed to read in the papers that Lady Chelmsford was ailing in Calcutta. I trust she is completely recovered.[2]

N.A.I.: Home, Political: February 1920: No. 413-416A

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Khilafat Deputation's Address to Viceeroy", 19-1-1920.

[2] To this letter Maffey replied as follows: "Your letter of 18th instant received. Things are much too far advanced for any addition to the address to be now possible. If I may say so I do not agree with your severe criticisms of the address prepared by the Khilafat Conference. It covers the ground very fully and I think they have exercised a wise discretion in excluding a presentation of claims on such an occasion."

182. NOTE ON TALKS'S LETTER[1]

[DELHI,
After *January 18, 1920*]

I naturally feel the greatest diffidence about joining issue with the Lokamanya in matters involving questions of interpretation of religious work. But there are things in or about which instinct transcends even interpretation. For me there is no conflict between the two texts quoted by the Lokamanya. The Buddhist text lays down an eternal principle. The text from the *Bhagavad Gita* shows to me how the principle of conquering hate by love, untruth by truth, can and must be applied. If it be true that God metes out the same measure to us that we mete out to others, it follows that if we would escape condign punishment, we may not return anger but gentleness even against anger. And this is the law not for the unworldly but essentially for the worldly. With deference to the Lokamanya, I venture to say that it betrays mental laziness to think that the world is not for sadhus. The epitome of all religions is to promote *purushartha*, and *purushartha* is nothing but a desperate attempt to become sadhu, i.e., to become a gentleman in every sense of the term.

Finally, when I wrote the sentence about 'everything being fair in politics' according to the Lokamanya's creed, I had in mind his oft-repeated quotation ' शठं प्रति शाठयम्[2].

To me it enunciates bad law. And I shall not despair of the Lokamanya with all his acumen agreeably surprising India one day with a philosophical dissertation proving the falsity of the doctrine. In

[1] This was in reply to the following letter dated Poona, January 18, 1920, from Lokamanya Tilak: "I am sorry to see that in your article on 'Reforms Resolution' in the last issue, you have represented me as holding that I considered 'everything fair in politics'. I write this to you to say that my view is not correctly represented therein. Politics is a game of worldly people and not of sadhus, and instead of the maxim अक्रोधेन जिने क्रोर्घ as preached by Buddha, I prefer to rely on the maxim of Shri Krishna ये यथा मां प्रपधते तांस्तयैव भजाम्यहम . That explains the whole difference and also the meaning of my phrase 'responsive co-operation'. Both methods are equally honest and righteous but the one is more suited to this world than the other. Any further explanation about the difference will be found in my *Gita Rahasya*." For the article referred to, *vide* "The Reforms Resolution in the Congress", 14-1-1920.

[2] Wickedness unto the wicked

any case I pit the experience of a third of a century against the doctrine underlying ' शर्ठ प्रति सत्यम~. The true law is , शठं प्रति शाठयम ~[1] .

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 28-1-1920

183. AN APPEAL TO MADRAS

I use the word Madras here in its popular sense, meaning the people of the whole of the Madras Presidency, speaking all the Dravidian languages.

I observe that Mrs. Besant was disappointed that the proceedings of the Congress were conducted mainly in Hindustani, and she has therefore come to the amazing conclusion that it became a Provincial rather than a National Assembly. I entertain a very high regard for Mrs. Besant and her services to India. No one has popularised the idea of Home Rule for India with so much success as she. The best of us, much younger in age, are unable to approach her in her industry, zeal and organising ability, all devoted to the service of India. She has devoted the best part of her mature life to the service of India and she has deservedly attained popularity in India second perhaps only to that of Lokamanya Tilak. But, for the present moment her views being unacceptable to a large body of educated Indians, she has become somewhat unpopular, and it grieves me to have to dissent publicly from her view about Hindustani making the Congress provincial. In my humble opinion it is a grave error of judgement, and duty compels me to draw attention to it. I have attended all the Congress sessions but one since 1915. I have studied them specially in order to study the utility of Hindustani compared to English for the conduct of its proceedings. I have spoken to hundreds of delegates and thousandes of visitors and I have perhaps covered a larger area and seen a much larger number of people, literate and illiterate, than any public man, not excluding Mrs. Besant and Lokamanya Tilak, and I have come to the deliberate conclusion that no language except Hindustani a resultant of Hindi and Urdu can possibly become a national medium for exchange of ideas or for the conduct of national proceedings. It is also my deliberate opinion based upon extensive experience that the nation has very materially suffered by reason of the proceedings of the Congress having been conducted almost

[1] Truth even unto the wicked

entirely in English except during the last two years. I further wish to state as a fact that, barring the presidency of Madras everywhere else the majority of the visitors and delegates to the National Congress have always been able to understand more Hindustani than English. The astounding result therefore has been that the Congress has been national throughout all these long years only as a spectacle but never for its real educative value. In any other country in the world, an assembly of this character that has become progressively popular from year to year would have, during thirty-four years of life, given a political education that would have entered every home because the people would have had various questions thrashed out before them in their own language. Whatever therefore the shortcomings of the last Congress, it has certainly been more fully national than any of its predecessors, by reason of the majority of the delegates and visitors having understood the proceedings. If the audience was weary of Mrs. Besant, it was not becasue it was indifferent or disrespectful to her but because it could not follow her speech, interesting and able though it was. And as national consciousness develops and as the appetite for political knowledge and education grows, as it must, it will become more and more difficult, and rightly so, for a speaker, no matter how able and popular, to command the attention of a popular audience if he spoke in English. I therefore appeal to the people of Madras Presidency to recognize the national necessity for public men to learn Hindustani. Audiences outside Madras can more or less understand Hindustani without difficulty. Dayananda Saraswati enthralled audiences outside Northern India with his Hindustani eloquence and could be understood by even the common people without difficulty. That means that out of a population of three hundred and fifteen millions only over thirty-eight millions composing the Madras Presidency cannot follow a Hindustani speaker. I have deducted the Mohammedan population for it is common knowledge that the majority of the Mohammedans of Madras Presidencyunderstand Hindustani. The question therefore is: what is the duty of the thirty-eight million inhabitants of that Presidency? Should India for their sake learn English? Or should they for the sake of two hundred seventy-seven million inhabitants of India learn Hindustani? The late Justice Krishnaswami, with his unerring instinct, recognized Hindustani as the only possible medium of expression between the different parts of India. I am not aware that the proposition is seriously challenged by anybody at the present

moment. It is not possible for thousands of people to make English their common tongue, and it would be highly undesirable even if it were possible, for the simple reason that the higher and technical knowledge being acquired through English cannot percolate to the masses, as it would if it became current among the upper classes through any of the vernaculars. It is easier, for instance, to translate the writings of Sir J.C. Bose from Bengalee into Gujarati than it is to translate Huxley from English into Gujarati. And what does the proposition that the Madrasis should learn Hindustani for the sake of the rest of India amount to? It simply means that those public workers in Madras who want to work outside India and who want to take part in national assemblies outside the Madras Presidency should devote an hour a day for one year to learning Hindustani. Such an effort would enable several thousand Madrasis to pick up sufficient Hindustani to enable them to follow at least the drift of the Congress proceedings at the end of a year's study. They have got in several parts of the Presidency Hindi Prachar Offices where HIndustani is taught free of charge to all who wish to learn.

I appeal to Mrs. Besant, who is already devoting *New India* from time to time to the cause of Hindustani learning, to support my appeal.

Young India, 21-1-1920

184. SPEECH AT MEERUT MEETING [1]

January 22, 1920

After expressing his gratitude to the citizens of Meerut and the volunteers for the hearty reception they had accorded to him, he said that of all the problems that faced India to-day that of the Khilafat was the most important, for it was the problem of our Muslim brethren. His English and Hindu friends had been asking him why a staunch Hindu like him interested himself so keenly in the Khailafat question. His answer to them all was that he and his Hindu brothers wanted to maintain peace and love with the 7 crores of Mussalmans in India. Until the Khilafat question was settled according to Muslim ideas of justice, there could be no peace in India. The Government might succeed in suppressing discontent for a time, but men, whose

[1] Gandhiji was presented with addresses by the Khilafat Committee and the citizens of Meerut at a public meeting. Khan Bahadur Sheikh Wahid-uddin presided. Gandhiji spoke in Hindi.

feelings were seriously hurt, could not live in peace for ever.

He wanted to say to his Muslim brothers that there was no means more effective to settle the question than satyagraha. They could never settle the Khilafat question by physical force. But they could themselves see the great chances of success if they adopted satyagraha. If the men in South Africa had taken up arms to defend themselves, they could have been killed by those very arms. But they stood firmly on patience.

Apart from the problem of Khilafat, the question of India's freedom was always bound up with the adoption of swadeshi. India's slavery dated from the day she gave up use of her indigenous articles. The East India Company never aimed at conquest. Its objects were purely commercial. But they were caught in the net. They used the goods manufactured in Lancashire and Manchester. If they wanted to make India free, they could not do so by the reforms, they could not do so by taking any rules or regulations from England, but they could do so by using swadeshi goods.

As to the question of Hindu-Muslim unity, he exhorted the audience to remember that they could never achieve real unity by false pretensions and pleasant words. They could deceive men but they could not deceive God. If the Hindus cajoled the Muslims to spare the cow or the Muslims coaxed the Hindus to take up the cause of the Khilafat, they could both be disappointed. These were passing things. So far as their respective religions allowed, they ought to be ready to sacrifice their very lives for each other's sakes.

Before concluding, he again expressed his thanks to his brothers and sisters of Meerut.

The Tribune, 12-2-1920

185. INTERVIEW TO S.W. CLEMES

[MEERUT,
January 22, 1920]

Mr. Gandhi, what can nations of the West do in furthering the all-round development of the East, and particularly of India? Mr. Gandhi answered the question indirectly:

India is just now in the state of unlearning. She has learned a lot that is useless and unprofitable. From my observation of the West, and particularly of your own country, I have learned two outstanding facts: First, cleanliness; second, energy. I am fully convinced that my people cannot advance spiritually, until they clean up. Your people are wonderfully energetic. To a large extent, it has been energy after

things material. If Indian people could have that same amount of energy, rightly directed, they would receive a great blessing.

Mr. Gandhi, will you kindly tell me how Christianity can best help India, in view of the spirit of nationalism that is abroad? He replied:

What we need, most of all, is *sympathy*. When I was down in Africa, I found this illustration. I had to dig some artesian wells. In order to search the pure flowing streams, I had to dig deep. Many of the people who come out here to study my people only scratch the surface. If they would dig deep by means of sympathy, they would find a stream of life there, pure and clear.

And will you kindlly tell me, Mr. Gandhi, what book or person has influenced you the most? He frankly confessed that he was not an omnivorous reader, but rather a careful selector of the very best. The order in which he spoke of the books was as follows: The Bible, Ruskin, Tolstoi. Speaking of the Bible, he said:

There have been many times when I did not know which way to turn. But I have gone to the Bible, and particularly the New Testament, and have drawn strength from its message.

I was anxious to know how our Meerut Graduates' Association, composed of the finest of the educated men in the city, could further the city's welfare. In reply to the question, he gave me his one word.

Scavenger, I employ that word in all its meaning. If the members would get out and lend a helping hand to clean up the city, literally and morally, they would be doing a great work.

Young India, 25-2-1920

186. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI [1]

LAHORE,
Tuesday [After *January 23, 1920*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

How could I manage to write to you? All the same, I look for letters from you. Let me know how matters stand there with regard to spinning and weaving. Did you promise to send Kantilal for Sarladevi? Can he be spared? If he can be, send him to teach the boys. Ask Deepak to write to Sarladevi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5779. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

187. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[LAHORE,
After *January 23, 1920*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I always feel that you, at any rate, should not fall ill. When you do, though, I will submit to the inevitable. One may fall ill even through anxiety not to do so. When the body is debilitated beyond a certain point, it does not recover completely. I certainly wish that you could spend a few months, four to six, in a place all by yourself. I would be happy if you could force yourself to find this time. Surely, you should be able to place the Ashram on such a footing that you can spare yourself from time to time. However, treat this as the master's advice should be treated.[2] Do your own will. I want to see you healthy in body, mind and heart.

[1] This and the following letter seem to have been written after the Amritsar Congress. After the session, Gandhiji had returned to Ahmedabad and reached Lahore on January 23. Sarladevi Choudhrani, wife of Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Choudhry, had left her son Deepak, at the Sabarmati Ashram sometime after the Amritsar Congress.

[2] The Gujarati saying runs: "The master's advice as far as the gate", that is to say, one may acquiesce for the moment and then forget all about it.

Cherish Esther and Deepak. Mahadev, of course, you must be meeting. I hope you are doing everything to keep Ba cheerful. May one write such things to an ailing man? Yes, one can, to a man like you. I imagine you to be a man who can forget his illness in his concern for others. Mathuradas and Devdas are tireless in their service. The latter has gone far ahead. Sarladevi has been showering her love on me in every possible way. Write to her when you get time that she should not worry about Deepak.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5781. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

188. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

LAHORE,

[After *January 23, 1920*][1]

BHAISHRI NARAHARI,

Herewith a letter for Deepak. Pass it on to him after reading it. Ask him whether he has understood it. This is only the third time Sarladevi has allowed him to leave her side. Her old mother-in-law is none too happy about it. I cannot say that Panditji[2] is happy either. But he never objects to anything Sarladevi does. He very much wants that the child should grow up there to be a man of character and learning. We may do all we can to help him to be so. Pay attention to his instruction in Sanskrit and Bengali. If Manindra takes charge of his Bengali, the boy will easily make progress in it. Wouldn't he like to write to Sarladevi in good Bengali? Or, if he prefers, he may write sometimes in Bengali and sometimes in English.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in Gujarati : S. N. 11885

[1] It appears Gandhiji wrote this letter soon after his arrival in Lahore on January 23.

[2] Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Choudhri

189. LETTER TO REGISTRAR, HIGH COURT, BOMBAY

LAHORE,
January 24, 1920

SIR,

I beg to acknowledge your letter[1] of the --------- instant.

The 3rd March next will suit me for the hearing of the rule against Mr. Mahadev Desai and myself[2].

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand : S. N. 7063

190. LETTER TO S. ALI HUSAIN

2, MOZANG ROAD,
LAHORE,
January 24, 1920

DEAR MR. HUSAIN,

I was glad to receive your letter[3]. The information I made use of in the meeting was given to me at Meerut and in the motor by the friends who brought me to Muzaffarnagar. If you dispute their version, I would like you to let me have your own.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the handwritten copy: S. N. 7068

[1] Evidently this was in reply to Gandhiji's letter of January 4.

[2] On February 27, Gandhiji wrote again to the Registrar and forwarded statements by himself and Mahadev Desai. The hearing of the rule *nisi* was held on March 3, when boththe respondents appeared in court in person. The Judges held them guilty of contempt of court but confined themselves "to severely reprimanding the respondents and cautioning them both as to their future conduct."

[3] This was dated January 23 and read: "I am sorry to intrude upon your busy time, but as differences have arisen here regarding your last night's speech, I hope you won't mind these few minutes. We would like to know the nature of your information regarding the *Mohharram* affair and who gave you that information. Was it during your short stay here or at some time previous to this? . . . " The speech referred to is the "Speech at Meerut Meeting", 22-1-1920.

191. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

LAHORE,
January 24, 1920

MY DEAR CHILD,

I was delighted to receive your letter on my arrival in Lahore yesterday.

I am glad you have opened out your heart. It is the truest test of friendship and affection. You enable me to help you when you do open out. I had no notion that you had already observed Mrs. Gandhi's pettiness. I simply warned you, as I asked you to come in closer touch with her. As it is, my warning reached you just in time. God will give you wisdom and courage to do the right thing at the right moment. Only remember one thing, never allow your spirit of sacrifice to go to the length of making you sour and disgusted with yourself or your surroundings. This is one of the sorest temptations to which workers are exposed. They go on sacrificing themselves till they become disgusted with everything and everybody for want of response. We sacrifice truly only when we expect no response. It is well worth knowing the root meaning of the word. It means, as you might know, 'to make sacred'. We make neither ourselves nor others sacred when we are irritated or angry. There is often more sacrifice sacared making in a divine smile than in so-called substantial sacrifice. The instances of Mary and Magdalene[1] occur to me as I write these lines. Both were good but the one who simply waited upon her Lord without making any fuss was probably more self-sacrificing than the other. And so may it be with you. Do not overtax your spirit in trying to win over Mrs. Gandhi or anybody else. Immediately you find that you cannot get on with her, you must have a separate kitchen for yourself. You could still serve her but not be so intimate with her. Nothing that you do there should tire out either your spirit or your body.

Do please ask for every convenience you may need whether for food or otherwise. Ask Maganlal or Imam Saheb or anybody who has come nearer you.

[1] This appears to be a slip for "Martha".

Yes, Deepak is all you describe him. I would like you gently to get him to realize his responsibility and concentrate on his studies. Supervise his letter-writing. See that he writes fully and neatly to his mother every day.

My heart is with you in your sorrow. I can understand your desire to be with your brother in Denmark[1] . But you have chosen a different path a path that does not admit of exclusive service. May God give you strength for your task.

I agree with you about Mahadev. He is needlessly anxious about his health.[2] He is prized not for his body but for his spirit. It must be a privilege for friends to nurse him in his illness.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat of the handwritten original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child,* pp. 47-9

192. TELEGRAM TO SHAMLAL NEHRU

[LAHORE,
January 24, 1920]

IMPOSSIBLE LEAVE PUNJAB PLEASE APOLOGISE FOR ME.[3]

GANDHI

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S. N. 7440

[1] Esther Faering had written of her brother stricken with tuberculosis.

[2] Mahadev Desai had told Esther Faering that he felt he had "no right or claim to live in the Ashram when he so often fell ill".

[3] This was in reply to the following telegram from Shamlal Nehru: "K.P. Singh Barrister Arrah wishes me forward following message mass meeting Arrah 25th instant request release Shahabad rioters. Your presence solicited strengthen Hindu-Muslim unity. Keen disappointment non attending."

193. LETTER TO THE PRESS[1]

[Before *January 25, 1920*]

The following is the extension of a cable received by me from Mr. Aswat, Chairman of the British Indian Association, Transvaal, regarding the *Krugersdorp Municiplality* v. *Dadoo, Ltd.*, referred to in the memorandum presented to the Union Premier:

> The Court has set aside the transfers. It held that the formation of Indian companies for the purpose of acquiring fixed property is illegal. It declared transfers so obtained were *fraudem legis,* saying that legislation cannot be laughed at (Section 130). The Gold Law was intended to prevent indiscriminate mingling of Coloured [persons and] Europeans. Further in the judgment in Potchefstroom, under the Local Ordinance 9, 1912, the magistrate upholds the Council's contention that the Asiatic's presence causes annoyance and detriment to European commerce and on that ground holds Indians as undesirable. Both judgments mean the ruination of the community. Appeals noted. Europeans tendering evidence before the local Government Commission are specialising on the Indian question, urging complete autonomy for municipalities. Make representations to the proper quarters immediately. The Association prays to hold meetings throughout India. New Act 37 gives no protection even to old companies and traders. The position is most precarious. Strenuous action is imperative for the sake of saving the community.

This cablegram cannot fail to disconcert those who have at all studied the South African question, for, as Mr. Aswat says, it is calculated to undo even the little that the new Act was claimed to accomplish. Dadoo, Ltd., is an old-established Indian company in Krugersdorp. It holds extensive landed property in that township, and, the meaning of the cablegram is that the transfers registered in the name of the company of landed properties are illegal, because, as the Court seems to have contended, the transaction was in fraud of the law and that legislation could not be laughed at. I wish to say nothing regarding the propriety of the judgment or the reasoning on which it seems to be based.

Thousands of pounds' worth of landed property is registered in the names of companies in which Indians enjoy a dominating

[1] A Gujarati translation of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 25-1-1920.

position. If the judgment stands, everyone of these companies will become dispossessed of the land they have occupied for years, land which they have acquired openly and under legal advice and which has been registered in the Land Registry Office. With the full knowledge of all the circumstances by the registrars, and only last year, when the new disabling Act was passed by the South African Legislature, we were told that the holding of land in this manner, prior to July 31 last, would not be affected by the legislation, and in justification of the measure, we were told by all the speakers in the Union Assembly that the legislation would protect existing companies and mortgages. The judgment in question comes, therefore, as an eye-opener. I venture to submit that, even if the judgment is sound, it evidently frustrates the intention of the Legislature and deprives Indians of rights they have enjoyed without question for years past. I hold that the impending sin[1] must be averted, even if it is to be done by special legislation, as was done in 1914 in connection with the legal recognition of Indian marriages.

The second point raised in the cablegram refers to a magisterial judgment, and it means that Indians as Indians may be declared as undesirable, not on ground of insanitation or immorality, but because they compete with the European traders to their detriment. If this doctrine were to hold good, not a single Indian can engage in any trade whatever in South Africa[2] .

Sir Benjamin Robertson will presently sail for South Africa. His diplomatic talent and his trusteeship will be taxed to the utmost before he secures, not a full status for the Indians in South Africa, but even a tolerably respectable footing for them to secure, i.e., the right to trade and own landed property without restriction, save such as are common to all as well in theory as in practice. One can only hope that the

[1] The original has “sum”, evidently a misprint.

[2] A Gujarati version of the letter in *Navajivan*, 25-1-1920, has the following additional paragraph: “The third point raised in the cable is about the proposed increase in the powers of municipalities. Ordinarily, everyone would welcome such an increase but, looking to what has happened in the present case, in South Africa and the other Colonies, this increase will mean investing the municipalities with power to persecute the dependent and disenfranchisedclasses. In the event, the latter will find the increased powers of municipalities not to their benefit but to their detriment. In the Transvaal and the Free State, Indians have no political or municipal franchise. They have a measure of franchise in Natal and the Cape, but not sufficient to enable them to influence the working of municipalities or to have their wishes respected.”

Government of India will speak to the Union Government in no uncertain terms on this question, and that the public and the Press will strengthen their hands.

India, 27-2-1920

194. OFF THE RAILS

Letters, loving and not so loving, come pouring in to me; and, since I became editor, their number has increased. I cannot publish many of them; they are not worth publishing. Some, however, are such as may do good if published. I received one such recently and I give it here exactly as it is.[1]

The writer of this letter is a hard-working young man. He has patriotism, but, as one with a squint in the eye sees everything out of focus, so this friend, in the bitterness of his heart, sees everything wrong about me. Once he had nothing but love for me; however, what with his bitterness against the British and my attitude to them free from malice, even those actions of mine which he once thought good or about which he used to be neutral seem bad to him. Not only this; he has even found it possible to argue my incapacity from the very actions which I consider to be my best.

This is no exception. I had this experience in South Africa and have it here too. What is it which reduces man to such a state? The answer to this is given in the *Bhagavad Gita,* in the best possible language:

By constantly dwelling on objects, the mind develops attachment, from attachment grows desire, desire brings forth anger, anger clouds one's perception, this obscures memory, from that comes loss of reason and, reason lost, one is utterly destroyed.[2]

This is a vivid picture of the mental states as they succeed one another. All who dwell on objects of sense do not, however, ultimately end up thus, because all do not lose self-awareness completely.

With the writer of this letter, the object [on which his thought dwells] is his hatred of "bureaucracy". This has roused anger in him

[1] This is not reproduced here. The correspondent had argued that Gandhiji had failed miserably in every cause he had espoused in India and that he was no longer "fit to work in politics".

[2] *Bhagavad Gita,* II, 62-63

and, in the heat of his anger, he has lost his judgment of good and bad and even forgotten his former words.

I have published this letter to warn people so that they may, if possible, save themselves from this state of mind.

It is not necessary that we should be able to approve of all the actions of a "bureaucracy" or any other "cracy". I do not like many of its actions, but I do not hate it for that reason. In consequence, I can point out its errors with a precision which, I think, few others show. There must be very few who have fought it as doggedly as I have during these four years. But, not possessed by anger, I have not lost my judgment.

That is exactly the fault this angry friend has seen in me. Let us now examine his letter. All his accusations are half true, and I have described half-truth as falsehood multiplied one and a half times, for it confuses both. The person who states a half-truth is unaware of the incompleteness of his statement and the listener thinks that the half-truth is the whole truth and accepts it as such. It is true that only after the people of Kheda had already paid most of the revenue due from them that the payment was declared to be voluntary, but securing this was only one of the aims of the movement in Kheda. The other result, that the Government had to reverse its stand, was an important one. I think, and so do the thousands of men and women of Kheda, that the awakening among the people and the Government's admission of defeat in passing the order it did were significant results. Had the correspondent known that self-interest has no place in satyagraha, he would not have blamed me in this particular matter.

That I have started a movement against *varnashrama* is a delusion of the writer's; that untouchability is a part of *varnashrama* is a half-truth. I have declared again and again that I believe in *varnashrama*. However, I have steadfastly endeavoured to rid *varnashrama* of the taint of untounchability by pointing out that it is sin to refuse to touch *Bhangis* and others, and this is my purest service to Hinduism. That I have hurt the feelings of Hindus is also a half-truth. The attitude behind it is that the feelings of Hindus ought never to be hurt. If following truth hurts people's feelings, it is one's dharma to hurt them. How can I or anyone else escape this dharma?

It is a half-truth to say that I started recruiting work in opposition to the stand taken up by Lokamanya Tilak. He was not opposed to this activity of mine; his view was that such efforts would be more successful if equality of rights was conceded. There is, thus,

much difference between the view really held by the Lokamanya and the view attributed to him by this friend. How I, a believer in non-violence, came forward to secure recruits is a question which occurred to many. I have given my reply to it. Without discussing it here, [I need only observe that] from a general point of view my action was much appreciated; to this friend, however, it seems unworthy. The half-truth about the Rowlatt Bills is evident enough. But how can I explain to an angry man that I should not be held responsible for people having been killed, for the misdeeds of those who set fire to buildings?

I do not think it right to comment on the half-truths about Reforms and related matters. I would advise those who are apt to get angry all too quickly to reflect over this letter and I wish that they save themselves from such delusions. Let the people, by all means, make their charges against me. Let it be that I have no service to my credit about Kheda district and in other matters. Opinions may differ on these points. We should not, however, be carried away by anger. We ought to see that, merely because some actions of a man have seemed bad to us, we do not set down as bad those very actions of his which we had once, on full consideration, held to be good.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-1-1920

195. LETTER TO THAKORE

LAHORE,
January 25, 1920

DEAR MR. THAKORE,

I cannot say anything about your work in England beyond saying that you[1] should be accurate in your information and moderate but firm in your demand; extravagance in either case weakens the cause. I am unable to send you any papers because I have nothing with me here. I take it that you will see Mr. Polak and be guided by him. I wish you all success.

Yours sincerely,

From the handwritten pencil draft: S. N. 7027(e)

[1] The original has “we”.

196. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

Sunday [*January 25*] *1920*[1]

MY DEAR CHILD,

Narahari tells me you are now boarding with Imam Saheb. I am glad you will certainly feel at home there more than anywhere else if only because you have someone who will talk to you constantly in English. And you can shower your discriminating love on Fatima with immediate results.

I shall feel deeply hurt if you lose your health and your peace of mind. 'Resist not evil' has a much deeper meaning than appears on the surface. The evil in Ba, for instance, must not be resisted, i.e., you or for that matter I must not fret over it or be impatient and say to ourselves, 'why will not this woman see the truth or return the love I give her'. She can no more go against her nature than a leopard can change his spots. If you or I love, we act according to our nature. If she does not respond, she acts according to hers. And if we worry, we 'resist evil'. Do you agree ? I feel that that is the deeper meaning of the injunction. And so, in your dealings with everybody I want you to keep your equanimity. Secondly please do not deny yourself anything you may need for your bodily comfort. Ask me, if you will not ask anybody.

I want you to write to me daily whilst I feel uneasy about you.

With love and prayers,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat of the handwritten original in N.A.A.; also, *My Dear Child,* pp. 49-50

[1] This date is given in *Mahadevbhaini Diary,* Vol. V.

197. LETTER TO N.D. SAVARKAR

LAHORE,
January 25, 1920

DEAR DR. SAVARKAR,

I have your letter.[1] It is difficult to advise you. I suggest, however, your framing a brief petition setting forth the facts of the case bringing out in clear relief the fact that the offence committed by your brother was purely political. I suggest this in order that it would be possible to concentrate public attention on the case. Meanwhile as I have said to you in an earlier letter[2] I am moving in the matter in my own way.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the handwritten draft: S. N. 7043

[1] Dr. Savarkar had written in his letter of January 18 : " . . . Yesterday I was informed by the Government of India that the Savarkar Brothers were not included in those that are to be released. The telegram runs as follows: 'Your telegram 8th inst. Savarkar Brothers have not been included in those receiving clemency under the amnesty.' It is now clear that the Indian Govt. have decided not to release them. Please let me hear from you as to how to proceed in such circumstances. They (my brothers) have already undergone a rigorous sentence for more than ten years in the Andamans and their health is utterly shattered. Their weight has come down from 118 to 95-100. Though they are given a hospital diet at present, their health does not show any sign of improvement. At least a change to some Indian jail of better climate is the most essential for them. I have received a letter from one of them very recently (a month back) in which all this is mentioned. I hope that you will let me know what you mean to do in this matter." The Savarkar Brothers had been sentenced to life. They were ultimately released in 1937.

[2] This is not available.

198. LETTER TO ASAF ALI

January 25, 1920

MY DEAR ASAF ALI,

I was sorry to hear of your illness. I hope you are now better if not quite restored.

I thank you for your frank letter.

I shall certainly take every step to see that there is no misunderstanding regarding the cow-slaughter resolution. I quite agree with you that no false hopes should be raised regarding the Mahomedan attitude on [the] point and that all propaganda on our (Hindus') part among Mahomedans should be avoided.

I am glad too that you have raised the moral issue and discussed it not on purely orthodox religious but on broad and humanitarian grounds. I would however say on the orthodox religious grounds that, when two great communities live side by side, the religious sense of the one demands a scrupulous regard for the practices of the other, so long as they are not immoral from a universal stand point. For instance I see nothing wrong in non-Muslims going to Mecca. But there is nothing immoral in your prohibiting non-Muslims from entering it. And as the sentiment of prohibition has grown during all these 1,300 years, I support it.

So may it be for the Mahomedan regarding the cow-slaughter.

Now for the broad humanitarian ground: we shall probably have to agree to differ; your view point seems to be so different from mine. I consider that God has not created lower forms of animal life for man to use them as he will. Man realises his highest station not by indulging but by abstinence. I have no right to destroy animal life if I can subsist healthily on vegetable life. I have no right to slaughter all animal life because I find it necessary to slaughter some animal life. Therefore if I can live well on goats, fish and fowl (surely enough in all conscience) it is sin for me to destroy cows for my sustenance. And it was some such argument that decided the *rishis* of old in regarding the cow as sacred, especially when they found that the cow was the greatest economic asset in national life. And I see nothing wrong, immoral or sinful in offering worship to an animal so serviceable as the cow so long as my worship does not put her on a level with her Creator. I immensely appreciate the idea (so emphasized by Islam)

that special worship must be reserved for the Creator of us all. But I must not mix up cow-worship and cow-slaughter. If you accept the proposition that man is more man as he abstains more, you will have no difficulty in allowing that cow-slaughter is indefensible on moral grounds.

I agree with you that so far as the economic ground is concerned, the slaughter for the Europeans is much the most important. In my opinion the cry against the Mahomedan slaughter on the Bakr Id is unbecoming so long as we Hindus remain dumb about the daily slaughter going on in the public abattoirs. We strain at a gnat and swallow a camel.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand : S. N. 7064

199. LETTER TO SOMEONE IN MADANPALLI

LAHORE,
January 25, 1920

DEAR MR. . . . .[1]

I have drawn the distinction between passive resistance as understood and practised in the West and satyagraha before I had evolved the doctrine of the latter to its full logical and spiritual extent. I often used passive resistance and saytagraha as synonymous terms : but as the doctrine of satyagraha developed, the expression passive resistance ceases even to be synonymous, as passive resistance has admitted of violence as in the case of suffragettes and has been universally acknowledged to be a weapon of the weak. Moreover passive resistance does not necessarily involve complete adherence to truth under every circumstance. Therefore it is different from satyagraha in three essentials: Satyagraha is a weapon of the strong; it admits of no violencer under any circumstance whatever; and it ever insists upon truth. I think I have now made the distinction perfectly clear.

Yours sincerely,

TO

MADANPALLI (P.O.)

From a photostat of the handwritten draft : S. N. 7071

[1] The addressee's name is illegible.

200. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

[After *January 25, 1920*][1]

BHAI NARAHARI,

I got your letter just now. I would have been pained if you had not written it. It does not matter if Miss Faering's meals have had to be arranged at Imam Saheb's. I have already written to her about Ba. The latter has obstructed many plans. Let us pray that she does not obstruct this about Miss Faering. It serves no purpose to complain about this weakness of hers. See that you look after Miss Faering as you do after Mahadev.

I have sent your letters to Chi. Maganlal. You should believe with me that I have acted wisely in doing so.

Blessing from

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in Gujarati : S. N. 11883

201. LETTER TO J.B. PETIT

[LAHORE,
January 26, 1920][2]

DEAR MR. PETIT,

I had taken it for granted that you had paid Rs. 900 odd to Mrs. Kunverbai Sorabji, but a postcard just received from her shows that she has not received the money at all. Please send the amount to her as early as you can. The poor woman seems to be suffering. She is just at present with the Palonji's.[3]

Yours Sincerely,

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhi's hand : S. N. 7072

[1] From the reference to Esther Faering having her meals with the Imam Saheb, it is clear that the letter was written after Gandhiji's letter of this date to her.

[2] The date is quoted in Petit's letter to Gandhiji, dated February 4, 1920.

[3] Petit wrote back to say that Rs. 925.50 had already been forwarded to Mrs. Sorabji Shapurji Adajania.

202. AN AWARD

January 26, 1920

In virtue of reference made by the parties to me as sole arbitrator, I award that the defendants pay the plaintiffs Rs. 8,000/- (Eight thousand rupees) bearing simple interest at 7 p.c. from the 17th day of June 1918. On failure to pay the said sum with interest, I further award that the property described in the mortgage deeds referred to in the plaint be sold for the recovery of the amount awarded. I further award that each party should pay his own costs to the date hereof but that the cost of collection if any should be paid by the defendants.

Given at Lahore the 26th January 1920.

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand : S. N. 7056

203. LETTER TO AZMATULLAH KHAN

[*January 26, 1920*]

DEAR CAPT. AZMATULLAH KHAN,

I enclose herewith my award[1] in your case. The duplicate I have sent to the Solicitor for the plaintiff.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the handwritten draft: S. N. 7056

204. LETTER TO MOTICHAND & DEVIDAS, SOLICITORS

January 26, 1920

TO
MOTICHAND & DEVIDAS
SOLICITORS
BOMBAY

GENTLEMEN,

I enclose herewith my award in connection with the matter between the Patan Pinjrapole and Capt. Azmatullah Khan and others referred to me. I have sent duplicate copy to Capt. Azmatullah Khan.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

I don't know whether any stamp is required in connection with the award. You will please affix it yourself should any be necessary, and if it requires defacing by me, I shall do so on your returning the award duly stamped.

From a photostat of the handwritten draft: S. N. 7056

205. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

LAHORE,
January 26, 1920

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your brief note. I hope you have been receiving my letters regularly. I have hardly missed a day. I cannot send you a love-letter today as I have not many minutes for the post.

How is Deepak shaping? Please tell Deepak he has not written to Sarladevi for the last 4 days. He must be regular in writing.

Please see that he writes at least a p[ost]c[ard] every day.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat of the handwritten original in N.A.I.; also, *My Dear Child,* p. 49.

206. PUNJAB LETTER

LAHORE,
Magh Sud 6 [*January 27, 1920*]

(9)

DELHI

I am back to my pilgrimage of the Punjab and have thus the opportunity of renewing my Punjab Letters for readers of *Navajivan.*

I shall first say something about my stay in Delhi and a few other places before I came back here.

I had hoped to go to Bombay and, having met friends, inspected the work of the Swadeshi Sabha and Satyagraha Sabha and met the men and women engaged in spinning, to proceed to Prayag and thence to Lahore.

But either God or the Khilafat Committee had planned otherwise. Haji-ul-Mulk Hakimji Ajmal Khan wired to me requesting

me to join the Khilafat deputation which was to wait on the Viceroy. Reports of this deputation have already appeared in the papers. I shall, therefore, write nothing about it. The inclusion of Hindus in the deputation has created an excellent impression. I could see how the Ali Brothers had been able to win the affection of their community. Their sweet speech, their constant readiness for work, their loving nature and sympathy for all, their religious zeal≈who would not be charmed by such qualities! Their very presence fill our Muslim brethren with happiness. They are, as it were, the eyes of the Muslims and now, by their love, they are winning over the Hindus as well.

KANPUR

From Delhi I had in any case to go to Prayag. When I returned from there after meeting Pandit Motilal Nehru, I was pressed to go to Kanpur. The citizens of Kanpur urged me to go there for a few hours and open the Swadeshi Bhandar, saying I could leave by the next train. I could not refuse them.

Kanpur is between Prayag and Delhi and is four hours from Prayag by Mail. It is a centre of commerce and mills, like Bombay. The climate too is excellent. This was the first venture here by way of a swadeshi store, Hasrat Mohani's being the chief hand behind it. Thousands attended the opening ceremony and the people's enthusiasm was boundless.

A PAINFUL INCIDENT

The Ali Brothers had preceded me and a huge procession was organized for them. The horse drawing their carriage shied and started kicking. The crowd was thick. A young and sturdy Muslim named Abdul Hafeez was standing close by. Recently he had been devoting himself entirely to public service. He was hit in the chest and collapsed. In a second this youth, who had looked as if he could never die, passed away. The two brothers came down from the carriage on the instant, asked for a cot to be brought and laid the body on it. They both bore it on their shoulders and went with the procession for some distance. Others then took their places and they went away to their work. The procession which had started as a celebration now accompanied a bier. The day was darkened.

I arrived within about four hours of this occurrence and the news was given to me at the station. I made a request that the procession organized for me be cancelled and that I be taken direct to the Bhandar and, after the opening ceremony was gone through, to

see the body of Abdul Hafeez; the leaders agreed. Having opened the Bhandar some of us proceeded to pay our homage to the body of our brother who had passed away. The sight of the dead body of Abdul Hafeez was heart-rending. I was overwhelmed with grief as I looked upon that sturdy frame and that charming face, but I took heart from the fortitude of the Muslim brethren standing around. I observed no wailing and weeping near the body. The people were exchanging remarks, unmoved with fear, as though standing round someone in deep sleep, and described to me how he had been killed. The scene appealed to me greatly. I thought of the wailing and crying usual among the Hindus. I wished that we were delivered from that horror. I also told myself that we could do a great many things if we discarded this fear of death. I have often felt that the followers of Hinduism, who should least fear death, fear it most. The very thought of this makes me feel ashamed. We learn right from our childhood that the soul is immortal and the body transitory, and that every act will have its consequence. Why then do we fear death? The only son of Abdul Hafeez was standing by my side. He too spoke as if untouched by fear. May God give peace to the soul of Abdul Hafeez.

VISIT TO MEERUT

I left Kanpur by the evening train and reached Merrut the following morning, i.e., on the 22nd. Meerut is on the G.I.P. line on the way to Lahore. I had promised to stop there for a few hours. The citizens had made elaborate preparations. There was almost a competition between the Hindus and the Muslims in showering affection on me. The Ali Brothers had been there only recently and had stayed in the house of a Hindu. I was to stay at the house of a well-known Muslim barrister of Meerut, Bhai Ismail Khan. Seven hundred and fifty volunteers were active in the reception, many of them being from aristocratic families. A mounted cadet corps also stood at attention. Flag-Poles had been erected along a three-mile route and ropes tied connecting them. The procession moved along inside the rope-fence and the crowds stood outside. It included a band, camel-drawn carriages, men on horseback, people in fancy dress, etc. The procession, I imagine must have been a mile long. Thousands had come in from neighbouring villages. Yet the arrangements were excellent. Addresses were presented to me by the Municipality, the Khilafat Committee, the general public, Hindu and Muslim women. There was a separating meeting for women. They were overflowing with joyous enthusiasm. About a thousand women

were present. I was almost terrified. how could I support so much affection? I offered it up then and there to Lord Krishna.

My sincere efforts in the cause of the Khilafat have commended themselves to our Muslim brethren. As long as they base their case on justice and fight non-violently, I shall be ready to lay down my life for them. If they put forward unreasonable demands, I will offer satyagraha even against them. This statement of mine has appealed to them and they have taken strength from it. All, Hindus and Muslims, have welcomed the emphasis on truth, whether they themselves abide by it or not. They are therefore showering affection on me. If the time comes for me to offer satyagraha against them, they may be angry with me, too. Those who love us have also the right to be angry with us.

MUZAFFARNAGAR

From Meerut, I was taken the same night to Muzaffarnagar. There had been some minor differences between Hindus and Muslims in this place and I had been dragged there to settle them. The car reached there at 9 p.m. The crowds were all enthusiasm. No one was in a mood to take instructions from anyone else. Men on horseback were present but there was no order as in Meerut. The people surrounded the car. I was taken through it with great difficulty and put into a carriage. I had no longer the strength to bear their joyous tumult. Literally, I had stuffed my ears with cotton wool. Somebody's foot was hurt. I was reminded of Abdul Hafeez and took the injured man into the carriage. I bagged the people to move away. But who would listen and to whom? I then brought out my usual weapon. I announced that, if the carriage started before the crowds had moved aside, I would jump out to the ground, for I could not tolerate anyone being injured. This miraculous weapon had an electric effect. The people became quiet and, a little firghtened, moved away, whereupon I asked [the driver] to be quick and start the carriage. The control was with me now. All this took a lot of time. The roads were illuminated as on the festival of lights and a good deal of time was spent in passing through them. The meeting was yet to take place. The time for the departure of my train was fast approaching and it was imperative that I reach Lahore the following day. But the people had realized that they should no longer make noise nor press round me. We reached the *pandal* at 11 p.m. There, at the meeting, everything was in wonderful order, without anyone's efforts. Those present must have been 4,000

or more. My voice was slightly hoarse but the audience maintained such silence that I could be heard even by those sitting farthest from me. I said a few words on how, if we were to work among lakhs of people, it was necessary to maintain order. I then referred to the local dispute and, having advised them to show a spirit of accommodation and resolve their differences, I took leave from them. Having thus rushed through these two towns, I reached Lahore on the morning of the 23rd.

A MIRACLE

Where earlier I had seen a woman, separated from her husband and living all alone, the image of a lioness, I saw today a happy couple. Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Choudhri was long since out of jail. I saw a new glow on Smt. Sarladevi's face. The face which had been lined with care was today bright with joy. Or perhaps I am doing her an injustice. Even during separation Sarladevi had not lost the light on her face. However, I could see a difference between that light and this; let us say, rather, that I imagined such a difference. It is certain that the sadness I used to feel when I stayed before at Sarladevi's house has entirely disappeared now, thanks to the return of Choudhriji.

KHILAFAT DISCUSSED

Immediately on arrival I was to engage myself in consultations. It had been decided to have a meeting with the Ali Brothers and other prominent Muslim friends in Lahore on the 23rd. They had also, therefore, arrived by some other trains and the entire day was occupied in preparing a draft of their demands. Sarladevi's house has become a veritable dharmsala. This lady proffered her hospitality to these distinguished Muslim friends as if she were their sister. The day passed in preparing the draft and in accepting the hospitality. Night fell and the time came for the Ali Brothers to depart. "When you offer satyagraha, invite me to join you; at other times, I am not with you." Listening to these words and accepting this as the agreement between us, the Brothers and Hastrat Mohani Saheb made their departure. The three have but one thought day and night-how to secure justice on the Khilafat issue. The Brothers do not put unqualified faith in satyagraha. Hasrat Mohani Saheb, however, whispered to me in passing, "I cannot say whether satyagraha can always be a practicable proposition but, for this purpose and in these times, I too believe that there is no other weapon like it. I shall therefore certainly propagate it."

The Ali Brothers embraced Hastrat Mohani, introducing him as "our mad Mullah"[1]. This man does not want honour nor does he mind insults. He remains engrossed in his work, indifferent to heat and cold and making no difference between day and night. These are three jewels of the Muslim community and I feel that Hasrat Mohani is the brightest of the three. There are not many even among Hindus who could rival him in his single-minded devotion it is doubtful if there is any. And just as they are true Muslims, they are true Indians. The fate of the Khilafat case and the future peace of India depend largely on the wisdom of these three. I can see that none of them will be afraid to follow the path they think is right.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-2-1920

207. THE KHILAFAT

The question of questions today is the Khilafat question, otherwise known as that of the Turkish peace terms. His Excellency the Viceroy deserves our thanks for receiving the joint deputation even at this late hour[2] especially when he was busy preparing to receive the heads of the different provinces. His Excellency must be thanked for the unfailing courtesy with which he received the deputation and the courteous language in which his reply was couched. But mere courtesy, valuable as it is at all times, never so valuable as at this, is not enough at this critical moment. "Sweet words butter no parsnips" is a proverb more applicable today than ever before. Behind the courtesy there was the determination to punish Turkey. Punishment of Turkey is a thing which Muslim sentiment cannot tolerate for a moment. Muslim soldiers are as responsible for the result of the War as any others. It was to appease them that Mr. Asquith said, when Turkey decided to join the Central Powers, that the British Government had no designs on Turkey and that His Majesty's Government would never think of punishing the Sultan for the misdeeds of the Turkish Committee. Examined by that standard the Viceregal reply is not only disappointing but it is a fall from truth and justice.

[1] Gandhiji uses the English words.

[2] The deputation waited on the Viceroy on January 19.

What is this British Empire? It is as much Mohammedan and Hindu as it is Christian. Its religious neutrality is not a virtue, or if it is, it is a virtue of necessity. Such a mighty Empire could not be held together on any other terms. British ministers are therefore bound to protect Mohammedan interests as any other. Indeed, as the Muslim rejoinder says, they are bound to make the cause their own. What is the use of His Excellency having presented the Muslim claim before the Conference? If the cause is lost, the Mohammedans will be entitled to think that Britain did not do her duty by them. And the Viceregal reply confirms the views. When His Excellency says that Turkey must suffer for her having joined the Central Powers, he but expresses the opinion of the British ministers. We hope, therefore, with the framers of the Muslim rejoinder that His Majesty's ministers will mend the mistakes if any have been committed and secure a settlement that would satisfy Mohammedan sentiment.

What does the sentiment demand? The preservation of the Khilafat with such gurantees as may be necessary for the protection of the interests of the non-Muslim race living under Turkish rule and the Khalif's control over Arabia and the Holy Places with such arrangement as may be required for guaranteeing Arab selfrule, should the Arabs desire it. It is hardly possible to state the claim more fairly than has been done. It is a claim backed by justice, by the declarations of British ministers and by the unanimous Hindu and Muslim opinion. It would be midsummer madness to reject or whittle down a claim so backed.

Young India, 28-1-1920

208. LETTER TO FATIMA SULTANA[1]

[After *January 28, 1920*]

DEAR MADAM,

I have your papers forwarded to me from Ahmedabad. I have read them and I feel that I am unable to help you in the matter.

I enclose the paper herewith registered post.

Yours sincerely,

From the pencilled original in Gandhiji's hand : S. N. 7077

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter dated January 28, 1920 in which she had requested Gandhiji to secure for her some land or a monthly subsistence from the Government with which she could pass the remaining days of her life peacefully.

209. LETTER TO V.T. AGASHE

LAHORE,
January 29, 1920

V. T. AGASHE, ESQ.
POONA CITY

DEAR SIR,

I have gone through your memorial.

(1) Have the European pensioners been granted an increase?

(2) Have all the pensioners in the United Kingdom [been] granted an increase?

(3) Are not the pensioners here capable of and, in the majority of cases, adding to their pensions by some employment?

The case for the pensioners does not appear on sight to be one of unavoidable relief from the public purse.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the office copy in Gandhiji's hand : S. N. 7080

210. LETTER TO SIR GEORGE BARNES

LAHORE,
January 29, 1920

DEAR SIR GEORGE BARNES,

I thank you for your letter of the 21st instant[1] regarding the situation in East Africa and for the sympathetic assurances contained therein. May I, however, draw your attention to one sentence in your letter? With reference to the proposed "Undesirables Ordinance", you say, "It is not possible to question the right of any government to remove 'undesirables' from the country over which it exercises jurisdiction." Whilst the above statement is perfect as a theoretical propostion, in the East African case, seeing that the legislation is aimed at Indians and that the term "undesirable" has an artificial meaning I venture to think that it is not only open to the Government

[1] This was evidently in reply to Gandhiji's letter of January 13, 1920.

of India, but it is their duty to protest against the proposed measure and its use.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 4-2-1920

211. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

January 29, 1920

MY DEAR CHILD,

I passed two days by without writing but not without thinking or talking of you. Your health is not what it should be. You may not be able to digest *chapati*. You should then take the usual loaf. Anasuyabehn will bring it for you. Tell Imam Sahib about it. And you may take milk in the morning with some fruit and bread and *dahi*[1] in rice for breakfast, with some vegetables simply boiled. Perhaps the dal[2] may not suit you. Thus a little bread, a little rice, a little vegetable and *dahi* may be your breakfast. In the evening too it may be this. And a little fresh fruit, an orange, say, at noon; whether this is proper or something else you will finally decide. Only you must put your body right even as an artisan's first duty is to keep his tools in order. God has given us this body as a tool to be used efficiently for His service neither for pampering nor for keeping in cotton wool but not even for abusing or spoiling it by neglect. This is a wretched sermon but much needed.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat of the handwritten original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child*, pp. 51-2

[1] Curds

[2] The original has "dholl".

212. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

LAHORE,
Friday, [On or before *January 30, 1920*][1]

RESPECTED ANASUYABEHN,

For the moment I am not too crowded here. I feel like writing to you about swadeshi. Are you paying attention to it at all? It is a stupendous work.It is fraught with difficulties but unless it is taken in hand there is no chance for the country to overcome starvation.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original : S. N. 11572

213. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

Friday [*January 30, 1920*]

MY DEAR CHILD,

No letter from you today. I am surrounded by too many people who want me, to be able to write to you a love-letter. I therefore send you my prayers and all love.

Yours,
BAPU

[PS.]

Do give me a cheering and cheerful letter if you can.

M. K. G.

From a photostat of the handwritten original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child,* p. 54

[1] From the contents; *vide* "Petition to Lord Ripon", 5-5-1895.

214. LETTER TO K. K. CHANDA

LAHORE,
January 30, 1920

DEAR MR. CHANDA,

I think you for your letter.[1] I have not received the text of the new resolution referred to in your letter.

Even if the Viceroy had not ruled out your O'Dwyer resolution, I would have considered it to be premature.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the office copy in Gandhiji's hand : S. N. 7079

215. TELEGRAM TO SHAUKAT ALI[2]

LAHORE,
[Before *January 31, 1920*]

DEPUTATION HAS SACRED MISSION. IT HAS TO APPEAL NOT MERELY TO IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT AND BRITISH OPINION BUT HAS TO WIN WORLD OPINION. ITS STRENGTH LIES IN ITS ABILITY TO APPEAL TO REASON AND JUSTICE. IT MUST THEREFORE BE MODERATE IN PRESENTATION AND FIRM IN DEMAND. ODDS FROM A WORLDLY STAND-POINT SEEM HEAVILY AGAINST US BUT IN PROPHET'S WORDS MINORITY OF TWO WHEN IT HAS GOD ON ITS SIDE CAN FACE OVERWHELMING NUMBERS WITH CONFIDENCE AND HOPE. IN MY OPINION HINDU INDIA SOLIDLY ON YOUR SIDE FOR YOUR CAUSE IS NOT MERELY SPIRITUALLY TRUE BUT IT IS MORALLY JUST AND PRESENTLY ENGLAND WILL BE ON OUR SIDE WHEN THROUGH DEPUTATION ENGLISHMEN LEARN THAT BRITISH HONOUR IS AT STAKE IN THIS QUESTION FOR WE ARE ASKING NOTHING MORE

[1] K.K. Chanda, a member of the Imperial Legislative Council, had written on January 28 that he was forwarding a draft of the amendment he was proposing to make in his own resolution on Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Lt.-Governor of the Punjab, during the martial law regime in April 1919. Chanda had requested for Gandhiji's suggestions in regard to the draft amendment. Moderate Party members were urging its withdrawal and the Viceroy disallowed it.

[2] This was read out at a public meeting held in Bombay on January 31, 1920.

THAN WHAT BRITISH MINISTERS HAVE PLEDGED THEMSELVES TO GIVE. MAY GOD GUIDE DEPUTATION.

Young India, 11-2-1920

216. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

[On or before *January 31, 1920*][1]

BHAISHRI NARAHARI,

I have your letter. Mahadev, it seems has had to suffer much. He deserves to reach the end of the suffering now. Often, a person improves in health after an attack of typhoid if good care is taken later. It is also true that some remain weak for ever, Sundaram, for instance. He over-indulged his palate subsequently and ruined his health. You did well in writing to me. Your resolution not to let the Ashram inmates know is also correct. We have no right to criticize anyone if we cannot tolerate criticism by the other party. Hence it should be your vow to hold your tongue despite the charge levelled by Maganlal. It is necessary, however, to get out of this state of mind. We must draw a person's attention even to those of his weaknesses which he will not admit, unafraid that we might incur his displeasure by doing so. If we see a serpent moving up to a bed, we must wake up the sleeper though we know that he will kick at us. We do not always get an opportunity for doing this through a neutral intermediary. It is only on such seemingly trivial occasions that we can test ourselves. Till such time as you can act in this way, you may convey through me what you wish to.

I am writing to Anandshankarbhai about religious education and shall see if he agrees.

I have been a little concerned on hearing that Miss Faering has gone to Lilavatibehn's. Miss Faering is a very simple-minded girl. She puts trust in everyone all too readily. Lilavatibehn will befriend her for unworthy purposes. So let me know in more detail what happened and why she went. If anyone makes unworthy approaches to her, it would be a matter of shame for us. Do not talk about this. I have dropped a hint to Maganlal and do so to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 11888

[1] Gandhiji wrote to Anandshankar Dhruva, as he says, in this letter, on this date.

217. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

LAHORE,
Saturday [On or before *January 31, 1920*][1]

RESPECTED SISTER,

I have received your letter. The proposals you have got published with regard to the labourers appear all right to me. There appear to be signs of amity between workers and mill owners there. The main reason for it is the fact that you have largely got rid of the ill will towards the owners. Even now, the more you get over that ill will and inculcate the quality of humility I have no doubt the more will be the fruit that your act of service will bear. Each day I am directly experiencing how great a thing even-mindedness is. By making the workers persons of character, that is, by making them honest, hardworking and self-respecting, we shall be able to get much more work out of them. Whatever rules the workers formulate about their Union[2] keeping in mind the. . .[3] element would do. None the less, if you send me the draft, I shall try to improve it.

Do not give up the work for swadeshi. Make the changes in the prices and the cotton rolls as I have suggested.

Mahadev is very ill. Pray keep visiting him. Look after Miss Faering[4]. Entertain Deepak[5].

I hope to be there towards the end of February.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 11578

[1] Inferred from the reference to the proposals regarding labourers. For Gandhiji's views on the subject, published on February 8, 1920, *vide* "Coondition of Labour", 8-2-1920. Saturday prior to February 7, 1920, was January 31.

[2] Labour Union of Ahmedabad; *vide* "Speech at Meeting of Mill-Hands, Ahmedabad", 25-2-1920.

[3] Illegible in the source

[4] Esther Faering, a Danish missionary, who was staying at the Satyagraha Ashram

[5] Son of Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhary and Saraladevi

218. LETTER TO MRS. BROWN

LAHORE,
January 31, 1920

DEAR MRS. BROWN,

I thank you for your kind letter. I have just arrived in Lahore. I am now having the poster translated and shall make the necessary inquiry. I presume from your letter that you have acquired the site but you do not want to hurt people's feelings unnecessarily and that you want to prevent a misunderstanding and avoid if at all possible the persecution of those who are said to have distorted facts.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the office copy in Gandhiji's hand : S. N. 7083.

219. LETTER TO ANANDSHANKAR DHRUVA

January 31, 1920

DEAR FRIEND,

Herewith a letter I have received on the subject of books for religious education. Can you do something in the matter? Do you think you can bring out a *Mahabharata* and a *Ramayana* on the model of the *Bible Story* and similar books? I will henceforth use the money only for . . . .[1] It will be possible to obtain [the amount] by begging. I shall not bother you with the problem. Do you have the time? Would you like to write anything? I don't want books written by a mere scholar. Apart from you, I can't think of anyone who combines learning with character. That is why I am seeking your help. This is not the first time that such a request has been made to me. I want something which a child may read and which may help it to understand Hinduism.

I get reports from time to time that you maintain excellent health.

[1] Something is missing here in the source. Something is missing here in the source.

I received the photograph of the English spinning-wheel. More than the photograph itself, it was the love which made you think of sending it, which made me happy.

Do send me something for *Navajivan* when you get some time. A description of Kashi? Some account of the University? Panditji[1] has again and again expressed to me his happiness at your joining there. I felt quite proud.

PROF. ANANDSHANKAR DHRUVA
KASHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S. N. 7084

220. THE KHILAFAT

The question of the Khilafat[2] that is, of the peace terms with Turkey, is so important a one that before it all others fade into insignificance, for on a satisfactory solution of this problem depends the peace of India. The Government may with its armed might succeed in maintaining an artificial peace for the time being but, should the solution of this problem prove unsatisfactory, a peace enforced by strength of arms will not be an enduring peace. There are questions which may not be satisfactorily solved, but the dissatisfaction is forgotten in the course of time. If, however, the solution of the Khilafat problem is felt to be unsatisfactory, time will be no cure for the resulting discontent; on the contrary, the effects will grow in strength from day to day and unrest will go on increasing.

Hence it is the duty of every Indian to know what the problem is and know its right solution, and to take steps to bring about a satisfactory settlement. What has hurt seven crores of Muslims ought to hurt Hindus too. We do not, therefore, hesitate to place this issue before the people again and again. The Government's duty in this matter is as important as that of the people.

[1] Madan Mohan Malaviya.

[2] The Caliphate. The object of the Khilafat movement was to ensure that the Sultan of Turkey was restored to the status which he enjoyed before World War I.

The deputation which waited[1] on His Excellency the Viceroy included both Hindus and Muslims. His Excellency's reply was courteous. He showed the utmost consideration to the deputation and spared time for it from his heavy schedule of work. We should thank him for all this. But mere courtesy and good manners cannot satisfy the Muslims or the nation this time. Courtesy is essential at all times, but there are occasions when courtesy fails to meet one's object. There is a saying in English that "fine words butter no parsnips". This applies very well to the present situation.

The Viceroy pointed out that there was nothing strange in Turkey, having taken the sword against the Allies, paying the penalty for doing so. No Muslim would admit the justice of this. When Turkey threw in its lot with Germany, Mr. Asquith, the then Prime Minister, said that the Sultan had no hand in this step; it was the mistake of a few Turks and Turkey would not have to suffer for it. Why did he have to declare this? Surely, not for reasons of good manners or justice. He said it lest there be disaffection among Muslim troops. The result was as desired. The Muslim troops remained staunch in their loyalty. A promise of reward thus made in order to reassure people cannot be lightly set aside now. If it is, one should not be surprised that Muslims feel hurt. Thus the threat uttered by the viceroy or the hint dropped by him as to the shape of things to come is such as can lead only to discontent, and the statement issued[2] by the deputation in reply to the Viceroy is very much to the point. Let us hope that the Government will give its best attention to it.

What is the Muslim demand? The Khilafat means the Turkish Empire. Its authority should remain substantially what it was at the commencement of the War. The Allies may demand any guarantees they choose for the protection of the interests of non-Muslim subjects of the Empire. Turkish rule, however, should be preserved. Likewise, the Khalifa's control over Arabia which is called Jazirat-ul-Arab[3] and

[1] On January 19, 1920. The deputation consisted of Gandhiji, Hakim Ajmal Khan and Maulanas Abul Kalam Azad, Abdul Bari, Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali.

[2] On January 20, 1920

[3] Literally, "the island of Arabia" which, as defined by Muslim religious authorities, included Syria, Palestine and Mesopotamia as well as the peninsula of Arabia

over other holy places of Islam should remain. It has been objected against this that Arabs too are Muslims; why should they not [it is asked] have swaraj in Arabia? Our Muslim friends reply that they have no objection to a scheme of swaraj for Arabia. Their only claim is that Arabia should not be subject to any but Muslim authority. This demand of the Muslims is perfectly just. If it is rejected and unrest spreads in consequence, the responsibility will not be the Muslims' but the Government's.

It is not enough that the Government presented the Muslim claim effectively before the Peace Conference. It is in duty bound to make the Muslim cause its own. The Empire belongs as much to Muslims and Hindus as to Christians and, therefore, it cannot sacrifice Muslim interests any more than it will sacrifice Christian interests.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-2-1920

221. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING[1]

LAHORE,

Sunday [*Morning, February 1,*][2] *1920*

MY DEAR CHILD,

You have been a bad child to keep me without a line for so many days. I do however hear about you from others. You are at a marriage party. I have felt a little disturbed. What is it all about? How could you have fared in the midst of strangers? It was wrong if you went as a matter of duty. For no duty lay on you to attend such parties. If you went for the sake of a change I don't know that you had a desirable change. Where was the party? What were the people? Did they know English? What was your food there? Where did you have to sleep? Who suggested your going? It seems all so strange to me. I do not want you to make experiments in the dark. It is early

[1] A Danish missionary who came to India in 1916 and later joined Sabarmati Ashram, where Gandhiji treated her as a daughter

[2] This and the following letter were written on the same day; *vide* the following item.

Sunday morning and I am filled with anxiety about you. I know it is stupid to be anxious. God is above us all to protect and guide His own. But you give me the privilege of calling you my child. 'Rock of ages, cleft for me; let me hide myself in Thee.'

With deep love,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child,* pp. 54-5

222. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

[About *February 1, 1920*][1]

BHAISHRI NARAHARI[2],

Esther has made a big mistake in leaving. I have repeatedly written to her and Maganlal. If she, of her own accord, shows my letters, you will find all of them worth reading. I am studying you all from this distance and, in the process, learning some things myself.

You are right in what you write about Kaka.[3] If his health improves further, he will rise higher still. I have never ceased to think of him ever since I met him. But he needs a congenial atmosphere. In an unfriendly atmosphere, it is not unlikely that his spirit will wither. For some time past, he has been making himself very useful. For 'forceful' we may use the word *jabardust* [in Gujarati] but it does not convey the right shade of meaning. I shall think of another word. At the moment, I have some visitors.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 11886

[1] The reference to letters written to Esther Faering and Maganlal Gandhi on February 1, 1920, suggests this date.

[2] Narahari Dwarkadas Parikh

[3] Dattatreya Balkrishna Kalelkar

223. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

LAHORE,

Sunday [*February 1, 1920*][1]

MY DEAR CHILD,

The enclosed[2] was written in the morning. I have just got your pencil letter. I do clearly see that you made a mistake in accepting the invitation. You are young, you are inexperienced. You have a golden heart but it needs steadying. What is a big ship without a rudder? Where does it go? Does it not drift? My heart weeps for you today. You have left a surrounding[3] where you could grow after a fashion; you have come to a surrounding[4] where you can grow much more if you will assimilate the surrounding. You must not prick yourself in your waywardness. A disciplined conscience is one to obey. It is the voice of God. An undisciplined conscience leads to perdition, for the devil speaks through it. I wish I was with you. 'Not everyone that sayeth unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven shall enter that kingdom.' I am quoting from memory but it will do.

Do put yourself under discipline. Never do anything without consulting Maganlal[5]. Let him be as elder brother to you. Come close to him. Ask for the food you need, take the rest you want and put your mind and body at rest.

Write to me daily a full letter.

I shall pray for you and love you all the more for your waywardness.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child,* pp. 55-6

[1] It would appear from the contents that this letter was written immidiately on receipt of Esther Faering's letter of January 30, 1920 (S.N. 7066). In 1920, the first Sunday after that was February 1.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] The Danish mission to which Esther Faering had belonged

[4] The Ashram at Sabarmati

[5] Maganlal Gandhi (1883-1928); second son of Khushalchand, Gandhiji's cousin; sometime manager of the Phoenix Settlement; Manager, Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, 1915-28.

224. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

LAHORE,
Sunday [*February 1, 1920*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

There is a letter from Esther and hence I write this second letter to you. I have written to her as well. She made a great mistake in going.[2] I can see her weakness. This is how a holy soul falls. She claims too much independence. She feels humiliated to have to ask anyone. She is like a ship without a rudder. She has a large heart, but does not know what to do with it.

I have advised her in my letter that she should look upon you as an elder brother and obey you, discuss matters with you. You should see her and find out her needs. If necessary, she may stay with you. It is possible that, by herself, Ba will not be able to look after her. I so much want to be in the Ashram at this time. My heart is bleeding. It does not seem that Esther has done anything sinful. But I also believe that she may do such a thing in no time. This feeling may be only an expression of my fear.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 5782. Courtesy : Radhabehn Chowdhari

[1] This letter was evidently written on the same day as the preceding item.
[2] To attend a marriage party

225. PUNJAB LETTER[1]

LAHORE,
Magh Sud 13 [*February 2, 1920*]

TWO DEPUTATIONS

Deputations from Fiji and British Guiana have been in India for some time.[2] The Fiji Islands are in the vicinity of Australia. During the last 50 years, there has been extensive cultivation of sugar-cane in these islands with the help of indentured labour from India and through this means the Australian Central Sugar Company has enrned to the tune of crores. Our friend Andrews[3] has graphically described to us the iniquity of the indenture system. Now, however, thanks to the firmness of the Viceroy, even the indentures whose terms had not expired have been terminated.[4]

British Guiana is a part of South America. It is situated south of the equator. Here also, sugar-cane is grown on a colossal scale and sugar can be produced at the rate of three tons per acre. In India the production is one ton per acre. This question is being investigated at the moment by the Sugar Committee, which has the well-known Mr. Burjorji Padshah as one of its members. It may, therefore,be hoped that some good will result from their deliberations. According to them, at present we may even be suffering losses in sugar-cane cultivation. Imported sugar is found cheaper and no one is thrown out of work by our not producing sugar in the country. I report this information just as it has come to my ears. I cannot say, either, that these are Mr. Padshah's final conclusions, nor do I wish to discuss the matter here. I merely mention this incidentally while on the subject of British Guiana.

Be the condition of our sugar trade what it may, British Guiana and Fiji have both prospered entirely because of this trade of theirs.

Indentured labourers used to emigrate to British Guiana as well.

[1] Gandhiji toured the Punjab in November and December 1919, and again in February 1920. From there he dispatched this weekly series of news-letters for *Navajivan*, the first appearing in the issue of November 2, 1919.

[2] Both were unofficial deputations.

[3] C. F. Andrews (1871-1940); English missionary, author, educationist and a close associate of Gandhiji

[4] The Government of Fiji cancelled all indentures with effect from January 2, 1920.

No knowledgeable person has visited that place and we are ignorant of the local labour conditions. Emigration of indentured labour to that place has also been stopped.

Consequently, it has now become a problem of great urgency for both the countries how to maintain their prosperity. If they are unable to secure further Indian labour, it will be a serious matter for them.

They cannot get British labourers for this work. The latter cannot settle in those parts, as they cannot stand the climate. If, therefore, they fail to secure Indian labour, they will have to think of China or other sources. It is said that they do not find the honesty and submissiveness of the Indian labourer in his Chinese counterpart.

These two deputations have come here to consult with the Indian Government and public men. They have come to ascertain under what conditions independent Indian labour may emigrate to these two places, and to make the required arrangements. I have met both the deputations here. The one from British Guiana includes their Attorney General[1] and some Indians long settled there. From Fiji have come the Bishop and another Englishman. The suggestion of British Guiana is that some of our agriculturists should emigrate voluntarily and take up farming there. They need not work as labourers. In British Guiana, there is equality between Indians and whites. This is not due to the magnanimity of the white people but is the result of circumstances. The British belong mainly to the officer class, and in any case cannot undertake agriculture. It need not be imagined that the whites in that area have cast off their prejudice against us. However, it may be admitted that in British Guiana they do not have two classes of citizens as in other countries, and If Indians settle there, they are not likely to be harassed as in East Africa.

In Fiji the conditions are different. The Fiji deputation does not ask for Indians of independent means but for Indians who will work as free labourers. The latter will go, not as indentured labourers but as independent workers, in the same way as they go to Singapore and other places.

I have been asked to give my opinion on both these matters. I have not yet done so publicly. The Attorney General of British Guiana has, however, taken my signature to certain observations I made to him.[2]

[1] Dr. Joseph Nunan

[2] Gandhiji met Dr. Nunan on February I, 1920.

I feel that we are not yet ready to send out "colonists"[1]. Our people have not yet developed the requisite independence or self-reliance. Therefore, I think it unlikely that any independent labourers will, in fact, go. Nor do I think it possible that any agriculturists will go there as independent men and succeed in maintaining their independence.

There is not that ingenuity in us; we are not drawn to the idea of emigration, nor is there any need for us to emigrate. If an ignorant but adventurous class does emigrate, it is essential that it be followed by an educated class devoted to higher aims. If such men go to serve the people, I am sure that excellent results will follow. But there are few such men even in India. Where, then, are we to find any who might go abroad? Therefore, though I would not like peasants to be prevented by law from emigration to these parts as labourers or otherwise, I would not, directly or indirectly, encourage them to go either. All I can do at the moment is to place this humble opinion before my readers.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-2-1920

[1] Here the original has the English word.

226. LETTER TO L. FRENCH[1]

LAHORE,
February 3, 1920

Inquiries are daily being made with reference to those Martial Law and other political or semi-political prisoners not yet discharged. I have not worried you with even an inquiry, as I know it takes time to prepare lists of all the possible prisoners fit for discharge.

But if you could now tell me whether the other prisoners including Bhai Parmanand[2] and those who were sentenced during the Lahore Conspiracy trials are to be discharged [*sic*].

Exception has also been taken to the undertaking taken from the recent discharges.[3] Is it possible to give a reason for making the distinction?

From a copy : S. N. 7102

227. BRITISH GUIANA AND FIJI DEPUTATIONS[4]

[Before *February 4, 1920*][5]

There are at present two deputations in India from overseas. The one headed by its Attorney General, Dr. Nunan, is from British Guiana, and the other by the Bishop of Polynesia is from Fiji. Both these deputations have arrived from their respective colonies for the purpose of obtaining Indian labour. Hitherto both have had indentured labour. In both, the existing indentures have only just been cancelled.

[1] Then Chief Secretary to the Punjab Government

[2] A revolutionary leader of the Punjab who was sentenced to life transportation but was subsequently released; later became President of All-India Hindu Mahasabha

[3] In his reply of February 6, 1920, the Chief Secretary stated that out of 734 prisoners, 638 had been released in view of His Majesty's Proclamation, that cases of those sentenced under the Lahore Conspiracy trials (including Bhai Parmanand's) were still under consideration and that undertakings had been taken from those charged with the more serious non-political offences.

[4] *Vide* also "Punjab Letter", 2-2-1920, "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", before February 4, 1920, and "Letter to Dr. Joseph Nunan", February 5, 1920.

[5] This article was evidently written before February 4, 1920; *vide* the following item.

His Excellency the Viceroy, whose attitude on the status of British Indians living in the different colonies has been generally correct, put the popular case very clearly when His Excellency said that India could not be expected to consider the convenience of the colonies at her own expense nor could the Government of India prevent free Indian emigration if there were Indians who wanted to go to any of the colonies with a view to bettering their own position. His Excellency further added that a committee of probably non-official members would be appointed to confer with these deputations and consider the question, and that the Government would be guided by the advice of that committee.[1]

Now let us examine the position. The British Guiana deputation wants free Indian settlers of the farmer type for its plantations. The Fiji deputation wants free in the place of indentured labour. Both are tropical countries chiefly growing sugar-cane. These colonies unlike South Africa and the Uplands of East Africa cannot hold European colonists. These places are not fit for European colonization, but they are being developed by European capital assisted by Indian labour. If they cannot get Indian labour, whether as servants or master workers, they must tap some other sources, possibly China.

I had the pleasure of meeting both the deputations—the British Guiana more than once. From British Guiana there have been no complaints of ill-treatment of its indentured Indians. There is no doubt that there are no legal inequalities in British Guiana. In Fiji, too, there are probably no glaring inequalities in law. I believe, too, that the Fiji Government and the planters are now willing to treat the Indian labour better and offer better terms.[2]

The question for us, however, to consider is : do we want Indian labour to go to these colonies, and, if we do, are the terms such as would make the Indians morally and materially better?

In my opinion we want all the labour we have in India. A willing labourer has ample scope for earning a substantial living in India. Our industries require labour. India is not over- populated. The pure agriculturist does not need to go out of India to earn a

[1] In February 1920, a resolution was accepted by the Indian Legislative Council appointing this Committee.

[2] In the beginning of 1920 Indian labourers in Fiji went on a strike apparently designed to secure better pay and working conditions but which subsequently let to serious disorder which was frocibly repressed.

living. Emigration cannot solve the problem of Indian poverty. The causes are too deep and widespread to be solved by a scheme of emigration no matter how ambitious it may be. A few thousand emigrants going out every year can produced no effect on the deep and deepening poverty of the vast masses of India. My convic-tion is that the returned emigrants in the majority of cases disrupt the home life without doing any counter-balancing benefit to society in gene-ral or the members of the home so disrupted in particular. Whilst, there-fore, I would not interfere with any agriculturist, I would not encourage him to leave India unless there was a distinct moral advantage to be gained by emigrating.

We are not a colonizing nation in the modern sense of the term. The labourers are not followed by their better-class countrymen who whilst they would want to earn a living would make it dependent upon their service of their countrymen. The religious and the social tie is loosened. The restraints of Indian environment do not follow the emigrant. Going therefore to an environment which has become debased by servility and degraded by the inevitable immorality of the system under which his predecessors have lived, the new emigrant succumbs to that environment. It is not right to expose the would-be emigrants to such grave moral risks.

Both the deputations have urged that it is our duty to send more emigrant families in order that the deficiency in the female Indian population may be redressed. In other words we should send more women to these colonies. I totally dissent from the view. I would not be a party to sending a single woman to be exposed to a life of shame. The only remedy for the evil to which both the colonies and the Government of India have been party is for the superfluous young men, if they are so minded, to come to India, get decently married and take their wives with them. Such an uplifting movement can only come from the colonies. And I suggest to both the deputations that if they are in earnest about the moral welfare of the Indian settlers in their midst they will start societies in the colonies for the encouragement of young men temporarily returning to India for the purpose of seeking life-companions. Indeed, the mention of this great difficulty tempts me to say that if both the missions were to occupy themselves in clearing the moral atmosphere around them, one would be better able to respond to their mission.

Moreover, no scheme of free emigration can be really success-ful until the relations between Englishmen and ourselves have

considerably improved everywhere. The Englishman in South Africa is no worse than in India or in Fiji and British Guiana. In South Africa a short-sighted conception of his interest demands expulsion of the Indian. And he is struggling between his conscience and his interest. In British Guiana his interest and conscience coincide. He therefore desires Indian settlement. But he no more considers the Indian to be his equal than the Englishman in South Africa. What is more, the average Indian considers that he is not the Englishman's equal. There is, therefore, mutual distrust, despise [*sic*] on the one hand and fear on the other. Until the relations become normal and natural it is not proper to encourage or countenance even free emigration to these colonies.

These deputations, I take it, propose to set up a kind of agency or bureau for the collection of the type of emigrants they require. I cannot contemplate with equanimity the idea of Indians going to Fiji as free labourers. With their present equipment, they would not know the distinction between free and indentured labour after being in Fiji. In British Guiana the agriculturist will not know what to do with himself and would drift into the plantations as a labourer. Side by side with this free agency, there must be a corresponding advisory agency on our part to enable the people to make their choice. I have suggested an experimental shipment to Dr. Nunan and the sending of Mr. C. F. Andrews or some leading Indian with a knowledge of labour conditions to British Guiana and report [*sic*]. This is about as much as is possible to be done at the present moment. And I hope that neither the proposed non-official committee nor the public will countenance anything more.

Young India, 11-2-1920

228. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

[Before *February 4, 1920*][1]

DEAR MR. SHASTRI[2],

I know the Fiji and the Br. Guiana deputations have seen you or will presently see you. I have just sent off an article[3] for *Young India* which cannot be published before Wednesday week. It will be sent to you in due course. But meanwhile I wish to say that I distrust the objects of the mission. The members are well meaning enough. But they cannot understand our difficulty. I feel that we cannot countenance any emigration at the present moment. It is like good milk added to bad milk also going bad. The environment in Fiji and British Guiana is reeking with the odour of indentured labour. Let the pestilential odour go before we can send a new supply of emigrants. True, now it is a question of free agency and free labour. But we must advise our countrymen. I have suggested to Dr. Nunan that if he would get a cultured Indian to go to British Guiana to report it would be good. I have said too that I do not mind a shipment of agriculturists going as an experiment. Can you spare Amritlal Thakkar[4] for a visit to these places, or Tiwary? Dr. Nunan has agreed to pay the expenses.

I hope you are keeping good health.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy : S. N. 7393

[1] The article to the publication of which Gandhiji refers in the text appeared in *Young India* of Wednesday, February 11, 1920. Both the article and this letter must therefore have been written before Wednesday, February 4, 1920.

[2] Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri (1869-1946); educationist and orator; President, Servants of India Society, 1915-27; member, Viceroy's Legislative Council and Council of State; Agent General of the Indian Government in South Africa

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

[4] Amritlal Vithaldas Thakkar (1869-1951); Gujarati engineer who, as life member of Servants of India Society, took up full-time social work and later devoted himself to the cause of Harijans and aboriginal tribes

229. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

Wednesday [*February 4, 1920*][1]

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your letters. It is no use crying over spilt milk. How to mend matters now is the question. You shall certainly go where you wish during Easter or any time. Your mental and spiritual happiness is the primary consideration. For the irregularity you mention there is a sovereign remedy tried by L. K. It consists in hip and friction baths and a diet without salt and other condiments. We have the book at the Ashram. Read it. S. K. and others know it. Ba also has tried them for a number of years with the best of results. Do try them whilst you are there. Please don't hesitate to get bread. It is such a simple thing to procure.

I agree with you that you should have a quiet time and spiritual communion. Why will you not go to the church in Ahmedabad? But this is not suggested in the place of the convent. God will guide you and give strength and light.

With prayers and love,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child*, pp. 52-3

[1] Judging from the contents, it would appear that this letter was written very soon after the letters of February 1 to the addressee, and the first Wednesday after February 1 in 1920 was February 4.

230. LETTER TO BRIJSUNDER DASS

2. MOZANG ROAD,
LAHORE,
February 5, 1920

DEAR B. BRIJSUNDER DASS,

I have received your printed circular on the Oriya Movement.[1] I have not got the papers; probably they will follow. I would, however, like you to keep me informed of the progress that the Movement may make from time to time. I am giving a paragraph[2] to it in *Young India* which, I hope, you receive.

Yours sincerely,

PRESIDENT
ORIYA PEOPLE'S ASSOCIATION
CUTTACK

From a photostat : S. N. 7105

231. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

LAHORE,
Thursday [*February 5, 1920*][3]

MY DEAR CHILD,

I see I have hurt you; forgive me. I wrote as I did because I love you so. I am afraid it is no use your coming here, because I shall be touring from the 11th.[4] So I cannot be with you even if you come. I hope to be with you on the 23rd at the latest.[5] And we shall have some time at least together. Meanwhile please take the hip and the sitz baths. And why will you not be examined by the doctor who is there? If I were you I should have no such compunction. But I don't wish to press you.

With prayerful love,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child, p. 57*

[1] *Vide* "A Cry from Utkal", 18-2-1920.

[2] *ibid*

[3] The letter appears to have been written just after "Letter to Esther Faering", February 4, 1920.

[4] Gandhiji was on tour in the Punjab from February 11 to February 15.

[5] Gandhiji reached Sabarmati Ashram on February 22.

232. LETTER TO DR. JOSEPH NUNAN

February 5, 1920

DEAR DR. NUNAN,

I enclose herewith an extract from the *Daily Argosy* sent by Mr. Polak[1]. You will see from it that there seems to be a party in British Guiana opposed to your scheme. They evidently consider it to be not a Colonization Scheme but one intended to find labour. Will you please let me know who this party is and what exact position [it] is that you wish to reach. I have written for *Young India* an article setting forth my views; you will have a copy as soon as it is published. This extract from the *Argosy* has certainly unsettled me a bit and it makes me revise ever over what I have written for *Young India*. As soon as I get a moment's leisure I propose to put down my own thoughts of what any Colonization Scheme should be if it is to give any satisfaction at all and to receive any countenance even from those [of] you [who] believe in emigration.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy : S. N. 7393

233. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

2, MOZANG ROAD,
LAHORE,
February 5, 1920

DEAR MR. SHASTRI,

I have your letter which I hope to reply in a day or two; meanwhile I enclose an extract received from Mr. Polak. The extract adds to the difficulty of even considering a scheme of emigration, however nice it may appear on paper. I am trying, however, to draft some kind of a scheme which should be a minimum scheme for those who are prepared to consider a scheme of emigration.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy : S. N. 7393

[1] H. S. L. Polak, who had been a close associate of Gandhiji in South Africa

234. TELEGRAM[1] *TO C. R. DAS*[2]

LAHORE,
[On or after *February 5, 1920*]

IMPOSSIBLE LEAVE. MUST FINISH WORK[3] BEFORE TWENTIETH.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S. N. 7104

235. VALUE OF KHADI

Mr. Vithaldas Jerajani sends news from Bombay that the demand for khadi there has gone down or altogether vanished. This was painful reading for me, but not at all surprising. It was painful because the reduced demand indicates that our enthusiasms are short-lived, that they lack the backing of a religious sentiment or ideal. The people who, in the name of religion, are prepared to drink dirty water, the Hindus who, in the name of religion, abstain from eating while travelling in a train and prefer to remain hungry for fear of pollution, the Muslims who refuse to eat meat unless it has been prepared in a specific way—if such a people were to view the use of khadi as a duty dictated by compassion, as something holy, they would not give it up.

That all khadi is not of equally good quality; that is easily crumples and coat and trousers do not remain stiff; it shrinks so much that the sleeve recedes from the wrist to the elbow; it looks like a sieve so much so that *moong*[4] grains can easily pass through it: people perhaps have had experience of one or the other of all these things but my personal experience is that the more I wear khadi shirts the softer they feel. I do not find even the dhotis heavy, so that now I find it something of a hardship to have to wear machine-made dhotis. All this may be sheer fancy; anyway, for me wearing khadi is a matter of dharma.

[1] Sent in reply to a telegram, dated February 5, 1920, inviting Gandhiji to Calcutta, presumably to attend the Bengal Provincial Khilafat Conference held in the last week of February under the presidentship of Maulana Azad. Gandhiji drafted this reply on the back of the telegram from C. R. Das, evidently on or after February 5.

[2] Chitta Ranjan Das (1870-1925); eminent lawyer and Congress leader; orator and author; elected President of the Congress in 1921

[3] In regard to the Punjab Disorders Inquiry, as the meeting of the Commissioners appointed by the Congress Punjab Sub-committee was to be held at Banaras on February 20, 1920, to finalize the draft report

[4] one of the pulses

How is all this khadi made? The yarn is spun mostly by our poor sisters. The lives of some of them were wretched, but have now improved; again, there are those who had no occupation, but have now begun to earn an anna a day, if not more. They can use it for buying vegetables for the family or milk for their children. The anna we casually throw away in Bombay is certainly worth four annas in the villages.

Those who weave this khadi are weavers who had either left off their profession or were about to do so.

Using khadi is the foundation of swadeshi, since khadi is the only thing which can be made from thick yarn, and made easily. It has not so far had to compete with machine-made cloth. The consumption of khadi alone enables lakhs of poor people to earn an honest living, staying at home.

This khadi will show, it has been showing, daily improvement. It has a variety of uses. If shirts made of it seem impossible, loose shirts and underwear are decidedly wearable. Handkerchiefs, large and small, can be made of it, also covering for pillows and bedding. It can be used for making quilts. It can thus be put to a variety of uses. I do not say, of course, that those who have no need of new clothes should throw away their money just that they might use khadi; even if that is done, the advantage to the people will not be very great. I do certainly say, however, that we should use khadi alone wherever it is possible to use it. A good use for khadi will easily be found if one is keen on it.

The effort to increase production of khadi continues; in fact production has increased. Now efforts must also be made to sell it. In this I want help from the Bombay business men. Suggestions for necessary improvements in khadi will also prove useful. Wherever swadeshi stores have been opened, they should proceed to order khadi. Besides khadi, production of other goods will also increase. It is only when people develop a liking for hand-woven, swadeshi good that hand-spinning and hand-weaving will gather full speed.

From my experience in the Punjab I see that, if people cultivated a sincere regard for swadeshi, large numbers of Punjabi women would take up their ancient occupation of spinning. The Punjab can easily turn into a swadeshi centre. It produces cotton, almost every Punjabi woman knows spinning and there are weavers in the Punjab. It has everything necessary. But, at present, Bombay is the centre of

business and hence the co-operation of its business men is also required.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-2-1920

236. CONDITION OF LABOUR[1]

Two paths are open before India today, either to introduce the western principle of 'might is right' or to uphold the eastern principle that truth alone triumphs, that truth knows no mishap, that the strong and the weak have alike a right to secure justice. The choice is to begin with the labouring class. Should the labourers obtain an increment in their wages by violence, even if that be possible? They cannot resort to anything like violence howsoever legitimate their claim may be. To use violence for securing rights may seem an easy path, but it proves to be thorny in the long run. Those who live by the sword also die by the sword. The swimmer often dies by drowning. Look at Europe. No one seems to be happy there; no one is contented. The labourer does not trust the capitalist and the capitalist has no faith in the labourer. Both have a sort of vigour and strength but even the bulls have it. They fight to the very bitter end. All motion is not progress. We have got no reason to believe that the people of Europe are progressing. Their possession of wealth does not argue the possession of any moral or spiritual qualities. King Duryodhana[2] was a master of untold wealth, but with all that he was pauper in comparison to Vidura[3] and Sudama[4] . Today the world adores Vidura and Sudama, whereas Duryodhana's name is remembered only as a byword for the evil qualities one should shun.

What shall we do then? The labourers in Bombay made a fine stand. I was not in a position to know all the facts[5]. But this much I could see that they could fight in a better way. The millowner may be wholly in the wrong. In the struggle between capital and labour it may be generally said that more often than not the capitalists are in

[1] This translation is reproduced from *Young India*, 11-2-1920.

[2] Characters in the *Mahabharata*. Duryodhana was the eldest son of King Dhritarashtra and the leader of the Kaurava princes in the battle of Mahabharata while Vidura, 'the wisest of the wise', was adviser to the Pandava and Kaurava princes.

[3] *ibid*

[4] A poor Brahmin friend of Lord Krishna

[5] Regarding the strike of mill-hands in Bombay in January 1920

the wrong. But when labour comes fully to realize its strength, I know it can become more tyrannical than capital. The mill-owners will have to work on the terms dictated by labour if the latter could command intelligence of the former. It is clear, however, that labour will never attain to that intelligence. If it does, labour will cease to be labour and become itself the master. The capitalists do not fight on the strength of money alone. They do possess intelligence and tact.

The question before us is this : when the labourers, remaining what they are, develop a certain consciousness what should be their course? It would be suicidal if the labourers rely upon their numbers or brute force, i. e., violence. By so doing they will do harm to industries in the country. If, on the other hand, they take their stand on pure justice and suffer in their person to secure it, not only will they always succeed but they will reform their masters, develop industries and both masters and men will be as members of one and the same family. A satisfactory solution of the condition of labour must include the following :

1. The hours of labour must leave the workmen some hours of leisure.
2. They must get facilities for their own education.
3. Provision should be made for an adequate supply of milk, clothing and necessary education for their children.
4. There should be sanitary dwellings for the workmen.
5. They should be in a position to save enough to maintain themselves during their old age.

None of these conditions is satisfied today. For this both the parties are responsible. The masters care only for the service they get. What becomes of the labourers does not concern them. All their endeavours are generally confined to obtaining maximum service with minimum payment. The labourer on the other hand, tries to hit upon all tricks whereby he can get maximum pay with minimum work. The result is that although the labourers get an increment there is no improvement in the work turned out. The relations between the two parties are not purified and the labourers do not make proper use of the increment they get.

A third party has sprung up between these two parties. It has become the labourers' friend. There is need for such a party. Only to the extent to which this party has disinterested friendship for the labourers can it befriend them.

A time has come now when attempts will be made to use labour

as a pawn in more ways than one. The occasion demands consideration at the hands of those that would take part in politics. What will they choose? Their own interest or the service of labour and the nation? Labour stands in sore need of friends. It cannot proceed without a lead. What sort of men give this lead will decide the condition of labour.

Strikes, cessation of work and hartal are wonderful things no doubt, but it is not difficult to abuse them.[1] Workmen ought to organize themselves into strong Labour Unions, and on no account shall they strike work without the consent of these Unions. Strikes should not be risked without previous negotiations with the mill-owners. If the mill-owners resort to arbitration the principle of *panchayat*[2] should be accepted. And once the *panch* are appointed, their decision must be accepted by both the parties alike, whether they like it or not.

Readers, if you are interested in ameliorating the condition of labour, if you want to befriend the workman and serve him, you will see from the above that there is only one royal road before you, viz., to elevate the workmen by creating between the two parties family relationship. And to secure this end there is no path like truth. Mere increase in wages not satisfy you; you must also watch by what means they get it and how they spend it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-2-1920

[1] There were 200 strikes in India during the year 1920. *India in 1920*, Ch. V.

[2] The traditional Indian practice of getting local disputes settled by the *panch*, a permanent committee of five elders chosen by members of the community

237. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

Sunday [*February 8, 1920*][1]

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have seen your pathetic letter to S. I am glad you have poured out your heart in it. I have telegraphed[2] to you today asking you not to leave[3] before I reach if you can at all stay. I want to have a few long chats with you in the early morning which I get only at the Ashram. I could urge you too to have the baths I have suggested. Ask for the water to be brought to you.

Are you an unworthy child? You have made yourself dearest to me by your wonderful love and conscientiousness. You do not for one moment think that your waywardness can make any alteration in my estimation of your worthiness. It is my privilege to point out where you need strengthening. If the body is the temple of the Holy, it requires the utmost care—certainly not pampering but equally certainly not disregard or even indifference.

With deep love always mingled with prayer,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child*, pp. 56-7

238. LETTER TO L. FRENCH

LAHORE,

February 9, 1920

I thank you for your prompt, full and frank reply to my letter of the 3rd instant. I am sure everybody appreciates the manner in which the Royal Proclamation[4] is being given effect to and I hope that the remaining prisoners whether convicted under Martial Law or other special laws, will be soon released.

With regard to the undertaking taken from the recent discharges,

[1] From the contents it appears that this letter was written after the letters of Sunday, February 1, 1920 to the addressee and before the letter of Sunday, February 15, 1920, on which date Gandhiji left Lahore. The letter must, therefore, have been written on the Sunday in between, what is, on February 8.

[2] This telegram is not available.

[3] Sabarmati Ashram

[4] Issued on December 23, 1919, announcing Royal clemency to political prisoners

whilst I appreciate the force of your reasoning, I cannot help submitting that it would have been more gracious had the men been unconditionally released specially as the popular belief is that the majority of the convictions were unwarranted.

From a copy : S. N. 7114; also N. A. I.: Home, Political (A), March 1920, No. 327

239. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

Lahore, [*February 9, 1920*][1]

BHAISHRI NARAHARI,

Enclosed is a letter to Deepak. Read it and give it to him. See if he understands it. This is the third time that Saraladevi has sent Deepak away from her. Her old mother is not pleased and I do not think that Panditji[2] is, either, but he has never stood in Saraladevi's way. It is her earnest wish that the boy should become a scholar and a man of character. We should help as much as we can in this. Make arrangements for his Sanskrit and Bengali [studies]. He will easily learn Bengali if Manindra teaches him. Why not have him write to Saraladevi in beautiful Bengali, or let him write sometimes in Bengali and sometimes in English?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11885

[1] From the S.N. Register for letters to the addressee dated February 12 and 13; *vide* also "Letter to Narahari Parikh", 12-2-1920; 13-2-1920.

[2] Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhary, father of Deepak

240. STATEMENT ON SOUTH AFRICAN COMMISSION[1]

LAHORE,
February 9, 1920

I do not think that the Commission[2] is a strong Commission. Certainly it is not an impartial Commission. So far as the terms of reference are concerned, I am not disposed to quarrel with them. Indeed I would have, if it was at all possible, avoided a Commission altogether and obtained relief regarding land and trading by other means. But I am inclined to think that it is possible for Sir Benjamin Robertson to secure the rights of ownership of land and trading which are in imminent danger. The whole situation hinges round the strength that the Government of India through Sir Benjamin Robertson puts forth. It is difficult for me to go further in the absence of any cablegram from South Africa which I expect hourly from our people. It is a matter of great consolation that Mr. Andrews is on the spot.[3] He knows the people and he knows the members of the present South African Ministry and other public men of South Africa.

The Tribune, 10-2-1920

241. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

Sunday [*February 9, 1920*][4]

BHAISHRI NARAHARI,

Your letter received today has given me a fright. Jivraj Mehta believes, though, that your telegram received the day before yesterday must have been of a later date. That, and the absence of any

[1] Made to a representative of *The Tribune*

[2] Appointed by the South African Government to enquire into the question of Asiatics trading and holding land in South Africa. The Commission was assisted by Sir Benjamin Robertson on behalf of the Government of India and sat from March to July, 1920.

[3] C. F. Andrews was in Africa from December 1919 to March 1920.

[4] Dr. Jivraj Mehta was with Gandhiji for some time during this month (*vide* "Punjab Letter", 29-2-1920). On February 16, 1920, which was a Sunday, both arrived in Banaras. It is likely that Gandhiji wrote this letter from Lahore, where he spent most of the time from January 23, 1920, to February 15, 1920, after his letter to Narahari Parikh, written about January 31, 1920, in which he mentions Mahadev Desai's illness. The following Sunday, February 2, is obviously too early a date for this letter.

subsequent telegram, reassures me. If I didn't have on hand the Punjab work, I would not remain here a moment longer but would hasten there and embrace Mahadev. For the present, however, I can only embrace him through you all. Many such clouds have cleared from over my head and I cling to the hope that this, too, will clear.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 11884

242. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

LAHORE,

Tuesday [*February 10*][1], *1920*

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your dear telegram and two letters in one day. I had telegraphed before I received your letter about your father. I am sure that you should answer that call by going[2] as early as possible. Only I want to have many a chat with you before you go. Never mind the weakness of body today. I would like you still to consider the Ashram as your home to which you could return whenever you wished to. If you feel like going now to Madras and come back on your way to Denmark you may do so. But I prefer seeing you before you go to Madras. But pray do whatever is in your opinion best. Take warm baths and you will get rid of the rash. The hip baths must do you good.

I want Devdas[3] to go with you. I shall discuss it with him and with you when we meet. The idea of Mahadev going attracts me more.

D. has a little book given to him by a missionary. It is called *The Inner Shrine*. In a hymn I read these lines: "With happy grief and mourn-ful joy, /My spirit now is filled", and at once I thought of

[1] Gandhiji left Lahore on Sunday, February 15, 1920, and this letter seems to have been written shortly before his departure.

[2] To Denmark

[3] Devdas Gandhi (1900-1957); youngest son of Gandhiji; worked in Champaran villages in 1917 and went to jail during the Salt Satyagraha, 1930; managing editor *The Hindustan Times*; twice president of Indian & Eastern Newspapers Society

you. 'Happy grief' and 'mournful joy' are wonderful expressions. But no more today.

With love and prayer,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I., also *My Dear Child,* pp. 50-1

243. PUNJAB LETTER

[Before *February 11, 1920*][1]

JALLIANWALA BAGH

The Hon'ble Pandit Malaviya had announced during the Congress session[2] that Jallianwala Bagh[3] had become the nation's property. But later, serious difficulties were encountered. There was nothing in writing and some of the joint proprietors changed their mind. They thought of presenting a small part of the Bagh to the nation and putting the rest to sale. Everything was done to explain to them that a cemetery should not be cut up, that there was not a corner of that garden which had not been stained by the blood of innocent men and it would be improper, therefore, to exploit it for financial gain. Moreover, it had been announced through a staunch worker, grown old in the service of India, that the entire Bagh had become the nation's property. In these circumstances, it was undesirable that there be any division of the plot. The owners, however, who had changed their mind remained unconvinced. Finally, Panditji and Swami Shraddhanand[4] had to go to Amritsar. A settlement has now been reached and a temporary agreement signed.

FIVE LAKHS

The land has been valued at rupees five lakhs and it has been agreed to pay the amount within three months. If payment is not made by the end of that period, there is every danger that the land will be lost to the public.

[1] The letter seems to have been written before Gandhiji's visit to Gujrat on this date mentioned in "Punjab Letter", 15-2-1920.

[2] Held at Amritsar in December 1919

[3] The site of the tragedy of April 13, 1919

[4] Munshiram Nanakchand (1856-1926); later known as Shraddhanand; nationalist leader of Arya Samaj who took a prominent part in public activities in Delhi and the Punjab

The next step, now, is to collect this amount in as short a time as possible. The best thing is that every citizen should contribute his mite to the cause; that will bring honour to the nation and raise it higher. This Bagh is a unique thing, a consecrated spot. We want that it should become a place of pilgrimage for us. During the Congress, thousands visited it. Thousands had come only for this purpose. Hardwar is a pilgrim centre for Hindus, but the term does not include Jains, Sikhs and others who do not call themselves Hindus. For Muslims, Christians, Parsis and Jews, it is certainly not a holy place. Jallianwala Bagh, on the other hand, is a sacred spot for all who were born or who live in India. At least, we want it to be so. This idea does not have its source in hatred but is born of our love for those innocent men and women who lost their lives. In visiting the Bagh, our purpose is not to remind ourselves of General Dyer's[1] cruelty. Men have always made mistakes. We do not want to keep alive the memory of General Dyer's wrong and thereby feed our hatred. Even so, if we do not preserve the memory of the innocent, the nation would perish. The sacrifice of innocent people, killed for no crime of theirs, is a great opportunity to a nation to raise itself higher. If the people do not treasure the memory of such an event, then, as a spendthrift, careless of his wealth, becomes a pauper, so the nation also will become insolvent. If, on the contrary, it treasures this wealth, it is bound to prosper. If 500 or 1,000 innocent persons deliberately embrace death, this will have the effect of raising the country instantaneously, an effect so tremendous as to be regarded a miracle. Maybe we cannot bring about such a miraculous result from the slaughter of the innocent people in the Jallianwala Bagh; the event, however, will always be recognized as a potent influence in uniting Hindus and Muslims and in creating an awakening throughout the land. It is, therefore, our duty to see that it every lives in our memory.

If this idea is right, then everyone, great or small, rich or poor, can join in collecting these five lakhs. If a single person donates the amount, we may, thanks to our inertia and laziness, feel relieved, but the spiritual value of the place will be reduced. If there crores and 20 lakhs of Indians contribute one pice each, five lakhs will easily be

[1] Reginald Edward Harry Dyer (1864-1927); Officer Commanding, Amritsar Area, who ordered firing on a peaceful assembly of people gathered at the Jallianwala Bagh; *vide* "Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.

made up and all will agree that a spot purchased with the money so collected will be most sacred indeed. If, when offering the pice, the people would also meditate on the subject, its holiness would be even further enhanced.

Already the question has arisen as to how to collect this sum so that the minimum is spent in the process and the danger of misappropriation avoided. There is apprehension that dishonest people may collect money for themselves on the pretext of collecting it for the Bagh fund, and misuse it.

PRACTICAL WAY OUT

The practical way out of this is for an honest man in every village to take it upon himself to collect the money. He should, at once, forward the amount to the main committee. Contributions should never be handed over to anyone except a person known to one. By "known" we mean a person in whom one has trust. This person should immediately present the account to the people of the village.

MODE OF COLLECTION

Those who collect contributions must not bring pressure on anyone but rely entirely on persuasion. Although it should be our aim to collect the amount pice by pice, yet it is only proper that all contribute to the best of their capacity. It has never happened in this world, and obviously it should not happen, that the rich and the poor contribute equally. It is not right to offer the minimum and no more. It is our duty to give, at any rate, in accordance with the principle : "the greater the effort, the greater the fruit." In this way the burden on others is reduced and our objective will the more quickly be achieved. To be content merely to give our share is a sign of miserliness. There is magnanimity in what is done with love. Love will not have its actions weighed in a pair of scales. Anything which does so is not love, but the spirit of business. Such an attitude is out of place here. This collection is to be raised from Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis and all others. I earnestly wish that readers of *Navajivan* contribute their full share in this sacred task. They should keep in mind that six lakh have to be collected without delay.

We have read in the papers that the report of the Hunter Committee[1] will be presented to the Viceroy in the first week of March. Our Committee's report[2] should be out very soon.[3] The printing of the evidence is nearly over. Mr. Jayakar[4] has taken this work upon himself. The report, too, is almost drafted. Members of the Committee[5] are to meet in Kashi on the 16th to scrutinize and approve the report, and it is hoped that the latter will be approved and sent to the press by 20th February. The cost of printing the reportwill be quite heavy and it is likely that a copy of the report and evidence together will be priced at Rs. 8.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-2-1920

[1] Set up by the Government of India on October 14, 1919, to investigate the April disturbances in the provinces of Bombay, Delhi and the Punjab. The Committee presented its report to Government on March 8, and it was published on May 28, 1920.

[2] Of the Commissioners appointed by the Punjab Sub-committee of the Indian National Congress to enquire into the Punjab disorders

[3] The report was published on March 25, 1920; for the text, *vide* "Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.

[4] M. R. Jayakar (1873-1959); Bombay lawyer and Liberal leader; educationist, political negotiator and peacemaker

[5] Gandhiji, C. R. Das, Abbas S. Tayabji and M. R. Jayakar

244. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

Thursday [*February 12*][1], *1920*

MY DEAR ESTHER,

You and Mahadev are foremost in my mind as I finished my mouth wash. I have detained you in Ahmedabad. But have I done right? If your health grows worse where am I? I therefore want you to await me only if you keep at least tolerably well. Otherwise we must meet on your return from Madras. Please don't consider yourself bound to stay on because I have expressed the wish. To express purest love is like walking on the edge of a sword. 'None of self and all of Thee' is easier sung than practised. We never know when we are not selfish even when we fancy we are all love. The more I think of it, the more I feel the truth of what I have often said. Love and truth are two faces of the same coin and both most difficult to practise and the only things worth living for. A person cannot be true if he does not love all God's creatures; truth and love are therefore the complete sacrifice. I shall therefore pray that both you and I may realize this to the fullest measure.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child,* pp. 53-4

245. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

LAHORE,
Thursday [*February 12, 1920*][2]

BHAISHRI NARAHARI,

I get your letters regularly and they give me much peace. You may show my letter to Mahadev, but only if you wish to. You may destroy it if you like.

I hope to arrive there on the 23rd. I may arrive even on the 22nd. You did well in forwarding the Doctor's[3] letters.

Does Dipak[4] take dal and vegetables in addition to *rotli* and

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Esther Faering", February 10, 1920

[2] Gandhiji arrived in Ahmedabad on February 22, 1920, after his three weeks' tour of the Punjab. His last Thursday in Lahore fell on this date.

[3] Presumably Dr. Jivraj Mehta

[4] Son of Saraladevi Chowdharani who had joined the Ashram school in January 1920

jaggery? Did he again go to his uncle's? He has a standing invitation to go every Sunday. It will be better if you yourself take him there on foot next Sunday.

Esther's condition is miserable indeed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 11887

246. SPEECH AT SARGODHA

February 13, 1920

Mahatmaji appeared in public at 2.30 p. m. when he delivered a short discourse to the ladies of the town in the Arya Samaj exhorting them to always keep quiet and attentive while attending a meeting and take to spinning. After that he wended his way to the Municipal Gardens. . . .

Mahatmaji spoke for a short time touching briefly on the questionable methods of recruitment resorted to by some of the officials in the ecstasy of their zeal in this district during the period of the War. He said that dining together could not constitute the chief basis of love between the different communities as was wrongly understood by some of the people. Love being the quality of heart could be fostered and developed without forsaking one's religion, by sharing the sorrows as well as joys of each other. The people should observe strict discipline while attending a meeting. Swadeshi should be encouraged in view of our country being the poorest on the surface of the earth, its average annual income being not more than Rs. 24 or 25 per head. He advocated spinning and weaving as cloth alone to the value of rupees sixty crores was imported into the country in a year.

The Tribune, 22-2-1920

247. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

[*February 13, 1920*][1]

BHAISHRI NARAHARI,

Two points in your letters have been left unanswered. It is true that by taking Dipak there I have added to your work. It is also true that the thing will make your task hard. However, I see difficulties in

[1] As stated in the text, Gandhiji wrote this letter from Sargodha, which he visited on this date in the course of his Punjab tour.

the way of adhering to the rule that no non-Gujarati should be admitted. I do not understand how we can refuse admission to anyone who agrees to join on the same conditions as Dipak has joined. All the same, I shall abide by any rule you want to be followed. After all, it is for you to carry out the thing and, therefore, your word will be law to me. I shall make what suggestions I feel inclined to. I unreservedly accept the principle that any boy whom we admit will have to have his education through Gujarati. In regard to Dipak's Bengali, I did not mean that he should be taught through that language. I merely meant that it would be good if we could make some arrangements for his Bengali. I want this only in his case. There is no other boy in the country, in the same circums- tances as Dipak, who is likely to join us. Sarladevi is the only Bengali woman who, married to a Punjabi, is keen on her son keeping up his mother's tongue. This principle deserves support. All of you, that is you, Kaka and others, know Bengali and, moreover, Manindra is there at present. I, therefore, felt that Dipak should keep up the use of Bengali.

The second point, concerning fixed times for Dipak for writing letters. About this, I am sure you have been hasty in expressing the view you have done. Writing letters as a matter of rule should no doubt be mechanical. Anything which becomes natural, instinctive, is of course mechanical. When you give fruit juice to Mahadev at 2, you may be so absorbed in the work that it becomes mechanical for you. "Mechanical" has two meanings. One, anything done unintelligently, in the manner of a machine, or occurring in that way. Two, anything done or occur- ring according to rule, like the functioning of a machine. The first is to be avoided, and the second to be welcomed. If Dipak's love for his mother burns bright in him, he should, once he has realized that it is good on his part to write to her, set apart a fixed time for the purpose and adhere to it. Reciting *Gayatri*, daily or occasionally, without a fixed rule can never bring the same reward as reciting it with a devout heart at a fixed hour every day. Progress in life is possible only if one regulates one's life according to rules. I think you will have no further doubts in this matter. If you have any, put them to me when we meet or write about them to me at Kashi.[1]

We are in Sargodha today. Tomorrow we shall be in Lahore and the day after in the train on our way to Kashi. I wrote to Mahadev yester-day apologizing to him. My intention was absolutely pure.

[1] Gandhiji was in Banaras from February 16 to February 21, 1920.

When writing that letter, I had repeated to myself the verse: "I desire to see the suf-fering of all suffering creatures ended."[1] I had no idea that all of them suffered in the same way, but I suffered because they were suffering and had been applying remedies to end their sufferings. The pain felt by Ma-hadev showed me how complex one's feelings are and how inadequate our *tapascharya* was. That he smiled away his pain was his goodness indeed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 11889

248. APPEAL FOR JALLIANWALA BAGH MEMORIAL FUND

AMRITSAR,
February 14, 1920

We are glad to be able to inform the public that the Jallianwala Bagh has now been acquired for the nation in terms of the resolution that was passed by the last Congress. The undersigned were appointed as a Committee to carry out the wishes of the Congress. The purchase price has been finally fixed at Rs. 5,40,000 (five lakhs and forty thousand rupees), inclusive of costs and has to be paid to the sellers within three months from the 5th instant. Lala Dewanchand, proprietor of the firm of Messrs Radhakishen Ramkrishna of Amritsar, had been appointed treasurer and Lala Girdhari Lal[1] of Amritsar as the secretary of the Fund. The Central Bank of India, the Punjab National Bank, the Punjab and Sindh Bank and the Allahabad Bank, Amritsar, have been appointed bankers. Subscriptions should be remitted direct to one of these banks or their branches and the fact should be communicated to the treasurer or the secretary. A formal receipt signed by the treasurer and the secretary, will be sent to every donor. Relying upon the enthusiasm shown in this matter as an index of the national wish, we trust that the donors

[1] The Sanskrit couplet of which this is the second line runs :
नत्वहं कामये राज्यं न स्वर्ग नापुनर्भवम्।
कामये दु:खतप्तानां प्राणिनामार्तिनाशनम्॥

[2] Deputy Chairman, Punjab Chamber of Commerce; Managing Director, Amritsar Flour & General Mills

will without any personal canvassing send in their own subscriptions. Whilst the least amount necessary is six lakhs, our aim is to collect ten lakhs and not more, but even less if possible. Though we have come to no final conclusion, we propose that the Bagh should be converted into a park, whereon a simple memorial will be erected with a suitable inscription perpetuating the memory of the dead and commemorating Hindu-Muslim unity. There will not be a word on it calculated to promote or encourage bitterness or ill will against anybody. We invite suggestions as to the inscription and also tentative proposals regarding the use of the ground. We consider that it should be used as a place of national pilgrimage. We desire emphatically to repudiate the suggestion made in some quarters that the memorial is designed to perpetuate bitterness between Englishmen and ourselves. Nothing can be farther from our wish than any such idea, but we believe that it is our bounden duty in some shape or other to cherish and perpetuate the memory of the many hundreds of innocent men who were shot dead on the fateful 13th of April. It was a tragedy of national importance which cannot be allowed to be forgotten and we came to the conclusion that there was no better method of achieving the object than by acquiring the site hallowed by innocent blood and using it in some such manner as we have suggested. We trust that all, without distinction of party, not excluding Englishmen, will subscribe to the memorial and respond to the Committee's invitation for suggestions as to the inscription and the use of the Bagh.

M. K. GANDHI
MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA
MOTILAL NEHRU
SHRADDHANANDA
HARKISHEN LAL
KITCHLEW
GIRDHARI LAL

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-2-1920

249. PUNJAB LETTER

ON THE WAY FROM LAHORE,
Magh Vad 11 [*February 15, 1920*]

GUJRAT

Gujrat is the name of a district in the Punjab with Gujrat as the main town. The battle of Gujrat which occurred during the Sikh War

in 1849 is well known. I even saw the field on which that battle was fought. I went to this district because it, too, had been under Martial Law.[1] Sarladevi Chowdhrani[2] accompanied us on this journey.

There is a small village called Jalalpur Jata near Gujrat, which also we had to visit. This village may be said to be inhabited almost entirely by weavers. The women spin and the men weave. The whole of the little lane had been decorated with hand-made cloth. The cloth was not just white khadi but khadi dyed red and embroidered with silk. Such cloth is known here as *phulkari*[3]. Beautiful designs are worked on the cloth and these make the cloth delightful to the eye. At a marriage this *phulkari* is presented to the bride and the bridegroom and in many families the garments are preserved. Many women may be observed wearing scarves of *phulkari*. Nowadays people also make curtains of it. The seats prepared for me are, I generally see, decorated with such *phulkari* and the affection which inspires this gives me great happiness.

But the sight of the bazaar filled with *phulkaris* also saddened me and my heart became heavy. The thought that this beautiful craft, which had been the chief source of India's prosperity, is about to vanish made me disconsolate. The beauty and the sanctity, the conservation of our resources which I see in this *phulkari*, I do not see in foreign saris. The prosperity of Indian homes lies in spinning. With the disappearance of this occupation, prosperity too has gone.

The Commissioner had not requested the imposition of Martial Law in this district of Gujrat and when, nevertheless, it did come he dispatched a telegram to make sure, thinking that possibly Gujarat in the Bombay Presidency was intended—so innocent was the Gujarat district in the Punjab. I have no desire to write about what happened in the district. But the matter was mentioned before the Hunter Committee and so I recall it here.

SARGODHA

After spending a night at Gujrat we went on to Sargodha. This is a newly-settled village. Several such villages have come up near the canals. This village is included in the Shahpur district. One reason

[1] From April to June, 1919

[2] Wife of pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari and grand-niece of Rabindranath Tagore. She and her husband became followers of Gandhiji in 1919 and sent their son Dipak to be educated at Sabarmati Ashram.

[3] Literally, flower-work

for our going there was to investigate the cruelties perpetrated during the recruitment drive. We arrived at night but even at 10 it was impossible to restrain the enthusiasm of the people. Thousands had flocked from near-by villages. The bazaar was a blaze of countless lights.

I found the people of Shahpur district quite different from those of other districts. Though physically tall, they are rather dull, simple and not too bold. They are much afraid of soldiers and are quite incapable of defending themselves. The majority are Muslims but they must have been enfeebled by starvation. With the digging of canals, starvation among them has been considerably reduced, but the people have had no training in civic life and so have remained helpless.

MALAKVAL

From Sargodha we went to Malakval, which is a city in Gujrat district. Being a railway junction, it has become a well-known place. This place, too, had been under Martial Law. The people here had been so suppressed that their leaders did not have the courage to put us up. But the relations between the leaders and the public are none too good at present. Consequently, when the news of our arrival spread, the station was filled with people. Such crowds poured in from surrounding villages that quiet became impossible. The leaders, however, continued to remain aloof out of fear. We had to stay here for the night. Early next morning, men and women came from near-by villages playing on their instruments and woke us up. The crowd became so thick that there was no hope of any quiet talk or of recording statements. In the end, it was only after I had led the people to a *maidan* near by and held a meeting that I could have some peace. In all these meetings, some- times composed of thousands, I am always both chairman and speaker or, perhaps, it would be more correct to say that there is no chairman at all. Day by day the number of women attending these meetings is found to be increasing. We left Malakval for Lalamusa at 11 o'clock.

SCENES ON THE WAY

This is a junction on the main line and is two and a half hours' journey from Malakval. There are four or five intermediate stations. I can scarcely describe the scenes at these stations. Although at almost every station the train stopped for only a few minutes, hundreds of people—both men and women—used to collect. There is a station on

the way called Bahuddin. The village is a fairly large one. A multitude of men and women stood there as far as my eye could reach and women competed with the men in their efforts to come to me. In every place, the women made offerings to me of yarn spun with their own hands. But, at a station named Dhinga where the train stops for five to seven minutes, the scene was simply wonderful. The women stood behind the men and, from there, they threw ball after ball of handspun yarn and we in the train and the men who stood in between caught them as they came. I understood the feelings of these women and my heart overflowed with joy. To the question, 'Why do all these women show such love?' I found the answer in the miracle at Dhinga station. It is my deep conviction that the women of the Punjab have understood my message. They have felt that swadeshi is not merely a means of protecting India's wealth but that it makes for protection of women's honour, that it is a form of *Ishwar bhakti*[1] and that in it lies the country's best freedom. Moreover, they have been able instinctively to grasp the significance of the holy message of satyagraha and have received from it great peace of mind and a new assurance. They feel that, if my message if adopted by the country, peace will prevail in India and through India, in the whole world and the *Satyayuga*[2] will be born. They have understood that, whether all this is realized in the near future or not, it is for us to work on with faith for these two objectives and this is why they come to me in ever larger numbers, shedding their fear. I was convinced during this journey that there is no exaggeration in saying that women have understood how we can fight our opponents with love and without hate, and be a match for them, how we can fearlessly point out to the officers their errors and they will have to listen to us, and that, seeing all this, they are extremely happy.

I hope the reader will not get the impression that I am indulging in self-praise in all this. The admission of imperfection that I made before the Hunter Committee[3] was no gesture of modesty. It was literally true. I said that I could not claim to be a perfect satyagrahi. If I had been one, it would not have been necessary even to write this sentence. I would not, then, have had even the fear that I might be accused of self-praise. I have not the self-assurance to claim that I never praise myself. But in order that I might engage the genuine

[1] Worship of God
[2] The Age of Truth
[3] On January 9, 1920 at Ahmedabad, in his evidence before the Committee

interest of readers in truth and swadeshi, I beg leave to state, deliberately and knowingly, that I do not believe the profound feelings of the Punjabi women to be directed towards me personally. They are taken up with admiration for me because of the truth they see in me and the simplicity of swadeshi which they have come to realize through me. The men's love is no less. But I am not sure of its purity. Some are drawn to me because I am a fighter against the Government. Some think that, though I do not speak out, in fact I harbour a good deal of hatred which, being a shrewd man, I hide from others. Some consider that I have great fighting capacity, no doubt, but that I am something of a fool for lack of intellect. They do not, therefore, think it wrong to avail themselves of my fighting capacity and to show me sufficient regard with that end in view. Others are genuine lovers of truth and swadeshi and, regarding me as more experienced in these matters than themselves, bear sincere affection for me. Thus, since I suspect that men's feelings for me are mixed, I am frequently uneasy and nervous when surrounded by men and sometimes I fear lest they and I together bring about some calamity. But with regard to women, such an idea would not occur to me even in a dream. They come to me with but one feeling in their heart and therefore their presence, even by the thousand, gives me nothing but a sense of peace. They strengthen my faith and confidence in satyagraha and swadeshi, make me ever more resolute and create a new zest in me and inspire me to greater effort. If I could inspire in men devotion as pure as I find in the women, within a year India would be raised to a height impossible to imagine. As for swaraj, it would be the easiest thing in the world.

A Muslim servant of Sarladevi said something to her and she reported it to me. I shall place it before my readers and close this letter with a request to them to ponder over it very carefully. Many men and women address Sarladevi as *Mataji* or mother

This servant said, "*Mataji*, if Mahatmaji keeps talking to all women about the spinning-wheel, surely it is not without reason. He is a man of God and believes that the Indian women can safeguard their dharma through it. This is why he does what he does." Sarladevi told me in some context that this servant was a good and devout man, and she passed on his ideas about swadeshi to me. She was amazed to find such wisdom in one who could be called ignorant. I was greatly pleased but by no means surprised. The wisdom I have seen and learnt from so-called illiterate people I have not learnt from others.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-2-1920

250. LETTER TO L. FRENCH

2, MOZANG ROAD,
LAHORE,
February 15, 1920

DEAR MR. FRENCH,

I have just returned from Sargodha where I heard from the lips of many witnesses the story of the persecution they said they underwent at the hands of the Tahsildar, Nadir Hosen Shah, who was in 1918 cruelly murdered, and other officials whilst recruiting was going on.[1] I think that hard recruiting was necessary during the late War and that some kind of moral pressure was inevitable. I think too that a certain amount of overzeal on the part of the inferior officials was to be looked for and can only now be looked [*sic*].

But the stories that had been repeated to me by several witnesses—men and women—cannot be ignored and I am sure His Honour[2] will not desire to excuse the oppression that is said to have been practised.

The statements made before me go to show that villagers were brought up on a wholesale scale and were called upon on pain of suffering inhuman tortures and indignities to send their sons as recruits if they were at all of age. It is stated that for this purpose men were made naked, they were whipped on their buttocks and were made to bend themselves on thorns whilst they were whipped. Women were made to drag men whose modesty was outraged. Women themselves were made naked and subjected to disgraceful treatment because their husbands and boys were hiding themselves. It has also been stated that men were falsely challaned[3] and otherwise brought under legal processes, that punitive police has been imposed on several villages in connection with the murder of the deceased Tahsildar and that members of the police levy unlawful exactions from the poor villagers.

In my humble opinion this is essentially a matter which requires a searching investigation and the officials who can be found to have

[1] *Vide* "Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.
[2] The Lt.-Governor of the Punjab
[3] Charge-sheeted

persecuted villagers deprived [*sic*] of the opportunity of so doing. I venture to think that the punitive police should be removed without delay and villagers freed from daily exactions.

The statements made are so serious that I feel it my duty not to publish them without at least drawing His Honour's attention to them. I shall be pleased to submit the statements for His Honour's inspection should he desire to see them. I am also prepared to wait on His Honour in this matter and render what assistance I may be capable of rendering in order to bring the true situation to light.

I am leaving today for Benares, c/o Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, by the Calcutta Mail and shall be there up to the 20th instant; thereafter at Sabarmati, B. B. & C. I. Railway. I could wait on His Honour some time after the 6th March. Urgent business will keep me away from the Punjab at least till that date.

I shall esteem it a favour if you will please drop me a line to say what His Honour's wishes are in this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

L. FRENCH

PUNJAB GOVERNMENT CAMP

From a copy : S. N. 7125

251. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

ON THE TRAIN TO BENARES,
Sunday [*February 15, 1920*][1]

MY DEAR CHILD,

I am on my way to Benares[2] and we shall soon meet. How I wish you were with me serving me like Devdas. I know you would love it and so would I. No man can supply the place of father but I would like to be that to you to the extent of my ability in this land of your adoption. I feel humiliated at the thought of your having to go to Denmark to recuperate yourself. Nothing would please me better than to send you to Denmark fully restored to health and a fuller Christian and a fuller daughter. And you have all the possibilities in you of a full growth in this life. May God grant you all your dearest wishes and may He make you an instrument of great service to humanity. Your love for India can only be acceptable as an expression of your love for humanity. "None of self and all of Thee" is a big prayer, [the] biggest of its kind.

May it be true of you and me.

With all love,

Yours,
BAPU

[PS.]

You will give your whole heart to A.[3]

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child,* p. 58

[1] Esther Faering left India for Denmark in 1920, and in that year Gandhiji proceeded from Lahore to Banaras on February 15.

[2] For a meeting where the draft report of the Commissioners appointed by the Punjab Sub-committee of the Congress was to be finalized

[3] This sentence is not found in the photostat available at the National Archives.

252. A CRY FROM UTKAL

Utkal[1] is a much better term than Oriya. The Hon'ble B. Brijsunderdas, ex-secretary, Utkal Union Conference and president, Utkal People's Association, Kattak,[2] has circulated a printed letter in which he says :

> Oriya has been placed under four administrations,. viz., Behar Madras, Bengal and Central Provinces; they are in a minority everywhere. An autonomous growth is impossible in their case. For the last fifteen years they have been struggling for administrative union. Docile and non-agitating as they are, their repeated prayers have caught no authoritative ear. Advancement of India does not preclude a part of India. The new Indian nation cannot be built upon the ashes of an ancient race.

We need not cavil at the language used by the Hon. B. Brijsunderdas. The complaint is sound and raises the large question of redistribution on a linguistic basis. This fine face cannot possibly make the natural advance which is its due, if it is split up into four divisions for no sound reason, and we trust that the Oriya Movement will be examined by the public with sympathetic care and attention.

Young India, 18-2-1920

253. JALLIANWALA BAGH

There was an unfortunate hitch about the purchase of this Bagh for the nation.[3] Thanks to the efforts of the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Sannyasi Swami Shri Shraddhanand and the local leaders, it has now become the property of the nation subject to the full payment of the purchase price within three months from the 6th instant. The purchase price is Rs. 5,36,000. And the amount must be raised within the prescribed period.

It is, therefore, necessary to examine the propriety of making this purchase on behalf of the nation, especially as it has been questioned even in enlightened quarters. With the Cawnpore

[1] This name for Orissa was popularized by Rabindranath Tagore.
[2] Cuttack, the old capital of Orissa
[3] *Vide* "Punjab Letter ", before 11-2-1919.

Memorial[1] before us the attitude is not to be wondered at. But with all respect to objectors, I cannot help saying that if the Bagh had not been acquired, it would have been a national disgrace. Can we afford to forget those five hundred or more men who were killed although they had done nothing wrong either morally or legally? If they had died knowingly and willingly, if, realizing their innocence they had stood their ground and faced the shots from the fifty[2] rifles, they would have gone down in his-tory as saints, heroes and patriots. But even as it was, the tragedy became one of first-class national importance. Nations are born out of travail and suffering. We should forfeit all title to be considered a nation, if we failed to treasure the memory of those who in our battle for political freedom might, innocently or for the crimes of others, lose their lives or otherwise suffer. We were unable to protect our helpless countrymen when they were ruthlessly massacred. We may decline, if we will, to ave-nge the wrong. The nation will not lose if we did. But shall we—can we afford to—decline to perpetuate the memory and to show to the surviv-ing members of the families of the dead that we are sharers in their suf-ferings, by erecting a national tombstone and by telling the world thereby that in the death of these men each one of us had lost dear relations? If national instinct does not mean at least this much kinship, it has no mea-ning for me. I hold it to be our duty to tell the generations yet unborn that in our march towards true freedom we must be prepared for repetiti-ons of the wrongs such as the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. We must prov-ide against them; we must not seek them, but we must be ready to face them if they come again. I would not have us flinch from the battle of national life. The supreme lesson of the Amritsar Congress[3] was that the sufferings of the Punjab did not dishearten the nation but the nation treat-ed them as a matter of course. Some of us made stupid mistakes and the innocent suffered for them. We must in future try to avoid the mistakes but in spite of our best effort, we may fail to convert everyone to sanity. We must, therefore, be ready for the repetition of the sufferings of the gu-iltless by telling the country now that they and theirs shall not be forgot-ten but that the memory of the innocent dead shall be regarded as a sacred trust and that the surviving relations shall have the right to look

[1] In connection with the Mutiny of 1857

[2] Fire was opened at Jallianwala Bagh by all the fifty soldiers led by General Dyer; *vide* "Congrees Report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.

[3] Held in December 1919

to the nation for maintenance in case of need. This is the primary meaning of the memorial. And has not the blood of the Mohammedan mixed with that of the Hindu? Has not the blood of the Sikh mixed with that of the Sanatanist[1] and the Samajist[2] ? The memorial should be a national emblem of an honest and sustained effort to achieve Hindu-Muslim unity.

But the objector's objection still remains unanswered. Will not the memorial also perpetuate bitterness and ill will? It will depend upon the trustees. And if I know them, I know that that is not their intention at all. I know that such was not the intention of the vast assembly. I do not wish to convey that bitterness was not there. It was there—not in any way suppressed. But the idea of the memorial had nothing of bitterness in it. The people want to, they must be encouraged to, forget the doer and his madness. What General Dyer did we may all do if we had his irresponsibility and opportunity. To err is human and it must be held to be equally human to forgive if we, though being fallible, would like rather to be forgiven than punished and reminded of our misdeeds. Nor does this mean that we may not ask for General Dyer's dismissal. A lunatic cannot be kept in a position from which he can do harm to his neighbours. But just as we do not bear ill will towards a lunatic, so too may we not bear ill will even towards General Dyer. I would therefore eschew from the memorial all idea of bitterness and ill will but treat it as a sacred memory and regard the Bagh as a place of pilgrimage to be visited by all irrespective of class, creed or colour. I would invite Englishmen to appreciate our feeling in the matter, ask them by subscribing to the memorial in the spirit of the Royal Proclamation[3] to make common cause with us in our endeavour to regain consciousness, to realize the same freedom that they enjoy under the same constitution and to realize Hindu-Muslim unity without which there can be no true progress for India.

Young India, 18-2-1920

[1] Follower of orthodox Hindu religion

[2] Member of the Arya Samaj, a reformist Hindu denomination following the old Vedic religion

[3] Of December 1919

254. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU [1]

BENARES.
February 20, 1920

THE HON'BLE PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU
EX-OFFICIO PRESIDENT, SUB-COMMITTEE
ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE
LAHORE

SIR,

On the 14th November 1919, the Punjab Sub-committee of the All India Congress Committee appointed yourself, the Hon'ble Fazlul Haq[2], and Messrs C. R. Das, Abbas Tayabji[3] and M. K. Gandhi, as Commissioners, with Mr. K. Santanam as Secretary, to examine, sift , collate, and analyse the evidence already collected by and on behalf of the Sub-commitee regarding the events of last April in the Punjab, and to supplement such evidence where necessary, and to present their conclusions thereon.

On being nominated President-elect of the National Congress you considered it necessary to resign your office as Commissioner. The resignation was duly accepted by the Sub-committee and as the work of taking evidence was practically concluded when you resigned, no other commissioner was appointed in your place.

The Hon'ble Fazlul Haq was called away on important business immediately after his arrival. Mr. M. R. Jayakar of the Bombay Bar was therefore appointed in his place.

We entered upon our work on the 17th November 1919.

We examined the statements of over 1,700 witnesses and we have selected for publication about 650 statements, which will be found in the accompanying volumes of our report. The statements excluded were mostly statements proving [the] same class of acts.

Every admitted statements was verified by one of us and was

[1] This is the covering letter accompanying the draft report of the Commissioners appointed by the Punjab Sub-committee of the Indian National Congress. The draft prepared by Gandhiji is not available. For the report, whose final manuscript for the press was prepared by Gandhiji with the assistance of M. R. Jayakar, *vide* "Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders". 25-3-1920.

[2] Nationalist Muslim leader; Chief Minister of Bengal during World War II

[3] 1853-1936; nationalist Muslim leader of Gujarat

accepted only after we were satisfied as to the *bona fides* of the witness. This does not apply to a few statements from Manianwala and neighbourhood, which were mostly brought at our request by Mr. Labh Singh, M. A., Bar-at-Law. Every such statement bears his name at the foot thereof. No statement was accepted without sufficient cross-examination of the witnesses.

It will be observed that many witnesses are men of position and leaders in their own districts or villages.

It will be further observed that some of the witnesses have made very serious allegations against officials. In each and every case the wit-nesses were warned by us of the consequences of making those allegatio-ns and they were admitted only when the witnesses adhered to their state-ments, in spite of the knowledge of the risk they personally ran and the damage that may ensue to the cause by reason of exaggeration or untruth. We have moreover rejected those statements which could not be corrob-orated although in some cases we were inclined to believe the witnesses. Such for instance were the statements regarding ill-treatment of women.

Needless to say that our inquiry was confined to the Martial Law area and to the districts[1] in which it was proclaimed. The principal places were personally visited by us. Thus Lahore, Amritsar, Tarn Taran, Kasur, Gujranwala, Wazirabad, Nizamabad, Akalgarh, Ramnagar, Hafiza-bad, Sangla Hill, Sheikhupura, Chuharkana, Lyallpur, Gujrat, Malakwal and Sargodha were visited by someone of us. In most places large public meetings were held and the public were invited to make their statements to us. The nature of the evidence already recorded was placed before the meetings and those who wished to challenge the occuracy of the state-ments made, were invited to send in their statements even under pledge of confidence if they so desired.No contradiction was received by us.

We have freely availed ourselves of the evidence led before the Disorders Inquiry Committee[2], in order to strengthen or correct our conclusions. It may be mentioned that the vast majority of the statements appended were received by us before Lord Hunter's Committee began its sittings.

The majority of the statements were given in the vernaculars. We have endeavoured to procure the most accurate translations, but

[1] Amritsar, Lahore, Gujranwala, Gujrat and Lyallpur

[2] Lord Hunter's Committee

the statements appended to our report may be treated as original, as we checked the witnesses through the translations and made corrections or amendments ourselves, wherever necessary.

We have also studied the records of the trials by Martial Law Commissioners or Summary Courts, in so far as they were available to us, and we have studied the judicial records of several cases that arose during the recruiting period and out of recruiting methods.

In conclusion we desire to place on record our great obligation to the leading men of every place we have visited and the many workers in Lahore and elsewhere who have rendered valuable assistance without which we could not have brought our labours to a close within the time at our disposal.

We are,

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

C. R. DAS

ABBAS S. TAYABJI

M. R. JAYAKAR

Report of the Commissioners Appointed by the Punjab Sub-committee of the Indian National Congress

255. SPEECH AT KHILAFAT MEETING, BANARAS

February 20, 1920

A public Khilafat meeting was held at 3.30 in the afternoon in the Town Hall ground. . . . Among the distinguished visitors, besides Maulanas Shaukat Ali[1] and Abul Kalam Azad, were Mr. Gandhi, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Pandit Motilal Nehru, Lala Harkishen Lal and other Punjab leaders. . . . Hakim Mohamed Husain Khan was voted to the chair. . .

Mr. Gandhi, the lover and beloved of India, rose amidst deafening cheers and dealt with the Khilafat question and Hindu-Muslim unity emphasizing that the two sister communities could have real and true oriental love for one another, while following the dictates of their respective religions. He also narrated the interview that he had with Mr. Candler[2] who had asked him if the Hindus were going to eat and

[1] 1873-1938; Nationalist Muslim politician who along with his brother, Maulana Mohamed Ali, took a leading part in the Khilafat movement

[2] Edmund Candler; well-known English journalist, then Publicity Officer in the Punjab. He wrote some open letters to Gandhiji questioning his attitude towards the Khilafat problem.

drink with the Mussulmans and have intermarriages with them. Mahatmaji said that he had replied to Mr. Candler that for Hindu-Muslim unity it was not at all necessary that there should be intermarriages and one table for Hindus and Mussulmans. He said:

Why did the Germans and English who belonged to the same race and same religion and who entered into marriage bonds, fight with each other, if that was necessary for unity?

Mr. Gandhi appealed in strong terms to the Hindus to help the Mussulmans in the cause of the Khilafat which was a righteous one.

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-2-1920

256. SPEECH AT MEETING OF STUDENTS, BANARAS

February 21, 1920

Mr. Gandhi's address to the Hindu University students under the Vice-Chancellor's presidentship this morning was full of lofty ideals and breathed a high tone of morality. The audience consisted of students and teachers of various other schools also and of ladies. He spoke in Hindi and referred to Tulsidas[1] several times. He exhorted the students to follow absolute honesty which should not be adhered to simply because of policy. He said students in the Punjab had suffered great hardships on account of Martial Law, but they could not be said to have been quite free from blame. Students should study politics but should not be active participatos in it. He said they should have as their ideal *sanyam*[2] and not *swechchachara*,[3] regulated life and not life prompted by self-will. He gave examples of *sanyam* from the life of Bharata[4] . The Hindu University would not justify its existence and its prompters would not feel encouraged if its students failed to live up to the ancient ideal of *sanyam.* He said he knew almost every student of the Gujarat College[5] and some of them found fault with their teachers. Mr. Gandhi acknowledged that teachers had received education in the materialistic system, but the boys should learn to revere them as teachers and not find fault with them. He eulogized the services of Pandit Malaviya to the country and said that his life was an example to teachers and boys.

The Leader, 23-2-1920

[1] A seventeenth-century Hindi poet and saint; author of *Ramacharitamanas*
[2] Self-restraint
[3] Self-indulgence
[4] Younger brother of Rama, the hero of the *Ramayana*
[5] At Ahmedabad

257. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

THE ASHRAM,

Sunday [*February 22. 1920*][1]

MY DEAR CHILD,

I found three love letters form you awaiting me on my return today. I was delighted to note the air of cheerfulness, quiet resignation and trust in God in your letters. The latter you always had in you. But your letters show deeper trust. May your trust go deeper and deeper still till at last you are freed from all doubt and therefore are all joy whatever happens. For as we go forward in our journey of life, we have always problems coming up for decision and they are the hardest when the voice of Satan nearly approaches the voice of God. Only fullest trust and perfect purity and extreme humility can lead us to the right choice.

I hope to be at the Ashram for at least a week and then hope to seek solitude and rest for a fortnight.

I shall certainly miss you tonight at the time of retiring.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

You will be glad to learn that S. 's father has returned your watch. The value lies not in the return but in the motive behind it. You will take it when you return on your way to Denmark.

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child,* p. 59

[1] It is clear from the text that this letter was written on February 22, 1920, the day Gandhiji arrived at the Ashram.

258. LETTER TO NAOROJI KHAMBHATTA

ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Tuesday [*February 23, 1920*][1]

BHAI NAOROJI KHAMBHATTA,

I have your letter. Convey the blessings of us both to Jal at the time of his *navjot*[2].

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

SHRI BEHRAM NAOROJI KHAMBHATTA
IBRAHIM NAOROJI KHAMBHATTA
NO. 8, NAPIER ROAD
CAMP, POONA

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 5800. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

259. HINDU-MOHAMMEDAN UNITY

Mr. Candler some time ago asked me in an imaginary interview whether, if I was sincere in my professions of Hindu-Mohammedan unity, I would eat and drink with a Mohammedan and give my daughter in marriage to a Mohammedan. This question has been asked again by some friends in another form. Is it necessary for Hindu-Mohammedan unity that there should be inter-dining and intermarrying? The questioners say that if the two are necessary, real unity can never take place because crores of *Sanatanis* would never reconcile themselves to inter-dining, much less to inter-marriage.

I am one of those who do not consider caste to be a harmful institution. In its origin caste was a wholesome custom and promoted national well-being. In my opinion the idea that inter-dining or intermarrying is necessary for national growth is a superstition borrowed from the West. Eating is a process just as vital as the other sanitary necessities of life. And if mankind had not, much to its harm, made of eating a fetish and indulgence, we would have performed the operation of eating in private even as one performs the

[1] This date has been taken from the postal cancellation mark on the envelope.

[2] Investiture of a Parsi with the *kasti*, a sacred thread d worn round the waist

other necessary functions of life in private. Indeed the highest culture in Hinduism regards eating in that light and there are thousands of Hindus still living who will not eat their food in the presence of anybody. I can recall the names of several cultured men and women who ate their food in entire privacy but who never had any ill will against anybody and who lived on the friendliest terms with all.

Intermarriage is a still more difficult question. If brothers and sisters can live on the friendliest footing without ever thinking of marrying each other, I can see no difficulty in my daughter regarding every Mohammedan as a brother and *vice versa*. I hold strong views on religion and on marriage. The greater the restraint we exercise with regard to our appetites whether about eating or marrying, the better we become from a religious standpoint. I would despair of ever cultivating amicable relations with the world if I had to recognize the right or the propriety of any young man offering his hand in marriage to my daughter or to regard it as necessary for me to dine with anybody and everybody. I claim that I am living on terms of friendliness with the whole world; I have never quarrelled with a single Mohammedan or Christian, but for years I have taken nothing but fruit in Mohammedan or Christian households. I would most certainly decline to eat cooked food from the same plate with my son or to drink water out of a cup which his lips have touched and which has not been washed. But the restraint or the exclusiveness exercised in these matters by me has never affected the closest com-panionship with the Mohammedan or the Christian friends or my sons.

But inter-dining and intermarriage have never been a bar to disunion, quarrels and worse. The Pandavas[1] and the Kauravas[2] flew at one another's throats without compunction although they inter-dined and intermarried [*sic*]. The bitterness between the English and the Germans has not yet died out.

The fact is that intermarriage and inter-dining are not necessary factors in friendship and unity though they are often emblems thereof. But insistence on either the one or the other can easily become and is today a bar to Hindu-Mohammedan unity. If we make ourselves believe that Hindus and Mohammedans cannot be one unless they inter-dine or intermarry, we would be creating an

[1] The Pandavas, sons of King Pandu, and the Kauravas, sons of King Dhritarashtra, fought against each other the epic battle described in the *Mahabharata*, although they were cousins.

[2] *ibid*

artificial barrier between us which it might be almost impossible to remove. And it would seriously interfere with the growing unity between Hindus and Mohammedans if, for example, Mohammedan youths consider it lawful to court Hindu girls. The Hindu parents will not, even if they [merely] suspected any such thing, freely admit Mohammedans to their homes as they have begun to do now. In my opinion it is necessary for Hindu and Mohammedan young men to recognize this limitation.

I hold it to be utterly impossible for Hindus and Mohammedans to intermarry and yet retain intact each other's religion. And the true beauty of Hindu-Mohammedan unity lies in each remaining true to his own religion and yet being true to each other. For, we are thinking of Hindus and Mohammedans even of the most orthodox type being able to regard one another as natural friends instead of regarding one another as natural enemies as they have done hitherto.

What then does the Hindu-Mohammedan unity consist in and how can it be best promoted? The answer is simple. It consists in our having a common purpose, a common goal and common sorrows. It is best promoted by co-operating to reach the common goal, by sharing one another's sorrows and by mutual toleration. A common goal we have. We wish this great country of ours to be greater and self-governing. We have enough sorrows to share. And today seeing that the Mohammedans are deeply touched on the question of Khilafat and their case is just, nothing can be so powerful for winning Mohammedan friendship for the Hindu as to give his whole-hearted support to the Mohammedan claim. No amount of drinking out of the same cup or dining out of the same bowl can bind the two as this help in the Khilafat question.

And mutual toleration is a necessity for all time and for all races. We cannot live in peace if the Hindu will not tolerate the Mohammedan form of worship of God and his manners and customs or if the Mohammedans will be impatient of Hindu idolatry or cow-worship. It is not necessary for toleration that I must approve of what I tolerate. I heartily dislike drinking, meat-eating and smoking, but I tolerate all these in Hindus, Mohammedans and Christians even as I expect them to tolerate my abstinence from all these although they may dislike it. All the quarrels between the Hindus and the Mohammedans have arisen from each wanting to force the other to his view.

Young India, 25-2-1920

260. SPEECH AT MEETING OF MILL-HANDS, AHMEDABAD[1]

February 25, 1920

We have assembled here today to set up a union of workers, to approve its rules and adopt the necessary resolutions.

Before we start on this work, I must tell you that we should be perfectly clear about the aim of the organization we have undertaken to set up. About two or three years ago, revered Anasuyabehn[2] had thought of founding a union of weavers and she had even taken some steps in that direction. But my advice to her then was that it was responsible work and that, though we may have taken it up with the idea of serving the workers, if later we failed to shoulder the responsibility adequately we might, instead of serving the workers, do them much harm. I do not mean to say that I am free of that fear today, but it is becoming plain to me that, in some ways, conditions in India are changing so much that we would do well to watch these changes carefully, study them and set up some such organizations by way of protection. All I want you to understand is that, if we do not have, for running our organizations, sincere workers who know their duties well, we would be bringing down the axe on our own feet. If such workers are not available, we had better not take up the difficult business of running a union. This is exactly what I said two years ago, and I repeat it here today.

All manner of movements are going on these days among the workers of our country. In all the countries ruled by the British and the European States, there is such chaos after the War that, if the workers fail to look after and safeguard their interests, they would be crushed. Today, those people who cannot stand together as a nation and do not keep in step with other nations will find it impossible to survive. The very machinery of Government is such that anyone who refuses to play his part in it and remains ignorant of his interests is sure to be wiped out. In former times, there was no need for us to know what the king was doing, no need even to mention his name. It was enough then if one paid the revenue dues in time, gave a bold

[1] The workers of the spinning departments of various mills had met to consider the formation of a labour union.

[2] Anasuyabehn Sarabhai, a social worker and labour leader of Ahmedabad

answer on occasion or bought survival for the moment with a bribe. Today one cannot get away in this way. Whether we want it or not, we are so intimately connected with the administration that, if we do not learn to look closely into affairs and understand our interests, we are bound to be crushed. It is for this reason that I, though religiously inclined and having no interest in politics whatever, have been busy for the last several months with nothing but politics. The sole reason for this is that I doubt whether I would be able to follow my dharma without thus participating in political affairs. And this is exactly the point I wish to explain to you in simple words, namely, that the workers have no option but in some measure to interest themselves in politics.

Formerly, we knew only our fields. There were neither mills, nor mill-owners, nor laws governing them. All these things have come in now. We should therefore know what they are. There are laws of dharma and of family life. We do not, however, call them laws because they provide for no punishment or fine. Now the time has come when no single individual can do us good, nor harm us either. We shall have to manage our affairs ourselves. It may so happen, in all this, that our representatives in the Government or the legislature may cut our throats for us while professing to speak for us. For this reason, too, we shall have to understand these matters. We shall have to learn how to bring up our children, shall have to discover the reasons why the facilities for their education are poor and know why the prices of food grains rise. The mothers present here will also have to learn how to bring up their children. The time will come when it will be compulsory for us to send our children to the schools which will be opened. If we do not exert ourselves to understand how these things work, to our advantage or otherwise, if we do not learn to be independent of others, we are as good as dead. We have always had unions of *Vanias*[1] and Brahmins, even of Kshatriyas, of a slightly different kind. Now the time is ripe for unions of workers in which weavers, smiths, and spinners may come together and establish unity among their ranks, may discover what is good in themselves and what is bad and remedy the latter. I caution you once again; by all means set up organizations, establish your unions, but see that you frame your rules and select your representatives, men to whom you will entrust your interests, with a full understanding of your responsibility.

[1] Members of a mercantile community

You will keep a watch over them not only about the finances and the management of your affairs, but also to know what they have actually done in your name and where they have signed on your behalf. You will have to go into all these things.

I want to tell you another thing. To those of you who believe that the unions we are establishing are for the purpose of fighting or coercing the mill-owners or that we shall be able to use these unions for such purposes, I would advise not to join the proposed union at all. I have never done anything in my life to coerce owners or harm their interests, and I will never allow myself to be an instrument in this. Only, if they try to suppress the workers, I will be ready to give up my life to save them. Neither the revered Anasuyabehn nor Shankarlal [1] has the slightest ill will for the mill-owners. I know well enough that they only love service of the workers. Hence it is that, whenever I get the chance, I join them in this service of theirs and I tell them over and over again on this occasion that, if they would truly serve the workers, they should have regard for the interests of both the workers and the mill-owners. The mill-owners do not need anyone's services. The workers are poor, timid and simple minded and need others' services. By establishing unions, we do not wish to intimidate the mill-owners but to protect the workers, and we certainly have the right to do this.

If the workers find it necessary today to send their wives and children to work in factories, it is our duty to see that they do not have to. There ought to be no need for workers' children to go and work, at the cost of their education, for the sake of an extra income of three to four ru-pees. Work is not for children. Nor is it for women to work in factories. They have plenty of work in their own homes. They should attend to the bringing up of their children; they may give peace to the husband when he returns home tired, minister to him, soothe him if he is angry, and do any other work they can staying at home. If we want our family life to be comely and sweet, we ought to do this. It is not for women to go out and work, as men do. If we send them to the factories, who will look after our domestic and social affairs? If women go out to work, our social life will be ruined and moral standards will decline. To those who advance the example of Europe, asking how it is that thousands of women there do the work

[1] Shankarlal Banker, a political and labour leader of Ahmedabad. He was also associated with *Young India* and *Navajivan,* and with the Home Rule League and the Satyagraha Sabha, Bombay.

of men and that men and women work together, my reply is: 'I don't bother myself about Europe.' From what little insight into the laws of social life I have gained, I feel convinced that for men and women to go out for work together will mean the fall of both. Do not, therefore, send your women out to work; protect their honour; if you have any manliness in you, it is for you to see that no one casts an evil eye on them. Today the workers, in their helplessness, are forced to send their women and children out for work, much against their will. It is true, of course, that they should have better wages if they are not to be so obliged. All this could be easy to achieve through a union, if established.

Thus, in setting up a union of this kind, you have to apply your mind and decide about three things:

1. You should go through the laws of labour unions.

2. The mill-owners should not have undue authority over workers.

3. For joining the union, will have to pay an entrance fee and a monthly subscription afterwards.

Moreover, if you receive more money, you will have to think what you will do with it. It would be better for me that I do not receive this money if I were to lose this extra money in a tavern, or drink tea or eat fritters with it. Personally, I would prefer to give some relief to my wife and educate her; if I had more money still, I would engage a lady-teacher for her, educate my children, get my clothes washed, change my damp and dirty house for a better one; if I do this, I would have received the extra money to good purpose. If we could do all these things through a union, it would be a good thing to establish one. But I am still doubtful, and I tell you again and again that, if we forget all this, we who wish to serve you, and you as well, will be wicked creatures in our next birth.

There was a time when all people were religiously inclined. By joining and sharing in all these activities, I have been trying if, even in this way, the religious temper may somehow be revived in the people of this country. It is my firm belief that we shall be saved in these hard times if this comes about; else we are doomed. This religious temper is not very difficult to cultivate. It is the simplest of things and can be cultivated most easily. I tell you, in a word, that he who gives a free rein to his desires is self-indulgent, and has no regard for self-control, that such a one is far removed from religion. He who

wrongs none, who never robs anyone of a single farthing, he understands what dharma means. If we turn ourselves into drunkards, rogues and knaves, our living, or earning will all be in vain. If we become truthful, good, straightforward, courteous and religiously inclined, we shall have lived indeed. Let our unions be established; they will foster understanding and unity among us. We shall be able to work systematically. I know that the mill-owners want a union to be formed. Today, each has some difficulty or other to solve, and complaints to attend to, individually. If there were a union, matters could be discussed with the office-bearers and settled in orderly fashion. Thus, a union is to the advantage of both the parties; give the fullest thought, therefore, to the matter before you proceed further.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-2-1920

261. LETTER TO REGISTRAR, HIGH COURT, BOMBAY[1]

THE SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 27, 1920

THE REGISTRAR
HIGH COURT
BOMBAY

DEAR SIR,

I enclose herewith the statement I wish to read or submit to the court on the 3rd proximo, the date fixed for taking the Rule *Nisi*[2] issued against me. I enclose also Mr. Mahadeo Desai's statement.

Yours [faithful]ly,

[ENCLOSURES]

[GANDHIJI'S STATEMENT]

With reference to the Rule *Nisi* issued against me I state as follows:

[1] The drafts of this letter and of both the statements enclosed are in Gandhiji's hand.

[2] Issued in the proceedings for Contempt of Court against Gandhiji as editor and Mahadev Desai as publisher of *Young India*, Bombay, which, on August 6, 1919, printed with comments a letter from B. C. Kennedy, District Judge of Ahmedabad, to the Registrar, High Court, Bombay. *Vide* also "Was It Contempt of Court?", 10-3-1920.

Before the issue of the Rule certain correspondence passed between the Registrar of this Honourable Court and myself. On the 11th December I addressed to the Registrar a letter[1] which sufficiently explains my conduct. I therefore attach a copy of the said letter. I regret that I have not found it possible to accept the advice[2] given by His Lordship the Chief Justice.

I am sure that this Honourable Court would not want me to tender an apology unless it be sincere and express regret for an action which I have held to be the privilege and duty of a journalist. I shall therefore cheerfully and respectfully accept the punishment that this Honourable Court may be pleased to impose upon me for the vindication of the majesty of law.

I wish to say with reference to the notice served on Mr. Mahadeo Desai, the publisher, that he published it simply upon my request and advice.[3]

[MAHADEV DESAI'S STATEMENT]

With reference to the Rule *Nisi* served upon me I beg to state that I have read the statement made by the Editor of *Young India* and associate myself with the reasoning adopted by the Editor in justification of his action. I shall therefore cheerfully and respectfully abide by an[y] penalty that the Honourable Court may be pleased to inflict on me. Moreover I have been unable to accept the advice because I do not consi-der that I have committed either a legal or a moral breach by publishing Mr. Kennedy's letter or by commenting upon the contents thereof.

From a copy: S. N. 7128

[1] For the text of this letter, *Vide* "Letter to Registrar, High Court, Bombay", 11-12-1919

[2] To apologize in the form suggested by him

[3] The statement as reproduced in *Young India*, 10-3-1920, ends here.

262. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI [1]

Phagan Sud 8 [*February 27, 1920*][2]

I got your letter yesterday. I hope to arrive there on Monday[3]. Hence I do not write myself, but just dictate a brief reply. I feel completely exhausted today and so am lying down. With some rest, however, I think I shall feel somewhat better. When you served me like a good son, how could it ever be that I felt dissatisfied ? Because of you, I moved everywhere with no anxiety about my correspondence.[4] Had you not been there, Devdas would have fallen ill and I also would have had to abandon so many of the things I could do. More on Monday.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi

263. SPEECH AT AHMEDABAD

February 27, 1920

Perhaps all of you know that for some time past I have been something of an invalid and I shall, therefore, address you sitting. I hope you will excuse me for doing so.

I find my name, too, included in the list of speakers at this meeting. I have been assigned the duty of thanking Sarladevi and the Chairman.[5] The sister who addressed you today and the Chairman are known to me very well and it gives me great pleasure, therefore, to perform this duty.

I am, personally, a beggar. In my begging, I especially seek out sisters. Men I have found everywhere. But I try especially to seek out sisters, for I know that, unless our sisters in the country give their blessings to the brothers, India's progress is impossible. In Ahmedabad, particularly, I have found such a sister. At Bombay,

[1] 1894-1951; grandson of Gandhiji's step-sister; author, and follower of Gandhiji; secretary, Bombay Congress Committee, 1922-3; member, Bombay Municipal Corporation, 1923-5, and later Mayor

[2] Footnote 2 on page 54 of Mathuradas's *Atmanirikshana* indicates that the meeting which Gandhiji suggests in the letter took place on March 3, 1920.

[3] Gandhiji reached Bombay on Wednesday, March 3, 1920.

[4] Mathuradas worked as Gandhiji's secretary in Bombay in 1919 and accompanied him when he toured the Punjab in January and February, 1920.

[5] Sir Ramanbhai Mahipatram Nilkanth

Madras and elsewhere, too, I have found someone or other. In the Punjab, I found Sarladevi. I first came to know her in 1910 and then I saw the husband and wife again in Hardwar. Sarladevi invited me to the Punjab. I accepted the invitation but felt nervous. At the time she extended it, she was separated from her husband. That made me wonder whether it would be proper for me to accept her hospitality. However, I look upon it as my good fortune if I can share others' suffering and so I stayed with her in the Punjab. I had from her as much service as from one's own sister and thus became her debtor.

If any sister carries my message to the country, I would bow to her in all reverence. But, at the moment, I want to tell you that she has delivered to you not my message but Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari's. On an occasion such as this, this lady, ever doting on her husband, thought only of conveying her husband's message , and so put him on a pedestal. Well, Chowdhariji's message is the message of the entire Punjab. It asks you never to fear, never to accept defeat come what may, to love God and work on with patience and fortitude. We would do well to inscribe this message in our hearts.

I go after good men as I do after good women. This Chairman at today's meeting is known for his simplicity, his amiable nature and other fine qualities. He has added to the achievements of his father and earned greater fame for himself. As a reformer as also in other capacities, Shri Ramanbhai has done much. If we learn his virtues and achieve something, that will be doing a great deal.

I once again thank Sarladevi and the Chairman on behalf of you all.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-3-1920

264. A LETTER[1]

[After *February 27, 1920*][2]

DEAR SIR,

I enclose herewith a copy of the statements[3] sent by me to the Registrar of the High Court and which I propose to read before the Honourable Court on the 3rd proximo when the Rule *Nisi* issued against me is to be taken. I enclose, too, a copy of Mr. M. H. Desai's statement.

Yours [*faithful*]*ly*

From a copy: S. N. 7128

265. PUNJAB LETTER

LEFT THE PUNJAB

I am writing this letter sitting in the Ashram, after prayers. How can a letter written in the Ashram be called a Punjab Letter? I take the liberty of calling it so because my soul is still in the Punjab. I find it impossible to forget the frankness and the plain living of the Punjabis, their simplicity and magnanimity of heart, nor can I forget their sufferings. I feel that I have been purified by sharing, in however small a measure, in their tribulations. I can now better understand the greatness of the religion of compassion and love sung by Tulsidas. If I get time, I shall take some occasion to place before readers certain concrete instances of how that dharma is being followed.

However, my heart being still in the Punjab is not sufficient justification for calling this a Punjab Letter. This letter, though written outside, will be mainly about the Punjab and for that reason can rightly be called a Punjab Letter.

PILGRIMAGE TO KASHI

Last week I described the journey to the Gujrat district of the Punjab. After this no more journeys were necessary for the purpose of the Committee's report . It was time, moreover, that the report was

[1] Addressee not known

[2] Judging from the contents, this was written after 'Letter to Registrar, High Court, Bombay", 27-2-1920.

[3] *Vide* enclosure to "Letter to Registrar, High Court, Bombay", 27-2-1920.

finalized. The question was where the Commissioners[1] should assemble to read it over. Kashi was likely to suit Pandit Motilal Nehru, Mr. C. R. Das and Pandit Malaviya. It was decided, therefore, that all should go to Kashi. Mr. Jayakar was already in Lahore. He, together with Mr. Santanam, Dr. Parasram and Lala Harikishen Lal left Lahore for Kashi on the 15th. On the way, Lala Girdhari Lal joined them at Amritsar. Dr. Jivaraj Mehta[2] also came along to look after me. We reached Kashi on the 16th. I was deeply gratified to see Pandit Malaviya and our pious and scholarly Bhai Anandshankar Dhruva[3] on the platform.

The duty of drafting the report had been laid on me and I had not been able to complete the drafting in Lahore. I had, therefore, to spend the entire time in writing it out and the other Commissioners in reading what I had written. The commissioners guarded me and saved me out of their great affection. This is a memory which I shall ever cherish. Malaviyaji's love is something I cannot describe. He literally stood guard and, although our relations are such that we would scarcely allow a moment to pass without talking about the virtue of service, we both controlled ourselves and refrained from conversation. I wanted very much to have a talk with Anandshankar and listen to his experiences in Kashi but had to restrain myself. It was in this sanctifying and loving atmosphere that the report was completed. We may now confidently expect that it will be published in the beginning of March.

SUNRISE

We were staying with Panditji on the banks of the Ganga. Dawn and sunrise are impressive everywhere, but from these banks the sight was simply sublime. As the clouds brightened with the light of dawn, a golden sheen would appear on the waters of the Ganga and, when the sun had come into view over the horizon, there seemed to stand in the water of the river a great pillar of gold. It was a scene on which the eyes would rest with supreme satisfaction and make the pious devotee burst forth spontaneously into the *gayatri*[4] hymn. After

[1] Appointed by the Punjab Sub-committee of the Congress; *vide* "Letter to Motilal Nehru", 20-2-1920.

[2] An eminent physician who later became the first Chief Minister of Gujarat State

[3] Vice-Chancellor, Banaras Hindu university

[4] Vedic prayer to the sun-god for illumination

witnessing this magnificent sight, I felt I understood a little better the worship of the sun, the adoration of the rivers and the significance of the *gayatri* hymn.

Walking on that spot, I was filled with pride for our country and our traditions but at the same time, as I thought of the present conditions, I felt sad. I observed people defecating on the very banks of the river. We no more go out to the jungle but, instead, go to the river bank. In this holy spot, it should be possible for us to walk barefoot with our eyes closed, whereas one has to walk here with the greatest caution. One also feels disgust to sip the Ganga water at this spot. Before I had finished thinking of the filth of this spot, I was reminded of the Kashi Vishvanath temple. The narrow lane leading to the temple, the stink, the heap of rotting flowers which I had seen there, the harshness and the lack of cleanliness of the Brahmin priests—as I thought of all these, I heaved a sigh and remembered the cause of degradation of the Hindus. From this my mind turned to Panditji and his work. He will be judged in future by the success of the Kashi University. Will he pass the test? I remembered his piety, his sacrifices, his magnificent service to Bharatvarsha[1]. Dhruvaji[2] is his right hand. Remembering that the affairs of the university were in the hands of two such pious men, I felt reassured. I thought that, if the students of this university grew to be religious and learned men, there was room to hope for cleanliness in the temple and on the banks of the Ganga. Whether the university has this capacity or not, it is the task of every Hindu to find ways to remove the inner and outer defilement that has crept into the Hindu religion and every Hindu, even sitting in his own home, can make a start this very day. If each one was scrupulous about his own cleanliness, the Kashi Vishvanath would soon be as clean as we could wish.

STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY

Having been commanded by Panditji to say a few words to the students, I spoke before them at 7.30 on the morning of my departure, and gave them my ideas about student life[3]. The student's stage of life is similar to the sannyasi's and his life should, therefore, be pure and celibate. Today two cultures are competing for the students' attention—the ancient and the modern. Self-restraint was the

[1] India
[2] Anandshanker Dhruva
[3] *Vide* "Speech at Meeting of Students, Banaras", 21-2-1920.

key-note of the former. Ancient culture tells us that a man advances in the measure that he deliberately and with full knowledge reduces his wants. Modern civilization teaches us that man progresses by increasing his wants. The difference between self-restraint and self-indulgence is the difference between dharma and *adharma*[1]. The ideal of self-restraint attaches less importance to the outward life than to the inner. There is a danger that in place of the ancient culture based on self-restraint, the modern civilization of self-indulgence will be accepted. Students can play decisive part in averting this danger. University students will be judged, not by their knowledge, but solely by their good conduct. Religious education and ethical conduct should be given the first place in this university. This requires the fullest co-operation from the students. Panditji himself is a man of piety and virtue. By bringing another man of similar qualities, viz., Anandshankar, he has provided an opportunity to the students. I should like them to make the best use of this opportunity and adorn their learning with dharma. These were the thoughts I placed before them on that morning. I have repeatedly expressed these ideas, in one form or another, at several places, and a summary of these same ideas which I explained to the students of Kashi University on getting this happy opportunity, I now lay before readers of *Navajivan* for them to think over. I am convinced that we cannot profit from political reforms unless we also give thought to religion. Religion will not be revived through these reforms. Rather, it is religion which will supply what the reforms may lack.

GUJARATIS IN KASHI

I did not know till today that a large number of Gujaratis lived in Kashi. Anandshankarbhai got me an opportunity of meeting them. Panditji was also present. The Gujaratis showed their sense of propriety by using this occasion for presenting an address to him. While offering my thanks to them, I put a few suggestions before them. I advised them to send back to Gujarat those defects which were regarded as typical of Gujaratis, and bank only on their good qualities. By so doing they would bring credit both to Gujarat and to the country. In practical affairs, every man encounters numerous moral difficulties. At such times, a friend becomes a necessity. This they had in the person of Anandshankarbhai. I hoped that they would take ample advantage of his presence among them. Proceeding

[1] Irreligion

from Kashi to Delhi, I met the Hon'ble Srinivasa Sastri and, bringing Sarladevi[1] along with me, I was back in the Ashram on the 23rd.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-2-1920

266. HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

It would be no exaggeration to say that the unity which prevails today between the Hindus and the Muslims is unparallelled in the present age. We all desire that it should remain undisturbed. However, unless our desire is backed up by efforts to that end, this unity cannot be kept up, nor can it be strengthened.

There is no doubt that, if it has been brought about to serve self-interest, it will not continue once the interests have been served. We should therefore examine the reasons for this growth in unity.

Many of my friends question me about it. Some misunderstandings may be removed if I repeat here the answer I gave them.

Some of them feel I am not well-advised to take a leading part on the Khilafat issue. One party asserts that it is impossible to overcome the bitter hostility between the Hindus and the Muslims. I do not wish to answer this question here. I can only observe that, if we keep raising such questions it will become impossible for us to solve many of our complicated problems. It is said the human effort can achieve anything and we see that indeed it does. If so, we need not assume that the problem is incapable of solution.

Another party argues that, though the Khilafat may well be a religious issue for Muslims, they do not have justice on their side. How are we concerned with Turkey? There is no limit to the injustices perpetrated by that country. What good will it do to the world to restore its tyrannical rule? A number of similar questions are raised. I shall try to answer them all some other time, but the main points I shall examine now. I believe that, on the Khilafat issue, the Muslim stand is entirely just. If it were purely a case of religious feelings and these feelings did not appeal to our reason, I admit that we would in no wise be bound to help them in the matter. Even apart from the religious issues involved in the Khilafat, the Muslims are still on the path of justice. The Allies had accepted, and so had President Wilson, the principle that the boundaries of the different countries as they

[1] Sarladevi Chowdhrani

existed when the War started should remain intact, and that no country should be made to suffer by way of punishment. The Muslims want them to abide by this principle. They demand that the territories held by Turkey in August 1914 be restored to her, that Arabia and the holy places of Islam remain under the control of the Khalifa, and they say that they would not mind the Sultan being asked to furnish reasonable guarantees for the protection of his Christian and Jewish subjects, consistent with his dignity. The Arabs may remain free. I find none of these demands unreasonable. They meet the objec-tion based on the alleged oppression by Turkey. There have been promises by British ministers[1] to this effect. If, now, the Muslims do not get what was promised, they will suffer grave injustice and their religious feelings will be hurt. Hence I feel that, if we wish to do our duty by our neighbours, it is incumbent on us to help our Muslim brethren.

The orthodox Hindus, however, tell me : 'All right, we shall help them. But nowadays Hindus drink water from the same glass, sit at meals together with them and talk of Hindus and Muslims giving their sons and daughters in marriage to one another.' This is a genuine fear among the orthodox Hindus, but there is no good reason for entertaining it. In order that we may help them on the Khilafat issue, there is absolutely no need to drink water from the same glass, sit together at meals or give sons and daughters in marriage. Unity will come about only when the Hindu, while scrupulously following his own religion, regards the Muslim as his brother. I do not love my son the less though I wash clean the glass he has used, or do not allow him to drink from my glass without washing it . A brother and a sister do not marry, but where else shall we find such pure love as exists between them? Many Hindus do not marry in the same *gotra*[2] but this does not detract from their unity. Really speaking, if we consider such freedom in matters of drinking, eating and marriage essential for unity, then unity between Hindus and Muslims will never come about. Hence, whenever I hear that a Hindu and a Muslim drank from the same glass or ate from the same plate, I feel sorry because an orthodox Hindu is bound to be hurt even on hearing of these things. It would be an entirely different matter if there is some good reason why we should not mind hurting them. When, however, drinking

[1] Asquith and Lloyd George
[2] Lineage on the male side

water from the same glass implies no unity, to give prominence to the act as an expression of unity is creating an obstacle in the way of unity. I personally believe that we have given false importance to eating and thus invited disease and starvation, and made self-control difficult. The act of eating is no different from that of excretion; both are unclean and should be performed in private. Because we enjoy eating, we indulge in the pleasure openly and have abandoned shame in this matter as well. I feel that we would do well to emulate those strict Hindus who eat in private, just that they might preserve the body, taking God's name the while. Maybe I am mistaken; I only want to prove that, for promoting Hindu-Muslim unity, it is not necessary to drink and eat in company. By raising this question , we put an obstacle in the way of unity.

Let us now consider the question of marriages. Many Hindus and Muslims eat together of their own free will and Hindu society tolerates this. But nowhere do we find marriages as between Hindus and Muslims; if such a thing were to be encouraged, the Hindu religion would die out. I think it impossible for a Hindu and a Muslim to marry and yet follow his or her own religion properly. Men devoid of the religious feeling live to no good purpose. If we would keep this feeling pure, there can be no question of marriages between Hindus and Muslims. If Hindus and Muslims keep up unity between themselves by being in different to their respective religions, such unity is not real; it is not unity as between Hindus and Muslims, and what we wish for is Hindu-Muslim unity. If we wish to achieve it and would preserve it, we should forget for ever the idea of marriages between Hindus and Muslims. I should think that the zealous Muslims feel the same way. A Muslim can never marry a Hindu who remains a Hindu. What religion will the offspring of such union follow? One spouse must accept the religion of the other or they should both live without religion, or found a new creed. In none of these lies Hindu-Muslim unity. My dream is that a *Vaishnava*[1], with a mark on his forehead and a bead necklace, or an ash-smeared Hindu with a *rudraksha*[2] necklace, ever so punctilious in his *sandhya*[3] and ablutions, and a pious Muslim saying his *namaz*[4] regularly can live as brothers. God willing, the dream will be

[1] Member of the *Vaishnava* sect among the Hindus; a worshipper of Vishnu

[2] Literally “Shiva's eye”; seed of a tree sacred to Lord Shiva

[3] Morning and evening prayers

[4] Prayer

realized.

Well may some friend, his mind clouded with doubts, remark that, if help on the Khilafat issue can promote unity, there should be a similar bond between a lawyer and client. I see two fallacies in this doubt. The clients in India are so poor in spirit that they even worship the lawyer whom they have paid. A lawyer, then, who wants no return can easily buy his client as a slave. Those who have never seen Dadabhai[1], even such Indians, suffering from leprosy, with whom Dadabhai would never sit for a meal, worship that lawyer. Gokhale's[2] gratuitous pleading has gained him immortality. If twenty-two crores of Hindus intelligently plead for the Muslims on the Khilafat issue, I believe that they would for ever win the vote of the eight crores of Muslims.

I stayed at Maulana Bari[3] Saheb's with love. He sent for a Brahmin cook for me and even had my milk warmed by him. He is a non-vegetarian but he did not let me catch even a glimpse of meat in his house. Because of his observing such decorum, our friendship was strengthened, not weakened.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-2-1920

267. NOTES

MRS. BESANT INSULTED

We find that, at the meeting held[4] in Bombay to welcome Lalaji[5], many from among the audience insulted Mrs. Besant[6]. We were deeply grieved to hear this. When we are looking forward to a new

[1] Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917); thrice elected president, Indian National Congress; first to enunciate swaraj as objective of the Congress

[2] Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915); educationist and politician; president of the Congress, 1905; founder of Servants of India Society; successfully pleaded the cause of indentured Indian labourers

[3] Abdul Bari (1838-1926); nationalist Muslim divine; took active part in the Khilafat movement and urged his followers to refrain from cow-slaughter

[4] On February 20, 1920

[5] Lala Lajpat Rai (1865-1928); nationalist leader of the Punjab. He arrived in Bombay on February 20, 1920, after being away from India for six years and was accorded a great welcome.

[6] Annie Besant (1847-1933); philosopher and political leader; president of Theosophical Society, 1907-33; left in 1919 the Indian Home Rule League founded by her in 1916

and beautiful life in India, employing the weapons of rudeness and contempt against people who hold views different from ours will obstruct our progress. In public life, courtesy, respect and toleration for opponents are indispensable. The insult to Mrs. Besant brings disgrace to us. The incom-parable service which this good lady had in a few years' time rendered to india, very few Indians have done. Maybe at present her views do not appeal to us, maybe we see her errors all the time; even so, by insulting one who has rendered such magnificent service to India, —one who. in her old age, displays enthusiasm worthy of youth, still continues to contribute her share for the advancement of India--we insult ourselves. It is our duty to clear the air immediately of this noxious wind of rudeness.

MRS. SARLADEVI CHOWDHRANI

Sarladevi has been in Ahmedabad for some time and hence it will not be out of place to give some additional information about her to readers of *Navajivan.* In a general way, all have heard of Sarladevi, but only as an erudite lady doing public service. To be more specific about her, she is a niece of Sir Rabindranath Tagore, daughter of the well-known former secretary of the Congress, Mr. Ghosal and wife of the famous Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari of the Punjab. She completed her B.A. at the age of 19, and from then onwards has been engaged in public service in one form or another. It was she who started the Bengali monthly, named *Bharati,* and it is said that she showed in it the great power of her pen. Her poetic power is of a high order and her sweet song "I bow to India", which was sung in Banaras, is known all over the country. Shrimati Sarladevi took a leading part in establishing committees in Bengal and, when the War broke out, and it came to telling the educated Bengalis that they should join the army and do their duty, few were as effective as this lady. We see her hand in the public movement in the Punjab too. Her musical talent perhaps exceeds her gift for poetry and she is, therefore, in demand at every Congress. Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari himself has some poetic gift. One of his poems is very powerful and popular as well. It is in Gurumukhi[1] and is sung by thousands of men. It was sung at the Congress[2] , Sarladevi having trained some boys and girls for the purpose. It can almost serve as the song of satyagrahis and we publish it, therefore, on the opening page

[1] A script in use in the Punjab; here, the Punjabi language

[2] At its Amritsar session in December 1919

of this issue, with the meanings of the difficult words.

PROPAGATION OF SWADESHI IN NADIAD

To propagate swadeshi in Nadiad, a company named the "Swadeshi Bhandar Limited" has been formed. It has ten shares of a lakh each and ten thousand shares of ten rupees each. This enterprise has been launched with the purpose of supplying sufficient cloth to those who have taken the vows of pure and of mixed swadeshi in Nadiad and other places and for popularizing hand-spun, hand-woven cloth. The company's profit is restricted to a maximum of six and a quarter per cent and the commission for the agents has been fixed at 25 per cent on the net profit. This venture has been started not with the object of making profit, but solely for the purpose of propagating swadeshi, and the friends who will manage it have joined it, we believe, wholly with the idea of service. We have, therefore, welcomed this enterprise. The organizers hope that, instead of a few persons buying up the shares, a large number will buy a few shares each. It is also their aim to permit no speculation in the name of this company and no transfer of shares purely for such purpose. The shareholders, too, it is hoped, will not subscribe with the sole object of earning heavy interest but entirely with the idea of encouraging swadeshi. A company formed with such restrictions ought to be welcomed. We, therefore, hope that people of ordinary means will buy shares in this company and encourage this enterprise, and also that the organizers, despite any difficulties they may have to face, will never give up the aims they have set before them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-2-1920

268. LETTER TO L. FRENCH

[CALCUTTA,][1]

February 29, 1920

DEAR MR. FRENCH,

I beg to thank you for your letter of the 19th instant in reply to mine[2] regarding the recruiting methods in Shahpur. I feel grateful to

[1] Although this letter is written on Gandhiji's personal letter-paper bearing his Sabarmati address, it must, in fact, have been written from Calcutta, for he was there on February 29, 1920.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to L. French", 15-2-1920.

His Honour[1] for the assurance that he will investigate the matter. I am sorry that there has been some unavoidable delay in sending the statements that were taken before me. I left them to be translated in Lahore with instructions to send them immediately after translation. I am expecting them every day and as soon as I receive them, I shall forward them for His Honour's perusal.

I may mention that the punitive police is still posted at Lak Tahsil Sargodha, at Bahk Lurkhan, at Kot Inoman and at Kot Ranja in Tahsil Bhalwal. Whatever the final opinion about the statements may be, I trust that punitive police will be withdrawn at the earliest moment.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: S. N. 7125

269. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[About *February 29, 1920*][2]

BHAI MAHADEV,

Do what I will, I cannot find time for a long letter to you. Dr. Mehta[3] casually told me about your health. I came here in connection with Khilafat work and am returning to Ahmedabad. God alone knows when I shall join you in Sinhgadh.[4] I believe Anandanand[5] writes to you frequently.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 11410

[1] The Lt.-Governor of the Punjab

[2] The letter seems to have been written from Calcutta, where Gandhiji attended the Khilafat Conference on February 29, 1920. He was back in Ahmedabad on March

[3] Jivraj Mehta

[4] Gandhiji reached Sinhgadh on March 26, 1920.

[5] Swami Anandanand; manager of the Navajivan Press during the decade after the publication of *Navajivan* was commenced from Ahmedabad in September 1919

270. THE AMRITSAR APPEALS[1]

So these appeals have been dismissed in spite of the advocacy of the best counsel that was obtainable. The Privy Council has confirmed lawless procedure. I must confess that the judgment does not come upon me quite as a surprise, though the remarks of the judges, as Sir Simon was developing his argument on behalf of the appellants, led one to expect a favourable verdict. My opinion, based upon a study of political cases, is that the judgments even of the highest tribunals are not unaffected by subtle political considerations. The most elaborate precautions taken to procure a purely judicial mind must break down at critical moments. The Privy Council cannot be free from the limitations of all human institutions which are good enough only for normal conditions. The consequences of a decision favourable to the people would have exposed the Indian Government to indescribable discredit from which it would have been difficult [for it] to free itself for a generation.

Its political significance can be gauged from the fact that as soon as the news was received in Lahore all the preparations that were made to accord a fitting welcome to Lala Lajpat Rai were immediately cancelled and the capital of the Punjab was reported to be in deep mourning. Deeper discredit, therefore, now attaches to Government by reason of the judgment, because rightly or wrongly the popular opinion will be that there is no justice under the British Constitution when large political or racial considerations are involved.

There is only one way to avoid the catastrophe. The human and especially the Indian mind quickly responds to generosity. I hope that without the necessity of an agitation or petitions the Punjab Government or the Central Government will immediately cancel the death sentences and, if at all possible, simultaneously set the appellants free.

This is required by two considerations, each equally important. The first is that of restoring public confidence which I have already mentioned. The second is fulfilment of the Royal Proclamation[2] to the letter. That great political document orders the

[1] On July 24, 1919, the Privy Council had granted leave of appeal to 21 citizens of Amritsar convicted by the Court Martial at Lahore in connection with the Amritsar riots of April 1919. They appealed on the ground that the Viceroy had no power to issue the Martial Law ordinances and that the procedure followed by Summary Courts was irregular.

[2] Of December 1919

release of all the political offenders who may not by their release prove a danger to society. No one can possibly suggest that the twenty-one appellants will, if they are set free, in any shape or form constitute a danger to society. They never had committed any crimes before. Most of them were regarded as respectable and orderly citizens. They were not known to belong to any revolutionary society. If they committed any crimes at all, they were committed only under the impulse of the moment and under what to them was grave provocation. Moreover, the public believe that the majority of the convictions by the Martial Law Tribunals were unsupported by any good evidence. I, therefore, hope that the Government, which have so far been doing well in discharging political offenders even when they were caught in the act, will not hesitate to release these appellants and thus earn the goodwill of the whole of India. It is an act of generosity done in the hour of triumph which is the most effective. And in the popular opinion this dismissal of the appeal has been regarded as a triumph for the Government.

I would respectfully plead with the Punjab friends not to lose heart. We must calmly prepare ourselves for the worst. If the convictions are good, if the men convicted have been guilty of murders or incitements to murder, why should they escape punishment? If they have not committed these crimes as we believe most at least have not, why should we escape the usual fate of all who are trying to rise a step higher? Why should we fear the sacrifice if we would rise? No nations have ever risen without sacrifice and sacrifice can only be spoken of in connection with innocence and not with crime.

Young India, 3-3-1920

271. TELEGRAM TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

BOMBAY,
March 3, 1920

ANASUYABEHN
MIRZAPUR
AHMEDABAD
JUDGMENT RESERVED INDEFINITELY.[1] LOVE. REACHING SUNDAY.

GANDHI

From the original: S.N. 32781

[1] The judgment in the Contempt of Court case against Gandhiji and Mahadev Desai was delivered on March 12. For Gandhiji's article on the subject, *Vide* "What is Contempt of Court", 10-3-1920.

272. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

BOMBAY,
*Wednesday [*March *3*] [1] *1920*

MY DEAR CHILD,

The case is going on, and as I have a few minutes' interval, I want to give you a few lines.

You are constantly in my mind. Sometimes I even feel uneasy when I think of our chats and when I think that in some things I might have appeared harsh when I had wanted to be gentle. One's speech cannot be judged by one's intentions but only [by] the effect it produced on the hearer. Are you happy and joyful ? How are you in body?

I would like you to return Mr. Banker's trunk. If you need another, you may take one in Madras. You will let me have your programme, of course.

The case is finished and the judgment has been reserved. I have sent you a telegram[2] .

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child*, pp. 66-7

273. SPEECH AT KHILAFAT MEETING, BOMBAY[3]

March 3, 1920

I am not strong enough to stand and speak. I have spoken often on this issue. It is my belief that nothing can be done to us against our will. They are bound to respect our wishes. I saw today the resolutions passed at the Khilafat Conference[4] at Calcutta and they made me happy. The Maulana Saheb[5] has, at this meeting, laid down

[1] The Contempt of Court case to which the letter refers was heard at Bombay on March 3; *vide* "Was It contempt of Court?", 10-3-1920

[2] Not available

[3] The meeting was called by the Khilafat Committee; Mia Mahomed Haji Jain Mahomed Chhotani was in the chair.

[4] Held on February 29, 1920

[5] Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, who presided over the Conference

our line of work. He has declared, as with a trumpet, what he wished to say to the Emperor. How do I know that tomorrow my Hindu brethren will not find themselves in the same situation in which you are placed today? I have offered this neck of mine, in the name of Khuda, to the world and to you. What more can I give you? If this question is not settled satisfactorily and if our Muslim brethren resign from the Councils, I can tell you with confidence that my brethren, the Hindu representatives, cannot but follow their example. The Calcutta Conference has passed the resolution on boycott[1] but it does not command my sympathy at all. We should keep away from the idea of boycott. If we are prepared to lay down our lives, where is the point of boycott? This is a sacred cause. We will pay a price only for a cause which deserves it. What can the Archbishops of Canterbury and York do to make us strong? You have the fullest sympathy of the Hindus. These days I have been reading the Koran a little. That brings me nearer to you. We have no desire to subdue anyone with hate. Rather than cut off the other man's head with the sword, offer your own head. All of our representatives should be ready to declare that, if the issue is not settled justly, their help will not be available in running the government of the country.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 7-3-1920

274. SPEECH AT BOMBAY [2]

March 4, 1920

Mr. Gandhi congratulated the organizers of the movement on the starting of the Sabha and hoped it would succeed in the work which it had undertaken. The objects of the Sabha appeared to be clear and straightforward, and that being the case, he had no doubt of their success provided they worked industriously to achieve their object. Truth and fearlessness were conditions essential to and sufficient for the success of an object like the one they had in view, and he was sure that if they worked in a spirit of truthfulness, fearlessness and straightforwardness, their effort would be crowned with success.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-3-1920

[1] Of British goods

[2] At a public meeting held under the presidentship of G. K. Parekh at the Morarji Gokuldas Hall to welcome the formation of the Kathiawar Hitvardhak Sabha

275. SPEECH ON PRESS ACT, BOMBAY[1]

March 5, 1920

The fact that the man[2] who struggled more than anyone else for the repeal of this law is not present here is a shame both to the people and the Government. If the Government offered to repeal this Act, but wanted to shelve the question of Horniman's return to India,[3] I am sure the Indian people would not accept that. The question which I keep asking myself is this: 'if there were no newspapers to give expression to public opinion, how would the Government ever know it?' For want of independent newspapers, the Government has to rely upon the C.I.D[4]. The people, therefore, request the Government that, if it wanted to lighten this burden on the C.I.D., if it was anxious to see independent newspapers in India and felt the need for people's co-operation, it should not gag newspapers, which are representatives of public opinion. The Government's condition at present is like that of the meteorologist who has smashed his barometer and would yet measure the atmospheric pressure.

Not only journalists but the entire public should carry on a powerful agitation to secure repeal of this Act. Were I to describe the worries and hardships of journalists, I would fill a volume as big as the *Mahabharata*. People sometimes praise me and sometimes swear at me as well; sometimes they defend the authorities, and occasionally denounce them too. It is for journalists to separate the grain from the chaff in all this. It is the journalist's duty to throw light on every matter of public concern. However, not to admit in one's paper a single adjective which does not serve the people's cause in the most effective means of securing the repeal of the Press Act.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 14-3-1920

[1] At a meeting held under the auspices of the Indian Press Association, with Sir Narayan Chandavarkar in the chair. A resolution demanding repeal of the Press Act of 1910 was proposed by Gandhiji and seconded by M. R. Jayakar. The meeting was one of the few occasions which found Nationalists, Liberals and Home Rule Leaguers on the same platform.

[2] B. G. Horniman (1873-1948); journalist and political agitator; editor of *The Bombay Chronicle*. He was deported from India in April 1919 and could return only in 1926.

[3] A resolution requesting the Government of Bombay to permit Horniman's return to India was moved by K. Natarajan at the meeting.

[4] The Criminal Investigation Department

276. TELEGRAM TO SHAUKAT ALI[1]

March 6, 1920

PREPARING APPEAL REGARDING NINETEENTH[2] GIVING CONDITIONAL ADHERENCE. ADVISE YOU TEMPER FIRMNESS WITH MODERATION AND EXPRESS TRUTH IN LANGUAGE LOVE NOT HATE THEN ONLY SHALL WE WIN.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1920, p. 33

277. TELEGRAM TO K. SANTANAM

March 6, 1920

SEND TRANSLATION STATEMENTS[3] TAKEN BY ME IMMEDIATELY AHMEDABAD TRANSLATE REST AND SEND.

GANDHI

From a copy : S. N. 7145

278. CONDITION OF "NAVAJIVAN"

At the time the *Navajivan* was converted into a weekly and I took over its editorship,[4] I had mentally decided upon certain conditions. Some of those which the reader knows I recall here :

1. Not to accept advertisements for money in *Navajivan*.
2. Not to publish *Navajivan* at a loss.

These days about nine thousand copies of *Navajivan* are sold. I would not be satisfied till the number rises to twenty thousand and would not be surprised if it increased to fifty thousand. So far, however, we have not been able to provide for the printing of so many copies. We do not have such a machine, nor the required number of men. We do not have a building in which so many copies can be printed with ease; moreover, my co-workers and I are not yet able to supply articles of the quality and in quantity to tempt fifty thousand

[1] Who had gone to Calcutta in connection with the Bengal Provincial Khilafat Conference held on February 28 and 29

[2] March 19, the Khilafat Day

[3] In regard to the Punjab atrocities of 1919. Gandhiji had asked for these as he was preparing the manuscript of the Congress Report thereon for the press and also to send to Lt.-Governor of the Punjab; *Vide* "Letter to L. Franch", 29-2-1920.

[4] This was with effect from September 7, 1919

subscribers. God willing, such a time will come. I would consider the last issue to be of such a standard; previously, too, a few such issues came out. But, as an English saying has it, one swallow does not make a summer. Similarly one good issue of *Navajivan* cannot be the standard for judging all. The last issue was especially good because of Sarladevi's article, "Bandhu", appearing in it. It was written in two instalments. The first part was written several years ago when she was living in some region covered with woods, but it had remained unpublished. Recently, on my begging her, she searched it out, supplemented it and made it into the likeness of a perfect poem and then gifted it to me. The original article is in Bengali. As it was found difficult to translate, its appearance in *Navajivan* was delayed. Two or three meanings can be read in this article. But I would advise my readers to peruse it several times over and extract all the sweetness from it. They will discover that its sweetness is inexhaustible.

But I have digressed. These days *Navajivan* is sold at a loss. The cost of one copy comes to 16 pies, of which eight pies are for paper. Having started with good quality paper, we do not like to change over to inferior quality. Hence it has been decided to effect some saving by reducing the size. Instead of sixteen pages, only twelve pages are given this time, but not even four pies are saved in this way. And so it has been decided to sell single copies in Bombay and Ahmedabad at five pice instead of four. This will stop the loss. The reader will see that so long as basically *Navajivan* suffers loss, increasing its sale would mean increased loss. In its present state of loss, therefore, even increasing its sale is out of the question.

When *Navajivan* was started, eight pages were promised but, the circumstances having permitted, sixteen pages were given. Even now the reader will get more than the promised eight pages. I wish to state at the same time that no subjects will be avoided for lack of space, but more concise articles, costing greater effort,will be given and an attempt made to include as many subjects as at present. Often lengthy articles are produced in order to fill up space in papers. Frequently the author writes his articles in haste and fails to arrange his ideas properly. One finds it difficult to understand them and, sometimes, a thought in itself easy to understand is expressed in such a roundabout way that it costs an effort to understand it. I hope, therefore, that contributors to *Navajivan* will write more concisely and, looking upon themselves as joint proprietors, co-operate to make it prosper. Our aim in starting *Navajivan* was not business; it was,

through its means, to render what little service we could to the people and, at a time when new life was flowing into them, to guide them, to the best of our ability, along straightforward and simple paths and help them in solving complicated problems.

Contributors to *Navajivan* should, therefore, try and see that, though they write more briefly, they do not give less substance.

If the price of paper comes down, or if any losses are due to our inefficiency in the Navajivan Press or the office and if matters can be set right, we will do so and start giving sixteen pages again. If we do not want *Navajivan* to run at a loss, we do not want any profit either. Any saving, therefore, will be passed on to readers. I hope they will see this, and, looking upon *Navajivan* as their own property, co-operate in improving its condition.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-3-1920

279. NOTES

SIR RABINDRANATH TAGORE'S VISIT

The Sahitya Parishad[1] will be held in April. News has been received that Sir Rabindranath Tagore will grace the Conference with his presence. His visit will be no ordinary event. He is not a politician, but a great poet. In India, certainly, he has no equal. Our friend Andrews is himself a poet and in his opinion Sir Rabindranath has no equal today even in Europe.

As he is a poet, so is he a philosopher and believes in God. Andrews has even called him a prophet. This great poet is a priceless gem of India. No one can deny that his poetry is full of spiritual wisdom, ethical ideals and other noble elements. His *Gitanjali* and *Sadhana* stand in a world apart; his stories are full of childhood's joy and, equally, of thought and art.

I should like the capital city of Gujarat to accord him a befitting reception. Deafening cheers are not the right thing for him. Despite the crowd, we should avoid jostling and make way for one beloved of us. The way we decorate the roads should have nothing of the West in it but should be in the manner of the East. He is as great a connoisseur of painting and music as he is a great poet. The expre-

[1] The Gujarat Literary Conference, the sixth session of which was due to be held at Ahmedabad

ssion of our feelings, therefore, should be quiet, artistic and so sincere as to be free in all respects from ostentation or sentimentality. I request the organizers to apply their minds from today and think out proper arrangements so that our guest may feel no strain and Gujarat may accord, with religious fervour, a welcome worthy of itself and the poet.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-3-1920

280. LETTER TO THE PRESS

[*March 7, 1920*][1]

The Khilafat question has now become a question of questions. It has become an Imperial question of the first magnitude.

The great prelates of England and the Mohammedan leaders combined have brought the question to the fore. The prelates threw down the challenge. The Muslim leaders have taken it up.

I trust that the Hindus will realize that the Khilafat question overshadows the Reforms[2] and everything else.

If the Muslim claim was unjust apart from the Muslim scriptures, one might hesitate to support it merely on scriptural authority. But when a just claim is supported by scriptures, it becomes irresistible.

Briefly put, the claim is that the Turks should retain European Turkey subject to full guarantees for the protection of non-Muslim races under the Turkish Empire and that the Sultan should control the holy places of Islam and should have suzeraint over Jazirat-ul-Arab, i.e., Arabia as defined by the Muslim savants subject to self-governing rights being given to the Arabs if they so desire. This was what was promised[3] by Mr. Lloyd George and this was what Lord Hardinge had contemplated.[4] The Mohammedan soldiers would not have fought to deprive Turkey of her possessions. To deprive the

[1] This "manifesto" on the Khilafat question was released from Sabarmati Ashram Ahmedabad, on March 7, 1920.

[2] The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919

[3] In his speech of January 5, 1918, wherein he declared that the Allies were not fighting "to deprive Turkey of its capital or of the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor and Thrace"

[4] Evidently the reference is to the Proclamation issued by the Government of India on November 2, 1914, which declared that "no question of a religious character was involved" in the War.

Khalif of the suzerainty of Arabia is to reduce the Khilafat to a nullity.

To restore to Turkey, subject to necessary guarantees, what was hers before the War is a Christian solution. To wrest any of her possessions from her for the sake of punishing her is a gun-powder solution. The Allies or England in the hour of triumph must be scrupulously just. To reduce the Turks to impotence would be not only unjust. It would be a breach of solemn declarations and promises. It is to be wished that the Viceroy will take his courage in both his hands and place himself at the head of the Khilafat agitation as Lord Hardinge did at the time of the South African"passive resistance" struggle[1] and thus like his predecessor give a clear and emphatic direction to an agitation which under impulsive or faulty leadership may lead to disastrous consequences.

But the situation rests more with us Hindus and Mohammedans than with the Viceroy and still more with the Muslim leaders than with the Hindus or the Viceroy.

There are signs already of impatience on the part of Muslim friends and impatience may any day be reduced to madness and the latter must inevitably lead to violence. And I wish I could persuade everyone to see that violence is suicide.

Supposing the Muslim demands are not granted by the Allies or, say, England! I see nothing but hope in Mr. Montagu's brave defence of the Muslim position and Mr. Lloyd George's interpretation of his own declaration. True, the latter is halting but he can secure full justice under it. But we must suppose the worst and expect and strive for the best. How to strive is the question.

What we may not do is clear enough :

1. There should be no violence in thought, speech or deed.

2. Therefore there should be no boycott of British goods, by way of revenge or punishment. Boycott, in my opinion, is a form of violence. Moreover, even if it were desirable, it is totally impracticable.

3. There should be no rest till the minimum is achieved.

4. There should be no mixing up of other questions with the Khilafat, e.g., the Egyptian question.

Let us see what must be done :

[1] In 1913 and 1914

1. The cessation of business on the 19th instant[1] and expression of the minimum demands by means of one single resolution is a necessary first step provided that the hartal is absolutely voluntary and the employees are not asked to leave their work unless they receive permission from their employers. I would strongly urge that the mill-hands should be left untouched. The further proviso is that there should be no violence accompanying the hartal. I have been often told that the C.I.D. sometimes promote violence. I do not believe in it as a general charge. But even if it be true, our discipline should make it impossible. Our success depends solely on our ability to control, guide and discipline the masses.

Now a word as to what may be done if the demands are not granted. The barbarous method is warfare, open or secret. This must be ruled out if only because it is impracticable. If I could but persuade everyone that it is always bad, we should gain all lawful ends much quicker. The power that an individual or a nation forswearing violence generates is a power that is irresistible. But my argument today against violence is based upon pure expedience, i.e., its utter futility.

Non-co-operation is therefore the only remedy left open to us. It is the cleanest remedy as it is the most effective, when it is absolutely free from all violence. It becomes a duty when co-operation means degradation or humiliation or an injury to one's cherished religious sentiment. England cannot accept a meek submission by us to an unjust usurpation of rights which to Mussulmans mean a matter of life and death. We may therefore begin at the top as also the bottom. Those who are holding offices of honour or emolument ought to give them up. Those who belong to the menial services under Government should do likewise. Non-co-operation does not apply to services under private individuals. I cannot approve of the threat of ostracism against those who do not adopt the remedy of non-co-operation. It is only a voluntary withdrawal which is effective. For voluntary withdrawal alone is a test of popular feeling and dissatisfaction. Advice to the soldiers to refuse to serve is premature. It is the last not the first step. We should be entitled to take that step when the Viceroy, the Secretary of State and the Premier leave us. Moreover every step in withdrawing co-operation has to be taken with the

[1] The Khilafat Day, which would be observed as a day of national mourning, betokened by fasting and hartal

greatest deliberation. We must proceed slowly so as to ensure retention of self-control under the fiercest heat.

Many look upon the Calcutta resolutions[1] with the deepest alarm. They scent in them a preparation for violence. I do not look upon them in that light, though I do not approve of the tone of some of them. I have already mentioned those whose subject-matter I wholly dislike.

"Can Hindus accept all the resolutions?" is the question addressed by some. I can only speak for myself. I will co-operate whole-heartedly with the Muslim friends in the prosecution of their just demands so long as they act with sufficient restraint and so long as I feel sure that they do not wish to resort to or countenance violence. I should cease to co-operate and advise every Hindu and for that matter everyone else to cease to co-operate the moment there was violence actually done, advised or countenanced. I would therefore urge upon all speakers the exercise of the greatest restraint under the gravest provocation. There is certainty of victory if firmness is combined with gentleness. The cause is doomed if anger, hatred, ill will, recklessness and finally violence are to reign supreme. I shall resist them with my life even if I should stand alone. My goal is friendship with the world and I can combine the greatest love with the greatest opposition to wrong.

Young India, 10-3-1920

281. TELEGRAM TO BENGAL KHILAFAT COMMITTEE

[On or after *March 7, 1920*][2]

HAVE ISSUED MANIFESTO DECLARING VIEWS APPROVING NINETEENTH[3]. SHALL SUPPORT TILL DEATH IF MOVEMENT DOES NOT DRIFT INTO VIOLENCE.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-3-1920

[1] Of the Khilafat Conference held on February 29, 1920

[2] The "manifesto" mentioned in the text is the letter to the Press issued on March 7, 1920, *vide* the preceding item; this telegram must therefore have been sent on or after that date.

[3] The Khilafat Day

282. THE 6TH APRIL AND THE 13TH

It is impossible for us to forget the 6th of April[1] which vitalized the whole of India and the13th of April[2] which by the spilling of innocent blood has made the Punjab a place of pilgrimage for the whole of India. The 6th of April saw the advent of satyagraha. One may dissent from the civil disobedience part of it but no one can dissent from the essential doctrine of truth and love or non-injury. With *satya* combined with ahimsa you can bring the world to your feet. Satyagraha in its essence is nothing but the introduction of truth and gentleness in the political, i.e., the national life. And whether one takes the satyagraha pledge or not, there can be no doubt that the spirit of satyagraha has pervaded the masses. Anyway, that is my experience of thousands of Punjabis I met throughout my tour in the Punjab.

The 6th of April again saw the inauguration of a definite plan of Hindu-Muslim unity and swadeshi.

It was the 6th of April which broke the spirit underlying the Rowlatt Act and made it a dead letter. The 13th of April saw not merely the terrific tragedy, but in that tragedy Hindu-Muslim blood flowed freely in a mingled stream and sealed the compact.

How to commemorate or celebrate these two great national events? I venture to suggest that those who will, should devote the 6th April next to fast (twenty-four hours abstention from food)and prayer and that all over India at 7 p.m., public meetings should be held praying for the repeal of the Rowlatt Act and expressing the national belief that there will be no peace in the land till that Act is repealed. That the Act is a dead letter is not enough. Either it is a disgrace or it is not. If it is, the Act must be repealed. The repeal before the reforms[3] will be a token of goodwill on the part of the Government.

The whole of the week beginning from the 6th should be devoted to some work connected with the tragedy of the 13th. I therefore venture further to suggest that the week should be devoted to the collecting of funds for the Jallianwala Bagh memorial, it being remembered that the sum to be collected is ten lakhs of rupees. Each

[1] April 6, 1919, the day of universal hartal

[2] April 13, 1919, the day of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre

[3] The Montagu-Chelmsford reforms of 1919, then awaiting implementation

village or town can devise its own plan of collection, guarding against misappropriation and fraud. The collection should be finished by the evening of the 12th April.

Then the 13th. That day of days should be devoted to fasting and prayer. It should be free from ill will or anger. We want to cherish the memory of the innocent dead. We do not want to remember the wickedness of the deed. The nation will rise by readi-ness to sacrifice, not by preparing to revenge. On that day I would also have the nation to remember the mass excesses[1] and feel penitent for them. We close the week by meetings throughout India to pass resolutions urging the Government, both Imperial and Indian, to take effective steps to render a repetition of the tragedy impossible.

I would further urge that during the week each one does his or her best in his or her own person to realize more fully than ever the princi-ples of satyagraha, Hindu-Muslim unity and swadeshi. In order to empha-size Hindu-Muslim unity I would advise joint meetings of Hindus and Mohammedans on Friday, the 12th April, at 7 p.m., urging that the Khi-lafat question be decided in accordance with the just Muslim sentiments.

Thus this national week should be a week of purification, self-examination, sacrifice, exact discipline and expression of cherished national sentiments. There should be no trace of bitterness, no violence of language but absolute fearlessness and firmness.

Should there not also be hartal on the 6th and the 13th? My answer is an emphatic 'no'. The week is a Satyagraha Week for those who believe in truth and non-violence. The hartal of the 6th was a satyagraha hartal in the sense that it was a prelude to satyagraha. The hartal of the 6th April last, though it was spontaneous, was not altogether free from undue pressure during the course of the day in the way of asking people not to use carriages, etc. I would therefore not advise hartal at all for this week of discipline and penance. Moreover hartal must not be made cheap. It must be only for rare occasions.

I respectfully trust that all parties and all classes will see their way to take their full share in the observances of the national week and make it an event for the true and definite progress in national awakening.

Young India, 10-3-1920

[1] The disorders of April 1919

283. WAS IT CONTEMPT OF COURT ?[1]

This rule[2] was heard by the Hon'ble Justices Marten, Hayward and Kajiji on the 3rd instant. The Editor, Mr. Gandhi and the Publisher, Mr. Desai, of Young India were to show cause why they should not be committed for contempt having published with comments in the issue of the 6th August, 1919 of their paper, a letter addressed by Mr. Kennedy, District Judge of Ahmedabad, to the Registrar of the High Court complaining of the conduct of certain satyagrahi lawyers of Ahmedabad.

The Hon'ble Sir Thomas Strangman, Advocate-General, with Messrs Bahadurji and Pocock appeared for the applicant. Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Desai appeared in person.

The Advocate-General, in opening the case, said that the proceedings were in contempt against Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Desai, about whose being Editor and Publisher respectively there was no dispute. It appeared that Mr. Kennedy in April last, finding that certain lawyers in Ahmedabad had signed the Satyagraha Pledge[3], asked them to explain why their sanads should not be cancelled for their having signed the pledge, and as he did not consider their explanation satisfactory he addressed a letter to the Registrar of the High Court on the 22nd April, 1919. In consequence, two notices were issued by the High Court to the lawyers concerned. A copy of Mr. Kennedy's letter was given by the Registrar to Mr. Divetia, pleader for one of the lawyers, who handed the same to Mr. Kalidas J. Jhaveri, one of the satyagrahi lawyers, who in turn handed it to Mr. Gandhi. On the 6th August this letter was published in his paper under the heading "O'Dwyerism in Ahmedabad" along with an article headed "Shaking Civil Resisters"[4], commenting on the letter. (The Advocate-General at this stage read the letter and the article.) It appeared from the article, said he, that by "O'Dwyer" was meant a disturber of peace. The article said that the District Judge was

[1] This article has been attributed to Gandhiji in *The Law and the Lawyers,* a compilation edited by S.B. Kher and published by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad.

[2] Rule *nisi* issued against Gandhiji and Mahadev Desai; *vide* "Letter to Registrar, High Court, Bombay", 27-2-1920.

[3] Drafted by Gandhiji in protest against the Rowlatt Bills and signed on February 24, 1919 by Gandhiji himself, Vallabhbhai Patel, Sarojini Naidu, Horniman and others; *vide* "The Satyagraha Pledge", 24-2-1919.

[4] *Vide* "Shaking Civil Resisters", 6-8-1919

prejudging the issue. His conduct was described as not only ungentlemanly, but something worse, unpardonable. He was said to be fanning the fire of Bolshevism. Those were shortly the charges made against Mr. Kennedy. Then proceedings took place in the High Court. After the proceedings the Registrar addressed a letter to Mr. Gandhi requesting him to attend the Chief Justice's Chamber to give an explanation as regards the publication of the letter. Mr. Gandhi replied by telegram[1] explaining his inability to attend on the appointed date as he was going to the Punjab, and inquiring if a written explanation would be sufficient. The Registrar replied saying that the Chief Justice did not wish to interfere with Mr. Gandhi's appointment and that a written explanation would do. On the 22nd October Mr. Gandhi sent a written explanation[2] in which he stated that the letter was received by him in the ordinary course and that he published it as he believed it was of great public importance and that he thought that he was doing a public service in commenting on it. He, therefore, claimed that in publishing and commenting on the letter, he was within the rights of a journalist. In reply to this the Registrar wrote[3] saying that the Chief Justice was not satisfied with the explanation, but that it would be considered sufficient if an apology in the following terms were published in the next issue of *Young India*.

FORM OF APOLOGY

> Whereas on the 6th August, 1919 we published in *Young India* a private letter written by Mr. Kennedy, District Judge of Ahmedabad, to the Registrar of the High Court of Justice at Bombay and whereas on the same date we also published certain comments on the said letter and whereas it has been pointed out to us that pending certain proceedings in the said High Court in connection with the said letter we were not justified in publishing the said letter or in commenting thereon. Now we do hereby express our regret and apologize to the Hon'ble the Chief Justice and Judges of the said High Court for the publication of the said letter and the comments thereon.

The Advocate-General said that he submitted with some confidence that it was an apology which the opponent should have published. A milder form of apology, he thought, it was difficult to

[1] *Vide* "Shaking Civil Resisters", 6-8-1919

[2] *Ibid*

[3] A letter dated October 31, 1919, which Gandhiji received on November 7, 1919 while at Lahore

conceive. Mr. Gandhi, however, did not publish the apology and took counsel's opinion and addressed a letter to the Registrar expressing his inability to apologize. Before the receipt of this letter a notice was ordered by the High Court on the 11th of December to be issued for contempt on which the proceedings were based. The text of Mr. Gandhi's letter dated 11th December, 1919, is as follows.[1]

A few days before the hearing of the rule Mr. Gandhi addressed a letter to the Registrar dated 27th February, with which he enclosed copies of statements which he and Mr. Desai desired to submit before the Court. The text of the two statements is given below.[2]

Continuing the Advocate-General proceeded to cite rulings to show what constitutes Contempt of Court. 2 Q.B., page 36, showed that there were two kinds of contempt : (1) any act or writing tending to scandalize the court; (2) any act or writing calculated to obstruct or interfere with the due course of justice or the lawful process of the court. The Advocate-General submitted that the publication of the letter and the comments thereon constituted contempt in two respects : (1) in the language of Lord Hardwicke it scandalized Mr. Kennedy; and (2) it was an attempt to interfere with the course of justice. He further said that the High Court could punish for contempt of an inferior court. The District Court of Ahmedabad was under the superintendence of the High Court and it had no power to commit for contempt except for what was done in the face of the Court.

Mr. Justice Marten asked if it was Contempt of Court in a civil action to publish the plaint or the written statement.

The Advocate-General replied it was a contempt. The pleadings did not become public documents until the case was heard. The Advocate-General also referred to (1906) 1 Kings Branch, page 132, and (1903) 2 K.B. He added that publication after trial was different from publication before it. In conclusion the Advocate-General drew the deduction that the gist of Mr. Gandhi's article was that as Mr. Kennedy was fanning the fire of Bolshevism, the High Court, if it acted on his letter, would likewise disturb the peace and fan the fire of Bolshevism.

Mr. Gandhi addressing the Court said that he did not propose to say anything beyond what he had already said in his statement.

[1] Not reproduced here. For the text of the letter, *vide*"Letter to Registrar, High Court, Bombay", 11-12-1919.

[2] For text of the letter and the statements, *vide* "Letter to Registrar, High Court, Bombay", 27-2-1920.

Esteemed friends had asked him to consider if he was not obstinate in not making the required apology. He had considered the matter over and over again and whatever view the Court held, he asked them to believe him that nothing was farther from his thoughts than obstinacy. He wished to pay all respect to the Honourable Court. On the other hand he did expect that the Honourable Court would not grudge his paying the same respect to his own sense of honour and to the dignity of journalism. He had heard the Advocate-General carefully to see if anything he said could convince him that he had been in the wrong. But he had remained entirely unconvinced. Had he been convinced he would readily have withdrawn his statement and tendered apology. He did not wish to say anything more.

Mr. Justice Marten said that the point of law was against Mr. Gandhi. Mr. Gandhi had said that he was entitled as a journalist to do what he had done. But the Advocate-General had cited authorities against him. Had he any authorities to support his position?

Mr. Gandhi said he differed from the Advocate-General on the point of law, but he did not rest his case, such as it was, on points of law. He did not wish to argue legal points and go beyond the limits he had set to himself. The Court had before now done justice in many undefended cases and he wished himself to be considered as undefended. He would be entirely content with their Lordships' finding on points of law.

Mr. Justice Marten reminded Mr. Gandhi that he was himself a member of the Bar and that he could argue out the case from the legal standpoint.

Mr. Gandhi said he was unprepared to do so and repeated that he would be content to take the ruling of the Court with regard to law. But since the Court had coaxed him to argue he would say that what he felt was that he had not prejudiced any party. The Hon. the Advocate-General had said that his comments on the District Judge constituted contempt of a judge. Mr. Gandhi commented on the District Judge not as a judge but as an individual.

J. MARTEN : Take the case of a sensational murder trial. Supposing the Press commented on the events while the case was going on, what would happen?

MR. GANDHI : I would respectfully draw a distinction as a layman between the two cases. The District Judge writes this letter as a complainant and not as a Judge.

J. MARTEN : He was writing as a judge exercising jurisdiction over certain lawyers.

MR. GANDHI : I agree. But he was not sitting in court to decide an action. I feel again that I am travelling beyond the limits I set to myself. The whole law of Contempt of Court is that one ought not to do anything which might prejudice proceedings before a court. But here the Judge does something as an individual. I have not done anything to prejudice in any shape or form the judgment of the judges.

J. MARTEN : Would it not be dangerous if the Press made comments during pendency of proceedings? The court would cease to be the tribunal and the Press would be the tribunal instead.

MR. GANDHI : I would again respectfully draw a distinction. If a son wrongly brought a suit against his father then I would be justified in commenting on the son's conduct in bringing such a suit against his father, without in any way thereby prejudicing the decision of the Court. And do our courts prevent public men from inducing litigants to settle their claims outside? I submit I have committed no contempt. I have prejudiced no party and have made no comment on the action of Mr. Kennedy as a judge. I am anxious to satisfy the Court that there is not an iota of disrespect shown to the Court in commenting on Mr. Kennedy's letter. I may have erred, and in the view of the Court, erred grievously but I have not done so dishonestly or disrespectfully. I need not add that all that I have said applies to the case of Mr. Desai, the Publisher.

J. Marten then drew Mr. Gandhi's attention to a decision in England reported in a recent issue of the London *Times* whereby the editor, publisher and printer of a newspaper were fined for contempt.

MR. GANDHI : There also I submit it is possible for me to draw a distinction. While I was in England the famous Mrs. Maybrick's case was going on and the whole newspaper Press divided itself into two parties, one condemning Mrs. Maybrick and the other going for the Judge, Mr. Justice Stephen, and even suggesting that he was unfit to try the case.

J. MARTEN : But that was all after trial?

MR. GANDHI : No. It was while the case was going on. I followed the proceedings in the case from day to day throughout the many months that it was going on.

J. MARTEN : It did not go on, Mr. Gandhi, for many months. It went on for some days.

MR. GANDHI : Of course here I am speaking subject to correction, but I am quite sure that while the case was going on, the newspaper

Press was so full with all sorts of innuendoes, insinuations and aspersions, that I am sure I, as a journalist, would not even at this day be able to go the length they went.

Mr. Desai stated that he entirely associated himself with the sentiment expressed by Mr. Gandhi. He was sure he was infinitely more incapable of arguing the case than Mr. Gandhi and he would not presume to do that. He was prepapred to cheerfully and respectfully abide by whatever decision their Lordships were pleased to give. The judgment was reserved.[1]

Young India, 10-3-1920

284. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
March 10, 1920

I sent you the balance from Amritsar and the bulk[2] from Lahore. I have endeavoured to go through everything as carefully as possible. I have considered all the suggestions you made on the margin and incorporated those that I thought fit could be so treated. Please let me know what progress is being made. Shall we be ready for the 16th of April?[3]

The Story of My Life, Vol. I, p. 332

285. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Wednesday [*March 10, 1920*][4]

BHAI MAHADEV,

It seems you have adopted a rule in Matheran that, if I do not write, you also may not. I simply outdid myself today. I started work at two in the morning. I got fatigued in consequence but had

[1] The judgment, delivered on March 12, was summed up by Justice Marten as follows : "The Court finds the charges proved. It severely reprimands the respondents and cautions them both as to future conduct."

[2] Of the press copy of the report on the Punjab disorders of 1919; Jayakar saw it through the press at Bombay.

[3] K. Santanam, secretary to the Congress Punjab Commission of Inquiry, had announced to the Press that the Report would be published on April 16; it was, in fact, published on March 25.

[4] The references in the letter to the 'report' and the 'manifesto' suggest this date.

complete peace. When the revision of the report[1] is over, I would, if my heart were not broken, dance [with joy] as a schoolboy does on the closing of his school for holidays.

You are bound to keep good health there. Durga left for Navasari yesterday. Did you read my manifesto?[2] If not, see yesterday's *Times* [*of India*].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 11411

286. LETTERS TO M. R. JAYAKAR[3]

March 11, 1920

(i)

By the courtesy of the postal authorities I am able to send you now the whole batch[4], i. e., up to 24. You will please note where I have made any addition in the second batch. I hope to send you a fairly big batch.

(ii)

I send you some more today. Enough to satisfy me. The fact is I am now played out and I find that the revision work is most taxing. I have not had rest tonight.

I am anxious to make the work as thorough as I can.

(iii)

I have carefully studied Mr. Das's[5] summary of evidence and the suggested addendum. I thought that he was going to put together the evidence of specific witnesses and enable me to study their statements. In any event, the summary before me leaves me not only unconvinced but a discussion along the lines suggested can only mar the Report which in my opinion is otherwise convincing. The points marshalled by Mr. Das appear to me like so many loose staples which

[1] Presumably the Congress report on the Punjab disorders, which was published on March 25, 1920

[2] Presumably the press statement on Khilafat; *vide* "Letter to the Press", 7-3-1920.

[3] This item consists of three separate letters which Gandhiji wrote to Jayakar on the same day and on the same subject.

[4] Of the press copy of the report on the Punjab disorders

[5] C. R. Das, who was a member of the Commission appointed by the Punjab Sub-committee of the Indian National Congress

will not hang together. I want them like bricks cohering and making a roadway for you to walk to your goal. Much as I would like to discuss the suggested theory as such in the Report, I cannot do it unless I have *prima facie* evidence.[1]

In arranging a discussion you please study the thing yourself and if you think otherwise I would have you to marshal the evidence on this point and discuss the theory. I would sign what you write provided that you go no further than Mr. Das has done. He has left it to us two. I do not want you to yield to my reasoning. What seems to me to be loose may appear coherent to you. I would gladly yield to you if you take a different view. I would conciliate Mr. Das if he can convince any one of us. If you consider the matter of sufficient importance for consultation, please come down for discussion. Will you please send his to Mr. Das with your remarks?

The Story of My Life, Vol. I, pp. 332-3

287. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 11, 1920

DEAR GURUDEO,

I have not been able before now to acknowledge your two telegrams, one addressed at Benares and redirected here and the other addressed here. We are all deeply grateful to you for your acceptance of the invitation[2]. Every effort is being made not to overload you with engagements or tamashas. Will you please let me know, if necessary by wire, how long you will be able to give to Gujarat and whether you could visit one or two important centres. The second question is regarding your residence. Will you put up at the Ashram? Nothing would delight me more than to have you at the Ashram. I am most anxious that you should, during your stay, understand what it

[1] In connection with this letter, Jayakar says : "This had a reference to the question whether there was enough evidence to support the view that Dyer had laid a trap to drive the people into the Jallianwala enclosure with the view of giving them condign punishment. Motilal, Das and I were of opinion that there was enough evidence to justify our mentioning the matter in our Report. Gandhi violently differed from our view." *The Story of My Life*"Memorial to J.Chamberlain", 22-5-1896.

[2] To address the sixth session of the Gujarati Literary Conference to be held at Ahmedabad from April 2 to April 4, 1920

is and what it stands for. I am anxious, too, that you should give the benefit of your presence to the many at the Ashram who claim to have been your pupils. Apart from the Gujarati boys and girls and the Sindhi lad Girdhari[1] whom you may recall, Manindra is here still and Sarladevi's son, Deepak, is also at the Ashram. It is situated about four miles from the centre of Ahmedabad and stands on a ridge on the bank of the Sabarmati.

You can, then, either stay at the Ashram or at a private bungalow in Ahmedabad with all the modern appointments. I need not say that your health and comfort are the primary consideration and your wishes will be faithfully carried out. Will you please also let me know any special arrangements or things you will desire?

Yours sincerely,
M.K.GANDHI

[PS.]

The Parishad lasts 3 days—2nd April to 4th.

From a photostat : G. N. 4627

288. TELEGRAM TO GOKARAN NATH [2]

AHMEDABAD,
March 12, 1920

HELD UP HERE FIRST WEEK APRIL.[3]

GANDHI

From the original as delivered : C.W. 5990

289. LETTERS TO M. R. JAYAKAR[4]

March 13, 1920

(i)

I have made an attempt to finish today but could not. Anyway, I hope I have not kept the compositors[5] waiting.

[1] Nephew of J. B. Kripalani

[2] The telegram was sent to the addressee at Lucknow. He was then the General Secretary of the Indian National Congress.

[3] Presumably because of Tagore's visit in connection with the Gujarat Literary Conference which was to be held at Ahmedabad in the first week of April.

[4] This item comprises three separate letters written on the same day, in regard to the press copy of the Congress report on the Punjab disorders.

[5] Of Karnatak Printing Press, Bombay, where the report was being printed

I see a note in the margin about Kasur but I must tone down the remarks about the crowd's behaviour. I have not been able to do so. Every word I have written is justifiable but you may wish to take the responsibility of altering where I do not see my way clear. The Kasur crowd acted most mischievously and we must make that clear admission.

(ii)

I am sending you a very poor batch today but I think I have already sent enough for the compositors to cope with. I must finish tomorrow even if I have to keep awake the whole of the night.

(iii)

Thank God! I am sending the last. Please read everything very carefully.

I am sorry to hear from Dr. Parashram that you were ailing.

The Story of My Life, Vol. I, pp. 333-4

290. PRESS ACT AND HORNIMAN

The meeting[1] held in Bombay for demanding repeal of the Press Act was an important one. Sir Narayan Chandavarkar[2] was able to show that it was as much in the Government's interest as in the public's to repeal the Act. It is said of the ostrich that when it sees any danger, it buries its head in sand and imagines that there is no danger and gets caught in the end. Through the Press Act, the Government has put itself in the condition of the ostrich. If public feeling is against the Government, it can find expression only through the medium of newspapers. By suppressing the expression, one cannot change the feeling. To keep the Press Act alive is to behave like the meteorologist who, after smashing his barometer, would know the state of atmospheric pressure. By putting it on the statute-book, the Government has damaged the machine which indicates the direction and the state of the current of popular feeling, and consequently it can no longer keep itself informed about the exact state of public feeling. The only course for the Government, therefore, is to repeal the Press Act and it is the duty of the public to strive for its repeal.

[1] On March 5, 1920

[2] Narayan Ganesh Chandavarkar (1855-1923); Liberal leader of Bombay who presided over the meeting

Mr. Horniman, however, was a victim of the very same attitude which the Government displays in retaining the Press Act. It cannot tolerate a frank expression of public opinion and, therefore, it cannot tolerate Mr. Horniman who expressed it with such vigour. Very few men have shown Mr. Horniman's capacity for educating public opinion or inspired the people with the same spirit as he did. Even assuming that Mr. Horniman did not possess any such gift, from the point of view of simple justice also no charge has been proved against him. People ought not to tolerate it, if despite this, the Government should arbitrarily keep him out. It is not true at all that those alone who agree with Mr. Horniman's methods and ideas can work for the removal of the restrictions against him. We have plenty of grounds for differing with him. His language is sometimes harsher than it need be. Even so, we have not the slightest doubt that he should be as free as anyone else to enter India. Accordingly, we welcome the resolution passed at the foregoing meeting; not only this, we even believe that people should take effective steps to keep alive the agitation for his return and force the Bombay Government to cancel the orders against him.[1] The third resolution passed at the meeting was to the effect that the securities obtained from any of the presses should be returned to them.[2] We hope the Government will pay attention to all these three points.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-3-1920

291. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING[3]

THE ASHRAM,
March 14, 1920

MY DEAR CHILD,

Of course I will pray and I know I can do no better. Friends can help you little during the crisis you are passing through. May God protect you.

[1] When moving the resolution, K. Natarajan referred to the proceedings in the House of Commons where the Secretary of State for India had stated that the return of Horniman to India was dependent entirely on the Government of Bombay.

[2] The resolution, *inter alia*, offered thanks to the Government of Bombay for cancelling the securities deposited under the Press Act by certain presses and newspapers and requested that similar action be taken in the remaining cases.

[3] This and the ten letters which followed it were written to help Esther Faering during the days when the announcement of her betrothal to Dr. E. K. Menon brought a storm of criticism, much of it harsh and ungenerous, upon her head.

Once to every man and nation
Comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood,
For the good or evil side.
Some great cause, God's new Messiah,
Offering each the bloom or blight,
Parts the goats upon the left hand
And the sheep upon the right
And the choice goes by for ever,
'Twixt the darkness and that light.

I hope to pick out something like this, if I can, every day, charged with my prayers. What I have sent you today is from Lowell.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

My case[1] is decided. The court I understand has reproved us both[2] but no penalty.

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child,* p. 60

292. TELEGRAM TO GOKARAN NATH

AHMEDABAD,
March 15, 1920

GOKARAN NATH
LUCKNOW

SIR RABINDRANATH EXPECTED AHMEDABAD THAT TIME [3] CAN MEETING BE HELD AHMEDABAD IF IMPOSSIBLE HOLD BOMBAY.

GANDHI

From the original as delivered : C.W. 5989

[1] Before the High Court, Bombay; *vide* "Was It Contempt of Court?", 10-3-1920.

[2] Gandhiji and Mahadev Desai.

[3] Tagore was to arrive on April 1 and stay on till April 5. In the second week of April, both Gandhiji and Tagore were to be in Bombay.

293. TELEGRAM TO GIRDHARI LAL[1]

March 16, 1920

YOU SHOULD OBSERVE HARTAL[2] AND PARTICIPATE PUBLIC MEETING ACCORDANCE MY MANIFESTO[3].

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 7138

294. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

BOMBAY,
March 16, 1920

More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of.
Wherefore let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If knowing God they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.

TENNYSON

MY DEAR CHILD,

The above is my share in your sorrow for today. May it lighten your burden.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child,* p. 61

295. KHILAFAT

The Leader of Allahabad and *Young India* have drifted apart. I entertain such sneaking regard for the former that I struggle hard to

[1] This telegram was in reply to one from Girdhari Lal which read : "Kindly wire if Amritsar observe hartal and extent Hindus participation in resolution."

[2] On March 19, the Khilafat Day

[3] *Vide* "Letter to the Press", 7-3-1920.

accept the view that may be put forth by *The Leader*. But in spite of the struggle of late I have invariably failed. The latest instance is the confusion into which *The Leader* has fallen over boycott and non-co-operation. I had thought that my meaning was clear and that there was no inconsistency. Boycott is a punishment and is conceived in a vindictive spirit. The idea of boycotting British goods is that although British goods may be better than, say, Japanese, I should not buy the former because I want to revenge myself upon the British people for a wrong done to me by British ministers, or for the utterly irresponsible and insolent language of some Englishmen regarding the Khilafat. I hold that boycott under such circumstances is a form of violence.

Non-co-operation stands on a different footing. If the Government do wrong I become a participator in its wrongdoing by co-operating with it and thus making it possible for them to do the wrong. It is my duty, not by way of punishment or by way of revenge but to the end that I may not make myself responsible for the wrongdoing, to withdraw my support off that Government. Indeed I should be justi-fied in bringing that Government to a standstill. It is clear to me, therefore, that non-co-operation is as different from boycott as an elephant from an ass.

The Leader also sees ill logic in my disapproval of violence and approval of hartal. I see none because I feel that hartal does not necessarily lead to violence. One cannot always avoid doing the right thing because there are risks to be run. *The Leader*'s difficulty arises perhaps from the belief that strong and definite action is not necessary and that it is possible for the Mohammedans of India to keep their peace even after an adverse decision[1] by the Allied Powers. In my opinion the movement[2] is bound to endorse violence unless a non-violent course of action is found that would lead to a just solution of the question. All strong action may bring about violence but we may not fear to do the right lest it may be misinterpreted and lead to wrong. All that is, humanly speaking, possible is to guard against mistakes and misunderstanding and with trust in God to go forward. I know that on the Khilafat question that course and that alone can avoid violence if, short of a proper solution of the question, anything is to avoid it at all. I therefore trust that Indians of all shades of opinion will join this movement. A firm and unanimous stand on

[1] In regard to the temporal and spiritual authority of the Sultan of Turkey
[2] The Khilafat movement

the part of the Hindus will certainly put courage and hope into Mohammedan hearts. Any lukewarmness or indifference will lead to loss of hope and desperation.

Much the same is to be said about the objection to satyagraha. I still believe that for the moment I consider that I am alone capable of offering satyagraha in its fine form. But if that belief were to deter me from making experiments, satyagraha would never make headway. But here, there is the further fallacy of the ambiguous middle. Satyagraha in the form of civil resistance has possibilities of mischief. But hartal is no new weapon and hartal may or may not be satyagraha. Nor need non-co-operation be necessarily satyagraha. When the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya resigned his membership on the Imperial Council[1] or when Sir Rabindranath Tagore asked to be relieved of his distinction[2] they did not do so as satyagrahis. Of course there is danger in widespread non-co-operation. But that is merely stating a truism. The one thing to be remembered is that for the Mohammedans the Khilafat is a question of life and death. It is essential for them to secure a proper solution. It is the sacred duty of the Hindus to give their all for the sake of their brothers so long as they work along the lines of non-violence. And I know no better way of keeping them on that path save by all Hindus, Christians, Parsees and Jews, who have made India their own, whole-heartedly supporting them and suggesting to them forcible methods of attaining redress without resort to violence.

Young India, 17-3-1920

296. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

BOMBAY,
March 17, 1920

Teach me, my God and King,
In all things Thee to see,
And what I do in anything,
To do it as for Thee,
All may of Thee partake,
Nothing can be so mean

[1] On April 6, 1919
[2] Knighthood, on June 1, 1919

Which with this tincture, 'for Thy sake',
Will not grow bright and clean.
A servant with this clause
Makes drudgery divine;
Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws
Makes that and the action fine.
This is the famous stone
That turneth all to gold;
For that which God doth touch and own
Cannot for less be told.

GEORGE HERBERT

MY DEAR CHILD,

May there be some line, some word, some thought to soften your grief.

With love,

Yours

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child*, p. 62

297. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[*March 17, 1920*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

You may extend the time limit for the spinning-wheel if you wish to,[2] but I think the reply you have given is all right. We will give the man something if his model is good. I think we are not using as much khadi in the Ashram as we should. Sarladevi also commented on this. I see no compelling reason why the women should have no garment of khadi on their bodies. Khadi may be dyed, if desired. Whether this is done or not, there seems nothing wrong in the girls wearing loose blouses made of khadi. The women, in any case,

[1] Gandhiji was in Delhi from March 21 to March 24, and in Sinhgadh from March 26 to March 30 in the year 1920. On March 17 and March 19, he was in Bombay from where this letter was evidently written.

[2] The reference evidently is to the announcement of a prize in *Navajivan*, 5-10-1919, for an improved model of the indigenous spinning-wheel : *vide* "Notes", 5-10-1919 , The competition for the spinning-wheel prize was held at Ahmedabad on March 31, 1920

should have no objection to wearing such blouses. See if you can persuade Santok[1], Radha[2] and Rukhi.

I shall have to leave for Delhi on the 20th. I shall be in Delhi on the 22nd and leave for Bombay on the 23rd. I shall then probably go to Sinhgadh for a week. Meanwhile, collect all the post there and, if there are any important letters, you or Narahari[3] may reply. See that I get all the letters together in Bombay on the 24th. Till then, keep them safe with you so that I can revise the directions if I wish to.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 5783. Courtesy : Radhabehn Chowdhari

298. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

BOMBAY
Thursday [*March 18, 1920*][4]

Lord, it belongs not to my care
Whether I die or live;
To love and serve Thee is my share,
And this Thy grace must give.
If life be long I will be glad
That I may long obey;
If short, yet why should I be sad
To soar to endless day?
Christ leads me through no darker rooms
Than He went through before;
He that unto God's kingdom comes
Must enter by this door.
Come, Lord, when grace hath made me meet
Thy blessed face to see;
For if Thy work on earth be sweet,

[1] Wife of the addressee
[2] Daughter of the addressee
[3] Narahari Dwarkadas Parikh, a member of Gandhiji's team of constructive workers in Sabarmati Ashram since 1917
[4] Gandhiji wrote to Esther Faering on March 17, 1920 and on March 21, 1920. In between we have two undated letters. In his letter of March 21, Gandhiji says that he wrote no letter to the addressee on the previous day. These undated letters, of which this is one, must have therefore been written on March 18 and 19. The order in which they have been dated has been taken from the source.

What will Thy glory be?
My knowledge of that life is small;
The eye of faith is dim;
But 'tis enough that Christ knows all,
And I shall be with Him.

RICHARD BAXTER

MY DEAR CHILD,

Another evening has come to fill me with thoughts of you. I pass them to our common Maker to make of them such use as He will for your good.

With love,

Yours
BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child*, p. 63

299. LETTER TO MANLEY

[*March 18, 1920*][1]

DEAR MR. MANLEY,

I thank you for your note. You need have no fear about Ahmedabad. Miss Ansuya Sarabhai has remained in Ahmedabad to look after the mill-hands. Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel[2] is looking after the post-office men[3]. Indeed I fear no ill from any quarter for tomorrow. Please remember me to Mrs. Manley.

From a photostat : S. N. 7141

[1] This was in reply to a letter from Manley, Deputy Police Commissioner, C.I.D., Bombay, seeking Gandhiji's help for a correct assessment of the situation in Ahmedabad where March 19, the Khilafat Day, was to be observed, as elsewhere in India, as a day of general hartal.

[2] 1875-1950; Congress leader of Gujarat who later became the first Deputy Prime Minister of free India

[3] Who were then on strike

300. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI[1]

BOMBAY,
March 18, 1920

DEAR MR. SASTRI,

As I took an active part in the Congress affairs last year I have been asked to interest myself still more actively to the extent of joining an organization. The demand has come from those with whom I have had the privilege of working although I was not connected with their organization. They have asked me to join the All-India Home Rule League. I have told them that at my time of life and with views firmly formed on several matters I could only join an organization to affect its policy and not be affected by it. This does not mean that I would not keep or that I do not have an open mind to receive new light. I simply wish to emphasize the fact that any new light will have to be specially dazzling in order to entrance me. I placed before the friends the following points on which I hold decided views :

1. [The] highest honesty must be introduced in the political life of the country if we are to make our mark as a nation. This presupposes at the present moment a very firm and definite acceptance of the creed of Truth at any cost.

2. Swadeshi must be our immediate goal. The future aspirants after membership of the Council[2] should be asked to pledge them-selves to an out and out protection of the country's industries—spe-cially cloth manufacture.

3. Definite acceptance of Hindustani—a resultant of Hindi and Urdu—as a national language of intercourse in the immediate future. The would-be members will be therefore pledged so to work in the Imperial Council as to introduce Hindustani and in the Local Councils the respective vernaculars, at least as an optional medium for the time being till we are able to dispense with English for the conduct of national affairs. They will also be pledged to introduce Hindustani as a compulsory second language in our schools with Devanagari or Urdu as an optional script. English will be recognized as a language of Imperial intercourse, diplomacy and international commerce.

4. Acceptance of the principle of redistribution of provinces so far as possible on a linguistic basis at the earliest opportunity.

[1] Copies of this letter were also addressed by Gandhiji to other friends, like Natesan, for private circulation.

[2] Gandhiji presumably has in mind the Imperial Legislative Council, Delhi.

5. Hindu-Mohammedan unity in its essence and from a political and religious standpoint as an unalterable article of faith. This contemplates mutual help, mutual toleration and recognition of the sufferings of one section to be the sufferings of all. This will exclude, from the official programme of the League, the unity propaganda by means of inter-dining and intermarriage and will include vigorous co-operation on the Khilafat question. In my discussions amongst the friends I have also told them that I will not think of asking for official recognition of my creed of civil disobedience and that I do not belong to any party and would like to make the League a non-party organization helping all honest men if they are otherwise capable of doing justice to the service they may choose irrespective of party. The League, according to my opinion, cannot become an anti-Congress organization but it should work as it is now doing to further the interests of the Congress.

Do you advise me, knowing me as you do with my qualifications and limitations, to join the League?[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K.GANDHI

Letters of V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, pp. 69-71

301. LETTER TO MAZHARUL HAQUE[2]

LABURNAM ROAD,
GRAMDEVI BOMBAY,
March 18, 1920

DEAR SHRI HAQUE,

Because of my active participation in Congress work last year, I am being asked that I should take more interest and join this organization. This demand is from those people with whom I got the opportunity to work, though I had nothing to do with their organization. They say that I should join India Home Rule League. I have told them that at this stage of my life, when l have developed a firm viewpoint, I can join an oganization only if I can influence their view

[1] Gandhiji joined the League and accepted its presidentship on April 28, 1920.

[2] The letter has been translated from Hindi. The original letter was in English which is not available.

point rather than get influenced myself. It does not mean that I do not have an open mind to accept new ideas. I only want to emphasise the fact that a fresh idea, with some extraordinary relevance alone can impress me now. I want to place before my friends, my certain and firm views on the following subjects.

(1) If we want to build a better nation, the virtue of great honesty should constitute the polity of the country. Right now, we have to admit, we are not sure and certain in choosing the right path to adopt the principle of truth.

(2) Swadeshi should be our goal. It should be demanded from the members of the council that they take a pledge to save the cottage-industry, particularly the cloth-industry.

(3) Hindustani, i.e., a blend of Hindi and Urdu, should be accep-ted as the national language for future use. So, the future members of the councils will take a pledge that till the use of English is stopped in correspondence, etc., at the national level, Hindustani should be used in the Imperial Council and regional languages should be used in the Provincial Councils. They should resolve that Hindustani would be implemented as the compulsory co-language in middle schools with freedom to choose either the Devanagari or the Urdu script. English language will be accepted in the field of administrative matters, diplo-macy, and international trade.

(4) Whenever a chance presents itself, the principle of re-division of provinces on the basis of language should be accepted.

(5) From the political and religious viewpoint, the quintessence of the Hindu-Muslim unity should be made an article of unfailing faith. In fact, this will be a viewpoint of mutual help, mutual tolerance and the feeling of mutual sharing of suffering by all. This will include the programme of co-operation on the question of Khilafat, leaving behind the propaganda of unity through the programmes of inter-caste marriage and inter-dining. During discussion with my friends, I also told them that I neither want theapproval of my princi-ple of civil-disobedience nor am I concerned with any party. But I would like to make the League a non-party organization which would help all honest persons. According to me, the League cannot be an anti-Congress organization but should work in the interest of the Congress as it is doing at

Keeping in view my capabilities and my helplessness, do you suggest that I should join Home Rule League?

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]
Ashiyana Ki Awaz, pp. 40-41

302. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

BOMBAY,
Friday [*March 19, 1920*][1]

Oh I could go through all life's troubles singing,
Turning each night to day,
If self were not so fast around me, clinging
To all I do or say.
My very thoughts are selfish, always building
Mean castles in the air,
I use my love of others for a gilding
To make myself look fair.
I fancy all the world engrossed with judging
My merit or my blame.
Its warmest praise seems an ungracious grudging
Of praise which I might claim.
Alas! no speed in life can snatch us wholly
Out of self's hateful sight,
And it keeps step, whene'er we travel slowly
And sleeps with us at night.
O Lord that I could waste my life for others,
With no ends of my own,
That I could pour myself into my brothers
And live for them alone.

MY DEAR CHILD,

You have forgotten your promise. Do not keep me without any-thing from you for so many days. The above is my selection for the day.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I., also *My Dear Child,* p. 64

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Esther Faering", 18-3-1920.

303. SPEECH ON KHILAFAT, BOMBAY[1]

March 19, 1920

It gives me the greatest pleasure to be able to move the only resolution[2] of this great conference.

I beg to congratulate the organizers and the volunteers on the splendid success of the peaceful demonstration of today. We had many warnings given to us as to the consequences that were likely to follow from suspension of business. Bombay at least has, thanks to the effort of the Khilafat Committee, behaved nobly in the matter. The hartal was spontaneous a nd voluntary. No pressure whatever was used. It was a matter of great satisfaction to me to note that the Committee followed the advice tendered by me that mill-hands should not be called upon to participate in the hartal.

[1] Made on the occasion of the Khilafat Day at a mass meeting consisting of about thirty thousand Muslims, Hindus and other citizens, presided over by Mia Mahomed Haji Jan Mahomed Chhotani

[2] The next of the resolution read :

This meeting of Hindus, Muslims and other citizens of Bombay hereby enters its emphatic protest against the violent and irresponsible agitation going on in the United Kingdom calculated to wound the deepest susceptibilities of the Muslims and therefore the whole of India, and trusts that not only will His Majesty's Ministers and other statesmen who desire the retention of India in the Empire as a free partner dissociate themselves from that agitation but will reassure the inhabitants of India of the fellow-feeling of the people of the United Kingdom by securing a settlement of the Khilafat question compatible with the just and religious sentiments of millions of the Muslim subjects of His Majesty.

This meeting further records its deep conviction that any other solution of the question must eventually result in complete withdrawal of co-operation from the Government and therefore appeals to all the statesmen of the Empire to prevent such a severe strain being put upon India's loyalty.

This meeting at the same time wishes to place upon record the fact that, whatever joint steps it may be necessary to take in order to give effect to the just sentiments of Indians, there shall be no resort to violence whether in speech or deed and is firmly of opinion that any violence practised in connection with the movement will seriously injure it and cause irreparable harm.

In the event of the failure of the joint movement, the Muslims reserve to themselves the right of taking such steps as the exigencies of the situation might dictate.

That the President of this meeting be authorized to send a copy of this resolution to His Excellency the Viceroy with a request to convey the same to His Majesty the King Emperor. *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 24-3-1920.

In these days of tension between employers and employees in the various industrial concerns[1] of the country, we may not encourage labourers to absent themselves from work without the willing consent of the employers.

Our resolution divides itself into four parts. The first part consists of a protest and a prayer. It protests against violent and irresponsible agitation[2] set up in England in connection with the Khilafat question, and appeals to the Ministers and other statesmen to dissociate themselves from this agitation and reassure us of the fellow-feeling of the people of the United Kingdom by securing an honourable settlement consistent with the just religious sentiments of the Mussulmans of India. The second part warns those concerned that an adverse solution is likely to eventuate in complete withdrawal of co-operation from the Government and will put an undue strain upon Indian loyalty,[3] and if such a step unfortunately becomes a necessity there is likely to be excitement. The third part of the resolution warns the people in the most emphatic language against violence of speech or deed and gives it as the opinion of this great meeting that any exercise of violence is calculated to injure the sacred cause and to do irreparable harm. So far the resolution is a joint transaction between the Hindus, Mohammedans and others to whom this great land is their mother country or their adopted home.

And it commits the joint movement to a policy of non-violence in the course of the struggle. But Mohammedans have special Koranic obligations in which Hindus may or may not join. They, therefore, reserve to themselves the right, in the event of the failure of non-co-operation *cum* non-violence, in order to enforce justice, to resort to all such methods as may be enjoined by the Islamic scriptures. I venture heartily to associate myself with this resolution. I consider the resolution to be thoroughly respectful and moderate in tone. I see on

[1] For example, the Tata Iron Works at Jamshedpur, where the strikers were fired on by the police and troops on March 15

[2] This presumably refers to the propaganda carried on in England against the Turks who were accused of crimes against humanity.

[3] Gandhiji's programme of non-co-operation was placed before the public for the first time at the Khilafat Conference held in Meerut on January 26, 1920. At the second Khilafat Conference held in Calcutta on February 29, 1920, Maulana Azad, in his presidential address, recommended this programme "for the acceptance of the Muslims".

the platform Shias and Sunnis,[1] Hindus and Parsis, all joined together in a respectful demonstration. Complete closure of the great Hindu cloth market and Hindu business houses is an eloquent testimony of Hindu agreement with the Muslim demand. The unholy agitation set up in London has evoked an outburst of feeling in India which will never die until justice is done. It is a matter of painful surprise that even Lord Curzon, with all his knowledge and experience of India, should have allied himself with the ignorant agitation.

There is, however, a silver lining to the cloud that has gathered overhead. Mr. Montagu has been our uncompromising advocate. Mr. Lloyd George has at last reaffirmed his memorable declaration[2] though in a somewhat halting form. I believe that the Government of India is pressing forward our claim with great firmness. The Anglo-Indian Press has not been hostile. *The Times of India* and the Bengal Chamber of Commerce have even warmly espoused our cause. The resolution invites all Englishmen to rally round the banner of Truth and vindicate British honour and the pledged word of the British Premier. I yield to no one in my loyalty to the British connection but I must refuse to buy that loyalty at the price of honour and at the sacrifice of the deeply seated religious sentiments of one section of my countrymen. A loyalty that sells its soul is worth nothing, and if in spite of acknowledged services of Indian soldiers, both Hindu and Mohammedan, during the late War,[3] the promises made by British statesmen are broken, the reasons that evoke the loyalty of India will have ceased to exist. I do not lose hope, but if the hope is disappointed and the worst happens, God alone knows what will happen to this fair land of ours. We know this that there will be neither peace nor rest for the Government or the people until the wrong is righted and the feelings of eight crores of Mohammedans are respected.

I hope it is unnecessary to show why it is obligatory on Hindus to march side by side with their Mohammedan countrymen. So long as the means and the end are honourable, I can imagine no

[1] Two sects of Mohammedans

[2] On February 26, 1920, Lloyd George declared in the House of Commons : "The pledge given in January 1918 was given after full consultation with all parties. It was specific, unqualified and deliberate . . . The effect of the statement in India was that recruiting went up appreciably from that very moment."

[3] On January 30, 1920, Queen Alexandra's tribute to the Indian Army was read by the Commander-in-Chief in the Council-chamber.

better cement for perpetually binding us both than our complete association with Mohammedans. But in a cause so sacred as this there can be, there should be, no violence either of speech or of deed. We must conquer not by hate but by love. I admit the difficulty of loving the un-just, but victory consists not in marching along a smooth surface but in conquering obstacles in a resolute and undaunted way. And in a just and sacred cause, firmness of purpose and unconquerable will are the least qua-lities required of us. Moreover violence can only damage this great cause. It may create a sensation but we shall never reach the goal through a series of sensations. The non-violence clause of the resolution, therefore, definitely recognizes the wisdom of self-restraint and enjoins upon all speakers to refrain from making wild or exaggerated speeches which can only lead to blood-shed, ruthless repression and humiliation of both the Government and the people. But the Mohammedans want to play a perfectly honourable game.

They wish to reserve or suppress nothing. Some of them have, therefore, insisted upon the insertion of a proviso to the resolution, meaning that if non-violence fails, they are at liberty to resort to the other methods enjoined upon them by the Koran and these are that when their religion is assailed, they should leave the country in which it is assailed or war against the assailant. And so the resolution undoubtedly foreshadows, in the most honourable and unmistakable manner, the stages through which this great movement will pass, the last stage being a bloody revolution. God forbid that this country should have to pass through such a revolution and all its horrors but the feeling on this Khilafat question runs so high and goes so deep that an unjust solution may, if peaceful means fail, land this country in a revolutionary move-ment the like of which we have not seen before, and if it comes responsibility will rest with Englishmen, the Hindus and the timid Mohammedans. If Englishmen will only recognize the existence of the deep feeling and the necessity of a just decision, all would be well. If the Hindus will understand the neighbourly duty and actively co-operate with the Mohammedans, they can, by united and perfectly peaceful effort, force a just solution. Timid Mohammedans by shedding their timidity at this critical moment of their history will also prevent bloodshed by letting the party of violence understand that there are no deserters of the flag of Islam. If, then, revolution is to be our lot, it will come through sheer despair

staring honest, honourable, high-souled Mohammedans in the face and giving them a feeling of being neglected by Englishmen, Hindus and their co-religionists. I hope, therefore, that the whole of India will unite in a prayer to the Almighty and in a cry of justice that shall not be denied. I venture finally to hope that the Government will not anticipate revolution by thoughtless and angry repression. They will recognize that India is no longer an infant and that Indians have the same feelings that actuate Englishmen in similar circumstances.

Young India, 24-3-1920

304. LETTER TO L. FRENCH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 20, 1920

L. FRENCH, ESQ.
CHIEF SECRETARY TO
THE PUNJAB GOV[ERNMEN]T
LAHORE

DEAR MR. FRENCH,

I hope you will please pardon me for not sending you the Sargodha statements earlier.[1] I had not brought them with me to Ahmedabad, and more were being taken by a local worker. And then, I have been travelling. I now send you a selection out of the numerous statements I have received. I shall hope to hear from you in due course. Will you please let me know whether the punitive police has been withdrawn?

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S. N. 7126

305. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

March 20, 1920

DEAR FRIEND,

I hope you have read my proposal[2] about the observance of what may be called the Satyagraha Week from the 6th to the 13th April. I am hoping that during the week there will be no difficulty about collecting ten lacs of rupees. If there are volunteers

[1] *Vide* "Letter to L. French", 29-2-1920.
[2] *Vide* "The 6th April and the 13th", 10-3-1920.

of known respectability and unquestionable honesty we need have no receipts but simple collection from all and sundry. Monied men and women can go out and collect in the quarters best known to them. But it is not so much the manner as the matter which I wish to emphasize. I hope that there will be no difference of opinion as to the desirability of passing the week in the manner suggested by me or of having a memorial in connection with massacre[1] of the 13th. In presenting the case to the people I would advise that the memory of the dead and not of the atrocity be treated as the impelling motive.

I trust that those who do not approve of the method of satyagraha will not on that account refrain from participating in the collection. This should be a truly national memorial.

But there is fasting and prayer too on which I myself lay even greater stress than on the memorial; for if there is universal fasting and prayer I know that money and whatever we want will rain down from heaven without further effort. I wish to give you my experience in this direction as a specialist *par excellence*. I do not know any contemporary of mine who has reduced fasting and prayer to an exact science and who has reaped a harvest so abundant as I have. I wish that I could infect the nation with my experience and make it resort to fasting and prayer with intelligence, honesty and intensity. We would thus, incredible as it may appear, do millions of things pertaining to the nation without elaborate organization and checks upon checks, but I know that fasting and prayer, to be as effective as I have found them to be in my own experience, have to be not mechanical things but definite spiritual acts. Fasting then is crucifixion of the flesh with a corresponding freedom of the spirit and prayer is a definite conscious longing of the soul to be utterly pure—the purity thus attained being dedicated to the realization of a particular object which is in itself pure. I hope therefore that if you believe in the ancient institution of fasting and prayer you will dedicate the 6th and the 13th to the purpose and induce your neighbours to do likewise.

Then there remain the three meetings[2] which I doubt not you will organize and make them a thorough success.

Yours sincerely,

M. K.GANDHI

Letters of V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, pp. 74-5

[1] At Jallianwala Bagh

[2] These were held on April 6, April 9 and April 13.

306. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Saturday, March 20, 1920

I should tell you that I slept only half an hour last night and I am sure, therefore, that you will forgive me for not writing to you. I ask your forgiveness because, though I always remember you, and wanted to write to you to share your dilemma[1], I could not do so. I shall arrive there on Tuesday morning.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi

307. LETTER TO MAZHARUL HAQUE[2]

March 20, 1920

DEAR FRIEND,

I hope you have read my proposal to observe 'Satyagraha Week' from April 6 to April 13. I hope that there will be no problem in collecting Rs. 10 lakh during the week. If we have honest and trustworthy volunteers, then there is no need of any receipt book. We can take the subscription from the public. Rich men and their wives can collect money from their acquaintances. But I want to put more emphasis on the subject than on the method of working. I hope there will be no difference of opinion about how to celebrate the week which I have already explained, or about the position on erecting a memorial in connection with the massacre of April 13. While putting my arguments before the public, I will advice them to work not with the feeling of revenge but with inspiration drawn from the memory of martyrs.

I believe that those who do not accept the principle of Satyagraha will not, for that reason alone, keep themselves away from the act of collecting subscriptions. In fact, it should be a real national memorial.

However, I lay greater stress on fasting and prayer than on memorial, because I know that wherever collective fasting and prayer

[1] Regarding the choice of a permanent field for active service. In March 1920, Gandhiji entrusted to him some work in connection with the printing of Part II of the Congress report on the Punjab disorders.

[2] This and the following letters to the addressee have been translated from Hindi. The original letters were in English and are not available.

is held, we will get in abundance the money or whatever we want even without any effort. I as a specialist, want to tell you my experiences in this particular field. I do not think that I have any such contemporary who has made fasting and prayer a science and has been a beneficiary of it like me. I wish to make the country a beneficiary of my experience and with wisdom and sincerity, want to take it on the path of fasting and prayer. Thus we can accomplish hundreds of thousands of jobs without having any big organization or a controlling agency. But I know from my experience that fasting and prayer are not mere ceremonial or mechanical things but spiritual acts. Fast drives out the physical and is closely attached to liberation of the soul and prayer is the conscious effort of the process of purification of soul. The purity thus gained can be utilized to accomplish a pure end. Therefore, I hope that if you believe in the ancient method of fasting and prayer, you will definitely come forward on April 6 and 13 andencourage your neighbours also to accompany you. Then remains the programme of the three meetings which you will undoubtedly organize with success.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Ashiyana Ki Awaz, pp. 42-3

308. KHILAFAT

The Khilafat issue is a splendid opportunity as much as a grave problem. It is the latter because on it hangs the future peace of eight crores of Muslims and therefore of the whole of India. It is a splendid opportunity because, if the Muslims use wisdom in solving the problem, their moral power will increase and India will come to enjoy a moral empire; Hindu-Muslim unity will increase, both Hindus and Muslims will grow stronger, their moral level will rise and the English will stop looking down upon us as an inferior race. Friendship is possible only between equals. The English do not regard us as their equals; even we consider ourselves as their inferiors. And, therefore, we, Hindus and Muslims, should solve this problem and ensure that the three become equals.

The sword makes men equal. After fighting with one another like so many bulls, till they all get exhausted, the opponents salute

each other and become friends. Anyone who shows weakness will humiliate himself. The other method is, instead of using physical force against the opponent, to employ soul-force and win ascendancy over him. This ascendancy is accepted not out of fear but out of love, and so both become equals. One does not consider it humiliating to admit another's moral superiority. The other takes no pride in being morally superior. Hence both be-have respectfully towards each other. We must give up the very thought of overcoming the English by the sword.

I do not want to argue that it would be impossible for us to employ such force; only, in order to use it we shall have to resort to hypocrisy, falsehood, treachery and so on, and even for employing these we shall have to acquire various other unprofitable abilities. We shall have to put forward all our strength against them and fight on till both of us are out of breath. They will not, naturally, let matters go so far; that is human nature. Even in ancient times the arts of fighting were guarded secrets. A proud man does not easily part with the means of gratifying his pride. Strength of arms necessarily carries pride with it. Therefore, if we wish to be the equals of our enemies through force of arms, we shall have to press on till the point of their defeat and, at the end of it all, we shall for ever remain enemies. Can the Khilafat problem be solved in this way?

Leaving aside the question whether or not it is right to fight, if we think merely of the result, we shall see that military strength will never solve the problem. The fight for the Khilafat is not solely against the English; it is a fight between Christians and Muslims.[1] The Christians are very well united and well-versed in the art of war; the Muslims are not equipped, the Muslims of India evidently are not, today at any rate, to try their strength against them; and the Hindus cannot stand shoulder to shoulder with the latter in a trial of strength. Under these circumstances, it is well-nigh impossible, from a practical point of view, for the Muslims to seek a settlement of the Khilafat issue by force.

One who tries his strength in fighting cannot say : 'God's will be done.' He alone can say this who believes in fighting with moral force, for in such a contest defeat is out of the question. He who

[1] Influential sections of English and American opinion had demanded that the Turks should be expelled from Constantinople and reduced to the status of a fourth-rate Power.

employs pure means may put his trust in fate, but he who uses impure means has no right to do so. The man who knowingly jumps into a well, blaming God as he does so, will instantly receive his punishment; he will die an untimely death. If a man, drinking to the last drop in the bottle, prattles, 'If it be God's will that I should get drunk, be it so,' the world will laugh at him. In moral experiments, we may maintain unswerving faith in God, because we know that the outcome of such an experiment is always happy. The military man trusts to his weapons as the alcoholic trusts to the property of his drink to produce intoxication and, when the weapons break, he is like wax.

If, however, Hindus and Muslims equip themselves with the divine weapon of satyagraha, victory is certain. If they both refuse to be a party to the injustice being done by the Christians, who on earth can defeat them? If Muslims refuse to be a party to any injustice perpetrated on them, it is God's promise to them that they will never be defeated; this is why I have said that it is our right and our duty to refuse to help the British in their unjust acts. It is only by discharging this duty that the Muslims can defend their religion against the present attack on it.

Let us now examine the views expressed by the British Labour Party on the Khilafat issue. We summarize them elsewhere.[1] This party declares that the Islamic Empire[2] must be split up, that the Muslims themselves demand this. How can Indian Muslims oppose it? If the Arabs do not want to remain with the Ottomans,[3] should they be kept with them by force? As a satyagrahi, I can answer this question straightaway. I do not wish to deprive the Arabs of their freedom; let them be free, but let them recognize the suzerainty of the Khalifa and let the holy places remain under the control of the Khalifa. I need not fight if this is not done, but I would not co-operate either to bring about the opposite result. This injustice cannot be perpetrated without my co-operation. If every Hindu and every Muslim resigns from the service of the Government, what will be the result? The British will either have to leave India or respect our wishes. And so in my view all that is necessary is to have patience and wait for public opinion to be educated along the right lines. Will Muslims use the present

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] Of the Sultan of Turkey who as Khalifa claimed supreme authority over the Islamic world

[3] Under the Ottoman Empire of Turkey

awakening to good purpose or ill? They will prove themselves their own friends or foes. May God give them wisdom and may they maintain conditions in which Hindus can go all out to help them.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 21-3-1920

309. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

Sunday, March 21, 1920

I say to thee, do thou repeat
To the first man thou mayest meet
In lane, highway or open street—
That he and we and all men move
Under a canopy of love,
As broad as the blue sky above;
That doubt and trouble, fear and pain,
And anguish all are shadows vain.
That death itself shall not remain,
That weary deserts we may tread,
A dreary labyrinth may thread,
Through dark ways under ground be led,
Yet, if we all one Guide obey,
The dreariest path, the darkest way
Shall issue out in heavenly day;
And we on diverse shores now cast,
Shall meet, our perilous voyage past,
All in our Father's house at last.

TRENCH MY DEAR CHILD,

I am on the train to Delhi.[1] I could not go out for rest.[2] I sent you nothing yesterday. I could not. This may be my last for some days because I shall not know what will happen from day to day. Do let me have a line from you.

With love,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child*, p. 65

[1] On March 21 Gandhiji left Bombay for Delhi.

[2] Gandhiji needed rest as he had some trouble with one of his legs. In the last weeks of March and April he went to recuperate at Sinhgadh.

310. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

Monday [*March 22*] *1920*

MY DEAR CHILD,

Here is my selection for today :

He that is down needs fear no fall
He that is low, no pride,
He that is humble ever shall have
God to be his guide.
I am content with what I have
Little be it or much
And Lord! contentment, still, I crave
Because Thou savest such.
Fullness to such a burden is
That go on pilgrimage,
Here little and hereafter bliss,
Is best from age to age.

J. BUNYAN

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child,* p. 66

311. REFLECTIONS ON THE SATYAGRAHA WEEK[1]

This national week will soon be upon us. We trust that it will be worthy of the occasion which it is to commemorate. The chief item of work which can be measured and which will be an acid test of our genuineness and feeling for the Punjab will be the collection of a fund[2] to pay for the memorial site for commemora-ting the memory of the martyrs of the 13th April last. To collect ten lacs from a population of thirty crores is not a difficult task if suitable workers can be found. If rich and well-known ladies and gentlemen could be persuaded to take up the work, it could be finished inside the week. The proper thing no doubt will be to collect *pro rata* from every

[1] The Gujarati translation of this article appeared in *Navajivan*, 28-3-1920, and has been included in *Gandhijinu Navajivan*, a collection of Gandhiji's articles published in *Navajivan*.

[2] Jallianwala Bagh Memorial Fund

province. We hope to give such a list next week. But each province should try to collect as much more as it can, than its share. It would not matter if we succeed in collecting more. Ten lacs is not the highest sum required. It is the minimum. Everyone therefore is expected to subscribe liberally.

* * *

Then there is the fasting and prayer. This is a hoary institution. A genuine fast cleanses body, mind and soul. It crucifies the flesh and to that extent sets the soul free. A sincere prayer can work wonders. It is an intense longing of the soul for its even greater purity. Purity thus gained when it is utilized for a noble purpose becomes a prayer. The mundane use of *gayatri*, its repetition for healing the sick, illustrates the meaning we have given to prayer. When the same *gayatri jap* is performed with a humble and concentrated mind in an intelligent manner in times of national difficulties and calamities, it becomes a most potent instrument for warding off danger. There can be no greater mistake than to suppose that the recitation of the *gayatri*, the *namaz* or the Christian prayer are superstitions fit to be practised by the ignorant and the credulous. Fasting and prayer therefore are a most powerful process of purification and that which purifies necessarily enables us the better to do our duty and to attain our goal. If therefore fasting and prayer seem at times not to answer, it is not because there is nothing in them but because the right spirit is not behind them.

* * *

A man who fasts and gambles away the whole of the day as do so many on *Janmashtami* day[1], naturally not only obtains no result from the fast in the shape of greater purity but such a dissolute fast leaves him on the contrary degraded. A fast to be true must be accompanied by a readiness to receive pure thoughts and determination to resist all Satan's temptations. Similarly a prayer to be true has to be intelligible and definite. One has to identify oneself with it. Counting beads with the name of Allah on one's lips whilst the mind wanders in all directions is worse than useless. We therefore hope that the coming week of dedication to national fasting and prayer will become a universal reality and not merely a formal observation.

* * *

[1] The eighth day of the dark fortnight of the *Shravana* month, the birthday of Lord Krishna

The magnificent spectacle[1] of tens of thousands of Mohammedans going to Jumma Masjids in different parts of India and offering heart-felt prayers for the triumph of truth did more than anything else to bring a just solution within the bounds of possibility. We would have no hesitation in guaranteeing a proper solution of the Khilafat question purely on the strength of prayer. We need not be told that the argument in favour of prayer cuts both ways, as it is open as much to our enemy as to us to pray. But that would be an argument not against prayer but against allowing the result to affect our valuation of prayer. One may not make terms with God. It is enough to know that prayer has played from times immemorial a most important part in the evolution of nations as well as individuals. May the Satyagraha Week witness a revival of the institutions of fasting and prayer in all their original glory and splendour.

Young India, 24-3-1920

312. VIOLENCE VERSUS NON-VIOLENCE

The Khilafat day has come and gone. It was a great success and a complete triumph of satyagraha, i.e., not civil disobedience but truth and non-violence. No hartal has been so voluntary as that of the 19th March in that all the canvassing that ever took place was before the 19th.[2] It was an example of wonderful self-restraint on the part of the Committee[3] not to have called out the mill-hands. The Committee deserves the highest praise for its efficient management and for the definite recognition of voluntarism. If the people continue to show the discipline and self-restraint shown on the 19th and add thereto in an equal measure the spirit of self-sacrifice, nothing can prevent the full fruition of our hopes regarding Khilafat. Nobody could have believed a year ago the possibility of peace being observed by the fanatical element among the Mohammedans on a matter of life and death to them and on a day of no business for the idlers. But there can be no idleness when there is prayer. All were enjoined not to quarrel, not to be angry but to pray for the right to be done. It is true that all did not definitely pray, but the spirit of prayer was abroad and it dominated the people rather than the spirit of revenge,

[1] On March 19, the Khilafat day

[2] The Hindu shopkeepers of Bombay had voluntarily observed the hartal on the Khilafat day.

[3] The Khilafat Committee, Bombay

anger, excitement, and so we had the amazing spectacle of the hartal day passing off like an ordinary day when everybody expects peace to be observed. The vast meeting of Bombay attended perhaps by thirty thousand men was a sight worth seeing. There was firmness in the faces of those thousands of people who listened to the speeches, yet without applause or any other effusive demonstration. The organizers deserve the warmest praise for having introduced into our meetings the ancient peacefulness,quiet, determination and orderliness in the place of modern fluster, excitement and disorderliness. The one develops just the qualities that make for satyagraha, the other inevitably leads to violence. And the message of the great meeting and the very successful hartal is not violence but non-violence. I hope that the authorities will not misread the situation. They will not fail to understand the admirable spirit of the whole demonstration or the equally admirable spirit of the resolution—a resolution to which, in my humble opinion, it is impossible for any honest lover of this country or the Empire to take exception. I hope, too, that they will read the spirit of the movement in the manner in which it is developing. I hope that the exemplary patience, self-restraint and orderliness that are evolving in our midst will have their due weight with them and that they will inform the Imperial Government that whilst there is this admirable peace in the land there is also a grim determination behind it which will not take "no" for an answer. I hope that Government will not repeat the sin of last April and entertain any false hope of tyranny and unquenchable spirit that has come into being and that will suffer everything but humiliation, dishonour and defeat [*sic*].

It is a matter of deep regret that so respected a body as the Liberal League should have hastily and in advance condemned the hartal. Surely a people so stricken with grief and with disappointment probably staring them in the face must have an outlet for orderly manifestation. It was because not very long ago we were afraid to speak or write what we thought that our sentiments burrowed under and became foul with stench because of the absence of the fierce sun and the open air of public opinion playing upon them. Hence we had a secret revolutionary movement. Today, thank God, we seem to have outlived the evil day. We dare to think, speak and write openly, with- out fear, but under restraint that openness imposes upon mankind. I appeal to the members of the Liberal League and those who think with them to recognize this plain fact and to

appreciate the superiority of boldness over timid caution. If they desire to harness all the innumerable forces that are coming daily into being for the uplift of the nation, if they wish to become privileged participators in the throes of the new birth, let them not ignore the signs of the time, let them not reject the advances of the younger generation, let them not chill their ardent hopes and aspirations, but let them head this growing party of young, enthusiastic, self-sacrificing dare-devil men. Sympathize with them, respond to the heart's throb, regulate it, for they are amenable to reason or an appeal to their high-souledness—and you have a disciplined party, obedient to the call of the country. But if they feel neglected, if they feel that the older heads will not patiently listen to their wants, will not give them a helping hand, they may despair and despair may lead to desperation resulting in a catastrophic destruction. I can recall no time so magnificently suitable for leading India to the method of satyagraha—not necessarily civil disobedience, but truth and non-violence—in which there is no defeat and in which if there is any error it hurts but those who err.

Young India, 24-3-1920

313. CONTEMPT OF COURT

The long expected hearing of the case against the editor and the publisher of *Young India* in connection with the publication of a letter of the District Judge of Ahmedabad regarding satyagrahi lawyers and my comments thereon has been heard and judgment has been pronounced.[1] Both the editor and the publisher have been severely reprimanded. But the Court did not see its way to pass any sentence upon either of us. If I dwell upon the judgment it is only because I am anxious as a satyagrahi to draw a moral from it. I wish to assure those friends who, out of pure friendliness, advised us to tender the required apology, that I refused to accept their advice not out of obstinacy but because there was a great principle at stake. I had to conserve a journalist's independence and yet respect the law. My own reading of the law was that there was no contempt committed by me. But my defence rested more upon the fact that I could not offer an apology if I was not prepared not to repeat the offence on a similar

[1] It was pronounced on March 12, 1920; for Gandhiji's account of the hearing, *vide* "Was It Contempt of Court?", 10-3-1920.

occasion. Because I hold that an apology tendered to a Court to be true has to be as sincere as a private apology. At the same time I owed a duty to the Court. It was no light thing for me to refuse to accept the advice of the Chief Justice especially when the Chief Justice was so very considerate in the correspondence with me. I was on the horns of a dilemma. I therefore decided not to offer any defence but simply to make a statement frankly and fully defining my position, leaving it to the Court to pass any sentence it thought fit in the event of an adverse decision. In order to show that I meant no disrespect of the Court and that I did not desire to advertise the case I took extraordinary precautions to prevent publicity and I venture to think that I succeeded eminently in convincing the Court that behind my disobedience—if it was disobedience—there was no defiance but perfect resignation; there was no anger or ill will but perfect restraint and respect; that, if I did not apologize, I did not because an insincere apology would have been contrary to my conscience. I hold that it was about as perfect an instance of civil disobedience as it ever has been my privilege to offer. And I feel that the Court reciprocated in a most handsome manner and recognized the spirit of civility that lay behind my so-called disobe-dience. The luminous judgment of Justice Marten lays down the law, and decides against me. But I feel thankful that it does not question the propriety of my action. Justice Hayward's judgment recognizes it as an instance of passive, i.e., civil, resistance and practically makes it the reason for not awarding any sentence. Here then we have an almost complete vindication of civil disobedience. Disobedience to be civil must be sincere, respectful, restrained, never defiant, must be based upon some well-understood principle, must not be capricious and above all must have no ill will or hatred behind it. I submit that the disobe-dience offered by Mr. Desai and myself contained all these ingredients.

Young India, 24-3-1920

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

ROWLATT PETITION

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

THE HUMBLE MEMORIAL OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIAN SUBJECTS OF HIS MAJESTY THE KING-EMPPEROR

HUMBLY AND RESPECTFULLY SHOWETH AS FOLLOWS:

(1) Your petitioners have learnt with great concern the announcement recently made by you in answer to a question in the House of Commons that you would not advise His majesty to signify his disallowance of the Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act being Act XI of 1919 (generally known as the Rowlatt Act).

(2) Your petitioners submit that the said Act contains provisions which are highly prejudicial to the liberties of His Majesty's Indian subjects, among others those which empower the Indian Executive to assume at its own discretion practically uncontrolled powers of depriving His Majesty's Indian subjects of their right to be tried by the Ordinary Tribunals of the land and those which deprive the offenders placed for trial under the said Act of many privileges which have been recognized by civilised jurisprudence as absolutely necessary for safeguarding their innocence.

(3) Your petitioners further submit that on account of the aforesaid and other objections to which the principle and the provisions of the said Act are open it has met with universal disapprobation and opposition in India and has given rise to an agitation the like of which in extent and intensity has never been known or heard of before in India.

(4) Your petitioners feel that constitutional reforms inaugurating responsible Government in India can have no value or meaning if the said Act is retained on the Indian Statute Book in open and deliberate defiance of public opinion in India.

(5) Your petitioners, therefore, submit that under the circumstances aforesaid, you will be pleased to reconsider your decision and advise His Majesty to signify through you his disallowance of the said Act.

(6) And for this act of kindness your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

Your most obedient servants,

Serial No.	Signature	Place of Residence

Signature [of] Volunteer

Supplement to *Navajivan*, 13-11-1919

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM SECRETARY, HUNTER COMMITTEE, TOMALAVIYA

In his reply to Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Mr. Stokes writes that Lord Hunter's Committee feel that it is not within their province to review the discretion of the local Government. If in the course of their inquiry, it should appear that the evidence of any person, now in custody, is necessary to throw light on the causes of disturbances or measures taken to deal therewith, such persons will be called before the Committee and in the event, the Committee do not doubt that the Government of the Punjab will place no obstacle in the way of their appearance. The Committee observe, "Indeed, from the communication of the Private Secretary to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of which a copy is annexed to your letter, it is seen that an assurance has been conveyed to you on this point and also an undertaking that proper facilities will be allowed for consultation between persons in custody and counsel engaged in the inquiry which has been entrusted to the Committee and Lord Hunter's Committee would expect that. In this matter, Government would afford the fullest reasonable facilities. Lord Hunter has independently suggested to the Punjab Government that this should be done. Beyond this Lord Hunter's Committee feel that they cannot properly make any further suggestions. If the Congress Subcommittee still should feel unable to co-operate in the inquiry and should adhere to their decision to forgo the opportunity for full investigation which it is the desire of Lord Hunter's Committee to make, His Lordship's Committee, I am to say, can only acquiesce with regret in that decision."

The Leader, 19-11-1919

APPENDIX III

STATEMENT ON THE PUNJAB BY CONGRESS ENQUIRY COMMITTEE

LAHORE,
November 17, 1919

The following statement has been issued by the Punjab Inquiry Sub-committee of the All-India Congress Committee:

It is necessary that the public should have a connected narrative of events that have led to the decision of the Congress Sub-committee to withdraw its co-operation from Lord Hunter's Committee. It will be remembered that, within ten days of regrettable occurrences in the Punjab, the All-Inida Congress Committee met at Bombay on the 20th and 21st April and, while it deplored and condemned all acts of violence, it urged upon the Government to deal with the situation in a sympathetic and conciliatory manner, immediately reversing the policy of repression. In

accordance with a resolution passed by the Congress Committee, a representation was sbumitted on the 28th April last to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Inida in which the Committee most earnestly urged His Majesty's Government to intervene and put an end to the methods of repression and to order the appointment of a commission of officials and non-officials to investigate the causes of discontent and allegations of excesses by authorities in repressing popular disturbances.

Mr. Montagu announced in the House of Commons in the last week of May that His Majesty's Government and the Viceroy have recognized the necessity for such inquiry as has been referred to above. Shortly after, a second meeting of the All-India Congress Committee took place at Allahabad on the 8th June last, dealing with the situation which then existed. It passed among others the following resolution: The Committee note with satisfaction that the Viceroy and Mr. Montagu have recognized the necessity of an inquiry into the causes of the unrest and into the complaints against authorities of use of excessive and unlawful force in relation to the view of the fact that the policy of the Government of India and the Government of the Punjab is inseparably connected with such unrest and complaint and must form a subject of investigation, this Committee earnestly request His Majesty' Government to constitute a Parliamentary Committee or a commission of persons wholly unconnected with the formulation, sanction or carrying out of the said policy. The Committee urge the following among other matters be included within the scope of the inquiry: (1) Policy of the Government of India and the Government of the Punjab in dealing with recent disturbances; (2) Sir Michael O'Dwyer's regime in the Punjab with special reference to methods of recruitment for the Indian Army and labour corps, raising of war loan, administration of martial law and complaints of excessive and unlawful use of force by the authorities; (3) recent occurrences in Delhi and other places. The Committee further urge that interests of justice and good government demand that an inquiry should begin at an early date. At the same meeting the Committee appointed the Sub-committee consisting of gentlemen whose names are noted below: (a) to arrange for the conduct of an inquiry into the recent occurrences in the Punjab and other places through such agency as they may determine, (b) take such legal or other proceedings in relation thereto in India or England as may be necessary and (c) to collect funds for the purpose by public subscriptions:≈Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, President ex-officio; Sir Rash Behary Ghosh, Pandit Motilal Nehru, Syed Hasan Imam, Mr. B. Chakravarty, Mr. C.R. Nath, Mr. Kasturi Ranga Aiyangar, Mr. Umar Sobani and Pandit Gokaran Nath Mistra, Secretary ex-officio, with power to co-opt others as members. The Sub-committee co-opted the following members at its meetings held on the 16th October 1919: Mr. Gandhi, Swami Shraddanand, Mr. Purushottam Das Tandon, Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, Mr. Ganpat Rai, Sheikh Umar Baksh, Bakshi Tekchand, Mr. Gokulchand Narang, Mr. Santanam, Badr-ul-Islam Ali Khan and Lal Girdhari Lal.

We the undersigned went to the Punjab shortly after withdrawal of martial law and began our investigations on the 25th June last. We need hardly say that at every step we felt the need of the assistance of the leaders of people who had occupied a prominent position in the public life of their respective towns and none of whom had taken an important part in the events which followed disturbances. We found that many people who knew what had happened would not come forward to give evidence because of fear, real or imaginary, of police. Whilst we were going on with our inquiry, the appointment of Lord Hunter's Committee was announced and we redoubled our efforts to collect evidence for the purposes of the inquiry. But, as we proceeded, we realised more than ever that the presene of principal Punjab leaders was necessary to guide and help us in collecting some of the most valuable evidence, to hearten those who were still keeping back from fear and to show to profit that Government wanted the inquiry to be carried on fairly and that they wanted the whole truth to be told to Lord Hunter's Committee.

We had also expressed the desire that the Committee should have power to revise the sentences passed by the Martial Law Commission and summary courts through whose agency, it is our firm belief, an amount of permanent and prolonged injustice has been possible. But the Government of India restricted the scope of Lord Hunter's Committee and appointed special judges for such revision. The judges appointed were both Punjab judges and rightly or wrongly (we think more rightly than wrongly), the public objected to this work being entrusted to the Punjab judges. It was therefore necessary that this tribunal should be so composed as to inspire confidence and that to that end one judge at least should be from outside the Punjab and that the tribunal should have power to admit fresh evidence where records were found to be insufficient or material evidence was, in the first instance, shut out. We had also some apprehension that our counsel might not be allowed to appear before the Committee and that, even if they were allowed, the right of cross-examination might not be extended to them. We may mention here parenthetically that it was our desire to hasten the inquiry and to avoid bitterness that led us to waive our substantial objection that the inquiry should be made by a Royal Commission appointed independently of the Government of India.

Early in October we wrote to the Government of India informing them that our Sub-committee engaged lawyers to put the case of the people before Lord Hunter's Committee and desired to know the terms of reference of the Committee and the procedure to be adopted by them. Having been referred by the Government of India to Lord Hunter's Committee for information regarding procedure, we wrote to Lord Hunter's Committee for permission to lead evidence through our counsel and to cross-examine witnesses of the other side.

In the same letter we informed Lord Hunter's Committee that we considered it equally essential for a proper and fair investigation of recent events in the Punjab that

the Punjab leaders who are undergoing imprisonment should be released on parole or bail for the period of the enquiry. We thought, however, that this was a matter on which proper authority to be approached was the Punjab Government, the Government of India and the Secretary of State. In this view, so far back as the 12th September last, at a meeting of the Indian Legislative Council, one of us had urged upon the Government of India and the Punjab Government the release of the Punjab leaders on such security, personal or pecuniary, or both, as may seem adequate to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab in order that they should be able to give evidence before the Committee and have the people's case properly put before it. A cablegram was sent to the Secretary of State on the 27th ultimo praying for the right of appearance by counsel and for the release of the Punjab leaders for purposes of inquiry when time came for leading evidence before Lord Hunter's Committee. The Punjab Government was approached regarding all three points mentioned above.

There were protracted negotiations and appearance by counsel with right of cross-examination was allowed and status of the Congress Sub-committee recognized. Mr. Justice Mullick of the Patna High Court was appointed as one of two revision judges and we have reason to believe that the judges have power to admit fresh evidence in the circumstances already referred to. But the third equally fundamental need was left unsatisfied. The Lieutenant-Govenor of the Punjab rejected our request for the temporary release of principal leaders under due security in the following terms : "As regards the suggestion that certain prisoners convicted in connection with disturbances should be released from jail in order to ensure satisfactory presentation of case, I am to say it will not be possible to comply with this suggestion. If, however, the Committee desire to hear evidence of any prisoner, this will be duly arranged and if it is found necessary for counsel engaged in inquiry to visit prisoners for consultation in connection with inquiry, proper facilities for such consultation will be given." We considered the reply to be highly unsatisfactory. Lord Hunter's Committee was approached with a view to the wrong being righted. We were all to cite the precedent of the Solomon Committee of 1913 of South Africa for the suggested action of His Lordship's Committee, but our suggestion was rejected. Then followed Mr. Gandhi's interview with the Lieutenant-Governor and His Honour was prepared to allow the principal leaders to be released on parole for the day or days they had to give evidence before Lord Hunter's Committee, and His Honour was willing also that counsel should visit in jail all prisoners whose evidence was to be tendered before the Committee. But it was clear that, while the demand for the release of the leaders was being granted in principle by advance made by His Honour upon previous position, the substantial and most practical part of the request stood rejected.

By securing release of the principal leaders and their presence in Committee room, we desired to get valuable assistance from them for our counsel in examination

of witnesses. Those who know anything of law will at once recognize the force of this remark≈the presence of party interested, provided he is intelligent, is most helpful whilst his case is going on. No trials can take place in absence of the accused. Lord Hunter's Committee is in a way trying these leaders as conspirators in a political conspiracy to wage war against the King. They have been held by the Goverment to be responsible for the so-called rebellion.We hold the Committee cannot do justice to the matter before them if they do not have at least the leading prisoners before them. It may be mentioned here that we had asked Lord Hunter's Committee at Delhi to be supplied with a list of official witnesses and their printed statements to enable the Sub-committee's counsel to cross-examine witnesses punctiliously, but this request was not granted. Thus it is not possible for our counsel to take instructions from prisoners beforehand by visiting them in jail. Some of our colleagues that those prisoners who were principally interested in events then being examined by the Committee would be permitted to appear before the Committee as prisoners under custody and that they would be able, then, to help counsel in course of examination of witnesses, but we wanted to take nothing for granted. Mr. C.F. Andrews, therefore, kindly offered to go to the Lieutenant-Governor and had the point made definitely clear. He told us on return that His Honour would not allow the prisoners to appear before the Committee except as witnesses and on the day or days that they were actually required for that purpose. There was, then, nothing left for the Congress Sub-committee to do, but to abide by its manifesto not to participate in the proceedings of Lord Hunter's Committee.

The Congress Sub-committee arrived at this decision after the greatest and most anxious consideration. It weighed every consequence, but it felt that if it was to discharge the trust laid upon it, if it was to vindicate national honour and honour of the great Punjab leaders, if it was to see truth and innocence established, it could not possibly engage in an inquiry in which the people's party was so heavily handicapped. it must be remembered that officials are as much upon their trial as leaders. But not only are Government officials free to appear before Lord Hunter's Committee but also to instruct Government counsel. In the words of the Congress Committee's letter to Lord Hunter, it cannot be expected to be party to a position under which Government officials whose acts are under review can freely appear before Committee, when people's representatives whose acts are equally under review are not allowed to appear even as prisoners under custody. We have to come to the conclusion that our work of collecting evidence must continue. We have already in our possession most valuable evidence. It needs to be supplemented and checked. The Congress Committee have therefore appointed Mr. Gandhi, Pandit Motilal Nehru, Mr. C.R. Das, Mr. Abbas Tyabji, Ex-judge, Baroda High Court, and Mr. Fazlul Haq as Commissioners, with Mr. Santanam, Bar-at-law, as Secretary for work, and the Committee hope before long to place before the public a full and accurate statement of events. The first undersigned begs to state in order to avoid any misunderstanding

that he has purposely refrained from allowing himself to be appointed a Commissioner as, being the Chairman of Committee, he should be free to guide the work of the Committee as a whole.

MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA,
CHAIRMAN
MOTILAL NEHRU.
VICE-CHAIRMAN

The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 19-11-1919

APPENDIX IV

LETTER FROM E. CANDLER

LAHORE,
December 12, 1919

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

In a conversation with a Professor of a Lahore College yesterday, a Hindu and very old friend, I came to know that the article published in the *Haq* (29th November 1919) might, in view of Indian etiquette and tradition, appear deliberately offensive and in bad taste as regards the reference to the possible marriage of a daughter of yours to a Mussalman. I do not know if you have any children, but I feel sure that you will accept it from me that, in any case, the point was impersonal or only personal in so far as your individual attitude was concerned. I had no idea, when I wrote the article, except in the case of an ultra conservative, that a reference to a daughter or a wife was considered indecent or offensive. If there is anything in the passage in the nature of a personal affront, I beg that you will forgive and believe me when I tell you that nothing would give me more pain than to discover that I had unwillingly offended in this way and more especially in *Haq* which I wish to keep clean from my taint of unfairness or bad taste. I need not point out that the political intention of the article was to put these questions to you squarely. Are you, with a view to embarrassing the Government, working up an anti-British campaign to modify the terms for the Turk? Are the claims of the Turks really as dear to you that you would jeopardise the peace of your own country for their sake, and this in the face of the verdict of men like Gladstone, Morley, Bryce, men, whose opinion, I am sure, you value and whose disinterestedness you cannot doubt, men who, long before this agitation, denounced the treatment of the subject races by the Turk as the gravest infringement of modern civilisation, and who devoted a large part of their lives to their efforts in redressing it? Please make use of this letter, if you wish to do so, privately or publicly, in any way you deem fit.

I remain,
Yours sincerely,
EDMUND CANDLER

New India, 18-12-1919

APPENDIX V

GENERAL SMUTS REPLY TO DEPUTATION

The Minister in his reply said that he was out for fair play and justice for all in the Union. The Indian community ought also to realise that there was a very strong and powerfully backed up movement afoot to curtail the progress of the Indian community. It would be inadvisable in the interest of the community to rake up all the past matters and have them included in terms of referene of the proposed Commission. It would be better if the trading matter alone is once for all gone into thoroughly. As the Indians are not anxious to acquire any fixed property, that matter should be left out. He also pointed out that Sir Benjamin Robertson is coming out to watch the interest and assist the Indian community and it would, therefore, be to the interest of the Indians themselves to render all the assistance they can both to Sir Benjamin and the Commission. He concluded by saying that he was very anxious to be on the best of terms with the Indian Government and those settled in the Union. He would endeavour under his Government to give fair play to all. Being in a great hurry to meet another deputation, he regretted that he could not give the time he desired to the deputation, but the facts will not slip his memory. The Commission may give us a couple of years' rest until another agitation breaks out and we shall see then what could be done.

Young India, 24-12-1919

APPENDIX VI

*KHILAFAT DEPUTATION'S ADDRESS TO VICEROY*1

[DELHI,
January 19, 1920]

WITH NAME OF ALLAH THE MOST MERCIFUL AND THE MOST COMPASSIONATE

TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE RT. HON. BARON CHELMSFORD, P.C., G.M.S.I., G.C.M.G.,
G.M.I.E., VICEROY AND GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

We the members of the Khilafat deputation, authorised in this behalf by the Khilafat Conference at the very important session recently held at Amritsar, beg to approach Your Excellency with a view to enlist the sympathy and secure the fullest assistance of Your Excellency's Government in a matter of vital importance in which we are confident neither the one nor the other will be withheld. The Khilafat Conference has more than once resolved that a deputation should proceed at an early

we are confident neither the one nor the other will be withheld. The Khilafat Conference has more than once resolved that a deputation should proceed at an early date to England and lay before His Majesty the King-Emperor and his Ministers a full and clear statement of the obligations imposed on every Muslim by his faith and of the united wishes cherished by Indian Mussalmans regarding the Khilafat and cognate questions, such as those relating to Muslim control over every portion of the Zazirat-ul-Arab, the Khilafat's wardenship of the Holy Places, and the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. Such a desire would have been both natural and laudable at any time, but in view of the grave situation that exists to-day and is fast developing into an unmistakable menace, it has acquired an urgency and an insistence that have compelled us to give respectful expression to it, with Your Excellency's permission, through the agency of such a representative deputation as ours. After a protracted war in which almost the entire civilized world was engaged on one side or the other, in which each nation vied with its neighbours in pouring out its blood and treasures on the most lavish scale in order to secure victory, and of which the ravages and horrors have been without precedent, it was natural that even those indirectly yet powerfully affected thereby should experience extreme war-weariness at its close and feel intense abhorrence of the ancient method of settling the vital affairs of mankind through the arbitrament of the sword. Nor was it less natural that the world should cry with one voice for a lasting peace to be concluded with the utmost rapidity and yet, although more than a year had elapsed since the Treaty of Peace was signed by Germany, peace seems almost as far as ever from resuming its sway over mankind and our own continent of Asia is not without reason apprehensive of grave developments of which no one can pretend to foresee the final end. The world seems once more to be approaching a grave crisis and, although it is not possible to speak with any degree of certainty of the regions and the races likely to be affected by the storm that is obviously brewing, it requires no great perspicacity to foretell that, when it comes to burst, the Muslim world will not be left unaffected. We may suggest without disrespect that it is of paramount importance at such a juncture that the authorities at the centre of this composite Empire should be fully alive to all that transpires in remotest corners of His Majesty's world-wide Dominions, and the least that we may reasonably expect from the statesman of the Empire is that, in concluding any settlement to which they attach any degree of finality, they should take into the fullest consideration the most binding religious obligations and the most highly cherished sentiments of 70 millions of Indian Mussalmans and the no less ardent sympathies of 250 millions of their compatriots. For one reason or another, sufficiently forcible expression had not been given to these sentiments and sympathies during the War, and we regret more than we can tell that even the religious obligations to which we have referred were not set forth with that degree of clearness and emphasis that is essential for the purpose of communicating the religious

doctrines of one set of people to the ruling classes of another of alien faith.

This is neither the time nor the place to enter into any lengthy discussion of the reasons that swayed the Mussalmans of India nor into any such exposition of the doctrines that they hold to be absolutely essential for their salvation. It suffices to say that, since the armistice was concluded more than a year ago, they have not spared themselves in the task of a clear exposition of these essential doctrines of their faith and they are not unmindful of the fact which is becoming clearer every day that Your Excellency's Government, various local Governments and those Englishmen who had held responsible offices in India before their retirement have gradually come to realise and appreciate in a daily increasing measure the deep concern of the Mussalmans of India and of their compatriots in the settlement to be concluded with the Ottoman Khilafat. Realising at the same time their own responsibility for the peace and good governance of India and tranquillity on her borders, Your Excellency's Government and the Right Hon. the Secretary of State have, we may thankfully acknowledge, made representations to His Majesty's Government, but that Government is obviously so far removed from us, both in point of distance and political and religious surroundings, that neither our own voice nor the representations of this Govenment have apparently affected the opinion, view point, and preconceived ideas of His Majesty's ministers to an appreciable degree, and a number of ministerial utterances can be cited to prove, if proof was necessary, that they are inclined to insist on a settlement of such world-wide interest and importance as if it was solely, or at any rate mainly, the concern of the small section of His Majesty's subjects of British birth and Christian faith. From the rest they seem to expect impassive acquiescence, if not willing submission, to the dictates of their narrowly conceived and far from Imperial statesmanship. Need we say that such an estimate of the situation that a sectional and sectarian settlement will create will prove disastrously incorrect. Deeply apprehensive as we are of the calamitous consequences of such an estimate and still more deeply anxious to prevent them while we can, we have been driven to the conclusion that one final effort must be made to give timely warning to the Imperial authorities of the dangers we so clearly foresee and respectfully entreat them to avoid the evil consequence of a settlement sought to be forced on the Mussalmans of the world contrary to the clearest commandments of their creed and the united wishes of so large a portion of humanity. Recent experience as well as the inherent difficulties of discussing such grave matters over the wires at the distance of seven thousand miles of land and sea have forced us to resolve that, with Your Excellency's assistance, a deputation of ours should proceed at the earliest possible opportunity to England and place directly our humble but frank submissions before His Majesty and his ministers, and since we have been repeatedly asked to remember that, in arranging such a settlement Great Britain, whatever her position among her Allies and associates, could not leave their interests and wishes out of

consideration, we trust that our deputation will be enabled to explain to the Allied and associated nations and their Governments the nature and binding force of Islamic obligations and the true character and scope of Muslim aspirations. We need not repeat here the clear conditions of futre peace as set forth by the President of the United States of America on the basis of which the Khilafat concluded the armistice, not the unmistakable pledges of the British Premier regarding Constantinople, Thrace and the homelands of the Turks. We respectfully submit that no prospective territorial or political gains, whether real or only imagined, can compensate Great Britain or her Allies and associates for the loss of moral credit if their pledged word is left unredeemed, and the ingenious interpretations suggested now as an afterthought by irresponsible persons will in no way prove helpful to the responsible authorities. The shock of this blow to the moral prestige of the Empire will be felt all the more severely in consequence of the sad disillusionment with regard to the pledge of His Majesty's Government proclaimed by Your Excellency's predecessor at the commencement of the war with Turkey.

But it is not because the Mussalmans of India take their stand on British and Allied pledges, any more than they expect that a settlement with such extended and intricate ramifications can be governed by their own interests and sentiments alone, that they are so deeply agitated to-day when they apprehend a breach of these solemn pledges and an almost complete disregard of these universally cherished sentiments. The Mussalmans of India will entirely fail in their purpose if they cannot make it clear to those who have made themselves responsible for preserving to them their religious freedom in its entirety that their deepest concern today is that settlement of the Khilafat and cognate questions is apparently being outlined by His Majesty's Government and their Allies which no Mussalman can accept or acquiesce in without jeopardising eternal salvation. This is the one governing consideration on which attention must be focussed and so intent is it that, even if the Ottoman Turks could be made to acquiesce in such a settlement, it would remain as unacceptable as ever to every believing Mussalman. The preservation of the Khilafat as a temporal no less than a spiritual institution is not so much a part of their faith as the very essence thereof and no analogies from other creeds that tolerate the lacerating and devitalizing distinction between things spiritual and things temporal, between the Church and the State, can serve any purpose save that of clouding and befogging the clearest of issues. Temporal power is of the very essence of the institution of the Khilafat, and Mussalmans can never agree to any change in its character or to the dismemberment of its Empire. The no less important question of the Zazirat-ul-Arab, over no portion of which can any kind of non-Muslim control be tolerated, is equally clearly not one of Muslim sentiment but of Islamic faith. Similarly, Islam also declares and defines the sanctity of the holy places of Islam and places this and similar matters beyond the uninformed interpretation of people of alien faiths. Mussalmans insist, and with perfect reason, that the Khalifa alone shall be the warden of the holy places. As regards the integrity of the Khalifa's dominions, we are

painfully aware that some sections of the Mussalmans of Arabia have in clear defiance of the laws of Islam stood out from the solid mass of the rest of the Muslim world. But instead of this being any argument against the latter, it furnishes it with one more compelling reason for proclaiming the truth and in accordance with the divine declaration that all Mussalmans are brother, one to another, and the divine injunction to make peace between brothers, Indian Mussalmans must seek to remove every existing misunderstanding and eliminate every cause of friction that may tend to separate Arab from Ajam, and Turk from Tajik. And it is the logical consequence of Islamic brotherhood that all Mussalmans should share the sorrows and sufferings of their brothers in every corner of the world and should see to it that principles of such universal application as that of self-determination should be applied to the Muslim no less than to the Christian and to the Asiatic no less than to the European. It is true that a great part of Europe and Christendom charges the Ottoman Turks with religious injustice and political ineptitude, but it is permissible to argue that those who do so are neither free from old-standing prejudices nor from a bitterness of latter growth, and we are confident that the verdict of history would be pronounced in due course with full regard for the difficult position in which the Ottoman Turks have stood for centuries and that it would vindicate alike the basic toleration of Islam and the essential humanity of the Turk. The loyalty of Indian Mussalmans no less than that of other communities of India to their Sovereign has been an abiding asset acknowledged as well as proclaimed throughout the history of British rule in India. It is also admitted that it depends and is mainly based on the preservation of their religious freedom in its entirety. If it has not been necessary to remind Government of this aspect of Muslim loyalty, and, in fact, of the loyalty of every Indian community, it is because we thankfully acknowledged that until lately no question had arisen in which it appeared likely to be forgotten or ignored; but now that the policy of the Allied and associated powers and the dictates of Islam seem to run counter to each other, we respectfully submit that justice and expediency alike demand that what is unalterable by human hand and has never been so altered throughout the thirteen centuries of Islam shall remain unaltered, and what is susceptible to change and is essentially changeable with every change in circumstances and surroundings should, when necessary, change. Even the most cherished Muslim sentiment may be sacrificed in subservience to Imperial demands though we humbly submit that true Imperialism should give proportionate consideration to the wishes and sentiments of every member of the Empire, but the requirements of Islamic law are so definite and of such a binding nature that they cannot be reduced by a hair's breadth to suit the desires of Allied and associated powers any more than they can be enlarged to further the mundane ambitions of Mussalmans themselves. These are the limits set by Allah and none shall transgress them, but while the Mussalmans take their stand firmly on their credal obligations, they respectfully submit that true Imperial interests point to the same path as Islamic commandments. The War may be over but peace is still distant and doubtful and we shall beseech the Imperial authorities not to underrate the worth and value of Islamic friendship and Indian loyalty. A settlement unacceptable alike to

Muslim and non-Muslim Indians, now happily reunited and standing shoulder to shoulder, will bring no peace because it will bring no sense of justice and no contentment. No Mussalman who hopes and prays for salvation would henceforward know any rest and he could only aspire to salvation by following the dictates of Islam, however the consequences may be. But if on the contrary, the heart of India is won by a generous recognition of her fitness for managing her own affairs as a member of the British Commonwealth and the Muslim world is reconciled by a just appreciation of Islamic responsibilities and obligations, Muslim sentiments of half the world would be at the back of Great Britain and no Power in the world could dare to deny to her the rights that are hers and her Empire's. The menace that now looms so large would then shrink into nothingness without a blow being struck in wrath or a drop of human blood being shed in vain warfare. The world would then be truly not only for democracy but for God and the truth, and it is in this spirit that we desire to send our mission, with Your Excellency's assistance, to great Britain and Allied and associated countries. We also feel confident that, once the success of our mission is assured, it would set itself with equal zeal to reassure the Muslim world and reconcile those who have parted, maybe in anger, maybe in sorrow, but in any case through misunderstanding of their common interests which everyone anxious to promote the peace of the world should endeavour to remove. May it be given through the grace of merciful Providence to us and to Your Excellency's Government to accomplish this humane and sacred purpose.

We beg to subscribe ourselves Your Excellency's most obedient servants.

The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 24-1-1920

1. *CONGRESS REPORT ON THE PUNJAB DISORDERS*[1]

CHAPTER I

THE PUNJAB

(HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL)

Historically the Punjab may be considered the most important province of India. It was here that the Aryas of Vedic times first made their home. It was here that the hymns of the Rig Veda were first chanted. It was to this province, at the great University of Taxila, that seekers after knowledge flocked from various parts of the world. It was in this province that the Pandus and the Kurus, the great heroes of the *Mahabharata*, fought out their great battles.

It was here that Osiris, King of Egypt, first touched Indian soil and Semiramis, Queen of Assyria, who at the head of her vast armies tried her fortune for the dominion of India, suffered a crushing defeat. The Scythians and Tartars and Persians had to measure swords with the sons of the Punjab in their attempts to penetrate into India. It was in this province that Alexander the Great, though victorious, for the first time met a foe, under King Porus, who shattered his dream of a world-wide dominion.

[1] Authorship of this Report, the full title of which reads *Report of the Commissioners oppointed by the Punjab Sub-committee of the Indian National Congress*, and which was published on March 25, 1920, has been attributed to Gandhiji on the basis of the following evidence :

(I)"The responsibility of organizing the work of the Committee devolved on me, and as the privilege of conducting the inquiry in the largest number of places fell to my lot, I got a rare opportunity. . . . The task of drafting the report of this Committee was also entrusted to me. . . . This reprot, prepared as it was solely with a view to bringing out the truth and nothing but the truth, will enable the reader to see. . ." *An Autobiography*, Part V, Ch. XXXV.

(ii) a."Whole day spent in discussing Gandhi's draft Report."
The Story of My Life by M. R. Jayakar, Vol. I, p. 322.
b."The Report was drawn up by Gandhi, with assistance from me." *Ibid.*
c."Gandhi made the first draft of the Report in a quiet little room." *Ibid.*
d."By that time, Das, Motilal and Tyabji had dropped out, and Gandhi and myself worked hard on the publication of the Report.".

(iii) Letters produced in this volume which Gandhiji wrote to Jayakar during March 1920.

The Report was published in two volumes, Volume I consisting of the Report and Volume II consisting of Evidence. Here, only Volume I has been reproduced.

The Punjab proper is the land watered by the five rivers, the Sutlej, the Beas, the Ravi, the Chenab and the Jhelum, from which it derives its name. It is situated in the north-west of India, and is bounded on the north by a portion of the Himalayas and Kashmir, on the west by the Indus, on the south by Sind and Rajputana, and on the east by the river Jamna.

The present area of the Punjab is 135, 773 square miles, out of which a little less than 100,000 square miles is directly under British rule, the rest being ruled by Indian princes and chiefs. The population in 1911 was slightly less than 20 millions. The province used to be much larger before, but in 1901 it was partitioned and a new province, now called the North-West Frontier Province, was carved out of it. Another slice was taken off in 1912, when the Capital of the British Indian Empire was shifted to Delhi, and the city of Delhi and a part of the surrounding territory were constituted into a distinct province.

The Punjab is inhabited mostly by Hindus, Mohammedans and Sikhs. The Sikhs have their home in the Punjab and number about $3\frac{1}{2}$ million. The chief occupation of the people is agriculture, but other industries are making headway and a considerable number of factories worked by steam have sprung up in various towns of the Punjab.

The Punjab supplies the flower of the British Indian Army. During the late War[1] the contribution of the Punjab to the army was the largest of all provinces of India.

Among the fighting classes the Sikhs hold the foremost place and Rajputs and Jats come next. The Rajputs and Jats of the western and southern parts are mostly Mussulmans and those of the eastern and northern parts are Hindus. The Jats of the Central Punjab are mostly Sikhs.

We give in Sir Michael O'Dwyer's[2] own words the Punjab's war contribution in men. Speaking on the 7th April last, Sir Michael O'Dwyer said :

> I have spoken so often about the War and the Punjab's share in it during the last year that I need say but little today. We started the War with 100,000 men in the Army.

[1] World War I, 1914-18

[2] Lt. -Governor of the Punjab, 1913-19

In 1917, I was able to tell you that in the first $2\frac{1}{2}$ years of the War we had raised 124,000 combatants. In the next year we raised over 127,000 and a year ago the total was over a quarter of a million. We were then in the most critical stage of the War and in response to His Majesty's August Message and the Premier's appeal, I asked the province to raise another 200,000 men including 180,000 fighting men within a year. Many people thought that was an extravagant demand. Those people did not know the spirit of the Punjab. April and May 1918 were the harvest months and we advisedly did not push recruiting. But 21,000 men were enrolled.

From June to September the recruiting campaign was carried on everywhere with great enthusiasm, and in those four months 78,000 men or over 19,500 per month joined the colours. In October, owing to the influenza epidemic, the number dropped to 14,426 and in November, when we were about to make a fresh effort, our enemies collapsed and hostilities came to an end, and the number fell to 6,313, but in six months, from June to November, we had raised 99,000 men, or half of the total promised, and in the eight months, April to November, our total was 121,000 men, including 1,00,000 combatants. If the need had continued, we should have completed our quota of 200,000. As it is, we can claim to have raised about 360,000 combatants during the four years of War, or more than half the total raised in the Indian Empire, excluding, of course, the splendid contribution from our gallant neighbours and allies in Nepal.

The distribution of the 355,000 combatants by main religions and tribes is roughly as follows :

MOHAMMEDANS		1,20,00
Pathans	5,000	
Mohammedans from North & Central Punjab, commonly known as Punjabi Mohammedans	1,36,000	
Mohammedans from South Punjab	25,000	
Kashmiris	1,500	
Other Mohammedans	2,500	
SIKHS		90,000
HINDUS		90,000

Jats	30,000	
Dogras	24,000	
Other Rajputs	10,000	
Ahirs	10,000	
Gujars	6,000	
Gaur Brahmins	5,000	
All others	5,000	
PUNJABI CHRISTIANS		4,000

The Mohammedans forming 5/9th of the population, gave 48 per cent of the recruits, Hindus with 3/9th of the population, furnished $\frac{1}{4}$ th, while the Sikhs, though only 1/9th of the population, also furnished $\frac{1}{4}$ th.

As I said last year the fighting men were drawn almost exclusively, and the non-combatants mainly, from the rural population, both for Army and even in the Indian Defence Force; the townsfolk made but a slight response to the call for men, though they helped generously in the War Loan. But most of the rural Hindus did splendidly in recruiting and their proportionate recruitment, though much below of the Sikhs, is nearly equal to that of the Punjabi Mohammedans.

The administration of the Punjab is carried on by a Lieutenant-Governor, who has a Legislative Council under him—the members of which are partly elected and partly nominated.

The capital of the Punjab is and has always been at Lahore, which is a big town with a population of about 250,000, situated at a distance of about 1,200 miles from Calcutta, 300 miles from Delhi, 784 miles from Karachi, and 1,162 miles from Bombay.

The province is divided into 5 divisions under Commissioners, comprising 28 Districts under Deputy Commissioners or Collectors, viz., Ambala Division comprising the eastern part of the Punjab including Simla, the summer headquarters of the Government of India; Jullundur, including the mountainous and sub-mountainous parts; Lahore, the central parts; Rawalpindi, the north-western; and Multan, the western part of the Punjab.

CHAPTER II

SIR MICHAEL O'DWYER'S ADMINISTRATION

Gentlemen, I have often been criticized for dwelling on the achievements

of the Punjab in season and out of season. But my pride in the province is based on no narrow parochial spirit. I have spent 15 years away from it, during which I have seen many other parts of India. I might indeed say, much have I seen and known, cities, men and manners, climates, councils, governments. But nowhere did I find the same qualities as the Punjab can show, from the prince's palace down to the peasant's hut. I found I could meet the Punjabi, whatever his class or condition, as man to man without suspicion or mistrust. I found him, in the mass, loyal but not subservient, brave but not boastful, enterprising but not visionary, progressive but not pursuing false ideals, or mistaking the shadow for the substance. These are the qualities which have made the Punjab among the provinces of India 'not least but honoured of them all', and these are the qualities which, combined with the moral courage that will be so essential in the times before you, will keep the Punjab in the vanguard of progress and prosperity.

This is what Sir M. O'Dwyer said in a public speech made on the 7th April, the day after the universal hartal in India and three days before the firing on unarmed people at Amritsar and Lahore and the murders and arson in Amritsar.

The quotation is from the speech he delivered at his last meeting in the Council prior to his then intended departure.

But the same speech also contains the following :

The Government of this province is and will remain determined that public order, which was maintained so successfully during the time of war, shall not be disturbed in the time of peace. Action has, therefore, already been taken under the Defence of India Act[1] against certain individuals at Lahore and Amritsar, who, whatever their motives, were openly endeavouring to rouse public feeling against the Government. The British Government, which has crushed foreign foes and quelled internal rebellion, could afford to despise these agitators, but it has a duty of protection to the young and the ignorant, whom they may incite to mischief and crime, while themselves standing aside. I, therefore, take this opportunity of warning all, who are connected with political movements in the province, that they will be held responsible for the proper conduct of meetings which they organize, for the language used at and the consequences that follow such meetings. Subject to these provisions the Government has no desire to restrict, in any way, the right of public meetings; but it is a matter of common knowledge that those who organize such meetings, even with quite legitimate objects, often lack moral courage or authority to restrain some of the more violent speakers. It is also, I fear, only

[1] Passed in 1915 as an"essential war measure"

too true that owing to the wild, reckless language which a handful of noisy agitators habitually indulge in, sober and reasonable men, with regard for their *izzat*[1], shrink from attending such meetings. Restraining influen-ces are, therefore, either absent or are not exercised. Hence the necessity for my warning, which is addressed to the Press as well as to the platform. I would ask, in all seriousness, is this the calm and reasonable atmosphere which is needed to prepare the way for constitutional reforms? It certainly is not, and those who are creating that unhealthy atmosphere are the deadliest enemies of the cause of re-form, which they propose to champion. Fortunately, their influence does not cor-respond to the noise they make. They do not speak with the voice of the Punjab.

He then expatiated on the inoffensive nature of the Rowlatt Act[2] and said about it what was not true, namely, that it conferred on the police no powers of arbitrary arrest, search or interference. Everyone who has read the Rowlatt Act knows that it does contain such powers, and that it is because it contains such powers that it was so strongly objected to by the people. Sir Michael, however, was not satisfied with his fanciful description of the Rowlatt Act. He wanted to show what he felt about the great demonstration of the 6th April, which for thousands upon thousands was of a semi-religious character because of the fast. He laughed at it in this manner :

The recent puerile demonstrations against the Rowlatt Act in both Lahore and Amritsar would be ludicrous if they did not indicate how easily the ignorant and the credulous people, not one in a thousand of whom knows anything of the measure, can be misled. Those who want only to mislead them incur a serious responsibility. I would remind them of President Lincoln's famous saying :"You can, if you are very clever and very unscrupulous, mislead all people for some time and some people for all time, but you cannot mislead all people for all time." Those who appeal to ignorance rather than to reason have a day of reckoning in store for them.

No other Head of Government in India laughed at the people on the 7th of April. Everyone but Sir M. O'Dwyer realized more or less the meaning of the 6th of April, but Sir Michael's one desire was to provide"a day of reckoning" for those, who he thought, were

[1] Prestige, honour

[2] Passed in the third week of March 1919 as a temporary measure intended to deal with the situation arising out of the expiry of the Defence of India Act and investing local governments with arbitrary powers to arrest and detain persons believed to be connected with certain offences threatening public safety

appealing to passion or ignorance rather than to reason. It is not without considerable pain, that it will be our duty to show in the following pages, how it was Sir Michael who almost invariably appealed to passion and ignorance rather than to reason, and how serious a responsibility he incurred in misleading both the people and his superiors. It will be our painful duty to show also the meaning he attached to the phrase" day of reckoning". He had occasion to speak again on the 10th. He spoke in the evening after he had learnt what had happened at Amritsar and Lahore. He spoke to the representatives of the martial races of the Punjab, who had met at the Montgomery Hall to present him with an address. We give the speech in full as reported by the Associated Press :

> I am glad to think that the excitement of this evening has not preven- ted us from meeting here tonight. I am proud to meet, in this unique gathering, so many representatives of the great martial races, Mohammedan, Sikh, and Hindu of the Punjab, who, though differing in origin, religion and social customs, are united to one another and to the British Government by two bonds of steel, the bonds of loyalty and valour.
>
> You realize the difficulties of the administration and the necessity of taking measures to prevent peaceful and orderly progress being disturbed by disorder and anarchy. You have seen within the last few weeks how a law passed to safeguard the lives and property of the people against such outbursts of anarchy and revolution—a law that is only to be brought into operation if, unfortunately, those conditions should arise—has by the persistent falsehood and misrepresentation of a small but noisy class been made to appear as a deadly weapon aimed at the people, whom it is intended to protect in situations of great emergency. Those of you who have studied that law know how baseless that agitation is. You can gather something of the motives of those behind that agitation from what took place a few days ago at Multan, when the Rowlatt Bill agitation was made a pretext for offering an insult to gallant Punjabi Mohammedans, Sikhs and Gurkhas, that had returned from the front after fighting the battles of India, and these insulters had, as we know, no martial spirit themselves and no appreciation for the valour and loyalty of those who had been safeguarding their hearths and homes. Their object is to attack Government and insult those who are true to their salt. Loyal men must and will oppose their evil designs. I would, therefore, ask you to explain the motives and policy of Government, as shown in that law, to those within your

influence, and to expose the campaign of falsehood that is being carried on in certain quarters in order to mislead the ignorant and credulous masses and the scum of the bazaars of the towns and to incite them to crime and disorder.

The promoters of the agitation began by announcing a policy of socalled passive resistance. What form has that taken? You heard what happened at Multan on Saturday. At Lahore and Amritsar on Sunday coercion and intimidation were used to law-abiding citizens, and in Bombay they have begun openly to defy the law. This movement, unless promptly checked, will bring about disorder and bloodshed. It has already done so at Amritsar and Lahore and will endanger the lives and property of law-abiding citizens. Government looks to you and to all loyal citizens, whatever their political views, to join with it in openly denouncing this dangerous agitation and bringing it to a speedy close. Your co-operation with Government in this and similar matters will be as valued and as much appreciated as your memorable war services.

The situation is for the moment critical, and prompt action on your part and that of Government is required. Government will do its duty without hesitation, and will support you in doing yours. Government will enforce the law, and if that leads to bloodshed, the responsibility is with those who make others break the laws.

This is my last word of counsel, and I know you will take prompt action on it and enable me to restore public order before I leave the province. The trouble, though serious, is not widespread and, with your help, will soon be dispelled.

It will be a proud memory to me that in time of war or of internal trouble, I never appealed to the martial races of the Punjab in vain. I am confident that by your action and that of the loyal and sturdy men you represent, you will, within the next few weeks, establish a further claim to my gratitude and to the consideration of Government.

I must now say good-bye. In leaving the province I shall carry away recollections of what you have done. I shall not forget you, nor your work, nor your interest.

We have copied this speech in full, as it shows at a glance Sir Michael O'Dwyer's mentality. It was given to the martial races of the Punjab. He has not hesitated to incite them against the people. He has distorted facts, as for instance regarding the conduct of the people of Multan against the soldiers. We have investigated the incident and we have found that no insult was offered to the soldiers who passed through Multan. He has wilfully misrepresented the scope of the Rowlatt Act to his audience and then threatened the people with punishment, practically for taking part in political agitation.

We now propose to give a brief outline of Sir Michael O'Dwyer's administration, showing how he estranged every class from him, and how he tried to reduce the influence of the educated classes over the masses.

He had considerable experience of the Punjab before he was appointed Lieutenant-Governor, to which post he was called in 1913. He signalized his rule by contemptuous references to proposals for reforms. He said in reply to an address of welcome a few weeks after his appointment :

> During the short time I have held charge of this province, I have received many excellent and well-meant suggestions, as to how I should carry on the administration, what I should do to meet the aspirations of the people, to further the movement towards self-government, towards the separation of executive and judicial functions, and in regard to other matters of state policy. Abstract speculations of this nature have their interest and value, though they would gain in value, if in addition to enforcing the duties of the administration, some stress were laid on the elementary duties of the people as citizens and subjects. I should have welcomed and I shall welcome any practical suggestion, as to how Government can discharge more efficiently its primary obligation to secure life and property, and how the people can be aroused to a sense of duty towards the community. All other questions of policy are, in my opinion, subsidiary to these two and should stand over till these obligations are adequately discharged.

He thus gave notice to his hearers that those reforms which they held to be vital for the progress of the country were"abstract speculations" and that he expected his hearers to help him in securing life and property and awakening a sense of duty to the community. One would have thought that life and property had become fairly secure, and that this securiy was claimed to be the proudest achievement of British Rule, and that the yearning for the reforms mentioned by his audience did show a sense of duty to the community. In the same speech he addressed a homily to the vernacular Press. It was followed by action under the Press Act. Security was demanded from several vernacular newspapers; the security already deposited was forfeited in some cases. A month later in his very first speech, as President of the local Legislative Council, he gave to the Press a second warning :

> If the action already taken does not have the desired effect, Government will deal with the offenders as with any other individuals that break the law by promoting disorder or disaffection, and will employ all the means the law places at its disposal, and of these the taking and forfeiture of the security are the least.

This warning was followed by a more stringent policy regarding the Press, although he himself in the same speech, referring to the peace that was prevalent in the province, said :

> The great results already achieved are due to the mutual confidence and intimate association of the administration and the people, which have always been a marked feature in this province.

He had occasion, six months later, of expressing his views regard- ing a proposal that an executive council be established in the province. To this very innocent proposal he thus replied on the 13th April, 1914 :

> The proposal had come upon him rather as a surprise. The people of the province had from the start been habituated to regard the Lieutenant-Governor as the sole head of, and in the last degree responsible for, the administration of the province. The province had progressed and prospered under that system in a manner which can stand comparison with any other province or presidency, and that the matter could come within the range of practical politics only if it could be shown that the present administration of the province suffers from certain defects, and that the addition of an executive council would remove those defects.

He then insulted those who had come to honour him, by quoting : 'For forms of Government let fools contend'.

Five months later the War broke out and the Punjabis had a fairly full experience of the working of the Defence of India Act, in the passing of which he had no small share. What share he had and what powers he wanted, so as to supersede the ordinary procedure and safeguards of law, may be seen from the following recommendations of his, which were subsequently adopted by the Imperial Government. We take them from the Sedition Committee's Report, page 151 :

> The Lieutenant-Governor considered that"it is most undesirable at the present time to allow trials of any of these revolutionaries or other sedition mongers who have been or may be arrested in the commission of crime or while endeavouring to stir up trouble, to be protracted by the ingenuity of counsel, and drawn out to inordinate length by the committal and appeal procedure, which the Criminal Law provides." His Honour, therefore, submitted for approval a draft ordinance which provided, subject to the sanction of the local government for its application in these cases : (a) for the elimination of committal procedure in the case of offences of a political or quasi-political nature; (b) for the elimination of appeal in such cases; (c) for the taking of security from persons of the class affected by a more rapid

procedure than that prescribed by the ordinary law; (d) for the prompt punishment of village officers and the fining of villagers colluding with and harbouring revolutionary criminals.

He abused the powers given to him by the Defence of India Act by prohibiting the entry into the province of Messrs Tilak and Pal[1]. He interned hundreds of local men with little or no cause. He gagged the vernacular Press, prevented the nationalist papers edited outside the Punjab from circulating in the province, as, for instance, *New India*, *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, *Independent*. He prohibited the circulation even of pre-censored vernacular papers and brought about a state of things whereby it became practically impossible for the people of the province to have a free interchange of independent views, or a free ventilation of their grievances in the public Press, and then, having prevented free speech and free writing, allowed myself to think, and gave outsiders to understand that the people of the Punjab were the happiest under his rule.

Not only did he abuse emergency legislation for the purpose of throttling political aspirations, but he abused his position as a ruler by summoning public men, using threats and giving them warnings. Lala Duni Chand, who has an unbroken record of public service, had personal experience of this part of Sir M. O'Dwyer's administration. This is what he says in his statement given to us by him :

> As a secretary of the Indian Association I had to call public meetings, and after the issue of the notices I was called either by the Chief Secretary to Government or the Commissioner of Lahore to see him, and they always put such obstacles in my way of holding public meetings that many persons in my place would have done anything but held public meetings in Lahore. The Chief Secretary and the Commissioner told me more than once, presumably on behalf of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, whom to invite and whom not to invite as speakers from outside the province.
>
> Not only this but when some of the members of the Provincial Legislative Council attended the last Provincial Conference at Lahore, these gentlemen were called by the Chief Secretary, and were taken to task in such a way that they would not have the courage to attend other public meetings in the Bradlaugh Hall. (Statement No. 553.)[2]

[1] Bipin Chandra Pal (1858-1932); educationist, journalist, orator and political leader of Bengal

[2] This statement and others cited subsequently are contained in Volume II of the Report of the Commissioners appointed by the Congress Punjab Sub-committee,

In 1917, nineteen members of the Imperial Legislative Council signed their famous memorandum, setting forth their proposals for reforms.[1] A meeting was held to approve of the scheme. Four of the signatories to the notice of the meeting were Punjab men. He sent for them and administered to them a severe rebuke for having dared to think for themselves and to sign the notice. Then followed the Congress-League Scheme, and he tried his best to wean the Punjab from it, and lost no opportunity of belittling the effort to bring about a hearty union between Hindus and Mohammedans. He dared to confound the issue by comparing the Home Rule movement, led by Mrs. Besant and Mr. Tilak, whose goal was attainment of self-government within the Empire by constitutional and peaceful means, with the Ghadar[2] revolutionists, whose goal was frankly to sever the British connection by violent means, and with the mad people of the South-West Punjab, who desolated many a home by harbouring chimerical views of establishing an Islamic Kingdom through German aid. He put down the Ghadar movement in a merciless manner, and, we fear, not without inflicting injustice on hundreds of innocent men. He affected to consider the pillage of defenceless homes in the South-West Punjab in 1915 by treating the pillage, in the early stage, as mere grain riots, and took energetic measures only when his hands were absolutely forced and when he saw that these depredations became so serious that they might even jeopardize the work of recruiting.

On the 13th of September, 1917, a resolution was moved by the Hon'ble Mr. Muhammad Shafi[3], asking that the legislative and administrative system in the Punjab be assimilated to that of the province of Bihar and Orissa. There was no opposition to this mild resolution from any quarter. Sir M. O'Dwyer himself rose to speak in its favour, but, to the amazement of everybody, he packed into a single speech as much irrelevancy and vilification of educated classes

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which is not reproduced here; statement and page numbers and appendices, quoted in brackets in such cases, refer to that volume.

[1] The proposals were based on the idea of Dominion Self-government.

[2] The Ghadar Party, a revolutionary organization, was started in 1911 in California by Har Dayal, editor of *Ghadar*. Through his paper and party he won over many immigrants from the Punjab to his revolutionary programme. These immigrants, working through their relations, were able to spread disaffection in the Indian Army, and when forced to return to India, they carried on anti-British activities.

[3] Member, Imperial Legislative Council; became member of the Viceroy's Executive Council in 1920

as he possibly could, till at last the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, who could brook it no longer, interrupted his speech and called for an apology, which at the instance of the Viceroy he had to tender. His Excellency the Viceroy felt called upon to dissociate himself from Sir Michael's views. We would give a few extracts from that speech of Sir Michael's :

> Speaking of my own province, while I would welcome a speedy progress, I must say that those conditions (meaning the three conditions set forth by Mill as indispensable for self-government) are not likely to be fulfilled for many a long day.

He observed again :

> We should be glad if those who are so fond of basing political claims on the loyalty of India and the sacrifices of the Indians and the sacrifices of the Indian Army, which is mainly a Punjab army, would show their loyalty to the King Emperor and their sympathy for the province, which is bearing the burden of sacrifice, not by words, however eloquent, but in some practical form, for instance, by active help in the recruiting campaign in other provinces.

The following is another passage from the same speech to show Sir Michael's utter want of appreciation of the educated classes :

> In these days when we are in danger of being deafened by political harangues and of being blinded by the shower of political manifestos, it is well occasionally to return to mother earth to clear up our minds of shams and illusions, and to ask ourselves what will all this noise and talk do for the man on the soil, the man behind the plough, the man whose life is a long-drawn question between a crop and a crop.

The implications of the speech are obvious. It was for this affront to educated classes that he was made to apologize.

The meaning of an apology in ordinary English is that when a man apologizes for his speech or action he does not repeat it. Not so Sir Michael. On October 30th the same year—nearly a month after the apology—he practically went back upon it in the following words :

> In a speech last month in the Imperial Council I described the signal services of the Punjab in this War with an emphasis, which some people considered excessive, as it involved a comparison with other provinces and their action during the War. I still adhere to my argument that the loyal services of the Punjab in providing men, money and materials for the Empire stand out pre-eminent, and establish a special claim on the consideration of the Government. I also reaffirm my contention that the services of the martial

> classes, on whom the burden of sacrifice has fallen, are receiving and should continue to receive prior recognition from Government, and that as the so-called political concessions will be of less benefit to them than to other classes, we have to look around for forms of recognition and reward which they regard as suitable and desirable.

In this revised version we see not only a repetition of the offence but a repetition in an aggravated form. He returns to the topic by way of complaint and gives a colouring to facts in order to prove—what nobody has denied—that the war services of the Punjab were singularly great. He isolates the martial classes from the others, insults the former by imputing to them want of political ambition, and tries to wean them from association with the others by holding out prospects of special recognition. His contempt of the educated classes and his inclination to withhold political power from them are easily traceable in the extract we have quoted.

But nothing perhaps shows more clearly his dislike of the educated classes than his memorandum on the question of constitutional reforms, published together with the Government of India's despatch of March 5th, 1919, Describing the demands made by the educated classes for the whole of India, he says :

> If it is clear that the demands emanate not from the mass of the people, whose interests are at stake, but from a small and not quite disinterested minority, naturally enough eager for power and place, we must, if we are faithful to our trust, place the interests of the silent masses before the clamour of the politicians, however troublesome and insistent. Here I may quote Burke's warning :"Because half a dozen grasshoppers under a fern make the field ring with their importunate cries, while thousands of great cattle, who repose beneath the shadow of the British oak, chew their cud and are silent, pray do not imagine that those who make the noise are the only inhabitants of the field."

We need hardly comment upon the deadly insult implied in the quotation. He then goes on, in the same writing, in total disregard of facts, to show that the educated classes have nothing in common with the masses, and that the latter are beginning to disown the educated leaders. He belittles the efforts regarding Home Rule made by Mrs. Besant, Mr. Tilak, Mr. Jinnah, Hon'ble Pandit Malaviya and the Raja of Mahmudabad. He exaggerates out of all proportion the non-Brahmin classes' movement, reduces the All-India Muslim League to an unimportant body, deplores the awakening of the Punjab in spite

of his prohibitive orders against Messrs Tilak and Pal, and then he says gratuitously that the advancement to be considered should be"not of the political classes alone but of the Indian people", and winds up this portion of his memorandum by saying :

> I have felt it necessary to emphasize this principle because I can find no adequate recognition of it in the Government of India proposals. Perhaps it is taken for granted. But an obligation so solemn should not be kept in the background; and in its absence the proposals read as if the only question to be considered is how to satisfy the aspirations of a certain proportion of the educated classes. The latter, no doubt, claim to represent the masses, but perhaps after what has come to light in the last few months, it is hardly necessary to expose the hollowness of the claim. Apply any practical test—the prevention of religious riots, the composing of sectional differences, the raising of recruits for the combatant army or the defence force—when any of these questions is to the fore, the politician usually retires into the background. His influence for good is generally nil, but he can and sometimes does add to the trouble by injudicious or malicious interference.
>
> It is often stated as an argument for self-government, that there are no religious riots in Native States. For this there are many reasons, but a leading one is that the professional politician does not exist there, or, if he does, is not allowed to interfere. The one recent and serious religious disturbance that I am aware of in Native States—between Sunnis and Shias in Bhopal—was fomented largely by the interference of a Mohammedan lawyer from Bombay anxious to advertise himself. In the Punjab, though sectarian feeling often runs very high, it rarely leads to riot or bloodshed, because the local authorities know on whom to depend to compose matters. Those are not politicians but quiet men of local influence.

Here we have Sir Michael O'Dwyer seeking to prove of the whole of India that the political classes are a useless body for all practical purposes.

So much for Sir Michael and the educated classes. But though he claimed to regard the others with affection, he estranged them from him and his Government by his methods of recruitment and collection of war contributions. It is not, however, without considerable hesitation that we feel bound to deal with this matter. We realize the necessity that existed during the War for a vigorous campaign of recruiting and collection of monetary contributions. We realize, too, that if India claims, as she does, equal partnership with the other members of the Empire, she must bear her full share of the Empire's burden. We

would, therefore, if we could, have avoided any reference to the methods adopted for collecting contributions in men and money. But in understanding and appreciating the sudden response of the classes and the masses to the proposal for hartal, and then, in the Punjab, the unexpected exhibition of mob fury, it is necessary to go into the causes that contributed to the remarkable demonstration and in the Punjab to the manifestation of violence. For we consider that no amount of misrepresentation about the Rowlatt Act, assuming that there was any, can possibly account for the response of the masses, and the participation of a number of people in violence. Nor can any sense of duty towards the Empire be allowed to disregard the sacredness of individual liberty or to ignore cruelty or compulsion, secretly or openly but illegally practised. The evidence that we have collected and the judicial records that we have read conclusively prove that the methods adopted for securing recruits and donations or loans travelled far beyond the line of moral or social pressure; nor were these methods unknown to Sir Michael O'Dwyer. Indeed conscription was openly talked of, suggested and advocated, and we cannot help saying that open conscription would have been infinitely better than the so-called voluntarism, which was in effect worse than conscription, because the voluntarism pressed only the weakest and permitted the strong to go scot-free.

Let us glance at the actuality. Sir Michael said at a meeting on the 4th of May, 1918, just after the Delhi programme had been settled :"200,000 men for the regular army, voluntarism if possible, conscription if necessary." Colonel Popham Young, speaking at the same meeting, said :

> When deciding how to apportion the effort it is inevitable that many must be guided, must even be compelled. We shall continue to work on the lines of voluntarism. We shall fix quotas for each district, tahsil or village with reference to the material which is available, and shall in the great majority of cases obtain the number of men we require without resort to compulsion. But in order to be fair to those who come forward at the call of duty, we must forthwith be armed with authority. We must be able to say that when there has been a failure on the part of the people to choose their champions for the areas, Government will step in and make the choice for them.

At the same meeting Sir Michael O'Dwyer himself said as follows :

Before I leave the subject of recruitment I must say a few words about conscription. No one, of course, dreams of conscripting the whole of India's manhood for the half million combatants required; and if we can do without conscription in any form no one will be better pleased than I. But, splendid as has been the volunteer response of the Punjab hitherto, we must face the fact that the strain has been severe, that the burden has not been evenly distributed, and that the tribes and localities which have done their duty are not a little resentful against those who have not. The land-owning classes feel that they are paying the main burden of the War both in purse and in person, and that there are other classes who pay little or nothing in either form. Inequality of burdens as between classes is always a legitimate grievance. It becomes more acute as the need of men becomes more insistent and the call for men more imperative.

The contingency of failure of the voluntary system in certain areas is there and it would be cowardice not to face it. We have given our pledge, and we must take measures in time to secure its fulfilment. I believe that in the Punjab at any rate there is now a strong feeling in favour of some form of conscription to raise the necessary quotas, both within the province and as between the various provinces, the taking, for instance, of one fit man in ten or fifteen or twenty by lot, with the option of some pecuniary forfeit to be paid to the State. I hope I carry a large majority of my audience with me here, and, if so, it is right that the province, which hitherto has borne the main burden, should state its views in no uncertain language. The decision, of course, rests in other hands. But, gentlemen, the machinery cannot be set in motion at once. The men are wanted immediately. What, therefore, appears necessary is that Government should take power to enforce the quotas allotted to provinces, and that all the necessary preparations should be made in advance on the distinct understanding that the measure will not be applied if the quotas are forthcoming on voluntary basis.

A circular was issued by the Punjab Government making suggestions for obtaining contributions which could only be given effect to by using more than normal pressure. We give below one paragraph from the circular.

I am to suggest that Deputy Commissioners might assist much in the campaign by estimating the contributions that might reasonably be expected from the various towns. In doing so they will derive much assistance from the local income-tax returns, especially where the assessments have recently been revised by the special establishment. Income-tax returns furnish, too, a fairly reliable index to the relative financial condition of individuals who are

expected to help the loan and a rough standard, which it is believed is already being applied in some districts. To judge of the adequacy of their investments in it, it would not be unreasonable to expect that on an average an assessee would be in a position to invest in the War Loan from half to one-fourth of the income on which he is actually assessed. Applying this rough test or others, which may be found suitable to local conditions, Deputy Commissioners should be in a position to see whether towns and villages or individuals in their jurisdiction are doing what is expected of them.

The Deputy Commissioner should then, by special meetings, formation of local committees of *sahukars*[1] and such expedients, endeavour to obtain the estimated sum as a minimum contribution. Local committees of traders and others presided over in large towns by Judicial Officers, Extra Assistant Commissioners or Tahsildars, will probably be able to effect a satisfactory distribution of the loan demand. Rivalry between towns and communities might be promoted by periodical publication and comparison of the amounts subscribed. Help might be afforded by a promise to recognize liberal subscriptions by sanads, by the grant of Chairs, and by the gift of special certificates. On the other hand, it should be made clear to wealthy citizens that failure to do their duty in this matter will be taken into account in nominations to municipal and notified area committees, in appointments of honorary magistrates, and in any other forms of Government recognition, on the ground that such honours are reserved for those who have shown in a practical form their desire to assist the administration.

Consequently subordinate officials put pressure upon the people. A letter was written to an"addressee in the Ambala district, asking him to inform the D.C. within one week through Lala Rangi Lal, Sub-Judge, what amount the addressee wants to invest in the War Loan". The meaning of this is obvious.

Judicial processes were also pressed into service. The First Class Magistrate at Chakwal discharged an accused in Criminal Case No. 82 of 1917, noting that"the accused and his brother have between them subscribed Rs. 110 towards 'Our Day Fund' and according to verbal compromise made, accused is accordingly acquitted."

Mehar Singh, son of Daulat Singh, applied for remission of income-tax in Case No. 36 of 1917 in the same court. The magistrate in dismissing the application remarked among other things :

Owing to the War, the profit of the mules is immense, but the objector has not contributed a pice to any War Fund or any War Loan. He has also a son whom he would not enlist.

[1] Money-lenders

There is a village called Leihia in the district of Muzaffargarh. A large crowd besieged the residence of the Naib[1] Tahsildar, assaulted the chaprasi and the rural policeman. Some people were arrested. 52 of them were tried under Section 147 of the Indian Penal Code. On appeal, the Sessions Judge acquitted some, reduced the sentences of the others. Mr. Coldstream, the Judge in question, remarked that"the people had real grievances for which they wanted to find expression". He said further :

> It is a matter of common knowledge that the efforts of the subordinate officials in Muzaffargarh to raise the War Loan and to find recruits, owing to the methods adopted by *Zaildars*[2] and *Lambardars*[3] on whom pressure was brought to help in the matter, led to severe frictions in many places. It must be admitted, too, that these methods were frequently unauthorized, objectionable, oppressive, and opposed to the intentions of the Government. In remote tracts, they were found intolerable by the people. These acts could not, of course, be proved by the prosecution and it would be absurd to expect proof of them to be adduced in defence in a case of the present kind. It is necessary in the cause of justice to make this clear, even if in doing so I have to get outside the judicial record. The facts I have stated are, as I have said before, matters of common knowledge.

The Judge opined that the oppressive methods were opposed to the intentions of the Government. In every place we have visited we have been informed that the officials, who have been known to the people for their oppression, have not only not been degraded or publicly reprimanded, but they have been in many cases promoted.

In the Shahpur district, a Tahsildar was unfortunately even murdered. A Special Tribunal was appointed to try the case. 46 residents were prosecuted. 4 of them were sentenced to be hanged and 12 to transportation for life. 8 were discharged and 12 finally acquitted. Sir Michael O'Dwyer's note, from which we have taken the above facts, says that vague allegations had been made of ill-treatment of the people by the late Sayed Nadir Hussain and that the Tribunal had given every latitude to the defence to prove any facts which might extenuate the crime, but that beyond the fact that his

[1] Dputy

[2] Government employees who maintain records of canal water supplied to peasants

[3] Big landlords in villages who help Government in collecting land revenue

methods of recruitment amounted almost to conscription, nothing was proved against him and the Tribunal had held that his reputation was unstained by any discreditable conduct.

In our opinion, the admission that conscription was resorted to is its own condemnation. But Sir Michael O'Dwyer must have read the evidence produced at the trial. This is what Muhammad Khan, who was the reader for the deceased, deposed on behalf of the prosecution :

> The Tahsildar's method was to have a list of all men in a village prepared by the *Patwari*[1]. When he had got the list, it was the Tahsildar's practice to go into the village and hear if any objections were taken to the selection of the recruits. It was his practice to ask a family of 3 or 4 brothers to provide one or two recruits for the army. . . He also secured some deserters from the neighbourhood of Gurna, who were sent under escort to the recruiting officer. . . The Tahsildar had noted the fact of selection as recruits against many names in this list. . . The zamindars of this *ilaqa*[2] usually ran away on the approach of the Tahsildar, being not accustomed to service and being afraid to come in front of him.

The president of the Special Tribunal made the following remarks in his notes :

> Nadir Hussain Shah was overzealous and wanting in tact to influence a wild people unused to join the army. The people had no traditions to back them. . . On the 6th February, the *Patwari* prepared the lists of Bakh Lurhkan. Government had directed such a list of men with their relationships and ages. Hence on the 6th February the men knew that they were likely to be enlisted for the army and alarm started.

Khan Ahmad Hussain Khan, Revenue Assistant, said before the court :

> I heard a complaint that he made men to stand naked in the presence of their womenfolk. . . . I never heard of any instance of a woman being tormented with thorns, but I have heard that men were confined between thorny bushes. I only heard of these occurrences of June. I never saw it done myself. What I have stated I have heard from *Zaildars* and other zamindars. Ghulam Muhammad of Hazara Miani told me that some women had been ill-treated at Kaura Kot and also in some Pathan village, perhaps Gurna. He told me that some women had been taken to Midh Ranjha and thence to Bhulwal in order to

[1] Government employee who keeps land revenue records
[2] Sub-division

> induce their relations either to return or to enlist. I also heard that the companions of the Tahsildar had grazed the crops of the absconders and looted their houses. I have heard that Sher Ali of Bucha Kalan had 15,000 or 17,000 rupees of the Tahsildar's accumulated money. This money was reported as a result of bribery in recruiting. I have also heard that Sher Ali misappropriated this money. . . . The villagers' grievance was only about recruiting. They did not want to be recruited. . . I only heard later on that two women of Ghullapur had been oppressed in the month of June. The Tahsildar himself informed me that, finding a large number of deserters belonging to Chhani Rehan, he had brought some pressure to bear upon them by grazing the crops of the villagers, with the result that the absconders returned. Before his arrival the villagers had left the village.

The Court naturally refrained from finding that ill-treatment by the deceased was proved. It said :

> The Revenue Assistant, Khan Ahmad Khan, stated all he had heard as to the behaviour of the Tahsildar at our special desire, but on the whole the evidence before us shows that beyond the facts admitted by the prosecution that recruitment amounted almost to conscription, no instances of ill-treatment by the Tahsildar have been proved.

On this the Government *communique* remarks that"he had not insulted the people or outraged their feelings". There is no positive finding by the Court to warrant any such assertion. On the contrary, if the Government had desired to find out the truth on the strength of the serious information in possession of the Revenue Assistant and given by him to the Court, they would have made a searching inquiry into the question of treatment apart from the murder trial.

We have collected some evidence of a direct nature, which, being of a serious character, we have refrained from publishing with our report. Mr. Gandhi, who is responsible for that collection, has placed himself in communication with the Punjab Government in the matter.

In another case in the same district a mob is said to have gathered round a village and resisted the arrest of seven men. They were fired at and several casualties had occurred. The defence version that the men resisted because they were afraid of enlistment, was rejected by the Court. But the fact of the resistance and firing tends to prove the allegation of oppressing methods.

In the Multan division the manager of an estate under the Court of Wards in the Kabir Wala tahsil went among the Khiji tribe for

recruiting. A scuffle ensued resulting in casualties. The public prosecutor entered *nolle prosequi* against the manager.The question, however, remains why did the manager go among the tribesmen and why and what did they resist?

We have some answer from the recruiting returns published by Sir Michael O'Dwyer. The recruiting returns of the Multan district at the end of December 1917 stood at 759 or 1 in 586 of the male population. By the end of November 1918, the number rose to 4636 or 1 in 93. Such a phenomenal record is only possible under methods of compulsion. The Commissioner said :

> I am afraid, with a few exceptions, the leading men in the district have not done their duty. Instead of enlisting members of their own families, they tried to buy or coerce men of lower stratum; objectionable methods of coercion were resorted to by some headmen with the result that in some cases public tranquillity was disturbed. Attempts were made in numerous cases, and these were successful, to fraudulently enlist foreigners from other districts and other divisions as residents of this district though this was against the orders of the Government.

No wonder Sir Michael O'Dwyer was obliged to deplore the fact that"a large proportion of those who joined deserted from their depots or units, and very few indeed faced the enemy in the field."

The Commissioner of Ambala Division reported that"in order to make up the quota, the people resorted to the not unnatural expedient of subscribing large sums to be given to young men to enlist—500 or 1,000 rupees being the price of a recruit."

Another popular device was to compel men of supposed bad character either to enlist or furnish security under Section 109 or 110 of the Indian Penal Code to be of good behaviour. The report on the administration of Criminal Justice for 1917 says :

> District Magistrates have spent much time in recruiting work during the year. The large decrease in the number of persons called upon to give security under Section 110 of the Indian Penal Code is in a great part due to the heavy recruiting of the army.

An official went to the village Yara, district Karnal, and a number of boys were induced to offer themselves as recruits. The father of one of these entreated the Magistrate not to take from him his only son. The Magistrate would not listen and there was excitement and a scuffle. Some persons were brought up under the Defence of India Act and five were convicted. The conviction was set aside on

appeal. It appears from the judgment that the lower court had acted under express orders of Mr. Hamilton, the District Magistrate. The Appellate Court says :

> The various orders passed by the District Magistrate from time to time clearly show that if these appellants had also supplied recruits from among their near relations or if they were fit for enlistment themselves, they would have been let off, provided twenty recruits were made up from the village as was originally demanded from it.

Indeed, even twenty recruits were supplied, but the District Magistrate wanted the twenty recruits from the accused themselves.

In Gujranwala, in 1917, Sir Michael O'Dwyer, not being satisfied with the recruiting results, was pleased to rebuke the people on account of their remissness. Whether by accident or design, the then Deputy Commissioner was succeeded by Col. O'Brien and the recruiting barometer went up. The result was thus summarized by Sir Michael O'Dwyer in the August of 1918 at a durbar held at Gujranwala :

> A year ago Gujranwala had 3,388 men in the Army, or only one man in every 150 of the total male population. At the end of last month, it had 11,765 men with the colours, which gives a ratio of one man in every 44 of the total male population and one in every 14 of military age. Thus within a year you have raised 8,500 men. That is a triumphant instance of successful organization, mainly due to the untiring activities of your admirable District War League under the inspiring and energetic guidance of your Deputy Commissioner, Colonel O'Brien, and his assistants, and backed up by the Divisional Recruiting officer, Major Barnes, and his recruiting staff.

This result was obtained by methods of which we have a graphic description from eyewitnesses at Gujranwala, Manianwala, Chuharkhana, Hafizabad and other places. From the numerous statements collected by us and printed in the appendix we cull only an extract from one typical statement. Sardar Khan, part-proprietor of Ratali in the Gujranwala district, deposed before Mr. Labh Singh, M. A., Bar-at-Law, who was specially deputed to collect evidence. He said :

> The Tahsildar came to our village in the month of *Baisakh*. At night, it was proclaimed by beat of drum that all should present themselves in the morning at the village *daira*[1]. As it was harvest time and also as the people

[1] Public place for meeting

were afraid of being forcibly taken as recruits, only a small number of people attended in the morning. The Tahsildar therefore fined some 60 or 70 persons. The total amount of fine was Rs. 1,600. The people were again ordered to present themselves at the headquarters at Gujranwala which is 18 miles off. When the people went there on the fixed date, they were made to stand in a row and 7 young men were picked out. This was done by Fateh Khan, Tahsildar. The other people were abused and beaten and told to bring more recruits. (Statement 591.)

Sardar Sant Singh, Vakil of Lyallpur, thus summarizes the recruiting and war loan methods :

War loan was forcibly levied in this district. Title-hunters exacted war loan from the masses in order to win honour for themselves. Rs. 33 per square were forcibly levied *en masse*. No exception was made. Even an adjudged bankrupt had to pay it. The history of this levy is interesting. It was proposed that every square-holder should be made to give Rs. 33, the value of one acre of land, to the Government. No squareholder was consulted. The proposal came from the title-hunters. It was accepted by the local authorities but was modified by the local government. In place of gift, the local government took it as a loan, the interest going to the improvement of the village, and not to the individual contributors.

Uttamsingh of Chak. No. 26 G.S. was prosecuted for an offence, when he was reluctant to pay it. The case was withdrawn on his making the payment.

Imperial War Relief Fund : Ten rupees per square were levied. People paid it as they could not help it.

Lambardars had to furnish recruits on the penalty of forfeiting the *Lambardari* rights. Several were actually dismissed. Thus the value of a recruit goes to Rs. 500. Police sent up people to be bound down for keeping peace. Magistrates refused bail and sent them to the lock-up, till they agreed to furnish recruits. Criminal prosecution was withdrawn on the accused agreeing to offer himself as a recruit. (Statement 516.)

Thus Sir Michael O'Dwyer galvanized the Punjab into life and made the Punjabis feel akin in a manner they had never done before. When, therefore, the month of April last was reached and he had an occular demonstration of the oneness of the Punjab and the oneness of India, he was stupefied and delivered his splenetic speech on the 7th April, from which we have already quoted. He wanted to make and did make a supreme effort to crush the spirit that was struggling to be free from the thraldom under which he had bound it during his

iron rule. He scented danger in every honest speech made by the leaders and he detected conspiracy in every combination, and thus forgetting himself issued his orders against Dr. Satyapal, Dr. Kitchlew and Mr. Gandhi. He must have known that this could only end in exasperating a people who had already been incensed against his rule. We feel tempted to say that he invited violence from the people, so that he could crush them. The evidence in the appendix shows that he subjected the Punjabis to the gravest provocation, under which they momentarily lost self-control. They have paid dearly for it, but they have also, with amazing quickness, regained self-control and risen purified through the fire of sufferings, mostly undeserved, and earned the certificate for sanity given to them by Sir Michael O'Dwyer.

CHAPTER III

THE ROWLATT BILLS

The foregoing chapter makes it sufficiently clear that the people of the Punjab were subjected to a variety of pinpricks by the local administration, and that, by its studied contempt for them, it had made it well-nigh impossible for the natural leaders of the people—the educated classes—to control the populace. It was in this atmosphere that the Rowlatt Bills came upon the Punjab.

It is common ground that at the time these two Bills were published,[1] there was little or no revolutionary crime in India. Indeed, for years it had ceased to affect any part of India other than Bengal and the Punjab. In Bengal the party of violence came into being when discontent over the partition of Bengal grew to white heat. In the Punjab it was due to the various measures of the local government, which deeply dissatisfied the people, and it became serious owing to the gross ill-treatment of the proud Sikh settlers of Canada. They infected some local men, too, with their discontent, and the forcible interference with the returned immigrants, ex *Komagata Maru*[2],brought it to a head. The causes of violence in each case were

[1] In February 1919

[2] In 1914, several hundred Punjabis sailed for Canada as emigrants. They were, however, not allowed to land by the Canadian Government. They returned by s.s. *Komagata Maru* to India where they landed as prisoners and were kept in camp at Budge Budge, near Calcutta, under armed guard pending removal to their

well defined and, in our opinion, avoidable and remediable. Anyway, violence, both in the Punjab and in Bengal, was brought under complete check, as the Government contend, under the powers taken by them in virtue of the Defence of India Act.

This Act was passed as an emergency measure to cope with revolutionary outbreaks that were feared during the War. It is possible to understand the use of such powers when all available fighting material had been removed from India to the battlefields of France and Mesopotamia, and when India's internal peace had to depend largely upon the loyalty and the peace-loving nature of the people. Extraordinary powers taken by the Executive, like Martial Law, enable one policeman to do the work of perhaps four, but this is done at the cost of the liberty of the subject, by depriving him of all the wholesome checks which regulate police procedure. When, therefore, the hostilities ceased, the people had looked forward to the repeal of the Defence of India Act. They had done so the more because, in spite of the declarations made by the Government that the measure would be used only in case of real necessity and never for the purpose of stifling political agitation or hindering the movements of public men, it was used for the purpose of restraining political freedom. To mention no other case it was used in order to intern Mrs. Besant and her associates,[1] because they represented in its intense form the Indian Home Rule movement. In it, there never was any suspicion of violence entertained even by her worst enemies. The public had, therefore, grown thoroughly distrustful of the Government, and had hoped that in view of India's unique war record, and the declaration[2] of August 1917 foreshadowing reforms leading to responsible government, that Act would be repealed and that the people would have respite from the unwelcome attentions of the Secret Service Department.

They were therefore taken by surprise when the two Bills were sprung upon them. The Viceregal speech ushering in the Bills added

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province and internment there. Exasperated by continued ill-treatment, they broke into revolt.

[1] Annie Besant and her associates, Arundale and Wadia, were interned on June 10, 1917.

[2] Made by Montagu on August 10, 1917, shortly after assuming office as Secretary of State for India

to the disquiet, as it seemed to show that the Bills were designed to answer the fears of the British element in the Civil Service regarding its safety under the reforms. The Indian position was explained by Mr. Gandhi in the following letter[1] which he addressed to the Press, when he inaugurated his satyagraha movement.

We give below the text of the satyagraha pledge[2] referred to by Mr. Gandhi in the foregoing. We now propose to examine, as briefly as possible, Bill No. II, known as the Rowlatt Act. We will not discuss the Bill No. I, which evidently appears to have been dropped by the Government.

The Act takes its popular name from the President of the Sedition Committee that was appointed by the Government of India on the 10th December, 1917, with Mr. Justice Rowlatt as its President,

> (1) to investigate and report on the nature and extent of the criminal conspiracies connected with the revolutionary movement in India and
>
> (2) to examine and consider the difficulties that have arisen in dealing with conspiracies and to advise as to the legislation, if any, necessary to enable Government to deal effectively with them.

The committee was required to sit *in camera*. It presented its report on the 15th April, 1918. With the exception of four sittings which it had at Lahore, the Committee had all its sittings in Calcutta. Mr. Justice Rowlatt in his covering letter addressed to the Government says :

> As directed by the order appointing us, we have on every occasion sat *in camera*.

The public have no knowledge up to today of the nature of the evidence given before the Committee or the names of those who gave it. Naturally, the witnesses were not cross-examined on behalf of the public, for it was totally unrepresented before the Committee.

The Bills were the outcome of the recommendations of this Committee. We have read the report and the recommendations. As the recommendations were intended to deal with a state of things that did

[1] Not reproduced here. For the text of the letter, *vide*"Letter to the Press on Satyagraha Pledge", 26-2-1919.

[2] Not reproduced here. For the text, *vide*"The Satyagraha Pledge", 24-2-1919.

not exist at the time they were made, it is not easy to understand them. We know the argument that without the Defence of India Act or its substitute, non-eruption of violence could not be guaranteed. This argument involves two assumptions—first, that repressive legislation is necessary not merely to suppress crime of a revolutionary character, but that it remains under check only during the continuance of such legislation. Second, that there were yet men at large who are or were suspected to be revolutionaries.

The first assumption betrays bankruptcy of statesmanship and a confession of failure; the second, if true, betrays hopeless inefficiency. The fact is that the demand for repressive legislation means disinclination to yield to the will of the people; in other words, government of them against their will. The point was clearly brought out by the Hon'ble Mr. Sastri in his memorable speech[1] on the introduction of the Rowlatt Bill. He said that even though political amelioration did not satisfy the confirmed anarchist, it, and not repression, was the only true way of securing peace, and proceeded to say :

> Because the anarchist is in this unfortunate condition of mental derangement, are we to say, since these people are not going to be satisfied by political concessions, we will not think of them; we will only apply the rule of law to them? That is not the way I think that sound statesmanship should go about the business. We should offer them satisfying measures of political emancipation. But after all it is not these anarchists that have to be satisfied. It is general atmosphere which feeds anarchy that we have got no cure, and when the anarchist finds that he gets no sympathy anywhere, that he cannot propagate his wicked doctrine in a soil where there is contentment and political prosperity, he will naturally die, even if the long arm of the law does not get at him.

The Hon'ble Mr. Sastri's remarks on the suggestion that the innocent need not fear the admittedly repressive character of the measure, are also worthy of note. He says :

> A bad law once passed is not always used against the bad. . . In times of panic caused, it may be, by very slight incidents, I have known governments lose their heads. I have known a reign of terror being brought about; I have known the best, the noblest Indians, the highest characters amongst us, brought under suspicion, standing in hourly dread of the visitations of the

[1] Before the Imperial Legislative Council on February 7, 1919

Criminal Investigation Department. . . When Government undertakes a repressive policy, the innocent are not safe. Men like me would not be considered innocent. The innocent then is he who forswears politics, who takes no part in the public movements of the times, who retires into his house, mumbles his prayers, pays his taxes, and salaams all the government officials all round. The man who interferes in politics, the man who goes about collecting money for any public purpose, the man who addresses a public meeting, then becomes a suspect. I am always on the borderland and I, therefore, for personal reasons, if for nothing else, undertake to say that the possession, in the hands of the Executive, of powers of this drastic nature will not hurt only the wicked. It will hurt the good as well as the bad, and there will be such a lowering of public spirit, there will be such a lowering of the political tone in the country, that all your talk of responsible government will be mere mockery. You may enlarge your Councils, you may devise wide electorates, but the men that will then fill your Councils will be toadies, timid men, and the bureaucracy, armed with these repressive powers, will reign unchecked under the outward forms of a democratic government. Well, we are all anxious to punish the wicked. None of us desire that wickedness should go unpunished, but . . . even the wicked must be punished in certain ways. When Skeffington was shot,[1] I remember the whole world was shocked . . . . Now even in war, when all humanity throbs with excitement and peril, and when nobody thinks of anything except how to conquer the enemy, even then, my Lord, there are the laws of war. You have to play the game. . . when there are criminals abroad in a country there are certain ways in which they ought to be brought to book. You ought not to lay them by the heels and punish them in ways that will shock the sense of justice; in ways that will make the innocent feel that there is no law in the land; in ways that will make honest, virtuous and public-spirited work impossible. The price even for the extinction of wickedness that is demanded then is far too high. . . Much better that a few rascals should walk abroad than that the honest man should be obliged for fear of the law of the land to remain shut up in his house, to refrain from the activities which it is in his nature to indulge in, to abstain from all political and public work merely because there is a dreadful law in the land.

Mr. Sastri did not believe in Sir William Vincent's[2] dictum that the aim of the Bill he was in charge of was not "the suppression but the purification of politics." Mr. Sastri gave credit for good inten-

[1] He was shot by the British military authorities in 1916, in connection with the Easter rising in Dublin.

[2] Member, Viceroy's Executive Council, 1917-22

tions, but, he exclaimed :

> Ah ! if in this world good intentions always bore fruit it would be very well. . . The history of legislation, both social and political, is strewn with instances of miscarriage of excellent intentions. Laws intended to cure poverty have aggravated it . . . and I take leave to say to the Hon'ble Sir William Vincent that the laws now placed before us, which are aimed at purifying politics, may come dangerously near suppressing them. You cannot place on the statute-book such drastic legislation without putting into the hands of over-enthusiastic executive officers what I consider short cuts to administrative peace.

This repressive measure had no public support it, and in warning the Government against carrying the measure through in the teeth of the opposition,"unanimous and unsparing, of their Indian colleagues", he thus asked the Legislative Council :

> Whom have you behind now amongst Indians? The tragic story of India may be summed up in these words, that you have governed all these centuries in India in isolation, without having any responsible section of public opinion behind you . . . No section of public opinion supports you. The nominated members have not given their blessing to this Bill. The zamindar members have not given their blessing. The lawyer members will have none of it. The members of commerce will have none of it. And yet the Hon'ble Sir George Lowndes[1] told us, 'We must carry this legislation through, because we are satisfied that it is very right; we should have been glad of your help, but with our sense of responsibility we must go on even without your help, however much we would have liked it.' I admire the courage of the Hon'ble the Law Member. I admire the candour with which he said, 'We have the responsibility today; you have none of the responsibility.' We realize that position. We have none, my Lord, of the responsibility for this legislation, and I therefore refuse to believe when the case is put correctly before the public opinion that they will say, as the Hon'ble Sir William Vincent seemed to think sections of the English public might, that we had responsibility and shirked it. We have none.

Mr. Sastri then closed his speech with the following solemn warning:

> Now there is only one more remark, my Lord, I must make and that in justice to the feeling in the country of which for the moment I am the spokesman. I do not think the Hon'ble the Law Member could have meant all

[1] Law Member, Viceroy's Executive Council, 1915-20

that he said when he said that some of us were indulg- ing in threats of agitation. I venture to think that no one here who has spoken against the Bill indulged in anything which might truthfully be described as a threat of agitation. None of us, certainly none of the Moderates, I take leave to say, has power to go and stir up a violent agitation in the country. It is impossible. Agitation must be there already. The heart must be throbbing, if any words that we use here can have a possible affect of the general political atmosphere. The agitation is there. I wish to assure my official colleagues that none of us has had a share yet in this business, but, if our appeals fall flat, if the Bill goes through, I do not believe there is anyone here who would be doing his duty if he did not join the agitation.

In spite, however, of the passionate protest, the motion that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee was carried, and the amendment[1], that its consideration be deferred till six months after the term of office of the Legislative Council, was defeated on the 6th of February, 1919. 22 voted for the amendment and 35 against. We give the names below of the 35 who voted against the amendment and therefore *for* the Bill, and the 22 who voted for the amendment and therefore *against* the Bill. It will be noticed that the only Indian name amongst the 35 was that of the Indian member[2] of the Viceroy's Executive Council. He could not vote otherwise without resigning.

AYES—22	NOES—35
The Hon'ble Sir Gangadhar Chitnavis	His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief
,, Babu S. N. Bannerjea	The Hon'ble Claude Hill
,, Raja of Mahmudabad	,, ,, Sankaran Nair
,, Dr. T. B. Sapru	,, ,, George Lowndes
,, Pandit M. M. Malaviya	,, ,, William Vincent
,, Mr. S. Sastri	,, ,, James Meston
,, ,, B. N. Sarma	,, ,, Arthur Anderson
,, Mir Asad Ali Khan Bahadur	,, Mr. W. A. Ironside
	,, Sir Verney Lovett
,, Mr. V. J. Patel	,, Mr. H. F. Howard
,, ,, M. A. Jinnah	,, Sir James Duboulay
,, Sir Fazulbhoy	,, Mr. A. H. Ley

[1] Moved by Vithalbhai Patel, in supporting which Jinnah forcibly denounced the sinister provisions of the Bill

[2] Sir Sankaran Nair, who, however, submitted his resignation in July 1919

Currimbhoy	,, ,, H. Sharp
The Hon'ble Rai Sitanath Ray Bahadur	The Hon'ble Mr. R. A. Mant
,, Raja Sir Rampal Singh	,, Major-General Sir Alfred Bingley
,, Rai Krishna Sahay Bahadur	,, Sir Godfrey Fell
,, Raja of Kanika	,, Mr. F. C. Rose Bahadur
,, Mr. Mazharul Haque	,, Mr. C. H. Kesteven
,, Khan Bahadur Mian Muhammad Shafi	,, ,, D. de S. Bray
,, Khan Zulfikar Ali Khan	,, Lieutenant-Colonel R. E. Holland
,, Mr. G. S. Khaparde	,, Surgeon-General W. R. Edwards
,, Rai B. D. Shukul Bahadur	,, Mr. G. R. Clarke
,, K. K. Chanda	,, ,, A. P. Muddiman
,, Maung Bah Too	,, ,, C. A. Barron
	,, ,, P. L. Moore
	,, ,, M. N. Hogg
	,, ,, T. Emerson
	,, ,, E. H. C. Walsh
	,, ,, C. A. Kincaid
	,, Sir John Donald
	,, Mr. P. J. Fagan
	,, ,, J. T. Marten
	,, ,, W. J. Reid
	,, ,, W. F. Pice
	,, ,, H. Moncrieff Smith

The final passage of this Bill on the 18th March,[1] with some modifications, which the member in charge of it accepted and which did not touch the scheme or the scope of it, brought about three notable resignations, i.e., from Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Mr. Mazharul Haque and Mr. M. A. Jinnah.

We shall now glance at the provisions of the Rowlatt Act and see whether it justified the widespread and unexampled agitation that took place over it.

Originally, it was to be a permanent measure, but an amendment was accepted in the select committee limiting its continuance to three years from the termination of the War. We consider that this limitation

[1] During the debate on this Bill in March 1919, Gandhiji attended, for the first and last time, the proceedings of India's Central Legislature at Delhi.

does not affect the opposition to the Act on principle.

It contains 43 sections and is divided into five parts. The preamble itself is interesting and it reads :

> Whereas it is expedient to make provision that the ordinary criminal law should be supplemented and emergency powers should be exercisable by the Government for the purpose of dealing with anarchical and revolutionary movements.

It extends to the whole of British India. The first part enables the Governor-General-in-Council, if he is satisfied that in any part of British India anarchical or revolutionary movements are being promoted, and that scheduled offences in connection with such movements are prevalent to such an extent that it is expedient, in the interests of public safety, to provide for the speedy trial of such offences, to declare to that effect, and thereupon the provisions of the first part would come into force in the area specified in the notification. The defenders of the measure, whilst they admit that the powers vested in the Executive are great, contend that it does not much matter, as so high an authority as the Governor-General-in-Council has to be satisfied that anarchical or revolutionary movements are being promoted, and that scheduled offences in connection there with are prevalent to an extent justifying the withdrawal of the ordinary safeguards against miscarriage of justice. Let us see how this high authority is generally satisfied. The initiative comes through a policeman of the lowest rank, who is often interested in exaggerating criminal movements, equally often, being hopelessly ignorant, is incapable of appreciating the facts before him, and is not unoften prone to corruption. He reports to his superior that a revolutionary movement is being promoted and that offences are being committed in connection therewith. The superior officer investigates. He is satisfied, or if not satisfied, the policeman in question submits further evidence, even though it may be concocted, and thus, the report, though it may be tainted at its origin or may be of doubtful value, travels upwards, gathering importance in its career, till at last it blossoms into a pronouncement by the Governor-General-in-Council, receiving an authority wholly undeserved. A study of the events in the Punjab will show clearly what we mean and how, rumours or suspicions assumed the dimensions of concrete revolutionary move-

ments, and how utterly innocent men can be victims, sometimes even of malicious, and almost invariably of capricious, prosecution and persecution.

Now let us see what some of the scheduled offences are. They include the highly technical offence of sedition; rioting with deadly weapons; promoting enmity between classes; causing grievous hurt by dangerous weapons; causing hurt to extort property or to constrain to an illegal act; putting a person in fear of injury in order to commit extortion, dacoity, etc. Thus an energetic criticism of a Government measure, a religious riot, a Hindu-Mohammedan quarrel, extortion for private purposes or professional dacoity may all come to be recognized as having connection with a revolutionary movement, once a suspicion gains ground that such a movement is in existence.

What is the nature of this speedy trial? We must give it in the words of the mover of the Bill. These trials are to be conducted "expeditiously without commitment, and with no right of appeal, and may take place *in camera*." The court may sit for the whole or any part of a trial at any place in the province as it may consider desirable, and at the instance of the Advocate-General, at some place other than the usual sitting place of the High Court.

Section 7 provides that the Criminal Procedure Code, in so far as it may be inconsistent with part I of the Act under discussion, shall not be applicable to the trials under it. Section 8 reduces the procedure to be adopted at the trials that may involve even the death penalty to that adopted for the "trial of warrant cases by magistrates". The accused is entitled to ask for one adjournment only, at the most for fourteen days. Section 18 brushes aside two most important sections of the Evidence Act. Sections 32 and 33 of the Indian Evidence Act provide that a dead witness's statement can be accepted, *inter alia*, only if it is against his pecuniary interests and has been previously subjected to cross-examination. Both these safeguards are done away with under Section 18, if the person making the statement before a magistrate is dead or cannot be found or is incapable of giving evidence and the court is satisfied that such death, disappearance or incapacity has been caused in the interest of the accused. This is a section which is capable of bringing about a complete abortion of justice. It is a most difficult thing for a court to know when dis-appearance or incapacity, even

death, has taken place in the interest of the accused. The life of an innocent man may, therefore, be easily in jeopardy on the strength of an interested statement of a person who has never been cross-examined.

Under Section 17, judgments pronounced at such trials are held to be final, subject neither to appeal nor to revision. It has been urged that neither the partial suspension of safeguards provided by the Criminal Procedure Code or the Evidence Act, nor the deprivation of the right of appeal or revision need cause uneasiness, because the court shall be composed of three members, who shall have served as permanent judges of the High Court. As we shall show in the course of our examination of the events of April last, the fact of High Court Judges constituting a special bench is an illusory comfort when the High Court atmosphere is withdrawn. The highest judge is capable of making a mistake in assessing evidence, or applying the law thereto, especially when he is unaided by the controlling influence of a well thought out code of procedure or rules of evidence.

So much for part I of the Rowlatt Act. It is punitive in character. Part II deals with preventive measures and is, therefore, as the mover[1] of the Bill practically admitted, more open to attack. Whereas Part I contemplates the actual commission of scheduled offences, part II authorizes the Governor-Genera-in-Council, if he is satisfied that revolutionary movements likely to lead to the commission of scheduled offences are being extensively promoted, to notify that the provisions of Part II shall apply in the area specified. Therefore, Section 22 enables the local government, where it has reasonable grounds for believing that any person is or has been actually concerned in a revolutionary movement, to place all the materials relating to such a case before a Judicial officer who is qualified for appointment to a High Court and to take his opinion thereon. Thereafter, if the local government is satisfied that action under part II is necessary, it may take security from such person for a period not exceeding one year, that he will not commit or attempt to commit any of the Scheduled offences, that he shall not change his residence without notifying the Government, that he shall be restricted to a particular area, shall abstain from any act calculated to disturb the

[1] Sir William Vincent

public peace or prejudicial to public safety and shall report himself at the nearest police station at specified periods.

Section 24 authorizes the Government to use "all means reasonably necessary to enforce compliance with its orders". Thus, upon mere suspi-cion, the most respectable man may find himself entirely at the mercy of the police. If this is prevention, it is worse than the disease, and preven-tion itself calculated to produce the very disease sought to be prevented.

This part II creates a special machinery intended to check the local government. It is called the investigating authority. This authority has to revise the orders of the local government passed under Section 22, and, for that purpose, has to hold an enquiry, not at its option, but compulsorily *in camera.*

> Such authority shall in every case allow the person in question a reasonable opportunity of appearing before it at some stage of its proceedings and shall, if he so appears to him the nature of the charge made against him.

The Section 26 from which we have quoted specially provides that the person so charged shall not be represented by pleader, "nor shall the local government be so entitled". It charges this authority not to "disclose to the person in question any fact the communication of which might endanger the public safety or the safety of any individual". If the "person in question"—be it noted that the ordinary phraseology adopted for describing such persons, viz., "the accused", has been omitted in this part, and yet the person in question has to go through all the disadvantages of a trial without any single one of its real safeguards—

> requests the investigating authority to secure the attendance of any person or the production of any document or thing, such authority shall, unless for reasons to be recorded in writing it thinks it unnecessary so to do, cause such person to attend, or such document or thing to be produced.

As if all this travesty of justice was not complete, Section 26 further provides that "In making the inquiry, such authority shall not be bound to observe the rules of the Law of Evidence." We make bold to say that even a mind saturated with judicial tradition cannot do even-handed justice, if it is surrounded with the licentious conditions created by the section quoted.

Section 27 regulates the disposal of the report of the investigating authority it shows that the report has no binding effect upon the Government. The same section enables the Government to

prolong the period under the original order to a further twelve months. Finally, the investigating authority is to consist of "three persons of whom two shall be persons having held judicial office not inferior to that of a District and Sessions Judge and one shall be a person not in the service of the Crown in India."

If part II is worse than part I, again, in the words of the mover, "part III is more drastic." By way of solace, Sir William Vincent adds :

> It can, however, only come into operation when the Governor-General-in-Council is satisfied that scheduled offences have been or are being committed to such an extent as to endanger the public safety.

Part I applies when scheduled offences are prevalent to such an extent that it is expedient in the interests of the public safety to provide for the speedy trial of such offences. Part III applies when such offences are so prevalent as to endanger the public safety. The line of demar-cation is thus very thin, and yet part III, Section 34, enables the local government to bring the case of a suspected person before a judicial officer and after considering that officer's opinion it may make any order authorized under Section 22 in Part II and may further direct the arrest, without warrant, of any suspected person, and his confine-ment under such conditions and restrictions as it may desire, provided that the confinement is not one specially set apart for convicted prisoners, and it may also direct the search of any place specified in the order. Then, when orders are passed, the course to be adopted is the same as under part II, and thus, subject to the so-called investigation by the investigating authority, the person arrested may have to remain under confinement for two years without a proper trial. And when it is remembered that the Act has been passed not in order that a single suspected person may occasionally be placed under confinement, but that it is intentionally designed to affect large bodies of people at a time of anxiety and excitement, it is not difficult to picture to oneself a reign, not of law and order, but of organized terror and disorder, or Martial Law without the name.

Part IV applies to persons already dealt with under the Defence of India Act and whom it brings automatically under the provisions of part II and to persons in confinement in accordance with the provisions of the Bengal State Prisoners' Regulation and brings them

under part III. It also brings under Part II persons affected by the Ingress into India Ordinance[1] upon its expiry.

Supposing that the notifications about affected area issued under parts I, II and III are cancelled, Part V provides that, notwithstanding such cancellation, any "trial or investigation or order commenced or made under this Act, such trial, investigation or order may be continued or enforced and on the completion of any such investigation any order which might otherwise have been made, may be made, and enforced as if such notification had not been cancelled." It also authorizes the arrest of any person affected by Part III outside the area in British India in which part III is not applicable and such person so arrested is then governed by the same procedure as in part III, as if Part III for him was in force throughout British India.

Section 42 provides that orders made under the Act shall not be called in question in any court and "no suit or prosecution or other legal proceeding shall lie against any person for anything which is in good faith done under this Act. The last section provides that the powers given by the Act are to be cumulative and not in derogation of any other powers conferred upon the local government.

It is this Act which raised a storm of opposition unknown before in India. It has been contended on behalf of the Government that there has been misrepresentation and exaggeration in connection with the Act. We hold that the Act hardly lends itself to popular misrepresentation. It has certainly been misrepresented on the official side. A typical exaggeration that we have seen complained of is a cryptic phrase, *"na appeal, na dalil, na vakeel"*, meaning "no appeal, no argument, no pleader". In our opinion, if this is the worst description of the Act on the popular side, it far underrates its evils, rather than overstates them. In our opinion, no self-respecting person can tolerate what is an outrage upon society. The crime of the Government became complete when they persisted in it the face of unanimous popular opposition. We would note, too, that the Viceroy has sufficient powers by means of ordinances to deal with extra-ordinary situations. The Government were wholly unjustified in placing on the statute-book, on the eve of liberal reforms[2], an

[1] Passed in 1914, restricting the liberty of any person entering India

[2] he Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms embodied in the Government of India Act, 1919

extraordinary measure to deal with anarchy, as if anarchy had been endemic instead of being rare in India.

CHAPTER IV

SATYAGRAHA

It was in order to combat the Rowlatt Act which had raised a storm of unprecedented opposition inside the Council Chamber from the Indian members and outside from the Indian Press, that Mr. Gandhi launched out his satyagraha movement.

People have only a hazy notion of what satyagraha is and how it is applied. We therefore give it in the words of its author, who has prepared for us a special note upon it :

> For the past thirty years I have been preaching and practising satyagraha. The principles of satyagraha, as I know it today, constitute a gradual evolution.

The term satyagraha was coined by me in South Africa[1] to express the force that the Indians there used for full eight years[2], and it was coined in order to distinguish it from the movement, then going on in the United Kingdom and South Africa under the name of passive resistance.

Its root meaning is "holding on to truth'; hence, truth-force. I have also called it love-force or soul-force. In the application of satyagraha I discovered in the earliest stages that pursuit of truth did not admit of violence being inflicted on one's opponent, but that he must be weaned from error by patience and sympathy. For what appears to be truth to the one may appear to be error to the other. And patience means self-suffering. So the doctrine came to mean vindication of truth, not by infliction of suffering on the opponent, but one's own self.

Satyagraha differs from passive resistance as the North Pole from the South. The latter has been conceived as a weapon of the weak and does not exclude the use of physical force or violence for the purpose of gaining one's end; whereas the former has been conceived as a weapon of the strongest, and excludes the use of violence in any shape or form.

[1] *Vide* "Gujarati Equivalents for Passive Resistance, etc.", 7-3-1908.

[2] 1906 to 1914

When Daniel disregarded the laws of the Medes and Persians which offended his conscience, and meekly suffered the punishment for his disobedience, he offered satyagraha in its purest form.Socrates would not refrain from preaching what he knew to be the truth to the Athenian youth, and bravely suffered the punishment of death. He was, in this case, a satyagrahi. Prahlad[1] disregarded the orders of his father, because he considered them to be repugnant to his conscience. He uncomplain-ingly and cheerfully bore the tortures to which he was subjected at the instance of his father. Mirabai[2] is said to have offended her husband by following her own conscience, was content to live in separation from him and bore with quiet dignity and resignation all the injuries that are said to have been done to her in order to bend her to husband's will. Both Prahlad and Mirabai practised satyagraha. It must be remembered, that neither Daniel nor Socrates, neither Prahlad nor Mirabai had any ill will towards their persecutors. Daniel and Socrates are regarded as having been model citizens of the States to which they belonged, Prahalad a model son, Mirabai a model wife.

This doctrine of satyagraha is not new; it is merely an extension of the rule of domestic life to the political. Family disputes and differences are generally settled according to the law of love. The injured member has so much regard for the others that he suffers injury for the sake of his principles without retaliating and without being angry with those who differ from him. And as repression of anger and self-suffering are difficult processes, he does not dignify trifles into principles, but, in all non-essentials, readily agrees with the rest of the family, and thus contrives to gain the maximum of peace for himself without disturbing that of the others. Thus his action, whether he resists or resigns, is always calculated to promote the common welfare of the family. It is this law of love which, silently but surely, governs the family for the most part throughout the civilized world.

I feel that nations cannot be one in reality, nor can their activities be conducive to the common good of the whole humanity, unless there is this definite recognition and acceptance of the law of the family in national and international affairs, in other words, on the

[1] A devotee of God persecuted by his unbelieving father

[2] Medieval saint-poetess of Rajasthan, queen of Mewar

political platform. Nations can be called civilized only to the extent that they obey this law.

This law of love is nothing but a law of truth. Without truth there is no love; without truth it may be affection, as for one's country, to the injury of others; or infatuation, as of a young man for a girl; or love may be unreasoning and blind, as of ignorant parents for their children. Love transcends all animality and is never partial. Satyagraha has therefore been described as a coin, on whose face you read love and on the reverse you read truth. It is a coin current everywhere and has indefinable value.

Satyagraha is self-dependent. It does not require the assent of the opponent before it can be brought into play. Indeed, it shines out most when the opponent resists. It is therefore irresistible. A satyagrahi does not know what defeat is, for he fights for truth without being exhausted. Death in the fight is a deliverance, and prison a gateway to liberty.

It is called also soul-force, because a definite recognition of the soul within is a necessity if a satyagrahi is to believe that death does not mean cessation of the struggle but a culmination. The body is merely a vehicle for self-expression; and he gladly gives up the body, when its existence is an obstruction in the way of the opponent seeing the truth, for which the satyagrahi stands. He gives up the body in the certain faith if anything would change his opponent's view, a willing sacrifice of his body must do so. And with the knowledge that the soul survives the body, he is not impatient to see the triumph of truth in the present body. Indeed, victory lies in the ability to die in the attempt to make the opponent see the truth, which the satyagrahi for the time being expresses.

And as a satyagrahi never injures his opponent and always appeals, either to his reason by gentle argument, or his heart by the sacrifice of self, satyagraha is twice blessed; it blesses him who practises it, and him against whom it is practised.

It has however been objected that satyagraha, as we conceive it, can be practised only by a select few. My experience proves the contrary. Once its simple principles—adherence to truth and insistence upon it by self-suffering—are understood, anybody can practise it. It is as difficult or as easy to practise as any other virtue. It is as little necessary for its practice that everyone should understand the whole philosophy of it, as it is for the practice of total abstinence.

After all, no one disputes the necessity of insisting on truth as one sees it. And it is easy enough to understand that it is vular to attempt to compel the opponent to its acceptance by using brute force; it is discreditable to submit to error, because argument has failed to convince, and that the only true and honourable course is not to submit to it even at the cost of one's life. Then only can the world be purged of error, if it ever can be altogether. There can be no compromise with error where it hurts the vital being.

But, on the political field, the struggle on behalf of the people mostly consists in opposing error in the shape of unjust laws. When you have failed to bring the error home to the lawgiver by way of petitions and the like, the only remedy open to you, if you do not wish to submit to it, is to compel him to retrace his steps by suffering in your own person, i.e., by inviting the penalty for the breach of the law. Hence, satyagraha largely appears to the public as civil disobedience or civil resistance. It is civil in the sense that it is not criminal.

The criminal, i.e., the ordinary law-breaker, breaks the law surreptitiously and tries to avoid the penalty; not so the civil resister. He ever obeys the laws of the state to which he belongs, not out of fear of the sanctions, but because he considers them to be good for the welfare of society. But there come occasions, generally rare, when he considers certain laws to be so unjust as to render obedience to them a dishonour; he then openly and civilly breaks them and quietly suffers the penalty for their breach. And in order to register his protest against the action of the lawgiver, it is open to him to withdraw his co-operation from the state by disobeying such other laws whose breach does not involve moral turpitude. In my opinion, the beauty and efficacy of satyagraha are so great and the doctrine [is] so simple that it can be preached even to children. It was preached by me to thousands of men, women and children, commonly called indentured Indians, with excellent results.

When the Rowlatt Bills were published, I felt that they were so restrictive of human liberty that they must be resisted to the utmost. I observed, too, that the opposition to them was universal among Indians. I submit that no state, however despotic, has the right to enact laws which are repugnant to the whole body of the people, much less a government guided by constitutional usage and precedent, such as the Indian Government. I felt, too, that the oncoming agitation needed

a definite direction, if it was neither to collapse nor to run into violent channels.

I ventured therefore to present satyagraha to the country, emphasizing its civil resistance aspect. And as it is purely an inward and purifying movement, I suggested the observance of fast, prayer and suspension of all work for one day—the 6th of April. There was a magnificent response throughout the length and breadth of India, even in little villages, although there was no organization and no great previous preparation. The idea was given to the public as soon as it was conceived. On the 6th April, there was no violence used by the people, and no collision with the police worth naming. The hartal was purely voluntary and spontaneous. I took no steps to further the idea beyond publishing the following message on the 24th March last at Madras:[1]

> Satyagraha, as I have endeavoured to explain at several meetings, is essentially a religious movement. It is a process of purification and penance. It seeks to secure reforms or redress of grievances by self-suffering. I therefore venture to suggest that the second Sunday after the publication of the Viceregal assent to Bill No. 2 of 1919 (i.e., 6th April) may be observed as a day of humiliation and prayer. As there must be an effective public demonstration in keeping with the character of the observance, I beg to advise as follows :
>
> (i) A twenty-four hours' fast, counting from the last meal on the preceding night, should be observed by all adults, unless prevented from so doing by considerations of religion or health. The fast is not to be regarded, in any shape or form, in the nature of a hunger-strike, or as designed to put any pressure upon the Government. It is to be regarded for the satyagrahis as a necessary discipline to fit them for civil disobedience, contemplated in their pledge, and for all others, as some slight token of the intensity of their wounded feelings.
>
> (ii) All work, except such as may be necessary in the public interest, should be suspended for the day, Markets and other business places should be closed. Employees who are required to work even on Sundays, may only suspend work after obtaining previous leave.
>
> I do not hesitate to recommend these two suggestions for adoption by public servants. For, though it is unquestionably the right thing for them not to take part in political discussion and gatherings, in my opinion they have

[1] The message was dated March 23; *vide* "Letter to the Press on Satyagraha Movement", 23-3-1919.

an undoubted right to express, upon vital matters, their feelings in the very limited manner herein suggested.

(iii) Public meetings should be held on that day in all parts of India, not excluding villages, at which resolutions praying for the withdrawal of the two measures should be passed.

If my advice is deemed worthy of acceptance, the responsibility will lie, in the first instance, on the various satyagraha associations for undertaking the necessary work of organization, but all other associations will, I hope, join hands in making this demonstration a success.

The doctrine of satyagraha as explained by Mr. Gandhi seems to be clear and intelligible as a theoretical proposition. But, we think that it is not easy, as it may appear at first sight, to reduce it to practice in every walk of life. For the practice of such satyagraha a large amount of discipline in patience and self-control is necesary. And these are the qualities that are in practice found to be most lacking, when they are most needed. Satyagraha to be acceptable as a doctrine of everyday life by a large number of people must be capable of being practised by the average human being; and the average man is more prone to resort to violence than to sacrifice himself, when he is chafing under a sense of wrong. Mr. Gandhi's answer is that the average man does exercise such patience in the family circle, and Mr. Gandhi only asks for its extension to the political circle.

In any case, this is not the place where we need examine the feasibility of the doctrine any further than we have done. This much is clear that the preaching of an innocuous doctrine of this nature can only do good to society. And it is our firm belief, based on our examination of hundreds of men, that, had not the spirit of satyagraha permeated the people who took part in the agitation, the results would have been infinitely more disastrous than they were. The exemplary self-control exercised by the people in the other parts of India shows, not that they are vitally different in temperament from the Punjabis, but that the restrain-ing influence of satyagraha was powerful enough to control the anger of the people against the action of the Government in forcing the Rowlatt Act upon India. If the people had been able to vent their resentment without disregarding restraint and discipline in offering disobedience to the laws of the State, it is highly likely that the Government would have long ere this yielded to the people's will.

But the restraining influence of satyagraha proved unequal to the strain put upon it by the Punjab Government. Had Sir M.

O'Dwyer recognized the sobering effect of satyagraha and cooperated with the people, as did the Governments of the other provinces in a more or less perfect manner, the terrible sufferings of the Punjab would have been avoided, and the history of the past few months would have been differently written.

We admit that satyagraha, if properly practised, would render government of people by brute force an impossibility, and that, therefore, an effective enforcement of laws disliked by the people would be difficult, if not altogether impossible. But that can be no ground of complaint in a state whose constitution requires the assent of the governed to their government in a given manner.

It only remains for us to examine whether satyagraha was responsible for the murders, arson, and pillage that took place in the Punjab. The preaching of satyagraha, as we have shown, could never produce violence in any shape or from, for it is negation of violence. The preaching of the civil disobedience from of satyagraha, however, can easily lend itself to misinterpretation, and can only be cautiously undertaken. We recognize the necessity for the utmost caution in advocating civil resistance. It is easy enough to undermine respect for law, but it is not equally easy to inculcate suffering involved in civil, i.e., non-violent disobedience of the laws of a state. Civil resistance can therefore only be preached where the ground has been previously prepared for self-suffering. We had to note that Mr. Gandhi frankly, and we think rightly, admitted his error in prematurely embarking on mass civil disobedience, and immediately suspended his movement.[1]

In the Punjab, however, the civil resistance part of satyagraha was neither appreciated nor understood, much less practised. The hartal, as such, has nothing to do with civil resistance. It may be a part of satyagraha, if it is voluntary, free from all violence and resorted to not to express ill will against, but disapprobation of the acts of a wrongdoer. Moreover, hartal is an ageold institution in India, resorted to by people under the very conditions in which it was applied in the Punjab during April. Neither satyagraha nor hartal, therefore, had anything to do with the mob excesses. What led to them will be considered in the following pages.

[1] In July, 1919

CHAPTER V

THE MARTIAL LAW

PART I : GENERAL

We have followed Sir Michael O'Dwyer's administration with regard to his treatment of the educated classes and his recruiting methods. We have endeavoured to show how Sir Michael O'Dwyer estranged all classes of Punjabis from him. We have also described in sufficient detail the Rowlatt Act and its consequences. We have shown, too, the nature of the agitation that took place throughout the length and breadth of India for its repeal. We have given, in the language of its author, the principles of satyagraha, and we think we have shown sufficiently clearly that the Rowlatt Act agitation, which crystallized into shape on the 6th April, produced no violence what- soever, and that satyagraha, as conceived and applied by its author, is singularly free from violence; indeed, its propagation and acceptance can only result in greater peace and security of life and property. We have shown, too, that the Rowlatt Act agitation and satyagraha had likewise enabled the people to realize their power, and had energized them. The people in the Punjab had no love for the Government, as represented by Sir Michael O'Dwyer. They were thoroughly discontented. This discontentment became intensified by reason of high prices. They had expected better times in every way after the War. On the contrary, the termination of hostilities brought into prominent relief their own precarious position. The unrest thus caused was aggravated by the Khilafat agitation, the Mohamedans, not without just cause, distrusting the intentions of the British Government.

In order properly to understand the events of April last, it is necessary to bear in mind the foregoing facts, which are scarcely capable of being disputed.

The Punjab had a complete hartal on the 6th April. It was a scene unparallelled in the Punjab, and, for that matter, in India. On that day, the leaders and the people seemed to act as one man. There was complete fraternization between Hindus and Mohammedans. Resolutions were passed all over, protesting against the Rowlatt Act and demanding its repeal. The demonstration of the 6th of April was a peaceful assertion of the people's will.

This, however, proved too much for Sir Michael O'Dwyer. He

scented danger to the British Rule in both the hartal and the Hindu-Mohammedan unity. To him it was an anti-British combination that must be broken at any cost. Even the prosecution against the Lahore leaders dignified their peaceful acts by the name of "conspiracy and waging war". The *precis* of the Lahore case, prepared by the convening authority, proceeds :

> The measure commonly known as the Rowlatt Bill was passed by the Imperial Council on 18th March, 1919. Thereupon, a general conspiracy was formed by persons outside the Punjab, with whom the accused associated, to hold tumultuous meetings, and to ordain a general strike with the intention and object of inflaming popular feeling against Government, and to so overawe it as to try to induce the vetoing of the measure. Accordingly, throughout India, and in the Punjab in particular, the said conspirators, including the accused, declared a general strike, commonly known as a hartal, to take place on the 30th March, intending thereby to induce disorder, paralyse the economic life of the country, and excite disaffection and hatred towards Government.

Then follows a general statement of several meetings, called in the *precis* "riotous assembly", and this is followed by two paragraphs which we must give in the words of the Government draftsman :

> On the 9th April, in pursuance of the conspiracy to excite disaffection and feelings of enmity against Government, and on the occasion of the *Ramnaumi*[1] procession, the accused, Rambhuj Dutt, Gokal Chand, Dharm Das Suri and Duni Chand and others encouraged the fraternization of Hindus and Mohammedans against the Government as by law established. On the 10th April, the Government of the Punjab, with a view to maintaining peace and order, prevented the ingress of one of the conspirators, by name Gandhi, into the province, and, on the same date, ordered the deportation of two other conspirators from Amritsar, by name Kitchlew and Satyapal. These precautionary measures of Government for the preservation of peace and order were seized upon by the conspirators as a signal to wage war against the King.

We cite these paragraphs to emphasize the points made by us, viz., that the hartal, the meetings preceding and following it, and the fraterni-zation of Hindus and Mohammedans were interpreted as a menace to the Government. Nor was this treatment of the hartal and the fraternizationan afterthought. Sir Michael O'Dwyer had expressed himself in plain language on the 7th April. We have already

[1] Ninth day of the waxing moon in the month of *Chaitra*, according to *Vikama* calendar, celebrated as the birthday of Lord Rama

quoted from his speech of that day. He had met the Hon'ble Raizada Bhagat Ram, a barrister of Jullundur. He expressed his strong disapproval of the hartal to him also, as will appear from the statement submitted by him. Raizada Bhagat Ram says :

> After the meeting (of Punjab Legislative Council) I met the Lieutenant-Governor in the drawing-room. He asked me what sort of a hartal we had at Jullundur. I replied it was a complete hartal, and that there was no disturbance. Sir M. O'Dwyer asked me what I attributed it to. I answered, "to my mind it was due to the soul-force of Mr. Gandhi." On this, Sir Michael raised his fist and said, "Raizada Sahib, remember, there is another force greater than Gandhi's soul-force." (Statement 650.)

Thus Sir Michael was determined to crush all political consciousness by any means he could think of. He was prepared to goad the people to madness. How he partially succeeded we shall see presently.

THE MARTIAL LAW

PART II : AMRITSAR

We shall take Amritsar first, as it was there that the goading process took place. Amritsar is second in importance to Lahore, though in many respects it is more important even than Lahore. Its population numbers 160,000. It is the city of the Golden Temple, the greatest place of Sikh worship. Being the largest commercial centre in the Punjab, and having the Golden Temple, it attracts travellers and visitors from all parts of the Punjab and even from outside.

About the middle of April marks the Hindu New Year's Day, when in Amritsar there takes place also a cattle fair. The New Year's Day is called the *Baisakhi*, the occasion being both religious and commercial. Every year it draws crowds from far and near. The *Baisakhi* is preceded by the *Ramnaumi* celebration.

Amritsar observed the 6th of April in a thorough manner; the Mohammedans, the Sikhs and the other Hindus belonging to all grades observed complete hartal. It was spontaneous and voluntary. The behaviour of the crowd was unexceptionable and there were no accidents to regret or to report.

The ninth April was the *Ramnaumi* day. It is principally a Hindu religious function. But this time it was used for Hindu-Mohammedan unity. The Mohammedans took a leading part in it.

Dr. Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapal were among the organizers of the fraternization. Long before this, the two leaders had risen into prominence by their public services.

Dr. Saif-ud-din Kitchlew is a Mohammedan barrister enjoying a considerable practice. He is a Doctor of Philosophy of Munster and a graduate of Cambridge. He was also a student at Aligarh. He is 35 years old, is married and has got two children. He has interested himself for several years in Hindu-Mohammedan unity.

Dr. Satyapal is a Hindu, Khatri by caste. He is a B.A., M.B., of the Punjab University. He held the King's Commission for one year at Aden during the War as Lt., I.M.S. He was a co-worker with Dr. Kitchlew and became popular by reason of having carried on a successful agitation against the stoppage of the issue of platform tickets to Indians at the Amritsar Railway Station. Both became much more popular during the Rowlatt agitation, and both approved of satyagraha. There is no doubt that at Amritsar, as elsewhere, the Rowlatt agitation began to draw much larger audiences than before, and as the agitation gathered force, by their continuous activity they became the idols of the people.

Dr. Satyapal was prohibited on the 29th March, 1919, under orders of the Government of the Punjab from speaking in public and he was interned in Amritsar.

As has been observed in the previous chapter, hartal was observed in some parts of India on the 30th of March also. It was observed that day in Amritsar.

The meeting of the 30th March at Amritsar, according to official accounts, is said to have been attended by from 30,000 to 35,000 persons, but all accounts agree that it passed off without a single untoward incident. The speakers at the meeting emphasized the peaceful and religious character of the function. These are the closing words of Dr. Kitchlew :

> We will be ever prepared to sacrifice personal over national interests. The message of Mahatma Gandhi has been read to you. All countrymen should become prepared for resistance. This does not mean that this sacred town or country should be flooded with blood. The resistance should be a passive one. Be ready to act according to your conscience, though this may send you to jail, or bring an order of internment on you.

Again :

> Do not cause pain or distress to anyone. Go home peacefully. Take a walk in the garden. Do not use harsh words in respect of any policeman, or traitor, which might cause him pain or lead to the possibility of a breach of the peace or a riot.

But Sir Michael O'Dwyer was much ruffled by the hartal and the meeting at Amritsar. He, therefore, served on Dr. Kitchlew also the same order as on Dr. Satyapal. The order is dated the 3rd April and reads that

> he shall until further order (a) remain and reside within the municipal limits of Amritsar City; (b) refrain from communicating, either directly or indirectly, with the Press; and (c) refrain from convening or attending or addressing in writing or otherwise any public meeting.

Pandit Kotu Mal, Pandit Dina Nath[1] and Swami Anubhavanand were also similarly restricted. These orders had undoubtedly agitated the public mind, but the people were not unnerved by them. There was, therefore, another complete hartal on the 6th April, and a meeting larger still than the one held on the 30th March. Mr. Badrul Islam Khan, a barrister of Amritsar, presided at the meeting which is said to have been attended by 50,000 people. Quoting again from the official record, the meeting passed a resolution requesting the Government that the orders against Dr. Satyapal and others might be rescinded. The burden of the speeches in connection with the orders will be found in the following sentence, which we extract from the report before us :

> The only fault found with them is, that they informed all of us of the real object of the Rowlatt Act.

A resolution asking for the repeal of the Rowlatt Act was also passed. The president in concluding the proceedings said :

> Today's meeting has been held more successfully even than the meeting of Sunday last. Your object as to the expression of opinion has been accomplished. At this time people should not exhibit passions, but they should be patient. Mahatma Gandhi's advice is : in this struggle we will patiently bear grief and sorrow and thus save ourselves from violence and harshness. Falsehood will fail and truth shall win. If you preserve peace of mind, patience and forbearance the meeting shall have vast effect. But if there is the least disturbance, and even two men fight with each other, this will

[1] Editor, *Waqat*, Amritsar

entail bad result and the meeting will have no effect. The audience is therefore requested to leave the meeting-place very calmly and not to make any sort of procession.

The report from which we have quoted the above passage and which is dated the 8th April concludes :

The public fully complied with the directions of the president.

The 9th of April, as already stated, was the great *Ramnaumi* day. The leaders had decided that there should be complete fraternization between Hindus and Mohammedans on that occasion. The *Ramnaumi* is usually a religious function, but the Mohammedans having decided to take part in it, it undoubtedly assumed a larger significance. It was a big procession, in which a large number of Mohammedans took part. Dr. Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapal witnessed the procession from different places and received a great ovation from it as it went past them. The Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar also watched the procession, and as the various band parties passed him they struck up *God Save the King*. And again in spite of the great demonstration, there was no regrettable incident and no accident.

All this popular demonstration and unfoldment of national consciousness would have gladdened any ruler with imagination and sympathy with popular aspirations. It only enraged Sir Michael O'Dwyer. He was angry that his orders, referred to by us, instead of cowing down the people had only made them bolder and more articulate in their demands. Therefore, practically at the same time that the popular demonstration was going on in an orderly, perfectly constitutional manner, an order was being forged in the Punjab Govern-ment Secretariat, which was to destroy and disturb the people's peace; for the Lieutenant-Governor had decided to deport Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal. The orders were received at Amritsar late at night on the 9th April, and Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal were sent for on the 10th April by the Deputy commissioner, who served the orders on them and sent them away to an unknown destination in a motor-car. The news spread throughout Amritsar like lightning. A crowd immediately gathered together. It was a crowd of mourners—bareheaded, many unshod, and all without sticks. It was on its way to the Deputy Commissioner's bungalow to plead for the release of its loved ones. It marched through the principal streets of Amritsar, passed by the National Bank, the Town Hall and the Christian Mission Hall, the very buildings which within a short time were to be destroyed

by some of them. Its progress was, however, stopped at the railway-carriage over-bridge which was guarded by a military picket. The men demanded passage and said that they wanted to go to the Deputy Commissioner's bungalow to make *faryad*—a prayer. They pushed forward, the picket fell back a little. They advanced, the military fired, killing and wounding some of them; whereon the crowd fell back. It was now no longer a peaceful crowd. It was a crowd foiled in its effort to secure the release of its leaders, and exasperated at the wounding and the killing of some of its members. These enraged men went to the railway foot-bridge and some to the Hall Bazaar, carrying the killed and the wounded. The sight of the wounded persons and dead bodies inflamed the citizens who saw them. Within a short time, a large crowd was again seen near the carriage over-bridge and the foot-bridge. This time it had armed itself with sticks and pieces of wood. Both the bridges were guarded by the military.

Meanwhile, the members of the Bar, having heard of the uproar, had offered their services to the Deputy Commissioner with a view to intervention. They were permitted to intervene. On their arrival, Mr. Plomer, the Deputy Superintendent of Police, Amritsar, told them that a big crowd had gone towards the railway yard. Some, therefore, went in that direction and some remained near the bridges. Those that went to the railway yard succeeded in clearing the crowd from it. Near the carriage overbridge, however, the position was more difficult. Messrs Salaria and Maqbool Mahmood were trying, on the one hand, to reason with the crowd, and, on the other hand, to restrain the authorities from firing. At one time it appeared as if they would succeed, but some persons in the crowd threw stones or pieces of wood at the military, who instantly fired, killing about twenty persons and wounding many. Messrs Salaria and Maqbool Mahmood had themselves a narrow escape. The officer in charge expressed his regret for ordering the fire whilst they were in the crowd and trying to help the authorities by persuading the crowd to disperse. Mr. Maqbool Mahmood then went to the Civil Hospital and brought Dr. Dhanpat Rai to render first aid to the wounded. The stretchers were brought from the hospital, but it is said that Mr. Plomer sent them away, saying that the people would make their own arrangements. Some of the wounded were taken to Dr. Kidar Nath's house. He was living very near to the Zenana Hospital. It is stated that Mrs. Easdon[1], on seeing

[1] A lady doctor in the Municipal Zenana Hospital

the wounded, laughed and said that the Hindus and the Mohammedans had got what they deserved. Upon this, a party forced its way into the hospital and tried to find out Mrs. Easdon, but was in the meanwhile concealed by Mrs. Benjamin and was only thus able to escape the mob. The excited mob sacked the National Bank and murdered Mr. Stewart, the manager, and Mr. Scott, the accountant. Those who had gone to the goods shed murdered Mr. Robinson, the railway guard. The mob attacked the Alliance Bank and upon Mr. Thomson, the manager, firing revolver shorts, became infuriated and murdered him, threw down his body and burnt the corpse with the Bank furniture. Sergeant Rowland, the Cantonment electrician, was killed near the Rigo Bridge. The Town Hall, the Post Office and the Mission Hall were burnt, and so was a part of the Bhagtanwala Railway Station. An attack was attempted on the Chartered Bank also, but no serious damage was done to it, the Indian staff of the Bank saving the situation. Miss Sherwood[1] who was cycling was brutally attacked, but she was rescued by the father of one of her Indian pupils. The crowd, there is little doubt, contained the usual badmash (hooligan) element, which seeing the opportunity resorted to looting the National Bank godowns. We might mention here that since then some policemen had been apprehended for being in possession of property stolen from the banks. The whole of the destruction and looting was finished before 5 p. m. on the 10th April.

The provocation given by the deportation of their beloved leaders to the people of Amritsar was grave and uncalled for. This was doubled when the unarmed crowd was prevented from proceeding on its peaceful errand, and upon becoming insistent was fired on. It is necessary here to recall and emphasize the fact that up to the time of reaching the carriage over-bridge and the firing on it, the mob had committed no violence. It is difficult to say what would have happened if the mob had been allowed to proceed to the Deputy Commissioner's bungalow and there had its prayer rejected, as it was likely to be. It would have largely depended on the way the Deputy commissioner dealt with them. It must be granted that the crowd was in an assertive mood, and if the authorities thought that the crowd would have acted in a violent manner, we are not prepared to blame them for checking its advance. Our study of the evidence led before the Martial Law Commissions, of the official evidence led before

[1] An Englishwoman who worked in the local Mission School

Lord Hunter's Committee[1] and the evidence collected by us, leads to the conclusion that there was no warrant for the firing. The authorities omitted all the intermediate stages that are usually resorted to in all civilized countries. There was no parleying, no humouring, and no use of milder force. Immediately the crowd became insistent, the order to fire was given. In this country, it has become too much the custom with the executive and the military never to run any risk, or, to put it in another way, to count Indian life very cheap.

This is what Mr. Maqbool Mahmood, High Court Vakil, who together with Mr. Salaria was trying to reason with the crowd, says with reference to the second firing :

> Salaria and I shouted out to the Deputy Commissioner and the officers to get back and not to fire, as we still hoped to take the crowd back. A few of the crowd threw wood and stones at the soldiers. The soldiers at once opened a volley of fire without any warning or intimation. Bullets whistled to my right and left. The crowd dispersed, leaving 20 or 25 killed and wounded. After the firing stopped, I went up to the soldiers and enquired if they had an ambulance car, or any first-aid arrangements at hand. I wanted to run to the hospital, which was close by, for help. The soldiers would not allow me. Mr. Seymour, however, let me go. . . . The Deputy Commissioner himself was present when the fire was opened. He knew that Salaria and I were members of the Bar, and were trying to get the people back to the city. It was by mere accident that our lives were saved. I still believe, if the authorities had a little more patience, we would have succeeded in taking the crowd back. It is a matter of regret that, when the authorities decided to fire, they did not make any arrangement for an ambulance car or first aid. I believe some of the wounded might have been saved if timely medical assistance had been forthcoming. After the first few shots, the crowd rushed back, but the firing was continued even after they began running away. Many of them were hit on the back. Most of the wounded were hit above the belt, on the face or on the head. (Statement 5, pp. 30 & 31)

It should be remembered that the mob had not yet indulged in excesses. There was, therefore, no occasion for impatience, indifference of callousness, which, according to this witness, was evidently the case.

Whilst, therefore, we deplore the deportaion order and the firing, and consider both as unjustifiable, and the absence of any ambulance

[1] The Punjab Disorders Inquiry Committee, appointed by the Government of India in October 1919, under the chairmanship of Lord Hunter

arrangement as inhuman, nothing can be held to justify the wanton destruction by the mob of the innocent lives and properties. The bank managers were deservedly popular. The others who were murdered were unknown to the crowd and totally innocent. Miss Sherwood was a devoted Christian teacher and no remarks, however objectionable, that might have been made by Mrs. Easdon, could warrant the proceedings of the mob. The destruction of the buildings was utterly mad, and we cannot help saying that all the good that had been done by the wonderful self-restraint previously exercised by the Amritsar people was undone by these wild and unworthy acts of the mob.

Could these excesses have been prevented? Could innocent lives have been saved? What were the police doing? The *Kotwali* (Police Station) is a portion of the same block as the Town Hall. There were sufficient numbers of the police force at the *Kotwali*. The crowd did not touch the *Kotwali*, whilst it burnt the adjoining Town Hall with impunity. Most of the other buildings burnt were within a stone's throw of the *Kotwali*. The police had also intimation of the fact that the banks were being set fire to. It was clearly the duty that the banks were being set fire to. It was clearly the duty of the police to have bestirred themselves and, even at the peril of their lives, at least tried to save the Englishmen who were murdered.

This murder and incendiarism came upon the authorities with such suddenness that they were unnerved for the time being.Mr. Kitchin was sent post-haste from Lahore by the Lieutenant-Governor. He says in his evidence before the Hunter Committeethat he met people on the road. He motored unmolested to Amritsar which is about 35 miles from Lahore. This was in the afternoon at about 4 p. m. on the 10th April. At night at about 11, a troop train came with troops under Major MacDonald. Mr. Kitchin told him "that the situation was beyond their control and that he should take such steps as the military situa- tion demanded." He says further in his evidence that "he advised him to send a suitable force into the city and get information, or bring the survivors, which was done." "Why was not a civil magistrate sent?" asked Lord Hunter. Mr. Kitchin replied :

> I expected that the party would have to fight their way and the presence of a civil magistrate would naturally embarrass what was purely a military operation . . . The survivors were brought out and the *Kotwali* was reinforced without any resistance or fighting.

He returned to Lahore on the 11th. The charge of the city was handed over by Mr. Miles Irving to the military. On reaching Lahore, he informed the Lieutenant-Governor of this and the Lieutenant-Governor approved. Next morning, Mr. Kitchin again motored to Amritsar, but he saw no indication of any disturbances. Meanwhile General Dyer had arrived, established his headquarters at Ram Bagh and had taken over full control.

The first thing General Dyer did was to make arrests. He entered the city and made about twelve arrests without any molestation or resistance whatsoever.

We now turn to the people's doings during this time. On the night of the 10th, the city was left to itself, but there was no robbery or looting. Early in the morning of the 11th, they wanted to dispose of the dead. The military authorities would not allow, at first, more than 4 persons to accompany each bier. The people were intensely dissatisfied. They wanted a funeral procession. They sent their representatives to plead for them. At last, permission was granted after much haggling, but the procession was ordered to return before 2 p.m. The procession was very large, but the orders were strictly carried out and everything was finished before the appointed time. On the 12th April, Hans Raj, who subsequently became chief approver in the Amritsar conspiracy case, held a meeting at Dhab Khatikan, and he announced that another meeting would be held on the 13th April in the Jallianwala Bagh under the chairmanship of Lala Kanhya Lal. Lala Kanhya Lal himself denies having ever been asked or having consented to preside at any such meeting. He is a respectable pleader of long standing, 75 years old, and he is very popular. (Statement 29.) We have no doubt that his statement is correct. We believe that his name was used to draw a large crowd.

To understand the events that followed it is necessary to have a picture of Amritsar as drawn by one who belonged to it, and yet had been away just for a few days. We have such a picture given be Lala Girdhari Lal, Deputy Chairman of the Punjab Chamber of Commerce, and Managing Director of the Amritsar Flour and General Mills Company. He says :

> I reached Amritsar by Calcutta Mail from Cawnpore on 11th April, 1919, about 11.30a.m. . . . From and on the canal bridge near Amritsar, I saw batches of policemen guarding the railway lines. When the train steamed into the station here, the whole place looked like a regular military post, with soldiers and guns scattered all over. . . . No coolie or conveyance of any kind

> was to be had. Just as I came out of the platform, Sardar Bikram Singh met me and advised me either to go back where I had come from, or not to enter the city in any case. Being extremely nervous, as it appeared to me, he did not talk to me long. By the kindness of a railway servant, after waiting for 20 minutes, with great difficulty, I got a coolie to carry my luggage as far as the Golden Temple. At the foot-bridge there was a guard of some European soldiers, who would not let anyone enter the city without searching all things thoroughly. Sticks of all kinds were taken away from everyone. After a thorough over-hauling of all my things I was allowed to proceed further. No one was permitted to go over the carriage-bridge. This continued for days, till the 15th April probably. At every step outside the city, one could see nothing but only military or police as short distances with rifles and bayonets. Not a single policemen was to be seen on duty anywhere within the city. . . . The first thing that struck me, immediately on entering the city, was the stoppage of water supply completely. . . . Later, in the evening, I found the electric connection all over the city proper also cut off. To the best of my memory, this inconvenience also lasted at least up to 18th or 19th April, if not later. While proceeding to the Golden Temple, I saw marks of violence. Telegraph wires were cut, some buildings were burnt. (Statement 1, pp 1 & 2.)

According to the official testimony also, the cutting off of the water supply and electric light lasted three or four days, and it is quite evident that the cruel deprivation was intended largely to be a punishment for the whole city for the violence in which only a few could take part and which, as Lord Hunter pointed out to a witness, the peaceful citizens could not prevent.

On the 13th April, in the morning at about 9.30, General Dyer entered the city with an escort and made a proclamation. It was, according to the General's evidence before Lord Hunter's Committee, in three parts. The last part is the only part relevant to the occasion. It runs:

> No procession of any kind is permitted to parade the city or any part of the city or outside of it any time. Any such procession or gathering of 4 men will be looked upon and treated as an unlawful assembly and dispersed by force of arms, if necessary.

General Dyer was closely questioned on the significance of the qualifications "If necessary" and on the meaning of the word "gathering" in juxtaposition to the word "procession"."If necessary" can only mean "in the event of such gathering not dispersing otherwise", and "gathering" can only mean "gathering in a public

street"; otherwise any gathering of more than 4 men in private houses would become an unlawful assembly in terms of the proclamation.

This proclamation was read out by an interpreter in Punjabi and Urdu, at intervals, during General Dyer's progress through the city, which he says occupied "2 or 3 hours". The drum was beaten to gather the people. A map was handed to the General indicating the places at which the proclamation was read, and he admitted that it was not read in many parts of the city. We have examined the map of the city with the route marked. More than one half, and that the most populous part of the city, was left untouched by the General. There is abundant evidence to show that very few citizens knew anything about the proclamation. Moreover, the 13th April was, as stated before, the *Baisakhi*, the Hindu New Year's Day, and many people from surrounding villages were streaming in, who knew nothing of the proclamation. That such people did come and could not have heard the proclamation is admitted by the official witnesses.

At or about the time of this proclamation a boy was announcing in the streets of Amritsar, by beating a tin can, that a meeting would be held at 4 p.m. at Jallianwala Bagh, and that Lala Kanhya Lal would preside at that meeting. There may be a question as to the exact time of this announcement by the boy. The evidence before us, however, shows that the announcement was made some time before the proclamation by General Dyer. Lala Kanhya Lal says :

> I heard that some men (who have not been traced up to this time to my knowledge) had, on the 13th April, proclaimed that a lecture would be given in the Jallianwala Garden by me. This led or induced the public to think that I would give them some sound advice on the situation then existing. (Statement 29, p. 73)

At about 12.45 p.m., General Dyer was informed that a big meeting was to be held at Jallianwala Bagh at 4.30 that very afternoon. General Dyer admits that he took no steps to prevent the meeting. "I want you to explain," asked Lord Hunter, "why you did not take measures to prevent the crowd from assembling at the Jallianwala Bagh?" The General answered :

> I went there as soon as I could. I had to organize my forces, to think the matter out. . . . I thought I had done enough in warning them not to meet.

Lord Hunter asked :

> Did the making of dispositions necessitate the occupation of the time between 12.40 to 4 p.m.?

General Dyer answered :

> I did not believe that they would really meet, after all that I had done in the morning. I did not think of sending off another force and warn them not to go.

He got definite information at 4 o'clock that the meeting was actually being held. Soon after, he marched off towards the city with picketing parties consisting of 25 rifles of Gurkhas and 25 Sikhs. He had also 40 more Gurkhas armed with *kukris*[1], and he took two armoured cars with him. He went at the "ordinary walking pace". To Lord Hunter's question why he did not consider there was any necessity for proceeding with any extra expedition, he said :

> No Sir, it was very hot; we went at the usual pace of marching.

He reached the Bagh about 5 or 5.15 p.m.

What is Jallianwala Bagh? The word *bagh* is a misnomer; 'Jalle' is the caste name of the original owner, wala' is the gen it ivetermination; and the *bagh*, meaning a garden, is really an open piece of waste land surrounded by houses. It was, at the time, a private property owned in common by several people. As will appear from the plan attached, it is an irregular quadrangle, indifferently walled; and in most cases, the back walls of the house surrounding it enclose the quadrangle. There are three trees in the quadrangle, a dilapidated *samadhi* (tomb) with a dome, and a well. The main entrance is a narrow passage through which armoured cars happily could not pass. There were no other regular entrances, but at 4 or 5 points it was possible to get out through narrow openings. The ground at the entrance is an elevation, remarkably fit for posting soldiers and firing upon a crowd in front. When therefore, General Dyer marched into the Bagh with his 90 soldiers, the crowd had no easy exit.

According to the evidence before us, Hans Raj, prior to General Dyer's arrival, was in possession of the audience estimated at 20.000 He and a few others were standing on animprovised platform marked on the plan. An aeroplane was hovering over the meeting before the arrival of the troops. Hans Raj asked the meeting not to be afraid. The audience included many boys and children, and some men had come with infants in their arms. The people had no lathis with them. There were some C.I.D. men also at the meeting. Two of them were seen talking to Hans Raj. General Dyer deployed

[1] Dagger-like weapons

25 soldiers to the right and 25 to the left, on the high ground on the north side of the rectangular space. It is best to give what happened afterwards in his own words :

Q. When you got into the Bagh, what did you do?

A. I opened fire.

Q. At once?

A. Immediately. I had thought about the matter and don't imagine it took me more than 30 seconds to make up my mind as to what my duty was.

Q. As regards the crowd, what was it doing?

A. Well, they were holding a meeting. There was a man in the centre of the place on something raised. His arms were moving about. He was evidently addressing. He was absolutely in the centre of the square, as far as I could judge. I should say some 50 or 60 yards from where my troops were drawn up.

The General had admitted that there might have been a good many who had not heard of the proclamation. So Lord Hunter asked :

On the assumption that there was that risk of people being in the crowd who were not aware of the proclamation, did it not occur to you that it was a proper measure to ask the crowd to disperse before you took that step of actually firing?

A.No, at the time I did not. I merely felt that my orders had not been obeyed, that Martial Law was flouted, and that it was my duty to fire immediately by rifle.

Q.Before you dispersed the crowd, had the crowd taken any action at all?

A. No, Sir. They had run away, a few of them.

Q. Did they start to run away?

A.Yes. When I began to fire, the big mob in the centre began to run almost towards the right.

Q.Martial law had not been proclaimed. Before you took that step, which was a serious step, did you not consider as to the propriety of consulting the Deputy Commissioner who was the civil authority responsible for the order of the city?

A. There was no Deputy Commissioner to consult at the time. I did not think is wise to ask anybody further. I had to make up my mind immediately as to what my action should be. I considered it from the military point of view that I ought to fire immediately, that if I did not do so, I should fail in my duty. . . .

Q. In firing was it your object to disperse?

A. No, Sir. I was going to fire until they dispersed.

Q. Did the crowd at once start to disperse as soon as you fired?

A. Immediately.

Q. Did you continue firing?

A. Yes.

Q. After the crowd indicated that it was going to disperse, why did you not stop?

A.I thought it was my duty to go on until it dispersed. If I fired a little, I should be wrong in firing at all.

Then in reply to a variety of questions, General Dyer said he continued to fire for about 10 minutes, and that he had no "military experience to use similar methods of dispersing crowds"; "he could have dispersed them, perhaps even without firing". But he fired, because "they would all have come back and laughed at him and he would have made a fool of himself". His reasons for firing, he has given, in answer to another question, as follows :

I thought they were trying to assault me and my force suddenly. All these pointed that this was a widespread movement which was not confined to Amritsar alone, and that the situation was a wide military situation which was not confined to Amritsar.

The General had fired 1,650 rounds of ammunition. He admitted also that if he could have taken the armoured cars into the Bagh, he would have done so and opened fire with them, that he stopped shooting when he did because the ammunition had run out, and that the crowd was very dense. He had made no provision for aiding or removing the wounded. It was not then his duty to render aid. That was a medical question. As soon as the firing ceased he retired. From time to time, he "checked his fire and directed it upon place where the crowd was thickest", and that he did, not because they were not going fast, but because he (the General) "had made up his mind to punish them for having assembled".

We must now supply further details of the scene from the mouths of eyewitnesses. We have already adverted to Lala Girdhari Lal's statement. He happened to watch the scene from a house overlooking the Bagh.

I saw hundreds of persons killed on the spot. The worst part of the whole thing was that firing was directed towards the gates through which the

> people were running out. There were small outlets, 4 or 5 in all, and bullets actually rained over the people at all these gates, and. . . many got trampled under the feet of the rushing crowds and thus lost their lives. Blood was pouring in profusion. Even those who lay flat on the ground were shot. . . . No arrangements were made by the authorities to look after the dead or wounded. . . . I went round the whole place and saw almost every body lying there. There were heaps of them at different places. . . . The dead bodies were of grown-up people and young boys also. Some had their heads cut open, others had eyes short, and nose, chest, arms, or legs shattered. . . . I think there must have been over 1,000 dead bodies in the garden then. . . . I saw people were hurrying up and many had to leave their dead and wounded, because they were afraid of being fired upon again after 8 p.m. (Statement 1, pp. 10 & 11.)

It may be mentioned here that the second part of the proclamation made on the 13th April by the drum beat, reads :

> No person residing in the city is permitted to leave his house after 8. Any person found in the street after 8 is liable to be shot.

The witness further states :

> Many amongst the wounded, who managed to run from garden, succumbed to injuries on the way and lay dead in the streets. It was thus that the people of Amritsar held their *Baisakhi* fair.

In the matter of the death-roll, it is interesting to note that according to the Government's own showing, they did not commence investigating the figure before the 20th August, i.e., four months after the tragedy. Mr. Thompson then announced that not more than 290 had died. Now they have practically accepted the Sewa Samiti's[1] figures, viz., 500, which are based on actual tracing and represent the mini- mum. The exact figure will never be known, but, after careful investigation, we consider that Lala Girdhari Lal's computation of 1,000 is by no means an exaggerated calculation. They must have been indifferent shots if, after directing their fire in the thickest part in a concentrated area, and among 20,000 people, the soldiers were not able to kill 1,000 men. Let it further be remembered, the fire was directed even into and from the Hansli, the narrow lane to the right, on the plan . We observed bullet marks on a balcony opposite the lane; and evidence has been led before us to show that soldiers were posted

[1] Relief Association

at points outside the Bagh to guard approaches, and men were shot whilst they were effecting their escape through these approaches. There can be no doubt that General Dyer's plan was to kill the largest number, and if the number was 1,000 and not more, the fault was not his. His ammunition was exhausted, and he could not take his armoured cars through the passage, it being too narrow.

It is not possible to describe, in all the hideous detail, the events of the 13th, and to use Justice Rankin's expression, its "frightfulness". In order to appreciate it fully, one must read the whole of the official evidence and the evidence published by us. After the violence of the 10th April, the English official had become angry, and perhaps rightly so. The very men towards whom they were in the habit of showing courtesy now repelled them. Lala Dholan Das, a reputed resident of Amritsar, was one such man, but when he went at the request of the authorities to see them, he found them in an angry mood.

> All were in excited temper; so much that Mr. Seymour is reported to have said that for every one European life one thousand Indians would be sacrificed. Someone suggested bombarding of the town, and Lala Dholan Das informed the officers that if, in any way, any part of the Golden Temple was touched or damaged, there would be no end of trouble, as this temple was held sacred all over the Punjab. (Statement 1, p. 7.)

Mr. Muhammad Sadiq, Barrister, went with others to see the authorities regarding the disposal of the dead on the 11th April. He says :

> The impression I got from the talk I had with them was that, as Europeans had been murdered, their blood could not remain unavenged, and if there be the least resistance or disobedience or any breach of the peace, sufficient amount of force would be used and, if necessary, the city would be bombarded. (Statement 19.)

Dr. Balmokand, Sub Assistant Surgeon, says that on the 11th April, Col. Smith, the Civil Surgeon, remarked

> that General Dyer was coming and he would bombard the city. He drew diagrams and showed us how the city would be shelled and how it would be razed to the ground in half an hour. I said that I lived in the city, and what was to become of me if there was bombardment. He replied that I had better leave the city and live in the hospital if I wanted to save myself. (Statement 20, p. 56)

Thus we know why and how the "frightfulness" of the 13th April came about. A staggering blow had to be delivered. The idea of bombardment was evidently given up. The meeting of the 13th furnished a ready chance and General Dyer seized it. Mr. C. F. Andrews has called it a massacre, even like the Glencoe Massacre[1]. If there can be degrees in assessing values of inhumanities, we consider that the massacre of Glencoe was infinitely worse than the massacre of Jallianwala Bagh, but the standard of correctness exacted today was not the standard set in the military manuals of the days of the Glencoe Massacre. In our opinion even the people who heard the proclamation had not understood the significance or the meaning of the prohibitory part of it. Not a single man went to that meeting in open defiance of the proclamation. No provocation whatever was given to the military authorities and nothing, either in Amritsar or outside it, justified the massacre. It was a calculated act of inhumanity, and if the British Rule in India is to be purged of this inexcusable wrong, General Dyer must be immediately relieved of his command and brought to justice.

He has stated to Lord Hunter's Committee that Sir Michael O'Dwyer approved of his action. It is unthinkable to us that one, who was a trustee for the inhabitants of the Punjab, should have endorsed a crime against humanity. Even under Martial Law, *de facto* or *de jure*, certain canons of decency are obligatory on commanding officers. We venture to submit that General Dyer totally disregarded them. We regret that we do not, in any shape or from, desire to defend or minimize either the murders of Englishmen or incendiarism. We believe that they are indefensible, but no deeds, however dastardly, of an enraged mob can warrant a slaughter of innocent people such as General Dyer was guilty of.

The fourteenth of April was devoted by the people to clearing the dead or wounded, and burning or burying the dead. Permission had to be obtained for the purpose, and this was the laconic proclamation issued:

> The inhabitants may burn or bury their dead as soon as they please. There must be no demonstration of any kind.

In reply to Lord Hunter's questions as to the state of the city on the 14th, General Dyer said :

[1] In Scotland, in 1992 during the reign of William and Mary

> I went through the city to see if my orders had been carried out or not. I visited the pickets. All was quiet.

At about 2 p.m., a meeting of the local residents, municipal commissioners, magistrates and merchants was called at the *Kotwali*, whereat the Commissioner made the following speech :

> Do you people want peace or war? We are prepared in every way. The Government is all-powerful. *Sarkar* has conquered Germany and is capable of doing everything. The General will give orders today. The city is in his possession. I can do nothing. You will have to obey orders. (Statement I, p. 11.)

Mr. Kitchin, the Commissioner, then went away. General Dyer with Messrs Miles lrving, Rehill, Plomer and military guard, came about 5 p.m. He rushed into the room, followed by others, all exceedingly angry, and made a speech in Urdu. The following is the translation :

> You people know well that I am a sepoy and soldier. Do you want war or peace? If you wish for war the Government is prepared for it, and if you want peace, then obey my orders and open all your shops; else, I will shoot. For me the battle-field of France or Amritsar is the same. I am a military man and I will go straight. Neither shall I move to the right, no to the left. Speak up if you want war. In case there is to be peace, my order is to open all shops at once. You people talk against the Government, and persons educated in Germany and Bengal talk sedition. I shall report all these. Obey orders, I do not wish to have anything else. I have served in the Military for over 30 years. I understand the Indian sepoy and the Sikh people very well. You will have to observe peace; otherwise, the shops will be opened by force and by rifles. You must inform me of the badmashes. I will shoot them. Obey my orders and open shops. Speak up if you want war.

The General was followed by Mr. Miles Irving, the Deputy Commissioner. We cull two sentences from his speech :

> You have committed a bad act in killing the English. The revenge will be taken upon you and your children.

On the 15th, all the shops were opened. One would have thought that, with the retribution of the 13th, the speeches of the 14th and the opening of the shops, the ordinary civil rule would be resumed, but it was not to be. The revenge had not yet been fully taken. Martial Law was, therefore, proclaimed[1] and what was true in

[1] On April 15

fact became a fact in law. It remained in force up to the 9th June and the life or the people in Amritsar was made intolerable in a variety of ways :

1.The street in which Miss Sherwood was assaulted was set apart for flogging people and for making those who passed through it crawl on their bellies.

2.All were made to salaam, in theory English officers only, but in practice every Englishman, on pain of being arrested and suffering indignities.

3.Flogging was administered publicly and otherwise, even for trivialities.

4.All the lawyers of the town were made special constables without cause, and made to work like ordinary coolies.

5.Indiscriminate arrests were effected of persons, irrespective of status, and during detention, they were subjected to humiliations, discomforts and indescribable tortures for the purpose of extorting confession or evidence, or for the purpose of merely humiliating them.

6.Special Tribunals were formed for trying offences, which resulted in gross injustice in the name of law, leaving the aggrieved parties without a right of appeal.

We shall now deal with what is called the crawling order. The lane in which the crawling took place is a narrow and thickly populated place, with double-storey buildings on either side of it, and with numerous blind alleys shooting out of the lane and containing several houses. For the inhabitants of the lane, if they wanted to make any purchases or to go the city, there was no option but to pass through some part of it, and therefore to crawl in and out. Sanitary or medical service could only be rendered on condition of crawling. The full length to the lane in which the order was enforced is about 150 yards. In the middle of it will be seen, on the plan hereto attached,[1] an oblong marked “tiktiki”, which was the specially erected flogging-booth. The order rem-ained in force for 8 days. Although General Dyer has called it “going on all fours”, and it has been called “hand-and-knee order” by the Press, the process consisted in the persons lying flat on their bellies and crawling exactly like reptiles. Any lifting of the knees or bending thereof brought the rifle-butts on

[1] Not reproduced here

the backs of the persons who were made to crawl. The whole motion had therefore to be performed by movement of the belly and the arms. The lane, like most Indian lanes, is dirty and full of the usual rubbish, not excluding grit. It is worthy of note that the order was only given verbally and was withdrawn after orders from superior authorities. This is General Dyer's reason for the order :

> I felt women have been beaten. We look upon women as sacred. I searched in my brain for a suitable punishment for these awful cases. I did not know how to meet it. There was a little bit of accident in that. Now, when I visited the pickets, I went down and ordered a triangle to be erected. I felt the street ought to be looked upon as sacred; therefore, I posted pickets at both ends, and told them: "No Indians are to be allowed to pass along here." I then also said, "If they have to pass they must go on all fours." If never entered my brain that any sensible man, any sane man, would under the circumstances voluntarily go through that street.

The deliberateness or the depravity of the punishment cannot well be surpassed. Miss Sherwood was assaulted on the 10th and the order was promulgated on the 19th. It had to be obeyed by those who night never have seen Miss Sherwood. They might have, as the vast majority of the residents of Amritsar must have, deplored the cowardly assault on her. It was such men who had to undergo the punishment. It is difficult to characterize a mind that invents and takes pleasure in inflicting a punishment whose object is merely to degrade man's state. The pickets were posted from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m., so when Lord Hunter asked him what justification there was in passing an order which necessitated the inhabitants, lawfully residing, to crawl on all fours when they had to leave their houses, General Dyer replied : "They could leave at all other times," i.e., between the hours after 10 p.m. and before 6 a.m. (the hour 8 p.m. was changed to 10 p.m. on the 15th). The General forgot that another order operated against it, because nobody could be but after 10 p.m., and if he did, he was liable to be shot. Yet he was able to add in the same answer :

> I do not think it caused great inconvenience. If they had suffered a little, it would be no harm under Martial Law. They could get necessaries of life of life by other means. It could not be helped if they had to suffer a slight amount of inconvenience.

Lord Hunter said :

> You will admit, during the period of turmoil, it is a difficult thing for peaceful citizens to give assistance in quelling the disturbances. Is it not just

on that account that extreme remedy be confined to the mob, as distinguished from the law-abiding citizens?

General Dyer answered :

Yes, they were abstract law-abiding citizens, but I think on that occasion I only thought of punishing the wicked.

Q.But this street was not the street which was frequented by those who had beaten Miss Sherwood?

A.No, but I had erected a platform there in the middle of the street and thought, when I got these men who had beaten her, I would lash them down. I meant to lash them.

For a moment let us see what was actually done. Lala Ishwar Das is an assistant in a big firm in Amritsar. He had gone to Lala Labh Chand's house, marked on the plan, on the 18th April. Suddenly Mr. Plomer came with the military into the street. L. Ishwar Das and his friends were looking from a window. Mr. Plomer struck his hunting crop at them and asked them all to stand up and salaam. Mr. Labh Chand was asked to vacate a portion of his house for the accommodation of the military. This witness says :

At about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, Ishar Das, Panna Lal, Mela Ram and I wanted to go home, but were refused permission by the police. We asked permission again, but it was given on condition that we would pass the street by crawling. So all of us had to pass out the street by crawling on our bellies. We could not go to our houses by any other road. (Statement 104, p. 163.)

It is to be observed that this was the first day of the order which had not been promulgated, whether by word of mouth or in writing. It became known only as it was being enforced.

Another witness, Lala Megha Mal, is a cloth merchant, who says:

My house is in Kutcha Kurichan (an alley from the crawling lane) and my shop is in Guru Bazaar. On the very first day soldiers were posted in Kutcha Kurichan; I was stopped by the soldiers when I was returning home at about 5 p.m., and I was ordered to creep on my belly. I however ran away, and kept away till after the soldiers had left. That day I came home at 9 p.m. and found my wife laid up with fever. There was no water in the house to be given to her, and no doctor and no medicine. I had to fetch water myself late in the night. For the seven days following, my wife had to be without any treatment, as no doctor like to creep on his belly. (Statement 114.)

In this lane is a Jain Sabha Mandir where some sadhus live. Lala Rallya Ram, opium contractor, has a house near the Mandir. As he

was going to his shop, he was compelled to crawl. He says :

> While I was crawling, they kicked me with their boots and also gave me blows with the butt-ends of their rifles. That day I did not go back home to take my food. . . . For full 8 days, not a single sweeper appeared; so the refuse of the house was never removed, nor were the latrines cleaned. The water-carrier, too, was throughout absent. . . . we could neither get vegetables nor other eatables. (Statement 102.)

Lala Ganpat Rai of the Jain Mandir, living in the lane, says :

> Even those who had to attend the temple in the street for the purpose of worship, were made to crawl in the same way. (Statement 122.)

Lala Devi Das, Banker, was ordered to crawl on his belly. He offered to go back to his house, but he was forced to crawl. He says :

> I tried to go on my hands and knees at first, but I was threatened with a bayonet, and had to creep on my belly. (Statement 99.)

Kahan Chand has been blind for the last 20 years. He was made to crawl and was kicked. (Statement 105.)

Abdulla, teacher by profession, had to crawl and whilst he was taking rest in the way, he was kicked and struck with the butt-end of a rifle. His body was scratched all over on account of his being a stout man. (Statement 106.)

Whilst the crawling was being enforced, sacred pigeons and other birds were shot. The *Pinjarapole*, a sacred house for the care of animals, which was just at one end of the lane, was defiled. The wells in the lanes were polluted by the soldiers easing themselves near them. (Statement 121.)

The official testimony is that 50 persons were subjected to the barbarous and inhuman process of crawling.

Those who have not undergone the degradation of compulsory salaaming, can hardly realize the intensity of pain and humiliation caused to one who has actually undergone it. We, who have heard the description given to us by those who were made to salaam, are able only somewhat to realize what it must have meant to them. The salaaming order, made applicable to the city containing a population of 160,000 souls, was not a small thing and it meant standing and performing fixed movements with the right arm. No wonder there are witnesses who state that they were arrested for not salaaming in the proper manner. Nor did the effect of the order end with exacting the

particular manner of salaam. The defaulters had to undergo punishment in a variety of ways.

Lala Har Gopal Khanna, B.A., was, on the 18th of April, passing through a street with some friends. He saw some policemen on horseback followed by General Dyer, who beckoned to him. On reaching there, Lala Har Gopal saluted in the military fashion, whereupon he was told that he did not know how to salaam and was told to present himself, the next day, in the Ram Bagh garden. He took leave of the General with a salute and asked Mr. Plomer, City Superintendent of Police, where he had to present himself in the Ram Bagh. Mr. Plomer immediately ordered a constable to take him to the Kotwal Sahib. On being taken, he was made to squat, along with 2 or 3 ther men, on the damp floor. By 7 p.m., more men joined them. Then they were marched in pairs to the *Kotwali,* At the *Kotwali,* they had to pass the night sitting or lying in the open. A Gurkha guard was placed upon them. At 8.30, next morning, they were taken to the Ram Bagh, where they were all kept standing in the sun, until a military havildar (sergeant) taught them how to salaam. They were then let off. (Statement 95 and Statement 96.) Mian Firoz Din, an Hony. Magistrate, says :

> People used to be whipped for not standing up whilst salaaming the General and Mr. Plomer. Those, who did not salaam were at times arrested. I saw a few cases of such whipping and of such arrests myself. The people were so terrified that many had to keep standing practically the whole day to prevent any mistake on their part and to avoid any such punishment. I say "practically" because they had to stand up every time they heard the sound of a motor-car. I myself did so. (Statement 2.)

Flogging, in so far as it was in public, was not only humiliating but it was torturing, and, save for the official evidence given, it is difficult to know why flogging was administered at all. Official evidence shows that flogging was administered for the so-called breach of fort discipline, and, as to those who were suspected of assaulting Miss Sherwood, General Dyer had admitted that he wanted to lash them in the crawling lane. Thus six boys were flogged on the booth, marked in the plan. Each of them was fastened to the *tiktiki* (triangle) and given 30 stripes. One of them, Sundar Singh,

> became senseless, after the 4th stripe, but after some water was poured into his mouth by a soldier, he regained consciousness. Flogging was then resumed.

> He lost his consciousness for the second time, but the flogging never ceased till he was given 30 stripes. He was taken off the flogging-post bleeding and quite unconscious.

The other boys were similarly treated, and the majority of them became unconscious while they were being flogged.

> They were all handcuffed and as they could not walk even a few paces, they were dragged by the police. They were then taken to the fort. (Statement 115, Statement 117 and Statement 118.)

General Dyer in his evidence has said that the lawyer constables did useful service and Mr. Kitchin has said that they rather liked it. Let us see what the lawyers themselves have to say about their appointment and the nature of the services they had to render. We have already referred to Lala Kanhya Lal. He is the oldest lawyer of Amritsar. Even he did not escape the distinction. He says :

> I have to add that, along with all the members of the local Bar, I was compelled to act as a special constable. This appointment was made on the 22nd of April, when there was absolutely no necessity for such appointment for the maintenance of peace and order in the city. The police force was quite sufficient for the purpose and, as a matter of fact, the city was quiet on those days. In my old age, I was made to work like a coolie, carrying tables and chairs from one place to another, and to patrol the city in the hot sun. The abuse which was showered upon us, and the indignities to which we were put, added a great deal to our sufferings. I cannot believe that our appointment was necessary for the maintenance of peace and order. The order was meant to punish us. The local Bar takes part in public affairs and took a prominent part in the Rowlatt Act agitation; that is why the whole Bar was punished in this way. (Statement 29.)

Lala Balmokand Bhatia, High Court Vakil, Municipal Commissioner, describing the ceremony of appointing special constables, says, that they were made to sit on the ground, and

> it was then that we were called upon to witness 2 citizens being flogged after being tied to the post. We were specially ordered to see this scene. In the evening, all the members of the Bar were made to stand in a line.
>
> Lieut. Newman was placed in charge. He threatened one of them with kicking. They were to report themselves thrice a day and patrol the city for the rest of the day. Mr. Bhatia says :

In other words, we had to keep ourselves in attendance the whole day, either in the garden or in the city. We were constantly reminded that we were mere constables and the punishment for any neglect was not only flogging or imprisonment, but also death. We were made to do the work of coolies, by being ordered to take tables and chairs in the presence of many people, who held us in respect, although there were orderlies and other servants enough for such work.

They were particularly taught how to salaam. They were discharged on the 12th May. He too agrees with Lala Kanhya Lal that the idea was to punish the members of the Bar. (Statement 91.)

Pandit Rajendra Misra and other lawyers support the foregoing allegations and say that they were thus insulted and illtreated, although they had helped the authorities. (Statement 94.)

Altogether, ninety-three lawyers were humiliated in this manner, not to mention the pecuniary loss they had unnecessarily to sustain by reason of being deprived of their ordinary vocation.

Perhaps, the wholesale arrests that took place during the Martial Law period, and the treatment meted out during the confinement, was the most harassing form of punishment from which, at the time the arrests were going on, no citizen considered himself to be safe.

Lala Girdhari Lal says :

The police began to arrest people from 12th April, as far as I remember. There was no break after that, and people in every sphere of life were arrested from day to day, while employed peacefully in their occupations. No charge was stated.

They were then handcuffed at once and put into the lock-up, for days and months, without being informed what they were accused of, and no opportunity was ever allowed them to see or consult friends or relations. When Mr. Badrul Islam Ali Khan was arrested, the impression created in the public mind was that all connected with the Congress move- ment in the city would suffer likewise. Lala Girdhari Lal had left Amritsar on the 7th of April and returned on the 11th, leaving a relation very ill at Cawnpore. He wanted therefore to go back to Cawnpore. After much difficulty, he was able to procure a pass, permitting him to leave Amritsar. He left on the 21st April by the Calcutta Mail. On the Beas River Bridge, the train was stopped and all the Indian passen- gers' luggage was minutely searched. He heard after some time that he was wanted by the authorities at Amritsar. He presented himself to the Superintendent of Police at Cawnpore, who

treated him courte-ously and sent him under escort to Amritsar. He had a newspaper in his hand, as permission had been given to him by the Sub-Inspector who was in charge. This was too much for the Amritsar Superintendent; but the Sub-Inspector quietly told him that he had allowed Lala Girdhari Lal to buy the newspaper, as there was no instruction from his chief to restrict the liberty of his charge in such a manner. Lala Girdhari Lal was at once handcuffed, and, upon his enquiring why he was arrested, no reply was returned. He had nothing to eat since 11 o'clock on 22-4-'19 till the next day at 8 a.m. He was locked up in a small room with 10 or 11 persons in it. In a corner of the room was an evil-smelling chamber-pot. The next morning they were allowed out for a few minutes for the necessary purposes of life and were shut up again. They were allowed neither to bathe nor to change clothes, and it was with diffliculty that they were able to obtain water, when there was a charitably disposed constable near by. The month of May is about the hottest month of the year and the discomfort of being in a stuffy and crowded little room can be easily imagined. He was taken before some officials in due course. One of them made insulting and offensive remarks about him. On the 24th May, he was removed from the lock-up to the Subsidiary Jail. The food given was"unfit for human consumption". On the 27th May, he and his companions were taken to Lahore, handcuffed in pairs. No one was allowed to come near them. Those who dared to talk to them were straightway arrested. They had to walk from the Lahore Railway Station to the court—a distance of about 2 miles. The Inspector of police prevented them from having water to drink on the way. On reaching the court they had to wait outside the court all day long. They were then taken to the Central Jail, where each one was locked up in an iron cage, about 7 by 2, and 4 feet high. The bathing arrangement was most filthy. A small drain, used for all sorts of purposes, was pointed out for the purpose. On the 27th, only a few, whose relatives had paid for them, were removed to slightly better rooms and could get somewhat better food, and it was only here that permission was granted to change clothes. On the 28th May, they were transferred to the Borstal Jail. On the 3rd June, some of the Amritsar prisoners were sent up for trial. Some others were asked, without knowing the nature of charges against them, to cite their witnesses. Lala Girdhari Lal was released, on the 6th June, with-out any trial and with-out ever knowing why he had been arrested at all. Thus one of the leaders of Amritsar, not unknown to the

authorities, was arrested and detained for over a fortnight and treated worse even than a common felon, for every prisoner under trial is entitled to see his relations, certainly his legal advisers, and receive what food he likes. Mian Firoz Din, an Hony. Magistrate of 21 years' standing and a *rais*[1] of Amritsar, says that, whilst the most respectable men of Amritsar were being harassed and molested, the well-known badmashes were left practically untouched. (Statement 2.)

Mr. Maqbool Mahomood, High Court Vakil, who, at the risk of his life, it will be remembered, tried, on the 10th April, to turn away the crowd near the bridge, was later on arrested by a Sub-Inspector, was taken to the police station and was prompted [*sic*] to say :"I could and would identify the murderers of Robinson and Rowland." [He says :]

> I informed the police that I had already sent a written statement to them and that I had stated that I could not recognize anybody. This statement was then brought to me and I was then asked to tear it off with my own hands and to submit a fresh statement giving the names of those whom they had found out as culprits. I refused to comply with the demand and some threats were flung at me. However, I was subsequently allowed to leave.

He was then cited as a defence witness. Sardar Sukha Singh told him that many people had refused to give evidence for the defence and that he should do likewise. He said he had his own conscience, to which Sardar Sukha Singh replied that in those days"nobody had a conscience and those that had, suffered." He added that he would see that his pleader's licence was cancelled and further that he got into trouble. (Statement 5.)

On the 20th April, Dr. Kidar Nath Bhandari, Senior Assistant Surgeon, age 62, was asked by Sardar Sukha Singh to name anyone of the mob that had gone to attack Mrs. Easdon on the 10th April. Dr. Kidar Nath told him that he could not do so. Upon this, Sardar Sukha Singh, Mr. Plomer and Mr. Marshall shouted out,"Oh! you don't help the Government; you will also be arrested!" To this the Doctor replied,"I cannot name anybody whom I had not seen and you can do what you like." There-upon, Sardar Sukha Singh told the Doctor that he had orders to arrest him and that he should consider himself under arrest. He was not shown the orders, but was sent to the lock-up, together with his assistant. Both of them were kept in the lock-up

[1] Man of property

till the 27th April, on which date they were removed to the Subsidiary Jail. It meant a walk of about a mile and as he had heart trouble he asked for a conveyance. He added also that his being paraded and handcuffed with others through the bazaar would shock him. He was nevertheless made to walk to the jail, together with 62 other prisoners. He says :

> As it was very hot, I fainted when I reached the jail, but recovered soon, owing to the kindness of a policeman, who kindly gave me a little water to drink.

He was locked up in a cell and given bread which he could not eat. The request of a friend to supply him with food from outside was refused; and so was also the request to change his clothes,"which were stinking and full of lice". On the 2nd May, the Deputy Commissioner went to the jail and the Doctor asked him why he was being detained. The answer was there was nothing against him except that he had not tried to save the life of Mrs. Easdon, when she was attacked by the mob. The Doctor tried to reason that it was not possible for him to do so, because he did not know when the mob went to her, but it was of no avail. He and his assistant were, however, released on the 12th May, without knowing any definite charges against them. Whilst he was at the *Kotwali* lock-up, between 20th and 27th April, someone went to him twice and said :

> You are suffering for nothing. If you mention a few names who were in the mob, you will be released at once. (Statement 13.)

Mr. Mohammad Amin, a pleader, is the father of Mohammad Akram, who was sentenced to death—a sentence which was subsequently commuted to 5 years' rigorous imprisonment, in connection with the attempt to assault Mrs. Easdon. He claims personal friendship with Mrs. Eadson, and in his statement attached hereto, he contends that his son, who looked up to Mrs. Easdon as his mother, was totally innocent. On the 20th April, he, with his son and brother, was arrested and taken to the *Kotwali*. He says :

> I was taken by a constable to the door of the *havalat*[1]. A small room as it was, it contained not less than 30 unfortunate men. It was a horrible sight to see them stretching their arms out of the iron bars and praying for a drink of water. I was going to faint at the sight. I said to a policeman,"I have no objection to going in, but I must tell you that I shall not be able to live there

[1] Lock-up

for a quarter of an hour." He went to the Inspector and shortly after came back and took me to another room, where I found Dr. Bashir and Mr. Badrul Islam Ali Khan, Barrister-at-Law. From this room they took out some persons and put us, 6 newcomers, in their place. Never in my life have I ever seen a dirty place like this. Most of us kept sitting all through the night. We prayed that we might be allowed food from our houses for that one evening only, but it was refused. We asked for coverings, but they too were denied to us. After a short time, a policeman came to Gama and in our presence said,"Why do you put your life in danger? Name 4 or 5 men with whom you have some enmity, we shall make you a witness." Gama said,"I have no enemy to name." The policeman went away, but after a few minutes he reappeared and said to him,"Look here, name Qayam, and as to others say what you please." We got extremely frightened at the way the police were fabricating false evidence, and thought that we were not safe.

The witness describes the condition in the jail. They were kept handcuffed in their cells in pairs and thus led even to the latrines. They begged for the removal of the handcuffs whilst they were actually in the latrines but it was no use. They were compelled to walk round and round in the hot sun—we imagine for exercise? They were given no food for 36 hours and they were made to sleep on the bare floor. The handcuffs were at a later stage removed.

The food which we were expected to take was a little heap of gram in one corner and a bucket of drinking water in the other, while near by was a tinpot for passing water. We could not take that food and kept hungry for another day.

The things improved the next day. They were allowed to have their own food and a change of clothes. Thus they remained at the fort for 22 days. On the 12th of May, they were taken to Lahore to stand their trial. They were 52 men chained together. In Lahore, they were made to sit out the whole day without drink or food. They had to walk from the Lahore station to the court and from the court to the Central Jail in the burning sun. He and his brother were discharged on the 27th of May. (Statement 14.)

Mrs. Nelly Benjamin, Sub-Assistant Surgeon, is a friend of Mrs. Easdon. She was the one who screened her from assault. She says :

When the enquiry was going on, I was taken to the *Kotwali* on two occasions; I was asked to say that I had seen Mohammad Amin in the crowd. As I said that was not the truth, Mr. Plomer threatened to send me to jail. I

told them whatever I knew but I refused to give false evidence. They also tempted me with a reward from the Government, if I supported the story of Mrs. Easdon regarding the presence of Mohammad Amin. I refused again. (Statement 16.)

Seth Gul Mohammad, a glassware merchant, was arrested on the 20th April whilst he was offering prayer, and taken to the *Kotwali*. He was asked to give false evidence. Inspector Jawaharlal caught hold of his beard and slapped him so hard that it made him reel for a while. He then asked him to state,"Doctors Satyapal and Kitchlew had instigated me to bring about the hartal on the 6th and that they had encouraged me by saying that they would use bombs to drive out the English from the country." The witness refused. The officer then asked his underlings to take him aside and make him"all right". He was then taken away a few paces from the officers' table and asked by a number of constables to please Jawaharlal by doing what he wanted. He still refused. So they caught hold of his hand and placed it under the leg of a cot, over which eight constables sat."When the pain became unbearable," the witness proceeds,"I cried out, 'leave my hand, I will do whatever you ask me to do.'" He was then taken to Jawaharlal again. But he again refused to implicate the Doctors. He was therefore kept confined in a room that day. During the following days he was beaten, slapped and caned. He was told that he would be made an accused and hanged. This beating went on for eight days. On the eighth day he again agreed to make the desired statement. He was then taken to Aga Ibrahim, the Magistrate, before whom he repeated the same"untrue statement", that was required of him. Hans Raj, the approver, who was in the *Kotwali*, advised him to do as the police asked. After ten days' detention he was let off, on the condition that he appeared at the *Kotwali* from day to day, which he did up to the 9th of June, when he was taken to Lahore. On the 16th of June, he was produced before the Martial Law Tribunal, where he made a clean breast of the whole thing and told the Judges that he was tortured. (Statement 21.)

Brijlal, a boy 14 years old, was kept under custody for 9 days. After two days he was made over to Hans Raj and was induced to make a false statement before the Martial Law Tribunal, which he retracts in the evidence before us. (Statement 22.)

Sardar Atma Singh, wine merchant, was arrested in front of General Dyer on the 13th April. He was made to walk with the

procession and, he adds,"They tied a cloth round one of my arms and dragged me along with them through several streets of the city." He was prevented by a British soldier from getting some water to drink. Some others were arre-sted also during the day, and nine of them were handcuffed and confined in a cell without food. On the 15th, they were taken before the General and were all tied to a tree,"constantly abused and laughed at". After the General had finished his lunch, they were produced before him. Then Sardar Atma Singh was sentenced to 8 days' quarter-guard. He was never told what the charge against him was. During his incarceration, he was relieved by a sergeant of his gold ring and a West End hunting watch bearing his name. (Statement 30.)

Muhammad Ismail, butcher, was arrested about the 18th April. His father was also arrested and both were beaten and were released only after his brother Dina was produced. Dina himself was detained for 3 days, and is said to have been mercilessly beaten. (Statement 46.)

Abdul Aziz, vegetable seller, was arrested for having sworn at a *khansama*[1], which he denied. He was taken before the General, was kept in the lock-up for two days, was given ten stripes and was ordered to close his shop for 14 days. (Statement 123.)

Lala Raliaram, pensioner, 58 years old, was asked by a Sub-Inspector to give the names of those who had beaten Miss Sherwood. He replied that he knew nothing, as he was not present. Whereupon, he was beaten with a cane, his beard was pulled and he was made to walk up and down the lane and set free in the evening. (Statement 107.)

Lala Dadu Mal was beaten and made to crawl. He and his son were arrested, and he was discharged and rearrested and at last let off, after he had paid one hundred rupees to the headman of the bazaar for the police. He was rearrested and was compelled to pay fifty rupees more and purchase his release. The police used to go to his shop and forcibly take away cream, etc., for their use. His son was detained for 8 days and was then given 30 stripes, although, during the process, he became unconscious. He witnessed others also being flogged. He says,"These men shrieked with pain and were all bleeding." (Statement 116.)

[1] Cook-bearer, usually employed by Europeans in India

Lala Rakharam saw Dhaniram who was made to sit down and catch hold of his ears after passing his hands under his legs. (Statement 108.)

Gholam Qadir Toopgar was arrested during the third week of April by Sub-Inspector Amir Khan. He was asked to point out the looted property, and he was beaten severely when he pleaded ignorance. He was asked to give the names of certain persons as members of the mob that had burnt and looted the Bhagtanwala Railway Station. His turban was taken off, his hands were tied with it and he was suspended from a tree for about 10 minutes. He saw 8 or 9 men, besides himself, being subjected to torture.

He says :

> I saw Peera Gujar lying flat on the ground and a havildar, whom I know by face, pushed a stick into his anus in the presence of Sub-Inspector Amir Khan. He cried piteously all the time, but the police showed no mercy. For full 3 days and nights we were not allowed any food, during which period we were subjected to police torture. I was released after 5 days. (Statement 141.)

Miraj Din, barber, generally supports the above statement, he himself sharing the same fate as Gholam Qadir. (Statement 142.)

Gholam Jilani, an Imam (leader at prayer) of a masjid and deed-writer, is perhaps the worst case of torture we have come across. He took a prominent part in organizing the *Ramnaumi* festival. He was arrested on the 16th April. The statement contains such a wealth of detail that it must be read *in toto* in order to appreciate the measure of torture that the Imam had to undergo. (Statement 134.) Mian Firoz Din, Hony. Magistrate (Statement 2) and Mr. Gholam Yaseen, Barrister (Statement 6) support what is stated about his treatment by the witness. Mohammad Shafi (Statement 139) saw some of the tortures that Gholam Jilani was subjected to and heard his piteous cries. He says that, on the same day, one Khair Din was similarly treated, his condition became so bad that he never recovered from the injuries he had received. (Statement 139.) Mian Quamar Uddin Khan, landlord and proprietor, says Maulvi Gholam Jilani met him immediately after his release. He saw the injuries which were received by him and that the story that he related to him then is the same as he has given before us. (Statement 140.) Gholam Mohammad witnessed the torture on him and on Khair Din, who, he says, died a few days ago of the injuries. (Statement 138.) Haji Shamsuddin, landlord and zemindar, also witnessed the tortures administered to Maulvi Gholam

Jilani and late Khair Din. The Haji was called by the police. He says,

> They drove a stick into his anus. Also, he was in a most pitiable condition. I saw his urine and excreta coming out. All of us, who were outside, were told by the police that those who did not give evidence would be treated like that. (Statement 135.)

Witnesses 136-137 also corroborate the statement about the torture to which both Jilani and Khair Din were subjected. Malik Abdul Hai, merchant of pashmina, on receipt of a telegram from the Superintendent of Police, went from Lahore to Amritsar about the 15th of May and, there, he was given over to Inspector Jawaharlal, who tempted him with reward by increment in his pay if he would give false evidence against Dr. Kitchlew. When he refused, he was threatened that he would be included amongst the accused. When all the threats and persuasions failed, he was taken to a room and thrashed "mercilessly". Being frightened, he eventually yielded. His statement was taken down and he was summoned before the Martial Law Court. He proceeds :

> I made up my mind to tell the truth. . . I submitted before the judges how I had been harassed by the police to give false evidence. When I had finished my deposition I came out. The Naib Court arrested me and was about to lead me to the police room when I screamed out. There upon, a few barristers who were then present in the Court in connection with the case, among whom were Mukand Lal Puri and Mr. Hasan and others, came on the scene . . . Having freed myself from the grip of the Naib Court I immediately told the judges the whole story. The presiding judge ordered me to proceed home by another route. (Statement 148.)

Mr. Badrul Islam Ali Khan, Barrister-at-Law, was arrested on the 19th April. The police walked into his wife's bedroom and when she asked them to go outside they refused to do so. He was taken to the *Kotwali*, where Mr. Plomer said in a loud voice,"This is the man who wants to be the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab." He recites how he was pressed to give evidence. He describes the condition of the cell in which he and the fellow prisoners were locked up, how they were subjected to humiliation, and discusses the charges that were brought against him, before he was finally discharged. He concludes :

> There was an attempt made by the police to manufacture evidence against me by torturing a man named Gholam Jilani, who admitted the fact in his evidence before the Martial Law Commission, in the course of my trial. Thus it was that I was arrested and kept in custody for a period of two months and a half and

tried for my life. (Statement 88.)

Mr. Gurdial Singh Salaria, Bar-at-Law, was also arrested. He was one of those who, in common with others, at the peril of his life, tried to go, on the 10th April, to push the crowd back from the bridge. He describes also the indignities he had to suffer. He remained in custody from the 23rd of May to the 5th of July. (Statement 87.)

The paragraphs we have devoted to indiscriminate arrests and tortures for the purpose of extorting evidence, furnish perhaps the blackest chapter in the whole of the story of the cruelties perpetrated in the name of Martial Law. The tragedy of Jallianwala Bagh was staggering for its dramatic effect. But the slow torture of the arrests was felt not only by those who suffered but by those also who were always in fear of being arrested, for, from the evidence collected by us it is clear that there was no method about these arrests. All classes and conditions of people came in for this treatment. Nobody had a feeling of safety. We wish, too, to add that we have been most careful in the collection of the evidence on this head. We were incredulous when we entered upon the inquiry, but as statement after statement came under our notice, we were driven to accept the general charge. The most damaging statements are so fully supported that, in our opinion, they will stand the test of investigation in any court of low.

We would here add that we had copious evidence about bribes having been freely taken by the police. But we have refrained from tak-ing evidence on this point from Amritsar, because the witnesses, whilst they gave us their confidence, were unwilling to disclose their names. If the Government wish to know the truth about this class of corruption, we suggest the holding of an inquiry, with a promise of protection to those who would come forward to give their evidence. We are sure that the Government have no desire to screen offenders of this class and we feel equally sure that, by adopting the course suggested by us, they will clean the police department of its worst features. The evidence of torture, too, challenges inquiry. It is there before the Government. They cannot ignore evidence given with the detail that characterizes it.

Not much need now be said to show that where there was an orga-nized attempt made to procure false evidence, there must have been seri-ous and extensive abortion of justice during the trials that took place, whether before the Martial Law Commissions, the Summary Courts, or Area Officers. It may not be amiss to describe

the constitution of these courts. The Martial Law Commissions were composed of 3 members, clothed with summary jurisdiction and possessing the power to inflict death sentences. They were not bound to record any evidence, and their judgments were unappealable. The Summary Courts, on the other hand, contained only one member, usually a Magistrate, and they became the courts of inferior jurisdiction, having power to award imprisonment up to two years and to impose fines up to Rs. 1,000. Their judgments also were final and unappealable to any superior court. We have examined the published records of the trials before these courts and the statistics published by the Government, and we have come to the conclusion that the majority of the convictions are wholly bad. In the Amritsar district, according to the statistical abstract, 188 were tried before the Martial Law Commissions, of whom 3 were acquitted. Before the Summary Courts and Area Officers, 173 were tried, and 32 acquitted, discharged or released.

In view of the Royal Proclamation[1] and the release of the majority of the prisoners convicted[2] by the tribunals mentioned by us, it is unnecessary to go into the details of these trials. But it may be mentioned that cases involving transportation for life with forfeiture of property as the minimum penalty were based on such charges as organizing the hartal or making speeches on the Rowlatt Act. Leading men were charged with serious offences on no better evidence than that of an approver. We hope, however, to discuss the Martial Law Commission trials a little more fully in our discussion of the Lahore events. We shall close our examination of the Amritsar events with the remark that the authorities committed a criminal blunder in secretly deporting Doctors Kitchlew and Satyapal; that there was at least undue haste in firing; that, had they acted with tact and consideration, then, in spite of the deportation, the mob excesses would have been prevented; that the excesses were, in any event, deplorable and deserving of condemnation; that the massacre in the Jallianwala Bagh was an act of inhumanity and vengeance, unwarranted by anything that then existed or has since transpired; that, on General Dyer's own showing, the introduction of Martial Law in Amritsar was not justified by any local causes and that its prolongation was a wanton abuse of authority, and its administration unworthy of a civilized government.

[1] Issued on December 23, 1919

[2] Nearly 1,800 persons were convicted during the Punjab disturbances.

TARN TARAN

Tarn Taran is a part of the Amritsar District and a railway station. It is 16 miles from Amritsar and a Sikh centre, next only to Amritsar in importance. It was alleged by the Police Sub-Inspector that there was an attempt to loot the treasury. The evidence in our possession shows that the charge was a pure fabrication; yet a large number of persons was convicted of that charge by a Summary Court.

LAHORE CITY

In point of political importance, Lahore is the first city in the Punjab, being its capital and the seat of the Government. We have, however, treated Amritsar first, as, apart from its great importance as the Sikh stronghold, it was there that the disorder arose, and it was there that the policy of the Government was determined. Lahore is a big railway junction for Peshawar, Calcutta, Karachi and Bombay. The distance between Lahore and Delhi is 298 miles. The population of Lahore, excluding that of the Cantonment, is about 250,000 of which the Mohammedan element is preponderant, Hindus being nearly a third of the Mohammedans.

Lahore has ten colleges for boys and two for girls, and numerous high schools for boys and girls. It is also the seat of the Punjab University. It has two English dailies; one conducted in the interests generally of the bureaucracy and European commerce; the other devoted to Indian national interests. It has several dailies and weeklies in the vernaculars. Lahore, therefore, of all the places in the Punjab, possesses the largest number of the literate classes and is the best supplied in the Punjab with news from day to day. The Punjab has been noted and even congratulated by Sir Michael O'Dwyer on its comparative indifference to Indian politics, but, of late, it had begun to organize political life, and Lahore was leading the way. This awakening was strengthened by Sir Michael O'Dwyer's speech in the Council at the threshold of his career, already referred to. Moreover, the Punjab shared in common with the rest of India the increase in political activity consequent upon the introduction of the Rowlatt legislation and Lahore led the way in the Punjab. When Mr. Gandhi announced his satyagraha declaration, the leaders in the Punjab were and remained, up to the last moment, undecided as to its acceptance, and no one seemed actually to have taken the Satyagraha Pledge, certainly none in Lahore. But fasting and hartal stood on a different footing. Their observance required no pledge and no continuity of

action. But, even on this point, the leaders do not appear to have been sure of their ground, nor did they know what response the populace would make to Mr. Gandhi's call. They decided to publish and distribute his letter with reference to it. As soon as the Government came to know that there was to be hartal, they became panicky. On the 4th of April, a police notice was issued in Lahore, prohibiting processions and meetings without previous permission. On the 5th, the leaders were invited by the Deputy Commissioner to meet him. Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari and other leaders have described in their statements the whole of that interview and the subsequent events. At that meeting, the leaders went so far as to say that if the Government did not want them to hold the meeting contemplated by them, they would abandon it, but the Deputy Commissioner was satisfied with the following terms, namely :

(a) All may endeavour, up to the evening of the 5th, to convince the citizens either for or against the hartal.

(b) On the 6th, there should be no canvassing one way or the other.

(c) The meeting may take place, but there should be no inflammatory speech-making.

The 6th broke upon Lahore with an absolutely complete hartal such as had never been seen before. Thousands, including women and children, observed the hartal, and people went to the river to bathe and on their return they formed themselves into a procession. Strictly speaking, this was in breach of the police notice we have referred to. The procession, however, was perfectly orderly. The police wisely refrained from any interference, but when the procession went towards the Mall, they would not allow it to proceed any further than the Post Office. They obtained the services of the leaders for turning the processionists back. Lala Duni Chand[1] and Dr. Gokal Chand Narang[2] came to their assistance and succeeded in preventing the processionists from going up the Mall.

There is, however, a slight indication of what was troubling Sir Michael O'Dwyer. It is said that he had been saying in the course of conversations that there would be no hartal in the Punjab, but he was painfully surprised to see a complete hartal even in the capital city,

[1] A popular Municipal Commissioner of Lahore

[2] A prominent barrister and leader of Lahore; on this occasion he mounted a horse and led the procession back to the city.

and he is further reported to have remarked that he would make the leaders pay for the crime of having brought about such a complete hartal.

In the afternoon, there was a meeting at the Bradlaugh Hall. It was attended by thousands of people. Such a meeting Lahore had never seen before. Sir M. O'Dwyer had specially deputed the Superintendent of the Criminal Investigation Department to attend this meeting. The speeches made at the meeting were fully reported; we have seen them. While they were assertive in tone and insistent on the people's right to have the Rowlatt legislation repealed, there was nothing seditious in them, and certainly nothing that could in any shape or form be interpreted to mean an incitement to violence. Nothing happened on the 7th and 8th.

The 9th of April, the *Ramnaumi* day, was observed as in Amritsar. The people gave themselves up to rejoicings and utilized the day for Hindus and Mohammedans to fraternize with each other. What was therefore a purely religious function has been happily, of late years, turned into also a national celebration. There were officials with the procession. They were cheered wherever their presence was noticed.

Thus, everything was quiet up to the 10th. Not so, however, Sir Michael O'Dwyer. He knew that Mr. Gandhi was invited by Dr. Satyapal to visit Amritsar and to explain his doctrine of satyagraha. He knew, too, that, in response to that invitation and that of Sannyasi Swami Shraddhanand, Mr. Gandhi was to visit Delhi and had left Bombay for Delhi on the 8th April. He could not brook it, and after receiving permission from the Viceroy, he stopped Mr. Gandhi's entry into the Punjab, and had him arrested at the first station[1] inside the Punjab border and sent him back to the Bombay Presidency wherein he was interned. The news of Mr. Gandhi's arrest and internment was received in Lahore on the 10th, through its publication in *The Civil and Military Gazette*, and, without any organization or effort, there was an immediate closing of shops. By 4 o'clock, all business was suspended. Some of the citizens formed a procession and began marching towards the Mall. By the time they reached Anarkali, it had become a big procession, but as the police had prevented the procession of the 6th April from going up the Mall, the majority stopped near the Forman Christian College, but about 3 to 4

[1] Palwal, between Mathura and Delhi

hundred persons, including students, decided to march up the Mall with the intention of proceeding to the Government House, to ask for Mr. Gandhi's release. As soon as this was known, a party of police came out, passed by the crowd from behind, wheeled round and, facing it, stopped its march near the O'Dwyer Soldiers' Club. The crowd, however, would not listen to the police. Order to fire was given; 2 to 3 lives were lost, more were wounded. The crowd retired back. The dead and the wounded were taken away by the police. Assistance of doctors who were passing by was refused. The crowd, thus broken up, was pushed back slowly by the police all the way through the Anarkali till very near the Lohari gate. The police wanted to disperse the crowd at this point also. They parleyed for over half an hour, as stated by Mr. Broadway, the Superintendent of Police, before the Hunter Committee. Meanwhile, Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari, who was informed at his house, which is situated outside the city, of what had happened, hastened to the spot and offered his services. He was asked to turn the crowd back and to disperse it. The Pandit tried, but his voice could not reach except to those who were immediately near. He therefore spoke from a raised seat. Meanwhile, the Superintendent of Police was becoming impatient. The Deputy Commissioner, who was sent for, also arrived. Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari went over to the Deputy Commissioner and asked for some time, so that he could reason with the crowd and induce it to disperse. But Mr. Fyson gave him only two minutes and told him that if the people did not disperse within that time, he would immediately order firing. The Pandit protested that he could hardly make any impression on the crowd within two minutes, but Mr. Fyson was unbending. The Pandit, however, tried and he partially succeeded in making some of the crowd turn back, but Mr. Fyson proved as good as his word, and on the expiry of the time limit gave the order to fire, inflicting about the same [number of] casualties as near the O'Dwyer Soldiers' Club. The firing dispersed the crowd, but it left the people sore at heart.

We are of opinion that both the firings could have been avoided. The crowd was unarmed; it had passed several public buildings including, besides the Christian College, the Y.M.C.A., the Alliance Bank of Simla, the Bank of Bengal, the Post Office, the Telegraph Office, the High Court and the Cathedral. As at Amritsar, the authorities omitted to take the usual intermediate stages, and they erred in not giving sufficient time to Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari, who had been admittedly making an earnest effort to disperse the

crowd. No resistance was offered by the crowd. We presume that other crowds in India are of about the same temper under given circumstances and of the same determination or rather weakness as the Punjabi crowd. We say this because we have heard it suggested that a Punjab crowd is different from and more defiant and determined than any other crowd. We hold a different view. Some of us have seen a strong Punjab crowd being dispersed by the sweep of a heavy stick. The crowds at Lahore, Kasur and Amritsar were as determined as can be imagined, but none of them could stand even a little bit of firing. We imagine that crowds of the dimension admitted by official testimony, in any other part of the world could certainly have overwhelmed such small forces as were arrayed against them. We have it upon official testimony that a huge crowd in Bombay was dispersed on the 10th April by two dozen horsemen dashing into it, and a Bombay Pydhownie[1] crowd is noted for its mischievousness when it is bent on mischief. We are inclined to think that in India generally, and in the Punjab particularly, there seems to be an unwritten code, requiring the police never to run any risk and to resort to firing on the slightest pretext. If it is a test of a civilized government that it shall not value the life of the meanest citizen as cheap, we fear that the Punjab Government has signally failed in that test. The plea that the governing race is, in numbers, hopelessly inferior to the governed cannot be accepted as any excuse for disregarding, under an ordinary test, the value of human life entrusted to its care. The indifferent answers given by some officers to questions regarding their orders strongly incline us to the belief that the firings we have mentioned could have been avoided with a little forbearance, a little tact and a little regard for the lives of the citizens. We are fortified in this belief by the knowledge that in every case that has come under our observation, no arrangement was considered necessary for taking care of the wounded after the dispersal of the crowd.

To return to the narrative, extraordinary as it may appear, the authorities, as we have seen, did not allow the relatives to take charge of the wounded and the dead. This created a great deal of ill feeling and resentment. On the 11th also, therefore, the hartal was continued. Constant parleying took place between the leaders and the authorities. The leaders pleaded, with all the earnestness at their command, for the return of the dead and the wounded, but to no purpose. Without in

[1] A municipal ward of Bombay city

any way conciliating the people, the authorities wanted the hartal to be broken. We have had several interviews with the Lahore leaders since their discharge. They have favoured us with their statements; we believe that most of the leaders tried their best to break up the hartal, even though the authorities would not return the dead and the wounded, but they did not succeed. There was a big meeting on the 11th at the Badshahi Mosque at which the idea of breaking up the hartal was considered, but nothing came out of it. There was an interview again with the Deputy Commissioner, at which the leaders suggested that they should again have a meeting on the understanding that the military should not be posted near the meeting-place. Pandit Rambhuj Chowdhari affirms that such an undertaking was given by Mr. Fyson. The latter denies it. The evidence in our possession confirms Mr. Chowdhari's affirmation. A very big meeting took place at the Badshahi Mosque. Feeling certainly ran high. Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari was alone able with his powerful voice to gain a hearing. Without any decisive result, the meeting dispersed, and as the people were going to their homes the military fired. It is contended on behalf of the military that the situation demanded firing as the crowd had become defiant. If it is true that there was a promise by Mr. Fyson to withdraw the military, their very presence was unjustifiable. There was again loss of life. This added to the resentment of the people and made the work of the leaders wellnigh impossible. Further consultation amongst the leaders took place. The authorities began to assume a progressively uncompromising attitude. They would see some leaders and decline to see others. Hartal still remained. There was danger of starvation and consequent pillage. People, therefore, opened *langarkhanas*, i.e., free restaurants. These were run by voluntary subscriptions, and thus the 15th of April was reached. On the 16th Lala Harkishen Lal[1], one of the magnates of the Punjab, Lala Duni Chand, one of the most popular Municipal Commissioners of Lahore, with a record of unbroken public service, and Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari were invited by the Deputy Commissioner to meet him, only to be arrested and deported. Soon after their deportation, Martial Law was proclaimed in Lahore. At that time, the reason given to the leaders by the Deputy Commissioner was that it was being proclaimed in order to break the hartal, and Col. Johnson has said definitely in his evidence that he would have put the

[1] A big financier, who controlled many business enterprises in the Punjab

military in charge of the shops and forcibly sold their goods if they had not opened them. This warning was actually given and the proud merchants of Lahore had to suffer the humiliation of opening their shops under military pressure. Whether the people were right or wrong in sustaining the hartal as a tangible expression of their resentment we shall not discuss, but right or wrong, there was nothing criminal in the people refusing to open their shops. But it was criminal to compel them by threat of force to open their shops. Indeed, we are not sure that a peaceful hartal is not an infinitely superior weapon, even from the Government standpoint, to the use of violence as a means of seeking redress.

However, Col. Johnson has before Lord Hunter given his opinion that Martial Law was necessary in Lahore for the sake of preventing the spread of 'rebellion' in the other parts of the Punjab. We believe that the introduction of Martial Law in Lahore was an utterly unjustifiable act. No violence was done by the people either to person or property in Lahore. We do not include in public violence the rough handling to which a C.I.D. official was subjected at one of the Badshahi Mosque meetings. It was no doubt improper on the part of those who assaulted the official. But if an incident of this character could justify the Martial Law reign, we should have Martial Law not as an exceptional event but as an ordinary rule of life. No evidence has been brought forward publicly to connect a single leader in Lahore with an organization outside. No connection has been established even between Amritsar and Lahore. The personal interest of the Lahore population was entirely bound up with the preservation of law and order. Lahore contains no martial element. The introduction of Martial Law in the city of Lahore was therefore justified neither for the safety of Lahore nor for the prevention of infection spreading from it. It was an unmerited reflection cast upon the staunch loyalty of the citizens of Lahore. We wish here to draw a broad distinction between loyalty to the British Constitution and the King, and indiscriminate support of a tyrannical deputy who disgraces a high office to which he may be called.

The disturbances, where they took place, were an undisciplined demonstration against Sir Michael O'Dwyer's rule. From the very commencement of this rule, he estranged the educated classes by every means he could devise. He incensed the populace by his overzealous canvassing for contributions to the War in men and money. We consider it to be a proper thing to use social and moral

pressure for stimulating contributions to the War, in which the very existence of the Empire may be at stake. But Sir M. O'Dwyer overstepped the limits of decency and, in his laudable zeal for outstripping his fellow satraps in supplying men and money, he forgot himself and did not consider the quality of the means adopted. The consequence was that his under-officials out-heroded Herod, and, as remarked in a previous chapter, we have in our possession evidence to show that British Rule was disgraced by officials whose one aim was to get recruits and money. It was a result too dearly bought.

It has been suggested that recruiting cannot be held to be a cause of the violent part of the demonstration, because the districts in which undue pressure is said to have been used were the districts that were exceptionally free from violence. This statement is no doubt partially true. The reason, however, in so far as it is true, is obvious. Those who were at all able to protect themselves, more or less successfully, avoided the pressure. Those who could not resist the pressure were not likely to be the men to rise against it at a later stage, unless they felt conscious of their strength. There is however such a thing as vicarious resentment, as there is vicarious sacrifice; and as national consciousness grows from day to day, so is there likely to be a demonstration of vicarious sacrifice and vicarious violence; and it behoves both the Government and the people to make a wise choice. It hardly requires any recommendation from us that vicarious sacrifice is infinitely preferable to vicarious violence. We have no doubt that the Punjab Government goaded to vicarious violence the people, who were endeavouring to train themselves for vicarious sacrifice.

But Lahore, to its credit, never left the chosen path. The sufferings of Lahore are, in our opinion, a purer treasure in a way even than those of the people who were the victims of the massacre of Jallianwala Bagh.

We shall now cast a cursory glance at these sufferings.

Col. Johnson, of African fame, was in command of the Lahore Martial Law Area from the 15th of April to the 29th of May, 1919. His administration was so sweeping that it made itself felt by all classes of people, high and low, not excluding the students, numbering several thousands, studying in the various colleges. The tallest had to bend before his iron rule.

Take his curfew order. Men, women and children, living in small places where people are used to retire early, may not notice the

inconvenience of it as in a big city like Lahore. In Lahore it became intolerable. Even those who required medical help had to be without such assistance, and when the difficulty was pointed out to this officer by Pandit Jagat Narayan[1], he promptly stated :"You cannot wage war without having to suffer such hardships." An officer holding the responsible position that Col. Johnson did, ought not to have used a technical legal phrase in respect of a state of things which by no stretch of reasoning could be called"waging of war". It was a prostitution of terms to apply the expression to a state of things that existed in Lahore or, for that matter, in the Punjab. We have read all the evidence produced before Lord Hunter, and we have been unable to notice a single fact or argument in support of the statement that the Punjab was"waging war against the King." Col. Johnson was obliged to admit that people never made use of arms anywhere. Those who had arms, which they could have freely used, neither used them themselves nor allowed others to make use of them. We shall presently see what"waging war" actually meant in the opinion of the Judges of the Martial Law Tribunals, but here we have the spectacle of a British officer, of long standing and varied experience, making the most irresponsible statements, unsupported by anything that could be accepted by reasonable men, and acting, on his own showing, upon hearsay, taking drastic measures against the people who had done no wrong except protesting in an orderly manner against unjust administration. Many of those who broke the curfew order, knowingly or unknowingly, reasonably or unreasonably, were publicly whipped like common and incorrigible criminals.

Col. Johnson"laid the greatest importance" on the notice he gave to the effect that, if any bomb was thrown on his troops, it would be taken as done by all persons living within the radius of 100 yards, and that he would give to all those living within that area an hour's time to leave and then dismantle and demolish every building there, except mosques and temples.

He had commandeered 800 tongas, which number was finally reduced to 200, and these were detained up to the time the Martial Law was in force. He commandeered all the motorcars belonging to Indians. He restricted travelling by railway, so as"to limit the activities of gentlemen who might proceed outside the city to the

[1] Member of the Legislative Council of the United Provinces; one of the three Indian members of the Hunter Committee

district with a view to cause trouble there". He issued an order stopping all the free restaurants (*langarkhanas*). He regulated the prices of food-stuffs. He dispossessed licenceholders of their guns and his ardour had to be restrained by the Government in regard to those who were known to be men of"undoubted loyalty". He confirmed the orders that were issued by the Deputy Commissioner closing the Badshahi Mosque,[1] and it was permitted to be opened only on an undertaking being given by the trustees that"no Hindu would be allowed to enter the Badshahi Mosque".

He constituted Summary Courts. He himself tried cases. 277 persons were thus tried, of whom 201 were convicted. The maxi-mum sentence was 2 years' imprisonment, 30 stripes and a fine of 1,000 rupees. 800 stripes were ordered by Summary Court Magistrates, and they were distributed amongst 66 persons. The highest number of stripes was 30, the lowest 5. These men were publicly flogged until an order came to the effect that they were not to be so flogged. There was hardly any medical examination. Lord Hunter asked him whether he never imagined the punishment had serious effect. The answer was,"I cannot imagine it."In his opinion it was"the kindliest method of punishment". To Mr. Justice Rankin he said he"terrorized" people, and dozens and dozens of sentences were saved. Justice Rankin thought that it was a little strong to suggest that whipping should be regarded as the most efficacious and convenient method of summarily dealing with masses of people in minor breaches, and asked Col. Johnson whether it should not be rather exceptional, and the answer was :

> I hardly agree with you. You have a very great population. You are creating new offences by the issue of these orders. If the jail is the only punishment, it would not affect this population here very much. The jail is an extra-ordinarily comfortable place from the general standard of households in the city. They are well fed in the Central Jail and one would soon have got used to the conditions. We were going to have the whole lot of them. I feared the jail would be filled.

In another place he says the value of whipping is equal to 1,000 soldiers. In our opinion, in applying the above reasoning, Col. Johnson has used barbarous arguments in order to support a barbarous punishment, and this fact alone makes him unfit for holding a responsible position, such as was entrusted to him by the

[1] It was closed to the public for two weeks.

Punjab Government. Nor were these the only punishments of whipping awarded. He has given those that were recorded by the Summary Courts, but the unrecorded punishments were perhaps more numerous than the recorded ones. Over 170 statements collected by us from Lahore go to show conclusively that the temper shown by the highest officers of the Crown had filtered down to the lowest, and in so filtering had reached such a fineness that it was ruffled on the slightest pretext, and was allowed to have its full play upon the populace, without any restraint worthy of the name.

His railway-travelling order, besides being general, was particularly aimed at lawyers' clerks and their messengers. Sir C. Setalvad[1] asked :

> In the order No. 6 you say,"I have reasons to believe that munshis, agents and chaprasis of pleaders are engaged in disseminating seditious propaganda." Therefore, you issued an order prohibiting them from leaving Lahore Civil Command without permit, and you ordered every legal practitioner to submit a complete list of every munshi, agent or chaprasi directly or indirectly employed by him?

Col. Johnson replied in the affirmative. When he was asked what evidence he had, he admitted it was all verbal.

It is well known how far this bias against the lawyer class was carried, how lawyers from outside the Punjab were refused admittance on the ground that they might also disseminate sedition. Even a scholarly lawyer of Mr. Manohar Lal's standing, respectability, known loyalty and caution bordering even on timidity, could not count upon being safe from the attentions of the Martial Law officers. He is an M.A. of the Punjab, a B.A. of Cambridge, a fellow and a member of the Syndicate of the Punjab University. He was a foundation scholar of St. John's College, Cambridge, and possesses several other distinctions. He is the Vice-President of the High Court Bar Association and the President of the Forman College[2] Graduates' Union. He was arrested at about 7.30 a.m. on the 18th of April, as a trustee of *The Tribune* newspaper. There was no warrant, nor was he told the charge on which he was arrested. He says :

> On my arrest at my house, I had barely two minutes to take leave of my wife and children, and I was given no indication of where I was to be taken.

[1] Chimanlal H. Setalvad (1865-1947); eminent lawyer and liberal politi-cian; one of the three Indian members of the Hunter Committee

[2] Forman Christian College, Lahore

He says further :

At about 2 p.m., I was removed by the police from the Telegraph Office to the Central Jail, Lahore, where after the usual ceremonies at the gate, of depositing watch and chain, pencil, loose cash, etc., and signing the register by my thumb impression only, I was taken into a cell in the Ward No. 14 of the jail. This ward is meant for condemned prisoners, or those awaiting trial for capital or similar offences. In this cell, I was supplied after a time with two filthy jail blankets, and two iron basins to eat and drink out of. After about three hours, I was transferred to another part of the jail, known as the *Chakkis*, i.e., a series of cells furnished with arrangements for grinding corn. I do not wish to describe the cells, because they can easily be seen. All our sanitary and other arrangements were inside the small cells, consisting of stinking earthen vessels, cleaned twice a day. I was, when in this cell, allowed a short time in the morning to walk on a small indicated beat of about fifty yards, and go to the tap for a wash, if desired. I had no clothes but the suit in which I was taken away from the house, and it was not till Monday the 21st, that, in the afternoon, I was given a few clothes brought by my son, when he came to interview me.

My wife and children had no idea of where I was confined till late in the afternoon of the day of my arrest. I was allowed no communication with them, except for the postcard I was able to send through the Superintendent of the jail on Saturday afternoon.

On Monday, 21st April, my friend, Kanwar Dalip Singh, Bar-at-Law, and my son came to see me at the jail, but, as I was allowed to see only one of them, I had a few minutes' interview in the presence of the *Darogha*[1] of the jail with my barrister friend. My request for the indulgence, if that it was, for a minute's talk with my son was refused by the Superintendent, Mr. Cowan.

On Wednesday the 23rd, I was transferred to the European ward, where I was comparatively more comfortable, having considerable liberty of movement, and because of the accommodation and clean lavatory and washing arrangements and a small library.

I lived in this ward till the morning of my release, the 16th of May. During this period I had, I believe, three regular interviews with my friends and relatives, one very brief, one as a special case with Kanwar Dalip Singh, as he used to be frequently in the jail, on account of his being retained by the Government for the undefended prisoners, and one, as an act of special kindness by the Superintendent, with my brother who was passing through Lahore.

[1] Head warder

> During the whole of this time, I was given no indication as to what the charge or accusation against me was. I was left in a state of complete uncertainty.

Mr. Manohar Lal gives us also a glimpse of what happened to his invalid wife and children. He says :

> I learnt, during one of the interviews allowed me in jail, that my house was searched after my arrest. It was locked up within less than three quarters of an hour of my arrest. My wife, an invalid lady, and my children had to find shelter in the servant's quarters and the kitchen in the compound, and they had to use bedding lent to them by friends. The search took place on the 18th of April, and my family was able to return to the house on the 19th of April, at about 6 p.m.

Two or three valuable books were also taken away by the police and remained unreturned to the day of his making the statement. He concludes the story of his arrest as follows :

> To this day I am ignorant of any accusation against me, or of anything else that led to, much less necessitated, my arrest and confinement.

In examining the possible reason for his arrest, he says :

> I do not take any part in the active life of the town, being almost entirely a student, so far as professional duties permit. During the many and frequent meetings to which the Deputy Commissioner called representatives, etc., of the people, I was never called, nor was otherwise present nor did I attend any of the meetings held by private gentlemen to devise means to stop the hartal. (Statement 150, p. 198.)

An officer who can order or allow the arrest of a man of Mr. Manohar Lal's standing without the most searching investigation is unfit to hold the high command that Col. Johnson did. It betrays a contempt for Indian honour such as ought not to be possible in those who wear His Majesty's uniform.

Another form of torture invented by this resourceful officer was to paste his notices on the houses of those whom he considered to be"evilly disposed persons". The owner was made responsible for any damage done, including even the dirtying of these notices. Sir Chimanlal asked him for a definition of"evilly disposed persons", and asked whether those whom he suspected would be the evilly disposed people. His astounding reply was,"If you like to put [it] that way, I would not object.""I want to know what was in your mind?", asked Sir Chimanlal. The answer was :

I thought that people who were not known for their notorious loyalty should be employed on that work, and the persons deficient in this quality were selected by the C.I.D.

Sir Chimanlal suggested that the task meant watching the notices for full 24 hours from day to day. Col. Johnson admitted the necessity for such a watch, but held it to be absolutely justifiable. Intolerable as such an order was in any event, it became a thousand-fold intolerable when a whole institution was held responsible.

And this brings us to the story of the violence done to the student world as well as the professors of colleges. We must give the dialogue between Sir Chimanlal Setalvad and Col. Johnson in order that the working of Col. Johnson's mind may be thoroughly understood.

Q. The Sanatan Dharma College was one of the buildings selected for putting up that notice?

A. I believe it was.

Q. It was not in the first list prominent, though it was but subsequently added?

A. Yes, the list was recast afterwards.

Q. And the notice stuck on the outer wall of this college was torn down by someone?

A. That was the information laid before me, not by the police, but by somebody.

Q. Is it true that all the students of the hostels of the college were arrested?

A. I ordered that every male found on the premises should be arrested.

Q. How many were arrested?

A. 500.

Q. 500 students were arrested for this notice being damaged?

A. And the professors too.

Q. All of them so arrested were marched to the Fort which is three miles away from the College?

A. Quite.

Q. And during that march they were ordered to carry their bedding on their shoulders or heads?

A. If they wanted to carry their bedding, they could.

Q. Were they not made to carry them?

A. I made no order as to that. If they wanted to carry them, they could.

Q. On a Lahore summer day?

A. It was a May day.

Q. It was very hot in Lahore?

A. Yes.

Q. All these 500 students and professors were marched a distance of three miles?

A. Quite.

Q. And they were kept under orders in the Fort?

A. Yes, that is so.

Q. How long were they kept there?

A. I think one day. I beg your pardon, two days.

Q. They were then released after taking from the Principal certain undertakings as to their seeing that the notices were preserved?

A. Yes, after I got the necessary guarantee that such a thing would not happen again.

Q. I put it to you, Colonel, do you think that the measure that you took was a reasonable one?

A. Yes. I was looking for it. I was looking just for such an opportunity.

Q. You considered it then, and you consider it now, a reasonable order to make?

A. Undoubtedly.

Q. Your frame of mind, then, Colonel, was as you indicated in your report, that you were waiting for an opportunity to bring home to them the power of Martial Law?

A. That was so.

Q. You were longing for such an opportunity?

A. Only in the interests of the people themselves.

Q. I do not suggest that it was not in their interest. It may or may not be. But you were longing for an opportunity to show the might of Martial Law?

A. Quite.

Q. You got that opportunity?

A. And I took it.

Q. And you took it and marched these 500 students to the Fort in the hot sun?

A. That is so.

Q. And you still maintain, that was a proper exercise of your authority?

A. Undoubtedly. I will do it again tomorrow, if circumstances require.

It should be remembered that the last cold-blooded reply of Col. Johnson was given, not whilst he was in the thick of the battle, but on the 24th November, 1919, nearly six months after he had left his command of Lahore. If his precious notice was wilfully defaced by anybody at all, it was his duty to make an enquiry, and not straightway proceed to punish the professors and the students. But Col. Johnson was nothing if not thorough, and therefore he took action against the D.A.V. College, the Dyal Singh College and the Medical College, not by way of punishment, but in order to keep the students"out of mischief", and the order issued was that there was to be a roll-call of all the students, four times a day, the hours being 7 and 11 in the morning, and 3 and 7.30 in the evening."And the Medical College students, in order to attend this roll 4 times a day, had to walk in all about 17 miles a day?" was Sir Chimanlal's question. The impertinent reply given by Col. Johnson was:"I think it was only 16. I measured it." Sir Chimanlal then asked :

> And they had to walk like this, in the hot sun of Lahore, for 3 weeks every day?
>
> A. That is so, unless exempted by a medical certificate.
>
> Q. You thought, Colonel, then, and you still maintain the view, that this was a reasonable order to make in order to keep students out of mischief?
>
> A. That was my opinion then.
>
> Q. And still it is your opinion?
>
> A. Absolutely.
>
> Q. Did it ever occur to you, and does it occur to you now, [that] it was working upon students the utmost hardship to make them travel 16 miles every day in the Lahore sun for three weeks?
>
> A. No hardship at all.

We must give in Col. Johnson's own words the extraordinary justification for his extraordinary action :

> Q. I put it to you again, Colonel, did it ever occur to you that by treating—I do not know how many hundreds, possibly thousands, of students in the manner you did, with regard to the roll-call, you were making these young men bear bitter hatred towards the British Government for the rest of their lives?
>
> A. It did, but I came to the conclusion that there was so much sedition in these colleges that nothing that I did could make them worse.
>
> Q. Do I understand you to say that although it did occur to you that this

treatment of yours might result in turning them bitter against the British Government, your view was that they were such confirmed seditionists that you could not make them more bitter?

A. I do not accept your description, but the atmosphere of the colleges was such that you could not hurt it.

Q. Do you think that, by the measures you took, you were helping in the least to improve it?

A. I was certainly not making it worse.

Q. Were you improving it?

A. I was not out to make them loyal, but I was to keep them out of mischief and to keep them from outlying districts.

Q. Did you succeed?

A. Yes.

Q. You think that is the best way?

A. That is the best way I could think of. There are two ways. One is to close the colleges, and the other is to prosecute them.

Q. I take it to be your view that the best way of making people in this country loyal and well disposed towards Government is to adopt more harsh measures towards them?

A. I put it the other way—by teaching that there is a penalty for such suspected sedition.

Q. Did it ever occur to you that among these thousands of students there must have been a large number of perfectly innocent ones?

A. Yes, I gave exemptions to some.

The Colonel thought that some students had insulted English ladies. We have not found anything to justify this charge. He has himself produced nothing in support of his opinion, but he had on that account a meeting of the principals of the colleges. He had a"frank talk" with them, and asked them to submit proposals for adequate punishments. The principals came out with what was suitable punishment in their view. He considered that some of the punishments were inadequate, and he promptly informed the principals that"unless the punishments were raised, the colleges would be closed and the students would be stopped from attending the examinations." In this way, a thousand and eleven students were punished. This is what Mr. Sant Ram Grover, M.A., B.Sc., Professor of English, Dyal Singh College, says about the students and their treatment :

During the hartal days, I observed no change in the attitude of the students of my college, and I cannot recall even a single case of unseemly conduct on the part of any of them.

Like many other buildings, our college was selected for having Martial Law notices posted thereon. About ten days or more after the proclamation of Martial Law, a notice was served on the Principal of our college, at about 7 p.m., one evening, that the writer of a seditious poster, which was attached to the notice, must be found out and reported to the Officer Commanding before 12 noon the next day. The trustees, staff, and students met the following morning to find out the writer, but were unable to do so, as no one connected with the college appeared to have been the author thereof. We were just drafting a reply, when Col. Johnson with some C.I.D. men came to our college. Raja Narendra Nath, one of the trustees, and some others came down to explain the matter to the Colonel. One C.I.D. man pointed out a place in the college, where he said he had found the poster stuck on the wall. I suggested to the Colonel that it must all be a story, for, though the poster appeared to have been fixed with a nail on the wall, there was no corresponding mark on the wall itself. We then showed to the Colonel the reply we had drafted. On this, the Colonel asked the reply to be sent to his office, which was done. The same evening, another notice was received asking the Principal to see him the next morning at 9 a.m. The Principal saw the Colonel at the appointed time, and returned with some soldiers with fixed bayonets. He was asked to pay Rs. 250 by way of fine, or go to jail for three months. The fine was paid on the spot.

A few days after, our Principal, like those of other colleges, got an order from the Deputy Commissioner to find out and punish the ring- leaders, no explanation being given as to ringleaders of what movement were meant. We took it that some students had to be punished. To satisfy this demand, the College Council met and picked out a few students, and drew up a list of punishments. The list was shown to and approved of by the trustees. I took this list myself to the Deputy Commissioner with a letter from Raja Narendra Nath, mentioning the punishments, saying that a larger number of students was not castigated, because it would cause an unnecessary agitation, dangerous to society.

A day or two after this, we got a reply that the punishments were inadequate, and that a sufficient number of students had not been punished. The College Council again met, and a few more students were added to the list, and the punishments of others enhanced. The next day, we heard from the Deputy Commissioner, approving of the punishments and sending a cheque for Rs. 250 in remittance of the fine previously realized. (Statement No. 151, p. 201.)

The punishments consisted in rusticating students, suspending

them from attending examinations, etc. All this without any real trial. The letter, addressed on behalf of Col. Johnson to the Principal of the D.A.V. College on the 10th of May, shows most accurately the attitude adopted by this officer. We, therefore, give it below without any further comment.

Copy of a letter No. 111-4, dated 10th May 1919, from the Staff Officer, Lahore (Civil) Command, Punjab Club, Lahore, to the address of the Principal, D.A.V. College, Lahore :

The Officer Commanding , Lahore (Civil) Area, has carefully considered your letter of the 7th instant. In reply, I am directed to say that Col. Johnson considers the disciplinary action suggested therein as entirely inadequate, in view of all the facts at his disposal, which would tend to prove that the students of your college have even exceeded those of other colleges in Lahore in seditious activities. And I am to say that unless he receives from you today a schedule of punishments which, in his opinion, are more adequately applicable to the unenviable reputation of your college, the Officer Commanding would have no alternative but to immediately close the D.A.V. College and exclude all its students from the forthcoming examination.

In order to assist you in framing a scale of punishments, I am directed to inform you that in the case of the Government College, 6 students are being expelled and debarred from ever entering any other college in the University, 6 are not to be allowed to proceed to any further examination, 6 are to be rusticated for a year, 15 forfeit their scholarships, besides minor punishments in 112 other cases.

In the Dyal Singh College, 7 students are to be expelled, 5 are to be rusticated for a year, 14 will be put back one year, 14 are suspended for three months, 2 are temporarily deprived of their scholarships, and 224 are to suffer minor punishments, whilst 245 are required to furnish substantial securities for their future behaviours.

The Officer Commanding thinks that it may help you to submit proposals which will save him the necessity of closing your college, if I add that he expects such disciplinary action to be in no degree less than those to which I have drawn your attention.

Finally, I am to say that the Officer Commanding, Lahore Civil Area, is unable to accept the proposal that any portion of the fines inflicted should be paid to the Comforts Fund for British soldiers.

(Sd) W. BARNS, MAJOR,
STAFF OFFICER,
LAHORE CIVIL COMMAND

Then there was an order making it a crime for more than 2

Indians to walk abreast."The preamble stated, 'Whereas it is expedient to prevent violence or intimidation, if more than two 'natives' come and do not give way to a European, that is likely to lead to a breach of the peace'," said Col. Johnson to Sir Chimanlal. Sir Chimanlal elicited the fact that the breach of the peace would be committed not by the"natives", but by the Europeans, and Indians had to suffer in order to prevent a breach of the peace on the part of European who might resent more than two Indians walking abreast. One of the reasons he gave to Sir Chimanlal for depriving Indian owners of their cars was that it was a reasonable measure, as"he wanted to bring home to the people that they could not play this game and that they could not have risings in Lahore."

The following questions and answers demonstrate fully the blighting effect of Col. Johnson's rule.

> Q. Is it true, as has been alleged, that a marriage party in a certain part of Lahore was arrested, because they were more than ten, and moving about as they usually do, and the marriage party and the bridegroom were arrested and the priest and others were flogged?
>
> A. It is quite true. It is the one instance that I know of, that is to be regretted. The moment I heard of it the fines were remitted and the Civil Magistrate was removed.

It is good of Col. Johnson that there was at least one instance which caused him some regret, but it is also the one instance which shows how dangerous the punishment of flogging is, and how his totally unnecessary orders caused the greatest irritation and inconvenience to the population that was perfectly harmless.

We have been dwelling on the acts of Col. Johnson as if they were his own original productions. Whilst he was, no doubt, capable of doing most of the things himself, there can equally be no doubt that there was a mind and a purpose behind these acts that was not Col. Johnson's. That Officer was executing Sir Michael O'Dwyer's policy and wishes. Mr. Manohar Lal was arrested, because he was a trustee for *The Tribune*. That independent newspaper had to be killed. Mr. Kalinath Roy, the able Editor of *The Tribune*, had offended him more than once by his independence. His article on Sir Michael's vituperative speech of the 7th April, entitled"Blazing Indiscretion" was the last straw. How blazing the indiscreet speech was, the events have shown. He had not a single self-respecting man to defend his indefensible conduct towards the educated classes. Anyway, Mr. Kalinath Roy was duly arrested, tried and convicted for seditious

writings.[1] We have no hesitation in saying that there was not a word of sedition in Mr. Roy's writings. His trial was nothing less than an outrage on decency in political life. No less cruel was the prosecution of the Editor[2] of *Pratap*, a paper that had just commenced its career and whose Editor was widely known for his meekness and the harmless religious character of his writings. The existence of independent journalism became an impossibility during the Martial Law regime and *The Tribune*, the *Punjabee*, and the *Pratap* stopped publishing.

We now come to the oppression not practised in its nakedness, as it was in connection with the orders we have till now dealt with, but veiled and practised in the name of law and justice. We refer to the Martial Law Commissions[3]. These Commissions were supposed to conduct a judicial but summary trial of persons who were supposed to have committed serious crimes, i.e., waging war. We have examined the papers in connection with the trial of the Lahore leaders. They were 11 in number, most of them occupying a high status in society, and some of them worthy to be Sir M. O'Dwyer's peers. Seven of them are barristers or pleaders. Lala Harkishen Lal has furnished us with a statement, in which he has no hesitation in saying that he was charged because Sir M. O'Dwyer was, in plain English, jealous of his reputation as a financier, and in other respects concerned with activities which were distasteful to the Lieut.-Governor. He shows in his statement how insidious attempts were made to ruin the enterprises that he was controlling. Lala Harkishen Lal says that his deportation was without the least justification, and his trial and conviction were based purely on fabrication. The general dislike that Sir M. O'Dwyer felt towards the deponent was intensified in that the deponent had been appointed a member of the Congress Deputation, and was to proceed to England at the end of April, 1919,[4] and that he had also been elected to preside at the Punjab Provincial Conference which

[1] His petition for mercy was rejected by the Lt.-Governor of the Punjab on June 13, 1919. He was, however, released on August 27, 1919, as his sentence of imprisonment was reduced from 2 years to 3 months by the Governor-General-in-Council on July 6, 1919.

[2] Radha Kishan, who was sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment which was later reduced to 2 months by the Lt.-Governor on July 25, 1919

[3] They began their work on April 24, 1919. Each Commission was composed of three members.

[4] The Deputation left for England on April 28, 1919 .

was to be held at Jullundur on the 18th and 19th of April, 1919.

He and the other leaders were tried for waging war. We have read the *precis* of the charge against the accused, and it consists in the accused having taken part in the Rowlatt Act agitation, in the hartal, having made speeches, having supported *langarkhanas* and in being present at the meetings we have already described. We have read the evidence produced against these popular leaders, and we have read also the judgment, and have come to the conclusion that the whole of the trial was a travesty of justice, and it was an abuse of language to consider their acts as tantamount to the 'waging of war'. It is remarkable, too, that the judges took judicial notice of the state of war in the Punjab, because of the proclamation establishing Martial Law, whereas it was their clear duty, in trying individual cases, to take evidence rebutting the proposition that there was a state of rebellion or war in the Punjab. Lala Harkishen Lal has stated what it cost him to undergo the trial and imprisonment. He says the telegrams cost him well-nigh Rs. 1,200, the trial another sum of Rs. 12,000 and the appeal a good round sum, but the accounts were not yet complete. Loss of business meant nothing less than 3 lacs of rupees. It may mean nothing to him to lose all this money, but we are aware of some who have been impoverished because of these so-called judicial trials.

Mr. Santanam[1], a barrister of 10 years' standing, and practising in Lahore, and who was engaged for the defence, has furnished us with a graphic description of the tribunals. We make no apology for giving a long extract from his statement. After describing what he had seen himself of the firing on the 10th April, and of the other effects of the Martial Law, he proceeds :

> The consciousness of the humiliation to which every Indian, irrespective of status, was subjected in those days was however nothing in comparison to the pain one felt at the sorry plight of those poor prisoners who had been arrested in hundreds and were being arraigned before the Martial Law Tribunals. It is no exaggeration to say that no legal help of any kind was for thc oming. The Government had, no doubt, out of a feeling of great humanity (one likes to think so at least), appointed a counsel for each Tribunal to take up the case of those who could not afford to engage a lawyer to defend them. But this was a colossal sham, as such a counsel had often to defend as many as 10 to 15 men at a time, and that too, without any adequate time to consult

[1] K. Santanam, secretary to the Commission appointed by the Punjab Sub-committee of the Indian National Congress to report on the Punjab disturbances

them, or prepare their case. Some of these gentlemen had confessed to me that in several cases they had not had as much as 5 minutes with each accused for consultation, before being asked to defend them against such serious charges as waging war, conspiracy, arson, murder, etc. The procedure usually was to bring up before a Tribunal a batch of the accused, often numbering 30 and 40, who had never been told for what offence they had been arrested, to read out the charge to them, and ask them then and there to name what witnesses they were going to summon in their defence. They were also told at the same time that the Government would try their best to summon these witnesses, but could not guarantee that each and every one would be produced. As often as not, the *precis* of the evidence for the prosecution was not read out to them, nor were they allowed to take copies of the *precis*. Each accused was asked if he had a counsel of his own; if not, he was told that the counsel appointed by the Crown would defend him. After this, they were taken back to the jail, and were not allowed to see even the Crown counsel till 9 o'clock on the morning of the day fixed for their trial, which usually was 3 or 4 days after the day on which the charge was read out to them. Sometimes, I am told, the Crown counsel was allowed to see the prisoners in jail from 7 a.m. in the morning till 8.30 a.m., when the prisoners were usually taken to court. But it can be imagined what this concession amounted to, if it is remembered that these counsel had to attend the court every day at 10 a.m., and had to defend fresh batches of accused each day, so that they could only have consultation with those whose cases were coming on that very day. Let it also be remembered that the trial of 20 and 30 persons on very serious charges was usually over in a day, and it can be imagined what sort of trial these poor men could have had.

If this was the fate of the men who were too poor to engage counsel, the fate of those who were in a position to do so was not any better, as, though willing to pay, they could not find any counsel of any standing to take up their cases. The first difficulty they encountered was that no one knew on which day any accused would be brought up before a Tribunal and arraigned. In this uncertainty, the better class of lawyers could not accept a brief beforehand, quite ignorant as to whether the date would be suitable to them or not.

The second difficulty was that most of the lawyers having taken some part or other in politics, which was anathema to the then Government, were afraid that their turn might come next to be arrested, and did not want to hasten the evil day by taking up the cases of the alleged revolutionaries. The third and the most important one was that there was a general belief that the Government looked upon counsel who took up such cases as seditionists and revolutionaries themsevles and such a course was enough in itself to get a man

into trouble. This idea was strengthened by the action of the Hon'ble Mian Mohammad Shafi, now a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council,[1] whom a relative of Seth Ram Pershad had engaged to defend him when he would be brought up for trial. A few days after this, Mr. Shafi returned the brief, and I have it on very reliable authority that the reason he gave was that a high officer of the Government had as much as given a hint to him that such a course on his part was not looked upon with approval by the Government. It can better be imagined than described what effect this incident had on the already demoralized Bar.

My own personal experience is that whether the Government disapproved or not, it was evident that the police which was all in all at that time, certainly did not relish the idea. Up till May 1919, I had the good fortune not to attract the attention of the C.I.D. to myself. But on May 14th, I was engaged on behalf of the accused in the case of Lala Harkishen Lal and others, known as the Lahore Leaders' Case and went up to Simla with a petition for transfer of the case and for permission to get counsel from outside, which was, of course, never granted. But this action of mine seems to have been enough for the C.I.D., for, when I came back from Simla, I was told that the C.I.D. had been regularly patrolling my house in my absence and incidentally frightening my family into fits. Ever since then, I have been regularly shadowed and my movements watched and it is only recently that their unwelcome attentions have been somewhat relaxed.

From what I have said above, it will be clear that the accused were practically undefended and the Government succeeded in its object of securing speedy convictions without any opposition. The order prohibiting counsel from outside entering the Martial Law [area] was meant only to prevent the truth of the atrocities being committed here from becoming known to the outside world, and to obviate the possibility of any agitation being set up against the monstrous injustice perpetrated here under colour of judicial procedure.

Not content with setting up these difficulties in the way of an efficient defence being put up, the Tribunals went further and did things which no court, either civil or military, with any pretensions to deal justice of even a rudimentary character, would dare do. The ordinance of the Viceroy empowered the convening authority to convene a court with the powers of a Summary General Court Martial"wherever it might be necessary in the interests of public safety". But all the trials conducted by all the four Martial Law Tribunals were invariably under the powers of a Summary General Court

[1] He took his seat on July 16, 1920.

Martial, or, as it is otherwise called, a Drumhead Court Martial. I might explain that these Courts Martial are intended for the armies on the actual field of battle, where the niceties of legal procedure cannot be observed in the interests of military expediency.

The counsel engaged in the cases were treated with scant courtesy and were made to feel that they were there by mere sufferance. The most reasonable requests were most insolently refused and sometimes counsel were even actually insulted.

No records of proceedings were allowed to be taken on behalf of the accused except short notes by the counsel himself. There was actually an order to this effect by the convening authority which I herewith attach. (Appendix A.)

The record taken down by the court was an extremely unfair one, as the evidence-in-chief for the prosecution was taken down verbatim, but the answers in cross-examination were not taken down for the most part, especially those which were in some way favourable to the accused, in spite of repeated requests by the counsel for the accused. The reply usually given by the Commissioners was that, sitting as a Summary General Court Martial, they were not obliged to keep any record at all, except such notes as they considered necessary for their own use. As a consequence of this, it will be observed in the existing records that there are often pages of depositions of prosecution witnesses followed by a few lines of statement in cross-examination and these few lines too contain the most futile and unimportant answers. As an instance, I might point to the evidence of one Maratab Ali Shah, a Sub-Inspector of Police in the Lahore Leaders' Case, being witness No. 29 for the prosecution. He was subjected to a very severe cross-examination for nearly half an hour, and if it were all taken down, it would have been clear that if any witness broke down completely, it was he. But on the actual record there are only two lines, and this man's evidence has been relied on by the Commissioners in their judgment.

No fair or reasonable opportunities were given for cross-examination. Counsel were often told to limit their examination to a certain number of questions, or were given a time limit, irrespective of whether their questions were relevant or not. A good deal of protection was given to the prosecution witnesses and the Commissioners very often told them not to answer inconvenient questions, though perfectly relevant to the case. They also encouraged them to be insolent to the counsel.

Very often when a witness was cornered and was hesitating for an answer, the Commissioners told him,"If you don't remember, say so"; and this

hint was invariably taken by the witness who afterwards was ready with his answers,"I do not remember." The protection accorded to the European witnesses specially was something ludicrous. Any questions put with the object of making them contradict themselves were considered *lese-majeste*. Very often a witness, who had deposed to a certain incident, would shelter himself behind the reply"I do not remember". After this you were not allowed to put any other questions prompting his memory so as to elicit the true reply. If you did, the Commissioners came out with,"Do not you hear that he says he does not remember?" In deposing to the above facts, I speak from my experience of the Tribunal presided over by the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Leslie Jones, which tried the Lahore Leaders' Case.

Towards the close of the case, very little argument was allowed. Very often a time limit was placed. Legal objections were brushed aside most contemptuously. When I appeared before the Tribunal presided over by the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Broadway in the Gujranwala Leaders' Case, I put in an application raising nearly all the points of jurisdiction now raised before the Privy Council. The learned Commissioner at first refused to hear me and said he would send on the application to the convening authority for disposal. On my protesting against such a course and quoting a section of the Army Act for the simple proposition that the convening authority was *functus officio* when the court was once convened, and it was for the Court to decide these questions, he most grudgingly allowed me to argue, but told me that he would allow me only half an hour for arguing about 7 or 8 points of jurisdiction that I had raised. My protests were ignored, and I began my argument. In the middle of my argument, the Government Advocate got up to object to some remark of mine. The Commissioner at once came out with this remark,"Mr. Herbert, why do you think it worthwhile to object? It will only make him take a longer time. Let him have his say and let us be done with it." At the end of a little over half an hour, I was asked to finish my argu- ments as I had only 5 minutes more allowed to me. I had perforce to comply with it and the Court without calling on the other side for a reply passed its order. In it, only a few objections I took up are dealt with most cursorily and the rest ignored.

The trials which were carried on under such circumstances were a mere farce, and no real justice was sought to do [*sic*] or was administered. My experience of the two Tribunals I appeared before was an extremely painful and humiliating one, all the more so, because I had the honour of appearing before both the presiding officers in the calmer atmosphere of the High Court, where I had known them to act at least with a judicial decorum. My experience of Martial Law has been a revelation to me, inasmuch as I found that judges who, in the High Court atmosphere, would respect judicial forms and give a

scrupulously fair hearing to the accused and their counsel, brushed aside in the Martial Law atmosphere all canons of propriety and rendered themselves practically unfit as judges even though dealing with matters of life and death.

Nor were the leaders the only ones arrested and tried. Several others were tried before the Martial Law Commissions, and many more before the so-called Summary Courts. We have been furnished with a statement, from which we find that sixty-four were tried before the Commissions, of whom eight were discharged, three hundred and fifty tried before the Summary Courts and one hundred and two discharged, and 40 were arrested and released without trial, after having been kept in custody for several days, even extending to over a month, as in the case of Mr. Manohar Lal.

Thus Lahore, which had done no wrong, which had tried to conciliate the authorities, whose leaders had done all that was humanly possible to serve the authorities, had Martial Law inflicted upon it, and that under an officer who proved to be heartless, cruel, and utterly indifferent to the sentiments and susceptibilities of the people who had the misfortune to come under his charge. Every conceivable form of humiliation of every stratum of Lahore society was brought into service. We consider that, so far as we are aware of the local conditions, Martial Law was totally uncalled for, was unduly prolonged, and was ruthlessly and inhumanly administered, and indescribable injustice was perpetrated, even through the courts known as Martial Law Commissions or Summary or Area Officers' Courts.

KASUR

Kasur is an important town in the Lahore district, about 40 miles from Lahore. It is an important railway station on the main line, and a fairly large trade centre, with a population of 24,000. On the 6th April, there was no hartal in Kasur. Nothing happened on the 10th, but, on the 11th, the news of Mr. Gandhi's arrest and the deportation of Drs. Satyapal and Kitchlew had reached Kasur early in the morning. There was, therefore, hartal during part of the day, and a public meeting in the evening. The speeches were so unexceptionable that, with all the desire to prosecute the leaders, the leading lawyers of Kasur, in connection with the speeches, nothing could be found against them of an incriminating nature in their speeches. We

know that the Sub-Divisional Officer, Mr. Marsden, laboured the point about the speeches and, in his evidence before the Hunter Committee, suggested that the lawyers, by their irresponsible talk and failure properly to interpret the Rowlatt Act, had created an atmosphere of excitement.Whether there was misrepresentation about the Rowlatt Act in the course of conversation on the part of anybody, we do not know. Some exaggeration and some mis-representation about unpopular acts of a legislature or an executive are, unfortunately, inevitable in any society, no matter how well organized or cultured. But we believe that the lawyers in question did not indulge in any exaggeration whatever about the evil effects of the Act. As we have shown in discussing the Act, its evil effects are hardly capable of being exaggerated, for the Act perpetuates a regime of lawlessness, wherever it can be made applicable.

The 12th of April followed with a complete hartal. The temper of the people was different of the 12th from that of the 11th. We believe the testimony of one of the witnesses before the Hunter Committee that some people had come in from Amritsar, had given an exaggerated picture of the events there and inflamed the minds of the gullible or the disre-putable element in Kasur. The idlers as well as the middle class people gathered together, marched on the station, and tried to set fire to it. The fire which was started in the lamp-room was easily put out by some of the leaders, who had rushed in on hearing of the intentions of the crowd. Partially foiled in the attempt, the crowd went to the signal station, wherein a train had just arrived and stopped. The crowd emptied the mineral waters compartment of its contents, and, seeing some Europeans, made a disgraceful attack on them, in which they were again foiled by the timely appearance of Mr. Ghulam Mohiyuddin, a noted pleader of Kasur, and his friends. Mr. and Mrs. Sherbourne and their children were taken to a place of safety. The train, however, proceeded further with two more precious lives. They were two English soldiers. On the train reaching the station, the soldiers thought their safety lay in escape. They got out of the train and fired on the howling mob in pure self-defence. But their fire produced no effect on the mob, save perhaps to excite it to still further fury, and these two innocent Englishmen were brutally clubbed to death. In all the excesses, none perhaps was so brutal, inhuman and cowardly as this unprovoked murder of innocent soldiers. Indefensible as the conduct of the mob must be held in

Amritsar, it has at least the double provocation in the shape of the arrest of Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal, and the firing near the carriage-bridge as an extenuating circumstance. We cannot too strongly condemn these excesses. Drunk with the blood of their innocent victims, these rioters proceeded to the revenue offices, and burnt them. They were finally dispersed by the police, who were ordered to fire on them.

It is remarkable how the mob fury subsided in every place in a few hours. In Kasur, too, perfect quiet reigned after a few hours. Our examination of these incidents shows that the mob fury was a sudden outburst, and not the calculated result of a conspiracy or a plot. The authorities were able to make arrests without any difficulty. Mr. Marsden was sent to replace the Indian Sub-Divisional Officer, and Martial Law was proclaimed on the 16th April.

The administration of Martial Law was placed in the hands of Col. MacRae, who was followed by Captain Doveton. In some respects, these two officers excelled their brother officers in their inventiveness, irresponsibility and total disregard of the feelings and sentiments of those who were affected by their orders. We give the following condensed summary of their proceedings, made from the evidence before Lord Hunter's Committee. The first arrests commenced on the 16th. There was a proclamation parade at the Town Hall, and, evidently, to signalize the inauguration of Martial Law, they arrested Baba Dhanpat Rai, an aged and respected leader of long standing. He is 65 years old. He was detained at the Lahore Central Jail for 46 days, and released on the Ist of June, without ever having been told why he was arrested. 21 further arrests were made that same day, 3 more the next day, 4 on the 18th and 40 on the 19th. In all, 172 persons were arrested; of these, 97 were discharged without being sent up for trial. Of the 75 sent up, 51 were actually convicted. Amongst the men arrested were included Maulvi Ghulam Mohyuddin and Maulvi Abdul Kadir,who were the men who had succeeded in protecting Mr. and Mrs. Sherbourne and who, otherwise, had used their influence entirely to restrain the excesses of the crowd. The houses of many of these leaders were searched without the slightest excuse. On the 1st of May, the whole town of Kasur, excluding women and little children, was required to attend at the railway station for purposes of identification. They were made to sit bareheaded in the hot sun till 2 o'clock, without water or food. As one of the witnesses said before Lord Hunter, this was a totally useless

procedure, bare of any sub-stantial results, so far as the collection of evidence was concerned. We who have some experience of law and the manner in which evidence can be collected and tested have no hesitation in saying that it is impossible to secure correct identification by holding a parade in this manner, and that no value can be attached to identification thus procured. We suspect that the so-called parade was held purely with a view to humiliating the whole town and in order to strike terror. For, after the people had collected, search parties were sent out in order to see that nobody absented himself. It is not difficult to imagine the state in which the unprotected women must have been in the presence of these search parties.

During the trials at Kasur, 40 men were sentenced to be whipped. The total number of stripes given was 710. The flogging-post was erected on the station platform. Schoolboys were also punished with flogging. The head master of one school is supposed to have reported that his boys were getting insubordinate and asked for military help. The Officer Commanding, thereupon, suggested that some of the boys should be whipped. Therefore, boys from this school and another were ordered to be collected. The head master was asked to select 6 boys. He selected those who were not quite high class, but who were not physically fit. The Officer Commanding, therefore, rejected these boys and asked Mr. Marsden to select others, and so a selection was made out of the boys belonging to the complaining school and another, without any other reason than that they were bodily fitted to receive the punishment more than the others. They were whipped outside the station entrance in the presence of other schoolboys. In answer to the question by Lord Hunter as to what the object was, the reply given by Mr. Marsden was that there was no particular object. If should be remembered that there was no question of any Martial Law offence. No investigation, no trial. It was an unlawful and wanton use of authority. It was in Kasur again that prostitutes were invited to witness flogging on one occasion. (See their joint statement No. 279. B.)

Two men were even shot by the sentries. One was found to be dumb. Probably in both cases the shooting was wilful and wanton. We think that had the sacredness of Indian life been recognized, and a sense of justice prevailed at the top, the sentries would not have been

so free with their guns, as we fear they were.

Kasur was the place where fancy punishments were most common."What happened was," said Mr. Marsden,"Captain Doveton did not like to go through the formalities of trial and sentence." He wanted to do things"summarily". There can be no question of a record of the many punishments awarded by this capricious officer. He"used to make people mark time and climb ladders". By way of change, some sadhus were whitewashed. Capt. Doveton denies that this was deliberate. He says that they were asked to unload lime and they became whitewashed. We totally disbelieve this explanation, and we believe the testimony of eyewitnesses who have described the process. One form of punishment consisted in making the so-called delinquents lift heavy bales in the station warehouse. People who failed to salaam every white man were made to rub their noses on the ground if they were not flogged. Captain Doveton and Mr. Marsden suggested that the people liked Martial Law and were rather"amused" at these punishments than terrified or humiliated. Capt. Doveton got from the people an address for him-self, and actually, by way of punishment, required Mohammedans to compose verses in his praise. He inflicted also the punishment of skipping, which consisted in the punished people skipping 20 times without a break. He says that at least 20 people were thus punished.

Mr. Marsden has complained that among the exaggerations made by the pleaders there was one in which a Hindu pleader was reported to have said that the people were like"unarmed cattle in the eyes of the Government". The punishments that we have described, and the levity with which the people's feelings were regarded, certainly bear out the charge made by the pleader. In this report, Captain Doveton has said that these people had become"willing slaves". Sir Chimanlal Setalvad asked him to interpret the term and he said,"It means, willing to work in the way you require." This officer tried cases which were of a civil nature, and ordered punishment, and in this manner disposed of the case of the rental of a temple property. He also punished people who in his opinion were turbulent or defiant, and he said that he imposed ultra Martial Law punishments, because he did not consider that the Martial Law punishment was suited to those who were"merely truculent or

openly defiant". Sahibzada Sultan Ahmed[1] asked him whether, in doing so, he was not going beyond General Benyon's instructions. Capt. Doveton thought that he had a full discretion to do so. He sent out parties of reprisals in respect of those whom he had called but who had not turned up. The reprisal consisted in burning the property of such people. He was asked whether he thought he was justified by any Martial Law order. His reply was,"Yes, I do." And thus several poor people had their belongings destroyed, without warrant.

Before the trials of the prisoners were commenced, gallows were erected in a public place, in anticipation of the Judges awarding the punishment of hanging. These gallows were erected as near to the scene of the mob outrage as possible. It was elicited in the course of examination that this was done by the orders of Sir M. O'Dwyer, but before the hanging order could be carried out, public hanging was vetoed, because, we fancy, of the agitation set up in the Indian Press against this contemplated outrage upon public decency. This hanging suggests a serious reflection. Eighteen persons were hanged as a result of the Martial Law trials throughout the province, and many more would have been hanged but for the strong agitation that was set up throughout India, and the timely, firm and philanthropic promptitude of the Hon'ble Pandit Motilal Nehru, who entered into cable communication with the Secretary of State and, pending proceedings in appeal, asked for the suspension of death sentences. Fortunately, the Secretary of State intervened and ordered the Viceroy to suspend these death sentences. We cannot help expressing our deep regret that the Viceroy should not have of his own accord suspended these death sentences. Our regret is all the more poignant from our knowledge of the looseness and disregard of ordinary procedure with which Martial Law trials were carried out. We much suspect that many of those who were hanged and over whose heads the death sentences are still hanging, were or are totally innocent.

In deliberate disregard of facts, and insolent adherence to that attitude, perhaps no officer has outdone Col. MacRace if he has been equalled by any of his brother officers who had charge of Martial

[1] Bar-at-Law; Member for Appeals, Gwalior State; one of the three Indian members of the Hunter Committee

Law administration. In his statement before the Hunter Committee, he said,"This city has for many years past been noted for sedition." He admitted that he had never known Kasur before. Sir Chimanlal therefore asked :"On what do you base that statement of yours?"

A. It is all hearsay.

Q. You had no personal knowledge?

A. No.

Q. Who told you that this place had for many years past been noted for sedition?

A. I don't propose to answer that question.

Q. You make this statement in a responsible document to the authorities, and so I want to know what is the basis of this statement?

A. I leave it as I have put down.

Q. True, you may leave it as you have put down, but I want to know the reasons for your statement. I put this question, because, previous to this, officials have stated that in Kasur before the 10th April, there was no political activity and nothing done so far as politics were concerned. And therefore I am surprised to find in your statement that this city has for many years past been noted for sedition. Do you still adhere to that statement?

A. I won't answer this question.

* * *

Q. Then you make the statement :"This city harbours pleaders who are well known to have anti-Government feeling." Is that also hearsay?

A. Yes.

Q. And stands on no other footing, as the other statement?

A. Yes.

Q. Are you aware, as Martial Law administrator, that several pleaders assisted the authorities, in the 12th and subsequent days, to maintain law and order, and that one of them was actually seen to mingle in saving Mr. Sherbourn?

A. Yes.

Q. Knowing that several pleaders assisted the authorities in the manner I have described, you still adhere to the statement that the pleaders are well known to have anti-Government feeling?

A. I adhere to the statement, and say it is hearsay.

Q. Do you adhere to it now?

A. I acknowledge your facts as correct.

Q. If they are correct, do you adhere to this sweeping statement or are you prepared to modify it?

A. I put it to you in turn : did all the pleaders try to stop the whole . . . ?

Q. Well, I am not here to answer your question.

A. Well, I don't want to answer yours.

Col. MacRae had also stated that the *hundis* of Kasur merchants who had not joined them in the hartal, were dishonoured by the Amritsar merchants. Col. MacRae replied that that was also hearsay, and "he had no evidence in support of it". This officer had ordered that Martial Law notices should be posted on the houses of the well-known agitators. Sir Chimanlal asked what he meant by the word "agitators". The answer was : "I think it is good English."

Q.—But what do you mean by agitators?

A.—I don't want to answer otherwise than I have said in my statement.

This unedifying dialogue went on for some time longer. We have reproduced these portions to show the manner in which this officer, at least, discharged the very responsible duties which he had to perform, and with reference to which he has been indemnified in advance by the Government.

This officer had issued orders that reprisals would be taken against the property of the persons on whose walls any proclamation had been defaced. He declined to answer the question whether the order was written or oral, by saying, "What does it matter whether it was written or oral?" It is difficult to say which is more offensive, whether the insolence of the answer or the brutality of the order. We use the term "brutality", because the reprisals were to be taken (according to the answer given by the witness) "even though the notice may have been defaced by someone else"; and when he was asked whether he thought the order to be a reasonable order, he replied : "It was reasonable order, and I still think so."

Q. As regards the whipping of schoolboys, you gave directions that the biggest six boys were to be selected for whipping?

A. Yes, generally speaking.

Q. Their misfortune was that they happened to be big?

A. Of course.

Q. Because they were big, therefore they had to suffer these lashes?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you think it was a reasonable thing to do?

A. I thought so under the circumstances, and I still think so.

We have selected only a few samples from the answers given by

the two officers in question. In fact, their answers are a study in insolence and irresponsibility. We do not know that those who appointed these officers are not more to blame than the officers themselves. They perhaps knew not what they were doing. But those who selected them should have known that these officers were unfit for the post to which they were called. On the merits, we are of opinion that the introduction of Martial Law was, so far as local circumstances are concerned, totally unnecessary and the Act[1] was administered in an improper manner.

PATTI AND KHEMKARN

These are two small railway stations, a few miles from Kasur. At Khemkarn, the station property was looted and wires cut. As stated by Mr. Marsden, it was a small thing and done by "apparently the lower classes, shopkeepers, riff-raff labourers and people of that type". And at Patti, as stated by Mr. Marsden, the chief inhabitants of the town gave assistance to the officials and the police, and all was quiet. Yet the effect of Martial Law was felt at these two villages also in full force.[2]

GUJRANWALA

Gujranwala district is in many respects one of the most important in the province and Gujranwala itself, though a small town continuing a population of 30,000, is the most notable for being the birth-place of Maharaja Ranjit Singhji. It is also an important railway station, only 42 miles from Lahore on the main line. The places in this district which have come under our notice, besides Gujranwala, are Wazirabad, Nizamabad, Akalgarh, Ramnagar, Hafizabad, Singla Hill, Moman, Dhaban Singh, Manianwala, Nawan Pind, Chuharkana, and Sheikhu-pura. Gujranwala was cut up into two districts on the first of November last, the portion cut out being known as the Sheikhupura district. For the purposes of this report, therefore, the original district will be considered as one whole, coming under the jurisdiction of the same officer.

It is common cause that there were no signs of unrest up to the 13th April last, or, more correctly speaking, up to the 14th. So much was this the case that Col. O'Brien[3] was in the ordinary course

[1] Presumably, the Indemnity Act of 1919

[2] As stated by Marsden before the Hunter Committee, even at Patti 31 persons were convicted and of these 14 were sentenced to be whipped.

[3] Deputy Commissioner of Gujranwala

transferred, on the 12th, to Ambala, and was the recipient of an address from his friends and admirers at Gujranwala. In answer to a question by the Hunter Committee he said that had he or the authorities known that there was any trouble brewing, he would certainly not have been transferred, but would have remained at Gujranwala, as, indeed, he was brought to Gujranwala immediately there was trouble, i. e., on the 14th. On the 30th March, there was no stir at all in Gujranwala, and there was no hartal. On the 4th April, the matter of the hartal was informally discussed by the members of the District Congress Committee in connection with Mr. Gandhi's message. A large public meeting was held on the 5th, at which 4 innocuous resolutions were passed dealing with the Rowlatt Act. The speeches made at this meeting were studiously moderate. Col. O'Brien was, however, anxious about this meeting. He sent for certain noted men of Gujranwala and warned them that if any disturbances took place they would be held responsible; and they asked the Deputy Commissioner, and the Superintendent of Police who was also present at the interview, to attend the meeting, if they chose to. The 6th of April opened with a complete hartal and people, young and old, joined in fasting and prayer. The various statements made before us go to show that the authorities tried their utmost to prevent the hartal, and even fasting, and great pressure was exercised on behalf of, or by the authorities to prevent the hartal.

Up to the 12th, as has already been remarked, everything was calm and quiet. But suddenly the news of the arrest and externment of Mr. Gandhi, as also the arrest and deportation of Drs. Satyapal and Kitchlew, found its way to Gujranwala; so also did the happenings of the 10th at Amritsar and Lahore. On this, the common people as well as the leaders, began to consider the advisability of another hartal, this time by way of protest against the said arrests and sympathy for those who had died or were wounded by the firing at Lahore or Amritsar. The leaders had an informal conference, and after much discussion, they seem to have come to the conclusion that, whilst they recognized that, at that time of tensi-on, a hartal might be a dangerous thing, they would not be able to restra-in the ardour of the people, and that therefore they should try, if there was a hartal, to keep the hartalists occupied, and engage their attention by arranging an open-air meeting. The authorities again tried, without success, to prevent a

hartal, and the 14th of April saw another complete hartal.

The 13th of April and after, being the *Baisakhi* holidays, Gujranwala had attracted a large crowd of holiday-makers, who are at no time averse to having a drink, and were least so on this occasion. So, on the 14th, at Gujranwala, we find the elements that go to make a crowd unruly, viz., the holiday mood of 'do as you please', the drink, the resentment over the Government doings, the knowledge of mob excesses elsewhere, and idleness.

Early in the morning it was rumoured that a dead calf was hung up on one of the railway bridges near the station. There is no doubt that, whoever did it, it was a most imprudent act, calculated to rouse the worst passions of the Hindus. Various theories have been put before us—one is, that it was the work of the police, who did not like the union between Hindus and Mohammedans. It has been developed in the Gujranwala statements. The authorities have not been able to trace the mischief-makers. There can be little doubt that it was done by those who wanted to disunite the two sections. The effect, however, was quite the contrary. The people simply considered the hanging of a dead calf to have been instigated by the authorities, the more so because pork was found to have been thrown by someone on a mosque. And this belief knit the two closer together. A crowd, therefore, proceeded towards the station railway bridge. Meanwhile, a train going to Wazirabad from Lahore side, had arrived. A *khansama* on it gave the news of the massacre of the 13th. The train was packed with holiday-makers. Some of the crowd were evidently bent upon stopping the train from proceeding further. They seem to have thrown stones at the train. They then began to set fire to the Gurukul bridge. The attempt, however, was indifferently made. Whilst this was being done, the Governor of the Gurukul, Lala Rallya Ram, Mr. Labh Singh, Bar-at-law, Mr. Din Muhammad, pleader, and others, scenting the danger, proceeded to the scene of action. A European officer and a few constables were also seen approaching the bridge. The fire was put out by the Gurukul staff, assisted by the Indian gentlemen just mentioned. It is an extraordinary thing that the Superintendent of police said that "it was no business of the police to extinguish fire, but their duty was to protect public property." (Statement 282).

The crowd then proceeded to the Kachi bridge, which lies on

the other side of the station. Here the Superintendent of Police, Mr. Herron, was trying to disperse the crowd, and thought fit to fire, inflicting several casualties. Meanwhile, the leaders were trying to restrain the crowd and keep the people within the town limits. They had, therefore, organized a meeting which was proving quite successful, and might have proved entirely successful, but for an unfortunate occurrence. The men who were wounded were brought to the meeting, we presume, to excite its sympathy. The attempt entirely succeeded. The meeting broke up, and a crowd proceeded towards the station, bent upon seeking vengeance. Valuable properties, one after another, were destroyed, including the Church, the Post Office, the Tahsil[1], the Court House and the railway station. It seems that the police were mere onlookers, and made no attempt to check this incendiarism. In the statements before us, it has actually been suggested that the police even incited the mob to incendiarism, and the evidence contained in them certainly lends colour to the suggestion.

Col. O'Brien returned post-haste to Gujranwala. He seems to have telephoned to Lahore for a blank card. Examined by Sir Chimanlal Setalvad as to what powers he had, he said, "I had a conversation with the Chief Secretary on the telephone on the 15th, and said to him, I might probably have to take certain actions and I hope that they will be legalized afterwards, if done in good faith." "But that was before the declaration of Martial Law?" asked Sir Chimanlal Setalvad. Col. O'Brien replied, "Yes." Sir Chimanlal further asked, "You telephoned to him that you would have to take certain actions, and you wished that your actions should be legalized, if done in good faith, and he issued a blank cheque?" The answer was, "Yes. He said, 'Use your common sense. It would be all right'." If this be the genesis of the Indemnity Act, we have no hesitation in saying that it was discreditable. What action was taken by this officer "in good faith" will be seen presently.

We are satisfied that the destruction of the valuable property, including a place of devotion, was wanton and unjustified, and no firing on the part of the Superintendent of Police, or even the wicked hanging of a dead calf on the bridge, could possibly be held to justify incendiarism. The firing and, especially, the hanging of a dead calf constituted grave provocation, but they could not be pleaded in

[1] Office of the Tahsildar

justification of excesses.

When Col. O'Brien returned, the mob's fury had subsided. He had asked for assistance, and it came promptly at 3 o'clock in the shape of aeroplanes, which dropped bombs on utterly innocent people. At no place where bombs were dropped was any meeting going on. Bombs were dropped on the Khalsa Boarding House. This is how a student describes the scene :

> We heard the noise of aeroplanes at about 3 p.m. . . They remained hovering over the Boarding House for about 10 minutes. . . . Suddenly a noise was heard and a shell came down, which struck our confectioner Ganda Singh. . . . A small piece of it injured the finger of my right hand. A boy fell down on account of the shock. (Statement, 296, p. 408.)

The Superintendent of the Boarding House has also made a statement. He says :

> No political meeting was ever held in our school, nor is it allowed. On the 14th April, none of the boarders went to the city. Our hostel and school are at a distance of about half a mile from the city and more than a mile from the station. (Statement 297, p. 409.)

According to the evidence given by Captain Carbery before Lord Hunter's Committee, his orders were "to disperse crowds going or coming". So far as the bomb-throwing on the Khalsa Boarding House is concerned, there was no crowd either going or coming, there was no meeting and it appears to us that there was no necessity whatsoever for throwing bombs on the Khalsa Boarding House, and it was by a stroke of good luck only that no lives were lost.

It is interesting to find, from the officers concerned, how they dropped bombs and fired machine-guns. People were bombed who were running back to their village when the firing was started.[1] The following dialogue took place between the Hunter Committee and the officer.

> Q. You first bombed, and they began to run away into the village?
>
> A. Yes.
>
> Q. That is over the houses in the village?
>
> A. Yes. I suppose some of the shots hit the houses.
>
> Q. The people were running away, they dispersed and got into some houses?
>
> A. Yes.

[1] Machine-guns were used or bombs dropped on Gharjak, Bhagwanpura, Dhulla and other neighbouring villages.

Q. You fired the machine-gun into the village; you may be thereby hitting not those people whom you dispersed, but other innocent people in their houses?

A. I could not discriminate between the innocent people and other people. I tried to shoot the people who ran away and who I thought were coming to do damage.

Q. The result of bombing was that they dispersed?

A. Yes.

Q. They ran into the village?

A. Yes.

Q. Was not your object accomplished? Where was the need of firing the machine-gun indiscriminately into the village?

A. The machine-gun was not fired indiscriminately. I shot at the men who were running away. I said the crowd scattered and ran back into the village and I fired at the men.

The officer says he was at a height of 200 feet. He could see "perfectly well". To the question "What was the further need of machine-gunning them and killing them", the prompt reply was, "To do more damage."

Q. Your object seems to be to hit or kill more people of that crowd, although they had begun to disperse, and were running away after the bombs were thrown?

A. I was trying to do it in their own interest. I also realized that if I tried to kill people, they would not gather again and do damage.

"The idea being to have a sort of moral effect?" was the further question put by Sir Chimanlal. "Quite right," was the quiet reply. The officer then machine-gunned into another village. There he fired into a crowd of people who were returning to their village, having come from Gujranwala. The evidence before us shows that there was no crowd such as is described by the officer, but there were stray parties of people who were utterly innocent. It is an admitted fact that they were all totally unarmed. The reason for firing into the Indian quarters of Gujranwala was that the people should not be in the street. "150 rounds" were fired "into the native city" and the officer, in order to make certain that he was understood, said to Sir Chimanlal, "You must understand it was no good firing at the houses. I was firing at the natives, into the native city."

In our opinion, all this firing from the aeroplanes was entirely unjustified. It was begun after the destruction by the mob was over,

and the crowds had dispersed. There was, therefore, no question of preventing further damage. We believe, too, that the firing was thoughtless, if not vindictive, and the officers in charge of the machines, on their own showing, held the lives of the villagers cheap, and fired in order to terrorize the people. The casualties, according to the list supplied and embodied in the statements produced before us, amount to 12 killed and 24 wounded, and if the loss of life was not greater, it was no fault of the officers concerned. The bombs would not explode.

If there was no excuse for the bombing of the 14th, there was less to bring the aeroplane into play on the 15th, because Col. O'Brien had by that time more military aid than he needed, certainly all he had asked for.

Sir Michael O'Dwyer seems to have been the originator of the suggestion of bombing from aeroplanes. Whether he was or not, it is certain that he approved of it. It should be remembered that the people of the Punjab were not used to the aeroplane or any other bombing. It must be admitted that aeroplane bombing can be justified only in proved necessity, and in the face of existing or imminent danger. All danger had been over in Gujranwala when the aeroplanes arrived. The mere presence of the aeroplanes was absolutely sufficient protection. The European population of Gujranwala was in no danger. Not a single European life was lost. Nothing has been shown to prove a military necessity for bombing. The official evidence shows that bombing was recklessly practised upon an unresisting people, and at a time when there was no danger threatening life or property, and when the experience of Amritsar and Kasur had shown that the mob fury was a sudden and momentary outburst with no persistence about it. On the 15th began indiscriminate arrests of barristers, pleaders and other leaders, some of whom, the authorities knew, had helped, at considerable risk to themselves, to curb the fury of the mob. There was at the time of these arrests, on Col. O'Brien's own showing, not a tittle of evidence to justify these arrests. They were made, as he says, in virtue of regulation 12 of the Defence of India Act regulations. This regu- lation simply authorizes arrests on suspicion well grounded. The only possible regulation which Col. O'Brien had in mind could be the following :

> In exercise of the powers conferred by Rule 12 A.A. of the Defence of India Consolidation Rules, 1915, the Lieutenant-Governor is pleased to

> authorize all commissioners to arrest without warrant any person against whom reasonable suspicion exists that he is promoting or assisting to promote rebellion against the authority of the Government.

If this is the regulation he had in mind, he, being a Deputy Commissioner, had no power of arresting under it. Moreover, it was a stretching of interpretation to have arrested the people who had done no wrong to the knowledge of the Deputy Commissioner, as at least he then possessed. It was admitted in the evidence before the Hunter Committee, and it is amply proved before us, that these leaders were arrested there and then, some of them were not even permitted to put on their clothes or even their head-dress. They were handcuffed in pairs, and about 22 of them chained together were made to walk a distance of two miles through the city, headed by two municipal commissioners, one a Hindu and the other a Mohammedan, and carried to Lahore in an open truck without arrangements for food or other necessities of life. The prisoners included the Governor of the Gurukul, Mr. Rallya Ram, nearly 63 years of age. He says :

> I was in a batch of 22 prisoners. All were chained together and handcuffed in pairs. We were, in this condition, marched through the public streets, and were made to run. We were taken to Lahore in an open truck. One of us was not even allowed facility for answering calls of nature. He was asked to perform it where he was seated, and when we reached Lahore, I was unable to get out of the prisoners' van without the rest, who were chained with me, also coming down. I was, therefore, forcibly dragged down and much hurt owing to my suffering from lumbago. (Statement 282, p. 388)

Col. O'Brien was asked why he would not allow people time even to dress. His reply was that he was in a hurry to finish the arresting. It is pertinent, therefore, to enquire why he did not send these leaders in a van to the station. The irresistible inference is that he wanted to make a demonstration and terrorize the people. Col. O'Brien considered that the arresting "was the kindliest thing to do".

On the 16th, Martial Law was proclaimed, and, under it, the people of Gujranwala were subjected to humiliation, flogging and many indignities. In order to compel people to open their shops, the following remarkable order was passed :

NOTICE UNDER MARTIAL LAW RULE NO. 2

April 18, 1919

> As we have come to know that some shopkeepers, who live within the municipal limits of Gujranwala, shut up their shops when the army and the

police people go to them to purchase articles, or that they refuse to sell the articles to the army or the police soldiers for a reasonable price. Therefore, the undermentioned orders are issued that after the publication of this Notice, those shopkeepers who would be found acting as mentioned above, would be arrested and they would be liable to be punished by flogging.

(Sd.) F. W. BERBERY,

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL,

OFFICER COMMANDING, DISTRICT GUJRANWALA

The following Martial Law notice shows what was meant by the Saluting Order, so much discussed by the members of Lord

MARTIAL LAW NOTICE NO. 7

We have come to know that Gujranwala district inhabitants do not usually show respect to the gazetted commissioners, European civil and military officers of His Imperial Majesty, by which the prestige and honour of the Government is not maintained. Therefore we order that the inhabitants of Gujranwala district should show proper respect to these respectable officers, whenever they have occasion to meet them, in the same way as big and rich people of India are respected.

Whenever anyone is on horseback or is driving any kind of wheeled conveyance, he must get down. One who has opened or got an umbrella in his hand, should close or lower it down, and all these persons should salute with their right hand respectfully.

(Sd.) L. W. Y. CAMPBELL,

BRIG.-GENERAL,

OFFICER COMMANDING, DISTRICT GUJRANWALA

Col. O'Brien sought to justify this order on the ground of Indian custom. Neither custom nor prudence can possibly be held to justify an order so manifestly humiliating and degrading. The evidence tendered before us goes to show that in its execution, soldiers had also to be saluted, and flogging was the punishment awarded for failing to salaam. If anybody did not salute them, he was struck on the back twice or thrice with a stick. Opposite the shop of Haveli Ram, a *haldi*[1] seller, a person who was a stranger and was buying *haldi*, was struck for this very reason that he did not get up and salute the soldiers. He had not seen the soldiers as he was with his back to the street. (Statement 305; also Statement 290, 293, 298, 300 and 301.) Students had to attend daily to salute the Union Jack.

[1] Yellow turmeric

Men of status were made to clean the drains in the bazaar, although in some cases the municipal sweeper had already cleaned them. (Statement 304.)

People were forbidden to carry sticks. Railway travelling was stopped for some time, and the curfew order was issued, thus reducing the people to a state of helplessness.

Then followed the prosecutions before the Martial Law Tribunals and the Summary Courts, and about these the same remarks are applicable as have been made about the Amritsar trials. There is abundant evidence to show that the evidence had been manufactured. The theory of rebellion practically broke down before Lord Hunter's Committee. The only ground Col. O'Brien had to give was that rebellion was "judicially proved". Almost every public leader was arrested. The treatment meted out to Diwan Mangal Sen and his family, the vindictive evacuation of Lala Amar Nath's house, the arrest and detention of people who were never tried, constitute a story of deliberate cruelty which was a disgrace to British Administration.

WAZIRABAD

Wazirabad is the next important railway station, 20 miles from Gujranwala on the main line. It is also a junction station. It is a small place, with a population of about 10,000. Just after the *Baisakhi* fair, every year, large gatherings of people from surrounding villages and districts take place in Wazirabad. There was no hartal on the 30th March, or the 6th April last, but the crowds that gathered from the villages brought also the news of the happenings at Lahore, Amritsar and Gujranwala. The people who had come from the villages, twitted the Wazirabadis for not observing hartal, and said that "since the people of Wazirabad did not observe hartal, nobody would take their girls in marriage". (Statement 312, p. 434.) There was a meeting on the 14th, at the mosque, to consider the desirability of having the hartal. On the 15th, the hartal came off, but there were mischief-makers, who were not satisfied with the mere stoppage of business. The events, of which they had heard in an exaggerated form, rankled in their bosoms, and they proceeded to cut telegraph wires and damage the railway line. Some of these then proceeded to Rev. Mr. Bailey's house. They were joined by others on the way. The mob wantonly burnt the Rev. Mr. Bailey's house, including his valuable

literary treasures. The police appeared to have been present at the scene, but they made no attempt to check this most unjustifiable incendiarism. Fortunately, no lives were lost. Not a single person of note seems to have taken part in this destruction. Some of the notables of Wazirabad appeared to have attempted to check the mob excesses, with more or less success. The Rev. Mr. Bailey's house stands on an isolated piece of ground, about two miles from Wazirabad and a mile from Nizamabad. So much for the mob action, for which there is no justification. The destruction of an innocent and popular missionary's house makes the action all the more regrettable and reprehensible. We have not been able to find out any particular motive for this action, save that the mob had yielded to an anti-European fury.

Col. O'Brien, accompanied by the police and the military, reached Wazirabad on the 16th. Arrests took place immediately, and the whole of the demonstration, like that of Gujranwala, took place in Wazirabad also.

On the 18th, a durbar was held, at which Col. O'Brien is reported to have said :

> Listen, you foolish and mad people, you had thought that the British Government had ceased. Now your madness will be cured. We have got a prescription for your madness. Be it known to you all that the Government has authority to confiscate the property of any person, to raze to the ground his house, nay, if it likes, it can set fire to it. Accordingly, first of all, I do hereby order that the whole property of Jamiat Singh Bagga[1] be confiscated to the Government. (Statement 313, p. 142)

Martial Law was proclaimed the following day. This is how its administration is described by Dr. Daulat Singh, late secretary of the local Arya Samaj :

> Martial Law notices were posted at different places and on some buildings. These were affixed to the places and houses with which the arrested persons had connection. A set of Martial Law notices was also posted at the Arya Samaj Mandir, although the Arya Samaj had nothing to do with any of the events. I, who was against the hartal and took no part whatsoever in the movement, was to be held responsible for the safe custody of the Martial Law notices, as I happened to be the secretary of the Arya Samaj. Two persons had to be specially engaged to keep watch, and I had to go personally several times to see the notices, that no mischief-monger might tear them away or

[1] Old Sikh leader and prominent citizen of Wazirabad

damage them. Martial Law authorities were very particular that the notices were not injured or interfered with. (Statement 308, p. 422)

It was a breach of Martial Law regulations to remove or deface such notices, and occupiers of premises to which the notices were affixed were held responsible. Dr. Daulat Singh was arrested, and the registers of the Arya Samaj were attached and removed. He was detained for 10 days, asked to give evidence against certain persons, and then discharged about the 30th May. He was arrested again on the 7th June. He describes how evidence was manufactured against him, how he was given no time even to engage a pleader, how on the flimsiest evidence he was convicted and how Col. O'Brien said : "As Swami Shraddhanand is taking part in the agitation, you must be taking part also." (Statement 308, p. 426.)

It is further stated that if any person did not salaam a European by mistake or oversight, he had his turban taken off his head and tied round his neck. He was dragged to the camp by the military. There he was either fined or flogged. (Statements 308 and 313.) One witness states that although he had salaamed, but because his salaam was not noticed, he was made to kiss the shoes of the officer in question. (Statement 319.) This evidence is abundantly corroborated by many witnesses.

Butter was regularly collected for the troops without any payment. When the collection of butter was stopped, one rupee per house was "realized for the expenses of the military". (Statement 314.) Only widows were exempted. The witness adds that when the money thus collected was exhausted, more was collected. The same witness says that, in addition, 67,000 rupees were collected as indemnity from Wazirabad. He was himself a municipal commissioner, and he had to do his share of collecting in his own ward.

He himself was arrested on the 7th June, and was given only one hour to produce his defence witnesses. Those who had arms were authorized to fire without hesitation on any mob, if they exceeded the limits of the law. (Statement 309.)

The evidence before us further shows that bribes were freely given to and accepted by the police from persons who wanted to avoid arrest or to get out of having to give false evidence.

A number of *charpais* (cots) were taken away from the people for the use of the military. They have neither been paid for, nor

returned. (Statement 310, p. 423.)

As in Gujranwala, the curfew order was imposed in Wazirabad also, and schoolchildren were compelled to attend roll call and salute the Union Jack thrice a day. "They were put to great trouble, specially by walking a long distance in the noonday sun." (Statement 311, p. 434.)

Reference has already been made to the confiscation of Sardar Jamiat Singh's property. It is interesting to know exactly what this means. His son, in his statement says :

> When the Deputy Commissioner and other officers reached near our shop, I came to know that warrants had been issued against my father also. The police searched our residential house and sitting-room, and scolded the ladies in the house in my presence. They then asked where Jamiat Singh had gone, or where they had concealed him. (Statement 311, p. 431.)

Although the son had definitely told the police that his father had gone to Jammu, he was constantly worried. On the 21st April, the confiscation order was pronounced. Four ladies and six minor children were summarily turned out of the house.

> The ladies had only those few clothes on which respectable *purdanashin*[1] women generally wear within the four walls of their houses, and the children were even more scantily dressed, and, in fact, some of the children had been playing in the yard without any clothes. They did not allow the ladies to put on their shoes even, and the children who were naked were turned out as they were. The family of a man who was worth lakhs and who had donated thousands of rupees to schools, colleges, dharmsalas and other charitable institutions, and who had helped hundreds of people in the city in time of need, was that day without a house and without the necessaries of daily life. (Statement 311, p. 432.)

Only those who know what *purdanashin* ladies wear whilst in their houses and what they wear when they go out, can appreciate the enormity of the outrage done to the ladies in thus turning them out, and Sardar Jamiat Singh is the premier citizen of Wazirabad, a leader among the Sikhs, who had done valuable work during the War and was the recipient of a sanad from the Commander-in-Chief. Sardar Jamiat Singh surrendered himself as soon as he returned, i.e., on the 26th April, but the confiscation orders were not withdrawn till the 4th of May. We have gone through the record, such as it is, of his case,

[1] Those who observe *purdah*; in orthodox households such women live in secluded apartments.

and a variety of papers submitted to us, and we have no doubt that the conviction against him was wholly wrong. The charge-sheet was not shown to him in the first instance. His counsel could not get a certified copy of it, nor were all the defence witnesses called. Sardar Jamiat Singh is 62 years old. He has a cataract in one of his eyes. He was treated as a common felon, and for some time was locked up in a solitary cell.

The trials of persons arrested here seem to have been more farcical than elsewhere. Here is a graphic description as to how evidence was manufactured.

> All the citizens were sent for by beat of drum to the police station. Minors and badmashes (entered in the register) were considered as informers. Anybody, against whom the police wanted to get up a case, was brought before the boys who were tutored to give evidence, and thus the poor men were entangled. The same boys appeared before the Commission as witnesses; and it was on their evidence alone that the people were punished. (Statement 313, p. 444.)

NIZAMABAD

Nizamabad is a small village hardly a mile from Wazirabad, and consists of one narrow lane full of houses and workshops combined. It is a noted place for handmade cutlery prepared by hereditary artisans with the crudest tools. There is no doubt that some of the men, as has been already stated, joined the crowd that burnt Mr. Bailey's house, but the punishment meted out to the poor villagers was out of all proportion to the crime of a few of them. On the 18th of April, a special British troop train came from Lahore side and stopped before the village, which is situated near the railway. The soldiers surrounded the village. They looted the shops, took out flour, ghee, molasses and made the villagers carry these things to the train. For nearly a fortnight the people were made to attend the police station and had to sit in the sun from 7 in the morning till 8 in the evening. The people had to close their workshops. (Statement 329.)

A lad named Muhammad Ramzan had unwittingly crossed the soldiers' cordon. He was grazing his goats. He was shot and he died on the spot. "Two or three British soldiers tied the dead body with his turban, dragged it and left it by the pond near the village." (Statement 330.)

Mir Wajid Ali, a Mughul, describes in a long statement how attempts were made to extort evidence, how people were made to

attend the police station from day to day and wait there in the hot sun, and he winds up his statement :

> My son and I were searched and put in the lock-up. On the 9th of June, my son Islam Beg and myself were brought before the Deputy Commissioner, Col. O'Brien, at about 6 p.m. with 5 or 6 other persons of Wazirabad. We were all released by the Deputy Commissioner after undergoing the punishment of rubbing our noses on the ground. (Statement 327, p. 454.)

Thus, when there was no evidence at all on which to convict, a degrading form of punishment had to be invented in order to insult apparently innocent men. 6,500 rupees were exacted from these villagers as indemnity. (Statement 327.)

Witnesses 324, 325, 326 and 334 have given evidence showing how attempts were made by the police by threats and actual corporal punishment to extort evidence.

AKALGARH

Akalgarh is a railway station beyond Wazirabad on the Wazirabad-Lyallpur branch. It has a population of about 4,000, and is noted chiefly for its being the residence of the celebrated Diwan Sawan Mal and his son, Mul Raj, Governors of Multan in the later days of the Sikh rule.

In Akalgarh itself, there was no disturbance of any kind whatsoever during the month of April last. There was the hartal on the 6th and a public meeting, at which Diwan Gopal Lal, one of the descendants of Diwan Sawan Mal, presided. On the 14th April, there was another hartal over the arrests and the events at Amritsar and Lahore. Telegraph wires were, however, cut on the 15th, when there was no hartal at Akalgarh. These wires were cut at a distance of about a mile, whether from Akalgarh or from the railway station. It was not the work of a crowd, nor, so far as we can see, of anybody from Akalgarh. The theory suggested to us was that the wire-cutting was done by those who were coming back from the Wazirabad *Baisakhi* fair, Akalgarh being 23 miles from Wazirabad.

On the 22nd of April, however, the Deputy Commissioner came, stopped at the canal bridge and sent for the gentry of the town. He required them to repair the road leading to the dak bungalow, and ordered that it must be repaired quickly by the town people in such a manner that his motor could have an easy passage. Nearly Rs. 2,000, therefore, were collected from the people, and the road extending over a mile was compulsorily fitted for the passage of the Deputy Commissioner's motor. The whole of the amount was raised in a

single day from the small town. Not only, therefore, was the levy illegal and objectionable on principle, but it was also unconscionably heavy for a place so poor as Akalgarh.

Then followed, as at Gujranwala and Wazirabad, the arrests of the leading people. A batch of 30 accused was tried, 20 of whom were acqui-tted, 2 lads of 15 years of age were sentenced to simple imprisonment for one day, 6 were convicted and the case against 2 was withdrawn.

The intimidation of witnesses, the corruption that went on during nearly two months and the terrorism that reigned at Akalgarh are all set forth in the statements furnished to us, with a wealth of detail enough to carry conviction. We propose to sample out a few of these disgraceful incidents.

Nanak Chand was called to the police station and asked to give false evidence. On his refusal "he was made to stand in the sun for half an hour". He was abused. He was told that he would be shot if he did not give evidence. Thereupon, he gave a statement to dictation, but he says that he gave the true evidence before the Court. He adds that he saw other people being treated likewise. People were forced to assemble at the dak bungalow. He was obliged to supply the military officers milk free of charge. (Statements 343 to 345.)

Diwan Gopal Lal referred to above was arrested on the 22nd April. He was detained in jail for two months and was ultimately let off for want of evidence. He says :

> I was arrested because I refused to pay money which the Revenue Assistant and M. Sahib Khan demanded from me as a bribe through the *Zaildar* and Chaudhri Ghulam Kadir and Sirdar Khan. While I was in jail, they received from my relatives, as a bribe, a sum of Rs. 5,000 for me, and Rs. 1,000 for my brother-in-law. (Statement 340 p. 468.)

Ram Lal, a student aged 15 years, was arrested on the 23rd April, and discharged on the 13th May. (Statement 342.)

Lala Ganesh Das Pasi and his two brothers were arrested. He states how a bribe of Rs. 2,000 was paid; how he was still detained, how they were finally discharged, how on the 23rd of May his property was confiscated on the plea that he was an absconder. He says that his property was not restored to him, in spite of his acquittal, up to the 19th of July 1919. (Statement 346.)

Chaudhri Fazal Dad was a *Lambardar* and Vice-President of the Municipality of Akalgarh. His crime was that he had appeared as a defence witness, on which account, he says, he was arrested, tried and

fined Rs. 500. On May 26th, he was, without any reason, as he says, dismissed from lambardarship by Colonel O'Brien. He states that the road repairs, referred to above, were done during his lambardarship. He states that "the people who were not of the labouring class were forced by the Revenue Officer and the *Zaildar* to work without any payment". Out of the Rs. 1,800 collected by force, "only Rs. 700 or Rs. 800 were given to the contractor". He adds :

> All the people of the town were collected at dak bungalow, and some machine-guns and some big guns were fired from the railway line. The people were plainly told that they should not appear as witnesses for the defence, and ought to appear for the prosecution, as desired by the Sub-Inspector of Police. (Statement 336.)

Rs. 1,000 were also collected from the people as the expenses of the machine-gun firing already referred to, and a small sum for repairing the telegraph wire. (statement 340 A.)

RAMNAGAR

Ramnagar is no bigger than Akalgarh. It is situated about 5 miles from Akalgarh on the bank of the Chenab. It is not on the railway line. The late Maharaja Ranjit Singh had a palace there called Baradari.

There was a hartal on the 6th April, and a partial hartal on the 15th April. No damage is reported to have been done at Ramnagar, but it is alleged that an effigy of His Majesty was burnt on the 15th April, and the ashes thrown into the river. We have enquired into this allegation with the closest attention. Several hundred witnesses were examined by us. And though the evidence thus collected was convincing and conclusive to repudiate the charge, it was decided to invite the public in the openest manner to give us any information to the contrary that they might possess. A public meeting was, therefore, held on the 30th November, 1919, in the open at Ramnagar, at which those who believed that the King's effigy had been burnt or had information on it, were invited to make either a public or a private statement, but not a single witness came forward to state that there ever was any such insult offered to His Majesty. We are satisfied that it was entirely a manufactured charge. The statements, collected by us, will show that up to the 23rd April no mention was ever made of this matter by any of the police officers. Col. O'Brien has stated in his judgment, which we have carefully examined, that the delay in mentioning the incident was due to preoccupation on the part of the

police. This is wholly unacceptable, for, there should have been a mention of the incident at least in the police diary. On the 17th April, the Inspector of Police, although he went round the whole of Ramnagar, made no mention of it. The alleged leader in the affair, although he was available, was not arrested before the 9th of May.

Yet the people of Ramnagar were, all the same, not only made to labour under a calumny, but the best of them were made to suffer heavily through a prosecution wantonly undertaken, supported by manufactured evidence led in a trial in which the canons guiding ordinary trials were set aside.

Lala Karam Chand, 60 years old, by temperament a religious man, living practically in retirement, was himself a victim. He was prosecuted along with 27 others and sentenced. He was in Government employ from 1877 to 1900 in the Postal and the Railway Departments. After 1910 "he practically renounced worldly affairs". He passed 9 months out of the year at Hardwar. He denies that "there was any funeral procession arranged for, or any effigy burnt". He admits that a few boys passed through the bazaar on the 15th April and shouted "*Hai Hai Rowlatt Bill*" (Alas! the Rowlatt Bill). He says that on the 17th April a Sub- Inspector went to Ramnagar and recorded that there was hartal but nothing else. And it was on the 23rd April that the Revenue Officer went to Ramnagar and after consultation with the *Zaildar*, sent him and others to Akalgarh on the pretext of an enquiry. On the 24th, they were handcuffed and sent to Gujranwala and remained in jail up to the 16th May. Till then they did not know for what purpose they had been arrested. They were brought back to Ramnagar on the 17th May. On the 19th, they were required to give the names of their witnesses and they were tried on the 22nd, with the result we have already mentioned. (Statement 422.)

Lala Sundar Das states that even the despatch of telegrams by the people of Ramnagar in connection with the arrests was resented. He and others were produced, on the 11th June, before the Deputy Commissioner at Gujranwala, and, before they were discharged, they were ordered by Colonel O'Brien "to draw lines on the ground with their noses and express repentance". (Statement 419.)

Lala Hans Raj says that Abdulla, *Lambardar* of Ramnagar, went to him on the 8th May, and told him that if he did not pay Rs. 200, he would be arrested the next morning. The witness protested. He says :

> The next morning, I found the brother of Abdulla, *Lambardar*, and another person belonging to a criminal tribe, sitting at my door with lathis (sticks) in their hands. No sooner had I opened the door than I was suddenly seized by them and dragged to the bazaar.

The witness still refused to pay the money. He was then forcibly taken to the police station. He then describes how evidence was manufactured against him and others, after he himself had been given the option of becoming a Crown witness. The witness was at Wazirabad on the 15th April and reached Akalgarh at about 5.15 p.m. It was, therefore, physically impossible for him to have taken part in any procession or demonstration at Ramnagar, at the time when the effigy is stated to have been burnt. (Statement 417, p. 357.)

Lala Gobind Sahai and others were arrested for having dared to go to the Deputy Commissioner in connection with this case, and were released on the 11th June, after undergoing the same performance as Lala Sundar Das. (Statements 423 and 424.)

Lala Ram Chand describes how at first the prosecution story, that an effigy was carried in a funeral procession and burnt with several maunds of wood, had been changed into the burning of a cloth doll. (Statement 425.)

Sayed Hakim Shah, a retired station-master, sets forth how the prosecution story shifted, how he himself happened to go to the riverside on the very evening and saw nothing burning, how on the 22nd May he was asked to give evidence for the prosecution and how he refused and was badly treated for his refusal. He has a record of 37 years' service in the Railway Department. (Statement 432.)

Bhagwan Das was approver in the effigy case. He has now made a long statement repudiating the evidence which he gave for the prosecution, setting forth the circumstances under which he did so. (Statement 443.)

We feel that Akalgarh and Ramnagar were made to suffer humiliation, loss of liberty, loss of money and terrible anxiety, simply because Col. O'Brien was bent on teaching a severe lesson to people, those who had for the first time in their lives begun to realize national consciousness and to interest themselves in public affairs. The tyranny was aggravated by reason of the presence of an utterly unscrupulous local official, Malik Sahib Khan, whose name figures prominently in the statements collected by us regarding these villages.

HAFIZABAD

Hafizabad is 15 miles from Akalgarh on the Wazirabad-Lyallpur railway line, and is a fairly large trade centre. It has a population of more than 5,000 souls.

The hartal spirit, as a protest against the authorities' action at Lahore and Amritsar on the 10th, was travelling along the whole railway line and had reached Hafizabad also. And there was a complete hartal on the 14th April. A crowd, principally of drunken idlers, had gone to the station. Near the level crossing about 300 yards from the station, this crowd stopped the train and, in a wanton manner, attacked Lieutenant Tatam, who was in a first-class compartment with his little boy. They broke the window panes of the carriage. Meanwhile, others in the crowd resented this barbarous behaviour and protected Lieutenant Tatam at some peril to their own lives. At the request of Lieutenant Tatam, the driver hurried away the train, which safely reached Wazirabad. On the 15th, a drunkard, called Top, led a crowd of about a hundred and broke the wires and damaged a points-man's hut. Top was taken in custody, the crowd followed him to the Tahsil and broke the Tahsil windows by throwing stones. A shot fired into the air dispersed this crowd.

Colonel O'Brien went to Hafizabad on the 22nd April. Then followed a repetition of what has been described about Akalgarh and other places, resulting in the terrorizing of a whole population.[1]

Bihari Lal Kapur was arrested, together with his servant boy, for reasons mentioned in his statement, and in connection with the attack on the train. He says two boys and a Government servant were produced as witnesses against them, but they were acquitted after having been kept in custody for one month and nine days. (Statement 396.)

Harnam Singh had to submit to extortion to the tune of two hundred rupees, in order to save his son, but it proved of no avail. The son was arrested, tried and imprisoned. (Statement 397.)

Hukam Devi states that her son had to go to jail, because she was unable to find money to bribe the police. (Statement 398.)

Ruldu Ram, a pleader's clerk, describes the way in which private feuds were taken advantage of for the purpose of damaging the leaders, even those who had done valuable work during the War.

[1] It was reported that Gujranwala police proceeded to Hafizabad withwarrant for the arrest of 121 persons, containing neither names nor descriptions ofthe persons to be arrested, and the police did arrest 121 residents of Hafizabad under the warrant.

He describes also the way in which the police concocted evidence. (Statement 401.)

Sardar Diwan Singh, Sub-Editor, says :

> First of all, 6 men, all of whom were respectable people, were arrested and handcuffed. They were not told the charges against them, nor were they given any other information. After the lapse of a month and a half, charges were framed against them. In order to get up false prosecution witnesses, the people were subjected to corporal punishment; filthy and abusive language was used against them in the bazaar. They were severely treated and the police subjected respectable men to all sorts of hardships and indignities. . . . Telegrams were sent to His Excellency the Viceroy and the Lieutenant-Governor, Punjab, about false prosecution witnesses. But no attention was paid nor any enquiry held. . . . When it became known to the Colonel that such telegrams were being sent, they were censored and refused. The Summary Court Martial disposed of all the Hafizabad cases in the course of one single day. . . . The accused in the Hafizabad cases included big landowners, *raises*, bankers, lawyers and other respectable people, and were marched through the streets and were deliberately humiliated. (Statement 388, p. 517.)

Lala Rup Chand Chopra gives a graphic account of the energetic measures taken by Colonel O'Brein regarding the recruiting, and then regarding the prosecutions under Martial Law. Not finding things to his satisfaction, i. e., many people not having been arrested up to the 30th April, Colonel O'Brien is said to have removed some of the old officials and put in men of his own choice. On the evening of the 30th April, a proclamation by beat of drum was issued to the effect that every turban-wearer was to present himself the next morning in front of the Tahsil, and if anybody absented, he would be shot. He adds that during the new regime, people were made to sit all day long in the open, and the process was repeated from day to day. (Statement 390.)

The same order as at other places was issued regarding school-children. Some British soldiers helped themselves to various articles from shopkeepers, without making any payment. The witness went with Mr. Andrews to the Inspector's house on the 20th October, and a case of extortion was brought to his notice on the part of the punitive police, with the result that two constables had to be dismissed and a havildar degraded. Mr. Chopra concludes his statement by saying that he is an Oxford man, has resided in England for 13 years, belonged to the Indian Ambulance Corps raised in London, and that

he has never taken part in politics, but that he comes forward with his evidence for the sake of seeking redress for the wrongs done to the people. (Statement 390.)

Lala Beli Ram Kapur was arrested and locked up with 23 others in a room measuring 12 by 15, the same room having to be used by all of them for natural purposes also. They were kept as under-trial prisoners up to the 6th of June. (Statement 405, p. 540.)

Sardar Mewa Singh, a retired head clerk in the Forest Department, describes the cruelty of the recruiting methods. He describes his own arrest as follows :

> On the 21st of April, I was arrested without a warrant. On the 22nd, warrants were drawn and the signature of the District Magistrate obtained. I was placed for two days in the Hafizabad lock-up, which was very dirty. 23 men were packed up there in a single room. It could hardly accommodate four persons. We were put to fearful discomforts, not being allowed even to ease ourselves, when we felt the necessity. Two of us were taken out at a time in handcuffs. At times we had to pass stools in the lock-up. On the 23rd of April, 1919, we were removed to the Gujranwala District Jail. All the 23 persons were bound by the same chain. Handcuffs were put on the hands of everybody. We were taken there under strict surveillance and a guard of armed military police. We were not allowed to answer a call of nature, or to drink water on the way. The treatment accorded to us by the menial staff was intolerable. On the 23rd of May, 1919, we were again taken back to Hafizabad for identification. I cannot express the horrible treatment that was meted out to us by the police on our way to Hafizabad. Some seven or eight men were allowed their own food by the Superintendent, Jail, Gujranwala. When we were taken out from the Gujranwala Jail in handcuffs, the Jailor asked the Sub-Inspector of Police to allow us to take our meals which were ready, but the latter refused to allow us to do so. We had thus to fast for the whole day. We were brought down to Lahore on the 29th May. The papers were shown to the Public Prosecutor, who sent this case back, considering our offence to be slight. On the evening of 4th June, Mr. Wace called on us to put in a list of defence witnesses. In spite of our repeated requests we were not informed of the charges against us, nor were we given the names of the prosecution witnesses. The date for the hearing was fixed for 7th June, which left us a very short time to prepare our defence. We could not inform our relatives, nor engage the services of lawyers. One of my defence witnesses, Dr. Umrek Singh, Assistant Surgeon, was at Simla. He was not called. In cross-examination, Dr. Daulat Ram admitted that he was on bad terms with me. Other prosecution witnesses appeared out of fear of the police.

My defence witnesses, who are all respectable gentlemen, had deposed that I had been confined to bed on account of some trouble in the eyes, and could not have left my house. I am more than 60 years of age. I have never taken any part in any political meetings. Mr. Wace, after consultation with Colonel O'Brien, the Deputy Commissioner, fined me Rs. 500. My petition for mercy still remains undealt with. This is all due to the mischief of the police who had won over a few badmashes (hooligans) to support them. Thus all the occurrences took place on the same day, at the very place. The disturbances continued for two days, the 14th and the 15th. On the former, the police did not try at all to check the activities of the people, rather, they abetted them. On the latter day, the disturbances were quelled by simply firing a few blank cartridges and without the help of any additional police or military from outside. Had the police done their duty on the first day, these things would never have happened at all. The damage done to the buildings at Hafizabad might have amounted to a few rupees. Rs. 6,000 have been collected from the inhabitants in the form of a fine. The people have to bear the expenses of the punitive police, and this is a source of great trouble to the poor subjects of His Majesty. (Statement 389.)

Lala Ram Sahai, Head Master, Anglo-Sanskrit School, was also among those who were arrested. In his absence, his house was searched. The search continued up to 11 at night. He was taken to the Gujranwala jail and brought back to Hafizabad after a fortnight. He says :

Here pressure was brought to bear upon me to become a prosecution witness. The Inspector of Police used no physical force, but he employed moral pressure of every kind. He first praised me as an educated man and then alarmed me that I might be hanged and all my property confiscated, or that I might be transported for life. First, I told him that I did not like to play the traitor, and he advanced try [*sic*] arguments as to how it was no treason to tell the truth. I then consulted my father and the religious instructor of the school and decided that I must tell the truth and nothing but the truth. On my saying so to the Inspector, he told me that he wanted truth only. But when I made my statement, he suggested that I should not say that I was ready to speak at the peaceful meeting of the 6th April. He also suggested that if I was questioned as to whether the leaders took part in violence or not, I should answer that I was not expected to know it, for I was not present on the occasion. I, of course, fully believed and believe even now, that the leaders among the accused, such as Gurdial Singh and Lala Ram Sahai, did no violence. But I suppressed this from my statement, being influenced by the atmosphere that had been created around me. After I had given my statement, I was told that there was no

evidence against me, and that I would be released and made to appear as a prosecution witness. I, of course, was prepared to tell the truth and did tell it, except that I did not mention that the accused did no violence. No question was put to me about violence in the Court.

On 21st May, 1919, we were again brought back to Hafizabad. Prostitutes and other low people came to identify us. This time, as the number was very large, and as there was not sufficient room in the prisons, we were kept outside in a big office room. We were handcuffed day and night, and had to answer calls of nature in batches in full view of each other's nakedness. We were handcuffed two by two, and answered the call of nature in the same position. We slept at night in the open, with handcuffs on.

On the 23rd of April, 1919, I was presented before Colonel O'Brien, who ordered me to furnish a security of Rs. 1,000, which I did and was thereupon released. After 4 days, the Deputy Commissioner sent for me again, and I was told outside his bungalow that I was under no restrictions any more. Colonel O'Brien then came out and said, "*Toba Karo*" (cry penitence). I expressed, in word and action, my repentance, though I knew that I was innocent. He then said that I must "clear myself", by which he meant that I must appear as a prosecution witness.

As written above, I appeared as a prosecution witness afterwards, according to my promise. The Deputy Superintendent of Police told me afterwards that he would have arrested me again if I had not appeared as a prosecution witness. Martial Law was not yet over.

I again want to emphasize the fact that I fully believe that the leaders took no part in the violence done at the station or in the Tahsil. (Statement 413.)

We quote at length from this statement, in order to show what subtle pressure was brought to bear on a cultured man to make him give false evidence, and how even Colonel O'Brien let himself to the coaxing process, not excluding threats. The indignities and the indecency, as described by the witness, during the confinement, mostly wrongful, to which cultured or well-brought-up men had been subjected, betray the degradation to which the officials had sunk in their desire to suppress agitation.

SANGLA HILL

Sangla Hill is a comparatively modern place. It is a railway station, 62 miles from Lahore, situated on the Lahore-Lyallpur branch. It has a population of about 4,000 people. It was on the 12th April that a hartal was observed owing to Mr. Gandhi's arrest.

According to Mr. Bosworth Smith[1],

> The effect of the meeting in connection with the hartal was not at once evident. On the 13th, the *Baisakhi* fair passed off fairly quietly. . . . On the 15th, telegraph wires were cut between Sangla and Salanwala. On the 16th, a Sikh with some other Sikhs, assisted by a large mob from the town, forcibly released a military prisoner at Sangla station. He was an Indian prisoner. On the evening of that day (15th), some men made a murderous attack on Mr. Wells, a telegraph inspector.

This account is altogether exaggerated. The testimony produced before us shows clearly that the Sikh who forcibly released a military prisoner had run amok, and there was no crowd behind him. It was an individual affair. There was no murderous attack on Mr. Wells on the 15th or any other day, and he was not seriously injured. It is perfectly clear from the evidence in our possession that the people of Sangla were in no way implicated in any attack on anybody, or in any damage to property. But Martial Law was, all the same, proclaimed on the 19th April. The Deputy Commissioner visited Sangla and did nothing at the time, except to warn the people against repeating the hartal. On the 22nd, however, an officer with British soldiers arrived, arrested 11 leaders and after a few hours' detention released them. Arrests, however, were commenced on the 26th April. The arrested people were released on the 29th. But on the 12th May, a military demonstration was held and shots were fired from the hill, evidently with a view to overawe the people. Captain Ewing of the mobile column stated before Lord Hunter's Committee that they had "a demonstration with a machine-gun and Lewis gun firing before a large number of people". On the same day, 13 leaders were again arrested, handcuffed and marched under humiliating circumstances. On the 13th May, 64 further arrests were made. They were bound with their own turbans, a most disgraceful procedure, and marched off to the police station. A roll-call of inhabitants was taken daily for some days. On the 14th, 47 other arrests were made, and on the 18th, Mr. Bosworth Smith told the people under arrest that if they paid a fine of Rs. 50,000, they would all be released. Mr. Bosworth Smith admits that he wanted to levy a fine of Rs. 50,000 on the Sangla people, but denies that he made it a condition of release. All the same, the fact stands that, on the 19th May, 116 persons out of 124, all told, were released, the contention on the part of the people being that

[1] Joint Deputy Commissioner, Gujranwala; one of the Martial Law officers

some people, apart from those who were arrested, agreed to the fine of Rs. 50,000. The eight persons not released were tried on the 1st of June, convicted and sentenced to 6 months' imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 100 each, on evidence which was totally insufficient to sustain the conviction.

People were flogged upon pretexts the most trivial, admittedly without any previous medical examination, as a rule. Provisions were carried away from shopkeepers without payment. Respectable people were called upon to pull *pankhas* (fans) for the officers and to stand in the sunshine from time to time. School-boys, including little children, were compelled to attend roll-call from day to day, and made to stand in the hot sun and say, "Sir, we have done nothing wrong, and we will do nothing wrong in future." This was so strict that Mr. Balmokand could not get an exemption for his nephew, 7 years old. He tried his "best to get the boy exempted from roll-call, but to no use". The boy, therefore, attended regularly for 3 days. On the 5th day, on his return, he was perspiring. "He fell down and began vomiting. Doctor Gian Chand of Sangla was called, but in vain. Then an army I.M.S., who was there, was called, but he too could not help. The boy died on the 7th May." The roll-call was compulsory for 4 times every day. (Statement 358.)

Basant Ram was arrested along with 25 others on the 19th May. He and the others were released on the 22nd May, without any statements having been taken from them. He says :

> During the period of arrest, the police did not permit us even to answer calls of nature, unless we paid something. We paid Rs. 2 daily for this very purpose.

On the 23rd May, he was again summoned and was told by the *Thanedar* (Sub-Inspector) that if he still refused to give evidence, he would be taught a lesson then and there. He further says :

> He began to beat me very severely in the bazaar, and dragged me through the bazaar to the police station. (Statements 366 and 368.)

Sohan Mal had several maunds of ice taken away from him by the military without payment. (Statement 369.)

Harish Chandra, a student, although he had salaamed, was stopped by the military. He was there and then given 5 or 6 cuts with a cane on his legs, arms and back, without being heard. The witness says :

> The Commanding Officer threw a leather hunter [*sic*] over me in rage, which clung round to my feet, but he drawing it back, they took their way.

(Statement 570.)

Sardar Singh was pressed to give false evidence. He refused. He was, therefore, arrested and kept in the lock-up for 4 days. He says :

> Even the members of the Municipal Committee came to the lock-up and asked us to give evidence, if we wanted to be released.

The witness was in the lock-up along with 97 other men. (Statement 371.)

Lachhman Das had the contract of a serai (rest house). During the Martial Law days, the military made it their headquarters and did not allow any traveller to occupy it. He paid, himself, Rs. 75 as rent per month and Rs. 30 to his servants. He suffered a loss of Rs. 150 per month. The officers remained there for 2 months. He had to remain in his shop day and night, for the rations were taken from him. One night, one of the officers' servants came to fetch milk for the Extra Assistant Commissioner and the Inspec- tor of Police. He was, therefore, obliged to light a lamp. This was treated as a breach of the curfew order by the Commanding Officer, and consequently he and his companion were arrested. He pleaded that he was bound to supply milk to the officers and that, if he had not, he would have committed an offence, and that he could not possibly supply the milk without lighting a lamp. The officers paid no heed to the plea. In the meantime, his eldest brother came out from the neighbouring house and enquired what the matter was, and so he, too, was arrested. They all remained in custody for 2 days, and were then released under security. 5 days later they were summoned to the station and were sentenced to a fine of Rs. 50 and five stripes each.

Lachhman Das was pronounced to be medically unfit for receiving whipping; his fine was, therefore, doubled in lieu of stripes. (Statement 372.)

Sham Das was not allowed to drink water, whilst he had to stand in the heat of the sun when under custody. He, therefore, fell ill, but he received no medical attention. He was set free after 9 days. He says, "Even now, I do not know the reason of my arrest." (Statement 373.)

The authorities wanted the nephew of Nihal Chand, and as he was not at the time in Sangla, the uncle was arrested. He was kept standing in the sun like many other people. He proceeds :

> Owing to my old age and also owing to the strong sunshine, I fell down

> senseless 3 times. I was released after 4 or 5 days, without any explanation. (Statement 374.)

Jan Muhammad Patoli says that whilst they were made to wait from day to day, they could neither eat nor drink. He, too, like witness No. 374, fell sick owing to the hot sun. He was set free after 10 days. He adds that when he opened his shop, constables helped themselves to his goods. He rendered bills, but never received any payment. (Statement 375.)

Sohan Lal and 2 others, respected and well-known residents of Sangla Hill, have made a joint statement. They state that Rai Sri Ram, Sub-Divisional Officer, visited Sangla Hill on the 18th. He saw the people, made no arrests and went away. On the 19th Colonel O'Brien visited Sangla Hill. He, too, saw the people and said that he was pleased to pardon them regarding the hartal. The arrests only began on the 22nd April. (Statement 376, p. 503.) If what Mr. Bosworth Smith has stated regarding the disturbances at Sangla Hill had been true, the two respon-sible officials would not have gone away without making any arrests. The suggestion naturally is that it was Mr. Bosworth Smith who altered the position and prompted the arrests, and has magnified individual offences into popular disturbances, so far as Sangla itself is concerned. It is true that telegraph wires were cut near Sangla. The Moman station, which is not far from Sangla, was burnt and looted, but unless Sangla people could be directly traced to have taken part in the wire-cutting or the burning of the station, they could not be held liable.

The above 3 witnesses give particulars of the different arrests with names. These arrests we have already referred to in describing the administration of Martial Law in Sangla. The paragraph in the statement, showing how evidence was manufactured, will bear repetition. The witnesses state :

> On the 11th May, by means of violent threats, beating and exposure in the sun, the police succeeded in forcing 29 persons to stand as witnesses for the prosecution. This number included boys of ten years, and 14 men of the railway staff. One was Prem Singh Bazaz, who had been previously convicted for abduction by force and sentenced to $3\frac{1}{2}$ years. (Statement 376, p. 504.)

Dr. Karam Singh Nanda relates how he, in common with others, had to give daily attendance for identification and stand in the sun without water and food. He says that many fainted, and that he suffered so much from the heat of the sun from day to day that he fell

ill and was invalided for 2 months. He says that he was identified as being in Sangla on the 12th, whereas he was in Gujranwala and had to give evidence in the court on that day. He refers also to the fact that 180 men, who were arrested, were detained for 9 days and were asked to pay Rs. 50,000 if they wished to be released. (Statement 380.)

Kundan Lal, commission agent, states how British soldiers helped themselves to goods from shops without payment. (Statement

MOMAN

Moman is a railway station, 6 miles from Sangla on the Lahore side. There is no doubt that a party proceeded to this station from the surrounding villages and burnt and looted it, a procedure for which there was no provocation whatsoever, and which was an act of pure wanton destruction. It is not certain whether the people from the surrounding villages burnt the station, or whether it was a party of outsiders. In any case, the high-handed mea-sures taken by the authorities by way of reprisals were totally uncalled for. We have not burdened our notes with many statements regarding Moman, because it is practically a part of Sangla, and the people of the surrounding villages came in for the same ill-treatment that the people of Sangla had been subjected to.

MANIANWALA AND NEIGHBOURING PLACES

This is a village hardly containing a population of 500 men, and it is one of the villages near the railway station, Dhaban Singh. This station was burnt and looted by the people from the surrounding villages on the 16th April, 1919. The villagers had heard exaggerated reports of what had happened at Amritsar, which evidently excited them to this act of incendiarism; and as one of the witnesses states, what began as an act of vengeance ended as one of loot on the part of evil-doers.

But, bad as the action of some of the villagers was, the reparation exacted by the authorities was heartless, and passed the bounds of decency. On the 19th April, a troop train arrived at the Dhaban Singh station. Guns were pointed towards Manianwala; some soldiers alighted from the train and proceeded to the village, shooting as they went. One man at least was shot dead, others were wounded. One at least was maimed for life and rendered unfit for work. There seems to have been no warrant for this shooting. Women fled from their houses on hearing the shots, including those who were about to be mothers.

Sardar Atar Singh, a *Lambardar* of thirty years' standing, and founder of the village, narrowly escaped death. His house was searched, cupboards were broken open, and cash and other things removed. Atar Singh is said to be 115 years old. He is certainly over 100 and can hardly move about, and passes his days seated on a bedstead. He and Inder Singh were arrested; he, being unable to walk, was put on a horse. They were both taken to the station, and confined in an iron wagon which served as an improvised lock-up. There, they were detained for some days. This wagon, being made of iron, without any lining, was natu- rally unbearable during the hot days of April, and in this way, several other villagers had to pass their days often without food and water. (Statement 577.)

A few days later, Mr. Bosworth Smith came with a party of soldiers, more than once. Mr. Labh Singh, an ex-professor, M.A., and Barrister, was specially sent by us to Manianwala to make further investigation as to the evidence of a shocking character given to us. He has brought statements which are reproduced as a part of our own record. This is what witness Teja Singh deposed before him :

> I had not yet left for the bungalow where most of the villagers had gone by the order of the police. It was in my presence that Mr. Bosworth Smith gave a severe beating to Munshi Nawab Din and Lehna Singh. He asked him to give evidence against Bhai Mool Singh, forcing him to say that the latter had delivered a speech against the Government. After placing him in the custody of a constable who was ordered to take him to the bungalow, Mr. Bosworth Smith went towards the women. He removed their veils and used abusive language. He called them "flies, bitches, she-asses" and worse things. He said to them, "Your skirts will be examined by the police constables. When you were sleeping with your husbands, why did you allow them to get up and go?" He also spat on them. (Statement 580.)

Gurdevi, the aged widow of Mangal Jat, stated before Mr. Labh Singh :

> One day during the Martial Law period, Mr. Bosworth Smith gathered together all the male persons of our village, over 8 years, at the bungalow, which is some miles from our village, in connection with the investigations that were going on. While the men were at the bungalow, he rode to our village, taking back with him all the women, who met him on the way, carrying food for their men to the bung-alow. Reaching the village, he went round the lanes and ordered all the women to come out of their houses, himself forcing them out with sticks. He made us all stand near the village *daira*. The women folded

> their hands before him; he beat some with his stick, spat at them and used the foulest and most unmentionable language. He hit me twice and spat in my face. He forcibly bared the faces of all the women, and brushed aside their veils with his own stick. He called them "she-asses, bitches, flies", and "swine", and said, "You were in the same bed with your husbands; why did you not prevent them from going out to do mischief? Now your skirts will be looked into by the police constables." He gave me a kick also, and ordered us to undergo the torture of holding our ears by passing our arms under and around the legs, while being bear double. (Statement 582.)

This statement is supported by several women of Manianwala.

Nawab Din, Government school-teacher, says that Mr. Bosworth Smith pressed him to say that Mool Singh had spoken against the Government, and states :

> But when I repeated that it was not the fact, he began to belabour me with sticks, and beat me so long so cruelly that the marks of injury were visible on my wrist and ankles for a long time after. He said that I was a Government servant and I should, therefore, give evidence in favour of the Government. He went on beating me for some time, after which he ordered a constable to take me to the bungalow. (Statement 578.)

One Lehna Singh also received similar treatment. [He says :]

> As we left for the bungalow, the Sahib addressed himself to the women, whose cries fell upon our ears, as we went along. (Statement 579.)

We have dwelt upon these incidents at some length, and we consider that an officer who is capable of behaving in the manner Mr. Bosworth Smith seems to have, is totally unfit to occupy a post of any responsibility in a civilized Government or to wear His Majesty's uniform.

The other statements in connection with the incident at Manianwala show how over eighty villagers were arrested and subjected to the greatest inconvenience, how the villagers were obliged to pay for meals which the Government was bound to supply them whilst they were in detention, and how they were pressed under a vareity of threats to give false evidence, how flogging was administered, how Mr. Bosworth Smith conducted his trials, and how on the kind of evidence described in the statements, villagers were tried before the Martial Law Commission, and some of them trans-ported for life. Happily the sentences were reduced, and, under the Royal Proclamation these very men have been discharged. But no such discharges can possibly

atone for the grave injustice done to the villagers, the majority at least of whom appear to have been utterly innocent. A punitive police has been imposed on the villagers, and a heavy indemnity was levied upon them by Mr. Bosworth Smith, which was subsequently reduced.

We cannot close this brief review of the barbarities of Manianwala without mentioning that Mr. C. F. Andrews personally visited the place[1] on behalf of the Congress Sub-committee, and he brought evidence supporting the statements about the inhuman treatment described above.

NAWAN PIND (CHAK NO. 78)

This again is a very small village, smaller even than Manianwala, in the Tahsil Khangah Dogran. This is also near the railway station, Dhaban Singh, and, therefore, came in for practically the same treatment as Manianwala, except that the women- folk seemed to have escaped the disgraceful treatment that was meted out to their less fortunate sisters of Manianwala. That some villagers might have taken part in the burning of the Dhaban Singh station is quite likely, but there can be no justification for the cruel and vindictive punishment of a whole village, and yet the selection we have made out of nearly 40 witnesses, all speaking about similar or the same incidents, shows that the same treatment was meted out to the residents of Nawan Pind as to those of Manianwala.

Khushal Singh states that the day following the burning of the railway station, the inhabitants of the surrounding villages, including Nawan Pind, had gathered on the railway station. The Tahsildar was there to select a man for the membership of the District Board, and on the arrival of the men, the booking-office was on fire. After giving their votes, the men went away. The Tahsildar must have known most of the voters, and yet many of them were arrested in connection with the burning of the station. This witness states that, on his happening to be at the railway station the 3rd day after the fire, he learnt that the Sub-Inspector had been asking the porters to identify those who had burnt the station. The porters protested that the people were too many, and it was night time, and that they could not, therefore, identify them. The Sub-Inspector seems to have cajoled them. He said he

[1] In November 1919, before leaving for Africa

would collect people from those villages and they (the porters) should only point out some of them and that he would see to their arrest. The next step was that all the people, except women and children, were ordered to appear before Mr. Bosworth Smith. [The witness says :]

> No sooner did the Sahib arrive there, than we were all placed in rows. The porters, as well as the railway staff, came with the Sahib. The porters were ordered by the Sahib to identify from the rows of the people those men who were concerned in setting the railway station on fire; those who were touched by the porters were separated from others, and bound hand and foot.

The identification was conducted in the following manner :

> A man was identified by one porter, with a *Lambardar*, *Zaildar* and the Sub-Inspector of Police at his elbow. Then again another porter was made to identify the same person, in like manner. Thus some 28 or 29 men were arrested. One Bhagwan Singh begged to state that he had not left his home on the said day. The Sahib ordered him to be bound to a tree and flogged 12 times, because he had made a submission. After that, all the persons that were identified by the porters were taken to the railway station, where the names of the people had been called by the *Patwari*. Ishwar Singh was not present. The Sahib enquired whether there was any relative of his present. The *Patwari* replied that his brother-in-law, meaning me (Khushal Singh), was there. The Sahib at once ordered my arrest. We were all taken to the serai (rest house) and shut up in a room, and a guard was posted outside. We remained there for 2 days without anything to eat or drink. The relatives who came there with food were turned back. . . . On the 9th day we were taken back to the canal bungalow. Ishwar Singh also arrived on that day. The Sub-Inspector told him that if he deposed in favour of the prosecution, he would not be arrested. Teja Singh, son of Maya Singh Kambo, of Nawan Pind, was also there at that time, and was made a prosecution witness. Sadhu Singh, goldsmith, Jwala Singh, *Zaildar*, and Banta Singh, son of Jwala Singh, had also been arrested, and they were set free by the Sub-Inspector of Police on their promise to appear as prosecution witnesses. No sooner was I made a prosecution witness, than I was also released. Everybody, man or woman, from our village, was made to sit before the Tahsildar. Everybody who was arrested was called and punishment pronounced against him. No evidence was taken. If anyone said anything, he was beaten. (Statement 611.)

Here we have a full view of the so-called trials conducted by Mr. Bosworth Smith, as also of the way in which prosecution evidence was manufactured. Mr. Wathen, the Principal of the Khalsa College,

Amritsar, one of the biggest educational institutions in the Punjab, has left on record his view of how justice was miscarried in Nawan Pind. We reproduce below the whole of his argument :

> The case of Bhagwan Singh and Maghar Singh, sons of Jewan Singh of Nawan Pind, Chak No. 78, Tahsil, Khangah Dogran, Dist. Gujranwala.
>
> These two men were convicted on the 9th of May, 1919, under Article 6(a), (b), (c), Indian Penal Code, the charge being that they took part in burning Dhaban railway station, and were sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment and Rs. 200 fine each.
>
> The parties are now appealing against their conviction on the following grounds :
>
> (a) They were not present that day at the railway station, and offered to produce several witnesses to prove an alibi. Their witnesses were not called by the court.
>
> (b) They were identified by coolies of the railway, who were to them complete strangers, and it is suggested that the coolies were prompted, possibly bribed, by certain enemies to single out these two brothers.
>
> (c) The enemies, it is suggested, are Jwala Singh, *Zaildar*, and Jewan Singh, *Lambardar*, who have an old quarrel with the family of Jewan Singh. This quarrel, which is about a lambardarship, has been going on for about 5 years. Evidence about it can easily be had and was offered, but was not called for.
>
> (d) This statement has been made to me by the youngest brother of the accused, Jagat Singh, a boy of 18, whom I know well and who has been my pupil for four years in this College and School. Of Jagat Singh's personal loyalty I have no doubt whatever. I am in a position to know what Jagat Singh's feelings are, and a suggestion that Jagat Singh was a politician of anti-British tendency would be regarded here as ludicrous; also the fact that these brothers who support the boy sent him here suggests that they are loyal; for it is usually the loyal Sikhs who send the sons from afar to an institution which is supposed to have the special favour of the *Sircar*. I have made enquiries among the railway coolies, many of whom know the two convicted brothers, and their universal opinion is that the brothers are perfectly innocent, and the case has been got up against them by their enemies.
>
> (e) The point which seems to vitiate the evidence against the men is that

the third brother, Mangal Singh, was also identified by the same coolies as having been present at the railway station. It so happened that on the very day when he was alleged to have been at Dhaban, he happened to be staying with Jagat Singh at Khalsa College and was seen there by many reliable witnesses, including the Vice-Principal and some members of the staff.

He (Mangal Singh) actually came to see me in order to get leave for Jagat Singh. I wrote and told the Deputy Commissioner of this, and on learning [this] in the Court, [he] immediately ordered Mangal Singh's release. I suggest that had the Court realized that Mangal Singh, whose alibi was proved, was the brother of Bhagat Singh and Maghar Singh, it would have regarded the evidence as to identifying them as vitiated, for the same coolies who identified Bhagat Singh and Maghar Singh also identified Mangal Singh.

(SD.) G. A. WATHEN

PRINCIPAL

KHALSA COLLEGE, AMRITSAR

(Statement 613.)

The parties in question were hastily discharged on the production of Mr. Wathen's letter, but everybody cannot have the good fortune of having an intermediary known to a man occupying Mr. Wathen's position, as young Jagat Singh proved to be.

Bishan Singh gives a detailed account of the trial. He describes how, when a railway babu said he could not identify, the *Lambardar* and the *Zaildar* coaxed him, and how a man who had been away from Nawan Pind was thus identified and convicted. (Statement 612.)

Surain Singh was asked about the presence of Mangal Singh in the course of the trial of a batch of prisoners by Mr. Bosworth Smith. He proceeds :

I said he was not present there. But certain other people, such as Jwala Singh, *Zaildar*, and Jiwan Singh, deposed that he was in the riot. Upon this, Mr. Bosworth Smith sentenced me to 3 months at once. I was let off as it was found afterwards that Mangal Singh was at Amritsar on the day of the occurrence at Dhaban Singh, from the letter of the Principal, Khalsa College. (Statement 614.)

We presume that Surain Singh was sentenced on a charge of perjury. He was a *Lambardar*. It was possible for him to escape full imprison-ment, because of Mr. Wathen's letter, but although he has been proved to be innocent, his dismissal still stands.

Sohan Singh was also sentenced for the same reason, and released too upon the same discovery. He too was a *Lambardar* and was dismissed like Surain Singh. (Statement 615.)

Nandi, wife of Khushal, deposing about her son, says :

> No defence was even demanded. The fact is, he, against whom the railway coolies reported, was punished. No one was asked to even give his own statement. A man belonging to their *kot* (village) objected to such a procedure. He was fastened to a *shisham* tree and severely lashed. (Statement 616.)

As in other places, so in Nawan Pind, the officials helped themselves freely to people's goods. Thus, goods worth more than 108 rupees were taken from Hira Singh in the shape of flour, dal, sugar, ghee and milk. The villagers made collections, and paid the poor man. (Statement 618.)

Kishan Chand says he supplied Mr. Penny's and Mr. Bosworth Smith's camp and others with rations to the extent of 400 rupees. The villagers made up the amount. (Statement 619.)

Jwali, wife of Kahan Singh, states that her husband, 70 years old, weak as he was, was also arrested. She says :

> The police on duty would not allow us to give food to our relatives without payment. I had to pay Re. 1 per day per head, as was done by others. (Statement 620.)

Nand Singh says :

> The whole male population of the village, from 10 years upwards, was sent for. They were made to sit in rows in the sun, from morning till evening. Mr. Bosworth Smith was there. My brother, Bhagwan Singh, stood with folded hands and said that he was innocent and had not committed any crime. Upon this, Mr. Bosworth Smith became angry and ordered him to be beaten. A rope was sent for, which was brought by Satroo, *Chaukidar*[1], with which Bhagwan Singh was bound at once. Satroo was ordered to cane him, and he gave 12 lashes. Mr. Bosworth Smith was standing by him and said he did not mind if he was dead. He became unconscious, water was poured into his mouth and after a little time he came to his senses. He was then taken away by the Sub-Inspector and arrested. This frightened the whole people, and none dared to speak. Soldiers with rifles were standing round all, and Mr. Bosworth Smith said that if anybody spoke he would be also treated likewise. (Statement 621.)

This village was fined Rs. 10,000. One-third was taken during the last *rabi*[2] . (Statement 622.)

[1] Watchman

[2] Season for the winter crop

This is an important *mandi*, viz., a market-place visited by hundreds of men from the neighbouring villages, who bring their stock to the market. The village of Chuharkana lies about a mile and a half from the *mandi*. The station Chuharkana is near the *mandi*.

The hartal was observed on the 12th April. A public meeting announcing it was held on the previous day, in which all, including the municipal councillors, took part. Nothing happened up to the 14th. By the 15th, however, the news from Amritsar and Lahore had become common property, and people were much agitated. Some people, living at the *mandi*, and others from the villages who were at the *mandi*, proceeded to the railway station, and in broad daylight, took implements from the railway gang, damaged the line and burnt the station.

This was followed by the arrival of the military, and machine-guns, with an armoured train. There was considerable indiscriminate shooting. Rai Sahib Sri Ram Sud has sought, in his evidence before the Hunter Committee, to justify the shooting, but the whole of the evidence in our possession contradicts his statement. Indeed, he seems to be condemned out of his own mouth. It should also be remembered that the shooting took place before the proclamation of Martial Law. Now, R. S. Sri Ram Sud is a Sub-Divisional Officer of many years' standing; he has served in the district since August 1918; he, therefore, knew the people. He made himself principally responsible for the firing and, when he was cornered by Pandit Jagat Narain, he said that his authority was derived from the Criminal Procedure Code. In answer to Sir Chimanlal, who enquired on what he came to the conclusion that he should fire, he said, "Because we already came to know that the mob had already collected there, and there was reliable information of it." Again he says : "I had already heard that the people of Chuharkana were rushing to the market to loot." "Therefore, without any further enquiry, you began to fire?" asked Sir Chimanlal. "Yes, we determined to open fire," was the answer. He was then asked : "Your idea was that you wanted to strike terror." He replied, "Well, if necessary. And we found it necessary." "And after that firing, you proceeded further to the station?" asked Sir Chimanlal. "Yes," was the reply. The Rai Sahib then described the movements of the people.

Q. What do you mean by moving? They were not committing any

mischief?

A. No, not at that time. People were coming out and going into the village.

Q. You do not know what their object was in coming out and going into the village?

A. Well, their object was to attack the armoured train.

Q. From a distance, how did you know that they were collecting to attack the armoured train?

A. Unfortunately, I cannot illuminate things which are in my brain.

Q. Pardon me, Lala, we are dealing with what materials you then had and what you saw then. I want to know, when you refer to their movements, what was the actual movement. Will you kindly tell me?

A. I said they were coming and going and I fancy they were collecting.

Q. With what object you cannot say?

A. They were collecting for some sinister purpose.

Q. From the fact that you saw some people were going to the village and certain people going out, you concluded that they were collecting with some sinister object?

A. They saw our armoured train and yet they did not hide. What was the conclusion?

Now this evidence was given by the Rai Sahib on the 17th December. The evidence collected by us on our own behalf was long before that time and it was checked by one of us on the 6th December, and it goes to show that there was no crowd collecting and that the movement that the Rai Sahib saw was the very opposite of what he imagined it to be. The people were going out and hiding themselves through fear.

Dula Singh, a Jat, who knows what he is talking, and who seems to know every inch of the ground, says :

> They fired with the machine-guns at the men who were leaving the village out of terror. I saw three persons falling down wounded by the machine-gun fire. Maula Baksh and Kartar Singh, Members of the committee, were also in the carriage. (Statement 468.)

Ganpat Mal says :

> Firing from the machine-guns lasted for a long while and people went on running hither and thither. . . . On the 17th April, the same course was followed; the British soldiers came with machine-guns. They alighted from a train and fired on the people who were running hither and thither. (Statement 458.)

Thus, whilst we will not go so far as to say that firing before Martial Law could not be justified, we believe that the firing referred to by the Sub-Divisional Officer was hasty, premature, indiscriminate and due to panic or over-zeal. To strike terror was no part of the officer's business. It is a sign not of strength but of weakness, not a vindication of justice but a perpetration of injustice. A guilty conscience alone resorts to terrorism. We admit that the incendiarism, the looting and the wire-cutting were all bad, unwarranted and disgraceful, and that the culprits deserved condign punishment. But nothing that the people did could possibly justify the random firing that was resorted to and that resulted in the loss of innocent lives and permanent injury to several innocent people, and the other barbarous measures that were taken, in order to "terrorize" a whole people.

The other measures were more or less the same everywhere. The evidence about looting by the soldiers is stronger and more voluminous for Chuharkana than elsewhere. Cattle were forcibly seized and milked for the soldiers. Goats, utensils, eatables were taken away even in the absence of the owners. It is difficult to estimate the material loss that the people must have suffered during the Martial Law regime.

Sucha Singh says :

> The police got one bedding from me by frightening me and it has not been returned as yet. (Statement 449.)

Shaman deposes to the effect that his crops were forcibly taken by the sepoys who were there, for the use of their horses. (Statement

Mohan Lal says :

> When Mr. Bosworth Smith came here, provisions of the value of Rs. 45 were taken away from our shop, but no value has been realized up to this time. (Statement 474.)

Haveli Ram says :

> My shop and house were locked up for 10 or 15 days. . . . Many of the *mandi* shops were searched. The British soldiers promenaded the *mandi*, and tyrannized over the people. They used to enter the shops and take away anything they pleased . . . The soldiers paid nothing to me as the price of the things they bought from me. (Statement 453.)

Ganpat Mal says :

> They took away anything they saw for their ration. Hens, eggs, goats and milk, all these were forcibly snatched from the people. The policemen came

to the people and asked for beddings, which people had to give because they were very much afraid. Until now they have not been returned. The police took buffalo milk forcibly from me and nothing was left for my children. I gave one bedding, which has not been returned to me as yet. . . . During the Martial Law days, I had to pay Rs. 25 from *mandi* side, and Rs. 10 from the village side, for defraying the expenses of the military rations. (Statement 458.)

Certain shopkeepers, who had supplied the military with rations, sent in to the authorities a list of the articles supplied. The reply sent by the Superintendent of Police, Gujranwala, was :

It be sent to the Sub-Inspector with the direction that this money can under no circumstances be realized now. The applicants be made to understand that they should not trouble us again and again.

The villagers were prevented from cutting their crops for some days. In some cases, their crops were confiscated without just cause. These acts are practically admitted by Mr. Bosworth Smith who was chiefly responsible for the Martial Law administration in these parts, viz., between Sangla Hill and Sheikhupura.

Shan Singh says :

My pecuniary losses amounted to about 2,000 rupees on account of the damage done to my crops. (Statement 454.)

Jiwaya says :

I had my crop of gram, $3\frac{1}{4}$ *qilaas*[1], near that of Sher Singh, which has been used by the army for their horses and was never paid for. Even when they were asked not to do it, they threatened me stating that if we prevented them from taking the green fodder, they would take us before the Sahib, and we would be punished. (Statement 456.)

Ganpat Mal says :

It was also ordered that all that were present should remain in the village and no one should go outside into the fields to reap the wheat crop. He ordered the *Patwari* to go round the fields, so that people should neither reap their crops nor give anything to their animals to eat or take care of them. Accordingly, the cattle wandered uncared for, and the crops were ruined. Some of the crops were damaged by the military. We got only one-fourth of the output of the crop. (Statement 458, p. 597.)

About the so-called trials and the procedure adopted prior to them, the statements bristle with facts corroborating what has been

[1] Measure of land

stated by us about other places. Mr. Todar Mal says that when the identification parade was going on, Mr. Bosworth Smith said : "I want only big men, they are *gandi makkhi*[1], I do not want common people." This witness was pointed out as one of the guilty ones by Sardar Kartar Singh. He says :

> I immediately challenged him and asked him why he had singled me out. He said that he could not give the reason, as the C.I.D. had prohibited him. He would have to do what was required. (Statement 450, p. 589.)

He was tried, but acquitted by the Martial Law Commission.

Kanshi Ram says :

> The defence evidence, which we wished to produce before the Deputy Commissioner, was not allowed, nor was anybody's statement recored. (Statement 451, p. 590.)

Maya Singh says that his son Ujagar Singh had gone out to fetch medicine and was arrested together with others. He protested, and thereupon *Langra*[2] Sahib (i.e., Mr. Bosworth Smith) ordered him to be fastened to a tree and to be given 25 stripes. . . . He was confined in the cell for 10 days, and when the accused were identified in the canal rest-house, none identified him, and he was accordingly let off. (Statement 448.)

Haveli Ram says :

> One day, Ladha Singh, the watchman, informed all the *mandiwalas*[3] that all should present themselves the next morning at the canal bungalow, and that the absentees would have their properties forfeited. We reached the bungalow the next morning, and had to sit there without any food or drink. We were all required to stand in the sun at 12 noon, and had to do so for full 2 hours. All those that were pointed out by porters at the instance of the *Lambardar* were arrested and sent to the police-station. They were given nothing to eat or drink, and if anybody wished to give them anything to eat or drink, he was beaten and abused. They were taken to Lahore the next day, and were brought in groups, and their sentences were read to them. (Statement 452, p. 592.)

Sardar Shan Singh says :

> I was confined in the serai, with other arrested people, after being handcuffed behind my back. I had to stay there for about 15 or 16 days. I could not even take my meals; nor could I bind my turban on account of the handcuffs being put on my hands from behind. I was kept handcuffed even during the

[1] Contemptible flies
[2] Lame
[3] Residents of a*mandi*, a market-place

night. Other people, who were confined with me then, used to put food into my mouth; others would bind for me my turban on my head. My elder brother, Kahan Singh, was also confined with me there. He had one Arab horse which Ali Mohomed, Sub-Inspector of Police, asked him (my brother) to give to him, and he (the Sub-Inspector) would let him go. My brother replied that he was quite innocent and would not give his horse for nothing. The Sub-Inspector of Police was very angry at this refusal of my brother, and he added that he would charge him with many offences. The first thing that he did was to put surreptitiously some articles of a railway babu in the house of my brother, and then after an investigation, got those articles produced from his house. . . . . The Sub-Inspector of Police asked me to pay Rs. 500, if I wanted to save my skin. I refused to pay, and on that I was also *challaned*[1] together with my brother. But afterwards my wife borrowed the amount of Rs. 500 from someone and paid the same to the Sub-Inspector, through Sundar Singh, Zemindar, Sheikhupura, Chak Manora. Upon that, the Sub-Inspector of Police promised to release me. . . . . The Sub-Inspector stopped the men who were made to despose against me, from giving their evidence, but he put only one ordinary witness instead. This resulted in my release on account of the ineffectiveness of the evidence. (Statement 454, p. 549.)

Even a blind man was not free from interference. Ladha Mal, a blind man, was asked to produce his son, and, as the son was not then present, he was arrested, and discharged only after the mother had brought the son. (Statement 467.) Ganpat Malstates that Mr. Bosworth Smith ordered the villagers to gathertogether on pain of their property being burnt or confiscated. He says :

Accordingly all people, out of fear, assembled in the Durbar Sahib[2] . The *Langra* Sahib ordered the *Patwari* to bring the census report. Lala Sri Ram, the Deputy of Sheikhupura, read out the names from the report of those who were not present. The women were sent for, through the police. The Sahib ordered them to produce their husbands: otherwise, their houses would be burnt and lands confiscated. After giving this order, the women were asked to go; and the brothers and fathers of the absentees, who were present there, were arrested and taken away.

He further says :

The arrested men were brought in batches of 10 or 12, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment each, and fined Rs. 200. No evidence was taken, only they were asked to beg pardon and the people replied, "Sir, we are innocent; if

[1] Charged-sheeted
[2] Sikh temple

> we have done anything, we should be pardoned." (Statement 458.)

Sardar Harnam Singh says he pays a revenue-tax of Rs. 400, and that he bought Rs. 800 worth of War Bonds. He pays Rs. 60 as house-tax. His brother, Khushal Singh, was arrested. He engaged Mr. Martin for his defence on a payment of Rs. 1,000, but, he says :

> Nobody allowed him to plead. Nobody heard the defence witnesses, who were present; nor were they sent for. Khushal Singh's case was disposed of within 5 minutes.

He says :

> In all summary trials, Mr. Bosworth Smith, or any Inspector of Police present used to address the accused thus. "Do you beg for pardon?" To this the accused invariably replied, "Sir, we are innocent, we should be pardoned." But this was recorded on the file as if accused had made confession of their guilt. No defence witness was heard; nor was any time given to prepare the defence. On the first day, about 100 people were convicted, and within 2 or 3 hours their judgments and orders were also written. (Statement 447.)

Rs. 1,500 were levied from Chuharkana as a fine. Towards this, Mangal Singh and his brother had to pay Rs. 230. (Statement 460.) The firm of Lala Faquir Chand Jangli Mal paid Rs. 50 for the maintenance of troops in the month of April, Rs. 114 for the punitive police, Rs. 20 for the Lieutenant-Governor's Memorial."These sums were realized forcibly from us," says the agent. (Statement 480.)

SHEIKHUPURA

Sheikhupura is a historic place, 25 miles from Lahore, and the last place to be noticed in the Gujranwala district. It derives its name from the pet name of the Emperor Jehangir, and it was the residence of Rani Nakain of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. It has a population of about 2,500 people.

Sheikhupura observed a hartal on the 6th of April. It was spontaneous and complete, in spite of the interference by the Sub-Inspector of Police with the people. There was a meeting in the evening, where, as admitted by the officials, temperate speeches were made. The Sub-Divisional Officer, Rai Sahib [Sri] Ram Sud, unsuccessfully attempted to stop the meeting by summoning the pleaders and using threatening language towards them. Then, up to the 13th, there was

perfect peace. The news of Amritsar and Lahore, however, had its effect upon Sheikhupura's population, and the morning of the 14th saw another spontaneous and complete hartal, when too, there was no untoward incident. It has been alleged that a baker's shop was forcibly closed that day and that the baker was assaulted. The statement is denied, in spite of a conviction registered by the so-called Summary Court. During the night, however, some telegraph and signal wires were cut by unknown persons, very pro-bably from Sheikhupura.

In any case, the trouble did not arise out of the hartal, but all the same Martial Law was proclaimed on the 19th, and everything that has been narrated of the other places happened in Sheikhupura also. The pleaders came in for special attention. They were subjected to special humiliation; they were arrested and detained for 40 days and finally discharged without a trial and without being told why they had been arrested. A special feature in Sheikhupura was that the whole of the male population, over the age of ten years, was made to sweep a large area of land,[1] just in order to humiliate the people. They were also made to attend, from early morning till evening, for 7 days for the purpose of the so-called investigation. Schoolboys had to attend, as in other places also.

A 60-year-old respected *Lambardar* of 38 years' standing and a retired Inspector of Police[2], was arrested simply because his sons were not in Sheikhupura when they were wanted. His property was confiscated and his tenants prohibited from cutting the crops.

The soldiers and the police freely helped themselves to the goods of the people. The usual pressure was applied for extorting evidence and the trials resulted in the same miscarriage of justice as elsewhere. But, unlike the other places, Mr. Bosworth Smith reported the pleaders to the High Court with a view to their being deprived of the right of practising. Out of nearly 70 statements, we have selected about 30 for presentation, which support all the statements made above.

[1] This was done at the instance of Bosworth Smith

[2] Sardar Gauhar Singh; *vide* "Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.

Sardar Boota Singh, B.A., LL.B., was a member of the District War League, who had assisted in recruiting and had received a certificate for his services. He says that he took no part in either hartal, being engaged elsewhere on both the days. Writing of the 14th April he says:

> No mob was seen collected in any place, no demonstrations were made anywhere and nothing unusual was done by the people.

Together with the other local pleaders, he was suddenly arrested on the morning of the 19th. [He adds:]

> All of us were put in charge of some 25 soldiers, who carried loaded guns with fixed bayonets. We were made to parade the city in this condition and were more than once made to sit upon filthy ground in the presence of our co-villagers. After making a full display of our humiliating condition for about an hour, we were marched double speed towards an armoured train. . . . I was abused, jeered at and beaten with a stick on account of my not keeping pace with the others owing to my ill-health.

The prisoners were taken to Lahore, the journey occupying two hours. Their repeated requests to be allowed to answer nature's call were refused by the guard, and no food was supplied to them till late in the evening. [He continues:]

> From the railway station, we were taken to the Central Jail Lahore, where we were handcuffed and taken to solitary cells. For 40 days we were thus detained, thereby suffering the greatest possible discomfort and hardship.

As if all this was not enough, further humiliation was heaped upon them, even as they were discharged; for they were taken handcuffed to Sheikhupura, marched to the police station and then to the Naib Tahsildar's house in the town, evidently in order to mock them, and it was there that they were finally discharged. (Statement 486.)

Lala Ushnak Rai, B.A., LL.B., is a first-grade pleader of 9 years' standing. He has been a hereditary *Lambardar* of two villages, owns extensive landed property, and has continuously aided the War funds. He says, "Up to April last, I never took part in any political meeting." On the morning of the 15th, he was sent for by the Sub-Divisional Officer. He promised to co-operate with the officers in the maintenance of law and order. The same evening, the Sub-Divisional Officer went to Chuharkana, a step which seems to be inconsistent with his evidence before Lord Hunter's Committee, before which he stated that the peace of Sheikhupura was apparent and not real. It should

be remembered that he left Sheikhupura in spite of the wire-cutting incident already referred to. The witness says that he co-operated with the local Extra Assistant Commissioner up to the evening of the 18th April. He even presented himself on the 19th before the Sub-Divisional Officer, and reported that all was well in Sheikhupura, but a few minutes later he was arrested in his own house and was not allowed either to close the doors of his house or to put on his jacket. He adds:

> I was then made to squat on dirty ground, while they were waiting for Gosain Maya Ram, whose office was only a few yards off from mine. I had no desire to squat down, as I was not tired, but I was made to squat in order to humiliate me.

Speaking of the railway lock-up at Lahore, he says:

> It was totally unfit for habitation, as it had been used previously as a latrine, and was reeking with foul smell.

They were made to leave their turbans and shoes outside the lock-up. Gauhar Singh, being a Sikh, protested against the removal of the turban, and wanted to keep his spectacles on, as he could not see without them on account of his age. His protests were disregarded. He was dismissed from his *lambardari* without his being informed of it, and his appeal to the higher authority was also dismissed without his being heard. (Statement 485.)

Gosain Maya Ram, also B.A., LL.B., says that the arrests took place early in the morning:

> We were not properly clad. Some were arrested in their night-shirts and pyjamas, whilst Maulvi Alim Din, Pleader, had only a shirt and a dhoti on. Our request to have our clothes brought was met with a curt refusal and a frown.

He further adds, to illustrate the studied manner of the humi- liation:

> Myself, S. Boota Singh, Maulvi Alim Din and Jamiat Singh were put in one compartment, and were ordered to sit on the floor, although there were benches to sit upon. Sardar Buta Singh had taken a purgative the same day, early in the morning. He wanted to make water, and requested one custodian to allow him to do so, but to no purpose. All of us repeatedly made the requests, whereupon one of the soldiers replied, “Can't you swallow it?”

After describing the other scenes, he says:

> The hardships which we had to undergo in the jail are simply indescribable. The ordinary jail food is fit for cattle, and not for human beings. We were allowed to leave our cells for half an hour only in the morning, and half an hour in the evening, for bathing, etc. Even this one hour was many times denied to us by the warders, who used to open and shut out doors at will. (Statements483.)

This witness relates an interesting conversation he had with the Sub-Divisional Officer, who tried to warn him first, and then the other pleaders, from going to the meeting of the 6th April, and when he succeeded in showing that there was nothing wrong about the meeting and nothing inconsistent with the pleaders' licences to go to the meeting, the appeal was made on personal grounds, to which the Gosain weakly yielded. Then the Sub-Divisional Officer sent for other pleaders and told them that the Gosain had promised not to join the meeting. When the latter heard of this, he said :

> I felt hurt, and thought that the Sub-Divisional Officer had made wrong use of my name to influence the others; so I wrote to him that I meant to go to the meeting, and that he had no right to use my name in this fashion. (Statement 484.)

Sardar Pritam Singh, Pleader, who happened not to be arrested, witnessed the ushering in of Martial Law, which was proclaimed in the evening of the 19th April. He thus described it:

> This proclamation was read by the Sub-Divisional Officer, Rai Sahib Sri Ram himself, and after the reading was over, the people were told by him that he had been invested with powers to shoot them, in case they repeated the hartal a second time. On this occasion, he made a thrust at the chins of several old respectable people with the end of his stick.

He then describes the machine-gun demonstration referred to before the Hunter Committee:

> About the end of April, a moving column of British and Indian soldiers made a demonstration of the strength of the Sirkar (Government) with a number of machine-guns and motor-cars mounted with guns. Several iron pieces were placed against a mound, facing the machine- guns. After the machine-guns had been worked, and the iron pieces pierced with gun-fire, they were shown to the people, who had been made to see the tamasha by the order of the authorities. They were told that those persons would be made the targets of these very machines, if they rebelled against the Sirkar again. This show of power was, however, preceded by the reading of a proclamation, issued by the Lieutenant-Governor, wherein he had advised the people to co-operate with the Government in bringing about normal conditions.

This demonstration of power, side by side with an appeal for co-operation, seems to be an incompatible mixture.

There was another demonstration, on or about the 7th May, of a different character, this time intended not merely to terrorize, but also to humiliate. We again give it in the language of the same witness:

He gathered together in the sun all the people of the place including, among others, pleaders who had not been arrested. The pleaders were separated from the rest and made to stand in two rows, the front row consisting of those who had not joined the meeting of the 6th April, and the back row consisting of those who had joined that meeting but without taking any active part in it. Mr. Bosworth Smith then began his speech, and he took the Indian pleaders as his text. He said among other things, that the pleaders of India were a low class of people (*kamin*), who agitated against the Sirkar and made the innocent zemindars their tools. He asked me, personally, as to what my father was, and where I had received my education. On being informed that I was the son of a schoolmaster and had my education in the Forman Christian College at Lahore, he wondered how I could have at all taken to the agitation. Mr. Bosworth Smith went even so far as to call me a "little worm", in the presence of the other pleaders.

After he had done with the pleaders, Mr. Bosworth Smith made Sardar Gauhar Singh, a retired Inspector of Police, parade before the people, barefooted and handcuffed, in the sun. The Sahib told the people that Gauhar Singh was a disloyal subject of the Government, and that three of his sons[1] had been sent to jail for their misdeeds. The Government would forfeit [*sic*] his pension and deport him to Burma.

He then advised the people generally. He said that they were all *suar log* (swine) and *gandi makkhi* (contemptible flies). He actually spat on the ground, saying *kala log* (black men) *ganda log* (contemptible people), *sab ek rang ka* (all of one colour), inasmuch as they had rebelled against the *Sirkar* by the closing of their shops. He told them that they never should listen to the pleaders, who always cheated them, but go for advice to their *Lambardars, Zaildars,* Tahsildars and Deputies. (Statement 503.)

Here we have a special insult offered to the pleaders, an attempt to wean the people from those whom they considered their friends, the studied degradation of a respected Inspector of Police, because of the supposed misdeeds of his sons, and a vulgar abuse of the whole of his audience, and all this by an officer who was in charge of the district, and who was sent to restore order, and to punish the evil-doers.

The case of Gauhar Singh shows to what extent the officials went in relentlessly persecuting innocent people. Sardar Gauhar Singh and his family have practically been ruined, and in bringing ruin to these men, the officer who especially interested himself in them did not hesitate to resort to questionable means. If the statement of Sardar Amar Singh, his son, is to be relied upon, Rai Sahib Sri Ram had his

[1] Amar Singh, Atma Singh and Santok Singh, the last aged only 16 years.

eyes upon this family for some time. Says this witness :

> Accordingly, on the 19th of April , 1919, my father was arrested and sent to the Lahore Central Jail, without being guilty of any crime, but he was released that very day. What happened to us at Sheikhupura that day is beyond description. All our houses were locked up and all ladies and children turned out. The crop in the fields was confiscated, a guard was stationed there, and we were prevented from reaping it then. On this account, we suffered a heavy loss, which is well known to the people of our village. We were constantly threatened with our houses being set on fire.

On the 20th April, the witness, along with two brothers, was arrested. His brother-in-law was also arrested, also a friend of his, together with two servants. Sardar Amar Singh says that they were made to suffer "simply for my sake, as they were my servants". And these five, that is, the brother-in-law, the friend and the two servants were released without trials on the 28th May. The witness himself was brought to Sheikhu-pura on the 24th May. He was presented to the public, handcuffed, on the pretence of identification. He says this was done "merely to disgrace me in the eyes of the public". On the 26th, he was brought before Mr. Penny, but as there was no evidence at all against him personally, he was discharged. (Statement 490.)

Witnesses 492, 493, 497, 499, 500 and 501 depose either to pressure having been brought to bear on them to give evidence against Gauhar Singh, or to having been themselves arrested, charged and convicted for no other fault than that they would not perjure themselves. Sardar Gauhar Singh, himself describing his case, says:

> In spite of my sons having voluntarily surrendered as required by the authorities, my house, stables and other quarters remained locked up for about 8 days, and a strong police guard was placed around our house and the fields. So we had to remain out homeless. Our crops suffered a great deal owing to our not being allowed to look after them. Our poor tenants, who were to receive $\frac{2}{3}$ of the produce, suffered as well. These tenants had to pay full canal dues without any reduction. On the 17th of May, I was arrested again and was released on the 30th of May, 1919.

He was dismissed from his lambardarship, without being asked to show cause. (Statement 488.)

Although there was no damage done in Sheikhupura, and no damage done by the crowd of people to the wires indemnity was levied. Gosain Maya Ram, Pleader, says:

> The value of the loss cannot exceed Rs. 5 at the most. At first, the indemnity

proposed was Rs. 9,000 which was subsequently reduced to Rs. 100, out of which nearly Rs. 60 were recovered from 4 pleaders, who had the misfortune to be sent to jail for forty days, for no fault of theirs. (Statement 483.)

Lala Thakar Dass has brought to light what Mr. Bosworth Smith admitted in his evidence, namely, that he wanted a *tobaghar* (house of repentance) to be erected. The witness's contribution was to be Rs. 1,000. (Statement 507.)

Before closing our review of the events of Sheikhupura during April, it is necessary to glance at a portion of the evidence given by Colonel O'Brien, Mr. Bosworth Smith, Rai Sahib Shri Ram Sud, who show the animus that they brought to bear upon their work. It will be remembered that Colonel O'Brien justified the arrests without warrants, of people in general, on the strength of powers given to the Commissio-ners under the Defence of India Act. The ordinary common sense view of the section, which we have already quoted, would be that the Commissioners did not include Deputy Commissioners; where powers have been given to Deputy Commissioners, they have been specifically mentioned. However, as far as Sheikhupura pleaders were concerned, Col. O'Brien shifted the ground by saying that they were arrested for organizing hartal. Mr. Bosworth Smith, who was never before in Sheikhupura and, therefore, had never seen the pleaders before, has not only condemned them as a class without cause, but had the effrontery to report them to the High Court. Rai Sahib Shri Ram Sud has admitted that he had a ground of complaint that one of the pleaders was (a) "a subscriber to *The Tribune*", (b) "was seen bareheaded with another pleader on the day of hartal", and (c) "as the president of the meeting, after the 6th April, he got letters of regret from some of the pleaders"; while another was (a) "a subscriber to the *Moslem Herald*", (b) "was seen at the home of another pleader", and (c) "had written a letter to the president of the meeting, regretting his inability to attend it ".

We have not dealt with the summary trials in any detail nor with extortion. The evidence on both these points is to be found in the Sheikhupura statements in a full measure. The summary trials were a farce. The evidence on extortion is most damaging.

LYALLPUR

Lyallpur is the headquarters of the Lyallpur district. It is a new town containing a population of over 15,000. It is one of the largest depots for the exportation of wheat in the province. There was a

spontaneous and complete hartal on the 6th April, and there was a public meeting also, at which resolutions were passed and carefully prepared, written-out speeches, moderate in tone, were delivered. The meeting was held after due consultation with the authorities. Nothing happened up to the 12th. But, by that time, the news of the arrests of Mr. Gandhi, Dr. Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapal had arrived and also about the firing at Lahore And Amritsar. This brought about another spontaneous hartal. The leaders tried to avoid it, but they were not able to control the feelings of the people. They, however, rendered to the authorities great assistance in observing peace. Rumours about the alleged firing on the Golden Temple had considerably disturbed the Sikh population specially, and the hartal was prolonged. But, through the tact and vigilance of the leaders, the hartal was broken up on the 15th. There was no disturbance whatsoever in the town. Wires were cut near Lyallpur, but there was no connection between the wire-cutting and the hartal or any person in Lyallpur. Bundles of *bhusa* (chaff), stacked at the station, were burnt. This was considered to be the work of incendiaries. Innocent people were arrested and put to a lot of trouble in this connection, but upon a claim made on behalf of the Secretary of State for compensation a full enquiry was held and the magistrate dismissed the claim, and found that the burning of *bhusa* was not the work of incendiaries. Unfortunately, the enquiry was held too late for the protection of the innocent people. We have annexed the judgment to the statements recorded by us. The magistrate says:

> The *bhusa* appears to have gone on fire between 8.15 p.m. and 8.45 p.m. The fire was noticed by the picket at about 8.40. The night was dark, there was strong wind blowing from the direction of the factory at the time. This wind later developed into a dust storm of great violence.
>
> The stack or rather pyramid of bales which was nearest to the factories had taken fire. the fire had begun on the side nearest to the factories. The *sirki* covering or roof over the bales had caught fire. The fire communicated itself to the bales at once. The *chaukidar* of the *bhusa* stacks was absent at the time. The store-keeper or the officer in charge of baling operations arrived shortly after the fire had begun. I reached the spot with cavalry very shortly after the fire had begun. A few people from the factories, a few members of the municipal staff and the store-keeper alluded to above were the only persons on the spot when I arrived. There was no information of any crowd having visited the stacks or of any single person having been seen near the stacks. The absence of the *chaukidar* seems to have been due to laziness and not to have

been arranged or premeditated. Neither patrol nor picket saw anything suspicious in the vicinity of the goods yard. The subsequent dust storm and the covering of the ground by footprints of the helpers who tried to prevent the fire spreading to other stacks prevented all possibility of evidence.

A very exhaustive police enquiry was made; no trace of anything bearing on the burning of the *bhusa* came out. There were some approvers in the Lyallpur cases, who were associates of and in the secrets of those who were convicted in the Lyallpur disorders. None of these however had any information to give in regard to the burning of the *bhusa*, which does not seem to have formed part of the plans of their associates.

There was a strong suspicion at the time that this was the work of an incendiary, because,

1. similar acts had occurred elsewhere in connection with the disorders;
2. a plot to burn *bhusa* had been alleged to have existed at Toba Tek Singh;
3. of the fact that goods had been removed from the goods yard the day before.

The police enquiry, however, has failed to connect the burning of this *bhusa* with the act of any incendiary or with any riot or rioters. Those convicted in jail in Lyallpur disorder were questioned by me. They have now, after conviction, no object in concealing what they knew, and have given information on a number of other points, but none of them have any information to give about the *bhusa* .

I have examined the theory of whether it was the act of some villager or villagers, but no clue has been obtained .

Four factories were working on the day in question. One of them was in close proximity to the stacks. During the winter months no fires were caused to the *bhusa* by factories working ; but since April, there have been a number of fires in piles of open cotton in factory yards, due to cinders from chimneys, etc. It is possible, though not likely on account of the distance, that this may have been the cause of the *bhusa* fire.

I have been unable to find anything, except suspicion, to point to this injury having arisen from riot and unlawful assembly within the area.

I am unable, therefore, to make the assessment contemplated in Section 15 A (2) (c) of the police Act.

Incidentally, the magistrate has remarked:

There were no riots or disturbances at Lyallpur that day; though shops were shut, no disorder or unlawful assemblies were noticed in the town itself (Statement 517 A.)

So much was Lyallpur free from violent tendencies that Mr. B. W. Smith, Superintendent of Police, in giving his evidence before the

Hunter Committee, said that Martial Law was not "essential", though he considered it was "desirable"; and yet there was all the military display, all the terrorism, prosecutions, salaaming orders, restrictions upon travelling and unwarrantable attempts to discredit and to undermine the influence, such as it was, of the natural leaders of the people.

It was not before the 22nd that arrests were commenced. Lala Chint Ram Thapar says:

> On the 22nd, the people were not even out of their beds. When machine-guns were placed all round the city which was surrounded by British soldiers. About twelve people were arrested, I being one amongst them . . . . . On the 2nd of May, we were produced before the court, handcuffed in twos. We protested . . . In this way, we were taken from jail to court and from court to jail, and as long as we remained in the court, we remained handcuffed and were not allowed to sit. Efforts were made to make me an approver, and an autograph letter of the Deputy Commissioner was sent to me through a friend of mine.

But the witness was unbending. After conviction, the prisoners were taken to Lahore. The witness says:

> At about 11 a.m., in the scorching heat, we had to walk from the jail to the station with handcuffs and fetters on. Our ankles were wounded owing to the fetters. (Statement 521, p. 664.)

Lala Bodh Raj, Chairman of the District Congress Committee, Director of the Punjab National Bank, Limited, at Lyallpur, and Vice-Chairman of D.M.A.S. High School Committee, a legal practitioner of 22 years' standing, was also among those who were arrested. Unlike the Gujranwala district, the prisoners were told what charge they were to be tried under. It was under Sec. 143 of the Indian Penal Code regarding the formation of unlawful assembly. So they applied for bail and the application was rejected on the ground that some other charges, too, were under contemplation. Describing the treatment, whilst under detention, the witness says that although under-trial prisoners are entitled to have their own food from their houses, their application that they should be allowed to have their own food brought to them was not only rejected but they were taunted with this that as they could observe fast, they should be satisfied with jail food. During the trial, they were kept standing from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. They, therefore, requested that they should be allowed to have refreshment during the day at their own expense. It was allowed for the first day but for the rest of the days they were told that they were not entitled to

it. The magistrate refused to allow them the inspection of records before or after the commencement of the proceedings, and yet they were asked to name the defence witnesses. (Statement 517.) Lala Amir Chand[1] arrived at Lyallpur on domestic business on the 13th April. He had arrived from Calcutta at Lahore on the 5th April. He, too, was arrested. The trial was postponed from time to time at the instance of the authorities. The last date fixed was the 14th of June, but, suddenly without a warrant, the date was anticipated and the trial took place on the 5th of June. The witness says, he was convicted without being able to produce his witnesses. He was charged afresh on the 6th and was sentenced to undergo imprisonment for 3 months, and on the 18th of June he was awarded 2 years' imprisonment. In common with so many sentences that were revi-sed by the Lieutenant-Governor, his sentence had also undergone revi sion and he was discharged on the 18th of September. He was arrested again and made to furnish security, but for reasons best known to them, the police withdrew the case. The witness states that he subsequently learnt that he was arrested on the suspicion that he might have destructive instruments with him, as he had come from Bengal. He concludes:

> This was why the officers came with pistols in their hands to my house to arrest me. (Statement 524.)

Sardar Sant Singh, Vakil, gives a graphic description of the trial of the pleaders and others. He shows how at every step they were obstructed in their defence, and delay was caused, during which time they were kept under detention, and although the case was not finished when Martial Law ceased to exist, they were convicted. Fortunately, as the trial was finished after Martial Law, they were able to appeal. The convictions were pronounced to be illegal by the Superior Court, and the cases were remanded for retrial. They were then released on 23rd July, but they were promptly rearrested, though this time they were allowed out on bail.

They, therefore, all in good faith, restarted their practice, but they were immediately sent for by the magistrate, and informed that they were still under-trial men, and were "guilty of improper conduct" for resuming their practice. The witness says that although the warning was concluded in the form of advice, they considered it prudent not to resume practice. The last act in the drama, however, was not yet finished. On the 1st of October non-bailable warrants

[1] Proprietor, Swadeshi Stores, Anarkali, Lahore

were issued.

They were arrested, and the witness says:

> We were subjected to the indignity of sleeping in a dirty room, on dirty matting on the floor; our request to send us to the judicial lock-up in the jail was disregarded.

Ultimately, however, owing to the agitation that was set up by the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya in the Imperial Council regarding this atrocity,[1] the proceedings were withdrawn and the pleaders discharged from detention. (Statement 516.)

Mr. Ram Dass Chhokra, Barrister-at-Law, says that, for the offence of reading a paper on satyagraha, he was interned "within the municipal limits of Lyallpur", and this internment lasted till the abrogation of Martial Law. He says:

> But, an order, which was harder than the one of internment, was one regarding the fixing of Martial Law notices at my office in the Kacherry Bazaar. My office is at a distance of at least half a mile from my residential house, and to guard the Martial Law notices from such a distance at the risk of one's complete liberty was a very hard job. I made modest request to the Commander in regard to this matter, which was not, however, granted. I said to the Commander that as my office was at a considerable distance from my house the Martial Law notices might be handed over to me personally instead of being fixed to my office during my absence, for, in the latter case they might be torn away before I came to know of their existence. I also made a second request to him, and that was that I might be allowed to paste the notices on to a board, which I would make arrangements to exhibit at my office during the day time, but which could be put away during night, and so I could be saved the night watch of notices. The Commander said those were quite reasonable requests and he would consult the Deputy Commissioner and let me know. The next day, I was informed that I could go to the office of the Supreintendent of Police every evening, and find out if there were any Martial Law notices. As regards the second request, he kept perfect silence.
>
> I saw the Deputy Commissioner after these orders had been passed against me, and asked him bluntly why I was being persecuted. He said he had not been receiving good reports about me. I said, "That is exactly what I have come to know. Will you kindly tell me specifically what it is that you have against me?" He promised to look up Police papers. I went to him twice

[1] Malaviya had given notice of 92 questions, regarding Martial Law in the Punjab which he intended to ask in the Imperial Legislative Council in September 1919. They were however disallowed.

after this, but each time I was informed that he had no time to do so. And I do not know till now the reasons for the strange action of the authorities. (Statement 520.)

The pressure put upon witnesses to give false evidence was practically of the same character as described elsewhere. A remarkable expression was made use of by an officer to a witness who was expected to give evidence in particular, "*ya takhat lo, ya takhta milega*", meaning, "choose between the throne and the gallows". If the witness gave evidence as desired, he was to be free; if he did not, imprisonment was to be his lot. (Statement 530. See also Statements 518, 522, 525, 531, 533, 536, 537 and 548.)

GUJRAT

Gujrat is a historic place, famous for the battle[1] of Gujrat during the Sikh war. It has a population of nearly 20,000. It is a railway station beyond Wazirabad, on the main line, and nine miles from it.

An attempted hartal for the 6th April was prevented by the efforts of a local merchant, Lala Ram Chand Tandon, the President of the Sanatana Dharma Sabha. But on the 13th, some students from Lahore and belonging to Gujrat, as also a party that had gone to Wazirabad for the *Baisakhi* festival, returned by the late night train about 11 p. m. They formed themselves into a kind of procession, and entered the town, crying out against the Rowlatt Act. In the morning, they spread the news of the doings in Lahore and other places, and succeeded in inducing shopkeepers to close their shops. The hartal having taken place, the authorities sent for the Municipal Commissioners, and asked them to keep watch in their respective wards. Accordingly, during the night of the 14th, they, with the help of their friends, looked after their respecttive wards, and nothing untoward happe-ned during the night. On the 15th, the boys and others who had joined them proceeded to the Mission School, and asked the Head Master to close it. The latter, however, refused and is said even to have caned some of the boys. Thereupon the boys threw stones at the windows and sma-shed some panes. They did similar damage at the Station, burnt some papers, but before they could do anything more than break a few window panes, they were fired upon, and they dispersed. There were no casualties.

There was nothing beyond the above incidents. No responsible

[1] In 1849

person had taken part in the promotion of the hartal or in what followed. Yet Martial Law was proclaimed in Gujrat on the 19th April. Mr. Williamson, the Deputy Commissioner, knew nothing about the Martial Law. He did not want it, and when he received a telegram announcing Martial Law, he questioned whether it could be Gujrat, in the Punjab, at all. He thought it must be Gujrat, in the Bombay Presidency. But he was mistaken, and Gujarat, which had done nothing to deserve it, was handed over to the military, and remained under their sway till Martial Law was done away with in June.

In Gujrat, there are two factions, in one of which local officials seem to be involved. The other is headed by Seth Chirag Din, a prominent citizen, and, till recently, an Honorary Magistrate and Municipal Commissioner. The official faction, therefore, appears to have determined upon breaking up their opponents. And Mr. Har Gopal, a Barrister of Gujrat, and others were arrested and detained in custody for a long time. They were tried by the Martial Law Tribunal and hono-urably acquitted; the judges remarking that the officials who had given evidence on behalf of the prosecution had perjured themselves. Lala Ram Chand Tandon, who had assisted the authorities during the War, and who holds Government sanads for various acts, was also harassed. Respectable pleaders and others had their houses searched without the slightest cause.

Seth Chirag Din himself was dispossessed of his magistracy and commissionership. He holds several sanads from the Viceroy downwards. He holds a Kaisar-i-Hind medal. He was responsible for singly supplying 200 recruits. We invite attention to our selection of the Gujrat statements. Mr. Har Gopal applied for permission to prosecute the officials concerned for perjury, but the permission has not been granted.

All the other hardships, referred to in the other districts, were the lot of the residents of Gujrat also. It may be stated that there has been no political life in Gujrat. It does not boast of even a District Congress Committee.

A punitive police has been imposed upon Gujrat without any justification whatsoever. A tax of Rs. 42,000 has been fixed, and is to be exacted in six instalments. The first instalment has already been collected; strange as it may appear, one-fourth of it has been exacted from Lala Ram Chand Tandon and one-fourth from some pleaders. We consider that the incidence of the tax is as inequitable as the tax

itself.

JALALPUR JATTAN

This is a small village in the Gujrat district, about eight miles from Gujrat. It is an important weaving centre.

There was no hartal here on the 6th April. On the 15th, however, what may be termed a sympathetic hartal took place. There was no damage done by the crowd. A procession was formed, in which all participated. A telegraph wire was cut by someone during the night of the 15th or 16th.

Apparently, for this offence, Martial Law was duly proclaimed. Arrests of respectable people followed. Seventeen were arrested in all. One was discharged without being brought up before the court. The others were produced before the Martial Law Commission. Of these, ten were discharged and the remaining six were sentenced to a variety of terms of imprisonment.

Schoolboys, including little children, had to attend the *Thana*[1] three times a day during Martial Law.

An indemnity of Rs. 12,000 has been imposed on this village without any justification. One-sixth of it has already been collected.

MALAKWAL

Malakwal, an important railway junction, is reached from Lala Musa which is on the main line, and which is over ten miles from Gujrat. It has a population of 3,000. At Malakwal, on the 17th April, some men, probably railway labourers, had torn down rail, thus endangering the lives of passengers. A train was, as a matter of fact, derailed, but happily no damage was done.

Martial Law was proclaimed in due course and there was a repetition of the usual things. On enquiry we found that over forty arrests were made, including young students and about twenty of the railway clerical staff. Of these, eight were acquitted, and over fifteen released without ever being brought to trial, though they were detained for a long time in custody. Respectable men were compelled to pull pankhas for the officers. They were also called upon to clean streets and do other sanitary work. School-children were compelled to appear three times a day to salute the Union Jack.

The railway clerical staff was dismissed, although acquitted. Some of these were servants, who had an unbroken record of over

[1] Police Station

thirty year's service.

We have now reviewed, in the briefest manner possible, the events of April last in the five districts, in which Martial Law was proclaimed, viz, Amritsar, Lahore, Gujranwala, Lyallpur and Gujrat. In spite of our desire to do full justice to the tragedy in the Punjab, for it was nothing less, we have been unable to do so. It is not possible for us to condense into the compass of a brief review the story of persecution, corruption and disregard of human feelings that is revealed in the evidence we are presenting to the public. We have endeavoured to hold the scales evenly. We have endeavoured to make every allowance for the exceptional circumstances in which the officers suddenly found themselves placed. Yet, we have come to the conclusion that the measures taken by the authorities to suppress what have been termed disorders were far in excess of the requirements.

What was the nature of the disorders, and how did they arise? These disorders consisted in incendiarism in isolated places; murders of innocent Europeans; cutting of telegraph wires; burning, in an indifferent manner, of one or two small bridges; and derailment in one or two places. It is admitted that they were not universal, that the armed population remained unaffected, took no part, directly or indirectly, in the disorders; that the vast masses of the peasantry took no part in violence; that the population, even according to the official testimony, alleged to have been concerned in the disorders, was only $4\frac{1}{2}$ lcs out of 2 crores, the total population of the Punjab. According to the evidence in our possession, the only places where violence did take place were Amritsar, Kasur, Gujranwala, Wazirabad, Nizamabad, Hafizabad, Moman, Dhaban Singh, Chuharkana, Khem Karn, Patti and Malakwal, containing a population of about $2\frac{1}{4}$ lacs. But it has to be remembered that of this population of $2\frac{1}{4}$ lacs, it is clear from the evidence both before us and the Hunter Committee and that obtainable from the records of the several trials, that only a very small fraction could have taken an actual part in the alleged disorders. The European lives lost were four. We cannot too strongly condemn this action of the mob.

But how did a people, generally peaceful, find it in them to burn public property and commit murders? We have attempted to give the answer. Sir Michael O'Dwyer put an undue strain upon the proverbial patience of the people. By his vilification of the educated classes, by his methods of recruiting and collecting the War Loan and other

funds, by his suppression of the public Press, he had caused immense irritation among the people. His utterly unjustifiable deportation of Mr. Gandhi and Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal lighted the material he had made inflammable. Being defeated in his attempt to prevent the peaceful demonstration of the 6th April against the Rowlatt legislation, he thought he would make one supreme effort to crush the spirit of the people, struggling to find a free and disciplined expression. He mistook this healthy plant for a poisonous weed to be rooted out by every means; and he resorted to the madness of the deportations just mentioned. It would still perhaps have been well if he had issued peremptory orders to his subordinates not to be free with their rifles. But it was impossible for him to be temperate and furious at the same time. The unwise firing at Amritsar strained the temper of the people to the breaking point. The crowd became mad, and, in its fury, committed arson, murder and pillage, and spent its fury in three hours. The other places, mentioned by us, caught the infection from and copied Amritsar, we are, however, thankful to be able to say, without any further destruction of life except at Kasur.

Was this a state of rebellion or waging of war? Was this a state beyond the power of the civil authority, taking assistance, if necessary, from the military to cope with? Was it a state necessitating supersession of law? We have answered the question in dealing with each place separately, and the cumulative effect of the whole examination strengt-hens the conclusion that, so far as the published evidence before the Hunter Committee and the evidence in our possession shows, there was no necessity whatsoever for the promulgation of Martial Law. The secret evidence led before Lord Hunter's Committee will have to be extraordinarily clear and overwhelming to establish a case for Martial Law.

The theory of rebellion or war completely broke down before the Hunter Committee. There was no proof of organization outside the Punjab and behind the so-called conspiracy. On the contrary, Col. O'Brien—one of Sir Michael's trusted lieutenants—had to admit that he had no evidence to support the theory of rebellion, that it was mere guess-work and that his arrest of the leaders of Gujranwala, too, was based on mere table-talk. He admitted that he had nothing to connect the leaders directly with violence, but that he wanted to hold them responsible if there was any violence at all in Gujranwala. The other witnesses fared no better. They only betrayed their own incapacity for assessing the values of acts and events.

The fact is it was necessary for Sir Michael's theory that the Rowlatt agitation was mischievous, to establish a widespread conspiracy. The wish was father to the thought, and he saw, and he made others see that in every speech of the leaders there was sedition, in every hartal a conspiracy, and in every Hindu-Mohammedan fraternization a menace to British rule. No wonder the conspiracy theory broke down.

And if Martial Law was unjustified, much more so was its prolongation for nearly two months. The measures taken under it were such as to disgrace any government, calling itself civilized. Its inauguration was heralded by the massacre of the innocents of Jallianwala Bagh. The tone of frightfulness set up by General Dyer was approved by Sir Michael O'Dwyer during the two dark months that followed. If our figures are correct, and we hold them to be so, nearly 1,200 lives were lost, at least 3,600 men wounded, and some permanently disabled. The vengeance taken was out of all proportion to the wrong done by the people—wrong moreover, which was initiated under grave provocation. The slow torture administered to the survivors during the Martial Law period, we have sufficiently described. We can only hope that the reve-lations presented by us will make a repetition of the atrocities impossible.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

We have now dealt with the five districts in which Martial Law was proclaimed. We have dealt with Sir M. O'Dwyer's regime, and we have endeavoured to examine the Rowlatt Act and the satyagraha movement.

We desire to state that we have endeavoured to keep ourselves to the facts before us, and not based our conclusions on anything outside the evidence, printed separately, supplemented by the evidence given before Lord Hunter's Committee and the record of the Martial Law Tribunals.

We have been obliged in places to use strong language, but we have used every adjective with due deliberation. If anything, we have understated the case against the Punjab Government. We recognize that we have no right to exact an impossible standard of correctness from the Government. In times of excitement and difficulty, any officer is prone to make mistakes, in spite of the best intentions in the

world. We recognize, too, that when the country is on the eve of important changes introduced in the administration, and the Sovereign has made an appeal to the officials and the people for co-operation we should say nothing that may be calculated to retard the progress.

But we feel that it is not possible to ignore acts of atrocious injustice on a wholesale scale by responsible officers, as it would not be possible, no matter how bright the future might be, to ignore the criminal acts of the people. In our opinion, it is more necessary now than ever before that the official wrong should be purged as well as the people's. The task of working the Reforms and making India realize her goal in the quickest time possible would be well-nigh impossible if both the people and the officials did not approach it with clean hands and clean minds. If, therefore, we recommend that officials who have erred should be brought to justice, we do so not in a vindictive spirit, but in order that the administration of the country may become purified of corruption and injustice. Whilst, therefore, we believe that the mob excesses in Amritsar and elsewhere were wrong and deserving of condemnation, we are equally sure that the popular misdeeds have been more than punished by the action of the authorities.

We believe that had Mr. Gandhi not been arrested whilst he was on his way to Delhi and the Punjab, and had Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal not been arrested and deported, innocent English lives would have been saved,and valuable property, including Christian churches, not destroyed. These two acts of the Punjab Government were uncalled for, and served like matches applied to material rendered inflammable by previous processes.

In examining, in detail, the events in the different districts of the Punjab, we have refrained from saying anything regarding the Government of India. It is impossible, however, to ignore or slur over the inaction, if not the active participation, of the Central Government in the offi-cial action. His Excellency the Viceroy never took the trouble of examining the people's case. He ignored telegrams and letters from individuals and public bodies. He endorsed the action of the Punjab Government without inquiry. He clothed the officials with indemnity in indecent haste. He never went to the Punjab to make personal inquiry, even after the occurrences. He ought to have known, at least in May, everything that the various official witnesses have admitted, and yet he failed to inform the public or the Imperial

Government of the full nature of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, or the subsequent acts done under Martial Law. He became a party to preventing even a noble and well-known English Christian of unimpeachable veracity in the person of Mr. C. F. Andrews from proceeding to the Punjab,[1] whilst he was on his way, not to inflame passions, but simply to find out the truth. He allowed Mr. Thompson, the Chief Secretary to the Punjab Government, to indulge in distortion of facts and insult the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, whose statements, made in the Council[2] , have almost all been now proved to be true out of the mouths of the official witnesses themselves. He expressed such a callous indifference to popular feelings and betrayed such criminal want of imagination, that he would not postpone the death sentences pronounced by the Martial Law Tribunals, except after he was forced to do so by the Secretary of State for India. He seems to have closed his heart against further light by shutting out questions by a responsible member of the Council like the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. He would not visit the Punjab for local inquiry. We refrain from criticizing his attitude over the Rowlatt agitation. But a sense of public safety forbids us to ignore His Excellency's inability to appreciate and deal with the situation in April. Whilst, therefore, we do not think His Excellency was wilfully neglectful of the interests of those who were entrusted to his charge by His Majesty, we regret to say that His Excellency Lord Chelmsford proved himself incapable of holding the high office to which he was called, and we are of opinion that His Excellency should be recalled.

We summarize below our other conclusions:

1. The people of the Punjab were incensed against Sir M. O'Dwyer's administration by reason of his studied contempt and distrust of the educated classes and by reason of the cruel and compulsory methods, adopted during the War, for obtaining recruits and monetary contributions and by his suppression of public opinion by gagging the local Press and shutting out nationalist newspapers from outside the Punjab.

2. The Rowlatt agitation disturbed the public mind and shook public confidence in the goodwill of the Government. This was

[1] Andrews, while on his way to Lahore, was taken out of the train at Amritsar railway station, detained there for several hours and finally sent back out of the Punjab.

[2] Imperial Legislative Council

shared by the Punjab in a fuller measure perhaps than elsewhere, because of the use made by Sir M. O'Dwyer of the Defence of India Act for purposes of stifling public movements.

3. The satyagraha movement, and the hartal which was designed as a precursor of it, whilst they vitalized the whole country into activity, saved it from more awful and more wide-spread calamities, by restraining the violent tendencies and passions of the people.

4. The Rowlatt agitation was not conceived in an anti-British spirit, and the satyagraha movement was conceived and conducted in a spirit entirely free from ill will and violence.

5. There was no conspiracy to overthrow the Government in the Punjab.

6. The arrest and internment of Mr. Gandhi, and the arrests and deportations of Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal were unjustifiable, and were the only direct cause of hysterical popular excitement.

7. The mob violence which began at Amritsar was directly due to the firing at the railway over-bridge, and the sight of the dead and wounded at a time when the excitement had reached white heat.

8. Whatever the cause of provocation, the mob excesses are deeply to be regretted and condemned.

9. So far as the facts are publicly known, no reasonable cause has been shown to justify the introduction of Martial Law.

10. In each case, Martial Law was proclaimed after order had been completely restored.

11. Even if it be held that the introduction of Martial Law was a State necessity, it was unduly prolonged.

12. Most of the measures taken under Martial Law, in all the five districts, were unnecessary, cruel, oppressive and in utter disregard of the feelings of the people affected by them.

13. In Lahore, Akalgarh, Ramnagar, Gujrat, Jalalpur Jattan, Lyallpur and Sheikhupura, there were no mob excesses at all worthy of the name.

14. The Jallianwala Bagh massacre was a calculated piece of inhumanity towards utterly innocent and unarmed men, including children, and unparallelled for its ferocity in the history of modern British administration.

15. The Martial Law Tribunals and the Summary Courts were made the means of harassing innocent people, and resulted in abortion of justice on a wide scale, and under the name of justice caused moral and material sufferings to hundreds of men and women.

16. The crawling order and other fancy punishments were unworthy of a civilized administration, and were symptomatic of the moral degradation of their inventors.

17. The imposition of indemnity and of punitive police at various places, notwithstanding exemplary and vindictive punishments meted out, through nearly two long months, mostly to innocent men, and the exaction of fines and illegal impositions were an uncalled for; unjust, and added injury.

18. The corruption and bribery that took place during Martial Law form a separate chapter of grievance, which could have been easily avoided under a sympathetic administration.

19. The measures necessary for redressing the wrong done to the people, for the purification of the administration and for preventing a repetition in future of official lawlessness are:

(a) Repeal of the Rowlatt Act.

(b) Relieving Sir M. O'Dwyer of any responsible office under the Crown.

(c) Relieving General Dyer, Col. Johnson, Col. O'Brien, Mr. Bosworth Smith, Rai Sahib Sri Ram Sud and Malik Sahib Khan, of any position of responsibility under the Crown.

(d) Local inquiry into corrupt practices of the minor officials, whose names have been mentioned in the statements published by us, and their dismissal on proof of their guilt.

(e) Recall of His Excellency the Viceroy.

(f) Refund of the fines collected from people who were convicted by the Special Tribunals and Summary Courts; remission of all indemnity imposed on the cities affected; refund thereof where it has already been collected; and removal of punitive police.

It is our deliberate opinion that Sir M. O'Dwyer, General Dyer, Col. Johnson, Col. O'Brien, Mr. Bosworth Smith, Rai Sahib Sri Ram Sud and Malik Sahib Khan have been guilty of such illegalities that they deserve to be *impeached* but we purposely refrain from advising any such course, because we believe that India can only gain by waiving the right. Future purity will be sufficiently guaranteed by the dismissal of the officials concerned.

We believe that Col. MacRae and Capt. Doveton have failed equally with Col. O'Brien and others the carry out their trust, but we have purposely refrained from advising any public action against them, as, unlike the others mentioned by us, these two officers were

inexperienced and their brutality was not so studied and calculated as that of the experienced officers.

M. K. GANDHI
C. R. DAS
ABBAS S. TAYABJI
M. R. JAYAKAR

Report of the Commissioners Appointed by the Punjab Sub-committee of the Indian National Congress

2. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

[DELHI]
Thursday [March 25,][1] 1920

MY DEAR CHILD,

My heart and my prayers are with you. Your letter grieves me beyond words. That you should suffer so much pain! But true joy will come to the godly. And as my faith in your godliness is unshakable, I have a certain belief that you will have a peace full of joy.

You will certainly see Mr. Menon[2] if you think that you should. I am anxious for you to get an early boat.[3] The voyage will give you the solitude you need and your home and your father the comfort and the companionship you will want.

If you have not returned Mr. Banker's trunk , please do not send it by parcel. It may be returned on your coming back to Bombay. There is absolutely no hurry.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N. A. I.; also *My Dear Child,* p. 67

[1] There is no clear evidence to establish the date of this letter but it is likely to have been written on the morning of March 25 from Delhi where Gandhiji spent three days before reaching Sinhgadh on March 26. Moreover in *My Dear child* this letter has been serially placed before that of March 30.

[2] Dr. E. K. Menon, Esther Faering's prospective husband

[3] For Denmark

3. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

BOMBAY,

[*March 25, 1920*][1]

REVERED SISTER,

I have just arrived from Delhi and am leaving for Sinhgarh tonight. The resolutions you have sent seem all right. I shallarrange to send in my speech[2] . I hope you have kept copies of the resolutions. You must have got the letter written from the train. Show the resolutions to the Committee of the Mill Owners' Association if it is necessary. If they want to announce them let them do so, but it is not necessary.

I have already written to you that the Poet should be put up with Bhai[3] I must have mentioned this to Bhai. Did I write to you that he is going to be in Gujarat for a week?[4]

I do not yet know if Bhai Shankerlal is here or not. It is necessary to keep myself informed about your health also. Saraladevi is with me. I will certainly try and bring her with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32829

[1] Inferred from the contents of the letter. Gandhiji left Delhi on March 25, and reached Sinhgarh on the 26th.

[2] To be delivered at Ahmedabad on April 18, 1920; *vide* "Speech at Meeting of Mill-Hands, Ahmedabad", 18-4-1920.

[3] Ambalal Sarabhai

[4] For Gandhiji's article regarding Rabindranath Tagore's visit to Gujarat. *vide* "Sir Rabindranath Tagore", 7-4-1920.

4. NOTE TO PAUL ROCHE[1]

[After *March 26, 1920*][2]

Krishnaji Ananta will show you how to use this. I should so much have liked to do that myself. Don't forget India when you grow up. We'll always need good Englishmen.

Your friend,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[PS.]

Niger sum ego Led pulche.[3]

Profiles of Gandhi, p. 18

5. LETTER TO RAZMIA

[SINHGADH,][4]

March 27, 1920

MY DEAR RAZMIA,

I have already written to Dr.Ansari about the Khilafat question. But I feel that I should write to you also. My talk with Hasrat Mohani has left me much disturbed. According to him nobody believes in non-co-operation. But it has been taken up merely to conciliate me. Now in a matter so important as this there should be no question of conciliation and I would not have anything simply for my conciliation. Moreover non-co-operation to be successful has got to be taken up most enthusiastically by all, and no great cause has ever

[1] This was reproduced in *Profiles of Gandhi* from *New Yorker.* The addressee, a boy of 9, had met Gandhiji at Sinhgarh and asked him about the spinning-wheel. Gandhiji made the boy sit by his side, but while he was talking to somebody else the boy's courage failed him and he ran away. The next day Gandhiji sent him a large spinning-wheel with this note.

[2] Although this letter was written on Gandhiji's personal letter-paper bearing his Sabarmati address, it must, in fact, have been written from Sinhgadh where he had arrived on March 26.

[3] Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari (1880-1936); nationalist Muslim leader; President, Indian Muslim League, 1920; President, Indian National Congress, 1927-8

[4] A leader of the Khilafat movement, who insisted on the boycott of British goods and was Gandhiji's chief opponent at the All-India Khilafat Conference held on November 24, 1919

prospered if it has been handled without faith in it. I would therefore like you to discuss this with Hakimji[1] and let me know on his own behalf as also yours as to what is the real situation. There is no doubt in my mind that if this difficult Khilafat question is to be settled satisfactorily the Mussulmans of India will not only have to know their own mind but they must be prepared for sacrifices beyond measure. If there is no spirit of sacrifice at least they should get rid of a man like myself. I can secure no diplomatic triumph. I can only guide along the difficult, narrow and thorny path of self-sacrifice allied to absolute truth. Where these are absent I should feel like a square man [*sic*] in a round hole. I suggested to Hasrat Mohani that the principal leaders who want to do active service should meet me in Bombay between the 6th and the 13th April, and we could have a quiet chat, not for once only but often during the Satyagraha Week.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 4590

6. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

M.K. GANDHI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 27, 1920

MY DEAR HENRY,

You will not I hope consider that I have been less attentive to you than I should be because of the very great irregularity in my correspondence. The fact is I have no time. I simply write when and where I must.

Your latest letter fills me with sorrow. I do not know how far you did right in writing as you have done to Babu Surendranath. You know him better perhaps than I do. I shall therefore say nothing more about it. I do not know that I should agree with you in your categorical description of Mr. Samarth.[2] He is a man with strong views. I would even call him dense. But holding strong views myself I too run the risk of having that adjective applied to me. So I remain satisfied by simply saying that Mr. Samarth's ways are not my ways.

[1] Hakim Ajmal Khan (1865-1927); eminent Muslim physician and politician who took a leading part in the Khilafat movement; president, Indian National Congress, 1921-2

[2] N.M. Samarth, a member of the 1914 Congress Deputation to England

And that attitude of detachment always leaves me free to try to win him over to my side. Lately, that is, during my five years' stay in India, I have found the truth of the position abundantly illustrated. If we get enraged against a person, we render ourselves more or less unfit to serve him.

Now for the Khilafat. I do not mind your differing from me so violently as you do. You accuse me of narrowness because of my being cooped up in India and not knowing anything of the new life in Europe. I can only say that the new life in Europe appears to me to be abhorrent for its total disregard of sanctity of promises and of its idolatrous worship of brute force and money. Being in the thick of it, you are unable to feel the foul stench that modern Europe is filling the world with. I who stand outside it know what it means. But here again I will not argue with you. I certainly feel sorry that I cannot have your co-operation on this very important question and if I could but see you face to face I would certainly endeavour to convert you to my view.

On the British Guiana Scheme, we are at one. There is no danger of my falling into the trap. On South Africa, Fiji and all colonial affairs we agree. We have, therefore sufficient in common to work upon.

Andrews returns here on the 2nd April. East Africa for me seems to be the storm centre because the issues have not yet become crystallized. I hope therefore you will concentrate upon East Africa.

Did I acknowledge the two books from Millie? I am ashamed to say that I have not read them. I have no time. Please tell me something about Maud, Sally, Ceilia. And let me know how my bed-fellow Waldo and Leon are doing.

I am dictating this at Sinhgarh where I have come for four day's solitude. Dr. Mehta, Mahadev, his wife and others whom you do not know are with me. Mrs. Saraladevi Chaudhuri, your one-time hostess in Lahore, is also with me.

With love to you all,

Yours,
BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

7. NOTES

RABINDRANATH TAGORE'S VISIT

Information has been received that Sir Rabindranath Tagore, the poet, is to spend a week in Gujarat. We shall profit best from his presence if we give him peace and learn from him the things we should. He does not like too many functions. He keeps indifferent health. Perfect silence is essential at the meetings which he is to attend. He dislikes people shouting. We believe that, if we bear these restrictions in mind, he will be able to visit Surat and Broach. How can we honour him best? By helping his enterprise financially. He is deeply attached to his Santiniketan Ashram and the School [1] it runs. The Ashram was founded by his father[2] and the School by himself. He meets the expenses for these from donations received. He has used his own money, too, for these enterprises of his. When he toured Madras last year, he received donations for Santiniketan from every place that he visited. We think it will create an excellent impression if something like that happens in Gujarat too. We hope this will be borne in mind at every place he visits.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-3-1920

8. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

Sunday [March 28, 1920][3]

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

I enclose herewith a draft cable[4] in connection with our Report. I need not say anything further as I hope to meet you on Tuesday[5] . I would like you to consider the advisability of your going to England alone to support our Report. I am totally against a spectacular display in the shape of sending a big deputation. It will hamper swift

[1] Visva-Bharati. Its foundation was laid on December 23, 1918, and it started functioning in July 1919.

[2] Debendranath Tagore

[3] This letter was evidently written after the publication on March 25, 1920, of the Congress report on the Punjab disorders, but owing to Jayakar's illness the idea of a visit to England had to be dropped.

[4] Not available

[5] Presumably March 30, as Gandhiji was in Bombay on this date

movement and concentration and it can only irritate the authorities. I want to be absolutely frank. I conside that I am the fittest to go, but my going is a virtual impossibility. You come next in my view; because you are a student like me and we want a man of application and studious habits and possessing a level head. Whether you can spare yourself or not is another question. The only possible men who can do effective work, besides us two, are Malaviyaji and Motilalji and Mr. Das. I have not considered the relative merits, because I myself feel that Malaviyaji cannot be spared from India. I know that Motilalji ought not to be, unless certain things happen and Mr. Das has a heavy case to which, I understand, he is tied down for three months. I have gone into this matter somewhat fully, because we may not get time during my short stay in Bombay for an exhaustive discussion.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Story of My Life, Vol. I, p. 366

9. MEANING OF "BANDHU"

[Before *March* 30, 1920][1]

I had praised Shrimati Sarladevi's article, "Bandhu",[2] appearing in the issue of 29th February and asked the readers to read it several times over. Thereupon, some of them wrote to me to say that they had gone through the article and reflected over it but had failed to make out its meaning. They have requested me to explain the meaning myself. I could not reply immediately, being busy with my numerous activities. Now that I have some peace in Sinhgadh, I have read the article three times and give here the meaning as I understand it.

The first part of the article was written several years ago when she was living in Bolpur[3]. I saw her in her disconsolate state when her husband was in jail[4]. I saw that nothing would give her peace. The consolation which a friend could give in such circumstances, I tried to, but I could see that this brought no peace to her mind. She was

[1] The article was obviously written at Sinhgadh, where Gandhiji stayed from March 26 to March 30.

[2] Literally, brother

[3] Probably at Santiniketan

[4] In 1919

suffering, I saw, as a woman separated from her husband does. When I spoke about the release of prisoners, trying to guess when one could expect them to be out, I found that I could engage her attention. It was while she was in this frame of mind that I once requested her to write something for *Navajivan* or *Young India*. She hesitated, putting me off with the remark: "Ideas will just not come." One day she observed : "Long ago I wrote something which, in Bengali, would be considered good. If you agree, I will complete it, and you may have it translated if you wish. I should have the right to send the Bengali to some other journal." I agreed. 'One does not look a gift-horse in the mouth' is a saying in English. Moreover, my aim was to see that she had something to occupy her.

It is easy to explain the meaning now. There is a saying among us that "Time is invincible." Time has also been described as an enemy. This same Time takes for us the form of a *bandhu* when we are not plunged in the grief of separation or lost in the midst of pleasures, and gives us peace. This was the peace which was Sarladevi's when she lived in the woods. And so, Time, like a *bandhu,* tells us at early dawn: "Now be seated here and dive deep into your mind for a while." And again, when we have done our duty for the hour, is it any wonder that the Time-bird should smile at us with a face lit up with joy?

In the afternoon, no doubt, drowsiness comes upon us but the Brother Time cautions us to look outside, to observe the fields there and see that they are quiet, but not asleep."What aspirations and hopes, what music and beauty shine through!" By thus overcoming laziness, we have had the peace of the noon too. And now comes twilight. Tired? Well, the Bird says: "Enough! Now sit quietly in one spot and do nothing." What else is there to do? For one who goes over the day's work with a tranquil mind at twilight and thanks God for a day well spent, what else is there to do at that hour? Passing the day thus, Sarladevi found that Time was a *bandhu*.

Here starts the second part. Who is to live in the house— she or the furniture? "We have left the woods and come to a city. Cupboards all around and tables and chairs." "A little bit of sky framed" in a small window—this is all that remained as a visible symbol of the Formless. "I must visit so-and-so, or invite so-and-so. The servant has left today; the order day also a servant left." Time passes on, without stopping, and every day something remains unfinished. Daily there are new worries. In such a state of mind, Time

is an enemy—it is not peace. And so Sarladevi asks, doubtfully, whether Time is always a *bandhu* or one only when the heart is ready to receive him as such. "As we can have no real contact with a *bandhu* unless we make the mind free, so this *bandhu* perhaps does not like coming to us in the midst of all this uncontrolled rushing about for material things?" Of course, he does not. Happiness comes only where there is self-control. Lack of self-control is a sign that one is not at peace with oneself.

And therefore the writer asks: "Who is this gentleman whom one can approach only if one shakes off gentlemanliness? Is it the perfection inside me? One who is perfect inside needs no external *bandhu* to complete that perfection." If at all one does, the author proceeds to show what kind of a *bandhu* he must be.

Time being no longer ours, whom should we seek? Ponder- ing over this, she remembered the *Bhagavad Gita*. She discovered in it the Ancient Being of beings, the Supreme Ruler. Only in Rama can the weak find strength. When there is no living creature to console one in separation and lighten the grief, the grief- stricken one calls on Rama. So long as the elephant could struggle against the crocodile, he did not remember God;[1] but, when his lord- ship was exhausted, he began to call on the servant of servants. Hence Sarladevi says: "I who used to roar, I will humbly surrender myself in love to the charioteer[2] *bandhu*, friend of Arjuna and yet none else but God. I will not approach Him like Duryodhana exhibiting my strength. I will lay my strength aside and then go to Him, receive His grace and have supreme peace. As in the body so in the universe; as with me, so with all of you; as in my affliction my God was my staff, so may He be to all of you. Searching for that God, I have to look inwards to scan the heavens there and, as I do so, I realize that I am my own friend and I am also my own foe. If I would realize the Universal Self, I must first realize the self in me. Thus "The self is its own *bandhu*."[3]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-4-1920

[1] In the story of *Gajendra Moksha*, Vishnu descends from Vaikunth and rescues the elephant from the clutches of a crocodile.

[2] Lord Krishna who drove the chariot of Arjuna

[3] *Bhagavad Gita*, VI, 5

10. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

ON THE TRAIN,
March 30, 1920

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have just received your letter for which I thanked God. I am from a resting place going to the Ashram. After leaving Delhi,[1] I have not been able to write to you. I had four days' good rest. I hope to go back after the 13th April.[2] When are you going to Denmark?

With love,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child,* p. 68

11. THE SATYAGRAHA WEEK

First and foremost in the programme for the holy National Week I put fasting and prayer. I have said enough to emphasize the necessity of both these for the unfoldment of our national life.

I speak of these from personal experience. But, writing to a friend on this very matter of prayer, I came across a beautiful thing from Tennyson which I present to the readers of *Young India,* if perchance I might convert them to a definite belief in the efficacy of prayer. Here is the gem:

> . . . More things are wrought by prayer
> Than this world dreams of. Wherefore let they voice
> Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
> For what are men better than sheep or goats
> That nourish a blind life within the brain,
> If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
> Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
> For so the whole round earth is every way
> Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.

Throughout my wanderings in India, I have had the privilege of mixing with men of all creeds, of mixing with thousands of women, hundreds upon hundreds of students. I have discussed with them national problems with a passion which I am unable to describe. I

[1] On March 25, 1920
[2] Gandhiji could go back to Sinhgadh only on April 29.

have found that we have not yet reached a conscious recognition of our national state. We have not had the discipline necessary for a realization of that state and I venture to say that there is nothing so powerful as fasting and prayer that would give us the requisite discipline, spirit of self-sacrifice, humility and resoluteness of will without which there can be no real progress. I hope therefore that millions throughout India will open the Satyagraha Week with sincere fasting and prayer.

I do not wish, during this weak, to emphasize the civil resistance part of satyagraha. I would like us to contemplate truth and non-violence, and to appreciate their invincibility. Indeed, if all of us regulate our lives by this eternal law of *satya* and ahimsa, there will be no occasion for civil or other resistance. Civil resistance comes into play when only a small body of men endeavour to follow truth in the face of opposition. It is difficult to know what is truth, when to defend it to the point of civil resistance and how to avoid error in the shape of violence in one's pursuit after truth. There may well be differences of opinion as to the advisability of preaching civil resistance as a creed during a week devoted to national uplift, in which one seeks the co-operation of all without distinction of party, class or creed.

Beyond the prayer and fasting on the 6th and the 13th we have the collection for the Jallianwala Bagh Memorial.[1] I trust that complete organization would be set up in every province, in every district, and every town or village.

The third part of the activity is represented by three meetings during the week all over India at the stated times, whereat I have suggested the passing of certain resolutions, viz., on the Rowlatt Act which gave rise to the satyagraha movement, the Khilafat question which by Hindu association cements Hindu-Muslim unity, and what may be called the Jallianwala Bagh resolution, to be passed on the 13th April, calling upon the Government to take such measures as may be necessary to prevent a repetition of the tragedies that were witnessed during Martial Law regime and which were opened even before the inauguration of Martial Law by the unlawful massacre of the 13th. I suggest the following resolutions for acceptance:

[1] *Vide* "The 6th of April and the 13th", 10-3-1920.

FOR THE 6TH APRIL

1. This meeting of the citizens of . . . hereby places on record its emphatic opinion that there will be no peace in the land until the Rowlatt Act is repealed and therefore appeals to the Government of India to introduce at the earleist opportunity a bill repealing that Act.

FOR THE 9TH APRIL

2. This meeting of Hindus, Mohammedans and others, the inhabitants of . . . , trusts that the Khilafat question will be solved consistently with the just demands of the Mussulmans of India and with the solemn pledges of His Majesty's ministers and this meeting records its opinion that in the event of adverse decision being arrived at, it will be the duty of every Indian to withdraw co-operation from the Government until the pledges are fulfilled and Mussulman sentiment conciliated.

FOR THE 13TH APRIL

3. This meeting of the inhabitants of . . . is of opinion that whilst mob excesses at Amritsar, although committed after grave provocation, were worthy of condemnation, the deliberate and calculated massacre, without warning, by General Dyer, of innocent, unarmed and otherwise defenceless men to Jallianwala Bagh was an unexampled act of barbarity and hopes that the Government of India and the Imperial Government will take such steps as will render impossible a repetition of such barbarity and other similar barbarities committed by responsible officers in the Punjab during the period of Martial Law administration and hopes that recommendations[1] made by the Punjab Sub-committee of the Indian National Congress will be carried out in their entirety.

Young India, 31-3-1920

[1] *Vide* "Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.

12. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[*April 1, 1920*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Although a translation of the Punjab report[2] is carried by *Gujarati*, it will be better to have a translation of our own.[3]

Send six copies of the report and of the evidence to Vamanrao, the headman. He will pay for the same. Send him the bill. I am finding much peace here. So I spend all the time writing letters. You must have got back your harmonium from Revashankarbhai .

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Why have you given your address as 93 Bazar Gate Street?

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

13. SPEECH AT GUJARATI SAHITYA PARISHAD[4]

AHMEDABAD,

April 2, 1920

Let us consider what kind of literature should be produced if we are to educate the masses. The poet[5] gave us today the right point of view on this. He was shrewd in taking the example of Calcutta. He saw that things are the same in Ahmedabad as in Calcutta and his verbal attacks were entirely for our benefit. Sydney Smith was skilled in the art of satire. By using the pronoun "we", he tried to soften the blow; but our poet has used the pronoun "we" to mean his own people. We should see, however, that his attack is against us. Describing Calcutta,

[1] As noted by the addressee

[2] For the Report of the Commissioners Appointed by the Punjab Sub-committee of the Indian National Congress published on March 25, 1920, vide "Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.

[3] For Gandhiji's preface to the Gujarati translation of the Report, vide "Preface to the Gujarati Translation of Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders", 31-12-1920.

[4] Literary conference held at Ahmedabad on April 2 and 3 under the presidentship of Hargovinddas Kantawala

[5] Rabindranath Tagore who had spoken earlier at the Conference. "The search after gold must be subservient to the search after God" was his message.

he says that the banks of the sacred Ganga are covered with huge buildings and this has turned what should be a beautiful scene of nature into an eyesore. Such a spot should fill us with thoughts of nature. Instead, when he thinks of Calcutta, his eyes fill with tears.

According to me, a labourer that I am, our duty is to realize God. Forgetting that, we have given ourselves to the worship of money and the pursuit of self-interest.

I ask writers: "Will you, through your creations, bring me sooner to God?" If their reply is in the affirmative, I will be a slave to their works. If the work of any writer bores me, it is not my dullness that is to blame but his art itself. A gifted writer should so perfect his art that the reader would be simply absorbed in his work. I am sorry that our literature has little of this kind of thing. There is nothing the masses can learn from the literature of today. There is not one idea in this literature in virtue of which it may endure for a week, or a year or a whole age.

Let us, then, see what literature we possess in the holy books we have had with us from ancient times. The satisfaction they give we don't derive from our modern literature. Even a barely passable translation of any of those works is more interesting to read than anything of the latter. There is much indeed, some will say, in contemporary literature. That may be, but it is an exhausting task to search for that "much". Whoever gives us today anything like what Tulsidas and Kabir[1] gave?

Live as you may,
Realize God anyhow, anyway.

We never see these days anything of this kind. Where do we find now what we received in the age of Akha[2]?

I returned to India after twenty years in South Africa and, looking round, I discovered that we lived in a state of fear. A people in such a state cannot express itself fearlessly. If we have to write under the weight of suppression, the springs of poetry in us will not flow nor will truth come floating on the wave. The same is true about newspapers. With the Press Act hanging over him, the editor cannot write uninhibitedly. With the same Act hanging over the writers, not a single line is written in freedom and hence it is that truth is not

[1] A fourteenth-century poet and saint who had Hindu as well as Muslim followers

[2] A Gujarati poet of the seventeenth century

presented as it ought to be.

This is a period of transition in India. Crores of people feel that great changes are about to take place, that our poverty will give place to glory, that now the Age of Truth will dawn upon us. I hear these hopes expressed wherever I go. Large numbers of people think that India is about to turn a new leaf. If it does, what sort of writing shall we find on that new leaf? The Reforms which will have been granted will only prove to be a collar and we shall continue to be driven like bullocks, as we are driven today. At such a time, I ask the servants of literature nothing less than that they help us to a vision of God and Truth. They must demonstrate that India is not given to sinful ways, that she will not betray one's faith [in her].

No Indian in Madras has served South India so well as did Pope[1] —not the Pope of the *Iliad* fame. I am ever in love with human beings and would, therefore, always want to steal people's hearts. In order that I might steal the hearts of my brothers of the South, I had to learn their language. I cannot just now quote anything from the writings of the Rev. Pope, but this I will tell you that the poems, or rather the poetry, in Tamil which even the peasant can enjoy as he waters his field is just superb. The watering of the field begins even before the sun has risen. *Bajri* and wheat, everything is covered with pearly dew. The liquid drops on the tree leaves shine like pearls. This is what the men , these peasants, as they water the fields sing about. When I lived at Kochrab[2] , I used to watch the peasants and listen to their songs. I found obscene words in their mouth. Why should this be so? I should like to have an answer to this from Shri Narasinhroa[3] here and from the Chairman[4] .

I say to the Sahitya Parishad that, unless you help remove the filthy language from the mouths of our peasants, the sin of our degradation will be on your heads. I want to know from the servants of literature what the condition of the majority of our people is and what they will write for this majority. I will say only this to the Sahitya Parishad and repeat it over and over again: rid yourselves of all your

[1] Dr. G. U. Pope. He translated *Tirukkural* and *Tiruvachakam* into English.

[2] A village on the outskirts of Ahmedabad, now within its municipal limits. The Ashram, established in May 1915, was first housed in a private building in this village.

[3] Narasinhrao Bholanath Divetia; Gujarati poet and men of letters; professor of Gujarati, Elphinstone College, Bombay

[4] Anandshankar Dhruva, Sanskrit scholar and man of letters; Vice-Chancellor of Banaras Hindu University, 1920-37

shortcomings.

Lewis[1] thought of writing a book and wrote one for his children. They read it to their profit; men, women and children today may also read it and profit by it. I ask for such literature from our men of letters. I want, not Banabhatta's *Kadambari*[2] but Tulsidas's *Ramayana*. I have my doubts whether *Kadambari* will be with us for ever, but Tulsidas's work will certainly endure. Let us at present get just *rotli*,[3] ghee and milk from our literature. Later on we shall add almonds, pistachio nuts, etc., and produce something like *Kadambari*.

If the meek people of Gujarati—a people filled with sweetness, whose goodness is without bounds, a people so very simple-minded and having unswerving faith in God—if these people are to go forward, their men of letters should sing and write for labourers and peasants in the fields.

It is my heartfelt prayer that people may learn to write the truth, speak the truth and live the truth.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-4-1920

14. LETTER TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"

LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
April 3, 1920

SIR,

I submit for adoption the following three resolutions[4] during the Satyagraha Week, i.e., for the 6th, 9th and 13th. I take it that there will be no two opinions about the first and the third resolutions. But I have heard criticism about the Caliphate resolution. I suggest that without the non-co-operation clause the Caliphate resolution will be inane. The country requires some definite action. And nothing can be better for the country than non-co-operation as some definite action. The forces of violence cannot be checked otherwise.

M. K. GANDHI

The Times of India, 4-4-1920

[1] Lewis Carrol, author of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*

[2] A long prose romance in Sanskrit written in the seventh century A.D.

[3] Round, flat unleavened bread

[4] For the text of the resolutions, *vide* "The Satyagraha Week", 31-3-1920.

15. APPEAL FOR JALLIANWALA BAGH MEMORIAL FUND[1]

BOMBAY,
April 6, 1920

I trust that Bombay will respond in its own generous manner to the Punjab Memorial. It is a national monument. I have said repeatedly that it is in no sense anti-British. We should be unfit to call ourselves a nation if we did not treasure the memory of those innocent men who fell on the fateful 13th of April, 1919. I hope that Englishmen will see their way to subscribe to the Memorial. Their co-operation will be a demonstration of the non-racial character of the Memorial. Moreover, it stands independent of any finding, adverse or otherwise, of the Hunter Committee. It has been officially admitted that the men killed were innocent. Nothing that the Hunter Committee may find can possibly free India from the obligation to nationalize the plot in which innocent blood flowed in such profusion and to erect on it a national memorial that shall preserve the memory of the dead and shall yet be free from any poison or hatred.

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-4-1920

16. SPEECH AT NATIONAL WEEK MEETING, BOMBAY

April 6, 1920

In connection with the National Week, a public meeting of the citizens of Bombay was held under the joint auspices of the Presidency Association, the Provincial Congress Committee, the Bombay branches of the Home Rule League, and the National Union, at the open space near the French Bridge, Bombay, yesterday. Among those present, besides the President, were Mr. M. K. Gandhi, Mrs. Annie Besant, Mr. M.A. Jinnah, . . .

. . . the Hon'ble Sir Dinshah M. Petit was elected to the chair. . .

The following is an authentic summary of Mr. Gandhi's speech . . . in seconding the resolution moved by the Hon'ble V. J. Patel urging the repeal of the Rowlatt Act.

Mr. Gandhi said he hoped that at least during the Satyagraha Week, if not for

[1] Released as a letter to the Press

always, the meetings would be conducted on the same principles as they were done during the satyagraha campaign. The principles were that there should be no signs or sounds of approval or disapproval of the speakers' remarks but that they should be listened to in perfect silence and with respect. Mr. Gandhi felt that if this rule was observed the audience would be able to follow clearly the views that might be expounded by the various speakers. He called this the Satyagraha Week but he hoped that no one in the audience would be frightened by the word. He fully realized his responsibility as he knew that he was addressing a meeting called under the auspices of the Bombay Presidency Association which was a non-satyagraha body. He spoke about the Satyagraha Week without hesitation because he was neither emphasizing nor offering civil resistance for acceptance. He wanted to emphasize the necessity for truthfulness in speech and in deed and of non-violence in their relentless pursuit of Truth. Mr. Patel who had preceded him had said that resolutions were of no use. He agreed with Mr. Patel to a certain extent. But there were resolutions and resolutions. Theirs was not a resolution of despair but of confidence. It was not so much addressed to Government as it was a prayer addressed to the Almightly. He as a believer in fasting and praying made bold to say that if they had Truth on their side and a prayerful heart com- bined with determination to sacrifice themselves they could not but achieve success. Their resolution was moreover an invitation to Government to do their duty. The Congress had offered co-operation[1] on the Reforms in so far as that co-operation spelt national uplift. It was an act of nobility on the part of the Congress when it offered co-operation in spite of the Rowlatt Act remaining on the statute-book as a weapon that could be used by Government at any moment to repress the people or their activities. The resolution was an invitation to Government to respond to that nobility by removing the Rowlatt Act even before the Reformed Assembly met[2] . Mr. Patel had also pointed out the difficulty of carrying a repealing measure in the event of Government not repealing the Rowlatt Act before the Reformed Assembly met. He very properly urged that the Viceroy had merely to certify that a particular measure would endanger the peace of the land to stop its progress. But he (Mr. Gandhi) felt that there were other ways of combating any such untoward result if the Government failed in its duty. He had no doubt about the Act being repealed during the first session of the Reformed Assembly. But even if that new Assembly failed to do its duty he assured the meeting that so long as there was a handful of satyagrahis left alive, there would be no peace in the land until that Act was repealed before its statutory period.

Therefore he seconded the resolution, not in despair but in all confidence, and recommended it to the audience as a token of the fixed resolve of the people of India to secure the repeal of that obnoxious measure which had cost such suffering for so many people.

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-4-1920 & 8-4-1920

[1] At its Amritsar session held in December 1919

[2] Elections to the Central Legislative Assembly under the Reforms Act of 1919 were to be held in November 1920.

17. THE PUNJAB SENTENCES

The Commissioners appointed by the Congress Punjab Sub-committee have in their report accused His Excellency the Viceroy of criminal want of imagination. His Excellency's refusal to commute two death sentences out of five is a fine illustration of the accusation. The rejection of the appeal[1] by the Privy Council no more proves the guilt of the condemned than their innocence could have been proved by quashing the proceedings before the Martial Law Tribunal. Moreover, these cases clearly come under the Royal Proclamation[2] in accordance with its interpretation by the Punjab Government. The murders in Amritsar were not due to any private quarrel between the murderers and their victims. The offence, grave though it was, was purely political and committed under excitement. More than full reparation has been taken for the murders and arson. In the circumstances common sense dictates reduction of the death sentences. The popular belief favours the view that the condemned men are innocent and have not had a fair trial. The execution has been so long delayed that hanging at this stage would give a rude shock to Indian society. Any Viceroy with imagination would have at once announced commutation of the death sentences—not so Lord Chelmsford. In his estimation, evidently, the demands of justice will not be satisfied if at least some of the condemned men are not hanged. Public feeling with him counts for nothing. We shall still hope that either the Viceroy or Mr. Montagu will commute the death sentences.

But if the Government will grievously err, if they carry out the sentences, the people will equally err if they give way to anger or grief over the hanging if it has unfortunately to take place. Before we become a nation possessing an effective voice in the councils of nations, we must be prepared to contemplate with equanimity, not a thousand murders of innocent men and women but many thousands before we attain a status in the world that shall not be surpassed by any nation. We hope therefore that all concerned will take rather than lose heart and treat hanging as an ordinary affair of life.

(Since the above was in type, we have received the cruel news. At last H. E. the Viceroy has mercilessly given the rude shock to Indian society. It is now for the latter to take heart in spite of the unkindest cut.—Editor, *Young India.)*

Young India, 7-4-1920

[1] *Vide* "The Amritsar Appeals", 3-3-1920.

[2] Of December 1919

18. SIR RABINDRANATH TAGORE [1]

The visit[2] of the greatest poet of the age to Gujarat is no small event. And Gujarat has honoured itself by extending to the poet a royal welcome in its capital. The deep reverence shown by the people must have touched the Poet's heart. His address[3] to the Sahitya Parishad is a prose poem. It breathes the loftiest sentiments. Every line of it is proof of the religious spirit pervading his effort. It is worthy of the Poet and the occasion. His reference to Calcutta as the product of modern civilizaton is a fine token of his innate courtesy and humility. He had to speak the truth in Ahmedabad with its commercialism and its sixty odd mills. He had to tell Ahmedabad that the search after gold must be subservient to the search after God. He performed his task with consummate skill by describing the condition of Calcutta. We hope that the people of Gujarat will take to heart the Poet's message. That would be its best appreciation.

Young India, 7-4-1920

19. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

BOMBAY,

[April 8, 1920][4]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I got all your letters . I look forward to more of them. For the present, keep writing to me regularly. I am always waiting to hear how things are going on there[5]

Take care of your health above everything else. Studies follow health. Development of the self comes between the two. This self, of course, will shed its light on both, health and studies. He who has

[1] The draft of the article in Gandhiji's hand is available at the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi. The opening sentence in the draft reads: "It is no small event—the visit of the greatest poet of the age to Gujarat."

[2] In the first week of April 1920l.

[3] Delivered on April 2

[4] The date is mentioned in a note to Devdas Gandhi which Sarladevi Chowd hrani wrote on this letter.

[5] At Banaras, where Devdas Gandhi was engaged in an advanced study of Hindi

known the *atman*[1] has known everything. Even the preservation of our health is to this end, and study too. This statement, however, may mean nothing or everything. If we do our work, looking upon everything as the means to the sole end of knowing the *atman,* we come to know it. We have to have faith till we do so. To put the same thing in the language of the *Gita,* we should go on doing our duty with no desire for the fruit. Millions of labourers work to dig a mine, in order to find one diamond. For many years they need to have faith that there is a diamond deep down. When at last they get it, it is not as if it had dropped there just then. It was always there. The same is true about the *atman* and knowledge of the *atman.* But why write all this to you? Whether or not you are aware of it, you have the vision of the *atman* all the time. Writing about your health and studies, I was led to all this. I placed studies below preservation of health. Should we also regard knowledge of the *atman* as taking second place to the body? In trying to answer this, we should see that we are always gaining knowledge of the *atman.* The effort does not cease during illness. If there is anything you do not understand, ask me.

Sarladevi is by my side. Pandit Rambhuj Dutt is expected tomorrow.

Mahadev left for Hajira today. Durga[2] has also gone with him. From there he will proceed to Sinhgadh and reach the place by about the 21st Nothing is certain about me.[3]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 7168

20. SPEECH AT NATIONAL WEEK MEETING, BOMBAY

April 9, 1920

In connection with the National Week, a public meeting of the citizens of Bombay was held under the auspices of the Central Khilafat Committee of India, on the open space near the French Bridge, Bombay, last night. Mr. Mia Mahomed Haji Jan Mohomed Chhotani[4] presided. . .[5]

[1] Self
[2] Wife of Mahadev Desai
[3] Gandhiji reached Sinhgadh on April 29.
[4] A nationalist Muslim leader of Bombay
[5] The report in *The Times of India,* 10-4-1920 adds that the proceedings were in vernacular.

Mr. M. K. Gandhi moved the following resolution:

This meeting of the Hindus, Mohammedans and others, the inhabitants of Bombay, trusts that the Khilafat question will be solved consistent[ly] with the just demand of the Mohammedans of India and with the solemn pledges of His Majesty's Ministers and this meeting records its opinion that in the event of adverse decision being arrived at, it will be the duty of every Indian to withdraw co-operation from the Government until the pledges are fulfilled and Muslim sentiment conciliated.

Mr. Gandhi said they had met there that night not exclusively in connec- tion with the question of the Khilafat, but rather to look back on what had happened in India during the last twelve months. The two events that stood out most prominent among others were the inauguration of swadeshi and the laying of the foundation of genuine Hindu-Muslim unity. The first was started in April and the latter became an accomplished fact when Hindu and Muslim blood mingled together in Jallianwala Bagh. Since then, that unity had gone on increasing. He appealed to the Hindus to sympathize with and support their Mohammedan brethren in the Khilafat question and thus cement that unity for good. Muslim hearts were sore, as they had never before been sore, over the threatened dismemberment of the Turkish Empire and over the question of Khilafat. If the Hindus failed to sympathize with the Mohammedans on the present occasion the great opportunity of cementing the unity would go, never perhaps to recur.

Proceeding, Mr. Gandhi said he had never blindly supported a cause and would never so support one. He asked them to support the Mohammedans because he felt that the Muslim cause was just. He had read the report of what happened at the interview[1] between the Prime Minister and the Khilafat Deputation, and he found there was no demand urged by the Deputation that was not just. Now what they naturally expected in the Prime Minister of the British Empire was that he should adhere to the solemn promises he had made whilst the War was on, regarding the Turkish question. What the Muslims of India wanted was that the *status quo ante bellum* should be maintained as far as possible regarding Turkey. They desired, among other things, that Constantinople and Turkey-in-Europe should remain in Turkish hands, and that there should be Turkish suzerainty over the Jazirat-ul-Arab.[2] As to those parts of Turkey which had a majority of non-Muslim population, the European powers might ask for whatever guarantees they liked from Turkey for the protection of the non-Muslim races provided those guarantees were not prejudicial to the position of the Sultan. If the Arabs, who were Muslims, wanted self-government they might have it but there should be the suzerainty of the Sultan over them. When they in India asked

[1] On March 17, 1920

[2] The holy places of Hedjaj. The Government of India affirmed on March 29, 1920, that the holy places of Hedjaj would remain under independent Muslim control.

21. TWO LETTERS

I have received two thought-provoking letters. One of them is by a well-educated, pure-minded sister. The second is from an English friend, a prominent Christian gentlemen of England. The sister writes[1]:

These remarks are evidence of the purity of the sister's heart. She is perfectly right in saying that it is a great sin to disfigure or tear out the King's picture. If children learn such discourtesy and rudeness in their tender age, they will never grow fit to serve the people. A little reflection will be enough to show that in insulting the Emperor we but insult ourselves and, trying to throw dust at the sun, we only throw it in our own eyes. We may not like the British administration, but the Emperor is not responsible for it. He does not even know what happens in his Empire. It is not his duty, he does not have the means, to keep himself so informed. How is he to blame, then? Even if the blame is his, how will he be better by our tearing out his picture? The important thing, however, is that unworthy thoughts should not make their appearance in children's minds at all. They should be innocent. The mind should be innocent for the entire period of one's student life. Attachments and aversions should have no place in that period. Even if, however, we cannot attain such a high state, we may certainly keep ourselves free from rudeness, discourtesy and thoughtlessness. I don't think *Navajivan* is read by many children. I would therefore urge the parents to ask the children to read this article and see that they correct their wrong habit. Teachers also can do this.

The second point in the letter of this sister is about the people's bad habit of using foul words. The habit is so widespread that I think it will be difficult to remedy it. I have tried to do my bit to correct this bad habit, but I must admit that it was with the utmost difficulty that I could do so among my clients and others I am in contact with. It is an almost incurable disease. I remember what my clients often told me, that such words dropped out of their mouth without their meaning to use them. However difficult the task, we must succeed in it. It does not even require our arguing with people, nor is it a matter on which

[1] This letter, not reproduced here, complained about school-children tearing out and disfiguring pictures of King Emperor George V in their books and about the widespread use of foul language among workers.

people have strong feelings. It is only a matter of getting rid of a bad habit of long standing, so long indeed that the people cannot even see anything wrong in it. Many of the readers of *Navajivan* will feel that this article cannot be for them; for they never use foul words. If however, they pay attention to the language they employ, they will discover that even they use the word *salo*[1]. We must constitute ourselves censors to keep watch over one another and, noting offensive words in the language, make a deliberate effort to get rid of them. If every time we hear a person using some bad word we politely request him to refrain from doing so, some improvement can be brought about. Even school-children have this habit; we acquire it right from our childhood. Improvement can easily be effected in schools through the teachers and, if the school-going boys can command courage, they can rid their own homes of this unclean habit.

The letter from the English friend I shall take up next week.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-4-1920

22. LETTER TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

BOMBAY,
April 11, 1920

SIR,

Bombay has responded generously and yet not generously enough, to the call of duty from the Punjab. At the time of writing, it has subscribed nearly three lacs to the Jallianwala Bagh Memorial fund. Is it too much to expect Bombay to pay five lacs and the whole presidency with such trade centres as Ahmedabad and Karachi to subscribe the minimum ten lacs?

It is to be hoped that there will be no hesitation on the part of any-one to subscribe to a fund whose object is not to perpetuate the memory of the atrocity but of the innocent victims. I am told that the deed was so horrible that the memory of the dead could not fail to revive the memory of the deed and that therefore the whole episode should be forgotten. This is like saying that the innocents should not be thought of in our prayers because of the likelihood of our thinking of Herod. I suggest that the objectors have in their most laudable

[1] A word of abuse; literally, brother of one's wife

desire not to perpetuate hatred made the mistake of supposing that hatred can be eradicated by forgetting causes there of. Hatred can be done away with only by an enlightened training and that in spite of the remembrance of the deed. The nation will not forgive the deed if it cannot find harmless scope for perpetuating the memory of the victims. The best way of checking hatred, therefore, is to teach the nation to isolate the memory of the dead, which is a sacred trust, from the"frightfulness" which should be forgiven even if it cannot be forgotten.

What will be the nature of the memorial is the question asked. It will depend upon the committee which has been specially appointed for the purpose and which includes the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, the Hon'ble Pandit Motilal Nehru, Swami Shraddhanandji and myself. And I do know that whatever the shape that the memorial finally takes, it will certainly not contain anything offensive.

I hope, therefore, during the two days that the collection will continue, those who have not yet paid will not fail to take their share in this National Memorial. And it will be truly national and the Bagh will be a place of pilgrimage only if young and old, men and women, rich and poor give their quota.

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-4-1920

23. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

[BOMBAY,]

April 13, 1920

PRESSURE EXERTED ON ME PROCEED ENGLAND REGARDING KHILAFAT. WHILST I DO NOT THINK I CAN IN ANY WAY AFFECT POLICY HIS MAJESTY'S MINISTERS AT THIS STAGE AS ONE DESIRING WELFARE OF EMPIRE I FEEL I OWE IT TO MINISTERS AND BRITISH PUBLIC TO ACQUAINT THEM DISASTROUS CONSEQUENCES IF DECISION HOSTILE TO JUST MUSLIM SENTI-MENT AND TO TELL THEM THAT SUCH ADVERSE DECISION MUST RESULT IN COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL OF CO-OPERATION FROM GOVERNMENT, A STEP I WOULD GLADLY AVOID IF I COULD BUT WHICH WILL BE A NECESSITY IN THE CASE OF THOSE WHO REGARD RELIGION AND

SELF-RESPECT ABOVE EVERYTHING. HOWEVER, I DON'T WISH TO PROCEED TO ENGLAND WITHOUT HIS EXCELLENCY'S PERMISSION AND APPROVAL. WILL YOU KINDLY LAY THIS BEFORE HIS EXCELLENCY AND TELEGRAPH REPLY? IN THE EVENT HIS EXCELLENCY'S APPROVAL I SHOULD LIKE FACILITIES FOR PASSAGE BY EARLIEST STEAMER FOR SELF AND COMPANY NOT EXCEEDING SEVEN.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1920, p. 574

24. SPEECH AT NATIONAL WEEK MEETING, BOMBAY

April 13, 1920

In connection with the National Week, a public meeting under the auspices of the Bombay Branch of the Home Rule League, and the National Union, was held on the open space near the French Bridge, Bombay, last night, Mr. M. A. Jinnah presiding.

Mr. M. K. Gandhi moved the following resolution :[1]

This meeting of the citizens of Bombay is of opinion that whilst mob excesses at Amritsar, although committed after grave provocation, were worthy of condemnation, the deliberate and calculated massacre without warning by General Dyer of innocent, unarmed and otherwise defenceless men at Jallianwala Bagh was an unexampled act of barbarity and hopes that the Government of India and the Imperial Government will take such steps as to render impossible a repetition of such barbarity and other similar barbarities committed by responsible officers in the Punjab during the period of the Martial Law administration and hopes that recommendations made by the Punjab Sub-committee of the Indian National Congress will be carried out in their entirety.

Mr. Gandhi said they had heard Dr. Tagore's message, and he could say that the acts of barbarity perpetrated by some officials in the Punjab could not have been condemned in more scathing terms than those used by the great poet. He entirely agreed with the Chairman that the acts committed by General Dyer were unworthy of a soldier and were such as would befit only a coward. Proceeding, Mr. Gandhi said they asked Government to adopt such measures as would render impossible a repetition of the barbarities committed in the Punjab, and to adopt in their entirety the recommendations made by the Sub-committee of the Congress. The main

[1] Before Gandhiji moved the resolution, C. F. Andrews read out a message from Rabindranath Tagore condemning the Jallianwala Bagh massacre.

recommendation with which they were concerned was that under no circumstances in future should Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer be given responsible positions either in India or in any other part of the British Empire. It was their minimum demand that these officials should be displaced. They admitted that some people in the Punjab committed bad deeds which deserved to be condemned but the deeds perpetrated by some Government officials were worse still. They could never forget what happened at the Jallianwala Bagh. They could never forget the memory of the innocent people who died there. He was glad that the people of Bombay had contributed Rs. 3,25,000 to the memorial, though he must say he felt a little bit disappointed that it was not quite what he had expected from Bombay. Continuing, Mr. Gandhi said they could not forget, till life lasted, the memory of the Jallianwala Bagh victims. He entertained no thoughts of vengeance, because vengeance was the resort of the coward. But they could never forget the memory of the dead. All that they intended in erecting the memorial was to reverence the memory of the innocent dead. Malice never entered into their thoughts.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-4-1920

25. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

SABARMATI,
April 15, 1920

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have just returned from Bombay. I passed the fasting and prayer week[1] at Bombay. It is true I have not written to you but that does not mean that I have thought any the less of you or prayed for you less lovingly. I had no time and I felt I had sent you enough verses to last you for some time. I should send more if I knew your condition of mind. And so I allowed a few days to pass by without committing myself to writing.

But now I have your precious letter. I am quite resigned to your marriage. I will not argue against it. You will do exactly as God guides you. Only always be sure it is the voice of God.

Yes, I should certainly love to see Mr. Menon. That you are willing to give yourself to him is proof enough to me that he is no ordinary young man.

There is no certainty about my going to London. It is mere talk

[1] The National Week, April 6 to April 13

as yet; I have written to the Viceroy and much will depend upon the answer.

I had very rich experiences in Bombay during the fasting week. But of these when we meet. When are you likely to leave for home?

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child*, pp. 68-9

26. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM,

Chaitra Vad 11 [*April 15, 1920*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I arrived in the Ashram today, Thursday. I completed the two-day fast in Bombay.[2] I got the letter which you wrote after your return from Patna.

Sarladevi and Panditji[3] are in Bombay. They will arrive here on the 19th, leaving Bombay for Godhra on the 16th.

I saw a good deal of the poet[4] in Bombay , too. I also had him once for dinner at Revashankerbhai's[5].

The collection[6] in Bombay should be considered good, though of course it fell below my expectations.

Aunt[7] and Nirmala are both here. Mahadev and Durga have left for their village.

Balkrishna and Prabhudas are in Sinhgadh. Govindbabu is kept in Bombay for swadeshi work.

Have you now settled down to a routine? Mr. Andrews reports

[1] The events mentioned the test relate to 1920. In that year, Thursday fell on April 15, *Chaitra Vad* 12. The figure "11" seems to be a slip for "12".

[2] Gandhiji was in Bombay from April 6 to April 13, 1920.

[3] Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari

[4] Rabindranath Tagore, who was in Bombay during the National Week

[5] Revashankar Zaveri of Bombay, a business man and great admirer of Gandhiji

[6] For Jallianwala Bagh Memorial Fund

[7] The addressee's aunt, Gandhiji's sister; Nirmala was her daughter-in-law.

that everything is well with Ramdas[1] and manilal[2]. Both are keeping good health and, for the present, continue to work for *Indian Opinion*.

So I end today's letter to you with news in general.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 7169

27. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE AND PRABHUDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM

Chaitra Vad 12 [*April 15, 1920*][3]

CHI. BALKRISHNA AND PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. It will not do if both of you fall ill there. Get lost in the scenery there: sing, play and improve your health. I will soon reach there if I do not go to England. Mahadevbhai too will come. No one knows about Saraladevi. I expect her to arrive on the 22nd or 23rd.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 32954

28. LETTER TO MAZHARUL HAQUE

SABARMATI,

B. B. & C.I. RLY.,

April 15, 1920

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter. It seemed as if I had seen you. However, the news of your not being well hurt me. The doctors give terrifying reports and

[1] Sons of Gandhiji

[2] *ibid*

[3] From a note in addressee's hand which says this was written while he and Balkoba were at Sinhagad in Samvat 1976. *Chaitra Vad* 12 in Samvat 1976 corresponded to April 15, 1920 and is further confirmed by the contents. Gandhiji reached Sinhagad where the addressees were living at the time, on April 29 after his proposed visit to England was cancelled.

often they do it unknowingly. I am glad to know that you get the medicines over there. There should be no cause of worry if you remain vigilant and take proper care of yourself. Despite this, if death comes, why worry? Until you realize that the finer elements are your body and do not come out of the physical, you will have found a new body for yourself [sic]. This is simply an idea. Other people also console like this. All religions regard death as a welcome help. Therefore, nothing stops us from consciously contemplating death as Socrates did.

I hope you have not taken *sannyasa* from public life as was reported.

Kindly remember me to Mrs.Haque. Tell her I often see Mr. Hydari in Bombay. Is she engaged in some public work?

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]
Ashiyana Ki Awaz, p. 39

29. CABLE TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

[After *April 15, 1920*][1]

PRESSURE PUT UPON ME VISIT ENGLAND INTERVIEW MINISTERS AND PUBLIC REGARDING KHILAFAT QUESTION AND WITHOUT PREJUDICE OTHER DEPUTATION PLACE BEFORE MINISTERS AND PUBLIC TRUE HINDU-MOSLEM FEELING AND BRING THEIR NOTICE DISASTROUS CONSEQUENCES OF DECISION ADVERSE TO OVER-WHELMING MOHAMMEDAN OPINION. BEFORE TAKING ANY SERIOUS STEP I WOULD LIKE PERSONALLY PLACE BEFORE MINISTERS MY FEELING IN THIS IMPORTANT MATTER AND UNDERSTAND MINISTERS' VIEWPOINT. I THEREFORE APPLIED FOR PERMISSION FOR SELF AND PARTY TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY AND APPROVAL MY MISSION. VICEROY WHILST WILLING GRANT PERMISSION NOT PREPARED GIVE OPINION REGARDING EXPEDIENCY MISSION. CAN APPRECIATE VICEREGAL DISINCLINATION GIVE OPINION SAME TIME AM UNWILLING PROCEED WITHOUT ENCOURAGEMENT FROM GOVERNMENT IN DIFFICULT TASK. COULD YOU PLEASE FAVOUR ME MINISTERIAL VIEW.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1920, p. 652

[1] This was evidently sent after the Viceroy's reply to Gandhiji's telegram of April 13, 1920. The reply was not received till April 15; *vide* "Letter to Esther Faering", 15-4-1920.

30. LETTER TO ABBAS TAYABJI[1]

THE ASHRAM,
April 17 [1920][2]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Will you forgive me for not writing to you all these long days? Not a day has passed but I have longed to write to you a love letter. But the pressure of work has prevented me from so doing. I pleaded with Sarladevi to write to you on my behalf but she said nothing but a letter in my own writing would do. And so the weary days have gone on. I hope however that you received my message through Rehana. What a wonderful girl she is. Indeed the Tagores and the Tayabjis are the rarities for India and they are her friends. And it is my good fortune that I tumble upon them wherever I go. But I am not going to be satisfied until I get the girlies and Mrs. Abbas to do some spinning for me. You will blame me I know. Well, you can easily remedy the evil by sending one of the girls here to learn the art. If, however, that is impossible I must send you a teacher from here. Please tell me what you will have me to do.

And now for your health. Rehana told me that you still kept indifferent health. You worry too much. I should *burrrr*[3] away all worry and trust myself and the world to God. We are less than ants in the scheme of the universe. All therefore that is given to us to do is to try our best without attaching ourselves to results. And this applies as much to indisposition of the body as of the Punjab. In the one case you consult a doctor and sing; in the other you write a conscientious report and sing till you receive further orders. And now love to you all. A big post awaits me.

"Cheer boys, cheer; no more of idle sorrow" is a hymn I learnt as a schoolboy. It abides with me today.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original : S.N. 9593

[1] 1853-1936 nationalist Muslim leader of Gujarat; formerly, a judge of the High Court, Baroda. He was one of the Commissioners appointed by the Punjab Sub-committee of the Congress to report on the Punjab disorders.

[2] The reference to writing the report on the Punjab disorders suggests that the letter was written in 1920.

[3] This was a peculiar form of greeting used by the addressee and Gandhiji whenever they met.

31. THE KHILAFAT

I commented last week on a letter from a learned sister. I also referred in that article to a letter from an English friend. He writes to this effect."I am surprised that you take interest in the Khilafat issue. I helped you on the South Africa question. I believed you to be a well-wisher of the British and to be a wise and honest man. But now you want to unite the Hindus and the Muslims against the British, taking the side of Turkey. I have lived in Armenia and know what oppression the [Turkish] Muslims have practised. I doubt your *bona fides* but, before hearing from you that what I see in newspapers is correct, I shall form no conclusions against you." The letter from the learned sister was prompted by love and so she did not doubt my *bona fides*. In the letter from the English friend, despite the friendly tone, my *bona fides* is in doubt. Both, of course, question whether my efforts will have happy results. They are not the only ones to have this doubt. Other friends have felt the same way.

I think it is impossible, when resisting injustice, wholly to prevent ill will against the wrongdoer. There is no doubt either, that a man who cherishes hatred harms himself through it. No one is perfect, of course, and, therefore, the man who cherishes hatred deserves our compassion, for he wishes the world to forgive him his errors but, refusing to forgive the world its errors, he has rendered himself unworthy of being forgiven. However, having long been given to anger and hatred, we cannot keep away these enemies even if we wish.

What then should we do? Should we refrain from opposing injustice, lest someone should oppose the wrongdoer? This is what happens among relations and friends. We want the mistakes of our relatives to be buried. In my view, if hatred is harmful so is misplaced love. There will be no harm done if mistakes by our relations are also exposed; there may be some good, on the contrary. The first step towards undoing a wrong is to recognize it as such and feel ashamed of it. It cannot be recognized fully if it is covered up and the person who has done the wrong abandons all shame, grows defiant and sinks ever deeper in the pit of error. Just as, in the case of a boil on the body, there is nothing for it but to cut it open, so also there is no way but to bring a mistake to light.

Neither of the two letters above suggests that injustice may not be resisted. It is with the method of resistance that they quarrel. In

my method, resistance to injustice is taken to the length of parting company with the wrongdoer, be he one's father, if he does not change. If we do not, we become a party to the injustice. It is my personal experience that even if resistance to injustice is taken to the point of leaving the wrongdoer, it does not detract a bit from one's love for him. Injustice is a great wrong. It is a test of one's love whether one can love a friend despite his error. There is no great merit in returning good for good. As we learn from Shamal Bhatt[1], the enlightened man is one who returns good for evil. The *Gita* teaches us to look alike on friend and foe.

There is, thus, only one royal road before us. We should think long and much before deciding that a particular act is unjust or wrong. We should not be too ready to come to conclusions against any man who may appear to have acted unjustly. But, judge the matter how carefully we will, if we find that a wrong has been done we should fight it to the end. At the same time, if we discover that we were in error in believing that a wrong had been done, we should be ready to admit our error that very moment and apologize for it.

This method which I am demonstrating before India and in the cause of which I engage my friends, is a new experiment. It may have shortcomings; I see some. I never lay claim to perfection. But it is my conviction that this is the only right path. India can save herself along that path alone.

I am convinced that on the Khilafat issue the Muslims are in the right. The moment I see their error I will stop helping them. I do not say that they are free from hatred but I am sure that, joining my love with their hatred, I can diminish the intensity of that hatred. I also believe that, if my method is followed by a large number, their hatred can be counteracted altogether. Those who are full of hatred will in any case fight injustice, and exercise no restraint in doing so. The man who is free from hatred has also no choice but to fight. The wrongdoer, of course, is full of hatred. His victim, when he acts, acts in hatred. The only question is what the man without hatred should do. The answer to this is not always easy to find. A man grows through moral dilemmas. One rises only by falling again and again. Our duty is to remain alert, lest we make a mistake. To do nothing because of such fear is cowardice. Despite, therefore, the danger of our making mistakes, wherever we find injustice we should resist it

[1] A Gujarati poet of the eighteenth century

with love and thus deserve success [in our effort]—this, in my humble view, is the way taught by the *Gita.*

In Champaran,[1] in Kaira[2] and in the agitation against the Rowlatt Act,[3] fighting injustice passionately I failed to check hatred altogether but I could help to a greater or less extent in ending the injustice and succeeded in giving the people a glimpse of the sun of satyagraha. I could not reveal its full glory because my *tapascharya*[4] and my knowledge, I find, are much too imperfect. I am a friend of the British. My conscience bears witness that I wish no ill to the mill-owners. And so I keep to my path, with my mind ever at peace.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-4-1920

32. NOTES

SATYAGRAHA WEEK

The occasion passed off peacefully. I should like volunteers in every village in Gujarat and Kathiawar to send to *Navajivan* a brief account of the celebrations. They should also mention in the report the amount of collections[5] at each place and say what has been done with them. The collection in Bombay may be said to be good, though it has not reached the figure of five lakhs. However, what is important to know is not the amount received but the spirit in which the contributions were offered. Anyone who knows this is bound to be entirely satisfied. If the rich offered big sums, the poorest among the poor also contributed their mite. Women gave on their own account and also persuaded others to give. The Gujarati Stri Mandal[6] played a fine part in this. With Shrimati Sarladevi in the chair, they passed strongly-but properly-worded resolutions. *Dheds*[7] and *Bhangis*[8] also offered what little they could within their means. Everyone, moreover, paid cheerfully. We can safely assert that there was no occasion to press

[1] During 1917

[2] During 1918

[3] During 1919

[4] Self-suffering as moral discipline

[5] For the Jallianwala Bagh Memorial Fund

[6] Women's Association , at Bombay

[7] Members of the depressed classes whom Gandhiji later described as *Harijans.* The *Bhangis* are usually charged with sanitary duties.

[8] *ibid*

anyone to pay or shame anyone into doing so. I also observed, through my talks on this subject with hundreds of men and women who went round for collections, that there must have been hardly any people who had paid with the idea of perpetuating hatred and ill will. Most of them had only one thought in their mind, to perpetuate the memory of the innocent people who had been killed. Many also felt that by converting the Jallianwala Bagh into national property and raising a memorial column in it we would succeed in further cementing Hindu-Muslim unity which was strengthened on April 13, 1919. What Sir Rabindranath Tagore has said is perfectly true, that we shall certainly not advance by keeping alive the memory of General Dyer's cruelty. To perpetuate the memory of truth, firmness, courage and innocence, wherever these may be found—that is the people's real duty and in doing so lies the nation's regeneration.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-4-1920

33. TELEGRAM TO CHHOTANI[1]

AHMEDABAD,

April 18, 1920

IMPOSSIBLE LEAVE WITHOUT FULL DISCUSSION. CANCEL PASSAGES [2] TWENTIETH. REACHING TUESDAY.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1920, p. 620

[1] Mia Mahomed Haji Jan Mahomed Chhotani

[2] For going to England in connection with Khilafat movement

34. LETTER TO SRI PRAKASA

SABARMATI,
April 18, 1920

DEAR SRI PRAKASA,

I thank you for the papers sent by you at Father's[1] instance. I like the combination of Hindi-Urdu. I hope you had a good response there.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SRI SRI PRAKASA, ESQ.
SEVASHRAMA
BENARES CANTT.

From the original: Sri Prakasa Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

35. SPEECH AT MEETING OF MILL-HANDS, AHMEDABAD[2]

April 18, 1920

This is the second anniversary of the peaceful triumph of justice.[3] I call it a victory both for the mill-owners and the mill-hands. I call this a victory of justice because the demand of the mill-hands was just and the means adopted by them to secure acceptance were pure. I should not wish victory for the mill-hands by unjust means.

Last year Swami Shraddhanandji graced the last anniversary by his presence. Between then and now many things have happened and they have altered materially the state of India. A new spirit fires us, a new atmosphere pervades Indian society. But I do not propose to detain you on the general position in our country.

It would however ill become me to call myself your friend—and I pride myself in being considered a fellow-labourer—if I omitted all mention of the part that the mill-hands played in the events of the April of last year. During that month I was arrested at the instance of Government. There is no doubt that it was a serious blunder. But could the mill-hands undo the mischief by incendiarism and blood-shed? You are deeply attached to Anasuyabehn. She is worthy of your adoration. You heard a rumour to the effect that she was

[1] Dr. Bhagwan Das
[2] The speech was delivered in Gujarati.
[3] The reference is to the successful conclusion of the strike of mill-hands in 1918.

arrested; you were staggered; you were indignant. You felt that you were like birds with clipped wings. All this does credit to your love for her. But I would again ask : Is incendiarism a fit expression of your love for her? Nor may we escape responsibility by pleading that others too were concerned in the misdeeds. It is impossible for me to describe to you in adequate language the deep grief both she and I felt when we heard of the happenings in Ahmedabad. I can see nothing but catastrophe for India from methods of violence. Workmen would be committing suicide and India would have to suffer indescribable misery if working men were to vent their anger by criminal disobedience of the laws of the land. I do wish that you would not be misled into acts of violence because sometimes you see that violence see-mingly answers the purpose for which it is intended. When I began to preach satyagraha and civil disobedience it was never meant to cover criminal[1] disobedience. My experience teaches me that truth can never be propagated by doing violence. Those who believe in the justice of their cause have need to possess boundless patience and those alone are fit to offer civil disobedience who are above committing criminal disobedience or doing violence. A man cannot commit both civil and criminal disobedience at the same time even as he cannot be both temperate and furious at the same time and just as self-restraint is acquired only after one has been able to master his passions, so is the capacity for civil disobedience acquired after one has disciplined oneself in complete and voluntary obedience of the laws of the land. Again, just as he alone can be said to be proof against temptations who having been exposed to them has succeeded in resisting them, so may we be said to have conquered anger when having sufficient cause for it we have succeeded in controlling ourselves. We failed last year in this test. It is my earnest prayer to you all that on this auspicious day you will recall the mistakes of April last and make a fine determination never to repeat them.

I shall now say a few words about the condition in general of the mill-hands, of which they need to know a great deal. We cannot become rich by merely getting more wages; nor is becoming wealthy the all in all. Anasuyabai has not dedicated her life to you merely for the purpose of securing for you better wages. Her object in doing so is that you may get enough to make you happy, to make you truly religious, that you may observe the eternal laws of ethics, that you

[1] The source has “civil” which is evidently a misprint.

may give up bad habits such as drink, gambling, etc., that you may make good use of your earnings, that you may keep your houses clean and that you may educate your children.

Your economic condition has improved. There is room for yet more improvement. It can take place in two ways by consultation with the mill-owners or by using undue pressure. The first is the only true remedy. In the West an eternal conflict has set up between capital and labour. Each party considers the other as its natural enemy. That spirit seems to have entered India also, and if it finds a permanent lodgment, it would be the end of our industry and of our peace. If both the parties were to realize that each is dependent upon the other, there will be little cause for quarrel.

I do not propose to examine the duty of the capitalist. If the labourer alone were to understand his rights and responsibilities and confine himself to the purest means, both must gain. But two things are needful—both the demands and the means adopted to enforce them must be just and clear. It is an unlawful demand which seeks merely to take advantage of the capitalists' position. But it is an altogether lawful demand when the labourer asks for enough wages to enable him to maintain himself and to educate his children decently. To seek justice without resorting to violence and by an appeal to the good sense of the capitalist by arbitration is lawful means.

In order then to achieve the end you must have unions. A beginning has already been made. I trust that the mill-hands in every department will form their unions and everyone should [*sic*] scrupulously observe the rules that may be formed for them. You will then approach the mill-owners through your unions and if the decisions of the former do not satisfy you, you will appeal to arbitration. It is a matter of satisfaction that both parties have accepted the principle of arbitration. I hope that that principle will be fully developed and that strikes will for ever become an impossibility. I know that strikes are an inherent right of the working men for the purpose of securing justice, but they must be considered a crime immediately the capitalists accept the principle of arbitration. Ways are improving and there is every possibility of a continuous improvement. But there is equal need for reducing hours of labour. The mill-hands seem to be working twelve hours or more. Those who have to work so many hours per day can have no time left for mental or moral betterment. Their condition therefore must be reduced to that of the beast. It is our duty to escape the peril and yet in every step we take we must

guard ourselves against damaging our industries.

The mill-owners tell me that the mill-hands are lazy, they do not give full time to their work and they are inattentive. I for one cannot expect attention and application from those who are called upon to work twelve hours per day. But I would certainly hope that when the hours are reduced to ten the labourers will put in better and almost the same amount of work as in twelve hours. Reduction in hours of labour has brought about happy results in England. When mill-hands learn to identify themselves with the interest of the mill-owners they will rise and with them will rise the industries of our country. I would therefore urge the mill-owners to reduce the hours of labour to ten and urge the mill-hands to give as much work in ten as they have been doing in twelve.

It is now time to examine the use we should make of the increasing wages and the hours saved. It would be like going out of the frying-pan into the fire to use the increase in wages in the grogshop and the hours saved in the gambling den. The money received, it is clear, should be devoted to education of our children, and the time saved to our education. In both these matters the mill-owners can render much assistance. The can open cheap restaurants for working men where they can get pure milk and wholesome refreshments. They can open reading-rooms and provide harmless amusements and games for them. Provided such healthy surroundings, the craving for drink and gambling will leave them. The unions also should attempt similar things. They will be better employed in devising means of improvement from within than in fighting the capitalists.

It is a sign of national degradation when little children are removed from schools and are employed in earning wages. No nation worthy of the name can possibly afford so to misuse her children. At least up to the age of sixteen they must be kept in schools. Similarly women also must be gradually weaned from mill-labour. If man and woman are partners in life and complementary, each of the other, they become good householders only by dividing their labour, and a wise mother finds her time fully occupied in looking after her household and children. But where both husband and wife have to labour for mere maintenance the nation must become degraded. It is like a bankrupt living on his capital.

And just as it is necessary for the labourers to develop their minds by receiving education and to educate their children so it is

necessary to develop the moral faculty in them. Development of the moral faculty means that of the religious sense. The world does not quarrel with those who have a true faith in God and who understand the true nature of religion. And if it does such men turn away the wrath of their adversaries by their gentleness. Religion here does not mean merely offering one's *namaz* or going to the temple. But it means knowledge of one's self and knowledge of God, and just as a person does not become a weaver unless he knows the art of weaving so does he fail to know himself unless he complies with certain rules. Chief amongst these are three that are of universal observance. The first is observance of truth. He who does not know what it is to speak the truth is, like a false coin, valueless. The second is not to injure others. He who injures others, is jealous of others, is not fit to live in the world. For the world is at war with him and he has to live in perpetual fear of the world. We all are bound by the tie of love. There is in everything a centripetal force without which nothing could have existed. Scientists tell us that without the presence of the cohesive force amongst the atoms that comprise this globe of ours it would crumble to pieces and we would cease to exist, and even as there is cohesive force in blind matter so much must there be in all things animate and the name for that cohesive force among animate beings is Love. We notice it between father and son, between brother and sister, friend and friend. But we have to learn to use that force among all that lives, and in the use of it consists our knowledge of God. Where there is love there is life; hatred leads to destruction. I hope that Anasuyabehn will help you to learn this great law of love and I ask you, if you recognize her love towards you, to reciprocate it by feeling in your own persons that same love towards the whole of humanity. The third rule is that we have to conquer our passions. It is called *brahmacharya* in Sanskrit. I do not use it here merely in its accepted narrow sense. He is not a *brahmachari*, who, although he may be a celebate or may be living a chaste life as a married man, otherwise gives himself up to a variety of indulgences. He alone is capable of knowing himself who brings under complete subjection all his passions. He who exercises self-restraint in its widest sense is also a *brahmachari*—a man of faith, a true Hindu or a true Mohammedan.

It is a breach of *brahmacharya* to hear questionable language or obscene songs. It is licentiousness of the tongue to utter foul abuse instead of reciting the name of God, and so with the other senses. He alone can be considered the true man who having subjected his

passions becomes perfectly self-restrained. We are like a rider who cannot keep his horse under control and is quickly brought down. But one who drawing in the reins keeps the animal under subjection stands a fair chance of reaching his destination. Even so does a man who can control his passions make for the goal. He alone is fit for swaraj. He alone is a seeker after truth. He alone becomes capable of knowing God. It is my earnest wish that you will not reject these remarks as if they were copy-book maxims. I ask you to believe that we shall never go forward until we have learnt the value of observing these truths. What I have told you is a fragment of my own experiences. My service of you is due simply to my love for you and I partake of your sorrows because I hope thereby to justify myself before my Maker. What though your wages were quardrupled and you had to work only a quarter of the time you are doing now if, not withstanding, you did not know the value of true speech, if the *rakshasa*[1] in you injured others and gave the reins to your passions. We must have more wages, we must have less work because we want clean houses, clean bodies, clean minds and a clean soul, and we strive for better wages and less work in the belief that both are essential for this fourfold cleanliness. But if that be not the object to be achieved, it would be a sin to attempt and get better wages and reduce the hours of labour. May God grant you Anasuyabai the power to achieve the end.

Young India, 28-4-1920 & 5-5-1920

36. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Monday [*April 19, 1920*][2]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I read your postcard to Chhaganlal[3]. I understand now the absence of any letters from you. It seems you have decided to get ill at regular intervals. How is Durga? It appears you will have to stay on where you are. Be careful about your health.

[1] Demon

[2] The references in the letter to Malaviya and the mill workers' dispute at Ahmedabad suggest this date.

[3] Gandhiji's nephew who worked with him in South Africa and later in the Sabarmati Ashram

Malaviyaji is still here. We have now taken in hand the mill workers' dispute and he, therefore, changed his mind at the last minute when about to leave for the station. I have had no discussion with him worth writing about. Be sure you accompany me to Delhi. Do join me at Delhi at any rate.

Weaving and other activities are going on satisfactorily here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9829

37. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[Before *April 20, 1920*][1]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I got your letter. Whether or no I get time, just as eating gives me pleasure so do some letters and, therefore, as I find time for eating, so do I for such letters.

I shall arrive in Bombay on the 20th. You may stay on there up to the 21st if absolutely necessary and come to Bombay on the 22nd. I hope that even if we have to go,[2] it will not be before the 1st of May. We shall decide about the clothes when we are in Bombay. Fatima's wedding is fixed for the 26th and I must be back at . . .[3] for the occasion. At the time, you may stay here if you wish to, or in Bombay if you prefer, or, if we do not go to England, in Sinhgadh—Balkrishna and Prabhudas feel restless in Sinhgadh.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 11407

[1] Fatima's wedding, mentioned in the text, took place on April 26, 1920 (*vide* "Invitation to Wedding", 20-4-1920). In 1920, Gandhiji arrived in Bombay on April 20, as he says in the letter he would.

[2] To England, in connection with the Khilafat Deputation

[3] Illegible

38. INVITATION TO WEDDING[1]

786[2]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 20, 1920

DEAR FRIEND[3],

Fatima Bibi, eldest daughter of my friend Imam Saheb Abdul Kadir[4], who is as a brother to me and who has been staying with me for many years now ever since I was in South Africa, and living with me in the Ashram even in India, will be married to Saiyad Hussainmiya Uraizee on Monday, April 26, 1920, corresponding to Shaban 6 of the Hijiri year 1338, at 7 p.m. The *maulood sharif*[5] will commence at 6.30 p.m. I shall be grateful if you grace this auspicious occasion with your presence and give your blessings to the bride and the bridegroom.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 7162

39. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

BOMBAY,
Tuesday [*April 20, 1920*][6]

CHI. DEVDAS,

Of late not a single day has passed without my writing to you, but I have had no letter from you in reply. I have been worrying, therefore, lest my letters should have missed you. I address them myself, correctly.

Did you have any talk with Babu Arvind Ghosh[7] about a

[1] The source for this item is a printed invitation card.

[2] The figure stands for *Bismillahir-al-Rahamanir-al-Rahim* which means "to begin with the name of Allah, the God Mercy, the Merciful".

[3] Here the source has "Chi. Devdas Gandhi" written in hand.

[4] Formely chairman of Hamidia Islamic Society, Johannesburg

[5] The auspicious recitation of the life of the Prophet

[6] Gandhiji's speech to the workers, mentioned in letter, was delivered on April 18, 1920 which was a Sunday; "yesterday" in the text was evidently a slip for "day before yesterday".

[7] Aurobindo Ghosh (1872-1950); mystic, poet and philosopher; settled at Pondicherry in 1910

Japanese gentleman named Hyami Hamashi. An enquiry is going on about this matter. I gave them all information about your visit. What can we have to conceal? The enquiry is quite innocent.

It is not yet decided whether I should go to England.[1] I shall be meeting Muslim friends this evening. A decision will be taken after that. I am rather lukewarm, but I don't want to oppose the proposal outright. I shall be here up to the 23rd, at the outside. At the earliest I shall leave here on the 22nd.

Sarladevi told me that she wrote to you yesterday. I am sending to you the speech which I delivered to the workers yesterday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 7167

40. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE AND PRABHUDAS GANDHI

BOMBAY,
Tuesday [*April 20, 1920*][2]

CHI. BALKRISHNA AND PRABHUDAS,

On reaching Bombay today, I received your letter. Whether or not we should go to England will be decided today. I expect that it will be cancelled and then hope to be certainly there. Fatima's wedding is on the 26th. It seems I will be able to come only after the wedding is over. Both of you should just enjoy yourselves. In case I go to England, I will call you here to meet me. Smt. Sarladevi and Panditji are here. Panditji will leave for Punjab tomorrow.

The Ashram is getting deserted now. I presume that Mahadev will come here on the 22nd.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 32955

[1] In connection with the Khilafat question

[2] From the contents; Gandhiji reached Bombay on April 20, 1920, a Tuesday, and attended Fatima's marriage on April 26, at Ahmedabad.

41. NOTES[1]

COMMUNAL REPRESENTATION

We have absurdities enough in India in communal representation being demanded by other small groups because the principle has been conceded in the case of Mohammedans.[2] But when the cry for communal representation comes from Indians in Burma, the absurdity becomes criminal. We understand some Indians of Rangoon have pleaded for communal representation in the Burmese Council to be formed under the Reforms. We do hope that the demand will be withdrawn before mischief is done. The Burman will have every right to resent any such separate treatment of Indian settlers there. We are in Burma as guests of the Burmese for their and our mutual good, not for the exploitation of the former. Their welfare should be our first consideration. As a friend correctly points out, the Indian demand would be like Gujaratis or Marwaris claiming communal repre- sentation for themselves in the Bengal Council. Surely, Indians of Burma would have a right to enter the Burmese Council, only if they by force of ability and service can command the Burmese vote. We, who desire that nobody should set up claims in India which are against our interests, are bound to guard against desiring rights in Burma in conflict with the interests of the Burmans. And yet that is precisely what lies at the bottom of this demand for communal representation by Indian settlers. We, therefore, trust that wiser counsels will prevail and that we shall hear no more of communal representation for Indians in Burma.

MR. HORNIMAN'S DEPORTATION

26th April will be the anniversary of Mr. Horniman's deportation. During the interval the public have shown in various ways their strong disapproval of the summary order of the Bombay Government. Apart from Mr. Horniman's qualification, deportations without trial of any British subject must be a matter of great concern to any order-loving citizen. We must make it impossible in India for any British subject to be deported or have his liberty otherwise restricted without due trial except under circumstances in which every

[1] This and the following two articles have been identified as Gandhiji's from the draft in his hand preserved in the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi.

[2] *ibi*d

government must have the power of suspending the operation of the ordinary rules of law. And we must make it clear that no circumstances are proved to have existed for Mr. Horniman's deportation. We hope therefore that the whole of the Presidency will ask at public meeting in every village that Mr. Horniman's deportation should be cancelled without delay.

JALLIANWALA BAGH MEMORIAL

The National Week has been a striking success if Bombay is any index of the rest of the country. The three meetings were entirely successful. The Government know the opinion of the country on the Rowlatt Act, the Khilafat question and the Punjab tragedy. It is difficult to know to what extent fasting and prayer were undertaken. But there is no doubt that a respectable number went through the discipline in a proper religious spirit. But the most effective demonstration of the success of the national observance was the response made to the Jallianwala Bagh Memorial. The list published daily shows the liberality of the donors and its catholicity. But the public know little of the spontaneous help rendered by the fair sex and by those who have not hitherto been touched by the national spirit. A band of ladies went through personal canvassing with most encouraging results. Even *Dheds* and *Bhangis* collected subscriptions for the Memorial. Lists have been coming in from far and near. Contributions have come in from far-off Champaran. It is hoped that those who have received the amounts will send their contributions to Lala Girdhari Lal at Amritsar without delay. They should remember that the day for the payment of the balance of the purchase price is near.

Young India, 21-4-1920

42. SWADESHI

The National Week closed on Tuesday the 13th. It was in every way a remarkable demonstration of Hindu-Muslim unity, the determination to secure repeal of the Rowlatt Act and the satyagraha spirit. The speeches delivered were sober and more to the point than before. There was no disorderliness at any of the meetings of which we have received reports.

What however about swadeshi? Was swadeshi too not a product

of the satyagraha spirit and activity? It undoubtedly was. But swadeshi work is the most constructive of all. It does not lend itself to speeches so much as to solid action. It is not possible to save fifty crores of rupees annually by speeches or demonstrations. It involves much more than the severing of this annual drain. It involves the honour of Indian womanhood. Everyone who has any connection with the mill industry knows that the women working in the mills are exposed to temptations and risks to which they ought not to be exposed. Many women for want of home employment accept road repair labour. And only those who know what this labour is, understand the risks the women run. Give them the spinning-wheel and no woman need ever seek any other employment than sitting at the spinning-wheel. Swadeshi means even distribution of wealth from an occupation next in importance only to agriculture. It supplements agriculture and therefore automatically assists materially to solve the problem of our growing poverty. Thus swadeshi is our veritable *Kamadhenu*[1] supplying all our wants and solving many of our difficult problems. And an occupation which saves our honour and provides our livelihood becomes a religious duty.

How can the great consummation be achieved? The answer is simple. Those who realize the importance of the problem must set about working in one or all of the following directions :

1. Learn spinning yourself whether man or woman. Charge for the labour if you need money, or make a gift of at least one hour's labour to the nation daily.

2. Learn weaving yourself whether for recreation or for maintenance.

3. Make improvements in the present handlooms and the spinning-wheels, and if you are rich, pay for them to those who would make them.

4. Take the swadeshi vow and patronize the cloth that is both hand-spun and hand-woven.

5. Introduce such cloth among your friends and believe that there is more art and humanity in khadi whose yarn has been prepared by your poor sisters.

6. If you are a mother, you will give a clean and national culture to your children and make them wear clothes made out of

[1] A mythical cow that gave whatever one asked of her

beautiful khadi which is available to millions and which can be most easily produced.

Swadeshi then means the creation of a most perfect organization in which every part work in perfect harmony with every other. If we succeed in bringing into being such an organization, not only is success of swadeshi assured, but real swaraj comes to us as a matter of course.

Young India, 21-4-1920

43. INDIANS ABROAD

The prejudice against Indian settlers outside India is showing itself in a variety of ways. Under the impudent suggestion of sedition the Fiji Government has deported Mr. Manilal Doctor[1] who with his brave and cultured wife[2] has been rendering assistance to the poor indentured Indians of Fiji in a variety of ways. The whole trouble has arisen over the strike of the labourers in Fiji. Indentures have been cancelled,[3] but the spirit of slavery is by no means dead. We do not know genesis of the strike; we do not know that the strikers have done no wrong. But we do know what is behind when a charge of sedition is brought against the strikers and their friends. The readers must remember that the Government that has scented sedition in the recent upheaval in Fiji is the Government that had the hardihood to libel Mr. Andrews' character. What can be the meaning of sedition in connection with the Fiji strikers and Mr. Manilal Doctor? Did they and he want to seize the reins of government? Did they want any power in that country? They struck for elementary freedom. And it is a prostitution of terms to use the word sedition in such connection. The strikers may have been over-hasty. Mr. Manilal Doctor may have misled them. If his advice bordered on the criminal, he should have been tried. The information in our possession goes to show that he has been strictly constitutional. Our point, however, is that it is an abuse of power for the Fiji Government to have deported Mr. Manilal Doctor without a trial. It is wrong in principle to deprive a person of

[1] Son-in-law of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta, an old associate of Gandhiji. He went to Fiji in 1912 to take up public work there.

[2] Jayakunvar

The indenture system introduced in 1877 in Fiji was abolished in January 1920.

his liberty on mere suspicion and without giving him an opportunity of clearing his character. Mr. Manilal Doctor, be it remembered, has for years past made Fiji his home. He has, we believe, bought property there. He has children born in Fiji. Have the children no rights? Has the wife none? May a promising career be ruined at the bidding of a lawless government? Has Mr. Manilal Doctor been compensated for the losses he must sustain? We trust that the Government of India which has endeavoured to protect the rights of Indian settlers abroad will take up the question of Mr. Doctor's deportation.

Nor is Fiji the only place where the spirit of lawlessness among the powerful has come to the surface. Indians of (the late) German East Africa find themselves in a worse position than heretofore. They state that even their property is not safe. They have to pay all kinds of dues on passports. They are hampered in their trade. They are not able even to send money orders.

In British East Africa the cloud is perhaps the thickest. The European settlers there are doing their utmost to deprive the Indian settlers of practically every right they have hitherto possessed. An attempt is being made to compass their ruin both by legislative enactment and administrative action.

In South Africa every Indian who has anything to do with that part of the British Dominions is watching with bated breath the progress of the commission[1] that is now sitting.

The Government of India have no easy job in protecting the interests of Indian settlers in these various parts of His Majesty's dominions. They will be able to do so only by following the firmest and the most consistent policy. Justice is admittedly on the side of the Indian settlers. But they are the weak party. A strong agitation in India followed by strong action by the Government of India can alone save the situation.

Young India, 21-4-1920

44. THE CAUSE OF THE VERNACULARS

To anyone who watched the proceedings of the recent Sahitya

[1] The Commission of Enquiry which sat from March 1920 to July 1920. It was appointed by the Union Government of South Africa to enquire into the question of Asiatics trading and holding land in several provinces of South Africa.

Sammelans[1] it must be clear that our national awakening is not confined to politics alone. The enthusiasm displayed at these gatherings indicated a happy change. We are giving in thought their proper place to the vernaculars in our national life. Raja Ram Mohan Ray's[2] prophecy that India will one day be an English-speaking country, has not today many stars in its favour. The great reformer's spirit, however, still haunts some. A number of our eminent men hastily generalize in favour of English as the national medium. The present status of English as a court language weighs with them unduly. They fail to see that the present status of English is no credit to us and that it is not conducive to the growth of a true democratic spirit. That crores of men should learn a foreign tongue for the convenience of a few hundreds of officials is the height of absurdity. An instance is often cited from our past history to prove the necessity of a lingua franca to strengthen the Central Government of the country. Nobody disputes the necessity of a common medium. But it cannot be English. The officials have to recognize the vernaculars. The second consideration that appeals to the Anglicists is India's position in the Empire. The argument, put in plain words, amounts to asking 31crores of Indians to accept English as their common language for the sake of the other parts of the Empire whose population is not more than 12 crores.

The first fact that ought to receive consideration from every student of this problem is that after a century and a half of British rule English has failed to take the place of a lingua franca of India. A kind of broken English, no doubt, does seem to have succeeded in this respect in our cities. But this fact can only dazzle those who profess to study our national problems in big cities like Bombay and Calcutta. And what is their population after all? It is only 2.2 per cent of the total population of India. The second fact that the Anglicists ignore is that a very large majority of our vernaculars are akin to one another, and as a result of this, Hindi as a lingua franca suits all the provinces except the Madras Presidency. In view of this advantage in favour of Hindi and in view of our present national consciousness how can we accept English as our lingua franca?

The solution of this problem will decide the fate of the vernaculars. In our educational system English is suffered to have an unna-

[1] Literary conferences

[2] Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833); socio-religious reformer of Bengal; the pioner of English education in India

tural dominance over vernaculars. The extreme Anglicists hold that English should be used as the medium of instruction"at the earliest age possible". This argument is based on the fact that children in a foreign country pick up the language of the country without difficulty at an early age. Refuting this argument the Calcutta University Commission say :

> Whereas in a foreign country a child is surrounded by others who speak the language of the country, in a class-room he is sorrounded by others who, with the exception of the teacher, are as ignorant as himself of the new medium; it is a class of one person teaching many, not of many teaching one; and it is only by experiment that class-room methods can be worked out successfully.

The"educational economy", as an advantage of vernacularizing our educational system, has received recognition at the hands of the Commission. We have pointed out, in our issue of February 11, that the recommendations of the Calcutta University Commission in this connection are a further step. The next logical step after this is recommending the use of vernaculars as the medium in our universities also. The Sadler Commission have made the matriculation stage as a halting place between the use of vernaculars as the medium of instruction in secondary schools and their use in the college department. They have suggested as their own opinion a bilingual system for the future. But they also say :

> We do not wish to prejudge the future. It is not for us to predict whether the natural desire to use Bengali to the utmost will eventually outweigh the immense advantages of being able to use a medium common not only to the educated classes throughout India, but to more peoples than any other, and giving access in effect to the literature and the scientific records of the world.

Though in view of the evidence submitted to them the Commissioners could not be persuaded to lay down a policy for the future in favour of vernacularizing university education also, it is equally true that they could not find anything in the evidence which supported the Anglicists or the bilinguists. Thus, though the replies to the Commissioners' questions do not in themselves decide the future, they do

> reveal a strong movement in favour of the immediate introduction of Bengali fo r some University purposes, and of its ultimate introduction for others, a movement of which there was little sign in the debate in the Imperial Legislative Council of 1915.

If we study the Commissioners' analysis of the replies, we can

more fully appreciate their remark. The question put to the witnesses was :"Do you hold English should be used as the medium of instruction and examination at every stage above matriculation in the university course?'

The replies are analysed as follows :

(i) 129 are positively in the affirmative;

(ii) 29 are in the affirmative, with slight reservations;

(iii) 68 are in favour of a joint use of English and the vernacular either side by side in the same institution, or in parallel institutions;

(iv) 33 replies suggest the gradual replacement of English by the vernacular as the object to be aimed at;

(v) 37 are in the negative; and

(vi) 9 are insusceptible of classification.

So, 155 replies are in favour of the English medium and nearly 138 are not against using the vernacular medium sooner or later. This propor-tion is certainly encouraging to the vernacularists. Besides, even among those that favour the English medium there is not an inconsiderable section of witnesses who advise the foreign medium, because there is no provision for proper and sufficient text books for different subjects. This school of educationists is not against the vernacular medium on principle. They do not like us to get into water till we have learnt swimming. Of a similar sort but more decisive is the evidence of the remaining witnesses that stand for the English medium. This latter evidence has stamped the vernaculars as unfit ever to serve the purpose of the medium of instruction. These witnesses betray an ignorance of the history of our vernaculars. There was a time when Sanskrit was the sole medium for Hindu philosophy. But a few enthusiastic scholars enriched their vernaculars with a decent store of philosophic literature and brought Hindu philosophy within the reach of the masses. Can we not with our present ideas of organization do for our vernaculars in the sphere of science what once those vernacular scholars did in the sphere of philosophy? As against the diffidence of these witnesses, the vernacularists can cite the example of Japan. The Rev. W. E. S. Holland, Principal of St. Paul's Cathedral College, Calcutta, in his evidence, writes :

> Japan by use of the vernacular, has built up an educational system that commands the respect of the West.

The evidence of Babu Ramananda Chatterjee, the editor of the *Modern Review*, is even more convincing. He says :

> The use of the vernaculars in all grades of university education is indispensably necessary. All objections have force only temporarily, for the most highly developed modern languages and literatures were at first no better than Bengali. In their case development was obtained by use; and it will be obtained in our case, too, in the same way.

Thus we find that though the evidence before Dr. Sadler's Commis-sion is not today in favour of vernacularizing university education, it does hold high hopes for the future of the cause of the vernacular medium. Time was when the vernacularists' cause was looked upon with distrust. There is now not only no distrust but confidence has taken its place. Two important institutions have recently joined the cause. The Women's University of Poona[1] and the Osmania Univer-sity of Hyderabad are using the vernaculars as the sole medium. Their progress is being keenly watched by many. Their success will, as Jus-tice Sir Abdul Rahim says, make the solution of the problem of the vernaculars easier. At the last convocation of the Hindu University, the Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya invited all the eminent ver-nacularists to meet in a conference. We hope that such an organized effort will hasten full recognition of the vernaculars as media of instruction.

The present distribution of provinces is another factor which has done no less an injury than any other to the cause of the vernaculars. The redistribution of provinces on a linguistic basis will be followed by a rearrangement of universities.

We have shown above the three allied spheres of work for the cause of vernaculars. And it is evident that unless we advance this cause, we shall not be able to remove the growing intellectual and cultural gulf between our men and women and between the classes and the masses. It is also equally certain that the vernacular medium alone can stimulate originality in thought in the largest number of persons.

Young India, 21-4-1920

[1] Shrimati Nathibai Damodardas Thakersey University

45. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

BOMBAY,
Wednesday [*April 21, 1920*][1]

Being busy today in seeing Panditji[2] off and with other things, I have not been able to write to you the letter which I should have liked to.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 7170

46. LETTER TO J. L. MAFFEY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 24, 1920

DEAR MR. MAFFEY,

I thank you for your prompt telegram in reply to mine[3] about the proposed Khilafat mission. Although I cannot possibly grumble at the reply, I feel the responsibility so much that I had not the heart to proceed with the mission without the fullest approval of the Viceroy. What I mean is that no matter how strong and stubborn may be my opposition to Government actions or measures, I am anxious to have my conduct regarded as above suspicion and as that of a friend. I have no desire to go to England, for I feel that I can work most effectively in India rather than in England. But I have a vague feeling that I owe it to the Imperial Government and to the British public to tell them what a broken pledge on the Khilafat question is likely to mean. But I cannot do it without the assistance of the authorities. I was therefore disinclined to go unless the Mahomedan friends wanted me to, in spite of my failure to get an unequivocal approval of my mission from the Viceroy. I have now sent the enclosed cablegram[4] to Mr. Montagu and await his reply.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Chelmsford Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The letter is written in Gandhiji's hand on the back of a postcard dated April 21, 1920 from Mataji, i.e., Sarladevi Chowdhrani, to the addressee.

[2] Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari

[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to Viceroy", 13-4-1920.

[4] *ibid*

47. USES OF KHADI

The movement for swadeshi is slowly gathering momentum, though it is not progressing well enough to satisfy me.The Satyagraha Week saw a good awakening among the people and the swadeshi movement has also gained correspondingly. Muslims have now started taking greater interest in it. There is a new spirit among them. For them swadeshi means boycott. I have stated my view that boycott will not serve our purpose; even then, to the extent that boycott implies swadeshi, it is bound to produce some good. If any person, being angry, starts a fast, he will certainly enjoy the physical benefits of fasting. In like manner, adopting swadeshi in the spirit of boycott will have its benefit for the people. If we give up European goods but continue to use Japanese goods, we shall be falling out of the frying-pan into the fire.

How, then, can we ensure the propagation of swadeshi? Everyone who loves swadeshi is in duty bound to ask this question. If anyone believes that this can be done by increasing the consumption of mill cloth, he is wrong. We just do not produce enough cloth in India to meet our needs. If, therefore, we rest satisfied with using mill cloth, we shall have appropriated that much cloth from what is now available to the poor and thus raised its price. This would be wrong. But, then, the need for a swadeshi store in every village is also undoubted, for, as things stand today, those who use swadeshi cloth cannot get their needs from the ordinary shops. The truth of the matter is that he alone really encourages swadeshi who spins and weaves, if only to produce a yard of cloth and no more. If new mills could be brought into existence by a mere puff of the breath, this very day we could ensure the reign of swadeshi, of a sort. But mills take time to put up. With a puff of the breath we can learn hand-spinning no doubt. If only people try, any man or woman can learn spinning in no more than a day.

Hundreds of women have started spinning in this way but we do not get enough men and women to wear the cloth produced. A year ago, khadi was not available in sufficient quantity. Hand-spun yarn was quite difficult to come by in the beginning. Now, after one year, I am offered so much hand-spun yarn that I cannot take it all. The stocks of khadi with me have grown so large that the quantities cleared are inadequate.

The problem, then, of overcoming the prejudice against khadi has become as important as that of producing more cloth. We shall not succeed in producing all at once fine cloth from hand-spun yarn, in place of the [coarse] khadi being produced at present. The hundreds of thousands of women who spin will continue to produce yarn good enough only for khadi.

The swadeshi movement received the finest impetus from Shrimati Sarladevi Chowdhrani. During the National Week, she expressed a desire to wear a sari and blouse of khadi. I have not so far succeeded in inducing any woman to wear a sari made of khadi and so at first I thought Sarladevi was joking. But she was perfectly sincere in what she said and, what is more, she meant khadi as rough as what I wear. I got a sari and a blouse made for her and she celebrated the National Week in these. When her maternal uncle[1] saw her in this dress, he also remarked :"If you don't feel embarrassed yourself, there is nothing wrong with this dress. You can go anywhere in it." There was a big party on the 11th at Mrs. Petit's in honour of the poet and she had to decide whether she could attend it in khadi. She then remembered the poet's remark and honoured that party by attending it in this same khadi dress. She received no less respect than she used to in her costly silk saris. After this she went to all meetings and functions in khadi and at everyone of them which I attended I could see that people's respect for her had increased because of this dress. Thus, the uncle and the niece, who have acquired a reputation in the country for their artistic sense, did not reject khadi from that point of view at any rate. On the contrary, they introduced khadi as a dress for women in gatherings of rich people. This lady, who had been used to saris and other garments of finest texture, felt proud of wearing a khadi sari and a khadi blouse, not fighting shy of their heaviness. Till this attitude becomes fixed among large numbers of men and women or is adopted, at any rate, during this period of transition, I do not think it will be possible to make swadeshi a country-wide movement, for, as things are, if any cloth can be produced in lakhs of yards, it is khadi.

But I take no pity at all upon khadi-wearers. I do not believe I lack a sense of art, and in my eyes khadi is artistic enough. I can say from my experience and that of others, that, as against calico which sticks to the body because of perspiration in the summer, khadi has

[1] Rabindranath Tagore, who was in Bombay during the National Week

the property of absorbing moisture. Khadi is a more useful and superior cloth. It is more beautiful than calico because it has a soul in it. We can say that a piece of khadi has a personality of its own, if personality can be attributed to cloth. We can know, if we wish to, who attended to which process in the manufacture of any piece of khadi. There is some craftsmanship at any rate in the making of khadi. We can see that there is none in calico. Just as no two leaves of a tree are exactly alike, no two lengths of hand-spun, hand-woven khadi can be so. No painter can paint two paintings which are alike in every way; in like manner no weaver making khadi can make two lengths of it of identical quality. To some this will be a matter of regret. They probably believe that the right thing is to have, and to be able to produce, crores of yards of cloth of identical quality, one piece indistinguishable from another. This kind of machine production has its uses, but it is never reckoned as art. If we could not produce pins, or could not get paper, of identical quality, we would certainly feel at sea. But even in this machine age, even today, people who have appreciation of art prefer hand-made paper. Every-one will be able to see the difference between hand-made paper and machine-made paper. Hand-made paper is expressive of a certain quality of individuality, of the art of its maker. Maybe such paper cannot be made available to many. All that I wish to prove here is that there is an art in khadi, as there is in paper, which is absent in machine-made goods. If we had not developed a prejudice against Indian goods, we would have appreciated the art in khadi too. In Scotland, the tweed prepared from wool by the women there is even today esteemed superior to the machine-made variety. The Scottish nobles prove, by their use of it, that the beauty and the warmth to be found in its roughness is not to be found in the smoothness of the machine-made variety. Hand-made tweed is considered fashionable and artistic and therefore fetches more money.

Unfortunately for India, hand-made khadi came to be looked upon as clothing for the lower classes, as having no art in it. No one sets value on it and the khadi weaver can hardly earn eight annas a day. How can we expect appreciation of art in a country with such perverse notions? How can we expect such a country not to starve? Here, in this country, there is no appreciation for craftsmanship. The rich, fascinated by the machine-made, polished goods from Europe, see art in them, with the result that in their homes and in their dresses they never patronize Indian craftsmanship. The Collector of Surat

once told me, commenting on the swadeshi movement :"Look at my drawing-room, how it patronizes Indian craftsmanship, how much art it holds; compare it with the homes of your rich friends and then tell me who encourages swadeshi better." What he said was true and I felt rather small. I am convinced that the day when India feels honoured in wearing hand-spun khadi and pays for it for the sake of the art which lies in it, starvation will disappear from the country and we shall find that the poor, who are hard put to it to get even cereals to eat, are well supplied with them.

I have, today, a very large stock of khadi with me. We are, moreover, facing a situation in which it may be necessary to abandon an activity that gives work to some women and poor people. I have had, therefore to employ what ability I possess and try to prove some self-evident truths. To me, coats, Indian-style shirts and other garments made of khadi seem quite beautiful. If, however, I cannot carry the reader so far with me, I should like to say that khadi has many other uses. It can be used to make school bags and hammocks for children. Chairs, couches and other articles of furniture can be covered with it. Big car- pets can be made from dyed khadi. It can serve for canopies. Handker-chiefs of any required size can be made from it. Straining pieces, bags, pillow-cases, bed-covers and many other useful articles can be made out of it. I appeal for help from every reader for popularizing khadi. A *Khatri*[1] has come forward to dye khadi red with swadeshi material. With his help, I am getting some khadi dyed red. For bed-covers, etc., red khadi is better. I want every reader to remember that a large number of women are employed at present in spinning. Some of them led immoral lives and some could not afford even milk for their children; these sisters have now been earning something through an honest occupation. I want every reader to play his part in promoting this craft through which we can end starvation in India and help people to lead purer lives.

Anyone who wants to place an order for khadi should write to the Manager, Khadi Section, instead of to me. If he writes to me, there is likely to be delay in his getting a reply. The prices of the varieties of khadi which have accumulated in the Ashram can be had by writing to the Manager, Satyagraha Ashram.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-4-1920

[1] Member of a community of dyers

48. KATHIAWAR MANNERS

I have received several letters about the remarks I made, in the course of my speech [1] outside Lal Darvaja during a session of the Sahitya Parishad, concerning manners in Kathiawar. In one of them, I am accused of having done injustice to Kathiawar. My belief, on the contrary, is that in my speech I had praised the manners of Kathiawar. It was the exaggeration of these which I condemned. The generosity, the courtesy, the hospitality, the straightforwardness and the affection to be found in Kathiawar, I can never forget, nor upbraid. But, if I failed to criticize the intrigues, the hypocrisy, and the falsehood which have found their way into Kathiawar by reason of those very qualities or of other hostile factors, I would be missing an opportunity of saving others from the very faults from which I have escaped. Wherever I move and whenever I come in contact with Kathiawaris, I experience their good qualities as well as their faults. It is my conviction that the growing generation in Kathiawar, the youth, will advance very much if they develop the former and avoid the latter. They cannot however, eschew the faults if they just refuse to see them. I shall, therefore, ask the following questions of my correspondents :

1. Is it not your experience that the Kathiawari, more than others, gives promises which he should not, trying to be excessively obliging?

2. Have you not observed that, more than others, the Kathiawari spends beyond his means through what he supposes to be expression of regard for others?

3. Have you not observed that the actions of a Kathiawari, though he is ever so full of courtesy in the beginning, show him deficient in good manners, both in public and private?

I have experienced all the three faults in good measure. Even today, I receive complaints against Kathiawaris in respect of these faults. It may be that, because I come into contact with them frequently, I magnify their faults. Maybe because I am a Kathiawari, more complaints are brought to me about these faults. If so, this only means that the Kathiawaris have no more faults than the others. Even so, I shall urge them to rid themselves of whatever faults they have, so that their lives may become worthier and they are better able to serve

[1] On April 2, 1920

themselves and the country.

Why should we derive false satisfaction from thinking that we are not worse than others? It is the duty of every man and every woman to observe his or her own faults regardless of what others do. I hope, therefore, that Kathiawaris, who are distinguished for their courage and venturesome spirit, will spot out their minutest faults and get rid of them and offer their courage and adventurous spirit as gifts to the nation, eschewing the defects which, in his sincerity, the late Navalram[1] observed in us and described.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-4-1920

49. IT IS A YEAR NOW

It will be a year on the 26th since Mr. Horniman's deportation, and yet we have not been able to secure his return to India. When the Emperor's proclamation was published,[2] everyone thought that Mr. Horniman's case was covered by it. But the Governor of Bombay thought otherwise and so far he has had his way in this matter. A great principle is at stake in Mr. Horniman's return, namely, the freedom of the citizen. Let us leave out of consideration Mr. Horniman's personal qualities. Maybe he was guilty, but, under a modern administration, even a murderer cannot be hanged or imprisoned without a proper trial. Within these last twelve months, a person in Ahmedabad who was charged with murder and was sentenced to be hanged, having been tried by a duly constituted court, was let off because of some procedural flaw, and that by our own Governor. The Bombay Government displayed a high sense of justice in that case. Why should it not display the same sense of justice in Mr. Horniman's case? Some people may also defend [the Government] by saying that a Government which displayed such a sense of justice must have a strong reason for depriving Mr. Horniman of his freedom without a trial; we do not accept this as a valid argument. That murderer was no threat to the Government; Mr. Horniman, in one sense, may be regarded as a threat to it. He could discomfit the Government by his pen and by his speeches and so the Government had some motive in depriving him of his freedom. This is why the sense of justice

[1] A nineteenth-century Gujarati writer

[2] On December 23, 1919

displayed in the murderer's case was not shown in Mr. Horni-man's case. This is my view. If Mr. Horniman wrote anything unlawful, he may be tried and sentenced, but the people ought not to tolerate punishment without a trial. In defending Mr. Horniman's freedom, therefore, the people will be defending their own freedom, and so we hope they will not forget his case, but strive hard and take effective steps to secure the withdrawal of the prohibitory order against him.

Let us now consider what we can do. In Bombay, the months of April and May are a period of inactivity, the leaders being away. We cannot, therefore, hold any effective meeting in Bombay on the 26th. But, at the very first opportunity, mam- moth meetings can be held on a fixed day all over the Bombay Presidency and people can demonstrate to the Government that they will not rest in peace until the order against Mr. Horniman is withdrawn. Let us not think that enough resolutions have been passed and that there is no point in passing any more. We should change our attitude to resolutions. Resolutions are looked upon as the first and the last step; instead, we should think of them as the first step, intended to convey the people's determination. If the Government fails to act upon them, we must have the strength to see that they are acted upon. We need not consider at the moment what that strength should be and how and when it should be employed. What should con-cern us now is whether the people are unanimous, whether they wish to have Mr. Horniman released. We have suggested how we can know this.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-4-1920

50. WHY SHOULD I GO TO ENGLAND?

Some readers take such a keen interest in all my actions that I am not always able to satisfy their curiosity. The reason is not my negligence, but the fact that I do not get enough time to answer all questions and that it is not possible for me to spare sufficient space in *Navajivan* for answering them through it. Some matters, however, being of public interest, I consider it essential to clarify the position. One such issue is the proposal that I should go to England.

Some readers have asked me why I, being generally opposed to leaders going to England, have myself now got ready to go. What they say about my view is quite correct and so their question is perfectly

justified. But, then, I have never believed that no one should go to England under any circumstances. I can imagine a situation in which to refuse to go to England would be criminal. Not that I think of the Khila-fat issue in this light. It is not quite essential that I should go.[1] How-ever, my going may possibly do some good and so I have left the final decision to Muslim friends. When they expressed a desire that I should be ready to go in case they wanted me to do so. I agreed, and put forward two conditions : one, that people here should really be keen [that a deputation should go] and, two, that we should have the permission and approval of the Viceroy. His permission has been received. But he hesitates to express an opinion on the desirability of our going. So again I went to the Khilafat Committee and left to them the responsibility of deciding what I should do in this situation. There is a difference of opinion among the members. The general view was that, for the present, we should give up the idea of going; accordingly, the proposal of going to England has been dropped.

We were to go not only for the purpose of securing a settlement but also, should the settlement not meet our demands, to warn them of the reactions in India. Non-co-operation is no ordinary weapon. Properly employed, it can secure us full justice. I would, therefore, think it essential to give the fullest warning to the Government before employing such a mighty weapon and would welcome the idea of going to England for that purpose, circumstances permitting. But the Viceroy did not approve and we, ourselves, are not quite ready; I decided, therefore, that it would be better if I did not go. Even so, if the Muslim friends want me to go or if I see that the Government would like my going, I would certainly agree to go.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-4-1920

[1] The first Khilafat Deputation, which had reached England on February 26, was still there.

51. TO READERS

Only recently we changed the size of *Navajivan* and revised the price of a copy in Bombay and Ahmedabad. Paper is getting more scarce and its price is increasing. It seems that, if we continue to incur loss on *Navajivan* at the present rate, at the end of the year, that is after five months, the loss will have amounted to ten thousand rupees. The reader will undoubtedly approve of our decision not to accept advertisements. I also imagine that the reader will not approve of such a heavy loss. We have, therefore, decided to carry out the management's proposal to reduce the size to the minimum possible and so the reader will get only an eight-page *Navajivan* this time. I hope the reader will not be upset by this. As I have said before, I regard the reader as a partner in *Navajivan*. The management of *Navajivan* do not run it for pro- fit or as business; nor do they wish to run it at a loss. If the paper had to be published at a loss, I would feel that the people have no need of it. But I believe otherwise. For those who are managing the paper, this experiment of running a journal without advertisements is quite new. Besides, nobody had any idea that the price of paper would rise so high. It was supposed, on the contrary, that with the end of the war it would come down. It was also believed that the paper we used when we started was good enough. Experience has shown us that it was impossible to maintain the files of *Navajivan* with this inferior quality paper. Under these circumstances, the subscription rate has to be much higher. Accordingly, for the present we have fixed the subscription at four rupees for new subscribers, so that the old ones may not have to pay anything more; and, in order that the latter might have a share in bringing down the loss, the size has been reduced to eight pages. If there is no great increase in the price of paper, I hope we shall not have to make any more changes, during this year at any rate. I trust the reader will forgive us for the change that we have been obliged to make. At the same time, I wish to assure him that, the reduction in the size notwithstanding, there will be no cutting down of the fare. While dealing with the usual subjects more briefly, it will be our constant endeavour to see that nothing of importance is left out.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-4-1920

52. TO THE MEMBERS OF THE ALL-INDIA HOME RULE LEAGUE

It is a distinct departure from the even tenor of my life for me to belong to an organization that is purely and frankly political. But after careful deliberation and consultation with friends I have joined the All-India Home Rule League and accepted the office of its President.[1] Some friends whom I consulted told me that I should not join any political organization and that if I did, I would lose the position of splendid isolation I enjoy at present. I confess that this caution had considerable weight with me. At the same time I felt that if I was accepted by the League as I was, I should be wrong in not identifying myself with an organization that I could utilize for the advancement of the causes in which I had specialized and of the methods which experience has shown me are attended with quicker and better results than those that are usually adopted. Before joining the League, I endeavoured to ascertain the opinion of those who were outside the Presidency and with whom I had not the privilege to come in such close contact as with co-workers in the Bombay Presidency.

The causes referred to by me are swadeshi, Hindu-Moslem unity with special reference to Khilafat, the acceptance of Hindustani as the lingua franca and a linguistic redistribution of the Provinces. I would engage the League, if I can carry the members with me, in these activities so that they occupy the largest part of the nation's time and attention.

I freely confess that reforms take a secondary place in my scheme of national reorganization. For I feel that the activities chosen by me, if they could but absorb national energy, would bring about all the reforms that the most ardent extremists can ever desire, and so far as the desirability of full self-government at the earliest possible moment is concerned I yield to none in my desire to hasten our progress. And it is because I feel that the progress towards self-government can be best accelerated by developing the activities I have mentioned that I keep them in the forefront of the national programme. I shall not treat the All-India Home Rule League as a party organization in any sense of the term. I belong to no party and I

[1] This was on April 28, 1920.

wish to belong to none hereafter. I am aware that the constitution of the League requires it to help the Congress,[1] but I do not consider the Congress as a party organization, even as the British Parliament, though it contains all parties and has one party or other dominating it from time to time, is not a party organization. I shall venture to hope that all parties will cherish the Congress as a national organization providing a platform for all parties to appeal to the nation with a view to moulding its policy and I would endeavour to so mould the policy of the League as to make the Congress retain its non-party national character.[2]

This brings me to methods. I believe that it is possible to introduce uncompromising truth and honesty in the political life of the country. Whilst I would not expect the League to follow me in my civil disobedience methods, I would strain every nerve to make truth and non-violence accepted in all our national activities. Then we shall cease to fear or distrust Government and their measures. I do not wish however to develop the theme any further. I would rather let time solve the many questions that must arise from the bald statement I have made. My purpose just now is not to demonstrate the propriety of my action or the truth of the policy herein adumbrated but to take the members of the League into my confidence and to invite criticism of the programme herein set forth and any sugges- tions they may wish to make for the advancement of the welfare of the League.

Young India, 28-4-1920

53. WHY I HAVE JOINED THE KHILAFAT MOVEMENT

An esteemed South African friend who is at present living in England has written to me a letter from which I take the following excerpts :

> You will doubtless remember having met me in South Africa at the time when the Rev. J. J. Doke[3] was assisting you in your campaign there and I subsequently returned to England deeply impressed with the rightness of your

[1] The All-India Home Rule League was affiliated to the Indian National Congress.

[2] In September 1920, Gandhiji assembled Home Rule Leaguers at Calcutta and changed the creed of the League into a form later adopted by the Congress at its Nagpur session He also changed the name of the League to "Swarajya Sabha".

[3] Joseph J. Doke (1861-1913); minister of Johannesburg Baptist Church; edited *Indian Opinion* during Gandhiji's and Polak's incarceration in 1911

attitude in that country. During the months before the War I wrote and lectured and spoke on your behalf in several places which I did not regret. Since returning from military service, however, I have noticed from the papers that you appear to be adopting a more militant attitude. . . . I notice a report in *The Times* that you are assisting and countenancing a union between the Hindus and Moslems with a view of embarrassing England and the Allied Powers in the matter of the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire or the ejection of the Turkish Government from Constantinople.[1] Knowing as I do your sense of justice and your humane instincts I feel that I am entitled, in view of the humble part that I have taken to promote your interests on this side, to ask you whether this latter report is correct. I cannot believe that you have wrongly countenanced a movement to place the cruel and unjust despotism of the Stamboul Govern- ment above the interests of humanity, for if any country has crippled these interests in the East it has surely been Turkey. I am personally familiar with the conditions in Syria and Armenia and I can only sup- pose that if the report which *The Times* has published is correct, you have thrown to one side your moral responsibilities and allied yourself with one of the prevailing anarchies. However, until I hear that this is not your attitude I cannot prejudice my mind. Perhaps you will do me the favour of sending me a reply.

I have sent a reply[3] to the writer. But as the views expressed in the quotation are likely to be shared by many of my English friends, and as I do not wish, if I can possibly help it, to forfeit their friendship or their esteem I shall endeavour to state my position as clearly as I can on the Khilafat question. The letter shows what risk public men run through irresponsible journalism. I have not seen *The Times* report referred to by my friend. But it is evident that the report has made the writer to suspect my alliance with"the prevailing anarchies" and to think that I have"thrown to one side" my"moral responsibilities".

It is just my sense of moral responsibilities which has made me take up the Khilafat question and to identify myself entirely with the Mohammedans. It is perfectly true that I am assisting and countenancing the union between Hindus and Muslims, but certainly not with"a view of the embarrasing England and the Allied Powers in the matter of the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire". It is

[1] For the peace terms presented by the Allies to Turkey, *vide* "Turkish Peace Terms", before 3-6-1920.

[3] Not traceable

contrary to my creed to embarrass governments or anybody else. This does not however mean that certain acts of mine may not result in embarrassment. But I should not hold myself responsible for having caused embarrassment when I resist the wrong of a wrongdoer by refusing assistance in his wrong-doing. On the Khilafat question I refuse to be a party to a broken pledge. Mr. Lloyd George's solemn declaration is practically the whole of the case for Indian Mohammedans, and when that case is fortified by scriptural authority it becomes unanswerable. Moreover, it is incorrect to say that I have"allied myself to one of the prevailing anarchies" or that I have"wrongly countenanced the movement to place the cruel and unjust despotism of the Stamboul Government above the interests of humanity". In the whole of the Mohammedan demand there is no insistence on the retention of the so-called unjust despotism of the Stamboul Government; on the contrary the Mohammedans have accepted the principle of taking full guarantees from that Government for the protection of non-Muslim minorities. I do not know how far the condition of Armenia and Syria may be considered an"anarchy" and how far the Turkish Government may be held responsible for it. I much suspect that the reports from these quarters are much exaggerated and that the European powers are themselves in a measure responsible for what misrule there may be in Armenia and Syria. But I am in no way interested in supporting Turkish or any other anarchy. The Allied Powers can easily prevent it by means other than that of ending Turkish rule or dismembering and weakening the Ottoman Empire. The Allied Powers are not dealing with a new situation. If Turkey was to be partitioned, the position should have been made clear at the commencement of the War. There would then have been no question of a broken pledge. As it is, no Indian Mohammedan has any regard for the promises of British Ministers. In his opinion the cry against Turkey is that of Christianity *versus* Islam with England as the leader in the cry. The latest cablegram from Mr. Mohamed Ali strengthens the impression, for he says that unlike as in England his deputation is receiving much support from the French Government and the people.

Thus, if it is true, as I hold it is true, that the Indian Mussulmans have a cause that is just and is supported by scriptural authority, then for the Hindus not to support them to the utmost would be a cowardly breach of brotherhood and they would forfeit all claim to consideration from their Mohammedan countrymen. As a public

server, therefore, I would be unworthy of the position I claim, if I did not support Indian Mussulmans in their struggle to maintain the Khilafat in accordance with their religious belief. I believe that in supporting them I am rendering a service to the Empire, because by assisting my Mohammedan countrymen to give a disciplined expression to their sentiment it becomes possible to make the agitation thoroughly orderly and even successful.

Young India, 28-4-1920

54. NON-CO-OPERATION

A writer in *The Times of India*, the editor of that wonderful daily and Mrs. Besant have all in their own manner condemned non-co-operation conceived in connection with the Khilafat movement. All the three writings naturally discuss many side issues which I shall omit for the time being. I propose to answer two serious objections raised by the writers. The sobriety with which they are stated entitles them to a greater consideration than if they had been given in violent language. In non-co-operation, the writers think, it would be difficult if not impossible to avoid violence. Indeed violence, *The Times of India* editorial says, has already commenced in that ostracism has been resorted to in Calcutta And Delhi. Now I fear that ostracism to a certain extent is impossible to avoid. I remember in South Africa in the initial stages of the passive resistance campaign those who had fallen away were ostracized. Ostracism is violent or peaceful according to the manner in which it is practised. A congregation may well refuse to recite prayers after a priest who prizes his title above his honour. But the ostracism will become violent if the individual life of a person is made unbearable by insults, innuendoes or abuse. The real danger of violence lies in the people resorting to non-co-operation becoming impatient and revengeful. This may happen, if, for instance, payment of taxes is suddenly withdrawn or if pressure is put upon soldiers to lay down their arms. I however do not fear any evil consequences, for the simple reason that every responsible Mohammedan understands that non-co-operation to be successful must be totally unattended with violence. The other objection raised is that those who may give up their service may have to starve. That is just a possibility but a remote one, for the committee will certainly make due provision for those who may suddenly find themselves out of employment. I propose however to examine the whole of the difficult question much more

fully in a future issue and hope to show that if Indian Mohammedan feeling is to be respected, there is nothing left but non-co-operation if the decision arrived at is adverse.

Young India, 28-4-1920

55. THE USES OF KHADDAR

While the swadeshi movement is going forward by leaps and bounds and Mohammedans are taking it up as enthusiastically as Hindus, it is well to consider the best method of promoting swadeshi. The veriest tyro in swadeshi knows that we do not manufacture enough cloth to supply our wants. If therefore we merely use mill-made cloth, we simply deprive the poor of what they need, or at least increase the price of mill-made cloth. The only way therefore to encourage swadeshi is to manufacture more cloth. Mills cannot grow like mushrooms. We must, therefore, fall back upon hand-woven and hand-spun yarn. Yarn has never perhaps been so dear as it is today and mills are making fabulous profits out of yarn. He, therefore, who hand-spins a yard of yarn, helps its production and cheapens its price.

How to spin yarn and weave cloth is then the question. I know from personal experience that it is possible to flood the market with hand-spun yarn and hand-woven cloth if the standard cloth comes to be recognized as fit for wear. This cloth is called khaddar in Upper India. It is called khadi in the Bombay Presidency. Thanks to Sarladevi[1], she has shown that it is possible to make even saris out of khaddar. She thought that she could best express herself during the National Week by wearing khaddar sari and khaddar blouse. And she did it. She attended parties in her khaddar sari. Friends thought it was impossible. They thought a woman who had never worn anything but the finest silk or the finest Dacca muslin could not possibly bear the weight of heavy khaddar. She falsified all fears and was no less active or less elegant in her khaddar sari than in her finished silk saris."If you do not feel awkward in that sari of yours, you may go anywhere and to any party and you will find it would be well with you." It was with some such words that her great uncle, Sir Rabindranath Tagore, blessed her when he saw her in her khaddar sari. I relate this sacred incident in order to show that two of the most artistic people of India found nothing inartistic in khaddar. This is the cloth I venture to

[1] Sarladevi Chowdhrani

introduce to the cultured families of India, for on its use hangs the immediate success of the swadeshi movement during its infant stage.

To me khaddar is any day more artistic than the finest Dacca muslin, for its association. Khaddar supports today those who were starving. It supports women who have been reclaimed from a life of shame or women who, because they would not go out for work, remained idle and quarrelled among themselves for want of occupation. Khaddar therefore has a soul about it. It has an individuality about it. The wearer is able to trace all the processes of its manufacture to the respective manufacturers. If our tastes were not debased, we would prefer khaddar to sticky calico even during the summer season. Let those who are now using it certify, if they will, to the truth of my statement.

This khaddar is now being stocked at the Satyagraha Ashram. And I have accumulated a stock which is beyond the capacity of the space at my disposal. I therefore ask the readers of *Young India* to come to the rescue by introducing khaddar in their own homes.

Needless to say that the Ashram makes no profits from it. Any margin left is devoted to recouping the loss incurred in the initial stages or in reducing the price of khaddar received from districts where the cost is heavier than elsewhere, for the cost is not the same all over. In inducing weavers to take to their original occupation, I am obliged to pay enough to support them and for the present.

Khaddar can be used for making underwear, even if one is disinclined to use it for the outer costume. But even if one is not inclined to use it for personal wear, it can be used for making caps, towels, wipers, tea-cloths, satchels, bed-sheets, bedding, holdalls, carpet pieces, cushions, covers for furniture etc. I am having it dyed Turkey red in swadeshi dye. It then becomes more durable and looks less dirty when it is used for carpets or mattress-making or upholstering. I would advise those who wish to support this industry of the poor and the neglected to send for the khaddar by corresponding with the Manager, Khaddar Department, Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati.

RATES

MILL YARN WARP & WEFT KHADI

				R. A. P.
Double warp and double weft				
Width	25 inches	per	yard	0—9—0
,,	27	,,	,,	0—9—6
,,	30	,,	,,	0---10---0

,, 30 ,, ,,	0---10---0
MILL YARN WARP & HAND-SPUN WEFT KHADI	
Width 27” 20—Count’s warp per yard	0—9–6
8— ,, ,, ,,	0—8–0
24” 20— ,, ,, ,,	0—8–0
Lined Khadi ,,	0—8–6
Red Coloured ,,	0—8–6
HAND-SPUN WARP & WEFT KHADI	
24” ,,	0—8–0
27” ,,	0—8–6

For washed khadi add 0–0–6 to the above rates.

Young India, 28-4-1920

56. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

BOMBAY,
Vaishakh Sud 10 [*April 28, 1920*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I was very unhappy after I had left you. It was a mere chance that I heard your desparing words. Why did you keep them to yourself so long? The right thing for you is to come to me every time you feel despondent. I beg you that, henceforth, you should open your heart and let me know everything. Your writing [about these things] will not weary me. I should feel troubled, rather, if you didn’t write.

Meanwhile, I send you the verse which has been my support in hours of despair :

All impressions of sense, O son of Kunti,
Are hot or cold, give pleasure or pain;
They but come and pass, ever fleeting,
Bear them unmoved, O Bharata.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 5784. Courtesy : Radhabehn Chowdhari

[1] Gandhiji left Ahmedabad for Bombay on April 27, 1920, and probably wrote this letter on the 28th, which fell on *Vaishakh sud* 11. According to the Vikram Era, the tenth day in the bright half of this *Vaishakh* was omitted in reckoning.

[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, II, 14:
मात्रास्पर्शास्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदाः
आगमापायिनोऽनित्यास्तांस्तितिक्षस्व भारत॥

57. PRESS STATEMENT ON THE TURKISH TREATY[1]

The cablegram regarding the decision of the Conference[2] at San Remo, is most disquieting. The decision is bound to greatly disturb the Mohammedan mind. I hope, however, that the Mohammedan leaders will neither be disheartened nor give way to anger. The issues involved are tremendous. The greatest self-restraint is, therefore, absolutely necessary. Non-co-operation is, I remain convinced, the only remedy enabling India to give disciplined expression to the deep wound that is being made into her very heart. The way to be trodden is, I know, weary and full of thorns, but I am certain that it is possible to wrench justice from an alliance that prides itself on its brute force. I know that the temptation to answer violence with violence is almost irresistible, yet I feel certain that the slightest violence done by us will not only return to us with mad fury, but will dash to pieces the present hope of Islam, whereas the completely peaceful withdrawal of co-operation must inevitably result in a revision of any arrangement that the Powers might make regarding Turkey. And that can be demonstrated to be unjust and a breach of the solemn promises made by His Majesty's Ministers. To those who distrust non-co-operation, I can only say, in all humility : 'You will accelerate the eruption of violence, if you succeed in defeating the scheme of non-co-operation and cannot replace it by some definite course of strong action, which must be more than a mere protest, so much more, that resort to it must bring about this desired end.'

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-4-1920

[1] This statement was published also in *The Times of India*, 29-4-1920 and in *Young India*, 5-5-1920.

[2] Of the Allies on April 26, 1920 to finalize the terms of peace to be offered to Turkey. As per its resolutions, Smyrna and Thrace were to be given to the Greeks, Mesopotamia and Palestine were to be British "Mandates", Syria and Cilicia French "Mandates", etc. *Vide* also Appendix "Turkish Peace Terms", before 3-6-1920.

58. LETTER TO SARLADEVI CHOWDHRANI

April 29, 1920

As I write this I hear Dipak[1] singing to Balkrishna's sweet sitar. Balkrishna is a great gift of the gods to me. He [is] innocent as a flower. He looks after me like a mother.

Did you read my message on the Khilafat to the A.P.[2]? Lest you may not have got a copy of *Y.I.*, I am sending you a copy. Do please read the article on khaddar.

Here is yesterday's *bhajan*[3] :

मोरी लागी लगन गुरुचरननकी :
चरन बिना मुझे कछु नहीं भावे,
झूठ माया सब सपननकी। मोरीश :
भवसागर सब सूख गया है
फिकर नहीं मुझे तरननकी। मोरीश :
मीरां कहे प्रभु गिरिधर नागर
उलट भई मोरे नयननकी। मोरीश :[4]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

[1] Son of Sarladevi Chowdhrani

[2] Associated Press. Here Gandhiji presumably refers to the statement to the Press
published on April 29, 1920, the preceding item.

[3] Devotional song

[4] Mira Bai:

My heart longs for the Master's feet
Nothing pleases me while the longing remains unsatisfied
All else is illusion, a play of dreams.
The ocean of life is all dried up,
Crossing it does not worry me.
Mira says, O Lord Giridhar Nagar,
My eyes see all things in a new light.

59. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

SINHGADH,
Vaishakh Sud 12 [*April 29, 1920*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have been waiting for your letter like one thirsting for water. When I see you in despair, I lose heart, for I have built great hopes on you. I wish that you should not keep back from me a single thought or feeling. That is the only way I can retain your fullest devotion. You must, therefore, reassure me on this. You probably know what happened with Narahari. He kept back something in his mind and, without intending it, did me an injustice. I am sure this does not apply to you in the least. Even that instance was a trivial affair. But all of us can learn a great deal from it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 5785. Courtesy : Radhabehn Chowdhari

60. LETTER TO ABDUL BARI

[SINHGADH,]
April 30, 1920

DEAR MAULANA SAHEB,

You will please pardon me for not going to Fyzabad. I could not without seriously impairing my health which I wish to conserve if only for the coming fight. I seem to have lost the use of my left leg. I am hoping to regain it here if I am permitted to stop for a few days. Please plead for me before our friends.

You must have heard all about the English visit. I was disinclined to go unless the friends particularly wished me to go. Of that there was no clear indication and I decided to send a cable[2] to Mr. Montagu. I now await his reply. I feel strongly that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Shaukat Ali should be in Bombay for constant

[1] Gandhiji was in Sinhgadh on April 29, 1920.
[2] *Vide* "Cable to Secretary of State for India", after 13-4-1920

consultation.[1] Organization must start immediately. Unfortunately Maulana Abul Kalam Azad is still ill. I have asked him to come to Bombay at the earliest moment.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

61. LETTER TO SARLADEVI CHOWDHRANI

SINHGADH,
April 30, 1920

I posted a pencil letter[2] just before leaving Poona for Sinhgadh. The doctor [told me that I] was too pulled down to attempt walking up. I in my infatuity thought I could do it. So Mahadev, Dipak and I began climbing-up. But you will be sorry to learn that I could not move up even half a furlong when I felt an unbearable strain on the left thigh and I had to give up the attempt. I felt humiliated and deeply cut up to find myself so much reduced in strength. But I must be cheerful even under reverses. I shall try to be.

I have just got up with two dreams, one about you and other about the Khilafat. To my great joy, you returned within two days. I asked 'How so quickly?' You replied, 'Oh it was Panditji's[3] trick to have me by him. Jagdish's[4] marriage is as far off as ever. I have therefore returned.' I discovered that it was a dream. I fell off again to sleep in disgust to find myself there before a huge Mohammedan audience. One speaker who was speaking on the use of Hindustani as the common medium included the dialect spoken by the Bagdadis as hindustani offshoot and therefore worthy of study. The others in the audience protested against this travelling outside India. Abdul Bari Saheb who was with me sided with the man. But he was speechless under the angry protest of the audience. Bari Saheb did not like this treatment of the man. I was explaining the pros and cons to them. The conversation drif-ted into the ways and means. I emphasized the necessity for adhering to truth at all costs when there was confusion and I got up. I commenced this [letter] immediately on getting up.

[1] As they, along with Gandhiji, were members of the sub-committee appointed by the All-India Khilafat Committee to decide when the movement on the Khilafat issue was to be started

[2] Gandhiji presumably refers to "Letter to Sarladevi Chowdhrani", 29-4-1920; he left Poona for Sinhgadh on April 29, 1920.

[3] Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari

[4] Eldest son of Sarladevi Chowdhrani

Dipak climbed up with Mahadev without any chair. He is none the worse for it. He had milk on starting and cake on reaching. He is now sleeping heavily. Prabhudas is looking much better and more active. Balkrishana had come half way to receive us. Revashankerbhai is coming tomorrow. The ice doctor too has just now turned up bringing two goats for me. I understand that Tilak Maharaj is coming this evening. His party is already in his bungalow.

Here are goats coming in with their agreeable music. If the marriage is over or postponed I expect you to join the party and enliven it with your music and your laughter.

I can go on writing. But I must stop not from fear of wearying you but for the sake of taking up other work.

I am just reminded of L. Girdharilal's postcard asking for your bracelet which you had subscribed to the Bagh fund[1]. I think it was sent to you yesterday. In any case I put you in mind of it. I thought you had given the bracelet there and then.

You will not worry about my leg. The magnificent climate of this place should see me through. About Dipak you will not worry. We shall all look after him. Shankarlal[2] took him out for a drive round Colaba. He asked me whether he could take him to the cinema. I said I would not take the responsibility. I would send him some other time if you wished me to. I suggested instead a drive to Colaba or the Victoria Gardens. Hence the drive. Both Mahadev and Dipak dined with Shankarlal. Was I right about Dipak?

With love,

Yours,

LAW-GIVER

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

[1] Jallianwala Bagh Memorial Fund
[2] Shankarlal Banker

62. LETTER TO GILLESPIE[1]

[SINHGADH,]
April 30, 1920

I am aware of the great value attached to prayer in Christianity. My own impression however is that like all prayers much of the Christian prayer has become merely mechanical and often selfish. It is the mechanical and the selfish element in the Hindu prayer which I am trying with all the power in me to combat.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

63. LETTER TO MRS. JINNAH[2]

April 30, 1920

Please remember me to Mr. Jinnah and do coax him to learn Hindustani or Gujarati. If I were you, I should begin to talk to him in Gujarati or Hindustani. There is not much danger of you forgetting your English or your misunderstanding each other. Is there?

Will you do it? Yes, I would ask this even for the love you bear me.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

64. LETTER TO LAZARUS GABRIEL[3]

[SINHGADH,]
April 30, 1920

I have given my two sons[4] to South Africa and they can stay there as long as they choose. More it is not in my power to give. Every available man is wanted here and so every available pie.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

[1] Rev. Gillespie of Ahmedabad

[2] Wife of M. A. Jinnah, formerly a nationalist Muslim leader who later became the founder of Pakistan

[3] Lazarus Gabriel of South Africa

[4] Manilal and Ramdas, who were sent by Gandhiji in 1916 to manage *Indian Opinion* at Phoenix

65. LETTER TO NIRMALA[1]

April 30, 1920

After my talk with you I have been thinking a great deal about you. I see that if you want to, you can do much, but you need to steady your mind. You should think over and put into practice what you hear and read. I could see from your exercise book that your power of thinking is weak. My advice now is this. Understand all that you read, think over it and put into practice whatever appeals to you. Read *Navajivan* carefully. Try to understand the meaning of every verse of the *Gita*. This way alone will you go forward. Decide once for all that you will pass your whole life in the Ashram and acquaint yourself with all the work there. Consider in which of the activities you can be most useful and work accordingly. Meet Chi. Maganlal from time to time and acquaint yourself with everything with his help. Ask him for work. You should not remain imprisoned in your room, thinking that you are a child and that it would be improper to speak with others; understand that you can mix with everyone so long as your heart is pure and learn things from all of them as from brothers. Serve everyone. I shall take you to Bombay at the proper time. See that you write neatly. You handwriting should be as good as types in print. Write to me regularly in legible handwriting.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

[1] Widow of Gokuldas, son of Gandhiji's sister, Raliatbehn. She had become an inmate of the Ashram at Sabarmati as desired by Gandhiji; *vide* "Letter to Nirmala", 6-5-1919.

66 LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAREKH[1]

SINHGADH,
April 30 [*1920*][2]

BHAISHRI MANGALDAS,

I have your letter. It was three in the afternoon when I got it and I am writing this reply immediately. Even so, I do not think it will reach you on the 1st. I think your suspicion of Ambalal- bhai[3] is unjustified. I told you even that I had agreed with Ambalal- bhai on certain rates. I did not go further into the matter be- cause I thought you knew why I had gone to his place. There was nothing in my talk with him which I need have kept back from you, nor did I consider it improper to enter into negotiations with him after I had informed you. I negotiated with the mills which agreed to do so. I thought it advisable to restrict the scope of the strike, and I still think that way. How may I convince you that I have not the least desire to have things my own way in all matters? I exert myself to the utmost to see that justice prevails. More often than not, the line I take up is based on pure justice and, as justice always prevails, the people in their simplicity are led to believe that I try to have my own way in all things. When they come to know me better they see that I have no such desire, for I want neither money nor honour. I had had enough of wealth and gave up its pursuit. God meets all my needs through friends. Honour I receive in over-flowing measure from my conscience so that no room is left for receiving more from others. For what other reasons, then, should I feel tempted to have anything my own way? There is a fundamental difference between our points of view and so there always remains some distance between our positions. You believe that, as it is, the workers get more than enough and that they will not use well what they will now get [in addition]. I believe that they get very little at present. I do not think either that even the

[1] A mill-owner of Ahmedabad. He had helped Gandhiji to establish the Ashram in Kochrab.

[2] Gandhiji was in Sinhgadh on April 30, 1920. The dispute between the mill-owners and the workers which is the subject of this letter took place in April and May of this year.

[3] Ambalal Sarabhai

increase I have asked for is sufficient to meet all their needs.[1] Nor do I believe as a matter of principle that they will use their additional income unwisely. Hence I demand practically the highest rates which prevail in Bombay, not the average of the highest and the lowest, and I see no injustice in this. I have already told you that, had I known in advance how much they spend on machinery in Bombay, I would never have agreed, as I did when we took the decision to appoint a *panch*[2], to take the Bombay rates for comparison. It is my duty to see that the industry in Ahmedabad does not suffer in any way, and as far as I can see I am not at all violating this duty in asking that the workers be paid as much as Rs. 30. Because you cannot see this, you think I am obstinate, but how can I believe so myself? I see that the difference between us is understandable. I would do much to be able to go with you, but I would not take a single step which would do injustice to the workers. Ambalalbhai has had no hand in the letter which I wrote to you. I think that he has acted in all sincerity, that he has done nothing out of a desire to harm your good name. If I think any time that this is his motive, I would not be with him even for a moment. To me, your reputation is as dear as his. I should like to be a party only to what will advance your interest. It is still my request to you to accept the rates which have been agreed upon and, with the help of sincere workers like Anasuyabehn and Bhai Shankarlal whom you have with you today, raise the industry in Ahmedabad to a high level and set an example to others.

My health has gone down very badly these days, otherwise I would have come running straight to you. If possible come to Sinhgadh yourself and take some rest. There is no need to worry.

I return the papers, which you sent.

SHRI MANGALDAS PAREKH
AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 7044

[1] On March 31, Gandhiji had written to mill-owners to give certain concessions to their workers.

[2] Board of arbitrators; literally, “five”

67. LETTER TO ADA WEST

[SINHGADH,]
April 30, 1920

MY DEAR DEVI[1],

The place where I have arrived today is a lonely little historic fortress[2]. The scenery around is glorious and the weather most bracing but mild. I have come here to give tone to a system which is much run down. I have with me Dr. Jivraj Mehta, Mahadev Desai, Swami Anand, Prabhudas[3], Balkrishna and Dipak. You know only Prabhudas. I need not introduce the others in this letter as I am anxious to finish this soon. I have a splitting headache on me, but having taken out your letter I must finish the reply.

Mrs. Gandhi has kept remarkably well. She is looking after Harilal's children. Fatima was married to a nice young man on the 20th[4]. It was a very simple ceremony, quite unpretentious. It was performed on the Ashram grounds. We shall meet her often as her husband lives in Ahmedabad. I have not heard from Mr. Kallenbach[5] since his expulsion from England. I have inquired but without result.

I am sorry to hear about Mrs. West. I hope she is better. Please make love to Hilda on my behalf. Does she ever remember or think of me? Building operations are still going on at the Ashram. I hope one day you will see it and even take your share in making it.

My life remains as busy as ever. I have not a moment I can call my own.

Devdas is at Banaras finishing his Hindi studies. Harilal is going strong about his business. What he will ultimately do, I do not know.

With love,

Yours,
BHAI

[1] Sister of A. H. West, an intimate associate of Gandhiji in South Africa, she had assumed the Indian name Devi.

[2] Sinhgadh. Gandhiji stayed there from April 29 to May 4. So, "today" in the text is obviously a slip for "yesterday".

[3] Son of Chhaganlal Gandhi

[4] Evidently a slip for "26th", *vide* "Invitation to Wedding", 20-4-1920.

[5] A German architect and devoted friend and co-worker of Gandhiji in South Africa

[PS.]

Bhai Kotwal I have not now seen for a long time. I do not even hear from him. Pragji Desai has joined Mrs. Gandhiji's brother. Medh[1] is vegetating. Chhaganlal keeps books. Maganlal is the general manager. His children have grown. Prabhudas is said to have tuberculosis. Mrs. Chhaganlal has a very weak constitution. Krishnadas[2] [does] not keep over well. Imam Saheb looks after all the purchases. His wife does a lot of tailoring for the Ashram. I have given you a fair description of the activities of all you know.

BHAI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

68. LETTER TO SARLADEVI CHOWDHRANI

May 1, 1920

It is now nearly 5 p.m. I have hardly left my bed. I had a most torturing headache last night and I remained in a comatose condition up to 11 p.m. I slept fairly well after. I am free from the headache but I cannot walk even a furlong. I ask you however not to worry about me. I thought you should know my condition, if only to keep you to the fortnight's limit if Jagdish's marriage is then over[3] or if it is postponed. If you would persuade Panditji, too, to come so much the better. He must see and live the Ashram life.

Tilak Maharaj paid us a visit in the morning. He came in with his son and son-in-law. The conversation was purely formal.

Dipak is getting on. He seems to like the place. His tastes are clean. He is easily led. I shall put in[4] with this what I succeed in getting from him.

Revashankerbhai came in this morning. He brought some luscious mangoes. I fretted to find that you were not here to share them. This morning I got [up] at our usual time but turned in again. I did not watch the sunrise. Had you been here I know you would have dragged me to watch His Majesty coming in.

Padshah has been writing in the *East and West.* Perhaps the cutting came in whilst we were yet together. I have dictated an article based on it. It is rather good. You shall certify.

[1] Surendrarai Medh of Ahmedabad, an associate of Gandhiji in South Africa

[2] Son of Chhaganlal Gandhi

[3] His marriage was solemnized on May 19, 1920.

[4] The source, however, has "up".

And now for a boon. I know you have granted many. The appetite has grown with the receiving. You said you were shy over working at the Ashram. Will you not get rid of your shyness by commencing household work there? This I do not mind having for my sake. It is not a matter of changing our viewpoint. It is merely a matter of getting rid of one's disinclination. Great and good though you are, you are not a complete woman without achieving the ability to do household work. You have preached it to others. Your preaching will be more effective when people know that even at your time of life and in your station you do not mind doing it.

With love,

Yours,
LAW-GIVER

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

69. LETTER TO SARLADEVI CHOWDHRANI

May 1, 1920

मुक्तिमिच्छसि चेत्तात विषयान् विषवत्त्यज।
क्षमार्जवदयातोषसत्यं पीयूषवद्भज॥ २ ।।
यदि देहं पृथक्कृत्य चिति विश्राम्य तिष्ठसि।
अधुनैव खी शान्तो बन्धमुक्तो भविष्यसि॥ ४ ।।
मुक्ताभिमानी मुक्तो हि बद्धो बद्धाभिमान्यपि।
किंवदन्तीह सत्येयं या मतिः सा गतिर्भवेत्॥ ११ ॥[1]

I have culled the most powerful verses from the twenty I read yesterday. I remembered you once said the *Bhagavad Gita* did not appeal to you so much as some other things from other poets. These verses, too, may therefore fall flat on you. But I could not help sharing with you what seemed at the moment ennobling to me. Moreover they are my solace in my enforced idleness[2]. For I have not been able to leave my bed.

From a manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy Narayan Desai

[1] If you aspire after deliverance, my child, give up sense pleasures like poison and enjoy forgiveness, straight forwardness, compassion contentment and truthfulness as you would *amrit. Ashtavakra Gita*, I, 2

If, no longer identifying yourself with your body, you abide on the plane of *chilt*, this very day you will find happiness and peace, free from your bonds. I, 4

He who believes himself free is free; he who believes himself bound is bound; truly do they say : "As you think, so you are." I, 11

[2] The letter was written from Sinhgadh where Gandhiji was resting as he had some leg trouble.

70. LETTER TO JAMSHEDJI NASARWANJI MEHTA[1]

SINHGADH,

[*May 1, 1920*][2]

BHAISHRI JAMSHEDJI,

I welcome your letter. I cannot possibly fail to understand you or your sentiments; nor can it be said that those who are opposed to the idea of non-co-operation are not friends of the Muslims. There can well be a difference of opinion even among friends.

And now I shall answer your questions :

1. It is true that the effect of non-co-operation will be to create opposite to the Government, but it has not been conceived in a spirit of retaliation and, therefore, the question what crime the Government has committed does not rise; though, of course, the latter has not done all it could have. If the British Government fails to secure justice, the Indian Government can resign. In a situation like this the Indian Government cannot rest content with a mere protest. This is where it has failed and so the people are within their rights in withdrawing their co-operation and thereby expressing their displeasure.

2. We may not knowingly inflict pain on others. Nevertheless, if in consequence of some unavoidable act of ours anyone suffers, we cannot be held responsible. I have always the right to resign from Government service and, if the Government feels unhappy because of my resignation, I am guilty of no violence towards it. I may be living in my father's house and incidentally serving him in many ways, but I may quit the house and stop co-operating with him when I see him doing an injustice and that would certainly hurt him; even then, my duty would be to leave the house. My father would have invited that suffering on himself. If we do not act in this manner, the oppressors all the world over get a charter of freedom to persist in their evil ways.

3. Thus you will see that if we can organize non-co-operation without indulging in violence we have every right to do so; it is in fact our duty to do so.

[1] A Parsi business man and public worker of Karachi

[2] The letter was in reply to one from Jamshedji Mehta dated April 24, 1920. The source assigns this letter to may 19, which is evidently an error, Gandhiji was in Sinhgadh only till May . Probably "19" was a misprint for "1".

4. Shaukat Ali's speech[1] has not alarmed me, for I think I understand what he means. I do admit that all the Muslims do not view non-co-operation in the same light that I do. But there is a clear understanding with them that there can be no violence side by side with non-co-operation. Besides, though Muslims may adopt non-co-operation in a spirit of retaliation, we can produce a happy result from it and save ourselves from an outbreak of violence. All good actions, by whatever feelings prompted, yield some fruit. The man who follows truth or exercises self-restraint out of fear or shame will yet reap the outward benefit of doing so; such is the power of good actions.

Many others must have sincerely felt the same doubt which you have and hence I am sending your letter and my reply for publication in the *Navajivan.*

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 9-5-1920

71. WHY I HAVE JOINED THE HOME RULE LEAGUE

TO
MEMBERS OF THE
HOME RULE LEAGUE

Though much pressed before now by friends to join the All-India Home Rule League, I could not bring myself to do so. One reason for this was that I could not, and still do not, take interest in politics merely as such. But this time there was pressure of a different kind. When I was first asked, my views were not so well known as they are now. Besides, unlike as on previous occasions I found it impossible to remain silent during the last Congress[2]. I saw that I must place before the people my views on some of the issues. I was quite active at the Congress, and I do not regret the fact.

I was tempted to join the Home Rule League. I wrote to friends outside the Bombay Presidency and consulted them. I told them that, if I joined the Home Rule League, it would be in the hope of being to

[1] At Madras, as president of the Khilafat Conference, on April 17. In his letter to Gandhiji, Jamshedji Mehta had complained that Shaukat Ali's loose interpretation of "non-co-operation" and "non-violence" was rather alarming.

[2] The Amritsar Session of December 1919

put my ideas and methods into practice. Most of the friends approved of my ideas and also of my intention of joining the League. Some others approved of my ideas but expressed the fear that, by joining the League, I would sacrifice my freedom and my independent position. This fear had considerable weight with me. But I decided that, when they were admitting me to the League in full knowledge of my views, I would be able to preserve my freedom; I saw, moreover, that I would gain a platform for propagating my ideas. It is with this hope that I have joined the League.

I think that the key to the speediest achievement of swaraj lies in swadeshi, Hindu-Muslim unity and the spread of Hindi as the national language. Hence I will try to interest the League in these activites.

India's economic emancipation and moral regeneration can only be achieved through swadeshi. I would, therefore, exact a promise from every candidate for election to the Legislative Assembly that he would not be afraid to levy a tariff on foreign goods to any extent necessary for protecting Indian industry. So long as there is no unity between Hindus and Muslims, I think swaraj will remain a mere dream. I should like, therefore, to extend all help to the Muslims in their fight on the Khilafat issue and thus win them over for ever. I shall, therefore, try to engage every member of the League in Khilafat work.

We are to work with the millions and influence them. I will, therefore, try and see that I, and others as well, use for our work, both inside and outside the League, the respective regional languages in each region and the national language, that is to say, Hindustani, on the national plane. I would have every member of a leigislature give the assurance that he would try to use, and see that others used, the respective regional languages in the [provincial] legislatures and the national language in the Central Legislature.

This idea carries with it another. To ensure speedy attention to people's needs and development of every component part of the nation, I will strive to bring about a linguistic division of India and try to induce the League to take up this cause. I will exert myself to get separate provinces for the Telugu, Sindhi, Marathi, Oriya and Gujarati-speaking peoples and will do all I can to use the League to plan the means, and induce others to plan them, for the full development of each.

If I succeed in engaging the League in these activities, I shall

feel confident of our being able to achieve swaraj at an early date. Looking at the matter from this point of view, I would put less value on the Reforms than on these other things. I do not mean to say that the Reforms are of no consequence. But I am not prepared to give them more importance than they deserve. Even if we were to have all power in our hands today, so long as we do not understand swadeshi or value Hindu-Muslim unity or retain the delusion that English may serve as the langu-age of administration, I see that the Reforms could be used to deprive us of our freedom. They are but a means, not an end in themselves. Swadeshi and the other things are both means and ends at once.

I am of the view, besides, that my method of work yields better results, and quicker. This method consists in firm adherence to truth in all that we do, putting the fullest trust in truth and fearing no one in following truth as we know it. Acceptance of this principle brings about such a revolution in our life that we become self-reliant that very instant. Instead of depending on others, we learn forthwith to depend on our-selves. I wish, therefore, to work hard for the introduction of this principle of satyagraha in the activities of the League. I have no intention of drawing it into civil disobedience. The idea has not spread widely, and it seems to me that the country has not yet understood the spirit of civil disobedience. I wish, therefore, that no member should be alarmed because of my views about disobeying laws.

I shall seek other opportunities of elaborating my ideas before members of the League. Meanwhile, I invite comments from every member on the views set forth above. I also hope that all of them will express an opinion on the rightness or otherwise of my step.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-5-1920

72. NON-CO-OPERATION

Now that the idea of non-co-operation is making an impact, I feel the need for an easily intelligible [Gujarati] equivalent for it as I felt for"passive resistance". *Asahakar* immediately occurs to me, but I request the help of readers for finding a better term.

The learned Mrs. Besant has passed strong strictures against non-co-operation,[1] and so have a correspondent in *The Times of India* and its Editor. Mrs. Besant's services to India have been so invaluable, her in-dustry so great and her love for India so fine a thing that I cannot but hesitate to criticize her statements or express my difference with her. I have always, however, accepted the principle that we can differ, respect-fully, even from those whom we look upon as our elders, and that gives me courage on this occasion as well to express my dissent from her.

With all three of them the great fear is that non-co-operation is bound to lead to violence. We certainly cannot claim that violence will never occur but, having taken all precautions against its occurrence, we must, I feel, go ahead with our programme. If we know that those who want to resort to violence are only waiting for non-co-operation to start, we should certainly postpone it. According to me, the success of the Muslims' cause lies in their preventing the outbreak of violence. They have realized this so well that violence is bound to be kept out. They know that non-co-operation cannot proceed even for an hour along with violence.

Someone may ask whether it is ever possible to prevent violence from breaking out anywhere in India. The reply to this is that an army is no longer an army if anything happens in it which was not in the plan; likewise, if we have become one, we must have the capacity to prevent accidents like outbreak of violence. Before we have acquired such capacity, we shall commit errors and shall have to rectify them. I admit all this but I know that the people must acquire this self-discipline. It seems to me that this is a great opportunity for doing so.

These writers have assumed, without any reason whatever, that the advocates of non-co-operation do not know their job. The latter do not intend to climb to the last step of the staircase of non-co-

[1] The policy of non-co-operation did not appeal to Annie Besant and she tried todissuade the Muslims from adopting it.

operation all in one jump. If they proceed step by step, there will be very little fear of their falling.

There are risks, of course, in non-co-operation. But there is no alternative left. If the unjust settlement of the Khilafat issue is intolerable, there must be some way out. If the people are not to have even this weapon of non-co-operation, violence will remain the only course for them and that is a remedy worse than the disease, for our aim is not to vent anger but to secure justice on the Khilafat issue. Violence will not succeed in that; it seems to me, therefore, that there is no other weapon except non-co-operation.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-5-1920

73. NOTES

THE JALLIANWALA BAGH MEMORIAL AND POPULAR AWAKENING

If we wish to measure the increase in popular awakening during the last year, we can do so from the contributions being received from all quarters for the Jallianwala Bagh memorial. From the list[1] given below, it will be seen that, wherever efforts have been made, even small villages have not lagged behind cities in offering their contributions. We have received several letters informing us that in certain places even the poorest of the poor have contributed amounts equal to what they spend on some accustomed necessity of theirs; in some parts, the volunteers moved the whole day from place to place and from house to house, to collect funds. The villages in which Mr. Mahadev Desai moved have, according to the information he sends us, a population of not more than a thousand each and yet in every village people contributing to the Memorial Fund belonged not only to the upper and educated classes, but also to the lower and illiterate classes; that is to say, there were contributors not only from Brahmins and *Vanias*[2] but also from goldsmiths, carpenters, smiths, oilmen and *Kolis*[3]. In one village, the majority of the population was Muslim. There are names of women, too. Shri Mahadev Desai reports that, in collecting the

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] The merchant class

[3] Sturdy, sea-faring Hindu agriculturists inhabiting the sea coast of Gujarat

amounts he did, he did not have to press anyone for contribution. He would briefly explain to the people the reason for raising this Fund; in some places, he would show pictures of the Jallianwala Bagh, etc., in the report of the Congress Committee and explain what had happened,[1] and instantly, people would come with whatever they could afford.

A saying which a gentleman quoted humorously to Mr. Desai, in one of the villages he visited, is worth reporting here. The gentleman remarked:"Well, friend, though the *dubli*[2] gathers only the *kharmato*, the havaldar[3] must have his trinket all right. That is what it is, these days. But this is a national cause, and so how can one refuse to pay?" There is a profound meaning in this saying; it brings out the condition of our peasantry in a most touching manner. The word *kharmato* means the grain left over in some corners after the harvest has been removed from where it was gathered in the field. With this explanation, the meaning of the saying will be clear. The present condition of our peasantry is like that of the *dubli* picking up *kharmato*; even so, they give his trinket to the havaldar, and gladly—to a havaldar who is a worthy beggar, that is, a national worker.

From this fact, another inference may also be drawn, that it is easier to carry on national work in villages than in cities; it would, therefore, be natural to make a start with village swaraj and thence proceed to swaraj for the whole country.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-5-1920

[1] The printed report contained, in all, 19 illustrations depicting the Bagh, the public flogging and the wounded persons.

[2] Woman of the *Dubla* cxommunity which supplies farm-labour and menial services in South Guja

[3] Village peon

74. LETTER TO SARLADEVI CHOWDHRANI

May 2, 1920

Yesterday I gave you selections from the first chapter of the *Ashtavakra Gita*[1]. In it Janaka learnt that the remedy for his deliverance lay with himself, and that was to be free from the snare of the senses. In the second chapter he expresses his joy at the revelation. Here are some of the verses :

अहो निरंजन: शान्तो बोधोऽहं प्रकृते: पर:।
एतावन्तमहं कालं मोहेनैव विडंबित:॥ १ ।।
तन्तुमात्रो भवेदेव पटो यद्वद्विचारित:।
आत्मतन्मात्रमेवेदं तद्वद्विश्वं विचारितम् ।।५ ।।
आत्माज्ञानाज्जगद्भाति आत्मज्ञानान्न भासते।
रज्ज्वज्ञानादहिर्भाति तज्ज्ञानाद्भासते न हि ।।७ ।।
मत्तो विनिर्गतं विश्वं मय्येव लयमेष्यति।
मृदि कुम्भो जले वीचि: कनके कटक यथा ।।१० ।।
अहो जनसमूहेऽपि न द्वैतं पश्यतो मम।
अरण्यमिव संवृत्तं क्व रतिं करवाण्यहम्।। २१

I have selected five out of twenty-five. May I again charge you to copy them out and send them to Devdas? I should love to finish for you an abridged edition of this beautiful work of art.

I am no better today. I must still confine myself to bed. You still continue to haunt me even in my sleep. No wonder Panditji[2] calls you the greatest *shakti*[3] of India. You may have cast that spell over him. You are performing the trick over me now. But even two swallows cannot make a summer. If you are the greatest *shakti*, you will enslave India by becoming her slave in thought, word and deed.

I cannot get Dipak to write both to you and Panditji. You must therefore be satisfied with one letter to Panditji alone. He says, "Why should I write daily to Mataji, if she will not write?" I hung on this the lesson of good for evil. I told him too that pro- bably you had written but the post had not yet been delivered. I was certain of a letter from you yesterday. But none came. Today too there is a blank. I wonder,

[1] A dialogue between King Janaka of Videha and Raikva, the low-born, ugly-looking philosopher

[2] Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari

[3] Embodiment of life-force

however. I know you have not failed me. It is the wretched post.

I enclose herewith two cuttings from *The Times of India* on Indian music. They may interest you. Or get rid of your inertia and you can give your music to India. It is not enough that you sing for her. You can make her sing even as you do. But that requires application and study, a determination to give your musical talent to India. If you are taking the trouble of copying the verses for Devdas I take it you will copy the *bhajan* too for the boy.

We had a visit from Tilak Maharaj yesterday also. He frankly said he had not my forbearance and he believed in giving tit for tat. This was in answer to my gentle remonstrance over his trenchant criticism of Mrs. Besant. Probably you have not read it. I read it only here. He has even defended Mr. Khaparde's description of her as aunt Putna[1]. He was refreshingly frank in his remark.

Miss Faering has not yet arrived. I have invited her to come to Sinhgadh if she need not be in Bombay for her passage. The last hope of hearing from you today is gone. For the post-boy has arrived bringing some newspapers only. Devdas writes saying Panditji—pardon me, I mean Malaviyaji—again thinks I should go to England. I am afraid he is too late now, and perhaps it is as well. Without perfect organization here our going would be worse than useless.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

75. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

Sunday, May [*2,*] *1920*[2]

MY DEAR CHILD,

I do not know whether you have arrived.[3] If you have, do come up to Sinhgadh. It is a beautiful place. It is reached from Poona by a tonga. If I knew, I could easily arrange everything. But I know you are able to manage this yourself. Sinhgadh is about 13 miles from Poona. The tonga hire is at least Rs. 5/-. Sometimes it is more.

With love,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child,* p. 69

[1] A female demon, daughter of Bali. She attempted to kill the infant Lord Krishna by suckling him, but was herself sucked to death by the child.

[2] This letter was evidently written from Sinhgadh where Gandhiji stayed from April 29 to May 4, and the only Sunday between these dates was on May 2.

[3] In Bombay; *vide* the preceding item.

76. LETTER TO B. KRIPALANI[1]

May 2, 1920

I do believe your grandson[2] is doing better at the Ashram than he could do anywhere else. If I did not believe that of any boy I would certainly not keep that boy in the Ashram. In my opinion the Ashram education is such an all-round education that a boy discharged from it is capable of earning more than he would be after a study elsewhere for the same number of years. He acquires, that is to say, more confidence in himself. But I do confess that boys at the Ashram are constantly taught to believe that education is meant for building character and not wealth. Boys at the Ashram are constantly weaned from wealth hunger. I would strongly advise you not to force Girdhari to any institution, but to keep him wherever he wishes to remain. He is well able to choose for himself.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

77. LETTER TO LALCHAND

May 2, 1920

MY DEAR LALCHAND[3] ,

I have read all your notes in the *Young India* of the 28th April. The first is quite good, the second is not bad, but it is weak and halting. The matter of the third is good, but the manner of dealing with it is bad, the fourth is bad both in manner and matter—in matter because the Congress Deputation, you must know, is not going, and if you did not know you should have made certain. It is bad in manner because the style is not that of *Young India*. The fifth note is very good in matter, but you have hardly done justice to a case so important as that of the ill-treatment of a lady. My criticism is not meant to frighten you. It is meant only to warn you to be more careful in future in your selection of subjects and manner of dealing with them. *Young India* will not look faulty for want of a variety of subjects. But it will certainly look paltry, if the subjects chosen do not show originality, accuracy of information, and strength in dealing with

[1] Father of J. B. Kripalani
[2] Girdhari, nephew of J. B. Kripalani
[3] An employee on the editorial staff of *Young India*

them. To be accurate, original and strong you must become a deep student. Then only will you acquire enlightened confidence in yourself. Never mind therefore the range of your subjects but go in for the depth, walk round your subject, walk into it, walk through it, and you will make the pages of *Young India* live. (Re-reading my own articles in the current issue I miss my usual strength in some parts of them. The Khaddar article[1] is the best, but the English of the last paragraph show[s] that I was half asleep or indifferent when I wrote it. Look at 'even if one is disinclined to use it', followed immediately by'even if one is not inclined to use it'. The word 'use' occurs four times in four lines. I would never pass such a tenth-rate sentence in a good article. But you have. I do not mind your having done it, because until I have confi-dence in your style I must pay the penalty of my illness, sleepiness or indifference.

Take again"Non-co-operation"[2] . It is all solid stuff, but not at all solidly put. I know under what extreme difficulty I wrote that article, but I cannot on that account expect the readers to excuse indifferently written articles. My first article is fairly readable, but had I written it in Sinh-gadh, it would have been written differently. The manifesto[3] is the thing I like. It is nice in style, terse in expression, brings out all my points gracefully and concisely. I could have written it better but it can pass muster.

And now I have given you enough food for thought. You have come to me to get the best out of me. Give the best of yourself to the country, and do better than your best from week to week and if you would do this you must study swadeshi, read up Dutt, Radhakamal Mukerji, Barrow, and all the writers on Indian industries; you must read up blue-book, statistical abstracts and deluge the readers with facts and figures from week to week. You will not tell me you have no library. You must go to Ahmedabad and search all the libraries and find out what you can get. Similarly on Hindi and the vernaculars, study the history of the French craze during the Norman period, how the English nation was saved by some lovers of English, how the energy of a single professor in Russia revolutionized Russian teaching, and how practically from that period commenced the Russian national revival. Then take the linguistic distribution. You will find among my

[1] *Vide* "The Uses of Khaddar", 28-4-1920.

[2] *Vide* "Non-co-operation", 28-4-1920.

[3] Presumbaly Gandhiji here refers to "To Members of the All-India Home Rule League", 28-4-1920.

papers some material already collected, but you can collect it yourself. On H[indu]-M[uslim] unity you have to specialize on the Khilafat question. You must get Mr. Banker to give you his English weeklies, the *New Age* and the *Nation*; study the history of Turkey, answer like a student all the calumnies against it. Add to this your knowledge of finance and you have enough to deal with every week.

I would like you not to destroy this letter, but read it carefully more than once and keep it as a reminder of what I expect of you. Of course you will share it with Patwardhan[1], but I do not want you to share the responsibility with him, for the simple reason that I have not yet burdened him with the responsibility of editing *Young India*. He has shouldered it and done it bravely too, but I have not yet located him. Till then his work in *Young India* is a gift for which I am thankful but which I will not criticize as I must criticize everything coming from your pen.

Do not please confuse two different thoughts. It is not the payment you accept which distinguishes your work from Patwardhan. You have come to me reserved for *Young India*. Patwardhan has come in as the handy man, as a stopgap. Maganlal takes no payment but I criticize him mercilessly in the departments which are his and Patwardhan will come in for similar treatment when he is installed as chief of any department.

Yours sincerely,

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

78. LETTER TO SYED FAZLUR RAHMAN[2]

May 2, 1920

Boycott[3] of Brit[ish] goods is a punishment. If I buy British goods I do not identify myself with any injustice perpetrated by the Brit[ish] Government. But if I co-operate with the Gov[ernmen]t even when it is doing an injustice I become party to it. Hence non-co-operation in respect of an unjust Government becomes a duty. If, through the timidity of influential Mohammedans and aloofness of

[1] Yadwarkar Patwardhan of Amraoti who worked as sub-editor on the staff of *Young India* for over a year without any honorarium

[2] For another letter to the addressee, *vide* Addenda, "Letter to Syed Fazlur Rahman", 11-5-1920.

[3] Advocated by some Khilafat workers, particularly Hasrat Mohani.

Hindus, the masses of Mohammedans fail to take up non-co-operation, a bloody revolution must inevitably result, provided, that is to say, the Khilafat question is decided against the Mohammedans. If, however, both the above classes were to understand the inwardness of the general Mohammedan feeling, they could make non-co-operation a thorough success and bring about the desired result.

M. K. G.

From a manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

79. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

May 2, 1920

I casually asked Mahadev yesterday whether he knew why you were unhappy. He thereupon reported the conversation about the car and all that you poured out on the occasion. At the moment, however, I shall answer none of those points. I shall wait for a letter from you. There should have been one today. Or, rather, what reply can I give? But I should certainly like to say something to calm you. I shall do so only after I hear from you.

About Radha, I shall clear the position right now. I do not want her to be married. It was your worry, as I understood it, which prompted me to think and say what I did. If, now, you have made up your mind about the girl and can carry Santok with you, I would look upon Radha's inviolate *brahmacharya* as our biggest achievement in the Ashram. My ideas and feeling about Radha and her marriage are the same as they have always been. Devdas's inter-pretation is that my ideas have not changed, but that I have become more considerate towards others. Or you may call it weakness if you like. I am not impatient, as I used to be, that others should share my views. That impatience has disappeared with more thinking and experience.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

80. LETTER TO SWAMI SHRADDHANAND

May 2, 1920

DEAR BROTHER,

I have your letter. Government employees will be asked to give up jobs only when definite alternative plans have been made for their livelihood. In this connection I am in consultation with Muslim brethren. I have not advised anyone to leave the country,[1] nor can I do so. Some of our Muslim brethren do no doubt intend to leave the country. We cannot stop them, but I tell these people also that their leaving the country will not be of any avail. If we leave the country as a step in satyagraha, we cannot think of bringing any pressure on the Government through it. In my opinion the time for Hindus [*sic*] to leave India may come when there is a Hindu king and when the subjects, in collaboration with him, make the practice of Hindu religion compulsory. If we now fail to non-co-operate with the Government I will understand this to signify that the religious spirit of the Muslims has weakened. As everyone can see, this question of the Khilafat involves a great blow to Islam. If at such a juncture Muslims are not prepared to make sacrifices in life and property, it can only mean that the religious spirit has become extinct in them. I would not be surprised if such a disaster should come to pass for, travelling round the world, I have witnessed the power of the age of *Kali*[2]. The religious spirit is everywhere in decline and I find irreligion even in many things that are done in the name of religion. If what I have written is not clear to you, please tell me.

I hope the work of the Gurukul[3] goes on nicely now. I have been in this secluded spot[4] for the last four days.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

[1] Gandhiji presumably refers to suggestions made in the early summer of 1920 by some Khilafat workers that the migration of pious Muslims from India to Afghanistan might well be considered.

[2] Age of strife

[3] Residential institution of learning founded by the addressee near Hardwar

[4] Sinhgadh

81. LETTER TO SARLADEVI CHOWDHRANI

May 3, 1920

MY DEAR SARALA,

Finding Janaka exulting in the discovery that he was the changeless Brahma, Ashtavakra challenges his position in the 3rd chapter and says :

अविनाशिनमात्मानमेकं विज्ञाय तत्त्वतः।
तवात्मज्ञस्य धीरस्य कथमर्थार्जने रतिः ॥१ ॥
आत्माज्ञानादहो प्रीतिः विषयभ्रमगोचरे।
शुक्तेरज्ञानतो लोभो यथा रजतविभ्रमे ॥२ ॥
विश्वं स्फुरति यत्रेदं तरङ्गा इव सागरे।
सोऽहमस्मीति विज्ञाय किं दीन इव धावसि ॥३ ॥
श्रुत्वापि शुद्धचैतन्यमात्मानमतिसुन्दरम्।
उपस्थेऽत्यन्तसंसक्तो मालिन्यमधिगच्छति ॥४ ॥
सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि।
मुनेजनित आश्चर्यम् ममत्वमनुवर्तते ॥५ ॥
आस्थितः परमाद्वैतं मोक्षार्थेऽपि व्यवस्थितः।
आश्चर्यं कामवशगो विकलः केलिशिक्षया ॥६ ॥
उद्भूतं ज्ञानदुर्मित्रमवधार्यातिदुर्बलः।
आश्चर्य काममाकांक्षेत्कालमन्तमनुश्रितः ॥७ ॥[1]
इहामुत्र विरक्तस्य नित्यानित्यविवेकिनः।

[1] Having known the *atman* to be in truth the Imperishable One without a second,
how is it that you, enlightened about the *atman* and ever firm in mind, take pleasure in acquiring possessions? *Ashtavaktra Gita*, III, 1

Just as, not knowing a sea-shell, one covets it under the delusion that it is a piece of silver, so through ignorance of the *atman* one sees it as the delusive world of sense objects and takes pleasure in them. III, 2 Having known yourself to be that One from Whom emanates this universe waves rise in an ocean, why do you run about like a weak, miserable wretch? III, 3

Having learnt that the *atman* is the living spirit, absolute and unconditioned, supremely beautiful, if one remains attached to the gross pleasure of sense, one gets defiled. III, 4 It is strange that even a wise one, knowing himself present in all creatures and all creatures present in himself, should be dominated by the sense of "I" and "Mine". III, 5

It is strange that even a man abiding in the Supreme Oneness and set on attaining *moksha* should get distraught with passion, yielding to its overmastering urge through experience of the pleasure it brings. III, 6

It is strange that a man who knows for certain that the desire which has possessed him is an enemy of knowledge should yet long for pleasure even though extremely enfeebled and nearing death. III, 7

आश्चर्यं मोक्षकामस्य मोक्षादेव विभीषिका ॥८॥
धीरस्तु भोज्यमानोऽपि पीड्यमानोपि सर्वदा।
आत्मानं केवलं पश्यन् न तुष्यति न कुप्यति ॥९॥
चेष्टमानं शरीरं स्वं पश्यत्यन्यशरीरवत्।
संस्तवे चापि निन्दायां कथं क्षुभ्येन्महाशयः ॥१०॥
मायामात्रमिदं विश्वं पश्यन् विगतकौतुकः।
अपि सन्निहिते मृत्यौ कथम् त्रस्यति धीरधीः ॥११॥
निस्पृहं मानसं यस्य नैराश्येऽपि महात्मनः।
तस्यात्मज्ञानतृप्तस्य तुलना केन जायते ॥१२॥
स्वभावादेव जानानो दृश्यमेतन्न किंचन।
इदं ग्राह्यमिदं त्याज्यं स किं पश्यति धीरधीः ॥१३॥
अन्तस्त्यक्तकषायस्य निर्द्वन्द्वस्य निराशिषः।
यदृच्छयागतो भोगो न दुःखाय न तुष्टये ॥१४॥[1]

The challenged Janaka, retaining the same exultant mood, replies in the fourth chapter :

हन्तात्मज्ञानस्य धीरस्य खेलतो भोगलीलया।
न हि संसारवाहिकैर्मूढैः सह समानता ॥१॥
यत्पदं प्रेप्सवो दीनाः शक्राद्याः सर्वदेवताः।
अहो तत्र स्थितो योगी न हर्षमुपगच्छति ॥२॥
तज्ज्ञस्य पुण्यपापाभ्यां स्पर्शो ह्यन्तर्न जायते।
नह्याकाशस्य धूमेन दृश्यमानाऽपि संगतिः ॥३॥
आत्मैमैवेदं जगत्सर्वं ज्ञातं येन महात्मना।
यदृच्छया वर्तमानं तं निषेद्धुं क्षमेत कः ॥४॥
आब्रह्मस्तम्बपर्यन्ते भूतग्रामे चतुर्विधे।

[1] It is strange that a man unattached both to this world and the other, able to dicriminate between the transient and the eternal and aspiring after *moksha*, should be afraid of *moksha* itself. III, 8

The steadfast man when consuming things which please, or when made to suffer, is neither happy nor angry, ever seeing the one *atman* every- where. III, 9 The high-souled man, looking upon the ever-active body of his as not his, how should such a one be affected by praise or blame? III, 10

The man of steady intellect, who the entire universe as *maya* and is no more interested in its shows, how will he have fear even when death is near? III, 11

The high-souled one whose mind is free from desire even when things look hopeless, who, self-realized, rests supremely content in himself, with whom may such a one be compared? III, 12

The man of steady intellect who knows that all this, in very truth, is appearance and no more, will he feel drawn by one thing and repelled by another? III,

He who has inwardly renounced attachment, who is unaffected by the pairs of opposites and who hopes for nothing—to him chance-brought things of enjoyment occasion neither happiness nor suffering. III, 14

विज्ञस्यैव हि सामर्थ्यमिच्छानिच्छाविवर्जने ॥५ ॥
आत्मानमद्वयं कश्चिज्जानाति जगदीश्वरम् ।
यद्वेत्ति तत्स कुरुते न भयं तस्य कुत्रचित् ॥६ ॥[1]

You will note that the verses in the fourth chapter are somewhat dangerous. It is strong food for a delicate stomach. All the chapters are not of equal length. The third for instance has 14 verses and the fourth only six.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

82. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

SINHGADH,
Vaishakh Vad 1 [*May 4, 1920*][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I got today the post you sent me. As you have had no time, however, to write to me, I shall say something on the basis of what I heard from Mahadev, wishing to give you as much peace as I can.

1. Why did I at all inquire about the car? This itself shows my growing weakness.
2. There was much waste of time and money in what we did over Gurudev[3] and Fatima[4]. The result was nothing or almost nothing.

[1] There can be no comparison, indeed, between the man, self-realized and steady o intellect, who enjoys things as sport, and the beclouded man carrying on his back, the burden of this world. IV, 1The yogi, firmly established on that plane, which Indra and the other gods weakly yearn to attain, is never moved to joy. IV, 2

Neither good deeds nor sins touch the man who knows That : the sky and smoke do not touch each other in fact, though seem to. IV, 3

The high-souled man who knows that this whole universe is but the *atman* itself, who can forbid him from living as he will spontaneously? IV, 4

None but the man of perfect knowledge has the strength to end all desire and aversion, in all the four planes of existence, from *Brahma* to a blade of grass. IV, 5

Rare is the man who knows the identity of his self and the Lord of the Universe; such a one does what he may and knows fear from no quarter. IV, 6

[2] The letter also appears in *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. V, under May 3. May 4 is the more likely date since Gandhiji left Sinhgadh on that day.

[3] Rabindranath Tagore, for whom a reception was held in the Ashram when he visited it on April 2, 1920.

[4] Imam Abdul Kadir Bawazeer's daughter whose marriage was celebrated in the Ashram; *vide* "Invitation to Wedding", 20-4-1920 and "Three Occasions", 9-5-1920.

3. It is not true that work comes seeking me and I don't go seeking it.
4. Sarladevi had her meal sitting on the cushion bed on the floor and I also take my meals sitting there. Where is the need for all this hurry? Would it take more time if she and I had our meals at the right place? Even if it did, would it matter very much?
5. I am no more as scrupulously firm as I used to be.
6. India and the Ashram have lost by my activities outside the Ashram.
7. Indeed, I should leave everything else and, confined to the Ashram, lose myself in its activities like the school, etc. No one will now charge me with accepting defeat.
8. About Radha's marriage.
9. The power which was mine, in virtue of which everyone was obliged to listen to what I said, has disappeared.

I think it is natural that these and similar doubts should arise in your mind. Especially when I am so far away or, even though living in the Ashram, am like one living far away, my numerous activities are bound to perplex people.

I inquired about a car since in any case we have introduced many unwanted things. Economically, I saw that a car would be an advantage. We certainly use cars a good deal. The question was whether we could accept a car as a gift. I did not think it quite proper to give an immediate reply on my own. For two days I struggled hard against the idea but, thinking of Lyall[1], I softened and thought that I would accept the gift if you also desired that I should. Actually, I am so little in love with a car that I have often wished that Anasuyabehn's car might break down. It is true, however, that now I am not opposed [to using a car] as much as I used to be. I think, therefore, that you would be perfectly right if you believed that it was my weakness to have inquired about the car.

About Gurudev, I was a mere witness. I submitted to the desire of you all. Left to myself, I would not have gone in for arches, etc. I would have thought out a way of honouring him which would have cost little effort. I don't feel either way about what happened. I believe it was our duty to give him a fitting welcome. I don't think the

[1] A missionary who taught English in the Ashram school

students lost anything by being busy in this work. They merely followed the duty of service. These facts need to be borne in mind. Moreover, Gurudev is an exceptional man. He has poetry, goodness and patriotism in him. This is a rare mixture. He deserves to be honoured. What simplicity his is!

All that was done for Fatima seems perfectly right to me. If we remember that Imam Saheb is a Muslim, we shall see that we did nothing much. Every step was taken after full thought. If you admit that we were bound to celebrate her marriage,[1] you will see that everything we did was right. Imam Saheb could have observed still greater simplicity. It would have been excellent if he had given her no ornaments, but how can we expect so much? I especially want to satisfy you on this.

You may be sure I don't go seeking work. Which activity, do you think, did I go out of my way to take upon myself? If I had not joined the Khilafat movement, I think, I would have lost everything. In joining it I have followed what I especially regard as my dharma. I am trying through this movement to show the real nature of non-violence. I am uniting Hindus and Muslims. I am coming to know one and all and, if non-co-operation goes well, a great power based on brute force will have to submit to a simple-looking thing. The Khilafat movement is a great churning of the sea of India. Why should we be concerned with what it will produce? All that we should consider is whether the movement itself is a pure and worthy cause. I cannot leave any field in which I have cultivated some strength. *My moksha*[2] lies through them. If I refuse to work in these fields, I shall not succeed in giving anything through the Ashram either. It was for this reason that Doke described me as a pathfinder.[3] He had intended to name his book 'Pathfinder' or 'Jungle-breaker'. He kept the present name at the instance of Polak.

Even by establishing the Ashram I have shown a path. It is for you and others who are working in it to follow the path and reach the destination. Meanwhile, if it is given to me to live longer and have some peace, I may, on the basis of my matured experience, prepare a better scheme for the Ashram; that is another matter. However, you are free to engage me in the fullest discussions about this.

On that day Sarladevi was the only one left to take her meal and therefore had it where she was sitting. Ordinarily she used to have her

[1] As her parents were full-time workers in the Ashram

[2] Liberation as the final end of life

[3] In his book *An Indian patriot in South Africa*

meals in the dining-room. For myself, since I fell ill I have my meal wherever I happen to be when it includes no cereals. I do this for my convenience; it may also be attributed to my weakness. Your complaint is right, of course.

My staunchness has not disappeared. My ideas have grown stronger and more piercing. My indifference to worldly pleasures has increased. What I used to see but dimly has now become clearer to me. I have grown more tolerant, so that I am less particular about others [doing what I want them to do].

It is impossible for me to answer the question whether India and the Ashram have gained or lost through my outside activities. If I could think of a way, I would certainly confine myself to the Ashram, but the thing is not entirely in my hands. I should like it if you can convince me with argument and hold me down [to the Ashram].

It is quite true that I have lost my former fire. My illness has disabled me. I have myself observed that, ever since I lost the strength to stand beside you all and work, I have lost my fire. The steel-like strength of my body having given place to softness, I put up with many things. Did anyone ever see me going for a change of air? Well, that is what I do now. When I think of the expenditure which has been incurred over me I get still more nervous. I feel ashamed when travelling second class. My soul suffers on such occasions and, to be sure, it loses its lustre. There is no way out of this. My best time is over. People may take now what they can from my ideas. I have ceased to be the 'ideal man of action' which I used to be. I am to be pitied for being in this state. There is no exaggeration in this. I have given expression to these feelings often enough, off and on.

But in the midst of all this, neither you nor I need despair. We should be able to see our defects and, wherever possible, should correct them. You have learnt a great deal through my 50 years of life. Cherish it. Build on it, bring credit to yourself and me. When you experience any difficulties point them out to me. Overcome those of them which you can by your own effort. Don't lose heart. If you find anywhere in this letter that I have misunderstood you, do not brood over the thing, but immediately seek a clarification.

I want you to be perfectly at peace and cheerful. Shamaldas has wired to me for money. I am saying no to him. We simply cannot give him any money.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 5786. Courtesy : Radhabehn Chowdhari

83. THE DELHI NOTIFICATION AND PRESS ORDERS[1]

The first repressive move in connection with the Khilafat movement has commenced at Delhi in the shape of a notification under the Seditious Meetings Act and a gradual muzzling of the Muslim Press. We are not surprised at this. We must expect the Government to anticipate every move of the Committee[2] and expect it to thwart the scheme of non-co-operation. Nor can the Govern- ment be blamed for it so long as it acts wisely and temperately. But the people must be prepared for the Government even to lose its senses, become panicky and adopt insane measures. O'Dwyerism may erupt anywhere any day. The people must prepare for all contingencies. The preparation is simple. They must not lose their heads on any account whatsoever. They must not be angry. They must not play into the hands of mischief-makers and answer Government madness with madness. No one should act on his own responsibility. It should be remembered that civil disobedience is not to be offered, at any rate at this stage, in connection with the Khilafat movement. Non-co-operation, too, has not yet commenced. Every Government order must be strictly obeyed, all rules and laws faithfully carried out. Then and then only is non-co-operation likely to succeed. All the laws of war are applicable to this great struggle. An army moves silently, calmly and deliberately. No unit acts on its own responsibility. Discipline is the watchword of success. So must it be with the Khilafat army of peace. Its strokes will be sure and certain only when there is no violence in the face of the greatest provocation. The Government is not bound by any rule of non-violence. Indeed, the last resort of a Government is violence. The leaders must be prepared for prosecutions, internments, imprisonment, etc. Others must be ready to take their places. Then, when we have proved ourselves by going through the process of purification, will victory come, not till then.

Young India, 5-5-1920

[1] This article has been identified as Gandhiji's from the draft in his hand preserved in the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi.

[2] The sub-committee, consisting of Gandhiji, Shaukat Ali and Abul Kalam Azad, appointed by the All-India Khilafat Committee

84. HOW TO WORK NON-CO-OPERATION

Perhaps the best way of answering the fears and criticism as to non-co-operation is to elaborate more fully the scheme of non-co-operation. The critics seem to imagine that the organizers propose to give effect to the whole scheme at once. The fact however is that the organizers have fixed definite, progressive four stages. The first is the giving up of titles and resignation of honorary posts. If there is no response or if the response received is not effective, recourse will be had to the second stage. The second stage involves much previous arrange-ment. Certainly, not a single servant will be called out unless he is either capable of supporting himself and his dependents or the Khilafat Committee is able to bear the burden. All the classes of servants will not be called out at once and never will any pressure be put upon a single servant to withdraw himself from the Government service. Nor will a single private employee be touched for the simple reason that the movement is not anti-English. It is not even anti-Government. Co-operation is to be withdrawn because the people must not be party to a wrong—a broken pledge—a violation of deep religious sentiment. Naturally, the movement will receive a check, if there is any undue influence brought to bear upon any Government servant or if any violence is used or countenanced by any member of the Khilafat Committee. The second stage must be entirely successful, if the response is at all on an adequate scale. For no Government—much less the Indian Government—can subsist if the people cease to serve it. The withdrawal therefore of the police and the military—that third stage—is a distant goal. The organizers however wanted to be fair, just and above suspicion. They did not want to keep back from the Government or the public a single step they had in contemplation even as a remote contin-gency. The fourth, i.e., suspension of taxes, is still more remote. The organizers recognize that supension of general taxation is fraught with the greatest danger. It is likely to bring a sensitive class in conflict with the police. They are therefore not likely to embark upon it, unless they can do so with the assurance that there will be no violence offered by the people.

I admit as I have already done that non-co-operation is not unatt-ended with risk, but the risk of supineness in the face of a grave issue is infinitely greater than the danger of violence ensuing from organizing non-co-operation. To do nothing is to invite violence for a

certainty.

It is easy enough to pass resolutions or write articles condemning non-co-operation. But it is no easy task to restrain the fury of a people incensed by a deep sense of wrong. I urge those who talk or work against non-co-operation to descend from their chairs and go down to the people, learn their feelings and write, if they have the heart, against non-co-operation. They will find, as I have found, that the only way to avoid violence is to enable them to give such expression to their feelings as to compel redress. I have found nothing save non-co-operation. It is logical and harmless. It is the inherent right of a subject to refuse to assist a government that will not listen to him.

Non-co-operation as a voluntary movement can only succeed if the feeling is genuine and strong enough to make people suffer to the utmost. If the religious sentiment of the Mohammedans is deeply hurt and if the Hindus entertain neighbourly regard towards their Muslim brethren, they will both count no cost too great for achieving the end. Non-co-operation will not only be an effective remedy but will also be an effective test of the sincerity of the Muslim claim and the Hindu profession of friendship.

There is, however, one formidable argument urged by friends against my joining the Khilafat movement.[1] They say that it ill becomes me, a friend of the English and an admirer of the British constitution, to join hands with those who are today filled with nothing but ill will against the English. I am sorry to have to confess that the ordinary Mohammedan entertains today no affection for Englishmen. He considers, not without some cause, that they have not played the game. But if I am friendly towards Englishmen, I am no less so towards my countrymen, the Mohammedans. And as such they have a greater claim upon my attention than Englishmen. My personal religion however enables me to serve my countrymen without hurting Englishmen or for that matter anybody else. What I am not prepared to do to my blood-brother, I would not do to an Englishman. I would not injure him to gain a kingdom. But I would withdraw co-operation from him if it became necessary, as I had withdrawn from my own brother[2] (now deceased) when it became necessary. I serve the Empire

[1] *Vide*, for instance, "Why I Have Joined the Khilafat Movement", 28-4-1920, and "Letter to C.F. Andrews", 20-6-1920.

[2] Karsandas Gandhi

by refusing to partake in its wrong. William Stead[1] offered public prayers for British reverses at the time of the Boer War because he considered that the nation to which he belonged was engaged in an unrighteous war. The present Prime Minister[2] risked his life in opposing that war and did everything he could to obstruct his own Government in its prosecution. And today if I have thrown in my lot with the Mohammedans, a large number of whom bear no friendly feelings towards the British, I have done so frankly as a friend of the British and with the object of gaining justice and of thereby showing the capacity of the British constitution to respond to every honest determination when it is coupled with suffer- ing. I hope by my 'alliance' with the Mohammedans to achieve a threefold end—to obtain justice in the face of odds with the method of satyagraha and to show its efficacy over all other methods, to secure Mohammedan friendship for the Hindus and thereby internal peace also, and last but not least to transform ill will into affection for the British and their constitution which in spite of its imperfections has weathered many a storm. I may fail in achieving any of the ends. I can but attempt. God alone can grant success. It will not be denied that the ends are all worthy. I invite Hindus and Englishmen to join me in a full-hearted manner in shouldering the burden the Mohammedans of India are carrying. Theirs is admittedly a just fight. The Viceroy, The Secretary of State, the Maharaja of Bikaner[3] and Lord Sinha have testified to it. The time has arrived to make good the testimony. People with a just cause are never satisfied with a mere protest. They have been known to die for it. Are a high-spirited people like the Mohammedans expected to do less?

Young India, 5-5-1920

[1] William Thomas Stead (1849-1912); English journalist and reformer whose enterprise and originality exercised a potent influence on contemporary journalism and politics; enthusiastic supporter of the peace movement in Great Britain

[2] Lloyd George

[3] Sir Gangasinhji (1880-1943); represented India in the League of Nations after World War I; Chancellor, Chamber of Princes, 1920-25.

85. REPRESSION IN DELHI

There was no reason to believe that the Khilafat movement would go on without the Government resorting to repression. If anyone believed so, the notification[1] issued by the Delhi Government should open his eyes. The notification forbids the holding of any meeting in Delhi Province for a period of three months without the prior permission of the Government. This is but the beginning.

The Government would certainly not permit a movement like non-co-operation without trying to suppress it. No government would, for that matter. The movement is of such a nature that, if it succeeds, the administration would come to a standstill. The Government is certain to take steps to prevent this.

It is through repression that the people will be tested. If the Government were to remain quiet, non-co-operation would not have much effect. Every State depends in the last resort on the pistol, that is, on the power it wields. In this fight, however, the people's weapon is their capacity for suffering. If they pit their physical strength against the Government's, they will lose. The idea, therefore, of employing physical force simultaneously with non-co-operation will have to be given up altogether. And so I hope that the people will remain peaceful despite any repressive measures the Government may take in Delhi or elsewhere. Their success lies in doing so and going ahead with the programme. It should be remembered that in this struggle the soul-force of the Indian people is to be pitted against the brute force of the Allies.

If, in this, there is the slightest admixture of brute force by the people, even what is claimed as soul-force will be looked upon as brute force or as weakness.

If the people want to succeed on the Khilafat question with the help of soul-force, they should be ready to go to jail, to be deprived of their property and to resign from Government service. This is certainly no movement aiming at easy success.

It also needs to be borne in mind that we have not so far introduced the element of civil disobedience in this struggle. As I understand the matter, civil disobedience and non-co-operation do not go together. Any ordinances, therefore, which the Government might

[1] *Vide* "The Delhi Notification and Press Orders", 5-5-1920.

promulgate or any orders it might pass must be fully obeyed. If, in this movement, even a single worker follows his own judgment, he will do it much harm.

There is no difference between those who join this fight and the troops in an army. In an army, the individual soldier cannot act on his own responsibility but must await orders from his superiors, and this is also true of the Khilafat struggle or of any other struggle. If the soldier in the army is required to respect and obey his superiors, not to show temper, and so on, these things are equally necessary for workers in a movement like this one for the Khilafat. If we can acquire full control over the people, victory will be ours this very day. For acquiring such control, it is essential that the principles laid down above be followed. I hope, therefore, that no individual will risk anything on his own responsibility.

As it is, we have not started even non-co-operation. The peace terms have not yet been finalized.[1] The latest telegram from Mahomed Ali[2] is encouraging. Whether or no there is room for hope, till the peace terms are definitely announced[3] and instructions are issued by the Khilafat Committee, no one is to take even the step of resigning. At present, the people chiefly need to be educated in this, that none of them should, even by chance, be guilty of violence.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-5-1920

[1] By the Allies, in regard to Turkey

[2] 1871-1931; orator, journalist and politician; led the Khilafat deputation to England in 1920; President of the Congress, 1923

[3] They were announced in *The Gazette of India Extraordinary*, dated May 14, 1920.

86. ABDUCTIONS ON BORDER

There are certain wild tribes on the North-West Frontier of India. They are Muslims and live by carrying out raids and abducting people.[1] Recently they abducted an English girl and set her free only when they received a ransom. In like manner, they plunder Hindus in surrounding villages, abduct some and set them free when they are paid ransom. They harass Muslims, too, in the same manner. This is not, therefore, a case of Muslims plundering Hindus. Nevertheless, some Hindus, on the strength of the happy spirit of Hindu-Muslim unity which is in the air today, want that the Muslims, if they are sincere, should take steps to stop these raids. I know that this is said in ignorance. Indian Muslims have no influence whatever on the wild tribes on the border. They themselves suffer from these raids, as I have pointed out. Be that as it may, we must think out measures to stop this harassment. Those who suffer from these raids and abductions should get help. It is for the Government to provide it. If it cannot ensure such protection, what happens to the mighty power of protection with which it is credited? I have no illusions left about this power. The Government is not as strong for preventing crime as it is for punishing the guilty after a crime has been committed. The instances of Arar and Katarpur are quite fresh in our memory. Personally, I would not blame the Government for this state of affairs. As long as human nature remains what it is, crimes will continue. The State succeeds in preventing them, more or less, to the extent that they can be prevented by fear of punishment.

The best remedy against this should be with the people themselves. Be it on the border or elsewhere, the people should be capable of defending themselves. If they do not have the capacity, they should cultivate it. One method is to win over one's neighbour by love, and the other is to stop him by fear. Generally, a mixture of the two is employed. People develop enough physical strength for self-defence, and also try to cultivate friendly relations with the neighbours. The inhabitants of the border villages can employ both these methods.

[1] During the period, 1919-20, no fewer than 611 raids took place in the Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan districts. They resulted in the killing of 298, the wounding of 392, and the kidnapping of 463 British subjects. *India in 1920*.

They may prepare themselves to fight the raiders unitedly, and may also negotiate with them when there is peace. If the border tribes are starving, the people can help them as neighbours, after laying down terms. This is what the Government itself does.

At the same time, those Muslims who have any contact with the border tribes may send messages to them and persuade them to give up raids. If these measures are taken simultaneously, by the Government, by the people and, especially, by the Muslims, people may be saved from this harassment. It will not avail to sit back, thinking that the Muslims do nothing; besides, such a thought may be unfair to them.

I have had to write on this subject because newspapers in the North are full of it and I have received some letters on it. Men from the border areas have also been here [to see me]. As the spirit of nationalism grows among us, our desire to know about developments in other parts of the country should also increase.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-5-1920

87. A HUMBLE SUGGESTION[1]

I observe that many candidates have come forward for the choice of the would-be electors for the reformed Councils.[2] It must be granted that it is possible to render some service to the State by entering these Councils. But it is my firm belief that many can serve the country better by remaining outside. The late Mr. Keir Hardie used to say that it was practically impossible for a true Christian to remain in the British Parliament. Carlyle called it the talking shop. When there are many candidates, those who have accepted service of the land as an article of faith would do well to stand outside the lists, and they will find that they will be better occupied by educating the electorate and keep- ing the elected members to their promises at the polls. Even in England one sees the most effective service rendered by those who keep themselves outside the House of Commons. The real affairs of the English nation are conducted not by the seven hundred odd M.P.s but by the larger body who really control them. I would

[1] This translation is reproduced from *Young India*, 19-5-1920.

[2] Elections for Legislative Councils, under the Reforms Act of 1919, were to be held in November, 1920.

therefore venture to suggest to the larger body of those whose only ambition is to serve India, not to trouble about entering the Councils. To the aspirants after membership of Councils I would respectfully urge: 'Pray avoid the Councils if it is any axe of your own which you want to grind there, for it can be ground elsewhere. In a chamber where only national interests are supposed to be conserved and where a stiff fight has to be put up against strong vested interests, how can you think of serving your own little interest? Surely, you will not wish to injure the national cause by mixing your own with it.' I do not know who are the aspirants. But I draw my inference from what happens over municipal council elections. We shall benefit by our people entering the Councils if they are true men filled with humility and love of the country, courageous, fearless and versed in the subjects they have to handle.

The Reforms Act is full of defects which must be remedied. But even as a razor with the keenest edge is useless in incompetent hands, so may a most perfect constitution be rendered nugatory if it is handled by selfish or ignorant councillors. The most expeditious manner of refor-ming the Reforms Act would be to send to the Councils only those who wish to serve the nation. In their hands, even a defective constitution may be utilized for the good of the nation even as an able artisan effectively manages indifferent tools and even makes them better. We shall discuss the voters' duty some other time.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-5-1920

88. FAMINE IN ORISSA

Most of us perhaps do not even know where Orissa is. Our great poet, Sir Rabindranath Tagore, has made Orissa, with the name of Utkal, famous in a poem[2] of his. Jagannath Puri lies in Orissa, and a terrible famine is raging just now in Puri district itself. Orissa is a part of the province of Bihar, Bihar and Orissa being both under one Lieutenant-Governor. Orissa is a part of one of the poorest regions in India. We do not hear much about the suffering there because the people are backward in every way. I have often been asked to visit Orissa because of this famine, but as I am not in a position to go there I urged Bhai Amritlal Thakkar, who is free from his Jamshedpur work, to go there and he left at twenty-four hours' notice. Already a

[1] This last sentence is not found in the translation in *Young India*.

[2] Presumably the song which is now India's National Anthem

telegram and a letter have arrived from him. He is now touring villages to observe the conditions there. I see even from his letters, however, that the people's suffering is acute. He writes :

> I visited a Bengali children's home and a hospital for beggars. These institutions are being run on donations obtained from Calcutta. The number of orphans, boys and girls, is about a hundred. There are some thirty to thirty-five patients in the hospitals. From the large number in both these institutions, the extent of the suffering in the neighbourhood can easily be imagined.

In another letter he writes :

> There have been numerous deaths. I have read the report of a committee of non-officials on this subject. The report ought to be published. Tomorrow I shall be visiting some villages in a bullock-cart. I shall be out for about five or six days. I shall be able to send a detailed report after my return from there; in between, I shall write a letter or two. In any case, do issue an appeal for funds. It would not be proper for me to move in the villages empty-handed. If possible, I shall take one or two cartfuls of rice from here and use the stock only in case of urgent need. Even then, kindly make immediate arrangements to collect funds.

There is also a letter from a gentleman in Orissa, who writes :

> There is a village named Dawa; it had 59 families. In this place, draught was followed by floods and the resulting damage was heavy. This village had a population of 411 of whom 11 were children and all of them died for want of milk. Of the 411 inhabitants, 303 are still alive and they look like skeletons. In all, 58 people have died. Sixty-one people have left their homes; some houses are vacant; of some others, the roofs have blown off. It is rare to see any food with these villagers; most of them go about naked. For lack of clothes to cover their limbs, some women simply cannot stir out of their homes. Some subsist on grass and leaves.

I shall publish further information as I receive it. But what I have given is sufficient to justify our sending help. I hope every one will contribute what he can. I am not yet in a position to say how much will be needed, but when I appeal to people to offer what they can, the total figure is not quite relevant. I have already written to Bhai Amritlal Thakkar to keep an account of the expenses incurred, and a full account will of course be published. We who take pride in describing ourselves as Indians must consider it our religious duty to suffer when any part of India does so. How, then, can we remain unmoved by Orissa's suffering?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-5-1920

89. CURSE OF WIDOWHOOD

Mr. Kanchanlal Khandwala's letter is full of figures about widows. Anyone's heart will bleed to read them. Impatient reformers will merely say that remarriage of widows is the only straight and simple remedy for this. I cannot say so. I too have a family of my own. There are many widows in my family, but I can never bring myself to advise them to remarry and they will not think of doing so either. The real remedy is for men to take a pledge not to remarry.

But there are other remedies, barring remarriage, which we do not adopt, or rather do not wish to adopt. Here they are:

1. Child-marriages should stop.

2. No boy and girl should be betrothed till they are of an age to live together.

3. Not only should a woman who has never lived with her husband be permitted to remarry, she should actually be encouraged to do so. Such women should not be classed with widows.

4. Those who became widows before the age of fifteen and who are still young should be free to remarry.

5. Instead of being regarded as a sign of ill fortune, widowhood should be looked upon as a holy state and respected accordingly.

6. The best arrangements should be made to educate widows and give them some occupation.

There is no doubt that, if these reforms are brought about, Hindu society would be rid of the evils arising from widowhood. Every family and every community may adopt these reforms for themselves. Many reforms are delayed because everyone waits for someone else to make a start. It is a divine injunction that man should do a good deed the moment he sees it as such; about a sinful act, one should think, consult a fortune-teller and take advice from thousands of people, and ultimately refrain from it. We become guilty in the sight of God if we delay in the performance of a good deed. But we act the opposite way. We are not afraid of doing anything sinful, but, when it comes to doing good, we wait for conferences.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-5-1920

90. THREE OCCASIONS

A wedding having taken place in the Satyagraha Ashram, I could not help making a comparison between this wedding in the Ashram and the weddings outside. I take the liberty to place before the reader some of my reflections on this.

Imam Saheb Abdul Kadir Bawazeer is an earnest Muslim of a noble family. His father was the Muezzin in the Jumma Masjid in Bombay for several years. The Imam Saheb has been with me for the past many years. He was with me in jail, too. After his experience of jail, he lost interest in business and came over with his family to stay with me in Phoenix. Bodily labour was a rule in Phoenix. The Imam Saheb had never done it, but started it there. We used to bring out *Indian Opinion* and the Imam Saheb picked up the work of composing.

The Imam Saheb has two daughters. He has lived with me as if he were my own brother and we have fully respected each other's religion, so that we have never felt sorry that we belong to different religions. We have felt nothing wrong in his doing his *namaz* and the Hindu following his own method of worship; on the contrary, we have believed that this is as it should be.

And now came the wedding of his eldest daughter, Fatima. We held consultations. Fatima, over twenty, is a wise girl. After having consulted her and the Imam Saheb, we decided to have a wedding which would become the Ashram and our life of poverty. We dropped the marriage procession, the band and all other pomp; we dropped even the feast. That the students might realize the importance of their *brahmacharya*, they too were consulted and it was decided that they should not attend the marriage. The relations of Imam Saheb and of the bridegroom, Bhai Syed Hussein Uraizee, and others connected with the Ashram, were invited to give their blessings. They were offered home-made sherbet and fruits and nuts. As for illuminations, there was nothing except a hanging lamp.

The ceremony lasted two hours, of which half an hour was taken up by the *maulood sharif* or reading out in Arabic the life of the Prophet by way of an auspicious beginning. This was followed by the

Kaji Saheb writing down the *nikahnama*[1] in the presence of witnesses. The Khatib Saheb Abdul Munim Bagzada of the Jumma Masjid in Bombay led the bride and the bridegroom in reading it. It was then signed. This ceremony took about twenty minutes. Then came *fatecha* or thanksgiving, after which the sherbet and fruits were served and the bride and bridegroom paid their respects to the elders of the latter. The bridegroom wore a simple dress. The function, which began at half-past six, ended at half-past eight. Sister Fatima, then, went to meet the Ashram students. This was a moving scene. Knowing that the time had come for parting from her fellow students and the other residents, she started crying. She was reminded that it was her duty to carry her Ashram training with her to her husband's home. She understood that it was her duty to spread the message of truth, compassion, swadeshi, national service and simplicity in her new home. This wedding, thus, was over in two and a half hours.

Next morning I went to the city. There I saw numberless marriage processions. The bandsmen, in a variety of strange costumes, deafened one's ears with their noises. Children and young men, loaded with ornaments and velvet clothing in this intolerable heat, were dripping with perspiration. The bridegroom was veiled in a profusion of flowers. I saw in this no religion, nor real joy nor any grandeur. If we really wish to have band music, why foolishly ape the West? If we would follow the West, we should see that we have the genuine thing. Any person even with ordinary knowledge of music will say that there is no sweetness at all nor any music in the bands which we order. If we wish to take out a marriage procession, why should we not wear garments to suit our country's climate? If we wish to deck the bridegroom with jewels, why should we not use some discrimination or sense of art? If we want songs to be sung, why should we not train the women in them?

My complaint is not against pomp and splendour. Those who have money and no high aim in life will no doubt have them. They must have occasions to use their wealth. But I wish to see in all these things some discrimination and thought, some restraint and art, and progress. I do observe some changes in our marriage customs, but most of them, one observes, have been made without thinking. Instead of decreasing, pomp and expenditure have increased. It is entirely forgotten that marriage is also a sacred ceremony. If the better type of

[1] Marriage agreement

families introduced well-considered changes, I feel sure that others would soon seize upon them. If the life of the nation is to progress, we should examine every aspect of it.

There is a charge against us which has some truth in it. We make too much ostentation. Rather than really enjoy ourselves, we make a show of enjoyment; instead of sincerely mourning, we make a show of mourning.

I left Ahmedabad and went to Bombay. There were other tenants in the bungalow in which I put up. There was a death in one of their families. The time was about noon. Suddenly the air was rent with cries; weeping and wailing had begun. The voices of children, women and men rose together. This crying went on till about nine or ten in the evening. Other women arrived; they, too, joined in beating their breasts and wailing. Most of this was mere show. Certainly, there is no respect for dharma in all this. Our religion forbids us to weep for the dead. Followers of other religions do not do so. In all this crying, one's duty towards one's neighbour is entirely forgotten. That there might be a sick person or a marriage in the adjoining house—why take thought of this? After all, it is the practice to cry, and cry loudly; if one does not do so, one will be denounced; hence one must cry loudly and beat one's breasts—this is the idea. It prevails not only among the poor or the illiterate but even among the better classes. How shall we rid ourselves of this evil practice, this sin?

I had two bitter experiences after Fatima's marriage, and I could not help comparing these with that, which seemed to me a grand occasion. I offer my reflections to readers with the hope that we shall closely examine our ways and give up the harmful practices which obtain among us.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-5-1920

91. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

THE ASHRAM,
May 9, 1920

MY DEAR CHILD,

I did not at all like to part with you. But I know it was good for your health's sake. I only hope that the expectation has been fully realized and that the climate of Sinhgadh has agreed with you.[1]

I am sorry there is no chance of my being with you as early as I had thought. The great strike[2] commenced today. I, however, do hope that it will not last long. The mill-owners have no case and they have no fighters in their midst. It was a big meeting last night. The men were full of courage and determination.

I cannot help writing down for us again the heavenly lines of Trench—

> Yet, if we will one Guide obey
> The dreariest path, the darkest way
> Shall issue out in heavenly day;
> And we on diverse shores now cast,
> Shall meet, our perilous voyage past,
> All in our Father's house at last.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child,* pp. 69-70

[1] Evidently Esther Faering accepted Gandhiji's invitation (*vide* "Letter to Esther Faering", 2-5-1920), and reached Sinhgadh presumably on May 3 or May 4.

[2] In the cotton mills in Ahmedabad

92. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM,
May 10, 1920

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I shall start from here tomorrow night by the Gujarat Mail and reach there on Wednesday the 12th in the morning. I intend to leave for Ahmedabad the same day. Reserve a seat in the Mail. Inform Ahmed Haji Khatri about my coming.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

93 BAZAR GATE

BOMBAY (FORT)

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

93. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

ASHRAM,
Vaishakh Vad 8 [*May 11, 1920*][1]

BHAISHRI MAVALANKAR[2],

Kindly forgive my writing this letter. I cannot help doing so. I heard yesterday that you are preparing to marry. I simply could not bear the idea. Would you not observe a year's mourning? How can you forget the memory of a woman whom you called your better half, whose body became one with yours? Are we under no obligation to observe some self-control? I heard that your mother was very insistent. Why should even a mother's opinion count in this matter? How can we do anything unworthy of ourselves? To what end have we been educated? I shall say no more. May God grant you good sense. My right and duty as a friend is to caution you; you should go your

[1] The date of this letter is given in Mavalankar's *Sansmarano*.

[2] Ganesh Vasudev Mavalankar (1888-1956); lawyer, parliamentarian and Congress leader of Ahmedabad; elected Speaker of Bombay Legislative Assembly in 1937 and of Central Legislative Assembly in 1946; Speaker of Lok Sabha until his death

own way, however. If you can see the wrong in the step which you are about to take, you may save yourself from it by the courage and the support which friends like me may give. If *you* think that you are taking the right step, ignore any advice which I or the whole world may give. In any case, you will forgive me, I am sure.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 1223

94. LETTER TO SYED FAZLUR RAHMAN

THE ASHRAM,
May 11, 1920

DEAR SYED FAZLUR RAHMAN,

Technically it is the Government which is perpetrating the injustice against Turkey and thus violating Indian sentiment and therefore I cannot withdraw my support of its injustice by boycotting British goods. Indeed I expect to gain British sympathy and by it compel the British Government to do the right thing. I do not say that a successful boycott cannot achieve the end. But it will be by way of punishment and not by way of duty [.] We are ourselves not to be party to an injustice. My plan of non-co-operation today does not involve the withdrawal of servants from benevolent institutions but if a Government were wholly corrupt I would not hesitate to stop its activity by complete withdrawal of co-operation. I would refuse to have even useful service through a corrupt agency and when the activity of a completely unjust Government is brought to a standstill it is simultaneously replaced by another agency that will perform the useful services such as you mention. But as yet I do not take that view of the British Government. It suffers temporary aberrations less often perhaps than any other institution of similar type. And it is possible to compel it to retrace its steps by taking up a modified form of non-co-operation. I hope you are now able to see that non-co-operation is both just and necessary when an intolerable injustice is being perpetrated as in the case of Khilafat. I hope you will also see that my position is not so very spiritual as it is logical.[1]

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S. N. 7187

[1] On May 12, Gandhiji attended the meeting of the All-India Khilafat Committee at Bombay and moved the resolution on civil disobedience passed there.

95. DISTRESS IN ORISSA

Orissa, in spite of its enjoying the honour of having one of the great places of pilgrimage, viz., Jagannath Puri, appears to be a godforsaken country. For, even whilst India is pulsating with a consciousness of national life, we know little of Orissa. For most of us, it is a mere geographical expression. Not being a centre of modern education it has not produced the modern type of workers and, therefore, nobody knows whether the people of Orissa are happy or unhappy. For months past an Orissa friend has been trying to interest me in its problems. He has for the last few weeks been telling me that there is practically a famine in the land. In a little village containing 59 families, numbering all told 411 men and women, recently 11 infants, he says, died for want of nutrition. Altogether 58 deaths have taken place owing to starvation, 61 have abandoned the village and those who are left are mere skin and bone. They have neither food nor clothing. Women being insufficiently clad will not leave their homes and some are living on grass and leaves! I was not prepared to believe this terrible story. I felt that before making a public appeal there should be some authentic information to be placed before the people. I therefore approached the Servants of India Society for lending Mr. Amritlal Thakkar's services. His fitness for the work cannot be questioned, for he has qualified himself for it for years by such kind of investigations. My request was readily granted and the following is the substance of what he has to say after a week's stay in the Puri District of Orissa :

I have been travelling in the villages for the last 8 days. There are certainly famine conditions in Orissa. Whilst I was in Jamshedpur, I believed that Orissa was one of the granaries of India because Balassore provides a vast quantity of rice. But alas! Today I find that the people of the affected district have to get their rice from Calcutta, Sambalpur, etc. The country had a double visitation—famine and flood. It is said that during the last six months over 1,500 people must have died of starvation. I have already visited nearly 19 villages. Of these 6 are said to have lost 40 inhabitants simply from starvation. People are still dying. An old man died in my very presence. He was among those who had come for relief. A co-worker has just returned from a village telling me that he saw an old man who was dying of

starvation. One stumbles upon children recently bereft of parents. You see wherever you go many reduced to mere skeletons. I have sent you the following telegram:

> I have visited already 19 villages. I am still travelling. Scores have died of starvation. Recently the Government have begun to distribute relief but it is insufficient. Please send five thousand rupees at once. Altogether from 30 to 50 thousand rupees will be required.

According to the Famine Code, 50 *tolas* of grain have to be given to those who are unfit to work but only 26 *tolas* are being given per head. The relief was commenced on the 10th April. Nearly 4,000 men have already received it. The quantity will, I hear, be shortly increased to 40 *tolas*.

The Oriya people are very poor. His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor some time ago visited the affected parts but not more than 5,000 people have been able to obtain partial relief. No famine works have yet been opened.

Mr. Thakkar's letter speaks for itself. I hope that the cry of distress coming from Orissa will not be heard in vain and those who can will not fail to contribute their quota.

Young India, 12-5-1920

96. NEITHER A SAINT NOR A POLITICIAN

A kind friend has sent me the following cutting from the April number of *East and West* :

> Mr. Gandhi has the reputation of a saint but it seems that the politician in him often dominates his decisions. He has been making great use of hartals and there can be no gainsaying that under his direction hartal is becoming a powerful political weapon for uniting the educated and the uneducated on a single question of the day. The hartal is not without its disadvantages. It is teaching direct action, and direct action, however potent, does not work for unity. Is Mr. Gandhi quite sure that he is serving the highest behests of ahimsa, harmlessness? His proposal to commemorate the shooting at Jallianwala Bagh is not likely to promote concord. It is a tragic incident into which our Government was betrayed, but is the memory of its bitterness worth retaining? Can we not commemorate the event by raising a temple of peace, to help the widows and orphans to bless the souls of those who died without knowing why? The world is full of politicians and pettifoggers who, in the name of patriotism, poison the inner sweetness of man and, as a result, we have wars and feuds and such shameless slaughter as turned Jallianwala Bagh into a shambles. Shall we not now try for a larger symbiosis such as Buddha and Christ preached, and bring the world to

breathe and prosper together? Mr. Gandhi seemed destined to be the apostle of such a movement, but circumstances are forcing him to seek the way of raising resistances and group unities. He may yet take up the larger mission of uniting the world.

I have given the whole of the quotation. As a rule I do not notice criticism of me or my methods except when thereby I acknowledge a mistake or enforce still further the principles criticized. I have a double reason for noticing the extract. For, not only do I hope further to elucidate the principles I hold dear, but I want to show my regard for the author of the criticism whom I know and whom I have admired for many years for the singular beauty of his character. The critic regrets to see in me a politician, whereas he expected me to be a saint. Now I think that the word "saint" should be ruled out of present life. It is too sacred a word to be lightly applied to anybody, much less to one like myself who claims only to be a humble searcher after truth, knows his limitations, makes mistakes, never hesitates to admit them when he makes them, and frankly confesses that he, like a scientist, is making experiments about some of 'the eternal verities' of life, but cannot even claim to be a scientist because he can show no tangible proof of scientific accuracy in his methods or such tangible results of his experiments as modern science demands. But though by disclaiming sainthood I disappoint the critic's expectations, I would have him to give up his regrets by answering him that the politician in me has never dominated a single decision of mine, and if I seem to take part in politics, it is only because politics encircle us today like the coil of a snake from which one cannot get out, no matter how much one tries. I wish therefore to wrestle with the snake, as I have been doing, with more or less suc-cess, consciously since 1894, unconsciously, as I have now discovered, ever since reaching the years of discretion. Quite selfishly, as I wish to live in peace in the midst of a bellowing storm howling round me, I have been experime- nting with myself and my friends by introducing religion into politics. Let me explain what I mean by religion. It is not the Hindu religion, which I certainly prize above all other religions, but the religion which transcends Hinduism, which changes one's very nature, which binds one indissolubly to the truth within and which ever purifies. It is the permanent element in human nature which counts no cost too great in order to find full expression and which leaves the soul utterly restless until it has found itself, known its Maker and appreciated the true correspondence between the Maker and itself.

It was in that religious spirit that I came upon hartal. I wanted to

show that it is not a knowledge of letters that would give India consciousness of herself, or that would bind the educated together. The hartal illuminated the whole of India as if by magic on the 6th of April, 1919. And had it not been for the interruption of the 10th of April, brought about by Satan whispering fear into the ears of a Government conscious of its own wrong and inciting to anger a people that were prepared for it by utter distrust of the Government, India would have risen to an unimaginable height. The hartal had not only been taken up by the great masses of people in a truly religious spirit but it was intended to be a prelude to a series of direct actions.

But my critic deplores direct action. For, he says, "it does not work for unity." I join issue with him. Never has anything been done on this earth without direct action. I rejected the word "passive resistance", because of its insufficiency and its being interpreted as a weapon of the weak. It was direct action in South Africa which told and told so effectively that it converted General Smuts to sanity. He was in 1906 the most relentless opponent of Indian aspirations. In 1914 he took pride in doing tardy justice by removing from the statute-book of the Union a disgraceful measure[1] which in 1909 he had told Lord Morley would be never removed, for he then said South Africa would never tolerate repeal of a measure which was twice passed[2] by the Transvaal Legislature. But what is more, direct action sustained for eight years[3] left behind it not only no bitterness, but the very Indians who put up such a stubborn fight against General Smuts, ranged themselves round his banner in 1915 and fought under him in East Africa.[4] It was direct action[5] in Champaran which removed an age-long grievance. A meek submission when one is chafing under a disability or a grievance which one would gladly see removed, not only does not make for unity, but makes the weak party acid, angry and prepares him for an opportunity to explode. By allying myself with the weak party, by teaching him direct, firm, but harmless action, I make him feel strong and capable of defying the physical might. He feels braced for the struggle, regains confidence in himself and knowing that the remedy lies with himself, ceases to harbour the spirit of revenge and learns to be satisfied with a redress of the wrong he is seeking to remedy.

[1] The Transvaal Asiatic Registration Act

[2] Once in 1906 as the Transvaal Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance and again in 1907 as the Transvaal Asiatic Registration Act.

[3] That is, from 1906 to 1914

[4] Against the Germans during World War I

[5] The satyagraha led by Gandhiji in 1917 to secure redress for the grievances of indigo plantation labourers against European landlords

It is working along the same lines that I have ventured to suggest a memorial about Jallianwala Bagh. The writer in *East and West* has ascribed to me a proposal which has never once crossed my mind. He thinks that I want "to commemorate the shooting at Jallianwala Bagh". Nothing can be further from my thought than to perpetuate the memory of a black deed. I dare say that before we have come to our own we shall have a repetition of the tragedy and I will prepare the nation for it by treasuring the memory of the innocent dead. The widows and the orphans have been and are being helped, but we cannot "bless the souls of those who died without knowing why", if we will not acquire the ground which has been hallowed by innocent blood and there erect a suitable memorial for them. It is not to serve, if I can help it, as a reminder of the foul deed but it shall serve as an encouragement to the nation that it is better to die helpless and unarmed and as victims rather than as tyrants. I would have the future generations remember that we who witnessed the innocent dying did not ungratefully refuse to cherish their memory. As Mrs. Jinnah truly remarked when she gave her mite to the fund, the memorial would at least give us an excuse for living. After all it will be the spirit in which the memorial is erected that will decide its character.

What was the "larger symbiosis" that Buddha and Christ preached? Buddha fearlessly carried the war into the enemy's camp and brought down on its knees an arrogant priesthood. Christ drove out the money-changers from the temple of Jerusalem and drew down curses from Heaven upon the hypocrites and the Pharisees. Both were for intensely direct action. But even as Buddha and Christ chastised they showed unmistakable gentleness and love behind every act of theirs. They would not raise a finger against their enemies, but would gladly surrender themselves rather than the truth for which they lived. Buddha would have died resisting the priesthood, if the majesty of his love had not proved to be equal to the task of bending the priesthood. Christ died on the Cross with a crown of thorns on his head defying the might of a whole Empire. And if I raise resistances of a non-violent character I simply and humbly follow in the footsteps of the great teachers named by my critic.

Lastly, the writer of the paragraph quarrels with my "grouping unities" and would have me take up "the larger mission of uniting the world". I once told him under a common roof that I was probably more cosmopolitan than he. I abide by that expression. Unless I group unities I shall never be able to unite the whole world. Tolstoy

once said that if we would but get off the backs of our neighbours the world would be quite all right without any further help from us. And if we can only serve our immediate neighbours ceasing to prey upon them, the circle of unities thus grouped in the right fashion will ever grow in circumference till at last it is co-terminus with that of the whole world. More than that it is not given to any man to try or achieve. ''यथा पिंडे तथा ब्रह्मांडे''[1] is as true today as ages ago when it was first uttered by an unknown *rishi*[2].

Young India, 12-5-1920

97. KHILAFAT

As I told you in my last letter I think Mr. Gandhi has made a serious mistake in the Khilafat business. The Indian Mohammedans base their demand on the assertion that their religion requires the Turkish rule over Arabia; but when they have against them in this matter the Arabs themselves, it is impossible to regard the theory of the Indian Mohammedans as essential to Islam. After all if the Arabs do not represent Islam, who does? It is as if the German Roman Catholics made a demand in the name of Roman Catholics, with Rome and the Italians making a contrary demand. But even if the religion of the Indian Mohammedans did require that Turkish rule should be imposed upon the Arabs against their will, one could not, nowadays, recognize as a really religious demand, one which requi-red the continued oppression of one people by another. When an assurance was given at the beginning of the War to the Indian Mohammedans that the Mohammedan religion would be respected, that could never have meant that a temporal sovereignty which violated the principles of self-determination would be upheld. We could not now stand by and see the Turks reconquer the Arabs (for the Arabs would certainly fight against them) without grossly betraying the Arabs to whom we have given pledges. It is not true that the Arab hostility to the Turks was due simply to European suggestion. No doubt, during the War we availed ourselves of the Arab hostility to the Turks to get another ally, but the hostility has existed long before the War. The non-Turkish Mohammedan subjects of the Sultan in general wanted to get rid of his rule. It is the Indian Mohammedans who have no experience of that rule who want to impose it on others. As a matter of fact the idea of any restoration of Turkish rule in Syria or Arabia seems so remote from all possibilities that to discuss it seems like discussing

[1] As in the body, so in the universe
[2] Sage

a restoration of the Holy Roman Empire. I cannot conceive what series of events could bring it about. The Indian Mohammedans certainly could not march into Arabia themselves and conquer the Arabs for the Sultan. And no amount of agitation and trouble in India would ever induce England to put back Turkish rule in Arabia. In this matter it is not English Imperialism which the Indian Mohammedans are up against, but the mass of English liberal and humanitarian opinion, the mass of the better opinion of England, which wants self determination to go forward in India. Supposing the Indian Mohammedans could stir up an agitation so violent in India as to sever the connection between India and the British Crown, still they would not be any nearer to their purpose. For today they do have considerable influence on British world policy. Even if in this matter of the Turkish question their influence has not been sufficient to turn the scale against the very heavy weights on the other side, it has weighed in the scale. But apart from the British connection, the Indian Mohammedans would have no influence at all outside India. They would not count for more in world politics than the Mohammedans of China. I think it is likely (apart from the pressure of America on the other side, I should say certain) that the influence of the Indian Mohammedans may at any rate avail to keep the Sultan in Constantinople. But I doubt whether they will gain any advantage by doing so. For a Turkey cut down to the Turkish parts of Asia Minor, Constantinople would be a very inconvenient capital. I think its inconvenience would more than outweigh the sentimental gratification of keeping up a phantom of the old Ottoman Empire. But if the Indian Mohammedans want the Sultan to retain his place in Constantinople, I think the assurances given officially by the Viceroy[1] in India now bind us to insist on his remaining there and I think he will remain there, in spite of America.

This is an extract from the letter of an Englishman enjoying a position in Great Britain, to a friend in India. It is a typical letter, sober, honest, to the point, and put in such graceful language that whilst it challenges you, it commands your respect by its very gracefulness. But it is just this attitude based upon insufficient or false information which has ruined many a cause in the British Isles. The superficiality, the one-sidedness, the inaccuracy and often even dishonesty that have crept into modern journalism, continuously mislead honest men who want to see nothing but justice done. Then there are always interested groups whose business it is to serve their ends by means fair of foul. And the honest Englishman wishing to vote for justice but swayed by conflicting opinions and dominated by

[1] Lord Hardinge

distorted versions often ends by becoming an instrument of injustice.

The writer of the letter quoted above has built up a con- vincing argument on imaginary data. He has successfully shown that the Mohammedan case, as it has been presented to him, is a rotten case. In India, where it is not quite easy to distort facts about the Khilafat, English friends admit the utter justice of the Indian Mohammedan claim. But they plead helplessness and tell us that the Government of India and Mr. Montagu have done all it was humanly possible for them to do. And if now the judgment goes against Islam, Indian Mohammedans should resign themselves to it. This extraordinary state of things would not be possible except under this modern rush and preoccupations of all responsible people.

Let us for a moment examine the case as it has been imagined by the writer. He suggests that Indian Mohammedans want Turkish rule in Arabia in spite of the opposition of the Arabs themselves and that if the Arabs do not want Turkish rule, the writer argues, no false religious sentiment can be permitted to interfere with self-determination of the Arabs when India herself has been pleading for that very status. Now the fact is that the Mohammedans, as is known to everybody who has at all studied the case, have never asked for Turkish rule in Arabia in opposition to the Arabs. On the contrary, they have said that they have no intention of resisting Arabian self-government. All they ask for is Turkish suzerainty over Arabia which would guarantee complete self-rule for the Arabs. They want the Khalif's control of the holy places of Islam. In other words they ask for nothing more than what was guaranteed[1] by Mr. Lloyd George and on the strength of which guarantee Mohammedan soldiers spilt their blood on behalf of the Allied Powers. All the elaborate argument therefore and the cogent reasoning of the above extract fall to pieces based as they are upon a case that has never existed. I have thrown myself heart and soul into this question because British pledges, abstract justice and religious sentiment coincide. I can conceive the possibility of a blind and fanatical religious sentiment existing in opposition to pure justice. I should then resist the former and fight for the latter. Nor would I insist upon pledges given dishonestly to

[1] In his speech of January 5, 1918

support an unjust cause as has happened with England in the case of the secret treaties[1]. Resistance there becomes not only lawful but obligatory on the part of a nation that prides itself on its righteousness.

It is unnecessary for me to examine the position imagined by the English friend, viz., how India would have fared had she been an independent power. It is unnecessary because Indian Mohammedans, and for that matter India, are fighting for a cause that is admittedly just, a cause in aid of which they are invoking the whole-hearted support of the British people. I would however venture to suggest that this is a cause in which mere sympathy will not suffice. It is a cause which demands support that is strong enough to bring about substantial justice.

Young India, 12-5-1920

98. "IN PROCESS OF KEEPING"

The writer of "Current Topics" in *The Times of India* has attempted to challenge the statement made in my Khilafat article regarding ministerial pledges, and in doing so, cites Mr. Asquith's Guild Hall speech of November 10, 1914. When I wrote the article, I had in mind Mr. Asquith's speech. I am sorry that he ever made that speech. For, in my humble opinion, it betrayed, to say the least, a confusion of thought. Could he think of the Turkish people as apart from the Ottoman Government? And what is the meaning of the death knell of Ottoman Dominion in Europe and Asia if it be not the death knell of Turkish rule and therefore also of the Turkish people as a free and governing race? Is it, again, true historically that the Turkish rule has always been a blight that "has withered some of the fairest regions of the earth"? And what is the meaning of his statement that followed, viz., "Nothing is further from our thoughts than to imitate or encourage a crusade against their belief"? If words have any meaning, the qualifications that Mr. Asquith introduced in his speech should have meant a scrupulous regard for Indian Muslim feeling. And if that be the meaning of his speech, without anything further to support me I would claim that even Mr. Asquith's assurance is in danger of being set at nought if the resolutions of the San Remo

[1] Made by the Allies, for example, with Russia, Italy and the Grand Sherif of Mecca in 1915

Conference[1] are to be crystallized into action. But I base my remarks on a considered speech made by Mr. Asquith's successor[2] two years later when things had assumed a more threatening shape than in 1914 and when the need for Indian help was much greater than in 1914. His pledge[3] would bear repetition till it is fulfilled. He said :

> Nor are we fighting to deprive Turkey of its capital or of the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor and Thrace which are predominantly Turkish in race.. . . We do not challenge the maintenance of the Turkish Empire in the homeland of the Turkish race with its capital at Constantinople.

If only every word of this pledge is fulfilled both in letter and in spirit, there would be little left for quarrelling about. In so far as Mr. Asquith's declaration can be considered hostile to the Indian Muslim claim, it is superseded by the later and more considered declaration of Mr. Lloyd George— a declaration made irrevocable by fulfilment of the consideration it expected, viz., the enlistment of the brave Mohammedan soldiery which fought in the very place which is now being partitioned in spite of the pledge. But the writer of "Current Topics" says Mr. Lloyd George "is now in process of keeping his pledge". I hope he is right. But what has already happened gives little ground for any such hope. For, imprisonment or internment of the Khalifa in his own capital[4] will be not only a mockery of fulfilment but it would be adding injury to insult. Either the Turkish Empire is to be maintained in the homelands of the Turkish race with its capital at Constantinople or it is not. If it is, let the Indian Mohammedans feel the full glow of it, or if the Empire is to be broken up, let the mask of hypocrisy be lifted and India see the truth in its nakedness. To join the Khilafat movement then means to join a movement to keep inviolate the pledge of a British minister. Surely, such a movement is worth much greater sacrifice than may be involved in non-co-operation.

Young India, 12-5-1920

[1] *Vide* footnote 2 to "Press Statement on the Turkish Treaty," 29-4-1920.

[2] Lloyd George

[3] Made on January 5, 1918

[4] *Vide* "What Shall We Do Now?", 23-5-1920.

99. SPEECH ON NON-CO-OPERATION, BOMBAY

May 12, 1920

An urgent meeting of the All-India Khilafat Committee was held[1] in Bombay on 12th May to deliberate finally on the non-co-operation movement . . . the Central Committee has finally unanimously decided to adopt and work a full non-co-operation programme as recommended by the sub-committee consisting of Messrs Chhotani, Gandhi, Abul Kalam Azad and Shaukat Ali. . . .

Mahatma Gandhi in a clear, forcible speech again explained the non-co-operation movement. Its success depended on the firmness and courage of Moslems. Their Hindu brethren would willingly support Moslems but Moslems should take the lead. Every effort should be made to impress on all that any violence under any provocation would fatally injure the cause, while joint action was in progress. He assured all that his wife and children would gladly sacrifice their life and all for this sacred cause. . .

After solemn discussion and a speech from Mr. C. Rajagopalachari the resolution[2] was unanimously and most enthusiastically adopted, all standing and calling on God to witness their firm adhesion.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-5-1920

100. LETTER TO ABBAS TAYABJI

THE ASHRAM,
May 13 [*1920*][3]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your cheerful letter. I am glad you feel like taking up more national work. You congratulate me quite wrongly. I deserve congratulations for drawing you out and still more for keeping you at Lahore in spite of the terrible depressions you used to have. You do not know what we would all have lost if we could not have kept [you]. And I shall have to share those congratulations

[1] Under the presidentship of Chhotani

[2] On non-co-operation, moved by Gandhiji. This resolution is not reproduced here.

[3] Gandhiji and Abbas Tayabji were in Lahore in early 1920 in connection with the work of the Congress Punjab inquiry committee. The reference to Lahore in this letter therefore suggests that it was written during that year.

with Mrs. Abbas and your great daughters who cheered you, sent you and kept you at Lahore. So I can by their sufferance keep only a quarter. And that would not have been mine, if you had not been a willing listener. So I suppose you will divide the quarter or will you want the whole and fight for it, now that you can again say *burrrr*—[?]

Please tell the girls I shall be jealous of their engagement if they do not bring their future husbands also to the great cause. But I forget that you all move in that vicious—or is it virtu- ous—circle of the Tayabjis.[1] So there is no bringing—you are all there.

May the girls prosper and be a credit with their husbands to the great family and the nation which the family adorns. I must claim my yarn when you return.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 9594

101. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

ASHRAM,

May 13, 1920

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

Your letter of the 5th I got only today. You should now shake off your despondency, the sense of emptiness in your heart. Buoyancy will return when it will, it cannot be forced. You will not have it by going away from me. It will come only by your remaining with me and doing what work you can.

Is there any place where peace of mind may be had for money? A king in his palace may be all restlessness and a sufferer like Job may have peace. Did not Bunyan have complete peace in Jail? And you had it, didn't you, lying ill in bed? One can have peace if one does not hanker after things. As for hankering, is it not that what Mangaldas does while so many workers live in peace? Do you think it would make much of a difference if your body could give good service, and what harm if it does not? It should be enough that you do not obstruct its working and take all possible measures to keep it fit.

[1] Members of the Tayabji family—Justice Badruddin Tayabji, faiz Tayabji and others

Who knows what strength is to be found in [the text]: "The mind itself is [the cause of] men's [bondage and freedom]?"[1] Does it lose its truth because we hear it every day? If you accept its truth, revolve it over and over again in your mind and rise above your grief, your melancholy, your despondency and your fancies.

Here is the Viceroy's letter[2] . I think I should now go. 'I' means 'we'. I have written to Shaukat Ali to tell him this. He is in Bombay at present. I have asked him to come here. We shall know after he comes—do not worry at all—be perfectly calm and await events. Things will take care of themselves. After all, it is my job, isn't it, to worry over arrangements on your account, to attend to getting clothes ready for you and so on? And so start when I tell you. I am not impatient, since I am at home and quite comfortable.

Make Esther happy[3], and be happy yourself. Build very sound health; you will then be able to attend to other things well enough.

The Khilafat meeting yesterday went off very well. I was satisfied. Everyone took a strong line.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 11408

102. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 13, 1920

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Read the enclosed letter and pass it on to Bhai Shaukat Ali in an (open) envelope. That letter explains everything. Hence I am not writing to you anything more. I shall send you another copy which

[1]The Sanskrit original reads :

मन एव मनुष्याणां [कारणं अंधमोक्षयो:]

[2] Evidently sent by Gandhiji to the addressee as an enclosure, this letter presumably dealt with Gandhiji's proposed visit to England in connection with the Khilafat question.

[3] Esther Faering was then at Sinhgadh before leaving for Denmark on May 19, 1920.

you should give to Dr. Mehta. If I have to go[1], how I go has to be considered. Everything depends on what the Muslim brethren desire.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

103. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*Vaishakh*] *Vad 12* [*May 15, 1920*][3]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I got your two letters today. I like your reproaches because they show your love for me.

I have been inquiring daily about you. Every day I got Anandanand to write to you and complained about absence of letters from you. I started getting them only three days ago.

I must, however, admit one weakness of mine. It was very clearly observed by Kallenbach and he gave me a good scolding for that. I give the impression of forgetting those who have been tried and tested.[4] What particular need to write to him or say good night to him? Is that love which needs to be supplemented with ceremony? Would he misunderstand me if I did not write to him? Would anyone water an oak tree? But plant a mango sapling and see what happens if you fail to water it for two or three days or to make a hedge around it. I have imagined Esther as a mango sapling and you as the Kabirvad[5]. You may behave as an alfonso[6] sapling, if you wish. But it seems you wish to remain a sapling for ever. Should I satisfy that wish too? And if I do not, would you deny me the virtues you have attributed to me? If you want to hang a dog, give it a bad name. An admirable way of bringing about a man's fall is to invest him with fine virtues. But I shall not let myself fall. I am where I am. So be careful. Whenever you are hungry for letters from me, you will get them but, then, who

[1] To England in connection with the Khilafat question; *vide* "Why Should I go to England?", 25-4-1920.

[2] Ultimately Gandhiji decided not to go to London.

[3] The date is suggested by the reference to Shaukat Ali's arrival. Gandhiji had asked him to go to Ahmedabad from Bombay; *vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 13-5-1920.

[4] The source is not clear at this place.

[5] A huge banyan tree in Gujarat

[6] A variety of mango

would be the oak tree and the Kabirvad? A small pot needs constant filling. Does the sea ever need that?

What you say is quite right. Since you are still weak, the only thing to do is to leave everything to me. I used to tell Polak that he had two wives, Mrs. Polak and I, for he would pour himself out only before us two and likewise be angry only with us. You also seem to have got into the same habit. But what would Durga say?

Shaukat Ali has come down here today. His courage leaves nothing to be desired. Besides, the trio from Dutch Guiana is also here, so that today I don't have time even to breathe. In the morning, Lallubhai[1] and Brelvi[2] were here. We had a useful and pleasant discussion about the national language. They have sent Rs. 200 for Orissa[3]. Even if it is decided that we should go to England, we shall be starting after a month.

I am glad you helped yourself to the fruit. Surely, it was not meant for me alone? It was meant for me and mine. Your sending some of it to Haribhau[4] was evidence of your being a Kabirvad. Saving money on a telegram was another instance, and not going to Belgaum was a third, though, you had my permission to go. Now that Anandanand is going there, there is little need for you to go. I must be in Kashi on the 30th.[5]

Maganlal and Radha have left today on a tour. I believe they will go to Sinhgadh. I have advised them to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 11409

[1] Sir Lallubhai Samaldas Mehta, a prominent citizen of Bombay, associated with Liberal politics

[2] S.A. Brelvi; nationalist Muslim journalist then on the editorial staff of *The Bombay Chronicle*

[3] Orissa Relief Fund

[4] Haribhau Upadhyaya, editor, *Hindi Navajivan*

[5] Gandhiji arrived in Banaras on May 29, 1920, to attend tha All-India Congress Committee meeting on May 30.

104. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Saturday, [On or before *May 15, 1920*][1]

PUJYA ANASUYABEHN,

Bhai Shankerlal came and left. I got your wire in time. My talk with him was quite satisfactory.

After reflecting on the subject of workers when I get time, I shall certainly write something.[2]

You have apparently not called on Mahadev. I do expect an assurance from you that, in my absence, you will visit the Ashram and look after its inmates. I am alive today. I may not be there tomorrow. But I draw solace in the thought that you will certainly be there after me [to carry on the work]. I do not say that you carry on this benevolent activity setting aside your own.

Miss Faering[3] is a simple Irish woman. You can look after her to some extent.

Adopt Deepak[4] and look after him. I won't recommend anyone else. Deepak has been brought up as you have been, so you will be able to understand him better. When I am not around, I shall expect you to be more cautious.

Do not forget swadeshi. Do as much of it as you can. If you have faith in it, I would expect you to devote half an hour a day to it.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 32818

105. THE KHILAFAT

A good many questions are being raised about the Khilafat. There is plenty of discussion in the papers too about it. Several people express the opinion that non-co-operation will lead to violence, and they ask how, if that happens, we shall profit from non-co-operation. As in all great ventures, there is bound to be an element of risk in

[1] From the reference to the article "Mill-owners and Workers of Ahmedabad"; *vide* "Mill-Owners and Workers of Ahmedabad", 16-5-1920.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Esther Faering had left for Denmark on May 19, 1920.

[4] Son of Saraladevi Chowdharani

non-co-operation. Life is full of experiments and risks. Not even *moksha* is to be obtained without our venturing for it. Man, full of errors, can consider only this : 'Is there a greater risk in doing this or in not doing it? If there is less risk in doing it, is it unavoidable for other reasons as well?'

I am convinced that, had there been no move for non-co-operation, violence would long since have broken out. It is non-co-operation which has prevented violence. The Muslims are boiling over, but they have kept their patience in the belief that the Hindus are with them. When they began to suspect that, despite all this, they might not get justice, they had to think. What should they do now? Some thought of violence. Some considered the unworthy idea of boycott but they realized that, even if it was right, it was not feasible. Meanwhile, at the very first conference[1] in Delhi, I suggested non-co-operation. They hailed it with one voice. I told them that non-co-operation would be possible only if they gave up the idea of violence. Even if there was a single murder by any of us or at our instance, I would leave. They agreed, and understood that non-co-operation was, in many respects, a more potent weapon than violence. This idea of non-co-operation was then taken up and, today, it has spread everywhere; it is only because of this that we have peace in India. I am quite convinced that, had the Muslims not fixed their eyes on non-co-operation, we would now be witnessing a miserable state of affairs in India. I think the Government would have succeeded in suppressing violence, but it would have occurred all the same. If it occurs even in spite of non-co-operation, the Government will be able to suppress it. The only question is whether it would have occurred in the absence of non-co-operation. The answer to this must be in the affirmative.

So, then, we have to consider whether non-co-operation is necessary on other grounds. We cannot start it simply because violence has been prevented. Many evil things are done in this world. Steps to prevent them suggest themselves to us, but we do not feel bound to take them. In many places in India itself people do cruel things. If we could have our way we would prevent them, but we do not go to these places and try. The thing is beyond our capacity. Sometimes it does happen that we are in a position to prevent an evil by a lesser evil, but it does not therefore become our duty to commit the lesser evil. Hence we shall have to consider non-co-operation from

[1] Held on November 23 and 24, 1919

two points of view. Is it an objectionable weapon? I have often replied to this, that it is not so, that, on the contrary, it is one's religious duty to non-co-operate on certain occasions. In fact, there is nothing wrong in non-co-operation itself.

We have then to consider whether or not we should use the weapon of non-co-operation on this occasion. In other words, should the Hindus help the Muslims to this extent? One and all admit that on the Khilafat issue the Muslims are in the right. It is the evident duty of Hindus to be with the Muslims in their suffering. The latter have no other weapon save non-co-operation. Can the Hindus then stand aloof and keep neutral? In my humble view, the Hindus are bound to join in non-co-operation.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-5-1920

106. WHAT SHOULD THE VOTERS DO?[1]

Many who had hitherto no concern with Council elections will be shortly called upon to vote for the reformed Councils. The powers, too, of elected members will be found to have increased.[2] This adds to the voters' responsibility. In all our cities the citizens have been exercising the municipal franchise. And of these elections it cannot be said that the electors have always acquitted themselves in a wise manner. Electors' private relations with the candidates have often weighed with them more than the candidates' qualifications. It would be well if we set up a better standard for the elections to the Legislative Councils. Only thus shall we be able to make the best use of the Councils. I suggest also that voters should not identify themselves with any party or its quarrels. They should consider candidates' views and not their party. Their character should weigh more even than their views. A man of character will make himself worthy of any position he is given. Even his mistakes will not much matter. I consider it impossible for a man without character to do higher national service so that if I were a voter, from among the list I would first select men of character and then I would understand their views. My questions to them would be :

1. Do you approve of the present swadeshi movement? If so,

[1] This translation is reproduced from *Young India,* 9-6-1920.

[2] Under the Reforms Act of 1919

are you prepared to levy heavy import duties on foreign cloth? Will you favour legislation for cheapening the materials and machinery required to produce swadeshi articles?

2. Do you hold that all the affairs of a province should be conducted in its own vernacular and that the affairs of the nation should be conducted in Hindustani—a combination of Hindi and Urdu? If you do, will you endeavour incessantly to introduce the use of the vernaculars in the administration of the respective provinces, and the national language in the Imperial administration?

3. Do you hold that the present division of the provinces of India was made for administrative and political purposes and that no regard was paid to the people's wishes? And do you hold that this division has done much harm to the national growth? If you think so, will you try to bring out a redistribution on a linguistic basis as early as possible?

4. Do you hold that there is not the remotest likelihood of India's regeneration without Hindu-Muslim unity? And if you think so, are you, if a Hindu, willing to help the Mussulmans in all legitimate ways in their trouble?

A satisfactory answer to them alone will entitle the candidates to my vote if I had one. I suggest these questions because I regard them as of great importance. If the electors do not see any significance in these questions, they may put others which they consider to be of greater importance for the upliftment of the nation. If is not the particular questions that matter but the knowing of candidates' views on national questions. My attempt is to point out that we need an electorate which is impartial, independent and intelligent. If the electors do not interest themselves in national affairs and remain unconcerned with what goes on in their midst, and if they elect men with whom they have private relations or whose aid they need for themselves, this state of things can do no good to the country; on the contrary, it will be harmful.

Now it remains to be considered what the electors should do if they do not receive a satisfactory answer to their questions or if they cannot find men of character. It is an established custom with regard to elections that electors, if they do not find any candidate to their

liking, need not register their votes. In such a case abstention amounts to an exercise of one's vote. Exception was taken to this procedure, that if good electors refuse to make their choice bad electors would make the worst choice. This is to a certain extent true. But suppose in a certain place, all candidates being drunkards, the better portion of the electorate abstain from voting and the candidates manage to secure votes from their kind, can they exercise any influence in the Councils? No doubt their vote has its numerical value, but their views and speeches cannot influence the Council. Moreover, an intelligent abstention has its own effect. The electors having once failed to find a proper candidate will next time take steps to find out a suitable man and elect him, and by so doing they will raise the level of their own place. In a growing nation people are able to understand the national affairs and they are expected to purify the political atmosphere they live in and to maintain its purity. All enlightened and thoughtful voters will find that occasionally situations must arise when they will have to purposely refuse to register their votes. I earnestly hope that on such occasions our electors will have courage to do so. I hope that when they do exercise the vote they will give it to the best man no matter to which party he belongs.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-5-1920

107. FOR USERS OF KHADI

The reader will be glad to know that the stock of khadi which had accumulated in the Satyagraha Ashram has been entirely sold out.[1] Shri Narandas Purshottam and Shri Vithaldas Jerajani of the Shuddha Swadeshi Bhandar have bought up khadi and other things worth 10,000 rupees and demands for khadi are also coming in from the Punjab, Sind and other provinces. So, the centres which had been asked not to send any more khadi [to the Ashram] have now resumed its supply. Those who want to buy khadi keep asking for samples and prices, but at present we are in no position to be definite about either. It should be remembered that it is only a year since the revival of

[1] *Vide* "The Uses of Khaddar", 28-4-1920.

hand-spinning. Following its revival hundreds of women who used to remain idle for want of work have started working and earning some money. Hundreds of weavers, who had given up their profession, have resumed weaving. So, the hand-spun yarn is not yet sufficiently fine and the khadi is not of uniform quality or texture. Moreover, the weavers are not paid at a uniform rate in all places. Where they cannot afford to accept payment at a low rate, they are offered more. By and by, we shall be able to achieve some sort of a standard regarding the width, the quality and the price of khadi, and, if we learn to appreciate its usefulness and sacredness, we shall soon succeed in getting khadi worth lakhs of rupees produced and see that the people earn all that money. Meanwhile, the khadi-wearer should be satisfied with whatever quality of khadi he gets. The only assurance which can be given is that nothing would have been added to the price of this khadi over and above the cost of the cotton and the labour involved in turning the cotton into cloth. If, moreover, we take its durability into account, we shall find no cloth which can stand comparison with it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-5-1920

108. FAMINE IN ORISSA

I wrote something about the Orissa famine in last Sunday's *Navajivan*. I was expecting a letter from Shri Amritlal Thakkar, as I hinted then. I have received it now and it is as follows.[1]

This letter is the result of first-hand investigation. How acute the distress is will be known only hereafter. Our duty, meanwhile, is clear to us. Where even a single person, for no fault of his, dies of hunger because of famine, other people have no right to eat in peace. I hope, therefore, that everybody will help to the best of his ability. Orissa is not such a place that the people themselves can help [those in distress] at the time of a calamity like this. They have received no help from other places. We have heard of this suffering and so it is our clear duty to help them. In Ahmedabad, the Gujarat Sabha has taken up this work and collections have already started for this purpose.

[1] Not translated here. For the substance of the letter, *vide*"Distress in Orissa", 12-5-1920.

Receipts will be given for any contributions received and the accounts received from Shri Amritlal Thakkar will also be published.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 16-5-1920

109. MILL-OWNERS AND WORKERS OF AHMEDABAD

I had hoped that I would not have to write anything about the dispute between the mill-owners and the workers.[1] But, when thousands of people stop working, I feel that as a journalist I am in duty bound to bring this matter to the notice of readers. There are problems of which a genuine solution is rendered more difficult by public discussion. Even so, when a situation has become the subject of talk among people, it is the duty of the journalist to put the matter before the public in its true perspective. This is so in regard to [the conflict between] the mill-owners and workers.

There are more than fifty mills in Ahmedabad. In these mills not less than fifty thousand workers are employed. The workers of the throstle section of the spinning departments demanded from their employers a wage of Rs. 30 and ten hours' work instead of twelve hours' as at present.

They submitted these demands after much thinking. There are other demands besides these which are not in dispute. They are, for instance, that in mills where they are not getting clean water, arrangements should be made to supply it to them, that lavatories, if not clean, should be improved, that separate lunch rooms should be provided where they do not exist at present. These facilities ought to be provided as a matter of course. It is a matter of shame that they have to be asked for.

What raised a serious dispute, however, was the demand for an increase in wages and decrease of working hours.

There were consultations between the representatives of mill-owners and workers. In this the object of both parties was to avert a strike. This could happen only in two ways : either the workers remain ignorant and do not try to understand their rights or, though knowing them, forgo them; alternatively, in case of difference of

[1] On March 31, Gandhiji had written to the mill-owners requesting them to grant certain concessions to the workers.

opinion between the two parties, they go to a third party for a decision. If this latter course is followed, the workers should be able to act unitedly. As the mill-owners need some means, a body like their Association, to speak with one voice and in concert, the workers should also have a union to represent them. With this end in view, an effort was made to organize workers' unions and a start was made with the workers of the throstle section.[1] Some unions were actually formed. If these unions function well, acting with unity of purpose and speaking with one voice, their strength will increase very much indeed and, at the same time, the members will learn to be bound by their decisions whether these are to their liking or not. The risk is that, with the establishment of unions, the workers' strength will increase and may be misused. The advantage would be that the members would learn to obey rules and exercise some self-restraint. Arbitrators can be appointed and disputes settled through them only if there are such unions. Only when this practice has taken root will there be an end to strikes.

In this case, when the workers put forth their demands as above, some mill-owners wanted to refer them straightway to arbitrators for their decision. Shri Ambalal [Sarabhai] took the lead in this. He felt that if disputes were resolved through arbitration, strikes could be averted and the industry could be saved losses. And so he and others, who subscribed to his view, drew up a *panchanama*[2] and this was signed.

Shri Mangaldas was of the view that it would be better if there was nobody between the mill-owners and the workers; that this in fact would be the most honourable thing for the two parties. Any difference of opi-nion between them they should settle between themselves. He even tried to settle matters in this way. His great fear is that the workers are grow-ing insubordinate day by day and refuse to submit to discipline. If this went on, the industry would suffer. Hence the workers should have train-ing in securing justice by direct negotiations with the employers. He did solve some disputes in this way. But, finally, he also accepted to some extent the principle of arbitration in regard to the workers of the throstle section. It was decided that a joint award by him and myself would be accepted.

This notwithstanding, Shri Ambalal's *panchanama* remained,

[1] *Vide"* Speech at Meeting of Mill-hands, Ahmedabad", 25-2-1920.

[2] Instrument appointing a board of arbitrators

but on the understanding that, if Mangaldas's proposal led to an agreed decision, it should be accepted by Shri Ambalal's party. Shri Mangaldas and I could not reach agreement up to April 25. As Shri Ambalal was proceeding to England, he decided to finalize the rates of wages in so far as he was concerned and did so in consultation with the representatives of the workers. Shri Mangaldas was informed about them. Thereafter we started our consultation but could not come to an agreed decision. As a result, except in the twelve mills of Shri Ambalal's group, there was a strike from May 9. A compromise was possible if the workers accepted something less than the wages proposed by Shri Ambalal's group. This, however, they could not do, since they believed that even the wages accepted by Shri Ambalal's group were not adequate. At length, they agreed to entrust the matter to a single arbitrator for award. But Shri Mangaldas and I could not name such an arbitrator acceptable to both of us and so a strike has started.

My only wish is that the workers should preserve complete peace despite the strike, that the mill-owners, too, should take alm thought and do only what is right and proper. I see no need, just now, to answer questions like these : whether or not the demands of the workers are justified, whether they have erred in doing what they have done, whether the decision of the Ambalal group to appoint arbitrators was proper, whether there was any principle at stake in Shri Mangaldas's party fighting for a modification of rates by a small percentage, whether it was right of me to have associated myself with both *panchas*. For the present, I think it would be better not to go deeply into disputed matters so that a favourable atmosphere might be created for ending the strike without untoward incidents and for the resumption of work by the mill-hands.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-5-1920

110. MORE THOUGHTS ABOUT WIDOWS

The ideal of widowhood is one of the glories of the Hindu religion. If the vow of unswerving devotion to the husband has any meaning, it is that, once a woman has, with full knowledge, accepted and looked upon a man as her husband, even when he has died she should cherish his memory and rest in it, nay, find joy in it. It is by living in this way that thousands of widows in India have become

sacred names worthy of remembrance in one's morning prayers. Only recently I had occasion to call on *Ganga-swarup*[1] Ramabai Ranade[2] and saw her in her own room. In the centre of the room, I saw a couch, with a portrait of the late Justice Ranade placed on it. I understood its significance but to make sure I asked her why the portrait was kept there. She replied :"Well, this was his couch; it was on this that he generally sat and so I have reserved it for his portrait. I pass my day and also sleep at night under its shadow." I was filled with joy to hear these holy words and I understood the glory of widowhood the better. I know that chaste and devoted wives like Ramabai are to be found everywhere in India.

But where shall we find men with the ideal of devotion to one wife? If there are none such, are the men merely to honour chaste and devoted wives and be satisfied with that; should they not honour such wives by themselves following with absolute firmness the ideal of devotion to one wife? What can be better worship than emulation? Where, on the contrary, there is not the slightest desire to emulate, what value is to be put upon mere lip-worship? I have been in India for five years and have gathered a good deal of experience of every aspect of Indian life. I have seen many a young man generally considered to have good character and to all appearances bearing great love for his wife, getting engaged and marrying soon after the wife dies. And this has pained me a great deal. If we had not been slaves of certain customs, the very idea that a man who had lost his wife should, even before he has returned home from the cremation, think of remarriage would be harrowing. Actually, the mother wishes to see her widowed son married again at the earliest. Even the mother-in-law encourages her widowed son-in-law to get married and the son-in-law is not in the least embarrassed when so advised. What is the meaning of such a man shedding tears [over his dead wife]? What is the value of innumerable efforts such a man may make to perpetuate the memory of his former wife? Again, how much value should the new wife attach to the love which he may shower on her? How can such a life be considered as guided by thought? I see nothing but wickedness in it and, as long as men do not mind being thus brazen-faced, to praise widowhood seems to me sheer hypocrisy and the very height of selfishness on their part.

[1] Literally, in a state like Ganga's. According to the *Mahabharata*, the sacred river took human form and lived as wife of King Shantanu for some time. Among Hindus, the term is prefixed to the name of a widow.

[2] Widow of Justice Mahadev Govind Ranade who died in 1901; a social reformer of Maharashtra

A man who has been a friend to his wife for some years, has shared her joy and sorrow, has enjoyed life with her, should he not observe mourning even as long as one does on the death of a mere friend? Even in England, where widows can remarry, a woman of good family does not, maybe for fear of public opinion, venture to seek another man's company for a period of one year. The nobility of an Indian husband, however, does not last beyond the cremation ground and, at times, in the very precincts of the crematorium, even as the body of his holy wife is being consumed to ashes on the pyre, his relatives do not hesitate to propose to him remarriage and the widowed man feels no shame in lending his ear to such talk. It is essential that India saves herself from this pitiable plight. I see man's selfishness, conscious or otherwise, even in the movement for encouraging widows to remarry. By helping them to do so, men want to forget their own shame. If men believe that widows really suffer, they can help the latter to forget that suffering by themselves following uncompromisingly the ideal of taking only one wife. In such matters, public opinion has become so feeble that I have seen, all over India, educated men of noble families entering into ill-matched unions or, on the death of their wife, remarrying immediately.

Whether or not men do their duty, why should the women not have their rights? Women must have voting rights, by all means : but what will women, who do not understand what rights are or, if they understand them, do not have the strength to secure them, do with voting rights? Let them have these rights, there is no harm in that; let them become members of legislatures in India; but the foremost duty of women is to save themselves from the intentional or unintentional tyranny of men and make India glorious and strong. It is only when an ignorant woman is ready to sacrifice her equally ignorant daughter to the fire of a recent widower's lust that the man, whose tears of grief on the loss of his wife have not yet dried, can think of remarrying. For my part, I believe that it is women's right, nay, it is a duty they owe to themselves, to their menfolk and to India, to bring about reforms of this kind.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-5-1920

111. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

THE ASHRAM,
May 16, 1920

MY DEAR CHILD,

I cannot send you a love-letter, for the publication of the peace terms[1] again unsettles the regularity of my work. I am glad you are able to leave quite so early as the 19th. I hope you received my telegram[2] in reply to yours. Please do not worry about what happens to us here. We are all in God's keeping and if we wait upon Him and Him alone, whatever happens is for our good. Even so-called afflictions turn out then to be for our benefit. Give yourself perfect rest and peace at home, let your father meet you as a better Christian for having been to India and having come in contact with the Ashram and then when you are rested, strong in body, mind and soul, return. May you have a safe voyage, a happy time at home and a safe return. You will write of course regularly and give me your home address.

With deep love,

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child*, pp. 70-1

112. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM,
Vaishakh Vad 13 [*May 17, 1920*][3]

CHI. DEVDAS,

Your letter of the 6th came as a shock to me. I am always afraid for your health. If I did not press you to come here, it was partly also because of this fear. I thought it would be better for you to live alone in some cool place. I am waiting impatiently for your next letter. I did not get the letter you wrote before the 6th; I don't know if I shall get it. The postal department is in no end of a mess these days. I sent

[1] Presented by the Allies to Turkey; *vide* "Turkish Peace Terms", before 3-6-1920.

[2] Not available

[3] Although *Vaishakh Vad* 13 corresponds to May 16, Esther Faering, whose departure is mentioned in the text, left for Denmark on May 19, 1920.

a telegram to Panditji[1] about you, but I have had no reply to that either. Remember that I am going to Kashi on the 30th. There will be no harm if now you stay on there till then. We shall meet and think about the future.

I think I shall not have to go to England. Now that the peace terms are known, all that remains is to consult among ourselves what to do next.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Miss Faering leaves for Denmark the day after tomorrow.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 7173

113. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM,

May 17, 1920

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. It is good you thought about the Peace Terms[2] . Had you not sent me the Peace Terms I would not have been able to write all that I did today and yesterday.

Why should you not take the money for the mangoes from Saraladevi? I think it is a purely practical matter. Why should she not get some work done through you if she cannot get it done equally well from somebody else? And if you refuse to take money for the expenses incurred, she will certainly be unable to do so. Hence, according to me such an exchange of money between friends is possible. Thereby frindship is strengthened, not weakened.

Have the enclosed letter sent to Shaukat Ali. Send it by the easiest method possible. He receives direct mail very late. That is why I am sending the letter through you.

Shankerlal had a letter saying that Miss Faering would be

[1] Madan Mohan Malaviya

[2] The Peace Terms communicated by the Allies to Turkey and published in *Gazette of India Extraordinary* dated May 14, 1920. For Gandhiji's comments on it, *vide*"Press Statement on Turkish Peace Terms", 18-5-1920 and pp."Pledges Broken", 19-5-1920.

leaving on Wednesday. Meet her and render any help she may need. If you have the time, go to see her off at the port.

You may even send the letter to Shaukat Ali with someone.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

114. PRESS STATEMENT ON TURKISH PEACE TERMS

The Turkish terms[1] are admittedly a staggering blow to the Indian Mussulmans. In spite of the claim made in the Government *communique* that the peace terms are a fulfilment of Mr. Lloyd George's pledge of 5th January, 1918, it is in my opinion not a true fulfilment either of the letter or the spirit of the pledge. However, what to do now is the question. I hope that the Mohammedans will not lose self-control nor give way to despair. Given an adequate measure of intelligent self-sacrifice, I have no doubt that it is possible to secure justice. There is no sacred character about the peace terms. They are capable of being revised. The only question is whether the Mohammedans can exercise full self-control and at the same time undergo considerable amount of self-sacrifice. Any outbreak of violence will, undoubtedly, spoil what is a good cause. I am convinced that non-co-operation is the only effective remedy both for avoiding violence and for healing the wound inflicted on Mohammedan India. If other Indians and Englishmen would make common cause with their Mussulman fellow-subjects the task will be easy and it will ensure non-violence in the land.

I trust that the Khilafat Committee will call immediately a joint conference of Hindus and Mohammedans to consider the steps to be taken with a view to concerted action being taken for securing a revision of the terms in consistence with the pledged word of British ministers and the known religious sentiment of Indian Mussulmans.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-5-1920

[1] *Vide* Appendix"Turkish Peace Terms", before 3-6-1920.

115. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM,
Amavasya[1] [*May 18, 1920*][2]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I got only today your letter of the 21th. You must have missed my letters for about a week because, thinking that you would come here, I did not write any. When I had no letter from you, I lost patience and started writing. When I did not receive any even after this, I sent a telegram and now they have started coming.

You cannot praise Panditji's kindness too much. He gets so many things done through his large-heartedness.

I am bound to worry about you in a general way. But I feel reassured by the thought that your character will always protect you.

I shall arrive there[3] on the 29th. Since I shall be starting from Bombay at night, there is only one train I can take. Panditji, I presume, will be there. Pandit Motilal has written to everyone suggesting that all of us could stay in a hotel, but I have replied to him saying that, if Panditji is there, he will not allow me to put up at any place but his.

I have already sent you a copy of Mr. Montagu's reply.

Mr. Aiyyar of Pondicherry was here. He stayed for three days.

The workers' strike will end today. I believe they will resume work from tomorrow. I think I sent you all the leaflets.

Fatima is on a visit here with her mother-in-law, and so I stop.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 7174

[1] The last day of the lunar month according to the reckoning in use in Gujarat

[2] The workers' strike at Ahmedabad, mentioned in the text ended on May 21, 1920. In May 1920 *Amavasya* fell on the 18th.

[3] Banaras

116. SWADESHI DAY BY DAY[1]

Readers of *Young India* will be agreeably surprised to learn that the article[2] about khaddar has not only resulted in complete disposal of the stock that had accumulated at the Ashram, but it has evoked orders from Baluchistan, the Nilgiris, and even Aden. This is as it should be. The revival of the ancient cottage industry of India—hand-spinning during leisure hours in their own homes by the millions of women, and hand-weaving in similar circumstances by men—cannot but produce a silent yet effective revolution in this country and prevent an annual drain of crores of rupees which need never have left India and distribute the sav-ings among the poor millions instead of concentrating them in the hands of a few capitalists. This is not to say that we do not want capitalists in India. They are there already. They are able to take care of themselves. It is the poor millions who need to be lifted up from grinding poverty and consequent degradation. Nothing but a full revival of the hand-spinning and the hand-weaving industry can raise them effectively and speedily. It is to be hoped therefore that the demand for khaddar being proved, its production will be stimulated in every nook and corner of India.

The most wonderful experience, however, of the popularity of swadeshi has been that of Shrimati Sarladevi Chowdhrani and Mrs. Mohani, the wife of that sincere and indefatigable worker, Maulana Hasrat Mohani. Writing from Lahore whilst preparing to go to Bareilly, where she had to go to attend the Khilafat Conference[3] , the former says :

> I have done my packing racked with conflicts as to what to take and what not to take with me—whether to wear khaddar dress there while addressing the audience or swadeshi silk, the point of which will not be so well understood—whether to take up the trunk or to wrap up the holdall with clothes inside the bedding—whether to be smart and fashionable as of old or to be simple and common only. I have at last chosen to be the latter. But it is taking time and trouble to assimilate the new method.

[1] This article has been identified as Gandhiji's from the draft in his hand preserved in the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi.

[2] *Vide* "The Uses of Khaddar", 28-4-1920.

[3] Held on May 3, 1920

Writing after her experiences of Bareilly, she says :

> Just coming back from visits to Mohammedan families. There were two ladies— wife and sister in one place. They took the vow for charkha and swadeshi. In another place there were six ladies who all took the same vow. It was a family of Cutchi Bohras[1], very rich and cultured, settled down here since the days of the Mutiny. I find I can do the swadeshi and charkha propaganda to perfection in these provinces. My swadeshi dress is having its effect. At a meeting called in Bareilly by Mrs. Mohani, fifteen Mohammedan ladies took the swadeshi vow.

Speaking to the Bareilly divisional conference in Hindustani on a resolution on swadeshi, she laid stress upon the deep poverty of India and her two chief wants—food and raiment—and she said that if we did not know how to manage our own homes and could not make the two ends meet, we would be ill fitted to undertake the management of the national affairs. It was remarkable, she added, that whilst the people were ready to listen to speeches which required from them no action and no sacrifice they were chary of attending meetings where they were told home truths and which drew their attention to their primary duty of attending to swadeshi at all costs. She asked them to work in the spirit of the late Vidyasagar[2], who was not only not ashamed of but took pride in wearing throughout his life khaddar cloth. She admitted that return to khaddar was difficult, but all upward move ments were so. India would never be able to produce the beautiful cloth she did before, until she resolutely refused to use silks from China, Japan, France and elsewhere, and was content in the interval to wear cloth made out of coarse yarn that daughters of India were able to produce today. Her poverty and her nakedness, too, left no option to those who realized the actual condition of the country. She appealed to those on the platform to lead the way, emphasizing her admonition by quoting :

> यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः।
> स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते॥[3]

The Chowdharis[4] had not much time left to them to test the truth

[1] A Muslim community from Cutch, in Gujarat

[2] Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar (1820-1901); Sanskrit scholar and social reformer of Bengal

[3] What the eminent man does, others do. The standard he sets up, the rest of the world follows. *Bhagavad Gita*, III, 21.

[4] Sarladevi and her husband

of the above remarks in their own home, for they had to prepare dresses for their eldest son whose marriage was to take place on the 14th instant. Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari writes :

> All marriage clothes have been made of swadeshi silk made in Benares. It is somewhat costly but excellent stuff. We have rigidly exluded all foreign silk.

Young India, 19-5-1920

117. SOME QUESTIONS ANSWERED

I write to thank you for yours of the 7th instant and especially for your request that I should, after reading your writings in *Young India* on non-co-operation, give a full and frank criticism of them. I know that your sole desire is to find out the truth and to act accordingly, and hence I venture to make the following remarks. In the issue of May 5th you say that non-co-operation is"not even anti-Government".[1] But surely to refuse to have anything to do with the Government to the extent of not serving it and of not paying its taxes is actually, if not theoretically, anti-Government; and such a course must ultimately make all government impossible. Again, you say,"It is the inherent right of a subject to refuse to assist a government that will not listen to him."[2] Leaving aside the question of the ethical soundness of this proposition, may I ask which government, in the present case? Has not the Indian Government done all it possibly can in the matter? Then if its attempts to voice the request of India should fail, would it be fair and just to do anything against it? Would not the proper course be non-co-operation with the Supreme Council of the Allies, including Great Britain, if it be found that the latter has failed properly to support the demand of the Indian Government and people? It seems to me that in all your writings and speeches you forget that in the present question both Government and people are at one, and if they fail to get what they justly want, how does the question of non-co-operation arise? Hindus and Englishmen and the Government are all at present"shouldering in a full-hearted manner the burden the Mohammedans of India are carrying,"[3] etc., etc. But supposing we fail of our object—what then? Are we all to refuse to co-operate and with whom?

Might I recommend the consideration of the following course of conduct?

1."Wait and see" what the actual terms of the Treaty with Turkey are.

2. If they are not in accordance with the aspirations and recommendations of the Government and the people of India, then every legitimate effort should be made to have the terms revised.

[1] *Vide*"How to Work Non-co-operation", 5-5-1920.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*

3. To the bitter end, co-operate with a Government that co-operates with us, and only when it refuses co-operation, go in for non-co-operation.

So far I personally see no reason whatsoever for non-co-operation with the Indian Government, and till it fails to voice the needs and demands of India as a whole there can be no reason. The Indian Government does sometimes make mistakes, but in the Khilafat matter it is sound and therefore deserves or ought to have the sympathetic and whole-hearted co-operation of every one in India. I hope that you will kindly consider the above and perhaps you will be able to find time for a reply in *Young India*.

I gladly make room for the above letter and respond to the suggestion to give a public reply as no doubt the difficulty experienced by the English friend is experienced by many. Causes are generally lost, not owing to the determined opposition of men who will not see the truth as they want to perpetuate an injustice but because they are able to enlist in their favour the allegiance of those who are anxious to understand a particular cause and take sides after mature judgment. It is only by patient argument with such honest men that one is able to check oneself, correct one's own errors of judgment and at times to wean them from their error and bring them over to one's side. This Khilafat question is specially difficult because there are so many side issues. It is therefore no wonder that many have more or less difficulty in making up their minds. It is further complicated because the painful necessity for some direct action has arisen in connection with it. But whatever the difficulty, I am convinced that there is no question so important as this one if we want harmony and peace in India.

My friend objects to my statement that non-co-operation is not anti-Government, because he considers that refusal to serve it and pay its taxes is actually anti-Government. I respectfully dissent from the view. If a brother has fundamental differences with his brother, and association with the latter involves his partaking of what in his opinion is an injustice, I hold that it is brotherly duty to refrain from serving his brother and sharing his earnings with him. This happens in everyday life. Prahlad did not act against his father, when he declined to associate himself with the latter's blasphemies. Nor was Jesus anti-Jewish when he declaimed against the Pharisees and the hypocrites, and would have none of them. In such matters, is it not the intention that determines the character of a particular act? It is hardly correct as

the friend suggests that withdrawal of association under general circumstances would make all government impossible. But it is true that such withdrawal would make all injustice impossible.

My correspondent considers that the Government of India having done all it possibly could, non-co-operation could not be applicable to that Government. In my opinion, whilst it is true that the Government of India has done a great deal, it has not done half as much as it might have done, and might even now do. No government can absolve itself from further action beyond protesting, when it realizes that the people whom it represents feel as keenly as do lakhs of Indian Mussulmans in the Khilafat question. No amount of sympathy with a starving man can possibly avail. He must have bread or he dies, and what is wanted at that critical moment is some exertion to fetch the wherewithal to feed the dying man. The Government of India can today head the agitation and ask, to the point of insistence, for full vindication of the pledged word of a British Minister. Has the Government of India resigned by way of protest against the threatened, shameful betrayal of trust on the part of Mr. Lloyd George? Why does the Government of India hide itself behind secret despatches? At a less critical moment Lord Hardinge committed a constitutional indiscretion,[1] openly sympathized with the South African passive resistance movement and stemmed the surging tide of public indignation in India, though at the same time he incurred the wrath of the then South African Cabinet and some public men in Great Britain. After all, the utmost that the Government of India has done is, on its own showing, to transmit and press the Mohammedan claim. Was that not the least it could have done? Could it have done anything less without covering itself with disgrace? What Indian Mohammedans and the Indian public expect the Government of India to do at this critical juncture is not the least, but the utmost that it could do. Viceroys have been known to tender resignations for much smaller causes. Wounded pride brought forth not very long ago the resignation of a Lieutenant-Governor. On the Khilafat question, a sacred cause dear to the hearts of several million Mohammedans is in danger of being wounded. I would therefore invite the English friend, and every Englishman in India, and every Hindu, be he moderate or extremist, to make common cause with the Mohammedans and thereby compel the Government of India to do its duty, and thereby

[1] *Vide* "Lord Hardinge's Speech", 3-12-1913.

compel His Majesty's Ministers to do theirs.

There has been much talk of violence ensuing from active non-co-operation. I venture to suggest that the Mussulmans of India, if they had nothing in the shape of non-co-operation in view, would have long ago yielded to counsels of despair. I admit that non-co-operation is not unattended with danger. But violence is a certainty without, violence is only a possibility with, non-co-operation. And it will be greater possibility if all the important men, English, Hindu and others of the country, discountenance it.

I think that the recommendation made by the friend is being literally followed by the Mohammedans. Although they practically know the fate, they are waiting for the actual terms of the treaty with Turkey. They are certainly going to try every means at their disposal to have the terms revised before beginning non-co-operation. And there will certainly be no non-co-operation commenced so long as there is even hope of active co-operation on the part of the Government of India with the Mohammedans, that is, co-operation strong enough to secure a revision of the terms should they be found to be in conflict with the pledges of British statesmen. But if all these things fail, can Mohammedans as men of honour who hold their religion dearer than lives do anything less than wash their hands clean of the guilt of British Ministers and the Government of India by refusing to co-operate with them? And can Hindus and Englishmen, if they value Mohammedan friendship, and if they admit the full justice of the Mohammedan claim, do otherwise than heartily support the Mohammedans by word and deed?

Young India, 19-5-1920

118. PLEDGES BROKEN

After the foregoing[1] was printed the long expected peace terms regarding Turkey[2] were received. In my humble opinion, they are humiliating to the Supreme Council[3], to the British Ministers, and if as a Hindu with deep reverence for Christianity I may say so, a denial of Christ's teachings. Turkey broken down and torn with dissensions within may submit to the arrogant disposal of herself, and Indian

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* Appendix"Turkish Peace Terms", before 3-6-1920.

[3] Of the Allies

Mohammedans may out of fear do likewise. Hindus out of fear, apathy or want of appreciation of the situation, may refuse to help their Mohammedan brethren in their hour of peril. The fact remains that a solemn promise of the Prime Minister of England has been wantonly broken. I will say nothing about President Wilson's fourteen points[1] , for they seem now to be entirely forgotten as a day's wonder. It is a matter of deep sorrow that the Government of India *communique* offers a defence of the terms, calls them a fulfilment of Mr. Lloyd George's pledge of 5th January, 1918, and yet apologizes for their defective nature and appeals to the Mohammedans of India, as if to mock them, that they would accept the terms with quiet resignation. The mask that veils the hypocrisy is too thin to deceive anybody. It would have been dignified if the *communique* had boldly admitted Mr. Lloyd George's mistake in having made the promise referred to. As it is, the claim of fulfilment of the promise only adds to the irritation caused by its glaring breach. What is the use of the Viceroy, saying,"The question of the Khilafat is one for the Mohammedans and Mohammedans only and that with their free choice in the matter Government have no desire to interfere," while the Khalif's dominions are ruthlessly dismembered, his control of the holy places of Islam shamelessly taken away from him and he himself reduced to utter impotence in his own palace which can no longer be called a palace but which can be more fitly described as a prison? No wonder His Excellency fears that the peace includes"terms which must be painful to all Moslems". Why should he insult Muslim intelligence by sending the Mussulmans of India a message[2] of encouragement and sympathy? Are they expected to find encouragement in the cruel recital of the arrogant terms or in a remembrance of 'the splendid response' made by them to the call of the King 'in the day of the Empire's need'? It ill becomes His Excellency to talk of the triumph of those ideals of justice and humanity for which the Allies fought. Indeed, the terms of the so-called peace with Turkey, if they are to last, will be a monument of human arrogance and man-made injustice. To attempt to crush the spirit of a brave and gallant race, because it has lost in the fortunes of war, is a triumph not of humanity but a demonstration of inhumanity.

[1] Accepted by the Allies as the basis of peace on January 4, 1918

[2] Published on May 14, 1920; *vide* Appendix"Viceroy's Message to Muslims of India", before 3-6-1920.

And if Turkey enjoyed the closest ties of friendship with Great Britain before the War, Great Britain has certainly made ample reparation for her mistake by having made the largest contribution to the humiliation of Turkey. It is insufferable therefore when the Viceroy feels confident that with the conclusion of this new treaty that friendship will quickly take life again and a Turkey regenerate, full of hope and strength, will stand forth in the future, as in the past, a pillar of the Islamic faith. The Viceregal message audaciously concludes,"This thought will, I trust, strengthen you to accept the peace terms with resignation, courage and fortitude and to keep your loyalty towards the Crown bright and untarnished as it has been for so many generations." If Muslim loyalty remains untarnished it will certainly not be for want of effort on the part of the Government of India to put the heaviest strain upon it, but it will remain so because the Mohammedans realize their own strength—the strength in the knowledge that their cause is just and that they have got the power to vindicate justice in spite of the aberration suffered by Great Britain under a Prime Minister whom continued power has made as reckless in making promises as in breaking them.

Whilst therefore I admit that there is nothing either in the peace terms or in the Viceregal message covering them to inspire Mohammedans and Indians in general with confidence or hope, I venture to suggest that there is no cause for despair or anger. Now is the time for Mohammedans to retain absolute self-control, to unite their forces and, weak though they are, with firm faith in God to carry on the struggle with redoubled vigour till justice is done. If India—both Hindu and Mohammedan—can act as one man and can withdraw her partnership in this crime against humanity which the peace terms represent, she will soon secure a revision of the treaty and give herself and the Empire at least, if not the world, a lasting peace. There is no doubt that the struggle would be bitter, sharp and possibly prolonged, but it is worth all the sacrifice that it is likely to call forth. Both the Mussulmans and the Hindus are on their trial. Is the humiliation of the Khilafat a matter of concern to the former? And if it is, are they prepared to exercise restraint, religiously refrain from violence and practise non-co-operation without counting the material loss it may entail upon the community? Do the Hindus honestly feel for their Mohammedan brethren to the extent of sharing their sufferings to the fullest extent? The answer to these questions, and not the peace terms, will finally decide the fate of the Khilafat.

Young India, 19-5-1920

119. LETTER TO PRABUDAS GANDHI

[*May 19, 1920*][1]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I find that there is a marked improvement in your health. You can get even more benefit by keeping yourself cheerful. Do not worry about your work, nor even about your health. Remain cheerful as is the wont of human nature. Doing so, you will be able to take the full advantage of the pure air there. I will go to Kashi in a few days. Therefore, coming there is just not possible. I feel sorry about that.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 32956

120. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[BOMBAY,]
Jeth Sud 2 [*May 20, 1920*][2]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I get letters from you regularly now. Since I am going there,[3] I hesitate to say that you may go to Almora. If you wish to, you may, though. If you feel like staying there [for some time], we shall draw up a programme only after I arrive there.

I have come here[4] for a day in connection with the Khilafat. You will be reading about it all in *Young India* and *Navajivan*.

As for my health, there is nothing in particular except weakness.

I am so weak that I cannot walk at all. The legs have lost all strength. I cannot understand the cause. I can do my writing and other work well enough.

Prabhudas, Balkrishna, Doctor, Mahadev and Revashankerbhai have stayed on in Sinhgadh. Miss Faering left yesterday.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 7175

[1] According to the addressee, the letter was written by Gandhiji on train while travelling from Ahmedabad to Bombay on 19th; Gandhiji left Ahmedabad for Bombay on May 19, 1920 and thereafter went to Benares (Kashi) on 28th.

[2] Esther Faering left for Denmark on May 19, 1920, and this letter, as is evident from the text, was written on the following day.

[3] Presumably Gandhiji refers here to his proposed visit, in the last week of May 1920, to Banaras where Devdas then was.

[4] Bombay; *vide* the following item.

121. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

BOMBAY,
Thursday [*May 20, 1920*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have come here for a day. Ever since you left, I have spent the time for morning and evening prayers in long discussions. I discussed the things we have been talking about : my connection with the Ashram, Khilafat, swadeshi, Home Rule League work, how I cultivated peace and how others can do so. We talked at length. I am going to talk more yet. You will get reports from others.

Jaisukhlal has been to see me. He came only yesterday. His health is broken. Vrajlal is still running a temperature. His face looks all right, though. Make yourself thoroughly familiar with things before you return. I shall have to leave Ahmedabad for Kashi on the 26th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 5695. Courtesy : Radhabehn Chowdhari

122. LETTER TO SHAH HAFIZ ALAM

[*May 21, 1920*][2]

DEAR SHAH SAHIB,

I have your letter of the 14th instant. I received it only today on my return from Bombay, where I had gone for the Khilafat business[3].

I wish our friends will understand that the whole struggle consists in suffering imprisonment and all the other hardships that the Govern-ment may seek to impose upon us. We must not expect to carry on a stubborn non-co-operation campaign and yet expect not to

[1] The letter was evidently written on the same day as the letter to Devdas dated *Jeth Sud 2*, the preceding item. Gandhiji left for Banaras, according to his intention expressed in the last line, on May 26, 1920, which was a Wednesday.

[2] The source mentions that this letter was reported on June 5, 1920, and Gandhiji returned from his latest visit to Bombay, before that date, on May 21.

[3] Presumably in connection with the peace terms presented by the Allies to Turkey.

be arrested, bound over, imprisoned, deported. The whole struggle consists in our ability to undergo all these things without a single muscle being moved. I for one, therefore, will not only quarrel with the vigour of Government but will prepare the community for much greater. I hope to be in Benares on the 30th instant[1] where I will be pleased to meet Allaha-bad friends. What we now need is not big meetings but a proper grasp of the situation on the part of those who have to lead the movement.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1920, p. 933

123. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

ASHRAM,
May 21, 1920

MY DEAR CHILD,

I tried to overtake you on Wednesday, but it was not to be. I had to settle the dispute of labour. I therefore postponed. They all told me you were anxious to meet me. Of course you were. A friend is waiting to take the post, so I must be brief. I have your last precious letter. I know you will be all you say. May God bring you back safe, strong in body, mind and spirit.

I hope you received my note[2] on the *Berlin*[3].

Yours
BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child*, p. 71

124. TELEGRAM TO SHAUKAT ALI[4]

May 22, 1920

YES. ALLAHABAD. 1ST OR 2ND JUNE SUITS.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1920, p. 825

[1] For a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee where Gandhiji proposed that the Congress should recommend a programme of non-co-operation to the country without any further delay

[2] Not available

[3] The ship on which Esther Faering sailed for Denmark

[4] Sent in connection with the forthcoming conference on the Khilafat issue to be held at Allahabad

125. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

ASHRAM,
Jeth Sud 5 [*May 22, 1920*][1]

BHAISHRI MAVALANKAR,

I have got your letter. I destroyed it immediately after reading it. I could understand the dilemma[2] in which you find yourself. It should be enough for me if you do not misunderstand what I wrote to you. I simply cannot expect people always to act according to my advice. I did my duty. My mind is easy now. You may be sure that my regard for you will not diminish in the least.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 1222

126. LETTER TO PANDIT GOKARAN NATH

THE SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 22 [*1920*][3]

DEAR PANDIT GOKARAN NATH[4] ,

As I hope to meet you soon at Benares, I do not propose to deal with your letter regarding Shaukat Ali's speech[5] by post.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

5 NEILL ROAD
LUCKNOW

From the original: A.I.C.C. File. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The date is given in Mavalankar's *Sansmarano*

[2] *Vide* "Letter to G. V. Mavalankar", 11-5-1920.

[3] The year has been inferred from the contents of the letter. Gandhiji was in Benaras at the end of May, 1920, to attend the AICC session.

[4] Then General Secretary of the Indian National Congress

[5] At Madras on April 17 as President of the Khilafat Conference. *Vide* also "Jamshedji Nasarvanji Mehta", 1-5-1920.

127. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[*May 22, 1920*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Send the enclosed telegram to Bhai Shaukat Ali[2] . Addresses have been written from memory. If any additions are necessary, do so. Check the list that is prepared, and send it to me too. Do not worry if the number of invitations goes up. We should not fall short. Give instructions to send me a telegram when the day and date are fixed.

C. P. Ramaswamy	Vallabhbhai Patel
Natesan	Shankerlal Banker
Mrs. Besant	Anasuyabehn Sarabhai
Saumendranath Banerji	Saraladevi Chaudharani
Satyendra Bose	Imam Saheb Abdul Kadir
Ramendra Chatterji	Bawazeer
Srinivasa Sastri	Krishnalal Desai
Prof. Paranjapye	Sir Stanley Reed

NOTE

What does Jamnadas himself want? Do you feel the weakness too much? One person can certainly sit with me. Hence, it is best to come today. After all, if necessary we can buy second-class tickets.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

128. WHAT SHALL WE DO NOW?

The peace terms have been announced. We understand the English term *peace* to mean the treaty which ends fighting. But it also means quiet. If the terms which are announced had been described as the terms of war, the description would have been truer to facts. But, as was said in ridicule of the late Mr. Gladstone by an equally great man, the late Mr. Disraeli, language was invented not to express men's thoughts but to conceal them. That remark is perfectly applicable to the peace terms now announced. To say that there is peace where one

[1] As noted by the addressee

[2] In connection with the conference on the Khilafat issue to be held at Allahabad; *vide*"Telegram to Shaukat Ali", 22-5-1920.

party forces the other to agree to something against its will, crushes it under its brute strength, is a grave offence against *Satyanarayan*[1] .

And yet the Supreme Council has framed such terms and sent them to Turkey. It has, by doing so, disgraced the epithet it uses to describe itself. For a council which ignores justice and, blinded by its strength, wishes to describe injustice as justice, to call itself supreme is to add insult to injury. The peace terms may be said to have completely violated the pledges given by British Ministers. The promise was to the effect that the Turkish Empire would be preserved intact in Asia and Europe, wherever there were communities of Turks. But the Turkish Empire has been preserved only in name. In fact, the Supreme Council has, as it were, imprisoned the Sultan in his own palace. This amounts to torturing the Turks by constantly reminding them of their past glory. There was hope that the holy places of Islam would remain under the control of the Khalifa. Actually, he has been deprived of his suzerainty over these holy places as also over the peninsula which Muslims know as Jazirat-ul-Arab; in all this, there is not even a trace of justice or truth. Its being described, nevertheless, as justice is the very limit of man's pride and haughtiness, his reliance on brute strength. If such one-sided terms can be described as just, many things in the world which we usually know as injustice will have to be considered just.

And yet His Excellency the Viceroy, addressing the Muslims,[2] tells them that they should remain peaceful, that what now remains leaves room for hope and so they should take heart, rather than fall into despair. They should remember [he says] the old friendship between England and Turkey, and now that the peace terms have brought about a reunion, they should cement the new friendship and help in creating a new and glorious Turkey. These words of His Excellency are like branding again a man who has received burns. What should one do in this difficult situation? If the Muslims sit still, all that they have done during the last four years will be proved to have been hollow. If the Muslims have no peace, Hindus can have none, and *vice versa*—such is the law of friendship. If, losing our peace of mind in this way, we give way to anger and, getting excited, take to violence, we shall have lost the game. If we refrain from

[1] God in the form of Truth

[2] In his message of May 14, 1920; *vide* Appendix"Viceroy's Message to Muslims of India", before 3-6-1920.

violence, however, and show that we have the strength for self-sacrifice, we need not at all conclude that we have lost the game.

The Muslims and the rest of the country need not at all be shocked that the peace terms have been finalized. If India does her duty, these terms will certainly be revised. There is no reason to doubt this. To get these terms revised, India has only one thing at her disposal and that is non-co-operation. Non-co-operation has now become a duty because, if we do not start it, India will have been party to this injustice. The Bri-tish Empire is alive only because of the co-operation of all its subjects. In everything it does, the Empire must have co-operation, whether the co-operation is given willingly or otherwise. The chief manifestation of satyagraha is refusal to submit to compulsion. Hence, wherever the people have even a little of satyagraha in them, they refuse to submit to compulsion and the rulers may manage such satyagrahi subjects by cajoling, that is, by pleasing them. On this issue of the Khilafat, the people should not submit to force nor allow themselves to be won over by cajoling. Hence, if the feelings of the Muslims have been really hurt, at any rate they cannot co-operate with the Empire. If the Muslims cannot, how can the Hindus?

A meeting of leading Hindus and Muslims is to be held shortly to consider when and how to start non-co-operation.[1] If the decisions of this meeting are enthusiastically accepted by the people, we shall produce good from what seems evil today. Meanwhile, the people should show the utmost patience and wait. That will be *tapascharya*[2] for them.

This great issue, however, raises many secondary issues. Some of these deserve attention. People from a number of places have strongly urged on me the inadvisability of non-co-operation and the risks involved in it. Hence, thinking that the answers I have given to some friends who have advised me deserve to be read by readers of *Navajivan* as well, I give here the substance of a letter from an English friend and of my reply to him.[3]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-5-1920

[1] This joint Hindu-Muslim Conference was held at Allahabad on June 1 and 2, 1920. Three hundred influential representatives including Annie Besant, Madan Mohan Malaviya, Tej Bahadur Sapru and Motilal Nehru attended it.

[2] Self-suffering as moral discipline

[3] This article was followed by a Gujarati translation of"Some Questions Answered", 19-5-1920

129. IMPORTANCE OF KHADI

The reader will be glad to know that we have been receiving orders for khadi from all over India. All the stocks of khadi have been sold out and orders are still pouring in. But people should not understand from this that one should order no more khadi. Because people had lost faith in it, the production of khadi has stopped but otherwise our position is so good that we can produce heaps and heaps of it. Besides, though I want khadi to be sold, I place so high a value on it that I do not want anyone to order it, if it is actually not needed, just in order to reduce accumulated stocks. Khadi made from hand-spun yarn is sacred to me, so that such khadi is not to be thrown away. Moreover, consumption of khadi with-out real need will harm the country. Khadi will have been wisely used when we start wearing it in place of the fine cloth or foreign or mill-made cloth now used by us. Only then shall we succeed in overcoming the shortage of cloth in India. The rule, therefore, is that people who use a great variety of dresses should reduce their needs of cloth—so that the pressure on available cloth may be reduced and even in meeting their genuine needs they should use khadi wherever they can. This will spare cloth for the people and the money spent over cloth will have been well used, for, instead of a few people earning it, it will be distributed among thousands. It is not enough that we produce and consume; we should use our discretion in doing so. Production—and the manner of consumption too—should be so organized as to benefit the maximum number of people. This is the simple principle of economics. People starve only where this is violated. Hence a demand for khadi by itself will not please me. I can see, though, from the type of people who order khadi that they wish to put it to good use. We should also rejoice inasmuch as the demand for khadi is an expression of the love for the ideal of swadeshi. Orders for khadi have been received from places like Baluchistan and the Nilgiri Hills and from far-away Aden.

Perhaps we can derive still more satisfaction from the experience of Shrimati Saraladevi Chowdharani and the wife of the capable and extremely good-natured Maulana Hasrat Mohani. Saraladevi had an invitation to attend the Khilafat Conference at Bareilly. She went there on the 3rd. Having enjoyed wearing a khadi sari during the Satyagraha Week, she was perplexed what her duty was and

considered the matter with herself. She wrote in one of her letters :[1]

After reaching Bareilly, on the basis of her experience there, she wrote:[2]

At the Provincial Conference at Bareilly, she moved the resolution on swadeshi. I give here some paragraphs from her speech in Hindi on that occasion :[3]

Soon after she had made this speech, she and her husband were to be put to a test, for their eldest son was married last Wednesday. They were faced with the question what dresses they should get ready for the bride and the bridegroom. Writing about this, Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chaudhari says :[4]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-5-1920

130. MILL-OWNERS AND WORKERS OF AHMEDABAD

There is a proverb in English that all's well that ends well. Accordingly, the difference which arose for some time between the mill-owners and workers and the strike by the latter will be forgotten in a few days by both the parties as well as by the people but the good memories of that strike will remain. The workers, it can be safely asserted, showed in good measure the qualities of patience, firmness, courtesy, etc. It can also be said that they made an honest effort to give up drinking.[5]

Two circumstances militated against peace : that twelve mills were working and that the workers of the throstle department alone were on strike. The other workers were thrown out of employment for no fault of theirs. Even so, they exercised no pressure and peace was preserved throughout. We cannot adequately congratulate the workers on this.

We must admit, also, that the mill-owners, too, played their part in preserving peace. If they had wanted, they would have or could

[1] Not translated here. For the relevant extracts, *vide* "Swadeshi Day by Day", 19-5-1920.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Not translated here; for a report of it by Gandhiji, *vide* "Swadeshi Day by Day", 19-5-1920.

[4] For the sentences quoted, *vide* "Swadeshi Day by Day", 19-5-1920.

[5] Gandhiji had opened a temperance campaign among mill-hands, and by May 11 a hundred labourers had already signed the pledge

have provoked breach of peace. There is no doubt that, even if the workers had refused to be so provoked, the mill-owners could have made the maintenance of peace very difficult. On the contrary, the mill-owners, too, were always thinking how the strike could be ended early and it was because of this that it ended in ten days' time. I hope the workers will unhesitatingly resume work and give full satisfaction to their employers.[1] If they make good use of the increase in wages which the arbitrators have granted them, the fears which many mill-owners entertain on this subject will be dispelled. While, on the one hand, the wages have increased, on the other working hours have decreased. The workers should make good use of time thus saved and prove their worth by displaying greater vigilance and doing in ten hours the work they used to do in twelve.

I appeal to the mill-owners to be generous to the workers and win them over. If both the parties thus strive in the same direction, there will be no cause for difference or bitterness. One good principle has emerged as a result of this strike, namely, the principle of arbitration. The workers will not [I hope] go on strike hereafter but, whenever there are any differences between them and the employers, the two will always resolve their differences through arbitration. If this principle of arbitration comes to stay, there will be no reason at any time to fear disputes or strikes in Ahmedabad mills.

Both the parties have passed resolutions to this effect, but the value of resolutions depends on the future behaviour of those who pass them. The law cannot oblige them to do so. Everything depends upon the integrity and sense of honour of the two parties. And, therefore, rather than depend on the principle of arbitration, if the workers behave with courtesy and respect and the mill-owners, on their part, maintain a fatherly attitude towards the workers, no occasion will arise for an arbitrator to be appointed or for the workers to go on strike. The latter should realize that they can count on the services of revered Anasuyabehn or Shri Shankerlal Banker only so long as there is justice in their demands. But the ultimate aim of these two is also that the workers should have no occasion to require their services. If such a happy result can be brought about, everybody may then direct his attention to improving the internal conditions among the workers, and more can be done towards that end. It is very necessary to undertake such work all over India. There is awakening

[1] By May 20 work had been resumed in 18 out of 31 mills.

and people's enthusiasm and strength have increased. All this energy, however, if not used with discretion, will run to waste like so many floods and may even do harm if it takes a wrong turn as the latter do when they suddenly change their course. That the workers should try to improve their internal conditions need not be said; but I trust the mill-owners will take full interest in their effort and help them. It is to their advantage to do so. Where self-interest and the interest of others have gone together, the results have been the finest; let this general experience be the experience of the mill-owners and the workers alike.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 23-5-1920

131. MARRIAGE PROCESSIONS

I have received a letter on this subject from a highly educated lady. Thinking the following part of the letter[1] to be important, I place it before readers.

My purpose in reproducing this letter is to see that people start thinking about the subject, which I took courage to discuss, and do something at any rate to carry out the suggestions. On questions of reforms like these, so useful to the people, we cannot rest content with holding good views. We should, rather, learn to abandon immediately any custom which we think to be injurious. A number of people came to me from Baroda. As this was a year of marriages among *Patidars*[2] and as the Gaekwar Government had prohibited the evil custom, prevalent among them, of marrying off even little boys and girls, these people had come to consult me on how to get the ban removed. I told them that, if I had the powers of the Gaekwar Government, I would offer such satya-graha against people marrying off boys and girls of tender age that they would not even be able to stay on in the State. These friends understood my joke and not only did they give up the idea of securing my help but started discussing how this custom of child marriage, which had had so strong a hold

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent endorsed Gandhiji's criticism of marriage customs; *vide*"Three Occasions", 9-5-1920.

[2] A community of Hindu agriculturists in Gujarat. They used to arrange marriages only in certain auspicious years.

over the people, could be ended. I told them that, if other communities have every year auspicious periods during which marriages can be celebrated, the shastras cannot be so wrong-headed as to forbid this to *Patidars*. In such matters, it should not be necessary even to seek advice. Any individual who feels so inclined may refuse to marry off his daughter, and think himself free, like anyone else, to arrange the marriage in any year. On this, they said that, if they did not get their daughters married this year they might not get a suitable match later. Thus [they said] though some customs may be bad, it is difficult to go against them. I told them, in reply, that even if but one single person comes forward to oppose such wicked customs, he will certainly get another to keep him company, and I gave these friends the examples of some *Patidars* who had waited till their daughters had grown up. I told them finally that one who is convinced of the rightness of a certain course will risk anything in following it. About a daughter, the utmost risk is that she might remain unmarried till rather late. I can see no difficulty at all in this. It has been my experience that a wisely educated girl has no difficulty in maintaining self-control. I told the men of this. They took leave of me. I do not know what they finally did, but this example shows how strong is the force of custom. Until, regardless of its strength, we fight this force of custom with all our energy, we shall not succeed in ending these evil customs which sap the vitality of the people.

But I have strayed from the question of marriage processions to that of ill paired unions. The common man will not experience the same difficulty in getting rid of ostentatious marriage processions as the *Patidars* do in saving their daughters [from the evil of child marriage]. If everyone who is sick of such processions introduces reforms immediately where he is himself concerned, without waiting for others, we shall, with very little effort, shake off the hold of this and other suicidal practices of like nature.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-5-1920

132. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

I observe that, following the announcement of the peace terms, people[1] have been resigning their honorary positions and renouncing titles on their own responsibility. I think this is a hasty step. Before taking the momentous step of non-co-operation, it is very necessary for people to make petitions for a reconsideration of the peace terms and give public expression to their feelings on this issue. I hope, therefore, that people who have been thinking along these lines will not act indivi-dually and will take no steps without instructions from the central body[2].

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 23-5-1920

133. SPEECH ON SETTLEMENT OF MILL STRIKE, AHMEDABAD[3]

May 23, 1920

SHETH SHRI MANGALDAS, SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

Our reason for gathering here today is that the strike is over and we are once again free. The relations of the employers and the workers are again normal. We started the business of the meeting with two prayers. I hope every brother and sister here has reflected over these prayers. If any of them has not done so, I should like to draw their attention to them. Their tune was good, no doubt, but it is not to the tune that I draw your attention. I do so to the sweetness, the meaning, expressed through the tune. If we think over the two prayers, we shall see what a vast difference there is between *jiva*[4] on the one hand, and *Shiva*[5] on the other, between the human being, man or woman, in all his or her weakness, and Almighty God. We can do nothing except through God's will. God is the Supreme, All-powerful

[1]For example, Yakub Hasan who resigned his membership of Madras Legislative Council on May 20, 1920

[2] The Central Khilafat Committee

[3] According to a Bombay Secret Abstracts report this speech was made on May 23, 1920, at a meeting of representatives of mill-owners and mill-hands.

[4] Self

[5] The third God in the Hindu Trinity; principle of transcendent goodness.

Existence, Whom we cannot but obey, against Whom neither satyagraha nor *duragraha*[1] avails, Who is omnipresent, omniscient and knows all. And so the prayer-song asks:"O God, what greatness yours, and what an insignificant, ignorant creature I am! What has one like me to do with pride and conceit?" We have but one duty, to pray to God, to pray to Him whether we are in bed or sitting, whether we are eating or doing anything else. This is what our shastras enjoin and our *bhajans* advise. The experience of all men points to the same thing. And so it is that we commence the business of this important meeting with prayers to God.

I should like to tell the men and women present here that, if they would leave this world satisfied that they had fulfilled the purpose for which they had come into it, they should do everything with God as witness. You should ask yourselves, before you do anything, whether it would please God. If the answer is in the negative, do not go ahead with it.

When explaining the duty of workers, this is what I said once. If they wish to improve their conditions and want the goodwill of their employers, they should be honest and give up their addictions; they should become industrious and work hard, should be efficient and courteous. To be courteous means to carry out orders and speak with due respect, and this not only to the employer but to everyone else. We are not courteous if we are humble before the employer and salute him but insult our superior appointed by this very employer. One of the employers told me that the spinners in his mill had taken up the stand that they would resume work only if a certain jobber was removed. I should like to ask these workers who had refused to resume work whether they had come to this decision with God as witness.

We have now decided that hereafter we will not resort to a strike. We have found another weapon in its place, a weapon far more dignified than strikes. If we have a grievance and even a respectful representation to the employer brings no redress or satisfaction, we should go to the Association[2]. If we get no satisfaction from that quarter also, we should approach the *panch* for justice. The members of this *panch* are present before you. Sheth Mangaldas has been appointed to represent the employers and I, at the instance of the

[1] The opposite of satyagraha

[2] Presumably, the Mill-owners' Association

revered Anasuya-behn and Bhai Shankerlal and with my consent, to represent the workers. This *panch* will decide the points at issue in any dispute which may arise in the course of one year from now. While it functions, there must be no strike. Complaints are still being received from places that in some mills the workers have not resumed work.[1] I felt ashamed when I heard this and wondered whether there was any point in holding this meeting. But the majority of the workers have resumed work and it is for their sake that I am here today. I entreat those who have gone back to work to persuade the others to do the same. But they are not to force anyone in this matter, not to abuse anyone or speak with the least disres-pect, not to go about flourishing a stick. You should only entreat them, should prostrate yourselves at their feet, humble yourselves before them, reason with them and tell them that it is their dharma to go back to work. If any members of the Union are guilty of rudeness and refuse to go back to the mills, they have no right to continue as members of the Union. I therefore request all friends who have not resumed work to do so tomorrow itself. Only then will this big meeting justify itself.

In the presence of Shri Mangaldas, I request the employers—as a representative of workers I can only request them with folded hands—that they should be generous to the workers and look kindly on them. I, on your behalf, have conceded to them that, if any workers misbehave or are guilty of some offence towards them, they may dismiss such workers and I shall not intervene. My only request is that they should be kind to the men, not dismiss anyone who might happen to be above the others and something of a leader to them. Sheth Mangaldas has assured me that he does not desire a single pice of the workers, that they do not want the workers' curses by robbing them of what is theirs, that they would rather part with a rupee to a worker than deprive him of a pice. He has told me this time and again. There will be no more disputes between the workers and the employers in regard to wages. Sheth Mangaldas asked me how they could agree to give the workers anything if the latter put their demand aggressively. If the workers approached them in a friendly spirit, as becomes employees, they would not mind conceding a rupee. I told him that, if any workers approached him in an arrogant spirit, he might certainly refuse to concede anything. Even when the manner is

[1] The workers insisted that the mill-owners concerned should state in writing their acceptance of the terms.

respectful, the workers may not demand anything in excess of their rights. If the workers remain courteous and are reasonable and if the employers display generosity and a sense of justice, you would have no need of approaching Anasuyabehn or Shankerlal or me.

All mill-owners who are members of the Association came together today and looked into the rates of wages in other departments. They fixed these rates at generous figures. I don't say that the rates were an award by the *panch*. If that had been so, we could only say that the workers had had bare justice. What has happened is of far greater value than any award by the *panch*. If they granted an increase to workers in the throstle department, the employers argued, what crime had workers in other departments committed? It would be more dignified, more generous, they felt, to give them something before, rather than after, they came asking for it. The rates were not fixed by the *panch*; actually, they are higher than what the *panch* had recommended and were offered by the employers of their own free will. We should welcome them without reserve, nay, even gratefully.

Workers in the blow-room and card-room, workers carrying basket-loads or drawing carts, oilmen, sizers, folders and such other workers have not been granted this permanent increase, but they have what was granted to them earlier in the scheme signed by Bhai Ambalal[1]. That is, they get an increase of 25 per cent. Everyone, of course, will have a working day of ten hours.

In the case of framers, the figure has been raised from 35 per cent to 40 per cent and they will get a bonus, too, in the same way that the workers in the throstle department have been getting. In this matter, the framers have no ground for complaint. The employers have been generous to them.

For weavers and warpers, the figure put down was 25 per cent but this has been raised to $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent.

Winders will get an increase of 40 per cent over the existing rate, which will mean more than a rupee.

All these rates are good. All will admit, surely, that they are higher than the existing ones. Everyone will get an increase of between 25 and 40 per cent. I hope you will all be happy with these rates, be grateful to God and thank the employers.

I have heard that the workers in the weaving department are still

[1] Ambalal Sarabhai

dissatisfied. I have not looked closely into this matter; I have had no time to do so. The employers have given much thought to the subject. Their view is that the workers should not claim anything for the period of the strike.

I have told them of what I have heard about the workers in the weaving department. Their attitude is that they have given this increase on their own and so the weavers should not create a hitch when they wished to introduce connection for all time. Though I do not know who is in the right between you two, the employers and the workers, I put it to the latter whether, now that the employers had done so much for them, they would not like to abide by their decision. Even if they have taken up their stand to test the workers, the latter had better given in. Assuming that, when marking attendance, the managers informed you, as you say they did, that you would be paid [for the strike period], even then I would say that we cannot insist on having our way in this matter.

My next point, by way of advice, is that on this issue, too, we may demand justice, but the right way is not a strike. Some of the workers refuse to go back to work; this does not become them. An important principle has been laid down, that you should never go on a strike, that in case of dispute you should take it in the first instance to the Union and, failing there, place it before the *panch*. Can we now take the law in our own hands and refuse to go back to work?

Those of you who are still holding out should return to work from tomorrow. You may represent your case before the employers and, if you think that they have not been fair to you, ask for a *panch*; you may not, however, stop work even for an hour. I hope you will ever cling to this principle.

The employers cannot go on a strike. It is you, workers, who are obliged to do so. And so it is with a view to avoiding unnecessary loss to you and maintaining happy relations that they have accepted the principle of arbitration. If it is accepted only by them, what would be the workers' contribution? I request the workers of the weaving department to present respectfully any demand they may have and return to work. If you do so, the employers will feel that you have been very good and therefore they ought to concede your demand. We may not adopt tactics of coercion; if anyone believes that the demand could be secured through coercion, he is mistaken. I wish to declare in the presence of the employers that, if at any time I find

workers unreasonable, I will not help them but, on the contrary, help the former. My duty is to oppose injustice whenever I see it. If the workers are unreasonable with the employers, I can bring myself to oppose them too as I can oppose the Government and the employers.

If I accepted a bribe from you today—if you shower me with praises and garland me with flowers, that is as much as a bribe—if I were to be taken in by it all and get conceited, I might next learn to receive bribes from Sheth Mangaldas. I shall be of value only so long as I am useful in getting even justice dealt out. If you try to do an injustice, I shall have to oppose you and see that justice was done. I am against no one in this world; I do not take sides against employers nor will I ever do so against workers, but I should certainly oppose injustice by either. If we commenced the business of this meeting with God's name, it was entirely because we want justice.

I should once again like to tell Sheth Mangaldas as the leader of mill-owners and President of the Association, as a leading figure in the *Vaishnava* community, that, if he wanted the employers to have the workers under their full control, they should always do justice with God as witness, look kindly on them and love them as their own children. I want to assure him that, if they do this, the workers will not betray them.

We have done a great many things sitting under this tree.[1] We started our work today under this tree with God as witness; it is for you to see it through. Here, under this very tree, I want to tell you that our task is not yet over; it has just begun. So long as you have not obtained the employers' certificate, your task is not over, or mine or the revered sister's[2] or Bhai Shankerlal's. The flower garlands you have offered us mean nothing; it is your work which will count.

I shall end, as I began, with thought of God. The workers of the throstle department have collected some money and they offer it to me to be used in some good cause. I accept money from every quarter; for other causes, however, I generally hold out my hand to men like Sheth Mangaldas and will continue to do so in future. I will certainly not refuse the money you offer with so much love. I shall hand it over to the revered sister. She will use it for the uplift of the workers, to help them, especially, to be free from the evil of drinking.

[1] On the banks of the Sabarmati. The daily meetings of workers during the lock-out in February-March, 1918, used to be held here.

[2] Anasuyabehn Sarabhai

Next, the money will be used to provide education to workers' children and milk to such of them as go without it. I do not know how much you have brought but [whatever it is] I accept it as a token of your love and, as an expression of my love, I will use it in the manner I have indicated.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-5-1920

134. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

ASHRAM,

May 25, 1920

You have asked me [a] very searching question. I have always recognized that there are fundamental differences between you and me on the marriage and the caste question. I do not consider marriage to be a necessity in every case. From the highest standpoint it is a status lower than that of celibacy but I recognize it to be an absolute necessity in most cases. At the same time I would put disciplinary restraints upon the choice of man and woman and just as it would be considered improper for a brother to marry his sister I would make it improper for a person to marry outside his or her group which may be called a caste. I would there-by make the other men or women free from the attentions of that person. And if a person cannot get a suitable match within the limits prescribed for him or her he or she should be satisfied to remain unmarried. In other words I do not believe in unbridled licence. The vast majority of unions are due merely to physical attraction. I would narrow down this circle of attraction. So you see that I would be averse to a Brahmin going outside his circle for the choice of a wife; there is no question here of untouchability. Caste I consider a useful institution if properly regulated. Untouchability is a crime against God and humanity. I would purify the former, I would destroy the latter. If Manilal fell in love with a pariah girl, I would not quarrel with his choice but I would certainly consider that he had failed to imbibe my teaching. I would like him to be satisfied with his own caste division not because he would have any repugnance against the others but because I would like him to exercise self-restraint. Similarly for the institution of caste. In the Ashram we do not observe any caste restrictions , because we are making a new experiment but I would not like a Brahmin to go

beyond his pale, and indulge in dining here, there and everywhere. Again, therefore, non-dining with me does not proceed from a sense of . . .[1] but it proceeds from a sense of discipline. Rob the caste of its impurities, and you will find it to be a bulwark of Hinduism and an institution whose roots are embedded deep down in human nature. Now for the Khilafat question. I have said nothing about Armenia because I know nothing about it and because I do not want the Sultan[2] or any other power to rob Armenia of its independent existence. It can have autonomy as well under the Turk as any other power[3]. I have said always that absolute guarantees may be taken from the Sultan about non-interference with the internal administration of Armenia; similarly for Arabia. The position created by the peace treaty is simply intolerable.[4] The Arabians have lost what independence they had under the Sultan because they were more than a match for him. And now if the king of Hejaz and Amir Feisal can help it, Arabia and Mesopotamia will be drained dry for both these men will be puppets in the hands of British officers whose one aim would be to make as much money as possible for the European capitalists.

From a photostat : S. N. 7194

135. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Tuesday [*May 25, 1920*][5]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I got one letter from you which you wrote from Calcutta. I wrote a good many to you. I wonder why you did not get any.

I shall arrive there on Saturday, accompanied by Bhai Shankerlal and Jugatram[6]. I shall be travelling by the Jabalpur Mail. I have not looked up when it arrives there. But I have an impression that it arrives early in the morning.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 7176

[1] Illegible

[2] The Sultan of Turkey

[3] In 1920 Armenia was occupied jointly by Russian and Turkish troops.

[4] The Turkish peace treaty was handed in Paris to the Turkish delegates on May 11, 1920; Gandhiji called for its revision in a press statement dated May 18, 1920.

[5] Gandhiji reached Banaras, where the addressee then was, on Saturday, May 29, 1920; the second para of the text suggests that the letter was written on May 25.

[6] Jugatram Dave; author and educationist; full-time constructive worker devoted to the welfare of backward classes

136. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM,

Tuesday [*May 25,1920*][1]

CHI, PRABHUDAS,

I received your letter. I liked it very much indeed. I will certainly furnish you all the means for finding your path. The path is quite easy for persons like you. You may imbibe all the zest you can from Vinoba, but what you are seeking, you will not get from anything outside of yourself but only from within yourself. However, Vinoba will help you to scrape out the crusts that may have grown over your mind. Do not be impatient. Repeat to yourself again and again that compassion is the root of dharma. Understand what is real compassion and you will get everything else. It is the effort to understand the real meaning of compassion and truth that wearies us. It is only through experience that we understand their meaning. I will be returning after about fifteen days. See that instead of going after this thing or that, you cling to the study of Sanskrit alone. Music, of course, is there. If you do this, you will feel no burden on your brain. Learn other things which you may in the ordinary course of things. You have lost nothing by going to Sinhagad. It would indeed have been better if I could have stayed on. If, however, your health improves, the other things will follow without any effort on your part. But worrying even about one's health is a sin. If we are able to preserve the body, we will be able to find the means of realizing the *atman* while still alive. If we fail, we will get another, better than the present one. It is Tulsidas who has taught us the truth that it is the body which is the source of the sense of 'I' but as it is also a means [of realizing the self], we may try to improve its condition, and you are doing that in Sinhagad.

You may certainly come here when you wish. I am sending the reply by return of post. I thought of sending a wire, but then dropped the idea.

[1] As supplied by the addressee. In his letter dated May 20, 1920, Prabhudas had sought Gandhiji's permission to leave Sinhagad and return to the Ashram.

I have fully understood the nature of Balkrishna. He must have got my letter. I will arrange things for him as he desires. I have written him a long letter.

It seems to me that you will now come only with Radha[1] .

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33032

137. INSANITY

In the course of its discussion of my views on non-co-operation the Allahabad *Leader* asked me to state what I meant by 'wise and temperate action' on the part of the Government in dealing with the Khilafat agitation. The U.P. Government have provided me with an excellent illustration of unwise and intemperate action almost, if not altogether, amounting to insanity. I refer to the externment from Mussoorie of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the son of the Hon'ble Pandit Motilal Nehru.

Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru's dignified letter to the Superintendent of Police furnishes the public with all the facts in connection with the order served on him. The whole of the Allahabad public could bear witness, if witnesses to the action of an honourable man were necessary, that Mr. Nehru junior was proceeding with his mother, his sisters and his ailing wife to Mussoorie purely for reasons of health. Having inquired of him, having received an unequivocal, straightforward and full explanation of his presence in Mussoorie, having the knowledge that the members of the family were with him in Mussoorie, the authorities ought to have accepted Mr. Nehru's word and refrained from taking further action. It should be remembered that Mr. Nehru in his letter to the Superintendent of Police said :

> I have no concern with the Afghan delegation[2] and it was an accident that we both happened to be in the same hotel. As a matter of fact their presence here has put me out to a certain extent as I was looking forward to taking possession of the rooms at present occupied by them. I am of course

[1] She was with Prabhudas at Sinhagad.

[2] Which came to India to prepare the foundation for a treaty of friendship, and in April, 1920, was in Mussoorie

interested in the delegation as every intelligent person must be. But I had or have not the slightest intention of going out of my way to meet them. We have been here now for the last seventeen days and during this period I have not seen a single member of the delegation even from a distance. You are yourself aware of this fact as you told me this morning.

This was not enough for the authorities. They had lost their mental balance. They wanted an assurance that Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru would not have any communication with the delegation, for we learn from the same letter :

> But although I have no intention whatever of seeing the Afghans or of having any communication with them, I utterly dislike the idea of binding myself down to any course of action at the instance of the Government, even though such action may not prove irksome. It is really a question of principle or conscience. You will, I feel sure, appreciate my position.

And the Government whom Mr. Oakes, the Superintendent of Police, represented, appreciated the position by serving on him the order of externment two days after the receipt of the letter.[1] Mr. Nehru was anxious that the Government should have the full facts before them, [and] therefore told them in the same letter :

> If the Government chooses to serve any order on me, I am for the present prepared to obey it. It will be a great inconvenience to me to go down suddenly and leave my family by themselves here. The condition of my wife's health requires the most careful attention and my mother is a confined invalid and it is most difficult to leave them uncared for. My sudden departure will upset my father's and my plans entirely and cause us any amount of trouble and anxiety. But I suppose individual conveniences cannot be considered in high matters of State.

In a well-regulated State, individual inconvenience is as much a 'high matter of State' as any other, except when individual welfare demonstrably requires to be sacrificed to corporate welfare. In this instance there was nothing, so far as the public are aware, to warrant the inhumanity of tearing a husband from his ailing wife and separating an aged mother from her only son and protector when they have no one else to look after them and are away from home. I call.

[1] The order of externment from Mussoorie passed on Jawaharlal Nehru was withdrawn on June 19, 1920.

this insanity of a very severe type and it can only proceed from a guilty conscience. The Government know that the peace terms[1] are dishonourable and in breach of the pledges of ministers. They know, too, that the Mohammedan sentiment has been deeply hurt. They know that the Hindu sympathy is completely with them and they know that the Afghan delegation is also in complete accord with the Indian Mohammedan feeling. They are therefore afraid of any Indian of importance being in the position of knowing anything of or from the Afghan delegation. The Government have therefore become hyper-suspicious

But we must not answer this madness with madness. I am loath to think that the Government of Sir Harcourt Butler[2] desires to goad the people to violence so that he can repeat the frightfulness of the Punjab and terrorize the people into silence and submission. But whether it is the intention of that Government to do so or not, the leaders of the Khilafat movement must prepare themselves for more acts of the Mussoorie type. And the way to success lies not in becoming angry but in welcoming such acts of repression so that they may, ceasing to produce any effect upon those against whom they are directed, cease altogether even as a medicine that does not react upon a patient is necessarily stopped by the administering physician. The severest punishment is stopped as soon as it fails to produce the effect intended.

But the most shocking instance of madness comes from Sind. The *Alwahid*, published in Karachi in Sindhi and owned by a responsible merchant, has in its issue of the 13th instant a letter from the Secretary of the Khilafat Committee, Jacobabad, which, after relating that some respectable men connected with the Khilafat movement were sent to jail, proceeds that a respectable zemindar was whipped by the Deputy Commissioner within closed doors and that on his crying out, the police entered the room and administered further beating to him. In Mussoorie, at least, the decorum of law, such as it is, was observed. Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru was not physically molested. But in Sind, if the allegation of the Secretary of the Khilafat Committee is true, a respectable man has been whipped by a Deputy Commissioner, so far as the public are aware, without any cause

[1] In regard to Turkey; *vide* Appendix "Turkish Peace Terms", before 3-6-1920.

[2] Lieutenant-Governor of the then United Provinces, known at present as Uttar Pradesh

whatsoever warranting such procedure. The Governor of Bombay[1] enjoys the reputation of being the sanest of Governors and one may trust that he will make the fullest enquiry into the incident and the other allegations made, and publish the result of that enquiry. *The Bombay Chronicle* supports the *Alwahid* statement by giving the version of the same incident received by Mr. Shaukat Ali. If the facts set forth are true the offending Deputy Commissioner must be removed. But whether he is removed or not, the duty before those who are guiding the Khilafat movement is absolutely clear. Are they prepared to go through the fieriest of ordeals? An insolent treaty of peace, if it is in any way resisted by those who are affected by it, can only be supported by an equally insolent exhibition of force. And if Indian Mohammedans and Indians in general are more concerned with the revision of the treaty than with showing resentment and anger, they will submit to all the ill-treatment that may be meted out to them and yet pursue the policy of not submitting to the treaty. Any use of violence against Government violence must kill the Khilafat movement.

Young India, 26-5-1920

138. KHILAFAT : MR. CANDLER'S OPEN LETTER

Mr. Candler has favoured me with an open letter on this question of questions. The letter has already appeared in the Press. I can appreciate Mr. Candler's position as I would like him and other Englishmen to appreciate mine and that of hundreds of Hindus who feel as I do. Mr. Candler's letter is an attempt to show that Mr. Llyod George's pledge[2] is not in any way broken by the peace terms. I quite agree with him that Mr. Lloyd George's words ought not to be torn from their context to support the Mohammedan claim. These are Mr. Lloyd George's words as quoted in the recent Viceregal message :

> Nor are we fighting to destroy Austria-Hungary or to deprive Turkey of its capital, or of the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor and Thrace which are predominantly Turkish in race.

Mr. Candler seems to read 'which' as if it meant 'if they', whereas I give the pronoun its natural meaning, namely, that the Prime

[1] Sir George Lloyd
[2] Made on January 5, 1918

Minister knew in 1918 that the lands referred to by him were 'predominantly Turkish in race'. And if this is the meaning, I venture to suggest that the pledge has been broken in a most barefaced manner, for there is practically nothing left to the Turk of 'the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor and Thrace'.

I have already given my view of the retention of the Sultan in Constantinople. It is an insult to the intelligence of man to suggest that 'the maintenance of the Turkish Empire in the homeland of the Turkish race with its capital at Constantinople' has been left unimpaired by the terms of the peace. This is the other passage from the speech which I presume Mr. Candler wants me to read together with the one already quoted :

> While we do not challenge the maintenance of the Turkish Empirein the homeland of the Turkish race with its capital at Constantinople, the passage between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea being internationalized, Armenia, Mesopotamia, Syria and Palestine are in our judgment entitled to a recognition of their separate national condition.

Did that mean entire removal of Turkish influence, extinction of Turkish suzerainty and the introduction of European-Christian influence under the guise of Mandates? Have the Moslems of Arabia, Armenia, Mesopotamia, Syria and Palestine been committed, or is the new arrangement being superimposed upon them by Powers conscious of their own brute strength rather than of justice of their action? I for one would nurse by every legitimate means the spirit of independence in the brave Arabs, but I shudder to think what will happen to them under the schemes of exploitation of their country by the greedy capitalists protected as they will be by the mandatory Powers. If the pledge is to be fulfilled, let these places have full self-government with suzerainty to be retained with Turkey as has been suggested by *The Times of India*. Let there be all the necessary guarantees taken from Turkey about the internal indpendence of the Arabs. But to remove that suzerainty, to deprive the Khalif of the wardenship of the holy places is to render Khilafat a mockery which no Mohammedan can possibly look upon with equanimity. I am not alone in my interpretation of the pledge. The Right Hon'ble Ameer Ali[1], calls the peace terms a breach of faith. Mr. Charles Roberts reminds the British public that the Indian Mussulman sentiment

[1] Syed Ameer Ali (1849-1928); Judge of the Calcutta High Court, 1890-1904; member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council

regarding the Turkish Treaty is based upon the Prime Minister's pledge"regarding Thrace, Constantinople and Turkish lands in Asia Minor, repeated on February 26 last with deliberation by Mr. Lloyd George".[1] Mr. Roberts holds that the pledge must be treated as a whole, not as binding only regarding Constantinople but also binding as regards Thrace and Asia Minor. He describes the pledge as binding upon the nation as a whole and its breach in any part as a gross breach of faith on the part of the British Empire. He demands that if there is an unanswerable reply to the charge of breach of faith it ought to be given and adds the Prime Minister may regard his own word lightly if he chooses, but he has no right to break a pledge given on behalf of the nation. He concludes that it is incredible that such a pledge should not have been kept in the letter and in the spirit. He adds :

> I have reason to believe that these views are fully shared by prominent members of the Cabinet.

I wonder if Mr. Candler knows what is going on today in England. Mr. Pickthall[2] writing in *New Age* says :

> No impartial international enquiry into the whole question of the Armenian massacres has been instituted in the ample time which has elapsed since the conclusion of armistice with Turkey. The Turkish Government has asked for such enquiry. But the Armenian organizations and the Armenian partisans refuse to hear of such a thing, declaring that the Bryce and Lepssens reports are quite sufficient to condemn the Turks.[3] In other words the judgment should be given on the case for prosecution alone. The inter-Allied commission which investigated the unfortunate events in Smyrna last year,[4] made a report unfavourable to Greek claims.[5] Therefore, that report has not been published here in England, though in other countries it has long been public property.

[1] On February 26, 1920, Lloyd George declared in the House of Commons : "The pledge given in January, 1918, was given after full consultation with all parties. . . . It was specific, unqualified and deliberate. . . . The effect of the statement in India was that recruiting went up appreciably from that very moment."

[2] Marmaduke Pickthall; journalist and novelist; editor of *The Bombay Chronicle*; possessed close and intimate knowledge of the Near East

[3] Eventually Armenia, abandoned by the Allies, became a Soviet Republic on November 25, 1920

[4] On May 15, 1919, the Greek army was sent to Smyrna, and hundreds of Turkish civilians were massacred.

[5] The Report of the Allied Admirals, made in October, 1919, and suppressed by the Government, condemned the Smyrna landing *in toto* and declared the Greeks guilty of looting, arson and murder.

He then goes on to show how money is being scattered by Armenian and Greek emissaries in order to popularize their cause and adds :

> This conjunction of dense ignorance and cunning falsehood is fraught with instant danger to the British realm,

and concludes :

> A Government and people which prefer propaganda to fact as the ground of policy—and foreign policy at that—is self-condemned.

I have reproduced the above extract in order to show that the present British policy has been affected by propaganda of an unscrupulous nature. Turkey, which was dominant over two million square miles of Asia, Africa and Europe in the 17th century, under the terms of the treaty, says the *London Chronicle*, has dwindled down to little more than 1,000 square miles. It says :

> All European Turkey could now be accommodated comfortably between the Lands End and the Tamar, Cornwall alone exceeding its total area, and but for its alliance with Germany, Turkey could have been assured of retaining at least sixty thousand square miles of the Eastern Balkans.

I do not know whether the *Chronicle* view is generally shared. Is it by way of punishment that Turkey is to undergo such shrinkage, or is it because justice demands it? If Turkey had not made the mistake of joining Germany, would the principle of nationality have been still applied to Armenia, Arabia, Mesopotamia and Palestine?

Let me now remind those who think with Mr. Candler that the promise was not made by Mr. Lloyd George to the people of India in anticipation of the supply of recruits continuing. In defending his own statement, Mr. Lloyd George is reported to have said :[1]

> The effect of the statement in India was that recruiting went up appreciably from that very moment. They were not all Mohammedans but there were many Mohammedans amongst them. Now we are told, that was an offer to Turkey. But they rejected it, and therefore we were absolutely free. It was not. It is too often forgotten that we are the greatest Mohammedan power in the world and that one-fourth of the population of the British Empire is Mohammedan. There have been no more loyal adherents to the throne and no more effective and loyal supporters of the Empire in its hour of trial. We gave a solemn pledge and they accepted it. They are disturbed by the prospect of our not abiding by it.

Who shall interpret that pledge and how? How did the

[1] On February 26, 1920

Government of India itself interpret it? Did it or did it not energetically support the claim for the control of the Holy Places of Islam vesting in the Khalif? Did the Government of India suggest that the whole of Jazirat-ul-Arab could be taken away consistently with that pledge from the sphere of influence of the Khalif, and given over to the Allies as mandatory Powers? Why does the Government of India sympathize with the Indian Mussulmans if the terms are all they should be? So much for the pledge. I would like to guard myself against being understood that I stand or fall absolutely by Mr. Lloyd George's declaration. I have advisedly used the adverb 'practically' in connection with it. It is an important qualification.

Mr. Candler seems to suggest that my goal is something more than merely attaining justice on the Khilafat. If so, he is right. Attainment of justice is undoubtedly the cornerstone, and if I found that I was wrong in my conception of justice on this question, I hope I shall have the courage immediately to retrace my steps. But by helping the Mohammedans of India at a critical moment in their history, I want to buy their friendship. Moreover, if I can carry the Mohammedans with me I hope to wean Great Britain from the downward path along which the Prime Minister seems to me to be taking her. I hope also to show to India and the Empire at large that given a certain amount of capacity for self-sacrifice, justice can be secured by the peacefullest and cleanest means without sowing or increasing bitterness between the English and Indians. For, whatever may be the temporary effect of my methods, I know enough of them to feel certain that they alone are immune from lasting bitterness. They are untainted with hatred, expedience or untruth.

Young India, 26-5-1920

139. SAVARKAR BROTHERS

It is My earnest desire at this time that so far as possible any trace of bitterness between My people and those who are responsible for My Government should be obliterated. Let those who in their eagerness for political progress had broken the law in the past respect it in the future. Let it become possible for those who are charged with the maintenance of peaceful and orderly Government to forget the extravagances which they have had to curb. A new era is opening. Let it begin with a common determination among My people and officers to work together for a common purpose. I therefore direct My Viceroy to exercise in My name and on My behalf My Royal

clemency to political offenders in the fullest measure which in his judgment is compatible with the public safety. I desire him to extend it on this condition to persons who for offenses against the State or under any special or emergency legislation, are suffering imprisonment or restrictions upon their liberty. I trust that this leniency will be justified by the future conduct of those whom it benefits and that all My subjects will so demean themselves as to render it unnecessary to force the laws for such offences hereafter.—The Royal Proclamation.

The Proclamation from which the above extract has been copied was published in December last. Thanks to the action of the Government of India and the Provincial Governments, many of those who were undergoing imprisonment at the time have received the benefit of the Royal clemency. But there are some notable"political offenders" who have not yet been discharged. Among these I count the Savarkar brothers. They are political offenders in the same sense as men, for instance, who have been discharged in the Punjab. And yet these two brothers have not received their liberty although five months have gone by after the publication of the Proclamation.

Mr. Ganesh Damodar Savarkar, the elder of the two, was born in 1879, and received an ordinary education. He took a prominent part in the swadeshi movement at Nasik in 1908. He was sentenced to transpor-tation for life with confiscation of property under Sections 121, 121A, 124A and 153A on the 9th day of June, 1909, and is now serving his sentence in the Andamans. He has therefore had eleven years of imprisonment.

Section 121 is the famous section which was utilized during the Punjab trials and refers to 'waging war against the King'. The minimum penalty is transportation for life with forfeiture of property. 121A is a similar section. 124A relates to sedition. 153A relates to promotion of enmity between classes 'by words either spoken or written' or 'otherwise'. It is clear therefore that all the offences charged against Mr. Savarkar (senior) were of a public nature. He had done no violence. He was married, had two daughters who are dead, and his wife died about eighteen months ago.

The other brother[1] was born in 1884, and is better known for his

[1] Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, a leading revolutionary who later became the chief leader of All-India Hindu Mahasabha

career in London.[1] His sensational attempt to escape the custody of the police and his jumping through a porthole in French waters[2], are still fresh in the public mind. He was educated at the Fergusson College, finished off in London and became a barrister. He is the author of the proscribed history of the Sepoy Revolt of 1857. He was tried in 1910, and received the same sentence as his brother on 24th December, 1910. He was charged also in 1911 with abetment of murder[3]. No act of violence was proved against him either. He too is married, had a son in 1909. His wife is still alive.

Both these brothers have declared their political opinions and both have stated that they do not entertain any revolutionary ideas and that if they were set free they would like to work under the Reforms Act[4], for they consider that the Reforms enable one to work thereunder so as to achieve political responsibility for India. They both state unequivocally that they do not desire independence from the British connection. On the contrary, they feel that India's destiny can be best worked out in association with the British. Nobody has questioned their honour or their honesty, and in my opinion the published expression of their views ought to be taken at its face value. What is more, I think, it may be safely stated that the cult of violence has, at the present moment, no following in India. Now the only reason for still further restricting the liberty of the two brothers can be 'danger to public safety", for the Viceroy has been charged by His Majesty to exercise the Royal clemency to political offenders in the fullest manner which in his judgment is compatible with public safety. I hold therefore that unless there is abso-lute proof that the discharge of the two brothers who have already suffered long enough terms of imprisonment, who have lost considerably in body-weight and who have declared their political opinions, can be proved to be a danger to the State, the Viceroy is bound to give them their liberty. The obligation to discharge them, on the one condition of public safety being fulfilled, is, in the Viceroy's political capacity, just as imperative

[1] He carried on agitation for the freedom of India, which at one time reached the stage of his sending fire-arms to India from Paris.

[2] Off Marseilles, in July 1910, when he was being brought to India from England where he was arrested under the Fugitive Offenders Act of 1881

[3] Of A. M. T. Jackson, the Collector of Nasik in December 1909. It was alleged that the pistol with which Jackson was murdered was one of the many sent by Savarkar from London.

[4] Government of India Act, 1919

as it was for the Judges in their judicial capacity to impose on the two brothers the minimum penalty allowed by law. If they are to be kept under detention any longer, a full statement justifying it is due to the public.

This case is no better and no worse than that of Bhai Parmanand who, thanks to the Punjab Government, has after a long term of imprisonment received his discharge. Nor need his case be distinguished from that of the Savarkar brothers in the sense that Bhai Parmanand pleaded absolute innocence. So far as the Government are concerned, all were alike guilty because all were convicted. And the Royal clemency is due not merely to doubtful cases but equally to all cases of offences proved up to the hilt. The conditions are that the offence must be political and the exercise of Royal clemency should not, in the opinion of the Viceroy, endanger public safety. There is no question about the brothers being political offenders. And so far the public are aware there is no danger to public safety. In answer to a question in the Viceregal Council in connection with such cases the reply given was that they were under consideration. But their brother has received from the Bombay Government a reply to the effect that no further memorials regarding them will be received and Mr. Montagu has stated in the House of Commons that in the opinion of the Government of India they cannot be released. The case however cannot be so easily shelved. The public are entitled to know the precise grounds upon which the liberty of the brothers is being restrained in spite of the Royal Proclamation which to them is as good as a royal charter having the force of law.

Young India, 26-5-1920

140. A HARD CASE

I have received the following telegram from the families of Messrs Bugga and Ratanchand :

> Bugga and Ratto under orders transfer Andamans. Bugga, suffering hernia and piles since ten years. Was operated upon. Ratto aged over forty and therefore should not be sent Andamans under Jail Manual Rule 721.

The readers will remember that these were the accused on whose behalf appeals were made to the Privy Council in common with others and whose appeals were rejected on technical grounds.[1] The Hon'ble

[1] *Vide* "The Amritsar Appeals", 3-3-1920.

Pandit Motilal Nehru has analysed the cases and shown that they are no more guilty than the others who have been discharged. But several who were originally sentenced to death had their sentences commuted to imprisonment and are now set free. What is it that distinguishes these two cases from the others? Is it the fact of the appeal itself? If they had not appealed, or rather, if a philanthropic lawyer out of pity had not taken up their case, fought for them against tremendous odds, they would not have escaped the hangman's noose[1]. H. H. the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab has been showing a generous discretion in releasing many who suffered between April and June last year. Although he had the opportunity, after the dismissal of the appeal, to hang Messrs Bugga and Ratanchand, H. E. the Viceroy, it is equally true, has commuted the sentence of death to one of transportation. But I venture to submit that if the Royal Proclamation is to be given effect to in the fullest measure, Messrs Bugga and Ratanchand are entitled to their liberty. They are no more a danger to the State than Lala Harkishen Lal, Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari and others of that distinguished company. But for the time being, strong as the case is for their discharge, I am pleading not for a complete release but for keeping them in the Punjab and if they have been sent away already, for bringing them back, if for nothing else, out of consideration for the wives of these poor men. Let not the public think that the acts of the Government of the day are dictated only by fear and expedience, not by logic and high principles of justice.

Young India, 26-5-1920

141. LETTER TO MANGALDAS G. PAREKH

May 26, 1920

BHAISHRI MANGALDAS,

I was unhappy that we could not arrive at a decision[2] yesterday. I was quite hopeful that we would. I told you that I had already discussed the matter with Ambalalbhai. The final result was that the mills which go with him will pay warp-piecers Rs. 13 a week [fortnight?] and 8 annas a week as bonus. This rate is for 340 to 380

[1] The source has "horse" here.

[2] In regard to the detalied working out of the terms of settlement of the dispute between mill-workers and mill-owners

spindles. For spindles less than 340, the rate is Rs. 12-12-0 and for more than 380, Rs. 13-4-0. The rate for weft-piecers has been fixed at Rs. 13-8-0. For doffers, it is Rs. 9-4-0, with a bonus of 4 annas. For half-timers, the rate fixed is Rs. 5.

Hours of work are fixed at 10. The rates above are also on this basis. Besides, if [at least] 75 per cent of the mills do not join, the ten-hour scheme will not come into effect at present.

Caution money will not exceed ten days' [wages]. These are the main points. I still request you to accept, and persuade others to accept these terms. I think so much is perfectly reasonable.

SHRI MANGALDAS G. PAREKH

AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 7044

142. PREFACE TO "SWADESHI DHARMA"

BOMBAY,

Bhim Agiarash [*May 28, 1920*][1]

It is not for me to write a preface to this essay, for the author[2] is a friend of mine. I can say only this about it, that the views it expounds are a credit to swadeshi dharma. I should like India to profit to the utmost from this essay.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Swadeshi Dharma

143. INSANITY

I have said that in employing the extreme weapon of non-co-operation we must learn to exercise patience. If we get excited, we may invite serious harm. If the Government is seized by anger, we can do nothing but bear it. Every time those in authority make a mistake, they want people to get excited and commit acts of violence. If the people walk into this trap, public attention will be diverted from

[1] The booklet was published by Swami Anand from the Satyagraha Ashram in 1920.

[2] Dattatreya Balkrishna Kalelkar (1885-); popularly known as Kaka Saheb; associated with Gandhiji since 1915

the original injustice to the disorders. The Government and the public join hands to suppress the mischief-makers and, by and by, the Government's injustice is forgotten. It may also happen that, when the people agitate against the injustice, the authorities make a powerful effort to repress the agitation and in their attempt to cover up the original injustice overstep reasonable limits. In the result, the authorities go to insane lengths in repressing the agitation.

I think our Government is possessed by some such insanity. Pandit Motilal Nehru is known to everyone in the United Provinces[1]. The Governor there has known him for thirty years. His only son, Jawaharlal, is a barrister and he, too, is well known among the people. He helps his father to the utmost in his professional and public work. Everyone in the United Provinces knows that his mother keeps indifferent health. Of late Shri Jawaharlal Nehru's wife has been very ill. The Nehru family often goes in summer to Mussoorie for a change of climate. This year, it was all the more necessary for them to do so in view of the illnesses referred to above. When the decision to go there was made, they did not even know that members of the Afghan Delegation were to visit Mussoorie, nor that the latter would be staying in the same place as they. However, since accommodation in Mussoorie is none too plenty, the Nehru family and the Afghan delegates found themselves together. The officials could not bear their staying in the same building. It was not possible, however, to put restrictions on Shri Jawaharlal Nehru straightway and so the Superintendent of Police sent for him and told him that he would be permitted to stay on in Mussoorie provided he gave an undertaking that he would not even so much as speak with those delegates. How can a person who has any sense of self-respect give such an undertaking? Actually one may maintain no relations with the delegates; that is beside the point. In fact Shri Nehru remained in Mussoorie for 15 days and never had so much as a word with them. But it is one thing, of one's own free will, not to speak to a person without occasion and another to bind oneself under pressure from a third party not to do so. Hence Shri Jawaharlal refused to give such an undertaking. Thereupon he was immediately served with an order to leave Mussoorie. He had placed all the facts before the official and told him of his difficulties, too. But what are [people's] difficulties to an official?

[1] Now Uttar Pradesh

If the king is mindful of the difficulties of the weakest section of his subjects, his rule would be *Ramarajya*[1], it would be people's rule. We cannot expect this of any government in modern times, be it British or Indian, Christian, Muslim or Hindu. Europe, which we are so impatient to imitate, also worships brute force or, which is the same thing, majority opinion, and the majority, surely, does not always look after the interests of the minority. In ordinary matters, the principle of majority rule is, by and large, justice as the world understands justice, but the purest justice can consist only in the welfare of all. It is only a government that fully protects the weakest among its subjects, and safeguards all his rights, which may be described as perfectly democratic. Such a government does not mean the rule of the majority, but protection of the interests of even the smallest limb of the realm. We cannot at present expect from our Government such protection and such rule. But the step it has taken is plain insanity, for it is inconceivable that it has any strong reason for it.

This is but a symptom of insanity. If the report received from Sind is true, the Deputy Commissioner there seems to have reached the very height of midsummer madness. Not only does he place restrictions on respectable citizens with a view to arresting the Khilafat movement, but he is also said to have beaten up one such person.[2] Let us hope the Governor of Bombay will carefully inquire into this matter. At the moment, however, it is more necessary to consider our own duty. Non-co-operation cannot be said to have started yet; when it does, beyond doubt the Government will employ all its strength to suppress it. Who can say what degree of insanity will possess it then? If at that time the people remain firm, refuse to be provoked and are guilty of no acts of violence, they will have risen high indeed and the Khilafat issue, I have no doubt, will be solved in our favour.

The Khilafat Committee is meeting very soon to pass the final resolutions about non-co-operation and related matters. The All-India Congress Committee is meeting[3] most probably on May 30, and the Khilafat Committee is likely to meet at about the same time in Kashi or Prayag.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-5-1920

[1] Literally "the reign of Rama" here, however, it means an ideal political order.

[2] *Vide* "Insanity", 26-5-1920.

[3] The Congress Committee met in Banaras on May 30 and resolved to hold a special session of the Congress in Calcutta later in the year to consider Gandhiji's programme of non-co-operation.

144. WHY IS NON-CO-OPERATION BEING DELAYED?

A reader of *Navajivan* writes :[1]

I have dropped an adjective here and there in this extract. There are many more accusations, but I do not have the courage to reproduce them. The correspondent has given his name too; I do not wish to publish it either. It is possible that he himself may have intended his letter as private advice. Nevertheless, I have reproduced the portion which I thought was worth reproducing.

It is only so long as there are among the people men full of all this anger and suspicion, be they only a few isolated individuals, that difficulties will arise in employing a priceless weapon like non-co-operation. The writer of this letter has not at all understood the principle underlying the use of such a weapon. Nor has he the patience which Muslim friends show. I have not at all conceived non-co-operation as the weapon of the unarmed. The strong and the weak, all can employ it. I have often explained how on some occasions non-co-operation may be a sacred duty.

The grave charges made against British Ministers are unjustified. I believe that the Prime Minister has committed a breach of promise in this matter, but I do not believe the charge that the [entire] British Cabinet is faithless and treacherous or that all the officers in India are autocratic. I do not share the belief that the British people or the British Ministers are utterly worthless in comparison with us and that we abound in virtues. Personally, I am all love for the British people. They are a brave, un-suspecting and a fairly godfearing people; they are not totally irreligious. If they worship brute strength, they also recognize soulforce. This country has done many wrong things, but it has many good deeds to its credit. It has produced many a yogi who deserves to be adored. The organizing ability of the people, their patience and their skill are worth emulating. Because I see their faults, because they have done injustices to India, I cannot abandon or stifle my sense of justice. There will be hardly anyone who has fought against the injustice of the British as I have done. But, behind all this fighting, deep down in me, there is my regard for this nation or, if one prefers, my unthinking love for it. I believe that no other people, excepting Indians, recognize soul-force as quickly as the British do.

[1] The letter is not translated here.

This is the basis on which I have conducted my many campaigns. Should I, however, be mistaken in my estimation, I would not have to repent for that reason since I do not depend, in any movements which I lead, on external circumstances but only on the purity of the cause and of the means employed. Truth has nothing to fear from time. It can afford to be patient. One who follows truth will see no danger at all in waiting.

What charges against the Moderates, besides? If most of the people believe that the Moderates are nothing but traitors and flatterers, I would certainly be disappointed and grieved. I for one believe that both the parties[1] have the welfare of the country at heart. When we were all slumbering, the country resounded with Surendrnath's[2] voice. There was a time when the word of Sir Dinshaw Wacha[3] was respected all over the Bombay Presidency. I consider it a sin to describe such national leaders as traitors or flatterers. At present I do not approve of many of their views. My recent experience has certainly taught me new things. I cannot tolerate Surendranath Banerjea's blind attachment to the English language. I do not follow some of Sir Dinshaw Wacha's ideas on economics. But this certainly does not diminish in the slightest measure my reverence for either. I cannot forget the service they have rendered to the country and I would consider myself fortunate if, at their age, I have the same zeal for national service which they display. Tulsidas has said that everything, animate and inanimate, is a mixture of good and bad qualities. But our duty is to distin- guish the good from the bad, and imbibe the former and ignore the latter just as the swan takes in only milk, leaving the water of evil behind. For, where would we be if our kinsfolk and our society saw only our faults?

I most emphatically wish to request the people of Gujarat to keep aloof from the poison which is in the air today. The foregoing letter is a sign of that poison and that is why I have reproduced it here. As my mother tongue is Gujarati and especially as Gujarat is the land of my birth, I believe that the best I have I can give to Gujarat first, knowing that through Gujarat, it can spread throughout India. It is

[1] Nationalists and Moderates

[2] Surendranath Banerjea (1848-1925); President of the Congress in 1895 an 1902; later, one of the leaders of the Moderate party

[3] Dinshaw Edulji Wacha (1844-1936); Joint-Secretary of the Congress, 1896-1900; President of the Congress in 1901 and later, one of the leaders of the Moderate party

my earnest desire that Gujarat and India remain unpolluted by the poisonous wind that is blowing at present, and I shall believe to the end of my life that they have it in them to remain so. This poisonous wind is the only cause for the delay in the spreading of the fragrant breeze of Truth. We cannot hope to see our country rise by getting angry with the British, by distrusting all mankind and by accusing and hating one another. Hatred, faultfinding, etc., are the symptoms of a disease, of weakness. The weak sees weakness everywhere; the wicked believes everyone to be wicked. The snake and the scorpion are afraid of every creature. Why do we forget the law of this world :"If we are good, the whole world is good"?

Let me say a few words about the Rowlatt Act too. I am confident that this Act will be repealed before its time and that too, I believe, without our having to offer satyagraha by way of civil disobedience. Should this not happen, I have no doubt that satyagraha will be launched again.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-5-1920

145. MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES

I received some letters while I was touring Saurashtra for swadeshi propaganda, and a few were also received directly in the *Navajivan* office. I could not reply to all of them in *Navajivan* then. I even sent brief notes to some of the correspondents to say that I would reply when I got the time. I have carefully preserved all of them and I got a chance this week to go through them. Some of them would be relevant at any time and I intend to use them as occasion arises. One such letter is from a well-known, religious-minded lady of Saurashtra. I quote a part of it below :[1]

This is what her letter says in effect. I was asked similar questions by others as well in the course of my tour and so I shall try to answer them.

First as regards swadeshi. I think of swadeshi in terms of swadeshi cloth only, for about fifty crores of rupees are lost annually by the country because of our use of foreign cloth, though all that

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had asked Gandhiji whether he intended to extend the swadeshi movement to other items besides cloth, and why he seemed to show special concern for the untouchable communities.

money could be saved and spent so as to be distributed among our own craftsmen. In fact, formerly we did spend an equal or nearly equal amount in this manner. If starvation has increased terribly in our country, it is only because our craftsmen have not taken up any other profession in place of the one lost and because our countless young women have forgotten their mothers' holy occupation, by which they covered India's nakedness, of spinning some yarn every day in their homes. And, therefore, no matter what efforts are made in other directions, even if the cotton mills in India multiply to four times their present number, the miserable condition of the millions in India will never improve so long as these craftsmen and women do not take again to their old occupations. That is the reason why I have long believed, and still do, that swadeshi is our highest dharma. It is doubtless desirable that needles, penholders, etc., should be made in our country. We must certainly reach that stage finally. But there is no compa- rison between these industries and that of cloth. The former will be new industries introduced for the first time in our country. We shall not succeed in absorbing in them the crores of people who have been impoverished. The energy, moreover, which will enable us to produce cloth worth 60 crores of rupees with the co-operation of countless women and craftsmen, will profit us in future as well. In reviving an industry which will yield an annual income of 60 crores of rupees, we shall have to cultivate a great many sterling qualities, such as capacity for self-sacrifice, power of organization, intelligence, honesty, steadfastness, etc. Only then shall we succeed in putting my apparently limited idea of swadeshi on a firm basis.

Now as regards the depressed classes. This issue covers that of the decline in India's fortunes. The lady refers to it and asks whether, by merely removing the stigma of untouchability from these classes, we shall succeed in raising India's fortunes. I feel certain that we can bring about that happy result, for the strength which will enable us to shake off this sin will also help us to get rid of our other sins and it is my firm conviction that, so long as we remain submerged in some of these, India's fortunes will continue at a low ebb. I believe that by serving the depressed classes I serve the whole society. Though it is indeed a fact that, like the untouchables, other communities also suffer, the former are oppressed in the name of dharma. As an orthodox Hindu, therefore, I consider it my especial duty to free myself, and to persuade others to free themselves, from this notion of dharma. We cannot compare the sufferings of the untouchables with

those of any other section in India. It passes my understanding how we consider it dharma to treat the depressed classes as untouchables; I shudder at the very thought of this. My conscience tells me that untouchability can never be a part of Hinduism. I do not think it too much to dedicate my whole life to removing the thick crust of sin with which Hindu society has covered itself for so long by stupidly regarding these people as untouchables. I am only sorry that I am unable to devote myself wholly to that work.

There is no question here of freedom of eating with or marrying any of them. The only question is whether physical contact with them should be avoided. When a member of this community becomes a Muslim, I do not avoid such contact with him; when he becomes a Christian, I salute him; I consider it no sin to allow myself to be touched by a Muslim or a Christian after he has touched such a person, but I object to physical contact with the man himself! The very idea seems to me unjust, devoid of reason and contrary to dharma. That is why I consider myself sanctified when I touch any person of this class and have been continually beseeching the Hindus in all manner of ways, though remaining within limits of propriety, to free themselves from this stigma. I appeal to this lady, too, who has written her letter in all sincerity and frankness, that she should use her great powers and influence over the people to help Hindu society to throw off the burden of this sin : the practice of untouchability. She may also set a very worthy example to others by introducing the holy spinning-wheel in her own home, if only for a while and gifting a little of her time to the country.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-5-1920

146. NOTES

AN EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW

Contributions for the Orissa Famine Fund continue to pour in from all quarters without any effort for collection. This is a happy sign of increasing national consciousness and charity of heart. But the contribution received from a charity-box, at the Esplanade High School of Bombay, deserves special notice. The High School keeps a charity-box and teachers and students are encouraged to drop their contributions into it. The amount so collected is used for relieving

distress at any place, without any distinction of caste or creed. Only the teachers, students and employees of the school are allowed to put sums of money into it. Suitable rules have been framed in order to prevent any misappropriation of money. The smallest amount to be dropped is 2 annas and inducements are given for larger contributions by offering various certificates and in other ways. It is unnecessary here to dwell on the rules; we only wish to point out to readers that this practice of keeping a charity-box is worth emulating. If students and teachers in every well-maintained school are thus encouraged to give something in charity and if the funds collected are utilized properly, a large amount could be raised, almost without effort, for relieving distress in our country and every school can spend its amount for some good cause of its own choice.

HOW EMPLOYEES' CONDITION MAY IMPROVE

Regular readers of *Navajivan* probably remember that, in the issue of September 21, a correspondent, signing himself"Sarvodaya", suggested reduction of working hours for employees.[1] Another correspondent, an educated business man, who signs himself"Viragi", has now given his views on the subject. He writes :[2]

These views are admirable, no doubt. Once, however, in a meeting of mice one of them suggested that a bell be tied to the cat's neck, so that its sound could warn them of her approach and they could all run back into their holes. The question then arose who would bell the cat. In the same way, the question which arises here is, who, from the employees, will undertake this important task. It is not at all difficult if the large number of employees in Bombay come together and reach an agreement. There is no better way of propagating a good idea which may strike a man than its practice by the man himself. Why should not"Viragi" himself implement his idea?

DACOITIES IN MATAR TALUKA[3]

A correspondent, who does not give his name, says that dacoits are very active in Matar Taluka these days, and adds that there have

[1] *Vide* "Notes",21-9-1919.

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent agreed with the general contention of "Sarvodaya" but argued that the best way of removing employees' difficulties was to help them to organize co-operative activities.

[3] In Kheda District of Gujarat

been two raids since *Vaishakh Sud* 5[1]. Those who want steps to be taken in this matter should give more details. There is no need at all to be afraid of giving one's name and address. The people should now give up such fears. There is surely no danger in giving the information that there was a raid at a certain place, and even if there should be any danger in giving information, one should not be afraid of giving it so long as it is true. If any reader knows more about this matter and if the information is passed on to us, we hope to use it to secure relief for the people.

It is also necessary to add here that the people must now learn to defend themselves against such dangers. If all the residents of a village unite to take concerted measures, we believe the dacoits will generally not succeed in carrying out their raids.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 30-5-1920

147. KHILAFAT : FURTHER QUESTIONS ANSWERED

I have been overwhelmed with public criticism and private advice and even anonymous letters telling me exactly what I should do. Some are impatient that I do not advise immediate and extensive non-co-operation; others tell me what harm I am doing the country by throwing it knowingly in a tempest of violence on either side. It is difficult for me to deal with the whole of the criticism, but I would summarize some of the objections and endeavour to answer them to the best of my ability. These are in addition to those I have already answered :[2]

1. The Turkish claim is immoral or unjust and how can I, a lover of truth and justice, support it?

2. Even if the claim be just in theory, the Turk is hopelessly incapable, weak and cruel. He does not deserve any assistance.

3. Even if Turkey deserves all that is claimed for her, why should I land India in an international struggle?

4. It is no part of the Indian Mohammedans' business to meddle in this affair. If they cherish any political ambition, they have tried, they have failed and they should now sit still. If it is a religious matter with them, it cannot appeal to the Hindu reason in the manner it is put and in any case Hindus ought not to identify themselves with

[1] April 20, 1920
[2] *Vide* "Some Questions Answered", 19-5-1920.

Mohammedans in their religious quarrel with Christendom.

5. In no case should I advocate non-co-operation which in its extreme sense is nothing but a rebellion, no matter how peaceful it may be.

6. Moreover, my experience[1] of last year must show me that it is beyond the capacity of any single human being to control the forces of violence that are lying dormant in the land.

7. Non-co-operation is futile because people will never respond in right earnest, and reaction that might afterwards set in will be worse than the state of hopefulness we are now in.

8. Non-co-operation will bring about cessation of all other activities, even working of the Reforms, and thus set back the clock of progress.

9. However pure my motives may be, those of the Mussulmans are obviously revengeful.

I shall now answer the objections in the order in which they are stated :

1. In my opinion the Turkish claim is not only not immoral and unjust, but it is highly equitable, if only because Turkey wants to retain what is her own. And the Mohammedan manifesto has definitely declared that whatever guarantees may be necessary to be taken for the protection of non-Muslim and non-Turkish races, should be taken so as to give the Christians theirs and the Arabs their self-government under the Turkish suzerainty.

2. I do not believe the Turk to be weak, incapable or cruel. He is certainly disorganized and probably without good generalship. He has been obliged to fight against heavy odds. The argument of weakness, incapacity and cruelty one often hears quoted in connection with those from whom power is sought to be taken away. About the alleged massacres[2] a proper commission has been asked for, but never granted. And in any case security can be taken against oppression.

3. I have already stated that if I were not interested in the Indian Mohammedans, I would not interest myself in the welfare of the Turks any more than I do in that of the Austrians or the Poles. But I am bound as an Indian to share the sufferings and trials of fellow-Indians. If I deem the Mohammedan to be my brother, it is my duty to help him in his hour of peril to the best of my ability, if

[1] In connection with the agitation against the Rowlatt Bills

[2] In Armenia

his cause commends itself to me as just.

4. The fourth refers to the extent Hindus should join hands with the Mohammedans. It is therefore a matter of feeling and opinion. It is expedient to suffer for my Mohammedan brother to the utmost in a just cause and I should therefore travel with him along the whole road so long as the means employed by him are as honourable as his end. I cannot regulate the Mohammedan feeling. I must accept his statement that the Khilafat is with him a religious question in the sense that it binds him to reach the goal even at the cost of his own life.

5. I do not consider non-co-operation to be a rebellion, because it is free from violence. In a larger sense all opposition to a Government measure is a rebellion. In that sense, rebellion in a just cause is a duty, the extent of opposition being determined by the measure of the injustice done and felt.

6. My experience of last year shows me that in spite of aberrations in some parts of India, the country was entirely under control, that the influence of satyagraha was profoundly for its good and that where violence did break out there were local causes that directly contributed to it. At the same time I admit that even the violence that did take place on the part of the people and the spirit of lawlessness that was undoubtedly shown in some parts should have remained under check. I have made ample acknowledgment of the miscalculation I then made. But all the painful experience that I then gained did not in any way shake my belief in satyagraha or in the possibility of that matchless force being utilized in India. Ample provision is being made this time to avoid the mistakes of the past. But I must refuse to be deterred from a clear course, because it may be attended by violence totally unintended and in spite of extraordinary efforts that are being made to prevent it. At the same time I must make my position clear. Nothing can possibly prevent a satyagrahi from doing his duty because of the frown of the authorities. I would risk, if necessary, a million lives so long as they are voluntary sufferers and are innocent, spotless victims. It is the mistakes of the people that matter in a satyagraha campaign. Mistakes, even insanity, must be expected from the strong and the powerful, and the moment of victory has come when there is no resort to the mad fury of the powerful but a voluntary, dignified and quiet submission—but not submission to the will of the authority that has put itself in the wrong. The secret of success lies therefore in holding

every English life and the life of every officer serving the Government as sacred as those of our own dear ones. All the wonderful experience I have gained now during nearly 40 years of conscious existence, has convinced me that there is no gift so precious as that of life. I make bold to say that the moment the Englishmen feel that, although they are in India in a hopeless minority, their lives are protected against harm not because of the matchless weapons of destruction which are at their disposal, but because Indians refuse to take the lives even of those whom they may consider to be utterly in the wrong, that moment will see a transformation in the English nature in its rela-tion to India, and that moment will also be the moment when all the destructive cutlery that is to be had in India will begin to rust. I know that this is a far off vision. That cannot matter to me. It is enough for me to see the light and to act up to it, and it is more than enough when I gain companions in the onward march. I have claimed in private conversations with English friends that it is because of my incessant preaching of the gospel of non-violence and my having successfully demonstrated its practical utility that so far the forces of violence, which are undoubtedly in existence in connection with the Khilafat movement, have remained under complete control.

7. From a religious standpoint, the seventh objection is hardly worth considering. If people do not respond to the movement of non-co-operation, it would be a pity, but that can be no reason for a reformer not to try. It would be to me a demonstration that the present position of hopefulness is not dependent on any inward strength or knowledge, but it is hope born of ignorance and superstition.

8. If non-co-operation is taken up in earnest, it must bring about a cessation of all other activities including the Reforms, but I decline to draw therefore the corollary that it will set back the clock of progress. On the contrary, I consider non-co-operation to be such a powerful and pure instrument, that if it is enforced in an earnest spirit, it will be like seeking first the Kingdom of God and everything else following as a matter of course. People will have then realized their true power. They would have learnt the value of discipline, self-control, joint action, non-violence, organization and everything else that goes to make a nation great and good, and not merely great.

9. I do not know that I have a right to arrogate greater purity for myself than for our Mussulman brethren. But I do admit that they do not believe in my doctrine of non-violence to the full extent. For

them it is a weapon of the weak, an expedient. They consider non-co-operation without violence to be the only thing open to them in the war of direct action. I know that if some of them could offer successful violence, they would do today. But they are convinced that, humanly speaking, it is an impossibility. For them, therefore, non-co-operation is a matter not merely of duty but also of revenge. Whereas I take up non-co-operation against the Government as I have actually taken it up in practice against members of my own family. I entertain very high regard for the British constitution. I have not only no enmity against Englishmen but I regard much in English character as worthy of my emulation. I count many as my friends. It is against my religion to regard anyone as an enemy. I entertain similar sentiments with respect to Mohammedans. I find their cause to be just and pure. Although therefore their view-point is different from mine I do not hesitate to associate with them and invite them to give my method a trial, for I believe that the use of a pure weapon even from a mistaken motive does not fail to produce some good, even as the telling of truth, if only because for the time being it is the best policy, is at least so much to the good.

Young India, 2-6-1920

148. SPEECH AT KHILAFAT COMMITTEE MEETING, ALLAHABAD

[*June 3, 1920*][1]

Mahatma Gandhi, in a solemn speech which was listened to in perfect silence, said he knew full well that Muslims realized that non-co-operation was the only remedy now left to India in four stages.[2] He whole-heartedly sympathized with them and was prepared to co-operate with them to get the peace terms revised. He was of opinion that the present was a warfare between false Christianity and Islam. On the one side was the strength of arms and on the other side moral force. We wanted to win the war with moral force. The course that the movement of non-co-operation should

[1] A joint Hindu-Muslim conference was held at Allahabad on June 1 and 2, and the meeting of the All-India Central Khilafat Committee, at which this speech was delivered, took place on June 3, 1920 (*vide* "The Non-co-operation Committee", 23-6-1920). For the resolutions passed at this meeting, *vide* Appendix "Resolutions Passed at Khilafat Committee Meeting", 3-6-1920.

[2] The All-India Khilafat Committee wich had met in Bombay to deliberate upon Gandhiji's non-co-operation programme had adopted it on May 28 as the only means left to the Muslims.

pursue would be graduated in four stages, and previously to working out the first of them His Excellency the Viceroy should be approached and given notice of one month to see that the Turkish peace terms were revised in conformity with Moslem demands, and, in case it was not done, to resign and join the movement of non-co-operation. After a month the first stage would be put into operation. He suggested that a committee consisting of members prepared to remain with him and invested with full powers be appointed to work out the scheme, whose decisions would be binding on all people. He disapproved of boycott as impracticable and suggested that swadeshi should be adopted instead. He urged upon the people to avoid violence in any shape or form.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 7-6-1920

149. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, BOMBAY[1]

June 4, 1920

At the opening ceremony Mr. Gandhi was accompanied by Shrimati Saraladevi Chowdharani who was dressed in her *khaddar* sari and blouse.

Mr. Gandhi in his speech at the opening ceremony referred to the instance of the Duchess of Sutherland whose indefatigable industry had popularized the use of home-woven and homespun Scotch tweed furnishing as it did the honourable and lucrative occupation of the hundreds of Scotch women. She was able to show that there was more art in the rough-looking Scotch tweed made by the poor Highlander than in the woollen pieces turned out in huge factories. Mr. Gandhi said that he would not be satisfied until India recognized the true art in the homespun. When it became fashionable like the Scotch tweed it would, like the latter, fetch a higher price than the mill-made articles thus making it possible to double the rates he was now paying for homes- pun yarn.

Young India, 9-6-1920

[1] Delivered when declaring open the Khadi Bhandar of Narandas Purshottamdas and Vithaldas Jerajani

150. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, NADIAD[1]

June 5, 1920

I have great expectations of Kheda district. The store which I am just going to declare open should not merely spread the use of swadeshi cloth. I shall be satisfied only if it regularly buys up all the cloth produced in the villagers of Kheda district and becomes a centre for swadeshi cloth. Why should they have to go to Bombay to buy stocks for this store? I am confident that the women of Kheda district make sufficient cloth to meet the needs of the whole district, and that, too, in their spare time. I hope people with zeal will supply them spinning-wheels and cotton for spinning. For our cloth, we pay two rupees a head annually to foreign countries. On this reckoning, if we weave our own cloth we shall save fourteen lakhs of rupees on cloth for the seven lakh people of Kheda district, and this saving, moreover, will be shared, not among the rich few, but entirely among the large numbers of our poor brethren. In this way, the swadeshi movement serves the purpose of an insurance company. Again, I should like to point out emphatically that, if we would further the cause of swadeshi, this store should pay attention to the production of indigenous cloth rather than compete in sales with other stores. I urge you for this purpose to send round volunteers from house to house to supply cotton to people and collect the prepared yarn and cloth from them. This is how the East India Company penetrated Indian markets. For rehabilitating our indigenous industries, we shall have to display even greater organizing power, perseverance, thrift and commercial shrewdness than were displayed by the East India Company. I hope that this new enterprise will ensure the success of swadeshi on which national revival depends.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-6-1920

[1] Delivered when declaring open a swadeshi store. Sarladevi Chowdhrani and C. Rajagopalachari were present at the function.

151. POLITICAL FREEMASONRY

Freemasonry is a secret brotherhood which has, more by its secret and iron rules than by its service to humanity, obtained a hold upon some of the best minds. Similarly there seems to be some secret code of con-duct governing the official class in India before which the flower of the great British nation fall prostrate and unconsciously become instruments of injustice which as private individuals they would be ashamed of per-petrating. In no other way is it possible for one to understand the majority report of the Hunter Committee, the despatch[1] of the Government of India and the reply[2] thereto of the Secretary of State for India. In spite of the energetic protests of a section of the Press to the personnel of the Committee, it might be said that on the whole the public were prepared to trust it especially as it contained three Indian members[3] who could fairly be claimed to be independent. The first rude shock to this confidence was delivered by the refusal of Lord Hunter's Committee to accept the very moderate and reasonable demand of the Congress Committee that the imprisoned Punjab leaders might be allowed to appear before it to instruct counsel. Any doubt that might have been left in the mind of any person has been dispelled by the report of the majority of that committee. The result has justified the attitude of the Congress Committee. The evidence collected by it shows what Lord Hunter's Committee purposely denied itself.

The minority report[4] stands out like an oasis in a desert. The Indian members deserve the congratulations of their countrymen for having dared to do their duty in the face of heavy odds. I wish that they had refused to associate themselves even in a modified manner with the condemnation of the civil disobedience form of satyagraha.

[1] Dated May 3, 1920. For the text of the despatch, which contains the substance of the Hunter Committee's report, *vide* Appendix "Government of India Despatch on Hunter Committee Report", 3-5-1920.

[2] This followed on May 26, 1920; for the text, *vide* Appendix "Montagu's Reply to Government of India Despatch", 26-5-1920.

[3] Pandit Jagat Narayan, Sir Chimanlal Setalwad and Sardar Sultan Ahmed Khan

[4] The Indian members of the Hunter Committee submitted a separate minority report the substance of which is found in the Government of India's despatch; *vide* Appendix "Government of India Despatch on Hunter Committee Report", 3-5-1920.

The defiant spirit of the Delhi mob on the 30th March[1] can hardly be used for condemning a great spiritual movement which is admittedly and manifestly intended to restrain the violent tendencies of mobs and to replace criminal lawlessness by civil disobedience of authority, when it has forfeited all title to respect. On the 30th March civil disobedience had not even been started. Almost every great popular demonstration has been hitherto attended all the world over by a certain amount of lawlessness. The demonstrations of 30th March and 6th April could have been held under any other aegis as under that of satyagraha. I hold that without the advent of the spirit of civility and orderliness, the disobedience would have taken a much more violent form than it did even at Delhi. It was only the wonderfully quick acceptance by the people of the principle of satyagraha that effectively checked the spread of violence throughout the length and breadth of India. And even today it is not the memory of the black barbarity of General Dyer that is keeping the undoubted restlessness among the people from breaking forth into violence. The hold that satyagraha had gained on the people—it may be even against their will—is curbing the forces of disorder and violence. But I must not detain the reader on a defence of satyagraha against unjust attacks. If it has gained a foothold in India, it will survive much fiercer attacks than the one made by the majority of the Hunter Committee and somewhat supported by the minority. Had the majority report been defective only in this direction and correct in every other there would have been nothing but praise for it. After all satyagraha is a new experiment in the political field. And a hasty attributing to it of any popular disorder would have been pardonable.

The universally pronounced adverse judgment upon the report and the despatches rests upon far more painful revelations. Look at the manifestly laboured defence of every official act of inhumanity except where condemnation could not be avoided through the impudent admissions made by the actors themselves, look at the special pleading introduced to defend General Dyer even against himself, look at the vain glorification of Sir Michael O'Dwyer although it was his spirit that actuated every act of criminality on the part of the subordinates, look at the deliberate refusal to examine his

[1] In 1919 the satyagrahis of Delhi had observed Sunday, March 30, as a day of humiliation and prayer, to demonstrate their protest against the Rowlatt Bills. The mob, however, had created some disturbances.

wild career before the events of April[1]. His acts were an open book of which the Committee ought to have taken judicial notice. Instead of accepting everything that the officials had to say, the Committee's obvious duty was to tax itself to find out the real cause of the disorders. It ought to have gone out of its way to search out the inwardness of the events. Instead of patiently going behind the hard crust of official documents, the Committee allowed itself to be guided with criminal laziness by mere official evidence. The report and the despatches, in my humble opinion, constitute an attempt to condone official lawlessness. The cautions and half-hearted condemnation pronounced upon General Dyer's massacre and the notorious crawling order only deepens the disappointment of the reader as he goes through page after page of thinly disguised official whitewash. I need, however, scarcely attempt any elaborate examination of the report or the despatches which have been so justly censured by the whole national Press whether of the moderate or the extremist hue. The point to consider is how to break down this secret—be the secrecy ever so unconscious—conspiracy to uphold official iniquity. A scandal of this magnitude cannot be tolerated by the nation, if it is to preserve its self-respect and become a free partner in the Empire. The All-India Congress Committee has resolved upon convening a special session[2] of the Congress for the purpose of considering, among other things, the situation arising from the report. In my opinion the time has arrived when we must cease to rely upon mere petitions to Parliament for effective action. Petitions will have value, when the nation has behind it the power to enforce its will. What power then have we? When we are firmly of opinion that grave wrong has been done us and when after an appeal to the highest authority we fail to secure redress, there must be some power available to us for undoing the wrong. It is true that in the vast majority of cases, it is the duty of a subject to submit to wrongs on failure of the usual procedure, so long as they do not affect his vital being. But every nation and every individual has the right, and it is their duty, to rise against an intolerable wrong. I do not believe in armed risings. They are a remedy worse than the disease sought to be cured. They are a token

[1] 1919

[2] At Calcutta, in September 1920

of the spirit of revenge and impatience and anger. The method of violence cannot do good in the long run. Witness the effect of the armed rising of the Allied Powers against Germany. Have they not become even like the Germans, as the latter have been depicted to us by them?

We have a better method. Unlike that of violence it certainly involves the exercise of restraint and patience; but it requires also resoluteness of will. This method is to refuse to be party to the wrong. No tyrant has ever yet succeeded in his purpose without carrying the victim with him, it may be, as it often is, by force. Most people choose rather to yield to the will of the tyrant than to suffer for the consequence of resistance. Hence does terrorism form part of the stock-in-trade of the tyrant. But we have instances in history where terrorism has failed to impose the terrorist's will upon his victim. India has the choice before her now. If then the acts of the Punjab Government be an insufferable wrong, if the report of Lord Hunter's Committee and the two despatches be a greater wrong by reason of their grievous condonation of these acts, it is clear that we must refuse to submit to this official violence. Appeal to the Parliament by all means if necessary, but if the Parliament fails us and if we are worthy to call ourselves a nation, we must refuse to uphold the Government by withdrawing co-operation from it.

Young India, 9-6-1920

152. THE MOHAMMEDAN DECISION

The Khilafat meeting[1] at Allahabad has unanimously reaffirmed the principle of non-co-operation and appointed an executive committee to lay down and enforce a detailed programme. This meeting was preceded by a joint Hindu-Mohammedan meeting at which Hindu leaders were invited to give their views.[2] Mrs. Besant, the Hon'ble Pandit Malaviyaji, the Hon'ble Dr. Sapru[3], Motilal Nehru,

[1] Held by the Khilafat Committee on June 9, 1920

[2] *Vide* footnote 1 to "Speech at Khilafat Committee Meeting, Allahabad", June 3, 1920.

[3] Sir Tejbahadur Ambikaprasad Sapru (1875-1949); eminent laywer, constitutionalist and politician; Law Member in Viceroy's Council 1920-22; president of the Liberal Federation in 1923 and 1927

Chintamani[1] and others were present at the meeting. It was a wise step on the part of the Khilafat Committee to invite Hindus representing all shades of thought to give them the benefit of their advice. Mrs. Besant and Dr. Sapru strongly dissuaded the Mohammedans present from the policy of non-co-operation. The other Hindu speakers made non-committal speeches. Whilst the other Hindu speakers approved of the principle of non-co-operation in theory, they saw many practical difficulties and they feared also complications arising from Mohammedans welcoming an Afghan invasion of India.[2] The Mohammedan speakers gave the fullest and frankest assurances that they would fight to a man any invader who wanted to conquer India, but they were equally frank in asserting that any invasion from without undertaken with a view to uphold the prestige of Islam and to vindicate justice would have their full sympathy if not their actual support. It is easy enough to understand and justify the Hindu caution. It is difficult to resist the Mohammedan position. In my opinion, the best way to prevent India from becoming the battle ground between the forces of Islam and those of the English is for Hindus to make non-co-operation a complete and immediate success, and I have little doubt that if the Mohammedans remain true to their declared intention and are able to exercise self-restraint and make sacrifices, the Hindus will"play the game" and join them in the campaign of non-co-operation. I feel equally certain that the Hindus will not assist Mohammedans in promoting or bringing about an armed conflict between the British Government and their allies, and Afghanistan. British forces are too well organized to admit of any successful invasion of the Indian frontier. The only way, therefore, the Mohammedans can carry on an effective struggle on behalf of the honour of Islam is to take up non-co-operation in real earnest. It will not only be completely effective if it is adopted by the people on an extensive scale, but it will also provide full scope for individual conscience. If I cannot bear an injustice done by an individual or a corporation, and if I am directly or indirectly instrumental in upholding that individual or corporation, I must answer for it before my Maker; but I have done all it is humanly possible for me to do

[1] Sir C. Y. Chintamani (1880-1941); journalist, author and politician; president of the Liberal Federation in 1920 and 1931; associated with *The Leader* of Allahabad for 32 years

[2] Even after the treaty of peace was signed in August, 1919, at the end of the third Afghan war, the relations between the Governments of India and Afghanistan remained very uncertain. In April, 1920, the negotiation at Mussoorie between their representati-ves had to be suspended for more than a month due to a succession of unpleasant frontier incidents.

consistently with the moral code that refuses to injure even the wrong-doer, if I cease to support the injustice in the manner described above. In applying, therefore, such a great force there should be no haste, there should be no temper shown. Non-co-operation must be and remain absolutely a voluntary effort. The whole thing, then, depends upon Mohammedans themselves. If they will but help themselves, Hindu help will come and the Government, great and mighty though it is, will have to bend before this irresistible force. No Government can possibly withstand the bloodless opposition of a whole nation.

Young India, 9-6-1920

153. LETTER TO S. R. HIGNELL

LABURNUM ROAD, BOMBAY,
June 12, 1920

DEAR MR. HIGNELL,

I have purposely refrained from replying to your letter of the 6th May conveying Mr. Montagu's message in reply to mycable to him regarding my proposed visit to London on the Khilafat question. I have myself given the matter my most anxious thought and have consulted my Musalman friends. And I have come to the conclusion that I must not go to London for the purpose intended by Mr. Montagu. Nothing would give me greater pleasure than to be able to discuss the general Indian question with Mr. Montagu personally. But I feel that I at least must devote for the time being my exclusive attention to the Khilafat question. I flatter myself with the belief that mine is the greatest contribution to the preservation of the public peace in India. And my withdrawal from it today can be justified only for the purpose of hastening a proper solution of the difficult Khilafat question. Mr. Montagu's message, on the contrary, holds out no such hope if I went to London. In the circumstances and at the present juncture, I deem it wiser not to proceed to London unless I am wanted there definitely for the purpose of discussing the Peace Terms with a view to their revision. Will you kindly send Mr. Montagu the purport of this letter?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Chelmsford Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

154. PRESS STATEMENT ON REPATRIATION SCHEME[1]

June 13, 1920

With reference to the approval that seems to have been accorded to the scheme of repatriation, said to have been recommended by the South African Commission[2] and accepted by the Union Government, I would respectfully caution the public against accepting the proposed scheme[3].

The public have not the interim report of the Commission. We do not know the conditions of repatriation. It seems to me therefore that it is most hazardous to venture any opinion at all on a scheme of which we have a most imperfect knowledge. Generally, it must be stated that any scheme of State repatriation must be looked upon with the gravest suspicion, especially when the scheme is fathered by those who are uncompromisingly hostile to Indian aspirations. The Indians of South Africa are able to remain in that country because of their domicile. I very much fear that the proposed scheme will be found to involve forfeiture of domicile against acceptance of repatriation money, that is, passage back to India and possibly a trifling sum as pocket-money. I am inclined to think that apart from everything else such considerations will be wholly insufficient for giving away a valuable right. I would hardly call any such repatriation as purely voluntary.

This, however, is one of the many objections that may be advanced against the proposed repatriation. I have no doubt that the best thing is to suspend judgment till we have the full scheme before us for examination. It is to be hoped that the Government of India will take the public fully into its confidence before pronouncing upon the scheme.

The Hindu, 14-6-1920

[1] Released from Bombay, in regard to the scheme recommended by the Enquiry Commission in South Africa whose sittings had commenced from March, 1920

[2] In its interim report

[3] *India in 1920* says : "The interim report recommended that with a view to encourage the return to India of those Indians who are desirous of repatriation, the Union Government should afford all facilities, including the provision of shipping and the relaxation of restrictions on the export of gold in the form of savings and jewelry."

155. LETTER TO N. C. KELKAR AND OTHERS[1]

[About *June 15, 1920*][2]

DEAR MR. KELKAR,

I am s[orry I] ha[ve] not been able . . . attend . . . tic Congress constitution. I now send you my draft[3]. You will see that I have aimed at simplicity, intensity and representation of all parties an[d all] shades of opinion ensuring the predominance of that view which is most acceptable to the country. You will notice too that the Congress under the s. . . a. . . tly wieldy . . . body reta[ining] all the spectacular effect. Please go through the whole draft critically and suggest your dissent [un]hesi-tatingly wherever [you d]isagree.

Having taken all this time myself, I have no right to hurry you, but I know you will give it as early attention as you can. If there is . . . content . . . matter [we] must meet. I am at the present moment usually resident in Bombay and if we can meet in Bombay it will save . . . much time. [A]ny date will suit me.

Yours sincerely,

N. C. KELKAR, POONA
R[ANGA S]WAMI IYENGAR
H[IND]U OFFICE, MADRAS
I. B. SE[N, ES]Q.
C/O C. R. DAS, ESQ.
CALCUTTA

From a copy : S.N. 7420

[1] The draft in pencil in Gandhiji's hand, the source for this item, has been badly damaged by termites. Evidently, copies of the letter were sent to the other addressees also.

[2] At the Congress session in December 1919, Gandhiji was asked to revise the constitution of the Congress. The revised draft was circulated during the Congress session in September, 1920, at Calcutta. In his letter to Kelkar of July 2, 1920, Gandhiji acknowledges Kelkar's criticism of his draft. This letter forwarding the draft to Kelkar must, therefore, have been written about a fortnight earlier. Moreover, for the greater part of June, 1920, Gandhiji was in Bombay as he mentions in the second paragraph. It would seem therefore that this letter was written about the middle of June, 1920.

[3] Not available

156. THE LAW OF SUFFERING

No country has ever risen without being purified through the fire of suffering. Mother suffers so that her child may live. The condition of wheat-growing is that the seed grain should perish. Life comes out of Death. Will India rise out of her slavery without fulfilling this eternal law of purification through suffering?

If my advisers are right, evidently India will realize her destiny without travail. For their chief concern is that the events of April, 1919, should not be repeated. They fear non-co-operation because it would involve the sufferings of many. If Hampden had argued thus he would not have withheld payment of ship-money, nor would Wat Tyler have raised the standard of revolt. English and French histories are replete with instances of men continuing their pursuit of the right irrespective of the amount of suffering involved. The actors did not stop to think whether ignorant people would not have involuntarily to suffer. Why should we expect to write our history differently? It is possible for us, if we would, to learn from the mistakes of our predecessors to do better, but it is impossible to do away with the law of suffering which is the one indispensable condition of our being. The way to do better is to avoid, if we can, violence from our side and thus quicken the rate of progress and to introduce greater purity in the methods of suffering. We can, if we will, refrain, in our impatience, from bending the wrongdoer to our will by physical force as Sinn Feiners are doing today, or from coercing our neighbours to follow our methods as was done last year by some of us in bringing about hartal. Progress is to be measured by the amount of suffering undergone by the sufferer. The purer the suffering, the greater is the progress. Hence did the sacrifice of Jesus suffice to free a sorrowing world. In his onward march he did not count the cost of suffering entailed upon his neighbours, whether it was undergone by them voluntarily or otherwise. Thus did the sufferings of a Harishchandra[1] suffice to re-establish the kingdom of truth. He must have known that his subjects would suffer involuntarily by his abdication. He did not mind because he could not do otherwise than follow truth.

[1] Legendary King of Ayodhya who held his loyalty to truth above his wife, son, kingdom and wealth. Finally, after undergoing countless sufferings, he, his family and his subjects were raised to heavenly bliss.

I have already stated that I do not deplore the massacre of Jallianwala Bagh so much as I deplore the murders of Englishmen and destruction of property by ourselves. The frightfulness at Amritsar drew away public attention from the greater though slower frightfulness at Lahore where attempt was made to emasculate the inhabitants by slow processes. But before we rise higher we shall have to undergo such pro-cesses many more times till they teach us to take up suffering voluntarily and to find joy in it. I am convinced that the Lahorians never deserved the cruel insults that they were subjected to;[2] they never hurt a single Englishman; they never destroyed any property. But a wilful ruler was determined to crush the spirit of a people just trying to throw off his chafing yoke. And if I am told that all this was due to my preaching satyagraha, my answer is that I would preach satyagraha all the more forcibly for that, so long as I have breath left in me, and tell the people that next time they would answer O'Dwyerean insolence not by opening shops by reason of threats of forcible sales but by allowing the tyrant to do his worst and let him sell their all but their unconquerable souls. Sages of old mortified the flesh so that the spirit within might be set free, so that their trained bodies might be proof against any injury that might be inflicted on them by tyrants seeking to impose their will on them. And if India wishes to revive her ancient wisdom and to avoid the errors of Europe, if India wishes to see the Kingdom of God established on earth instead of that of Satan which has enveloped Europe, then I would urge her sons and daughters not to be deceived by fine phrases, the terrible subtleties that hedge us in, the fears of suffering that India may have to undergo, but to see what is happening today in Europe and from it understand that we *must* go through the suffering even as Europe has gone through, but not the process of making others suffer. Germany wan-ted to dominate Europe and the Allies wanted to do likewise by crushing Germany. Europe is no better for Germany's fall. The Allies have proved themselves to be just as deceitful, cruel, greedy and selfish as Germany was or would have been. Germany would have avoided the sanctimonious humbug that one sees associated with the many dealings of the Allies.

The miscalculation that I deplored last year was not in connection with the sufferings imposed upon the people, but about the mistakes made by them and violence done by them owing to their not having sufficiently understood the message of satyagraha. What then is the meaning of non-co-operation in terms of the Law of

Suffering? We must voluntarily put up with the losses and inconveniences that arise from having to withdraw our support from a Government that is ruling against our will. Possession of power and riches is a crime under an unjust government; poverty in that case is a virtue, says Thoreau. It may be that in the transition state we may make mistakes; there may be avoidable suffering. These things are preferable to national emasculation.

We must refuse to wait for the wrong to be righted till the wrongdoer has been roused to a sense of his inequity. We must not, for fear of ourselves or others having to suffer, remain participators in it. But we must combat the wrong by ceasing to assist the wrongdoer directly or indirectly.

If a father does an injustice, it is the duty of his children to leave the parental roof. If the head master of a school conducts his institution on an immoral basis, the pupils must leave the school. If the chairman of a corporation is corrupt, the members thereof must wash their hands clean of his corruption by withdrawing from it; even so, if a government does a grave injustice, the subject must withdraw co-operation wholly or partially, sufficiently to wean the ruler from his wickedness. In each case conceived by me there is an element of suffering whether mental or physical. Without such suffering it is not possible to attain freedom.

Young India, 16-6-1920

157. HINDI IN MADRAS

I have the greatest faith in the Dravidians some day taking up Hindi study seriously. If an eighth of the industry that they put in mastering English were to be devoted to learning Hindi, instead of the rest of India remaining a sealed book to them, they will be one with us as never before. I know that some would say the argument cuts both ways. The Dravidians being in a minority, national economy suggests that they should learn the common language of the rest of India than that the rest should learn Tamil, Telugu, Canarese and Malayalam in order to be able to converse with Dravidian India. It is for that reason that Hindi-propaganda work of an intense type has been going on in the Madras Presidency for the past eighteen months under the aegis of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan of Allahabad. In response to an appeal by me to the Agraval Marwadi Sammelan held in Bombay last week, the wealthy Marwadis of Bombay and Calcutta present there subscribed on the spot Rs. 50,000 for five years' Hindi propaganda in Madras Presidency. They have once more demonstrated that Hindi work is a speciality of this princely merchant class of India. This generous response increases the responsibility of the Sammelan of Allahabad and of those Dravidians who share with me the belief that Madras must take up Hindi for the sake of full national expansion. Let no Dravidian think that learning Hindi is at all difficult. A little time taken from the recreation hour daily and in a systematic manner will enable an average man to learn Hindi in one year. I would venture to suggest, too, that large municipalities might now introduce Hindi as an optional language to be learnt in the municipal schools. I can say from experience that Dravidian children take to Hindi in a remarkably easy manner. Little does anyone know that almost all the Tamils and the Telugus living in South Africa can carry on an intelligent conversation in Hindi. I venture to hope therefore that the young men of Madras will show their appreciation of Marwadi generosity by availing themselves of the facility afforded to them of learning Hindi without payment.

Young India, 16-6-1920

158. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

June 17, 1920

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have your letter as also Millie's. As for your letter, we must for the time being agree to differ. You cannot understand the religious viewpoint which guides me in the matter. I am satisfied that the Muslim cause is strictly just. I am not supporting and will not support an unjust demand on their part. But assume that their demand is just and you give me an unanswerable clause compelling me to throw in my lot with the Mussalmans. On the South African, Fiji and the East African question, we have a common platform and I know that you are putting forth your best energy in these matters. I do not know your views on the Punjab. There again we may differ. I hope you got the Congress Sub committee's report. I wonder whether you agree with its findings. For me the Hunter Committee's Majority Report is a piece of shameless jobbery.[1]

Millie's letter is a human document, which I was pleased to receive after so many months. The cheerful character of the news she has given me about the family has pleased me much and I was delighted to find that my bed-companion Waldo was much healthier than he used to be. I was glad too to have news about Agnes[2] . Please tell her when you see her that I would prize a few lines from her now and then provided that she does not bind me to a reply. I was sorry to have the bad news about Sally. I do not suppose any of us ever thought much of the match. But I have considered Sally to be a brave girl and I hope that she is bearing bravely the failure of her experiment. My family is ever increasing. If you now visited the Ashram you would be surprised at its bigness and I think the solidity of the work would please you. There we are concentrating on education, weaving industry and heart-culture. The family has outgrown the buildings you saw. We are living in a cramped condition. Devdas is growing wonderfully. He continues to answer the

[1] *Vide* also "Political Freemasonry", 9-6-1920 and "Government of India Despatch on Hunter Committee Report", 3-5-1920.

[2] Addressee's niece

true description that once Ceilia gave when I saw them all in Poona. She said ≈"When Devdas enters a room, he seems to fill it." I am dictating this letter to Sarala Devi in Bombay. Much of my work is done whilst I am lying down in bed. Devdas is with me and so is Mahadev Desai. He has just gone to Surat to pay a visit of condolence and so you find Sarala Devi helping me. You will be glad to learn that I have at last got good news of Kallenbach.[1] He is in Berlin. He sent me messages through Miss Anna Kirby. Unfortunately, I have not his address or I would have sent it to you. Miss Kirby wrote to me from Y.W.C.A., Johannesburg. She might have come back to London. If people are allowed to go to Berlin and if you succeed in tracing his address, please send Jamnadas there to see him.

With love,

Yours,

BHAI

From the original : Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy : National Archives of India

159. LETTER TO KHAMBATTA

BOMBAY,

June 18, 1920

DEAR MR. KHAMBATTA,

I thank you for your kind note sending Rs. 100 for the Orissa distress fund. I shall respect your wish not to publish your name.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 7533

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H. Kallenbach", 10-8-1920.

160. LETTER TO SAKARLAL

LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
Friday [*June 18, 1920*][1]

BHAI SHRI SAKARLAL,

I have just received a telegram about Vrajlal.[2] It is not that you alone have lost a jewel-like brother; we, too, have lost a co-worker no less precious than a brother. His hallowed soul is now resting in an exalted place. Bhai Vrajlal gave an excellent demonstration of what the higher life can be. I know you cannot but grieve; but lighten the burden of your grief with the thought that his life was sublime and that all of us share your grief.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 843

161. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[*June 18, 1920*][3]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your telegram. I am shocked by the telegram about Bhai Vrajlal. I just can't believe that he died as a result of a mishap. He passed away while he was yet happy in every way. He did not have to be looked after by anyone. These days we are being visited with fierce wrath. Write a letter to his brother, signed by all, and send the accompa-nying letter[4] with it. I can write no more just now. I expect a detailed letter from you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 842

[1] The Friday following the death of Vrajlal was June 18, 1920.
[2] For the circumstances in which Vrajlal died, *vide* "*In Memoriam*", 26-6-1920.
[3] Judging from the contents, this letter was evidently written just after the preceding item.
[4] *Vide* the preceding item.

162. DUTY OF SELF-SACRIFICE

They who live on the *amrit*[1] of what remains after a *yajna*,[2] attain to eternal *Brahma*;[3] O Arjuna, those who do no *yajna*, even this world is not for them, not to speak of the next.[4]

Narada gave his considered opinion that Parvati[5] should go and do *tapasya*. Her parents liked the idea, for *tapasya* brings happiness and destroys sin and suffering. *Tapasya* is the basis of all creation. They, therefore, desired that Parvati, taking this to heart, should go and do *tapasya*.[6]

The term *yajna* can be interpreted in a number of ways but there is only one meaning acceptable to men of all faiths, and that is, to be ready even to lay down one's life for true welfare. Parvati wanted such a one as Siva as her consort and so was advised to do penance. If anyone wants to know what was the penance she did, he should go to the incomparable work of Tulsidas. A woman gives birth to children in suffering and sacrifices herself in bringing them up. Life comes out of death. A seed must disintegrate under earth and perish before it can grow into grain. Harishchandra went through endless suffering to honour his word as a man of truth, Jesus put on a crown of thorns to win salvation for his people, allowed his hands and feet to be nailed and suffered agonies before he gave up the ghost. This has been the law of *yagna* from immemorial times. Without *yajna* this earth cannot exist even for a moment. Before the Turks could conquer Constantinople,[7] they sacrificed innumerable troops and used the corpses as a bridge. I cannot help feeling that we want to advance our country without fulfilling this immutable law of suffering

[1] Drink of the gods, conferring immortality

[2] Sacrifice

[3] The Absolute

[4] *Bhagavad Gita*, IV, 31 :

यज्ञशिष्टामृतभुज यान्ति ब्रह्म सनातनम्।
नाथं लोकोऽस्त्ययज्ञस्य कुतोऽन्थय कुरुसत्तम॥

[5] Daughter of Himalaya

[6] Tulsidas in *Ramacharitamanasa :*

करहि जाई तप शैलकुमारी। नारद कहा सो सत्य विचारी।
मातुपितहिं पुनि यह मत भावा। तपसुखप्रद दुखदोष नसावा।
तप अधार सब सृष्टि भवानी। करहि जाइ तप अस जिय जानी।

[7] In 1487

which has prevailed in India.

We want full independence without the sacrifice of a single life. We would be happy if we could do without sacrifice of money either. A great many people have got frightened of non-co-operation. What must be the reasons? I can think of only two: first, that people may have to starve if they give up their jobs and, second, if anyone makes a mistake and the Government resorts to firing, thousands may lose their lives. This means that we want a solution of the difficult and important problems of the Khilafat without the least suffering on our part. Non-co-operation is some sort of very easy *yajna*, it is penance in a small way, requiring a little self-sacrifice. I would certainly not think of it as any suffering if 20 or 25 thousand, or may be a 100 or 150 thousand, gave up service to secure justice or in order, at any rate, not to be a party to injustice; nay, where the institution in question is well run I would look upon such suffering [by employees] as natural; instead of running away from it, they should welcome it. I would not in the least be pained if thousands of men are ruined in the attempt to seek a just solution of a problem like the Khilafat. I would look upon it as a test of people's devotion to dharma. I believe that there can be no victory except through such suffering, and also that thousands of men suffering in that way cannot but win.

No measure of repression by the Government in consequence of non-co-operation can move or frighten me. I am convinced that the severer the repression the sooner will the problem be solved.

There is only one fear : lest people make a mistake, put themselves in the wrong and invite punishment, lest any individual yield to anger and assault or kill an official. If this happens, the pure law of self-sacrifice will be tarnished and to that extent the desired end will be delayed. Only the purest things can be offered in sacrifice. If Harishchandra had the least little evil in him and he had renounced a kingdom, we would not be singing his glory today. Christians, in regarding Jesus as the Saviour, attribute total perfection to him. Looking at the matter in this light, [we see] that we could start non-co-operation in full force immediately if we knew that there was not the slightest possibility of our being guilty of anything wrong in our agitation regarding the Khilafat or any other issue. If the movement has been divided into stages, it is because of doubts whether we would remain blameless. Considering all this, and considering that self-sacrifice is an inescapable duty if we are to ensure India's

regeneration, we should entertain no fears at all about non-co-operation; on the contrary, we should realize that without some kind of *yajna* or *tapas* by way of non-co-operation, we shall succeed neither in solving the Khilafat problem, nor in securing justice for the Punjab nor in winning and retaining swaraj.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-6-1920

163. "WHAT SHOULD I DO?"

Mrs. Polak has sent me a picture which shows one Mr. Glading, an Englishman of eighty years, spinning wool on a wheel. He has taken up this work in his old age by way of recreation. The old man cannot spend the whole day talking or reading the Bible; at this age, again, how can he join the games others play at home? Moreover, he must have a partner in the game and not everyone can get one. So, the old man must have thought of cultivating a useful hobby and chosen the spinning-wheel.

Before I got this picture, a gentleman who had retired from a high post had been to see me. He did not know how to spend his time. He could not spend the whole day telling his beads. He wished to have some philanthropic work. He came to me for advice since I have the reputation of being a man engaged in a good many activities. I could not think of any better work for him, considering his health, than plying the spinning-wheel. I politely put it to him that he could spin. I am afraid that I failed to make an impression on him. Perhaps I lowered myself in his esteem.

Some believe that spinning is just an activity reserved for women. To mention the spinning-wheel before men is to make them feel that they are being insulted. Not only do I not think this way but I believe, on the contrary, that all work beneficial to society is for both, men and women.

It is natural, of course, that since women cannot work as hard physically as men and do not as readily go out for work, spinning is regarded as especially their job.

But cooking is done by men in many families, though ordinarily it is women's work. Similarly, though the spinning-wheel may be ordinarily for women, occasionally men also can work on it. Many men are trying, at present, to effect improvements in the

spinning-wheel. I would, therefore, certainly advise people in the same position as the friend above to start plying the spinning-wheel.

Lawyers and doctors go to clubs and play cards or billiards, but I doubt if they refresh their minds thereby. If, on the other hand, they were to stay at home and, sitting in a clean room, work at the spinning-wheel, I am sure they would get more innocent pleasure from this work than they ever could from cards. Sir John Lubbock[1] found his rest in turning from one type of useful work to another and his recreation in watching ants at work. Lord Salisbury amused himself with experiments in chemistry. Gladstone sought relief from his work in the House of Commons by employing himself in splitting logs of wood. We stand in need of such recreation more than the British do.

The country lacks food and clothing, or whatever there is very dear. As for milk and ghee, large numbers have to go without them. At a time such as this, dharma consists wholly in producing and supplying these two things in enough quantities. Not to eat and not to clothe ourselves till we have fed the hungry and clothed the naked is the whole of *dayadharma*[2] . I would, therefore, humbly suggest to all persons in the position of this friend that, if it is not possible for them to do body labour in their spare time by working on farms or in such other ways, they should most certainly get hold of a spinning-wheel and spend their time spinning. This will safeguard both dharma and material interests.

No effort on this path is ever wasted

And no obstacle undoes the progress made;

Even a little of this dharma

Saves one from great danger.[3]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-6-1920

[1] Sir John William Lubbock (1803-1865); English astronomer and mathematician

[2] The way of compassion

[3] *Bhagavad Gita*, II, 40 :

नेहाभिक्रमनाशोऽस्ति प्रत्यवायो न विद्यते।
स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात्॥

164. LIVING ON THE PAST

Editors often have something or other ready at hand to fill space in newspapers. In English this is called 'evergreen' that is, always fresh. You can publish the matter any time. I unexpectedly came across something like this in *The* [*Bombay*] *Chronicle*. In contains the following information.

> The Hindus invented the decimal system. Geometry andAlge bra were first developed in India, and so too Trigonometry. The first five hospitals to be built were in India. The physicians of ancient Europe used Indian drugs. Hindus investigated the anatomy of the human body in the sixth century B. C. and about the same time acquired the art of surgery. People in ancient India knew the art of casting iron pillars of the same kind which they make now. India specialized in carving caves. Alexander, when he invaded India, found republican states in the Punjab and in Sind. In ancient India, women enjoyed all those rights for which women of Europe are fighting hard at present. Municipalities were in existence in the times of Chandragupta. It was the Hindus who perfected the science of grammar. The *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* still remain unrivalled.

I do not know how far these statements are true, but this I know, that, if the late Justice Ranade were alive today and heard such talk of India's past glory, he would certainly have asked, 'So what?' He used to say that no people could progress by merely dwelling on its past glory. If at all we do so, it should be only in order that we may be able to add to it. Where is the man who can write the *Ramayana* today? Where are the morals af ancient times? Where is the ability of those days? And devotion to duty? We have added nothing to the drugs discovered thousands of years ago, nor do we even have adequate knowledge about those mentioned in the ancient books. We witness the same poverty in respect of all the other gifts mentioned above, borrowing as we do everything from Europe. I, at any rate, feel that so long as we have not revived in the present the glory which was ours in the past, wisdom lies in not speaking about it. That wealth which has no exchange value, which the world does not recognize as such, brings not credit, but only humiliation and is in the nature of a burden. If, as we believe, we had these gifts in ancient times, we ought to be able to

give evidence of them again. We are indeed heirs of a brave people, but by confessing at the same time our inability to be worthy of that heritage we shall achieve nothing. We shall see hereafter how we can become so worthy.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-6-1920

165. NOTES

Writing about Orissa, Shri Amritlal Thakkar says that he has toured more villages and found that starvation is more widespread than was thought.[1] This is so, it seems, because, the means of transport being inadequate and the people comparatively poor, no complaints would be heard from them. They live in the conditions they find themselves in, so that these would come to light only if somebody went among them and felt pity for them. How shall we ever know the places in which such conditions prevail? A newspaper from that place points out that the area being low lying, floods from Central India are always pouring into it. Some dams have been built to check these floods, but they are giving way. New ones need to be built at some of the places. Unless this is done, damage from floods will continue every year. To devise measures against this, the newspaper suggests that the Government should call a conference of engineers to obtain their opinion and take the necessary steps. We hope that Shri Amritlal Thakkar will, when he has time, inquire also into the question of what should be done to prevent famines and will investigate the causes of the chronic poverty of these unfortunate people.

The reader will be glad to know that, thanks to the efforts of Amritlal Thakkar and the co-operation of Shri Karsandas, the well-known Gujarati merchant of Calcutta, a sum of Rs. 18,000 has been collected for famine relief.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-6-1920

[1] *Vide* "Distress in Orissa", 12-5-1920.

166. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

June 20, 1920

You have been pouring out your heart to me on the Khilafat and other matters[1] whereas I have been unable to reciprocate be- cause of the great strain I have been undergoing just now. All the same you know that you are ever in my mind. I know what spiritual struggles mean for you. I hope you are keeping better health. You wrote to me that you were very bad after your return from Calcutta.

I wish you will not concern yourself about my position on the Turkish question i.e., you will depend upon it that I shall do nothing blindly. I am committed to nothing on the Turkish question so that upon proof of the immorality of a position being found I could not retrace my steps. The unfortunate position in which I find myself is that I thoroughly distrust Lloyd George. Somehow or other I distrust the Armenian case as I distrust the Arabian case and I am so prejudiced against the present British diplomacy that I scent the foul hand of the deceitful diplomat in Armenia, Arabia, Mesopotamia, Palestine Syria. The position therefore I take up is that as soon as I can remove my prejudice I shall retire from the untenable position I may find myself in. I do ask for suzerainty[2] over Armenia, Mesopotamia, Palestine and Syria with proper safeguards. You say the safeguards are nothing. I do not agree with you. If the Allied Powers are themselves insincere and jealous of one another they may mean nothing. But if they are sincere, the safeguards can certainly be effective. Britain claims suzerainty over the Transvaal, but the Transvaal had no interference with its internal affairs. Why should Armenia have to complain if it has full autonomy with a Turkish Resident there? If Britain only meant well by Turkey everything could be satisfactorily arranged. If Turkey had joined the Allies, could Britain have dispossessed Turkey of Armenia, Arabia or Mesopotamia? Would Britain then not have brought about reforms in Turkey by friendly pressure instead of a victor's dictation? The insolence and hypocrisy of the Ministry bolstered up by equal insolence and hypocrisy in the Viceroy's *communique* are really insufferable.

[1] *Vide* Addenda, "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 25-5-1920.

[2] Of the Khalif

You consider Mahomed Ali's representation to be as unclean as the Treaty. I do not agree with you so far as the condemnation of the Treaty is concerned—I do think that practically the whole of India is with Mahomed Ali. If you say that the condemnation is not intelligent, is not based on knowledge, but is due to utter distrust of Britain, I should agree with you, but the condemnation is there. I do not read news-papers as a rule, but look at the enclosed in *The Leader*. Mahomed Ali certainly believes that the whole of India is at his back in the condemnation. Nor is his claim for suzerainty unclean, because he implicitly believes in the correctness of his demand. He has broken no pledge, for his claim was much higher than it is made today, whereas the peace Treaty is an abomination, a sin against God and man. Remember, too, that the Allied Powers, which simply mean England writ large, speak from a consciousness of their brute strength. Poor Mahomed Ali repre-sents, as he considers, a weak nation and supports the cause of a Power that has been already sufficiently humbled and humiliated. I am prepared to excuse some exaggeration in him. I am totally unprepared to tolerate the shameless exhibition of brute force. If only I could infect India with my belief in the weapons of unadulterated suffering, i.e., self-suffering, I would bring down this insolence from its pedestal in a moment and reduce to nothingness the whole of the powder magazine of Europe.

Shaken as I was by this Peace Treaty, the Hunter Report has taken away all my faith even in the good intentions of the Ministry and the Viceregal Council. Nor has Mr. Montagu come well out of the ordeal. He has tried to serve both God and Mammon and has failed hopelessly. If the British Constitution survives this shock it will be due to some inhe-rent vitality in it. Those who are at the helm at the present moment have certainly left no stone unturned to smash that constitution to pieces. Mahadeo just now reminds me that you have cancelled by your wire the letter I am replying to. That however does not alter the situation. I would like you to realize with me the enormity of the double crime of the present British administration or make me see my folly and correct myself !

I need not worry you about my views on caste. There, too, my moral position need not cause you anxiety. You have mistaken my standpoint. Not to dine with a fellow-being out of repugnance is a sin. Not to dine with him by way of self-restraint is a virtue. Do you know that Indian mothers impose the restraint upon themselves of not

sharing even the family meals? I believe Narottam's mother does not dine at the common kitchen. I consider that her self-restraint is unnecessary. It is possible that it has some merit in it. It is certainly not sinful. I hold it to be a virtue to restrict the area of my choice of a wife even as it is a virtue to restrict myself to one wife rather than many. Surely you must grant the necessity and the virtue of limiting one's indulgences. The sin comes in when I limit the area of service, the area of sacrifice. I have often thought that you have not yet realized the full grandeur of the per-fect theory of Hinduism, however debased it may be today in practice.

My health is fair, but I am longing for perfect peace, rest and solitude. I have just heard that the Turkish Peace Terms are to be completely revised. There may be then some hope of my stealing away for a few days.

Sir G. Barnes[1] has invited me also to go to British Guiana. I have told him I could not go whilst the Khilafat agitation is going on. Are you going?

I read your letter to the Imperial Citizenship Association on East Africa.[2] Evidently you wrote it under great stress. They criticized it adversely. I remained silent but I could not help sympathizing with the criticism. Your letter was scrappy and gave hardly any information. They complained bitterly, too, that you have not yet sent in any report on S. Africa.[3] I do think as you went as their accredited agent you owed them a full report. Indeed your very first writing if only as a matter of courtesy was due to them. I wish you would still mend the error in so far as it is mendable.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary

[1] Sir George Stapylton Barnes; member of Viceroy's Executive Council, 1916-21

[2] Gandhiji attended the meeting of the Association held at Bombay on June 11, 1920.

[3] Andrews was in Africa from December 1919 to March 1920.

167. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
June 22, 1920

DEAR MR. HIGNELL,

I enclose herewith a representation[1] signed by Mussulman representatives and another[2] by me for submission to His Excellency. The Mussulman representation does not bear original signatures, as it was circulated in the different parts of India and signatures authorized by wires. Some of the signatures are on soiled paper but authority in every case is in the possession of the Central Khilafat Committee.

I do not wish to say anything about the representations but shall only express the hope that they will receive due weight from His Excel-lency. I propose to hand the copies to the Press on Thursday evening.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

N.A.I. : Home, Political (A), November 1920, Nos. 19-31

168. LETTER TO VICEROY[3]

June 22, 1920

TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HON'BLE BARON CHELMSFORD
P.C., G.M.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.M.I.F.
VICEROY AND GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA
SIMLA

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

As one who has enjoyed a certain measure of Your Excellency's confidence and as one who claims to be a devoted well-wisher of the British Empire, I owe it to Your Excellency and, through Your Excellency, to His Majesty's Ministers, to explain my connection with and my conduct in the Khilafat question.

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Muslim Leaders' Representation to Viceroy", 22-6-1920.

[2] *Vide* the following item.

[3] The Turkish Peace Treaty was handed over to the Ottoman Delegation at Paris on May 11, 1920. These terms were published in India on May 14, 1920, along with a message from the Viceroy to the Muslims of India. This letter was written consequent upon this message.

At the very earliest stage of the War, even whilst I was in London organizing the Indian Volunteer Ambulance Corps,[1] I began to interest myself in the Khilafat question. I perceived how deeply moved the little Mussulman world in London was when Turkey decided to throw in her lot with Germany.[2] On my arrival in India in the January of 1915 I found the same anxiousness and earnestness among the Mussulmans with whom I came in contact. Their anxiety became intense when the information about the secret treaties[3] leaked out. Distrust of British intentions filled their minds and despair took possession of them. Even at that moment I advised my Mussulman friends not to give way to despair but to express their fears and their hopes in a disciplined manner. It will be admitted that the whole of Mussulman India has behaved in a singularly restrained manner during the past five years, and that the leaders have been able to keep the turbulent sections of their community under complete control.

The peace Terms[4] and Your Excellency's defence of them[5] have given the Mussulmans of India a shock from which it will be difficult for them to recover. The terms violate Ministerial pledges and utterly disregard Mussulman sentiment. I consider that as a staunch Hindu wishing to live on terms of the closest friendship with my Mussulman countrymen, I should be an unworthy son of India if I did not stand by them in their hour of trial. In my humble opinion their cause is just. They claim that Turkey must not be punished if their sentiment is to be respected. Muslim soldiers did not fight to inflict punishment on their own Khalifa or to deprive him or his territories. The Mussulman attitude has been consistent throughout these five years.

My duty to the Empire to which I owe my loyalty requires me to resist the cruel violence that has been done to the Mussulman sentiment.

So far as I am aware Mussulmans and Hindus have as a whole lost faith in British justice and honour. The Report of the Majority of the Hunter Committee, Your Excellency's Despatch[6] thereon, and Mr.

[1] In August 1914

[2] In November 1914

[3] *Vide* 5th footnote to "Khilafat", 12-5-1920.

[4] *Vide* Appendix "Turkish Peace Terms", before 3-6-1920.

[5] *Vide* Appendix "Viceroy's Message to Muslims of India", before 3-6-1920.

[6] *Vide* Appendix "Government of India Despatch on Hunter Committee Report", 3-5-1920.

Montagu's reply[1] have only aggravated the distrust.

In these circumstances, the only course open to one like me is either in despair to sever all connection with British rule, or if I still retained faith in the inherent superiority of the British Constitution to all others at present in vogue, to adopt such means as will rectify the wrong done and thus restore confidence. I have not lost faith in such superiority and I am not without hope that somehow or other justice will yet be rendered if we show the requisite capacity for suffering. Indeed my conception of that Constitution is that it helps only those who are ready to help themselves. I do not believe that it protects the weak. It gives free scope to the strong to maintain their strength and develop it. The weak under it go to the wall.

It is, then, because I believe in the British Constitution that I have advised my Mussulman friends to withdraw their support from Your Excellency's Government, and the Hindus to join them, should the Peace Terms not be revised in accordance with solemn pledges of Ministers and the Muslim sentiment.

Three courses were open to the Mussulmans in order to make their emphatic disapproval of the utter injustice to which His Majesty's Ministers have become party, if they have not actually been the prime perpetrators of it. They are :

1. To resort to violence.
2. To advise emigration on a wholesale scale.
3. Not to be party to the injustice by ceasing to co-operate with the Government.

Your Excellency must be aware that there was a time when the boldest though also the most thoughtless among the Mussulmans favoured violence and that *hijrat* (emigration) has not yet ceased to be the battle-cry.[2] I venture to claim that I have succeeded by patient reasoning in weaning the party of violence from its ways. I confess that I did not—I did not attempt to—succeed in weaning them from violence on moral grounds, but purely on utilitarian grounds. The result for the time being at any rate has however been to stop violence. The school of *hijrat* has received a check if it has not stopped its activities entirely. I hold that no repression could have prevented a

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Montagu's Reply to Government of India Despatch", 26-5-1920.

[2] *Vide* footnote 1 to "Letter to Swami Shraddhanand", 2-5-1920.

violent eruption, if the people had not had presented to them a form of direct action involving considerable sacrifice and ensuring success, if such a direct action was largely taken up by the public. Non-co-operation was the only dignified and constitutional form of such direct action, for it is the right recognized from times immemorial of the subject to refuse to assist a ruler who misrules.

At the same time I admit that non-co-operation practised by the mass of people is attended with grave risks. But in a crisis such as has overtaken the Mussulmans of India no step that is unattended with large risks can possibly bring about the desired change. Not to run some risks now will be to court much greater risks, if not virtual destruction of law and order.

But there is yet an escape from non-co-operation. The Mussulman representation has requested Your Excellency to lead the agitation yourself as did your distinguished predecessor[1] at the time of the South African trouble. But if you cannot see your way to do so, and non-co-operation becomes a dire necessity, I hope that Your Excellency will give those who have accepted my advice and myself the credit for being actuated by nothing less than a stern sense of duty.

I have etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

LABURNUM ROAD
GAMDEVI
BOMBAY

N.A.I. : Home, Political (A), November, 1920, Nos. 19-31

169. THE NON-CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE

There seems to be a great deal of misunderstanding and misconception about the non-co-operation committee appointed by the Khilafat Committee at Allahabad on the 3rd instant. A friend who was present at the meeting writes to say that the committee was formed for the purpose of giving full effect to non-co-operation and to act in all matters in connection with it as if it was representative of the whole Mussulman population of India even in the matter of making representations to the authorities. That this was not the committee's scope is the purpose of this writing to show.

[1] Lord Hardinge

As I stated its objects when I invited the formation of the committee,[1] they were to ascertain and enforce the wish of the nation on non-co-operation. Whilst it is a representative body with full powers to act, it cannot be said—it is not intended—to represent all the best and the most influential Mohammedan opinion. It does not for instance represent the titled nobility in Islam. It is no fault in the committee. It has been purposely restricted to those who are able to give their whole time and attention to the work of organized non-co-operation and in the process of ensuring obedience to instructions, other discipline and non-violence. It is therefore a committee of workers. It is not expected that the whole of the Mussulman India will be equally strong in non-co-operation. Some doubt its efficacy, others consider it to be a milk-and-water remedy. Some dread it as being too strong for India in her present stage; they say she has not developed the measure of sacrifice at present to ensure success. The committee does not represent or contain such doubting elements though they may otherwise be much more influential than many Mussulmans who are on the committee. It contains those only who have the largest faith in non-co-operation and who, although they swear by it, yet will not force the pace to the breaking point but will endeavour to carry the nation with its programme, in so far as it is practicable, and who whilst doing so will not themselves be deterred from taking the boldest steps and will seek out those who are prepared to do like- wise. This committee, therefore, starting without any, has to build its reputation upon its work and upon results it may achieve. It will cease to exist if it shows no work or in spite of work shows no results. For outsiders it has the least representative capacity. Shaukat Ali is an amiable man but a rabid fanatic, carrying no weight with anybody; Hasrat Mohani a useless man who thinks of nothing but swadeshi; Dr. Kitchlew a man of yesterday with no experience of the world outside Amritsar. Much the same may be said against the others; I am no doubt a superior person but after all a crank and an interloper at that. Any representation signed by it will carry little weight with the outside world in so far as it depends upon the influence of the signatories. It does not therefore mean that it will never make representations. It certainly will, when swiftness is of the essence or when others for reasons of expediency or otherwise are not prepared to sign representations. Indeed, canvassing of signatures to weighty

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Khilafat Committee Meeting, Allahabad", June 3, 1920.

representations will be one of the means of gauging public opinion and testing the spirit of sacrifice among the elite of the land. For the masses and for internal work, however, the committee is the most representative. It is difficult perhaps to find two men more representative of Mussulman opinion than Shaukat Ali and Hasrat Mohani. The others though less known have been chosen for the qualities of strength, perseverance, patience, calmness, truthfulness, courage under difficulty and sacrifice believed to be possessed by them.

It has been suggested that I am to lead the movement. The statement is only partially true. I say this not out of humility merely but it is a literal fact. If the belief gains ground that I am leading the move-ment it may prove fatal to it. I am leading the movement in the sense that I am the adviser whose advice is most acceptable today and who has the determination not surpassed by anybody to carry out the programme of non-co-operation. But I do not pretend to represent Mussulman opi-nion. I can only try to interpret it. I could not stand alone and expect to carry the Mussulman masses with me. I should be very properly hooted out by a mixed Mussulman audience if I tried to make a point against the best Mussulman opinion in matters of religion. But if I were a Muss-ulman, I would not mind contesting issues before a Mussulman meeting in the face of heavy odds against me. I consider myself to be a sagacious worker and my sagacity means no more and no less than a fine perception of my limitations. I hope I never travel beyond my limits. Certainly I have never done so consciously. It is necessary for every intelligent Mussulman to bear in mind my limitations and the scope of my function. Ignorance is likely to prove fatal to the success of the movement. My connection with it must not stupefy workers into indolence or indifference. My connection should means, if it is to be productive of good results,greater watchfulness, greater sense of responsibility, greater capacity and willingness for work and greater efficiency. I can think out plans but execution must ever rest with Mussulman workers. The movement must be worked and led by them with the assistance of friends like me but also without if need be. I must not be expected to make non-co-operators; Mussulman leaders alone can make them. No amount of sacrifice on my part will produce in the Mussulman world the spirit of non-co-operation, i.e., sacrifice in a matter of religion. The Mussulman leaders will have to show it in their own persons before the masses evolve it.

And now the question why there are no Hindu leaders on the committee is easily answered. The supreme committee can only be purely Mussulman. My presence, too, I consider as an evil but it is a necessary evil because of my qualifications. I have specialized in non-co-operation. I have successfully experimented with it. The resolution about non-co-operation was conceived by me at the conference at Delhi.[1] I am on the committee therefore as a specialist and not because I am a Hindu. My function is therefore of an adviser merely. That I happen to be a staunch Hindu with the conviction that every Hindu should consider it to be his duty to go with the Mussulmans the full length in non-co-operation, is no doubt an advantage to the committee. But that advantage was at its disposal whether I was on it or not.

Whilst I am considering the Hindu connection with the Khilafat movement, even at the risk of repetition I would like to clear up my own position. As I consider the Muslim claim to be intrinsically (as distinguished from religiously) just, I propose to go with them to the extent of fullest non-co-operation. And I consider it to be perfectly con-sistent with my loyalty to the British connection. But I would not go with the Mussulmans in any campaign of violence. I could not help them in promoting, for instance, an invasion of India through Afghanistan or otherwise for the purpose of forcing better peace terms.[2] It is, I hold, the duty of every Hindu to resist any inroad on India even for the purpose specified as it is his duty to help his Mussulman brethren to satisfy their just demands by means of non-co-operation or other form of suffering, no matter how great, so long as it does not involve loss of India's liberty or inflicting of violence on any person. And I have thrown myself whole-heartedly into the non-co-operation movement, if only because I want to prevent any such armed conflict.

Young India, 23-6-1920

[1] In the third week of January 1920, it being the conference of the members of the Indian Khilafat deputaton which waited upon the Viceroy on January 19. For the text of the resolution, *vide* Appendix "Resolutions Passed at Khilafat Committee Meeting", 3-6-1920.

[2] At the joint Hindu-Muslim Conference held at Allahabad on June1 and 2, 1920, the Hindu representatives had expressed their fear that complications might arise from the Indian Muslims welcoming an Afghan invasion of India. The Muslim speakers gave an assurance that they would resist any foreign invasion undertaken purely for conquest, but added that any invasion undertaken to uphold the prestige of Islam and to vindicate justice would have their full sympathy, if not their actual support.

170. THE DUTY OF THE PUNJABI

The Allahabad *Leader* deserves to be congratulated for publishing the correspondence on Mr. Bosworth Smith who was one of the Martial Law officers against whom the complaints about persistent and continuous ill-treatment[1] were among the bitterest. It appears from the correspondence that Mr. Bosworth Smith has received promotion instead of dismissal. Some time before Martial Law, Mr. Smith appears to have been degraded. The *Leader* correspondent says :

> He has since been restored to his position of a Deputy Commissioner of the second grade from which he was degraded and also been invested with powers under Sect. 30 of the Criminal Procedure Code. Since his arrival, the poor Indian population of the town of Ambala Cantonment has been living under a regime of horror and tyranny.

The correspondent adds :

> I use both these words deliberately for conveying precisely what they mean.

I cull a few passages from this illuminating letter to illustrate the meaning of horror and tyranny :

> In private complaints he never takes the statement of the complainant. It is taken down by the reader when the court rises and got signed by the magistrate the following day. Whether the report (received upon such complaints) is favourable to the complainant or unfavourable to him it is never read by the magistrate, and complaints are dismissed without proper trial. This is the fate of private complaints. Now, as regards police *challans*, pleaders for the accused are not allowed to interview undertrial prisoners in police custody. They are not allowed to cross-examine prosecution witnesses. . . . Prosecution witnesses are exa- mined with leading questions . . . Thus a whole prosecution story is put into the mouth of police witnesses. Witnesses for the defence, though called in, are not allowed to be examined by the defence counsel. . . . The accused is silenced if he picks up courage to say anything in defence. . . Any Cantonment servant can write down the name of any citizen of the Cantonment on a chit of paper and ask him to appear the next day in court. This is a summons . . . If anyone does not appear in court, who is thus ordered, criminal warrants of arrest are issued against him.

There is much more of this style in the letter which is worth producing, but I have given enough to illustrate the writer's meaning. Let me turn for a while to this official's record during Martial Law. He is the official who tried people in batches and convicted them after a

[1] *Vide* "Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.

farcical trial. Witnesses have deposed to his having assembled people, having asked them to give false evidence, having removed women's veils, called them "flies, bitches, she-asses" and having spat upon them. He it was who subjected the innocent pleaders of Sheikhupura to indescribable persecution. Mr. Andrews[1] personally investigated comp-laints against this official and came to the conclusion that no official had behaved worse than Mr. Smith. He gathered the people of Sheikhupura, humiliated them in a variety of ways, called them "*suvarlog*"[2], "*gandi makhi* ". His evidence before the Hunter Commission betrays his total disregard for truth and this is the officer who, if the correspondent in question has given correct facts, has been promoted. The question however is why he is at all in Government service and why he has not been tried for assaulting and abusing innocent men and women.

I notice a desire for the impeachment of General Dyer and Sir Michael O'Dwyer. I will not stop to examine whether the course is feasible. I was sorry to find Mr. Shastriar[3] joining this cry for the prosecution of General Dyer. If the English people will willingly do so, I would welcome such prosecutions as a sign of their strong disapproval of the Jallianwala Bagh atrocity, but I would certainly not spend a single farthing in a vain pursuit after the conviction of these men. Surely the public has received sufficient experience of the English mind. Practically the whole English Press has joined the conspiracy to screen these offenders against humanity. I would not be party to make heroes of them[4] by joining the cry for prosecution, private or public. If I can only persuade India to insist upon their complete dismissal, I should be satisfied. But more than the dismissal of Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer is necessary the peremptory dismissal, if not a trial, of Colonel O'Brien, Mr, Bosworh Smith, Rai [Sahib] Shri Ram and others mentioned in the Congress Sub-committee's Report. Bad as General Dyer is I consider Mr. Smith to be infinitely worse and his crimes to be far more serious than the

[1] C.F. Andrews, who visited a number of places in the Punjab between July and November, 1919

[2] Swine

[3] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri. The Bombay Provincial Conference held on April 3, 1920, had demanded impeachment of O'Dwyer and others and their trial and punishment by judicial tribunal.

[4] In England Dyer received a friendly reception in some quarters and a public fund was started in his support.

massacre of Jallianwalla Bagh. General Dyer sincerely believed that it was a soldierly act to terrorize people by shooting them. But Mr. Smith was wantonly cruel, vulgar and debased. If all the facts that have been deposed to against him are true, there is not a spark of humanity about him. Unlike General Dyer he lacks the courage to confirm what he has done and he wriggles when challenged. This officer remains free to inflict himself upon people who have done no wrong to him, and who is permitted to disgrace the rule he represents for the time being.

What is the Punjab doing? Is it not the clear duty of the Punjabis not to rest until they have secured the dismissal of Mr. Smith and the like? The Punjab leaders[1] have been discharged in vain if they will not utilize the liberty they have received, in order to purge the administration of Messrs Bosworth Smith and company. I am sure that if they will only begin a determined agitation they will have the whole of India by their side. I venture to suggest to them that the best way to qualify for sending General Dyer to the gallows is to perform the easier and the more urgent duty of arresting the mischief still continued by the officials against whom they have assisted in collecting overwhelming evidence.

Young India, 23-3-1920

171. SPEECH AT BOMBAY ON BANARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY

June 23, 1920

A public meeting was held at the Madhav Bagh, Bombay, yesterday, when the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya delivered a lecture on the Banaras Hindu University. H. H. the Maharaja Scindia of Gwalior presided, and there was a very large attendance, among those present being H. H. the Maharaja of Bikaner, Mr. M. K. Gandhi, Maulana Shaukat Ali. . . .

Mr. M. K. Gandhi said no man had worked more zealously and arduously in the cause of the University than their friend, Pandit Malaviya.[2] Whenever he had had occasion to speak to the Pandit on the subject he had told him that he should make the furtherance of the cause of the University the principal work of his life. More than that he had told him that he should, if he could, leave the field of politics altogether

[1] Who were arrested under the Martial Law and subsequently released under the amnesty announced in the Royal Proclamation of December 23, 1919

[2] Malaviya founded the University in 1916, worked on the scheme for a number of years and collected a fund of a crore of rupees to get the University going.

and devote himself entirely to the cause of the University.[1] Bombay had always been famous for the ready manner in which it came to the help of a deserving cause and he had no doubt that Bombay would extend its support to the University with her wonted generosity. Not only Pandit Malaviya, but two Maharajas had come to them that afternoon like humble petitioners. It was their duty therefore to contribute as much as they could to the funds of the University and they should do it promptly and on the spot. He concluded by proposing a hearty vote of thanks to H. H. the Maharaja Scindia for presiding at the meeting.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-6-1920

172. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING

BOMBAY,
June 25, 1920

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have not been regular in writing to you as I had intended to. I have been too busy with the Khilafat question. I did however ask Mahadev to write to you on my behalf. You must also be receiving *Young India* regularly.

I had expected to hear from you from on board. But as yet there is nothing from you. I wrote to you a letter[2] to reach you on your steamer and another[3] to London care of Thomas Cook. I do hope you received both these letters.

I am now fixed up for the time being in Bombay. I enclose herewith the letters to the Viceroy.[4] They will give you an idea of my activity. Devdas is with me.

I am anxious to hear about your meeting with your father and your health. Of course I expect to hear from you regularly.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child*, p. 72

[1] Malaviya joined Congress in 1886 and remained in it till his death in 1946. He did not miss a single session of the Congress and was always in demand to speak on one or more resolutions.

[2] Presumably the 'note' referred to in "Letter to Esther Faering", 21-5-1920

[3] Not available

[4] Presumably Gandhiji here refers to his letter of June 22, 1920, and the Muslims' representation accompanying it.

173. "IN MEMORIAM"

Ashad Sud 11, 1976 [*June 26, 1920*]

It is difficult for me to write about Bhai Vrajlal's death. I still cannot forget his figure. Not being free from *moha* yet, I do not find it easy to write objectively. I envy his death. I look upon him as a fortunate man indeed. What better death can we imagine than that of a man who had to receive service from no one, who actually died while serving others? When one dies a serene death, with God's name on his lips, we regard him as one hallowed by good deeds. Bhai Vrajlal died doing God's work.[1] I am aware that there is some exaggeration in saying this, but I know him so well that I am sure if he had been asked to choose he would have elected to die at the very hour when he did.

He was ever devoted to dharma. He had let me into the depths of his heart. So far as I remember, he asked to be alone with me only once. He had on that occasion acquainted me with his deepest feelings and told me of his moral dilemmas as well. The Ashram was very dear to him, as he showed through his actions. I thought of him as a *muni*[2] . He rarely felt inclined to talk but his face was ever radiant. He never looked upon any work as low and used to take the utmost service from his body.

It is difficult, it would even be a sin, to forget his serene image. How should we cherish his memory? There is, I think, only one way for us, namely, to emulate his many fine qualities. He saw dharma in keeping silent and occupying himself in cheerful service. Let us keep him ever living by accepting this dharma and following it ever more firmly and filling our life with his.

[From Gujarati]

Madhapudo, Vol. I, Special Number

[1] Vrajlal had descended into a well to bring up someone's water pot which had fallen in. While climbing up he fainted and fell back into the well.

[2] Spiritual aspirant observing silence

174. SPEECH ON HUNTER COMMITTEE REPORT[1]

BOMBAY,
June 26, 1920

The demands in this resolution go beyond those in the Congress Committee Report. The resolution calls for the impeachment of O'Dwyer and his fellow officers. The Congress Sub-committee did not go so far, though the All-India Congress Committee has made this demand. My personal view still favours the Sub-committee report, but I move this resolution in deference to the wishes of the majority. I believe the Hunter Report is a plain, deliberate shielding of the officials in the Punjab. If I could have my way,

I would bring in a resolution advising non-co-operation and satyagraha against this, for that is the only way to succeed in our aim. I have not come here to make a speech; I speak from the depth of my heart. I have not come here to persuade you merely to pass resolutions, but to do many more things. If you can get Lord Chelmsford recalled to England, you will have done a far more important thing than hanging O'Dwyer or Dyer. The man who is most guilty of slighting public opinion should be the first to be removed. The hero of Martial Law, Bosworth Smith, still holds his post. The people should aim at having Dyer, O'Dwyer and Lord Chelmsford debarred from holding any post. In this resolution, we also ask for the return of fines to the people and compensation for their losses. You probably do not know the horror of these fines. There is no sense in asking for the dismissal of the officials while these huge fines remain unreturned. So long as the Rowlatt Act remains on the Statute-book, satyagraha is bound to go on. If only the people learn how to use this weapon, all sufferings would end. My own faith in satyagraha is unshakable. The Punjab injustices still remain unredressed. For these injustices, we are as much responsible as the officials. Our minimum demands are three : Lord Chelmsford's recall, return of the fines and the Rowlatt Act to be buried for ever.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 4-7-1920

[1] The meeting was held under the auspices of the Bombay Home Rule League and the National Union to protest against the Hunter Committee Report, with M. A. Jinnah presiding. The chief resolution of the meeting, moved by Gandhiji, protested against the majority report of the Hunter Committee and its acceptance by the Government of India and the Secretary of State for India, and urged them to implement the recommendations of the Congress report on the Punjab disorders.

175. KHILAFAT

We have taken one step forward on this question, and not an ordinary one at that. The Viceroy was served with a notice[1] that he should take our side or else we would not be able to co-operate with him in carrying on the government. Let us hope that the Viceroy will have wisdom enough to take up the people's fight. The British Empire, however, is not so fortunate as to see such a glorious day. Hence, we have no choice but to prepare for non-co-operation from August 1. The non-co-operation about which there has been so much talking and which has consumed so much paper and ink is near at hand.

We must be ready for it in a month's time. The Muslims and Hindus will be put to the test. But, at the moment, I wish to say a few words to the Hindus alone. Before the Muslims act about the Khilafat, the Hindus need not do anything. When, however, the Muslims start non-co-operation, what should the Hindus do? A prominent Hindu gentleman in Allahabad said that for one Muslim resigning his position as Justice of the Peace or throwing up a job, three Hindus will be ready to follow suit. They will not have done much thereby. Muslims number more than seven crores and Hindus more than twenty-two crores; that means there are more than three times as many Hindus as Muslims. If there are three Hindus to stand by the side of every single Muslim, both Hindus and Muslims will have made equal sacrifices and to have done this will be evidence of friendship. In fact, friendship admits of no arithmetical calculation. But this does not mean that a friend may contribute less than his share. Friendship means or should mean that, even though paying very much more than one's share, one should feel that nothing has been paid. We have, then, to ask ourselves whether the Hindus will stand by the Muslims; nay, the eyes of the whole world will be fixed on the Hindus for whether the Muslims win or not will depend largely on the attitude of the Hindus. If they support the Muslims, there is no doubt that the latter's sufferings will end the sooner.

Hindus can avail themselves [of the opportunity] in two ways; one, by making sacrifices in proportion to those of Muslims and, two, by refusing to jump into the positions given up by Muslims. The first

[1] By the Khilafat Committee which met in Allahabad on June 9

means that for every Muslim giving up his job there will be from one to three Hindus doing so. If Hindus act in this way, they will have done a great thing. The second means that no Hindu will fill the place left vacant by a Muslim and this too will be something great. Any Hindu taking up a job given up by a Muslim will have acted as an enemy of the latter and non-co-operation will become, if not impossible, extremely difficult. Thus, the Hindu who cannot do more may at any rate attend their meetings to show his sympathy and refrain from putting obstacles in their way and thus prove that he is not hostile to them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-6-1920

176. LIVING ON THE PAST

As a son cannot live on his father's reputation for long, so the people of India cannot maintain their prosperity only on the strength of the glory of ancient India. We saw last week that at present there is poverty, not prosperity, in India.

We have to think over the causes and remedies for this state of affairs.

Akbar's successors lost the splendour of the Mogul Empire of his time, because they lost, one by one, Akbar's qualities of character. Jehangir lost one, Shahjehan one more, Aurangzeb more still and his successors lost almost all. The result was that they lost the Empire to the British. The Indian people in modern times have behaved like Akbar's successors.

Not wanting to admit this, we blame the British for everything; we fell because of their cunning, they robbed us of our wealth and left us beggars, we cannot even breathe without their permission; how are we to blame then [we ask]?

Though there is much exaggeration in this charge, there is also some truth in it. What is the cause of the control the British have acquired over us? May it not be our own fault? Who were the people tempted by the rupees of the East India Company? If that Company did business according to its own fashion, does the fault lie with it? If a wine merchant sells wine, can the consumer throw the responsibility on him? If I pay to the usurer interest equal to the principal, how is that the usurer's fault? I, at any rate, cannot speak ill of him. A writer

has said that as long as there are persons who can be deceived, so long will deceivers exist.

We shall not advance by finding fault with and hating the British. As long as we have not got rid of the shortcomings which enabled the British to get a hold here, we shall remain slaves.

And yet we are always pointing out their faults to the British and will continue to do so. This is what the Congress has mainly done. Speakers who do this are as numerous as leaves on a tree. I believe, therefore, that it will be more fruitful to try and see our own faults than to dwell on those of the British. The saying "If we are good, the entire world is good" is not to be lightly brushed aside. There is much force in it. If we remain upright, nobody will be able to corrupt us. It is a principle of medical science that so long as one's blood is free from impurity, the poisonous air outside can have no effect on it. That is why , during an epidemic, some people are attacked while others are not. Likewise, had we been incorruptible, the East India Company could have done nothing and at the present time, too, officers like Michael O'Dwyer would have lost their jobs.

What are our failings, then, because of which we are helpless and cannot stop the profuse flow of wealth from our country, and in virtue of which our children get no milk, three crores of our people get only one meal a day, raids occur in broad daylight in Kheda district,[1] and epidemics like the plague and cholera cannot be eradicated in our country while they can in others? How is it that the haughty Sir Michael O'Dwyer and the insolent General Dyer can crush us like so many bugs and the priest in Simla can write unworthy things about us; how is it that an intolerable injustice has been done to us in the Punjab? On the Khilafat issue, the British Prime Minister has gone back on his word. In both these matters, we seem to feel helpless.

The reason is our inveterate selfishness, our inability to make sacrifices for the country, our dishonesty, our timidity, our hypocrisy and our ignorance. Everybody is selfish, more or less, but we seem to be more selfish than others. We make some self-sacrifice in family matters, but very little of it for national work. Just look at our streets, our cities and our trains.. In all these, we can see the condition of the country. How little attention is paid to the convenience of others in streets, in the town as a whole and in trains? We do not hesitate to throw refuse out of our courtyard on to the street; standing in the

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 30-5-1920.

balcony, we throw out refuse or spit, without pausing to consider whether we are not inconveniencing the passersby. When we are building a house, we take little thought of the inconvenience that may be caused to our neighbours. In cities, we keep the tap open and, thinking that it is not our water which flows away, we allow it to run waste. The same thing is seen in the trains. We secure a seat for ourselves by hook or by crook and, if possible, prevent others from getting in. No matter if others are inconvenienced, we start smoking. We do not hesitate to throw banana skins and sugar-cane peelings right in front of our neighbours. When we go to draw water from a tap, we take little thought for others. Many such instances of our selfishness can be listed.

Where so much selfishness exists, how can one expect self-sacrifice? Does the business man cleanse his business of dishonesty for the sake of his country? Does he forgo his profit? Does he stop speculation in cotton for his country's sake? Is any effort made to keep down milk prices by giving up the profit from its export? How many give up a job when necessary, for the sake of the country? Where are the men who will reduce their luxuries and adopt simplicity and use the money so saved for the country? If it is necessary for the country's sake to go to jail, how many will come forward?

Our dishonesty is there for all to see. We believe that business can never be carried on honestly. Those who have the chance never refuse a bribe. We have the worst experience of corruption in the railways. We can get our work done only if we bribe the railway police, the ticket master and the guard. Even for securing a railway ticket, we have to use dishonest means or shut one's eyes to them. The contents of railway parcels which can be opened ever so slightly, if not of those which are wellpacked, are sure to be pilfered.

Our hypocrisy is only a little less than that of the British. We have experience of this every moment. In our meetings and in all other activities of ours, we try to show ourselves other than what we are.

We have made cowardice especially our own. Nobody wants bloodshed in connection with non-co-operation, and yet it is out of this fear of bloodshed that we do not want to do anything. We are so possessed by the fear of the Government's armed might that we dare not take any step. And so we submit to force in every matter and allow dacoits to plunder us in broad daylight.

What shall I say about our hypocrisy? It has increased in every field. Weakness is always accompanied by hypocrisy. Moreover, where the people want to be upright but cannot be so, hypocrisy will naturally increase; for, if we are not upright, we are anxious to seem so and thus we add another moral weakness to the one which we already possess. Hypocrisy has entered our religion as well, and that so fully that the marks which we put on our forehead, the rosary and things of that kind have ceased to be tokens of piety and become signs of impiety.

The origin of all is ignorance, to be sure. It is because we are ignorant of our strength that other weaknesses grow. We doubt the very existence of the *atman* in us, have to faith in its powers. This ignorance will not disappear merely with education. It can go only with a change in our ways of thinking. Literacy is necessary only to the extent that it develops our thinking power and teaches us to distinguish between good and evil.

Hence, so long as we have not given up our selfishness and learnt to be mindful of the interests of others, have not learnt self-sacrifice, have not taken refuge in truth, eschewed fear and become brave, shed hypocrisy and banished ignorance, the country will not prosper in any real sense.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-6-1920

177. NOTES

EDUCATED "ANTYAJAS"

The report of the second Kathiawar Antyaj Conference, which appeared in last week's issue, contained some criticism of the educated *Antyajas* of Bombay. Apart from that criticism, we also hear that often, in conversation, they make such remarks as : 'This is your Hinduism', 'This is what your shastras say', There were some Hindus in the train'. This is the strain in which they talk. *Antyajas* should never permit in their mind the thought that they are not Hindus. Is it right for them to despise Hinduism because those who claim to be Hindus oppress them? A person does not leave his family because he is harassed by the other members, but tries, rather, to reform them; educated *Antyajas* should act in the same way. Those who have had schooling in Bombay and claim to be the leaders of their community are to be looked upon as educated men. Besides, it is not dharma to

run down one's own work. No occupation which it is not immoral to follow should be regarded as low. *Antyajas* are generally engaged in weaving, agriculture and sanitary duties. The first two provide clothing and food to the people and the last preserves public health. No society can live without all these three occupations. To call any of them low or base is evidence of sheer ignorance. It should not be our desire, when educated, to leave our occupation; our effort should be to ennoble it. In other words, we should all, despite the occupation we follow, be and live as virtuous and educated men and keep ourselves clean.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-6-1920

178. THE MUSSULMAN REPRESENTATION[1]

Slowly but surely the Mussulmans are preparing for the battle before them. They have to fight against odds that are undoubtedly heavy but not half as heavy as the Prophet had against him. How often did he not put his life in danger? But his faith in God was unquenchable. He went forward with a light heart, for God was on his side, for he represented truth. If his followers have half the Prophet's faith and half his spirit of sacrifice, the odds will be presently even and will in a little while turn against the despoilers of Turkey. Already the rapacity of the Allies is telling against themselves. France finds her task difficult.[2] Greece cannot stomach her ill-gotten gains.[3] And England finds Mesopotamia a tough job.[4] The oil of Mosul may feed the fire she has so wantonly lighted and burn her fingers badly. The newspapers say the Arabs do not like the presence of the Indian soldiery in their midst.[5] I do not wonder. They are a fierce and a brave people and do not understand why Indian soldiers should find themselves in Mesopotamia. Whatever the fate of non-co-operation, I

[1] Sent by Sunni Mohammedans to the Viceroy on June 22, 1920. For the text of the representation, *vide* Appendix "Muslim Leaders' Representation to Viceroy", 22-6-1920.

[2] The reference is to the mandated territories under the Turkish Peace Treaty; *vide* Appendix "Turkish Peace Terms", before 3-6-1920.

[3] *ibid*

[4] *ibid*

[5] In Mesopotamia, which became a British mandated territory under the Turkish peace terms

wish that not a single Indian will offer his services for Mesopotamia, whether for the civil or the military department. We must learn to think for ourselves and before entering upon any employment find out whether thereby we may not make ourselves instruments of injustice. Apart from the question of Khilafat and from the point of abstract justice, the English have no right to hold Mesopotamia. It is no part of our loyalty to help the Imperial Government in what is in plain language daylight robbery. If therefore we seek civil or military employment in Mesopotamia we do so for the sake of earning a livelihood. It is our duty to see that the source is not tainted.

It surprises me to find so many people shirking over [*sic*] the very mention of non-co-operation. There is no instrument so clean, so harmless and yet so effective as non-co-operation. Judiciously handled[1] it need not produce any evil consequences. And its intensity will depend purely on the capacity of the people for sacrifice.

The chief thing is to prepare the atmosphere of non-co-operation. 'We are not going to co-operate with you in your injustice', is surely the right and the duty of every intelligent subject to say. Were it not for our utter servility, helplessness and want of confidence in ourselves, we would certainly grasp this clean weapon and make the most effective use of it. Even the most despotic government cannot stand except for the consent of the governed which consent is often forcibly procured by the despot. Immediately the subject ceases to fear the despotic force his power is gone. But the British Government is never and nowhere entirely or even chiefly laid upon force. It does make an honest attempt to secure the goodwill of the governed. But it does not hesitate to adopt unscrupulous means to compel the consent of the governed. It has not gone beyond the 'Honesty is the best policy' idea. It therefore bribes you into consenting to its will by awarding titles, medals and ribbons, by giving you employment, by its superior financial ability to open for its employees avenues for enriching themselves and finally, when these fail, it resorts to force. That is what Sir Michael O'Dwyer did and that is what almost every British administrator would certainly do if he thought it necessary. If then we would not be greedy, if we would not run after titles and medals and honorary posts which do the country no good half the battle is won.

My advisers are never tired of telling me that even if the Turkish

[1] The source here has "hauled".

peace terms are revised[1] it will not be due to non-co-operation. I venture to suggest to them that non-co-operation has a higher purpose than mere revision of the terms. If I cannot compel revision, I must at least cease to support a Government that becomes party to the usurpation. And if I succeed in pushing non-co-operation to the extreme limit, I do compel the Government to choose between India and the usurpation. I have faith enough in England to know that at that moment England will expel her present jaded ministers and put in others who will make a clean sweep of the terms in consultation with an awakened India, draft terms that will be honourable to her, to Turkey and acceptable to India.

But I hear my critics say : 'India has not the strength of purpose and the capacity for the sacrifice to achieve such a noble end.' They are partly right. India has not these qualities now; because we have not—shall we not evolve them and infect the nation with them? Is not the attempt worth making? Is any sacrifice too great to gain such a great purpose?

Young India, 30-6-1920

179. PRESS STATEMENT ON BOYCOTT OF REFORMED COUNCILS

Needless to say that I am in entire accord with Lala Lajpat Rai on the question of the boycott of the reformed Councils[2] . For me it is is but one step in the campaign of non-co-operation and as I feel equally keenly on the Punjab question as on the Khilafat, Lala Lajpat Rai's suggestion is doubly welcome. I have seen the suggestion made in more quarters than one that non-co-operation on the Reforms should commence after the process of election has been gone through. I cannot help saying that it is a mistake to go through the election farce and the expense of it when we clearly do not intend to take part in the proceedings of these Legislative Councils. Moreover, a great deal of educative work has to be done among the people. And if I could I would not have the best attention of the country frittered away in electioneering. The populace will not understand the beauty

[1] On June 27, 1920, Turkey submitted counter-proposals to the Treaty.

[2] Legislative Councils under the Reforms Act of 1919. Candidature for election to these now Councils had to be announced by October 1920. Lajpat Rai had declared in his Urdu newspaper, *Bande mataram*, that he would not stand for election

of non-co-operation if we seek election and then resign. But it would be a fine education for them if the electors are taught not to elect anybody and unanimously to tell whosoever may seek their suffrage, that he would not represent them if he sought election so long as the Punjab and Khilafat question were not satisfactorily settled.[1] I hope, however, that Lala Lajpat Rai does not mean to end with the boycott of the Reform Councils.[2] We must take, if necessary, every one of the four stages of non-co-operation if we are to be regarded as a self-respecting nation. The issue is clear. Both the Khilafat terms and the Punjab affairs show that Indian opinion counts for little in the councils of the Empire. It is a humiliating position. We shall make nothing of the Reforms if we quietly swallow the humiliation. In my humble opinion, therefore, the first condition of real progress is the removal of these two difficulties in our path. And unless some better course of action is devised *nolens volens* non-co-operation must hold the field.

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-6-1920

180. SPEECH TO STUDENTS OF SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, AHMEDABAD

[Before *July 1920*][3]

We want to conduct a novel experiment here. The experiment is so delicate that the teachers of the National School would not have the courage to undertake it on their own if I did not associate myself with it.

We wish to introduce co-education here. The teachers once told me : "The number of girls in the school is rising now, and there are grown-up girls, too, amongst them. Should we set up a separate class for girls after some time?" Immediately I replied in the negative and remarked that is was not at all necessary to have a separate class for girls.

[1] When elections were held in November 1920, in six cases out of 637 election was impossible owing to the absence of a candidate.

[2] Lajpat Rai was not originally in favour of Gandhiji's non-co-operation programme, but at the Nagpur Congress session of December 1920 he threw in his lot completely with Gandhiji like so many others.

[3] The speech, as stated in a prefatory note in the source, was first reported in, presumably, the July 1920 issue of *Madhapudo*, a manuscript magazine of the Ashram School.

Soon after, however, I realized the seriousness of the matter and I thought of the magnitude of the risk involved. I felt that it would be better if I explained to you all, students as well as teachers, the women and the other inmates of the Ashram, certain rules of conduct. Do not think that everything I say now is absolute law. I shall merely express my views. The teachers may discuss them afterwards and make necessry changes.

Boys and girls may sit in the same class, but they should maintain some discipline in doing so. Boys should sit in a separate row. Adolescent boys and girls should not sit together, because that may involve the danger of chance contacts. Many of these girls are already come of age and many others will be so in a short time. Thus the girls are growing up and some of the boys studying with us are already grown up. These boys and girls should not touch one another. Physical contact disturbs *brahmacharya.* Outside the class-room, the boys may mix, converse, cut jokes and play among themselves; the girls may do the same among themselves. But the boys and girls may not do this together; they should neither converse nor joke with one another. And they certainly may not carry on private correspondence with one another. Children at any rate should have nothing private. For a man who adheres to truth, what secrets can he have to keep? Even for elders it is a sign of weakness to have any private correspondence. You should not imitate this weakness of theirs, but should overcome your weakness as they may advise you. Ordinarily, parents do not confess their weaknesses to their children and, in such matters, they do not utter a single word. This, however, is a grave mistake on their part. By acting in this way they push their children down into the deep pit of disaster. If all parents take care that their children do not repeat their mistakes, the extent to which the boys will benefit cannot even be imagined. When I say that nobody should keep anything secret, it does not mean that you should pry into the secrets of others; these are not your concern. If we elders are sitt-ing somewhere and talking among ourselves and if we ask you to leave us alone, you ought to walk away. You cannot cure us of our weakness by listening to our talk. But you should have no letter or other matter of interest which you cannot lay fearlessly before your elders. The best thing is that there should be no exchanges between boys and girls, whether inside or outside the class-room, in the absence of elders. No girl should go to the room reserved for boys and converse, discuss or study there like any other boy. There can be no objection

to girls serving water or talking to boys in the presence of some elders, for example, on the prayer ground. It is their duty, in fact, to serve water to everybody there. Even here, however, propriety should be observed. They should take care that there is no physical contact. There is every danger of physical desire being awakened when grown-up boys touch grown-up girls. It is therefore essential that they guard against any possibility of such physical contact.

As days pass I realize with increasing clearness that preservation of the vital fluid is imperative if one has determined to serve the country. Which service can I get out of you with these your lean and lanky bodies? None of you seems to have any flesh on his body. Bodies like yours are the result of failure to conserve the vital fluid. All of you should conserve this fluid and build up your bodies. As long as the body is weak, it is not possible even to acquire knowledge, let alone putting it to any use. A hot-tempered person can acquire knowledge, and so can a dishonest person, but one who does not observe *brahmacharya* can never acquire knowledge. We can gather from our Puranas that big demons, who subsequently became embodiments of sheer lust, had to observe *brahmacharya* for acquiring knowledge.

That a healthy body is essential for acquisition of knowledge needs no proof. I wish, therefore, to train you to have bodies as strong as demons'. In spite of my best efforts to improve them, I shall never see you with bodies like Shaukat Ali's. For this, we, your progenitors, are to blame. However, if even now preservation of the vital fluid is ensured India can once again give birth to a Hanuman.[1] How can a person, whose body is as thin as a stick, cultivate the virtue of forgiveness? Such a person will submit through sheer terror. If Shaukat Ali were to slap me in the face here, how can I pretend to pardon him? If I do not react in any way, it will mean that I have been cowed down. I can, of course, pardon Rasik here. I tell you, therefore, if you wish to become forgiving and truthful heroes you must resolutely conserve your vital fluid. If I display so much vigour at this age of 51 it is only because I have conserved it. If I had done so from the beginning, I cannot imagine to what heights I should have soared by now. I appeal to all parents and guardians present here to help

[1] Monkey-hero in the *Ramayana*, celebrated for his superhuman strength which enabled him to fly across the sea to Lanka and which is traditionally attributed to his perfect *brahmacharya*.

their boys in every way to conserve the vital fluid. If they cannot restrain themselves any longer and come and tell you so, requesting you to get them married, then only should you arrange their marriage. It is not as if men could remain unmarried only in the old days. Lord Kitchener was a bachelor—he did not marry. I do not believe that he must have been seeking satisfaction elsewhere. He had decided that only bachelors and unmarried men—that is to say, only persons of strong physique—should join the army; they should be unmarried and not given to dissolute ways either. I would therefore request all the elders not to marry off their sons and daughters in a hurry for fear that they may not get suitable partners afterwards. Please wait till they themselves come and express their desire. I am sure God will be there at that time and will see that the boy or the girl gets a suitable match.

I wish to mention another matter to the boys, namely, that boys and girls who have chosen and are studying under the same person as their teacher are as brothers and sisters to one another and must live as such. There can be no other relationship or bond between them. All of you staying in this Ashram and studying in this school are like brothers and sisters. The day this relationship is violated, I shall not have a moment's hesitation in winding up this Ashram or the school. At that time I shall not think of what people might say. You should assure me that you will preserve your relation of brothers and sisters; then alone will I go ahead with this experiment fearlessly and also invite other girls here. There is a gentleman who has expressed a desire to come and stay here. He has a 12-year-old daughter. Among us a girl of this age is considered to have grown up and is married off. Hence you must reassure me so that I may in turn reassure the gentlemen that his daughter's virtue will remain unblemished here and that he will be able to mould her character as he wishes to. This experiment is so delicate that only if the rules I have laid down are obeyed in every particular can parents and guardians of the girls be free from anxiety and the teachers and other elderly members of the Ashram conduct this experiment without any apprehensions. For these people to have suspicions and to spy upon the girls will harm both parties.

Whoever feels that it is not possible for him to restrain himself any longer, that his physical urge has grown so strong that it is impossible for him to curb it, should immediately quit this place rather than bring shame to the Ashram and break up this holy

experiment. The Bible has gone to the length of enjoining that, if one's eyes are not under one's control, one should thrust a needle into them. I do not think that I shall be in such a plight; but should I ever be, you can trust me and this river Sabarmati.

Whether or no sex desire has awakened in you, all of you should meditate on what I have said and act upon it. We cannot ignore the difference created by God. Only by respecting this difference will anyone in whom sex desire has become active be able to control it—for one in whom it has not become active this control will be quite easy. I have often said, and I repeat here once again, that I had to make great efforts to adhere to *brahmacharya*. I have not come across till this day any man who has struggled to practise *brahmacharya* with such effort. For him who has indulged in carnal pleasure even once, it becomes very difficult to conserve his vital fluid thereafter. You would, therefore, do well not to taste the pleasure at all. Those who feel that their desires have been roused should suppress them at that stage, while those whose desires are yet dormant will not need to put in any particular effort. They have merely to be careful that their desires are not roused. Only those who conserve their vital fluid will be able to serve the nation. Similarly, the girls can become worthiest housewives only by practising *brahmacharya*. She who serves not one person, her husband, but the whole country, the poor and the afflicted—who will not call her the worthiest housewife?

I wish to draw your attention to one more thing. Plain clothes help in keeping *brahmacharya*, though it must be admitted that this help is negligible. It is possible that a man donning khadi may be a veritable sinner, and also that a man dressing himself up in grand attire may be the purest among pure *brahmacharis*. I would worship such a man; but a sinner dressed in khadi, should he come near me, I would immediately show him out. All the same, we certainly cannot don gaudy dresses and try to look handsome. If a *brahmachari* need display his body to anybody, it is only to God and to no one else, and God sees us in all our nakedness. Why then should we decorate ourselves in fine garments? Real beauty shines through one's virtues. We should impress others by our virtues, not by our looks. Clothes are intended only for covering the body; and this can be covered by coarse khadi in the best possible manner. If older people themselves find it difficult to wear khadi clothes, even then they should accustom

their children to wear khadi. The mother who decks her child in rich garments, pleased with the thought that the child looks lovely thereby, is foolish. How do rich garments confer beauty? And even if they do, what is the good of it? If somebody wished to marry my daughter only for her good looks, I would turn him out with contempt. I would give her in marriage only to a person who wanted her as a wife for the sake of her virtues. If you wish to appear handsome, do not put on gaudy garments but cultivate virtues. If you become virtuous, you will positively appear handsome and you will be honoured wherever you go.

I do not think that I have anything more to say. I have told you everything I wanted to. What I have said is of priceless worth. If you have not understood it have it explained to you by your elders or your teachers, because even small boys ought to understand and bear in mind what I have said. You should all reflect upon it and, after digesting it, act upon it to the utmost you can and thus make it possible for me to try this experiment in co-education fearlessly and make a success of it.

[From Gujarati]

Sabarmati, Autumn Issue, 1922 : S.N. 7195

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

TURKISH PEACE TERMS[1]

1. The frontiers of Turkey will be as already demarcated, and where necessary revised by a Boundary Commission to be created. According to this delimitation Turkey will include the Constantinople sector of Thrace and all the predominantly Turkish areas of Asia Minor.

2. The rights and titles of the Turkish Government in Constantinople will not be affected, but the right to modify this provision is reserved in the event of the failure of Turkey faithfully to fulfil the treaty.

3. A Commission of the Straits will have authority over all waters between the Mediterranean mouth of the Dardanelles, the Black Sea mouth of the Bosphorous, and of the waters within three miles of each of these mouths; also on the shores to such extent as may be necessary. The duty of the Commission will be to ensure freedom of navigation in these waters in peace and war.

4. A scheme of local self-government will be drafted for Kurdistan, including provision for the protection of the Assyro-Chaldeans and other minorities. The League of Nations will decide later whether Kurdistan should be granted independence of Turkey, if it be proved that separation is desired by the majority of the Kurdish people.

5. Certain portions of Smyrna are formed into a separate unit to be administered by Greece, the suzerainty of Turkey being continued for a period of years till the autonomous State of Smyrna decides its own destiny.

6. With the exception of the Constantinople sector, Eastern Thrace is ceded to Greece, provision being made for the local self-government of the town of Adrianople.

7. Certain portions of the Armenian districts of Turkey are added to the existing Armenian Republic, the boundary between Turkey and Armenia in certain districts being referred to the arbitration of the President of the United States, whose decision will be final thereon and on any stipulation regarding the Armenian access to the sea.

8. Syria, Mesopotamia and Palestine are provisionally recognized as independent States, subject to administrative advice and assistance from a Mandatory Power until such time as they are able to stand alone. The man- date for Syria has been entrusted to France and those for Mesopotamia and Palestine to Britain. The

[1] Communicated by the Allies to Turkey and published in India in *Gazette of India Extraordinary*, dated May 14, 1920

mandate for Palestine will include the provision for giving effect to the declaration of November 8, 1918, regarding the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people.

9. The Hedjaz is recognized as a free and independent State. The King of the Hedjaz undertakes to assure free and easy access to Mecca and Medina to Muslim pilgrims of all countries.

10. Turkey relinquishes all rights and titles over Egypt and the Sudan and Cyprus.

11. Turkey recognizes the French protectorate over Morocco and Tunisia.

12. Turkey relinquishes her claims to certain islands in the Aegean.

13. The military, naval, and air forces at the disposal of Turkey will consist of the following : (1) the Sutlan's bodyguard at Constantinople; (2) a troop of *gendarmerie* for the maintenance of internal order and security and the protection of minorities; (3) special elements for reinforcements of the *gendarmerie* and eventual control of the frontiers. The bodyguard is limited to 700 and the *gendarmerie* with special elements to 50,000. All warships interned in Turkish ports are declared to be finally surrendered. The Turkish fleet is limited to six torpedo boats and seven sloops.

No military or naval air forces or dirigibles are to be maintained.

14. Control will be maintained over the finances of Turkey until the discharge of her international obligations has been assured.

15. Freedom of navigation and transit is secured.

The following ports are declared international ports, provision to be made for free zones in each : Alexandretta, Busrah, Constantinople, Dedeagatch, Haief, Hailad Pasha, Smyrna and Trebizond.

16. In addition to the above are numerous provisions regarding (a) League of Nations, (b) protection of minorities, (c) restoration of abandoned property rights, (d) prisoners of war, (e) graves of Allied soldiers, (f) punishment of war criminals, (g) economic questions and concessions, (h) labour conventions and (i) antiquities. But it is not necessary to detail these in the present statement.

All About the Khilafat, pp. 326-329

APPENDIX II

VICEROY'S MESSAGE TO MUSLIMS OF INDIA[1]

The decisions of the Supreme Council of the Allies in respect of the peace settlement with Turkey have been made known to the world. They have been reached after the most careful and anxious consideration of representations from the Muslims of all countries, and you have my assurance that before coming to its present decision the Supreme Council has had all possible regard to those representations which have proceeded from the Mohammedan subjects of His Majesty in India. My Government are issuing along with a summary of the peace terms a statement which explains the principal decisions and the reasons for them. These decisions are in full accordance with the high principles which have been applied in the peace settlement with all other Powers lately at war with Britain and her Allies. Nevertheless they include terms which I fear must be painful to all Muslims. The long delays which have protracted your anxiety for over a year although they have been unavoidable, have filled me with regret for your sakes, and now in your hour of trial I desire to send you a message of encouragement and sympathy, which I trust will uphold you. In the day of the Empire's need you made a splendid response to the call of your King and country, and by so doing you contributed much to the triumph of those ideals of justice and humanity for which the Allies fought. The Empire of which you form a part is now firmly established on these ideals and a great future of political progress and material prosperity is within the grasp of the Muslims of India, who have ever enjoyed under British rule the fullest religious freedom. Before the late disastrous War Great Britain had always maintained the closest ties of friendship with Turkey and I am confident with the conclusion of this new treaty that friendship will quickly take life again and a Turkey regenerate, full of hope and strength, will stand forth in the future as in the past, a pillar of the Islamic faith. This thought will, I trust, strengthen you to accept the peace terms with resignation, courage and fortitude, and to keep your loyalty towards the Crown bright and untarnished as it has been for so many generations.

God save the King Emperor !

(Sd.) CHELMSFORD

All About the Khilafat, pp. 329-331

[1] This was published in *Gazette of India Extraordinary*, dated May 14, 1920.

APPENDIX III

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT KHILAFAT COMMITTEE MEETING

ALLAHABAD,

June 3, 1920

RESOLUTION I

This meeting reaffirms the movement of non-co-operation in accordance with the four stages already approved by the Central Khilafat Committee, and appoints a sub-committee consisting of the following gentlemen with power to add to their number, to give practical effect to the movement without delay : Mahatma Gandhi, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Maulvi Mohamad Ali, Mr. Ahmad, Haji Siddick Khatri, Maulana Shaukat Ali, Dr. Kitchlew and Maulana Hasrat Mohani.

RESOLUTION II

This meeting resolves that the swadeshi movement should be undertaken in right earnest and a sub-committee consisting of the following gentlemen be appointed to work out a scheme for carrying out the movement : Mr. Chhotani, Mahatma Gandhi, Maulana Hasrat Mohani, Dr. Kitchlew, Maulvi Zafar Ali Khan, Messrs Agha Safdar, Syed Abdur Rauf, Mohammed Yusuf, Sharif, Tajuddin Mushin-ul-Mulk, Lala Shankar Lal, Maulana Shah Suleman, Maulana Shaukat Ali, Messrs Umar Sobhani, Abdul Wahood, Ahmed, Haji Siddick Khatri, Zahoor Ahmed, Noor Mohamad Sheikh, Abul Kalam Azad, Maulvi Akram Khan, Maulvi Muniruzzaman, Mr. Yakub Hussain.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 7-6-1920

APPENDIX IV

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA DESPATCH ON HUNTER COMMITTEE REPORT

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

HOME DEPARTMENT

Political

TO

THE RIGHT HON'BLE EDWIN MONTAGU

HIS MAJESTY'S SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

SIMLA

May 3, 1920

SIR,

We submit for your information and for any orders His Majesty's Government may desire to issue the report which was presented on the 8th March, 1920, by the Disorders Committee, together with our review of the report and our conclusions thereon. In the ordinary course the report would have been published with a resolution of the Government of India in the Home Department, but we consider the subject so important that after discussion with you we have decided that it is best to communicate to you our views and findings on the report for the information of His Majesty's Government. We desire to add that our views and conclusions are unanimous, except on those points where the dissent of our Hon'ble Colleague, Mr. Shafi, has been expressly indicated. We may also state that our Hon'ble Colleague, Sir George Lowndes, now on leave, concurred in all the conclusions we had reached up to the time of his departure.

2. In Resolution No. 2168, dated the 14th October 1919, the Governor-General-in-Council with the approval of the Secretary of State appointed a Committee to investigate the disturbances in Bombay, Delhi and the Punjab, their causes, and the measures taken to cope with them. The Hon'ble Lord Hunter, lately Solicitor-General for Scotland and now Senator of the College of Justice in Scotland, was appointed President of the Committee, which consisted of the following Members :

(1) The Hon'ble Mr. Justice G. C. Rankin, Judge of the High Court, Calcutta.

(2) The Hon'ble Mr. W. F. Rice, C.S.I., I.C.S., Additional Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department.

(3) Major-General Sir George Barrow, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., I.A., Commanding the Peshawar Division.

(4) The Hon'ble Pandit Jagat Narayan, B.A., Member of the Legislative Council of the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces.

(5) The Hon'ble Mr. Thomas Smith, Member of the Legislative Council of the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces.

(6) Sir Chimanlal Harilal Setalvad, KT., Advocate of the High Court, Bombay.

(7) Sardar Sahibzada Sultan Ahmed Khan, Muntazim-ud-Doula, M.A., L.L.M., (Cantab.), Bar-at-Law, Member for Appeals, Gwalior State.

The Committee began its sittings on the 29th October, 1919, and after hearing evidence at Delhi, Lahore, Ahmedabad, and Bombay finished its labours in the first week of March 1920, when its report was presented to the Government of India.

Before reviewing the findings of the Committee we desire to make some preliminary observations regarding the scope of the enquiry, the procedure followed by the Committee in recording evidence, and the general character of its conclusions.

3. In order to obtain a general view of the character of the disturbances and of the scope of the enquiry it will be useful to explain briefly the relative geographical position of the chief centres of disorder and to refer to a few salient dates which indicate the sequence of events in point of time. It was at Delhi—the Capital of India and from its historical and commercial importance a determing factor of considerable weight in the attitude of the rest of Northern India—that disturbances first occurred on the 30th March. They were of such a character as required the use of the military to restore order and before this was achieved it became necessary to fire twice on the mob. On the 10th April violent rioting took place at Amritsar and Lahore in the Punjab, and at Ahmedabad in the Presidency of Bombay, and distinct unrest manifested itself in a minor degree at places as far distant as Calcutta and Bombay. Lahore is a city of 230,000 inhabitants and the capital of the Punjab. Amritsar, which is 20 miles east of Lahore, is a town of more than 150,000 inhabitants and of great commercial importance. Ahmedabad has a population of roughly 280,000 and is an industrial town where 78 mills are located. The distances respectively of Lahore, Amritsar and Ahmedabad from Delhi are roughly 300, 280 and 540 miles. The situation in the Punjab after the 10th April rapidly deteriorated and Martial Law was proclaimed on the 15th April in the districts of Lahore and Amritsar, and shortly after in three other districts. About two weeks later a thundercloud on the frontier burst and the mobilization of troops for the Afghan war began on the 4th May. This seriously affected the general situation in the Punjab and it was not found possible to withdraw Martial Law from all the districts concerned before the 12th June nor from railway lands till a later date. These were briefly the events which with their causes and consequences formed the subject matter of the Committee's enquiry.

4. The next point to which the Government of India wish to advert is the

decision of the All-India Congress Committee to obstain from presenting evidence before the Committee of Enquiry. As explained by Lord Hunter in his letter of the 8th March forwarding the Report of the Committee, all persons desirous of giving evidence were invited to submit their names and addresses, together with a brief memorandum of the points on which they desired to give evidence, and it was left to the Committee to decide what evidence they would hear. Lord Hunter has described the circumstances in which the Congress Committee declined after the 12th November further to assist the Committee of Enquiry by appearing before it and tendering evidence, the offer which the same body made on the 30th December to produce their evidence and reopen the enquiry, and the reasons which led Lord Hunter to reject that offer. We believe that Lord hunter's account of the matter will convince all reasonable people that his decision was fully justified. The point, however, which we wish to emphasize—and it is one which was present to Lord Hunter's mind also—is this, that the material placed at the disposal of the Committee and the evidence laid before it covered the whole field of enquiry. The official witnesses fully disclosed all they knew regarding the events in which they had participated and placed before the Committee all correspondence and other documentary evidence which had any bearing on the nature of the outbreak, the suppression of the disturbances, or the administration of Martial Law. It is a matter of regret to Government that this was not supplemented by the additional evidence which the Congress Committee had collected and that the evidence which has since been published by that body has not therefore been subjected to examination by an impartial tribunal. They are doubtful, however, whether it would have made any substantial difference to the general picture placed before the Committee, although it might have thrown further light on particular incidents. With regard to the firing at Jallianwala Bagh, on which the attention of the public both at home and in India has been so largely concentrated since December last, the Committee had the most ample materials for judgment and further evidence would have contributed nothing to their knowledge of the facts.

5. The Committee have now submitted their recommendations in the form of a majority and minority report. The majority report is signed by the President and four members of the Committee, Mr. Justice Rankin, General Barrow, and Messrs Rice and Smith. The minority report is signed by Sir C. H. Setalvad, Pandit Jagat Narayan and Sahibzada Sultan Ahmad Khan. While two reports have been submitted, it is a matter of satisfaction to the Government of India that most of the findings of fact are unanimous and that in spite of differences of opinion as to the conclusions to be deduced thereform there is considerable common ground in this respect also. That common ground covers the whole of the events in Delhi and the Bombay Presidency. It also covers much of the narrative of events and the causes of the disturbances in the Punjab. Nor is the divergence in the Punjab findings altogether basic. It is partly one of degree, partly one of essential difference. Certain measures adopted in the

suppression of the disturbances and the administration of Martial Law are condemned in both reports but with varying degrees of severity. This remark applies in particular to the joint condemnation of the firing at Jallianwala Bagh. The most important point on which there is an essential difference of opinion relates to the introduction of Martial Law in the Punjab. While the majority find that a state of rebellion existed, necessitating or justifying the adoption of that measure, the minority consider that the disorders did not amount to rebellion and that the disturbances might have been suppressed and order restored without abrogating the control of the civil authorities or calling in military force save as auxiliary to the civil power.

6. It will be convenient to explain at this stage the arrangement which has been followed in the reports. The first seven chapters of the majority report are devoted to accounts of the disturbances in Delhi, the Bombay Presidency, and the Punjab districts of Amritsar, Lahore, Gujranwala, Gujrat and Lyallpur. In each case the majority briefly review the disturbances and record their findings on the propriety of the measures adopted to check them and to restore order. In Chapter VIII they describe the widespread attacks on communications which have an important bearing on the general nature of the disorders. In Chapter IX they discuss the causes of the disturbances with more particular reference to the Punjab. Chapter X contains a brief description of the stages in the introduction of Martial Law. In Chapter XI the reasons for the introduction and continuance of Martial Law are considered, while Chapter XII is devoted to a criticism of the administration of Martial Law.

The minority report follows a somewhat different plan of arrangement. Chapter I sets forth the general extent of the minority's agreement or disagreement with the findings of the majority. The nature and causes of the disorders are discussed in Chapter II. The justification for the introduction and the continuance of Martial Law in the Punjab is exa-mined in Chapter III. Chapter IV is devoted to the firing at Jallianwala Bagh. The admini-stration of Martial Law is discussed in Chapter V, the use of armoured trains and aero-planes in Chapter VI and the working of the Martial Law courts in Chapter VII.

Although it might have been more convenient to review at the outset the findings of the Committee regarding the causes and nature of the disturbances, we are reluctant to depart from the general plan of the majority report, as any such departure would increase the difficulty of comparing its findings with those of the minority. We accordingly propose to examine the report chapter by chapter, to state our conclusions on the findings of the majority and minority, more particularly where these differ, and finally to explain the action which in our judgment should be taken on the report.

7. Chapter I deals with the disturbances at Delhi. The Committee are

unanimous in finding that the authorities handled the situation in an adequate and reasonable manner, that there was no provocative or unnecessary display of military force, and that the firing was justified on the three occasions on which it was found necessary to resort to this extreme measure. The actual collisions between the police and mobs are found to be the bye-products of the satyagraha movement. The majority recognize that Mr. Gandhi's visit to Delhi after the first outbreak, if not prevented, would have been a serious embarrassment to the executive authorities there and might well have proved a source of great danger. The minority, while doubtful of the expediency of his exclusion and, while thinking that his presence might have had a beneficial result, do not deny the possibility of developments endangering the public peace. The only criticism passed by the Committee on the measures adopted by the local authorities is that the Deputy Commissioner made a mistake in enrolling a number of leading citizens as special constables, though, as they point out, these persons were not called on to render any services.

We accept these conclusions and have perused with satisfaction the commendation which has been bestowed by the Committee on the handling of the situation by the local officers. We do not consider that any blame attaches to the Deputy Commissioner for his appointment of special constables, as he acted in accordance with the established practice. We have, however, decided to address local Governments on the question whether the orders now obtaining on the subject in the various provinces require modification or revision. This is the more necessary as it appears that leading citizens were enrolled as special constables at other disturbed centres besides Delhi.

The Government of India consider that the events described in this chapter have an important bearing on the rest of the report, for they were the first fruits of the satyagraha movement, the first collision between the forces of order and the adherents of the passive resistance or civil disobedience movement. The behaviour of the crowd on the 30th March, which rendered it necessary for the military and police to fire on two occasions, cannot be ascribed to any action taken against Mr. Gandhi or local politicians. Such action has been pleaded in excuse of later mob excesses, but the internment order against Mr. Gandhi was not passed till ten days after the first outbreak of disorder at Delhi.

8. Chapter II gives an account of the disturbances in the Bombay Presidency. They were confined to Ahmedabad City and Viramgam in the Ahmedabad district, to Nadiad in the Kaira district, and to Bombay City. Viramgam is a town of 20,000 inhabitants 40 miles distant from Ahmedabad, and Nadiad, which has a population of 30,000, is 29 miles from the same city. By far the most serious outbreak of disorder occurred in Ahmedabad which is the home of Mr. Gandhi and may be described as the birth-place of the satyagraha movement. The disturbances began

on the 10th April as soon as the people of Ahmedabad heard of the action taken against Mr. Gandhi, and were not finally checked till the 14th, although military assistance was called in from the afternoon of the 10th. It is not necessary to follow the report of the Committee into the details of the disturbances and the measures taken to quell them but it is important to notice that for two days mob law reigned in the city and the excesses committed included two atrocious murders, brutal assaults on Europeans and Govern- ment officers, and the total destruction of the courts and other Government buildings. The efforts of the police and the military to protect the city and restore order were not successful till the military commander, with the concurrence of the District magistrate, issued a proclamation on the 12th April warning all people that any gathering of over ten individuals collected at one spot would be fired at, and that any single individual seen outside any house between 7 p.m. and 6 a.m. who did not stop when challenged would be shot. The last occasion on which the troops fired was midday of the 13th April and the Committee find that there was not in fact any firing without warning nor was any person fired on, who was not either rioting or encouraging rioters. The outbreak came to an end abruptly on the 14th April and its cessation is ascribed partly to the effects of this proclamation and partly to the return of Mr. Gandhi who, be it said to his credit, used his influence with the people to assist the authorities in restoring order. During the disturbances telegraph wires were cut at eight places in Ahmedabad and at fourteen places outside, and property to the value of nine lakhs of rupees was destroyed. The number of rounds fired by the armed police and the troops was 748, and the number of ascertained casualties amongst the rioters was 28 killed and 123 wounded. The majority report comments thus on the measures taken to suppress the outbreak : "We are of opinion that the measures taken by the authorities to deal with the disturbances were appropriate. The use of military force was unavoidable and the rioters alone were responsible for the casualties which ensued. The control of the city was in the hands of the military for less than two days and this has been referred to as a period of Martial Law. But beyond maintaining order and issuing the procla- mation on the 12th April, the military authorities did not interfere with matters of administration. The so-colled Martial Law orders were drastic; but the situation was most serious. The belief that all groups of more than ten men would be fired on without warning did much to restore order, and it appears that this instruction was not in fact literally carried out. We think that the troops behaved with praiseworthy restraint in most trying circumstances, and that the military action taken was not excessive. The Bombay Government have informed us that the behaviour of the military during the period that they were stationed in the city was exemplary. Our investigation leads to the same conclusion."

9. The outbreak at Viramgam was marked by the same ferocity as in Ahmedabad, by arson, murder, the destruction of Government property, and attacks

on railway and telegraph communications. The fury of the mob culminated in the savage murder of Mr. Madhavlal, a magisterial officer, who after a relentless pursuit was dragged from a house, where he had taken refuge, to the public road, soaked in kerosene oil and burnt alive beneath piles of public records, his body being completely incinerated. The outbreak began on the morning of the 12th April and was not finally suppressed till troops arrived from Ahmedabad late on the evening of that day. The Committee find that the total ascertained casualties amongst the rioters were six killed and eleven wounded and that the value of the property destroyed by the mob exceeded two lakhs of rupees. They commend the conduct of the armed police who behaved with spirit and kept off the mob from the public offices for six hours. They consider that the force used against the rioters by the armed police and by the armed peons of the Salt Department under Mr. Caldecott was certainly not excessive, and say indeed that if greater force could have been applied at an earlier stage, an atrocious murder and much destruction of property might have been prevented. They express regret that the murderers of Mr. Madhavlal could not be brought to justice for want of adequate identification.

10. In Nadiad the chief incident was an attempt to wreck a train which was conveying British troops to Ahmedabad. The train was derailed but had a miraculous escape, as it was brought to a stand before running down a steep embankment. Several attacks were made on railway and telegraph communications, but no collision occurred between the people and the troops who were sent there as a precautionary measure.

11. In Bombay City attempts were made to create disturbances when news came of the exclusion of Mr. Gandhi from the Punjab and Delhi, but the situation was well handled by the police and the military, and with the arrival of Mr. Gandhi the disorder subsided. As the Committee were informed by the Bombay Government, "The disturbances were attended by no fatal casualties or extensive destruction of public or private property. There was no suspension of the normal course of administration or of civil control over law and order. Offences committed in the course of the disturbances were dealt with by the permanent magisterial courts. There was no serious dislocation for any considerable time of the normal life of the city."

12. The minority accept the majority report in respect of all the disturbances in the Bombay Presidency, although they consider it almost certain that the unfortunate events at Ahmedabad and elsewhere would not have taken place but for the orders passed against Mr. Gandhi, and add that according to the official evidence his influence on arrival was fully thrown on the side of law and order. They acknowledge the discretion and judgment displayed by Mr. Chatfield, the Collector of Ahmedabad, in dealing with a sudden and grave outburst of mob fury, and compliment of local Government in the following terms: "The manner in which the Bombay Government,

while firmly taking adequate steps for the maintenance of peace and order in the cities of Bombay and Ahmedabad and other places, avoided taking measures likely to cause public irritation and leave bitterness behind, displayed to our mind creditable statesmanship."

13. We accept the unanimous findings of the Committee regarding the disorders in the Bombay Presidency. We also endorse the opinions which have been expressed regarding the valuable services of the local officers and the admirable behaviour of the troops engaged in the suppression of the disturbances. In this despatch it is impossible to review in detail the various outrages recorded in the report. A perusal of that document is necessary to appreciate correctly the cruelty of the mob, which was immediately directed against Europeans and Government servants. We desire to place on record our deep sympathy with all those who suffered at the hands of the mob and in particular with the relations of the magistrate and two police officers who were done to death in so dastardly a manner. Steps have already been taken to make provision for the dependents of these persons and to ensure adequate recognition of the services of those officers and others who rendered valuable assistance in this serious outbreak.

14. In Chapter III the Committee turn to the Punjab and deal first with the disturbances in the Amritsar district. They begin by describing the unrest and ferment which prevailed in Amritsar city prior to the 10th of April , on which date the first outbreak of disorder occurred. On the 9th the Deputy Commissioner received the orders of the local Government for the deportation of Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal to Dharmsala. The action of the Deputy Commissioner in carrying out these orders quickly and quietly is approved and the precaution of concentrating seventy-five armed police at the *kotwali* (police station) is commended as wise. the subsequent breakdown of this arrangement is not held to be due to any want of foresight on the part of the local officers. The Committee comment, however, on the failure to warn the European residents in the city of the danger of their position, observing that this omission seems inconsistent with the precautions taken for the evacuation of the women and children. At the same time they recognize the impossibility of predicting such an outburst of murderous antipathy against Europeans as actually occurred.

When the news of the deportation of Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal became known, an excited and angry crowd attempted to make their way to the civil lines. The Committee find that the Deputy Commissioner was right in preventing the crowd from proceeding further in this direction, and that the firing which was ordered to secure this object was completely justified and in no way exceeded the requirements of the occasion. Similarly on the second occasion on which firing was ordered at the Hall Bridge they justify the action taken and agree that the necessity of the occasion was not exceeded.

15. The Committee then describe the violent excesses which were committed by the mob in the city. At the National Bank the manager and assistant manager were brutally beaten to death, their bodies were burnt under piles of furniture, and the building itself was sacked, set on fire, and completely gutted, while the bank godowns were looted of their contents. The Alliance Bank was next attacked and its manager was cruelly murdered, being flung from the balcony on the street where his body was burnt under a stack of furniture soaked in kerosene oil. the building itself was spared, presumably because it was Indian-owned. The Committee condemn the police at the *kotwali* for failing to take steps to prevent these outrages, holding that the officer in charge might have prevented them but failed either to grasp, or to attempt to cope with, their responsibility. The Chartered Bank, which was also attacked, escaped through police intervention. The Town Hall and post office were burnt and the telegraph office attacked but saved by the jemadar of the station guard who fired on the mob. The Committee hold the firing at the telegraph office to be justifiable. They proceed to describe the looting of the goods station, the murders of Guard Robinson and Sergeant Rowlands, the murderous attacks on Mr. Bennett and Miss Sherwood, the determined search for Mrs. Easdon, the burning of various buildings including the Indian Christian Church, and the persistent efforts to injure communications and isolate Amritsar. The mob violence is described as anti-Government and anti-European and the gravity of the situation is made abundantly clear. In the course of a single day property to the value of seventeen lakhs of rupees was destroyed.

16. Later that day reinforcements in the shape of troops arrived and in the evening the Commissioner of the Division gave verbal instructions to the commanding officer that as the situation was beyond civil control, he, as senior military officer, should take such steps as the military situation demanded. On the evening of the 11th the Commis-sioner left for Lahore and General Dyer arrived at Amritsar where he took over charge of the troops. The Deputy Commissioner made over formal charge to him at midnight of that day. Generally speaking the Committee find no serious ground for criticism in regard to the action taken before the 13th April. The general conclusion of the Committee is that between the 10th and the 12th the civil authorities had become powerless, and that the state of affairs on the 11th was inevitably leading to a state of *de facto* Martial Law, that the authorities were justified in the measures which they took to suppress disorder, including the cutting off of light and water supplies and that they acted wisely in not attempting to take sterner and more resolute action to regain control within the city on the 11th and 12th.

17. The minority say that they are in general agreement with the statement of facts set out in Chapter III of the majority report, except where they specifically differ. They agree that all the firing which took place on the 10th April was justified

and they differ on one point only. While the majority say that the firing at the bridge was in no sense the cause of the mob excesses of the 10th, the minority hold that, although the excesses were altogether inexcusable and without justification, the mob had not any previous fixed intention of committing excesses, but after the firing lost their heads and were seized by a mad frenzy to commit nefarious deeds.

18. We desire at this point to review the situation and the measures taken at Amritsar up to and including the 12th April. We endorse the finding of the Committee that the situation was one of great difficulty and consider that the action taken by the authorities was generally justified. We think, however, it is to be regretted that the civil authorities considered it incumbent upon them, before the proclamation of Martial Law, to hand over control to the military in such terms as to suggest that they did not intend to exercise supervision or guidance over the action of the military commander. The result was to place the latter in a position of great difficulty and to impose upon him a grave responsibility which, in the opinion of the Government of India, should have continued to be shared by the civil authorities up to a later stage. It is not clear who was actually responsible for the complete abdication of civil authority, but the Government of India propose to make further enquiry into this matter and to pass such orders as may be necessary.

19. The Committee next deal with the events at Jallianwala Bagh on the 13th. They describe the place and give a full account of all the facts and circumstances of the firing, stating the number of rounds fired—1,650, and the extent of the casualties, the dead being estimated at 379 and the wounded at three times that number. They criticize General Dyer adversely on two grounds : (1) that he opened fire without warning; and (2) that he went on firing after the crowd had begun to disperse. On the first point, they say that the only person who can judge whether notice should properly be given on such an occasion is the military officer concerned. The Committee point out however that General Dyer does not suggest the existence of an emergency justifying his decision to fire on the crowd without warning. He stated before the Committee that his mind was made up as he came along that if his orders were disobeyed he was going to fire at once. They think it distinctly improbable that the crowd would have dispersed without being fired on, as most of those present had assembled in direct defiance of a proclamation. Nevertheless they say that notice would have afforded those who had assembled in ignorance of the proclamation and others an opportunity to leave the assembly. In continuing to fire as long as he did, even after the crowd had begun to disperse, General Dyer, in the opi-nion of the Committee, committed a grave error, though they consider that he honestly believed on the information then before him and his appreciation of the existing military situation that he was called upon to take this step in the discharge of his duty. They find further that it was his intention to create a moral effect throughout the Punjab and they condemn this as mistaken conception of his duty. As regards General Dyer's failure to attend to the

wounded, they say that he had a very small force with him and, as he explained, the hospitals were open and no application was made to him for help. In conclusion, they do not accept the view that General Dyer's action saved the situation in the Punjab and averted a rebellion on a scale similar to the Mutiny.

20. In dealing with the events of Jallianwala Bagh, the minority find that the notice prohibiting the meeting was not adequately published and they criticize General Dyer Severely : (1) for suggesting that he would have made use of machine-guns if they could have been brought into action; (2) for opening fire without warning and continuing after the crowd had begun to disperse until his ammunition was spent; (3) for firing not merely to disperse the crowd but to punish it and to produce a moral effect in the Punjab; and (4) for assuming that the crowd before him consisted of the persons guilty of the outrages of the 10th. They maintain that it is immaterial whether General Dyer thought he was doing right or not and that the plea of military necessity will not avail him, as this plea is always used in justification of Prussian atrocities. They do not agree with the majority that it was probable that the crowd could not have been dispersed without firing, citing General Dyer himself in support of their opinion, and they describe his action as inhuman and un-British and as having caused great disservice to British rule in India. They attribute his conduct to a fixed idea that India must be ruled by force and they condemn his action in not taking steps for the removal of the dead and the care of the wounded. Finally, they criticize the failure of the Punjab Government to ascertain without delay the number of casualties. It should be here stated that the result of official enquiries which included a careful scrutiny of the information gathered by the Sewa Samiti (a Social Service Society) places the figures at 379 killed and 192 wounded. It is almost certain that the latter figure omits many who were only slightly wounded, but as an estimate of the more serious casualties the combined figure is probably nearer the truth than any estimate based only on a rule of proportion, such as that stated by General Dyer in his evidence before the Committee to be not beyond the bounds of possibility.

21. The difference in the measure of condemnation of General Dyer by the majority and the minority and the attention which has been directed to the events at Jallianwala Bagh both in England and in India, necessitate a careful examination by Government of the extent to which General Dyer should be held to be blameworthy. Looking to the specific findings on which the con- demnation of his action is based, we consider that the orders prohibiting assemblies should have been promulgated more widely and in particular that notices might have been posted up at jallianwala Bagh, which has become a favourite assembly ground for political meetings. We think also that notice might have been given at the *Baisakhi* fair where many people from villages in the vicinity had collected. At the same time it is the case that the proclamation was made by beat of drum in the presence of General Dyer himself, and

notices were published at nineteen places in the city; it cannot therefore be doubted that most of the residents of Amritsar present at the meeting were aware of the orders and collected in defiance of them.

The Government of India agree with the Committee that General Dyer should have given warning to the crowd before opening fire. It is true that he had only a small force with him and that in view of this circumstance and the previous successes of the forces of disorder it is most improbable that an excited and defiant mob would have dispersed on a mere warning, but those ignorant of the order, including the villagers who had come to visit the *Baisakhi* fair, and indeed others would have had an opportunity of leaving the assembly if reasonable notice had been given to them. The Government of India agree that there was not such an emergency existing as to render this precaution impossible.

General Dyer's action in continuing to fire on the crowd after it had begun to disperse was, in the opinion of the Government of India, indefensible. He fired continuously for ten minutes during which time 1,650 rounds were expended. It is probable that General Dyer's action so intimidated the lawless elements in the population of Amritsar and neighbouring districts of the Central Punjab as to prevent further manifestations of disorder. The Government of India cannot however accept this as justification of the continued firing which greatly exceeded the necessity of the occasion. The dispersal of the crowd was indeed a matter of vital importance in view of the situation which then existed in Amritsar and stern measures to effect this end were certainly required. In our opinion however much more restricted military force would have sufficed to produce this effect and General Dyer's action has undoubtedly left behind bitterness of feeling which will take long to pass away. He was no doubt faced with a position of great difficulty : he was apprehensive of Amritsar being isolated and he had before him the danger of allowing mob rule to continue after the terrible events of the 10th. Giving all due weight to these considerations, the deliberate conclusion at which we have arrived is that General Dyer exceeded the reasonable requirements of the case and showed a misconception of his duty which resulted in a lamentable and unnecessary loss of life. Although we are constrained to this decision we are convinced that General Dyer acted honestly in the belief that he was doing what was right and we think that in the result his action at the time checked the spread of the disturbances to an extent which it is difficult now to estimate. This was the opinion of many intelligent observers in the Punjab. There remains the question of the failure to arrange for medical aid after the firing at Jallianwala Bagh. Here too we must express our great regret that no action was taken either by the civil or the military authorities to remove the dead or give aid to the wounded. The minority criticize Sir Michael O'Dwyer for expressing approval of the action taken at Jallianwala Bagh. On this point the Government of India have little to add to the account given by the late Lieutenant-Governor of the circumstances in

which his approval was conveyed, but making every allowance for the difficult position in which Sir Michael O'Dwyer was placed, the Government of India think that he would have acted more wisely, if, before expressing any approval of General Dyer's action on this occasion, he had taken steps to ascertain the facts and circumstances of the firing more fully.

We desire to add here that our Hon'ble colleague Mr. Shafi agrees generally with the minority in their findings of fact as regards Amritsar and the inferences deduced therefrom, where these differ from the findings and conclusions of the majority. He rejects the theory that General Dyer's action at Jallianwala Bagh saved the situation in the Punjab and averted a rebellion on a scale similar to that of the Mutiny. In his opinion the disturbances on and after the 14th of April in the districts of Gujranwala, Gujrat and Lyallpur were the results of the commotion caused by the Jallianwala Bagh affair.

22. We cannot leave this tragic occurrence without adverting to the charge that a veil of secrecy was deliberately thrown around it, the public being left to infer that the sinister policy of concealment has only been foiled by the revelations made before the Committee of Enquiry in December last. The insinuation is devoid of foundation. When the outbreak of disorder occurred, the immediate necessity was to quell them and restore order. At a very early stage His Excellency the Viceroy decided that it was incumbent upon Government to hold an inquiry into the disturbances and the administration of Martial Law. In this opinion you concurred and in the third week of May in a speech in the House of Commons you made the following announcement :

> As regards these troubles which I have been describing, as questions have been asked from time to time and resolutions have been moved demanding an enquiry, the Viceroy has always contemplated an enquiry. You cannot have disturbances of this magnitude without an enquiry into the causes and the measures taken to cope with these disturbances, but no announcement has been made of enquiry up to this moment for this reason : let us talk of an enquiry when we have put the fire out.

This announcement is entirely incompatible with the suggestion of a conspiracy on the part of either the Government of India or the Secretary of State to suppress or conceal the details of the occurrence.

As a result of further communications between us the present Committee was appointed. The question of the composition of the Committee received the most careful consideration, as Government were determined that it should be a body of commanding weight and high judicial experience in which perfect confidence could be reposed by the public, both at home and in India. An announcement of the impending appointment of the Committee was made in the Imperial Legislative Council during

its autumn session of September last. Apart from a general enquiry of this character the question whether the investigation of particular incidents should be deferred till the Committee assembled or should form the subject of preliminary proceedings had been carefully considered. Finally, however, we decided with your concurrence that such preliminary enquiries were inadvisable.

In considering whether preliminary enquiries should be held, the case of Jallianwala Bagh had received prominent notice, and after the decision the collection of information continued. The first report of the firing on the crowd at Jallianwala Bagh received by the Government of India on the 14th April placed the casualties at 200. This was supplemented two days later by a report that 200 was the number of killed. These reports were at once repeated to the Secretary of State. Fuller reports were not received till a later date. In the second half of April, General Dyer was fully occupied in marching troops throughout the disturbed area. Very early in May, owing to the outbreak of the Afghan war, he was selected for the command of the Kohat Brigade. From that date till the end of July he was continuously engaged in field operations, and his detailed report on the administration of Martial Law in Amritsar, including the firing at Jallianwala Bagh was not received till the month of August. Meanwhile the local Government had been pursuing enquiries to obtain accurate statistics regarding the extent of the casualties. The information elicited up to the end of August, which was confirmed by a scrutiny of the results of private enquiries made by the Sewa Samiti, showed that the ascertained death roll was then 291 and this was the figure stated at the meeting of the Imperial Legislative Council held in Simla on the 11th September. During this same session of the Council full accounts were given of the happenings in the Punjab and the story of Jallianwala Bagh was discussed in great detail. The proceedings of the debate were fully reported and published in the usual manner and indeed attracted great attention in India. The official enquiries, however, continued, and when the Chief Secretary to the Punjab Government gave evidnce before the Committee four months later he stated that the total number of death casualties as then ascertained was 379, while a more recent report of the local Government, based on a scrutiny of the Sewa Samiti's information, places the number of wounded at 192.

From the time that it was decided to appoint the Committee, Govern- ment thought it proper to avoid as far as possible making any public comments on the transactions which it was the duty of the Committee to examine and to refrain from passing any judgment on the conduct of individual officers until they received the report of that body. There is no justification for the allegation that from the date of these occurrences until the publication of General Dyer's evidence before the Committee, the Government of India had been guilty of following a policy of deliberate suppression of the truth. The facts stated above clearly refute this libel.

It is no doubt a matter for regret that without resort to a formal enquiry full knowledge of what actually occurred should not have become general earlier. But the chapter is closed, and as Government and the public both in India and the United Kingdom are now in complete possession of the facts, recriminations and regrets serve no useful purpose.

23. Chapter IV deals with the disorders in the Lahore district. In the capital itself the agitation against the Rowlatt Bills and the complete hartal of the 6th April had worked the people up to a state of intense excitement, which the news of Mr. Gandhi's arrest and of the disturbances at Amritsar brought to a head on the afternoon of the 10th. Crowds assembled in the city and endeavoured to overpower the police when the latter opposed their advance towards the civil lines. The Committee have carefully considered the circumstances under which fire was opened on this mob under the orders of the District Magistrate, Mr. Fyson, and the Superintendent of Police, Mr. Broadway, on three occasions in the course of that afternoon and they fully approve the action taken by these two officers. The Government of India are unable to think that any other conclusion is possible. The outrages at Amritsar were known at the time to the mob when it was proceeding to the civil lines and it would have been suicidal to allow it to succeed in its endeavour. The position in Lahore, after these attempts of the crowd to enter the civil lines had been repelled, is thus described by the Committee :

> On the night of 10th April and for some days following, the city of Lahore was in a dangerously disturbed condition. Military measures were taken on that night to protect the civil station and its surroundings. No European could safely enter the city, from which the police were temporarily withdrawn. For about two days the city was controlled by the mob.

The Committee then describe the events of the 11th, the inflammatory speeches delivered at the Badshahi Mosque to excited crowds of Hindus and Mohammedans, the organization of the *Danda Fauj*[1], a band of hooligans, who marched through the city armed with sticks (lathis) and destroyed pictures of Their Majesties, shouting that King George was dead. Attempts were made on the morning of the 11th to pull down the railings at the Fort, where some of the rioters spat at the British soldiers on guard and called them "white pigs". On the same day the railway workshop was attacked and determined efforts were made to bring about a strike amongst the workers. On the 12th another meeting was held at the Badshahi Mosque, when an officer of the Criminal Investigation Department was severely beaten by the mob. On the same day a mixed column of police and military was marched through the city in an effort to regain control of the situation. The march was hindered by large crowds, assembled at the Hira Mandi, who refused to disperse when so directed

[1] Literally "Bludgeon Army"

by the District Magistrate and began to stone the small advance force of police which was with him. Mr. Fyson was obliged to open fire with the result that one man was killed and twenty wounded. The Committee consider that it was essential on this day to disperse the crowd and that it would have been the end of all chance of restoring order in Lahore if the police and troops had left without dispersing it. All the firing was done by the police. The fact that the police, armed with buckshot, were made to take the brunt of the collision with the crowd instead of the troops with service ammunition, the small number of shots fired by the police, and the warnings given to the crowd, showed, in the opinion of the Committee, that the greatest care was taken and the least possible degree of force was used.

Special attention is invited by the Committee to the use of inflammatory and seditious posters in Lahore, which in the name of Mahatma Gandhi called upon the brave people of the Punjab to enlist in the *Danda Fauj* and kill the English who were described as pigs, monkeys and kafirs. On the 13th April the district was proclaimed under the Seditious Meetings Act. On the same date the station of Wagah, about 14 miles off, was burnt and sacked, telegraph lines cut and an armoured train derailed, fortunately without loss of life. On the 14th the Punjab Government deported the local leaders, Rambhuj Dutt, Harkishan Lal and Duni Chand, who had been actively associated with the agitation and the still-continuing hartal; all these men were convicted later of offence of waging war. On the 15th April Martial Law was proclaimed in Lahore.

24. The second portion of Chapter IV describes the very serious disturbances which occurred on the 12th April at Kasur, a sub-divisional town, 37 miles south-east of Lahore. On the morning of that day a violent mob attacked the railway station, and after destroying and burning a considerable quantity of valuable property, turned their attention to three trains which were held up near the station. Murderous attacks were made on a number of Europeans, including a lady and three children, who were travelling by these trains; some of them had miraculous escapes, but three persons were severely injured and two unfortunate warrant officers were beaten to death. Elated by their success, the mob next burnt down the post office and a civil court, and attacked the sub-divisional offices where the police were obliged to fire in defence of Government property with the result that four men were killed and several wounded. The Committee uphold the decision to fire upon the mob and think indeed that it should have been fired on at an earlier stage. Troops arrived from Ferozepore on the afternoon of the 12th and averted further trouble. Outbursts of disorder occurred at two other places in Lahore district, at Khem Karan on the 12th, when the railway station was attacked with some resultant damage, and at Patti, where telegraph wires were cut on the night of the 11th and the post office and railway station were attacked on the 12th.

We accept all the findings of the majority, in which the minority concur, with regard to the disturbances in Lahore district and the measures taken to suppress them. We consider that praise is dut to Messrs Fyson and Broadway for their handling of the difficult situation in Lahore city.

25. Chapter V deals with the very serious outbreak at Gujranwala which is a town of 30,000 inhabitants about 36 miles north of Lahore. There had been here as elsewhere the usual agitation against the Rowlatt Bill and a complete hartal was observed on the 6th April but no violence had occurred or was anticipated till the 13th, when the news of the happenings at Amritsar and Lahore on the 10th gave rise to local excitement. That evening the authorities learnt that further demonstrations were intended next day and the acting Deputy Commissioner took such police precautions as seemed to him necessary. The committee describe in detail the outrages which were committed in the town on the 14th including the attack on a train, the setting fire to the Gurukul bridge, the burning of many buildings, and numerous injuries to railway and telegraph communications. The mob had obtained complete mastery and the police were unable to stop the senseless destruction of property which occurred or to secure the safety of the European and loyal population. The post office, the revenue office, the church, and the district court were all burnt down. The jail and the police lines were attacked but were saved by the police firing. The mob then returned to the railway station, set the buildings and goods sheds on fire, and looted their contents. Those European families which had not been sent away as a precautionary measure on the previous evening were collected for safety in the Treasury, which was protected by a small police guard. Communications meanwhile had been interrupted on every side; by the end of the day practically all the wires along the railway in front of the city were cut for a distance of some miles. On account of this interruption of communications, it was impossible to send ordinary military aid to Gujranwala and it was in these circumstances that the use of aeroplanes for the relief of the town was sanctioned. The police were nearly exhausted when about three o'clock in the afternoon three aeroplanes from Lahore arrived over the town. It was not till nine o'clock that night that the first troops arrived.

The important findings of the majority regarding events at Gujranwala are : (1) that Mr. Heron's action in firing on the mob is entirely approved; (2) that the conduct of the acting Deputy Commissioner in refusing to allow firing when the mob attacked the post office is open to criticism; (3) that the mob was seeking to imitate what had been done at Amritsar; (4) that the decision to use bomb-carrying aeroplanes was justified in the circumstances, though recourse to the use of aeroplanes in civil disorders cannot be defended save in cases of the utmost urgency; and (5) that generally speaking, the action of the aeroplane officer, Major Carberry, was justified but that his instructions were defective. On all these points the Government of India are in entire agreement with the Committee and desire to commend Mr. Heron who

behaved well in circumstances of great difficulty. The Committee find that the dropping of bombs on two outlying villages and on the Khalsa High School cannot be defended but the fault lay chiefly with the instructions given to Major Carberry and they impute no blame to him for a decision taken in the air and at the moment. They observe that the dropping of bombs on the riotous crowds within Gujranwala city was not only justified but, in their view, invaluable, and the fact that the disorders were ended long before troops arrived is in a large measure attributable to this act. They say that no sufficient explanation has been given to justify the use of an aeroplane on the 15th of April for purposes of offensive action, and they conclude by recommending that the instructions to be issued to Air Force officers regarding the procedure to be followed by them on such occasions should form the subject of careful enquiry by the Air Force Headquarters.

The minority discuss the employment of aeroplanes in Chapter IV which is entitled "Armoured Trains and Aeroplanes". They agree with the majority in saying that the use of aeroplanes to quell civil disorders should as far as possible be deprecated. They condemn Major Carberry for dropping bombs on the Khalsa High School and two outlying villages, and say that though the orders he received were not worded with sufficient care, he did not exercise his discretion wisely in carrying them out. They find also that his action in firing with a machine-gun on the crowd was excessive.

26. So far as the general question of the use of aeroplanes at Gujranwala is concerned, the Government of India accept the finding of the majority which is aptly expressed as follows : "We are not prepared to lay down as a charter for rioters that when they succeed in preventing the ordinary resources of Government from being utilized to suppress them, they are to be exempt from having to reckon with such resources as remain." We do not consider that it would be right to censure the officers who have been mentioned in connection with individual incidents, as their acts, where condemned, are more to be ascribed to want of clearness in their instructions than to errors of judgment. We think that the despatch of aeroplanes on the 15th under instructions which admitted of their being used for offensive action was not justified but we do not consider that the officer who carried out the instructions was seriously to blame. We note, however, with satisfaction that, so far as known, no casualties resulted from the action taken on this date. Finally, we propose to take steps to give effect to the recommendations of the majority that the instructions to be issued to Air Force officers on such occasions should be carefully prescribed.

27. There were outbreaks of disorder at fourteen other places in the Gujranwala district, but the Committee discuss those only which occurred at Wazirabad, a town of 20,000 inhabitants 20 miles north of Gujranwala, at Akalgarh, and Hafizabad, and in the Sheikhupura sub-division. At Wazirabad a riotous mob was

repelled from the railway buildings, but did extensive damage to the telegraph system. It also set fire to railway bridges, sacked and burnt the bungalow of a Scotch missionary, and made an unsuccessful attempt to wreck the mail train. At Akalgarh and Hafizabad extensive damage was done to the telegraph wires, and at the latter place an officer of the Military Farms Department had a fortunate escape from the murderous intentions of a threatening crowd. In the Skeikhupura sub-division persistent and determined attacks on the telegraph and railway systems were made at Chuharkhana, Sheikhupura, Sangla and other places, at least three railway stations being destroyed, while savage assaults were made on certain railway employees and Government servants. An armoured train was sent to the rescue from Lahore, and fire was opened from this at Chuharkhana under the orders of Rai Sahib Lala Sri Ram Sud, Extra Assistant Commissioner of Sharakpur. The Committee find that this officer acted in a difficult situation with promptitude and decision. The minority take a different view and condemn him on the ground that his intention was punishment and that the firing was therefore not justified. The Government of India accept the opinions of the majority in all matters arising out of the disturbances at these places and agree with them that Lala Sri Ram Sud displayed promptitude and decision in the discharge of his duties.

28. Chapters VI and VII describe the events which occurred in the Gujrat and Lyallpur districts respectively. The chief features of the disturbances in these areas were attacks on railway communications and telegraph wires. At Gujrat on the 15th April fire had to be opened on a riotous mob which was dispersed without casualties. At Malakwal a train was derailed on the 17th April and two lives were lost. In Lyallpur a very disquieting and prominent feature was the continued exhibition of posters of an inflammatory and criminal character. Indians were called upon, in the blessed name of Mahatma Gandhi, to fight to the death against English cheats and to dishonour English women. Great tension existed for several days and the situation at Lyallpur was an anxiety to Government on account of the memories of the previous troubles of 1907. The position was so serious that the Europeans in the station were collected for safety in two houses in the civil lines, but no actual violence occurred except the cutting of telegraph wires at a few places in the district. The arrival of troops on the 17th April prevented any further disorder.

The Committee have not described in detail the acts of violence and disorder which occurred in many other towns and places in the Punjab, but these are set forth in the chronological statement annexed to the report and it is necessary to bear them in mind in considering the position as it appeared to the local Government when the proclamation of Martial Law was recommended.

29. Chapter VIII describes the persistent and widspread attacks on the railway and telegraph systems, which continued from the 10th April till about the end of the month. According to a report of the Telegraph Department, the wires were cut or

tampered with on 55 occasions, but there were besides numerous attacks on railway telegraphs and the total number of outrages of this class cited by the Home Member at a Council meeting in September last according to a statement of the Punjab Government was 132. The Committee ascribe the attacks on communications partly to anti-Government feeling and partly to the desire to prevent the movement of troops. They also refer to the persistent attempts which were made to incite the railway staff to strike. The unrest prevailing amongst certain sections of the staff was a cause of great anxiety to Government at this critical time.

The importance of this chapter lies in the close bearing it has on the question of the justification for the introduction and continuance of Martial Law. The significance of the statistics of railway and telegraph interruptions is brought forcibly home by the maps attached to the report. These indicate the extended area over which this class of offence was committed, giving rise to a suspicion of preconcerted action.

30. In Chapter IX the Committee discuss the causes of the disturbances and say that an adequate explanation of the general and widespread outbreaks in the Punjab must be sought in the causes of a general state of unrest and discontent amongst the people, particularly the inhabitants of the larger towns. The increased interest in political agitation caused in recent years by the Home Rule movement received a great impetus from the new doctrine of self-determination. Meanwhile, however, the restrictions imposed under the Defence of India Act were becoming more essential, as the War drew to its climax. These restrictions affected the daily life of the ordinary citizen much more lightly in India than in Europe; nevertheless, particularly when imposed on political agitation, they were, however necessary, the more galling to the educated classes, in view of the fact that the political future of India was under consideration. The Punjab was meanwhile doing more than its share to respond to the call of the Empire for recruits for the army, and the strain was falling mainly on the country districts, which the local Government considered it necessary to protect from any anti-Government agitation likely to hamper the work of recruitment. After the conclusion of the Armistice in November 1918 hopes ran high amongst the educated classes that the services rendered by India in the War would receive immediate recognition. But these hopes were not at once fulfilled and disappointment was caused by a combination of circumstances, such as high prices, scarcity, food-stuff restrictions, and the anxieties of the peace settlement, especially as it affected Turkey.

The Committee next consider the agitation against the Rowlatt Bills. They find that this was largely, if not mainly, responsible for creating the feeling against Government which provoked such serious disorders and they cite various false rumours as to the provisions of the Bills which inflamed popular feeling. They next

examine the history and progress of the satyagraha movement inaugurated by Mr. Gandhi on the 24th February. After a careful review of this movement in all its aspects, the Committee find that a familiarity and sympathy with disobedience to laws was engendered by it amongst large numbers of people and that the law-abiding instincts which stand between society and outbreaks of violence were undermined at a time when their full strength was required. From its first inception the satyagraha movement was condemned by prominent leaders of moderate opinion in India as likely to promote disorder and breach of the peace, and the organizer himself recognized later that in embarking on a mass movement he had underrated the forces of evil. The Committee expressly find that the recruiting campaign and the action taken in the Punjab to raise subscriptions to the war loans were not responsible for the unrest. They conclude by saying that there is no evidence that the outbreaks in the Punjab were the result of a pre-arranged conspiracy to overthrow the British Government in India by force, but that it was difficult and probably unsafe for Government not to assume that the outbreak was the result of a definite organization. Apart from the existence of any deeply laid scheme to overthrow the British, a movement which has started in rioting and become a rebellion might have rapidly developed into a revolution.

31. In the introductory chapter of their report the minority state that they are in substantial agreement with the findings of the majority as regards the causes of the disturbances, with this reservation that they do not concur in the opinion that the Punjab authorities were justified in assuming that the outbreak was the result of a definite organization. They are unable to agree that the riots were in the nature of a rebellion and they say that it is an unjustifiable exaggeration to suggest that the events might have developed into a revolution. They entirely agree with the majority in their estimate of the satyagraha movement and its offshoot, civil disobedience of laws. They develop their views on the real character of the disorders, including their causes, more fully in Chapter II of their report. Here they refer to the general conditions existing in the beginning of 1919, the strain placed on India by her War efforts, the hardship of high prices, the inconveniences and restraints imposed by War measures, the hope of alleviation excited by the Armistice, and the subsequent disappointment caused by famine, epidemic and a more stringent Income-tax Act, the belief that the proposals of the Government of India as regards the Reform scheme were illiberal and intended to whittle it down, and the delay of the Turkish settlement. They argue that many of the foregoing causes affected the Punjab more than other provinces and they instance other special factors such as war-weariness, food-stuffs and traffic restrictions, Sir Michael O'Dwyer's speeches, press restrictions, the orders prohibiting the entry into the province of outside politicians, all tending to cause general irritation amongst the educated classes. While refraining from any discussion of the merits of the Rowlatt Act they hold that its introduction and enactment in the

face of Indian opinion was a fertile source of discontent which was fostered by misrepresentations in the Punjab. They assert that Indian leaders were not responsible for these misrepresentations, and they condemn Government for failing to explain the Act to the masses until after the hartal of April the 6th, althought misrepre sentation were current before that date. They accept the cstimate of the satyagraha movement formend by the majority, but they disclaim the view that the disorders in the Punjab can be attributed to any active presenatation of the satyagraha doctrine by organizations workin within the province. They find thatthere was no organization to bring about disturbances and they quote the evidence of various official witnesses in support of this onclusion. The anti-British and anti-Government outbursts which occurred were in their opinion purely the result of sudden mob frenzy. The minority conclude that although there was thus no evidence of organized conspiracy in the Punjab, the civil and military authorities persuaded themselves that open rebellion existed and took action accordingly.

32. The Government of India accept the finding of the Committee regarding the causes of the disturbances. The minority, as stated above, are in substantial agreement with the majority on this subject. Of the causes specially mentioned by the minority they agree that epidemics and a new Income-tax Act were factors in the unrest, and this latter cause may have accounted in part for the extent to which the movement enlisted the sympathy of the trading classes. The despatches containing the views of the Government of India on the Reform proposals were not published till long after the disturbances, and if, as is suggested by the minority, the supposed attitude of the Government was a cause of unrest this must have been due to deliberate misrepresentation. Moreover, so far as is known, no such allegations were made either in the Press or on the public platform before the disorders actually broke out. The minority assign as one of the causes of the unrest which preceded the outbreak in the Punjab the attitude of Sir Michael O'Dwyer towards the educated classes and the resentment which they allege was produced thereby. The efforts made by the larger landowners and men of leading [*sic*] in rural areas to promote recruiting during the War had brought these classes into prominence and had secured a generous recognition from the local Government. For this and other reasons a tendency had sprung up towards cleavage between the rural classes and the trading and professional classes from which the intelligentsia is mainly drawn. This may have created amongst the latter an impression that their political influence was being curtailed. The Government of India agree with the Committee that misrepresentations of the Rowlatt Act were an important cause of the outbreak. Such misrepresentations were freely circulated and their harmful effects were incalculable. Government were unaware of the dissemination of these malicious falsehoods until the beginning of April when they at once took action to contradict them. It is unfortunate that neither in the Press nor on the public platform did those who attacked the Act endeavour to

remove the effects of these misrepresentations. Whether it is correct or not to say, as the minority do, that the disorders in the Punjab were not due to any active presentation of the satyagraha doctrine within the province, we must place on record our belief that many of those who joined the satyagraha movement did so with the intention of using it for the purpose of promoting disorder. Finally we desire to observe that the opinion of the minority regarding the nature of the disorders is discounted by their findings of fact, while the conclusion of the majority that a movement which started in rioting became a rebellion is supported by the conviction before various tribunals of a large number of persons for the offence of waging war against the King. These convictions, in the opinion of the Government of India, are of great importance in reaching a decision as to the true character of the disorders.

But whatever the truth may be as to the causes which produced these disorders and grave as the outbreak was in its nature and effects, it must not be forgotten that the loyalty of India as a whole remained unshaken and that even in the Punjab the bulk of the pupulation maintained its reputation and did not fall a victim to the infection which so disastrously affected a portion of it.

33. There is one point in the discussion of causes to which the Government of India desire to advert at greater length. It has been represented that the action taken by Government against prominent politicians, such as Mr. Gandhi and Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal, was the cause and not merely the occasion of the disturbances. This is sufficiently disproved by the fact already pointed out that the satyagraha movement had led to grave disorders in Delhi long before any such action was taken. But the circumstances in which Mr. Gandhi was excluded from Delhi and the Punjab deserve fuller examination.

The situation about the end of March has already been described. The acute state of tension which continued in Delhi for some days after the outbreak of the 30th March greatly increased the potentialities of danger of the satyagraha movement in other parts of India, where the news of the Delhi rioting caused great excitement. The events of that date might indeed well have conveyed to the promoters of the movement a warning of the dengers which were attendant on their propaganda, but actually they were far from doing so. The agitation accompanied by increasing excitement continued unchecked all over the country.

It was at this critical juncture that we received information that Mr. Gandhi had vigorously renewed his campaign of civil disobedience to the laws, and on the 9th we heard that he had left Bombay for Delhi on the previous evening. Immediately on receiving this news, we consulted the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab and the Chief Commissioner of Delhi. Both these officers considered that the situation had become serious and that it would be most dangerous to allow Mr. Gandhi to enter their jurisdictions. His avowed intention was to break the law of the land and to secure

adherents to the satyagraha movement. His arrest and prosecution in the Punjab would in all probability have been the signal for an outbreak, and the enlistment of any large number of supporters to his movement in that province would almost certainly have led to an immediate campaign of active resistance and outrage. The Chief Commissioner considered that an order merely prohibiting Mr. Gandhi from entering Delhi would be very dangerous, as the only method of enforcing it would be to arrest, detain and prosecute him in that city. On the other hand, if he were allowed to enter Delhi, it was most probable that he would break the law there and would have to be arrested and tried for an offence, with the result that there would almost certainly be a recurrence of the recent serious rioting. In these circumstances the Government of India authorized the local Governments of the Punjab and Delhi to issue orders under rule 3(b) of the Defence of India Rules, directing Mr. Gandhi to remain in the Bombay presidency. The Government of India then considered, and still consider, that this course was amply justified in view of the fact that Mr. Gandhi was the leading spirit of a movement intended to paralyse Government.

34. In the same way it has been suggested that the action of the Punjab Government in ordering the deportation of Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal on the 10th April was a provocative act leading directly to the subsequent outrages. Previous orders had been passed prohibiting them from speaking in public, and it is true that they had not taken an open part in the meetings immediately preceding the hartal of the 6th April. But as the evidence subsequently taken before the Martial Law commission showed, they held secret meetings after that date and continued to direct an agitation which was found to be of the nature of a criminal conspiracy. It was in these circumstances that the local Government decided to remove them from Amritsar to Dharmsala. That outrages followed as soon as the news of the deportation became known is of course the case. But it is always a question of the greatest difficulty to judge whether preventive steps such as those taken will, in a time of great popular excitement, quiet the general atmosphere or precipitate disorder. The probability seemed to be that they would achieve the former result.

35. Chapter X of the report contains a statement of the facts regarding the successive stages in the application of Martial Law. Chapter XI discusses the propriety of its introduction and continuance. The majority of the Committee, as already mentioned, definitely find that a state of rebellion against Government existed. They review the various occurrences, indicate the broad features of the disorders and their significance, point out the danger of criticizing isolated events and examine the whole position as it presented itself to the Punjab Government and the Government of India. Finally they conclude that the situation in the Punjab was one of extreme gravity and that the authorities were justified in declaring Martial Law in those areas where it was proclaimed.

The wisdom of continuing Martial Law is discussed at some length, and the prolongation of it on the railway is examined with special reference to the Afghan war. The conclusion of the majority is that those responsible for the continuance of Martial Law gave careful and considerate judgment to the question and did not prolong it beyond the time during which to the best of their judgment it was necessary for the maintenance and restoration of order in the province. Looking to the problem with which Government was faced, the Committee do not think they would be justified in adversely criticizing the decision. On the question of the enforcement and continuance or Martial Law the minority differ widely from the majority. They find that the introduction of Martial Law was not necessary, because in their opinion order had been restored everywhere and the authority of Government vindicated before Martial Law was applied. They think that order could have been restored by the civil power with the aid of the military, and that the Punjab Government persuaded themselves rather easily that Martial Law was necessary. The reasons for the continuance of Martial Law are also examined and rejected. Assuming that the introduction of Martial Law was necessary, they say that it ought not to have been continued beyond a few days. The Punjab Government, they think, approached the question from a wrong point of view and the Government of India were guided by the local Government.

36. In considering the necessity for the declaration of Martial Law it is difficult for the Government of India to take an entirely detached view. We were necessarily guided by the information forwarded by the local Government; we had already received reports of grave disorders occurring in various places; and we maintain the view that with this information before us, we could not have taken any other course than we actually adopted, when we received from Lahore on the afternoon of the 13th April the wireless message which ran as follows :

> Railway stations between Kasur and Amritsar looted. British soldier killed and two British officers injured at Kasur. Bands of rebels reported on move—Kasur and Tarn Taran treasuries attacked. State of open rebellion exists in parts of districts of Lahore and Amritsar. Lieutenant-Governor with concurrence of General Officer Commanding, 16th Division, and Chief Justice of the High Court, requests Governor-General-in-Council to suspend functions of ordinary criminal courts in Amritsar and Lahore districts, to establish Martial Law therein, and to direct trials of offenders under Section 22, Regulation X of 1804. Section 4 will be borne in mind. Situation is critical. Movable column starts on march from Ferozepore to Amritsar through worst tract with guns tomorrow.

The action of the Government of India has now been justified by the findings of the majority of the Committee, who also exonerate the local Government from all blame. The minority accept the findings of fact as to the number of outrages

committed, the animus of those engaged in the riots, the violence used and the number of times on which it was necessary to resort to firing; they also observe that the acts of some of those who took part in the disorders may have amounted in law to waging war against the King, although it was not rebellion in the sense in which that term is ordinarily used. These findings, in the opinion of the Government of India, detract largely from the force of their conclusion that the introduction of Martial Law was not necessary. In regard to the continuance of Martial Law the Government of India have nothing to add to the findings of the majority beyond stating that although Martial Law was maintained on the railways for a prolonged period owing to the outbreak of the Afghan war it was only employed there after it had been withdrawn from the districts, for the purpose of controlling traffic and protecting the lines.

There is, moreover, one factor in the situation as it presented itself in April 1919 which cannot in the opinion of the Government of India be neglected without prejudice to sound judgment. At that time the British Empire was at war with Germany. Even at the present moment we are not yet at peace with all our enemies; and certainly a year ago when the treaty of peace with Germany had not yet been signed, the existence of a state of war was not a mere technicality. Allusion has already been made to the additional preoccupation which intervened in the shape of war with Afghanistan, and the difficulties thus created were enhanced by the attitude of the frontier tribes. But at the back of and accentuating these more local difficulties was the paramount necessity of maintaining at the call of the Empire, whose needs were abated but not extinguished by the Armistice, the resources of the Indian Dominions of His Majesty. In the face of this necessity it was impossible to contemplate any policy which involved an appreciable risk of delay in the restoration of normal conditions or of the recrudescence of the disorders which appeared to have been suppressed.

We desire to add here that our Hon'ble colleague, Mr. Shafi, dissents from the finding of the majority of the Committee, accepted by us, that the declaration of Martial Law was necessary. In his opinion, there being no organized or preconceived conspiracy to subvert British rule behind these disturbances, the vast rural tract in the five districts concerned having remained tranquil and loyal, there having been disturbances only in a few places in the urban areas, and even in these few places the majority of the residents not having taken any part in the disturbances, there was no open rebellion as alleged, and no justification in consequence for the proclamation of Martial Law. Besides, before the date on which Martial Law in these districts was actually enforced, the disturbances had been quelled with the assistance rendered by the military and, in consequence, there was no justification for enforcement or maintenance of Martial Law on these days and after. This being the case, Mr. Shafi is of opinion that the continuance of Martial Law over such a long period was uncalled for.

37. Chapter XII deals with the administration of Martial Law, in- cluding the

working and procedure of the summary courts. The majority of the Committee find that the trials were correctly described as lengthy, detailed and careful, and commend the substitution for courts martial of tribunals similar to those under the Defence of India Act. They find, however, that although arrests were made in the ordinary way, there may have been cases in which indi- vidual police officers subjected those arrested to unnecessary severity. They observe that while the number of persons arrested and not brought to trial was regrettably large and the period of detention unusually long, on the whole this difficult work was not done badly or oppressively. The disorder was so widespread and serious that its inevitable result was to strain any improvised system. In regard to the sentences passed by the Martial Law courts, the Committee find that there was a general feeling that they were unnecessarily severe but that this was remedied by commutations effected by the local Government. They suggest that charges for serious offences need not have been pressed in the case of minor offenders. Extensive reductions in the sentences would not then have been necessary. The Committee also find that in certain cases, e.g., those of Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal, it is a matter for regret that the accused were not tried by the ordinary courts. These views are accepted by the Government of India. The military order prohibiting the employment of counsel from outside the Punjab is criticized as unwise and the action of the Government of India in disapproving it is commended.

38. The Committee examine at considerable length the nature of the Martial Law orders which were promulgated by military commanders in the Punjab. The majority find that some of the orders passed were injudicious and served no useful purpose. They criticize severely the "crawling" order passed by General Dyer (which was disapproved by the Lieutenant-Governor as soon as it came to his notice), the "salaaming" order of General Campbell, and the "roll call" imposed by Colonel Johnson on the students of Lahore. The Government of India agree that in the instances which the Committee cite with disapproval the action of the officers mentioned was unjustifiable and in some cases inflicted unnecessary humiliation, resulting in ill-feeling which has been a serious embarrassment to the administration. The flogging of six persons, the suspected assailants of Miss Sherwood, for a breach of fort discipline on the spot where that lady was assaulted is severely criticized and the Government of India agree that the action taken in this case was highly improper. In dealing with sentences of public flogging the Committee say that under Martial Law administration no flogging should take place in public. They find further the number of flogging sentences was excessive, and though it was regarded as probably the most efficacious and convenient method of dealing summarily with minor breaches of Martial Law regulations, restrictions ought to be placed on the discretion of area officers in awarding sentences of this kind. They say, however, that there is no foundation for the allegation that whipping was inflicted in a cruel fashion and that several persons practically succumbed to it. These findings the Government of

India entirely accept. The Committee then refer to the infliction by summary courts of certain punishments not warranted by the law. Though these punishments were unsuitable, they were not generally of a serious nature and were often awarded in place of more severe legal punishments. the Government of India, However, disapprove of such fantastic penalties and have taken steps to prevent their being imposed in future.

39. The minority are more severe in their condemnation of the Martial Law administration. In addition to the criticisms already dealt with, they contend that many of the orders were issued for purely punitive purposes. They cite in particular the orders directing representatives of each ward in Lahore to appear daily before the commanding officer to ascertain his orders for the day. The curfew order, the regulation of prices, and the commandeering of motor-cars, electric lights and fans from Indians are also criticized. We are not prepared to say that all these orders were without justification, but we consider that the administration of Martial Law in Lahore was in some respects unduly severe and exceeded its legitimate limits, that is to say, the requirements of the military situation and the maintenance of law and order. The minority condemn the order imposing on property-owners responsibility for the safety of Martial Law notices pasted on their houses. The Government of India are not prepared to say that in the circumstances this order was improper. The minority express their strong disapproval of the confinement of the professors and students of the Sanatan Dharma College because certain Martial Law notices had been destroyed. The Government of India agree that this order exceeded the necessity of the case. The minority further criticize and condemn the conduct of certain officers, notably Colonel O'Brien, Mr. Bosworth Smith and Mr. Jacob, for various orders passed by them in the administration of Martial Law. The Govern- ment of India agree that in the instances cited the officers mentioned acted injudi- ciously and in some cases improperly. While the findings of the minority report in regard to all these points are very cogent and in some cases fully justified, it must be remembered that officers charged with the administration of Martial Law cannot be expected to act in abnormal condition with that care and circumspection which are possible in normal times, nor can such a standard be rigorously applied for the subsequent examination of their actions in the calm atmosphere of safety after order has been restored.

40. The minority in a separate chapter discuss the working of the courts under Martial Law. The flogging of some members of a marriage party in Lahore by an extra assistant commissioner is rightly condemned. The Punjab Government at once took action against the officer responsible for this abuse of power. The procedure of the summary courts is attacked as unsatisfactory. The Government of India do not think that when Martial Law is enforced summary courts can be required to observe the formalities of procedure which normally obtain. The minority comment more

severely than the majority on the large number of persons arrested and dis- charged without trial. In the opinion of the Government of India arrest and detention for short periods are justifiable during a period of Martial Law as preventive measures to preserve the peace; further, many of those arrested were not prosecuted subsequently because, though evidence was available, the necessary deterrent effect had already been secured by the conviction of a large number of persons for similar offences. Nevertheless, the Government of India consider that the arrest and detention for long periods of so many persons, and particularly of Dr. Kedar Nath, Mr. Gurdial Singh, Dr. Manohar Lal and six lawyers of Gurdaspur, were a serious error and while they do not overlook the difficulties of the situation, they are constrained to express their disapproval of the action taken in these cases.

In this connection we cannot pass over in silence the allegations of corruption and ill-treatment of prisoners and witnesses on the part of subordinate officers of the police and other services to which wide currency has been given. We recognize the difficulty of sifting charges made so long after the event, but we will direct the local Government to undertake enquiries and take appropriate action in cases where specific complaints are made and action has not already been taken.

41. We accept the view that the administration of Martial Law in the Punjab was marred in particular instances by a misuse of power, by irregularities, and by injudicious and irresponsible acts. We further agree with the Committee that while the principle of the ultimate supremacy of the military authorities must be kept in view, still, in practice, executive instructions should be given to all officers who may be called upon to administer Martial Law, which will guide them in the discharge of this duty. In our opinion it was the absence of such instructions which was responsible for many of the defects which have been noticed in the administration of Martial Law in the Punjab. It is to inexperience, ignorance of local conditions, and lack of guidance when confronted with an abnormal situation rather than to deliberate misuse of power that most of the mistakes committed must be ascribed. The Government of India consider that in any area in which in future it may be necessary to enforce Martial Law, senior civil officers should be appointed to act as advisers to the various military authorities. The military officer would not be bound in the last resort to follow the advice of his civil adviser but if he decided contrary to that advice, he would do so on his own responsibility. We regard the prevention of any future repetition of mistakes and irregularities as the most important lesson to be learnt from this portion of the report and we have accordingly decided to issue instructions which will secure this object, and will in particular discourage interference by the military authorities with the ordinary administration in excess of the necessities of the case.

42. Before leaving the subject of the working of the courts under Martial

Law, the Government of India desire to refer to the action which was taken by the local Government, after order was restored and Martial Law withdrawn, to mitigate the effects of the sentences passed by these courts. Between the months of June and November sentences were reduced in 634 cases, 45 death sentences were commuted and 43 persons were released. In November two High Court Judges were appointed to review all unexpired sentences passed by summary courts and such other cases tried by Martial Law commissions as might be referred to them by Government. In December, as a result of the reviewing Judges' recommendations, 92 persons convicted by summary courts were released, and further action of the same kind would have been taken, but on the 23rd of that month the Royal Proclamation with its message of amnesty was published, and under it clemency was extended to 657 prisoners who were released. By February, out of a total of 1,779 persons convicted in connection with the disturbances, only 96 worst offenders who had taken part in serious crimes of violence, remained in jail and this number has since been reduced to 88. The extension of elemency to political prisoners in the Punjab has been guided throughout by the generous and sympathetic recommendations of the Lieutenant-Governor, whose efforts to restore a peaceful atmosphere within the province are gratefully acknowledged by the Government of India.

43. It now ramains for the Government of India to endeavour to arrive at a just appreciation of the conduct of the officers of the Crown, whether civil or military, who were employed in the areas affected by these disorders and to make certain general remarks which appear to be essential before finally disposing of the Committee's report. The task of rightly estimating in a calm atmosphere, when order and peace have been restored, the behaviour of those faced with a grave emergency and compelled to arrive promptly at decisions of the greatest moment is one of unusual difficulty. The very qualities of courage and initiative, which are of incalculable value during the early stages of an outbreak, may in its later stages be source of injury, if not tempered by discretion. Moreover, any such estimate, if it is to be just, must not neglect the difficulty of deciding when to act and when to refrain from action, and must endeavour to view the whole position in a right perspective.

It was fortunate that, when the disturbances broke out in April 1919, the Punjab was in charge of a Lieutenant-Governor of great experience and courage. The Government of India consider that Sir Michael O'Dwyer acted with decision and vigour in a time of great danger and that he was largely responsible for quelling a dangerous rising which might have had widespread and disastrous effects on the rest of India.

Reviewing the situation as a whole, desire to express our great appreciation of the admirable conduct of the troops who were employed in the suppression of the outbreak. Leaving aside individual instances, which have already been noticed, both

officers and men acted with admirable restraint under most trying circumstances and the Government of India have nothing but praise and gratitude for the services which they rendered in suppressing disorder and restoring the peace of the country.

The officers of the civil administration of all classes and ranks in the affected areas generally maintained that high standard of conduct and devotion to duty which the Government of India would have expected of them. Thanks are due not only to those who were immediately concerned in the restoration of order but also to those who by carrying on their ordinary duties with calmness and fortitude in a time of turmoil did much to restore the confidence of the people. The names of some of those officers who have been specially commended have already been referred to but if local Governments consider that there are other officers whose conduct merits special commendation, their names should be brought to notice at an early date.

To those non-officials who either did their best to stay the agitation which had so sinister a connection with the outbreak, or who by their influence and assistance helped the authorities to restore order, the grateful acknowledgements of the Government of India are due in full measure and local Governments will be asked to see that individual assistance of this kind does not go unacknowledged or unrewarded.

It is a great satisfaction to the Government of India to notice that there were many of all classes and creeds who, in the face of frenzied mobs, and even at the risk of their lives, afforded assistance or showed compassion to the innocent victims of the outrages. Here again it is desired that all such actions shall be marked with a very definite acknowledgement or, in cases where such a course is suitable, be recompensed with a pecuniary reward.

44. The names of officers whose actions have been rightly criticized or condemned have been mentioned in the body of this despatch and local Governments will be requested to take such action as may be necessary to mark in these cases the disapprobation of the Government of India.

The case of General Dyer calls for separate mention. We have given most anxious consideration to the action of this officer at Jallianwala Bagh. We are satisfied that it was *bona fide* and dictated by a stern though misconceived sense of duty. The facts are abundantly clear. General Dyer has made no attempt to minimize his responsibility for the tragedy or even to put a favourable complexion on his action or purpose. The only justification that could be pleaded for his conduct would be military necessity arising out of the situation before him and in the area under his jurisdiction. In circumstances such as General Dyer was confronted with, an officer must act honestly and vigorously but with as much humanity as the case will permit. We recognize that in the face of a great crisis an officer may be thrown temporarily off the balance of his judgment and that much allowance must be made on this account. We recognize further that, however injurious in its ultimate effect General

Dyer's action may have been, it resulted in an immediate discouragement of the forces of disorder. Nor have we overlooked our Resolution in which we promised full countenance and support to officers engaged in the onerous duty of suppressing disorder. Nevertheless, after carefully weighing all these factors, we can arrive at no other conclusion than that at Jallianwala Bagh General Dyer acted beyond the necessity of the case, beyond what any reaso- nable man could have thought to be necessary, and that he did not act with as much humanity as the case permitted. It is with pain that we arrive at this conclusion, for we are not forgetful of General Dyer's distinguished record as a soldier or of his gallant relief of the garrison at Thal during the recent Afghan war. We must however direct that the judgment above pronounced be communicated to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief with the request that he will take appropriate action.

45. We have on several occasions expressed our very great regret for the loss of life, European and Indian, which occurred in the disturbances and our sympathy with those who are left to mourn the victims of these unhappy events. We desire once again to convey regret and sympathy to all who have thus suffered. Compensation, so far as this can be any reparation, has been awarded to those to whom compensation was due under the law, and adequate provision has been or will be made for the dependents of Government servants who have lost their lives in the disturbances. The Punjab Government will also be enjoined to consider the cases of persons who have been left in want through the death or permanent injury of their supporters at Jallianwala Bagh, and to supplement, if necessary, any assistance that may have been rendered to such persons by local charity organization.

46. We have now surveyed all the conclusions of the Committee. There remains, in our opinion, one lesson of supreme importance to be drawn from the events of April 1919. It will be impossible to dissociate memories of these disorders from the civil disobedience movement which was their chief immediate cause. When this movement was initiated, it was apparently not obvious to its promoters, as it was to all thoughtful persons, that in India in its present state of development (whatever may be the case in other countries) the unsettling effect of advice to the public in general to break selected laws was likely to lead to a situation which might involve the overthrow of all law and order. The bitter experience of last year removes this question from the category of doubt, and those who henceforth inaugurate such movements from whatever motives cannot feel uncertain as to the consequences of invoking forces which they can neither direct nor control. We can only hope that this lesson has been learnt once for all, and that in the future all right-thinking persons will set their faces firmly against the deliberate playing with fire which is involved in the promotion of such movements.

Finally, we desire to express here our earnest hope that the lesson to be learnt

from these events is not of a merely negative character. Since the period which has formed the subject of this enquiry a new era has been inaugurated in India and the change has given occasion to a gracious proclamation by the King Emperor, which has appealed to the hearts of all his subjects in India. We venture to recall at this time the salient features in this gracious message; we feel confident that the earnest desire expressed by the King Emperor, that any trace of bitterness between his people and those responsible for his Government should be obliterated, will not pass unheeded.

47. In conclusion, we desire to express our thanks to Lord Hunter and the members of his Committee for the great ability and painstaking labour they have bestowed on an enquiry which from its very inception must have been a most difficult and seemingly thankless task, and for their report which has cleared up much that was in doubt and dispute and which has been of the utmost service to us in arriving at just conclusions on the many questions that called for decision.

We have, etc.,

(Sd.) CHELMSFORD
C. C. MONRO
G. S. BARNES
W. H. VINCENT
M. SHAFI
W. M. HALLEY
T. H. HOLLAND
A. P. MUDDIMAN

APPENDIX V

MONTAGU'S REPLY TO GOVERNMENT OF INDIA DESPATCH

INDIA OFFICE,
LONDON,
May 26, 1920

No. 188 Public

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HON'BLE
GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA IN COUNCIL

MY LORD,

His Mejesty's Government have considered the report of Lord Hunter's Committee upon the disturbances which occurred in the Punjab and other parts of India in the early part of last year. They have further been informed by me of the conclusions at which Your Excellency's Government had arrived in your own review of the report as expressed in your letter dated the 3rd May, the text of which you have telegraphed to me. The report and your letter naturally cover ground which His

Majesty's Government did not feel called upon to survey in detail, but their consideration of the matter has led them to definite decisions upon certain of the more important questions arising out of the report, and they have desired me to communicate to you in my reply to your letter their considered statement of these decisions. The paragraphs numbered 2 to 8 of this despatch contain accordingly this statement.

2. *General*—The report of Lord Hunter's Committee presents the results of a prolonged and patient investigation. Their labours would be of little value if their very complete and careful findings are not put to a practical use. The conclusions here recorded have been inspired in the main by the belief that the chief duty which lies upon His Majesty's Government and the Government of India in utilizing the report is not primarily to apportion blame to individuals for what has been done amiss or to visit penalties upon them, but rather to prevent the recurrence in the future of occasion for blame or regret should unfortunate circu- mstances ever produce again a situation such as that which occurred in India in the spring of 1919.

3. *The conduct of Brigadier-General Dyer at Amritsar on April the 13th*—The main features of the occurrence at Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar City on the afternoon of April the 13th, 1919, are well known. They are set out at length in Lord Hunter's report and appear in minute detail in the evidence, both written and oral, given before the Committee by Brigadier-General Dyer himself, the full and authorized text of which is not available to the public. As to the facts, there is no doubt and no dispute, and it is only necessary here to recapitulate them very briefly in their baldest form. On the morning of April the 13th Brigadier-General Dyer, who had arrived at Amritsar on the night of the 11th, issued a proclamation forbidding *inter alia* processions to parade in or outside the city and declaring that "any such procession or gathering of four men will be looked upon and treated as unlawful assembly and dispersed by force of arms if necessary." This proclamation was read out at various places in the city, in the course of the progress through the streets of a column of troops led by Brigadier-General Dyer Personally, who left his quarters about 9 a.m. for this purpose and returned to them about 1.30 p.m. About an hour before his return to his quarters in Ram Bagh Brigadier-General Dyer had heard that despite his proclamation it was intended to hold a large meeting at Jallianwala Bagh at 4-30 that afternoon, and at 4 p.m. he received a message that a crowd of about 1,000 had already assembled there. Shortly after 4 p.m. Brigadier-General Dyer marched from Ram Bagh with picketing parties (as he had previously determined to picket the main gates of the city) and with a special party consisting of 50 Indian Infantry armed with rifles, 40 Indian Infantry armed with only "*kukris*" (type of sword), and two armoured cars. He proceeded straight to Jallianwala Bagh dropping his picket parties *en route* and on arrival marched his infantry through a narrow lane into the Bagh and deployed them immediately right and left of the entrance. The armoured cars he left ouside, as the

lane was too narrow to admit them. Having deployed his troops Brigadier- General Dyer at once gave orders to open fire and continued a controlled fire on the dense crowd facing him in the enclosure (which he estimated at about 5,000 persons) for some 10 minutes until his ammunition supply was at the point of exhaustion. 1,650 rounds of .303 mark VI ammunition were fired. The fatal casualties as the result of this action are believed to be 379; the number wounded has not been exactly ascertained, but is estimated by Lord Hunter's Committee at possibly three times the number of deaths. Immediately after giving orders to cease fire, Brigadier-General Dyer marched his troops back to Ram Bagh. The reasons given by General Dyer for the severity and duration of his fire are stated as follows in his written statement furnished to the Genreal Staff (16th Indian Division) and subsequently laid before Lord Hunter's Committee : "We cannot be very brave unless we be pos- sessed of a greater fear. I had considered the matter from every point of view. My duty and my military instincts told me to fire. My conscience was also clear on that point. What faced me was what on the morrow would be the"Danda Fauj' (—this, which may be translated as bludgeon army, was the name given to themselves by the rioters in Lahore). I fired and continued to fire until the crowd dispersed, and I consider this is the least amount of firing which would produce the necessary moral and widespread effect it was my duty to produce if I was to justify my action. If more troops had been at hand, the casualties would have been greater in proportion. *It was no longer a question of merely dispersing the crowd*, but one of producing a sufficient moral effect, from a military point of view, not only on those who were present, but more especially throughout the Punjab. There could be no question of undue severity."

The principle which has consistently governed the policy of His Majesty's Government in directing the methods to be employed, when military action in support of the civil authority is required, may be broadly stated as using the minimum force necessary. His Majesty's Government are determined that this principle shall remain the primary factor of policy whenever circumstances unfortunately necessitate the suppression of civil disorder by military force within the British Empire.

It must be regretfully but without possibility of doubt be concluded that Brigadier-General Dyer's action at Jallianwala Bagh was in complete violation of this principle. The task which confronted him was to disperse by force if necessary a large but apparently unarmed assembly which had gathered in defiance of his orders. It is possible that considering the strength of the military force at his disposal, the size of the crowd, and the general temper and attitude of the inhabitants of the city, he would have found it impossible to achieve this task effectively and completely without some firing and without causing some loss of life. But it is certain that he made no attempt to ascertain the minimum amount of force which he was compelled to employ, that the force which he actually employed was greatly in excess of that required to achieve the dispersal of the crowd, and that it resulted in lamentable and

unnecessary loss of life and suffering. But this is not a full statement of Brigadier-General Dyer's error. There can be no doubt that large numbers of people in the assembly, many of whom were visitors to the city from surrounding villages, were ignorant of the existence of his proclamation and the danger which they ran by attending the gathering. The proclamation was published in only a portion of the city, that portion being some distance from the scene of the meeting, and no warning of any kind was given before fire was opened. It would be unfair, considering the state of the city, the heat of the weather and the strain to which the troops under General Dyer's command had been subjected since their arrival in the city, to lay too great stress upon the first point, but the omission to give warning before fire was opened is inexcusable. Further, that Brigadier-General Dyer should have taken no steps to see that some attempt was made to give medical assistance to the dying and the wounded was an omission from his obvious duty. But the gravest feature of the case against Brigadier-General Dyer is his avowed conception of his duty in the circumstances which confronted him.

His Majesty's Government repudiate emphatically the doctrine upon which Brigadier-General Dyer based his action—action which, to judge from his own statement, might have taken an even more drastic form had he had a larger force at his disposal and had a physical accident not prevented him from using his armoured cars. They have not overlooked the extreme gravity of the situation as it presented itself to the authorities in India generally and to Brigadier-General Dyer in particular on April the 13th, nor have they failed to appreciate the immensity of the responsibility which Brigadier-General Dyer felt and rightly felt to be imposed upon him by that situation. They think it is possible that the danger to the lives of Europeans and to the safety of the British and Indian troops was greater than appears from the Committee's report. In Amritsar itself violent murder and arson of the most savage description had occurred three days previously and the city was still practically in possession of the mob. From the surrounding country-side reports were hourly being received of similar violent outbreaks and attacks upon communications, and the deficiencies in these reports (due to the success of the attacks on communications) were supplemented by rumours which there was little means of verifying and as little ground for disbelieving. In discharging this responsibility with the small force at his disposal Brigadier-General Dyer naturally could not dismiss from his mind the conditions in the Punjab generally and he was entitled to lay his plans with reference to those conditions. But he was not entitled to select for condign punishment an unarmed crowd which, when he inflicted that punishment, had committed no act of violence, had made no attempt to oppose him by force, and many members of which must have been unaware that they were disobeying his commands.

In passing judgment upon Brigadier-General Dyer for his action on April the 13th, it is impossible to disregard an order which he passed some six days later, and

which has become generally known as the "crawling order". It is unnecessary here to repeat the nature of this order or the circumstances out of which it arose. Had the order been carried out as a punishment upon the persons actually guilty of the crime, which it was designed to stigmatize, it would have been difficult to defend; inflicted as it was upon persons who had no connection with that crime, with the object of impressing upon the public of Amritsar through the humiliation of those persons the enormity of the crime committed by certain individuals of the public, that order offended against every canon of civilized government.

Upon a military commander administering Martial Law in a hostile country there lies a grave responsibility; when he is compelled to exercise this responsibility over a population which owes allegiance and looks for protection to the Government which he himself is serving this burden is immeasurably enhanced. It would prejudice the public safety, with the preservation of which he is charged, to fetter his free judgment or action either by the prescription of rigid rules before the event or by over-censorious criticism when the crisis is past. A situation which is essentially military must be dealt with in the light of military considerations, which postulate breadth of view and due appreciation of all the possible contingencies. There are certain standards of conduct which no civilized government can with impunity neglect, and which His Majesty's Government are deter-mined to uphold. Subject to the due observance of those standards, an officer adminis-tering Martial Law must, and will, remain free to carry out the task imposed upon him in the manner which his judgment dictates to him as best and most effective, and may rely upon the unqualified support of his superiors when his task has been accomplished.

That Brigadier-General Dyer displayed honesty of purpose and unflinching adherence to his conception of his duty cannot for a moment be questioned. But his conception of his duty in the circumstances in which he was placed was so fundamentally at variance with that which His Majesty's Government have a right to expect from and a duty to enforce upon officers who hold His Majesty's commission, that it is impossible to regard him as fitted to remain entrusted with the responsibilities which his rank and position impose upon him. You have reported to me that the Commander-in-Chief has directed Brigadier-General Dyer to resign his appointment as Brigade Commander and has informed him that he would receive no further employment in India, and that you have concurred. I approve this decision and the circumstances of the case have been referred to the Army Council.

4. *The justification for the declaration and continuance of Martial Law*— There are no grounds for questioning the decision of the majority of Lord Hunter's Committee that the declaration of Martial Law and the partial supersession of the ordinary tribunals in the districts of the Punjab in which Martial Law was applied were justified (Chapter XI, paragraph 17). As regards the dates to which it was pro-

longed, it is obvious that the institution of Martial Law involves the responsibility of deciding when it is to be revoked. The general principle is clear that Martial Law should remain in force no longer than the public safety demands, but beyond this there are no hard and fast criteria which can govern this decision, and a retrospective judgment in the light of after-events is not permissible. The fact that open disorder had ceased some time before Martial Law was revoked may have been due to the existence of Martial Law and its earlier abrogation might have been followed by a recrudescence. Looking back in the light of events, it is permissible to argue that an earlier abrogation was possible, though His Majesty's Government can feel little doubt that this argument would have been less pressed than it has been, had there been no grounds for complaint of the manner in which in some cases Martial Law was administered. But it is not permissible to condemn the authorities responsible for the decisions taken, who had to rely only on their anticipation of the future.

5. *The justification for Ordinance IV of 1919 giving the Martial Law Commissions jurisdiction to try any offence committed on or after March the 30th*— The legality of this ordinance is not a point at issue; that question has been recently determined by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. Nor is there any valid reason to question the propriety, when (as was the case here) it can legally be done, of ante-dating the effect of an enactment setting up special Martial Law tribunals and procedure, so as to bring within their jurisdiction persons charged with overt acts of violence, which were the immediate cause of and justification for the declaration of Martial Law. The original ordinance setting up Martial Law Commissions in the Lahore and Amritsar districts gave the Commissions jurisdiction to try offences committed on or after April the 13th. Had this date remained unamended, it would have been impossible to try by Commission persons charged with actual participation in the murders, incendiarism and destruction of property which occurred on April the 10th at Amritsar, or persons charged with participation in the riots at Lahore on April the 10th, 11th and 12th, and in the murders at Kasur on the 12th; and if the Government of India with the legal power at their disposal, had neglected to correct the anomaly to this extent, they would have omitted an obvious and necessary step towards the rapid restoration of normal conditions. But the use of the power which the ordinance gave in order to apply the special Martial Law method of trial to persons whose offence consisted in newspaper articles and speeches which were not demonstrably and immediately the cause of the outbreak of open disorder, stands on an entirely different footing and the terms "unfortunate" and "imprudent" which the majority of Lord Hunter's Committee applied to this policy are at all events not exaggerated criticism.

Taking into consideration the acts committed under Ordinance IV of 1919, which it is impossible not to disavow, His Majesty's Government can feel little doubt that the terms of the ordinance itself were too wide, and that the drafting of any

future ordinance of a similar kind should ensure due limits to its application.

6. *Administration of Martial Law*—There is one question with regard to which it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the majority of Lord Hunter's Committee have failed to express themselves in terms which, unfortunately, the facts not only justify but necessitate. In paragraphs 16 to 25 of Chapter XII of their report the majority have dealt with the "intensive" form generally which Martial Law assumed, and with certain specified instances of undue severity and of improper punishments or orders. It is unnecessary to recapitulate the instances which the Committee have enumerated in detail in both their reports, nor would any useful purpose be served by attempting to assess, with a view to penalties, the culpability of individual officers who were responsible for these orders, but whose conduct in other respects may have been free from blame or actually commendable. But His Majesty's Government must express strong disapproval of these orders and punishments, and ask me to leave to you the duty of seeing that this disapproval shall be unmistakably marked by censure or other action which seems to you necessary upon those who were responsible for them. The instances cited by the Committee gave justifiable ground for the assertion that the administration of Martial Law in the Punjab was marred by a spirit which promoted—not generally, but unfortunately not uncommonly—the enforcement of punishments and orders calculated if not intended, to humiliate Indians as a race, to cause unwarranted inconvenience amounting on occasions to injustice, and to flout the standards of propriety and humanity, which the inhabitants not only of India in particular but of the civilized world in general have a right to demand of those set in authority over them. It is a matter for regret that, notwithstanding the conduct of the majority, there should have been some officers in the Punjab who appear to have overlooked the fact that they were administering Martial Law, not in order to subdue the population of a hostile country temporarily occupied as an act of war, but in order to deal promptly with those who had disturbed the peace of a population owing allegiance to the King Emperor, and in the main profoundly loyal to that allegiance. It is difficult to believe that this would have occurred had the civil authority been able to retain a larger measure of contact with the administration of Martial Law, and it is of paramount importance, if in the future it should unfortunately be necessary to have recourse to Martial Law, that some system should be devised which will secure such contact effectively.

A review of the methods and results of the trials by the summary procedure of Martial Law tribunals would be uncalled for. It is not, however, improper to observe that marked attention has been directed to its disadvantages, and to the extreme divergence between the sentences required by the charges as presented to those courts and by the dictates of justice as they presented themselves to the reviewing authorities. It is to be hoped that, as a result of the experience thus gained, means will be devised whereby Martial Law tribunals can be improved if they have again to

be employed.

7. *The use of bombing aeroplanes at Gujranwala*—With regard to the use of bombing aeroplanes at Gujranwala on April the 14th, the majority of Lord Hunter's Committee expressed their views as follows : "As to the use of bombs from aeroplanes we do not think that this would be defended by anyone save in cases of urgent need, in the absence of other means, and under the strictest limitations even then. In our opinion the first two of these conditions were present in full force". . . . "We are not prepared to lay down as a charter for rioters that when they succeed in preventing the ordinary recourses of Government from being utilized to suppress them, they are to be exempt from having to reckon with such recourses as remain." They then proceed to state that no blame can be imputed to the flying officers concerned for carrying out the instructions given to them, but that the action taken under the instructions given illustrates their defectiveness and they conclude by a recommendation that the formulation of instructions to be given to flying officers in future in similar circumstances should form the subject of careful investigation.

In formulating these conclusions, His Majesty's Government desire to state clearly that reconnaissance, communications, propaganda-dropping and moral effect summarize the normal and correct use of aircraft under conditions of unrest in normally peaceful countries. But emergencies may occur when, owing to distances, or damage to communications, or both, and the progress of murderous mob violence and arson which there is no other means of checking, exceptions from this general position are not only justified but necessary. It is impossible to guarantee by general or special instructions that machine-guns or bombs will affect only the crowd which would be justifiably fired upon if troops were available on the ground. But in future explicit orders must be required for the employment of armed aircraft in such emergencies; these orders should be issued in writing by a civil authority, and should authorize only a limited amount of bombing and machine-gun fire to be employed to overawe mobs which are, so far as the airman can judge, actually engaged in crimes of violence. The Government will see to it that instructions on these lines are issued as soon as possible. They regretfully agree with Lord Hunter's Committee that the instructions issued to the airmen who visited Gujranwala on this occasion left much to be desired in precision.

8. *Sir Michael O'Dwyer*—It follows from what has been said in earlier paragraphs that on certain points arising out of this enquiry His Majesty's Government do not regard Sir Michael O'Dwyer as immune from criticism. Thus they cannot endorse the unqualified approval which he accorded on insufficient information to the action of Brigadier-General Dyer at Jallianwala Bagh and they think it unfortunate that he did not adhere at the time to his first impulse to withhold both praise and blame on a matter with which as a civil officer he was not in the circumstances directly concerned. The motives which evidently prompted him to adopt another attitude and to maintain that attitude subsequently and in the light of

fuller knowledge are less open to criticism.

Secondly, the opinion already expressed on the application of Martial Law procedure to certain trails must be taken as applying to Sir Michael O'Dwyer in so far as he was personally responsible for the action in question. As re- gards the administration of Martial Law generally sir Michael O'Dwyer had evidently contemplated arrangements by which civil officers would be accord- ed a recognized position to advise on military administration, and the Martial Law manual which your Government have under consideration should ensure that in future this plan is brought into operation.

With the general question of Sir Michael O'Dwyer's administration of the Punjab His Majesty's Government are not now immediately concerned. They recognized that it has formed the subject of much controversy in India and that a widespread impression has been engineered that the Punjab Government under his direction was hostile to the educated classes and was determined to suppress not only illegitimate but also legitimate and constitutional political agitation. While they sincerely trust that this atmosphere may be dispelled, they are fully conscious of the difficulties of the solution with which he was faced. Conspiracy, the activity of enemy agents, the rise in the cost of living and the necessity of furnishing the bulk of the vast number of recruits for the Indian Army which the needs of the Empire required, though fortunately powerless to disturb the loyalty of the province as a whole, caused constant anxiety throughout his term of office. That term is now closed, a long and honoured connection with India is ended, and His Majesty's Government desire here to pay a tribute to the great energy, decision and courage which Sir Michael O'Dwyer brought to his task through a period of exceptional difficulty and to express their appreciation of his services.

9. As to the conclusions which Your Excellency's Government have recorded on other matters arising out of this report, I am glad to find that I am in general accord with your views, save in so far as otherwise appears from the foregoing paragraphs and I have little further to add at the present moment. Your Excellency's Government will, however, understand that the publication of documents in which the public, both in India and in this country, is vitally interested is not necessarily a final settlement of all the large questions involved. In particular I shall expect you to submit for my early approval the draft of the Martial Law manual which you have under consideration. To this matter I attach the utmost importance. I need hardly say that I most earnestly trust that occasion may never arise for the enforcement of such rules. But this enquiry will have served a valuable purpose if it results in the enactment of a code of regulations calculated to ensure, so far as human foresight can serve, a system of administration which is at once adequate to repress disorder, to secure the speedy, just and fitting punishment of its promoters, and which yet subverts no more than the fulfilment of these requirements necessitates the ordinary rights and course of life of the people at large, and adheres to the processes

of civil justice and government. For in view of conditions which threaten the existence of the State, Martial Law is a necessary remedy, but it is a remedy which unless applied with wisdom and good judgment loses its value. It is therefore incumbent upon us to do all in our power to prevent the depreciation of its value by misuse. The same observations apply in my judgment to deportation, an expedient which in its present form it is so notoriously difficult to employ and the effects of which are so incapable of exact estimation.

10. His Majesty's Government found it necessary to criticize in strong terms the conduct of certain officers charged with the administration of Martial Law and Your Excellency's Government have indicated that all proved cases of abuse of their powers on the part of the subordinate officers of the police and other services will receive due notice. But these exceptions apart His Majesty's Government desire me to express to you in no uncertain terms their warm endorsement of your appreciation of the conduct of officers and men, both civil and military, both British and Indian, upon whom fell the heavy task of assisting the people of India to recover their fair name for loyalty and orderliness. The burden thus imposed upon officers and men of His Majesty's British and Indian armies, of his police force and of his civil services who had already borne with fortitude but not without fatigue the trials and strain arising from a long-drawn war, was a heavy one. In setting themselves to their task these men proved true to the great traditions of their services.

His Majesty's Government wish further to express the profound regret which they, equally with Your Excellency's Government, feel for the loss of life which these disturbances occasioned, and their deep sympathy with those to whom the events have brought personal bereavement.

11. In conclusion I am glad to have this opportunity of assuring Your Excellency of the sense of obligation which His Majesty's Government feel to you personally for the manner in which you have fulfilled your high trust. Great as is always the burden borne by the Governor-General of India, world-wide circumstances have combined to lay upon you a degree of anxiety such as has only at long intervals fallen upon any of your illustrious predecessors. His Majesty's Government desire that you should be fortified by the knowledge that they continue to repose the fullest confidence in Your Eccellency's discretion, inspired as they feel certain it has constantly been by the single aim of the good of the people whose Government is committed to your charge.

I have, etc.

(SD.) EDWIN S. MONTAGU

APPENDIX VI

MUSLIM LEADERS' REPRESENTATION TO VICEROY[1]

BOMBAY,
June 22, 1920

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

We the undersigned claim to represent the largest body of Sunni Muslim opinion. We have most carefully read the Turkish peace terms and we consider them to be in direct violation of the religious sentiments of Mussulmans. They violate obligations imposed upon the Sunnis and wound the susceptibilities of all Mussulmans. They are contrary to pledges of British Ministers on the strength of which it has been admitted it was possible to draw upon India for Muslim recruits during the War. We hold that the British Empire, which is the greatest Mohammedan Power in the world, cannot treat the Turkish Empire which represents the Khilafat in the same manner that it may treat a defeated enemy. Indeed we contend that in certain respects Turkey has been treated worse than other Powers. We respectfully submit that in the treatment of Turkey the British Government are bound to respect Indian Muslim sentiment in so far as it is neither unjust nor unreasonable. In our opinion the position taken up by the Indian Mussulmans in simple. They cannot bear the thought of the temporal power of the Sultan being adversely affected by way of punishment for his having joined Germany under circumstances which need not be examined here, but we have no desire to ask for anything that would interfere with the principle of self-determination. We have no desire to uphold any misrule such as has been attributed to Turkey. Our delegates in Europe have asked for an independent commission of enquiry to investigate the charge of wanton cruelty said to have been practised by Turkish soldiers in Armenia. We cannot look with indifference upon the partition of Turkey and her empire for the sake of punishment for humiliating her. We would, therefore, request Your Excellency and Your Government to ask His Majesty's Ministers to secure a revision of the peace terms and to tell them that on their failure to do so Your Excellency will make common cause with the people of India. We make this suggestion as Your Excellency has repeatedly declared that Your Government has consistently and often pressed upon the attention of His Majesty's Ministers the case of Indian Mussulmans in this matter of vital concern to the vast

[1] Sent in pursuance of the decision regarding non-co-operation taken at the meeting of the Central Khilafat Committee held at Allahabad on June 3, 1920, this letter was signed by ninety Sunni Muslims from all over India, including Yaqub Hassan, Mazhar-ul-Haq, Maulana Abdul Bari, Hasrat Mohani, Shaukat Ali, Dr. Kitchlew and Mia Mohammed Chhotani.

majoriy of them. We feel, therefore, that we have a right to ask Your Excellency to reassure the Mussulmans of India that they still retain your active co-operation and powerful advocacy in the prosecution of their claims, ever to the point of resignation of your high office should His Majesty's Ministers fail to secure a revision of the terms consistently with the pledges and sentiment mentioned above. We venture respectfully to suggest that had India been a Dominion enjoying full self-government her responsible Ministers would have as a matter of course resigned as a protest against such a serious breach of pledges and flouting of religious opinion as are involved in the peace terms. If unfortunately Your Excellency will not adopt our humble suggestion we shall be obliged as from the 1st of August next to withdraw co-operation from the Government and ask our co-religionists and Hindu brethren to do likewise. We ask Your Excellency not to regard our statement as a threat or in any way as a mark of disrespect. We claim to be as loyal subjects of the Crown as any in India, but we consider our loyalty to an earthly sovereign to be subservient to our loyalty to Islam. The latter enjoins upon every Mussulman to consider those who want only to injure the status of the Khilafat to be enemies of Islam and to resist them. We recognize that even if we had the power we must not resort to arms so long as any other measures are at our disposal. We feel that the least a Mussulman can do in these circumstances is not to assist those who are guilty of trying to reduce the Khilafat practically to nothingness. It would, therefore, become our painful duty to refuse to co-operate with the Government which accepts the peace terms and advises acceptance thereof by us. We shall hope that such a serious step as non-co-operation will not become necessary, but should it unfortunately happen to be otherwise we assure Your Excellency that we shall strive our utmost to avoid violence. We fully recognize our responsibility. We know that any eruption of violence must check and injure the peaceful demonstration contemplated by us, and, what is more, the sacred cause which is dear to us as life. We shall, therefore, take up non-co-operation in progressive stages so as to cause the least necessary dislocation or embarrassment to the Government and so as to enable us to control and discipline popular feeling.

All About the Khilafat, pp. 331-4

1. "PATH OF TRUTH FOR THE BRAVE ALONE"[1]

July, 1920

"The path of truth is for the brave alone, never for a coward." I realize the significance of this poem[2] more and more as days pass. I also see that it is not for grown-ups only to put the idea of this verse into practice; children and students, too, can do so. If we try to know and follow the path of truth right from childhood, then alone, on growing up, shall we be saved from following the path of untruth. Just as a disease, if neglected, becomes chronic and incurable, so also untruth, if permitted to take rot in us from childhood, will later grow into a serious disease and, becoming incurable, gradually ruin our health. It is for this reason that we find untruth increasing in us.

So the highest lesson to be learnt during one's student-life is that one should know truth and act on it.

This path has always been for the brave because a much greater effort is required to go up the steep slope of truth than to climb the Himalayas. If at all, therefore, we want to work in this direction and serve ourselves, we should give the first place to truth and march forward with unshakable faith in it. Truth is God.

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Madhpudo, I, ii

[1] This was Gandhiji's contribution to *Madhpudo*, the manuscript magazine of the Ashram School, Sabarmati.

[2] By Pritamdas (*c.* 1720-1798); a Gujarati poet and Vedantin

2. LETTER TO THE PRESS ON REPATRIATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN INDIANS

July 1, 1920[1]

I have just read the interim report[2] of the South African Commission[3] published in *Indian Opinion* recently received. As it reads, the report seems to be harmless. Even the word "Repatriation" does not occur in it. It is a cautiously-worded document. And as there seems to be no opposition to the recommendation from the resident Indian population, I am not inclined to oppose the proposal of the Commission. At the same time there is no mistaking its intention. Indeed they have not even attempted to conceal it, for, they ask His Excellency the Governor of South Africa "to appoint an official well acquainted with the Indian mind and their methods to act in a sympathetic manner and lay before the Indians the advantages of immediately returning to India". The case for the scheme is that the Indians are anxious to return and that the scheme satisfies that anxiety whereas the anxiety seems to be all on the part of the Commission and their return is to be stimulated by placing its advantages before our sorely tried countrymen. The working of the scheme will, however, require ceaseless watching. There should be no compulsion of any kind whatsoever and no forfeiture of rights of domicile. I was pleased to notice absence of any reference to such forfeiture in the interim report. One however never knows what undertaking may not be taken from the poor returning Indians against the grant of a free passage. If the scheme is benevolently intended to relieve the present distress the Union Government will simply facilitate the return of those who are unable to support themselvs in South Africa, without bargaining for the forfeiture of domicile. To insist upon the loss of that valuable right would be to take a mean advantage of the distressful condition on some of our countrymen in South Africa.

Young India, 7-7-1920

[1] Released on this date through the Associated Press of India; *vide The Bombay Chronicle*, 2-7-1920

[2] It contained a scheme of voluntary repatriation of Indians from South Africa to be carried out under Section 6 of the Indians' Relief Act, 1914; *vide* "Uncanny", 14-7-1920.

[3] Appointed by the South African Government to enquire into the question of Asiatics trading and holding land in South Africa. The Commission was assisted by Sir Benjamin Robertson on behalf of the Government of India.

3. LETTER TO N. C. KELKAR[1]

CONGRESS[2]

BOMBAY-7,
July 2 [*1920*][3]

DEAR MR. KELKAR[4] ,

I thank you for your very prompt rep[ly.]

I retur[n] . . . t . . . which you may keep . . .

I shall t . . . t an alternative of the cree[d in ter]ms of your suggestion. We ce[rtainly] ought to make it the broadest possible.

I agree that we need not fix the fees for membership for Congress committees. Perhaps you will agree to a minimum fee.

I accept [yo]ur suggestion as to the advisability of laying down the method of Taluka and District committees.

If you wish to avoid overlapping and want a fairly scientific constitution you will find that there is no room for affiliations. Those who want to be represented must join one of the series of groups.

Whether you accept the limit at 1,000 or will increase it, I think the membership ought to be limited to a manageable figure. Without that the Congress will remain an unwieldy body and we would not [be able] to carry the weight we othe[rwise cou]ld. In drafting the con[stitution I ha]ve attempted to give the [Congress] a representative character such as would make its demands irresis[tible.] I would therefore ask you to [recon]sider your views about limiting the number.

I accept your figure for delegate's fee.

I agree that the other fees may not [be] fixed by the Congress.

The present rules for the election of the president may remain as they are. I wanted to say so but my letter had already gone. But I would erase the bombastic speeches that are made at the time of the election. Two best speakers may in addition to the chairman of the R.

[1] The office copy of the letter has been damaged in many places by termites.

[2] The word "Congress" in Gandhiji's hand indicates the file in which the letter was to go.

[3] The consitution referred to in this letter was passed in 1920. *Vide* also "Letter to N. C. Kelkar and Others", about 15-6-1920.

[4] 1872-1947; political leader of Maharashtra; author and journalist

C.[1] introduce the president in the briefest speeches.

I value your suggestion as to the treasurer, also as to the payment to British Congress Committee.

I have not understood the *raison d' etre* of your suggestion regarding elections to the All I.C.C[2].

Draft resolution[s and] suggestions quite sound.

Your time . . . is quite worthy of you and [reasonab]le.

The demonst[rative p]art I don't like. The wh[ole] Con[gress] must be deliberaton and demonstration at the same time. If you divide the two, the demonstration will fall flat. The spectators pay to watch your actual d[eba]tes. We may here imitate the House of Commons. Call to mind the visitors' gallery. When we have limited the number of delegates we carefully rope them in and isolate them from the visitors. Today our *pandal*[3] is as unbusiness-like as our proceedings. Introduce business in your programme and you will evolve a *pandal* to suit your new needs, quite effective and much cheaper than at present.

I think I have now touched all your points. I wish the other two[4] would copy your prom[ptne]ss.

Pray excuse my w[retched h]andwriting. Mahadev Des[ai][5] is in Bijolia. My other aman[uensis] had a bereavement in his [fam]ily.[6]

M. K. GANDHI

From a pencil draft : S.N. 7420 R

[1] Reception Committee

[2] All-India Congress Committee

[3] Enclosure

[4] Iyengar and Sen; *Vide* "Letter to N. C. Kelkar and Others", about 15-6-1920..

[5] 1892-1942; Gandhiji's secretary for 25 years

[6] This paragraph is in Gandhiji's hand.

4. NON-CO-OPERATION

Since there is no reason to hope that, before August 1, either the khilafat issue will have been satisfactorily solved or a revision of the peace terms promised, we must get ready to start non-co-operation. The Committee is making preparations in this behalf. Meantime, the following can be done :

1. Not to subscribe to new loans.
2. Not to register one's name for recruitment in military or civil service.

The Government has no right to occupy Mesopotamia. Mandate is in fact nothing but occupation. Moreover, according to newspaper reports, the Arabs do not like even the sight of Indian soldiers there. Whether or not this is true, it is the duty of every Indian not to join such service. Those who go to Mesopotamia will be doing so merely for money. We must refuse to do this, if we do no more.

Not only can it never be our duty to rule by force over the Arabs, but we, who do not wish to remain in slavery, cannot wish to make others slaves.

Thus it behoves us not to subscribe to new loans and to refuse, from this very day, to offer ourselves as new recruits for service under the Government, especially for service which requires us to go to Mesopotamia.

In addition, it is hoped that the following things will be done from August I onwards :

1. Titles and honorary positions will be renounced.
2. Legislatures will be boycotted.
3. Parents will withdraw their children from Government schools.
4. Lawyers will give up practice and help people to settle their civil disputes among themselves.
5. Invitations to Government functions, parties, etc., will be politely refused, non-co-operation being given as the sole reason for doing so.

It is likely that this programme will be adopted from August 1, if the khilafat question is not settled.

Lala Lajpat Rai[1] has announced non-co-operation in the form of

[1] 1865-1928; social reformer and journalist; president, Calcutta session of the Indian National Congress, 1920; founder of Servants of the People Society

boycott of legislatures if justice is not done in the matter of the Punjab. So we can now take it that the Punjab too has joined the khilafat agitation. Just as on this issue Muslims should take the lead, in the matter of the Punjab the Punjabis themselves should take the lead. If they do not adopt non-co-operation, one may say that the other parts of India cannot do so either.

We shall hope that Lalaji will not stop with boycott of legislatures. Until we win, we shall have to go on extending the scope of non-co-operation, and be ready to take the four steps suggested earlier. I am convinced, however, that we would win if the whole nation joins in boycotting legislatures.

Three different views on the question of [boycotting] legislatures have been expressed :

1. Not to start non-co-operation at all;
2. to adopt non-co-operation after election to legislatures;
3. to boycott legislatures from the very start.

The first position is entirely opposed to non-co-operation. The second alone needs to be examined. I am convinced that it will be a waste of effort to try to enter legislatures and then to refrain from attending their sessions. It is a waste of money and time alike. I do not at all see the point of doing this. What if unworthy people get elected because we do not come forward? If such people enter the legislatures, the Government will not be able to run the government of an awakened people and it will be laughed at. Moreover, if we join in the elections, we shall not be able to show what real boycott can be. Our duty is so to educate public opinion—opinion of the voters—that it will be impossible for anybody to get elected to legislatures as their representatives. So long as there is lack of understanding between the king and the subject, to attend the king's council is to strengthen his hands. A king cannot govern at all if he is not able to carry any section of his subjects with him. It follows from this that the fewer the subjects who co-operate with him, the less will be his authority. Hence, for those who accept non-co-operation, the total boycott of legistatures is the only right course. And so I hope that those who are busy trying to get elected to legislatures will give up the attempt for the present and address themselves to the more important work, that of educating public opinion on the khilafat and the Punjab issues, and so serve the people that, when the time for entering legislatures comes, they will be better qualified in virtue of their service.

Now remain the other two suggestions which are likely to be

severely criticized. The lawyers should, for the time being, give up practice and intending litigants or those who find themselves dragged into litigation should boycott the courts and get their disputes settled through arbitration boards. It is my confirmed belief that every Government masks its brute force and maintains its control over the people through civil and criminal courts, for it is cheaper, simpler and more honourable, for a ruler that instead of his controlling the people through naked force, they themselves, lured into slavery through courts, etc., submit to him of their own accord. If people settle their civil disputes among themselves and the lawyers, unmindful of self-interest, boycott the courts in the interest of the people, the latter can advance in no time. I have believed for many years that every State tries to perpetuate its power through lawyers. Hence, though fully aware that I will be criticized for making this suggestion, I have no hesitation in putting it forward.

What is true of lawyers is true of schools. Even without such momentous issues as those of the khilafat and the Punjab, I would certainly, if I could, see to it that the present schools were completely abandoned and would provide the right kind of education for children on whom the future of India rests. But my purpose at present in calling for a boycott of the schools is different; I want to show the Government by rendering the schools idle that, so long as justice is not done in regard to the Punjab and the khilafat, co-operation with it is distasteful. I know that this suggestion will be visited with a good deal of ridicule. But, with the passing of time, people will realize that if they refused to crowd the Government schools, it would be impossible to run the administration. Look where we will all over the world, we shall find that the education imparted to the children is intended to facilitate smooth running of the Government. Where the Government is concerned solely with public welfare, so is the educational system; where the Government is of a mixed kind—as in India—the educational system is also calculated to confuse the intellect and is positively harmful. While making this suggestion I do not wish that the youth should be left altogether unprovided with education. Not for a moment do I wish people's education to stop. But I believe that, even when the schools have been deserted, we can look after people's education all right. I know that the suggestions I have made are quite serious and I do not expect to be able to convince readers all at once. I shall take up these subjects time and again and place my arguments before the public.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-7-1920

5. KHILAFAT AND SWADESHI

Pathan Alamkhan Jivakhan writes[1] from Damnagar[2].

This is really a heartening letter. It is plain that the khilafat agitation will benefit the cause of swadeshi. But the resolve not to use articles made in Europe only so long as the khilafat issue remained unsolved does not seem to me proper. Muslims ought not to use European goods even if they get full justice on the khilafat question. It is, moreover, not enough to boycott European goods alone. No foreign goods, including Japanese goods, should be used. The swadeshi movement is intended as a permanent change. No matter how justly Europe deals with us, it is our duty to use only swadeshi goods so that India may ever get perfect justice. The country, thus, can prosper only through the spinning-wheel and the handloom. Lakhs of Muslims have given up spinning and lakhs of Muslim weavers have given up weaving. If Hindu and Muslim women again take to spinning and Hindu and Muslim weavers to weaving, within a short time the country will be able to produce all the cloth it needs. I wish, therefore, to draw the attention of all, specially of women, to the example that Damnagar has set. But what can women do about it, so long as men do not provide them with spinning-wheels and slivers of cotton by getting cotton carded by the local carders? I trust, therefore, that at least a few public-spirited men will come forward in every village, who at a little trouble to themselves, will undertake to procure cotton, get it carded and turned into cotton rolls and supply them to women who may be prepared to spin. This is a business in which no loss is possible. Only last week we saw the instance of Dhasa[3] where men and women not only spin and weave but for the most part use cloth made in their own village and send out the surplus, if any, to other villages. There is no starvation, there cannot be any, in that village. With a little effort, things can be planned in a similar way in every village in India.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-7-1920

[1] The letter is not given here. It said that, on the *Id* day, about 300 Muslims had resolved not to use foreign articles so long as the khilafat question remained unsolved.

[2] A village in Saurashtra

[3] In Saurashtra. *Navajivan*, 27-6-1920, had published an account of D. B. Kalelkar and Narahari Parikh's visit to the village.

6. HOW "NAVAJIVAN" SHOULD BE RUN

A correspondent, who does not give his name and address but describes himself as "one who regards *Navajivan* as his own", says:[1]

I have often pointed out that letters containing serious statements should never be anonymous. It seems to me that we, Indians, are more in the habit of writing such letters than foreigners. We seem afraid or ashamed of expressing our views openly. Why should one be afraid of expressing one's honest views? Or be ashamed of them? I repeat my advice to anonymous correspondents to give up this habit of anonymity. We have no right to express views or use language for which we are not prepared to accept responsibility.

This letter is reproduced almost literally. Had the writer signed it, perhaps he would not have made the language as bitter as he has. One who claims that he regards *Navajivan* "as his own" would put his views quite differently. A friend had placed before me the very same views, but there was sweetness and politeness in his way of complaining. I put it to "one who regards *Navajivan* as his own" that he could have used more polite language, if he had but cared to. It is our duty to speak out our views, if we think them right and conducive to public interest, but we are never free to dispense with politeness.

Lack of politeness is a sign of anger. The people are at present in an angry mood and boiling over, and therefore, pleased with nothing. They are labouring under a mistaken feeling of helplessness, that they are powerless to do anything which may end their suffering. And so they cling to anything that can make them forget their grief for a while, to anything which may provide them with an intoxicant in place of that of anger. That is why we see nowadays an excess of sensational writing in newspapers. Then, again, the craze for reading has increased and with that has grown the habit of reading long articles. All these are signs of a state of intoxication. Some people in Europe are so addicted to reading something or other that they cannot bear being without a book even for a while. It being impossible to go on reading instructive literature the whole day, the plague of "shilling shockers" is on the increase. A "shilling shocker" is a hair-raising

[1] The letter which is not given here, complained that *Navajivan* had not fulfilled the hopes it had raised when it was started but, on the contrary, it had been deteriorating day by day.

novel, costing 8 annas. Novels written in restrained language cannot be thrilling. So writers and publishers, whose sole object is to make money, tempt readers with impossible stories written in language which no decent man can stand. Reading"shilling shockers" has thus become a disease which has affected hundreds of thousands of men and women. Even we in India are now in danger of catching this disease.

It is *Navajivan's* effort, among other things, to protect the people against this danger. It will never lose sight of this aim and so the writer of this letter has but to have patience.

All the same, I must admit that there is some substance in the complaint of this correspondent. Our hope of being able to give better articles and getting them better printed has not been fully realized. Though we have the money for it, we have not yet been able to procure a printing machine which can print a large number of copies. Money cannot secure honesty. There has been difficulty in getting honest workers. The prices of paper have gone sky high while, when *Navajivan* was started, some people feared that they would fall. All these difficulties were unavoidable.

With all that, we do not feel any shame in presenting *Navajivan* to the public. Not one thoughtless statement appears in it. Anyone who keeps in mind the purpose which *Navajivan* exists to serve, will never desert it so long as the paper remains loyal to that aim. This aim has been to shed a new light on current affairs, to place before the people new ideas which have passed the test of experience, and to state whatever we think to be right, without fear of the Government or the public. From this pledge, *Navajivan* has not departed in the slightest degree and, therefore, it is certainly not "wallowing in the dust," nor is it "a helpless orphan".[1] There are, indeed, many obstacles in its path but it has always been, and will always be, struggling to surmount them

The printing mistakes are to be regretted. Sometimes it happens that good articles intended for publication come too late and others of an inferior quality have to be put in. But from all this it cannot be argued that the aim with which *Navajivan* was started re- mains unfulfilled. One may also regret the reduction in the number of its

[1] As alleged in the letter under comment

pages,[1] but in these days of high cost of paper aman who claims to "regard *Navajivan* as his own" should excuse the reduction. There is no need, moreover, to jump to the conclusion that, because the pages are fewer, the matter published is necessarily less than before. In fact, since the number of pages was reduced, an attempt is being made to make the articles more concise and there is absolutely no curtailment of the number of topics covered.

When all this is said, let it be understood that the letter above is published not for providing an occasion to defend *Navajivan*, but to invite those who see *Navajivan's* drawbacks to point them out and, at the same time, to advise intending critics not to give up politeness as also to gather sufficient courage to give their names. *Navajivan's* prestige cannot be kept up by defending it. it is obvious that *Navajivan* can survive only if, on the whole, it has intrinsic worth.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-7-1920

7. CABLE TO MAHOMED ALI[2]

[Before *July 7, 1920*]

RESPECTFUL BUT FIRM MUSLIM REPRESENTATION[3] INFLUENTIALLY SIGNED[4] ANNOUNCING RESORT TO NON-CO-OPERATION FROM THE 1ST AUGUST IF PEACE TERMS BE NOT REVISED OR IF THE VICEROY DOES NOT HEAD KHILAFAT AGITATION NOW IN HIS EXCELLENCY'S HANDS. I HAVE SENT MY OWN SEPARATE REPRESENTATION[5] EXPLAINING MY CONNECTION WITH THE MOVEMENT AND ASSOCIATING MYSELF ENTIRELY WITH IT. IN MY OPINION THE VAST MAJORITY OF MUSLIM AND HINDU MASSES ARE BEHIND THIS GREAT AND JUST AGITATION FOR RESPECT OF MUSLIM RELIGIOUS SENTIMENT AND FOR ENSURING FULFILMENT OF

[1] The size was reduced, first from 16 to 12 and then to 8 pages; *vide* "Condition of *Navajivan"*, 17-3-1920 & "To Readers", 25-4-1920.

[2] 1878-1931; orator, journalist and politician; led the khilafat delegation to England in 1920; president of the Indian National Congess, 1923. This cable was sent to the addressee at London.

[3] *Vide*, Appendix "Muslim Leaders' Representation to Viceroy", 22-6-1920.

[4] Among the signatories were Yakub Hasan, Mazharul Haq. Maulana Abdul Bari, Hasrat Mohani, Shaukat Ali and Dr. Kitchlew.

[5] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 22-6-1920.

RELIGIOUS SENTIMENT AND FOR ENSURING FULFILMENT OF MINISTERIAL PLEDGES. YOU MAY BE SURE OF EVERYTHING POSSIBLE BEING DONE ON THIS SIDE. I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT IN THIS GREAT CAUSE GOD WILL HELP US IF WE WILL HELP OURSELVES.

Young India, 7-7-1920

8. LETTER TO THE PRESS ON NON-CO-OPERATION

[Before *July 7, 1920*]

Mr. Gandhi writes to the Press :

Needless to say that I am in entire accord with Lala Lajpat Rai on the question of the boycott of the reformed councils. For me it is but one step in the campaign of non-co-operation and as I feel equally keenly on the Punjab question as on the khilafat, Lala Lajpat Rai's suggestion is doubly welcome. I have seen the suggestion made in more quarters than one that non-co-operation on the reforms should commence after the process of election has been through. I cannot help saying that it is a mistake to go through the election farce and the expense of it when we clearly do not intend to take part in the proceedings of these Legislative councils. Moreover, a great deal of educative work has to be done among the people. And if I could I would not have the best attention of the country frittered away in electioneering. The populace will not under-stand the beauty of non-co-operation if we seek election and then resign. But it would be a fine education for them if the electors are not to elect anybody and unanimously to tell whosoever may seek their suffrage that he would not represent them if he so sought election so long as the Punjab and khilafat questions were not satisfactorily settled. I hope, however, that Lala Lajpat Rai does not mean to end with the boycott of the reformed councils. We must take if necessary every one of the four stages of non-co-operation if we are to be regarded as a self-respecting nation. The issue is clear. Both the khilafat terms and the Punjab affairs show that Indian opinion counts for little in the councils of the Empire.

It is a humiliating position, we shall make nothing of the reforms if we quietly swallow the humiliation. In my humble opinion therefore the first condition of real progress is the removal of these

difficulties in our path. And unless some better course of action is devised *nolens volens* non-co-operation must hold the field.

Young India, 7-7-1920

9. STATEMENT BY NON-CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE

[Before *July 7, 1920*]

The following is a statement issued by the Non-co-operation Committee for public information and guidance :

Many question have been asked of the Non-co-operation Committee as to its expectation and the methods to be adopted for beginning non-co-operation.

The Committee wish it to be understood that whilst they expect every one to respond to their recommendation to the full, they are desirous of carrying the weakest members also with them. The Committee want to enlist the passive sympathy, if not the active co-operation, of the whole of the country in the method of non-co-operation.

Those, therefore, who cannot undergo physical sacrifice will help by contributing funds or labour to the movement.

Should non-co-operation become necessary, the Committee has decided upon the following as part of the first stage:

1. Surrender of all titles of honour and honorary offices.
2. Non-participation in Government loans.
3. Suspension by lawyers of practice and settlement of civil disputes by private arbitration.
4. Boycott of Government schools by parents.
5. Boycott of the reformed councils.
6. Non-participation in Government parties, and such other functions.
7. Refusal to accept any civil or military post, in Mesopotamia, or to offer as Units for the army especially for service in the Turkish territories now being administered in violation of pledges.

PROPAGATE SWADESHI

8. Vigorous prosecution of swadeshi inducing the people at the time of this national and religious awakening, to appreciate their primary duty to their country, by being satisfied with its own

productions and manufactures.

Swadeshi must be pushed forward without waiting for the 1st of August, for it is an eternal rule of conduct not to be interrupted even when the settlement arrives.

In order not to commit themselves, people will refrain now from taking service either civil or military. They will also suspend taking Government loans, new or old.

For the rest, it should be remembered that non-co-operation does not commence before 1st August next.

Every effort is being, and will still be, made to avoid resort to such a serious breach with the Government by urging His Majesty's Ministers to secure the revision of a treaty which has been so universally condemned.

Those who realize their responsibility and gravity of the cause will not act independently, but in concert with the committee. Success depends entirely upon disciplined and concerted non-co-operation and the latter is dependent upon strict obedience to instructions, calmness and absolute freedom from violence.

Young India, 7-7-1920

10. NOTES

PURE CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE[1]

All the readers of *Young India* may not know that Ahmedabad came under a heavy fine for the misdeeds of the April of last year. The fine was collected from the residents of Ahmedabad but some were exem-pted at the discretion of the collector. Among those who were called upon to pay the fines were income-tax payers. They had to pay a third of the tax by them. Mr. V.J. Patel[2], noted barrister, and Dr. Kanuga, a leading medical practitioner, were among those who were unable to pay. They had admittedly helped the authorities to quell disturbance. No doubt they were satyagrahis but they had endeavoured to still the mob fury even at some risk to their own persons. But the authorities would not exempt them. It was a difficult thing for them to use discretion in individual cas-es. It was equally

[1] This note is unsigned.

[2] Vallabhbhai Patel (1875-1950); Congress leader from Gujarat; first Deputy Prime Minister of free India

difficult for these two gentlemen to pay any fine when they were not to blame at all. They did not wish to embarrass the autho-rities and yet they were anxious to preserve their self-respect. They carried on no agitation but simply notified their inability to pay the fines in the circumstances set forth above. Therefore an attachment was issued. Dr. Kanuga is a very busy practitioner and his box is always full. The watchful attaching official attached his cash boxand extracted enough money to discharge the writ of execution. A lawyer's business cannot be conduc- ed on these lines. Mr. Patel sported no cash box. A sofa of his sitting- room was therefore attached and advertised for sale and duly sold. Both these satyagrahis thus completely saved their consciences.

Wiseacres may laugh at the folly allowing writs of attachment and paying for the collection of fines. Multiply such instances and imagine the consequence to the authorities of executing thousands of writs. Writs are possible when they are confined to a few recalcitrants. They are troublesome when they have to be executed against many high-souled persons who have done no wrong and who refuse payment to vindicate a principle. They may not attract much notice when isolated individuals resort to this method of protest. But clean examples have a curious method of multiplying themselves. They bear publicity and the sufferers instead of incurring odium receive congratulations. Men like Thoreau[1] brought about the abolition of slavery by their personal examples. Says Thoreau,

> I know this well that if one thousand, if one hundred, if ten men whom I could name, —if ten *honest* men only— aye, if *one* honest man, in this State of Massachusetts *ceasing to hold slaves* were actually to withdraw from this co-partnership and be locked up in the country gaol therefor, it would be the abolition of slavery in America. For it matters not how small the beginning may seem to be, what is once well done is done for ever.

Again he says,

> I have contemplated the imprisonment of the offender rather than seizure of his goods—though both will serve the same purpose, because they who assert the purest right and consequently are most dangerous to a corrupt State, commonly have not spent much time in accumulating property.

We, therefore, congratulate Mr. Patel and Dr. Kanuga on the excellent example set by them in an excellent spirit and in an excellent cause.

Young India, 7-7-1920

[1] Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862); American recluse, naturalist and writer

11. CRITICISM OF MUSLIM MANIFESTO

The khilafat representation[1] addressed to the Viceroy and my letter[2] on the same subject have been severely criticized by the Anglo-Indian Press. *The Times of India* which generally adopts an impartial attitude has taken strong exception[3] to certain statements made in the Muslim manifesto and had devoted a paragraph of its article to an adverse criticism of my suggestion that His Excellency should resign if the peace terms are not revised.

The Times of India excepts to the submission that the British Empire may not treat Turkey like a departed enemy. The signatories have, I think, supplied the best of reasons. They say :

> We respectfully submit that in the treatment of Turkey the British Government are bound to respect Indian Muslim sentiment in so far as it is neither unjust nor unreasonable.

If the seven crore Mussulmans are partners in the Empire, I submit that their wish must be held to be all sufficient for refraining from punishing Turkey. It is beside the point to quote what Turkey did during the war. It has suffered for it. *The Times* inquires wherein Turkey has been treated worse than the other Powers. I thought that the fact was self-evident. Neither Germany nor Austria and Hungary has been treated in the same way that Turkey has been. The whole of the Empire has been reduced to the retention of a portion of its capital, as it were to mock the Sultan and that too has been done under terms so humiliating that no self-respecting person, much less a reigning sovereign can possibly accept.

The Times has endeavoured to make capital out of the fact that the representation does not examine the reason for Turkey not joining the Allies. Well, there was no mystery about it. The fact of Russia being one of the Allies was enough to warn Turkey against joining them. With Russia knocking at the gate at the time of the war it was not an easy matter for Turkey to join the Allies. But Turkey had cause to suspect Great Britain herself. She knew that England had done no friendly turn to her during the Bulgarian War. She was hardly well served at the time of the war with Italy. It was still no doubt a bad

[1] Of 22-6-1920; *vide* "Muslim Leaders' Representation to Viceroy", 22-6-1920.

[2] *vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 22-6-1920.

[3] In its issue of June 29, 1920.

choice. With the Mussulmans of India awakened and ready to support her, her statesmen might have relied upon Britain not being allowed to damage Turkey if she had remained with the Allies. But this is all wisdom after event. Turkey made a bad choice and she was punished for it. To humiliate her now is to ignore the Indian Mussulman sentiment. Britain may not do it and retain the loyalty of the awakened Mussulmans of India.

For *The Times* to say that peace terms strictly follow the principle of self-determination is to throw dust in the eyes of its readers. Is it the principle of self-determination that has caused cessation of Adrianople and Thrace to Greece? By what principle of self-determination has Smyrna been handed to Greece? Have the inhabitants of Thrace and Smyrna asked for Grecian tutelage?

I decline to believe that the Arabs like the disposition that has been made of them. Who is the King of Hedjaj and who is Emir Feisul? Have the Arabs elected these kings and chiefs? Do the Arabs like the Mandate being taken by England? By the time the whole thing is finished, the very name self-determination will stink in one's nostrils. Already signs are not wanting to show that the Arabs, the Thracians and the Smyrnans are resenting their disposal. They may not like Turkish rule but they like the present arrangements less. They could have made their own honourable terms with Turkey but these self-determining people will now be held down by the "matchless might" of the Allies, i.e., British forces. Britain had the straight course open to her of keeping the Turkish Empire intact and taking sufficient guarantees for good government. But her Prime Minister chose the crooked course of secrect treaties, duplicity and hypocritical subterfuges.

There is still a way out. Let her treat India as a real partner. Let her call the true representatives of the Mussulmans. Let them go to Arabia and the other parts of the Turkish Empire and let her devise a scheme in concert with them—a scheme that would not humi- liate Turkey, that would satisfy the just Muslim sentiments and that will secure honest self-determination for the races composing that Empire. If it was Canada, Australia or South Africa that had to be placated, Mr. Lloyd George[1] would not have dared to ignore them. They have the power to secede. India has not. Let him no more insult India by calling her a partner, if her feelings count for naught. I invite *The*

[1] 1863-1945; British statesman; Prime Minister 1916-22

Times of India to reconsider its position and join an honourable agitation in which a high-souled people are seeking nothing but justice.

I do with all deference still suggest that the least that Lord Chelmsford can do is to resign if the sacred feelings of India's sons are not to be consulted and respected by the Ministers. *The Times* is overtaxing the constitution when it suggests that as a contitutional Viceroy it is not open to Lord Chelmsford to go against decisions of His Majesty's Ministers. It is certainly not open to a Viceroy to retain office and oppose ministerial decisions. But the constitution does allow a Viceroy to resign his office when he is called upon to carry out decisions that are immoral as the peace terms are or like these terms are calculated to stir to their very depths the feelings of those whose affairs he is administering for the time being.

Young India, 7-7-1920

12. THE PRINCE

Mr. Baptista[1] has written to *The Bombay Chronicle* on the forthcoming visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales and has combated views he imputes to me. Much as I should like for the present to observe silence on this delicate subject I cannot allow it to be said of me that I would "visit the sins of ministers on the Prince". I entirely agree with Mr. Baptista that the Prince has no voice in the Government and that he is not concerned with the acts of the ministers of the Crown much less with their blunders. I am just as keen as anyone could be to give a royal reception to the Prince and it is because I appreciate the constitution and its working that I would boycott the visit under present conditions. It is because I know that the Royalty is above politics that I would not allow the ministers or the Government of India, if I can help it, to use the Prince for their own political purposes. If I can do nothing else, at least I must not become a tool in the hands of the ministers and the Government of India and allow them, under cover of the Prince's visit, to make their hold of India tighter and to demonstrate to the world that under their benign administration the whole of India is happy and contented. For let there be no mistake that such will be the result if we remained silent and, under a mistaken sense of loyalty of constitution, gave any re-

[1] Joseph Baptista; Congress leader from Bombay

ception to the Prince. On the contrary, I hope that our loyalty requires us to make it clear to His Majesty's ministers that if they send the Prince to India, we shall be in no mood to join any receptions they might arrange. I would tell them in no language that we are sick at heart over the khilafat and the Punjab questions and that whilst we are fighting them for very life, we must not be expected to co-operate with them in giving receptions to His Royal Highness. We would be doing a wrong to the public, if we neglected our clear duty of educating them to a truer perception of the meaning of the proposed Royal visit. Let it be known that the Prince will arrive by and with the advice of the ministers, and consent and approval of the Government of India. The visit therefore will be not an act of the Prince but that of the ministers and in boycotting the visit at this juncture we would be visiting their sins upon themselves and not on the Prince. In other words we would not be playing into their hands. Supposing the ministers sent Sir Michael O' Dwyer[1] to replace Lord Chelmsford and he arranged the reception, would Mr. Baptista have us to fall into Sir Michael's trap! Suppose further that he insulted the Punjab under the Prince's nose by ignoring the Punjab leaders, should the Punjab pocket the insult and join the reception because Royalty is above politics! To say so would be to betray a woeful display of ignorance of the meaning of loyalty and politics.

I venture to suggest that if the Australian people were intensely dissatisfied with the acts, or the blunders of the ministers in the sense we are, they would boycott the visit without the slightest hesitation. The ministers want to make political capital out of the proposed visit. It is our duty to refuse to let them do so.

Mr. Baptista says and I agree that we are in mourning. He therefore hopes that the Prince would not be sent but if he is, Mr. Baptista says, we should give him a welcome in spite of the mourning. I want the Prince to come and therefore I would try to remove the cause of mourning and not take it as a settled fact. I would tell the ministers that as we want to give the Prince an enthusiastic welcome, they should remove the khilafat and the Punjab grievances. I should further tell them that if they did not do so and still persisted in sending the Prince to India, they would be responsible for placing the people in the awkward position of having to boycott the visit or the reception.

Young India, 7-7-1920

[1] Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, 1913-9

13. SWADESHI IN THE PUNJAB

The joint secretaries of the Bharat Stri Maha Mandal, Punjab Branch, send a report of the swadeshi activities of Shrimati Saraladevi Chaudhrani[1] ever since her return to Lahore from Bombay. Miss Roy and Mrs. Roshanlal, the secretaries, state that meetings of women were held respectively on the 23rd, 24th and 25th June at three different places in Lahore. All the meetings were attended by hundreds of women who were deeply interested in what Shrimati Saraladevi had to say. The burden of her discourses was India's deep poverty. She traced the causes and proved that our poverty was primarily due to the abandonment of swadeshi by the people. The remedy therefore lay in reverting to swadeshi.

Saraladevi herself writes to say that her khaddar sari impressed her audiences more than her speeches, and her songs came next, her speeches last. The good ladies of Lahore flocked round her and felt her coarse but beautifully white sari and admired it. Some took pity on her that she who only the other day was dressed in costly thin silk saris now decked herself in hand-woven swadeshi khaddar. Saraladevi wanted no pity and retorted that their thin foreign scarves lay heavier on their shoulders with the weight of their helpless dependence on foreign manufacture whereas her coarse khaddar lay light as a feather on her body with the joy of the knowledge that she was free because she wore garments in the manufacture of which her sisters and her brothers had laboured. This statement so pleased her audience that most of the women present resolved to discard foreign clothes. Saraladevi has now been charged by these ladies to open a shop where they could buy swadeshi goods. She has since addressed more audiences. She spoke at the District Conference at Sialkot and to a meeting exclusively devoted to ladies numbering over one thousand. I hope that the men of Punjab will help Saraladevi in her self-imposed mission. They may harness her talents and her willingness in founding Swadeshi Sabha and organizing swadeshi propaganda on a sound basis. Both men and money are needed to make the work a success.Swadeshi is more than reforms. There is much waste over reforms. There is none in swadeshi. Every yard of yarn spun is so

[1] Wife of Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chaudhry and grand-niece of Rabindranath Tagore. She and her husband became followers of Gandhiji in 1919 and sent their son Dipak to be educated at Sabarmati.

much labour well spent and so much wealth added to the national treasury. Every drop counts. Swadeshi spells first production and then distribution. Distri-bution without production means the raising of prices without any corresponding benefit. For today demand exceeds the supply. If we will not manufacture more cloth, more foreign imports must continue a painful and sinful necessity.

Punjab has a great opportunity. Punjab grows splendid cotton. The art of spinning has not yet died out. Almost every Punjabi woman knows it. This sacred haunt of the *rishis*[1] of old has thousands of weavers. Only the leaders need to have faith in their women and themselves. When Saraladevi wrote to me that she might want goods from Bombay, I felt hurt. The Punjab has all the time and all the labour and the material necessary for producing her own cloth. She has brave merchants. She has more than enough capital. She has brains. Has she the will? She can organize her own swadeshi in less than a year, if the leaders will work at this great cause. It is playing with swadeshi for the Punjab to have to import cloth from Bombay.

The Punjab has to right herself by putting her swadeshi on a proper basis and by ridding herself of Messrs Bosworth Smith[2] and Company[3]. She will then be both economically and politically sound. Geographically she stands at the top. She led the way in the older times. Will she again do so? Her men are virile to look at. Have they virility enough to secure without a moment's delay purity of administration? I have not strayed from swadeshi to politics. My swadeshi spirit makes me impatient of garments that denude India of her wealth and equally impatient of the Smiths, the O'Briens[4], the Shri Rams and the Maliks who denude her of her self-respect and insolently touch women's veils with their sticks, chain innocent men as if they were beasts, or shoot them from armoured cars or otherwise terrorize people into subjection.

Young India, 7-7-1920

[1] Sages

[2] Deputy Commissioner, Ambala; one of the martial law officers, known for his tryanny.

[3] Other martial law officers

[4] The reference here is to Col. O'Brien, Deputy Commissioner of Gujranwala.

14. MADNESS IN JUNAGADH

Junagadh is a Moslem State in Kathiawad so named for its having been once the land of brave *Kathis*[1]. It posesses a well-regulated college called after its founder the Vazeer Bahauddin. The college had attracted a good many Sindhi scholars mostly Mohammedans. This college has the unique distinction of giving free tuition. Suddenly the new Nawab a few days ago issued a ukase expelling all non-Kathiawadi students within twenty-four hours. The poor bewildered students were forcibly entrained the same day and packed away to Sind. No one knows the crime committed by the students. Rumour has it that the khilafat agitaion is at the back of this mad order. The Hindu students have been thrown in to cover the shame of the deed. Personally I welcome this expulsion. The barefaced injustice of it would show the people the true nature of the subtly hostile forces arraigned against the khilafat agitation. These States are themselves subjects of the Imperial State and therefore when the latter errs violently they are really worse off than the subjects who possess no sovereign powers. Having much to lose—both power and riches—they become willing instruments of injustice, and the nakedness of the injustice of the Imperial State is better reflected in the acts of Native States than in its own direct act. The subjects of Native States and those who live under their temporary protection therefore often become double sufferers. But I do not wish to diagnose the condition of Native States under British suzerainty.

My purpose is to show an easy way out of the impasse. The Principal of the college is reported to have resigned by way of protest against the extraordinary order. He deserves the warmest congratulations of those who want to see justice and purity in the Empire. But have not the Kathiawadi students a duty by the State and their comrades? In my opinion they should leave the college in a body after loding a respectful protest. They will buy their free education at too dear a price if they have not the manliness to show their sympathy to their fellow-students by leaving the college. The Nawab Saheb may not still come to his senses. That is a matter of no concern to them. They will have done their duty by withdrawing from the college.

[1] Members of a community of Saurashtra

To the expelled students, I would say : "Do not lose heart. You will not beg to be readmitted to a college whose owner has so insulted you. You may even return the little compensation-money and the travelling expenses the Nawab Saheb has given you. Accepting any such compensation would be compromising with the wrong. You can get all the education you need in Sindh itself, without having to go to any college. There is too much idolatry about the education received in our schools and colleges. We must learn to be men before we learn to read and write. Nature has endowed men with the ability to overcome all difficulties in way of their progress literary or otherwise.

Young India, 7-7-1920

15. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

July 7, 1920

Mr. M. K. Gandhi asked the assembly to read the Congress Sub-committee's report[2] on the Punjab atrocities carefully. He dwelt upon some of the happenings revealed in that report, and said the women of Bombay might perhaps wonder and enquire what he was trying to talk about for they might argue that here in Bombay they could move about with perfect freedom but those who argued in that fashion lost sight of this, that things which had come to pass in the Punjab might happen in Bombay provided circumstances became identical. Besides their duty should not be confined merely to preservation of their own safety but taking a broader view of it, they should try to ensure the safety of others as well. They should feel the wrongs done to their sisters and brothers of the Punjab as if they themselves had been subjected to those wrongs, and it was their duty to protest with all the emphasis at their command, so that a repetition of the Punjab atrocities might be rendered impossible either in that Province or any other part of India. If they wished to maintain their pride in India's supreme civilization they would have to show to the world that the soul-power of India's womanhood was greater than the physical strength of those officials who had perpetrated the atrocities in the Punjab. They must stand by the side of their husbands, brothers and sons and insist on their getting the punjab wrongs redressed.

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-7-1920

[1] Under the presidentship of Mrs. Jaiji J. Petit, wife of Jehangir B. Petit of Bombay; *vide* "Duty of Women", 18-7-1920.

[2] Published on March 25, 1920; *vide* "Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.

16. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

BOMBAY,
Thursday [*July 8, 1920*][1]

BHAISHRI NARAHARI[2],

Experience has convinced me that one cannot pay too much attention to students' handwriting. It I were to think merely of livelihood, [good] handwriting is valuable enough. For a student, it is an accomplishment.

Why does one fall ill? Everyone should find this out for himself. I keep thinking about it all the time. Merely from considerations of physical health, I find myself drawn at present to some techniques of *Hathayoga*[3]. I think some of them to be very important from this point of veiw. It was a *vaidya*[4] from Baroda who gave these ideas to me. Think this over with Vinoba[5]. With unhealthy bodies, we cannot give of our best in the service of India. I often feel that *pranayama*[6] and techniques like *neti*[7], *dhauti*[8], etc., must be of great help in maintaining the internal cleanliness of the body. My only point in saying all this is that you should make your body [as strong] as steel.

In order to be able to get up early, go to bed, if necessary, at eight sharp. I say this because I put the highest value on early rising.

Deepak has very little fat on him. His ribs are visible. I am not happy with this. I simply cannot bear the thought that even one boy should have his ribs visible.

If possible, find out more about Bhaskar's money. There is no doubt, of course, that we should credit the amount to his account. Could he himself have taken that money?

The reply Kaka[9] gave about students could have been given by

[1] On Thursday, July 8, 1920, Gandhiji was in Bombay and he went to Ahmedabad for a day (as stated in the last paragraph) on Monday, July 12.

[2] 1891-1957; member of Gandhiji's team of constructive workers in Sabarmati since 1917

[3] Psycho-physical control

[4] Physician practising *Ayurveda,* an indigenous system of medicine

[5] Acharya Vinoba Bhave (1895-); Gandhiji's greatest disciple; founder of Bhoodan and Gramdan movements; author of *Talka on the Gita,* etc.

[6] Yogic exercises

[7] *abid*

[8] *abid*

[9] Dattatreya Balkrishna Kalelkar (1885); educationist, writer and constructive worker; was awarded Padma Vibhushan

him alone, by one who was filled with the true spirit of the school. I am perfectly satisfied with it as far as it goes. But, to go further than that, I am sure a student from my school will be able, if he but wants, to earn more in the end. He will have a trained and sharp intellect. His brain will not have been crushed under the burden of a foreign language and of examinations. Even as things are today, the idea that those who have passed examinations earn more is just a myth. The rich in India are still men who have had no English education. They have English-educated men working under them. I leave out of account here barristers and doctors, especially the former, for they are the men who require a stamp. As for medicine, even our children can practise if they have the requisite knowledge. They may take up any service, except under Government, in which B.A.s are employed (if service is to be all their aim). If, having attained that level in their studies, any of them wants to go to England, he may take the matriculation there and may also become a barrister. That is, we leave an opening for him in case he repents. If the education we are giving is really up to our expectations, we can defend it against the entire world.

Forgetting for the moment all about *moksha*[1], we can certainly persuade every child to aspire to be good. While explaining who is a good man, quite a few things can be taught.

But all this when we meet. I shall go there on Monday and return the same day. It will be good if you can set apart one hour at one o'clock for us. There will be no one then and if anyone turns up, we shall excuse ourselves.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 6415

[1] Deliverance from phenomenal existence, regarded as supreme end of life

17. MESSAGE TO RAJAKIYA MANDAL MEETING[1]*, NADIAD*

[Before *July 9, 1920*][2]

Mr. Yagnik[3] read out a Gujarati letter addressed to him by Mr. M. K. Gandhi for reading it at the meeting. The letter runs thus :

The Rajakiya Mandal meets at Nadiad. Please see the resolution[4] suggested by me in the [last issue of] *Navajivan.* I desire that the Mandal should fearlessly adopt a resolution advising non-co-operation in connection with both the Punjab and khilafat questions. I take the boycott of councils as a first step in that direction. To adopt boycott after entering councils is to my mind sheer cowardice. How can we co-operate with those who do not deal justice to the Punjab and who betray us in the khilafat question? I remember to have seen in my childhood players at dice not playing with those who cast their dice dishonestly. In the political game before us the honour of India is at stake. Players on one side appear to resemble Duryodhana[5]. How to play with them? God may help you to arrive at a correct and bold decision.

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-7-1920

[1] The message was addressed to the Executive Committee of the Rajakiya Mandal (Political Conference) which was to meet on July 11. The Conference took place on August 27, 28 and 29.

[2] *Vide* the following item.

[3] Indulal Yagnik, an active political worker. Gandhiji took over *Navajivan* from him.

[4] *Vide* "Gujarat's Duty", 11-7-1920.

[5] Son of King Dhritarashtra and eldest of the Kaurava princes in the *Mahabharata,* who, at a game of dice, tricked Yudhishthira out of all his possessions.

18. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

BOMBAY,
Friday [*July 9, 1920*]

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I shall go there on Monday and return the same day. Please see my letter[1] to Indulal for the line of action the Rajakiya Mandal should follow. I hope it will resolve for non-co-operation. Total boycott of the councils is the only thing which will help us.

Inform Mavlankar[1] and others.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI PATEL
BARRISTER
BHADRA
AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Sardar Vallabhbhai Patelne

19. GUJARAT'S DUTY

Many difficult problems are now coming up for the whole of India. The future of the country will largely depend on how these are solved. If, at this juncture, we betrary, we shall invite a curse upon ourselves.

I have deliberately given to this article the heading "Gujarat's Duty". Not only is *Navajivan* addressed to Gujarati-speaking readers, but I have been developing before Gujaratis those ideas of which I am especially enamoured and translating them into practice to the limits of my capacity.

And so a special duty arises for Gujaratis. I come into close contact with large numbers of them. I discusss my ideas with them

[1] *Vide* the preceding item

[2] G. V. Mavlankar, (1888-1956); a political worker of Gujarat, the first Speaker of the Lok Sabha after independence

very freely and they can examine my life very minutely. From them I cannot and do not try to conceal my weaknesses.

I claim that the ideas which I place before the people are no product of an undeveloped brain but have taken shape on the anvil of thirty years of ever vigilant experience of life and are, therefore, fully mature. Even so, there may be errors in them. They may even be altogether wrong. There are many errors coming down for generations but, even after sufficient experience, we are unable to recognize them as such. It is possible that obtuseness prevents me from seeing my own errors.

Hence, all I wish is that my ideas should not be rejected before they have been tried out. It is the especial duty of Gujaratis to test them as, being nearer to me, it is easier for them to measure their worth.

It is a sign of cowardice to dismiss these ideas by saying that I have renounced the world, that I have turned a sadhu, that my ideas are good but impracticable. I do not accept the charge of being a sadhu and a man ignorant of the world. Comparing myself with my co-workers, I see my imperfections. I believe myself to be a man of the world. Personally, I think I am a practical man. I am happier, more contented and fearless than my neighbours but with no fewer concerns than they. My neighbours shudder when they see my worries. And yet I remain healthy enough to be able to carry on with my work. I too have a wife and children, like other people. I have not disowned my responsibilities towards them; on the contrary, I have thought carefully over them and have not renounced any of them. I do not live in a forest, but seem to be establishing ever new contacts. I fail to understand how anyone else can be more engrossed than I in this world. To dismiss me as a sadhu is to be unfair to me and to deprive Gujarat of my services.

The present Government is immoral, unjust and arrogant beyond description. It defends one lie with other lies. It does most things under a threat of force. If the people tolerate all these things and do nothing, they will never progress.

If a man, when hungry, merely keeps wailing about his hunger and makes no great effort to procure food, prepared even to die in the attempt, then we shall doubt whether he is at all hungry.

The Times of India commented a few days ago that, if our public men were right in all the adjectives they employed when speaking on

the Punjab and other issue, with their feelings so excited the people would surely seek a remedy [for the wrongs]. There is a saying in English, "Necessity is the mother of invention." Memons have a saying among them, "With a crisis, the hero"; that is, a crisis produces the hero. A crisis means a moment of pressing difficulty. Such a moment shows a man the way out and so makes him a man indeed. If we really feel the pressure, if the adjectives we use truly describe our feelings, why should we not be able to find the remedy?

Countless times have we sung that the sufferings of the Punjab are intolerable. What does a man suffering unbearable pain do? One who is stung by a scorpion tries all manner of remedies and, if they fail to relieve the pain, he dies. We, on the contrary, have lost even the strength to die, though we say that our pain is unbearable. Why should *The Times*, then, not pour ridicule on us?

Shastras advise that the company of the evil should be shunned. We do not have enough courage even to turn our back on the evil Mr. O'Brien, the evil Mr. Smith and the evil Mr. Shri Ram.

Withdrawing co-operation from a government which breaks its promises is a course followed from immemorial times. The history of our country provides instance after instance of subjects oppressed by a king leaving the kingdom. The subjects have a right to show that they are displeased.

In Europe, they kill a wicked king. In India, the subjects leave the territory of the king when they find things unbearable. The non-co-operation I have suggested is a mild way of boycotting. Total boycott is the ultimate stage in non-co-operation. We have even forgotten how to show that we are displeased.

If that is true, it betokens the depth of our degradation. When the slave forgets that he is a slave, there is no way left to help him win his freedom.

There can hardly be an injustice greater than the two which the Government is obstinately defending today. If we do not find them unbearable, then no blame will attach to the Government; on the contrary, it will be said, to use the language of the rustic, that we deserved all this.

It is the duty of the people of Gujarat, at this difficult time, to examine closely the forms of non-co-operation which I place before them. I hope that in this matter Gujarat will not follow others' example, but will take the lead and be an example for others to follow.

A little reflection will show that renouncing titles, boycotting legislatures, leaving Government schools and giving up practice are not very difficult tasks. For the present, however, we have to make up our mind to boycott legislatures. If there is not a single candidate for election to the legislatures, this will have no insignificant effect on both the Government and the people.

Let us consider what should be done for boycotting legislatures. Keeping away from them does not mean sitting quiet and doing nothing, but means educating the voters in that direction and making our meaning plain to the Government.

In every important town, therefore, resolutions should be passed advocating boycott of legislatures :

The feelings of the people have been so deeply hurt by the injustice done to the Muslims on the khilafat issue, by the Cabinet's endorsement of the Prime Minister's breach of promise and by the terrible and unendurable injustice in the Punjab, that it will not be in keeping with the nation's self-respect, so long as redress is denied in these two matters, to enter legislatures and help the Government to function. This meeting, therefore, advises that no one should contest elections to the legislatures and appeals to the voters not merely not to vote for anyone who may stand as a candidate but also to write and inform him that they do not wish to elect anyone to represent them in the legislatures.

It is urgently necessary to hold meetings everywhere and pass resolutions to this effect.

We need not wait for the Congress to meet. The Congress is an organ of public opinon, and hardly an instrument of cultivating public opinion. Those to whom their path is clear need not at all wait till the Congress session is over; rather, they should put their decision into effect and, thereby, show to the Congress the direction and intensity of public opinion.

It is not likely that in a great venture like this all will be of one mind on the instant. We shall have patiently to educate those who differ from us. We shall succeed in changing their views by showing our dislike of them or boycotting them; we shall have to win them over to our view with argument and gentle persuasion. This is the only way in which we can cultivate public opinion along right lines.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-7-1920

20. VISIT OF THE PRINCE OF WALES

Mr. Baptista has asked in *The* [*Bombay*] *Chronicle* whether, in our present suffering, we are in a position to accord a cordial reception to the eldest son of King-Emperor George V when he visits India. He has spoken of my views and, therefore, I think it my duty to state them.

I believe that we cannot drag tha Prince or any other member of the Royal family into politics. If our differences with the Government are of an ordinary nature, we should welcome the Prince's visit and receive him with all respect. When, however, the people are in grief and their feeling have been deeply hurt, the Prince's visit will be ill-timed and the people have the right to express their displeasure at the action of the authorities, if the latter arrange the visit without ascertaining their feelings. The Prince is in no way insulted by such action. To deny this is to demonstrate ignorance of the British Constitution.

It should be remembered that the Prince is not coming of his own accord. If he did, he would be acting contrary to the Constitution. He can come only if the British Cabinet requests him to, after consulting the Indian Government. The Prince is not free to follow his own inclination in meeting Indians or making speeches. His visit, therefore, is not to be considered his own act but that of the Government.

Moreover, if the Government arranges a visit by the Prince to India, it will be to serve its own purpose. So long as there is no great difference dividing the Government and the people, it may be said that the interests of the one are those of the other. If there is such a difference, however, what is in the interest of the Government may be against that of the people. If the Prince comes at this time and if we receive him warmly, the Government will conclude that, in fact, the people have not been hurt and that all this talk of their having been hurt is only the work of a few disgruntled men. It would not be strange if it came to this conclusion.

If, therefore, the Government does arrange a visit by the Prince of Wales at this juncture, I would look upon the visit as a trap and it would be the duty of the people not to walk into it.

What is the position of the people today? The British Cabinet

has gone back on the promise it gave to a section of the people and the Government of India has acquiesced in this. The latter has disregarded the religious sentiments of the Muslims. Not only does it show no evidence of regretting the atrocities committed by the officials on the people of the Punjab but, on the contrary, we find it brazen-facedly defending the officials. Many of the officers who were responsible for the atrocities are continued in service and they are still going on in the same old way. In these circumstances, if we welcome the Prince and thereby strengthen the power of the Government, we shall be tightening our chains with our own hands.

By refusing to welcome the Prince, we express our strong displeasure at the misdeeds of the Government. We have a right to do this. If we do not do it, we shall proclaim ourselves cowards. Our petitions and complaints will be proved to have been unfounded.

If the Government wishes to see the people full of joy and enthusiasm at the time of the Prince's visit and wants them to show respect to him, it is its duty to satisfy them. There is only one way of doing this—a just solution of the khilafat issue and perfect justice in the Punjab. These two issues have created a gulf between the Government and the people and plunged the latter in grief. The people should tell the Government in the clearest possible terms that, while our demands remain unsatisfied, we are unable to welcome the Prince.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-7-1920

21. PURE SWADESHI

A brief report of Shrimati Saraladevi's work in the Punjab appeared in *Navajivan* last week. From a telegram received later, it appears that even at the Khilafat Conference which she attended at Jhelum, she spoke on swadeshi. As Muslims are fast taking to swadeshi, it is easy to propagate swadeshi from a khilafat platform.

At this juncture, it is very necessary to understand thoroughly some fundamental principles of swadeshi. Will it advance the cause of swadeshi if Muslims take the swadeshi vow in their hundreds of thousands? I think it will, provided that either there is an increase in the production of swadeshi goods to meet their needs or they and others reduce requirements of cloth.

The cloth which our cotton mills produce is not enough for India's needs and the mills are not in a position to increase the production of cloth in the immediate future. Their weaving capacity is greater than their spinning capacity. If, therefore, we use mill-yarn for handloom cloth, it will mean that the mills will produce less correspondingly and not that there will be an increase in the total production of cloth. The result will be large imports, not of cloth, but of yarn. That will leave us just where we are. We need not believe that we shall be saving on weaving for yarn will cost more. This is not swadeshi.

The swadeshi of our conception safeguards both dharma and *artha*[1]. Not to be able to serve our own neighbours, our own kith and kin—to wrest a morsel from their mouths and put it into those of strangers, surely this would not be serving the higher end of life, this would not be compassion. That would only mean our deserting our own field of duty. We are therefore, morally bound to encourage our sisters who spin and our weavers. In the process, we shall be sending 60 crores of rupees to the homes of our starving millions and this will safeguard *artha*. The swadeshi dharma is thus the royal road for safeguarding both our dharma and *artha*.

We can follow this only if we take to hand-spinning and hand-weaving. The true and genuine swadeshi movement, therefore, consists in increasing the production of yarn, getting the yarn woven and then marketing the cloth thus produced. It is, therefore my suggestion to all lovers of swadeshi and to all owners of swadeshi stores that they should get women to spin and should popularize the cloth woven out of the yarn they produce. I know that this work is difficult and heart-breaking. But no progress is ever possible without our venturing on a path beset with difficulties. The way to the Dhaulagiri peak[2] is strewn with the bones of countless travellers. The weak of heart lose their enthusiasm right at the foot; there is no way, though, except through hills and valleys. If, therefore, those who take up the swadeshi cause do so after fully understanding the basic principle of swadeshi, they will save themselves from disappointment. It does not matter if every worker does no more than spin and infects a few with his zeal; but there will be great harm, if the swadeshi movement does not make

[1] Material welfare
[2] In the Himalayas

headway, in being satisfied with what goes under the name of swadeshi. No piece of brass, however shining, can serve for gold; nor a bit of glass for a diamond. Just as mistakenly accepting glass as diamond will only delay our getting the latter, in the same way we shall only retard the progress of swadeshi if we accept spurious swadeshi as genuine swadeshi. Some people may wonder why, if the idea is to produce yarn, some 10 or 20 new mills should not be set up instead of trying to persuade millions of women to spin. I have already answered this question in *Navajivan*.[1] New mills are not easily set up. Nor does anyone need especially to make the effort. The rich make the attempt on their own and keep adding to the number. But the setting up of new mills will mean being permanently dependent on foreigners for machinery. It is, besides, no remedy for the hunger of the millions, nor does it enable us to put 60 crores of rupees in circulation among them every year. India's population numbering millions and spread over a length of 1900 miles will never be saved from starvation till we introduce a subsidiary occupation into the homes of the millions living on agriculture. Such an ocupation can only be hand-spinning and, to some extent, hand-weaving. This industry flourished in India a hundred and fifty years ago and at that time we were not as miserably poor as we are today.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-7-1920

[1] *Vide* "Uses of Khadi", 25-4-1920.

22. SHANTINIKETAN

Mr. Andrews[1] writes saying that buildings are under construction in Shantiniketan and the need for money is pressing. The Poet[2] is not there at present and the burden falls mainly on Mr. Andrews.

I feel that Gujarat did not do its duty fully at the time of the Poet's visit[3]. To welcome a guest with cheers and garlands of flowers is but courtesy; it is the beginning of one's duty, not the end. If we regard the Poet as a man of exceptional gifts and if we intend really to appreciate his literary genuis, it is our duty to help him in his work.

Before we help a man, it is not necessary to be in complete agreement with everything he does. It is quite possible that we see defects or imperfections in the actions of the great. None the less, if their motives are sincere it is our duty to help them.

We know hardly anything about the work of Pandita Ramabai[4]. Alone and single-handed, she carries it on with the help of American money. Because she is a Christian, we take no interest in her work. She does not approach us for help, and it is right that she does not. Her object is the propagation of Christianity, which appeals to the people of America. They do not care to look into all her activities, and perhaps would not approve of everything she does. The Pandita's objects in her work is sufficient for their purpose and, therefore, some from among them meet the very large expenses of her big institution.

In the same way, if we honour the object the Poet has in mind, if we like the experiment of keeping the nation's education in its own hands and if we want our children to have something of the Poet's artistic sense, we should help to maintain the institution. The Poet himself has declared that Shantiniketan is his recreation, that it is for recreation that he gathers children around him. The children's

[1] Charles Freer Andrews (1871-1940); British missionary, co-worker of Tagore and Gandhiji; honoured as "Deenabandhu" (brother of the poor)

[2] Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941); awarded Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913; founder of Visva Bharati at Shantiniketan, now a university

[3] During the first week of April, 1920. For Gandhiji's appeal for contributions, *vide* "Notes", 28-3-1920.

[4] 1858-1922; Christian missionary, scholar of Sanskrit, social reformer and educationist.

faculties develop best in the environment there. Shantiniketan is the creation of his revered father, Maharshi Devendranath. To honour the Poet but refuse to help his institution is not a consistent attitude.

I appeal to Gujaratis to bear a part of the expenses of this institution, since we had invited the Poet to be our honoured guest. One of his reasons for accepting our invitation was that we might come to know his institution and help it. He gladly accepted help wherever it was offered with love. His tour of Kathiawar, one may say, failed in its purpose. Bhavnagar practically did nothing and the experience in Baroda was the same. Looking to its capacity, Ahmedabad's response was rather poor. I trust that, even now, we will make amends for this lapse on our part and complete our reception.

Shri Tulsidas Karani of Mangrol[1], taking the occasion of a marriage in his family, sent only a few days ago Rs. 1001. It is while acknowledging this gift that Mr. Andrews says that still more help is needed. As we make progress, voluntary taxes on us are bound to increase and we ought to pay what we can within our means. Those who wish to offer anything may send the amounts to the Ashram or to Mr. C. F. Andrews, Shantiniketan, Bolpur, East Indian Railway.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-7-1920

23. MADNESS IN JUNAGADH

The expulsion, by the Nawab Saheb, of Sindhi students from the Bahauddin College at Junagadh is old news now. To expel without cause a whole lot of 60 students from the college and pack them off in a train within 24 hours is nothing but a sign of insanity. Such insanity reminds us of the martial law in the Punjab.

The question immediately occurs whether the step was influenced by the British Government. The Nawab Saheb seems to have given to reason [for his action] and, therefore, nothing can be said definitely on this point.

If the Nawab Saheb has taken the step on his own, it is plain that the subjects of Native States are worse off than people under British rule.

Our princes are in a sorry plight. They are in the position of

[1] In Saurashtra

subjects themselves. Their power and their wealth depend entirely on the British Empire and are safeguarded by it. The people living in dependencies being subjects of subjects are doubly dependent and, often, suffer twice as much as others.

But this is no occasion to consider who is really responsible for the Nawab Saheb's action, what rights the subjects of Native States have and how to improve their lot. We do not have sufficient data for the purpose.

A big question, however, arises : What is now the duty of the students of Kathiawar towards their fellow-students? The people of Kathiawar have physical strength and are also reputed to be brave. Their capacity for suffering is admirable. Should these students take the insult of their Sindhi friends lying down ? I for one feel that, if the Sindhi students are not re-admitted, it is the clear duty of the Kathiawar students to leave the college.

It will perhaps be argued that in that case the education of these students would suffer. I for one will assert rather, that in a situation like this true education for them lies in leaving the college. What use is that education which does not teach self-respect? When the occasion demands, one must uphold the honour of one's associates even at some cost to oneself. It is one's duty as a man to defend them against injustice.

The first thing to learn is to be men. Education in the letters is for human beings. What will you gain by education those who have lost their humanity? Book-learning by itself does not make us men. College students, moreover, are not mere children. We cannot say that they are in no posistion to think for themselves. I trust, therefore, that every single Kathiawari student in the Bahauddin College will leave the college if justice is not done to their Sindhi friends.

"What next?"—some will ask. It is quite possible that no other college will admit them; and, if any college is prepared to do so, they will hardly have the money to pay the fees. But it is in facing these difficulties that the worth of their sacrifice in leaving the college lies. If colleges grew like mushrooms, they would have no value and the Sindhi students would never have been expelled.

Those who leave the college can, working hard, continue their studies at home. And arrangements can be made to provide free coaching to them. It is not difficult, in these days, to find public-spirited teachers who will not mind helping such students. If the

students but do their elementary duty, they will know the way of fighting this injustice. Not to think of the future when doing the duty which has fallen to one's lot—this is *nishkama* karma[1] and this is dharma.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-7-1920

24. LETTER TO THE PRESS ON SOUTH AFRICAN COURT'S JUDGMENT

[*July 11, 1920*][2]

Mr. M. K. Gandhi writes to the Press :

I have received the following cablegram from Johannesburg : In *Deudoo* versus *Krugersdorp Municipality* the legality of Asiatic companies owning fixed property appellate court upheld appeal. Justices Rose-Innes, Solomon, Maarsdorp, Juta and De Villiers composed the bench. Justice De Villiers only dissented.

The cablegram means much relief for our harassed countrymen in South Africa. It would be remembered that the High Court of the Transvaal had decided against Indian companies holding fixed properties as being fraudulent of law. The appellate court has evidently taken a different view and sustained the Indian contention that the transactions of the Asiatic companies were perfectly legal.

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-7-1920

25. TELEGRAM TO KHWAJA, DELHI

BOMBAY,

[Before *July 12, 1920*][3]

NON-CO- OPERATION IMPOSSIBLE IN NATIVE STATES WITHOUT LOCAL GUIDANCE.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1920, p. 1064

[1] Such action is the central teaching of the *Gita*.

[2] According to *Gujarati*, 18-7-1920, Gandhiji issued the letter on this date.

[3] This telegram was intercepted by the police on July 12, 1920.

26. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Monday [Before *July 12, 1920*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL[2],

I have today asked Anandanand to write to you and tell you that Mr. Kale of Dharwar will be leaving for Ahmedabad by mail and that you should receive him at the station. I have asked him to write to you in detail.

This letter I write for the sake of Ba. I observe that she is not quite happy. She has been ill and works beyond her strength. As Nirmala came away with me, I asked Devdas to stay behind. Consult Gokibehn[3] and Ba, with Devdas present, and do whatever is necessary. Perhaps it will do if you reduce the burden of work in regard to clothes and utensils. I do not understand why there should be any difficulty on account of *rotlis*[4] . If the work in the kitchen is too heavy and if it is possible to make any changes, make them. Are there at present 15 persons who take their meals? I shall return there most probably on Monday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 5787. Courtesy : Radhabehn Choudhri

27. SPEECH ON FIJI AFFAIRS, BOMBAY

July 13, 1920

Under the joint auspices of the Imperial Indian Citizenship Associa- tion, the Bombay Presidency Association, the India Merchants' Chamber and Bureau, the Indian Home Rule League, the All-India Home Rule League, the Bombay National Union and the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee, a public meeting of the citizens of Bombay was held at the Excelsior Theatre, Bombay, yesterday to consider

[1] The letter seems to have been written from Bombay, evidently before the announcement in *Navajivan*, 18-7-1920, that a spinning-wheel had been invented by Ganesh Bhasker Kale, which would meet the requirements of the prize offered by Revashanker Mehta; *vide* "Notes", 5-10-1919. Gandhiji arrived at Ahmedabad on July 12 which fell on a Monday.

[2] Son of Khushalchand Gandhi, Gandhiji's cousin; manager of Phoenix Settlement and later of the Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati

[3] Raliatbehn, Gandhiji's sister; Gokibehn was her familiar name.

[4] Round thin cake of unloavened bread

the Indian situation in East Africa and Fiji. Sir Narayan Chandavarkar[1] presided and there was a very largeattendance. Mr. M. K. Gandhi moved the following resolution :

(a) That this meeting views with alaram and grave apprehensions the growing agitation in the East African Protectorate against the British Indian settlers residing in that Protectorate and hopes that, in view especially of the fact that the Imperial Government has directed control over the Protectorate and that the Indians emigrated to East Africa before the European advent, the Government of India will guard the Indians against any encroachment upon their rights whether by legislative or administrative measures and that the Government will secure complete equality of status for them by requiring the Protectorate to remove all legal and administrative inequality at present existing.

(b) This meeting emphatically protests against the undesirable authority placed in the hands of the administrator of the occupied territory empowering him to deport persons without trial, being power virtually aimed against Indians; and views with great concern the other grievances of Indians resident therein, such as want of police protection, artificial financial disabilities due to the invalidity of pre-war interim German currency notes, the exchange imbroglio, travelling restrictions, and the like. In the opinion of this meeting these disabilities make the position of British Indian settlers worse than during the German regime, and this meeting trusts that the Government of India will secure early relief of the Indian situation from the grievances complained of.

Mr. Gandhi said the resolution was to have been moved by Mr. C. F. Andrews, who, however, was unable to be present on account of an operation having been performed on him. He moved the resolution on behalf of Mr. Andrews who had also asked him to read to them the speech he had prepared for the occasion.

Mr. Gandhi then read Mr. Andrews' speech. . . .[2]

Mr. M. K. Gandhi moved the following resolution :

This meeting requests the Government of India to publish all the correspondence between the Fiji Government and itself regarding the recent strike of Indians and the firing that took place in connection with it, and calls upon the Government of India, to provide early facilities for the transport of those Indians in Fiji, who are desirous of returning to India. This meeting protests against the order of the

[1] Social reformer and judge of the Bombay High Court; presided over the Congress session at Lahore in 1900

[2] Not reproduced here

Government of Fiji, deporting without trial, Mr. Manilal Doctor[1], who is a barrister of long standing in Fiji, and calls upon the Government to secure an early cancellation of the deportation against him.

Mr. Gandhi, in proposing the resolution, said that the resolution did not deal with the condition of the Indians in Fiji during the period of indenture, which was now happily abolished. Those who wanted to study the question should do so by getting hold of the late Mr. Gokhale's[2] speeches in the Imperial Legislative Council on the indenture question and the speeches of the Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya[3] on the same subject in the same place. Both considerably helped in the great effort to secure the abolition of indentured labour. The status of our countrymen outside India shamefully reminded us that they were pariahs on the Empire. The late Mr. Gokhale used to recall our own treatment of our own people, the pariahs, and used to say that in receiving the treatment that our countrymen did in British dominions, we were perhaps paying the penalty of our continued sin against a fifth of our own countrymen. The resolution before the meeting however dealt with the present conditions of Indians in Fiji, and called upon the Government of India to give an open and accurate account of what was done in Fiji during the India strike and during martial law that followed the strike. It also called upon the Government to provide facilities of transport for those Indians who wished to return from Fiji. A shipment had already arrived. The Hon. Pandit Malaviya was advised of it, and had deputed a representative to meet the unfortunate people who had come here and among whom were nearly 500 lepers. He had seen two of the returned Indians who had given a graphic account of the happenings during martial law. If what they said was true, it was a second edition of Amritsar. India had a right to know the position in Fiji accurately. It was necessary to know the Dyers[4] and the O'Briens and Bosworth Smiths of Fiji. When the full facts were before the country it might be their painful duty to call for proper justice to be meted out to the wrong-doers.

The resolution also asked for information about the deportation of Mr. and

[1] Son-in-law of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta, an old associate of Gandhiji. He went to Fiji in 1912 to take up public work there; *vide* "Letter to Dr. Pranjivan Mehta", 24-9-1911.

[2] Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915); distinguished leader, educationist and politician; founder, Servants of India Society, Poona

[3] 1861-1946; founder of the Benares Hindu University; member, Imperial Legislative Council; twice president of the Indian National Congress

[4] The reference here is to Reginald Edward Harry Dyer (1864-1927); Officer Commanding, Amritsar Area, who ordered firing on a peaceful assembly of people gathered at the Jallianwala Bagh for a meeting; *vide* "Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.

Mrs. Manilal Doctor. They were the leaders of Fiji. Why were they deported ? There was no trial. This deportation was more intolerable than the deportation of Lala Harkishan Lal[1] and his friends. For Pandit Motilal Nehru[2] and Pandit Malaviya were able to go to the Punjab as soon as possible and replace the Punjab leaders who were imprisoned. Who could replace Mr. and Mrs. Manilal Doctor? The country had a right to demand justice in the matter. Mr. Gandhi recalled the reply that late Sir John Gorst gave in connection with the Manipur expedition years ago. Sir John Gorst was a frank and blunt Under-Secretary of State, and he said in the House of Commons that it was the policy of the British Government in India to cut off tall poppies. Could it be that Mr. and Mrs. Manilal Doctor were tall poppies? It was the duty of India to see that the natural leaders of the people were not, unceremoniously and, without any trial whatsoever, snatched away calmly. In concluding his remarks Mr. Gandhi said that the audience need not consider that the question of South Africa had not been brought before them owing to any neglect on the part of the Imperial Citizenship Association, or that the question of South Africa was of any less importance. The Association was in close touch with the Government of India, and the question had not been brought up because the Asiatic Commission has not yet presented its final report. The country knew the Government of India were anxiously watching the events in South Africa. When the moment came, the Association will, the speaker had no doubt, move the country in the South African question as it had done in the East African and Fiji questions.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-7-1920

28. COUNCILS' BOYCOTT

Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chaudhary[3] has ranged himself against Lala Lajpat Rai in the matter of the proposed boycott of the Councils. Madras is divided, most of the nationalist leaders seem disinclined to boycott the Councils. *The Mahratta* has pronounced against it in a well-reasoned article. The reasons for disapproval of boycott are mainly two : (1) If the nationalists refrain, the moderates will get all the seats; (2) since through the legislative councils we have made some progress we are likely to make greater progress by reason of larger

[1] A big financier and business magnate of the Punjab

[2] 1861-1931; lawyer and politician; twice president of the Indian National Congress

[3] A leader of the Punjab and a poet, who along with his wife, Saraladevi Chaudhrani, took a leading part in the public affairs of the Punjab

powers having been granted to popular representatives.

Now the first reason hardly does credit to a great popular party. If it is harmful to enter the Councils, why should nationalists be jealous of the moderates entering the Councils? Must they participate in the harmbecause moderates will not refrain? Or, is it contended that the harm can be avoided only if all join the boycott? If the last is the contention it betrays ignorance of the principles of boycott. We boycott an institution because we do not like it or because we do not wish to co-operate with its conductors. In the matter of the Councils the latter is the deciding reason. And I submit that in a sense we co-operate by joining even though the object is obstruction. Most institutions, and a British legislative council most of all, thrive upon obstruction. The disciplined obstruction of the Irish members made practically no impression upon the House of Commons. The Irishmen have not got the Home Rule they wanted. *The Mahratta* argues that obstruction would be active and aggressive non-co-operation. I venture to deny it. In my opinion it shows want of faith in yourself, i.e., in your doctrine. You doubt and you perish. I do not believe that either the English or the moderate leaders can possibly contemplate with equanimity a nationalist boycott of the Councils. We are now face to face with the reality. Will a single moderate leader care to enter any council if more than half his electorate disapprovd of his offering himself as a candidate at all? I hold that it would be unconstitutional for him to do so, because he will not represent his constituency. Boycott contemplated by me presupposes a most active discipline and watchful propaganda and it is based on the assumption that the electors themselves will prefer complete to an incomplete boycott in the form of obstruction. If it is assumed that the people themselves do no want a complete boycott it would be the duty of those who believe in it to educate the electorates to appreciate the superiority of boycott over obstruction. To enter the councils is to submit to the vote of the majority, i.e., to co-operate. If then we want to stop the machinery of Government, as we want to, until we get justice in the khilafat and the Punjab matters, we must put our whole weight against the Government and refuse to accept the vote of the majority in the council, because it will neither represent the wish of the country nor our own which is more to the point on a matter of principle. A minister who refuses to

serve is better than one who serves under protest. Service under protest shows that the situation is not intolerable. I contend that the situation created by the Government has become intolerable and therefore the only course left open to a self-respecting person is non-co-operation, i.e., complete abstention. General Botha[1] refused to enter Lord Milner's[2] Council, because he utterly disapproved of the principle that governed Lord Milner in dealing with the Boers. And General Botha succeeded because he had practically the whole of the Transvaal behind him. Politically considered, success depends upon the country accepting the boycott movement. Religiously considered success is there for the individual as soon as he has *acted* upon the principle he holds and his action has ensured national success because he has laid the foundation by showing the straightest way to it.

The other argument is that we shall succeed by entering the new Councils because we have after all not done quite so badly in having entered less popular bodies before. The answer to the objection is that the dividing line had not then been reached, we had not lost confidence in Briish honesty and justice or we had not confidence in ourselves then to carry boycott to the successful end or we had not thought of the method in the way we are doing today. Probably all the three reasons operate today. After all, manners and methods change with the times. We must grow with our years. What was good enough food for our babyhood cannot be good enough for manhood.

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[1] 1862-1919; Boer general and statesman; Prime Minister of the Transvaal, 1907, and of South Africa Union, 1910-19

[2] 1854-1925; Governor of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, 1901-5; High Commissioner for South Africa, 1897-1905; Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1919-21

29. THE LAW OF MAJORITIES

Mrs. Besant[1] having read a report of my speech at the Punjab meeting organized by the Home Rule League and the National Union, Bombay, and having therein seen that I had moved the resolution asking for the prosecution of General Dyer and the im-peachment of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, asks how I could move a resolution whose terms I had not approved. Mr. Shastriar[2] has also felt uneasy about the same act. I have not seen any report of my speech. I am unable to say therefore whether I am correctly reported. My speech was in Gujarati and may have suffered at the hands of the translating reporter. I shall endeavour to explain my own position independently of the reports of my speech. And I do so gladly because I recognize that the principle raised by the two great leaders is very important.

I have often been charged with having an unyielding nature. I have been told that I would not bow to the decision of the majority. I have been accused of being autocratic. Now on the occasion of the Punjab meeting, I was pressed to move a resolution which did not commend itself to me. I undertook to do so reserving to myself the right to expressing emphatic opinion to the contrary. And I did so. I have never been able to subscribe to the charge of obstinacy or autocracy. On the contrary I pride myself on my yielding nature in non-vital matters. I detest autocracy. Valuing my freedom and independence I equally cherish them for others. I have no desire to carry a single soul with me, if I cannot appeal to his or her reason. My unconventionality I carry to the point of rejecting the divinity of the oldest Shastras if they cannot convince my reason. But I have found by experience that if I wish to live in society and still retain my independence, I must limit the points of utter independence to matters of first rate importance. In all others which do not involve a departure from one's personal religion or moral code, one must yield to the majority. In the case in question I had an opportunity of illustrating my position. Of my so-called unyielding nature the country

[1] Annie Besant (1847-1933); president of the Theosophical Society; founder of the Central Hindu College at Benares; president, Indian National Congress, 1917

[2] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri (1868-1946); scholar and statesman; president, Servants of India Society, 1915-27

hadabundant illustration. It was happy to find a great occasion where I could safely yield. I believe still that the countrywrong in asking for General Dyer's prosecution and Sir Michael O'Dwyer's impeachment. That is purely the business of the British. My purpose is to secure the removal of the wrongdoers from any office under the Crown. Nothing I have seen since has altered my view. And I pressed it before the very meeting at which I moved the resolution in question. Yet I moved it because there is nothing immoral in asking for General Dyer's prosecution. The country has the right to demand it. The Congress Sub-committee has advised that waiver of that right can only do good to India. I thought therefore that I had my position quite clear, namely that I still opposed the idea of prosecution and yet I had no objection in moving the resolution that involved prosecution because it was not bad or harmful *per se.*

I admit however that during the crisis we are passing through, my moving the resolution was a dangerous experiment. For, whilst we are evolving new codes of public conduct and trying to instruct, influence or lead the masses, it is not safe to do anything that is likely to confuse the mass mind or to appear to be "truckling to the multitude". I believe that at the present moment it is better to be "dubbed" obstinate and autocratic than even to appear to be influenced by the multitude for the sake of its approbation. Those who claim to lead the masses must resolutely refuse to be led by them, if we want to avoid mob law and desire ordered progress for the country. I believe that mere protestation of one's opinion and surrender to the mass opinion is not only not enough but in matters of vital importance, leaders must *act* contrary to the mass of opinion if it does not commend itself to their reason.

Young India, 14-7-1920

30. GENERAL DYER

The Army Council has found General Dyer guilty of error of judgment and advised that he should not receive any office under the Crown. Mr. Montagu[1] has been unsparing in his criticism of General Dyer's conduct. And yet somehow or other I cannot help feeling that General Dyer is by no means the worst offender. His brutality is unmistakable. His abject and unsoldier-like cowardice is apparent in every line of his amazing defence before the Army Council. He has called an unarmed crowd of men and children—mostly holiday-makers—"a rebel army". He believes himself to be the saviour of the Punjab in that he was able to shoot down like rabbits men who were penned in an enclosure. Such a man is unworthy of being considered a soldier. There was no bravery in his action. He ran no risk. He shot without the slightest opposition and without warning. This is not an "error of judgment". It is paralysis of it in the face of fancied danger. It is proof of criminal incapacity and heartlessness. But the fury that has been spent upon General Dyer is, I am sure, largely misdirected. No doubt the shoot-ing was "frightful", the loss of innocent life deplorable. But the slow tor-ture, degradation and emasculation that followed was much worse, more calculated, malicious and soul killing, and the actors who performed the deeds deserve greater condemnation than General Dyer for the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. The latter merely destroyed a few bodies but the others tried to kill the soul of a nation. Who ever talks of Colonel Frank Johnson[2] who was by far the worst offender? He terrorized guiltless Lahore, and by his merciless orders set the tone to the whole of the martial law officers. But what I am concerned with is not even Colonel Johnson. The first business of the people of the Punjab and of India is to rid the service of Colonel O'Brien, Mr. Bosworth Smith, Rai Shri Ram and Mr. Malik Khan. They are still retained in the service. Their guilt is as much proved as that of General Dyer. We shall have failed in our duty if the condemnation pronounced upon General Dyer produces a sense of satisfaction and the obvious duty of

[1] E. S. Montagu (1879-1924); Secretary of State for India, 1917-22; co-sponsor of Montagu-Chelmsford reforms

[2] He was in command of the Lahore Martial Law Area during April-May, 1919; *vide* "Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920

purging the administration in the Punjab is neglected. That task will not be performed by platform rhetoric or resolutions merely. Stern action is required on our part if we are to make any headway with ourselves andmake any impression upon the officials that they are not to consider themselves as masters of the people but as their trustees and servants who cannot hold office if they misbehave themselves and prove unworthy of the trust reposed in them.

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31. UNCANNY

There is something uncanny about the repatriation scheme of Sourth Africa.[1] I had never dreamt that the interim report had the slightest connection with the Indians' Relief Act of 1914[2]. I have now read the full text of that Act and had a discussion with Mr. Andrews also. Till the latter drew my attention to the fact, I had even forgotten that there was a section[3] in the Act itself regarding the granting of free passages against forfeiture of domicile. The Government *communique*[4] confirms Mr. Andrews' information.

What puzzles me is the fact that it has been found at all necessary to have an interim report in order to enforce the free passage section of the Relief Act. That section takes the place of the several sections of different Acts of the Natal legislation repealed by the Act. These sections provided for the grant of free passage to those who were under liability to pay the £3 tax, if the latter wanted to escape the payment of the tax or re-indenture. The section in question though designed to affect these people was made generally applicable. But the debate in the Assembly made perfectly clear the scope of the section. The contention at the time was that those who paid the £3 tax really did not become domiciled, and if after they ceased to pay the tax, they wanted to take advantage of the free passage section, they should forfeit the right of domicile which was at that time considered to be an equitable settlement of the very hotly debated question of the removal of a tax which had been in vogue for nearly twenty years.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to the Press on Repatriation of South African Indians", 1-7-1920.

[2] *Vide* "The Indian's Relief Act, 1914", before 30-6-1914.

[3] Section 6

[4] Reproduced in *Young India*, 14-7-1920

The interim report somewhat alters the scope of the section, but I am personally not afraid because the section requires a written application for a free passage which is a difficult thing to obtain from any Indian in Natal, and it can only happen in the case of those indentured Indians who having become free are at the present moment unable to support themselves. Not many Indians are likely to take advantage of the section and forfeit their domicile; at the same time I cannot help feeling that an illegitimate use is being attempted to be made of the section that was designed not to meet cases of poverty but to meet cases of doubtful domicile. It is against my idea of right that a Government should take advantage of distress of men and seek to deprive them of a precious right. It would be better not to issue the scheme under unequal conditions. However I derive satisfaction from the fact that in spite of the machinery that is being set up not many Indians would take the doubtful advantage of the scheme.

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32. A SUPERINTENDENT'S ORDER[1]

Mr. Gandhi writes to the Press :

The Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya has handed to me an order signed by Mr. F. A. Heron, the Superintendent of Police, Gujranwala (Punjab). The Panditji has given it to me for publication with such criticism as I could offer out of my experience of the Gujarnwala district, the whole of which I visited during my stay in the Punjab. The order is dated the 5th June, 1919. It may be recalled that Superintendent Heron it was who directed the firing when one of the railway bridges was set fire to by a Gujranwala crowd on the 14th April, 1919. Here is the order in question :

June 5, 1919

TO

THE SUB-INSPECTOR OF POLICE

It is now practically certain that martial law will be taken off in this district, from those towns upon which it is still in force, in a few days. The result of this will be that only those cases actually at the time of removal of martial law then under trial before the Martial Law Commissions will be allowed to continue to be tried under martial law.

[1] This appeared as a letter to the Press in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 15-7-1920.

All other cases whether under investigation or under trial before a Summary court will have to be dropped and can then only be tried under the ordinary law. This will mean greatly prolonging these cases as under the ordinary law cases will proceed slowly in court and there will be appeals, etc. It is therefore imperativethat all cases now ready for trial in the Summary courts should be sent up for trial immediately and that all cases still under investigation which can be completed rapidly should be completed immediately and sent up for trial. In this district so far the police have sent up comparatively few cases for trial and so there must be many persons who are guilty and against whom there is proof available who should be sent for trial without delay.

Great efforts must now be made to complete all pending cases at once. Identification parades should be held immediately and every endeavour must be made to call up new witnesses, etc., who can help in proving the guilt of the accused.

Proper attention has not so far been paid to securing the arrests of absconders. This must now be done. Constables, *sufedposhes*[1], etc. should now be sent out immediately after absconders and every effort made to capture them at once. It is not sufficient merely to send a *ruqua*[2] to some police stations for their arrests.

I need not impress upon my officers the great necessity of completing their cases at once and of getting a sufficient number of accused dealt with before martial law is removed. This district in point of view of numbers sent up for trial is far behind other districts and this naturally arouses criticisms in the efficiency and energy shown by the police here. Something can still be done to improve matters and if all my officers put their hearts into the work there is no reason why the reputation of all the investigating staff here should suffer in comparison with those who have investigated in Lahore and Amritsar, but should the numbers sent up for trial continue so small, all concerned will undoubtedly not receive the *qadar*[3] and respect they are in some instances entitled to.

F. A. HERON
SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE

Scores of witnesses in the district gave evidence before the Congress Sub-committee that during the last days of martial law,

[1] Policemen in civilian dress
[2] Letter
[3] Consideration

batches after batches of prisoners were hurried to the Summary courts so called. The presiding officers sat late at night and without even examining defence witnesses condemned absolutely innocent men to varying terms of imprisonment. One of the officers who thus conducted trials was Colonel O'Brien, and the other was Mr. Bosworth Smith. The order reproduced above adds emphasis to the evidence recorded by the Congress Committee and throws a lurid light on the way in which prosecutions took place. And it was in this summary and hasty manner that men who were absolutely innocent of any crime were harassed and imprisoned at Akalgarh, Ramanagar and other places, and still these officials retain their offices and the power of doing evil.

Young India, 14-7-1920

33. SPEECH AT JULLUNDUR

July 15, 1920

In a short Hindustani speech he explained fully what non-co-operation meant.

As far as the Mussulmans were concerned . . . all my Mohammedan friends and brothers including Ulemas who command the respect of the whole of India assured me that no believing Muslim could give any help to a Government which had disregarded the religious obligation and occupied sacred places of Islam in spite of their earnest protestations. The Punjab affair is common to both Hindus and Muslims, and even if there were no khilafat question this alone would have given sufficient ground for withholding co-operation from a Government which finally has refused to accept the very modest recommendations of the Congress Committee.

He appealed to all to accept the movement and work it for gaining complete freedom of faith and establishing the good name of the country. He requested the ladies present to take to spinning again as of yore and encourage the weavers to ply their old trade again.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 21-7-1920

34. SPEECH ON NON-CO-OPERATION, AMRITSAR[1]

July 16, 1920

Mr. Gandhi, who on rising was most enthusiastically cheered, stated, he found it impossible to express adequately the pain he felt for the Punjab wrong. He would only ask Punjab Hindus and Mussulmans never to forget that fateful day[2] of April 1919. Whilst he said he wanted to emphasize that the people were also in the wrong, even as the authorities had been, the difference being one of degree. Whilst they had committed a few pound of wrong the authorities were guilty of tons of wrong. But as long as the least amount of wrong had been done by people they should be prepared for hundreds of Jallianwalas and he would not be satisfied by them until people had not the slightest share in violence. When however the wrong was fully Government's, conditions would soon be changed. He would then ask the whole people to stand free and

have nothing to do with a Government that outrages their sense of self-respect and honour. Speaking of the Punjab, Mr. Gandhi said he could not but confess to a sense of feeling that, however noted the Punjabis were for their bravery, they had not played well their part in April last. They were terrified, their spirit was broken. He had not the slightest doubt about this. For how else could they consent to such inhumanities as crawling like reptiles rubbing their noses against the ground.[3] How, if they had any sense of self-respect, if they felt that they were men, could they thus consent to be pulled down from man's state. If they had a sense of their manhood, of their self-respect and honour they should have willingly faced death rather than tamely accept such dishonours. But he was not there to cavil at the Punjab. His mortal frame was made of the same stuff as that of Punjabis. He was not sure that his spirit would remain unbroken under similar circumstances. He would only pray that he should never submit to such indignities even if he was faced with death as the only alternative. They were looking forward to the Hunter Committee[4] to end the scandal of these indignities by meeting out proper punishment to the miscreants, but their

[1] At Anjuman Park under the auspices of the local Khilafat Committee, Shaukat Ali and Dr. Kitchlew being the other speakers

[2] April 13, the day of firing at Jallianwala Bagh

[3] The reference is to the "crawling" order issued by Gen. Dyer on April 20, 1919.

[4] Set up by the Government of India on October 14, 1919, to investigate the April disturbances in the provinces of Bombay, Delhi and the Punjab. The Committee presented its report on March 8 and it was published on May 28, 1920

hopes were in vain and the Punjab wrong was now added to the khilafat wrong. He was sure that they could not get these wrongs righted by an appeal to passions. They could only get them righted by steps coolly and deliberately considered. One sovereign step was non-co-operation. He then explained to them the different stages of non-co-operation and said that if the first of August passed off as a peaceful day of general protest all over India they would be laying a sure foundation of success. In case of violence the movement would automatically come to a standstill. He would most earnestly appeal to them to act truthfully and bravely as the true soldier who prides himself on nobly laying down his life. It is possible, added Mr. Gandhi, many there assembled and many Mussulmans in India for that matter did not readily know what a grave affront had been put upon Islam by the Turkish peace terms. They would have to be shown that by a careful propaganda which was a matter of some time. But as to the scandal of the Punjab, as to the indignities offered by Mr. Bosworth Smith, by Col. O'Brien, by Shri Ram and Malik Khan there was no question of ignorance. They were common ground between all parties and personally known to most of them, and so long as these officers continued to be in the Punjab how could they call themselves men, how could they claim to have any sense of self-respect or honour ? They may know nothing about the khilafat question, but the Jallianwala Bagh was engraved ineffaceably in their hearts.

At this stage Mr. Gandhi asked the audience if Mr. Ghulam Jalani[1] was present there—Mr. Ghulam Jalani, the brutalities inflicted on whom no one could forget. The speaker was told that he had gone on *hijrat*[2]. Mr. Gandhi said he had honourably left the country, but he had also left his brethren responsible to God to vindicate his honour. Would, then, Punjab do nothing to vindicate that honour? The only remedy before them was non-co-operation. That was the most natural remedy. It was impossible to expect men to co-operate with Government by sitting in its councils and law-courts. How, he was often asked, would they be to maintain themselves if they gave up service under Government, if they gave up their callings which were their only means of livelihood? The speaker was sure that so long as God had given them hands and feet they could surely trust the giver of those hands and feet to hold them. He was not prepared to believe that the whole of Muslim India was prepared for general *hijrat,* but he was confident that they could offer non-co-operation and that they must. They should for ever bear the fact in mind that without this co-operation the machinery of Government would not go on for a single day.

[1] Imam and a deed-writer who took part in organizing the *Ramnavami* festival. He was arrested on April 16, 1919, and was badly tortured; *vide* "Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.

[2] Self-imposed exile, from the Prophet's flight from Mecca to Medina, 622 A.D.

He explained to them the importance of the observance of the first of August and exhorted them to observe the day in a dignified and in a peaceful manner. He was not prepared to discuss the question of the boycott of councils, as, he said, he was not prepared to create a breach between the people and the leaders. He would leave the people to local leaders. As for himself he had not the slightest doubt that the boycott of councils was an essential step in non-co-operation and he would continue to preach it from his quarters in Bombay. In conclusion Mr. Gandhi emphasized what to his mind was the essence of swadeshi, viz. restricting oneself to the use of hand-woven cloth made out of hand-spun Indian cotton. The bearing of swadeshi on khilafat lay, said the speaker, in the people being able to convince thereby the Englishmen that a nation could do without them for so essential a commodity as cloth and could be independent to that extent. The moment they were so convinced they would be prepared to stand by India in winning the justice she demanded.

A little discussion of the question arising out of the recent Peshwar incident, especially, the one as to what should be done in future for the safe passage of the *muhajarin*[1] terminated the proceedings.

The Tribune, 27-7-1920

35. SPEECH ON KHILAFAT AND NON-CO-OPERATION, LAHORE

July 17, 1920

A public meeting of the citizens of Lahore was held outside Delhi Gate on Saturday the 17th July, 1920, under the presidentship of Pandit Rambhuj Dutt.

Mr. Gandhi, who on rising to address the meeting received a tremendous ovation, speaking in Hindi, said that he would say only a few words. They were all grieved to hear what M. Zafar Ali Khan[2] had told them about the Peshawar incident. There was nothing to shed tears about. He had heard some people weeping during the speech. It they wished to settle the khilafat question, they should give up weeping. They were fighting not against one Empire but against Christendom. The Europeans were clever, skilful, shrewd and versed in the use of arms. They were also self-sacrificing. In the late War, every English family had given at least one man. He reminded them of the example of their Viceroy whose son was killed in the war, but who outwardly did not grieve even for a single day. In God's work, they ought to be self-sacrificing and they were not to weep. Even though there was bloodshed they should be patient. If they succeeded in killing a few Europeans they would gain

[1] Emigrants

[2] Editor and proprietor of *Zamindar* of Lahore; *vide* "Repression in the Punjab", 29-9-1920.

nothing. People in Europe would laugh at him if he were to go there to preach non-co-operation. But physical power was not the only thing in the world. The Europeans were skilled in warfare. In the old days if a man had a sword in hand, he would not fight unless his adversay had a similar sword in his hands. Now they had bombs, aeroplanes and firearms.

It was not courgeous to kill a few Europeans. If, on the other hand, some of them stood at a place and refused to move further at any cost, that was real courage. They were to give blood but not to take it. In this way alone would the khilafat question be settled. The speaker had consulted the Ulemas. If his hearers too believed that non-co-operation was a form of jehad they should follow it. They should give up councillorships and even posts like those of cooks, etc. The khilafat was a religious question and if they really grieved over it, they should be self-sacrificing. Regarding *hijrat*, the speaker advised them to stay in the country and bear and face all the trial. Would they die for councillorships and titles or for God?

In the Punjab, there was first the calamity which befell them the previous year and secondly, worse men than Dyer and O'Dwyer, men like O'Brien, Bosworth Smith, Shri Ram and Malik Sahib Khan were still in office. Were the people prepared to go to the council and send their children to the schools under such circumstances?

Only the deserving got justice from God. They were made to crawl because they deserved it. In Europe even a boy would refuse to do it. Could it be possible that a man who had no ticket should be shot dead? That was so because they had no power. But what kind of power? If they had the strength to suffer, all their difficulties would be solved soon.

After referring to Mr. Montagu's statement about himself and the remarks of M. Shaukat Ali[1] and Pandit Rambhuj Dutt, Mr. Gandhi said that by resorting to violence they would spoil the settlement of the khilafat question. Thousands of Jallianwala Baghs might happen but they were not to be excited. Even if it came to hanging although he did not believe Government would do so, they ought to be ready for the gallows. The speaker was not in the Punjab to render them less courageous. That man who was ready to suffer was more courageous than mere soldiers.

On the first of August they were to have total hartal and prayer but it was to be purely voluntary. A resolution was to be passed. But there were to be no processions nor meetings if the latter were prohibited. They were to obey all orders of police and Government. The speaker then detailed the four stages of non-co-operation as announced by the Central Khilafat Committee, Bombay. In the Punjab, continued Mr. Gandhi, there were more than 50 per cent Muslims and the Hindus would do their duty by the Muslims if they felt for them. Even if Hindus and Sikhs separated from them,

[1] 1873-1938; nationalist Muslim politician who along with his brother, Maulana Mahomed Ali, took a leading part in the khilafat movement

the Muslims should remember their duty to the God within. There were crores of Muslims in the Punjab. What was that which they could not do if they had courage and self-sacrifice? They could shake the whole of India. To the Hindus, the speaker said that he supported the Muslims and went about with them becuase they wished to protect the Hindus themselves. If the Hindus wished to live peacefully with the Muslims, the former should help the latter. Several people had told him that the Muslims would desert the Hindus after the khilafat question was decided. From his twenty years' experience, during which period he had been closely associated with the Muslims, he could say it was false.

He wished to protect the cows by appealing to and increasing love between Hindus and Muslims, and not as a return for support of the khilafat.

In conclusion, Mr. Gandhi referred to the necessity of learning discipline. That morning he had noticed the luggage of a passenger at the railway station being trampled under foot. That had grieved him. They should learn the value of discipline and their volunteers should maintain order on all such occasions. They ought to remain outside the railway station instead of crowding inside. He hoped on the 1st August there would be nothing like noise or disorder. They should work under the directions of their sectional leaders. In that way they would find that the Punjab and the khilafat questions are solved within six months.

Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew[1] in a brief speech thanked on behalf of the Punjab, Maulana Shaukat Ali and their Guru, Mahatma Gandhi for all that they were doing for them.

It was 12.45 a.m. when the meeting dispersed.

The Tribune, 20-7-1920

36. BOYCOTT OF COUNCILS

Steadily and surely non-co-operation is taking shape. The most important programme facing the country now is the boycott of councils. I trust that the people will stand firm and carry it out fully.

Can we ever gain anything from one whose intent is evil, who wants deliberately to do us injustice and who, we are convinced, holds the people in contempt?

I see the whole administration today as a poison-tree. How can we ever expect the *kadvi* creeper to bear sweet fruit? The important question is : Should we take our seats in the councils to offer constant opposition or boycott the elections altogether? No good fighter is ever beaten by the method of obstruction, and the British are born fighters. And what is this programme of "obstruction", after all? Making long

[1] A Congress leader of the Punjab

and stinging speeches, calling the Government names even, and refusing our vote when needed. Those who imagine that the Government can be tired out through such methods have not studied the Constitution. It can, indeed, through such harassment, be made to grant small favours but nothing substantial.

Through all our victories till now, we have hardly acheived anything really worthwhile. The drain on India's wealth continues. The dread of the military has not lessened a bit. Discrimination between whites and non-whites remains the same as ever. Duplicity has increased, rather than otherwise. Government policy shows no change for the better. Who will say that the relations between the Government and the people are growing healthier day by day?

That being so, what does it avail us if a few Indians have become judges, a few have been taken up on the executive councils, some have become members of legislatures and one Indian has been raised to the peerage? To me, all these things are mere baits. They are opium pills for keeping us slumbering. So long as justice is not done, any honour conferred by the British is, in fact, an insult. Why do we not see this very simple thing?

I am hoping for great things from the whole of India but, I believe, I have a right to expect even greater things from Gujarat. I do hope that Gujarat will make a leading contribution in this programme.

The people of Gujarat are known to be clear-headed. They are shrewd calculators. The calculations I have placed before them are simple enough. How can we walk in mud and not be defiled? While the administration remains tainted with injustice, I look upon legislatures as so much mud.

Ireland gained absolutely nothing through the policy of harassment and obstruction; and, remember, it had an able leader like Parnell to fight for it. In despair, it has now taken to the method of violence. This also, I believe, is a mistake. I have citied the instance of Ireland only to show that obstruction leads nowhere. General Botha in South Africa had to choose one of the two courses : either to enter the legislature and agitate for justice there or to boycott it completely. He chose the latter course and won. He got the constitution of his choice and became the Prime Minister of a free people.

Boycott of councils will advance the country. The people will get a good lesson in discipline and the burden of carrying on the administration will fall entirely on the Government. I am convinced

that, if only the educated people resist the bait [of the councils] and refuse, as a matter of duty, the seeming benefits the Government may offer, the latter cannot run its administration for a moment. A government always functions through the implicit consent of the people. It simply cannot function when the people oppose it outright. A government generally rules its subjects not by fear but by cajolery. The sanction of fear is there, of course, but to be used in the last resort. There is some justice, but only enough to maintain the Government in being. We get a measure of justice because justice is the best policy. We, on the other hand, demand that justice, and nothing but justice, be done though the heavens fall.

And it is to get this principle accepted that we talk of bringing about a change of heart on the part of the officials. To succeed in this we have to prove to them that we are their equals. A man can attain equality with another through physical or moral force. Equality attained by means of physical force is of the lower kind, it is the way of the beast; for the Hindu, especially, it is a policy ever to be shunned. For thousands of years past, our training has been in a different direction altogether. It is my firm belief that the British can be won over by moral force. I have, indeed, written strongly and bitterly against the injustices perpretrated by British officers but I believe, all the same, that no European nation is more amenable to the pressure of moral force than the British; and a purposeful sacrifice by way of boycott of councils is but the application of a token moral force. It is a sacrifice which is easy to make and yet very effective, since it is to be made by men who will be fit to be people's representatives.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-7-1920

37. DUTY OF WOMEN

At a meeting held under the presidentship of that good lady Mrs. Jaiji Jehangir Petit, the women of Bombay have given expression to their view on the atrocities committed in the Punjab. The meeting has served two purposes. In the first place, the women have joined the country in her suffering and understood what that suffering is. Women ought not to remain unconcerned in the face of such atrocities. They cannot afford to keep silent when events happen

which deprive women of their womanhood and men of their manhood. It is not men alone who have been humiliated in the Punjab. Women, too, have been humiliated. That arrogant officer, Mr. Bosworth Smith, left nothing undone in disgracing women in Manianwala in the Punjab. In holding the meeting, therefore, the women of Bombay have done nothing more than their duty. I hope the women of Gujarat, too, will hold similar meetings in the principal cities of the province and pass appropriate resolutions.

Women cannot disown such duties thinking that they are but weak creatures. The soul can never be described as weak; it is the body which may be so described. Even a little girl who has, and knows that she has, a soul of shining purity can stand up to an overbearing Englishman, six-and-a-half foot tall. A woman concious of her dignity as woman sheds lustre on her womanhood through soul-force. The woman who, knowing that she is weak in body, becomes weak [in mind] cannot do this. Our shastras tell us how Sita[1], Draupadi[1] and other women filled the wicked with awe. Just as the strength of an elephant's body is unavailing before the power of human intelligence, so also a man's intellectual and physical strength is quite helpless before the soul-force either of a man or a woman.

I, therefore, want the women of India not to believe themselves weak and give up their right and privilege of protecting their progeny. It is sheer ignorance to call woman weak, woman who has been the mother of mighty heroes like Hanuman[2]. Maybe she has been so called simply in order to impress upon the male his duty towards her, to tell him that, being physically the stronger, he must not be a monster and, in his pride, oppress woman who is weak, but that, on the contrary, he must do her service by protecting her and providing her with the means through which she may cultivate strength of soul.

Victims of the illusion that this is an age of sheer physical power, we feel perplexed and puzzled and wonder what the weak and miserable people of India can do. Thinking thus, even our menfolk feel themselves quite as helpless as women. If only the country realized that this is not true at all! The day the people of India come to have self-respect, they will be strong and no General Dyer will then

[1] Of the *Ramayana*, held in reverence as the ideal wife

[2] Of the *Mahabharata*, admired for her dauntless spirit

[3] A prominent character in the *Ramayana* lieutenent of Rama and God of strength

remain in the country.

How may we acquire such strength? No elaborate training is necessary. We have only to put our trust in God and stop being afraid of anybody's physical strength. The physically strong have at the most, the power of destroying our body. When we shed all fear for the safety of our body, we become lions among men. Real power, therefore, consists not in having the physical strength of a giant but in strength of mind, knowledge of the Self and freedom from the fear of death.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-7-1920

38. SWADESHI

I request readers to reflect over what I wrote about pure swadeshi.[1] The news[2] about the spinning-wheel published in today's *Navajivan* will not fail to fill every lover of swadeshi with enthusiasm.

I want to give here some more information which the women of Gujarat, especially, should ponder over.

The Hon'ble Panditji[3], giving the information, in the course of an appeal for donations for the Hindu University, that it had been decided to work there for promoting the cause of swadeshi and to install looms, said that even some ranis in Indian States had agreed to learn spinning. He declared, amidst cheers, that his mind would not be at peace till the ruling princes in the country started weaving.

Why did Panditji say this? He knows that India's economic freedom depends on the spinning-wheel and the hand-loom, and that, without economic freedom, the very hope of freedom of any other kind is futile or, in the alternative, we should follow England in her round-about methods in order to acheive such freedom.

This same thought has induced Dr. Manekbai Bahadurji to learn spinning and she does a little of it every day. Dr. Manekbai is the wife of a former Advocate-General of Bombay, and daughter of the late

[1] *Vide* "Pure Swadeshi," 11-7-1920.

[2] About the invention of a new spinning-wheel by Kale; *vide* footnote 1, "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", before July 12, 1920. It was, however, stated later, in *Navajivan*, 10-10-1920, that the model was found unsatisfactory in some ways.

[3] Madan Mohan Malaviya

renowned Dr. Atmaram Sagun. She has been keeping indifferent health for the past few years. Even at present she is weak. She has decided [all the same] to spin every day during her spare time.

And now Atia Begum[1] and the Begum of Janjira have undertaken to learn spinning.

In the Punjab, Shrimati Saraladevi has been devoting all her time to swadeshi. She says in the her latest letter that she had been to Amritsar and set the wives of Shri Ratanchand and Bugga Chau- dhri, who are in jail, on this work, as also Ratandevi, who had cried the whole night over her husband's dead body in her lap. She has formed a committee there and opened a class to teach spinning to women. In Ludhiana, too, she called a meeting of the women and started this work. We do not know how long this work will go on, but experience teaches us that, while there remains one true worker, any work once begun never stops.

Just now people are increasingly taking to wearing cloth made from hand-spun yarn. It is necessary, at this time, that the women of Gujarat start working. They have ability enough but lack the will. To work for clothing the naked is no ignoble occupation. The scarcity of cloth in India cannot be fully overcome until women start spinning.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-7-1920

39. LETTER FROM A READER[2]

I gladly publish this letter[3]. I have heard many such objections but I have my reply to them. Who are we to point out its duty to Bengal? It will realize its duty in course of time. But may it not be that each province has its distinctive sphere of service? If Bengal has not contributed in money, it has done so in learning. What Gujarat has done does not seem surprising. Gujarat has much; it knows how to give liberally and does so. Bengal does not know giving and does not give. But is not the very fact that the Poet is in need of money

[1] Atia Begum Rahman, sister of the Begum of Janjira

[2] Kanchanlal M. Khandwala

[3] Not given here. Referring to Gandhiji's comments in "Shantiniketan", 11-7-1920, it said that the criticism of Gujarat was underserved and that Bengal never contributed to public cause outside the province.

sufficient to show that Bengal has not recognized his worth fully? Should we, on that account, refuse to help him? It is true that our appreciation of the Poet cannot be expressed in terms of money, but this does not mean, either, that we have no obligation to help him. It means, rather, that we cannot give him enough. It is my emphatic view that, after having specially invited the Poet, what Gujarat gave him was too little. The reference to a "taunt", therefore, is irrelevant. It is just because, in the past, Gujarat has often done its duty that a beggar like myself expects it to do it again on other appropriate occasions. It is not the Poet who stands begging. It is I who drew Gujarat's attention to its duty in view of the condition of Shantiniketan and after reading the account given by Mr. Andrews. As I write this reply, I learn that from Bombay Rs. 10,000 have been received for Shantiniketan. The amount was collected soon after the Poet's visit there and so the immediate need has been met. All the same, those who see reason in my appeal should not drop the idea of sending their contributions.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-7-1920

40. SPEECH ON BOYCOTT OF COUNCILS, LAHORE

July 18, 1920

A prolonged informal conference was held on July 18, 1920, when the question of the boycott of reformed councils as a protest against the Punjab martial law atrocities and khilafat settlement was discussed.

Mr. Gandhi said with Indians, non-participation in the councils was a matter of national honour and self-respect and no self-respecting Indian could participate until martial law delinquents were punished. He said the English people were a high-souled race but unfortunately they had been weaned away from the teaching of Jesus Christ by the theories of Bentham, Darwin and other materialistic writers. If Indians wanted to be partners with Englishmen, they had got to cultivate virtues of self-respect and honour, qualities which alone appealed to Englishmen and they should not be subservient weaklings.

Incidentally, Mr. Gandhi said knowing as he did the agriculturists of his country and their love and attachment to home and homestead lands, he thought the consequences of non-payment of taxes might bring them into collision with the authorities. He did not therefore advise them to have recourse to non-payment of taxes which was the last stage in his programme.

The Hindu, 20-7-1920

41. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI[1]

[After *July 18, 1920*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I am simply in love with the spinning-wheel and with Kale. You too, should keep thinking about this, and this alone, all the time. You may now entrust the making of the block of the spinning-wheel and of Kale's photograph to Anandanand. Get to know him personally, too. Collect some facts about Kale's life. What have been his studies? Take out the patent of the spinning-wheel on your name. If Kale agrees, name the spinning-wheel "Gangabai Spinning-wheel". He wants it to be named after himself. If that is still his wish, name it accordingly. Inscribe the name and other particulars on the spinning-wheel in Devnagari and Urdu scripts. Do not delay the application for the patent. The Trust has not gone out of my mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 5793. Courtesy : Radhabehn Choudhri

42. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Thursday [After *July 18, 1920*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

The more I think about the spinning-wheel, the more I fall in love with Kale's handiwork. Take care of his health, and also get from him [designs for] machines to prepare slivers, etc.

Inform Chhotalal that Vitthaldas will soon ask for all the khadi to be sent to him. Keep back the samples in which the warp and the woof are both of hand-spun yarn.

Attend to Ramjibhai. He is a fine man. Keep these 18 rupees with you and credit the sum to his account. Send him yarn against it and ask him to weave pieces of greater width. He will do so. We should now have khadi of such width, in which both the warp and the woof are of hand-yarn. If you do not get spinning done in

[1] This and the letter which follows were probably written some time after the announcement about the spinning-wheel in *Navajivan*, 18-7-1920; *vide* footnote 2, "Swadeshi", 18-7-1920.

Ahmedabad, the expenses on the carder will be wasted. Be quick about this.

The Trust is in my mind. I don't keep idle for a single minute, but I find myself helpless. This whole day I have been writing for *Young India*. I am now tired. I will finish what remains, though. Look after Ba.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 5794. Courtesy : Radhabehn Choudhri

43. SPEECH AT RAWALPINDI[1]

July 19, 1920

If the Hindus understand that the seven crore Muslims are their fellow-countrymen and that they will not be able to live at enmity with them, they will see that it is their greatest duty to live with the Muslims and die with them. I do not want clapping of hands, I do not want big gatherings, I ask for action. If the Hindus, forgetting their duty, do not join in making sacrifices, I shall tell them that some day even their religion will be in peril just as Islam is today. Ministers of the Allied nations in Europe think that they can drive away the Muslims from Europe; likewise, they may want to enslave the Hindus. It behoves us, for the freedom of India, to stand by our Muslim friends so long as, loyal to their faith and religion, they are ready to make sacrifices. . . .

I have known Muslims for the last 30 years. I honour my Muslim friends who are capable of acting with courage, of being brave. I have also observed, however, that they have often done mighty deeds in the heat of anger, and that, when the anger subsides, their strength vanishes. If we are to make sacrifices in this struggle, we must match the efficiency of the Empire which we are fighting. The soldiers forget their anger and fight with discipline, with intelligence and courage. If you want to stand against them, you should be intelligent and cultivate courage and discipline. You will not succeed if, in anger, you fail to obey the orders of your leader. Anger has come in the way of secur- ing justice in many a cause. God dispenses justice only to those who possess resourcefulness, courage and the ability to work in the right way and are free from anger. In

[1] This and similar items which follow are extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour.

Rawalpindi, Hindus and Muslims are very strong. They have the strength, too, for quarrels [among themselves]. I request them to acquire the strength to make sacrifices. The sacrifice, I repeat, is not of the kind involved in drawing the sword. Muslims are brave at it. I compliment them on this, but I should like to make them see that, if they would have the strength to employ the sword, they must also have the strength to give up their life. The Punjabis know how to draw the sword, but I call their sword mercenary. One cannot intimidate anybody with such a sword. Your sword is unavailing against anyone who can employ his more skilfully than you, and the moment you lose your grip over the sword you stand helpless. I have found a way by which you can fight while keeping your swords sheathed. It seems to me that you will face defeat if you use your swords; not only that, but your swords will be turned against you people, men and women alike. If you want to understand the beauty of non-co-operation, follow my advice. I do not claim to know the holy Koran, but your own Ulemas say that non-co-opertion is a strong form of jehad. One may have to die whether drawing the sword or employing non-co-operation. Why, then, should you not sacrifice yourselves by adopting non-co-operation which does not involve the taking of another's life?

I have heard that in Peshawar, people have got excited, are boiling over, because of the outrage on the *muhajarin.* I think the latter were not at fault; it is the British soldiers who were to blame. But even in the face of such misdeeds, we shall have to have patience, bow our heads. If you resolve that rivers of blood may flow that you will not forsake manliness, will not be provoked and will continue courageously, making sacrifices, your success is assured. . . .

Real non-co-operation will be possible if you understand the principle that it consists in breaking off our ties with the Government. . . .

If such persons [title-holders] do not have the requisite strength and sincerity, I shall leave aside highly-placed officials and tell others, even the butlers, that to cook for Government servants is tantamount to helping this tyrannical Government in its tyranny. . . .

I shall ask the soldiers to leave the army but not to turn their arms subsequently against the enemy. I ask them, rather to be- come soldiers without swords, like me. I have nothing by way of physical strength; but nobody, I think, can make me do anything against my will. By and by I will also ask the peasants not to pay revenue, but I

tell both the soldiers and the peasants to take no step without instructions. The beauty of our struggle lies in the descipline it requires, and so I shall ask our unarmed, swordless army not to take up their weapons without orders. They will get their orders at the opportune moment. But so long as we are not sure that we can carry the whole of India with us, we will not ask the soldiers or the peasants to do anything. . . .

Why do these people join the army? For money. The money which robs us of our humanity is so much dust. Have you forgotten the black deeds of Bosworth Smith, Johnson, Shri Ram and others? Have you forgotten the crawling on your stomach? I entreat you not to allow yourselves to yield to the temptation of enlisting in the army. Earn your bread by toil, and tell them plainly that you can supply no recruits. Just think of the tremendous effect that will be produced if the Punjab declares this. Which other part has supplied as many recruits as the Punjab has? If the Punjab now refuses to supply any more, let us see who can get them from elsewhere. .

I have also been a soldier of the Government, but the time has now come for me to tell it that the kingdom of God is a thousand times dearer to us than its Empire. In that kingdom, we shall be able to preserve our religion, whereas the Empire is founded on injustice and maintains itself by disobeying God. We cannot be loyal to it.

The Punjab was humiliated under martial law, it lost its honour. To be even with the Government for that, tell it that you want to remain its loyal subjects, but that you can do so only if it mends its ways and does justice to the province. Tell it that, till then, you will have no love for it, will have nothing to do with it. . . .

Montagu has said that I have served the country in the past but that now I have lost my head and may have to be arrested, if necessary. I ask you not to lose your balance of mind if they arrest me. You went mad for the sake of Kitchlew. For Satyapal[1], too, you lost your head, set fire to houses, and killed innocent people. If you love me, you should keep your patience, should they arrest both of us, even if they hang us on the gallows. I know, my heart tells me, that if I were a Prime Minister and were opposed by any person whom I believed to be a mad Gandhi, I would certainly send such a Gandhi to the Andamans. Montagu thinks I am mad; if he believes this honestly

[1] Medical practitioner and Congress leader of the Punjab; deported on April 10, 1919

and arrests me, where is the cause for anger? If you do not consider me mad, listen to what I say, do what I have asked you to do and go to jail. Where a tyrant reigns, a prison is a palace and a palace a prison. If you have learnt this equation of prison and palace, do as I tell you. If you believe that what I am telling you is only what God tells me through my inner voice, then give me the assurance, I beg you, that you will restrain your passion and will not boil over even if they sentence me. Proclaim to the Government : "You may hang us on the gallows, you may send us to prison, but you will get no co-operation from us. You will get it in jail or on the gallows, but not in the regiments of the army. You will not get it in legislatures or any departments of Government service.". . .

No bodily strength or learning is required for this training, nor is it necessary to have a body like that of Shaukat Ali. What is required is just the understanding of one principle, and patience. I pray to God that He may fill you with inspiration, grant you strength, so that India may take up this work, forgetting all else. If they succeed in this, Hindus and Muslims will become one another's slaves and will be able to command the world to desist from treachery and injustice.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-8-1920

44. SPEECH AT MUNCIPAL GARDENS, GUJARKHAN[1]

July 20, 1920

Mahatma Gandhi rose amidst loud cheers and spoke on unity amongst Hindus, Muhammadans and Sikhs on the khilafat question, which he said, was the only way of regaining the sacred places of the Mussulmans from the hands of the non-Muslims. To attain this object sacrifices would have to be made. The Kacha Garhi incident[2] was an example. He enjoined on the audience not to use any sort of violence towards any Englishman. This was not the way to success, nor were they able to oppose the Govern-ment in the manner. Their only weapon lay in the unity of Hindus and Mohammedans. If they possessed genuine unity and had firmnes of mind, they should tell the Government that as long as khilafat question was not decided to the satsifaction of the Muslims they would keep aloof from the Government. The speaker went on to say that, as already announced by him, the 1st of August should be observed as a day of fasting and hartal, and prayers should be offered in the mosques

[1] At a public meeting

[2] *Vide* "*Hijrat* and Its Meaning", 21-7-1920.

and temples. The speaker expressed his determination to sympathize with the Muhammadans until such time as the khilafat question was decided in their favour. The Muhammadans were sometimes found to give way to anger and to the use of their swords. This was not needed at the present juncture and was likely to do more harm than good. He next dwelt on non-co-operation with Government, which, he said, should begin on the 1st of August. Government should be definitely told on the 1st of August that since the khilafat question had not been decided in their favour they were no longer prepared to remain faithful. Titles and honorary posts should be given up. Pleaders should cease to practise, as it was better to live on manual labour than to practise in the courts of this Government. *Khansamans*[1], too, should give up their employment, as one who serves oppressors partakes in the oppression exericsed by them. The councils should also be avoided. If this failed, the speaker would go to the soldiers and tell them that they should not serve a Government regardless of their religious sentiments. If this too failed, he would go to the peasants and ask them not to pay any land revenue to Government. This however, would be resorted to only when he was satisfied of the unity between them.

Mr. Gandhi went on to say that Mr. Montagu was of opinion that the speaker had done his duty, but his Deputy was of opinion that Gandhi had gone mad. The speaker said that he was firm and resolute in his determination and was not afraid of being hanged or deported. He asked the audience not to create any disturbance if he, Shaukat Ali and Dr. Kitchlew were hanged or deported, as they had done on the occasion of the deportation of Dr. Kitchlew and Satyapal last year. He was always ready to help his brethren, whether in jail or outside it. Jail was after all better than freedom under the oppressors. They should regard their own houses as jails and jails as palaces. All that was wanted was firmness of the mind. He set no store by cheering and the holding of large meetings. It was time for practical work. Mahatma Gandhi delivered his lecture while sitting and, as he was somewhat indisposed, he asked leave of the audience when his speech was finished. On this, four Campbellpore men stood up and said they had come to take him to Campbellpore. The Mahatma asked them to come to the place where he was staying.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1920, p. 1195

45. AT THE CALL OF THE COUNTRY

Dr. Sapru[2] delivered before the Khilafat Conference at Allahabad an impassioned address sympathizing with the Mussulmans in their trouble but dissuaded them from embarking on non-co-operation. He was frankly unable to suggest a substitute but was

[1] Waiters, attendants at table

[2] Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru (1875-1949); statesman and lawyer

emphatically of opinion that whether there was a substitute or not, non-co-operation was a remedy worse than the disease. He said further that Mussulmans will be taking upon their shoulders a serious responsibility, if whilst they appealed to the ignorant masses to join them, they could not appeal to the Indian judges to resign and if they did, they would not succeed.

I acknowledge the force of Dr. Sapru's last argument. At the back of Dr. Sapru's mind is the fear that non-co-operation by the ignorant people would lead to distress and chaos and would do no good. In my opinion any non-co-operation is bound to do some good. Even the Viceregal door-keeper saying, "Please Sir, I can serve the Government no longer because it has hurt my national honour," and resigning is a step mightier and more effective than the mightiest speech declaiming against the Government for its injustice.

Nevertheless it would be wrong to appeal to the door-keeper until one has appealed to the highest in the land. And as I propose, if the necessity arose, to ask the door-keepers of the Government to dissociate themselves from an unjust Government, I propose now to address an appeal to the judges and the executive councillors to join the protest that is rising from all over India against the double wrong done to India, on the khilafat and the Punjab questions. In both, national honour is involved.

I take it that these gentlemen have entered upon their high offices not for the sake of emolument, nor I hope for the sake of fame, but for the sake of serving their country. It was not for money, for, they were earning more than they do now. It must not be for fame, for, they cannot buy fame at the cost of national honour. The only consideration that can at the present moment keep them in office must be service of the country.

When the people have faith in the Government, when it represents the popular will, the judges and the executive officials possibly serve the country. But when that Government does not represent the will of the people, when it supports dishonesty and terrorism, the judges and the executive officials by retaining office become instruments of dishonesty and terrorism. And the least therefore that these holders of high offices can do is to cease to become agents of a dishonest and terrorizing Government.

For the judges the objection will be raised that they are above politics, and so they are and should be. But the doctrine is true only in

so far as the Government is on the whole for the benefit of the people and at least represents the will of the majority. Not to take part in politics means not to take sides. But when a whole country has one mind, one will, when a whole country has been denied justice, it is no longer a question of party politics, it is a matter of life and death. It then becomes the duty of every citizen to refuse to serve a Government which misbehaves and flouts national wish. The judges are at that moment bound to follow the nation if they are ultimately its servants.

There remains another argument to be examined. It applies to both the judges and the members of the executive. It will be urged that my appeal could only be meant for the Indians and what good can it do by Indians renouncing offices which have been won for the nation by hard struggle. I wish that I could make an effective appeal to the English as well as the Indians. But I confess that I have written with the mental reservation that the appeal is addressed only to the Indians. I must therefore examine the argument just stated. Whilst it is true that these offices have been secured after a prolonged struggle, they are of use not because of the struggle but because they are intended to serve the nation. The moment they cease to possess that quality, they become useless and as in the present case, harmful, no matter how hard earned and therefore valuable they may have been at the outset.

I would submit too to our distinguished countrymen who occupy high offices that their giving up their offices will bring the struggle to a speedy end and would probably obviate the danger attendant upon the masses being called upon to signify their disapproval by withdrawing co-operation. If the title-holders gave up their titles, if the holders of honorary offices gave up their appointments and if the high officials gave up their posts and the would-be councillors boycotted the councils, the Government would quickly come to its sense and give effect to the people's will. For the alternative before the Government then would be nothing but despotic rule pure and simple. That would probably mean military dictatorship. The world's opinion had advanced so far that Britain dare not contemplate such dictatorship with equanimity. Thetaking of the steps suggested by me will constitute the peacefullest revolution the world has ever seen. Once the infallibility of non-co-operation is realized, there is an end to all bloodshed and violence in any shape or form.

Undoubtedly a cause must be grave to warrant the drastic method of national non-co-operation. I do say that the affront such as has been put upon Islam cannot be repeated for a century. Islam must rise now or "be fallen" if not for ever, certainly for a century. And I cannot imagine a graver wrong than the massacre of Jallianwala and the barbarity that followed it, the whitewash by the Hunter Committee, the dispatch[1] of the Government of India. Mr. Montagu's letter[2] upholding the Viceroy and the then Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, the refusal to remove officials who made of the lives of the Punjabis "a hell" during the martial law period. These acts constitute a complete series of continuing wrongs against India which if India has any sense of honour, she must right at the sacrifice of all the material wealth she possesses. If she does not, she will have bartered her soul for a "mess of pottage"

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46. THE MUSIC OF THE SPINNING-WHEEL

Slowly but surely the music of perhaps the most ancient machine of India is once more permeating society. Pandit Malaviyaji has stated that he is not going to be satisfied until the ranis and the maharanis of India spin yarn for the nation, and the ranas and the maharanas sit behind the handlooms and weave cloth for the nation. They have the example of Aurangzeb[3] who made his own caps. A greater emperor—Kabir[4]—was himself a weaver and has immortalized the art in his poems. The queens of Europe before Europe was caught in Satan's trap, spun yarn and considered it a noble calling. The very words, spinster and wife, prove the ancient dignity of the art of spinning and weaving. "When Adam delved and Eve span, who was then a gentleman" also reminds one of the same fact. Well may Panditji hope to persuade the royalty of India to return to the ancient calling of this sacred land of ours. Not on theclatter of arms depends the revival of her prosperity and true indepen-dence. It depends most largely upon reintroduction, in every home, of the music of the

[1] *Vide*, "Government of India Despatch on Hunter Committee Report", 3-5-1920.

[2] *Vide*, "Montagu's Reply to Government of India Despatch", 26-5-1920.

[3] 1618-1707; Mogul Emperor of India; noted for his austerity

[4] ystic-poet and saint of medieval India; disciple of Ramananda

spinning-wheel. It gives sweeter music and is more profitable than the execrable harmonium, concertina and the accordion.

Whilst Panditji is endeavouring in his inimitably suave manner to persuade the Indian royalty to take up the spinning-wheel, Shrimati Saraladevi Chaudhrani, who is herself a member of the Indian nobility, has learnt the art and has thrown herself heart and soul into the movement. From all the accounts received from her and others, swadeshi has become a passion with her. She says she feels uncomfortable in her muslin saris and is content to wear her khaddar saris even in the hot weather. Her khaddar saris continue to preach true swadeshi more eloquently than her tongue. She had spoken to audiences in Amritsar, Ludhiana and elsewhere and has succeeded in enlisting the services, for her spinning committee at Amritsar, of Mrs. Ratanchand and Bugga Chaudhri and the famous Ratandevi who during the frightful night of the 13th April despite the curfew order of General Dyer sat, all alone in the midst of the hundreds of the dead and dying, with her dead husband's cold head in her lap. I venture to tender my congratulations to these ladies. May they find solace in the music of the spinning-wheel and in the thought that they are doing national work. I hope that the other ladies of Amritsar will help Saraladevi in her efforts and that the men of Amritsar will realize their own duty in the matter.

In Bombay the readers are aware that ladies of noted families have already taken up spinning. Their ranks have been joined by Dr. Mrs. Manekbai Bahadurji who has already learnt the art and who is now trying to introduce it in the Sevasadan[1]. Her Highness the Begum Saheba of Janjira and her sister Mrs. Atia Begum Rahman have also undertaken to learn the art. I trust that these good ladies will, having learnt spinning, religiously contribute to the nation their daily quota of yarn.

I know that there are friends who laugh at this attempt to revive this great art. They remind me that in these days of mills, sewing machines or typewriters, only a lunatic can hope to succeed in reviving the rusticated spinning-wheel. These friends forget that the needle has not yet given place to the sewing machine nor has the hand lost its cunning in spite of the typewriter. There is not the slightest reason why the spinning-wheel may not coexist with the spinning

[1] A social service institution, founded by Dayaram Gidumal (1857-1939) to provide training and work for women

mills even as the domestic kitchen coexists with the hotels. Indeed typewriters and sewing machines may go, but the needle and the reed pen will survive. The mills may suffer destruction. The spinning-wheel is a national necessity. I would ask sceptics to go to the many poor homes where the spinning-wheel is again supplementing their slender resources and ask the inmates whether the spinning-wheel has not brought joy to their homes.

Thank God, the reward issued by Mr. Revashanker Jagjiwan bids fare to bear fruit. In a short time India will possess a renovated spinning-wheel—a wonderful invention of a patient Deccan artisan. It is made out of simple materials. There is no great complication about it. It will be cheap and capable of being easily mended. It will give more yarn than the ordinary wheel and is capable of being worked by a five-year old boy or girl. But whether the new machine proves what it claims to be or it does not, I feel convinced that the revival of hand-spinning and hand-weaving will make the largest contribution to the economic and the moral regeneration of India. The millions must have a simple industry to supplement agriculture. Spinning was the cottage industry years ago and if the millions are to be saved from starvation, they must be enabled to reintroduce spinning in their homes, and every village must repossess its own weaver.

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47. MR. ANDREWS' DIFFICULTY

Mr. Andrews whose love for India is equalled only by his love for England and whose mission in life is to serve God, i.e., humanity through India, has contributed remarkable articles to *The Bombay Chronicle* on the khilafat movement. He has not spared England, France or Italy. He has shown how Turkey has been most unjustly dealt with and how the Prime Minister's pledge has been broken. He has devoted the last article to an examination of Mr. Mahomed Ali's letter to the Sultan and has come to the conclusion that Mr. Mahomed Ali's statement of claim is at variance with the claim set forth in the latest khilafat representation to the Viceroy which he wholly approves.

Mr. Andrews and I have discussed the question as fully as it was possible. He has asked me publicly to define my own position more fully than I have done. His sole object in inviting discussion is to give strength to a cause which he holds as intrinsically just, and to

gather round it the best opinion of Europe so that the allied powers and especially England may for very shame be obliged to revise the terms.

I gladly respond to Mr. Andrews' invitation. I should clear the ground by stating that I reject any religious doctrine that does not appeal to reason and is in conflict with morality. I tolerate unreasonable religious sentiment when it is not immoral. I hold the khilafat claim to be both just and reasonable and therefore it derives greater force because it has behind it the religious sentiment of the Mussulman world.

In my opinion Mr. Mahomed Ali's statement is unexceptionable. It is no doubt clothed in diplomatic language. But I am not prepared to quarrel with the language so long as it is sound in substance.

Mr. Andrews considers that Mr. Mahomed Ali's language goes to show that he would resist Armenian independence against the Armenians and the Arabian against the Arabs. I attach no such meaning to it. What he, the whole [*sic*] Mussulmans and therefore I think also the Hindus resist is the shameless attempt of England and the other powers under cover of self-determination to emasculate and dismember Turkey. If I understand the spirit of Islam properly, it is essentially republican in the truest sense of the term. Therefore if Armenia or Arabia desired independence of Turkey they should have it. In the case of Arabia, complete Arabian independence would mean transference of the khilafat to an Arab chieftain. Arabia in that sense is a Mussulman trust, not purely Arabian. And the Arabs without ceasing to be Mussulman, could not hold Arabia against Muslim opinion. The khalifa must be the custodian of the holy places and therefore also the routes to them. He must be able to defend them against the whole world. And if an Arab chief arose who could better satisfy that test than the Sultan of Turkey, I have no doubt that he would be recognized as the khalifa.

I have thus discussed the question academically. The fact is that neither the Mussulmans nor the Hindus believe in the English ministerial word. They do not believe that the Arabs or the Armenians want complete independence of Turkey. That they want self-government is beyond doubt. Nobody disputes that claim. But nobody has ever ascertained that either the Arabs or the Armenians desire to do away with all connection, even nominal, with Turkey.

The solution of the question lies not in our academic discussion of the ideal position, it lies in an honest appointment of mixed commission of absolutely independent Indian Mussulmans and Hindus and independent Europeans to investigate the real wish of the Armenians and the Arabs and then to come to a *modus vivendi* whereby the claims of the nationality and those of Islam may be adjusted and satisfied.

It is common knowledge that Smyrna and Thrace including Adrianople have been dishonestly taken away from Turkey and that mandates have been unscrupulously established in Syria and Mesopotamia and a British nominee has been set up in Hedjaj under the protection of British guns. This is a position that is intolerable and unjust. Apart therefore from the questions of Armenia and Arabia, the dishonesty and hyprocrisy that pollute the peace terms require to be instantaneously removed. It paves the way to an equitable solution of the question of Armenian and Arabian independence which in theory no one denies and which in practice may be easily guaranteed if only the wishes of the people concerned could with any degree of certainty be ascertained.

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48. INDIANS OVERSEAS

The meeting[1] held at the Excelsior Theatre in Bombay to pass resolutions regarding East Africa and Fiji and presided over by Sir Narayan Chandavarkar was an impressive gathering. The Theatre was filled to overflowing. Mr. Andrews' speech made clear what is needed. Both the political and civil rights of Indians of East Africa are at stake. Mr. Anantani, himself an East African settler, showed in a forceful speech that the Indians were the pioneer settlers. An Indian sailor named Kane directed the celebrated Vasco da Gama to India. He added amid applause that Stanley's expedition for the search and relief of Dr. Livingstone was also fitted out by Indians. Indian workmen had built the Uganda Railway at much peril to their lives. An Indian contractor had taken the contract. Indian artisans had supplied the skill. And now their countrymen were in danger of being debarred from its use.

[1] *Vide* "Speech on Fiji Affairs, Bombay", 13-7-1920.

The uplands of East Africa have been declared a Colony and the lowlands a Protectorate. There is a sinister significance attached to the declaration. The Colonial system gives the Europeans larger powers. It will tax all the resources of the Government of India to prevent the healthy uplands from becoming a whiteman's preserve and the Indians from being relegated to the swampy lowlands.

The question of franchise will soon become a burning one. It will be suicidal to divide the electorate or to appoint Indians by nomination. There must be one general electoral roll applying the same qualifications to all the voters. This principle, as Mr. Andrews reminded the meeting, had worked well at the Cape.

The second part of the East African resolution shows the condition of our countrymen in the late German East Africa. Indian Soldiers fought there and now the position of Indians is worse than under German rule. H. H. the Aga Khan suggested that German East Africa should be administered from India. Sir Theodore Morison would have cooped up all Indians in German East Africa. The result was that both the proposals went by the board and the expected had happened. The greed of the English speculator has prevailed and he is trying to squeeze out the Indian. What will the Government of India protect? Has it the will to do so? Is not India itself being exploited? Mr. Jehangir Petit recalled the late Mr. Gokhale's views that we were not to expect a full satisfaction regarding the status of our countrymen across the seas until we had put our own house in order. Helots in our own country, how could we do better outside? Mr. Petit wants systematic and severe retaliation. In my opinion, retaliation is a double-edged weapon. It does not fail to hurt the user if it also hurts the party against whom it is used. And who is to give effect to retaliation? It is too much to expect an English Government to adopt effective retaliation against their own people. They will expostulate, they will remonstrate, but they will not go to war with their own Colonies. For the logical outcome of retaliation must mean war, if retaliation will not answer.

Let us face the facts frankly. The problem is difficult alike for Englishmen and for us. The Englishmen and Indians do not agree in the Colonies. The Englishmen do not want us where they can live. Their civilization is different from ours. The two cannot coalesce until there is mutual respect. The Englishman considers himself to belong to the ruling race. The Indian struggles to think that he does not

belong to the subject race and in the very act of thinking admits his subjection. We must then attain equality at home before we can make any real impression abroad.

This is not to say that we must not strive to do better abroad whilst we are ill at ease in our own home. We must preserve, we must help our countrymen who have settled ouside India. Only if we recognize the true situation, we and our countrymen abroad will learn to be patient and know that our chief energy must be concentrated on a betterment of our position at home. If we can raise our status here to that of equal partners not in name but in reality so that every Indian might feel it, all else mustfollow as a matter of course.

The question of Fiji is a different propostion, though it too is affected by the same considerations. There it is no longer a question of status. We simply want to know why there was martial law, why there was shooting, why were Mr. and Mrs. Manilal Doctor deported without trial and without even being heard in their defence. The Government have kept us too long waiting. We must insist on full justice being done and we must bring back as speedily as possibe all those who wish to return to the motherland.

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49. "HIJRAT" AND ITS MEANING

India is a continent. Its articulate thousands know what its inarticulate millions are doing or thinking. The Government and the educated Indians may think that the khilafat movement is merely a passing phase. The millions of Mussulmans think otherwise. The flight of the Mussulmans is growing apace. The newspapers contain paragraphs in out-of-the-way corners informing the readers that a special train containing a barrister with sixty women, forty children including twenty sucklings, all told 765, have left for Afghanistan. They are cheered *en route*. They were presented with cash, edibles and other things, and were joined by more *muhajarin* on the way. No fanatical preaching by a Shaukat Ali can make people break up and leave their homes for an unknown land. There must be an abiding faith in them. That it is better for them to leave a State which has no regard for their religious sentiment and face a beggar's life than to remain in it even though it may be in a princely manner. Nothing but pride of power can blind the Government of India to the scene that is being enacted before it.

But there is yet another side to the movement. Here are the facts as stated in the following Government *communique* dated 10th instant :

> An unfortunate affair in connection with the *muhajarin* occurred on the 8th instant at Kacha Garhi between Peshwar and Jamrud. Thefollowing are the as at present reported. Two members of a party of the *muhajarin* proceeding by train to Jamrud were detected by the British military travelling without tickets. Altercation ensued at Islamia College station, but the train proceeded to Kacha Garhi. An attempt was made to evict these *muhajarin*, whereupon the military police were attacked by a crowd of some forty *muhajarin* and the British officer who intervened was seriously wounded with a spade. A detachment of Indian troops at Kacha Garhi thereupon fired two or three shots at the *muhajarin* for making murderous assault on the British officer. One *muhajarin* was killed and one wounded and three arrested. Both the military and the police were injured. The body of the *muhajarin* was despatched to Peshawar and buried on the morning of the 9th. This incident has caused considerable excitement in Peshawar city, and the Khilafat *Hijrat* Committee are exercising restraining influence. Shops were closed on the morning of the 9th. A full enquiry has been instituted.

Now, Peshawar to Jamrud is a matter of a few miles. It was clearly the duty of the military not to attempt to pull out the ticketless *muhajarin* for the sake of a few annas. But they actually attempted force. Intervention by the rest of the party was a foregone conclusion. An altercation ensued. A British officer was attacked with a spade. Firing and a death of a *muhajarin* was the result. Has British prestige been enhanced by the episode? Why have not the Government put tactful officers in charge at the frontier, whilst a great religious emigration is in progress? The action of the military will pass from tongue to tongue throughout India and the Mussulman world around, will no doubt be unconsciously and even consciously exaggerated in the passage and the feeling bitter as it already is will grow in bitterness. The *communique* says that the Government are making further inquiry. Let us hope that it will be full and that better arrangements will be made to prevent a repetition of what appears to have been a thoughtless act on the part of the military.

And may I draw the attention of those who are opposing non-co-operation that unless they find out a substitute they should either join the non-co-operation movement or prepare to face a disorganized subterranean upheaval whose effect no one can foresee and whose spread it would be impossible to check or regulate?

Young India, 21-7-1920

50. HARTAL ON FIRST AUGUST

The Central Khilafat Committee, Bombay, has issued the following instructions :

Although every effort is being made to secure revision of the Peace Terms, it appears to be almost certain that it will not come before the first of August next. The Committee desires to mark the sacred character of the forthcoming demonstration of non-co-operation in a fitting manner. It also wishes to gauge the public feeling in the matter. The Committee, therefore, seeks the co-operation of Hindus and other non-Muslim communities in making the inauguration a complete success :

1. The Committee advises full hartal on the first of August. Mill-hands, however, are requested not to abstain from work, unless they receive permission from their employers, nor should all those abstain who are required for absolutely necessary day-to-day work, viz, hospital men, sanitary men and dock labourers.

2. The day should be devoted to prayer. All those, who can, should fast for the day.

3. Meetings should be held all over the country not excluding the smallest village at which the following resolution should be adopted with or without speeches :

THE RESOLUTION

"This meeting held at . . . of the inhabitants records its full sympathy with the movement of the Central Khilafat Committee in order to secure revision of the Turkish Peace Terms, consistently with Muslim sentiment and Islamic law and approves of non-co-operation adopted by the Central Khilafat Committee to be continued till the Peace Terms are revised. This meeting respectfully urges the Imperial Government in the interest of the Empire which they are supposed to represent to secure a just revision of the Terms which have been universally condemned as unjust and manifestly in breach of ministerial declarations." The resolution should be sent to His Excellency the Viceroy with a covering letter requesting him to forward the same to the Imperial Government. The Central Khilafat Committee should be advised of the passing of the resolution and of its despatch.

MOVEMENT NOT CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

N.B. There should be no processions. Speeches should be restrained. It is expected that meetings everywhere will be very largely attended. All police and other Governmental instructions or regulations should be strictly and scrupulously obeyed. No meetings should be held where there is any written prohibition. It cannot be too often urged that the whole success of the movement depends upon perfect peace being observed by the community and complete obedience being rendered to police instructions in connection with the movement. It should be clearly understood that this is not a movement of civil disobedience. What should be done when unreasonable orders are issued interfering with the liberty of the subject will be considered on the merits by the Committee.

RENOUNCE TITLES

It is expected that all title-holders, Honorary Magistrates, Justices of Peace, Members of the Legislative Councils, who feel about this important question affecting the well-being of millions of Muslims, and who are in sympathy with the movement, will surrender their titles or honorary posts on this day.

[M. K. GANDHI
ABUL KALAM AZAD[1]
SHAUKAT ALI
AHMED HAJI SIDDICK KHATRI
SAIFUDDIN KITCHLEW
FAZUL-UL-HASSAN HASRAT MOHANI[2]
MAHOMED ALI
MEMBERS,
NON-CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE,
MOUNT ROAD,
MAZAGON, BOMBAY][3]

Young India, 21-7-1920

[1] 1889-1958; Congress leader and scholar of Koranic theology; twice elected presi-dent of the Indian National Congress; Education Minister, Government of India

[2] A leader of the khilafat movement who insisted on the boycott of British goods and was Gandhiji's chief opponent at the Khilafat Conference held on November 24, 1919

[3] As in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 22-7-1920

51. SPEECH AT IDGAH, KARACHI

July 22, 1920

The caliphate meeting at Karachi was held on the 22nd July at the Idgah, with Professor Vaswani[1] as president. The following spoke : Professor Vaswani, Gandhi, Dr. Kitchlew, Shaukat Ali and Lokamal Chellaram Seth of Karachi. Vaswani opened the proceedings and was followed by Gandhi, who, feeling unwell, spoke sitting down.

Before coming to the reasons of my visit to Karachi, I wish to refer to the scene at the railway station. We were to arrive this morning, but owing to an unfortunate railway accident and subsequent blocking of the line, we did not arrive till 9 p.m. The Karachi City station was overcrowded; many were in the sheds and many were whistling. What impression did I get from this? I realized your affection for me, but affection does not mean obstructing the platform and preventing me, the one you love, getting out. This is the result of lack of education and knowledge. What is the use of volunteers if they are unable to control crowds and do not obey the orders of their officers? Work cannot proceed under these circumstances. The railway station incident being finished, I bring to your notice the fact that our Muhammadan brothers are suffering for the caliphate. The British Parliament and the Viceroy have forgotten their pledges. I ask all Hindus to help Muhammadans in this time of trouble. If this is not done then the Hindus must bear in mind that slavery will be at the door of not only seven crores of Muhammadans but at the door of twenty-two crores of Hindus also. We have held meetings, delivered speeches, passed resolutions, and sent deputations to request that the feelings of Muhammadans be respected. Nothing has resulted from this. Turkey has been forced to face difficulties and hardships. To obtain a decision on the caliphate question, you will have to give your own blood. What do you understand by giving blood? It does not mean that you should kill the British in whose hands the caliphate decision is, but that you should be ready silently to sacrifice your own lives. To attain this, manly power is necessary. What is manly power? The power full of spiritual strength. What is spiritual strength? To become a *khatri*. What is a *khatri*? A sepoy. We

[1] T. L. Vaswani (1879); sage from Sind; author and founder of Mira educational institutions, Poona

do not want to become Vaswanis or professors, but soldiers with spiritual power; soldiers who stand their ground and do not run away. I want you all to be soldiers with such force of will that you will stand in your place and never retire. All pressure should be firmly but silently opposed. The killing of others, burning of Government buildings, is not bravery. Government buildings are as your own houses. The shedding of your own blood is true bravery. My brother, Shaukat Ali, says that he comes of a martial family. His father and grandfather and he himself is [*sic*] a soldier, but I am ready to pit my soldiers against theirs. One lakh of British govern 30 crores of Indians. If you prove this manly power, you can free the motherland. This is necessary to obtain (1) freedom for the motherland, (2) justice for the oppression of the Punjab and (3) revision of the caliphate decisions. If you have no spirit then you are weaker than women. If you have it, make use of it and you will be able to secure these three things; otherwise it means slavery for ever. By shedding English blood, the caliphate agitation will never succeed. We cannot oppose them. They have arms, aeroplanes and machine-guns. If you have the spirit then non-co-operation can be properly carried out. Hindus should not think that Mussulmans will afterwards oppose them. Islam is a pure religion and will never mislead Hindus. Non-co-operation is a weapon above all others. The only way of meeting the unjust terms of such a Government is by non-co-operation. Non-co-operation begins from the 1st of August, and it is the duty of every Indian, man, woman and child, to make it successful. Shops should be closed, prayers offered in the mosques and temples and every man should fast. Huge meetings should be organized; not meetings like this. No force should be used.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1920, p. 1107

52. TELEGRAM TO GHULAM RASOOL[1]

HYDERABAD (SIND)
[*July 23, 1920*][2]

GHULAM RASOOL
KHILAFAT
MULTAN

FIND IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO ATTEND ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY GO AHMEDABAD IMMEDIATELY HOPE VISIT MULTAN LATER PRAY FORGIVE SHAUKAT ALI, KITCHLEW LEAVING TONIGHT REACHING THERE TOMORROW FIVE EVENING.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1920, p. 1135

53. TELEGRAM TO SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI

HYDERABAD (SIND)
[*July 23, 1920*][3]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SABARMATI

CANCEL PRECEDING WIRE ACCOMPANYING PANDITJI SARALADEVI REACHING THERE MONDAY NIGHT.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1920, p. 1135

[1] An identical telegram was sent to Kewal Kishin, secretary, Congress, Multan.

[2] Intercepted by the censor on this date

54. TELEGRAM TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

HYDERABAD (SIND)
[*July 23, 1920*][1]

SHANKERLAL BANKER[2]
CHAUPATI
BOMBAY

LEAVING TOMORROW FOR AHMEDABAD WITH JAWAHARLAL[3] WIRING MOTILAL NEHRU PUNJAB WILL LIKELY ACCEPT NON-CO-OPERATION.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1920, p. 1135

55. SPEECH AT KHILAFAT CONFERENCE, HYDERABAD (SIND)

July 23, 1920

Gandhi advised 23 crores of Hindus to help 7 crores of Muslims as the latter's religion was in danger. Union between them should exist. No physical assistance or power would help but soul-power. They would live faithful to a Government only when religion is not endangered. Government had more physical power and a heavier sword. They must not assist a tyrannical Government.

He advocated non-co-operation and explained it. He knew Moslems would be violent and use the sword; but General Dyer had proved he could be more violent and use a heavier sword. He advocated unconditional sacrifice, when Government with guns and aeroplanes would be helpless. The Secretary of State had said that he, Gandhi, had become a great fool and would not have the freedom he had last year but he did not feel free. The khilafat and Punjab disturbances made him feel in prison. He preferred to die for Mussulmans, and if he was sent to the gallows, they should congratulate him. Use no violence, do not resist, follow non-co-operation which was to begin on August 1st. If too weak to follow non-co-operation, do *hijrat*.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1920, p. 1128

[1] Intercepted by the censor on this date

[2] Social worker and labour leader of Ahmedabad; was also associated with *The Bombay Chronicle* and Satyagraha Sabha, Bombay

[3] Nehru (1889-1964); statesman and writer; India's first Prime Minister, 1947-64

56. TELEGRAM TO AMRITLAL THAKKAR

HYDERABAD (SIND),
July 24, 1920

AMRITLAL THAKKAR[1]
FAMINE RELIEF
PURI

YOU MAY NOT LEAVE YOUR GREAT WORK THERE IN JEOPARDY YOU CAN THEREFORE ONLY GO BRITISH GUIANA AFTER FINISHING FAMINE WORK.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1920, p. 1131

57. SPEECH AT SIND NATIONAL COLLEGE

July 24, 1920

The Sind National College received a visit from Mahatma Gandhi early this morning (Saturday, 24th). He was received at the gate by the staff and the students, and was shown round the various departments. Returning to the hall in company with Shrimati Saraladevi Chaudhrani he was presented with an address in Hindi.The Mahatma replied in Hindi. He said he was gratified to receive the Hindi address, as Hindi was one of the things that he had at heart and which he had been preaching from the platform and the Press. The best way of showing respect to a man, he said, was to do as he tells one to do, not to clap and cheer him. It filled his heart with great pain when he thought over the system of education that was in vogue in the country. Those who had been brought up under that system could not see its many defects and the great harm that it had done to the spirit of nationality. He himself had received his fair share of it and recognized that it had done some good, but nothing filled him with greater pain than to see his countrymen ridden by that veneer of English polish. He had lived in England long enough, and knew that no Englishman ever talked to another Englishman except in their common mother tongue. It gave him immense pain when he heard Indians talking with their brother Indians in a foreign tongue. He quoted Prof. Jadunath Sarkar[2] and Mr. Sidgwick[3] as saying that the burden of English

[1] A member of the Servants of India Society and a leading worker in the cause of depressed classes and aboriginal tribes. He was at that time the secretary of the People's Famine Relief Committee, Puri.

[2] 1870-1958; historian; author of *A Short History of Aurangzeb* and *Fall of the Mughal Empire*

over the head of the Indian student was so heavy as to crush out all original thinking. For the Sindhi student, he would advise the study of Sindhi first and that of Hindi after it. Hindi was to be the language of the whole of India, and therefore its study was incumbent on the other provinces, so that all might come together on a common platform. For these among other reasons in which he could not enter then, he was gratified to find that Hindi was being encouraged in the Sind National College.

He then passed on to the other subject that he had equally at heart viz., swadeshi. The mainstay of the people of India was agriculture. But they wanted also a subsidiary occupation to fall back upon in times of difficulty and drought. that occupation must be weaving. Indian fabrics were once the glory of the land and were sought all over the world for their fineness. That brought the wealth of the world to India and made her sons happy and contented. At the present hour this and other similar industries had fallen on evil days. It was the duty of the young men imbued with a spirit of patriotism to help in the revival of weaving. This they could do by using swadeshi cloth in preference to foreign cloth and goods, however attractive in appearance. That will give work to thousands of women. It will bring bread to an immense number of their countrymen who now could hardly make the two ends meet, and get two square meals a day. He was glad to see that carpet-weaving was being taught in the Sind National College alng with agriculture. He hoped that when he happened to visit Hyderabad next, he would find cloth-weaving being taught, too.

In conclusion, Mahatmaji expressed great pleasure at being able to see the students and the staff of the College, and his gratitude for the hearty reception that they had given him.

He was sorry that the time at his disposal was short, he could not speak as long as he would have wished. He wished the College all prosperity, and hoped that it would be largely patronized by those for whose good it was intended.

The party then left amidst shouts of "*Vandemataram*" and "*Mahatma ki jai*".

The Tribune, 29-7-1920

[3] Henry Sidgwick (1838-1900); English moral and social philosopher

58. SPEECH AT KHILAFAT CONFERENCE, HYDERABAD (SIND)

July 24, 1920

Resolution 5 moved by Haji Abdulla Haroon :

This conference accepts the non-co-operation policy of Gandhi and is prepared to follow the instructions of the Central Khilafat Committee in regard to it.

Gandhi supported it in strong terms. He explained the four stages of non-co-operation in all its aspects, enjoined on all khilafatists to put into practice all the commandments of the first stage on the 1st of August 1920. He advised hartal, fasting and convening of a meeting on that day. He enjoined union between the Hindus and Mussulmans. He explained that *hijrat* was the last stage of non-co-operation, and that those who were prepared to leave the country could also non-co-operate or else their *hijrat* was a sham, an expression of weakness.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1920, p. 1141

59. TELEGRAM TO CALIPHATE WORKERS' LEAGUE, DELHI[1]

HYDERABAD (SIND),
[On or before *July 25, 1920*][2]

YOU SHOULD NOT BREAK LAW BREACH HARMFUL.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1920, p. 1106

60. SPEECH AT CITIZENS' MEETING, HYDERABAD (SIND)

July 25, 1920

On the 25th July in a public lecture at the Citizens' Association, Hyderabad, Mahatma Gandhi recommended swadeshism as a weapon for the protection of the caliphate, as thereby the Lancashire mills will sustain great losses and consequently these influential mill-owners will enquire into the cause of the boycott of their manufactures. When they learn the true facts of the unrest, in the interest of their trade they will take steps in England towards the satisfactory settlement of the caliphate and Jallianwala affairs.

[1] Regarding the extension of the application of Seditious Meetings Act

[2] This telegram was intercepted on July 27 but Gandhiji was in Hyderabad (Sind) on July 23, 24 and 25

He went even to the extent of recommending the boycott of Indian mill textiles as they were hampering his cottage spinning industries, for the welfare of which he was so anxious. He said that all women should sit in their cottages with their spinning-wheels to earn a respectable living, and those women who resorted to mills should not be married [*sic*] as they, in many cases, lose their chastity under the influence of immoral overseers. He complained of his wife for using cloth manufactured in mills instead of entirely sticking to home-spun materials.

He said that he was taking Saraladevi all over India with him as she had better understood his swadeshi principles than his wife, though he complained that she too did not practise the use of swadeshi cloth to his entire satisfaction.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1920, p. 1143

61. POSTER ON KHILAFAT

[BOMBAY CITY,
July 26, 1920][1]

GOD IS GREAT

In the name of God the merciful and compassionate.

One who becomes the friend of the enemy of Islam he may be considered as one of them.

Third day of khilafat has come.

Come along, the field of work is before us. Give the testimony of our strength of faith.

The work of non-co-operation is open and this is the first stage of test. Keep regard and reputation of Islam, God and His Prophet and never do any such work by which weakness of faith might come to light and thereby the enemies of Islam will be overpowered.

1st August, 1920 is the beginning day of the non-co-operation movement. On that day offer prayer to God, observe fast, stop business, hold committees and promise to God that you will suffer every sort of trouble for the sake of righteousness. Renounce the titles and honorary posts. Remember this also, that disturbanees and breach of peace are not in any way profitable to you. Be aside from disturbances; but stick to the right path.

Detailed instructions are being published separately. Obtain further information from your district or provincial Khilafat

[1] As given in the source

Committee; but remember that if you step ahead don't retreat. This is the only secret of success in your life.

Publishers :

M. K. GANDHI

ABUL KALAM AZAD	SHAUKAT ALI
AHMED HAJI SIDDICK KHATRI	SAIFUDDIN KITCHLEW
FAZUL-UL-HASSAN HASRAT MOHANI	MAHOMED ALI

MEMBERS OF THE NON-CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE,

MOUNT ROAD, MAZAGON, BOMBAY

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1920, p. 1118; also N.A.I. : Home : Political : July, 1920 : No. 106 Deposit

62. MR. MONTAGU ON THE KHILAFAT AGITATION

Mr. Montagu does not like the khilafat agitation that is daily gathering force. In answer to questions put in the House of Commons, he is reported to have said that whilst he acknowledged that I had rendered distinguished services to the country in the past, he could not look upon my present attitude with equanimity and that it was not to be expected that I could now be treated as leniently as I was during the Rowlatt Act agitation. He added that he had every confidence in the central and the local Governments, that they were carefully watching the movement and that they had full power to deal with the situation.

This statement of Mr. Montagu has been regarded in some quarters as a threat. It has even been considered to be a blank cheque for the Government of India to re-establish the reign of terror if they chose. It is certainly inconsistent with his deisre to base the Government on the goodwill of the people. At the same time if the Hunter Committee's finding be true and if I was the cause of the disturbances last year, I was undoubtedly treated with exceptional leniency. I admit too that my activity this year is fraught with greater peril to the Empire as it is being conducted today than was last year's activity. Non-co-operation in itself is more harmless than civil disobedience, but in its effect it is far more dangerous for the Government than civil disobedience. Non-co-operation is intended so far to paralyse the Government, as to compel justice from it. If it is carried to the extreme point, it can bring the Government to a

standstill.

A friend who has been listening to my speeches once asked me whether I did not come under the sedition section of the Indian Penal Code. Though I had not fully considered it, I told him that very probably I did and that I could not plead "not guilty" if I was charged under it. For I must admit that I can pretend to no "affection" for the present Govern-ment. And my speeches are intended to create "disaffection" such that the people might consider it a shame to assist or co-operate with a Government that had forfeited all title to confidence, respect or support.

I draw no distinction between the Imperial and the Indian Government. The latter has accepted, on the khilafat, the policy imposed upon it by the former. And in the Punjab case the former has endorsed the policy of terrorism and emasculation of a brave people initiated by the latter. British ministers have broken their pledged word and wantonly wounded the feelings of the seventy million Mussulmans of India. Innocent men and women were insulted by the insolent officers of the Punjab Government. Their wrongs not only remain unrighted, but the very officers who so cruelly subjected them to barbarous humiliation retain office under the Government.

When at Amritsar last year I pleaded[1] with all the earnestness I could command for co-operation with the Government and for response to the wishes expressed in the Royal Proclamation, I did so because I honestly believed that a new era was about to begin, and that the old spirit of fear, distrust and consequent terrorism was about to give place to the new spirit of respect, trust and goodwill. I sincerely believed that the Mussulman sentiment would be placated and that the officers that had misbehaved during the martial law regime in the Punjab would be at least dismissed and the people would be otherwise made to feel that a Government that had always been found quick (and rightly) to punish popular excesses would not fail to punish its agents' misdeeds. But to myamazement and dismay, I have discovered that the present representatives of the Empire have become dishonest and unscrupulous. They have no regard for the wishes of the people of India and they count Indian honour as of little consequence.

I can no longer retain affection for a Government so evilly manned as it is now-a-days. And for me, it is humiliating to retain my

[1] *Vide* Speech on Reforms Resolution at Amritsar Congress", 1-1-1920

freedom and be witness to the continuing wrong. Mr. Montagu however is certainly right in threatening me with deprivation of my liberty if I persist in endangering the existence of the Government. For that must be the result if my activity bears fruit. My only regret is that inasmuch as Mr. Montagu admits my past services, he might have perceived that there must be something exceptionally bad in the Government if a well-wisher like me could no longer give his affection to it. It was simpler to insist on justice being done to the Mussulmans and to the Punjab than threaten me with punishment so that the injustice might be perpetuated. Indeed I fully expect it will be found that even in promoting disaffection towards an unjust Government I had rendered greater services to the Empire than I am already credited with.

At the present moment, however, the duty of those who approve of my activity is clear. They ought on no account to resent the deprivation of my liberty, should the Government of India deem it to be their duty to take it away. A citizen has no right to resist such restriction imposed in accordance with the laws of the State to which he belongs. Much less have those who sympathize with him. In my case there can be no question of sympathy. For I deliberately oppose the Government to the extent of trying to put its very existence in jeopardy. For my supporters, therefore, it must be a moment of joy when I am imprisoned. It means the beginning of success if only the supporters continue the policy for which I stand. If the Government arrest me, they would do so in order to stop the progress of non-co-operation which I preach.It follows that if non-co-operation continues with unabated vigour, even after my arrest the Government must imprison others or grant the people's wish in order to gain their co-operation. Any eruption of violence on the part of the people even under provocation would end in disaster. Whether therefore it is I or anyone else who is arrested during the campaign, the first condition of success is that there must be no resentment shown against it. We cannot imperil the very existence of a Government and quarrel with its attempt to save itself by punishing those who place it in danger.

Young India, 28-7-1920

63. A NOTED RESIGNATION

During the eventful tour of the khilafat party in the Punjab, I was given a copy of a letter of resignation by a sub-divisional officer[1] over the khilafat question. It is printed elsewhere in this issue. The letter shows clearly how different classes of Mussulmans are being affected by the Turkish Peace Terms. It is an unforgettable wrong that England has been primarily responsible for doing to the Mussulman world. And as time passes, the movement for compelling its undoing will gain instead of losing strength. When an official of twenty years' standing and considered to be almost indispensable decides to leave a Government in respect of great wrong to which it has been a party, it is time for it to review the act that has prompted a resignation such as Mr. Mohamed Azam has felt called upon to tender.

But my purpose in publishing the resignation is not so much to draw the Government's attention to it (for they have it already) but to congratulate Mr. Mohamed Azam and to present the public with an example worthy of copying. Mr. Mohamed Azam from a purely worldly standpoint has sacrificed a position which many would covet. From the standpoint of religion or honour, he has gained by his resignation. What are position and money at the sacrifice of one's conscience? His superior officers, be it said to their credit, have recommended it for acceptance because it has been tendered for conscience' sake. If the higher branches of the Government service were to copy Mr. Mohamed Azam's brave example, the movement might attain the goal without the lowest ranks having to give up their employment.

Mr. Mohamed Azam's is an instance of positive courage. It is always difficult to find positive courage. But I hope there is enough negative courage in India to ensure that nobody applies for the post vacated by Mr. Mohamed Azam. It is almost certain that no Mohammedan will. But I hope that Hindus will be equally staunch and testify to their Mussulman brethren that they are fully alive to the difficulty in which they find themselves and that they will not be behind in giving them their active support.

The critics may say, it will be unnecessary for any Indian to apply because it is a post which any Englishman will be glad to fill. I

[1] Of Abbotabad

do not doubt it for a moment. Only the condition is somewhat different from the ordinary when a post is voluntarily relinquished by way of protest and when no one belonging to the protestant class applies for it. The only thing needful is to cease to make of Government employment a fetish. There are many other avenues open to an honest man of ability to earn a decent livelihood. After all Government servants represent a microscopic minority of the population.

Young India, 28-7-1920

64. THE FIRST OF AUGUST

It is hardly likely that before the 1st August there will be on the part of His Majesty's ministers promise of a revision of the Peace Terms and the consequent suspension of the inauguration of non-co-operation. The first of August next will be as important an event in the history of India as was the 6th of April last year. The sixth of April marked the beginning of the end of the Rowlatt Act. No one can consider, the Rowlatt Act can possibly live in the face of the agitation that has only been suspended—never given up. It must be clear to anyone that the power that wrests justice from an unwilling Government in the matter of the Punjab and the khilafat will be the power that will secure repeal of the Rowlatt Act. And that power is the power of satyagraha whether it is known by the name of civil disobedience or non-co-operation.

Many people dread the advent of non-co-operation, because of the events of last year. They fear madness from the mob and consequent repetition of last year's reprisals almost unsurpassed in their ferocity in the history of modern times. Personally I do not mind Governmental fury as I mind mob fury. The latter is a sign of national distemper and therefore more difficult to deal with than the former which is confined to a small corporation. It is easier to oust a Government that has rendered itself unfit to govern than it is to cure unknown people in a mob of their madness. But great movements cannot be stopped altogether because a Government or a people or both go wrong. We learn to profit through our mistakes and failures. No general worth the name gives up a battle because he has suffered reverses, or which is the same thing, made mistakes. And so we must approach non-co-operation with confidence and hope. As in the past, the commencement is to be marked by fasting and prayer a sign of

the religious character of the demonstration. There should also be on that day suspension of business, and meetings to pass resolutions praying for revision of the Peace Terms and justice for the Punjab and inculcating non-co-operation until justice has been done.

The giving up of titles and honorary posts should also commence from the first of August. Doubt has been expressed as to the sufficiency of notice regarding surrender of titles and honorary posts. It is however quickly dispelled by bearing in mind that the first of August marks the commencement of the surrender of titles. It is not the only day on which surrender has to take place. Indeed I do not expect a very large response on the first day. A vigorous propaganda will have to be carried on and the message delivered to every title or post-holder and the argument presented to him proving the duty of such surrender.

But the greatest thing in this campaign of non-co-operation is to evolve order, discipline, co-operation among the people, co-ordination among the workers. Effective non-co-operation depends upon complete organization. Thousands of men who have filled meetings throughout the Punjab have convinced me that the people want to withdraw co-operation from the Government but they must know how. Most people do not understand the complicated machinery of the Government. They do not realize that every citizen silently but nonetheless certainly sustains the Government of the day in ways of which he has no knowledge. Every citizen therefore renders himself responsible for every act of his Government. And it is quite proper to support it so long as the actions of the Government are bearable. But when they hurt him and his nation, it becomes his duty to withdraw his support.

But as I have said, every citizen does not know how to do so in an orderly manner. Disorderliness comes from anger, orderliness out of intelligent resistance. The first condition therefore of real success is to ensure entire absence of violence. Violence done to persons representing the Government or to persons who do not join our ranks, i.e., the supporters of the Governement, means in every case retrogression in our case, cessation of non-co-operation and useless waste of innocent lives. Those therefore who wish to make non-co-operation a success in the quickest possible time will consider it their first duty to see that in their neighbourhood complete order is kept.

Young India, 28-7-1920

65. *MORE ABOUT THE BULLETTED "MUHAJARIN"*

Last week I dealt[1] with the *muhajarin* who was shot. During the khilafat party's tour in the Punjab I was handed a signed statement giving particulars about the incident on which the Government have issued a *communique*. As the statement purports to come from responsible parties and as it contains a version at variance with that of the *communique*, I deem it to be my duty to place it before the public and invite the Government's attention to it. If the facts set forth in the statement are true, they reflect the greatest discredit on the so-called soldiers who took wanton delight in killing a man who was endeavouring to protect the honour of women.

I understand that the N.W. Frontier Administration are holding a judicial inquiry into the matter. But the public has become so suspicious even about inquires described as judicial, that unless it is a really independent and honest inquiry, no weight will be attached to its findings. If therefore the Government do not wish to lay themselves open to the charge of having hushed up an unmanly act on the part of the British soldiers they will not dread publicity and they will invite the most trusted men to investigate the matter. No local men merely can possibly be considered sufficient to ensure impartiality.

The incident is of no small importance. General Dyer unfortunately talked of the lives and honour of English women being held sacred in India. I hope that India holds the honour and life of *every* woman dear and sacred. There is therefore the question of woman's honour involved in the incident. Then again there is the question of the Indian soldiers—having refused to fire. If it is a fact and if the refusal was due to the causes narrated in the statement, it reflects the highest credit on them. The affair again derives importance from the fact that the tragedy has occurred in connection with an emigration of a sacred character. I assure the Government that the matter is being warmly talked about among thousands of men throughout the Punjab. Fullest and swiftest inquiry is essential if they do not intend that an unverified version should be current among the masses.

I wish that the narrative reproduced by me was free from passion and rhetoric. A narrative of events gains by being free from adjectives and expression of the narrator's opinion. But perhaps it is

[1] *Vide* "*Hijrat* and Its Meaning", 21-7-1920.

too much to expect perfect narrations from inexperienced men especially when they are taken down in English by people who are indifferent translators and are often eager to interpolate their own opinions. In any case I would advise the readers to suspend judgment till they have had the Government version before them.

This incident moreover shows the necessity of the Government laying down their policy about *hijrat*. If they do not wish to prevent this peaceful and religious protest they should say so. The petty officers not knowing the Government policy may act foolishly and rashly and precipitate events in a manner not desired by the Government. A movement, which is attaining the dimensions that this bids fair to do, cannot be left to itself. An open declaration of the Government policy is most desirable for the sake of every interest.

Young India, 28-7-1920

66. TELEGRAM ON THIRD KHILAFAT DAY[1]

BOMBAY,
July 29, 1920

WE HOPE THE MADRAS PRESIDENCY WILL RESPOND FULLY ON THE 1ST OF AUGUST BY OBSERVING COMPLETE PEACE AND ORDER, COMPLETE HARTAL, OFFERING HEARTFELT PRAYER, BY ORDERLY BUT LARGE MEETINGS AND SURRENDER OF TITLES BY AS MANY AS POSSIBLE. ALL GOVERNMENT ORDERS SHOULD BE STRICTLY CARRIED OUT. IN FIRM WITHDRAWAL OF CO-OPERATION AND OBEDIENCE TO ORDERS LIES THE SOLUTION TO THE KHILAFAT QUESTION, CONSERVATION OF NATIONAL HONOUR AND PROMOTION OF HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY.

The Hindu, 30-7-1920

[1] This was sent by Gandhiji and Shaukat Ali as a message to Madras Presidency.

67. SPEECH AT BOMBAY

July 29, 1920

Before a crowded meeting of Mussulmans in Muzaffarabad at Bombay held on the 29th July, speaking on the impending non-co-operation which commenced on the 1st of August, Mr. Gandhi said the time for speeches on non-co-operation was past and the time for practise had arrived. But two things were needful for complete success, an environment free from any violence on the part of the people and a spirit of self-sacrifice. Non-co-operation, as the speaker had conceived it, was an impossibility in an atmosphere surcharged with the spirit of violence. Violence was an exhibition of anger and any such exhibition was dissipation of valuable energy. Subduing of one's anger was a storing up of national energy, which, when set free in an ordered manner, would produce astounding results. His conception of non-co-operation did not involve rapine, plunder, incendiarism and all the concomitants of mass madness. His scheme presupposed ability on their part to control all the forces of evil. If, therefore, any disorderliness was found on the part of the people which they could not control, he for one would certainly help the Government to control them. In the presence of disorder it would be for him a choice of evil, and evil though he considered the present Government to be, he would not hesitate for the time being to help the Government to control disorder. But he had faith in the people. He believed that they knew that the cause could only be won by non-violent methods. To put it at the lowest the people had not the power, even if they had the will, to resist with brute strength the unjust Governments of Europe who had, in the intoxication of their success disregarding every canon of justice dealt so cruelly by the only Islamic Power in Europe.

MATCHLESS WEAPON

In non-co-operation they had a matchless and powerful weapon. It was a sign of religious atrophy to sustain an unjust Government that supported an injustice by resorting to untruth and camouflage. So long therefore as the Government did not purge itself of the canker of injustice and untruth, it was their duty to withdraw all help from it consistently with their ability to preserve order in the social structure. The first stage of non-co-operation was, therefore, arranged so as to involve minimum of danger to public peace and minimum of sacrifice on the part of those who participated in the movement. And if they might not help an evil Government nor receive any favours from it, it followed that they must give up all titles of honour which were no longer a proud possession. Lawyers who were in reality honorary officers of the court, should cease to support courts that upheld the

prestige of an unjust Government and the people must be able to settle their disputes and quarrels by private arbitration. Similarly parents should withdraw their children from the public schools and they must evolve a system of national education or private education totally independent of the Government. An insolent Government conscious of its brute strength, might laugh at such withdrawals by the people especially as the law-courts and schools were supposed to help the people, but he had not a shadow of doubt that the moral effect of such a step could not possibly be lost even upon a Government whose conscience had become stifled by the intoxication of power.

SWADESHI

He had hesitation in accepting swadeshi as a plank in non-co-operation. To him swadeshi was as dear as life itself. But he had no desire to smuggle in swadeshi through the khilafat movement, if it could not legitimately help that movement. But conceived as non-co-operation was in a spirit of self-sacrifice, swadeshi had a legitimate place in the movement. Pure swadeshi meant sacrifice of their liking for fineries. He asked the nation to sacrifice its liking for the fineries of Europe and Japan and be satisfied with the coarse but beautiful fabrics woven on their handlooms out of yarn spun by millions of their sisters. If the nation had become really awakened to a sense of the danger to its religions and its self-respect, it could not but perceive the absolute and immediate necessity of the adoption of swadeshi in its intense form and if the people of India adopted swadeshi with the religious zeal he begged to assure them that its adoption would arm them with a new power and would produce an unmistakable impression throughout the whole world. He, therefore, expected the Mussulmans to give the lead by giving up all the fineries they were so fond of and adopt the simple cloth that could be produced by the manual labour of their sisters and brethren in their own cottages. And he hoped that the Hindus would follow suit. It was a sacrifice in which the whole nation, every man, woman and child could take part.

Young India, 4-8-1920

68. TELEGRAM ON THIRD KHILAFAT DAY[1]

BOMBAY,
July 31, 1920

THE NON-CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE HAS ISSUED THE FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS REGARDING THE THIRD KHILAFAT DAY : "THE FIRST OF AUGUST IS ON US WITH ITS GRAVE RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPORTANT CONSEQUENCES. WE BELIEVE THAT SUCCESS FOR OUR JUST CAUSE IS CERTAIN IF WE EXERCISE GREATEST SELF-RESTRAINT AND SHOW AMPLE MEASURE OF SELF-SACRIFICE. IF WE CEASE TO HELP GOVERNMENT AND CEASE TO TAKE HELF FROM IT WE MUST BE CAPABLE OF PRESERVING ORDER IN THE COUNTRY. WE SHOULD THEREFORE AVOID COLLISION WITH AUTHORITY AND THUS ALSO OCCASION FOR SUDDEN RESENTMENT, OBEY ALL ORDERS AND GOVERNMENT NOTICES. WE HOPE THERE WILL BE COMPLETE HARTAL ON SUNDAY. NO PRESSURE SHOULD BE USED AGAINST ANYONE REFUSING TO CLOSE SHOP. THE COMMITTEE ATTACHES GREATEST IMPORTANCE TO PRAYER AND FASTING FOR INWARD STRENGTH AND PURIFICATION. WE HOPE TOO THAT LARGEST MEETINGS EVER HELD WILL BE CONVENED ON SUNDAY BUT THERE SHOULD BE NO PROCESSIONS. SPECIAL EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE AND CONTINUED TO SECURE SURRENDER OF TITLES AND HONORARY POSTS AND PARENTS ARE REQUESTED TO WITHDRAW THEIR CHILDREN FROM SCHOOLS RECOGNIZED BY OR UNDER GOVERNMENT CONTROL. LAWYERS ARE REQUESTED TO SUSPEND PRACTICE. WE HAVE NO DOUBT ABOUT THE MORAL EFFECT OF THESE STEPS. WE HOPE ALSO THAT FULL SWADESHI WILL BE INAUGURATED ON SUNDAY IT ENABLES EVERY MAN, WOMAN AND CHILD TO EXHIBIT IN THEIR OWN PERSONS THE SPIRIT OF SACRIFICE. IT WILL BE AT ONCE AN EARNEST OF OUR DESIRE FOR SACRIFICE FOR THE SAKE OF OUR RELIGION AND HONOUR AND A PREPARATION FOR FURTHER SACRIFICE. AGITATION FOR SECURING COMPLETE BOYCOTT OF COUNCILS SHOULD BE CONTINUED UNABATED. FINALLY THE COMMITTEE EXPECTS MUSLIMS TO LEAD AS WELL IN PRESERVING PEACE AND ORDER AS IN SACRIFICE AND WE FEEL SURE THAT OUR HINDU BRETHREN WILL NOT FAIL TO RESPOND AND JOIN THE MUSLIMS."

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 1-8-1920; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 31-7-1920

[1] From Gandhiji and Shaukat Ali

69. OUR DUTY

August 1 is already upon us. All manner of objections are being raised against non-co-operation, the most important being that it is bound to lead to violent disturbances.

It is quite easy to save ourselves from this possible danger. There should be no difficulty at all in preserving peace if there are even a few persons at every place working towards that end. The very first require-ment of non-co-operation is to preserve peace. If we do not know how to do this, we have no right to start non-co-opertation.

Some people cite the example of the Sinn Fein movement in Ireland and say that non-co-operation and assassinations go on simulta-neously there. This is quite true, but Ireland will not get Home Rule that way. There is, moreover, an important difference between us and Ireland. We can very easily gain our object by non-violent non-co opera-tion and, if violence breaks out, non-co-operation will stop that very moment. Through the method of violence and bloodshed, the people can get nothing in big country like India; likewise, no power in the world can rule over such a vast country as ours if there is peaceful non-cooperation.

That is why our best success lies in preventing the outbreak of violence. If violence does break out, we ourselves would, and we ought to, rush immediately to the help of the Government to stop it. Breaking out of riots can only mean that we have failed to acquire control over our own people. The second objection to non-co-operation is that the people are not at all ready for it. This really means that the people have no capacity for self-sacrifice.

If we regard it as an honour to be honoured by a Government that has gone to the last limits of injustice, if we receive education in its schools and continue to practise as lawyers in its courts, how can we demonstrate that we have felt hurt by its actions?

Some others ask me what effect can be produced on the Government if a few men renounce their titles, a few others withdraw their children from schools and a handful of lawyers stop practising in lawcourts. This objection is not valid. If we think it a sin to help an unjust Governmnet or to receive any favour from it, then, whether we be few or many, it becomes our duty to give up helping it or receiving favours from it, and this is also the only straightforward way of making others in larger numbers do likewise.

No reform anywhere in the world has ever been immediately accepted by all the people. It is always a few who make a beginning and, when others see the firmness of those few, they follow in the footsteps of the latter. Often reforms make no progress because people take up the attitude that they will adopt them when others do likewise. This attitude always results in delay and does much harm sometimes. Moreover, waiting for all the others or a majority of them bespeaks our want of faith in our duty. I trust, therefore, that those who are convinced that it is their duty to stop helping the Government will begin non-co-operation forthwith, no matter whether they are few or many.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-8-1920

70. MR. MONTAGU'S THREAT

There is no need at all to get excited over the threat[1] which Mr. Montagu held out while replying to a question about the khilafat. Regarding the ultimate aim, there is no difference between the views of Mr. Montagu and of others in authority. It is the usual way of these, when they want to do something in opposition to public opinion, to leave nothing undone in putting down the people. How can we expect Mr. Montagu to be free from this mentality? The people are raising their heads against the injustices in the Punjab and about the khilafat. If they are allowed to follow their way, authority will have to yield. This they do not want to do. So it is left with no alternative but to go all out to bend the people.

If, in this situation, the people are behind me and follow my advice, what else can the Government do but arrest me?

The Government can have one of three aims in arresting me :

1. To frighten me into changing my views.
2. To separate me from the people and thus weaken public opinion.
3. By removing me from their midst, to test the people and see whether they are really agitated over the injustices.

I suppose that it cannot be their object to frighten me. The

[1] Montagu had declared in the House of Commons that "if Mr. Gandhi persisted in 'non-co-operation', it would be absolutely impossible to take the same view of his action as was taken last year".

Government will certainly want to weaken public opinion, but it is more reasonable to believe that it wants to test the people. It has a right to do so. If the people, however, stand the test and show their mettle, that very day they will win. We cannot complain against being tested in this way.

What, then, should the people do if I am arrested? The very nature of our fight requires us to be always ready for jail. My imprisonment, therefore, should be welcome to the people. At any rate, it should not make them angry. If I do things which invite imprisonment and then run away from it, or if the people feel aggrieved over my arrest, then the fault lies not with the Government but with us. In an oppressive and unjust State, a prison is the only place where a subject is really free.

I, therefore, hope that, if I am arrested, the people will go ahead with non-co-operation with still greater vigour.

Perhaps the Government would welcome the people losing their self-control. That would give it a chance to use force. Even if the Government does not want this, the result would be the same, namely, that it would subject the people to repression.

If, therefore, the people have understood the meaning of non-co-operation, they should not abandon it, even if I or any others should be arrested but show to the Government that it cannot rule the people without their consent.

But the question will naturally be asked why Mr. Montagu should be doubly guilty by taking the wrong road of repression over people. He has already one crime to his credit, of being a party to the injustice [done to India]. Repression of the people in order to perpetuate that injustice would now be the second crime. The right course would be, seeing that the people are ready to go to the length of adopting non-co-operation, to bow to public opinion and, by undoing the injustice, remove the root-cause of non-co-operation.

Mr. Montagu admits that, through my activities till now, I have rendered nothing but service to the Empire. That service naturally includes the satyagraha which I have launched on different occasions. As a matter of fact, my chief services to the Empire lie in securing redress of grievances by means of satyagraha. I am sure that what I am doing at present is my greatest service. Even this time, all I am doing is to offer satyagraha. Non-co- operation is but a branch of the big tree of satyagraha. The regret is that, regardless of this, Mr.

Montagu thinks me mistaken in my present activity. When a friend of the Empire like myself takes up the extreme weapon of non-co-operation, Mr. Montagu should have realized that the people must have been seriously aggrieved and ought to have striven hard to secure justice for us. If, then, his efforts had failed, he could have resigned. But he has chosen the wrong course. I now hope that the public will answer Mr. Montagu's threat by remaining peaceful and carrying out the non-co-operation programme.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-8-1920

71. VISIT OF THE PRINCE OF WALES

The view which I have expressed, that in our present state of feelings we cannot join in welcoming the Prince of Wales, should he pay a visit, is considered by Mr. Montagu to be a disloyal suggestion.

This is a sign of changed times. Not only o I not see any disloyalty in refusing to welcome the Prince but I consider it disloyalty towards the people to act otherwise in this difficult predicament.

The Prime Minister says that the Prince of Wales will be coming as the representative of the Crown. We know that his visit will be to demonstrate the might and glory of the Empire. To associate ourselves in the welcome will be to honour all officials, from the Viceroy downwards, including the officers of the Punjab who have brought disgrace to their administration.

A people, whose feelings have been hurt, whose wounds still remain unhealed, and whom the House of Lords, in its utter ignorance and arrogance, has hurt still more painfully by whitewashing the crime of General Dyer, how can they associate themselves in the welcome to the Prince of Wales? To do so would be to give a certificate to the bureaucracy. The latter wants the unrest among the people to be taken as peace. Even if the people have courage for nothing else and not prepared to make any other sacrifice, everybody would at least expect them to give expression to their hurt feelings by keeping away from functions arranged to welcome the Prince.

We are certainly not insulting anybody by not taking part in the welcome. There is no insult to the Prince of Wales at all, and there can be no such intention either. If anybody is insulted, it can

only be the bureaucracy, but we shall not be insulting even the bureaucracy. We merely refuse to obey it, and it is our clear duty to do this. I hope, therefore, that despite anything Mr. Montagu may say, we will not join, it is our duty not to join, in the welcome.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-8-1920

72. NOTES

LOKAMANYA'S[1] ILLNESS

The hearts of hundreds of thousands of Indians flutter with anxiety at the sad news that the Lokamanya's illness has taken a serious turn. His contribution to the national awakening, his fearless spirit of independence and his sacrifices have made him the idol of the people. To millions, his word is law. Swaraj for this country is the mission of his life. At this critical time, the people are in no condition to bear the pain of separation from him.They are, themselves, afflicted at present with a serious disease. In the diagnosis and treatment of their disease, the Lokamanya has taken a leading part. Today the people are looking up to all their leaders to have their service and guidance. Among these, the Lokamanya belongs to the first rank. So great is his optimism that he has hoped for swaraj during his own life-time. May God help him to recover, grant him a long life and make him a witness to the attainment of swaraj!

FAMINE IN ORISSA

The latest letter from Shri Amritlal Thakkar is heart-rending. I quote the following sentences from it.[2]

In another letter he writes :

> Rs. 40,000 in all have been received from Gujarat. But worse months still are ahead. Money will be needed in plenty. I earnestly request you to issue one more appeal. Not less than one-and-a-half lakhs will be required. Including contributions from all other parts, a total of Rs. 80,000 has been received till now.

[1] Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920); patriot, politician and scholar. This note was obviously written before his death.

[2] Not given here. The part quoted by Gandhiji described the near starvation conditions prevailing among the residents of Piplithana.

There is nothing I need add to this letter. The rains have been good, but we see that Orissa's suffering will not end soon. The more closely Shri Amritlal examines the situation, the more misery he finds. In this unhappy province, the suffering people have lost even the strength to cry for help in their suffering. I trust that everyone will join in the holy effort of sharing in the suffering of Orisaa.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-8-1920

73. LETTER TO VICEROY[1]

[*August 1, 1920*][2]

SIR,

It is not without a pang that I return the Kaiser-i-Hind gold medal, granted[3] to me by your predecessor[4] for my humanitarian work in South Africa, the Zulu War medal granted in South Africa for my war services as officer in charge of the Indian Volunteers Service Corps in 1906 and the Boer War medal for my services as Assistant Superintendent of the Indian Volunteer Stretcher-Bearer Corps during the Boer War of 1899. I venture to return these medals in pursuance of the scheme of non-co-operation, inaugurated today in connection with the khilafat movement. Valuable as these honours have been to me, I cannot wear them with an easy conscience so long as my Mussulman countrymen have to labour under a wrong done to their religious sentiments. Events, which have happened during the past month, have confirmed me in the opinion that the Imperial Government have acted in the khilafat matter in an unscrupulous, immoral and unjust manner and have been moving from wrong to wrong in order to defend their immorality. I can retain neither respect nor affection for such a Government. The attitude of the Imperial and Your Excellency's Governments on the Punjab question has given me an additional sense for grave dissatisfaction. I had the honour as Your Excellency is aware as one of the Congress

[1] This also appeared in *Young India*, 4-8-1920, under the caption "Renunciation of Medals".

[2] From the reference to inauguration of non-co-operation in connection with the khilafat movement on this date

[3] In 1915.

[4] Lord Hardinge

Commissioners to investigate the cause of disorder in the Punjab during April of 1919 and

it is my deliberate conviction that Sir Michael O'Dwyer was totally unfit to hold the office of Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab and that his policy was primarily responsible for infuriating the mob at Amritsar. No doubt the mob excesses were unpardonable. Incendiarism, the murder of the five innocent Englishmen and the cowardly assault on Miss Sherwood[1] were most deplorable and uncalled for but the punitive measures taken by General Dyer, Col. Frank Johnson, Col. O'Brien, Mr. Bosworth Smith, Rai Shri Ram Sud, Mr. Malik Khan and other officers were out of all proportion to the crime of the people and amounted to a wanton cruelty and inhumanity, almost unparallelled in modern times.

Yours Excellency's light-hearted treatment of the official crime, your exoneration of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Mr. Montagu's dispatch and above all the shameful ignorance of the Punjab events and the callous disregard of the feelings of the Indians betrayed by the House of Lords, have filled me with the gravest misgivings regarding the future of the Empire, have estranged me completely from the present Government and have disabled me from tendering as I have hitherto whole-heartedly tendered my loyal co-operation. In my humble opinion, the ordinary method of agitating by way of petitions, deputation and the like, is no remedy for moving to repentence a Government, so hopelessly indifferent to the welfare of its charge as the Government of India has proved to be.

In European countries, the condonation of such grievous wrongs as the khilafat and the punjab would have resulted in a bloody revolution by the people. They would have resisted at all cost the national emasculation such as the said wrongs imply. But one half of India is too weak to offer a violent resistance and the other half is unwilling to do so. I have therefore ventured to suggest a remedy of non-co-operation, which enables those who wish to dissociate themselves from the Government and which, if it is unattended by violence and undertaken in an ordered manner must compel it to retrace its steps and undo the wrongs committed. But whilst I pursue the policy of non-co-operation in so far as I can carry the people

[1] An English woman who served in the Mission School, Amritsar. She was brutally attacked on April 10, 1919, while cycling and was rescued by an Indian

with me, I shall not lose hope that you will yet see your way to do justice. I therefore respectfully ask Your Exellency to summon a conference of recognized leaders of the people and in consultation with them find a way that would placate the Mussulman and do reparation to the unhappy Punjab.

I remain,
Sir,
Your faithful servant,
M. K. GANDHI

NOTE

I understand that P.S.V.[1] will send us the K.I.H. medal for storage. No other action is needed.

JOHN WOOD[2]

N.A.I. : Foreign : Political : File No. 100 : 1921

74. LETTER TO DAYALJI

August 1, 1920

BHAISHRI DAYALJI,

I have your letter. I don't at all like the idea of a three-day hartal.[3] I can understnad a hartal for one day. If we would really show our venera-tion, my preference is for some constructive work. We should, therefore, reflect over his good qualities and try to cultivate them in ourselves. He was a man of extreme simplicity; so in memory of him we should take a vow of simplicity. We should all give up, in his name, something we hold dear. He loved courage, we should, therefore, give up every kind of fear and try to become courageous. He wanted the people to be physically strong. We should all cherish his memory and try to be so. The country was dear to him as his very life; we, too, thinking of him, should give up love of self and cultivate, day by day, in increasing measure, pure love for the country. He was devoted to learning and had a wonderful command over his mother tongue and Sanskrit; we, too, if we do not love or know our mother tongue well enough, should love and know it better. We should improve our proficiency in the mother tongue and in Sanskrit. There

[1] Private Secretary to the Viceroy
[2] Political Secretary
[3] *Vide* "Passing away of the Lokamanya", 8-8-1920.

are a good many other gifts of his which we can note. Let us cultivate as many of them as appeal to us and immortalize him. Finally, those who can do nothing else may spend anything from a pice onwards on national work.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

75. SPEECH ON KHILAFAT DAY, BOMBAY[1]

August 1, 1920

Mr. M. K. Gandhi moved the following resolution :

This meeting records its full sympathy with the movement of the Central Khilafat Committee in order to secure revision of the Turkish Peace Terms consistently with Muslim sentiment and Islamic Law, and approves of non-co-operation adopted by the Central Khilafat Committee to be continued till the Peace Terms are revised. This meeting respectfully urges the Imperial Government, in the interest of the Empire which they are supposed to represent, to secure a just revision of the Terms which have been universally condemned as unjust and manifestly in breach of ministerial declaration.

Mr. Gandhi said he read in newspapers Government and others telling him that India was not at one with him in this question of non-co-operation and that the movement of non-co-operation would end in the country's ruin. Now those who joined in the non-co-operation movement could best refute those assertions not by merely attending such meetings and passing such resolutions but by actually practising non-co-operation. The first thing they could do in this connection was to renounce all titles, medals and hoonoray posts. He would like to inquire how many of them that attended the meeting had done so. Perhaps very few of those that were present there were possessors of such titles and posts. But this did not mean that those who possessed no titles or medals themselves had no duty to perform in this connection. For it should be their duty to ask with due respect those, who did hold the titles and honorary posts, to give them up. First of all they should ask Honorary Magistrates to resign their posts; secondly, they should ask their friends to withdraw their children from Government schools and ask teachers to resign their posts. This would have the effect of showing Government that the people were

[1] At Mastanshah Tank, under the auspices of the Central Khilafat Committee; Mia Mohmed Chotani presided.

determined to do without their educational institutions. The parents could send their children to schools conducted by non-official agencies and even if they went without the sort of education that they were having at school he did not see how it could harm them so much if they did not go to school for a year or so. Thirdly, he would ask men of the legal profession to give up their practice. He entirely repudiated the suggestion that legal practitioners would be doing a public service by continuing to practise in courts of law. For he believed they would be doing a greater service to their country if they did the khilafat and other work for the public good instead. Some people had expressed a doubt if they could do altogether without going to courts of law for having their cases decided. He thought they could do without having recourse to the courts if they instituted their own *panchas*, where they could hope to get much speedier and cheaper justice. Then he would ask them not to accept any civil post in Mesopotamia for they would be acting against the interests of the khilafat if they accepted such posts under a Government which wanted to rule over a country which formed part of the Jazirat-ul-Arab, which was sacred to Islam.

Proceeding, Mr. Gandhi said this was the first thing they had to do to achieve their object. The second was a vigorous prosecution of swadeshi. This, as he had said at the Muzaffarabad Hall meeting[1], was one of the two things essential to the success of their movement. He had said then and would repeat now, that the two conditions which should be rigorously adhered to in their prosecution of non-co-operation were non-violence and swadeshi. Any violence on their part would defeat non-co-operation, and he asked them all to refrain from violence. They should refrain from anger. Then, they should be prepared to make sacrifice if they wanted their movement to succeed. They could make sacrifice by giving up among other things their predilection for fine clothes. Mr. Hasrat Mohani told him when he advocated swadeshi, that the people of northern India could not possibly do without thin clothes made out of fine-spun cotton. Now he (the speaker) could not understand this inability on the part of the people mentioned by Mr. Mohani. Twenty-five years ago the people of India could do very well with the home-spun, coarse cloth, but Manchester cloth had changed their taste and ideas. At the present stage of the industry in India, the cotton mills were not in a position to produce fine cloth and the people must be content with the coarser quality of it. The remedy for the present lay in a revival of the handloom industry. If they had handlooms in every Indian home they could spin a sufficient quantity of cotton for the indigenous weavers to weave into cloth and when these found that their countrymen were prepared to give up foreign clothes and pay good prices for good, thin cloth they would take to producing that quality of cloth. If they practised swadeshi with vigour and enthusiasm they would save crores of rupees to India. The practice of swadeshi undoubtedly involved

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Bombay", 29-7-1920.

a sacrifice on their part but they ought to be prepared to make that sacrifice. It would show to the world that they were prepared to undergo all inconveniences and suffer so long as the khilafat question was not satisfactorily settled.

In conclusion, Mr. Gandhi said the chief things essential to the success of the non-co-operation movement were, as he had pointed out, non-violence, renouncing of titles and honourary posts, and a vigorous prosecution of swadeshi. If they did this and prayed to God, their cause, being just, was bound to succeed.

Dr. Kitchlew, Mr. Shaukat Ali and others supported the resolution, which was carried.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-8-1920

76. TRIBUTE TO TILAK

[*August 2, 1920*][1]

Love of India was the breath of life with Mr. Tilak and in it he has left to us a treasure which can only increase by use. The endless proces-sion of yesterday shows the hold the great patriot had on the masses.

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-8-1920

77. SPEECH AT RECEPTION TO KHILAFAT DELEGATION, BOMBAY

August 2, 1920

To welcome Maulana Mahomed Ali and his colleagues of the Indian khilafat delegation who arrived in Bombay on Monday, a public meeting was held that night at the Mastanshah Tank. Mahatma Gandhi was voted to the chair in the absence of Mr. Chotani who was indisposed.

The proceedings began with the recitation of a hymn from the Quran. Afterwards the chairman, addressing the audience, said that he was sorry Mr. Chotani could not take part in the meeting but he hoped Mr. Chotani would soon get better and begin the work of the Khilafat Committee in right earnest as before. Continuing he said that that was a very happy day for him and them all as their brother Mahomed Ali and his collea- gues, after arduous work in connection with the khilafat question, returned to their motherland safe and sound.

He could not express what affection he harboured towards Maulana Mahomed Ali. Since he had met the Ali Brothers in Delhi in the year 1915 and later in Aligarh,

[1] From the reference to "the endless procession of yesterday", this appears to have been written on August 2.

he was much impressed, and thought that one day the two Brothers would be among the Mahomedans what Mr. Gokhale was among the Hindus, and he was glad that what he had then surmised, has come true now.

Mahatma Gandhi then requested Maulana Mahomed Ali to lay, before the audience, the account of his work in Europe, in connection with the khilafat question.

All about the Khilafat, pp. 319-23

78. LOKAMANYA[1]

Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak is no more. It is difficult to believe of him as dead. He was so much part of the people. No man of our times had the hold on the masses that Mr. Tilak had. The devotion that he commanded from thousands of his countrymen was extraordinary. He was unquestionably the idol of his people. His word was law among thousands. A giant among men has fallen. The voice of the lion is hushed.

What was the reason for his hold upon his countrymen? I think the answer is simple. His patriotism was a passion with him. He knew no religion but love of his country. He was a born democrat. He believed in the rule of majority with an intensity that fairly frightened me. But that gave him his hold. He had an iron will which he used for his country. His life was an open book. His tastes were simple. His private life was spotlessly clean. He had dedicated his wonderful talents to his country. No man preached the gospel of swaraj with the consistencyand the insistence of Lokamanya. His countrymen therefore implicitly believed in him. His courage never failed him. His optimism was irrepressible. He had hoped to see swaraj fully established during his life time. If he failed, it was not his fault. He certainly brought it nearer by many a year. It is for us, who remain behind, to put forth redoubled effort to make it a reality in the shortest possible time.

Lokamanya was an implacable foe of the bureaucracy, but this is not to say that he was a hater of Englishmen or English rule. I warn Englishmen against making the mistake of thinking that he was their enemy.

I had the privilege of listening to an impromptu, learned discourse by him, at the time of the last Calcutta Congress, on Hindi being the national language. He had just returned from the Congress *pandal*. It was a treat to listen to his calm discourse on Hindi. In the

[1] This obituary appeared on the first page of *Young India*.

course of his address he paid a glowing tribute to the Enlgish for their care of the vernaculars. His English visit, in spite of his sad experience of English juries, made him a staunch believer in British democracy and he even seriously made the amazing suggestion that India should instruct it on the Punjab through the cinematograph. I relate this incident not because I share his belief (for I do not), but in order to show that he entertained no hatred for Englishmen. But he could not and would not put up with an inferior status for India in the Empire.[1] He wanted immediate equality which he believed was his country's birthright. And in his struggle for India's freedom he did not spare the Government. In the battle for freedom he gave no quarter and asked for none. I hope that Englishmen will recognize the worth of the man whom India has adored.

For us, he will go down to the generations yet unborn as a maker of modern India. They will revere his memory as of a man who lived for them and died for them. It is blasphemy to talk of such a man as dead. The permanent essence of him abides with us for ever. Let us erect for the only Lokamanya of India an imperishable monument by weaving into our own lives his bravery, his simplicity, his wonderful industry and his love of his country. May God grant his soul peace.

Young India, 4-8-1920

79. THE CONGRESS AND NON-CO-OPERATION

The Hon'ble Pundit Malaviyaji, for whom I entertain the highest regard and whom I have so often described as *dharmatma*[2], has appealed to me both publicly and privately to suspend non-co-operation till the Congress has pronounced upon it. *The Mahratta* has also done likewise. These appeals have made me pause and think, but I regret to say that I have not been able to respond to them. I would do much and give much to please Punditji. I am anxious to receive his approbation and blessing for all my actions. But a higher duty requires me not to turn from the course mapped out by the Non-co-operation Committee. There are moments in your life when you must act, even though you cannot carry your best friends with you. The

[1] The source here has : "of India and the Empire".

[2] The very soul of dharma

"still small voice" within you must always be the final arbiter when there is a conflict of duty.

The reason for asking me to suspend action is that the Congress will presently meet and consider the whole question of non-co-operation and give its verdict. It would therefore be better (says Punditiji) to await the Congress decision. In my humble opinion it is no Congressman's duty to consult the Congress before taking an action in a matter in which he has no doubts. To do otherwise may mean stagnation.

The Congress is after all the mouthpiece of the nation. And when one has a policy or a programme which one would like to see adopted, but on which one wants to cultivate public opinion, one naturally asks the Congress to discuss it and form an opinion. But when one has an unshakable faith in a particular policy or action, it would be folly to wait for the Congress pronouncement. On the contrary one must act and demonstrate its efficacy so as to command acceptance by the nation.

My loyalty to the Congress requires me to carry out its policy when it is not contrary to my conscience. If I am in a minority I may not pursue my policy in the name of the Congress. The decision of the Congress on any given question therefore does not mean that it prevents a Congressman from any action to the contrary, but if he acts, he does so at his own risk and with the knowledge that the Congress is not with him.Every Congressman, every public body has the right, it is sometimes their duty, to express their own opinion, act upon it even and thus anticipate the verdict of the Congress. Indeed it is the best way of serving the nation. By initiating well-thought-out policies, we furnish data for a great deliberative body like the Congress to enable it to form a well-informed opinion. The Congress cannot express national opinion with any definiteness, unless at least some of us have already firm views about a particular course of conduct. If all suspended their opinion, the Congress must necessarily suspend its own.

There are always three classes of people in an institution : Those who have favourable views on a given policy, those who have fixed but unfavourable views on it and those who hold no fixed views. The Congress decides for this third and large group. I hold fixed views on non-co-operation. I believe that if we are to make anything of the reforms we will have to create a pure, clean and elevating atmosphere instead of the present foetid, unclean and debasing atmosphere to

work them in. I believe that our first duty is to compel justice from the Imperial Government in regard to the khilafat and the Punjab. In both these matters injustice is being sustained by untruth and insolence. I therefore consider it to be the duty of the nation to purge the Government of the uncleanliness before they can co-operate with each other. Even opposition or obstruction is possible where there is mutual respect and confidence. At the present moment the governing authority has no respect for us or our feelings. We have no faith in it. In these circumstances co-operation is a crime. Holding these strong views I can serve the Congress and the country only by reducing them to practice and thus affording to the Congress material for forming an opinion.

For me to suspend non-co-operation would be to prove untrue to the Mussulman brethren. They have their own religious duty to perform. Their religious sentiment has been deeply hurt by a total disregard of laws of justice and their own promises by British ministers. The Mussulmans must take action now. They cannot await the Congress decision. They can only expect the Congress to ratify their action and share their sorrows and their burdens. Their action cannot be delayed till the Congress has decided on a policy nor can their course be altered by an adverse decision of the Congress unless their action is otherwise found to be an error. The khilafat is a matter of conscience with them. And in matters of conscience the Law of Majority has no place.

Young India, 4-8-1920

80. WHO IS DISLOYAL?

Mr. Montagu has discovered a new definition of disloyalty. He considers my suggestion to boycott the visit of the Prince of Wales to be disloyal and some newspapers taking the cue from him have called persons who have made the suggestion "unmannerly". They have even attributed to these "unmannerly" persons the suggestion of "boycotting the Prince". I draw a sharp and fundamental distinction between boycotting the Prince and boycotting any welcome arranged for him. Personally I would extend the heartiest welcome to His Royal Highness if he came or could come without official patronage and the protecting wings of the Government of the day. Being the heir to constitutional monarch, the Prince's movements are regulated and dictated by the ministers, no matter how much the dictation may

be concealed beneath diplomatically polite language. In suggesting the boycott therefore the promoters have suggested boycott of an insolent bureaucracy and dishonest ministers of His Majesty.

You cannot have it both ways. It is true that under a constitutional monarchy, the Royalty is above politics. But you cannot send the Prince on a political visit for the purpose of making political capital out of him, and then complain that those, who will not play your game and, in order to checkmate you, proclaim a boycott of the Royal visit, do not know constitutional usage. For the Prince's visit is not for pleasure. His Royal Highness is to come in Mr. Lloyd George's words, as the "Ambassador of the British Nation", in other words, his own ambassador in order to issue a certificate of merit to him and possibly to give the ministers a new lease of life. The wish is designed to consolidate and strengthen a power that spells mischief for India. Even as it is, Mr. Montagu has foreseen that the welcome will probably be excelled by any hitherto extended to Royalty, meaning that the people are not really and deeply affected and stirred by the official atrocities in the Punjab and the manifestly dishonest breach of official declarations on the khilafat. With the knowledge that India was bleeding at heart, the Government of India should have told His Majesty's ministers that the moment was inopportune for sending the Prince. I venture to submit that it is adding insult to injury to bring the Prince and through his visit to steal honours and further prestige for a Government that deserves to be dismissed with disgrace. I claim that I prove my loyalty by saying that India is in no mood, is too deeply in mourning, to take part in any welcome to His Royal Highness, and that the ministers and the Indian Government show their disloyalty by making the Prince a cat's paw of their deep political game. If they persist, it is the clear duty of India to have nothing to do with the visit.

Young India, 4-8-1920

81. CRUSADE AGAINST NON-CO-OPERATION

I have most carefully read the manifesto[1] addressed by Sir Narayan Chandavarkar and others dissuading the people from joining the non-co-operation movement. I had expected to find some solid argu-ment against non-co-operation, but to my great regret I have found in it nothing but distortion (no doubt unconscious) of the great religions and history. The manifesto says that "non-co-operation is deprecated by the religious tenets and traditions of our motherland, nay, of all the religions that have saved and elevated the human race." I venture to submit that the *Bhagavad Gita* is a gospel of non-co-operation between forces of darkness and those of light. If it is to be literally interpreted, Arjuna representing a just cause was enjoined to engage in bloody warfare with the unjust Kauravas[2]. Tulsidas[3] advises the *Sant* (the good) to shun the *Asant* (the evil-doers). The Zend-Avesta re-presents a perpetual duel between Ormuzd and Ahriman, between whom there is no compromise. To say of the Bible that it taboos non-co-operation is not to know Jesus, a prince among passive resisters, who uncompromisingly challenged the might of the Sadducees and the Pharisees and for the sake of truth did not hesitate to divide sons from their parents. And what did the Prophet of Islam do? He non-co-operated in Mecca in a most active manner so long as his life was not in danger and wiped the dust of Mecca off his feet when he found that he and his followers might have uselessly to perish, and fled to Medina and returned when he was strong enough to give battle to his opponents. The duty of non-co-operation with unjust men and king is as strictly enjoined by all the religions as is the duty of co-operation with just men and kings. Indeed most of the scriptures of the world seem even to go beyond non-co-operation and prefer violence to effeminate submission to a wrong. The Hindu religious tradition, of which the manifesto speaks, clearly proves the duty of non-co-operation. Prahlad[4] dissociated himself from his

[1] Signned by Sir Narayan Chandavarkar, Gokuldas K. Parekh, Phiroze Sethna, C. V. Mehta, Jamnadas Dwarkadas, K. Natarajan, H. P. Mody, Uttumlal K. Trivedi, B. C. Dalvi, Mawji Govindji, N. M. Joshi, Kanji Dwarkadas and others and published in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 30-7-1920

[2] Sons of King Dhritarashtra and cousins of the Pandavas

[3] The great Hindi poet; author of *Ramacharitamanasa*, a Hindi version of the *Ramayana*

[4] Devotee of Vishnu, was persecuted by his disbelieving father, the demon

father, Meerabai[1] from her husband, Bibhishan[2] from his brutal brother.

The manifesto speaking of the secular aspect says, "The history of nations affords no instance to show that it (meaning non-co-operation) has, when employed, succeeded and done good." One most recent instance of brilliant success of non-co-operation is that of General Botha who boycotted Lord Milner's reformed councils and thereby procured a perfect constitution for his country. The Dukhobours[3] of Russia offered non-co-operation, and a handful though they were, their grievances so deeply moved the civilized world that Canada offered them a home where they form a prosperous community. In India instances can be given by the dozen, in which in little principalities the *raiyats*[4] when deeply grieved by their chiefs have cut off all connection with them and bent them to their will. I know of no instance in history where well managed non-co-operation has failed.

Hitherto I have given historical instances of bloodless non-co-operation. I will not insult the intelligence of the reader by citing historical instances of non-co-operation combined with violence, but I am free to confess that there are on record as many successes as failures in violent non-co-operation. And it is because I know this fact that I have placed before the country a non-violent scheme in which, if at all worked satisfactorily, success is a certainty and in which non-response means no harm. For if even one man non-co-operates, say, by resigning some office, he has gained, not lost. That is its ethical or religious aspect. For its political result naturally itrequires polymerous support. I fear therefore no disastrous result from non-co-operation save for an outbreak of violence on the part of the people whether under provocation or otherwise. I would risk violence a thousand times than risk emasculation of a whole race.

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king Hiranyakashipu. Gandhiji often spoke of him as the ideal saytagrahi.

[1] A medieval saint-poetess of Rajasthan; queen of Mewar, she spent her days in devotions to Krishna incurring her husband's displeasure.

[2] The virtuous brother of Ravana. He tried long and hard to convert Ravana but, failing in his attempts, went over to Rama before the great battle began.

[3] "Spirit-wrestlers", a non-conformist Russian sect which emigrated to Canada in 1898

[4] Tenants

82. COW PROTECTION

Cow protection is an article of faith in Hinduism. Apart from its religious sanctity, it is an ennobling creed. But we, Hindus, have today little regard for the cow and her progeny. In no country in the world are cattle so ill-fed and ill-kept as in India. In beef-eating England it would be difficult to find cattle with bones sticking out of their flesh. Most of our *pinjrapoles*[1] are ill-managed and ill-kept. Instead of being a real blessing to the animal world, they are perhaps simply receiving-depots for dying animals. We say nothing to the English in India for whose sake hundreds of cows are slaughtered daily. Our rajas do not hesitate to provide beef for their English guests. Our protection of the cow, therefore, extends to rescuing her from Mussulman hands. This reverse method of cow protection has led to endless feuds and bad blood between Hindus and Mussulmans. It has probably caused greater slaughter of cows than otherwise would have been the case if we had begun the propaganda in the right order. We should have commenced, as we ought now to commence, with ourselves and cover the land with useful propaganda leading to kindness in the treatment of cattle and scientific knowledge in the management of cattle farms, dairies and *pinjrapoles*. We should devote our attention to propaganda among Englishmen in the shape of inducing them voluntarily to abandon beef, or, if they will not do so, at least be satisfied with imported beef. We should secure prohibition of export of cattle from India and we should adopt means of increasing and purifying our milk supply. I have not a shadow of doubt that if we proceed along these sane lines, we would secure voluntary Mussulman support, and when we have ceased to compel them to stop killing cows on their festival days, we would find that they have no occasion for insisting on killing them. Any show of force on our part must lead to retaliation and exacerbation of feeling. We may not make Mussulmans or anybody respect our feelings religious or otherwise by force. We can really do so only by exciting their fellow-feeling.

Hence it is that I have declined, and I am sure quite wisely, to enter into any bargain on the khilafat question. I consider myself to

[1] Institutions for care of disabled cattle

be among the staunchest of Hindus. I am as eager to save the cow from the Mussulman's knife as any Hindu. But on that very account I refuse to make my support of the Mussulman claim on the khilafat conditional upon his saving the cow.The Mussulman is my neighbour. He is in distress. His grievance is legitimate and it is my bounden duty to help him to secure redress by every legitimate means in my power even to the extent of losing my life and property. That is the way I can win permanent friendship with Mussulmans. I refuse to suspect human nature. It will, is bound to, respond to any noble and friendly action. The nobility of the help will be rendered nugatory if it was rendered conditionally. That the result will be the saving of the cow is a certainty. But should it turn out to be otherwise, my view will not be affected in any manner whatsoever. The test of friendship is a spirit of love and sacrifice independent of expectation of any return.

But one observes a spirit of impatience on the part of the Hindus. In our eagerness to protect the cow we seek to legislate through munici-palities and get the resolutions passed by Mussulman meetings. I would urge my Hindu countrymen to be patient. Our Mussulman countrymen are themselves doing most handsomely in the matter. I remind the read-ers of Maulana Abdul Bari's[1] declaration that he would not take any pro-ferred aid unless he, a devout Mussulman, could see his way clear to ask-ing his followers to protect the cow. He has been as good as his word. He has been unremittingly attempting to create a favourable atmosphere for receiving the doctrine of cow protection on humanitarian and utilitarian grounds. Hakimjee Ajmalkhan[2] as President of the Muslim League last year carried his resolution of abstention from cow-killing on festival days in the teeth of opposition members. The Ali Brothers have stopped beef-eating in their household. We must feel deeply grateful to those noble-hearted Mussulmans for their unsolicited response. We must let them solve the difficult problem in their own way. My advice to my Hindu brethren is, "simply help the Mussulmans in their sorrow in a generous and self-sacrificing spirit without counting the cost and you will auto-matically save the cow". Islam is a noble faith. Trust it and its followers.

[1] Natinalist Muslim divine of Lucknow who took part in the khilafat movement and urged his followers to refrain from cow-slaughter

[2] 1865-1927; Muslim physician and politician who took leading part in the khilafat movement; president, Indian National Congress, 1921

We must hold it a crime for any Hindu to talk to them about cow protection or any other help in our religious matters whilst the khilafat struggle is going on.

Young India, 4-8-1920

83. TELEGRAM TO ABDUL JABBAR

BOMBAY,
[Before *August 5, 1920*][1]

ABDUL JABBAR
PRESIDENT
CALIPHATE
HYDERABAD (SIND)

YOUR TELEGRAM BEG PIR SAHEB PREACH FORTITUDE PATIENCE BRAVE FOLLOWERS ALL CHEERFULLY GO JAIL SCRUPULOUSLY AVOIDING VIOLENCE WIRE URGENT IF WE STILL WANTED CAN START TOMORROW.

GANDHI
SHAUKAT ALI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1920, p. 1184

84. LETTER TO MOHANLAL

ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 7, 1920

BHAI MOHANLAL,

I do not approve of deception anywhere. The question whether corruption will increase or decrease day by day has nothing to do with the removal of untouchability. Dharma lies in removing it. I believe the national school in Wadhwan can look after the education of small children. The only way for removing unemployment among the middle classes is to teach them vocations which will require them to use their hands and feet. I have had no contact with Shri Arvind Babu.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 234

[1] Reported on August 5

85. TELEGRAM TO ABDUL JABBAR

AHMEDABAD,
[Before *August 8, 1920*][1]

ABDUL JABBAR
HYDERABAD (SIND)

SHAUKAT ALI SELF WERE ON WAY HYDERABAD RECEIVED COUNTERMAND WIRE HERE THANK YOU NOW RETURNING BOMBAY PROPOSE GOING MADRAS WIRE SITUATION BOMBAY ADVISE WHETHER WE MAY PROCEED MADRAS HOPE PIR SAHIB TAKING FOOD.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1920, p. 1185

86. PASSING AWAY OF THE LOKAMANYA

The Lokamanya was in a class by himself. The country has proved that the title which the people gave to Tilak Maharaj was a hundred thousand times more precious than any that could be conferred by a king. It is no exaggeration to say that the whole of Bombay turned out on that Sunday to give him a final farewell.

The scenes I witnessed during his last days on earth are unforgettable. People's profound love for him was beyond description.

In France it is the practice to say : "The King is dead; long live the King." That idea spread to Britain and other countries and, whenever a king dies, they proclaim : "The King is dead; long live the King." It means much in substance that the King never dies and the State machine never stops even for a second.

In quite the same way, the mammoth meeting in Bombay has sho-wn that Tilak Maharaj can never die, is not dead, that he is living and will live for ever. His relatives, indeed, may have been stricken with grief and their eyes may have dropped pearls, but the villagers from the Ghats who went out with their musical instruments did by no means go weep-ing and lamenting. They had gathered to celebrate a festival. Their musi-cal instruments and their *bhajans*[2] reminded the people that Tilak Maharaj was not dead. The place resounded with

[1] Intercepted on August 8
[2] Devotional songs

loud cries of "*Tilak Maharaj ki jai*"[1] and the very idea that his body was to be cremated was quite forgotten. The people thus came to the right conclusion and proved that the doctors' bulletins were wrong.

I had felt some uneasiness on Saturday night when I heard the news but, on hearing the cry of *jai* the feeling disappeared and I, too, felt that Tilak Maharaj was still alive. The transient body has perished, but his immortal soul is enthroned for ever in the hearts of millions.

An English writer has said that even two bosom-friends, while they live, are separated in body. They may even feel that they are different from each other. If they are real friends, the one who dies first breaks down the barriers. He lives in the body of the friend who survives and is not dead to him. In the same way, Tilak Maharaj lives today in the bodies of millions. On Saturday, in particular, he was alive in his own body.

No leader of the people has had such a glorious death in modern times. Dadabhai[2] passed away and so did Gokhale and Pherozeshah[3]. Thousands had followed them on their last journey but, with Tilak, the very limit was reached. He was followed by a whole people. On Sunday, Bombay was not itself.

What miracle, this! There is nothing like a miracle in this world, or, better still, the world itself is a great miracle. The rule that there is no effect without a cause has no exception. The Lokamanya's love for India knew no bounds and, therefore, the people's love for him was equally boundless. No one else has chanted the *mantra*[4] of swaraj as continually as he did. While others sincerely believed that India would presently be fit for swaraj, he believed equally sincerely that India was already fit and ready for it. This conviction won him the love of the people. But he was not satisfied merely with believing this; he spent his whole life acting on this conviction and that fired the people with a new spirit. He infected them with his impatience for swaraj and, as the infection was caught, more and more people were

[1] Literally, "Victory to Tilak Maharaj"

[2] Naoroji (1825-1917); statesman and patriot called "the Grand Old Man of India"; presided over Congress sessions in 1886, 1893 and 1906

[3] 1845-1915; one of the founders of the Indian National Congress; twice elected its president, in 1890 and 1909

[4] Phrase with magical efficacy, accompanying rituals; here, an inspiring slogan

drawn towards him.

He never gave up chanting this *mantra* of swaraj through all the dangers he had to face and all the suffering he had to bear. He thus emerged successful from this difficult test as well and as a result, the people put all the greater trust in him and his word became a law to them.

Such a great life never ends with the passing away of the body. It really begins then.

A friend has written to me saying that something special ought to be done for Tilak Maharaj and asking for my advice in the matter. He wonders if a three-day hartal would not be the right thing. I elaborate here the suggestion I have made in my reply to him.[1]

The right way of expressing our veneration for a man is to emulate his good qualities. I would, therefore, prefer some constructive work to a hartal. It is certainly necessary to observe a hartal, keep a fast and do similar things on that day, but the "specialness" lies in emulating his virtues. He was a man of extreme simplicity; so in memory of him we should take to simplicity ourselves and give up using certain things to the point of being put to discomfort. He was a man of courage; let us be brave likewise, and do only that which our conscience approves and never swerve from our aim. He was a thoughtful man; we, too, must learn to think before we speak or act. He was a learned man and had a wonderful command over his mother tongue and Sanskrit; let us take pains to be scholars like him. Let us give up using a foreign language in the conduct of our affairs, be proficient in our mother tongues and learn to express all our thoughts in them. Let us study Sanskirt and discover the beauties of spiritual wisdom which lie hidden in our Shastras. He was a lover of swadeshi; we also should understand the meaning of swadeshi and adopt swadeshi in practice. He had unbounded love for the country; let us, too, cultivate the same love for it in our hearts and, to the best of our ability, be daily more devoted to national service. This is the right way to venerate him. Those who cannot do even these things may contribute anything, from a pice onwards, for perpetuating his memory, and the money so donated may be used for founding national schools, for giving scholarships to deserving students to enable them to receive the right kind of education and for

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dayalji", 1-8-1920.

such other public purposes.

The Lokamanya was certainly a bitter enemy of the present administrative set-up, but the belief some persons entertain that he disliked the British is mistaken. I have often heard praises of the British from his own lips. He was not opposed to the British connection in all circumstances, but he wanted himself and his people to be recognized as equals of the British. He hated to be subject to the British or to any other power.

He had so much faith in the common people of Britain that he once made the rather unusual suggestion that we should use the medium of the cinema to tell them of the Punjab atrocities.

We are mourning the passing away of such a veteran among patriots. There is no denying that it would have been all to our gain if he had continued to live in the body in which we knew him. But a man such as he was continues to serve the country and lead it, whether or not he lives in the body. A man, who had thought out his plan of action and followed it for forty-five years, who wore out his body in the service of the nation, is never forgotten after his death, he never dies. Let us, then, tell ourselves that the Lokamanya, even in his death, has taught us the secret of living.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-8-1920

87. POSITION OF THE CONGRESS

I have always entertained the highest regard for the Honourable Pandit Malaviya and know him to be the very soul of dharma. He has advised me to suspend non-co-operation till after the special session of the Congress is over. The editor of *The Mahratta* and others have also given this advice. It is painful for me not to listen to the advice of Panditji. I would normally honour his advice at any cost to myself. When, however, the still small voice within me suggests otherwise, I become helpless and cannot meekly submit even to his advice. Just such an occasion has arisen for me now.

My suspending non-co-operation means that the Muslims also should do likewise. For them, after the announcement of the khilafat terms non-co-operation has become a religious duty. How can they co-operate with those who have insulted their religion and endangered its existence? How can they accept any gift from them? Moreover, how can I suspend non-co-operation without some strong reasons

after having, with full deliberation, advised the nation to follow a particular course of action? It has become my inescapable dharma to continue non-co-operation on the khilafat issue.

I must say this having regard to the present situation. But let us examine the position of the Congress. In my humble opinio the Congress takes stock annually of people's feelings and thoughts. Generally, it does not show a new path to the people. That is not its function. The prestige the Congress enjoys results from its being the organ of public opinion. Hence, it is not our duty, before taking up a new programme, to wait for the Congress to meet. If we so wait, the Congress can make no progress. If everybody suspends non-co-operation till after the opinion of the Congress is known, it will remain suspended for ever. If all people do not have an opinion of their own, the Congress is not something entirely apart from the people so that one might supplicate it for the gift of opinions. The Congress cannot pronounce an opinion unless a majority view has been formed on a particular question. This only means that those in the minority should carry on their work despite this handicap. The Congress does not, cannot wish to, and has no right to, come in their way. Hence anyone who likes a certain reform, who has faith in his capacity and who is a supporter of the Congress owes it to the latter to place his idea before the people so that the Congress may act upon it, can have the material on which to form an opinion. All reforms which have come about have done so in this manner. Nobody waited for the opinion of the Congress when opposing the Rowlatt Act.

The advice which Panditji has given me with much love only means that he has not formed a final opinion regarding non-co-operation. That I cannot accept this advice means that I have come to a firm decision. It is my sincere belief that we are committing a sin in delaying non-co-operation. So long as I had even a little faith in the Govern-ment's sense of justice, I co-operated with it and advised the people to do likewise. At the Amritsar Congress, I had very emphatically advised co-operation with the Government because I sincerely believed that the Punjab and the Muslims would get justice. When my belief proved to have been wrong, I turned to non-co-operation. For me, the Govern-ment's favours and its reforms are as much to be shunned as poisoned milk. Hence, even if I am in a minority of one, I shall keep proclaiming that we must not enter its legislatures.

Delegates to the Congress are of three types : Those who are

positively in favour of a given policy, those who are positively opposed to it and those who hold no fixed views. It is the duty of those belonging to the first category to try to influence those who belong to the last, and what else can have a greater impact than action? My own judgment, therefore, tells me that it is the duty of those who see India's good in non-co-operation, who see a possibility of getting justice in regard to the khilafat and the Punjab only through non-co-operation, to go ahead with it and advise others to do likewise and create public opinion in this way. That is the way to honour the Congress and help it to go forward. No reformer waits for anybody else before implementing his ideas. The eternal law is that one should not delay virtuous action by waiting for advice and should not commit a wrong even if advised to do so. In the present circumstances, I look upon non-co-operation as virtuous action.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-8-1920

88. WHAT THE SCRIPTURES SAY

Sir Narayan Chandavarkar and other friends have written an article in which they have condemned non-co-operation in strong terms and said that the scriptures and history are against it. The signatories have stated that the *Gita*, the Koran, the Bible and the Zend-Avesta of the Parsis, all hold non-co-operation to be wrong. They have cited no texts.

I think I too have been a student of the *Gita* in my own way. I have seen in it the principle of non-co-operation. The *Gita* speaks of the war between the divine and the demoniac. It makes it quite clear that good and evil can never be reconciled. If we interpret its teaching literally, we see that when Arjuna refused to fight the wicked Kauravas, Shri Krishna urged him to do so. Thus, literally interpreted, the *Gita* teaches us not only to refuse co-operation with the tyrant but even to punish him. Though the spirit of the *Gita* certainly does not teach this latter course, every line of it speaks of the war between good and evil.

Just as light and darkness are ever opposed to each other, just as cold and heat can never exist together, so also justice and injustice are incompatible. This is the reason for the age-old practice among us of a person leaving another when hurt. When the subjects can bear a tyrant-king no longer, they keep aloof from him to express their

displeasure. When things become unbearable, the subjects even used to leave the king's territory. Such instances have been quite frequent. Even today, the thing is happening in two countries. Prahlad non-co-operated with his wicked father, Mirabai with her husband and Narasinh Mehta[1] with fellow-members of his community. Today we revere all three. Tulsidas described the difference between the good man and the evil and showed the impossibility of association between the two. Hinduism, thus, teaches that the association of good with evil is ever undersirable. In the Zend-Avesta, Ormuzd and Ahriman are ever at war and, in the Bible, God and Satan. Ormuzd—God—is the perfection of goodness,Ahriman—Satan—is an embodiment of evil. Jesus Christ was nothing if not a heroic satyagrahi. He employed non-co-operation against the hypocrites, the liars andmen drunk with pride. He did not hesitate to introduce divisions in families for the sake of moral principles and he himself opposed, all alone, the mighty Roman Empire. What remains is Koran-e-Sharif. People have written about Islam as if they were ignorant of the life of the Prophet. While he lived in Mecca, he followed the way of non-co-operation with the evil-doers. When the Muslims themselves cite support for non-co-operation in their religion, how very strange it is to tell them that their religion is aginst it!

The evidence of history, too, endorses non-co-operation. By and large, history is a story of war, and war is merely an extreme example of non-co-operation. One side breaking off ties with another is but a form of non-co-operation. War is an example of demoniac non-co-operation. I do not think I am being guilty of presumption in claiming that the non-co-operation I am placing before the country is of the divine type. Non-co-operation which involves violence may succeed or fail, but that non-co-operation which requires nothing but self-sacrifice can end only in success. It simply passes my understanding how anyone can oppose such non-co-operation, for the man who resorts to non-co-operation of the divine type will not resume co-operation till he gets justice. The Germans employed the non-co-operation of armed conflict and so, when defeated, they surrendered. The Dukhobours, in Russia employed unarmed non-co-operation and, therefore, met with no defeat. When it became impossible for them to

[1] 1414-1479; saint-poet of Gujarat and devotee of Krishna; freely mixed with the so-called untouchables in devotional gatherings

continue to live in Russia, they left the country rather than submit to its oppressive rulers. Today, they live as a highly respected community in Canada. When an individual employs non-co-operation, the individual wins; when a community employs it, the community wins. Thus, in non-co-operation of the divine type, effort is never fruitless nor is there any question of moral taint. Its practice even to a limited extent is beneficial and saves the man who resorts to it from great danger. By renouncing the title conferred by a tyrant, the man who practises this renunciation ensures, through such non-co-operation, his happiness. By renouncing his courts, the man wins his own satisfaction to that extent. If a majority of the people perform this act of renunciation, society as a whole will have given up co-operation with injustice, washed itself clean and, to that extent, grown healthier.

Co-operation and non-co-operation have been accepted policies in use since times immemorial—co-operation, always, with the just and non-co-operation with the unjust. Both the Government of India and the Imperial Government have been doing, recently, one injustice after another. The former has been trying to cover up its original injustice with numberless wrongs. Co-operation with it is a sin, non-co-operation a duty.

Separation from the one [the good] kills, while a chance meeting with the other [the wicked] causes the severest pain.[1]

That is why the Shastras enjoin the rule of non-co-operation with the wicked.It cannot be invalidated by any number of manifestos.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-8-1920

89. COW PROTECTION

The cause of cow protection is very dear to me. If someone were to ask me what the most important outward manifestation of Hinduism was, I would suggest that it was the idea of cow protection. It has been clear to me for many years past that we have forsaken this duty. I have seen no country in the world where the progeny of the cow is so ill-fed and ill-cared for as in India. We do not find anywhere else such large number of cattle with bones sticking out of their flesh as we do in India. In England the people actually eat beef, but I did not see in that country cattle which were ill-fed and ill-kept.

[1] From *Ramacharitamanasa* of Tulsidas

We are as weak as our cattle are. It is not surprising to find three crores dying of hunger where the cattle are in similar plight.

Look at the condition of our *pinjrapoles*. I have respect for the kindness of the managers, but I have very little respect for their capacity for managing things. I do not believe that the *pinjrapoles* protect cows and their progeny. They should not be places where ill-fed and ill-kept cattle may be looked after and allowed to die peacefully. I would expect to see in them ideal cows and bulls. *Pinjrapoles* should be located, not in the heart of cities but in big fields and they should bring, instead of consuming, plenty of money.

How do the Hindus look after the cattle in the country? Are they not Hindus who goad them with sharpened nails on sticks, who put unbearable loads on them, keep them without enough fodder and make them work more than they can?

It is my firm conviction that the Hindus' first duty is to put their own house in order. I would, if I could and had the necessary time at my disposal, engage the various cow protection bodies in reforming the *pinjrapoles*, in imparting to the people scientific knowledge of cattle-breeding, in teaching cruel Hindus to have compassion for their cattle and in making available pure milk to the poorest child and to the sick. And I would first ask the Hindus to take charge of the gigantic task of organizing such bodies.

And then I would request the Englishmen to give up beef-eating. The princes forget, when entertaining English guests, the duty [of cow protection] which is especially theirs and do not hesitate to order beef for them; I would request them to save themselves from this violation of their dharma, I would shame them into doing so.

Only after I have done this may I be entitled to ask my Muslim friends to stop cow-slaughter. Our duty, thus, is clear enough, but we have taken up the last thing first. We seem to think that all we need to do by way of cow protection is to save cows from the hands of Muslims, either with their goodwill or with force. As a result, the hostility between Hindus and Muslims has increased, a cause for discord has been created and the effort [to save cows in this manner] has led to their slaughter in increased numbers, for the thing became a point of honour with the Muslims. Our supreme duty is to lay down our lives for saving the cow.

Today, however, we have an invaluable opportunity and I have embraced it. Every Hindu can do the same thing and easily ensure

the protection of cows. A great misfortune has befallen the Muslims, their religion has been slighted. At such a time, we should help them unconditionally, without asking for anything in return. It is our duty as neighbours to do this. The man who does his duty gets his reward, whether he hopes for it or not. By doing our duty to the Muslims, we challenge their nobility.

Friendship which asks for a reward is no friendship; it is bargaining. If, at this juncture, we give up all thought of bargaining and help the Muslims, we shall ensure [cow] protection of their own free will.

Some persons argue that in this matter Muslims cannot be trusted. I, for one, believe in human nature; I have faith in Islam. It is a divine law that nobility will be answered by nobility. It is only when our motives are mixed that we see contrary results. Even today, Muslims on their own have been doing much. Maulana Abdul Bari accepted my help only when he could find in his religion sanction for refraining from killing cows. Hakim Ajmal Khan is working hard for their protection. The Ali Brothers have banished beef from their homes altogether.

Let us not, by our suspicions or our impatience, endanger the change which is taking place.

I observe at some places a movement for legislation to ban cow-slaughter. Everywhere I hear people suggesting that we make conditions with the Muslims. In both these, I see nothing but harm. Orthodox Hindus have only one thing to do at present and that is, to discharge, quietly, the duty, which is morally theirs, of helping Muslims. That is the way to ensure complete protection of the religion and honour of either.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-8-1920

90. LETTER TO H. KALLENBACH[1]

August 10, 1920

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

After how long a time have I the good fortune to write to you? After the greatest search, I have now got your address. Never has a day passed but I have thought of you. The first information imparted to me about you was by a lady in Johannesburg. Miss Winterbottom[2] and Polak[3] could tell me nothing. P. K. Naidu[4] could tell me nothing. Dr. Mehta[5] sent me a cable to give me your address. I have also a letter from Jamnadas[6] whom I have asked to see you in Berlin if you could at all be seen. Jamnadas tells either he or Dr. Mehta will try to see you. How I wish I could go over to see you and hug you. For me you have risen from the dead. I had taken it for granted that you were dead. I could not believe that you would keep me without a letter for so long. The alternative was that you had written but

your letters were not delivered to me at all. I wrote to your camp and there was no reply. I still think that you have written but your letter has not been delivered to me. I am cabling to Dr. Mehta to see you. What shall I say of me? I shall forbear for the time being. Devdas[7] is with me, ever growing in every way and every direction. I am just now travelling with Devdas and another faithful companion on whom you would dote. I have come in closest touch with a lady[8] who often travels with me. Our relationship is indefinable. I call her my spiritual wife. A friend has called it an intellectual wedding. I want you to see her. It was under her roof that I passed several months at

[1] A German architect; devoted friend and co-worker of Gandhiji in South Africa

[2] Florence Winterbottom, secretary of the Union of Ethical Societies, London; *vide* "Letter to Miss F. Winterbottom", 13-11-1906.

[3] H. S. L. Polak, friend and co-worker of Gandhiji; editor of *Indian Opinion*; *vide* "Speech at Meeting of British Indian Association", 2-2-1908.

[4] P. K. Naidu, secretary to the British Indian Association, Transvaal

[5] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta, M.D., Bar-at-Law and jeweller; his association with Gandhiji began when he received Gandhiji on his arrival in England for the first time as a student. He rendered financial help to Gandhiji in his activities from the days of the Phoenix Settlement till his death in 1933.

[6] Youngest son of Khushalchand Gandhi, cousin of Gandhiji

[7] 1900-1956; youngest son of Gandhiji

[8] Saraladevi Chaudhrani

Lahore in the Punjab. Mrs. Gandhi[1] is at Ashram. She has aged conside-rably but she is as brave as ever. She is the same woman you know her with her faults and virtues. Manilal[2] and Ramdas[3] are in phoenix looking after *Indian Opinion*. Harilal[4] is in Calcutta doing his business.

He has lost his wife. And Mrs. G. is looking after his children. Chhaganlal[5] and Maganla l are with me. Medh[6] and Pragji[7] are in India. Pragji remains in touch with me, not Medh so much. Maganbhai is not with me. You now know something about most members of the family that you know. Oh! Imust not omit Imamsaheb[8]. He and his are with me, his loyalty is wonderful. I gave away Fatima[9] in marriage the other day. And this has made him happy. Andrews I see often. He lives in Bengal. Anandlal[10] too is with me. I am editing two weeklies. Both are doing well. I am engaged in a fierce struggle with the Government. No one can foretell the issue.

And now I shall stop. I was two years ago in death's grip. If you are free I want you to resume correspondence. My life is simpler than ever. My food is not fruit and nuts. I am living on goat's milk and bread and raisins. I am under a vow not to take more than five things. Cow's milk I would not like because of the vows I took in London. Salt I do not abjure because I find that we take inorganic salt in water and inhale it from the sea.

With love and expectation of seeing your own writing soon.

Yours ever,

UPPER HOUSE

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

[1] Kasturba Gandhi (1869-1942)

[2] Gandhiji's second son

[3] Gandhiji's third son

[4] Gandhiji's eldest son

[5] Eldest son of Khushalchand Gandhi

[6] Surendrarai Medh, a satyagrahi

[7] Pragji Khandubhai Desai, a satyagrahi in the South African campaign; he often contributed to *Indian Opinion* in Gujarati.

[8] Abdul Kadir Bawazeer; Muslim priest; chairman, Hamidia Islamic Society; courted jail in 1910 as a satyagrahi in South Africa; succeeded Mahadev Desai in 1930 on the latter's arrest during Salt Satyagraha

[9] Abdul Kadir Bawazeer's daughter whose marriage was celebrated in the Ashram.

[10] Son of Amritlal Gandhi, a cousin of Gandhiji

91. THE DOCTRINE OF THE SWORD

In this age of the rule of brute force, it is almost impossible for anyone to believe that anyone else could possibly reject the law of the final supremacy of brute force. And so I receive anonymous letters advising me that I must not interfere with the progress of non-co-operation even though popular violence may break out. Others come to me and assuming that secretly I must be plotting violence, inquire when the happy moment for declaring open violence will arrive. They assure me that the English will never yield to anything but violence secret or open. Yet others, I am informed, believe that I am the most rascally person living in India because I never give out my real intention and that they have not a shadow of a doubt that I believe in violence just as much as most people do.

Such being the hold that the doctrine of the sword has on the majority of mankind, and as success of non-co-operation depends principally on absence of violence during its pendency and as my views in this matter affect the conduct of a large number of people, I am anxious to state them as clearly as possible.

I do believe that where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence I would advise violence. Thus when my eldest son asked me what he should have done, had he been present when I was almost fatally assaulted in 1908,[1] whether he should have run away and seen me killed or whether he should have used his physical force which he could and wanted to use, and defended me, I told him that it was his duty to defend me even by using violence. Hence it was that I took part in the Boer War, the so-called Zulu rebellion and the late War. Hence also do I advocate training in arms for those who believe in the method of violence. I would rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honour than that she should in a cowardly manner become or remain a helpless witness to her own dishonour.

But I believe that non-violence is infinitely superior to violence, forgiveness is more manly than punishment.क्षमा वीरस्य भूषणम्। Forgiveness adorns a soldier. But abstinence is forgiveness only when

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", 16-5-1908.

proceed from a helpless creature. A mouse hardly forgives a cat when it allows itself to be torn to pieces by her. I, therefore,appreciate the sentiment of those who cry out for the condign punishment of General Dyer and his like. They would tear him to pieces if they could. But I do not believe India to be helpless. I do not believe myself to be a helpless creature. Only I want to use India's and my strength for a better purpose.

Let me not be misunderstood. Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will. An average Zulu is any way more than a match for an average Englishman in bodily capacity. But he flees from an English boy, because he fears the boy's revolver or those who will use it for him. He fears death and is nerveless in spite of his burly figure. We in India may in a moment realize that one hundred thousand Englishmen need not frighten three hundred million human beings. A definite forgiveness would therefore mean a definite recognition of our strength. With enlightened forgiveness must come a mighty wave of strength in us, which would make it impossible for a Dyer and a Frank Johnson to heap affront upon India's devoted head. It matters little to me that for the moment I do not drive my point home. We feel too downtrodden not to be angry and revengeful. But I must not refrain from saying that India can gain more by waiving the right of punishment. We have better work to do, a better mission to deliver to the world.

I am not a visionary. I claim to be a practical idealist. The religion of non-violence is not meant merely for the *rishis* and saints. It is meant for the common people as well. Non-violence is the law of our species as violence is the law of the brute. The spirit lies dormant in the brute and he knows no law but that of physical might. The dignity of man requires obedience to a higher law—to the strength of the spirit.

I have therefore ventured to place before India the ancient law of self-sacrifice. For satyagraha and its off-shoots, non-co-operation and civil resistance, are nothing but new names for the law of suffering. The *rishis*, who discovered the law of non-violence in the midst of violence, were greater geniuses than Newton.They were themselves greater warriors than Wellington. Having themselves

known the use of arms, they realized their uselessness and taught a weary world that its salvation lay not through violence but through non-violence.

Non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering. It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evildoer, but it means the putting of one's soul against the will of the tyrant. Working under this law of our being, it is possible for a single individual to defy the whole might of an unjust empire to save his honour, his religion, his soul and lay the foundation for that empire's fall or its regeneration.

And so I am not pleading for India to practise non-violence because it is weak. I want her to practise non-violence being conscious of her strength and power. No training in arms is required for realization of her strength. We seem to need it because we seem to think that we are but a lump of flesh. I want India to recognize that she has a soul that cannot perish and that can rise triumphant above every physical weak- ness and defy the physical combination of whole world. What is the meaning of Rama, a mere human being, with his host of monkeys, pitting himself against the insolent strength of ten-headed Ravana surrounded in supposed safety by the raging waters on all sides of Lanka? Does it not mean the conquest of physical might by spiritual strength? However, being a practical man, I do not wait till India recognizes the practicability of the spiritual life in the political world. India considers herself to be powerless and paralysed before the machineguns, the tanks and the aeroplanes of the English. And she takes up non-co-operation out of her weakness. It must still serve the same purpose, namely, bring her delivery from the crushing weight of British injustice if a sufficient number of people practise it.

I isolate this non-co-operation from Sinn Feinism, for, it is so conceived as to be incapable of being offered side by side with violence. But I invite even the school of violence to give this peaceful non-co-operation a trial. It will not fail through its inherent weakness. It may fail because of poverty of response. Then will be the time for real danger. The high-souled men, who are unable to suffer national

humiliation any longer, will want to vent their wrath. They will take to violence. So far as I know, they must perish without delivering themselves or their country from the wrong. If India takes up the doctrine of the sword, she may gain momentary victory. Then India will cease to be pride of my heart. I am wedded to India because I owe my all to her. I believe absolutely that she has a mission for the world. She is not to copy Europe blindly. India's acceptance of the doctrine of the sword will be the hour of my trial. I hope I shall not be found wanting. My religion has no geographical Limits. If I have a living faith in it, it will transcend my love for India herself. My life is dedicated to service of India through the religion of non-violence which I believe to be the root of Hinduism.

Meanwhile I urge those who distrust me, not to disturb the even working of the struggle that has just commenced, by inciting to violence in the belief that I want violence. I detest secrecy as a sin. Let them give non-violent non-co-operation a trial and they will find that I had no mental reservation whatsoever.

Young India, 11-8-1920

92. COURTS AND SCHOOLS

The Non-co-operation Committee has included, in the first stage, boycott of law-courts by lawyers and of Government schools and colleges by parents or scholars as the case may be. I know that, it is only my reputation as a worker and fighter, which has saved me from an open charge of lunacy for having given the advice about boycott of courts and schools.

I venture however to claim some method about my madness. It does not require much reflection to see that it is through courts that a government establishes its authority and it is through schools that it manufactures clerks and other employees. They are both healthy institutions when the government in charge of them is on the whole just. They are death-traps when the government is unjust.

FIRST AS TO LAWYERS

No newspaper has combated my views on non-co-operation with so much pertinacity and ability as the Allahabad *Leader*. It has ridiculed my views on lawyers expressed in my booklet, *Indian Home Rule*, written by me in 1908[1]. I adhere to the views then expressed. And if I find time I hope to elaborate them in these columns. But I refrain from so doing for the time being as my special views have nothing to do with my advice on the necessity of lawyers suspending practice. I submit that national non-co-operation requires suspension of their practice by lawyers. Perhaps no one co-operates with a government more than lawyers through its law-courts. Lawyers interpret laws to the people and thus support authority. It is for that reason that they are styled officers of the court. They may be called honorary office-holders. It is said that it is the lawyers who have put up the most stubborn fight against the Government. This is no doubt partly true. But that does not undo the mischief that is inherent in the profession. So when the nation wishes to paralyes the Government, that profession, if it wishes to help the nation to bend the Government to its will, must suspend practice. But, say the critics, the Government will be too pleased, if the pleaders and barristers fell into the trap laid by me. I do not believe it. What is true in ordinary times is not true in extraordinary times. In normal times the Government may resent

[1] In 1909.

fierce criticism of their manners and methods by lawyers, but in the face of fierce action they would be loath to part with a single lawyer's support through his practice in the courts.

Moreover, in my scheme, suspension does not mean stagnation. The lawyers are not to suspend practice and enjoy rest. They will be expected to induce their clients to boycott courts. They will improvise arbitration boards in order to settle disputes. A nation, that is bent on forcing justice from an unwilling Government, has little time for engaging in mutual quarrels. This truth the lawyers will be expected to bring home to their clients. The readers may not know that many of the most noted lawyers of England suspended their work during the late war. The lawyers, then, upon temporarily leaving their profession, became whole-time workers instead of being workers only during their recreation hours. Real politics are not a game. The late Mr. Gokhale used to deplore that we had not gone beyond treating politics as a pastime. We have no notion as to how much the country has lost by reason of amateurs having managed its battles with the serious-minded, trained and wholetime-working bureaucracy.

The critics then argue that the lawyers will starve, if they leave their profession. This cannot be said of the Sinhas of the profession. They do at times suspend work for visiting Europe or otherwise. Of those who live from hand to mouth, if they are honest men, each local Khilafat Committee can pay them an honorarium against full-time service.

Lastly, for Mohammedan lawyers, it has been suggested that if they stop their practice, Hindus will take it up. I am hoping Hindus will at least show the negative courage of not touching their Muslim brethren's clients, even if they do not suspend their own practice. But I am sure no religiously minded Mussulman will be found to say that they can carry on the fight only if the Hindus stand side by side with them in sacrifice. If the Hindus do as they must, it will be to their honour and for the common good of both. But the Mussulmans must go forward whether the Hindus join them or not. If it is a matter of life and death with them, they must not count the cost. No cost is too heavy for the preservation of one's honour, especially religious honour. Only they will sacrifice who cannot abstain. Forced sacrifice is no sacrifice. It will not last. A movement lacks sincerity when it is supported by unwilling workers under pressure. The khilafat movement will become an irresistible force when every Mussulman treats

the Peace Terms as an individual wrong. No one waits for others' help or sacrifice in matters of private personal wrong. He seeks help no doubt, but his battle against the wrong goes on whether he gains help or not. If he has justice on his side, the divine law is that he does get help. God is the help of the helpless. When the Pandava brothers[1] were unable to help Draupadi, God came to the rescue and saved her honour. The Prophet was helped by God when he seemed to be forsaken by men.

NOW FOR THE SCHOOLS

I feel that if we have not the courage to suspend the education to our children, we do not deserve to win the battle.

The first stage includes renunciation of honours or favours. As a matter of fact no government bestows favours without taking more than the favours are worth. It would be a bad and extravagant government which threw away its favours. In a government broad-based upon a people's will, we give our lives to secure a trinket which is a symbol of service. Under an unjust government which defies a people's will, rich jaighrs become a sign of servitude and dishonour. Thus considered, the school must be given up without a moment's thought.

For me the whole scheme of non-co-operation is among other things a test of the intensity and extent of our feeling. Are we genuine? Are we prepared to suffer? It has been said that we may not expect much response from title-holders, for they have never taken part in national affairs and have bought their honours at too great a price easily to sacrifice them. I make a present of the argument to the objectors, and ask, what about the parents of school children and the grown-up college students? They have no such intimate connection with the Government as the title-holders. Do they or do they not feel enough to enable them to sacrifice the schooling?

But I contend that there is no sacrifice involved in emptying the schools. We must be specially unfit for non-co-operation if we are so helpless as to be unable to manage our own education in total independence of the Government. Every village should manage the education of its own children. I would not depend upon Govern- ment aid. If there is a real awakening the schooling need not be interrupted for a single day. The very schoolmasters who are now conducting

[1] The five sons of Pandu and heroes of the *Mahabharata*

Government schools, if they are good enough to resign their office, could take charge of national schools and teach our children the things they need, and not make of the majority of them indifferent clerks. I do look to the Aligarh College to give the lead in this matter. The moral effect created by the emptying of our *madrasahs* will be tremendous. I doubt not that the Hindu parents and scholars would not fail to copy their Mussulman brethren.

Indeed what could be grander education than that the parents and scholars should put religious sentiment before a knowledge of letters? If therefore no arrangement could be immediately made for the literary instruction of youths who might be withdrawn, it would be most profitable training for them to be able to work as volunteers for the cause which may necessitate their withdrawal from Government schools. For as in the case of the lawyers, so in the case of boys, my notion of withdrawal does not mean an indolent life. The withdrawing boys will, each according to his worth, be expected to take their share in the agitation.

Young India, 11-8-1920

93. INTERVIEW TO "THE MADRAS MAIL" ON NON-CO-OPERATION[1]

August 12, 1920

A representative of this journal[2] called on Mr. M. K. Gandhi yesterdaay. . . . Mr. Gandhi, who has come to Madras on a tour to some of the principal Muslim centres in Southern India, was busy with a number of workers discussing his programme; but he expressed his readiness to answer questions on the chief topic which is agitating Muslims and Hindus.

[REPRESENTATIVE :] After your experience of the satyagraha agitation last year, Mr. Gandhi, are you still hopeful and convinced of the widsom of advising non-co-operation?

[GANDHIJI :] Certainly.

How do you consider conditions have altered since the satyagraha movement of last year?

I consider that people are better disciplined now than they were

[1] This appeared in *The Madras Mail*, 13-8-1920, under the captions : "A Talk with Mr. Gandhi/Non-co-operation Explained", and, along with these and the introductory paragraph, was reproduced in *Young India*.

[2] *The Madras Mail*

before. In this I include even the masses whom I have had opportunities of seeing in large numbers in various parts of the country.

And you are satisfied that the masses understand the spirit of saytagraha?

Yes.

And that is why you are pressing on with the programme of non-co-operation?

Yes. Moreover, the danger that attended the civil disobedience part of satyagraha does not apply to non-co-operation, because in non-co-operation we are not taking up civil disobedience of laws as a mass movement. The result hitherto has been most encouraging. For instance, people in Sind and Delhi, in spite of the irritating restrictions upon their liberty by the authorities, have carried out the committee's instructions in regard to the Seditious Meetings Proclamation and to the prohibition of posting placards on the walls which we hold to be inoffensive but which the authorities consider to be offensive.

What is the pressure which you expect to bring to bear on the authorities if co-operation is withdrawn?

I believe, and everybody must grant, that no Government can exist for a single moment without the co-operation of the people, willing or forced, and if people suddenly withdraw their co-operation in every detail, the Government will come to a standstill.

But is there not a big "if" in it?

Certainly, there is.

And how do you propose to succeed against the big "if"?

In my plan of campaign, expediency has no room. If the khilafat movement has really permeated the masses and the classes, there must be adequate response from the people.

But are you not begging the question?

I am not begging the question, because so far as data before me go, I believe that the Muslims keenly feel the khilafat grievance. It remains to be seen whether their feeling is intense enough to evoke in them the measure of sacrifice adequate for successful non-co-operation.

That is, your survey of the conditions, you think, justifies your advising non-co-operation in the full conviction that you have behind you the support of the vast masses of the Mussulman population?

Yes.

This non-co-operation, you are satisfied, will extend to complete severance of co-operation with the Government?

No; nor is it the present moment my desire that it should. I am simply practising non-co-operation to the extent that is necessary to make the Government realize the depth of popular feeling in the matter and the dissatisfaction with the Government that all that could be done has not been done either by the Government of India or by the Imperial Government whether on the khilafat question or on the Punjab question.

Do you, Mr. Gandhi, realize that even amongst Mohammedans there are sections of people who are not enthusiastic over non-co-operation however much they may feel the wrong that has been done to their community?

Yes. But their number is smaller than those who are prepared to adopt non-co-operation.

And yet does not the fact that there has not been an adequate response to your appeal for resignation of titles and offices and for boycott of elections of the councils indicate that you may be placing more faith in their strength of conviction than is warranted?

I think not; for the reason that the stage has only just come into operation and our people are always most cautious and slow to move. Moreover, the first stage largely affects the uppermost strata of society, who represent a microscopic minority though they are undoubtedly an influential body of people.

This upper class, you think, has sufficiently responded to your appeal?

I am unable to say either one way or the other at present. I shall be able to give a definite answer at the end of this month. . . .

Do you think that without one's loyalty to the King and the royal family being questioned, one can advocate non-co-operation in connection with the royal visit?

Most decidedly; for the simple reason that if there is any disloyalty about the proposed boycott of the Prince's visit, it is disloyalty to the Government of the day and not to the person of His Royal Highness.

What do you think is to be gained by promoting this boycott in connection with the royal visit?

Because I want to show that the people of India are not in sympathy with the Government of the day and that they strongly disapprove of the policy of the Government in regard to the Punjab and khilafat, and even in respect of other important adminis- trative measures. I consider that the visit of the Prince of Wales is a singularly

good opportunity to the people to show their disapproval of the present Government. After all, the visit is calculated to have tremendous political results. It is not to be a non-political event, and seeing that the Government of India and the Imperial Government want to make the visit a political event of first-class importance, namely, for the purpose of strengthening their hold upon India, I for one, consider that it is the bounden duty of the people to boycott the visit which is being engineered by the two Governments in their own interest which at the present moment is totally antagonistic to the people.

Do you mean that you want this boycott promoted because you feel that the strengthening of the hold upon India is not desirable in the best interests of the country?

Yes. The strengthening of the hold of a Government so wicked as the present one is not desirable for the best interests of the people. Not that I want the bond between England and India to become loosened for the sake of loosening it but I want that bond to become strengthened only in so far as it adds to the welfare of India.

Do you think that non-co-operation and the non-boycott of the legislative councils [are] consistent?

No; because a person who takes up the programme of non-co-operation cannot consistently stand for councils.

Is non-co-operation, in your opinion, an end in itself or a means to an end, and if so, what is the end?

It is a means to an end, the end being to make the present Government just, whereas it has become mostly unjust. Co-operation with a just government is a duty; non-co-operation with an unjust government is equally a duty.

Will you look with favour upon the proposal to enter the councils and to carry on either obstructive tactics or to decline to take the oath of allegiance as consistent with your non-co-operation?

No; as an accurate student of non-co-operation, I consider that such a proposal is inconsistent with the true spirit of non-co-operation. I have often said that a Government really thrives on obstruction, and so far as the proposal not to take the oath of allegiance is concerned, I can really see no meaning in it; it amounts to a useless waste of valuable time and money.

In other words, obstruction is no stage in non-co-operation?

No. . . .

Are you satisfied that all efforts at constitutional agitation have been exhausted and that, non-co-operation is the only course left us?

I do not consider non-co-operation to be unconstitutional, but I do believe that of all the constitutional remedies now left open to us, non-co-operation is the only one left for us.

Do you consider it constitutional to adopt it with a view merely to paralyse Government?

Certainly, it is not unconstitutional, but a prudent man will not take all the steps that are constitutional if they are otherwise undesirable, nor do I advise that course. I am resorting to non-co-operation in progressive stages because I want to evolve true order out of untrue order. I am not going to take a single step in non-co-operation unless I am satisfied that the country is ready for that step, namely, non-co-operation will not be followed by anarchy or disorder.

How will you satisfy yourself that anarchy will not follow?

For instance, if I advise the police to lay down their arms, I shall have satisfied myself that we are able by voluntary assistance to protect ourselves against thieves and robbers. That was precisely what was done in Lahore and Amritsar last year by the citizens by means of volunteers when the military and the police had withdrawn. Even where Government had not taken such measures in a place, for want of adequate force, I know people have successfully protected themselves.

You have advised lawyers to non-co-operate by suspending their practice. What is your experience? Has the lawyers' response to your appeal encouraged you to hope that you will be able to carry through all stages of non-co-operation with the help of such people?

I cannot say that a large number has yet responded to my appeal. It is too early to say how many will respond. But I may say that I do not rely merely upon the lawyer class or highly educated men to enable the Committee to carry out all the stages of non-co-operation. My hope lies more with the masses so far as the later stages of non-co-operation are concerned.

Young India, 18-8-1920

94. SPEECH ON NON-CO-OPERATION, MADRAS[1]

August 12, 1920

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

Like last year, I have to ask your forgiveness that I should have to speak being seated. Whilst my voice has become stronger than it was last year, my body is still weak; and if I were to attempt to speak to you standing, I could not hold on for very many minutes before the whole frame would shake. I hope, therefore, that you will grant me permission to speak seated. I have sat here to address you on a most important question, probably a question whose importance we have not measured up to now.

But before I approach that question on this dear old beach of Madras, you will expect me—you will want me to offer my tribute to the great departed, Lokamanya Tilak Maharaj. (Loud and prolonged cheers.) I would ask this great assembly to listen to me in silence. I have come to make an appeal to your heart and to your reason and I could not do so unless you were prepared to listen to whatever I have to say in absolute silence. I wish to offer my tribute to the departed patriot and I think that I cannot do better than say that his death, as his life, has poured new vigour into the country. If you were present as I was present at that great funeral procession, you would realize with me the meaning of my words. Mr. Tilak lived for his country. The inspiration of his life was freedom for his country which he called swaraj; the inspiration of his deathbed was also freedom for his country. And it was that which gave him such marvellous hold upon his countrymen; it was that which commanded the adoration not of a few chosen Indians belonging to the upper strata of society but of millions of his countrymen. His life was one long sustained piece of self-sacrifice. He began that life of discipline and self-sacrifice in 1879 and he continued that life up to the end of his day, and that was the secret of his hold upon his country. He not only knew what he wanted for his country but also how to live for his country and how to die for his country. I hope then that whatever I say this evening to this vast mass of people, will bear fruit in that same sacrifice for which the life of Lokamanya Tilak Maharaj stands. His life, if it teaches us anything whatsoever, teaches one supreme lesson; that if we want to do anything whatsoever for our country, we can do so not by speeches,

[1] At a public meeting, on the beach opposite the Presidency College

however grand, eloquent and convincing they may be, but only by sacrifice at the back of every word and at the back of every act of our life. I have come to ask everyone of you whether you are ready and willing to give sufficiently for your country's sake, for your country's honour and for religion. I have boundless faith in you, the citizens of Madras, and the people of this great presidency, a faith which I began to cultivate in the year 1893 when I first made acquaintance with the Tamil labourers in South Africa; and I hope that, in these hours of our trial, this province will not be second to any other in India, and that it will lead in this spirit of self-sacrifice and will translate every word into action.[1]

NEED FOR NON-CO-OPERATION

What is this non-co-operation about which you have heard much, and why do we want to offer this non-co-operation? I wish to go for the time being into the why. There are two things before this country. The first and the foremost is the khilafat question. On this the heart of the Mussulmans of India has become lacerated. British pledges, given after the greatest deliberation by the Prime Minister of England in the name of the English nation, have been dragged into the mire. The promises given to moslem India, on the strength of which the consideration that was accepted by the British nation was exacted, have been broken and the great religion of Islam has been placed in danger. The Mussulmans hold—and I venture to think they rightly hold—that so long as British promises remain unfulfilled so long is it impossible for them to tender whole-hearted fealty and loyalty to the British connection; and if it is to be a choice for a devout Mussulman between loyalty to the British connection and loyalty to his Code and Prophet, he will not require a second to make his choice and he has declared his choice. The Mussulmans say frankly, openly and honourably to the whole world that if the British ministers and the British nation do not fulfil the pledges given to them and do not wish to regard with respect the sentiments of 70 millions of the inhabitants of India who profess the faith of Islam, it will be impossible for them to retain Islamic loyalty. It is a question, then, for the rest of the Indian population to consider whether they want to perform a neighbourly duty by their Mussulman countrymen and if they do, they have an opportunity of a lifetime which will not occur for another hundred years, to show their goodwill, fellowship and

[1] Up to this, the report is from *The Hindu*.

friendship and to prove what they have been saying for all these long years that the Mussulman is the brother of the Hindu. If the Hindu regards that before the connection with the British nation comes his natural connection with his Moslem brother, then I say to you that if you find that the Moslem claim is just, that it is based upon real sentiment, and that at its background is this great religious feeling, you cannot do otherwise than help the Mussulmans through and through so long as their cause remains just and the means for attaining the end remains equally just, honourable and free from harm to India. These are the plain conditions which the Indian Mussulmans have accepted and it was when they saw that they could accept the proferred aid of the Hindus, that they could always justify the cause and the means before the whole world, that they decided to accept the proferred hand of fellowship. It is then for Hindus and Mussulmans to offer a united front to the whole of the Christian powers of Europe and tell them that weak as India is, India has still got the capacity of preserving her self-respect.

That is the khilafat in a nutshell; but you have also got the Punjab. The Punjab has wounded the heart of India as no other question has for the past century. I do not exclude from my calculation the Mutiny of 1857. Whatever hardships India had to suffer during the Mutiny, the insult that was attempted to be offered to her during the passage of the Rowlatt legislation, and that which was offered after its passage, were unparalleled in Indian history. It is because you want justice from the British nation in connection with the Punjab atrocities, you have to devise ways and means as to how you can get this justice. The House of Commons, the House of Lords, Mr. Montagu, the Viceroy of India, everyone of them knows what the feeling of India is on this khilafat question and on that of the Punjab; the debates in both the Houses of Parliament, the action of Mr. Montagu and that of the Viceroy have demonstrated to you completely that they are not willing to give the justice which is India's due and which she demands. I suggest that our leaders have got to find a way out of this great difficulty and unless we have made ourselves even with the British rulers in India, and unless we have gained a measures of self-respect at the hands of the British rulers in India, no connection and no friendly intercourse is possible between them and ourselves. I, therefore venture to suggest this beautiful

unanswerable method of non-co-operation.

IS IT UNCONSTITUTIONAL?

I have been told that non-co-operation is unconstitutional. I venture to deny that it is unconstitutional. On the contrary, I hold that non-co-operation is a just and religious doctrine; it is the inherent right of every human being and it is perfectly constitutional. A great lover of the British Empire has said that under the British Constitution, even a successful rebellion is perfectly constitutional and he quotes historical instances which I cannot deny in support of his claim. I do not claim any constitutionality for a rebellion successful or otherwise so long as that rebellion means in the ordinary sense of the term what it does mean, namely, wresting justice by violent means. On the contrary, I have said it repeatedly to my countrymen that violence, whatever end it may serve in Europe, will never serve us in India. My brother and friend Shaukat Ali believes in methods of violence; and if it was in his power to draw the sword against the British Empire, I know that he has got the courage of a man and he has got also the wisdom to see that he should offer that battle to the British Empire. But because he recognizes as a true soldier that means of violence are not open to India, he sides with me accepting my humble assistance and pledges his word that so long as I am with him and so long as he believes in the doctrine so long will he not harbour even the idea of violence against any single Englishman or any single man on earth. I am here to tell you that he has been as true as his word and has kept it religiously. I am here to bear witness that he has been following out this plan of non-violent non-co-operation to the very letter and I am asking India to follow this non-violent non-co-operation. I tell you that there is not a better soldier living in our ranks in British India than Shaukat Ali. When the time for the drawing of the sword comes, if it ever comes, you will find him drawing that sword and you will find me retiring to the jungle of Hindustan. As soon as India accepts the doctrine of the sword, my life as an Indian is finished. It is because I believe in a mission special to India, and it is because I believe that the ancients of India, after centuries of experience, have found out that the true thing for any human being on earth is not justice based on violence but justice based on sacrifice of self, justice based on *yajna*[1] and kurbani[2]—I cling to that doctrine and I shall cling to it for

[1] Sacrifice
[2] *ibid*

ever—it is for that reason I tell you that whilst my friend believes also in the doctrine of violence and has adopted the doctrine of non-violence as a weapon of the weak, I believe in the doctrine of non-violence as a weapon of the strongest. I believe that a man is the strongest soldier for daring to die unarmed with his breast bare before the enemy. So much for the non-violent part of non-co-operation. I, therefore, venture to suggest to my learned countrymen that so long as the doctrine of non-co-operation remains non-violent so long there is nothing unconstitutional in the doctrine.

I ask further, is it unconstitutional for me to say to the British Government, "I refuse to serve you" ? Is it unconstitutional for our worthy chairman to return with every respect all the titles that he has ever held from the Government? Is it unconstitutional for any parent to withdraw his children from a Government or aided school ? Is it unconstitutional for a lawyer to say, "I shall no longer support the arm of the law so long as that arm of law is used not to raise me but to debase me" ? Is it unconstitutional for a civil servant or for a judge to say, "I refuse to serve a Government which does not wish to respect the wishes of the whole people"? I ask, is it unconstitutional for a policeman or for a soldier to tender his resignation when he knows that he is called to serve a Government which traduces its own countrymen? Is it unconstitutional for me to go to the "krishak", to the agriculturist, and say to him, "It is not wise for you to pay any taxes, if these taxes are used by the Government not to raise you but to weaken you"? I hold and I venture to submit that there is nothing unconstitutional in it. What is more, I have done everyone of these things in my life and nobody has questioned the constitutional character of it. I was in Kaira working in the midst of seven lakhs of agriculturists. They had all suspended the payment of taxes and the whole of India was at one with me. Nobody considered that it was unconstitutional. I submit that in the whole plan of non-co-operation there is nothing unconstitutional. But I do venture to suggest that it will be highly unconstitutional in the midst of this unconstitutional Government—in the midst of a nation which has built up its magnificent constitution—for the people of India to become weak and to crawl on their belly—it will be highly unconstitutional for the people of India to pocket every insult that is offered to them; it is highly unconstitutional for the 70 millions of Mohammedans of India to submit to a violent wrong done to their religion; it is highly unconstitu-tional for the whole of India to sit still and co-operate with

an unjust Government which has trodden under its feet the honour of the Punjab; I say to my countrymen : "So long as you have a sense of honour and so long as you wish to remain the descendants and defenders of the noble traditions that have been handed to you for generations after generations, it is unconstitutional for you not to non-co-operate and unconstitutional for you to co-operate with a Government which has become so unjust as our Government has become. I am not anti-English; I am not anti-British; I am not anti-any government; but I am anti-untruth—anti-humbug and anti-injustice. So long as the Government spells injustice, it may regard me as its enemy, implacable enemy. I had hoped at the Congress at Amritsar—I am speaking God's truth before you—when I pleaded on knees before some of you for co-operation with the Government, I had full hope that the British ministers, who are wise as a rule, would placate the Mussulman sentiment, that they would do full justice in the matter of the Punjab atrocities, and, therefore, I said : Let us return goodwill to the hand of fellowship that has been extended to us, which, I then believed, was extended to us through the Royal Proclamation. It was on that account that I pleaded for co-operation. But today that faith having gone and [been] obliterated by the acts of the British ministers, I am here to plead not for futile obstruction in the legislative council but for real substantial non-co-operation which would paralyse the mightiest government on earth. That is what I stand for today. Until we have wrung justice and until we have wrong our self-respect from unwilling hands and from unwilling pens, there can be no co-operation. Our Shastras say and I say so with the greatest deference to all the greatest religious preceptors of India but without fear of contradiction that our Shastras teach us that there shall be no co-operation between injustice and justice, between an unjust man and a justice-loving man, between truth and untruth. Co-operation is a duty only so long as Government protects your honour, and non-co-operation is an equal duty when the Government, instead of protecting robs you of your honour. That is the doctrine of non-co-operation.

NON-CO-OPERATION AND THE SPECIAL CONGRESS

I have been told that I should have watied for the declaration of the special Congress which is the mouthpiece of the whole nation. I know that it is the mouthpiece of the whole nation. If it was for me, individual Gandhi, to wait, I would have waited for eternity. But I had in my hands a sacred trust. I was advising my Mussulman countrymen and for the time being I hold their honour in my hands. I dare not ask

them to wait for any verdict but the verdict of their own conscience. Do you suppose that Mussulmans can eat their own words, can withdraw from the honourable position they have taken up? If perchance—and God forbid that it should happen—the special Congress decides against them, I would still advise my countrymen, the Mussulmans, to stand single-handed and fight rather than yield to the attempted dishonour to their religion. It is, therefore, given to the Mussulmans to go to the Congress on bended knees and plead for support. But support or no support, it was not possible for them to wait for the Congress to give them the lead. They had to choose between futile violence, drawing of the naked sword and peaceful non-violent but effective non-co-operation, and they have made their choice. I venture further to say to you that if there is any body of men who feel as I do, the sacred character of non-co-operation, it is for you and me not to wait for the Congress but to act and to make it impossible for the Congress to give any other verdict. After all what is the Congress? The Congress is the collected voice of individuals who form it, and if the individuals go to the Congress with a united voice, that will be the verdict you will gain from the Congress. But if we go to the Congress with no opinion because we have none or because we are afraid to express it, then naturally we await the verdict of the Congress. To those who are unable to make up their mind, I say, by all means wait. But for those who have seen the clear light as they see the lights in front of them, for them to wait is a sin. The Congress does not expect you to wait but it expects you to act so that the Congress can gauge properly the national feeling. So much for the Congress.

BOYCOTT OF THE COUNCILS

Among the details of non-co-operation I have placed in the foremost rank the boycott of the councils. Friends have quarrelled with me for the use of the word boycott, because I have disapproved—as I disapprove even now—boycott of British goods or any goods for that matter. But there, boycott has its own meaning and here boycott has its own meaning. I not only do not disapprove but approve of the boycott of the councils that are going to be formed next year. And why do I do it? The people—the masses—require from us, the leaders, a clear lead. They do not want any equivocation from us. The suggestion that we should seek election and then refuse to take the oath of allegiance would only make the nation distrust the leaders. It is not a clear lead to the nation. So I say to you, my countrymen, not to fall into this trap. We shall sell our country by adopting the

methods of seeking election and then not taking the oath of allegiance. We may find it diffi- cult and I frankly confess to you that I have not that trust in so many Indians making that declaration and standing by it. Today I suggest to those who honestly hold the view viz., that we should seek election and then refuse to take the oath of allegiance—I suggest to them that they will fall into a trap which they are preparing for themselves and for the nation. That is my view. I hold that if we want to give the nation the clearest possible lead and if we want not to play with this great nation, we must make it clear to this nation that we cannot take any favours, no matter how great they may be, so long as those favours are accompanied by an injustice, a double wrong done to India not yet redressed. The first indispensable thing before we can receive any favours from them is, that they should redress this double wrong. There is a Greek proverb which used to say: "Beware of the Greeks but especially beware of them when they bring gifts to you". Today from those ministers who are bent upon perpetuating the wrong to Islam and to the Punjab, I say we cannot accept gifts but we should be doubly careful lest we may not fall into the trap that they may have devised. I therefore suggest that we must not coquet with the councils and must not have anything whatsoever to do with them. I am told that if we, who represent the national sentiment, do not seek election, the Moderates who do not represent that sentiment will. I do not agree. I do not know what the Moderates represent and I do not know what the Nationalists represent. I know that there are good sheep and black sheep among the Moderates. I know that there are good sheep and black sheep amongst the Nationalists. I know that many Moderates hold honestly the view that it is a sin to resort to non-co-operation. I respectfully agree to differ from them. I do say to them also that they will fall into a trap which they will have devised if they seek election. But that does not affect my situation. If I feel in my heart of hearts that I ought not to go to the councils, I ought at least to abide by this decision and it does not matter if ninety-nine other countrymen seek election. That is the only way in which public work can be done and public opinion can be built. That is the only way in which reforms can be achieved and religion can be conserved. If it is a question of religious honour, whether I am one or among many, I must stand upon my doctrine. Even if I should die in the attempt, it is worth dying for than that I should live and deny my own doctrine. I suggest that it will be wrong on the part of anyone to seek election to these councils. If once we

feel that we cannot co-operate with this Government, we have to commence from the top. We are the natural leaders of the people and we have acquired the right and the power to go to the nation and speak to it with the voice of non-co-operation. I, therefore, do suggest that it is inconsistent with non-co-operation to seek election to the councils on any terms whatsoever.

LAWYERS AND NON-CO-OPERATION

I have suggested another difficult matter, viz, that the lawyers should suspend their practice. How should I do otherwise knowing so well how the Government had always been able to retain this power through the instrumentality of lawyers? It is perfectly true that it is the lawyers of today who are leading us, who are fighting the country's battles, but when it comes to a matter of action against the Government, when it comes to a matter of paralysing the activity of the Government, I know that the Government always looks to the lawyers, however fine fighters they may have been, to preserve their dignity and their self-respect. I, therefore, suggest to my lawyer friends that it is their duty to suspend their practice and to show to the Government that they will no longer retain their offices, because lawyers are considered to be honorary officers of the courts and, therefore, subject to their disciplinary jurisdiction. They must no longer retain these honorary offices if they want to withdraw co-operation from Government. But what will happen to law and order? We shall evolve law and order through the instrumentality of these very lawyers. We shall promote arbitration courts and dispense justice, pure, simple, home-made justice, swadeshi justice to our countrymen. That is what suspension of practice means.

PARENTS AND NON-CO-OPERATION

I have suggested yet another difficulty—to withdraw our children from the Government schools and to ask collegiate students to withdraw from the college and to empty Government-aided schools. How could I do otherwise? I want to gauge the national sentiment. I want to know whether the Mohammedans feel deeply. If they feel deeply, they will understand in the twinkling of an eye that it is not right for them to receive schooling from a Government in which they have lost all faith; and which they do not trust at all. How can I, if I do not want to help this Government, receive any help from that Government? I think that the schools and colleges are factories for making clerks and Government servants. I would not help this great factory for manufacturing clerks and servants if I want to withdraw co-opera- tion from that Government. Look at it from any point of

view you like. It is not possible for you to send your children to the schools and still believe in the doctrine of non-co-operation.

THE DUTY OF TITLE-HOLDERS

I have gone further. I have suggested that our title-holders should give up their titles. How can they hold on to the titles and honours bestowed by this Government? They were at one time badges of honour when we believed that national honour was safe in their hands. But now they are no longer badges of honour but badges of dishonour and disgrace when we really believe that we cannot get justice from this Government. Every title-holder holds his title and honours as trustee for the nation and in this first step in the withdrawal of co-operation from the Government, they should surrender their titles without a moment's consideration. I suggest to my Mohammedan countrymen that, if they fail in this primary duty, they will certainly fail in non-co-operation unless the masses themselves reject the classes and take up non-co-operation in their own hands and are able to fight that battle even as the men of the French Revolution were able to take the reins of Government in their own hands leaving aside the leaders and marched to the banner of victory. I want no revolution. I want ordered progress. I want no disordered order. I want no chaos. I want real order to be evolved out of this chaos which is misrepresented to me as order. If it is order established by a tyrant in order to get hold of the tyrannical reins of Government I say that it is no order for me but it is disorder. I want to evolve justice out of this injustice. Therefore, I suggest to you the passive non-co-operation. If we would only realize the secret of this peaceful and infallible doctrine, you will know and you will find that you will not want to use even an angry word when they lift the sword at you and you will not want even to lift your little finger, let alone a stick or a sword.

A SERVICE TO THE EMPIRE

You may consider that I have spoken these words in anger because I have considered the ways of this Government immoral, unjust, debasing and untruthful. I use these adjectives with the greatest deliberation. I have used them for my own true brother with whom I was engaged in a battle of non-co-operation for full 13 years and although the ashes cover the remains of my brother, I tell you that I used to tell him that he was unjust when his plans were based upon immoral foundation. I used to tell him that he did not stand for truth. There was no anger in me. I told him this home truth because I loved

him. In the same manner I tell the British people that I love them and that I want their association but I want that association on conditions well defined. I want my self-respect and I want my absolute equality with them. If I cannot gain that equality from the British people, I do not want the British connection. If I have to let the British people go and import temporary disorder and dislocation of national business, I will rather favour that disorder and dislocation than that I should have injustice from the hands of a great nation such as the British nation. You will find that by the time the whole chapter is closed that the successors of Mr. Montagu will give me the credit for having rendered the most dintinguished service that I have yet rendered to the Empire, in having offered this non-co-operation and in having suggested the boycott, not of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, but of boycott of a visit engineered by the Government in order to tighten its hold on the national neck. I will not allow it even if I stand alone, if I cannot persuade this nation not to welcome that visit, but will boycott that visit with all the power at my command. It is for that reason I stand before you and implore you to offer this religious battle, but it is not a battle offered to you by a visionary or a saint. I deny being a visionary. I do not accept the claim of saintliness. I am of the earth, earthly, a common gardener man as much as anyone of you, probably much more than you are. I am prone to as many weaknesses as you are. But I have seen the world. I have lived in the world with my eyes open. I have gone through the most fiery ordeals that have fallen to the lot of man. I have gone through this discipline. I have understood the secret of my own sacred Hinduism. I have learnt the lesson that non-co-operation is the duty not merely of the saint but it is the duty of every ordinary citizen, who not knowing much, not caring to know much, but wants to perform his ordinary household functions. The people of Europe teach even their masses, the poor people, the doctrine of the sword. But the *rishis* of India, those who have held the traditions of India, have preached to the masses of India the doctrine, not of the sword, not of violence but of suffering, of self-suffering. And unless you and I are prepared to go through the primary lesson, we are not ready even to offer the sword and that is the lesson my brother Shaukat Ali has imbibed to teach and that is why he today accepts my advice tendered to him in all prayerfulness and in all humility and says: “Long live non-co-operation”. Please remember that even in England the little children were withdrawn from the schools; and colleges in Cambridge and Oxford were closed. Lawyers had left their

desks and were fighting in the trenches. I do not present to you the trenches but I do ask you to go through the sacrifice that the men, women and the brave lads of England went through. Remember that you are offering battle to a nation which is saturated with the spirit of sacrifice whenever the occasion arises. Remember that the little band of Boers offered stubborn resistance to a mighty nation. But their lawyers had left their desks. Their mothers had withdrawn their children from the schools and colleges and the children had become the volunteers of the nation. I have seen them with these naked eyes of mine. I am asking my countrymen in India to follow no other gospel than the gospel of self-sacrifice which precedes every battle. Whether you belong to the school of violence or non-violence, you will still have to go through the fire of sacrifice and of discipline. May God grant you, may God grant our leaders the wisdom, the courage and the true knowledge to lead the nation to its cherished goal! May God grant the people of India the right path, the true vision and the ability and the courage to follow this path, difficult and yet easy, of sacrifice.

The Hindu, 13-8-1920; also *Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* (3rd ed.), pp. 524-41

95. SPEECH ON NON-CO-OPERATION, MADRAS[1]

August 13, 1920

While discussing titles, Gandhi wished the chairman, Hakeem Abdul Aziz, would give up his.

He explained the second step in non-co-operation, i.e., resigning Government appointments.

Then he went to the third and fourth steps—withdrawal from military service and refusal to pay taxes respectively.

He said that by the time they got to the third stage they will be practically the rulers of India; but unless the title-holders give up their titles and the Honorary Magis-trates give up their posts, and lawyers their practices and children are withdrawn from Government and aided institutions, councils boycotted and swadeshism practically encou-raged, and the leaders go to the people like fakirs in hand-made clothes and walking bare-footed after giving up their motor cars, they cannot request Government servants and sepoys to resign their posts or the ryot to refuse to pay taxes. They should not think that if they give up their appointments

[1] At Juma Mosque, Triplicane

they will become helpless. The Khilafat Committee would come to their aid. . . . If non-co-operation is successfully worked up, it will be impossible for Government to carry on its administration.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1920, p. 1277

96. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

AMBUR,

Saturday [*August 14, 1920*][1]

DEAR SHANEKERLAL,

I think a lot about you. I shall await your letter.

I would particularly suggest that you should consider how much we harm ourselves and the country by anger. I am not writing this to find fault with you. I agree that you are under a nervous strain. But it is a mental trouble and so you can acquire control over your mind.

Would you make it a point to read the last stanzas in chapter II of the *Gita* which have been spoken by Krishna in reply to a question by Arjuna! These stanzas contain the remedy for all ailments.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 32714

97. DOCTRINE OF THE SWORD

I have no dearth of advisers. They send me letters, signed and unsigned, and some visit me to proffer their advice in person. Some write to me to say that I am a coward, afraid of the sword, and, therefore, I shall achieve nothing in this world; that it is my fear which makes me prate about non-violence without knowing what it means. Some others tell me that I have violence enough in my heart, that I approve of killing, but that I am such a "shrewd fellow" and so "cunning" that I do not let people know what I think and, though talking about non-violence, at heart want to instigate violence. Besides these, there is another class of men who think that I am not a rogue but am only waiting for my opportunity and, when it comes, I shall advise people to use the sword. These people think that the time for

[1] Gandhiji was in Ambur on this date which fell on a Saturday.

this is ripe and that now I should wait no longer.

Ordinarily, it should not be necessary for me to occupy myself with answering the points these advisers make. Where is the harm, or what is there to be exercised about, if some people think me cunning? What right, besides, have I to take up the time of *Navajivan's* readers with a defence of my saintliness or a rebuttal of the charge of being "cunning"? Certainly, I ought not to enter into any discussion of this matter with a view to defending myself, but I know that, my present position being what it is, the common people are eager to know my views and I know, further, that my actions proceed from my views. I think it necessary, for the sake of these, to clarify my position and so I take the liberty to place once again before readers my views on brute force.

Sword-force is brute force. Killing people requires no intelligence. We may, indeed, by misdirecting our intelligence employ it in the service of brute force but, though aided by intelligence, brute force remains brute force and the law of the sword remains the law of the beast. In the latter, the self is in a state of nescience and can have no knowledge of itself. That is why we know the animal world as enveloped in darkness. The activities of eating, drinking, sleeping, feeling afraid, etc., are common to man and beast. But man has the power of distinguishing between good and evil and can also know the self. One animal subdues another simply by its physical might. Its world is ruled by that law, but not so the human world. The law which is most in harmony with human nature is that of winning over others by the power of love—by soul-force. When, therefore, a man wins over an enemy through love, he simply follows the law of his nature. He has not become a god in doing so. Gods have no physical body. They behave sometimes like beasts and sometimes like men. There are white gods as also black gods. Man is, at times, seen acting like an animal. He is endowed with brute force as well, and, so long as he has not developed awareness of his spiritual nature he remains an intelligent animal. Though human in body, instead of obeying the law of his kind he follows the law of the animal. This, however, should not be regarded as his true nature. I believe, therefore, that if we wake up to the consciousness of our true nature, we would, that very moment, renounce the law of the jungle.

But the sages saw that the passions of the beast had not died out in most persons, though they possessed human bodies. They

recognized, therefore, that there was scope for the use of brute force even by human beings and showed under what circumstances it could be employed.

When a man submits to another through fear, he does not follow his nature but yields to brute force. He who has no desire to dominate others by brute force will not himself submit to such force either. Recognizing, therefore, that a man who fears brute force has not attained self-knowledge at all, our Shastras allowed him the use of brute force while he remains in this state.

A Pathan made a murderous attack on me in 1908. My eldest son[1] was not present then. He possessed fairly good physical strength. I did not have the Pathan prosecuted since I held the same views then as I do now. I was educating my sons too in the ideas of forgiveness and love, and so at our very first meeting [after the assault], my son said to me : "I want to know what my duty would have been if I had been with you at the time. You have taught us that we may not strike back nor tamely submit to the other man. I understand this principle but I have not the strength to act upon it. I could not remain a silent spectator while you were being beaten to death. I would consider it my duty to protect you if you should be assaulted. But I could not do this by laying down my own life [instead of striking back]. I must, therefore, either protect you by attacking the man who would strike you, or be passive witness to the attack on you, or run away." I told him : "It would be a sign of cowardice if you ran away or did nothing to protect me. If you could not protect me by taking the danger upon yourself, you should undoubtedly do so by attacking the other man. It is any day better to use brute force than to betray cowardice." I hold this view even now. It is better that India should arm itself and take the risk than that it should refuse to take up arms out of fear. It was for this reason that I had joined the Boer War and did my bit in helping the Government during the Zulu rebellion. It was for this same reason that, during the last War, I gave my help in England and in India, too. I engaged myself in recruiting work.

Forgiveness is the virtue of brave. He alone who is strong to avenge a wrong knows how to love [and forgive]. He alone who is capable of enjoying pleasures can qualify to be a *brahmachari*[2] by

[1] Harilal Gandhi

[2] One who observes *brahmacharya*. Literally, *brahmacharya* means living in the *Brahman*, the Absolute, In ordinary usage, the term has come to signify celibacy, which is considered essential for attainment of that state; *vide* also "In Confidence", 13-10-1920.

restraining his desires. There is no question of the mouse forgiving the cat. It will be evidence of India's soul-force only if it refuses to fight when it has the strength to do so.

It is necessary to understand what the phrase, "strength to fight" means in this context. It does not mean only physical strength. Everyone who has courage in him can have the strength to fight, and everyone who has given up fear of death has such strength. I have seen sturdy Negroes cowering before white boys, because they were afraid of the white man's revolver. I have also seen weaklings holding out against robust persons. Thus, the day India gives up fear we shall be able to say that she has the strength to fight. It is not at all true to say that, to be able to fight, it is essential to acquire the ability to use arms; the moment, therefore, a man wakes up to the power of the soul, that very moment he comes to know the strength he has for fighting. That is why I believe that he is the true warrior who does not die killing but who has mastered the *mantra* of living by dying.

The sages who discovered the never-failing law of non-violence were themselves great warriors. When they discovered the ignoble nature of armed strength and realized the true nature of man, they discerned the law of non-violence pervading this world all full of violence. They then taught us that the *atman*[1] can conquer the whole world, that the greatest danger to the *atman* comes from itself and that conquest over it brings us the strength to conquer the entire world.

But they did not think, nor have affirmed or taught anywhere, that because they had discovered that law they alone could live according to it. On the contrary, they declared that even for a child the law is the same, and that it can act upon it too. It is not true that only sannyasis abide by it; all of us do so more or less, and a law which can be followed partially can be followed perfectly.

I have been striving to live according to this law. For many years past, I have been consciously trying to do so and have been exhorting India to do the same.

I believe myself to be an idealist and also a practical man. I do not think that a man can be said to have lived in accordance with this law only if he does so conciously and purposefully. Therefore, like a *vaid* [his medicine], I place it before all, whether or no they have faith

[1] The Self

in it. To prove that it is not necessary to have the higher knowledge to be able to recognize the importance of this law, I have joined hands with those who hold views contrary to mine. My friend Shaukat Ali seems to attach prime importance to violence, to believe that it is man's dharma to kill his enemy. Consequently, he follows the law of non-violence with hatred in his heart. He thinks non-co-operation is a weapon of the weak, and, therefore, inferior to resistance by force. Even so, he has joined me because he has seen that, except non-co-operation, there is no other effective method of upholding the honour of his faith.

I appeal even to those who have no faith in me to follow my friend Shaukat Ali. They need not believe in the purity of my motive, but must clearly recognize that there can be no violence simultaneously with non-co-operation. The greatest obstacle to the launching of all-out non-co-operation is the fear of violence breaking out. Those who are ready with arms or are eager to be so should also put them by while non-co-operation is going on.

To me, on the day when brute force gains ascendancy in India, all distinctions of East and West, of ancient and modern, will have disapp-eared. That day will be the day of my test. I take pride in looking upon India as my country because I believe that she has it in her to demonstrate to the world the supremacy of soul-force. When India accepts the supre-macy of brute force, I should no longer be happy to call her my mother-land. It is my belief that my dharma recognizes no limits of spheres of duty or of geographical boundaries. I pray to God that I may then be able to prove that my dharma takes no thought of my person or is not restricted to a particular field.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-8-1920

98. COURTS AND SCHOOLS

The Khilafat Non-co-operation Committee has, under my advice, called upon lawyers to give up practice, parents to withdraw their children from schools and college students to leave their colleges. I know that some people will think me mad for giving such advice. It is possible, though, that my work in South Africa and elsewhere is saving me from public ridicule. Nevertheless, I see widsom in my madness. I seriously believe that at present it is the duty of lawyers to give up practice and of the people to withdraw their wards from Government schools. If lawyers leave courts and Government colleges and schools are abandoned, the effect will be very powerful.

Let us first consider the case of lawyers. The power of a government depends on its courts. Through courts it punishes the guilty and it is through them that civil disputes are settled and in this way the Government acquires control over the people. Since the courts cannot run without lawyers, the latter, too, are deemed officials of the courts. When the Government rules justly, the courts and lawyers are perhaps of some service but, when the Government resorts to injustice, helping its courts to run is to further the injustice. It is almost impossible to run courts without the co-operation of lawyers. When I call upon the lawyers to give up practice, my intention is not that they should sit idle at home; it is rather that they should start working whole time for the cause of the khilafat or the Punjab, and also that they influence their clients and prevail upon them not to go to the courts. These lawyers should set up *panchas*[1] and help their clients to settle their disputes among themselves. In this way, the courts will be left without work and the people will learn to become independent of the State.

Some argue that the Government will be only too pleased if the lawyers give up practice. This is a delusion. It is true that generally lawyers are found to be most severe critics of the Government but, when there is a movement for bringing the machinery of Government to a halt, the Government seeks the help of lawyers and the latter, believing that their livelihood depends on that machinery, go to the help of the Government. At such times, therefore, the lawyers too are put to a test.

[1] Literally, “the five”; here a board of arbitrators

Some people raise the question what the lawyers would do for their livelihood if they gave up practice. One reply is that no such question can arise for eminent lawyers. For small lawyers, the Khilafat Committee can afford to pay them enough for a living and engage their full-time service for the khilafat movement, or appoint them to plead before *panchas* set up by the people and pay them. Moreover, lawyers are not the people to sit idle after giving up practice. They are, ought to be, capable of earning their livelihood honestly in some other way. During the last War, many lawyers in England gave up practice and joined the army.

Finally, the suggestion is not that the lawyers should surrender their registration but only stop practising for the duration of the movement.

The late Shri Gokhale used to say that the work of fighting an intelligent, determined and united bureaucracy, that is political work, is ill-done because it is taken up as spare-time hobby by the people. The way out of this evil, too, is for lawyers to stop practice and take up public work as their main work rather than as a hobby. They certainly cannot attend to public work in this way unless they give up practice. If the lawyers themselves are not prepared to make sacrifices, how can they ask the people to do so? It is no easy thing to secure justice on the khilafat and the Punjab issues. Thus, from every point of view, lawyers who really feel concerned about the khilafat or the Punjab cannot continue to practise.

Let us now turn to schools and colleges.

The Government uses our schools and colleges to produce servants. If we stop this important help to the Government, it will have no negligible effect. So long as we believe that the Government is a beneficent one, we need have no shame in helping its schools and preparing qualified men for Government service. When, however, the Government has set itself against the people, to let the school remain under its control is to tighten its stranglehold.

Even if we consider school to be a favour granted by the Government, we may not accept even a favour from an unjust Government.

There is no reason to fear that, as a result of the closing down of schools, our children will have to go without education. If a school closes down completely, it can then be run by the people. If people lack even this capacity, it will only mean that they do not have the strength to fight the Government. If all or most parents withdraw their

children, the teachers will resign of their own accord and, in that case, we shall be able to run the schools with the help of the very same teachers. If the expendi-ture is somewhat in excess of the fees [collected], the local Committee should find the balance. Parents should bear this increased burden.

Moreover, what is the harm if education is interrupted for some time? I rather maintain that, far from their education being interrupted, it is real education for children to be withdrawn from schools and for college students to leave their colleges. When we withdraw our childen from schools or, being grown up, they leave schools and colleges on their own, for the sake of dharma or justice, the understanding of these which they acquire is no mean education. I would myself look upon that as the right education. It will be a further advantage, besides, that the pupils who have thus left schools and colleges may enrol as volunteers.

Our Muslim brethren say that they have been deeply hurt over the khilafat issue. This is really a matter of religious sentiment. This question of [leaving] schools and colleges will test the religious sentiment of Muslim parents and the Hindus' brotherly feelings for Muslims. The test, though easy to pass, will have a powerful effect. If millions of pupils leave schools and colleges, what conclusion will the Government draw? What a fine means for measuring public feeling will this provide? And what degree of popular awakening does it betoken that the people should take their education in their own hands in order to protect themselves?

During the last War, a number of schools had closed down in England. During the Boer War, all Boer schools were closed down.

For these reasons, I believe that it is the duty of Hindus and Muslims to withdraw their children from every Government school and of college students to leave their colleges. What needs to be done is worth doing even if there is only one person to do it. A good deed done by one person will bear fruit for that person at any rate. If all the people do it, all will reap the fruit.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-8-1920

99. FORTHCOMING GUJARAT POLITICAL CONFERENCE

It is a momentous Conference which will be meeting at the end of this month. It will decide on the great question of non-co-operation. The aim behind calling the Conference hurriedly is to educate public opinion and place Gujarat's view before the Congress session. Non-co-operation with a mighty empire requires great firmness, courage, sagacity, capacity for self-sacrifice, unity, discipline, etc. The present policy of the British Government is so wicked that to me it becomes clearer every moment that it is a sin to co-operate with it so long as that policy continues. It is no easy thing, however, to get it changed. Non-co-operation, therefore, is not likely to be an easy affair. Hence I do not wish to secure Gujarat's vote in favour of non-co-operation anyhow, keeping people in the dark, but I want that the delegates should weigh the pros and cons carefully and give their considered opinion.

I hope that those who are opposed to non-co-operation will attend it in full strength and argue their case with firmness. I also take it, likewise, that the supporters of non-co-operation will come well-prepared. It is the duty of both sides to see that the audience listens to the arguments of either with courtesy and restraint and without making any noise. This is an essential condition if we are to obtain a clear verdict at such conferences. The irresponsible behaviour, bad manners and rowdyism in the House of Commons need not be copied by us. To go to a conference with settled views and get excited at the arguments of the opposite side is certainly not the way to arrive at a well-considered decision. It will, therefore, be profitable and facilitate the proceedings of the Conference if the organizers issue circulars for this purpose and make the necessary suggestion to the delegates in advance.

If it is necessary that order be maintained, it is likewise the people's duty to elect intelligent delegates. It is desirable that they attend the Conference in sufficient strength.

It is necessary that the Conference should be attended by delegates representing all occupations and all classes of society. It will be more in keeping with the dignity of the country if the distinction between the educated and the uneducated is replaced by other suitable distinctions such as those based on occupations, etc. We do not find in the world that the educated have a monopoly of intelligence and wisdom. An illiterate farmer can represent the difficulties of the

agricultural classes much better than an Indian learned but without experience in that particular field. I wish, therefore, to see an ever-increasing number of delegates from among farmers, weavers, carpenters, blacksmiths, shoe-makers and other such groups. I, for one, think that no substantial progress in the country is possible so long as patriotic farmers do not attend our political and social conferences in numbers proportionate to their numerical strength. The understanding of farmers' conditions which, through direct experience, I acquired in few months in Champaran[1] and Kheda[2] cannot be had from any number of books.

If, again, we really welcome the presence of delegates from among farmers and others, chairs and other ostentations have no place in our conferences. In our climate, chairs, curtains, etc., are so much of a nuisance. I am quite sure that we can go through the business of the Conference far more efficiently and at much less expense with carpets spread on clean ground. I believe that, as long as three crores of men in India starve for want of food and a larger number than that have little to cover their bodies with, as long as a frightful number of living human beings in Orissa look like mere skeletons, with ribs sticking out, when there is no compelling reason why this should be so, we have no right to erect gaudy *pandals* and be comfortable in chairs. Our people do not usually sit in chairs. I would, therefore, request the organizers to provide only as many chairs, if any, as are absolutely necessary and to make seating arrangements on the ground for all others. This will save public money and accommodate a large number in a small space. I have just returned from the Khilafat Conference held at Hyderabad. Thousands of Muslims, including *Pirs*, lawyers and barristers, landlords and others simply squatted on the ground and presented a very impressive scene. Temporary clay platforms were improvised and the leaders and dignitaries sat cross-legged on them. The chairman, too, sat on a similar platform. It was made with rough poles and these were sufficiently long. The chariman sat towards the back, and therefore, remained in full view of the audience. The speakers deliverd their speeches, standing on one side of the dais. This *pandal* accommodating thousands of men had been

[1] During 1917
[2] During 1918

erected in one day.

Volunteers should be trained beforehand in organizing things well so that there may be no noise or crowding anywhere in the Conference. Order can be maintained if all of them do not crowd together and keep standing at one place but keep to their appointed spots. They ought to be taught signalling with flags and fingers to communicate with one another from a distance when they cannot make themselves heard.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-8-1920

100. SPEECH ON RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF LABOUR, MADRAS[1]

August 15, 1920

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I hope that you will excuse me for not standing whilst speaking. Though my voice has become stronger than it was over a year ago, my body has not become as strong as I should like to be so as to enable me to stand up and speak. It gives me very great pleasure to renew your acquaintance a second time. I think I told you last year, when I had privilege of addessing some of you that I considered myself a fellow-labourer with you. Perhaps you are labourers not by choice, but somewhat by compulsion. But I entertain such high regard for labour. I entertain such geat respect for the dignity of labour that I have thrown in my lot with the labourers. And for many many years now, I have lived in their midst like them labouring with my hands and with my feet. I believe that it is the lot of life for every sentient being that before he or she eats, he or she must use hands and feet. In labouring therefore with your bodies you are simply following the law of your being and there is not the slightest reason for you to feel dissatisfied with your lot. On the contrary I would ask to regard yourselves as trustees for the nation for which you are labouring. A nation may do without its millionaires, without its capitalists, but a nation can never do without its labour. There is one fundamental distinction between your labour and my labour. You are labouring for someone else. In a natural state perhaps we would expect everyone to be his own master, viz, to be his own labourer. You are not your own

[1] At a meeting at Madras Beach under the auspices of the Central Labour Board, B. P. Wadia presiding

labourer. I consider that I am labouring for myself, i.e., I am my own master. In a natural state, we should all find ourselves our own masters. But such a state of things, cannot be reached in a day. It therefore becomes a very serious question for you to consider how you are to conduct yourselves as labourers serving for others. Just as there is no shame in being a labourer, so also there is no shame in labouring for others. It becomes necessary to find the true relation between master and servant. What are your duties? What are your responsibilities? And what are your rights? It is simple enough to understand that your right is to receive the hire for your labour and it is equally simple to know that your duty is to work to the best of your ability for the wages you receive. And it is my universal experience that as a rule labour discharges its obligations more effectively and more conscientiously. The master have corresponding duties towards the labourers. It therefore becomes necessary for labour to find out how far labour can impose its will upon the masters. If we find that we are not adequately paid, or adequately housed, how are we to claim and receive enough wages and good accommodation? Who is to determine the standard of wages and the standard of comfort required by the labourers? The best way, no doubt, is that you labourers understand your own rights, understand the method of enforcing those rights and enforce them. For that you require a little previous training and education. You have been brought to a central point from various parts of the country, and find yourselves duly congregated together and it was in the stress of circumstances perhaps you did not earn enough on your fields, or in your previous occupation, that you found yourselves in the hands of a particular master. But later you find that you are not getting enough and that you are not properly housed. But you do not know how to go about your work. I therefore venture to suggest to Mr. Wadia and those who are leading you and advising you that their first business is to guide you, not by giving you a knowledge of letters, but a knowledge of human affairs and human relations. I make this suggestion respectfully and in all humility, because my survey of labour in India, in so far as I have been able to undertake it, and my long experience of conditions of labour in South Africa led me to the conclusion that in a large majority of cases, leaders consider that they have to give labour a knowledge of the three R's. That undoubtedly is a necessity of the case. But it is to be preceded by a proper knowledge of your own rights and a way of enforcing them. In conducting many a strike I

have found that it is possible to give this fundamental education to the labourers within a day. That brings me to the subject of strikes.

Strikes are in the air today throughout the world. On the slightest pretext, the labourer goes in for strikes. My own experience of the last six months is that many strikes have done harm to labour rather than good. I have studied in so far as I could the strike in Bombay, the strike at the Tata Iron Works, the strike in Gorakhpur twice, and the celebrated strike of the Railway labourers in the Punjab. In all these four strikes I was more or less in connection with the labourers and what I am about to tell is derived from the labourers themselves. There was partial failure in all these strikes. Labour was not able to make good its points to the fullest extent. What was the reason? Labour was badly led. I want you to distinguish between two classes of leaders, you have leaders derived from yourselves and they are in their turn advised and led by those who are not themselves labourers, but who are in sympathy or expected to be in sympathy with labour. You do not require me to tell you that unless there is correspondence between yourselves, your own leaders, and those who are above you, unless there is perfect correspondence between these three there is bound to be failure. Now in all these four strikes, that perfect correspondence was lacking. There is another substantial reason which I discovered. The labourers looked at pecuniary support from their unions for the maintenance. No labour can prolong a strike indefinitely so long as labour depends upon the resources of its union. No strike can absolutely succeed which cannot be indefinitely prolonged. In all the strikes that I have ever conducted, I have laid down one indispensable rule, that labourers must find their own support. Therein lies the secret of success. And therein consists your education. You should be able to perceive that if you are able to serve one master and command a particular wage your labour must be worth and must be fit to receive that wage anywhere else. Strikers therefore cannot be expected to be idlers and to succeed. Your demands must be just and there should be no pressure exerted upon those whom you call blacklegs, any force of this kind exerted against your own fellow-labourers is bound to react upon yourselves. I think your advisers will tell you that these three conditions being fulfilled no strike need ever fail. That at once demonstrates to you the necessity of thinking a hundred times, before undertaking a strike. So much for your rights and the method of enforcing it. you on this point any further

But as labour becomes organized, strikes must become few and far between and as your mental development progresses further you will find immediately that the principle of arbitration replaces the principle of strikes. Time has now arrived when we should reach this stage. I will not detain

I would now venture to say a few words in connection with your national responsibilities. Just as you have to understand obligations amongst yourselves with reference to your own masters, so also it is necessary to understand your obligations to the nation to which you belong. Then your primary education is complete. If you sufficiently realize the dignity of labour, you will realize that you have a duty to discharge by your country. You must therefore find out the affairs of our country in the best manner you can. You must find it out without having to wade through a cartful of books, who are your governors, what are your duties in relation to them, what they can do to you and what you can do to them. I do not propose to go into the existing conditions. I have not come here to give you a long address. It is impossible for me to interest you in the intricate questions that are now agitating the country. It is enough for me to tell you that it is your bounden duty to understand your responsibilities and your duties as citizens of this great land. In my humble opinion it is not possible for you to live up to your religion fully until you undertake to understand these things. My task this evening is finished, if I have stimulated your desire after a knowledge of the affairs of your country and I hope that you will not rest content until you have found out through your advisers and leaders—the principal affairs of this country. I thank the controllers of labour here for extending this invitation to me and I thank you all for having come and given me patient hearing. I wish to give you my assurance that whenever you find that, you need any advice from me, it is yours. It therefore grieves me very much that when you invited me at one time to come to Madras, I was unable, because I was preoccupied, to respond to your invitation to come to Madras. But you will accept my assurance that it was not due to want of will, it was due to want of ability. I wish you all the prosperity that you may deserve and I hope that you will discharge yourselves as good citizens of this country.

The Hindu, 16-8-1920; also *Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* (3rd ed.), pp. 784-8

101. SPEECH ON NON-CO-OPERATION, KUMBAKONAM

August 16, 1920

Messrs Gandhi and Shaukat Ali spoke in English and Urdu respectively, their speeches being rendered into Tamil sentence by sentence. Acknowledging address of welcome presented at Kumbakonam and addressing a huge mass meeting, Mahatma Gandhi while regretting his insufficient knowledge of Tamil exhorted the people to learn the national lingua franca, Hindi or Urdu, as an essential condition of national progress and wished some of the addresses had been presented in Tamil instead of English. He next asked the country to remember that the khilafat cause cannot thrive without large funds and though money in itself was neither of high importance nor of as much consequence as self-sacrifice, appealed to people to contribute their mite to the Khilafat Fund, especially those who could not actively take part in non-co-operation. He emphasized the time for speeches and mere deliberations or demonstrations had gone and the time had now come for organized, continuous and sustained work. Action must be the watchword of the people. It had become the imperative duty of the people, obligatory on everyone of them to withdraw co-operation from the wicked, immoral and unjust Government, as khilafat and the Punjab questions had proved the present Government to be. If the Turkish Terms really affronted Islam it was a religious duty of Muslims to take up non-co-operation in all its stages. Hindus considered Muslims to be their brethren as sons of Mother India and they wish to be true to their religion and preserve their self-respect and honour. They must also resort to non-violent non-co-operation as laid down by him. Ordinary methods of agitating as memorializing, etc., have failed. The principle of non-co-operation was the only course open to them and whosover approved of it in principle must also recognize that surrender of titles, boycott of proposed visit of Prince of Wales and vigorous prosecution of swadeshi, were the chief essentials of any effective programme of non-co-operation. All Government-managed, aided or recognized educational institutions must be emptied as they were mainly manufacturing clerks and servants for the Government. As regards councils the policy of co-operating to the extent of securing seats in councils, with a view to obstruct Government might be half non-co-operation but not a full one. In the present situation where they wanted to offer non-co-operation to an insolent and strong Government which was able to protect itself well against popular will and persist in its unjust policy, no half measures will suffice. Candidates must refuse to stand for election and constituencies to send any representatives. Mr. Gandhi next explained why lawyers must suspend their practice and the Prince's visit must be boycotted and said several steps which he had enumerated and which formed the first stage in Central Khilafat Committee's non-co-operation programme were so arranged as to enable men in higher rungs of society to lead in the matter by practising self-

sacrifice on their own part. The last stage would give opportunity to the masses for practice of non-co-operation. Holders of titles must unhesitatingly renounce them now that they have become badges of dishonour. Concluding with impassioned appeal to the audience Mr. Gandhi said the Jain Sabha in their welcome address have wrongly described him as a Jain. He was a Vaishnavite and Prahlad who non-co-operated with his own father was the prince of non-co-operators showing by his conduct the paramount duty of man if he believed God to be greater than all men to non-co-operate with even one's own father. All Vaishnavites cannot at this critical juncture fail to non-co-operate without failing to act up to their religion. As Thoreau has said, loss of liberty, wealth and intense suffering were the only course of honourable conduct under unjust government. Mr. Shaukat Ali was whole-heartedly co-operating with him in non-violent non-co-operation because he thought India was weak to offer armed resistance but it was his (Mr. Gandhi's) firm conviction that it required greater strength to offer non-violent resistance as the proposed non-co-operation.

Mr. Shaukat Ali next addressing the meeting . . . appealed for Hindus' support and pointed to the Muslim choice of Gandhiji as their leader as the greatest triumph of Hindu-Muslim unity. For Muslims, if it was good to kill in the cause of Islam, it was equally good to be killed and to invite self-suffering.

The Hindu, 18-8-1920

102. SPEECH AT NAGORE

August 16, 1920

At the mass meeting at Nagore the special feature was the very large number of Muslim ladies. Mr. Shaukat Ali said he took courage from their presence . . .

Mr. Gandhi said the presence of so many Muslim ladies was a sign of the intensity of Muslim feeling on the khilafat question and it showed how the movement had appealed to the core of their heart. He emphasized the importance of Hindu-Muslim unity and in his opinion it was of more vital importance than the British connection.

The Hindu, 18-8-1920

103. SPEECH AT TRICHINOPOLY

August 17, 1920[1]

I thank you on behalf of my brother Shaukat Ali and myself for the magnificent reception that the citizens of Trichinopoly have given to us. I thank you also for the many addresses that you have been good enough to present to us, but I must come to business.

It is a great pleasure to me to renew your acquaintance for reasons that I need not give you. I expect great things from Trichinopoly, Madura and [a] few places I could name. I take it that you have read my address on the Madras Beach on non-co-operation. Without taking up your time in this great assembly, I wish to deal with one or two matters that arise out of Mr. S. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar's[2] speech. He says in effect that I should have waited for the Congress mandate on non-co-operation. That was impossible, because the Mussulmans had and still have a duty, irrespective of the Hindus, to perform in reference to their own religion. It was impossible for them to wait for any mandate, says the mandate of their own religion, in a matter that vitally concerned the honour of Islam. It is therefore possible for them only to go to the Congress on bended knees with a clear-cut programme of their own and ask the Congress to pronounce its blessing upon that programme and if they are not so fortunate as to secure the blessings of the national assembly, without meaning any disrespect to that assembly, it is their bounden duty to go on with their programme, and so it is the duty of every Hindu, who considers his Mussulman brother as a brother who has a just cause which he wishes to vindicate, to throw in his lot with his Mussulman brother. Our leader does not quarrel with the principle of non-co-operation by itself, but he objects to the three principal details of non-co-operation.

He considers that it is our duty to seek election to the councils and fight our battle on the floor of the council hall. I do not deny the possibility of a fight and a royal fight on the council floor. We have done it for the last 35 years, but I venture to suggest to you and to him, with all due respect, that it is not non-co-operation and it is not half as successful as non-co-operation can be. You cannot go to a class of people with a view to convince them by any fight—call it even

[1] The source has August 18 but Gandhiji visited Trichinipoly the provious day; *vide* "Madras Tour", 29-8-1920.

[2] Editor, *The Hindu*, Madras

obstruction—who have got a settled conviction and a settled policy to follow. It is in medical language an incompatible mixture out of which you can gain nothing, but if you totally boycott the council, you create a public opinion in the country with reference to the khilafat wrong and the Punjab wrong, which feeling will become totally irresistible. The first advantage of going to the councils must be goodwill on the part of the rulers. It is absolutely lacking. In the place of goodwill, you have got nothing but injustice, but I must move on.

I come now to the second objection of Mr. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar with reference to the suspension by lawyers of their practice. Milk is good in itself, but it becomes absolutely poisonous immediately a little bit of arsenic is added to it. Law-courts are similarly good when justice is distilled through them on behalf of a sovereign power, which wants to do justice to its people. Law-courts are one of the greatest symbols of power and in the battle of non-co-operation, you may not leave law-courts untouched and claim to offer non-co-operation, but if you will read that objection carefully, you will find in that objection the great fear that the lawyers will not respond to the call that the country makes upon them, and it is just there that the beauty of non-co-operation comes in. If one lawyer alone suspends practice, it is so much to the good of the country and so if we are sure to deprive the Government of the power that it possesses through its law-courts, whether one lawyer takes it up or many, we must adopt that step.

He objects also to the plan of boycotting Government schools. I can only say what I have said with reference to lawyers that if we mean non-co-operation, we may not receive any favours from the Government, no matter how advantageous by themselves they may be. In a great struggle like this, it is not open to us to count how many schools will respond and how many parents will respond and just as a geometrical problem is difficult, because it does not admit of easy proof, so also because a certain stage in national evolution is difficult, you may not avoid that step without making the whole of that evolution a farce.

At this stage there was some disturbance in one part of the assembly and after a few minutes pause the Mahatma continued.

We have had a great lesson in non-co-operation and co-operation. (laughter.) We had a lesson in non-co-operation when some young men began to fight there, and it is a dangerous weapon.

I have not the slightest doubt about it. One man with a determined will to non-co-operate can disturb a whole meeting (Laughter.) and we had a physical demonstration of it to-night (Renewed laughter.) but ours is non-violent non-co-operation in which there can be no mistake whatsoever if the fundamental conditions are observed. If non-co-operation fails, it will not be for want of any inherent strength in it, but it will fail because there is no response to it, or because people have not sufficiently grasped its simple principles. You had also a practical demonstration of co-operation just now. (Laughter.) That heavy chair went over the heads of so many people, because all wanted to lift their little hand to move that chair away from them and so was that heavier dome also removed from our sight by the co-operation of man, woman and child. Everybody believes and knows that this Government of ours exists only by the co-operation of the people and not by the force of arms it can wield ("Hear, hear!") and every man with a sense of logic will tell you that the converse of that also is equally true (Laughter.) that Government cannot stand if this co-operation on which it exists is withdrawn. Difficulties undoubtedly there are, we have hitherto learned how to sacrifice our voice and make speeches. We must also learn to sacrifice ease, money, comfort and that we may learn from the Englishmen themselves. Everyone who has studied English history know that we are now engaged in a battle with a nation which is capable of great sacrifice and the three hundred millions of India cannot make their mark upon the world, or gain their self-respect without any adequate measure of sacrifice.

Our friend has suggested the boycott of British or foreign goods. Boycott of all foreign goods is another name for swadeshi. He thinks that there will be a greater response in the boycott of all foreign goods. With the experience of years behind me and with an intimate knowledge of the merchantile classes, I venture to tell you that boycott of foreign goods, or boycott of merely British goods is more impracticable than any of the steps I have suggested, whereas in all the steps that I have ventured to suggest there is practically no sacrifice of money involved. In the boycott of British or foreign goods you are inviting your merchant princes to sacrifice their millions. It has got to be done, but it is an exceedingly slow process. The same may be said of the steps that I have ventured to suggest, I know, but boycott of goods is conceived as punishment and punishment is only effective when it is inflicted. What I have ventured to suggest is not a punishment, but the performance of a

sacred duty, a measure of self-denial from ourselves, and therefore it is effective from its very inception when it is undertaken even by one man and a substantial duty performed even by one single man lays the foundation of a nation's liberty.

I am most anxious for my nation, for my Mussulman brethren also to understand that if they want to vindicate national honour, or the honour of Islam, it will be vindicated without a shadow of doubt, not by conceiving a punishment or a series of punishments, but by an adequate measure of self-sacrifice. I wish to speak of all our leaders in terms of the greatest respect, but whatever respect we wish to pay to them may not stop or arrest the progress of the country, and I am most anxious that the country at this very critical period of its history should make its choice. The choice clearly does not lie before you and me in wresting by force of arms the sceptre from the British nation, but the choice lies in suffering this double wrong of the khilafat and the Punjab, in pocketing humiliation and in accepting national emasculation or vindication of India's honour by sacrifice today by every man, woman and child and those who feel convinced that this is the only choice left open to us may not wait for the verdict of the Congress, of for any other verdict save the verdict of their own conscience. You and I may not wait till the nation itself has made the choice, but if we are convinced of the rightness of things, we should make that choice to-night. So, citizens of Trichinopoly, you may not wait for the whole of India but you can enforce the first step of non-co-operation and begin your operations even from tomorrow, if you have not done so already. You can surrender all your titles tomorrow; (Cheers.) all the lawyers may surrender their practice tomorrow; those who cannot sustain body and soul by any other means can be easily supported by the Kilafat Committee, if they will give their whole time and attention to the work of that Committee, and if the lawyers will kindly do that, you will find that there is no difficulty in settling your disputes by private arbitration. You can nationalize your schools from tomorrow if you have got the will and the determination. It is difficult, I know, when only a few of you think these things. It is as easy as we are sitting here when the whole of this vast audience is of one mind and as it was easy for you to carry that chair, so is it easy for you to enforce this programme from tomorrow if you have one will, one determination and love for your country, love for the honour of your country and religion. (Loud and prolonged cheers.)

The Hindu, 19-8-1920

104. MORE OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

Swadeshamitran is one of the most influential Tamil dailies of Madras. It is widely read. Everything appearing in its coloums is entitled to respect. The editor has suggested some practical difficulties in the way of non-co-operation. I would therefore like, to the best of my ability, to deal with them.

I do not know where the information has been derived from that I have given up the last two stages of non-co-operation. What I have said is that they are a distant goal. I abide by it. I admit that all the stages are fraught with some danger, but the last two are fraught with the greatest—the last most of all. The stages have been fixed with a view to running the least possible risk. The last two stages will not be taken up unless the Committee has attained sufficient control over the people to warrant the beliefs that the laying down of arms or suspension of taxes will, humanly speaking, be free from an outbreak of violence on the part of the people. I do entertain the belief that it is possible for the people to attain the discipline necessary for taking the two steps. When once they realize that violence is totally unnecessary to bend an unwilling Government to their will and that the results can be obtained with certainty by dignified non-co-operation, they will cease to think of violence even by way of retaliation. The fact is that hitherto we have not attempted to take concerted and disciplined action from the masses. Some day, if we are to become truly a self-governing nation, that attempt has to be made. The present, in my opinion, is a propitious movement. Every Indian feels the insult to the Punjab as a personal wrong, every Mussulman resents the wrong done to the khilafat. There is therefore a favourable atmosphere for expecting cohesive and restrained movement on the part of the masses.

So far as response is concerned, I agree with the editor that the quickest and the largest response is to be expected in the matter of suspension of payment of taxes, but as I have said, so long as the masses are not educated to appreciate the value of non-violence even whilst their holdings are being sold, so long must it be difficult to take up the last stage into any appreciable extent.

I agree too that a sudden withdrawal of the military and the police will be a disaster if we have not acquired the ability to protect ourselves against robbers and thieves. But I suggest that when we are ready to call out the military and the police on an extensive scale, we

would find ourselves in a position to defend ourselves. If the police and the military resign from patriotic motives, I would certainly expect them to perform the same duty as national volunteers, not as hirelings but as willing protectors of the life and liberty of their countrymen. The movement of non-co-operation is one of automatic adjustment. If the Government schools are emptied, I would certainly expect national schools to come into being. If the lawyers as a whole suspended practice, they would devise arbitration courts and the nation will have expeditious and cheaper method of settling private disputes and awarding punishment to the wrongdoer. I may add that the Khilafat Committee is fully alive to the difficulty of the task and is taking all the necessary steps to meet the contingencies as they arise.

Regarding the leaving of civil employment, no danger is feared, because no one will leave his employment, unless he is in a position to find support for himself and family either through friends or otherwise.

Disapproval of the proposed withdrawal of students betrays, in my humble opinion, lack of appreciation of the true nature of non-co-operation. It is true enough that we pay the money wherewith our children are educated. But when the agency imparting the education has become corrupt, we may not employ it without partaking of the agent's corruption. When students leave schools or colleges I hardly imagine that the teachers will fail to perceive the advisability of themselves resigning. But even if they do not, money can hardly be allowed to count where honour or religion are at stake.

As to the boycott of the councils, it is not the entry of the Moderates or any other persons that matters so much as the entry of those who believe in non-co-operation. You may not co-operate at the top and non-co-operate at the bottom. A councillor cannot remain in the council and ask the *gumasta* who cleans the council table to resign.

Young India, 18-8-1920

105. SWADESHI

In criticizing my article entitled "The Music of the Spinning-Wheel"[1], the *Leader* the other day attributed to me the ideas that I have never entertained. And it is necessary for the purpose of understanding the true value of swadeshi, to correct some of the current fallacies. The *Leader* considers that I am putting back the hands of the clock of progress by attempting to replace mill-made cloth and mill-spun yarn by hand-woven and hand-spun yarn. Now, I am making no such attempt at all. I have no quarrel with the mill. My views are incredibly simple. India requires nearly 13 yards of cloth per head per year. She produces, I believe, less than half the amount. India grows all the cotton she needs. She exports several million bales of cotton to Japan and Lancashire and receives much of it back in manufactured calico although she is capable of producing all the cloth and all the yarn necessary for supplying her wants by hand-weaving and hand-spinning. India needs to supplement her main occupation, agriculture, with some other employment. Hand-spinning is the only such employment for millions. It was the national employment a century ago. It is not true to say that economic pressure and modern machinery destroyed hand-spinning and hand-weaving. This great industry was destroyed or almost destroyed by extraordinary and immoral means adopted by the East India Company. This national industry is capable of being revived by exertion and a change in the national taste without damaging the mill industry. Increase of mills is no present remedy for supplying the deficiency. The deficiency can be easily supplied only by hand-spinning and hand-weaving. If this employment were revived, it would prevent sixty million rupees from being annually drained from the country and distribute the amount among lakhs of poor women in their own cottages. I therefore consider swadeshi as an automatic, though partial, solution of the problem of India's grinding poverty. It also constitutes a ready-made insurance policy in times of scarcity of rain.

But two things are needful to bring about the needed revival—to create a taste for khaddar and to provide an organization for the distribution of carded cotton and collection of yarn against payment.

In one year, by the silent labour of a few men, several thousands rupees have been distributed in Gujarat among several thousand poor

[1] Of July 21, 1920

women who are glad enough to earn a few pice per day to buy milk for their children, etc.

The argument does not apply to the sugar industry as the *Leader* has attempted. There is not sufficient cane grown in India to supply India's wants. Sugar was never a national and supplementary industry. Foreign sugar has not supplanted Indian sugar. India's wants of sugar have grown and she therefore imports more sugar. But this importation does not institute a drain in the sense in which importation of foreign cloth does. Production of more sugar means more scientific agriculture, more and better machinery for crushing and refining. The sugar industry therefore stands on a different platform. Swadeshi in sugar is desirable, swadeshi in cloth is an urgent necessity.

Young India, 18-8-1920

106. SPEECH AT CALICUT

August 18, 1920

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

On behalf of my brother Shaukat Ali and myself I wish to thank you most sincerely for the warm welcome you have extended to us. Before I begin to explain the purpose of our mission I have to give you the information that Pir Mahboob Shah who was being tried in Sind for sedition has been sentenced to two years' simple imprisonment. I do not know exactly what the offence was with which the Pir was charged. I do not know whether the words attributed to him were ever spoken by him. But I do know that the Pir Saheb declined to offer any defence and with perfect resignation he has accepted his penalty. For me it is a matter of sincere pleasure that the Pir Saheb who exercises great influence over his followers has understood the spirit of the struggle upon which we have embarked. It is not by resisting the authority of Government that we expect to succeed in the great task before us. But I do expect that we shall succeed if we understand the spirit of non-co-operation. The Lieutenant-Governor of Burma himself has told us that the British retain their hold on India not by the force of arms but by the force of co-operation of the people. Thus he has given us the remedy for any wrong that the Government may do to the people, whether knowingly or unknowingly. And so long as we co-operate with the Government,

so long as we support that Government we become to that extent sharers in the wrong. I admit that in ordinary circumstances a wise subject will tolerate the wrongs of a Government, but a wise subject never tolerates a wrong that a Government imposes on the declared will of a people. And I venture to submit to this great meeting that the Government of India and the Imperial Government have done a double wrong to India, and if we are a nation of self-respecting people conscious of its dignity, conscious of its right, it is not just and proper that we should stand the double humiliation that the Government has heaped upon us. By shaping and by becoming a predominant partner in the Peace Terms imposed on the helpless Sultan of Turkey, the Imperial Government have intentionally flouted the cherished sentiment of the Mussulman subjects of the Empire. The present Prime Minister gave a deliberate pledge after consultation with his colleagues when it was necessary for him to conciliate the Mussulmans of India. I claim to have studied this khilafat question in a special manner. I claim to understand the Mussulman feeling on the khilafat question and I am here to declare for the tenth time that on the khilafat matter the Government has wounded the Mussulman sentiment as they had never done before. And I say without fear of contradiction that if the Mussulmans of India had not exercised great self-restraint and if there was not the gospel of non-co-operation preached to them and if they had not accepted it, there would have been bloodshed in India by this time. I am free to confess that spilling of blood would not have availed their cause. But a man who is in a state of rage whose heart has become lacerated does not count the cost of his action. So much for the khilafat wrong.

I propose to take you for a minute to the Punjab, the northern end of India. And what have both Governments done for the Punjab? I am free to confess again that the crowds in Amritsar went mad for a moment. They were goaded to madness by a wicked administration. But no madness on the part of a people can justify the shedding of innocent blood, and what have they paid for it? I venture to submit that no civilized Government could ever have made the people pay the penalty and retribution that they have paid. Innocent men were tried through mock-tribunals and imprisoned for life. Amnesty granted to them after; I count of no consequence. Innocent, unarmed men, who knew nothing of what was to happen, were butchered in cold blood without the slightest notice. Modesty of women in Manianwala, women who had done no wrong to any individual, was outraged by

insolent officers. I want you to understand what I mean by outrage of their modesty. Their veils were opened with his stick by an officer. Men who were declared to be utterly innocent by the Hunter Committee were made to crawl on their bellies. And all these wrongs totally undeserved remain unavenged. If it was the duty of the Government of India to punish those who were guilty of incendiarism and murder, as I hold it was their duty, it was doubly their duty to punish officers who insulted and oppressed innocent people. But in the face of these official wrongs we have the debate in the House of Lords supporting official terrorism. It is this double wrong, the affront to Islam and the injury to the manhood of the Punjab, that we feel bound to wipe out by non-co-operation. We have prayed, petitioned, agitated, we have passed resolutions. Mr. Mahomed Ali supported by his friends is now waiting on the British public. He has pleaded the cause of Islam in a most manful manner, but his pleading has fallen on deaf ears and we have his word for it that whilst France and Italy have shown great sympathy for the cause of Islam, it is the British ministers who have shown no sympathy. This shows which way the British ministers and the present holders of office in India mean to deal by the people. There is no goodwill, there is no desire to placate the people of India. The people of India must therefore have a remedy to redress the double wrong. The method of the West is violence. Wherever the people of the West have felt a wrong either justly or unjustly, they have rebelled and shed blood. As I have said in my letter to the Viceroy of India, half of India does not believe in the remedy of violence. The other half is too weak to offer it. But the whole of India is deeply hurt and stirred by this wrong, and it is for that reason that I have suggested to the people of India the remedy of non-co-operation, I consider it perfectly harmless, absolutely constitutional and yet perfectly efficacious. It is a remedy in which, if it is properly adopted, victory is certain, and it is the age-old remedy of self-sacrifice. Are the Mussulmans of India who feel the great wrong done to Islam ready to make an adequate self-sacrifice? All the scriptures of the world teach us that there can be no compromise between justice and injustice. Co-operation on the part of a justice-loving man with an unjust man is a crime. And if we desire to compel this great Government to the will of the people, as we must, we must adopt this great remedy of non-co-operation. And if the Mussulmans of India offer non-co-operation to Government in order to secure justice in the khilafat matter, I believe it is the duty of the Hindus to

help them so long as their means are just. I consider the eternal friendship between the Hindus and Mussulmans is more important than the British connection. I would prefer any day anarchy and chaos in India to an armed peace brought about by the bayonet between the Hindus and Mussulmans. I have therefore ventured to suggest to my Hindu brethren that if they wanted to live at peace with Mussulmans, there is an opportunity which is not going to recur for the next hundred years. And I venture to assure you that if the Government of India and the Imperial Government come to know that there is a determination on the part of the people to redress this double wrong they would not hesitate to do what is needed. But the Mussulmans of India will have to take the lead in the matter. You will have to commence the first stage of non-co-operation in right earnest. And if you may not help this Government, you may not receive help from it. Titles which were the other day titles of honour are today in my opinion badges of our disgrace. We must therefore surrender all titles of honour, all honorary offices. It will constitute an emphatic demonstration of the disapproval by the leaders of the people of the acts of the Government. Lawyers must suspend their practice and must resist the power of the Government which has chosen to flout public opinion. Nor may we recieve instruction from schools controlled by the Government and aided by it. Emptying of the schools will constitute a demonstration of the will of the middle class of India. It is far better for the nation even to neglect the literary instruction of the children than to co-operate with a Government that has striven to maintain an injustic and untruth on the khilafat and Punjab matters. Similary have I ventured to suggest a complete boycott of reformed councils. That will be an emphatic declaration on the part of the representatives of the people that they do not desire to associate with the Government so long as the two wrongs continue. We must equally decline to offer ourselves as recruits of the police or military. It is impossible for us to go to Mesopotamia or to offer to police that country or to offer military assistance and to help the Government in that blood-guiltiness. The last plank in the first stage is swadeshi. Swadeshi is intended not so much to bring pressure upon the Government as to demonstrate the capacity for sacrifice on the part of the men and women of India. When one-fourth of India has its religion at stake and when the whole of India has its honour at stake, we can be in no mood to bedeck ourselves with French calico or silks from Japan. We must resolve to be satisfied with cloth woven

by the humble weavers of India in their own cottages out of yarn spun by their sisters in their own homes. When a hundred years ago our tastes were not debased and we were not lured by all the fineries from the foreign countries, we were satisfied with the cloth produced by the men and women in India, and if I could but in a moment revolutionize the tastes of India and make it return to its original simplicity, I assure you that the Gods would descend to rejoice at the great act of renunciation. That is the first stage in non-co-operation.

I hope it is as easy for you as it is easy for me to see that if India is capable of taking the first step in anything like a full measure that step will bring the redress we want. I therefore do not intend to take you to the other stages of non-co-operation. I would like you to rivet your attention upon the plans in the first stage. You will have noticed that but two things are necessary in going through the first stage:

(1) Perfect spirit of non-violence is indispensable for non-co-operation,

(2) only a little self-sacrifice. I pray to God that He will give the people of India sufficient courage and wisdom and patience to go through this experiment of non-co-operation. I thank you for the great reception that you have given us. And I also thank you for the great patience and exemplary silence with which you have listened to my remarks.

Freedom's Battle, pp. 237-45

107. SPEECH AT MANGALORE

August 19, 1920

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

To my brother Shaukat Ali and me it was a pleasure to go to this beautiful garden of India. The great reception that you gave us this afternoon, and this great assembly are most welcome to us, if they are a demonstration of your sympathy with the cause which you have the honour to represent. I assure you that we have not undertaken this incessant travelling in order to have receptions and addresses, no matter how cordial they may be. But we have undertaken this travelling throughout the length and breadth of this dear motherland to place before you the position that faces us today. It is our privilege, as it is our duty, to place that position before the country and let her make the choice.

Throughout our tour we have received many addresses, but in my humble opinion no address was more truly worded than the address that was presented to us at Kasargod. It addressed both of us as "dear revered brothers". I am unable to accept the second adjective "revered". The word "dear" is dear to me I must confess. But dearer than that is the expression "brothers". The signatories to that address recognized the true significance of this travel. No blood-brothers can possibly be more intimately related, can possibly be more united in one purpose, one aim than my brother Shaukat Ali and I. And I considered it a proud privilege and honour to be addressed as blood-brother to Shaukat Ali. The contents of that address were as equally significant. It stated that in our united work was represented the essence of the unity between the Mussulmans and Hindus in India. If we two cannot represent that very desirable unity, if we two cannot cement the relation between the two communities, I do not know who can. Then without any rhetoric and without any flowery language the address went on to describe the inwardness of the Punjab and the khilafat struggle; and then in simple and beautiful language it described the spiritual significance of satyagraha and non-co-operation. This was followed by a frank and simple promise. Although the signatories to the address realized the momentous nature of the struggle on which we have embarked, and although they sympathize with the struggle with their whole heart, they wound up by saying that even if they could not follow non-co-operation in all its details, they would do as much as they could to help the struggle. And lastly, in eloquent, and true language, they said, "if we cannot rise equal to the occasion it will not be due to want of effort but to want of ability". I can desire no better address, no better promise, and if you, the citizens of Mangalore, can come up to the level of the signatories, and give us just the assurance that you consider the struggle to be right and that it commands your entire approval, I am certain you will make all sacrifice that lies in your power. For we are face to face with a peril greater than plagues, greater than influenza, greater than earthquakes and mighty floods, which sometimes overwhelm this land. These physical calamities can rob us of so many Indian bodies. But the calamity that has at the present moment over-taken India touches the religious honour of a fourth of her children and the self-respect of the whole nation. The khilafat wrong affects the Mussulmans of India, and the Punjab calamity very nearly overwhelms the manhood of India. Shall we in the face of this danger

be weak or rise to our full height? The remedy for both the wrongs is the spiritual solvent of non-co-operation. Icall it a spiritual weapon, because it demands discipline and sacrifice from us. It demands sacrifice from every individual irrespective of the rest. And the promise that is behind this performance of duty, the promise given by every religion that I have studied, is sure and certain. It is that there is no spotless sacrifice that has been yet offered on earth, which has not carried with it its absolute adequate reward. It is a spiritual weapon, because it waits for no mandate from anybody except one's own conscience. It is a spiritual weapon because it brings out the best in the nation and it absolutely satisfies national honour if the whole nation takes it up. And therefore it is that I have called non-co-operation—in opposition to the opinion of many of my distinguished countrymen and leaders—a weapon that is infallible and absolutely practicable. It is infallible and practicable, because it satisfies the demands of individual conscience. God above cannot, will not expect Maulana Shaukat Ali to do more than he has been doing, for he has surrendered and placed at the disposal of God whom he believes to be the Almighty ruler of everyone, he has delivered all in the service of God. And we stand before the citizens of Mangalore and ask them to make their choice either to accept this precious gift that we lay at their feet or to reject it. And after having listened to my message if you come to the conclusion that you have no other remedy than non-co-operation for the conservation of Islam and the honour of India, you will accept that remedy. I ask you not to be confused by so many bewildering issues that are placed before you, not to be shaken from your purpose because you see divided counsels amongst your leaders. This is one of the necessary limitations of any spiritual or any other struggle that has ever been fought on this earth. It is because it comes so suddenly that it confuses the mind if the heart is not tuned properly. And we would be perfect human beings on this earth if in all of us was found absolutely perfect correspondence between the mind and the heart. But those of you who have been following the newspaper controversy, will find that no matter what division of opinion exists amongst our journals and leaders there is unanimity that the remedy is efficacious if it can be kept free from violence, and if it is adopted on a large scale. I admit the difficulty, the virtue however lies in surmounting it. We cannot possibly combine violence with a spiri- tual weapon like non-co-operation. We do not offer spotless sacrifice it we take the lives of others in offering our own.

Absolute free- dom from violence is therefore a condition precedent to non-co- operation. But I have faith in my country to know that when it has assimilated the principle of the doctrine to the fullest extent, it will respond to it. And in no case will India make any headway what- soever until she has learnt the lesson of self-sacrifice. Even if this country were to take up the doctrine of the sword, which God forbid, it will have to learn the lesson of self-sacrifice. The second difficulty suggested is the want of solidarity of the nation. I accept it too. But that diffficulty I have already answered by saying that it is a remedy that can be taken up by individuals for individual and by the nation for national satisfaction; and therefore even if the whole nation does not take up non-co-operation, the individual successes, which may be obtained by individuals taking up non-co-operation, will stand to their own credit as of the nation to which they belong.

The first stage in my humble opinion is incredibly easy inasmuch as it does not involve any very great sacrifice. If your Khan Bahadurs and other title-holders were to renounce their titles I venture to submit that whilst the renunciation will stand to the credit and honour of the nation it will involve a little or no sacrifice. On the contrary, they will not only have surrendered no earthly riches, but they will have gained the applause of the nation. Let us see what it means, this first step. The able editor of *The Hindu*, Mr. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, and almost every journalist in the country are agreed that the renunciation of titles is a necessary and a desirable step. And if these chosen people of the Government were without exception to surrender their titles to Government giving notice that the heart of India is doubly wounded in that the honour of India and of Muslim religion is at stake and that therefore they can no longer retain their titles I venture to suggest that this their step which costs not a single penny either to them or to the nation will be an effective demonstration of the national will.

Take the second step or the second item of non-co-operation. I know there is strong opposition to the boycott of councils. The opposition when you begin to analyse it means not that the step is faulty or that it is not likely to succeed, but it is due to the belief that the whole country will not respond to it and that the Moderates will steal into the councils. I ask the citizens of Manglore to dispel that fear from your hearts. United, the voters of Mangalore can make it impossible for either a Moderate or an Extremist or any other form of

leader to enter the councils as your representative. This step involves no sacrifice of money, no sacrifice of honour but the gaining of prestige for the whole nation. And I venture to suggest to you that this one step alone if it is taken with any degree of unanimity even by the Extremists can bring about the desired relief, but if all do not respond the individual need not be afraid. He at least will have laid the foundation for true set progress, let him have the comfort that he at least has washed his hands clean of the guilt of the Government.

Then I come to the members of the profession which one time I used to carry on. I have ventured to ask the lawyers of India to suspend their practice and withdraw their support from a Government which no longer stands for justice, pure and unadulterated, for the nation. And the step is good for the individual lawyer who takes it and is good for the nation if all the lawyers take it.

And so for the Government and the Government-aided schools, I must confess that I cannot reconcile my conscience to my children going to Government schools and to the programme of non-co-operation which is intended to withdraw all support from the Government and to decline all help from it.

I will not tax your patience by taking you through the other items of non-co-operation important as they are. But I have ventured to place before you four very important and forcible steps any one of which if fully taken up contains in it possibilities of success. Swadeshi is prea-ched as an item of non-co-operation, as a demonstration of the spirit of sacrifice and it is an item which every man, woman and child can take up.

Freedom's Battle, pp. 245-53

108. SPEECH ON NON-CO-OPERATION, BANGALORE[1]

August 21, 1920

Mahatmaji spoke in Urdu and at first apologized for his inability to stand. Mr. Gandhi after reiterating the two national grievances and explaining at length various items in the first stage of non-co-operation declared that should India elect to remain for ever to be the slave of this Government machinery, should her people continue to frequent law-courts for justice, should they continue to fill Government schools with their children and continue to go to councils, he would no longer be in a position, conscientiously to accept flowers and garlands from them. Until the wrongs remain unredressed the help given to the Government in any shape or form would serve to

[1] At Idgah

tighten the chains that bind India at present. He could not consistently utter verses from holy Koran and help the Government at the same time while they were convinced that the Government had imperilled Islam. Muslims consider it their religious duty to draw sword to save the khilafat. He has always been against the doctrine of the sword and Maulana Abdul Bari assured him that non-co-operation had been practised by the great Prophet. He (the speaker) was convinced that the country was not strong enough to draw the sword. Hence it shrank to the simple item of the first stage of non-co-operation. He felt that Mr. Shaukat Ali had understood that it was a fact that there was sacrifice in lifting the sword but it was also a fact that sacrifice demanded in non-co-operation was greater and yet a child could adopt it. He warned the Mussulmans to deter against such weakness as shown by Pir Mahboob Shah.[1] Indians by their own habits had spoiled *Pirs* and *Pujaris*[2]. He therefore did not expect *Pirs* to perform an amount of sacrifice that he wanted from the people. In his South African struggle one of his *first* fellow-workers was a *Pujari*, but the success came through masses.

The Hindu, 27-8-1920

109. ADDRESS TO STUDENTS OF LAW COLLEGE, MADRAS

August 21, 1920

Mr. Gandhi began by saying that he wanted to occupy the students in a heart-to-heart conversation, that he would explain to them how a pair, composed of Maulana Shaukat Ali and himself, living at opposite poles about some fundamentals of life—particularly in one fundamental of life, inasmuch as to the speaker non-violence was the final arbiter and to Shaukat Ali the sword was the final arbiter—how such a pair could engage hand in hand in the struggle in question. He could do no better than read to them a letter he had received that very morning from a Christian lady who said among other things that she was convinced by the speaker's Madras speech of the necessity of non-co-operation and that though she had no particular sympathy with Turkey she could not help feeling that in a struggle carried on solely for the honour and prestige of Islam, not only the Hindus but the Christians also should render full assistance to the Mussulmans, and that in a matter of conscience, as the one in question, no nation should be called upon to hang its decision on the mandate of its Congress. She also expressed her hearty approval of the boycott of councils and of Government and Government-aided schools as also other steps in the first stage of non-co-operation. The speaker read out the letter to the audience and said that it was a magnificent letter, and that he read it not to produce a certificate of

[1] *Vide* "Our Duty", 29-8-1920.

[2] Priests

non-co-operation or about his Madras address, but as the testimony of an impartial Christian observer who was convinced of the spirituality of the struggle, and who thought it was therefore a struggle in which Hindus and Christians ought to have their share no less than the Mussulmans.

Mr. Gandhi next went on to offer his remarks on the Viceroy's speech at the opening of the legislative council. He said that the paragraph on non-co-operation demonstrated the triumph of non-co-operation, it involved a confession that the authorities had learnt a lesson, viz, the wisdom of not precipitating violence and to allow a movement to die out by simply ridiculing it. That was, said the speaker, the chosen method of Government in its own home, and it was for the people of India to convert that ridicule into approval. Lord Chelmsford had said that he was a lawyer, and that as such he was offering advice to the members of the bar, but that took them no step further. At the one end was the Viceroy asking the lawyers to hold on to the courts like grim death, at the other end was the speaker, also a lawyer, who had seen several years' active practice and given it up, who was born of the people and for the people, asking them to shun the law-courts, and it was for the legal profession to make their choice. Throughout the world, went on the speaker, the Government had their hold on the necks of the people through the agency of the law-courts. These law-courts, in times other than the present, a lesser evil inasmuch as they preserved so-called order as opposed to anarchy. In times as the present, they were an unmitigated evil, and he had no doubt that if the lawyers boycotted law-courts they would paralyse the arm of Government which means force. If the lawyers leading public movement in the country were not willing to respond to the call of sacrifice, he, the speaker, would not have the gumption to go and advise the country. If the lawyers were not prepared for acts of sacrifice their appeals would fall flat on the masses, indeed they would have to go asking the people not to engage in a struggle of the present nature, in which case they would have to eat their own words and say that the injustice of which they were talking till now was not so glaring or rankling in their breast as to ask them to go beyond the orthodox methods of agitation. There may be, said the speaker, governments as diabolical, even more diabolical than the British Government, but for Indians it was the most diabolical. It was going downhill. What a shocking document was the Viceregal pronouncement! The Viceroy said that the Punjab chapter was closed. From a Government who could thus add insult to injury, no gifts, however valuable they may be, could be accepted so long as they do not repent for what they had done. Khilafat, the Government might say, would kill itself, but it would not kill itself so long as the Indians had not killed themselves. It would close only over their ashes.

The speaker then carried the audience through some of the episodes in his life which revealed how he, a staunch Hindu, who had imbibed the best of Hinduism from his Shastras, from his fore-fathers and his studies, how he was brought together with

a man like Shaukat Ali, than whom he knew no more deeply religious man. It was the common feeling that the salvation of India lay in the union of hearts between the Hindus and the Mussulmans that brought them together. The Mussulmans were not too arrogant, too haughty to do with- out the help of the Hindus and others, and there was no alternative before Shaukat Ali to accept the aid offered by the speaker, as a Hindu who had represented the best of what he had assimilated of Hinduism and for no other motive but that of showing the nobility of his faith. To illustrate the spirit in which his assistance was accepted the speaker harked back to a meeting that took place between him and Maulana Abdul Bari Saheb, narrating in vivid detail the talk between the Maulana and him. The gist of the story was that whilst Mr. Gandhi insisted that he was not going to render aid in any bargaining spirit, the Maulana insisted that it would be the denial of Islam if the Mussulmans accepted the aid without any thought of reciprocating it. Thus were two staunch faithful ones, viz, the speaker and Mr. Shaukat Ali, united more than a brother to brother on a mission to save the honour of Islam and India.

The speaker proceeded to say that the lawyers with their trained minds ought to be able to see the core of the question. It meant, in spiritual terms, not a battle between races, but a battle between the forces of light and darkness, between the forces of devil and God. The devil was today incarnate in the wretched Western civilization. Having given years of study to the Western civilization the speaker had come to the deliberate conclusion that it represented evil clothed in the robes of Satan and that the Indians had to be engaged in fighting the powers of that evil. The force that were moulding the masses of Europe were devilry incarnate and Christianity had to grapple with those forces more and more as the evil ever darkened and thickened. The speaker would not hesitate to say that God (Truth) was represented by the Indians, by the non-co-operationists because they approached God in the humblest spirit, they were asking God not to give them arms but a spirit of self-sacrifice. The British people, said the speaker, whilst they bragged, blustered, whilst they used in turn honeyed phrases and bitter ones, deep down in them was the spirit to appreciate courage. But the Viceroy today was coquetting with them. He saw that there was an atmosphere of sycophancy and he wanted to avail himself of it. He presented to show that he could tolerate opposition. It was good enough this cajoling, but it was wicked because behind it were not just motives as the Viceroy represented today a double wrong, as he had heaped insult on insult. The khilafat wrong he laid at the door of Europe. Well, the Indians were offering non-co-operation to all the powers, not only to the British powers, they were non-co-operating with the evil regarding the khilafat and the Punjab in each and every corner of the world wherever it was represented.

Mr. Gandhi appealed to the audience to leave law-courts, emphasizing that nobody served the country and did not serve himself. He for one could say that by giving up law he had to sacrifice none of the comforts that he used to enjoy,

because they came multiplied a hundred-fold out of the kindness of the people who repaid their services in more than a full measure. But they must be prepared to say that they were all for the country, every hour of their time, even their recreation hours, were to be for the country. If they wanted to pit themselves against the mighty corporation, i.e., the Government, who had got all the arts and crafts of Government, all the powers of sweet speech, all the powers of bribery and even of sacrifice, they must be prepared for greater powers of sacrifice. He wanted them to realize that in going to the law-courts they were strengthening the arm of Government which represented evil.

Incidentally, the speaker said that the reluctance to cast in their lot with Mussulmans was engendered by the craven fear that India would be deluged by the Mussulmans and that the Hindus would be terrorized over by them, in case the latter were victorious. This fear, said the speaker was degrading to Hinduism, whose land was dotted, as Col. Tod said, with a thousand Thermopaelies. The death of a martyr is far more preferable to the death of a coward. Immediately a sword fell upon an innocent neck that religion was disgraced, and the speaker had no doubt that Islam was not a religion of disgrace. The nobility of Hinduism consisted in unconditionally going to the aid of the Mussulmans, when they were in peril. He would assure them that God would send a fresh command to Islam that Hindus should be regarded as the partners of the Mussulmans and that they might never quarrel with them. The speaker was prepared to give the same aid to Christendom in its peril; he would give the same aid to Gen. Dyer if he was in danger; but not if he was going on a similar errand as the Jallianwala Bagh. He asked them to go out to Islam, trusting not the followers of Islam but trusting goodness, and asking the heavens to witness. Every Mussulman would then be their protector, and there would be an imperishable union between the two. The Hindu would then offer his prayers with more impunity than he did today. Today he did not offer his prayers with impunity as he had to do so with fear of Satan hanging on him in the guise of a saint.

Mr. Gandhi went on to say that the attempt to revise the Peace Terms was an attempt to revive Islam. The Mussulmans adored no Caliph, and none who had a rotten character; they adored Islam and they adored the Caliph as representing the essence of Islam. They were not fighting for a Sultan who has signed the Peace Terms; they were fighting for an ideal, pure and simple, and the Hindus had the choice ready before them of defending their hearts and homes, and it would be the eternal disgrace of Hinduism if they could not prepare themselves to stand by Islam. The speaker emphasized with the force and humility he could command that in trying to die for Islam, they were trying to die for their own faith, and for their own hearts and homes.

From a photostat : S.N. 7223

110. SPEECH AT LABOUR UNION MEETING, MADRAS

[*August 21/22, 1920*][1]

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I am glad that I have been able to come in your midst so soon after my visit. You will remember, those of you who were present on the last occasion, what I said to you then and I hope that those who listened to my remarks and understood them explained them to those who were not present. And if none of you has done it already I would ask you on my behalf to explain those remarks to other friends. I told you then what some of your duties were and I told you also that if you performed all those duties you could gain not only your immediate end, namely, a positive relationship with your employers, but you could command. . .[2]

Indeed, I went so far as to say that when labour became fully conscious of its own strength and perfectly disciplined, labour became the predominant partner and not money. But what I said to you on the last occasion had reference only to relation between labour and capital. I would like this after[noon] to address a few remarks on your duties [as] citizens [and] part of the community to which you belong. For if you follow my humble advice and begin to think about yourselves, think alone [of] your duties and begin to train your minds by proper education. You will presently know your status not only as labourers but your status as part of the whole community. Your Union is an extension of the idea of family. You are now not members of your family which is naturally comparatively small but you are members of your Union which is a much bigger family. You have only to extend the idea to understand that you are not only members of the Union but members of the whole body of people that live in Madras and therefore you owe certain duties to the people of Madras as a whole and they owe certain duties to you. But Madras after all is part of a big place called the Madras Presidency. And Madras Presidency is but a part, though a very big part, of what we know as India. So if you have a large heart you will understand that your

[1] This speech is obviously in continuation of the one given on August 15, 1920; *vide* "Speech on Rights and Duties of Labour, Madras", 15-8-1920. Gandhiji must have delivered this speech either on August 21, 1920, when he returned to Madras from Bangalore or on the 22nd when he left Madras.

[2] Some words are missing here.

birthplace is not your little village and not Madras Presidency but yours is the land of India or Bharat Varsha, and therefore you are brothers of your 33 crores of fellow-men. And you owe certain duties to them and they to you, even as you owe certain duties to the members of the Union and they to you. And if any one of them lives 2,000 miles away from you in the Punjab you should feel the same for [him]. If any of them is starving you should feel like going and feeding him before you feed yourselves. But you cannot know how you are to discharge your duties unless you try to understand what the expression India means, what this land of 33 crore people means, also what are their grievances and what are their needs and before you can undestand this it is necessary to know what is the form of government in the country. In other words you should understand the politics of the country in the real sense of the term. There are so many movements going on in the country in connection with politics. It is your duty to understand them and find your place in them. And I hope that your curiosity will not end with your obligations to your personal family and to the Union but that you will extend your curiosity to the uttermost bounds of India, and I hope that Mr. T. V. K[alyana] S[undaram] and all friends who are doing such good and valuable work for you will arrange a course of lectures for you and tell you what your duties as citizens of this Great Empire are. They will give you, I hope, the necessary knowledge of the geography of India, that is, of India both political and commercial. You will not consider that all this is beyond your capacity. Nothing is impossible for a man who tries, and I do hope sincerely that you will try. I thank you for inviting me again to come and see you. I thank you for listening to me so patiently. God bless you.

From a photostat of the original in Mahadev Desai's hand: S.N. 6431

111. TALK AT LAW COLLEGE, MADRAS

August 22, 1920

Mr. Gandhi in the course of an informal talk with the students of the Law College, referring to the non-Brahmin movement of this Presidency said as follows:

I am prepared to say that it is the duty of the Brahmins to surrender at every stage of the fight to the demands of the non-Brahmins and grant them all the seats if demanded, and if it is in my power, I will give them some more.This demand of the non-Brahmins

is the result of their distrust towards the Brahmins. The Brahmins have for long contributed their best, but in their arrogance, the distinction they have drawn between themselves and the other castes is most diabolical and is as diabolical as the distinction we are fighting against, i.e., the distinction the European races have drawn between themselves and the darker races.

The Hindu, 23-8-1920

112. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

BEZWADA,
August 23, 1920

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I complete today my exhausting tour in the Madras Presi [dency]. Ithas been incessant travelling. My experience has confirmed me in the rightness of the struggle and in my belief in the greatness and goodness of Shaukat Ali. He is really one of the most sincere of men I have met. He is generous, frank, brave and gentle. He believes in his mission and in himself. Having an implicit faith in God, he is refreshingly optimistic. The response of the common people is wonderful. The non-violence part of the programme is making great headway. There was a dense crowd in Bangalore covering a vast area as far as the eye could reach. There was a solitary Englishman and an Englishwoman amongst it. But the crowd did not so much as jostle them. From everywhere Iget testimony regarding non-violent behaviour of the crowds. You must have noticed the *reluctant testimony* of the Government regarding the trying circumstances of the *Muhajarins.* All this is, in my opinion good. On the other hand, I see poor response from the leading class. They do not want to sacrifice anything at all. They expect to gain everything by speeches and resolutions. They [are] keeping back a nation which is ready for sacrifice.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

113. LETTER TO SARALADEVI CHAUDHRANI

BEZWADA,
August 23, 1920

Either the night or the day has been passed each day in the train. The nights have been always disturbed by crowds. Thank God we have nearly finished this exhausting tour. Considering everything I have kept remarkably fit and strong.

Your letters have your usual self. Some of them decidedly despondent and sceptical and suspicious.

You still do not understand Mathuradas[1]. He and the others who surround me are superior to us, if you will allow me to include you. They are certainly superior to me. And it is as should be. It is my claim that I have selected as my companions my superiors in character, superiors, that is to say, in their possibility. My progress can only be little. Theirs is still illimitable. They are jealous of their ideal which is my character. I and (if you are mine in the purest sense of the term) you must give everything to retain or deserve their love and affection. There can be no yielding only on principle. For that we must forsake all and everything. But I would surrender all the world to deserve love so pure and unselfish. Their love uplifts me and keeps me on the square. They are my sheet-anchor as I am theirs. You should be proud of their jealousy and watchfulness. They want to run no risks and they are right. You and I are in duty bound to satisfy every lawful requirement. And we shall have well met.

Yes, if you remain at your post in Lahore it would be quite all right. You can gain little by coming to Calcutta during the week of turmoil and stress. The pilgrimage to your mother may take place in quieter time and after you have perfected your spinning-wheel and Hindi and put our Lahore work on a sound footing. You see I say Lahore in preference to the Punjab. I want you to lay the surest foundation and therefore I want intensity rather than extent.

You ask for a reward of your great surrender. Well, it is its own reward.

With deep love,

Yours,
L. G.[2]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

[1] Mathuradas Trikumji (1894-1951); grandson of Gandhiji's sister, occasionally his secreatary; secretary, Bombay Congress Committee, 1922-3; Mayor, Bombay Municipal Corporation

[2] Law-giver

114. SPEECH AT BEZWADA

August 23, 1920

Proceedings of the meeting held in connection with the visit of Messrs M. K. Gandhi and Maulana Shaukat Ali, on the evening of 23rd August 1920 at Bezwada in the compound of the Municipal Travellers' Bungalow :

India will commit suicide if we do not appreciate and understand the forces that are arrayed against us. We have got a mighty Government, with all the power, with all the forces of arms arrayed against us. It is composed of men who are able, courageous, willing and capable of making sacrifices. It is a Government which does not scruple to use means fair or foul in order to gain its ends. (Cries of "shame!") No craft is above that Government. It resorts to frightfulness, terrorism. It resorts to bribery in the shape of titles, honours and high offices. (Cries of "shame!") It administers opiates in the form of reforms. In any sense it is autocracy doubly distilled, appearing in the guise of democracy for the greatest gifts of a crafty, cunning man are worthless so long as cunning resides in his heart. It is a Government which represents a civilization which is purely material and godless. (Cries of "shame!") I have given to you these qualities of this Government not in order to excite your angry passions but in order that you may appreciate fully the forces that are matched against you. Anger will serve no purpose. But we shall have to meet the godlessness by godliness. We shall have to meet their untruth by truth. We shall have to meet terrorism, their frightfulness by bravery, and it is an unbending bravery which is, today, demanded from every man, woman and child. . . .

And I ask you, the citizens of Bezwada, to consider well before you set your eyes upon the loaves and fishes that are ready for you in Government employment, set them in one scale and set your religious and national honours in the other and make your choice. . . .

It passes my comprehension how we, who have known this Government, who have read the Viceregal pronouncement, who have understood the determination of this Government not to grant justice either in the matter of the Punjab or in the matter of the khilafat; it passes my comprehension how can we expect any real blessing, any real freedom for India from any association, constructive or obstructive, with this Government. . . .

Moderates believe in the possibility of justice being obtained at the hands of this Government. Nationalists with firmness, on the other

hand, have wrung with denunciation unadulterated of this Government and of its measures. How can a Nationalist ever hope to gain anything by entering into these councils holding people that they do. But if they really represent popular will and if they want to retain their hold on the popular mind, I venture to suggest to them that it is their business to remain out of the councils, consolidate public opinion and wring justice from unwilling hands.

N.A.I. : Home : Political : December, 1920 : Nos. 210-16A

115. LETTER TO SARLADEVI CHAUDHRANI

ON THE WAY TO MANMAD FOR BOMBAY,
August 24, 1920

MY DEAREST S.,

Your letters have caused me distress. You do not like my sermons. And yet so long as you remain a school girl, what should I do except giving you sermons? If my love is true it must express itself in sermons so long as you do not realize the ideal accepted by you as worthy. I do not at all like your doubting the necessity of the life adopted by you or the life you are trying to adopt. What can be the reward of always speaking and doing Truth even at the peril of one's life? What can be the reward of dying for one's country? What is the reward of your having given years to acquiring perfection in piano-playing? You give all for the cause you represent because you cannot do otherwise. Your satisfaction must depend upon complete surrender. A surrender that gives not satisfaction is compulsory surrender, unworthy of a self-respecting person. And if your association with me does not teach you this simple truth, I must be unworthy of your love. For, if my life has not taught you this much, I am a worthless being. There is no worth in me except the capacity for unlimited self-surrender and truthfulness. All have noticed these two qualities in me and there must be something wrong in me if you who have penetrated my life so deeply have failed to notice them. And what can I give you to share except my richest possessions? And so, you must not resent my giving you sermons but receive them in the same loving manner in which they are delivered. If I am your Law-giver and if I do not always lay down the law, surely I must at least reason with you on things of eternity or supreme importance for the country for which we live and which we love so well.

But this does not mean that you must not write nasty things if you think them. My plea is that you must cease to think nasty thoughts.

With love,

Yours,

L. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

116. RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY FOR NON-CO-OPERATION

It is not without the greatest reluctance that I engage in a controversy with so learned a leader like Sir Narayan Chandavarkar. But in view of the fact that I am the author of the movement of non-co-operation, it becomes my painful duty to state my views even though they are opposed to those of the leaders whom I look upon with respect. I have just read during my travels in Malabar Sir Narayan's rejoinder to my answer to the Bombay Manifesto against non-co-operation. I regret to have to say that the rejoinder leaves me unconvinced. He and I seem to read the teachings of the Bible, the *Gita* and the Koran from different standpoints or we put different interpretations on them. We seem to understand the words ahimsa, politics and religion differently. I shall try my best to make clear my meaning of the common terms and my reading of the different religions.

At the outset let me assure Sir Narayan that I have not changed my views on ahimsa. I still believe that man not having been given the power of creation does not possess the right of destroying the meanest creature that lives. The prerogative of destruction belongs solely to the Creator of all that lives. I accept the interpretation of ahimsa, namely, that it is not merely a negative state of harmlessness but it is a positive state of love, of doing good even to the evil-doer. But it does not mean helping the evil-doer to continue the wrong or tolerating it by passive acquiescence—on the contrary, love, the active state of ahimsa, requires you to resist the wrong-doer by dissociating yourself from him even though it may offend him or injure him physically. Thus if my son lives a life of shame, I may not help him to do so by continuing to support him; on the contrary, my love for him requires me to withdraw all support from him although it may mean even his death. And the same love imposes on me the

obligation of welcoming him to my bosom when he repents. But I may not by physical force compel my son to become good—that in my opinion is the moral of the story of the Prodigal Son.

Non-co-operation is not a passive state, it is an intensely active state—more active than physical resistance or violence. Passive resistance is a misnomer. Non-co-operation in the sense used by me must be non-violent and therefore neither punitive nor vindictive nor based on malice, ill will or hatred. It follows therefore that it would be sin for me to serve General Dyer and co-operate with him to shoot innocent men. But it will be an exercise of forgiveness or love for me to nurse him back to life, if he was suffering from a physical malady. I cannot use in this context the word co-operation as Sir Narayan would perhaps use it. I would co-operate a thousand times with this Government to wean it from its career of crime, but I will not for a single moment co-operate with it to continue that career. And I would be guilty of wrong doing if I retained a title from it or "as service under it or supported its law-courts or schools". Better for me a beggar's bowl than the richest possession from hands stained with the blood of the innocents of Jallianwala. Better by far a warrant of imprisonment than honeyed words from those who have wantonly wounded the religious sentiment of my seventy million brothers.

My reading of the *Gita* is diametrically opposed to Sir Narayan's. I do not believe that the *Gita* teaches violence for doing good. It is pre-eminently a description of the duel that goes on in our own hearts. The divine author has used a historical incident for inculcating the lesson of doing one's duty even at the peril of one's life. It inculcates performance of duty irrespective of the consequences, for, we mortals, limited by our physical frames, are incapable of controlling actions save our own. The *Gita* distinguishes between the powers of light and darkness and demonstrates their incompatibility.

Jesus, in my humble opinion, was a prince among politicians. He did render unto Caesar that which was Caesar's. He gave the devil his due. He ever shunned him and is reported never once to have yielded to his incantations. The politics of his time consisted in securing the welfare of the people by teaching them not to be seduced by the trinkets of the priests and the pharisees. The latter then controlled and moulded the life of the people. Today the system of Government is so devised as to affect every department of our life. It threatens our very existence. If therefore we want to conserve the welfare of the nation, we must religiously interest ourselves in the

doings of the governors and exert a moral influence on them by insisting on their obeying the laws of morality. General Dyer did produce a "moral effect" by an act of butchery. Those who are engaged in forwarding the movement of non-co-operation, hope to produce a moral effect by a process of self-denial, self-sacrifice and self-purification. It surprises me that Sir Narayan should speak of General Dyer's massacre in the same breath as acts of non-co-operation. I have done my best to understand his meaning, but I am sorry to confess that I have failed.

Young India, 25-8-1920

117. KHILAFAT AND SWADESHI

It was not without much misgiving that I consented to include swadeshi as a plank in non-co-operation. But Maulana Hasrat Mohani by his sheer earnestness bore me down. I fear however that his reasons for including swadeshi are different from mine. He is a protagonist of boycott of British goods. I cannot reconcile myself to the doctrine as I have explained elsewhere in this issue. But having failed to popularize boycott, Mohani Saheb has accepted swadeshi as the lesser good. It is however necessary for me to explain how I have come to include swadeshi in the programme of non-co-operation.

Non-co-operation is nothing but discipline in self-sacrifice. And I believe that a nation that is capable of limitless sacrifice is capable of rising to limitless heights. The purer the sacrifice the quicker the progress. Swadeshi offers man, woman and child an occasion to make a beginning in self-sacrifice of pure type. It therefore presents an opportunity for testing our capacity for sacrifice. It is the measure for gauging the depth of national feeling on the khilafat wrong. Does the nation feel sufficiently to move it to go through even the preliminary process of sacrifice? Will the nation revise its taste for the Japanese silk, the Manchester calico or the French lace and find all its decoration out of hand-spun and hand-woven cloth, i.e., khadi? If crores of people will refuse to wear or use foreign cloth and be satisfied with the simple cloth that we can produce in our homes, it will be proof of our organizing ability, energy, co-operation and self-sacrifice that will enable us to secure all we need. It will be a striking demonstration of national solidarity.

Such a consummation cannot be achieved for the mere wish. It cannot be achieved by one man, no matter how capable and sincere he

may be. It cannot be achieved by dotting India with swadeshi stores. It can only be achieved by new production and judicious distribution. Production means lakhs of women spinning in their own homes. This requires earnest men to be engaged in honestly distributing carded cotton and collecting yarn and paying for it. It means manufacture of thousands of spinning-wheels. It means inducing the hereditary weavers to return to their noble calling and distributing home-spun yarn amongst them and setting their manufactures. It is thus only as an energizing agent that I can think of swadeshi as a plank in non-co-operation. But it is not to be despised in that capacity. And I hope that every worker for the cause, even if he can do nothing else, will have done something if he can advance swadeshi first by increasing production and then distribution. He would be simply moving in a circle if he is satisfied with distributing cloth that is already being manufactured in India.

Young India, 25-8-1920

118. BOYCOTT OF GOODS V. NON-CO-OPERATION PROGRAMME

Mr. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar was pleased to answer my argument in favour of the details of the first stage of non-co-operation that I had the honour of explaining at the great Madras Beach meeting. He expressed his dissent from all but the renunciation of titles. He suggested boycott of foreign goods in the place of the other items. Even at the risk of repeating arguments familiar to the readers of *Young India*, I must deal with the question of boycott which has now received the *imprimatur* of so able a publicist as Mr. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar.

In the first place, boycott of British goods has been conceived as a punishment and can have no place in non-co-operation which is conceived in a spirit of self-sacrifice and is a matter of sacred duty.

Secondly, any measure of punishment must be swift, certain and adequate for the effect intended to be produced. Resorted to by individuals, therefore, boycott is ineffectual, for, it can give no satisfaction unless it is productive of effect, whereas every act of non-co-operation is its own satisfaction.

Thirdly, boycott of British goods is thoroughly unpractical, for, it involves sacrifice of their millions by millionaires. It is in my opinion infinitely more difficult for a merchant to sacrifice his

millions than for a lawyer to suspend his practice or for a title-holder to give up his title, or for a parent to sacrifice, if need be, the literary instruction of his children. Add to this the important fact that merchants have only lately begun to interest themselves in politics. They are therefore yet timid and cautious. But the class, to which the first stage of non-co-operation is intended to appeal, is the political class which has devoted years to politics and is not mentally unprepared for communal sacrifice.

Boycott of British goods to be effective must be taken up by the whole country at once or not at all. It is like a siege. You can carry out a siege only when you have the requisite men and instruments of destruction. One man scratching a wall with his finger nails may hurt his fingers but will produce no effect upon the walls. One title-holder giving up his title has the supreme satisfaction of having washed his hands clean of the guilt of the donor and is unaffected by the refusal of his fellows to give up theirs. The motive of boycott being punitive lacks the inherent practicability of non-co-operation. The spirit of punishment is a sign of weakness. A strengthening of that spirit will retard the process of regeneration. The spirit of sacrifice is a determination to rid ourselves of our weakness. It is therefore an invigorating and purifying process and is therefore also calculated to do good both to us and to those who evoke the spirit of sacrifice in us. Above all, if India has a mission of her own, she will not fulfill it by copying the doubtful example of the West and making even her sacrifice materialistically utilitarian instead of offering a sacrifice, spotless and pleasing even in the sight of God.

Young India, 25-8-1920

119. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SABARMATI,
August 26, 1920

MATHURADAS
93 BAZAR GATE STREET
BOMBAY

SEND GOAT GHEE IMMEDIATELY MAN OR POST.

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

120. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

SABARMATI, NEAR AHMEDABAD,
August 27 [1920]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I hope you have my letters. Jamnadas has sent me a cable asking me in your name to go to Germany to have Just's cure. But it cannot be. I have no leisure for anything but the struggle going on here. If I was free, I would have run down not for the earth cure but most decidedly to meet you, hug you and once more look you in the face. For me you have risen from the dead. Not having heard from or of you and all my inquiries having failed, I had decided that you had left this little globe of ours. You cannot imagine the joy of the thought I may yet see you in the flesh and meanwhile begin to receive your love letters.

I know you will not rebuke me when I tell you that like many of my things, your clothes have become moth-eaten. With all the changes life with me has undergone, I have been unable to overhaul things in my custody. For months when we shifted to where we are at present, all the things had to be stored away in a place. We were living in tents in what was practically a wilderness. So when you come, you will see a skeleton of what at one time used to be a good wardrobe. Most of your books remain in a fair condition.

Our friend Omar has gone through much grief. Parsi Rustomji is in Durban and thriving. West is his own printer in Durban.

I am now off to a conference.[1]

With love,

Yours,
UPPER HOUSE

From the original : Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy : National Archives of India

[1] Fourth Gujarat Political Conference

121. SPEECH AT GUJARAT POLITICAL CONFERENCE, AHMEDABAD

August 27, 1920

I consider it an honour to discharge the duty which has been assigned to me. I am not, however, altogether disinterested in the matter. Electing a president is easy and yet difficult. This is a critical time for India. On this occasion, with the eyes of the whole country turned on us, we need to elect as president an old and experienced captain who will steer the ship well. Several names were suggested in the meeting of the Reception Committee. I voted for Shri Abbas Tyabji. I felt that, with him in charge, many of our difficulties would be overcome and that I, too, could help in solving them since I knew Shri Tyabji quite intimately. He is advanced in age and weak, but the moment he received my telegram about the Punjab matter he came running to Lahore. He was taken ill there; as he was making a list of the people who had suffered, his heart started beating faster. He was so ill that, since he looked upon me as his younger brother, he sent for me and made his will. We should pay careful attention to what the other side has to say. It was difficult for Shri Abbas Tyabji to accept the invitation to be president. As he is weak, he will not be able to take full part in the discussion. We should, therefore, make his task as easy as we can.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 5-9-1920

122. SPEECH ON NON-CO-OPERATION AT GUJARAT POLITICAL CONFERENCE[1]

August 28, 1920

There has been no occasion in the history of the Congress to move a resolution of this kind. Hence all of us should give the most careful consideration to it and hear respectfully what the leaders who oppose it have to say about it. If we would have the weapon of non-co-operation employed in the right manner, we should win over our opponents by love instead of trying to impose our views on them. Non-co-operation is no weapon of coercion. In using this beautiful

[1] On the second day of the Conference; Gandhiji moved the resolution on non-co-operation.

weapon, there should be no impatience or discourtesy. If the resolution is rejected, I would be unhappy but would certainly not lose heart, nor would I give up non-co-operation. We should hear what leaders who have served the people want to say. If we refuse to give a hearing to those who wish to warn us, I do not know what work we are fit todo. It is our duty to listen with courtesy even to a child's protest. Courtesy is both the first and the last step in non-co-operation. This is not a weapon to be used in anger. Maulana Shaukat Ali, who acts in complete unity of purpose with me, has held his anger in check. Those who have joined the movement out of anger will be disappointed. The friends who advise against non-co-operation mention two things: one, that it involves a risk and, two, that the people of our country are not fit to employ this weapon, since using it against a Government which commands ample resources, which is united and does not lose heart all too soon, certainly involves a risk. But, then, without using such a weapon, it is impossible to bring it to its knees. There is no task attempted by the British people which may not have involved a risk. Is it without venturing anything that a handful of them rule 32 crores of Indians? Would there be any risk they may not have faced, these people who fought the Germans, unprepared as they were? Without taking risks, you will achieve nothing; only, we should see that the risk bears some proportion to the end we have in view. A weapon which will serve our purpose and at the same time involve the least risk—such a weapon, I think, you will find in non-co-operation. No one is able to suggest a practicable alternative, involving less risk. We should not forget the services which the Congress has been rendering for 35 years. It is thanks to the Congress that we have this weapon. This does not mean, of course, that we should be content to be drowned in a well simply because it has come down to us from our forefathers. He is the real son who adds to his inheritance. Some persons argue that non-co-operation will violate the Congress constitution. There is nothing in it, however, in virtue of which we can say this. Of course, the Government will be put to harassment. An alcoholic is bound to feel when the wine-bottle is snatched away from his hands, and non-co-operation is a far more serious affair for the Government than the snatching away of his bottle is to the alcoholic. It is morally wrong to co-operate with the Government. If it had known that the people of India were opposed to it, the khilafat issue would not have been settled as it was. I do not believe that the settlement was the work of other nations. Our powerful

ministers are a match for them all. It would be morally wrong, and an act of injustice, to keep company with those who have been unjust to Turkey and we should keep away from such an evil course at any cost. A mere child like Prahlad could understand non-co-operation and one like me also can adopt it. What some persons say, then, that the people are not fit to employ non-co-operation, is not true. If my sons and my wife have used non-co-operation against me, I do not believe that the people of India cannot understand this idea. Non-co-operation is quite a practical weapon. The nation as a whole could employ it to its great advantage. If we employ it, we would not be the first people to do so. We need not believe, either, that if we start non-co-operation others will necessarily follow. Our waiting for the decision of the Congress will be no sign of progress [of the cause]. We should start it right now and present it in action to the Congress. I am going to Calcutta to get non-co-operation accepted by it. History furnishes innumerable instances of non-co-operation. We have before us the example of the Boers. General Botha was not satisfied with the rights granted to his people and resorted to non- co-operation. In the event, they called him to England and the Boers now enjoy freedom. They had boycotted the councils. Let the Moderates enter the councils if they will; but what will Nationalists do there, I should like to ask them. Personally, I do not believe they will be in a majority there. They will not succeed in their aim unless they secure every vote. The authorities hold dice which lend themselves to foul play, and against these the genuine dice of the Nationalists will not avail them. The latter's dice are hollow, whereas the Government's are weighted with lead. Their entering the councils, therefore, will serve no purpose. If, in the Transvaal, 10,000 Indians could succeed against a hundred and fifty thousand whites, there is no reason to suppose that the weapon [of non-co-operation] will be ineffective in India. R. B. Ramanbhai says that, once the people's heads are turned with this weapon and they get out of control, there is no knowing what excesses they will not commit in future. When the check over them has disappeared [he says], they will not be held within limits. However, we wish to begin with the educated classes. If we proceed gradually and systematically, there will be no danger of chaos. If the weapon is put to wrong use by anyone, the movement will not last even for 15 days. No matter into whose hands this stainless weapon falls, there will be no excesses. For a people rendered important and growing impatient, non-co-operation is the only way. As Shri Wamanrao has pointed out, we

would be savages if we struck with any weapon that came to hand. We have, thus, no right to employ any and every weapon. If any of you feel that I have advised you to take up this weapon without any experience of it and without giving thought to the matter, they should abandon me. If we were to take up any weapon [that came to hand], there would be utter chaos in the country and we would be reduced to the condition of beasts. In the funeral procession on the death of Tilak Maharaj, I witnessed scenes which were painful to me. I felt that people had not been able to restrain themselves within limits of propriety. As the tears over his death have not yet dried, I have not discussed the matter in public. The weapon of non-co-operation is not to be employed as we please. It would not be worthy of us to do so. We should take up non-co-operation only after we have had full training in it. It is a weapon not for spreading violence, but for reducing it. In Kheda district, they say, satyagraha has been followed by robberies, but there were robberies even before. When appealing to the people to enlist in the army, I told them that robberies would remain, and that the only way of preventing them was for the people to have arms or, following me, to keep nothing with them except a few clothes. I told them that their looking up to the Government for protection against robbers proved their lack of fitness for swaraj, that they should win over the robbers by love. The tree of non-co-operation will not grow in a day. It will bring you the gift of a good many powers. We need not boycott municipalities, since they are of benefit to our towns. We do not propose to start full non-co-operation all at once, but will proceed gradually. We shall have to wait, but not long. This is not a resolution to be implemented by the Government; it is to be implemented by us. If you think it cannot be implemented, please drop it. If, on the other hand, you feel that the country has been humiliated and our religion slighted, welcome this resolution enthusiastically; go home and think over it and employ the weapon of non-co-operation only if you are convinced.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 5-9-1920

123. TO HINDUS

I see that the Hindus have still mental reservations about going all out to make sacrifices on the khilafat issue. I decided many years ago that India's good lay in unity of heart between Hindus and Muslims. That is why on the Satyagraha Day, i.e., April 6[1], special stress was laid on Hindu-Muslim unity.

I attach far more importance to Hindu-Muslim unity than to the British connection. This latter is not indispensable for the prosperity of India, whereas Hindu-Muslim unity is. Three-fourths of India can never enjoy freedom if they remain hostile to the remaining one-fourth. Extermination of seven crore Muslims is equally impossible.

Many Hindus believe that British rule serves at any rate to protect Hinduism, and, therefore, whatever other harm it may do, the protection of Hinduism is a sufficient compensation. I can think of no more humiliating idea which can occur to a Hindu. If twenty-three crore Hindus are not strong enough to defend themselves against seven crore Muslims, either the Hindu religion is false or those who believe in it are cowardly and wicked.

I would rather that the Hindus and the Muslims settled their accounts by means of the sword than that the British Government maintained artificial peace between them.

If, however, we do not wish to fight it out with the Muslims, if we wish to live with them as with our own brothers, if we would ensure protection of cows, of our temples and our women by winning over their hearts and through a friendly approach, we should welcome the opportunity we have today. The like of it will not come again for a hundred years.

It is wrong to believe that Muslims and Hindus can never get along together. To be sure, you will find in history cases of injustice done by Muslims. But their religion is a noble one and Muslims are a noble people. I do not believe that they have no respect for people of other faiths, or that they have no compassion in them. They know how to repay obligations. I, therefore, advise every Hindu to place full trust in his Muslim brethren. Man by nature is pure in his heart and Muslims are no exception to this law.

So far, we have made no sincere efforts to bring about unity. Such an attempt expects no reward. Sincerity is not a matter for a

[1] 1919

shop-keeper's calculations. To help Muslims on certain conditions is as good as not helping them. The hearts of seven crores cannot be changed by making conditions. Their trust and their respect can be won only by helping them in their time of need. Reward should be asked only of God. My Hindu religion teaches me not to expect a reward while doing any good deed and to trust that good always produces good. Knowing that this is an unalterable law, if we come across an instance which seems to contradict it, we should think that, with our limited understanding, we are unable to explain the contradiction. We have no ground for taking it to be an exception. God always puts man to a severe test. He helps him who does not forget Him in the direst adversity, i.e., who keeps up his faith in truth. That is why He has been called the Protector of the weak.

But suppose that Muslims betray Hindus despite the latter's generous behaviour. Will Hindus, in that case, remain cowards? Are they not strong enough to protect their religion? If Hindus want to acquire strength to protect their religion, this too they will acquire by helping Muslims because, in the process, Hindus will have to display the great qualities of determination, courage, truthfulness, capacity for self-sacrifice, unity, organizing ability, etc.

I do not mean that Hindus should help because of their own weakness, but rather that it has become our duty to help the Muslims as neighbours since their case is just and the means they are employing are also just. If they do not do this duty, they will strengthen their bonds of slavery and lose for ever the opportunity of winning the friendship of Muslims. Doing it, they will shake off slavery and win over Muslims.

Looking at the matter in this way, [we see that] it is the highest duty of every Hindu to help Muslims since, in doing so, he will be saving India and protecting his religion. There can be no thought of reward or fear in discharging such a duty. Bringing about so good and great a result requires a *yajna*—a supreme *yajna*. Offering up, in this *yajna*, our titles, our practice and our education for material gain is, in my opinion, but a small sacrifice. Whether the Hindus make this sacrifice or not, every Hindu should try and understand the true meaning of this war.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-8-1920

124. OUR DUTY

Pir Mahboob Shah[1] has fallen. He was a strong man, and had been under no pressure not to defend himself. His religion meant much to him. And yet, when he found himself in jail, he took fright. Even two years' simple imprisonment was too much for him. He tendered an apology and came out. How could we explain the fact that even strong-minded people are not ready for a little suffering?

We have not always been cowards. The people of India could stand some suffering, indeed, and can do so even today. Why then are we afraid of some ordinary hardship?—for I do not look upon imprisonment as any great hardship. I attribute this abjectness to our slavery. We have been, for a long time, in so wretched a condition that we have forgotten what it is to be really free. And so, outside jail, whether or not we enjoy any respect and our dharma remains inviolate, we are content if we can have some freedom of person and desire no more. The result is that when we are asked to submit to physical suffering and win freedom of the soul, we prove ourselves cowards.

It is not merely that we have lived in slavery for a long time, luxuries have also found their way among us during this time. It is undoubtedly true that under British rule a few people have opportunities of comfortable living. As a mouse is lured into a trap by a piece of bread and a fish into a net by a small ball of flour, so we, lured by opportunities for luxurious living for a few, sacrifice our real freedom.

We need not be disheartened by the case of Pir Mahboob Shah, but we should, rather, redouble our efforts to change the atmosphere in which even the stoutest of men may fall. We should recognize our condition of slavery, should forgo bodily comfort, in other words, pleasures, to win our freedom and refuse to be frightened by the hardships of jail life.

Besides, if one of the bullocks yoked to a cart is taken ill or gets exhausted, the other bears the whole weight; likewise, if one Mahboob Shah falls, we should have the courage to take upon ourselves the burden which he should have carried.

It is no ordinary victory we aim at and no ordinary Government which we are up against. It has its strong points and weak. It is brave;

[1] Sentenced for sedition in Sind; *vide* "Speech at Calicut", 18-8-1920.

its supporters are united, have knowledge, power of organization and capacity for self-sacrifice. It denies God, is hypocritical and deceitful. It lures people, dupes them, intimidates them; being brave, it recognizes bravery and yields to it. If, therefore, we would triumph over it, we should be more brave and more united than it is, should have knowledge of a purer kind than it has, power of organization which would put it to shame and a superior capacity for self-sacrifice. We should conquer its atheism by our faith, its hypocrisy by our plainness and its deceitfulness by our truth; we should keep miles away from its baits in the form of titles, refuse to be duped by its reforms or offer of high positions and not stand in awe of its Dyers and Johnsons.

There is no reason at all to feel that we shall never be capable of doing these things and so be disheartened. To win freedom means to acquire the strength for doing them. If we ask when it will be possible for the whole nation to have such strength, our heads would simply begin to reel; if, on the other hand, each one of us asks himself whether he can have the strength, everything will be easy. We should take it that what we ourselves can do, others too can do. It would be arrogance on our part to believe otherwise.

To be brave and truthful, to make sacrifices and be fearless, to have faith in God, to refuse to be tempted by the Government's baits or be taken in by its legislatures—this will not be difficult for the reader. He will be free when he can do so much, and his freedom cannot but infect others. When the nation has caught the infection, it will be free. There is the same law both for individuals and for a nation. Though all the people in the country, when they suffer from a disease, may not know the remedy, it is the duty of the man who knows it to apply it; in the same manner, any person who knows the remedies for this disease of slavery ought to apply them, even if he is the only one.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-8-1920

125. THREE INFATUATIONS

As I tour the country, I realize more and more that the people are greatly in love with Government schools, practice in law-courts and legislatures. Neither the issue of khilafat nor that of the Punjab will be settled while people continue under the delusions that without schools children will remain uneducated, that unless lawyers practise they will go hungry and people will not get justice, that without legislatures the people's affairs cannot be managed. And the Government will go on increasing its control.

We must acquire the ability to get for ourselves the knowledge which is available in the Government schools. The lure of degrees must go. We must know how to settle our disputes among ourselves. It is not as if we always get justice in Government courts. Judges and others are even known to accept bribes and to do injustice through error or ignorance. Cases of injustice are known to have remained unredressed even in the Privy Council. By abandoning courts, then we are not likely to suffer any very great loss except that we might fail to get justice in settling disputes among ourselves. Moreover, lawyers, knowing that others are able to make a living all right, should have patience and maintain themselves in some other way. Though the lure of legislatures is the strongest, it is difficult to understand it. I can say nothing to those who hope for justice from the Government. It is in vain that one tries to persuade a man who believes wine to be beneficial to give up drinking. But many have even less faith in the Government than I. They never had any nor do they have it today. It passes my understanding why they should be attracted by legislatures.

So long as the ruling class is not sincere, its intentions not honest, so long as it has not atoned for its sins in the Punjab and has not made amends for its betrayal of the Muslims, all reforms, however splendid, are, in my opinion, to be shunned like milk mixed with arsenic. Mr. Sharma[1] and Dr. [T. B.] Sapru have been appointed to the Executive Council. So what? I look upon it a studied attempt to deceive the people. Lord Sinha[2] may become a Governor, so what? Who are those people making all these gifts? What is their intention

[1] B. N. Sharma; member, Viceroy's Executive

[2] S. P. Sinha (1864-1928); presided over Bombay session of the Indian National Congress in 1915

in doing so? To strengthen their power, to make the people forget the wounds of the Punjab and the khilafat. What epithet shall we give to a doctor who so treats the wound that it becomes septic within but seems to heal up on the surface?

Consider the Viceroy's speech. He says that he can answer the critics of the Government on the Punjab question, but would rather not do so. He leaves the final judgment to the future historian. He forgets that he has already pronounced this final judgement. He has absolved Sir Michael O'Dwyer; General Dyer [he has said] committed no crime, but only an error of judgment; the other officials are guilty of nothing; Col. O'Brien and others have been totally absolved and are known to be respected officials; the Rowlatt Act remains; this is the final judgment on the Punjab affair. What remains now for history to say? Perhaps in future, it will hold them unfit to have been officers, will call Sir Michael O'Dwyer a Nero; so what? Will that end the people's sufferings today? What shall it profit a patient if a correct diagnosis of his disease is made after his death? We demand justice for the Punjab today. If we are one people, the fact that even one Punjabi had to crawl on his stomach should mean for us that the whole nation had to do. The Government has no right to ask for the people's co-operation without atoning for its sins. The people will accept no favours from the Government.

Now examine the reference to the khilafat in his speech. That he has conveyed the feelings of the Muslims to the Allies means that he admits the justice of their demand. But he wants to absolve himself by saying that our Government cannot dictate to the Allies. This is an untruth. The whole world knows, as does the Indian Government, that the British Government took the main part in drafting the peace treaty with Turkey and ensuring its acceptance. They know that, if Mr. Lloyd George had wished, he could have kept his promise and respected the feelings of the Muslims. But it was his intention to destroy Turkey and weaken the roots of Islam. Despite this, the Viceroy says that he did his best in the matter of the khilafat and wants thereby to disown his res-ponsibility; in other words, he is misleading the people.

When the people are striving to end these injustices by employing the harmless weapon of non-co-operation, His excellency ridicules them. He has given up the idea of arresting me and

Maulana Shaukat Ali and decided to laugh at non-co-operation. I would have congratulated His Excellency if this decision had not been vitiated by hypocrisy. The massacre inflicted by General Dyer was a barbarous method; to try to weaken a movement by ridiculing it is a refined method. And the people will certainly invite ridicule if they do not start non-co-operation and swallow the humiliation of having had to crawl on their stomach. It must be a principle with a people who love their religion and their self-respect that they cannot accept even a throne from hands stained with the blood of innocent people or from pens which have been instrumental in insulting Islam.

It is my hope, therefore, that the people will take the first step in non-co-operation with firmness and uphold their self-respect, give up the triple infatuation and see that the Viceroy regrets this mockery.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-8-1920

126. MADRAS TOUR

FAITH OF MADRAS

I have not been able to write an account of my tour of the Punjab. Mahadev Desai has reported it. I also wanted to write of my experiences in Sind, but I have not been able to find time for that. The morale of the Sindhis was not less. It is difficult to say where I saw it higher. However, the people of Madras have always produced a different effect on my mind. In Madras, my friend and I have had to address the meetings in English. In some meetings, where the Muslims were in a majority, Shaukat Ali often spoke in Hindustani. Even then the people heard him in complete silence. This used to have a profound effect on my mind. The faith of the people of Madras is boundless. The people's sincerity is extreme.

EVEN THEN DISAPPOINTMENT

And yet the immediate result of our tour cannot be said to have been much. At every place some lawyers have given up practice, some parents have decided to withdraw their children from schools, some persons have resigned their jobs and some have abandoned the idea of entering legislatures. Even so, the result has not come up to one's expectations, considering the people's love [for me].

REASONS

The reasons are easy to understand. Some of the leaders have no faith in non-co-operation. Those who have it lack the capacity

for self-sacrifice. the third category consists of persons who are not sincere. They believe one thing and say another. This being the condition of the leaders, it is natural that the people are unable to act promptly. This experience suggests that the atmosphere will be purified as a result of this purifying movement of non-co-operatioin; hypocrisy will be a little less and the dross will come to the surface. The progress of the people is impossible without such purification.

MAULANA SHAUKAT ALI

My experience of Shaukat Ali in the course of this tour was enough to help me get over my disappointment in other matters. His firmness, straightforwardness, truthfulness, honesty, his unbounded faith in himself and in the people, his generosity, his friendliness, his courage, his humility—all these qualities illuminate his life. I believe his love for India is great. He wishes that Hindus and Muslims should ever live as blood-brothers. He always tells Muslims, in private and in public, that they should make every possible sacrifice to please the Hindus. Even if a Hindu has hurt the feelings of any Muslim [he tells them], the latter should not go to court but settle the matter through a *panch*.

WHERE WE DIFFER

There is one point on which we differ, and we have known it from the very beginning. If, despite this, we can live together as blood-brothers, it is because both of us are perfectly loyal to our respective ideals as well as to each other personally. He believes that one can kill an enemy and, for doing so, even deceit can be employed. I believe, on the contrary, that in killing an enemy, one falls from one's true nature as a human being, that the act is degrading; and also that deceit never pays at any time. In fact, it is soul-killing. Despite this, we have joined hands, since he has understood that the people have no strength of arms; that they lack unity and qualities like firmness, courage, and capacity for self-sacrifice; and that till they acquire them they cannot wield the sword. He says that, whereas his car needs good roads, my cart can move, whatever their condition. Hence, for the present, he has accepted my way. Certain things are necessary in following either way. Not only has he, therefore, not hesitated to accept my way, but, having accepted it, he is trying to cultivate the qualifications necessary for success in it and pleads with the people to do likewise. I see no deceit in him. He tells the people frankly that, at the present time, my way is the best for

them. If the Muslims are peaceful, it is because of his firmness.

HIS INFLUENCE

His influence over the Muslims is great. Their regard for him is unselfish and most wonderful to behold. There is no exaggeration in saying that he is the life and soul of the Muslims.

GOVERNMENT'S ILL-FORTUNE

The Government proves its own ill-fortune by looking upon such a man as its enemy. He has served the Government for seventeen years and, during that period, he came into contact with many Englishmen. What kind of a Government it must be which could not retain the loyalty of such a brave man? He has no unreasoning hatred of the Government. If the latter would bow an inch, he would bow an ell. Only, he can stand no insult to his religion and his community. He runs away from hypocrisy. There is a possibility that the Government may imprison this man who, in any country outside India, would have become a commander-in-chief. I cannot but feel that to co-operate with such a Government is a sin.

GUJARATIS' LOVE

If my experience of Shaukat Ali helps me to get over my disappointment in other matters, my experience of Gujaratis in Madras Presidency has been similar. Like other communities, Gujaratis, too, at every place, have taken part in the khilafat movement. In Calicut and Mangalore, they were simply wonderful. At both these places, they took a leading part. We were put up at a *Bhatia*[1] gentleman's place in either of these towns. This was a most pleasant surprise to me. It does not mean that either of these two families had given up its religion. Though they keep up their *Vaishnava* way[2] of life, they saw no difficulty in putting up a Muslim in their houses. Even otherwise, they have been helping the Muslim residents there, who are, comparatively, an ignorant people. Women also joined in this public work with interest. The train leaves Mangalore early in the morning. When we arrived at the station, we found a Gujarati sister with *kumkum*[3], rice, coconut and a leaf-bowl of sugar-candy in her

[1] A community of Gujarat

[2] A *bhakti* cult; also a follower of it or devotee of Vishnu, one of the Hindu Trinity, and His incarnation, Krishna

[3] Auspicious red powder

hands. She welcomed us as adopted brothers, put a *tilak*[1] on our forehead, offered us the coconut and the leaf-bowl, wished us success and blessed us. The radiant face of Shaukat Ali at the time was a happy sight. I was happy that, even far away from their homes, Gujaratis maintain their traditional courtesy, good sense and love, and play their part in public life.

SWADESHI

Gujaratis have been giving good encouragement to the swadeshi movement. They have taught even little girls in Calicut to spin. These girls also sang before us, as they plied the spinning-wheels, a song about the wheel. This movement and the awakening, in some measure, among the Gujaratis of Calicut and Cochin are due to the enterprise of but one man. I was very pleased to see some wealthy Gujaratis wearing khadi.

AN INTELLIGENT GUJARATI

All the Gujaratis may not be filled with pride by the fact that some of them, so far away from their homes, are working to promote the movement for swadeshi, but I am sure they will all be delighted at the incident I shall describe. In Calicut, my speech was translated by a Malayali friend. The people were not quite satisfied with his translation. Those who had followed my speech pointed out some mistakes. When it was the turn of Shaukat Ali to speak, Mathuradas[2] came forward to translate his speech. Everybody knew him. The audience cheered him. Shaukat Ali's speech which was in English, he translated so well into Malayalam that everybody was immensely pleased with him. It is said that Mathuradas did not miss in his translation a single shade of meaning expressed in the English speech. Mathuradas knows Gujarati, Malayalam and English, all three, very well, and all his study has been the little he had learnt in an ordinary school in Cochin, the rest having been picked up in actual life. He is a business man, but is well informed on political issues. Most of the Gujaratis living in this part of the country have settled here with their families for the last two or three generations. Many of them were born in these parts. They keep in contact with their home-towns by visiting them from time to time and, in the places where they have settled, they do not keep aloof but are found to mix with the people. Mostly, one finds *Bhatias* and *Vanias*[3] from Kutch and Saurashtra

[1] Mark on the forehead, made with *kumkum*, sandal paste or saffron

[2] Mathuradas Trikumdas

[3] A community in Gujarat

settled outside for business.

OUR DIARY

The diary of our tour is as follows :

August 10	Left Bombay	
„	12-13	Madras
„	14	Ambur and Vellore
„	15	Madras
„	16	Tanjore and Nagore
„	17	Trichinopoly
„	18	Calicut
„	19	Mangalore
„	20	Salem
„	21	Salem and Bangalore
„	22	Madras
„	23	Bezwada
„	25	Bombay
„	26	Ahmedabad

We could not stay continuously for twenty-four hours at any place except Madras. Even in Madras, we did so only when we first arrived there. Thereafter, it being the central place, we used to spend there a few hours whenever we passed through it. The 125-mile journey from Salem to Bangalore was made by car. Touring at this pace was rather too much. But invitations poured in from all over and we did not feel it proper to reject any. There was also the desire, of course, to convey our message to as many places as we could manage.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-8-1920

127. SPEECH ON BOYCOTT AT GUJARAT POLITICAL CONFERENCE[1]

August 29, 1920

I am of the view that boycott will prove a hindrance. Perhaps you will not understand this. Much has been said about the injustices done to us, and it is no longer doubted that injustices have been done. Nor is there any argument about the need to take some action in the matter. Since we have the weapon of non-co-operation for the

[1] A resolution advocating boycott of British goods was moved by G. V. Mavlankar on the third day of the Conference.

purpose, why should we think of the additional weapon of boycott? I shall not refer here to my ideas about boycott from an ethical point of view and the moral objections against it; just now I shall only try to prove to you that the policy of boycott has been shown to be impracticable. The movement of boycott which followed the Bengal partition could not be kept up with the same spirit. Shri Jivanlal[1], Mr. Baptista, Shri Gangadharrao Deshpande[2] and others were against satyagraha and were advocates of boycott. They were simply in love with the idea. They had even administered a pledge of boycott at a conference in Ahmednagar, and also issued public statements to refute my views. It was announced that boycott would start within three months, but nothing of the kind happened. You will hardly come across a worker like Hasrat Mohani. I had pleaded with him earnestly at the Delhi meeting on non-co-operation and requested him not to move the resolution on boycott. But, with his influence on the Muslims, who would listen to me there? They heard me all right, some even felt that there was substance in what I said, but the resolution advocating boycott was finally passed. However, it remained ineffective, for the people are in love with foreign goods, and a lover has eyes only for the thing he loves. Hasrat Mohani pleaded with Muslim business men and requested them not to import goods manufactured by British firms. The business men, however, could not bring themselves to sacrifice their profits runn-ing into crores. I have met innumerable people in places like Calcutta and Bombay and I have come to the conclusion that boycott is not possi-ble. And now Hasrat Mohani also has given up the idea. I have, thus, seen the failure of the policy. Why, then, cling to a stand which puts you in an awkward situation? Gujarat has voted for non-co-operation; where then, is the need for a further resolution on boycott? If it has been a proper course to follow, I would have taken up the idea long ago. I must admit that the [Prime] Minister of England is Lancashire, and also that, if we refuse to patronize it, this Prime Minister would lose his strength. But there is vindictiveness and anger in this attitude and hence I reject it. I do so not only because the idea is morally wrong, but also be-cause it is impracticable and, therefore, unworthy of consideration. Besid-es, you have adopted swadeshi as

[1] Barrister; a public worker of Ahmedabad who had helped Gandhiji in establishing the Satyagraha Ashram in 1915

[2] A Congress leader of Karnatak

your dharma; how, then, can you accept boycott? One who has understood the idea of swadeshi, how can he use foreign goodsmanufactured, if not in England, in Japan or America or any other country? Is it your idea that we should retaliate against England through boycott? You will not succeed, unless you boycott all goods from England. How is this possible? A good English book, I would certainly keep in a sacred spot and offer my worship to it. It is when I fall in love with paper made in a foreign country, though paper made in my country is available, that I disgrace myself. You may resort to boycott when India has taken to the sword and the atmosphere has turned to poison. But consider this. Even the general of an army does not go to battle without first getting the army ready. What preparations have you made for boycott? Non-co-operation and boycott will ever remain as different from each other as light is from darkness. I appeal to you to reject the idea of boycott.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 12-9-1920

128. KHADI VOW[2]

August 31, 1920

From today for life I declare that I shall purchase for my (wear) only khaddar cloth hand-made of hand-spun yarn cap or head-dress and socks excepted.

From a photostat : G.N. 2514

[1] The resolution was put to the vote and declared lost.

[2] The text of the vow is in Gandhiji's hand both in English and in Hindi. Below this appear the following signatures; in Sindhi, 1. Chimandas Isardas 2. Kundansing Gangasing Makhijani 3. Ramchand Tarachand Murjani 4. Pohumal Hassomal Butani 5. Hariram Mohandas Relwani 6. Alimchand Udharam Jiandani, in Gurumukhi, 7. Rukminibai.

129. RIDICULE REPLACING REPRESSION

Had His Excellency the Viceroy not made it impossible by his defiant attitude on the Punjab and the khilafat, I would have tendered him hearty congratulation for substituting ridicule for repression in order to kill a movement distasteful to him. For, torn from its context and read by itself His Excellency's discourse on non-co-operation is unexceptionable. It is a symptom of translation from savagery to civilization. Pouring ridicule on one's opponent is an approved method in civilized politics. And if the method is consistently continued, it will mark an important improvement upon the official barbarity of the Punjab. His interpretation of Mr. Montagu's statement about the movement is also not open to any objection whatsoever. Without doubt a government has the right to use sufficient force to put down an actual outbreak of violence.

But I regret to have to confess that this attempt to pour ridicule on the movement, read in conjunction with the sentiments on the Punjab and the khilafat preceding the ridicule, seems to show that His Excellency has made it a virtue of necessity. He has not finally abandoned the method of terrorism and frightfulness, but he finds the movement being conducted in such an open and truthful manner that any attempt to kill it by violent repression would expose him not only to ridicule but contempt of all right-thinking men.

Let us however examine the adjective used by His Excellency to kill the movement by laughing at it. It is "futile", "ill-advised", "intrinsically inane", "unpractical", "visionary". He has rounded off the adjectives by describing the movement as "most foolish of all foolish schemes". His Excellency has become so impatient of it that he has used all his vocabulary for showing the magnitude of the ridiculous nature of non-co-operation.

Unfortunately for His excellency the movement is likely to grow with ridicule as it is certain to flourish on repression. No vital movement can be killed except by the impatience, ignorance or laziness of its authors. A movement cannot be "inane" that is conducted by men of action as I claim the members of the Non-co-operation Committee are. It is hardly "unpractical", seeing that if the people respond, everyone admits that it will achieve the end. At the same time it is perfectly true that if there is no response from the people, the movement will be popularly described as "visionary". It is for the nation to return an effective answer by organized non-co-operation and change ridicule into respect. Ridicule is like repression. Both give place to respect when they fail to produce the intended effect.

Young India, 1-9-1920

130. THE VICEREGAL PRONOUNCEMENT

It may be that having lost faith in His Excellency's probity and capacity to hold the high office of Viceroy of India, I now read his speeches with a biased mind, but the speech His Excellency delivered at the time of opening of the council shows to me a mental attitude which makes association with him or his Government impossible for self-respecting men.

The remarks on the Punjab mean a flat refusal to grant redress. He would have us to "concentrate on the problems of the immediate future"! The immediate future is to compel repentance on the part of the Government on the Punjab matter. Of this there is no sign. On the contrary, His Excellency resists the temptation to reply to his critics, meaning thereby that he has not changed his opinion on the many vital matters affecting the honour of India. He is "content to leave the issues to the verdict of history". Now this kind of language, in my opinion, is calculated further to inflame the Indian mind. Of what use can a favourable verdict of history be to men who have been wronged and who are still under the heels of officers who have shown themselves utterly unfit to hold offices of trust and responsibility? The plea for co-operation is, to say the least, hypocritical in the face of the determination to refuse justice to the Punjab. Can a patient who is suffering from an intolerable ache be soothed by the most tempting dishes placed before him? Will he not consider it mockery on the part of the physician who so tempted him without curing him of his pain?

His Excellency is, if possible, even less happy on the khilafat. "So far as any Government could", says this trustee for the nation, "we pressed upon the Peace Conference the views of Indian Moslems. But notwithstanding our efforts on their behalf we are threatened with a campaign of non-co-operation because, forsooth, the allied Powers found themselves unable to accept the contentions advanced by Indian Moslems." This is most misleading if not untruthful. His Excellency knows that the Peace Terms are not the work of the allied Powers. He knows that Mr. Lloyd George is the prime author of Terms and that the latter has never repudiated his responsibility for them. He has with amazing audacity justified them in spite of his consi-dered pledge to the Moslems of India regarding Constantinople, Thrace and the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor. It is not truthful to saddle responsibility for the Terms on the allied Powers when Great Britain alone has promoted them. The offence of the

Viceroy becomes greater when we remember that he admits the justness of the Muslim claim. He could not have "pressed" it if he did not admit its justice.

I venture to think that His Excellency by his pronouncement on the Punjab has strengthened the nation in its effort to seek a remedy to compel redress of the two wrongs before it can make anything of the so-called Reforms.

Young India, 1-9-1920

131. ASSASSINATION OF A DEPUTY COMMISSSIONER

The assassination of Mr. Willoughby is a most unfortunate event which has naturally evoked public sympathy and indignation. The murder was a cruel, thoughtless and fanatical act. It has not advanced but retarded the cause of khilafat. Mr. Willoughby had no hand in the Turkish Terms. As is quite probable, he was himself a popular officer. It can only be counted as madness to kill an innocent man for a crime committed by a member of his race. And yet the fact must not be disguised that the murder will be regarded by many Mohammedans as a pious act worthy of martyr. I have heard Mohammedans calmly arguing that such murders are not only justifiable but meritorious. I have known many Hindus who have argued that it was the throwing of bombs which brought about the removal of the Partition of Bengal.[1] I know that many consider Dhingra[2] to have been a martyr. The Sinn Feiners[3] openly practise murder and other forms of violence for the purpose of freeing their country from the English connection. Every assassin or incendiary is considered by them a hero. It is because I feared such a result in our midst, that I advised non-violent non-co-operation regarding the khilafat. In my opinion, it is the active and open preaching of non-co-operation which has prevented murders and assassinations in the land. The murder of Mr. Willoughby proves that the propaganda of non-

[1] The partition of Bengal took place in 1905 and was annulled in December, 1911.

[2] Madan Lal Dhingra, a Punjabi student who shot dead Sir Curzon Wyllie, Political Aide-de-Camp to the Secretary of State for Inida, on July 1, 1909 at a reception by the National Indian Association in London; *vide* "London", after 16-7-1909.

[3] In Ireland

violence and non-co-operation has not proved sufficient to control individul fanatics and that it is not an easy thing to do so. It proves further that the khilafat wrong is a deep-seated grievance which with the passage of time will sink deeper still instead of being forgotten.

I observe that *The Times of India* credits the khilafat propaganda with the murder and calls it the "first fruits". I realize that the language used is cautious. It connects "certain aspects of the agitation" with the crime. But I venture to suggest that no aspect of the agitation is responsible for the unfortunate murder. It is the grievous wrong, done by the British ministers, which has evoked the cruel deed.

The Times of India is on safer ground when it says that the tragedy "is a special call to Islam, for, all thoughtful Mohammedans must realize that the honour of their religion is at stake". I wish to emphasize that warning. It must be the special duty of every khilafat worker to be more careful than hitherto in insisting on complete freedom from violence as the condition precedent to successful non-co-operation. I am sure it is possible to cite texts from the Koran in condemnation of murder of inno-cent men. I can understand violence being done to wrongdoers in order to compel justice. It is unnfortunately the chosen method of the civilized world. It has scriptural authority. Islam is said openly to preach violence to the wrongdoer. The so-called votaries of Christianity justify organized warfare for the removal of wrongs, fancied or real. Thousands of Hindus interpret the *Gita* to be a certificate for war in the cause of justice. It is only a minority (daily growing in numbers) which religiously believes that violence is wrong in itself and cannot be justified even to vindicate truth. But it cannot be religious (it may be civilized) to murder innocent unarmed men without warning. It is not enough for khilafat workers to be satisfied with public condemnations (necessary as they are) or for the sake of decorum to join them. It is necessary for us to preach privately, publicly and incessantly the necessity of refraining from violence especially when an active campaign of non-co-operation full of promise is going on. We must feel in every fibre of our own being that every murder, every deed of violence must retard the progress of the movement.

This is an opportunity for distinguishing the Sinn Fein or the Egyptian non-co-operation from ours. The former does not and did not depend for success on non-violence. The Sinn Feiners resort to

violence in every shape and form. Theirs is a "frightfulness" not unlike General Dyer's. We may pardon it if we choose, because we sympathize with their cause. But it does not on that account differ in quality from General Dyer's act. The Central Khilafat Committee has openly and deliberately accepted non-violence for its creed so long as non-co-operation is being carried on. We must therefore seek to guard English life as our own. We must constitute ourselves as self-appointed volunteers guarding English life from violent hands. And our success depends upon our ability to control all the violent and fanatical forces in our midst.

Young India, 1-9-1920

132. THE GUJARAT POLITICAL CONFERENCE

The Gujarat Political Conference has made its choice. The terse, able and firm addresses, both of the chairman of the Reception Commit-tee and the honorary president of the Conference, left little room for doubting its verdict. But perhaps no one was prepared for the acceptance in detail of the programme of non-co-operation. The resolutions of the Conference, which were naturally in Gujarati, are being translated specially for *Young India*.[1] I venture to invite the attention of the readers to them.

The Conference had burned the boats. It has deliberately refrained from waiting for the Congress mandate. The Gujaratis consider that they hold sufficiently decided views to warrant their taking definite action. I tender my congratulations to them. They had full warning given to them. The opposition was led by Rao Bahadur Ramanbhai. But he was in a hopeless minority. His warning may be stated in one sentence. The agitation for non-co-operation is calculated to evoke a spirit of lawless-ness which in a nation composed of millions may be impossible to keep under control. It is the warning of a leader who has devoted his whole life to political and social reform and is therefore entitled to respect. The Gujarat Conference has fully weighed the consequences and given vote for non-co-operation. Mr. Abbas Tyabji in his closing words said in moving tones that he was reluctantly driven to adopt non-co-operation because he saw no other choice left open but to take up non-co-operation if he was to keep his self-respect and leave any healthy

[1] They were published in *Young India*, 1-9-1920.

tradition to his children. He who once implicitly believed in British justice no longer believed in it. And with his belief in it so rudely shattered, he could not support the British Government until it had purged itself of the injustice.

The Conference has laid emphasis on the necessity of the boycott of titles and honorary offices, law-courts, Government schools and councils. It has a separate resolution advising would-be recruits from offering themselves as soldiers, clerks or labourers for service in Mesopotamia. It has suggested boycott of any welcome to H. R. H. the Duke of Connaught. It views his visit in the same light as that of the Prince of Wales. It has approved of swadeshi and has by an overwhelming majority thrown out the proposition of boycott of British goods as being unpractical and inconsistent with true swadeshi and non-co-operation. By way of constructive proposals it has suggested private arbitration courts, national schools and university and formation of volunteers corps and boy scouts in the villages for defence against dacoits and robbers.

It has altered the phraseology of the resolutions reciting other grievances. Thus the programme is clear, unequivocal, drastic and thoroughgoing. But it will tax the Gujaratis to their utmost. The mere passing of resolutions sufficed when the Government were expected to give effect to them. The new resolutions will stand to our shame if they remain unenforced by us who have whole-heartedly and after full deliberation voted for them.

There is no mistaking the awakening among the masses. A strong Executive Committee has been appointed by the Conference. Much will depend upon its earnestness and patriotism to make non-co-operation a reality in Gujarat.

Young India, 1-9-1920

133. OUR BURDEN

Pir Mahboob Shah has fallen. He was a brave man. I am not concerned with his guilt or innocence. If he used the language attributed to him, it certainly constituted an incitement to violence. In that case the punishment of two years' simple imprisonment awarded to him was certainly light. Not even the highest in the land, whether belonging to the official class or to the people, can be exempt from punishment for proved guilt. What however commanded my admir-

ation was the fortitude with which the Pir Saheb decided to refrain from offering any defence and patiently to bear the penalty imposed upon him by a lawfully appointed tribunal. I thought that he had understood the spirit of the struggle. The manner in which his followers seemed to have borne the imprisonment of their leader was also most satisfactory.

But the later news to the effect that the Pir Saheb secured his release by an apology shows our weakness. Having been brought up in debilitating atmosphere of servility, the tallest of us often bend before a very simple storm. The temptation of Western civilization, without its hard discipline which the nations of the west undergo, has made us almost incapable of suffering the physical discomfort entailed by even simple imprisonment. But Pir Mahboob Shah's surrender need not dishearten us. When a number of horses are carrying a burden and one becomes fatigued or otherwise incapacitated, the rest if they are spirited animals take up their companion's burden, put forth greater effort and pull up the load. How much more should we intelligent human beings bear our comrade's burden when he gives in?

Let us therefore see what that burden exactly means. He is an indifferent soldier who ignores his opponent's strength. We must therefore know the strength of the Government with which we are engaged in a fierce struggle. The Government represents a corporation that is crafty in the main, godless, untruthful, but courageous, able, self-sacrificing and possessing great powers of organization. We must therefore meet its craftiness by simplicity and openness, godlessness by godliness, untruthfulness by truthfulness. We must match its courage with greater ability, sacrifice with greater self-sacrifice, and its organizing powers with greater organizing powers. It has almost match-less weapons of violence. We must meet them with non-violence. Unless we are able to satisfy the test, we must be content to occupy a status of servility. Non-co-operation affords the nation an opportunity of showing all the qualities required for sustaining its honour.

Young India, 1-9-1920

134. LETTER TO ESTHER FAERING[1]

ON THE WAY TO CALCUTTA,
[*Septemebr 2, 1920*][2]

MY DEAR CHILD,

I had your first long letter from home. I was delighted.

I had four very pleasant days with Menon. He is frank, honest and clean. He is unassuming. I have invited him to come to the Ashram any time he likes. I have told him too that both you and he could stay at the Ashram and make it your home there.

He has still difficulties. Pressure is being put upon him to own Christianity for your sake[3]. I consider that unworthy of both of you. Your religion must be above everything. It is not a mechanical thing to be changed at will. Therefore in my opinion you must keep your respective faiths.

Then what about your children if you decide to bear them? It is a tremendous question for a godfearing person.

The solution I can see is that though you may marry, you may not see each other carnally. But you will both do as God directs you. Menon wished me to write to you what we talked and I have done. The solution appealed to him then. But that signifies nothing. Your connection is too sacred to tamper with.

Anne Marie[4], that is Miss Petersen, [as she] insists on my calling her, [and] I have fallen in love with each other. Of course I had nothing to forgive. But I must not describe the interview. She must have done it.

Ba, Devdas, Mahadev, Imam Saheb, Shankerlal Banker, Anasuya Behn are with me among many others. These however you know. Harilal I shall meet tonight in Calcutta.

[1] A Danish missionary who came to India in 1916 and later joined Sabarmati Ashram; Gandhiji treated her as his daughter.

[2] The date given in the original is August 2, but Gandhiji was in Bombay on that date. He was on his way to Calcutta on September 2, reaching there on the 3rd.

[3] The original has "case", evidently a slip.

[4] A member of the Danish Missionary Society in South India

I know you are spreading there love for India. May God bless you and your mission.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in the National Archives of India

135. SPEECH AT CALCUTTA CONGRESS

September 4, 1920

Mahatma Gandhi then stood up on the chair supported by a gentleman and there were loud andcontinued cheers. He was given a patient hearing as he appealed in English to the audience to hear Mrs. Besant. He with folded hands said that he liked to say a few words to those who to their shame and to the shame of the great assembly were trying to prevent an authorized speaker from addressing the audience. Mr. Gandhi wanted to appeal to everyone in the assembly that if they gathered together in order to demand justice it was their first and sacred duty to render justice. (Cheers.)

"Do not mistake the position", continued Mr. Gandhi, "that Mrs. Besant had taken up (Cries of 'shame! shame!') as a position which is wilfully inimical to the interests of the country. You will have to forget the difference ('Hear! hear!') on the part of your men and women. That will be the first test ('Order! order!') of your ability to govern yourselves ('Hear! hear!') and if you are about to inaugurate non-co-operation ('Hear! hear!') you will be making a bad and a sad beginning."

The speaker then appealed to every one of them not merely to listen to Mrs. Besant in silence but with the respect for her age and her magnificent services to India. ("Hear! hear!")

Mr. Gandhi yielded to no one in the position he had taken up and that if he could not agree with her he yielded also to none even of her best admirers in his respect for her ("Hear! hear!") which she could rightly claim from everyone in India for the services that she had rendered to the country. In the name of the country, in the name of the great cause on which they were about to embark Mr. Gandhi asked them kindly and prayerfully to give Mrs. Besant and every one of those they might consider to be their opponents a respectful hearing. ("Hear! hear!" Shouts of "*Vandemataram*!")

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 5-9-1920

136. "NAVAJIVAN" ENTERS A NEW YEAR

Navajivan has completed one year. It has had to face many difficulties but, despite them all, it has been able to complete one year. I have not succeeded in all my intentions. Thanks to the difficulties about the printing press, high-prices of newsprint, defects in management, etc., we have not been able to give as many pages as we wanted to.

The subscribers have to suffer because of harassment by some honorary agents. I was pained by the failure of this experiment. Honorary work, done out of love, should be far better than paid work, but we have not attained that level yet. The desire for service has spread but we have not yet developed the capacity for it.

Besides these, I have my personal difficulties too. Thanks to them, I have not been able to give readers all that I wished to. To edit a paper and to travel are, if not impossible, difficult to do at the same time. For this reason, I have not been able to write some articles I had wanted to. I know how to guide correspondents, but I have not been able to satisfy my wish to encourage them.

It is no small satisfaction to know that, despite these and many other shortcomings, *Navajivan* is read eagerly. I should like the ideas presented in it to be put into practice even by the illiterate. Hence I request those readers who share *Navajivan*'s views to read out its issues to the illiterate as well. I will continue my efforts to make it more deserving of readers' interest.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-9-1920

137. GUJARAT MAKES ITS CHOICE

Gujarat has played its part well. The Conference[1] has never in the past had to face, and it will not have for a hundred years more to face, an issue as serious as the one on which it took a decision. We needed at this critical time a leader with an iron will and we found one. Everyone who reads the speeches of Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel and the venerable old gentleman, Abbas Tyabji, will readily acknowledge that they were resolute and unambiguous, but polite. The chairman of the Reception Committee stated his views in a brief but impressive

[1] The Gujarat Political Conference held on August 27, 28 and 29

speech, in the simplest Gujarati. We cannot say anything about Mr. Abbas Ali's style, since his speech was originally written in English. Other speeches were short and easy to follow. I have rarely come across or listened to presidential addresses so brief but direct as those speeches.

The Conference was worthy of the president. The resolutions it has passed leave nothing to be desired. They are categorical and are to be implemented forthwith.

The resolutions passed before now called upon the Government to do something or other; now, it is we who are to act.

The Conference has been sufficiently warned. The leaders told it of all possible dangers. It was made very clear that the people would lose their good name if they were found lacking the strength to carry out their decisions. The Conference has accepted non-co-operation unanimously, regardless of whether the special Congress votes against non-co-operation as such or against the actual programme suggested.

Gujaratis are reputed to be practical; they do not pass resolutions, carried away by emotion. If Gujarat fails to act on the resolution, it will fall in the esteem of others as much as it has risen by passing it. If Gujarat weakens in its resolve, even the country as a whole may suffer. It is a sign of wisdom, in the first instance, not to embark upon a task but, once a task is undertaken, it is one's duty always to see it through.

Gujaratis have become the trustees of Mother India's honour. May God grant them firmness.

The Conference has decided on the boycott of legislative bodies, Government schools and law-courts. It has requested title-holders to renounce their titles. While it has accepted swadeshi unanimously, it has by large majority rejected the proposal for the boycott of British goods. It has opposed a welcome being given to the Duke of Connaught when he pays a visit and advised people against offering themselves as recruits or clerks or labourers for in Mesopotamia.

The resolution means the following things :

1. Title-holders and persons holding medals should renounce the titles and return the medals.

2. Lawyers should give up practice in law-courts and work

out arrangements for settling disputes privately.

3. Parents should withdraw their children from schools which have any connection with the Government. Grown-up students should leave schools and colleges on their own.

4. Voters should refuse to vote for any one of the candidates seeking election to a council and the candidates should withdraw their candidature.

5. Every man, woman and child should follow the rule of perfect swadeshi and, in order that they may do so, spinning and weaving should be started in every home.

This shows that it is no small responsibility which the people have taken upon themselves. Even so, there is no possible danger of harassment in discharging it. The danger comes from the people's own timidity and lethargy. The loss of money which the programme entails is also negligible.

"What will be the substitute for law-courts? And for schools?" In answer to these questions, the Conference has suggested a scheme for securing settlement of disputes through *panchas* and another for starting new schools and converting the present schools into national schools.

All this looks nice on paper. But nothing can be done without a good number of workers and these must be brave, of sound morals, sober, courteous and persevering. If we can get such workers, Gujarat which seems enslaved today will be free tomorrow and, if Gujarat is free, to that extent India can be said to be free.

This programme contains something for everyone to do. Nothing will be achieved if everyone waits for someone else to begin; whoever can do anything should start doing it forthwith.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-9-1920

138. DEPUTY COMMISSIONER'S ASSASSINATION

When I heard of the assassination, by a Muslim, of Mr. Willoughby, a Deputy commissioner, how I wished I had been present on the spot; if it had been possible for me to take that blow upon myself, I would have rendered a service to Islam and to India which I can do in no other way. My dying in such circumstances would have had the result of convincing the whole world of the purity of our struggle; in such conviction lie the seeds of our victory.

This assassination has harmed our cause. An element of violence has entered the struggle, which had been peaceful so far. The freedom from fear which individual Englishmen enjoyed has in a measure dimini-shed. This will lead to vindictiveness and severer repression. Increase in repression brought on by our own mistakes cannot but harm us.

In our struggle, nothing is kept secret. What we think, we speak out. Since we certainly do not want to use violence in our non-co-operation movement, we should condemn this murder, condemn it not only in newspapers and meetings but in our private conversations too, and even in our thoughts.

It is not that what I am saying is relevant only to non-violence of my conception; I say it from the point of view of the generally accepted principles of moral conduct.

If we really wish to keep non-co-operation free from violence, we should realize that it was our first duty to stop violence [if it occurred]. Welcoming violence, openly or secretly, while claiming to have renounced it, would be nothing but duplicity.

If violence broke out, the people would not be able to keep up non-co-operation. There would be a reign of terror all over the country and the people themselves would get panicky; no one would then go on with non-co-operation. This is plain enough and those in charge of the movement have realized it; that is why non-co-operation has generally remained free from violence.

I know, however, that there are Muslims, and Hindus too, who welcome such assassinations. A good many people read with interest accounts of murders in Ireland. Quite a few believe that, were it not for bomb-throwing, the partition of Bengal would not have been undone. There are some who believe that the assassination [of Sir William Curzon Wyllie] by Dhingra did some good. I myself am

emphatically of the view that assassinations never do any good, and that, if sometimes for a while good seems to have followed, in the end there is harm. I regard the victory of the British to be their defeat. Evil has increased in them. Greed, hypocrisy, anger, lying, injustice—these are rapidly increasing. There is no limit to their arrogance. The Germans have no scope for these evil impulses. On whom should they perpetrate injustice? What will anger avail them?

I would make this appeal even to those who believe in the creed of violence, that they may not ride two horses at a time. Either we should have non-violent non-co-operation or abandon non-co-operation altogether.

In saying this, it is not my purpose to suggest that we should now abandon non-co-operation; I only wish to alert those in charge of the movement, to point out to them where the real danger lies. Probably, the assassin of Mr. Willoughby does not even know what the term "non-co-operation" means; the key to our success, however, lies in our acquiring control over every person in the country. If we are not strong enough to prevent even sporadic attempts at assassination, our movement simply cannot go on.

What is the way to prevent them? By changing the atmosphere. The atmosphere can change only when those who are conducting the non-co-operation movement fully understand its true nature and the conditions for its success. The first condition is that we appoint ourselves policemen for the protection of Englishmen's life; if we do so, we would reason with all around us and explain to them that our success depended wholly on our eschewing violence.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-9-1920

139. THE NON-CO-OPERATION RESOLUTION[1]

September 5, 1920

In view of the fact that on the khilafat question both the Indian and Imperial Government have signally failed in their duty towards the Mussulmans of India, and the Prime Minister has deliberately broken his pledged word given to them and that it is the duty of every

[1] This appeared in *Young India* with the additional caption : "Mr. Gandhi's Resolution".

non-Moslem Indian in every legitimate manner to assist his Mussulman brother in his attempt to remove the religious calamity that has overtaken him :

And in view of the fact that in the matter of the events of the April of 1919 both the said Governments have grossly neglected or failed to protect the innocent people of the Punjab and punish officers guilty of unsoldierly and barbarous behaviour towards them and have exonerated Sir Michael O'Dwyer who proved himself directly or indirectly responsible for most of the official crimes and callous to the sufferings of the people placed under his administration, and that the debate in the House of Lords betrayed a woeful lack of sympathy with the people of India and showed virtual support of the systematic terrorism and frightfulness adopted in the Punjab and that the latest Viceregal pronouncement is proof of entire absence of repentance in the matters of the khilafat and the Punjab :

This Congress is of opinion that there can be no contentment in India without redress of the two aforementioned wrongs and that the only effectual means to vindicate national honour and to prevent a repetition of similar wrongs in future is the establishment of swarajya. This Congress is further of opinion that there is no course left open for the people of India but to approve of and adopt the policy of progressive non-violent non-co-operation until the said wrongs are righted and swarajya is established.

And inasmuch as a beginning should be made by the classes who have hitherto moulded and represented opinion and inasmuch as Government consolidates its power through titles and honours bestowed on the people, through schools controlled by it, its law-courts and its legislative councils, and inasmuch as it is desirable in the prosecution of the movement to take the minimum risk and to call for the least sacrifice compatible with the attainment of the desired object, this Congress earnestly advises

(a) surrender of titles and honorary offices and resignation from nominated seats in local bodies;

(b) refusal to attend Government levees, durbars, and other official and semi-official functions held by Government officials or in their honour;

(c) gradual withdrawal of children from schools and colleges owned, aided or controlled by Government and in place of such schools and colleges establishment of national schools and colleges in

the various Provinces;

(d) gradual boycott of British courts by lawyers and litigants and establishment of private arbitration courts by their aid for the settlement of private disputes;

(e) refusal on the part of the military, clerical and labouring classes to offer themselves as recruits for service in Mesopotamia;

(f) withdrawal by candidates of their candidature for election to the reformed councils and refusal on the part of the voters to vote for any candidate who may despite the Congress advice offer himself for election;

(g) the boycott of foreign goods.

And inasmuch as non-co-operation has been conceived as a measure of discipline and self-sacrifice without which no nation can make real progress, and inasmuch as an opportunity should be given in the very first stage of non-co-operation to every man, woman, and child, for such discipline and self-sacrifice, this Congress advises adoption of swadeshi in piece-goods on a vast scale, and inasmuch as the existing mills of India with indigenous capital and control do not manufacture sufficient yarn and sufficient cloth for the requirements of the nation, and are not likely to do so for a long time to come, this Congress advises immediate stimulation of further manufacture on a large scale by means of revising hand-spinning in every home and hand-weaving on the part of the millions of weavers who have abandoned their ancient and honourable calling for want of encouragement.

Young India, 15-9-1920

140. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING, CALCUTTA

September 5, 1920

Mr. Gandhi spoke in support of his motions[1]. He expressed his utter distrust of the bureaucracy and stated that as British people were past masters in the art of diplomacy he felt convinced now, though he felt otherwise in Amritsar, that these reforms were a dangerous trap which concealed gilded chains that enslaved the country. He warned his hearers not to fall in that trap. He assured them that if they would only start the movement in the right spirit and carry it out as he desired, he was sure that they would secure full independence for the country within a year. He also

[1] On non-co-operation

stated that the masses were still backward in political action and had no initiation in the working of the electoral machinery. The electorate in his view had not yet the ability to discriminate on complicated political issues and were unable to understand the objective they had in view. They would be at the mercy of unscrupulous men and he wound up by saying that boycott of elections was the pivot upon which the porgramme in his resolution turned and therefore he was not prepared to yield to any appeal made in the name of unity. On this head, patriots like Mr. Tilak would not have been able to do even the small part of work they had done if they had got into councils. He again reiterated that he was not afraid of Moderates getting into the councils and he wished well to them because they believed that non-co-operation was dangerous. He claimed that his was a religious movement, that to true Mohammedans, non-co-operation including boycott of councils was an obligation enjoined as their faith, which they may not break. He described the state of excitement in the Mussulman community, such that, for very safety and peace, no less for brotherhood and unity, they should go with them non-co-operating with Government and that Mr. Das'[1] plan won't do.

By this time a number of amendments were handed to the president including amendments by Mr. Vijayaraghavachariar[2] to both motions, by Swami Shraddhananda[3], by Shri Prakasa[4], by Pandit Nehru and others. Mr. Jinnah[5] then enquired as to the procedure to be adopted in further discussion of motion and amendments, pointing out the issues raised in deciding between the two principles of the motions of Mr. Das and Mr. Gandhi.

Mr. Gandhi at this stage agreed, so far as the preamble was concerned, he was prepared to accept the Das preamble defining the aim of non-co-operation to be the attainment of complete swaraj.

The Hindu, 6-9-1920

[1] C. R. Das (1870-1925); eminent lawyer and Congress leader; orator and author; elected president of the Congress in 1921

[2] 1852-1943; leading lawyer and active Congressman; presided over the Nagpur Congress session, 1920

[3] Mahatma Munshiram (1856-1926); later known as Shraddhanand; nationalist leader of Arya Samaj who took prominent part in public activities in Delhi and the Punjab

[4] 1890- ; Congress leader and freedom fighter; India's first High Commissioner to Pakistan; sometime Governor of Maharashtra

[5] Mohammed Ali Jinnah (1876-1948); Muslim leader; founder and first Governor-General of Pakistan

141. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING, CALCUTTA

September 7, 1920

This is Gandhiji's speech delivered before the Subjects Committee held at Calcutta on 7-9-1920, while answering his critics when he won by a narrow majority.

He said he had agreed to graduality of the withdrawal of school children and lawyers on the ground that that was how it had actually happened in his practical experiences. He said that non-co-operation was gradually gathering force. "Gradual" did not mean eternity. He was only giving shelter and dispensaion to those lawyers who had. . .[1] and to those who, on account of their circumstances, could not immediately renounce practice. Similarly in regard to schools.

Next referring to the question of allegiance and full responsible Government he desired to dispel the illusion both upon Mohammedans and Hindus as regards his position. He accepted the amendment regarding full self-government in his proposal not on the ground that the khilafat question was subservient to the question of swaraj. To him the khilafat and the Punjab were greater than swaraj. Pressure had been put upon him to accept Mr. Pal's[2] amendment but he had come to the conclusion that he should reject it, not only on a matter of conscience, but also on the ground of practical expediency as well. He had been told that he would prove by his action to be the evil genius of the Congress and other things. Such statements did not appeal to him, if in the interests of the country, the Congress deserves to be split up, he did not mind the consequences. He did not care about the creation of a great split among Nationalists. The Congress was to him a national and not a Nationalist or Moderate organization. The old creed of the Congress, according to him, provided a platform for every shade of opinion in the country. He for one felt that the Congress should continue to do so. It was wrong at any time to put pressure on anybody of any kind in this matter he and [*sic*] give his assurance to Mr. C. Vijayaraghavachari who had grieved him by his observations which amounted to saying that he, Mr. Gandhi, was trading on his past reputation. He asked to be judged as a practical man before the Congress. His amendment embodied both a political and a religious principle because he considered that in politics, conscience and honourable dealing were as important as in private affairs, though consequences had to be judged and expediency adopted. He asked them to discard all prejudices and vote upon this question. Whatever the result, his view was that the minority in the Congress should not

[1] The source is damaged and some words are missing here.

[2] Bipin Chandra Pal (1858-1932); educationist, journalist, orator and political leader of Bengal

secede, put stay and use its best endeavours to convert itself into the majority. If he was defeated, he would not secede and so long as he could find in the Congress a platform to reach the hearts of men of all shades of opinion he would continue to stay in it, but, if he could not find it, he would go away. In his view the function of the Congress was not one of acceptance and action, but one of the expression of the verdict of the people. The Congress resolution, as he conceived it, was not a party resolution and he considered it was not right to make a fetish of the Congress resolution. The Congress did not issue a command as the Central Khilafat Committee did and so it was, he used the word "advised", in the resolution. If the Congress found within the next few months that the opinion expressed by it now, was not the opinion of the country, it shall change it. There was, therefore, no reason to introduce or impute conscience in this matter.

In regard to boycott of councils, he reiterated his view that the councils were a trap in which they should not enter. They were a death trap. He ackowledged that there were substantial improvements in Mr. Pal's resolution over the Das resolution, but on the boycott of elections, he was clear he wanted to go to every elector and ask him to boycott elections for the insult offered to the country by the Punjab and the khilafat questions. He would not base his appeal to them on the question of swaraj. To him swaraj was only a means to an end and he for his part was prepared to exchange swaraj for any other system of Government if, in his opinion, it was for the good of the country.

On the creed, he was clear, he should support Mr. Shaukat Ali in every- thing he said and he himself felt that, in the circumstances in which they were placed, he was unable to tender his loyalty to the Government. He was prepared to seek his objects with or without British connection if necessary, so long as the methods were peaceful and the object was the good of the country. Mentally at least he owed no allegiance now to the British connection. He finally appealed to his hearers to affirm their belief one way or other and he reiterated that they should not go and run into the danger of the death traps provided and offer themselves as sacrifices to the God mammon. He believed in the ancient and pacific ideals of the East and not in the modern and advanced ideals of the West as he only too well knew that the choice of India lay before them and he asked them to give a new gospel to the world based on their ancient ideals.

The Hindu, 8-9-1920

142. THE INWARDNESS OF NON-CO-OPERATION

I commend to the attention the readers of *Young India* the thoughtful letter received from Miss Anne Marie Petersen. Miss Petersen is a lady who has been in India for some years and has closely followed Indian affairs. She is about to sever her connection with her Mission for the purpose of giving herself to education that is truly national.

I have not given the letter in full. I have omitted all personal references. But her argument has been left entirely untouched. The letter was not meant to be printed. It was written just after my Vellore speech. But it being intrinsically important, I asked the writer for her permission, which she gladly gave, for printing it.

I publish it all the more gladly in that it enables me to show that the movement of non-co-operation is neither anti-Christian nor anti-English nor anti-European. It is a struggle between religion and irreligion, powers of light and powers of darkness.

It is my firm opinion that Europe today represents not the spirit of God or Christianity but the spirit of Satan. And Satan's successes are the greatest when he appears with the name of God on his lips. Europe is today only nominally Christian. In reality it is worshipping mammon. "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom." Thus really spoke Jesus Christ. His so-called followers measure their moral progress by their material possessions. The very national anthem of England is anti-Christian. Jesus, who asked his followers to love their enemies even as themselves, could not have sung of his enemies,"Confound his enemies, frustrate their knavish tricks'. The last book that Dr. Wallace wrote set his deliberate conviction that the much vaunted advance of science had added not an inch to the moral stature of Europe. The last War however has shown, as nothing else has, the Satanic nature of the civilization that dominates Europe today. Every canon of public morality has been broken by the victors in the name of virtue. No lie has been considered too foul to be uttered. The motive behind every crime is not religious or spiritual but grossly material. But the Mussulmans and the Hindus who are struggling against the Government have religion and honour as their motive. Even the cruel assassination which has just shocked the country is reported to have a religious motive behind it. It is certainly necessary to purge religion of its excrescences, but it is equally necessary to expose the

hollowness of moral pretensions on the part of those who prefer material wealth to moral gain. It is easier to wean an ignorant fanatic from his error than a confirmed scoundrel from his scoundrelism.

This however is no indictment against individuals or even nations. Thousands of individual Europeans are rising above their environment. I write of the tendency in Europe as reflected in her present leaders. England through her leaders is absolutely crushing Indian religious and national sentiment under her heels.England under the false plea of self-determination is trying to exploit the oilfields of Mesopotamia which she is almost to leave because she has probably no choice. France through her leaders is lending her name to training cannibals as soldiers and is shamelessly betraying her trust as a mandatory power by trying to kill the spirit of the Syrians. President Wilson[1] has thrown on the scrap-heap his precious fourteen points.

It is this combination of evil forces which India is really fighting through non-violent non-co-operation. And those like Miss Petersen, whether Christian or European, who feel that this error must be dethroned can exercise the privilege of doing so by joining the non-co-operation movement. With the honour of Islam is bound up the safety of religion itself and with the honour of India is bound up the honour of every nation known to be weak.

Young India, 8-9-1920

143. PARIAHS OF THE EMPIRE

The memorable Conference at Gujarat in its resolution on the status of Indians abroad has given it as its opinion that even this question may become one more reason for non-co-operation. And so it may. Nowhere has there been such open defiance of every canon of justice and propriety as in the shameless decision of confiscation of Indian rights in Kenya Colony announced by its Governor. This decision has been supported by Lord Milner and Mr. Montagu. And his Indian colleagues are satisfied with the decisions. Indians, who have made East Africa, who outnumber the English, are deprived practically of the right of representation on the council. They are to be segregated in parts not habitable by the English. They are to have

[1] Thomas Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924); 28th President of the United States of America

neither the political nor the material comfort. They are to become Pariahs in a country made by their ownlabour, wealth and intelligence. The Viceroy is pleased to say that he does not like the outlook and is considering the steps to be taken to vindicate the justice. He is not met with a new situation. The Indians of East Africa had warned him of the impending doom. And if His Excellency has not yet found the means of ensuring redress, he is not likely to do it in future. I would respectfully ask his Indian colleagues whether they can stand this robbery of their countrymen's rights.

In South Africa the situation is no less disquieting. My misgivings seem to be proving true, and repatriation is more likely to prove compulsory than voluntary. It is a response to the anti-Asiatic agitation, not a measure of relief for indignant Indians. It looks very like a trap laid for the unwary Indian. The Union Government appears to be taking an unlawful advantage of a section of a relieving law designed for purpose totally different from the one now intended.

As for Fiji, the crime against humanity is evidently to be hushed up. I do hope that unless an inquiry is to be made into the Fiji martial law doings, no Indian member will undertake to go to Fiji. The Government of India appear to have given an undertaking to send Indian labour to Fiji provided the commission that was to proceed there in order to investigate the condition on the spot returns with a favourable report.

For British Guiana I observe, from the papers received from that quarter, that the mission that came here is already declaring that Indian labour will be forthcoming from India. There seems to me to be no real prospect for Indian enterprise in that part of the world. We are not wanted in any part of the British Dominions except as Pariahs to do the scavenging for the European settlers.

The situation is clear. We are Pariahs in our own home. We get only what Government intend to give, not what we demand and have a right to. We may get the crumbs, never the loaf. I have seen large and tempting crumbs from a lavish table. And I have seen the eyes of our Pariahs, the shame of Hinduism—brightening to see those heavy crumbs filling their baskets. But the superior Hindu, who is filling the basket from a safe distance, knows that they are unfit for his own consumption. And so we in our turn may receive even Governorships which the real rulers no longer require or which they cannot retain with safey for their material interest—the political and material hold on India. It is time we realized our true status.

Young India, 8-9-1920

144. SWADESHI

The swadeshi propaganda has been going on in a more or less organized manner now for the past eighteen months. Some of its results are surprising and gratifying. It has taken a fairly firm hold in the Punjab, Madras and the Bombay Presidency. Hand-spinning and hand-weaving are steadily increasing in these parts. Several thousand rupees have been distributed in homes where women never did any work before. And if more work of this kind has not been done, it is due to want of workers.

This is however written more to note the mistakes of the past than to sum up the bright side. My observations lead me to the conclusion that whilst the inauguration of the three vows and swadeshi stores have greatly stimulated the swadeshi spirit, it is no longer possible to advocate the taking of any of the three vows or the opening of new swadeshi stores for the sale of mill-made cloth. The result of the propaganda has been to send up the prices of yarn and cloth rather than increase production. It is clear that the purpose of swadeshi is not served until the quantity of yarn and cloth produced is increased. The gain therefore is merely moral and not material. The people have begun to perceive the desirability of wearing only swadeshi cloth if the real interest of the country is to be advanced.

But it is clear that we must take practical steps for meeting the growing demand for swadeshi cloth. One way, no doubt, is to increase the mills. But it is obvious that capitalists do not need popular encouragements. They know that India needs much more cloth than is manufactured by our mills. But mills do not spring up like mushrooms. It is a matter of getting machinery from outside, let alone the difficulty of getting labour. And after all, India cannot become truly and economically independent so long as she must rely on the supply of machinery from outside for the manufacture of her cloth.

The cleanest and the most popular form of swadeshi, therefore, is to stimulate hand-spinning and hand-weaving and to arrange for a judicious distribution of yarn and cloth so manufactured. With a little talent and a little industry this thing is easy. Even as each home cooks its own food without difficulty, so may each home weave its own yarn. And just as in spite of every home having its own kitchen, restaurants continue to flourish, so will mills continue to supply our additional wants. But even as because of our private kitchens we would not

starve if every restaurant was through some accident closed, so would we, by reason of domestic spinning, not have to go naked even if every mill, by a blockade from the West, had to stop work. Not long ago, we knew this secret of our own economic independence and it is possible for us to regain that independence by a little effort, a little organizing agency and a little sacrifice.

Therefore true swadeshi consists in introducing the spinning-wheel in every household and every household spinning its own yarn. Many a Punjabi woman does it today. And though we may not supply our own cloth entirely, we shall be saving yearly crores of rupees. In any event there is no other swadeshi than increased manufacture by hand-spinning and hand-weaving. Whether we take up hand-spinning and hand-weaving or we do not, it is at least necessary to understand what true swadeshi is.

Young India, 8-9-1920

145. DEMOCRACY "VERSUS" MOBOCRACY

Looking at the surface there is but a thin dividing line between mob-law and the people's law. And yet the division is complete and will persist for all time.

India is today quickly passing through the mob-law stage. The use of the adverb signifies my hope. It may be our misfortune to have to pass through that process even in slow stages. But it is wisdom to adopt every means at our disposal to have done with that stage as quickly as possible.

There is much tendency on our part to yield to the rule of the mob. There was mob rule at Amritsar on the 10th April 1919. There was mob rule at Ahmedabad on the same fateful day. It represented undisciplined destruction and therefore it was thoughtless, profitless, wicked and harmful. War is disciplined destruction, much more bloody than any yet committed by mobs. And yet war has been apostrophized, because we have been deceived by the temporary but brilliant results achieved by some wars. So, if India has to achieve her freedom by violence, it will have to be by disciplined and honourable (insofar as it is possible to associate honour with violence) violence, named war. It will then be an act not of mobocracy but democracy.

But my purpose today is not to write mobocracy of the Ahmedabad type. I intend to deal with the type with which I am more

familiar. The Congress is a demonstration for the mob and in that sense and that only. Though organized by thoughtful men and women it may be called a mob-demonstration. During the memorable tour of the khilafat mission through the Punjab, Sind and Madras, I have had a surfeit of such demon-strations. I have been ashamed to witness at railway stations, thoughtless though unwitting destruction of passengers' luggage by demonstrators who in their adoration of their heroes have ignored every-thing else and everybody else. They have made, much to the discomfort of their heroes, unmusical and harsh noises. They have trampled upon one another. They have elbowed out one another. All have shouted, all at the same time, in the holy name of order and peace. Ten volunteers have been heard to give the same order at the same time. Volunteers often become demonstrators instead of remaining people's policemen. It is a task often dangerous, always uncomfortable, for the heroes to be escorted through a broken chain of volunteers from the platform to the coach intended for them. Often it is a process which although it should occupy no more than five minutes, has occupied, one hour. The crowd instead of pressing back, presses towards the heroes and who therefore require to be protected. The coach is taken possession of by anybody who dares, volunteers being the greatest sinners. The heroes and other lawful occupants have to reason with the intruders that they may not mount the foot-boards in that summary fashion. The hood of the coach is roughly handled by the processionists. It is not often that I have seen hoods of motors left undamaged by crowds. On the route instead of crowds lining the streets, they follow the coach. The result is confusion worse confou-nded. Every moment there is danger of accidents. That there is rarely any accident at such demonstrations in not due to the skill of the organizers, but the crowd is determined to put up with all jostling and retain its perfect good humour. In spite of everyone jostling everyone else, one has not the slightest *wish* to inconvenience one's neighbour. To finish the picture, there is the meeting, an ever-growing cause of anxiety. You face nothing but disorder, din, pressing, yelling and shouting there. A good speaker arrests the attention of the audience and there is order such that you can hear a pin drop.

All the same this is mobocracy. You are at the mercy of the mob. So long as there is sympathy between you and the mob, everything goes well. Immediately that cord is broken, there is horror. An Ahmedabad episode now and then gives you the mob psychology.

We must then evolve order out of chaos. And I have no doubt that the best and the speediest method is to introduce the people's law instead of mob-law.

One great stumbling block is that we have neglected music. Music means rhythm, order. Its effect is electrical. It immediately soothes. I have seen, in European countries, a resourceful superintendent of police by starting a popular song controlling the mischievous tendencies of mobs.[1] Unfortunately like our Shastras, music has been the prerogative of the few, either the barter of prostitutes or high class religious devotees. It has never become nationalized in the modern sense. If I had any influence with volunteer boy scouts and Seva Samiti organizations, I would make compulsory a proper singing in company of national songs. And to that end I should have great musicians attending every Congress or Conference and teaching mass music.

Much greater discipline, method and knowledge must be exacted from volunteers and no chance comer should be accepted as a full-fledged volunteer. He only hinders rather than helping. Imagine the consequence of the introduction of one untrained soldier finding his way into an army at war. He can disorganize it in a second. My greatest anxiety about non-co-operation is not the slow response of the leaders, certainly not the well-meant and even ill-meant criticism, never unadulterated repression. The movement will overcome these obstacles. It will gain even strength from them. But the greatest obstacle is that we have not yet emerged from the mobocratic stage. But my consolation lies in the fact that nothing is so easy as to train mobs, for the simple reason that they have no mind, no premeditation. They act in a frenzy. They repent quickly.Our organized Government does not repent of its fiendish crimes at Jallianwala, Lahore, Kasur, Akalgarh, Ram Nagar, etc. But I have drawn tears from repentant mobs at Gujranwala and everywhere a frank acknowle-dgment of repentance from those who formed the mob during that eventful month of April. Non-co-operation I am therefore now using in order to evolve democracy. And I respectfully invite all the doubting leaders to help by refusing to condemn, in anticipation of a process of national purification, training and sacrifice.

[1] The reference is to Alexander, who saved Gandhiji in this manner from an attack by the mob.

Next week I hope to give some illustrations[1] of how in a moment order was evolved out of mob disorder. My faith in the people is boundless. Theirs is an amazingly responsive nature. Let not the leaders distrust them. This chorus of condemnation of non-co-operation when properly analysed means nothing less than distrust of the people's ability to control themselves. For the present I conclude this somewhat lengthy article by suggesting some rules for guidance and immediate execution.

1. There should be no raw volunteers accepted for big demonstrations. Therefore none but the most experienced should be at the head.

2. Volunteers should have a general instructions book on their persons.

3. At the time of demonstrations there must be a review of volunteers at which special instructions should be given.

4. At stations, volunteers should not all be centred at one point, namely, where the reception committee should be. But they should be posted at different points in the crowd.

5. Large crowds should never enter the station. They cannot but inconvenience traffic. There is as much honour in staying out as in entering the station.

6. The first duty of the volunteers should be to see that other passengers' luggage is not trampled upon.

7. Demonstrators ought not to enter the station long before the notified time for arrival.

8. There should be a clear passage left in front of the train for the passengers.

9. There should be another passage if possible half way through the demonstrators for the heroes to pass.

10. There should be no chain formed. It is humiliating.

11. The demonstrators must not move till the heroes have reached their coach or till they receive a pre-arranged signal from an authorized volunteer.

12. National cries must be fixed and must be raised not anyhow, at any time or all the time, but just on the arrival of the train, on the heroes reaching the coach and on the route at fair intervals. No objections need be raised to this on the score of the demonstration

[1] *Vide* "Some Illustrations", 22-9-1920.

becoming mechanical and not spontaneous. The spontaneity will depend upon numbers, the response to the cries above all the general look of the demonstrators, not in the greatest number of noises or the loudest. It is the training that a nation receives which characterizes the nature of its demonstrations. A Mohammedan silently worshipping in his mosque is no less demonstrative than a Hindu temple-goer making a noise either through his voice or his gong or both.

13. On the route the crowd must line and not follow the carriages. If pedestrians form part of the moving procession, they must noiselessly and in an orderly manner take their places and not at their own will join or abstain.

14. A crowd should never press towards the heroes but should move away from them.

15. Those on the last line or the circumference should never press forward but give way when pressure is directed towards them.

16. If there are women in the crowd they should be specially protected.

17. Little children should never be brought out in the midst of crowds.

18. At meetings volunteers should be dispersed among the crowd. They should learn flag and whistle signalling in order to pass instructions from one to another when it is impossible for the voice to carry.

19. It is no part of the audience to preserve order. They do so by keeping motionless and silent.

20. Above all, everyone should obey volunteers' instructions without question.

This list does not pretend to be exhaustive. It is merely illustrative and designed to stimulate thought and discussion. I hope that all the vernacular papers will translate this article.

Young India, 8-9-1920

146. THREE NATIONAL CRIES

During the Madras tour, at Bezwada I had occasion to remark upon the national cries and I suggested that it would be better to have cries about ideals than men. I asked the audience to replace "*Mahatma Gandhi ki jai*" and "*Mahomed Ali-Shaukat Ali ki jai*" by "*Hindu-Mussulman ki jai*". Brother Shaukat Ali, who followed, positively laid down the law. In spite of the Hindu-Muslim unity he had observed that if Hindus shouted "*Vandemataram*", the Muslims rang out with "*Allah-o-Akbar*" and *vice versa*. This he rightly said jarred on the ear and still showed that the people did not act with one mind. There should be therefore only three cries recognized, "*Allah-o-Akbar*" to be joyously sung out by Hindus and Muslims showing that God alone was great and no other. The second should be "*Vandemataram*" (Hail Motherland) or "*Bharat Mata ki jai*" (Victory to Mother Hind). The third should be "*Hindu-Mussulman ki jai*" without which there was no victory for India, and no true demonstration to the greatness of God. I do wish that the newspapers and public men would take up the Maulana's suggestion and lead the people only to use the three cries. They are full of meaning. The first is a prayer and a confession of our littleness and therefore a sign of humility. It is a cry in which all Hindus and Muslims should join in reverence and prayerfulness. Hindus may not fight shy of Arabic words when their meaning is not only totally inoffensive but even ennobling. God is no respecter of any particular tongue. "*Vandemataram*", apart from its wonderful associations, expresses the one national wish—the rise of India to her full height. And I should prefer "*Vandemataram*" to "*Bharat Mata ki jai*" as it would be a graceful recognition of the intellectual and emotional superiority of Bengal. Since India can be nothing without the union of the Hindu and the Muslim heart, "*Hindu-Mussulman ki jai*" is a cry which we may never forget.

There should be no discordance in these cries. Immediately some one has taken up any of the three cries the rest should take it up and not attempt to yell out their favourite. Those who do not wish to join may refrain, but they should consider it a breach of etiquette to interpolate their own when a cry has already been raised. It would be better too, always to follow out the three cries in the order given above. Nor should cries be incessantly shouted. One often hears an incessant yell when a popular leader is passing through a station. I

doubt if this incessant noise does the slightest good to the nation except to provide an indifferent exercise for one's lungs. Moreover, it is necessary to think of our hero's nerves and time. It is a national waste to keep him occupied in gazing at a crowd and hearing a cry in his praise or any other for full thirty minutes. We must cultivate the sense of proportion.

Young India, 8-9-1920

147. SPEECH ON NON-CO-OPERATION RESOLUTION, CALCUTTA CONGRESS

September 8, 1920

Mr. Gandhi moved his resolution on non-co-operation with the following speech :

I am aware, more than aware, of the grave responsibility that rests on my shoulders in being privileged to move this resolution before this great assembly. I am aware that my difficulties, as also yours, increase if you are able to adopt this resolution. I am also aware that the adoption of any resolution will mark a definite change in the policy which the country has hitherto adopted for the vindication of the rights that belong to it, and its honour. I am aware that a large number of our leaders who have given the time and attention to the affairs of my motherland, which I have not been able to give, are ranged against me. They think it a duty to resist the policy of revolutionizing the Government policy at any cost. Knowing this I stand before you in fear of God and a sense of duty to put this before you for your hearty acceptance.

THINK IMPARTIALLY

I ask you to dismiss me, for the time being from your consideration. I have been charged of saintliness and a desire for dictatorship. I venture to say that I do not stand before you either as a saint or a candidate for dictatorship. I stand before you to present to you the results of my many years' practical experience in non-co-operation. I deny the charge that it is a new thing in the country. It has been accepted at hundreds of meetings attended by thousands of men, and has been placed in working order since the first of August by the Mussulmans, and many of the things in the programme are being enforced in a more or less intense form. I ask you again to dismiss personalities in the considera-tion of this important question,

and bring to bear patient and calm judgment on it. But a mere acceptance of the resolution does not end the work. Every individual has to enforce the items of the resolution in so far as they apply to him. I beseech you to give me a patient hearing. I ask you neither to clap nor to hiss. I do not mind them so far as I am concerned, but clapping hinders the flow of thought, clapping and hissing hinder the process of correspondence between a speaker and his audience. You will not hiss out of the stage any single speaker. For non-co-operation is a measure of discipline and sacrifice and it demands patience and respect for opposite views. And unless we were able to evolve a spirit of mutual toleration for diametrically opposite views, non-co-operation is an impossibility. Non-co-operation in an angry atmos- phere is an impossibility. I have learnt through bitter experience the one supreme lesson to conserve my anger and as heat conserved is transmuted into energy, even so our anger controlled can be transmuted into a power which can move the world. To those who have been attending the Congress, as brothers in arms I ask what can be better disipline than that, which we should exercise between ourselves.

I have been told that I have been doing nothing but wreckage and that by bringing forward the resolution I am breaking up the political life of the country. The Congress is not a party organization. It ought to provide a platform for all shades of opinions, and a minority need not leave this organization, but may look forward to translate itself into a majority, in course of time, if its opinion commended itself to the country. Only let no man in the name of the Congress advocate a policy which has been condemned by the Congress. And if you condemn my policy I shall not go away from the Congress, but shall plead with them to convert the minority into majority.

ENFORCE CLEAR REPENTANCE

There are no two opinions as to the wrong done to the khilafat. Mussulmans cannot remain as honourable men and follow their Prophet if they do not vindicate their honour at any cost. The Punjab has been cruelly, brutally treated, and inasmuch as one man in the Punjab was made to crawl on his belly the whole of India crawled on her belly, and if we are worthy sons and daughters of India we should be pledged to remove these wrongs. It is in order to remove these wrongs that the country is agitating itself. But we have not been able to bend the Government to our will. We cannot rest satisfied with a

mere expression of angry feeling. You could not have heard a more passionate denunciation of the Punjab wrongs than in the pages of the presidential address. If the Congress cannot wring justice from unwilling hands how can it vindicate its existence and its honour? How can it do so if it cannot enforce clear repentance, before receiving a single gift, however rich, from those blood-stained hands?

EXTEND THE SPIRIT OF SACRIFICE

I have therefore placed before you my scheme of non-co-operation to achieve this end and want you to reject any other scheme unless you have deliberately come to the conclusion that it is a better scheme than mine. If there is a sufficient response to my scheme, I make bold to reiterate my statement that you can gain swarajya in the course of a year. Not the passing of the resolution will bring swarajya, but the enforcement of the resolution from day to day in a progressive manner, due regard being had to conditions in the country. There is another remedy before the country, and that is drawing of the sword. If that was possible India would not have listened to the gospel of non-co-operation. I want to suggest to you that even if you want to arrest injustice by methods of violence, discipline and self-sacrifice are necessary. I have not known of a war gained by a rabble, but I have known of wars gained by disiplined armies and if you want to give battle to the British Government and to the combined power of Europe we must train ourselves in discipline and self-sacrifice. I confess I have become impatient, I have seen that we deserve swarajya today, but we have not got the spirit of national sacrifice. We have evolved this spirit in domestic affairs, and I have come to ask you to extend it to other affairs. I have been travelling from one end to the other of the country to see whether the country has evolved the national spirit, whether at the altar of the nation it is ready to dedicate its riches, children, its all, if it was ready to make the initiatory sacrifice. Is the country ready? Are the title-holders ready to surrender their titles? Are parents ready to sacrifice literary education of their children for the sake of the country? The schools and colleges are really a factory for turning out clerks for Government. If the parents are not ready for the sacrifice, if title-holders are not ready, swarajya is very nearly an impossibility. No nation being under another nation can accept gifts and kick at the responsibility attaching to those gifts, imposed by the conquering nation. Immediately the conquered country realized instinctively that any gift which might come to it is not for the benefit of the

conquered, but for the benefit of the conqueror, that moment it should reject every form of voluntary assistance to it. These are the fundamental essentials of success in the struggle for the independence for the country, whether within the Empire or without the Empire. I hold a real substantial unity between Hindus and Mussulmans infinitely superior to the British connection and if I had to make a choice between that unity and the British connection, I would have the first and reject the other. If I had to choose between the honour of the Punjab, anarchy, neglect of education, shutting out of all legislative activity, and British connection, I would choose the honour of the Punjab and all it meant, even anarchy, shutting out of all schools, etc., without slightest hesitation.

If you have the same feeling burning in you as in me for the honour of Islam and the Punjab then you will unreservedly accept my resolution.

BOYCOTT OF COUNCILS

I now come to the burning topic, viz, the boycott of the councils. Sharpest difference of opinion existed regarding this, and if the house has to divide on it, it must divide. If it must divide you will consider that it must divide on one issue, viz, whether swarajya has to be gained through the councils or without the councils. If we utterly distrust the British Government and we know that they are utterly unrepentant how can you believe that the councils will lead to swarajya and not tighten the British hold on India?

SWADESHI

I now come to swadeshi. The boycott of foreign goods is included in the resolution. You have got here, I confess, an anomaly for which I am not originally responsible. But I have consented to it. I will not go into the history of how it found a place into the resolution, of which the essence is discipline and self-sacrifice. Swadeshi means permanent boycott of foreign goods. It is therefore a matter of redundancy. But I have taken it in, because I could not reject it as a matter of conscience. I know, however, it is a physical impossibility. So long as we have to rely on the pins and needles—figurative and literal both—we cannot bring about a complete boycott of foreign goods. I do not hesitate to say this clause mars the musical harmony, if I may claim it without vanity, of the programme. I feel that those words do mar the symmetry of the programme. But I am not here for symmetry of the programme as for its workability.

I again ask you not to be influenced by personality. Reject out of your consideration any service that I have done. Two things only I claim. Laborious industry, great thought behind any programme, and unflinching determination to bring it about. You may take only those things from me, and bring them to bear on any programme that you adopt.

Young India, 15-9-1920

148. SPEECH REPLYING ON NON-CO-OPERATION RESOLUTION, CALCUTTA

September 8, 1920

This is the full text of Mr. Gandhi's speech in reply to the criticisms of the opposite party.

I know that I have got to perform a duty by you and answer some of the many objections that have been raised against the points in the proposition. You have now listened to all speeches but one, with respectful attention. I am exceedingly sorry that you refused to hear Mr. Jamnadas Dwarakadas[1]. You have heard Pandit Malaviya, Mr. Jinnah, and Mrs. Besant—a host in themselves. You have heard the arguments advanced by Mrs. Besant and several other speakers. They have all a splendid record of service behind them. They have hitherto led the Congress for a number of years and have given you their best services and I know that you will give all arguments that have been advanced against my resolution the respect that they are entitled to. But at the same time I am here to tell you that with all my anxiety to be convinced of any error of judgment or otherwise that I have committed, I stand unconvinced.

It has been suggested by Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Das that this programme is impracticable. Is it not capable of being practised? I venture to suggest to you that it is capable of being practised today by everyone who is affected by the several items. There is the introduction of the word "gradual" and Mr. Das has very properly laid emphasis upon that word in order to show that it is in recognition of the impracticable nature of at least two items, those relating to schools and law-courts. I respectfully differ from him. The introduction of that adjective is a concession to our weakness and

[1] A leading member of the Home Rule League

recognition of our unreadiness. I admit that with the introduction of the adjective, these two items may be absolutely whittled down. It would depend largely upon the sense of indignation that has really fired the nation and it will still more largely depend upon the work that may be put into the programme by real workers. You may depend upon it that so long as the Non-co-operation Committee started by the Central Khilafat Committee is in existence, so long will you find these items, and many more, continuously placed before you for acceptance and every argument and every inducement will be held out to you—not pecuniary but every inducement in the interest of the nation—and every appeal will be made to your patriotic spirit in order that you may be stimulated to action. I have not the slightest doubt, even with the experience of only one and a half months behind me, that we shall have a fairly good response from the country. I contend that this programme is not unpracticable, in the sense that anybody who wishes to enforce those items can do so today. It is not a physical impossibility with him as it is practical if he wanted really to enforce complete boycott of foreign goods.

In my humble opinion this item is a practical impossibility as other items are undoubtedly not. I have given you my reasons for accepting this item in my programme though in theory this is sound. I was most anxious to place before the nation only those things which the nation, if it was willing and ready, could put it into practice today.

Let me not conceal one great fact from you. I do suggest to you that if you want to carry out the programme of non-co-operation as sketched by me it is expected of you—and you will find in the course of our peregrinations that we shall be continually dinning the thing into your ears,—it is expected of you that if it is at all possible for you, you will withdraw your children from schools tomorrow and lawyers will suspend their practice from tomorrow. But, as I have said, if you have not the ability, if you have not immediate readiness, the introduction of the adjective gives you thinking time. I declined to accept the interpretation that some in the audience placed upon these two items, when they questioned that they are to withdraw their children only when national schools are ready, and that lawyers should suspend practice when arbitration courts are established. That in my opinion is building before foundation.I cannot put a handsome pile of buildings or ever erect a straw cottage without having children to educate. When a nation is at war, whether non-violent, or violent, it is an indispensable condition that it stops its schools and law-courts. I

have gone through two wars myself. In them schools remained in suspended animation and so were the law-courts closed, rather because litigants had no time to think of their private quarrels and parents came to the conclusion that the best education that their children could receive at a critical time in their history was that they should understand that it was better for them to have their children's education suspended for a time than that they should remain in a state of evil. These two items are undoubtedly tests of our feelings in the matter and if the nation feels it will act up to these two things.

Much has been made of want of notice and, if facts were as they are supposed to be, I think, it would be a sound argument. But perhaps this has escaped even Mr. Pal's notice, even Mr. Jinnah's notice, that really this question of notice arises only because of the introduction of new elements in the programme, namely the demand for swaraj. If we were making a new demand for swaraj, the argument will be final; they, as an honourable nation, ought to give a clear emphatic notice to the British people, but in my programme it is not put in that fashion. I have said that without swaraj it would be impossible to prevent repetition of wrongs such as have been inflicted in the Punjab and therefore in this programme swaraj is no independent demand but has been made a demand because in the opinion of the Congress it is necessary in order to guard against a future contingency to have swaraj. In my humble opinion, there is absolutely nothing wrong in it. But I go forword. Both Messrs Jinnah and Malaviya have accepted Mr. Pal's programme. You will find therein that some of the items are to be enforced from tomorrow and what the amendment states is that the other items will be reduced to practice later on and that while the mission is conducting its affairs, some operation of non-co-operation programme is to be enforced from the population of India. I think the Congress may well hold that notice sufficient for its purpose without in any way damaging the prestige of the whole nation which are convertible terms.

I come to the final point namely boycott of councils. I must confess that I have not yet heard a single argument in favour of going to councils. All the argument that has up to now been advanced is seeing that we have done something through these councils during 35 years, seeing that the reformed council is really in response to our agitation—which I admit—and seeing that there is greater scope for obstruction as we can command a majority by influencing voters—which too I admit—, we may be able by going to

councils, to paralyse Government, or the administration, as the case may be. In my humble opinion, as student of English history, I have found, and it is a practical maxim adopted in Enlgish public life, that every institution thrives on obstruction. When we seek elections to councils, I assure you that Government will not be pleased to see Nationalists outside the councils. Govenment are eager today to have Nationalists in the councils. You will take my evidence for what it is worth. It may be bad evidence, but it is there. It is my firm opinion that the services public men want to render can be rendered outside the councils, rather than inside and such services will be infinitely greater than the services they render in the councils. What is the secret of the great power of the late and the only Lokamanya of the country? Do you suppose that if he had gone to the council he would have exercised the unrivalled influence that he exercised over all the millions of India?

You have had evidence given before you in connection with his opinion. I am exceedingly sorry that you had not evidence brought before you as to what he considered in connection with the programme. But as the matter has been brought before you, it has become my painful duty to give you evidence, that is in my possession. I happened at his wish to wait upon him in company with Mr. Shaukat Ali a fortnight before his demise and he said : "I personally believe that it will be better to go to councils and obstruct where it was necessary and co-operate where also it was necessary." But when Mr. Shaukat Ali told him, "What about your promise to Mussulmans in Delhi?", at which also I was present, he immmediately added, "Oh, yes, if the Mussulmans do the thing". He laid emphasis on it and did not merely speak, of the boycott of councils. He said : "I give you my word that my party will stand with you." I do not want you to exaggerate the value of this evidence. As I know his name is a name to conjure with and his opinion must carry great weight with those of us who believe that he was unrivalled in his continued prosecutions for the attainment of swaraj and naturally any opinion that might be cited as having come from him must carry weight.

What do these councils mean? A simple test I venture to present to you and leaders is that these two wrongs that we are come to consider are the khilafat and the Punjab. Do you believe that by going to the council and engaging in debates there, you can produce a direct impression upon British ministers and secure a revision of the

Turkish Terms and repentance on account of the Punjab affair? Our revered brother and leader Pandit Malaviya has said that very soon all that the Congress Sub-committee asked for will be granted, because some or most of the officers are already gone or will be presently going and in April even the Viceroy will have gone. I respectfully suggest that it is not what I at least intended when I put my pen to that report. I said emphatically, even at our discussion, that the dismissal of the officers be based upon their incapacity and the atrocity, that they were guilty of and not by efflux of time and that the Viceroy should be compulsorily retired if he does not tender his resignation before his time. It does not serve my purpose when the Viceroy goes by efflux of time; and so also the officers. If the officers are retired compulsorily but not retired on these specific grounds, it does not serve my purpose at all. I want a repentant clean heart, a change of heart, and I miss any repentance, any change of heart and the hand of fellowship which I had thought was extended at the time of the Amritsar Congress—and that is my reason for having then suggested co-operation with Government, but having found out afterwards that there was no redress of the khilafat and the Punjab wrongs, the painful revelation has dawned on me that the British ministers or the Government of India never meant well by the people of India. Instead of repentance, a challenge is given to India, that if you want to be ruled by British, the price is terrorism. Therefore I want to make this party of terrorists, a present of these law-courts, a present of the education of my children if I cannot bring them into national schools.

But I certainly decline to wait for establishment of these schools. Necessity is the mother of invention. When there are children without schools, I promise that our revered leader Pandit Malaviya will himself go from place to place and collect subscriptions for opening national schools. I do not want to starve the Indian mind. I want every Indian to be educated along proper lines, educated to understand the dignity of his nation and not receive the education that makes him a slave.

There are many other points but I would reiterate two things. The public will not understand our fine distinctions. It will mean that non-co-operation must commence at the top, viz, in a body miscalled representative body, namely the reformed council and, if the best mind of the country refuses to associate with that Government, I promise that that Government's eyes will be opened. The condition is that those who refrain will not go to sleep, but move from one end of the country to the other and bring every grievance to

the notice not of Government but of the public and, if my programme is carried out, the Congress will be going on growing from year to year and give public expression to those grievances, so that the volume of wrong, ever increasing as it rolls, will inflame the great nation and enable the nation to harbour, to conserve all its anger and its heat and transmute it into irresistible energy.

Please recognize one fundamental settled fact, that the Muslim League has passed a resolution that they are going to boycott councils entirely. Do you believe that one fourth of our body may pull one way and three fourths in another way? If these were running along parallel lines I can understand it, but here they will be pulling in opposite ways and is it right they should do so? Can Hindus gain anything even by a policy of obstruction, if every believer in Islam boycotts the council, as he could boycott sin? That is the religious position in Islam. They consider it is sinful for them to go to the councils and take the oath of allegiance. Let not practical India and practical politicians who gather here from year to year forget this settled fact. If they believe that they will be able to change the Mussulman mind and that those resolutions of the Mussulmans are pious wishes then certainly the argument that I have now advanced falls to pieces. But if you believe that Mussulmans are in earnest, that they feel the wrong, and as time goes on, the wrong instead of dying out, and being forgotten, will gather force day after day, then you will understand that as time goes forward, the energy of Mussulmans will increase, whether Hindus help them or do not help them. That is the choice that lies before the whole of this national assembly. I, therefore respectfully submit to you that I have not embarked upon this thing without careful thought and it is not a matter of pleasure or joy to me to put myself, a humble, single individual, always liable to err, against the best leaders of the country. But here it is a matter of duty. Whereas I see clearly before me that if we want to cement the relations between Hindus and Mussulmans, and we want them to endure for ever, there is no escape for us but a complete association with them, so long as they remain on the right path and adopt honourable means and do not over-reach themselves in forming their demands and so long as they do not resort to violence.

There are many other things which have been said and to which I might have given a reply. But I have tried your patience unduly. My business is finished when I have placed every argument in a dispassionate manner and not as an advocate, but if it is at all

possible for me to speak as a judge, and I assure you I have endeavoured to place the whole argument pure and simple as a judge, I owe a great deal to Pandit Malaviya. The relations that subsist between him and me the country does not know. I would give life to placate him, to please him and follow him, at a respectful distance. But when it becomes a matter of sacred duty and conviction I hold that I am absolved from any obligation to follow him. I know that he absolves me from any such obligation of following him and if I, who venerate him, adopt a course different from his, you will understand that I am absolutely serious and sincere when I ask everyone in this *pandal* to use his own individual judgment and not to be carried away in the slightest degree by my personality. Finally, if you pass this resolution, you will do so with your eyes open. If you think everyone of you individually has the capacity and willingness to offer this small measure of sacrifice in the name of the nation, for the name of the nation and for the sake of securing lasting friendship with Mussulmans you will not hesitate to adopt the resolution, but if you cannot satisfy these conditions you will not hesitate to reject this resolution. (Cheers).

The Hindu, 11-9-1920

149. INTERVIEW ON INDIANS ABROAD

[*September 9, 1920*][1]

Mr. Gandhi, interviewed on questions of Indians abroad, made a definite statement of his views. He said the despatch of the Government of Fiji was one-sided and meant to whitewash official crime. He disapproved the idea of sending out a commission to Fiji to see labour conditions unless the commission is armed with power to investigate the causes of the unrest. He would oppose any attempt to encourage emigration to Fiji. He would advise Indians in Fiji to return to India.

As regards East Africa, Mr. Gandhi said the Government of that place was prejudiced, pro-white, and anti-Asiatic. The Indians in East Africa were numerous and influential. They must organize themselves. They were powerful enough to resist the influence of the white residents.

Mr. Gandhi was now not in favour of a single Indian labourer going to British Guiana. Being asked as to how he proposed to work for Indians abroad now that he had taken up non-co-operation, he said his faith in British statesmen had been

[1] *Vide* "Terrorism in Fiji", 22-9-1920.

shattered. Till they had obtained complete responsible Government they would bring more prominently than hitherto to the notice of the public in India the grievances of their countrymen abroad, and the volume of indignation of the country would be such that Government cannot resist its pressure and would be compelled to take effective steps, because any wrong brought to their notice would speed the process of non-co-operation and to that extent the process of disintegration of the force of anarchy, injustice, and exploitation which dominated the Government of India and the Imperial Government at the present moment. They would continue to call public meetings and frame protests[1], but they will all be by way of arming themselves with power that would compel the Government to do its duty.

Young India, 15-9-1920

150. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING, CALCUTTA

September 9, 1920

In bringing the meeting to a close Pandit Malaviya said . . . that although he had the greatest regard and affection for Mr. Gandhi, it was his most painful duty to differ from him entirely in regard to the resolution of the Congress on non-co-operation. . . he was therefore determined . . . to pursue a course of action different from that adopted by the Congress . . . to remain in the Congress and at the same time seek election to the Legislative Council.

Mr. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar said that he felt relieved to hear the statement from the Panditiji because a number of friends who were standing as candidates and who were also Congressmen had doubts as to whether they should continue to be the members of the Congress seeking elections to the councils. . . . Panditji's example would be a precedent to them and may be acted upon by others who were in similar position with regard to the resolution. . . . Members would like to hear Mr. Gandhi's views on the matter.

Mr. Gandhi said that as he had expressed his opinion in the Press, the Subjects Committee and elsewhere, he would state it again that it was perfectly competent for the minority to continue to be members of the Congress and to be free to act or not to act on the resolution of the Congress according to their convictions and conscience and said that he agreed with Mr. Malaviya in the view he took as regards this matter.

Mrs. Besant observed that as she was totally opposed to non-co-operation, she as a member of the All-India Congress Committee felt she ought not to act in the Committee and she would cease to attend further meetings of the Committee till the next Congress.

[1] The words that follow are from *The Hindu*, 13-9-1920.

Mr. Malaviya, however, said that as an ex-officio member of the Committee, he would continue to attend the meetings of the Committee till he was forced to leave. . . . Mr. Malaviya finally adjured all those present not to take any hasty action.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-9-1920

151. LETTER TO RENUKA MUKERJEE

[After *September 9, 1920*][1]

DEAR MISS MUKERJEE,

The only advice I can give you is that you should think fifty times before you take any serious step. You should argue out the position with your parents and convince them or feel stronger in your own conviction. And then you may take the step you may think is best. I am not in love with education in England. I can understand grown-up people with formed ideas going to England to test them. The atmosphere in which education is given there tends to endear our own slavery to us in a most insidious manner. But you may not act upon these ideas unless they are part of your own being. The very fact that you need my advice is a sound reason for your waiting, praying and discussing with those that are near and dear to you.

From a photostat: S.N. 7248a

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter of September 9, 1920.

152. INTERVIEW WITH MOTILAL GHOSE[1]

September 10, 1920

Mahatma Gandhi was accompanied by Babu Giridhari Lal[2], Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru and Sreemati Saraladevi. After mutual greetings Mahatma Gandhi opened the conversation by inquiring if it were a fact that Babu Motilal had written to the president of the special Congress opposing the boycott of councils.

MOTI BABU : It is not a fact. I only sent a message to the Congress and its Subjects Committee through the president suggesting that the non-co-operation resolution should not be disposed of in a hurry but its consideration should be postponed till the Nagpur Congress was held.

MAHATMA : What is your opinion about the boyccott of councils and other items in the resolution passed by the Congress?

I have been a non-co-operationist for the last fifty years. As regards the councils I have always regarded them as a farce, a delusion and a snare. I myself have never sought to enter any of them and have always counselled our public men to do the same. But I must say both this and other items in the resolution affected only an infinitesimally small number of people. It mattered little whether the handful of title-holders give up their titles or not or the few men, who go to the council, do or do not go. The all-important question is how to rouse the masses. You must raise a cry which the masses will understand.

Will you kindly be a little more explicit?

I shall explain my position by citing two instances. You have no doubt heard of the great combination of the indigo *raiyats* of Bengal in 1866 to expel the planters from this province?

Oh yes.

Do you know how this was effected, the unity of six millions of people in the course of six months which has no parallel in the histroy of any country in the world? It was only by raising a cry of a great wrong felt keenly by all the *raiyats* equally and which went straight into the heart of every one of them as soon as it was raised.

Yes, I have heard of it.

It happened in this wise. The *raiyats* were groaning under the oppression of the planters. They came to see that their deliverance lay in not sowing indigo. So a

[1] Editor, *Amrita Bazar Patrika,* Calcutta

[2] Lala Girdhari Lal; deputy chairman, Punjab Chamber of Commerce; managing director, Amritsar Flour and General Mills

few intelligent among them took a vow in some sacred place that they would have nothing to do with indigo-sowing. They then persuaded others to take the same vow. The cry was "no *raiyat* should touch the indigo even if he was tortured to death". And though they were tortured in a most brutal way by the planters they did not yield. When the planters failed, the authorities interfered and coerced them both by threats and entreaties. They remained as firm as the rock. "Saheb, you say you will put us in jail. Do it, but this hand shall never again touch indigo." "Sow it for this season only and you will be free to do what you like afterwards." "Saheb, we have taken the vow in the name of God. We can never break it."—that was the bold and spirited reply of the downtrodden and illiterate *raiyats*.

Moti Babu next referred to the cry of "land" by Ireland to bring about unity among Irishmen. He said, "You know the Irish leaders failed to rouse the Irish masses till Parnell raised the cry of 'land' which affected every Irishman. The Irish understood it because it was a common grievance. And the Land League was the result which formed the nucleus for Irish nationality."

Moti Babu addressing the Mahatma said : "Dear friend, you should think of a common cry for the masses which will appeal to their heart directly. It seems to me that there are two things which sit like a dread nightmare on the breast of both the masses and the educated class. One is the police *zulum*[1] and the other is the pitiless character of the criminal administration. Can't these go to make a common cry?" Mahatma Gandhi said that he would think over the matter.

Mahatma Gandhi next gave his view on the boycott of councils. He said that councils demoralized most of those who went there. These our representative men can do greater service outside the council than inside it. Moti Babu agreed.

Next came the question of boycotting British courts. Mahatma Gandhi said, that the courts, as much as the councils are the great instrument to keep our people under moral and intellectual domination. We must get rid of these evils.

Moti Babu replied that he agreed with him but the evil must be struck at very root. The vast majority of the lawyers won't give up their practice which enables them to keep motor cars, etc., and indulge in other luxuries. You must go to the people and advise them to stop litigation. Mahatma Gandhi replied that he knew of many lawyers who were prepared to give up their practice. Moti Babu said it was very hard for him to believe that story. However, if there be some willing to do it, the great majority will not. We are to stop the evil at the very source.

In regard to the question of the withdrawal of children from schools Mahatma Gandhi said that the boys get their mentality in the school. On being pressed to say what the boys would do if they were withdrawn from schools Mahatma Gandhi said

[1] Repression

that if the boys were withdrawn new schools would be started. So long as our boys, who are the makers of the future of the country, continue to be intellectually fed in the present-day schools there is little hope for the country.

Babu Motilal replied that as the existing schools and colleges are maintained by our money and not by money brought from England he did not see why should not our boys avail themselves of the education imparted in those institutions till we have got our national educational institutions established. Of course we must be on our guard that our boys are not in any way demoralized in the Government schools and colleges.

The last question discussed was the deletion of that part of Babu Bipin Chandra Pal's amendment which contemplated the raising of a fund in the name of Lokamanya Tilak. Babu Motilal regretted that this should have been dropped and was not added to Mr. Gandhi's resolution. The first thing we want now is propaganda not only in this country but also in England and America. We also need funds for starting national schools and colleges and establish arbitration courts. Babu Motilal appealed to the Mahatma to start such a fund at the Nagpur Congress.

The interview ended by Moti Babu's warmly embracing Mahatma Gandhi and giving him his blessings.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 17-9-1920

153. THE CONGRESS

Never has the Congress been called upon to decide an issue so momentous as the one it was called upon to decide at its special session presided over by Lala Lajpatrai. Never perhaps has the Congress witnessed such determined opposition as was offered to the non-co-operation resolution. And yet never, within my experience, has a decisive majority listened with such respect and attention to the opposition argument as it did at the last session. Again never has there been such united opposition shown to a Subjects Committee resolution by the noted leaders of the people.

Mrs. Besant has a fine record of service to India. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji is a name to conjure with. He has to his credit an unbroken record of many years' brilliant service to the country and an unblemished character. Mr. Das leads a party ever growing in influence and strength. I felt the late Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak's absence most keenly at such a juncture. Mr. Baptista led the Deccan. Mr. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, the talented editor of *The Hindu*, led the Madras Nationalist Party. All these and many other leaders

strenuously opposed the non-co-operation resolution. I warned that great audience against accepting my proposal unless they were prepared to suffer and were convinced that true non-co-operation was possible only through the programme submitted by me. But the audience wanted action, wanted suffering. The voting was elaborately registered. The Congress *pandal* was cleared for the purpose of voting. Lala Lajpatrai personally superin-tended the operation. It lasted for six hours. All the provinces but the Central Provinces and the Berar voted in favour of my resolution. The Central Provinces gave for my proposition 30 votes as against 33 for Babu Bipin Chandra Pal's. I give the figures below :

	For Resolution	For Amendment
Bombay	243	93
Madras	161	135
Bengal	551	395
U.P.	259	28
Punjab	254	92
Andhra	59	12
Sind	36	16
Delhi59	9	
Behar	184	28
Burma	14	4
C.P.	30	33
Berar	5	28
	1855	873

My resolution adopted the principle of the whole of the khilafat programme, even non-payment of taxes, and advised for immediate adop-tion, boycott of titles and honorary offices, law-courts by litigants, scho-ols and colleges and reformed councils. Babu Bipin Chandra Pal proposed a mission to England to present our demands and meanwhile to establish national schools, formulate arbitration courts and not to boycott the councils. His resolution would have meant in effect seeking election to the councils and these probably adopting obstructive tactics. This meant a virtual postponement of the real struggle to the next general election. The opposition therefore chiefly centred on the boycott of councils. And the Congress has decided by an overwhelming majority that the councils must be abandoned. I hope that those who do not believe that boycott of

councils would postpone the attainment of swarajya (let alone hastening it) will work with all their might to advance the purpose of the Congress.

An analysis of the votes shows that the country wants non-co-operation. Mrs. Besant who consistently, fearlessly and frankly opposed it had very few adherents. I do not propose to examine the merits of the case at the present moment. My argument is before the country in favour of boycott of councils, schools and courts. Nothing I heard on the Congress platform has shaken my belief in the necessity or the efficacy of these steps. But I would respectfully address a few words to the majority and to the minority.

To the majority I would say : The hour of the greatest triumph is the hour of the greatest humility. The majority has taken upon its shoulders a tremendous responsibility. Every individual voter in favour of my proposal has certainly bound himself, if he is a parent, to withdraw his children from schools or colleges subject in any way to Government control. Every voter being a lawyer is bound at the earliest opportunity to suspend his practice and promote the cause of settlement of disputes by private arbitration. Every candidate for the councils, who has voted with the majority, has undertaken to withdraw his candidature, every such voter to refrain from voting at the elections. Every delegate voting with the majority has bound himself to stimulate hand-spinning and hand-weaving and in his own person to use only hand-spun and hand-woven cloth. Everyone of the majority having accepted the principle of non-violence, self-sacrifice and discipline in regard to non-co-operation is bound to treat the minority with respect and fairness. We may not use physical or wordy violence against them. We must endeavour by our intensive practice and by scrupulously honourable methods to convert it to our views. Those who voted with the minority were either weak or not ready. Some few doubted the rightness of withdrawing children from schools for instance. But when they see schools being emptied, national schools springing into being, lawyers suspending practice and yet not starving, and the councils deserted at least by the best of nationalists, they will soon begin to believe in the programme, lose their weakness and be themselves ready to adopt it. We need not therefore be impatient with the minority because it does not see eye to eye with us.

To the minority I would say, they have lost in a fair fight. Unless now therefore it is a matter of conscience with them, they must come

forward to prosecute the programme of non-co-operation in a most vigorous manner. Those who think that majority has grievously erred are no doubt entitled to carry on a campaign of conversion of the majority to their views. By far the largest number in the minority however have accepted the principle of establishment of private arbitration courts and national schools. They wanted only a postponement of the consideration of the boycott of councils. I venture to suggest to them that minority should accept the verdict and help to make the programme a success.

Boycott of foreign goods finds a place in my resolution. I am sorry for it. I may not state how it came to find a place there. But as it did not conflict with my conscience, and in order to show my reasonableness, I undertook to move a resolution whose musical harmony was marred by a false note. Boycott of foreign cloth is included in swadeshi. Boycott of all other foreign goods is a senseless proposition if only because it is a virtual impossibility. But if the introduction of the addendum stimulates us to sacrifice our luxuries and superfluities, it would have served a good purpose. It is certainly our right and duty to discard everything foreign that is superfluous and even everything foreign that is *necessary* if we can produce or manufacture it in our country.

Young India, 15-9-1920

154. A FOREWORD[1]

[About *September 15, 1920*][2]

It is not [an] easy thing for me to write a foreword to a life-sketch of Mr. Andrews between whom and me there exists a tie closer than between blood-brothers. But if I may say without presumptions, I would like to note down my conviction that there does not exist in India a more truthful, more humble and more devoted servant of hers than C. F. Andrews. May the lesson of his life prove to the youth of India an encouragement for greater devotion to the motherland.

From a photostat: G.N. 2562

M. K. GANDHI

[1] This was written by Gandhiji for a proposed biography of C. F. Andrews by Benarsidas Chaturvedi.

[2] According to Benarsidas Chaturvedi this foreword was written during Gandhiji's visit to Santiniketan after the Congress session at Calcutta in September 1920 .

155. LETTER TO N. C. SINHA[1]

BOLPUR,
[Before *September 17, 1920*][2]

DEAR MR. SINHA[3],

I am glad you have written about the lawyers. We shall never fight our way to swaraj without taking any risks and without causing some distrubance in the ordinary life. I agree with you that we lawyers have been the *bete noir* of the magistracy, but that was when in their opinion, we caused the greatest trouble. But you will see that when we ourselves abandon the courts, the process will not be relished by the bureaucracy. What does it matter if temporarily the Santhal Parganas and such other districts are deprived of the assistance the lawyers have only just begun to render to them, and I can conceive hundreds of ways of helping them without pleading their cause before biased or ignorant magistrates. The lawyers today lead public opinion, and conduct all political activity. This they do during the few leisure hours they get from their tennis and billiards. I do not expect that by dividing their leisure hours between billiards and politics, lawyers will bring us substantially near swaraj. I want at least the public workers among them to be whole-timers, and when that happy day comes, I promise a different outlook before the country.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 29-9-1920

[1] In reply to the addressee's letter regarding suspension of practice by lawyers
[2] Gandhiji stayed at Shantiniketan from September 13 to 17.
[3] A vakil of the Patna High Court

156. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SANTINIKETAN,
September 17, 1920

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
93 BAZAR GATE STREET
BOMBAY

REACHING BOMBAY NINETEENTH AFTERNOON. RESERVE THREE BERTHS GUJARAT MAIL.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

157. SPEECH TO INMATES OF SHANTINIKETAN

September 17, 1920

SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

The happiness I have found in your company these few days is beyond words. I came here to improve my broken health and you will be glad to know that I shall be returning from here, though not altogether restored to health, much improved.

It is a painful thought to me that I cannot speak to you in Bengali. Though my hope to be able, one day, to talk with you in Bengali may be a forlorn one, I think I am not unjustified in hoping that you will come to understand my Hindustani. Your education will be incomplete till Hindustani has become a compulsory subject in your school and you pick up the language. There is another thing, moreover, which I should not like to keep back from you and that is that I want to see your school, by and by, become a beautiful hive swarming with most industrious bees. The life we live will not be a real life until a beautiful harmony between our hearts and hands has been established.

I think the meaning of the work in which I am at present absorbed can be explained even to young children, though, of course, what I am going to say is not meant for them alone. I have kept back nothing from my own children or, in South Africa, from children whom I regarded as my own.

For me, personally, there is only one religion and that is

Hinduism. I take pride in calling myself a Hindu, but I am no dogmatic, ritual-bound Hindu. As I understand Hinduism, it is an extremely comprehensive faith. It has tolerance and respect for other faiths. That is why you see me engaged in defending Islam with the same energy and passion with which I would defend my faith. Defending Islam is a great happiness to me since I feel that in the process I am acquiring fitness to defend my religion. The European Powers, which rely on brute force, pose a threat to Hinduism as much as they do to Islam. Today, it is Islam's turn, tomorrow it may be that of Hinduism. I think the threat to Hinduism has been there, a very subtle threat, ever since British power was established in this land. I have seen that Western influences have shaken the very foundations of our thinking. Western civilization is the work of Satan. For many years now, we have been under a strange spell.

My eyes really opened only last year. When the Allies declared war, it was ostensibly for the defence of weak nations but under cover of this aim they practised no end of scheming. Even then, at the last Congress at Amritsar, I pleaded earnestly and sincerely with the country to extend co-operation to the Government, for till then it was my faith that the British people would feel penitent for their misdeeds and that the British [Prime] Minister would honour his promises. But the closing of the Punjab chapter and the announcement of Peace Terms with Turkey destroyed all my faith. I came to the conclusion that every man is faced, once in his life, with a choice between God and Satan. From my experience of co-operation with the British Government for these many years, I have seen that association with the British rulers has a demoralizing effect. I am convinced that until India realizes her mission and the whole nation is awakened to a consciousness of their equality with the British, the continuation of the British connection will only mean our continued degradation. I also saw that unity with the Muslims was of far greater value than keeping up the British connection. This unity would be difficult to maintain if we did not help them in their hour of need. Moreover, with one-fourth of the body politic suffering from paralysis, development of the spirit of patriotism among us would be impossible.

Hence, I cultivated friendship with Shaukat Ali and became a brother to him. My association with him is a source of joy and pride to me. We have differences on some matters. I believe in the principle of non-violence. He seems to believe in violence. He believes that in certain circumstances a man may be another's enemy and that killing

one's enemy is justified. If, nonetheless, I continue to work with him, the reason is that I have seen in him some qualities of sterling worth. He is a man of his word, is a perfectly loyal friend and is extraordinarily brave. He has great faith in God. I immediately saw that only a devoted man could have all these qualities and I sought association with him, attracted only by his devoutness. I have, besides, always trusted that my success in employing non-violence will convince him of its beauty.

No other English term can express all the meanings of ahimsa whi-ch the word *innocence* expresses. Hence ahimsa and *innocence* may be re-garded as equivalents. It is my faith that everything will be well with the man who follows the path of non-violence. The weapons at the disposal of the votary of non-violence are much more potent than those available to the votary of violence. I may describe organized violence as a barbar-ous thing. It is most certainly beastly. Only a perfect practitioner of non-violence can display perfect courage. Even one man ready to live a life of non-violence to perfection will be able to subdue the entire world. Let me say, in all humility, that, if I have, with this broken body of mine, some little strength to conduct a struggle of such great magnitude, it is because of my practice of non-violence. If the Hindus understand their religion and follow it, they are bound to produce an impact on the world. The day on which India accords primacy to violence, my life will have been emptied of its meaning.

But my faith remains unshaken. And you, children of Hindu parents, if you understand your duty as Hindus, you will never co-operate with the unjust and the wicked. The immortal verses of Tulsidas in which he advises against association with the wicked are beautiful beyond comparison. For India to hope for any good from British rule as it is today is like trying to hug empty space. I, for one, have offered my closest co-operation to this Government for a number of years and, at the end of it all, I had some bitter experiences. It is owing to them that I have undertaken this terrible, but noble and glorious fight and have been trying to induce you all to join it. In this holy temple, I only ask you to pray that, in my struggle for spiritual growth, God may grant me good health and wisdom and for ever keep me from error and cowardice.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-9-1920

158. PURE SWADESHI

I grow more convinced every day that swadeshi can mean only one thing. I have declared open swadeshi stores and formulated vows of swadeshi; this may have served some purpose and developed the spirit of swadeshi, but I do not think India has gained any economic benefits thereby. The swadeshi movement has benefited to the extentthat hand-woven cloth has been produced out of hand-spun yarn and that such cloth has been popularized.

The mills need no incentives. They are able to market all their production. They are hardly in a position to spin the yarn they need. In this situation, producing hand-woven cloth with mill yarn is of no benefit to the country; on the contrary, it increases the burden on the poor. One disadvantage of doing so is that it will increase the price of yarn and cloth and the other is that, whereas now the poor content themselves with wearing cloth produced by our mills, they will by and by start wearing foreign cloth. The latter will prove more harmful, for once the poor have fallen into the habit of using foreign cloth it will be difficult to bring them back to the use of swadeshi cloth. Hence I put down here some rules and principles of the swadeshi movement :

1. Only hand-spun yarn and hand-woven cloth should be used.

2. The utmost efforts should be made to promote the spinning and weaving of such yarn.

3.All possible improvements should be effected in the spining-wheel and the handloom.

4.We should find out where hand-spinning and hand-weaving are carried on.

5.At present, the main variety of cloth so produced is khadi. We should work to popularize it.

6.Steps should be taken to promote love of simplicity among the people.

7.Stores should be opened for selling hand-spun yarn and hand-woven cloth made from such yarn.

In the course of my tours, I have been observing that swadeshi of this type is being quietly but steadily propagated in many places. In a village in Madras Province, Shri Hanumant Rao of the Servants of India Society has been working very hard with the help of friends. A widow is helping him with money and also by working herself. His own wife, too, has joined in the effort. There is a technical school in

Masulipattam, where also work is going on. I saw some yarn, very much finer and of better texture than what we get in Gujarat. This fine yarn was spun by some rich women for the love of the thing. I saw some dhotis, too, made of such yarn. The people also succeed well in dyeing clothes with swadeshi material. Thus, in some isolated spots, even without capital the enterprise is making progress.

To open a khadi store requires hardly five hundred rupees. It can be managed by one person provided he is hard-working. He may have a small shop, just large enough to hold what he can afford to stock. Till he has acquired enough custom for khadi, he should go round hawking. In this way, with a small capital a large number ofpeople can subsist and pure swadeshi will be popularized. The main purpose of this article, how-ever, is to warn those who take the vow of wearing [Indian] mill cloth and those who open stores for such cloth. It may not be necessary to close down all the stores which exist, but their owners should gradually stock them with khadi. They may, if they wish, invest money in other swadeshi goods besides cloth but it is clear that the country will not profit at all by their storing mill-made cloth or cloth woven by hand from mill yarn.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-9-1920

159. NOTES

THEFT ON RAILWAYS

I have been receiving complaints from many poor people that the goods they send by railway are stolen in transit. A person sends yarn and it is stolen. There is no end to the pilfering of fruits. Who is to blame for this? Certainly not the Government. We have no regard for honesty, no contempt for dishonesty. I do not know how much *Navajivan* is read among railway servants. I would, however, request those who read it to see that others read this article. Railway servants should realize that they are the servants of the public. They must not steal. If they are not paid enough for their living, they should try for an increase in pay, but on no account should they steal.

Railway workers have formed their own unions. I put it to their leaders that it is as much their duty to bring about internal reform as to secure rights in regard to their wages. If we merely insist on our rights and fail in our duties, we shall lose whatever rights we secure.

No very profound principle of honesty is involved in this. If we do not display even practical honesty, public administration just cannot be carried on. I place a simple idea before the railway workers: "You, too, take interest in the national movement; you, too, raise your voice against the injustice of British rule. But how are people to protest against the injustice you do by stealing? Has an unjust man any right to demand justice? To the extent you are dishonest, you strengthen British rule, for people will lose faith in you. You will make them say, by your behaviour, that British administration is better, such as it is." So long as a subject people do not make themselves better than their rulers in point of moral strength, they cannot shake off subjection. Therefore, if the railway workers wish well both of themselves and the people, they must resolve to shake off this immoral practice of stealing.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 19-9-1920

160. LETTER TO V. H. TEMBE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 20 [*1920*][1]

DEAR MR. TEMBE,

I have your letter. The portion sent by you has been reproduced in Marathi also. It certainly substantially expresses my views in the matter. The paragraph however has been torn from its context. I was speaking to a meeting[2] largely composed of Brahmin students. If the Brahmins and the non-Brahmins are prevented from coming to blows only by Government intervention, is it not time to yield everything to the non-Brahmins and end the quarrel? I fear that the parallel is exact, but my speech was certainly not designed for exploitation by non-Brahmins of resentment by Brahmins. What will you have me do in order to prevent an illegitimate use being made of the extract? That the non-Brahmins are pro-Government and anti-Congress does not really matter. They deserve to be justly treated in spite of it, and before they are able to extort justice by force. All

[1] This letter was in reply to the addressee's letter of September 13, 1920.
[2] *Vide* "Talk at Law College, Madras", 22-8-1920.

the grace would have gone if they wring justice from unwilling hands.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 7250a

161. LETTER TO N. C. KELKAR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
September 21 [*1920*][1]

DEAR MR. KELKAR[2],

May I thank you for the splendid response the nationalists of Maharashtra are making to the Congress reso[lution][3]. I am sure that your great resolve brings swarajya nearer and if Maharashtra will enthusiastically take up all the items outlined in the n.c.o. the rest of India will follow. And if she does, swaraj within a year is not unlikely to be a reality. I have sent you a further amendment of the 1st article of the Congress constitution[4] which I hope you have received. I would very much like to see our draft in print if it is possible even before the All-India Committee meets. If you think that any minor details are left out they can be incorporated when the Committee consider the draft. If you generally approve of the draft and the report will you please telegraph ?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7264

[1] The year has been inferred from the contents of the letter.

[2] One of the members of the Sub-Committee appointed by the Congress to revise the Congress constitution in December, 1919; *vide* "The Congress", 7-1-1920.

[3] On non-co-operation; *vide* "The Non-co-operation Resolution", 5-9-1920.

[4] Stating the objects of the Congress; *vide* "Congress Constitution Adopted at Nagpur Session", December 1920.

162. TELEGRAM TO SHAUKAT ALI[1]

[On or after *September 21, 1920*]

ZAFARALIKHAN MUST NOT DEFEND BY LAWYER HE CAN ONLY MAKE STATEMENT. AM STRONGLY OPI- NION NO DEFENCE BY LAWYER POSSIBLE.

From a photostat : S. N. 7262

163. TELEGRAM TO AGA SAFDAR[2]

[On or after *September 21, 1920*][3]

AGA SAFDAR
CARE *ZAMINDAR*
LAHORE

CONSIDER UNNECESSARY FOR SELF COME THERE JUST NOW FIRM OPINION ZAFARALIKHAN SHOULD MAKE CLEAR STATEMENT ADMITTING ALLEGATIONS THAT ARE TRUE AND CHEERFULLY SUFFER PENALTY NO LAWYER'S PRESENCE NECESSARY.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S. N. 7263

164. SWARAJ IN ONE YEAR

Much laughter has been indulged in at my expense for having told the Congress audience at Calcutta that if there was sufficient response to my programme of non-co-operation, swaraj would be attained in one year. Some have ignored my condition and laughed because of the impossibility of getting swaraj anyhow within one year. Others have spelt the "if" in capitals and suggested that if "ifs" were permissible in argument, any absurdity could be proved to be a possibility. My proposition however is based on a mathematical calculation. And I venture to say that true swaraj is a practical

[1] This was in reply to Shaukat Ali's telegram of September 21, 1920, from Bombay regarding the trial of the editor of *Zamindar*. It read : "Khilafat Lahore wires trial begins today, Section 124-A 153-A Special Magistrate Maulana cheerful offence Hazro speeches. Zafar Ali Khan case fixed 27 Prosecution evidence about twenty witnesses including Pirgolra. Wire advice about Defence. Kindly wire Khilafat Lahore direct send me copy."

[2] The draft is in Gandhiji's hand.

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

impossibility without due fulfilment of my conditions. Swaraj means a state such that we can maintain our separate existence without the presence of the English. If it is to be partnership, it must be a partnership at will. There can be no swaraj without our feeling and being the equals of Englishmen. Today we feel that we are dependent upon them for our internal and external security, for an armed peace between the Hindus and the Mussulmans, for our education and for the supply of daily wants, nay, even for the settlement of our religious squabbles. The rajas are dependent upon the British for their powers and the millionaires for their millions. The British know our helplessness and Sir Thomas Holland cracks jokes quite legitimately at the expense of non-co-operationists. To get swaraj then is to get rid of our helplessness. The problem is no doubt stupendous even as it is for the fabled lion who having been brought up in the company of goats found it impossible to feel that he was a lion. As Tolstoy used to put it, mankind often laboured under hypnotism. The British themselves cannot be expected to help us out of it. On the contrary, they din into our ears that we shall be fit to govern ourselves only by slow educative processes. The *Times* suggested that if we boycott the councils we shall lose the opportunity of a training in swaraj. I have no doubt that there are many who believe what the *Times* says. It even resorts to a falsehood. It audaciously says that Lord Milner's mission listened to the Egyptians only when they were ready to lift the boycott of the Egyptian council. For me the only training in swaraj we need is the ability to defend ourselves against the whole world and to live our natural life in perfect freedom even though it may be full of defects. Good govern- ment is no substitute for self-government. The Afghans have a bad Government but it is self-Government. I envy them. The Japanese learnt the art through a sea of blood. And if we today had the power to drive out the English by superior brute force, we would be counted their superiors, and in spite of our inexperience in debating at the council table or in holding executive offices, we would be held fit to govern ourselves. For brute force is the only test the West has hitherto recognized. The Germans were defeated not because they were necessarily in the wrong, but because the allied Powers were found to possess greater brute strength. In the end therefore India must either learn the art of war which the British will not teach her or, she must follow her own way of discipline and self-sacrifice through non-co-operation. It is as amazing as it is humiliating that less than one hundred thousand white men should be able to rule three

hundred and fifteen million Indians. They do so somewhat undoubtedly by force but more by securing our co-operation in a thousand ways and making us more and more helpless and dependent on them as time goes forward. Let us not mistake reformed councils, mere law-courts and even governorships for real freedom or power. They are but subtler methods of emasculation. The British cannot rule us by mere force. And so they resort to all means, honourable and dishonourable, in order to retain their hold on India. They want India's billions and they want India's manpower for their imperialistic greed. If we refuse to supply them with men and money, we achieve our goal, namely, swaraj, equality, manliness.

The cup of our humiliation was filled during the closing scenes in the Viceregal council. Mr. Shastri could not move his resolution on the Punjab. The Indian victims of Jallianwala [Bagh] received Rs. 1250, the English victims of mob-frenzy received lakhs. The officials who were guilty of crimes against those whose servants they were, were reprimanded. And the councillors were satisfied. If India were powerful, India would not have stood this addition of insult to her injury.

I do not blame the British. If we were weak in numbers as they are, we too would perhaps have resorted to the same methods as they are now employing. Terrorism and deception are weapons not of the strong but of the weak. The British are weak in numbers, we are weak in spite of our numbers. The result is that each is dragging the other down. It is common experience that Englishmen lose in character after residence in India and that Indians lose in courage and manliness by contact with Englishmen. This process of weakening is good neither for us, two nations, nor for the world.

But if we Indians take care of ourselves the English and the rest of the world would take care of themselves. Our contribution to the world's progress must therefore consist in setting our own house in order.

Training in arms for the present is out of the question. I go a step further and believe that India has a better mission for the world. It is within her power to show that she can achieve her destiny by pure self-sacrifice, i.e., self-purification. This can be done only by non-co-operation. And non-co-operation is possible only when those who commenced to co-operate begin the process of withdrawal. If we can

but free ourselves from the threefold *maya*[1] of Government-controlled schools, Government law-courts and legislative councils, and truly control our own education, regulate our disputes and be indifferent to their legislation, we are ready to govern ourselves and we are only then ready to ask the Government servants, whether civil or military, to resign and the tax-payers to suspend payment of taxes.

And is it such an impracticable proposition to expect parents to withdraw their children from schools and colleges and establish their own institutions or to ask lawyers to suspend their practice and devote their whole time and attention to national service against payment, where necessary, of their maintenance, or to ask candidates for councils not to enter councils and lend their passive or active assistance to the legislative machinery through which all control is exercised? The movement of non-co-operation is nothing but an attempt to isolate the brute force of the British from all the trappings under which it is hidden and to show that brute force by itself cannot for one single moment hold India.

But I frankly confess that, until the three conditions mentioned by me are fulfilled, there is no swaraj. We may not go on taking our college degrees, taking thousands of rupees monthly from clients for cases which can be finished in five minutes and taking the keenest delight in wasting national time on the council floor and still expect to gain national self-respect.

The last though not the least important part of the *maya* still remains to be considered. That is swadeshi. Had we not abandoned swadeshi, we need not have been in the present fallen state. If we would get rid of the economic slavery, we must manufacture our own cloth and at the present moment only by hand-spinning and hand-weaving.

All this means discipline, self-denial, self-sacrifice, organizing ability, confidence and courage. If we show this in one year among the classes that today count, and make public opinion, we certainly gain swaraj within one year. If I am told that even we who lead have not the qualities in us, there certainly will never be swaraj for India, but then we shall have no right to blame the English for what they are doing. Our salvation and its time are solely dependent upon us.

Young India, 22-9-1920

[1] A Vedantic concept, seeking to explain phenomenal existence describing it as illusion

165. SOME ILLUSTRATIONS

I promised in my article on "Democracy *versus* Mobocracy"[1] to give some illustrations of my meaning out of my own experiences. I was however unable, owing to the protracted Congress proceedings, to give those illustrations last week. I do so now. When we reached Madras, a huge crowd waited us at the station. Our compartment was detached and fortunately drawn up in front of a reserved platform. What would have happened, if we had to alight together with the other passengers can be better imagined than described. But even on the reserved platform we were not able to get out for some time. The volunteers were in the way. Instead of dispersing themselves among the crowd and keeping it back, they clustered together to do us honour as they thought. The result was that the pressure was all directed towards where they and we were standing. And "form a ring" has become the usual word of command. This forming a ring is a humiliating spectacle and yet it has become such an institution that even when there is no one else but volunteers, "a ring" is formed round the leader to be "honoured".

To proceed with my descripiton, the crowd was large, the noises they made were so terrific that the directions given by the volunteers could not be heard at all. All was chaos. My poor toes were every moment in danger of being crushed to a pulp. I often very nearly lost my balance through the jostling of the very volunteers who were trying to protect me. And but for the very great care with which they guarded me and the assistance rendered to them by the stalwart Maulana Shaukat Ali, I would have fared much worse than I did. The atmosphere was suffocating. Thus struggling it took us nearly three quarters of an hour to reach the motor car, whereas ordinarily it need not have taken three minutes to walk out of the station to the porch. Having reached the car it was no easy job to get into it. I had to be shoved into it in the best manner possible. I certainly heaved a sigh of relief when I found myself in the car, and I thought that both the Maulana and I deserved the ovation we received from the crowd after the dangerous exercise we had gone through. With a little forethought this mobocracy, for such it was, could have been changed into a splendidly organized and educative demonstration. And it could have

[1] Of September 8, 1920

been rendered free of all risk to life. The experience of Madras was typical of many. We had an extraordinary experience at Erode on our way to Salem. I was fairly fagged out. My voice had become hoarse with speaking. As at many stations there was here too a surging crowd. It was throughly disorganized, though like everywhere else perfectly good humoured and respectful. I appealed to them not to make all kinds of unmusical noises, told them to disperse in an orderly manner as they had already seen us. I told them too that if they intended to take their share in the khilafat and the Punjab struggle, they were expected to undergo discipline. I was able to reach my voice to the most intelligent amongst them. I suggested that they should quietly rise, turn towards the station entrance and noiselessly retire. They listened, the rest followed and the station was cleared in two minutes' time. If the friends, who heard me, had haggled, argued, objected and insisted on shouting and remaining, the whole crowd would have done likewise and there would have been a pandemonium throughout the long time that the train stopped there.

I shall finish this description by giving the reverse of our experience at Jalarpet. We were travelling to Madras by the night train leaving Bangalore. We had been taking meetings at Salem during the day, motoring to Bangalore, a distance of 125 miles from Salem, taking there a meeting in drenching rain and thereafter we had to entrain. We needed night's rest but there was none to be had. At almost every station of importance, large crowds had gathered to greet us. About midnight we reached Jalarpet junction. The train had to stop there nearly forty minutes or stopped that night all those terrible minutes. Maulana Shaukat Ali requested the crowd to disperse. But the more he argued, the more they shouted "*Maulana Shaukat Ali ki Jai*", evidently thinking that the Maulana could not mean what he said. They had come from twenty miles' distance, they were waiting there for hours, they must have their satisfaction. The Maulana gave up the struggle, he pretended to sleep. The adorers thereuponmounted the footboards to have a peep at the Maulana. As the light in our compartment was put out they brought in lanterns. At last I thought I would try. I rose, went to the door. It was a signal for a great shout of joy. The noise tore me to pieces. I was so tired. All my appeals proved fruitless in the end. They would stop for a while to renew the noise again. I shut the windows. But the crowd was not to be baffled. They tried to open the windows from outside. They must see us both. And so the tussle went on till my son took it up. He harangued them,

appealed to them for the sake of the other passengers. He produced some effect and there was a little less noise. Peeping however went on to the last minute. It was all well-meant, it was all an exhibition of boundless love, yet how cruel, how unreasonable! It was a mob without a mind. There were no intelligent men of influence among them and so nobody listened to anybody.

Before we can make real headway, we must train these masses of men who have a heart of gold, who feel for the country, who want to be taught and led. But a few intelligent, sincere, local workers are needed, and the whole nation can be organized to act intelligently, and democracy can be evolved out of mobocracy. This evolution is really the first step to successful, national non-co-operation.

Young India, 22-9-1920

166. SWADESHI STORES

In a previous issue[1] I endeavoured to show how stores for the sake of selling mill-manufactures did not advance swadeshi in any way whatsoever, but on the contrary tended to send up the price of cloth. I propose to show in this article how with a small capital, it is possible to advance true swadeshi and earn a modest live- lihood.

Suppose that there is a family consisting of husband, wife and two children one of whom is ten years old and the other five. If they have a capital of Rs. 500, they can manage a khaddar *bhandar*[2] in a small way. They can hire, say in a place with a population of 20,000 inhabitants, a shop with dwelling rooms for Rs. 10 per month. If they sell the whole of the stock at 10 per cent profit they can have Rs. 50 per month. They have no servants. The wife and the children in their spare time would be expected to help in keeping the shop tidy and looking after it when the husband is out. The wife and children can also devote their spare time to spinning.

In the initial stages the khaddar may not sell at the shop. In that case the husband is expected to hawk the khaddar from door to door and popularize it. He will soon find a custom for it.

The reader must not be surprised at my suggesting 10 percent profits. The khaddar *bhandars* are not designed for the poorest. The use of khaddar saves at least half the cost not necessarily because the

[1] *Vide* "Swadeshi", 8-9-1920.

[2] Store

khaddar is more durable (though that it certainly is) but because its use revolutionizes our tastes. I know what saving of money its use has meant to me. Those who buy khaddar from patriotic motives merely can easily afford to pay 10 percent profits on khaddar. Lastly the popularizing of khaddar means much care, devotion and labour. And the owner of a khaddar *bhandar* does not buy it at a wholesale shop but he must wander to get the best khaddar, he must meet the local weavers and induce them to weave hand-spun yarn. He must stimulate in his own district hand-spinning among its women. He must come in touch with the carders and get them to card cotton. All this means intelligence, organization and great ability. A man who can exhibit these qualities has a right to take 10 per cent profits. And a swadeshi *bhandar* conducted on these lines becomes a true centre of swadeshi activity. I commend my remarks to the attention of the managers of swadeshi stores that are already in existence. They may not revolutionize their method at once but I have no doubt that they will advance swadeshi only to the extent that they sell khaddar.

Young India, 22-9-1920

167. THE DISTRESS IN PURI

I invite the attention of the readers to the latest report of the Puri distress.

The response made hitherto has been generous but not enough to cope with the distress in full. Volunteers are becoming scarce owing to the prolongation of the distress. They have to be replaced by paid workers. The committee[1] has been obliged for want of funds to cut down the number relieved and the Government of Bihar and Orissa will not relieve "economic" distress. The committee needs at least Rs. 50,000. I take that the generous readers who see the appeal will not be slow to respond. An eyewitness who chanced to go to Puri from Calcutta told me that he saw a hungry man die in his presence. He had walked to the place where relief was being given. He was too exhausted to live to get relief. Only the other day an Oriya was found in the act of committing suicide because he was unable to bear the pangs of hunger. He was charged with the crime of attempting to commit suicide. The presiding magistrate practically discharged him and gave him Rs. 20 from the poor-box.

[1] The People's Famine Relief Committee, Puri

What do these incidents teach us? Distress is chronic in the land. We hear something of Puri because there it has become acute. But in India, it must be held to be a crime to spend money on dinner and marriage parties, tamashas and other luxuries so long as millions of people are starving. We would not have a feast in a family if a member was about to die of starvation. If India is one family, we should have the same feeling as we would have in a private family. But whether we connect ourselves generally with every Indian as with a member of our own family or whether we do not, let me hope that everyone will help to relieve the acute distress that is now going on in Puri.

Nor, let me hope, will the death of Mr. Krishnachandra Naik from snake-bite discourage volunteers from offering their assistance. Mr. Naik has died well in dying in harness. Any day such a death is better than a death from disease. In India it is an article of faith even with the most ignorant person that the soul survives the body and weaves for itself a better one or worse according to its karma, death ought not to matter so much as it seems to do. Mr. Naik will return to the earth with a body better equipped for the work before him. And with that faith in us we must refuse to mourn over his death and rejoice that he had the good fortune of meeting his death whilst engaged in relieving distress among fellow-beings.

Young India, 22-9-1920

I had in view all the three alternatives when I gave the answer I did. Let us hope no self-respecting Indian would go to Fiji on the proposed commission to *inquire into the prospects of further emigration*. An independent commission of our own to inquire into the grievance will be hampered in its progress. How was Mr. Andrews himself treated by some of the white men of Fiji? Pamphlets if we may publish, broadcast in India, we should. But that cannot solve the present troubles of those who are in Fiji who are in prison or being imprisoned. It is clearly a matter of terrorizing the present Indian population into slavish submission to the white exploiters. The esteemed correspondent forgets that these men are cooped up in Fiji. They have no facilities for coming back to India. Let us remember that the white men of Fiji *do not want to drive out* the Indians from Fiji as they do in South Africa or East Africa. The Fiji whites intend to keep those that are there and want more. It is therefore clearly our first duty to tell all who are weary and heavy laden in Fiji that they are free to return to India and to provide transport, for Mr. Manilal Doctor himself suggested the same remedy. The cables received by me from Fiji have said the same thing. The least we can do is to provide facilities for return.

Young India, 22-9-1920

[1] This was in reply to a correspondent's letter to the editor, *Young India*, which in part said : "In the interview that you kindly gave me on the 9th September in Calcutta, you told me that you would advise Fiji Indians to return to India even if they had to sell out all their possessions. . . They have built their houses there. Thousands of them have been born in Fiji. . . Surely, you will not ask these all to return to India. . . What shall we do for these fifty thousand Indians. . . I would suggest three things for favour of consideration : 1. We must make it clear to the public here that the Government of India is going to add insult to injury by sending a commission to Fiji to enquire into the labour condition in Fiji after their refusal to press for an independent enquiry into the Fiji Tragedy. No Indian worth the name should go to Fiji in that commission of the Government of India. 2. We should send a commission of our own to enquire into the causes and consequences of the recent disturbances in Fiji.

169. REPORT ON DRAFT INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONGRESS ORGANIZATIONS [1]

September 22, 1920

Report on draft instructions for Congress organizations and those who approve of the resolutions on non-co-operation of the special Congress Session prepared by the Sub-committee appointed by the All-India Congress Committee.

The Congress has advised:

(a) boycott of titles and honorary offices,

(b)boycott of Government functions such as parties, levees and durbars,

(c)gradual boycott of Government or Government-controlled schools and colleges and establishment of national schools and colleges,

(d)gradual boycott of law-courts by lawyers and litigants and establishment by the aid of such lawyers of private arbitration courts,

(e) boycott of reformed councils by candidates and electors,

(f)boycott of recruiting for soldiers, clerks and labourers for service in Mesopotamia (meaning Turkish dominions) as on the outbreak of the war,

(g) boycott of foreign goods,

(h)promotion of swadeshi by stimulating manufacture and distribution of hand-spun yarn and hand-woven cloth out of such yarn.

The Congress has approved of Mr. Gandhi's full programme of progressive non-violent non-co-operation but has adopted for immediate use the items above mentioned.

The question is how to enforce these items.

BOYCOTT OF TITLES

This is the most difficult part of the programme. But it is the most necessary part. It is difficult because it applies to those who have not as a body hitherto taken part in active public life and have prized their titles or honours as life itself. It is a necessary item in non-co-operation because even this class must be disillusioned and educated to consider gifts from an unrighteous government as a dishonour to

[1] The original typewritten draft bears corrections in Gandhiji's hand.

be religously shunned.

Workers therefore in every town, taluka and district should compile a list of such holders of titles and honorary offices and a small deputation of the leading non-co-operationists should wait upon such holders and with all respect and humility urge upon them the necessity of surrendering their titles and honorary offices for the good of the country. No undue pressure of any kind whatsoever should be exercised. Violence of language should be scrupulously avoided, and lists of those who have not should be furnished to the provincial headquarters for pub- lication. Those who have already surrendered their titles and honorary offices will be expected to induce others to do likewise. Those who hold such titles and offices and who have voted for non-co-operation are naturally expected immediately to surrender their titles and offices, mentioning the purpose, viz, the resolution of the Congress.

BOYCOTT OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES OWNED OR CONTROLLED BY THE GOVERNMENT

The step ought really to be the easiest because the parents of children receiving education, as also grown-up boys and girls receiving education have taken keen interest in the politics of the country. And yet this step has been considered by many to be almost impossible of accomplishment because of the rooted bias in favour of these schools and colleges. It must however be clear to anyone who is anxious to attain swaraj within a measurable period that unless we are able to dispense with Government employment which the college degrees promise we cannot reach our goal for generations to come. The only way to become independent of Government employ and to evolve a truly national culture is to create a want for national schools by emptying the present Government schools, which give but an indifferent education, teach us false history and take no note of the national want. We adivse gradual withdrawal of boys and girls from schools and colleges, and meanwhile reliance should be placed upon private education and where even that is not available or possible for want of means boys should be apprenticed to patriotic merchants or artisans. Vigorous propaganda should be organized and carried amongst the parents, schoolmasters, and school- boys who are over the age of 18 years. Canvassing should go on for volunteer-teachers, and where parents and schoolmasters of schools other than those under direct Government control agree, those schools should give immediate

notice to the Government dispensing with all control or aid by way of inspection or otherwise. They should be conducted as national schools with such modification in the training as local circumstances may require. If men of education take interest in this movement of truly nationalizing our education, local committees of inspection and guidance may be formed ultimately resulting in provincial or district universities. The introduction of the adjective "gradual" in the item regarding schools in the resolution simply means that immediate results are not expected because of the existing infatuation about Government schools. It does not mean that propaganda should be so carried out as to bring about only a gradual withdrawal of boys and girls from schools and colleges. Lists of parents who have withdrawn their children, of boys who have themselves withdrawn and of school-masters who have resigned and lists of local schools established as also of volunteer-teachers should be sent to the provincial headquarters and should be published.

BOYCOTT OF LAW-COURTS

The increase of litigation is an acknowledged evil. That litigation keeps pace with the increase of lawyers is also a fairly established fact. That a government wields tremendous powers through its law-courts and its system of punishments is also equally true. When there is a real nati-onal awakening amongst the masses it must be reflected in the statistics of crime and civil suits. A nation which has set its heart upon gaining self-determination can have little time for private quarrels civil or criminal and it must be the duty of everyone and specially of those who are versed in law to bring about such a state of things. Moreover, hitherto lawyers have controlled (and that very properly) public agitation in the country. If they do not give their whole time and attention to the immediate establishment of swaraj and devote only a portion of their leisure to public affairs, and assuming that the lawyers remained in charge of public movements the establishment of swaraj must be indefinitely postponed. Therefore it is absolutely necessary for reaching our goal in the immediate future that lawyers should suspend their practice. Those who do so and who require to be supported should be supported by the nation either by utilizing their services for the national schools or in connection with private arbitration or for propaganda work. A deputation such as has been suggested for holders of titles, etc., should

also wait upon lawyers and ascertain their wishes. Lists of lawyers in each town or district should be prepared marking out those who may suspend their practice and forwarded to the provincial headquarters for publication.

Lawyers should help in inducing parties not only to refer future disputes to arbitration but also to withdraw cases now pending in the British courts and submit them to the national arbitration courts. District Committees should make lists of lawyers and other prominent citizens commanding public confidence who are to preside over arbitration courts. As there is at present no machinery to enforce the orders of arbitration courts some kind of social boycott should be imposed on parties who fail to carry out such orders.

It has been pointed out that certain lawyers who are ready and willing to suspend their practice immediately are not in a position to do so completely at a moment's notice as they have already entered into engagements from which as honourable men cannot withdraw without the consent of their clients. In these cases the lawyers will be expected to attend only to such engagements and to make every endeavour to cease to practice completely at the earliest possible date.

COUNCILS

The boycott of councils is of the greatest moment and the greatest concentration of energy. People at large cannot understand the meaning of non-co-operation if the best workers seek election to the councils. The reform act has not been framed so as to grant immediate swaraj. Whenever swaraj comes it will not come as a free will offering from the British people but it will come when the demand becomes irresistible. A force of an irresistible character, we contend, cannot be generated on the floor of the reformed councils. It will have to be generated by an incessant education of the electrorate and those who are outside the electoral rolls. Candidates who have already come forward should be approached by deputations requesting them to withdraw their candidature, and electors should be approached to sign the following form :

> In view and in virtue of the resolution of the special session of the national Congress and the All-India Moslem League we being voters in the electoral district of . . . for election to the reformed councils hereby place on record our desire that we do not wish to be represented at the Provincial Legis- lative Council (or the Legislative Assembly or the Council of State) and hereby inform all candidates for election that if they seek election in

spite of our wish to the contrary, they will not, represent us. We do not desire to be represented in the reformed councils till justice has been granted in the matters of khilafat and the Punjab and swaraj is established in India.

If more than one half of the number of electors in a particular district can be induced to sign this form we consider that it is impossible for any candidate to persist in his candidature after such an emphatic declaration. Lists of those who have withdrawn their candidature and those who persist should be taken to put the pros and cons before the voters prior to asking them to sign the above-mentioned form which should be translated in the vernacular of the district concerned.

RECRUITING FOR LABOUR, ETC., FOR MESOPOTAMIA

The least that a nation which feels the cruel wrong of the khilafat and the Punjab can do is to refuse to swell the ranks of recruits as sepoys, clerks and labourers for service in Mesopotamia and the other parts of the Turkish Dominions as they existed on the outbreak of the War. Propaganda should be carried by workers among those who are likely to offer themselves for such service placing before them the true situation and then letting them make their choice.

BOYCOTT OF FOREIGN GOODS

This clause was an unfortunate interpolation due to a misapprehension.[1] Every non-co-operator is in duty bound to simplify his or her wants and dispense with all luxuries that are dependent on the use of foreign articles.

SWADESHI

This part of the resolution contains all that is immediately possible in the way of boycott of foreign cloth. The use of foreign cloth whether from Lancashire or Japan or France has taken the bread out of millions of mouths, has all but killed the ancient art of home-spinning which supplemented the resources of millions of agriculturists and constituted a kind of insurance against famine. It has robbed thousands of weavers of an honourable and lucrative occupation. Our mills do not manufacture sufficient for our wants. Any pressure on mill-manufacture by those who are in the habit of using foreign cloths can only result in increasing prices, depriving the

[1] This sentence is from *The Bombay Chronicle*, 28-9-1920.

poor of the cloth they buy without in any way promoting swadeshi. Resort therefore to hand-spinning and hand-weaving is at the present day a national necessity and before it becomes fairly universal it will require discipline, sacrifice and organizing ability all of which are qualities also required for gaining swaraj. We attach great importance to swadeshi in the form of a revival of hand-spinning and hand-weaving and distribution of cloth so manufactured. Thousands of workers need special training for this work. Ladies of high station should be induced to take up hand-spinning and to use only such cloth as can be woven out of hand-spun yarn. Classes should be formed in every street. Spinning-wheels can be manufactured by any ordinary carpenter if a model is placed before him. Those who are desirous of taking up this branch of work should communicate with the manager of Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, near Ahmedabad.

SWARAJ FUND

It is very necessary that a national fund should be established for the purpose of carrying into effect the Congress resolution. Fund will be required for propaganda work, for encouraging swadeshi for establishing national schools and for supporting lawyers who have suspended their practice and are unable to support themselves. Provincial with the help of district organizations should therefore make every endeavour to collect funds and submit monthly reports of receipts and expenditure.

VOLUNTEER CORPS

Provincial, district and town organizations should form volunteer corps for the purpose of disciplining the people and maintaining order.

Finally we would advise that where there is a sufficient number of workers, a batch should specialize in order to make one particular item successful. Where the workers are not sufficient, precedence should be given to the boycott of councils because results must be shown in this item of non-co-operation before the middle of December next.

PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU
M. K. GANDHI
V. J. PATEL
(Subject to a separate note)[1]

From a photostat : S. N. 7266

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Interview with Lord Mountbatten", 14/16-9-1947.

170. TELEGRAM TO SHAUKAT ALI[1]

[On or after *September 23, 1920*]

AM PERSONALLY DISINCLINED RESPOND BUT IF YOU THINK CAUSE WILL BE SERVED THEREBY AM WILLING GO I DO NEED REST TILL END MONTH.

From a photostat : S. N. 7268

171. CIRCULAR LETTER TO HOME RULE LEAGUE BRANCHES

ALL-INDIA HOME RULE LEAGUE,
305/09, MASJID BUNDER ROAD,
MANDVI,
BOMBAY,
[Before *September 25, 1920*]

TO
THE PRESIDENT AND SECRETARIES,
BRANCH,
HOME RULE LEAGUE

DEAR SIRS,

In accordance with the resolution passed at the general meeting of the All-India Home Rule League at Calcutta, we beg to send the following instructions for carrying out the non-co-operation resolution passed by the special session of the Congress :

All Branches of the All-India Home Rule League are requested in accordance with its object to enforce the non-co-operation resolution of the special session of the Congress in so far as it advises action on the part of the people. And with a view to effective action all the Branches are for the time being requested to concentrate their attention for the next two months principally upon complete boycott of the reformed councils. For that purpose all the Branches are requested to canvass signatures on the following form on the part of the voters :

In view and in virtue of the resolution of the special session of

[1] This was in reply to Shaukat Ali's telegram of September 23, 1920 from Bombay which read : "Punjab khilafat wants your presence urgent Lahore twenty-seventh Zafaralikhan's trial. Delegates here will join Baroda. If you start Express twenty-fifth evening reaching Lahore twenty-seventh morning wire reply."

the national Congress and the All-India Moslem League, we, being voters in the electoral district of . . . for election to the reformed councils, hereby place on record our desire that we do not wish to be represented at the Provincial Legislative Council (or the legislative Assembly or the Council of State) and hereby inform all candidates for election that if they seek election in spite of our wish to the contrary, they will not represent us. We do not desire to be represented in the reformed councils till justice has been granted in the matters of the khilafat and the Punjab and swaraj is established in India.

Too much stress cannot be laid on the fact that before the signatures are taken the voters should be made to understand clearly what they are doing. No pressure of any kind should be exercised upon the voters. Candidates too should be requested to withdraw their candidature in obedience to the expressed wish of the voters, wherever more than half the number of voters have signified their wish in writing.

Further instructions as to the other adopted by the Congress for immediate enforcement will be forwarded in due course.

M. K. GANDHI
President
UMAR SOBANI[1]
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[2]
GENERAL SECRETARIES

The Bombay Chronicle, 25-9-1920

[1] Sometime Congress treasurer; died in 1926
[2] 1879- ; statesman and first Indian Governor-General

172. LETTER TO EVERY VOTER ON DUTY OF VOTERS[1]

ALL-INDIA HOME RULE LEAGUE,
MASJID BUNDER ROAD,
MANDVI,
BOMBAY,
[Before *September 25, 1920*]

The special session of the Congress by an overwhelming majority has decided in favour of complete boycott of the reformed councils. It is therefore your duty not to vote for any candidate for election to the reformed councils. It is however necessary for any candidate who wished to stand in your name to know that you do not wish him or anybody else to represent you. For that purpose you should sign the form that has been prepared for your signature. It is your duty also to tell your co-voters, what they should do.

You know why it is wrong to enter the councils. The Government have declined to grant justice to the Punjab. British ministers have broken their pledged word to the Mussulmans and otherwise ignored the deepest Mussulman sentiments regarding the khilafat.

We must get these wrongs righted and in order to prevent a recurrence of such injustice or bad faith we must obtain full swaraj and must get rid of the badge of inferiority. We cannot do this by going to the councils, nor can we gain swaraj by going there. On the contrary, although our representatives may vote against unjust Government measures they will still be regarded as authors of those measures and thus be unwilling instruments of injustice. The best way therefore for conserving our honour, hastening the advent of swaraj and righting those wrongs is for the voters not to send any representatives to the councils.

The Bombay Chronicle, 25-9-1920

[1] According to Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1920, this was issued as a leaflet by Gandhiji and was being freely distributed in Sind in English and vernacular.

173. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

AHMEDABAD,
September 25, 1920

JAMNALAL[1]
BACHHRAJ
WARDHAGANJ

HAVE WIRED[2] ARAVINDA GHOSH[3]. HEALTH VERY MUCH BETTER.

GANDHI

Panchven Putrako—Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 13

174. LETTER TO CHAIRMAN, A.I.C.C.[4]

September 25, 1920

THE CHAIRMAN
ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE
CALCUTTA

SIR,

By a resolution of the All-India Congress Committee held at Amritsar and dated the 2nd January last the undersigned were appointed a committee to draft amendments to the Congress Constitution and Rules. The report was to be presented on or before the 30th June last. We regret to say that owing to unforeseen difficulties we were not able to prepare our final draft by that date.

We now append hereto our final draft of the Constitution.

We have not been able to meet at any place for mutual discussion but have been obliged to confer with one another only by correspon- dence.

received from various quarters.

In coming to our conclusions we have carefully considered all the suggestions

[1] 889-1942; whom Gandhiji regarded as his fifth son; treasurer of Indian National Congress for a number of years

[2] To accept the presidentship of Nagpur Congress; *vide* the addressee's letter to Gandhiji dated September 24, 1920.

[3] Aurobindo Ghosh (1872-1950); mystic, poet and philosopher; settled at Pondichery from 1910 onwards

[4] The original draft is in Gandhiji's hand.

We have not been able to agree to the principle of fixing the number of delegates to the Congress. Mr. Gandhi is alone responsible for the suggestion. The majority of us consider that the Congress will lose its demonstrative and influential character if the number is restricted. The majority admit the unwieldy nature of the present Congresses. But in their opinion the benefit of having an unlimited number outweighs the difficulty of the problem. Mr. Gandhi on the other hand considers that the restriction is essential in order to give the Congress a truly representative character and to make it a proper deliberative body. He thinks too that the Congress demands will become irresistible when it scientifically represents the whole people of India with an effective and proportionate voice in its deliberations and when every resolution has been considered with precision. He thinks that its demonstrative character will remain unimpaired by reason of the admission of visitors and guests in an unrestricted manner. The draft hereto attached embodies Mr. Gandhi's suggestions. If therefore the All-India Congress Committee rejects Mr. Gandhi's proposal the section dealing with the restriction of the number of delegates will have [to] be deleted. If Mr. Gandhi's proposal for restriction is accepted, we approve of the principle of proportional representation known as the single transferable vote.

The All-India Congress Committee will note the change we have made in the Congress creed. The most noteworthy change proposed by us is the substi[tu]tion of the adjective constitutional by legitimate and honourable in reference to the methods to be adopted. We think that the work constitutional having a double meaning—popular and legal—causes embarrassment. We have also removed the clause "a steady reform of the existing system of administration" in order to bring the article more in accordance with the recent resolutions of the Congress on reforms.

Another noteworthy change we have made is to redistribute the provinces on a linguistic basis. We believe that the present distribution made from time to time to meet the exigencies of a conquering power is unscientific and is calculated to retard the political and social progress of the respective communities speaking a common vernacular and therefore the growth of India as a whole. We therefore feel that so far as the Congress is concerned, we should re-divide India into provinces on a linguistic basis. This would also strengthen the movement for securing such a redistribution by the Government.

We have made no special provision for Mussulman representation in the Congress. In view of the happy relations existing between the two races, we do not consider it necessary to make any special provision for their representation. But we wish to state that if the Mussulmans desire any special provision or protection, it should be made or granted for the asking. So far as recognition of Urdu is concerned we have used the common term Hindustani which includes both Hindi and Urdu and we have recognized both scripts, Devnagari and Persian.

We present no separate draft rules. We consider that the ordinary recognized procedure for such assemblies like the Congress and its offshoots should be applicable where no special mention to the contrary is made in the Constitution.

We remain,
Sir,
Yours truly,

From a photostat : G.N. 8228

175. UNUSUAL CIRCULAR

The Education Department has issued a circular which, translated, reads as under :[1]

The reason which has prompted this circular is not difficult to understand. It is dated September 1. Even the man who trusts to his rifle must admit that, faced with non-co-operation, brute force is unavailing and the rifle ineffective. When we get the strength for non-co-operation, rifles will be covered with rust, there will be grass growing over them and our children will play where they lie buried.

When one side talks of non-co-operation, the other side has no choice but to talk of co-operation. There is no doubt of it that the Empire depends on friendship, on co-operation. It was only when I saw that the friendship was not genuine, that it was a friendship between the strong and the weak, that I advised non-co-operation. Friendship is possible only between equals and, since we want to be friends with the whole world, we wish to be the equals of all; we wish to give up all fear of others and to conquer their brute force by our

[1] For the text of the circular, *vide* "The Meaning of the Empire", 29-9-1920.

moral strength.

It is our non-co-operation which will create the basis for friendship. The foregoing circular is sheer hypocrisy, no more than make-believe. The effort will be as futile as trying to make a rope out of sand.[1] If the Government really means to treat us as friends, it must undo the injustices, its ways must change and its heart should melt. If the heart melts, it will repent for its innumerable sins, do justice to the Punjab, heal the Muslims' wound, will look upon Tilak Maharaj, not as an enemy, but as a pillar of the Empire and the Viceroy will apologize for the crime of refusing even to mention his name. The greatest crime of Tilak Maharaj was that, with his foresight, he saw that, so long as the British officers looked down upon us, associating with them would do us harm. It is for this reason that the British officers seem to think that they would be polluted if they so much as mentioned his name.

So long as, inwardly, they have contempt for us, such circulars for promoting friendship are but a salve for our wounds. But we can hope for a change of heart in the officials only when we have conquered their hostility by our strength of character. We ourselves credit them with superior strength and want to be what they are. The truth of the matter is that acquiring an empire constitutes no superiority. It requires brute force and the ability to use cunning methods of persuasion, bribery and coercion and to creat divisions among the opponents. This provides no measure of moral worth. Superiority can be measured only in terms of moral worth and an empire based on moral strength is the only true empire. In adopting non-co-operation, India has chosen the way which will help it to win such an empire. All that the foregoing circular tells us is that even our adversary admits our path to be the right one.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-9-1920

[1] A Tamil proverb

176. GUJARAT'S DUTY

The question naturally arises what Gujarat will do now. Gujarat had decided, even before the Congress session was held, to boycott legislatures, schools and courts and the Congress has now approved this programme; Gujarat is, therefore, under a double obligation now.

However, it seems to have done nothing of much consequence so far.

It seems that legislatures will be boycotted by and large. But this certainly will not suffice.

How many schools have we rendered vacant? How many lawyers have given up practice? How many people have given up wearing foreign cloth entirely? How many have taken up, and induced others to take up, hand-spinning and hand-weaving?

These are no idle questions. We shall be tested by how we answer them. Our attending meetings and raising hands for voting will not get us swaraj or justice for the Punjab; nor will it prevent the humiliation of Islam.

Moreover, the Viceroy has made it clear by his action that we are not to expect any justice. Officers have been reprimanded. India has demanded not merely that the guilty officers be reprimanded but that they be discharged from service or suitably punished. Nothing like this has been done.

In Fiji, innocent and helpless Indians were subjected to atrocities similar to those in Amritsar. Gujaratis must have read the report of an example of arrogance in New Zealand. The rights of Indians living in Africa are being attacked. Indians in South Africa are being befooled and driven out. When these are the policies which prevail, how is co-operation possible?

We have taken upon ourselves to get this policy changed, to be the equals of the British, to uphold our self-respect, to prevent the country from ruination and show our culture (if we have any).

The Congress has concluded that we cannot achieve all this by arranging, gathering or making petitions. Gujarat had decided so even earlier.

How, then, can we succeed in this task? Our reply was: By non-co-operation. Non co-operation with British rule means co-operation

among ourselves. This task can never be accomplished without self-sacrifice, determination, efficiency, planning, training, etc. It seemst hat legislatures will be boycotted by and large. But this certainly will not suffice.

How many schools have we rendered vacant? How many lawyers have given up practice? How many people have given up wearing foreign cloth entirely? How many have taken up, and induced others to take up, hand-spinning and hand-weaving?

These are no idle questions. We shall be tested by how we answer them. Our attending meetings and raising hands for voting will not get us swaraj or justice for the Punjab; nor will it prevent the humiliation of Islam.

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The Congress has concluded that we cannot achieve all this by arranging, gathering or making petitions. Gujarat had decided so even earlier.

How, then, can we succeed in this task? Our reply was: By non-co-operation. Non co-operation with British rule means co-operation among ourselves. This task can never be accomplished without self-sacrifice, determination, efficiency, planning, training, etc.

If we must look to the British Government for our education, for settling our disputes, for our laws and the cloth we need, how can we ever start non-co-operation with it ?

Can the children of a man sunk in immorality non-co-operate with him while he provides their education, settles their disputes and lays down rules for their future conduct and they receive these bene-

fits from him? Does not the very first step towards non-co-operation lie in renouncing these three benefits? And when the children straightaway give up these favours, what will be the effect on their father? Will he not change his ways and try to win them back?

If, however, the children think that they cannot do without the benefit of education, that it is for the best that the father should settle their disputes and he alone can lay down the law for their guidance and ask how it could be non-co-operation to renounce these benefits, then not only will they fail to put a stop to their father's immorality but will be a party to it and take to immoral ways themselves.

The same is true of our relations with the Government. If, tempted by tangible benefits like schools, etc. we make compromises, swaraj will be ever receding from us. For we shall always feel that schools, courts, etc., can be run only by the Government. Just as a person who always moves in a vehicle loses his ability to walk, one who passively receives education and such other benefits can never be independent.

When we are able to educate our children and settle our disputes ourselves, we shall feel new strength in us and shall know what it means to be independent.

In Agra, there was a dispute between Hindus and Muslims. The English official said : "Well, send for your Maulana Shaukat Ali and Gandhi." He obliged us by saying this. Maulana or Gandhi did not have to go, but the well-known Hakim Ajmal Khan and others went there from Delhi and restored peace between the two communities. The people were convinced that they could do without the service of the army and the officials. To that extent the people made progress, became independent and qualified themselves for swaraj.

In this way, as the people gradually learn to manage their own affairs, they will become more and more free.

It is the essence of non-co-operation to awaken people to their strength. People must realize that without their consent and co-operation, the Government can never be carried on. In this realization lie the seeds of swaraj. The people will be subject only so long as, yielding to temptations or out of ignorance or fear, they co-operate [with the Government]. If people emancipate themselves from the lure of titles, etc., from the ignorant belief that knowledge can be acquired only in Government schools and from the fear of the Government's physical might, they will be independent.

Gujaratis should understand this simple idea and everybody should realize his duty.

It is mainly workers that we lack. If honest, sincere and alert workers who have unshakable faith in every item in the non-co-operation programme come forward, people will not take long to get ready. So the first thing to do, for ensuring the success of non-co-operation, is to find workers. There can be no lack of such workers. I hope that they will be found in every village.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-9-1920

177. FAMINE IN ORISSA

The distress in Orissa is getting more acute, not less. Readers of *Navajivan* have contributed much towards relief but what they have given is not enough. Shri Amritlal Thakkar has asked for Rs. 50,000. If we fail to collect this amount, some are bound to die of starvation.

Anyone may go there and see people starving. One gentleman was there recently. He saw with his own eyes a man dying of hunger. This latter had gone to the place to receive doles being distributed among famine-stricken people, but did not live to get his share.

Another such starving man, unable to bear his suffering, went away to commit suicide. Since the attempt to commit suicide is a crime, he was arrested by the police. The magistrate passed a nominal sentence on him and set him free; he was given Rs. 20 from the charity box.

In Puri, now, they are short of volunteers. Those who were enrolled got overworked. So paid servants have had to be employed, and this has meant additional expenditure. It is our duty to meet this.

As long as millions are starving in India, we have no right to arrange parties and dinners, to indulge in rhetoric and spend money on luxuries. We cannot even enjoy good dishes.

I have stated our duty in regard to the chronic poverty of India. You may accept or reject it. But we cannot escape the duty to end the present starvation in Puri and it is my hope that everybody will contribute to the fund to the best of his ability.

I also wish to draw the reader's attention to another fact mentioned by Amritlal Thakkar. He writes about a young man

named Krishnachandra Naik, and says that he died of a serpent bite while doing his duty. We may offer consolation to the family of this friend. Personally, however, I would offer congratulations.

I would rather die of a serpent bite while trying to satisfy the hunger of a starving man, than of dysentery. The dysentery may be the result of my sins. The serpent bite may also be due to my sins even so, if I die of such an accident while doing good, I cannot but fare well after death. I would, consider it my good fortune [to meet such a death].

Instead of being pained by the death of friend Naik, everyone should rejoice over it and not turn away from such work as risky.

We find there is greater fear of death in India, where it should be less. We believe the *atman* to be immortal. We know the body to be liable to perish any moment. The *atman* goes from body to body, according to its actions. If so, why fear or mourn death? If a child dies, why should we not believe that it has died after paying its debt and, therefore, feel no terror at its death? Is it not a delusion to believe that a child's death is untimely? Does not our dharma teach us that all deaths occur at their appointed hour? We indeed need to shake off our delusions about death.

This certainly does not rule out manly effort. Whether death comes today or tomorrow, true human effort consists in adhering to our dharma and doing our duty without fearing death, for, in this way, we remain free from the weakness of impatience and are saved from many sins. And, at the same time, believing that there is no room for slackness in matters of dharma, we go on working ceaselessly and take no thought of death.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-9-1920

178. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

AHMEDABAD,
September 27, 1920

JAMNALAL
BACHHRAJ
WARDHAGANJ

IF SHUKLAJI[1] DOES NOT ACCEPT YOU MAY ACCEPT[2] .

GANDHI

Panchaven Putrako—Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 13

179. TELEGRAM TO BIHARILAL ANANTANI[3]

[On or after *September 27, 1920*]

EXPECT NO JUSTICE FROM PRESENT GOVERNMENT. OUR COUNTRYMEN EAST AFRICA STRONG ENOUGH, PROTECT THEMSELVES BY NON-CO-OPERATION ANY CASE EVENTS PROGRESSING HERE CANNOT BUT ULTIMATELY IMPROVE THEIR POSITION.

From a photostat : S. N. 7277

180. LETTER TO K. G. KRISHNAMURTI

THE ASHRAM,
September 28, 1920

DEAR MR. KRISHNAMURTI,

I am glad you have revised your views on non-co-operation. I think it is better to bear in mind that the primary object of the movement is not paralysis of the Government but putting ourselves in the right. Since the Government is in the wrong our action mustnecessarily result in its paralysis. The millions who do not assist the Government by any direct action assist it by giving it passive co-operation. they do not actively desire to dissociate themselves from

[1] Pandit Bishandutt Shukla
[2] Chairmanship of the Reception Committee of Nagpur Congress
[3] An East African settler who in a telegram to Gandhiji on September 27 had said: "Leaving for East Africa Wednesday. Pray wire me care Swaga desired advise as message to be delivered our countrymen under present circmustances."

the Government. Anyway swadeshi gives everyone a chance of partaking in the movement. And, after all, it it not enough that those who are actively co-operating with the Government, i.e., title-holders, parents of school-going children and lawyers, withdraw their support? The moral force of a Government depends upon these volunteers and immediately the moral force goes, the very foundation is undermined. I am not opposed to boycott of foreign goods on principle. I have opposed it because it is physically impossible. I have suggested a definite special boycott, i.e., of foreign cloth. This is possible today, and if we achieve that we make India economically independent. I think this answers all the questions raisd by you.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 7274

181. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING AHMEDABAD[1]

In the Punjab, students being forced to march sixteen to eighteen miles, and children being whipped, were not the only indignities; some students were even called out to salute the Union Jack. I leave it to the students to judge how, if people are forced to salute the Union Jack, or even God, those who are so forced—and God Himself—would feel. Then, again, some were expelled from college. I used to get letters from such students. They felt that they were ruined and that their future was bleak.

If there is any lesson that students should learn from the events in the Punjab, it is that they should not be enamoured of colleges any longer, should drive out of their minds the idea that if they did not go to college, they would lose their bread.

When I went to Lahore, I could see from the joy on the faces of students that their fascination for college had considerably waned. Had I been frightened along with them and given way to false concern as if, unless they went to college, they would not be men, their infatuation would have increased. Had these students not been enrolled in Government colleges, what could the Governent have done to them? I am sure it could have done them no harm it could not have forced them to salute the Union Jack. Above everything else, they

[1] Meeting of students of Gujarat College, V. J. Patel presiding

were afraid that they would face dire consequences if they refused to salute the Union Jack. These students would have been quite safe had they been attending private colleges over which the Government had no control. But, as the students attended Government colleges, it could exercise greater control over them and through them humiliated our people. It is only through students that we can achieve independence, and it is only because of their weakness that we shall continue to be under foreign domination. It is true that I have laid great stress on the boycott of councils. Each one of us is prone to hero-worship and, therefore, when leaders who are fit to be our representatives give up the idea of entering the councils, I know that the immediate effect would be tremendous. This can be done right now and it should be done. It would also have a powerful effect. If, however, all Government schools are left empty I promise that you will see the face of India changed within a month. Nothing else will have the same impact on the public and our rulers as that produced by every student leaving his or her school or college forthwith in a day. Even lawyers giving up practice would not have the same effect as students leaving their schools. When students stop attending Government schools, the Government will realize that their Tansa Water Works[1] —why go so far, the Dudheshvar Water Works[2] —has stopped its supply [of Government servants]. India depends on its students for winning its freedom because they are young. Lawyers are men of affairs and as such seasoned in the ways of the world. But students lead an innocent life. It is difficult to make lawyers give up practice as they have their interests to consider; but, as students have no such interests, it would be easy for them to boycott their colleges if only they would give up their fascination for them.

Some of you may ask why students should do this, why they should leave schools. Our great leader, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, a profoundy religious man with long experience in public service, Shri Shastriar, one of the ablest thinkers in the country, and some of our other leaders including Lala Lajpat Rai argue against this movement and say that this step of asking the students to leave schools is fraught with great danger. I certainly cannot wish that you should be guarded against being influenced by their ideas and, therefore,

[1] Source of water-supply to Bombay
[2] Source of water-supply to Ahmedabad

request you, students, to give the fullest consideration to the views of these patriotic leaders of ours. If having done so, you still feel that what I say is true, only then must you leave schools and colleges.

Some of you may ask how the education we have been receiving has suddenly become vicious. However bad the Government, why should we leave the schools which we attend if they are well managed and staffed with good teachers and professors? This is a question which will naturally trouble each one of us.

When the Punjab and the khilafat issues arose, the policies of the Government were bearable. I give you my word that, when I was there [in the Punjab], I was confident that we were bound to get justice. I also assured our Muslim brethren that they would get at least what had been promised by the Prime Minister, Mr. Lloyd George. However, we received a slap in the face over the Punjab issue and the most ingenious means were employed to cover up the injustice. Regarding the khilafat, even a child can see that the promise given has been broken.

The victims of the atrocities in the Punjab were no ordinary persons; it was the educated class, educated by the Government which was subjected to the most wanton cruelties.

The Government has robbed India of its self-respect. Were a robber to rob us of our belongings and then come and ask us to attend a school fou-nded with money from out of what he had seized from us, I am sure we would tell the robber that we did not want the education provided by him. I can tolerate a robber robbing me of my belongings, but how am I robb-ed of it? Could I have my nose whole again if it were to be cut off? Rob-bers in Kathiawad used to cut off people's noses, and then a doctor came along who offered to stitch them up. But there is no surgeon who can restore its shapeliness to India's nose which has been cut and disfigured. It is we alone who can effect this. Just as we would not touch the best of milk if it is poisoned with arsenic, so we should keep away from education which is polluted even though it be the best. I doubt if Pandit Malaviya or Shri Shastriar has been pained as much as I have been by these two issues. If they also feel as I do that the Government, by its policies, has turned into poison what otherwise was as beneficial as milk—they would say the same thing that I have said. I would say that these great men of our country fail to recognize the position which infected the education provided by the Government.

If, in this situation, we do nothing, we shall be disgraced for

ever. For ages to come, our people will be unfit to hold up their heads before the rest of the world. You, students, cannot be called children any longer. You should, therefore, boycott your colleges and schools right from tomorrow after courteously informing your parents and elders. But I want you to understand fully the conditions under which the freedom that boys and girls over sixteen have may be used.

Those alone, who are both mentally and physically sick of our present condition and are convinced that they cannot even for a moment tolerate this Empire, that it is humiliating to live in such an Empire permeated by the position of injustice, have the right to leave schools and colleges. Just as we cannot accept alms from the robber who has robbed us of our all, likewise we should refuse the education provided by the Government; this is the only right way of showing our respect for our parents and leaders. If you hear the voice of conscience telling you to do a certain thing, you have the right to obey it. If you are convinced of all this, I would like you to give up your colleges right from tomorrow.

"To which schools do we go then?" To those students who ask this question, my reply is that they should yet wait for a while and consult their parents, for they are still undecided. Would I have any doubt about leaving a room inhabited by a snake? If you want to know the meaning of the resolution passed by the National Congress, I tell you that it does not make the leaving of schools conditional on new schools being provided. Whether we have new schools or not, it is necessary to boycott the present ones which have become like poison to us.

Let no one conclude, from what I have said above, that I am opposed to education or that I wish to propagate my own ideas on education. I am trying to spread my ideas through the National School and, when I wish to spread them more effectively, I shall find the appropriate means. But today it is as a soldier that I advise the boycott of schools and colleges. When a war breaks out, students give up studies, law-courts are closed and even prisons emptied. Even prisoners who have made jail their home turn a new leaf in their lives and go out to the battle-field. Similarly, this is a time of war for us. Had ours been a warlike nation, long before now thousands of swords would have been unsheathed, but the way of the sword is not possible in India today. At present, it is from the ordinary, worldly point of view that I put this issue before the

public—that we cannot accept gifts, we cannot accept assistance from a Government which has humiliated us to this extent. If this principle is accepted, the question whether there are any alternative schools does not arise at all. You have, therefore, to consider the issue only from this point of view, whether or not it is your duty now to leave schools and colleges forthwith. What should the students do after leaving their institution? What should those who are rendered idle during the intervening period do? You may ask all these questions. The principle is the same that I have put forward. I do not put before you the corollaries which follow from this. Consistently with this main principle, one may, unwaveringly, follow any course which appeals to one's heart. It is, at the same time, my duty to add that no student is justified in continuing to attend school or college out of weakness, once his doubts have been resolved. This is no time for the nation to show weakness.

Then followed questions by students and Gandhiji's replies.

Q: Mahatmaji, what should we do if the Congres meeting in Nagpur postpones the implementation of this resolution?

I think that the Congres session in Nagpur cannot pass a resolution to that effect. This question—what the Nagpur session of the Congress will do or will not do—has no meaning for one who has really understood the principle advanced here. The awakening among students in Gujarat could make it impossible for the Congress to pass such a resolution.

Mahatmaji, do you wish students to commit suicide or to sacrifice their interests?

I wish students to do the latter and thereby protect themselves.

The Gujarat College was founded by funds collected from Gujarat and the Government merely accepted its management when handed over to it. Should we, then, give up that which truly belongs to us or should we take back its management in our hands?

Should a person misuse something that has been entrusted to him, even in law such a person is said to have committed breach of trust. If a dhobi puts to some other use garment which has been given to him for washing, he is accused of theft. In the same manner, I accuse the Government of theft, of a breach of trust. When we entrusted the Government with the management of the College, we did not anticipate the injustice it would do in the Punjab and with regard to the khilafat. Secondly, as the chairman has said, Gujarat College is

not going to be converted into a zoo. It will, in the end, be ours. In order to take complete and proper possession of our property, which at the moment is under the control of the Government, it is necessary that we should even give up its improper use. As we would abandon our house if there has been a plague case in it, so we should abandon this College as it is no longer truly ours. Should one's arm become gangrenous, Dr. Kanuga would amputate it since gangrene is incurable. During a storm, sailors jettison their cargo into the sea, but there by they do not commit suicide. In the same manner, it is necessary that we boycott today the schools which once belonged to us and it is only through such a boycott that we shall regain our ownership.

Mahatmaji, should one leave schools which are private and not run by the Government?

Those private schools which are affiliated to the Government [to the university] are in fact controlled by the Government, are under its moral government and should, therefore, be boycotted. In my opinion, all those colleges which have even the very slightest trace of Government influence should be boycotted.

Would the Government be affected if only a few students gave up their colleges?

We are not concerned with the effect but with the question whether to accept or not to accept the gift of injustice. It is our duty to uphold our self-respect. A boy or girl who gives up college has done his or her duty and served the world to that extent. Even a single person making a sacrifice will produce some effect.

As far as I can see, the Government never wanted to educate us. Do we not then help the Government by leaving colleges?

I do not think the Government wants us to do so. It has even issued a circular in this connection. The Government is very much afraid that, if schools and colleges are vacated, it would lose what control it has over the people. We should do the right thing irrespective of the wishes of the Government.

Should we give up even those schools or colleges which are to become national institutions?

You should write to the managers of such schools and colleges congratulating them on their intention to make them national institutions and requesting them to notify the Government immediately of their intentions so that you would be reassured.

What should we do if our parents do not agree to this?

Try and reason with your parents. We must be respectful and polite to our parents. We should not forget that we must obey their wishes, but we may politely refuse to comply with them whenever we find them unreasonable.

What should we do if national schools are banned as seditious?

In that case, every student in a Government school must walk out of it. If, in such a situation, the people continue to patronize Government schools, they will be fit only to be a nation of slaves. The Government cannot stop people's education along national lines, it cannot prevent private tutors and volunteer workers from going to people's homes.

Mahatma Gandhi, you said that the Dudheshwar Water Works would be shut down if Government schools and colleges were boycotted. What do you mean by this?

We supply to the Government water in the form of Government servants and it is with this water that the Government quenches its thirst. So, then, the Government will perish of thirst if this source of water is dried up. Lord Macaulay also said that schools and colleges alone could provide the Government with the servants it needed.

Some people believe that this movement will collapse like the one against the partition of Bengal. What would you say to this?

There are bound to be, among the people, such bubbles which arise and burst. If all the babies born could live, what more could the world ask for? We should embark on this task only after taking our weakness into account. There were two weaknesses in the movement against the partition of Bengal: (1) The students were not made to leave Government schools and (2) the leaders continued to send their own children to colleges and such institutions. These two weaknesses are being overcome to the extent possible. I am always prepared to be cursed by the students. One who wishes to serve the public must, from the very beginning, be prepared for curses. Both the public and I must be prepared to suffer the consequences of this course. That alone will raise the future generations.

Do all war-time requirements hold in this movement?

All war-time requirements are being adhered to in this movement and, most certainly, this is a war.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-10-1920

182. THE KACHA GARHI INCIDENT

My attention has been drawn by Lieutenant Hewett of the 37th Dogras to certain statements which appeared in the issue of this paper on the 28th July last under the heading, "More about the Bulletted *Muhajarin*." The report[1] in question which deals with the Kacha Garhi incident was communicated by Mr. H. J. Mohamed as the opening words showed. Lieutenant Hewett denies the truth of various statements in the report and complains in particular of the following specific allegations, which he characterizes as false and malicious:

> The officer kneeled upon the body and cut deep in the neck;

and

> They (i. e. the British soldiers and the officers) were bent on murder and murder in a cruel manner, for this alone could satisfy their lust for blood and appease their anger.

Lieutenant Hewett informs me that he was the only officer travelling by the train referred to in this report or present on the occasion referred to therein, and he denies that there is any truth whatever in these allegations which he says clearly refer to him. On another page of the same issue of *Young India*, there appeared an article[2] by me in which I said that "If the facts set forth in the statement are true they reflect the greatest discredit on the so-called soldiers who took wanton delight in killing a man who was endeavouring to protect the honour of women", but I was careful to advise my readers to suspend their judgement till they had the Government version before them.

I gladly publish the repudiation by Lieutenant Hewett. The public thus have the original statement and a contradiction by the officer concerned. There is now all the greater reason for suspension of judgment till the result of the inquiry is before the public.

Young India, 29-9-1920

[1] Not reproduced here
[2] *Vide* "More About the Bulletted *Muhajarin*" 28-7-1920.

183. REPRESSION IN THE PUNJAB

Mr. Zafar Ali Khan, the editor and proprietor of the *Zamindar* of Lahore, is on his trial. Probably by the time this appears in print, his fate will have been decided. The reader will see the charge-sheet against Mr. Zafar Ali Khan.[1] It is worth studying from the political standpoint. The judicial must for the time being rest with the judges. He has been accused of having made use of sentiments amounting to an attempt to create disaffection towards the Government established by law in British India and to promote feeling of enmity between different clases of His Majesty's subjects.

The statements attributed to Mr. Z. A. Khan undoubtedly constitute the crime, if they were actually made and are not true. For to state facts cannot by any stretch of the canon of interpretation amount to an attempt to excite disaffection or to promote enmity. To speak of General Dyer' performances, of Mr. Lloyd George's breach of promises or of the Viceroy's and Mr. Montagu's defence of O'Dwyerism, would be to speak the truth; and yet it cannot but excite disaffection towards a Government that is guilty of condonation of crimes or breaches of deliberate pledges. And if it be a crime to speak the truth, it is a virtue and a duty to promote disaffection. Similarly if the telling of truth promotes feelings of enmity between classes, it has to be risked if truth may not be sacrificed. Suppression of material but damaging facts cannot promote friendship but can only make the enmity more deadly for its secrecy.

In Mr. Zafar Ali Khan's case there are two statements which are, so far as I am aware, unsupportable by evidence. Mecca was never set on fire. And there seems to be no warrant for the statement that virgin girls were outraged in Baghdad. I do not know whether Mr. Zafar Ali Khan made the two statements imputed to him. I should be sorry if he did. Khilafat workers in particular, and all other workers in general, cannot be too strongly to urged avoid all exaggeration. Facts are always stronger than fiction. The latter hurts a cause in the long run and discredits the speaker. The case against the Government based on proved facts is invulnerably strong. And public movements will gain greatly when no charge of exaggeration can be sustained against workers.

[1] For making statements at Hazro in August 1920 against the British Government on khilafat and other issues; *vide Young India*, 29-9-1920.

But the charges that will be and must be admitted by Mr. Khan are really from the Government's point of view far more serious, and yet of those charges I am guilty with Mr. Khan. For instance, the conditions laid down for a hearty reception to H. R. H. the Prince of Wales would be mine as they are stated to be Mr. Khan's. It is but too true, if the conditions laid down are not fulfilled, that this Empire must perish.

Hitherto the Government has taken no notice of speeches advising non-co-operation and containing such demands as are said to have been made or advice as is said to have been given by Mr. Zafar Ali Khan. And I had begun to think that the Government were adopting the healthy method of allowing such agitation to go on so long as it did not result in violence. I had thought that the Government had ceased to think of punishing a man for expressing his views however extreme they might be so long as they did not incite the people to violence.

But the policy is evidently to be changed. Mr. Zafar Ali Khan's speech must have told. He preached against recruiting in the District which provided recruits. And if such preaching is wrong, the Congress itself has done wrong. Yet surely it is the right of a citizen to warn people against accepting an occupation that is harmful to the people's self-respect or religious honour.

Mr. Habib Shah of *Siasat* had his security forfeited, I suppose, for much the same reasons. This kind of repression we must expect as non-co-operation begins to produce its effect. It is clear that success depends entirely upon our ability to carry on our campaign in spite of repression by way of prosecution of speakers and suppression of newspapers. Such repression must simply nerve us for further effort. And the demands must be repeated not by one man but thousands. Newspapermen need not feel concerned if their activity is stopped. Door to door propaganda, circulars written by the hand and multiplied after the snowball process by voluntary workers will result in more concentrated work than newspapers. When the struggle reaches the effective stage even in spite of peace reigning in the land, we must be prepared for prosecutions and internments and the like. And the victory will be ours, only when the struggle survives the repressive stage and makes non-co-operation more popular than ever. For will it not be a conclusive proof of the necessity of non-co-operation with a Government that will suppress even the legitimate

aspiration of the people and a legitimate and truthful narrative of facts, however distasteful they may be to the Government?

Only we dare not be impatient. Sentences like the following do betray impatience.

> I have heard that in Baghdad a father and son were in the Indian army. They were fighting against the Turks. The son was killed in action, the father carried his body to Baghdad. In the way he noticed that his son's face had turned into that of a pig!

These sentences have been put into Mr. Khan's mouth. It is an appeal to superstition. I hope that Mr. Zafar Ali Khan did not appeal to the superstition of his audience. The khilafat agitation is a religious movement. It must be free from untruth, exaggeration, violence of speech or action, and superstition or prejudice. The cause itself is truthful, and truth, when self-sacrifice and courage have been applied for its vindication, has never yet been known to fail.

Young India, 29-9-1920

184. THE HALLUCINATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Much is being said and written against the proposed boycott of Government-controlled schools and colleges. The proposal has been descibed as "mischievous", "harmful", "opposed to the best interest of the country", etc. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji is among its most uncompromising opponents.

I have been taxing myself to the best of my capacity in order to discover my error. But the effort has resulted in deepening my conviction that it is sinful to receive any education under the control of the present Government, no matter how high its quality may be, even as it would be to take the richest milk when it is tainted with poison.

I ask myself why some see the truth of the proposition quite clearely whilst others, the accepted leaders, condemn it as an error. The answer I have been able to find is that the latter do not consider the present system of Government as an unmixed evil as the former do. In other words, the opponents do not sufficiently realize the significance of the Punjab and the khilafat wrongs. They do not feel as others do that the activity of the present Government is injurious to national growth. I know that this is a serious statement to make. It is unthinkable that Malaviyaji and Shastriar cannot feel

the wrongs even as I do. And yet that is precisely my meaning. I am positive that they will not put their children in a school where there was any likelihood of their becoming degraded instead of being elevated. I am equally positive that they would not send their children to a school managed, controlled or even influenced by a robber who had robbed them of their possessions. I feel that the nation's children suffer degradation in the Government schools. I feel that these schools and colleges are under the influence of a Government that has deliberately robbed the nation of its honour, and therefore the nation must withdraw its children from such schools. It may be that some learning even in such schools may be able to resist the progress of degradation. But it cannot be right to countenance national humiliation going on in the schools because some have risen above their environment. In my opinion it is self-evident that the honoured leaders of the nations today do not realize that the Government-controlled schools are tainted in the manner described by me.

It may be urged that the schools are no worse today than they were before the Punjab wrong or the khilafat breach, and that we tolerated them before these events. I admit that the schools are not much worse now than before. But so far as I am concerned, the knowledge of the Punjab and the khilafat betrayal has revolutionized my view of the existing system of Government. My ignorance of its inherent wickedness made the system tolerable to the extent of my not rising against the schools. And that is just the reason why I fear that those who oppose boycott of the schools on the ground of its harmfulness, do not put the same valuation on the Punjab and the khilafat wrong that I do.

And so I congratulate Messrs S. B.Tilak, Patel, Tripathi and others on their having given up their colleges even as they were on the point of finishing their education. That is also why I congratulate Misses Desai and Patel for their having left their high school. It is perhaps not generally known that these high-spirited girls left the schools of their own accord as have the young men.

I have no hesitation in wishing that the youth of India, both boys and girls, will, if they have felt personally the deep humiliation of abtrocities of the Punjab, or understood the meaning of the violation of the khilafat pledge, without any further reflection, empty the Government controlled schools and colleges. The moral education that they will gain in a moment when they take that step will

more than make up for the temporary loss of literary education. For the day that the boys and the girls empty the Government-controlled schools will be the day that will mark a very definite advance towards the goal.

It will mark a revolution in the national thought. It will mark our freedom from the hallucination of schools and colleges. Is not nation able to take charge of its own education without any Government intervention, protection, advice or grant? Abandonment of the present schools means consciousness of our ability to educate ourselves in spite of Himalayan difficulties.

Young India, 29-9-1920

185. THE MEANING OF THE EMPIRE

The following circular has been issued by the Education Department:

> Teachers and educational officers of this Presidency should be asked to co-operate in bringing about a right understanding of the meaning of the Empire and in dispelling the idea that the Empire is based on force and militarism, by encouraging the parties concerned to look upon each other as brethren in advancement of the liberal aims and mutual friendship and sympathy particularly in India where a contrary feeling is gaining ground.

It is dated at Poona the 1st instant.

The circular in my opinion is a triumph of non-co-operation. We have been often told authoritatively that the Empire is based finally on force. When an attempt is being made to isolate this force, and to show by not meeting it by force that it is utterly useless when it is not backed by co-operation, conscious or unconscious, of the people, we have a circular calling upon the teachers to co-operate in showing that the Empire is based not on force or millitarism but that it is based on mutual friendship. This I consider a triumph of non-co-operation because force recedes into the background. Sir Michael O'Dwyer flaunted his brute force in the face of the nation, and terrorism reigned supreme for a time. It did not answer. Now it is to be covered under soft-sounding phrases. It too must fail.

The circular is hypocritical. To talk of friendship and sympathy between terrorist and their victims is to add deception to tyranny. The way out is through non-co-operation.

It is a vain attempt to expect to secure friendship by false

pretensions. The best and only way to secure the real friendship of the people and to prove to them that the Empire is not based on force and militarism, is to withdraw the superflous military force even at the risk of losing the Empire to trust the people, and for Englishmen in general to regard us in every way their equals in thought and in deed. This presupposes righting the khilafat wrong in accordance with the Mussulman sentiment and to give full reparation regarding the Punjab.

But this seems impossible for the general body of Englishmen to do. They have been brought up to work upon us as mere chattels. I invite the attention of the reader for the account of the treatment of our countrymen in New Zealand. I cannot conceive anything more wantonly brutal than the doings of the white men of New Zealand. It is not as if the colonists are depraved people. They are brave, generous, charitable and cultured in their own sphere. But they are thrown off their balance immediately they come in contact with us. We are their natural prey. And culture is no bar to their maltreatment of us even as culture is no bar to the killing even say of snakes by the majority of mankind. I have not used a far-fetched illustration. Thousands of Englishmen cannot bear the idea of an Indian claiming or living on terms of equality with them. White superiority, as Mr. Andrews has shown, has become a religion. President Kruger[1] used to say that God had ordained Asiatics to be white men's slaves. He even introduced the idea in his statute-book. He was frank and he avowed it. Others believe it, practise it, but would fain break its force by using euphemistic language or worse.

It is not possibe to blame anybody but ourselves for this badge of inferiority and we alone can remove it by supreme effort.

Young India, 29-9-1920

[1] 1825-1904 Boer leader and State President of the South African Republic.

186. MR. PENNINGTON'S OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

I gladly publish Mr. Pennington's[1] letter[2] with its enclosure[3] just as I have received them. Evidently Mr. Pennington is not a regular reader of *Young India*, or he would have noticed that no one has condemned mob-outrages more than I have. He seems to think that the article[4] he has objected to was the only thing I have ever written on General Dyer. He does not seem to know that I have endeavoured with the utmost impartiality to examine the Jallianwala massacre. And he can see any day all the proof adduced by my fellow-comissioners and myself in support of our findings on the massacre. The ordinary readers of *Young India* knew all the facts and therefore it was unnecessary for me to support my assertions otherwise. But unfortunately Mr. Pennington represents the typical Englishman. He does not want to be unjust, nevertheless he is rarely just in his appreciation of world events because he has no time to study them except cursorily and that through a press whose business is to air only party views. The average Englishman therefore except in parochial matters is perhaps the least informed though he claims to be well informed about every variety of interest. Mr. Pennington's ignorance is thus typical of the others and affords the best reason for securing control of our own affairs in our own hands. Ability will come with use and not by waiting to be trained by those whose natural interest is to prolong the period of tutelage as much as possible.

But to return to Mr. Pennington's letter he complains that there has been no "proper trial of anyone". The fault is not ours. India has consistently and insistently demanded a trial of all the officers concerned in the crimes against the Punjab.

He next objects to the "violence" of my language. If truth is violent, I plead guilty to the charge of violence of language. But I could not, without doing violence to truth, refrain from using the language I have regarding General Dyer's action. It has been proved out of his own mouth or hostile witnesses :

1. That the crowd was unarmed.
2. That it contained children.
3. That the 13th was the day of *Vaisakhi* fair.

[1] J. R. Pennington, a retired I.C.S. officer
[2] Defending General Dyer
[3] Entitled "Is India Worth Keeping?"
[4] *Vide* "General Dyer", 14-7-1920.

4. That thousand had come to the fair.

5. That there was no rebellion.

6. That during the intervening two days before the "massacre" there was peace in Amritsar.

7. That the proclamation of the meeting was made the same day as General Dyer's proclamation.

8. That General Dyer's proclamation prohibited not meetings but processions or gatherings of 4 men on the streets and not in private or public places.

9. That General Dyer ran no risk whether outside or inside the city.

10. That he admitted himself that many in the crowd did not know anything of his proclamation.

11. That he fired without warning the crowd and even after it had begun to disperse. He fired in the backs of the people who were in flight.

12. That the men were practically penned in an enclosure.

In the face of these admitted facts I do call the deed a "massacre". The action amounted not to "an error of judgment" but its "paralysis in the face of fancied danger".

I am sorry to have to say that Mr. Pennigton's notes, which too the reader will find published elsewhere, betray as much ignorance as his letter.

Whatever was adopted on paper in the days of Canning was certainly not translated into action in its full sense. "Promises made to the ear were broken to the hope" was said by a reactionary Viceroy. Military expenditure has grown enormously since the days of Canning.

The demonstration in favour of General Dyer is practically a myth.

No trace was found of the so-called Danda Fauj dignified by the name of bludgeon-army by Mr. Pennington. There was no rebel army in Amritsar. The crowd that committed the horrible murders and incendiarism contained no one community exclusively. The sheet was found posted only in Lahore and not in Amritsar. Mr. Pennington should moreover have known by this time that the meeting held on the 13th was held, among other things, for the

purpose of condemning mob excesses. This was brought out at the Amritsar trial. Those who surrounded him could not stop General Dyer. He says he made up this mind to shoot in a moment. He consulted nobody. When the correspondent says that the troops would have objected to being con- cered in "what might in that case be not unfairly called a massacre'," he writes as if he had never lived in India. I wish the Indian troops had the moral courage to refuse to shoot innocent, unarmed men in full flight. But the Indian troops have been brought in too slavish an atmosphere to dare do any such correct act.

I hope Mr. Pennington will not accuse me again of making unverified assertions because I have not quoted from the books. The evidence is there for him to use. I can only assure him that the assertions are based on positive proofs mostly obtained from official sources.

Mr. Pennington wants me to publish an exact account of what happened on the 10th April. He can find it in the reports, and if he will patiently go through them he will discover that Sir Michael O'Dwyer and his officials goaded the people into frenzied fury—a fury which nobody, as I have already said, has condemned more than I have. The account of the following days is summed up in one word, viz, "peace" on the part of the crowd disturbed by indiscriminate arrests, the massacre and the series of official crimes that followed.

I am prepared to give Mr. Pennington credit for seeking after the truth. But he has gone about it in the wrong manner. I suggest his reading the evidence before the Hunter Committee and the Congress Committee. He need not read the reports. But the evidence will convince him that I have understated the case against General Dyer.

When however I read his description of himself as "for 12 years Chief Magistrate of Districts in the South of India before reform, by assassination and otherwise, became so fashionable", I despair of his being able to find the truth. An angry or a biased man renders himself incapable of finding it. And Mr. Pennington is evidently both angry and biased. What does he mean by saying, "before reform, by assassination and otherwise, became so fashionable"? It ill becomes him to talk of assassination when the school of assassination seems happily to have become extinct. Englishmen will never see the truth so long as they permit their vision to be blinded by arrogant assumption of superiority or ignorant assumptions of infallibility.

Young India, 29-9-1920

187. SPEECH AT TEACHERS' MEETING, AHMEDABAD

September 29, 1920

I was myself a teacher once and can still claim to be one. I have had some experience in education, having carried out experiments in it. As a result of these experiments, I have come to the conclusion that a nation whose teachers have lost their manhood can never rise.

Our teachers have indeed lost manhood. They do under force what, otherwise, they would not do. No physical force is used on them, but they are subjected to a subtle kind of pressure. Teachers get frightened by threats from their superiors, by threats or hints of cuts in their salaries or stoppage of increments.

We are now faced with a situation in which teachers—both men and women—should risk their lives, their belongings and their salaries and, courageously, put the situation before the students as it is. If they cannot do so, they should give up teaching as their means of livelihood. My task for the day will be done when I have explained this to the teachers. A great teacher like Shri Shastriar is in the opposite camp. Even Pandit Malaviya, founder of an institution like the [Benares] Hindu University, is of the opinion that I am leading the public on the wrong path. Those who belong to the nationalist camp also have their doubts. Even so I believe I am right.

A gentlemen who has come from Baghdad recounted to me his experiences there. I was dumbfounded by this. I tell you that I find it unbearable to live in India. If I did not think of non-co-operation all the twenty-four hours,—even when I go to bed it is this thought which calms my mind—it would have been impossible for me to live in this country. I think the illiterate Arabs of Baghdad are infinitely more advanced than we. This gentleman is no ordinary person. He was a high official in Government service in Baghdad. He is no enemy of the British Government. He gave me but a truthful account of his experiences. When Gangabehn[1] asked him whether the British rule would last there, he replied that Mesopotamia was not India, that the Arabs would not rest in peace while one Englishman remained there. They have no equipment such as gunpowder or swords, or anything to speak of. But one weapon they certainly possess : "This is our country. Those whom we do not permit cannot stay here even for a

[1] Gangabehn was the one who found the spinning-wheel in Vijapur.

moment."

They massacred all the Sikhs who were sent there by the British Government. I do not advise Indians to do anything of the kind. On the contrary, I am trying to prevent the trend in that direction. The Arabs had nothing against the Sikhs as such. We have to look only to their motives. The British held out many hopes to them. It is so hot in Baghdad that one cannot sit on the sands there, as you are doing now. The sand there is hot enough for one to cook on. The British Government promised to build tarred roads for the Arabs, to build railway and provide all facilities to see them happy, as also to educate them. The Arabs saw a car for the first time only recently. But they knew only this : "You have come here to occupy our country." The Muslims of Mesopotamia have already set about expelling the British from their country, while the Muslims of India have yet to do so.

The British planes cannot frighten them. What is an air-plane or anything else to Arabs? They ever hold their life in their hands. They have nothing to lose to the enemy. They do not fight for their personal interests. Their clothes are made of leather and they live in tents. Their aim is to save their own land—no matter if it be all sand. Who dare enter, without their permission, the holy city of Baghdad, which has been the dwelling place of many a Muslim saint? Neither an Englishman nor a Sikh nor any friend of theirs will be permitted to stay there.

The Arabs are a million times superior to us. He alone is truly happy who has the courage to declare : "This is our country; whoever points a finger at it will lose that finger. No outsider will be permitted to stay here." We shall be doing injustice both to ourselves and to the Arabs if we believe that they are barbarous and we are civilized. Although we live in a state of servitude, we enjoy some comforts and luxuries. So long as we cherish the desire for such pleasures, we are most certainly lower than the Arabs.

Our forefathers have told us, it has been said in the Vedas and the *Upanishads* "Let not this holy land be profaned." Let outsiders enter your country only as guests. One who has lost his independence has lost all, including his dharma.

I do not believe that we can follow our religion very freely under the British and that under the Muslims it was not quite so. I know Muslim rule was oppressive, that it suffered from pride. But, then, British rule denies God, it has no regard for dharma. It threatens the very existence of our religion.

The condition of the Pathans, the Iranians and the Arabs in our neighbouring countries is better than ours. They do not get the education we do and yet they are superior to us.

Having, in this manner, set out our sad plight, I present my case to the teachers. So long as we are not prepared to sacrifice our education, it will not be possible for us to make our country free.

Many students come to me these days and tell their story in touching words. But I see that they are overcome with fear. They ask me whether there would be other schools and colleges ready for them tomorrow if they were to leave their present ones. This is the glamour which education has for them. No one will say that I myself am opposed to education. There is not a moment when I am not thinking or reading. But we cannot settle down to read Dickens or the Bible when there is a conflagration all around us. It is so at present. At this hour, one should not be overmuch in love with education.

If you are convinced in your mind that the British have been guilty of a great injustice to India in regard to the Punjab and the khilafat issues, it would be a grave sin to accept gifts in any form, or to accept any salary or education from them, until they sincerely feel penitent for their misdeeds and have thoroughly cleansed their corrupted souls. We would not let a monster educate us. Even the purest education is corrupted if one who imparts it is corrupt. The British actually pass off even their evil as purity itself.

We owe our present abjectness, wretchedness and the delusions from which we suffer solely to English education. It is entirely incorrect to say that, were it not for this education there would have been no [social or political] movements among us.

We lack the Arab's spirit which impels him to lay down his life for his country. I shall prophesy that, so long we have not lifted oursel-ves out of this low state, India will not succeed in winning her freedom.

I shall be bold and tell you, teachers and professors, that if you would see the nation buoyant with zeal and enthusiasm, hand in your resignations tomorrow. The teacher who resigns will be teaching his students the most important of lessons.

Gujarat will be as good as free today if teachers come to be fired with heroism and feel that they cannot accept salaries from a Government which does not do justice and does not feel penitent for its misdeeds. If they courageously declare that they would

impart only such education as is truly national, even though they may have to beg for the purpose, the very gods in heaven would come down to witness what they did and rain money on them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-10-1920

188. NEED FOR FIRMNESS AND COURAGE

Probably, very few people know the signifiance of the war we are fighting. A gentleman asked me : "Can our activities be described as war?" I had no hesitation in replying : "Our struggle has all the attributes of a war." The thing that we want, namely, swaraj, is not to be had without fighting and, therefore, all the means we employ must be those used in a war. That is to say, we must suspend our normal work and attend to the duty forced on us by circumstances. The only difference, or rather the one great difference, between our struggle and a war is that there is no scope for brute force or armed might in our struggle; in fact, the use of physical force will mean our defeat. The other characteristics of our struggle are those of an ordinary war. As in the usual kind of war, so in this, too, self-sacrifice, training, planning, and so on are indispen- sable. During a war, people suspend their normal work; in the face of a general threat, people forget their individual misfortunes. The immoral becomes moral, the robber gives up robbing, the drunkard, drinking, the debauchee gives up his debauchery and the thief, his thieving. There is but one thing on the lips of all : the country's freedom. In a crisis of this kind, people have no time to go to law-courts; the students join the struggle for national freedom and look upon their part in it as their studies.

At such a time, though, the qualities which shine best are firmness and courage. These are the qualities needed most. Not to go back on one's decision is firmness. To leave a Government school today, torepent the next day and on the third day to seek readmission to the same school is no firmness. Such weakness will bring about the downfall of the nation, will not raise it. The teacher who submits his resignation today and withdraws it the next day does greater harm to the nation than the one who does not resign at all. Courage lies in going ahead with one's work in the face of difficulties and risks. During a war, courage is in greater demand than the shrewdness of a business man. This shrewdness is needed during peace time. When

things are unsettled, the thing needed is courage : Gujarat is famous for her commercial shrewdness, and it seems quite a natural thing that the commercially inclined should lack courage. This supposition is not proper. As a nation cannot thrive on just one aptitude, so too an individual cannot. Hence, every individual is endowd with the quality of courage. It is only when we have no need to use it that we feel we lack it. The time has come for Gujarat, for the whole of India, to show her courage.

"Where is the scope for courage when no physical force is to be used?" I hope no one will raise such vain doubts. In truth, courage does not lie in using physical force. The elephant does not exhibit courage when he goes along crushing ants underfoot, but he shows it when he fights a lion with all his strength, for in doing so he risks his life. The potter exhibits no courage in twisting his donkey's ear, but the lion-hearted man opposing a band of robbers exhibits courage, for it is plain that he puts his life in danger. The man who refrains from using physical force and yet, refusing to submit, fights on, shows the highest courage. What is courage, indeed? India has, in this unarmed war, an opportunity to show such courage. The student who leaves his school without thinking of the future or of education shows real courage, while the one who leaves only when another school is provided shows the shrewdness of a business man. The pleader who boycotts the Government's law-courts without considering whether or not he will then be able to maintain himself shows courage; the one who boycotts them only after making alternative arrangements for his livelihood may show worldly wisdom but he certainly exhibits no courage. To plunge into a thing with faith and without any fear of consequences is courage. Where there is timidity, there can be no courage. Our people are afflicted with timidity. To talk of winning while clinging to this is to indulge in self-contradiction. We shall need an enterprising spirit and shall have to take risks at every step. On a battle-field, they often brave dangers under compulsion; in our struggle, we brave them willingly, and can achieve much at a small risk.

The steps we are to take by way of non-co-operation are such as involve very little danger. And yet, if the people respond well, I am sure we shall be enjoying swaraj in a very short time. However, the people will certainly expect the educated classes to show firmness and courage in taking these steps.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-10-1920

189. TRUTH AND KHILAFAT

All dharma culminates in truth. Truth is God. There is no dharma which is above truth. Undoubtedly, truth is difficult to follow. If a man can be truthful both in thought and word, he will need nothing more. He will find in truth everything else. The path of truth is only for the brave. "Truth" is a simple word. Anyone who fails to follow it in his dealings will lose his honour and his credit. If some dirt mixes with a quantity of milk, all of it is considered impure; likewise, the value of words otherwise unblemished is diminished if falsehood mixes with them. Thus, it is not only for an ill-spoken word that one has to pay; even innocent things are regarded as evil when mixed with evil.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan's case provides an instance of this truth. We do not know if the words attributed to him were actually spoken by him; my object is merely to show that some ingenuity has been used in framing the charge against him. A fact which has no direct bearing on the charge and which cannot possibly prove the charge has been included to strengthen the case against the Maulana.

Whatever the legal meaning of the charge, I am concerned with its political implications.

There are two parts in the charge-sheet. Even if the serious allegation made in one of these is true, it does not prove the main charge. If the other part, alleging nothing really criminal, proves the charge, it also reflects credit [on the accused]. The Maulana is charged with having said, in the course of a speech : If the Government wishes the people to honour the Prince it ought to fulfil certain conditions; for instance, it must keep the Turkish Empire intact, satisfy the Muslims, repeal the Rowlatt Act and promise that it will never again proclaim martial law. If it does not do this, the Empire will perish." This is indeed a strong thing to say, but it is utterly innocuous. If it is a crime to say such a thing, then I am guilty of such a crime practically every day. The Maulana has spoken the truth and there can be no crime in telling the truth.

The Government, however, argues that such statements create disaffection against it. This is true, but, then, if the Government is guilty of misdeeds and disaffection follows on their being described, it should blame itself and not the person who describes them. If describing the misdeeds of the Government is an offence in the eyes of the law, then such an offence is in reality an act of

virtue.

The second part of the accusation is as follows. It is alleged that, in the course of the same speech, Maulana Zafar Ali Khan told the Muslims that the English had bombed the holy city of Mecca, that a Muslim whose son died fighting on the British side and against the Arabs saw that son's face distorted like that of a pig, and that some British soldiers had raped virgins in Baghdad. Now, of these three allegations, the first and the last are baseless; the second is incredible and as such likely to rouse the superstitious feelings of the people. I still hope that Maulana Zafar Ali Khan did not say these things; if he did say them, we should be sorry. Exaggeration will give a set-back to our cause. The object of this article is to show that the workers have great need of keeping away from such exaggeration. The case against the Empire is proved by the evidence which the Government itself provides. Exaggeration can only weaken it.

It is possible that, had Maulana Zafar Ali Khan not been charged with making exaggerated statements, no case would have been instituted against him, or it would have been difficult to institute one, for his other statements.

The lesson that every khilafat or other public worker should draw from this is that he should never swerve from the path of truth.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-10-1920

190. WOMEN'S ROLE

"What can we do to help non-co-operation?" This question was asked of me in all seriousness by the women in Shantiniketan. The question has also been asked by a gentleman on behalf of women. I wish to give here the substance, with some variation, of the answer I gave to the Shantiniketan sisters. It would be in vain to hope for swaraj so long as women do not make their full contribution to the effort. Men are not as conscientious as women in such matters. If the women do not know or do not accept their duty of preserving the nation's freedom, or of winning it back when it is lost, it will be impossible to defend it.

Going to temples, I grant, is important for strengthening one's faith. If, however, women believe this to be the whole of religion, the idea becomes a superstition and harms the nation. The women

who understand that the Lord's *darshan*[1] is a means to self-realization will also know that even temples must speak to us of freedom, for without freedom it is impossible to protect religion. Could the people protect their religion when General Dyer let loose a reign of terror in Amritsar? Even at that time, women used to go to temples, and a few men as well; what did this avail them?

Had the women been aware that it was the primary duty of the people to free themselves from the tyranny of this man, they would have filled with courage their husbands and sons, made them shake off their cowardice and defend their self-respect. But, in the present age, the women keep aloof from the the things which really matter for the nation's welfare and, hence, we get little help from them.

It was not so in ancient times. Sita set out for the forest with Ramachandra and there was nothing he did of which she remained in ignorance. Draupadi, making herself a true partner in life, accompanied the Pandavas in their wanderings and, when her honour was threatened, she proved to the world that she had the strength to protect herself with soul-force. Damayanti stood by Nala's side in all he did;[2] not only that, but she even proved to be his protector when he was not in his right mind.

Speaking generally, we can say that men and women seem today to be going in opposite directions. Men do not interfere with women in anything the latter may wish to do; many of women's superstitions are growing stronger, though their faith has remained unshaken. Men do as they like, and women do not interfere with them.

Hence the first reform for the women should be to understand the important idea of freedom and cherish it as a part of dharma. The woman who has understood this should enlighten her sisters. Women alone can work and achieve great results among women. There is a limit to what a man can do. He can never understand their deepest feelings.

A woman nourishes the bodies of her children. In the same way, she should inculcate in their minds the qualities of independence, fearlessness, firmness, etc. She should not worry about livelihood but should realize that, if she and her children are ready to work, livelihood should be no problem.

[1] Sight of a person, place or thing considered holy
[2] The story is told in the *Mahabharata*.

The immediate duty before women is, if their children are attending Government schools, to withdraw them from those schools.

But the most important work—work which should become a permanent activity—is promoting swadeshi. The nation simply cannot be kept alive without swadeshi. The main reason why the people are suffering from lack of food and clothing is that they have no money. Though they can produce their own cloth, still, instead of doing so, they wear imported cloth and, in consequence, the nation is bled whiter every year. This weakness cannot be overcome unless women undertake the task. They have been spinning, in this country, from time immemorial. From the time that they gave up this work began the economic and spiritual degradation of the people. It is no exaggeration to say that India's freedom hangs solely by a cotton thread. If the country were to spin in her cottages all the yarn she needs and weave it into cloth, she would acquire so much strength that India could win her freedom with it, and a free India is bound to win justice on the khilafat and the Punjab issues.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-10-1920

191. THE HALLUCINATION OF LAW-COURTS

If we were not under the spell of lawyers and law-courts and if there were no touts to tempt us into the quagmire of the courts and to appeal to our basest passions, we would be leading a much happier life than we do today. Let those who frequent the law-courts—the best of them—bear witness to the fact that the atmosphere about them is foetid. Perjured wit-nesses are ranged on either side, ready to sell their very souls for money or for friendship's sake. But that is not the worst of these courts. The worst is that they support the authority of a government. They are supposed to dispense justice and are therefore called the palladia of a nation's liberty. But when they support the authority of an unrighteous Government they are no longer palladia of liberty, they are crushing houses to crush a nation's spirit. Such were the martial law tribunals and the summary courts in the Punjab. We had them in their nakedness. Such they are even in normal times when it is a matter of dispensing justice between a superior race and its helots. This is so all the world over. Look at the trial of an English

officer and the farcical punishment he received for having deliberately tortured inoffensive Negroes at Nairobi. Has a single Englishman suffered the extreme penalty of the law or anything like it for brutal murders in India? Let no one suppose that these things would be changed when Indian judges and Indian prosecutors take the place of Englishmen. Englishmen are not by nature corrupt. Indians are not necessarily angels.Both succumb to their environment. There were Indian judges and Indian prosecutors during the martial law regime, who were generally guilty of just as bad practices as the Englishmen. Those who tortured the innocent women in Amritsar were Indians, if it was a Bosworth Smith in Manianwala who insulted its women. What I am attacking is the system. I have no quarrel with the Englishmen as such. I honour individuals among them today as I did before my discovery of the unimprovableness of existing system. If anything, Mr. Andrews and other Englishmen I could name, are nearer to me today than before. But I could not tender my homage even to him who is more than a brother to me, if he became the Viceroy of India. I would distrust his ability to remain pure if he accepted the office. He would have to administer a system that is inherently corrupt and based on the assumption of our inferiority. Satan mostly employs comparatively moral instruments and the language of ethics to give his aims an air of respectability.

I have digressed a little for the purpose of showing that this Government, if it was wholly manned by Indians but worked as it now is, would be as intolerable to us as it is now. Hence it is that the knowledge of Lord Sinha's appointment to a high office[1] fails to fill me with a glow of satisfaction. We must have absolute equality in theory and in practice, and ability to do away with the British connection if we so wish.

But to revert to the lawyers and the law-courts, we cannot gain this desirable status so long as we regard with superstitious awe and wonder the so-called palaces of justice. Let not individuals who get satisfaction of their greed or revenge or their just claims, be blind to the ultimate aim of these courts—the permanence of the authority of the Government which they represent. Without its law-courts the Government must perish in a day. I admit that under my plan this power of subjugating the people through the courts will still remain

[1] Governor of Bihar and Orissa

even when every Indian lawyer has withdrawn and there are no civil suits in the law-courts. But then they will cease to deceive us. They will have lost their moral prestige and therefore the air of respectability. It is strange but it is true that so long as we believed in the gradual transference of the power of the English to the people, appointments to high posts in the law-courts were hailed as a blessing. Now that we believe that the system is incapable of being gradually mended, every such appointment by reason of its deceptiveness must be regarded as an evil. Therefore every lawyer suspending his practice to that extent undermines the prestige of the law-courts and to that extent every suspension is a gain for the individual as for the nation.

The economic drain that the law-courts cause has at no time been considered. And yet it is not a trifle. Every institution founded under the present system is run on a most extravagant scale. Law-courts are probably the most extravagantly run. I have some knowledge of the scale in England, a fair knowledge of the Indian, and an intimate knowledge of the South African. I have no hesitation in saying that the Indian is comparatively the most extravagant and bears no relation to the general economic condition of the people. The best South African lawyers—and they are lawyers of great ability—dare not charge the fees the lawyers in India do. Fifteen guineas is almost a top fee for legal opinion. Several thousand rupees have been known to have been charged in India. There is something sinful in a system under which it is possible for a lawyer to earn from fifty thousand to one lakh rupees per month. Legal practice is not—ought not to be—a speculative business. The best legal talent must be available to the poorest at reasonable rates. But we have copied and improved upon the practice of the English lawyers. Englishmen find the climate of India trying. The habits imbued under a cold and severe climate are retained in India, ample margin is kept for frequent migra- tions to the Hills and to their island home and an equally ample margin is kept for the education of an exclusive and aristocratic type for their children. The scale of their fees is naturally therefore pitched very high. But India cannot bear the heavy drain. We fancy that in order to feel the equals of these English lawyers, we must charge the same killing fees that the English do. It would be a sad day for India if it has to inherit the English scale and the English tastes so utterly unsuitable to the Indian environment. Any lawyer looking at the law-courts and the profession of law from the view points I have ventured to suggest cannot keep coming to the

conclusion that if he wants to serve the nation to the best of his ability, the first condition of service is suspension of his practice. He can come to a different conclusion only if he successfully changes the statement of facts I have made.

Young India, 6-10-1920

192. HOW THE VICEROY DISCHARGES HIS TRUST

The reader will find reproduced elsewhere the Viceroy's cablegram to Mr. Montagu in refutation of Shrimati Sarojini Naidu's[1] allegations regarding the ill-treatment of women in the Punjab during the martial law period, as also Shrimati Sarojini's spirited reply. It seems that every responsible statement made by His Excellency only strengthens the opinion of the public that he is totally unfit for the great trust which has been reposed in him. I do not wish to add one word to what Shrimati Sarojini has said in condemnation of the Viceroy's attitude; but I would draw the readers' attention to the ignoring of some very material allegations that were made by the Shrimati. Even assuming the propriety of rejecting the evidence of prostitutes because they are engaged in the unfortunate traffic, what has His Excellency to say regarding the evidence of the many women of Manianwala against whom, in so far as I am aware, not a word of reproach has been whispered? I give below in full the statement of Guredevi, the widow of Mangal Jat. That statement was corroborated by several other women. This is the statement :

> One day, during the martial law period, Mr. Bosworth Smith gathered together all the males of over 8 years at the Dacca Dalla Bungalow, which is some miles from our village, in connection with the investigations that were going on. Whilst the men were at the Bungalow, he rode to our village, taking back with him all the women who met him on the way carrying food for their men at the Bungalow. Reaching the village, he went round the lanes and ordered all women to come out of their houses, himself forcing them out with sticks. He made us all stand near the village Daira. The women folded their hands before him. He beat some with his stick and spat at them and used the foulest and most unmentionable language. He hit me twice and spat in my face. He forcibly uncovered the faces of all the women, brushing aside the veils with his own stick.

[1] 1879-1949; poet, patriot, Congress leader and a close associate of Gandhiji

He repeatedly called us she-asses, bitches, flies and swines and said : "You were in the same beds with your husbands; why did you not prevent them from going out to do mischief? Now your skirts will be looked into by the police constables." He gave me a kick also and ordered us to undergo the torture of holding our ears by passing our arms round the legs, whilst being bent double.

This treatment was meted out to us in the absence of our men who were away at the Bungalow.

If the facts set forth are true, can anything be more brutal or more loathsome? And yet the perpetrator of the crime will probably receive a pension from the Government treasury. The curious reader will find in the evidence collected ample material in proof of the depravity of the officer concerned. The evidence was first collected by Mr. Andrews. Mr. Labhsingh, M.A., Bar-at-law, was specially deputed to go to Manianwala to see the ladies concerned. He held a kind of public enquiry which anybody was free to attend.

Mr. Montagu had his attention drawn to these statements when he hastily rebuked Shrimati Sarojini for her so-called recklessness of speech. And it was due to this that Mr. Montagu pompously ordered an inquiry. The Viceroy seems quietly to have ignored the instructions issued to him, and has held no inquiry. He has laid down a new canon of evidence, hitherto unknown, and the law upon it that the evidence of prostitutes is not to be trusted. In other words, the legitimate corollary to be drawn from the Viceregal pronouncement is that prostitutes may not get justice done to them, unless their complaint is supported by other evidence. Any way Mr. Montagu has evidently accepted the Viceroy's explanation, and has thus strengthened the cause of non-co-operation. Can India for one moment associate herself with a Government that condones offences of most barbarous nature committed against her own folk by its officers?

Young Indian, 6-10-1920

193. HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

There can be no doubt that successful non-co-operation depends as much on Hindu-Muslim unity as on non-violence. Greatest strain will be put upon both in the course of the struggle and if it survives that strain, victory is a certainty.

A severe strain was put upon it in Agra and it has been stated that when either party went to the authorities they were referred to Maulana Shaukat Ali and me. Fortunately, there was a far better man at hand. Hakimji Ajmal Khan is a devout Muslim who commands the confidence and the respect of both the parties. He with his band of workers hastened to Agra, settled the dispute and the parties became friends as they were never before. An incident occurred nearer Delhi and the same influence worked successfully to avoid what might have become an explosion.

But Hakimji Ajmal Khan cannot be everywhere appearing at the exact hour as an angel of peace. Nor can Maulana Shaukat Ali or I go everywhere. And yet perfect peace must be observed between the two communities in spite of attempts to divide them.

Why was there any appeal made to the authorities at all at Agra? If we are to work out non-co-operation with any degree of success we must be able to dispense with the protection of the Government when we quarrel among ourselves. The whole scheme of non-co-operation must break to pieces, if our final reliance is to be upon British intervention for the adjustment of our quarrels or the punishment of the guilty ones. In every village and hamlet there must be at least one Hindu and one Muslim whose primary business must be to prevent quarrels between the two. Sometimes, however, even blood-brothers come to blows. In the initial stages we are bound to do so here and there. Unfortunately we who are public workers have made little attempt to understand and influence the masses and least of all the most turbulent among them. During the process of insinuating ourselves in the estimation of the masses and until we have gained control over the unruly, there are bound to be exhibitions of hasty temper now and then. We must learn at such times to do without an appeal to the Government. Hakimji Ajmal Khan has shown us how to do it.

The union that we want is not a patched up thing but a union of hearts based upon a definite recognition of the indubitable proposition that swaraj for India must be an impossible dream

without an indissoluble union between the Hindus and the Muslims of India. It must not be a mere truce. It cannot be based upon mutual fear. It must be a partnership between equals, each respecting the religion of the other.

I would frankly despair of reaching such union if there was anything in the holy Koran enjoining upon the followers of Islam to treat Hindus as their natural enemies or if there was anything in Hinduism to warrant a belief in the eternal enmity between the two.

We would ill learn our history if we conclude that because we have quarrelled in the past, we are destined so to continue unless some such strong power like the British keep us by force of arms from flying at each other's throats. But I am convinced that there is no warrant in Islam or Hinduism for any such belief. True it is that interested or fanatical priests in both religions have set the one against the other. It is equally true that Muslim rulers like Christian rulers have used the sword for the propagation of their respective faiths. But in spite of many dark things of the modern times, the world's opinion today will as little tolerate forcible conversions as it will tolerate forcible slavery. That probably is the most effective contribution of the scientific spirit of the age. That spirit has revolutionized many a false notion about Christianity as it has about Islam. I do not know a single writer on Islam who defends the use of force in the proselytizing process. The influences exerted in our times are far more subtle than that of the sword.

I believe that in the midst of all the bloodshed, chicane and fraud being resorted to on a colossal scale in the West, the whole humanity is silently but surely making progress towards a better age. And India by finding true independence and self-expression through an imperishable Hindu-Muslim unity and through non-violent means, i.e., unadulterated self-sacrifice can point a way out of the prevailing darkness.

Young India, 6-10-1920

194. A VOW

BOMBAY,
October 6, 1920

Many months ago I took a vow to wear khadi so long as I live.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 2513

195. SPEECH TO STUDENTS AND TEACHERS[1]*, SURAT*

October 6, 1920

You must have read a summary of my speech to students in Ahmedabad. I want to talk to you about some of the things I said to them. I shall talk to your elders in the evening.[2] Wherever I go, I like to keep alive the close contacts which I have established with students. Being myself a father of four sons, I understand the son's duty towards his parents. I was myself a son once and some persons whom I respect as elders are still living. Hence I know very well the duty that sons owe to fathers. A son can be advised to disobey his father, if the occasion demands this. I may thus seem to be giving contradictory advice. What I am going to say to you, I have already told my sons. I have a good many sons, have had quite a few children entrusted to my care and I have brought them up. Only yesterday, a couple belonging to one of the untouchable communities expressed their desire to entrust their daughter[3] to my care. The girl has stayed with me before now. I told her father that he could leave Lakshmi with me only if he gave up all claims on her. I did not make this condition with all parents who entrusted their children to me. Even so, I regard as my very own the children whom I have brought up. I have given my sons advice no less harsh than what I give the students these days. On the right occasion, you can rise against me, your parents and the whole world. If I did not say this, I should violate what I understand to be dharma. If one would prosper in dharma, one should, if need be, sacrifice one's parents, relations and all others in a *yajna* undertaken in real sincerity of heart

[1] Of the College and the High School run by the Sarvajanik Education Society
[2] No report of this speech is available.
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 9-10-1920.

as Prahlad sacrificed his father. Prahlad did not offer violent resistance to his father, Hiranyakashipu, nor did he obey his order forbidding him to worship Vishnu[1] —an order repugnant

to his conscience—but said : "In this matter, I will obey His order who is your father, and the grand-father of your grand-father."

Your parents would say you should not leave schools and I say you should. If you understand that what I am asking you to do is your dharma, tell your parents respectfully that you cannot attend your schools. This is your duty if you have been sincerely moved. Why do I give such advice? What I say is not meant for students of 10 or 12 years of age. They are not free to think for themselves. They should do their parents's bidding. According to our Shastras, a child should be lovingly reared for five years, should be disciplined for ten years—"disciplined" not with physical punishment but with instruction and persuasion,—and a son of 16 should be regarded as a friend. Why do I give such advice to young men? For many years I have co-operated with the Government, with the British Empire. Nobody could have given better co-operation than I did, for there was nothing better. My co-operation was inspired by no selfish motive. I did not want any brother or son of mine to be employed in Government service, nor did I wish to be honoured with a title. My attitude, therefore, was entirely disinterested. I gave my co-operation as a matter of dharma, duty. I gave obedience to this regime, not because of the punishment it can inflict, but because I thought it my duty to do so. I shall give you one illustration.

When my third son was born, I was faced with the question whether I should get him vaccinated against smallpox. I have a conscientious objection to vaccination. Yet, in 1897, I got the child vaccinated. If a child is not vaccinated within a certain number of days, one is liable to punishment. This law exists only on the statute-book. People do not respect it as they should. I felt that either I should respect it or clarify my position to the Government, which meant that I should disobey it respectfully since I do not accept as vaild the public opinion which it reflects. However, I thought it better to obey it so long as I did not get it amended and hence I got my child vaccinated. But there was an occasion afterwards to resist this same thing, vaccination. While in South Africa, we went to jail.

[1] One of the Hindu Trinity, regarded as Preserver of the universe

According to the prison rules, one must be vaccinated. We non-co-operated, offered civil resistance. We told the Government that it could keep us in jail longer if it chose, but that we would not agree to vaccination. At last, the Government had to issue an order exempting people from veccination on grounds of conscience.

How far have I not gone in co-operation? I believe it to be the highest dharma indeed to swallow and put up with minor harassments on the part of the Government. Even after we have won swaraj, fraud, robbery and Dyerism will flourish. I am not naive or hypocritical enough to say that with swaraj will come *Satyayuga*[1]. After all, it will be swaraj in *Kaliyuga*[2] and not in *Satyayuga*. It will be the kind of swaraj which the British and the Arabs enjoy. But the Dyerism of that time will be tolerable. Power will be in our hands, so that, at the most, we ourselves will have abused it, or will have allowed it to be abused. But what has happened today is not this. It has been done against our will. Had Lord Chelmsford, the Viceroy or Lord Sinha been appointed by us, it would have been a different matter. What we protest against is the way [things are done] and not the skin [of those who do them]. If my friends Dayalji and Kalyanji act unjustly, I may protest and may not even accept milk offered by them. Mr. Andrews, Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali are as brothers to me, but I would not accept their appointment as Viceroy since they would have been appointed by the Government. When power is in our hands, we may appoint even Lord Chelmsford as Viceroy, if we trust him, and may dismiss him when we cease to trust him. Today the whole of the country is asking Lord Chelmsford to resign, but there he is. I would give only the kind of co-operation I have explained here. Since that is not possible, I advocate non-co-operation.

I cast the accounts of the Government's rule and found that it had taken away more than it had given. I saw that the Reforms gave no reforms, but made the position worse. The Government's power is maintained not because of its machine-guns, but because of our deluded love for it. This love has taken three forms : Love for the councils, which Dwijendranath Tagore[3] has compared to [Sita's]

[1] Age of truth
[2] Age of strife
[3] Eldest brother of Rabindranath Tagore, affectionately called "Borodada"

infatuation for the illusory deer[1], love for the courts and love for education. I say nothing about titles and similar honours, for very few have them. But we are very much in the grip of the three above-mentioned infatuations. Our great leader, the learned and veteran Lala Lajpat Rai, is also their victim. Madan Mohan Malaviya, whom I have always revered, also believes that I have lost my head and that I am misleading the people. He thinks that it is dharma to enter councils and to attend schools. To my mind, it is a sin to enter councils and attend courts and an altogether heinous sin to attend schools.

There is a reason why I cannot succeed in convincing lawyers. I know how attached they are to things of this world. It is not easy to forsake children, to give up the arm-chair and the motor-car. But a student has no such problem. He can be led as desired. If I do not stop those who receive education for slavery and persist in attending schools and colleges, we shall not succeed in loosening the roots of the Empire. That is what I want to do. Through the students, the Empire gets the manure it needs; they are like the Niagara Falls—like the waters of the Ganga, the Yamuna and the Brahmaputra combined. This bare hint will be enough to make you see that we should have none of this education which breeds ignorance—this education for slavery. Unless I teach you the A B C of how to shake off your slavery, everything else will be unavailing. If you go on pouring milk into an unclean vessel, instead of the latter becoming clean it is the milk that will become dirty. So long as we remain like a vessel polluted by slavery, all education will be mere waste. If there are any gods above and if they see that India is like an unclean vessel, the rain of education will be to no good purpose. First, therefore, see that you are clean. If you do not learn law or medicine, India is not going to sink into the bottomless pit; with slavery, it will. It will not, then, be a country inhabited by human beings but by beasts. Not to speak out one's mind out of fear of anyone—even of a great Empire—this is to be a slave. The first lesson we have to learn is to shake off this fear. May the lesson of Jallianwala and the humiliation of Islam fill everyone with the fire which has possessed me.

The Hindus have two dangers to face. If the Muslims became slaves, through them the Hindus too would be enslaved. This is as

[1] Deceived by Maricha, Ravana's uncle, appearing as a golden deer, Sita asked Rama to capture it alive or dead. Lakshmana went to his help and Ravana, taking advantage of the absence of the brothers, carried off Sita.

simple as the rule of three. If we would protect Hinduism, would spend our time in devotions to Vishnu, sitting under a tree, it is our duty to help the Muslims. If the latter should behave aggressively to you in future, I would tell them to remember this time. You, too, can say that one Gandhi from among you—no matter what kind of man he was in other ways, did something on your behalf. If nothing avails, you may fight it out. I, for one, would ask you to be brave men. As between a man who is ready to lay down his life fighting and another who will do so without fighting, the latter is the braver man. How much stronger of breath must be the man who climbs the Himalayas without a stick in hand or without getting himself carried up in a *doli*[1] than the one who climbs in this way? Having reached the top, such a man will turn to the country and greet it with a peal of happy laughter. The friend sitting by my side (Mahomed Ali) looks upon this as the weapon of the weak. Whether or no he is right, it is only in this way that one can learn even to use the sword. I told my friend Shaukat Ali that the Muslims did not have the strength to make self-sacrifices. When they have the strength to die, they will see that there is no need for a sword at all. Even so, you are welcome to draw the sword when you think it is necessary to do so. An Empire which has betrayed Islam, which made India crawl on its stomach—it is that even if one person was made to do—which forcibly remove the *purdah* off the faces of India's women this happened in the Punjab—how is it possible to co-operate with such an Empire? No matter how many metalled roads they build and what peace prevails in the country—we would rather have rivers of blood flow. Nay, even if we had to go without railways and ships and even if the administration were to break down, I would rather prefer that to the present condition. If you are fired with the same zeal that I am, even those among you who have been forbidden by their parents can leave their schools and colleges. One student's father told me that he would watch how the national school which has been started runs and then see what he should do. A man who withdrew his child from a Government school only after he had, in this manner, first satisfied himself about the working of a national school could be of no help in winning back the [freedom of the] country. One should not be exercised whether one would have education or not. Even if it were possible to teach the idea of freedon to a man who continued meanwhile in his state of slavery, one cannot

[1] Hammock slung from a stick carried by two men on their shoulders

teach him how to win freedom. If you feel that you have rightly understood what I am saying, give up everything. You will get all things afterwards. It is a divine law that he who lives in utter devotion to God will have all things given to him.

If all the students in Surat left their schools and colleges, how happy the result would be. The professors and teachers would then come asking you on what terms you would remain. You should tell them that, once the connection with the Government was broken off and its aid rejected, you would provide the expenses of the institutions even by begging. This was the ancient way. In those times the pupil approached the teacher with sacrificial wood in his folded hands, told him that he would fetch his fuel and look after his cattle, and prayed to be instructed. In Poona, there is one such Students' Home for orphans which the inmates maintain by begging from door to door. You should do the same rather than sacrifice your humanity by attending the present schools. Great indeed are the hopes built on you.

Here in Surat you have these two great institutions. Their students can do every fine work. Surat has lost its *surat*[1] these days. I expect the people here to make it a point of honour to have education on their own terms or go without it altogether. If all the students showed this strength, we would have the desired result in a month's time. But even if it be that only a few stray students are convinced of this, they should leave the schools this very day. I would tell the students who did this that they had taken one step towards swaraj, had spoken up eloquently for the country. If you get no help from your people at home, work with your bodies. Learn, what you do not know at present, how to use your hands and feet, but do not remain in slavery. Believe it for a truth, students, that we needs must give up the love of schools, courts and councils if we want swaraj for the country. The first and last step towards swaraj is to purify ourselves. Those who have been endowed with teeth will be provided with food, not by this Government but by a Government above this Government. This is for us the first lesson, which has gone out of our minds. I for one give no credit to the Government or the rich for providing food [to the people]. Though the Government was there all the time, thousands of people died victims of the famine in Orissa. There is no dearth of rich

[1] Beauty

men in the country, but even so thousands of these victims went their way to seek refuge in God. Have God's name on your lips, take courage and, without making any calculations—without balancing profit and loss—give notice to your parents and teachers that you cannot attend your schools and colleges. Do not say this, being carried away by my words. I am only trying to stimulate your heart and your reason. Unless convinced, no child has a right to disobey its parents. Only that child has such a right whose heart is on fire as mine is. In the effort to rescue parents addicted to drink from the hold of that evil habit, a son should renounce his inheritance, his home and the protection it provides. If you see that you are getting your education under the shadow of slavery, take the plunge tomorrow, even if you have to go against the wishes of your parents.

Q. Mahatmaji, do you believe that the country will remain peaceful if you are arrested or exiled?

Yes. If it does not, I shall believe that we are unworthy. If I rule out the sword, it is not because I do not know how to use it or because I am weak. Even this moment I can fire a revolver. If I wish, I can put a dagger into a man's bowels. I have ruled them out, however, because there is no great profit in them. If the country does not remain peaceful when they arrest me or Shaukat Ali or Mahomed Ali, I would think that it had not learnt the lesson. Violence in such circumstances would be natural in Ireland or Arabia, for there everyone has the right to carry arms and knows how to use them. If I were among them and the Government tried to arrest me, the people would say that it would have to fight them before it could take me away. But conditions here are not the same. If in this country peace was not preserved, I would have to retire into the Himalayas for I cannot permit violence on my account. However, the Hindus have no such strength, nor the Muslims. I told the latter in Allahabad that this was not a new idea I was placing before the people. All scriptures have spoken of it, but we had forgotten it till today. If they thought [I told them] that they were strong enough right then to fight and save Islam, they were free to draw the sword. Suppose we succeed in attacking the Viceroy unobserved and killing him, or get someone to do so, we would not have saved Islam thereby. The result would be martial law. Even that would not matter, were it not that India would be completely suppressed. For India, what I am recommending is a weapon not of the strong but of the weak. If the Muslims had the requisite strength,

they would have asked me who I was to advise them against drawing the sword, would have told me that they had the injuction of the holy Koran. Among the Hindus, too, there are some who do not listen to me. Even so, it should be remembered that the country has come round and accepted this line. The men and women who died in Jallianwala Bagh were not martyrs or heroes. Had they been heroes, when General Dyer came on the scene in all his pride, they would have fought with swords or sticks or would have stood up before him and faced death. There are no Sikhs in the country today who resort to *hijrat*, as did the Imam, there are no such Gurkhas and certainly no *Vanias*; as for the Rajputs, they are now no better than *Vanias*. If, therefore, violence should break out in the country on my arrest, I would say that you had been defeated, for you simply do not have the strength to succeed in it. On the day I am arrested, you should leave your schools if you will not do so today, and the lawyers should give up practice, the policemen should leave their service and army should throw away its arms. I am, moreover, a farmer. The farmers should declare on that day that they would pay no taxes. The day this happens, our freedom will be assured.

Perhaps they will arrest all three of us together. Till now, I used to pray that they should arrest the two of us at the same time. Now I pray that it should be all three. That is why I did not give my consent to Shaukat Ali when he wanted to go to Delhi alone for, if we are to be arrested, I should like both of us to be arrested together. When the Government goes mad, it will arrest all three of us or the one who seems to it the most guilty.

The Government cannot put us down with force. I ought to have the right to tell it that, if it ruled without regard to law, we would send it out bag and baggage. So far, we used to think one thing in our mind and say another on the platform, and peace was described as unrest. That has gone now. Certainly, I trust these two brothers so far that I am sure that the day they want violence, they will give advance notice and say that from that time on no English life was safe. You may ask them about this. Ask them separately. Then ask me. If you get the same reply from all three, believe it and, when we are arrested, let all of you become volunteers and go out to preserve peace. Otherwise, there will be martial law. That in itself would not matter; but the difficulty is that we do not have the strength to keep up the struggle so as to force the Government to prolong the martial law.

Mahatmaji, if you advise that children should be withdrawn from English

schools, why do you not advise that they should also be withdrawn from the Municipal primary schools?

Municipalities may also forgo Government aid, repudiate all connection with it and so become free. The Nadiad Municipality is about to take such a step.

If you advise withdrawal from schools, why do you not ask people to forgo other help from the Government, to stop using trains or availing themselves of benefits like water-taps, etc,?

I am a "practical idealist"[1], and so I place before the people only such programmes as can be implemented. Even so, I would congratulate anyone who refrained from using these things. When it was suggested by Mrs. Besant, by way of answer to my non-co-operation, that the Government should refuse to deliver postal articles to me and Shaukat Ali, to issue us railway tickets, and so on, I had congratulated my friend. I told the friends present then that, if this happened, it would be a great day indeed. The work of khilafat or non-co-operation would not stop in consequence.

Mahatmaji, since primary education is compulsory here, how can we ask anyone to stop going to school?

Education is compulsory; there is no compulsion to attend a particular school.

About non-co-operaiton, what should people do in the Indian States?

The subjects of Indian States are slaves of slaves. At the moment, let us confine oursleves to direct slaves. If, however, anyone in an Indian State leaves school or college on his own, that would be another matter. Only, I would not go and start an agitation there. My doing so would put the rulers in an awkward position. It would be a different matter, of course, if the Gaekwar of Baroda himself felt that, in trying to protect the religion of his Muslim subjects, he should even go to the length of abdicating.

What should people do if the Government forced the national schools to close down?

This is a shrewd Government and will not take such a step. Even if it does, that will not stop national education. On the contrary, those students and teachers who refuse today to leave school or college will then leave them forthwith and the teachers will start going round and teaching pupils in their homes. No Government can stop this. If the

[1] The original has the English phrase.

Government does so, it would mean that the Hindu should not read the *Gita*, since it talks of war, and the Muslim should not read the Koran. The Government simply cannot take such a step.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-10-1920

196. SPEECH AT ROHTAK

October 8, 1920

I remember that one of the arrested maulvis[1] saw me in Calcutta, and said that a case would be started against him. He requested Shaukat Ali and me to visit Panipat when he was arrested, so, according to the promise then given, I have come with Shaukat Ali. Regarding the charges against the maulvis, it is a bad thing to abuse anyone and it is not worthy of us to say such things, but it is alleged that one of them said that Englishmen are scoundrels. I am ashamed to utter these words, but I do not know whether it is true or false, but it is a bad thing and I dislike such abuse. The other charge is that they called the Government *be-iman*[2]; but I say that in reality the Government did cheat the Indians and Turks, and Mr. Lloyd George did this. The Government then is faithless. Government promised Indians that after the War it would grant them special rights and safeguard the kingdom of the Turks. The favours shown by the Government at Amritsar and in other parts of the Punjab are well known to you. You can never obtain self-government until you prepare yourself for sacrifice. Freedom can never be had until you overpower your anger and become united. The real freedom is in jail. In the search for truth all of you have to go to jail and I confidently say that there is no place to keep 30 crores of you and you will be left alone in India. Self-government and the khilafat cause can only be secured when you have become united. Give up co-operation with the English. I do not mean that you should kill any Englishmen, because one Englishman's life will cost 1,000 Indian lives as General Dyer and Sir Michael O'Dwyer proved at Amritsar. I would give 1,000 lives for the life of an Englishman, but I do not think it right to pay as much. All the Indian public servants are our brothers and the Indian soldiers in the army are also our brothers; only for Rs. 10 a month our Indian

[1] Muslim priests

[2] Dishonest

soldiers kill their brothers, which I regret to say is not right. I co-operated with the English for 35 years, but I have now ceased to do so. No one should stand for the councils and no one should vote for them, because it is a case of cheating. No one should serve the Government and we should not send our boys to the Government schools. Hold panchayats to decide your cases. The maulvis who have been arrested will be released.

N.A.I. : Home : Political : December, 1920 : Nos. 183-6 & K.W.A.

197. MESSAGE TO INDIAN WOMEN, BOMBAY

[*October 9, 1920*]

The Bhagini Samaj celebrated the 52nd birthday of Mr. M. K. Gandhi at the hall of the Marwadi Vidyalaya on Saturday evening. There was a large gathering of ladies. Mrs. Jaijibai Petit presided.

After a prayer sung by some of the ladies, Mrs. Petit gave them the message of Mr. Gandhi in Gujarati in which he said that he did not understand what connection the women had with his birthday and how Indian women recognized him. Thinking over this, he felt that they recognized his affection. They knew that he had their self-respect at his heart and to preserve this the easiest method which he had shown to them was swadeshi. Men could not help more than women in promoting it. When the daughters of India used to spin yarn and covered themselves and others, India was poor but she was not so poor as she was today. At that time the women of India preserved their modesty but it was seen that they did not do so now. He therefore preached to the women the same thing. His advice to them was that all the women should always spend one hour in spinning yarn. All of them should consider plain living a duty imposed upon them and use the clothes made of the yarn spun by their maidens and consider them as holy. He perceived swarajya for India in that only.

The Bombay Chronicle, 13-10-1920

198. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[*October 9, 1920*][1]

Started writing this letter on Friday evening and finished it on Saturday morning at 3.15.

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have your letter. Lakshmi will be ours as long as she remains with us. Dudabhai may take her away if he wants to. To me she is like a daughter. Though she is not well bred, we have got to bear with her. The only unhappy part of the business is that I have invited the burden and you have to bear it. Well, that has been my way, and there is nothing for you to do but to put up with it. In this lies your training. Though it is difficult enough, you have agreed to submit to it.

What do I do about Harilal's children? I will keep them as long as he permits me to. When he wants to take them away, who can stand in his way? Have not their interests suffered? Should we hold ourselves responsible for this? I leave everything to God. The responsibility and the right, both are His. He uses us only as His instruments. The moment we have rid ourselves of the "I" in us, we shall have done our duty. Dudabhai handed over the girl to me. That was a moment of trial for me; how could I possibly be found wanting in that? Our duty is now to do the best we can for her. If Dudabhai keeps interfering, we need not mind that; this means that he may either leave the girl to us or take her away. I have applied the same rule to Harilal. My own wish is that the girl should grow up to be a Mirabai; what would it matter, though, if she should become a prostitute instead? Only, we may not help her to become one. If this does not explain everything, you may ask me further. As Rukhi and Manu, so Lakshmi; this is the long and the short of it.

Tell Imam Saheb that I always think about the khilafat. I had tried a little to intervene. I can say no more. The two brothers, besides, are far away. Ask him not to worry. A great many things are done without proper understanding. No one can prevent them. There is God to look after all and so everything will end well. Does Amina learn anything?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 5768. Courtesy : Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] Dudabhai handed over his daughter Lakshmi to Gandhiji on October 5, 1920; *vdie* "Speech to Students and Teachers, Surat", 6-10-1920. The letter seems to have been written on the Friday and Saturday following October 6. The latter was October

199. THE DIARY

The business man who goes to bed without drawing up his balance-sheet for the day will declare himself a bankrupt some day. The man who finds no time during the whole day for prayers and ablutions is a thief stealing what belongs to God. Following the same principle, the swarajist who understands that swaraj is to be won through non-co-operation must keep an account from day to day and ask himself at the end of each day :

1. "How many title-holders did I request today to renounce their titles?"

2. If he has not withdrawn his children from schools and colleges, "Why have I delayed so long? How many other parents have I persuaded to do this?"

3. "Why have I failed so far to give up legal practice? Or, how many lawyers did I request to do so?"

4. "How many persons did I dissuade from joining the army as recruits?"

5. "How many candidates for councils did I entreat to withdraw their candidature? To how many voters did I appeal to abstain from voting?"

6. "What foreign goods have I myself boycotted? How many persons have I successfully persuaded to do the same?"

7. "How much yarn did I myself spin today? How many others did I get to spin? How many weavers did I help by encouragement?"

8. "Since I believe that swaraj is impossible without self-sacrifice, selfless work and discipline, what further self-sacrifice did I make today? How many persons in my own locality or village did I inspire to work for this movement? How much of my time and money did I spend in doing so?"

Every swarajist must put such questions to himself every day and, if the answers are not satisfactory, he must do some act of penance and increase his efforts the following day. It is only in this way, through persistent efforts and unfailing vigilance, that we shall advance and establish swaraj. If people in their crores join this movement today, freedom is ours this very day. One year is much too long a period. Only, for taking the message of swaraj to the millions we need thousands of volunteers. A volunteer can do much

work even while keeping himself in the background. He does not require anybody's guidance. Beginning with himself, he may go on to work among the people in the neighbourhood. We must see that not a single Indian remains ignorant of the movement. Anyone who is still not convinced may not join it. Half our work will have been done when we have taken the message of non-co-operation to the entire country.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-10-1920

200. SCHOOLS

Government schools and colleges in Gujarat are getting emptied every day. Two professors of Gujarat College have resigned their posts and have joined an institution imparting national education. I congratulate them and hope that other professors will follow their example and join this national movement.

From the students, however, I expect more. When they come out of the present schools and colleges, their teachers and professors are likely to follow them on their own. For them, the immediate problem is one of livelihood; for the students, it is a question merely of getting rid of a fascination.

Two students of the Grant Medical College, Bombay, who were due for their final examination, left the College without taking the examination. Two others were reading for a post-graduate course. They were getting a scholarship of 50 rupees each; renouncing their scholarships, they have won their freedom and are now engaged in national education work. I do not feel concerned for these students. On the contrary, I think they have done the right thing and congratulate them. Many other students have left Gujarat College and I should like to see that College totally deserted. In my view, the most important education is to learn to be a man. As matters stand, our men have lost their manhood and our women their womanhood. If the whole nation were to declare with one voice that it would not have this subjection to foreign rule, then, in that declaration itself lies swaraj. The nation cannot be prepared for this by degrees or stages. Those who get ready will do so overnight. It is, in fact, a kind of new birth. To recognize our state of slavery and to have the faith that we are, this very day, fit to be free from it : this is swaraj. In managing

the affairs of our families, we realize what swaraj means. When we sincerely desire swaraj for the nation, we shall have it for the asking.

The country will be free only when students are possessed with this intense desire for freedom. As things are, the first lesson the pupils learn is to know the might of the Empire and understand that it is thanks to the Empire that we live. No wonder that this is so. What else can you expect foreign imperialists to teach in their schools?

So now, by asking the students to leave schools, I teach them the first lesson, that they save themselves from this and I appeal to parents to help me in this work. It does not matter if our young men remain uneducated or semi-educated. If they acquire self-respect, other things will follow. The truth is that if only a handful of students come out, they may have some reason to think before taking the step that, when large numbers of them leave, provision of national education is bound to follow.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-10-1920

201. SURAT'S RESPONSE

A competition is going on among Surat, Nadiad and Ahmedabad. Only the future will show who wins the race. When we, my friends Shaukat Ali and Mahomed Ali and I visited Surat, the enthusiasm was boundless. Hundreds of men had come there even from villages. Our chief object was to open a national school. There are many educational institutions in Surat, among them the well-known Anavil Chhatralaya and Patidar Chhatralaya. Both have a large number of boarders. A question had arisen as to what should be done about those boarders who had given up their schools. The leading workers there felt it necessary to open a national school for them and others in their position and immediately made the necessary arrangements. One Muslim gentleman, Mr. Narmawala, has given his big building free of rent for the use of the school. Some teachers have come forward to teach without remuneration. Some others will work as paid teachers. If the workers are honest and industrious, the school will flower into a splendid institution. I have no doubt about their being so and the school, therefore, is bound to flourish.

A very good arrangement has also been made for its maintenance. Cotton merchants have resolved to contribute amounts

at the rate of four annas for every transaction of 20 maunds. Other business men, too, will contribute. The educational programme in Surat is thus likely to have its needs fully provided for.

A movement to persuade the students in the present schools and in the colleges to leave the institutions is also going on and, this, too, is likely to meet with succees.

Though the movement is thus going on satisfactorily, personally I felt disappointed on two scores. One was the noise and bustle that went on in the meeting for some time. We must learn to conduct a meeting peacefully, however vast the gathering. Such control will be a sign of our discipline, culture, understanding and unity. No one in particular was to blame for the failure to maintain order, but it shows that we still have a long way to go in that direction.

The second incident is still more painful. When, at Surat, we boarded the train for Delhi, a fairly large number had assembled on the platform. Some from among them insulted white passengers by loudly jeering and booing at them, though the latter had done nothing to provoke the people. In such behaviour lies the danger of violence breaking out. However bitter our hostility to the Empire, we ought to show no hostility to individuals. Our victory lies in control we acquire over ourselves in such matters.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-10-1920

202. TO TEACHERS OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Personally, I am convinced that the present salaries of primary school teachers are very low. All the same, I cannot at present advise them to agitate for higher salaries. Even if teachers were to be paid adequately, to my mind all schools run by the Government deserve to be shunned like poison, by both teachers and pupils. If, therefore, the primary school teachers have sufficient national consciousness and moral strength, they should leave, at any cost to themselves, these schools in which the pupils are educated, above everything else, for slavery and should work to educate the people, even begging for their maintenance, as teachers used to do in ancient times. But, personally, I am certain that, if teachers give up Government service in all sincerity and with full faith in themselves, the public will not fail to provide for them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-10-1920

203. SPEECH AT U. P. CONFERENCE, MORADABAD

October 11, 1920

Mahatma Gandhi . . . expressed the extreme pain he felt at having to differ from his brother Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. He wanted them to consider Panditji's views with great respect as he had an unbroken record of service in the country's cause. He wanted them to dismiss his (the speaker's) personality from their mind in giving their decision. His views remained the same as at Calcutta and in spite of the most anxious thought he held that non-co-operation was the only road for the attainment of the country's liberty and that the programme adopted at Calcutta was the best. He had been asked whether he wanted separation from the Empire. He admitted that separation from the British Empire had its place in the non-co-operation programme but it was necessary to distinguish. His object was the attainment of Indian liberty. If the present Government purified itself and the people rose to the occasion and the Government and its officers treated Indians as equals, the connection may continue. But it must be made clear that the people were masters and the Government their servants. If the people were treated as equals and partners, well and good. But if the Government and the British people claimed to be the master, he would not tolerate it for a minute nor would he allow them one square inch of Indian land. There were two conditions necessary for the attainment of Indian freedom. First there was Hindu-Muslim unity. He appealed to them to be mutually tolerant. Being a Hindu, he could appeal to the Hindus more frankly. They must love and trust the Mohammedans which they could do even though leading lives of rigid orthodoxy. The second condition was the success of the non-co-operation movement. It was the best and the only remedy. He did not believe in violence and violence will not mitigate but only aggravate existing evils. The Government had broken their pledges in reference to the khilafat; the Government had been guilty of outrage in the Punjab. The Government had not repented. Under the present system the people cannot prevent men from going to Mesopotamia and destroying the freedom of small nations. Association with such a Government was sin. It was a Government which had passed the Rowlatt Act, it was a Government which has broken its pledges in reference to the khilafat; it was a Government which had set up the infamous martial law tribunals; it was a Government which had made their children bow before the Union Jack—to associate with such a Government, to sit in its councils or to send their children to its schools would, he believed, be a deadly sin (*haram*).

The Searchlight, 17-10-1920

204. REPLY TO A CRITIC, ALIGARH[1]

October 12, 1920

This work is certainly destructive, but the weeds which have grown need to be rooted out so that a good crop may be sown.

* * *

How can you remain, even for an hour, in an institution in which you are obliged to put up with the Union Jack and profess your loyalty to a Governor or other high-ranking official when in fact you are not loyal?

* * *

A college which has proclaimed itself free will get more money. Why should you be anxious for money when you have indomitable leaders like Shaukat Ali and Mahomed Ali?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-10-1920

205. IN CONFIDENCE

I receive so many letters questioning me regarding celibacy and I hold such strong views upon it, that I may no longer, especially at this the most critical period of national life, withhold my views and results of my experiences from the readers of *Young India*.

The word in Sanskrit corresponding to celibacy is *brahmacharya* and the latter means much more than celibacy. *Brahmacharya* means perfect control over all the senses and organs. For a perfect *brahmachari* nothing is impossible. But it is an ideal state which is rarely realized. It is almost like Euclid's line which exists only in imagination, never capable of being physically drawn. It is nevertheless an important definition in geometry yielding great results. So may a perfect *brahmachari* exist only in imagination. But if we did not keep him constantly before our mind's eye, we should be like a rudderless ship. The nearer the approach to the imaginary state, the greater the perfection.

But for the time being I propose to confine myself to *brahmacharya* as in the sense of celibacy. I hold that a life of perfect

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour. Gandhiji, accompanied by Shaukat Ali and Mahomed Ali, met students in the Union Hall. The remarks were in answer to a criticism.

continence in thought, speech and action is necessary for reaching spiritual perfection. And a nation that does not possess such men is the poorer for it.[1] But my purpose is to plead for *brahmacharya* as a temporary necessity in the present stage of national evolution.

We have more than an ordinary share of disease, famines and pauperism—even starvation among millions. We are being ground down under slavery in such a subtle manner that many of us refuse even to recognize it as such, and mistake our state as one of progressive freedom in spite of the triple curse of economic, mental and moral drain. The ever-growing military expenditure, and the injurious fiscal policy purposely designed to benefit Lancashire and other British interests, and the extravagant manner of running the various departments of the State constitute a tax on India which has deepened her poverty and reduced her capacity for withstanding disease. The manner of administration has in Gokhale's words "stunted" national growth so much that "the tallest of us have to bend". India was even made to crawl on her belly in Amritsar. The studied insult of the Punjab, and the refusal to apologize for the insolent breach of the pledged word to Indian Mussulmans are the most recent examples of the moral drain. They hurt the very soul within us. The process of emasculation would be complete if we submit to these two wrongs.

Is it right for us who know the situation to bring forth children in an atmosphere so debasing as I have described? We only multiply slaves and weaklings if we continue the process of procreation whilst we feel and remain helpless, diseased and famine-stricken. Not till India has become a free nation, able to withstand avoidable starvation, well able to feed herself in times of famine, possessing the knowledge to deal with malaria, cholera, influenza and other epidemics, have we the right to bring forth progeny. I must not conceal from the reader the sorrow I feel when I hear of births in this land. I must express that for years I have contemplated with satisfaction the prospect of suspending procreation by voluntary self-denial. India is today ill-equipped for taking care even of her present population, not because she is over-populated but because she is forced to foreign domination whose creed is progressive exploitation of her resources.

How is the suspension of procreation to be brought about? Not by immoral and artificial checks that are resorted to in Europe but by

[1] The source has "poorer for the worse".

a life of discipline and self-control. Parents must teach their children the practice of *brahmacharya*. According to the Hindu Shastras, the lowest age at which boys may marry is 25. If the mothers of India could be inclined to believe that it is sinful to train boys and girls for a married life, half the marriages of India will automatically stop. Nor need we believe the fetish of early puberty among girls because of our hot climate. I have never known a grosser superstition than this of early puberty. I make bold to say that the climate has absolutely nothing to do with puberty. What does bring about untimely puberty is the mental and moral atmosphere surrounding our family life. Mothers and other relations make it a religious duty to teach innocent children that they are to be married when they reach a particular age. They are betrothed when they are infants or even babes in arms. The dress and the food of the children are also aids to stimulating passions. We dress our children like dolls not for their but for our pleasure and vanity. I have brought up children by the score. And they have without difficulty taken to and delighted in any dress given to them. We provide them with all kinds of heating and stimulating foods. Our blind love takes no note of their capacity. The result undoubtedly is an early adolescence, an unmature progeny and an early grave. Parents furnish an object lesson which the children easily grasp. By reckless indulgence in their passions they serve for their children as models of unrestrained licence. Every untimely addition to the family is ushered in amid trumpets of joy, and feasting. The wonder is that we are not less restrained than we are, notwithstanding our surroundings. I have not a shadow of doubt that married people if they wish well to the country and want to see India become a nation of strong and handsome full-formed men and women, would practise perfect self-restraint and cease to procreate for the time being. I tender this advice even to the newly married. It is easy not to do a thing at all than to cease doing it, even as it is easier for a life-abstainer to remain a teetotaller than for a drunkard or even a temperate man to abstain. To remain erect is infinitely easier than to rise from a fall. It is wrong to say that continence can be safely preached only to the satiated. There is hardly any meaning, either, in preaching continence to an enfeebled person. And my point is that whether we are young or old, satiated or not, it is our duty at the present moment to suspend bringing forth heirs to our slavery.

May I point out to parents that they ought not to fall into the argumentative trap of the rights of partners? Consent is required for

indulgence, never for restraint, this is an obvious truth.

When we are engaged in a death-grip with a powerful Government, we shall need all the strength—physical, material, moral and spiritual. We cannot gain it unless we husband the one thing which we must prize above everything else.Without this personal purity of life, we must remain a nation of slaves. Let us not deceive ourselves by imagining that because we consider the system of Government to be corrupt, Englishmen are to be despised as competitors in a race for personal virtue. Without making any spiritual parade of the fundamental virtues, they practise them at least physically in an abundant measure. Among those who are engaged in the political life of the country there are more celibates and spinsters than among us. Spinsters among us are practically unknown except the nuns who leave no impression on the political life of the country. Whereas in Europe thousands claim celibacy as a common virtue.

I now place before the reader a few simple rules which are based on the experience not only of myself but of many of my associates.

1. Boys and girls should be brought up simply and naturally in the full belief that they are and can remain innocent.

2. All should abstain from heating and stimulating foods, condiments such as chillies, fatty and concentrated foods such as fritters, sweets and fried substances.

3. Husband and wife should occupy separate rooms and avoid privacy.

4. Both body and mind should be constantly and healthily occupied.

5. "Early to bed early to rise" should be strictly observed.

6. All unclean literature should be avoided. The antidote for unclean thoughts is clean thoughts.

7. Theatres, cinemas, etc., which tend to stimulate passion should be shunned.

8. Nocturnal dreams need not cause any anxiety. A cold bath every time for a fairly strong is the finest preventive in such cases. It is wrong to say that an occasional indulgence is a safeguard against involuntary dreams.

9. Aboveall, one must not considercontinence even as between husband and wife to be so difficult as to be practically impossible. On the contrary, self-restraint must be considered to be the ordinary and

natural practice of life.

10. A heartfelt prayer every day for purity makes one progressively pure.

Young India, 13-10-1920

206. SPEECH ON NON-CO-OPERATION, KANPUR[1]

October 14, 1920

Mr. Gandhi dwelt on the essentials of success in the unequal struggle against the biggest power in Europe. One was organizing capacity. Without the Englishman's organizing capacity they would not be able to administer their own affairs. He had on a former occasion marched with a corps of 10,000 men in the early hours of a morning in perfect discipline but there force was the determining factor. Where the battle had to be won by means of non-co-operation the necessity for discipline was all the greater. Another essential was Hindu-Muslim unity, not lip-unity, but a unity of the heart and spirit. The moment both the communities realized that without their co-operation British rule was impossible and ceased to give their co-operation, success would be achieved. They would not be able to make their power felt by acts of incendiarism or violence. They would only do so by acts of self-sacrifice and self-surrender. The speaker firmly believed that the true test of truth was sacrifice and truth never won but when it was backed by true sacrifice. The whole lecture was a fervent appeal to the people to withdraw their boys from schools, to boycott courts and council elections, to abandon all luxuries and adopt swadeshi.

The Leader, 21-10-1920

207. INTERVIEW TO PRESS REPRESENTATIVE, LUCKNOW

October 15, 1920

Messrs Gandhi, Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali arrived by Bombay Mail this morning . . . Replying to a question by a representative as to why he did not put himself at the head of the reform and support the Government, Mr. Gandhi said :

That would be a death-trap to me. I would rather command this rabble. I have tried to work with the Government for the past 30 years, but can do so no longer. It is a devilish, wicked Government which has broken treaties and I would tell Mr. Lloyd George that myself if I could speak to him.

Asked why he used the English language, also Posts and Telegraphs, Mr.

[1] At a mass meeting on the parade ground

Gandhi said he used the former because he would not be understood if he spoke in Hindi. As regards Posts and Telegraphs, he considered them his own property and if the Government took them away from him he would be only too glad.

The Hindu, 16-10-1920

208. SPEECH AT LUCKNOW[1]

October 15, 1920

We want to train a big national army. We cannot do so unless we have strict discipline.

* * *

The British Empire, today, represents Satanism and they who love God can afford to have no love for Satan.

* * *

You have pledged yourselves not to draw the sword; if so, such isolated assainations [as that of Mr. Willoughby] are a serious violation of discipline. I do not think Islam permits this either. So long as Muslims are pledged to non-violent non-co-operation, it should not even occur to them that drawing the sword might bring excellent results. The Empire certainly has been guilty of misdeeds but, by killing an innocent man, we would only encourage the Government in its policy of repression and terrorism. Islam, it is true, permits the use of the sword, but I am sure it does not countenance such wanton killing and I believe that Ulemas also will support me on this point. If ever you decide to abandon non-violent non-co-operation and draw the sword, I am sure you would warn every European man, woman and child that their lives were not safe thenceforth. But I shall cherish the hope that you will not be obliged to come to such a decision.

* * *

Zafar-ul-Mulk is an extremely upright and fearless man, so that he could have peace only when he was in jail. Why is he imprisoned? Because he said in a speech that this Empire would perish, that to offer oneself for recruitment was to take the path to hell.

* * *

This Empire has been guilty of such terrible atrocities that, if it

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of tour

did not apologize for them to God and to the country, it would certainly perish. I will go further and say that, unless it so apologized, it was the duty of every Indian to destroy it. If it is a crime to say that to offer oneself for recruitment is to take the path to hell, most certainly it is the duty of everyone to commit such a crime and be cleansed.

* * *

We cannot make such a demand [i.e., for a public trial of Zafar-ul-Mulk]. By making it, we prove our unwillingness to go to jail. I do not know why people make this demand; to Zafar-ul-Mulk himself, jail is like a palace. We should, rather, make things impossible for the Government, so that it would either give us what we want or throw us into the sea. Better be drowned in the sea than remain in slavery.

I have often compared the Government to a robber. If any robber robbed us of our possessions and then offered to return one-half, could we accept it? This Government, however, is even worse than a robber. Not only has it dispossessed us of all we had, but it also seeks to gain control of our souls, to reduce us to slavery. If so, we can tell it only this, that we can maintain no relations with it until it had not only restored all our wealth but also given us back our honour and freedom.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 31-10-1920

209. "MY FOLLOWERS"

This letter[1] was received by a candidate contesting the election to the Legislative Assembly. He has made a verbatim copy and sent it to me. The correspondent's language is faulty. He must have deliberately made it such, or he is not a very educated man. He has not given his name. Such correspondents do not have the courage to give their names.

We need to feel ashamed so long as there are such people in Gujarat. Adopting the pseudonym of "Bolshevism", he brings discredit on the Bolsheviks. I am in no great love with Bolshevism as I

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had threatened the candidate with death unless he withdrew his candidature.

have known it. However, the Bolsheviks are certainly no cowards. The foregoing letter, on the other hand, bespeaks cowardice. How can we hate a man who seeks to enter the legislature with an honest intention? What wrong does he do? If we try to control people's inclinations, we shall be doing what the Government does and, therefore, we shall have been as Satanic as the Government.

We may try to dissuade an intending candidate by the force of argument or of public opinion, or we may win him over with love. I am sure that we shall gain nothing by trying to stop him forcibly. We can only harm ourselves.

The correspondent refers to the murders[1] in Viramgam and Ahmedabad. Was there any bravery in several thousands of people killing a white or an Indian officer and then burning his body? The brave do not fight that way. To this day the men who killed [these persons] have not been apprehended. It is to act like a murderer to kill anyone thus unobserved and then run away. Such an act shows no courage and no manliness; it is neither patriotism nor self-sacrifice, nor is it an example worthy of being followed. Those who commit such acts of terror harm the nation. So long as there are such men in Gujarat, we cannot have non-co-operation in full swing. Even if we want, we cannot have it so. As darkness is the enemy of light, so also the kind of ideals referred to above certainly obstruct non-co-operation, which requires self-sacrifice, as they obstruct the training for non-co-operation. It is the duty of non-co-operators to restrain with love those who follow the philosophy of Bolshevism, to reason with them and make them shed their cowardice.

The gentleman who received this letter writes to me : "I think you cannot but be pained to read this extract. You advocate peaceful and non-violent non-co-operation and want everyone's honest opinions to be respected. But this letter will show you to what lengths your followers go to compel people to accept the idea of non-co-operation under threat of force. And this is but the beginning. It should not be surprising if those who believe that non-co-operation will lead to coercive tactics keep away from this idea." The original letter is much longer. I have given only an extract from it. The correspondent has done me injustice in including "Bolshevism" among my followers. Had he done injustice only to me, I would not have entered into an argument; but he has done injustice to non-co-

[1] In 1919

operation. I do not regard anyone as my follower. Those who approve of my ideas are followers of those ideas [not of me]. Those who act contrary to my ideas are followers neither of me nor of the ideas.

As we may not abandon good work lest someone should see it in a wrong light, so also a movement like non-co-operation which is otherwise considered essential may not be abandoned for fear that it might lend itself to abuses. The *Gita* is misinterpreted by many people, but this is no reason why it should be condemned or abandoned. So-called Christians plunder others in the name of Christianity, but this is the fault neither of the Christian religion nor of its founder.

A misdeed of the Government cannot be concealed simply because its exposure is likely to make people more angry with it. There is no virtue in being free from ill will for the blameless. Not to entertain ill will even for the guilty—this alone lends lustre to the virtue. Hence it is that, though I point to the great evils of the British Empire, I restrain the bitter feelings which they rouse, check violence and show to the people the royal road of bringing about a change of heart in the British or making them leave India through non-co-operation.

This will intensify the bitterness for a while. There will also be trouble from insane persons, like this "Bolshevism"; if there is, I shall try to cheek it, of course, but I consider it less intolerable than that the British Empire should continue as it is today. I think it is easier to counteract Bolshevism obviously gone mad than Bolshevism which is respectable. If public opinion non-co-operates with persons who go mad, like "Bolshevism", all such madness will collapse like a house of cards at a mere puff of the breath.

The candidate who received the letter has said a few things in anger; I entreat him to banish his anger. He is free to contest the election to the legislature if he thinks it right to do so; but to contest the election merely in a fit of anger, provoked by "Bolshevism's" letter, would also be a kind of Bolshevism. Is it right, out of anger, to harm the country's interest?

It would be altogether wrong now to seek election to legislatures in opposition to public opinion. What epithet can describe the action of a candidate who enters the legislature, though forbidden by the very voters with whose votes he aspires to be elected?

We have, therefore, but one golden rule. Those who believe

that the councils will open the gate to freedom and those, like me, who believe them to be a death-trap for the country, should patiently explain to the voters the possible benefits and dangers and act as the latter wish. If they wish to elect anyone, persons of my view should not hinder them; likewise, if the voters plainly show their opposition, it is the duty of intending candidates not to seek election. If the opponents of council entry use coercion, they will be committing a sin; if candidates enter councils against all opposition, they will be committing a heinous sin. There is here no problem of conscience for the candidates, for their duty is to enter the legishature only if the voters in their constituency want them to.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-10-1920

210. SPEECH IN REPLY TO ADDRESS BY BAREILLY MUNICIPALITY[1]

October 17, 1920

Since you have been so fearless, I hope you will remain so. What could be more cruel than compelling a municipality to do the ignoble things which the Government compelled the Amritsar Municipality to do—to cut off water supply to the people? Preserve your independence, though they torture you; do not be intimidated; do not follow the example of the Amritsar Municipality. The other thing I tell you is, you can make your schools independent if you but have the strength. Refuse Government grant and your schools will be independent. I want you to think seriously about both these things.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 31-10-1920

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of the tour

211. LETTER TO VIDYAGAURI R. NILKANTH

[Before *October 18, 1920*][1]

DEAR SISTER,

I have always wanted Gujarat Vidyapith to be established. It goes without saying that the Government will have no say in its affairs.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Vidyabehn Nilkanth Jeevan Jhanki

212. SPEECH AT AMRITSAR

October 18, 1920

Mr. Gandhi . . . began his speech in Hindi amid shouts of *Allah-o-Akbar* and *Sat Sri Akal*. He said, Mr. Mahomed Ali had told them what was taking place at present in England. It was being considered how to secure all the approaches to India. If the Govern-ment was taking possession of Persia and Iraq, it was to ensure the perpetuation of India's dependence. A man could not serve two masters. If Indians acknowledged the English as their masters, it meant that they had forgotten their great to whom they had sworn allegiance from their very birth. The only alternative before them now was to relinquish their God or to relinquish the Government. The only two ways to attain swaraj were the sword and non-co-operation. The Hindus and Mussulmans had already accepted the latter. Although some people had confidence in the sword, too, to win swaraj, he had not. They could not free India by burning houses and committing murders. There were two condi-tions precedent to win swaraj, complete unity and sacrifice. The latter was only possible if they decided upon non-co-operation with the Government. If they did that they could achieve swaraj in one year. They lacked discipline which they must cultivate. As long as there was no discipline in towns and villages liberty was impossible. There should be unity and confidence. They must remember that fear and slavery could live side by side but not fear and love. God wanted pure sacrifice. They must be pure. They must leave Government courts, schools, service, councils, and titles and wear home-spun khaddar. He asked the Amritsar lawyers with what face they now practised in the courts which had disgraced and humiliated them so much during the martial law days. Unless they relinquished practice the salvation of India was impossible through them. Could they send their boys to schools where they had been made to walk 16

[1] Inferred from the reference to the Gujarat Vidyapith which was founded on October 18, 1920.

miles a day for punishment? The first lesson of liberty was that they should tell their children that although they themselves were slaves they did not want their children, too, to grow up as slaves. Theirs were the buildings, the teacher and the money. They should refuse Government grants and affiliation. That would be the first lesson to the rising generation to break the chains of slavery. Amritsar had done well to leave off the councils. These were nothing but weapons for snatching their freedom. They could turn out laws like the Defence of India Act and the Rowlatt Act. Then, they all knew what injustice had been used in recruitment. How the Punjab suffered by that decision. Could they still supply recruits?

Did they not like to maintain the freedom of Arabia, etc.? They should turn into national recruits and advise people not to join the army.

It was said if people did not join the army they would take to rapine and plunder. Could they not, he asked, turn from sword to the plough? Punjab was the cause of the subjection of India, as she supplied recruits and it was the boast of their late Lieutenant-Governor that the Punjab had supplied in the War as many recruits as all the other provinces of India put together. If even now they did not refuse to be recruited, India's freedom was impossible. They should also turn to swadeshi. Their women should take to charkha. They must know that crores of rupees were annually drained out of India by reason of cloth alone. If they could not do all this their freedom was impossible.

The Tribune, 20-10-1920

213. TALK WITH KHALSA COLLEGE STUDENTS, AMRITSAR[1]

October 18, 1920

My friend Mahomed Ali wrote an article, "Choice of the Turks", which was confiscated. I tell you today that the time has now come to make up our minds about "Choice of the Believers of India"[2]. I have come here to ask the Sikh students whether they wish to be loyal to the Empire or to Guru Nanak[3]. Friends of your community are being sent to put down the great, freedom-loving Arab people who have done us no harm. The Government steals an anvil from you and compensates you with the gift of a needle. After the torture which was inflicted on Sardar Gohar Singh, how can a Sikh draw the sword for the Government? How can we maintain cordial

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of the tour
[2] Gandhiji used the English expression.
[3] 1469-1538; religious reformer and founder of Sikhism

relations with it after the cruelty perpetrated by Bosworth Smith in Jallianwala? If you feel for the Punjab as much as I do, you can see that the Khalsa College gives up receiving grants, that it breaks off its connection with the Municipality, and so you can make it truly *khalsa*[1]. If you do not succeed, you can leave it and be *khalsa* yourselves.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 31-10-1920

214. SPEECH ON NON-CO-OPERATION, LAHORE[2]

October 19, 1920

Mahatma Gandhi said that he was glad to find Zafar Ali in jail, because according to him Zafar Ali became free by being put inside the jail. The only place for those who did their duty by the people and the Government was the prison house. The speaker had read the charges against Zafar Ali. Zafar Ali had said that if Government did not do justice on the matter of the khilafat, Government would perish and had asked his audience to repeat that statement after him. This was the principal charge against Zafar Ali. The speaker said that he would proceed a step further. He wanted the audience to repeat after him not only that if the Government would not do justice in the matter of the khilafat, Government could perish but also that they would deem it their duty to destroy it. (The audience repeated this after Mahatma Gandhi.) The speaker said that the way to release Zafar Ali was to do their duty loyally by the people and to push on the non-co-operation propaganda. In that event, Government could not send any of their leaders to jail. He was glad to be told that that in spite of being kept in a dark narrow cell, being supplied with the jail food though he was yet an under-trial prisoner, and in spite of his being in bad health for these reasons, Government was not able to break Zafar Ali and he would not apologize. It was not for the people to pray to Government for Zafar Ali's release. It would be a sin to do so. They would not ask favours from Government.

The speaker next referred to the bravery of the Sikhs during the War and said that they had saved the British Empire and had cut the throats of the Turks, the Arabs and the Egyptians at the bidding of their task master. What was their reward? Let them ask Gohar Singh of Sheikhupura. Let them ask the Sikh ladies of Manianwala.

The speaker emphatically declared that violence was not to be encouraged. He was sorry to see the great ovation given to Mr. Mahomed Ali when he said that it

[1] Pure

[2] A Shorter version of this appeared in *Young India*, 24-11-1920; *vide* Appendix "Interview with Lord Mountbatten", 25-9-1947.

might be necessary in the future for us to unsheath the sword and proclaim jehad. The sword, said the speaker, should be altogether discarded. Neither the Punjab wrong nor the khilafat wrong could be righted by violence. Freedom was not to be attained through violence. Mahatma Gandhi said that for him non-violent non-co-operation was the beginning and the end.

The speaker said that several persons had told him that in the Punjab there were no prominent leaders who were prepared to lead the non-co-operation movement. But the people did not want leaders to boycott schools and colleges, for every one could withdraw his children from Government and aided schools and colleges without leaders. Nobody required a leader to be told that Lieut.-Col. Frank Johnson made the students of Lahore College walk 16 miles a day in the summer sun; nobody wanted to enslave the future generation of the province by sending the children into the degrading and dwarfing atmosphere of official institutions. Nobody need require a leader to boycott the courts. Let the people cease going to courts to recover their debts. Let the parties go to any man whom they could both trust and let him settle their differences. If this could not be done, let the creditor in the last resort forgo his money rather than seek the help of Government courts. The courts that had unjustly deprived their leaders of their liberty could not deserve to be called courts of justice. Similarly people did not require a leader to tell them of the advantages of the doctrine of swadeshi, which was the only means by which they could affect the voters of Lancashire.

Clean morals and strong character was the condition precedent to success of the non-co-operation movement. The ladies of Amritsar had told Mahatma Gandhi that the two things necessary for success were (1) truth, and (2) that the men and women should be *jitendriya*. By *jitendriya* was meant a person who acquired complete control over his senses. The man who could control his senses and passions and had complete sway over his desires and appetites was the clean man. He was the man, who could work for the nation with a single-minded and fearless devotion. He would be the man who would fear God and love truth and would be impervious to everthing else. He who could not live a pure life was not fit for non-co-operation.

Let the Hindus, Mussulmans and the Sikhs weld themselves together in one whole and through progressive non-violent non-co-operation wrest justice from Government's unwilling hands. Either they should all go to jail or secure the release of their innocent brethren who were being unjustly made to suffer. That was the only way left to them. That way lay their goal and final destination, which was complete swaraj. There was no other way; and let them start on the journey while yet there was time.

The Tribune, 22-10-1920

215. FROM RIDICULE TO—?

It will be admitted that non-co-operation has passed the stage of ridicule. Whether it will now be met by repression or respect remains to be seen. Opinion has already been expressed in these columns[1] that ridicule is an approved and civilized method of opposition. The Viceregal ridicule though expressed in unnecessarily impolite terms was not open to exception.

But the testing time has now arrived. In a civilized country when ridicule fails to kill a movement it begins to command respect. Opponents meet it by respectful and cogent argument and the mutual behaviour of rival parties never becomes violent. Each party seeks to convert the other or draw the uncertain element towards its side by pure argument and reasoning.

There is little doubt now that the boycott of the councils will be extensive if it is not complete. The students have become disturbed. Important institutions may any day become truly national. Pandit Motilal Nehru's great renunciation of a legal practice which was probably second to nobody's is by itself an event calculated to change ridicule into respect. It ought to set people thinking seriously about their own attitude. There must be something very wrong about our Government—to warrant the step Pandit Motilal Nehru has taken. Post-graduate students have given up their fellowships. Medical students have refused to appear for their final examination. Non-co-operation in these circumstances cannot be called an inane movement.

Either the Government must bend to the will of the people which is being expressed in no unmistakable terms through non-co-operation, or it must attempt to crush the movement by repression.

Any force used by a government under any circumstance is not repression. An open trial of a person accused of having advocated methods of violence is not repression. Every State has the right to put down violence by force. But the trial of Mr. Zafar Ali Khan and two moulvis of Panipat shows that the Government is seeking not to put down or prevent violence but to suppress expression of opinion, to prevent spread of disaffection. This is repression. The trials are the beginning of it. It has not still assumed a virulent form but if these trials do not result in stifling the propaganda, it is highly likely that

[1] *Vide* "Ridicule Replacing Respression", 1-9-1920.

severe repression will be resorted to by the Government.

The only other way to prevent the spread of disaffection is to remove the causes thereof. And that would be to respect the growing response of the country to the programme of non-co-operation. It is too much to expect repentance and humility from a government intoxicated with success and power.

We must therefore assume that the second stage in the Government programme will be repression growing in violence in the same ratio as the progress of non-co-operation. And if the movement survives repression, the day of victory of truth is near. We must then be prepared for prosecutions, punishments even up to deportations. We must evolve the capacity for going on with our programme without the leaders. That means capacity for self-government. And as no government in the world can possibly put a whole nation in prison, it must yield to its demand or abdicate in favour of a government suited to that nation.

It is clear that abstention from violence and persistence in the programme are our only and surest chance of attaining our end.

The Government has its choice, either to respect the movement or to try to repress it by barbarous methods. Our choice is either to succumb to repression or to continue in spite of repression.

Young India, 20-10-1920

216. NECESSITY OF DISCIPLINE

I have already remarked upon my experiences of want of method and discipline in Madras. The same want is being noticed during the tour in the Rohelkhund. Everywhere there is chaos and disorder not for want of men but because of volunteers without training. They are called upon to handle a situation and crowds that are unprecedented. There is more noise and bustle than work.

Maulana Shaukat Ali is the indefatigable organizer. He wants to satisfy all parties and therefore packs too many events in any programme he arranges. To take only one instance. He accepted for one single day a motor ride from Aligarh to Hathras, thence to Etah and from Etah to Kasgunj with the prospect of a slow night journey from Kasgunj to Cawnpore. The motor ride covered a distance of 90 miles. After a trying meeting of workers at Aligarh early in the morning, we got into our motors at 9.45 a.m. and reached Hathras at

about 11 a.m. The sun was burning hot and fierce. The inevitable noisy procession was there. It was followd by a huge meeting involving an intolerable strain on the voice of the strongest speaker. We however got for our pains resignations of three honorary magistracies. We motored thence to Etah. There was a little more order there than at Hathras. Soon after finishing Etah we motored to Kasgunj. We had accidents during the jouney, the cars refusing to move. With difficulty we reached Kasgunj, Maulana Shaukat Ali and his companions not reaching in time for the train. We had several resignations at Etah. The meeting at Kasgunj for its enormous size was well managed but not without difficulty. Touching the feet has become an uncontrollable performance causing much waste of time and involving danger when it is resorted to in the midst of a large crowd.

But the most wretched experience was the night journey from Kas-gunj to Cawnpore. It was made most uncomfortable by crowds attending at every station. They were everywhere insistent and assertive. The noises they made in order to wake me up were piercing and heart-rending. I was tired. My head was reeling and was badly in want of rest. In vain did Mrs. Gandhi and others plead with the crowds for self-control and silence. The more they implored, the more aggressive the crowds became. It was a tug of war between her and the crowds. The latter would put on the light as often as she put it off. If she put up the shutters the crowd immediately put them down. I was resting did they want me to die a premature death? The answer was, they had come many miles to have *darshan* and *darshan* they must have. I had hardened my heart and refused to move till it was daybreak. But there was not a wink of sleep for any of us during the whole of that night. It was a unique demonstration of love run mad. An expectant and believing people groaning under misery and insult believe that I have a message of hope for them. They come from all quarters within walking reach to meet me.

And[1] I do believe that I have a message of hope and certain deliverance, but?

Yes. It is a big BUT. There is no deliverance and no hope without sacrifice, discipline and self-control. Mere sacrifice without discipline will be unavailing. How to evolve discipline out of this habitual indiscipline? Not certainly by the British bayonet or the

[1] The source has “As”.

British hypocrisy. The British officials have no affection for this loving and phenomenal demonstration of a peaceful and peace-loving people. They would put it down, if they could, by barbarous exhibition of force even as Sir Michael O'Dwyer tried and ingloriously failed.

But if this demonstration cannot be put down by force, it cannot also procure swaraj for India unless regulated and harnessed for national good. There are in it all the elements of success as well as of self-destruction. It cannot lead to the promised goal if the nation in extravagant affection wastes its servants by encroaching upon their hours of needed rest. We must therefore cease to have nocturnal demonstrations. We must have consideration for the feelings of the lowest of our fellow-beings. We must not disturb the rest of a train-load of passengers. We must learn to transmit our love for our heroes into unquenchable energy and useful action. Love that is satisfied with touching the feet of its hero and making noise at him is likely to become parasitical. Such love ceases to be a virtue and after a time becomes a positive indulgence and therefore a vice. The great task before the nation today is to discipline its demonstrations if they are to serve any useful purpose. Non-co-operation is not designed to create hate but to purify the nation to the point of rendering it proof against the injurious aggression whether from within or from without. Non-co-operation to be effective must be prevented by co-operation between all the units composing this great and ancient people. Let us begin by co-operating with our loved ones.

Young India, 20-10-1920

217. THE BRITISH CONGRESS COMMITTEE AND "INDIA"

I gladly reproduce in another column an open letter sent to me by Miss Normanton[1]. I do not know the lady save by her writings in *India* while it was being edited by her. Her views on non-co-operation are refreshingly strong and her unqualified support of the boycott of the reformed council ought to prove consoling to the waverers. But I would ask my reader not to overweigh the effect of

[1] Helena Normanton, ex-editor of *India*, the official organ of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress. Her letter to Gandhiji, of September 15, 1920, supported the policy of non-co-operation.

the boycott on the British public or the League of Nations. It is better for us to rivet our attention on our own duty irrespective of the effect of its performance on outside opinion. We have over-estimated the effect of our action on British public opinion and in doing so have often damaged the true interests of the nation. At the same time Miss Normanton's argument appears to me to be perfectly sound.

What will however interest the public more are perhaps her views on the British Committee. I do not know the merits of the controversy she discusses. But apart from the merits, her views on the constitution of the Committee would appear to be original. I entirely associate myself with her remark that a British Committee, to be true to the name, should be composed exclusively of the British people and financed by them. It is then more likely to exert influence on British public opinion than not.

In any case we would then have a real index of the British interest in Indian affairs. I endorse Miss Normanton's views about the newspaper *India* also. The paper costs much more than it is worth. Its influence on English opinion is practically nothing and it is an indifferent vehicle of English opinion for India's enlightenment. Its only value therefore consists in its parliamentary reports which can be received and distributed by the All-India Congress Committee with very little cost. An enterpri-sing newspaper could take over that duty any day and make it a paying venture. And now that we have embarked on non-on-operation and are determined to become self-reliant, it would be more consistent for us to disestablish the British Committee and stop *India*. It would save a needless waste of public money and turn our attention more towards ourselves.

It is not easy for me to reconcile myself to the alternative suggested by Miss Normanton, viz, that we should have a kind of an advisory committee or adviser resident in London to help the proposed British Committee with suggestions. Iwould rather concentrate all our attention and all our best workers on work in India. The harvest is truly rich and the labourers are few. We can ill spare a single worker for foreign work. It will be time for us to consider the propriety of sending a representative abroad after we have created a permanent impression in India itself by substantial and solid work.

(We are in possession of further evidence, which we have received from another esteemed correspondent in London in connection with the very unsatisfactory condition of the newspaper *India*. The total circulation of *India*, our correspondent informs us, is, 500

only (!) 220 in Great Britain, the rest in India. Last year's income was £4-17-0 (!!) only, while the expenditure for the current year is estimated to £3300. This is how our correspondent puts it :

For the maintenance of *India* we pay—that is the poor people in India pay—£1800 a year, out of which Mr. Syed Hussain as editor-secretary gets £550 a year with effect from October. Mr. Fenner Brockway as co-editor-secretary gets £550, Mr. G.P. Blizzand as secretary £400, the typist £150, clerk £150.

The paper has had a chequered career but we never had success from the propaganda point of view. It has never had a constructive policy. To squander £1800 on a 3d weekly with a circulation of 500, and to spend another £1500 on establishment charges, £3300 in all, looks like reckless extravagance. Ed. *Y. I.*)

Young India, 20-10-1920

218. TALK TO COLLEGE STUDENTS, LAHORE[1]

October 20, 1920

Will the Punjab, for whose sake the whole nation has got ready to fight, itself remain in slumber? You may forget the khilafat, but you cannot forget the Punjab. Jallianwala made us brave but, when we were ordered to crawl on our stomachs, we submitted like cowards. India rose through Jallianwala, but fell when people crawled on their bellies. Forcing students to salute the Union Jack was still more bitter. Col. Johnson humiliated you and you sumitted to the humiliation. My satyagraha never asked anyone to sacrifice his honour. The souls of the boys who died in the Punjab are present here and are clamouring to know what you mean to do. Even if you want to hang Sir Michael O'Dwyer, you must be ready, youself, to be hanged.

* * *

When the Boer War was going on, persons like Smuts[2] and Hertzog[3] who were eminent lawyers left their profession to join the War. Boer women used to teach their children not to speak a single

[1] At Rambhuj Dutt Chaudhri's place, where Gandhiji was staying. Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of the tour

[2] 1870-1950; South African soldier and statesman; Prime Minister, 1919-24 and 1939-48

[3] 1866-1942; South African nationalist leader and politician; Prime Minister of South African Union, 1924-39

English word, while here men and women—Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chaudhri and Saraladevi, for instance—correspond with one another in English. I see our cowardice in this. Every woman in the Transvaal was a Rani of Jhansi[1]. When will our women be so brave? I am all praise for the English language. I am all admiration for the New Testament. I read Tolstoy and the Koran in English. But I cannot tolerate one Indian using English for communication with another Indian. I for one believe that the Indian father who communicates with his son or the Indian husband who communicates with his wife in English is a coward. I shall be in a position to benefit from anything English only when I am their equal. The second sacrifice that the Boers made was after the Treaty of Vereeniging. Smuts and Botha rejected the reforms [offered by the British]. Instead, they started non-co-operation, and it stopped only when the Boers got the free constitution of their choice.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 31-10-1920

219. LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN MALVIYA

BHIWANI,

October 22 [*1920*][2]

MY DEAR PANDITJI,

I purposely write this in English as I have a vague belief that probably my English is more explicit than [my] Hindi. I enclose copy of a telegram I sent you at Dehradun. Advice was received that you could not be found in Dehradun, and I subsequently learnt from Bakshi Tekchand that you had gone to Simla. Seeing that you have taken the definite step about the Councils, is it no possible for you to do likewise regarding Hindu University[3]? I know that it is much more difficult and the value of the step will also be comparatively greater. Does the present Government represent Rakshasa Rajya? And if it does can we send our children to schools conducted under the influence or control of a Ravana? That is perhaps the whole of my argument. But if the argument is not conclusive and therefore you

[1] Lakshmi Bai who fought the British in 1857

[2] Gandhiji was at Bhiwani on October 22, 1920.

[3] The Benaras Hindu University, of which the addressee was the founder

cannot tear the charter to pieces, I hope you will not resent my asking the boys of the Central Hindu College and other institutions under the University to withdraw. If you could possibly take the step I have suggested, it need not mean your having to abandon the ground or the buildings if the trustees decided to declare the independence of t he University. Not that I would in the least mind dispossession by the Government of the ground and the buildings. I know that in the place of the present university you will raise into being a larger and a greater [one]. And if the trustees outvote you, will you not be a free man having washed your hands of an institution that has outgrown its usefulness?

From a photostat S. N. 7311

220. SPEECH AT BHIWANI CONFERENCE

October 22, 1920

Mahatmaji said that it was impossible for the followers of God to co-operate with such a Government. The only two ways to win swaraj were the sword and peaceful non-co-operation; Hindus and Muslims both accepted the latter way. There were two conditions precedent to attaining swaraj—complete unity amongst the people and non-co-operation with Government. Mahatmaji said that he had strong faith in the non-co-operation programme; it could make Indians free and get them swaraj within one year. God wanted pure sacrifices. Indians must leave Government courts, Government schools, Government services, councils and titles, wear hand-spun khaddar, arrange their own panchayats and leave other considerations alone. Complete unity among Hindus and Muslims would make India free, help Muslim brothers in connection with the khilafat problem.

The Tribune, 27-10-1920

221. SWARAJYA SABHA

The "All-India Home Rule League" will henceforth be known as "Swarajya Sabha". Its constitution has been changed. I must confess that I always disliked the term "Home Rule". If we are to know even our highest ideal under a foreign name, why not have it as our ideal to turn ourselves into foreigners? I know some highly educated Indians who believe that India's salvation is possible only through immitation of Western ways and ideals. One of these Indians

is Mr. Chintamani[1]. I respect Mr. Chintamani. It is not that he does not love India. If, in most things, he prefers the Western way, it is not for self-interest. Somehow he feels that only by turning ourselves into their like shall we be able to meet the English as their equals. Some Indians, converts to Christianity, believe that the country's salvation is impossible until both Hindus and Muslims have become Christians.

However, just as we would not have it as our ideal to turn ourselves into Englishmen or Christians, so also I did not like the phrase "Home Rule". The meaning, the force, to be found in "swaraj" are not present in "Home Rule". Hindus and Muslims, all—even illiterate people—can understand the term "swaraj", but not "Home Rule". We have, therefore, dropped Home Rule and given to "swaraj" its rightful place.

Besides this, there are other important changes which are worth noting. The aim, so far, was to secure Home Rule within the British Empire, like what the Colonies enjoy. Instead, the aim now will be to strive for swaraj of people's choice. The means have always been a subject of controversy and, therefore, we have limited ourselves to all effective means which are peaceful and legitimate. That is to say, the ideal now before us is to achieve swaraj without recourse to violence.

The Congress is the people's organ. The Homr Rule League has always worked as a subsidiary body of the former and the Swarajya Sabha will do the same. For the present, therefore, swaraj has been defined to mean what it means in the Congress constitution, the implication being that the Swarajya Sabha will also strive to get the Congress constitution changed.

In my view, these changes are unexceptionable, and were necessary too. The intention behind them is sincere. They have been made after much thought and discussion. A committee consisting of Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, Shri Rajagopalachari, Shri Omar Sobani, Shri Jinnah, who is president of the Bombay Branch [of the All-India Home Rule League] and Shri Jayakar[2] was appointed to draft a suitable constitution. The draft was discussed in plenary sessions, once in Calcutta and a second time in Bombay, and the constitution was adopted by a majority vote.

Despite this, some lawyers and other friends have resigned from

[1] Sir C. Y. Chintamani (1880-1941); editor, *The Leader*, Allahabad

[2] M. R. Jayakar (1873-1959); Bombay lawyer and Liberal leader; leading negotiator and peace-maker

the Swarajya Sabha. Signatories [to the letter of resignation] include men who have enjoyed a high reputation right to this day. I have been pained by these resignations, and still more by the reasons given in the letter. The help these friends gave was highly esteemed by the Swarajya Sabha. Even so, when basic ideals are in question, one has to part from one's dearest friends and be happy in doing so.

Let us now consider the letter of resignation. We shall first examine the charge against me. Mr. Jinnah had argued that no amendment would be valid unless approved by a three-fourths majority. In support of this, he argued that under the old constitution the council of the Home Rule League could make any change by a three-fourths majority. I ruled that the restriction placed upon the council by the general body of the Sabha did not apply to the Sabha itself. The general body had the common right of taking decisions by simple majority and this was not nullified by the restriction placed on the council. I still adhere to this ruling. I do not think it necessary to enter into a discussion of the adjectives which Shri Jinnah and his friends have used to describe my ruling.

However, thinking that Shri Jinnah's view, which was supported by Shri Jayakar, deserved the utmost consideration, I consulted other lawyers. They have endorsed my view and said that I could have given no other ruling, that it would have been arbitrary of me to have given a ruling other than the one I gave.

The second reason which they have given for resigning is that the Swarajya Sabha has shown contempt for the Congress constitution. This is certainly not true for, as I have pointed out above, we have accepted the Congress definition of swaraj pending a change in its constitution.

The third charge is little serious. Shri Jinnah and his friends have stated that the clause defining the means to be employed for winning swaraj lends itself to the interpretation that it permits the Swarajya Sabha to carry on unlawful activities. To an extent, this interpretation is correct for, in my view, the means [as defined] cover civil disobedience. I think it necessary to retain this freedom. It is not always easy to say what is constitutional or legal. Some people argue that non-co-operation is illegal. Some others used to argue that civil disobedience was illegal. The means clause is so drafted as to give some freedom with view to avoiding occasions for such controversies. The clause does not mean, however, that the Swarajya Sabha will

encourage any and every kind of violation of law. The provision that the means must be peaceful rules out incivility in any form. The clause is intended to ensure that there is no difficulty in our adopting any means we consider necessary so long as we remain civil.

I have shown that there is nothing improper in the constitution of the Swarajya Sabha. Why, then, have all these leaders left it? The simple answer is that the country is moving so fast now that our leaders cannot keep pace with it. In such circumstances, no matter how much we are pained we must go ahead. India will not have such an opportunity for a century. We may only hope that when the leaders realize the value of the strong popular current, they will not hesitate to join it. Our duty, meanwhile, is to follow our chosen path with due civility, to bear with the leaders' differenes with us, to maintain respect for them and, undeterrred by their disagreement, go ahead firmly, calmly and with full regard for moral principles. Truth comes to no harm.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-10-1920

222. LETTER TO THE TRUSTEES OF ALIGARH COLLEGE

October 24, 1920

GENTLEMEN,

I know you are about to meet in order to give your decision on a most momentous issue for Islam and India. I hear that you are calling in the aid of the Government and the police for the occasion of your meeting. If the rumour is true you would be making a grievous mistake. In a matter which is purely domestic you need neither the intervention of the Government nor the protection of its police. Neither the Ali Brothers nor I are engaged in brute war. We are engaged in a war in which our only weapon is force of public opinion and we shall reckon ourselves beaten in the battle if we do not carry the public with us. In the present dispute the test of public opinion will be in first instance your majority. Therefore, if you after a full and free discussion decide by a majority that the college and school students may not remain in the college ground either as students or even as boarders if they persist in their demand of disaffiliation and the rejection of the Government grant, they will be peacefully withdrawn. We propose in that event to carry on their

education if at all possible in Aligarh itself, or elsewhere. The desire is not to suspend their secular education for one moment longer than is absolutely necessary. But it is our sincere desire that it should be given in consistence with the law of Islam and the honour of India. I understand that in the opinion of the recognized Ulemas it is not lawful for a believing Muslim to receive the assistance of a Government that has desired or indirectly sought to cause the destruction of the holy khilafat and to tamper with the exclusive Muslim control of Jazirat-ul-Arab[1]. You know as well as I do, how this Government has wilfully trampled under foot Indian honour. Consistently therefore, with the control of the passions by the people, all voluntary association with the Government is being withdrawn by the people. The least that you, in my humble opinion, can do is to decline any further Government grant, disaffiliate the great institution of which you are the trustees and reject the charter of the Moslem University. The least that the Aligarh boys can do, if you fail to respond to the call of Islam and India, is to wash their hands clean of an institution acknowledging the aegis of Government that has forfeited all title to the allegiance of Islam and India and to bring into being a larger, nobler and purer Aligarh that would carry out the inmost wishes of its great founder. I cannot imagine the late illustrious Sir Syed Ahmed[2] keeping his noble creation under the control or influence of the present Government.

As I have been the originator of the idea of disaffiliation of Aligarh and rejection of the Government grant, I feel that I might be able to assist you in your discussions, and therefore, offer my humble services to you, and will gladly attend your meeting if you will allow me to do so. I am proceeding to Bombay and shall await your answer there.

But whether you wish me to attend or not I hope that you will not summon Government intervention in this purely domestic matter.

And let me say to the Government through you, that one hears all sorts of rumours of their intentions about the Ali Brothers and myself. I hope for the peaceful evolution of the struggle, they will not restrict our liberty. We are endeavouring in a most constitutional manner to conduct our propaganda. We are seeking to bend the

[1] The only places of Hedjaj. The Government of India affirmed on March 29, 1920, that those would remain under independent Muslim control.

[2] 1817-1898; educationist and reformer; founder of Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh

Government to the people's will, or if it will not, to overthrow it, not by brute force but by creating real public opinion. We hold it to be perfectly constitutional, legitimate and honourable to expose the Satanic nature of the Government, and to ask the people by appealing to their heads and their hearts, never to their animal passions, to express their will, not in words but in action, i.e., by withdrawing all possible association with the Government. But if the Government wish even to suppress the liberty of opinion and peaceful action, I hope they will issue no internment orders against us, but that they will imprison us. For, in spite of our sincere desire not to offer civil disobedience even in our own persons, it will not be possible for us to respect any internment orders. So long as our movement is not physically restrained, we must use it in such a manner as we consider to be the best in the interests of our mission.

With humble apology,

Your faithful servant

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 27-10-1920

223. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
October 25, 1920

DEAR MR. JINNAH,

I have just returned from an exhausting tour. I have received the letter addressed to me by you and 19 other friends, tendering your resignation of the membership of the Swaraj Sabha, till lately known as the All-India Home Rule League.

I am exceedingly sorry that you and your co-signatories have thought fit to take the very serious step you have.

The reasons given by you are that the procedure adopted at the meeting at which the change was made was "contrary to the rules and regulations of the League" and that my ruling validating the procedure was both incorrect and arbitrary.

I venture to think that the procedure adopted was in accordance with the rules and regulations and that my ruling was strictly correct. The point you raised was that there was not a three-fourths majority.

The regulations cited by you referred to a change in the constitution by the council of the League being legal only if it voted by a majority of three-fourths. The meeting at which the vote was taken was not a meeting of the council, but it was a general meeting of the League. And my ruling was that as there was no rule, whereby the League had bound itself not to change its constitution except by a majority of three- fourths, it was competent and proper for the League to alter its consti-tution by a bare majority. Had I accepted your deductive or inferential interpretation of the rules, I feel that my ruling would have been "illegal and arbitrary". Coming as the challenge did from you, for whose legal knowledge I have high regard, I have since the meeting endeavoured to examine my ruling and every one of the lawyers whom I have consulted tells me that it was not possible for me to give any ruling other than the one I gave.

Your second objection is that the new constitution omits mention of "British connection", and that it is permissive of "unconstitutional and illegal activities".

So far as British connection is concerned I think you are clearly wrong. Because the meaning of the word "swaraj" is deliberately limited by the new constitution so as to keep the Sabha strictly loyal to the Congress creed. Let me recall to you the discussion that took place before the important alteration was adopted. Speaker after speaker made it clear that the interpretation clause was purposely introduced to keep the affiliation of the Sabha pure and above board.

In my opinion, you may not allow yourselves to be affected by any sentiments expressed by the speakers, including myself. If I could help it I would certainly make it clear in any creed as I have made it clear in my speeches, that I want my country to have swaraj whether with or without the British connection. I am not opposed to that connection by itself but I do not wish to make a fetish of it. I will not keep India for a single minute under slavery for the sake of that connection. But I and those who think with me have limited our ambition in order that we can carry the Congress with us and be thus enabled to remain affiliated to that body. I venture to suggest to you that your amendment and the original adopted by the Sabha, do not materially differ, except in so far as the original keeps unadulterated swaraj constantly before the country as an ideal to be worked for. I should think, therefore, that your objection to the alteration is not so vital (if at all), as to warrant a separation.

There now remains for me to consider your objection to the methods. I entirely dissent from your interpretation of sub-clause 2,

that it permits "unconstitutional or illegal activities". You will admit that the words "unconstitutional" and "illegal" are highly technical terms. An ex-Advocate General of Madras considers non-co-operation to be unconstitutional. If I have understood you correctly you consider it to be perfectly constitutional. The president of the special Congress gave it as his considered ruling that my resolution was not unconstitutional. As a not indifferent lawyer of 20 years' unbroken practice, I confess it is difficult for me to conceive an illustration under the British constitution of unconstitutional activity except it be violence. And violence has been specifically eschewed from the Sabha's constitution.

Similarly, about the word "illegal". Jurists differed on its interpretation. A cyclist cycling without a lamp to fetch a doctor acts contrary to law but does not engage in an "illegal" activity. He voluntarily pays the fine and thus honours the law. To disregard a tyrannical administrative order may be contrary to law but it is not in my opinion an "illegal activity". To make strong speeches amounting in the opinion of an erratic judge to sedition is not an illegal activity.

In placing before you for your consideration these homely illustrations my purpose is to show that it is a most dangerous thing for a country, fighting for its very life, its honour and its religion, to tie itself down in a knot of indefinable expressions. Surely all public bodies will think out for themselves the methods to be adopted for winning freedom for the country. I personally hate unconstitutionalism and illegalities, but I refuse to make a fetish of these as I refuse to make a fetish of the British connection.

I therefore, venture to ask you and friends to reconsider whether you have not hastily severed your connection with a body which you have hitherto nursed with industrious affection. If you wish to take your share in the new life that has opened up before the country, and benefit the country by your experience and guidance, and if you do not consider that there is anything fundamentally opposed to your conscience, I invite you and your co-signatories to reconsider your resignations. But if, unfortunately, you cannot see your way to revise your decision I trust you will acquit the Sabha of any irregular procedure and me of any illegal or arbitrary conduct and base your decision on grounds other than those you have set forth in your letter.

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-10-1920

224. TO EVERY ENGLISHMAN IN INDIA

DEAR FRIEND,

I wish that every Englishman will see this appeal and give thoughtful attention to it.

Let me introduce myself to you. In my humble opinion, no Indian has co-operated with the British Government more than I have for an unbroken period of twenty-nine years of public life in the face of circumstances that might well have turned any other man into a rebel. I ask you to believe me when I tell you that my co-operation was not based on the fear of the punishments provided by your laws or any other selfish motives. It was free and voluntary co-operation based on the belief that the sum total of the activity of the British Government was for the benefit of India. I put my life in peril four times for the sake of the Empire, —at the time of the Boer war when I was in charge of the Ambulance corps whose work was mentioned in General Buller's dispatches, at the time of the Zulu revolt in Natal when I was in charge of a similar corps, at the time of the commencement of the late War when I raised an Ambulance corps and as a result of the strenuous training had a servere attack of pleurisy, and lastly, in fulfilment of my promise to Lord Chelmsford at the War Conference in Delhi, I threw myself in such an active recruiting campaign in Kaira District involving long and trying marches, that I had an attack of dysentery, which proved almost fatal. I did all this in the full belief that acts such as mine must gain for my country an equal status in the Empire. So late as last December I pleaded hard for a trustful co-operation. I fully believed that Mr. Lloyd George would redeem his promise to the Mussulmans and that the revelations of the official atrocities in the Punjab would secure full reparation for the Punjabis. But the treachery of Mr. Lloyd George and its appreciation by you, and the condonation of the Punjab atrocities have completely shattered my faith in the good intentions of the Government and the nation which is supporting it.

But though my faith in your good intentions is gone, I recognize your bravery, and I know that what you will not yield to justice and reason, you will gladly yield to bravery.

See what this Empire means to India:

Exploitation of India's resources for the benefits of Great

Britain, an ever-increasing military expenditure, and a civil service the most expensive in the worlds,extravagant working of every department in utter disregard of India's poverty,disarmament and consequent emasculation of a whole nation lest an armed nation might imperil the lives of a handful of you in our midst, traffic in intoxicating liquors and drugs for the purpose of sustaining a top-heavy administration, progressively repressive legislation in order to suppress an ever-growing agitation seeking to give expression to a nation's agony, degrading treatment of Indians residing in your dominions and you have shown total disregard of our feelings by glorifying the Punjab administration and flouting the Mussulman sentiment.

I know you would not mind if we could fight and wrest the sceptre from your hands. You know that we are powerless to do that, for you have ensured our incapacity to fight in open and honourable battle. Bravery on the battlefield is thus impossible for us. Bravery of the soul still remains open to us. I know you will respond to that also. I am engaged in evolving that bravery. Non-co-operation means nothing less than training in self-sacrifice. Why should we co-operate with you when we know that by your administration of this great country we are being daily enslaved in an increasing degree? This response of the people to my appeal is not due to my personality. I would like you to dismiss me, and for that matter the Ali Brothers too, from your consideration. My personality will fail to evoke any response to anti-Muslim cry if I were foolish enough to raise it, as the magic name of the Ali Brothers would fail to inspire the Mussulmans with enthusiasm if they were madly to raise an anti-Hindu cry. People flock in their thousands to listen to us because we today represent the voice of a nation groaning under your iron heels. The Ali Brothers were your friends as I was, and still am. My religion forbids me to bear any ill will towards you. I would not raise my hand against you even if I had the power. I expect to conquer you only by my suffering. The Ali Brothers will certainly draw the sword, if they could, in defence of their religion and their country. But they and I have made common cause with the people of India in their attempt to voice their feelings and to find a remedy for their distress.

You are in search of a remedy to suppress this rising ebulition of national feeling. I venture to suggest to you that the only way to suppress it is to remove the causes. You have yet the power. You can repent of the wrong done to Indians. You can compel Mr. Lloyd George to redeem his promises. I assure you he has kept many

escape-doors. You can compel the Viceroy to retire in favour of a better one, you can revise your ideas about Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer. You can compel the Government to summon a conference of the recognized leaders of the people, duly elected by them and representing all shades of opinion so as to revise means for granting swaraj in accordance with the wishes of the people of India.

But this you cannot do unless you consider every Indian to be in reality your equal and brother. I ask for no patronage, I merely point out to you, as a friend, an honourable solution of a grave problem. The other solution, namely repression, is open to you. I prophesy that it will fail. It has begun already. The Government has already imprisoned two brave men of Panipat for holding and expressing their opinions freely. Another is on his trial in Lahore for having expressed similar opinions. One in the Oudh District is already imprisoned. Another awaits judgment. You should know what is going on in your midst. Our propaganda is being carried on in anticipation of repression. I invite you respectfully to choose the better way and make common cause with the people of India whose salt you are eating. To seek to thwart their aspirations is disloyalty to the country.

I am,

Your faithful friend,

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 27-10-1920

225. "DEPRESSED" CLASSES

Vivekanand[1] used to call the *Panchamas*[2] "suppressed classes". There is no doubt that Vivekanand's is a more accurate adjective. We have suppressed them and have consequently become ourselves depressed. That we have become the "pariahs of the Empire" is, in Gokhale's language, the retributive justice meted out to us by a just God. A correspondent[3] indignantly asks me in a pathetic letter reproduced elsewhere, what I am doing for them. I have given the

[1] Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902); disciple of Ramakrishan and eminent exponent of Vedantic philosophy

[2] Lowest caste among Hindus traditionally regarded as untouchables

[3] S. M. Michael; *vide* "Satyagraha and the Suppressed Classes", 17-11-1920.

letter with the correspondent's own heading. Should not we the Hindus wash our blood-stained hands before we ask the English to wash theirs? This is a proper question reasonably put. And if a member of a slave nation could deliver the suppressed classes from their slavery, without freeing myself from my own, I would do so today. But it is an impossible task. A slave has not the freedom even to do the right thing. It is right for me to prohibit the importation of foreign goods, but I have no power to bring it about. It was right for Maulana Mahomed Ali to go to Turkey and to tell the Turks personally that India was with them in their righteous struggle. He was not free to do so. If I had a truly national legislature I would answer Hindu insolence by erecting special and better wells for the exclusive use of suppressed classes and by erecting better and more numerous schools for them, so that there would be not a single member of the suppressed classes left without a school to teach their children. But I must wait for that better day.

Meanwhile are the depressed classes to be left to their own resources? Nothing of the sort. In my own humble manner I have done and am doing all I can for my *Panchama* brother.

There are three courses open to these down-trodden members of the nation. For their impatience they may call in the assistance of the slave-owning Government. They will get it but they will fall from the frying pan into the fire. Today they are slaves of slaves. By seeking government aid, they will be used for suppressing their kith and kin. Instead of being sinned against, they will themselves be the sinners. The Mussulmans tried it and failed. They found that they were worse off than before. The Sikhs did it unwittingly and failed. Today there is no more discontented community in India than the Sikhs. Government aid is therefore no solution.

The second is rejection of Hinduism and wholesale conversion to Islam or Christianity. And if a change of religion could be justified for worldly betterment, I would advise it without hesitation. But religion is a matter of the heart. No physical inconvenience can warrant abandoment of one's own religion. If the inhuman treatment of the *Panchamas* were a part of Hinduism, its rejection would be a paramount duty both for them and for those like me who would not make a fetish even of religion and condone every evil in its sacred name. But I believe that untouchability is no part of Hinduism. It is rather its excrescence to be removed by every effort. And there is

quite an army of Hindu reformers who have set their heart upon ridding Hinduism of this blot. Conversion, therefore, I hold, is no remedy whatsoever.

Then there remains, finally, self-help and self-dependence, with such aid as the non-*Panchama* Hindus will render of their own motion, not as a matter of patronage but as a matter of duty. And herein comes the use of non-co-operation. My correspondent was correctly informed by Mr. Rajagopalachari and Mr. Hanumantrao that I would favour well-regulated non-co-operation for this acknowledged evil. But non-co-operation means independence of outside help, it means effort from within. It would not be non-co-operation to insist on visiting prohibited areas. That may be civil disobedience if it is peacefully carried out. But I have found to my cost that civil disobedience requires far greater prelimi-nary training and self-control. All can non-co-operate, but few only can offer civil disobedience. Therefore, by way of protest against Hinduism, the *Panchamas* can certainly stop all contact and connection with the other Hindus so long as the special grievances are maintained. But this means organized intelligent effort. And so far as I can see, there is no leader among the *Panchamas* who can lead them to victory through non-co-operation.

The better way therefore, perhaps, is for the *Panchamas* heartily to join the great national movement that is now going on for throwing off the slavery of the present Government. It is easy enough for the *Panchama* friends to see that non-co-operation against this evil Government presupposes co-operation between the different sections forming the Indian nation. The Hindus must realize that if they wish to offer successful non-co-operation against the Government, they must make common cause with the *Panchamas*, even as they have made common cause with the Mussulmans. Non-co-operation when it is free from violence is essentially a movement of intensive self-purification. That process has commenced and whether the *Panchamas* deliberately take part in it or not, the rest of the Hindus dare not neglect them without hampering their own progress. Hence though the *Panchama* problem is as dear to me as life itself, I rest satisfied with the exclusive attention to national non-co-operation, feel sure that the greater includes the less.

Closely allied to this question is the non-Brahmin question. I wish I had studied it more closely than I have been able to. A

quotation from my speech delivered at a private meeting in Madras has been torn from its context and misused to further the antagonism between the so-called Brahmins and the so-called non-Brahmins. I do not wish to retract a word of what I said at that meeting. I was appealing to those who are accepted as Brahmins. I told them that in my opinion the treatment of non-Brahmins by the Brahmins was as Satanic as the treatment of us by the British. I added that the non-Brahmins should be placated without any ado or bargaining. But my remarks were never intended to encourage the powerful non-Brahmins of Maharashtra or Madras, or the mischievous element among them, to overawe the so-called Brahmins. I use the world "so-called" advisedly. For the Brahmins who have freed themselves from the thraldom of superstitious orthodoxy have not only no quarrel with non-Brahmins as such, but are in every way eager to advance non-Brahmins wherever they are weak. No lover of his country can possibly achieve its general advance if he dared to neglect the least of his countrymen. Those non-Brahmins therefore who are coquetting with the Government are selling themselves and the nation to which they belong. By all means let those who have faith in the Govenment help to sustain it, but let no Indian worthy of his birth cut of his nose to spite the face.

Young India, 27-10-1920

226. ALIGARH

Aligarh is an old institution—forty-five years old. It has unique traditions. It has a great record behind it. It may claim to have given to India the Ali Brothers. It is the best known centre of Islamic culture in India.

Why do I seek to destroy it? Some Mussulmans easily think that I mean ill under the pretence of wishing well to Aligarh. Little do they know that I am imploring Panditji to do to the Hindu University what I am asking the trustees to do to Aligarh, and I am certainly going to plead with the Benares students as earnestly as I have with the Aligarh boys. I have done the same with the Khalsa College. The latter is the only centre of Sikh culture.

I do desire passionately to destroy all these three institutions as they are, and would strive to raise purer and truer ones instead.

I deny that these institutions are in any way true representatives

of their respective cultures. And as much as Islam is in peril at English hands, Hinduism and Sikhism are also in peril. I asked an Aligarh professor whether he would preach complete independence for India as her goal if necessary, or if the institution as such could refuse to receive a Governor in his racial capacity. He frankly admitted that it was not possible. And yet I make bold to say that today the vast majority of the students of India have no regard or respect for British rule. They are disgusted with it. They have certainly no genuine affection for it. I venture to submit that to keep boys in this false atmosphere is to teach them to deny their faith and for us to do violence to their respective cultures. *We will not make a nation of hypocrites*.

With the knowledge we have of British intentions, it is unmanly—un-Indian—for us to accept even a portion of our own money through hands stained with the blood of the innocents at Jallianwala. We may as well accept gifts from a robber who has robbed us of our property. This Government has robbed us of our honour and put one of our religions in peril. In my humble opinion, it is a sin for nation to receive education in schools financed by or under the influence or control of the Government.

I have therefore no hesitation in advising immediate destruction of these institutions at all cost. But if the trustees, the teachers and the parents or the boys will act in unison, there is no cost to be paid and eveything to be gained.

I am asking for the form to be changed, I do not seek to destroy the soul. Even as we leave bodies which we have out-grown, so must we leave the institutions which we have out-grown, and bring into being others, more in accord with our needs. How can scholastic institutions which represent the youth of a nation lag behind when the nation is marching forward? Several high schools having a more or less distinguished record have thrown off the yoke of grant and affiliation in Gujarat. They are none the worse for it. They are all the purer for it. The principals and the trustees can train the youth under their charge in a freer atmosphere.

Financial considerations deter those who do not want to work. Our institutions will collapse if the teachers or the trustees are false to their trust, or the nation really does not want them. The programme of non- co-operation is based on the belief that the nation is tired of the present Government and wants to change it without resorting to

methods of violence. The experience so far gained shows that the nation does definitely desire the change. If there is failure or delay, it will be due to want of workers.

Young India, 27-10-1920

227. OUR LATE TOUR

My experiences are becoming so much enriched by every tour that it is difficult for me to cope with them and give the results to the reader. I must therefore content myself with adding to the stock on the necessity of discipline and organization. I have dealt with our experiences up to the journey to Cawnpore. I was dreading our approach to Cawnpore—the Cawnpore of Maulana Hasrat Mohani and Dr. Murarilal[1]. They are both great workers. The arrangements at the station were perfect. A large crowd awaited us at the station. But the discipline observed was so good that we were able to make our way through two solid rows of men without a single member moving before we had taken our seats in the cars. What might have meant a waste of thirty minutes was finished within five. The procession was happily abandoned. The programme was as business like as the reception at the station. We reached at about 8 o'clock. We had only a day at our disposal, but during that time there was a meeting with the workers, a private interview with Mr. Frazer Hunt of the *Chicago Tribune*, a visit to the Widows' Home, opening a national Gujarati school, a meeting of the Gujarati ladies (a crowded ladies' meeting), opening of a national arbitration court, an open-air meeting, and finally private chats with visitors. All this was finished without any undue rush and strain. There was at first a little confusion at the open-air meeting. It was discovered that no previous instructions were given to the volunteers. But after a little effort, there too perfect silence reigned, and the audience listened to three heavy speeches amid perfect silence. It is my conviction that as soon as we have organized and disciplined ourselves, swaraj will be established. An organized refusal to be ruled by any foreign power is all that is needed in a country like ours. Lucknow was a contrast. There was utter confusion at the station and a seething mass of humanity. It was a demonstration of undisciplined love. All were pressing forward to

[1] Who resigned the title of Rai Saheb and returned the badge and sanad to the U.P. Government

get at us. Not one of them realized that it was an impossible task. As last I refused to move unless the crowd had regained self-control. In a few minutes the crowd understood what I had to say, and made way for us. There was trying pro-cession. We were all privileged to stay with Maulana Abdul Bari Saheb. He had engaged a Brahmin cook and made special arragements for the Hindus of the party. The reader may recall that it was here that Maulana Zafar-ul-Mulk, a cultured Mussulman of blameless character, was arrested. It was not far from Lucknow that Mr. Willoughby was murdered. There was at night a vast meeting. The crowd listened with rapt attention. I wish I had time and space to give the gist of the speeches. We all referred to the Kheri murder[1] and showed how it had taken place in spite of the vigilance of the Khilafat Committee, and how it had injured the cause of the Khilafat by creating unnecessary alarm and covering the local committee with suspicion. I am sorry to have to note that the leaders were conspicuous by their absence. They think that the movement of non-co-operation is harmful. Time alone will show. We must be patient with them. They belong to the nation and will march with it as soon as their distrust is dispelled.

I must reluctantly omit the stirring events of Amritsar and Lahore and hasten to Bhiwani. At Amritsar there was a huge but unorganized crowd at the station. We evaded it by alighting at another platform. The demonstration at Lahore we evaded by motoring there.

The night journey to Bhiwani was perfectly restless. Crowds insisted on *darshan*. One man suggested that mahatmas needed no rest and that it was their duty to give *darshan*. Some were really angry that we all stolidly refused to move out of beds. Another remarked that we must be highly inconsiderate not to respect the wishes of the people and get up to give *darshan*. At length tired and sleepless, we reached Bhiwani. Probably fifty thousand people had gathered from surrounding villages. I was therefore afraid that we would be crushed to atoms. But to my agreeable surprise, I found perfect order there. There was no rush or noisy bustle at the station. All kept their respective places. The procession was comfortably managed in spite of a dense throng. Order observed at the *pandal* was still more striking. It was a huge artistic but non-pretentious structure. There was not a single chair—not even for the president.

[1] Assassination of Willoughby

Distinguished visitors were seated on a substantial and commodious platfom erected in the midst of the *pandal*. Although there was accommodation for 12,000 people, the *pandal* appeared to be roomy. The approaches were wide. The ground was excavated to slope towards the centre.All therefore had a perfect view of the centre. The only sugges tion I have to make is that semicircle is a better arrangement. There should be no seats at the back of the platform. The Sind arrangement, referred to in these columns, of T inverted as T, is therefore better from an acoustic standpoint.

Let Bhiwani and Hyderabad (Sind) present a lesson to the approaching Congress. The Reception Committee will save a few thousand rupees and much space if they will dispense with chairs whether on the platform or below. We must cater more and more for the masses and their leaders. We, the educated few, hope to control them only through the leaders of the masses who are as simple as the masses themselves. It is cruel to impose chairs on the many, because the few seem to want them. I hope, too, that the Nagpur volunteers will be trained from now for their respective duties so that we may have perfect arrangements regarding every little detail.

Young India, 27-10-1920

228. IN DEFENCE OF MALAVIYAJI AND SHASTRIAR

TO

THE EDITOR

YOUNG INDIA

SIR,

Mahatma Gandhi in his article headed "The Hallucination of Schools and Colleges"[1] while discussing the non-co-operation programme regarding the withdrawal of students from schools and colleges, admitting that the movement has been called "harmful" and "opposed to the best interests of the country", says that Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya is its most uncompromising opponent. Then he taxes himself to find out the reasons for this attitude of Panditji. We quote Mahatma Gandhi : "The answer I have been able to find is that the latter do not consider the present Government as an unmixed evil as the former do. In other words, the opponents do not sufficiently realize the significance of the Punjab and khilafat wrongs." And

[1] Dated 29-9-1920

further on he proceeds to say : "It is unthinkable that Malaviyaji and Shastriar cannot feel the wrongs even as I do. And yet that is precisely my meaning." We assure Mahatma Gandhi that we have the most profound and sincere respect for him, but that would not blind us to the claims of others. We hold no brief for Messrs Malaviyaji and Shastriar. They can take care of themselves. Panditji's brilliant speech in the council, his touching appeal for funds for the "Jallianwala Bagh Memorial" and his recent stirring speech at the Empire Theatre, Bombay, supply an emphatic refutation to the suggestion that Mahatma Gandhi, quite unconsciously no doubt, has made. Mr. Shastriar's articles in the *Servant of India*[1], and his speeches on the Punjab tragedy also reveal the burning patriotism, somewhat softened by the judicial mind of Mr. Gokhale's worthy successor. Both of these great men have sufficiently given vent to expressions of deep feeling in connection with the khilafat wrong.

Mahatma Gandhi himself has said so much on the question of individual liberty and the importance of following one's conscience, that we can hardly believe that he would, by any action of his, try to curtail the one, or silence the other. But that is what the article indirectly attempts to do. That there is ample scope for difference of opinion in the adoption of means to attain the end is conceivable, but that so great an individualist as Mahatma Gandhi should attempt, however remotely, to curtail the expression of different views, is not so easy to imagine.

In conclusion, we appeal to Mahatma Gandhi not to make such equivocal statements, we appeal to the modern Buddha not to excite emotions, to base his arguments on reason alone, and trust he will see the impropriety of the statements he has made and will hasten to make reparation for the same. We trust Mahatma Gandhi will allow us the same honesty of conviction and freedom of opinion as Mahatma Gandhi claims for himself, though we have the misfortune to differ from him.

Yours, etc.,

"SWADESHI"

I gladly publish this letter. I honour the writers for their defence of the two great patriots. I wish they had permitted me to publish their names. Let me however inform the reader that they are Gujaratis. And it is a matter of pride to me that Gujaratis would resent like everyone else any aspersion upon the patriotism of either Malaviyji or Shastriji. But I hasten to assure these friends that they will not be able to out do me in the race for honouring the two patriots. For the time

[1] Organ of the Servants of India Society, Poona

being we differ in our views on matters of highest importance. I have endeavoured honestly to find out the reason for the difference and have come to conclusion that they cannot feel as strongly as I do the khilafat and the Punjab wrongs. Feelings are measured by acts, not by words. Their diagnosis is different from mine. From the two wrongs I deduce that I am to expect nothing good from this Government. Not so they. Therefore, whilst for them association with the Government is possible, for me it is impossible unless it repents of its sins. Two surgeons may describe a particular disease by the same name and yet one may prescribe mere ointment and the other a dangerous surgical operation. There need not be on that account any want of respect ascribed to the one who resorts to an operation. And if the other were to seek the cause of difference in the methods of treatment, he would be entitled to say and be justified in saying that the one who prescribed the ointment treatment could not have realized the desperate nature of the disease, though he described it by the same name. I wish to assure the writers further that in my statement of the case there is no equivocation. Nor is there any desire on my part to curtail any one's liberty, or silence the voice of conscience, least of the two partiots. On the contrary, I have humility enough to own that though I *feel* sure that my diagnosis and method are both correct, [they] *may* be wrong. And when I *find* that they are, I shall be quick enough to acknowledge my mistake. Lastly, let me assure these friends that I have made it my business in life not to appeal to emotions, that is, excite passions but to put the most abstruse truths in simplest terms, so that the reason even of the illiterate masses may comprehend.

Young India, 27-10-1920

229. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, DAKOR

October 27, 1920

This place where we have gathered is a centre of pilgrimage. But India today is in such straits, such a sad plight, that even when we are in a holy place, we fail to realize the meaning of sanctity. Moreover, I have not come here to have *darshan* of Ranchhodji[1]. In these days, Ranchhodji has lost the power to set us free from our debt. The reason for this is that we, his devotees, have no devotion, we have

[1] A name of Lord Krishna

lost our faith. I can see with my own eyes that places of pilgrimage have lost their purity and, instead, become nurseries of hypocrisy. When will God deliver us from this evil, this sin?

I have often heard that many pilgrims coming to Dakor do not conduct themselves properly. On their way, they misbehave at places. I do not know whether there is any truth in this talk. But, if there is anything that our religion, that of Hindus and of Muslims, teaches us, it is above all to keep our desires or senses under control. All religions teach us to look upon every woman in the world, according to her age, as our mother, our sister or our daughter. I have heard, and I believe it, that pilgrims to Dakor violate this very first tenet of religion, and yet believe that a dip in the Gomati would purify them. Can a dip be of any avail? I do not even believe that they wish to be purified by a bath. The practice of truth and *brahmacharya* are elementary requirements of religion. Even for those who accept family life, *brahmacharya* is a dharma. *Brahmacharya* consists in controlloing all the five sense—hearing, sight, smell, taste and touch. This dharma is not for the sannyasi only but also for all good householders. One who does not follow these simple rules is none such. This then, is our first duty if we would live rightly, remain independent and be no one's slave—be it in Hindu society or in Muslim.

Someone told me that there would be many *Dharalas*[1] in this gathering and that I might address a few words to them. What should I tell them? This at least I must tell them, that, if they have any idea of religion, they should know that it does not tell them to rob others. Rather than live by robbery, it would be better to commit suicide. Rather than rob others that one may eat, it is better to starve to death. Rather than rob for clothes, it is better to go naked.

This plea that I am making to the whole of India is not addressed to *Vanias* and Brahmins alone, but to everyone in the country, to *Dheds*[2], Bhangis[3], *Dharals*—to Muslims, Parsis, Christians and others. I entreat you all that, if you wish to make India happy, your primary duty is to live in harmony with people of other faiths. That is the duty of good neighbours. Had it not been for some work

[1] Community in Gujarat
[2] Communities traditionally regarded as untouchables
[3] *ibid*

which called brother Shaukat Ali away from Bombay, you would have seen him standing here beside me in this place of pilgrimage for Hindus. Wherever I go, I take him—and now I take both the brothers—along with me. I tell everyone that I have lost two of my own brothers but that my regard for these two brothers is no less than for my own. I claim to be a *sanatani*[1] Hindu and, despite my fraternal relations with these two Muslims, I think I am a perfectly good Hindu. Maintaining such relations is in my own interest. For if, being a Hindu, I can die for Islam, then, when the occasion arises, I shall be able to lay down my life for Hinduism as well. In this lies a challenge both for me and the country.

A great calamity has befallen seven crores of our Muslim brethren in the matter of their religion. A mighty Empire is bent upon destroying their faith. Islam is under the shadow of the Empire, just as at the moment the moon in the sky above is caught in an eclipse. You must rescue Islam from this grip. The eclipse of the moon is a physical phenomenon and it is not in our hands, either, to rescue her from it. This eclipse does not frighten me at all, it does not force me to observe a fast. But the eclipse which has our soul and our heart in its grip makes me shudder. If fasting can set us free, I pray to God to give me the strength to fast. If suicide can do so, may God give me the strength to commit suicide. The lovely moon that is India is darkened by the shadow of England. I have already explained one reason for this. The sword of the Empire hangs over Islam. Today it is Islam's turn, tomorrow it will be that of Hinduism. The Empire which has betrayed Islam, which, in the shape of the Punjab, made the whole of India crawl on its stomach, forced children all over the country to raise their hands in salute, and, in the process, took the lives of two children six or seven years old, the Empire under which fifteen hundred or a thousand innocent ment have been murdered—what kind of an Empire is this? I cannot measure the extent to which this Empire has cast its eclipsing shadow over us.

The present Government is no *Ramarajya*[2]; it is *Ravanarajya*[3]. We suffer under this *Ravanarajya* and learn the ways of wickedness under it. How are we to be rid of this *Ravanarajya*? By becoming evil men in dealing with evil men? By meeting a crafty man with

[1] One who accepts the essentials of Hinduism as unalterable
[2] Literally, Rama's rule, traditionally regarded as the ideal political order
[3] Ravana's rule, the opposite of *Ramarajya*

craftiness? How can we ever match them in their wickedness? How can we outwit the Empire in its cunning ways? How can the men of policy among us succeed against this Empire which, by its skilful deceptions, has conquered even Europe with all her cunning ways? Even if we, Hindus and Muslims, would employ cunning, we simply do not have it. If we want to kill Ravana with brute force, we should have ten heads and twenty arms like him. From where are we to get these? It is only a man of Rama's strength who can do so. What was that strength of his? He had observed *brahmacharya* and he was God-fearing. His army consisted of monkeys. Have monkeys ever used weapons? During *Diwali*[1] we celebrate even today the victory of Rama over Ravana. But we can truly celebrate this victory only when we destroy this monster with not ten but a thousand heads. So long as we have not accomplished this, there is nothing but *vanavasa*[1] for us. If you are men who would never cast lustful glances at chaste and devoted women like Sita, then alone will you be able to mobilize sufficient strength to destroy this Empire. If any power has succeeded in subduing Satan, it is God's. He it was Who created Satan and He it is Who can kill him. Man can never vanquish him by his own strength. It is God Who subdues him through the agency of a man serving Him with single-minded devotion.

We have to face such a mighty Empire. I do not wish to bemoan our sorry lot under it. On the contrary, I ask of the people of India that they leave it to me alone, as my privilege, to criticize this Government. At the time when I was co-operating with it, I used to see you spitting fire against it. It does not become you even to speak ill of it. You have not swallowed the bitter pills that I have. You have not acquired even one hundredth of the strength I have derived from swallowing these bitter pills. I have many reasons for being angry with the government, but I have gulped down my anger. On this occasion, too, I speak no word in anger, but only what the self in me dictates. I do not want from you even so much as one sentence in anger against the British Empire. Rather than look at the evil in the British, you should look at your own and caste it out; that will set you

[1] The Hindu festival of lights celebrating, according to legend, Rama's success in rescuing Sita

[2] Literally, dwelling in the forest. The reference is to Rama's living in the forest for 14 years to fuffil Dasharatha's promise to Kaikeyi.

free. If I point out the wrongs of the British Empire, it is becuase I have been a witness to them. After having faithfully served it for thirty years, I am convinced that it is no *Ramarajya* but *Ravanarajya*. If this Empire seems an evil thing to me, it is not because I hate the British, I hate only the Empire. As long as the British Empire refuses to repent, to apologize to the men and women of India, and say, "We are here to serve you, and would like to stay on if you will keep us as your servants," I am ready to face the aeroplanes and machine-guns of that Empire and fight it. These planes and machineguns cannot frighten me.

I see nothing contrary to religion in opposing the Empire. If need be, I can resort to non-co-operation against my own son. Likewise, I may do so against the Empire. That also is dharma. It is but human to err and sin. I admit that, even though I exercise self-control, I am far from perfect. I am imperfect and full of sin. All the same, I fear sin. I have my failings, which I try to overcome. I am no slave to them. This Empire, on the other hand, looks upon sin as virtue. It builds its own prosperity on the ruins of other countries. This is the height of tyranny. I do not wish to make India prosperous by crushing or ruining others. I do not want to raise India by destroying the religious faith of others. But this Empire says that for its own imperial glory it will stoop to any atrocity. It does not say this in so many words, but it acts as it did in the Punjab. As a devotee of Lord Krishna, I ask you to boycott the schools and law-courts of such an Empire. I have no fears from any quarters for my person. Though I am present here, I have handed over my body to the Empire. Let your hearts be guided by God alone. The moment you do so, your chains will break.

Non-co-operation is a golden weapon,a weapon of the gods. When you see injustice, see someone as evil incarnate, you should forsake him : Shri Krishna taught this to the Hindus, the Prophet Mahomed to the Muslims and the Zend-Avesta teaches it to the Parsis. Tulsidas has said, in his gentle way, that one should keep away from the wicked, that their company is a source of suffering. You should run away from evil men and from injustice as you would from a forest fire. This running away is non-co-operation. Non-co-operation does not proceed from ill will or hatred. It is a religious duty for the man of religion. Even between father and son, non-co-operation is proper; between man and wife and between relatives, it is a duty. Were I to allow my son who drank and ate meat to stay in my

house even for a second, I, as a *Vaishnava* father, would be consigned to eternal hell. If I fail in explaining the meaning of this non-co-operation to you, swaraj will be impossible to acheive. If you want to acheive it, the only way is through non-co-operation.

Yes, certainly, there is a second way, that of the sword. But have you ever practised *tapascharya*[1] to be able to wield the sword? Have you practised self-control for the purpose? The Muslims are better able to use the sword than you. But even they have realized that the sword will not avail here. Do you think the killing of a few will frighten the Empire into giving us swaraj? That Empire which is established on the corpses of thousands of Englishmen, which has shed rivers of British, Sikh and Pathan blood, is that Empire going to be frightened by the murder of a handful of people? Most certainly not. Though I criticize the British Empire, I also call it fearless. The British love their country. It is their evil tendencies which are to be shunned. I would even admire Ravana's courage. Tulsidas has said that, if one must have an enemy, let him be like Ravana. To fight against Lakshmana[2], one must be an Indrajit[3]. If you would fight such an Empire, you should abandon all fear and take the field against it, sword in hand. But this is beyond our power. As I understand the Hindu religion, a Hindu should fight without a sword, offer his own head rather than take that of another. I claim to be one of the greatest Kshatriyas of India. Can I not fire a few shots with a revolver? Can I not administer poison? Can I not throw bombs from an aeroplane if required to do so? But I have deliberately decided to have nothing to do with these things. As god has not given me the power to create even a creature like the bug, it is not for me to take anyone's life. My duty is to lay down my life. I can be called a true Kshatriya only if I can lay down my life in defending myself, my wife or my country. The weakest among the weak, even a woman, can cultivate the true Kshatriya spirit within himself or herself—that is, can tell an enemy, "I will stand firm—do your worst." Otherwise, even a murderer would have to be called a Kshatriya and a man who raised his hand to strike a woman could also be called a Kshatriya. That is

[1] Self-suffering as moral discipline

[2] Shri Ramachandra's brother, who accompanied him to the forest

[3] Meghanad, son of Ravana, who had earned the name of Indrajit by his victory over Indra, chief of the gods

why I proclaim to the people of India, ever so loudly, that whatever they do, they should do in the true Kshatriya spirit.

Abusing Muslims and looking down upon them will put our own religion to shame. Even assuming for the moment that Muslims will betray you, you can employ against them the same strength that you would employ for the purpose of non-co-operation with the British. Have you ever co-operated with the Muslims? For once, try to join hands with them. You have all along co-operated with this Government and we are no better off for that. That is why I ask you to offer non-co-operation against the Government and co-operate with the Muslims instead. For the purpose of non-co-operation, you do not have to resort to violence. You cannot convert by force those who do not wish to join you. You should be all humility before them and plead with them. If they kick you, you should submit to their kicks; then alone will you be able to promote the cause of non-co-operation. If you are truthful and humble, and if you have unity amongst you and you are brave, who will dare to leave your side and join the Government? In order to win over such men, you should make yourselves fearless.

How is that a hundred thousand white men can lord it over thirty-three crores of us? The reason is that we have become slavish-minded. If we say to them "Friends, as from today, we will no longer be your slaves," they would either leave the country or stay on as our servants. To acquire the strength to say this, the first step to take is to cultivate a sense of brotherhood with the *Dharalas*, the *Bhils*[1], the Muslims, the *Dheds*, the *Bhangis*—with all the communities—that is, to think of them all as our brothers and not look down upon any. You are angry with the Muslims for killing cows, but don't the Hindus kill them? To continue to milk a cow even when the milk is exhausted and she bleeds, to strike her offspring with iron-spikes, this is in no way better than killing a cow. With what face can the Hindus, who are given to such cruel exploi-tation of the cow, go up to their Muslim brethren and ask them why they kill their cows? If Hindus want cows to be saved, they should show their large-heartedness. I would be ashamed to approach Muslims for the pur-pose. The British eat beef every day. British soldiers cannot do without beef—cow's meat—for a single day. Why, then, do you hate Muslims alone? A Muslim is God-fearing, at any rate. If you lived with the Ali Brothers for a while, you

[1] Tribe in Central India and Gujarat

would know how much they fear God. If you make common cause with the Muslims, swaraj will not be long in coming.

Take your children out of Government schools, do not send your representatives to the legislatures, ply the spinning-wheel and wear khadi.

One last thing I have to metnion is that we want to educate our children and set up new law-courts, and for this we need money. Contribute according to your capacity. I am not happy asking for your money. I do not know many young men in whose hands I may safely entrust it. If you wish to help the cause of non-co-operation, give to the volunteers, who will go round just now, anything you may want to, from a pice onwards. For the cause of non-co-operation, each of you can give a pice at least. If one can do nothing else, everyone can spin and weave. You are mistaken if you believe that by wearing mill-made cloth you support swadeshi. The mills cannot produce enough cloth to meet the needs of the country. In khadialone is there beauty. I see a symbol of slavery in fine muslin and, therefore, I find khadi to be as light as a feather, and the former appears thick to me. Let your children stay at home. It does not matter if they do not study for a while. Let them sing hymns to Vishnu at home.

If you wish to support the cause of non-co-operation and free yourselves from the yoke of the wicked Empire, do not go away at the sight of volunteers but contribute your mite. If anyone approaches you for funds on my behalf or Sardar Vallabhbhai's or on behalf of the Swarajya Sabha, do not give anything straightaway. Contribute only if you happen to know the persons. Those who do no have money on them now may send their contributions to Ahmedabad. From today, may God make you fearless, give you the strength for self-sacrifice, may He make you truthful and humble. May you fear God alone and may He rid you of your fear of other men.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-11-1920

230. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, DAKOR

October 27, 1920

SISTERS,

All of you should listen to me in silence. I will finish what I have to say in a few words. While some of you belong to Dakor, others must be visitors to this place of pilgrimage. I am sure there is hardly any among you in this large gatherwing who is fully aware of the present plight of India. What is our duty, our dharma, in the condition in which India is placed today? You have all come to this place of pilgrimage with feelings of devotion. You probably believe that you will be rid of your sins through the *darshan* of the Dakor shrine, that you will have your heart's desire granted if you take a dip in the Gomati. Some of you may be thinking that by having *darshan* of a mahatma like this Gandhi, they will be sanctified. This is far from the truth. In fact, you pollute the Gomati if you merely bathe in it without purifying your hearts. It will avail you little if, going for the *darshan* of Dakorji, you leave behind there only the dirt on your feet. The *darshan* can bear fruit only if we purify our hearts, fill them with good thoughts and attain self-knowledge. You yourselves will ask what good such *darshan* can do to a sceptic like myself or to a Christian. I wish to make it clear to you that so long as the heart is not purified and the mind not cleansed, *darshan* of Ranchhodraiji or bathing in the Gomati can bear no fruit.

First of all, I request you, my sisters, to understand the true meaning of religion. So long as you do not do this, you will not realize what the present condition of India is. While you look upon the present Government as your parents and believe that you live in peace under it, you will not be able to free yourselves from slavery. I believe that the Government has enslaved us. For thirty years, I thought that we were happy under the protection of the British Government, but now I am convinced that, instead of being sheltered by the government, we burn in its scorching heat. We are about to lose all sense of dharma. On my way, I saw a sign board which said that we lose caste by eating in hotels. This is true enough, but it is not the whole truth. When were these hotels introduced? It was under the present Government. Why were they introduced? Because the present Government taught us to lead a life of ease and luxury. We now prefer bazar-made preparations to what is cooked at home and violate the strict restrictions of the *Vaishnava* way. This is a Government

which collects hundreds of thousands of rupees by trafficking in liquor and opium. It is said in the Shatras that a king who carries on trade is of the middle order, one who raises money from his subjects just enough to help him protect them is of the highest order, but one who collects revenue by making addicts and drunkards of his subjects is of the lowest order. I have come here to make you, my sisters realize that our present Government is of this last order.

We have been taught in the *Bhagavad Gita* to treat all men as equals. The Hindus and Muslims are like the two eyes of the country. There should be no enmity between them. But we look with contempt upon them, do not associate ourselves with them, and treat them as our enemies. Today this Government is bent upon destroying the religion of the Muslims. If it can destroy their religion today, it can destroy ours tomorrow.

And now about the Punjab. Perhaps you have not even heard of the Punjab. But it is through the Punjab that our *rishis* entered India. The Punjab is the land in which the *rishis* wrote the Shastras. It is in this same Punjab that the Government humiliated our men and women, whipped the children, and forced the people to crawl on their stomachs like serpents. It is against dharma to accept the authority of such a Government. That is why I tell you that we should overthrow this *Ravanarajya* and establish *Ramarajya* in its place.

My second request to you is that you should adopt swadeshi. This Government has taught us false ways. We have come to believe that foreign cloth adds to one's beauty. Even the clothes worn by you, in this gathering, have the odour of foreign cloth. Even mill cloth is not swadeshi. The cloth produced by the mills is not sufficient to meet the needs of the country. You are not quite so poor. I have seen people who are poorer than you. I have seen men who have only a loin-cloth with which to clothe themselves and women who have no more than a torn skirt. We can set ourselves free this very day if India adopts swadeshi, if all women take to the good old spinning-wheel and if they put on clothes made only with yarn spun by themselves. To the women of the past, virtue was beauty. Wearing of foreign cloth makes a woman ugly. There is a touch of the harlot in a woman seeking loveliness by fine dressing. What is our image of Sita and Damayanti, whom we adore? Is it that of women clad in finery? We revere Damayanti who wandered in the forest, half-clad, and Sita who suffered *vanavasa* for fourteen years. Was

Harishchandra's[1] queen, Who served as a maid, dressed in fine clothes? In those days, people covered themselves with nothing more than leaves. To seek beauty by adorning oneself is to imitate the harlot. If you want to follow your dharma, you must first understand the swadeshi dharma. It consists in using cloth made with yarn spun by yourselves and woven by your menfolk, singing as they work. I am truly handsome, since the clothes I am wearing are made wih yarn spun by women and lovingly woven by men. If you wish to deliver yourselves from *Ravanarajya* and establish *Ramarajya*, you must adopt swadeshi and introduce the spinning-wheel in your homes. There are many women now who will be able to teach you how to work it. Each one of you should spin for at least an hour daily, singing devotional songs the while. Get the yarn, afterwards, woven into cloth.

You will no doubt find it difficult at first to use hand-spun cloth in place of foreign muslin. Some women in Bombay complained to me that their saris, which previously weighted less than forty *tolas*[2] now exceeded seventy *tolas* in weight. I replied to them in figurative language, saying that, they had till now lowered their own weight by reducing the weight of their clothes During pregnancy, women cheerfully carry their load for nine months and suffer the severe pains of child-birth with joy. This is the time for the birth of new India. Will you not be ready at least to carry the weight of heavy clothes at this hour? You can make India free only if you bear this burden. If you wish to give birth to a new India, every woman must bear this burden not merely for nine months but for nine years.

Secondly, do you know to what kind of schools you send your children? You send them to the schools of *Ravanarajya*. Would a devout *Vaishnava* ever send his or her children to the schools of an irreligious Government? Would I ever go to the wicked to learn the *Gita* or the *Bhagavat*[3] from them? Our present schools are run by a wicked Government. So long as these schools are not run by us, do

[1] King of Ayodhya who suffered great hardships while in the service of a *Chandala* (outcaste); he was even ready to kill his wife Taramati for the sake of truth.

[2] Forty *tolas* make about a pound.

[3] One of the 18 *Puranas*, sacred narrative poems in Sanskrit, part history and part legend; it depicts the love of Radha and Krishna as symbolic of the love of the human soul for God.

not send your children to them. Teach them *Ramaraksha*[1], teach them devotional songs, or go to the wise men of your town and request them to educate your children. But do not, under any circumstances, send them to the present schools.

A sister came and left Rs. 5 for me. Till today, I have accepted nothing in this way. What I need, I obtain from friends. But now I want swaraj to be established and to run many schools; I cannot do all this by raising money from friends. If you want *Ramarajya*, you must work to that end. Contribute whatever you wish to. I shall use the amount for the cause of swadeshi and for running schools for your children. At present, some wicked men among us have made the shrine of Dakor a subject of litigation. Should we take disputes concerning our shrines to courts of law? This is wickedness. We must compensate lawyers for giving up their practice. If the arguments put forward by my colleagues and myself hold good, every pice you contribute will bring you two in return. With this money, your own law-courts will be run and the swadeshi movement will be carried on. The money that we contribute to these sacred places is being squandered by the wicked.

If you wish to be pure Sita, if you would give up the many forms of subtle mental degradation of the kind I have described and make others give them up, if you wish to understand your true dharma rather than wickedness, then you must whole-heartedly join in the movement for swaraj. Each one of us must be able to distinguish between true dharma and wickedness. Many fraudulent men will also come to you for con-tributions. I would ask you not to conribute to any of them. I hold out my hand to you only because I feel certain that you have trust in me. I shudder to introduce the corrupting influence of money in my work. Had I the strength and the *tapascharya* to be able to carry on my work without money, I would most certainly not ask for it. But I do not have such *tapascharya* and such strength. I also am a man of *Kaliyuga* and am full of failings, but I know that I am constantly striving to overcome these failings. So, if you trust me, contribute anything you wish to, from a pice onwards. The funds will be handled by the Swarajya Sabha.

Finally, I request you to see that these few things I have placed

[1] A prayer in Sanskrit, believed to be effective in securing Rama's protection and grace

before you do not go in at one ear and come out at the other. By adopting swadeshi, you will be able to save some money on clothes. You will be able to give your children milk and ghee out of this. At present, you spend on your comforts and luxuries the money which could buy milk and ghee for your children. I, too, want a small share from the amount you will save. But contribute only if you wish to. Even if you do not give money, you should at any rate follow dharma of spinning which I have explained to you. We have today to wash off the pollution caused by the eclipse. The right way of doing so is to purify our hearts. If all of you take the name of Rama in good faith and pray for *Ramarajya* in place of *Ravanarajya*, I can assure you that you will find that Rama is the strength of the weak.[1] May your hearts be ruled by God and may He set you free from all other forms of enslavement.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-11-1920

231. LETTER TO ROBERTSON

[*October 28, 1920*][2]

DEAR MR. ROBERTSON[3],

I have just returned from my tour to find your kind note. I shall certainly persue the pamphlet sent by you and I shall have pleasure in discussing the subject with you in December if I am in Ahmedabad during that month.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 7308

232. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM,
[*October 28, 1920*]

CHI. DEVDAS,

We arrived here at eleven. You must have got my letter of

[1] The reference is to a well-known song, "*Nirbala ke bala Ram*".

[2] Gandhiji reached Ahmedabad on October 28, 1920, after his tour of U.P. and the Punjab.

[3] Inspector General of Police, Poona

yesterday's. Mathuradas has given me news about your health. I am sure he will continue to do so. I am trying not to worry over it.

Balibehn is here. When she returns, she will take the children along with her. Deepak, too, is going to Lahore for the holidays. Mr. Andrews is here. He will leave tomorrow. Jinavijayji[1] has also come along with me.

Ba must be in good cheer. I shall leave for Mehmedabad on Monday morning and then go on to Nadiad in the afternoon. I shall leave Nadiad on Tuesday and be there on Wednesday morning.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 7172

233. LETTER TO RAGHUNATH SAHAI[2]

ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 30, 1920

DEAR SIR,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I agree with you that the scene described by you was most disgraceful. I am inquiring into the matter. Please let me hear from you again if you receive further particulars about the outrage. I hope to correspond with you further on hearing from my co-workers.

These regrettable incidents will now and then undoubtedly happen. It will be for us to check all such violent tendencies. But I think it [is] hardly proper to stop a big movement because of the over-zeal shown by some students.

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 7313

[1] A Jain scholar and sadhu, then on the staff of the Gujarat Puratatva Mandir

[2] Head Master, Dayalsingh High School, Lahore, who in his letter of October 25, 1920, wrote : "Hundreds of boys entered into my school . . . broke our windows and desks, beat several boys and took away several books . . . a number of *badmashes* also joined the students in doing mischief. Pray think over the consequences of this sort of non-co-operation. It cannot remain non-violent as you think. . . ."

234. LETTER TO THE PRESS ON CLOSURE OF TEA-STALLS[1]

[Before *October 31, 1920*]

I see that some persons have been trying forcibly to get tea-stalls closed and exploiting my name, too, for the purpose. I have even received a complaint from a shop-owner whose shop and men had been attacked with stones. I was very much pained to know this. I certainly do not approve of these things. True, I do not approve of tea-stalls either, but I have not started or asked anyone to start a movement to get them closed; rather, if anyone sought to get them closed forcibly, I would protect the owners. I request all such persons who are engaged in getting tea-stalls closed to see that, if at all, they go about their work peacefully. They should reason with people and should in no circumstances employ force nor exploit my name. Volunteers owe it as a duty to protect innocent shop-owners against such attacks.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Gujarati, 31-10-1920

235. HOW TO CELEBRATE "DIWALI"

It would be no exaggeration to say that in this *Kaliyuga* we have no right to celebrate *Diwali* with so much jubilation. Our celebrating *Diwali* implies that we feel we are living in *Ramarajya*. Do we have *Ramarajya* in India today?

A king who is not prepared to listen to his subjects, under whose rule the subjects get no milk to drink, no food to eat and no cloth to wear, a king who massacres his innocent subjects, who trades in wine, hemp and opium, who, by eating pork, hurts the feelings of Muslims and by eating beef the feelings of Hindus, who threatens the very existence of Islam and gambles at horse-racing—how can the subjects of such a king celebrate *Diwali* ?

Let no one labour under the delusion that this is an exaggerated picture; if there is anyone who has such fear, I shall be only too happy to be able to explain the thing to him in all humility. If I am being in

[1] *Vide* "Tea-stalls", 31-10-1920.

the least unfair to the British, I am ready to be convinced of my mistake and, on being convinced, I shall consider it my religious duty to apologize to them.

I would apply to any Indian Prince the standard I apply to the British Government. Actually, I apply, a much stricter standard to Indian Princes. Judging it even by the lightest standard, I find British rule repugnant to me. All my admiration for this rule has vanished.

I have the utmost respect for the courage of the British. Their team spirit and organizing power are wonderful. Their literature has much that is admirable. Reading their Bible, I feel myself in bliss. However, their selfishness overshadows their fine qualities. Their activities have done nothing but harm to India. These policies have ruined and emasculated the country. I am convinced that never under Moghul rule, or at any other time, were the people so thoroughly emasculated as they are today. This is no accidental result that has been deliberately brought about, and so I look upon this rule as *Ravanarajya*. The Government we dream of, I describe as *Ramarajya*. Swaraj alone can be such *Ramarajya*.

How may we establish it?

In former times, the subjects did *tapascharya* when they were oppressed. They believed that it was because of their sins that they got a wicked king and so they tried to purify themselves. The first step in this was to recognize a monster as such and avoid him, to non-co-operate with him. Even non-co-operation requires courage. To cultivate it, one needs to give up comforts and pleasures. To receive education provided by a wicked Government, to accept honours at its hands, to seek settlement of one's disputes through its agency, to help it in framing laws, to provide it with policemen, to wear cloth produced by it—to do this while desiring that it should perish is like trying to cut off the branch on which one is sitting. This is nothing but sin. Nor, in this way, shall we succeed in destroying the Government. How, then, should we celebrate *Diwali*?

1. If your children are attending Government schools, we should withdraw them from such schools.

2. We should start other schools in their place.

3. We should settle our disputes privately through *panchas*.

4. If we are lawyers, we should give up practice.

5. We should resolve, if we are voters, and persuade others, not to vote for any candidate. If anyone from our own locality stands as a

candidate, we should send him a "card" requesting him to withdraw his candidature.

6. We should introduce the sacred spinning-wheel in our homes.

7. We should get hand-spun yarn woven into cloth and wear such cloth, bearing the additional burden for the sake of the country.

All these things need money, of course. We should, therefore, donate what we can and collect contribution from others. If the people listen to me, I would advise them to do nothing during the *Diwali* but engage themselves in work for swaraj.

This, at any rate, we should not do during *Diwali* :

1. Treat ourselves to pleasures,
2. gamble,
3. prepare all manner of sweet dishes and
4. enjoy ourselves with fire-works.

The money saving by renouncing these things, we should donate for swaraj work.

This is the duty dictated by these difficult times. When we have the Government of our dream, we may enjoy some innocent pleasures. At present, however, the people are in mourning, they are widowed. At such a time, they can have no celebrations.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 31-10-1920

236. TEA-STALLS

The closing of tea-stalls in Gujarat is a change of no ordinary significance. I congratulate the workers who took up this task and saw it through. I hope this self-denial will be permanent.

There was a time when we always had our meals in our homes and had no need to eat or drink anything outside. Nowadays, we generally eat outside. In consequence, we do not get good food to eat, and it is dear. In this way, we make things dear for the poor. Personally, I know of no virtue in tea. Moreover, the tea made in shops is boiled and, therefore, harmful. The most beneficial result of this movement, however, is that the consumption of milk has been reduced and its price has come down. If the people exercise sufficient care, they can have [the consumption and price of] milk under control

and it may then be possible for the poor to have milk and ghee, things which they can now only dream of.

However, it is one thing to bring about the closure of tea-stalls through the force of public opinion and quite another to seek to do so through coercion. The attempts being made in Bombay to get them closed forcibly seem dreadful to me at any rate. I have even addressed a letter[1] on this subject to the newspapers there. I invite readers' attention to this letter. I would rather that the teal-stalls remained open than that they should be forced to close down. The right way to see them closed down is to dissuade the visitors, and not to coerce the owners. It has pained me all the more to see my name used in this movement. I can never associate myself with violence in any form whatever. To me, vio-lence is a denial of dharma. I would not like to have even the best thing done under compulsion. Even swaraj I would not have through violence. How, then, can I desire to have tea-stalls closed under threat of force?

The most important reform, however, which people can bring about is to see that drinking liquor is given up. If the people as a whole take up this work, they can get wine-shops closed. Not of course, by trying to persuade the owners of the shops. I think it impossible to win over the owners. But I do not think it should be difficult to persuade the wine addict of the evils of drinking and influence his mind. Tea weakens one's digestion and wine destroys the soul. In the wake of drinking follow insanity, adultery, gambling, etc. It depraves the mind and hardens the heart with cruelty. I am convinced that wine drinking has depraved the West. It is because of this that they do not shrink from wickedness and regard sin as virtue. If, therefore, we can rescue people in Gujarat from the evil habit of drinking, we shall have, as it were, got them out of a prison. It is universally acknowledged that wine is not at all necessary for man. Who does not know that a drunken man is incapable of self-control? I hope, therefore, that a movement will be started for rescuing wine addicts, courteously, without using any force against them and entirely through persuasion, from the evil habit of drinking.

To be sure, there are difficulties in the way. It was easy to reason with tea addicts. To do so with wine addicts is more difficult. But, before public opinion everyone feels helpless. Shamed by it, if for no other reason, wine addicts will give up their evil habit.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 31-10-1920

[1] *Vide* "Letter to the Press on Closure of Tea-stalls", before 31-10-1920.

237. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, AHMEDABAD

October 31, 1920

Wherever I go in India in the course of my tours, women bless me with their *darshan*. At every place, I meet thousands of them. Today, I shall tell you a beautiful story. By now there must be hardly any of you who has not heard of Amritsar. A few days ago I was in this very town, where there had flowed the blood of thousands of our brethren and General Dyer had killed or wounded a thousand or fifteen hundred innocent people. When I was in Amritsar, one day four women came to me early in the morning, at half past six. There, the cold is much severer than it is here. But the women felt that they ought to caution the man who, they thought, had been doing so much in their service. One of them said to me : "Brother, what you are doing is good indeed, but you do not know that our men, and the women too, in some degree, have been deceiving you." I was simply taken aback. I asked them: "Why should they deceive me? What can they hope to gain thereby?" She said : "The men are cunning. They lie to you. We have understood, of course, that you need only pure men and women to help you in your work and this is reason why we, women, follow you everywhere, that we may be filled with your ideals." The sister then used a Sanskrit word. One would not expect to hear a Sanskrit word like this from a Punjabi woman. Perhaps you also do not understand its meaning. she told me that their men were not *jitendriya*, and that the women, too, were not so to the extent I wanted them to be or believed they were. I understood from this hint what they meant. *Jitendriya* means one who has the senses under control. In other words, a man or woman who does not mind hearing evil with the ears or speaking evil with the tongue is not *jitendriya*. In this context, what is specifically meant is that a man who is not loyal to one woman, his wife, or a woman to one man, her husband, is not *jitendriya*. The sister asked me : "You want us to control our anger, but how can one who cannot restrain carnal desire restrain anger? And how can one who is unable to restrain anger make sacrifices?"

* * *

Tulsidas and the *Gita* teach that association with the wicked is to be shunned. The present rule also is a rule of the wicked, of the base. Rather than that the children be educated in the schools of this Government, it is better that they should go without education. "Who will maintain us if the son is not educated?"—such fears are

unnecessary. How do they, who have no sons, maintain themselves? It is God who maintains us.

* * *

If you can make only thick *rotlas*[1] and another woman can make them thin, will you eat your thick ones or beg thin ones from the other? Wearing mill-made cloth, even Indian, is not enough for following the swadeshi dharma. By doing so, on the contrary, you will make the poor man's cloth dear for him.

* * *

There can be no happiness without suffering. It is because Rama had suffered *vanavasa* for fourteen years that he could rescue Sita; it is because Nala went through so much suffering that his name became immortal; it is because Harishchandra, Queen Taramati and Rohit[2] suffered so much that their truthfulness shone like the sun and its brightness filled the world. Do not, therefore, be afraid of suffering; instead of feeling ashamed of thick saris, use cloth woven with yarn spun by your own hands.

Again, it is necessary to have God's name constantly on one's lips, but repeating *Ramanama*[3] parrot-like will not bring you *moksha*. If you have Rama in your heart, you will feel compassion and, with compassion in your heart, you will not behave so as to hurt others. I tell you that, if you do not wear hand-spun, hand-woven cloth, thousands of women will have to go without clothes or have only rags to wear. Even today, I can show you thousands of Damayantis[4] in the country. I once suggested to a woman that she should bathe regularly. She replied that she would do so if I gave her another garment to change into. Such is the miserable plight of the country today.

* * *

To secure swaraj, to start new schools—this requires money and I cannot collect it from a tree. When I started this begging in Dakor, one woman who made her living by working a quern parted with her ring to me. Two or three other women gave me rings, necklaces, etc. One friend took off his gold wristlet. It was his faith, he said that anyone who gave a pice would get two in return.

[1] Unleavened bread of *bajra* or *jowar* flour

[2] Son of Harishchandra

[3] Sacred name of Rama

[4] Nala's wife. The husband and wife were reduced to such straits that they had to go covered with a single garment between them.

* * *

This is *Kaliyuga*. Falsehood reigns everywhere. I would be very happy if I could carry on without begging; I would then never beg. I or my co-workers are not likely to put the money to wrong use. Nevertheless, give something only if you are convinced of what I say.

* * *

The *Diwali* festival celebrates Rama's success in rescuing Sita. So long as we are unable to achieve another victory like Rama's against Ravana, we have no right to enjoy ourselves, to dress ourselves in finery, to indulge the palate or fire crackers.

* * *

This money[1] is more sacred than gifts of millions by the rich. In everyone of these copper coins is the soul of one sister in Ahmedabad; she has poured forth with it her love of the country. With this sacred money, I shall educate the children in this country. With such sacred gifts, I shall have my swaraj.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-11-1920

238. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Monday [*October, 1920*]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter.

Pay Jugatram Rs. 40. I forgot to tell you about this. His salary is no longer being charged to *Navajivan*. From now on, it will have to be paid from the school.

Tulsidas Karani's[2] contribution has been traced. It was not for Orissa though. It was for Shantiniketan. I have written to him, all the same, to make sure. I have sent the sum to Shantiniketan, of course.

Blessing from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 7328

[1] Small change donated by the people in response to Gandhiji's appeal

[2] Of Mangrol

239. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

LAHORE,

[*October 1920*][1]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

Now you are nineteen years old. You must get well now. I keep getting information about you. Tell Vinoba that he should not worry for your health. Next year, if you are ready, I will again send you with him.

Write to me when you get well. However, you should not be impatient to get well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Whether you are ill or well, remain calm in both situations.

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 32951

240. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

LAHORE,

Wednesday [About *October 1920*][2]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

You must have received my letter. I always keep thinking of you but am not able to write to you. Someone or other keeps me informed about your health. I was never apprehensive about your recovery. But whatever suffering you are destined to undergo, you will have to. At such times, pondering over the *shlokas* of the *Gita* which are recited daily, with their meaning, will give you solace. If you find that difficult, ponder over such *bhajans as "Sukh dukh*

[1] From reference to the addressee having completed 19 years and from 'Lahore' in the date-line; according to the addressee's own book *Jivan Prabhat*, he was born towards the end of the year 1901 and hence would be 19 in the year 1920. Also in October 1920, Gandhiji was at Lahore from 19th to 21st when this letter was presumably written.

[2] The contents and 'Lahore' in the date line indicate that this letter was written about the same time as the one to the addressee dated October l 920. *Vide* the preceding item.

manma na aniye" but never think of disease or pain.

Write to me after you have regained your strength. At present, whatever you want to convey to me, convey through Mahadevbhai or whosoever is free there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 32952

241. TELEGRAM TO MAHOMED ALI

EXPRESS [Before *November 1, 1920*][1]

MAULANA MAHOMED ALI
ALIGRAH

WIRE FULLY POSITION COLLEGE HAVE YOU NOT VACATED COLLEGE PRECINCTS. WIRE EXPRESS NADIAD.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 7360

242. TELEGRAM TO SIR AKBAR HAIDARI[2]

ORDINARY

[Before *November 1, 1920*][3]

HAIDARI
TRUSTEE
ALIGARH

UNTHINKABLE MAHOMEDALI REFUSING VACATE PROMISE SHALL CERTAINLY BE FULFILLED.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 7360

[1] Gandhiji was at Nadiad on November 1.
[2] 1869-1940; one of the trustees of Aligarh University
[3] *Vide* the preceding item. The two telegrams appear to have been sent about the same time.

243. SPEECH AT MEHMEDABAD

November 1, 1920

I should like to talk to you about a great many things today, but I do not wish to hold forth for long. India is passing through a difficult period. I can hardly describe the sad plight of the country. I have just said, at a women's meeting,[1] that the present Government is a Satanic Government, a *Ravanarajya* possessed by a Satanic spirit. We have two outstanding instances of this: that of the Punjab and of the khilafat. About the khilafat, promises have not been kept; there has been a senseless massacre. He alone who is imbued with a demoniac spirit, a Satanic spirit, would act in such a manner. Tulsidas has described such a government as a demoniac government. Co-operation with such a government is not possible, indeed it is one's duty, one's dharma, to withhold co-operation from it. Should we take help from such a government or accept favours from it, we would be a party to its acts of injustice and its sins. So long as we share in its sin, the people cannot be happy.

What can we do to carry out non-co-operation? One way is for all of us to co-operate with one another. There should be the utmost co-operation among all Indians—Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians and others. A demon can govern only by setting his subjects against one another. This is what our Government has actually done. It has set Hindus and Muslims against each other and, in the Madras Presidency, Brahmins and non-Brahmins against each other. If it could have its way, it would create trouble here as well. I have already received a few letters. Some *Dheds* and *Bhangis* have asked me where they stand in the non-co-operation movement. I see their point and tell you that non-co-operation is not feasible without unity amongst us. Unity cannot be achieved through hypocrisy. Unless we are just to one another, there can be no unity.

For this we must have the strength to make sacrifices, the strength to subordinate self-interest; we should be able to lay down our lives. We shall not get swaraj by killing people, setting fire to houses, or removing railway tracks. To be able to win swaraj, we should become pure, and to be pure is to be self-controlled.

We shall not be able to carry on our work so long as we do not eliminate fraud and dishonesty from us. The attempt to stop the

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Women's Meeting, Dakor", 27-10-1920

slaughter of a goat in Ahmedabad is a recent example of what I mean. A wicked moulvi went about misleading the people there. He conducted meetings which went on till midnight. He declared that he was there on behalf of Gandhi and had stayed on at Gandhi's request. He incited the people by making tendentious statements in his speeches; he was joined by a sadhu. He thought that he would ascend to heaven by saving the goat. The sadhu got the moulvi to support him and the latter, by intimi-dating the butcher, prevented the killing of the goat. But this incident sowed the seed of a dispute between the Hindus and the Muslims. Some Hindus believe in the sacrificial offering of goat to the Goddess. Those who share my view do not believe in it. If an offering has to be made, it should be of one's own body. But I would certainly not ask Maulana Shaukat Ali to take sides in this internal dispute of the Hindus. The cow-ardly Hindus, however, brought the moulvi along. He came, and with the help of his drum-beating retinue rescued the goat. That sadhu then came and saw me. I asked him to cast off his sadhu's robes. I asked the moulvi to leave Ahmedabad and told him that he could not serve the country in this way. Shall we, who do not seek even to replace this Government by force, seek anything by using force against our own countrymen? What would be the outcome of such an attempt? The outcome would have been fine indeed (!) were it not that the Collector of Ahmedabad was a good man and did not permit the slaughter of the goat. Otherwise, The Government could as well send its police and arrange for the slaughter of the goat under its protection. Such things would make our non-co-operation ineffective. I sent for the moulvi and told him this. We could not function effectively [I told him], if such methods came to be introduced in our work. When I asked him not to leave his province or his sphere of work, he said that he was under pressure from the Hindus to do what he did. Is it possible that we should be overwhelmed by two hundred cowards? If two hundred cowards can do this, what may not one white man do? What was expected did actually take place. When the Collector sent for the moulvi he was frightened and sought [mill-]worker protection, so that the Government, afraid of the trouble that they might create, would not touch him. One who is really sincere about going to jail should rather dissaude others from violence.

If you resort to violence or arson or remove railway tracks in case Maulana Shaukat Ali or I am arrested, you will lose the game. I give you this advice as you are not Arabs. You do not even know

the use of a stick. Do not think that you do because you use it on your wife or on a donkey. A man who can really wield a stick can hold his own against thousands. But you cannot do so and, therefore, mine is the right advice to you.

We have forgotten that we are lions and have become lambs. If, therefore, we try to follow the example of the Irish or the Egyptians and behave like lions, we shall invite hell when the Government puts forth its full might—and it is not wrong to do so. If I were in charge of the Government, I too would arrest people. It is the duty of a Government which wishes to maintain its authority to put under arrest those who oppose it. When the Government puts forth its full might, you will be lost if you take to violence. You are cowards if you try to frighten the Government in this manner. If our aim is to make India free, we should be lions.

You six thousand people are in danger at present. What would you do with a municipality? It is a white elephant which the Government has imposed on you. An expenditure of twelve thousand rupees for a population of six thousand! You must wind up such a municipality. It does not serve you in any way. It provides education, but we must boycott that education. How can we receive alms from the unworthy? I need funds for a *vidyapith*[1], but should I run it by begging from harlots? Should I run it with profits from liquor shops? I tell you that the money for our education comes from liquor shops. When we demand that the excise department be closed down, we are told that but for the revenue received by this department our schools will have to be closed down. Those—lawyers, barristers and scholars—who have been educated with the help of money obtained through the sale of liquor, of what service can they be to the country?

I congratulate your boys on having boycotted Government schools. You should educate these boys and girls at your own expense. Ask the teachers to resign their posts and make a start this very day. Give up the use of Government buildings and start the schools in your own buildings. This is the alternative to the education provided by the municipality. The other things it provides are lavatories and street lights. These are in a deplorable condition. The municipality affords you no protection as the police is not under its control. The

[1] Evidently the Gujarat Vidyapith, which was established some time in October; *vide* footnote 1, "Inaugural Speech at Gujarat Mahavidyalaya, Ahmedabad", 15-11-1920.

municipal roads are a cloud of dust. So, apart from providing education, the municipality does nothing important. It runs a dispensary; but, then, there are three private dispensaries. So leave its dispensary to itself. The long and short of it is that we have no use for the municipality. It is like an idol, merely to be worshipped. All nine hundred of you, rate-payers, should get together and pass a resolution that this municipality should be wound up. Say that you do not want the sanitary board nor the village panchayat. Serve notice to the members to resign their seats.

Inform the Government that you will not pay the municipal taxes. This does not involve disobedience of law or disrespect for authority. The Government can have no cause for complaint, since you do not avail yourselves of its services. You can resist it, though it will threaten you for some time. Should you try and resist it, it will attach your property. Let it auction away your property. A population of six thousand can even vacate a whole town. Whom, then, will the municipality serve? The Government is not so insane as to go to that length. I speak against it, but I know it has some sanity; if it did not show such wisdom, it would have to quit the country this very day. But the Government has no intention of winding up the Empire.

You must have unity among yourselves if you wish to succeed in this. There are sure to be some who will oppose you. You should tell them politely and respectfully : "You hold the place of pride amongst us. We merely request you to bow to the wishes of the majority." Even if this does not succeed, we may at least request them not to put a spoke in our wheel. What will two to five hundred of them gain by setting themselves against six thousand? This is my advice to you, provided you Hindus and Muslims can remain united.

I have already mentioned two conditions for success in our task. The first condition is forbearance or non-violence. Even assuming that this is the virtue of the weak, so long as you do not possess the strength to wield a sword, there is no other way which can be shown to you. The second condition is that there should be unity among Hindus and Muslims—among all the communities in the country. You can adopt non-co-operation only if you fulfil these two conditions. As the first step in non-co-operation, you should withdraw your children from Government schools and refuse to send your representatives to legislatures. If you do this, swaraj will be

yours.

Besides, have no fear of the police or of Government servants. We bear them no ill will; rather, we have to win them over with love and affection. You have, therefore, nothing to fear.

There are two more things to be mentioned. You get your cloth from Ahmedabad. Beautiful cloth was woven in Mehmedabad in the past. But there is no one left who follows that occupation. If you but make up your mind, there is little that six thousand of you cannot accomplish. Why do you require mill-made cloth? Your homes can become your cotton-mills. If you do not get your food from hotels, why do you get cloth from elsewhere?

The textile mills of Sheth Mangaldas or Mr. Tata[1] will not shut down if you do not purchase their cloth. That cloth is for the poor. You should not rob them of what they cannot live without. The other alternative is to use foreign cloth. But that you should not even think of. We should not use cloth which belongs to others. It is as sinful to cast covetous glances at imported cloth as it is for a man to cast lustful glances at another's wife. We cannot free ourselves from the clutches of that Empire so long as we are dependent on it for our cloth. It is as sinful to use Japanese cloth as to use British cloth, because it is in British ships that Japanese goods come to this country. The Empire has us in its grip on every side. I, therefore, advise you to open a new chapter in your history. Though it may be difficult for a population of crores, so far as your town is concerned you can become self-sufficient. You do not have to get food from outside. There can be no shortage of foodgrains in Kheda district. But even your cloth you must produce here; nay, you should produce more than you need and send it out to nearby places. It will not be difficult, then, to collect twelve thousand rupees to run your municipality.

Let me now turn to the subject of money. We shall certainly need money for all our tasks. But my greatest difficulty is in raising funds. I have become nervous because I get dishonest workers to collect funds. The need for funds, however, remains. So, in sheer helplessness, I hold out my hand for contributions. I do not wish to carry on this work with help from millionaires only. I shall accept a gift even from a *Bhangi*. A small contribution of even a pice offered with goodwill is as welcome as a large contribution of a hundred

[1] Sir Dorabji Tata (1859-1932), mill owner of Bombay

thousand rupees. The rings and other jewellery given to me by young girls are very dear to me, since they give them with the thought of God in their mind. This is a thousand times better than my getting money from them by flattery. Whatever you con-tribute here, do so not in front of me but with God alone as your witness.

We shall make progress in this work of raising funds only if volunteers who are entrusted with it realize that they hold public money in trust. The people are unsuspecting. They trust anyone who approaches them on my behalf. A certain dishonest woman, calling herself my daughter, collected funds in Dwarka[1]. She has now gone to Hyderabad[2], where she has been given a cordial reception. I cannot bear to see my name used for misleading the public. We have before us the example of the Ahmedabad moulvi. He, too, had exploited my name. So I expect each one of you to be upright. I am ready to fall at the feet of those of you who work honestly. There will always be evil in the world, but let it not corrupt the masses. If it does, it will be my hanging and, though I am not afraid of being sent to the gallows by the Government, the thought of this other hanging frightens me to death. Collect money, therefore, with God as your witness.

I ask the people not to hand over their contributions to anyone, even to an emperor, no matter in whose name the person approaches you. I intend to issue credentials on behalf of the Khilafat Committee and the Swarajya Sabha, stamped with their respective seals. Do not heed anyone who cannot produce such authorization. Give him nothing. Turn him out immediately. We want to have the control of our Government in our hands; if so, we shall have to learn to be strict so that we may run it properly.

You are not truly free if you give up slavery to the British only to become my slaves. I wish to win over your mind and your heart; I do not wish to make slaves of you, since I do not wish to become a slave myself.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-11-1920

[1] In Saurashtra
[2] In Sind

244. TALK WITH MUNICIPAL COUNCILLORS, NADIAD

November 1, 1920

You can be free not only in regard to education but every other matter.[1] Take the Municipality in your hands and collect the taxes yourselves. The Government will certainly use pressure for a while and try to collect the taxes itself, but the rate-payers should refuse to pay and take the consequences.

* * *

We ask to have swaraj today; we should, then, be ready this very day to manage our affairs. You can explain all this to the rate-payers and, if they are not ready to refuse to pay the taxes [to the Government], you can employ non-co-operation against them as you do against the Government. You can tell them that, if they do not agree, they cannot ask you to look after their affairs. The leaders' duty is to lead the people, not to be led by them. You should also make it plain to them that not paying the taxes to the Government does not mean that they will escape paying. They will have to pay the money needed for managing their affairs.In this arrangement,

however, they will not get, as they get from the Government, a return worth one rupee against ten rupees which they pay. Here, they will get two pice against every pice paid. But pay they will have to.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-11-1920

245. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, NADIAD

November 1, 1920

At this time, when it is necessary for all communities to unite in this great struggle, no quarrels should arise between different sections of the Hindus or the Muslims because of tendentious speeches made by some irresponsible or wicked persons. To prevent this, I hope, the Swarajya Sabha and the Khilafat Committee will issue notices to the effect that no one should make speeches unless authorized by them. You are at liberty to listen to anyone who wishes to make a speech

[1] The Collector of Kaira had informed the Municipality that, even if it refused to avail itself of education grants from the Government, it would not be free from Government control.

before you, but you will have known at any rate that the person does not represent any organization. The Government we wish to fight is a mighty organization. Not one of its men either speaks or acts without orders from his superiors. We should develop such discipline.

Hindus and Muslims should be united and be sincere with one another if we wish to get swaraj. Should a Muslim say something in an unguarded moment, the Hindus should overlook it. Similarly, Muslims in their turn should excuse something said carelessly by a Hindu.

You must silently carry on your work in the event of the arrest of myself, Maulana Shaukat Ali or Maulana Abdul Bari. You cannot even call a hartal, for that would mean that we had lost our cause. Why should you wish to get us released? I told Zafar Ali, who has been arrested, that we would not appeal on his behalf but would get him released by winning swaraj. Should you want me and others to be released, think of taking the four steps of non-co-operation[1]. I would certainly put Gandhi under arrest if I were the Government and knew that the people depended entirely on him in their fight.

You will win no respect if you are without courage yourselves. In our absence, start doing what you are not doing today.

* * *

Give your contributions to volunteers after making sure that they are men of integrity. This is a movement not of millionaires but of the poor. Should thirty crores of people contribute no more than a pice each, even then we would have five million rupees and could provide free education. The contribution I ask from you is not by way of a gift. It is in your own interest to give me money, for if you contribute a pice it will bring in twice as much in return.

* * *

Little girls of eight to sixteen took out their rings and necklaces and gave them to me.[2] They will not ask their parents to replace these ornaments. What use have they for ornaments? India is in a state of helpless widowhood. Where are the men in the country to give her the status of mistress of the house? That good fortune will be hers when such men arise and the women will then be able to adorn themselves.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-11-1920

[1] *Vide* "Speech on Non-co-operation, Madras", 13-8-1920

[2] At the women's meeting in Ahmedabad on October 31, 1920

246. MESSAGE TO STUDENTS OF WILSON COLLEGE, BOMBAY

[Before *November 2, 1920*]

I understand that the Wilson College students are agitated with the question whether they should leave the College or not. I wish I could be of some help in enabling them to solve the question.

If we may not receive education through the patronage or under the influence of those who have robbed us of our wealth, we may not receive it from a Government that has robbed us of our honour and has conclusively proved untrustworthy. This Government of ours has humiliated us through the black record in the Punjab. It, i.e., the Imperial part of it, has violated a solemn pledge given through the Prime Minister to India in general and to the Mussulmans in particular. And yet it not only shows no signs of repentance but even insolently seeks to defend its conduct both regarding the khilafat and the Punjab. I hold it to be a sin to receive any favours through it and I have therefore no hesitation in saying that it is sinful for us to receive education in schools and colleges conducted by or through it. It is better to be without such education or even to suspend it till we have received redresses.

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-11-1920; also from a photostat : S. N. 7315

247. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BROACH

November 2, 1920

There is a war on at present between *Ravanarajya* and *Ramarajya*. It is a war between God and Satan, conflict between evil people and good people. I see that this Government is possessed with a Satanic spirit. I have been spreading this idea ever since I awoke to the truth. I believe that the British Government is Satanic, has the nature of a demon. All religions—those of the Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and all others—enjoin that we conquer *adharma*[1] with dharma. This means that we should desist from assisting *adharma*. One could cite examples of such conduct from the Muslim scriptures. In the Parsi scriptures there is an everlasting war between Ormuzd and

[1] Opposite of dharma

Ahriman. The *Gita*, speaks of this very same conflict. For us, today, there is no dharma except non-co-operation. If, however, you feel that you can still get something out of the British Government, that it is not sinful, cling to it by all means. I do not wish to say that the British are evil. But the system they have created, the roots of evil that they have planted, are doing harm to the country. There are, in this Government, good Viceroys such as Lord Hardinge and Lord Ripon, and officers like Mr. Chatfield, the kind-hearted and noble Collector of Ahmedabad; yet they, too, work under a Satanic system and only further its purposes. My own father was in the service of an Indian State. The ruler of this State was an unworthy man. I asked him why he did not give up the service of such a ruler. He replied that we had been indebted to him for our livelihood. My father would not be ungrateful and our entire family continued to live supported by a ruler wholly engrossed in the gratification of his desires, in drinking and meat-eating.

I say this before the whole of India—that for us there is no other dharma. However virtuous a man may be, he cannot but be affected by association with this system. Hence it is that a difference of opinion has arisen between me and Shri Shastriar and Pandit Malaviya, for both of whom I feel great reverence and whose close friendship I value and for whom, even now, I have great regard. They believe that there is an element of goodness in this Government, I believe that it is a sinful one. Malaviyaji is like an elder brother to me and I respect Shri Shastriar, but I must fight against them. The Congress has already shown what to do for non-co-operation, and so have the Muslim League and the Sikh League.

There are two conditions for our being able to carry on non-co-operation. One of them is unity between Hindus and Muslims. By Hindu-Muslim unity I mean unity among all religious communities. I mention Hindus and Muslims as a widely-known example. For many centuries these two communities have distrusted each other and, therefore, so long as the Hindus and Muslims do not settle their differences, we shall not win. In the same way, we should win over Parsis and others through love. We could reduce them to submission by Satanic methods like murder, but then we would have to destroy eighty thousand Parsis. We would do best, rather, to win them over only with affection. Nor shall we attain independence if Hindus or Muslims try to suppress the Sikhs. Even the Jains have been claiming

of late that they are not Hindus; should we on that ground destroy them? The strength of one who is strong lies not in his being able to crush his opponent through pride, but in his ability to win him over through love. So our primary task is to maintain unity among the various religious communities.

Our second requirement is the power of organizing. Non-co-operation will not be possible until we develop this capacity.

The other thing needed is compassion. We should not even think of murder. Even if, instead of being compassionate, you take to cruel methods, you will not succeed in your aim. Should you draw the sword, it will be broken into pieces. You should be welcome to draw the sword if you could rescue your country thereby; that, however, is not possible. Do not utter a single word against the Government; do not abuse it any more. Give a patient hearing to those who favour co-operation with the Government, but stick to your denial. Non-co-operation is aptly described by the saying—"A firm denial will prevent a hundred mischiefs."

In order to ensure the success of non-co-operation, you have to make two great sacrifices. The first is in regard to education. Education has become the biggest problem in India today. The second sacrifice is to be made through the boycott of legislatures. To this day it is only the people—the common men and women—who have participated in the non-co-operation movement. The privileged classes have taken no part at all. If we wish to make them join this movement, we can do so provided we are strong enough. We could send them a notice, signed by all of us, stating that we do not want them to enter legislatures to represent us and then they will not be able to do so. Why should parents, students and teachers be perplexed about education? The growing generation must emerge from slavery. It is the duty of elders to see that they do. Parents and teachers should do everything in their power to help the young to be free. See that the cause of education is not held up even for a moment for lack of funds. Some of you may ask, "What if the Government passes a law to create difficulties in our way?" As this is a meaningless question, I do not wish to say a word about it. If you feel that anyone can restrict our freedom of action in this manner, you should be courageous and fearless and come out of Government schools. Teach as many boys, girls and youths as you can and forget the rest.

Let us now turn to swadeshi. It is my faith that swadeshi means

swaraj. Mr. Chintamani once said of me that swadeshi is nearer to my heart than swaraj or the khilafat. Swadeshi is indeed dear to me. Will not the khilafat question, once we have won, cease to exist? But swadeshi is for all time. It is a dharma inseparable from the fact of one's physical existence, something that is unalterable. Swaraj would be ours today if we but followed swadeshi uncompromisingly for a single day. Some wise men have suggested to me that we should see to it that Lancashire was ruined. But this is not an easy task. We have neither the desire nor the strength for boycott. Had we this strength, I would not be deterred from boycott through fear, just as I would not fear to use weapons. If, without boycott, India were to be altogether impoverished, I might approve of it. I would never accept again what I have once renounced. One cannot associate with a drunkard or a sinner even for a single moment. Co-operation would be possible only when the drunkard gave up drinking. India would have freedom today and the khilafat problem would be justly solved if the country accepted this immutable principle. I have not been able to persuade Muslims to take to khadi. I have been unable to make fakirs of them. Nor have I been able to con-vert Hindus to my views. It is because of this that we have not succeeded in securing justice on the khilafat issue. Even in the Punjab, all this bemoaning has been of no avail. We should resolve in our minds to forbid ourselves the use of foreign cloth. To the women, I say humbly that the success of swadeshi is in your hands. It is your dharma to spin. You should set an example to the men. Mothers can hardly complain about the weight of khadi. How can a mother, who is cheerfully prepared to carry for nine months the burden of pregnancy, say that she cannot bear an added weight of a seer ? A woman could say this only if she would prefer to remain childless. But so long as women have no desire to remain childless, would rather like to be mothers of brave boys and girls, I would not hear such talk from them. I fail to understand how you can use saris made in the mills of Japan, China, England or France at a time when men and women in your country go naked.

Funds are needed for the work which has been started. This country has so much faith in religion that even fraudulent persons are able to collect funds. If you can raise money for your temples, mosques and your public rest-houses, why should you not be able to raise it for temples which are purer than these—the temples of learning? It is not for want of funds that India lacks anything. What we require is the capacity for *tapascharya* and renunciation. The

meaning of renunciation will be clear to the Hindus. The Shastras say that jewels will pile up before one who has taken the vow not to hoard things beyond his immediate needs. My own experience has been similar. Even in a country as poor as Africa, the struggle was not held up for lack of funds. On the contrary, I had to write to Gokhale asking him not to send any more funds. The public poured forth money at the time of the Kheda and Champaran agitations also. I stopped them. The workers in Ahmedabad did not seek a pice from outside even when they had recourse to an extreme form of non-co-operation for 23 days. If the attitude of renunciation is present, money will pour forth of itself.

Crores of rupees are lying idle in the *Vaishnava*, Jain and *Swaminarayana*[1] temples; even with a small portion of this sum, you could run your entire department of education. We do not, however, wish to do what the Government does, throwing away money and setting up a new department in a matter of a few minutes. Our work should take into account the poverty of India. A magic mango could be grown within seconds, but its fruit cannot be enjoyed. It takes twenty years for a real mango tree to grow. If, therefore, anyone offers you a crore of rupees for national education, I would advise you to reject it. The professors of Khalsa College were told to join non-co-operation only if I gave them a grant of a crore of rupees. The professors replied that they did not wish to be my slaves after they had ceased to be the Government's slaves. They said they would go from door to door begging from the Sikhs. These professors have informed the College authorities that, if the Government control did not go, they would go forth as beggars to impart national education to the country's youth.

If you have faith in the cause, do not hold back, but contribute your mite. These funds will not be used for your own town only. The money will also be used for the Gujarat Vidyapith which has been founded in Ahmedabad. I wish to set [through it] an example to the citizens of Broach.

If you carry out non-co-operation in this manner, you will have swaraj within a year.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-11-1920

[1] A *Vaishnava* sect, founded by Swami Sahajananda (1781-1830)

248. SPEECH AT OPENING OF LOKAMANYA NATIONAL SCHOOL, ANKLESHWAR

November 2, 1920

Make your school worthy of the revered figure after whom it has been named. Swaraj could hardly be dearer to anyone than it was to the Lokamanya. We shall be justified in having associated the name of the Lokamanya with this school only if its purpose is to take us nearer swaraj. If I tell parents, students and teachers that the Government schools be abandoned, it is not because the education they provide is of a poor quality. The spirit I wish to create in you has no bearing on the problem of the quality of education. There is, of course, need for improvement in the education imparted in the Government schools, but the task on hand cannot be postponed till this is brought about.

We have been at the service of Government schools for fifty years and have derived some benefit, too, from them. Today, these schools are out of bounds for us, though the reason for this is something different. The flag that flies over the schools today is the flag of a Satanic Government. That Government has broken the hearts of seven crores of Muslims, has, through the Punjab, committed terrible atrocities on the whole of India. The scriptures of all religions say with one voice that it is sinful to live under an irreligious king, that to do so is as good as embracing evil and being a party to it. Run away from these schools even if, by attending them, you earn some moneyand even if they teach the Koran, the Zend-Avesta, or the *Gita*. If they do this, their motive will be evil. We do not, therefore, wish to make slaves of our children by getting them educated in thoseschools over which flies this Satanic flag. Those who have understood this will not let their children remain in Government schools even for a day longer. They will first take them away and make alternative arrangements for their education afterwards. If our house were to catch fire, we would not stay on in it, while it was burning, till we had found a better dwelling place. We would jump out of it immediately, even if there was a moat underneath. If we do not cultivate such a spirit, we shall not succeed in our educational movement, for the Government's men—spies—will always be there to tempt us and speak to us of the high quality of the education in the schools they served, of their beautiful buildings and of education there being free. But so long as the spirit does not come to prevail

among the people that, despite all this, the education imparted in these schools is totally unacceptable to us, our movement will make no progress.

I pray to the parents not to let their children remain in slavery. Your first duty is to withdraw your children from Government schools. Having done so, we must not let them roam about in the streets. And so your second task is to give all you have and make arrangements for providing national education. If we have no capacity for this, we shall not get swaraj. To manage swaraj, that is, our own government, does require capacity.

As the second condition for the success of national education we need teachers of good character. I congratulate the head master and other teachers of this high school who have made a sacrifice for the sake of their dharma and their country, and I ask of them that in their work hence-forth they show the same spirit which has prompted their self-sacrifice. Once you are absorbed in your work, money will come in of itself. Your executive committee will be able to raise funds with ease. Even if they have nothing else than clean ground to sit on, the boys of national scho-ols will be able to hold their own against other boys and, if their teachers are men of character, will acquire a greater spirit of manlines than the pupils of the more pretentious Government schools. Today, the men have lost their manhood, the women their womanhood. They have not the stre-ngth to raise a manly nation. I forbid them to give birth to slaves. If true men are born, they would refuse to be educated in those schools which, by their teaching, make slaves of them. If only parents refuse to send their children to receive the education which makes slaves of them, natio-nal schools will undoubtedly shine out in comparison with other schools.

My advice to the executive committee is that it should not at all be impatient. Entreat the parents, but do not use harsh words with them. It is difficult to win them over with persuasion. Do not assume that everyone's eyes will open and they will see things as we see them. This new wind has been blowing only for sometime now and, if we are not patient, we shall achieve nothing.

I have heard that the wealthy Parsis of Ankleshwar are opposed to non-co-operation. India is the land of the Parsis as much as it is of the Hindus and Muslims. Was Dadabhai Naoroji not an Indian? Was Sir Pherozeshah also not an Indian? Parsis should feel as much for the country as the others do. We shall reason with the Parsis, fall at

their feet and beg money from them. We shall bow to them if they send their children to our schools, and bow to them even if they do not do so. We shall in this way show them that they should also make their contribution in this great struggle that is going on in India. Win the Parsi brethren over with love. Tell them that it is your dharma to explain their duty to them.

The surest key to the successful working of national schools lies in avoiding all show and publicity. There will be no question, then, of our having failed in our aims. A beautiful piece of brick masonry cannot be put up in haste. One can be quick in destroying things. The work of weeding out a field with a sickle can be completed within a day, but the sowing cannot be done in such haste. We can get a school vacated in a day, but a great deal of patience is required where something new is to be started. If good teachers are not available, do not, out of impatience, employ men without character. If we do not swerve from the truth, if we are not impatient, then we shall be able to get twelve hundred students instead of the hundred and twenty who have enrolled themselves today. It is not enough, either, that you get everyone of the students at present attending Government schools. All children do not attend these schools. There should be no boy or girl in a village to whom we are not able to give an education such as would build the finest character.

This school is being started with the sole object of securing justice on the Punjab and the khilafat issues and of winning swaraj, and you must make it worthy of the great man as a tribute to whom you have embarked on this task and to perpetuate whose memory you are establishing it. May God grant wisdom to parents, pupils and teachers.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-11-1920

249. TO THE PARENTS OF ALIGARH BOYS

GENTLEMEN,

I know that the best of my friends are bewildered at many of my doings at the present moment, not the least among which is my advice to the youth of the country. I do not wonder at their bewilderment. I have undergone a complete transformation in my attitude toward the system of Government under which we are labouring. To me it is Satanic even as was the system under Ravana's rule according to the scriptures of my religion. But my friends are not so convinced as I am of the supreme necessity of ending this rule, unless the system undergoes a radical change and there is definite repentance on the part of the rulers.

I share too your concern about your boys who are learning at Aligarh. You will believe me when I tell you that I do not wish to hurt your feelings. I am, myself, the father of four boys whom I have brought up to best of my lights. I have been an extremely obedient son to my parents, and an equally obedient pupil to my teachers. I know the value of filial duty. But I count duty to God above all these. And in my opinion, the time has come for every young man and young woman in this country to make their choice between duty to God and duty to others. I claim to know the yourth of our country in a fairly intimate manner. I know that in the majority of cases the youth of our country have the determining of their higher education in their own hands. I know cases in which parents find it difficult to wean their children from what to them (the parents) appears to be the infatuation of their children about higher education. I am convinced that I am doing no violence to the feelings of parents when I address our young men and ask them to leave their schools or colleges even in spite of their parents. You will not be astonished to learn that, of the parents of hundreds of boys who have left schools or colleges, I have received only one protest and that from a Government servant whose boys have left their college. The protest is based on the ground that they were not even consulted before their boys decided to leave their college. In fact my advice to the boys was even to discuss with their parents the question of leaving before arriving at a decision.

I have myself appealed to thousands of parents at scores of meetings at which hardly a parent has objected to the proposition of leaving Government-controlled schools. Indeed they have with

wonderful unanimity passed resolutions on non-co-operation including the item on schools. I therefore take leave to think than the parents of the Aligarh boys are no less convinced than the others of the necessity of withdrawing their children from schools and colleges supported or controlled by a Government that has participated in betraying the Mussulmans of India and has wantonly humiliated the nation through its barbarous treatment of the Punjab.

I hope you know that I am as eager as any that our boys' education should not be neglected. But I am certainly more eager that their education is received through clean hands. I hold it to be unmanly for us to continue to receive grants for our education from a Government which we heartily dislike. In my humble opinion that would be even dishonourable and disloyal.

Is it not better that our children should receive their education in a free atmosphere, even though it may be given in humble cottages or in the shade of trees and under teachers who, being themselves free, would breathe into our children the spirit of freedom? I wish you could realize that the destiny of our beloved land lies not in us, the parents, but in our children. Shall we not free them from the curse of slavery which has made us crawl on our bellies? Being weak, we may not have the strength or the will even to throw off the yoke. But shall we not have the wisdom not to leave the cursed inheritance to our children?

They can lose nothing by pursuing their studies as free lads and lasses. Surely they do not need Government university degrees. And if we could but get rid of the love of Government degrees for our boys the question of finding money for their education is in reality simple. For a week's self-denial by the nation will provide for the education of its school-going children for one year. Our existing religious and charitable Hindu and Muslim funds can support our education without even a week of self-denial. The present effort is no more than an attempt to take a referendum of our capacity to govern ourselves and to protect our religions and our honour.

I remain,

Well-wisher of the youth of India,

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 3-11-1920

I have seen the repudiation by the Punjab Government of a statement made at a public meeting in Lahore that Maulana Zafar Ali Khan was reported by his son to be confined in a dark small room and that, although he was an under-trial prisoner, he was given only prison food. The Government *communique*does not mention the name of the speaker at the meeting in question. I must confess that I was the speaker, and I made the statements now contradicted by the Government. I was careful. I stated the source of my information and said that if it was true, the treatment was illegal and inhuman. I am glad that the Government have repudiated all the three statements. I could have no desire further to discredit the already discredited Government of the Punjab by a single exaggerated statement. I know that the cause of India can only suffer by a single wrong statement. At the same time I must be forgiven for looking with suspicion upon all Government contradictions. I have had more than enough experience of such contradictions during the dark days in the Punjab. The majority of these contradictions were simply lies. I therefore ask the reader to reserve his opinion till Maulana Zafar Ali's son has given his explanation. He gave me the information with great deliberation and I have, and had, no reason to doubt the accuracy of his statement. I am in communication with him.

* * *

Meanwhile let the reader join me in congratulating Maulana Zafar Ali Khan in receiving his sentence of five years' transportation and Rs. 1,000 fine. Let the reader realize that he has had this sentence for holding opinions. I have already analysed[1] the indictment in these pages. Thus has repression begun in the Punjab. There is also the seditious meeting prohibition. The strong speeches are strong if calling a spade a spade be strong—if a demand for full independence in case the Government do not repent, be strong.

* * *

Only, this repression need not worry us. It should stengthen our resolve to throw off a yoke which is intended to humiliate us and keep us in perpetual servility. The one indispenable condition of success is that we must not on any account lose our heads in the

[1] *Vide*, "Repression in the Punjab", 29-9-1920.

midst of repression. We must not retaliate secretly or openly. We must bear the repression meekly and use it to strengthen our resolve to suspend or sever all association with the Government. To observe hartal when an innocent man is imprisoned betrays weakness—a desire not to go to gaol. But I see no gateway to liberty save the doors of His Majesty's prison. And when a single political offender is imprisoned for no fault save an expression of his opinion, we must rejoice in his suffering. The best way of emptying the gaols of political offenders is to fill them. And the best way to fill them is ceaselessly to go on enforcing non-co-operation and unhesitatingly and unequivocally to demand full swaraj with the British connection if possible, and even without it if necessary.

* * *

If the Punjab Government have been active in repressing expression of opinion, the U.P. Government have been no less so. Maulana Zafar-ul-Mulk has been sentenced to two years' imprisonment and Rs. 750 fine, or nine months more if he fails to pay the fine. More arrests are promised. On the top of this comes the suggestion that my activities must not be left unchecked. My activities must result in the attainment of swaraj within a short time, and if swaraj must be delayed, the people must be debarred from hearing or adopting my views. The Government have the right to take away my liberty so long as in their opinion my activities are harmful. It will undoubtedly be more honourable to deal with me than with my co-workers. They cannot distinguish between my activity and that of my co-workers. Both are absolutely peaceful. We are concerned merely in spreading a certain class of opinions which if carried out can never result in violence. And only a tyrannical Government endeavours to suppress non-violent propaganda. Solong therefore as this Government of ours persists in its denial of justice to the khilafat and the Punjab, so long must it resort to repression—the only means available to a tyrant when he is thwarted in his purpose.

Young India, 3-11-1920

251. THE DEPRESSED CLASSES[1]

In order to give an authoritative reply the letter was referred to the Senate which has passed a resolution to the effect that, in accordance with the constitution of the Senate, no institution that specially excluded the depressed classes could be affiliated. I had personally no doubt about the meaning of the constitution.

Young India, 3-11-1920

252. LUCKNOW SPEECHES

The recent meeting in Lucknow, held during the visit of the Ali Brothers and myself, has attracted considerable attention and resulted in the secession of Mr. Douglas, an Indian Christian barrister, from the non-co-operation movement. Mr. Douglas' reason for his decision is Maulana Abdul Bari's speech on that occasion. Mr. Douglas charges the Maulana with having called Christians Kafirs and with having practically condoned the late Mr. Willoughby's murder.

Now I was present at the meeting and had reason to listen to every word that Maulana Abdul Bari said with the greatest attention, and I must confess that the speech could not possibly provide any occasion for Mr. Douglas' secession. I deny that the Maulana Saheb either condoned the murder, or by calling Mr. Willoughby a Kafir had any intention of insulting Christians. Mr. Douglas was hardly justified in seceding. He never protested at the meeting, he never complained to me. He knew that I had great regard for the Maulana Saheb, and that I myself would have spoken out if there was any condonation of the offence in his speech, or if there was any insult meant to be offered to Christians as such. I could not associate myself with an insult to any of the great religions of the world. Moreover Mr. Douglas suspended his practice and joined non-co-operation, not merely for the sake of the khilafat but equally for the Punjab, and he was a party to the extension of non-co-operation up to the time of the establishment of swaraj in India. Does Mr. Douglas now

[1] This was in reply to Andrews' letter, which, referring to Gandhiji's article ("Depressed Classes", 27-10-1920), put the following question : "Will all national schools and colleges be open to the depressed classes?"

not want swaraj or redress for the Punjab? And can he abandon the khilafat movement because a moulvi however distinguished given him offence by his speech? Surely there is something wrong and incomprehensible about Mr. Douglas' attitude. However, I must leave Mr. Douglas to clear up his position[1] and justify his secession on more reasonable grounds.

It is necessary for me to deal with the speeches themselves, and more especially the speech delivered by Maulana Abdul Bari Saheb. The difficulty of a reporter is at any time great, but when he has to take down a report in long hand, and at the same time to translate the speaker's remarks made in a tongue the reporter only half understands, the task becomes still more difficult. Such was the position which my co-worker, Mr. Mahadev Desai, occupied when he took notes of the Maulana's speech. I saw his report after it was published in the *Navajivan* and was grieved about it. I thought that a serious though innocent mistake was made by him. The report does not do justice to the Maulana and makes him say that the murderer of Mr. Willoughby was a martyr, and that he, the Maulana had accepted my word in preference to that of *Alkoran*. I consider Mr. Mahadev Desai to be one of the best and most careful of the co-workers I have the good fortune to possess. But the best of us may, in spite of the best of intentions, sometimes make mistakes.

To my recollection what Maulana Abdul Bari Saheb said was that he disliked the murder of Mr. Willoughby as much as anybody. He knew that it had damaged the khilafat cause. He felt sure that if he had known anything of the proposed murder he would have himself intervened to prevent it. That was a position he himself could take, and understand when taken by others. But it was a different thing when he was asked, as he was by some of his friends, to condemn the murderer to *jahanam*[2]. He, as a religious man found it impossible to do so. He did not know how the murder was committed, or what were the motives actuating it. The murderer's position after death was therefore clearly a matter between him and his Maker, and it would be presumption on the part of any person to anticipate the verdict of the Deity. Mr. Willoughby belonged to the Kafir race, and had there been jehad proclaimed anyone belonging to the enemy race could have been lawfully killed by the sword of Islam. But they (the

[1] *Vide* "Mr. Douglas Replies", 17-11-1920

[2] Hell

Mussulmans) had decided not to draw the sword and so it was not lawful for any Mussulman to take the life of any member of the enemy race. They had accepted Mr. Gandhi's advice of non-co-operation. For there was ample warrant for it in the Koran and the Prophet's own life. And so long as non-co-operation continued, he would be guided entirely by Mr. Gandhi. He was rebuked for making friends with the Hindus who were idolators. It was his conviction that it was perfectly competent for a Mussulman to prefer friendship with those Kafirs who had left no stone unturned to put Islam in jeopardy.

This is the gist of the Maulana's speech. The speech was certainly bitter. Who can complain of bitterness of speech in a man of such religious devotion as Maulana Abdul Bari when he finds that his religious honour is at stake? I personally dislike the use of the word Kafir as applied to anyone, as I dislike the use by a Hindu of the word *mlechchha*[1] or *anaryas*[2] to anyone. But I refuse to quarrel with the Mussulman or the Hindu for the use of words to which they have been accustomed from their childhood. Time will certainly tend towards the discontinuance of such words as friendship between people of different professions and faiths grows. Must I refuse to acknowledge the learning or the goodness of a man like Bishop Heber[3] for calling Hindus heathens and even pitying them? "Man alone is vile"[4] was said of a whole race of mankind and is even today sung in many a Christian church. I can therefore see no warrant for Mr. Douglas' decision in the above speech.

Maulana Shaukat Ali was still more unexceptionable. He said no one could regret more than he did the murder of Mr. Willoughby. Had not Khilafat Committees sedulously tried their best to prevent violence there would certainly have been not one but many such murderers. But it was their duty for the sake of their own religion and honour to prevent them so long as they accepted non-co-operation. But he declined to identify himself with toadying resolutions regarding the murderer.

I observe too that I have been misreported. I never said that we would give notice when we intended to draw the sword. I

[1] Impure
[2] Non-Aryans
[3] Reginald Heber (1782-1826); Bishop of Calcutta
[4] For the actual lines, *vide* 3rd footnote to "Letter to S. K. Rudra", 18-4-1917.

condemned the murder with the emphasis I could command and said that the honour of Islam would be injured if there was any condonation of the murder of an innocent man when an assurance of safety was issued by authoritative religious bodies in Islam. I said further that my own personal religion forbade me to take the life of my enemy in any case whatsoever. But I added that I recognized that Islam, and for that matter lakhs of Hindus, believed that killing one's enemy was considered lawful under certain circumstances. And I said that when the Mussulmans of India wanted to draw the sword, they would as honourable men declare themselves in no equivocal terms and give due notice.

And I repeat what I have often said that the noblest and the most fearless among the Mussulmans (and I count Maulana Bari Saheb and the Ali Brothers as such) are trying their utmost to prevent violence. I verily believe that but for strenuous efforts of such men violence would have broken out in this land. I admit that it would have done no good to Islam or India. It would only have provided occasion for ruthless repression without doing any honour to Islam or India.

Young India, 3-11-1920

253. THE CONGRESS CONSTITUTION

The belated report of the Congress Constitution Committee has now been published for general information, and opinion has been invited from all public bodies in order to assist the deliberations of the All-India Congress Committee. It is a pity that, small though the Constitution Committee was, all the members never met at any one time in spite of efforts, to have a meeting of them all. It is perhaps nobody's fault that all the members could not meet. At the same time the draft report has passed through the searching examination of all but one member, and the report represents the mature deliberations of four out of the five members. It must be stated at the same time that it does not pretend to be the unanimous opinion of the members. Rather than present a dissenting minute, a workable scheme has been brought out leaving each member free to press his own views on the several matters in which they are not quite unanimous. The most important part of the constitution, however, is the alteration of the creed. So far as I am aware there is no fundamental difference of opinion between the members. In my opinion the altered creed

represents the exact feeling of the country at the present moment.

I know that the proposed alteration has been subjected to hostile criticism in several newspapers of note. But the extraordinary situation that faces the country is that popular opinion is far in advance of several newspapers which have hitherto commanded influence and have undoubtedly moulded public opinion. The fact is that the formation of opinion today is by no means confined to the educated classes, but the masses have taken it upon themselves not only to formulate opinion but to enforce it. It would be a mistake to belittle or ignore this opinion, or to ascribe it to a temporary upheaval. It would be equally a mistake to suppose that this awakening amongst the masses is due either to the activity of the Ali Brothers or myself. For the time being we have the ear of the masses because we voice their sentiments. The masses are by no means so foolish or unintelligent as we sometimes imagine. They often perceive things with their intuition, which we ourselves fail to see with our intellect. But whilst the masses know what they want, they often do not know how to express their wants and, less often, how to get what they want. Herein comes the use of leadership, and disastrous results can easily follow a bad, hasty, or what is worse, selfish lead.

The first part of the proposed creed expresses the present desire of the nation, and the second shows the way that desire can be fulfilled. In my humble opinion, the Congress creed with the proposed alteration is but an extension of the original. And so long as no break with the British connection is attempted, it is strictly within even the existing article that defines the Congress creed. The extension lies in the contemplated possibility of a break with the British connection. In my humble opinion, if India is to make unhampered progress, we must make it clear to the British people that whilst we desire to retain the British connection, if we can rise to our full height with it, we are determined to dispense with, and even to get rid of that connection, if that is necessary for full national development. I hold that it is not only derogatory to national dignity but it actually impedes national progress superstitiously to believe that our progress towards our goal is impossible without British connection. It is this superstition which makes some of the best of us tolerate the Punjab wrong and the khilafat insult. This blind adherence to that connection makes us feel helpless. The proposed alteration in the creed enables us to rid ourselves of our helpless condition. I personally hold that it is perfectly constitutional openly to strive after

independence, but lest there may be dispute as to the constitutional character of any movement for complete independence, the doubtful and highly technical adjective "constitutional" has been removed from the altered creed in the draft. Surely it should be enough to ensure that the methods for achieving our end are legitimate, honourable, and peaceful. I believe that this was the reasoning that guided my colleagues in accepting the proposed creed. In any case, such was certainly my view of the whole alteration. There is no desire on my part to adopt any means that are subversive of law and order. I know, however, that I am treading a delicate ground when I write about law and order for, to some of our distinguished leaders even my present methods appear to be lawless and conducive to disorder. But even they will perhaps grant that the retention of the word "constitutional" cannot protect the country against methods such as I am employing. It gives rise, no doubt, to a luminous legal discussion, but any such discussion is fruitless when the nation means business. The other important alteration refers to the limitation of the number of delegates. I believe that the advantages of such a limitation are obvious. We are fast reaching a time when without any such limitation the Congress will become an unwieldy body. It is difficult even to have an unlimited number of visitors; it is impossible to transact national busines if we have an unlimited number of delegates.

The next important alteration is about the election of the members of the All-India Congress Committee, making that Committee practically the Subjects Committee, and the redistribution of India for the purposes of the Congress on a linguistic basis. It is not necessary to comment on these alterations, but I wish to add that if the Congress accepts the principle of limiting the number of delegates it would be advisable to introduce the principle of proportional representation.That would enable all parties, who wish, to be represented at the Congress.

I observe that *The servant of India* sees an inconsistency between my implied acceptance of the British Committee, so far as the published draft constitution is concerned, and my recent article[1] in *Young India* on that Committee and the newspaper *India*. But it is well known that for several years I have held my present views about the existence of that body. It would have been irrelevant for me, perhaps, to suggest to my colleagues the extinction of that Committee.

[1] *Vide* "The British Congress Committee and *India*", 20-9-1920.

It was not our function to report on the usefulness or otherwise of the Committee. We were commissioned only for preparing a new constitution. Moreover I knew that my colleagues were not averse to the existence of the British Committee. And the drawing up of a new constitution enabled me to show that where there was no question of principle I was desirous of agreeing quickly with my opponents in opinions. But I propose certainly to press for abolition of the Committee as it is at present constituted, and the stopping of its organ *India*.

Young India, 3-11-1920

254. INNOCENT MISTAKE

In the last issue of *Navajivan*, Mr. Mahadev Desai gave what was, on the whole, an excellent report of the mammoth meeting held at Lucknow. In this report he gave an account of Maulana Abdul Bari Saheb's speech, a speech which was followed with great attention by everyone. A Christian named Douglas misconstrued the speech to such an extent that he has resumed legal practice which, embracing non-co-operation, he had abandoned and has now given up non-co-operation work. Others, too, have reacted to the speech in different ways. I know that Shri Mahadev Desai cannot follow the highly Persianized and Arabicized Urdu of the Maulana Saheb very well. As I understand the speech, he has committed an error in his report of it. The Maulana Saheb's speech had produced an entirely different impression on me. I reproduce it here as well as I can recollect it. The words cannot be attributed to the Maulana Saheb, since I took no notes of the speech. But I am sure that the thought are his.

> After Gandhiji's comments on the Kheri incident[1], I feel it to, be my duty to say something. I do not know anything about politics; I do not want to make a speech, I wish to speak only as an *aalim*[2], and so I shall speak sitting [on my knees]. Men have said all man-ner of things about this assassination. Many of them understand nothing about the matter. I wish to give my opinion based on the tenets of my religion as I understand them. Some say that the murderer will go to hell. I cannot say this. Only God understands a man's heart. How can I know

[1] Assassination of Willoughby

[2] Literally, a learned man, here a man informed on matters of religion

why and for what reason that man committed the murder? Islam permits, in no uncertain terms, the killing of one's enemy. It is impossible to decide who is innocent and who is guilty from among one's enemies. It is an accepted principle that in war all persons of the enemy nation can be killed. Mr. Willoughby was a Kafir and belonged to the enemy nation. Had a jehad been proclaimed and had the assassin been legally killed, he would undoubtedly have been named a martyr. But we are not fighting a jehad just now. Gandhiji has shown us another path, and we know very well that in the present circumstances we shall not succeed in saving Islam by declaring a jehad; we do not have the strength for it. Gandhiji has shown us the way of non-co-operation, and we have accepted it. There are specific injunctions in the Koran supporting this. Even the Prophet had resort to non-co-operation for thirteen years. As I have put my faith in Gandhiji, quite a few Muslims are angry with me, but I can say that they do not understand me at all. I prefer the friendship of the Hindus to that of the Kafirs who have threatened the existence of Islam, and, for their sake, I consider it my duty to spare the cow. The Prophet himself had joined hands with idolators. So long as the Khilafat Committee and the *aalims* have not declared a jehad, we cannot draw the sword, and it is for this reason that I feel pained at Mr. Willoughby's murder. Had I known beforehand, I would have taken steps to prevent it. But to say this and express one's disapproval of the murder is one thing, and to declare that the murderer will go to hell is another. Only God can decide whether the murderer should go to hell or to heaven. All that we can say is that the assassination has given a set-back, to the khilafat struggle and that we should prevent such acts.

This is what I understand Maulana Saheb's speech to have been. We can see from this that, unless shorthand notes are taken, it is very dangerous to report important speeches. Shri Mahadev's report has unwittingly done injustice to the Maulana Saheb. He has not proclaimed that the murderer was a martyr and I, at any rate, believe that such a statement would be a discredit to Islam. If a Muslim commits a murder for a good cause, even for the sake of the khilafat, on his own responsibility without a jehad having been declared, he cannot, in my humble view, be looked upon as a martyr. That such a man would not deserve to go to hell is quite another matter and we

can understand the point; but martyrdom is the special reward for a good deed. A deed which, we admit, may give a setback to the khilafat movement cannot make a martyr of anyone. I think it impossible, therefore, that the Maulana Saheb said in his speech that the murderer had become a martyr.

The other mistake which I notice in Shri Mahadev's account is that he has reported the Maulana Saheb as preferring my behest to the injunction of the Koran-e-Sharif. No Muslim may follow the behest of even another Muslim, much less that of a Hindu, in preference to the injunctions of the Koran-e-Sharif. Just as the Vedas or the *Gita* are the final word for the Hindus, so is the Koran-e-Sharif for the Muslims. Besides, I dare not command an *aalim* like the Maulana Saheb; I cannot command even the Khilafat Committee. I can be, and am, only an adviser and no more.

Yet one more mistake remains to be pointed out. Shri Mahadev has reported the last sentence of the Maulana Saheb's speech as follows :

> But ever since I entered this struggle, nothing has been dearer to me than the Hindus and the cow.

I do not remember the Maulana Saheb having said this and I believe that he would not say it. All that he can say is that the Hindus now are dearer to him than others. Nevertheless, this mistake cannot be put on a level with the two mistakes mentioned above. The first mistake may encourage an ignorant person to commit a murder, and it is my firm conviction that this was not the Maulana Saheb's intention—he does not want it. The second mistake does injustice to the Maulana Saheb and also gives a cause to Muslims to feel hurt. The very idea that any Muslim should prefer the behest of a man to of the Korane Sharif is intolerable to an orthodox Muslim.

It is not necessary for me to point out to the attentive reader of *Navajivan* that in his note below the report Shri Mahadev has shielded himself and the Maulana Saheb in advance. He says :

> I have given above the Maulana Saheb's arguments in my own words. There may conceivably be errors in it, but I have given the speech as I understood it and recollect it. The occasion was so important and the matter was discussed in words so carefully weighed that, unless every word of the speech is reproduced, the report is bound to be inadequate in one way or another.

Shri Mahadev too had not taken down the speech verbatim.

I have, therefore, drawn readers' attention to the inaccuracies I found in it. Others who heard the speech can certainly point out inaccuracies in my report and the Maulana Saheb alone can see the inadequacy of the reports of us all; if he wishes, he can certainly point out something. I must learn from this my responsibility as a jou rnalist. It is not possible for any editor to check every line printed in his paper. Had I seen Shri Mahadev's report before it was printed, I would certainly have altered it along the lines indicated above. But I am not prepared to find fault with Shri Mahadev either. A reporter has done his duty if he reports honestly and in good faith what he has heard or as he has understood it. Readers should bear in mind the difficulties of editors and reporters and read their papers with due corrections. If they do not do so, they would be doing great injustice to those who run the newspapers and quite certainly would not derive as much profits as they could.

Now remains Mr. Douglas who, as I have stated above, has withdrawn from the movement. He has been altogether hasty. The Maulana Saheb's description of Christians as Kafirs has hurt him. I can understand this. It would have been better if the term "Kafir" had not been used. The Maulana Saheb, however, had used it without malice and with reference to the British whom he regards, at present, as his enemies. In any case, Mr. Douglas should have ascertained from the Maulana Saheb the meaning of the term before taking the hasty step he did. Instead, he has been in too great a hurry to leave the movement and so I, at any rate, view his action with some suspicion. The Maulana Saheb's words were strong, no doubt, but I am convinced that they were not of the kind with which a man whose own heart is clean need take offence, and I am equally convinced that they were not intended to encourage assassination. In his speech the Maulana Saheb has merely explained what the Holy Book says and replied to the attacks on him.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-11-1920

255. SPPECH AT MEETING IN NASIK[1]

November 4, 1920

FRIENDS,

I shall not talk about many things in this holy place. On this occasion I am sorry that Maulana Shaukat Ali, who is like a brother to me, is not with me just now. He and his brother, Mahomed Ali, are at present engaged in important work in Aligarh and, therefore, their brother-in-law, Moazam Ali, a resident of Moradabad, who has just given up practice as a barrister, has accompanied me here.

All of you have probably heard of Pandit Motilal Nehru, the present President of the Congress. His great services and sacrifices in the cause of the Punjab are known to all. It is his and Pandit Malaviya's great efforts which saved the lives of thousands of innocent Hindus and Muslims in the Punjab. Even today, he is dedicated to the service of the country, having renounced a flourishing practice worth a lakh of rupees every month.

The events of the last ten months have convinced me that the Empire which rules us today is utterly Satanic. I call it *Ravanarajya.* The people have before them two convincing proofs of this. The outrages in the Punjab are probaby unheard of anywhere. Secondly, the way this Empire has wounded the seven crore Muslims of India by betraying them on the khilafat issue, no other government would have had the heart to do. What should the subjects of such a Satanic Empire do? Tulsidas has said that one must shun association with the wicked, the evil-minded—give up their company, break off friendly relations with them, non-co-operate with them, stop helping them. This is a kind of *yajna,* and we shall be able to purify ourselves, end *Ravanarajya* and establish *Ramarajya* only when we offer ourselves as oblation is this *yajna.* This *Ramarajya* is swaraj. Without establishing swaraj we cannot throw off the yoke of this Satanic rule.

How may we establish this swaraj? By cultivating love and regard among us, between Hindus and Muslims, by co-operation among ourselves. Until this Empire has repented its misdeeds, apologized for them, we must shun all dealings with it. We should not seek to destroy or bend this Empire by killing Englishmen or burning down their houses; we can gain our end by breaking off relations with

[1] Gandhiji went to Nasik at the special invitation of Shrimad Shankaracharya of Karavirpeeth, who himself presided over the meeting.

it. If one hundred thousand people can make thirty crores feel helpless before them, the reason is that we ourwelves are very much their slaves. We assume that, should the British leave, we would fight among ourselves and destroy one another. We must forthwith shake off this delusion. We must refuse to feel helpless before them. Instead of Hindus and Muslims uniting to kill, they should offer their own blood to secure freedom. I want you to see that this is the only way, that there is no other. We can fight Satan and vanquish him, reduce him to helplessness, not with his methods but with God's help and God's help is available ony to him who has love in his heart.

We thus want to build on the foundation of self-sacrifice and for that purpose we must disown all ties with this wicked Empire, refuse its gifts and favours and everything else. Its titles, its schools and the jobs it offers must be totally unacceptable to us and we must at once, without taking thought of consequences, turn our back on them in the same way that we would escape from a burning house. We cannot enlist in its army, either. Nor should we walk into its councils, the trap it has laid for us. I find some persons advancing the argument that the money with which the Government runs the schools is not its own, but the people's. If so [they ask], why should we leave these schools? I ask in reply how, once a robber has disposessed you of your money, you can claim the money in his hand as yours. If, out of the wealth the robber has seized from you, he offers to return a part as gift to you, would you accept it? How can we accept a gift from one who has robbed us of our honour, who has committed the greatest robbery of all by endangering our religion? Our duty at the present hour is to withdraw from all association with the Government. We should not seek the help of its courts to settle our disputes and we should see to it that not a single voter votes for any candidate contesting election to the newly-introduced councils.

If we do this and, at the same time, understand the moral duty of following swadeshi, we shall have swaraj within a year, secure justice for the Punjab and on the khilafat issue. Swadeshi is no minor matter. The country is today in a state of abject poverty, has no food to eat and no cloth to wear. I have seen large numbers of women who, for want of an-other garment to change into, are unable to have a bath. If we want that people should have at least two square meals a day and enough cloth on the body to cover their nakedness, every person in India will now have to embrace swadeshi and every woman will have to install the sacred spin-ning-wheel in her home and start spinning on

it. It would not be right for us to use mill-made cloth, for such cloth is mostly used by those who are the poorest among us. To give up wearing English cloth and start using Indian mill-made cloth will actually mean our making cloth dearer for the poor. For this reason, we should wear garments made only from cloth produced by our weavers with yarn spun by the women in our homes. There is no cloth, I allure you, more sacred and more beautiful than this khadi which I wear. This is the only royal road to save India from her abject poverty. I pray God grant you the strength to take a sacred pledge, in this spot hallowed by the Ganga[1], to sacrifice your all so that India may become free, the wounds of the Muslims may be healed and justice done on the Punjab issue.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-11-1920

256. LETTER TO THE TEACHERS AND PUPILS OF GURUKUL

POONA,

Friday [*November 5, 1920*][2]

TEACHERS AND PUPILS OF GURUKUL[3],

I have your letter. How can I forget that the Gurukul has bound my children with bonds of love? What message can I send you? If I must, I will tell you: Do you keep off the sin of modernity?[4] Do you think of the downtrodden of India by spinning every day? Have you realized that plying the little spinning-wheel today is a great *yajna?*

No step along this path is ever wasted.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi : S.N. 7429

[1] The Godavari, which is called "The Ganges of the South" (दक्षिण गंगा)

[2] On this date, Gandhiji was in Poona.

[3] Residential educational institution founded by Shraddhanand near Hardwar

[4] The Original is not clear.

257. SPEECH AT MEETING IN DECCAN GYMKHANA, POONA[1]

November 5, 1920

I felt ashamed when I heard that the day before yesterday they had invited the Governor to this Gymkhana and had him distribute the prizes. I know the Governor to be a worthy man. While the Lt.-Governor of the Punjab had lost his head at the time of the Punjab outrages, this Governor had kept his and remained perfectly cool. If at all we wish to retain this Empire, we would have him as a Governor. Even so, I should have no dealings with him at present since he has not resigned from Government service. How can a man like him remain in the service of an Empire which has the breath, not of God, but of Satan over it? If my revered master, Shri Gokhale, had been alive and held the post of a Governor, I would have told him that I would not go anywhere near a Governor who put up with the outrageous acts of an Empire like this. Even a perfect gentleman can do nothing while in the service of this Empire. Tilak Maharaj, who sacrificed his life fighting for swaraj, deserved to be a Viceroy. Even him, I would have refused to salute if he had agreed to serve as Viceroy in this Empire which has refused to apologize [for its misdeeds]. My fight is not against the British people but against the Empire. The latter talks big things but carries out nothing in action. It has turned its back on Cobden and Bright and accepted slavery with Satan. So long as things continue thus, we should refuse to have any dealings with it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-11-1920

258. SPEECH AT MEETING IN BHAVANIPETH, POONA[2]

November 5, 1920

Hindus and Muslims have been fighting to this day. We have merely talked about unity. What little friendship we show for one another has a political aim and does not spring from the heart. I would that now we cleansed our hearts and cultivated genuine love.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of the tour
[2] *ibid*

But the things I see happening here between Brahmins and non-Brahmins make me shudder. I once spoke in Madras against Brahmins. It was a private meeting. There the problem of non-Brahmins is of a different character, and is a very acute one. Giving an example, I said that the Brahmins' treatment of the *Panchamas* was as Satanic as the treatment meted out by the bureaucracy [to us]. Since I was talking to Brahmins, I pointed out the wrong they do. It is most certainly Satanic to treat the *Panchamas* as untouchable. I said that, so long as we had not got rid of the Satanism in us, we were not fit to overcome it in others. Actually, my charge was not against the Brahmins but against the Hindu community itself. It was not against the Brahmins of today. The late Mr. Gokhale was a Brahmin and so was the Lokamanya, and they, too, used to assert that the [so-called] untouchables were the same as others and always said that, if we continued to treat them as untouchables, we would not be able to manage swaraj.

I did not refer to Maharashtra. The non-Brahmins have taken out of its context an expression I used in Madras only in reference to Madras, and have been misapplying it. Some of them even go so far as to say that they are not Hindus. Those, at any rate, have no right to concern themselves with the quarrel of Brahmins and non-Brahmins. To the non-Brahmins, however, I say that just as we would not rush into criminal proceedings against any Muslims if they should abuse us, so also should they give up thinking in such terms. Let them remember that, if they approach this wicked Empire for help against the Hindus, they will have to become slaves of the Empire itself. I request non-Brahmins to see that they do not falsely attribute any statement to me and give currency to it. I do not know what the Satya Shodhak Mandal is; it has been telling the people, however, that I am an enemy of *varnashrama*[1]. I assert that this is not true. All manner of false ideas have been propagated in my name. I am an orthodox Hindu—I am a *Vaishnava;* I have unshakable faith in the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata* and the Upanishads. I know the short-comings of my holy books, but I am a staunch believer in *varnashrama*. Anyone who wants to, is welcome to profit from this fact and exploit my name. If Hindus create divisions, like that between Brahmins and non-Brahmins, and go begging to the Government for protection, I want to

[1] The organization of society into four castes, each with a distinctive function, and the division of life into four stages

tell them that they will get a good knocking on the head and will return empty-handed. Muslims have had this experience. To get the injustice to the nation undone, we have no choice but to unite, all of us.

* * *

I have heard that the Government wants to arrest us. We cannot blame it for this, if it is true. We seek to uproot the Empire. The Empire, then, has the right to arrest us. You have no right to observe a hartal. If you do, your action will mean that you are not ready for imprisonment. If some of you should go mad and burn houses or kill a few Englishmen, you would be making a serious miscalculation. Our country is not Egypt or Russia or Ireland. Ours is not an armed fight. Our weapon is non-co-operation.The Government believes that, if we are arrested, you will all be cowed down and keep still. You can tell the Government that these are shrewd calculations it is making but that, when we are arrested, things will not turn out that way. If you readily take charge then of the non-co-operation movement which I am conducting, you will be able to secure our release. With the seal of swaraj in your hands, you will get all three of us out of jail. It should be for you to see that we are released. I would not like to be set free by them; I should like to be released by your hands, though not even by your hands if they are blood-stained. Be sure that, if my arrest is followed by bloodshed, that very moment my blood, too, will have been shed. I will then pray to God to give me the strength to burn myself in the flames kindled by your actions. I trust that my own community will not betray me. If it does, nevertheless, I will pray for death.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-11-1920

259. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, POONA[1]

November 6, 1920

I know that in all communities, Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and others, it is the women who preserve dharma. The day they forsake dharma, it will be destroyed. Our Shastras say that a country in which the king and the women have abandoned dharma perishes. In our

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of the tour

country, the women have not totally abandoned it, but the king has. Our country is governed in the same way as *Ravanarajya*—as the kingdm of a monster.

* * *

This Empire has made cowards of men. Had we not been cowards, had the women brought forth brave men, the atrocities [in the Punjab] would have been impossible. But alas! these days the men in our country are no longer men. I want the mothers in India to shed fear. So long as they do not rear brave men, India's deliverance is impossible. . . .[1] But how is this to be done? The country will produce brave men only when the women have courage in their heart, have *bhakti*[2] and faith, when God has become the lord of their heart and they have learnt to fear Him alone, and to fear no man. If we want to end *Ravanarajya*, we must have *Ramarajya* prevail. How can we hope to have the strength to bring this about so long as the women do not do *tapascharya* like that of Parvati[3] or Kausalya[4], do not follow dharma as conscientiously as Draupadi and Damayanti did? Till they do this, it is impossible that we shall have brave men.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-11-1920

260. SPEECH AT MEETING IN WAI[5]

November 6, 1920

The remark I made in Madras[6] has been twisted by non-Brahmins and is being used to serve unworthy ends. I humbly submit to you that it had no reference to this quarrel. Non-Brahmins even say that they will throw off the yoke of Brahmins. They also persecute the latter and harass them in all manner of ways. Surely,

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] Seeking God through love and devotion

[3] Daughter of the Himalayas and consort of Siva

[4] Rama's mother

[5] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of the tour. The two parts of the speechwere reproduced, one in the issue of 14-11-1920 and the other in the issue of 21-11-1920.

[6] *Vide* "Talk at Law College, Madras", 22-8-1920.

our Hindu culture does not permit such conduct towards anyone. It simply passes my understanding how any person brought up in this culture can bring himself to say that he is not a Hindu. I cannot conceive it, either, that any non-Brahmin should have hatred for Brahmins. I am a non-Brahmin, but I do not hate any Brahmin. I am a student of the *Bhagavad Gita* and I claim that for a sincere student of this work it is quite easy to eschew ill will and hatred. The *Gita* also teaches that, if we wish to conquer anyone, it should be with love. I appeal to non-Brahmins to give up fighting if they love Hindu culture. It the Brahmins have done them injustice, they may demand justice for the future. You should first be clear about what the Brahmins have done to you and then approach some Brahmin leaders to have matters set right. Brahmins are trying to reform the extreme practices and remove the shortcomings to be found in present-day Hinduism; they are unhappy about these. I am not speaking of those Brahmins who remain plunged in darkness and merely go on repeating the words of the Shastras; I speak of those whom non-Brahmins attack and tell the latter that by their hostility to these Brahmins they will be cutting their own throats.[1]

* * *

I co-operated for 30 years but, today, I have embarked upon non-co-operation. Why? Only because, as our Shastras say, we may co- operate with a man while there is some little measure of goodness in him, but when a man is obstinately determined to forget his humanity, it becomes everyone's duty to turn his back on such a one. Tulsidas, Tukaram[2], Ramdas[3],—all of them taught this same thing, that there can be no co-operation between a god and a monster, between Rama and Ravana. Rama and Lakshmana were mere boys, but they fought the ten-headed Ravana.This British Government of ours has thrust a sharp dagger into the Muslims' heart, has slighted Islam. Cruel things have been done to men and women and to students in the Punjab. To prevent things from happening again, non-co-operation with the Government is the only way.

What is the meaning of the identification with others which the

[1] From *Navajivan*, 14-11-1920

[2] Saint-poets of Maharashtra, contemporaries of Shivaji

[3] *ibid*

Gita speaks of? You have not cultivated such identification so long as the beatings to which men were subjected in the Punjab, the forcing of people to crawl on their stomachs and to rub the nose on the ground as they did so, the atrocities inflicted on students—so long as you do not feel that these things were done to you. It is said about Shri Samarth Ramdas Swami that once, when he saw someone being whipped, he felt it so much that sores appeared on his back. It is because of this identification with others which Ramdas Swami had cultivated that he has become for us a man ever to be revered. It we do not feel that the injustice in the Punjab and that done to the Muslims have been done to us, how can we fight to defend Islam, to defend Hinduism?

Everyone makes mistakes but, on realizing that a mistake has been made, one apologizes for it. This Empire, on the contrary, after having made a mistake refused, in its pride, to acknowledge it and asked us to forget the cruel things done; this, therefore, was a wound worthy of a devil. Tulsidas has said that one should shun the company of the evil. It is on the strength of this teaching that I have been advising people to avoid association with this Empire. It will be enough if, while living in it, we refuse to accept any favour or help from it. Sita, living in the kingdom of Ravana, found it impossible to accept the delicious food sent by the latter or the services offered by the monster-women. Thus, by her severe *tapascharya*, she preserved her ideal of perfect chastity. If we would guard our character against defilement, there is no way but non-co-operation. Students hesitate to leave schools and colleges because they are worried what would happen to their education. I assure them that, If they stop receiving the education provided by this Satanic Empire in the same faith in which Janakiji[1] refused food sent by Ravana—she of course got food from Rama—then Rama and Lord Krishna will see to their education.

Students will ask where this Rama of mine is. Educated under the English system and reading history as taught in it, we learn to ask such questions. Our students are falling low, Western education has taught us Western ways, has taught us to cry "Shame!" on people. If you have no regard for Mrs. Besant, you may not attend her schools or go to her meetings[2], but neither Hindu culture nor Islamic culture

[1] Another name of Sita

[2] Reference to Mrs. Besant's meeting in Bombay and Allahabad; *vide* the following item.

teaches one to attend her meetings and then create disturbance there. Approval is not to be expressed by clapping hands or disapproval by crying "Shame!" ; we can express either through action alone. If you want to employ non-co-operation, you should know what your Shastras teach. This is a holy war. We can defeat *adharma* through dharma, can prevent people from following the way of *adharma* by ourselves living according to dharma.

* * *

If you[1] become single-minded servants of the country, you will be able to render four times the service you render today. Our sannyasis used to be content to get food and no more, likewise, you, too, should embrace *sannyasa*[2] for a year, if not for a longer period, and so secure swaraj.

* * *

Hinduism contains the finest culture, it teaches that he is the true, the pure, Kshatriya who does not kill but knows how to die. The *Gita* has taught me one most important word, *apalayanam*[3]. He who wields the sword is likely some time to retreat. Not putting his trust in God, he trusts to his arms and, therefore, he is unable to abide by the duty of *apalayanam*. I, for one, would certainly say that Prahlad and others like him did this duty and showed themselves to be pure Kshatriyas.[4]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-11-1920 & 21-11-1920

261. SOME DIFFICULTIES

The way to swaraj is as difficult as it is straight. There are hills and ditches on the way. The mounds will have to be levelled down, the ditches will have to be filled up. If we do not break them, the hills will obstruct our progress, and so will the ditches if we do not fill them up.

Some of the events[5] which have occurred in Ahmedabad are

[1] Addressed to lawyers in the audience
[2] Sannyasi's way of life
[3] Refusal to run away in fear
[4] From *Navajivan*, 21-11-1920
[5] "Speech at Mehmedabad", 1-11-1920.

painful. There were many who felt satisfied at having saved one of the goats which were to be slaughtered in sacrific to Mother Kali. Had the goat been saved in the right manner, I would have felt very happy, but in saving the goat they hurt many human beings. For saving the goat, force was used against these. This is not Hinduism. The non-violence it teaches does not enjoin the saving of a goat by beating up or threatening human beings. The multitude of lions, tigers and wolves swallow up innumerable goats and other animals; we do not kill them to stop them doing so. A good many snakes sting and kill animals and human beings, but the Hindus not only abstain from killing them, they actually consider it a sin to kill them. On what grounds, then, can we use violence to save a goat?

Moreover, in a religious matter involving Hindus only, they took the assistance of a Muslim moulvi and through him the help of [mill-] workers. To me this seems to have been a great mistake. To avail ourselves of the strength of Muslims for such a purpose means our exchanging one form of slavery for another. The moulvi should have refused to interfere. He should have understood that it was no business of his to interfere in a religious quarrel which concerned the Hindus. One hears that the things the moulvi has been saying are also harmful to the community. This experience teaches us two lessons. We should not try to get anything done through force and we should not attend meetings called or listen to the speeches made by anyone not specially deputed by bodies which we trust, such as the Khilafat Committee or the Swarajya Sabha. It is quite a different thing to attend meetings addressed by those whom we look upon as our opponents, in order that we may know what their arguments are. But it seems to me that, when we have not formed our own opinions, no one should attend a meeting merely through curiosity, saying, "A moulvi has come; let us go and hear him."

The truth is that there are some impostors who flourish these days by making speeches in the name of the khilafat or the Swarajya Sabha. We should on no account go and listen to their speeches.

I have heard that a Hindi-speaking woman goes from place to place and, claiming to be my daughter, swindles people. I first got this information from Dwarka. Now I receive it from Sind. One man collected funds in my name and is already in jail. I have no daughter at all but, even if I had one, no one need help or trust persons simply because they happen to be my relations. This is no time to respect relationship; it is a time when one must know the man and his worth.

Whatever the occasion, no person whom we do not know should be taken at his word simply because of his connections.

I hope that in a short time all the known public bodies will publish a list of their chosen speakers, so that we may always recognize one as such. As the non-co-operation struggle gains momentum, we shall have to save ourselves from all manner of impostors, ignorant orators and counsellors equally ignorant. A little mistake may conceivably lead us into serious difficulties.

We have to do many things, destroy the old and build new things in their place. New schools are to be opened, *panchas* have to be appointed, money is to be collected. We shall not be able to do all this unless we learn to discriminate between persons. On the one hand, we shall have to have trust, on the other be cautious. The great difficulty in our path is that we live like pebbles, we cannot work as a team. We lack the power to draw others to ourselves or be drawn to others. Where we do get drawn, it is out of blind faith. Faith is necessary, but faith must go with discrimination. To allow ourselves to be fooled by any person and start working—this is one difficulty.

The Second fear is that we may spoil all our work by getting angry. There are two parties, the non-co-operators and the co-operators. In Ankleshwar, a certain co-operator used a harsh word and in reply a non-co-operator used a harsh word too. Had they gone further, the result would have been bad. This was only a matter of a difference of opinion among ourselves. But, since the Government favours co-operation, that party has become a Government party as well. Suppose a member of the pro-Government party, with a view entirely to picking up a quarrel, uses some abusive word, we retaliate, and a scuffle ensues, even a murder, who will suffer? If the Government gets a pretext for using violence, I believe it will not fail to make use of it. The Government cannot shed blood no matter how free the views we express on swaraj. It will shed blood only when we ourselves first commit a murder, even if it be at the incitement of a Government agent. Swami Shraddhanand believes that, if we committed any mistakes in April [1919] in Delhi, it was because of incitement by such agents. Hence the easiest way for us is to restrain our anger despite any provocation. Abuse should not be repaid with abuse, beating with beating. Even in such matters, it is possible to overcome many obstacles by applying the method non-co-operation. We should not go to a place if we shall not have the

strength to forbear. Mrs. Besant was insulted in Allahabad; I have heard that she was insulted in Bombay too. If we disapprove of Mrs. Besant's views, if we are even likely to be irritated by them, decency lies in not attending her meeting. To attend her meeting and then greet her with cries of "Shame!" or with other insulting slogans bespeaks lack of culture. A people without culture cannot have true swaraj. Lack of culture is incompatible with non-violence, with the renunciation of arms. There is no room for falsehood, lack of culture and impudence in the army of non-co-operation. If we do not take care to bear this in mind, we shall lose the game which we are almost at the point of winning. The fight of non-co-operation is not for giving expression to our anger but, by curbing it for generating such superabundant energy that no one can withstand it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-11-1920

262. REQUEST TO PEOPLE

The non-co-operation movement is in full swing. The people are responding, more or less. Students are leaving their schools. Many candidates have given up their intention of entering legislatures. Some lawyers have given up practice. Swadeshi continues to make progress.

But the movement needs money as much as it needs popular enthusiasm. Money is especially needed at present for spreading education.If, however, we can collect the money, the students' education will be a sufficient return.

Besides this, we have a number of other things to do, for which too we shall need money.

According to present estimates, we need five lakhs of rupees. If we have this sum to spend, we shall make a great success of our educational programme. We shall be able to give help, wherever needed, to the schools which become national schools and succeed in organizing properly the work of the university. If we are to make the university a shining success, our expenditure will have to be fairly heavy. Statements of expenditure will be published from time to time. It is estimated that four lakhs will be spent during the first year on education and the remaining expenditure of one lakh will be of miscellaneous character.

I hope that even those who cannot join the movement in regard to the other programmes will do this at any rate : donate something and induce others to do the same.

I hope that even those who do not agree with the whole of the programme of non-co-operation will help the cause of national education at any rate.

These are *Diwali* days. The *Diwali* festival stands for the end of the demon's rule and the establishment of *Ramarajya*. It is my humble view that, so long as our country is in slavery, we cannot celebrate *Diwali* with all manner of things to enjoy. The best way to celebrate *Diwali* is to spend these days in activities which will hasten swaraj, help uphold the honour of our Muslim friends and heal a little the wounds of the Punjab.

If my advice is followed, we should save something from what we would otherwise spend on celebrating *Diwali*. This may also help the movement considerably. I hope every man and woman will join in this holy work. Let no one think that only the rich can make donations. I want the rich to donate according to their capacity and the poor according to theirs. If we but get honest workers, we can easily collect as much as we need.

I hope no one will hand over this contribution to an unknown person.

All the contributions will be deposited with the Bombay branch of the Swarajya Sabha.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-11-1920

263. SPEECH AT SATARA[1]

November 7, 1920

May be you do not look upon Brahmins with reverence, but all the same they deserve to be respected for their *tapascharya*, their knowledge, their self-sacrifice and holiness. I would certainly hesitate to attribute any errors to the Brahmins who composed the Upanishads and other holy books, but I said, and I say it again, that even they, by sanctioning the practice of untouchability, has some share in Satan's work. You will not be able to save your own religion by abusing Brahmins and burning down their houses. If at all you claim to be

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of the tour

Hindus, know that your conduct is un-Hindu. If you say you are not Hindus, I tell you that you have still another dharma to respect. I wish you well in your non-Hinduism. [I tell you this] just as I would tell Jains that they were welcome to think of themselves as non-Hindus but that, if they looked upon India as their country, they had another dharma to abide by—the swaraj-dharma. This dharma teaches you, if you wish to have swaraj, to be on good terms with Hindus. Who were Tilak, Gokhale, Ranade[1] and Agarkar[2]? Though Brahmins, they served the cause of non-Brahmins at the greatest cost to themselves. Tilak Maharaj bore sincere love to me, though I am a non-Brahmin. By indulging in violent contempt of a community which has produced men like Ramdas, Tulsidas, Ranade, Tilak and others, it is imppossible that you can rise. By looking to the English for help, you will sink deeper into slavery. You can ask Shaukat Ali what he gained from friendship with the Government.

You talk of resorting to non-co-operation against Brahmins but one must be pure in heart to be fit to employ the sacred term "non-co-operation". I speak of the British Empire as Satanic, but I can do so because I wish ill to no Englishman. If Lord Chelmsford, with whom today I refuse co-operation in any form, from whom I would not even accept water, were to fall ill, I would most certainly look after and serve him as I serve you. If you demand justice from the Brahmins, you must practice *tapascharya* like theirs. If you take up the sword, you yourselves will perish. I tell the Muslims the same thing. They will not succeed in making Islam free by drawing the sword. I think the sword will imperil it still further. I ask non-Brahmins to see first that India becomes free; they could then cut the throats of Brahmins if they so wished. I tell the Hindus, too, that they should get swaraj first and fight with the Muslims afterwards, if they want to. And the same thing to Muslims. The Position today is that the Empire has been insulting 30 crores of you, perpetrating atrocities on you; to stop this, there is no way but non-co-operation with it and co-operation among ourselves.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-11-1920

[1] 1842-1901; social reformer and author; judge of the Bombay High Court; one of the founders of the Indian National Congress

[2] 1856-1895; social reformer and rationalist from Maharashtra

264. TELEGRAM TO MAHOMED ALI[1]

[*November 8, 1920*][2]

SHAUKAT ALI GAVE ALL INFORMATION. ARRANGING TO SEND ANDREWS AND A BRILLIANT HARVARD GRA-DUATE AND KRIPALANI[3] OF THE HINDU UNIVER-SITY. MORE CAN BE SENT IF YOU NEED. HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS YOURSELF STUDENTS. HOPE FIRMNESS AND COURTEOUS PEACEFUL BEHAVIOUR WILL BE RETAINED THROUGHOUT THE CRITICAL PERIOD. I WOULD REMIND THE STUDENTS OF THE WISH EXPRESSED WHEN I FIRST HAD THE PLEASURE OF MEETING THEM AT ALIGARH, THAT THEY IN ORDER TO PRESERVE HONOUR, DIGNITY, ISLAM AND INDIA, SHOULD ADOPT HIGH THINKING AND SIMPLICITY AS THEIR MOTTO NEVER HAS OUR COUNTRY NEEDED TRUE FAKIRS AND HUMILITY AS NOW.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 9-11-1920

265. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

NIPANI,

[*November 8, 1920*][4]

CHI. MANI[5],

I was simply filled with wonder to see your work and your love for the country. Try to make a good collection during *Diwali.*

You must be attending on father, I am sure. I don't expect a reply from you this time.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Citing the example of sisters in Ahmedabad, I held out my

[1] Sent to the addressee at Aligarh, congratulating him on the new Aligarh University

[2] Received on this date

[3] J. B. Kriplani (1888-); president, Indian National Congress, 1946; member of Parliament

[4] Gandhiji was in Nipani on this date; *vide* the following item. The postscript evidently refers to the women's meeting which Gandhiji addressed in Poona on November 6.

[5] Daughter of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel; Congress worker, member of Parliament and vice-president, Gujarat Pradesh Congress Committee

hand before those in Poona. They showered gold bangles, rings, nose-rings and chains over me, and outdid the Ahmedabad sisters.

MOHANDAS

SHRI MANIBEHN
C/O VALLABHBHAI, BAR-AT-LAW
BHADAR
AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4 : Manibehn Patelne, p. 11

266. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, NIPANI[1]

November 8, 1920

I have carefully listened to Shri Marutirao and should like to tell the non-Brahmins here that what he has said is full of half-truths. A half-truth is always very dangerous. I do not suggest that Marutirao has deliberately made statements which he knows to be half-truths. We often, through misunderstanding, state and act on half-truths. Undoubtedly, there are Brahmins in this world who ask others to wash their feet and then drink that water, and among books which pass as holy with the Hindus there are some which play on people's ignorance; but we should use our reason to distinguish between truth and deception. It would be suicide to hate the entire Brahmin community and keep away from it simply because a few of them have told lies and misled the people with false Shastras. I should like to tell the non-Brahmins, on oath, that I have studied the Koran, the Zend-Avesta and the Bible according to the best of my ability. I have respect in my heart for all these religions and believe that every one of them has a good measure of truth in it. I believe, all the same, that no other religion values renunciation and self-control, as a form of *yajna* as much as Hinduism does. I want to tell the Hindus that we owe these ideas of *yajna*, of self-sacrifice, to none other than the Brahmins. No one else in this world has practised self-sacrifice in the same measure that the Brahmins have done and, even today, in this terrible *Kaliyuga*, no other community display the same capacity for self-sacrifice and the same purity as the Brahmins do. I would, therefore, tell Marutirao and other non-Brahmins that the faults they point to are real enough;

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of the tour. The remarks were in reply to a gentleman in the audience, who had criticised Brahmins.

but, thinking about them, I remember an analogy. If there is any dirt in milk, it is easily noticed, while the filth in a dirty article is not so easily noticed. Non-Brahmins have set such a high ideal for Brahmins that any lapses on their part immediately attract attention. Personally, I would say that this very fact of small lapses of Brahmins being magnified is a testimony to their worth. I have not heard of any community in any country which has done *tapascharya* in the same measure as the Brahmins have done. And, therefore, I tell my non-Brahmin friends to exercise discrimination in judging the faults of Brahmins, and not commit suicide by non-co-operating with them.

I know that Brahmins are a small number and the non-Brahmins are in a large majority. It is for this reason that a Satan of an Indian suggested that even the present-day British Government is a Brahmin government, for it rules over a nation of 30 crores of brave and heroic Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. The British Government, however, keeps the 30 crores under its power with the help of the sword. The Brahmins of India do not wish to hold down the crores of non-Brahmins in that manner. Though a mere handful, they will be able to keep down the 30 crores wholly through their life of self-control. In the same way that we wish to fight this tyrannical Government with the power of self-control, the Brahmins have preserved their independence—their purity—by the holiness of their lives. I know that today Brahmins have forsaken their dharma and, therefore, I submit to the Brahmins of Maharashtra that, if their faith and *bhakti* revive, there will be no occasion for me to say anything. To non-Brahmin friends, I want to say, desist from acting in hatred of the Brahmins, as you do now, losing your patience and balance of mind. This need not be taken to mean that anything the Brahmins do may be ignored. Ido not advise submitting to injustice at any time. Employing the same energy in doing our duty with which we seek to defeat this Empire, we can force justice from any community. Even a little child will say that the Brahmin dharma is free from the Satanism of the British Government. There is something in that dharma through which a mere child cultivating purity of mind and observing self-control, can become an emperor of emperors. Such is the Brahmin dharma that they revere any member of an untouchable community who becomes a saint. The Brahmins have plenty of defects, to be sure, and you may certainly point them out; but seek redress through a *panch*. The only right course for us is to acknowledge their services to the world and always co-operate with them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-11-1920

267. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, BELGAUM

November 8, 1920

MY REVERED[1] SISTERS,

In this holy temple[2], I have been sanctificed by the *darshan* of you all. What makes me especially happy is your having expressed eagerness to see my friend Shaukat Ali as well. We had all been tired and were resting for a while but, when I heard that you wanted Shaukat Ali also to be brought along, I sent for him. I see in this expression of goodwill an assurance of India's success, for I know that, so long as our Hindu women do not look upon Muslims as our brethren, the days of our misfortune will not be over. Sitting in this temple, I do not want to hurt your religious sentiments in any way. I am a *sanatani* Hindu, but I have learnt from Hinduism that one should not disrespect or despise the religion of anyone else. I have also realized that, till we have learnt to cherish love for people of all other religions and for all our neighbours, we shall not succeed in our efforts for the country's welfare. I have not come here to tell you that you should change and permit people to eat in the company of Muslims or marry among them, but I have certainly come to tell you that we should bear love to every human being. I pray that you teach your children to love members of other faiths.

I also ask of you that you understand the state of national affairs in the country. For this, you do not need to be highly educated or to read any big books. I want to tell you that our Government rules like a monster. The condition is the same today as in *Ravanarajya* of old; the Government has deeply wounded the feelings of our Muslim brethren, has perpetrated terrible atrocities on men, women and children in the Punjab and, even after all this, it does not acknowledge its error, does not repent; on the contrary, it asks us to forget the cruelties. That is why I liken this Government to the rule of a monster. Ourmen and women should now resort to non-co-operation with the Government, much like Sita's or Ramachandra's non-co-operation with Ravana. The latter held out inducements to Sita, sent her various good things to eat, but she disregarded them all and practised the most rigorous *tapascharya* to be free from the clutches of Ravana. Until she was free from his hands, she would wear no fine

[1] *Pratasmaraniya*, literally, worthy of remembrance in morning prayers

[2] Maruti temple

dresses or ornaments. Ramachandra and Lakshmana practised rigid discipline of the senses, spent their days in self-denial, eating only fruits and tubers, and both the brothers practised the strictest *brahmacharya*. I want to tell you that, while this tyrannical Government is on our back, none of you, whether man or woman, has a right to wear fine dresses or ornaments. So long as India has not become free, so long as the Muslims' wounds have not been healed, we need to live as fakirs. We should burn up our love of comfort and luxury in the fire of suffering. I entreat you, in the humblest words, to give up ways of comfort and practise severe *tapascharya*, to keep your heart and mind ever pure.

Fifty years ago, all our women—Hindu and Muslim—had the sacred spinning-wheel in their homes and every one of them wore hand-made cloth. I want to tell you, women, that our downfall began, that slavery came to be imposed on us, after we had abandoned swadeshi-dharma. All over the country people are dying of hunger and go naked for want of clothes. In these circumstances, every one of you should spin for at least one hour daily, in the name of India, and gift the yarn to the country. You are not likely to get fine cloth for some while, but you will get even fine cloth if you learn to produce fine yarn. However, so long as the country remains subject, we should not think of fine cloth at all, for, producing fine yarn requires much time and today in the country every minute is valuable.

* * *

I appealed for funds when speaking in Dakor and Ahmedabad. In Poona I did so only the day before yesterday. Some women, even little girls, took off and handed over to me their rings, bangles, nose-rings and necklaces. If I have succeeded in my aim, which has brought me here, of awakening in you the spirit of self-denial, you would not hesitate to take off all your ornaments for the sake of the country. The money realized from them will be spent by Shri Gangadharrao Deshpande on education and for promoting swadeshi. If any of you want to offer cash, give it for the country with the same feelings with which you put it here in this temple. India is like a poor cow in a butcher's clutches and it is for you and me to rescue her. Offering money to rescue a cow earns the same merit as offering a gift to a temple.

And one last thing I beg from you is this: give your blessings for the success of the cause for which Shaukat Ali, Gangadharrao and I are working. Let me also say that I do not want any sister

to take off and hand over her ornaments out of a false sense of shame. Gift something only if you feel in your heart that it is your duty, that it is a holy act, to do so. May God grant you purity and courage and inspire you with the desire to make sacrifices in the cause of the country.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-11-1920

268. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BELGAUM[1]

November 8, 1920

I cannot describe in words the impact made on me by the scene I witnessed in the Maruti temple. I had a similar experience in Poona. They showered both their love and their ornaments on us, having understood that I had asked for the ornaments for winning swaraj, for securing *Ramarajya*. Our millionaires have not given anything to equal this. They melt somewhat when we fall at their feet and beg them for donations. I needed to make no entreaty to the women. They gave me what I asked for, out of their own zeal and with all love. What they gave with love far exceeds even donations of crores.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-11-1920

269. WHAT TO DO ON THE 16TH OF NOVEMBER

In connection with this, Mr. Gandhi writes in *Navajivan*[2] as follows:

The 16th of November is somewhat of a day of trial for the people, because on that day members for the legislative councils will be elected throughout the Bombay Presidency. What will the voters do on that day? What is their duty?

1. I hope that no voter will go to the polling-booth to record his vote.

2. That all the voters will remain indoors.

3. In case a meeting is held away from the polling-booth, voters will attend it and express themselves against being represented on the council.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of the tour

[2] Of 7-11-1920

4. The work of canvassing signatures and of asking voters not to vote will cease for 24 hours from the night of the 15th instant.

5. Volunteers too will not do anything on the 16th instant to dissuade voters from voting.

6. In short, those who choose to vote should have the day wholly at their disposal.

How can we hope to convert voters whom we have not been able to persuade till the 15th? Surely we do not want to prevent anybody from voting by physical force. There can therefore be no persuasion on the 16th.

Our campaign is one of educating public opinion. When we have succeeded in doing that, then and only then is swaraj within easy reach.

Young India, 10-11-1920

270. DIFFICULTIES IN OUR WAY

Our difficulties are of two kinds; those that are imposed from without and those that are of our own creation. The latter are far more dangerous, because we often hug them and are therefore reluctant to remove them. Thus, for instance, the disturbance created at Mrs. Besant's recent meetings at Bombay was of our own making. And it is easier to deal with a seditious meetings proclamation than the disturbance at Mrs. Besant's meetings. A prohibition of "seditious" meetings gives us strength. Disturbances created by us undoubtedly weaken our cause. The verbal rowdyism at Mrs. Besant's meeting was a type of violence. It was a distinct departure from the creed of non-violent non-co-operation. It may easily result in physical violence.

Those who created the disturbance ought to realize its seriousness for the sacred cause they have at heart. It is the very worst training we can give ourselves in swaraj. Swaraj pressupposes mutual toleration of views, no matter how distasteful they may be to us. If the non-co-operationists refuse to listen to the other party's views, they lay themselves open to the same charge as the Government, which they complain comes to decisions without considering their view-point. Non-co-operation against the Government is based on, and is possible with, co-operation among ourselves. We must bring about as far as possible and consistently with our creed, harmony among ourselves. Rowdyism is hardly the way to do so. By their action at

the meetings in question non-co-operationists have still further estranged from themselves Mrs. Besant and her friends and followers. The loss is patent enough. They have certainly gained no new adherents by their rowdyism. In so far as the students were concerned in the insult offered to Mrs. Besant, they have discredited themselves at a critical period in their evolution. They are called upon, in the name of religion and country, to disregard the wishes even of their parents, should they dissuade them from leaving schools tainted with Government grant or affiliation. Such disregard is permissible only to sons and daughters who have cultivated the sense of scrupulous respect and obedience towards their parents and elders. That disobedience is a virtue only when it is resorted to in response to a higher call and has not a trace of bitterness, hostility, or resentment in it. It is a positive vice when it becomes thoughtless, insolent and rowdy. The one ennobles, the other degrades. And after all, do we not owe anything to Mrs. Besant's years, her past brilliant services, and her sex? The rising generation will commit suicide if it becomes ungrateful. India's grateful-ness ought to ensure for Mrs. Besant a respectful hearing even when she opposes India's sentiment. She does so from pure motives. She thinks that we are in error, she is of opinion that we are retarding India's progress. Surely it is her duty to wean us from what she considers is our error. And it is our duty respectfully to consider what she says.

But I have been told that unless, at her meetings, an emphatic dissent is expressed, she would make capital of our supposed silence, and claim that here is a larger body of Indian opinion at her back than is really the case. Surely rowdyism is not the only way of expressing dissent. The best and the chosen way would be not to attend her meetings, unless we wish to go in order to be convinced. We need not swell her audience when we know that we do not approve of her views. The other way, if we must attend, is to enter our respectful dissent at the end of the meeting, or if we consider her remarks to be offensive to express our dissent by courteously walking out. A noisy demonstration is a sign of our weakness. A dignified withdrawal is a proof of our strength. Rowdyism is, as a rule, intended to cover a minority that wishes to break up a meeting. A majority conscious of its strength produces an eloquent and electrical effect both on the speaker, and his, or her, minority of followers.

It is true that this rowdyism is not a result of the movement of non-co-operation. It is a legacy of our past. We have been,

to our harm, nurtured in the baneful traditions of the West in the manner of conducting our meetings. Applause and shouts of dissent are essentially a Western institution. With the, for us, new method of *non-violent* non-co-operation, the old must go. The two cannot co-exist. If we are engaged in a duel between religion and irreligion, and if we truly represent the forces of religion, we shall have to give up even verbal violence and learn dignified ways of dealing with our opponents. It is through training in cool courage and self-sacrifice, discipline and faith in God, and therefore humility to the uttermost, that we shall conserve the honour of Islam and our country, and turn our opponents into admirers and fellow-workers.

Young India, 10-11-1920

271. IF I AM ARRESTED[1]

I have been constantly thinking of what the people would do in case I am arrested. My co-workers also have been putting this question to me. What would be the plight of India if the people took to the wrong path through love run mad? What would be my own plight in such a case?

Rivers of bloodshed by the Government cannot frighten me; but I would be deeply pained even if the people did so much as abuse the Government for my sake or in my name. It would be disgracing me if the people lost their equilibrium on my arrest. The nation can achieve no progress merely by depending upon me. Progress is possible only by their understanding and following the path suggested by me. For this reason,I desire that the people should maintain perfect self-control and consider the day of my arrest as a day of rejoicing. I desire that even the weaknesses existing today should disappear at that time.

What can be the motive of the Government in arresting me? The Government are not my enemy, for I have not a grain of enmity towards them. But they believe that I am the soul of all this agitation, that, if I am removed, the ruled and the rulers would be left in peace, that the people are blindly following me. Not only the Government but some of our leaders also share this belief. How, then, can the Government put the people to the test? How can the Government ascertain whether the people understand my advice or are simply

[1] In the source this was published with the indication: "Translated from Mr. Gandhi's article in *Navajivan*".

dazzled by my utterances? The only way left to them is to arrest me. Of course, there still remains an alternative for them and that lies in the removal of the causes which have led me to offer this advice. But intoxicated as they are with power, the Government will not see their own fault and even if they do, they will not admit it. The only way then that remains for them is to measure the strength of the people. They can do this by arresting me. If the people are thus terrorized into submission they can be said to deserve the Punjab and the khilafat wrongs.

If on the other hand the people resort to violence, they will merely be playing into the hands of the Government. Their aeroplanes will then bomb the people, their Dyers will shoot into them, and their Smiths will uncover the veils of our women. There will be other officers to make the people rub their noses against the ground, crawl on their bellies, and undergo the scourge of whipping. Both these results will be equally bad and unfortunate. They will not lead to swaraj. In other countries governments have been overthrown by sheer brute force, but I have often shown that India cannot attain swaraj by that force. What, then, should the people do if I am arrested? The answer now is simple. The people

1. should preserve peace and calmness,
2. should not observe hartals,
3. should not hold meetings, but
4. should be fully awake.

I should certainly expect

5. all the Government schools to be vacated and shut down,
6. lawyers to withdraw from practice, in great numbers,
7. settlement by private arbitration of cases pending before the law-courts,
8. opening of numerous national schools and colleges,
9. renunciation of all foreign cloth in favour of the exclusive use of hand-spun and hand-woven garments by lakhs of men and women, and selling or burning of any foreign cloth in stock,
10. none to enlist in the army or in any other Government service,
11. those able to earn their livelihood by other means to give up Government services, civil and even military,

12. contribution of as much as is wanted towards national funds,

13. title-holders to surrender titles in greater numbers,

14.candidates to withdraw from elections, or if already elected, to resign their seats,

15.voters who have not yet made up their minds, to resolve that it is sin to send any representative to the councils.

If the people resolve and carry this out, they would not have to wait for swaraj even for a year. If they can exhibit this much strength we shall have attained swaraj.

I shall then be set free under the nation's seal. That will please me. My freedom today is like a prison to me.

It will only prove the people's incompetence if they use violence to release me, and then depend upon my help to attain swaraj for them. Neither I nor anyone else can get swaraj for the nation. It will be got on the nation proving its own fitness.

In conlusion it is useless to find fault with the Government. We get what government we deserve. When we improve, the government also is bound to improve. Only when we improve can we attain swaraj. Non-co-operation is the nation's determination to improve. Will the nation abandon the resolve and begin to co-operate after my arrest? If the people become mad and take to violence and as a result of it crawl on their bellies, rub their noses on the ground, salute the Union Jack and walk eighteen miles to do it, what else is that but co-operation? It is better to die than to submit to crawling, etc. In fine, consider it from any point of view, the course suggested by me is the right one for the people to take.

Young India, 10-11-1920

272. TELEGRAM TO V. J. PATEL

November 11, 1920

V. J. PATEL
BANDRA

SWARAJ CLAUSE[1] CANNOT BE OMITTED.

GANDHI

From the original as delivered : C.W. 5991. Courtesy : All-India Congress Committee, New Delhi

273. TELEGRAM TO GIRIDHARILAL[2]

BOMBAY,
[*November 14, 1920*][3]

OBEY ORDER PROHIBITION. MOTILALJI NOT HERE. INFORM LAJPATARAI OTHERS.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1920, p. 1639

274. SPEECH TO STUDENTS, BOMBAY[4]

November 14, 1920

Mr. Gandhi addressing the audience as brothers and sisters said he was not going to give them a kindergarten lesson that evening, but would try to convince them of something important. First of all he wanted to tell the students that he did not want those students to boycott schools and colleges, who could not refrain from hissing a speaker whose views differed from theirs. That was *asatya*[5]. It would not be wrong to disobey even parents in the matter of boycott of schools and colleges after attaining *satya*[6] and purifying their inner selves. Those who could act against their

[1] The reference obviously is to Article 1 of the Congress Constitution; *vide* "The Congress Constitution", 3-11-1920.

[2] At Amritsar, in reply to his telegram which read : "Home Rule Conference fixed 19th-21st November. Seditious Meetings Act applied Amritsar City. Should obey postpone or break and hold Conference. Wire your and Pandit Motilal's opinion. Lajpatrai and Kitchlew in favour."

[3] Reproduced in Bombay Secret Abstracts, alongside a report of Gandhiji's speech to students on November 14.

[4] At Shantaram Chawl

[5] Untruth

[6] Truth

conscience were not fit to adopt the principle of non-co-operation. As long as they were not able to purify their inner selves and abide by their conscience they were unfit for non-co-operation. After becoming true *brahmacharis* and after attaining to right pitch of self-restraint they could even disobey their parents. There would be nothing wrong in it if they disobeyed their parents at the dictation of their conscience.

He was sure that those who hissed at the Excelsior Theatre the other day, acted against their conscience and they would soon repent for that. As for Mr. Nimbkar, he was sure that Mr. Nimbkar would express his regret in public in no time, because he knew that he had done something wrong. Until the students realized the principles of non-violence and non-hatred, they would be able to do no service to their motherland which they genuinely loved. The speaker then asked them to remember that his non-co-operation was "non-violent non-co-operation". His non-co-operation had no similarity with the non-co-operation movement of Ireland or Egypt, though the motive was nearly the same. He did not like to adopt such methods in India. Both Ireland and Egypt preached violence while he was against it. The use of the sword, or force or abuse against an opponent was morally equally culpable and they all amounted to violence. In India they could not use any of these devices for it was against the nature and religion of Indians to abuse an opponent. It is an act of violence to abuse an opponent and so long as they would use violence their goal of swaraj would be remote from them. The speaker again asked them to purify their inner selves and appealed to the students to free themselves from such false notions.

The second thing he wanted to tell them was their present Government was based on the worst principles. Their rulers had first cheated them and were now trying to question them by so many honeyed and false statements. After the massacre in the Punjab, they had even today, Lord Chelmsford at the head of the Government of their country and O'Dwyer in a high position. He said no man could conscientiously co-operate with such a Government. If the Britishers sincerely admitted their mistake and begged their pardon, Indians would have forgiven them unhesitatingly. But instead of doing that they were adding fuel to the fire by flagrantly breaking the responsible pledge given to the Indian Mohammedans. Of late, they had asked the Indians to forget the unfortunate tragedy, but even now they do not show an attitude of repentance nor do they admit their fault in clearer terms.

The speaker now asked the audience if it was not sufficient to show that their Government was a callous Government and whether it was not right on their part to boycott all schools and colleges controlled by such a Government. The late Lokamanya Tilak had explained to them more than once from that very platform how

wicked-minded their Government was.

Continuing Mr. Gandhi said, there were some who said that it was a folly to withdraw students from the Government colleges without making sufficient provision for national colleges and schools. But the speaker asked when a man saw a snake under his bed would he look out for another bed before leaving the former one ? The speaker advised the students to leave schools and colleges without bothering themselves unduly about the future. In his opinion the idea of passing B.A. and M.A. with the hope of obtaining service, was also greatly reponsible for their present slavery.

Concluding Mr. Gandhi told them that the present universities and colleges had produced more slaves than scholars. Now they must destroy these slave-producing institutes and the only measure was non-co-operation with the Government and the boycott of their institutions. But he again reminded them that their non-co-operation must be non-violent. If they could all became non-violent non-co-operators, then swaraj would be within their reach within a year.

After Mr. Gandhi took his seat Mr. Nimbkar said that he was convinced after what Mr. Gandhi had said, that he had committed a mistake in not obeying the ruling of the chairman, while Mrs. Besant was speaking in the Excelsior Theatre and he sincerely repented for that.

The Bombay Chronicle, 15-11-1920

275. INAUGURAL SPEECH AT GUJARAT MAHAVIDYALAYA[1], AHMEDABAD

November 15, 1920

SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

I have done a good many things in my life; some of them I feel proud of, though some others I regret. A few of them were very responsible undertakings. But I should like to state here—I am sure I am guilty of no exaggeration—that nothing I have done so far can stand comparison with what we are about to do today. I am aware of a great risk in this undertaking, but not because I fear that it may prove harmful to the nation; what pains me, or rather the incongruity I feel, is this, that I am not fit for the task I have undertaken. I do not say this as a matter of formality, I speak from the heart. If I knew that the present undertaking related to education in the real sense of the term, this preface would not have been necessary. This Mahavidyalaya is not being established with the sole object of imparting education; it [also] aims at helping the student to acquire a means of livelihood and when, in this respect, I compare it with Gujarat College and other similar institutions, I simply shudder.

In this, too, I am not exaggerating. What comparison is possible between Gujarat College and other similar colleges, on the one hand, and this small Mahavidyalaya of ours? To my mind, of course, it is great, but I am afraid that in your eyes, as you compare this Vidyalaya with the colleges you have in India, this Mahavidyalaya[2] probably appears an Anuvidyalaya[3]. You are very likely thinking in terms of brick and mortar. Of this, to be sure, I see more in Gujarat College.

[1] Literally, an institution of higher learning. The Mahavidyalaya was a constituent college of the Gujarat Vidyapith which had been established as a national university without a Government charter. Gandhiji was appointed chancellor for life. Many more institutions, colleges and schools were afterwards affiliated to or recognized by the Vidyapith, the total number of students in these institutions standing at 30,000 in 1923.

The activities of the Vidyapith were interrupted for temporary periods in consequence of the Civil Disobedience Movements of 1930 and 1932 and the Quit India Movement of 1942. It is now one of the national universities with a charter from the Government of India and seeks to promote Gandhiji's ideal of craft-centred and service-oriented education.

[2] *Maha*, great; *Anu* small

[3] *ibid*

While on the train I was all the time thinking what idea I should put before you today so that you might dismiss from your mind this comparison in terms of brick and mortar. It pains me that I have not been able to think of any. I have never in the past put myself in such an embarrassing position. It is an accident that I find myself in such a position today. What is self-evident to me, I cannot make so to you. How can I prove to you that what you take to be deficiencies are no deficiencies? By drawing attention to them, thanks to his frankness, Kishorelal[1] has made my task easy. Despite these deficiencies, please think of this undertaking as a momentous one. May God give you the same faith in it which I have. I cannot create such faith in you for my *tapascharya* has not been adequate for the purpose. I must admit my inability. I have done nothing in the field of education on the strength of which I can convince you that this is the greatest of all great undertakings. In the present circumstances in the country, what we are about to embark on is the only right course. Why compare buildings?

Today, not an inch of the ground is ours. Everything belongs to the Government. This land, these trees, everything belongs to the Government, even this body, and I have now begun to doubt whether our soul also is ours. Placed in this pitiable condition, why go looking for good buildings to house our Mahavidyalaya? How can we afford to wait till we had found men of great learning? Even if the most ignorant of ignorant men, a mere simpleton, were to come forward and could succeed in convincing us that our *atman* had been starved, that this country had lost its light—its knowledge of things of the spirit—I would appoint him as the principal. I am not sure that you would be ready to appoint a shepherd as principal and so we have had to find Shri Gidwani[2]. I have not been attracted by the position he occupied. Perhaps you do not know him apart from that position. I should, however, like you to adopt a different criterion, seek another touchstone, for judging the worth of this Vidyalaya. If you test it on the common touchstone, it will seem to be brass but it will be found to be gold if you test it on the touchstone of character.

The coming together of [talented] men for educational work here is like the holy confluence of rivers. We have men of character

[1] Mashruwala, Registrar of the Vidyapith

[2] Acharya A. T. Gidwani, principal, Ramjas College, Delhi. For names of other members of the staff, *vide* Appendix "Staff of Gujrat Mahavidyalaya, Ahmedabad".

assembled here. Fine men from Sind, Maharashtra and Gujarat have banded together here. How could we have, ordinarily, secured this?

I shall first address my prayer to the sisters and brothers who have come here for the function. You are witnesses to the establishment of this Mahavidyalaya. If there are any among you who feel that what is taking place is a farce, I would ask them not to be so conscientious and sit through the function. They should remain only if they wish to give their blessings. With the blessings of you all, the Mahavidyalaya will earn a name as a great institution. But they should not be blessings merely uttered with the lips; bless it from your heart. This you can do only by offering your sons and daughters to the institution. People in India have plenty of capacity to contribute money. In no field is progress held up for lack of funds. It is held up for want of men—of teachers or leaders, or if a leader is forthcoming, for want of pupils, i.e., soldiers. It is my belief that, if the leader is worthy, there will be no lack of soldiers. A carpenter will not quarrel with his tools, however bad they may be. He will handle the bluntest of them with the utmost ease. Likewise, if the leader is a real artisan, whatever the quality of material, he will produce gold from it, will produce gold from the country's clay. This is my prayer to the principal.

You, principal and teachers, have been inspired by one ideal only in joining this institution. You have undertaken to secure freedom through the miracle not of learning but of character, secure it not by meeting the Government, sword against its shining sword, but with peaceful, spiritual effort—howsoever imperfect it be—against its aggressive, Satanic way. We want just now to sow the seed of freedom and afterwards we will water the plant and rear it into a tree. This tree can be raised only through character, with pure, spiritual strength. So long as the principal and the teachers go on working with their eyes on this one aim, we shall never be put to shame. May God justify in your experience the faith which is mine. Were it not for this unshakable faith of mine, I would not at all have accepted the sacred position of chancellor. I am ready to live and die for this cause, thinking that to die in this cause is to live; it is because I know that this is also true of you that I live among you and have accepted this exalted position.

If the principal and the teachers do their duty, what need I tell

the students? I shall not indulge in ignoble running down of students. They are but the sky and reflect their surroundings. They have no fraud or hatred or hypocrisy in them. They let themselves be seen as they are. If they have no energy for determined effort, no truthfulness, if they do not know *brahmacharya* or do not practise non-stealing or non-hoarding, if they lack the virtue of non-violence, the fault is not theirs. The fault lies with their parents, with the teachers, with the principals and with the Government. Or, rather, in this matter, why should I blame the Government? Only yesterday I told the students in Bombay that, if the saying "As the king, so the subjects" is true, it is equally true to say "As the subjects so the king"; in fact, the latter alone is true. The people should be blamed first. Their weaknesses are reflected in the students in a concentrated form and, therefore, may be clearly observed in them. If that is so, let us all, parents, the principal and the teachers, do everything necessary to be rid of these weaknesses.

Every home in the country is a university—is a Mahavidyalaya with the parents as principals. By neglecting their duty in that respect, they have forsaken their dharma. We have not understood the foreign culture, have not weighed its virtues and shortcomings. We have merely borrowed it, or, rather, stolen it since we pay nothing for the loan. How can India rise through such borrowed culture?

We are establishing this Vidyalaya, not with an educational, but with a national aim in view. Advising that students be taught to cultivate strength and character, I have been saying everywhere that in the measure we succeed with them we shall make ourselves fit for swaraj in the country. Swaraj cannot be secured in any other way. No amount of money we can spend or strength of character we can employ to ensure the success of such colleges will be enough.

This is a time not for words but for action. I have placed my thoughts before you as they came. I asked of you what you could give. Now I shall ask something of the students as well. There is no doubt at all that they have in them the courage which takes risks. I shall not look upon them—upon those who have already joined—as mere students and, therefore, I will not treat them as being free from responsibility. Those who have registered their names here are half teachers. It is they who have provided the foundation for the Mahavidyalaya. It is on them that the structure of the institution has been raised. Had they not joined, this Mahavidyalaya could not have

been started. They also, therefore, share equal responsibility. You are equal partners in this and, if you do not play your part well, no efforts on the part of the teachers will succeed or, at any rate, succeed completely. Students who have left their colleges should understand why they have joined here and what they should expect to gain. May God grant them the strength to go on with their work, no matter how long this grim war continues. If they do, I am sure that, even if they are a mere handful, this Mahavidyalaya will shine forth and be a model institution for the whole country.

The reason will not be that Gujarat has wealth or that it has learning; it will be, rather, that non-co-operation had its origin here. The seed was sown and watered here, the required *tapascharya* was performed here. Do not think from this that I am a conceited man to speak in this manner, or that all the *tapascharya* has been mine and the seed was sown by me. I merely gave the *mantra*, I fulfilled the function of a *rishi*, if a *Vanik*'s[1] son can do so.

I have done nothing more than this. The planting was done by my co-workers. It is because their faith was greater than mine that we have succeeded. I claim the knowledge which comes from direct perception. Even if the gods came down and tried to persuade me to the contrary, my faith would not be shaken. As surely as I see, with my eyes, the trees in front of me, so surely I know that there is no salvation for India except through non-violent non-co-operation. As for my co-workers, however, they have believed this through logic or reasoning or accepted it on faith.

Neither in India nor in any other part of the world is anyone guided solely by his own experience. Some have the experience while others work on in faith.

My co-workers have laid the foundation. Many of them are Gujaratis; there are Maharashtrians, too, but, having been in Gujarat, they have become half or three-quarters Gujaratis, or, perhaps, more Gujaratis than the Gujaratis themselves. They have made this a weapon of shining strength. We have not yet seen all its miraculous power. Within six months, you will see more of the miraculous power of this programme for which young girls handed over their bangles to me. But the source of it all—the visible image—is this Mahavid-yalaya. Hindus are worshippers of images and we are proud of being so. This image has its various limbs : one of them is the chancellor and that is

[1] Same as *Vania*

myself. The teachers, the principal and the students are other limbs. I am, myself, an old man, a withering leaf, and busy with other work. The falling away of such a leaf as I am can do no harm to a tree. The principal and the teachers, too, are no more than leaves, though green leaves as yet. In a short while, they also will grow old and, perhaps, fall off. The students, however are the branches of this beautiful tree and it is on them that principals and teachers will grow as leaves.

I request them to put the same faith in their teachers as they do in me. Should they, however, see that the principal or any of the teachers is weak, let them burn him to ashes with the fire which was Prahlad's and go ahead with their work. This is my prayer to God and my blessings to the students.

I shall end with a prayer to God and I want you all to say "amen" to it. Join me in my prayer, all of you, with a pure heart, "God! Make this Mahavidyalaya of such worth that through it we may win the freedom for which we offer prayers day and night and grant it that, through that freedom, not only India but the entire world, in which India is but a dot, may be happy."

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-11-1920

276 . SPEECH TO STUDENTS, AHMEDABAD

November 15, 1920

RESPECTED PRESIDENT, STUDENTS, SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

Our respected principal has reminded us of the pledge that the nation took at the instance of the Congress in Calcutta and told us that it should be fulfilled. Together with this pledge, I wish to remind you of another pledge as well, and it seems to me that this other pledge is of greater importance than the one taken by the Congress. Last year I went to the Punjab, and there we had unanimously decided that the Hunter Committee should be boycotted. We spent many days in discussion before coming to this decision. Pandit Malaviya advanced many arguments and reminded us of our weakness; we had also taken into account the fact that our enthusiasms were generally short-lived; that our leaders might be put behind prison-bars—all this was taken into consideration. And yet, all those who had assembled there—including, first, myself, second, Pandit Malaviya, third, Pandit Motilalji

and, fourth, Mr. Andrews, and some others—all of us together passed a resolution advising boycott of the Hunter Committee. I remind you first of this pledge. At that very time, I had given the warning that, if people took this pledge, they would have to publish their own report and that, if the alleged atrocities were proved, they would have to secure justice even at the cost of their lives, that, if it was found necessary to sacrifice the country, we would have no choice but to do so. At that time, my warning notwithstanding, the pledge was dear to the people. It is even more important to remember this pledge than the one taken at the instance of the Congress, for it has been said in criticism of the Congress pledge that the people were given no time to think it over, my oratory having dazzled everyone into accepting it. The second criticism is that for the first time Muslims attended the Congress in larger numbers and their numerical strength gave the resolution the necessary majority. This is certainly not what happened. The fact is that votes were counted province-wise and in this, with the exception of two provinces all the rest passed the resolution with a majority. Nevertheless, it is possible that not all the people gave thought to this resolution and, therefore, you may not, if you so desire, give weight to this pledge; though anyone who has respect for the Congress and who has no conscientious objection against acting on its resolution should carry out this pledge too with determination. The Punjab pledge, on the other hand, was taken with deliberate purpose. It was taken in complete calmness of mind, at a time when the excitement had died down, after due deliberation and in full consciousness of the risks. Men for whom you have respect and who are your leaders are determined to uphold the honour of the Punjab, for whose sake we are fighting. I wish to remind you of this pledge.

And now I ask those students who have not enrolled themselves in this national college—what do you want? Do you want freedom for India? Do you want to have your own culture or slavery to foreigners? I do not have a single word for you if you are prepared to put up with foreign domination. Gujarat College provides you with large playing fields and you can play games there; it has learned professors for you. It will be a long time before this college can provide a laboratory like what they have there. You will not get such facilities here. However, you are not less prisoners in Gujarat College for being provided with handcuffs made of gold and set with gems. If, on the other hand, you

believe that independence is absolutely necessary for keeping alive one's spirit, you should leave Gujarat Gollege, whatever the facilities it provides, and get yourselves enrolled in this college in spite of the handicaps you may have to suffer. I wish not to rouse your feelings but to awaken your reason, to make you aware of your duty, to put your reason in communication with mine. If you still believe that, as long as you study in Government colleges you should not even think of independence, that entertaining such thoughts amounts to disloyalty, you are free not to leave Government colleges. One should speak well of the Government so long as one as one is being educated by it. But this Government has behaved arrogantly, it has inflicted atrocities on us, it has robbed the people of their spirit and attacked our religion—after all this, could we wish the Government well? And can we say that the Empire is so just that the sun never sets on it? If we cannot wish this, then we should flee from the Government. Every religion teaches us that nothing is as sinful as betraying one's religion. It is for this reason that I wrote once that to be educated in Government colleges is like cutting down the very branch that one is sitting on. So I ask those students who have not yet left Government schools and colleges to examine their heart again and again. If you feel that this rule ought to be brought to an end, our strength, our courage lies in leaving at once the schools and colleges of that Government.

Our respected principal has pointed out that co-operation in some matters is unavoidable, while in some others we can immediately withdraw it. It would be right to disown one's country itself in order to dissociate oneself from things of a certain nature. I do not deny that the time may even come when this will become necessary. But we shall not go into this as such a time has not yet come. We should do sufficient *tapascharya* to serve our present purpose. If one could purify one's mind or cure oneself or a disease as well as one desired by fasting for a day, then one would be a fool to fast for two days. If the *tapascharya* we have undertaken is sufficient for our purpose, then we need do no more. This same answer applies to [the question of] co-operation in respect of telegraph, railways, etc. That co-operation which robs us of our spirit, or that through which we willinglyaccept gifts from the Government, should be withdrawn immediately. Attending Government schools and colleges involves co-operation of this nature. Fortunately, we have the national colleges now. It is not everywhere that you will find a principal and professors

such as we have. I do not wish to compare them with the professors of Gujarat College in Ahmedabad. In a short while things will improve of themselves. The students who have not left the Government College so far because there was no national college are not in the same predicament now. They cannot ask any longer what would happen if a new college was not opened. They should forthwith get themselves enrolled in this college.

A student of the medical college asked me what they should do if they wished to join non-co-operation. There are two categories of medical students. Those among them who pay their own fees should leave tomorrow. But I do not advise those who study with scholarships from the Government, and who have given an undertaking to return the sum within a specified period or to serve the Government for a certain number of years, to leave the college immediately. I cannot give them money out of the funds collected from the public. If they can secure their freedom by their own efforts by raising the sum from some other source and paying it up to the Government, it is their duty to do so. But I have on my hand the more urgent problem of the students who pay for their education from their own pockets. Whether or not we have other facilities for learning medicine, we must refuse that education which we think deprives us of our freedom and, giving up all desire for it until such time as the required facilities are available, take up some other occupation. If our people become spiritless, what will they be able to do even after they have been educated? I do not condemn the love of education. It is but right that a young man should have such love. But we should not sacrifice our country, our religion, for its sake.

"That is true education which leads to freedom." That alone is true education which enables us to preserve our dharma. This is the motto accepted by our university. The idea has appealed to me very much : "That is true education which leads to freedom." That which liberates is education. Liberation is of two kinds. One form of liberation consists in securing the freedom of the country from foreign rule. Such freedom may prove short-lived. The other kind of liberation is for all time. In order to attain *moksha*, which we describe as our *paramadharma*[1], we should have freedom in the worldly sense as well. He who is ridden with many fears cannot attain the ultimate *moksha*. If one would attain this, would achieve the highest end of

[1] The hightest dharma

human effort, one has no choice but to attain that *moksha* which is nearest to one. That education which delays our freedom is to be shunned, it is Satanic, it is sinful. Whatever the quality of the education given in Government schools and colleges, it is to be shunned because the Government which imparts it is Satanic and deserves to be shunned.

I shall now tell you, students, about how you should act towards your parents and whether or not it is proper for you to disobey them. It is your highest duty always to give them the best obedience. However, the voice of your conscience is more important even than the expressed wishes of your parents. If this voice tells you that their words proceed from weakness, that your duty as men requires you to leave Government schools or colleges, leave them even against the wishes of your parents. But who can plead this voice of conscience? I repeat what I have said many times in the past, that he who is full of humility, he who has always given obedience, he who has understood and followed the moral law, he alone may disobey. He who has given the first place in his life to the duty of compassion, who has gained control over his senses by observing the rule of *brahmacharya*, who has not let either his limbs or his soul be polluted, who has observed the vow of non-stealing, who has not been guilty of hoarding material possessions, such a one alone can say, "This is what my conscience tells me." Do not merely echo Gandhi's voice when you approach your parents. Approach them at the command of your own inner voice and, prostrating yourselves before them full-length, tell them that you will not be able to obey their wishes.

A student told me that he had disobeyed his parents and left the Government College, but now they do not want him to join the national college. I advised him to obey them most certainly on this point. If any parents feel that the education given in the national college will be harmful and if they wish, therefore, to prevent their children from getting it, they have a right to do so and it is the duty of the latter to obey their wishes in the matter. Parents may keep children away from anything new which they feel is not good for them. They may not compel the children to carry a load of refuse. Each student must decide for himself what his dharma requires in this matter and then do what he considers to be his duty, despite opposition by his parentsor the Government. Unless we act in this manner, the country cannot advance.

I shall now tell you of an incident which took place in Bombay.

Some students raised cries of "shame, shame". A friend named Shri Nimbkar was among those who took part in this shouting. At the Bombay meeting[1], I dwelt on this insult to Mrs. Besant. I do not want to see any student who has pledged himself to non-co-operation violating peace. Everyone who joins non-co-operation must accept its three conditions. The first condition is that you should ever keep before you the need for peace, telling yourselves always that you are not to violate it, not to abuse anyone or lose your temper, not to strike anyone or cry out "shame, shame". Until one is capable of acting in this way, one cannot join this movement. I told Shri Nimbkar that he had violated peace. However much he had been pained by the conduct of Mrs. Besant, Shri Purushottamdas[2] or Shri Setalvad, it was not right for him to raise cries of "shame". The right thing for him was to keep silent or quietly to leave the meeting. Shri Nimbkar was convinced of what I said and, in the presence of the whole meeting, expressed regret for his action and displayed his courage. He is a truly courageous man who admits his mistakes and feels sorry for them. By doing this, Shri Nimbkar has advanced himself.

Similarly I ask of you—of those who attend Gujarat College and of those who have enrolled themselves in this college—that you do not forget your dharma. There are three conditions involved in the pledge of non-co-operation. The first is peace. Non-co-operation should be peaceful, should have nothing to do with the sword. The tongue can be a sword and so can the hand, just as much as a sharpened piece of steel. The second condition is descipline or self-control and the third is sacrifice. We can offer ourselves as sacrifice only if we are pure. One cannot become pure except through self-sacrifice and, until you have become pure you should not leave college. There are about sixty students here today. The Vidyapith will carry on its work with these—will carry on even with five. If its foundation is pure, on that foundation swaraj will be established. One who has not purified himself will not add to the purity of this sacred foundation but, instead, bring disgrace to it. And so I say to those who wish to be admitted to this Mahavidyalaya that, if they do not intend to abide by the three conditions involved in non-co-operation, they had better keep away from it.

To the parents who are present at this meeting, I say: "You were

[1] *Vide* "Speech to Students, Bombay", 14-11-1920.

[2] Purushottamdas Thakurdas and Chimanlal Setalvad; liberal leaders

present at the National Congress and raised your hands to pass its resolutions; you should have faith in the Congress, should fully realize your responsibilities. Do not give a cruel blow to your sons and daughters, do not strike a blow at India. If your sons and daughters wish to perform a sacrifice, do not prevent them from doing so, but bless them and send them to this national Mahavidyalaya with your blessings. If you refuse to do this, you will bring shame upon yourselves and upon Gujarat and will show Gujarat's weakness and, thereby, India's weakness.

In the past, Gujarat has never taken such active part in politics. It has now decided henceforth to be active in politics. May it remain firm in its decision and so bring glory to itself and to the whole of India. Though you may not have truthfulness and courage in you, if your children have these qualities, be sure that you foster them. I conclude with a prayer to God to give you the strngth to do so.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-11-1920

277. SPEECH ON MCSWINEY[1], AHMEDABAD

November 16, 1920

A meeting was held yesterday evening on the Sabarmati sands to express sorrow at the death of Alderman McSwiney, the Lord Mayor of Cork. Mr. Gandhi presided.

Mr. Gandhi paid a high tribute to the Lord Mayor and related his noble qualities. He was a young man and invited death by getting himself elected Mayor. He died not believing in violence. He was, however, wrong to resort to a fast in order to secure his release. Mr. Gandhi had received through Mrs. Sarojini Naidu for publication a poem composed by a brave Irish girl, eulogizing him [McSwiney]; but Mr. Gandhi had not yet published it, because this fasting would set a bad example.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-11-1920

[1] An Irish patriot who passed away after a 65-day fast unto death for the emancipation of Ireland. A resolution paying homage to him was passed at the Nagpur Congress session in December 1920.

278. LETTER TO L. N. SAHU[1]

[After *November 16, 1920*]

MY DEAR SAHU[2],

I am not publishing your letter in *Young India* because it covers a subject which requires local investigation and special track work.

From a draft in Gandhiji's hand : S.N. 7335

279. A TRIUMPH OF NON-VIOLENCE

The *communique*[3] issued by the Government of India on the non-co-operation movement may be regarded as its first triumph of a striking order. For the Government have decided *in view of its non-violent character* to refrain, for the time being at any rate, from repressing by violence what they consider to be an unconstitutional movement. The Government, as well as the people, may be congratulated upon this wise decision; and I have not the slightest doubt that, if the movement continues to be purged of all violence, whether in deed or in word, it would not only be impossible for the Government to resort to repression, but also to resist the ever-growing volume of public opinion against it, when that opinion is backed by well-directed acts of renunciation of Government patronage or support, on a national scale.

But the *communique* is careful to hold out the mailed fist, if the leaders of "moderate" opinion fail to check the onward march of non-co-operation. It is interesting to recall the exact wording of the threat.

> "How long," the *communique* ends, "with due regard to their ultimate responsibility for the public safety, the Government will be able to maintain that policy" (i.e., non-repression) "will depend largely on the success, which attends the efforts of the moderate citizens to check the extension of the movement and keep its dangers within bounds."

Thus repression is to replace reason and argument, if non-co-

[1] In reply to a letter dated November 16, 1920, from the addressee forwarding for publication in *Young India*, a translation of an Oriya article which appeared in *Samaj*, an Oriya weekly of Puri.

[2] Of the Servants of India Society

[3] In *Gazette of India Extraordinary* dated November 6, 1920

operation becomes effective to the extent of making it impossible for the Government to exist whilst refusing to retrace its steps and repent of its crimes against India. For it must be noticed that danger here feared is evidently not of violence but of the loss of the existence of this Government. If my analysis is correct the Government are wickedly playing with the "Moderates" and with India. If they mean well let them make an irrevocable announcement in the clearest possible terms that, so long as the movement remains non-violent, they will not interfere with it even though it demands, and may result in, complete independence. That they will have to make that announcement sometime or other I have no doubt, if we, the non-co-operators, are able to keep the movement free from violence. But the announcement made when they are driven to it by irresistible public opinion will have lost all its grace.

The rest of the *communique* is quite in keeping with the traditional policy of the Government. It is full of the usual self-adulation and misrepresentations about non-co-operators. It is wrong, for instance, to say that those who have been repressed have been so dealt with for their departure from principle of non-violence. I challenge the Government to produce from the speeches or writings of those who have been imprisoned any instance of incitement to violence. The language of the defendants has sometimes been reckless, even exaggerated, but the records available to me of the trials of some of them show that there has been no violence preached by the speakers concerned. There is very little that the speakers have said which I would not have said myself. It is equally untrue to say that those who have been punished have been so dealt with for "tampering with the loyalty of the army or of the police", unless a public appeal to recruits, not to sell themselves as mercenary levies for robbing other countries of their independence, amounts to such incitement. The Seditious Meetings' Proclamation in the Punjab and the action taken against some non-co-operation papers is an eloquent repudiation of the statement that the Government

> have been reluctant to interfere with the liberty of speech and the freedom of the press at a time when India is on the threshold of a great advance towards the realization of the principle of self-government.

The misrepresentation about the leaders of the movement and the cheap sneer at their supposed desire to seek martyrdom is beneath notice. The Government ought to know what a relief it is to the Ali

Brothers and myself to learn that, at least for the present, they do not propose to imprison us. Everybody knows that the danger of an outbreak of violence is the greatest if we are imprisoned. I am aware that this is a humiliating confession. If the people were truly strong and self-reliant, they would remain unperturbed by our or any leaders' imprisonment. So long, however, as the blighting influence of the awe of the Government lasts, so long must there be this fear of an insensate outbreak of violence on the part of the people of this unhappy land, when they are deprived of the assistance and service of those in whom they believe.

The Government's third argument, in favour of the exercise of their self-restraint, is the most specious, and calculated to entrap the unwary. They describe non-co-operation as

> a visionary and chimerical scheme, which, if successful, could only result in widespread disorder, political chaos, and the ruin of all those who have any real stake in the country.

In this one sentence we have the Satanic character of the Government. They must know that successful non-co-operation means orderly and peaceful destruction of the present system of the Government, and *its replacement not* by disorder and chaos but by political order of the first magnitude, and protection of every legitimate interest in the country—not excluding that of the European merchant who desires to earn an honest living in India. Mention of the "real stake" is a wilful insult to the masses of India, and a mischievous incitement to the monied classes to range themselves against the masses. Have the masses no stake in India? Are they not the only people with any real stake in the country? The monied classes, if the worst happened, could even migrate from the country. The masses know no other home save the few yards of earthspace which they possess in this land of sorrow and tears.

It lies ill in the mouth of the framers of the resolution to say "that the appeal of non-co-operation is to prejudice and ignorance", when they are aware that from every platform the appeal is made for self-sacrifice, self purification, and discipline. The misrepresentation of satyagraha is no less wicked. The experience was indeed bitter during that eventful month of April, but the recollection in the minds of the people of official misdeeds during those days will remain an evergeen. India will never forget how a wicked administrator in the Punjab sought to crush an innocent and pure movement by every means, fair or foul. The wonderful awakening of the people of India

to a sense of the wrong then done, and to a sense of their duty, gives the lie direct to the implications of the sentence on satyagraha.

The resolution in question is an appeal not merely to our ignorance and avarice, but it is an appeal also to our helplessness. For this document proceeds :

> The full consummation of their hopes would leave India defenceless alike against foreign aggression and internal chaos, all the benefits of a stable Government and undisturbed peace, the results that have been obtained by the orderly progress of India for more than a century and the still greater results which, it is hoped, will attend her advance under the Reform scheme, her material prosperity and her political progress, are all to be sacrificed to the irresponsible caprice of a few misguided men.

In my humble opinion this paragraph is, indeed, the most mischievous, the most misleading, and to borrow the phraseology of the Government, "the most immoral". If the argument advanced is sound, India must ever remain in a defenceless condition without the British bayonet. I cannot imagine for India a prospect more gloomy, more immoral, and more unworthy of a nation, that only a century ago was capable of putting in the field more sturdy warriors than all the soldiers that can be mustered together today by any three powers of Europe, barring Russia. What severer condemnation can be pronounced upon the British Government than that, for the commercial greed of the British nation, it has emasculated a whole people? The framers must be aware that the full consummation of our hopes means an India with the whole of her population having one mind, one purpose, self-contained and self-reliant, producing enough for all her daily wants, and therefore well able to stand a blockade by all the naval powers of the world combined. This may all be a day-dream but that is the exact meaning of "the full consummation of our hopes", and I should very much like the gods to witness a duel between the powers of all the world pouring into India—not to punish her for any offence given by her, but in order to trade with her at the point of the bayonet; and the Sikhs, the Gurkhas, the Poorbhias, the Mussulmans, the Rajputs, and all the other military races of India voluntarily fighting for their hearth and home. If I am told that there never will be in India such unity of purpose and mind, I must say that there never will be swaraj for India, and therefore true freedom and true progress—moral and material. It was Canning who wrote that under the Indian sky a cloud no bigger than a man's thumb might any moment gather such dimensions as to flood a whole country if it burst. I have implicit faith in the ability of my countrymen to hope that all the bitter experiences of the British rule, at present lying subconscious in the *minds* of the nation, may any moment take definite

shape in the nation recognizing the necessity of unity and self-sacrifice, such as to compel either repentance and a real change of heart, or withdrawal, on the part of the British Government.

I must refrain from burdening this article with any refutation of the charges of immorality, etc., regarding my advice to the student-world. The pages of this journal have made clear to its readers the ethics of the fundamental position taken upon this question. I must close this lengthy article with noticing the absence of the only thing that can stop the invitable progress of non-co-operation, viz, a full and satisfactory revision of the khilafat terms and complete satisfaction about the Punjab. When, and if, the British nation respects the wishes of India on these two points, co-operation will replace non-co-operation, and swaraj within the Empire will be the most natural consequence.

But till that clear repentance comes, in spite of all the resolutions and all the repression that may be resorted to by the Government, so far as I can read the national mind, non-violent non-co-operation will and must remain the creed of the nation that has grown weary of camouflage, humbug, and honeyed words.

Young India, 17-11-1920

280. BRAHMINS AND NON-BRAHMINS

When I wrote in *Young India* on the non-Brahmin question in Maharashtra, I little realized that the non-Brahmin case was largely, if not entirely, a political matter, and that the complaint was not so much against the Brahmins as a class by the non-Brahmins as a class, as by some educated non-Brahmins against the Nationalists who were mostly Brahmins. Non-Brahmins include the Lingayats, the Marathas, the Jains and the "untouchables". The latter, however, have a separate grievance against the other non-Brahmins, in that they are isolated as much by the non-Brahmins. The case for the educated non-Brahmins is again not common to all. It may however be stated in the following terms :

1. Educated non-Brahmins do not possess the same political power that the Brahmins possess. The latter have the largest number of Government posts, and seats on representative bodies, although the former are numerically by far the strongest.

2. Some Brahmins debar the Lingayats from the inner

sanctuary of temples, which the latter claim as their own; and this false (in their estimation) claim is supported by the Brahmins in general.

3. The Brahmins treat all non-Brahmins as Shudras, and treat them precisely as the British treat all Indians.

In my opinion the non-Brahmin case is exceedingly weak and is certain to disappear from the public life of Maharashtra, if the Brahmins of the Nationalist party carry out the Congress non-co-operation programme in its entirety.

The movement owes its vitality, not to the religious or the social disability, but to the political ascendancy of the Brahmins, which the latter undoubtedly enjoy by right of merit. That grievance must vanish if the Nationalist Brahmins, having evolved larger views about swaraj, taboo all Government posts and boycott the councils and nominated seats on municipalities. It is clear to me, that the Government in accordance with its confirmed policy will play the non-Brahmins against the Brahmins even without the knowledge of the former, and endeavour to prolong its lease of life by fostering quarrels between the two, and holding out political inducements, to the non-Brahmins.

It is clear, too, that the Brahmins will take the wind out of the non-Brahmin sail, and make that opposition innocuous by a rightrenunciation of every form of Government patronage. The reason why the question has assumed a more acute form is that non-Brahmin leaders are trying to influence the electorate in their favour, and are telling the electors that the non-Brahmins being weak, they must seek the British alliance. Brahmin leaders are naturally trying to influence the same electors and dissuade them from using their vote. This gives rise to bad blood but not more than when the moderates and the nationalists are fighting. The most painful part of the situation, however, is that the non-Brahmin leaders, who claim to represent the masses and to feel for them, by their co-operaion with the Government, or by seeking to better their condition by Government aid, will actually tighten the hold of the Government on the masses. And by their countenancing the Government aid they will make more difficult the remedy of the Punjab and the khilafat wrongs. The non-Brahmin policy is thus demonstrably suicidal. Whatever their grievance against the Brahmins or the Nationalists, their remedy certainly does not lie through alliance with a Government, whose creed is economic exploitation of the masses, and to that end also their emasculation. For this refusal to right the Punjab, and partly

even the khilafat wrong, is based upon the policy of keeping up the British prestige at any cost. One lakh of Englishmen cannot keep under subjection thirty crores of human beings merely by brute force.

But it can, and does, consolidate its power, by making them progressively helpless, in a most subtle manner. I venture therefore to warn the non-Brahmin leaders against the danger of the co-operation with the Government which is bound to hurt the very cause which they seek to espouse. They will not better the economic condition of the masses by gaining a few Government posts, or by being elected legislative councillors.

Judged by the economic standard, thirty-five years of our political activity have resulted in disaster. The masses of India today are less able to stand the ravages of famine and disease than they were fifty years ago. They are less manly than they were at any period in the history of the nation.

The impending calamity of the non-Brahmin leaders running into the arms of the Government for the supposed betterment of their political condition can easily be averted by the great Brahmin party. It is intelligent, it is strong, it has the traditional prestige of authority. It can afford to stoop to conquer. A wholehearted acceptance of the non-co-operation programme does provide an automatic solution. But it is not enough.

Bitterness will still remain, unless the Brahmins extend the hand of fellowship to those who feel weak and injured. Complaints were made about nationalist papers in the Karnatak using offensive and haughty language towards non-Brahmins; of Nationalist Brahmins otherwise also belittling them and treating them with contempt. Their ignorant non-Brahmin countrymen have a right to expect courtesy and considerateness from comparatively more enlightened Brahmins. The mass of non-Brahmins are still untouched by the anti-Brahmin prejudice. I have faith enough in the Maharashtra Brahmin to know that he will solve the non-Brahmin question in a manner befitting the traditions of Hinduism of which he is trustee.

Young India, 17-11-1920

281. THE GUJARAT NATIONAL COLLEGE

Never have I felt my position as embarrassing as I felt it at the time of inaugurating the Gujarat National College.[1] I knew that it marked a silent and peaceful revolution which my audience might not understand or appreciate. I felt too that the National College would suffer in comparison, if brick and mortar or academic distinction were to be the test. It was hardly possible to have a *national* building, when a Government, which claimed to be the ultimate proprietor of all our earthly possessions, had ceased to be the mouthpiece of the nation, and had even forfeited its confidence—yet the new college has in it possibilities which it is impossible to forecast. May it be the seed of national freedom! Its success will depend upon the combined efforts of the teachers and the scholars. Without any literary merit, I have accepted the office of chancellor, and performed the inauguration ceremony, because I believe in non-co-operation being the only remedy for national regeneration, and because I believe that the staff of the College and members of the senate are truly imbued with the same belief. I have approached my task in prayerful humility. May God protect the new University and the College!

Young India, 17-11-1920

282. THE SIKH LEAGUE

Babu Kalinath Roy, the talented editor of *The Tribune* has kindly sent me an extract from a Press letter received by him from a Sikh correspondent, for my comments[2]. The extract runs as follows :

> Mahatma Gandhi told some of the sikh gentlemen who went to remonstrate with him on the 21st October last on the pernicious effects of his propaganda on Sikh masses, that his propaganda of non-co-operation was non-violent, that there were no doubt visible signs that the movement was likely to become violent among the Sikhs, that he would strongly urge the Sikhs to remain non-violent both in word and deed; but that if despite his warning the Sikhs become violent, he shall not regret if the British

[1] *Vide* "Inaugural Speech at Gujarat Mahavidyalaya, Ahmedabad", 15-11-1920.

[2] Sewaram Singh

authorities crushed them by force. He shall then let them be annihilated without letting either Hindus or Mohammedans come to their help, for it shall be by the sacrifice (*ahuti*) and total extinction of an element which is likely to become violent that the propaganda of non-violent non-co-operation will succeed.

Babu Kalinath Roy after quoting the foregoing says :

The writer adds that at a meeting of the Sikh League these words were duly repeated as having been used by you and that you who were present, did not contradict the report. The letter has, I am further informed, been published by the *Civil and Military Gazette* of Lahore.

The above remarks are, I suppose, intended to discredit me. Now the conversation referred to was long, lasting nearly an hour. Some of the remarks made by me during the conversation have been torn from their setting and put together as though I had made them in the manner and the order given. The fact is that the conversation was carried on partly in Hindustani and partly in English. My remarks were addressed to several members of the deputation. The latter had come to urge me not to put the idea of non-co-operation before the Sikhs, especially as I had myself witnessed the violent attitude of some members of the League. I told them in the course of my replies to several questioners that I did not like the attitude of some of the Sikhs present at the meeting, and that it filled me with grief. I told them also that if I was permitted to speak I would warn the audience against the danger of violence, that it would be suicidal to do violence to co-operators and seek to make them non-co-operators by compulsion. I told them too that the non-co-operators would be courting destruction if they committed violence, for the whole of the community. I certainly told my hearers that, so far as I could, I would dissuade both Hindus and Mohammedans from helping any campaign of violence, and that I would not in this struggle against the Government be deterred by the fear of such a calamity as has been described to me.

The summary of my remarks given by the writer thus hardly does justice to me. I may state that I do not know the writer nor have I seen the letter from which Babu Kalinath Roy has taken the extract. I do recollect a speaker at the Sikh League reproducing the conversation. His speech was in Gurmukhi and in so far as I understood him I think he correctly represented the gist of my remarks.

Young India, 17-11-1920

283. MR. DOUGLAS REPLIES

TO

THE EDITOR

YOUNG INDIA

SIR,

With reference to Mr. Gandhi's article[1] under the heading "Lucknow Speeches" reprinted in *The Independent* of the 10th instant from your paper, I request you will extend me the courtesy of your columns, as in a manner Mr. Gandhi has challenged me to "clear up my position". . . .

Mr. Gandhi complains that I did not protest at the meeting of the 15th October, and that I did not complain to him subsequently. As to protesting at the meeting, I left the meeting in a state of disgust, and judging from the present mood of audiences at political meetings, it is open to serious doubt whether I would have obtained a hearing if I had got up to take exception to the speeches of the learned Maulanas. As to complaining to Mr. Gandhi, the matter concerned me and my future conduct, not merely as a non-co-operator but as a Christian, and however great a respect I may have for Mr. Gandhi, I refuse to admit him as my guide and to take counsel with him as to my conduct as a Christian.

Mr. Gandhi further complains to having been misreported in one respect, but that obviously refers to the report of his speech by Mr. Mahadev Desai, and not by me, as the juxtaposition of the context is somewhat unfair to me. I mention this to avoid confusion.

Now to the speeches of the Maulanas and my withdrawal from the non-co-operation movement in consequence of those speeches. The gist of my letter of the 21st October is that a Christian was referred to as a Kafir and his murderer as a *shahid*[2], and that in my opinion this amounted to the condonation of such a murder. The use of the word Kafir is admitted, but says Mr. Gandhi in his answer that Bishop Heber spoke of Hindus as heathens, and in many a Christian church to this day, a whole race of mankind is spoken of contemptuously. An argument of this nature savours of advocacy, and I am surprised that a man of the eminence of Mr. Gandhi should have gone so wide off the mark. The speeches of the 15th October at Lucknow were not delivered from a temple, mosque, or church, they were delivered from, if I may be permitted so to describe it, the national platform, a platform to which Mr. Gandhi in several of his writings exhorts the Indian Christians and Jews to come, and these speeches were not of some obscure though devout Moulvis, but were those of

[1] Of 3-11-1920

[2] Martyr

the protagonists of this movement, and in a meeting held for the propagation of this political creed. Mr. Gandhi has not touched that portion of my letter in which I said that the murderer was referred to as *shahid*, nor does he say in his article that that word was not used without the slightest fear of any belated contradiction from any quarter. I assert this term was employed by Maulana Shaukat Ali, whom Mr. Gandhi openly calls his lieutenant in this movement. Having failed to comprehend the significance of this, it is not astonishing that Mr. Gandhi should consider my attitude incomprehensible. But this is the vital point. The place was the national platform, the occasion was for the preaching of the doctrine of non-violent non-co-operation, the speakers were the Muslim leaders of this movement and the upshot of their speeches was that, though they did not approve of this murder from the mundane point of view, but from the religious aspect because the person murdered was a Christian, the murderer being a Mohammedan was *ipso facto* a *shahid*. I request Mr. Gandhi to ponder over this, that if a murderer is described as a *shahid*, if it has any meaning it is this, that the murder was a meritorious act, having committed which the murderer becomes a *shahid*, and notwithstanding any subtle protesta-ions to the contrary, the example of the *shahid* is held up for public esteem, to be emulated by his co-religionists, if they have any aspirations to religious reward. It would require an intellect of an unusually astute order not to perceive in this a condonation of the murder. Though it is not for me to enter into the merits of this question from a religious point of view, I maintain that these speeches amounted to a condonation of murder, to put it very mildly, to disapprove of murder on worldly grounds in one breath and in the next to uphold it on religious ones, is not only sophistical to a degree, but is hopelessly inappropriate from the non-violent non-co-operation platform and on the lips of the leaders of this movement. And when the leaders of a propaganda violate one of the cardinal basic principles of it, only two courses are open in my opinion to the dissenting followers, either to withdraw in protest if they are in a minority, or if they are in a majority to dislodge such leaders from their position. I being a Christian was in the first position and I took the first course, and it is for the public and Mr. Gandhi to decide what action to take if they really disapprove of those speeches and do not desire to temporize with an awkward situation by merely finessing with words. Mr. Gandhi puts me the question "Do I now not want swaraj or redress for the Punjab?" My answer is, certainly, I do, but I am equally convinced I am not going to get them in the company of such Muslim leaders, who to suit this particular occasion, preached violence neatly disguised in the garb of their religion, and to repeat myself it is impossible for me in these circumstances to continue to be a participator in a movement the Muslim leaders of which entertain

such notions of a cold-blooded murder of a Christian as such.

On my part this is the last word on this subject.

H. P. DOUGLAS

Lucknow

November 12, 1920

I need hardly say that Mr. Douglas has missed the mark. He may not work *his* non-co-operation with a Mussulman or any Mussulman. But may he co-operate with an unrighteous government because he finds his co-workers equally to be unrighteous? In so far as Maulana Shaukat Ali is concerned, I am inviting him to state his own position.

Young India, 17-11-1920

284. SATYAGRAHA AND THE SUPPRESSED CLASSES

TO

THE EDITOR

YOUNG INDIA

SIR,

In commenting on my letter in your leading article[1] of the 27th October, you have virtually admitted my principal contention that "we Hindus should wash our own blood-stained hands before we ask the English to wash theirs" to borrow your own powerful phraseology. But are you not practically asking the English to do so? You admit that mine is "a proper question seasonably put". Does it not strike you, then, that the present political movement which you have started is, to say the least, a bit premature? You further say, "that we have become the Pariahs of the Empire which is, in Gokhale's language, the retributive justice meted out to us by a just God." If that is so, does it not follow that we cannot permanently achieve our political ideals unless and until we remove the root cause or causes of that same "retributive justice" and that even if your present movement succeeds (which goodness forbid) in ousting the British and establishing independence, it will not be worth an hour's purchase? For as our revered poet-laureate Dr. Tagore says in his book on "Nationalism", "no enduring political freedom can be built in this country on the quicksands of social slavery", and further, "the real problem in this country is social and not political". I know you too were of this opinion some time ago. I distinctly remember to have read in one of

[1] Entitled " 'Depressed' Classes"

your speeches in the early days of your work here, that if only we Indians remove our internal evils and social handicaps, self-government will come to us without our seeking or asking for it. I am profoundly sorry that you have changed your opinion since then. I regard it as nothing short of a national calamity. But I pray you not to misunderstand those of us who still hold the same view. It is because they still sincerely hold this view that the suppressed millions and the non-Brahmins of Madras and the Deccan, who represent the masses of the people in these parts, have so resolutely set their faces against your political non-co-operation move-ment which, in their judgment, is like putting the cart before the horse. They are not traitors to the country of their birth as you seem to think. Knowing them in a way in which you do not know them, I may assure you that they are no less sincere and patriotic than you yourself. They fervently believe that on the whole the British raj is the best for the time being, and that even if you succeed in establishing Indian independence tomorrow, it will be lost in no time to the Afghans or the Japanese, if it is not wrecked and broken to pieces on the rock of caste as it has been more than once in our long and chequered history. They, therefore, intend to make democracy safe for India before India achieves democracy—safe from internal enemies as well as external foes. That is why they, while thanking you for inviting them to join your movement, will thank you still more if you give it up and join them in their noble endeavours of making India a fit and lasting home for democracy. Phrases as "slaves of slaves" and "the greater includes the less" are, no doubt, admirable dialectics which might conceivably deceive the shallow, superficial reader, but they sound hollow in the ears of all practical-minded folk. And it is neither correct nor fair to say, that the Government will be a hindrance in your way if you decide to work for the uplift of the suppressed millions. Why, they no less than we would thank you for it! It is too much to hope you will see your "error of judgment" yet and turn attention to the task of social amelioration which, to quote from your old speeches, is the surest and the best way of winning swaraj for India?

Yours truly,

4-11-'20 S. M. MICHAEL

I gladly publish this reply. Evidently Mr. Michael is not a regular or careful student of *Young India*. If he were he should have known that non-co-operation is a process of purification. He will find when swaraj is established by the method of non-co-operation, that there will be no Pariah or non-Brahmin problem left to be solved. I adhere to my statement that amelioration of radical social evils meant an attainment of swaraj, but I did not then realize that the British Government was the greatest of all the social evils with which society was cursed. This Government must therefore perish if it does not

repent, as surely as Hinduism must perish if it does not purge itself of the blot on itself in the shape of untouchability. My difference with Mr. Michael is of the same type as with the Hindus who do not see the Satanic character of untouchability. Mr. Michael does not see in the present system of Government the growing degradation of the nation to which he belongs. It may therefore be right for him to tolerate the British Government. It is sinful for me to do so in its present state. And I am now engaged in employing the same remedy against the present system of Government, as I have applied against the system of untouchability in Hinduism. Mr. Michael has strayed from his subject in talking of the Afghan invasion. He would forgive me if instead of answering this new objection, I refer him to the pages of this journal.

Young India, 17-11-1920

285. SPEECH AT OPENING OF SCHOOL[1], MALAD

November 17, 1920

He at the outset expressed regret for not being able to come there at the appointed time. He had very short time at his disposal as he had to return to Bombay shortly and he would tell them as briefly as possible whatever he had to say. He was sorry that he had received a complaint from some blacksmiths and carpenters that the proposed school was being started with the object of minimizing their importance. He very much regretted that there should have been so much class hatred manifest among their community. He advised the proprietors of the school to carry on their work with vigour and he wished them Godspeed. He valued conscience more than anything else and if they had an honest difference of opinion, they should not mind it.

In conclusion, he advised them to learn to stand on their own legs in everything, and to attain this, they had to preach and practise non-co-operation. India required national education and not the education given in Government schools.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-11-1920

[1] For teaching blacksmith's and carpenter's work

286. LETTER TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"[1]

BOMBAY,
November 19, 1920

SIR,

I have just read the *Express* extract reproduced by you, attributing to me the opinion that Urdu should be the national script. Somebody has evidently perpetrated a joke at my expense, for I have never entertained any such opinion. What I have said to my friend and fellow-worker Hasrat Mohani[2] is that in any scheme of national seducation Devnagri anal Urdu scripts should be compulsory. My opinion is that Devnagri is the most scientific and perfect script in the world and is therefore from that standpoint the most suitable national script. But I see no way out of the difficulty of Mussulmans in accepting it at the present moment. I therefore feel that the educated classes should know either script equally well. That which has greater vitality and is easier will then become the national script, especially when Hindus and Mussulmans as well as the [other] classes have ceased altogether to distrust one another and have learnt to decide non-religious questions on purely national lines.

Yours,

From a photostat: S.N. 7344

287. LETTER TO RANGASWAMI IYENGAR

BOMBAY,
November 19, 1920

DEAR MR. RANGASWAMI IYENGAR[3],

I have your letter with enclosures. I regret that you have raised technical objections though as I had thought you had agreed to the procedure adopted. When you were in Bombay, you left me under the impression that you entirely accepted the amended creed[4] and you left

[1] The letter, of which this is a handwritten draft, was published in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 22-11-1920.

[2] 1875-1951; nationalist Muslim leader; took active part in the Khilafat movement, and was Gandhiji's chief opponent at the Khilafat Conference of November 1920.

[3] Congress leader of Madras and a loyal follower of Gandhiji

[4] Of the Congress in its revised constitution which was to be finally approved in its annual session in December 1920

it open for Mr. Patel[1] and Mr. Kelkar[2] make such amendments as they chose in the other parts of the rules. However I suppose nothing further now remains to be done unless you have any proposition to make.

From the draft in Mahadev Desai's hand: S.N. 7420

288. LETTER TO PERSUMAL TARACHAND[3]

IN THE TRAIN FOR DELHI,
November 19, 1920

DEAR MR. PERSUMAL,

I read your letter only in the train. It is perhaps impertinent for me to express my sympathy with you when I am the direct or indirect cause of distress to you.

Your brother came to me after he had withdrawn from the examination. He should certainly have conferred with you but, apart from that defect, I am unable to condemn his action. If we have to depend for our maintenance on Government service, we shall never be free. Our helplessness is to me the greatest of tragedies. I am hoping that the boys who leave colleges will not be defiant to or neglectful of their parents.

Yours,

From a photostat: S.N. 7337

[1] Vithalbhai J. Patel (1873-1933); elder brother of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and a fearless and astute constitutional fighter; member of the Bombay Legislative Council and then of the Imperial Legislative Council; the first elected president of the Indian Legislative Assembly, Delhi

[2] Narasinh Chintaman Kelkar (1872-1947); journalist, politician and a close associate of Tilak; sometime Secretary of the Indian National Congress; helped Gandhiji in revising the constitution of the Congress in 1920; leader of the Swarajist Party.

[3] This was sent in reply to a letter in which Persumal Tarachand, a Hyderabad pleader, had protested that his brother, acting under Gandhiji's advice, had withdrawn from the final M.B.B.S. examination, as part of the non-co-operation movement, without consulting his parents.

289. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

JHANSI,
[*November 20, 1920*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS[2],

We have just arrived in Jhansi. We have some peace here. Gangadharrao[3] accompanying, and so also is Saraladevi.[4] It seems she will leave tomorrow for Lahore *via* Delhi. It will depend on the news from Panditji[5].

I hope you are keeping all right. See Dhiru from time to time. If he comes over to the Ashram, by all means have him, otherwise he may go to the [National] University hostels. Revashankarbhai[6], too, believes that it is not at all good that he should stay in the city. Shankarlal's nephew is also going there. Keep him company and see that he does not feel ill at ease in the Ashram.

Get to know Velabehn. She has made an excellent impression on me. She seems to be an upright and virtuous woman. Her children, too, seemed to be well-behaved, but you will be able to observe these things more carefully. Though I would not like to put too heavy a burden on them; I might do so without knowing it.

I have made a note of the mistakes in Hindi which you have corrected, but defects disappear only if constantly corrected. When speaking, one doesn't knowingly commit errors; actually, if errors are pointed out from time to time, one learns to avoid them.

I am eager to know your programme of studies.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2055

[1] Gandhiji left Bombay for Jhahsi on November 19, 1920, and reached Delhi on November 21.

[2] Devdas Gandhi (1900-1957); youngest son of Gandhiji; worked in Champaran villages in 1917 and went to jail during the Salt Satyagraha in 1930; managing director of *The Hindustan Times*; twice president of the Indian and Eastern Newspapers' Society

[3] Gangadharrao Deshpande, Congress leader of Karnatak

[4] Saraladevi Chowdharani; wife of Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari and niece of Rabindranath Tagore. She and her husband became followers of Gandhiji in 1919 and sent their son, Dipak, to be educated at Sabarmati Ashram.

[5] Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari

[6] Revashankar Jagjivan Zaveri, a business man of Bombay and a friend of Gandhiji; treasurer of the Congress for a number of years

290. TELEGRAM TO SIVAPRASAD GUPTA

[About *November 20, 1920*][1]

HOW IS MALAVIYAJI'S[2] HEALTH. WOULD NOT LIKE VISIT BENARES IF HIS HEALTH LIKELY SUFFER.[3] WIRE DELHI.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7310

291. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU

[About *November 20, 1920*]

HAVE HEARD MALAVIYAJI IS ILL AND LIKELY BE WORSE IF I VISIT. PLEASE WIRE HIS HEALTH DELHI.

From a photostat: S.N. 7310

292. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

[About *November 20, 1920*]

PROPOSE VISIT BENARES IF YOU CONSENT ON TWENTY-FOURTH. PLEASE WIRE DELHI.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7310

[1] From the entry for November 26, 1920, under the caption "In Kashi", in Mahadev Desai's Diary, it is clear that this telegram and the two that follow were sent in November 1920. Gandhiji left Bombay for Jhansi on November 19 and was in Delhi on November 21. He left Delhi for Banaras on November 24 and stayed with Madan Mohan Malaviya on November 25, 26 and 27. These three telegrams were therefore presumably sent about November 20.

[2] Madan Mohan Malaviya (1861-1946); founder of the Benares Hindu University; member, Imperial Legislative Council; twice President of the Indian National Congress

[3] Gandhiji wanted to visit Banaras to meet Malaviya as the latter's reaction to Gandhiji's non-co-operation movement was unfavourable.

293. SPEECH AT JHANSI

November 20, 1920

Mr. Gandhi . . . began by condemning the illuminations and decorations.[1] So long as the Khilafat question[2] not settled, the Punjab wrongs[3] were not redressed and swaraj was not obtained, none should partake of enjoyments. Our objects could only be realized by Hindu-Muslim unity and non-co-operation unattended with violence. Swords should not be drawn. He then emphasized the various items of non-co-operation and said that none should join the Army. He then appealed for funds for the Saraswati Pathshala which, he said, was a purely national institution.

The Leader, 24-11-1920

294. TO HINDUS AND MUSLIMS

I learn that my Mehmadabad[4] speech[5] has led to a controversy. I read the relevant portion of that speech only when I started to write this. I notice in it just one important mistake. I am reported to have said that "the sadhu came and saw me". I do not remember to have said this, but I may have made a slip of the tongue while speaking. It is not true at all that the sadhu came and saw me. I apologize for this error. The facts are these: Two of his men came to me and gave me his message that he wanted me to go and see him. By this time I had heard what had happened.[6] I said that I had simply no time to go but that I would see the sadhu if he came. I also conveyed to him that I was afraid that what he had done ill became his sadhu's robes, that it would be better if he came without these. I expected sadhus to be

[1] The city, especially Hardygunj where the speech was made, had been most lavishly decorated and illuminated to welcome Gandhiji who was accompanied by Shaukat Ali.

[2] The Khilafat movement aimed at the restoration of the Sultan of Turkey, who as Khalif claimed supreme authority over the Islamic world, to the status enjoyed by him before World War I.

[3] The Jallianwala Bagh massacre and other atrocities perpetrated in the Punjab during 1919; *vide* "Congress report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.

[4] Town in Kheda district of Gujarat

[5] *Vide* "Speech at Mehmedabad", 1-11-1920.

[6] Some Hindus had objected to the intended sacrifice of a goat by another group of Hindus and, on behalf of the former, the sadhu referred to here had sought the help of Muslims for saving the goat.

fearless and compassionate. I did not expect them to invite the intervention of Muslims in the internal quarrels of Hindus, as he seemed to have invited that of the maulvi. This message, too, I find, created some excitement. But I stick to what I said in my speech and to my message. I take the affair of the goat seriously. That it did not lead to serious consequences was our good fortune. To be sure, it is the sadhus' duty to prevent the destruction of countless innocent creatures, but they can do so only by being good sadhus, by *tapascharya*[1]. It is not open to a sadhu to use force or threaten to use it for this purpose. Nor can he utilize the strength of Muslims in a religious quarrel. If some Muslims are fighting among themselves, how can Hindus side with one party and try to put down the other? It would be shameful of the Hindus to do so and for the Muslims the thing would be a mortal humiliation. Just as we lost power because we brought the British into our worldly conflicts, so the Hindus and the Muslims, by seeking each other's intervention in their internal religious quarrels, would endanger their own religion. Suppose some Hindus who wanted to sacrifice a goat carried out their intention with the help of Muslims, in opposition to other Hindus, where would the latter be?

We want a sincere bond of brotherhood to grow between Hindus and Muslims; the Ahmedabad incident, I believe, has put an obstacle in the way. Its effects may not be apparent immediately, but I have cautioned both Hindus and Muslims lest such obstacles multiply in future.

And now about the maulvi. I believe he is most certainly an impostor. He said one thing to me; a leaflet issued in the name of some Muslim friends suggests something altogether different. The things it mentions as having been said to him are all got up. All that I wished to say was that he had made wrong use of my name. What right have I to send him or anyone else out of Ahmedabad? However, the maulvi said that I was for him a respected elder and so I told him that, if he would take my advice, he should leave Ahmedabad. Neither he nor any other Muslim has a right to work in the name of the Khilafat Committee or in my name without our permission. I put no trust in him at all, and he carries no letter of authority from the

[1] Self-suffering as moral discipline

Khilafat Committee. It is, therefore, my advice to every Muslimnot to listen to the maulvi or to any other person not authorized by the Khilafat Committee.

The Muslims will not succeed in the great task of [securing justice on] the Khilafat issue, and Hindus and Muslims together in that of winning swaraj till the two communities learn to be fearless, brave, self-sacrificing and truthful. They have need, therefore, of caution in every step they take. Every great struggle is accompanied by attempts by impostors to exploit the events for selfish ends. It is our duty to guard ourselves against all such attempts.

[From Gujarati]

NAVAJIVAN, 21-11-1920

295. CONDITIONS FOR SWARAJ AND PRACTICE OF UNTOUCHABILITY

An innocent resolution of the Gujarat Vidyapith has created a commotion in Ahmedabad, Bombay and elsewhere.[1] The resolution is to the effect that no school which excludes *Antyajas*[2] will be recognized. It is but a corollary of a principle adopted by the Vidyapith, but it has hurt many Hindus and some have been telling me that I should not have raised the issue for discussion. There are some who argue that my views on the practice of untouchability are a blot on my Hinduism. Some others question my claim to be a *Sanatani*[3] Hindu on the score of these views. My reasons for believing that I am one, I shall examine some other time.

At the moment I merely wish to show that the Vidyapith has not adopted a new policy by passing the resolution it did. It would have been a new policy had it resolved otherwise. The *Antyajas* attend Government schools at present. There are many such students in Bombay schools. There are some in the high schools in Gujarat, too.

[1] The Gujarat Vidyapith had been established as a national university without a Government charter. At a meeting of its senate on October 31, 1920, under the presidentship of Gandhiji, it was resolved that the so-called untouchables would not be excluded from any schools approved by the Vidyapith.

[2] The lowest caste among Hindus, traditionally regarded as untouchables

[3] One who accepts the essentials of Hinduism as unalterable

If we have been sending *Vaishnava*[1] children to such schools till now, shall we adopt a new policy and exclude *Antyaja* children from national schools? Do we hope to win swaraj while reviving the practice of untouchability at the same time?

We do not mind what happens in trains, hotels, courts and mills; shall we, then, perpetuate the practice in schools alone where, all the time under teachers, eyes, pupils can attend only if they observe the ordinary rules of cleanliness ?

We do not treat Muslims, Parsis, Christians and Jews as untouchables; if we do, we cannot hope to make them our brethren; shall we, then, treat the *Antyajas,* who are a limb of Hindu society, as untouchables even in schools which pupils belonging to non-Hindu communities can attend?

It has been charged against me that, by getting the Vidyapith to pass the resolution in question, I too have, by this means, used coercion on Hindu society in the same manner that the Government does. I would humbly remind those who level this charge that I do not prevent them from running schools according to their ideas, and I request them not to prevent me. Where is coercion in this? In fact, it is they who employ coercion on me by standing in my way. Is it right for them to prevent those who believe that the practice of untouchability hampers our efforts to create a national consciousness from working for its removal? No one will hamper them if they try to set up vidyapiths with other ideals, which recognize this practice as part of dharma. That you may be prevented by the impossibility of succeeding in the attempt is a different matter.

I am firm in my view that the practice of untouchability is contrary to dharma. It is an instance of the evil extremism in Hinduism. To keep alive extremism is *duragraha*[2] and to try to eliminate it through *tapashcharya* is satyagraha. Firmness in seeking and upholding truth—this is dharma. Firmness in holding on to an evil practice sanctioned by custom is *adharma*.[3]

Non-co-operation is a science of purification. Unless we have purified ourselves, we cannot employ it. So long as we regard one of our own limbs as untouchable, we ourselves, Hindus, and our

[1] *Vaishnavas* are devotees of Vishnu, one of the Hindu Trinity, and his incarnation, Krishna

[2] Pursuit of a wrong cause, or of the right cause in an unworthy manner

[3] The opposite of dharma

neighbours, the Muslims and others, will remain the untouchables that we have become. I am convinced that the Hindu society has fallenbecause of the evil of untouchability. Thanks to our sin, we ourselves have become untouchables. We looked upon the *Antyajas* as untouchables in the name of religion; the Government, too, has reduced us to the position of untouchables in the sincere belief that it was doing its duty in this. Like the *Antyajas,* we too have accepted as natural and carry the stigma, branded by foreigners, of being untouchables. Besides, just as we argue that the *Antyajas* themselves do not consider it an insult to be treated as untouchables, the Government too argues that we accept our inferior status as natural and that it is a few revolutionaries like Gandhi who, misleading the people, describe their natural state as degradation.

I entreat the Hindus of Gujarat not to stop, because of thepresent commotion, the great effort they are making in the non-co-operation movement. If they look upon the practice of untouchability as a part of dharma, they may be sure they will never get swaraj. Perhaps they will argue that, in that case, they will prefer the present Government, Satanic as it is. The reply to this is that, even under its rule, they will not be able to go on treating as untouchables those whom they look upon as such; not only this, but our present pitiable condition in which we find that all of us have become *Antyajas* will become ever more so. Let us not forget this self-evident truth.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-11-1920

296. TRIUMPH OF NON-VIOLENCE

Whether you speak of renunciation of the sword, or compassion or peace or non-violence, the meaning is the same. The Government's latest resolution[1] is a triumph of this principle. The Government has

[1] This resolution, released early in November 1920, stated, among other things, " . . . the Government have hitherto refrained from instituting criminal proceedings, or taking any other action against those . . . who have advocated simultaneously with non-co-operation abstention from violence, and they have instructed local Governments to take action against those persons only who . . . have by speech or writing openly incited the public to violence . . . [The Government] have been reluctant to interfere with the liberty of speech and the freedom of the Press . . ." *India in 1920.*

given up, for the present, its intention of arresting the Ali Brothers[1] and me and has decided to try, instead, todefeat non-co-operation with the force of reason, that is, with the help of the Moderates. For this decision, the Government and the people may compliment each other. I look upon it as a triumph of peaceful war, that is, of non-violence. Had we decided to carry on the struggle through secret or open assassinations or by burning down buildings or removing railway tracks, we would not have succeeded in educating public opinion and would not have acquired the strength to speak out the truth courageously; that is, we would not have been ready or fit for swaraj. Even as late as a year ago, we could not express our ideas as freely as we do today. By taking care that the Government should have nothing to fear from us, we ourselves have acquired courage. We have come to have the confidence that, since we ourselves have no guilty thought in us, others can do us no harm. We have an instinctive feeling that, as we do not intend violence to anyone, no one will use violence against us either.

In this way the atmosphere has become clean. We want to win swaraj by changing people's ideas through the force of love and reason, and this has obliged the Government also to rely on reason. It is only when, afraid of our opponent, we employ unclean strength like his that we learn unclean ways and so become weak. In the result, both sides become weak. If we meet uncleanliness with cleanliness, the total result would be less of uncleanliness and the people, the world, would be the happier for this. Thus, peace—non-violence—is ever victorious. The Government's resolution is a notable instance of such victory.

We still do not have the spirit of perfect peace among us. The tongue has not yet become clean, the heart is not pure. We have anger in us. Because of this, our remaining peaceful does not produce the effect it should. We shall have swaraj the day our struggle is free from all bitterness and the workers are perfectly sincere. The common people will do what we do. The path taken by the eminent is followed by the rest.[2]

[1] Mahomed Ali (1871-1931) and Shaukat Ali (1873-1938). Both the brothers were nationalist Muslim politicians and took a leading part in the Khilafat movement. Mahomed Ali, orator and journalist, led the Khilafat delegation to England in 1920 and was president of the Indian National Congress in 1923.

[2] An allusion to the *Bhagavad Gita,* iii, 21

The Government resolution has a sting in it's tail, since in our attitude, too, there is a similar sting in the tail. How many of us accept non-violence as a matter of principle, as I do? My friend Shaukat Ali does not believe in non-violence as a principle valid for all time; he believes in it only as a temporary expedient. He accepts non-violence as a policy. If all of us accord primacy to non-violence and accept it as our chosen means, we can have swaraj this very day. It is because I believe that we shall do this before long that I say we may get swaraj within a year. Of what value is swaraj without non-violence? The way to destroy *adharma is* to establish dharma. The moment we declare solemnly that this regime is an enemy of dharma, we must learn to abide by dharma. How can a person who has no regard for dharma point an accusing finger at another for being like him? What right has the kettle to call the pot black? *Adharma* can be destroyed only through dharma. If there is none to submit to oppression, there can be no oppression.

Since we have not become wholly truthful, the Government's resolution is full of falsehood and hypocrisy. It says that, because our campaign is non-violent, the curbs on newspapers have been removed. This is not quite true. Some newspapers are still harassed. As for people who have been imprisoned, the reason given is that they had incited people to violence. This also is not correct. These persons may not have been quite innocent in their language, but they certainly did not incite the people to violence; even if it is a fact that they did so, the Government has not succeeded in establishing their guilt. The law is that even if a man is, in fact, guilty, he cannot be punished unless his guilt is proved. In trying to discredit non-co-operation, the Government has had recourse to much hypocrisy. It says that non-co-operation will spread anarchy. It knows, however, that simultaneously with non-co-operation, a new order is taking shape. Keeping away from the education provided by the Government does not mean anarchy in education but means receiving education for freedom in place of the present education for slavery; keeping away from the Government's courts does not mean increase in crime but settlement of disputes *panchas*[1]; boycott of councils does not mean rejection of laws—of restraint—but voluntary obedience to laws in the nature of self-imposed restraints instead of to arbitrary laws;

[1] Literally, *panch* means "the five", a board of arbitrators; an arbitrator or board of arbitrators in general

refraining from the use of foreign cloth does not mean going naked, but means the hallowed use, for protection of the body, of sacred cloth produced by the people with what art they possess; refusing to join as policemen in the Government's service means enabling the people to protect themselves; thus, non-co-operation with the \the Government means perfect co-operation by the people among themselves.

If there is no limit to the Government's hypocrisy, there is no limit to its arrogance either. To hold out false threats is to be arrogant. To make impossible claims is to be arrogant. The Government claims that it protects the country against external aggression and says that, were non-co-operation to succeed, that is, were the Government to withdraw, the country would be wholly defenceless, like a child, and an easy prey to invasion by any nation. The truth of the matter is that, if co-operation prevails among us, if we Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians and Parsis believe ourselves to be one nation and be ever fearless and self-reliant, if the people produce their requirements—of food, clothing, etc.—in the country itself, no one will dare cast covetous eyes on India.

Non-violence—peacefulness—does not mean cowardice. It means the spirit of manliness in its perfection. Should India be ever invaded in this manner, it should defeat the enemy by its perfect non-violence or, if it cannot thus endure the enemy's pride, the Kshatriya communities in the country—Sikhs, Muslims and others—should give the aggressor his due. Non-violence—peace— does not mean submission to others, does not mean weakness. He alone can forgive who is brave. When the hour comes for bidding good-bye to the Government, India will not be lustreless as she is today but will be radiating light in all directions. If anyone asks whether it is possible that we should see this day within a year, the only reply to such a sceptic can be that, unless such a day comes, India will not be fit for swaraj at all. If, moreover, such a happy day is to come, it will come only through non-violent non-co-operation. I for one see the day approaching nearer.

In all humility I entreat our elders among the Moderates to see the Government's insincerity and not to walk into the snare laid by it.

I do not go into the Government's charges relating to education. If there had been no co-operation from parents, the

movement would not have progressed so far as it has done. I have advised sons to disobey parents, respectfully, only when the latter are without faith and the sons themselves possess soul-force. This advice is not immoral, or thoughtless or unmannerly. All Shastras give the young the right to think for themselves.

The lesson to be drawn from the Government's resolution is that, just as we have almost succeeded in overcoming its armedmight by our renunciation of arms, so also we should slash its snare of hypocrisy and duplicity with the golden knife of fearless truthfulness and not ignorantly walk into it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-11-1920

297. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

DELHI,
November 21, 1920

Asked whether he thought he would be able to run all the educational institutions in this country without taking any financial aid from the Government, Mr. Gandhi replied:

Yes, if I can carry the country with me, I think it is quit. possible to run all the present institutions without any Government aid.

In reply to the enquiry whether the success hitherto achieved by non-co-operation made him confident of its ultimate triumph, Mr. Gandhi said:

Yes, certainly.

To the question, "Are the non-co-operation and the Khilafat agitation really two separate movements or have they been merged into one another for the realization of any particular object", Mr. Gandhi said:

Non-co-operation has been adopted by the country as a means to an end. It has been adopted for the rectification of the Khilafat wrongs, the Punjab wrongs and the attainment of swaraj.

When Mr. Gandhi was asked if, in spite of all that was happening, he was still as sanguine as ever in the belief that India would attain self-government within a year or so, he said:

I still consider it possible to attain swaraj in India within one year if India responds sufficiently, but whilst I think that the response is not quite as adequate as it might have been, it is adequate enough to make me not to despair of more in the near future.

The Hindu, 23-11-1920

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

V. J. PATEL'S NOTE ON DRAFT INSTRUCTIONS

BOMBAY,
September 22, 1920

While I agree, generally speaking, with most part of the draft instructions contained in the report I feel I should be failing in my duties as a member of the Sub-committee were I to endorse them wholesale in solemn silence. I therefore write this separate note explaining my views on some of the points dealt with in the report.

1. I regret, I cannot see my way to accept the suggestion contained in the report that the Congress has approved of Mr. Gandhi's full programme of non-co-operation and that having adopted the first stage for immediate application it has merely to determine later on the pace for the remaining three stages. My reasons briefly are : (1) The Congress did not as a matter of fact discuss the merits or demerits of the remaining three stages of Mr. Gandhi's programme. The issue was not directly raised, debated and determined upon. (2) In my opinion approval by the Congress of all stages of Mr. Gandhi's programme would offend against the first article of the Congress constitution which restricts the Congress to the use of all "constitutional means" for attainment of self-government. The stage which involves resignation of Government employees particularly those in the Military department can hardly be deemed "constitutional". I should be perfectly prepared to support any proposal for the substitution of the word "peaceful" for the word "constitutional" in the first article. But unless the necessary change is made in the "constitution" Congress cannot approve all the stages of Mr. Gandhi's programme.

I therefore respectfully submit that All-India Congress Committee should delete the paragraph in the report which contains the suggestions in question

2. Boycott of Government functions, etc.

Perhaps the omission of instructions in the report on this is due to inadvertence. The following are the lines on which instructions under this item should be prepared :

(1) Deputations and public meetings to ask Durbaris to have their names removed from the list. (2) Deputations and public meetings to be organized on the occasion of a Levy, Durbar or such other functions in order to urge upon persons likely to attend them, the necessity of abandoning the idea organized by

Government, local body, association, or any private individual in honour of an officer of Government, similar steps should be taken to induce people not to attend such function.[*sic*] Deputations and public meetings should also be organized to request local bodies, associations, or private individuals not to give any address to any officer of Government or hold or organize any function in his honour.

3. Gradual boycott of Government schools and colleges.

I cannot accept the interpretation in the report of the adjective "Gradual" in this clause. I fail to understand how the All-India Congress Committee can advise immediate withdrawal of boys and girls from schools and colleges in face of the introduction of the adjective "Gradual" by the Congress, an adjective which did not find place in the clause as originally proposed by Mr. Gandhi. In my opinion the the All-India Congress Committee could only adopt one of the two courses mentioned below in order to give effect to this part of the Congress Resolution : (1) An All-India propaganda for the withdrawal of boys and girls from schools and colleges *pari passu* with the establishment of national institutions. Such a propaganda must necessarily require huge funds and call for incessant activites and yet it will not be possible, I am afraid, to show any tangible results for a long time to come. (2) Concentration of all our efforts in making an experiment of the establishment of national education and simultaneous withdrawal of boys and girls from schools and colleges in some select area e.g., Gujarat in the Bombay Presidency. Under such a scheme, it is possible to show definite results within reasonable time and if the experiment is found successful, other parts of India will soon follow the example.

4. Boycott of British courts.

Here too I cannot accept the meaning given to the word "Gradual" in the report. Vigorous propaganda through the country preaching to the masses the desirability of referring their dispute to arbitration simultanesouly with the establishment of arbitration courts will yield results better than any propaganda for immediate withdrawal of lawyers from British courts would do. Better still I would recommend the concentration of our efforts in this direction in some select areas and making the experiments as thoroughly as possible. In the meantime lawyers all over the country should be asked to contribute a quota of their income to the National Fund. From this Fund, lawyers who desire to suspend their practice and devote their full time to public affairs may be maintained.

5. Boycott of councils.

I am of opinion that for some time to come at any rate we must concentrate all our energies and efforts in making the boycott of councils as complete as possible. We must create an impression and this we can do by concentrating on any one of the items of our programme. In order that the non-co-operation movement may take root, grow, develop and ultimately succeed, we must act in such a way as to show some tangible results of our activities in the near future. This can be best done by taking up in initial stages only one item and working it up as thorough as we can.

This being my view, I have suggested above that the work in connection with the boycott of schools and courts be localized to select areas in order that we might be able to put forth sufficient efforts to make the boycott of councils as complete as possible. I would therefore like to supplement the instructions contained in the report on this item by following suggestions : (1) Public meetings should be held immediately in all constituencies and resolutions passed asking candidates to withdraw. (2) Even after elections are over continuous propaganda by way of deputations and public meetings in order to bring pressure to bear on the candidates to resign their seats. (3) Voters with whose votes a constituency has returned a member should be repeatedly approached and asked to influence the members to resign.

6. In the form embodied in the report to be signed by the voters I would suggest one alteration. The last sentence should be dropped and the following words substituted. "We do hereby declare further that we do not desire do be represented on any legislative bodies unless they are established under a constitution for full "swaraj" that is complete responsible Government in order to enable us to secure justice in the matters of the "khilafat", "the Punjab" and the like.

7. Boycott of foreign goods.

I cannot endorse the view that this is an unfortunate interpolation due to a misapprehension. No doubt the phraseology of the clause is too sweeping and will in all probability be devised at the next Congress. In the meantime, it is the duty of every non-co-operator to give effect to the recommendation as far as practicable. Perhaps the All-India Congress Committee might give instructions recommending the boycott of certain specified goods of British origin to start with.

8. Publicity Boards.

I strongly feel that in our struggle for freedom full pubicity of our activities from time to time not only in United Kingdom, but also in America is absolutely essential. This was the opinion of Lokamanya and it is also the opinion of Lala Lajpat Rai. One noticeable feature of the Egyptian Nationalist Movement was its extensive foreign propaganda. My interviews with the Irish and Egyptian Nationalists during my stay in England this year have convinced me that without simultaneous publicity in foreign countries [our efforts] will not yield results they otherwise would. I therefore unhesitatingly recommend that simultaneously with our activities in the field of non-co-operation in this country two strong Publicity Boards should be immediately established, one to be located in London and the other in New York. I append herewith a copy of the issue of the Egyptian Circular dated November 15th, 1919, to give to the members of the All-India Congress Committee some idea of the kind of publicity work carried on by the Egyptian Nationalists.

Finally I should like to say a word or two which I should have said in the earlier part of this note. On the question of boycott of titles, etc., the draft instructions contained in the report are all right so far as they go. But they should in

my opinion be supplemented on the following lines :

(1) All Indian newspapers should in future in all their writings drop all references to titles and the title-holders should be addressed or referred to as Mr. or Esquire.

(2) No Indian newspaper should in future publish in their columns any Honours' list or any nominations by Government.

(3) Indian Public in addressing title-holders should drop all references as in the case of newspapers.

V. J. PATEL

From a photostat : S.N. 7266

APPENDIX II

MAHADEV DESAI'S NOTES OF GANDHIJI'S SPEECH AT LAHORE

The following is an English rendering of brief notes of Mr. Gandhi's Lahore speech[1] contributed by Mr. Mahadev Desai to *Navajivan* of the 4th instant :

Mr. Gandhi referred mainly to the imprisonment of Moulvi Zafar Ali Khan in his speech. He said that the Moulvi had already secured his liberty by going to jail, while we were still slaves. He repeated with special stress the words of the Moulvi that this Empire would collapse, and added that the Government was sure to be uprooted if it did not give us justce in the Punjab and khilafat matters; and that it was the duty of all Indians to do their might towards its overthrow, keeping themselves within the paths of truth and justice; because to destroy this oppressive Government was to obey the word of God.

He further said that "there are two ways by which we can see Moulvi Zafar Ali Khan. One is that he should apologize for his words and be acquitted; but that he will never do. The second is that we should enter the jail. Sikhs, Hindus, Mohammedans, whoever have the strength to do what he did, can secure his acquittal by entering the jail. But those who will request the Governement to set him at liberty will thereby commit a national crime. I called the Sikhs brave. They have shed their own blood for the sake of this Government. Other races are brought into submission with their help. It is due to them that hundreds of Arabs and Egyptians have been cut down. And today how are the Sikhs rewarded for all their bravery? Ask that of Sardar Goharsingh of Shekhupur. If the Sikhs would do their duty by their Hindu and Mohammedan brethren, they would surely bring about the release of Moulvi Zafar Ali Khan and also swaraj."

Mr. Gandhi further said that he was deeply pained by the remark of a fakir during the speech of Maulana Mahomed Ali, that so long as materials are not ready for

1 *Vide* "Speech on Non-co-operation, Lahore", 19-10-1920.

the use of the sword, we can do nothing but harm ourselves by resorting to the sword. He was altogether opposed to the use of the sword and expected that the Maulana would agree with him in the end. Murder of one Englishman would result not in our independence but in thousands of Jallianwalas. Even an encounter with arms would necessitate training and sacrifice. He then dilated upon the necessity of self-control with special stress upon the conquest of the senses, and in conclusion advised the audience to demand justice from the Government in the Punjab and khilafat matters, and failing to receive that to paralyse the Government by renouncing all connection with it. They should either get Zafar Ali Khan released or enter the jails themselves.

Young India, 24-11-1920

APPENDIX III

STAFF OF GUJARAT MAHAVIDYALAYA, AHMEDABAD

Principal…….Asudomal Tekchand Gidwani

Religious Teacher……..Vinayak Narahar Bhave

Gujarati Teachers……Ramnarayan Vishwanath Pathak and Narahari Dwarkadas Parikh

Sanskrit……. Ramachandra Balwant Athavale and Rasiklal Chhotalal Parikh

English…….. The Principal and Pranjivan Vishwanath Pathak

Mathematics…….. Maheshwar Shankar Godbole

History…….. Lala Jugalkishore Agrawal, M.A.

Economy…… Jekishan P. Bhansali, B.A., and Dattatreya Balkrishna Kalelkar

Logic…….. Sitaram Pandurang Patwardhan

Pali and Magadhi Languages and

Old History of Gujarat…… Muni Maharaj Jin Vijayaji

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1920, p. 1707

1. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

ALIGARH,
November 23 [*1920*][1]

MY DEAREST CHARLIE[2],

I have your letters and your wire. Have I done you an injustice? I simply wired saying I was trying to send you—I did not say you had accepted the post. And I said what I did on the strength of our conversation.[3] In any case there will be no pressure whatsoever brought to bear on you. You wills simply do what you can for the Muslim University.

Yes I realize the necessity of putting the English connection on a pure basis. In its present condition it is hateful. But I am not as yet sure that it must be ended at any cost. It may be that the English temperament is not responsive to a status of perfect equality with the black and the brown races. Then the English must be made to retire from India. But I am not prepared to reject the possibility of an honourable equality. The connection must end on the clearest possible proof that the English have hopelessly failed to realize the first principle of religion, namely, brotherhood of man.

Baro Dada's[4] letter has not been received by me. It may be in the Ashram or it may be received by me tomorrow on reaching Delhi. I have duly telegraphed to you.

I cannot wire any message to Dr. Dutta but if there is yet time I shall endeavour to write out something for him.

I do hope you are keeping well.

I do not wonder at the Gujarati children having been withdrawn.[5] I do not think you have lost anything. You cannot whittle down principles to keep a single boy. I have not told youwhat I

[1] It was in the year 1920 that on November 23 Gandhiji was in Aligarh where he had gone to attend a meeting of the Khilafat Committee.

[2] Charles Freer Andrews (1871-1940); English missionary, author, educationist, and a close associate of Gandhiji

[3] During Andrews's visit to Gujarat in October 1920, when he was with Gandhiji for a few days

[4] Dwijendranath Tagore; philosopher brother of Rabindranath Tagore; was an admirer of Gandhiji's non-co-operation programme in principle

[5] Presumably because Brahmin and non-Brahmin children were asked to dine together at Santiniketan Ashram

am suffering for having got the senate [pass the] resolution[1] [as suggested] in your letter. They have threatened to boycott me completely. But my position is absolutely clear. I do not want swaraj at the cost of the depressed classes or any classes for that matter. It will not be swaraj at all in my sense of the term. My belief is that the instant India is purified India becomes free and not a moment earlier. Only I must fight the greatest devil of all—this Government—with all my might and in doing so I shall be automatically fighting the lesser ones. This threat of boycott is giving me the keenest pleasure for I feel that there I am on still purer ground. In fighting the Government, the motives of co-workers can be mixed. In fighting the devil of untouchability I have absolutely select company.

With love,

Yours,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 956

2. SPEECH ON NON-CO-OPERATION, AGRA[2]

November 23, 1920

Mr. Gandhi began by referring to the recent Hindu-Muslim disturbances at Agra and congratulated the people for settling the dispute without the intervention of the authorities. He said it grieved him to see a disorderly meeting as that would not enable them to attain swaraj. He said the procession[3] wasted time and huge meetings did not serve the purposes for which they were held. They both wasted time and he would perhaps have to take a vow that he would not go out in a procession and would not address huge meetings. India was in mourning for the 1,500 killed at the Jallianwala Bagh and he could not tolerate the idea of music and procession while in mourning. He regretted that foreign articles were used in the decorations and buntings and foreign candles and lamps were used for the illumination. These methods would not help them to get the Khilafat wrongs righted and to attain swaraj.

He said he had come to address the students only and would soon leave the meeting to address them at his residence, where only students could attend. He said he regarded the Government as Satanic and was confident that swaraj could be attained in one year if the people became truthful and behaved better. The Government called him

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, "Conditions for Swaraj and practice of untouchability", 21-11-1920.

[2] Delivered at a large public meeting presided over by Abul Kalam Azad

[3] Gandhiji and others had been taken to the meeting-place in a procession which lasted two hours and was accompanied by a band; the route had been lavishly decorated.

insane,[1] but he knew he was not insane. He would meet the deceitful Government with truth. He urged the lawyers to give up practice, the candidates to boycott the councils and the voters not to vote. He said the setting up of *chamar*[2] as a candidate was ridiculous. The bureaucracy would laugh at him and at the people for such actions and as swaraj would not be attained in this manner, they would ridicule both.[3]

The Leader, 26-11-1920

3. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, AGRA[4]

November 23, 1920

At no other place have I been as unhappy as I felt after coming here. With all this confusion, you will not help me in my mission here. When there is so much disorder, how can I advise students to leave college?

* * *

We are dazzled by the shining lustre of our chains and look upon them as the symbols of our freedom. This state [of mind] bespeaks slavery of the worst kind.

* * *

Speaking about the timidity induced by their education, Gandhiji said:

We may feel in our heart any measure of devotion for Tilak Maharaj, but where is the student who will express it freely?

* * *

For us, fear has become synonymous with life. What is the use of that education which does not help us to overcome fear, but which, on the contrary, strengthens it? What kind of an education is it which does not teach us to follow truth and to cultivate devotion for the country?

But my argument is not merely that we should give up this education because it is bad. My argument is that we ought not to receive it because it is provided by those who hold us in slavery. From his owner a slave will not learn the lesson of freedom. This Empire has

[1] Lord Chelmsford, the Viceroy, had described Gandhiji's non-co-operation programme as "the most foolish of all foolish schemes".

[2] A low-caste person considered untouchable by orthodox Hindus

[3] After this speech Gandhiji and the students left the meeting as Gandhiji wished to address them separately. For a report of this speech, *vide* the following item.

[4] This and similar items which follow are extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of the tour published in *Navajivan.*

become defiled; even if this Satanic Empire should propose to give me training for freedom, I may not receive it.

No matter what the quality of this education, what is its source? Why are you taken in because they teach you big books? They do not give you real education in freedom, only deceive you into believing that they do. In point of fact, it is with money stolen from the country that they give you this education by which you are taken in, and that is like using money stolen from a man to teach him to drink.

* * *

As a boy, I loved my parents as Shravana[1] loved his. I believe in God, too. Would I, then, ask anyone to do something in disregard of his parents' wishes? However, one's parents, too, were created by God and I have been arguing that, when parents' wishes conflict with God's command, one should obey the latter.

Those of you who feel in the depth of their heart that they will not learn lessons of freedom in schools run by an Empire such as I have described, who hear a command from God that, in order to secure freedom, they need to shake off this slavery, should reason with their parents respectfully. If you feel that this is a house on fire, that you have no choice but to run out of it, only then should you abandon it. I feel all the twenty-four hours that I cannot live a moment longer under this Empire and, if you feel the same way, you would not want to ask if alternative schools had been provided for you. Leaving your school or college without making conditions is the first lesson in freedom. If, however, you do not have patience enough to occupy yourselves after leaving your school with collecting funds for a free school till one is set up, if you do not have patience to live by begging meanwhile, most certainly do not leave your school.

You should get training for bodily labour. When an English boy comes out of school or college, he certainly has the strength for such labour. If, however, your only ambition, after completing your education, is to be lawyers or the Government's hacks, the present schools and colleges are the only ones for you. If you understand the dignity of the ancient practice of *madhukari*[2] which is followed in Maharashtra even today, you should even live by begging and study. If you have not acquired the strength for this, I do not want to win the country's freedom through you.

[1] A youth, in the *Ramayana,* who was devoted to his aged parents and carried them on his shoulders to various places of pilgrimage

[2] Collecting alms from door to door; literally, the collection of honey by the bee moving from flower to flower. Here the reference is to the practice of students without means of support having their meals with different families by turns.

This education is an education in atheism. One who, in spite of it, has faith in God, who has mastered the senses, has observed the vow of non-stealing and practised non-violence—such a one may claim to hear the voice of conscience. I, therefore, address myself only to those students who have been trained in self-control and I tell them that they may unhesitatingly leave college if they hear the command of God.

I want only such students as have the strength, when the timecomes, to sacrifice themselves, to mount the gallows, to beg. You may leave college only if the cruel injustice done to the country and to the Muslims has kindled fire in your hearts.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-12-1920

4. TELEGRAM TO JAIRAMDAS DAULATRAM[2]

[On or after *November 23,* 1920]

WILL CERTAINLY DISSUADE PEOPLE AGAINST SOCIAL AS DISTINGUISHED FROM POLITICAL BOYCOTT. HOLD LATTER ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY.

From a photostat: S.N. 7353

[1] The report of the speech in *The Leader,* 26-11-1920, ends thus : "His address was for students of over 16 years of age. Violence ought in no case to be used. Some of his Mohammedan friends told him that they tried non-co-operation but if this would fail they would use the sword. He was against the use of the sword. The students who left the institutions must, in case their guardians refused them pecuniary help, break stones or beg and continue their studies, thus supporting themselves and their guru. Only those who were prepared to suffer must leave schools and colleges unconditionally, but they should not go out simply on account of excitement.

When the lecture was over he invited the students to ask any questions they liked. One student asked whether any student could go to England or any other European country for technical or any education. Mr. Gandhi said he would not like it, but if the student wanted to go he could, as he regarded all European countries alike. The student again asked if he could go to Japan or the United States as they were independent countries. Mr. Gandhi said he regarded all of them alike. They were not India."

[2] Jairamdas Daulatram; a Congress leader of Sind. This telegram was sent in reply to Jairamdas's telegram of November 23, 1920, from Nowbad in Hyderabad, Sind, which read: "Several Hindu non-co-operators including Durgadas Govindnand Choitharam Ghanshyam Jairamdas and Editor *Hindu* and others met today. Discussed suggestions of social boycott opinion unanimous against social boycott being advised because inexpedient hindrance to our movement and giving innumerable opportunities for tyranny urge you kindly use your influence in this matter."

5. *MORE DIFFICULTIES*

The resolution[1] of the senate of the Gujarat National University in regard to Mr. Andrews' question about the admission of children of the 'depressed' classes to the schools affiliated to that University is reported to have raised a flutter in Ahmedabad. Not only has the flutter given satisfaction to a *Times of India* correspondent, but the occasion has led to the discovery by him of another defect in the constitution of the senate in that it does not contain a single Muslim member. The discovery, however, I may inform the reader, is no proof of the want of national character of the University. The Hindu-Muslim unity is no mere lip expression. It requires no artificial proofs. The simple reason why there is no Mussulman representative on the senate is that no higher educated Mussulman, able to give his time, has been found to take sufficient interest in the national education movement. I merely refer to this matter to show that we must reckon with attempts to discredit the movement even by misinterpretation of motives. That is a difficulty from without and easier to deal with.

The 'depressed' classes difficulty is internal and therefore far more serious, because it may give rise to a split and weaken the cause—no cause can survive internal difficulties if they are indefinitely multiplied. Yet there can be no surrender in the matter of principles for the avoidance of splits. You cannot promote a cause when you are undermining it by surrendering its vital parts. The 'depressed' classes problem is a vital part of the cause. Swaraj is as inconceivable without full reparation to the 'depressed' classes as it is impossible without real Hindu-Muslim unity. In my opinion we have become 'pariahs of the Empire' because we have created 'pariahs' in our midst. The slave-owner is always more hurt than the slaves. We shall be unfit to gain swaraj so long as we would keep in bondage a fifth of the population of Hindustan. Have we not made the 'pariah' crawl on his belly? Have we not segregated him? And if it is religion so to treat the 'pariah', it is the religion of the white race to segregate us. And if it is no argument for the white races to say that we are satisfied with the badge of our inferiority, it is less for us to say that the 'pariah' is satisfied with his. Our slavery is complete when we begin to hug it.

The Gujarat senate therefore counted the cost when it refused to bend before the storm. This non-co-operation is a process of self-purification. We may not cling to putrid customs and claim the pure boon of swaraj. Untouchability, I hold, is a custom, not an

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, "Conditions for Swaraj and practice of untouchability", 21-11-1920.

integral part of Hinduism. The world has advanced in thought, though it is still barbarous in action. And no religion can stand that which is not based on fundamental truths. Any glorification of error will destroy a religion as surely as disregard of a disease is bound to destroy a body.

This Government of ours is an unscrupulous corporation. It has ruled by dividing Mussulmans from Hindus. It is quite capable of taking advantage of the internal weaknesses of Hindusim. It will set the 'depressed' classes against the rest of the Hindus, non-Brahmins against Brahmins. The Gujarat senate resolution does not end the trouble. It merely points out the difficulty. The trouble will end only when the masses and classes of Hindus have rid themselves of the sin of untouchability. A Hindu lover of swaraj will as assiduously work for the amelioration of the lot of the 'depressed' classes as he works for Hindu-Muslim unity. We must treat them as our brothers and give them the same rights that we claim for ourselves.

Young India, 24-11-1920

6. COUNCIL ELECTIONS[1]

The elections in the Bombay Presidency and elsewhere have demonstrated the success of non-co-operation about Councils, in so far as the voters are concerned. In some cases not a single voter seems to have registered his vote. What will the so-called representatives do? They know that the voters have refrained from going to the polls not out of laziness but out of deliberation. They know, too, that thousands of voters have declared in writing their intention not to be represented. The members had ample opportunity of acting on the electors and convincing them of the desirability of voting. They cannot complain [of] intimidation or even picketing. For the instructions were not to picket, and, as far as I am aware, the instructions were implicitly followed. In the face of these facts, is it not the clear duty of the members declared to have been elected not to have anything to do with the Council? The electors have shown in no uncertain terms that they do not want to have anything to do with the reformed Councils. The members will reduce representative institutions to an absurdity if they persist in going to the Council when they have the clearest possible mandate to the contrary.

If the so-called representatives do not obey the mandate of their electors, the course of the latter is quite clear. They must form voters'

[1] Elections for the various Legislatures took place in November 1920; those for the Bombay Legislative Council were held on November 16.

associations, and through these bodies pass votes of no-confidence; they must address their respective members notifying their disapproval of their conduct in allowing themselves to be declared elected. It follows, too, that the electors must not on any account whatsoever take any work from these members. For them the Council does not exist. They must not seek any relief through it. The next trial of the voters will commence when the Council is opened, if at all, in the face of this verdict. The temptation to air grievances by having questions put in the Council will be very great. The electors will have to resist the temptation.

But let us hope for the good name of our country that the members themselves will bow to the verdict so emphatically declared by the electors.

Young India, 24-11-1920

7. STATE OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

Pandit Gangaram Sharma's[1] letter[2] reproduced elsewhere is a seasonable contribution to the question of national education. He has even been making a useful experiment in primary education in the Punjab, and is able to throw a flood of light on this very important problem. His refusal to take Government grant and affiliate his school makes his scheme specially attractive. It has received the blessings of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji and Mr. Shastriar. The programme is ambitious and well thought out. The scheme is inexpensive. My fear is that it is overweighed with too many items. But one has hardly the right to criticize an experiment without careful study on the spot. I question the advisability of introducing a knowledge of English in any scheme of primary education. In my opinion millions of boys and girls of this country do not need to know English at all. They need ideas rather than languages. And I would give even little children ideas about swaraj and other essential matters without their having to wait for higher literary knowledge. The present system and method of education fill a boy with many useless facts and leave him without proper mental development till he begins to receive a high-school training. Thus we have come to think quite unwarrantably that we cannot imbibe true ideas of liberty, religion, etc., without a knowledge of English, and have therefore made of it a fetish.

[1] A Congress worker in the Punjab
[2] Not reproduced here

The more interesting part of Pandit Gangaram Sharma's letter lies in the information he imparts about the difficulties placed in his way by the local officials and the startling figures he produces regarding the 'progress' of primary education in the Punjab. It would appear that in 1844, in a population of 127 lakhs, there were 30,000 indigenous schools, catering for 4 lakhs of children. In 1918-19, with a population of 190 lakhs, there were only 933 indigenous schools and 4,171 Government schools, catering in all for 239,332 children. If the figures are correct, the state of primary education in the Punjab is worse now than it was in 1849, i.e., before British occupation. Yet we are told that if we nationalize education, we cannot finance it!

There are other equally damaging figures and facts Pandit Gangaram Sharma has shown me. I must deal with them later.

Young India, 24-11-1920

8. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI[1]

[On or after *November 24, 1920*][2]

BOYS SHOULD REMAIN FIRM AVOID ROWDYISM SHOULD UNDERGO DAILY DRILL STUDY AT HOME TILL NEW HIGH SCHOOL OPENED OR TILL PRESENT HIGH SCHOOL[3] NATIONALIZED. THEY MUST CONFER WITH PARENTS AND GENTLY BEAR DOWN OPPOSITION IF ANY. CONSULT BANKER[4] THREE SCHOOLMASTERS HAVE OFFERED SERVICES.

From a photostat: S.N. 7354

[1] This was sent in reply to Narandas Gandhi's telegram of November 23, 1920, from Bombay, which read: "Three hundred students Gokuldas School left today addressed by Narandas and Vithaldas meeting again Thursday please advise."

[2] Narandas's telegram was received by Gandhiji on November 24.

[3] Gokuldas Tejpal High School, Bombay, which was abandoned by 300 students because it received a Government grant

[4] Shankarlal Banker; a social worker and labour leader of Ahmedabad. He was also associated with *The Bombay Chronicle* and Satyagraha Sabha, Bombay.

9. TELEGRAM TO C. Y. CHINTAMANI[1]

[On or after *November 25, 1920*][2]

AM CERTAINLY OPPOSED ANY CANVASSING[3] BY NON-CO-OPERATORS FOR ANYBODY. IT WAS BECAUSE I FOUND INCLINATION TAKE SIDES THAT I BEGAN WARNING NON-CO-OPERATORS AGAINST THAT TEMPTATION. FURTHER THAN THIS I MAY NOT GO. NO ONE HAS AUTHORITY IN MY NAME PREFER ANY CANDIDATE JHANSI ELSEWHERE HOPE IF YOU FIND MAJORITY VOTERS JHANSI AGAINST ANY ELECTION YOU WILL RESPECT CONSTITUENCY'S WISH.

From a photostat: S.N. 7355

10. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, BANARAS[4]

November 26, 1920

I spoke to you a few months ago about self-control.[5] Today also, the purpose of my visit here is to speak, as I understand the matter, on the same subject. It is being said these days that I am putting wild ideas into students' heads. With a full sense of responsibility, I declare that I am doing nothing of the kind. I can never think of putting such ideas into their heads. I was also a student once and I did everything in my student days with full respect for elders. I am, moreover, the father of four sons and I have had hundreds of boys who came to me and to whom I still claim to be a father. That being so it is impossible that I should utter any words intended to put wild ideas into people's heads.

[1] Sir C. Y. Chintamani (1880-1941); prominent journalist, author and politician; Law Member in Viceroy's Council, 1920-22; president of the Liberal Federation in 1923 and 1927

[2] This telegram was sent in reply to Chintamani's telegram of November 25, 1920, from Jhansi, which read: "Mr. Shaukatali refers at your meeting here followed by alleged private instruction interpreted as your desire that non-co-operators must oppose my candidature especially. Some of your followers since acting against me in your name inducing electors vote for one of my opponents. I feel sure this could never be your intention and request you wire friends accordingly. Kindly wire reply."

[3] In regard to Legislature elections under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, held in November and December, 1920

[4] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour

[5] *Vide* "Speech at meeting of students, Benaras", 21-2-1920.

But these are days when the elders feel that through my present activities I am doing them injustice, that I have also departed a little from truth, which I say I scrupulously follow, and that my language today lacks the moderation to which I lay claim. I have given thought to all this but my soul tells me that I am not immoderate in my language. All that I say I say with a calm mind and with the utmost deliberation. The fact is that the delusion under which I laboured in December last has vanished and so the language I speak today is different from what I spoke then.[1] However, I have only been describing things as they are. If I saw that a thing was unclean and I did not say that it was so, I would violate truth and be guilty of lack of consideration for others. In describing a thing as it is, there is no lack of consideration for others but only respect for truth. To be sure, perfect truth is in silence alone but, so long as it is necessary to employ language, it can reflect the perfect truth only when I describe a situation to you exactly as I see it.

A report of a speech by Panditji[2] appeared in *The Leader*. I observe that it was published with his consent. I wish to draw your attention to one sentence in it: "Give thought to everything and do as your conscience bids you." I want to tell you the same thing. And if you have any doubt about what your conscience tells you, if you are not able to come to a decision in your mind, do not accept what I or anyone else may say but accept only what Panditji, whom you allrevere, says. I have come across no holier man than he; I see no living Indian who has served India more than he has done. What is our relation, Panditji's and mine? I have revered him ever since I returned from South Africa. I have poured forth my troubles to him on innumerable occasions and received consolation from him every time. He is certainly as an elder brother to me.

This being our relation, I can tell you nothing else than that you should act as I ask you to do only if you feel in your heart of hearts that what I tell you is the only truth. If, on the other hand, you argue that we are both your leaders and that you have to choose the advice of the one or the other, do only what Panditji asks you. If you have the slightest misgiving, do not follow me; in fact, it would be to your harm to do so. Panditji is the patriarch of this University; he is its founder, its soul, and it is our duty to respect him. If you have the slightest doubt about my being right in seeing the error which I do on

[1] Gandhiji had faith in the *bona fides* of the British Government and had advocated the acceptance of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms at the Congress Session held at Amritsar in December 1919.

[2] Madan Mohan Malaviya

Panditji's part in this matter, do not accept my advice. A gentleman came and told me that, if I came to Banaras, in the present state of Panditji's health, my visit would give him a painful shock and that we might even lose him. He hoped my visit would not kill Panditji. Who am I that I could kill Panditji? If by killing him we mean killing his soul, that is impossible. But this gentleman saw in my visit Panditji's death. He told me that the students would accept my advice and leave the University, that in this Panditji would see his life's work destroyed and it would kill him. I was a little amused by this. I felt that the gentleman did not know Panditji. Panditji is no coward to throw away his life over a matter like this.

No doubt the University is Panditji's very life, but it seems to me truer to say that India is his life. He is an optimist. Rightly does he believe that no one can harm India, that no one has the reins of the country in his hand, that they are in the hands of God and He will looks after its welfare. Even so, I sent him a telegram[1] Panditji sent me a courteous reply welcoming me to Banaras.

Panditji feels that some of you have been acting without taking due thought and that, if you act without thinking, you will have nowhere to stand on. If, however, you think that it is a sin to continue studies in this University, you should leave it immediately and you will have Panditji's blessings in that. If your soul, however, is not on fire, listen to Panditji rather than to me.

It is only when your action is pure, when your motive is pure and the result is pure, that the action can have been inspired by your conscience. There is, however, another restriction which the shastras lay down in this matter. He alone who practises non-violence, is truthful and keeps the vow of non-hoarding, can claim that he has had a command from the conscience within. If you are not a *brahmachari*[2], if you have no compassion in your heart, no regard for modesty and truth, you cannot claim any action of yours to have been inspired by your conscience. If, on the other hand, you have a heart such as I have described, if you have given up Western ways, if you have God in the pure temple of your heart, you may respectfully disobey even your parents. If you are in such a state, you are free and can act on your own. I know that in the West there is a powerful trend towards licence. But I have no desire to see students in India take to

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Madan Mohan Malaviya", about November 20, 1920.

[2] One who observes celibacy

such licence. If, in this hallowed Banaras, in this sacred place, I wished to turn you to ways of licence, I would be unworthy of my task.

Why do I tell students that it is their duty to leave schools and colleges? Do I want to ruin your studies? No. I am given to a life of study, even today I am a student, but I want to tell you that the man who has not received education for freedom—and you may be sure this is not to be had by reading Mill on "Liberty"—cannot be taken to be a free man. The education you receive is base compared to even what an Arab boy gets. A friend from that side was here and he tells me that the education our boys get does not amount even to one-fourth of what the boys in his country get. You will not find a single student there who will acquiesce in the rule of this Empire. They were offered facilities of the post, the telegraph and trams, were tempted with the bait of aeroplanes, were promised that their sandy soil, which is generally so hot that one can cook *khichdi*[1] on it in a few minutes, would be made cooler; promises were held out that big institutions would be opened for their education; but the boys there refused to have them. They receive very good education in their religion. That is what you need. In the circumstances in which you pursue your studies, you can only learn to fear man. I would say, on the other hand, that he alone is a real M.A. who has given up the fear of man and has learnt to fear God. Any education you receive will have justified itself only when you have become so strong that you will not beg of anyone for your living. It will have justified itself when the feeling has grown in you that, so long as you are strong of limb, you need not humble yourselves before anyone for a livelihood.

British historians say that three crores in India do not get two square meals daily. In Bihar the majority of people subsist on a stuff called *sattu* which is useless as nourishment. When I saw people swallowing this *sattu*—maize flour—with water and chillies, my eyes used to blaze with fire. If you were to have such food to eat, how long would you survive? In that land of Ramachandra, in that holy land of King Janaka[2], people today get no ghee, not even milk. In such conditions, how can you rest in peace? If we do not get an education which makes a Mazzini out of every one of us, our education is of no value. If you cannot eat your food in freedom, you should have the strength to starve to death and remain free.

[1] A preparation of rice and pulses cooked together

[2] A philosopher-king of ancient India; father of Sita in the *Ramayana*

I am told that in Arabia and Mesopotamia boys have education of this kind. They are ready to fight the British. They have arms with them. We lack them, but in her love of truth India has a great store of soul-force and this is why we are able to fight oppression. Tulsidas[1] counsels us to keep away from the wicked. This Empire, I say, is Satanic and it is our duty, therefore, to keep away from it. Keeping away from it can mean nothing less than *hijrat*[2] but I do not counsel that. Where should we go, keeping away in that manner? I see no place of shelter unless it be the Indian Ocean or the Bay of Bengal. But Tulsidas has said that, should it be impossible to keep away from the wicked altogether, we may remain at some distance. If you fail to acquire the strength for non-violent non-co-operation like Sita's, who refused to look at Ravana's delicacies and to accept the services of his maid-servants, living wholly on fruits growing in Ashokavatika[3], I have not the least doubt that India would be ruined, would for ever rot in slavery.

I do not wish to go into why this Empire is Satanic. But an Empire which has been guilty of the atrocities in the Punjab,[4] which killed children six or seven years old by making them walk in the heat, which dishonoured women, which has said that the officials who did all this had committed no crimes but had saved its rule—to study in the schools of such an Empire is, to my mind, the greatest *adharma* of all. To Panditji, an elder brother to me, this seems to be dharma. My shastras do not teach me so. I cannot learn from Ravana the *Gita* the Koran or the Bible. I would learn the *Gita* from one who had studied it with reverence. How can I learn it from one who takes liquor? I can give you no idea of how much my soul is on fire. I served this Empire for 30 years. I do not mean, of course, that I did anything wrong in that. Only, I can serve it no longer, for I have been a witness to the Punjab atrocities. Not only this; I also see that for many years now this Empire has been bringing such ruination to the country that the Punjab atrocities are nothing in comparison. When I was your age, I read Dadabhai Naoroji's[5] *Poverty and Un-British Rule*

[1] A sixteenth-century Hindi poet; author of *Ramacharitamanasa*

[2] Emigration enjoined on Muslims when faced with religious persecution

[3] In the *Ramayana*, a garden in Lanka where Sita was kept after she was carried off by Ravana

[4] During the disorders in 1919; *vide* "Congress report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.

[5] 1825-1917; pioneer Indian statesman, affectionately called "the Grand Old Man of India"; president, Indian National Congress, 1886, 1893 and 1906; first enunciated swaraj as objective of the Congress; elected member of the British Parliament, 1893

in India. Has the "progressive drain"[1] of India's wealth, which it described convincingly, diminished today? Is it not a fact that the expenditure on the army has been rising? Has not the expenditure on pensions increased? If the answers to these questions are in the affirmative, I would say: 'Let Lord Sinha[2] or any other person like him be appointed Governor—let even a person like Panditji be appointed Viceroy— I would not go and salute such a person.' The real position is that, under this rule, our slavery has been steadily increasing. When, moreover, the slave is dazzled by the lustre of his chain that binds him, his enslavement is complete. I assert that we are more enslaved today than we were 35 years ago. We are becoming ever more defeatist. We are growing more cowardly. Basically, therefore I would certainly say that our slavery has been increasing.

I always remember one part of the learned speech of Babu Bhagwandas[3]. He said that when our rulers rule as traders, nay, when they go further and trade in intoxicants like bhang and *ganja*[4], they become rulers of the lowest order. We should keep away from them. This Empire has turned India into an unholy land. The Excise Department is continually expanding. Men like Gokhale had raised their voice for increasing the number of schools, but the position is that, whereas in 1857 there were 30,000 schools in the Punjab, there are 5,000 today. The Government did away with the rest. It has the power of organization. Do we have it? The Government, however, has kept us deluded. What lesson in swaraj can it teach us? What lesson in swaraj can we learn in the Councils? If you want to get the strength for swaraj, go to the Arabs, go to the Boers. I assert that we have such strength even today but, though lions, we imagine we are lambs. Can anyone intimidate a man who has a soul in him? When you have acquired this spirit, your education will have been to some purpose. Only after you have had such education can you get education for other, general purposes. At present you have been receiving education which will tighten the chains on you. Being enamoured of degrees, we have been demanding "charters" all the time. Why do we refuse to

[1] Gandhiji uses the English expression

[2] Satyendra Prasanna Sinha (1864-1928); first Baron of Raipur; lawyer and statesman; Under-Secretary of State for India, 1919-20; Governor of Bihar and, Orissa, 1920-21; first Indian member of Viceroy's Executive Council

[3] An eminent scholar and public worker of Uttar Pradesh who delivered the speech referred to as president of the U.P. Political Conference held at Moradabad on October 9, 10 and 11

[4] Dried hemp flowers

learn under these trees? Why should we want such palatial buildings? When large numbers in the country do not get enough to eat and women are unable to take a bath for days together for want of a garment to change into, do you demand big palaces in which you may study? If you do, better stop thinking about non-co-operation. If you feel for the country, if the fire which has been raging in me also rages in you, forget everything about buildings and take to non-co-operation as I have been advising. If you do so, I repeat here in this sacred place the pledge I gave elsewhere[1] that we shall have swaraj within a year.

But I tell you again and again that you will get it only if you know your dharma. You will not get it by shouting applause. Why do I say these things? I don't want any wealth or honours, nor India's crown; I want India's freedom. Everyone advises me to fall in with the others. But I cannot do so; I cannot give up my heart's conviction, cannot be deaf to the voice of conscience and fall in with the others. I do not want to do so by compromising on a principle. This is that, if we want swaraj, every individual must learn to be free. If you feel in your mind, as clearly as you see the trees in front of you, that this Empire is Satanic, that it is a sin to study in this institution, that, though the Lieutenant-Governor may assert as much as he likes that the Government exercises no control [over the University], it can make its influence felt indirectly, if you feel strongly that it is disloyalty [to the country] to receive education from this Empire, do not remain in this University for a moment longer, do not even breathe its air.

I tell you, save yourselves from this raging fire, take every risk. Ask me no questions about other things. Do not ask me what students should do. Do not tell me that there are no other professors and no buildings, asking me where else you can carry on your studies. Your home is your university. If you become respectful and truthful, your home is your university. If, however, you compare the home with these temples[2], you will fall. If you have fallen in love with the latter, you are lost. Can our homes be compared with these temples? There is some little similarity [between homes and university buildings] in England, but in our country we do not have even that much. Here, the buildings have been set up wholly with plundered money. He who is not free cannot even pray to God in peace. You can regain your

[1] At the special session of the Congress held at Calcutta in September, 1920

[2] Gandhiji here pointed to the University buildings.

physical, mental and spiritual freedom this very day. Anyone who acquires the confidence that, after leaving the University if he merely takes to repeating the magic name of Narayana[1], or Rama's name, even that would be valuable education; anyone who acquires this confidence will have secured all the three kinds of freedom. If I can breathe such a spirit into the students in the country, I can raise from among them an army for winning swaraj. I tell you, so long as the influence of this Empire reaches the University directly or indirectly, you have no choice but to leave it. If, however, you have no confidence in yourselves, remain where you are.

I feel uneasy because 200 students here have taken a pledge to leave the University. I am not uneasy over the pledge; I am uneasy lest they lack confidence in themselves. If you believe that Gandhi is a magician, that when he is here, he will set up a college, you are mistaken. If this is how you feel, I would tell you that not to embark on a thing in the first instance is a sign of wisdom. If you leave the University without giving thought to this, I would be a sinner. What I am asking you to do is to leave the University and go to your homes. Save yourselves from this fire. If you have confidence in yourselves, you will be able to raise a university this very day. But, as Pandit Jawaharlal has advised, and as Mahomed Ali advised in Aligarh, leave without making conditions. Leave it, by all means, if you really wish to; otherwise, return to it. If, however, you are likely to think of returning after leaving it, you had better not leave. If we do not do our duty, our country will not remain our country. Remember what I have been telling you—what I have been saying to appeal to the ancient culture and holiness in you. I tell you once more that if you have the slightest hesitation, listen to Malaviyaji. He has worn out his life in setting up this University. Leave, however, if your conscience tells you, as clearly as you see the object before you, that it is a sin to remain here. "When the son has arrived at the age of 16, he should be treated as a friend"—that is what our shastras say and, since you are above 16, I have a right to tell you what I have told you. I have given this very counsel to my sons and I have done them no harm. I pray, in conclusion, may Kashivishvanath[2] make you pure, may He give you fortitude, give you strength for *tapashcharya* and whatever else you may need.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-12-1920

[1] One of the names of Vishnu

[2] The deity in the famous Hindu temple at Banaras

11. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BANARAS[1]

November 26, 1920

You will please forgive me that I am not able to stand while speaking. A few days ago Maulana Azad[2], along with some of us, came here and we spoke to you. We are here again on the samemission. Our intention was specially to address the students, but the love you show us has been such that we could not but come here. What we have to tell you is that our government is a *rakshasi*[3] government. Our duty is either to mend it or to end it. Our condition is extremely bad. So far we have only talked. Now it is the duty of all of us, men and women, to act. What is it that we can do? If you do not consider this Government a *rakshasi* government we can give you no proof of it. We on our part consider it so evil that we must either destroy it or purify it. If it does not repent, if it does not do justice to the Punjab, if it does not act justly over the Khilafat, we cannot stand by it. How can we mend it? Our Congress, our Muslim League, our Sikh League have all suggested the way in which we can mend it. This is the way of non-co-operation, or peaceful severing of relations. That is, that we should neither seek help from the Government nor offer it any help. How can we part company with it? First we should renounce titles. For us now to hold titles is a sin. Next we should give up the courts. The dispensing of justice should lie in our own hands. The courts strengthen the roots of the Government. Lawyers should give up their practice. If it is possible for them they should, after giving up legal practice, serve the country. Even if they cannot serve the country the giving up of legal practice would be by itself sufficient service. They should take up other trades. Parents should withdraw their children from schools and universities. Boys who have reached the age of 16 should be treated as friends and advised to withdraw. They should be told not to continue their studies in these institutions. They should be told to go to school at institutions where they can remain free. We should not go for education to a place where the Government's flag flies.

The Congress has also said that we should not go into the

[1] The meeting was held on the Town Hall grounds under the presidentship of Bhagwandas. Among those present were Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru, Abul Kalam Azad and C. R. Das.

[2] Abul Kalam Azad (1889-1958); Congress leader and scholar of Koranic theology; twice president of the Congress; Education Minister, Government of India

[3] Satanic

Councils. The election to the Councils will take place on the 30th. It is the day when we shall be tested. First we should persuade the candidates to withdraw. If they do not give in, it will be the duty of voters to remain at home and not to cast their votes. We should go on pleading with the candidates till the night of the 29th. We should fall at their feet and beseech them not to stand for the Councils. If they do not come round but persist in going into the Councils it will be your duty to refuse all help and do no work for them. Again, soldiering is a sin. You should not get recruited as soldiers, but it is your duty to become soldiers of freedom.

The next question is that of swadeshi. We should use only such cloth as is produced here. Our mothers should take the spinning-wheel into their homes. We should get cloth woven by our weavers and wear only that. I tell all my brothers and sisters of India: Swadeshi is your duty. Wear khaddar. Non-co-operation consists in doing all this. Do not draw the sword. Sheathe it. The sword will only cut our own throats. The unity between Hindus and Muslims should not be the unity of lips; it should be the unity of hearts. If such were the case we should be able to establish swaraj in a year. It lies in your hands to solve the Punjab and the Khilafat problems. So many of you are gathered here. With great humility I ask you: What have you done? Have you withdrawn your boys from schools and colleges? If your boy is grown up have you made him aware of his duty? Have you given him your blessing in this matter? If you have not done this, why are you gathered here? It is the duty of boys to leave schools and to convince their elders. Have you decided not to vote? Have you taken the swadeshi vow? These questions concern everyone. Government recruitment should stop. We should take our litigation to our elders and seek justice. This will put an end to the "prestige" of the Government. The Government will at the same time realize that its hundred thousand whites can no longer rule over three hundred million people. So long the Government has carried on its rule over us by making us quarrel among ourselves, by offering us enticements and by giving and taking help. "As the ruler so the ruled" is an old saying. A truer saying would be: "As the ruled so the ruler." If we set to work with a clear heart, if we surrender ourselves to God with a pure feeling, if we make genuine sacrifices, such as have been mentioned, we shall gain swaraj at once. This swaraj is *Ramarajya*[1]

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 27-11-1920

[1] Rama's rule, traditionally regarded as the ideal political order

12. LETTER TO DR. MUHAMMAD IQBAL

[Before *November 27, 1920*][1]

DEAR DR. IQBAL[2],

The Muslim National University[3] calls you. If you could but take charge of it, I am sure that it will prosper under your cultured leadership. Hakimji Ajmal Khan[4] and Dr. Ansari[5] and of course the Ali Bro[ther]s desire it. I wish you could see your way to respond. Your expenses on a scale suited to the new awakening can be easily guaranteed. Please reply Allahabad,[6] care Pundit Nehru.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 7361a

13. LETTER TO HAKIM AJMAL KHAN

[Before *November 27,* 1920][7]

DEAR HAKIMJI,

What is this quarrel about a *masjid* near Peepul Mahadev[8]. Is it not capable of being settled? I have written Dr. Iqbal about Aligadh. I suggest your writing also.

From a photostat: S.N. 7361a

[1] The addressee's reply (S.N. 7330) dated November 29, 1920, says that Gandhiji's letter was received two days earlier.

[2] 1873-1938; renowned Muslim poet; took his Ph. D. from Cambridge and Munich Universities; nationalist leader during the twenties; one of the representatives at the Second and Third Round Table Conferences, 1931-32

[3] At Aligarh

[4] 1865-1927; eminent Muslim physician and politician who took a leading part in the Khilafat movement; president, Indian National Congress, 1921-2

[5] Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari (1880-1936); a nationalist Muslim leader; president, Indian Muslim League, 1920; president, Indian National Congress, 1927-8

[6] Gandhiji reached Allahabad on November 28, 1920, and stayed there for four days.

[7] The reference to the letter written to Dr. Iqbal suggests that this letter was written presumably on the same day as the preceding letter.

[8] Hindu temple of Siva

14. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, BANARAS[1]

November 27, 1920

What I see here today reminds me of what I saw at Aligarh.[2] All that I had to say to students I said at Aligarh. I was conscious of my responsibility. I was aware that the University at Aligarh is older than this University. I was also aware of the great love Muslim students have for that University. I was further aware of the greatness of the Muslim founder[3] of that University. Nevertheless I said without fear what I had to say. My heart wept at what I was doing. My heart weeps also when I see you and behold these huge buildings. Today, in fact, it weeps the more because the life and soul of this University is my revered brother, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. I do nothing with which he is not associated. Ever since I returned to India I have been wishing that I may spend all my life with him. I have no such association with the Aligarh University. Who the life and soul of that University may be I have no idea. It is not a small thing for me to stand here and say something of which my revered brother may be proud. My religion—which is also his religion—teaches me to sacrifice the most cherished of my possessions for what I consider my dharma. That is what I am doing today. I want to tell you that there is a sharp difference of opinion between me and my revered brother, and yet this has not diminished even in the least the reverence I have for him. I earnestly entreat you that even if you accept my views you should not let it affect the respect you have for Malaviyaji.

If you do not consider it a sin or irreligion to accept the gift of education you should never leave. I cannot take even the gift of gold from the hands of one who is wicked. I consider it sinful to take education where his flag flies. I consider it sinful to study even the *Gita* and the crafts there. To tell you the truth I do not wish even to live under such a regime. If it were possible to renounce it altogether I would have done so. But that would render my stay here impossible and if I were to go away I would not be able to give you my message. I therefore stay on. I consider this the regime of Ravana. Tulsidas has called it a sin to live under such a

[1] On the previous day, Gandhiji had addressed the students outside the University Campus, but Malaviya insisted on his addressing them in the University Hall and he himself presided over this meeting.

[2] *Vide* "Reply to a Critic, Aligarh", 12-10-1920.

[3] Sir Sayad Ahmed Khan

regime. I can positively say that all the twenty-four hours I am taken up with the idea of destroying it or mending it. That is why I am here. I say to the students that their duty consists in not co-operating with this regime. You must do what it is possible for you to do. The main thing for you is to refuse the education that is offered to you. I do not speak of co-operation in general. I ask you to give up the specific co-operation with which you as students are concerned. If you feel the same way about this Government as I do, then you should consider it your dharma to leave. This dharma involves no conditions as to the kind of education you may then get. I merely tell you your dharma. To everyone I say: whether or no education is available elsewhere, you should leave. You can try for a similar sort of education elsewhere if you are so inclined but it should not be under the aegis of the Government. I want to say that it is not a question of livelihood; it is a question of humanity. The question of livelihood may come next. Freedom is dharma. The body comes after dharma. Dharma cannot be sacrificed for the body, while the body may be sacrificed for dharma. We have no freedom of any kind—whether economic or intellectual or spiritual. We have no spiritual freedom because Muslims are being pushed away from the dictates of their religion. They are being enticed away with the argument that there is nothing wrong in doing so. Religious sentiment is being stifled; so there is no spiritual freedom. Tens of millions here have neither food nor clothing; so economic freedom is impossible. Under the circumstances we should give up the little gains we enjoy. We are offered many temptations. Advantages are dangled before us. There are a number of facilities in this University. There is instruction in engineering and various other facilities. For the good of India these things must be sacrificed. If we fall for every little benefit that comes our way this Government will go on for ever.

Hinduism teaches non-co-operation. Some people think that we should take up the sword. But everyone is now convinced that we do not have the power of the sword. Non-co-operation is the only method which will either bring freedom or purge the regime of its evils. I am convinced that Malaviyaji is doing what he is doing because he considers it dharma. A difference of opinion cannot take away from the affection we have for each other. Our friendship cannot weaken and I am sure that your respect for him will not diminish either. Please do not be carried away into believing that you have more intelligence than he has or that you enjoy a greater degree

of patriotism. It is impossible for everyone to think alike. If all men and women of India thought alike freedom could be secured in a day. History shows that freedom can only be had after much suffering. It would be false to think that we can achieve freedom without having to put up with suffering. I entreat you not to give up humility and civilized ways. If you like my views, do not show hatred or malice towards those students who are not with you in this or persecute them in any way. If you are particularly careful of dharma, seek and obtain Malaviyaji's blessings before you leave the University. Those who do not serve the country after they leave here, those who become selfish and develop addictions will cause me much grief. Sin will attach to me as well as to them. It is my prayer to you that whatever you wish to do you should do after full reflection. If you must take counsel from someone, if your heart cannot decide for you, you should accept Malaviyaji's advice. You should give precedence to his views. But if your heart is clear on the point, you can take to non-co-operation considering it your dharma. Do not rely wholly either on my advice or his. My revered brother will surely give you his blessings and will not detain you even for a moment.

Now I want to tell you why in the scheme of non-co-operation I have included sacrifice from students. It is my firm conviction that the main reason why the present regime goes on and continues to perpetrate the atrocities that it does, is that we have come under the spell of its education. Before its intrusion we were self-reliant and not dependent as we are today. The present system of education has rendered us more dependent. But I am not concerned at the moment with the system of education. My argument is not that it has faults. My revered brother also agrees that there are faults which should be removed. I do not ask anyone to leave on account of these faults. I do not also say in what way the present system should be changed. For I consider it a sin to take education under the aegis of a regime which I consider *rakshasi* and which has committed such outrages in the Punjab. If you agree with me you should renounce it. But if you do not consider this rule *rakshasi*, this rule which perpetrated the Punjab outrages and which has committed such treachery against Muslims and against India. . . .[1] Students should also make sacrifices. The rest of what I had to say I have said yesterday. At this sacred spot and inthe presence of my revered brother, I will say this: whoever leaves

[1] Here some words are missing in the source.

will be doing a great thing. It is here that freedom lies. Do not leave civilized ways, do not hate anyone. Be prepared to put up with suffering when you go out. I wish also to tell you that I can make no alternative arrangements for you. If it were possible for me to remain here with you it would not be difficult to make some arrangement. But I do not wish to offer you any temptations. I only wish to say: on going out do not become aggressive, do not become wilful. Self-control is your dharma. Do not give up tolerance. Do everything with a calm mind. Consult your parents' wishes. If you are determined and they do not agree, argue with them. If you think their stand right, accept it. If you do not consider it right and feel that your heart tells you the truth, accept its prompting. You can disobey them with humility. This is what Hindu dharma says. This is a testing time for you. Adorn your non-co-operation with humility; do not be wilful. Do not violate your pledge. Remember two things: first, that non-co-operation teaches humility; and secondly, that it calls for great self-sacrifice. In our degraded state we have become impotent, dependent. We think of our bread. It is difficult to arrange for everything. If you are prepared to make sacrifices, then leave; otherwise don't. I pray to God to grant you purity of thought and strength. Listen only to the voice of your heart. I shall be going away tomorrow. Those who wish to participate in non-co-operation and have been thinking of doing so for many days should have a talk with their teachers. They should also have a talk with my brother, Malaviyaji. Those who have given their names in writing should remain firm in their resolve; others that may wish to join should give their names.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 30-11-1920

15. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BANARAS[1]

November 27, 1920

Mr. Gandhi . . . explained how mandatory the protection of cows was from the point of view of Hinduism and said non-co-operation alone could help them to attain swaraj by which they could protect cows. He then said that the use of swadeshi-made articles and the boycott of foreign-made goods was essential to their national and

[1] The meeting was held near Ramghat under the presidentship of Anandshankar B. Dhruva, Vice-chancellor of Banaras Hindu University.

material progress and enjoined the trading classes not to trade in them. He appealed to them to consider the country's grave situation carefully and decide what best means should be used to take our administration in our own hands. Dealing with Hindu-Muslim unity, he said that love between these two important communities was the only way to improve the nation.

The Leader, 29-11-1920

16. TO WOMEN

I started begging for money at Dakor and, fortunately, I made a beginning with women.[1] Among them, the sister who first gave me a piece of jewellery made a living by grinding flour for others. When she took off her earring and handed it over to me, that same moment I was convinced that India's women had understood the holy nature of peaceful non-co-operation. The experiences which followed were marvellous indeed. Girls in Ahmedabad parted with their bangles, rings and chains. In Poona, they literally showered jewellery on me. There were similar scenes in Belgaum, Dharwar and Hubli. Muslim women in Delhi, from behind their purdah, gave jewellery, currency notes and cash.

When the women in the country have woken up, who can hinder swaraj? Dharma has always been preserved through women. Nations have won their independence because women had brave men for sons. By preserving purity of character, they have kept dharma alive. There have been women who sacrificed their all and saved the people. When women, who have done all this, have become alive to the suffering of the country, how long can that suffering last?

The women among whom I see this awakening cannot be described as educated, but they have understanding. They fully understand the obligations of dharma. What the educated classes take a long time to see, the women, with their gift of intuition, have understood at a mere hint. They have not taken long to realize that swaraj means *Ramarajya*.

Everything has been put clearly before them. The nature of the [country's] suffering has been explained. They have also been toldthat the remedy for this suffering is non-co-operation, and also what non-co-operation means. They have realized their duty in

[1] A centre of pilgrimage in Gujarat. The reference is to Gandhiji's visit to it; *vide* "Speech at women's meeting, Dakor", 27-10-1920.

helping to preserve Hindu-Muslim unity, while everyone understands and remains faithful to her own religion.

If women keep up what they have so wisely begun, I am sure we can provide education for the whole country with the help of the jewellery which they can spare. The women who have offered their ornaments have done so on the understanding that they will not ask them to be replaced before we have got swaraj, but will do without them. Thus, with a little sacrifice of jewellery on women's part, we can arrange for the country's education and promote swadeshi. I hope, therefore, that they will continue the great *yajna*[1] which commenced at Dakor and that the husbands or other relatives will not restrain any of them in this sacred effort.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-11-1920

17. LETTER TO SARALADEVI CHOWDHARANI

November 28, 1920

Dipak[2] asks for being relieved from English studies for the time being. I honour the boy for it. If you do not even mentally resist I would like to let Dipak have his way. I will see to it that some day he learns English. But I assure you he will lose nothing by omitting English for the time being. Do you know that when a boy has acquired linguistic talent and has mastered the science of language it is an easy thing for him to learn a new language. Thus did Max Muller learn sixteen languages. When you have mastered the science, you have only to memorize a few hundred root words and you know your language. Do therefore please give me your willing consent. Dipak is a great and noble boy. I would not force him in the matter of learning or anything else so long as he remains busy and trains himself to think. Please tax yourself and giveme your true decision. Remember it is ever safe to trust one's children's teachers. Take all the precautions you like about your choice; but having made it leave the training to the teacher.

I had a nice time in Benares.[3] What the outcome will be I do not know. The atmosphere is certainly clear and Malaviyaji is calmer if not entirely calm.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Sacrifice

[2] Sarladevi's son. He was studying in the Ashram School, Sabarmati.

[3] Gandhiji was in Banaras on November 25, 26 and 27.

18. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

November 28, 1920

. . . I spent two full days[1] in Kashi[2]. It was a good experience. I had no apprehension of there being any bitterness with Panditji[3] Others may have had some, but that too must have vanished. There were long discussions with students. As for the result, let us wait and see. There is no limit to the weakness in the country. It is this non-co-operation which will make it strong.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

19. LETTER TO DIPAK CHOWDHARI

November 28, 1920

Henceforth, I shall write to you in Gujarati. I got your letter. I have written to Mother for her opinion on whether or not you should now give up English. If you become studious, no harm will follow your giving up English. Think of all the three—your body, your mind and your soul. For the body—exercise, recreation, good food and cheerfulness. For the mind—reading and thinking. For the soul—inward purity and, for cultivating this, early rising, absorption in prayers with one-pointed attention and reading of the *Gita*. Repeat this to yourself every day: 'I will always speak truth, will think and act truth, will love everyone, learn to control all my senses and never look with greedy eyes on anything belonging to someone else. I will look upon nothing as mine but offer up everything to God.' Such meditation will purify the heart.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

[1] November 26 and 27

[2] Another name of Banaras

[3] Madan Mohan Malaviya

20. LETTER TO HARKISHEN LAL

November 28, 1920

MY DEAR HARKISHEN LAL,[1]

Your letter has followed me in my travels. If you prove a true prophet the blame will be partly yours also.[2] You may not sit still and let the roots of violence sprout and say: 'Behold what I said has proved true.' But whether you prove a true prophet or false, non-co-operation has to go on, till it stops by the weight of its own violence. Therefore you are expected to strain every nerve to falsify your prophecy.

The demand regarding Khilafat is: Restore to Turkey what was hers at the time of the War with completest safeguards for the self-determination of Arabs and the Armenians. Regarding the Punjab, full reparation in accordance with the demands of the Punjab. This should be followed by complete swaraj in accordance with the wishes of only chosen leaders of the people. You will see this suggestion in my letter[3] to every Englishman.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

21. SPEECH ON NON-CO-OPERATION, ALLAHABAD[4]

November 28, 1920

Mahatma Gandhi, who was given a great ovation, in the course of his speech in Hindustani, emphasized at the outset that it was a time for action and not for speeches and meetings. He characterized the Government as Satanic and said that it was like the Government of Ravana's[5]. It had wronged the Mohammedans and was responsible for the atrocities of the Punjab. It had been deceiving the Indians so long and it was not yet penitent and rather asked them to forget the wrongs it had done them. If they did not realize all that he had nothing to say to them, but as soon as

[1] Business magnate and nationalist leader of the Punjab who opposed Gandhiji's non-co-operation programme and later became a Minister in the Punjab Government under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms

[2] Harkishen Lal had prophesied that Gandhiji's non-co-operation programme would fail.

[3] *Vide* "To every Englishman in India", 27-10-1920.

[4] Delivered at a public meeting held under the presidentship of Motilal Nehru. Among those present were Colonel Wedgwood, Abul Kalam Azad and Shaukat Ali.

[5] In the *Ramayana*, the demon-king of Lanka

they realized the real situation, non-co-operation was the only alternative.

Mahatmaji then emphasized the great necessity for unity. If they all united they could make it impossible for the Government to flout their opinion in the manner it had so far done. Once united they could right the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and obtain swaraj. It was only by their help that the Government was ruling India. It was, however, painful to see that the Hindus and the Mohammedans did not yet repose full faith in each other, but the speaker asked them if they had any faith in the Government. No Hindu, however dark-hearted, could place Islam in danger. They had to destroy or to correct the present Government and to attain that they must unite. In order to non-co-operate with the Government, they must co-operate among themselves. The Government was also trying to divide them. It was their old game and it was only by that means that they were ruling India. If the Hindus and Mohammedans were united today no power in the world could put them down. They had realized that they could not gain swaraj by the sword, for in the emasculated position in which the Indians were today, the idea of an open battle was out of question, as it would prove fatal to the interests of the country. The Government was trying to put down their national aspirations by using all the means at its power by playing one party against the other, and by open threats. In dealing with such a Government it was impossible for them to hope to defeat it by worldly force; neither should they meet violence by violence. To punish the Satan they should not employ Satanic means. After an experience of 30 years he was able to say that cruelty and deceit could not be destroyed only by becoming cruel and deceitful. Just as light disperses darkness they could disperse falsehood by truth and evil forcesby soul-force. Besides, the Government was very strong [*sic*] in using violence and it was wrong for the people morally to combat its forces by violence; it was, therefore, with due consideration that the Congress had placed the programme of non-violent non-co-operation before them.[1]

Coming to the boycott of schools and colleges, Mahatmaji asked the parents whether they were not convinced that it was their duty at this time to take out their children from the Government-aided schools, and said they should not come to such a meeting if they had not, and if they came at all they should express their disagreement with the programme; otherwise if they went out silently it showed that they agreed to it, and should withdraw their children from schools and colleges. If their boys were of

[1] Here *The Leader*, 1-12-1920, adds: "The Government would try to create disunion among them—the moderates were being duped—but they must remain true to their faith. They should boycott the Councils, the polling-booths, and schools and colleges. The 30th of November was come, but they should not use their franchise; at the same time they should not persecute those who thought otherwise and wished to vote. Those who sat in the Councils should be told that they did not represent the people. But the voters also who abstained from voting should not then expect the members of the Councils to do anything for them."

mature age they should induce them to come out and if they did not come out, they should be left to their fate.[1]

After emphasising the need of swadeshi, Mahatmaji appealed for funds for starting a National College in Allahabad.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-12-1920

22. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, ALLAHABAD

November 29, 1920

Mahatmaji appealed to the ladies not to neglect to do their part in the country's struggle for freedom. He urged them to exhort and encourage their husbands and sons to pursue the path of duty, and urged them to help vigorously and effectively in the building up of a free India by taking up swadeshi. In the days of Ravana's government even Sita Devi had to wear for fourteen years the rough garment made from the bark of the tree. Even so, today, when the adoption of swadeshi meant a long step in the path of freedom for India, the Indian ladies should make it a matter of religious duty with them not only to wear only khaddar clothes both hand-spun and hand-woven, they must also devote one hour at least daily to hand-spinning and help in the hand-weaving of cloths. The women of India owed it as a duty to their country to discard fineries in clothes and to be simple in their dress.

In swadeshi there is an effective way to swaraj and redress of the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs and vindication of the national honour. The main burden of the task of propagating swadeshi lay on the women of India and they must rise to the occasion.[2]

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-12-1920

23. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, ALLAHABAD

November 29, 1920

Mahatma Gandhi . . . said that the U.P.[3] being the centre of Hindustan was expected to lead the rest of India; but in fact there was nothing so far to give the U.P. any prominence above Gujarat. He expected, however, that in the long run the former

[1] Here *The Leader*, 1-12-1920, adds: "Mr. Gandhi then insisted on the use of swadeshi as the most powerful weapon against the bureaucracy. If they would save the 60 crores of rupees which were being spent in buying British goods, they would command the services of the 57 members of Parliament from Lancashire. If they determined to use only swadeshi goods they would get swaraj. But that could only be possible when they acquired simple habits. They should no longer put on muslin. Only khaddar should be used."

[2] After the speech many ladies gave their jewellery as a gift in the national cause and evinced great enthusiasm about taking the swadeshi vow.

[3] United Provinces, now known as Uttar Pradesh

would take its right place in the present struggle and related the example of Jhansi where Hindu and Mohammedan students had taken oaths on the Gita and the Koran that they would withdraw from the Government-controlled institutions

Coming to the question of Hindu-Muslim unity, Mahatmaji regretted that the Government had successfully played its game in the U.P. by dividing the two communities and thus emasculating both. He reminded both of their religious books and asked them to sink their differences. At this juncture he referred to a wire which he had received from Lucknow where there was some controversy over a municipal resolution regarding the sacrifice of cows and also to the allegation that he had emptied the Aligarh College but did not do so in the case of the Benares University and said that all this showed that they were still wanting in mutual confidence and goodwill. He did not know how to deal with such questions. He wanted to empty the Hindu University as well as the Aligarh College and carried his message to these places. It was a question of personal duty and those only were more successful who came to the forefront, whether it be Aligarh or Benares or any other institution. It wasa sign of their weakness if in performing an obligation of this nature they looked forward to others to lead.

Addressing the Hindus, the Mahatmaji said there was no cause for them to suspect that the Ali Brothers would deceive them, having expressly said that they were Mohammedans first and everything else afterwards. They had pledged themselves to fight against the whole world for the freedom of India. Suspicion of that sort showed a lack of self-reliance. It was said that the Ali Brothers were pan-Islamists. If to sympathize with Mohammedans in other parts of the world was pan-Islamism for a Mohammedan, then the Hindus were also pan-Hinduists, as the feeling of sympathy for co-religionists was a natural feeling and common to all nations. He appealed to them therefore to be manly and give up these suspicions which were fit only for cowards. It was time that they should all unite and take up the country's cause in right earnest but even if there was no response from the people in general he with 4 or 5 others that had taken up the cause would continue the struggle to the end. (Loud cheers.)

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-12-1920

24. SPEECH AT STUDENTS, MEETING, ALLAHABAD[1]

November 30, 1920

I was extremely pained to hear this.[2] Here in Allahabad, too, a number of students had gone and seen my friend Jawaharlal, who told

[1] The meeting was held at Anand Bhavan and addressed also by Abul Kalam Azad and Shaukat Ali. This speech is taken from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour.

[2] Many students in Jhansi who, after Gandhiji's visit there, had taken oaths on the *Gita* or the Koran to leave schools and colleges had returned to their institutions two or three days later.

them plainly that they should leave their schools and colleges only if they thought that it was their dharma to do so and not in the hope that we might be able to make some other arrangements for them. These students had agreed to accept any arrangement. Shri Jawaharlal also secured a building for them, but it has been lying vacant for the past one week. I cannot describe to you how much I have been pained to hear all this. These incidents, I feel, are plainly a sign of our slavery. Anyone who violates a pledge once taken becomes a beast, a coward. Lord Willingdon[1] telling me of his experience in Bombay, where he had spent only a few days after his arrival from England,said that, since his coming here, he had not come across a single Hindu or Muslim who had had the courage to say "No". The charge is true even today. We have "No" in the heart but we cannot say so. We look at the other man's face to know whether he wants "Yes" or "No" and say what we think he would like us to say. Here, in this building, I could not make a little girl of three or four do my bidding. I asked her to sit on my lap, but she said "No". I asked her if she would wear khadi. She said "No". We do not have the strength which even this little girl has. A great saint has said that, if we would go to heaven, we should be like little children. To be like little children is to have their innocence and their courage. Edwin Arnold has described a child's innocence very well. A child catches hold of a scorpion, even a snake, puts its hand in the fire; it does not know what it is to feel fear. Cultivate such fearlessness. You give way to fear because you have lost faith in God.

I often feel impatient and tell myself that I should either make the country free or run away from it. Freedom merely means that, unafraid of anyone, we should be able to speak and act as we feel. He is a boy with true courage who can stand up against millions and say what he thinks. The first lesson, therefore, which you should learn is to be able to say "No". I would much rather that you did not take a pledge; to violate one after taking it is, I should say, a great crime. You may have received the best education and obtained the highest degree, but I would certainly ask you, if you are men who would not mind violating a pledge, why you should not drown yourselves in the Yamuna. Perhaps you will say in self-defence that, following the dictates of your heart, you may have acted in one way but that you are

[1] Freeman Freeman-Thomas, First Marquis of Willingdon (1866-1941); Governor of Bombay, 1913-19, of Madras, 1919-24; Governor-General of Canada 1926-31; Viceroy and Governor-General of India, 1931-36

free later, for the same reason, to act in a different way. My reply to this is that you should not, in that case, have taken a pledge. The shastras enjoin you to give up your life for the sake of a pledge once taken. We had among us men who honoured this injunction, Harishchandra[1] and Rohidas[2] who served with a *Bhangi*[3] Will you forget that we are the descendants of these great heroes of dharma? To be sure, if you have taken a pledge to commit adultery or to tell lies, you should certainly violate it, for by doing so a man raises himself. A pledge of renunciation must never be violated. If a Hindu has taken a pledge not to eat beef or a Muslim not to drink liquor or eat pork, it behoves him to refuse the thing even if, when he is ill, maybe almost dying, doctors advise him to take a little of the forbidden article. A man like this who has remained faithful to his pledge at the cost of his life, it is only such a man, when he leaves this world, that God will greet as a young lion.

All religions in the world are thus strict in regard to pledges. If you have taken a pledge to tell the truth, you may not speak untruth for saving a whole town or an individual. I must speak out how the violation of pledges has pained me. I can understand an old, enfeebled man violating a pledge. Being an old man myself, I might commit an error. But you are young and sturdy, you have fresh blood flowing in your veins; how can I forgive you? Even at the risk of a digression, I cannot restrain myself from narrating an experience of mine. Two years ago, in Ahmedabad, under a tree on the banks of the Sabarmati, thousands of workers took a pledge, with God as witness, that they would not return to work till their demand had been conceded. They held out for 20 days and then I felt that they were on the point of yielding. And so I told them that, if they yielded, I too would go without food and lay down my life. They need not have taken the pledge, I told them, but I could not bear their going back on a pledge once taken. The workers started crying they fell at my feet. “We will hire our labour,” they said, “and earn our livelihood, but will not return to work,” and tried to persuade me to give up my

[1] Legendary king of Ayodhya who left his wife, son, kingdom and wealth for the sake of truth. Finally, after undergoing countless sufferings, he, his family and his subjects were raised to heavenly bliss.

[2] Harishchandra’s son

[3] A low-caste Hindu doing sanitary duties

resolve. I had, thus, to go on a fast so that they might be saved from falling. Surely, you will not be more undisciplined than the workers were, will not have less faith in God than they had. Stop being the slave of any man and accept slavery under God. If you wish to see the end of this regime, you will have to shake off slavery. Your not taking a pledge will not prevent our getting swaraj, but your betraying an oath once taken will certainly retard it. Muslims will not be able to serve the cause of their community with the help of such students who go back on their pledges. I entreat you, therefore, not to take an oath; if you do take one, do not go back on it even if the earth should sink into the bottomless pit. Even if only a few among you take the pledge, we shall have swaraj through them. Muslim students have before them the example of Imam Hasan[1] and Husain. Islam has not been kept alive by the sword, but by the many great fakirs with a high sense of honour whom it has produced. You will not make the country free by becoming M.A.s, or enrolling yourselves as volunteers in *seva samitis*[2] or by cultivating the strength to go and speak in the Congress, as you will by learning to respect your pledge and carrying it out.

* * *

There is no difference between this regime and *Ravanarajya*[3]; if at all, Ravana may have had some compassion in his heart, and a little less duplicity. In fact, he said to Mandodari[4]: "I, a man with ten heads—do you think I cannot meet Rama in battle? You have gone crazy. I know that he is an incarnation of God. I also know that I have become so wicked that it might not be a bad thing at all to be killed by God." This Empire does not even think that God may possibly destroy it. It takes no account of God. Its God is its pride, its wealth and its deceit. European civilization is steeped in Satanism, but the British Empire is steeped deepest in it. Hitherto. I used to believe that it was the least wicked, but I am convinced now that there is no other

[1] Grandchildren of Prophet Mohammed. Hasan was killed in Medina after he abdicated the Caliphate, and Husain was slain on the tenth of Mahurram, October 10, 680 A.D., a day still observed by Shia Muslims as a day of mourning.

[2] Associations for rendering voluntary social service

[3] Ravana's rule, the opposite of *Ramarajya*

[4] Ravana's wife

Government which thinks less about God than this one does. I do not wish to serve such an Empire. It is impossible for me to live under it a moment longer.[1]

If you have any doubt about what I am saying, if you don't think the Government is as bad as I think it is, by all means stay in your schools. If, however, you agree with me, even your learning the *Gita* in its schools will serve no purpose. If a Government which holds us down as slaves sets up palatial buildings for us and teaches us the *Gita*, medicine and engineering in those schools, should we agree to learn them? My reply is "No", because there is poison in all this education, because it is intended to strengthen our slavery. In this fight, we have dharma on our side, the Government has *adharma*. A Government which, though recognizing the crimes of an official like Michael O'Dwyer[2] defends him, though realizing the wickedness of Dyer[3] treats it merely as a grave error of judgment—how can we accept any service from such a Government and have any relation with it? To have any relation with it is to become more of beasts, more of slaves.

Please don't ask me what I would do for you. I am not asking you to shake off Government's slavery to be slaves to me afterwards. If what you want is to be my slaves, I have nothing to do with you. If you do not have the strength to feel that you will manage to make a living anyhow, that you will do some work, no matter what, and maintain your parents, most certainly do not leave your school or college. It is our duty to make some arrangements for you and we will certainly do the best we can. The atmosphere in the country is so vicious that perhaps teachers and professors even think me mad and we shall not get their help. I do not want any help from such persons. If, however, you do not get the services of any teachers or professors, become your own professors and stand on your own feet. if you are thinking of coming out in the hope of being able to stand with

[1] Here *The Leader?* 2-12-1920, adds: "It was *haram* to read even *Gita* Or Koran in their schools. He believed that Mr. Lloyd George and Lord Chelmsford were both deceiving them. They could set aside the Turkish Treaty if they wished. But they would not. They knew in their heart of hearts that O'Dwyer and Dyer were both culprits, but they would not punish them. Surely he could not co-operate with such a Government."

[2] Sir Michael O'Dwyer; Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, 1913-19

[3] General Dyer, who ordered the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar in April 1919

Motilal's strength or Shaukat Ali's or mine, remain standing where you are.

* * *

From where are we to get Prahlads[1] in this age, [you will ask].

There have been Prahlads even in this age.[2]

* * *

I have nothing to give you in the way of excitement. The excitement of the education you will get should suffice you.[3] I want to give you quiet courage. I want you to have hearts pure enough for self-sacrifice, for *tapashcharya*.

* * *

The truth is that parents do not prevent their children from leaving schools; the latter themselves ate not ready to leave schools even if the parents ask them to do so. I questioned a hundred or a hundred and fifty boys in the Hindu University. They told me that they had the permission of their parents, nay, their parents were even ready to bear their expenses. Be that as it may. Let others say what they like; leave Government schools and colleges only if your conscience tells you that it is a sin to study in them any longer. If you have the slightest doubt, follow Malaviyaji's advice. I returned to India only five years ago; Malaviyaji has dedicated his entire life to the service of the country. I tell you, therefore, if my voice is not the same as the voice of your conscience, listen to Malaviyaji. If it is the same, do not listen even to him.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-12-1920

[1] Prahlad was 3 devotee of God persecuted by his unbelieving father.

[2] Gandhiji then mentioned the instance of Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of the Arya Samaj.

[3] These remarks were in reply to a suggestion from someone in the audience that, since Gandhiji had argued that their struggle was a war, he should give them something in the way of "excitement" to enable them to fight.

25. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Wednesday [*November, 1920*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I did not feel that your letter was too long. I understand what you say about Ba[2]. I am sure my impression was not altogether wrong. Being carried away by emotion, even for a moment, is not right. But where is the time to go into this matter?

You will have to take more milk. You may have rice but very little of it. It contains no nourishment at all. As for fruits, if grape is dear, you can have raisins instead. These and oranges will be all right. If you don't have appendicitis, there must be some other trouble. You must be careful and get over it.

It seems certain now that we shall not be arrested for the present. A national school is being organized here too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 7178

26. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[*November, 1920*][3]

CHI. DEVDAS,

You will find two letters here. I wrote one of them while in the car. I tore open the envelope and now send it along with this. See that you make your body quite strong. Let your life be studious. Be perfectly regular in meals. Take more milk. Pick up Urdu without delay. Do not miss the morning prayers any day.

With blessings,

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 7177

[1] The Government's intention not to arrest Gandhiji first became known in early November, 1920; Gandhiji may have had more definite information about this during the last week of November when he was in North India. On November 24, he inaugurated the New Prajakiya Islamic Madrassa in Delhi and, on December 1, the Tilak Vidyalaya at Allahabad. The last sentence in the text probably refers to one of these two institutions. This letter, therefore, was presumably written in the last week of November.

[2] Kasturba, Gandhiji's wife

[3] From the contents it appears that the letter was written shortly after the preceding item which is evidently the letter referred to as having been written in the car.

27. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Monday [*November, 1920*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have just read your letter. I certainly like your staying there. Anything done after careful thought always yields fruit. Undoubtedly *The French Revolution* is worth reading. Read it by all means. If Behn Vasumati goes over there, you will be a support to her. That is why she wanted you to be there. I certainly wish that you should pick up Urdu and learn spinning and carding, and do this very well. As days pass all these things become more difficult. You may take this to be true [about] your handwriting too. Your . . . [2] Hope to arrive.

My discontent will remain.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 7664

28. NOTES

ZAFAR ALI KHAN'S TREATMENT

I promised to inquire of Maulana Zafar Ali Khan's son about the accuracy of the statement he made to me regarding the treatment of his father in the Lahore jail pending trial. I have now heard from him and he has no hesitation in calling the local Government *communique* 'a lie'. He says that the information he gave me was absolutely correct, that Maulana Zafar Ali Khan was kept in a dark room, and that he was not permitted to receive food from outside. The son however adds that, after the public declaration made at the Lahore meeting, his father was removed to better quarters and permitted to receive food from outside. This does not improve Government's case but rather makes it worse. Their having corrected the illegality after it was made public betrays a guilty conscience. They knew that they were in the wrong, but had expected that this gross ill-treatment of an under trial prisoner would pass unnoticed. There is another possible and charitable explanation. It may be that the higher authorities knew nothing of the illegality, that it was the act of an under-official without

[1] This letter seems to have been written at about the same time as the preceding item, in which also Gandhiji advises Devdas to pick up Urdu.

[2] Some words are missing here.

the knowledge of the higher authorities, and that they have themselves been duped by the guilty official. But if that is so, it is a further proof of the state of corruption that is rampant in the present administration. I hope that Government will cause further inquiries to be made. I have no desire to heap discredit upon it where none is deserved. But till the matter is cleared up, the public will be entitled to believe the statement reaffirmed by the son of Maulana Zafar Ali Khan.

THE DUKE'S VISIT

His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught[1] will be soon in our midst. It is a matter of great sorrow to me that I should have to advise a complete boycott of all public functions held in his honour. He is personally an amiable English gentleman. But in my humble opinion, public interest demands that this official visit should be strictly ignored. His Royal Highness comes to sustain a corrupt system of government, he comes to whitewash an irresponsible bureaucracy, he comes to make us forget the unforgettable, he comes not to heal the wounds inflicted upon us but to mock us by flinging deceptive reforms[2] at us. To welcome His Royal Highness is to associate with him in promoting our own dishonour. No government official, whether he be European or Indian, has a right to claim any welcome or honour from us so long as the Government, whose power he represents, remains unrepentant and unresponsive to the one thing needful.

STORM IN A TEA CUP

Apropos of this I am tempted to notice *The Leader*'s fling at Mr. Mahomed Ali inasmuch as he accepted the invitation to tea of a District Magistrate. It is not often that I am able to read newspaper paragraphs. But I happened to read *The Leader* of the 25th November. It certainly grieved me. *The Leader* has a reputation for being bright, pungent, and sarcastic, but never for hitting below the belt. The paragraph about Maulana Mahomed Ali appears to me to be below par. The Non-co-operation Resolution boycotts official functions. It does not boycott private interviews at a tea-table between an official and a public man. Where *The Leader* sees an inconsistency, I see a gentlemanly act on the part of Maulana Mahomed Ali. It is a demonstration of the fact that this movement is neither based on hatred nor is it aimed at Englishmen personally. It seeks merely to destroy a system which even the best of Englishmen cannot make

[1] Uncle of King George V. He arrived in India on January 10, 1921

[2] The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms as embodied in the Government of India Act, 1919; the Duke came to India to inaugurate the Reformed Constitution.

tolerable. It aims at purification, not at vindictive or punitive destruction. In my opinion, Mr. Mahomed Ali would haste failed in his duty as a public worker, if he had rejected the District Magistrate's invitation to have tea with him and have a chat. It would have been a different thing if a public function was held by the District Magistrate in order to sustain or enhance his prestige.

BAD TASTE

In similar bad taste is, in my humble opinion, the attack delivered by *The Leader* on Pandit Motilal Nehru regarding his telegram about the action of the Punjab Government in having prohibited a contemplated Home Rule League gathering. Pandit Motilal Nehru is reported to have said that the prohibition should be respected because civil disobedience was "undesirable". Instead of noticing the admirable self-restraint underlying the telegram, *The Leader* has chosen to laugh at Pandit Motilalji for having resorted to expedience. If the Pandit had advised civil disobedience, if the Government had been violent and the people had retorted, *The Leader* would have been rightly wrathful. I do expect *The Leader* to be just even to opponents. The goal of non-co-operation is the attainment of swaraj by purification of public life, and generating public opinion by non-violent, i.e., courteous or civil means. I admit that non-co-operationists have not as a body yet enforced civility in their own practice. But the tendency is undoubtedly in that direction. Now for the merits of the advice of the Pandit. Old words are receiving new values. Expedience has a bad odour. But it is not a bad word in itself. *Civil* disobedience is lawful but it is not desirable or expedient so long as the nation has not acquired full self-control and so long as it has not learnt the necessity of obeying just laws of its own free, will and apart from the fear of punishment prescribed by them. Suspension of payment of taxes is lawful, but it is inexpedient so long as the nation as a whole has not imbibed the lesson of non-violence in its fullness. In other words non-violence is not a mere adjunct of non-co-operation. It is its integral and principal part. Its fiercer and more potent forms may not be adopted till it can be said, with a fair measure of certainty, that the nation has realized the situation and can stand restraint, imprisonment and worse with an unperturbed mind.

Young India, 1-12-1920

29. ADVICE

The following anonymous advice has been received by me:

Mahatma,

Listen to a woman's advice. Reject it, but ponder over it well before you reject, and pray to the All-wise fervently for wisdom and inspiration. Concentration is strength, diversion is weakness. Limit your scope of non-co-operation to only three things: foreign goods, the police service and the army. Thereby you will remove all internal differences and strengthen our cause and speed swaraj. Confine your efforts chiefly, not wholly, to the border tribes, the Sikhs, the Punjabis, the Dogras, and especially the Gurkhas. Work through secret societies as history teaches, and not by flourish of trumpets. Do not threaten but strike, and strike at the root and not at the branches. May God speed you and our cause to success.

Mrs. F.

The letter is undated. It is evidently not a women's letter. It is too unwomanly to be a woman's letter. The women of India are infinitely braver than the letter would make them out to be. The writer writes about God but is possessed with the fear of the British bayonet, and would therefore gladly make use of the Sikh and the Gurkha steel. He has ill-digested the gospel of non-co-operation. In his fear someness, he does not see that to exchange British brute force for any other brute force is no real remedy for the ills of India. And if it is the steel that is to decide the issue, it must be not Sikh or Gurkha steel, it must be all-India steel. That is the one supreme lesson that Europe teaches. If it is brute force that is to rule, then the millions of India must learn the art of war, or must for ever remain prostrate at the feet of him who wields the sword, whether he is *pardeshi*[1] *or swadeshi*[2]. The millions must remain 'dumb, driven cattle'. Non-co-operation is an attempt to awaken the masses to a sense of their dignity and power. This can only be by enabling them to realize that they need not fear brute force if they would but know the soul within.

The Dogras, the Sikhs, the Gurkhas, and the other martial races of India, we do want, not for the purpose of giving battle to the British soldier, but for the purpose of refraining from helping the British soldier to subjugate us. We want our military classes to realize thatthey only perpetuate their own and our slavery by wielding the sword at the dictation of a British officer. And that time will come when the school

[1] A foreigner
[2] A compatriot

the writer represents has become defunct, and when the military classes have also understood the necessity of non-violence.

The writer makes me suspicious about himself when he asks us to concentrate our attention on foreign goods, the police, and the army. He would thus secure internal unity by waiving all sacrifice, i.e., purification by the very classes who have hitherto led public opinion—whereas the whole battle of non-co-operation rages round these very classes. It may, for the time being, appear to have struck a discordant note, but, in fact, it will achieve real unity after the process of purification is over.

The writer has moreover missed the grand result already achieved by the absolute openness of our battle. In my opinion, the public has never expressed itself so fearlessly and openly as at present. It has almost lost the fear of the highly artificial law of sedition. When the writer talks of secret societies, he seems to talk of a bygone age. You cannot raise this great nation to its full height by the unclean methods of secrecy. We must, by boldly carrying on our campaign in the light of the blazing sun of openness, disarm the secret and demoralizing police department. Non-co-operation is nothing if it does not strike at the root. And you strike at the root when you cease to water this deadly tree of the British Government by means of open and honourable non-co-operation. The writer takes the name of God in vain, when he advocates in the same breath the secret ways of Satan.

Young India, 1-12-1920

30. HOOLIGANISM

The columns of *Young India* are open to all who have any grievance against non-co-operators. 'One who knows' has sent to the Editor a letter which I gladly publish.[1] He has in a covering letter giving his name pleaded for the publication of his letter. Such pleading was unnecessary in connection with a matter of public importance. If the facts related by the correspondent are true, they reflect no credit on the young men of Dharwad. The correspondent has connected the incident with non-co-operation. It is the fashion nowadays to connect every incident of indecent behaviour with

[1] In this letter, not reproduced here, the correspondent had referred to a charity show for Indians organized in Dharwad by a sympathetic European lady. The original idea of a play by Indian schoolgirls had been changed at the guardians' instance into a programme of singing and recitations. During and after the entertainment a mob of young men, instigated, the correspondent alleged, by non-co-operationists, had stoned the organizers and guests.

non-co-operation. I wish that the incident had been brought to my notice when I was at Dharwad. I would then have been able to, investigate the matter and deal with it then. I may state that stones were thrown at a meeting of Dharwad students that was held by me in the open. One boy narrowly escaped being seriously hurt. And it was a pleasure to watch the audience remaining unmoved in spite of the stone-throwing. I was told too that stone-throwing at meetings was not an unusual occurrence at Dharwad in connection with the non-Brahmin movement. I state this fact only to show that Dharwad enjoys the unenviable reputation for stone-throwing in a special manner. I must therefore decline to connect the incident either with non-co-operation or with any anti-European movement. Though the correspondent's letter is obscure on the point, it is evident from what he says that resentment was felt at the idea of girls taking part in a drama. The correspondent says that the drama was dropped "in the nick of time at the desire of the guardians". There must have been persistence to provoke resentment.

But my position is clear. No amount of provocation could possibly justify the hooliganism of the "mob of young men'. They had no right to prevent the performance that was at last determined upon, if the guardians of the girls did not mind it. The truest test of democracy is in the ability of anyone to act as he likes, so long as he does not injure the life or property of anyone else. It is impossible to control public morals by hooliganism. Public opinion alone can keep a society pure and healthy. If the young men of Dharwad did not like a public exhibition of Dharwad girls on the stage, they should have held public meetings and otherwise enlisted public opinion in their favour. The movement of non-co-operation is intended to check all such abuses. Non-co-operationists are undoubtedly expected, not only to refrain from taking part in such violent scenes as are represented to have taken place at Dharwad, but they are expected also to prevent them on the part of others. The success of non-co-operation depends upon the ability of non-co-operationists to control all forces of violence. All may not take part in the programme of self-sacrifice but all must recognize the necessity of non-violence in word and deed.

I am surprised that the correspondent in his covering letter speaks of the hooliganism at Dharwad in the same breath as the massacre of Jallianwala Bagh. He loses all sense of proportion when he compares the cold-blooded and calculated butchery of innocent men, who had given no provocation, with the undisciplined and thoughtless demonstration of a "mob of young men", who were

labouring under a fancied or real wrong. Both acts are worthy of condemnation. But there is as much difference between the programme of the Dharwad boys and the Dyerism at Amritsar as there is between an attempt at simple hurt and a completed murder.

Young India, 1-12-1920

31. SPEECH AT OPENING OF TILAK VIDYALAYA, ALLAHABAD[1]

December 1, 1920

Mr. Gandhi, in declaring the school open, said he was very glad to perform the ceremony. He heard from Mr. Shyam Lal Nehru that the school would be called Tilak Vidyalaya instead of National High School. No man made so much self-sacrifice for swaraj as Mr. Tilak[2] and it was in the fitness of things that it should be named after the great patriot. If college students came they would open a college also. The school would take up the teaching of subjects which were taught in other schools. He then announced the names of the members of the executive committee of the school, which consisted of Pandit Motilal Nehru, president, and Messrs Jawahar Lal Nehru, Mohan Lal Nehru, Shyam Lal Nehru and Gauri Shankar Misra, members. Continuing, he said there were 15 teachers, some possessing degrees, and he thought that they were all men of good character. If the teachers were good, the school would prosper. Those who promised to serve in the school must forget other things. In some schools teachers used to do outside work besides their school work. That should not be the case there. The teachers in the National School must concentrate their attention on school work. The students would not get any furniture in the school. The Government had taught them the bad habit of using furniture, but they must be prepared to use asanas[3] only. They must show that they were superior to the boys of the other schools by their learning and character. They would not get any comforts in that institution. If necessity arose, the students must study under the trees in the open air, and, in his opinion the old tradition of India insisted upon that point. In ancient times, when the rainy season arrived the students used to work on farms. He was glad to find that typewriting, shorthand and spinning and weaving also found a place in the school course. Boys would have to learn both the scripts, Urdu and Devanagari. It

[1] This national high school was housed in the office of the Swaraj Sabha. The executive committee of the school had decided to conduct it on the lines laid down by Gandhiji.

[2] Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920); great Indian political leader, scholar and writer, popularly known as 'Lokamanya'; one of the founders of the Deccan Education Society, Poona, and the newspapers the *Kesari* and *The Mahratta;* suffered six years' deportation for his criticism of the Government; took active part in the Home Rule campaign

[3] Seats used when squatting on the floor

was good from the point of view of swaraj and Hindu Muslim unity that they should do so. Both Hindus and Mohammedans would learn much from a study of both the scripts. His friend Mr. Shaukat Ali told him that Urdu possessed the most virile literature among the vernaculars of India and he agreed with him on that point; Urdu possessed more strength than either Bengali or Gujarati, because the maulvis who wrote in Urdu drew inspiration from Arabic and not from a foreign language. They never translated any books from the English language. He thought that by studying the Urdu script boys would be able to read the works of Saadi and other Persian poets.

Addressing the students particularly, he said that they took one step towards swaraj that day. He exhorted them to make non-violent non-co-operation successful by their conduct.

The Leader, 3-12-1920

32. SPEECH AT PHULWARI SHARIF[1]

December 2, 1920

Mahatma Gandhi. . . addressing the meeting in Hindi, first begged the audience to allow him to speak in a sitting posture as he was too weak to stand. He was glad that he had the occasion to pay his respects to the Pir Sahib and notice the vast gathering of Hindus and Mussulmans. He expected that the Hindu and Mussulmans of the place would do their duty to their God and country. He was going to save Islam from the proposed destruction. It was the duty of everyone—be he a Hindu or Mussulman—to help him. It was better to die while helping him. He wanted first reparation for the atrocities committed in the Punjab and then swaraj so that such things might not be repeated. Hindus and Mohammedans were two sons of the same mother and they should feel as one. They must be peaceful, they could not succeed by violence. Our swords must not be drawn out of their scabbards. Everything must be strictly non-violent. We could reform the Government only by severing all our connection from it. The respected bodies, like the Congress and Muslim League had been giving out their verdict. Here the speaker enumerated the various parts of the programme. They wanted to give up the use of foreign goods. They should use swadeshi articles. Our mothers and sisters should be provided with charkha. They should not care if they were coarse or dear. It was very fortunate that Pir Sahib was helping them and showing people that that was the way open to them. A national Madrassa was being started there and he had been asked to open it. It was said that there were only a handful of boys but it did not matter. The speaker said that he did not propose to place any other scheme, similar to or better than the present systemof education, for the boys, but he wanted to teach them manliness and to rely on God and themselves. The national schools would teach them that it was not the Government

[1] A village in Bihar. This speech was made at a public meeting attended among others by Abul Kalam Azad, Shaukat Ali and Rajendra Prasad.

that provided them with the necessities of life but it was God. Then and then alone could people demand swaraj.[1]

The Searchlight, 5-12-1920

33. SPEECH AT PATNA

December 2, 1920

Mahatma Gandhi addressed the audience sitting on a chair. He said that he wanted to save Islam, to secure justice for the Punjab, and a guarantee against the repetition of future wrongs in the shape of slavery. They could achieve it only by means of non-co-operation. But this made it necessary that they should co-operate among themselves. He regretted that they did not do so, and, whenever they were engaged in any work of organization, he found that they showed temper and could not brook differences. But he wanted them to remember that if they were to save Islam and win swaraj they must co-operate among themselves. From Bettiah he had heard the sad story that their own brethren (though they were in the police) had applied a kind of martial law.[2] When martial law was applied in the Punjab the Viceroy had framed some rules for its regulation but no such thing was done in Bettiah. He would admit that the application was not so severe in Bettiah as in the Punjabi but martial law was introduced in miniature in the villages affected. The police had done, without the orders of the Government, severe injustice and were reported to have committed outrages on their mothers and sisters. He did not know whether what was published in the papers was true but, assuming that to be correct and the witnesses who had given the information as reliable, he found that properties had been looted and women insulted and maltreated and all this against the orders of the Government.

So long as they acted in that manner, they would be slaves and could neither win swaraj nor save Khilafat. Of course they would not go to the courts for that was a profanation, and even if they did so that would not get them a bit of freedom except sending the policemen to jails. Their aim was to end the present system of administration, but so long as that was not done what was he to say to those who had learnt tyranny from a tyrannous Government. Their principal duty was achievement of complete unity. If they could do that today they should get swaraj in a day. Proceeding, Mahatma Gandhi said Bihar was to be congratulated on the fact that few people had voted in the elections.[3] People who cared even slightly for liberty had

[1] After the meeting, the party motored to the Qaumi Madrassa (national school) which Gandhiji declared open. The source adds: "There Mr. Gandhi addressed a number of *purdahnashin* ladies, assembled on the adjoining balcony. He requested them to take to spinning and weaving cloth and to use that for themselves and their husbands and children. They should give up the fine made foreign goods. He requested them to teach men simplicity and make them firm."

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Bettiah", December 8, 1920.

[3] For the Legislative Council

given up the idea of going to the Councils. Some went to the Councils but without the authority of the bulk of the voters and yet persisted in calling themselves representatives. The speaker referred to a letter that had been handed over to him by the Hindus at Phulwari Sharif where he had gone to meet the revered Maulana Badaruddin Saheb. The letter said that their relations with their Mussulman brethren of the place were not quite cordial and that their Durga Puja[1] had been interfered with. Though Bihar was noted for Hindu-Muslim unity he could not help feeling, when such complaints reached his notice, that trouble was lurking. He had not forgotten the Shahabad riots nor the fact that the aggressors on that occasion were Hindus. He would tell them that they should settle such differences among themselves and that, if they aimed at reforming and purifying the administration, they must in first place purify themselves.

The second thing that he wanted to emphasize before them was the essentially non-violent character of non-co-operation. They would have to keep their swords in their sheaths and learn the completest self-control. They did not want to hurt the policemen who had committed outrages even on women in Champaran. In fact, if he met them he would intercede with them and tell them that it was not their work to do as they had done. He wanted to conquer by means of truth. It was always wrong to abuse or hurt an Indian; and it was impudent as well. He did not want to give anyone an occasion to raise his hand against him, for he hated violence.

He then appealed for funds. For a month he had been begging for money. He wanted them to pay what they could. He did not want millions from the millionaires but a rupee or pice each from the 30 crores of our people. On Mussulmans the obligation was double, for they had to pay to that fund and also for the sufferings of the sufferers in Smyrna and for the Aligarh National Muslim University. He assured them that the money would be spent neither on Congress work nor on anything else but purely in connection with non-co-operation, for opening of schools, and, in short, for the attainment of swaraj. He would form a committee to administer the funds and accounts would be published regularly in the papers. Also, the money raised in Bihar would be spent wholly in Bihar. He was sorry that he had to beg for money for he realized that many of them who had done that before were not true and had at times cheated them of their money in the name of the Congress. He appealed to them to realize the conditions precedent to their success. Unless theHindus and the Mussulmans lived like brothers, unless they acted in co-operation, unless they controlled their temper and were prepared to make sacrifices and unless they acted up to the direction of the Congress and the League[2], which was merely a preparation for freedom, they could not free themselves from the domination of the Satanic Government. Boycott of Councils did not involve sacrifice but was a means of purification and he prayed that their souls be purified.

The Searchlight, 5-12-1920

[1] Religious ceremony in connection with the worship of the goddess Durga
[2] All-India Muslim League

34. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, PATNA[1]

December 3, 1920

Mahatma Gandhi addressing the boys said that he was told by Maulana Shaukat Ali that the Hindi language was so very poor that he could not impress the audience to the extent he wanted. He enquired whether the students wanted him to address them in English. But they were all for hearing him in Hindustani. He began his speech in Hindi. He explained what he meant by Hindustani. He said that the dialect spoken by the Biharis was the language which could become the national language of India. Much as he would prefer Devanagari to become the national script, he would request every Indian to learn both Persian and Devanagari scripts, so long as their Muslim brethren did not accept the latter. Referring to the duties of the students, he said that every student should empty the Government schools and colleges or those which had any concern with the Government. Proceeding, he explained how the British Government cheated both the Hindus and Mussulmans and had forfeited the right of co-operation. He compared the present system of administration with *Ravanarajya* and remarked that the latter also had some good points in the sense that there existed *sanyam*[2], *yajna,* etc. But all this was done with a bad motive; so no good could be expected out of that. While Lok[amanya] Tilak was alive the speaker thought that in his condemnations of the British Government there was some amount of exaggeration, but after his death, Jallianwala Bagh[3], the Turkish Peace Treaty and such other incidents had compelled him to agree with the Lokamanya. But all the same he could not see his way to accept Mr. Tilak's axiom, "Tit for tat". . . . He did not like to deal with Satan in a Satanic way. To him it seemed necessary that Satan should be conquered with the help of God, i.e., by purity of heartand purpose. God defeated Satan by his godly means alone. The present Government could not be of any help to India since it was Satanic. The speaker said without any fear that this Government should be either removed or reformed. And that could not be done either by giving or receiving any help from the Government. Continuing, he said that he would not study the *Gita* from Ravana, even if he sent a *rishi*[4] for it, as there was some poison lying hidden in it.

To him it seemed that there was something even in the education provided by Pandit Malaviya in his Benares University. The Government of India was trying to cajole him. But the organizer of the Hindu University did not realize that the motive of the Government was not honest. The master of the slaves could never teach liberty.

[1] The meeting was held in Mazharul Haq's compound, under the presidentship of Rajendra Prasad.

[2] Self-restraint

[3] The reference is to the massacre at this spot ordered by General Dyer on April 13, 1919; *vide* "Congress report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.

[4] Sage

Even in prescribing works of Mill, Macaulay and others who breathe the air of freedom and liberty, there existed some ill motive. It was not their—the Government's—duty. If the speaker pretended to teach the holy Koran to the Mohammedan boys or Maulana Kalam[1] to teach the *Gita* to the Hindu boys, there was treachery in that. He could read the *Gita* from Babu Rajendra Prasad[2]. Mohammedan boys could learn the Koran from the maulanas. For him salvation did not lie in the Koran but in the *Gita*. The *Gita* was the best book for him. He could not leave that. His parents attained heaven by that and they taught him to read and revere the *Gita*. He admitted no religion higher than his and the day he would think so he would change his religion. Continuing, Mahatmaji said that he would not go to the slaves to learn lessons on liberty. The Arabs, Pathans and Egyptians could teach liberty. The Arab boys refused the temptation put before them in the shape of civilization, education or government appointments. He could not ask his lessons from Lord Sinha but from Shaukat Ali who had declared himself free. Sir Edward Gait[3] a good man. The speaker knew him well. He admitted that Sir Edward was the best of all the governors. But if he met him, he would tell him that the Government whose servant he was was bad. Liberty could not be received from him. Mr. Andrews was an Englishman, he advised them to attain swaraj without the British Government. To the speaker it seemed that Mr. Andrews was going too far; he was ready to have the Britishers as their servants or countrymen. He had no objection to cooperate with any man of any religion, caste or creed, if he was true to the Indians. His was a movement of non-co-operation. He wanted to see the Union Jack removed from whole of India. As long as that was not possible he would remove it from individual buildings and boycott those houses where the Union Jack was flying. He advised people to boycott Government functions. The Government institutions were like a house on fire to him. The students should keep away from them. Indians could not boycott everything all of a sudden, as for a very long time they had been in the bondage of slavery. Even the food that they took had some connection with the Government, as that was produced in Government-owned lands. But people should nowhere intentionally co-operate with the Government. Gradually they could free themselves from everything. There was a rush of more people who were standing outside and the speaker at once began to speak on the value of time. He said that he could not understand how the young men who were so earnest and just beginning their lives could be so unpunctual. He told the audience how the late Mr. Gokhale[4] valued time. When Mr. Gokhale started the Servants of India Society he used to have the doors closed before he would speak. Just after two minutes of the announced time when the gate was closed he did not even

[1] Abul Kalam Azad

[2] 1884-1963; statesman and scholar; Chairman, Constituent Assembly of India, 1946-9; first President of India

[3] Lieutenant-Governor of Bihar and Orissa during the period of Satyagraha in Champaran in 1917

[4] Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915); educationist and politician; president of the Congress, 1905; founder of Servants of India Society

allow Sir Tata[1], who was his chief support, to enter the hall. Reverting to his subject he said that somebody had told him that Mr. Hassan Imam[2] was ready to wreck his movement in a week. But when he met him the latter said that it was not so; rather, Mr. Imam was with him as far as non-co-operation was concerned and was ready to render every help required. But Mr. Hassan Imam could not understand what was meant by non-violence. If that word be removed, he would gladly join the movement. He exhorted the audience to sever their connection only if they realized that the Government was Satanic. He would gladly attend on the sick-bed of Lord Chelmsford[3] if the latter accepted that. He would try his best for his recovery rather than to poison him. But if Lord Chelmsford offered crores even for his Ashram he would refuse that. He was informed that the college students had been allowed to volunteer their services to the Nagpur Congress but it was only a concession to pacify them, which might be withdrawn at a most crucial hour. When the time would come many Col. Johnsons[4] might arise and make young boys of 6 or 7 years to walk 16 miles or more in the hot sun of June in order only to salute the Union Jack.

Addressing the guardians he requested them to make the boys independent. They would have to pay the fees even in the National Colleges but would be saved the insult of saluting the Union Jack. The authorities of the Hindu University and the Aligarh College thought that they were giving true education but it was not so. There the professors could not teach that the Government of India was Satanic and the boys should try to do away with it. Could they prevent Sir H. Butler[5] from inspecting their colleges? Could the students dare not to salute him?. If they did so that would be counted as insolence and not as liberty. If the Duke of Connaught wanted to visit his Ashram as a member of the Government he would not allow him to set foot in the Ashram. Of course he would have no objection in his visiting it as a private Englishman.

If they wanted to be free they should remove the flag of dependence. Whilst asking them to withdraw from the schools and colleges, the speaker said that although he would not give them any promise, yet he would try to provide them with national institutions. But it was sufficient for them to run away from fire. They could shun the present education.

The real education consisted in doing one's duty. Students could become

[1] Sir Ratanji Jamshedji Tata (1871-1918); Parsi industrialist and philanthropist

[2] 1871-1933; judge of Calcutta High Court; in 1916, resigned to resume legal practice in Patna High Court; presided over the special session of the Congress held at Bombay in September 1918; led the Muslim deputation to England for revision of the Treaty of Sevres with Turkey

[3] Frederic John Napier Thesiger, 1st Viscount Chelmsford (1868-1933); Viceroy of India, 1916-21

[4] Col. Johnson was in command of the Lahore Area during the Martial Law in April and May, 1919.

[5] Governor of United Provinces

engineers, doctors, agriculturists, if they had a free country. What would they do with the degree of slavery? They should take their lessons from Maulvi Haq[1] and Rajendra Babu and become free, standing on their own legs. It was slavery to think that the degrees afforded food and drink. It was not a degree but God who gave them food. They should not think what would become of their mothers and wives; they should support them by working like a coolie, rather than by serving under the Government. If they had the courage to do that they should non-co-operate, otherwise not. If everyone non-co-operated the speaker was sure that swaraj would be obtained within one year. They should not wait for the others to do it. When one suffered from cholera one would never think of taking medicine after others had taken it. There was no reason why they should wait to become free till others had obtained liberty. First they should become free themselves and then they should go to villages and teach liberty in small schools started by them. The speaker did not mean that they should disrespect their parents. They could even do that if that was the dictate of their inner soul, but not because he had said so. He himself had much reverence for his parents and he would teach obedience and not insolence. Students should most respectfully convincetheir guardians after deciding in a cooler moment. He had appealed to the guardians also so many times to withdraw their boys from schools and none objected to that. They might ask how they were to recognize the voice of their soul. He said that if they were true to God and practised *yama*[2] and *niyama*[3], they would recognize the voice of God within them.

They should patiently hear even those who did not think with them. Proceeding, he explained what the students were to do and how. The students must rely on themselves and not on him. The students of today were the leaders of tomorrow. They should not decide anything in haste. It was better for them not to withdraw if they had to go again to the schools. It was better to be drowned in the Ganges than withdraw when once they had joined it.

The Searchlight, 8-12-1920

35. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, PATNA[4]

December 3, 1920

Mahatmaji then began addressing them in Hindi, seated on a chair, on account of his ill health, for which he begged their pardon. He begged four things of them. He and Maulana Shaukat Ali, whom he considered as his own brother, had appeared

[1] Mazharul Haq (1866-1930); prominent lawyer, author and public worker of Bihar; opposed separate electorates for Muslims under Morley-Minto Reforms; helped Gandhiji in Champaran satyagraha; staunchly followed Gandhiji's non-co-operation programme of 1920-21

[2] Self-discipline

[3] Rules to regulate life

[4] This meeting was attended also by Abul Kalam Azad and Shaukat Ali

before them to beg of them some service in the cause of the Motherland. He knew that they were more humble and kindhearted than men and so he hoped not to be disappointed at the hands of their mothers and sisters.

First of all he begged of the Hindu and Mussulman ladies not to consider each other as enemies and also to teach the same to their children from boyhood so that they might not even ever think the two to be each other's enemy. By this he did not mean that the two should be one, that Hindus should take to reading and believing in the Koran, giving up the study of and belief in the Vedas and Shastras; nor that the Mussulmans should discard the Koran and begin studying and believing in the Hindu Shastras and Vedas. Every one of them should remain firm to their religion. As there could be no marriage between a brother and a sister but all the same they could love each other, so Hindus and Mussulmans also should have love and respect for each other.

His second *bhiksha*[1] was that every woman should take to spinning yarn on the charkha. Those who wanted to sell that yarn might do so, but those who did not want to sell that should give it away as charity to others because of all the charities the charity of cloth was the best. India became poorer all the more from the time this charkha was given up. Women, who formerly used to live upon the charkha, were now leading a very miserable life in the bondage of slavery, breaking bricks and stones and being abused by overseers. He had come across many women in Champaran who had got only one sari to cover their body with and hence they could not go for a bath in the Ganges when they wanted to do so. Their life of freedom, when they used to have clothes made of the yarn spun by their own hands, was no more.

The third *bhiksha* which he begged of them was that they should not allow their sons and brothers to remain in a school owned and aided by the Government as that only meant fettering oneself with the chain of dependence and slavery. They did not receive any social or religious instruction in such institutions. They learnt only to drink wine, to visit theatres and to lead the life of a vagabond. Proceeding, he said that co-operation with a government, so unjust, so treacherous to our Mussulman brethren, so cruel to our mothers and sisters in the Punjab, was absolutely impossible. How could they ever like to remain under such an administration? There could be no cooperation between Satan and God. Likewise they also could not help the Government, nor take any kind of help from it. That raj was no better than the *Ravanarajya*. He wanted to establish *Ramarajya*. In other words he wanted to have full, complete swaraj and that could not be achieved without non-co-operation.

His fourth *bhiksha* was for money. India, he said, was very badly in need of money. There were three crores of people here who barely got one meal a day. They had not got sufficient money to buy a charkha or cotton. They should be supplied with both so that they might spin yarn and thus once again spread swadeshi cloth in the country. Then again, for boys national universities must be started. And for those money was very badly needed. Proceeding, he remarked that it pained him much to see

[1] The thing begged

that many had gone to the meeting with plenty of valuable ornaments on their bodies. In that very country there were so many who actually starved while there were others who had got plenty to spare for their ornaments, etc. He begged of them to give as much money as they could and also those ornaments which they desired.[1] But they must remember that in place of the ornaments which they would give away, they should not get others made until India had won full swaraj.

The Searchlight, 8-12-1920

36. LETTER TO SARALADEVI CHOWDHARANI

December 4, 1920

. . . I shall not deliberately omit to write to you. But you must cultivate patience and trust. You may not accuse me of sainthood and dignify yourself by adopting the role of a sinner. Each one of us must recognize [his/her] own limitations. Among lovers and friends there is neither sinner nor saint. We are all equal, but there are wise and unwise men and women among equals. And who knows who is wiser? You must let me delude myself into the belief that I am wiser than you and therefore fit to teach you and train you. But it has not unoften happened that the learner becomes the teacher. Gorakh became the teacher of Machhander. And in trying to teach you, may God give me the wisdom to learn from you. Believe me, I will not grudge you the post. Indeed I shall count my teaching the most perfect if I can make you superior to me. Anyway that is the belief that keeps me attached to you. And therefore it is that I ever pray for a humble and contrite heart for you.

With love.

Yours,

L[AW] G[IVER]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

37. LETTER TO GOODFELLOW

December 4, 1920

MY DEAR MR. GOODFELLOW,

I was thankful for your letter. Has it struck you that this Government of ours is deliberately increasing the drink evil and that

[1] In response to this appeal, many of the women present there gave away articles of personal jewellery.

all effort at amelioration must be fruitless until this Government is either destroyed or radically mended? I should be glad to meet you when I am in Calcutta for any length of time.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

38. LETTER TO HYDERI

ON WAY TO ARRAH[2],
December 4, 1920

MY DEAR FRIEND,

We have just left Bankipore. Mazharul Haq is with us. I write this to say that Mrs. Haq gave me last night at a ladies' meeting[3] my call for donations her choicest four bangles made of pearls and rubies. Will you please tender my congratulations to Mrs. Hyderi on possessing a sister who gives away her choicest things for the country and her faith? I was simply overwhelmed with joy when she produced the bangles and thanked God that He had brought me in touch with the Tyabji family[4].

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

39. SPEECH AT ARRAH

December 4, 1920

Mahatma Gandhi addressed the audience seated on a chair. He said that he rejoiced extremely to see such a huge gathering of the Arrah people before him but at the same time it pained him to find that they were unable to hold the meeting in an orderly fashion.[5] He added that the noise was so great that he had to lose half an hour of his time in asking the people to keep quiet, and asked if they could not discipline and control themselves, how could they hope to obtain swaraj in a year? That was, he said, the first essential for obtaining swaraj. Proceeding, Mahatmaji said that he had not forgotten the Shahabad riots that took place a few years ago, nor the fact that

[1] Gandhiji was in Calcutta on December 13 and 14.

[2] Town in Bihar

[3] Held at Patna

[4] Mrs. Mazharul Haq and Mrs. Hyderi came from the Tayabji family.

[5] It was the largest meeting ever held at Arrah, and the volunteers on duty failed to control the gathering.

both the Hindus and Mussulmans were more or less to blame for it. The Hindus wanted to protect cows but the method they adopted was ill suited to the purpose so that while it brought no benefit to either party, it enabled the Government to take advantage of this situation and throw the Hindus in jails. He would like to tell them that they should settle their differences among themselves. What was wanted was Hindu-Muslim unity—not a sham unity, but a unity of heart and soul. If they wanted to protect Islam from danger, to secure justice for the Punjab wrongs and to obtain swaraj, it could be only by means of co-operation among themselves. He was asked, he said, by a sannyasi whether he believed that the Mohammedans would join with him after the Khilafat wrongs had been righted, and the Mohammedans had complained to him that he had destroyed the Aligarh College but saved the [Benares] Hindu University. He disposed of the first with saying that if the Hindus helped the Mohammedans honestly, God, who sees a man's heart, would banish ill feelings from the hearts of the latter. He repudiated the second allegation that he had saved the [Benares] Hindu University. If the Hindus were impotent, would the Mohammedans, he asked, like to be so? He entertained a very high regard for Malaviyaji but all the same he wanted to see all the students out of his University so long as it had any connection with Government. He would like all the existing institutions in the country to be converted into national ones. He referred to a private talk[1] with Mr. Hassan Imam in which the latter asked him whether the non-violent form of non-co-operation would remain non-violent, and he had been holding out for a long time. Further, Mr. Hassan Imam had complained to him that the students cried "Shame!" to him and behaved in a rude manner with him. Mahatmaji exhorted the audience to have tolerance for the views of those who happened to differ from them and not to behave with them in that way as that would not advance their cause. Mahatmaji then enumerated the various parts of the programme of non-co-operation and wanted them to give up the use of foreign goods which, he said, would alone bring swaraj. He laid great emphasis on the introduction and use of charkhas and said they should have nothing to do with a Satanic Government which was bent upon trampling their rights and liberties. He then appealed for funds and said that the obligation of the Mohammedans was double for they had to pay to the Swaraj Sabha (recently established at Bankipur) and for the relief of the sufferers in Smyrna.

The Searchlight, 8-12-1920

40. TO "VAISHNAVAS"

A true *Vaishnava* is he
  Who is moved by others' sufferings;
Who helps people in distress,
  And feels no pride for having done so.
Respectful to everyone in the world,

[1] At Patna

He speaks ill of none;
Is self-controlled in action, speech and thought—
Twice-blessed the mother who bore such a one.
He has an equal-seeing eye, and is free from all craving,
Another's wife is to him a mother;
His tongue utters no untruth,
And never his hand touches another's wealth.
Moha[1] and *maya*[2] have no power over him,
In his mind reigns abiding detachment;
He dances with rapture to Rama's name—
No centre of pilgrimage but is present in his person.
A man he is without greed and cunning,
And purged of anger and desire;
Offering reverence to such a one, says Narasainyo[3],
Will bring release to seventy-one generations of one's forbears.[4]

From the marks of a *Vaishnava* described by Narasinh Mehta we see that he is a man who

l. is ever active in bringing relief to the distressed,
2. takes no pride in doing so,
3. is respectful to all,
4. speaks ill of none,
5. is self-controlled in speech,
6. in action and
7. in thought,
8. holds all in equal regard,
9. has renounced desires,
10. is loyal to one woman, his wife,
11. is ever truthful,
12. keeps the rule of non-stealing,
13. is beyond the reach of *maya*,
14. is, in consequence, free from all desire,
15. is ever absorbed in repeating Rama's name,
16. and, as a result, has been sanctified,

[1] Primal ignorance and the attachment resulting from it

[2] Cosmic illusion

[3] Narasinh Mehta (1414-1479); saint-poet of Gujarati admired by Gandhiji for disregarding the common prejudice against the so-called untouchables

[4] This poem, which formed part of the daily prayers at the Ashram, appealed to Gandhiji as a perfect expression of his own ideal of life and seems to have had a powerful impact on him.

17. covets nothing,
18. is free from guile,
19. from the urge of desire and
20. from anger.

Here Narasinh, the best among the *Vaishnavas,* has given pride of place to non-violence. This means that a man who has no love in him is no *Vaishnava.* One who does not follow truth and has not acquired control over all his senses is not a *Vaishnava.* He teaches us in his *prabhatiyan*[1] that one does not become a *Vaishnava* simply by studying the Vedas, by following the rules of *varnashram*[2], by wearing a string of basil seeds or the *tilak*[3] mark. All these things can be the origin of sin. Even a hypocrite may wear a string of beads or put the *Tilak* mark or study the Vedas or keep repeating Rama's name with his lips. But such a one cannot follow truth in his life, cannot, without giving up his hypocrisy, help people in distress or be self-controlled in speech, action and thought.

I invite everyone's attention to these principles, since I still continue to receive letters regarding *Antyajas.* The advice I receive from one and all is that, if I do not exclude *Antyajas* from the national schools, the movement for swaraj will end in smoke. If I have even a little of the true *Vaishnava* in me, God will also vouchsafe me the strength to reject the swaraj which may be won by abandoning the *Antyajas.*

The resolution, to the effect that the *Antyajas* cannot be excluded from any place which is open to members of other classes or communities, is not mine but that of the senate[4] as a whole. I welcome the resolution. Had the senate not passed it, it would have been guilty of *adharma.*

The resolution lays down nothing new. One to the same effect is actually in operation in the existing schools. The Congress, a body which the *Vaishnavas* respect, has also passed such a resolution. They have not opposed it. I realize, however, that they honour me by

[1] Devotional songs with which the devout, getting up before dawn, commence the day

[2] The organization of society into four castes, each with a distinctive function, and the division of life into four stages

[3] Auspicious mark on the forehead, usually made with vermilion or sandal paste or saffron

[4] Of the Gujarat Vidyapith; *vide* footnote l, "Indian Princes", 1-6-1907.

criticizing me for having a hand in a resolution of this kind. The point of their argument is that others may violate dharma but that I, especially, should not do so. This is very gratifying to me.

I have been endeavouring to show that dharma requires that we do not look upon *Antyajas* as untouchables. Old veils prevent us from seeing that we are guilty of *adharma* in acting to the contrary. Just as, through such veils, British rule cannot see its own Satanism, so also, thanks to them, some of us are unable to see the chains of slavery which bind us. I think it my duty to reason with such people patiently.

But I cannot stand hypocrisy and sophistry. I saw in *Gujarati* an account of a talk I had with Maharajshri, as also the comments on it.[1] I have been very much pained by both. I seldom comment on views expressed in newspapers. In fact I scarcely read papers. But the *Gujarati is* a widely read paper and it claims to present the *sanatana* dharma[2] its true nature. Hence I am pained whenever I find in it even the least element of unfairness. A friend has sent me a cutting giving the report of my talk with Maharajshri and the criticism on it. I see in both an attempt, deliberate or otherwise, to *prove adharma* to be dharma. I shall explain next time what this is.[3]

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 5-12-1920

41. SPEECH AT GAYA

December 5, 1920

The Mahatma said that he expected their hearts to be as pure as the town of Gaya[4] was famous for purity. This being the case, they should be ready to make sacrifices. What that sacrifice would be had been said by assemblies like the Muslim League, Sikh League and others. For instance, he said that the pleaders would have to give up their practice; one of his brethren giving up practice would not do. He would earnestly request other vakil brethren to give up their practice. The Congress had resolved to boycott the law courts. He hoped that there would be some such institution where the people would go for decision of their cases. They should give up

[1] On November 17, Gandhiji had a talk with Goswami Shri Gokulnathji Maharaj, religious head of the *Vaishnavas* in Bombay. An account of this talk and the comments on it had appeared in *Gujarati*, 21-11-1920.

[2] The essentials of Hinduism regarded as unalterable, *varnashram* being one of them

[3] *Vide* "Vaishnavas and Antyajas", 12-12-1920.

[4] In Bihar; a holy city and a centre of pilgrimage for Hindus

all Government titles. Boys should be withdrawn from the schools. Boys of 16 and above should, with their folded hands, request their parents and guardians not to send them to schools managed, aided or controlled by the Government. He had learnt just now that a small percentage had exercised their votes[1] at Gaya. But now the time of their trial had come. They should not get any help from or through their councillors; otherwise exercise or non-exercise of franchise would be one and the same thing. They should work for swadeshi. They should ask their mothers and wives to spin on the charkha. People knew how to hold very big meetings; but they did not know their duty. If they did their duty and followed the above methods they would get swaraj. They should also make gifts of money. One who was not making any other sacrifice should give money. That money would be devoted to the work of swaraj, swadeshi and national schools. They had established a Swaraj Sabha at Patna of which Mr. Mazharul Haq was the president and Babu Rajendra Prasad was the secretary. The money would be spent there and they would get quarterly accounts. He knew of some men of Nagpur whom he did not know but who had collected money in his name. He requested even the leaders that they should give an account of the public money collected. He knew that in many places no such accounts had been given. (At this stage there was noise at the northern end of the platform.) Mr. Gandhi said that there was a noise there; that should not be. They should have control over their voice. They should not make noise. The volunteers should know their duty and be true to themselves. They had got to bear the opposition of a great kingdom. Even when aeroplanes were hovering over their heads, bombs were being thrown and bullets incessantly discharged on them they should remain quiet. He had also marked that the Hindus and Mohammedans had no power of forbearance among themselves. The management of this meeting could not be called satisfactory. If the volunteers could not make themselves effective swaraj could not be attained. They should learn how to do things well even if they were minors. There could be no service to the Motherland except by honesty and labour. Purity was necessary. A true heart was necessary. To sacrifice was the work of the true-hearted. They wished to save Islam from danger and get justice for the Punjab atrocities. They could not obtain them without being true to themselves.

The Searchlight, 10-12-1920

42. SPEECH AT CHAPRA[2]

December 6, 1920

Mahatma Gandhi then addressed the meeting sitting on a chair. He said that India today was faced with such a situation that he must speak to them and ask their help. He was pleased that Mr. Zakariah Hashmi and Babu Bindeshwari Prasad had given up their practice at the bar and he congratulated them on the step they had

[1] In the elections for Legislative Councils
[2] Town in Bihar

taken. He felt that it was the English-educated gentlemen that were the cause of their present sufferings. He admitted that they had done some service but the wrongs done through their instrumentality so greatly outweighed the good done that he could not take into account the latter. For 35 years the Congress had been passing resolutions and their leaders making speeches on the Congress platform but they had achieved little thereby. On the other hand they were worse off than they were 50 years back. What was the reason for this state of affairs? Indians today filled a larger proportion of the civil service than in the past and Lord Sinha was now the Governor of a Province[1] and yet why was it that he said that they were worse off than before? If they had not been today greater slaves than before, could it have been possible for the authorities to betray Islam as it had been betrayed and yet be possible for the Government to allure them with little things dangled before their eyes? Despite this betrayal, the Government said that they were not at fault. He wanted them to mark the significance of the Government attempting to delude by little doles and fine words. The Government was full of poison and that kind of self-delusion in which they allowed themselves to be indulged was possible only with slaves. It was the Punjab that had given her Pathans and Sikhs to shed their blood for the Government and it was in this province that people had been made to crawl on their bellies, whipped in streets, made to salute the Union Jack, and that women's veils had been drawn away by officials! Could all this have been possible if their bondage had not been tightened? When slaves began to like their fetters he knew that their slave nature had got confirmed. When they tried to break through their fetters they could do so, but when on the other hand they liked their bondage and felt that freedom would come by means of their slavery, he thought that the grip had been tightened on them. It was because of their slave mentality and instinct that the principle and practice of non-co-operation had to be explained to them over and over again. In the past people were not as they were now. There were few barristers and his reading of history did not show that their condition and position was worse one hundred years back. The people were more happy and prosperous and the oppression on the *kisans*[2] hardly partook of the character they witnessed today. In Champaran, a hundred years ago, while he would acknowledge the existence of *zullums*[3] on the part of the zemindars, he would not admit that the type of *zullum* practised today was ever possible during those days. The Congress and the League had therefore told them that the only way to save Islam and to secure justice for the Punjab was by means of non-violent non-co-operation. He would emphasize the non-violent character of the movement. If they drew their sword they were as likely to kill themselves with it. He desired no emancipation, no swaraj through the sword. But there were some among the Mussulmans and also among the Hindus who did not agree with him and to them he would say that they had neither the capacity nor the strength to draw the sword. They had with them the

[1] He became Governor of Bihar and Orissa towards the end of 1920

[2] Farmers

[3] Oppression

storehouse of all power and that was soul-force. The capacity to die for others, for a cause, for honour, liberty and country—the possession of it showed soul-force. Even a child could say to his parent that he would not act against his conscience, crushed and killed though he be. They could all have this strength and there could be oppression, neither by the zemindars nor the planters. The moment they resorted to violence they would fail but if they eschewed it altogether and depended absolutely on soul-force nothing could possibly crush them. The only weapon, therefore, was non-cooperation and he would ask them to withhold all co-operation with, and support to, the Government. They should neither offer nor receive any kind of help or co-operation. The present system of administration could be mended or ended. If it refused to mend itself it had to be ended. All the sacred books, the *Gita, Ramayana,* Koran and the Bible, taught that there could be no co-operation between devils and God, no friendliness between saints and Satans, no mutual help and co-operation. If they felt their Government was Satanic it was their duty to cease co-operation with it and refuse all support. The Congress and the League had urged the lawyers among them to suspend their practice, such of them as had titles to surrender them and all of them to boycott courts of law, schools and colleges, He could ask them to settle their quarrels before panchayats. [Gandhiji continued:

So far as the boycott of schools and colleges is concerned, the older students should withdraw themselves from schools and colleges and their guardians should withdraw small children even from primary schools. A student will be better off if he only breaks stones. I am not of opinion that the present system of education is altogether harmful but I am of opinion that we should not receive education at unclean hands of the Government. We cannot have even the *Gita* from Satan. It is sin to read under their management. Students should withdraw and be taken out even from the Hindu University established by the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. It is better to retreat from a burning house. I am glad to convey to you the happy news that a national school will be opened in this very compound. It is hoped that every parent will send his children there. We ought not to learn through the medium of another language even under self-government. I would urge upon the teachers and the president to appoint pious and able pundits and maulvis for imparting religious education to the Hindus and Mohammedans. In that school the students should be trained in manual labour as well and should be trained to spin and to prepare cloth. English ought to be a compulsory second language. I am confident that the parents would withdraw children from schools, primary or secondary.

We ought to boycott the Council. We should neither vote nor stand as candidates. If anybody happens to go there with your help he

will begin to think himself your representative. The voters ought not to approach a member for the redress of a wrong done.

Nobody ought to volunteer himself for the army.

It is very essential to use swadeshi goods. In my opinion even the cloths of Bombay and Ahmedabad are not purely swadeshi; for the people of Bihar we should produce all our necessaries ourselves in our own locality. In days gone by we used to do like this and were not helpless. It is sin to wear cloth coming from a foreign country like England and Japan. It would be very beneficial to produce necessary cloth. This will save lakhs of people from this grip of starvation. Cotton is very cheap. We shall be able to prepare cloth cheaply. Coarse cloth is pure and sacred.

I have said that I shall take swaraj in a year. That will be possible only when Hindus and Mussulmans have no mutual suspicions. To allow suspicion to remain lurking is a vice to which slaves are akin [*sic*]. Evil can never come out of good. God has directed that the life of truth is the path of heaven. Why should theMohammedans suspect their brethren and co-operate with the Government which is the author of the Mesopotamian trouble and which even imprisoned the Khalifa[1] at Constantinople? Be united and become brothers and there is no power on earth which can keep 30 crores of people as slaves. Can one lakh Englishmen frighten us? They do so by inducing sister communities and people of different status such as zemindars and ryots to fight among themselves. It is not proper for a peasant to fight with zemindars. It is a great mistake to quarrel with the zemindar and swaraj cannot be attained thereby. I want *Ramarajya.* But side by side I do not like that zemindars should tyrannize over the peasants. If the zemindars tyrannize over them they would be right in adopting non-co-operation with them. At present we have to non-co-operate with the Government and hence we should not think of mutual non-co-operation.

There is a dire necessity of funds. A Swaraj Sabha has been established in this province with Mr. Haq[2] as president and Babu Rajendra Prasad as secretary and treasurer. He will give an account of income and expenditure every three months. We have to open national schools. Volunteers will approach you for funds. You should

[1] The Sultan of Turkey who was also the spiritual head of Islam

[2] Mazharul Haq

help the Swaraj Sabha. In the end I pray to God that He may givesufficient strength in you to steer the country safe out of the impending danger.

The Searchlight, 10-12-1920

43. NOTES

ON THE WRONG TRACK

Lord Ronaldshay[1] has been doing me the favour of reading my booklet on Indian Home Rule which is a translation of *Hind Swaraj*[2]. His Lordship told his audience that if swaraj meant what I had described it to be in the booklet, the Bengalis would have none of it. I am sorry that the swaraj of the Congress resolution does not mean the swaraj depicted in the booklet; swaraj according to the Congress means the swaraj that the people of India want, not what the British Government may condescend to give. In so far as I can see, swaraj will be a parliament chosen by the people with the fullest power over the finance, the police, the military, the navy, the courts and the educational institutions.

I am free to confess that the swaraj I expect to gain within one year, if India responds, will be such swaraj as will make practically impossible the repetition of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs, and will enable the nation to do good or evil as it chooses, and not be 'good' at the dictation of an irresponsible, insolent, and godless bureaucracy. Under that swaraj, the nation will have the power to impose a heavy protective tariff on such foreign goods as are capable of being manufactured in India, as also the power to refuse to send a single soldier outside India for the purpose of enslaving the surrounding or remote nationalities. The swaraj that I dream of will be a possibility only when the nation is free to make its choice both of good and evil.

I adhere to all I have said in that booklet and I would certainly recommend it to the reader. Government over self is the truest swaraj. It is synonymous with *moksha* or salvation, and I have seen nothing to alter the view that doctors, lawyers and railways are no help, and are often a hindrance to the one thing worth striving after. But I know that association with a Satanic activity, such as the Government is engaged

[1] 1844-1929; diplomat and author; Governor of Bengal, 1917-22

[2] Written by Gandhiji originally in Gujarati in 1909; *vide* "Hind Swaraj", 22-11-1909.

in, makes even an effort for such freedom a practical impossibility. I cannot tender allegiance to God and Satan at the same time.

The surest sign of the Satanic nature of the present system is that even a nobleman of the type of Lord Ronaldshay is obliged to put us on a wrong track. He will not deal with the one thing needed. Why is he silent about the Punjab? Why does he evade the Khilafat? Can ointments soothe a patient who is suffering from corroding consumption? Does his Lordship not see that it is not the inadequacy of the reforms that has set India aflame but that it is the infliction of the two wrongs and the wicked attempt to make us forget them? Does he not see that a complete change of heart is required before reconciliation?

But it has become the fashion nowadays to ascribe hatred to non-co-operationism. And I regret to find that even Colonel Wedgwood[1] fallen into the trap. I make bold to say that the only way to remove hatred is to give it disciplined vent. No man can —I cannot—perform the impossible task of removing hatred so long as contempt and despise for the feelings of India are sedulously nursed. It is a mockery to ask India not to hate when in the same breath India's most sacred feelings are contemptuously brushed aside. India feels weak and helpless and so expresses her helplessness by hating the tyrant who despises her and makes her crawl on the belly, lifts the veils of her innocent women and compels her tender children to acknowledge his power by saluting his flag four times a day. The gospel of non-co-operation addresses itself to the task of making the people strong and self-reliant. It is an attempt to transform hatred into pity.

A strong and self-reliant India will cease to hate Bosworth Smiths and Frank Johnsons, for she will have the power to punish them and therefore the power also to pity and forgive them.[2] Today she can neither punish nor forgive, and therefore helplessly nurses hatred. If the Mussulmans were strong, they would not hate the English but would fight and wrest from them the dearest possessions of Islam. I know that the Ali Brothers who live only for the honour and prestige of Islam and are prepared any moment to die for it, will

[1] British Labour leader and member of Parliament who visited India in December 1920 and attended the Nagpur session of the Congress

[2] During the martial law in the Punjab in April and May, 1919, Bosworth Smith, the Joint Deputy Commissioner at Gujranwala, and Colonel Johnson, the commander of the Lahore area, inflicted barbarities on the public; *vide* "Congress report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.

today make friends with the hated[1] Englishmen, if they were to do justice to the Khilafat, which it is in their power to do.

I am positively certain that there is no personal element in this fight. Both the Hindus and the Mohammedans would today invoke blessings on the English if they would but give proof positive of their goodness, faithfulness, and loyalty to India. Non-co-operation then is a godsend; it will purify and strengthen India; and a strong India will be a strength to the world, as an India, weak and helpless, is a curse to mankind. Indian soldiers have involuntarily helped to destroy Turkey[2] and are now destroying the flower of the great Arabian nation. I cannot recall a single campaign in which the Indian soldier has been employed by the British Government for the good of mankind. And yet (Oh! the shame of it!) Indian Maharajas are never tired of priding themselves on the loyal help they have rendered the English! Could degradation sink any lower?

Young India, 8-12-1920

44. SOCIAL BOYCOTT

A correspondent writes from Hyderabad, Sind, a letter[3] regarding boycott which I gladly publish. He refers to what is alleged to have happened to Mr. Khaparde[4]. Hyderabad, Sind, is a far cry from Amraoti. I do not know that Mr. Khaparde has been put to all the inconveniences that the correspondent relates. Mr. Khaparde is well able to take care of himself. I hope, however, that there is much exaggeration in the information supplied to the correspondent about the treatment.

Nevertheless, the issue raised by the correspondent is important and serious. It would be a dangerous thing if, for differences of opinion, we were to proclaim social boycotts.

It would be totally opposed to the doctrine of non-violence to

[1] "latter" in the original

[2] In World War I

[3] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had complained that Khaparde had been boycotted by his panchayat and his servant denied the use of the panchayat well, as he differed on some points from the Congress non-co-operation programme, and that this boycott had been justified by some non-co-operationists.

[4] Ganesh Krishna Khaparde (1854-1938); lawyer, orator and public worker of Amraoti; member of the Council of State under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. He did not favour Gandhiji's non-co-operation programme.

stop the supply of water and food. This battle of non-co-operation is a programme of propaganda by reducing profession to practice, not one of compelling others to yield obedience by violence, direct or indirect. We must try patiently to convert our opponents. If we wish to evolve the spirit of democracy out of slavery, we must be scrupulously exact in our dealings with opponents. We may not replace the slavery of the Government by that of the non-co-operationists. We must concede to our opponents the freedom we claim for ourselves and for which we are fighting. The stoutest co-operationist will bend to the stern realities of practice if there is real response from the people.

But there is a non-violent boycott which we shall be bound to practise if we are to make any impression. We must not compromise with what we believe to be an untruth, whether it resides in a white skin or a brown. Such boycott is political boycott. We may not receive favours from the new Councillors[1]. The voters, if they are true to their pledge, will be bound to refrain from making use of the services of those whom they have declined to regard as their representatives. They must ratify their verdict by complete abstention from any encouragement of the so-called representatives.

The public will be bound, if they are non-co-operationists, to refrain from giving these representatives any prestige by attending their political functions or parties.

I can conceive the possibility of non-violent social ostracism under certain extreme conditions, when a defiant minority refuses to bend to the majority, not out of any regard for principle but from sheer defiance or worse. But that time has certainly not arrived. Ostracism of a violent character, such as the denial of the use of public wells is a species of barbarism, which I hope will never be practised by any body of men having any desire for national self-respect and national uplift. We will free neither Islam nor India by processes of coercion, whether among ourselves or against Englishmen.

Young India, 8-12-1920

45. THE CASTE SYSTEM

I have received several angry letters about my remarks during my Deccan tour[2] on the caste system. I am not publishing these letters because there is nothing but vituperation in them, and when there is no vituperation, there is little argument about them. I am anxious to

[1] Members of the new Legislative Councils

[2] In the first fortnight of November 1920; for Gandhiji's speeches during this tour.

open the columns of *Young India* to opinion expressing dissent from its views, but the writers must be brief and interesting. Acrimony is no argument. I am obliged to make these remarks because two writers at least would have gained publicity for their letters if they had not been prolix and unintelligible in their expression. The question, however, that my correspondents have raised commands attention and deserves an answer. They argue that the retention of the caste system spells ruin for India and that it is caste which has reduced India to slavery. In my opinion it is not caste that has made us what we are. It was our greed and disregard of essential virtues which enslaved us. I believe that caste has saved Hinduism from disintegration.

But like every other institution it has suffered from excrescences. I consider the four divisions alone to be fundamental, natural, and essential. The innumerable sub-castes are sometimes a convenience, often a hindrance. The sooner there is fusion the better. The silent destruction and reconstruction of sub-castes have ever gone on and are bound to continue. Social pressure and public opinion can be trusted to deal with the problem. But I am certainly against any attempt at destroying the fundamental divisions. The caste system is not based on inequality, there is no question of inferiority, and so far as there is any such question arising,[1] as in Madras, Maharashtra or elsewhere, the tendency should undoubtedly be checked. But there appears to be no valid reason for ending the system because of its abuse. It lends itself easily to reformation. The spirit of democracy, which is fast spreading throughout India and the rest of the world, will, without a shadow of doubt, purge the institution of the idea of predominance and subordination. The spirit of democracy is not a mechanical thing to be adjusted by abolition of forms. It requires change of the heart. If caste is a bar to the spread of that spirit, the existence of five religions in India—Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Zoroastrianism and Judaism—is equally a bar. The spirit of democracy requires the inculcation of the spirit of brotherhood, and I can find no difficulty in considering a Christian or a Mohammedan to be my brother in absolutely the same sense as a blood brother, and Hinduism that is responsible for the doctrine of the caste is also responsible for the inculcation of the essential brotherhood, not merely of man but even of all that lives.

One of my correspondents suggests that we should abolish the

[1] As between Brahmins and non-Brahmins

caste [system] but adopt the class system of Europe—meaning thereby I suppose that the idea of heredity in caste should be rejected. I am inclined to think that the law of heredity is an eternal law and any attempt to alter that law must lead us, as it has before led, to utter confusion. I can see very great use in considering a Brahmin to be always a Brahmin throughout his life. If he does not behave himself like a Brahmin, he will naturally cease to command the respect that is due to the real Brahmin. It is easy to imagine the innumerable difficulties if one were to set up a court of punishments and rewards, degradation and promotion. If Hindus believe, as they must believe, in reincarnation, transmigration, they must know that nature will, without any possibility of mistake, adjust the balance by degrading a Brahmin, if he misbehaves himself, by reincarnating him in a lower division, and translating one who lives the life of a Brahmin in his present incarnation to Brahminhood in his next.

Interdrinking, interdining, intermarrying, I hold, are not essential for the promotion of the spirit of democracy. I do not contemplate under a most democratic constitution a universality of manners and customs about eating, drinking and marrying. We shall ever have to seek unity in diversity, and I decline to consider it a sin for a man not to drink or eat with anybody and everybody. In Hinduism, children of brothers may not intermarry. The prohibition does not interfere with cordiality of relations; probably it promotes healthiness of relationships. In *Vaishnava* households I have known mothers not dining in the common kitchen, nor drinking from the same pot, without their becoming exclusive, arrogant or less loving. These are disciplinary restraints which are not in themselves bad. Carried to ridiculous extremes they may become harmful, and if the motive is one of arrogation, of superiority, the restraint becomes an indulgence, therefore hurtful. But as time goes forward and new necessities and occasions arise, the custom regarding interdrinking, interdining and intermarrying will require cautious modifications or rearrangement.

Thus whilst I am prepared to defend, as I have always done, the division of Hindus into four castes as I have so often said in these columns, I consider untouchability to be a heinous crime against humanity. It is not a sign of self-restraint but an arrogant assumption of superiority. It has served no useful purpose and it has suppressed, as nothing else in Hinduism has, vast numbers of the human race who are not only every bit as good as ourselves, but are rendering in many walks of life an essential service to the country. It is a sin of which the

sooner Hinduism purges itself the better it is for itself, if it is to be recognized as an honourable and elevating religion. I know no argument in favour of its retention and I have no hesitation in rejecting scriptural authority of a doubtful character in order to support a sinful institution. Indeed I would reject all authority if it is in conflict with sober reason or the dictates of the heart. Authority sustains and ennobles the weak when it is the handiwork of reason but it degrades them when it supplants reason sanctified by the still small voice within.

Young India, 8-12-1920

46. SPEECH AT MUZAFFARPUR[1]

December 8, 1920

MR. PRESIDENT AND BROTHERS,

You will kindly excuse me as I am unable to deliver my lecture standing. Most of you must have known me and seen me at Muzaffarpur a few years back. Muzaffarpur, Tirhut, or Champaran is not a new place for me. I have become known through my activities in Champaran[2] but the task I have undertaken now is much more important and difficult than the Champaran affair. You all know how very unrighteous and oppressive is our Government. Our Congress, our Muslim League and our Sikh League have already shown us the way by which we can set the Government right. If we are really desirous of getting rid of the *rakshasi* Government then non-co-operation is the only weapon left to us. It is neither our dharma to draw the sword, nor are the times and circumstances favourable for it. It is admitted on all hands that we can neither win swaraj nor save Islam nor force justice for the Punjab nor get rid of the tyrannous Government by sword. Both Hindus and Mohammedans are unanimous on the point that non-co-operation is their last resource. The Government has robbed us of our wealth through trade, of our respect through Punjab and of our religion through endangering Khilafat. If we admit all this then there is no other alternative open to us than to refuse to offer to, and receive help from, the Government. We have already decided in our Congress that we should not seek justice in Government law courts.

We cannot make our children righteous in schools controlled by

[1] Town in Bihar

[2] Gandhiji led a satyagraha campaign in favour of the indigo labourers in Champaran in 1917.

unrighteous men. We cannot free our children from slavery by sending them to slave schools. If my Hindu brethren think that the present oppressive Government is like *Ravanarajya* then they must withdraw their children from schools controlled by the Government today. We don't want to send our men to the Council[1] because we know we cannot get justice for the Punjab or Islam through them. The Government may fill the Councils with Englishmen but we ourselves cannot tighten the chains of our slavery by going to the Councils. It is immaterial if we can get some small favourable Acts passed or even if we secure the release of the imprisoned men, until and unless we get swaraj, secure justice for the Punjab and have a settlement of the Khilafat question. Our object is not gained even if all the prisoners in the Andaman Islands[2] are let off. We should not enlist ourselves in recruitments. We must use swadeshi articles. Every house must be supplied with the charkha. In it lies our swaraj, in it lies our duty and through it we can save Islam from danger. If we 30 crores of Indians say with one voice that we cannot use even a single foreign article then there will be no reason why the English people should stay here in India any longer. Swadeshi is a dharma wherein lies simplicity which can keep off our hunger and want, which can bring down the price of cloth. If the prices of cloth should go down you must take a vow of swadeshism. Hindus and Mussulmans should live in mutual friendship and amity. The Hindus cannot protect cows by killing Mohammedans. If the Hindus are really serious about the protection of cows they must sacrifice themselves for Islam. You must keep your conscience clear. You had never got such opportunities in the past hundred years. Today Hindus and Mussulmans have united together. I don't wish to say that the Mogul emperors were not tyrants but the oppression practised by the present Government beats all past records. If Islam is in danger today where is the guarantee that Kashi[3] and Prayag[4] will not be in jeopardy tomorrow. Hypocrites are never trustworthy. We can't say when our Government will deceive us. We can never depend on the Government but we must have confidence in ourselves. So long as there is discord amongst ourselves, so long as we

[1] Legislative Council

[2] A penal settlement for convicts sentenced to life imprisonment

[3] *Banaras and Allahabad respectively, holy centre*s of pilgrimage for the Hindus

[4] *Banaras and Allahabad respectively, holy centre*s of pilgrimage for the Hindus

are slaves to anger, so long as we thirst for the blood of the English, so long we cannot free India. I want three things: unity among Hindus and Mussulmans; restraint of anger; non-violent non-co-operation.

The Searchlight, 17-12-1920

47. SPEECH AT BETTIAH[1]

December 8, 1920

I am not a stranger to Champaran. Whenever I come here, I feel that, of all places in the country, this is my birth-place and suffer at the thought of people's suffering here. Though I am here after two years, I assure you that I have not forgotten your sufferings during this period. Champaran's suffering, which is my suffering, is always in my mind and I have also, from time to time, done something for its relief. But what I can do is bound to be less than what you yourselves can do. Today, therefore, I want to tell you how you can help yourselves.

I toured some villages today. What I had heard had already made me unhappy but, seeing for myself what had happened, I felt grieved beyond measure. In this case, I cannot blame the Government for the cruel things which were done, nor the planters. I blame our police officers, their subordinates and the village people themselves. However, we have no desire to take them to courts and see them punished. We want them to be their own judges. The police are our own brethren and it is their duty to protect the people, not to oppress them. When I heard that the sub-inspectors of this place and other policemen had gone to the villages and done cruel things to the people, I was extremely pained. Perhaps they will not admit having done such things but all that the village people narrated could not be false. It is the duty of the well-placed among us to reason with members of the police force. I want to tell the policemen who are present here: 'You are my brethren and of the villagers as well and, therefore, if the Government asks you to do wicked things, you ought not to obey. If you, too, regard us as your brethren, you would work to serve us and not harass us. If you are servants of the Government, the latter is our servant and, therefore, it is none of your duty to obey it if it asks you to do wicked things.' In the present case, however, the Government had not ordered the police to plunder the people's

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour

dwellings or get any men from the village to do so, nor to molest women. It is, therefore, not to blame for what the police did; the latter misbehaved on their own. The remedy for this is for respectable men to go to the police and plead with them that their red turban is for the protection of the people, not for their oppression; to request them to return the plundered goods and tell them that they should look upon the village people, too, as their own kith and kin and win their confidence.

While I am suggesting a remedy for preventing such atrocities, let me also say that, besides reasoning with the police, there is another way, too. I have been telling people that satyagraha is a sovereign remedy for all ills. I have been showing a way of ending this rule, one which is peaceful, however. Though employing a peaceful remedy, I do not wish, at the same time, that people in the country should become cowards, should be wholly dependent on others and lose the strength even to protect women. Do you know what the village people showed me and what things they narrated to me? . . [1] What did they show to the robbers? Their heels. I asked myself whether the people of India had become so cowardly that they could not even protect their property and their womenfolk. Do we lack even the strength to defend ourselves against robbers? Is it satyagraha to run away and leave the thief to do his work? If, voluntarily, you let the robber take away your possessions, that would be another matter. If you will not have this, you may reason with him; you may even fight him if he refuses to see reason. If the police turn to terrorism and you come forward to lay down your lives before them, I would say that you are satyagrahis, that you are brave. If, instead, you merely look on while you are being dishonoured—rather than this it would be far better that you should fight and drive them back. Satyagraha does not mean running away, leaving women helpless, or looking on while they are being stripped naked. I ask those among you in this meeting, with these long sticks in your hands, do you think this is satyagrah? Our dharma does not teach us to be cowards, to submit to tyranny. What it teaches is that, instead of taking the life of the tyrant, it is much better to lay town one's own. If we could do this, we would be as gods; should we, however, run away from the scene of oppression, we would have behaved worse than beasts. From the animal state, we have risen

[1] Here Mahadev Desai has omitted a part of the speech, referring the reader to his own account of the incidents earlier in the despatch.

to the human state. Animal functions are with man from the movement of birth; he grows into the distinctively human state as his reason develops. As we do so, we cease relying on mere animal strength and learn to trust more and more to soul-force. When, however, we are threatened by anyone employing brute force, let alone standing, up to him with soul-force, if we actually run away from him, we would be neither beasts nor men. We would be simply cowards. Look at the dog; he does not employ Satyagraha, but he does not run away either. He barks at the person threatening him, that is, fight back. If the people of India cannot display their humanity, they can certainly show evidence, at any rate, that they are animals. Henceforth, I don't want to be told that a hundred young and sturdy men ran away from where they were standing the moment they saw some constables approach. I would praise you if I heard that you stood your ground and laid down your lives. I would praise you even if I heard that you fought them hard. Someone will perhaps ask me: 'What can we do if the police seize us and drag us away?, I reply: 'It would be better for you to die than to have your life spared in this way. Even the Government permits you to employ force in defence of your life and property.' The law permits this very clearly. Hereafter, every inhabitant of Champaran will fight back on such occasions and kill or be killed. I cannot bear to hear what I heard today.

But understand me aright. I am not advising you to be ready to kill on every occasion. If you offer to fight policemen who may approach you with a warrant, that would be cowardice on your part. If a solitary policeman, wanting to serve an order, comes up to us where we are standing, fifty of us together, we could certainly kill him; what is there specially to marvel at in this? Our manliness consists, rather, in obeying the order. The policeman's duty is only to effect the arrest. Even if his warrant is bad, it is not right for us to force the constable to free the arrested man. Even if, while effecting the arrest, he should beat or abuse you, that, too, you should bear. If, however, he enters your home, tries to seize your cattle or your money, you should certainly resist and fight back with your stick—that is, if you are not ready to lay down your own life instead. I shall mention one more restriction. If I advise you to fight back on such occasions, I do not mean that you should kill a thief who may enter your home. Even war has its law. Dharma does not permit drawing a sword against a stick; to employ a fist when attacked with a stick is dharma. It is not dharma, but cowardice, to attack one man with an army of fifty. By drawing a sword against a stick, by fifty of us attacking one man, we have shown

ourselves to be cowards.

I am afraid you may put my advice to wrong use. I want the sober among you who are present here to repeat to the others time and again what I have said. If I did not tell you what I felt today after I had seen what had happened, I thought I would be guilty of *adharma* and would be leaving this place without having done my duty. I want that you should not be timid, should never behave as cowards, and yet not take anyone's life.

Certainly, the Government made one mistake. It tried to intimidate the volunteers who went there, and to cajole them. But do not be intimidated. The volunteers, too, have a difficult duty before them. They will have to go on working fearlessly and with patience.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-12-1920

48. SPEECH AT BETTIAH GOSHALA[1]

December 8, 1920

Cow-protection is the outward form of Hinduism. I refuse to call anyone a Hindu if he is not willing to lay down his life in this cause. It is dearer to me than my very life. If cow-slaughter were for the Muslims a religious duty, like saying *namaz*[2], I would have had to tell them that I must fight against them. But it is not a religious duty for them. We have made it one by our attitude to them.

What is really needed for protecting the cow is that the Hindus themselves should care for her, since they, too, kill her. The barbaric practice of blowing for extracting milk to the last drop, of tormenting oxen, which are the progeny of the cow, by using the goad, and of making them draw loads beyond their strength —these things amount to killing the cow. If we are serious about cow-protection, we must put our own house in order.

Whereas Muslims slaughter cows only occasionally for beef, the English cannot do without it for a single day. But we submit to them as slaves. We like the schools and courts of a Government which does not honour our religion. It is not as if I noticed this thing today for the first time. But previously I used to tolerate their eating

[1] An institution for the care of infirm and disabled cows. The *goshala* was founded by Gandhiji in 1917 during his stay in Bihar in connection with the Champaran Satyagraha.

[2] Prayers

beef, for I cherished the hope that they would do us some good. Now the hope is gone and hence I have declared non-co-operation against them. At such a time if we care for cow-protection, we should unconditionally help the Muslims. I am with Shaukat Ali day and night but I do not say to him a word about cow-protection, for at present our duty is only to help the Muslims. For this, I am ready today to sacrifice my sons, my wife and my friends. We cannot protect the cow while remaining enamoured of the Government. But by non-co-operating with it, you may even succeed in melting the hearts of Muslims.

Goshalas of this kind cannot protect the cow. Real *goshalas* should supply fresh milk to the towns. This will be possible only when they have thousands of milch cows and thousands of *bighas*[1] of land. Only when we look after cows with the utmost care, shall we raise *kamadhenus*[2] from among them. Then alone will the misery, the hunger, the nakedness and the spiritual abjectness of the country disappear. What I have said has come of itself. Never before have I spoken so earnestly about cow-protection. Protect mother cow, and mother cow will protect you.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

49. SPEECH AT MOTIHARI[3]

December 9, 1920

Mahatmaji addressed the meeting sitting on a chair and exhorted the people to join the non-co-operation movement whole-heartedly if they wanted to be freed from the present condition of slavery and inhuman indignities at the hands of the bureaucracy. He explained to the people their clear duty to treat one another as brothers. He also explained to the police their duty and reminded that they were meant to protect the people and not to molest them. If they failed in it he dared say that they should take shelter elsewhere. He referred to the recent looting in the village under the jurisdiction of Lawria *thana*[4] and expressed his regret at the action of the police there. Maulana Shaukat Ali also exhorted the people to adopt non-co-operation with great force and spoke on the desirability of Hindu-Muslim unity. He thanked the Hindus for standing by the side of the Mussulmans in the Khilafat question and said that his first action would be to stop cattle slaughter altogether from this country.

The Searchlight, 22-12-1920

[1] A measure of land

[2] *Kamadhenu* is a mythical cow fabled to yield whatever is asked of her.

[3] Town in Bihar

[4] Police station

50. LETTER TO SARALADEVI CHOWDHARANI

ON WAY TO BHAGALPUR,
December 11, 1920

I had two letters from you, one a scrap, the other a longish letter which shows that you do not understand my language or my thoughts. I have certainly not betrayed any annoyance over your complex nature, but I have remarked upon it. If a person is born with a deformation [*sic*] one may not quarrel with nature for it, but one may pardonably take note of it and try to remove it. And that is what I have done. I refuse to call an indefinable complexity a piece of art. All art yields to patient analysis and shows a unity of design behind the diversity on the canvas. You are hugging your defects even when they are pointed out by a friend in a friendly manner. I do not feel vexed but it makes my task of helping difficult. What art can there be in moods, in fits and starts? The simplest natures are certainly complex in a sense. But they are easily analysed. But they are called simple because they are easily understandable and readily yield to treatment. But I do not want to quarrel with you. In you I have an enigma to solve. I shall not be impatient. Only bear with me whenever I try to point [out] what to me appear to be your obvious limitations. We all have them. It is the privilege of friendship to lay the gentle finger on the weak spots. Friendship becomes a divine institution only when it educates friends. Let us try to elevate each other.

I await with interest your letter on *shuddhi*[1].

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

51. LETTER TO DWIJENDRANATH TAGORE

ON WAY TO BHAGALPUR,
December 11, 1920

MY DEAR BARODADA,

Your letter was a consolation to me. Your approval[2] I count as a blessing. I am in Calcutta on the 13th and in Dacca on the 14th. May you live to see swaraj established in India.

Yours,

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Literally, purification
[2] Of the non-co-operation programme in the field of education

52. SPEECH ON NON-CO-OPERATION, MONGHYR[1]

December 11, 1920

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,

I am too weak to stand and deliver my address. My friend, Mr. Sri Krishna Singh, has told you that last year when the coolies of Jamalpur were on strike he came over to see me at Ahmedabad and requested me to come to Jamalpur. But I was engaged in some other important work and so failed to comply with his request. I say frankly I like the occupation of a *kisan* more than I like the profession of a barrister. To my heart a labourer has a higher place than a pleader. Last year when I heard of the distress of the coolies of Jamalpur, I was sorely aggrieved, but on account of my preoccupation with some other work I pleaded my inability to come. Today I am much pleased to meet you all, especially the coolies of Jamalpur. Your gathering today is very large and I fear my voice will not reach each and every one of you. So I shall be very brief in my say. It is the duty of every Indian, whether he be Hindu or Mohammedan, Arab or Afghan, male or female, to think deeply over the present condition of India—to analyse minutely the situation. It is also the duty of every one of you to devise ways and methods for the weeding out of the present-day evils. The Government has disappointed seven crores of our Muslim brethren. It has broken its pledge to Turkey and has practically dismembered it.[2] This Government has forced our brothers in the Punjab to crawl on their bellies and has offered sundry other unthinkable humiliations to them. It has caused our students, even infants of six or seven years of age to walk sixteen miles a day in the noon-day scorching sun four times to salute the Union Jack—in consequence of which some of the tender boys gave up their ghosts.[3] This Government has massacred 1,500 innocent men in the Punjab and now tells us to forget it. It says that it has no hand in the destiny of the Khilafat. I ask you never to bow down, never to salute this Government. I ask you not to participate in the actions of the Government. We can remove Satan only by forsaking its company. If

[1] This was delivered at a meeting held under the presidentship of Shah Umar.

[2] *Vide* "Khilafat", 12-5-1920 to "Speech on Non-co-operation,Bombay", 12-5-1920 and Appendix "Turkish Peace Terms".

[3] *Vide* "Congress report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.

we admit that this Government has inculcated Satanic elements in us, then I say it is our duty to forsake it. If this Government does not confess its blunders, if this Government does not give out to the world that the way in which the Punjab and the Khilafat affairs have been disposed of is wrong, if the Government does not repent of its misdeeds and beg pardon for them, we shall know no rest. We can remove the Satanic Government by two means: one, by means of the sword, and the other, by means of non-co-operation. The greybeards of the Hindus and Mussulmans have come to the decision that we cannot succeed if we unsheathe our swords. If we once do so, instead of bringing the Government to its knees we ourselves shall be no more and all wrongs and atrocities that have been perpetrated will go unrevenged. But if we adopt non-violent non-co-operation, we are bound to succeed. If you admit that we should bid adieu to Satan, then we should seek the help and favour of God, as has been enjoined on us by the Koran, the *Gita* and Tulsidas. We should see that we do not grow angry with anyone, see that we do not abuse any Englishmen, nor like to cut their throats. We don't want to show contempt to any Khan Bahadur who does not renounce his title, we don't want to abuse a pleader who does not suspend his practice. We don't want to coerce any student who does not leave his college or school. The only thing that we want is that if they do not accede to our requests we should non-co-operate with them. Neither should we help them in any way nor should we receive help from them. It will not harm anybody. God will come to our help and realize the extent of our misery. I have asked you all to non-co-operate, but I ask you all to cooperate with yourselves. Hindus and Mohammedans should live in unity; they are the sons of a common mother. The Hindus should stick to their own religion and so should the Mohammedans. But there seems no reason to me why they should fall out with one another. We should offer our heads for the sacrifice at a time when the religion of our seven crore Muslim brethren is at stake. If you keep away wrath and apply yourself whole-heartedly to non-co-operation, I assure you that you shall have swaraj, undo the Punjab wrongs and wrest away Mesopotamia, Thrace and other places[1] within one year. There are six items in the non-co-operation movement. First, the renunciation of titles, etc.; secondly, withdrawal from schools and colleges—those students who are above sixteen years of age should

[1] Which were formerly ruled by the Sultan of Turkey; the Khalifa of Islam

ask leave of their parents to leave college and school; if they do, well and good; if they do not, they should leave college and school of their own accord; thirdly, suspension of practice by pleaders and decision of cases in arbitration courts; fourthly, boycott of Councils and of persons who have entered Councils; fifthly, use of swadeshi goods and cloth. We should prepare more cloth with the help of the charkha as the cloth turned out by Indian mills is not sufficient to meet Indian demands.

At this stage there was great noise. Proceeding further Mahatmaji said:

If we do all the things enumerated earlier, we shall have swaraj very soon. But so long as this kind of uproar will continue, it will be difficult to transact any business. So long as we are uneducated we cannot manage.

Thereafter he gave some advice to volunteers and asked them to collect money for N.C.O.[1] funds. A decent amount was paid on the spot. Mahatmaji spoke for another 20 minutes.

The Searchlight, 19-12-1920

53. TELEGRAM TO M. ASAF ALI[2]

[One or after *December 11, 1920*][3]

ORDER DISBANDMENT MUST BE OBEYED. NO LAWYERS CAN BE ENGAGED FOR DEFENCE.

From a photostat: S.N. 7376

54. "VAISHNAVAS" AND "ANTYAJAS"

I drew attention to the virtues of the *Vaishnava* which Narasinh Mehta, the great *Vaishnava*, has sung of in his poem, and I expressed

[1] Non-co-operation

[2] 1888-1953; barrister and nationalist Muslim politician; took a leading part in the Khilafat movement.

This telegram was sent in reply to Asaf Ali's telegram of December 10, 1920, which read: "Your Khilafat workers falsely charged with offering indignity to human corpse. Supposed complainant notified authorities unwillingness to prosecute but authorities appear obdurate as case cognizable. Since complaint originally filed by individual we are anxious to know whether we should advise accused to defend their honour against unscrupulous false allegations. May we disobey Government's order to disband volunteer corps." *Vide* also "Notes", 22-12-1920.

[3] Asaf Ali's telegram was received by Gandhiji on December 11, 1920.

my pain at the comments on my talk with Maharajshri.[1]

I saw in them, not an attempt to determine the meaning of dharma, but only *duragraha* and attacks on me. May it not be said that I, too, am guilty *of duragraha* and attack others? Certainly, it may. It will be for the reader to judge whether this is true or not. At the very beginning of our talk, Maharajshri told me that, in the interpretation of shastra, reason had no scope. That itself pained me. In my view, that which reason cannot understand and which the heart does not accept can be no shastra, and I think that anyone who wants to follow dharma in its purity cannot but admit this principle. If we do not do this, we shall run the risk of violating our dharma. I have heard the *Gita* being interpreted to the effect that, if any of our relations are wicked, we may use force to reduce them to submission; indeed, that it is our dharma to do so. Because Rama killed Ravana, is it dharma to kill a person whom we regard as Ravana? The *Manusmriti*[2] permits the eating of meat; is *a Vaishnava* free, therefore, to eat meat? I have had it from the lips of *shastris*[3] and men claiming to be sannyasis that, when ill, one may take even beef. Where would I have been if, accepting all these interpretations of the shastras, I had gone about destroying my relatives, had advised the killing of the British and eaten beef in my illness? On such occasions, I was saved because I accepted only that as dharma which my reason and my heart accepted as such, and I advise everyone to do the same.

For this reason, holy men of *tapashcharya* have told us that those who study the Vedas but do not follow dharma in conduct are mere pedants; that they neither swim across themselves, nor help others to do so. So it is that I am never impressed by those who have the Vedas on their lips or have got the commentaries by heart and, instead of marvelling at their learning, cherish my little knowledge as of greater value.

These being my views, I was pained when Maharajshri enunciated the principle for determining the meaning of shastra, but I was also pleased by his frankness. Though he held, thus, that the shastras were against me, his decision finally was that it would not be justice to exclude *Antyajas* from schools which were open to Muslims, Parsis, Christians, Jews and others. *Vaisnnavas*, who give money for

[1] *Vide* "To *Vaishnavas*" 5-12-1920.

[2] The Laws of Manu, the Hindu law-giver

[3] Men learned in the shastras

innumerable worldly activities and spend it even in gambling and similar things, could not take cover behind objections on religious grounds and refuse donations to national schools which admit *Antyajas* along with others. If they do not wish to send their children to schools attended by *Antyajas*, they should be under no pres-sure to do so. This was the pragmatic decision which Maharajshri gave.

However, the arguments of the *shastris* who surrounded Maharajshri made my heart sink. I saw no frankness in them, but only an obstinate clinging to their views. Shastri Vasantram has given us a sample of this in *Gujarati.*[1]

I wish respectfully to tell him and the editor of *Gujarati* that a public worker's duty is not to follow the popular current but, should its direction be wrong, to lead it in the right direction.

I do not know the shastras, have no experience, am obstinate — by asserting all this I cannot be disqualified from being a *Vaishnava*. So long as I hold that the test of being a *Vaishnava* lies in moral conduct and not in debating or the gift of clever speech or in determining the meaning of the shastras, I do not wish to give up my claim [of being *a Vaishnava*].

To say that looking upon the practice of untouchability as sin is a Western idea is to make out a sin to be a virtue. Akha Bhagat[2] had no Western education, but it was he who said in a poem, "Like a superfluous limb is this notion of defilement by touch". It is sheer fanaticism, and will lead to the degradation of dharma, to look upon efforts at eradicating our evils as deriving their inspiration from other religions and to cling on to those evils.

It has been argued that the practice of untouchability implies no contempt; the British put forward a similar argument in regard to their attitude to us. If they keep us away, call us "natives", they mean no contempt [they say]. If they force us to occupy separate compartments in trains, it is entirely for "convenience of hygiene" and there is no ill will in the procedure—such is their claim. I have seen *Vaishnavas* abusing and beating up *Antyajas* who happened to touch them unintentionally. It is sheer hypocrisy, or sin rather, to describe such conduct as dharma. There is arrogance in ordering

[1] In his article "Gujarat Vidyapith and *Antyajas*", published in *Gujarati*, 21-11-1920

[2] Mystic poet of the seventeenth century, famed for his satire; vedantin and rationalist

Antyajas to turn their faces to the wall when a Brahmin is out in the street. It is baseness to offer them the remains on our plates or things which have become rotten. Such conduct has its source in the practice of untouchability.

I simply do not understand the contention that bathing andputting on clean clothes will not cleanse an *Antyaja*. Is it that an *Antyaja* carries filth in his heart, or that he was not born a human being? Are *Antyajas* lower even than animals?

I have seen a number of *Antyajas* who were of an open frank heart, were upright, were men of knowledge and lovers of God. I look upon such *Antyajas* as worthy of all reverence.

I can understand refusal to touch an *Antyaja* who is dirty or who has not bathed after carrying night-soil. But it is the very limit of *adharma* to refuse to touch *Antyajas* however clean. I have seen many who were not *Antyajas* but were extremely dirty. There are many Christians among those who carry night-soil. It is part of a physician's duty to help remove stools. We do not consider contact with these as sinful. But we despise our physicians who hold no degrees, committing a sin thereby and bringing a bad name to the *Vaishnava* dharma.

It seems, rather, that Shastri Vasantram and the editor of *Gujarati* have identified the practice of untouchability with *varnashram.* In my humble opinion, the latter is dharma, unalterable, universal and in harmony with Nature, as also a social arrangement; it is a pure outward form of Hinduism.

The practice of untouchability is a blot on Hinduism; it was probably introduced as a temporary expedient, during the period of decline. It is based on no principle of universal application and has no support in the shastras. The verses which are cited in justification of it are interpolations; or, at any rate, there are differences of opinion about their meaning. There are no statements *by Vaishnavas* describing the practice of untouchability to be a part of dharma. It is disappearing day by day. It is not observed in trains, Government schools, centres of pilgrimage and courts. In mills and other big factories, people touch *Antyajas* with the utmost freedom. My request to *Vaishnavas* is that this contact with the *Antyajas* which in any case they tolerate, though looking upon it as sinful, they should accept deliberately and as an act of virtue. The *Gita* says the same thing: "To the man who looks on all with an equal eye, a Brahmin, a dog and an

Antyaja—all are the same."[1] 'Narsainyo' says in his poem that a *Vaishnava* should have the same eye for all. *Vaishnavas* cannot claim they can maintain this attitude to *Antyajas* looking upon them as people with whom all contact is forbidden.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-12-1920

55. SPEECH AT BHAGALPUR

December 12, 1920

Mahatma Gandhi, addressing the audience, said that Satan could not be defeated by Satanic arts. It was God only that could overcome Satan and the Satanic Government must therefore be overcome by truth and right. He then said that the people could not make progress by adopting the English mode of life. The Hindu *rishis* did not have any chairs and taught under the trees. The Mohammedan fakirs too, who were the real cause of Mohammedan progress, did not sit on chairs but lived in the jungles.

The Mahatma then said that it was not he that was the cause of the Indian awakening; it was the realization by the people that they were in bondage. The Government was subduing the people, not by aeroplanes but through titles, the Councils, the courts and the schools. If they wanted to be free they must adopt the methods adopted by the Boers, of which he had personal experience.[2] The Boer women did not allow their boys to attend British schools and showed a courage which was wanting in the Indian people. The people therefore should non-co-operate with the Government.

He said that in ancient India the women spun thread and cloths were woven from them. The people should revive the old system now.

Speaking on Hindu-Muslim unity, the Mahatma said that there should be no bargaining on this account. Instead of being Banias in this respect they should be noble-hearted like the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas. Truth was its own reward. There should not, therefore, be any conditional unity. Nor should there be any distrust or fear in any community that the other might become very powerful in the future.

The Mahatma then spoke on the evils of drinking and said that during British rule the number of madrassas had decreased while that of wine shops had increased. People should abstain from drinking wine as also from indulging in co-operation with the Government, which also was like an intoxicating habit. Drunkards could not attain swaraj, nor could the children of a slave people learn liberty in the school of their masters.

The Searchlight, 17-12-1920

[1] *Bhagavad Gita,* V, 18

[2] In South Africa

56. SPEECH AT OPENING OF NATIONAL MADRASSA, CALCUTTA[1]

December 13, 1920

Mr. Gandhi said that he had much pleasure in opening the National Madrassa. He desired that they should have a common language, preferably Hindustani, through the medium of which instruction should be given. He had, however, no objection to their opening the Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit and English departments for those who were keen in these respective choices. He was glad to hear that as many as 120 students had taken admission and he hoped that by joining institutions like this they would turn out good, honest and truthful students. They [the founders] would not be able to compete with the Government in constructing spacious buildings but surely they could give better instruction in their humble house. Swaraj could not be attained unless they knew how to manage their institutions and turned out good citizens.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 14-12-1920

57. SPEECH ON NON-CO-OPERATION, CALCUTTA[2]

December 13, 1920

The very fact that so many of you cannot understand Hindi, which is bound to be the national medium of expression throughout Hindustan in gatherings of Indians belonging to different parts of the land, shows the depth of the degradation to which we have sunk, and points to the supreme necessity of the Non-co-operation Movement which is intended to lift us out of that condition. This Government has been instrumental in degrading this great nation in various ways, and it is impossible to be free from it without co-operation amongst ourselves which is in turn impossible without a national medium of expression.

But I am not here today to plead for that medium. I am to plead for the acceptance by the country of the programme of non-violent, progressive non-co-operation. Now all the words that I have used hereare absolutely necessary and the two adjectives ‘progressive’ and ‘non-violent’ are integral parts of a whole. With me non-violence is part of my religion, a matter of creed. But with the great number of Mussalmans non-violence is a policy; with thousands, if not millions of Hindus, it is equally a matter of policy. But whether it is a creed or

[1] The Madrassa was founded by a committee headed by Abul Kalam Azad.

[2] Delivered at a mass meeting held at Kumartoli Park under the presidentship of Syam Sunder Chakravarty, editor of the *Servant*

a policy, it is utterly impossible for you to finish the programme for the enfranchisement of the millions of India without recognizing the necessity and the value of non-violence. Violence may for a moment avail to secure a certain measure of success but it cannot in the long run achieve any appreciable result. On the other hand all violence would prove destructive to the honour and self-respect of the nation. The blue-books issued by the Government of India show that inasmuch as we have used violence, military expenditure has gone up, not proportionately but in geometrical progression. The bonds of our slavery have been forged all the stronger for our having offered violence. And the whole history of British rule in India is a demonstration of the fact that we have never been able to offer successful violence. Whilst therefore I say that rather than have the yoke of a Government that has so emasculated us, I would welcome violence, I would urge with all the emphasis that I can command that India will never be able to regain her own by methods of violence.

Lord Ronaldshay, who has done me the honour of reading my booklet on Home Rule,[1] has warned my countrymen against engaging themselves in a struggle for a swaraj such as is described in that booklet. Now though I do not want to withdraw a single word of it, I would say to you on this occasion that I do not ask India to follow out today the methods prescribed in my booklet. If they could do that they would have Home Rule not in a year but in a day, and India by realizing that ideal wants to acquire an ascendency over the rest of the world. But it must remain a day-dream more or less for the time being. What I am doing today is that I am giving the country a practicable[2] programme not for the abolition of law-courts, posts, telegraphs and of railways but for the attainment of parliamentary swaraj. I am telling you that so long as we do not isolate ourselves from this Government, we are co-operating with it through schools, law-courts and Councils, through service, civil and military, and payment of taxes and foreign trade.

The moment this fact is realized and non-co-operation iseffected, this Government must totter and fall to pieces. If I knew that the masses were prepared for the whole programme at once, I would not delay in putting it at once to work. It is not possible, at the present moment, to prevent the masses from bursting out into wrath against those who come to execute the law; it is not possible that the military would lay down their arms without the slightest violence. If that were possible today, I would propose all the stages of

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 8-12-1920.

[2] The source has "pardonable" here.

non-co-operation to be worked simultaneously. But we have not secured that control over the masses; we have uselessly frittered away precious years of the nation's life in mastering a language which we need least for winning our liberty; we have frittered away all those years in learning liberty from Milton and Shakespeare, in deriving inspiration from the pages of Mill, whilst liberty could be learnt at our doors. We have thus succeeded in isolating ourselves from the masses; we have been westernized. We have failed these 35 years to utilize our education in order to permeate the masses. We have sat upon the pedestal and from there delivered harangues to them in a language they do not understand and we see today that we are unable to conduct large gatherings in a disciplined manner. And discipline is the essence of success. Here is therefore one reason why I have introduced the word 'progressive' in the non-co-operation resolution[1]. Without any impertinence I may say that I understand the mass mind better than anyone amongst the educated Indians. I contend that the masses are not ready for suspension of payment of taxes. They have not yet learnt sufficient self-control. If I was sure of non-violence on their part I would ask them to suspend payment today and not waste a single moment of the nation's time. With me the liberty of India has become a passion. Liberty of Islam is as dear to me. I would not therefore delay a moment if I found that the whole of the programme could be enforced at once.

It grieves me to miss the faces of dear and revered leaders in this assembly. We miss here the trumpet voice of Surendranath Banerji[2], who has rendered inestimable service to the country. And though we stand as poles asunder today, though we may have sharp differences with him,[3] we must express them with becoming restraint. I do not ask you to give up a single iota of principle. I urge non-violence in language and in deed. If non-violence is essential in our dealings with the Government, it is more essential in our dealings with our leaders. And it grieves me deeply to hear of recent instances of violence reported to have been used in East Bengal against our own people. I was pained to hear that the ears of a man who had voted at the recent elections had been cut [off] and night-soil had been thrown into the bed of a man who had stood as a candidate. Non-co-operation is

[1] Passed at the special session of the Congress held at Calcutta in September 1920

[2] Sir Surendranath Banerjea (1848-1925); eminent orator and politician; president of the Congress in 1895 and 1902; later joined the Liberal Party and became a Minister in the Government of Bengal under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms

[3] Surendranath Banerjea was opposed to Gandhiji's non-co-operation programme.

never going to succeed in this way. It will not succeed unless we create an atmosphere of perfect freedom, unless we prize our opponents' liberty as much as our own. The liberty of faith, conscience, thought and action which we claim for ourselves must be conceded equally to others. Non-co-operation is a process of purification and we must continually try to touch the hearts of those who differ from us, touch their minds and their emotions, but never their bodies. Discipline and restraint are the cardinal principles of our conduct and I warn you against any sort of tyrannical social ostracism. I was deeply grieved therefore to hear of the insult offered to a dead body in Delhi and feel that if it was the action of non-co-operators they have disgraced themselves and their creed.[1] I repeat we cannot deliver our land through violence.

It was not a joke when I said on the Congress platform[2] that swaraj could be established in one year if there was sufficient response from the nation. Three months of this year are gone. If we are true to our salt, true to our nation, true to the songs we sing, if we are true to the *Bhagavad Gita* and the Koran, we would finish the programme in the remaining nine months and deliver Islam, the Punjab and India.

I have proposed a limited programme workable within one year, having especial regard to the educated classes. We seem to be labouring under the illusion that we cannot possibly live without Councils, law-courts and schools provided by the Government. The moment we are disillusioned we have swaraj. It is demoralizing both for the Government and the governed that a hundred thousand pilgrims[3] should dictate terms to a nation composed of three hundred millions. And how is it they can thus dictate terms? It is because we have been divided and they have ruled. I have never forgotten Hume's frank confession that the British Government was sustained by the policy of "Divide and Rule". Therefore it is that I have laid stress upon Hindu-Muslim unity as one of the most important essentials for the success of non-co-operation. But it should be no lip unity, nor bania unity; it should be a unity broad-based on a recognition of the heart. If we want to save Hinduism, I say, for God's sake do not seek to bargain with the Mussulmans. I have been going about with Maulana Shaukat Ali all these months, but I have not so much as whispered anything about the protection of the cow. My alliance with the Ali brothers is one of honour. I feel that I am on my honour, the whole of Hinduism is on its honour, and if it will not be

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, "Telegram to M. Asaf Ali", on or after 11-12-1920.

[2] At Calcutta, in September 1920

[3] The British in India

found wanting, it will do its duty towards the Mussulmans of India. Any bargaining would be degrading to us. Light brings light, not darkness, and nobility done with a noble purpose will be twice rewarded. It will be God alone who can protect the cow. Ask me not today, 'What about the cow?' Ask me after Islam is vindicated through India. Ask the Rajas what they do to entertain their English guests. Do they not provide beef and champagne for their guests? Persuade them first to stop cow-killing and then think of bargaining with Mussulmans. And how are we Hindus behaving ourselves towards the cow and her progeny? Do we treat her as our religion requires us? Not till we have set our own house in order and saved the cow from the Englishmen have we the right to plead on her behalf with the Mussulmans. And the best way of saving the cow from them is to give them unconditional help in their hour of trouble.

Similarly what do we owe to the Punjab? The whole of India was made to crawl on her belly inasmuch as a single Punjabi was made to crawl in that dirty lane in Amritsar; the whole womanhood of India was unveiled inasmuch as the innocent women of Manianwalla were unveiled by an insolent officer; and Indian childhood was dishonoured in that schoolchildren of tender age were made to walk four times a day to stated places within the Martial [Law] area in the Punjab and to salute the Union Jack, through the effect of which order two children, seven years old, died of sunstroke having been made to wait in the noonday sun.[1] In my opinion it is a sin to attend the schools and colleges conducted under the aegis of this Government so long as it has not purged itself of these crimes by proper repentance. We may not with any sense of self-respect plead before the courts of the Government when we remember that it was through the Punjab courts that innocent men were sentenced to be imprisoned and hanged. We become participators in the crime of the Government by voluntarily helping it or being helped by it.

The women of India have intuitively understood the spiritual nature of the struggle. Thousands have attended to listen to the message of non-violent non-co-operation and have given me their precious ornaments for the purpose of advancing the cause of swaraj. Is it any wonder if I believe in the possibility of gaining swaraj within a year after all these wonderful demonstrations? I would be guilty of want of faith in God if I underrated the significance of the response from the women of India. I hope that the students will do their duty. The country certainly expects the lawyers, who have hitherto led

[1] The references here are to the Punjab disorders of 1919; *vide* "Congress report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.

public agitation, to recognize the new awakening.

I have used strong language but I have done so with the greatest deliberation. I am not actuated by any feeling of revenge. I do not consider Englishmen as my enemy. I recognize the worth of many. I enjoy the privilege of having many English friends, but I am a determined enemy of the English rule as conducted at present and if the power—*tapasya*[1]—of one man could destroy it, I would certainly destroy it, if it could not be mended. An Empire that stands for injustice and breach of faith does not deserve to stand if its custodians will not repent, and non-cooperation has been devised in order to enable the nation to compel Justice.

I hope that Bengal will take her proper place in this movement of self-purification. Bengal began swadeshi and national education when the rest of India was sleeping.[2] I hope that Bengal will come to the front in this movement for gaining swaraj and gaining justice for the Khilafat and the Punjab through purification and self-sacrifice.

Young India, 22-12-1920

58. LETTER TO SARALADEVI CHOWDHARANI

CALCUTTA,
December 14, 1920

My love for you is not a task. It is one of the keenest pleasures of my life. It is based on faith in you, i.e., in your ultimate goodness. It will go only if I find you to be bad. My love is nothing if it does not draw the best out of you and make you better and purer than you are. And you must bear with me if in the process of helping you sometimes I seem to be rubbing you up the wrong way. Anyway, I am studying you and shall endeavour not to do so.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

59. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, CALCUTTA

December 14, 1920

Mahatma Gandhi began by addressing the audience as fellow-students as he thought that though he read in no college, whether national or affiliated to universities established under the aegis of the Government, every reasonable being

[1] Penance generating spiritual strength

[2] This was in 1905 and 1906 when the popular agitation against the Government resolution for partition of Bengal was in full swing.

ought to remain a student throughout his life. The president and the other two speakers who preceded him had told the audience to come to a final decision in the matter of withdrawal from schools and colleges that very evening. The speaker desired to disabuse their mind of any such idea. He desired that the students should not come to any decision that evening. He desired to appeal to their intellect and not to their emotions. Instead of wishing them to come to any decision that very evening, he wanted them to retire to their closets and be on their knees and then seek and follow the guidance of God. Mahatma Gandhi tried to make it clear that his message was not to those who did not believe in an Almighty Power Who guides all our steps.

Coming to the subject-matter of the present lecture, Mahatma Gandhi said that the task was no small one. They were face to face with a situation such as had never been faced probably at any time throughout the long period of British occupation. The British Government had stabbed Islam in the back. It was common knowledge that Mr. Lloyd George had made a solemn promise[1] to Indian Mussulmans, a promise which was repeated by him to Muslims generally and Indian Muslims in particular more than once, guaranteeing the integrity of the Turkish sovereignty. This promise Mr. Lloyd George has gone back upon and has dispossessed the Turkish Sultan of Constantinople, Thrace, Smyrna and all the fair lands of Asia Minor. It might be said by some that Constantinople was in the possession of the Turks but the speaker made bold to say that the Sultan was prisoner in Constantinople even in his own kingdom. His territory of Mesopotamia was in the hands of the British and Syria was in the occupation of the French. So long as this would remain unhealed, it would go on festering in the heart of Islam and if the Hindus wanted to do their duty by their Mussulman brothers, they ought to stand by the latter in their hour of trial. Similarly, the British Government had stabbed the heart of India through the Punjab and yet that Government was unrepentant and asked India to forget the wrongs and pleaded helplessness in the matter of the Turkish treaty. The question before them now was whether the Indians could, consistently with their self-respect and dignity, continue to associate with a Government which was responsible for the Punjab atrocities and the Turkish treaty and under whose aegis innocent men had been killed.

It was for India to make her choice. The speaker freely confessed that if these two wrongs did not stir them, the whole case for non-co-operation would go. They could not retain their title to be called a nation if they continued to be associated with such a Government. They could not co-operate so long as these wrongs remained unrighted. Two courses were open to a people so distressed: either to draw the sword or to non-co-operate with the Government. The whole of India had admitted her powerlessness to draw the sword. With himself, the speaker said, to draw the

[1] On January 5, 1918, Lloyd George had declared: ". . Nor are we fighting to deprive Turkey of its capital or of the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor and Thrace which are predominantly Turkish in race. We do not challange the maintenance of the Turkish Empire in the homeland of the Turkish race with its capital at Constantinople."

swordwas a sin, though with the majority of the Mohammedans and a considerable body of the Hindus, not to draw it was a matter of policy. It was a recognized fact that to draw the sword was an impossibility. What could we do then with a Government subduing 300 millions of men with one lakh of English soldiers?

Another question was how the Government held India under subjection. This Government, the speaker impressed upon the audience, would totter and fall to pieces immediately all co-operation was withdrawn. So long as we co-operated with the Government through the law-courts, Councils, and schools, which he called our three *mayas* or hallucinations, so long as we believed in our helplessness without any law-courts to administer justice, and Councils to legislate for us, so long as we thought ourselves helpless with regard to education without institutions controlled by the Government with which we co-operated either by patronizing it or submitting to its discipline, so long we were slaves. The question before the students was a question of duty. They could not be said to be drawn to the performance of their duty unless they were prepared to face starvation of education. The question before them was very simple— were they or were they not disgusted with the feelings of domination that prevailed in these schools? Were they filled from top to toe with the disaffection not to have anything to do with such a Government? The case of the speaker was sufficiently simple. If there was no national consciousness, if there was no sense of national self-respect, his whole case for non-co-operation fell to the ground.

He called to mind an illustration the Boer War. When President Kruger[1] threw down the challenge to the British Government all the students withdrew from schools and no provision was made for their study. On the other hand they were found to be fighting in the trenches or helping the wounded on the battle-field. They did not consider that their minds would be starved by such discontinuance of studies. How did Oxford, Cambridge and the Inns of Court send out their students during the War? Did they not go to fight in the trenches? The speaker said that he himself formed an ambulance corps for relieving the sick and the wounded from among these students for which his services were gratefully acknowledged by the very Government with which he now found it impossible to co-operate. All were fired with one ambition, viz., to defeat the enemy. The stake before India today was the same as the stake before England on that occasion. England was fighting for life, for honour. She was ready to sacrifice all because there was an assault upon the honour of England. Was not India reduced to the same condition? Had India conscience enough to be stung in her heart, to be ready for similar sacrifice in order to save these (life and honour) when they were at stake?

He then showed the audience two documents which had been placed in his hands. Students asked him in these letters what they should do after withdrawing from colleges. Medical students asked where they were to go in that case. He said that his message to them was to withdraw completely from schools dominated by the

[1] S. J. Paul Kruger (1825-1904); President of the Transvaal, 1883-1900

Government because honour demanded it. It was wrong to co-operate with the Government in any way. What would they do after withdrawing? They might break stones or take to scavenging and cleansing the stinking stables of India. He would make no promise to, or any bargain with, the students. It was their duty which could not require any reward. It was a debt to be paid with life. Their reward was to be in heaven and not in this world. The reward which they were to get here was freedom. Only those students who had a choking sensation each time they went to school had the right to leave such Government schools. [Gandhiji continued:]

If you think that you will improve in your mind if you remain there, then you should not come out. If you feel you are evolving freedom by being inside these schools, it is your bounden duty to remain. But you should remain true to your oath, true to the loyalty which you are always presupposed to have for your institution by going to the school or college. But you should never be hypocrites by going there, harbouring disaffection in your minds. Under such circumstances, it would be your bounden duty to withdraw and not only to withdraw but also to proclaim from the house-tops that it was your intention to break the entire system. Once again, I say that I make no appeal to your emotions only, but to your intellect and heart combined. You are asked to give me a patient hearing and after due consideration for some time, you should give your verdict to God. If you consider it your bounden duty to withdraw from colleges, you cannot remain there for one day more. You cannot harbour feelings of revenge and yet go to these institutions for the present in expectation of some future opportunity.

[Gandhiji added that] history, of course, abounded in such deceitful behaviour. Other nations might have resorted to treachery, chicanery and fraud but not so the non-co-operation movement which was a purifying process and sought for assistance from God and not from man. The highest sacrifice with the greatest nobility of purpose was the thing required. Consquently, it hurt him when he found any who entertained the view that students should continue to go to these institutions and yet harbour ill will against them and then strike the death-blow when the opportunity came. If they retained any spark of the *rishis* of old, if the Mussulmans retained any respect for the true fakirs who made Islam what it was and read their Koran aright, they would find that treachery and dishonesty found no place in their religion. There was no room for camouflage in such a matter. Their battle was nothing but a religious battle. If they employed Satanic methods they were doomed. What then were the students to do? He had already said that he had not come to bargain but he might assure them if they came out in a body, national institutions would not be wanting. All the leaders who seemed now to be asleep would then wake up and come to establish schools and colleges for these students. That was the case in Gujarat, that was the case in Surat. What was the fault of these leaders? They did not believe in non-violent non-co-operation and so they did not show any enthusiasm. But if all the

students came out, he did not despair even of Babu Surendranath Banerjea. By boycotting such schools and colleges, he wanted them to be self-reliant and not merely to go from one slavery to another. He wanted the students to be absolutely self-reliant, to breathe the ozone of freedom by leading a new life and to change their helplessness into self-help. Lastly, the speaker dealt with the duty of the students to their parents. He considered here the case only of those who were over 16 years of age as, according to the Hindus, boys were then friends of their parents. Mahatma Gandhi said that he could not ask them to disobey their parents wilfully. If they believed that they were right, they should try to persuade them on bended knees. They should try to convince their parents what a great wrong had been inflicted on them and there was no parent who would not respect the opinions of the son. The minds of the parents were cast in a certain mould, but their minds were so many clean slates. So there might be difference of opinion. But never should they prefer the speaker's opinion above the opinions of the parents; but if the opinion of the speaker became their own conviction they were entitled to disobey their parents. He exhorted them again not to be carried away by emotion. It was better that they should stay on rather than return after coming out in a fit of the moment. Breach of promise and dishonour would be the only result of such hasty action. He asked the students to consider fifty times before taking any steps. They should discuss the situation with their friends, parents and teachers, and if they were still convinced of the rightness of the cause, they should withdraw.

If students came out they should not underrate the devotion of those who did not withdraw. Too often had he seen taunts flung at those who remained inside. They must concede that liberty to others which they claimed for themselves. In meetings also they should not adopt Western methods of howling down or applauding a speaker. These did not help but merely interrupted the flow of thought. He asked them to give the same attention to every speaker that came before them. They should give undivided attention to the thing as theirs was a business of earnestness. If they wanted to have India free in one year, each should do all that lay within his power.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 16-12-1920

60. NOTE ON BOYCOTTING GOVERNMENT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

[About *December 14, 1920*][1]

I understand that the Wilson College students are agitated with the question whether they should leave the College or not. I wish I could be of some help in enabling them to solve the question.

[1] From the contents. Gandhiji was in Calcutta on December 14, 1920; *vide* also "Speech at students' meetig, Calcutta", 14-12-1920.

If we may not receive education through the patronage or under the influence of those who have robbed us of our wealth, we may not receive it from a Government that has robbed us of our honour and has conclusively proved untrustworthy. This Government of ours has humiliated us through its black record in the Punjab. It, that is, the imperial part of it, has violated a solemn pledge given through the Prime Minister[1] to India in general and the Mussalmans in particular. And yet it not only shows no signs of repentance but even insolently seeks to defend its conduct both regarding the Khilafat and the Punjab. I hold it to be a sin to receive any favours through it and I have therefore no hesitation in saying it is sinful for us to receive education in schools and colleges conducted by or through it. It is better to be without such education or even to suspend it till we have received redress.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy Dr. V. D. Sathaye Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

61. NOTES

REPRESSION IN BENGAL

The Government of India *communique*[2] on non-co-operation says that, for the time being, at any rate, there is to be no repression, so long as non-co-operation remains non-violent, and so long as speakers do not travel beyond the limits set by the leaders. This reads fine. I showed at the time that there was not much truth in it. Evidence is pouring in upon me that repression is going on. And now the mask is removed. The farce of trials is to be done away with and orders under the Defence of India Act are to take their place. Here is one order from Calcutta:

> Whereas the Commissioner of Police, Calcutta, is of opinion that the delivery of public harangues by you, Nagendra Nath Bhattacharji of Calcutta, is likely to incite to the commission of an offence and to a distur- bance of the public peace and resistance to and contempt of law and lawful authority, the Commissioner of Police, in pursuance of the powers vested in him under Section 62-A, Clause 3 of Act A of 1866, and Section 39A, Clause 3 of Act 11, 1866 P.C., as modified up to the 1st June, 1910, prohibits you, Nagendra Nath Bhattacharji, from delivering any public harangues for a period of one year from this date, the 6th November, 1920, within the limits of the Town and

[1] Lloyd George
[2] Released in November 1920

Suburbs of Calcutta.

The order is dated the 6th November. It is the old dodge—no reasons are given. Vague fear of a disturbance is trotted out as sufficient reason for gagging a young man. Even a farcical trial serves one useful purpose. It enables an accused person to know the reason for restriction on his liberty. Under the order quoted, Mr. Nagendra Nath Bhattacharji has no knowledge of his offence; the public has less. And yet there are people who wonder why there is hatred in the land, and then ascribe it, not to the high-handednessand intolerance betrayed by the Government, but, to non-co- operation—the one remedy which is calculated to regulate it and, ultimately, to eradicate it.

AND IN THE PUNJAB

The Punjab is not behind Bengal in the matter of administrative, as distinguished from judicial, repression. Maulana Zafar Ali Khan was tried and convicted. Now Aga Sufdar, a worker of unimpeachable character, commanding great local influence, and secretary of the Khilafat Committee, has received an administrative order not to speak in public. I have only seen a telegram to that effect. I am making further inquiries into the matter. But there appears to be no reason to doubt the accuracy of the information. Granting it to be true, the order shows that the Punjab Government cannot tolerate free speech. Lala Lajpat Rai[1], in his trenchant letters to the Lieutenant-Governor, has shown clearly that under Sir Edward Maclagan[2] the Punjabis have not fared much better than under Sir Michael O'Dwyer. No doubt, Sir Edward's methods are not so rough and ready as Sir Michael O'Dwyer's. But what difference can it be to the Punjabis whether they wear chains with or without gilt? The real article will any day be preferable to the misleading gilded one. Is the Punjab essentially freer for the milder methods of the present administrator? Do the people feel taller? It is time we realized the true situation. The spirit of the administration of India is evil, degrading and enslaving. It therefore matters little whether it is an angel who administers our affairs or Satan. My purpose in quoting Aga Sufdar's case, however, was merely to show that the acts of the Government belie its pompous declarations.

SOME DOUBTS

Babu Janakdhari Prasad was a staunch co-worker with me in Champaran.[3] He has written a long letter setting forth his reasons for

[1] 1865-1928; nationalist leader of the Punjab; journalist and educationist

[2] Who assumed office as Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab on May 26, 1919

[3] During the satyagraha there in 1917

his belief that India has a great mission before her, and that she can achieve her purpose only by non-violent non-co-operation. But he has doubts which he would have me answer publicly. The letter being long, I am withholding it. But the doubts are entitled to respect and I must endeavour to answer them. Here they are as framed by Babu Janakdhari Prasad.

(a) Is not the Non-co-operation Movement creating a sort of race hatred between Englishmen and Indians, and is it in accordance with the Divine plan of universal love and brotherhood?

(b) Does not the use of the words "devilish", "Satanic", etc., savour of unbrotherly sentiment and incite feelings of hatred?

(c) Should not the Non-co-operation Movement be conducted on strictly non-violent and non-emotional lines both in speech and action?

(d) Is there no danger of the movement going out of control and leading to violence?

As to (a), I must say that the movement is not "creating" race hatred. It certainly gives, as I have already said, disciplined expression to it. You cannot eradicate evil by ignoring it. It is because I want to promote universal brotherhood that I have taken up non-co-operation so that by self-purification, India may make the world better than it is.

As to (b), I know that the words "Satanic" and "devilish" are strong, but they relate the exact truth. They describe a system, not persons. We are bound to hate evil, if we would shun it. But by means of non-co-operation we are able to distinguish between the evil and the evil-doer; I have found no difficulty in describing a particular activity of a brother of mine to be devilish, but I am not aware of having harboured any hatred about him. Non-co-operation teaches us to love our fellowmen in spite of their faults, not by ignoring or overlooking them.

As to (c), the movement is certainly being conducted on strictly non-violent lines. That all non-co-operators have not yet thoroughly imbibed the doctrine is true. But that just shows what an evil legacy we have inherited. Emotion there is in the movement. And it will remain. A man without emotion is a man without feeling.

As to (d), there certainly is danger of the movement becom- ing violent. But we may no more drop non-violent non-co-operation because of its dangers than we may stop freedom because of the danger of its abuse.

Young India, 15-12-1920

62. DYERISM IN CHAMPARAN?

India is a land full of tragedies. Champaran probably contributes the largest number of them. *The Searchlight* of Patna has just reported one such awful tragedy. It is being investigated by a local Congress Committee of which Mr. Mazharul Haq is the chairman. I do not propose to anticipate the verdict. I understand that the matter is also engaging the Bihar Government's attention. But as I happened to be in Bettiah, together with Maulana Shaukat Ali in connection with our non-co-operation tour, I venture to give my own impressions gathered from a hurried visit to the spot.

The tragedy took place about fourteen miles from Bettiah, about the 30th November last. I do not think that the Government, i.e., the high officials, had any part in its enactment. Nor had the English planters. This seems to have been peculiarly a police matter, in which the police have acted in an irresponsible manner and without the knowledge of the higher authorities.

Its origin lies in a petty dispute between villagers that resulted in a petty assault. In connection with it a local man of influence was arrested by the police. The villagers appear to have resented it and rescued the man, and even surrounded the constables who arrested him. This proved too much for the wounded dignity of the police. The local *Daroga*, i.e., Sub-Inspector of Police, is said to have organized a loot in which, under the guidance and direction of the police, men from a neighbouring village also are said to have taken part. Houses were denuded of their contents—grain and ornaments. Women are reported to have been molested and robbed of their jewellery. One woman told me that she was made naked and dust was thrown into her eyes. Another was equally grossly maltreated while she was in the act of easing herself. The villagers had fled in a cowardly manner. Houses were shown to us in which the grain *kothis*[1] were found to be emptied and broken, grain scattered about, big boxes unlocked and opened—with the contents removed.

Needless to say that the rescued man was almost immediately rearrested and several other men, too, were arrested by the police. Among them is a local *brahmachari*. He is a man of considerable influence. He has succeeded in organizing Panchayats settling localdisputes. His activity bids fair to popularize the principle of arbitration among the villagers. The police, naturally wanting to undermine his influence and suspecting him of having had a hand in inciting the people to defy their authority (so it appears from the

[1] Large Earthen jars

evidence given to me), have arrested the *brahmachari* who is now out on bail.

I am unconcerned with the result of the trials that will now probably take place. Some of the arrested men will no doubt be convicted on concocted evidence. Of all the places in India, the most perjury committed on either side is in Champaran. Incredible as it may appear, the occurrence I have reported is not the first of its kind. The Champaran peasantry is the most helpless and the most terror-stricken of all I have seen. They dread the approach of the police and leave their villages as soon as they appear on the scene. The police have become equally demoralized: bribery and corruption are rampant among them. And each time the people have resented the police treatment, as in the case in point, they have been reduced to greater helplessness by a system of terrorism, in which the magistracy has taken no mean part on behalf of the local Dyers.

At times the police have been reprimanded by magistrates or the Government. That they do not mind. The lower police never even know anything about such reprimands; and they care less. The system of terrorism continues and flourishes.

How are the people to be helped? How is the corruption to be removed? Certainly not by courting an official inquiry. That must result in only strengthening the police. Already the police is fortifying its position. Certainly not by the villagers seeking the protection of the courts. It is my settled conviction, based on a study of the records of cases, that in the vast majority of them the people have lost both in money and in power. An isolated discharge of an innocent man is all they can show as a result of paying fortunes to the lawyers and the bribe-takers.

This police, composed mainly of our own men, must be reformed and won over by non-resistance. We have unnecessarily vilified them instead of pitying them. They are victims of a vicious and even inglorious system. I decline to believe that the Indian policemen are inherently bad and that the Government are powerless to reform them. On the contrary, the system of the Government is such as to corrupt even the most honest of men. It is based upon the practice of securing the greatest immunity for itself. It has made of prestige a fetish and has arrogated to itself the position of infallibility and protection.

Local men everywhere must therefore befriend the police, and the best way of befriending them is to cease to fear them or their authority.

In the present case, the village must be advised to forget the

wrong. If they can recover stolen property by seeking the intervention of friends, they must do so. They must patiently suffer imprisonment. As defendants, they must resolutely decline to be represented by pleaders. They must give an unvarnished version to the court. They must submit to misrepresentation, even to the taunt of having no case.

And in future, if and when such incidents happen, they must be prepared to defend themselves. It is better if they can manfully stand persecution and allow themselves to be robbed, instead of hitting in defence of their persons or property. That would indeed be their crowning triumph. But such forbearance can only be exercised out of strength and not out of weakness. Till that power is acquired, they must be prepared to resist the wrongdoer by force. When a policeman comes not to arrest but to molest, he travels beyond his authority. The citizen has then the inalienable right of treating him as a robber and dealing with him as such. He will therefore use sufficient force to prevent him from robbing. He will most decidedly use force in order to defend the honour of his womanhood. The doctrine of non-violence is not for the weak and the cowardly; it is meant for the brave and the strong. The bravest man allows himself to be killed without killing. And he desists from killing or injuring, because he knows that it is wrong to injure. Not so the villagers of Champaran. They flee from the police. They would strike and even kill a policeman if they had no fear of the law. They gain no merit of non-violence but on the contrary incur the reproach of cowardice and unmanliness, they stand condemned before Government and man.

But the workers among a people so fallen as in Champaran will have to be most careful about what they do. They and the people will put themselves in the wrong if they resist the police in the lawful execution of their office, even though the execution may prove or appear to them to be unlawful. The police must not be resisted if they arrest without a warrant. They must not take the law into their own hands but scrupulously obey it. The safeguard against any serious blunder lies in the fact that on no account are they to seek the protection of the law. If, therefore, they are in the wrong, they will invariably suffer punishment. And when they are in the right, they will most probably not suffer punishment, and they will always have the satisfaction of having saved, or attempted to save, the property, or, what is infinitely better, the honour of their women. In the case in point, it was wrong to rescue the man who was arrested even though in the opinion of the villagers he was innocent. It was wrong because thepolice had the authority in law to effect arrests. It was cowardly on their part to have fled on the approach of the police; it would have been right for them to have defended their women and their goods. If

they had not fled, they, being so numerous, would easily have saved their property and protected their women merely by standing their ground. In no case would the villagers have been justified in doing more bodily injury than was needed on the occasion. It is invariably a sign of cowardice and madness to use excessive force. A brave man does not kill a thief but arrests him and hands him to the police. A braver man uses just enough force to drive him out and thinks no more about it. The bravest realizes that the thief knows no better, reasons with him, risks being thrashed and even killed, but does not retaliate. We must at any cost cease to be cowardly and unmanly.

Young India, 15-12-1920

63. REJOINDER

Messrs Popley and Phillips have been good enough to reply to my letter "To Every Englishman in India"[1]. I recognize and appreciate the friendly spirit of their letter.[2] But I see that there are fundamental differences which must for the time being divide them and me. So long as I felt that, in spite of grievous lapses, the British Empire represented an activity for the world's and India's good, I clung to it like a child to its mother's breast. But that faith is gone. The British nation has endorsed the Punjab and the Khilafat crimes. There is no doubt a dissenting minority. But a dissenting minority that satisfies itself with a mere expression of its opinion and continues to help the wrongdoer partakes in the wrongdoing.

And when the sum total of his energy represents a minus quantity one may not pick out the plus quantities, hold them up for admiration, and ask an admiring public to help regarding them. It is a favourite design of Satan to temper evil with a show of good and thus lure the unwary into the trap. The only way the world has known of defeating Satan is by shunning him. I invite Englishmen, who could work out the ideal they believe in to join the ranks of non-co-operationists. W. T. Stead[3] prayed for the reverse of the British

[1] *Vide* "To every Englishman in India", 27-10-1920.

[2] I n this letter, written from Bangalore on November 15, Popley and Phillips had said, among other things, that they would like to become the servants of India rather than her rulers.

[3] William Thomas Stead (1849-1912); English journalist and reformer whose enterprise and originality exercised a potent influence on contemporary journalism and politics; an enthusiastic supporter of the peace movement in Great Britain

arms during the Boer War. Miss Hobhouse[1] invited the Boers to keep up the fight. The betrayal of India is much worse than the injustice done to the Boers. The Boers fought and bled for their rights. When, therefore, we are prepared to bleed, the right will have become embodied and the idolatrous world will perceive it and do homage to it.

But Messrs Popley and Phillips object that I have allied myself with those who would draw the sword if they could. I see nothing wrong in it. They represent the right no less than I do. And is it not worth while trying to prevent the unsheathing of the sword by helping to win a bloodless battle? Those who recognize the truth of the Indian position can only do God's work by assisting this non-violent campaign.

The second objection raised by these English friends is more to the point. I would be guilty of wrongdoing myself if the Muslim cause was not just. The fact is that the Muslim claim is not to perpetuate foreign domination of non-Muslim or non Turkish races. The Indian Mussulmans do not resist self-determination, but they would fight to the last the nefarious plan of exploiting Mesopotamia under the plea of self-determination. They must resist the studied attempt to humiliate Turkey, and therethrough Islam, under the false pretext of ensuring Armenian independence.

The third objection has reference to schools. I do object to missionary or any schools being carried on with Government money. It is true that it was at one time our money. Will these good missionaries be justified in educating me with funds given to them by a robber, who has robbed me of my money, religion and honour, because the money was originally mine?

I personally tolerated the financial robbery of India, but it would have been a sin to have tolerated the robbery of honour through the Punjab and of religion through Turkey. This is strong language. But nothing less would truly describe my deep conviction. Needless to add that the emptying of Government-aided or -affiliated schools does not mean starving the young mind; national schools are coming into being as fast as the others are emptied.

Messrs Popley and Phillips think that my sense of justice has been blurred by the knowledge of the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs. I hope not. I have asked friends to show me some good fruit (intended and deliberately produced) of the British occupation of

[1] Emily Hobhouse; an Englishwoman of liberal views, mentioned by Gandhiji in *An Autobiography*

India. I repeat the request. And I assure them that I shall make the amplest amends if I find that I have erred in my eagerness about the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs.

Young India, 15-12-1920

64. SPEECH AT DACCA

December 15, 1920

I had a great desire to come to Dacca when Maulana Shaukat Ali last visited this place. Today I feel a great deal of pleasure in coming here. I am sorry that this is the first time that I feel that my voice is breaking down.

This Government has done a very great injustice to the Indians. It has acted treacherously with our Muslim brothers. Every Indian knows that in the Punjab, the Indians were made to crawl on their bellies. Many innocent men have been sentenced to death by the judges of the Punjab and a great many were sent to jail. A great injustice was done to our students in the Punjab. Small children were ordered to make salaams four times. I myself think it a sin to be loyal to a Government which has done such a great injustice to us. Every Indian who loves freedom would feel just as I do. It would be his duty to destroy this Government or rectify it. (Cheers.) I am not sorry because my voice fails but you should know that the work you are going to do does not need the use of your voice. Two things are incumbent upon us: one, to convene meetings and pass some resolutions; and two, to bring the latter into practice. The opportunity has appeared before us and the greater part of ourwork should be practical. We should now give up processions, for we have hitherto seen that they have been of no use to us in India. We are lacking in the power of management. *"Hindu Mussulman kid jai"*[1] is to my consideration, a kind of prayer to God. *Bandemataram*[2] is prayer offered to *Bharat Mata* (Mother India). The *sangit* (song) of our Bengali brothers is so powerful that the like of it cannot be found in India. If you want to worship your country loyally, you should learn what they teach. In my consideration, this education should be spread among the common people. For the last 35 years we have been receiving the degenerate education with the result that we are 35 years back in progress. Our late Dadabhai

[1] Victory be to the Hindus and the Mussulmans

[2] The opening words of a national song composed by Bankimchandra Chattopadhyaya; literally, "I bow to the Mother"

Naoroji wrote[1] that the expenditure of soldiers and of railways was daily increasing. The trade of India had been made so much worse that crores of rupees were every year going away abroad. The Rowlatt Act, the Press Act[2], the compulsion of students and the unveiling of women had never been seen during the time of Dadabhai Naoroji. If you say that we have been favoured with the Council and that Lord Sinha has been appointed Governor of Bihar, then I would tell you that your slavery has now become complete. India is much worse than what she was 50 years back. The people of India are more cowardly than they were 50 years back. They had strength to draw swords 50 years back, but now they have become weaker. It is very difficult to liberate India from the bond of slavery. The Muslims have been seduced to go abroad and made to fight against the Turks and occupy Mesopotamia. Our Government solaced us with the Reform Scheme[3] and at the same time passed the Rowlatt Act. Events happened in India which caused Indians to rub their noses in the dust of disgrace. India can never forget the services that Mr. C. R. Das rendered whileworking with me in the Congress Committee of the Punjab[4] along with other fellow-workers such as Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Motilal Nehru, Harikishen Lal, Lala Giridhari Lal and Jayakar[5]. When the report[6] came out, I accepted the minimum and took an oath that either I would grow fearful or destroy this Government. We have not been able to set aside the pension of a degenerate ruler[7] who has ruined the Punjab. I have made friends with the two brothers, Shaukat Ali and Mahomed Ali, and promised before my Indian brethren that I will fight on their side and sacrifice my life till the demands of my Muslim brethren are satisfied. I will give up my life for the sake of Khilafat. Our religion does not teach us to cut the throats of Englishmen with our swords. If we could have used our swords in India, these men, Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali, would never have remained silent. They have sheathed their swords in order to render good to the Muslim community. The movement that is before you is non-violent non-co-operation. If you want to free India

[1] In his book *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India*

[2] Of 1910

[3] The scheme of Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms

[4] The Punjab Sub-committee appointed by the Congress to inquire into the Punjab disorders of April 1919

[5] M. R. Jayakar (1873-1959); Bombay lawyer and liberal leader, leading political negotiator and peacemaker

[6] The Congress report on the Punjab disorders which was published on March 25, 1920

[7] Sir Michael O'Dwyer

within a year—when I spoke "a year", I did not say it in jest—adopt it. India needs only one lesson to learn, and that is, not to be afraid. When she has learnt that, I would then understand that India has become independent. Your actions should now be practical. The two words "non-violent" and "progressive" are part and parcel of non-co-operation. We do not now possess so much strength that we can approach the cultivators and tell them not to pay taxes or ask a soldier to leave his service. We will use swords, when the time will come. He who does not draw the sword at the proper time is a fool and he who uses his sword at an improper time is also impudent. The problem of non-co-operation is before you. Indians need to remember only one thing, and that is, they should expel fear from their minds. If you do this, you will then think that India has become free. I am overwhelmed with grief when I think how very cowardly Indians have grown. Let Indians give up fear only for five years.

You cannot dispense with the two words "non-violent" and "progressive" that have been attached to the word "non-co-operation". If the people of India accept this, they will not only sacrifice their voice but their life and property, too. If our leaders go to Indian title-holders, pleaders, students and Councillors and appeal to them, it is my firm belief that they will condescend to undergo a sacrifice and will think that God is the only Being who feeds them and that Government, the courts and the Councils are not their gods. If you do this there will be no necessity of going to peasants and soldiers. The Mohammedans will then be able to save not only Islam but India, too. I congratulate the people of India in general and of Bengal in particular for the work they have done in connection with votes.[1] We shall work with patience which can win over Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and other leaders, including our brother Surendranath Banerjea, to our side.

We should work peacefully. I cannot think that intimidation can succeed in inducing our brethren to join hands with us. It gave me much pain when I learnt that night-soil was thrown over a candidate and the ear of a voter was chopped off. Certainly those were most dirty deeds. We should approach our brethren most courteously, appeal to their hearts and try to win over their hearts by means of love and kindness. If you work in this manner with patience and perseverance, I can assure you that within one year, nine months from now, India *must* become independent and the Muslims will surely free Islam from danger. I appeal to the students to think over the Punjab

[1] That is, dissuading people from voting in the elections to the Legislative Councils held in November 1920

affairs and the condition of Islam, and if you do so, you will find that this rule is a Satanic rule, this Raj is *Ravanarajya.* If you are told that you will be given free education, even then you should not go to the schools of Ravana which are full of Satanic things. I do not call any Englishman a Satan. I love Englishmen in the same way as I love Mr. Shaukat Ali and Mr. Das. But what I say is this, that this Administration is Satanic. If God gives me enough power, I will rectify this Government or end it; I will not rest until I have mended this Government. I know full well that today I am violating the Seditious Act [*sic*] of the Government—I am a loyal subject of this Government and I am also its loyal friend and as such I tell the Government to reform itself or be destroyed. I will take part in its destruction and I invite you, too, to join with me. Either we will mend this Government or destroy it. I cannot live to see the black disgrace by Englishmen with impunity—I want to meet Englishmen in the open field and tell them that we, too, do possess the same amount of strength as they do.

I wish to tell my student friends that it would be a regrettable thing if you do not understand my simple Hindustani. This shows how far we have become degenerated. This Government has acted treacherously with us. You have realized this and you should leave the educational institutions unconditionally.

From Records of the Intelligence Branch of the I.G.P., West Bengal

65. SPEECH TO STUDENTS, DACCA[1]

December 15, 1920

It is difficult for me to resist the word of a friend and a dear co-worker. I was so thoroughly bound up with my Hindi and with my theme that I was hoping to be able to finish the whole of my remarks in Hindustani. But I am helpless; Mr. Das suggests that I should speak on the topic of the students in English. I do so not without some degree of pain, but I do so also not without pleasure—pleasure, because I satisfy his desire, pain because I am compelled to make my meaning clear to you through a medium which is foreign both to you and to me. I am explaining to the students their clearest possible duty. If you, the students, have understood the purport of my remarks, and if you feel with me that this Government of ours is dominated by the spirit of Satan, if you feel with me that the net result of the activities of our Government is to tighten the bonds of slavery rather than to

[1]After his speech in Hindi at the public meeting (the preceding item), Gandhiji, at the request of C. R. Das, delivered this speech in English.

loosen them, if you feel with me that today our slavery is stronger than ever and if you feel with me that in order to vindicate the self-respect of the Punjabi, in order to vindicate the honour of Islam, you and I should do something, then I say to the students of Dacca: Consider your own immediate duty. Imagine that Satan has established schools and seminaries for the instruction of Indian youths, imagine that you have a choice between allowing your intellect and your heart to remain virgin and attending the seminaries and the colleges established by Satan. Imagine also that the youths of India are possessed with the fear of God, that you are all believing men, that you have faith in God and that you believe in the righteousness of godhead; imagine all these things and tell me whether you will choose rather to remain without any instruction or whether you will choose to go and attend the seminaries and colleges established by Satan. And, if your answer is positively in favour of leaving Satan's colleges and schools, then I tell you, I suggest to you, that my case is absolutely complete. My own position is that this Government in its nakedness is dominated by the spirit of Satan and if you want to be dominated by the spirit of God, if you want to establish the kingdom of heaven in India, if you want, that is to say, to establish what swaraj is in India, it is your bounden duty to leave these colleges and schools without any condition whatsoever. Because the instruction that you receive in these schools and colleges is not the instruction that will give you swaraj, this is not the instruction which a man ought to receive who desires freedom or liberty. It is a slave-owning state and do you imagine that a slave-owning state can possibly give you education in such a manner that you can break down the shackles that bind you in slavery? I have never yet known a slave-owner teaching his slave the price of freedom, the price of liberty. Wherever slaves have enfranchised themselves, they have done so in spite of the slave-owner. I am not now attacking the system of education, base as it is, imperfect as it is. I am simply attacking the aegis under which this imperfect, this base instruction is given to the youths of India. I consider it undesirable on our part to go to these schools and colleges to nurture disaffection. And it is disaffection I am spreading throughout the length and breadth of India. I say affection for this Government is disaffection to God. It is disaffection towards India, it is disaffection towards Islam, and we are bound to remain disaffected towards the Government until it mends its wrongs and until it bends upon its knees. I pray to God for forgiveness to retrieve the blunders that it has committed. So, my friends, I suggest to you that the choice before you is absolutely clear. The case that I have made out before you is, in my opinion, also clear. I do not for one

moment wish to suggest that you have not derived some advantages from this Government. That is only Satan's way. When Satan comes in the garb of a righteous man he is most deceptive. 'Beware of the Greeks when they approach you with their gifts'—this is a wise saying. Beware of this Government when it professes to approach you with titles, with its seats in the Councils, with judgeships, with its governorships and most of all, you, youths of India, who have a right to carry a clean slate, beware of the traps that this Government has laid for you in establishing factories for creating slaves. You may get posts under the Government. You may become Deputy Magistrates and what not. But all these are badges not of our freedom but they are badges of our slavery. If you feel that you cannot tolerate this Government for one moment, honour demands, the self-respect of India demands, that you leave these colleges and schools tomorrow. You must not harbour disaffection and dishonourable means in those schools and colleges. You must not say that you go to these schools in order to demolish this Government. In my opinion it would be disloyalty. It is not disloyalty of the Penal Code. It is not manufactured disloyalty but it is disloyalty in accordance with the eternal laws of God. If you go to these schools and colleges established by the Government you should go to these schools and colleges with a clean heart. Imagine the Governor attends the schools and you have got to stand up. You have got to sing "God save King George". An Englishman, and we as gentlemen, can pray to God to save King George but we cannot with a clear conscience cry out "God save the King" of this kingdom. That is the meaning: God save this kingdom. Does it mean that the present ruler who sits in England in the Buckingham Palace may remain alive for eternity? It means that this British Empire in which the sun never sets may remain for ever, till eternity. And if you, the youths of India, the future hope of India on whom the foundation of the nation rests, if you feel with me that it is not possible for you to get up to honour the Governor in virtue of his office when he attends your schools and colleges, that it is not possible for you to get up when "God save the King" is struck up in schools, then I say, do not go to these schools and colleges. You will be false to your traditions and you will be false to India's past.

After leaving the schools, if they are not afraid to leave the schools, I say that as soon as they leave the schools and colleges, they are masters of the liberty of India. They are custodians of the liberty of India. They have tasted the first fruit of liberty. They have laid the foundation of a career of freedom rather than a career of slavery and on that foundation you may build today and you may leave that foundation as it is. That foundation will never arise so long as you are

nurtured in these institutions. And so I appeal to the students: If you accept the case that I have made out you will leave your colleges and schools unconditionally. I have got a letter in my pocket addressed to me by a student in which he asks me what he is to do if he leaves his college. He asks me further if he may go on preaching non-co-operation. I am not such a fool. I ask him to preach nothing but I ask him to do a little bit of practice. An ounce of practice is worth tons of preaching. I want unadulterated, pure gold. And if you are ready today to sacrifice a little bit of this intellectual training that you get in these colleges and schools, if you are ready to suspend this intellectual development that you receive in these schools and colleges, then and then only you should do so for the sake of India. Remember how the Boer children did during the Boer War. Remember how the students of Cambridge and Oxford did at the time of the late War. Remember what the youths of Arabia are doing today. They are not deceived by the promise of education that the Government makes to them. Their freedom is more precious to them than the training of their intellect. What is the training of intellect of a slavish mind if that training of intellect does not bring him freedom? If you believe that you are taking a training in schools and colleges that will secure the liberty of India or of Islam, remain in your schools and colleges. If you believe with me that those badges of educated Indians got through these schools and colleges are badges of slavery, then you will desert these schools and colleges tomorrow without a single doubt.

This student has given me another piece of information which is painful. He tells me that when Babu Bipin Chandra Pal[1] rises on the platform in Dacca and tells you something against leaving the schools until new schools and colleges are established, the students hiss him off the platform. That is not education in non-co-operation. That is not India's tradition and the least you have of these Western traditions the best. Babu Bipin Chandra Pal and I differ as poles asunder. We have differed now for all the years that I have had the pleasure of knowing him but all the same I will not be a party to this; let me not be guilty of encouraging any rough conduct on the part of the youths of India towards him or anybody. After all, Babu Bipin Chandra Pal has served his country to the best of his light and he feels even now that he is serving his country to the best of his light. His advice to students to wait till the new schools and colleges are established is bad advice. But that is a matter of opinion. This is a difference of opinion. He sincerely believes that to ask the students to give up the education

[1] 1858-1932; educationist, journalist, orator and political leader of Bengal

they now receive is wrong. I believe that the youths of India should rather remain without education.[1]

Mr. Das tells me that Babu Bipin Chandra Pal never said that during the course of his lectures. Then the case is still worse on the part of those who hiss him off the stage. It is necessary for you to listen with attention to every speaker. It is necessary on our part that we should trust every speaker.

We ought to have sufficient freedom in ourselves to form our own judgment. We shall not be able to lead this nation to the promised goal unless we are capable of sifting wheat from chaff, unless we are able to distinguish between error of judgment and wise advice, unless we are able to exercise our faculty of discrimination. But let us not forget ourselves and insult a speaker who stands up on the platform. I give you one recipe which I gave to the Gujarat students. If you believe that a particular speaker is insincere—there are speakers in India who are insincere,—even then you are not entitled to hiss him, you are not entitled to show any disrespect to him. But you are entitled to leave the stage and leave the audience. When the students hissed Mrs. Besant[2] it cut me to the quick. I feel that these students who claimed to be non-co-operationists had done the highest disservice to the cause and had done something which was disgraceful on their part from the non-co-operator's standpoint. I suggested to them that if they did not wish to listen to Mrs. Besant, if they found that Mrs. Besant's remarks irritated them, if they found that she did not do justice to the cause, they were entitled to withdraw from the stage but they were not entitled to show disregard to a venerable lady. I say even if a hypocritical speaker appears on the stage you are bound in common courtesy to give him a hearing.

Young men of Dacca, I ask you to join the banner of non-co-operation. Understand please that this is a battle of self purification; it is a call upon you to exercise common self-restraint, it is a call upon you to exercise your own judgment and not slavishly to follow anybody else. I ask you not to follow the judgment of others. If you feel, if your heart endorses what I am saying to you, if you can assimilate what I say to you, then and then only you are justified in leaving your schools and colleges. If you feel what I have said, it

[1] At this stage, C. R. Das interrupted to remark that he had attended all the meetings addressed by Bipin Chandra Pal and that Pal had never given the advice attributed to him.

[2] Annie Besant (1847-1933); president, Theosophical Society, 1907-33; founded Central Hindu College at Banaras, 1898; organized Indian Home Rule League; president, Indian National Congress, 1917

would be your sacred duty—because your parents may not endorse what I have said—even respectfully to disobey them if they call upon you not to leave these schools and colleges. But the condition of this disobedience is perfect civility, perfect self-restraint and not dishonouring your parents. If I know the parents of India, I know that you, the youths of India, will be able even to persuade your parents in the granting of permission to leave your schools and colleges if you are in earnest. I think that the parents of India will have a perfect right to warn you against leaving your schools and colleges, against being carried away by the eloquence of any indifferent or good speaker. You have been in the habit of being carried off your feet. Therefore if your parents warn you, think fifty times. It is wise.

I ask you young Indians, if you hold with me that this is a sacred duty—to leave these schools and colleges unconditionally — you are to do so at once. But you must pray to your God confining yourself within your closets and see whether it is the voice of clear conscience. And, if you are satisfied, then check yourself by going to your parents, by going to your elders and your teachers, and if still you remain unconvinced and if you feel that you must leave these schools and colleges, then, consistently with full regard for your parents, it is your sacred duty to leave these schools and colleges. This is the command of the Hindu shastras. This is the command of the holy Koran. If you are satisfied you will have no hesitation in leaving your schools and colleges.

One thing more and I have done. You want new schools and colleges in place of the old. I am aware of that. Whilst I ask you to leave these schools and colleges unconditionally I know that the duty rests upon the leaders to establish schools and colleges and they shall do what is best for you. But I ask you to have sufficient faith in yourselves. I want you to have sufficient faith in your leaders. You will have to create the want and immediately the leaders are sure that you do not want to go to the established schools and colleges that are affiliated to the universities, that very moment you will find them providing institutions for you. May God give you strength. May God give you health. May God give you faith to see your path quite clear.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-12-1920

66. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[ON WAY TO CALCUTTA,]
Thursday [*December 16, 1920*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

We shall be in Calcutta in a few hours. If you can manage somehow to build the house for Dr. Mehta[2], do build it. Should we not learn, ourselves, to spin well-twisted good quality yarn? It would be good if through Kale's[3] experiments such yarn could be produced even on the ordinary spinning-wheel.

Be solicitous for Lakshmidas[4]. Personally, I liked his nature very much. See if the spinning-wheel made by Kale can be kept working for eight hours at a stretch.

Let me know what you have done about the document which was to be executed. I myself will be out touring for a month.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Revashankar has also come along this time.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5984. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

67. DISCUSSION ABOARD THE "GURKHA"[5]

December 16, 1920

I[NDIAN]: The immediate aim of non-co-operation, then, is to protest against injustice, isn't it?

G[ANDHIJI]: No, it is not protest, but purification. Through self-purification, purification of the other party.

[1] Gandhiji arrived in Calcutta from Dacca on this date, which fell on a Thursday.

[2] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta, for whom a house was built near the Ashram

[3] One of the competitors for the prize announced in connection with a particular type of spinning-wheel

[4] Lakshmidas P. Asar; an inmate of the Satyagraha Ashram who specialized in khadi and village industries

[5] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of the tour. The discussion took place during Gandhiji's voyage from Narayanganj to Golando on his way back from Dacca to Calcutta. The interlocutors were two barristers, an Indian named Mitra and an Englishman named Meyer.

E[NGLISHMAN]: And to dissociate yourselves from sin?

G. Quite so.

E. Well, do you feel that you have succeeded in bringing about such purification in any degree?

G. I have been touring the country these days and I am quite surprised to observe how people are learning self-restraint and self-reliance. Even the peasants are developing both these qualities and I feel that British officers, too, have not remained unaffected. Their minds, too, are being purified.

E. Through this purification, what would you have the British do? In what respect do you want their conduct to change?

G. I wish to bring about a state of affairs in which every Englishman would look upon every Indian as his equal. I want to bring down the Englishman from the superior heights from which he talks and to make him think of even the most ordinary Indian labourer as his equal. I want to create a state of affairs in which he would not slight an Indian in any dealings with the latter, would, on the contrary, in all affairs deal with him as with an equal partner. On no other terms can the Englishman have a place in India. The moment the British and the Indians both come to feel this sense of equality, feel it as a reality, my country will have won its freedom. And to bring about this result, it will be enough if the fetish they make of prestige and dignity is destroyed. What do you find today on all sides? Indians afraid of the British—Indians concealing their thoughts from others. What can be more degrading than this?

E. Don't you think you are asking too much when you say that every Englishman should look upon even a labourer in India as his equal? Does every Indian gentleman do so? It would be reason if you merely asked that an Englishman should behave towards Indians as he would towards other Englishmen. He should behave towards an Indian labourer as any English squire would behave towards his farmers.

G. Wonderful. You have put it so much more beautifully than I. That is just what I mean.

I. So, then, you say even the immediate aim of non-co-operation with an unjust Government is purification irrespective of whether purification does or does not bring any material benefits?

G. When we have gone through a full measure of untainted self-suffering, material benefits will follow as a matter of course. For instance, nothing will then remain to be done in regard to the Punjab atrocities. Not only will none of those guilty of the Punjab crimes have any place in India, it will also be impossible to pay salary or pension to any of them from our treasury.

E. Have you, then, reserved punishment only for the British? Crimes were committed even by Indians—common Indians. What about them?

G. This is an astonishing question. We have been punished for our crimes a thousand times more severely than we deserved. I assure you that not only have all the guilty been punished, but hundreds of innocent people also have been killed. Innocent people have had to suffer imprisonment. Even children suffered. Innocent women were humiliated. The victims of the Jallianwala massacre, too, were innocent people. What punishment more severe than this can you think of? However, I have said nothing about punishing British officers. All that I have suggested is that they should not still continue to receive Indian money and to hold any titles or posts. As for punishing them, the only punishment for some of them can be hanging. My religion has no room for this. I do not know what India wants.

Talking of this subject, I remember an incident. When Mr. Andrews compared the Jallianwala Bagh massacre to the massacre of Glencoe[1], I hastened to publish in *Young India* even an account of the latter. I did that only in order to show the revulsion Mr. Andrews must have felt at the cruelty of the Jallianwala massacre. But on rereading the account, I felt that Mr. Andrews had been a little unjust and I felt quite unhappy about the matter. I saw Principal Rudra[2] had a talk with him; he also thought as I did. But I realize today the aptness of Mr. Andrews' comparison. I now feel that the Jallianwala massacre was even more wicked, more reprehensible than the other one, for there is a whole world of difference between the state of civilization then and now.

I. Why do you say that the Government has attacked our religion? It was but one partner in the Grand Council of the victorious Allies.

G. I am surprised to hear a man like you asking such a question at this hour of the day. The leading part in planning the dismemberment of Turkey was taken by England.[3] The Prime Minister's[4] actions are now recoiling on himself. Having outraged his nonconformist conscience, he has, in order to satisfy it, had to go back on his promise[5] and has hurt the Muslims thereby.

I. Well, let's turn to another matter. You have been asking the students to

[1] In Scotland. The incident took place in 1692.

[2] Sushil Kumar Rudra, then principal of St. Stephen's College, Delhi

[3] Under the Peace Treaty after the conclusion of World War I

[4] Lloyd George

[5] Of January 5, 1918; *vide* footnote 1, "Speech at students' meeting, Calcutta", 14-12-1920.

leave their schools, but do you make any alternative arrangements for their education?[1]

* * *

I. Is the present educational system bad, then?

G. The question doesn't arise at all. But I have no objection to replying to it. I say, "Yes, it is bad." The medium of education being English has doubled the load on the students' brains. How should I explain to you what is in my mind? Men like Professor Jadunath Sarkar[2] say that the class educated under the system of a foreign medium has lost its intellectual vigour. Our imaginative and creative faculties have been completely destroyed. The whole of our time is taken up with learning the pronunciation and the idiom of a foreign tongue. From its very nature this is mere drudgery, and the result has been that we function like blotting-paper before Western civilization; instead of imbibing the best from it, we have become its superficial imitators. The second result is that a gulf has been created between us and the masses. We cannot explain to them in a language which they will understand even the elements of hygiene and public health, let alone politics. We have become the modern counterparts of the Brahmins of old days; in fact, we are worse, for the Brahmins didn't mean ill. They were the trustees of the nation's culture. We are not even that. Actually, we have been misusing our education, behaving towards the common people as if we were superior. I should like you to cross-examine me on this matter. Let me say, however, that these views of mine are not recent but are the fruit of many years' experience.

E. We have never thought about this aspect of the matter, and so all we can say is that we shall now think about it.

G. That's right. I forgot one thing. I forgot to say that the system has killed us spiritually. Since you have been worshippers of secular education, the Hindus did not get any religious education. In England, the result has not been quite so bad. There the priests arrange to provide some religious education.

I. The thing is that you do not want your children to be educated with robbed money; am I right?

G. Yes, not only not with robbed money, but not under the

[1] Mahadev Desai record that Gandhiji replied to this question with a detailed account of the educational movement then in progress in Gujarat, but does not report the answer.

[2] 1870-1958; educationist and historian; vice-chancellor, Calcutta University, 1926-8

robber's flag either. I have said that we should have nothing to do with schools controlled by a Government which has forfeited our loyalty and our love. I shall tell you a simple thing. There was a time when not only did I myself use to sing "God save the King" with the greatest fervour but had even got my sons, who did not know English, to learn it by heart. When I returned from Africa to Rajkot, I taught the anthem to the students of the Training College also, for I thought that every loyal citizen must know it. But what is the position today? I certainly cannot lay my hand on my heart and sing it or ask anyone else to sing it. I would say that as a good man, King George should live long. But I cannot bring myself to pray that an Empire which has debased itself before man and God should live a moment longer.

I. You said you did not care what the actual system of education was.

G. Yes, that is so.

I. Our universities are run by Indians; their policies are also determined by Indians.

G. Yes, that is true. If the people who run the universities would listen to me, I would simply ask them to tear up their charters. Then I would say that the universities were mine. If they protest that in that case Government grants would stop, I am prepared to give them a guarantee that I would get the funds. All that I am asking them to do is to make the universities national. What did I tell even Panditji[1]? "Return the charter to the Viceroy and, if the Maharajas[2] want their money back, return even that. We shall meet the deficit by begging. If you have an incomparable gift of begging from Maharajas, I have some gift of begging from the common people."

I. But what harm has the "charter" done?

G. Why, with the charter comes all that the Government means. It is because of its charter that the Hindu University will honour the Duke of Connaught. How can I stand this? No; I tell you the truth. Mrs. Besant was right when she once said that I wanted a political revolution. Only, the revolution should not be a simple revolution but an evolutionary revolution. But a revolution, I think, there must be. There is no alternative. Just see how the Government has lost all sense of decency. Look at the shameless public statement it has issued recently. Weaving an elaborate web of big phrases, the Government say that at present they have given freedom to the Press, that they do not intend to gag anyone. But actually what are they doing? Why did

[1] Madan Mohan Malaviya

[2] Indian princes who had contributed liberally to the funds for the Benares Hindu University

they gag the silent worker of the Punjab, Aga Sufdar? He has nothing of the fanatic in him; I have not seen another silent worker like him in the Punjab. And only the other day, Babu Shyam Sunder Chakravarti of *The Servant* told me that he had received a warning from the Government. Why? Is it for reproducing Mr. Rajagopalachari's[1] article "Suggestion to Voters" published in *Young India?* This is an intolerable situation.

I. Let us now turn to courts. What do you have in mind when you ask lawyers to leave courts and give up practice?

G. I want to shatter the Government's prestige. It is these courts and schools that strengthen the foundation on which its prestige rests. It is with them that the Government has ensnared the people.

I. How will disputes be settled, then?

G. Shall I tell you my experience? In the course of my practice, I got 75 per cent of my cases settled out of court, and I was considered an expert in getting cases settled in this way. I had earned a name there for my impartiality. And, therefore, as soon as the party received a notice from me, he came running to me and requested a settlement. Many people felt obliged for this reason to engage two solicitors. If they did not get things their way with me, they would approach another solicitor to fight their case. I accepted only clean cases.

E. Do you think there will be many litigants who will have such trust?

G. If 50 per cent of the litigants avoid going to courts, the number of cases will be reduced by 50 per cent. I have been told that 50 per cent of the cases are created by touts. Mr. Das said that this was not so in Calcutta but others told me that he had no experience about this.

A Calcutta pleader who had been following the conversation intervened at this point to remark that mofussil courts were full of touts.

I. Maybe, but I am talking about cities. The Bengal Chamber of Commerce has set up an "Arbitration Tribunal". The Chamber is said to be an influential body, bat the number of business men's cases going to courts has not gone down.

G. It is possible, for the number of lawyers has not decreased.

I. What effect will it have if a solitary individual gives up practice?

G. It is bound to have some; effect, relatively speaking. I would certainly say that the tottering structure of the Government's prestige

[1]Chakravarti Rajagopalachari (1879-); lawyer, journalist, author and statesman; Governor-General of India, 1948-50

has received one more push by Pandit Motilal Nehru's giving up practice. You may ask Sir Harcourt Butler.

E. You have been dissuading intending litigants, too, from going to courts; haven't you?

G. Yes.

E. But how will that be? In your case, the litigants trusted you. You could only settle the affairs of those who approached you with a clean conscience and with clean hands. You didn't even look at others with unclean hands who might come to you. What will you do about such people? There will hardly be any cases in which both the parties have clean consciences and clean hands.

G. Without the least hesitation, I would make a gift of the unclean ones to the Government.

I. I hope you know that we have not come to you to quarrel with you, but only to understand. We will ask only one more question. Isn't it true that the non-co-operation of your followers rests on malice and hatred?

G. Yes. An English friend from Madras has also written to me about this.

E. I understand your principle, but the tongues of your followers utter undiluted poison.

G. Yes, yes, but my position is that a noble action, whether done with love or hatred, cannot but yield fruit. Whether truth is spoken out of fear or purposefully, it cannot but have its fruit.

I. Your principle is: hate the sin, but not the sinner. But that of your followers seems to be the reverse of this—hate the sinner; there is no need to hate sin.

G. Are you not being unjust? Some hate both sin and the sinner. It is because they hate sin that they have been renouncing so much, have come forward to make such heavy sacrifices. Do you think anyone who merely hated the sinner could make these sacrifices? Never.

E. Your fundamental principle is not to associate yourself with sinners. Then how can you work with ungodly colleagues? How can a man working from the exalted position that you take work with impure instruments?

G. Will you compare the Government's ungodliness with the imperfections of my colleagues? Consider a little further and you will understand. Any reformer—and I am a reformer—is bound to carry on with whatever instruments are available to him—not impure instruments, but, say, imperfect instruments.

I. We have given you so much trouble today. Kindly excuse us. I have been till now opposing non-co-operation, but today I realize that the non

co-operation I opposed was not non-co-operation as I understand it from you today. We are both grateful to you.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-12-1920

68. LETTER TO K. W. BHATTACHARYA

[*December 16, 1920*][1]

DEAR SIR,

I have only just received your letter of the 29th September last. Could you send me more details of the strike and the cutting of the *Times of Assam*?

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 7285

69. LETTER TO SARALADEVI CHOWDHARANI[2]

December 17, 1920

I love you more [for] loving me less for any hate you may see in me. And you would be right in your regret over my being engaged in N[on]-C[o-]O[peration], if it was a matter of politics with me. As it is, with me it is my religion. *I am gathering together all the forces of hate and directing them in a proper channel.* Hatred is a sign of weakness as contempt of insolent power. If I could but show our countrymen that we need not fear the English, we will cease to hate them. A brave man or woman never hates. Hatred is essentially the vice of cowards. N[on-]C[o-]O[peration] is self-purification. Even as the dirt comes to the surface when you are purifying sugar, so does our weakness come to the surface whilst we are purifying ourselves. But what I like about your letter is your clear position. Your love for me is based on your belief in my purity and gentleness. I am worth nothing if I have not these and I should hold myself unfit for all the renunciation of yours described in your previous letter.

I have been analysing my love for you. I have reached a definite meaning of spiritual wife. It is a partnership between two persons of

[1] Noted as the date of reply on the addressee's letter of September 29, 1920 (S.N. 7285)

[2] This was written in reply to a letter in which Saraladevi had expressed her regret over Gandhiji's being engaged in non-co-operation which, in her opinion, was based upon hatred. She had stated that she could have loved him more if he had got rid of hatred.

the opposite sex where the physical is wholly absent. It is therefore possible between brother and sister, father and daughter. It is possible only between two *brahmacharis* in thought, word and deed. I have felt drawn to you, because I have recognized in you an identity of ideals and aspirations and a complete selfsurrender. You have been 'wife' because you have recognized in me a fuller fruition of the common ideal than in yourself. For this spiritual partnership to subsist, there must be complete coincidence not from faith, but from knowledge. It is a meeting between two kindred spirits. This partnership can take place whilst either party is physically married to another, but only if they are living as celibates. Spiritual partnership is possible even between husband and wife. It transcends physical relations and persists beyond the grave. It follows from what I have stated that spiritual partners can never be physically wedded either in this life or a future, for it is possible only if there is no carnality, latent or patent. Are you spiritual wife to me of that description? Have we that exquisite purity, that perfect coincidence, that perfect merging, that identity of ideals, that self-forgetfulness, that fixity of purpose, that trustfulness? For me I can answer plainly that it is only an aspiration. I am unworthy to have that companionship with you. I require in me an infinitely higher purity than I possess in thought. I am too physically attached to you to be worthy of enjoying that sacred association with you. By physical attachment I here mean I am too much affected by your weaknesses. I must not be teacher to you, if I am your spiritual husband, if coincidence or merging is felt. On the contrary there are sharp differences between you and me so often. So far as I can see our relationship, it is one of brother and sister. I must lay down the law for you, and thus ruffle you. I must plead gently like a brother ever taking care to use the right word even as I do to my oldest sister. I must not be father, husband, friend, teacher all rolled in one. This is the big letter I promised. With dearest love I still subscribe myself,

Yours,

LAW-GIVER

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy; Narayan Desai

70. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING NAGPUR

December 18, 1920

We two brothers[1] have been touring India for some months past. Our Chairman did not introduce the Maulana Sahib for he was your

[1] Gandhiji and Shaukat Ali

guest at Chhindwara[1] for quite a long time. You know the reason why he was the Government's guest there and what work we are doing these days. I congratulate the pleaders who have given up practice and tell them that what they have done is not enough. You have invited the Congress to meet in Nagpur;[2] what should you do to deserve thehonour? I have been told that the Central Provinces have been doing excellent work and that the Congress session here will be a success. It is good to hear that the movement to wean away people from drinking is making good progress here. I tell you even success in this will mean our victory. We seek to employ non-co-operation and, therefore, if we drink and excite our brains and indulge in unworthy behaviour, that would be no way of remaining peaceful. Unless we remain so, we shall not succeed in seeing the end of the Empire in our lifetime. If we wish to mend it or end it, there is no weapon other than non-violent non-co-operation. I have been saying that this Empire is steeped in Satanism. If we wish to reduce Satan to submission, drive him hack, we shall not succeed in our aim by resorting to Satanism. We should seek help from God alone. Our fight is one of dharma against *adharma*. Though guilty of the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs, the Empire does not want to apologize. It asks us to forget these issues and do what else we would. I tell both Hindus and Muslims that until there is real unity between them it will be impossible to see the end of this Empire, that such unity is an essential condition. Non-violent non-co-operation is our highest duty. There can be no cooperation between dharma and *adharma*. It requires courage to stop receiving help from Satan. It is with this aim in view that Jamnalalji[3] is here today presiding over this meeting. When abandoning a house on fire, we don't pause to think whether we should or should not abandon it. By entering councils, we cannot undo either the Punjab or the Khilafat wrong. Only by winning swaraj can we secure justice for the Punjab.

Seven crore Muslims and 23 crore Hindus can live together on

[1] Where Shaukat Ali and Mahomed Ali were held under surveillance under the Defence of India Act, 1915

[2] Gandhiji arrived in Nagpur on December 18; the Congress session was to be held there on December 26.

[3] Jamnalal Bajaj (1889-1942); merchant, banker, social worker and philanthropist; devoted follower of Gandhiji; served as treasurer of the Congress for many years. He was chairman of the reception committee for the Nagpur session of the Congress.

no condition except that of unity.

Till now, we passed resolutions; now has come the time for action. If, before the Congress meets, you want to show that you have done something, you should see to it that all schools and colleges in Nagpur are vacated.

There is a serious difference of opinion between Shri Khaparde and me, but I do not like anyone to harass him. I want that he should have the same freedom which I want for myself. If we achieve good results through action, we shall see that Shri Khaparde and all others like him will come over to us.

We should have the strength to make within a year all preparations for managing our affairs. We should have faith that we shall succeed in getting justice on the Punjab issue. It is because of our timidity that a handful of Englishmen rule over us. We should have swaraj in order that there be no repetition of such treachery in future. Until we get ready for concrete work, we shall be able to achieve nothing. I cannot understand what sacrifice is involved in swadeshi. We have an opportunity such as the people in Egypt and Korea never had. There are 30 crores of people in India. Egypt has only a handful. We two brothers are an object lesson for the whole country. We live as two blood brothers would. Neither has any reserve in his heart.

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. V

71. MORE ABOUT "ANTYAJAS"

I feel sorry that *Navjivan* has had to join the present controversy about *Antyajas.* Since, however, the issue has a bearing on the success of non-co-operation, I hope the readers of *Navajivan* will forgive me for taking up its space. It is *Navajivan's* duty to place before the people the naked truth as the workers who run the journal see it.

The path of non-co-operation is both easy and difficult. It is easy for those who understand it. For the others, it is difficult; for, not understanding it, they get confused again and again.

Problems do not get solved by our trying to put them out of sight. The path of non-co-operation will be the easier if we solve a problem the moment it arises. Unless we co-operate among ourselves, we shall not acquire the strength to employ non-co-operation against the Government. We shall not succeed if we look upon six crores of

Antyajas as *Dheds*[1] despise them. An Empire which has set the Hindus and the Muslims against each other will not hesitate to create enmity between the *Antyajas* and the rest of the Hindus.

In forming our judgments, it is desirable that we are not led away by wrong information. The resolution that *Antyajas* will be admitted to schools recognized by the Vidyapith[2] is not a new rule; it merely asserts what is implied in the constitution of the Vidyapith. The interpretation which it contains has not been inspired by Mr. Andrews; he asked a question and the resolution was a reply to hisquestion. The reply would have been the same if anyone else had asked the question.

I have said earlier that the resolution was not mine or that of any individual; it was of the Vidyapith's senate as a whole.[3]

The resolution was adopted not as a measure of expediency but as an imperative moral obligation.

Its adoption is not the work of the new wind from the West but only means accepting what Hinduism says. I myself would not sacrifice dharma for the sake of swaraj. I have been fighting for swaraj because I think of it as an essential aspect of dharma.

I would be ready even to sacrifice the country for the sake of dharma; such is the ideal which inspires me. My patriotism is subject to my concern for dharma and, therefore, if the interest of the country conflicts with that of dharma, I would be ready to sacrifice the former. I look upon it as *adharma* to treat *Antyajas* as untouchables, and I have not the slightest wish to advance the interests of the country through *adharma*. I am convinced that we shall get swaraj only when there is religious awakening in the country. This awakening seems to be near at hand and that is the reason why I believe it possible to win swaraj within one year. What I have said so far will have made it clear that, if I have been striving hard to eradicate the practice of untouchability, it is because I look upon it as *adharma*.

I am sure Hinduism does not at all teach that there can be any person who is born an untouchable and must die an untouchable. To describe such *adharma* as dharma is to be guilty of a further violation of dharma. I have been entreating the Hindus of Gujarat to give up, on rational grounds, the idea of untouchability which in any case is not followed in practice. If the idea had been right from the point of view of dharma and had disappeared in practice at the present time, I

[1] One of the communities traditionally regarded as untouchable

[2] Gujarat Vidyapith

[3] *Vide* "To *Vaishnavas*", 5-12-1920.

would have wished to revive it in the Vidyapith. But it is because I believe that the idea is contrary to dharma that I have welcomed the resolution of the Vidyapith and request all Gujaratis to do the same.

I realize that it is difficult to overcome old prejudices. Those who see the practice of untouchability in the light of a prejudice and cannot get rid of it all at once have my sympathy. But I merely pity those who keep it alive because they think it is dharma.

It is dangerous to give credence to everything which may be said in the name of Hinduism or the shastras. I, therefore, request theGujarati Hindus not to be misled by the resolution passed [at the meeting held] under the presidentship of the Shankaracharya.

It is very necessary, however, that in all our discussions we remain peaceful. This is especially true of the non-co-operator. I read in one of the articles of Shastri Vasantram that someone has held out a threat to him. We shall not succeed in solving religious issues or coming to right decisions in any other matter by resorting to violence. We can decide between right and wrong only by reasoning with one another in a respectful manner. All moral problems will be resolved by each one of us acting on his ideas. The truth will emerge when we try to do so. Trying to throw dust up at the sky we only fill our own eyes with it. Where is the need to argue this? Those who enjoy throwing dust will certainly throw it and learn, from experience, what is right and what is not. The effort to win swaraj while clinging to the sin of untouchability, a load of dirt, is like the attempt to throw dust up at the sky.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-12-1920

72. NOTES

BEHOLD THE WOMAN

We may learn much from the women of India. I wish the Englishmen as well as our own unbelievers in the efficacy or the necessity of non-co-operation were to witness the demonstration of the women of India in favour of non-co-operation. Everywhere they have flocked in their hundreds and thousands. They have even come out of their *purdahs* and given Maulana Shaukat Ali and me their blessings. They have instinctively understood the purity of the movement. Their hearts have been touched. They have given up their pearl and diamond bangles, their necklaces and their rings. All have come—both rich and poor—and given us their blessings and

accompanied them with rich gifts, rich because of the absolutely voluntary nature thereof. They have understood, too, that the purity of the poor women of India is hidden in the music of the spinning-wheel. They do not flock to the standard of non-co-operation through hatred.

THE OTHER SIDE

But the men are impatient and grievously err as they are reported to have done at Delhi and in Bengal. It was cruel and sinful to deny the rights of burial to the corpse of a man whom the so-called non-co-operators (if they were non-co-operators) disliked.[1] It was filthy to throw, at a place in East Bengal, night soil on a candidate who had stood for election as a Council member, or to cut [off] the ears of a voter for daring to exercise his vote.[2] These are just the ways of defeating our own purpose. Non-co-operation is non-violent not merely in regard to the Englishmen and Government officials. It has to be equally so as between ourselves. A co-operator is as much entitled to freedom of action, speech and thought as the tallest among non-co-operators. Non-co-operation is directed against all slavery. Every non-co-operator therefore retards the function of his cause by resorting to violence. It is a sure sign of want of faith in his mission.

MORE REPRESSION

Whether it is in answer to the Delhi incident or what, the Seditious Meetings' Act is again applied to Delhi and a certain volunteer corps disbanded.[3] I am unable to say much about this repressive measure in the absence of more information. But this I know that the orders of disbandment, prohibition of meetings, posters, etc., must be scrupulously carried out if the campaign is to be quickly carried to a successful issue. We must be able to conduct the movement without public meetings and placards if need be. The disbanding order has not much meaning. No government in the world can prevent a man from rendering service if he wants to. He does not need a label to enable him to do so. But volunteers must not act as the police is reported to do. They must not terrorize those who do not fall in with their views. They are servants, not masters of the nation.

Young India, 22-12-1920

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, "*Vaishnavas* and *Antyajas*", 12-12-1920.

[2] Both the incidents had occurred in November 1920, during elections to Legislative Councils.

[3] *Vide* "Telegram to M. Asaf Ali", on or after December 11, 1920.

73. THE SIN OF SECRECY

One of the curses of India is often the sin of secrecy. For fear of an unknown consequence we talk in whispers. Nowhere has this secrecy oppressed me more than in Bengal. Everybody wishes to speak to you 'in private'. The spectacle of innocent young men looking around before opening their lips to see that no third party overhears their conversation has given me the greatest grief. Every stranger is suspected of belonging to the Secret Service. I have been warned to beware of strangers. The cup of my misery was filled when I was told that the unknown student who presided at the students' meeting belonged to the Secret Service department. I could recall the names of at least two prominent leaders who are suspected in high Indian circles of being spies of the Government.

I feel thankful to God that for years past I have come to regard secrecy as a sin more especially in politics. If we realized the presence of God as witness to all we say and do, we would not have anything to conceal from anybody on earth. For, we would not think unclean thoughts before our Maker, much less speak them. It is uncleanness that seeks secrecy and darkness. The tendency of human nature is to hide dirt, we do not want to see or touch dirty things: we want to put them out of sight. And so must it be with our speech. I would suggest that we should avoid even thinking thoughts we would hide from the world.

This desire for secrecy has bred cowardice amongst us and has made us dissemble our speech. The best and the quickest way of getting rid of this corroding and degrading Secret Service is for us to make a final effort to think everything aloud, have no privileged conversation with any soul on earth and to cease to fear the spy. We must ignore his presence and treat everyone as a friend entitled to know all our thoughts and plans. I know that I have achieved most satisfactory results from evolving the boldest of my plans in broad daylight. I have never lost a minute's peace for having detectives by my side. The public may not know that I have been shadowed throughout my stay in India. That has not only not worried me but I have even taken friendly services from these gentlemen: many have apologized for having to shadow me. As a rule, what I have spoken in their presence has already been published to the world. The result is that now I do not even notice the presence of these men and I do not know that the Government is much the wiser for having watched my movements through its secret agency. My opinion is that these agents accompany me as a matter of form or routine. They certainly never bother me. I venture to make a present of my experience to every

young man in Bengal and for that matter in India. No one need think that my public position, and not my openness, saves me from offensive attention. It is the simplest thing to see that the moment you cease to dread the presence of the spy and therefore refuse to treat him as such, that moment his presence ceases to offend you. Soon the Government will feel ashamed to have its Secret Service department or, if it does not, the secret police will be sick of an occupation which serves no use.

Non-co-operation is essentially a cleansing process. It deals with causes rather than symptoms. The detective department is a symptom of the secrecy which is the cause. Removal of secrecy brings about the full disappearance of the Secret Service without further effort. The Press Act is a symptom of the disease of cowardice. If we would boldly declare our intentions, the Press Act will die of inanition. The beginners will have to suffer for their so called daring. I hear that *The Servant* of Calcutta has been served with a warning for its tenacity to take over an article from *Young India*[1] condensing Mr. Rajagopalachari's admirable instructions to voters. I notice, too, that the most telling passages of Calcutta have been omitted by the Press evidently for fear of the censor. I would far rather see a complete stoppage of a newspaper if the editor cannot, without fear of the consequence, freely express his sentiments or publish those which he approves.

Non-co-operation, while it gladly avails itself of the assistance that may be rendered by the Press, is, has to be, by its very nature, independent of the Press. There can be no doubt that every thought we print is being printed on sufferance. As soon as its circulation takes effect, the Government, for the sake of its existence, will try to prohibit it. We may not expect this or any government to commit suicide. It must either reform or repress.

In the ordinary course repression must precede reform under a despotic Government such as ours. The stoppage of the circulation of potent ideas that may destroy the Government or compel repentance will be the least among the weapons in its repressive armoury. We must therefore devise methods of circulating our ideas unless and until the whole Press becomes fearless, defies consequences and publishes ideas, even when it is in disagreement with them, just for the purpose of securing its freedom. An editor with an original idea or an effective prescription for India's ills can easily write them out, a hundred hands can copy them, many more can read them out to thousands of listeners. I do hope therefore that non-co-operation

[1] Of November 10, 1920

editors, at any rate, will not refrain from expressing their thoughts for fear of the Press Act. They should regard it as sinful to keep their thoughts secret—a waste of energy to conduct a newspaper that cramps their thoughts. It is negation of one's calling for an editor to have to suppress his best thoughts.

Young India, 22-12-1920

74. SPEECH AT WEAVERS' CONFERENCE, NAGPUR

December 25, 1920

Though I am extremely busy with other work, I could not refuse the invitation to preside over this Conference. True, I am not a weaver by profession, but I regard myself as a farmer-weaver. In the court also I have stated this as my profession. I think that the regeneration of India will be difficult, if not impossible, without the uplift of its weavers. And the subject, therefore, came up for discussion at the last Congress. At the time that India passed into subjection, there was no other country in the world which produced cloth in the same quantity and of the same quality as it did. All this cloth was being produced when there was not a single mill here. From khadi to Dacca muslin, every variety of cloth was available then. There was enough to meet the country's requirements of cloth and leave a surplus which was exported. Foreigners were drawn to this country as visitors. The man who invented the sacred spinning-wheel had shown a greater genius than Hargreaves (inventor of the spinning jenny), and greater than anyone else in the country ever did. In the days of our prosperity, there was a spinning-mill in every home. Brahma saw that if India was to remain free her women should be persuaded to look upon it as their sacred duty to produce some yarn [every day] That is why it happened that he did not create a distinct community whose function would be to spin but made that obligatory on all women. Our downfall began with the coming of the East India Company. From that time, weavers and spinners started giving up their profession. As in Champaran the people were obliged to part with their indigo crop, so [in those times] they were pressed to give yarn, so much so that in sheer desperation people cut off their fingers. After this, started the imports from Lancashire. If you wish to bring about regeneration of dharma, you should atone for the past and revive the old professions of spinning and weaving. Because we have forsaken the path of dharma, we have been doing evil things in the name of swadeshi. I,

therefore, ask people to produce more yarn and more cloth so that they may protect dharma. If they do not do this, we shall certainly have to import cloth from outside. Shri Fazalbhoy[1] and Shri Wadia[2] tell us that for fifty years more we shall not be in a position to produce all the cloth we need. Shri Gokhale had argued that this would be impossible for a hundred years. They are mistaken. They do not know that every home in the country can have a spinning-wheel and a loom.

So long as spinning and weaving have not been taken up, it is no service to the country to open swadeshi stores; it is actually a sin to do so. The handkerchief given to me is made with foreign yarn.

I see a very small number of weavers here. Of the three classes of them, I do not see any members of the untouchable communities. A gentleman wrote to inform me that such members would not be admitted. I told him that in that case I also would leave the place. The next time you hold a conference, invite weavers of this class.

Your manner of carrying on your profesion is not the right one. If you follow it for the benefit of the country, you should produce additional yarn, or have it produced by others, and weave that. You will find it difficult to weave this yarn, but you should not mind it. If young boys and girls spin daily for one hour, all the cotton we produce can be turned into yarn. It would not be right for me to ask you to produce fine cloth for the country at this time. A fire of sorrow is raging at present and I want, if I can, to burn the men and women of India to ashes in this fire. I must tell the weavers that it is a matter of grief that the cloth which they wear is not produced by themselves.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-1-1921

75. SPEECH AT "ANTYAJ" CONFERENCE, NAGPUR

December 25, 1920

I feel very happy in taking the chair at this meeting.[3]

I am very glad to see present here such a large number of people belonging to non-*Antyaj* communities.

[1] Mill-owners of Bombay

[2] *ibid*

[3] Before proceeding, Gandhiji, who had begun in Hindi, asked the audience if they followed him, to which they replied in the affirmative.

I have been studying the conditions of the *Antyaj* communities for many years now. On this matter, I differ from our great reformers. I do not follow the same method of work as they do. I have been thinking over their method of work ever since my return to India, but I have not felt that the work I have been doing is inadequate or that the work of others is better than mine. It is possible, of course, that my work is inadequate, but my faith is that it is not.

My method of work is this. The practice of untouchability is a sin and should be eradicated. I look upon it as my duty to eradicate this sin; it is, however, to be eradicated on the initiative of the other Hindus, not the *Antyajas.* The practice of untouchability is an excrescence on Hinduism. I said once in Madras that I saw terrible Satanism in our Empire and that, if I could not mend it, I wanted to end it; likewise, I believe that the practice of untouchability is a great Satanism in Hinduism.

The late Mr. Gokhale, on being acquainted with all the facts about our position in South Africa, asked why it should surprise us that our condition was so miserable. Just as we look upon the *Antyajas* as untouchables, so the Europeans look upon all of us, Hindus and Muslims, as untouchables. We may not reside in their midst, nor enjoy the rights which they do. The whites of South Africa have reduced Indians to the same miserable plight to which we Hindus have reduced the *Antyajas.* In the Colonies of the Empire, outside India, the conduct of the whites [towards Indians] is exactly like that of the Hindus towards the *Antyajas.* It was this which prompted Shri Gokhale to say that we were tasting the fruit of the Satanism practised by Hindu society, that it had committed a great sin, had been guilty of extreme Satanism, and that this was the reason for our wretched plight in South Africa. I immediately agreed. What he said was perfectly right. My subsequent experience has confirmed it.

I am a Hindu myself and I claim to be an orthodox one. It is my further claim that I am a *sanatani* Hindu. At present I am engaged in a great dispute with the Hindus in Gujarat. They, especially the *Vaishnavas,* reject my claim to be called a *sanatani* Hindu, but I cling to it and assert that I am one. This is one great evil in Hindu society. There are many others, but those you may eradicate, if not today, after a thousand years and the delay may be forgiven. This practice, however, of regarding the *Antyajas* as untouchables is intolerable to me. I cannot endure it. The Hindus owe it as a duty to make a

determined effort to purify Hinduism and eradicate this practice of untouchability. I have said to the Hindus, and say it again today, that till Hindu society is purged of this sin, swaraj is an impossibility. If you trust my words, I tell you that I am more pained by this evil being a part of the Hindus' religion than the *Antyajas* are by their being treated as untouchables. While the practice remains in Hindu society, I feel ashamed and feel unhappy even to call myself a Hindu. The speakers[1], who preceded me and spoke to you in Marathi, made a kind of attack [on me]. I would be [they said] worthy of the title [Mahatma] which the country has conferred on me—but which I have not accepted—only when Hinduism was purged of the evil of untouchability. When I am pouring out my heart, please do not interrupt me with applause. I ask you, tell me if you can, is there any method of work by following which one individual may end a very old practice? If anyone could show me such a way, I would end the thing today. But it is a difficult task to get Hindu society to admit its error and correct it.

I put into practice what I say. I have had to suffer much in trying to carry my wife with me in what I have been doing. By referring to my ordeals I want to show to you, *Antyajas* and Hindus, that this is a task full of great difficulties. I don't wish to suggest that we should on that account give it up. Only we should take thought about the method of work. This is my reason for not approving of your resolutions.

You want to pass a resolution to the effect that the *Antyajas* should be free to enter all the temples. How is this possible? So long as *Varnashram-dharma* occupies the central place in Hinduism, it is in vain that you ask that every Hindu should be free to enter a temple right now. It is impossible to get society to accept this. It is not prepared for this yet. I know from experience that there are many temples which some other communities besides the *Antyajas* are also forbidden to enter. Some of the temples in Madras are not open even to me. I don't feel unhappy about this. I am not even prepared to say that this betrays the Hindus' narrow outlook or that it is a wrong they

[1] The mover and the seconder of the proposal requesting Gandhiji to accept the presidentship of the Congress had said, as reported by Mahadev Desai in his Diary: ". . . . Mahatmaji has hitherto done nothing for us (untouchables). He sympathizes with our efforts. We do not need Gandhiji's services for securing improvement in our conditions. We can do this even by getting favourable laws enacted by the State, but untouchability cannot be eradicated by laws."

are committing. Maybe it is, but we should consider the line of thinking behind it. If their action is inspired by considerations of discipline, I would not say that everyone should be free to go into any temple. There are a variety of sects in India and I do not want to see them wiped out. Hindu society has not fallen because of sects or on account of *Varnashram.* It has fallen because we have forgotten the beauty and the discipline which lie behind *Varnashram. You* should understand that *Varnashram-dharma* has nothing to do with the practice of untouchability. To say that the former is evil, that it is a sin, is to apply Western standards, and I do not accept them. It is by accepting them that India has fallen. I do not want to have the blessings and the goodwill of the *Antyajas* for what I have not done and, therefore, I wish to make it plain to you on this occasion that I have associated myself with these proceedings most reluctantly. For I am with the *Antyajas* and the reformers in wanting to eradicate the evil of untouchability, but I do not go along with them in the other things which you and they want to be done. I cannot tell a Hindu—for I do not believe in it—that he may freely eat and drink in the company of any other Hindus or that all Hindus should freely intermarry. This is not necessary. A man who refrains from these things, I say, may be a man of self-control or he may even be a man of licence. I believe that it is with a view to self-control that people refrain from them.

I myself eat and drink in the company of *Antyajas. I* have adopted the daughter[1] of an *Antyaj* family and she is dearer to me than my very life. I should not, however, tell Hindu society that it might abandon its self-control. I believe that society has a place even for one like me. It has a place for anyone who lives as I do, without being a sannyasi. Just as I would eat something offered by a Muslim, if it was otherwise acceptable, so I would accept anything offered by an *Antyaj*. But I should not like to compel other Hindus to do likewise, for it would mean their casting off self-control, the self-control which protects Hindu society. To abolish *Varnashram* or the restrictions about eating and drinking and to eradicate the evil of untouchability—these two are not quite the same thing. One is Satanism, the other means self-control. I am a student and I have been

[1] Lakshmi, daughter of Dudhabhai and Danibehn who were admitted as inmates of the Ashram at Sabarmati soon after it was founded in May 1915. She was entrusted to the care of Gandhiji in October 1920. *Vide* "Speech to students and teachers, Surat", 6-10-1920 & "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 9-10-1920.

studying this matter. If, therefore, I ever feel that I have been mistaken, I will forthwith admit my error; at the moment, however, I am ready to declare that I see nothing but hypocrisy, nothing but Satanism, in those who have been defending the practice of untouchability. It is Satanism which they are defending.

I have explained my limitations and the task to which I have addressed myself, as also my method of work. I do not believe that by working among the *Antyajas* and educating them, the reformers will succeed in eradicating the practice of untouchability. I know quite a few people who speak much on platforms but hang back when the occasion may require them to touch [an *Antyaj*]. This method is not mine and I want to tell you that it is not the way to bring about reforms. On the other hand, those who argue that they will change their practice when Hindu society has corrected its error also weary me with their talk. I have been telling the *Antyajas* that I for one would most certainly offer non-co-operation against a sin of this kind. I may tell all those other than *Antyajas* present here that, should all our efforts to eradicate this evil fail, it may even be that, alone, I shall offer non-co-operation against this sin of society—against Hindu society. I don't think it so difficult to end the Satanism of the Empire. That Satanism is of a worldly nature. The Satanism of untouchability has taken on the colour of religion. Hindus are convinced that it is a sin to touch the *Antyajas.* It is a difficult task to make them see reason. We are so much in the grip of lethargy and inertia, so deeply sunk in misery, that we can't even think. Our religious heads, too, are so deeply sunk in ignorance that it is impossible to explain things to them. Eradicating the evil of untouchability means in fact persuading Hindu society of its need. It will be impossible for the *Antyajas* to destroy the crores of Hindus and end the evil of untouchability. If the practice is enjoined in the Vedas or the *Manusmriti,* they ought to be replaced. But where are the men who will write new scriptures? I am a man of the world and lay no claim to being a religious leader. With many shortcomings myself, how can I lay down a moral and ethical code for the Hindus? I may only persuade them to do what I want by making myself worthy of their compassion.

The task is full of difficulties. However, if our reformers only realize that to seek to eradicate this evil by destroying Hindu society is a futile attempt, they will be convinced that they will achieve their purpose only by being patient. I tell you, my *Antyaj* friends, you are

as much Hindus as I am, as much entitled to the privileges of Hinduism as I am. If you understand it properly, you have in your own hands the weapons you need, much as we have in our own hands the weapons we need to see an end of the Empire. Just as begging willnot avail us for this purpose, so also the means of ending the practice of untouchability is in the hands of the *Antyajas* themselves.

If they ask me to teach them non-co-operation, I am ready to start this very evening. Non-co-operation is a process of self-purification. India is different from other lands and, therefore, we do not seek to get what we want by making things hot for the British. What, then, is the way to purify ourselves? Hindus say that the *Antyajas* drink, that they eat anything and everything, that they do not observe rules of personal cleanliness, that they kill cows. I do not believe that all this is true. No one who claims to be a Hindu can eat beef. If the *Antyajas* want to employ non-co-operation, they should give up drinking and eating beef or, at any rate, killing cows. I do not ask the tanners to give up their work. Englishmen do this work but we don't mind saluting them. These days even Brahmins do it. I see no uncleanliness in doing sanitary work. I have myself done that work for a long time, and I like doing it. My mother taught me that it is holy work. Though it means handling unclean things, the work itself is holy. Anyone who does it and looks upon it as holy work will go to heaven. You can remain in the Hindu fold without giving it up. If anyone offers you left-over food or cooked food, you should refuse to accept it and ask him to give you grains instead. Be clean in your habits. When you have finished your work of cleaning latrines, change your dress. Though doing this work, you should observe as much cleanliness as my mother did. You will ask me how you are to get clothes into which you may change; you should, in that case, tell the Hindus that you will not work unless you get Rs. 15 or 20 or 30, whatever you think you need, you can tell them that you perform an essential service for society, in the same way that carpenters and blacksmiths do. Make yourselves fearless. I know the *Antyajas* of Gujarat, know their nature. I teach them this same thing, that they should end the evil of untouchability by their own strength, that they should live as thorough-going Hindus so that other Hindus may honour them instead of despising them.

I want to get the thing done through you or through Hindu society itself. I ask you to make yourselves fit for the rights which you

demand. By saying so, I do not wish to suggest that you are not already fit. When I ask the country to be fit for swaraj, I do not implythat it is unfit. I only ask it to be fitter than it is. I tell the *Antyajas*, likewise, that they have a right to be free, to be the equals of any other Hindu; I ask them, however, to do *tapashcharya* and be fitter for these things.

Speaking of *tapashcharya*, I should like to tell you of two incidents in my life. After I had started the Satyagraha Ashram in Ahmedabad, I admitted to it an *Antyaj* friend, named Dudhabhai, and his wife. How did our Hindus behave at the time ? Dudhabhai's wife was not allowed to draw water from the well which we had been using. I told them that, in that case, I, too, would not avail myself of that well. I had a share in the use of that well. But I let it go. How did Dudhabhai behave? He remained perfectly calm, bearing the abuse in silence. With this *tapashcharya*, the difficulty was overcome in three days, the people having realized that Dudhabhai, too, was free to draw water from that well. This same Dudhabhai's daughter, Lakshmi, lives in my house, moving like [Goddess] Lakshmi indeed. If all of you learnt to do the tapashcharya which Dudhabhai did, your suffering would be over this very day.

And now I address myself to Hindus other than *Antyajas* and tell them that they should be brave and get rid of this sin of theirs. I believe that I am a religious man. You may even say that I am superstitious. I believe that so long as you have not rid yourselves of this sin, have not begged forgiveness of the *Antyajas*, *you* will be visited with no end of misfortunes. Know that the practice of untouchability is a sin. If you can, by your own voluntary effort, purge yourselves of the evils in you, you will have freedom for the asking.

I will cite another instance to show the flexibility of Hinduism. When I returned from South Africa, I had, accompanying me, a boy named Naidoo belonging to the *Panchama* community. Shri Natesan[1] is a sincere worker in the cause of the *Antyajas.* Once I was to stay in his house when I was in Madras on my way to Ahmedabad. Many friends asked me if I knew what I was doing. Natesan's mother [they said] was so orthodox in her ideas that it would be the death of the old

[1] G. A. Natesan; author, journalist and nationalist politician; later joined the Liberal Party; sometime member of the Council of State and the Tariff Board; founder of the publishing house of G. A. Natesan & Co.; editor; *Indian Review*

lady to know that I was accompanied by an *Antyaj* boy. I told them that I would prefer to avoid Natesan's house rather than send away the boy elsewhere. Natesan, however, is a straightforward man. He went to his mother and told her the real fact. She said the boy was welcome. She had understood that a boy accompanying me could not lack cleanliness. I, too, had seen that he did not. We stayed in his house and drew our water from the very same well which the lady was using. What does this incident prove ? That like Natesan, other casteHindus can succeed, by the purity of their character and their straight forwardness, in winning over their mothers and sisters. The point is that this problem can be solved only through the sincerity of caste Hindus and the *tapashcharya* of the *Antyajas.*

I pray to God to give wisdom and patience to the *Antyajas* so that they may not turn away from the path of dharma. On behalf of the Hindus, I pray to God that He may save Hindu society from this sin, from this Satanism.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-1-1921

76. MY NOTES

LANGUAGE OF "NAVAJIVAN"

Moving about all the time in the course of my tours, I am not able to write about my experiences and reflections at such great length as I should like to; I, therefore, content myself for the present with brief notes and beg leave to place before readers some important ones.

I am happy that *Navajivan* is read by hack-drivers and workers. Two such readers have written to me to say that I should not permit difficult words like *asprishyata*[1] and *Maharashtra-yatra*[2] *to* be used in the paper. I should like to satisfy readers like these but it would not be proper, either, to lower the quality of the language. The workers, too, should exert themselves a little and learn to follow cultivated language. They should seek others' help to understand words which they do not follow.

Our language, Gujarati, is used by three classes of people:

[1] Untouchability
[2] Maharashtra tour

Hindus, Muslims and Parsis. Each class has developed its own dialect and, besides, the three communities keep so much aloof from one another that none of them acquires acquaintance with the language of the other two. Few Hindus read books written by Parsis. True, there are the writings of Khabardar[1] and others which are an exception, but as a rule Parsis write for Parsis, Muslims for Muslims and Hindus for Hindus. When the feeling of oneness is born among us, when especially we come to have all our education in schools through Gujarati and Gujarati comes to be respected by Gujaratis, all of us will learn to write one and the same language. Meanwhile, an effort is made to keep [the language of] *Navajivan* as simple as possible; but we cannot avoid using certain word, which it is likely that Muslim readers will not easily follow. They should take some pains to learn such words.

NATIONAL LANGUAGE

While on the subject of language, some experiences about Hindustani come to my mind. My use of this language is full of errors of grammar. Even so people listen to my Hindustani with love. At some places I tell students that I am ready to speak in English, but they prefer Hindustani. There were in particular three such occasions, in Allahabad, in Patna and in Nagpur, and on each one the students wanted me to speak in Hindustani. Everyone had believed that in Dacca I would have no option but to speak in English, but the people asked for Hindustani and listened to my speech with attention. I see that those public workers, like me, who speak Hindustani with facility find their path clear wherever they go in India. There is some difficulty only in the Bengal and Madras presidencies. Experience shows every day that, with growing awakening among the ordinary people, public speakers have no choice but to speak in Hindustani once they leave their province. It is very necessary that such speakers in Gujarat, if they wish to work on the all-India plane, should learn Hindustani.

AWAKENING AMONG WOMEN

What is true about language is also true about women. Just as our educated class has neglected the mother tongue and the national language, thereby cutting itself away from the general mass of the people, so also have we neglected women. We believe that they have

[1] Ardeshar Faramji Khabardar, a Parsi poet

no contribution to make to the national life and, in consequence, they have taken no part in public life so far. In this matter and in that of language, we have so far believed that without receiving English education and attending schools we simply cannot learn how to serve the country. This belief has been put into our heads by the Government and now we find it difficult to get rid of it. Unless we take a B.A. degree, we cannot get a post in Government service; without such a post we cannot have a position of authority and without authority we cannot be happy; and so we have come to believe that without English education we cannot serve the people. Having had this amount of education, we become "Sahibs" and, like the [English] "Sahibs", the Indian "Sahibs" also look upon the masses as untouchables. This is the reason why the latter have taken little part in the efforts towards national regeneration.

I have met thousands of women. I talked to them about swaraj, about the Punjab, tried to popularize swadeshi among them and explained to them how today we had only one dharma, non-co-operation, for winning swaraj. The women understood all this. They had had no English education. Rich and poor, but most of them uneducated, these women gave me their blessings and their jewellery. Some gave bangles set with diamonds and pearls, some gave pearl necklaces, others gave diamond rings and still others gold chains. Of finger-rings and ear-rings of gold, there was no counting. The poor among them gave their anklets of silver. With practically no effort, I obtained from women in Gujarat, the South, the United Provinces, Bihar, Bengal and the Central Provinces about 50 thousand [rupees] in jewellery and cash. Nothing was given out of false regard [for me]; everyone gave voluntarily and with a promise not to ask for new jewellery till swaraj was won. With such awakening among women, why may I not believe that we are bound to get swaraj within a year? And this is but the beginning. These women had not come to the meetings with the thought of giving anything, nor had they consulted their husbands before coming. If, nevertheless, so much has been collected, why may I not trust that, with the sacrifice of only a little of what the women spend on their persons, we can start and run new schools in India?

PARSI RUSTOMJEE'S GIFT

The well-known Sheth Rustomjee Jivanji[1] of Natal has addressed

[1] A prominent Natal Indian who took a leading part in the satyagraha campaigns in South Africa.

a letter to me. Translated, it reads as under.[1]

Everyone in South Africa knows Sheth Rustomjee. He has always taken the fullest part in public life and has also made numerous charities. During the satyagraha there, he suffered a year's rigorous imprisonment. He had a great share, too, in uniting Hindus and Muslims. He is now making his contribution to the public work here. I will consult friends and announce in a short time how this offer will be utilized. Meanwhile, I may mention in passing that Sheth Rustomjee has taken the sting out of the charge that Parsis are taking no part in non-co-operation; it should also be noted that Sheth Bomanji, the well-known millionaire of Bombay, has been acting in the same manner. I am sure the non-co-operation movement is so pure that no class of people, whether Parsis or Christians or Jews, who have made this country their own, will be able to keep aloof from it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-12-l920

77. SPEECH AT CONGRESS SESSION, NAGPUR[2]

December 26, 1920

Gandhiji . . . wished that the president's speech should be heard with respect and patience. India was in the midst of a great controversy. The country was divided into two camps. He wished both sides should hear the president with patience and obey his order. The president was a satyagrahi. It was just possible that every finding of his might not be liked by all. He wished that even those who differed from him would give a respectful hearing.

Continuing, he said that he found somebody smoking in the *pandal*[3]; it might cause some danger. He appealed to the audienee to abstain from smoking in the *pandal.* Besides, it was not Indian etiquette. In conclusion, he again appealed to the audience to give everybody a patient hearing and said their silence would convince him that God would help the Indians in their spiritual cause. He further exhorted the audience to hear speakers in the language in which they would like to address the meeting. He personally liked Hindi to be the language of the Congress but at present it could not be enforced.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 30-12-l920

[1] This letter, not reproduced here, offered a sum of Rs. 40,000 for school buildings in four villages, provided the local population undertook to meet the cost of running them.

[2] The speech was made on the opening day of the session when Gandhiji seconded the proposal for electing Vijayaraghavachariar as president of the Congress.

[3] Temporary enclosure erected for special occasions

78. SPEECH ON CONGRESS ELECTIONS, NAGPUR[1]

December 26, 1920

Mr. Gandhi . . . impressed upon all non-co-operationists that whatever their grievances might be and whether the election had been rightly held or not they should refrain from any exhibition of temper or violence. If Mr. C. R. Das would conscientiously declare that the election of this morning had been rightly held, then he would ask the Bengal non-co-operators to accept that decision, and if they stillhad any grievance he would ask them to withdraw from the subjects committee and not to take any active part in the proceedings of the Congress, and he himself wouldgo out and keep out with them, leaving the conduct of affairs in the Congress toMr. Shaukat Ali.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 30-12-1920

79. SPEECH 0N NEW CONGRESS CREED, NAGPUR[2]

December 28, 1920

The resolution which I have the honour to move is as follows:

> The object of the Indian National Congress is the attainment of swaraj by the people of India by all legitimate and peaceful means.

I do not propose to detain you for any length of time over proposing this resolution to you in a few English words. I am already absolved from that infliction because Lala Lajpat Rai has already arrived and he has undertaken the task of explaining that resolution to you in English. I just want to say a few words, personal words, to those who may not have followed my Hindustani. In my humble opinion, the Congress will have done the rightest thing if it unanimously adopts this resolution.

There are only two kinds of objection, so far as I understand, that will be advanced from this platform. One is, that we may not today think of dissolving the British connection. What I say is that it is

[1] The speech was made when Gandhiji heard complaints regarding the election of delegates to the subjects committee, held in the morning. Ultimately fresh elections were ordered by the president.

[2] The speech was made at the commencement of the debate on the draft Creed Resolution at the meeting of the subjects committee.

derogatory to national dignity to think of permanence of British connection at any cost. (Hear, hear.) We are labouring under a grievous wrong which it is the personal duty of every Indian to get redressed. This British Government not only refuses to redress the wrong but it refuses to acknowledge its mistakes, and so long as it retains that attitude it is not possible for us to say that all that we want to get is by retaining the British connection. No matter what difficulties lie in our path, we must make the clearest possible declaration to the world and to the whole of India that we may not possibly have the British connection if the British people will not do this elementary justice. I do not for one moment suggest that we want to end the British connection at all costs unconditionally. If the British connection is for the advancement of India we do not want to destroy it. But if it is inconsistent with our national self-respect, then it is our bounden duty to destroy it. (Hear, hear.) There is room in this resolution for both; those who believe that by retaining the British connection we can purify ourselves and purify the British people and those who have no such belief. As for instance, take the extreme case of Mr. Andrews. He says all hope for India is gone for keeping the British connection. He says there must be complete severance, complete independence. (Hear, hear.) There is room enough in this creed for a man like Mr. Andrews also. Take another illustration—a man like myself or my brother Shaukat Ali. There is certainly no room for us if we have eternally to subscribe to the doctrine that, whether these wrongs are redressed or not, we shall have to evolve ourselves within the British Empire: there is no room for me in that creed. Therefore, this creed is elastic enough to take in both shades of opinion, and the British people will have to beware that, if they do not want to do justice, it will be the bounden duty of every Indian to destroy that Empire.

Then we have some argument as to the means. I will have the right of reply, so I do not want to address myself on that question now.

I want just now to wind up my remarks with a personal appeal drawing your attention to an object-lesson that was presented in the Bengal camp yesterday. If you want swaraj, you have got a demonstration of how to get swaraj. There was a little bit of skirmish, a little bit of squabble and a little bit of difference in the Bengal camp, as there will always be differences so long as the world lasts. I have

known differences between husband and wife because I am still a husband. I have noticed differences between parents and children because I am still a father of four sons and they are all strong enough to destroy their father so far as bodily strength is concerned. So I possess that varied experience of husband and parent. I know that we shall always have squabbles, we shall always have differences. But the lesson that I want to draw your attention to is that I had the honour and privilege of addressing both parties.[1] They gave me their undivided attention and, what is more, they showed their attachment, their affection and their fellowship for me by accepting the humble advice that I had the honour of tendering to them, and I advised them: "I am not here to distribute justice; the justice that can be awarded is only through our worthy President. But I ask you not to go to the President. You need not worry him. If you are strong, if you are brave, if you are intent upon getting swaraj, and if you really want to revise the creed, then you will bottle up your rage, you will bottle up all the feelings of injustice that may rankle in your hearts and forget these things here under this very roof." And I told them to forget their differences, to forget the wrongs. I do not want to tell you or go into the history of that incident. Probably most of you know. I simply want to invite your attention to the fact. I do not say they have settled their differences. I hope they have. But I do know that they undertook to forget the differences. They undertook not to worry the President, they undertook not to make any demonstration here or in the subjects committee, and all honour to those who listened to that advice.[2] I only want my Bengal friends and all the other friends, who have come to this great assembly with a fixed determination, to seek nothing but the betterment of their country, to seek nothing but the advance of their respective rights, to seek nothing but the conservation of the national honour. I appeal to everyone of you to copy the example set by those who felt aggrieved and who felt that their heads were broken. I know, before we are done with this great battle on which we have embarked at the special session of the Congress[3], we have to go probably, possibly, through a sea of blood, but let it not be said of us or any of us that we are guilty of shedding blood, but let it be said

[1] One led by C. R. Das and the other by Jitendralal Banerjee

[2] All Bengal delegates attended the open session of the Congress despite rumours to the effect that the group led by Jitendralal Banerjee would not attend it on account of differences regarding the election to the subjects committee.

[3] Held at Calcutta in September 1920

by generations yet to be born that we suffered, that we shed not somebody's blood but our own; and so I have no hesitation in saying that I do not want to show much sympathy for those who had their heads broken or who were said to be even in danger of losing their lives. What does it matter? It is much better to die at the hands at least of our own countrymen. What is there to revenge ourselves about or upon? So I ask everyone of you that if at any time there is blood boiling within you against some fellow countryman of yours, even though he may be in the employ of the government, even though he may be in the secret service, or he may belong to the detective department, you will take care not to be offended and not to return blow for blow. Understand that the very moment you return the blow from the detective your cause is lost. That is your non-violent campaign and so I ask everyone of you not to retaliate but to bottle up all your rage, to dismiss your rage from you, and you will rise braver men. I am here to congratulate those who have restrained themselves from going to the President and bringing the dispute before him. Therefore I appeal to those who feel aggrieved to feel that they will have done the right thing in forgetting it and if they have not forgotten I ask them to try to forget the thing—and that is the object-lesson to which I wanted to draw your attention.

If you want to carry this resolution do not carry it only by acclamation, though I shall want your acclamation for this resolution. But I want you to accompany the carrying out of this resolution with a faith and a resolution, which nothing on earth can move, that you are intent upon getting swaraj at the earliest possible moment, and that you are intent upon getting swaraj by means that is legitimate, that is honourable, and by means that is non-violent, that is peaceful. You have resolved upon this thing: that, so far as we can see today, we cannot give battle to this Government by means of steel but we can give battle by exercising what I have so often called soul-force and soul-force is not the prerogative of one man or a sannyasi or even of a so-called saint. Soul-force is the prerogative of every human being, female or male, and therefore I ask my countrymen, if they want to accept this resolution, to accept it with that fixed determination and to understand that it is inaugurated under such good and favourable auspices as I have described to you. I have done. If there is anything which I have got to explain I shall do so in my reply. I thank you very much for giving me this patient hearing. May God grant that you will pass this resolution unanimously. May God grant that you will

alsohave the courage and the ability to carry out the resolution and that within one year. (Loud and continued cheers.)[1]

Report of the Thirty-fifth Session of the Indian National Congress

80. SPEECH AT CONCLUSION OF SUBJECTS COMMITTEE DEBATE[2]

December 28, 1920

I have before me the original resolution along with the various amendments, including one about our remaining in the Empire and another suggesting omission of the word "republic". I still maintain that, if our grievances remain unredressed, we should sever the British connection. This is why we are amending the constitution. If redress is available, the possibility of arriving at a compromise on swaraj through discussions is not ruled out. There is no trickery in this. In the form proposed, the Congress creed leaves the door open to both parties. If this is trickery, we should welcome it. Legitimate and peaceful means are the very foundation of the Congress programme. We should proclaim to the Europeans that their lives are safe in our country, that their guns and other things are no weapons of destruction but are mere toys. At the moment, there seems to be no possibility of violence. So far we addressed ourselves to the educated

[1] M. R. Jayakar, in *The Story of My Life*, Vol. I, pp. 414-5, Asia Publishing House, 1958, quotes the following paragraphs as occurring in this speech:

"Now [since the Surat Congress of 1907] about thirteen years have rolled by and many events have since happened which practically make it compulsory, almost obligatory, to change the creed and I am prepared here to say that it could not be changed in a better way than is proposed. I say it is only a development of the policy which was adopted at the last Session at Calcutta in passing the Resolution of Non-co-operation. What does this change of creed aim at? A notice to the British public and the British Government that although we do not at the present moment aim, directly aim, to get out of this British Empire, if we remain in it we shall not remain at the dictation of anybody. We shall remain there by our own free choice and free will.

"The phrase 'Swarajya' has been deliberately used for the purpose of enabling us to remain within this Commonwealth if we choose, when that Commonwealth has been established or go out of it when we like.

"I just want to tell you one word: The paths may be long and tedious. The goal may be distant, though I hope it is not. The task may be difficult. But there is nothing impossible before a nation of 315 millions. If we decide to do our duty, to do our duty manfully, fearlessly, in a spirit of selfless devotion to the interest of the country, what we are aiming at we shall achieve at no distant time."

[2] On the draft resolution on the creed of the Congress.

classes, but now we should address ourselves to the masses. If we can have swaraj only through unworthy means, that swaraj itself will be an unworthy thing. If we wish to undo the humiliation offered to Islam we should remain peaceful, otherwise the movement would collapse. If we take to violence, the Congress will be declared an illegal body and crushed out of existence. We should achieve our goal by honourable means. "Responsible government"is a misleading phrase. No dictator will rise to power in India since swaraj will be rule by the people themselves. If the people in the country themselves want dictatorship, nobody can prevent its rise.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-1-1921

81. SPEECH ON CREED RESOLUTION AT PLENARY SESSION OF CONGRESS

December 28, 1920

The Resolution means that the aim of the National Congress is to achieve swaraj, and that by just, pure and peaceful means. The Congress believes that we should secure swaraj as early as possible, this very day if we can have it.

In this Resolution, the Congress also indicates what we should do to achieve swaraj. It says that we do not want to secure it by the power of the sword. We do not want it through falsehood or by sacrificing truth. On the contrary, our means should be as pure as our aim. The Resolution, therefore, means that we pledge ourselves to secure swaraj and to adopt just, truthful and peaceful methods for the purpose.

I consider it my good fortune that I have an opportunity of moving such an important resolution in this Congress. Let me remind you that till now the aim of the Congress was to secure what they call "Responsible Colonial Government" within the Empire, such as what the other colonies enjoy, and to do this by means consonant with law. Law here means the law of the British Empire. We should respect the law of this Government, even though it refuses to offer a satisfactory solution of the Khilafat problem and, on the Punjab issue does not even admit its error, let alone doing justice. We may not seek to end the Government, if we wish to remain in the Congress—this was what the [Congress] constitution meant till this day. It is impossible for Hindus and Muslims to submit any longer to a Government which has perpetrated such naked injustice and refuses to repair it. We, therefore, declare through this Resolution that we want swaraj. It is only when we have swaraj that we shall have justice in the matter of the Punjab and

the Khilafat wrongs.

But I do not want that we should adopt the methods of the West for securing swaraj. I know that Hindus and Muslims have not renounced for all time the use of force for securing swaraj, but everyone realizes that today we cannot succeed in our aim by using force and hence it is that we have resorted to non-co-operation. We cannot save anything, ourselves or our dharma or the Empire, by using force. If you agree with me in this, let none of you oppose this Resolution.

I know that there are two parties among our thinking men, and to one of them belongs the Hon'ble Pandit Malaviyaji, who is like an elder brother to me. He has got a cold today and is running a temperature and hence could not come here to express his views. I shall, therefore, tell you what he thinks. There are not many who serve their country as well as he does and you know this. Even if we cannot agree with a man like him, we should listen to him patiently and respectfully. He argues that we talk of bringing down the British Empire, but that it is beyond our power. How can India, unarmed and weak, bring down such a mighty Empire? He says that we should not mislead the people by talking to them about what is beyond their strength, that anyone who leads them to attempt such a thing is a fool. If, as he says, it were really beyond the people's strength to bring down this Empire, I would certainly accept his advice. On this point, however, I differ from him. I believe that every man or woman has in him or her the necessary strength for winning swaraj. While we have the assurance in our heart that this body is inhabited by an *atman*, so long, I believe, we have it in us to win swaraj. The 33 crores of Hindus and Muslims are staunch in their faith, have God ever on their lips and would welcome death in His name. For one cow slaughtered, a thousand Hindus are ready to shed blood, others' and their own. For any Muslim humiliated, large numbers of others are ready to shed their blood, and to take others'. While India has such Hindus and Muslims, I shall never say that it is impossible for the country to win swaraj and I shall never permit this goal of ours, winning swaraj, to be relegated to some distant future.

This Empire has been guilty of so many crimes that living under its flag is tantamount to being disloyal to God. It is, therefore, my humble prayer to you all to give your approval to this Resolution.

Those among us who feel that we are much too weak, that with the strength we have we cannot win swaraj, even to them this goal should be acceptable since we wish to secure it peacefully and without sacrificing truth. That being so, we may place the highest ideal before

us.

Those who feel that the Empire may yet come round, that an Empire of this character will sooner or later be persuaded to do justice, that we shall succeed, after entering the Councils, in bringing it to see reason, even such persons will have a place in the Congress in virtue of this Resolution.

We have no desire to punish the Empire. The Resolution does not say that we should necessarily end our connection with it in order to have swaraj. If this same Empire agrees to do justice and grant us our rights, we are ready to stay in it. I claim that this path is the path of justice and that, following it, we can come to no harm.

Therefore, if you accept this Resolution, if you agree that we must win swaraj and that in the manner suggested in this Resolution, I would ask you to pledge yourselves solemnly to that effect. Your task will not be over when you have passed the Resolution. If you take a solemn pledge, you will most assuredly win swaraj and succeed in getting the Punjab wrongs and the Khilafat injustice redressed.

You will also have speakers tell you [from this platform] that we should be free to employ any means to achieve our aim. I shall give my reply at the right time. At the moment, I shall merely say that, in defining the aim of the Congress, we should take the existing circumstances into account. For me, personally, it is a matter of dharma not to seek swaraj through violence even if it could be won in that manner, not to seek even *moksha*, if it were possible to attain it through violence. If I could perform an act of *bhakti* to God, I would not have such *bhakti* [through violence]. For us, the means, non-violence and truth, as suggested in this Resolution are the only right ones. Through them alone will you succeed in securing redress for the injustices inflicted on you.

I do not wish to tell you anything more than this. Knowing the great awakening in the country, I believe there is no need to tell you more.

Before concluding my remarks, I wish to tell you of an incident which was in the nature of an object-lesson [to us]. There was a minor scuffle in the Bengali camp yesterday. I was grieved to hear about it. I went to the spot to explain to the people how we should behave if we wanted to win swaraj. I told the friends very respectfully, what I wished to. I told them I could not say which party was in the right and whichin the wrong, but I appealed to them, if they wanted to see their

strained relations repaired, if they wanted swaraj for India and wished to wash their hearts clean and pure, to forget all that had happened and bury the entire quarrel at that spot before leaving it. Both the parties saw the reason of this. If we want swaraj, we should not appeal to the Government when a brother has injured us, has even broken our head. Why should we approach the President either? If anyone assaults me with a stick, I would bow to him in return. The occasion is the right opportunity to win him over. If we do not behave in this manner, we can achieve nothing. If you are firm, if you are brave, if you are determined to win swaraj and if you really wish to change the Congress creed, you will have to conquer your anger. If any sense of wrong is gnawing at your hearts, you will have to repress it and forget everything about the matter. And so I ask this favour of my friends from Bengal and all others who are attending this great assembly with an earnest determination, that they will not spend their efforts on anything except the task of making their country strong, will not be concerned over anything except advancing their own rights and will not think of anything except upholding the self-respect of their country. I commend to you all the example of those who were agitated yesterday and felt that their heads had been broken. Before the great fight on which we embarked at the special session of the Congress is over, we shall, perhaps, have to cross a sea of blood. I know this full well. But we should see that none of us is charged with having shed others' blood. Let it be said by future generations that we did not take others' lives, but gave our own. I, therefore, feel no hesitation in saying that I do not want to show much sympathy for those whose heads were broken and who are said to have been in danger of their lives. What does it matter if it was so? Death at the hands of one's countrymen is to be welcomed. For what and on whom should we seek revenge? Even if a detective or a Government official assaults me, I would not complain to the Government against him; I would complain to God. Till we learn to co-operate among ourselves to the utmost, we shall not be free. My Bengali friends fell out among themselves, but they recovered their balance the moment they realized what they had done. I shall say nothing to those who approve of violence, but I can certainly urge my views on those who describe themselves as non-co-operators. The friends from Bengal have promised not to lose their temper. I congratulate the Bengal delegates on this. If you all do what they have done, I have not the slightest doubt that you will get swaraj. If you forgive a man, do not

do so out of weakness. I would not, out of cowardice, submit to an assault; there is courage, however, in forgiving out of compassion for the man, even a person who has inflicted a cruel outrage on me. In placing this Resolution before you, I present this object-lesson to you.

Simultaneously, I expect from you such faith and determination as nothing in the world can shake. I know that you are determined to get swaraj as early as possible and that you wish to secure it with legitimate, honourable, non-violent and peaceful means only. We cannot match the Government's armed strength, but we can pit against it what I have called soul-force. No person, whether a sannyasi or a so-called Mahatma, has a monopoly of this force. All human beings, men and women, have it in them to employ it. I ask those who wish to accept this Resolution to do so with determination and believe that it will have been accepted at an auspicious moment such as I described earlier. May God move you to vote for it unanimously and inspire in you courage and strength to see its aim fulfilled within a year.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-1-1921

82. INTERVIEW TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"[1]

[Before *December 29, 1920*]

Asked by the representative as to his impressions formed as a result of his activities during the last three months, Mr. Gandhi said:

My own impression of these three months' extensive experience is that this movement of non-co-operation has come to stay, and it is most decidedly a purifying movement, in spite of isolated instances of rowdyism, as for instance at Mrs. Besant's meeting in Bombay, at some places in Delhi, Bengal and even in Gujarat. The people are assimilating day after day the spirit of non-violence, not necessarily as a creed, but as an inevitable policy. I expect most startling results, more startling than, say, from the discoveries of Sir J. C. Bose, from the acceptance by the people of non-violence. If the Government could be assured beyond any possibility of doubt that no violence would ever be offered by us, the Government would from that moment alter its character unconsciously and involuntarily, but none

[1] An account of this interview, given at Nagpur, was published in *Young India*, 29-12-1920, under the title "Swaraj in Nine Months", and also in *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 5-1-1921.

the less surely, on that account.

[INTERVIEWER:] Alter its character—in what directions?

[GANDHIJI:] Certainly in the direction in which we ask it should move—that being in the direction of Government becoming responsive to every call of the nation.

Will you kindly explain further?

By that I mean, people will be able, by asserting themselves, through fixed determination and self-sacrifice to gain the redress of the Khilafat wrong, the Punjab wrong, and attain the swaraj of their choice.

But what is your swaraj, and where does the Government come in there— the Government which you say will alter its character unconsciously?

My swaraj is the parliamentary government of India in the modern sense of the term for the time being, and that government would be secured to us either through the friendly offices of the British people or without them.

What do you mean by the phrase 'without them' ?

This movement is an endeavour to purge the present Government of the selfishness and greed which determine almost everyone of their activities. Suppose that we have made it impossible by dissociation from them to feed their greed. They might not wish to remain in India, as happened in the case of Somaliland, where, the moment its administration ceased to be a paying proposition they evacuated it.

How do you think, in practice, this will work out?

What I have sketched before you is the final possibility. What I expect is that nothing of that kind will happen. In so far as I understand the British people, I think that they will bow to the inevitable. They will recognize the force of public opinion when it has become real and potent. Then, and only then, will they realize the hideous injustice which in their name the Imperial Ministers and theirrepresentatives in India have perpetrated. They will, therefore, remedy the two wrongs in accordance with the wishes of the people, and they will also offer a constitution exactly in accordance with the wishes of the people of India as represented by their chosen leaders.

Supposing that the British Government wishes to retire because India is not a paying concern, what do you think will then be the position of India?

At that stage, surely, it is easy to understand that India will then have evolved either an outstanding spiritual height or the ability to

offer violence against violence. She will have evolved an organizing ability of a high order, and will, therefore, be in every way able to cope with any emergency that might arise.

In other words you expect the moment of the British evacuation, if such a contingency arises, will coincide with the moment of India's preparedness and ability and conditions favourable for India to take over the Indian administration as a going concern and work it for the benefit and advancement of the nation ?

My experience during the last months fills me with the hope that within the nine months that remain of the year in which I have expected swaraj for India we shall redress the two wrongs and we shall see swaraj established in accordance with the wishes of the people of India.

Where will the present Government be at the end of the nine months?

The lion will then lie with the lamb.

Young India, 29-12-1920; also *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 5-1-1921

83. NOTES

A GOSPEL OF HATE ?

The *Indian Interpreter* has much to say against non-co-operation. I do wish editors will try to understand public questions before dealing with them. The *Indian Interpreter* is a Christian journal and one has a right to expect a fair knowledge of subjects handled in a responsible journal devoted to religious matters.

"India will never," says the *Interpreter*, "attain unity by means of a common hate. That appears, as far as an onlooker can judge, tobe the means to which Mr. Gandhi, the idealist, has surrendered himself." Mr. Stokes[1], who has endeavoured to study the movement as an onlooker, says that it is not based on hate. I have said so myself. But prejudices die hard. And in these days of mad rush to which modern journalism is making the largest contribution, people feed their prejudices, unconsciously it may be, by coming to hasty conclusions on insufficient data.

A COMMON DANGER

It is a common danger, a common affliction, that is binding Hindus and Mussulmans. I know no purifier so great as affliction. "Adversity makes strange bedfellows": with us it has knit together

[1] Who had adopted India as his home and was interested in non-co-operation; *vide* the following item.

not strangers but neighbours, sons of the same soil.

BRITISH RULE AN EVIL ?

The *Interpreter* is however more to the point in asking:

> Does Mr. Gandhi hold without hesitation or reserve that British rule in India is altogether evil and that the people of India are to be taught so to regard it? He must hold it to be so evil that the wrongs it does outweigh the benefits it confers, for only so is non-co-operation to be justified at the bar of conscience or of Christ.

My answer is emphatically in the affirmative. So long as I believed that the sum total of the energy of the British Empire was good, I clung to it despite what I used to regard as temporary aberrations. I am not sorry for having done so. But having my eyes opened, it would be sin for me to associate myself with the Empire unless it purges itself of its evil character. I write this with sorrow and I should be pleased if I discovered that I was in error and that my present attitude was a reaction. The continuous financial drain, the emasculation of the Punjab and the betrayal of the Muslim sentiment constitute, in my humble opinion, a threefold robbery of India. The blessings of pax Britannica I reckon, therefore, to be a curse. We would have at least remained like the other nations, brave men and women, instead of feeling as we do so utterly helpless, if we had no British Rule imposing on us an armed peace. 'The blessing' of roads and railways is a return no self-respecting nation would accept for its degradation. 'The blessing' of education is proving one of the greatest obstacles in our progress towards freedom.

A MOVEMENT OF PURIFICATION

The fact is that non-co-operation by reason of its non-violence has become a religious and purifying movement. It is daily bringing strength to the nation, showing it its weak spots and the remedy for removing them. It is a movement of self-reliance. It is the mightiest force for revolutionizing opinion and stimulating thought. It is a movement of self-imposed suffering and therefore possesses automatic checks against extravagance or impatience. The capacity of the nation for suffering regulates its advance towards freedom. It isolates the forces of evil by refraining from participation in it, in any shape or form.

A CRY FROM FIJI

The letter[1] published elsewhere lends powerful support to the

[1] Not reproduced here

movement. My esteemed correspondent analyses the reasons for our countrymen having returned in such large numbers as they have done one are still doing. In Fiji, not even the women were immune from prosecutions and imprisonment. Of course there is no reason why the sex should secure immunity from punishment for a proved crime. But all the accounts received from Fiji go to prove that the prosecutions of Fiji were very like those of the Punjab—a method of terrorism adopted for crushing the spirit of a people struggling to be somewhat free. I fear that we shall bring little comfort to our distressed countrymen in Fiji by sending a Congress deputation. I so thoroughly distrust the Fiji Government. It will afford no facility to the deputation for conducting an inquiry. The deputation may even be stopped by the Indian Government from leaving the Indian shore. For me the Fiji trouble affords more reason for quickening the non-co-operation movement. Meanwhile we must do everything we can to look after those who may return to India.[1] The returning Indians must not be leftto shift for themselves, feel disappointed, and then think of going back to Fiji. I am glad therefore that the men who have returned are being looked after by Mr. A. V. Thakkar[2], who has just finished his labours in Puri[3], and Mr. Banarasidas[4] of Shantiniketan who is assisting Mr. Andrews in his humanitarian work.

Young India, 29-12-1920

84. 'ONE STEP ENOUGH FOR ME'

Mr. Stokes is a Christian who wants to follow the light that God gives him. He has adopted India as his home. He is watching the non-co-operation movement from the Kotagiri hills where he is living in isolation from the India of the plains, and serving the hillmen. He

[1] In January 1920, the Government of Fiji cancelled the indentures of Indian labourers and arrangements were made for the early repatriation of such of them as desired to return to India. In consequence, large numbers left Fiji. Many arrived in India comparatively destitute.

[2] Amritlal Vithaldas Thakkar (1869-1951); Gujarati engineer who, as life member of the Servants of India Society, took up full-time social work and later devoted himself to the cause of Harijans and aboriginal tribes.

[3] *Vide* "Famine in Orissa", 9-5-1920 & "Distress in Orissa", 12-5-1920.

[4] Banarasidas Chaturvedi; resigned from Chief's College, Indore, in July 1920, and joined C. F. Andrews at Shantiniketan, after corresponding with him for five years about Indians overseas; co-author of *Charles Freer Andrews*, a biography

has contributed three articles on non-co-operation to the columns of the *Servant* of Calcutta and other papers. I had the pleasure of reading them during my Bengal tour. Mr. Stokes approves of non-co-operation but dreads the consequences that may follow complete success, i.e., evacuation of India by the British. He conjures up before his mind a picture of India invaded by the Afghans from the North-West, plundered by the Gurkhas from the hills. For me, I say with Cardinal Newman: "I do not ask to see the distant scene; one step enough for me." The movement is essentially religious. The business of every godfearing man is to dissociate himself from evil in total disregard of consequences. He must have faith in a good deed producing only a good result: that in my opinion is the *Gita* doctrine of work without attachment. God does not permit him to peep into the future. He follows truth although the following of it may endanger his very life. He knows that it is better to die in the way of God than to live in the way of Satan. Therefore, whoever is satisfied that this Government represents the activity of Satan has no choice left to him but to dissociate himself from it.

However, let us consider the worst that can happen to India on a sudden evacuation of India by the British. What does it matter that the Gurkhas and the Pathans attack us? Surely we would be better able to deal with their violence than we are with the continued violence, moral and physical, perpetrated by the present Government. Mr. Stokes does not seem to eschew the use of physical force. Surely the combined labour of the Rajput, the Sikh and the Mussulman warriors in a united India may be trusted to deal with plunderers from any or all the sides. Imagine however the worst: Japan overwhelming us from the Bay of Bengal, the Gurkhas from the hills, and the Pathans from the North-West. If we do not succeed in driving them out we make terms with them and drive them out at the first opportunity. This will be a more manly course than a helpless submission to an admittedly wrongful State.

But I refuse to contemplate the dismal outlook. If the movement succeeds through non-violent non-co-operation, and that is the supposition Mr. Stockes has started with, the English, whether they remain or retire, will do so as friends and under a wellordered agreement as between partners. I still believe in the goodness of human nature, whether it is English or any other. I therefore do not believe that the English will leave in "a night".

And do I consider the Gurkha and the Afghan as being

incorrigible thieves and robbers without the ability to respond to purifying influences ? I do not. If India returns to her spirituality, it will react upon the neighbouring tribes; she will interest herself in the welfare of these hardy but poor people, and even support them if necessary, not out of fear but as a matter of neighbourly duty. She will have dealt with Japan simultaneously with the British. Japan will not want to invade India, if India has learnt to consider it a sin to use a single foreign article that she can manufacture within her own borders. She produces enough to eat, and her men and women can without difficulty manufacture enough cloth to cover their nakedness and protect themselves from heat and cold. We become prey to invasion if we excite the greed of foreign nations by dealing with them under a feeling of dependence on them. We must learn to be independent of everyone of them.

Whether therefore we finally succeed through violence or non-violence, in my opinion, the prospect is by no means so gloomy as Mr. Stokes has imagined. Any conceivable prospect is, in my opinion, less black than the present unmanly and helpless condition. And we cannot do better than following out fearlessly and with confidence the open and honourable programme of non-violence and sacrifice that we have mapped for ourselves.

Young India, 29-12-1920

85. CASTE "VERSUS" CLASS

Man being a social being has to devise some method of social organization. We in India have evolved caste: They in Europe have organized class. Neither has the solidarity and naturalness of a family which perhaps is a God-ordained institution. If caste has produced certain evils, class has not been productive of anything less.

If class helps to conserve certain social virtues, caste does the same in equal, if not greater, degree. The beauty of the caste system is that it does not base itself upon distinctions of wealth-possessions. Money, as history has proved, is the greatest disruptive force in the world. Even the sacredness of family ties is not safe against the pollution of wealth, says Shankaracharya. Caste is but an extension of the principle of the family. Both are governed by blood and heredity. Western scientists are busy trying to prove that heredity is an illusion and that *milieu* is everything. The sole experience of many lands goes

against the conclusion of these scientists; but even accepting their doctrine of *milieu,* it is easy to prove that *milieu* can be conserved and developed more through caste than through class. The Anglo-Saxon is temperamentally incapable of appreciating any outlook but his own. One can understand his violent opposition to everything that goes against his grain. But Indians, whether Hindus or Christians, ought to be able to see that the spirit behind caste is not one of arrogant superiority; it is the classification of different systems of self-culture. It is the best possible adjustment of social stability and progress. Just as the spirit of the family is inclusive of those who love each other and are wedded to each other by ties of blood and relation, caste also tries to include families of a particular way of purity of life (not standard of life, meaning by this term, economic standard of life). Only, it does not leave the decision, whether a particular family belongs to a particular type, to the idiosyncracies or interested judgment of a few individuals. It trusts to the principle of heredity, and being only a system of culture does not hold that any injustice is done if an individual or a family has to remain in a particular group in spite of their decision to change their mode of life for the better. As we all know, change comes very slowly in social life, and thus, as a matter of fact, caste has allowed new groupings to suit the changes in lives. But these changes are quiet and easy as a change in the shape of the clouds. It is difficult to imagine a better harmonious human adjustment.

Caste does not connote superiority or inferiority. It simply recognizes different outlooks and corresponding modes of life. But it is no use denying the fact that a sort of hierarchy has been evolved in the caste system, but it cannot be called the creation of the Brahmins. When all castes accept a common goal of life a hierarchy is inevitable, because all castes cannot realize the ideal in equal degree. If all the castes believe that vegetarian diet is superior to animal diet, the vegetarian caste will naturally be looked up to. There are certain sub-castes in India that have ever stood on a par with each other, and yet have not interdined or intermarried. Just as a Hindu or a Mohammedan does not think himself an inferior of the other because of his differences of faith, or just as a Brahmin or a *Lingayat* in Southern India mutually refuse to interdrink, all castes can confine their food and drink to their own caste. Only by accepting the standard of the Brahmin or the *Vaishnavas* as the best, have the other castes consented to dine at the hands of the 'purer' castes.

Touch, drink, food and marriage are progressively private affairs. But by refusing to touch a man, you practically refuse all intercourse with him. He is thus denied all the fruits of social development. The touchables, for instance, can all attend the *kathas*, the *kirtans* (religious sermons). They can visit temples and thus get the free education of religion, rituals and arts. In the temple, all the touchables exchange their love and service and the fruits of civilization. The 'untouchables' are automatically barred from all that. In many places, being required to live outside the village, they are deprived of even the protection of their life and property. In the social division of labour they do one of the most important duties to society, and they are deprived of the fruits of the great social life which is evolved by the family of castes. Untouchability has made the 'depressed' classes the Cinderella of Hindu society. The question of food and drink has or ought to have no social value. It is merely the satisfaction of physical wants. It is, on the other hand, an opportunity for the control of the senses. Interdining has never been known to promote brotherhood in any special sense. But the restraints about interdining have to a great extent helped the cultivation of will-power and the conservation of certain social virtues.

Young India, 29-12-1920

86. TO THE LEARNED NARASINHRAO

I happened, by chance, to read the open letter to me addressed by the renowned scholar of Gujarat, Shri Narasinhrao[1]. I find little time for newspapers and rarely get any when I am touring. It is likely, therefore, that I miss many such writings.

I could ill-afford to miss this letter. Shri Narasinhrao has written it with love and in all sincerity. I can see that my present activities have pained him. Reading his letter, others also may have felt like him. I would be happy if I could satisfy their doubts and reassure them. I shall, therefore, try to answer his letter.

Shri Narasinhrao's letter, I can see, rests on one belief. He does not see today the same moral and religious fervour which he did in 1915 and after. He thinks that I am lost in the sea of politics and have

[1]1859-1937; Gujarati poet and man of letters; professor of Gujarati, Elphinstone College, Bombay

been overcome by *moha*.

My soul bears witness that I am the same man that I was in 1915. In fact, my concern for dharma and justice has become more urgent.

I am afraid Shri Narasinhrao is ignorant of my past life. I have spent my entire life in politics and do not regard dharma as something apart from politics. I have always believed in Gokhale's principle of "spiritualizing politics"[1] and tried to act upon it to the best of my ability.

During the satyagraha in South Africa, I used the same epithets which I apply to the Government, but I have never thought that my reason was clouded at that time. Some English friends indeed thought so, but afterwards they felt sorry for that. One of them was the late Mr. Escombe, a Natal minister, and, another, General Smuts, the present [Prime] Minister of South Africa.

The sweet music of *Premal Jyoti*[2] still reverberates in my ears. Even today its message is the goal of my striving. Even now I pray every moment of my life for God's grace and inspiration.

Nevertheless, I had even then called on people to turn their back on Western civilization. It was in 1908 that I clearly saw that imitating it would be the ruin of India. I first shared my views with a British peer[3] and, the same year (1908)[4] on my return to South Africa from England I published them in the columns of *Indian Opinion* and later brought them out in book form under the title *Hind Swaraj*.[5] May I request Shri Narasinhrao to read it in the original or in translation? These pages will give him a clear insight into many of my present activities.

But, by rejection of Western civilization I never meant, nor do I mean even today, shunning everything English or hating the British. I

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Banglore", 8-5-1915 and "Foreword to volume of Gokhale's speeches", before 19-2-1918.

[2] A verse-translation in Gujarati, by Narasinhrao, of Cardinal Newman's hymn, "Lead Kindly Light"

[3] Presumably Lord Ampthill whom Gandhiji met in England in 1909.

[4] This should be 1909. Gandhiji was in England from about the middle of July to November 13 of that year as member of a deputation on behalf of Indians in South Africa.

[5] In January 1910. An English translation, by Gandhiji himself, was published in March of the same year; *vide* "Hind Swaraj", 22-11-1909.

revere the Bible. Christ's Sermon on the Mount fills me with bliss even today. Its sweet verses have even today the power to quench my agony of soul. I can still read with love some of the writings of Carlyle and Ruskin. Even now, the tunes and the verses of many English hymns are like *amrit*[1] to me. Even so, I think that we would be well-advised to reject Western civilization, that it is our dharma to do so.

By Western civilization I mean the ideals which people in the West have embraced in modern times and the pursuits based on these ideals. The supremacy of brute force, worshipping money as God, spending most of one's time in seeking worldly happiness, breath-taking risks in pursuit of worldly enjoyments of all kinds, the expenditure of limitless mental energy on efforts to multiply the power of machinery, the expenditure of crores on the invention of means of destruction, the moral righteousness which looks down upon people outside Europe,—this civilization, in my view, deserves to be altogether rejected.

And yet I clung to British rule because, in my ignorance, I attributed to it strength for undertaking the great task of smashing this civilization. But now I see that British rule is perhaps more Satanic than what Germany does. Even if I am mistaken in this comparison, the two are at any rate equal.

All the characteristics of *Ravanarajya* described by Tulsidas are to be found in British rule and that is why I describe it by that name. There is no anger in this, nor "righteous indignation". It is a conclusion which I have reached in all calmness of mind. It is not my intention to suggest that every Englishman or English officer is a devil. Every officer, however, works as part of a Satanic machine and, therefore, whether intentionally or unintentionally, becomes an instrument of injustice, deception and repression. If, holding this belief, I were to conceal it, I would be betraying truth. It is not bad manners to call a thief a thief or a sinner a sinner, nor is it abuse in the manner of an uncultured peasant. On the contrary, if the words have been uttered with sincerity, they can be an expression of love.

If in my life I have tried to practise anything with unswerving devotion it is non-violence, truth and *brahmacharya.* I alone know how difficult it is to practise these. I believe that I have succeeded

[1] Drink of the gods, supposed to confer immortality

fairly well in following all the three in action and speech. To say that I have had no angry thought would be untrue, and I would be sinning if I said that I have never felt the urge of desire. I believe, nonetheless, that keeping the three vows in action, speech and thought has so potent a virtue that, if I had acquired the strength to follow them perfectly, the doubt which has occurred to Shri Narasinhrao would never have occurred to him at all. Having said this, I can say on oath that I do not wish ill to General Dyer in any way, that I have not the least desire to see him punished. Were he to fall ill, I would nurse him with love. But I certainly would not pay him a pension out of my money and so have a share in his sin. I would not gloss over the wickedness of his action. I have no doubt that his action was monstrous. The British people, by describing it as an error of judgment, have taken his sin upon themselves.

When Jesus described his times as a generation of vipers, it was not out of anger. At a time when everyone was afraid of telling the truth, Jesus risked his life, described hypocrisy, pride and lying in plain terms for what they were and so put innocent and simple folk on their guard, and saved them. When the Buddha, with the lamb on his shoulder, went up to the cruel Brahmins who were engaged in an animal-sacrifice, it was in no soft language that he spoke to them; he was, however, all love at heart. Who am I in comparison with these? Even so, I aspire to be their equal in love in this very life. Let the reader not think me presumptuous on this account. The highest ideal I have set before myself is a Mehta[1] of Gujarat, Shri Narasinhrao's namesake. His love was no less than that of the Buddha.

It is quite possible that I am making a mistake, that I am doing injustice to the British, that I have misread history, but it is certainly not true that my present activities are conceived in a spirit of retaliation or that they are less religious in inspiration. I request those friends who would save me from error to know me first. I make an effort to be and to remain pure; I am full of error, but ever ready tocorrect myself. There is nothing in my life which I wish to conceal, Whatever I think I speak out immediately. But, being one who takes most careful thought before doing anything, I do not easily abandon my views. I should not be surprised to know that my co-workers too think me autocratic. It is my humble belief that I am no autocrat. An autocrat has simply no patience for what others may have to say. So

[1] Narasinh Mehta

far as my memory goes, I listen even to children and have learnt much from them. There is a great deal, indeed, I have learnt from cowherds and peasants.

I have used the term "co-workers" above. Shri Narasinhrao has unwittingly done me an injustice by taking my statement, "I have no followers; there may be persons who follow my ideas", to be a mere play on words. I have not accepted anyone as my dharma-guru[1] and I don't think myself, either, to be worthy of the honour of being such [to anyone else]. So long as I have not acquired the strength to follow the rules of *yama-niyama* perfectly in thought, word and deed, I am liable to commit errors, any number of them. Such a person is not entitled to accept anyone as his disciple. I made the mistake, some years ago, of regarding just one friend as my disciple at his urging, and burnt my fingers in consequence. My role of a guru simply did not work. I had judged wrongly.

I think it very dangerous, in this age, for anyone to accept another as a guru or be another's guru. We attribute perfection to a guru. By accepting an imperfect man as our guru, we are led into no end of error. That is why I have deliberately said that I welcome people being followers of my ideas but I want no one to be my follower. Following ideas requires understanding; in following a person, faith is the chief thing. I do not want to be an object of the devotion which such faith expresses, but I certainly want people to follow my ideas with devotion. They can do this, of course, only if they understand them. I know, however, that at present many persons follow my ideas simply out of blind regard for me. I accept no responsibility for their sin, since I do not look upon them as my followers. Between a person's being my follower and his being a follower of my ideas there is the same difference which there is, according to Gladstone, between calling a man a fool and describing his ideas as foolish.

This is not all. Shri Narasinhrao sees in me another weakness which "gurus" are especially prone to. How is it that I do not offer satyagraha against people touching my feet out of reverence—do not condemn it—but permit the thing? I respectfully submit to my friend that this does not fall within the scope of satyagraha. Touching a man's feet in reverence is not in itself wrong or sinful so that it calls

[1] Spiritual mentor

for satyagraha against it. Moreover, is it possible for anyone, all at once, to persuade the multitude of simple-hearted, loving peasants, who are used to the practice of touching a man's feet, to give it up? I assure Shri Narasinhrao that I am weary of this touching of my feet and these cries of *jai*[1]. My friend Shaukat Ali tries hard to save me from these assaults on my person which take the form of touching my feet, and numbers of volunteers are busy to the same end, but so far I have not escaped these attentions. I do not have the courage, nor the desire, to offer satyagraha against the practice by going on a fast or refusing to speak to the people. The cries of jai vex me so much that often I literally plug my ears with cottonwool. I assure Shri Narasinhrao that I shall not be blinded by adoration and will not forsake my duty, either, because of people's scorn.

Shri Narasinhrao invites me to Bandra Point[2]. My only desire in wanting to go there was to call on that good man, Dayaram Gidumal[3]. I heard of him in Hyderabad through members of his family. It was also my desire to compliment Shri Narasinhrao on the courage he has shown in keeping him as an honoured guest of the family. Owing to my preoccupations, however, I have not been able to fulfil this desire.

I do not believe that Bandra Point will give me peace of mind or that I shall have there a clearer vision of the "Kindly Light". I had an occasion years ago to decide whether I would go and stay in Bandra and I deliberately decided not to go. The Bombay slaughter-house is in Bandra. I feel a stab in the heart whenever I pass it. There may be any number of beautiful spots in that place but to me they all seem dyed with the blood of innocent creatures and, therefore, it hurts my soul to have to go there. Another place where I find it painful to stayis Calcutta. There, countless goats are killed in the name of Hinduism and I find this unbearable. I will, therefore, certainly try to go to Bandra, but only with the first desire as explained above. As for the "Kindly Light", I get a vision of it in the temple of my heart whenever this is radiant with perfect self-control and the vision invariably gives me the experience of transcendent peace.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-12-1920

[1] Victory

[2] In Bombay. Narasinhrao lived there at this time.

[3] 1857-1939; social reformer; founder of Seva Sadan, Bombay

87. SPEECH ON FOREIGN PROPAGANDA, NAGPUR[1]

December 29, 1920

The paper costs much more than it is worth. Its influence on English opinion is practically nothing and it is an indifferent vehicle of English opinion for India's enlightenment. Now that we have embarked on non-co-operation and are determined to become self-reliant it would be consistent for us to disestablish the British Committee and stop *India.* I would far concentrate all our attention and all our best workers on India. The harvest is rich and the labourers are few. We can ill spare a single worker for foreign work.

We shall hurt our cause, rather than help our cause. If we are doing anything here, no propaganda will be necessary. I want foreign countries to understand me. They understand only business, they understand only work. Whilst you have given currency to one solid fact our detractors have tried to contradict it by various devices. You will put the British nation on their honour, so that they will understand your act of self-denial in withholding information through agency. We are too few for the work and we must husband our resources. It is best that we consumed Rs. 45,000 for work here.

Mahatma, Vol. II, p. 30; also the Manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary Courtesy: Narayan Desai

88. DRAFT RESOLUTION ON NON-CO-OPERATION[2]

[Before *December 30, 1920*]

This Congress reaffirms the resolution passed at its last special session[3] advising non-violent progressive non-co-operation with the Government for the purpose of securing the rectification of the

[1] The speech was made during the Nagpur Congress session where a resolution was adopted to the effect that the British Congress committee and its journal, *India,* published from London for the last thirty years, be wound up. While the second paragraph, assigned to December 29, 1920, in the manuscript, of Mahadev Desai's Diary, belongs to this speech, the first, taken from *Mahatma,* Vol. II, but undated, would also appear to be part of the same speech.

[2] The resolution was adopted by the Nagpur session of the Congress on December 30, 1920, as moved by C. R. Das. This unsigned draft in Gandhiji's hand is marked "Draft for private circulation and consultation only". For' the resolution as passed, *vide* Appendix "Congress resolution on Non-co-operation".

[3] Held at Calcutta in September 1920

Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and attaining swaraj and is of opinion that the time has now arrived for removing the word "gradual" in the clauses regarding withdrawal of students from affiliated or grant-in-aid schools and colleges and suspension by lawyers of their profession in the British courts of law and therefore now resolves that the word "gradual" may be removed.

This Congress congratulates the nation upon the progress made so far in carrying out the programme of non-co-operation and especially with regard to the boycott of Councils elections[1] by the voters and trusts that those who have thought fit to allow themselves to be declared elected in spite of the decided opinion to the contrary expressed by the electors will see their way to resign their seats on the Councils. In the opinion of this Congress the retention of their seats by the Councillors would be a direct negation of the principle of democracy.

If in spite of the declared wish of their respective constituents, their so-called representatives retain their seats, the Congress is of opinion that it is the duty of the electors studiously to refrain from asking or receiving any political service from them.

This Congress lays the greatest stress upon the desirability of immediate stopping of the education received by the youth of the nation under the aegis or influence, direct or indirect, of a Government that has forfeited the confidence of the nation by its utter disregard of the sacred sentiments of the Mussulmans of India and the outraged feelings of the whole of India regarding the wanton atrocities of the Punjab administration during the satyagraha year[2] and therefore advises the parents to withdraw their children from such schools and colleges and the grown-up students of the age sixteen and over to withdraw from such schools and colleges.

In order to continue the education of the youth of the country in a free and untainted atmosphere this Congress advises the owners, trustees and educationists in charge of aided or affiliated institutions to give up grants and affiliation and render them independent of all Government control and influence and advises the monied men and educationists of the country to establish national universities, new schools and colleges so as to render it possible for every child to receive suitable education in accordance with the needs of the nation.

[1] Held in November 1920
[2] 1919

This Congress appeals to the legal profession to recognize the new spirit that has been awakened in the country and to suspend their practice and devote their attention exclusively to the boycott by the litigants of law courts and settlement of their disputes by private arbitration, and to the monied class to make it easy for those practitioners who may stand in need by providing financial assistance for them.

This Congress recognizes the growing friendliness between the police and the soldiery and the people and hopes that the men belonging to the police and the military will, by making common cause with the people, remove the reproach hitherto levelled against them that they are unscrupulous hirelings possessing no regard for the feelings and sentiments of the people.

This Congress appeals to all who may be in Government employ to respond to the call of the nation for self-purification and, whilst remaining faithful to the discharge of the obligations imposed by the terms of their service, help the national cause otherwise by utmost kindness and honesty in their dealings with the people and fearlessly and openly attending, without taking any active part in, all popular gatherings.This Congress calls upon the capitalists, the merchants and the dealers in the country to assist the national cause by introducing in their respective businesses the spirit of patriotism and to help the movement for boycott of foreign goods by concentrating their attention on stimulating production of cloth sufficient for the national needs by encouraging home-spinning and home-weaving.

This Congress desires to lay special emphasis on non-violence being the integral part of the non-co-operation resolution and invites the attention of the nation to the fact that non-violence in word and deed is as essential between ourselves as it is on the part of the nation in respect of the Government and this Congress is of opinion that the spirit of violence is not only contrary to the free growth of the truly democratic spirit but actually retards the enforcement if necessary of the other three stages in non-co-operation leading to the suspension of taxes.

Finally, in order that the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs may be redressed and swaraj established within one year, this Congress urges upon all public bodies whether affiliated to the Congress or otherwise to devote their exclusive attention to the promotion of non-violence and non-co-operation with the Government [in] asmuch as the

movement of non-co-operation can only succeed by complete co-operation among the people themselves, this Congress calls upon these associations to advance Hindu-Muslim unity, calls upon the leading Hindus to settle all disputes between Brahmins and non-Brahmins wherever they may be existing and to make special efforts to rid Hinduism of the reproach of untouchability and respectfully urges the Shankaracharyas[1] and other Hindu preceptors to help the growing desire to reform Hinduism in the matter of itstreatment of the suppressed classes.

From a photostat: G.N. 8230

89. SPEECH ON NON-CO-OPERATION RESOLUTION, NAGPUR[2]

December 30, 1920

I do not wish to detain you for any length of time, but it is necessary for you to understand—those who do not understand a word of Hindi—what has been going on during the last quarter or half an hour. One[3] of the most respected of Muslims that I have had the privilege of knowing during my four or five years' residence in India since 1915 has come forward with an amendment as a matter of conscience. His amendment[4] is that he wants to reject the conscience clause and he wants to reject the clause which says that you may not make personal appeals to boys under sixteen. You will have noticed these two phrases. Maulana Hasrat Mohani, supported by another well-known and respected Moulana[5] from Cawnpore, says that those clauses should go because they consider that they are in violation of the obligations of Islam. I have been endeavouring to point out to my

[1] Hindu religious heads in the five zones of India

[2] The Non-co-operation Resolution, moved by C. R. Das in the open session of the Congress, was seconded and supported by Gandhiji, Lajpat Rai and others. Hasrat Mohani moved an amendment in reply to which Gandhiji spoke first in Hindi and then made this speech in English. For the Resolution, *vide* Appendix "Congress resolution on Non-co-operation".

[3] Hasrat Mohani

[4] The amendment wanted deletion of the conscience clause from that part of the Resolution which dealt with students, and immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all students from schools and colleges by deleting the age limit from the original Resolution.

[5] Abul Kalam Azad

Muslim brethren that there is absolutely no violation of obligation.[1] It is a mis-construction or misconception of the purport of the Resolution. The Congress resolution does not bind a man's conscience. The Congress resolution is never intended to supersede a man's conscience, and I have never made a fetish of the mandate of the Congress. Even now, although I feel that the majority are of thesame opinion which I hold, I make bold to say that I shall never be a party to making the Congress itself a fetish or its mandate a fetish. I shall always reserve the right of conscience, wherever my conscience pricks me and tells me that I should resist the mandate of the Congress. Therefore I have been suggesting to our Muslim brethren that that cannot possibly be a matter of conscience. If a single Mohammedan thinks that it cannot even be a matter of conscience with a boy of sixteen years of age, that he has no right to think for himself but must obey his parents these are the implications—all well for him. Let him say that, and the Congress will not prevent him, but he may not say those words in the name of the Congress. That is all that the Congress Resolution means. Similarly, with reference to boys of 12 years or under 16. This Congress certainly says, you may not address boys under sixteen because they are of tender age and you do not know whether they have a prick of conscience, and so it calls upon you not to address or make personal appeals to such boys but make the appeal to the parents. That was the practice which we have hitherto adopted, and that must be the practice if we want to stand justified before the bar of public conscience and before civilized opinion. So I say that it is only just and proper that we are doing that, and if there is a boy twelve years old who has visitings of conscience, there is no power on earth that can prevent him from doing so. But I am not to quicken that boy's conscience who has his father, for the father has that special prerogative. That is all that this Resolution says. Therefore, I have been urging my Mohammedan friends, and in doing so I have already said that we dare not call all matters that crop up as matters of conscience.[2]

There is a message from Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. He is lying, I am exceedingly sorry to inform you, on the sick-bed, with fever on. He sent me a message yesterday that he wanted to see the

[1] Mahomed Ali in fact opposed the amendment moved by Hasrat Mohani.

[2] Hasrat Mohani subsequently withdrew his amendment which, he delcared, was not necessary in the light of the very cogent explanation given by Gandhiji.

Resolution but it could not be sent. He has now seen the Resolution and has sent me a message saying that he is not all in favour of the Resolution. If he had been here he would have noted a respectful protest before this Congress. He is not in sympathy with the creed either. He thinks that it is his duty to transmit a message to hiscountrymen and leave them to judge things for themselves.

Lala Lajpat Rai has addressed you with reference to the police. I accept every word of what he has said in interpretation of that part of the Resolution. I think it is right that we should know that we are not tampering with the obligations of service imposed upon employees of Government, whether civil, military or police. But we are asking them not to kill their conscience, and I want to make that point a little clear. I would have held it a sin if I had been one of those soldiers to receive the command of General Dyer to shoot those innocent men in Jallianwala Bagh. I would have considered it my duty to disregard that command and preferred being shot on the spot. I know the discipline of a soldier. I say that if a soldier receives a command from his officer which he considers to be in conflict with his religion or in conflict with his duties to his country, he may certainly disregard it at the peril of his life. He may not come to you afterwards to lodge a complaint. He has made his choice. Military duty requires that a man who does not obey the command on such a critical occasion shall be shot, and if he chooses to be shot he can certainly disregard the command.

With these words, I ask you to carry this Non-co-operation Resolution with acclamation and with a prayer to God from the deepest recesses of your heart that you are resolved to attain swaraj by the means that have been declared by the Congress in this resolution, and you will also go away forgetting all the differences and acrimony that have guided our public life during the last three months, and you will show no violence in thought, deed or word whether in connection with the Government or whether in connection with ourselves, and I repeat the promise that I made, that, if we can only do that, we do not require one year, we do not even require nine months to attain our goal. (Loud cheers and cries of "*Mahatma Gandhi ki jai*".)[1]

Report of the Thirty-fifth Session of the Indian National Congress

[1] The Resolution was then passed unanimously, all amendments having been withdrawn.

90. SPEECH ON TILAK MEMORIAL SWARAJ FUND[1]

NAGPUR,
December 31, 1920

I have been just saying, with the permission of the President, a few things in connection with that portion of the Non-co-operation Resolution which you have all accepted with acclamation. I refer to the All-India Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund. I hope that all the delegates will do their utmost in order to contribute to this Fund. They will be thereby serving a double purpose. They will be treasuring and perpetuating the memory of one who has commanded the universal reverence of India and who has laid down his life in the service of his country. I have not the slightest doubt that this great memorial which you have decided to erect in memory of the illustrious deceased will be a magnificent success; but if it is to be a magnificent success it cannot be so except by the joint and united effort of every one of us, brothers and sisters. Those of you who want even to make payments here, that is, after withdrawing from the *pandal*, can do so, but I hope that when you have gone to your homes you will not forget this thing but will consider it a sacred duty to contribute as much as you can, and continue to do so, to this sacred memorial in the hope and full belief that we shall be able to get swaraj within one year. If we cannot contribute whatever we can to this purpose, I hardly think that we can be considered worth getting swaraj. But your *mantra*[2] was that you should get swaraj, and if you see the letters over the picture[3], "Swaraj is my birthright", and if you want to make that hope of his good within one year, you will all make the utmost attempt in order to make this memorial a success. You may send your contributions to theGeneral Secretary. I have much pleasure in announcing a subscription of Rs. 1,001 from our Indian Sandow[4] and two rings from friends whose names I do not know. (Loud cheers.) I have much pleasure to announce to you that Seth Jamnalal, who is lying on the sick-bed, and who is the Chairman of the Reception Committee, has

[1] On October 2, 1920, the All-India Congress Committee had resolved to raise the Tilak Memorial Fund but the resolution was not enforced till December 1920, when the annual session of the Congress adopted it.

[2] Literally, a sacred formula

[3] Of Tilak, which was displayed prominently in the Congress *pandal*

[4] Professor Rammurty who had offered the subscription at this stage of the speech

sent me a message that he proposes to place at my disposal one lakh of rupees (loud and prolonged cheers) to be treated as part of the public Fund, but to be specially utilized for the maintenance of those lawyers who may suspend their practice and who may be in need of some Little assistance and who do not do any work but devote all their time to the national service (cheers.) and he has given me the assurance that he will endeavour to collect more funds also. I know you will consider this a fairly happy augury for the success of this Memorial Fund. May God help you to make this Memorial Fund the success that it ought to be. (Loud cheers.)[1]

Report of the Thirty-fifth Session of the Indian National Congress

91. PREFACE TO THE GUJARATI TRANSLATION OF CONGRESS REPORT ON THE PUNJAB DISORDERS

[*December 1920*][2]

I hope every Gujarati will read and ponder over this translation.

I think the translation is excellent, but it is not for its simple Gujarati that I commend it. If we realize well enough what happened in the Punjab,[3] we shall readily understand our duty in the present circumstances.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati Translation of the Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders

[1] At this stage a number of contributions were received from those present in the *pandal*. The following day, a Parsi philanthropist from Bombay, Shavaksha Bamanji, promised a monthly donation of Rs. 10,000 till the attainment of swaraj.

[2] The Gujarati translation of the report has the date line, *Magashar, Vikram Samvat* 1976. This is evidently a mistake. The English report was published on March 25, 1920 and the Gujarati translation must have been brought out in the *Magashar* of 1977, which covered the period 11-12-1920 to 9-1-1921.

[3] *Vide* "Congress report on the Punjab disorders", 25-3-1920.

92. CONGRESS CONSTITUTION ADOPTED AT NAGPUR SESSION[1]

[*December 1920*]

Article 1

The object of the Indian National Congress is the attainment of Swarajya by the people of India by all legitimate and peaceful means.

(Note: This was passed as Resolution No. 1)

SESSIONS OF THE CONGRESS

Article II

(a) The Indian National Congress shall ordinarily meet once every year during Christmas holidays at such place as may have been decided upon at its previous session or such other place as may have been determined by the All-India Congress Committee hereinafter referred to.

(b) An extraordinary session of the Congress may be summoned by the All-India Congress Committee either of its own motion or on the requisition of a majority of the Provincial Congress Committees, wherever it may deem it advisable to hold such a session; and the Articles of this Constitution shall apply with such modifications as the All-India Congress Committee may consider necessary in respect of each such session.

COMPONENT PARTS OF THE CONGRESS

Article III

The Indian National Congress organization shall consist of the following:

(a) The Indian National Congress.
(b) Provincial Congress Committees.
(c) District Congress Committees.
(d) Sub-Divisional, Taluqa or Tahsil, Firka or other Local Congress Committees.
(e) The All-India Congress Committee.
(f) Such other Committees outside India as may from time to

[1] This new constitution was framed by Gandhiji in consultation through correspondence with other members of the Constitution Committee; *vide* "Letter to N.C. Kelkar", 2-7-1920 , "Letter to Chairman, A.I.C.C.", 25-9-1920 & "The Congress Constitution", 3-11-1920.

time be recognized by the Congress in this behalf.

(g) Bodies formed or organized periodically by the Provincial, District, Taluqa or Tahsil, or other Local Congress Committees such as the Reception Committee of the Congress and the Provincial, District, Taluqa or Tahsil, or other local Conferences.

Article IV

No person shall be eligible to be a member of any of the organizations referred to in the foregoing Article, unless he or she has attained the age of 21 and expresses in writing his or her acceptance of the object and the methods as laid down in Article I of this Constitution and of the Rules of the Congress.

PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE

Article V

The following shall be the Provinces with headquarters mentioned against them and where no headquarters are mentioned and in every case the respective Provincial Congress Committees shall have the power to fix or alter them from time to time.

1. Madras	Tamil	Headquarters	Madras
2. Andhra	Telugu	”	
3. Karnatak	Kannada	”	Gadag
4. Keral	Malayalam	”	Calicut
5. City of Bombay	Marathi and Gujarati	”	Bombay
6. Maharashtra	Marathi	”	Poona
7. Gujarat	Gujarati	”	Ahmedabad
8. Sind	Sindhi		
9. United Provinces	Hindustani	”	Allahabad
10. Punjab	Punjabi	”	Lahore
11. N.W. Frontier Province	Hindustani	”	Peshawar
12. Delhi	Hindustani	”	Delhi
13. Ajmer, Merwara and Rajputana	Hindustani	”	Ajmer
14. Central Provinces	Hindustani	”	Jubbulpore
15. Central Provinces	Marathi	”	Nagpur
16. Berar	Marathi	”	Amraoti

17. Bihar	Hindustani	”	Patna
18. Utkal (Orissa)	Oriya		
19. Bengal and Surma Valley	Bengali	”	Calcutta
20. Assam	Assamese	”	Gauhati
21. Burma	Burmese	”	Rangoon

Provided that the All-India Congress Committee may from time to time assign particular Indian States to particular Provinces and a Provincial Congress Committee may in its turn allot particular Indian States assigned to it by the All-India Congress Committee to particular Districts within its jurisdiction

The existing Provincial Congress Committees shall forthwith proceed to reorganize themselves in terms of this Constitution and such reorganization shall be final unless and until it is revised by the All-India Congress Committee.

Article VI

(a) There shall be a Provincial Congress Committee in and for each of the Provinces named in the foregoing Article.

(b) Each Provincial Congress Committee shall organize District and other Committees referred to in Article III and shall have the power to frame rules laying down conditions of membership and for the conduct of business not inconsistent with this Constitution or any rules made by the All-India Congress Committee.

(c) Each Provincial Congress Committee shall consist of representatives elected annually by the members of the District and other Committees in accordance with the rules made by the Provincial Congress Committees.

FRANCHISE

Article VII

Every person not disqualified under Article IV and paying a subscription of 4 annas per year shall be entitled to become a member of any organization controlled by the Provincial Congress Committees.

ELECTORATES AND DELEGATES

Article VIII

Each Provincial Congress Committee shall be responsible for the election of delegates to the Congress.

No one shall be qualified for election who is not of the age of 21 years and who does not subscribe to the Congress creed.

The number of delegates shall be not more than one for every 50 thousand or its fraction of the inhabitants of the Province of its jurisdiction, including the Indian States therein, in accordance with the last census: provided however, that the inclusion of Indian States in the electorate shall not be taken to include any interference by the Congress with the internal affairs of such States.

Each Provincial Congress Committee shall frame rules for the election of delegates, due regard being had to the return of women delegates and representation of minorities, special interrests or classes needing special protection.

The rules shall provide for the organization of electorates and shall prescribe the procedure to be adopted for securing the proportional representation (by a single transferable vote) of every variety of political opinion.

The rules framed by each Provincial Congress Committee shall be sent to the General Secretaries of the Congress not later than the 30th April 1921, which rules shall be published for general information by the Secretaries as soon as possible after the receipt thereof.

Each Provincial Congress Committee shall send to the Reception Committee of the ensuing Session of the Congress an alphabetical list of the delegates so elected containing the full name, occupation, age, sex, religion and address of each of them to reach the Committee not later than the 15th day of December every year, and in the case of an Extraordinary Session not later than ten days before the date advertised for the holding of such Session.

Article IX

(a) Each Provincial Congress Committee shall pay annually such subscription to the All-India Congress Committee as may be fixed by the latter from time to time.

(b) No member of a Congress Committee shall vote at the election of representatives or delegates or be elected as such unless and until he has paid the subscription due by him.

DELEGATES

Article X

Each Committee referred to in Article VIII shall issue certificates to the delegates duly elected in accordance with the form

hereto attached marked Appendix A and signed by a Secretary of the Committee.

Article XI

Every delegate on presenting such a certificate and paying a fee of Rs. 10 at the Congress office shall receive ticket entitling him to admission to the Congress.

Article XII

Delegates shall alone have the power of voting at the Congress sittings or otherwise taking part in its deliberations.

RECEPTION COMMITTEE

Article XIII

The Reception Committee shall be formed by the Provincial Congress Committee at least six months before the meeting of the annual session and may include persons who are not members of the Provincial Congress Committee. The members of the Reception Committee shall pay not less than Rs. 25 each.

Article XIV

The Reception Committee shall elect its Chairman and other office-bearers from amongst its own members.

Article XV

It shall be the duty of the Reception Committee to collect funds for the expenses of the Congress Session, to elect the President of the Congress in the manner set forth in the following article and to make all necessary arrangements for the reception and accommodation of delegates and guests and, as far as practicable, of visitors and for the printing and publication of the report of the proceedings and to submit statements of receipts and expenditure to the Provincial Congress Committee within 4 months of the Session of the Congress.

ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT

Article XVI

The several Provincial Congress Committees shall, as far as possible by the end of June, suggest to the Reception Committee the names of persons who are in their opinion eligible for the Presidentship of the Congress and the Reception Committee shall, as far as possible in the first week of July, submit to all the Provincial Committees the names as suggested for their final recommendations provided that such final recommendation will be of any one but not

more of such names and the Reception Committee shall, as far as possible, meet in the month of August to consider such recommendations. If the person recommended by a majority of the Provincial Congress Committees is adopted by a majority of the members of the Reception Committee present at a special meeting called for the purpose, that person shall be the President of the next Congress. If, however, the Reception Committee is unable to accept the President recommended by the Provincial Congress Committees or in case of emergency by resignation, death or otherwise of the President elected in this manner, the matter shall forthwith be referred by it to the All-India Congress Committee whose decision shall be arrived at, as far as possible, before the end of September. In either case the election shall be final, provided that in no case shall the person so elected as President belong to the Province in which the Congress is to be held.

The President of a special or extraordinary session shall be elected by the All-India Congress Committee subject to the same proviso.

CONGRESS FUNDS

Article XVII

(a) The Reception Committee shall, through the Provincial Congress Committee of the Province, remit to the All-India Congress Committee, not later than two weeks after the termination of the Congress Session, ordinary or extraordinary, half the delegation fees.

(b) If the Reception Committee has a balance after defraying all the expenses of the session it shall hand over the same to the Provincial Congress Committee in the Province in which the session was held towards the Provincial Congress fund of that Province.

AUDIT

Article XVIII

The receipts and expenditure of the Reception Committee shall be audited by an auditor or auditors appointed by the Provincial Congress Committee concerned and the statement of accounts together with the auditor's report shall be sent by the Provincial Congress Committee, not later than six months from the termination of the Congress, to the All-India Congress Committee.

ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

Article XIX

The All-India Congress Committee shall consist of 350 members exclusive of ex-officio members.

The ex-officio members shall be past Presidents of the Congress and General Secretaries and Treasurers of the Congress.

Each Provincial Congress Committee shall elect the allotted number of members of the All-India Congress Committee from among the members of the Congress Committees within its jurisdiction.

The allotment shall be on the basis of population according to the linguistic redistribution of Provinces or in such other manner as may appear more equitable to the All-India Congress Committee and shall be published by the All-India Congress Committee before the 31st day, January 1921.

The method of election shall be the same as already prescribed for the election of delegates.

Election to the All-India Congress Committee shall ordinarily take place in the month of November.

The first All-India Congress Committee under this Constitution shall be elected on or before the 30th of June, 1921. Till then, the members of the All-India Congress Committee recently elected shall continue in office.

The All-India Congress Committee shall meet as often as may be necessary for the discharge of its obligation and every time upon requisition by 15 members thereof who shall state in their requisition the definite purpose for which they desire a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee.

The All-India Congress Committee shall hold office till the election of the new All-India Congress Committee.

Article XX

The Secretaries of the respective Provincial Congress Committees shall issue certificates of membership of the All-India Committee to the persons so elected.

Article XXI

The All-India Congress Committee shall be the Committee of the Congress to carry out the programme of work laid down by the Congress from year to year and deal with all new matters that may arise during the year and may not be provided for by the Congress itself. For this purpose the All-India Congress Committee shall have the power to frame its own rules within this Constitution.

Article XXII

The President of the Congress shall be the Chairman of the

All-India Congress Committee for the year following.

GENERAL SECRETARIES

Article XXIII

The Indian National Congress shall have three General Secretaries, who shall be annually elected by the Congress. They shall prepare the report of the work of the All-India Congress Committee during the year and submit it, with a full account of the funds which may come into their hands, to the All-India Congress Committee at a meeting to be held at the place and about the time of the session of the Congress for the year, and copies of such account and report shall then be presented to the Congress and sent to the Congress Committees.

WORKING COMMITTEE

Article XXIV

The All-India Congress Committee shall at its first meeting appoint a Working Committee consisting of the President, the General Secretaries, the Treasurers and 9 other members, which shall perform such functions as may be delegated to it from time to time by the All-India Congress Committee.

SUBJECTS COMMITTEE

Article XXV

The members of the All-India Congress Committee shall constitute the Subjects Committee for the ordinary or extraordinary session following.

Article XXVI

The Subjects Committee shall meet at least two days before the meeting of the Congress in open session. At this meeting, the President-elect shall preside and the outgoing Secretaries shall submit the draft programme of the work for the ensuing sessions of the Congress, including resolutions recommended by the different Provincial Congress Committees for adoption.

Article XXVII

The Subjects Committee shall proceed to discuss the said programme and shall frame resolutions to be submitted to the open session.

Article XXVIII

The Subjects Committee shall also meet from time to time as the

occasion may require during the pendency of the Congress Session.

CONTENTIOUS SUBJECTS AND INTERESTS OF MINORITIES

Article XXIX

No subject shall be passed for discussion by the Subjects Committee or allowed to be discussed at any Congress by the President thereof, to the introduction of what the Hindu or Mohammedan Delegates, as a body, object by a majority of _ ths of their number, and if, after the discussion of any subject which has been admitted for discussion, it shall appear that the Hindu or Mohammedan Delegates, as a body, are, by a majority of _ ths of their number, opposed to the resolution which it is proposed to pass thereon such resolution shall be dropped.

Article XXX

The All-India Congress Committee shall have the power to frame rules in respect of all matters not covered by the Constitution and not inconsistent with its Articles.

Article XXXI

The Articles and the Creed of the Constitution now in force are hereby repealed without prejudice to all acts done thereunder.

Report of the Thirty-fifth Session of the Indian National Congress

93. LETTER TO ANASUYSBEHN SARABHAI

MOTIHARI,
Sunday [*December 1920*][1]

REVERED ANSUYABEHN,

I have your letter. Why should you be surprised that I have so much affection for you? I have great faith in you. I feel sure that when others have given up you will remain staunch. I am a votary of purity, courage and truth. I have ascribed all these qualities to you. Look after your health. I was very unhappy after taking you to Dakorji. But such bitter experiences have always been my lot.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[1] Gandhiji had visited Dakor in October 1920 and in the same year he was in Motihari on December 9, which date, however, does not concur with the "Sunday" mentioned in the date-line.

[PS.]

I have destroyed your letter.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32768

94. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL G. BANKER

Friday, [*1920*][1]

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I have your letter. I had also received your earlier letter. How can you divert your anger with Saraladevi to me? Replying to your letters is going to be very difficult for me. You should, therefore, come here to get from me the answers to your questions. You may start writing letters when I forbid you to come here. And if you are afraid of Saraladevi, she is not here today and will not be coming here till Tuesday.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati : S. N. 32741

95. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM,

Tuesday, [After *January 4, 1921*][2]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I have read the address to the students of Seoni. I think the report is fairly good. I am sending it separately. Now it is no longer necessary to print it because I had seen the report in newspapers. I do not know if it is accurate.

Do read about the land revenue when you find time. You should never forget that you have to master the subject.

Charkhas must ply constantly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Anasuyabehn Sarabhai", 25-3-1920 and "Letter to Shankerlal Banker", 14-8-1920.

[2] From the reference to Seoni, where Gandhiji visited the Marwari National School on January 4, 1921. This was obviously written after this date.

96. THE CONGRESS

The largest[1] and the most important Congress ever held has come and gone. It was the biggest demonstration ever held against the present system of Government. The President[2] uttered the whole truth when he said that it was a Congress in which, instead of the President and the leaders driving the people, the people drove him and the latter. It was clear to everyone on the platform that the people had taken the reins in their own hands. The platform would gladly have moved at a slower pace.

The Congress gave one day to a full discussion of the creed[3] and voted solidly for it with but two dissentients after two nights' sleep over the discussion. It gave one day to a discussion of the Non-co-operation Resolution and voted for it with unparalleled enthusiasm. It gave the last day to listening to the whole of the remaining thirty-two Articles of the Constitution which were read and translated word for word by Maulana Mahomed Ali in a loud and clear voice. It showed that it was intelligently following the reading of it, for there was dissent when Article Eight was reached. It referred to non-interference by the Congress in the internal affairs of the Native States. The Congress would not have passed the proviso if it had meant that it could not even voice the feelings of the people residing in the territories ruled by the princes. Happily, a resolution suggesting the advisability of establishing Responsible Government in their territories enabled me to illustrate to the audience that the proviso did not preclude the Congress from ventilating the grievances and aspirations of the subjects of these states, whilst it clearly prevented the Congress from taking any executive action in connection with them; as, for instance, holding a hostile demonstration in the Native States against any action of theirs. The Congress claims to dictate to the Government but it cannot do so by the very nature of its constitution in respect of the Native States.

Thus the Congress has taken three important steps after the greatest deliberation. It has expressed its determination in the clearest possible terms to attain complete self-government, if possible still in

[1] The Congress session of December 1920 was attended by 14,582 delegates—the largest attendance till then at any Congress session.

[2] C. Vijayaraghavachariar

[3] Article I of the new Constitution stating the object of the Congress; *vide* the preceding item.

association with the British people, but even without, if necessary. It proposes to do so only by means that are honourable and non-violent. It has introduced fundamental changes in the constitution regulating its activities and has performed an act of self-denial in voluntarily restricting the number of delegates to one for every fifty thousand of the population of India and has insisted upon the delegates being the real representatives of those who want to take any part in the political life of the country. And with a view to ensuring the representation of all political parties it has accepted the principle of the "single transferable vote". It has reaffirmed the Non-co-operation Resolutionof the Special Session[1] and amplified it in every respect.[2] It has emphasized the necessity of non-violence and laid down that the attainment of swaraj is conditional upon the complete harmony between the component parts of India, and has therefore inculcated Hindu-Muslim unity. The Hindu delegates have called upon their leaders to settle disputes between Brahmins and non-Brahmins and have urged upon the religious heads the necessity of getting rid of the poison of untouchability. The Congress has told the parents of school-going children and the lawyers that they have not responded sufficiently to the call of the nation and that they must make greater effort in doing so. It therefore follows that the lawyers who do not respond quickly to the call for suspension and the parents who persist in keeping their children in Government and aided institutions must find themselves dropping out from the public life of the country. The country calls upon every man and woman in India to do their full share. But of the details of the Non-co-operation Resolution I must write later.

Young India, 5-1-1921

97. MORAL VALUES

There is an extract from the letter of an English friend. It is a pleasure to me to receive letters from English friends. I know that there are many honest Englishmen who are following the movement of non-co-operation with sympathetic attention, and would gladly help if they are clear about the moralities of non-co-operation. The

[1] Held at Calcutta in September 1920

[2] For the Non-co-operation Resolution as passed at Nagpur, *vide* Appendix "Congress resolution on Non-co-operation".

letter is a typical instance.

> I understand that you are striving to establish swaraj in India by appealing to moral force to attain which you rely upon selflessness. Permit me to observe that the idea is simply *excellent.* But, is there no fear that the means—non-co-operation—which you are adopting will fail you in the end, if applied before *every* unit acts from a purely selfless motive? When moral success is aimed at, surely the means *must* be of the same trend?I also earnestly look forward to the day when, not only India, but also the whole race of man will enjoy swaraj on the following lines:
>
> The human species exists at the junction of the animal and the moral kingdoms of creation, blessed with free will by the Creator, wherewith to adjudicate between the demands of a material frame (the human animal body) and a moral form (character), and thereby to express the image of the first Great Cause in finite form (in the latter). When every unit of the species learns to appreciate moral values in *every* thought, word and deed, by always giving preference to moral demands because they hail from a higher Kingdom of creation—and to do otherwise will be to defy Omnipotence—selflessness must obviously follow. The results will be that every human being will love the other automatically and true swaraj knit the whole family together.
>
> Does it not seem likely, on the other hand, that, to begin with non-co-operation will lead to the subordination of your moral goal to ulterior and inferior material desires; and, therefore, even if you do succeed, that you will have lost the very cream of your efforts unintentionally, by making fellow men greater animals than they already are? The co-operation of selfless representatives of a selfless nation will sooner make a selfless government than non-co-operation of a nation which strives to follow a selfless leader before waiting *first* to learn how to conquer self!
>
> Kindly pause to consider these facts; whatever you do should be for the good of the whole brotherhood of man; and moral values must *on no account* take a second place, even in an ostensibly trivial instance; otherwise, the cure may be worse than the disease.

I have given the letter in full omitting an introductory sentence. I have refrained from publishing the name because 1 am not sure of the writer's intention regarding the publication of his name. His moral difficulty is entitled to careful consideration. In my opinion there is confusion of thought in this statement of the case. It ever has been my purpose to show that dishonourable means cannot bring about an honourable end. What the writer may challenge and in fact does challenge is the motive of the non-co-operators in general. I confess that the motive of all non -co-operators is not love but a meaningless

hatred. I call it meaningless, for the hatred of so many of then on-co-operators has no m'eaning in the plan of non-co-operation. A man does not sacrifice himself out of hatred. He helplessly tries to inflict an injury on his supposed enemy. In non-co-operation the result to be achieved is not infliction of punishment but the attainment of justice. The end of hatred is never justice: it is retaliation: it is blind fury. The hatred of the mob at Amritsar resulted in the cruel murder of innocent men.[1] But the hatred of a non-co-operator turning upon himself loses its points, purifies him, and makes it possible for the object of his hatred to reform and retrace his steps. Thus a non-co-operator starting as an enemy ends by becoming a friend. What does it matter with what motive a man does the right thing. A right act is right whether done for policy or for its own sake. I recognize the danger of a thing done from policy being abandoned, if it does not produce the desired result. But the existence of such danger is not an argument against the morality of the act itself.

The writer has suggested an impossible solution. He wants non-co-operators to be perfect beings. But he forgets that if we were perfect there would be no occasion for non-co-operation. For there would have been non-co-operation with evil. Non-co-operation is an attempt to purify or perfect oneself. And the majority follow the path of purification from faith, not from knowledge. In other words selfish non-co-operationists following a selfless leader will have done well at the end, for they will realize the virtue of non-co-operation as a doctrine of selflessness.

The difficulty of Englishmen lies really in believing that theirrule is wholly an evil for India, i.e., it has made India the worse for English rule in everything that counts. India is poorer in wealth, in manliness, in godliness and in her sons' power to defend themselves. It is sinful to coquet with evil. There is no meeting ground between good and evil—God and Satan. The writer asks me to pause and consider. I have done so for thirty years and have been driven to the final conclusion that English Rule in its present form has proved a curse to India. Let Englishmen pause and consider what is happening before their eyes. Let them turn the searchlight inward. May they ask me to co-operate with a Government that has betrayed the Mussulmans of India and stabbed humanity in the Punjab? Let them not call the massacre of Jallianwala an error of judgment. Let them not believe the Prime Minister if and when he says that he has not

[1] *Vide* "Congress report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.

committed a breach of the solemn promise given to the Mussulmans of India.[1] The cause is just: the means are equally just. The motive is mixed. The struggle is being prolonged only because the motive is not as unmixed as the means and the end.

Young India, 5-1-1921

98. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS

WARDHA,
Wednesday [*January 5, 1921*][2]

DEAR BHAGWANDASJI[3],

I am certain that we should now immediately set up a university in Kashi. I would say that the point at issue at present is not the system of education, but non-co-operation. We are resorting to non-co-operation because the Government is Satanic. That instruction in Government schools is faulty can be another reason for boycotting them. I would, therefore, request you not to let your views on the subject matter of education block the creation of the university. Bhai Shiv Prasadji[4] will explain more about it.[5]

Yours sincerely,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 11161. Courtesy: Kashi Vidyapith, Varnasi

99. SPEECH AT CHHINDWARA[6]

January 6, 1921

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

For three years I have been trying to pay a visit to your city. The Ali Brothers were among the first Muslims with whom I came to be acquainted after my return to India. All the time, since they were

[1] *Vide* "In process of keeping", 12-5-1920 and "Khilafat : Mr. Candler's open letter", 26-5-1920.

[2] The date has been inferred from the contents of the letter. January 5 in 1921 was a Wednesday.

[3] Eminent scholar and public worker of Banaras

[4] Shiv Prasad Gupta

[5] The Kashi Vidyapith established by Bhagwandas and Shiv Prasad Gupta, was inaugurated by Gandhiji on February 10, 1921; *vide* "Speech at founding of Kashi Vidyapith, Banaras", 10-2-1921.

[6] In the then Central Provinces

put under surveillance[1] I had been trying to get permission to meet them. I did not get it.

The Ali Brothers have great love for Chhindwara. It was our agreement, first, that from Bombay I would go to Ahmedabad for some rest, but they have brought me to Chhindwara, for which they feel so much, which they have served and which in turn has also served them a lot, and from which they have great expectations.

The prestige of the Central Provinces has certainly risen by the very fact of the Congress session[2], but it has been doubly increased by the resolution passed there. Fortunately for India and the Central Provinces, at Nagpur we took one step forward, and not backward, from where we stood at Calcutta[3]. If we wish to wipe out our humiliation over the Khilafat issue and undo the injustice to the Punjab, if we wish to win freedom, the Nagpur Congress has shown us what our duty is. We have told the Government title-holders what we had to tell them. The Congress has left to them the responsibility of retaining the titles or relinquishing them and, therefore, the resolution[4] passed this time does not even mention them. We shall not come across even a child now who stands in awe of these title-holders or has any respect for their titles.

The Congress has urged the lawyers to make every effort to give up practice and to devote all their time to the service of the country. The Congress may certainly meet the needs of those lawyers who do not have enough savings even for their livelihood. The energy and time which the lawyers spend today in courts are badly needed for national work.

The Congress has also indicated the duty of students and of their parents towards them. At the moment, instead of going into arguments about all this, I just want to place before you the Congress directive. It is your duty, while withdrawing your children from schools, to engage them at the same time in some other tasks. If education can be provided, arrange for it. If this is not possible just now, engage them in some work for the country. I do not believe that there is any youngster who, after understanding what happened in the Punjab and about the Khilafat, will not say, 'I want this Empire to be

[1] At Chhindwara, under the Defence of India Act of 1915

[2] Held at Nagpur in December 1920

[3] Where the special session of the Congress was held in September 1920

[4] Gandhiji presumably refers to the Non-co-operation Resolution.

destroyed and no trace left of it.' If there is any such, I shall say to him that he is welcome to remain in his school. The Congress has advised students above 16 years of age to leave all schools and colleges having any connection with the Government.

In the same way, the Congress has asked soldiers to play their role. Loyalty to the Government is subordinate to loyalty to the people and so, when the two conflict, it becomes one's duty to sacrifice service-loyalty and to accept loyalty to the people. If some tyrannical officer like Dyer gives a perverse order, you should instead of obeying his order, prefer to face his bullets bravely and embrace death. It is better to be shot dead than to shoot and kill innocent people like those who had assembled in Jallianwala [Bagh]. Have some feeling for your own countrymen. Be their real protectors, regard them as your own, instead of oppressing them by abusing your office. Nobody can stop you from gifting to any national cause the money you earn. Give openly whatever you save. You can attend public meetings without any fear. It is true that you cannot make a speech, but the Government cannot dismiss you if you go to meetings in order to acquaint yourselves with what is going on in the country. In addition to all this, the Congress has placed special emphasis on swadeshi. The foundation of India's freedom will have been laid only when the import of Lancashire cloth has stopped. Again, do not believe that you will succeed in your aim by giving to Japan the place occupied by Lancashire. Our freedom will be won through the spinning wheel. It is necessary to introduce it in every home. If every person in the country—man, woman and child—takes a vow today to give some little time of his to spinning, within a very short time we may cease to depend on others for clothing our people and save sixty crores of rupees for the country.

The unity of Hindus and Muslims is also of equal importance. We do not wish to kill Englishmen. Likewise, we do not want to kill one another. We want to live like brothers. Satan always takes advantage of weak points. It is our duty, therefore, to overcome them.

Just as it is necessary for Hindus and Muslims to live in harmony, it is also important for the Hindus to be rid of the disgraceful practice of untouchability and to wipe out this blot on Hindu religion. The Congress has earnestly requested all Hindus to give up this evil practice. Take it from me, just as the Government does not fail to take advantage of the disunity between Hindus and

Muslims, it will also not fail to take full advantage of the heart burning within the Hindu fold caused by this practice. While there are such shortcomings in us, it should not be wondered at if our efforts for freedom fail.

This, in brief, is the resolution unanimously passed by the Nagpur Congress. In implementing it, we shall be put to the test. We have set out to win our freedom within a year; if the Government is willing to give up its Satanism and stay on submitting to our wishes and ruling us to give us contentment, we are willing to let it remain. If, however, it clings to its Satanism and wants to hold us down, then I would say that it is our duty to end it. If it is possible to do this today, I do not want to wait even till tomorrow. I pray God that He may give us the strength to make all necessary sacrifices in this great battle.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-1-1921

100. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHAGANJ,
January 8, 1921

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
94 BAZARGATE, BORIBUNDER
BOMBAY

RAJAGOPALACRARI'S SON WITH ME. SEE SHANKERLAL OR DHIRAJLAL. ARRANGE SON'S STAY THERE GROUND-FLOOR PENDING DEPARTURE MADRAS. INFORM REWA-SHANKERBHAI. BRING MOTORS TOMORROW MORNING.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

101. LETTER TO KASTURI RANGA AIYENGAR

[NAGPUR,]
January 8, 1921

DEAR MR. KASTURI RANGA AIYENGAR [1]

I was glad when you assured me that you were entirely satisfied with the Non-co-operation Resolution and that you would no longer oppose the detailed programme after it had been twice affirmed by the Congress. I hope that you would give it your whole-hearted support in your paper[2]. If we are to achieve swaraj inside of one year, we need all the strength that can be given to the movement.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

102. LETTER TO LAJPAT RAI

January 8/9[3], 1921

I hope you are looking into P[andit] Gangaram's matter.[4] The letters received by me are most damaging to him. But I am going to defer publishing anything about them till I have heard from you.

May we look to you for organizing [the] Punjab in respect of non-co-operation? I know that your difficulty is the greatest with Lala Harkishen Lal ranged against the movement. But so long as the masses continue to respond, there is a clear duty before those who are convinced of the necessity and the virtue of non-co-operation. I cannot help feeling that both Malaviyaji and Lala H. being true and brave will come round when [they] perceive the inherent weakness

[1] Journalist and Congress leader of Madras who worked on the Civil Disobedience Inquiry Committee and several other sub-committees appointed by the All-India Congress Committee

[2] *The Hindu*

[3] From the source, it is not clear on which of these two dates this letter was written.

[4] Gangaram had started national schools in the Punjab, and certain charges had been made against him by the public; *vide* "Letter to Gangaram Sharma", February 21, 1921.

and the untruth of their position. I trust you will be in Bombay on the 20th instant for the meeting of the Working Committee[1].

I am anxious to convince you that we are wrong in spending anything in foreign propaganda outside India. Curiously I have a letter from a friend in America which strengthens my position. I plead for saving every penny during this year of trial. We need all the men and all the money we can get for organizing ourselves here. But of this more when we meet.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the Manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtsey : Narayan Desai.

103. NAGPUR CONGRESS

What has the Congress done? What should we do? What should Ahmedabad do?[2] These three questions should occur to every person. The Congress gave us a new constitution[3] and unanimously passed the resolution advocating non-violent non-co-operation. Such a huge session of the Congress has never been held, and never before has it deliberated with such seriousness of purpose. Important changes have been made in the constitution. There was a long discussion on the objects of the Congress and, ultimately, after considering the matter for two nights and one day, votes were taken province-wise and the proposed changes were almost unanimously approved.

The new aim is the achievements of swaraj in the form of our choice, that is, swaraj with the British connection kept up, if possible, or severed if it is not to our liking. If this connection is to continue, it can do so only in such form as will permit the aim of the Congressto be fully realized. That is to say, the British should give up behaving as our superiors. The British connection ought to be intolerable to us so long as we feel that a handful of Englishmen are ruling over us. The Congress has also suggested the means for achieving such swaraj. It has decided that we are to win it by peaceful and pure means. There is no room here for falsehood, trickery, hypocrisy, make-believe, etc. We should follow the right path and, in doing so, lay down our life rather

[1] Of the Indian National Congress

[2] The next session of the Congress was to be held at Ahmedabad in December 1921.

[3] *Vide* "Congress constitution adopted at Nagpur session", december 1920.

than kill others. We have to learn the secret of "living by dying". The world exists by obeying this law. The corn grows only when the seed dies. The child lives only because the mother suffers for it even to the point of death. We eat stolen property if we eat without offering sacrifice. Swaraj can be won only through sacrifice and that sacrifice, that martyrdom, can be acceptable to God only if it is pure.

The other important change is that, while in the past any person and any number of persons could be delegates at a Congress session, this will not be possible now; there will be only two delegates for every hundred thousand of the population in the country. That is to say, from the whole country there will not be more than six thousand delegates. According to me, even this number is too large. This is sure to lead to one undesirable result; the whole quota from the place where the Congress is held will be able to attend, but it will be difficult for far-off provinces to send many delegates. Even then, the fact that some limit has been fixed is an improvement. A change has also been made in the method of election. Henceforth the delegates will be elected only through the choice of millions and it has also been made obligatory to take necessary measures to induce the participation of Muslims, women, the untouchables and others who have not so far been taking part. Every person wishing to join a unit of the Congress is given the right to do so by paying the fee of four annas and signing the Congress creed. In order that persons representing all points of view can enter the Congress, it has been decided to introduce a system of voting there under only one vote can be given and, if that vote is not needed by the candidate in question, it can be transferred to another. The division into provinces has also been made on the basis of language. If work is carried on in each province along the lines indicated in the constitution that itself will enable us to make great progress, for, as soon as we have developed team spirit and the power of organization, we shall have won swaraj. Towards that end, it is necessary above all to create national consciousness in every section of the public.

The resolution on non-violent non-co-operation has confirmed the resolution of the special session of the Congress at Calcutta with certain additions.[1] Those who have accepted that resolution are obliged to do the following:

1. Title-holders to relinquish their titles.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Subjects Committee meeting, Calcutta", 5-9-1920.

2. Parents to withdraw their children from Government-controlled schools and make some arrangements for them in their homes or through a national school.

3. Any student over sixteen years who is convinced that it is a sin to learn under the shadow of a Government which the people have decided either to reform or to end should occupy himself in some other way.

4. Lawyers should give up practice as soon as possible and devote themselves to the service of the people.

5. Business men should give up trade in foreign goods, sever foreign connections as soon as possible and encourage hand-spinning and hand-weaving.

6. Those members of Councils who have got themselves elected[1] despite voters' opposition should resign and those who, in defiance of public opinion, refuse to resign should not be approached by the voters for any political work.

7. Policemen and other Government servants should be polite, kind and truthful in their dealings with the people; they should attend political meetings but should not make any speeches there and should openly contribute money for the freedom movement.

8. Policemen should not regard service as greater than their religion or country and should, by their good behaviour, falsify the charge that they are mercenaries with no feeling for their own community.

9. Every man and woman should make as much sacrifice as possible.

10. All should understand that our victory lies in preserving peace, and that not only in dealing with the Government but also amongst ourselves. Preserving peace means not only avoiding physical violence but eschewing abuse as well.

11. All should try to strengthen Hindu-Muslim unity and, likewise, end the bitterness prevailing among the various sections in the country. The quarrels between Brahmins and non-Brahmins should be ended and the sin of untouchability eradicated.

If we can do this in a year, we shall have swaraj within that period; and if we delay doing it, then freedom will also be delayed.

Our duty is clear. Each of us must forthwith sacrifice what we can and, to see that others do the same, hold meetings in conformity with the new policy. At the time of the next Congress, there should not

[1] In November 1920

be a single delegate whose children continue to go to a Government school or who is himself still practising as a lawyer or who has not conformed to any condition which is applicable to him. Hence every delegate—whether man or woman—must have only hand-spun and hand-woven cloth on his or her body. It is not difficult to imagine what our condition will be when we have six thousand such delegates and other workers.

Ahmedabad has extended an invitation for the next Congress to be held there and it may therefore be said to have pledged itself to make a success of the new constitution. While Ahmedabad has made a bid for great honour, it has also incurred a great responsibility. Honour for Ahmedabad is honour for Gujarat, and honour for Gujarat is honour for India. Only if we start our preparations from today shall we be able to complete them in time. We shall consider hereafter what will need to be done.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-1-1921

104. NOTES

LOKAMANYA TILAK NATIONAL FUND FOR SWARAJ

Along with a resolution on non-co-operation, a resolution for raising a swaraj fund in memory of the Lokamanya has also been passed. Some contributions were also received during the last session of the Congress. There is no doubt at all that it is everyone's duty to contribute to this fund to the best of his means. It would be more fitting if many people gave a little each and a good fund was raised than if a few persons donated large amounts; in this way alone can the title of 'Lokamanya' conferred on the departed leader be justified. One business man giving a crore of rupees is no proof of Tilak's being 'Lokamanya'; it would be far more important to collect one crore from crores of people and it would be taken as a convincing proof of the late Lokamanya's popularity. It is in our own interest tocollect this fund since the money is to be spent for our own good. Swaraj was the one sacred aim to which the Lokamanya's whole life was dedicated. For us, it is the door leading to our *moksha*[1], the key to our happiness, the solution to the hunger of the poor, the means for clothing the poor and the weapon with which sin may be fought and

[1] Deliverance from phenomenal existence as the supreme end in life

destroyed. Thus in honouring the Lokamanya we serve our own interests. There; should be no delay and no hesitation on our part in taking up collections for this fund. Since collections have to be made from countless people, there will be a great many persons to go round collecting. They must start the work with a pledge to remain honest. During this year, there should be only one collection, this one in the name of the Lokamanya, as it can be used to support any worthy cause. We should also see to it that the collection does not fall short of the target of one crore. With the money, we can open schools wherever necessary and start similar activities.

For collecting this fund, we should go to every village, should carry the message of swaraj to the people of every street in each city. I hope that the work will be taken up without delay.

DUKE OF CONNAUGHT

H. R. H. the Duke of Connaught will soon be in the country. We have no quarrel with him. He is a good man, but he is ruled by the British Government. On this occasion, he will be an emissary of the Emperor. His aim is to strengthen the Empire. His visit will result in emphasizing the prestige of the present rulers. To extend a welcome to him would amount to welcoming our slavery. If we want to humble the arrogance of this rule, it is our duty to do nothing which may add to that arrogance. If we are convinced that we shall gain nothing through the new Councils, we cannot welcome a person who has come to confer dignity on them. Hence, at every place visited by H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught, the people should confine themselves to their homes and refrain from going out to watch illuminations; nor should they participate in any functions which may be held. This is the easiest way of expressing our dislike of this Government.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-1-1921

105. IN MEMORIAM

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear,
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

I am reminded of these memorable lines of Gray's elegy when I think of a dear friend and co-worker who died on the 4th instant at

Nagpur, unwept by any but his closest relations and friends. Yadwarkar Patwardhan of Amraoti was unknown to fame, but was no less devoted a servant of the nation than many who work in the limelight of public gaze and command the plaudits of overgenerous and often even unthinking crowds. Patwardhan was a graduate in law of Bombay University but never practised the profession. I had the privilege of first knowing him in 1915. He was constantly at the Ashram. I was struck by the beauty of his character, his simplicity, his self-effacingness, his utter humility, his constancy and his devotion to the work entrusted to him. He laboured for *Young India* over a year without any honorarium as Sub-Editor. He attended the Congress[1] and was preparing to go to Sholapur and work there for non-co-operation. But God had willed otherwise. He was ailing for some time; but we had all hoped that he would soon recover. He had a sudden relapse however during the Congress week and never left his bed. He died with the last verses of the second chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita* on his lips. Thus die many a Hampden, the real dumb makers of a nation. I knew Patwardhan to be 'a gem of purest ray serene'. His friends knew his worth. May God grant peace to the noble soul !

Young India, 12-1-1921

106. NOTES

"UNGRATEFULEST OF MEN"

Mr. Edward Foy's letter[2] reproduced elsewhere is a type of many I receive from Englishmen. I have no doubt that my correspondent believes what he writes. The pity of it is that the average Englishman's outlook upon English rule is totally different from

[1] The 35th session of the Congress held at Nagpur in December 1920

[2] Not reproduced here. The following, however, are some extracts from it: "I am sorry . . . that you are the ungratefulest of men . . . Where would you have been today but for the British Government which saved India from the iron grip of Germany? . . . you have misrepresented the Government in saying that it seeks to destroy both the Hindu and Mohammedan religions, which is grossly false . . . You talk glibly of non-violence while you are just as sure of the opposite . . . you are trying at the present stage to bring it about in order to cover the failure of non-co-operation. . . you are a peace breaker . . Be advised even at this eleventh hour and withdraw from all agitation . . . and co-operate with the Government in making the Reforms a success in which is . . . the promise of earliest swaraj *Young India*, 12-1-1921.

mine and, I believe, an average Indian's. I do not think I am of a particularly ungrateful temperament. On the contrary a little act of kindness makes me feel grateful. I am slow to find fault. And yet I can see nothing in the British rule to be grateful for. I do not think that the Germans would have occupied India if the British had not fought them. I am not inclined to believe that if it was a matter of choice between two evils, the German rule would be the worse of the two. Britain did not go to war with Germany for the sake of India. I do believe that British rule has undermined the religious instinct in us and the British people have deliberately undermined the influence of Islam. The British Government has favoured the Christian Church. Personally I would not quarrel with the favouritism if it was not indulged in at the expense of the Indian tax-payer. I would gladly help the Reforms and co-operate if I could secure the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and hasten the advent of swaraj. On the contrary I firmly believe that the reforms can do no substantial good to India. They cannot lead to real swaraj and it is impossible for me or any Indian to forget the Khilafat or the Punjab. Lastly, I assure Englishmen like Mr. Foy that non-co-operation is not failing and that not only am I, or any co-worker, not countenancing violence to cover failure but we are doing our best to prevent violence. We know that our success lies in our holding English life as sacred as our own. We are engaged in a fight between good and evil. We have no quarrel with individual Englishmen. We seek to mend or end a system which compels even the best of Englishmen to lend their assistance to evil, corruption, robbery, and humiliation of a whole nation.

'THE WICKED ROMANS'

Of another type is Mr. Pennington's letter. He always leaves a sting in the tail. His self-assurance is really amazing. He wishes me to realize that the British are not likely to leave India to anarchy, as the wicked Romans left Britain. I wish the British would be as wicked as the Romans were or as indifferent as I, a son of the soil, am about anarchy. For I do really believe that anarchy will be preferable to a continuance of the orderly humiliation and emasculation of a whole nation. I feel better able to evolve order out of anarchy than I am to destroy a Government whose one aim is to hold India under bondage for the sake of exploiting her resources. I do not believe in the philanthropic character of British rule. And now Mr. Pennington will follow me when I assure him that if I retain the British connection, it is

not for the humiliating protection it can afford but because, believing as I do in the ultimate goodness of human nature, I would not mind a partnership based on perfect equality both in theory and practice. That same belief makes me reject the fear that, immediately the British withdraw, other nations will be ready to pounce upon India. And if they will be ready, India will respond either by using the same matchless weapon of non-co-operation or will, when the paralysing aim of Britain is removed, produce a nationalist Pratap[1] a nationalist Akbar who would make effective use of disciplined brute force. Mr. Pennington further forgets that, if not the goodness of other powers, their mutual jealousies will keep this unhappy land free from the foreigner's lust once the British have withdrawn. As for my belief in the efficacy of non-violence, it is an evergreen. I warn my correspondent against believing the interested accounts that he may see published in the British Press. Everybody knows that hitherto the movement has remained singularly free from violence. There has been rowdiness in isolated cases among ourselves. Every effort is being made to purge the movement even of rowdyism. Rather than point out the weaknesses of the movement the more[2] profitable course for Mr. Pennington would be so to work as to compel the Government to retrace its steps to undo the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and to summon a conference to establish swaraj in India.

INTOLERANCE

I turn from letters from English friends to those from Indian friends. One such letter is from four Mussulmans of Bengal. One of the signatories is a pleader. These correspondents do not doubt the efficacy of the movement or the justice of the cause. They fear that violence in deed is likely to follow violence of language. They refer me to the intolerance said to have been shown to Messrs B. C. Pal and Fazlul Haq[3]. I agree with the writers that intolerance can do us no good and may harm the movement if it becomes violent. I have already suggested that when a speaker offends or irritates us, we have the undoubted right to withdraw; but nobody has any right to make a noisy demonstration against a speaker. We may not replace an

[1] Maharana Pratap, ruler of Mewar who did not submit to the Moghul Emperor Akbar

[2] The source has "moral".

[3] Nationalist Muslim leader; Chief Minister of Bengal during World War II

intolerant Government by an intolerant democracy. Non-co-operation is an attempt to demonstrate the superiority of the force of public opinion over brute force.

PUBLIC WASTE

The same writers say:

> We painfully bring to your kind notice that many people suspect that the public fund, to which even the beggars contribute their mite, is very often mis-spent in first-class dinners, first-class travelling, unnecessary taxi hire and in several other ways by the leaders.

No names are mentioned. But I am inclined to think that this is meant to be a reflection on the Ali Brothers. I must plead guilty myself to travelling second-class of late since my illness. I know that it is practically a physical impossibility for Maulana Shaukat Ali to travel 3rd class. He is certainly over-indulgent to the workers who need not always travel 2nd class. But that is due to his generous nature. I am sure that he is at least as careful about public funds as he would be about his own. I have never known him to spend money on first-class dinners. He certainly does not *waste* money on taxi hire. As a rule he makes friends pay for whatever luxuries he allows himself or his companions. But I welcome this letter. Having watched him closely and travelled with him for nearly a year, I am able to say that the thousands who trust him have no reason to doubt his honesty. They have in him and his brother, public servants of integrity, ability and courage of a high order.

VILLAGE PROPAGANDA

The writers have covered a variety of subjects. They ask how village propaganda is to be carried on. The answer is now simple. Every villager—man or woman—should belong to a Congress organization and the latter should establish in every village a school and introduce in every home a spinning-wheel. There is hardly a village that has neither temple nor mosque. National schools should be established in the compounds of these temples or mosques and simple instruction given to the boys and girls. If I had my way, I would make spinning compulsory in the schools. The cost of conducting village schools cannot be beyond the resources of a single village. These schools would be institutions for infecting our children with courage and confidence. Spinning and weaving could make every village self-supporting. A peaceful organization of the life of India on a national basis must synchronize with the establishment of swaraj. No power on earth can possibly stop the progress of the nation

towards its goal if it is in earnest. Every honest and brave college-boy can undertake this great work. It requires little previous training. It does require the two qualities I have mentioned.

MORE CRITICS AND CRITICISM

My correspondents will forgive me if I do not publish or notice all they write. It is physically impossible for me to do so. There are two pamphlets lying beside me also claiming notice. One is by Mr. Chatterji of Calcutta with a glowing introduction by Mr. Shastriar[1]. I have not had the time to read it. The other is from the pen of Prof. Raju of Nagpur. I have just been able to glance at Prof. Raju's effort to destroy the case for non-co-operation. I had to read it because I was looking forward to meeting him at Nagpur together with Principal Cheshire. But the administration had willed it otherwise and I was unable to meet these gentlemen. I have not the time to notice Prof. Raju's pamphlet at length. I am sorry to have to say that he has but superficially studied the movement and equally superficially considered my means. He betrays ignorance of some of the fundamental views held by me. He attributes to me ideas I have never held. He has presented to the readers a caricature of my views. Those alone who have never studied the movement or my views are likely to be misled by the pamphlet. I must content myself with noticing only one glaringly absurd conclusion he has arrived at. He says:

> We must conclude that Mr. Gandhi's present non-co-operation movement, far from being non-violent in character as he claims, is itself intended and calculated to do undeniable violence.

The readers of *Young India* hardly need any assurance as to the true nature of the movement. He comes to this conclusion by a gratuitous assumption of wrong premises. He will forgive me if I do not notice his pamphlet at any length. I must ask him and those who are impressed by his arguments to read the file of *Young India*, and I promise that they will find an answer to almost every argument advanced by Prof. Raju.

"GANDHI CIGARETTES"!

Of all the abuses to which my name has been put, I know nothing so humiliating to me as the deliberate association of my

[1] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri (1869-1946); educationist and orator; president, Servants of India Society, 1915-27; member, Imperial Legislative Council and Council of State; Agent-General of the Indian Government in South Africa

name with cigarettes. A friend has sent me a label purporting to bear my portrait. The cigarettes are called "Mahatma Gandhi cigarettes ". Now, I have a horror of smoking as I have of wines. Smoking I consider to be a vice. It deadens one's conscience and is often worse than drink in that it acts imperceptibly. It is a habit which is difficult to get rid of when once it seizes hold of a person. It is an expensive vice. It fouls the breath, discolours the teeth and sometimes even causes cancer. It is an unclean habit. No man has received my permission to associate my name with cigarettes. I should feel thankful if the unknown firm were to withdraw the labels from the market or if the public would refuse to buy packets bearing such labels.

TRUE WORTH

Information has also been brought to my notice to the effect that a girl has been travelling through the land claiming to be my daughter. She was reported to be in Dwarka, Chhapra and even in Nepal. I may state at once that I do not possess the good fortune of having a daughter and that no girl has my authority to use my name in connection with any propaganda. All my sister workers are well known and they do not need to use my name in order to forward the cause they may handle. The best way out of thedifficulties is to discount the word of those who claim kinship with me or, for that matter, any public worker. When we must have thousands of workers, everyone must stand or fall by his or her own intrinsic merit and be judged apart from his or her connections.

Young India, 12-1-1921

107. DRAFT M0DEL RULES FOR PR0VINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEES

1. The old Provincial Congress Committee or the old District Congress Committee of a newly created Province[1] shall form the Provincial Congress Committee under the new constitution.[2]

2. The existing members who accept the new creed shall forthwith proceed to divide the Province into districts the existing political districts, being retained wherever possible.

[1] Under the new constitution Congress circles or provinces were organized on linguistic basis.

[2] *Vide* "Congress Constitution adopted at Nagpur session", december 1920.

3. Each such district shall divide itself into talukas or tahsils, the existing divisions being retained so far as possible.

4. Each taluka shall divide itself into firkas or circles.

5. Each existing District Committee shall enrol, from among the villagers within its jurisdiction, as many members as are eligible under the constitution and these members shall form the electoral roll for the election of delegates to the Congress and representatives for the various district Congress Committees.

6. An alphabetical list of members with the full name and address and occupation of each shall be forwarded to the Provincial Congress Committee every Monday.

7. Each District Committee shall be responsible for the collection of subscription of the members and shall remit half of the proceeds to the Provincial Congress Committee at the same time as the list referred to in rule 6.

8. Each village containing more than five members of a Congress organization formed for it shall elect its secretary, treasurer, chairman, and two other members who shall form the Village Panchayat or Mahajan.

9. Each Rich Panchayat shall be responsible for the primary education of every child, male or female, residing in the village, for the introduction of spinning-wheels in every home, for the organization of hygiene and sanitation therein, and for carrying out all the other items of the Non-co-operation Resolution of the Congress in so far as it is applicable to such village.

10. It shall be the duty of every District Committee to supervise and regulate the work of village and other organizations within its jurisdiction

11. Each District Committee shall consist of ten members elected by the members belonging to the different organizations and shall as far as possible contain Mussulmans in proportion to the Mussulman population of the District and shall contain, so far as possible, at least one member belonging to the female sex and one belonging to the depressed classes.

12. The representatives of a District Committee so elected shall from among themselves elect their chairman, treasurer and secretary.

13. The representatives elected to the District Committees shall elect representatives to the Provincial Congress Committees subject to the same provisions as in rule 11, the number to be ten more than the number attached for the A.I.C.C

14. The representatives so elected shall elect from among

themselves chairman, secretary, treasurer and four other members who shall conduct the affairs of the Province and shall be responsible to the Provincial Committee for the due carrying out of the Congress resolutions from time to time.

15. The election of representatives to the District Congress Committees shall take place on the 21st February, 1921, and shall be on the basis of the roll of members as on the 15th day of February at 5 p.m.

16. Elections shall take place at a convenient place to be appointed by each District Congress Committee in an open manner and at a meeting of the electors convened for the purpose, the secretary of the [outgoing] committee shall be the convenor and the election officer.

17. The election of representatives of the Provincial Congress Committee shall take place on the 4th March, 1921, at the headquarters of the Province. The Secretary of the outgoing Provincial Congress Committee shall be the convenor and the election officer.

18. Electors of the Provincial Congress Committee may register their vote by post.

19. Results of all elections shall be sent to the Press for publication by the secretary.

20. The secretaries of the Provincial Congress Committees and the District Congress Committees should, so far as possible,be whole-time workers, and may, if necessary, be paid out of the Provincial or District funds.

21. Election of delegates to the Congress shall take place on the 15th November, 1921.

22. The Provincial Congress Committee shall assign, as far as possible in proportion of the population of each taluka, the number of delegates to be elected by it. And the elections shall take place in such taluka at a central place to be selected by the District Committee and shall be supervised by agents affiliated by the District Committee.

23. The result of elections shall be forwarded by the respective District Committees not later than the 1st December, 1921.

24. The Provincial Congress Committee shall meet at least once every month and consider reports from District organizations and adopt measures for the furtherance of the resolutions passed by the Congress.

25. These rules shall be in force for one year ending 31st December, 19215 and till such time as they are revised by the new

Provincial Congress Committee or altered or amended from time to time.

* * *

For the purpose of facilitating the work of the Provincial Congress Committees, I have ventured to frame the foregoing draft rules which they will naturally alter as they please or reject *in toto*. They are merely designed to serve for guidance. There is no time to lose if we are to set the whole of the new machinery in motion by the end of June, as we are bound to, under the new constitution. If we can bring into being the new organisation in an orderly and efficient manner and succeed in enrolling hundreds of thousands of men and women as active workers, determined to carry out the Non-co-operation Resolution, he who runs may see that we shall have difficult a peaceful and bloodless revolution within one year. The whole of the scheme of non-co-operation is based upon the supposition that the British control is dependent upon the voluntary association with it of the people. It is true that it is unconscious; it is true, too true, that it is due to fear; it is true that it is due to a variety of tempting inducements held out to a few of us. The present movement then is an attempt to show that the moment we cease to give our voluntary association, to fear and be tempted, that momentwe become a free people. I hold that this process is not so difficult as many imagine. The current year will show whether my opinion is justified. The thousands who gathered under the Congress *pandal*[1] have shared my belief. It is now for them to translate their belief into action.

Young India, 12-1-1921

108. THE NEED FOR HUMILITY

The spirit of non-violence necessarily leads to humility. Non-violence means reliance on God, the Rock of ages. If we would seek His aid, we must approach Him with a humble and a contrite heart. Non-co-operationists may not trade upon their amazing success at the Congress. We must act, even as the mango tree which droops as it bears fruit. Its grandeur lies in its majestic lowliness. But one hears of non-co-operationists being insolent and intolerant in their behaviour towards those who differ from them. I know that they will lose all their majesty and glory if they betray any inflation. Whilst we may not be

[1] At the Nagpur session, in December 1920

dissatisfied with the progress made so far, we have little to our credit to make us feel proud. We have to sacrifice much more than we have done to justify pride, much less elation. Thousands who flocked to the Congress *pandal* have undoubtedly given their intellectual assent to the doctrine but few have followed it out in practice. Leaving aside the pleaders, how many parents have withdrawn their children from schools? How many of those who registered their vote in favour of non-co-operation have taken to hand-spinning or discarded the use of all foreign cloth?

Non-co-operation is not a movement of brag, bluster, or bluff. It is a test of our sincerity. It requires solid and silent self sacrifice. It challenges our honesty and our capacity for national work. It is a movement that aims at translating ideas into action. And the more we do, the more we find that much more must be done than we had expected. And this thought of our imperfection must make us humble.

A non-co-operationist strives to compel attention and to set an example not by his violence but by his unobtrusive humility. He allows his solid action to speak for his creed. His strength lies in his reliance upon the correctness of his position. And the conviction of it grows most in his opponent when he least interposes his speech between his action and his opponent. Speech, especially when it is haughty, betrays want of confidence and it makes one's opponent sceptical about the reality of the act itself. Humility therefore is the key to quick success. I hope that every non-co-operationist will recognize the necessity of being humble and self-restrained. It is because so little is really required to be done and because all of that little depends entirely upon ourselves that I have ventured the belief that swaraj is attainable in less than one year.

Young India, 12-1-1921

109. HOW TO FINANCE THE MOVEMENT

The Non-co-operation Resolution[1] of the Congress requires a careful study by every lover of the country. Swaraj can be gained inside of one year if the people respond sufficiently by acting in accordance with their vote. It was not merely the delegates who emphasized the necessity of non-co-operation, but the many thousand

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Congress resolution on Non-co-operation".

visitors, too, showed in a variety of ways that they were in full sympathy with the programme.

The days of merely passing resolutions during the Christmas week[1] and sleeping over them till the next Christmas are gone. It will be more and more difficult for those to attend the Congress who do not act up to their profession. Everyone is called upon to withdraw his children from Government-managed or controlled schools. Everyone is called upon to use as few foreign articles as possible and to use only hand-woven cloth made from hand-spun yarn. Everyone is called upon to subscribe to the Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund. This movement of non-co-operation is a searching of the heart. Workers must constantly awaken people to a sense of their duty. The whole Congress organization must be utilized for the enforcement of theprogramme. The new constitution enables workers to organize the nation within one year for carrying out the programme in detail and if the vast body of the people of India make a conscious effort, nothing can thwart its legitimate wish for self-determination. If we nationalize schools, boycott law courts and manufacture all the cloth we need, we will have asserted our right to govern ourselves and no army in the world can possibly defeat our purpose. With a few thousand selfless, honest and industrious workers, the three things mentioned by me can be organized without much difficulty.

I propose however to devote this article to a consideration of the financial difficulty The All-India Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund should be large enough to meet every requirement, not excluding that of national institutions. Welcome as the thousands of monied men must be to us, we must rely upon the pice of the masses. Every pice knowingly given will be a token of the determination of the giver to establish swaraj. I make bold to say that the movement can be financed by the nation abandoning its superfluities, its questionable habits, and its vices.

If the women of India were to surrender their superfluous ornaments, if the wine-bibbers were to give up their drink and hand to the movement half their savings, if the smokers were to suspend their smoke pending attainment of swaraj and give to the cause half their savings, we would get all the money we need for bringing the movement to a successful close. I was agreeably surprised to find that

[1] The annual sessions of the Congress used to be held during the last week of December.

in the Central Provinces there has been a great campaign going on against the drink evil. I understand that the movement has resulted in thousands having given up this cursed habit. It would be a crowning triumph of non-co-operation if an organized effort were made to stamp out the drink evil. And I am sure that those who are weaned from it will gladly and thankfully part with a portion of their savings.

We are a poor people, getting daily poorer; and if we are to make collections from the masses we shall do so only by acts of self-denial. There is certainly always something which we can deny ourselves for the sake of the country. I do not hesitate to suggest to the religiously-minded that they cannot better devote their charity than to the erection of the temple of swaraj. No doubt the Working Committee appointed by the All-India Congress Committee will present a scheme for collection. But I suggest to the volunteer workers that they can supplement the scheme by inculcating among the masses the lesson of self-denial.

There should be a healthy competition among the different provinces in this direction.

Young India, 12-1-1921

110. TELEGRAM TO JAIRAMDAS DAULATRAM

January 12, 1921

YOUR WIRE. AM HERE TILL NINETEENTH, THEN BOMBAY[1]. TRY NOT DRAW ME THERE FOR PRESENT.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1921, p. 99

111. SPEECH TO STUDENTS OF GUJARAT MAHAVIDYALAYA[2], AHMEDABAD

January 13, 1921

I had hoped that after returning from my tour[3] I would meet you, discuss things with you, talk of experiences, happy and otherwise

[1] For the meeting of the Congress Working Committee to be held on January 20

[2] A constituent college of Gujarat Vidyapith established on November 15, 1920

[3] Gandhiji was on tour from November 16, 1920, to January 10, 1921.

and share with you some interesting moments of my numerous experiences. I did not know, then, that I would be giving you today the message I have been giving these past few days to all and sundry. The idea I am going to place before you on this occasion is not a new one. It has always been with me. I have thought about it in season and out of season and acted upon it as well. However, it has been my experience all through my life that it is only at a certain moment that I can see a particular thing as clearly as daylight. For instance, during the Rowlatt Act agitation, it suddenly struck me one day[1] in Nadiad that the nation was not yet ready for civil disobedience. I had myself spent some days in Nadiad and it is my belief that I had my biggest achievement working from there.[2] The residents of that very place became as blind as a wall and committed a big mistake.[3] I saw that they alone were qualified to offer civil disobedience who had been law-abiding all their lives not out of fear but voluntarily.

I was obliged to lay down my weapon. In this way, a particular idea strikes me only at a particular moment. When I was a student, I could not follow anything in geometry. Up to the time we had reached the thirteenth theorem, I simply could not understand what geometry was about. But then suddenly, as the teacher explained this theorem on the board, light dawned in my mind, and from that time onwards I followed the subject with interest. In the same manner, these last three or four days an idea has got hold of my mind. What should we do if we want non-co-operation to succeed, would like students to join it and wish to secure swaraj within a year? I shall place before you today what I have always believed. I have had unshakable faith in it from the very beginning, but one aspect of my reason for this faith I understand better today than I did before.

I have not come here to tell you anything as your Chancellor. I have come as an elder brother or as a senior in the family to advise you and discuss things with you. I will, of course, press my advice on you most earnestly. I have not presented this idea to you any time before now as forcefully and with as much faith in it as I will do

[1] 0n April 18, 1919, Gandhiji had advised temporary suspension of the movement.

[2] Nadiad was Gandhiji's headquarters during the Kheda satyagraha in the summer of 1918.

[3] Daring the disturbances on April 10, 11 and 12 of 1919, following news of Gandhiji's arrest.

today. If in your view it is committing suicide for students to leave schools and go without education, I would certainly tell you that you should desist from the sin of continuing in your schools and commit suicide. God will forgive you your suicide. Before now, I used to talk to you of all manner of interesting things. Today, I have come here to tell you only this, that, if you wish to see non-co-operation crowned with success, set apart one hour from your time entirely for spinning. This will sound strange to you and may shock you. Those of you who have cherished the ambition of becoming B.A.s and have been assured that this Vidyapith will confer the degree on them—to all such.I shall say that spinning for the country is in itself the highest degree that can be obtained today. I go to this length because I want to see you feel as intensely as I do.

If we have lost the country to foreigners, it is because we forsook swadeshi. In India, spinning was not a distinct profession. Every woman of every class of society spun. Some men also spun. The yarn for Dacca muslin was spun by men. But these men I speak of were a small number of professional workers. Ordinarily, spinning was not looked upon as a profession, it was regarded as a duty, as a part of one's dharma. As long as spinning flourished in India, the country was prosperous. History tells us that not only did the cloth produced in the country meet all the internal demand but there was surplus and it was exported to other countries. The East India Company destroyed the weaving industry, by means fair or foul; to ensure profits of crores, they waged wars, acquired control of ports, monopolized trade and finally established their rule. So long as we do not feel penitent, do not atone for the oppression our forefathers had to endure, how can we hope to win swaraj? We certainly shall not win it by seeking to punish anyone. We should turn our back on that method. We should try to end British rule not by visiting them with punishment but by acquiring strength through self-purification. If you believe that they have been ruling over us, that they are able to maintain their hold, entirely because of our demoralisation, if you want to win swaraj only through pure means, what should you do? You should make amends for the past, should take to spinning again. You will perhaps say that this is women's work, that you don't mind asking them to take it up. My reply is that that will not be enough. We had the misfortune to see women in the Punjab dishonoured; we, men, should take up spinning at any rate byway of amends for this dishonour, should take it up not as a substitute for some other work

but in our spare time and raise the country through it. Our atonement will be complete only when all of us, men, women and children, have taken to spinning. Those who advocate boycott of British goods do so with the intention of ruining Lancashire, but personally I think it is better that we should talk of saving ourselves from being ruined by anyone than of ruining others. If we wish to stop the opening to Japanese, British and American goods, we should produce all our requirements of cloth. Until we produce the yarn, we cannot get the required quantity of cloth woven. In the view of some experienced business men, it would take us fifty years to set up the required number of new mills if we want the mills to meet all our needs of cloth. What, then is the way to gain our end in nine months? You will never succeed, with the help of mills, in bringing prosperity to millions in covering the men and women who at present go about unclothed. No country can live on agriculture alone. Along with agricultures there must be a subsidiary occupation. Spinning and weaving is the only possible one. So long as we do not revive it, do not learn it ourselves, all our other education will be in vain. By saying all this I want to show what if it is true—and the National Congress has admitted its truth publicly by passing a resolution—we should do. If we want to win swaraj within nine months, the only education for students is that they should work to end the cloth famine in India. There is such a famine in the country today. The scarcity of food grains is not on the same scale. Sixty crores of rupees are being sent away annually to foreign countries on account of this cloth. The country imports at present 40 crore pounds of yarn. We should spin all this yarn in our homes. There is no dearth of weavers, but there is a dearth of spinners today. I have not yet been able to get the precise figure of weavers but I think it is about 50 lakhs or more. If we would save all that money, we must immediately start spinning. Just consider how many people would get employment if this trade of 60 crores were within the country itself. We should use cloth as carefully as we use ghee. We are not in such a condition that we may use as much of it as we may choose. If we can make do with just a shirt, we should have nothing else. If a short dhoti will serve the purpose, we should not have a long one. If we want to save sixty crores of rupees, our sacrifice should be equally great.

If students devote themselves exclusively to this work throughout the year, they can help win swaraj within a year, as resolved upon by the Congress. This will, however, require a determined effort.

Provided certain conditions are fulfilled, we can achieve this aim. Let students stop their studies and turn themselves into labourers for the sake of the country. You will deserve thanks if you ask no payment for your labour, but those who need it are welcome to ask for it.

If I am qualified to advise you, I would ask you to leave your college. If you want to make your full contribution in the struggle for swaraj, spin and produce as much yarn as you can for the country. Spend six hours daily in spinning, or, if that is not possible, at least four. I do not insist upon your giving up studies altogether. Even if you do, I don't think your capacity for thinking will suffer. It never does so long as one's mind has not been corrupted. My own experience has been that when I was in jail and could not get any book to read, I could think better. Our brains have grown dull with too much reading. That is why I asked you to spend six hours in spinning and to study during the rest of the time. I go to the length of putting it to you that, if you become experts in spinning, you may even go into villages. In case you do not have sufficient confidence for this, you may remain in the College. But of this I am convinced, that unless all of us give four to six hours daily to spinning, we shall not get swaraj. You can pick up spinning in a month's time or, at the most, in three months' time, and so be equipped to go into villages and spread it there. We cannot take the country forward in any other way as well as we shall by ending the shortage of yarn. Moreover, according to the Congress constitution, we have to form electorates; how can we do this if we do not take up this work? What message at the present time should I give for the villages of Gujarat? Shall I teach them to abuse the British? Or supply swords and guns to them? If not, what should I tell them? My message today is to the effect that everyone should start spinning. I feel very unhappy that anyone in a village should come to Ahmedabad to buy cloth here. The swadeshi dharma which I propagate means that every village should produce its own requirements. If we can revive this old way, no one dare cast a greedy eye on India. I entreat the Principal and the professors to accept this line for a year and so train the students that they can be sent into villages.

By way of your educational programme during the year, this will suffice; improve your Gujarati, eschew English, learn Hindustani, learn the Urdu script and learn to work on the spinning-wheel. If you do this, you will be fresh for the next year. Personally, I wish that you

should go on working along this line till we have swaraj. In any case, do so for a year. This is my message at the present time.

Don't hesitate to bring up any doubts which you may feel. I do not wish that a single student should accept this new idea if he has no faith in it. Accept what I have said only if it appeals to your reason and your heart.

Q. Parents may tell us that they had sent us to the Mahavidyalaya to study, not to ply the spinning-wheel.

Tell them that plying the spinning-wheel is also a kind of education.

Q. They may not permit us to go into villages but may ask us to stay at home and do nothing.

The best way in that case would be to stay at home and spin. If they forbid even spinning, you may reason with them respectfully. If the son spends the whole day spinning, the parents will be angry and object one or two days or four days at the most. After that, they are certain to come round. I have even seen parents who tell the son that he may tell lies. They get angry if the son does not; but they do this for a few days and then stop of themselves. You will certainly need to have this measure of firmness and I do expect a college student to have it.

Q. How will the spinning-wheel help the non-co-operation fight?

It will help us to achieve the economic freedom of the country. Until we have won this, we shall not truly enjoy swaraj. We can go without soap, or needles, or pins, but not without cloth. At present, we are not able to export as much as we import. This leads to increased economic loss every year. There is the heavy military expenditure which we must bear, whether we choose or not. We part with 60 crores for cloth, besides what is thrown away on in essential articles. If this is true, we must achieve economic freedom. Let us save the 60 crores which we are in a position to save. If we can save this amount, we shall by and by find it possible to save other amounts, too, or will then be able to afford the imports of those other items. If we do not have in the country a factory for pins or watches, it will not be reduced to utter helplessness; without cloth, however, India's condition is much like a widow's.

Q. The introduction of the spinning-wheel will again disturb the students.

Students grow through being disturbed. It is our duty, mine and of the professors, to disturb them. At present the students are

slumbering, though their eyes are open. When there is a conflict with parents, with the world and with one's friends, it is likely that some of them will wake up; this is not going back.

Q. Why do you not tell others who are not students to spin? Why do you ask the students to give up studies?

Our first mistake is to believe that spinning is not education, and the second that self-sacrifice is not education. If tomorrow all young men make up their minds to serve the country by sacrificing their studies, I would know that very moment that my task for the year was accomplished.

Q. How will it be possible to make a living with the help of the spinning-wheel?

A man who uses his intelligence can also earn a living. At present, however, I place the spinning-wheel before you as an emergency duty. If all the young men in the country took a pledge to spin four hours daily, in a month's time the price of yarn would come down.

Q. Will not the non-co-operation movement receive a set-back through the introduction of this change in schools?

No. Those who leave Government schools should do so with the conviction that the education provided by the Government is tainted with evil. If any of them would leave their institutions because they are attracted by this Vidyalaya, they had better remain in their colleges. Those who wish to impart an exclusively literary education may by all means open a college for the purpose. If we feel that our duty is this, that it will help the country if we do this work for a year, that by doing it we shall be instrumental in bringing swaraj,—if we feel thus, we ought to do this work.

Q. Do you believe that the atmosphere in the country is ready for your new idea? You are pushing the people all at once towards the last room, the Turkish bath-room, of the struggle.

I know the atmosphere is ripe and that is why I am talking about the thing. The country has advanced a good deal during the last three months. The tempo is rising not with the speed of a train but with geometrical speed in the manner of falling snow. When I stated in print eight years ago that India would have to take this path, I did not know that on the 13th of January in 1921 I would be talking to you about this idea.

Q. Before trying to serve the country, should we not serve the family?

Certainly. But there can be no conflict between service of the family and service of society. First service of self, then of the family, then of the village and finally of the country—I believe in this order. But no service should be in disregard of human welfare. At this time of want in the country, we may not spend Rs. 20,000 on the marriage of a sister.

Q. We shall need a police force for maintaining order in the country. Instead of asking us to learn spinning, why do you not teach us drill and train us for that work?

How can I teach you the policeman's work? You must first acquire the strength to rush up to a place where there may be danger. Do you mean to say that you will work for swaraj at leisure after you have had your higher education?

Q. What do we mean by swaraj?

Swaraj means the control of the military in our hands, our control over income and expenditure, over land revenue and over courts. When we have such swaraj, we shall be able to prevent all misdeeds. Apart from the other things, economic freedom can be ours this very day. We can achieve it with the help of the spinning-wheel. The country may not, of course, take up the idea today.

Q. You constantly talk of a state of war. Do you think we can do anything without raising a *volunteer army*? Students must have military training too. Is it not, then, necessary to lay more stress on this than on the spinning wheel?

Military training can be given in a short time. Moreover, what does military training signify? Courage. Is this to be acquired by exercises with dummy swords? Should riots break out again in the city and people start setting fire to houses, anyone who runs up to the scene and, standing between the rioters and their object, tells them that they would have to kill him before they could burn the house-such a one is a brave man. In situations of this sort, do you expect orders to be issued? Should you wait to hear 'March', 'Quick March', and so on? You should forget even your drill at such a time. In such acontingency, all I can tell the man is to run as fast as he can and reach the spot. If I were faced with such a situation, I would simply run without taking anything with me—not stopping, even, till I had put on my shoes if I was in the act of doing so at the moment—and perish in the flames in the attempt. You may say that Gandhi used to talk big things but it was all empty talk.

Q. If the Government conceded all our demands except that relating to the

Khilafat, should we continue the fight even then?

Certainly. I have often said that in defending Islam I am training myself to defend Hinduism. We can ensure cow-protection only by defending Islam, and while a single cow is being lulled in the country, my very flesh and muscles and blood turn into water. I am going through the necessary training for protecting the cow, doing *tapashcharya* and acquiring spiritual potency to do a great many things, and l shall die with the holy message of cow-protection on my lips.

Q. Do you not believe that, by devoting ourselves exclusively to the spinning-wheel, we shall forget what we have been learning?

Having won our freedom through spinning, we shall become really qualified for literary education. Thus, spinning will have added life to the education we receive at present.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-1-1921

112. TELEGRAM T0 ABDUL BARI[1]

January 15, 1921

SHAUKAT ALI REDIRECTED YOUR WIRE. YOU SHOULD CERTAINLY INTERVENE FOR SECURING PEACE.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1921, p. 72

113. YADVARKAR PATWARDHAN

I have lost two co-workers within only a few months. Both of them were devotees of God. Both were servants of the people. Their service was invisible. One was Vrajlal Bhimji[2] He went down into a well to take out a pitcher which some children had thrown into it. He got exhausted while climbing up with the help of the rope, slipped and so died.

The other friend, Patwardhan, was running a temperature. He

[1] Abdul Bari (1838-1926); Nationalist Muslim divine of Lucknow who took an active part in the Khilafat movement and urged his followers to refrain from cow-slaughter

[2] One of the inmates of the Ashram; *vide* "In Memoriam", 26-6-1920.

used to work[1] on *Young India*, living on his own money. In the meantime he fell ill. He went to his brother's place at Amraoti for recovery. Believing he had recovered, he came to Nagpur at the time of the Congress and had a relapse. This time the fever proved fatal. No one was present by his side except his close relatives and two or three friends. Thus Patwardhan passed away on the last *Ekadashi*[2] *day*.

I have seen very few workers like him or Vrajlal. It was not their wont to make speeches or thrust themselves forward to offer their services. But it is through workers like them that the people progress. Patwardhan's truthfulness, humility and single-minded devotion were incomparable. He was a B.A., LL.B. of the Bombay University, but he never practised as a lawyer. He joined the Ashram in 1916 and trained himself to do silently whatever work fell to his lot. He had been thinking of going to the Sholapur district after the Congress was over and working there for non-co-operation. Describing his last moments, a friend writes:

> When we arrived, he was at his last gasp and had not much consciousness. But, after a while, i.e., at about nine or nine-thirty, seeing him speak a little, I said: "Sircar (Patwardhan's pet name), be absolutely peaceful." To this he replied quite distinctly: "I am all peace." After a few moments, he said: "Nothing else is real; there is only one Real." He had passed the stage of delirium. Everybody saw plainly that he was thinking on nothing else but *Sat-chit*[3]. A few moments later I asked: "Shall we recite *Sthitaprajna*?"[4] Showing the happiness within, he himself started.

Then follows a description of how Patwardhan and others recited this part of the Gita more than once.

There is nothing here which suggests death. All signs point to his having attained immortality. Patwardhan's co-workers may, through selfishness, mourn over his death. His memory should teach them to be more devoted to their work. Patwardhan lives in his death. Though dead, he is serving the cause of freedom. There must be many such silent workers in India. Who will take note of them? And where is the need to do so either? True saints always serve unknown to others. It cannot be that there have been only five Pandavas[5]. There

[1] As sub-editor

[2] The eleventh day of the bright or the dark half of the lunar month. This particular *Ekadashi* was on January 4.

[3] Reality as Absolute Existence and Consciousness

[4] The description of the steadfast seer in the *Bhagavad Gita*, II, 55-72

[5] Heroes of the *Mahabharata*. They were Yudhishthira, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva.

are in the world other devotees like Arjuna, warriors like Bhima and votaries of truth like Yudhishthira. They do not know what fame is. They do not desire it. May Mother India produce many more workers like Patwardhan!

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-1-1921

114. TO YOUNG BENGAL

DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,

I have just read an account of your response to the nation's call. It does credit to you and to Bengal. I had expected no less: I certainly expect still more. Bengal has great intelligence, it has a greater heart, it has more than its share of the spiritual heritage for which our country is specially noted. You have more imagination more faith, and more emotion than the rest of India. You have falsified the calumny of cowardice on more occasions than one. There is, therefore, no reason why Bengal should not lead now as it has done before.

You have taken the step: you will not recede. You had ample time to think. You have paused, you have considered. You held the Congress[1] that delivered to the nation the message of non-co-operation, i.e., of self-purification, self-sacrifice, courage and hope. The Nagpur Congress ratified, clarified and, amplified the first declaration. It was delivered in the midst of strife, doubt and disunion. It was re-delivered in the midst of joy, acclamation and practically perfect unanimity. It was open to you to refuse or to hesitate to respond. You have chosen the better, though, from a worldly-wise standpoint, less cautious way. You dare not go back without hurting yourselves and the cause.

But for the evil spell that the existing system of Government and, most of all, this Western education has cast upon us, the question will not be considered as open to argument. Can the brave Arabs retain their independence and yet be schooled under the aegis of those who would hold them under bondage? They will laugh at a person who dared to ask them to go to schools that may be established by their invaders. Is the case different, or, if it is different, is it not stronger in our case when we are called upon to give up schools conducted under the aegis of a Government which, rightly or wrongly,

[1] The special session of the Congress held at Calcutta in September 1920

we seek to bend to our will or destroy?

We cannot get swaraj if not [even] one class in the country is prepared to work and sacrifice for it. The Government will yield not to the logic of words. It knows no logic but that of brave and true deeds.

Bravery of the sword they know. And they have made themselves proof against its use by us. Many of them will welcome violence on our part. They are unconquerable in the art of meeting and suppressing violence. We propose, therefore, to sterilize their power of inflicting violence by our non-violence. Violence dies when it ceases to evoke response from its object. Non-violence is the corner-stone of the edifice of non-co-operation. You will, therefore, not be hasty or overzealous in your dealings with those who may not see eye to eye with you. Intolerance is a species of violence and therefore against our creed. Non-violent non-co-operation is an object-lesson in democracy. The moment we are able to ensure non-violence, even under circumstances the most provoking, that moment we have achieved our end; because that is the moment when we can offer complete non-co-operation.

I ask you not to be frightened at the proposition just stated. People do not move in arithmetical progression, not even in geometrical progression. They have been known to perish in a day: they have been known to rise in a day. Is it such a difficult thing for India to realize that thirty crores of human beings have but to feel their strength and they can be free without having to use it? As we had not regained national consciousness, the rulers have hitherto played us against one another. We have to refuse to do so, and we are masters: not they.

Non-co-operation deals first with those sensitive classes upon whom the Government has acted so successfully and who have been lured into the trap consciously or unconsciously as the school going youths have been.

When we come to think about it, the sacrifice required is infinitesimal for individuals, because the whole is distributed among so many of us. For what is your sacrifice? To suspend your literary studies for one year or till swaraj is estabished. If I could ‘infect’ the whole of the student world with my faith, I know that the suspension of studies need not extend even to a year.

And in the place of your suspended studies I would urge you to

study the methods of bringing about swaraj as quietly as possible even within the year of grace. I present you with the Spinning-Wheel and suggest to you that on it depends India's economic salvation.

But you are at liberty to reject it if you wish and go to the college that has been promised to you by Mr. Das.[1] Most of your fellow-students in the National College in Gujarat[2] have undertaken to give at least four hours to spinning everyday. It is no sacrifice to learn a beautiful art and to be able to clothe the naked at the same time.

You have done your duty by withdrawing from Government colleges. I have only showed you the easiest and the most profitable way of devoting the time at your disposal.

May God give you strength and courage to sustain you in your determination.

Your well wisher,
M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 19-1-1921

115. NOTES

LORD READING[3]

The long expected announcement[4] about the new Viceroy has come. But two years ago, the name of the Lord Chief Justice as the Viceroy-designate would have excited wonder and even admiration. Today the public is rightly indifferent. A military dictator might have answered just as well if not better. At the same time the appointment of Lord Reading probably is a silent recognition of the fact that ours is a non-violent battle and that therefore a diplomat with a judicial training is the best representative of the Sovereign. Lord Reading has declared his intention to do the right. I have no doubt that he means it. But the system which he is coming to administer will not permit him to do what is right. That is India's experience. If he succeeds in doing the right, I promise he will also succeed in destroying the system or radically reforming it. Either he will swallow the system or the system will swallow him.

[1] C. R. Das proposed to start a National College at Calcutta.

[2] At Ahmedabad

[3] Rufus Daniel Isaacs (1860-1935); 1st Marquis of Reading; British statesman; Lord Chief Justice of England, 1913-21; Viceroy and Governor General of India, 1921-26; Foreign Secretary in the first National Government of England, 1931

[4] Made on January 9, 1921

The *Chronicle*, I observe, calls the decision[1] to end the British Committee and *India* an unfortunate decision. The argument advanced in support of the view is that the Constitution Committee had not advised abolition of the British Committee and *India* and that both were doing good work. It is true that the Constitution Committee had not recommended abolition. But it should be remembered that the Committee was appointed at the Amritsar Congress and its report was conceived before the Non-co-operation Resolution of the Special Congress.[2] Much has happened since then to revolutionize the country's ideas about foreign propaganda and the British Committee.

The abolition was a matter of principle. It was felt that a non-co-operation Congress could not keep a foreign agency for helping its work. The Congress has deliberately burnt its boats. It has decided to become self-reliant. The question of efficiency of the Committee as constituted becomes irrelevant. It is hardly dignified for the Congress in the altered situation to subsidize a foreign agency for doing propaganda work. No amount of misrepresentation about it could possibly blot out effective action by the nation.

* * *

Whether you advertise the fact or not, a body not receiving the food it needs dies. Whether we advertise the fact or not, the moment we cease to support the Government, it dies a natural death. Personally I dislike even the resolution voting the money to be used at the discretion of the All-India Congress Committee in foreign propaganda. We want all the money we need in this country. I would far rather invest Rs. 45,000 in spinning-wheels or establishing primary schools than in wasting it in advertising our work. Every good deed is its own advertisement. And I shall certainly hope that the money will still be saved for a better purpose. So far as the newspaper *India is* concerned, we are certainly better without it. It raised in us false hopes. The British people are as much on their honour and trial as we are. If they choose to be misinformed by interested or dishonest journals, we cannot help them. Have we not published the Congress Punjab report[3]? Who believes it? Mr. Montague[4] discredits it and the

[1] *Vide* "Speech on Foreign Propaganda, Nagpur", December 29, 1920.

[2] Held at Calcutta in September 1920

[3] The Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders published in March 1920; *vide Vol.* "Congress report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.

[4] Secretary of State for India

British public echoes his opinion. In the art of advertising bogus things, the British Journalists are to be beaten only by the Americans. I would not enter into the unequal competition and court defeat.

We must adopt new methods for combating the evils of sensational and untruthful journalism and public life. The Congress has given the lead-by abolishing the Committee and its organ, *India*.

TAINTED MONEY

An esteemed friend from Sind asks several questions. The letter being personal I refrain from giving the name. His first question is thus put:

> One item in the first stage of the non-co-operation programme is the withdrawal of students from the Government and aided institutions. The reason that you have been assigning is that the money with which such institutions are financed is tainted because it comes from the hands of the present Government, though the money is really ours as it has been paid by us. At the same time there is no item in the first stage of the programme for refusal to accept money from the same Government for municipal purposes which include education, sanitation, waterworks, etc. Can the money be tainted simply for education given by authorities other than municipal and not for other purposes whether municipal or otherwise?

The money received for other purposes is undoubtedly equally tainted but our non-co-operation at the present moment is confined, among other things, to scholastic institutions for the reason that the power of the Government is consolidated through these institutions in a special manner. It should be remembered that we are boycotting all scholastic institutions, whether aided or merely affiliated. We are resisting the corrupting influence of the Government through these institutions. The *corrupting influence* is the *deciding* reason.

MUNICIPAL CO-OPERATION

The friend proceeds:

> I am an elected-Municipal Councillor. From experience I find that at every stage of our work, we have to co-operate with the Government. If the Government is wicked and unjust, as we believe, is it consistent and logical that we shall refuse to co-operate with it in Legislative Councils, courts, etc., but should continue to co-operate with it in municipalities?

This is a very pertinent question. But the doubt will probably be resolved by remembering that the municipalities do not consolidate the power of the Government as do the Councils. Once we admit the

wickedness of the government system, we must admit the necessity of doing nothing that would strengthen that system. I will not dispute the necessity even of dissociating ourselves from municipalities. And any Councillor or any municipality is free to retire, or court disbandment, if they feel that they are helping the present system. The Congressresolution is an indication of how far the nation as a whole should or could go. But there can be no limit put upon individual renunciation.

CONSCIENCE OR EXPEDIENCE

> "But," adds the able correspondent, "our conduct would be quite consistent if we did not take our stand on religion or conscience but simply declared that we wanted to render this Government impotent and would employ such means (provided they are peaceful and not immoral) as would help us to achieve our object. Then there would be no question of the money coming from the Government being tainted or otherwise, though withdrawal of students from Government or aided institutions may even then be undertaken if we thought we would thus help to render the Government impotent. Such withdrawal will then be based not on any principle of religion or conscience but simply on the principle of ex- pediency."

I have a horror of the word 'expediency' because of its bad odour. As a rule, expediency is often opposed to morality and does not exclude the use of violence. But the writer has removed the sting from the word by using it in its root meaning. For he insists upon being moral and peaceful. I would therefore not quarrel with the admirable presentation of the argument. I have presented non-co-operation in terms of religion because I enter politics only in so far as it develops the religious faculty in me. My correspondent has presented the case in terms of politics. I submit that my presentation is freer from pitfalls than his. There certainly is room for stages in a religious as in a political programme. The fundamental distinction is that a programme conceived in a religious spirit admits of no tactics or compromise with things that matter. Our present non-co-operation refers not so much to the paralysis of a wicked Government as to our being proof against wickedness. It aims therefore not at destruction but at construction. It deals with causes rather than with symptoms. My meaning will become perhaps clearer in the following paragraph.

"PASSIVE RESISTANCE"

A correspondent from Satur writes:

> "A Passive resister shuns boycott, he never embarrasses a Government." But a

non-co-operator paralyses the Government and his whole business rests upon boycott (of Councils, aided schools etc.). Could a passive resister be a non-co-operator simultaneously? The quotation is yours.

The Satur correspondent has quoted me correctly. Only he has torn the sentence from its context. The word boycott has been used in its technical sense meaning boycott, by way of punishment, of British goods as distinguished from foreign goods. I hope every One recognizes the futility of boycott of British goods. But boycott, by way of purification, of evil is not only right but obligatory. Therefore boycott of Councils, etc., being symbols of an evil power, is a virtue. The term "passive resistance" is a misnomer. I have never seen it defined. I have attempted a definition.

But for the purpose of the correspondent it is enough for me to say that non-co-operation is part passive resistance. Neither embarrasses the Government. But embarrassment may result from either activity. The goal in each case is inward purification and growth. Does a man who closes his gate against an intruder embarrass the latter? Or does a drunkard who patronizes a drink shop embarrass the keeper when he withdraws his custom and turns teetotaller?

Young India, 19-1-1921

116. THE SECRET OF SWARAJ

The Congress resolution has rightly emphasized the importance of swadeshi and thereanent of greater sacrifice by merchants.

India cannot be free so long as India voluntarily encourages or tolerates the economic drain which has been going on for the past century and a half. Boycott of foreign goods means no more and no less than boycott of foreign cloth. Foreign cloth constitutes the largest drain voluntarily permitted by us. It means sixty crores of rupees annually paid by us for piece-goods. If India could make a successful effort to stop that drain, she can gain swaraj by that one act.

India was enslaved for satisfying the greed of the foreign cloth manufacturer. When the East India Company came in, we were able to manufacture all the cloth we needed, and more for export. By processes that need not be described here, India has become practically wholly dependent upon foreign manufacture for her clothing.

But we ought not to be dependent. India has the ability tomanufacture all her cloth if her children will work for it. Fortunately

India has yet enough weavers to supplement the out-turn of her mills. The mills do not and cannot immediately manufacture all the cloth we want. The reader may not know that, even at the present moment, the weavers weave more cloth than the mills. But the latter weave five crore yards of fine foreign counts, equal to forty crore yards of coarser counts. The way to carry out a successful boycott of foreign cloth is to increase the output of yarn. And this can only be done by hand-spinning.

To bring about such a boycott, it is necessary for our merchants to stop all foreign importation, and to sell out, even at a loss, all foreign cloth already stocked in India, preferably to foreign buyers. They must cease to speculate in cotton, and keep all the cotton required for home use. They must stop purchasing all foreign cotton.

The mill-owners should work their mills not for their profits but as a national trust and therefore cease to spin finer counts, and weave only for the home market.

The householder has to revise his or her ideas of fashion and, at least for the time being, suspend the use of fine garments which are not always worn to cover the body. He should train himself to see art and beauty in the spotlessly white khaddar and to appreciate its soft unevenness. The householder must learn to use cloth as a miser uses his hoard.

And even when the householders have revised their tastes about dress, somebody will have to spin yarn for the weavers. This can only be done by everyone spinning during spare hours either for love or money.

We are engaged in a spiritual war. We are not living in normal times. Normal activities are always suspended in abnormal times. And if we are out to gain swaraj in a year's time, it means that we must concentrate upon our goal to the exclusion of everything else. I therefore venture to suggest to the students all over India to suspend their normal studies for one year and devote their time to the manufacture of yarn by hand-spinning. It will be their greatest act of service to the motherland, and their most natural contribution to the attainment of swaraj. During the late War our rulers attempted to turn every factory into an arsenal for turning out bullets of lead. During this war of ours, I suggset every national school and college being turned into a factory for preparing cones of yarns for the nation. The students will lose nothing by the occupation: they will gain a kingdom

here and hereafter. There is a famine of cloth in India. To assist in removing this dearth is surely an act of merit. If it is sinful to use foreign yarn, it is a virtue to manufacture more swadeshi yarn in order to enable us to cope with the want that would be created by the disuse of foreign yarn.

The obvious question asked would be, 'If it is so necessary to manufacture yarn, why not pay every poor person to do so?' The answer is that hand-spinning is not, and never was, a calling like weaving, carpentry, etc. Under the pre-British economy of India, spinning was an honourable and leisurely occupation for the women of India. It is difficult to revive the art among the women in the time at our disposal. But it is incredibly simple and easy for the school-goers to respond to the nation's call. Let no one decry the work as being derogatory to the dignity of man or of students. It was an art confined to the women of India because the latter had more leisure. And being graceful, musical, and as it did not involve any great exertion, it had become the monopoly of women. But it is certainly as graceful for either sex as is music, for instance. In hand-spinning is hidden the protection of women's virtue, the insurance against famine, and the cheapening of prices. In it is hidden the secret of swaraj. The revival of hand-spinning is the least penance we must do for the sin of our forefathers in having succumbed to Satanic influences of the foreign manufacturer.

The school-goers will restore hand-spinning to its respectable status. They will hasten the process of making khaddar fashionable. For no mother, or father, worth the name will refuse to wear cloth made out of yarn spun by their children. And the scholars' practical recognition of art will compel the attention of the weavers of India. If we are to wean the Punjabi from the calling not of a soldier but of the murderer of innocent and free people of other lands, we must give back to him the occupation of weaving. The race of the peaceful *julahis*[1] of the Punjab is all but extinct. It is for the scholars of the Punjab to make it possible for the Punjabi weaver to return to his innocent calling.

I hope to show in a future issue how easy it is to introduce this change in the schools and how quickly, on these terms, we can nationalize our schools and colleges. Everywhere the students have asked me what new things I would introduce into our nationalized

[1] Weavers

schools. I have invariably told them I would certainly introduce spinning. I feel, so much more clearly than ever before, that, during the transition period, we must devote exclusive attention to spinning and certain other things of immediate national use, so as to make up for past neglect. And the students will be better able and equipped to enter upon the new course of studies.

Do I want to put back the hand of the clock of progress? Do I want to replace the mills by hand-spinning and hand-weaving? Do I want to replace the railway by the country cart? Do I want to destroy machinery altogether? These questions have been asked by some journalists and public men. My answer is: I would not weep over the disappearance of machinery or consider it a calamity. But I have no design upon machinery as such. What I want to do at the present moment is to supplement the production of yarn and cloth through our mills, save the millions we send out of India, and distribute them in our cottages. This I cannot do unless and until the nation is prepared to devote its leisure hours to hand-spinning. To that end we must adopt the methods I have ventured to suggest for popularizing spinning as a duty rather than as a means of livelihood.

Young India, 19-1-1921

117. THE SINS OF UNTOUCHABILITY

It is worthy of note that the Subjects Committee[1] accepted without any opposition the clause regarding the sin of untouchability. It is well that the National assembly passed the resolution stating that the removal of this blot on Hinduism was necessary for the attainment of swaraj. The devil succeeds only by receiving help from his fellows. He always takes advantage of the weakest spots in our natures in order to gain mastery over us. Even so does the Government retain its control over us through our weaknesses or vices. And if we wouldrender ourselves proof against its machinations we must remove our weaknesses. It is for that reason that I have called non-co-operation a process of purification. As soon as that process is completed, this Government must fall to pieces for want of the necessary environment, just as mosquitoes cease to haunt a place whose cesspools are filled up and dried.

[1] Of the 35th session of the Congress held at Nagpur

Has not a just Nemesis overtaken us for the crime of untouchability? Have we not reaped as we have sown? Have we not practised Dyerism and O'Dwyerism on our own kith and kin? We have segregated the 'pariah' and we are in turn segregated in the British Colonies. We deny him the use of public wells; we throw the leavings of our plates at him. His very shadow pollutes us. Indeed there is no charge that the 'pariah' cannot fling in our faces and which we do not fling in the faces of Englishmen.

How is this blot on Hinduism to be removed? 'Do unto others as you would that others should do unto you.' I have often told English officials that, if they are friends and servants of India, they should come down from their pedestal, cease to be patrons, demonstrate by their loving deeds that they are in every respect our friends, and believe us to be equals in the same sense they believe fellow-Englishmen to be their equals. After the experiences of the Punjab and the Khilafat, I have gone a step further and asked them to repent and to change their hearts. Even so it is necessary for us Hindus to repent of the wrong we have done, to alter our behaviour towards those whom we have 'suppressed' by a system as devilish as we believe the English system of the Government of India to be. We must not throw a few miserable schools at them: we must not adopt the air of superiority towards them. We must treat them as our blood-brothers as they are in fact. We must return to them the inheritance of which we have robbed them. And this must not be the act of a few English-knowing reformers merely, but it must be a conscious voluntary effort on the part of the masses. We may not wait till eternity for this much belated reformation. We must aim at bringing it about within this year of grace, probation, preparation, and *tapasya*. It is a reform not to follow swaraj but to precede it.

Untouchability is not a sanction of religion, it is a device of Satan. The devil has always quoted scriptures. But scriptures can nottranscend reason and truth. They are intended to purify reason and illuminate truth. I am not going to burn a spotless horse because the Vedas are reported to have advised, tolerated, or sanctioned the sacrifice.[1] For me the Vedas are divine and unwritten. 'The letter killeth.' It is the spirit that giveth the light. And the spirit of the Vedas is purity, truth, innocence, chastity, humility, simplicity, forgiveness,

[1] Gandhiji here refers to the practice of horse-sacrifice performed by kings in the Vedic Age.

godliness, and all that makes a man or woman noble and brave. There is neither nobility nor bravery in treating the great and uncomplaining scavengers of the nation as worse than dogs to be despised and spat upon. Would that God gave us the strength and the wisdom to become voluntary scavengers of the nation as the 'suppressed' classes are forced to be. There are Augean stables enough and to spare for us to clean.

Young India, 19-1-1921

118. DID JESUS CO-OPERATE?

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Mr. Lyle[1] has been here and he told me that you had been enquiring kindly about me. I thank you for your kind inquiries. Of course I have been following your activities with the greatest interest, but it grieves me to have to say that I do not and cannot approve of your nonco-operation movement. I have been praying that God may show you your mistake and that He may use you—and us all—for the glory of His Holy Name, and for the real enduring welfare of the whole of India. From your many articles and speeches I have gathered that you attempt to justify your movement on the ground that if, in spite of argument and dissuasion, one's nearest and dearest even be seen pursuing a wrong course of action, one is bound to dissociate oneself from him or her lest one be charged with being an accomplice in the wrongdoing.

But surely, one fundamental doctrine of both the Christian and Hindu Scriptures points to quite a different course of conduct. Both tell us of Divine Incarnations, and though these differ in some respects, yet in eachcase the underlying idea is that when God, who is Himself infinitely holy, saw the sin-begotten misery of men, He did not hold aloof from them but graciously stooped down and came to them to render help and to save theirsin and its effects. Jesus Christ, the Holy and Undefiled One, did not refuse to work along with sinful men, but, on the contrary, while loathing all evil and scathingly denouncing it even in the great ones of his time, He freely and closely associated with all men, from the Pharisee down to the hated tax-gatherer of an alien government and the notorious sinner; and endeavoured, both by wise precept and loving example, to wean them from their wickedness and to win them to righteousness.

From this I gather that it is the obvious duty of all true patriots at the present time not to hold themselves aloof from a Government unfairly denounced as "devilish" and "Satanic", but to take every possible step, e.g.,

[1] A white Christian missionary at Ahmedabad who used to teach English to the students in Sabarmati Ashram

the encouraging of the new Councils, to keep in touch with it and endeavour to bring it round to what they consider a more righteous course of conduct. I am hoping and praying that as you were led to acknowledge your mistake of last year in the matter of satyagraha, so God may open your eyes before it is too late and lead you from non-co-operation to co-operation.

You are at liberty to use these few words in any way you like. With kind regards,

I am,

Yours sincerely,

RAJKOT, G. GILLESPIE

20-11-20

I print this letter without a word of alteration. I print it specially because it shows that in spite of ceaseless denunciation by me of the existing system of Governments, I have the good fortune to retain the warm friendship of Britishers like the Rev. Gillespie. I know that he honestly believes what he says. He gives me credit for honesty of belief and purpose, yet we differ as poles asunder even in our interpretation of the Christian and Hindu scriptures. Of the latter I can write with confidence, and I make bold to assert that it is the *duty* of a Hindu to dissociate himself from the evil-doer, i.e., to refrain from participating in or countenancing the evil in him. Prahlad dissociated himself from the evil done by his father. The divine Sita rejected the services tendered to her by Ravan. Bharat denounced the deeds of Kaikeyi, his mother, and rejected the throne wickedly secured for him by her. I can write of the Bible onlywith diffidence. But my reading of it has clearly confirmed the opinion derived from a reading of the Hindu scriptures. Jesus mixed with the publicans and the sinners neither as a dependent nor as a patron. He mixed with them to serve and to convert them to a life of truthfulness and purity. But he wiped the dust off his feet of those places which did not listen to his word. I hold it to be my duty not to countenance a son who disgraces himself by a life of shame and vice. *Enlightened non-co-operation is the expression of anguished love.* My esteemed correspondent mixes up dissociation from evil with dissociation from persons for service. Would Jesus have accepted gifts from the money-changers, taken from them scholarships for his friends, and advanced loans to them to ply their nefarious traffic? Was His denunciation of hypocrites, Pharisees, and seducers merely in word? Or did He not actually invite the people to beware of them and shun them? But Mr. Gillespie thinks that I unfairly describe the

Government to be Satanic. Perhaps that alters our viewpoints. I consider that I would be less than truthful if I did not describe as Satanic a Government which has been guilty of fraud, murder, and wanton cruelty: which still remains unrepentant and resorts to untruth to cover its guilt. I really believe I am performing the office of a friend by denouncing in precise language the pretentions of a Government which has nothing to commend itself to the people under its charge.

Young India, 19-1-1921

119. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

ON THE TRAIN,
January 19 [*1921*][1]

MY DEAREST CHARLIE,

I have just read your letter written on Xmas eve and the other regarding Lalchand[2]. I agree with you that Lalchand is much tooinexperienced to go to Mombasa. He is not worth Rs. 600 to them. I have not yet read the East African dispatch. But I have read the article you refer to. I do not like Lalchand's style at all. If I had seen it, I would have stopped its publication.

I hope you are keeping well.

Pearson's[3] letter I count as a rich gift. Baro Dada[4] has given me another letter. He is very good. I esteem his blessings.

I am leaving Bombay for Calcutta on the 21st instant.

With love,

Yours,
MOHAN

From a photostat G.N. 957

[1] Para 1 of "Letter to Lalchand", January 29, 1921, suggests that this letter was written in 1921.

[2] Who worked on the editorial staff of *Young India*

[3] William Winstanley Pearson; a missionary who collaborated with C. F. Andrews in Y. M.C.A. work; taught for some time at Santiniketan; in 1914, studied conditions of Indian labour in sugar estates in Natal

[4] Dwijendranath Tagore

120. LETTER TO GOPALDAS

NADIAD,
[*January 19, 1921*][1]

BHAI GOPALDAS,

I have not read the [Congress] President's order. But I would be satisfied if an earthen lamp illuminated a village. Can Bombay or Nadiad have it? And have the village people understood the message of the Congress? An earthen lamp may be lighted outside every house for that purpose. Let it be done at my risk. But as it is, I am not likely to be interested in illuminations. I can think of illumination outside only when our hearts are enlightened. And is it not true that our hearts can be enlightened only when we have attained our objective? Right now one would like to use the sesame oil in food rather than for the earthen lamp.

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

121. SPEECH TO STUDENTS OF NATIONAL SCHOOL, NADIAD[2]

January 19, 1921

Everybody who calls himself an Indian, including yourself and myself, has only one duty today, namely, to take effective steps and make necessary sacrifices to win swaraj within a year, as we wish to do. I do not want you to regard swaraj as being a political matter. Every child should know the meaning of swaraj, that to have swaraj is part of everyone's dharma. Every child should have the strength to keep his dharma inviolate, should be so strong that nobody can make him do anything against his will by force or threats. Every child should have the courage to declare as wrong that which he considers to be wrong and as right that which it considers to be right. Parents should have taught their children to discriminate between right and wrong. This is the meaning of swaraj. It is the right to say what is in one's mind and act according to it, and the right to refuse to do anything which one considers sinful.

[1] From the contents it appears that the letter was written some time after the Congress passed its resolution on Non-cooperation on December 30, 1920. Gandhiji was in Nadiad on this day in January 1921; *vide* also "Nagpur Congress", 9-1-1921.

[2] Exrtacted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour

How can we enjoy swaraj as long as we do not exercise freedom in any matters and as long as the foreigner dictates to us what we should eat and drink and what we should think? We depend upon others for our cloth. In consequence we have to depend upon others in respect of food also. Our friend Shri Amritlal Thakkar has just returned from Orissa. where he had gone to render service. I mention this matter because Gujarat made some contribution to help in relieving the distress there. The immediate cause of the famine may have been excessive or insufficient rains; but the fact remains that the people of Orissa had no money and hence they could not buy food. They are poor because they have no work. I have, therefore, been insisting that, if we expect national service even from children, we should train their hands and feet as much as we should teach them to read and write and chant the name of God. This alone will provide education of the heart, the mind and the body. The spinning-wheel today provides the most useful training for the hand. Besides, it willenable us to win freedom, for it will teach us to save 60 crores of rupees.

I want that all you children should realize that it is as much your duty to ply the spinning-wheel for a few hours, two or four or six, for the sake of India, as it is your duty to practise truthfulness and other virtues. I want every child to ply the spinning-wheel for six hours daily for this one year. I pray to God that He may make this easy and light work for us, for through it we shall win religious and economic freedom.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-1-1921

122. SPEECH AT TEACHERS' MEETING, NADIAD[1]

January 19, 1921

Till now, we were afraid of the Government. We thought that we would not be able to carry on without Government help. Therefore we did everything under fear. We could not even speak out our thoughts because of fear. Today we know that we can carry on without

[1] This item is extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour. The Municipality having resolved not to accept grants from the Government, teachers of the municipal school had to decide whether they should remain in its service and forgo their right to pension.

Government help, and that the Government can do us no harm. We have come out of the habit of saying what we do not mean. We can speak what we feel. We should tell the Government that the school belongs to us. How will it, then, try to influence us? Can it punish or arrest everybody? This, however, is but the first result. The golden effect is yet to come. To produce it the co-operation of teachers is required. You should get ready to play your part and make sacrifices in the battle for freedom. When freedom is won, your pensions will also be resumed. The secret of this battle lies in everybody seeing clearly that we are fighting for our own rights and acting with courage to win them. I should like you all to become teachers of swaraj and help the Municipality.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-1-1921

123. SPEECH AT MERCHANTS' MEETING, NADIAD[1]

January 19, 1921

Nadiad has done quite a lot till now and I wish it will continue to do as much and more in the future. If merchants get ready, even the lawyers will not be needed. We can secure justice on the Punjab and the Khilafat issues with the help of merchants. We can win freedom right today if seven crore Muslims and 23 crore Hindus are imbued with the spirit of swadeshi. The first step in this is to produce cloth. If we can get the capacity to do this, we shall be able to produce otherthings as well. Hindu and Muslim merchants are equally responsible for having lost this capacity. They cannot overcome their greed. You can get both swaraj and justice even today if merchants overcome their greed. You may throw away all foreign cloth; I shall not be sorry even if you burn it. If you wish, you may export it to other countries and dispose of it there but do not sell it in your country. Start producing indigenous cloth. I consider it odd that Nadiad should depend on Ahmedabad for cloth. It is difficult to call this swadeshi. As long as everybody, young or old, does not spin, swaraj is far away. If all of us spin, we get the yarn free. And then everyone can get it woven, just as everybody can get wheat milled for his own requirement. In this way we can make up the shortfall in mill cloth. If you stop buying and selling foreign cloth, you can secure

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour

swaraj for the country.

Secondly, you can donate funds. Spending your money for swaraj, you can prove that you are made of gold and not of base metal. Your money will go back to you. It will be spent in your own town. You will not get interest at the rate of eight annas[1] or twelve annas[2] on this money, but you will get education and you will get freedom in return for it. You will be able to produce your own cloth. I earnestly request you to add glory to Nadiad by implementing these two programmes. In doing so, you will bring glory to the whole of Gujarat and India.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-1-1921

124. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, VADTAL[3]

January 19, 1921

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I request all of you to excuse me for my inability to stand while speaking. It is due to my physical weakness. The fact is as my body has gone weak, so has my voice also. I however wish that my voice should reach as many people as possible. All ofyou should therefore remain silent. If silence prevails, many brothers and sisters will be able to hear and understand what I wish to say.

I am glad to come to this holy place. From 1915 I have nursed a wish to undertake a pilgrimage to this holy place. I look upon it as God's grace that I have got this opportunity today and I am also thankful to you for the same.

I am very glad that so many sadhus have come to this meeting; because my message is not intended only for ordinary men and women, it is meant for all—and more so for the sadhus. When sadhus understand the meaning of non-co-operation and the reason why the people of the country have undertaken it, they will see that they cannot live as sadhus, cannot preserve the virtues of a sadhu unless they chant the *mantra* of non-co-operation. Non-co-operation is not a

[1] On one hundred rupees per mensem

[2] *ibid*

[3] A village in Kheda District of Gujarat; a place of pilgrimage for the Hindus of the Swaminarayan sect. The item is extracted from the account of Gandhiji's tour published in *Navajivan*

new idea for our religion. It is only that because of some misfortunes we have forgotten it or that its principles have gone out of our minds and so we are slow to put it into practice, doubts arise and in consequence the establishment of swaraj is delayed. I know, however, that this idea is not new and that is why I say that, if the people respond properly, we can establish swaraj within a year. Four months have gone by since I said this, but I repeat it even now because of my abiding faith in the people.

When some friends who are interested only in politics express a doubt and say that non-co-operation is not a political movement, that it is a movement nobody knows of what kind, rather that it is a religious movement, I admit that it is undoubtedly a religious movement. I have not made a secret of this. Difficulties arise so long as sadhus do not understand the principles of religion and do not use them to solve political problems. As long as sadhus do not lend a hand in solving these problems they cannot have the virtues of a sadhu.

Non-co-operation means refusing to associate ourselves with or be a party to the tyranny of the Government and to render any support, direct or indirect, to such tyranny. All scriptures advise us to keep away from Satanic activities. When such things are being perpetrated, we become partners in the sin of those responsible for them if we take help from them or give help to them. Tulsidas has said that it is sinful to associate with wicked persons. The *Gita* has also said that we shall be demons if we follow the demon's ways.

If you run away because of this little shower, you will not even understand the meaning of non-co-operation. We have learnt a lesson during this interval, which will make us realize why there is delay in our getting swaraj. *Kaliyuga*[1] in this world is like a shower of rain out of season. As this latter brings us no happiness, so also in *Kaliyuga* we do not get happiness easily. If we wish to spend our time in devotion to God and to live as we would in *Satyayuga*[2], we ought to give up the fear of *Kaliyuga*.

See how much time we have wasted because of our fear of a shower. The large number of people here with sticks, umbrellas and *dharias*[3] in their hands started the confusion, umbrellas were opened

[1] Age of strife
[2] Age of truth
[3] Scythes fixed to ends of long staves

up and the women started quarrelling for no reason whatsoever. This shows that we are not yet fit for swaraj. In swaraj, the first virtue everyone should have is fearlessness. He who gives up dharma for fear of suffering cannot win swaraj. A timid man can never be happy. A thief or robber can compel such a one to do anything by threatening him with force and, therefore, he cannot follow dharma.

It is the duty of every man and woman to maintain quiet in a meeting. If someone gets mad and starts hitting out, others should bear with him, not hit him back nor start cursing and shouting. Those who stand outside should not try to rush in. They should listen to the speech attentively, should ponder over it, act upon those ideas with which they agree and reject the rest. We are not yet capable of following this practical rule. If we cannot remain quiet when there are a few drops of rain, we would also run away if some one from among all these people carrying sticks and *dharias* should turn mad and become violent. This would not help us to protect our womenfolk or to preserve our honour. We should have faith in man. Nobody is likely to attack us with a *dharia* or stick. In case, however, some mad man does attack us with one, as so often illnesses come upon us, it is the duty of the sane among us to keep patience. The Kshatriya's dharma is not to strike back if somebody abuses him or strikes him with a stick or *dharia,* but to put up with the abuse or bear the blow. His dharma is not to run away. It is not his dharma to kill; his dharma is rather to die and live by dying. I tell you my conviction that nobody who kills someone does so in order to protect another; the man gets ready to lay down his life but, not having sufficient strength to die, he kills before he dies. He is so much the less of a Kshatriya for unsheathing his sword.

If only the Kshatriya has faith, death is but a crown of glory. Why fear it? He is a brave man who runs-up where there is the greatest danger to life. A man is not considered brave because he has the strength to hit. We do not call the potter brave for beating his ass so often. In the same way, we correctly describe the aggressive Kshatriya as a potter. A weak man beats his wife; we do not call him brave, but fittingly describe him as unmanly. As long as we have not developed the virtue of the Kshatriya, it is difficult for us to win swaraj. That virtue is fortitude. The twelve-year-old Prahlad, Sudhanva[1] and Sita had this virtue. Ravana offered tempting things to Sita, tried to frighten her, but she did not yield ever so little. That is why we regard her as a pure Kshatriya woman, a goddess—a mother. As long as our

[1] Son of King Hansdhwaj of Champavati, in the *Mahabharata*

sisters do not develop the virtues of Sita, we shall remain unfit to employ non-co-operation or to get swaraj. The sweets offered by Ravana and spurned by Sita were not bitter to the taste; but they had been offered by unworthy hands and so she threw them away. The ornaments which Ravana offered her were extremely good, the like of which you would never have seen. The pearls and jewels embedded in them were far more lustrous than any we see today. But knowing that they had been issued by unworthy hands, she rejected them; it was in this way that she could guard her chastity.

It is necessary also for the country to understand the essentials of non-co-operation. If we wish to preserve our manliness, to protect our religion and the cow, if we wish to preserve our existence, it is imperative for us to offer non-co-operation.

The Government has robbed us of our self-respect. It had all along been robbing us of money. As long as it did only that I tolerated it. I adopted the same standard towards it as I do in the Ashram. There I do not punish a thief; in the same spirit I tolerated the Government too. When, however, the Government struck at the self-respect of my country, I woke up and realized that it was an incarnation of Ravana and must be destroyed. It does not mean that I claim to be the incarnation of Rama. We regard Rama to be an incarnation of God Himself. I am no God; neither are you. But all of us are heirs of Rama. It is our dharma to practise *tapashcharya* and undergo sufferings like his. We should non-co-operate in the same manner in which he non-co-operated with Ravana. Since we are not Rama, we can seek nothing by killing Ravana physically. We believe that this Ravana, thanks to his evil desires, assumes ever new bodies. We should, however, act upon the counsel of Valmiki and Tulsidas and dissociate ourselves from [the modern] Ravana and try to destroy his wickedness.

The message of Zarathustra, the Koran, the Bible and of Swaminarayan[1] teaches us this same thing: not to associate with the wicked, not to help him nor to seek help from him. The Government has revealed itself to be a Ravana by attacking Islam and betraying the Muslims. Today it is the turn of Islam, tomorrow it will be that of Hinduism. In fact, it attacked Hinduism long ago but in our ignorance, we gave up our culture and did nothing against the Government. If the Hindus had not abandoned their dharma, how would they salute those who openly slaughter cows? We are not

[1] Swami Sahajanand (1781-1830); founder of the Swaminarayana sect

talking about one man killing a cow. It would be a different matter if we tolerated that. But how can we be loyal to people who kill cows though supposed to be our protectors, our rulers and to bless us with food?

You may ask whether I realized this only a year ago. No; but then I was under an illusion. I believed that I could reform the Government. I believed that I could influence it even if I had to sacrifice my life in the process. I have lost my faith in it because of its calculated betrayal of Islam. I woke up and told myself: "My dear man, if you are a Hindu, you should know that it is time for you to run away, otherwise you will sacrifice your dharma." Since then I have been preaching non-co-operation among Hindus for the protection of their religion. If you wish to live as Hindus, I declare in this holy place that the first and the last lesson you should learn is that of non-co-operation.

You may, however, wonder why I am talking about friendship with Muslims. They too kill cows. I would say that they do so in the name of and as a part of their religion. I shall be able to explain to them that an orthodox and devoted Hindu fought along with them with the faith that, if he fell fighting for the protection of their religion, Khuda will call upon them to protect the cow. I do not make this a condition with them, but I believe that Khuda will certainly give them this call.

I do not always say this. I make no conditions, but, in the vicinity of a temple and in the presence of sadhus, however, I cannot refrain from saying this. It would be shameful of me if I did not say it.

You cannot save the cow by killing Muslims or Englishmen; you can save her only by offering your own dear neck. If you offer your neck in saving the cow, *Yamaraj*[1] will not call you to account for doing so but will offer you a seat on his own throne. If, on the other hand, you kill another person for saving a cow, he will positively ask you to justify your action, for you are a man and so was the other one [whom you killed]. We are not God so that we may kill another person in order to save a cow. Hinduism, however, imposes an obligation on me to offer my neck for the sake of the cow. How many Hindus have acted thus? How many of them have offered their lives

[1] God of Death

unconditionally for the sake of Muslims? The cow cannot be protected with the calculating virtues of a *Vanik*[1]. The noble tradition of Hinduism requires you to take no thought of your life. As soon as the Muslims realize that for their sake the Hindus are ready to lay down their lives, they will desist from cow-slaughter. The Ali brothers have given up beef; it is not even admitted in their kitchen, for they know and do their duty by a neighbour. The Koran does not insist that Muslims must eat beef. It has not prohibited beef, that is all. They will, therefore, understand the duty to a neighbour and will stop cow-slaughter. I am associating with the Muslims only with this faith and I tell all the sadhus that, if they sacrifice their all for the sake of the Khilafat, they will have done a great thing for the protection of Hinduism. Today the duty of every Hindu is to save Islam from danger. If you do this, God Himself will inspire them to look upon Hindus as friends and Hindus will also look upon Muslims as friends. All this time, the Muslims regarded it as their duty to harass the Hindus and Hindus have believed that they should kill Muslims to protect the cow. Taking advantage of this conflict, the third party, namely, the British, went on with cow-slaughter, and they got the blessings of both. In this manner, we have committed a great sin.

This Government has betrayed Islam and humiliated the Punjab. The Punjab is our crown, the land where saints and sages lived. The Government whipped the people of this Punjab, made them crawl on their stomachs, snatched the veils of their womenfolk; painted the robes of the sadhus white and murdered one thousand persons by shooting them from behind. This Government now asks us to forget all this. It is not the death of a thousand men which has pained me. What inflicts a deadly wound is that the Government should, over and above all this, proclaim that India alone was to blame for all this. Though the blame was its own, it blames the country. It has done nothing; there was only a little error of judgment on the part of General Dyer; that is what the Government says. It neither regrets nor apologizes for what has happened. As long as the Punjab does not get justice, it is the duty of Hindus, Muslims, Christians and all others to non-co-operate with the Government. The religion of Muslims also teaches this same thing. They call it *tarke mawalat.*

This non-co-operation is peaceful. There is no scope in it for the use of sticks and *dharias* for head-hunting; there is scope only for

[1] Trader

offering one's own head. Its way is that of non-violence towards the British and among ourselves.

You are not *Dharalas*, but *Thakardas*[1]—no, you are *Thakores*. If you want to call yourself *Thakores*, you cannot act like petty thieves. *Patidars*[2] also call themselves Kshatriyas, but they are not Kshatriyas because they share in stolen goods, receive stolen property. They have neglected the heritage of the Kshatriya. You, however, look very much like the Kshatriyas, carrying weapons so that you may look so. I say to you, you are Kshatriyas not for harassing the people but for protecting them. It is not your dharma to drink, to oppress the people, to cast evil glances at women and rob people. If you do such things, you will be men of loose morals. Such persons cannot be called Kshatriyas. I have come here to meet *Dharalas*. Since I look upon them as my brethren, I call upon you to boycott any *Patidar* who takes to immoral ways. I am one of you, and so also one of *Patidar*. I came to stay with them, thinking that they were Kshatriyas. When I learnt that these *Patidars* accept stolen goods, I began to doubt their manliness. If you wish, in co-operation with the *Patidar* community, to contribute your share in the winning of freedom, you should give up these ways of yours.

Dharalas can become *Thakores* only by being prepared to defend the country. Only that person is a sadhu who moves freely among them and, though not living in too close association with them, seeks to enlighten them while remaining unattached like the lotus leaf[3]. I do not claim to be a sadhu; but though a householder, I tell you, had I not taken up this work, I would have gone and stayed with *Bhils*[4] and other tribal people, exhorted them to become pure, kind, brave, virtuous and truthful and seen to it that they protected other people.

A good many sadhus live here. I earnestly request them, just as I am calling upon students to become volunteers, that while they find people terrorized in this way, they should use their authority and address themselves to this task. It is your duty to reform cheats, burglars and dissolute people. As long as you do not do this, you have

[1] An economically and socially backward community in Gujarat, claiming descent from Kshatriyas

[2] A community in Gajarat whose members were mostly landholders and cultivators

[3] Which remains dry even when it is drenched in water. This is the ideal of the *karmayogi*, who seeks liberation through action.

[4] A tribe in Central India and Gujarat

no right to call yourselves sadhus. If you want swaraj—i.e., *Ramarajya* or *Satyayuga*—if you wish to convert India into a land of dharma—a land of gods, it is your duty to defend your neighbour if he is being oppressed. You possess divine weapons like *yama-niyamas.* With just a little practice, you can make these weapons effective

We have taken a vow that we shall not beg for justice at the hands of the Government. If Ravana assaults me, do I go to Ravana and ask for justice? I must cultivate courage to stand up to him. How do I get courage? I should learn kindness, imbibe knowledge. All this the people can learn from you. Everybody, be he Hindu, Muslim or Pathan, recognizes and honours a sincere man of religion. You should bring home to the *Dharalas* that it is not right of them to indulge in burglary or robbery.

To the *Dharalas* I would say: do not bother the sadhus. To the *Patidars* I would submit that they should not encourage [such things]. You may fight with sticks. If they cannot follow the way befitting Brahmins, they may beat back the raiders.

If these two communities lose sight of their duty, I ask the sadhus to protect them, reform them and purify them of their evils. If you do this, the rule of dharma will be re-established, and only when this has happened shall we speak of India as *karma-bhumi*[1].

I shall be going away; but you should take up this work. I would suggest that a committee of some sadhus, *Patidars* and *Dharalas* be appointed right today and be asked to start this work—make people take solemn vows. If you do this, swaraj wills positively be secured within a year. I pray to God that He may grant you love, courage, kindness, truthfulness and the strength to make sacrifices.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan 27-1-1921

125. SPEECH AT MEETING OF SADHUS, VADTAL[2]

January 19, 1921

I am always eager to meet sadhus. When I visited the *Kumbhmela*[3] in Hardwar, I tried to go into all *akhadas*[4] of sadhus in

[1] The land of *karma,* action as duty, as contrasted with *bhoga-bhumi,* land of enjoyment

[2] Extracted from K. G. Mashruvala's account of Gandhiji's tour

[3] A religious fair held once every twelve years; Gandhiji visited it in 1915 and joined a volunteer corps for the service of the pilgrims.

[4] Centres for sadhus of particular sects

search of a sadhu who would gladden my heart. I met every sadhu who had acquired some reputation but I must say I was disappointed. I am convinced that sadhus are an ornament to India and that, if the country lives, it will be thanks to them. But I see very little of the goodness of sadhus today. On the last day in Hardwar, I spent the whole night thinking what I could do so that sadhus in the country would be real sadhus. Finally, I took a hard vow[1]. I shall not say what it is, but many believe that it is a difficult one to keep. By God's grace, I have still kept it inviolate.

Some friends suggested to me that I should become a sannyasi. However, I have not become one. My conscience did not approve of such a step then and does not do so today. I am sure you will not believe that the reason for my not doing so is love of enjoyments. I am struggling to the best of my ability to conquer the desire for them. But in the very process of struggling, I see that I am not worthy of the ochre robe. I cannot say I always practise truth, non-violence and *brahamacharya* in action, speech and thought. Whether I want or no, I feel attachments and aversions, feel disturbed by desire; I try to control them with an effort of mind and succeed in repressing their physical manifestation. If I could practise them to perfection, I would be in possession today of all the supernatural powers they speak of; humble myself, the world would be at my feet and no one would ever want to laugh me out or treat me with contempt.

But I have not come here to persuade you to give up your dress. I would have failed in my duty if, in gratitude for the straightforwardness which I have found in the Swaminarayana sect and the love with which you have invited me here, I did not tell you what I feel. I submit to you, therefore, that you should bring credit to your outward garb of sadhus through the virtues of sadhus, and thus shine in lustre yourselves and shed lustre on the Swaminarayana sect.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-1-1921

[1] To have only five articles of food, *vide* "Diary for 1915".

126. DUTY OF SPINNING

I have already discussed the contents of the resolution[1] on non-co-operation passed by the Congress. All the parts are important. But, of all of them, one is so important that, if the nation acts on it, I am convinced that swaraj will follow immediately. This part relates to the duty of spinning.

I am being asked everywhere whether, if we get swaraj, food will become cheaper and the prices of cloth will come down. This is a pertinent question. Whether we get swaraj or something else in its place, so long as we depend on foreign countries for the cloth we need, its price, and that of food, will certainly not come down. They will not come down because, as long as we send out sixty crores of rupees for our cloth, hunger will not disappear from among us; so long will crores of people remain more or less unemployed and will not get the food and the clothes they need.

We are thus faced with the problem of producing enough cloth to meet our needs. If we produce only that and no more, we shall save sixty crores of rupees and, what is more, the money will be earned by the poor. This can be brought about in one way only, by spreading the spinning-wheel movement. India imports five crore pounds of yarn. All this is yarn of 80 counts and higher. This means that, had the yarn been coarser, the imports would have amounted to forty crore pounds. As long as we are not producing this quantity of yarn, we should not talk about winning freedom for the country. What should we do to produce this yarn?

Our mills cannot produce it. Only the spinning-wheel can do it, and the easiest method of increasing the output of yarn is to get school pupils to take up this work. Accordingly, the senate of the Vidyapith[2] has recommended that the schools affiliated to it should introduce spinning and help produce the required yarn. I have always thought of this, and said as much, as a deficiency in our educational programme. I hope all teachers and students will welcome this suggestion. We shall take it up for detailed consideration some other time.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-1-1921

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Congress resolution on Non-co-operation".

[2] The Gujarat Vidyapith

127. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

January 20, 1921

Mr Gandhi, who spoke in Hindi, said that if they wanted swaraj, the students must leave their colleges and schools. What was their duty, as students, and what were they to do for their country? The Congress had given them a definite lead, and laid down the practical step they were to take, and that was non-violent non-co-operation. It was their duty to leave all schools and colleges aided or conducted by the Government and do practical work for their motherland. By leaving their colleges they would be shaking the moral prestige of the Government and, if they succeeded in doing so, Indians would be successful in attaining swaraj. That was the only way of gaining their object, which they all had in view and for which they had to sacrifice. Even if they remained for a year or so without attending any educational institution, they would not lose anything. What was required was courage and sacrifice to do the thing which could be acquired both in their homes and schools.

Two of the most important things required of them in order to attain their goal were: first the uplift of their country in an economic sense. Everyone of them should learn the art of spinning and weaving; they should do this in order to free their country from the economic thraldom of foreign countries, and if they did it they would be able to render an immense amount of service to their country, by stopping all imports of foreign cloth. The next point he wanted to emphasize was that they should have a uniform language; all Indians should have one common language so that wherever they went in India they could make themselves understood. Mr. Gandhi suggested that for this purpose they should either adopt Hindi or Urdu. He asked the audience to spread this gospel of hand-loom weaving to every village in the country, so that they could uplift their country in the economic scale of nations.

Referring to the action of Calcutta students in leaving their colleges, Mr. Gandhi spoke in eloquent terms of it, and exhorted the students of Bombay to follow their inspiring example. He was leaving for Calcutta[2] and he wanted to take their message to the students of Bengal that they in Bombay were with their brethren of Bengal. Were they prepared to give him such a message ? Were they prepared to make that sacrifice for their mother country? He wished to have their reply that very day before he left Bombay. Concluding, he prayed to God that the students might be granted wisdom enough to leave their colleges and schools.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-1-1921

[1] The meeting was held under the joint auspices of the Swarajya Sabha and the National Union, with Gandhiji presiding.

[2] Gandhiji reached Calcutta on January 23 and stayed there up to February 4.

128. MESSAGE ON LIQUOR PROHIBITION[1]

[*January 23, 1921*]

It gives me pleasure to hear that the movement to refrain from liquor is in progress. If this vice is abandoned it will give purity to our non-co-operation movement: it will help towards obtaining swaraj. Notices will come out shortly for the sale of liquor shops. Nobody should attend the auction nor take out a licence. If anybody takes out a licence, none should visit his shop to buy liquor. By this means the wicked vice will be everywhere destroyed.

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1921, p. 125

129. ROBBERY AND THEFT

Some men and women from Jotana[2] told me tales of the terror of robbery prevailing there. I also heard that a similar situation obtains in a number of villages in Kheda. This was the reason of my visit to Vadtal. I met the *Dharalas* and *Thakores* there and after hearing more about the matter, I could see that this was an important question. It is not a new one. Incidents of robbery, big or small, have always been there from time to time. This also is an epidemic. Sometimes it breaks out in a virulent form and at other times it remains mild. Till today, people have believed that it is the Government's duty to prevent such robbery. A Government certainly has the duty of protecting its subjects. But a country in which the people depend entirely upon the Government in such matters cannot become free. If, at this time of non-co-operation, the people go to the Government for protection they will have simply committed suicide.

It has always been argued from the Government's side that the people are not ready to protect themselves, that they do not at all have the strength to defend themselves against external attacks. But a little thought should reveal that this is not true. Even when this Government was not there, India had sufficient strength to maintain its existence. If the people of the country did not have the strength to defend themselves, they would have been destroyed long ago. The truth of

[1] The message was published in *Sandesh*, 23-1-1921.

[2] A village near Ahmedabad in Gujarat

the matter is that the people of India, however degraded their state, have survived to this day with their civilization, while Rome, Egypt, Greece, Persia, etc., have perished. Ancient Egypt was not the same as modern Egypt. Ancient India was the same, for the most part, as what India is even today. Still, assuming for the sake of argument that India was powerless to protect itself at the time British rule came, then today it is even more powerless than it was in those days. And the main cause of its being so is the Government itself. The Government has not discharged its primary duty. It was its duty to train us gradually for self-defence. Instead, our present condition is that we seem to be incapable of fighting such dangers, whether of external attack or internal disorders.

I said that we seem to be incapable. As a matter of fact, the Government has deliberately tried to keep us weak and to make us more so. Even then, we have not become altogether powerless to protect ourselves. I shall not here go into the subject of defence against external attacks. I have said something about it before. I shall dwell on the subject further as occasion arises. Just now, we will confine ourselves to the troubles I have mentioned above.

The remedy can be found only when the cause of the disease is known. Let us examine the causes of these troubles. In Jotana, we heard that the trouble came from the *Makranis*[1] *and* the *Baluchis*[2][2] there, and in Kheda, from *Dharalas.* The reason given for the trouble in Jotana is that the *Makranis* and *Baluchis* no longer fear the Government and, thinking that there is no one to punish them, they have gone back to their profession of robbery. The explanation given for the *Dharalas* engaging themselves in robbery is that some *Patidars,* with the object of earning money for themselves, incite the former and get them to commit robberies and some others, again, exploit the *Dharalas*' evil propensities to satisfy their enmities against one another.

The simple and straight way is to regard the *Makranis*, the *Baluchis* and the *Dharalas* as our brethren and plead with them to reform themselves. If they are driven to robberies by starvation we should see that they do not have to starve, help them to get education and arouse their good instincts. What would we do if we were enjoying

[1] Descendants of tribes which had entered India from Makran in Persia and from Baluchistan, respectively

[2] *ibid*

swaraj? If our swaraj were well managed, we would certainly try to reform them.

This work of reforming people should be attended to by sadhus. In the past also, it was the sadhus who used to preach to such people. Swaminarayana himself influenced the ordinary classes of the community to good effect and made them give up their evil habits. It is the duty of sadhus and fakirs in every sect fearlessly to go among such communities and, even risking their lives, try to turn them away from their unworthy profession. If the sadhus attend to this essential work of theirs, in a very short time they can influence communities like the ones I have mentioned.

If the charge against the *Patidars* is true, they should rid themselves of their mutual jealousies, and likewise should consider it a sin to amass money by purchasing stolen property. *Patidars* are known to be a brave and intelligent community. During the Kheda agitation,[1] they had shown to the whole of India their virtues of bravery, shrewdness, unity, understanding, etc. It certainly does not behove such a community to harbour jealousies among themselves and to go on making money by improper means.

The *Dharalas* have some educated and thoughtful leaders among them. They should constantly exert themselves to improve the condition of the community.

All these efforts will supplement one another. But assuming that they all fail, I would certainly advise that we must acquire the strength to resist such robbers, thieves and their like. It is possible to have such strength even though we no longer have arms. If a few men in every village can have the strength to risk their lives, they should constitute themselves protectors of their village and guard it. When any robbers come to raid a village, if all men remain alert, shed fear and get prepared to fight, the robbers will certainly take to their heels. I have heard that these plunderers possess guns, etc. What does it matter? Certainly a brave man can fight even against a person carrying a gun. I have even heard of many who have vanquished a man armed with a gun. This is nothing impossible. Even a man who has a gun at his service does not always keep his weapon with him, but he may sometimes be obliged to oppose an armed man. He does not turn his back, but fights. The test of bravery lies in the strength to face death and, therefore, even a physically weak person can be brave.

[1] In the summer of 1918.

Everyone should be so brave as to try to defend himself and should take the requisite training. That training is to be had not by exercise in swordsmanship but by strengthening of will-power and by casting off the fear of death. Exercises in the use of sticks, etc., are certainly helpful in acquiring such strength and those who are not wholly permeated with the spirit of non-violence have not learnt to be indifferent to death and who would defend themselves even by killing others should certainly acquire the ability for self-defence even by taking training in swordsmanship.

The sad thing is that we have taken it for granted that we lack the strength to protect ourselves or our neighbours. Though physically strong, some of us have permitted a single robber, who came to steal, to do his work while we lay in bed. We recognize no duty to our neighbour, let alone discharging any. We must at once get out of this state. In every village, the bravest among the population must volunteer and take upon themselves the responsibility of protecting the people. When thieves and others realize that the villagers will protect themselves, they will be afraid to commit thefts. The best way is the one which I indicated first. We should teach thieves to become honest men. The worst method is that of punishing thieves. To hide through fear of thieves is not the way to protect oneself, but is plain cowardice. In practice we should employ all these means in order to meet the present situation.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-1-1921

130. IN MEMORY OF SIRCAR[1]

What need for a Sircar to be conscious of its power? The British Sircar may die or improve its ways, the Indian Sircar is immortal. Patwardhan was a Sircar indeed because he was a servant. I never observed that he wanted honour or importance for himself. A friend's worth is known after his death. Patwardhan is immortal, for we are in duty bound to imbibe all his qualities of character and become so many Patwardhans. While he lived, he was only one; dying, he has called upon us to be like him.

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Madhpudo I, vi, Posh Sud 14, *Samvat* 1977 [January 23, 1921]

[1] A pet name of Yadwarkar Patwardhan

131. SPEECH AT MIRZAPUR PARK, CALCUTTA[1]

January 23, 1921

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

Let me congratulate the students of Bengal on the very magnificent response they have returned to the call of the country. I knew that the students of Calcutta were waiting for my friend, Mr. C. R. Das, to give them the lead. I congratulate him upon his having given you the lead and I congratulate you, the students of Bengal, upon having followed that lead. But you know as well as I do that the task for him and for you has only just commenced. We are in the throes of a new birth and we are experiencing all the difficulties and all the pains that attend a new birth. It is not enough for him, it is not enough for India, that you have emptied the colleges. It is absolutely necessary that you must not return to the colleges and schools that you have abandoned, and it is necessary for him to find out for you the work that you should do during this period of probation, during this period of purification.

It has now become necessary for Mr. C. R. Das and for you to put your heads together and devise means whereby you may complete the work that you have begun. Anyway, you, the students who have withdrawn from the Government and Government-aided schools have completed your work. But in order that that work may be sustained, that that work may be continued, and in order that your services may be harnessed for the attainment of swaraj, it is necessary to find out the ways and means. And I cannot describe to you how much it grieves me to find that, whilst the student world has responded so nobly, the professors and educationists and the trustees of the great educational institutions of Bengal are not giving the lead they should have.[2] In drawing your attention and their attention to this fact, I do not wish to be understood as casting any reflection upon them, or their love for the country. I know, I am convinced, they believe that you have erred. I know that they believe that Mr. Das has erred in asking you not to seek shelter behind your conscience but to respond

[1] This meeting was held under the presidentship of C. R. Das. While *Young India*, 2-2-1921, describes it as "a monster meeting of students", *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 25-1-1921, and *The Hindu*, 24-1-1921, report that it was a public meeting chiefly composed of students

[2] In the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* report, this sentence ends thus: "are not responding in a manner in which they might have."

to the call of the nation. They believe that I am grievously in error in having presented non-co-operation to the country, and they sincerely believe that I am still more grievously in error in having advised the students to boycott Government educational institutions.

But in spite of all the experience that I have gone through, in spite of all that I have heard and read, and in spite of all the reverence that I tender[1] to our elders and our leaders, I am here to confess before you that I am more than ever convinced of the correctness of the step that I have suggested to the country. I am more than ever convinced that if we desire to establish the swaraj of our choice, if we want to retrieve the lost honour of India, if we want to retrieve the honour of Islam which is trembling in the balance, it is absolutely necessary for us to tell this Government that it shall not receive any help from us, nor will we receive any help from a Government which has forfeited all confidence. I know those of you who are sceptics will tell me or tell yourselves that you have heard this kind of talk many a time from such platforms: it is true. But Max Muller has told us—he has paraphrased a Sanskrit proverb—that a truth always bears repetition until it has gone home, and I propose to reiterate this truth in the ears of my countrymen—to reiterate this truth before our leaders[2] till it goes home: till they respond to it. I am here to repeat what I have said from so many platforms that India will not regain her lost honour—her lost freedom—until India has responded to the call of non-co-operation. It is not possible for Indians, constituted as we are, to give battle to this great Government on any other terms.

Non-co-operation is bred in the very marrow of every Indian, and if you want to know why the crores and millions of the masses have responded to the call of non-co-operation as they have never responded to any other call, it is not because I gave voice to that call. Non-co-operation is born, is bred in them—it is part of every religion—it is part of Hinduism—it is part of Islam, and it is for that reason that, fallen though we are, helpless though we feel ourselves to be, non-co-operation has awakened us from this long sleep. Non-co-operation has given us faith, has given us courage, has given us hope, and strength.

And if our educated leaders have not yet responded to the call of non-co-operation, let me say with all the humility that I can

[1] "that I claim I am capable of tendering" in *Amrita Bazar Patrika*

[2] *Amrita Bazar Patrika* has "elders" here.

command that they are sceptics, they have not the religious fire of the people and the masses. They are saturated in modern civilization, or as we call it, "Western civilization". I have used the term "Western civilization"[1]. But I want you and myself this evening to distinguish between the two. I want to make it clear that I am no hater of the West. I am thankful to the West for many a thing I have learnt from Western literature. But I am here to confess to you that I am thankful to modern civilization for teaching me that, if I want India to rise to its fullest height, I must tell my countrymen frankly that, after years and years of experience of modern civilization, I have learnt one lesson from it, and that is, that we must shun it at all costs. What is that modern civilization? It is the worship of the material, it is the worship of the brute in us—it is unadulterated materialism, and *modern* civilization is nothing if it does not think at every step of the triumph of *material* civilization.

And if I did not know my country, if I did not know the mass mind, I would also have erred, and I would also have been misled, even as I contend that educated India has been misled. You, my countrymen, know that I have lived for 20 years in the midst of modern activity—I have lived in a country which has copied everything that is modern. I have lived in a country which is pulsating with new life. South Africa contains some of the bravest of men on the face of the earth and I have seen modern civilization worked by that nation at its best; and I am here to tell you, the young men of Bengal, and I am here to tell my educated leaders, that my experience of modern civilization, worked at its best, told me in emphatic terms in the year 1908, 'God save India from that modern curse'. This is a lesson that I have learnt in South Africa though it is the lesson that I have followed up since 1908, and which slowly but surely I have been preaching in season and out of season during my five years' stay in India. And it was my faith in our ancient civilization—it was my faith in our simplicity—it was my faith in the inborn religious instincts of every Indian—be he a Hindu or be he a Mohammedan, Christian, Parsi or a Jew—it is that faith in me which has sustained me throughout all the dark days of scoffing, of scepticism, and of opposition.

I know that opposition stares you and stares me in the face even today. We have just broken the ground, but it is true that if we are

[1] Here *Amrita Bazar Patrika* adds "as synonymous with modern civilization".

going to win this great battle that you, the people of Calcutta, commenced in September of last year[1] we shall have to continue as we have begun in full faith. I am not ashamed to repeat before you who seem to be nurtured in modern traditions—who seem to be filled with the writing of modern writers, I am not ashamed to repeat before you that this is a religious battle. I am not ashamed to repeat before you that this is an attempt to revolutionize the political outlook—that this is an attempt to spiritualize our politics. And the more we have of it, I assure you the greater progress we shall make towards our goal. It is because I believe that the mass mind of India is tired of this British rule in its present form that I have made bold to say that swaraj is easily attainable within one year.

Four months of this one year have already gone by, and my faith has never burnt as brightly as it burns tonight, as I am talking to the young men of Bengal. You have given me greater hope, you have given me greater courage—you have given me greater strength. May God grant that Shaukat Ali and Mohamed Ali and I will live to erect this flag of swaraj inside this year! But if it is the will of God that my ashes should be placed in the Ganges water before the eight months of the year are out, I shall die with the conviction that you will see to it that swaraj is secured before this year is out.

This is not as difficult as you may imagine. The difficulty lies with our conviction. The difficulty lies in our believing that we want to have lessons in swaraj in the Council hall. The difficulty lies in our believing that we cannot get swaraj until we have passed through a sixteen years' course of education, and if we believe in all these things I shall be free to confess that we should require a century to get swaraj. But it is because I believe that we need not these things, but we need faith, courage and strength, and it is because I believe that the masses have got all these things today that I believe that swaraj is attainable within this year.

And what does the appeal of the Congress mean? The Congress appeal means that you and I, that the whole of educated India, the whole of the mercantile community of India—a mere drop in the ocean of the millions of people of India, the artisans and the agriculturists—have a test placed before them. And believe me that the Congress will isolate India and wrest swaraj from insolent hands and

[1] When a resolution about non-co-operation was passed at the special session of the Congress held in Calcutta

establish the flag of freedom, if possible with your assistance, even without your assistance if need be. The whole of India is not concentrated in the educated India of today. India can sustain its hope, even if the whole of educated India were to remain sceptic, were to remain without hope, and faith, and courage, and strength. It is that faith which sustains me. But I am hoping that if the student world and if the students of Bengal remain true to their vow[1], I am hoping that the professors and the trustees and the educationists of Bengal and India will respond to the call and their winter of discontent will be turned by you into the summer of hope.

I ask you, the young men of Bengal, to abide by the decision that you have come to—no matter what happens. I know that Mr. C. R. Das is going to remain true to his promise. He has already received a promise of Rs. 10,000 to be given to him now and [another] ten thousand as annual contribution from a great Bengali[2]. He has received certain promises from the Marwaris— the domiciled Marwaris of Calcutta—and he is going to receive many more promises, so far as the finance is concerned, but finance is the least part of the difficulty. He has to find out a habitation for having the college located. He has to find out better professors. And I ask you students who have non-co-operated not to set before yourselves the old standard, even as this swaraj of our dream is not to be a base copy of what we have today. So will you please see that what you get in the shape of a new college is not to be a base copy of what you have today ? You will not look to brick and mortar. You will not look to benches and chairs for inspiration, you will look to character. You will look to sterling character in your professors and in your teachers for inspiration. You will look to your own determination to give you the necessary impetus and necessary inspiration. And I promise you that you will then not be disappointed; but if you believe that Mr. Das is going to present you with noble buildings, if you believe that he is going to give every ease and luxury to which you have been hitherto used, you will certainly be disappointed.

I have come this evening to present before you a newer gospel, a better gospel. If you are determined to attain swaraj inside of twelve months, if you are determined to help to attain swaraj within one year

[1] "true to their conviction, true to their vow" in the *Amrita Bazar Patika* report

[2] Gopalchandra Sinh, who had earlier given a lakh of rupees for establishing national schools and colleges

then I ask you to make the way of those who have dedicated their lives to the attainment of swaraj easier and clearer by accepting the advice that I am about to tender to you. If you believe that swaraj can be attained by continuing your colleges and schools precisely in the same manner as the institutions that you have left are being conducted, you are sadly mistaken. No country in the world has gained its liberty—has seen a new birth—without difficulties, without pain, without sacrifice. And what is sacrifice? The right meaning of sacrifice I learnt in my youth was that it meant making sacred, making holy. Non-co-operation is a process of purification, and if a suspension of our ordinary routine is necessary for the purpose of that purification, that has to be done. I know—if I know Bengal at all—that you will not shirk it and you will respond.

Our education has been the most deficient in two things. Those who formed our education code neglected the training of the body and the soul. You are receiving the education of the soul by the very fact of non-co-operation for non-co-operation is nothing less and nothing more than withdrawing from participation in the evil that this Government is doing and continuing to do. And if we are withdrawing from evil conscientiously, deliberately, it means that we are walking with our face towards God. That completes or begins the soul training. But seeing that our bodily education has been neglected, and seeing that India has become enslaved because India forgot the spinning-wheel, and because India sold herself for a mess of pottage, I am not afraid to place before you, the young men of Bengal, the spinning-wheel for adoption. And let a training in spinning and production of as much yarn as you can ever do constitute your main purpose and your main training during this year of probation. Let your ordinary education commence after swaraj is established, but let every young man, and every girl, of Bengal consider it to be their sacred duty to devote all their time and energy to spinning. I have drawn attention to the parallel, that presents itself before us, from the War.

Those of you who know anything about what was going on in England will recall those days of the War[1] when every boy and every girl had suspended their education—ordinary education— and were put upon such national work as was necessary for the purpose of the War. They were put upon simple tailoring, upon making badges, and

[1] Of 1914-18

that was done even here. I recall many a home where even little children were put to work and the Government looked upon my activity with sympathy, with attention and approval, when I presented to the youths of Kaira the opportunity of fighting on the battle-field even though their parents might be against it.[1] Times have changed and I am now twitted for asking young men who have got heads on their shoulders and who have conscience in their hearts—I am twitted for asking these young men and girls and for having the audacity to tell them that they should rather obey the voice of their conscience than the voice or commands of even their parents. But I say to the young men and young girls of Bengal that if your voice, the voice of your conscience, tells you that during this year of probation you should devote your energy and attention to the attainment of swaraj, then you will believe me when I tell you that it is impossible to arrive at a complete boycott of foreign cloth or foreign goods until and unless we employ every man, woman and child on spinning yarn. We have spun many a yarn during all these long 35 years on the Congress platform. Let us now spin the truest yarn that India wants, and let me tell you that, if you want to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, there is no other way out of the difficulty but spinning for the whole of India. And so I ask you, young men of Bengal, to accept the privilege that I place at your feet. And if we can bring about a complete boycott of foreign cloth we sterilize the activity of the fifty-five members of the House of Commons that Lancashire contributes to it, we sterilize the activities of ambitious Japan who has her eyes fixed and set upon India. You will not gain your economic freedom, as the Congress has told you, until India becomes self-contained so far as her food and clothing are concerned. We can do without all things but we cannot be without food and clothing. A vast country like India, 1,900 miles long and 1,500 miles broad, cannot possibly become self-contained by any other means than the means of old. If you want to do penance for what Bengal did and what the whole of India did during the East India Company's regime, even then you have no other remedy—no other penance open to you but to revive those noble arts and industries and to present India with sufficient yarn, so that the prices of cloth and clothing may both go down and so that India may not have to depend upon foreigners for her special needs.

[1] In June 1918 when Gandhiji went on a recruiting campaign in Kheda district to help the British Government during World War I

So, young men of Bengal, if you will work in order to gain swaraj within one year, you will accept the advice of a man who has conducted a series of experiments, to whom this gospel came in the year 1908[1], and who has not yet been ousted from it by a hair's breadth. The more I have studied the economics of India, the more I have listened to the mill-owners of India, the more convinced I have become that until we introduce the spinning-wheel in every home of India, the economic salvation and freedom of India is an impossibility. Go to any mill-owner you like, he will tell you that it will require fifty years if India is to become self-contained, so far as cloth supplies are concerned, if she has to depend upon her mills alone. And let me supplement the information by telling you that today hundreds and thousands of weavers are weaving and are able to weave homespun yarn, but they have to fall back upon foreign yarn because mills cannot supply them. So I ask the young friends of Bengal who have left their colleges to go forward in hope and courage and take up this neglected training of the hand for at least the time that we have not attained swaraj and then think of anything else.

I have suggested another thing. You and I and every one of us, has neglected the true education that we should have received in our national schools. It is impossible for the young men of Bengal, for the young men of Gujarat, for the young men of the Deccan, to go to the Central Provinces, to go to the United Provinces, to go to the Punjab and all those vast tracts of India which speak nothing but Hindustani, and therefore I ask you to learn Hindustani also in your leisure hours—the hours that you may be able to save after spinning. And if you will learn these things you can learn both spinning and Hindustani in two months. An intelligent, gentle lad, a patriotic and hard-working lad, I promise, you can learn both these in two months' time. And then you are free to go out to your villages—you are free to go to every part of India but Madras, and be able to speak your mind to the masses. Do not consider for one moment that you can possibly make English a common medium of expression between the masses. Twenty-two crores of Indians know Hindustani—they do not know any other language. And if you want to steal into the hearts of 22 crores of Indians, Hindustani is the only language open to you. If you will do but these two things, during this year, during these nine months, believe me, you will have, by the time you have finished,

[1] In South Africa

acquired courage and acquired strength which you do not possess today. I know thousands of students—black despair stares them in the face if they are told that they cannot get Government employ. If you are bent upon ending or mending this Government how do you propose to get Government employ. If you do not want to fall back upon Government what is your English knowledge worth? I do not wish to underrate the literary value of the English language. I do not wish to underrate the vast treasures that are buried in the English books. I do not want to suggest to you that we have overrated the importance of the English language but I do venture to suggest to you that the English language finds very little place in the economy of swaraj.

You do not need to increase the stock of English words in order to gain swaraj and so I have suggested to the young men of Gujarat that they should suspend their literary training in English for these nine or twelve months and devote their time and their leisure to learning spinning and to learning Hindustani and then place themselves at the disposal of India and join the National Service that is going to be formed. You are not going to respond to the great constitution that the Congress has given unless we have got an army of workers penetrating the seven and a half lakhs of villages with which India is studded, if we are going to set up a rival organization in every village of India, if we are going to have a representative of the Congress in every village of India, we cannot do so until and unless the young men of India respond to the Motherland. The privilege to pay is yours. The call today has come to the young men of Bengal and the rest of India. I hope—I have every confidence—that all the young men and all the young girls of India will respond to this sacred call. I promise before the year is out you will not have regretted the day that you set your heart upon these two things, and you will find at the end of the chapter that what I am saying to you tonight has come true, that you have vindicated the honour of India, you have vindicated the honour of Islam, you have vindicated the honour of the whole nation and established swaraj. May God grant you, the young men and the young girls of Bengal, the necessary courage, the necessary hope, the necessary confidence to go through the sacred period of purification and sacrifice. May God help you.[1]

[1] The *Young India* report ends here. The following paragraphs are from *Amrita Bazar Patrika.*

After this speech, when Gandhiji was asked specially to address a few words to the medical students, he, resuming, said:

There was one thing which I had purposely neglected to mention. I had the thing in my mind, but as I was obliged to take up so much of your time as to the necessity of spinning and the necessity of learning Hindustani and as to what you should do after having given up your colleges, I purposely omitted reference to the difficulty of the medical students. If they will but exercise their splendid faculty and imagination they will deduce from what I have said generally to the student world that the remarks that are applicable to the arts colleges and other colleges are equally applicable to the medical students, if possible even much more to the medical students than to the others. They want to heal the bleeding wounds of India, they want to heal the diseases from which India is suffering—and I know no greater wound than has been inflicted upon the Punjab and I know no greater disease than the disease of helplessness, dependence and servility from which the whole of India is suffering—and if the medical students will be true to their future calling they will have no hesitation in responding to the call. And they will have no hesitation in undertaking the humanitarian work of clothing the naked and of ridding India of her shame, degradation and helplessness. They cannot do any nobler work. For an Indian, no matter how noble, how learned, how powerful and rich he may be, there can be no nobler work than the work of attaining swaraj, than the work of ridding India of the great disease from which we have been suffering for years and years. And so I ask all the medical students and all the boys of the colleges and all the boys, over sixteen years, of the schools without a moment's hesitation, first of all to leave their schools and colleges, to finish that one peremptory duty that devolves upon them. But it will always be open to you either to reject or to accept my advice. It will be open to you to establish new colleges, new schools, new medical colleges or anything you like. But if you will accept my advice, you will understand that you will not have finished your work as true and brave fellows unless you dedicate all the time at your disposal for the attainment of swaraj and make the task easy all round.

If there is anything that I have left out in connection with the medical college or any other institution and if you want a solution about these things from my lips, I shall be prepared to answer those questions, but I must confess to you that I am tired of answering questions, I am tired of making speeches, I am tired of making

appeals. I would far rather wish that I became speechless and left you to your own resources and left you to your own conscience. Only today I have been answering a correspondent who has written to the *Navajivan* asking, "If you say, if you call conscience above all, why do you waste so much of your time in arguing with us? Why do you not leave us to ourselves?" In a way the rebuke was well administered. But I know the fire that is burning within me. I should be untrue to you and to myself if I do not give it to you in the best manner that I can, and so I have been travelling through the length and breadth of India in order to give you the gospel of hope and courage that is within me. But believe me, could I possibly be left alone, you will find me spinning away for all I am worth and poring over the pages of Hindustani books. I know that I can speak Hindustani, but I know my limitations also. And I know what handicap I am labouring under, for I am not so well versed in Hindustani literature as I am in English literature.

And so my young friends, I would ask you to cast all your doubts, all your fear, all your scepticism, into the Bay of Bengal and rise with a new hope that will not be denied.

Young India, 2-2-1921; *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 25-1-1921

132. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, CALCUTTA[1]

January 25, 1921

Mr. Gandhi, in the course of his address, first compared the British Government to the kingdom of Ravana, in which the wicked were happy and the good were unhappy. The present Government was, he continued, a kingdom of sin. As Rama was born to destroy Ravana's kingdom of sin, the present non-co-operation movement might serve the same purpose. The Mahatma suggested that the mothers and daughters of India ought to take away their sons and brothers from the Government schools and colleges where education meant nothing but slave mentality.

Turning to the question of the luxury that was prevalent amongst all sections of the community, Mr. Gandhi asked them to give it up. The clothes that they were wearing were not holy. To worship one's God and Goddess they must wear holy clothes. Similarly when they were engaged in a holy battle for the country's cause they must wear holy clothes, clothes hand-woven and hand-spun.

Continuing, Mr. Gandhi said that there should be a spinning-wheel in every

[1] Held at the residence of C. R. Das, Gandhiji himself presiding

home and he hoped that within two or three months every home in Bengal would have charkhas. He held out to the audience the example of the family of Vidyasagar[1] who were spinning yarn.

Mr. Gandhi then spread his *chaddar*[2] and wanted the ladies to part with what they loved most. He said he did not want money but wanted their sacrifice. At this there was a general whisper amongst the audience, whereupon Mr. Gandhi intervened and said that he did not want anything which they gave after anxious deliberation, bat that their gifts must be spontaneous. At this stage there was a shower of gifts which literally filled up the *chaddar.*

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 28-1-1921

133. NOTES

EDUCATION OR EXCISE ?

In his instructive articles[3] on Primary Education in the Punjab, which we have published from time to time, Mr. D. R. Gupta has shown by facts and figures what a set-back education has received in that province since it passed into British hands. There can be no doubt whatsoever that the civilizing influence there of British satraps and British officials tended to scotch most educational institutions. The schools, the teachers, and the scholars have been shown ruthlessly to have suffered at the hands of the British administrator.

But if the progress of education in the Punjab was gall and wormwood to the official, the advancement of liquor-traffic wassweet as honey. The achievement of two aims was set before the young officer: to stifle education and to send up the excise revenue. The Punjab Excise Report for 1919-20 shows an enormous rise in excise revenue. An increase of 25 lakhs in the year brought the total revenue to nearly Rs. 130 lakhs! The excise policy of the Government has brought in its wake many baneful results to the people. We intend in future issues to reveal this policy as well as substantiate from official figures that the excise policy of the Government is directed systematically to increase the drink evil. It will startle our readers to know that in some of the provinces better facilities are provided for

[1] Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar (1820-1901); famous Sanskrit scholar and social reformer of Bengal

[2] Shawl

[3] These articles by Daulat Ram Gupta appeared in the various issues of *Young India* between December 8, 1920, and January 26, 1921.

the consumption of liquor than for the promulgation of knowledge.

RELIGIOUS IMPARTIALITY

Mr. Sita Ram, in a somewhat angry letter in reply to Mr. Foy,[1] combats his statement on the assumed religious impartiality of the Government and says:

> Educational institutions drawing very handsome Government grants compulsorily teach the Bible. Ecclesiastical establishments all over the country consume enough money out of the taxes paid by Hindus, Mussulmans and Parsis.

All this and much more can be undoubtedly cited to show that Government of India is certainly not above suspicion in its treatment of the different religions.

TO MY CORRESPONDENTS

Whilst dealing with Mr. Sita Ram's letter, I am tempted to say a word to my correspondents, both those who write to me in my journalistic capacity and those who write for general advice. The correspondence has grown beyond my capacity to deal with it. I have the privilege of having several helpers but our combined labours are insufficient to cope with the enormous correspondence. If therefore the correspondents do not get replies, they will know that it is no want of will on my part but it is a physical impossibility to send individual replies. At the same time, every effort is being made to send acknowledgements. Needless to say, it is impossible for me to give personal attention to every correspondent. At the same time I would like to add that correspondence which is brief, to the point and clearly written will receive earlier attention than long-winded letters written in an indecipherable hand.

Young India, 26-1-1921

134. "HIND SWARAJ" OR THE "INDIAN HOME RULE"

It is certainly my good fortune that this booklet[2] of mine is receiving wide attention. The original is in Gujarati. It had a chequered career. It was first published in the columns of the *Indian Opinion* of South Africa. It was written in 1908[3] during my return

[1] For Gandhiji's comments on Foy's letter, *vide* "Notes", 12-1-1921.
[2] For a translation of *Hind Swaraj vide* "Hind Swaraj", 22-11-1909.
[3] An error for '1909'

voyage from London to South Africa in answer to the Indian school of violence, and its prototype in South Africa. I came in contact with every known Indian anarchist in London. Their bravery impressed me, but I feel that their zeal was misguided. I felt that violence was no remedy for India's ills, and that her civilization required the use of a different and higher weapon for self-protection. The satyagraha of South Africa was still an infant hardly two years old. But it had developed sufficiently to permit me to write of it with some degree ofconfidence. It was so much appreciated that it was published as a booklet. It attracted some attention in India. The Bombay Government prohibited[1] its circulation. I replied by publishing its translation. I thought that it was due to my English friends that they should know its contents. In my opinion it is a book which can be put into the hands of a child. It teaches the gospel of love in the place of that of hate. It replaces violence with self-sacrifice. It pits soul-force against brute force. It has gone through several editions and I commend it to those who would care to read it. I withdraw nothing except one word of it, and that in deference to a lady friend. I have given the reason for the alteration in the preface to the Indian edition.

The booklet is a severe condemnation of 'modern civilization'. It was written in 1908[2]. My conviction is deeper today than ever. I feel that if India would discard 'modern civilization,' she can only gain by doing so.

But I would warn the reader against thinking that I am today aiming at the swaraj described therein. I know that India is not ripe for it. It may seem an impertinence to say so. But such is my conviction. I am individually working for the self-rule pictured therein. But today my corporate activity is undoubtedly devoted to the attainment of parliamentary swaraj in accordance with the wishes of the people of India. I am not aiming at destroying railways or hospitals, though I would certainly welcome their natural destruction. Neither railways nor hospitals are a test of a high and pure civilization. At best they are a necessary evil. Neither adds one inch to the moral stature of a nation. Nor am I aiming at a permanent destruction of law courts, much as I regard it as a 'consummation devoutly to be wished for'. Still less am I trying to destroy all machinery and mills. It requires a higher simplicity and renunciation than the people are today prepared

[1] In March 1910

[2] An error for '1909'

for.

The only part of the programme which is now being carried out in its entirety is that of non-violence. But I regret to have to confess that even that is not being carried out in the spirit of the book. If it were, India would establish swaraj in a day. If India adopted the doctrine of love as an active part of her religion and introduced it in her politics, swaraj would descend upon India from heaven. But I am painfully aware that that event is far off as yet.

I offer these comments because I observe that much is being quoted from the booklet to discredit the present movement.[1] I have even seen writings suggesting that I am playing a deep game, that I am using the present turmoil to foist my fads on India, and am making religious experiments at India's expense. I can only answer that satyagraha is made of sterner stuff. There is nothing reserved and nothing secret in it. A portion of the whole theory of life described in *Hind Swaraj* is undoubtedly being carried into practice. There is no danger attendant upon the whole of it being practised. But it is not right to scare away people by reproducing from my writings passages that are irrelevant to the issues before the country.

Young India, 26-1-1921

135. LETTER TO LEVETUS

148, RUSSA ROAD,
[CALCUTTA,]
January 26, 1921

DEAR MR. LEVETUS,

With reference to your inquiry about the interpretation of the resolution[2] of the Congress regarding the exchange policy of the Government, in my opinion no one is entitled to seek shelter under it for repudiating obligations incurred by him. It undoubtedly advises merchants, etc., that they will be justified for reasons stated in the preamble of the resolution in refusing *to complete contracts at the present rate of exchange.* But this cannot possibly enable those who failed to meet bills at maturity to refuse to discharge them in the usual manner. You said to me that the resolution was a departure from the

[1] For example, the comments of Lord Ronaldshay; *vide* "Notes", 8-12-1920.
[2] Passed in December 1920 at the annual session held in Nagpur

moral principles underlying the policy of non-co-operation. I have told you that in my opinion there is no moral lapse if the preamble represents a correct statement of facts. You will observe that the Congress has instructed the All-India Congress Committee to appointa committee to give effect to the resolution. I would advise you to prepare a case for the Committee and I assume that if the preamble can be successfully attacked or the resolution be otherwise proved to be morally wrong, the Committee will give due effect to the argument.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 7442

136. SPEECH AT MERCHANTS' MEETING, CALCUTTA

January 26, 1921

BROTHERS,

You all know that I speak seated on a chair and I feel ashamed on that account. I hope that I may not ever sit on a chair, but I am helpless. As I want to win swaraj in nine months so I do not want these.[1] My brothers give me much trouble when I come through streets.[2] I see that they love me much but I want to dissuade them from that if I can. Outside this hall so many have assembled that no business can go on because of that. I lost half an hour. The reason is that the organization has not been a good one. That ought not to be so. When it is known that many men will gather, provision will have to be made for that also. Work must not suffer and passages ought not to be blocked and tram-cars ought not to be stopped. Our people's time ought not to be wasted. There are a thousand people inside and another thousand outside. Two thousand hours of people's time have here been wasted. I want that Hindi and Urdu papers should also publish that touching the feet is bad and my request is that people should not do it. I am greatly disturbed with noise. I am far from well and cannot tolerate the sound [of] "*Vande Mataram*" , " *Mahatma Gandhi ki jai*" —these shouts are of no avail unless they voice forth our true feeling. What I mean to say is that men do not translate into action what they utter. I also have become a Kshatriya giving up my

[1] Gandhiji presumably refers to the shouting by the audience.

[2] The crowd in front of the house in which the meeting was held was so great that Gandhiji could only enter through a back-door nearly three quarters of an hour after his arrival.

Bania dharma[1]. Had I not been a Kshatriya I would have demonstrated my feeling by weeping. Certainly I am not thirsting after the touching of my feet by you. When I shall want it I will plainly let you know my feelings and that will be when my object will be attained. I consider myself compromised in dignity; otherwise swaraj will be attained in nine months. Let all of you combine and lend a helping hand. There is no necessity for shouting "*Vande Mataram*" , " *Hindu Mussulman ki jai*" , " *Alla-ho-Akbar*" . What I propose to do I shall accomplish certainly. I must attain swaraj. If thirty crores of people say that they are not with me, yet I shall do my work and win swaraj but I do not like shouting. In the matter of shouts and noise I am like a weak lamb. Also, prostration at the feet is not good. Bow to all with your hands folded. No one is worthy of being touched at the feet, especially in this Kaliyuga. The times are changed. If you wish to accomplish the work of 30 crores of men, then come out with your money. Try to have money and ask me to give an account for the same. Appoint some one treasurer. If you know that you yourselves cannot attain swaraj, then help me with money.

If you do not help with money, swaraj will be difficult but not impossible to attain. If the students of India do not help me, it does not matter. If the pleaders do not help, it does not matter. If moneyed men do not help with money, that also does not matter. The attainment of swaraj depends on the workers and the agriculturists. I belong to the same profession as yourselves by birth and was a merchant myself by profession. I was a lawyer and earned money thereby. I am a student also and I think that I am a good student too. If you have power, if you have strength in you, if you want to govern India, then make sacrifices. Sacrifice yourselves, your children and your parents, everything in your life. Swaraj depends upon the agriculturists. If they do not help, then swaraj cannot be attained. If they co-operate with the Government, then all your virtues will not help in winning swaraj. If 25 crores of people turn out to be undutiful, swaraj cannot be attained. Now as to our Marwari brothers, the President has just said that the rich have not turned up for today's meeting. This pains me much. But there is reason for it. They have been brought up under this Government and they have made their piles under its protection. They have earned their money with their co-operation. So they are afraid of it. The English people make

[1] Traditional duties of a Bania

money through the co-operation of Indians. This truth is not realized by my Marwari brethren. I do not ask you to give up trade, but I ask you to carry on honest business and not indulge in untruth. You may say that if you do not resort to untruth, then you will become fakirs. I think it is better to be fakirs and in that case I do not want any money from you. You should not give up trade of foreign goods and as to your trade of foreign cloths, that should certainly be shunned. Those who fear God, they cannot but do the work of God. God has given you riches and these riches help you to decorate your bodies. With these riches you wear *malmal*[1] puggrees. I ask you to be fearless and wear khaddar puggrees, and give up all connection with mills even in the matter of agencies. I asked my son to give up this business as it is not swadeshi work and to deal in khaddar. He answered: "Father, khaddar business does not go on. Much of it is lying in stock." Khaddar, *garha*, khadi—whatever you call it, such beautiful stuff cannot be found. My brothers and sisters all use it and the labourers who are my brothers prepare it. The exploitations which the mill-owners are making are very unjust. When the price of cotton is Rs. 9, how is it that the price of the yarn is Rs. 34? I know that there is very little profit in khaddar business. The cause of this is the mill-owners who increase the price of the yarn. We have to clothe the shoemakers and the sweepers. If there be any *Vaishnava* in the meeting, he will say that the remnants of his dish and dirty, worn-out clothes will suffice. But I remember them in the morning and consider to be equal to me. If you wear khaddar after leaving mill cloth, then its price will go up.

If you go to Janakpuri, Orissa, you will see the condition of the poor very very miserable. *Satu* may be had for food, but not ghee. When I was travelling third class—as you of course do not—then I used to see in dharmsalas that one man took out a handful of *satu* from his baggage, a little of salt and red pepper—and with these mixed with water, he had his meal. I have turned a Kshatriya and not a drop of water came to my eyes. In this country of Annapurna[2], ghee is not available. In Champaran, people are dying of starvation. There is one remedy for all these and that is the charkha. If all women and girls spin yarn, then they will be able to feed themselves as the price of khaddar will look up then. If swaraj is attained then *malmal* also will

[1] Muslin

[2] Durga, consort of Siva, worshipped as the giver of plenty

be manufactured. I myself am a good workman and I can work it but I say that you have got to make thread from No. 7 to 20 and that will be used in making saris and *pathis.*[1] No. 80 thread has been used in making your puggrees. It is foreign and it is irreligion. The Marwaris have given up their religion. Give up your foreign trade, not all immediately, but of piece-goods only, clear your house of foreign cloths and ask your mothers and wives to throw them out and not to wear them again. This will not cause you any loss. Send all these to South Africa and sell them there. They will be in demand there, as there are no spinning machines there. India rested on the dharma of faithful wives. Mussulman women do much work on charkhas.

If you wish to save cows, then save Khilafat. Millionaires speak of stopping cow-killing but co-operate with the English. Oppressive Englishmen drink the blood of cows. Agency of English goods is irreligious. It is said against the Mussulmans that they kill cows. But I say that what is slaughtered in Bandra[2] in five years cannot be done in 25 years by 7 crores of Mussulmans. I repeat to you some commonplace things. It is about Champaran. I narrated the matter to a Marwari and he burst into tears. I did not shed any tears. I drew his attention to the condition of a bullock drawing a cart. You worship cows, and are you justified in killing bullocks? See the condition of dairy farms. The cows give milk, the buffaloes also give milk. Milk is drawn in such quantities from their udders that blood comes out. And we drink it. If you truly wish to save cows, then go to the help of Khilafat. The Mussulmans are not ungrateful but you should not ask them to save cows first before you can help their Khilafat. Don't do so—this is no matter for bargain. Die for your brothers, adopt *fakiri*[3] and claim that you are a Hindu. As a Hindu, you should not turn out to be cowards, but be bold in your conduct.

If you have piece-goods lying in stock sell them or burn them and promise that you will never purchase them or wear them. Make the weaver understand that foreign yarns should not be used. Ask them to despatch the goods which they have in stock and not to use yarn above No. 20 and use cloths made with them. I want three things. The first thing is: save me. Do not worry Gandhi, do not give him

[1] Pieces of cloth used as veils
[2] A suburb of Bombay where a big slaughter-house is situated
[3] A life of voluntary poverty

trouble and cry "*Gandhi ki jai*", and consider it as *haram*[1]. The second thing is: money is needed. Give as much as you can afford, and do as much as you can. Today the dealers in seeds have given me Rs. 10,000 and promised to give more by raising fresh subscriptions. I want that whatever you give, you should give with humility and generosity. As I pray to God, so I pray to you. Kindle your religious sense and your patriotic feelings. The third thing is this: be pure, be patriotic, be devoted to the cause of swaraj and Khilafat. Khilafat is the *Kamadhenu.* Use pure swadeshi things in your household. This alone will do you good. 60 crores of rupees go out of the country. Save them and win swaraj in 9 months. Brothers, you have listened to me with such love and attention that I am very pleased-with you. But I do not want blind, mad love for me. I want the conscious love of India. With such love for me, I shall be able to free India. Again I ask you to remember my words and pray to God that He may give you and me power to win swaraj and bless you.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 30-1-1921; *The Hindu,* 1-2-1921

137. NON-CO-OPERATION MEANS SELF-PURIFICATION

The Congress resolution[2] has been accepted as a method of self-purification and a form of *yajna*. If non-co-operation does not mean that, it would certainly be a sin. As there can be no co-operation between virtue and sin, between darkness and light, so there can be none between the people and a government opposed to; their interests; by means of non-co-operation, we are proving that even the most wicked policy cannot survive if the people do not tolerate it, refuse to be a party to it.

Foreign cloth can be sold in India because we are attracted by it; the Government can establish control over us by bribing us with titles because we feel tempted by them; we are infatuated with degrees and, therefore, the Government, by controlling our education, tells us that we have not the strength to be free even in regard to education; because we continue to submit to the orders of despotic officers, such officers still rule in the Punjab; the Government earns crores out of liquor simply because we drink it; the Government's courts function

[1] A thing to be shunned

[2] On non-co-operation; *vide* Appendix "Congress resolution on Non-co-operation".

because we quarrel among ourselves. This means, in effect, that our share in the sins of the Government is not a small one. When public opinion has become pure and the people have decided to get rid of their sins, that very day the Government will lose its crown. It is we who have been supporting it. It is not by their own strength that a hundred thousand Englishmen rule over thirty crores. Large numbers from among us have been, consciously or unconsciously, helping those one hundred thousand in every possible way and crores of us tolerate this situation. The Government means those who are running the administration with our help. When we have withdrawn our help, there will be no Government worth the name.

We believe the Government to be a sinful, a Satanic one. If we desist from our sins, the Government will drop off like dead leaves, or will repent and be purified.

Through what sins, then, are we supporting the Government? We have considered the question in relation to schools, courts, titles and legislatures. Really speaking, these things are not sinful in themselves. They are merely signs of a sinful state of affairs. If the Government is a beneficent one, we may receive our education from it, obtain justice through it and accept honours from it. By renouncing these things, we are obliged to leave off our sinful habits.

So the heart of the matter is giving up our sinful ways. If the people drink liquor, indulge in gambling, commit thefts, are guilty of adultery and envy one another, non-co-operation cannot go on, for the Government maintains its rule by taking advantage of those evil habits.

The drink habit is one of no little danger. If we get rid of that habit, the people can save crores of rupees, and many wicked things will cease. I believe that the element of cruelty we find in British policy would not be there if the British did not drink. A man will never lose all sense unless he habitually drinks. However small the quantity of liquor taken, it cannot but have an intoxicating effect, one's reason is bound to be clouded in consequence, be it ever so little, and in such a state the conscience certainly becomes weak. Therefore, we who have set out to cultivate and teach sacrifice, must free the people from the habit of drinking liquor. There can be no resolution to appeal to habitual drinkers, because there are not many such people taking part in public life. But it is certainly necessary to pay attention to that matter. Great efforts were made at many places to

induce people to give up the tea habit. In the measure that it remained free from violence, it was a praiseworthy movement. We do not wish to use violence to force anyone to leave the drink habit; but we should try to make people give it up through moral pressure and by persuasion. Some of us should go to the liquor-vendors in our respective cities and plead with them, request them to take up some other trade, and also work through the communities to which the drink addicts may belong. This is difficult work but nothing is difficult for public opinion to bring about. When public opinion ceases to tolerate drinking, it will stop in a moment. At present we do not bother about our neighbour. To become one people means that the thirty crores must become one family. To be one nation means believing that, when a single Indian dies of starvation, all of us are dying of it and acting accordingly. The best way of doing this is for every person to take under his charge the people in his immediate neighbourhood; that is to say, start serving them. If we work along this line, we can abolish every distillery in no time. The reader need not concern himself when the whole of India will give up liquor. If he takes care of his own village in that regard, he will have discharged his duty fully. What is true of liquor is also true of tobacco. We do not deprecate tobacco so much because its evil effects are not obvious. It is an addiction like opium. It makes one forget one's suffering, but the addiction is so wasteful of money that it must be cast off. Even if people resolved to refrain from this habit till we get swaraj, a great deal of money could be saved thereby and put to other good uses.

What should I say about licentiousness? In comparison with this, I would not think of drinking, smoking, etc., as sins. A drunkard degrades only himself, a debauchee drags many others with him. Who can ever keep count of the hypocrisy, the falsehoods, the quarrels and the diseases born of this vice? There are few sins equal to that of casting an evil eye on another's wife and yet it is a sin that is not rare. There is no easy way, either, to save oneself and others from it.Speaking for myself, I have not been able to find a universally effective way of saving the people from this sin. Who should reason with the prostitutes, and who should entreat their customers? What associations can be established for this purpose? I am holding on to this faith only that those at any rate who are taking part in the national movement will resolutely free themselves from that sin and that, as the awakening among the people grows, others will also free themselves from this vice. It is a vice which has weakened and impoverished the

people and made them cowardly. Why is it that the people of the West, who are no less guilty of this vice, are not cowardly, it will be asked. I have pointed out time and again that there is no manliness in possessing the strength to kill. It is my firm belief that this strength which has been cultivated by the people of the West stems from their addiction to liquor and their indulgence in passion. There are other reasons also but these are among the chief ones. To call the people of the West manly is an exaggeration.

Yes, it is true that those people are less afraid of death than we are; but so are the communities which live by robbery. We may regard the people of the West as brave to the extent to which we regard these communities as brave. The very comparison with the West should be regarded as out of place. Everyone should realize that we shall not succeed in establishing *dharmarajya* in India by imitating the West.

The self-control practised in the West is based on expediency—on policy. In the East, self-control is an end in itself. It is not the teaching of religion that one should tell the truth because it is profitable to do so. All religions have proclaimed their belief that truth is God Himself. One gets exercise through *namaz*,[1] but no Muslim offers *namaz* for exercise; they all do so only as a religious duty. Therefore, if we wish to liberate India by non-co-operation, we shall have to realize the importance of self-purification and shall have to get rid of our infatuation for the West. We shall win swaraj only by giving up Western ways. I consider it impossible to win it by our adopting these ways.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-1-1921

[1] During the *namaz,* the Muslim prayer, one has frequently to bend forward on one's knees.

138. A NOTE

DESCENDANTS OF "RISHIS"[1]

I am not out of my senses in publishing this article. It was written after two days' experience and is probably the result of momentary enthusiasm. But personally I think that the status which the author has given to the spinning-wheel is deserved and so, publishing it, I flatter myself. The exaggerated picture of the Ashram which it may have given is published in order that it may serve as an ideal for the Ashram inmates to follow. It will serve to make them feel ashamed whenever they fail to live up to the ideal. The name *tapovan* was actually suggested by a friend. Even today I regard it as unsuitable. I would be satisfied if scrupulous regard for truth was maintained in the Ashram, and it is my unshakeable faith that the country, too, would be satisfied. The Ashram can, therefore, adopt the name of Satyagraha Ashram alone and no other.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-1-1921

139. SPEECH AT OPENING OF TILAK NATIONAL SCHOOL, CALCUTTA

January 27, 1921

Mr. Gandhi then addressed the meeting. At the outset he wished the school success. He next spoke about the wrongs done to the Punjab and to the Khilafat. He dwelt at length on the efficacy of the charkha and said that the authorities would see that special stress was laid on spinning so that the boys might be well trained in this art. He suggested that instruction should be given both in Devanagri and Urdu to both the Hindu and Mussulman boys. Addressing the students Mr. Gandhi asked them to follow his advice and assured them that if they did so swaraj would be attained very soon.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 28-1-1921

[1] The comments were appended to an article with this title written by one who called himself a brothel of these descendants. After a day's visit to the Ashram, he described it in glowing terms and spoke of it as a *tapovan,* or a forecast retreat where the inmates lived a life of austerity and spiritual discipline.

140. LETTER TO SHAVAKSHA BOMANJI

[Before *January* 28, 1921][1]

DEAR MR. BOMANJI[2],

You have asked me to state briefly what can lead to a settlement of the present deadlock. I shall endeavour to do so.

A settlement of the Khilafat and the Punjab questions is absolutely necessary to pave the way to an understanding.

To settle the Khilafat the minimum terms have been already stated. They are restoration of the pre-war status with such guarantees as may be necessary to prevent the misrule.

For the Punjab the Minimum is given in the Congress Commiittee's Report.[3]

Governments act upon recommendations of their own Committees. They can have these from two committees to be appointed with summary powers. The committee on the Khilafat may consist, say, of Mahomed Ali and the representative Mussalmans with Sir Valentine as chairman. The Punjab committee may consist of Pundit M. M. Malaviya or Nehru[4] and Shastriar[5] and Sir George Lloyd as chairman. When these two questions are settled by the adoption by these Committees of the above demands as their own recommendations, a conference of real representatives may he held to frame a scheme of swaraj. And that scheme should be passed by the Parliament without alteration.

Non-co-operation must continue till swaraj is established. But if the negotiations fructify, naturally steps would be taken not to extend its scope.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The original having been sent earlier, a copy of this was enclosed with Mahadev Desai's letter dated January 28, 1921 to Jawaharlal Nehru.

[2] A Bombay millionaire; *vide* also "My Notes", 26-12-1920.

[3] *Vide* "Congress report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.

[4] Motilal Nehru

[5] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri

141. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

CALCUTTA,
January 29 [*1921*][1]

MY DEAREST CHARLIE,

You have inundated me with love-letters and I have neglected you. But you have been ever in my thoughts and prayer. You had no business to get ill.[2] You had therefore be better up and 'doing'. And yet on your sick-bed you have been doing so much.[3] For I see more and more that praying is doing and that silence is the best speech and often the best argument. And that is my answer to your anxiety about the untouchables.

I look at the problem as an Indian and a Hindu, you as an Englishman and a Christian. You look at it with the eye of an observer, I as an affected and afflicted party. You *can* be patient, and *I cannot.* Or you as a disinterested reformer can afford to be impatient whereas I as a sinner must be patient if I would get rid of the sin. I may talk glibly of the Englishman's sin in Jallianwala. But as a Hindu, I may not talk about the sin of Hinduism against the untouchables. I have to deal with the Hindu Dyers. I must act and have ever acted. You act, you do not speak, when you feel most. Not knowing Gujarati, you do not know how furiously the question is raging in Gujarat. Do you know that I have purposely adopted a pariah girl? There is today at the Ashram a pariah family living again! You are doing an injusticeto me in even allowing yourself to think that for a single moment I may be subordinating the question to any other. But I need not give addresses or write in English upon it. Most of those who form my audience are not hostile to the 'pariahs'. I had the least difficulty about carrying the proposition about them in the Congress[4]

Moreover I cannot talk about things I do not know. The *Namsudra*[5] question in Bengal I know only superficially. It is perhaps

[1] The contents suggest that the letter was written in 1921 and in that year Gandhiji was in Calcutta on January 29.

[2] In January 1921 Andrews had a severe attack of influenza.

[3] After visiting the emigrants who had returned from Fiji and were stranded near the Calcutta docks, Andrews kept to his bed but dictated 35 letters, telegrams and articles in one day.

[4] The annual session of the Congress held at Nagpur in December 1920 had passed a resolution on the removal of untouchability among the Hindus.

[5] One of the depressed classes in Bengal

not one of untouchability but of the zemindar against the serf. I am dealing with the 'sin' itself. I am attacking the sacerdotalism of Hinduism. That Hindus consider it a 'sin' to touch a portion of human beings because they are born in a particular environment! I am engaged *as a Hindu* in showing that it is not a sin and that it is sin to consider that touch a sin. It is a bigger problem than that of gaining Indian independence but I can tackle it better if I gain the latter on the way. It is not impossible that India may free herself from English domination before India has become free of the curse of untouchability. Freedom from English domination is one of the essentials of swaraj and the absence of it is blocking the way to all progress. Do you know that today those who are opposing me in Gujarat are actually supporting the Government and the latter are playing them against me?

I began to think about you and the question at 2 a.m. Not being able to sleep I began to write to you at 4 a.m. I have not written all I want to say on the question. This is no apology. I have not been able to clear the point for you as it is clear to me. What you have written in your letter about students is right. You are thinking as an Englishman. I must not keep one thing from you. The *Gujarati* is endeavouring to weaken my position on the question by saying that I have been influenced by *you* in this matter, meaning thereby that I am not speaking as a Hindu but as one having been spoiled by being under your Christian influence. This is all rotten I know. I began this work in S[outh] A[frica]—before I ever heard of you and I was conscious of the sin of untouchability before I came under other Christian influences in S[outh] A[frica]. The truth came to me when I was yet a child. I used to laugh at my dear mother for making us bathe if we brothers touched any pariah. It was in 1897 that I was prepared in Durban to turn Mrs. Gandhi away from the house because she would not treat on a footing of equality Lawrence who she knew belonged to the pariah class and whom I had invited to stay with me. It has been a passion of my life to serve the untouchables because I have felt that I could not remain a Hindu if it was true that untouchability was a part of Hinduism.

I have only told you half the truth. I feel as keenly about the Kalighat[1] as I do about the untouchables. Whenever I am in Calcutta

[1] In Calcutta near the temple of the goddess Kali. It was then the practice to sacrifice goats there to propitiate the goddess.

the thought of the goats being sacrificed haunts me and makes me uneasy. I asked Harilal[1] not to settle in Calcutta on that account. The pariah can voice his own grief. He can petition. He can even rise against Hindus. But the poor dumb goats? I sometimes writhe in agony when I think of it. But I do not speak or write about it. All the same I am qualifying myself for the service of these fellow creatures of mine who are slaughtered in the name of my faith. I may not finish the work in this incarnation. I shall be born again to finish that work or someone who has realized my agony will finish it. The point is, the Hindu way is different from the modern way. It is the way of *tapasya*. You will notice the use of the word 'modern'. For I do believe that the Christian way is not different from the Hindu. I am still not satisfied that I have told you all that is just now rising to my pencil. But I dare say I have said sufficient for you to understand. Only please do not take this letter to be a complaint if it is not to be taken as an apology.

Your reply to Sir William Vincent[2] is perfect.

I know you will let Dr. Chimandas go, if he wishes to. What is wanted is for Shantiniketan to come out boldly for non-co-operation in the religious sense. My fear is that Gurudev[3] has not yet realized the absolute truth and the necessity of it.

I am likely to leave here on the 4th instant on my way to Delhi. I am in Benares on the 9th. I am sending a personal note too, to Corbett[4].

With deep love,

Yours,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 958

[1] Gandhiji's eldest son

[2] Member, Viceroy's Executive Council

[3] Rabindranath Tagore. The term literally means godly preceptor.

[4] G. L. Corbett; member of the Asiatic Inquiry Commission appointed by the Government of South Africa in 1920

142. LETTER TO LALCHAND

January 29, 1921

MY DEAR LALCHAND,

I have read the letter from East Africa. I believe that you will not shine as an editor. You may shine in the absence of any light whatever. But you have not reached the minimum standard. You have neither the style nor the accuracy of knowledge.[1] The style really comes from knowledge. You will therefore be unable to give our people the lead they need in East Africa. But you must be guided not by me but by your inner voice.

Anyway, I am seriously thinking of putting someone else in editorial charge. I value you as manager, not as editor. I am in constant dread. I do not know what you have said on caste. Joseph has frightened me. You ought not to have written at all on that thorny topic. You should have waited for me. You see that I am in no hurry to air my views on the questions though thereby I am exposing myself [to] being misunderstood. I must have leisure for the task.

I have seen a report of the Nagpur Congress speech. It contains glaring errors. Your weak English disables you even for the work of touching up things. If you reproduce my speeches they should be touched up. What therefore, I require, is a better scholar and more informed man than you are in order to make me feel easy about *Young India*. You must therefore be prepared to vacate the chair at any moment. If you will remain as manager, I would like to keep you. But in that event I would expect you to be absorbed in that work and organize it in the most thorough manner possible.

I would like you not to take this letter amiss, but believe that it is best for the cause. *Young India* ought to rise higher than where it stands today in its editorial get up and for that purpose an abler assistant is a necessity of the case.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] *Vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", January 19, 1921.

143. LETTER TO FRIEND IN BURMA[1]

January 29, 1921

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I know I owe you many apologies, for I have not personally attended to so many of your letters. But you know my difficulties. I have, however, been sending you replies through Mahadeo Desai or another Desai who has also been kindly helping me.

You do not now want me to deal with the difficulties you raised in your previous letters. If you have any doubt still left, I promise to give you fullest satisfaction about the utmost correctness of my ruling to Mr. Jinnah about Swaraj Sabha[2]. Did you ever see my reply[3] to his letter?

Do you also know that all the Commissioners[4] have at least fulfilled their obligations. For Mr. Jayakar also has suspended his practice.

And now for the education question there. . We have such an awakening here all round that really it is not possible to spare anyone of those you name. My advice to the Burmese is that they must revert to the old system with a new Spirit. They need not at the present moment think of Western education. If there is any tradition there about hand-spinning it should be revived or you should find out the Burmese supplementary industry to agriculture and revive that lostindustry pending full swaraj. Let the students understand that swaraj is not to be obtained by learning but by an exhibition in their own lives of the qualities necessary for swaraj, viz., openness, truthfulness, courage, cohesion, fellowship and self-sacrifice. If they have these qualities, they must take them to their villages and spread them. They must teach the villagers that the English are not here for the benefit of the Burman but for their material end. They must therefore suspend their literary training till they have freed themselves from foreign domination. If I came there, that is how I should talk to them. They must unlearn the infatuation of the English language. Today it is positively a hindrance to national growth.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] The addressee's name is not known.

[2] Formerly known as the Home Rule League

[3] *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 25-10-1920.

[4] Appointed by the Punjab Sub-committee of the Indian National Congress to report on the Punjab disorders; *vide* "Congress report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.

144. SPEECH TO POST-GRADUATE AND LAW STUDENTS, CALCUTTA

January 29, 1921

I shall tell you that the only excuse I could offer for being so horribly late is this pile containing money and jewellery which your Marwari sisters have given for your sake. I had the pleasure and privilege of addressing them just now and the response that they made—the so-called uncultured ladies of Marwar—was a magnificent response. I do not believe there is anything under Rs. 10,000 worth of jewellery and cash in that pile. I know you will be pleased to hear from me that more is to be expected from our sisters this very afternoon. Do you, therefore, wonder if you find me saying in season and out of season that I do expect swaraj within one year? If the response in money, in men and in every respect continues as it has begun, the most confirmed sceptic will be converted to the view that I venture to hold, and I ask all the post-graduate students who have gathered here to listen to your leaders, to respond to the resolution[1] of the Congress, nay more, to respond to the voice of your own conscience. If you are satisfied that we cannot live under this Government with any degree of self-respect, if you are satisfied that this Government has trodden underfoot the most sacred sentiments, that it has disregarded some of the inestimable privileges which we hold dear, you will come to the same conclusion that the Congress has come to: that association with that Government is a crime, is a sin, and if you endorse that view, it is impossible for us to receive any instruction at the hands of or under the influence of a Government such as ours. The Duke of Connaught came to Calcutta yesterday and you saw what the great citizens of Calcutta had to say about his visit. They carried out a complete hartal. Do you suppose that for a man like me, who has always tendered the heartiest and voluntary co-operation to this Government for a period of nearly 30 years—do you suppose that it was a matter of pleasure to me that I should associate myself heartily and entirely with a complete boycott of his visit ? It was not a pleasure to me. At the same time I felt it to be my duty not only to associate myself with it but to propagate the idea that

[1] On non-co-operation, passed at the Congress Session at Nagpur in December 1920

to extend any welcome to any representative of the Sovereign would be a mistake, would be a crime, would be inconsistent with our self-respect, and that is the view I hold even up to the present moment. The Duke of Connaught has come not to wipe your and my tears. He has come not to wipe away the insult that has been hurled against Islam and the seven crores of Mohammedans of India. He has come not to heal the wounds of the Punjab, but he has come to sustain the power which has been so horribly abused. He has come to add prestige to an institution which we consider to be corrupt at its very source and, therefore, it became our duty to boycott that visit, and our duty not to receive any instruction under the influence of that Government. And I therefore suggest to you, post-graduate students of Calcutta, that you would far rather postpone your further literary progress and throw in your lot with the millions of your countrymen and gain swaraj inside of one year. If you feel that by continuing your post-graduate studies under the influence of this Government you can advance by one single minute the establishment of swaraj on this great soil, I have no word to say. But if you are convinced, as I am convinced, that continuation of our studies under the aegis of this Government can only retard our progress towards the goal, you will not take one single minute before retiring from these studies.

I want you to face this question boldly and fairly. You are not called upon to withdraw because the system of education is rotten, rotten though it undoubtedly is. You are called upon to suspend your studies, to withdraw from these institutions because they are under the aegis of this Government which you and I want to destroy, if we cannot mend it. And if you approach the question with that view, you will not ask any further question as to your future. Your future is safe and insured immediately you come out of these institutions in order to advance the cause of swaraj. Your future rests not on these institutions but on yourselves. That is the lesson which the Congress resolution teaches you and teaches me. Hitherto for a period of 35 years all our resolutions have been addressed to the Government. The Congress has altered its course. The Congress has asked the nation to become introspective. The Congress has turned this searchlight inward. The Congress addresses its resolution now not to the Government but to the nation. Its prayer is addressed to you, the student world of Calcutta, and to me, an old man passed the stage of youth. The Congress addresses its resolution and its prayers to the uncultured men of India, the people living on the fields of India, to

the artisans, and to all those whom we consider to be the illiterate masses of India; And the question that rises before you this afternoon is: what are you, the post-graduate students, going to do? What part are you going to play in this great upheaval? Are you going to be mere witnesses or are you going to be actors? Are you going to throw yourselves in the thick of the fight and claim the laurels of victory? I hope that your decision will be sound, swift and certain, and after having come upon that decision I hope that there will be no shrinking back. And I ask the students who are gathered in this theatre[1] to burn their books and not to seek at the present moment a literary career. I ask you to work as hewers of wood and drawers of water for the sake of swaraj. I, therefore, ask every one of you students to take to the spinning-wheel, and you will find the message of the spinning-wheel to be true.

The message of the spinning-wheel is that "he who takes me, he who turns me, brings swaraj within a measurable distance." The message of the spinning-wheel is that "every man, woman or child of India will turn me for one year or eight months, and I shall present, in turn, swaraj." And I ask you to take that message from that wheel which costs no more than Rs. 6 or Rs. 8. Mr. Das was telling me only the other day that there is a Bengali song about the spinning-wheel and the song runs somewhat thus: that the spinning-wheel gives you all, that the spinning-wheel is the cow of plenty; and I assure you that if you ask those who have taken to the spinning-wheel they will tell you, "Yes, the spinning-wheel is the *Kamadhenu* for ourselves."

The women who surrounded me this afternoon asked me to give them a message. As I went round them asking for donations for your sake, they asked me for a message and my unhesitating message was: "Take up the spinning-wheel. Purify yourselves, sacrifice yourselves for the sake of the country," and that is my humble message to you also. Purify yourselves by withdrawing yourselves from slave-owning institutions and take up the spinning-wheel and, if you will do that, I promise you swaraj within one year.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 30-1-1921

[1] The Star Theatre where this meeting was held

145. MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT, PUNJAB STUDENTS' CONFERENCES[1]

January 30, 1921

Please convey to the Punjab students our great expectation of an enthusiastic and unanimous response to the country's appeal for immediate withdrawal,[2] the only response consistent with honour and dignity of the outraged Punjab and betrayed Islam.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 1-2-1921

146. SOME QUESTIONS

Many correspondents probably feel disappointed, because their letters do not receive full justice. Readers of *Navajivan* know that great care is being exercised about the matter published in it. Therefore, letters from correspondents are utilized only when space is available. I have two such letters, written in October, lying with me. After they were written, quite a number of articles must have appeared and the correspondents may also have had the replies to their questions. Even then, if only to show that I have not considered their questions as deserving no notice, I shall here try to reply to them.

EASY TO WIELD BUT OF TREMENDOUS EFFECT

A friend writes from Surat:

> Q. You say that the people should remain peaceful if you or the Ali Brothers are arrested or sentenced to any punishment. If that is not done, non-co-operation will receive a set-back. I do not understand this. Besides, you have only Mr. Nehru[3] with you. Supposing he also is arrested, who will take up your work?

My advice is the right one, The key to successful non-co-operation is peace. If peace is violated, non-co-operators will be deprived of their strength because, in consequence of breach of

[1] The message was sent jointly by Gandhiji, C. R. Das and Mahomed Ali to Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew, president of the Punjab Students' Conference, Gujranwala, which passed a resolution on January 30, 1921, welcoming the Congress resolution on non-co-operation.

[2] From Government or Government-aided educational institutions

[3] Motilal Nehru, who had given up his princely practice as a lawyer and become a prominent leader of the non-co-operation movement

peace, the Government will resort to repression and the people, terrorized by the repressive measures, will submit. Non-co-operation is an education in getting rid of the fear of repression. We are still full of fear. When we have become fearless, there will be no one to oppress. Nor can it be said that Shri Nehru is the only leader left now in the non-co-operation movement. Victory will be ours only if non-co-operation goes on even after all the leaders of non-co-operation are arrested. Non-co-operation educates people in exercising the power they have. When the people stand with their own strength, only then can they enjoy swaraj, that is, democratic government. We do not want to give any help to the Government or receive any from it. This is no big task so that it should need a leader. Non-co-operation is an unfailing weapon, but yet one which can be employed even by a child. It is a weapon that is easy to wield but of tremendous effect.

ONE STEP ENOUGH TODAY

Q. Suppose we have won swaraj; how do you propose now to solve the Khilafat question ? Will you fight the Europeans ? We are unarmed.

A. If we get swaraj without a solution of the Khilafat issue, we shall have severed our connection with England. The Government is today suppressing the Khilafat only with our assistance and for subduing us. When they lose their hold over India, they will not need Mesopotamia or Constantinople. But whether or not it remains, when we recall our soldiers from abroad, the Government will not be able to stay on in Mesopotamia any longer. It will not be necessary for us to fight. All we shall need is to recall our people from Europe and Asia. But, supposing we want to fight, then free India will have that right as well. Who can say today what we may wish to do at that time?

DON'T ASK FOR EXTERNAL UNITY, GO ON ACTING RIGHTLY

Q. You have promised to get freedom within a year. We can certainly get it within a month if we are absolutely united. But, when big leaders such as Shastriji[1], Bannerjea[2] Malaviyaji and others are on the opposite side, victory will be difficult. Moreover, you also do not try to win them over to your side.

A. Let us understand the meaning of absolute unity. Unity does not mean identity of views. Each one may have his own opinion and yet there can be unity. There is a serious difference of opinion

[1] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri
[2] Surendranath Bannerjea

between Malaviyaji and me, yet there is complete unity between the two of us. My efforts to win him and others over to the same view as mine are continuing. This can be brought about only through the actions of non-co-operators. Where argument fails, one good action succeeds. There is a condition attached to my promise to win swaraj in a year. If non-co-operators do their duty, we shall surely have it within a year. If the twenty thousand persons who assembled in the Congress as also the thousands of men and women who met together in different cities act on the views they have expressed, we shall certainly get freedom within the time fixed. I have no reason to believe that they will not act that way.

AM I A DICTATOR ?

Q. You say you are not a dictator. Have you ever been guided by any leader to the smallest extent? Even in the Subjects Committee, you remained adamant as a rock. At times you ask us to follow the voice of our conscience; why are you, then, struggling so hard to canvass support for your view?

A. I certainly believe that I am not a dictator. Not only that, there is not even a trace of dictatorship in me, since the way that I have embraced is that of service. I have often been guided in the past by many leaders and still am. In the Subjects Committee meetings, I yielded on many points, at Calcutta as also at Nagpur. But this indeed is true, that in matters of conscience I am uncompromising. Nobody can make me yield. I, therefore, tolerate the charge of being a dictator. Though I ask people to obey the voice of their conscience, everyone has the right to convince others by argument. The conscience in us likes to go to sleep. It requires to be aroused from time to time, and that is the worthiest effort for man. Helping one another to break our chains is the truest service.

ACCLAIMED BY PEOPLE MEANS ACCLAIMED BY THE CONGRESS

Q. Before the session of the Congress, you had said, “I do not at all care for the Congress,” then why do you claim to be a Congressman?

A. I have never made the arrogant statement that I do not care for the Congress. Nor have I claimed to be a Congressman. The Congress is a great body and I hold it in the highest esteem. I have respected it since my youth and, therefore, I have always tried to attend its sessions. But I have never regarded the resolutions of the Congress as gospel truths. When I feel any of them to be against my personal creed, I consider myself free to go against them, and I also

believe that everybody else should have that freedom. Though acting in this way, one can remain a genuine admirer of the Congress.

> Q. Would your movement have succeeded even to the extent of one per cent if the Congress had not passed the resolution[1]? In these past twenty centuries, this non-co-operation is the most important issue we have had to face. When we have the nectar like Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, is it right to lead the whole country on the wrong path in the manner of a dictator? People like Malaviyaji also say that Gandhiji has lost his head and is leading India along a wrong path.

A. I see much misunderstanding behind this question. The Congress is the organ of public opinion. When the people accept something, the Congress will certainly pass it, whether it is good or bad. Supposing a reformer wishes to introduce some reforms which are not to the liking of the people, he will not succeed in getting them passed by the Congress, and no wonder. The non-co-operation movement was in full swing before the resolution of the Congress was passed and it is for that reason that the Congress acclaimed it. I have many ideas which I cannot get the Congress to pass, because I have not been able to make the people see their value. I believe that when a man becomes a widower, he should not remarry; I believe that we should take only vegetarian food; I believe that it is wrong to get vaccinated; I believe that many of our practices relating to hygiene are so bad that they cause diseases. But I have not been able to educate public opinion in my favour on all these matters; hence I would not succeed, either, in getting resolutions on these matters passed by the Congress. Despite this, I do not hesitate to place these ideas of mine before the people when occasion arises. If India had felt the Montagu Reforms to be like nectar, I would have had to put my dictatorship in my pocket. I believe that I have given practical shape to an idea which appeals to the people, and that this is the reason why the people have acclaimed my programme. I am not leading the people on the wrong path; if the path taken by the people is wrong, I also have fallen into error and been swept along that path. If so, my capacity will be held in low esteem. I believe that the people have taken the right path and that they have advanced along it very rapidly. Malaviyaji certainly does not believe that I am leading the people astray. There is some difference of opinion between us, but he is a devoted supporter of non-co-operation and believes that the people are marching ahead.

[1] On non-co-operation

I SHALL NOT RUN THE NEW GOVERNMENT; THE PEOPLE WILL RUN IT

Q. If, as Lokamanya Tilak said, you are going to retire to the foot of the Himalayas after freedom is achieved, what will be the fate of the new Government? Who will run it? When blood-brothers do not agree, what may one expect of the crores?

A. This question is also based on a wrong impression. The Lokamanya never said anything about my going to the Himalayas. I do not intend to retire to the Himalayas after freedom, but it is certain that I shall not run the new Government. The people themselves will run it. Until the people have developed such self-confidence, what possibility is there of our getting freedom ?

"POLITICS" AND RELIGION

Q. Are you not mixing religion and politics, as stated by Mr. N. V. Sharma? Can politics be for mahatmas? Do you think you will be able to secure victory for the crores simply because you secured it for a small number in Africa and in Kheda?

A. I certainly do introduce religion into politics. It is my humble view that not a single activity in the world should be independent of religion. It is a question whether there can be anything not meant for a mahatma. If he does not share in every suffering, how is he a mahatma? I cannot do this, and so I do not claim to be a mahatma. But there is no impropriety in every one of us striving to become a mahatma. It is because we did not introduce religion into our politics that there has been so much delay in winning freedom. It is a law that what is true in one case will be true in all. We can fight on the all-India plane in the same manner in which we fought in Kheda, and can win too.

Q. You had said in Ahmedabad that, even if one man practised non-co-operation in perfection, it would have its effect and freedom would be won. Is this likely?

A. I am convinced that even one non-co-operator, if he has attained perfection, will suffice. But I think the effect produced even by a man striving to be perfect, as I do, will be great. The seed of every reform in the world is sown by one individual.

NONE IS BORN BEFORE HIS TIME

Q. Like the Lokamanya, are you not born before your time?

A. No one ever comes or goes before his time. But people feel

so about every reformer in the world. When we, who are accustomed to one way, are shown another by somebody, initially we always feel shocked.

I HAVE NOT AROUSED THE MUSLIMS

Q. The Muslims feel nothing about the Khilafat. It is you who, prodding them repeatedly, aroused them. Did not some Muslims stand as candidates for Councils? Is not Mr. Shafi in the Executive Council of the Viceroy? Do rich and educated Muslims take part in your movement?

A. I cannot claim at all that I roused the Muslims. It was the Ali Brothers who did so. I only offered them my help, thinking that it was my duty to do so. It is not a matter for surprise that the educated Muslims have lost their good sense. That is a sign of the times. The Muslim masses are with the Ali Brothers. There would have been no delay [in winning freedom], as there is today, if Muslims like Mr. Shafi and Hindus had not been under some kind of spell.

EFFORTS IN GOOD CAUSE NEVER FAIL

Q. Is not your movement unpractical or one which cannot possibly succeed? You said in Madras that the movement might even fail if there was no satisfactory response. Then what about those who have supported you? What degradation it will be for the whole of India! Why not leave this movement midway, as you left the satyagraha movement, and do what you mentioned, repair to the Himalayas?

A. It is being proved day by day that this is not an unpractical movement. The straight path may perhaps in the beginning appear an impossible one to follow, but it is certainly not unpractical. There is nothing in the world which is so effective in practical affairs as truth. Nobody in the world has ever been able to draw any other line which was as short as a straight line. The Madras speech ought to be read in full. The sentence quoted only means that, if the response was not satisfactory, the movement would seem to the people to have failed. But at no time is there a failure in a good undertaking. One always gets the fruits which one's actions deserve. But it is possible that the people may not see the fruits of what one man alone has done. In order to obtain tangible results, it is necessary that the work should have been done by many. This apart, those persons who did the work have certainly had the full benefit. Those who have given up studies and those who have left practice have already acquired the reward of their virtuous action. Whatever may happen to the movement, what harm can come to the persons who have left these things? They will

feel unhappy, of course, if they regret having left them. This is the reason why I have been saying that renunciation cannot be sustained without detachment. I never advised those who were not thoroughly disillusioned with this Government to join non-co-operation. This movement is holy because it is right even for one individual to go on with it. There is no need to pause or look for a co-worker before doing a meritorious deed; before committing a sin, one should consulta thousand astrologers and try to find thousands of companions. One must desist [from sin] even if time and friends oblige. Just as an individual will not be harmed through non-co-operation, so also the country as a whole will not be. I certainly did not abandon satyagraha half way. It assumed another form. As the people had not learnt to offer it in the form of civil disobedience, satyagraha in that form was stopped.[1] I believe that thereby India has profited beyond measure. I am sure that by stopping civil disobedience, I proved my understanding of satyagraha and showed my fitness as leader of the movement. It is because I had stopped civil disobedience that the Punjab has risen in prestige, despite Sir Michael O'Dwyer's determination to knock it down. My mention of going away to the Himalayas should be understood in the same way. It is my firm belief that the law of brute force followed in the West will not be relished by India, will not suit it. Suppose, nonetheless, India adopts it, I would then see no profit in living in the country. At such a time, residence in the Himalayas in solitude would seem heavenly to me. In employing brute force, the country would find no use for my services. It would also, then, send me away to the Himalayas with its blessings.

IS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN IDEAL GOVERNMENT CONCEIVABLE?

Q. You have said in *Navajivan* that a real *brahmachari* can exist only in our imagination. Cannot the same be said about an ideal government? Was there any such government in the past? And will there be any in the future?

A . Once the ideal is fully realized in practice, it ceases to be an ideal. Still we should go on, clinging to the ideal; else we would stumble and fall. The ideal straight line and the ideal right angle exist in imagination only. And yet, without the ideal line and the ideal right angle, the mason could not build a single house. Similarly, keeping in

[1] In 1919.

mind the ideal swaraj and the ideal means and trying to employ them, we shall win the right kind of swaraj in the shortest possible time.

The questions asked by the friend from Surat are over. His letter begins with a pleasant preface. There might seem occasional severity in the language of the questions, but I believe that the questions have been asked respectfully. The questioner has also given his name and address. I quote three from his concluding sentences:

> As a father forgives the wrongs of his son, so should be your attitude to me. In schools, teachers say that, if pupils have any difficulties, they should ask questions about them over and again; in like manner, we, as pupils, find it necessary to put you such questions. Please tear up the letter if you think the questions to be wrong or impertinent.

BEHAVIOUR OF STUDENTS

The other letter is from a well-known writer from Ahmedabad. He has written it under the pseudonym "Swadeshi". It discusses five questions. One of them is about the advice I have given to students. This question has been discussed so often that continuing the discussion is likely to yield nothing new, and so I drop it. I would say only this that the students have not become arrogant and self-willed because of the advice I have given them. They were locked up in a cage; a bird which has just come out of a cage is bound to play a few pranks. One need not, for that reason, be satirical about them. There will be hardly anyone who knows, as well as I do, the students who have come out [of schools]. They have not dispensed with respectful manners. They are struggling against themselves, against society and against their parents, and have been fulfilling all the expectations that one can have of youngsters. There is no room in non-co-operation for show of disrespect. It is quite true, as this gentleman writes, that people act according to their nature. But there are two natures in man, one of Ahriman and the other of Ormuzd; the demoniac and the human; one loving truth and the other falsehood. I am convinced from experience that we do no violence to human nature to stress the aspect of truth, to pay attention only to the good, to go on asserting that man was an animal yesterday but has taken the human form today, is indeed human.

The other question relates to what he had heard about my having advised the teachers of private schools to repudiate their contracts. I have never given such advice to anybody.

UNCIVIL NON-CO-OPERATOR

The third criticism is about a so-called non-co-operator who described a candidate for a Council as "the prince of donkeys". It pains me to have to say that there are non-co-operators who use such unbecoming words. But this is a heritage which has come down from a long time ago and, therefore, the habit will go only with effort. I know that there are many non-co-operators who are learning to control their language and their thoughts. The correspondent thinks that the use of such language has become second nature and that my efforts to combat it are likely to be in vain. My experience of thirty years teaches me something different.

WHY I HAVE BEEN WORKING FOR KHILAFAT SO SERIOUSLY

The fourth question is important. The gentleman writes:

> I cannot at all understand why you feel so much over the Khilafat issue. We are convinced that the Khilafat agitation is just a political weapon. Looking to the past, one feels that Hindus and Muslims will not remain united, no matter how many sacrifices are made. Unity is worth having, if it can be brought about and maintained. But I feel that it will not endure if dictated merely by self-interest. This is what many besides me believe. If, therefore, you tell us in an article why you feel so much about Khilafat, I and others of my way of thinking will be grateful to you.

I have discussed this question orally and in writing. However, believing it to be so important a question that there can never be too much discussion of it, I discuss it here. I place the Khilafat issue above all others. I discovered the weapon of non-co-operation in the form we know while thinking about the Khilafat. I feel very much about this issue because I am a staunch Hindu. If I wish to see my religion protected against seven crores of Muslims, I must be ready even to die for the protection of their religion. Similarly, for the Hindus as well freedom will remain a meaningless ideal until Hindus and Muslims develop unity of heart; till such time, cow-protection will remain an impossibility. I do not believe that the Muslims will betray us once their end has been achieved. Those who believe in religion do not betray anyone. I do not know of a single instance in history of a great sacrifice by the Hindus having gone unrewarded. What was done before now was a kind of bargaining. There is no place whatever for bargaining in our dealings today. The Hindus should help the Muslims as a matter of duty and look to God for reward. They must not ask anything of the Muslims. I seldom mention the subject of

cow-protection to the Ali Brothers. I have already published the conversation with Maulana Abdul Bari.[1] He knows, all the same, that I have not concealed my hope of being able to melt the hearts of Muslims, by dying for them, if need be. It is my conviction that God always rewards a good deed. My prayer is to God. I have sold myself to the Muslims without demanding a price and I ask each and every Hindu to do the same. This is no policy, but plain dealing. I would not have been ready to die for Muslims if their case had been weak. If, knowing their case to be absolutely just, I remained aloof through doubt or fear, my Hinduism would be disgraced and I would have failed in my duty as a neighbour.

I know that the Khilafat agitation is not a political weapon. It is the duty of all Muslims to defend the Khilafat. It is a different matter that Hindus may not regard it as their duty as well. The Muslims will not accept cow-protection as a religious duty. But all Muslims know that for the Hindus it is so. In the same way, all Hindus must know that to defend the Khilafat is a religious duty for the Muslims. I have great respect for the devotion of the Ali Brothers to their religion. They would not have become fakirs just for the sake of political benefits. Of course, fighting for the Khilafat will increase the power of Islam. It is no crime to rejoice at this. The Muslims cannot but be glad; and, if we wish that people of other faiths should be happy at the awakening of a new spirit in Hinduism and its regeneration, we Hindus should also be glad at the regeneration of Islam.

I hope that nobody will bring up here the history of the attempts by Guru Nanak[2] and Kabir[3] unite Hindus and Muslims; for the effort today is not for uniting the religions, but for uniting hearts, despite the differences of religion. The efforts of Guru Nanak and others were towards uniting the two by showing the basic unity of all religions. The attempt today is for cultivation of tolerance. Its aim is to see that the orthodox Hindu remains what he is and yet respects an orthodox Muslim and sincerely wishes him prosperity. This attempt is altogether new but it springs from an ideal which is at the very root of Hinduism.

Let us assume that the Muslims will betray us even after this effort. The fact remains that it will always be in the interests of both to maintain unity all the time. Let us assume, however, that the Muslims

[1] For an account of this conversation, *vide* "Letter to the press", 6-9-1919.

[2] Founder of the Sikh religion

[3] A fourteenth-century poet and saint who had Hindu as well as Muslim

will turn against the Hindus once their immediate object, that concerning the Khilafat, is attained. If, because of that fear, we remain neutral today, what shall we gain thereby, except perpetuating our slavery under British rule? Suppose that, by our efforts today, the Khilafat is saved and freedom won, and that the Muslims then betray us; even so, what will it matter? Can the Muslims prevail against the 22 crore Hindus? Will their moral strength, their *tapascharya* and the sacrifice the Hindus make today be of no help to them? But [it may be asked] what if the Muslims invite an outsider and fight us? Not impossible. Why should a brave man be afraid even of that? Our struggle today is for becoming self-reliant, free. Though but one, a man can face many with courage and refuse to budge from where he is standing. Even animals act thus when driven to such straits. The Arab children behave in this way. I have known Dutch children acting thus. This is no strength of the gods, but a common endowment of man. India cannot be free so long as there are not many Indians with this kind of strength. The Kshatriyas of the time of [Rana] Pratap had such fortitude. A Kshatriya does not mean one who can kill, but one who knows how to die. According to the definition given in the *Gita*, a Kshatriyas means one who does not run away in fear, does not turn his back. There is no bargaining at all in the unity we have between Hindus and Muslims today. The title-deeds of our partnership are the nobility of either. This is friendship subject to no condition. It is a unilateral bond on either side. Such a partnership alone can be called a voluntary partnership. It is not broken simply by one side breaking it, though perhaps in a sense it may be. The law does not bind the party that breaks it, but love may bind even the person so breaking it.

Hari has bound me to Him by a slender cord, As He pulls me so do I turn.

My heart by love's dagger has been pierced.

Thus sang Mira[1] proved by her actions that it was so. The same slender cord will suffice to bind the Muslims and tosave the cow. Bhoja Bhagat[2], however, has described for us the conditions of love also:

Devotion's way is a bargain, and one's head the price,
Hard and steep is the way ahead.
The test of love is in walking on the blade of a sword.

[1] Medieval saint-poetess of Rajasthan
[2] Medieval Gujarati poet

If a Hindu wishes to protect his religion, let him do that.

MALAVIYAJI AND SHASTRIJI

The fifth question this friend has put thus:

> You are greatly mistaken in thinking that Malaviyaji and Shastriji do not feel as much as you do about the Punjab and the Khilafat issues.

He has followed this statement with some arguments. These proceed on the assumption that I have attacked these two veteran leaders. I assure him that that is not so at all. My regard for both of them remains what it was, and so does their love for me. To describe the actual position, I have merely cited the examples of two friends with whom I am closely connected. Impatient over the Punjab and the Khilafat issues, I have come forward to sacrifice my all. These two leaders are ready to tolerate the humiliation on both these scores. If anyone chooses to call this practical good sense, I would not quarrel. To me, one's actions are the test of one's feelings. I do not wish to win more admiration by claiming that I feel more, nor do I wish to lower Malaviyaji and Shastriji in people's esteem in the least measure by asserting that they feel less.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-1-1921

147. SPEECH AT BELUR MATH[1]

January 30, 1921

Mr. Gandhi was requested by the people to deliver a speech. He agreed and wanted to know if they wanted to hear him in English or in Hindi and asked them to raise their hands. Many raised their hands wishing him to speak in English. He said that it pained him much that they did not understand Hindi, the language of their own country. He then asked how many of them wanted to hear him in Hindi. A good many also raised their hands in favour of Hindi. He then spoke in Hindi and asked all to learn Hindi. He began by saying that he bore great respect for late Swami Vivekananda[2]. He had studied many of his books and said that his ideals agreed in many respects with that great man. If Vivekananda were alive it would have been a great help for their national awakening. However his spirit was amongst them and that they should do their best to establish swaraj. He said that they should learn to love their country before anything else and they should be of one mind. He asked all

[1] Delivered on the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda at Belur Math, the headquarters of the Ramakrishna Mission, near Calcutta

[2] 1863-1902; founder of the Ramakrishna Mission

to use swadeshi clothes and to take to charkha and give up drinking of liquor. He said that the police were reported to be oppressive. He asked the police not to do any *zoolum*[1] over the ryots who were their own countrymen. He wanted to tell the police and the army to do their job but not to interfere with the work which they were doing for the country. The police were not the servants of the Government but the servants of their countrymen. He did not want them to give up their jobs but asked them to remain prepared to obey such a call which might be given to them in proper time. He also asked the audience not to seek for Government service but to try to live independent lives. He advised them to keep that idea always before their mind. He also spoke about the national school in Calcutta and said that he had funds with him for opening other schools.

Records of Intelligence Branch, I.G.P., West Bengal

148. SPEECH AT MIRZAPUR SQUARE, CALCUTTA[2]

February 1, 1921

Mr Gandhi at the outset wanted to know if the majority of the audience were students. When he was informed that it was largely attended by students and a few parents and guardians, he said he was much pleased. He said that swaraj could be attained in the course of eight months or within a year if they were strictly non-violent throughout. If they were not non-violent, he was afraid he would not be successful in this movement, but he believed that he had great confidence in them. He did not want the brute force, but he wanted to acquire soul-force and to win swaraj by the latter force. In this connection he incidentally mentioned that to lie prostrate before a running motorcar would be an act of violence. If they wanted a real democracy, they should not use this sort of violence. It mattered little if the Councillors or the lawyers did not withdraw but it would be a death-blow to the attainment of swaraj if they were not non-violent.

Turning to the question of the spinning-wheel, which Mr. Gandhi had been advising his countrymen to take to, he said if they really wanted to save 60 crores of rupees which were being drained out of their country every year, he hoped that every home would have such a wheel. Mr. Gandhi next appealed for help and said that he had received large contributions that day. It was the chief object of the meeting to collect funds and in this direction he hoped that his appeal in every meeting that afternoon would have a ready response.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 2-2-1921

[1] Oppression

[2] The meeting was held under the presidentship of Bipinchandra Pal to express disappointment at the Mont-ford Reforms, on the day of the inauguration by the Duke of Connaught of the Reformed Bengal Legislative Council. Similar meetings were held at Wellington Square and six other places in Calcutta. Gandhiji, Mahomed Ali and Motilal Nehru were present at all these meetings held on February 1.

149. SPEECH AT WELLINGTON SQUARE, CALCUTTA[1]

February 1, 1921

Mr. Gandhi then speaking in Hindi said that they had already heard what had happened in Calcutta in the morning and what their duty should be. It had been said that the Council was their own and the members were their representatives. He wanted to say that the Council was not theirs and the members were not their representatives. They should not take any political help from these members. If they believed that the Council had no representative character, if they wanted to attain swaraj they would have to do a lot of things. The task before them was a difficult one. If they thought that they had done their duty by passing resolutions in meetings then it would have no effect. What should they do then? The question had been answered many a time. They should all adopt non-violent non-co-operation. If they could not spread the idea of non-violent non-co-operation throughout the land it would be impossible for them to attain swaraj. Let them leave their schools and colleges and law courts. Those who had surrendered their titles, left schools, colleges and law courts, should not go there again. They should go to others and ask them to do as they had done. Mr. Gandhi then spoke at length about the importance of non-violence in their non-co-operation movement. If they did not indulge in violence the Government would have no opportunity to use force on them and in spite of the great power of the Government the victory would be theirs. When the people would become fully impressed about the importance of non-violence then only he might ask the people to stop paying taxes and the soldiers to lay down their arms. He regretted that during the hartal on Friday[2] some students stood on public roads and interfered with some people. He was sorry that some students lay in front of Calcutta University to prevent others from appearing at the examination. This should not have been done. They should not give anyone any chance of saying anything against them. Mr. Gandhi then spoke about the importance of the spinning-wheel in their struggle for swaraj and asked all of them to take to it.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 2-2-1921

[1] Delivered at a meeting held under the presidentship of Abul Kalam Azad

[2] That is, on January 28, 1921, when the Duke of Connaught arrived in Calcutta; the hartal referred to was observed by the citizens to signify a complete boycott of the Duke's visit.

150. LETTER TO DUKE OF CONNAUGHT[1]

[Before *February 2, 1921*]

SIR,

Your Royal Highness must have heard a great deal about non-co-operation, non-co-operationists and their methods and incidentally of me, its humble author. I fear that the information given to Your Royal Highness must have been in its nature one-sided. I owe it to you, to my friends and myself that I should place before you what I conceive to be the scope of non-co-operation as followed not only by me but my closest associates such as Messrs Shaukat Ali and Mahomed Ali.

For me it is no joy and pleasure to be actively associated in the boycott of Your Royal Highness's visit. I have tendered loyal, voluntary assistance to the Government for an unbroken period of nearly 30 years in the full belief that through that lay the path of freedom for my country. It was, therefore, no slight thing for me to suggest to my countrymen that we should take no part in welcoming Your Royal Highness. Not one amongst us has anything against you as an English gentleman. We hold your person as sacred as that of a dearest friend. I do not know any of my friends who would not guard it with his life if he found it in danger.

We are not at war with individual Englishmen. We seek not to destroy English life. We do desire to destroy the system that has emasculated our country in body, mind and soul. We are determined to battle with all our might against that in English nature which has made O'Dwyerism and Dyerism possible in the Punjab and has resulted in a wanton affront upon Islam, a faith professed by seven crores of our countrymen. We consider it inconsistent with our self-respect any longer to brook the spirit of superiority and dominance which has systematically ignored and disregarded the sentiments of thirty crores of innocent people of India on many a vital matter. It is humiliating to us. It cannot be a matter of pride to you that thirty crores of Indians should live day in and day out in fear of

[1] This was published in *Young India* and other newspapers, the earliest available publication being in *Amrita Bazar Patrika,* 2-2-1921

their lives from one hundred thousand Englishmen and, therefore, be under subjection to them.

Your Royal Highness has come, not to end the system I described, but to sustain it by upholding its prestige. Your first pronouncement was a laudation of Lord Willingdon. I have the privilege of knowing him. I believe him to be an honest, amiable gentleman, who will not willingly hurt even a fly, but he certainly failed as a ruler. He allowed himself to be guided by those whose interest it was to support their power. He is not reading the mind of the Dravidian province[1]. Here, in Bengal, you are issuing a certificate of merit to a Governor[2] who is again, from all I have heard, an estimable gentleman, but who knows nothing of the heart of Bengal and its yearnings. Bengal is not Calcutta; Fort William and the palaces of Calcutta represent an insolent exploitation of the unmurmuring and highly cultured peasantry of this fair province.

The non-co-operationists have come to the conclusion that they must not be deceived by the reforms that tinker with the problem of India's distress and humiliation, nor must they be impatient and angry. We must not in our impatient anger resort to stupid violence. We freely admit that we must take our due share of blame for the existing state. It is not so much British guns that are responsible for our subjection as our voluntary co-operation.

Our non-participation in a hearty welcome to Your Royal Highness is thus in no sense a demonstration against your high personage, but it is against the system you come to uphold. I know individual Englishmen cannot, even if they will, alter the English nature all of a sudden. If we would be the equals of Englishmen we must cast off fear. We must learn to be self-reliant and independent of schools, courts, protection and patronage of a Government we seek to end if it will not mend.

Hence this non-violent non-co-operation. I know we have not all yet become non-violent in speech and deed, but the results so far achieved have, I assure Your Royal Highness, been amazing. The people have understood the secret and value of non-violence as they have never done before. He who will may see that this is a religious, purifying movement. We are leaving off drink. We are trying to rid India of the curse of untouchability. We are trying to throw off

[1] Madras
[2] Lord Ronaldshay

foreign tinsel splendour and, by reverting to the spinning-wheel, reviving the ancient and poetic simplicity of life. We hope thereby to sterilize the existing harmful institutions.

I ask Your Royal Highness as an Englishman to study this movement and its possibilities for the Empire and the world. We are at war with nothing that is good in the world. In protecting Islam in the manner we are, we are protecting all religions; in protecting the honour of India, we are protecting the honour of humanity. For our means are hurtful to none. We desire to live on terms of friendship with Englishmen, but that friendship must be friendship of equals both in theory and in practice, and we must continue to non-co-operate, i.e., to purify ourselves till the goal is achieved. I ask Your Royal Highness, and through you every Englishman, to appreciate the viewpoint of non-co-operation.

I beg to remain, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 9-2-1921

151. NOTES

SWARAJ SABHA

Apropos of reorganization, the question has been asked as to what is to become of Swaraj Sabhas, Home Rule Leagues, etc. In my opinion their institutional activity, for the time being, should be swaraj activity.

PATIENCE WANTED

The construction of an organization such as I have adumbrated means patience. In their zeal, I understand, certain workers in Bihar, with a view to bring about a reduction of prices, began to intimidate shopkeepers and are said to have used my name for that purpose. Such exhibition of force will defeat the end we have in view. If shopkeepers are not dealing honestly we must reason with them, and if they will not listen, we must set up national shops for the purpose of supplying cheap grain. As a matter of fact the grain traders? being so many, are ill able to charge exorbitant prices. In any case, the grain dealers, too, have got to be purified. They must be induced to introduce honesty and concern for the nation into their dealings.

But these excesses will sometimes happen when a great revival is taking place. Fortunately, the leaders were able immediately to deal with the situation, and, probably, nobody even knows anything about the incident except those immediately concerned. Bihar is silently, but surely, organizing itself. Babu Rajendra Prasad has become the Principal of a National College[1] which has some able professors on its staff, and their institution is making steady headway. The professors are mostly volunteers drawing just enough for a livelihood.

SITTING "DHARNA"

Some students of Calcutta have revived the ancient form of barbarity in the form of sitting *dharna*[2]. Fortunately, the practice was stopped as soon as it was revived. They blocked the passage of their fellow students who wanted to go to the University for paying their fees or to see some officials of the educational department. I call it 'barbarity' for it is a crude way of using coercion. It is also cowardly because one who sits *dharna* knows that he is not going to be trampled over. It is difficult to call the practice violent but it is certainly worse. If we fight our opponent we at least enable him to return the blow. But when we challenge him to walk over us, *knowing* that he will not, we place him in a most awkward and humiliating position. I know that the overzealous students who sat *dharna* never thought of the barbarity of the deed. But one who is expected to follow the voice of conscience and stand even single-handed in the face of odds cannot afford to be thoughtless. Non-co-operation, if it fails, will fail only through internal weakness. There is no such thing as defeat in non-co-operation. It never fails. Its so called representatives may so badly represent their cause that it may appear to the spectators to have failed. Let non-co-operationists therefore beware of everything they do. There must be no impatience, no barbarity, no insolence, no undue pressure. If we want to cultivate a true spirit of democracy, we cannot afford to be intolerant. Intolerance betrays want of faith in one's cause.

[1] At Patna, in Bihar

[2] Exerting moral pressure by sitting at one spot and going without food or water

THE NEED FOR HINDUSTANI

I have ventured to advise every student to devote this year of our trial to the manufacture of yarn and learning Hindustani. I am thankful to the Calcutta students that they have taken kindly to the suggestion. Bengal and Madras are the two provinces that are cut off from the rest of India for want of a knowledge of Hindustani on their part—Bengal, because of its prejudice against learning any other language of India, and Madras, because of the difficulty of the Dravidians about picking up Hindustani. An average Bengali can really learn Hindustani in two months if he gave it three hours per day and a Dravidian in six months at the same rate. Neither a Bengali nor a Dravidian can hope to achieve the same result with English in the same time. A knowledge of English opens up intercourse only with the comparatively few English-knowing Indians, whereas a passable knowledge of Hindustani enables us to hold intercourse with the largest number of our countrymen. I do hope the Bengalis and the Dravidians will come to the next Congress[1] with a workable knowledge of Hindustani. Our greatest assembly cannot be a real object-lesson to the masses unless it speaks to them in a language which the the largest number can understand. I appreciate the difficulty with the Dravidians, but nothing is difficult before their industrious love for the Motherland.

THE PLACE OF ENGLISH

Alongside of my suggestion about Hindustani has been the advice that the students should, during the transition period from inferiority to equality—from foreign domination to swaraj, from helplessness to self-help—suspend their study of English. If we wish to attain swaraj before the next Congress, we must believe in the possibility, we must do all that we are capable of doing for its advancement, and one must do nothing that would not advance it or would actually retard it. Now adding to our knowledge of English cannot accelerate our progress towards our goal and it can conceivably retard it. The latter calamity is a reality in many cases for there are many who believe that we cannot acquire the spirit of freedom without the music of the English words ringing in our ears and sounding through our lips. This is an infatuation. If it were the truth, swaraj would be as distant as the Greek Kalends. English is a

[1] To be held at Ahmedabad in December 1921

language of international commerce, it is the language of diplomacy, it contains many a rich literary treasure, and it gives us an introduction to Western thought and culture. For a few of us, therefore, a knowledge of English is necessary. They can carry on the departments of national commerce and international diplomacy, and for giving to the nation the best of Western literature, thought, and science. That would be the legitimate use of English. Whereas today English has usurped the dearest place in our hearts and dethroned our mother tongues. It is an unnatural place due to our unequal relations with Englishmen. The highest development of the Indian mind must be possible without a knowledge of English. It is doing violence to the manhood and specially the womanhood of India to encourage our boys and girls to think that an entry into the best society is impossible without a knowledge of English. It is too humiliating a thought to be bearable. To get rid of the infatuation for English is one of the essentials of swaraj.

MY 'STABLE COMPANION'

Commander Wedgwood has not done justice to himself in his article in the *Nation.* I am afraid that he wrote without a proper study of facts and persons. I do not wish to deal with inaccuracies concerning myself. But his ignorance of Maulana Shaukat Ali is amazing. He does not understand the secret of the power of Maulana Shaukat Ali who is one of the sincerest of men I have had the privilege of meeting. I do not believe that he hates Englishmen —or anybody for that matter. He certainly loves his religion as life itself. He does believe in non-violence, though he believes equally in violence. If he cannot secure honourable terms for the Khilafat by means of non-violence, and if he finds that he can usefully lead his people on the path of violence, he will do so. If ever he thinks it necessary to offer violence he will do it on terms that the world will consider beyond reproach. His conviction about non-violence is not only not "skin-deep" but is derived from the life of the Prophet. He is enjoined to refrain from violence so long as it is possible to attain his purpose by non-violent means. Col. Wedgwood's article would almost show that Maulana Shaukat Ali is simply thirsting for blood. Surely he should know that a soldier, although he believes in violence, may still be credited with qualities of the heart, viz., kindness, charity, and benevolence. I assure him that Maulana Shaukat Ali is as good a soldier as the gallant Colonel himself. I have entered upon this reply

because I am anxious that Englishmen should not misjudge the Ali Brothers and the Muslim attitude. The Ali Brothers have rendered a service to humanity by restraining themselves and their fellow religionists when their passions might have got the better of them. And this amazing self-restraint is a most eloquent demonstration of their intense religious faith. It saddens me when I find Englishmen, even like Col. Wedgwood, rushing to conclusions. Nothing retards a peaceful settlement as this refusal on the part of Englishmen to see things as they are.

Young India, 2-2-1921

152. THE DUTY OF SPINNING

In "The Secret of Swaraj" I have endeavoured to show what home-spinning means for our country.[1] In any curriculum of the future, spinning must be a compulsory subject. Just as we cannot live without breathing and without eating, so is it impossible for us to attain economic independence and banish pauperism from this ancient land without reviving home-spinning. I hold the spinning-wheel to be as much a necessity in every household as the hearth. No other scheme that can be devised will ever solve the problem of the deepening poverty of the people. How then can spinning be introduced in every home? I have already suggested the introduction of spinning and systematic production of yarn in every national school. Once our boys and girls have learnt the art they can easily carry it to their homes.

But this requires organization. A spinning-wheel must be worked for twelve hours per day. A practised spinner can spin two tolas and a half per hour. The price that is being paid at present is on an average four annas per forty tolas or one pound of yarn, i.e., one pice per hour. Each wheel therefore should give three annas per day. A strong one costs seven rupees. Working, therefore, at the rate of twelve hours per day it can pay for itself in less than 38 days. I have given enough figures to work upon. Anyone working at them will find the results to be startling.

If every school introduced spinning, it would revolutionize our ideas of financing education. We can work a school for six hours per

[1] *Vide* "The Secret of Swaraj", 19-1-1921.

day and give free education to the pupils. Supposing a boy works at the wheel for four hours daily, he will produce every day 10 tolas of yarn and thus earn for his school one Anna per day. Suppose further that he manufactures very little during the first month, and that the school works only twenty six days in the month. He can earn after the first month Rs. 1-10-0 per month. A class of thirty boys would yield, after the first month, an income of Rs. 48-12 per month.

I have said nothing about literary training. It can be given during the two hours out of the six. It is easy to see that every school can be made self-supporting without much effort and the nation can engage experienced teachers for its schools.

The chief difficulty in working out the scheme is the spinning-wheel. We require thousands of wheels if the art becomes popular. Fortunately, every village carpenter can easily construct the machine. It is a serious mistake to order them from the Ashram or any other place. The beauty of spinning is that it is incredibly simple, easily learnt, and can be cheaply introduced in every village.

The course suggested by me is intended only for this year of purification and probation. When normal times are reached and swaraj is established one hour only may be given to spinning and the rest to literary training.

Young India, 2-2-1921

153. REORGANIZATION OF PROVINCES: THE NEW CONSTITUTION

It is to be hoped that the different provinces have begun to reorganize themselves in terms of the new constitution[1]. There is not a moment to lose if we are to attain swaraj within one year. Below will be found the rules[2] adopted by Gujarat for reorganizing the province on the new basis. They are published for general guidance. They show that it is convenient to treat talukas as units for returning delegates and electing members of the Provincial Congress Committee. That Committee is to consist of 100 members of whom 90 will be directly elected and these will elect ten more so as to ensure representation of minorities and other interests—if the general body

[1] *Vide* "Congress constitution adopted at Nagpur session", december 1920.
[2] Not reproduced here.

of electors have omitted to do so. There should not be a single village left without a Congress organization and no village register should be without a single adult male or female on it[1]. This means honest and industrious workers. When millions have voluntarily joined the Congress, the forced organization of the Government must fall to pieces. I consider the Government organization to be forced because it is based on fear and not on hope. The *Patel* or the *Mukhi*[2] not a man executing the will of the villagers but he imposes on them the will of a Government which has nothing in common with the people.

Young India, 2-2-1921

154. LETTER TO A FRIEND[3]

148, RUSSA ROAD,
CALCUTTA,
February 2, 1921

DEAR FRIEND,

I have heard that you have gone on hunger strike at not findingsufficient response from your neighbours to the call of non-co-operation. Whilst your action shows the purity of your heart and the spirit of sacrifice, in my opinion, it is hasty and possibly thoughtless. Fasting for the purpose of showing one's displeasure or disappointment can hardly be justified. Its basis must be penance or purification. I would therefore strongly advise you to stop fasting and devote yourself to organizing those parts of the country where you are known. We must not put pressure of the kind contemplated by your fast in order to bring people round to our point of view. We must give to everyone the same freedom of action and speech that we claim for ourselves.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] "Not on it" in the source.
[2] The village headman
[3] The name of the addressee is not known.

155. LETTER TO ROY

148 RUSSA ROAD, CALCUTTA,
[Before *February 4, 1921*][1]

DEAR MR. ROY,

I have been in correspondence for some time with your daughter as I have been with many other girls and boys. I have had the pleasure too of meeting your daughter and her companions more than once. As Kumari Lalita has often referred to your attitude about her desire to withdraw from her college, I would like you [to] know my advice to your daughter. In my opinion no self-respecting boy or girl can possibly receive education in institutions in any way controlled or dominated by a Government so wicked as ours. If I were a student, and had to chosse between education under the influence of such a Government and no education, I would not hesitate to choose the latter. Whilst I have pressed this argument upon your daughter as on every other student, I have advised her to be largely guided by your advice and if it were a matter of choosing between your advice and mine, certainly to prefer yours to mine. But I have also added that if she is really convinced about the wickedness of the Government and therefore the necessity of withdrawing from her college, she could not fail to secure you consent and blessing in following the voice of her conscience. I write this to you as I am most anxious, being a parent myself, to respect to the utmost extent the susceptibilities of parents especially in the case of girls. You will perhaps permit me to say that I feel for your daughter as I would for my own. It has been a pleasure to me to read in all her letters a scrupulous regard for her parents. And I need hardly assure you that I would not be guilty of undermining the duty of children towards their parents. Your daughter has, I may inform you, given me her valuable bangles for the Swaraj Fund.[2] I would like to have a line of your approval of her gift. As I have come in close contact with your daughter I would like to make your acquaintane and understand your wishes in the matter.

Yours truly,

From a photostate; S.N. 7330

[1] Gandhiji was in Calcutta from January 23 to February 4, 1921. During this period he stayed at 148 Russa Road, Calcutta: *vide* "Letter to Levetus", 26-1-1921.

[2] The All-India Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund raised, following the Congress resolution of December 30, 1920, for financing the Non-co-operation Movement

156. SPEECH AT OPENING OF NATIONAL COLLEGE, CALCUTTA[1]

February 4, 1921

FRIENDS,

You have just now heard the beautiful prayer[2] sung by the students over there, and I hope that all of you will ponder over the magnificent language of that prayer.[3] If we will base all our acts in this institution on prayer, I have very little doubt that we shall come through with added glory to ourselves and to our country. I have had the privilege, during these few months, of opening several institutions in several parts of India. But I must confess to you that, in opening no other institution have I been so weighed down with anxiety and fear as I am in performing the opening ceremony in connection with this institution. As I have elsewhere remarked, all the eyes, all the attention of the student world are centred upon Calcutta. You have seen so many telegrams reproduced in the Press, I have seen many more telegrams not reproduced in the Press, congratulating the students on the magnificent response to the country's call. You may have also noticed that as a result of your response the students all over India are withdrawing themselves from Government institutions. Great, therefore, is your responsibility and the responsibility of the professors and teachers connected with this institution, of Mr. Das and myself also. For myself, I can only assure you that my prayers will attend all your efforts in making this institution a success. But I know that no prayer that I can offer, no prayer that our clearer hearts can offer, can be of the slightest service unless the students approach their task in humility and in their fear of God, with perseverance, with single-mindedness and with love and a devotion for the country in whose name and for whose sake they have abandoned Government institutions. It is not a light task for a student expecting

[1] The college, housed in a spacious building in Wellington Square, was established by the Board of Education formed by C. R. Das, J. L. Banerjea and others.

[2] A hymn from the *Gita* sung at the commencement of the opening ceremony

[3] The report in *Amrita BazarPatrika*, 5-2-1921, begins thus: "Mr. Gandhi, in declaring the College open, said that he was exceedingly grieved that their good friend and brother Sj. Chittaranjan Das was not present as he was not well enough to attend the gathering, although it was his intention that he should be present at the opening. Mr. J. L. Banerjea had told them what they were to expect in the institution. They had just heard the beautiful prayer sung by the students and he hoped that all of them would ponder over the magnificent nature of that prayer."

certificates of high merit, expecting a great career in his own estimation. It is no light task for a student with all these expectations to surrender them in the hope that he is rendering a service to the country and therefore a service to himself. Personally I have not the slightest doubt about it. I hope you will never have to regret the day that you left Government institutions. But I know also that you must have to regret the day if you will not use your time usefully, if you have left under the impulse of moment as so many of our leaders who mean well of the country have already expressed their fears. Let me hope that you will falsify their fears.

You will at the end of the year so discharge yourselves that those who are today filled with doubts may come forward with an expression of opinion that their doubts were misplaced. Let me not conceal from you, the students of Calcutta, what certificate Indians in other parts of India give to you. Many of the students and many grown-up men also, who have talked to me about your movement have expressed a sense of nervous fear. You have been credited with a great deal of emotion, you have been credited with a great deal of impulsiveness but you have not been credited with the same amount of perseverance and industry.

You are embarking upon a new career. You are turning over a new leaf. You are shouldering a great responsibility. You are counting yourselves among the makers of India of the future. And if you realize this responsibility, I have no doubt, you will dispel all these fears which have been expressed in other parts of India. Those who know Bengal well are in the position also to testify that Bengalis on many an occasion have not been found wanting; and for my part I shall certainly decline to believe that those students who have responded and who will join this institution will be found wanting. I shall hope also that the professors and the teachers will prove true to their trust. What I said in all humility to the professors and teachers at the time of performing the opening ceremony of the Gujarat National College[1], I am tempted to repeat here; that the success and failure of this institution will very largely depend upon the honest exertion that the professors and teachers may put forth. At this critical moment in the history of our dear country every one of us, who intends to mould the young mind of the country, has a serious responsibility, and if the

[1] At Ahmedabad, on November 15, 1920; *vide* "Inaugural speech at Gujrat Mahavidyalaya, Ahmedabad", 15-11-1920.

professors and the teachers are found alseep, if they are overtaken with doubt, if they are overtaken with fear as to the future, God help the students who come under their charge. And I shall pray to the Almighty that he may bless the professors and teachers with wisdom, with courage, with faith and hope.

I have in one of my speeches told the students that whilst they might go on with the course that they have mapped out for themselves they must not interfere with others. You have perhaps read the paragraph that appeared in the newspaper today with reference to Barisal[1]. I do not know whether it is an exaggerated account of what had happened there. I do not care whether it is an exaggeration, and whether it is an understatement, but it furnishes a lesson for you andfor me that we must on no account resort to violence, that we must on no account exert undue pressure. And as I said at one of the meetings day before yesterday, I hope that the students will not sit *dharna*—they will not exercise any pressure whatsoever upon those students who would not come out of the schools and colleges. It is sufficient that those who feel it is sinful to belong to these institutions ought to come out of them. If we have sufficient faith in ourselves we shall remain steadfast although not a single other student responds to the call. It does betray want of faith in our own mission when you become impatient. And if we are impatient we begin to compel others to do what we have done. I hope no one of the students who will belong to this institution will be filled with any such doubt as to the correctness of his conduct.

I hope also that when I renew your acquaintance a month hence, as I hope I shall be able to do, you will not call upon me to address you any longer in English but that you will have mastered sufficient Hindustani to be able to understand whatever message I might have to give to you in our national common language. I assure you when you approach your study of Hindustani some of you will find it simple and easy. To some of you the words will seem perfectly natural, because the vocabulary is common to Bengali, Hindi and most of the Indian languages, barring the Dravidian stock. You will find also it will feed your intellect and it will satisfy all the intellectual requirements of intellectual Bengal. And if you want to go in for literature, I promise you will find treasures hidden both in Hindi and Urdu whatever scripts you take up—and whatever books you take up

[1] Town in Bengal

first. You talk of the poverty of Hindi literature—you talk of the poverty of today's Hindi, but if you dive deep into the pages of Tulsidas, probably you will share my opinion that there is no other book that stands equal to it in the literature of the world in modern languages. That one book has given me faith and hope which no other book has given. I think that it is a book which can stand any criticism and any scrutiny alike in literary grace, in metaphor and in religious fervour.

I hope also that when I come back you will have made sufficient progress in making yarn and have it woven by some village weaver for your own use. But I hope that you will be able to give sufficient proof of what wonders you have performed in spinning and I hope you will be able to share with me the same poetry and the same intellectual treat that I find in spinning if you spin with faith and hope with reference to the future of India. I hope also that your professors and teachers will give their lectures through Bengali, and I hope that, all the knowledge that you have acquired in your Government institutions, you will translate for yourselves in Bengali and that you will be able to find equivalent expressions for the richest thought that you have learnt from English poets and from English literature.

I hope also that you will approach your task with a religious faith. If this movement of ours is not religious I am free to confess to you that this movement will not only fail but it will discredit us. It is a new method of applying ourselves to the task and if we consider that we can solve the problem of India by bringing some changes only upon the old methods, we shall be doomed to disappointment. If you approach the task with the same religious fervour for which Bengal is noted, I know you will I find that swaraj is within easy reach. May God help you. May God help the professors, and may God give you the strength that our friend Srijut Chittaranjan Das needs. I have much pleasure in declaring this institution open.

Young India, 9-2-1921

157. TELEGRAM TO JAIRAMDAS DAULATRAM

JHARIA,
February 5, 1921

SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE VISIT SIND FOR TWO MONTHS.[1] SO LONG COLLEGE REMAINS NATIONAL WE NEED NOT INTERFERE. GIRDHARI[2] MAY STAY IF HE LIKES WORK.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1921, p. 176

158. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Saturday [*February 5, 1921*][3]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I got your letters. I hardly get time for sleep; how then could I write to you?

I think you had better stay on there for the present. Ba will also feel happy. You will be able to solve some of the difficulties of the Ashram. Besides, I do want that you should have some experience there and acquire proficiency in carding and spinning. Accompanying me at present are Jamnadas, the Doctor and Prabhudas. And Surendra will come and join us today. I do not understand why he has come away from Rangoon; Prabhudas, however, saw him in Patna yesterday. There are likely to be two further additions to these, Parasram and a Bengali whom the Professor[4] wants to entrust [to me]. He believes that the man is competent enough to be useful for *Young India*. You would get lost in all this company and I wouldn't know what to do. I have been thinking of reducing the number somewhat. I believe it is all to the good that things have so chanced that you have had to go there. Either you alone can fill your place, or anyone can. No person can fill another's place and no one is indispensable. I at any rate have cultivated this attitude. It is good to cultivate the virtue of detachment.

[1] Gandhiji went to Sind in the last week of April 1921.

[2] Girdhari Kripalani, nephew of J. B. Kripalani

[3] As stated in the last paragraph, Gandhiji wrote this letter in the train on his way to Bihar. After touring Bengal, in 1921, Gandhiji arrived in Dhanbad, in Bihar, on February 5, which fell on a Saturday, and he was in Patna on February 6 to inaugurate a National University for Bihar.

[4] J. B. Kripalani

Mrs. Joseph[1] will now definitely go to Prayag[2], and that will be right. It seems they will not arrest Joseph in the immediate future. I wonder if you will have to accompany Mrs. Joseph when she returns.

I should like you to study every aspect of the Ashram. I shall be sending you a wire today. I am writing this letter in the train. We are on our way to Bihar. The Doctor and Prabhudas were left in Gaya.They will be going to Patna from there. We shall meet tomorrow morning.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 7605

159. THE SPINNING-WHEEL MOVEMENT

The spinning-wheel movement appears to be making good progress. I see that there is demand for spinning-wheels from many places. But we would get lost again if people want spinning wheels to be manufactured in one place only.

This movement is as easy to carry on as it is likely to be rewarding. It will be rewarding because it is easy. The spinning wheel is such an ordinary thing that it can be made in any village. Every one of its parts can be manufactured in a village which has a carpenter and a blacksmith. The population being 30 crores, if we count one home for every ten persons the number comes to three crore homes. A lover of swaraj can have peace only when the country has three crore spinning-wheels. If all these spinning-wheels are to be manufactured only in one place, the work cannot go ahead.

There are 750,000 villages in India, and so this work will spread out in so many villages. The villages are grouped into two hundred and fifty districts. If, therefore, we have one man in every district to take up this work, the movement can spread in every part of the country. The work will make progress only if the worker in each district can supply spinning-wheels to his own district, or show the people the way to produce them.

The fact that all demands for spinning-wheels are addressed to the Ashram shows that we have not yet started working among the

[1] Wife of George Joseph, a barrister of Madurai

[2] Allahabad

artisan classes. We have to arouse interest in the swaraj movement in every one of the many communities in every village. As we are slowly getting out of the delusion that only those who have had English education can conduct the movement of swaraj, so also shall we have to forget the idea that only politicians can do justice to this work.

The first training we need is that for swaraj. It has to be imparted to all, to children and to aged people, to men and to women, to the people of all communities and faiths. Literacy is not essential for the purpose. We have to destroy this Satanic rule. It is not for our good. The means we use to destroy it is peaceful non-co-operation. Non-co-operation means co-operation among ourselves. Co-operation among ourselves means the desire and the strength to become free. The most effective means of acquiring the strength to satisfy this desire is the sp-inning-wheel. So much can be explained to everyone in a short while.

We should, therefore, engage our carpenters, blacksmiths, cobblers, farmers and others in this work. The artisans built the Swaminarayana temple[1] free. Rich men donated money for it. Why should not the artisans devoted to swaraj build the temple of swaraj free? Labourers can donate their labour and rich people their wealth. Only a few persons are needed for rousing such a spirit, but these must be honest men of service.

At present, all this work is being done among a class of people who are cripples. It is my firm belief that we, the educated class, have become cripples in so far as winning swaraj is concerned. We have realized that swaraj cannot be won by talking, by making speeches and applications or by leading deputations to England, but it is only now we have begun to see that swaraj means devotion to one's dharma, that it can be won only through courage and self-sacrifice. We have now to spread this idea widely. The day it becomes widespread, swaraj will be ours. If we are after this work, it can be done in a year. That is why I have been saying that it is possible to get swaraj in a year's time.

However, this article is about the spinning-wheel. Working for swaraj means introducing a spinning-wheel in every home and persuading people to spin on it.

Instead of asking me to send spinning-wheels, people should get them made in their own villages.

[1] In Vadtal

Thanks to our fear and lack of information, it takes us time to find spinning-wheels. There are some in every province, Iying in obscure places. Every person should search for one in his own village or street. If he finds any, he should seek out a carpenter. The latter will probably know how to make others. If all attempts to find a spinning-wheel fail, one may be ordered for use as a model and with it we may get others made.

But our securing a spinning-wheel will not by itself mean production of yarn. Securing a spinning-wheel is only the first step. Slivers will be required. For this purpose, we shall have to find a carder and beg him for his services. He, too, will have to be taught the lesson of swaraj.

These suggestions have been made time and again, but they need to be repeated either in the same words or in different words because we have still not acquired efficiency and skill.

Just as there are demands for spinning-wheels, so also there are for khadi. Once yarn of good quality is being produced, enough khadi can be made to spread over the whole country.

Yarn must be in fact yarn. Any sort of thread drawn out will not be accepted as yarn. Yarn is what can be woven [into cloth]. It should be properly twisted, should have no loose fibre and should be of one unbroken length. There should be no particles of broken cotton seeds or leaves sticking to the yarn.

The spinning-wheel has spread so widely in Gujarat that, with a little more faith, khadi worth a crore of rupees can be produced in a year in this province alone. This would mean a crore of rupees brought into the homes of the poor in Gujarat and that without increasing vice; for, when the poor are enabled to earn so that they have enough to eat, the result is always auspicious.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-2-1921

160. WHO IS A "SANATANI" HINDU?

It has been asked why I call myself an orthodox *sanatani* Hindu and why I regard myself as a *Vaishnava.* I think I should answer these questions.

The answer will cover the definition of a *sanatani* Hindu and include a complete description of a *Vaishnava.*

According to my belief, a Hindu is anyone who, born in a Hindu family in India, accepts the Vedas, the *upanishads* and the *puranas* as holy books; who has faith in the five *yamas* of truth, non-violence, etc., and practises them to the best of his ability; who believes in the existence of the atman[1] and the *paramatman*[2], and believes, further, that the atman is never born and never dies but, through incarnation in the body, passes from existence to existence and is capable of attaining *moksha;* who believes that *moksha* is the supreme end of human striving and believes in *varnashrama* and cow-protection. Whoever, besides believing in all these, has been born in a family belonging to the *Vaishnava* sect and has not forsaken the *Vaishnava* way; who possesses in some measure the qualities described in Narasinh Mehta's devotional song entitled "Vaishnavajana" and strives to cultivate these qualities in perfection is a *Vaishnava.* It is my firm belief that I possess in a large measure the characteristics described by me and I have been striving to strengthen them. I do not, therefore, hesitate to call myself with all firmness, though humbly, a strict *sanatani* Hindu and a *Vaishnava.* I believe that the most important outward form of Hinduism is cow-protection. I regard the Hindu world as important because at present not a single Hindu is capable of giving that protection. Among these impotent people, I believe myself to be the least impotent. I do not believe that there can be anybody else who has systematically exerted himself as much as I have done, and am still doing, for the protection of cows or who feels for the cow and its progeny as much as I do. As long as the Hindus in India show no kindness to the cow, as long as they themselves torture cattle in many ways, as long as they have not succeeded in winning the regard of Muslims and persuading them to stop, out of their regard, the slaughter of cows and as long as they tolerate the killing of cows by the English and salute the British flag, I shall believe that the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas spirit has vanished from Hinduism. Therefore, though born a Vaisya, I am ever active in the duties of both.

I believe that the essence of Hinduism is truth and non-violence. I have not seen anyone among those whom I know respecting truth so scrupulously as I have been doing right from my childhood. The active manifestation of non-violence is love—absence of ill will. I

[1] Self
[2] Supreme Self

firmly believe that I am overflowing with love. I have not felt ill will against anyone even in a dream. I entertain no such feeling towards Dyer, his wicked deeds notwithstanding. Wherever I have seen misery or injustice, I have felt troubled in my soul.

The central principle of Hinduism is that of *moksha*. I am ever striving for it. All my activities are for *moksha*. I have as much faith in the existence of the *atman* and in its immortality as I am certain of the existence of my body and its transience.

For these reasons, I am happy to declare myself a staunch *sanatani* Hindu.

If anybody asks me whether I have made any deep study of the shastras, I would say that I have and I have not. I have not studied them from a scholar's point of view. My knowledge of Sanskrit is almost nil; even of the translations available in modern Indian languages, I have read only a few. I cannot claim to have fully read even a single Veda. Nevertheless, I have understood the shastras from the point of view of dharma. I have grasped their real meaning. I know that one can attain *moksha* without reading the Vedas.

I have found the right method for reading—for understanding the Shastras. If any injunction in a Shastras is opposed to truth, non-violence and *brahmacharya*, it is unauthentic, whichever the shastra in which it is found. The shastras are not above reason. We can reject any shastras which reason cannot follow. I have read through only the Upanishads. I have also read some among them which my reason could not follow. I did not, therefore, accept them as havingany authority. Many poets have told us in their poems that anyone who sticks to the letter of the shastras is a pedant. Teachers like Shankaracharya[1] have given the essence of the shastras in single sentences, and the sum and substance of it all is that one should cultivate *bhakti* towards God and attain *jnana*[2], and there by attain *moksha*. Akha Bhagat has said:

Live as you please,

Attain God anyhow, somehow.

That Shastras which teaches me drinking liquor, eating meat and wicked ways cannot be called a shastra.

[1] 780-812; Hindu philosopher and religious reformer; author of commentaries on the Upanishads, Brahmasutras and the *Bhagavad Gita*

[2] Enlightenment

Much that is the very opposite of dharma is going on in the name of the *smritis*[1]. *B*y trying to follow the letter of the *smritis* and other such works, we make ourselves fit for hell. Deluded by these, people who call themselves Hindus give themselves up to licence and become ready to commit or make others commit rape on young girls.

We now have before us the important question of what, in all the Shastras, we should regard as interpolations, what as acceptable and what as deserving to be rejected. If there had not been, as I have stated above, a total extinction of the Brahmins spirit, we could have consulted a Brahmins who had purified himself by following the disciplines of *yama-niyama* and acquired a good measure of *jnana*. In the absence of such Brahmins, the path of rules supreme at present. When we have brought about self-purification by non-co-operating with the present Government in which the sins of hypocrisy, pretension, pride, worldliness and so on, reveal themselves in numerous ways, then perhaps we shall get a cultured person who can give us the essence of the Shastras. Till then we, the common people, may cling to the essentials with a simple faith and live our lives in *bhakti* to God. I see no other way.

"There can be no *jnana* without a guru" is a golden maxim. But it is very difficult to find a guru, and it would not be proper toaccept any person as a guru in the absence of a good one and so drown ourselves right in the middle of our voyage across this ocean of life. A guru is one who will help us to swim across. How can a man who knows no swimming save others? Even if such swimmers exist in modern times, they are not a common sight.

Let us now examine *varnashrama.* I have always believed that there are no more than four *varnas*[2]. I believe that one acquires one's caste by birth. One who is born in a Brahmin family dies a Brahmin. If he becomes a non-Brahmin through his qualities of character, his Brahmins body does not cease to be such. A Brahmins who does not follow the Brahmin's dharma may be born, according to his deserts, as a Sudra, or even as an animal. A Vaisya like me who follows the dharma of a Brahmins and of a Kshatriya, if he has to be born again, may well be a Brahmins or a Kshatriyas in the next birth. So far as this life is concerned, he will remain but a Vaisya,

[1] Sacred books prescribing detailed rules for personal conduct and social life; considered as of derivative authority in contrast with *shruti*, revealed literature

[2] Castes

and rightly so. From time to time persons belonging to other faiths have been absorbed by Hinduism, but they were not known as Hindus during their lifetime. The Hindu world is like a sea. All refuse that finds its way into its bosom gets purified, settles down. This has happened again and again. People from Italy, Greece and elsewhere came in and were absorbed by Hinduism, but they were not converted by anyone to Hinduism. Merely in course of ages, the numbers have risen and fallen. Unlike Christianity or Islam, Hinduism does not invite persons of other faiths to join its fold; it enjoins all to follow their own religions. Sister Nivedita[1], for instance, embraced Hinduism but we do not think of her as a Hindu, nor do we boycott or slight her in any way. There is no question of anybody embracing Hinduism. Everybody can practise Hinduism.

Varnashrama is a law. The practical question is the caste system. Castes are subject to increase and decrease [in number]. They come into existence and they disappear. Only the man himself can leave Hinduism, though he may be expelled from the caste. Excommunication by the caste is a mode of punishment and ought to be available to every community.

It is certainly necessary that the numerous castes should become fewer, and this can be brought about by the councils of the various castes without injury to Hinduism. If the various divisions of *Vanias* merge together and their members marry among themselves, will not harm religion in any way.

The rules which people observe in regard to food, water and marriage are not essential features of Hinduism but, because self-control has been given special importance in Hinduism, restrictions have been laid down, even to the smallest detail in regard to these matters. I do not think that they deserve to be condemned, but, at the same time, I would not regard a person who does not observe them as having transgressed dharma. Not to have water or food or enter into matrimonial alliance anywhere and everywhere, I regard as civilized behaviour. This ensures preservation of health and purity. But I believe that not accepting food or water at anybody's place through contempt is opposed to Hinduism. It is my view, based on experience, that the prohibition as to dining with or marrying a person of another *varna* or another religion is an essential protective fence for its culture put up by Hinduism.

[1] Margaret E. Nobel, a follower of Vivekananda

Why do I, then, dine even at the homes of Muslims? I do so because, even when dining with them, I am able to observe the utmost self-restraint. Among cooked articles, I go so far as to take bread, because the process of baking bread is absolutely clean and just as pop-corn can always be taken, no matter where roasted, similarly bread (not *rotli)* can be taken wherever it may have been baked. But my co-workers do not observe even this restriction and eat any articles, otherwise acceptable, in the home of a Muslim or of a person belonging to a caste other than their own, if the articles are prepared hygienically. In doing so, they run the risk of being expelled from their caste, but they do not cease to be Hindus. The Ashram follows a kind of dharma appropriated to sannyasis. There a new caste or a new code of conduct, suitable to the present age and in conformity with Hinduism, is being formed. I look upon this effort as an experiment. If it succeeds, it will be treated as worthy of adoption. If it fails, it will have harmed no one. Even those engaged in the experiment will not be harmed, because the basis of the experiment is self-control. The aim is to be able to carry on the work of service with ease and to see that unlike at present, when religion has come to be confined to rules about eating and drinking, the conventions in those matters are kept in their proper and subordinate place.

Now remains the issue of untouchability. Nobody can trace the origin of this practice. I have merely ventured guesses. They may be right or wrong. But even a blind man can see that the practice of untouchability is contrary to dharma. Only, in the same way as the *atman's* inhabiting [the body] for ages prevents us from knowing it, the long existence of the practice of untouchability does not permit us to see the *adharma* inherent in it. To make any persons crawl on their stomach, to segregate them, to drive them to live on the outskirts of the village, not to be concerned whether they live or die, to give them food left over by others—all this certainly cannot be religion. We are inflicting upon untouchables an outrage grosser than that in the Punjab against which we have been protesting. That an untouchable cannot live in our neighbourhood and cannot own land, that an untouchable must, on seeing us, shout: "Please keep at a distance, do not touch me," and should not be permitted to sit with us in the train—this is not Hinduism. This is Dyerism. There is no self-control in the practice of untouchability. An analogy has been cited in justification of it, viz., that a mother, after removing stools, does not touch anything without taking a bath. But in this instance the mother

herself does not wish to touch anything and, if we sought to enforce such a rule in respect *of Bhangis,* nobody will object. By treating Bhangis and others as untouchables, we only tolerate filth and breed diseases. If we look upon untouchables as touchables, we shall see to it that that limb of ours remains clean.

I have found the homes of *Bhangis* far cleaner than many *Vaishnava* houses. I have been astonished at the truthfulness, simplicity, kindness and such other qualities in some of them. It is my conviction that we have fallen because of the entry into Hinduism of the demon of untouchability, and have, in consequence, also become powerless to ensure the protection of mother cow. So long as we have not rid ourselves of this Dyerism, we have no right to ask that we should be freed from the Dyerism of the British.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-2-1921

161. SPEECH AT PATNA[1]

February 6, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi spoke sitting. He was ashamed to say that he had forgotten that Maulana Mazharul Haq and he were together in England and that they returned to India by the same boat.[2] He remembered the fact when he was reminded of it. But he was glad that ever since his return to India from South Africa his friendship with Maulana Haq had gone or increasing and in fact he regarded his house in Patna as his home. If it was true, as he had told them, that in the matter of Khilafat he had raised his voice before others, he had but done his duty. As he was a staunch Hindu and wanted to live his religion he had realized that he must be friends with Mussulmans, stand by their religion and defend it as if it was his own. He wanted to assure them again that he would not rest satisfied till the Khilafat wrong was satisfactorily settled even though he had to give his life in the attempt. Maulana Haq had told them that in opening the National College they were laying the foundation of swaraj. The college had been already opened by his friend Mr. Haq and he was there to perform but the formal ceremonial. When he saw the students that morning praying in solemn earnestness the question came to his mind if they had anything of the kind in any Government college and he thought that the right kind of feeling was coming over them. He had to open both the National College and the National University. The Vidyapith would be their National University, it would be the machinery which would

[1] Delivered at the opening ceremony of the Bihar National University and the National College, Patna

[2] In 1891

regulate the teaching in the National institutions in the province, prescribe the syllabus and would generally control national education. They had selected Maulana Haq as Chancellor, Babu Braja Kishore Prasad as the Vice-chancellor and B[abu] Rajendra Prasad as their Principal and Registrar. The members of the Provincial College Education Committee[1] would be the senators and out of them they would constitute a syndicate. He wanted all of them to realize their great cause in which they were working and he was glad to find that all the professors and others connected with their institutions were genuine, earnest Bihar workers. Babu Braja Kishore and Babu Rajendra Prasad were as brothers to him and he had lived with them and worked with them for months in Champaran[2] a time when not many were willing to go and join them. He was sure that with them at the helm, the work of their institution would be carried on with enthusiasm, for he was certain that they were men who would gladly give their lives for the work. To the professors he wanted to say that they must live up to the ideal of their old *rishis*, in consonance with their great ancient civilization, and if they did that they might rest assured that the foundation of swaraj had been truly laid in the founding of their institution. Referring to students he said that Kalidas had once observed that a guru could give only as much as the neophyte could take. Education was a manifestation of the enlightenment they received within and it was the function of the guru to bring out what was within the student, and he hoped that the students in the College would so live and learn at the hands of their teachers that the institution might be an example to the country.

In the prayer read out to them by Pandey Jagannath Prasadjee he had seen the key of the work they were doing—to get into truth, into light from darkness, into life from a sort of death. This was non-co-operation and the attainment by them of swaraj was the sign of their emerging into the light. By co-operating with their present hypocritical Government they had become as it were contaminated and had become partners in its crimes. They had done so so far because they were equally sinful, but even then they had believed in and feared God. And the conviction having at last dawned on them that the Government was wrong and its system vicious, they had come to the decision that they could not co-operate with it till it was completely transformed. He hated neither the Empire nor those who sustained it; he was out to uproot the system. He had hatred for none and entertained for them nothing but sentiments of love. But even if his father and his brother had acted in the manner the Government had done he would have felt it his duty to have nothing to do with them. If a son lived with a Satanic father he became by that fact partner of his sire's guilt and no religion sanctioned this partnership even between a father and his son. The divine injunction was clear and imperative-to cease co-operation even with their near and dear ones if they were sinful.

The first mission of the University therefore would be to teach the ideal of non-co-operation and to emphasize its basic principle, absolute non-violence. The

[1] Of the Congress organization in Bihar
[2] In 1917

speaker then referred to the picketing by students in Calcutta and other similar forms of pressure brought by them on their friends who did not like to join them. He said he had been pained to hear of the treatment meted out to men like Messrs Shastri[1] and Paranjapye[2] Bombay, who, he wanted to tell them, were real, sincere patriots. If they were enemies of India, he (Mr. Gandhi) could not be its friend. They honestly believed that the future of the country would be advanced by co-operation with the Government and were convinced that he (Mr. Gandhi) was misleading the country. Such differences of opinion were bound to exist but these could never mean that they were not patriots but enemies of the country. It was none of the business of the students to cry shame on them and refuse to give them a respectful hearing. It would have been in keeping with their ancient culture to listen to their advice with respect and attention. It was an English practice to obstruct meetings, howl down speakers and even throw stones at them. Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Churchill had been in their time howled down and stoned. But this was a habit foreign to their culture and their civilization and they must give it up if they were really earnest in carrying on the non-co-operation movement to a successful end. Cries of "shame" could never never win friends, make their opponents their supporters. They could transform them into their friends in time only if they loved and treated them with respect.

He hoped the University would not devote its energy merely to adding to the store of their literary knowledge, but that its principal function would be to inculcate in the minds of the young men the principles of their civilization, to inspire them with an earnest and genuine aspiration for freedom. The first thing they had to do was to unlearn a great deal of what they had hither to learnt and seek to live up to their great ancient culture. If one of their lawyer friends refused to give up his practice it was not for them to call upon him to explain why he had not done what Mr. Haq has done. There was a vakil in Jharia, whom he asked in joke to give up his practice. Mr. Mahomed Ali repeated the request and the result was that by then he would have given up his practice. But if he did not, he was by no means the enemy of the country. His heart was as genuine as theirs. If out of honest difference of opinion or for want of sufficient courage any of their friends were unable to join them that day they could not be regarded as objects of their hate.

Referring to the charkha he said that its significance should not be minimized. With the spinning of the charkha was bound up the solution of the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs and they could be true soldiers of the country only when they took to spinning in right earnest. Even the uneducated could do so but he wanted the educated among them to take to it, and realize for themselves that the greater the quantity of the thread they produced, the greater would be the advance of the country. So far they had loosened their tongue; he wanted them now to stretch their hands, not, however,

[1] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri

[2] R. P. Paranjapye, educationist and Liberal politician; Minister of Educations, Government of Bombay, 1921-23; member; India Council; appointed High Commissioner in Australia in 1944

with the sword but for the charkha. If they could see to it that not one Indian used any cloth manufactured in foreign countries and of yarn made in foreign lands they could begin to realize their strength and feel that they were going to win swaraj. The speaker then referred to some jewellery presented to him by little girls and said many ladies had promised to spin in Bengal. The daughters of Mr. Justice P. R. Das[1] had taken to spinning and to wearing khaddar cloth. Girls and young married women in Bengal had come to him and told him that they could not use jewellery for they were atpresent in a state of widowhood without swaraj. He wanted to realize the present situation even as these girls and young ladies had realized it. The speaker then announced that during his recent visit to Jharia he was able to secure Rs. 60,000 for their National University mostly from Gujaratis, Bengalis and Marwaris, and Rs. 2,000 for the same purpose from a Bangali zemindar of Katras. The donors were mostly non-Biharees and yet they had given him the magnificent sum because they had begun to realize that the National University, though founded in Bihar, would work for the nation. He almost wept—though he suppressed it as they had to be brave at the present moment—when little girls came to him with their jewellery and he hoped they would make themselves as pure as these girls. He prayed to God that their National University would flourish and prosper and remain an everlasting monument of the enthusiastic labour of all those who worked for it. With an appeal for funds the speaker concluded his speech.

The Searchlight, 9-2-1921

162. SPEECH ON NON-VIOLENCE, PATNA[2]

February 6, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi then rose amidst deafening cheers and said that he did not want to detain them longer. After the speech of Maulana Mahomed Ali there was nothing left for him to say. Whatever had fallen from his lips was right, well and good. His path was the path of non-violence, of ahimsa. He would not kill one who considered himself to be his enemy. His brother Maulana Mahomed Ali believed in the contrary faith. But in spite of this difference they were living like the sons of one mother. Wherever they went, whatever side they turned, the three (himself, Maulanas Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali) preached only non-violence. If they did not maintain non-violence they were sure to lose their case. In them there was no strength left for taking to the sword. He believed that he would be able to win swaraj, in other words what he called *Ramarajya* or *Dharmarajya,* through non-violence alone. He condemned strongly the action of those who take to abusing and coercing, hat looting, etc., and said that if the attainment of swaraj was being delayed it was because they had not learnt well the lesson of non-violence or ahimsa.

[1] Brother of C. R. Das; Judge of the High Court at Patna

[2] Delivered at a public meeting held in the afternoon, in Madrassa Mosque grounds

Mr. Mahomed Ali did well in calling upon Mr. Hassan Imam and an old European professor of his. He wanted to win them over by persuasion and love and he believed that they would come round soon. Referring to the awakening amongst the villages he said that the spirit which had come in them, the strength which they had acquired, must be kept up. They must not use any kind of violence in dissuading them from the evils of intemperance. They could do away with the evils simply by non-co-operation with them, by not taking or giving any kind of help to them. If any Mussulman converted anyone to Islam by force he would fight with them in the same way as he was fighting with the Government. If his son took to drinking wine, instead of beating him, he would ask him to get out of his house, would stop all help to him, and thus he would make him give up the habit. He in fact had no right to use any kind of violence against him. So if they all understood that perfectly, if they all acted up to it, there was no doubt that they would be able to win swaraj by September next. The land of Bihar he always considered to be very sacred. He had spent many days[1] amongst the agriculturists in Champaran. It would be a great pain to him if any violence was done anywhere.

The Searchlight, 9-2-1921

163. TELEGRAM TO KHWAJA ABDUL MAJID[2]

GORAKHPUR,
February 8, 1921

KHWAJA
BARRISTER
ALIGARH

IF FAIR ORGANIZED UNDER GOVERNMENT PATRONAGE WE SHOULD BOYCOTT. OTHERWISE ONLY FOREIGN GOODS.

GANDHI

From a copy: A. M. Khwaja Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

164. NOTES

ABUSING THE KHADDAR

A friend draws attention to the fact that many who have adopted the khaddar costume are using it as a passport for arrogance, insolence, and, what is worse, fraud. He says that they have neither the

[1] In 1917 during the Champaran Satyagraha

[2] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram which read: "Your decision solicited whether public should boycott local fair or only foreign goods therein."

spirit of non-co-operation in them nor the spirit of truth. They simply use the khaddar dress as a cloak for their deceit. All this is likely, especially during the transition stage, i.e., whilst khaddar is beginning to become fashionable. I would only suggest to my correspondent that such abuse of khaddar must not even unconsciously be allowed to be used as an argument against its use. Its use today is obligatory on those who believe that there is not sufficient Indian mill-made cloth to supply the wants of the nation, that the wants must be supplied in the quickest way possible by increasing home manufacture, and that such manufacture is possible only by making home-spinning universal. The use of khaddar represents nothing more than a most practical recognition of the greatest economic necessity of the country. Even a scoundrel may recognize this necessity, and has, therefore, a perfect right to wear it. And if a Government spy wore it to deceive people, I would welcome his use of khaddar as so much economic gain to the country. Only I would not give the wearer of the khaddar more than his due. And I would therefore not ascribe to him any piety or special virtue. It follows, therefore, that co-operationists or Government servants may wear khaddar without incurring the danger of being mistaken for non-co-operationists. We may no more shun khaddar than a devout church-goer may renounce his church because bad characters go to it for duping gullible people. I recall the name of an M. P. who successfully cloaked many of his vices by pretending to be a staunch temperance man. Not very long ago a bold and unscrupulous speculator found entry into most respectable circles by becoming a temperance advocate. Well has a poet said that "hypocrisy is an ode to virtue."

AN APOLOGY

I must apologize to the reader for the article on the East African Despatch[1] under Mr. Adwani's name. It gives a view which is not borne out by its contents. The language is needlessly offensive. Whilst I condemn the existing system of Government in severe language, I will not be knowingly guilty of pronouncing unmerited condemnation upon it. The Despatch is an honest attempt to do justice to the Indians of East Africa. It is true that it has been renderedpossible by the awakening in India. But that, too, is a credit to the Government that it is responsive to public opinion when its own

[1] Of the Government of India to the Home Government vigorously protesting against the policy of racial disability and racial segregation in East Africa

existence is not at stake. It is true also that it still betrays a language of patronage. But that is only to be expected until Englishmen have begun to regard themselves not as our trustees but as equal partners. Whilst I offer this apology to the reader and the Government, I do not wish to be unfair to my assistant. Mr. Adwani is a sincere and devoted assistant. He endeavours to write calmly and dispassionately. But he is young, ambitious and inexperienced. Like everyone of us he labours under the handicap of having to write his thoughts in a foreign tongue. The mistakes such as his are inevitable. I offer the apology because I want to avoid being understood as approving of everything written by my assistant, or other contributors. I am anxious to be impartial and fair in conducting *Young India*.

Young India, 9-2-1921

165. THE GREATEST THING

It is to be wished that non-co-operationists will clearly recognize that nothing can stop the onward march of the nation as violence. Ireland may gain its freedom by violence. Turkey may regain her lost possessions by violence within a measurable distance of time. But India cannot win her freedom by violence for a century, because her people are not built in the manner of other nations. They have been nurtured in the traditions of suffering. Rightly or wrongly, for good or ill, Islam too has evolved along peaceful lines in India. And I make bold to say that, if the honour of Islam is to be vindicated through its followers in India, it will only be by methods of peaceful, silent, dignified, conscious, and courageous suffering. The more I study that wonderful faith, the more convinced I become that the glory of Islam is due not to the sword but to the sufferings, the renunciation, and the nobility of followers, its early Caliphs. Islam decayed when its followers mistaking the evil for the good, dangled the sword in the face of man, and lost sight of the godliness, the humility, and the austerity of its founder and his disciples. But I am not, at the present moment, concerned with showing that the basis of Islam, as of all religions, is not violence but suffering, not the taking of life but the giving of it.

What I am anxious to show is that non-co-operationists must be true as well to the spirit as to the letter of their vow if they would gain swaraj within one year. They may forget non-co-operation but they

dare not forget non-violence. Indeed, non-co-operation is non-violence. We are violent when we sustain a Government whose creed is violence. It bases itself finally not on right but on might. Its last appeal is not to reason, nor the heart, but to the sword. We are tired of this creed and we have risen against it. Let us not ourselves belie our profession by being violent. Though the English are few, they are organized for violence. Though we are many, we cannot be organized for violence for a long time to come. Violence for us is a gospel of despair.

I have seen a pathetic letter from a god-fearing Englishwoman who defends Dyerism for she thinks that, if General Dyer had not enacted Jallianwala, women and children would have been murdered by us. If we are such brutes as to desire the blood of innocent women and children, we deserve to be blotted out from the face of the earth. There is the other side. It did not strike this good lady that, if we were fiends, the price that her countrymen paid at Jallianwala for buying their safety was too great. They gained their safety at the cost of their humanity. General Dyer has been haltingly blamed, and his evil genius, Sir Michael O'Dwyer, entirely exonerated because Englishmen do not want to leave this country of fiends even if every one of us has to be killed. If we go mad again as we did at Amritsar, let there be no mistake that a blacker Jallianwala will be enacted.

Shall we copy Dyerism and O'Dwyerism even whilst we are condemning it? Let not our rock be violence and devilry. Our rock must be non-violence and godliness. Let us, workers, be clear as to what we are about. *Swaraj depends upon our ability to control all the forces of violence on our side.* Therefore, there is no swaraj within one year if there is violence on the part of the people.

We must then refrain from sitting *dharna,* we must refrain from crying 'shame, shame' to anybody, we must not use any coercion to persuade our people to adopt our way. We must guarantee to them the same freedom we claim for ourselves. We must not tamper with the masses. It is dangerous to make political use of factory labourers or the peasantry—not that we are not entitled to do so, but we are not ready for it. We have neglected their political (as distinguished from literary) education all these long years. We have not got enough honest, intelligent, reliable and brave workers to enable us to act upon these countrymen of ours.

Young India, 9-2-1921

166. A MUNICIPAL ENTERPRISE

The reader will find elsewhere the text[1] of the correspondence between the municipality of Nadiad and the Government of Bombay as represented by the Collector of the District of Kaira in which Nadiad is situated. Nadiad is an important town in Gujarat with a population of about 35,000. Its municipality has an elected chairman and contains a majority of elected members. Nadiad is noted for its educational activity and has the honour of having produced some of the best educated sons of Gujarat. The town has two high schools. Its aided high school has been nationalized. The municipality runs several primary schools which instruct over five thousand children.

The question before the citizens was to nationalize all the primary schools. The ratepayers, instead of withdrawing the children from these schools, passed a resolution calling upon the municipality to nationalize the primary schools. They were in receipt of a yearly grant of Rs. 21,000 and were naturally under the control and supervision of the Education Department. The municipality therefore resolved in accordance with the instructions of the electors to nationalize the schools and informed the Government accordingly. It will be noticed that the municipality in its proceedings has directly referred to the Congress resolution on non-co-operation and has adopted this bold policy in furtherance of the attainment of swaraj.

There was the technical point about the municipality's statutory obligation to conduct schools under the direct supervision of the Government. On this the municipality's attitude is thus stated:

> It is in complete symapthy with the movement of non-co-operation designed for the attainment, among other things, of full swaraj and so long as this municipality remains in existence, it will be its bounden duty to help the people of Nadiad in achieving the national purpose . . . So far as the legal difficulty is concerned, it is respectfully suggested that Sec. 58, if it runs counter to the express wish of the residents of Nadiad, must automatically remain in abeyance because if the Board correctly understands the temper of the people of Nadiad, they are clearly determined to have nothing to do with Government control over the education of the children, and it need hardly be pointed out that the Board is in full sympathy with the determination of the people.

[1] Not reproduced here

No one can take exception to the admirable spirit of the people or the correctness of the attitude of the municipality. Of course the Government may, if it dare, disband the municipality. But any such disbandment must be futile if the ratepayers are determined not to have Government control over the education of their children. This is a peaceful revolution on a small scale. The success of the movement is due to the cohesion of the people and their ability to manage and finance the education of their children. Violence being eschewed, the people of Nadiad are able to give an education in swaraj to their children. What is true of the municipality regarding the education of the children is true of the whole of India in every other respect.

When the people have one mind, ability of management, and recognize the necessity of non-violence, if only as a business proposition, swaraj is won. Finance is a matter of little consideration. For the Government does not bring money from heaven. It receives, to paraphrase an expressive Gujarati saying, an anvil weight of metal and returns a needle weight. And the pity and the disgrace of it is that even with that niggardly donation, it imprisons and emasculates the tender mind of the nation. Were it not for self-delusion, we would at least refuse to be party to the ruin of our own children. The municipality of Nadiad has shown how easy the whole process of nationalization of education is. Lala Daulat Ram's articles have shown how easy the question of finance is, and how the ordinary fees are almost enough to conduct all our educational institutions. I hope that the object-lesson given by the municipality of Nadiad will not be lost upon other municipalities similarly situated.

Young India, 9-2-1921

167. TELEGRAM TO SHAUKAT ALI

February 9, 1921

PLEASE WIRE BENARES[1] DESCRIPTION BEHAVIOUR BOMBAY STUDENTS TOWARDS SHASTRI KANJI[2]. WE MUST PREVENT THESE SCENES AND DISSOCIATE OURSELVES THEREFROM.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1921, p. 157

[1] Gandhiji was in Banaras on February 9 and 10.

[2] Kanji Dwarkadas, a public worker of Bombay

168. SPEECH AT TOWN HALL, BANARAS[1]

February 9, 1921

BROTHERS,

My brother Mahomed Ali and I have both come to you today. You will be setting up a Vidyapith here. We have come to take part in its inauguration. Our brother Maulana Abul Kalam Azad has also come with the same purpose. I will not take away your time for something else. I only want to tell you all that our *shakti*[2] is increasing day by day. And along with it our responsibility is increasing and also our sense of fear. We have to decide how we are to set about our work. If, conscious of our increased *shakti* we want to go forward, we must be clear about how the increase has come about. The only explanation is that we pursue *shanti*[3]. Brother Shaukat Ali is fond of saying that the increase in our *shakti* is to be ascribed to our cool courage. If in anger or excitement we were to draw the sword we might cut our own throat or that of the Englishman. This would only make us weak. This is a battle that calls for cool courage and peaceful methods. Get ready for this battle. If in this battle we draw the sword and cut the throat either of the Englishman or of our own brother it will only bring about our downfall. What have the Fyzabad peasants done? In frenzy they looted shops and the property of their own brothers.[4] That was our downfall. The Government is aware that we have started a great campaign, that we have resolved to mend or end this regime. Even then the Government, mighty as it is, says nothing. Why? Because the Government sees that we are working peaceably, that we have made it a matter of religion. So the Government can do nothing against us. If we take up arms today its power will begin to increase. If we want to see an end to the Punjab atrocities, if we want to see justice done in the matter of Khilafat, if we want to secure swaraj, we must show cool courage. This and this alone will be the right way. I shall not be in the least sorry if lawyers do not give up their practice or students their schools and colleges, if people choose to go into the Councils, and if Government jobs and titles are not renounced; but it causes me great

[1] Delivered at a public meeting attended by nearly a hundred thousand people and presided over by Bhagwandas.

[2] Capacity

[3] Peace

[4] In January 1921 there were agrarian riots at Fyzabad and some other places in Uttar Pradesh.

pain if there is even a single killing, if the stick is brought into play or if someone swears at someone else, for it indicates waning of our power. I am extremely unhappy at the madness shown by the peasants of Fyzabad and the doings of the Bombay students. It was a great error on their part to have insulted Mr. Sastri and Mr. Paranjapye. Both are very able men and no less servants of the country than myself. No doubt there are differences between us but they are as proud of their service to the nation as I am of mine. I would not have been sorry if you had not gathered here today. But it would be painful if you indulged in rowdyism and created a noisy disturbance here. I cannot understand why such a thing happens. One should not come to a meeting with the intention of creating a disturbance there, and he who does this is no gentleman. I am compelled to say that the students of Bombay cast aside the decorum of their families and violated the instructions of the Congress and the Khilafat Committee. If you are in agreement with what I say, you should take a lesson from this. If you want to get someone to do your work and if he is unwilling to do it in the manner that would satisfy you, do not compel him. Remember the condition I have laid down. I want complete swaraj within a year, that is to say, by September. We can get that swaraj only by maintaining peace. Without this power it is impossible to achieve swaraj. People say: We do not want to disturb the peace, but the Government forces us to do so. I call this madness. If I tell you to give up your religion, will you do so? Never. Similarly if we are determined not to do something, how can the Government make us do it? Nothing should be done in anger; otherwise swaraj is impossible. I am prepared to give up everything—I shall not raise the question of lawyers, I shall leave students alone but I cannot give up peace. If we do not want foreign rule we should also give up foreign fashions of dress. And we must give up foreign cloth too. If we cannot do this, we shall not get swaraj in ten years, let alone one. We do not need numbers. The few that are making sacrifices are enough. Pandit Motilal Nehru, Mr. Das and Lala Lajpat Rai have given up legal practice. What more do we need? By and by, others will follow them. No coercion should be used against anyone. Let those only do it whose hearts respond. Students of Sanskrit ask me what their duty is. There is no question now about what one's duty is. The only duty is to give up Government schools and colleges. So long as our sufferings are not wiped out, Government schools are taboo. Spreading of swadeshi cloth is also an imperative need. For this we

must propagate the charkha. If students want to give up their schools and serve the country, they could do nothing better than this. They should forthwith take up the charkha. If five million students devote four hours daily to this work, every student can spin in four days enough yarn for a dhoti, so that all the students can together produce a million and a quarter dhotis in one day if they have all the material. What a great service it will be! You would then forget your meetings. I am rather tired of meetings. The experience I have gained from participating in these meetings is that we make use of our energy in strangling one another. What else can be expected where everyone is trying to take the place of everyone else? I have been observing this since September and I am upset. We cannot even keep peace at these meetings. At Gorakhpur the audience consisted of about one hundred and fifty thousand people and things went very peacefully. But this alone does not meet my needs. For that you must take up the charkha. The day we realize this meetings will no longer be necessary nor will anyone have time for them. If the time that is wasted in meetings were devoted to spinning how many of the naked would we not be able to clothe? Two things are necessary if we want swaraj in one year: to maintain peace and to give up foreign cloth. To do both successfully, we must take up the charkha. The need for meetings will cease the day you have grasped this. If you have understood the *mantra* of charkha, swaraj is at hand. If you have understood that non-co-operation has to be peaceful and if you have chosen it after due thought then remain peaceful. We can bend the Government, Persevere in work, Do not be frightened of jail. People who seek release of those who have gone to jail show cowardice and their fear of jail. We should go to jail cheerfully. We should regard the jail as a palace. It is our part to go to jail just as it is the Government's to send us to jail. If we shrink, the world will say that we only know how to talk and not how to act.

All this, of course, needs money. We need money for the charkha, for setting up educational institutions, for national work and for those who will be giving up legal practice. I cannot go back empty-handed from such a vast meeting as this. I shall beg. Please give what you can. Remember that if you take up the charkha and resolve to wear only the cloth that you yourselves make, we shall have swaraj in September.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 10-2-1921

169. MY NOTES

BLACK MIXING WITH WHITE

A friend writes[1]:

Every word of this criticism is justified. Whenever a reform is undertaken, there is always a danger of its being abused. So it is with khadi. I would certainly say that one cannot show perfect patriotism unless one uses khadi, but it cannot be denied, either, that a person wearing khadi can be a C.I.D.[2] man and that another not wearing khadi, either because he is too poor to do so or because he has not come to have faith in khadi, may yet be a patriot. Hence, we need not assume that a person wearing khadi is necessarily a patriot. We may believe that a person wearing khadi is likely to be a follower of swadeshi. It is enough if the aversion to khadi disappears and beauty is seen even in khadi. Just as it would not be right to attribute all virtues to khadi, so also we should not be shocked when a person wearing khadi disgraces khadi by his misbehaviour. Any kind of outward show must be eschewed, but the outward appearance must be a fit expression of the feelings within. Thus, anyone who is simple in mind will also be simple in dress, and he whose heart is devoted to swadeshi will have his dress made of khadi only. As long as there are fools and ignoramuses in the world, cheats will flourish. We should not, for that reason, allow ourselves to be cheated nor be afraid of cheats.

We have seen that just as khadi is being exploited, non-co-operation is also being exploited. Many even behave as if they had got a licence to abuse those who co-operate [with the Government] merely because they themselves had raised their hands in support of the non-co-operation resolution. Really speaking, exploiting khadi and non-co-operation pollutes this pure movement and delays the hour of freedom. In these wicked times, we find that, when we try to remove impurity from one place, it settles in some other place. Despite such difficulties, this is the only way left for anyone who has come to see the truth.

[1] The letter, not reproduced here, gave a warning against excessive importance being attached to khadi lest impostors in khadi dress should be at an advantage over honest people not wearing khadi.

[2] The Criminal Investigation Department

I have received many letters of advice on this subject. All of them cannot be published. They contain more of censure than of argument. Quite a few letters express ideas in agreement with mine. They certainly need not be published. It remains to convince those who argue on the opposite side. A young man writes to say that I have made an unfailing weapon like non-co-operation less effective by raising the question of the untouchables. He says that even if untouchables are not really such, this is not the proper time to raise this issue, that as a result of this one of the schools has chosen to go back to the Government; he adds, further, that in the end all the *sanatani* Hindus will go over to the side of the Government and take their revenge either on me or on non-co-operation. I have no such fear. The number of those who would cut off the nose to spite the face is never very large at any place. I believe that there are not many such in India. Among those who today oppose this movement are some who sincerely believe that Hinduism will perish if the untouchables are no more treated as untouchables. Gradually, they will realize that Hinduism has fallen on evil days because of its sanctioning the practice of untouchability. There is no genuine basis for this practice. Nevertheless, let us assume that the cause of non-co-operation suffers because of the movement for the abolition of untouchability. That means non-co-operation itself obstructs non-co-operation. Many persons used to argue that the non-co-operation movement would break down because of that part of the programme which related to lawyers and schools. The truth is that we cannot carry on non-co-operation to its ultimate conclusion as long as we cling to the practice of untouchability. Again, even if the *sanatani* Hindus support the Government so that they may continue with it, the non-co-operators will remain unafraid. The *sanatani* Hindus, too, think that the Government should be got rid of and denounce it. Today the Government itself is like an untouchable. How can the *sanatani* Hindus succeed in maintaining the practice of untouchability by touching that Government? If non-co-operation is a form of self-purification, we should intensify it without thinking of the consequences. Then, even if only one non-co-operator is left, we shall gain victory through him. Again, what needs to be pondered over is that, if we neglect the untouchables, not only shall we suffer for that sin but the Government also is sure to use them for its own ends.

Friend Sethna from Dabhol writes a long letter and says that the charge that the Parsis are not in the non-co-operation movement is not justified. He says that as the Parsis get convinced of the firmness of Hindus and Muslims, they will start joining the non-co-operation movement. I too believe the same. Nobody, certainly, can say that all Parsis remain aloof from non-co-operation. But, since the number of those who have joined is very small, they are not conspicuous. Speaking of the community as a whole, it is true that they have not joined [the movement]. If the non-co-operation go on making sacrifices peacefully, maintaining humility and adhering to truth, then the Parsis and all the others who have stayed out will positively join.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-2-1921

170. SPEECH AT FOUNDING OF KASHI VIDYAPITH, BANARAS[1]

February 10, 1921

BABU BHAGWANDAS, SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

There is in my heart a sorrow that I cannot hide from you. Before I came here I went to Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and asked him if he would attend this ceremony. He said no, it would be better for him not to. It is needless to tell you how close he is to me. Today he is not here with us. I cannot describe to you how sad it makes me not to see him here. But our struggle is such that we have to put up with such sorrow. The father has to bear the pain of separation from the son, the husband from the wife, the wife from the husband. Babu Bhagwandas has in very sweet words told us that ours is a righteous struggle. I have not the slightest doubt that it is so. Else I would never think of destroying an institution[2] whose life-breath is Malaviyaji. My heart says that it should either become mine or cease to be. I deem it a sin not to act in this way. Yesterday a number of students from Kanpur came to me. They have given up their studies. I

[1] This National University was established by Bhagwandas and Shivaprasad Gupta.

[2] The Benares Hindu University, which had not stopped taking the Government grant

asked them why they had done so. They answered that they would rather do some national work. I told them that it was not a good reason for giving up studies. I told them that it would have been better if they had given up studies because they considered it a sin to pursue them in institutions run with Government aid. They understood something of what I meant but their faces showed that a doubt still lingered in their hearts. For they said that only two months remained for the examinations and asked if it would not be all right if they took up non-co-operation after getting their degrees. I said no, it would not be right, for once we had become convinced that it was a sin to receive education in these institutions it would be proper to leave forthwith. This is non-co-operation. For years and years a snake has lain hidden under my bed. I was not aware of it. Today all of a sudden I discover it. I cannot stay in the bed any more. Even if my father forbids me to leave it, even if he curses me, I cannot remain in it. I cannot obey my father's command, for he does not know the situation. I cannot lie in peace in that bed. This is the attitude that should guide you in leaving schools and colleges. This is not the time to raise the question of examinations.

That is what I have to say to the students here. Yesterday I received a letter from my brother Andrews. He writes that, judging from the way this work has been going on, he has no hope of its success even in Gujarat which is my home. But he is sure about two places—Patna and Kashi. In Patna Babu Rajendra Prasad shoulders the burden; in Kashi it is Babu Bhagwandas. Everyone has full confidence that these two will not let the work languish. Babu Bhagwandas has done a lot of work for education. The workers in other provinces have greater political interest and so they take part in education work also. About Kashi and Patna I too am confident. But I wish to say in answer to Mr. Andrews that in other provinces also the work is being done out of interest that is religious, not political. We must set our hearts on making non-co-operation successful. The education that we require should also be such that the achievement of swaraj can come within a year. It is also to be considered how swaraj can be secured. Giving up of educational institutions run with Government aid is possible. People ask why we should not give up food grains available under the aegis of the Government. I agree that we should. But it is not easy. Education can be had elsewhere. Babu Bhagwandas has just recited the story of the abduction of Sita. We are not owners of the land. It is something that we cannot renounce. And

not to give up what cannot be given up may be excused. But education is not something that cannot be given up. Even if we do not get anything in its place we should leave the Government's educational institutions. What do the leaders of *this Ravanrajya* tell us today? They tell us that they want to keep us with them. Mr. Craddock from Burma says that we do not handle arms. We should tell these gentlemen that we do not wish to remain with them; that we have been with them against our will. The Ali Brothers say that if we cannot find here the pure-heartedness that is needed even for reciting the Koran we should do *hijrat,* i.e., that we should leave the country. Tulsidas also speaks of leaving a kingdom that is wicked. But we are not quite leaving it just yet. We shall give it a chance. We shall consider if there is no way to end it or mend it. If a way can be found, what need is there for the *hijrat* of 300 million people? A little effort is all that is needed. That is why this Vidyapith is being set up. We should not accept the sacred gift of education from soiled hands. We should not receive education in institutions patronized by the Government. It is sinful to study where the flag of the Government flies. If you too agree that it is sinful to study there, I invite you into this institution. But do not come here merely with the idea that the education there is faulty and you will get better education here. If you do so, you will repent. I realize that the education there is faulty. For one thing the medium of instruction there is English. English is not our mother tongue. Our mother tongue is Hindustani, which is spoken by 210 million people. We do not wish to install English as our mother tongue though we do not wish to give it up either. It is a most vigorous language. Its usage is highly developed. Learn it. Our mother tongue has lost its place, which has been usurped by another. And now we have to restore it to its place.

There are a number of other defects too. But we cannot wait till these defects are removed and a new system established. We cannot stay under a flag which our boys were forced into saluting[1]. Students, steady your hearts. If these institutions are to be shunned, then even the study of the *Gita* and the Koran there should be given up. You will not get here those huge mansions Here we have neither houses nor lands. But it is good to live and work in a thatched hut. It is bad to have to salute the Government flag [though living] in a palace. Every student who wishes to come forward should boldly declare: It is not

[1] During the Martial Law regime in the Punjab, in 1919

my function to improve educational institutions; I have no time for it. If [new] teaching institutions are started, education will automatically be cleansed. If I come here it is because non-co- operation has found its way into the hearts of Babu Bhagwandas and Babu Shivprasad. This institution has been founded for the furtherance of non-co-operation. For us non-co-operation alone is shastra. Other knowledge—metaphysical or religious—is not shastra. There is no place here for selfish knowledge. We want to do away with it or raise it into something higher. If we do service today it is out of selfishness, with the desire to make our wives and children happy. We must serve the nation. Let us all work for the nation. We do not want to indulge in the gambling that is trade. We shall turn India into a *punyabhumi*[1]. Every year a sum of Rs. 60 crore goes from here to foreign countries as the price of cloth. I shall tell you the way to stop this. We can install Sita (land)[2] here after we bring her from Lanka, but we have to stop this stripping of Draupadi.[3] It is not possible at once to make the land our own, but we should not let them deprive us of cloth. We should solemnly declare that it is a sin to wear foreign cloth. Both Hindus and Muslims can easily understand this because to both self-control and sacrifice are matters of religion. Using foreign cloth is a sin. Our first duty is to ply the charkha. Those who run this institution will remember this. We can save Rs. 60 crore with the aid of students. And we must save it. It is up to the students to do it. It will purify our economic life.

Our next duty is to develop our mother tongue. It is a shame not to be able to read or write it. Assimilate into the mother tongue what you have learned through English. Hindus and Muslims have to learn the way of service. We have to learn both Devanagari and Urdu scripts. We have to make current a Hindi in which there is a mingling of both Sanskrit and Urdu elements, and through which Hindus and Muslims can enter each other's hearts. The English say that this unity is only apparent, that Hindus and Muslims can never unite, that the basis of even this apparent unity is only self-interest and they will

[1] Land of virtue

[2] Sita, in the *Ramayana*, was born of the earth and is thus a symbol of it.

[3] The words "of Draupadi" are from the report in the *Kashi Vidyapith Panchang*. The allusion is to the incident in the Mahabharata where Duryodhana, having won Draupadi in a game of dice from Yudhishthira, attempted to humiliate her by getting her stripped.

again fall apart as soon as this is served. But this is nonsense. If Hindus and Muslims are determined to protect their unity, this cannot be. The teacher can draw the pupil. Babu Bhagwandas is one who can certainly do so. Everyone in India knows how learned he is. In fact at the time of the founding of the national university in Gujarat I requested him to come to Gujarat for a time. He is your Principal. I can pray to him with humility. Kripalani[1] is my younger brother. I have a right to command him. There are others whose names BabuBhagwandas has mentioned but whom I do not myself know. It is my prayer to them that they should so transform Kashi that the whole of India may look up to it. We have to steal Malaviyaji's heart. Malaviyaji has told me that he will leave the Hindu University if he is convinced that it is right to do so. He argues that leaving it will do India harm. All of you will now adorn this new institution. And the *yajna* will now proceed more efficiently and more swiftly. Our revered brother Malaviyaji will also come to see things more clearly. If Hindus and Muslims unite to work here we shall have swaraj through you. That is why I asked Shivprasad and Jawaharlal to let me inaugurate this institution with my hand. I have explained my hopes to you. I pray to God that this institution may flourish from day to day and take its share in ending or mending this *rakshasi* regime.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 11-2-1921

171. SPEECH AT FYZABAD

February 10, 1921

Mr Gandhi spoke sitting on a chair placed on a raised platform. He apologized for this, expressed appreciation of Mr. Kedar Nath, who was arrested,[2] and said the arrest was a test of that man and of the people, made by Government in order to cow them down and to release Mr. Kedar Nath if he agreed to abandon agitation.

He next dwelt upon the agrarian disturbances and deplored the action of the kisans who committed violence.... Mr. Gandhi condemned violence most strongly

[1] J. B. Kripalani, then a professor of history, had left the Benares Hindu University and joined the National University, Banaras.

[2] In connection with the agrarian disturbances in some parts of Uttar Pradesh in January 1921

and unequivocally, and said that he considered it a sin against God and man. He deprecated all attempts to create discord between landlords and tenants and advised the tenants to suffer rather than fight, for they had to join all forces for fighting against the most powerful zemindar, namely, the Government. He exhorted the people to purify their soul, to banish fear and to march on with stout hearts and fearlessness.

Recalling his South African passive resistance campaign and the success which attended it he condemned the sword procession at the station.[1] Violence. he said, was a sign of unmanliness. Thirty crores of souls, he said, were a power and could bring about swaraj, without violence, by non-co-operation. The sword was described as a weapon of the weak. He pleaded for organization, the adoption of the spinning-wheel and for funds. About students leaving Government colleges and schools, he said boys over sixteen should do so even against their parents' wishes. Swaraj was attainable in seven months, he said, *by shanti,* the spinning-wheel, non-co-operation and money, and appealed for funds.

The Leader, 13-2-1921

172. LETTER T0 MANIBEHN PATEL[2]

DELHI,
February 12, 1921

CHI. MANI,

I got your letter. I was very much pleased. You two, brother[3] and sister, spinning for half an hour daily will not bring swaraj. If you come to like the work, make it a point to spin for four hours every day. With practice you will acquire proficiency in spinning.

Shri Das is not at present in a position to go there. Keep writing to me. Let me know what books you have been reading.

Blessings from
BAPU

PS.

I have to be constantly on the move these days. Today I am in Delhi. I have still to go to the Punjab, thence to Lucknow and after that to Bezwada. So I don't know when I shall be back in

[1] Mohammedan volunteers who had come to receive Gandhiji at the railway station had lined up at the gate, armed with naked swords.

[2] Daughter of Vallabhbhai Patel

[3] Dahyabhai

Ahmedabad. Tell father that he should start preparations for the Congress.[1]

CHI. MANIBEHN
C/O VALLABHBHAI PATEL, BAR-AT-LAW
BHADRA, AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne

173. SWARAJ WILL BE DELAYED

I feel ashamed even to pen such a heading. But the incidents that took place in Poona and Bombay and the things I witness in the course of my tours have forced these words from me. Those who looted shops in Bihar and those who did not allow Shastriar and Paranjapye to speak[2] have put back the clock of freedom; they practised untruth in the name of truth; pledged to preserve peace, they spread disorder; they justified Shastriar's fears. If Shastriar and others get convinced that India can really fight a peaceful war, they would forthwith become non-co-operators and, if the whole of India takes to non-co-operation immediately, freedom would be ours this day.

Even if the lawyers do not give up practice, the students do not leave Government schools and the title-holders do not relinquish their titles, even then, I see freedom can be won immediately. If, however, peace is disturbed, we cannot win freedom or, at any rate, cannot win it within one year.

Shri Shastriar and others sincerely believe that the non-co-operation movement only harms the country. If they believe so, how are they to blame? We cannot correct this wrong idea of theirs by force, nor by unmannerly behaviour.

Those who violate peace are enemies of the country, for they give the most effective co-operation to the Government. The Government knows how to put down violence. It would certainly be defeated if we could employ greater strength of arms than it can; if, however, we try to overcome it with force of a kind it does not possess at all, then we can achieve our goal in the shortest possible time and

[1] The 36th session of the Congress was to be held at Ahmedabad in December 1921.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Patna", February 6, 1921.

we shall not have to learn anything from it. Even a child will be intelligent enough to understand this.

Non-co-operation can succeed only when we can demonstrate its magic to large numbers. That magic can be worked only through peace. Just as darkness can be dispelled only by light, so we shall be able to vanquish the Government's armed might only by non-violent non-co-operation.

So far, I have dwelt only on the general principle. What, then, should a non-co-operator do in such circumstances? If we cannot stop the rowdyism in such meetings, we had better not attend any of them. When the first cry of "shame" was heard in Shastriar's meeting, if those who did not approve of this in civility had left forthwith, maybe only a few persons would have remained in the meeting, shouting "shame", but then the non-co-operators would have been spared the blame. We are not bound to attend anybody's meeting but, if we do attend, we are bound to preserve, and see that others preserve, civil manners.

But should we be blamed if the Government's own agents create rowdyism? The blame is ours to the extent that we fail to curb it. A soldier Will not be dismayed by the ditches and rocks that obstruct his way but will continue to march forward, filling up theditches and levelling the rocks. The Government rules over us because it has the strength to defeat our tactics. When we are able to defeat all its plots, we shall rule over it. If the Government's own spies come to meetings for breaking them up, we should leave the field clear for them. We should quietly leave the meeting. Peaceful non-co-operation is so pure a weapon that the slightest impurity which gets into it cannot escape notice. Its edge is so sharp that it can cut through the hardest object. Hence there is no weapon as effective as this one. And yet its use is so easy that it can be explained even to a child. Wherever anything is to be "done", experience and training are required. Non-co-operation means "not doing". It takes years to make a child master letters, but to ask it to write nothing is easily done. A really obedient child can of itself understand what should not be done, likewise, a sincere non-co-operator who has faith in non-co-operation can understand without any training what things should not be done. And wisdom and strength come only from a sacrifice made with such understanding. Even if India wants to learn the use of arms, it will

have to learn how to preserve peace and to employ non-co-operation.

Therefore, workers who may read this article should pay attention to the following general points:

When there is the slightest apprehension of disorder in a meeting of co-operators, they should not attend it and they should dissuade other non-co-operators from doing so. They should make efforts on every occasion to train people along these lines.

Nothing more can be said to persuade lawyers and students; if, therefore, we give training to those who have already left [practice or studies], their character and their fearlessness will induce others to do likewise of their own accord.

Now the non-co-operators need to go into the midst of the artisan class. We shall progress by thus serving every section of society.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-2-1921

174. SPEECH AT OPENING OF TIBBI COLLEGE[1]*, DELHI*

February 13, 1921

HAKIMJI AND FRIENDS,

It was not without reluctance that I agreed to perform the ceremony of declaring this great institution formally open. I know that had it not been for the unfortunate estrangement created between the Government and ourselves, His Excellency the present Viceroy[2] would have been requested to open an institution whose foundation stone was laid by his predecessor[3]. You will naturally appreciate my embarrassment in finding myself a substitute for so exalted a personage as the Viceroy. The second reason for my reluctance is still more personal. I hold strange views on medicine and hospitals and have scrupulously avoided any special contact with such institutions. But my reluctance was overborne by my regard for our worthy Hakimji. I must frankly confess that I have undertaken to perform the ceremony for political motives. I regard the Hakimji as an

[1] The Tibbia College, a national medical college, founded by Hakim Ajmal Khan

[2] Lord Chelmsford

[3] Lord Hardinge

embodiment of Hindu-Muslim unity without which we can make no progress. I regard this institution as a symbol of that unity. It, therefore, gives me pleasure to be associated with today's ceremony.

You must have listened to the report just read with interest and profit. It is a record of substantial progress and strenuous labour. It shows what one man's energy devoted with single mindedness can do. May God grant long life to the Hakimji and enable him to complete the programme sketched out by him. I hope that the monied men of the country will lighten his labours by sending him unsolicited donations. You will note that besides declaring this institution open I am to unveil the portraits of Lord and Lady Hardinge. It will give me particular pleasure to be privileged to perform that function giving us as it does an opportunity of showing that in the battle of non-co-operation we are not actuated by an anti-British spirit and that our national ideal includes the treasuring of the memory of good deeds done by anybody, be he English or Indian.

In order to avoid any misinterpretation of my views on medicine, I would crave your indulgence for a few moments over a very brief exposition of them. I have expressed them in a booklet[1] much criticized at the present moment. I believe that a multiplicity of hospitals is no test of civilization. It is rather a symptom of decay, even as a multiplicity of *pinjrapoles*[2] is a symptom of the indifferenc to the welfare of their cattle by the people in whose midst they are brought into being. I hope therefore that this college will be concerned chiefly with the prevention of diseases rather than with their cure. The science of sanitation is infinitely more ennobling, though more difficult of execution, than the science of healing. I regard the present system as black magic because it tempts people to put an undue importance on the body and practically ignores thespirit within. I would urge the students and professors of the college to investigate the laws governing the health of the spirit and they will find that they will yield startling results even with reference to the cure of the body. The present science of medicine is divorced from religion. A man who attends to his daily *namaz* or his *gayatri*[3] in the proper spirit need never get ill. A clean spirit must build a clean body. I am convinced that the main rules of religious conduct conserve both

[1] Gandhiji presumably refers to *Key to Health* (earlier version) or *Hind Swaraj.*

[2] Insitutions for the care of Infirm and disabled cattle

[3] Vedic prayer to Sun-god for illumination

the spirit and the body. Let me hope and pray that this college will witness a definite attempt on the part of the physicians to bring about a reunion between the body and the soul.

Modern medical science having ignored the condition of the permanent element in the human system in diagnosing diseases has ignored the limitations that should naturally exist regarding the field of its activity. In trying to cure a body of its disease, it has totally disregarded the claims of sub-human creation. Man, instead of being lord and, therefore, protector of the lower animal kingdom, has become its tyrant and the science of medicine has been probably his chief instrument for tyranny. Vivisection in my opinion is the blackest of all the blackest crimes that man is at present committing against God and his fair creation. We should be able to refuse to live if the price of living be the torture of sentient beings. It ill becomes us to invoke the blessings in our daily prayers of God the Compassionate, if we in turn will not practise elementary compassion towards our fellow creatures. Would to God that this college, founded by one of the bestof Indian physicians, may bear in mind the limitations that God in my humble opinion has set upon our activity.

Having said this much, I would like to pay my humble tribute to the spirit of research that fires the modern scientists. My quarrel is not against that spirit. My complaint is against the direction that the spirit had taken. It has chiefly concerned itself with the exploration of laws and methods conducing to the merely material advancement of its clientele. But I have nothing but praise for the zeal, industry and sacrifice that have animated the modern scientists in the pursuit after truth. I regret to have to record my opinion based on considerable experience that our hakims and *vaids*[1] not exhibit that spirit in any mentionable degree. They follow without question formulas. They carry on little investigation. The condition of indigenous medicine is truly deplorable. Not having kept abreast of modern research, their profession has fallen largely into disrepute. I am hoping that this college will try to remedy this grave defect and restore Ayurvedic and Unani medical science to its pristine glory. I am glad, therefore, that this institution has its Western wing. Is it too much to hope that a union of the three systems will result in a harmonious blending and in purging each of its special defects ? Lastly I shall hope that this college will set its face absolutely against all quackery, Western or

[1] Practitioners of the Ayurvedic system of medicine

Eastern, refuse to recognize any but sterling worth and that it will inculcate among the students the belief that the profession of medicine is not intended for earning fat fees, but for alleviating pain and suffering. With the prayer that God may bless the labours of its founder and organizers, I formally declare the Tibbi College open.

The Bombay Chronicle, 15-2-1921

175. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

DELHI,
Monday [*February 14, 1921*][1]

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

Today is my day of silence. Naturally I think of those that are dearest and nearest to me. I appreciate your letter regarding Shastri and Paranjapye. It was a disgraceful affair. We must however continue our work making every endeavour to restrain the rowdyism. The more I think and I see, the more clearly do I see the hand of God in this movement. The self-restraint exercised in the face of provoking circumstances is certainly amazing. I make all allowance for the restraining influence of the bayonet.

I do not want to neglect either science or education in general. But I do want to suspend all other activity during this period[2] ofprobation. The time limit is for the people. They like a period to work up to. And I know that if real non-violence can be established in India during the period, you will see swaraj before September. You will remember the time limit for the termination of indentured labour. There is no usurpation there of any kind.

We had a good time at the Tibbi College. I want you to read my address at the opening and give me your criticism. I want your criticism of my letter[3] to the Duke also.

Please write at Lahore, 36, Mozang Road. I shall be in the

[1] The various events mentioned in the text suggest this date

[2] One year after the special Calcutta session of the Congress held in September 1920

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Duke of Connaught", before February 2, 1921.

Punjab nearly a fortnight.[1]

With love,

Yours,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 954

176. SPEECH AT HARIANA RURAL CONFERENCE, BHIWANI[2]

February 15, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi then spoke and said that the resolutions passed by them about non-co-operation and intoxicating drugs[3] were to be strictly carried out. He said that he had observed that the people were satisfied with the mere passing of resolutions and were unconcerned with the carrying out of their resolve. That was a most unfortunate thing. Those who passed the resolutions were expected to carry them out. There were certain conditions attached to the statement made by him in September last that swaraj could be attained within one year from that month. The first indispensable condition was that the people remained non-violent even in face of provocation, whether from the Government or from amongst themselves. Non-violence with the speaker was a creed. But everybody now had realized that swaraj was unattainable within any measurable distance of time by methods of violence.

The second condition was co-operation among themselves. They, therefore, could not treat anyone of their own kith and kin as untouchables. He claimed to be a staunch Hindu. His Hinduism taught him to consider every man as his brother, entitled to the same opportunities and privileges as himself. So long, therefore, as they treat millions of their countrymen as untouchables, they must be content to remain the untouchables of the Empire. If non-co-operation was the movement of purification, all their evil habits had to go. The third condition was complete boycott of foreign cloth at any cost. That could only be brought about by making home-spinning a voluntary obligation during leisure hours by young and old, male and female, at least for a year.

The fourth condition was pecuniary contribution by everyone to the utmost of

[1] Gandhiji left Delhi on February 14, 1921, and was in the Punjab from February 15 to March 8, 1921.

[2] A town in the Hariana district of the Punjab. The Conference was held under the presidentship of Lala Lajpat Rai.

[3] The resolution about intoxicating drugs called upon the people to give up liquor and other intoxicants.

his or her ability.[1] They could not carry on swadeshi propaganda or national schools or colleges without funds.

He had mentioned these few conditions, which were of universal application. Those relating to the special classes were also there. Whilst the Congress did not call upon the sepoys and the policemen to give up their service, it did expect them to be faithful to the people; and the Congress did expect the military classes not to go in for any further enlistment. There should be no recruitment for the police or the military.

If the conditions that the speaker mentioned could be carried out in a satisfactory measure he said that swaraj could certainly be gained before September. No one could complain that the fulfilment of the conditions he had named was at all difficult.

The Tribune, 19-2-1921

177. NOTES

WHAT WILL KILL NON-CO-OPERATION ?

Certainly violence on the part of non-co-operators. But that is not what I wanted to answer. 'What can the Government do to kill non-co-operation?' is the question I have been asked. A settlement of the Khilafat in accordance with the Muslim demand, a settlement of the Punjab in accordance with the Indian demand, and the grant ofswaraj; in accordance with a scheme to be framed by authorized representatives of the nation.

WHAT IS SWARAJ?

That is the next question. It is partly answered in the foregoing paragraph. No one man can produce a swaraj scheme because it is not one man's swaraj that is wanted, nor can a scheme be framed in advance. What may satisfy the nation today may not satisfy it tomorrow. Our evolution is, and must be, an organic growth. National will is therefore subject to change from day to day. But some broad outline, can certainly be laid down in advance for any scheme of swaraj. The nation's representatives must have full control over education, law, police and military. We must have full financial control. And if we are to be self governing not a soldier can leave

[1] At the Conference Gandhiji received about Rs. 18,000 in cash besides numerous ornaments from women, and promises for contributions amounting to Rs. 42,000.

India without our consent.

WHAT ABOUT EUROPEAN INTERESTS ?

They will be as safe in a self-governing India as they are today. But there will be no privileges of a superior race, no concessions and no exploitation. Englishmen will live as friends in every sense of the term but not as rulers.

AND THE BRITISH CONNECTION ?

Nobody, so far as I am aware, wants to end it for the sake of ending it. There must be complete independence if England's policy is in conflict with the Muslim sentiment on the Khilafat question or with the Indian sentiment in the Punjab. In any case it must be a partnership at will, based upon mutual love and esteem.

IS INDIA READY FOR THIS ?

Time will show. I am convinced that it is. The swaraj that the Congress demands is not one that is to be granted by England. It must be that which the nation demands and can enforce, in the same sense that South Africa received it.

DHOTI AND "CHADAR"

Signs of the times are unmistakable. A Councillor in the reformed Council is reported to have appeared in dhoti and *chadar* and insisted upon taking his oath in Bengali. The Councillor deserves congratulations upon his pluck. It is the most natural thing for us to appear in our national costume at all functions. And one may hope that Councillors, wherever they can, will co-operate with the nation in spite of their having in many cases flouted the nation's wish in insisting upon going to the Councils. They will certainly render a service if they will have the courage to appear at Council meetings in khaddar dress and speak in their vernaculars. It is easier for the few Englishmen to speak our vernaculars than for the many of the nation to speak English.

Young India, 16-2-1921

178. MY RESPONSIBILITY

The Servant of India has referred me to the remarks of a Poona non-co-operator to illustrate that all non-co-operators are actuated not by love but by hate. I have never doubted it. On the contrary, I have

admitted that many non-co-operators are impelled by hate, that most are impelled by a sense of justice, and some few by love only. The recital of the Poona facts is followed by a rebuke. Thus the writer ends:

> To enrol under the banner of love and peace the forces of hatred and violence, to believe that a simple doctrine can convert every heart into the purest gold, to persist in smoking a peaceful pipe on a stack of hay and in apparent innocence to disclaim all responsibility for the consequences, is amazing conduct even in a prophet.

The rebuke, I am sorry to say, is based on three unwarranted assumptions. I have not enrolled under the banner of love and peace the forces of hatred and violence, but I have enrolled under the banner of justice all those who wish to secure it; and in doing so, as a practical reformer, I have not hesitated to take in those who I know are actuated by hatred. Even the latter are entitled to justice. Only I must see that they do not give play to their hatred. I claim that the vast majority of the haters are honourably fulfilling the compact, because they realize that non-violence is the best and the only policy for the country if it is to attain justice, and not merely to vent anger. I therefore do not need to believe that 'a simple doctrine can convert every heart into the purest gold'. But I do believe that practicalexperience is likely to change policy into creed. For I believe that people are by nature loving and peaceful. When they hate and kill, they do so against their better nature. I am not 'smoking a peaceful pipe on a stack of hay and in apparent innocence disclaiming all responsibility for the consequences'. On the contrary, as an expert miner, I am moving in a coal mine full of explosive gases with a safety lamp well protected against explosion, with a due sense of responsibility, and with the full knowledge that, in spite of the apparent safety of the lamp, the gases may, by some mysterious processes, any moment explode. If they do, I shall not shirk responsibility. I shall ask forgiveness not from avenging and indignant countrymen but from God, Who knows my motive and Who knows that He has created in me a frail mortal liable to err and has yet given him the faculty to judge and act. I claim to be a soldier, and a soldier is nothing if he does not take the boldest risks. The reference to 'a prophet' is an unkind cut coming from *The Servant* of *India*, The writers in that journal should know that I do not claim to be a prophet. But I do claim to be a devoted servant of the country with a burning passion to assist in delivering it from the intolerable yoke

which has given it a stoop which it does not even sometimes recognize.

Young India, 16-2-1921

179. HAND-SPINNING AGAIN

The Servant of India a fling too at spinning and that is based as I shall presently show on ignorance of the facts. Spinning does protect a woman's virtue, because it enables women, who are today working on public roads and are often in danger of having their modesty outraged, to protect themselves, and I know no other occupation that lacs of women can follow save spinning. Let me inform the jesting writer that several women have already returned to the sanctity of their homes and taken to spinning which they say is the one occupation which means so much *barkat* (blessing). I claim for it the properties of a musical instrument, for whilst a hungry and a naked woman will refuse to dance to the accompaniment of a piano, I have seen women beaming with joy to see the spinning-wheel work, for they know that they can through that rustic instrument both feed and clothe themselves.

Yes, it does solve the problem of India's chronic poverty and is an insurance against famine. The writer of the jests may not know the scandals that I know about irrigation and relief works. These works are largely a fraud. But if my wise counsellors will devote themselves to introducing the wheel in every home, I promise that the wheel will be an almost complete protection against famine. It is idle to cite Austria. I admit the poverty and limitations of my humanity. I can only think of India's *kamadhenu,* and the spinning wheel is that for India. For India had the spinning-wheel in every home before the advent of the East India Company. India being a cotton-growing country, it must be considered a crime to import a single yard of yarn from outside. The figures quoted by the writer are irrelevant.

The fact is that, in spite of the manufacture of 62.7 crore pounds of yarn in 1917-l8, India imported several crore yards of foreign yarn which were woven by the mills as well as the weavers. The writer does not also seem to know that more cloth is today woven by our weavers than by mills, but the bulk of it is foreign yarn and therefore our weavers are supporting foreign spinners. I would not mind it much if we were doing something else instead. When spinning

was almost compulsorily stopped nothing replaced it save slavery and idleness. Our mills cannot today spin enough for our wants, and if they did, they would not keep down prices unless they were compelled. They are frankly money—makers and will not therefore regulate prices according to the needs of the nation. Hand-spinning is therefore designed to put millions of rupees in the hands of poor villagers. Every agricultural country requires a supplementary industry to enable the peasants to utilize the spare hours. Such industry for India has always been spinning. Is it such a visionary ideal—an attempt to revive an ancient occupation whose destruction has brought on slavery, pauperism and disappearance of the inimitable artistic talent which was once all expressed in the wonderful fabric of India and which was the envy of the world?

And now a few figures. One boy could, if he worked say four hours daily, spin $^1/_4$ lb. of yarn. 64,000 students would, therefore, spin 16,000 lbs. per day, and therefore feed 8,000 weavers if a weaver wovetwo lbs. of hand-spun yarn. But the students and others are required to spin during this year of purification by way of penance in order to popularize spinning and to add to the manufacture of hand-spun yarn so as to overtake full manufacture during the current year. The nation may be too lazy to do it. But if all put their hands to this work, it is incredibly easy, it involves very little sacrifice and saves an annual drain of sixty crores even if it does nothing else. I have discussed the matter with many mill-owners, several economists, men of business and no one has yet been able to challenge the position herein set forth. I do expect *The Servant of India* to treat a serious subject with seriousness and accuracy of information.

Young India 16-2-1921

180. STRIKES

Strikes are the order of the day.[1] They are a symptom of the existing unrest. All kinds of vague ideas are floating in the air. A vague hope inspires all, and great will be the disappointment if that vague hope does not take definite shape. The labour world in India, as elsewhere, is at the mercy of those who set up as advisers and guides. The latter are not always scrupulous, and not always wise even when they are scrupulous. The labourers are dissatisfied with their lot. They

[1] There were 200 strikes in India during 1920, and no fewer than 400 in 1921.

have every reason for dissatisfaction. They are being taught, and justly, to regard themselves as being chiefly instrumental in enriching their employers. And so it requires little effort to make them lay down their tools. The political situation, too, is beginning to affect the labourers of India. And there are not wanting labour leaders who consider that strikes may be engineered for political purposes.

In my opinion, it will be a most serious mistake to make use of labour strikes for such a purpose. I don't deny that such strikes can serve political ends. But they do not fall within the plan of non-violent non-co-operation. It does not require much effort of the intellect to perceive that it is a most dangerous thing to make political use of labour until labourers understand the political condition of the country and are prepared to work for the common good. This is hardly to be expected of them all of a sudden and until they have bettered their own condition so as to enable them to keep body and soul together in a decent manner. The greatest political contribution, therefore, that labourers can make is to improve their own condition, to become better informed, to insist on their rights, and even to demand proper use by their employers of the manufactures in which they have had such an important hand. The proper evolution, therefore, would be for the labourers to raise themselves to the status of part proprietors. Strikes, therefore, for the present should only take place for the direct betterment of the labourers' lot, and, when they have acquired the spirit of patriotism, for the regulation of prices of their manufactures.

The conditions of a successful strike are simple. And when they are fulfilled a strike need never fail.

1. The cause of the strike must be just.

2. There should be practical unanimity among the strikers.

3. There should be no violence used against non-strikers.

4. Strikers should be able to maintain themselves during the strike period without falling back upon Union funds and should therefore occupy themselves in some useful and productive temporary occupation.

5. A strike is no remedy when there is enough other labour to replace strikers. In that case, in the event of unjust treatment or inadequate wages or the like, resignation is the remedy.

6. Successful strikes have taken place even when all the above

conditions have not been fulfilled, but that merely proves that the employees were weak and had a guilty conscience. We often make terrible mistakes by copying bad examples. The safest thing is not to copy examples of which we have rarely complete knowledge but to follow the conditions which we know and recognize to be essential for success.

It is the duty of every well-wisher of the country, if we are to attain swaraj during the year, not to precipitate any action that may even by a day retard the fulfilment of the great national purpose.

Young India, 16-2-1921

181. SOCIAL BOYCOTT

Non-co-operation being a movement of purification is bringing to the surface all our weaknesses as also excesses of even our strong points. Social boycott is an age-old institution. It is coeval with caste. It is the one terrible sanction exercised with great effect. It is based upon the notion that a community is not bound to extend its hospitality or service to an excommunicate. It answered when every village was a self-contained unit, and the occasions of recalcitrancy were rare. But when opinion is divided, as it is today, on the merits of non-co-operation, when its new application is having a trial, a summary use of social boycott in order to bend a minority to the will of the majority is a species of unpardonable violence. If persisted in, such boycott is bound to destroy the movement. Social boycott is applicable and effective when it is not felt as a punishment and accepted by the object of boycott as a measure of discipline. Moreover, social boycott to be admissible in a campaign of non-violence must never savour of inhumanity. It must be civilized. It must cause pain to the party using it, if it causes inconvenience to its object. Thus, depriving a man of the services of a medical man, as is reported to have been done in Jhansi, is an act of inhumanity tantamount in the moral code to an attempt to murder. I see no difference in murdering a man and withdrawing medical aid from a man who is on the point of dying. Even the laws of war, I apprehend, require the giving of medical relief to the enemy in need of it. To deprive a man of the use of an only village-well is notice to him to quit that village. Surely, non-co-operators have acquired no right to use that extreme pressure against those who do not see eye to eye with

them. Impatience and intolerance will surely kill this great religious movement. We may not make people pure by compulsion. Much less may we compel them by violence to respect our opinion. It is utterly against the spirit of democracy we want to cultivate.

There are no doubt serious difficulties in our way. The temptation to resort to social boycott is irresistible when a defendant, who submits to private arbitration, refuses to abide by its award. Yet it is easy to see that the application of social boycott is more than likely to arrest the splendid movement to settle disputes by arbitration which, apart from its use as a weapon in the armoury of non-co-operation, is a movement fraught with great good to the country. People will take time before they accommodate themselves to private arbitration. Its very simplicity and inexpensiveness will repel many people even as palates jaded by spicy foods are repelled by simple combinations. All awards will not always be above suspicion. We must therefore rely upon the intrinsic merits of the movement and the correctness of awards to make itself felt.

It is much to be desired if we can bring about a complete *voluntary* boycott of law courts. That one event can bring about swaraj. But it was never expected that we would reach completion in any single item of non-co-operation. Public opinion has been so far developed as to recognize the courts as signs not of our liberty but of our slavery. It has made it practically impossible for lawyers to practise their profession and be called popular leaders.

Non-co-operation has greatly demolished the prestige of law courts and to that extent of the Government. The disintegrating process is slowly but surely going on. Its velocity will suffer diminution if violent methods are adopted to hasten it. This Government of ours is armed to the teeth to meet and check forces of violence. It possesses nothing to check the mighty forces of non-violence. How can a handful of Englishmen resist a voluntary expression of opinion accompanied by the voluntary self-denial of thirty crores of people?

I hope, therefore, that non-co-operation workers will beware of the snares of social boycott. But the alternative to social boycott is certainly not social intercourse. A man who defies strong, clear public opinion on vital matters is not entitled to social amenities and privileges. We may not take part in his social functions such as marriage feasts, we may not receive gifts from him. But we dare not

deny social service. The latter is a duty. Attendance at dinner parties and the like is a privilege which it is optional to withhold or extend. But it would be wisdom to err on the right side and to exercise the weapon even in the limited sense described by me on rare and well-defined occasions. And in every case the user of the weapons will use it at his own risk. The use of it is not as yet in any form a duty. No one is entitled to its use if there is any danger of hurting the movement.

Young India, 16-2-1921

182. SPEECH AT RURAL CONFERENCE, ROHTAK[1]

February 16, 1921

Our object is to obtain swaraj and to redress the Khilafat question. If Government were again to promulgate Martial Law people would not submit to creep on their bellies. Now we have got so much power that we would refuse to creep on our bellies and to salute the Union Jack. I bowed to the sirkar for 35 years with my own consent but now I would not do so even by force. We should do good deeds and become the soldiers of God. We intend either to destroy or to reform the present Government. I request you to become the servants of God instead of serving anybody else. As long as you are in the service of the Government I advise you to continue and with honesty. Probably there is a police station here and some policemen present here. I tell them to treat the public, who are their brethren, mildly and lovingly and not to oppress them. We have not got so much funds that we can ask the people to leave their service and supply them food; but I ask them to continue their service; at the same time they should be the soldiers of God. In order to gain our twofold object we have started non-co-operation. You should peacefully adopt that. The Government have become Satanic. Even God did not kill Satan and we should refrain from killing the Devil. If [Government] servants have got sufficient funds to maintain themselves they should at once leave service, otherwise not. If any [Government] servant wants to leave he may do so today. Until there is freedom we can neither perform our prayer nor worship our God. Those who are in service may continue so, but no recruit should be given in future. Do not

[1] Town in the Punjab. Gandhiji visited the Jat School, which had lately been nationalized, and laid the foundation stone of the Vaishya High School.

drink wine, smoke or commit theft, and refrain from looking on another's wife. Those who are addicted to these things can never be called godly people. Non-co-operation is a thing free of fear. Use native made articles and spinning-wheels. Hindus and Mohammedans should unite. You should decide your cases by panchayats. If you act upon my advice we shall obtain swaraj by September. Give money for this as it is needed.

Police Abstract of Intelligence, Punjab, No. 1

183. SPEECH AT GUJRANWALA[1]

February 19, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi began by requesting the audience to preserve silence so that his voice might reach all. He asked the people not to talk or smoke. Mahatmaji said that when he was at Bhiwani and Rohtak, resolutions against drinking, smoking and using other intoxicants were passed. They should also take a similar pledge and become *jitendriyas*[2], that is to say, they should look upon all women as their mothers and sisters and be pure in thought, word and deed. They all desired swaraj and wanted to solve the Khilafat question and to obtain redress of the Punjab wrong. The panacea for all these three was non-co-operation. There were two ways of obtaining swaraj. One was by the might of the sword and the other by peaceful means. The Congress, the Muslim League and the Sikh League, had decided to obtain swaraj, by non-violent non-co-operation. If they wanted swaraj within one year, they should follow the example of Mr. Yakub Hassan[3] at Calicut. Mr. Yakub Hassan had voluntarily preferred to go to jail rather than incite the people to violence. Government asked him to give security but he refused to do so and went to jail for six months[4]. Ail of them should prepare to go to jail. He was not prepared to go to jail nor did he ask anybody else to go to jail as a result of crime. But he was prepared to go to jail and asked others to do the same for the sake of swaraj.

Another condition of obtaining swaraj was the one which concerned students. It was necessary for students to give up colleges and schools if they wanted swaraj. The non-co-operation students should not bring pressure to bear on those students who wanted to continue their studies, nor should the former ridicule the latter. The

[1] Thousands had come from Lahore and other places to Gujranwala to hear Gandhiji who could not deliver a public speech in Lahore owing to the enforcement there of the Seditious Meetings Act.

[2] Those who have acquired control over the five senses

[3] Who had resigned his membership of the Madras Legislative Council on May 20, 1920

[4] Yakub Hassan, along with three companions, was sentenced on February 17, 1921.

man who becomes angry or uses strong language, loses something of his own strength. Those who wanted to continue their studies should be left alone. Only, the non-co-operators should place before the others their own practical example. Mahatmaji hoped that if martial law was declared again they would not crawl on their bellies. All of them had, to India's eternal shame, humiliated themselves before the Union Jack which represented a Government which had sent to jail and the Andamans many innocent countrymen of theirs. He also hoped that if another Dyer would be born, the people would not run away before his bullets but allow the shots to pierce not their backs but their chests. They all wanted to be soldiers and soldiers did not run away but died of shots at their posts. If another Jallianwala Bagh was enacted, they would lay open their chests to the bullets and bear the shots till they died.

The first condition was that their methods of work should be peaceful. All the same they should be fearless. He had received letters which described the courage of Arab youths. Government placed before the Arabs all sorts of alternatives which were tempting. They promised to convert their warm sands into a cool climate and to build railways, etc. In exchange for these things, Government wanted the Arabs to consent to be governed by them. But the Arabs preferred their warm sands to foreign rule.

Mahatmaji then referred to the Duke's[1] visit and asked what he had done for them. He had neither punished the guilty officials nor stopped Dyer's pension. He [Gandhiji] did not want that Dyer should be prosecuted, but he certainly wanted that not a pie should be given to him out of the Indian exchequer. Men like Dyer were receiving pensions from their treasury. Students should give up schools and colleges maintained by such a Government. Courts also should be boycotted. The lawyers should also realize their duty along with students. If the Punjabis wanted liberty, they should learn to sacrifice comfort. If they were not prepared for this, freedom was impossible.

Another condition for the attainment of freedom was not to use foreign things, particularly cloth. If they were prepared to die for swaraj, could they not do without foreign clothing? Some people had told him that when the Punjab students would be asked to take to the charkha, they would run away. He wanted to tell them that if they desired to bring about the economic salvation of their country and to save 60 crores of rupees annually, they should give up the use of foreign cloth at once and take to the spinning-wheel. He had received a letter from Bombay which said that as a result of the example of those non-co-operating students in Bombay who had taken to the spinning-wheel, the members of their families had also adopted the charkha. There were some who looked upon spinning as womanish. In his opinion, the very expression of such a view was cowardly. If the Punjab students wanted to learn true economics, they should take to the charkha upon which depended their economic salvation.

Mahatmaji, continuing, said that it gave him great pain to notice Punjabi sons writing to their parents in English. If they adopted a foreign language as their own,

[1] The Duke of Connaught

they could not attain freedom. He had been told that the Punjab youths were drifting towards extravagance. Dadabhai Naoroji had estimated that their annual income per head was Rs. 26 only. How could they, under the circumstances, afford to live in luxury? There were in India three crores of persons who daily went without a full meal. How could they think of living a life of ease and comfort? They should lead poor lives and the help their brethren. If they wanted to obtain swaraj they could not do with a lakh of rupees. Swaraj was not an ordinary bargain. In order to obtain the pearl of swaraj, they would have to make far heavier sacrifices. Up to that day ladies had donated liberally wherever he had occasion to appeal to them. He regretted that the ladies of Gujranwala had acted in a miserly spirit. Lala Lajpat Rai was styled by them the "Lion of the Punjab" and a lion was never satisfied with morsels of grass.

All of them should live like brothers. Neither cows, nor *gurudwaras*, temples or mosques should be protected by resort to violence. If they wanted to protect these things, they should do so by sacrificing their lives. If they wanted to achieve swaraj, the path before them was straight. They should not resort to crooked ways nor be cheated by others.

In conclusion, Mahatmaji prayed to God to strengthen their minds and to make them fearless. They would themselves die but they would not kill others. They would have nothing to do with the Government. They would never cry "shame, shame" or hoot their revered leaders like Mr. Sastri and Babu Surendranath Bannerjea. All these were their respected elders. By hooting them they committed violence. They should not follow western civilization but their own ancient tradition and thus maintain its pristine glory.

The Tribune, 22-2-1921

184. NATIONAL TILAK MEMORIAL FUND FOR SWARAJ

The nation has a duty to perpetuate the memory of Tilak Maharaj. It was a wholly worthy idea to associate his memory with swaraj work. That the money received for a memorial to him shouldbe spent in the cause of swaraj is the only right course. By contributing for such a purpose, people serve their interests in two ways. It is to our benefit to perpetuate the memory of the Lokamanya and winning swaraj is plainly in our interest.

The Congress Working Committee has decided that the various provincial committees will collect contributions [in their respective provinces]. Three-fourths of what each committee collects will be spent for the purpose of the non-co-operation movement in the particular province and one-fourth will be passed on to the All-India Congress Committee.

Collections for the Fund are not to go on for years; they must

be completed in a month or two.

Everyone, young or old, man or woman, should contribute to the Fund to the best of his or her ability. Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians, Jews—all who look upon themselves as Indians should contribute their full share.

Contributions should be remitted to the Treasurer, All-India Congress Committee, or to Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj, Treasurer of the Congress or to Mian Chhotani[1]. If any persons wish to send their contributions to the *Navajivan* office instead of to one of these, the amounts will be acknowledged in the paper and sent on to the Treasurer of the Gujarat Provincial Committee.

I hope that every village will take up this work without delay.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-2-1921

185. WHAT TO DO WHEN ONE LOSES TEMPER

The treasure of my experiences is growing richer. I get a new experience every day. After the visit to Gorakhpur, we had to go to Kashi. The journeys are mostly by night. It is no exaggeration to say that out of a month almost fifteen nights are spent on trains. One night[2], things reached the limit. The train made long halts at each station, while crowds outside kept shouting all the time. My companions pleaded with the people and tried to maintain quiet as well as they could. I was very much tired and altogether exhausted. At one of the stations, my wife and Mahadevbhai[3] tried hard to keep the people quiet. But in vain. They insisted on having darshan[4]. They peeped through the window, said all kinds of things and even made ironic remarks. Finally, I got upset. I felt that I must do something to save my wife and Mahadev. I got up and peeped through the window. I was in a rage and so had not even taken care to cover myself. It was quite cold but, in my temper, I didn't feel it. I pleaded with the people

[1] Mian Mahomed Haji Jan Mahomed Chhotani; nationalist Muslim leader of Bombay who took leading part in the Khilafat movement

[2] The night of February 8, 1921

[3] Mahadev Desai (1892-1943); lawyer, journalist and author; Gandhiji's private secretary

[4] Sight of a person, place or thing considered holy

in a raised voice. Their shouting of slogans grew louder. I felt very much annoyed. I told them: "You ought to have pity on a woman and a young man. Why do you harass us in this way? How could you expect *darshan* at night?" But the people were in no mood to listen to all this.

What was I to do ? Should I jump from the window? Should I cry? Should I beat any of them? Should I stay back at the station? How could I jump? What good would it be to cry? How could I even think of beating anyone? If I stayed back at the station, I could not reach Kashi. But I could in no way recover my calm, nor would the people be quiet. The shouts of jai grew louder still. I saw that both love and hatred can overpower us. I beat my forehead, but that had no effect. I did that again, when someone said: "What would be our plight if you yield to anger?" I felt ashamed, but the anger did not subside. It would subside only when people had become quiet. I beat my forehead for the third time. The people got frightened. They asked me to forgive them, became quiet and requested me to go to sleep. All this was observed by one gentleman[1] and he could understand my suffering. In this way I recovered my calm. From that station onwards, this gentleman himself protected us. At every station, he would plead with the people, restrain their eagerness for *darshan* and persuade them to remain quiet.

Within my memory, this is the fourth occasion in my life when I hit myself. On each of them, I have recovered peace only after hitting my head. It is only now I learn from experience that even love can irritate a person.

And now comes the point of describing all this. There are so many occasions when a person is likely to give way to anger. It is his duty every time to control it; as he learns to control it, he becomes braver, acquires greater fortitude, greater courage and self-confidence and his reason becomes clearer. When, however, a person simply cannot control his anger, the best way to work it off is to strike oneself. Of the four incidents I mentioned, on three occasions my grief was due to the misdeeds of those dear to me and I could not bear it. On one occasion I atoned for my own lapse. I had committed such a sin that I felt suddenly shocked at it and was aflame with anger

[1] Ram Gopal, secretary of the Khilafat Committee at Mhow, described by Mahadev Desai in his account of this journey as an unknown angel who rescued Gandhiji

with myself. I rose and struck myself hard blows and only then did I have peace. It was my experience on all these four occasions that the effect on me and the atmosphere around me was quite good. When an enraged person hits another, he himself falls and commits a crime against that other person. When, tortured by anger, a man suffers himself, he is purified and has a purifying effect on others.

India is at present angry because of the atrocities of this Government. If the country hurts itself, if it suffers in its own person, it will win and get swaraj before September. Let no one put forward this vain argument: "In my case, on all occasions the people concerned loved me and so they could understand the meaning of self-punishment. Here we have to deal with the British; what effect can we produce on them by inflicting suffering on ourselves?" It would be atheism to ask such a question. Self-punishment is also a kind of *tapashcharya.* Its fruit can be nothing else but the holy merit which accrues from a virtuous act. Even enemies cannot but feel its effect. Our purpose, however, is not to produce an effect on the British but to become, ourselves, pure, firm, courageous, and fearless. When we have become fearless, who would dare to rule us? Nobody can rule even uncivilized races when they become fearless; who, then, can rule a civilized India become fearless ?

There should be strong reasons for self-punishment. The reason for getting angry should be just. When this is not so, self punishment is suicide and deserves to be condemned. It will not be Satyagraha, it will be nothing but *duragraha*.

I hear of instances of such *duragraha* again. A person who fasts before another's house in order to get money will only starve to death. Anyone who gives him money out of misplaced pity because of his fasting will have done so virtuous deed either. If my example of self-punishment is not followed wisely, the self punishment will profit nothing.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-2-1921

186. LETTER TO G. L. CORBETT

RAWALPINDI
February 20, 1921

DEAR MR. CORBETT,

I thank you for your letter which I received in Lahore on Thursday[1]. Though we seem to be drifting I am sure that we are drifting only to come nearer. The false and unnatural relations that subsist today are really keeping us apart.

I am not against free and voluntary emigration but I am indifferent about it and even opposed to any stimulation. I thoroughly distrust the Fiji authorities. I have heard enough to convince me of the truth in the main of the emigrants' version. In these circumstances I should deplore the departure of a single emigrant to Fiji. Emigration would be a proper enterprise when India has gained full control of her own affairs and can treat with the dominions on an equal footing. But if anybody goes to Fiji to conduct an inquiry whilst India is in aferment and her status undermined, I know that you are one who will not do conscious injustice to her.

I am quite at one with you on the question of the Hindu treatment of the untouchables. There is absolutely no excuse to offer for the evil. And I am hoping that with the untouchability of India in the Empire will go the untouchability in Hinduism. I do look upon our present status as a deserved nemesis for our treatment of the so-called pariah.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 7465

187. LETTER TO GANGARAM SHARMA

LAHORE,
February 21 [*1921*][2]

DEARS GANGARAMJI,

This is what is averred against you:

l. You and Mr. Gaurishanker have misappropriated monies.

[1] February 17
[2] In this year Gandhiji was in Lahore on February 21.

2. Your schools are mostly bogus.
3. You have a bogus committee.
4. You have published no accounts.
5. You do not collect from those who are said to benefit by your schools.
6. You were charged with misappropriation, but acquitted. The public belief is that the charge was not ill-founded.
7. You are keeping a woman by whom you have children.

There seems to be strong ground for believing these things. If you desire an inquiry, I would ask some of the friends you mention to conduct the inquiry.

Yours sincerely;

From a photostat: S.N. 7441

188. TELEGRAM TO CHHOTANI[1]

February 22, 1921

YOU MAY GO PROVIDED NO SURRENDER OF MINIMUM TO BE ACCEPTED AND PROVIDED ALSO ANSARI ACCOMPANY YOU AS AUTHORIZED SECRETARY ADVISOR INTERPRETER HAKIMJI DR. ANSARI REACHING THERE THURSDAY IMPOSSIBLE FOR SELF LEAVE PUNJAB.[2] POSTPONE DEPARTURE SATURDAY WEEKS FOR FULL DELIBERATION.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1921, p. 208

189. LETTER T0 C. F. ANDREWS

LAHORE,
February 22 [*1921*][3]

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your two letters. You must get well.

[1] Mian Mahomed Haji Jan Mahomed Chhotani

[2] Gandhiji, who was in the Punjab from February 15 to March 8, reached Bombay on March 10.

[3] In this year Gandhiji was in Lahore on February 22.

The Sikh tragedy[1] absorbs me. Please tell me whether the extract in *Young India* referring to Gurudev's pronouncement is correctly reported.

I want to suspend all other activities means that any other activity will be rendered fruitless without the people realizing themselves. It is like 'seek ye first the kingdom', etc. I would any day have the boys going to the villages rather than learning Hindustani. But you have no idea of their helplessness. Very few are able to live the village life. And so I say during the transition period of 10 months let them spin, let them assimilate their knowledge through their mother tongue and let them learn Hindustani. Those boys who cannot or will not do this for 10 months with the promise of resumption of normal studies at the end of the year had better not come out of their colleges. The[y] must only come out if they consider it sinful to remain in Government colleges, not otherwise.

With love,

Yours,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 959

[1] About one hundred and fifty Akali Sikhs were killed when, on February 20, 1921, they entered the *gurudwara* at Nankana Saheb, about 40 miles from Lahore. The *gurudwara* was in the possession of Mahant Narandas who was allegedly abusing his trust; *vide* "Speech at Nankana Saheb", March 3, 1921, and "Sikh Awakening", March 13, 1921.

190. LETTER T0 A. F. FREEMANTLE[1]

[Before *February 23, 1921*]

DEAR SIR,

I have just received your letter of the 12th instant. You will please excuse me if I do not reply to your letter in detail. You havehardly done justice to yourself in criticizing a letter[2] you have never seen, whose translation you have only partly read. If you had read the letter, you would have seen that I did not mention my services to demonstrate my sufferings, much less to show that they were

[1] This was written in reply to a letter dated February 12, 1921, from the addressee, a member of the Indian Civil Service. The following are the relevant excerpts from Freemantle's letter:

"I have not had the pleasure of perusing in full the open letter to Europeans in India which I understand you indited last year, and am aquainted with its contents merely through a Hindi translation which I have partly read.

You began, I believe, by some detail of the services you had rendered to the British Empire. Have you ever asked yourself . . . how far you can hope to impress us with them . . . Between August 4, 1914, and November 11, 1920, . . . thousands of Englishmen joined the colours merely for justice' sake . . . Many were wounded again and again. Many . . . reduced to indigence. And all this not for a particular motive, but, I repeat, to establish a universal principle. . . What have you lost that you should presume to place yourself upon the eminence on the strength of any losses or sufferings, and to lecture others? . . . There is another thing which distinguishes you, your "idealism". I do not myself think great things of that shallow quality, that miscalled idealism which turns from history and experience to evolve a misty Utopia out of the inner consciousness . . . you have not that higher idealism which looks hard at the facts . . . On truth you appear to set a peculiar value . . . It would be a mistake however . . . not to realize that practice toils painfully behind . . . truthful yourself in the main, you are not—if newspaper reports are correct— scrupulous about lies uttered in your presence. Witness the disgusting aspersion on a British officer now recognized as the Kachagarhi fable . . . you made a feeling allusion to the story, treating it as accepted truth. The *Tribune* apology is published; we await yours and are likely still to await it.... I suspect you of being at heart a co-operator waiting only for a suitable time to come to terms with this Satanic Government.... you are already on the right path, . . . You have right ideas. . . But it is necessary to strip off unworthy motives. Cease even to recognize Government by struggling against it. Take a step further and ignore it. Those of us who love learning for its own sake . . . would be glad indeed to see educational institutions which are really independent of Government.... Empty our law courts, not because you are under the fond impression that Government likes them full, but simply because litigiousness is bad. Another idea is that of home industries. It is puerile to connect the spinning-wheel with swaraj . . . But you are on the right road if you teach your fellow-countrymen . . . the dignity of manual labour, and to discard shoddy machine made goods . . ." *Young India*, 23-2-1921.

[2] *Vide* "To every Englishman in India", 27-10-1920.

selfless. I mentioned them merely to show how consistently loyal I was to the British connection even in the midst of adverse conditions. My services were not selfless, because I believed that I would by those services be assisting my country's progress towards freedom. Your mention of British bravery and selflessness is therefore irrelevant. British bravery and capacity for suffering are beyond question. The claim to national selflessness, you will permit me to deny *in toto.* I did not believe then, the world does not believe today, that the late War was one for justice or was selfless. You wanted to crush the Germans, and for the moment you have succeeded. I do not believe that the Germans are the fiends the English Press has made them out to be, nor do I believe that the world would have come to an end if they had won.

You think that I am on an eminence. I assure you that I am unaware of that. I am however on the top of a volcano which I am trying to turn into hard incombustible rock. It may erupt any moment before I have succeeded. That unfortunately has always been a possible fate for a reformer.

My idealism worries you. If you had taken pains to read my writings, you would have known that it is intensely practical.

You have rightly guessed that I am at bottom a co-operator. How would I be otherwise having been that for nearly thirty years? I am certainly waiting for the first opportunity to co-operate, but believe me my co-operation will not be tendered until Englishmen have realized the necessity of settling the Khilafat terms in accordance with the Muslim sentiment, until they have repented of the calculated torture of the Punjab, and until they have ceased to consider themselves as our patrons and rulers. India will gladly have Englishmen as friends, fellow-workers and equal partners in India, but if they desire to exploit the country for their own gain, they must do so, if they can, without our co-operation.

You have seen fit to accuse me of deviation from truth. Here again your amazing ignorance is to blame. You were rightly informed that I believed the statement about the Kachagarhi incident, made to me upon oath by persons whom I had no reason for doubting. I published over my signature a denial as soon as I received it. I refer you to the file of *Young India*. Lastly may I ask you to try to study and understand the Movement of non-co-operation? You will find that it is not anti English in spirit. It is a religious movement, it is a

purifying movement. It is a movement intended to resist injustice, untruth, terrorism and to establish swaraj in India. You will admit that it is better to replace mutual distrust and fear by trust and fearlessness.

This movement is an attempt to end that unhappy state. And I seek your co-operation in the effort.

I am,
Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 23-2-1921

191. NOTES

HOW MANY LAWYERS AND STUDENTS HELP?

Everywhere I have been asked whether lawyers and students who do not carry out the Congress resolution affecting them can help the movement in any other way. The question is rather strange for it assumes that if a lawyer or a student cannot non-co-operate as such he cannot help at all. There are undoubtedly hundreds of students and scores of lawyers who are not suspending their normal studies or their practice, as the case may be, only out of weakness. A lawyer who cannot suspend practice can certainly help with money, he can give his spare hours to public service, he can introduce honesty and fair dealings in his profession, he can cease to consider clients as fit prey for his pecuniary ambition, he can cease to have anything to do with touts, he can promote settlement of cases by private arbitration, he can at least do spinning himself for one or two hours per day, he can simplify the life of his family, he can induce the members of the family to do spinning religiously for a certain time daily, he can adopt for himself and his family the use of khaddar. These are only some of the things that can be done by every lawyer. Because a man cannot or will not carry out a particular part of the non-co-operation programme, he need not be shy about the other items. One thing a practising lawyer may not do: he may no longer figure as a leader on public platforms. He must be content to be a silent worker What I have said about practising lawyers applies to students also who cannot or will not withdaw from schools. Most of our volunteers are drawn from the student world. Volunteering is a privilege and a student who has not been able to withdraw from Government schools

cannot receive privileges from the nation. They too must be content to be unambitious servants of the nation. Even if we cannot completely boycott schools and colleges, we must destroy their prestige. That prestige has almost gone and is daily decreasing. And we must do nothing that would restore their prestige till they are nationalized and answer the requirements of the nation.

ROWDYISM

Certainly, no-co-operation has received a rude shock by disgraceful behaviour at the Bombay and Poona meetings towards Messrs Shastri and Paranjapye. I have seen the explanation that the hooliganism was resorted to not by non-co-operation students but by those who wanted to discredit the movement itself, and to rouse prejudice against non-co-operation students. The explanation is likely to be partly true for there are undoubtedly men who would for the sake of killing of movement even create violence. For non-co-operation to be speedily successful, we must be able to provide even against such contingencies. A soldier cannot plead difficulties in defence of his defeat. When General Buller[1] failed to relieve Ladysmith, he was superseded[2]. When Lord Roberts[3] failed to finish the South African War, Lord Kitchener[4] took over command. This Government will live on only so long as it can circumvent non-co-operation. If non-co-operation students did not want to be discredited why notices clearly sated that only those who wished to hear the other side of the question were to attend. There was, therefore, no excuse for the scenes that were enacted in Bombay and Poona. Moreover, it is often forgotten that Messrs Shastri and Paranjapye are among the ablest and the most public-spirited men we have in thecountry. They are as much lovers of their country as non-co-operators themselves. We may consider them to be mistaken in their view as they consider us to be mistaken. But we shall grievously err if we refuse to listen to the arguments of our

[1] Sir Redvers Henry Buller (1839-1908); British Commander-in-Chief during Boer War before Roberts

[2] By Roberts. Buller had failed to relieve Ladysmith in December 1899; in the following February he succeeded

[3] Frederick Sleigh Roberts, 1st Earl Roberts of Kandahar (1832-1914); Commander-in-Chief in India, 1885-93, in South Africa, 1899-1900

[4] Horatio Herbert, 1st Earl Kitchener of Khartoum and of Broome (1850-1916); Chief of Staff to Lord Roberts in South Africa, 1899; organized forces to combat guerilla warfare of Boers, 1900-2; Commander-in-Chief in India, 1902-9

opponents.

Nor need we seek to justify rowdyism on the strength of English precedents. We may not call the movement religious and continue still to copy the bluster and violence of English meetings. Our strength lies in not copying foreign or other precedents without discrimination. This movement, if it is to be non-violent in essence, as it must be to be successful, has to retain its distinctive character at every step and at all times.

Young India, 23-2-1921

192. THE CONDITIONS OF SWARAJ

Swaraj is easy of attainment before October next if certain simple conditions can be fulfilled. I ventured to mention one year in September last because I knew that the conditions were incredibly simple and I felt that the atmosphere in the country was responsive. The past five months' experience has confirmed me in the opinion. I am convinced that the country has never been so ready for establishing swaraj as now.

But it is necessary for us as accurately as possible to know the conditions. One supreme indispensable condition is the continuance of non-violence. The rowdyism, hooliganism, looting that we have recently witnessed are disturbing elements. They are danger signals. We must be able to arrest their progress. The spirit of democracy cannot be established in a year in the midst of terrorism whether Governmental or popular. In some respects popular terrorism is more antagonistic to the growth of the democratic spirit than the Governmental. For the latter strengthens the spirit of democracy, whereas the former kills it. Dyerism has evoked a yearning after freedom as nothing else has. But internal Dyerism, representing as it will, terrorisrn by a majority, will establish an oligarchy such as will stifle the spirit of all free discussion and conduct. Non-violence, therefore, as against the government and as between ourselves is absolutely essential to speedy success. And we must be able to devise means of observing it on our part in spite of the gravest provocations.

The next condition is our ability to bring into being the Congress organization in terms of the new constitution[1], whichaims at

[1] *Vide* "Congress constitution adopted at Nagpur session", december 1920.

establishing a Congress agency in every village with a proper electorate. It means both money and ability to give effect to Congress policies. What is really needed is not a large measure of sacrifice but ability to organize and to take simple, concerted action. At the present moment we have not even succeeded in carrying the Congress message to every home in the 7 1/2 lakhs of villages of India. To do this work means at least 250 honest workers for as many districts, who have influence in their respective districts and who believe in the Congress programme. No village, no circle need wait for instructions from headquarters for founding their respective organizations.

There are certain things that are applicable to all. The most potent thing is swadeshi. Every home must have the spinning wheel and every village can organized itself in less than a month and become self-supporting for its cloth. Just imagine what this silent revolution means and there would be no difficulty in sharing my belief that swadeshi means swaraj and *swadharma*[1].

Every man and woman can give some money—be it even a pice—to the Tilak Swarj Fund. And we need have no anxiety about financing the movement. Every man and woman can deny himself or herself all luxury, all ornamentation, all intoxicants at least for one year. And we shall have not only money but we shall have boycotted many foreign articles. Our civilization, our culture, our swaraj depend not upon multiplying our wants—self-indulgence—but upon restricting our wants—self-denial.

We can do nothing without Hindu-Muslim unity and without killing the snake of untouchability. Untouchability is a corroding poison that is eating into the vitals of Hindu society. *Varnashram is* not a religion of superiority and inferiority. No man of God can consider another man as inferior to himself. He must consider every man as his blood-brother. It is the cardinal principle of every religion.

If this is a religious battle, no argument is necessary to convince the reader that self-denial must be its supreme test. Khilafat cannot be saved, the Punjab inhumanity[2] cannot be redressed, without godliness. Godliness means change of heart—in political language, changing the angle of vision. And such a change can come in a moment. My belief is that India is ripe for that change.

[1] One's own duty

[2] The original has "humanity".

Let us then rivet our attention on:

1. Cultivating the spirit of non-violence.
2. Setting up Congress organizations in every village.
3. Introducing the spinning-wheel in every home and manufacturing all the cloth required for our wants through the village weaver.
4. Collecting as much money as possible.
5. Promoting Hindu-Muslim unity and
6. Ridding Hinduism of the curse of untouchability and otherwise purifying ourselves by avoiding intoxicating drinks and drugs.

Have we honest, earnest, industrious, patriotic workers for this very simple programme ? If we have, swaraj will be established in India before next October.

Young India, 23-2-1921

193. "DID CHRIST NON-CO-OPERATE?"[1]

The reader will perhaps agree with me that the Rev. Gillespie has made a bad case worse. Every non-co-operator will, I am sure, be prepared to co-operate on the same terms that he mentions in connection with the prodigal son[2]. Let this prodigal Government return like the Biblical son and all non-co-operators will rejoice exceedingly. The incoming Viceroy[3] will have all the assistance he may expect from the non-co-operators if he means to do well. As to untouchability, Rev. Gillespie is on safe ground. No one who hugs untouchability has any right to denounce this Government. 'He who seeks equity must come with clean hands' is a maxim of universal application. And the Rev. gentleman will find that those who want to retain untouchability are certainly among the co-operators. Non-co-operation is nothing if it is not reformation from within.

Young India, 23-2-1921

[1] In this article, Gandhiji comments on a letter dated January 22, 1921, from the Rev. Gillespie at Rajkot; the letter is not reproduced here.

[2] The Rev. Gillespie had said in his letter: "While we must not 'countenance a son who disgraces himself by a life of shame and vice', yet we should co-operate with him—and this is true co-operation—by waiting for the prodigal in 'anguished love' and with prayerful soul-energy, and, when he returns, receive him with open arms."

[3] Lord Reading, who assumed office in April, 1921

194. SPEECH AT SIKH CONFERENCE AT SHRI[1]

February 25, 1921

I admit that we should have the control of our sacred places in our hands. We can secure that control in a single day. But how is that to be done? If not a single person visits a *gurudwara*[2] and if no money is put into the impure hands of impure *mahants*[3], you can get them to do your bidding right today. If you now believe that the control of the *gurudwara* at Nankana Saheb is in your hands, you are mistaken. Its has been given to you by the Government's army. I do not wish you to have it in this manner. I do not mean to say that you should relinquish the control which you have obtained. But there certainly is some humiliation in the way you have got it.

I am much grieved on account of those who died as martyrs.[4] But I know that this is not the time to weep. This is the time to die. I wish that at this time we should all be able to meet death, taking blows on our chest. It seems this courage was shown by the martyrs of Nankana Saheb. But I cannot help seeing our own fault either. We do not have any right to acquire control of a *gurudwara* by intimidation. If the *mahant* had slain Lachman singh after coming to Lyallpur, he would not, thereafter, have been able to retain that control even for a moment. But by going to Nankana Saheb, we actually gave him a chance. We can acquire control of *gurudwaras* only through patience. We kept quiet all these years. Would it have been wrong to wait a year more?

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 17-4-1921

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour

[2] Sikh place of worship

[3] Priests in charge of *gurudwaras*

[4] At the time of Nankana Saheb tragedy, which occurred on February 20; *vide* footnote 2, "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 22-2-1921.

195. SPEECH AT KHILAFAT CONFERENCE, LUCKNOW

February 26, 1921

Speaking in Urdu at the Khilafat Conference yesterday Mr. Gandhi said that within the remaining seven months up to October they would decide the Khilafat question and attain swaraj. They could not draw the sword but would produce the power of drawing the sword after swaraj was attained. The Viceroy used to laugh at them but now he wanted to co-operate with them.[1] He advised the boycott of British goods and the giving up of foreign cloth, by which means they could get swaraj the next day.[2] [Gandhiji continued :]

We have done our best to persuade lawyers and students. It is not necessary any further to busy ourselves over this aspect of the movement. I am satisfied with the measure of success we have achieved in conveying our message. Those whom we have failed to win over may start non-co-operation when they choose. The lawyers who still practise and the students who attend Government schools and colleges enjoy no respect. Most of them admit, themselves, that they are going wrong. This is enough for us. To the extent that the lawyers, and the students attending Government schools, have lost prestige, the Government's prestige also is lowered.[3]

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 2-3-1921; *Navajivan,* 17-4-1921

196. PERVERTED REASONING

I continue to receive anonymous letters. Many people, even now, lack the courage to come out with their names. Whether one's name should be published or withheld from a newspaper may be a matter of choice; but to look forward to the publication of an article without disclosing one's name even to the editor is another story. I have with me two such letters. In one of them, a student of Gujarat College casts some aspersions on non-co-operators. I shall not publish this letter. The second letter is from a sister. This, too, contains some allegations. But the correspondent being a woman and the allegations

[1] This is presumably a reference to the Viceroy's speech *on* the Khilafat issue; *vide* Appendix "Viceroy's speech on Khilafat".

[2] This paragraph is from *Amrita Bazar Patrika.*

[3] This paragraph is from the Gujarati report *in Navajivan.*

deserving of notice, I quote from the letter here.

This anonymous correspondent writes:

> The atrocities perpetrated in the Punjab by the autocratic officials of the British Government have moved me very strongly and, for the past four months, I have been thinking of giving up my job. With the passing of time, however, I find that the urge to give up the job is slackening. This has happened because I am as much shocked at the doings of dishonest leaders working in your name as I had been shocked at the doings of autocratic officials. It is imperative somehow to ensure that such dishonest persons do not use your name to their profit and that nothing but truth prevails. Is it not improper to start national schools at every place where municipal schools exist and to seek to enroll larger numbers of children in them? Why not convert municipal schools into national schools as has been done at Nadiad?

This sister has employed perverted reasoning. If she felt an urge to give up her Government job, that urge should quicken instead of slackening because of dishonesty among non-co-operators. The dishonesty of non-co-operators will not be reduced by honest persons getting disheartened and clinging to their Government jobs. Whoever gives up a Government job or non-co-operates in any other way, should do so not to oblige the non-co-operators but as a matter of duty. How does it matter if all non-co-operators are sinners? Rather, if that be really so, stray individuals, upright in character and determined non-co-operators, should employ far mightier non-co-operation. If the impulse of this sister is genuine, this is the right way. If all the non-co-operators had been honest, swaraj would have been an accomplished fact long ago. It is wrong to hope that we shall at once be cleansed of all the dirt that has covered us through the years. If we keep away from an unclean Government, to that extent at any rate we shall have been cleansed. It is not right for an alcoholic to cling to his drink because he notices other vices among the abstainers. Whatever others may do, the right course for such a person is to get rid of his drink habit and to endeavour to liberate others from their vices.

Moreover, if what this sister has said about municipal schools is all that she means by dishonesty, it is simply her error. It is the obvious duty of non-co-operators, where the municipalities do not convert their schools into national schools, to start new schools and to seek, if possible, to take away students from municipal schools.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-2-1921

197. RAWALPINDI SISTERS

I have been receiving the blessings of sisters from Bengal and other regions for the cause of swaraj. I have seen young girls handing over all their ornaments. Those who were moving in very fine muslins in the past, are seen wearing khadi saris. When this has become a common thing, I wonder which experiences I should narrate and which I may pass over.

Rawalpindi is considered to be mainly a town of soldiers. Its residents are wealthy people. The sentiments which I observed among the women of Rawalpindi were, however, beyond my imagination. The women's rally was held at eleven in the morning.[1] Its venue was an open ground in a garden. Menfolk were prohibited from entering the garden while the meeting was going on. The sisters were seated around a dais. I was accompanied by Lalaji[2]. The sisters sang a couple of songs composed by themselves. Quite a large number joined in the chorus. One of the songs related to Amritsar and the other was about swadeshi. This was about their resolve to ply the spinning-wheel, not to idle away time, to chant God's name while plying the wheel, to give up fine cloth in favour of khadi and to make our land happy by encouraging carpenters, smiths and cobblers. The song-leader seemed to be a girl of about twenty years. She was in a white dress. She was rich, but I did not notice on her person any ornaments except a ring. There is no custom in the Punjab that an unmarried girl or a woman whose husband is alive must wear bangles. The sisters had also brought yarn and khadi as gifts.

Our speeches were hardly listened to in the midst of all their happy chatter. They simply didn't wish to listen, since the appeal we were going to make was already imprinted on their hearts. We must end *Ravanarajya* and establish *Ramarajya*. The way to do that was indicated by Sita. She had rejected all sweets, ornaments and other temptations offered by Ravana, and the daughters of India should act in like manner. The hearts of the poor will not pour out blessings as long as they are hungry. This hunger can be satisfied only by the spinning-wheel. The blessings of only pious women can bear fruit. Therefore, women should become more virtuous, simple and upright. These simple truths were already imprinted on their hearts. Why, then,

[1] Of February 20, 1921

[2] Lala Lajpat Rai

should they listen to us? They started bringing out money and ornaments. The white-clad sister became envious of her ring. She struggled to remove it but it would not come off. Only when she had succeeded and dropped the ring in my sack did she feel relieved. The sisters spread out all around us. Some collected money and ornaments in their scarfs. Some collected money and threw it with such skill that another sister would neatly gather it in the fold of her garment. This commotion went on for about an hour and there was a shower of rupees and notes.

These sisters knew why I needed money. They knew what swaraj meant and what the Khilafat meant, and knew all about the atrocities in the Punjab. The sisters were donating money for these causes. Why, then, should I not feel confident that swaraj can be attained within a year? The fact is that I don't believe swaraj will be won by any individual. If any good deeds of India are ripe for their reward and if the country as a whole has taken to the path of virtue, swaraj is bound to come. The conditions are clear enough, but I have made them a little clearer. They are:

(1) Peace, (2) Swadeshi (popularizing spinning-wheel and khadi), (3) Co-operation among ourselves, (4) Donating of necessary funds and (5) Arrangements in every region to work in accordance with the constitution of the Congress.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-2-1921

198. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

LUCKNOW,
February 28, 1921

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I have not been able to write to you personally. Many times I thought of doing so, but something or the other came up and the writing got postponed.

I cannot say when I shall be able to come that side. I am going back to Lahore today. I have to be there to settle the problem of the Sikhs. The situation is very grave.[1] If I can be free from there early, I

[1] On February 20, at Nankana Saheb, near Lahore, 160 Akali Sikhs were massaacred in the Gurudwara premises by a faction led by Mahant Naraindas.

expect to visit Ahmedabad. I have got to reach Calcutta on the 17th.

You may or may not be aware that the newsprint for the *Navajivan* and young *India is* almost exhausted. Do something about it if you can. Even if Anandanand is not in touch with you, I wish at least you would write to someone from whom paper can be procured.

Have you heard that Lalchand[1] has been dismissed and Vakil has been engaged? Lalchand did not satisfy as a writer. His hard work and honesty were praiseworthy.

I had a meeting with the Governor of Punjab and had a long discussion with him.

Are you taking any part in the preparations for the Congress? This time it is necessary to show fully our capacity to organize, our courteous behaviour, unity, discipline and so on. I wish you would engage yourself in the work without attachment or aversion. I do understand your difficulties. Do what you can.

My respects to Bhabhi.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32702

199. NOTES

REPRESSION GALORE

I have devoted a special article to the Bihar repression. Since writing it I have come across more news in the Press about Bihar. And if there is no second Jallianwala in Bihar, it will be due, not to want of goading by the authorities, but to the exemplary self-restraint of the Biharis. What is there to prevent an officer from shooting an unsuspecting crowd which he may allege, and believe, to have collected in defiance of an order? Such a thing may easily happen, and the catastrophe may go down to history, written by a Government historian, as an "error of judgment".

Repression is assuming definite shape in the United Provinces also. Public speakers are being restrained.

[1] Lalchand Adwani, who was relieved of his charge as Assistant Editor, *Young India.* For Gandhiji's mention of the change, "Notes", 20-4-1921, "Letter to Lalchand", 29-1-1921 and "Speech at Nankana Saheb", 3-3-1921

The Calicut Magistrate has rendered himself famous by imprisoning Mr. Yakoob Hassan and his companions.[1]

But it is the expected that is happening. Swaraj cannot, must not, be cheaply attained. Why should not all, young and old, suffer imprisonment? It is common suffering that will indissolubly bind us together. As non-co-operation begins to tell, the authorities are bound to lose their heads.

For, it is clear that as yet there is no real desire to repent. The Duke[2] has spoken sonorous sentiments, and it is said that, whilst H.R.H. was pronouncing these sentiments, he was visibly affected. The Council has accepted a resolution recording its regret over what happened during the fateful April of 1919,[3] and, as if to mock us, almost at the time that these empty sentiments were being uttered, the magistrates in various provinces were hatching plots of repression. It was a most telling illustration of what is meant by wordy repentance.

India today wants no magnanimous speech nor, for that matter, any magnanimous action. What she is thirsting for is the barest justice. She is entitled to demand the stoppage of pensions from the Indian treasury to Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer. She cannot be satisfied so long as officers who have misbehaved are still in the enjoyment of high offices.

But so long as this elementary justice is withheld, so long must India continue the battle of non-co-operation, and so long must the Government continue its policy of repression.

WHAT TO DO

We must treat repression as the touchstone wherewith we are to be tested. If we can stand it without wincing or without losing self-control, it will do us good and bring us nearer the goal. If we are in earnest we shall go through the ordeal without losing temper. After all, we are trying the temper of the Government by refusing co-operation, but its instinct of self-preservation keeps it sober up to a point. It loses balance after that point is reached. As a rule, we respond by becoming angry in turn and so the Government feels

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Gujranwala", February 19, 1921.

[2] The Duke of Connaught

[3] In the Council of State this resolution was moved on February 15, 1921, by Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas. It was accepted after its third clause, calling for deterrent punishment to officers who had been guilty, was withdrawn by the mover.

stronger for our weakness. Non-violence teaches us that we make no response to the Government's temper. And, if we carry out the lesson in practice, the Government must lose. Repression will have lost its edge because of our non-response, even as an arm swung in the air becomes dislocated for want of response.

Young India, 2-3-1921

200. REPRESSION IN BIHAR

Bihar is a province in which the most solid work is being done in connection with non-co-operation. Its leaders understand the true spirit of non-violence. They are trying to curb, and are succeeding in curbing, the zeal of those who would cross the boundary-line, even in speech. There is no danger of an outbreak of violence in Bihar. The province has a splendid record of purifying work. The temperance movement has made such rapid strides that the excise revenue is likely to be very considerably affected. The educational movement is making great progress. Many pleaders have suspended practice. The people are settling their disputes by arbitration. There are signs on every side of a national awakening of which any popular government would have been proud. Not so the Bihar Government. And, yet, people had high hopes of Bihar, for, had it not an Indian Governor[1], one of the ablest of India's sons, an ex-president of the Congress? Even Lord Sinha has his limitations. He has become part of a machinery which is grinding the people, and his abilities can only be utilized to run that machinery, or he must fall out.

Repression is most rampant in Bihar because the officials have become daring under the cover of an Indian Governor. Lord Sinha has become a shield for official offenders.

Let the reader judge from the following facts. Maulana Mazharul Haq and Babu Rajendraprasad, both well known in Bihar, were prevented from going to Arrah.[2] A letter from a friend says:

> In the districts of Muzaffarpur, Saran, and Champaran, notices under sections 144 and 107 are being continuously served. Those who decline to be bound over are imprisoned. Thirty such persons have already gone to gaol. Action against others is pending. it is a matter of pleasurethat some of these are old men and that the womenfolk, instead of being downcast over these

[1] Lord Sinha

[2] The order forbidding them to enter Arrah was served on February 16, 1921.

imprisonments, have felt unconcerned, if not elated.

Maulana Safi and Babu Ram Binod have received the following notice:

> Whereas I am reliably informed and I am satisfied that you intend addressing a public meeting in Hajipur, in which you will exhort your hearers to suffer imprisonment even, in the cause of non-co-operation, and will also speak on other matters in connection with non-co-operation, which Exhortations are likely to cause excitement amongst your hearers and a breach of the public tranquility may reasonably ensue, I therefore by virtue of the powers vested in me under Sec. 144 Cr. P.C. hereby order you to abstain from delivering any speech on non-co-operation in any of its forms within the limits of my jurisdiction.

The Sub-Divisional Officer who has signed the notice claims to have known beforehand what the gentlemen were going to speak ! And it was non-co-operation ! Speakers all over India have been asking people to prepare themselves for imprisonment. It has caused no breaking of public tranquility anywhere. All the most popular organizations have preached non-co-operation, and it is being peached daily from a thousand platforms. The terms of the order virtually prevent the speakers from speaking on swadeshi, temperance, untouchability and Hindu-Muslim unity. they are all 'forms' of non-co-operation.

Another order runs as follows:

> Whereas it has been reported to me that Brahmachari Ram Raksha of Bangra, P.S. Gopalganj Saran, addressed a meeting yesterday in which he denounced the Government and the British people as treacherous, pledge-breakers and tyrannical and stated that the policy of the British Government was to set one race against another in order to rule both; and that the Government is bound to disappear on account of its *zulum* and that if all Indians responded to the call of Gandhi they could expel the British Government within ten days, and it has further been reported that this speech caused great excitement; and that another such speech is likely to cause a breach of the peace, and whereas it appears that the said Brahmachari Ram Raksha intends to make a similar speech again today, I hereby forbid him under Sec. 144 Cr. P. C. to abstain [*sic*] from making any speech whatever to any gathering of five or more persons in any part of the Sitamarhi Sub-Division in any open place during a period of one month from the date of this order.

Again, what the Brahmachari has been gagged for has been uttered by thousands of lips. The charge brought against the Government by the Brahmachari occurs in the preamble of the

Special Congress Resolution[1]. I have myself had the honour of denouncing the Government as 'treacherous, pledge-breakers and tyrannical.' It was left to the magistrate of Sitamarhi to discover that it was a crime to denounce the Government in those terms.

Now the question is: what can Lord Sinha do short of resigning?[2] He cannot supervise the orders of even magistrates. If he did the magistrates would non-co-operate, strike and make his position intolerable and government impossible. Therefore, for the sake of, some day and in some way, serving his country as Governor, he makes himself believe that it is better for him to hold on to his post than make room for an English Governor. This is but the beginning of his rule. The public will find that the Civil Service under his regime will have consolidated its power more thoroughly than under an English Governor. And this for two reasons: the Civil Service will make a greater grievance of every restraint under Lord Sinha than they would under an English Governor, and the people would submit to wrongs more cheerfully because they would naturally want to make his regime successful. And thus the strongest Indian who could possibly have been selected for the high post of a Governor will fail not because of want of effort or ability but because of the inherent evil of the system his Excellency has been called upon to administer.It gives me no pleasure, thus, to have to criticize the rule of one for whom I entertain very high regard. But even a Gokhale would have failed had he been called upon to administer the system with its existing spirit.

Young India, 2-3-1921

201. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

ON THE WAY TO LAHORE,
March 2 [*1921*][3]

MY DEAREST CHARLIE,

I thought of you the whole of Monday but was not able to reach the letter. I wanted to write to you. I wanted to tell you how forcibly I

[1] The resolution on non-co-operation adopted at the special session of the Congress held at Calcutta in September 1920

[2] Lord Sinha resigned on November 21, 1921.

[3] The year is indicated by the reference in the text to the speech at Tibbia College, which was published in *Young India*, 23-2-1921.

felt the truth of what I have said in one sentence in my Tibbia College speech. The crime against the untouchables I feel, the exploitation of the dumb millions I feel, but I realize still more clearly our duty to the lower animal world. When Buddha carried that lamb on his back and chastised the Brahmins, he showed the highest measure of love. The worship of the cow in Hinduism typifies that love.

And what does that love demand? Certainly not hospitals for cattle ill-treated by fellow-beings, though they are not to be destroyed, but promotion of kindness to beasts. Our love consists in our getting off the necks of our dumb fellow-creatures. The more helpless the lower life, the greater should be our pity.

Thus thinking I see a newer meaning in the spinning-wheel and my statement that its destruction marked the subjection of India and her decay. The work among the poor will be profitless and devoid of religion without the spinning-wheel. We must help the poor to feed and clothe themselves. We can never succeed unless we reintroduce the spinning-wheel. No other industry can solve the problem of the mass poverty in India.

I have given you my thoughts at random but you will probably have no difficulty in seeing my meaning. I am trying to answer the difficulties that underlie some of your questions. I feel that you have not seen clearly the message of the spinning-wheel or the working of the spirit of non-co-operation. Somehow or other the women of India appear to have caught it instinctively.

I appreciate Gurudev's rebuke but I do not feel guilty. Somehow or other I imagine that with my knowledge limited as it was at that time I did right in not judging the Government. My hearty association up to the time of the Amritsar Congress has given me a confidence and power which I could not havepossessed otherwise—nor was there a spirit of bargaining behind it. I did what I held was right without bargaining for reward.

In Lahore I may have to stay a week. I shall know on reaching.

Mahadev is at Sabarmati installing Vakil as Sub-editor for *Young India*. Lalchand leaves *Young India*.[1] wanted a more capable man. Lalchand is a good, honest worker, but does not understand his limitations. Mahadev will return after he has done.

I do hope you are keeping better health now.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lalchand", January 29, 1921.

Please give my respects to Baro Dada. It is a great comfort to me that he is so whole-heartedly with me in this struggle.

With love,

Yours,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 960

202. SPEECH AT NANKANA SAHEB

March 3, 1921

The following is the substance of Mr. Gandhi's Hindustani speech delivered at Nankana Saheb *Gurudwara* when he visited it together with Maulana Shaukat Ali:

I have come as a pilgrim to tender you my sympathy. I received a wire[1] of the tragedy[2] from a Sikh friend at Ghurkha. I showed it toLala Lajpatrai and friends. The news was so staggering that they would not believe it without confirmation. We hastened back to Lahore to find that the news was all terribly true. I cancelled my visit to Multan and awaited further information. The next day I proceeded to Lyallpur and thence to the Sikh Divan[3] at Shri. I heard there that the cremation[4] was taking place that day. It was too late to attend when the news was received. I could not make this pilgrimage earlier as I was bound to keep important appointments at Amritsar and Lucknow. Meantime I have heard much about the immolation.

I need hardly give you my assurance that your grief is mine. I am so constituted that the sufferings of others make me miserable. And were it not for the futility of suicide to end grief, I should long ere this have done away with my life by suicide. And so when I heard of the tragedy of Nankana I felt like wanting to be among the victims. As it is I can but show my sympathy to those that are left behind.

I must confess that I have not yet been able to come to any final judgment as to what actually happened. It seems almost unbelievable that not a man died at the hands of the Akali[5] party. Did not the brave men who were armed with kirpans[6] and battle-axes retaliate even in

[1] On February 20, when Gandhiji was at Rawalpindi

[2] *Vide* footnote 2, "Letter to C.F Andrews.

[3] Held on February 25, 1921

[4] Of those killed at Nankana Saheb

[5] Reformist Sikhs

[6] A *kirpan* is a knife with a curved blade which every Sikh is enjoined by religion to carry.

self-defence? If they did not, it is an event that must electrify the whole world.

I can imagine three possibilities.

One is that the Akali party came to take possession of the temple. They lost their lives in the act. The world will not blame the party for having come to take possession. You believe the *mahant* to be unworthy of the trust. You are puritans. It was natural for you to take possession. But it is impossible for me to defend the action of taking possession by a show of force. My creed forbids me to use violence or to make a show of it even against an evil-doer. I know that there exists this difference bet ween your creed and mine. I hope that I am capable of forgiving one who may do me or mine an injury. I always pray to God that should such an occasion arise, He would give me the strength to forgive such a wrongdoer. But History will hold you free from blame even if it is found that the martyrs had come to take possession by a show of force.

The second possible position is that the party came merely to worship and was assassinated without the opportunity of defending themselves.

The third possibility is that the party came to worship, although it had knowledge that the *mahant* was fully armed for destroying them and that, although they were capable of defending themselves, they allowed themselves to be butchered.

In every case the event will live in history.

I hope that you will not take the credit of the bravery for the Sikhs only, but that you will regard it as an act of national bravery. The martyrs have died not to save their own faith merely but to save all religions from impurity.

You and I must live and die for Hindustani as her sons and daughters. I have dedicated my life to the cause of the Khilafat because it means the defence also of my own faith and country. I claim to be *Sanatani* Hindu. And I want to live at peace with my neighbours. I can only do so by serving them. I have no desire to save my country or my religion by killing others. I know that God will hold me blameless if He finds me capable of dying for either.

I would ask you therefore to dedicate this martyrdom to Bharat Mata[1] and believe that the Khalsa[2] can remain free only in a free

[1] Mother India
[2] The Sikhs

India. You cannot be free and enslave India. And yet the temptation in the hour of your triumph is almost too great. This Government is quite capable of harnessing your aid to keep India under bondage. I mean no reflection on the present Governor or any other official. If I was satisfied of their complicity I would not hesitate to say so. But just now I am speaking of the genius of the Government. It has not hesitated to divide Hindus from Muslims in order to be able to retain its hold on us. And it is quite capable of dividing you from the rest of India. I ask you to resist any such temptation with all your might and to unite with the rest of India to end this Satanic system of Government.

A friend has just now said that the Sikhs have passed their examination in suffering. I join issue with him and suggest to you that your examination has only just commenced. How are you going to use this newly acquired strength? The same friend drew my attention to the fact that your *kirpans* and your battle-axes were part of your dress. So let them be. But I assure you that the time has not come for their use, if it is ever to come. All the national associations have recognized the present necessity of non-violence. Your *kirpans* must therefore remain scrupulously sheathed and the hatchets buried. If you and I will prove worthy of the martyrs, we will learn the lesson of humility and suffering from them; and you will dedicate all your matchless bravery to the service of the country and her redemption.

Young India, 16-3-1921

203. MESSAGE TO LAHORE SIKHS ON NANKANA TRAGEDY

March 4, 1921

DEAR FRIENDS,

Having made my pilgrimage to Nankana Saheb yesterday I would like to say a word to my Sikh friends. The traces that I saw of the massacre at one of the greatest of your temples and the stories related to me have left an indelible impression on my mind.

There seems little doubt that nearly one hundred and fifty men of the Akalis party were foully murdered and their bodies mutilated on that fateful Sunday, the 20th Feb[ruary], whilst not a single one of the murderers was apparently hurt by the Akali party. There is no doubt that at least one Akali was tied to a tree in the temple ground

and probably burnt alive. There is still less doubt that many of the corpses were soaked in paraffin, and, in order probably to hide the fact that only men of one party were killed, they were burnt. No one of the Akalis that gained entrance to the temple seems to have escaped to tell the tale of the butchery.

The temple presents the appearance of a fort. The walls of the rooms that surround the shrine are pierced to admit of shooting through them. The partition walls have connecting holes. The main door has massive steel plates evidently of recent make. The Granth Saheb[1] bears bullet marks. The walls of the sanctuary and the pillars tell the same tale. The Akali party seem to have been treacherously admitted and the gates closed on them. Everything I saw and heard points to a second edition of Dyerism more barbarous, more calculated and more fiendish than the Dyerism at Jallianwala. Man in Nankana, where once a snake is reported to have innocently spread its hood to shade the lamb-like Guru[2], turned Satan on that black Sunday.

India weeps today over the awful tragedy. I am ashamed to find that there are men today who are capable of the crime committed by sons of India in that holy temple. Information is lacking to show why the Akali party went to the temple and whether they offered resistance to the murderers. They had all their *kirpans* and mostly their hatchets. There are three possibilities that could have happened:

1. The party went by a show of force to take possession of the temple but were overwhelmed by superior force and died fighting bravely.

2. The party went merely as worshippers, had no intention of taking possession and were treacherously murdered without being able to defend themselves.

3. The party went as worshippers, as in the second case, and were mercilessly attacked; but though able to defend themselves would not retaliate and willingly died being under a vow not to use violence in connection with the *gurudwara* movement.[3] The contention of my

[1] The holy book of the Sikhs

[2] Guru Nanak

[3] Started by Akali Sikhs to take over control of *gurudwaras* from the hands of *mahants* protected by the Government

informants, who can only speak from hearsay, is that the party went and died as supposed in the third alternative. If it is so, the martyrs have showed courage and resignation of the highest order of which the Sikhs, India, and the whole world have every reason to be proud. It is a matter of the greatest satisfaction that the Sikhs with whom I have discussed the possibilities persist in believing the last.

In the second instance, the bravery of the defenders was as unquestioned as in the last.

In the case I mentioned first, the bravery was great, but the morality of the act, i.e., the taking possession by a show of force must remain open to question and ordinarily speaking, made the Akalis a party of trespassers whom the party in possession was entitled in law to use sufficient force to repel.

The Akalis are a great party of purists. They are impatient to rid the *gurudwaras* of abuses that have crept in. They insist upon uniformity of worship in the *gurudwaras.* The movement has been going on for some years. Both co-operating and non-co-operating Sikhs have, since the movement of non-co-operation, been acting in concert so far as the *gurudwara* movement is concerned. And even if it is discovered ultimately that the Akali party went to Nankana Saheb by show of force to dispossess a mahant[1] who had abused his trust, History will still call the immolation an act of martyrdom worthy of high praise. Judged by the highest standard and that of non-violent non-co-operation, if the first supposition turns out to be true, the act of entering to take possession must bear the taint of violence and as such is worthy of censure. But the original taint can never be held as in any way justifying or excusing the fiendish barbarity of the crime committed by the murderers. The law courts were open to them—no man using violence can plead non-co-operation for not seeking the assistance of the law courts.

Time, however, for adjudging the exact value of the martyrdom is not yet. It is more to the point to consider the immediate steps that should be taken. I can only think of the tragedy in terms of Indian nationality. The merit of the brave deed must belong not merely to the Sikh but to the whole nation. And my advice, therefore, must be to

[1] Narandas

ask the Sikh friends to shape their future conduct in accordance with the need of the nation. The purest way of seeking justice against the murderers is not to seek it. The perpetrators, whether they are Sikhs, Pathans or Hindus, are our countrymen. Their punishment cannot recall the dead to life. I would ask those whose hearts are lacerated to forgive them, not out of their weakness—for they are able in every way to have them punished—but out of their immeasurable strength. Only the strong can forgive. You will add to the glory of the martyrdom of the dear ones by refusing to take revenge.

Moreover those who are non-co-operationists may not have recourse to British law courts even for getting murderers punished. If we will be free within one year we must have the courage to suffer even the murderers to go scot-free[1] till we have established a government in accordance with our will and which can vindicate justice.

Let the Sikhs beware. The Government will no doubt try to win them over to them by showing that they alone can punish the guilty. Law courts of a civil government [*sic*] are traps into which the unwary run unwittingly.

But if we have not yet visualized the wickedness of the system under which we are governed, and therefore at a crucial moment will not avoid the existing law courts, let us not thoughtlessly blunder into having our own Committee side by side with the Government Committee of Inquiry. Let us frankly admit our imperfection or weakness and avail ourselves of the law courts or boldly face the possibility of murderers being let loose upon us. It is dangerous to conceal our weakness, it is still more dangerous to make a pretence of courage.

It was common knowledge that the *Mahant* had been preparing for a long time, and practically openly, to give battle. He had arms. He had collected ammunition, he was surrounding himself with ruffians. Government officials could not but have known of the preparations. You, therefore, naturally suspect that high offlcials contemplated with equanimity, if they did not encourage, the perpetration of a heinous deed. You are anxious to find out the exact truth. A moment's reflection must convince you that even if it is found that some Government officials were guilty of such complicity, the discovery

[1] "act-free" in the source

takes you and India no further than where we stand today. You, and practically the whole of India, want to sweep the whole of the Government out of existence unless the system under which it is being carried on is radically altered. It would be wrong to divert the attention of any section of the nation from the main or the only issue which is before the country.

So much for the tragedy.

The whole of the *gurudwara* movement requires overhauling. There is no doubt that a large party proceeding to a *gurudwara* to take possession does constitute a show of force even though no violence is contemplated or intended. And in a well-ordered society, no individual, except under a process of law, is permitted to dispossess by a show of force or any undue pressure, even a wicked man who has been ostensibly in possession of public property such as temples. If such individual action were permitted there would be an end to all good government and the weak would be left without the right of protection. Such attempt therefore, on your part will be a negation of the Khalsa Dharm[1] whose basis is protection of the weak. No one can be more eager for real reform in our temples and removal of all abuse than I. But let us not be party to measures that may be worse than the reform sought to be brought about. There are two ways open to you: either establishing arbitration boards for settlement of possession of all *gurudwaras* or temples claimed to be *gurudwaras* or postponement of the question till the attainment of swaraj. If you would let the martyrdom at Nankana bear fruit, exemplary self-restraint and suspension of the movement to take possession of *gurudwaras* by means of Akali parties are absolutely necessary.

I am,

Your faithful friend,

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, l6-3-l921

[1] Sikh religion

204. LETTER TO VARMA

MULTAN,
March 5 [*1921*][1]

DEAR MR. VARMA,

Your letter has followed me in my travels.

I am doing all I can to overtake the unruly tendency in the boys. I am hoping that the unseemly exuberance will pass and things will settle down and take their proper shape. Are we not all in the melting-pot today? Perhaps we are not able to appreciate merits and demerits of actions or their proper value. However I must do what little I can to avoid a repetition of the disgraceful scenes of Kashi.[2] I am asking Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru to attend to the matter.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7978

205. SPEECH AT MULTAN

March 5, 1921

Mahatmaji started by apologizing for having twice failed to keep his promise to go to Multan; once it was because of the news that the Government wanted to arrest him and Maulana Shaukat Ali, so they had to hurry back to Ahmedabad; and the second time the sudden and tragic news of Nankana Saheb compelled him to give up his programme of coming to Multan from Lyallpur; and even for the present visit he was greatly dissuaded from coming to Multan on account of the prevalence of plague. But in spite of that, he had gone there owing to the affection they cherished for him. While congratulating the Seva Samiti for the relief given by them to their plague-stricken brethren, he could not help accusing the people of Multan and the Municipality of being partly responsible for the prevalence of the scourge on account of the extremely insanitary condition of the city. Cleanliness and purity of body, mind and soul was their primary duty without which attainment of swaraj was impossible. From the discussion of the plague, Mahatmaji proceeded to refer to a 'greater plague', the subjection of the nation.

[1] During 1921 Gandhiji several times referred to students' disturbances in his writings and correspondence. He was in Multan on March 5, 1921.

[2] Here Gandhiji presumably refers to a recent incident in which disrespect was shown by students at Banaras to Malaviya.

From the persistent invitation of the Multanis he had thought that they were anxious to show him the progress they had made towards swaraj, but he regretted that he could not congratulate them on their achievements. At first he had thought that his brother Maulana Shaukat Ali had missed a great deal by not coming to Multan and witnessing what the Multanis had done towards the national movement; but after coming to Multan he was no more sorry on that account. He found that the Multanis had held a great meeting. It was possible to have a bigger meeting, but he regretted they had done practically nothing to combat the greater plague. Not one lawyer had suspended practice,[1] nor had any school been disaffiliated, or any national school started. He had nothing to commend about the achievement of Multan. He felt very grieved at these signs of national weakness. The Viceroy was partly right when he spoke about the failure of non-co-operation although he should have known that they had achieved a great deal. Swaraj was attainable even if no school was disaffiliated and no lawyer suspended practice, or no rich men made sacrifices.

Again, while congratulating Bhai Mul Chandji[2], he was sorry that he was still retaining the Government medal. If he feared that by returning the medal Government would stop him from doing his humanitarian work and people would die in consequence they should not mind. Similarly he exhorted the lawyers sitting on the platform to give up practice though he held that swaraj did not depend on a Mul Chand giving up his medal or a lawyer suspending his practice. Several lawyers in other parts of the country had nobly responded to the can and Mahatmaji referred to the noble sacrifice of [C.R.] Das, Pandit Motilalji and Lala Lajpat Rai. Students too in other parts of the country had given up Government-aided schools and colleges and title-holders had lost all position in public affairs. But these were not ad and there were further conditions for attaining swaraj.

He then proceeded to enumerate and discuss those conditions, those being non-violence and unity amongst all classes of the Indians. Following one's religion in all strictness should lead to still greater unity amongst the followers of different religions. He cited the case of the Ali Brothers and himself loving each other as brothers in spite of differences in religion. They should ad be one in love was the highest teaching of the Hindu shastras. The third condition. Mahatmaji said, was swadeshi, and the charkha was to be their shield as well as the aeroplane and the machine-gun. Even those who ridiculed them before were now realizing the truth of this statement. And for authority he cited no other person than O'Dwyer. India's position as a nation had been falling more and more as the charkha fell out of use. Even during the earliest stages of British occupation there was no crawling on their bellies, no rubbing of the ground with their noses and no saluting of the Union Jack as long as the charkha was used in their homes. The more the charkha fell out of use

[1] After the speech was over Bodh Raj and Keval Krishen, local Congress workers announced that they would suspend practice for one year.

[2] Manager of the Seva Samiti plague camp. At the end of the meeting he promised to return his Kaiser-i-Hind gold medal.

the greater grew Lancashire and the more they sank into slavery. He then exhorted the audience to take to the charkha and introduce the same into their homes and to give up all luxuries. The fourth condition was the purity of mind and soul. They should follow truth and religion and give up corrupt habits like drinking, dissipation and Iying, if they wanted to save Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism. The last condition, Mahatmaji said, was to subscribe handsomely to national funds. He saw before him a large number of rich people and Sikh landholders. He could also recognize from their turbans the Shikarpuri merchants. Though Lala Lajpat Rai had estimated subscriptions for Swaraj Fund from Rs. 50,000 to a lakh, and Lala Duni Chand[1] a lakh and a half, Mahatmaji thought even ten lakhs was not a big amount to be collected in one year. They should all subscribe to their best, so that he might be able to convey a much more Hopeful message to Lala Lajpat Rai. He asked them to organize themselves for collection work and to keep proper accounts.

The Tribune, 8-3-l921

206. TELEGRAM TO HANS RAJ[2]

[*March 7, 1921*][3]

SHALL GLADLY RECEIVE ADDRESS IF EARLY MORNING SO AS NOT INTERFERE HARIANA, HOSHIARPUR AND RETURN LUDHIANA.

The Tribune, 8-3-1921

207. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

LAHORE,
Monday, [*March 7, 1921*][4]

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

Panditji[5] writes that *The Independent* is in a bad shape and that if there is no help forthcoming it will have to be closed down. In my

[1] A popular municipal commissioner of Lahore

[2] Sent in reply to a telegram from Jullundur from a local public worker, Raizada Hans Raj, which read: "Jullundur Municipal Committee unanimously resolved presentation of welcome address tomorrow morning. Please wire acceptance. Inform Press."

[3] The address referred to in the text as well as in addressee's telegram was presented by the Jullundur Municipal Committee on March 8, 1921.

[4] March 7 was the last Monday Gandhiji spent in Lahore before *The Independent* was closed down in December, 1921. Gandhiji reached Ahmedabad on March 11, a Friday.

[5] Pandit Motilal Nehru, General Secretary of the Congress

view, it is the only daily newspaper which fully supports non-co-operation. Its influence is considerable. It is desirable that it should not close down. Even those who have taken shares have not paid. Moreover, the case against Syed Hussain is going to cost money. Panditji writes that Umar has taken the entire responsibility for it. It would be good to come to a definite decision in the matter. If it has to be closed down, let it be so. I cannot decide about the matter because personally I am not so much enamoured of newspapers. I expect to be in Ahmedabad on Friday. But the situation here is such that one cannot be sure.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati : S. N. 32737

208. SPEECH AT JULLUNDUR[1]

March 8, 1921

Mahatmaji, replying to the address, thanked the Municipality that this committee had shown the courage to present an address to a national servant. He deplored the absence of Maulana Shaukat Ali and expressed thanks to the lady who had lent khaddar for printing the address and expressed pleasure at receiving it and said that to obtain swaraj peacefully we must use khaddar. There was no other way. Rich and poor, all should use khaddar. Today the Indian population in crores in villages had no clothes with which to cover themselves. They should not be deceived because they had puggrees and fine muslin clothes. He appreciated the presentation of Rs. 629 in a khaddar purse by the people of Jullundur and of Rs. 100 by Sardar Kesar Singh. Mahatmaji expressed pleasure that the address was in Urdu. He regretted that the Indians even in their private life used English. He was no enemy of English, yet we could not attain swaraj unless we adopted the national language. He appealed for funds saying that the money presented was not sufficient. Lala Lajpat Rai would not be satisfied. He asked them to send more money so that schools and colleges could be nationalized. He opposed the use of ornaments and appealed to pleaders to suspend practice and serve the nation for one year and requested that all men and women should use khaddar.

The Tribune, 9-3-1921

[1] Delivered in reply to the address presented by the local municipality

209. SPEECH AT HOSHIARPUR

March 8, 1921

Mahatmaji in his speech regretted the absence of Maulana Shaukat Ali who was his brother and had common cause with him. He said he was a staunch *Sanatanist* and Maulana Shaukat Ali was a staunch Mohammedan, but still they were like brothers, which showed that Hindu-Muslim unity was possible. He congratulated Hoshiarpur on having hand-made cloth factories, but regretted that still people had foreign cloth on them. There was no shame for men and women in weaving and spinning for themselves. To be able to kill was no courage. The perpetrators of the Nankana Saheb tragedy were denounced, while the martyrs were honoured, which showed that courage lay in dying for truth and the nation, and not in killing. All religions had decided that to remove the Khilafat and Punjab wrongs they must win swaraj within 8 months, which could only be obtained by non-violent non-co-operation. It was their duty to stop the pensions of O'Dwyer and Dyer, which could only be done by attaining swaraj. To win that they must stand united, adhering to their religion. They should non-co-operate with Government and adopt swadeshi. Pleaders should leave practice and schools should be nationalized. Mahatmaji appealed for funds.

The Tribune, 10-3-1921

210. SPEECH AT HARIANA[1]

March 8, 1921

Mahatmaji in declaring these institutions[2] open congratulated Hariana on its achievements, and asked them to do more for swaraj, the only remedy for Khilafat and Punjab wrongs. Mahatmaji declared that he was not a barrister any more but a weaver and a peasant. There was no shame in weaving and spinning. Mahatmaji laid special stress on non-violence in speech and action and denounced the present system of Government and declared it the duty of every Indian to work for swaraj, which could be attained within 8 months by non-violent non-co-operation. Violence would mean failure. Sikhs wanted to hang the Nankana Saheb murderers. They wanted Government help. He wanted them to leave those murderers if Government wanted to release them, but not co-operate with Government. His message to the panchayats was not to use social boycott against those who did not conform. He urged Hindu-Muslim unity

[1] Delivered at a meeting presided over by Syed Habib in place of Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari who could not attend owing to a Government order

[2] Several panchayats and national schools which Gandhiji had been requested to declare open

based on religious tolerance. Mahatmaji specially asked ladies to wear khaddar, to spin and weave and pray for the success of the national movement, telling them they had no right to wear ornaments when crores of Indians were naked and starving.

The Tribune, 10-3-1921

211. SPEECH AT AMBALA

March 8, 1921

Mr. Gandhi finished his present Punjab tour at Ambala where in the course of his speech he said that Ambala was the last place to be visited by him. He hoped to return and visit other places in the near future. He was sorry that Maulana Shaukat Ali was not with him during the latter part of his tour. People had been accustomed to look upon them as inseparable but, when every available worker had to give his best attention and time to the service that needed him most, it was not possible even for two to be together except when it was absolutely necessary. They wanted to gain swaraj during the year and they wanted to see the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs redressed within that period. He believed it to be possible if certain elementary conditions were fulfilled. He had dilated upon them from many a platform. They knew that it was necessary for them to observe non-violence in the strictest manner possible. They must not only control their hands but their tongues and their minds also. Thus, and thus only, would they be able to restrain themselves at critical moments. If they claimed theirs to be a religious movement, they were bound topurify themselves and therefore avoid drink and intoxicating drugs, observe chastity and cleanse their hearts by being truthful in thought, word and deed. There must be a real unity of hearts between Hindus, Mohammedans, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians, Jews and all others who composed the Indian nation.

But the speaker said he would not dwell further upon the essential conditions of swaraj. He would like rather to sum up the result of his experiences. He was going to Ahmedabad[1] and he would be asked what the Punjab was doing. And though the Punjab was the land of puritans it had not kept pace with the other parts of India in non-co-operation. The Punjab had produced reformers like Guru Nanak and Guru Govind Singh[2]. The Punjab was the home of Dayanand's[3] activity. The Punjab had suffered as no other part of India in 1919. It was in the Punjab that India was made to crawl on her belly. It was in the Punjab that stalwart Punjabis were made to draw lines with their noses. It was in the Punjab that innocent men were hanged and sentenced to transportaion for life. It was in the Punjab that little schoolchildren were made to walk long distances and to salute the Union Jack. He hoped that if terrorism was

[1] Gandhiji reached Ahmedabad on March 11, 1921.

[2] The spiritual head of the Sikh community in the seventeenth century, who made the Sikhs militant.

[3] Dayanand Saraswati (1824-83) founder of the Arya Samaj

repeated, not a Punjabi would be found who would crawl or rub his nose on the ground, and that not a child would be found who would against his will salute the Union Jack. He hoped that they would be shot rather than do under compulsion any of the things he had mentioned.

What had the Punjab done for non-co-operation to vindicate India's honour and the honour of Islam? He would have sorrowfully to tell his inquirers that the pleaders of the Punjab had made a poor response to the call of the nation, that not many college boys had given up colleges conducted under the Government patronage and that very few titled men had given up their titles. The speaker hoped that the Punjab would soon show better results. So far however as financial help was concerned he would be able to testify to the fact that the land of five rivers had organized the Tilak Swaraj Fund in an effective and business-like manner. Everywhere the speaker noticed the readiness of the audience to pay. Their financial contribution, be it little or much, was a token of their association with the movement. Whilst the Punjab stood at the top in point of swaraj finance, he wished to warn them against being satisfied or being remiss in their effort. They should relieve Lala Lajpat Rai of all anxiety on that score. In the matter of swadeshi too the Punjab was by far the most progressive. The spinning-wheel was nowhere so popular as in the Punjab. It was to the speaker a stirring sight to find women belonging to the highest station in life spinning daily in a religious manner. He congratulated the women of the Punjab on their industry and patriotism. The devotion, the simplicity, and the faith of the Punjabi women was a sight that filled him with the highest hope. The women were not behindhand in paying their quota of money either. The speaker however added that he would not be content until the Punjab manufactured the whole of its yarn and cloth and was dressed in khaddar. The Punjab might easily lead India.

It had the living memory of the Gurus[1] and Swami Dayanand. The Punjab had faith and devotion. The Arya Samajists[2] and the Sikhs had a splendid organization. They had wealth too. They were both small and compact communities of puritans, and if they would but dedicate their puritanic zeal to the country's cause, they would contribute not a little to the movement for gaining swaraj during the year. They could easily nationalize all their educational institutions, their vakils could without difficulty suspend practice. The essence of puritanism was progress. Let it not be said of these organizations that they could not march with the times. They needed the bravery of Lachman Singh and Dulip Singh,[3] but they needed still more the bravery of commonplace, sustained, steady sacrifice such as the programme of non-co-operation was calculated to evoke. Whilst these two communities must be at the front the vast Hindu and Mohammedan population of the Punjab must not lag behind. They being

[1] Spiritual heads of the Sikh community; they were ten in all.

[2] Members of the Arya Samaj, a reformist Hinndu denomination following the old Vedic religion

[3] Leaders of the Akali Sikhs who were killed at Nankana Saheb on February 20, 1921; *vide* "Sikh Awakening", 13-3-1921.

the most numerous, the ultimate salvation of India must ultimately depend upon an awakening and response among the Hindus and Mussulmans of India. In concluding, Mr. Gandhi thanked the Punjabis for the affection with which they hand overwhelmed him. Their desire for processions, their demonstrative nature, their desire to touch the feet seriously embarrassed him and hampered his movement. He asked them to refrain from the demonstrative character of their great and wonderful affection and translate it into action such as the nation required of them.

Young India, 16-3-1921

212. NOTES

TELEGRAPHIC EMBARGO

A message was required by my assistant at Ahmedabad regarding the Duke's visit to Bombay.[1] I sent the following wire: "Bombay should certainly boycott Duke's visit like other cities." The message was sent on the 18th ultimo. I received the following reply dated the 24th ultimo at the Lahore Telegraph Office:

> Your telegram addressed to Anandanand, Navajivan, Ahmedabad, on the 18th has been held up at Ahmedabad as objectionable under rulings of the Department. A refund will be granted on your applying for same.

Nobody can seriously object to the prevention of the telegraph line being used for destroying a system in whose interest, chiefly, it is run. Only, the embargo further discredits the system. If one man alone thought it evil, the embargo would enable the thinker to hang his theme on the 'atrocious limitation of the liberty of the public'. In a case like the present, it was very like the attempt to stop with a straw an onrushing torrent. In either case the prohibition of *bona-fide* propaganda, even though it may be objectionable from the Government's standpoint, must be a useless procedure. The present embargo, however, is symptomatic of a Government tottering to its own destruction.

ITS LESSON

Though I consider this embargo to be an exhibition of mere local overzeal, it has a lesson for us. Any day the Government may prohibit the use of the telegraph, the post, the rail, and the press by non-co-operationists. Will it stop the struggle for a single minute? I

[1] The Duke of Connaught was to visit Bombay in the last week of February 1921.

hope not. It has been conceived so as to be independent of Government sufferance. For it depends for success upon its universality. Non-co-operation by stray individuals is, no doubt, possible and conceivable. It has then to take a somewhat different shape. But when the spirit of it pervades the whole of India, we need not feel dependent upon the telegraph, the post, the rail, or the press. Our work can be done quite effectively without the aid of these agencies. We can send messages from mouth to mouth with electric speed. The railway train quickly transfers leaders from place to place, but it quickly transfers thousands of curiosity-mongers who serve no purpose and cause national waste. I can contemplate with perfect calmness the prohibition of the use of the rail by all except those who sign the creed of co-operation with the Government—we should have an automatic census of co-operators. So long as we have pen and paper, or even slate and pencil, we need not despair of transmitting our thoughts in writing, if we have enough volunteers. I have often been told that the independence of our printing-press is a great desideratum. I admit that it is a convenience but I was able to show during the Satyagraha Week in the April of 1919 that it was possible to issue a written newspaper.[1] Given a sufficient number of volunteer writers, we can multiply copies indefinitely. I can foresee many advantages in non-co-operationists being confined to their pens only.

THE BIHAR GOVERNMENT

When I wrote about the Bihar Government last week, I did not know half as much as I do today. I rarely get the newspapers during my incessant travels. When I do get some, I find little time to read them. It was only during my visit[2] to Lucknow that I saw the extraordinary circular of the Bihar Government practically inciting the officials to lawlessness. No wonder non-co-operation has become in Bihar almost a statutory crime. No wonder a Bihar magistrate has the impudence to assault an inoffensive sannyasi in the presence of a large crowd of admirers. I do not know that such a non-violent atmosphere was possible a year ago. No wonder such a respectable leader like Mian Mahomed Shafi of Muzaffarpur was prohibited from seeing the sannyasi and his position as a Congress secretary ignored. I am hoping that the Government employees will answer the Bihar

[1] The first issue of *Satyagrahi*, a hand-written weekly edited by Gandhiji, was published on April 7, 1919.

[2] On February 26, 1921

Government circular by attending non-co-operation meetings in a body and dare it to dismiss them. One can understand the prohibition against public servants not speaking at such meetings. But to restrain them from attending non-co-operation meetings or contributing funds to national institutions or introducing the spinningwheel, is unpardonable restriction on individual liberty, to which, I trust, the public servants will refuse to be party by complying.

GOVERNMENT PROPAGANDA

The Bihar Government is illustrating the meaning of counter-propaganda by Government, referred to in his speech by Lord Chelmsford.[1] This Government has gagged non-co-operationists of unimpeachable character and invited its officials and other supporters to conduct an unopposed campaign against non-co-operation. I understand that overzealous chowkidars announce these Government meetings in my name. The people gather, see unfamiliar faces, and most of them retire. Those who remain to listen to the eloquence of co-operators are told that, if the law courts are abandoned and the drink shops are closed, the Government revenue will suffer. Thus, these co-operation speakers put a premium on drink and litigation. I have given the substance of a graphic description given to me by a most reliable worker. It is a highly probable picture. A moment's thought will show that the Government speakers must say what my informant has attributed to them. A non-co-operationist usually begins by describing the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and demonstrating the Satanic nature of the system under which we are governed. He ends by asking people to be peaceful, to renounce intoxicants, law courts, schools and foreign goods, and to take up the spinningwheel. A thoughtless non-co-operation speaker also abusesco-operators and ignorantly advises their social boycott. A Government speaker must declare the Government as almost angelic in spite of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs, and ask the people not to give up law courts because they give justice, and not to give up drink because an occasional draught is no crime, and it brings revenue to the Government and enables it to conduct schools. The spinning-wheel, he must contend, is an antediluvian fad impossible to reintroduce in our homes, and foreign goods we cannot do without till India has become educated and industrial to the extent of being able

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Viceroy's speech on Non-co-operation.

to compete with foreign markets. Thus Government propaganda must at least indirectly encourage drinking, litigation and use of foreign goods.

An honest Government responsive to the wishes of the people will seize this golden opportunity of allying itself with the people, thus getting rid of the drink curse, will encourage even indifferent experiments in national education as a lesson in self-help, will stimulate the desire for settlement of disputes by arbitration, and will welcome the revival of hand-spinning, if only as an aid to machine manufacture and industry in the place of idleness. A Government anxious for public welfare will recognize the inner meaning of the struggle, will understand its religious nature, and, conscious of its good motive and moral strength, will be indifferent to the opposition against itself and will hail the great undoubted revival of a yearning after strength, character, and purity. But that would mean a change of heart on the part of the Government, which need not be expected just yet.

THE NAGPUR INCIDENT

Not only is it too early yet to expect any such change of heart, but the Nagpur prosecutions make it clear that the C. P. Government intend to take severe notice of temperance workers. Dr. Cholkar and Mr. Paranjapye are well-known workers. They are both undergoing prosecution virtually for temperance propaganda, The magistrate's notice, which I have seen in the papers, clearly shows that Government cannot look with unconcern upon a diminution in the drink revenue. They insisted upon holding their sale of liquor licences by a show of force, when it was their plain duty not to hold such a sale at all in view of public feeling but take advantage of it to abolish the drink traffic altogether.

AND MADRAS?

Madras has not lagged behind, either, in the campaign against non-co-operation. It may be noted, in passing, that Madras has not shown even the rowdyism that has been noticed elsewhere. Mr. Yakub Hassan and his companions have rendered a great service by refusing to be bound over and electing to suffer imprisonment. A telegram has just arrived saying that four more Malabar leaders have preferred imprisonment to giving security. It is evident that this wave of repression that is passing through India is not due to accident but to

design. I am inclined to believe the bazaar talk that the word has gone from the central authority that the local administrations are free to take up energetic measures to kill non-co-operation.

DUTY OF NON-CO-OPERATIONISTS

Our duty in the face of this repression is clear. We have undertaken to suffer for the sake of Islam, the Punjab, and swaraj. We must therefore welcome these prosecutions and the resulting imprisonments. Every good movement passes through five stages: indifference, ridicule, abuse, repression and respect. We had indifference for a few months. Then the Viceroy graciously laughed at it. Abuse, including misrepresentation, has been the order of the day. The provincial Governors and the anti-non-co-operation Press have heaped as much abuse upon the movement as they have been able to. Now comes repression, at present yet in its fairly mild form. Every movement that survives repression, mild or severe, invariably commands respect which is another name for success. This repression, if we are true, may be treated as a sure sign of the approaching victory. But, if we are true, we shall neither be cowed down nor angrily retaliate and be violent. *Violence is suicide.* Let us recognize that power dies hard, and that it is but natural for the Government to make a final effort for life even though it be through repression. Complete self-restraint at the present critical moment is the speediest way to success, and the easiest way of blunting the edge of repressive measures is a more extensive boycott of titles, schools, law courts, and foreign cloth, and a more intelligent activity for the revival of hand-spinning and hand-weaving.

JOURNALISTIC IGNORANCE

It has been my lot to be misrepresented and misunderstood throughout a busy life of thirty years, often by the respective governments with whom I had to deal and sometimes by the people whom I had to serve. Having been intimately connected with the Press, both as a journalist and as a public man, I have had to suffer also for its ignorance. But at no time have I so much realized the measure of ignorance betrayed by the Press as at the present moment. The cuttings that friends at times send me from England and America add even unscrupulousness to ignorance. The latest instance of careless reading and gross ignorance that has come under my notice is that of *The Leader*. It has an article on spinning which misinterprets the very

article it quotes. One of the young men travelling with me showed it to me. I was pained at the ignorance and carelessness betrayed by the writer. I asked the young man in question to write out his own reply if he had understood *The Leader*'s fallacies. His reply[1] is so effective that I give it elsewhere instead of attempting it myself.

CENSUS ENUMERATORS

I have been asked as to whether census enumerators should co-operate with the Government by responding to the Government's call. Not being clear myself I have hitherto shirked a public answer. The spirit of civil disobedience in me has pulled me one way, my loyalty to the existing programme has pulled me in the opposite direction. My loyalty has triumphed and I am clear that we must co-operate with the Government in the matter of the census. I am convinced that it strengthens our cause. It disciplines us in the habit of even reluctant obedience to statutory rules when they do not hurt our conscience or honour, and demonstrates the high and non-violent character of our struggle. We must resist the temptation to offer civil disobedience even when it is so great as in the matter of the census. Thousands of us have a singular opportunity presented to us of showing our dislike of the existing system of Government. But the exercise of restraint at the present moment enables us to prepare for civil disobedience in future. Let us, therefore, help the Government to complete the census operations, not because we fear the punishment of disobedience, but because we are by nature and training law-abiding, and we need not as yet disobey unmoral laws, whether by way of protest or with the view of destroying the authority of a Government which no longer enjoys our confidence. That extreme step in non-violent non-co-operation is open to us but we recognize that the atmosphere for its working has not yet been sufficiently created, and that we may not take extreme steps whilst milder measures are open to us. I hope, therefore, that all those who may be called upon in terms of the existing law to help census operations will render the required assistance to the authorities.

MORE GAGGING ORDERS

Since writing the foregoing notes, I have seen the text of the orders served on Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhary and Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew. They are orders under Rule 3c of the Defence of India

[1] Not reproduced here

Consolidation Rules, 1915, and run as follows:

> Whereas in the opinion of the Local Government there are reasonable grounds for believing that (name given) has acted in a manner prejudicial to the public safety, His Excellency the Governor is pleased hereby to direct that the said (name) shall until further orders abstain from attending or addressing any public meeting.

I congratulate both the receivers of[1] the orders. The Government, I hope, will find that the movement still goes on as merrily as ever. I have already suggested to the Pandit and the Doctor that they should now write out all the thoughts worth publishing and send them to the Press and to those meetings which they may wish to attend. And they may devote to spinning a portion of their enforced leisure from talking. I would advise the other speakers also to accommodate the Government by speaking as little as possible and confining their attention to quiet organizing. I know that all these gentlemen would gladly invite imprisonment by disregarding these arbitrary orders. The time for such action has not yet arrived.

But there is the other side to these orders. Now that we do not wish to seek the protection of the law courts, it would be idle tospeculate as to the legality of their orders. Everything is or can be made legal for a Government that wishes to rule arbitrarily. But the co-operators may well bestow a moment's reflection on what is happening in India. The Indian members of the Executive Councils and the responsible ministers are as much privy to these orders as are the respective Governors. Grant that the non-co-operators are wicked persons. Are the co-operators satisfied with the exercise of arbitrary powers against them? Mr. Raghupati Sahay[2] of Gorakhpur might have been a deputy collector if he had chosen to be one. He is a cultured educationist. But he has the misfortune to have organizing ability and to have a hold on the citizens of Gorakhpur. He also, I just learn from the papers, has been gagged. Nobody preaches violence in the land. Mr. Raghupati Sahay is the last person to do so. But a magistrate under a 'Home Rule' Government has been able to prohibit him from speaking at public meetings!

Young India, 9-3-1921

[1] "On" in the source

[2] Nationalist worker; professor of English, Allahabad University; renowned Urdu poet with the pen-name 'Firaq'

213. THE VICEROY'S TWO SPEECHES

His Excellency the Viceroy has made two important declaraions, one on the Khilafat[1] and the other on non-co-operation[2] and the policy of the Government arising from it. On the Khilafat His Excellency has given an exact indication of the Government mentality. He thinks that he has discharged his responsibility fully towards the Muslims of India by pressing their claim. Whereas the Indian contention is that, on a matter so vital to the Muslims, he should have resigned when he found that the Imperial Government had disallowed the Indian claim. Nobody accepts the plea of Britain's helplessness at the Council table of the League of Nations. The public may also recall the fact that, when the terms of the treaty of Sevres were published,[3] the Viceroy entered upon an elaborate defence of the part played by the Premier. How comes it, then, that he finds himself again pleading the Muslim cause! Would he have done so if there had been no non-co-operation? And what has he to say even now? If the claim is disallowed and non-co-operation is still pursued, he assumes that anarchy will be the result. Therefore the Government, he threatens, will step in to restore order. We know what "restoring" order means. His Excellency forgets that, if there is anarchy in India, it would be due to the criminal breach of their duty both by the Imperial and the Indian Governments towards the three hundred millions of the people of India.

A Viceroy may be satisfied with merely pleading the case of India. Can India be satisfied? Can a man who is dying of hunger be satisfied with mere sympathy, especially when he knows that the sympathiser can give more than mere sympathy? When the Indian Government pleads the duty of subordination to an immoral superior power, it must share the adverse judgment that may be pronounced against the latter. No duty devolves upon any servant of submitting to orders in breach of trust or honour. The treaty of Sevres is a breach of solemn pledges and the ordinary canons of honour. One who sincerely sympathizes with a starving man is presumed to share such sufferings, and is not expected to shoot him when the latter shows symptoms of becoming mad through the pangs of hunger. The responsibility for anarchy, if it does overtake India, will therefore rest

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Viceroy's speech on Khilafat".
[2] *Vide* Appendix "Viceroy's speech on Khilafat".
[3] On May 14, 1920

with the Indian Government and with those who support it in spite of its wrongs, not upon those who refuse to perform its wrongs, not upon those who refuse to perform the impossible task of making people forget vital wrongs and try to direct their anger in a proper channel.

His Excellency wonders at the description of the Government as Satanic. He is wrong in adopting the description for himself. For nobody has accused individuals of being Satanic. His Excellency's adroitly taking in that category his Indian colleagues is too artless to deceive anyone. But the system that the Viceroy and his colleagues, whether Indian or English, administer, possesses all the attributes of Satan—deceitfulness, hypocrisy, unscrupulousness, and unmitigated tyranny on occasion and its justification tempered by half-hearted confessions. His Excellency may rest assured that there is no partiality in non-co-operation. There is always a place of honour for an Englishman in the ranks of non-co-operationists. And no Indian co-operator will be spared the criticism that may be deserved by him for his complicity in the crimes of an evil Government.

His Excellency is on safest ground when he enunciates the doctrine of meeting non-co-operation by propaganda—by the counter-propaganda of co-operation. He is entitled to take all the comfort he can from the fact that both the title-holders and the students have made a poor response in point of numbers and that sufficient Indians have been found to act as members of the reformed legislatures. Non-co-operationists, whilst admitting that the numerical response might have been greater, manage, however, to take pleasure in the titles and the schools and the law courts having fallen into disrepute. These institutions no longer remain the objects of idolatry that they once were. Non-co-operationists are satisfied that practising lawyers and title-holders can no longer be popular leaders. They know that even those who have not given up titles, practice or schools, are at heart non-co-operators and confess their weakness.

His Excellency has been misled by his advisers in believing that non-co-operationists have only now turned their attention to the masses. Indeed, they are our sheet-anchor. But we are not going to tamper with them. We shall continue patiently to educate them politically till they are ready for safe action. There need be no mistake about our goal. As soon as we feel reasonably confident of non-violence continuing among them in spite of provoking executions, we shall certainly call upon the sepoy to lay down his arms

and the peasantry to suspend payment of taxes. We are hoping that that time may never have to be reached. We shall leave no stone unturned to avoid such a serious step. But we will not flinch when the moment has come and the need has arisen.

Young India, 9-3-1921

214. INSTRUCTIONS TO U.P. PEASANTS[1]

Attainment of swaraj or redress of grievances is impossibleunless the following rules are strictly observed.

1. We may not hurt anybody. We may not use our sticks against anybody. We may not use abusive language or exercise any other undue pressure.

2. We may not loot shops.

3. We should influence our opponents by kindness, not by using physical force nor stopping their water supply nor the services of the barber and the washerman.

4. We may not withhold taxes from the Government or rent from the landlord.

5. Should there be any grievances against zemindars they should be reported to Pandit Motilal Nehru and his advice followed.

6. It should be borne in mind that we want to turn zemindars into friends.

7. We are not at the present moment offering civil disobedience; we should, therefore, carry out all Government orders.

8. We may not stop railway trains nor forcibly enter them without tickets.

9. In the event of any of our leaders being arrested, we may not prevent his arrest nor create any disturbance. We shall not lose our cause by the Government arresting our leaders; we shall certainly lose it if we become mad and do violence.

10. We must abolish intoxicating drinks, drugs and other evil habits.

11. We must treat all women as mothers and sisters and respect

[1] During his visit to Oudh, Gandhiji addressed, presumably at Gorakhpur or Fyzabad which he visited on February 21, these instructions in Hindi to the peasants of the then United Provinces, and a “free rendering” was reproduced in *Young India*.

and protect them.

12. We must promote unity between Hindus and Muslims.

13. As amongst Hindus we may not regard anyone as inferior or untouchable. There should be the spirit of equality and brotherhood among all. We should regard all the inhabitants of India as brothers and sisters.

14. We may not indulge in gambling.

15. We may not steal.

16. We may not tell an untruth on any account whatsoever. We should be truthful in all our dealings.

17. We should introduce the spinning-wheel in every home and all—male and female—should devote their spare time to spinning. Boys and girls should also be taught and encouraged to spin for four hours daily.

18. We should avoid the use of all foreign cloth and wear cloth woven by the weavers from yarn spun by ourselves.

19. We should not resort to law courts but should have all disputes settled by private arbitration.

The most important thing to remember is to curb anger, never to do violence and even to suffer violence done to us.

Young India, 9-3-1921

215. LETTER TO MEMBERS OF S.G.P.C.[1]

AMBALA,
March 9, 1921

KHALSAJI,

I have received your wire and I have also received and studied your resolution condemning the manner in which the Government enquiry into the Nankana tragedy is being conducted, expressing want of confidence in it and appointing an unofficial Committee of Enquiry. The resolution appoints me as Chairman of the Committee. Whilst I appreciate the honour done to me, I very much fear that I shall not be able to render any useful service to the Committee or the community so long as the appointment of the Committee is intended

[1] Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee, the committee for the management of Sikh temples

merely to counteract any mischievous effects that might be produced by the Government enquiry. The resolution of non-co-operation passed by the Sikh League and the other national organizations really precludes the Sikh community from taking part in or assisting any investigations by the Government. I should therefore have thought that you would dissociate yourself from the enquiries solely on the ground of non-co-operation, even though such investigations might be calculated to bring temporary or partial relief in special matters. To me your want of confidence in the Government enquiry is one more illustration of the hopelessness of any association with a Government which we are seeking to destroy, if it will not mend. I would therefore urge you to reconsider your resolution and come to a decision in terms of non-co-operation or relieve me from the responsibility you have imposed on me.

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

The Tribune, 13-3-1921

216. SIKH AWAKENING

Such has been the awakening among the Sikhs and so spirited is that community that either this awakening will deliver India from bondage within eight months or it will obstruct that deliverance. They have strength of both body and mind. They are brave with the sword. It may be said that they are strong of will, too.

The Sikhs are believed to number some thirty lakhs. Till today I had thought of them as a sect of Hinduism. But their leaders think that theirs is a distinct religion. Guru Nanak was its founder and Guru Govind Singh its defender. The Sikhs believe in ten gurus in all. Guru Nanak, of course, was a Hindu but, according to Sikh leaders, he founded a new religion. Outwardly their religion is symbolized by five K's. Those five things are: *kesha*[1], *kangi*[2], *kada*[3], *kachha*[4], *kirpan*. As they do not shave their beards—or trim their hair, they need the comb. The steel bangle they wear on the wrist is a symbol of self-control. The purpose of the *kachha is* easy to understand. The

[1] Hair
[2] Comb
[3] Steel wristlet
[4] Long drawers

kirpan is what is called a *jambiya* and they look upon it as a sign oftheir strength in defending their faith and as an object of terror to the enemy. Till some years ago, not much emphasis was laid on these five things, but the younger Sikhs now attach importance to them and those who, though professing to be Sikhs, do not wear them, are not accepted as such by the reformers. The latter have been persuading even women to wear the *kirpan*.

One of their elders once told me that the Sikhs do not believe in *varnashrama;* there is no high or low among them; there is no untouchability; they look upon idol worship as a sin. Though they show reverence for Rama, Krishna and others, these do not have among them the same place as in Hinduism. They do not believe in cow protection, though they do not eat beef. They believe in rebirth and *mukti*[1]. They do not hold the Vedas or other Hindu scriptures in special regard. Their sacred book[2] is the word of their gurus and, apart from that book, they accept no other scriptures as holy books. Tobacco and liquor are forbidden among them.

Sikh temples are known as *gurudwaras.* The reformers believe that the standards in these *gurudwaras* have become lax and the *mahants* too often impious scoundrels. Some of the *gurudwaras* have historic importance. The reformers think that it would be best to take over control of all of them. This movement, which has been going on for a number of years now, seeks to introduce changes in them and to put their management under a committee. Leading Sikhs like Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia are also associated with this movement, which has become more rigorous after the starting of non-co-operation. Organizations of Sikhs known as Akali *Jathas* or Akali *Dals* are springing up everywhere and are taking over possession of the *gurudwaras*. They have their headquarters at Amritsar. In addition to the five symbolical articles mentioned above, the Akalis wear a black turban and a black band on one shoulder and also carry a big staff with a small axe at the top. Some of them have staffs without axes. Fifty or a hundred men of such groups go and take possession of a *gurudwara.* They claim that it is not their intention to take possession by force, they suffer violence themselves but do not use any. Nevertheless, a crowd of fifty or more men approaching a place in the way described is certainly a show of force, and naturally the keeper of

[1] Deliverance from phenomenal existence; same as *moksha*

[2] The Granth Saheb

the *gurudwara* would be intimidated by it.

Whether or not it is true that there is display of force in an action of this kind, the biggest *gurudwaras* have fallen into the hands of the Akali *Jathas,* the latter having lost 160 men in the process.

The majority of these died while taking possession of their most important *gurudwara,* known as Nankana Saheb. It is 40 miles from Lahore. The railway station also bears the same name. This *gurudwara* was built in memory of Guru Nanak. There is not one *gurudwara,* but there are five, at Nankana. One of these five is at the spot where a cobra with its outspread hood is said to have provided shade to Guru Nanak, intending no harm. Narandas was the *mahant* in control of this *gurudwara.* He is said to be given to sensuality. Though a professed *udasi*[1], he had kept a mistress. His annual income was estimated at Rs. 5 lakhs. The Akali *Dal* had its eye on this gurudwara, and had intended to make some move on the 3rd or 4th March. But the late Sardars Lachhman Singh and Dulip Singh, both millionaires, could not wait. The former decided to go to Nankana Saheb and took with him about 200 men. To Sardar Dulip Singh's attempts to dissuade him from the step Sardar Lachhman Singh replied that he had taken a pledge, when starting, that he would bow his head before the Granth Saheb and, if fate had decreed that he must die, he would. The previous night, Sardar Dulip Singh was talking to me in the presence of other Sikh friends. Death took him to Nankana. How could he allow a friend to proceed there alone? So he too went with him. It was the early morning of Sunday, February 20, when the Sikh *Dal* arrived [at Nankana].

Narandas had been apprehending an attack on the *gurudwara* for some months. He had made preparations, had collected weapons and gunpowder. A number of rooms had been built forming a kind of fort with openings for directing gun-fire. The main door was rivetted with massive steel plates. Things were so arranged that a man who had gone in could not come out alive, and that, once the gate wasclosed, no one could effect easy entry. The shrine stands nearly in the centre of the circle of rooms. The floor inside is of marble.

That Sunday, Lachhman Singh and his band entered the temple. It is said that they had gone only for *darshan.* They had no intention of taking possession that day.

[1] One who has cultivated indifference to things of the world

Narandas was already possessed with fear. A guilty mind is all timidity. He had become desperate. He looked upon the Akali *Dal* as his enemy. The moment Lachhman Singh bowed his head before the Granth Saheb, the assassins hired by Narandas, who are stated to have taken up positions on the terrace of the cells, opened fire. I saw bullet marks on the Granth Saheb and on the columns of the marble cupola.

Lachhman Singh fell. It is said that, in that wounded, bleeding state, he was dragged, tied to a near-by tree, and burnt alive! I did see the burnt trunk of the tree and even the blood trails.

The others sought refuge in the cells, and everyone tried to save his life by hiding somewhere or other. But the *mahant* had run amuck. He had hired murderers with him. He decided to kill all the men. These brave men were sought out where they were hiding in the cells, beaten up almost to death and their arms, ears, etc., were chopped off! For a while, on this holy ground man had turned into monster. He out-Dyered Dyer. Nor was this all. As if ashamed of his cruelty or wishing to hide the shameful fact that not a single man of his had been killed, this terrible *mahant* had the corpses sprayed with kerosene and burnt. Not a single man out of all those who had entered the temple could come out alive. Not even one witness on the Akali side has yet been found. It is said that Dulip Singh, who had been left outside, pleaded with the *mahant* and urged him to desist. But was he likely to listen to reason? He took Dulip Singh's life also and had his body burnt outside!

In this way, for the sake and in the name of religion, over 150 Sikhs laid down their lives and established their title to the ownership of the *gurudwara*.

I asked one of their leaders what, according to him, was the value of this sacrifice from the point of view of the country. He said it had added to the strength not only of the Sikhs but of the whole of India. We should not be surprised if many more such sacrifices have to be made before we win swaraj. This sacrifice, he said, had shown the world what brave men the country had. He was right.

On the day on which these martyrs were being cremated, we two, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and I, were present at a meeting[1] of Sikhs. He uttered one profound sentence there. "The blood," he said, "of a hundred and fifty martyrs has purified one *gurudwara*. Should it be

[1] At Shri, on February 25, 1921

any wonder if all of us have to be martyrs to purify the *gurudwara* that is India?"

Let us examine a little the sacrifice of these friends. If they had intended to obtain control of the *gurudwara* by a show of force their aim was pure but their means should be considered impure. Since, however, they laid down their own lives, the world will always applaud their gallantry.

If they had gone only for *darshan* and died in self-defence, even then the world would admire their bravery and their meanswould not be called into question. If, however, they had gone only for *darshan* and, notwithstanding that they were armed, they silently and without once raising their weapons embraced death, they are to be held to have given a demonstration of peaceful gallantry the like of which no one has shown in modern times. If that is what happened, it could, in this age, happen only in India. What makes one so happy is that almost without exception everyone of the Sikhs to whom I talked on this subject believed that these 150 heroes had gone only for *darshan,* and that though it would have been possible for them to draw their swords, they refrained from doing so and perished, since they had taken a pledge to act peacefully.

If so, this is a perfect example of non-violent non-co- operation, and I firmly believe that its impact on the freedom movement will be tremendous.

As soon as a report of this reached the Government in Lahore, troops were despatched by special train and the *mahant* and those of his companions who could be found in the *gurudwara* were taken and put under arrest. On the second or third day, the *gurudwara* was handed over to a committee of the Akali *Dal.* The Sikhs, however, do not trust the Government. They believe that the *mahant's* preparations could not have been outside the knowledge of the Government officials. But here I do not wish to consider the Government's fault.

The only thing to consider is what lesson we are to learn from the event. We cannot imagine the limit to which we can increase our strength through self-immolation. If the Sikhs had killed the *mahant.* and his men or wounded them, or an equal number had died on either side, the Akali *Dal* would never have acquired the strength it now has. It is the [Akali] Sikhs who have died, yet it is the *mahants* and others who control the *gurudwaras* and selfishly wish to perpetuate their control that got frightened. Many sensible Sikhs understand that if, in

this hour of victory, the Sikhs get excited and forget themselves, there is a danger of their losing all that they have gained and the community's losing its light.

I do not wish to go into the other serious issues besides this which arise, for they are of no interest at the moment to the Gujarati-reading public. I shall explain them to readers as and when occasion arises.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-3-1921

217. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN[1]

BOMBAY,
March 14 [*1921*][2]

DEAR MR. NATESAN,

We got your telegram yesterday. Mr. Gandhi feels that much as he thinks he would find peace of mind only at your place[3], he should not place you in a rather awkward position.[4] He understands your position quite fully and he therefore desires that he should this time stay with those who for the time being are with him. He trusts fully well you won't mind this. You need not at all be anxious now on the score of his accommodation.

Yours sincerely,

M. H. DESAI

From a photostat: G.N. 2243

[1] This letter was written by Mahadev Desai on behalf of Gandhiji.

[2] Judging from the contents the letter seems to have been written in 1921; *vide* "Letter to G. A. Natesan", April 4, 1921.

[3] During his proposed visit to Madras early in April

[4] Natesan was not in favour of non-co-operation.

218. TELEGRAM TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

[After *March 14, 1921*][1]

JUST RECEIVED LETTER. HOPE REACH BEZWADA[2] 30TH INSTANT MAIL.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7503

219. SPEECH AT SADHAKA ASHRAM, ANDHERI

BOMBAY,
[*March 15, 1921*][3]

I look upon ashramites as my "reserve force". I do not wish to use them for winning independence and fighting the British. I shall win independence with the help of the people. The need for the services of ashramities will arise after independence. I do not think winning independence will be as difficult a task as making it work, which will require the services of tried and tested and resourceful persons. I wish all ashramites to train themselves for the task. Itherefore thought of naming this ashram 'Sadhaka Ashram', and after consulting Acharya Deshpande and the directors of this institution settled upon this name. I wish to keep the inmates away from political activity. They have to go through a long penance, doing constructive work.

[From Hindi]

Gandhiji aur Rajashthan, pp. 289-90

220. NOTES

HUMANITY V. PATRIOTISM

A dear friend has drawn my attention to what he considers is an unfortunate appeal to patriotism rather than humanity in my letter[4] to the Sikhs. The portion objected to is this:

> The purest way of seeking justice against the murderers is not to seek it. The perpetrators, whether they are Sikhs, Pathans or Hindus, are our countrymen.

[1] This telegram was sent in reply to the addressee's letter of March 14, 1921.

[2] Where the All-India Congress Committee meeting was to be held on March 31, 1921

[3] Gandhiji visited the Sadhaka Ashram on this day.

[4] *Vide* "Message to Lahore Sikhs on Nankana Tragedy", March 4, 1921.

Their punishment cannot recall the dead to life. I would ask those whose hearts are lacerated to forgive them, not out of their weakness—for they are able in every way to have them punished—but out of their immeasurable strength. Only the strong can forgive.

I have read the foregoing again and again. I feel that if I had to rewrite the letter, I should not alter a single word in it. My appeal in that letter is to the Sikhs as Indians. And it was enough for me to confine my appeal to the point that could be easily appreciated and reached by those whom I was addressing. The main reasoning would be the same for all, and at all times. My letter as addressed to the Sikhs would have lost its force somewhat if I had broadened the appeal as from patriotism to humanity. A Sikh who will want to punish a non-Sikh criminal but would forgive a Sikh may be told that to him Sikh and Indian must mean the same thing in matters such as the incident covers. The appeal to an Indian as against an Englishman will be to his humanity rather than to his patriotism.

But I am free to confess that in the present state of feeling, an Englishman may easily misinterpret the motive of the letter. For me patriotism is the same as humanity. I am patriotic because I am human and humane. It is not exclusive. I will not hurt England or Germany to serve India. Imperialism has no place in my scheme of life. The law of a patriot is not different from that of the patriarch. And a patriot is so much the less a patriot if he is a lukewarm humanitarian. There is no conflict between private and political law. A non-co-operator, for instance, would act exactly in the same manner towards his father or brother as he is today acting towards the Government.

WHAT ABOUT GENERAL DYER?

Then why all the recalling incessantly of Jallianwala Bagh, the Crawling Lane,[1] asks the friend? The answer is simple. To forgive is not to forget. There is no merit in loving an enemy when you forget him for a friend. The merit lies in loving in spite of the vivid knowledge that the one that must be loved is not a friend. Ali, that Bayard of Islam, would not retaliate whilst the memory of a vile affront was still fresh in his mind and although he was more than a match for his adversary. India seeks not punishment of the criminals, Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer, but dismissal of servants who have proved unworthy of the trust reposed in them. And they are not

[1] *Vide* "Congress report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.

fully dismissed so long as they receive any pension from the Indian treasury. A father is not only not bound to feed an unrepentant son but participates in his crime if he continues to support him.

The Congress Commissioners[1] had their choice either to advise impeachment and prosecution or mere dismissal. They chose the latter on the grounds of humanity and not on that of expedience. The reader may be let into the secret that the Commissioners passed many an anxious hour over the matter. The report was finally shaped at Kashi within a stone's throw of the waters of the Ganges. The recommendation was hotly debated among them and they came to the unanimous conclusion that India could only gain by refraining from prosecution. Mr. Das in a notable speech at Patna recently referred to the compact then made between the Commissioners that, whilst and if they reduced the recommendation to a minimum, they must solemnly resolve to enforce them at the risk of their lives. The Commissioners are therefore non-co-operators as a matter of simple duty. But they chose to waive the right of punishment. It is true that the whole of India has not yet deliberately accepted the doctrine of humanity, i.e., forgiveness. One often hears the talk of hanging the murderers and so on. But India does not yet feel strong as against British Governors and Generals. She still fears them. Forgiveness of Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer is therefore a meaningless term. But India is daily gaining strength and qualifying for forgiveness. When an Indian talks of punishment of the Punjab criminals, he talks in impotent rage. But I am convinced that if India was today free, i.e., strong enough to punish them, she would refrain. She only wants her deliverance from possibilities of Jallianwala. The whole campaign of non-co-operation has been conceived in a spirit not of revenge but of Justice.

AGAINST THE SYSTEM

Moreover, the battle is not against the individuals but against the system. All the Governors are certainly not bad. Hakim Ajmal Khan, one of the greatest Indians and one of the highest of Muslims, demonstrated this clearly when he had the portraits of Lord and Lady Hardinge unveiled at the opening of the Tibbi College.

Non-co-operationists have constantly invited the opinion of

[1] Gandhiji C. R. Das, Abbas Tayabji and M. R. Jayakar, who were appointed by the Punjab Subcommittee of the Congress to inquire into the Punjab disorders of April 1919

Englishmen, and men belonging to all nations to join this movement of purification. India in arms against the religion of superiority will not be exploited whether the system of [exploi]tation is administered by Lord Chelmsford [or L]ord Sinha. The language of non-co-operators [may] not always be happy but their means are the choicest.[1]

PANDIT MALAVIYAJI

Writing of the means brings me to the recent happenings in Benares. The attack on Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji is symptomatic of the temper of the people. If any man in India should be free from insult it is Panditji. His services to the Punjab are still fresh in our memory[2]. After all, his labour alone has brought into being that great University in Benares. His patriotism is second to no one's. He is gentle to a fault. It is India's misfortune, not his fault, that he does not see his way clear to risk the temporary giving up of his idol. That he should have been insulted in the manner reported is a matter of deep sorrow. If the Sanskrit students or the so-called sannyasis chose to block the passage of the students, Panditji certainly had the right—it was his duty—to intervene and secure a free passage for co-operating students. In my opinion, the police were perfectly justified in prosecuting the ringleaders or those whom they believed to be such. That those arrested were roughly handled I can well believe. But we may not expect gentleness from the police even when we attained swaraj. I am, therefore, unable to extend any sympathy to those who so manifestly discredited a cause which they ignorantly claimed to represent.

THE TRUE AND THE FALSE

It is one thing, however, to condemn the excesses in the move ment and another to condemn the movement itself. It is necessary to distinguish between the true non-co-operators and the false ones. The behaviour of the immature students and the ignorant sannyasis was undoubtedly disgraceful and worthy of condemnation. But the vast body of the people know the limits of non-co-operation and do not travel beyond them. I venture to claim that India has never been so tranquil as she is today, and yet it is not the inertia of the weak and the

[1] The source is damaged at some places in this paragraph.

[2] Gandhiji evidently has in mind the tour of the Punjab undertaken by Malaviya following the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy of April 1919.

unknowing, but it is the enlightened quiet of those who are conscious of their daily growing strength India knows the malady from which she is suffering and is preparing to throw it off by a course of inward purification.

TO BE EVER WATCHFUL

At the same time we have to take care of what we say and do. Some of the best men of India are standing aloof because they have no faith in the people remaining non-violent in the face of provocation. And every little act, even of discourtesy, on the part of non-co-operators retards the fulfilment of our purpose. We cannot be wise, temperate, and furious in a moment; we are either violent or non-violent. We must lie in the bed we have made for ourselves. Having decided to pin our faith to non-violence, we may not coquet with violence. We would therefore warn ourselves against countenancing violence in any shape or form. If we do not build our movement on the solid rock of non-violence, it may any day tumble, like a pack of cards, with a whiff. We cannot serve God and Mammon.

A JULLUNDUR CIRCULAR

The instructions of the D[eput]y Commissioner, Jullundur, on the panchayats are innocent to look at. He has laid down the law in an unexceptionable manner but he has missed the point of attack. No doubt the decisions of private panchayats are not binding in law. But only those will seek the protection of the panchayats who wish voluntarily to abide by their decisions and therefore need no process of enforcement of panchayat decrees. No doubt compounding of a felony is wrong. But no court in the world can compel a man whose property is stolen to lodge a complaint. Even in my capacity as a lawyer, I have had the privilege of advising clients not to prosecute thieves they had known and have rescued some of them from the police. Neither the police nor I, much less did the client, compound a felony in such cases. Why should not a panchayat excommunicate a habitual thief? Society does not deprive itself of social protection when law courts are established for the punishment of offenders. The Government have their own remedy when they wish to punish thieves and other offenders. I would therefore strongly advise the panchayats of Jullundur to continue their very useful work of giving people cheap, speedy, and efficient justice. Care must of course be exercised that they resort to no punitive measures. The only penalty that is at

our disposal is the force of public opinion. There is not much danger of parties who voluntarily seek the protection of the panchayat disobeying the latter's verdicts. We must run the risk of some disobedience; we must not, in impatience, resort to force or intimidation for the purpose either of securing reference to panchayats or execution of their decrees.

IMPATIENT COW-PROTECTORS

During my wanderings I have come across many instances of Hindus being in a hurry to protect the cow. I would respect fully remind them of the homely proverb, 'Haste is waste.' In several municipalities, Lahore for instance, they have been trying to pass a bye-law prohibiting slaughter of calves and milch cattle. The object is laudable and unexceptionable. But these things cannot be brought about by majorities. It is entirely for the Muslims to take the initiative. Hindus cannot force the pace. And Muslims cannot be expected to take legal steps till we have attained swaraj. Hindus cannot 'have the cake and eat it' too. Either we are non-co-operators or we are not. If we are, we cannot seek the assistance of the Government even to protect the cow. I hope, therefore, that Hindu non-co-operators in Lahore as elsewhere will dissociate themselves entirely from any movement to secure legislative protection for the cow. We must recognize that the Muslims are everywhere doing most handsomely in the matter. They are trying their utmost to respect Hindu susceptibilities. No man could have done more than Miyan Chhotani and Mian Haji Ahmed Khatri at the time of the last *Bakr-i-Id*.[1] Impatient Hindus will actually injure their own cause by forcing the pace. Either we rely upon Muslim nobility or upon the force of arms or law. Having chosen the former we dare not resort to the latter. Let it be remembered that forces are still at world to destroy the growing friendliness between Hindus and Muslims. Mischief-makers are straining every nerve to break the tie that binds the two. They are already exploiting the Lahore incident. We must not play into the hands of 'the enemy'.

MAIL FROM MAURITIUS

I have the following cable sent by Mr.Budhan, a practising barrister of Mauritius:

[1] A Muslim religion festival

Indians Mauritius request intervention attempt reintroduction immigrants. Governor Mauritius proceeding Ceylon thereanent protest sent Viceroy.

I can only draw public attention to the scandal and urge redoubled effort to gain swaraj. Immigration can only mean indentured immigration or stimulated immigration. The first will be almost illegal and I can hardly conceive the possibility of a Viceroy agreeing toresumption of indentured emigration. The second is a possibility fraught with great mischief, for under it emigrants will go under the pretence of freedom. I hope, however, that workers in the labour districts of Madras and the United Provinces will warn the labour class against temptations that might be held out to them, i.e., if the Government foolishly permit any recruiting for the so-called re-emigration.

Young India, 16-3-1921

221. THE OLD STORY

Whenever a great movement is going on sensation-mongering becomes the order of the day. A newspaper placard in Lahore is reported to have announced in flaming letters that I had said in *Navajivan* that swaraj would not be attained because Messrs Shastriar and Paranjapye were insulted during the year. I have just read the back number of *Navajivan* and can find nothing in my writings warranting such a conclusion. Under the heading "Swaraj will be delayed"[1], I have severely criticized the conduct of the audience at Mr. Shastriar's meetings in Bombay, and I said that conduct such as this must put back the clock of progress. I have explained in the same article that but for such exhibition of rowdyism we should not take even one year to gain swaraj. No one need feel anxious about my belief. I wish people will cease to think of what I believe and begin to believe something themselves. If I could infect India with the intensity of my belief, she can gain swaraj today, for the will of a nation composed of three hundred million men and women acting in unison cannot be withstood by any power on earth.

But Sir William Vincent was good enough to inform the Assembly the other day that India could not become even like the Dominions because she would fall an easy prey to any power that chose to attack her, and if that did not happen she would be torn to

[1] *Vide* "Swaraj will be Delayed", 13-2-1921.

pieces by internal strife. If it is true, it is the severest censure that can be pronounced upon British rule in India. I have however suggested before now that we need not be afraid either of foreign invasion or anarchy within. British rule has certainly emasculated us. Disarmament has reduced our fighting power, and the policy of 'divide and rule' certainly succeeded for a time in keeping Hindus and Muslims apart. Common misfortunes have however made us brothers in distress. We need not fear foreign invasion, if we refuse to were foreign cloth and exchange with foreign nations only such produce or manufacture as we choose. South Africa has a poor standing army and no navy. It is true that every Boer is a fighter. But it is not the fighting quality that has made South African whites one nation. It is consciousness of oneness and ability to die for their country that has made them a nation. The consciousness of oneness is with us an ever-growing quality and with it must come the stength to die. This does not require training either in English schools or in Council halls, and, as I feel that India is realizing her unity with an undreamt of velocity, I believe there is every probability of evolving sufficient consciousness of unity and stength to make our demand for immediate swaraj irresistible. Let us not fear the bugbear of anarchy. In spite of a Pathan occasionally running amuck in a Bombay street and a *mahant* turning Satan in Nankana Saheb, we are essentially good and inoffensive by nature. And when the Sikhs, the Gurkhas, the Rajputs and the Pathans feel as one nation, we have, if we want it, fighting material enough to give battle to any number of bandits who may wish to despoil us without any cause sedulously instilled into us by our reules, that makes my soul rise years. It in this belief of ours in our helplessness which makes the clock of progress go to slow. It is strange that we are in bondage. It would be natural for us to feel free today.

Young India, 16-3-1921

222. ALL-INDIA TILAK SWARAJ FUND

The Punjab deserves the first place in having organized the Tilak memorial in a methodical manner. The new committees should now be in working order and we must dot the whole of the country with collectors for the fund. In the Punjab, the Congress Committee has issued one-rupee receipts, thus expecting those who can to pay nothing less than one rupee. A memorial week, subsequently extended

to a fortnight, was declared and trusted volunteers went round to make collections. They have collected over one lakh of rupees in that province. The Committee has already forwarded Rs. 25,000 on account of its contribution to the All-India Congress Committee

In my opinion, the rest of us cannot do better than copy the useful example of the Punjab. It is necessary to fix the sum we should collect. One crore of rupees for the whole of India is a most modest tribute to the memory of a patriot so great as the Lokamanya. It is a trifle when we think of the object with which the memory of the deceased is to be associated. To contribute one crore of rupees towards the attainment of swaraj is not much. And it may be noted here that the money is not to be spent in foreign or other propaganda, but largely in spinning, weaving, and other educational activity. It is to be spent in educating our children. The collection has to be distributed among the twenty one provinces and should be finished before the 30th June next. Each province will on an average be expected to collect about five lakhs of rupees. But Bombay, Gujarat, Bengal, Punjab, and such other provinces, may be expected to collect much more than Orissa or Andhra for instance.

The Working Committee has made the task easier by allowing each province to retain 75% of the collection for provincial expenditure. It is to be hoped, therefore, that not a moment will be lost in organizing the great memorial. It will be a fitting and noble tribute to the memory of one who gave his life to the attainment of swaraj and died with swaraj only in his thoughts. The Working Committee will no doubt issue authoritative instructions. But we need not await instructions in a matter of clear duty. We may safely follow the Punjabis' lead and show to the forthcoming All-lndia Congress Committee what we have done towards the fulfilment of our duty

Young India, 16-3-1921

223. FAMINE INSURANCE

When I wrote about the spinning-wheel being a household instrument of famine insurance, I little realized its implications. What I then saw through the glass of reason darkly, I now see more clearly with the undimmed eye of experience. With famine staring us in the face in Bijapur, Ahmednagar and in some parts of Gujarat,[1] it behoves us to consider carefully what this spinning-wheel as an insurance

[1] During the early months of 1921, famine was declared by the Government in Bijapur district and scarcity in five other districts of Bombay Presidency.

agency means.

Let me give some figures. A spinning-wheel costs, say, six rupees. If we supply a family of three with two wheels and all the members work at it together for eight hours each, they will, between them, earn at least six annas per day. I claim that six annas per day for a family will keep it going during a season of distress. I can conceive it to be possible for them to work at the rate of twelve hours each, when the work has to be done in their homes at their own leisure. They add fifty per cent to the daily earning making it nine annas per day. Thus at an outlay of Rs. 12,000, we can support for four months one thousand families, or three thousand souls, and get from them a

$$\frac{\text{1,000 families x 6 Annas x 120 days}}{16} = \text{Rs. 45,000}$$

return of worth of labour. No doubt, forty-five thousand rupees will have to be found in the first instance for organizing famine relief, in addition to carded cotton and the spinning-wheels. The whole of the yarn that may be produced by the famine-stricken people would be used by the nation. There will be some little waste during the first month of learning I use the adjectives 'some little' advisedly because cotton will not be absolutely wasted.

Suppose further that we make a present to these families of the spinning-wheels, they will never need to starve or be in need of funds. All that will be necessary for these families in future will be to be able to have a supply of cotton and a ready sale for the yarn they may manufacture. The experiment can be indefinitely multiplied, and I make bold to say that, if we introduce the spinning-wheel in every family home, we insure the nation practically against famine. I have assumed here that the famine is one of money and that the distressed area is able to buy corn if it has funds. Such was the case in Kheda three years ago, such was the case in Orissa[1] last year, and such is the case in Bijapur and Gujarat this year. I invite the public to try the experiment. I would ask the benevolent not to waste their benevolence by contributing funds to Government organizations which make people more and more helpless. I advise them to form their own committees of trustworthy workers and try the experiment themselves. Surely they will see that in it there is no possibility of failure or loss and every probability of the families helped becoming self-reliant and

[1] *Vide* "Famine in Orissa", 9-5-1920 & "Distress in Orissa", 12-5-1920.

not feeling that they were living on public charity.

Let no one labour under the delusion that the spinning-wheel is a toy of the moment. Thousands of wheels have been already made and are working. Several thousand rupees are every month being distributed in poor homes. A few more months of honest and intelligent toil, and the spinning-wheel will have taken firm root. Pending organization of such committees I invite the readers of *Young India* who believe in the spinning-wheel as an instrument offamine insurance to send their contribution to the Manager, *Young India.* Every subscription will be acknowledged and will be devoted only to the introduction of the spinning-wheel in the famine area under proper supervision. In the event of a committee being formed the money will be handed over to the committee. In any case the contributions will be utilized for the purpose suggested by me.

Young India, 16-3-1921

224. THE LATE DR. RASH BEHARI GHOSE

The famous jurist, Dr. Rash Behari Ghose[1] Bengal, died last Monday at the age of 76. His learning was unfathomable. His charity was of equal grandeur. His patriotism was not of the ordinary kind. His indefatigable diligence put to shame many a youth. His command of English was highly eulogized. Nevertheless he would be considered a man of bygone age. Dr. Rash Behari Ghose was the most striking example of how the most eminent of India's men of learning become useless owing to a foreign domination and unnational education. He passed his youth in cultivating an English style which surpassed European writers, instead and then of devoting all his parts to his mother tongue. He expended his unfathomable erudition in elucidating law points based on Western view-points of life and occidental speculation, and in interpreting the same. All that he did after having entered the Congress was to circumscribe the objective of the national assembly. The creed that he formulated at Surat had to be modified this year by the National Congress at Nagpur. He gave a sum of ten lakhs to the Calcutta University although he coupled it with the condition that the professor who was to be maintained on the interest of this foundation must be an Indian. He made large

[1] 1840-1921; president of the Indian National Congress at Surat, 1907, and at Madras, 1908

contributions also to the Indian universities. Thus he dedicated his abilities to cultivate a foreign tongue, his intellect to assisting Government law courts, his wealth to aid that system of education of a Government in whose policy he had no confidence, and the weight of his personality in limiting the national ideal. Nevertheless had such a person been born in the epoch of swaraj, his life would have appeared golden and his services perceived by the entire world. By the two resolutions that he got passed in the Legislative Council, he demonstrated that he was perfectly conscious of the inordinate regard and affection which the people of India have for their own country. Had he received a national education, the same sentiment and love would have manifested themselves in him and he would have been in a position to render the loftiest services to the country. The people have not appreciated him to the extent that the Government did, because having received the culture confined to the Western globe, he had become almost a stranger to his people. His indefatigable industry, however, is likely even today to be worthy of anyone's emulation.

The Hindu, 16-3-1921

225. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

ON WAY TO WARDHA,
Wednesday [*March 16, 1921*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Please note one thing, that the amount of Rs. 500 given by Dabholkar is meant for the spinning wheel, the swadeshi movement, and the amount of Rs. 600 given by Vasumatibehn is for the Ashram. Both the cheques are handed over to Revashankarbhai.

Dr. Mehta[2] has offered Rs. 1,50,000 for the Ashram. The money is to be drawn in the course of two years as and when needed. The amount is for the construction account. You may draw from this Rs. 20,000 immediately from Revashankarbhai. For the present, we should merely complete what is already begun and postpone the rest. I think it necessary that the money from Sheth Rustomjee[3] and the

[1] Gandhiji left Bombay for Wardha on this date.

[2] Dr. Pranjivan Jagjivan Mehta, M.D., Bar-at-law; a Friend of Gandhiji since Gandhiji's student days in England till his death in 1933; evinced great interest in all of Gandhiji's enterprises and gave them generous financial support.

[3] Parsee Rustomjee, who had donated Rs. 40,000; *vide* footnote 2, "My Notes", 26-12-1920.

other amounts with us should be kept apart. This sum of Rs. 1,50,000, you should know, is purely an answer to the soul's prayers. The test of the spinning-wheel is a very difficult one to pass. I saw the Surat spinning-wheel, costing one and a half rupees. I thought it was exquisite. It produces good enough yarn. Its inventor is really one of God's good men, a student who has joined non-co-operation. I have suggested to him that he should go and see you. Encourage him. I am taking one specimen with me. Shankarlal believes that our model uses too much wood. This man has ensured more revolutions with less wood. It is necessary that you should thoroughly study this matter. We wish to see the spinning-wheel introduced in five crore homes. The model, then, must be as cheap as possible, and strong as well. Give earnest thought to the problem and scrutinize the different models which people invent. It is very essential to study the work which Shankarlal is doing. You should examine very closely the one-and-a-half-rupee spinning-wheel and draw up a report on it. Give more attention to our students and see that they produce more yarn, and of better quality. It is necessary, too, that we learn carding well. You should also write what time it takes to learn spinning. We must have among us experts for all processes. We should now let the work outside go on by itself and, concentrating more on the work among us, learn merely to watch others' work. Find out the difference between the method of spinning which Lakshmidas teaches and that which you do, and adopt the one which is scientific.

Write to me about other matters, too, in the Ashram, if there is anything important enough.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5791. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

226. SPEECH AT MASS MEETING, BOMBAY

March 16, 1921

Mr. Gandhi spoke in Gujarati. He said he wanted to tell them a few words about the present situation in the country. He had toured all over the country and had earned a good deal of experience during the tour, but he had no time to tell them at length all that he had known and seen in different parts of the country. He could only tell them that if they went on with their non-co-operation propaganda work as peacefully as they, in all parts of the country, had done during the last five months, they were sure to get swaraj in a year and so also the revision of the unjust Turkish Treaty and justice for the Punjab wrongs.

The great achievement that they had made during the last five months was that the ryot had realized that Government-given titles had no worth; that the education imparted by the bureaucracy was no education and that foreign goods had no value. The ryots had also realized that bureaucratic law courts were of no practical use to them.

Continuing, he said it was not only the ryots that realized this truth, the other classes also had felt it. Those students present there could nothonestly say that they felt it honourable to remain in the Government schools and such was the case with the lawyers practising in bureaucratic courts. During his tours in Bengal, the Punjab and the United Provinces, he met hundreds of lawyers and students who seemed to feel ashamed, of course not ashamed of him but of themselves, because they could not shake off their bondage to those institutions which they knew to be mere shams. He also noticed that by and by they (lawyers and students) also were getting indifferent towards the present system of education and the British law courts. There were hopeful signs that full *vairagya*[1] would come over the classes, within the next seven months. It had been an admitted fact that India could not expect greater services from any class of people than the lawyers. As for the students they had tender hearts and undeveloped minds and that was why they were hesitating to come out of their schools and colleges which they did dislike in their heart of hearts. But he could tell them that it would impede the attainment of swaraj if they did not discard a thing which they knew to be bad.

The people—the ryots and the [other] classes—had now understood that non-co-operation was also an instrument for the purification of the soul. He was greatly pleased with what he had seen in the northern parts of the country. He saw that the majority of the people there had not had a single piece of foreign cloth on their persons. The students who came out of the schools and colleges were doing national work in numerous ways and he could not understand how non-co-operating students could become "anarchists" as was said in some quarters. He was convinced that those who had the cowardly minds of the anarchists, could never so courageously non-co-operate with their schools and colleges at the call of the nation.

Proceeding, Mr. Gandhi said he was sorry to hear that Mr. Sastri and Mr. Paranjapye were insulted at public meetings. He failed to understand what they could gain by insulting those of their countrymen whose views did not agree with theirs. He was greatly mortified when he heard that at Benares, that sannyasi, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, also did not receive that treatment from his countrymen which his services to the country deserved. They must bear in mind that they would have to tolerate all that; they had no right to hate anybody. As one had to tolerate the presence of a wife, son or sister even though the wife, son or sister might differ from one in view, so they must tolerate all the views of their countrymen. They would never be able to convert anybody to non-co-operation by force if they could not do so by politely appealing to their reason. As long as they were unable to tolerate all

[1] The spirit of renunciation

opinions in the country so long they would remain unfit for any responsible task. Non-co-operation was their shastra which taught to hate none. If he were asked he would have told anybody that he not hate even Chelmsford, Dyer, or O'Dwyer. What he was doing was simply to point out their blunders.

In all parts of the country the Government had made their grip tighter and stricter. At the beginning the Government were indifferent to them, then they began to ridicule and then to abuse them and now they had resorted to repression. He could only say that it was all for the best and that if they (non-co-operators) proceeded in as peaceful a manner as during the last five months, swaraj would be theirs during the next seven months. The only thing required of them was to go on in a well-organized and peaceful manner. They must not go to the doors of schools and colleges and then call out students, but they must convince all about the truth of non-co-operation.

Regarding swadeshi and boycott he wanted to tell them that it was impossible for them to drive away all foreign goods from the country. They were to boycott only those goods which they could produce in the country. Cloth was chief among those goods. When they could weave cloth they could easily boycott foreign goods. In this connection he must tell them that he did not ask them to boycott Indian mills too just at present, because if they did so it would make the country poorer still. But they must see that the mills did their duty properly. Mills must not work for "capital" alone, they must work for the people too. They should now try to raise the price of their khadi. They should impress upon Lancashire that they could do without her, but he did not mean to say that they should boycott Lancashire all at once because he knew that would only make room for Japan.

Concluding, Mr. Gandhi said the 6th April[1] would be a day of searching test for them. On that day they would be tried whether they were earnest about swaraj. He wanted a crore of rupees on that day in memory of the great mahatma Tilak. Of course, he did not want that amount for his children or Lokamanya Tilak's children, but he wanted that for them and their own children. He knew that many among them wouldsay that the money market . . .[2] and that their trade was suffering from depression. He knew others would say that they were hard up because they would have to give their daughters in marriage. But he said they could easily sacrifice the money they spend for their smoke and they could easily perform the marriage ceremony of their daughters in khadi without a heap of jewels. Men and women of India must undergo some penitence for their sins.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-3-1921

[1] The commencement of the Satyagraha Week

[2] Some words are missing here.

227. SPEECH AT NATIONAL COLLEGE, BOMBAY

March 16, 1921

He said the essence of all education was kindness—kindness to all, friends, foes, men and beasts. The chief object of education was the building of character which could be done by strict observance of *brahmacharya.* Mr. Gandhi then explained to the students the necessity of learning Hindi and spinning and said that if the whole younger generation was educated in the manner in which they were trained in national schools then there would not have been any difficulty in getting swaraj.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-3-1921

228. INTERVIEW TO "THE DAILY HERALD"

March 16, 1921

[INTERVIEWER] Why are you against foreign propaganda*?*

[GANDHIJI:] Our movement mainly depends for its success not upon propaganda, but upon internal reform and internal strength. Firstly, if not a soul outside India knew what we are doing, but, if we actually evolved strength, this Government must of necessity fall to pieces. Secondly, this Government has so well organized itself that it does not allow any propaganda hostile to itself to be continued when that hostility becomes effective. Thirdly, any propaganda that we can carry on must be based upon limited resources, whereas Government's counter-propaganda commands not only unlimited resources but is that it is impossible to overtake it in time. I have, therefore, come to the conclusion that we must rely upon the truth of our movement to propagate itself.

What do you think of the repression that is going on at the present moment in India?

I welcome it as a token of the pressure of the movement that Is now being felt. We in Bombay are more fortunately situated because repression in our Presidency is not so rampant as in other parts. If people will remain calm and unperturbed and respond not by agitation against repression, but by great their part repression will kill itself. If restrictions placed upon the liberty on men of unquestioned integrity, character and influence falls to cow down the people, I can hardly imagine that any Government will be so foolish as to try still greater in order to kill a movement, inoffensive alike in conception and execution, for the non-violent character of the movement has checkmated this very irresponsible Government, and has resulted in a

shameless attempt to crush not violence, but opinion and character. I am hoping, therefore, that workers throughtout India, conscious of the daily growing national strength, will remain perfectly Indifferent and continue the work of consolidating and organizing national strength along the lines laid down by the Congress.

Are you able to give any informed opinion about the working of the new legislative bodies?

So far as I have been able to follow the working of these Councils the forebodings of pessimists are coming true. The bureaucracy has lost nothing of its real power for mischief. It is making most effective use of its diplomatic skill in order to hoodwink honest people, and of its unscrupulousness in order to meet all the other forces. The result is that we have more expensive toys than we had before in order to keep us from crying, and in no province has this come more true, I am sorry to say, than in Lord Sinha's.[1] Bihar is a province where there is the least danger of violence, where leaders have assimilated the full spirit of the movement, where the whole energy of leaders is concentrated on temperance, education and industry. If Government were simply to remain indifferent the Biharees will be teetotallers and set an example to the whole world of temperance reform without legislation and they would revolutionize education movement and bring it within the reach of the poorest without burdening the tax-payer and by reintroducing the spinning-wheel, they would make of Bihar a land flowing with milk and honey that I verily believe it was once. Let the world, therefore, know that repression in Bihar, as for that matter throughout India, means repression of these three important puritanic movements. Judged by this test, the new legislative bodies must be pronounced failures at least up to the present.

What of the future?

So far as I can judge the movement will continue its present course. We are daily increasing our concentration upon handspinning and hand-weaving, thus making India economically selfcontained, and upon inward purification by driving out the drink habit. Notwithstanding what critics may say the boycott of law courts and educational institutions run by Government, is making steady, though slow, progress. Hindu-Muslim unity is becoming more and more a permanent part of national life and non-violence has gone beyond the stage of experiment or expedience, and is fast becoming a creed, so

[1] Lord Sinha was then the Governor of Bihar and Orissa.

far as attainment of swarajya is concerned. I am a born optimist and I believe, if we continue at the rate we are going, before October is upon us, Government will find it impossible to ignore the strength of unanimous public opinion and we shall find swarajya established in India.

What do you think of the proposed revision of the Treaty of Sevres?[1]

I have only hurriedly glanced through the new terms. So far as I can judge, they aim at pacifying Turks and not Indian Mussulmans. The two things have to be recognized as distinct. Khilafat is essentially a religious movement, being idealistic and unconnected with Turkish pacification. It derives its sanction directly from the injunction of the Prophet. Until, therefore, Indian Mussulmans are placated, there can be no peace, and the *sine qua non* of Mussulman conciliation is that what is termed the Island of Arabia must remain under the exclusive Mussulman control and under the spiritual sovereignty of the Khalifa, whoever he may be for the time being. The prestige of Islam demands rendition of Smyrna and Thrace to Turkey, and evacuation by the Allied Powers of Constantinople, but the existence of Islam demands the total abrogation of mandates taken by Britain and France. No influence, direct or indirect, over the Holy Places of Islam will ever be tolerated by Indian Mussulmans. It follows, therefore, that even Palestine must be under Mussulman control. So far as I am aware, there never has been any difficulty put in the way of Jews and Christians visiting Palestine and performing all their religious rites. No canon, however, of ethics or war can possibly justify the gift by the Allies of Palestine to Jews. It would be a breach of implied faith with Indian Mussulmans in particular and the whole of India in general. Not an Indian soldier would have gone, if Britain on the eve of war had declared even the possibility of any such usurpation, and it is becoming clearer every day that if India is to remain a free partner in a future British Commonwealth, as distinguished from the Empire, the terms of the Khilafat have to be settled more in consultation with the spiritual leaders of Mussulmans than with the political leaders of Turkey.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-3-1921

[1] Following World War I, the draft Treaty was published in May 1920; then the efforts of the Government of India, who pressed their views upon His Majesty's Government, resulted in an abortive revision of the Treaty on lines more favourable to Turkey. The London Conference for the revision of the Treaty was opened on February 22, 1921.

229. SPEECH AT ARVI[1]

March 17, 1921

Many among you are wearing swadeshi clothes, but I find that all of you have turbans of foreign cloth. It is a sin now to wear any foreign cloth. We should give it up as early as possible and, in order that we may have swadeshi cloth to wear, everyone of us should spin. Spinning will protect our religion and our culture and, of course, our economic well-being. Secondly, we should give up drinking and persuade others who drink to give up the habit. We cannot compel those who refuse to hear us or who do not stop drinking. We should persuade people with love, falling at their feet to win them over and even if they do not listen, should entreat them again and again without any resentment. Women can do this better. We should give up stealing,adultery and deceit. We should improve our behaviour towards the untouchables.

If untouchability is a part of Hinduism, I would say that, to that extent, there is Satanism in Hinduism. But it is my firm conviction that there is no such thing in it. It is not dharma but *adharma to* refuse to touch persons of a particular community. We have committed many sins by taking untouchability as a part of dharma. We have got to atone for them. I am not advocating interdining or intermarriage; I am only suggesting that the idea that there is harm in touching anybody should be abandoned. We have allowed one of our limbs to rot by treating it as untouchable, and our entire body is suffering pain in consequence. Today Englishmen look upon us as *Bhangis*. In the Colonies, they allot us separate areas for carrying on business. Our residential localities and railway coaches for our travel are segregated. We are considered untouchable, pariahs. We must end the long-standing injustice of our behaviour towards the untouchables. When we have changed our behaviour towards them, the life of the untouchable communities will become cleaner. It has been my experience that the homes and surroundings of many untouchables are much cleaner than those of quite a few belonging to the so-called higher castes. The work of a *Bhangi is* not low. It is essential for the existence of society. It is not impure. I have myself often cleaned the latrines of patients both in South Africa and here, but nobody ever

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of the tour. Arvi is a village near Wardha, in Maharashtra.

said that this work was unclean or low; on the contrary, it was praised. Every mother removes the stools of her child. There is service and an element of nobility in her work. Will anybody ever dream of looking upon the mother as an untouchable? Consolidation of Hindu-Muslim unity is as important as removal of untouchability. It is not at all necessary, for this purpose, that Hindus should become Muslims or that the latter should become Hindus. The right course for each community would be to remain loyal to its own faith and, at the same time, respect the faith of the other.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-4-1921

230. SPEECH AT NAGPUR[1]

March 18, 1921

I am sorry that my friend Maulana Shaukat Ali is not present at this big meeting. Until now, both of us kept together while moving all over India. But after the Congress session in December we thought that the hearts of Hindus and Muslims had been purified to such a degree that it was no longer necessary for us to move together. If we want to win swaraj within seven months, if we want that the pain felt by the Muslims on the Khilafat issue should be healed and that justice should be secured for the Punjab, we should tour different places separately and finish the work in time. I hope nobody will demand that both of us must go together to every place. There are seven and a half lakh villages in India. One person cannot visit them all.

I am glad to see such a huge gathering here. I congratulate you on your having Asahayoga-Ashram [Non-co-operation Institute] and the National School which are running here. A leader of your city, Bhagawandin[2], has gone to jail. Another leader, Dr. Paranjapye, has been served with an order restraining him from public speech for one month and a third leader, Dr. Cholkar, is being prosecuted.[3] I congratulate you on these developments also. But you transgressed the order of the Congress and the League—you pelted stones—and that has grieved me. Recently, an English guard assaulted my friend

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour

[2] Honorary Principal of Asahayoga-Ashram who, along with Dr. Cholkar, organized picketing of liquor shops

[3] In connection with a speech made by him; *vide* "Notes", 30-3-1921.

Ashvat who works as secretary to Maulana Shaukat Ali, and he even sustained an injury. Friend Ashvat, thereupon, pushed the guard. According to the Government's law he had every right to do so. The Government's law says that there is no crime whatever in using force in self-defence. That is the law of the Government, but the law of theCongress and the League is different. Friend Ashvat, therefore, felt sorry for what he had done. He went out and protected the guard from the wrath of the public. You have committed a very wrong thing in Nagpur. Whatever the provocation, you should pick up no stone for pelting. If, again, anybody insists on drinking, he cannot be compelled to desist. We want swaraj. Under real swaraj, no man, even if he commits a crime, should be subjected to arbitrary compulsion. It was also an error to have obstructed the burial of the dead body of a person. It has harmed our movement and lowered our prestige.

There should be no compulsion against a person even if he obstinately persists in drinking or similar vices. Such compulsion would mean an offence against the Congress and the League. You could have, in September last,[1] decided on another path for yourself if you had wished. But you have pledged to carry on a peaceful fight. You cannot now swerve from that path. We cannot profess peaceful intentions and commit breach of peace. The reports of our fight have spread throughout the world. This peaceful fight is winning praise. If we deceive the world by using violence while we talk of peace, we shall lose all that we have gained. We should feel penitent for our errors. The whole world has observed that India has gathered more strength during these five months than she did during the past fifty years. The Government has invited Mr. Chhotani to participate in the Allies' Conference for negotiations with Turkey and Dr. Ansari has also been nominated a member; this is a clear victory for non-co-operation. I am not saying that we should sit quiet out of fear. It is not necessary to fear anybody except God. Not to be afraid is, however, one thing and not to get angry is another. If you cannot check your anger, you should sit quietly at home or undertake *hijrat*. *Hijrat* means renouncing. Both Hindus and Muslims can undertake it. If, however, you want to be brave soldiers of non-co-operation, you should resolve that you will not defile your hands by picking up stones or other things for pelting, that you will not defile your tongue by uttering filthy words. We want to win swaraj within seven months. It will not

[1] When the special session of the Congress was held at Calcutta

matter, if, for this purpose, students do not leave schools and lawyers do not give up practice in larger numbers. That will not altogether prevent the coming of swaraj. However, you will certainly prevent it if you abandon restraint. The other condition for swaraj is Hindu-Muslim unity.

The third condition for swaraj is swadeshi. You should ply the spinning-wheel instead of playing with the tennis racket. Everybody should have a spinning-wheel. If you want to boycott foreign cloth, all of you should take up the spinning-wheel. There was a time when the idea of boycotting foreign cloth was considered ridiculous, was considered impracticable. That fear has vanished today. The pledge of swadeshi is one which everybody can implement. If we cannot do even this, we should give up the hope of swaraj. We should move about in a loin-cloth rather than wear foreign cloth. Nagpur has a large number of weavers. They should give up weaving polluted foreign yarn and resolve to weave the pure yarn spun by their own mothers and sisters. It is not the hand-spun yarn that is weak, but our hearts which are so. This is why we are reluctant to weave it.

Many friends ask me whether we shall win Palestine[1] also. I say, certainly we shall win even Palestine if you are prepared to turn yourselves into fakirs and if you remain peaceful. You will not win it if you remain content with persuading others to become fakirs. No matter who is imprisoned, we must remain peaceful. Let them be imprisoned, prepare yourselves also for imprisonment. You should not, however, be imprisoned for resorting to violence; be imprisoned for sincere work. If the Government throws you into jail for such work, that will be the day of our victory. When it tries to rule in this manner, it will come down like a dry leaf. Creating disorder when somebody is imprisoned is a sign of weakness, of fear.

And now one last thing. You love Tilak Maharaj. They shout 'victory' to his name everywhere. There is a picture of his here. His spirit also is present here, a witness. His life was dedicated to the cause of swaraj. It is our duty to strive to win it. The Swaraj Fund which is being collected in his name is not meant for erecting his statue or creating a park in his name, but is intended for promoting activities calculated to win swaraj. This is a business deal. It is to our own profit. The sum of one crore must be collected before June. This is not a big

[1] After World War I, Turkey was dispossessed of Palestine and the territory was placed under British mandate.

task. I hear that spinning-wheels are not plying because there is no money. This is a matter for shame. If everybody contributes his share, we can have any amount of money. If from nowhere else, you may contribute money to this fund out of the savings effected by giving up the bad habits of drinking, smoking, etc.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan,3-4-1921

231. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

NAGPUR,
March 19 [*1921*][1]

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

Ever since I saw Mother, her face has been before my eyes. I wish you would respect her wish that you should wear her *tulsi* beads. When you feel that it is sinful to wear them, you may discard them. The sacred beads given by one's mother are a symbol of immortality. If you have not yet started wearing them, do so and send me a telegram.

My travel schedule will be as follows:

20-21 Jabalpur

22 Gondia up to 12 o'clock

22-23 Nagpur mail

24 Cuttack from morning, care Utkal Society

Till 29th I shall he touring in Orissa.

31st expect you at Bezwada.

Vandemataram form

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32740

[1] The year has been inferred form Gandhiji's travel schedule.

232. SPEECH AT AMRAOTI[1]

Marth 19, 1921

Shri Yadwarkar[2] had dedicated his all to the country. He had all those qualities which the Congress, the [Muslim] League and other public organizations expect from us. If we possessed his qualities, we would have already won swaraj. At one time he did believe in violent methods for securing swaraj, but subsequently his views changed. He had become a confirmed satyagrahi and he was convinced that the programme of the Congress and the League alone was for the good of the country.

We are bound by the resolution of the Congress to preserve peace under all circumstances; but both we and Englishmen doubt our ability to preserve peace. We should show that we remain peaceful in obedience to the dictates of dharma and not because we are deterred by fear of arms. I have had differences of opinion with Dadasaheb Khaparde from the very beginning. He prefers one path and I another. I know that the path which he wants to follow will not lead to swaraj. I do not, however, speak ill of him on that account. It is a breach of Congress discipline to prevent his people from drawing water from a well. If anyone is opposed to us, we should so behave towards him that he will have no fear of us though he be in a minority of one against us. Of course, we should not ask Dadasaheb Khaparde for any services in the Council and elsewhere, but should certainly offer him ours. If he falls ill, we should nurse him. If Lord Chelmsford becomes ill, we should offer our services to him too, but we certainly may not accept titles from him.

Our fight aims at self-purification. What is self-purification? Those who are addicted to drink should give it up. Drink yields revenues to the tune of Rs. 17 crore to the Government. Obviously the Government will not allow us to rest in peace if there is fear of itslosing this money. The education provided to our children from funds derived from drink should be unacceptable to us. Under swaraj, income from drink ought to be considered dishonourable. I am

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour

[2] Yadwarkar Patwardhan of Amraoti, who died in January 1921; *vide* "In Memoriam", 12-1-1921.

convinced that we can provide education without these revenues. I have read the speech delivered by Dr. Cholkar. The magistrate may or may not deal him justice, but I assert most emphatically that Dr. Cholkar has said nothing that was not discussed openly in the Congress. He has used the word 'republic'. To have a republic, however, is our birthright. India has had village republics from time immemorial. The Government of Bihar is trying hard to break up the panchayats[1]. Did we get justice at the hands of General Dyer or Sir Michael O'Dwyer? I testify that we got injustice instead of justice. You need not, however, be sorry for the sake of Dr. Cholkar. You should congratulate him. You should plead with drink-addicts to give up drink. Entreat the owners of liquor shops not to sell drink; persuade those who intend to take out licences for such shops not to do so. But at no stage should you resort to compulsion. You should not even use the word 'Satanic' to describe the Government. Do not get infuriated over the Punjab. Leave criticism on these matters to me alone. You should strive to put a stop to the consumption of liquor but do not condemn or abuse anybody while doing so. The days of harsh words are past. It is time to put in solid work. If you are imprisoned not for speech-making but for solid work—and the Government is welcome to treat refusal to drink as a sin—it will be utterly exposed and will be destroyed by its own misdeeds.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-4-1921

[1] Establishing panchayats for settling disputes through arbitration was part of the non-co-operation movement.

233. THE SATYAGRAHA WEEK

April is nearing. Can any Indian forget the inspiring Sunday of 6th April[1] and the terrible one of the 13th?[2] There is no exaggeration in saying that the new life of India commenced on the 6th of April. It is our duty to celebrate the two days.

On the 6th, India awoke, shook off her sloth, and the first thing she saw on being fully awake was the fearful atonement forced on her on the evening of the 13th for the misuse of a newly-acquired strength. That night India heard Ratan Devi lamenting the death of her husband, his lustreless head resting in her lap.

How should we celebrate this week? Only by showing more scrupulous regard for truth, by strengthening our determination, by being more humble and making ourselves purer, by acquiring greater strength. It is also our especial duty during this week to take measures for preventing any possible recurrence of the terror and violence of the 13th.

This week should be spent in pure *tapashcharya*, pure devotion to God and the purest spirit of renunciation. During this week let us beg forgiveness of God for our offences and of those against whom we may have committed them. In humility lies our strength. Let us not wish ill to the British or others who act in opposition to us; we shall not talk offendingly to them. On each of those seven days we should repeat: This very year we shall secure swaraj, this very year we shall have the Khilafat question settled and this very year we shall secure justice in regard to the Punjab.'

We should think about the means of achieving these aims and make a big effort towards that end.

1. Title-holders should give up their titles.

2. Lawyers should give up practice.

3. Students should quit Government schools.

4. Litigants should boycott law courts.

5. People given to drink and other vices should give up drink and other addictions and sins, stealing, gambling, etc.

[1] Of 1919, on which day hartal was observed throughout India to proetest against the Rowlatt Bills

[2] Of 1919, on which day Jallianwala Bagh tragedy occurred

6. Everyone should take a vow always to act truthfully.

7. All should introduce the spinning-wheel in their homes and every man and woman should spin for a given number of hours every day.

8. All should boycott foreign cloth and wear only hand-spun and hand-woven cloth.

9. All Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis and Jews born in India should behave towards one another as brothers or sisters.

10. No Hindu should look upon another as an untouchable and all people should be held in equal regard.

11. Everyone should contribute to the Tilak Swaraj Fund according to his means.

While doing any of these things or persuading others to do it, no one should use harsh words.

It can be seen from this that the most important things we have to do are to popularize the spinning-wheel, to wear khadi and to collect funds.

We should observe hartals on the 6th and the 13th. No compulsion should be used on anyone. Mill-hands too should arrange in advance to take leave for these two days. Those who may not get leave should certainly not stop work.

On the 6th and the 13th, a 24-hour fast should be observed, commencing from the previous evening.

At places where there may be no official ban, we should hold meetings and pass suitable resolutions

Contributions should be collected at every meeting and sent to the Tilak Swaraj Fund of the province.

On all the seven days, and especially on the two days of fasting, part of the time should be spent in complete silence and in devotions and in this way we should demonstrate that our fight is a sacred one.

There should be no village in India which will not have received the message of the Satyagraha Week. On the 14th, every man and woman must feel that he or she has done something in the service of the country and of dharma, that he or she has become purer.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-3-1921

234. MY LAST VISIT TO THE PUNJAB

THE PUNJAB "VERSUS" GUJARAT

The Punjab has become a second Gujarat to me. I have to go there so many times. There remain only a few districts in the Punjab which I have not visited. I have captioned this article "My Last Visit", but it does not mean that it is the last visit I shall ever make. It seems likely that I shall have to go there again in a little while. This time I visited Rawalpindi, Gujranwala, Multan, Lyallpur, Shri, Lahore, Amritsar, Jullundur, Hoshiarpur, Hariana, Khanna, Ludhiana, the [North-West] Frontier, Ambala, Rohtak and Bhiwani. And so I find it a little difficult to say whether I know Gujarat better or the Punjab.

SISTERS OF THE PUNJAB

It is not my intention to give a regular account of the tour. I am writing this article only to give some rewarding and sacred memories. The sisters of the Punjab have captivated me. A women's meeting was held almost at every place, and these meetings were by no means thinly attended; crowds and crowds of them came. Their patience, their simplicity, their innocence are above praise. I experienced unsurpassed love from them. At every place, they blessed me from their hearts. They believe that swaraj is but *Ramrajya*. They have showered on me sacred balls and garlands of yarn. They did not stint in giving money. The sisters of the Punjab have disproved Lala Lajpat Rai's fears about funds. Nor was the money given out of false regard for me; they vied with one another in giving it. They sing sweet songs in chorus, and those songs are also historical. Thousands of Punjabi sisters have the story of Dyerism by heart through songs. In the art of spinning the sisters of the Punjab today beat their other sisters in the country and I believe they will always do so. Two daughters of a barrister competed with me on the spinning-wheel. My hands simply would not function. As I lengthened a yarn, it would snap. These girls just went on and on. I felt abashed. I had confessed my defeat at the very beginning. The father consoled me and said that my spinning-wheel must have been defective. But the consolation was unavailing since I knew my ignorance well enough. The music that issued from the spinning-wheels of those girls sounded to me sweeter even than that of a fine musical instrument. This battle of spinning-wheels began at 11 o'clock at night but, if I had not some other work to attend to, I would

certainly have gone on watching the turning of the spinning-wheels, for my faith that India's swaraj will be won through the spinning-wheel grows day by day.

FLAG OF SWARAJ

A wise friends[1] has suggested that the picture on our swaraj flag must be that of the spinning-wheel. This idea has appealed to me as very beautiful. We use all manner of flags. A gentleman[2] from Andhra Pradesh has suggested many designs for a flag. But I find no other idea as attractive as that of having a spinning wheel on the flag of swaraj. I commend this idea to the leaders who will be in charge of the forthcoming Congress session.[3]

WIDESPREAD ACTIVITY

In some districts in the Punjab, there is not a home without a spinning-wheel. Jullundur, Hoshiarpur and Hariana are spinning-wheel centres. They produce the best spinning-wheels and other articles of indigenous craftsmanship. A gentleman from Hoshiarpur has given me two spinning-wheels. Anyone who wants to see them may come to the Ashram. Those spinning wheels are made of a variety of ebony. Their handles are made on the lathe and are skilfully designed. They are even painted. Some are very artistically made. Expensive models have handles inlaid with ivory. Some have even small mirrors in their wheels. Some have small tinkle-bells. I was told in Hoshiarpur that the price of the spinning-wheel had doubled within six months. Generally a good painted spinning-wheel costs about Rs. 15/-. The demand for spinning-wheels is so great that the craftsmen are unable to meet it.

AN UNUSUAL ADDRESS OF WELCOME

I have been given a good many kinds of welcome addresses, but I have not received till today any address like the one I got in Jullundur. Generally, our municipalities do not honour public workers. A beginning was made by Bareilly when Maulana Shaukat Ali and I visited that place.[4] Gorakhpur followed[5] and thistime

[1] Lala Hansraj of Jullundur

[2] Venkayya of the National College, Masulipatam. *Vide* also "The National Flag", 13-4-1921.

[3] Which was to be held in December 1921 at Ahmedabad

[4] On October 17, 1920

[5] On February 8, 1921

Jullundur.[1] This was rather a bold step that the Jullundur Municipality took, but, treading the signs of the times, it dared. The welcome address was certainly not in English, it was in sweet Hindustani, printed in the Urdu script. It was not printed either on silk, calico cloth or paper. That welcome address was printed on khadi. That khadi had been sent to Mecca Shariff and hallowed. The mother of a Jullundur lawyer, Naziruddin Shah, had supplied a piece from the khadi she had preserved for many years for use as her own shroud and the welcome address was printed on it. Today one hears stories of Muslims purposely using khadi for the bier.

When I arrived in Ayodhya, I was taken to a small temple that stands at the place where Shri Ramachandra is believed to have been born. The devout among non-co-operators had suggested to me that I should request the temple priest to use khadi for dressing the images of Rama and Sita. I did make the suggestion, of course, but it is hardly likely to have been acted upon. When I went for *darshan*, I saw them dressed in ugly muslin with brocades. If I had Tulsidas's strength of profound devotion, I too would have been as insistent as he had been. Tulsidas had vowed, in a Krishna temple, that unless Lord Krishna took visible form as Rama with bow and arrow, he would not bow [to the deity]. Devout writers say that when Goswami [Tulsidas] took this vow, his eyes saw images of Ramachandra standing on every side and he bowed his head most readily. I often feel like insisting that I would bow my head only when the officiating priests made our Thakoreji[2] swadeshi by dressing him in khadi. But I must first do the *tapashcharya* which Tulsidas did and acquire his unique devotion. Meanwhile, I wish that, just as the Muslim brethren have started using khadi for holy occasions, the Hindus too should begin to use khadi in the temples and for other sacred purposes. It is the law of the universe that when an important thing is well done, other related issues will get solved suitably. The biggest item in the country's imports is cloth, though at one time this import did not exist. Therefore, when we have boycotted foreign cloth altogether, we shall most certainly have won swaraj and our strength will have grown so much that no one will be able to resist it.

A REHEARSAL

I have attended hundreds of meetings. Chairs are now hardly used on the dais. There was no chair for anybody at the Khilafat

[1] On March 7, 1921

[2] Image of Lord Krishna

conference[1] in Lucknow. Maulana Mahomed Ali was the President. He had come in his khadi pyjamas and shirt. He was seated on a cotton mattress. Others, from aristocratic families, religious teachers and members of the educated classes, were seated on the ground. But I saw everything swadeshi at the conference[2] at Hariana, as if it was a small-scale rehearsal of the forthcoming Congress as I imagine it. The conference *pandal* was made wholly of khadi cloth. In the middle was a high dais on which many members sat cross-legged. At the rear, there were hundreds of women. On the right was a khadi exhibition. There, beautiful embroidered scarves, handkerchiefs woven from handspun yarn and long pieces of khadi were spread on the ground. Prizes had been awarded to those who had made the thinnest khadi and produced the thinnest yarn. The thinnest khadi was of three grades, which I have brought with me. I have also brought woven handkerchiefs and embroidered scarves. They can be inspected at the Ashram. The volunteers had put on khadi pyjamas, shirts and caps. The pupils of the new national school[3] were all in khadi dresses. I did not see a single foreign article in this conference. The slogans displayed on every side were also written in Urdu, the mother tongue of the region and the resolutions, too, were about what should be done by all people and on similar subjects. The expenses for this *pandal* were only those by way of rent for the rafters and other pieces of wood that had to be hired. The khadi will all of it remain in stock. The flags also were of khadi.

A FRIEND OF THE OPPRESSED

Jullundur, Hoshiarpur, Hariana, etc., are close to one another. They are situated in eastern Punjab. From there I now wish to take the reader to Multan in the west. The plague is endemic in this town. Prahlad is believed to have been born in this place. It has even a temple to Prahlad. The native place of Diwan Mooldas[4] Multan. It is said that the Pandavas spent the period of their incognito residence in Hariana. Multan is a dirty town. There is no limit to the dust there. The Multan Municipality is considered to be irresponsible. The plague brought forth a good man, Bhai Moolchand. Financially he

[1] Held on February 26, 1921

[2] The Hariana District Rural Conference held at Bhivani On February 15, 1921

[3] Of Rohtak in Hariana district

[4] Chief minister of the last Sikh ruler of the Punjab. The latter was defeated by the British in the Second Sikh War in 1849.

was well-to-do. Even now he probably has a little. He is unkempt to look at. Like the old-fashioned people in Gujarat, this man wears a jacket, made of khadi. He dons a khadi cap and a khadi dhoti. His efforts have brought into existence a hospital for victims of the plague. Bhai Moolchand and his brother have both dedicated themselves to it. There are three doctors with them, two of whom work honorarily. All plague cases are brought to this hospital. The patients are nursed by Bhai Moolchand, his brother and other volunteers. They are made to sleep in the open air as far as possible. The townspeople have told me that when mothers fled, frightened at the sight of their plague-stricken children, Bhai Moolchand took charge of the helpless victims and nursed them. Thanks to his efforts, hundreds have been saved and hundreds had a peaceful death. As a result of his efforts, the people have less fear of the plague. I was taken to see this hospital. There were about forty patients. I saw them all. How shall I describe the satisfaction they feel? As for me, I felt myself blessed by the *darshan* of these patients at Multan.

A BHANGI FRIEND

Bhai Moolchand arranged for my meeting everyone and did notomit the *Bhangi* either. "This friend, too," he said, "gave us much help at a critical time." He was standing a bit away. I advanced to meet him. The poor man moved further away. I stopped him and patted him on the back. There were many *sanatani* friends with me. I did not notice that they were displeased by this act of mine; on the contrary, I actually saw that many of them were glad at my touching the man. The *Antyaj* friend felt very pleased and said, "I have, of course, done nothing much." It is true certainly, that the practice of untouchability has no great hold in the Punjab. I did not find that any Punjabi *sanatani* ever considered himself polluted by a *Bhangi's* touch.

REMEDIES FOR PLAGUE

I told the persons in charge of this hospital that I had experience of three epidemics of the plague,[1] the story of one of them being that I had a hand in eradicating the plague completely and of the other two that, though the epidemic could not be arrested immediately, it could be controlled fairly well. Upon this they asked me to tell them the remedies. I give them here, though we already know them:

[1] In Rajkot (1896), Johannesburg (1905) and Ahmedabad (1917-18)

1. The victim of the plague should be, if possible, totally segregated and those who nurse him should not come in contact with others.

2. A house in which a case of plague has occurred should be sprinkled with lime and should not be used for at least ten days.

3. If it is full of moisture, ill-lighted and ill-ventilated, all the three defects should be removed.

4. If it is infested by rats, necessary repairs should be carried out so that they cannot stay on.

If these remedies are kept in mind, there is no doubt that the plague will stop spreading. I know it is easy to enumerate these remedies but difficult to adopt them. That is precisely why the plague has made a home in India. But we must adopt as many remedies as possible despite our poverty. The steps to prevent the plague are simple and I wish to set down those I once suggested:

1. We should cultivate the habit of living in properly ventilated and well-lighted houses.

2. We should see that our houses are so built as to make it impossible for rats to make their home in them.

3. Faeces should not be allowed to drop on the ground but only into a pot and, whenever the pot is used, a lot of dry earth should be thrown over it, so that all the excreta would be covered up and only the dry earth would be visible.

4. Even urine should drop into a pot.

5. Latrines, like other parts of the house, should be clean.

I have no time to write on the importance of these rules, but it is my emphatic view that, though we observe the rules of cleanliness in regard to natural functions, in so far as they concern individuals, we do not know the rules which concern society as a whole or, even if we know, we do not observe them and, therefore, suffer from a number of diseases.

MEDAL RETURNED

While writing about this hospital, I must not omit to mention that Bhai Moolchand decided on that day[1] to return the gold medal that he had received for his services. The same day, two well-known lawyers, Lala Kevalkrishna and Lala Bodhraj, announced their decision to give

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Multan", March 5, 1921.

up practice for a year. The public services of these two lawyers had a good impact on Multan's life. They realized that their sticking to legal practice had checked the progress of public life. In how many places is the same thing happening at present? Wherever the leaders have not understood non-co-operation or, having understood it, do not go along with it, the movement can make no advance, since "as the eminent ones act, so do the others"[1].

SIALKOT'S EXAMPLE

In my wanderings, I notice that wherever there is at least one sincere worker, the work of non-co-operation proceeds very well. One man by himself, Aga Sufdar, has greatly lifted up Sialkot's life. He isa brave and noble Muslim lawyer. He gave up practice before September, at the same time as Dr. Kitchlew, that is, immediately the Khilafat resolution was passed. His sacrifice, his simplicity and his truthfulness can be seen in every one of his actions. This gentleman, Aga Sufdar, used to take a big part in Sialkot's life even prior to non-co-operation. Through his example, therefore, non-co-operation work is making excellent progress in Sialkot. A big Muslim school has been converted into a national school. The spinning-wheel movement is going on apace. I saw his wife, and the other women too in Sialkot, all clad in khadi. I have had such experiences in many places. While narrating my Punjab experiences, I recalled the beautiful one in Sialkot. I have also observed that those who had been sincere in their sacrifices have added to their prestige and lost absolutely nothing. One cannot say that they have lost even money. They earn enough for their livelihood. Has anyone a right to earn more? A public worker certainly has none. His hands must be clean, he should have very few private concerns and his wants should be the fewest.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-3-1921

235. THE NATIONAL TILAK SWARAJ FUND

An indirect reference to this Fund was made in my note on the Punjab tour. It is necessary for us to raise a fund worthy of the memory of the Lokamanya. Those who had assembled after his death and joined the funeral procession will have some idea of the unique

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, III, 21

regard in which he was held by the people. Is that devotion still alive? The people have an opportunity to answer this question in the next few months.

And what kind of memorial is it to be? There will be no statue. With that Fund, we are to win swaraj; it is to be utilized chiefly for providing education to children, for promoting the spinning-wheel movement and remunerating public workers, that is to say, the contributions we shall make to the Fund will be used entirely for us. I at any rate cannot imagine a better use for our money than this.

I hope no one will consider it too much that the country should raise a crore of rupees for a memorial to the Lokamanya. It should be an easy thing to collect this amount so that we may be able to win swaraj. If we cannot even collect the money we need, we have no right at all to demand or gain swaraj. If the people are not ready to boycott foreign cloth, are reluctant to spin and do not donate money, what right can they have to demand swaraj? The amount of one crore, therefore, is in my view the very minimum. This sum must come from the 21 provinces. Some of these provinces are poor and some are very small, and one cannot expect them to be able to pay their share. One may certainly expect more [than their share] from Bombay, Gujarat, the Punjab and other parts.

We should complete the collections by 30th June. If we collect sums from many people, no one will feel the burden and we shall find it easy to collect the amount of one crore. I suggest that we should start the collection immediately, and complete the work by the end of June. All that is needed is determination and a band of honest volunteers. In this matter, other provinces would do well to follow the example of the Punjab.

Everyone will remember that the collection is to be separated for every province and that 25 per cent of the amount collected by each province is to be made over to the All-India Congress Committee. No one should give his contribution to any person not authorized by the local Congress Committee. If we follow this simple rule, we shall probably escape a good many difficulties.

While this Fund is being collected, no demand should, as far as possible, be made for any other fund.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-3-1921

236. CONGRESS CONSTITUTION

It is necessary for us to understand the meaning of the Congress constitution. This constitution[1] has been so drawn up that we may be able to win swaraj at an early date. If, in accordance with that constitution, we can form a Congress Committee in every town, and succeed in having the name of every man and woman of twenty-oneyears [and over] on our register, it will mean Congress authority respected in everything simultaneously with the Government's. The latter is maintained by force. When, in one and the same place, another authority comes to be voluntarily respected by the people, the authority of the Government, if it is not accepted by the people, will not last even a moment. That is to say, if we can see the Congress constitution functioning on a country-wide scale, we may take it that swaraj will have been established that very day. This will test our capacity for organization. If we do not possess even that, what right do we have to ask for swaraj?

The Congress constitution is an answer to the pessimists. They believe that we do not even have organizational ability, that it will take years to acquire it. The Congress has placed in the hands of the optimists a weapon with which they can prove that this pessimism is unwarranted. No sacrifice is needed for successful implementation of the plan; all that is needed is ordinary honesty in us. Nor does it require much money, and as much as we need we shall get from the subscription fee of four annas a member. Just as we should have the capacity to collect a crore of rupees by 30th June, so also should we have the capacity to enrol one crore members of the Congress. One crore is one-thirtieth part of the population. The population of Gujarat is put at 96 lakhs, so that we should have on our register not less than 3 lakh members before June 30. We had some 25,000 names on our register by the 28th of February. We shall succeed in our task only if our speed increases During the Satyagraha Week, we should work hard and raise the number of members and the amount of collections so that we may complete this simple job.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-3-1921

[1] *Vide* "Congress constitution adopted at Nagpur session", december 1920.

237. SPEECH AT SIVNI[1]

March 20, 1921

I specially wanted to stop here as Bhagwandinji had come here to address a meeting and was arrested. That the Government should arrest the innocent is a certain sign of our victory. We should rejoice at such arrests.

* * *

It is much better to consume sewage water than to drink liquor. Sewage water is merely dirty and causes bodily illnesses, but liquor defiles the soul.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-4-1921

238. LETTER T0 C. F. ANDREWS

JUBBALPORE,
March 21 [*1921*][2]

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I am today in Jubbalpore and shall presently entrain for Calcutta on my way to Orissa. That will practically finish my tour throughout India. The poorest province will be the last to be visited.[3] The present activity of the Government fills me with unutterable distress. India is passing through a wave of purity. The people want to do away with the drink and the opium traffic. The Government is doing its best to thwart the purpose. People want to be simple. A subtle attempt is being made to prevent it. But I think the tide cannot be turned. It must go on. It almost seems however as if thedetermination is to anticipate Lord Reading[4] and create for him an atmosphere in which it will be impossible for him to do any real service unless he brings with him a stout heart and scales of gold to weigh justice.

Today is my sacred day[5] and I cannot help sending you a line. I saw a line in the Press somewhere that you were again down with influenza. I hope you are better. Do send me a wire at Cuttack to say

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhji's tour
[2] In this year, Gandhiji was in Jabalpur on March 21.
[3] Gandhiji was in Orissa from March 24 to March 29.
[4] Then Viceroy-designate of India
[5] March 21, 1921, was a Monday, Gandhiji's day of silence.

how you are. I shall be in Orissa six days.

I am sorry to have to tell you that Lalchand[1] appears to have been a broken reed. Mahadev tells me—and I have little doubt about the truth of his investigation—that Lalchand has misappropriated large sums of money. I have asked for his explanation. I have heard nothing as yet from him. He behaved very badly towards Mahadev. He will not part with your article on opium saying it was meant for himself, not for the Editor of *Young India*. I write this to warn you against trusting him. He is likely to make money out of anything he gets from you or anyone else of authority.

Such discoveries make me sad and despondent at times. We cannot make much headway with this battle of non-co-operation if we do not have clean instruments. Lalchand I believed to be absolutely straight and above suspicion.

I shall be in Bezwada on the 3lst or even 30th and be in the Andhra province for about five days.

With love,

Yours,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 961

239. TELEGRAM TO CENTRAL KHILAFAT COMMITTEE, BOMBAY

March 22, 1921

WIRED KARACHI IF NON-CO-OPERATORS TRY NATIONALIZE EDUCATION THEY NEED NOT BE STOPPED.

Bombay Secret Abstract, 1921, p. 350

240. NOTES

'FOR GOD, KING, AND COUNTRY'

During my peregrinations I once came across boys in uniform and asked them what their uniform meant. I observed that their uniform was made of foreign cloth or cloth woven out of foreign yarn. They said it was scouts' uniform. They whetted my curiosity by

[1] Who had shortly before been removed from the editorial staff of *Young India*; *vide* "Letter to Lalchand", January 29, 1921.

the answer. I was eager to know what they did as scouts. The answer was that they lived for God, King, and Country. 'Who is your King?' I asked. 'King George,' was the reply. 'How about Jallianwala? Supposing you had been in that place on the 13th April 1919 and were asked by General Dyer to shoot your terrified countrymen, what would you have done ?'

Of course I would not have obeyed the command.

But General Dyer wore the King's Uniform ?

Yes, but he belongs to the bureaucracy and I have nothing to do with it.

I suggested that he could not separate the bureaucracy from the King, that the King was an impersonal ideal existence which meant the British Empire and that no Indian could remain loyal, in the accepted sense, to the Empire as it was at present represented and be loyal to God at the same time. An Empire which could be responsible for the terrorism of the Martial Law regime, that would not repent of the wrong, that could enter into secret treaties in breach of solemn obligations, could only be reckoned as a godless Empire. Loyalty to such an Empire was disloyalty to God.

The boy was puzzled.

I continued my argument: 'Supposing our country becomes godless in order to enrich itself, exploits other people, trafficks in intoxicants, goes to war for the sake of extending its trade and resorts to fraud in order to sustain its power and prestige, how can we be consistently loyal to God and country? Must we not forsake the country for the sake of God? I suggest, therefore, that you should bind yourself to be faithful and loyal only to God and none else in the same sense and in the same breath.'

There were many of his companions who were deeply interested in the conversation. Their chief too came in. I repeated my argument to him and asked him to tax himself and stimulate the inquiring spirit of the grown-up young men whom he was guiding. Hardly was the absorbing topic exhausted, when the train steamed out of the station. I felt sorry for the splendid lads and understood better the deep meaning of the movement of non-co-operation. There can be but one universal creed for man, that is loyalty to God. It includes, when it is not inconsistent, loyalty to King, country and humanity. But it equally often excludes all else. I hope that the youth of the country as well as their tutors will revise their creed and set themselves right where they

are convinced of their error. It is no small matter for tender minds to have formulas presented to them which cannot bear scrutiny.

SATYAGRAHA, CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE, PASSIVE RESISTANCE, NON-CO-OPERATION

It is often my lot to answer knotty questions on all sorts of topics arising out of this great movement of national purification. A company of collegiate non-co-operators asked me to define for them the terms which I have used as heading for this note. And even at this late day, I was seriously asked whether satyagraha did not at times warrant resistance by violence, as for instance in the case of a sister whose virtue might be in danger from a desperado. I ventured to suggest that it was the completest defence without irritation, without being ruffled, to interpose oneself between the victim and the victimizer, and to face death. I added that this (for the assailant) novel method of defence would, in all probability, exhaust his passion and he would no longer want to ravish an innocent woman, but would want to flee from her presence for very shame, and that, if he did not, the act of personal bravery on the part of her brother would steel her heart for putting up an equally brave defence and resisting the lust of a man turned brute for the while. And I thought I clinched my argument by saying that if, in spite of all the defence, the unexpected happened, and the physical force of the tyrant overpowered his victim, the disgrace would not be that of the woman but of her assailant and that both she and her brother, who died in the attempt to defend her virtue, would stand well before the Throne of Judgment. I do not warrant that my argument convinced my listener or that it would convince the reader. The world I know will go on as before. But it is well at this moment of self examination to understand and appreciate the implications of the powerful movement of non-violence. All religions have emphasized the highest ideal, but all have more or less permitted departures as so many concessions to human weaknesses.

I now proceed to summarize the explanations I gave of the various terms. It is beyond my capacity to give accurate and terse definitions.

Satyagraha, then, is literally holding on to Truth and it means, therefore, Truth-force. Truth is soul or spirit. It is, therefore, known as soul-force. It excludes the use of violence because man is not capable of knowing the absolute truth and, therefore, not competent to punish.

The word was coined[1] in South Africa to distinguish the non-violent resistance of the Indians of South Africa from the contemporary 'passive resistance' of the suffragettes and others. It is not conceived as a weapon of the weak.

Passive resistance is used in the orthodox English sense and covers the suffragette movement as well as the resistance of the nonconformists. Passive resistance has been conceived and is regarded as a weapon of the weak. Whilst it avoids violence, being not open to the weak, it does not exclude its use if, in the opinion of a passive resister, the occasion demands it. However, it has always been distinguished from armed resistance and its application was at one time confined to Christian martyrs.

Civil disobedience is civil breach of unmoral statutory enactments. The expression was, so far as I am aware, coined by Thoreau to signify his own resistance to the laws of a slave state. He has left a masterly treatise[2] on the duty of civil disobedience. But Thoreau was not perhaps an out-and-out champion of non-violence. Probably, also, Thoreau limited his breach of statutory laws to the revenue law, i.e., payment of taxes, whereas the term "civil disobedience" as practised in 1919 covered a breach of any statutory and unmoral law. It signified the resister's outlawry in a civil, i.e., non-violent manner. He invoked the sanctions of the law and cheerfully suffered imprisonment. It is a branch of satyagraha.

Non-co-operation predominantly implies withdrawing of co-operation from the state that in the non-co-operator's view has become corrupt and excludes civil disobedience of the fierce type described above. By its very nature, non-co-operation is even open to children of understanding and can be safely practised by the masses. Civil disobedience presupposes the habit of willing obedience to laws without fear of their sanctions. It can therefore be practised only as a last resort and by a select few in the first instance at any rate. Non-co-operation, too, like civil disobedience is a branch of satyagraha which includes all non-violent resistance for the vindication of Truth.

Young India, 23-3-1921

[1] In 1908; *vide* "Gujarati equivalents for passive resistance, etc.", 7-3-1908.

[2] For a summary of it by Gandhiji, *vide*, "Duty of Disobeying Laws",7-9-1907 & "Duty of Disobeying Laws", 14-9-1907.

241. SATYAGRAHA WEEK

April 6th and 13th will be soon upon us. The 6th[1] saw India one and awakened. The 13th was a black Sunday, when a diabolical attempt was made to crush the spirit of a nation that had just become awakened. India observed the anniversary of the two days last year in a fitting manner, and the whole week commencing from the 6th was treated as a week of consecration. Would that the coming April will find us ready for greater consecration. We have every reason and every occasion for it. Last year we concentrated merely on securing subscriptions for paying the purchase price of the ground hallowed by innocent blood.[2] It was a necessary and pious act. But greater things have happened since then. The nation has affirmed and reaffirmed its determination to redress the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and to establish swaraj. The December Congress went further and declared its intention to acquire swaraj within one year.

We cannot, then, do better than consecrate ourselves for greater national effort in this direction. The school and the courts movements continue. No special endeavour is now necessary on that score except on the part of those who have left educational institutions or law courts. They must search within and see how they are utilizing their time. But there are six things in which we certainly need to make a very special effort.

Firstly, we must acquire greater mastery over ourselves and secure an atmosphere of perfect calm, peace, and goodwill. We must ask forgiveness for every unkind word thoughtlessly uttered or unkind deed done to anyone.

Secondly, we must still further cleanse our hearts and we Hindus and Muslims must cease to suspect one another's motives; and we should believe ourselves to be incapable of wronging one another.

Thirdly, we Hindus must call no one unclean or mean or inferior to ourselves, and must therefore cease to regard the 'pariah' class to be untouchable. We must consider it sinful to regard a fellow being as untouchable.

These three things are matters of inward transformation and the

[1] April 6, 1919

[2] The reference is evidently to the Jallianwala Bagh Memorial Fund; *vide* "Appeal for Jallianwala Bagh Memorial Fund", 14-2-1920 & "Appeal for Jallianwala Bagh Memorial Fund", 6-8-1920.

result will be seen in our daily dealings.

The fourth is the curse of drink. Happily, India seems to have voluntarily and spontaneously resolved to get rid of the curse. A supreme effort should be made during the week to induce, by respectful entreaty, the liquor-sellers to give up their licences and the habitual visitors to these shops to give up the habit. Every caste knows its own offenders and can handle them much more effectively than others. But I have suggested to the women of Ahmedabad that they should organize temperance bands and approach the liquor-sellers and the drinkers. In any case, no physical force should be used to attain the end. A determined peaceful campaign of persuasion must succeed.

The fifth thing is the introduction of the spinning-wheel in every home, larger production and use of khadi, and complete giving up of foreign cloth.

The sixth thing is the systematic and ceaseless collection of subscriptions for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. If an organized endeavour is made in this direction, we should be able to finish the collection of even one crore rupees during the Satyagraha Week. My incessant touring has convinced me that India is ready to pay much more than one crore. Only there are not enough honest collectors. Every district of India should be able to organize itself for this work to be done during the Satyagraha Week.

Hartals have become cheap, and are easily organized and, therefore, have lost much of their original value. But hartals for the two days have a significance all their own. And I would certainly advise hartals for both the sixth and the thirteenth April accompanied by fast. Needless to say that there should be no compulsion. The employees whether in mills, or elsewhere, should not stop work if they cannot secure leave, and no undue pressure should be brought to bear on the tram management. We must rely upon the public not using public vehicles on the two days without just and urgent cause. The two days of fast should be utilized for special prayers and worship.

I would dissuade the public from passing any resolutions as to our demands. The week of consecration must be a week of self-examination and purification. We must rely upon our work to bring about the desired result. As soon as we have rendered ourselves fit no person on earth can prevent our establishing swaraj and securing redress of the two great wrongs.

Young India, 23-3-1921

242. TO THE PARSIS

DEAR FRIENDS,

I know that you are following with considerable interest the present non-co-operation movement. You may know, too, that all thoughtful non-co-operators are anxiously waiting to see what part you are going to play in the process of purification through which the whole country is passing. I, personally, have every reason to have full faith in your doing the right thing when the moment for making the final choice comes to you. And I address these few words to you because I feel that, probably, that moment has now arrived.

Apart from your being fellow-countrymen, I am bound to you by many sacred ties. Dadabhai[1] was the first patriot to inspire me. He was my guide and helper when I did not know any other leader. It was to him that I bore, when yet a boy, a letter of introduction.[2] It was the late uncrowned king[3] of Bombay who led me in 1896 and showed me the way to work. It was he who, when I wanted to give battle to a Political Agent as far back as 1892,[4] restrained my youthful ardour and taught me the first practical lesson in ahimsa in public life. He taught me not to resent personal wrongs if I would serve India. A Parsi merchant in Durban, Rustomjee Ghorkhodoo, was among my most valued clients and friends in South Africa. He gave freely to the public cause, and he and his brave son were the first among my fellow prisoners. He gave me shelter when I was lynched,[5] and now, too, he is following the swaraj movement with considerable interest and has just donated[6] Rs. 40,000 to it. In my humble opinion, probably the first woman in India today is a Parsi woman[7] gentle as a lamb, with a heart that holds the whole humanity. To have her friendship is the

[1] Dadabhai Naoroji

[2] This was in 1888 when Gandhiji went to England to study for the Bar.

[3] Sir Pherozeshah Mehta

[4] This Was at Rajkot when Gandhiji attempted to intercede with the Political Agent on behalf of his elder brother and was rudely rebuffed. For a detailed account of the incident by Gandhiji, *vide An Autobiography*, Part II, Ch. IV.

[5] In Durban, on January 13, 1897; *vide* "Memorial to Secretary of state for The Colonies", 15-3-1897.

[6] *Vide* footnote 2, "My Notes", 26-12-1920.

[7] Presumably Gandhiji refers to Mrs. Jaijee Petit, wife of Jehangir Bomanjee Petit, a Bombay millionaire.

rarest privilege of life. I would love to multiply these sacred memories, but I have given you enough of them to enable you to understand and to appreciate the motive of this letter.

You are a very cautious community. You are compact, an you rightly insist on abundant proof of the stability and the morality of any movement before you would take to it. But there is now danger of your becoming over-cautious, and your success in trade may make you oblivious of the wants and aspirations of the multitude of your countrymen. I dread the Rockefeller spirit that seems to be overtaking the great House of the Tatas. I dread to think of the consequences of their appropriating poor peoples' properties for the doubtful benefit of making India industrial. But I do believe that this is a passing phase. Your shrewdness will show you the suicidal nature of such enterprises. Your quick wit will tell you that what India needs is not concentration of capital in a few hands, but its distribution so as to be within easy reach of the 7_ lakhs of villages that make this continent 1,900 miles long and 1,500 miles broad. I know, therefore, it is a question of time when you will throw in your lot as a community with the reformers who are hungering to free India from the curse of an Imperialism which is bleeding her to death.

But there is one thing for which it will be criminal to wait. A temperance wave is passing over India. The people want voluntarily to become teetotallers. Society is fast developing a public opinion that would consider drinking an unpardonable vice. Many Parsis make a living by running liquor shops. Your whole-hearted co-operation can sweep out of existence many of these plague-spots in the Bombay Presidency. The Local Governments almost all over India are making a discreditable attempt to thwart the movement which bids fair to succeed even to the point of destroying the whole of the Abkari[1] revenue. Will you help the Governments or the people? The Bombay Government has not yet been seized by panic. But I can hardly imagine that it will have the courage and wisdom to sacrifice the drink revenue. You have to make your immediate choice. I do not know what your Scriptures say about drink. I can guess what the Prophet, who separated good from evil and sang the victory of the former over the latter, is likely to have said. But apart from your own religious belief, you have to make up your mind as to whether you will forward the cause of temperance in a whole-hearted manner or whether you

[1] Excise

will supinely and philosophically watch developments. I shall hope that you as a practical community of India will actively and thoroughly associate yourselves with the great temperance movement which bids fair to outshine every such movement in the world.

I am

Your faithful friend,

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 23-3-1921

243. THE KHILAFAT

The proposed change in the Treaty of Sevres[1] cannot satisfy Indian Muslims. And that is saying a great deal. It is not Turkey merely that Great Britain has to placate. It is India that has to be pacified. In my opinion, if the demands of the Muslims of India are conceded it will not much matter whether Turkey's are satisfied or not. And this for two reasons. The Khilafat is an ideal and when a man works for an ideal, he becomes irresistible. The Muslims, who represent the ideal, have behind them the opinion of the whole mass of the Indian people.

It is wrong to say that Muslims are fighting merely for Turkey. They will abandon her today, if she went wrong, if, to take a foolish illustration, she demands her restoration to the status that she occupied during the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent. Similarly, the Muslims cannot abandon a claim based on the Koranic injunctions because a weak and helpless Turkey cannot sustain it.

Whilst every good Muslim must strive to retain the temporal power of Turkey, it is obligatory on him to see that unequivocal Muslim control is retained over the 'Island of Arabia' which includes Mesopotamia, Syria, and Palestine as well, and the spiritual sovereignty over them of the Caliph, whoever he may be for the time being. No other terms, however good otherwise they may be, can possibly satisfy Muslim opinion. They will not tolerate any non-Muslim influence, direct or indirect, over the holy places of Islam.

The most thorny part of the question is, therefore, Palestine. Britain has made promises to the Zionists. The latter have, naturally, a sacred sentiment about the place. The Jews, it is contended, must remain a homeless wandering race unless they have obtained possession of Palestine. I do not propose to examine the soundness or

[1] Signed on August 10, 1920

otherwise of the doctrine underlying the proposition. All I contend is that they cannot possess Palestine through a trick or a moral breach. Palestine was not a stake in the War. The British Government could not dare have asked a single Muslim soldier to wrest control of Palestine from fellow Muslims and give it to the Jews. Palestine, as a place of Jewish worship, is a sentiment to be respected and the Jews would have a just cause of complaint against Mussulman idealists if they were to prevent Jews from offering worship as freely as themselves.

By no canon of ethics or war, therefore, can Palestine be given to the Jews as a result of the War. Either Zionists must revise their ideal about Palestine, or, if Judaism permits the arbitrament of war, engage in a 'holy war' with the Muslims of the world with the Christians throwing in their influence on their side. But one may hope that the trend of world opinion will make 'holy wars' impossible and religious questions or differences will tend more and more towards a peaceful adjustment based upon the strictest moral considerations. But, whether such a happy time ever comes or not, it is clear as daylight that the Khilafat terms to be just must mean the restitution of Jazirut-ul-Arab[1] to complete Muslim control under the spiritual sovereignty of the Caliph.[2]

Young India, 23-3-1921

244. TRUE AND FALSE[3]

I fear I shall be unable 'to dispel the clouds that are gathering round' but I shall try to throw light on the points raised by the

[1] The 'Island of Arabia'

[2] Here follows a short extract from a review of Israel Zangwill's *The Voice Jerusalem*, dealing with the Jewish claims on Palestine.

[3] In this article Gandhiji comments on a letter from a correspondent in Poona. The following are excerpts from the letter:

"It is three months since the Congress Resolution on Non-co-operation was passed but there is no adequate response from the student world . . . They are not convinced how the boycott of colleges will paralyse the Government. . . . They look upon it as a mass movement, and if non-co-operation is to succeed, it must be brought into practice by a majority of the people. Till now only 200 students from the Poona colleges have responded . . . to obey the Congress mandate, but not at all to satisfy their conscience . . . should a minority which has non-co-operated suffer for nothing and ruin their careers? With this idea many are going to return to their colleges and are being abused as "moral lepers" by some enthusiasts. You will kindly throw light on all these points and dispel the clouds that are gathering round." *Young India*, 23-3-1921.

correspondent. Whilst this is a mass movement, everyone is expected to respond irrespective of others because it is also a purifying movement. We leave schools or courts because it is sinful to countenance them, not because individual action can paralyse the Government. Such withdrawal on the part of many, however, does result in paralysis of the Government. Students who withdrew merely in response to the Congress call, but without inner conviction, did wrong and should rejoin their respective schools and brave the derision of their fellows. Those, however, who have seceded from conviction, must stand true even though they be a handful. One true coin is worth its full face value. A million false coins are so much dead weight and perfectly valueless. When the few true non-co-operators have *proved* their worth the movement will automatically become a mass movement. The spirit of it pervades the masses even today. Mass action is a matter of time. My belief is that India will be ripe by October. Those who have faith ought not to wait. I know that the students who have not withdrawn have refrained out of weakness, and not because they believe it to be wrong to leave the schools dominated by a Government which they would fain destroy.

Young India, 23-3-1921

245. SPEECH AT CUTTACK

March 23, 1921

After apologizing for the absence of Maulana Shaukat Ali, he [Gandhiji] appealed for Hindu-Muslim unity which he regarded as the first condition of swaraj. He laid stress on the dismembered state of Oriya[1] speaking tracts, the necessity of a separate Utkal Province and the chronic famine of Orissa. He remarked that these were the problems to be solved easily when we attained swaraj. Swaraj could easily be gained within seven months if we could carry out the Congress resolution on non-co-operation. He appealed to the people of Orissa to organize their villages, enroll 3 lakhs of Congress members, spread one lakh of charkhas and collect three lakhs of rupees in Orissa by the 30th June. The moment Orissa did this, she contributed her share to Indian swaraj. He advised his hearers to exercise self-control and self-discipline in morals, manners and habit. He said that those who were ready for self-sacrifice could fear no man but God; swaraj was our goal and birthright, to attain which we were to destroy the political Satan. As we were not possessed of any sword and, if we had a sword, it would not be useful, he said that non-violence must be

[1] The language spoken by the majority of people in the now separate province of Orissa, also called Utkal

the governing principle in non-co-operation. Referring to the backwardness of Orissa, he remarked that though the English-knowing people in Orissa were comparatively backward the masses were never so; the masses were far ahead. He would try to collect a pie even from the famine-stricken people of Orissa. The Oriyas[1] should devote their time to penance. Finally, he appealed for funds for the memorial of Lokamanya Tilak. The Oriyas who demanded Ganjam, Contai, Singhbhum and C. P. Oriya tract[2] must show that they were able to attain swaraj for Orissa in harmony with other provinces and to govern their province by organizing their tract and collecting their funds.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 31-3-1921

246. SPEECH TO MARWARIS AND GUJARATIS, CUTTACK

March 23, 1921

On the same day at 8 p.m. he addressed a meeting of Marwaris and Gujaratis and appealed for funds. He explained that as these had identified their interest with Orissa and took much profit from the Oriyas, they should help them in collecting their funds. He dwelt largely upon interprovincial sympathy and goodwill and asked the audience to boycott foreign cloth and popularise the spinning-wheel through their customers. He asked them to follow the example of their brothers in other cities and in contributing funds to the province in which they were domiciled.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 31-3-1921

247. SPEECH AT MEETING OF MUSLIMS, CUTTACK

March 24, 1921

Mahatmaji addressed a gathering of Mussulmans and described to them the Khilafat wrongs and the means to redress them. He asked them to live in amity and goodwill with the Hindus. He did not want to make a bargain with the Mussulmans with respect to cow-killing. He wanted to keep the honour of Islam, Hinduism and India, and asked the Mussulmans not to be satisfied until the Khilafat question was satisfactorily decided.

Referring to the Khilafat delegation and Chhotani's work, he assured the Mussulmans that Hindus must continue to be the friends and brothers to Mussulmans till the final solution of the problem and he himself was ready to die. He appealed for funds on the spot.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 31-3-1921

[1] The people of Orissa

[2] For inclusion in the separate Oriya-speaking province which they wished to have

248. SPEECH AT MASS MEETING, CUTTACK

March 24, 1921

In the evening he addressed another huge mass meeting where the students and lawyers were given separate seats to the right of the platform. He first dwelt upon the neccessity of learning the Hindustani and Oriya languages. He ofcourse did not discourage the study of English literature. He appealed to the students not to have any contact with the polluted system of education and demoralizing influence of the Government. The students were asked to handle the spinning-wheel for eight hours a day and spin out swaraj for thenselves. He then invited questions from the audience.

Q. If the non-co-operation movement fails, what are we to do?

A. Even if it fails it is sure that if you give up your studies you have done your duty, by avoiding contat of sin and Satan.

Q. If I give up my studies my father's property wil be firfeited in the native state. So should I throw him into trouble, and be disobedient to the father?

A. Ramachandran[1] did his duty when he gladly went to the forest for 14 years. He did not care for Dasaratha's[2] anxieties. I can't comprehend how any Chief can forfeit a father's property for the son's conduct. The boy should take a risk upon himself even if such forfeiture be the case. Such arbitrary rules in the native states must come to an end by swaraj only.

Q. What about medical students?

A. We are preparing medicine for the healthy life of Mother India. Thirty crores of poverty-striken people want medicine.

Q. English education has gone to the bottom of our national life, brought about unity among various Indian peoples and it can abolish untouchability. So is it an extra evil? Are not Tilak, Ram Mohan Roy, yourself products of English education?[3]

A. This is a representative view being expressed by several people. We must conquer the battle of swaraj by conquering this sort of wilful ignorance and prejudice of our countrymen and of Englishmen. The system of education is an put my best energy to destroy that system. I don't say that we have got as yet any advantage from the system. The advantages we have so far got are in spite of the

[1] The hero of the *Ramayana*

[2] King of Ayodhya and father of Ramachandra

[3] The answer that follows is from *Young India*

system, not because of the system. Supposing the English were not here, India must have marched with other parts of the world and even if it continued to be under Mogul rule many people would learn English as a language and a literature. The present system enslaves us without allowing a discriminating use of English literature. My friend has cited the case of Tilak, Ram Mohan and myself. Leave aside my case; I am a miserable pigmy.

Tilak and Ram Mohan would have been far greater men if they had not had the contagion of English learning. (Clapping.) I don't want your verbal approval by clapping but I want the approval of your intellect and reasoning. I am opposed to making a fetish of English education, I don't hate English education. When I want to destroy the Government I don't want to destroy the English language but read English as an Indian nationalist would do. Ram Mohan and Tilak (leave aside my case) were so many pigmies who had no hold upon the people compared with Chaitanya[1], Sankar, Kabir and Nanak. Ram Mohan, Tilak, were pigmies before these saints. What Sankar alone was able to do, the whole army of English-knowing men can't do. I can multiply instances. Was Guru Gobind a product of English education ? Is there a single English-knowing Indian who is a match for Nanak, the founder of a sect second to none in point of valour and sacrifice? Has Ram Mohan produced a single martyr of the type of Dalip Singh? I highly revere Tilak and Ram Mohan. It is my conviction that if Ram Mohan and Tilak had not received this education but had their natural training they would have done greater things like Chaitanya. If that race has even to be revived it is to be revived not by English education. I know what treasures I have lost not knowing Hindustani and Sanskrit. I ask you to consider and value the glamour of education at its true worth. English education has emasculated us, constrained our intellect and the manner of imparting this education has rendered us effeminate. We want to bask in the sunshine of freedom, but the enslaving system emasculates our nation. The pre-British period was not a period of slavery. We had some sort of swaraj under Mogul rule. In Akbar's time the birth of a Pratap was possible, and in Aurangzeb's time a Sivaji could flourish. Has 150years of British rule produced any Pratap and Sivaji? You have got several feudatory Native Chiefs everyone of whom bends the knee

[1] A sixteenth-century Hindu religious reformer of Bengal who taught that caste was subordinate to faith in Lord Krishna

before the Political Agent and admits his slavery. When I find young men complaining against Native Chiefs, my sympathy goes to them. They are doubly oppressed. When the Native Chiefs do so I ascribe it to the British conquerer not to the Chiefs. They are victims to the slave-owning system. So my appeal to you all is: "Fly from this monster." Never mind if you beg from door to door. Rather die begging than live in bondage. We must be able to hold the country. Who holds the country now? It is not the English. It is we the Indian people who have accepted bondage. I refuse to shed a single tear if the English retire at this moment. I ask them to help us as our servants, equals and friends. I shall not allow them to lord it over us with our consent. They may use aeroplanes, army, navy, but not our consent. Realize your own dignity even though India was infested with robbers. You must do your duty. What can be nobler than to die as free men of India? It is a Satanic system; I have dedicated my life to destroy the system.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 31-3-1921; *Young India,* 13-4-1921

249. MY NOTES

THE CONGRESS CONSTITUTION

My experiences in the course of my travels over the country have increasingly convinced me that even if, in accordance with the constitution of the Congress, we could but form a committee in every village and in this way establish Congress authority, we would not be far from swaraj. No one will think this a difficult task; if it is considered so, we should give up all talk of attaining swaraj this year. Wherever new life has come into the people and a few leaders have started working honestly, these things are being done. In the district of Jabalpur alone, 50,000 people are said to have enrolled themselves. In some villages, almost 90 per cent of the men and women have got themselves enrolled on the Congress register. Those who saw this done were not lawyers, but two young sons of wealthy zemindars. They have been sacrificing their time and money for the service of the people. In fact, the lawyers, by and large, have kept away from this activity. Where the people still cling to ideas of position and status, look to lawyers and other old workers and do not have the courage to break away from them and go ahead with the work, the movement makes no progress. In Gujarat, 25,000 members of the Congress had

been enrolled by February 28. This is in no way an impressive record. Just as by June end we should have collected from all over India a crore of rupees, we should within the same period have enrolled one crore Congress members. That is to say, we have still to collect one and a quarter crores and to make arrangements for enrolling a crore of members and for such other work. The total population of Gujarat is placed at 96 lakhs. At the rate of a crore for 30 crores, we should have enrolled three lakh members by the end of June and the Provincial Committee should have Rs. 75,000 as membership fee from these three lakhs in addition to the contributions to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. The enrolment of members will be of some advantage only if the work is properly organized. We should have on our record the full name, occupation, address and age of every member. He should have a general idea of the Congress constitution and should also be familiar with the main principles of non-co-operation. A worker should be specially appointed to supervise this work and he should watch all the time how it is progressing at each place. Detailed and authentic information should be published every week on behalf of every district. To attend to this, some persons will have to give all their 24 hours to swaraj work. Not only that, they should use intelligence and judgment, and be truthful, in all that they do. I still find everywhere personal jealousies, standing on prestige, excessive self-regard and love of power. My faith is shaken when I think of all these things. As I look, however, at the general awakening and the purification of the people, it returns. Nevertheless, it is necessary for us to learn to attend to the minutest detail. There is a saying in English, "Take care of the pence and the pound will take care of itself." Drop by drop fills the lake.

SPINNING-WHEEL AND KHADI

I saw in Jubbalpore those [two] young zemindars do this work; they have not been doing only this work but have also taken up energetically the work of swadeshi. They are introducing the spinning-wheel in village after village. They have bought a stock of cotton, got it made into slivers and distributed these among the people. Where six months ago not a single spinning-wheel was being plied, hundreds are now working and khadi is being produced. Both the cousins wear khadi and, for the required yarn, they themselves spin daily.

PROHIBITION

Prohibition work has been going on in full swing. In some places, there was no applicant for a liquor licence. If we can show courage and see that consumption of liquor is stopped, we can retain

17 crores of rupees in the homes of the poor in India. The Government has at present an annual income of Rs. 17 crores and this comes from our own homes.

APPEAL TO WOMEN

If the women of Gujarat undertake this sacred work, we shall succeed before June in rooting out this evil of drink from Gujarat at any rate. They should go to the liquor booths in every district and appeal first to their owners and, if they do not oblige, to thecustomers. I am sure women at any rate will not use any harsh words. "You are like a brother to us, and our brother should not drink liquor in God's name, therefore, give it up." This is all the speech I would expect from them, I am sure many addicts will feel ashamed and turn away. Even if they do not go away, or do not show respect to the ladies but abuse them, it does not matter. Our sisters should bear a few abuses for the sake of Bharatvarsha[1]. If women in any town give the lead, I am sure women elsewhere will take up the work.

BUT WHAT ABOUT EDUCATION ?

If, however, an income of 17 crores is thus written off, what would happen to our education? For the Government asserts, and we foolishly believe, that our education is financed out of the revenue from liquor. If this is really so, I would in fact say that we have two reasons to reject the education provided by the Government. One reason is the general Satanic policy of the Government and the other the fact of that education being financed with income from tainted sources. Can we provide pure education to our children with income from liquor and opium? As is the source of money, so is its fruit. If it is the owner of the liquor booths who finances our children's education, do what we will, shall we ever succeed in getting his booth closed down?

Why should the Government credit the income from liquor to the head of education? Why should it not credit land revenue to that head? Let it credit the income from liquor to the military account so that, when it stops, the army will be proportionately reduced. When we have swaraj, we shall certainly not spend crores on the army. A saving of 17 crores can easily be effected from the expenditure on the army. We should not, therefore, be alarmed by the possible disappearance of the income from liquor and opium.

[1] India

RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION

Under swaraj, the resources for education cannot come either from liquor [revenues] or from land revenues. The beautiful spinning-wheel is the right source. If the spinning-wheel and the loom are introduced in every school, our education will never be a burden to us. Today, of course, we should expect children to give all their time to the spinning-wheel, but even after independence, they should give at least an hour daily to it. Swaraj will be swaraj only if its effect is felt in every department of life. Today education is intended only to train slaves—to produce servants. Education under swaraj should aim at making the pupils self-reliant right from their early years. Hence we would necessarily teach them spinning and weaving. If desired, they may also be taught some other trade or profession besides this, but spinning and weaving should be made compulsory. The spinning-wheel should become the "refuge of the hapless and support of the poor". No other profession can serve our needs as well as this, for it is the only work which can be made universally available and an alternative or a supplementary employment to agriculture. All cannot be carpenters or blacksmiths, but all should know spinning and should spin a little for the sake of the nation or for supplementing their income. All need food and clothing and that is the reason why the spinning-wheel can be adopted as a universal employment. Our national education should be planned on the lines above suggested, right from today. Otherwise this will be the cause of the very first conflict among us under swaraj. It may be argued by some that there should be no teaching of crafts as part of education. Let us make the learning of a craft a part of education right from now on in order that public opinion be sufficiently moulded to leave no room for argument at a later stage.

BEGINNING OF THE ERA OF ACTION

I have been observing everywhere that the era of talking is over. We still love to hear speeches and speakers love to speak but, all the same, the people have realized that what is required now is action, that swaraj cannot be won by talking. If those who are eager for action do not take advantage of this age of action, they will miss the opportunity which has offered itself. The Government has started gagging us. Why not we ourselves shut our mouths? What do we hope to gain by talking? Instead of maligning the Government, would it not be more interesting to engage ourselves wholly in the concrete task of devising ways and means of destroying a political system which has become an evil? Is it necessary now to probe what kind of a Government this is?

It is, therefore, my earnest advice to all who go about making speeches to stop speaking and engage themselves wholly in work. If they must speak, let them criticize the people for their lethargy, their selfishness, or inspire them to greater effort by admiring, wherever seen, their courage and their self-sacrifice. We are slowly bringing about a situation in which the Government will not punish people for criticizing it, but will treat it as an offence to ply the spinning-wheel and to refuse to drink liquor. In fact, the arrests which are taking place everywhere these days are on account of our work to stop consumption of liquor. It just does not suit the Government that we should not use foreign cloth or consume liquor. It did not fear our speeches, but it fears the effects which our speeches are now producing. We may be sure that the day the Government starts arresting us for plying the spinning wheel or for refusing to drink liquor, we shall have won a complete victory. We must give it no other excuse than our giving up of liquor and acceptance of the spinning-wheel. The earlier we take up this work, the sooner shall we get swaraj.

BAN ON WHITE CAP

I understand that in some places an order has been issued, asking employees not to attend office in white khadi caps. I would welcome such offences. Under the rule of Ravana, keeping a picture of Vishnu in one's house was an offence. It should not be surprising if in this *Ravanarajya* wearing a white cap, or not going to law courts or not drinking liquor or not using foreign cloth, or plying the spinning-wheel came to be considered as offences. We shall have swaraj only when all of us take to committing these offences; or, maybe, this Government will then change its policy. For, if we learn to follow truth, only one of three things can happen: (I) the Government may change its policy and respect public opinion; (2) rather than not change its policy, the Government may look upon [advocacy of] policies favoured by the people as a crime and make the futile attempt of sending countless men to jail; or (3) unable to accept such policies and also unable to suppress the people, it may leave India.

Any of the three possibilities should be welcome to us. One more, the fourth, is beyond my imagination. It is that, on the arrest of the handful of leaders, the people will give up their moral standpoint, and submit to the Government's policy which they are denouncing today. I hope that the time when this could happen has gone for ever.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-3-1921

250. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

PURI,
March 28 [*1921*][1]

MY DEAREST CHARLIE,

I have just received your letter. I do hope you are better. You must not get ill so often. Kallenbach used to tell me that it was a crime for a German soldier to have a bad foot. Must it not be a crime for a God's soldier to be bed-ridden? I wish you would agree with me that such is the Law. I know what you said when I got ill. But I willingly agreed that I must have committed some breach of the Law.

That brings me to Gurudev. Even if I agreed unreservedly that my illness was a just punishment for my recruiting campaign,[2] I am unable to agree with the implications of Gurudev's letter reproduced in the *Tribune* and sent to me by a friend for reply in *Young India*. I have glanced through it once and I could not help thinking that he had not understood the simple beauty and the duty of non-co-operation.

I heard from a Fiji man all about the recent arrivals. Yes, I have seen the recommendations of the S[outh] A[frican] Commission. Nothing good can come without radical amelioration in India. This campaign against the temperance crusade on the part of the Government officials makes me sick. I see nothing but sham and humbug behind everything.

Did you see how I dealt with the Sikh letter and the objection raised by you? I feel that that letter was quite perfect. But your caveat enabled me to drive the point of forgiveness still further.

I wish you were with me when I met the famine-stricken people of the Puri District yesterday. It was a heart-rending sight. I assure you that there is nothing but the spinning-wheel for their deep distress.

Yours,
MOHAN

C. F. ANDREWS, ESQ.
SHANTINIKETAN
BOLPUR, E. I. RY.

From a photostat: G.N. 2608

[1] From the postal cancellation mark on the envelope
[2] From June to August 1918, to help the cause of the Allies in World War I

251. LETTER TO KANAIYALAL VAKIL

BERHAMPUR,
Tuesday [*March 29, 1921*][1]

BHAISHRI KANAIYALAL,

I will never be able to get over my sorrow on your having gone back sick. I had hoped to take from you plenty of work. Even now I am not going to give you up. Please get well soon. If an operation is necessary, I advise you to undergo it without fear. You should get yourself examined by Dalal. Drop me a line when you are well enough to write.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a facsimile of the Gujarati: *The Bombay Chronicle*, 26-12-1937

252. SPEECH AT MUNICIPAL RECEPTION, BERHAMPUR[2]

March 29, 1921

[Gandhiji said that] he was unprepared for receiving an address in English which was considered out of place in our national evolution except as a medium for international commerce and diplomatic relations. He commended Surat, Nadiad and Ahmedabad as model municipalities and said that a well-conducted municipality must bear the seeds of swaraj. He said that mere rejection of Government grant or control was not enough and the national form of education was not complete without the spinning-wheel and Hindustani. He said that the noble traditions of Gokhale should be copied and that Gokhale's supreme work consisted in spiritualizing the politics of the country. He said that we were also now introducing the religious spirit in all our national affairs. He referred to the sweating industry of Gokhale, who, born economist that he was, wanted to economise every moment of the nation. He wished all prosperity to the Berhampore Municipality and hoped it would give all its best towards national uplift.

The Hindu, 1-4-1921

253. SPEECH AT MASS MEETING,, BERHAMPUR

March 29, 1921

He [Gandhiji] reiterated his regret that the Madrasis were not able to follow Hindustani, an elementary knowledge of which ought not to be difficult. He saw that Hindustani should permeate the masses from the classes. He referred to the district

[1] The date has been inferred from Gandhiji's presence at Berhampur on this day which happened to be a Tuesday.

[2] Delivered in reply to an address of welcome presented by the Municipality of Berhampur

problem between the Andhras and Oriyas and said that it should be solved in a statesmanlike manner and in the Indian way.[1] He asserted that the masses were untouched by this problem. Though he was for linguistic distribution and provincial development he was determinately opposed to them at the expense of the national advancement. The battle for freedom was the battle for real legal equality with the strongest on earth. He was aware of the difficulties that faced him in obtaining swaraj but considered that in the few months of probation we were now undergoing, we should have thrown away the want of faith in ourselves. He should have the capacity to die for India, not live as witness to her shame. He exhorted that we should in the twinkling of an eye set our houses in order and settle matters like the district excision question, by living for others and not for ourselves. He asserted that we should get swaraj immediately. He referred to the Khilafat peril and reminded that Hinduism had been in peril all these years. He emphasized that the Punjab wrongs should be redressed and that as the national awakening had given a new courage, if there be again martial law, no Indian would crawl. He asserted that non-co-operation was a means of attaining swaraj and that he was indifferent as to how the scheme of swaraj was evolved. His recent trip to Orissa showed him that the masses cared only for their food, that the masses must feel the benefit of swaraj. He said that the masses would not recognize us, if Englishmen allowed them rice free of charge. He enjoined that lawyers should suspend practice till the Government had repented and till swaraj was attained. He held that those events which sent the innocent people of Punjab to the Andamans were not fit for practice [*sic*].

Swaraj in his view hung on a thread, the spinning 'thread'. He emphasized that if we could not effectually boycott British goods within a year, the opportunity would pass. He referred to the trap laid by the East India Company. He appealed strongly that we had to purify ourselves and must not be Satanic to get out of an unsympathetic, Satanic Government. He claimed to be a practical idealist. He was pleased that India was carrying on a mighty campaign against the drink evil and had forestalled even the Congress. He considered that, to purify ourselves, we needed no university training. He referred to the accomplished fact of the Hindu-Muslim unity and urged strongly the elevation of the depressed classes. He pleaded that money was necessary to obtain swaraj, that the Tilak Swaraj Fund should be strengthened and that it should flow as it gave life to India.

The Hindu, 1-4-1921

254. NOTES

REPRESSION AND ITS LESSON

I had the pleasure, whilst at Nagpur, of studying Dr. Cholkar's speech[2] which is the subject matter of prosecution against him. Even

[1] A controversy was then going on regarding the delimitation of Berhampur district on a linguistic basis and, earlier in the afternoon, Gandhiji had met deputations representing the two language groups.

[2] *Vide* "Speeh at Nagpur", March 18, 1921.

as it stands reported by the C. I. D. reporter, it is extremely inoffensive. It is, to use Lord Chelmsford's expression, 'pruned of epithet'. It is a reasoned speech. But it discusses a republican form of government. If that is the gravamen of the offence, then almost every Congressman is an offender. For he will not hesitate to think of, and work for, a republic, if he could not gain his birthright without complete independence. The fact is, that the temperance movement has told on the people in the Central and other Provinces, and the Government cannot tolerate it. Bhagvandinji whom the local men delight to call Mahatma, is the respected, superintendent of the Non-co-operation Ashram—a flourishing institution in Nagpur. He is an effective speaker and worker. He must also be silenced in the cause of the Abkari revenues. That is my reading of the prosecutions in the Central Provinces and elsewhere. By all means prosecute for violence those who incite people to do, or who themselves do, violence to liquor dealers or visitors to liquor shops, but why at this late stage prosecute people under sedition sections? The answer is simple. There is no violence used by responsible persons in connection with drink. Irresponsible violence can be checked in a moment. But that is not what the Government want. They dread the approaching disappearance of the drink and the opium revenue. And they are intent upon preventing (to them) the catastrophe by every means legitimate or otherwise.

CORNER THE GOVERNMENT

If my reading be correct, the remedy is simple. Let us not give the Government even a colourable pretence for prosecution. If sedition means disaffection towards the present system of Government, it is a virtue and a duty. But we do not need to preach it. There is no affection for the system even on the part of [titled] men. They hold their titles, as several have admitted, because they have not the courage to risk loss of their wealth. I know more than one who were threatened with confiscation of their jagirs if they gave up Government favours. I know many more who would not give up their titles or other honours because they fear loss of banking custom. So far is the influence of the Government felt! But all these would welcome the destruction of a system under which, if they gain a few lakhs of rupees, crores are drained out of the country without adequate return. I repeat, therefore, that we need not preach disaffection. We cannot paint the system blacker than it appears to the average audience today. All we need do is to show the people the way

to destroy it. That way is self-purification. We shall put the Government in an uncomfortable corner when we oblige them to treat temperance as a vice, and the possession of a spinning-wheel a crime. The system can last only so far as we can afford to clothe it with an air of respectability and being, or pretending to be, enamoured of it by giving the Government even a plausible excuse for prosecution.

WHO CUT THE THUMBS ?

If the Government treats the possession of the spinning wheel as a crime, it would not be for the first time in history. During the East India Company regime, spinning or weaving had become almost a crime. The labour of these artisans was so cruelly suppressed that they were obliged to cut off their own thumbs in order to avoid imprisonment, Many speakers mix up facts and say that the Company's servants cut off the thumbs of artisans. In my opinion, such cutting off would be less cruel than the terrorism which resulted in self-mutilation.

WHITE CAP A CRIME

To make temperance a crime would be only a step removed from making the wearing of white caps a crime. And yet I heard whilst at Jubbalpore[1] that the servants of a railway department were prohibited from wearing white caps!

REVOLUTIONARY

And has not the U. P. Government pronounced the movement revolutionary?[2] Hitherto the word "revolution" been connected with violence, and has as such been condemned by established authority. But the movement of non-co-operation, if it may be considered a revolution, is not an armed revolt: it is an evolutionary revolution, it is a bloodless revolution. The movement is a revolution of thought, of spirit. Non-co-operation is a process of purification, and, as such, it constitutes a revolution in one's ideas. Its suppression, therefore, would amount to co-operation by coercion. Orders to kill the movement will be orders to destroy, or interfere with, the introduction of the spinning wheel, to prohibit the campaign of temperance, and an incitement, therefore, to violence. For any attempt to compel people by indirect methods to wear foreign clothes, to patronize drink-shops, would certainly exasperate them. But our success will be assured when

[1] On March 21, 1921

[2] Sir Harcourt Butler, the Governor of the U.P., stated in a speech delivered in March 1921 that the non-co-operation movement was now appearing as a revolutionary movement, "playing on passions and pandering to ignorance".

we stand even this exasperation and incitement. We must not retort. Inaction on our part will kill Government madness. For violence flourishes on response, either by submission to the will of the violator, or by counter-violence. My strong advice to every worker is to segregate this evil Government by strict non-co-operation, not even to talk or speak about it, but having recognized the evil, to cease to pay homage to it by co-operation.

THE ORIGINAL CIRCULAR

The position taken up by the Government of India in its original circular was sound.[1] It conceded the right of free speech and free thought. It threatened to put down by force only actual violence. But I expressed my distrust of it at the time of its publication.[2] The framers expected to be able to kill the movement by patronizing indifference or tolerance. But as soon as it began to take effect by demolishing the prestige of Government institutions and by real boycott of foreign cloth, and diminution in the drink revenue, the Government became alarmed, and began to stop free speech and propaganda. And this repression is only by way of rehearsal. The reality has yet to come. Let us be prepared for it. Our determination to continue silent self purification must remain fixed and unalterable. We must pass through the fire of terrorism even of the O'Dwyer type, and prove our loyalty to our country, even as Sita proved hers to her lord by the fiery ordeal.[3]

BIHAR GOVERNMENT

If the Bihar Province promises to outdo the others in non-co-operation, its Government bids fair to stand first in devising methods of repression. It has now brought under the ban municipal councillors and servants. They are not to take part in non-co-operation meetings. I have not seen the circular, but I hearthat that is its effect. If so, I advise the municipal councillors and servants to ignore the circular and challenge the Government to disband municipalities. The electors, if they have grit in them, will continue to elect the same councillors and force the Government either to supersede municipal government or withdraw the offending circular.

PRACTISING LAWYERS

The *Patrika*[4] devotes a leading article to an examination of the position taken up by me regarding lawyers, and strongly dissents from

[1] *Vide* "Triumph of Non-violence", 21-11-1920.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Rama, the hero of the *Ramayana*, made Sita, his wife, pass through the ordeal to prove her chastity.

[4] *Amrita Bazar Patrika*

it. The *Patrika* thinks that practising lawyers may continue to lead public opinion on Congress platform. I respectfully suggest that any such deviation from the Non-co-operation Resolution will be a serious mistake. I am aware that the *Patrika* thinks that the Congress has not called upon all lawyers to suspend practice. I venture to differ from the interpretation. The resolution calls upon all lawyers to make greater effort to suspend practice. And, in my opinion, those lawyers who have not yet succeeded in suspending their practice, cannot expect to hold office in any Congress organization or lead opinion on Congress platforms. Will titled men be elected as office-bearers, although they may not have given up their titles? If we do not face the issues boldly, we stand in danger of corrupting the movement. We must exact correspondence between precept and practice. I hold that a lawyer president of a Provincial Committee cannot lead his province to victory if he does not suspend his practice. He simply will not carry weight. I have noticed this again and again during my tours. Lawyers who have hitherto led public opinion have either renounced practice or public life.

The *Patrika* errs in comparing practising lawyers to merchants. Not many merchants have yet led public opinion, but where they have come forward, they have certainly renounced dealing in foreign cloth. The public will not, I am glad to be able to say, tolerate divorce between profession and practice. But not to seek, or give up, public position is one thing, and to help the movement as a weak but humble follower is another. Thousands are unable to carry out the full advice of the Congress and are yet eagerly helping as silent camp-followers. That is the position that practising lawyers should take up. It will be honourable, dignified, and consistent. We may not, in our progress towards swaraj, consider the lead of any class or individual as essential to success.

The *Patrika* goes beyond the scope of the paragraph of *Young India* when it presents as an alternative to suspension, derision and insult. He would be an unworthy non-co-operator who would deride or insult a lawyer, or anyone else who is too weak or otherwise unable to respond to the Congress call. Because we may not elect such persons as office-bearers, we may not be intolerant and insulting to them. On the contrary, those who are honestly unable to follow the Congress resolution, are in every way worthy of sympathy.

Nor is the *Patrika* in thinking that, before practising lawyers cease to be leaders, there should be a complete boycott of law courts; and as that is impossible without a rebel government, and as we do not contemplate rebellion, practising lawyers may safely lead opinion as hitherto. There is an obvious fallacy underlying this suggestion.

Carried to its logical extent, it would mean that no leader need practice what he preaches. The fact is that, although law courts may not be completely boycotted, by the sacrifice of Messrs Nehru and Das,[1] and by our refusal to give any public status to practising lawyers and others who have not carried out the Congress resolution, we have successfully demolished the prestige of these institutions, and, therefore, to that extent, of the Government. If we restore titled men, lawyers, and others, to their status even though they have not responded, we commit national suicide. Lastly the *Patrika* is wrong in arguing that the Congress has called for suspension in order to secure the lawyers' services. The motive, as the preamble of the original resolution clearly states, is to undermine the Government's prestigeby the non-co-operation of parties to the institutions on which the prestige is built.

Young India, 30-3-1921

255. THE CONGRESS CONSTITUTION

The last Congress has given a constitution[2] whose working is in itself calculated to lead to swaraj. It is intended to secure in every part of India representative committees working in conjunction with, and under willing and voluntary submission to, a central organization—the All-India Congress Committee. It establishes an adult suffrage open to men and women, subject only to two qualifications: signing of the creed and a nominal payment of four annas. It is intended to secure due representation of all parties and communities. If, then, it is honestly worked, and commands confidence and respect, it can oust the present Government without the slightest difficulty. For, the latter has no power except through the co-operation, willing or forced, of the people. The force it exercises is almost through our own people. One lakh of Europeans, without our help, can only hold less than one-seventh of our villages each, and it would be difficult, for one man, even when physically present, to impose his will on, say, four hundred men and women—the average population of an Indian village.

The problem before us, therefore, is one of opposing our will to that of the will of the Government, in other words to withdraw our co-operation from it. If we are united in purpose, the Government must obey our will or retire. It is the disturbing factors of which the Government avails itself for the consolidation of its power. When we

[1] Motilal Nehru and C. R. Das had given up their princely practice as lawyers.

[2] *Vide* "Congress constitution adopted at Nagpur session", december 1920.

are violent, it resorts to terrorism; when we are disunited, it resorts to bribery; when we are united, it resorts to cajolery and conciliation; when we are clamant, it puts temptations in the way of those who cry out most. All, therefore, we need do is to remain non-violent, united, and unresponsive to bribery and cajolery.

Surely, there is not much education required to accomplish this much among a people who are cultured and intelligent. It is not difficult to present to them a common purpose and a common platform which they can appreciatean dunder stand. Butthismeans not talking, but acting and organizing. I suggest that weconcentrate on registering before the 30th June, in an accurate manner, at least one crore of members in the Congress organization. No registration is to be deemed complete without the payment of fourannas and the acceptance of the creed We must aim at enlisting every adult member of every family. It should be our boast to have as many women as men on our registers. We should have all the Mussulmans, all the castes, all the artisans, and all the pariahs, whom we can induce to come to our register. It will then become a most democratic register of voters that the world can show. If the suggestions made by me are acceptable, we have to concentrate our attention up to the 30th June on getting:

1. One crore rupees for the Tilak Swaraj Fund,
2. One crore members on the Congress register,
3. The spinning-wheel introduced in twenty lakhs of homes.

In order to register one crore members, I estimate that we shall have canvassed at least twenty lakhs of homes, counting five members to a family. Workers can certainly persuade Congress families to take up one wheel per family. Twenty-five lakhs of spinning-wheels in twenty-one provinces[1], is not an ambitious scheme.

Let us not waste our resources in thinking of too many national problems and their solutions. A patient who tries many nostrums at a time, dies. A physician, who experiments on his patient with a combination of remedies, loses his reputation and passes for a quack. Chastity in work is as essential as chastity in life. All dissipation is bad. We have hitherto all pulled our own way, and thus wasted away national strength in a most extravagant manner. To boycott foreign cloth within the year is a practical feasibility. To bring into being a working organization for the Congress is an easy thing for honest workers. The collection of one crore of rupees in a methodical

[1] Congress circles formed on linguistic basis

manner will at once create confidence and will be a tangible token of our earnestness and determination.

This programme does not mean cessation of the other activities of non-co-operation. They go on. Drink and untouchability must vanish. The education movement is steadily going forward. The national institutions that have sprung up will, if they are efficiently managed, make headway and attract students who are still hesitating. The pleaders, always a cautious and calculating class by training,will, as they see the movement progressing more and more, fall inline with the rest of the country. Boycott of law courts by the public is making fair progress. These things do not now require concentration of universal effort. They apply to special classes. But the three things mentioned by me are the most essential; they might be done now, and without them the movement, as a mass movement must be pronounced a failure.

Young India, 30-3-1921

256 SPEECH AT VIJAYANAGARAM[1]

March 30, 1921

He began by saying that the study of English was not absolutely necessary except for the purpose of carrying on our international trade and acquiring a knowledge of modern sciences. He emphasized that the study of Hindi was essential inasmuch as it ensured a feeling of national brotherhood in the country. It must be made the lingua franca of India. Continuing, he said that Hindi which is the language of Kasi Viswanatha[2] ought to be the language of the masses. They are longing to be a united and compact nation and they should discard provincial pride. Hindi can be learnt, he said in three months. Referring to the lavish praise bestowed upon him by the people he remarked that he did not like it. He wanted his principles to be carried out in practical life. He believed that the charkha or the spinning-wheel would bring about the salvation of the country. In his opinion the spinning wheel would serve the purpose of machine-guns and dreadnoughts. When the East India Company came into existence, it gave a death-blow to spinning. From that time, he said, the moral and economic degradation of India began. He advised the audience not to take to the flashy and gorgeous robes manufactured in the West but to satisfy themselves with the simplicity of homespun fabrics however coarse they might be, for home-made cloth had a history behind it, would have a soul of its own, would possess its own

[1] Delivered in reply to a public reception held in the People's Park

[2] Gandhiji refers to the famous Hindu temple of Viswanatha, situated at Kashi (Banaras).

aroma. He next spoke of the miserable condition of Orissa. In passing he exhorted the vakils and students to non-co-operate. If, however, they failed to follow his advice, they would be grievously neglecting a duty which they owed not only to them selves but to the country at large. By the way, he deplored the habit of drinking so prevalent in India. In conclusion, he said that the following things would achieve swaraj for them—purity of mind and body, Hindu-Muslim unity, and the use of swadeshi goods.

The Hindu, 1-4-1921

257. SPEECH ON FIRST RESOLUTION AT A.I.C.C. MEETING[1]

BEZWADA,
March 31, 1921

Mr. Gandhi in proposing the first resolution for adoption made a lucid and clear statement of the present situation. He pointed out that in respect of those aspects of propaganda upon which they had so far concentrated, namely, giving up of titles, Councils, educational institutions and courts, there was no need for further concentration as the success already achieved therein was in every way satisfactory. Whatever be the number of students who had given up college or of lawyers who had given up practice, the Congress had achieved the real object of propaganda, namely, the demolition of prestige of these institutions of the bureauctatic Government of this country. Most of those who yet continued in schools or in courts were fully convinced of the principle for which the Congress had fought although for a variety of reasons they were not able to give effect to the resolutions immediately. The Congress might therefore well trust to time for the movement to work its way fully. He therefore pointed out that in order to achieve the programme of swaraj within the time[2] mentioned in the Nagpur Congress resolution, they should now concentrate upon those parts of it which would directly lead the masses of this country to its realization.

The awakening of the masses was phenomenal and while the masses were fully alive to the urgent need of realization of swaraj the leaders were lagging behind. It was therefore necessary to give form and shape to the aspirations of the masses. Their aspirations for swaraj were based upon the very definite perception that without swaraj their condition could not improve and the direct means of improving their condition was to enable them to clothe and feed themselves. It was for this purpose that he felt the charkha movement was full of the utmost potentialities in the winning

[1]At this meeting of the All-India Congress Committee Gandhiji moved four resolutions which were adopted; for their text, *vide* "Resolutions at A.I.C.C. Meeting, Bezwada", March 31, 1921.

[2] The time limit of one year mentioned in the resolution on non-co-operation adopted by the Congress at Nagpur in December 1920

of swaraj. If the masses were enabled to perceive that situation and to realize it by receiving their economic independence through the use of the spinning-wheel in their houses so as to obtain the maximum of production and wherewithal to feed and clothe themselves, it would immediately have the effect of making them feel that they were no longer dependent on foreigners for their livelihood and progress. It would also effect a complete economic boycott of the most important of foreign imports of this country. If this was achieved swaraj could be considered to have been realized. That was why he desired that the charkha movement should be encouraged.

In order that the propaganda might succeed, workers were needed. Congress organizations should be thoroughly put into operation. If, as the resolution insisted, one crore of rupees were collected before the 30th June, as he was quite hopeful it would be, and one crore of manhood and womanhood of the country were registered as Congressmen, there could be no more patent proof of the fitness of the people for swaraj than of their ability to achieve it through the Congress orgnaization itself.

The Hindu, 1-4-1921

258. SPEECH ON SECOND RESOLUTION AT A.I.C.C. MEETING[1]

BEZWADA,
March 31, 1921

Mr. Gandhi pointed out that in deference to the ruling of the chair that civil disobedience as such was not recommended in express terms by the Nagpur Congress and was not within the four corners of the resolution on non-co-operation, he proposed that the A.I.C.C. in this matter should only express its opinion on the matter in the form of advice, in order that the country might have a lead from the Committee. The question of civil disobedience had been raised in several quarters in consequence of the action of the Government against non-co operators. He referred at length to the entirely unjustifiable character of several proceedings taken by the authorities in several province and he pointed out how wonderfully the people had conformed to non-violence even under grave provocation. Nevertheless, he felt that the Committee should not recommend civil disobedience suggested in the form which was understood by those who advocated it. Though it was true that non payment of tax was one form of civil disobedience contemplated by the Congress resolutions, yet it was not initiated as part of a programme of civil disobedience against the Government in respect of particular laws or orders, lawful or otherwise. The scheme of civil disobedience which he had practised in South Africa and developed in his own mind was one which could not yet be put into operation. If the country was organized and restrained so thoroughly as he desired it would then be time to put it into operation. As it was he considered that notwithstanding the great progress of non-violence among the people, there was still an element of what he would, for want of a better term, call mob law, not in the wrong sense but in the idea that the

[1] For the text of the resolution *vide* the following item.

people had not yet so thoroughly disciplined themselves to the restraint that was needed when their dearest wishes were violated or when their great leaders were snatched away to prison under most provocative circumstances. Until, therefore, they were able to exercise self-control perfectly, they should not initiate civil disobedience. Of course, he was glad to note that the people were in a fair way to it. If any person took upon himself the responsibility of offering civil disobedience to particular orders or laws, which he conscientiously thought he could not obey, as for example in the case of Mr. Yakub Hassan,[1] he was at liberty to do so. But he might do so only on his own responsibility and not in the name of the Congress.

The Hindu, 1-4-1921

259. RESOLUTIONS AT A.I.C.C. MEETING, BEZWADA[2]

March 31, 1921

RESOLUTION I

In the opinion of the A.I.C.C. all Congress organizations and workers should concentrate their attention chiefly upon:

(a) bringing the All-India Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund to one crore of rupees and before 30th June next each Congress province to collect in the ratio of its population.

(b) putting in Congress registers one crore of members in pursuance of the Constitution and before 30th June next each province to contribute the number of members in the ratio of its population.

(c) introducing into villages and houses 20 lakhs of charkhas (spinning-wheels) in good working order before 30th June next, each province to introduce the number of charkhas in the ratio of its population.

RESOLUTION II

(a) The All-India Congress Committee is of opinion that the orders of the officials in various provinces against non-co-operators in pursuit of the policy of repression are totally unwarranted by the situation in the country and are in most cases pronounced by the highest legal opinion to be illegal.

(b) The Committee believes that the country has responded in a wonderful manner and in the face of grave provocation by

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Gujranwala", February 19, 1921.

[2] These four resolutions moved by Gandhiji were presumably drafted by him.

Government to the principle of non-violence enjoined by Congress in the country's pursuit after swaraj and redress of Khilafat and Punjab wrongs.

(c) This Committee is of opinion that apart from the fact that civil disobedience is not expressly comprised in the Congress resolution relating to non-co-operation, the country is not yet disciplined, organized and ripe for the immediate taking up of civil disobedience.

(d) This Committee by way of preparation, therefore, advises all those upon whom orders may be served to conform to them and trusts that new workers will take the place of those who may be disabled by the Government and that the people at large instead of becoming disheartened or frightened by such orders, will continue their work of quest, organization and construction sketched by the Congress resolution.

RESOLUTION III

The A.I.C.C. congratulates the country[1] on the rapid progress made in the organization of panchayats and trusts that people will make still greater efforts to boycott Government law courts.

RESOLUTION IV

This Congress Committee congratulates the country in its spontaneous response to the principle of self-purification underlying the movement of non-violent non-co-operation by taking up the campaign against the drink evil and trusts that the habit of taking intoxicating drinks and drugs will totally disappear from the land by the persistent and continued efforts of self-sacrificing workers.

The Hindu, 1-4-1921

260. SPEECH TO MUNICIPAL COUNCILLORS, BEZWADA[2]

April 1, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi gave a suitable reply in which he emphasized the need of the municipal councils adopting the policy of the Congress for the attainment of swaraj. He showed how valuable the support and work of the municipal councils would be in the programme of work now before the country for the realization of swaraj and

[1] "Committee" in the source

[2] Delivered in reply to the address presented by the chairman of the Municipal Council at the Museum Hall, the venue of the A.I.C.C. meeting

referred to the example of Nadiad, Ahmedabad and Surat.[1] He exhorted them to help in the collection of the Tilak Swaraj Fund and the organization of the Congress Committees.

The Hindu, 4-4-1921

261. SPEECH ON CONGRESS SABHAS RESOLUTION, BEZWADA

April 1, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi in urging the proposition observed that though the enforcing of such a resolution[2] might be difficult and unpleasant, it was a duty that had to be faced and overcome by those who had to bring into being the new constitution. It seemed to him that while the mass of the country and Congressmen were overwhelmingly in favour of non-co-operation, it was right that those who were not prepared to give effect to it in their own person and conduct should not be asked to control the working of the Congress organizations having regard to the resolution of the Nagpur Congress.

The Hindu, 4-4-1921

262. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[COCANADA,]
Saturday [*April 2, 1921*][3]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I was pleased to read in *Navajivan* your comments on the Gandiva spinning-wheel. May not the same[4] be true of the calculations made by Shankarlal? I asked him.

He said he had remained unconvinced by your argument. He had done, he said, and also got others to do, a good deal of spinning on his model and it had been giving him the same results as the Ashram model. All that he wanted was that we should not condemn his model.

[1] The municipalities of these three towns in Gujarat had defied Government control.

[2] The resolution was to the effect that in the organization of Congress Sabhas under the new constitution, no person who did not conform to the resolution on non-co-operation, specially applicable to himself, should hold any office therein.

[3] The comments on the Gandiva spinning-wheel referred to in the letter appeared in the *Navajivan* of March 27, 1921, and, as stated in the letter, Gandhiji arrived in Bombay on April 10 and in Ahmedabad on April 12.

[4] Maganlal Gandhi had revised his opinion about it and said that, after further trials with it, he had found it useful. The model cost only one and a half rupees.

His spinning-wheel worked quite well. He said this in all humility. I advise you to consider the size of the Punjab spinning-wheel. It seems the ideal wheel to me. I am simply astonished to see the results they obtain here. You will marvel at the specimens of fine cloth which I shall bring along with me. A boy brought to me a spinning-wheel the weight of ten rupee coins,[1] sat down to spin on it and produced extremely fine yarn. But all this some other time.

I shall arrive there on the 12th, going to Bombay on the 10th. Read the letter to Chi. Chhaganlal and reflect over it.

It is plain to me that the economic condition of India depends on the capacity we show. But I cannot write anything more at the moment. I am writing this surrounded by crowds.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5792. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

263. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

COCANADA,
Saturday [*April 2, 1921*][2]

BHAI JAMNALALJI,

I wish to tell my Agrawal brethren that only a community which offers pure sacrifice can serve India and its own religious faith. I hope in the great struggle for freedom the Agrawal community will make its fullest contribution. I know the Marwaris are rich, pious and philanthropic. The need today is for self-purification and for protection of dharma. I pray to God that He may grant our Agrawal brethren the strength for self-sacrifice.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3080; also *Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirwad*, p. 570

[1] About a quarter pound

[2] Gandhiji was at Cocanada on April 2, 1921, which was a Saturday.

264. SPEECH AT COCANADA[1]

April 2, 1921

MY HINDU AND MOHAMMEDAN COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN,

COUNCILLORS OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF COCANADA,

You will please forgive me for not standing up to speak to you for the reasons offered, known to you probably by this time, in common with the rest of India, namely my physical incapacity. You will also forgive me for I have not been able to bring my brother Maulana Shaukat Ali with me. You know that in order to represent to India what the real Hindu-Mussulman unity meant both Maulana Shaukat Ali and I travelled throughout the length and breadth of the land for about one year. It has not been possible recently to travel together. You and I are eager to attain swaraj in this year. You and I are eager to secure redress for the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs during this year. And so, after having travelled for one year, we divided our energies and decided to travel in different parts of the country separately. If one year of object-lesson that we both have presented to India has not been enough to convince you of the absolute necessity of the Hindu-Mussulman unity, and if one year of close insight of [*sic*] our countrymen contributing to human happiness has not been sufficient to show what that unity meant, I for one spurn the idea of convincing you of the necessity of Hindu-Mussulman unity. Maulana Shaukat Ali is a staunch Mohammedan. I claim to be a staunch *sanatani* Hindu. And each in his own views and conviction, we both have been able to live together as no two blood brothers can live. Bud am aware that by this time India has realized that Hindu-Mussulman unity is as essential for our national life as eating, drinking and sleeping. And I hope you have also by this time realized that, given certain conditions, swaraj is attainable within one year.

And, as an aid to the advancement of swaraj, I have much pleasure in accepting this address from this Municipality, because it shows that the municipalities of India are now as ready to receive and welcome a humble servant of theirs as they have been hitherto ready to receive and extend welcomes to governors and viceroys. It is the fear, it is the want of faith in ourselves, which are real obstacles in our progress towards swaraj. I am not likely to lead

[1] Delivered in reply to an address of welcome presented by the Municipal Council

myself into the belief that this address is a testimonial to anything in my personal self, but I know that it constitutes an endorsement of an idea—that I for the time being represent the nation. The municipalities have now commenced to shed their fear which used to possess them and to shed the belief that municipalities were but appendages to the Government. I venture to ask this great Municipality to take a step further and copy the example of Ahmedabad, Nadiad and Surat. I ask this Municipality to nationalise education in this Municipality. If only the municipalities all over India will recognize their power and do their duty, I venture to suggest to you that these municipalities bear with them the promise of swaraj. Because, after all, swaraj is nothing but an extension of municipal government. And if every village and every town of India is found capable of looking after its own affairs, surely it follows that the villages and towns of the whole of India are necessarily capable of conducting national affairs.

The All-India Congress Committee have given us the lead and have put before the whole of India a very simple test. If the Congress is our national assembly, if the Congress is an instrument in our hands for establishing swaraj in India, it is natural that every man and woman, every Hindu and Mussulman, Christian, Parsi and Jew born in India should place themselves on the Congress register. And so the All-India Congress Committee has suggested that by the time the 30th of June arrives at least one crore of men and women should find their names on the Congress register. In a nation which has been showing the wonderful energy and wonderful cohesion that has been shown during the past months at least one-thirtieth of the men and women of India should find themselves on the Congress register before the 30th June, which is surely not a great thing.

You revere the memory of Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak Maharaj. Wherever I go I find the people naturally exposing his portrait in the home, in the windows, at public meetings. The Congress, therefore, asked you to signify your respect, your veneration, for the great departed patriot by subscribing one crore of rupees before that date in order to revere that great patriot. This one crore of rupees is not to be spent on any marble statues or memorial halls. It is to be spent as capital investment for the attainment of swaraj. And if only the men and women of Andhra Desh[1] were to discard only a portion of the ornaments they wear, I know that Andhra Desh will find a quota within a week. I suggest to you that if

[1] Province

you are really determined to attain swaraj during this year and redress the Khilafat and the Punjab grievances we can sacrifice everything.

And the third thing that the Congress requires the whole of India to do is that by the end of June we shall introduce into our homes not less than 20,00,000 spinning-wheels. I assure you that the foreign cloth that I see on the persons of these beautiful sisters of mine, the foreign cloth that I see on the persons of so many of you, is nothing but a badge of our slavery and for once it is my honest conviction that the men and women of India clad in foreign cloth look not handsome but ugly. And ugliness will only be termed as beauty when slavery passes for freedom. India was a free land—India was a land flowing with milk and honey when every home in India sang freedom with the spinning-wheel. Hundreds of sisters whom I have seen throughout the length and breadth of India have told me that they remembered the time when their mothers used to tell them that the spinning-wheel was a sign of plenty. It is an emblem of purity, simplicity, freedom; it is an emblem of peace to the whole world. As Mr. Das rightly said yesterday the spinning-wheel proved to us and to the whole world that we did not want to engage in the killing competition of the West. The spinning-wheel, its revival, constitutes notice to England, France, America, Japan and every other country that India cannot be subdued for their exploitation. It sends across the seas a message to the other nations of the world that India is determined to be absolutely self-contained and independent for her food and clothing. It takes a message of goodwill to the 3 crores of our countrymen who are living from day to day on only one meal per day and that containing a piece of dried bread and a pinch of salt. It is the one cement that binds the whole of India and makes it into one nation. Take away, destroy this cement, the only cohesive force that can possibly support, and the building of swaraj falls to pieces. Remember that India lost her freedom and lost very nearly her nationality when India yielded either to the force or to the rupee of the East India Company. I hope, therefore, that you, the enterprising citizens of Cocanada, will not rest content until you have put one spinning-wheel working in every home in this great town. I hope that boys, girls, men and women do not consider it beneath their dignity to turn the spinning wheel for some hours during the day. It will be a slight penance that you and I will have performed when we have turned the spinning-wheel. I hope that when my friend or any of you invite me again to the town, you will not forget to give me this

assurance that there would not be a boy or girl, a man or woman who is dressed in a foreign cloth, not a boy or girl who is not dressed in khaddar. And I assure you that if the whole of India satisfies this very simple test—I call it a very simple test—by the end of June, you will find a new life pulsating through the whole of India by the 1st of July.

The National Week, the week of purification, will be soon upon us. The 6th of April, 1919, awakened India from its sleep. The 13th of April of that same year made India a witness to a massacre not known in modern times. It is a holy week; it will be crime, it will be sin for a single Indian to forget it. I hope that there will be a complete hartal, purely voluntary, on the 6th and 13th. The hartal must be purely voluntary; if a single man wants to open his shop we must protect him from any harm. Purification is purification only when it is voluntary. And the way to freedom lies not through compulsion, but sweetness, persuasion and humility. I hope that those who can will devote these two days specially to fasting and praying. For remember that this is a battle of freedom. In this we do not invoke the assistance of gunpowder but the assistance of God. During that week you will search your hearts from within. You will fight with all your might against the drink curse.

One indispensable sign of purity is that every man considers every woman as his own sister and mother and every woman considers every man as her brother and father. Having been born in a port town[1] myself I know what temptations the population of a port is always exposed to. I was told only yesterday by a friend that the life of our people in Rangoon—and I know that many are in the habit of going to Rangoon—is not all that can be desired. If we want *dharmarajya* and not *rakshasarajya*[2] you will agree with me that personal purity is as essential as national purity. Our swaraj consists not in self-indulgence but in self-restraint. I hope that you will devote the National Week to expediting the programme that has been laid to you by the All-India Congress Committee. I hope that during that week you will make still greater efforts to make Hindu-Mussulman unity a solid thing. And I hope that during that week you will for every one of yourselves and for others make it absolutely certain that India's freedom is dependent purely on non-violence. And you will understand that an angry word uttered against our own countrymen

[1] Porbandar
[2] Rule of demons

who may not hold the same view as we do, and every word uttered against an Englishman, a stick waved against a single person who might have harmed us, is also violence, contrary to the precept laid down for us by the Congress. And unless we remove the fear of violence from the meanest of our countrymen and from the least of the foreigners that may be residing in our midst we may not be called a nation fit for democracy. And we commit a Satanic breach of non-violence when we consider a single man as untouchable, when we consider about a single man in India, even though he may be a leper or a pariah, that his touch pollutes, that his shadow takes away *Vaishnavite*[1] or *Shaivite*[2] purity. The teaching of the *Bhagavad Gita* is absolutely as clear as daylight. It enjoins upon us to treat Brahmin and *Chandala*[3] with the same love, with the same spirit of brotherhood. A Brahmin ceases to be a Brahmin when he considers a single man as inferior to him. One of the sweetest names for God that human loftiness has invented is—*Dasanudasa,* servant of the servants. And it is time that India got rid of this curse of untouchability.

And now a word specially to the dear sisters who have assembled. Wherever I have travelled the women of India have treated me with affection. And wherever I have gone I have asked from you sisters a blessing for myself and for Maulana Shaukat Ali. And I ask you to give us the blessings that other sisters have given us. And you know what we want the blessings for. We are fighting the battle of freedom and of India's religions. We are trying to replace this *Ravanarajya* by *Ramarajya.* And you know, in that Ashokavatika the divine Sita rejected the finer ornaments. She rejected the spices and tempting foods that Ravana sent to her. She was satisfied to live on the fruits that the trees of Ashokavatika yielded to her. I ask you, the descendants of that same Sita, to follow in her footsteps. Our shastras have given me the assurance that the blessings of a pure woman can never go wrong. And I want you to be armed with the same purity that Sita possessed. And if you are fired with that same spirit of Sita you will not hesitate to tell your husbands or fathers that you don't wantornaments for your pleasure, either their pleadings in the courts or services in high offices. And tell them that your strong arms and nimble fingers will work at the spinning-wheel. You will tell them that the fruits of your labours will supplement the earnings that your husbands, brothers and fathers may bring home. And you will refuse

[1] Of *a Vaishnava*
[2] Of a devotee of *Siva*
[3] A low-caste Hindu

to send your children to *Ravanarajya* schools[1]. And, if with a heart pure and bodies undefiled by foreign garments you give us blessings, I know I have every confidence that we will get *dharmarajya* during this year. I want you to give me out of the fullness of your hearts, not out of shame, whatever ornaments you would, whatever money you would. This money will be spent in taking spinning-wheels to poor homes and in educating poor boys. You and I may not deck ourselves with ornaments or with fine dress so long as there is a single man or woman who has to get his or her food or clothing. I thank you for giving me such a patient hearing.

You understand now that all our speeches and our resolutions are addressed to ourselves. Unlike as of old, our speeches, our resolutions now require us to do something, rather than the Government. I would ask you to give me at least one ocular demonstration that you are all intent upon attaining swaraj. I will ask you to give whatever you can to the volunteers who will presently go into your midst, whether it is a pie or one rupee or whether a bangle or ornament—all these things will be helpful for winning swaraj if voluntarily given and with a determination to get swaraj. I want nothing out of shame, nor out of compulsion. I am satisfied with a pie as I am satisfied with millions. May God grant you courage and ability to go through the discipline that is required of you during this year.

The Hindu, 6-4-1921

265. MORE ABOUT PARSIS

A Parsi gentleman, Mr. Burjorji Ratanshaw Bhuri, comments from Colombo on the criticism that is being levelled against the Parsis. Here are some extracts. His Parsi Gujarati has been turned into standard Gujarati and his sentences have been shortened.

> You have become known for your truthfulness and simplicity. Be steadfast in the hopes you cherish. The non-co-operation you have started is quite different from the method of violence. If that is so, I am prepared to support it. But do all men subscribe to your views? Already, violence has broken out. I am grieved at this, and do not agree with you.

We have to learn from this criticism. As we learn the lesson of peace, we become more successful and people think more highly of the struggle. Reading some news about violence, Mr. Burjorji, being

[1] Schools run or aided by the Government

far away, assumes that violence has already started. But it can be said that there never reigned greater peace in India than what has prevailed, so far at any rate. All the same, it is essential for us to acquire [sufficient] control [over the people] for preserving peace throughout the country. Peaceful conditions are the foundation on which the struggle rests. The struggle will be weak to the extent that this foundation is weak and strong to the extent that it is strong.

Proceeding, Mr. Burjorji says:

> Our ancestors came from Iran. They came and settled in India for the sake of their holy and beloved religion. It is through that same India that we have become well known in the world. In return, we have served our fellow-communities, the Hindus and the Muslims, as much as it lay in our power. No other community has given away as much in charity as the Parsis have done. They are but a grain in a heap of wheat . . . The Parsis are certainly not against swaraj. But your hope of winning it in seven months will never be realized. If there is no unity in the country, it will be difficult to win it at all.

No one in the world is unfamiliar with Parsi charities. Undoubtedly, no other community in the world has donated in charities as much as the Parsis have done. There is also no doubt that, though small in number, the Parsis can render great assistance in winning swaraj for India, if they only decide to. I have already recorded that a number of Parsi gentlemen have been helping [the movement]. There is no doubt that as the holy nature of the movement is demonstrated more and more clearly, the Parsis will join it in increasing numbers. The best way, I believe, to hasten the Parsis and others joining the movement is to refrain from criticizing them or using bitter language about them. It is our duty respectfully to point out a mistake whenever we notice one, but it is a sin to abuse anyone or use improper language about him.

Mr. Burjorji and some other Indians of his way of thinking believe that it will be difficult to win swaraj within seven months. It is because of such persons that even a period of seven months has had to be fixed. If all of us, acquiring self-confidence and courage, start doing our duty, we can get swaraj even today. I have been talking about winning swaraj before the end of this year because I believe that those thousands of Indians, who have pledged themselves to non-co-operation, will abide by their pledge with determination. Our want of faith in ourselves constitutes the biggest obstacle in our path.

Our Parsi brethren have served India. They possess good sense. They have made India their home. All that is theirs is in India. Their mother tongue is Gujarati, though one cannot but say that they have not done justice to this mother tongue of theirs. Had I published Mr.

Burjorji's letter in his own Gujarati, many Gujaratis would perhaps not have understood it fully. Every reader of a Parsi newspaper knows that many of the Parsi news papers simply murder the Gujarati language. If they wish to write ordinary Gujarati, it is not as if they will not be able to do so. Malbari[1] could write pure Gujarati. Khabardar has adorned Gujarati [language] by his poetry. But how can one be satisfied with that much? Will they not think it desirable that they should have love for Gujarati and, seeing that it is their mother tongue, serve it?

Some Parsi writer may ask why the Gujarati that the Parsis write should not be accepted as genuine Gujarati. It-is easy to meet this argument. That Gujarati which is spoken and written by hundreds of thousands of educated people who have their home in Gujarat is true Gujarati. Having been derived from Sanskrit and being its daughter, Gujarati must necessarily lean on Sanskrit —no one can question that. Parsi writers and teachers can serve Gujrati, if only they mean to. As we grow in patriotism, our love for our mother tongue should also grow. When our love of our language has grown, when all our regional work is carried on in Gujarati, what sort of Gujarati shall we use then? In what sort of Gujarati shall we frame our laws? In what sort of Gujarati shall we write our text-books? Our casual attitude to Gujarati bespeaks want of love on our part for our country and language. It is improbable that there should be patriotism but no eagerness to cultivate love of the language. All the three communities, Hindus, Muslims and Parsis, speak Gujarati. Being traders, all the three travel about in the whole of India and go abroad as well. The thing in virtue of which they are known as Gujaratis is their language. It is the duty of all the three communities to serve it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-4-1921

266. NOTES

GROWING PRESTIGE OF KHADI

Khadi propaganda has had such a great effect that, when a young Muslim, a water-carrier, died in Bulandshahr, his relatives used khadi for the shroud and their *pancha* resolved to use only khadi in future for the purpose. When such holy sentiments spread among the

[1] Behramji Malbari (1854-1912); poet, journalist and social reformer

people, why should there be delay in India getting swaraj? It is our own weakness and want of faith which cause delay. We do not do our duty because of them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-4-1921

267. SPEECH AT RAJAHMUNDRY

April 3, 1921

I know and you should know also that the time for talking and listening is gone. The All-India Congress Committee demands[1] that India should supply the nation with a crore of rupees before June 30th. It asks you to put one crore of men and women on the Congress register, and it asks you to introduce twenty lakhs of spinning-wheels in working order in Indian homes. I hope you will do your full share, and if we succeed in doing this, we shall have brought swaraj within easy reach. But even that work cannot be done unlessthe Hindus and Mohammedans combine in that effort. Hindu-Muslim unity is as necessary for national evolution as breathing is necessary for life. Maulana Shaukat Ali and myself have been presenting to India what we mean by Hindu-Muslim unity. We are both staunch in our respective faiths—he to Islam and I to Hindu *Sanatana* Dharma. Just as Hindu-Muslim unity is essential for national liberty, swaraj, and settlement of the Khilafat and Punjab wrongs, so also it is necessary for the maintenance of non-violence. Hindu-Muslim unity and non-violence means controlling of passion, clearing of minds and hearts of mean jealousies, and therefore I called this movement a movement of self-purification and self-restraint. You cannot drink and cannot womanize.

Nothing has given me, therefore, greater joy and pleasure than the manifestation of purity that India is conducting spontaneously against stable drinkers.

Addressing the women in the audience he said:

You, my dear sisters, I want to warn you and to bring you to a sense of duty and religion. If there is a dancing girl amidst you, I ask you to make her life not one of shame.[2] Take up the spinning-wheel and take the few pies that the work brings you, and it will bring pies

[1] As per its resolutions passed at Bezwada; *vide* "Resolutions at A.I.C.C. Meeting, Bezwada", March 31, 1921.

[2] On the previous evening in Cocanada, a group of dancing girls had visited Gandhiji and described to him their life of shame.

and God into your house. Do you suppose that Rama and Sita would rest for a single moment if they knew a single woman might have to sell her honour for lust of men and for a mess of pottage? I ask you to discard all your fine garments and ornaments, if only for the protection of these dancing girls. Take up the spinning-wheel for their sake, if not for the sake of India. Take up the spinning-wheel for the sake of the purity of India. Take up the sari that the charkha can give you. Let the spotless sari of India be the protection of the virtue of man and woman in India. I ask you to consider that to wear fine foreign saries is a sin.

Continuing his address he said:

Remove equally the curse of untouchability from your midst. Let my voice reach the leaders of Andhra Desh. Do not lead a free nation into perdition. I believe you to be men and women of faith. I believe you to be capable of all sacrifice for the sake of India. I believe you are all fired with the ambition of service. I ask every one of you to search within and fully appreciate the significance of this movement and understand but not brag and bluster; nor is eloquence necessary for winning in this battle. Absolute personal purity, humility, understanding and ceaseless activity are the things necessary for attaining swaraj and redressing the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs. May God grant you the necessary widsom, courage, discrimination and spirit of service.

The Hindu, 8-4-1921

268. SPEECH AT ELLORE

It was my intention to reproduce some of my Andhra Desh speeches in *Young India*. But that has not been possible. I was most anxious to reproduce my Rajahmundry speech. But I have no notes of it. The industry of a co-worker enables me to give the speech at Ellore which deals somewhat with the special matter of the Rajahmundry speech, and as it is otherwise not a bad effort, I take the liberty of giving it to the readers of *Y.I.*[1]

April 3, 1921

You will please forgive me for not standing up to speak to you. You know that I am physically very weak.

You will please also forgive me that I have not with me this

[1] This introduction, signed by Gandhiji, prefaces the report of the speech published in *Young India*, 11-5-1921.1

evening Maulana Shaukat Ali.

We have given to India an object-lesson in Hindu-Muslim unity by travelling as full-born brothers throughout the length and breadth of India for one year. He claims to be, and is, one of the staunchest of Muslims and I claim to be a staunch *sanatani* Hindu. But we find no difficulty in living and serving together.

But you and I are in a hurry to establish swaraj or *dharmarajya* in India during this very year. You will not expect us any longer to be travelling together.

It has given me the greatest pleasure to be able to unveil the portrait of Lokamanya Tilak. Swaraj to him was the breath of his nostrils. He lived for swaraj and he died muttering the swaraj *mantra*. It is, therefore, but right that you treasure the portrait of that great patriot, and I consider it a privilege and an honour having been called upon to unveil the portrait. I congratulate the local artist on his creation. But you know that the unveiling of portraits of great men and women, and reciting the names of gods and personages carry with them certain duties, if they confer certain privileges. I assume that you have realized your duty in having asked me to perform this sacred ceremony. I shall assume that this unveiling of the portrait of Tilak Maharaj marks your fixed determination to redress the Punjab and Khilafat wrongs and to establish swaraj. We can only earn the title to be the heirs of the fame of this great patriot if we sacrifice everything for the attainment of swaraj and succeed in the attempt. I regard it also as a happy augury that I have been called upon to perform the opening ceremony of a club for women in Ellore. It delights my heart to see brave sisters, dressed in khaddar going about from door to door and asking for money for the national fund.

It is equally a happy augury that you have asked me to perform the opening ceremony of the national college for which you have collected the handsome sum of Rs. 67,000. And I have much pleasure in declaring open the national college. May God grant that institution a long life and all that the professors and workers may entitle it to. I consider that the profession of the schoolmaster is one of the noblest professions in the world. Schoolmasters are trustees for the future generations. I hope that the schoolmasters of this great institution will remember that only that education is true which fits boys and girls for complete self-expression. Let me in all humility tell the schoolmasters that the only art that boys and girls can learn this year is the fine art of spinning, the art of carding cotton and the art of weaving.

It is on the slender cotton thread that the honour of Islam and India and the redress of the enormity of the Punjab wrong rest. I am absolutely convinced after years of search and experiment (and now that experiment has been supplemented by experience), that the introduction of spinning in every home is the solution for the grinding poverty of the masses. We have no right to call ourselves the sons and the daughters of India so long as we remain silent witnesses to the plight of lakhs of our semistarved countrymen. Our degradation and the grinding poverty of India began with the destruction of the spinning-wheel, and it is but small penance for us men, women, boys and girls to spin during all our leisure hours in order to win swaraj for India. I regard it as a sin, and I would ask every one of you to regard it as a sin to wear a single piece of foreign cloth. I regard as foreign cloth even that which comes from Bombay and Ahmedabad. Our spinning mills must be in our homes, our weaving mills must be in our villages. And just as it will be sinful for you to have your bread baked in Bombay, so is it sinful for you to have your cloth manufactured in Bombay. Let Bombay and Ahmedabad manufacture for the poorest for whom it is not possible to take the gospel of swadeshi. For you who know better, it must be a crime not to spin your own yarn and get it woven. It has given me the greatest pleasure to find that in this province you are able to spin veryfine superior yarn and weave better cloth in your weavers' sheds. I hope also that the professors and trustees of the national college will bear in mind that the Tamils and the Telugus have cut themselves off from India by not learning Hindustani. I feel humiliated to have to speak in English before a vast audience like this which understands not a word of English and I wish you would consider it shameful that not a single one of you can translate my simple, broken Hindustani.

But I must now hasten to other matters. I had my full say at Rajahmundry on an important matter and I hope that some Telugu friend will reproduce that speech, translate it, and spread it broadcast among hundreds of our countrymen. It was at about ten o'clock last night in Cocanada when dancing girls paid me a visit that I understood the full significance of what they were. I felt like sinking in the earth below. I ask you to blot that sin out of us. It is not right that for our lust a single sister should have to live a life of shame and humiliation. In this movement of purification we are in duty bound to regard these girls as our sisters and daughters. Let us who feel the pricks of violence that this insolent Government inflicts on us not commit worse violence by ruining the life of a single girl in India. I ask you, brothers and sisters, to send me assurance, as early as possible, that there is not a single dancing girl in this part of the land.

I charge these sisters who are sitting behind me to go about from place to place, find out every dancing girl and shame the men into shunning the wrong they are doing.

We call this a movement of purification, we call it a religious movement, we dare to call this Government Satanic, we compare it to *Ravanarajya,* we think of our future Raj in terms of religion and gladly call the swaraj to come, *dharmarajya.* Let us not deceive ourselves and [our] gods and deserve the curse of God for deceiving them. We may not regard a single being as untouchable. We have become lepers of the Empire by regarding a class of Hindus as lepers. I speak with the authority of experience and I assure you that in Hinduism there is no sanction for treating a single human being as untouchable. In the estimation of a Brahmin knowing and living his religion, a Sudra is as good as himself. The *Bhagavad Gita* has nowhere taught that a *Chandal* is in any way inferior to a Brahmin. A Brahmin ceases to be a Brahmin, immediately he becomes insolent and considers himself a superior being. India owes a deep debt to the Brahmins, who voluntarily sacrificed themselves for the betterment of all. It was Brahmins who have called God servant of servants, the purifier of the fallen. It was Brahmins who taught that the prostitute and the *Chandal* could attain *moksha* if she or he only purified her or his heart.

But unfortunately for the human race the Brahmin shares with mankind the frailties of all. In common with others he has neglected his duty of giving knowledge to mankind, of guiding them in the right and truest path. We glibly charge Englishmen with insolence and haughtiness. Let us, before we cast the stone at them, free ourselves from liability to reproach. Let us put our own house in order.

I believe in *Varnashrama Dharma.* But what we know today by that name is nothing but a travesty of it. *Varnashrama Dharma* is the truest road to equality, it is a religion not of self-indulgence but of self-sacrifice. It is a religion not of insolence but of humility. Whilst therefore, some of our weaknesses make me shudder and despair, I see many a silver lining to the cloud of despair.

The spiritual character of the movement is one of the most soul-stirring phenomena that India could pass through. I ask you to put a stop to gambling, the use of intoxicating drinks and drugs, and other kindred vices. Believe me that when we have done this there is no power on earth which can stand in our way.

It is now commonplace for me to draw your attention to Hindu-Muslim unity and to non-violence. I hope that these things have become articles of faith for all of us.

For a Hindu to quarrel with a Mohammedan or for a Mohammedan to quarrel with a Hindu is to destroy the prospect of swaraj. This union between the Hindus and the Mussulmans means the redress of Khilafat wrongs and of the Punjab wrongs.

For us to draw the sword is to perish by it. Let not an angry word slip against our opponents or Englishmen. It is not necessary to criticize Englishmen or our own countrymen who differ from us. For the best and the truest criticism consists in living according to our faith.

Let us concentrate our attention on three things that the Congress Committee has placed before us. You invited the All-India Congress Committee to your capital[1], you lavished boundless affection on the members, you held a spontaneous demonstration as if it was a religious festival, as if it was a Congress gathering. The demand for men, money, and munitions, as Mr. Das put it, was born at Bezwada. And I hope that you will put your shoulders to the wheel and work ceaselessly so that everyone is registered in the Congress ledger.

Long before the 30th June dawns upon you, I hope that you will have collected your quota, and long before the same date, you will place the spinning-wheel in every home of this Andhra Desh.

I hope that in three months' time there will be not a man or woman, calling himself or herself the son or daughter of this land, using foreign cloth. Your energy and faith had captivated me even in South Africa. My best fellow prisoners were Tamil and Telugu countrymen. They were the first to come to the field and never left it. But the energy, the devotion, the faith, the simplicity, the industry that you are exhibiting amaze me. Your natural freedom and natural self-restraint have enchanted me. With all such magnificent qualities it will be nothing but a misfortune if we do not attain swaraj during one year. I ask every one of you to remain on the watch-tower, to watch and check yourself in everything you do. It is no exaggeration to say that all that you have let me see of you convinces me that you have in you the making of *Ramarajya*. Frankness and generosity are written in your faces, and I pay the sisters of Andhra Desh the highest compliment when I say that they have shown the same noble bearing which I have seen in Maharashtra.

Go on as you have begun and I have no doubt that when the Congress Secretary presents the balance-sheet you will be found on the top. If there are any lawyers in Ellore who have not yet suspended their practice, I ask them to throw in their lot with the masses of India

[1] Gandhiji has in mind Bezwada where the Committee met.

and take the opportunity of serving the motherland.

May God grant power to your elbow, courage to suffer, ability to go through any sacrifice for the motherland.

Presently, volunteers will go amongst you, and I ask you to give me all that you can now for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Men of Ellore, part with all the luxuries and ornaments and you will find that you will get the *dharmaraiya* in an incredibly short time.

I thank you, I congratulate you, for the considerate arrangement which has enabled me to go through this heavy programme without much inconvenience. I thank you also for the patience with which you have listened to my remarks.

Young India, 11-5-1921

269. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

BEZWADA,
April 4 [*1921*][1]

DEAR MR. NATESAN,

I shall be for the day in Madras on the 8th and yet I may not stay with you. I may neither put the strain on you of all the non-co-operators, real or so-called, flooding your house or on them of having to come to your house to freely discuss things they know are distasteful to you. I may not be able to pay you a call but I shall expect you to just let me have a look at you wherever I may be housed by my Madras gaolers.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2233

270. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

BEZWADA,
Silence Day [*April 4, 1921*][2]

CHI. MANI,

It is 5 a.m. just now. I am waiting for the car which is to take me to Masulipatam.

[1] It was in 1921 that Gandhiji was at Bezwada on April 4 and in Madras, as the text mentions, on April 8.

[2] Gandhiji went from Ellore to Bezwada on this date and was in Masulipatam on April 5, 1921

I came here from Ellore at 1 a.m. Look up these three places on the map.

I got your letter and read it immediately on my arrival here.

What Dr. Kanuga[1] has done is excellent work. Dahyabhai[2] is doing a very good thing in going out for picketing. Give him my congratulations.

You are doing the right thing in spinning regularly for four hours daily. Try to produce yarn which is strong and of uniform thickness, and also keep an account of the quantity spun daily.

My conviction grows stronger every day that swaraj can be won only through spinning.

I am a busy man and constantly on the move, and so may write with a pencil. But you should make it a practice to write in ink and with an indigenous pen.

You should serve father[3] and see that he has fewer worries on account of you, brother and sister.

Improve your Gujarati day by day. By reading *Navajivan* carefully one can improve one's Gujarati.

I shall arrive in Ahmedabad on Tuesday, the 12th. Inform father, and tell him that I hope he has in this interval raised quite a good amount.[4]

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

CHI. MANIBEHN
C/O VALLABHBHAI, BAR-AT-LAW
BHADRA, AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne

271. THOUGHTFUL LIVING

In the course of my tours, I get experiences, both sweet and sour. I shall remember my tour through the Central Provinces for a long time. We reached Wardha on the 17th morning. The same day we were to proceed to Arvi and Ashti. It was a distance of nearly sixty miles; We had to start at 1 p.m. and return at 10 p.m. But God had

[1] Balvantrai Narsinhlal Kanuga, a Congress worker of Ahmedabad
[2] Addressee's brother
[3] Vallabhbhai Patel
[4] Presumably for the Tilak Swaraj Fund

willed otherwise. On our way, our car stopped abruptly but somehow we managed to reach Ashti. On our return trip, even the second car broke down and this time at a place where no help whatever could be had. At last we reached the outskirts of a village. It was decided to proceed thence in a bullock-cart. The journey commenced at 1 a.m. I was tired and felt sleepy too. Why should I bother to see what manner of bullocks they were and who the driver was? Even in my drowsiness I could judge that the bullocks were running at the speed of horses. At times, they would move slowly, but mostly they kept running.Who does not like to see bullocks running? I said to myself: "Good. We shall reach home so much the earlier. The bullocks of this region must be good."

Morning broke and I woke up. To my dismay, I found that the driver's goad had a sharpened nail fixed in it and he made the bullocks run by frequently piercing their backs with it. Because of this torture, the bullocks had been shedding liquid excreta all along the route.

Let the reader imagine, if he can, my pitiful condition at this sight. I wished to get down from the cart that very moment. I felt that a journey by car was a thousand times better than this. But, then, I thought: "Who knows what the English and American workers in automobile factories suffer? Could it not be a lesser sin to ride in a bullock-cart than drive in a car?" I was reasoning out the matter thus in my mind and watching the torture inflicted on the bullocks. I put up with it for about two minutes. Then I asked for the goad frown the owner of the bullocks, which he handed over to me.

He understood. He did not know me and addressed me as *Bawaji*[1]. I liked *Bawaji* better than "Mahatmaji". From my dress he had taken me for a *bawa.* It is easy to wear a *bawaji's* dress, but difficult to acquire the virtues of one. But the simple masses of India have always been, and will always be, taken in by the simplicity of the sannyasi's dress.

I returned the wooden goad to the owner, suggesting that he might use its blunt end. I told him that there was no need to make the bullocks run for my sake and asked him not to worry if I should reach my destination an hour late. I requested him to remove the nail [from the goad]. He promised to do so. Whether he will keep his word or not is a different question.

This incident affected me deeply. I realized how thoughtless and devoid of pity our way of life was. Every action of ours ought to be informed with thoughtfulness and compassion and I clearly felt there

[1] A respectful form of address applied to sannyasis

should be more compassion where there are more weakness, helplessness and dumbness. That we feel sympathy for our own species is nothing to admire particularly. We certainly ought to feel it. But are not cattle even more helpless, miserable and dumb than victims of famine? The famine-stricken, when made desperate by their suffering, may even fight with us, but what can the bullock do? It can neither speak nor rebel.

I remembered the dialogue of beasts of the text-book. I felt convinced of the truth of its central idea. How devoid of thoughtour life is! If I had only thought about it, I would have examined the bullocks and the driver and would have got the nail removed from the stick right at the commencement of the journey.

Had the cart-man thought he would have realized how he himself would have felt if someone had prodded his body with a goad. He would not then have fixed a nail in his stick and made the bullocks run by piercing them with it.

The more I think, the more numerous grow the conditions for our winning swaraj. If it is our desire to win swaraj through self-purification, where shall we fix a limit to the process? Will the limit be reached when we have come to treat our *Bhangi* brethren as we do our own blood brothers? What of our other brothers and sisters—the animals? What is the difference between the soul in them and in us? They eat and sleep, feel happiness or suffer, just as we do. At most, we may be their elder brethren. What else can there be, besides this?

We ask the other fellow to do his duty by us; if he refuses, we get angry. "Send Dyer to the gallows," we shout. He who hears the complaint of the beasts against us, what must He be thinking of us ?

We Hindus hold cow protection to be as important as safeguarding one's life. We fight the Muslims as enemies in order to save the cow. What right have we to ask them not to kill cows, when we ourselves prod our bullocks with a goad, load them excessively, give them as little to eat as possible and extract milk from the cow until she bleeds, resorting to blowing for the purpose? Muslims consider it no sin to kill a cow for food. Will the Hindus contend that there is no sin in piercing the bullocks with a goad? We commit a sin, knowing it as such. God, it is said, pardons sins committed unknowingly. Only such sins can be atoned for as are committed in ignorance. Having committed a sin in full knowledge that it is a sin, can we purify ourselves by going through the motions of atoning for it?

Thus, if we only think we shall see that there is no limit to the degree of self-purification to be achieved for winning swaraj. The

earlier we achieve it, the sooner shall we get swaraj.

Swaraj means the rule of dharma. If the present method of government is replaced by another of the same description, it will not be swaraj, it will not advance people's welfare. As there are conditions for winning swaraj, so there are signs which are evidence of swaraj. I referred to these in my speech at Nadiad. Some day I shall put them down in an article.

Meanwhile, we must understand this at any rate; that if our claim that we are striving for self-purification is true, we must go on improving our conduct [day by day]. We shall have to examine and concede the rights of all from the smallest ant's to the biggest elephant's. Let no one doubt that, when we have done so, the world will grant us our rights unasked.

Before we call this Government—or its ways of governing—Satanic, we must eschew similar ways. As soon as we do so, the Government's ways will cease to be what they are. That is why I have been saying that it is possible for us to win swaraj in seven months, because all that needs to be done is to be done by ourselves, and that is to bring about a change in our way of thinking. If we but change our ideas, it will take us only a second to effect a change in our conduct accordingly.

I hope no reader will accuse me of making daily additions to the conditions for swaraj. The thoughtful reader will understand that I have been showing these conditions to be lighter and easier.

We must end the Satanic way of the Government either by being more Satanic than it is or by eschewing such ways altogether. Sin and injustice can never exist by themselves. They always require something behind which to shield themselves. Hence the injunction in ail religions is that it is one's highest dharma to non-co-operate with a sinful policy and get it abandoned; we must reflect every moment of our life and save it from sin, so that the evil policy will collapse of itself.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-4-1921

272. DOUBTS ABOUT UNTOUCHABILITY

Untouchability is a subject which raises all manner of doubts in the minds of different people. Some try to defend it one way, some another. That is so with every custom which has taken deep roots. No custom had ever been abolished all at once without opposition. We find even use of alcoholic drinks and other addictions being

defended. There are some who believe that drinking is a part of their dharma, not to speak of untouchability. A friend has suggested that I should answer the following three questions:

1. The very profession of *Bhangis* and *Chamars* is dirty. Whoever follows this profession gets so subtly affected by it that even if he should clean himself regularly by bathing, he becomes unclean to his very bones. Hence physical contact with him should be totally avoided.

2. Though doctors and others are engaged in unclean work, the *Bhangi's* work is not unclean in the same sense. The former are not always engaged in such work and, when they do it, they clean themselves immediately afterwards.

3. So long as the *Dheds* and *Bhangis* have not given up their work altogether, they simply ought not to be touched.

These arguments are somewhat novel. One party argues that no objection will remain if the untouchables learn to bathe and wash. But the party advancing the arguments given above takes the position that the *Bhangi* is unclean to the marrow of his bones and so he cannot be touched, no matter how clean we wash him.

I for one can clearly see the error of both the parties. We have grown used to not touching *Bhangis* and others like them. What is more, this has been given a religious garb. We cannot, therefore, bring ourselves now to touch them and hence we feel disposed to defend our habitual behaviour anyhow. In my humble opinion, the uncleanness which defiles the *Bhangi* is only physical and can soon be removed. But the uncleanness of untruth, hypocrisy and so on which defiles some is so subtle that it is extremely difficult to remove it. If any persons can ever be considered untouchable, it is those filled With the uncleanness of untruth, hypocrisy and the like. We dare not look upon such persons as untouchables because such uncleanliness is present in all of us in greater or lesser degree. If we start behaving thus, we shall have made ourselves judges of the world and shall end by ourselves coming to be treated as untouchables. For this real uncleanness, we have no other remedy except patience and our own internal cleanliness The *Bhangi's* uncleanness, however, not only does not soak into his very bones but is actually something for which there is an easy remedy. Let us treat him as our own and he will surely keep himself clean.

The doctor's profession is one which certainly always involves rummaging in unclean things all the time. If any doctor gets cases for operation which will keep him busy 24 hours, he will certainly not decline them. Moreover, he, too, does unclean work for a living. And

yet we consider his work philanthropic and respect him. My argument is that the doctor's profession helps only patients, but the *Bhangi's* benefits the whole world and is, therefore, more useful and sacred than the former's. If the doctors stop practising, the sick will perish but should the conservancy services stop, the world will be destroyed. It is, therefore, not at all unreasonable to hold that it is a great sin to consider anyone doing such essential work as unholy and to treat him with contempt.

Any movement by *Bhangis* and *Chamars* to give up their work would, I think, do great harm to society.

There is only one thing for us to do. We should look upon the *Bhangis'* and *Chamars'* professions as not less sacred than the doctors'. We should urge the *Bhangis* to be cleaner in their habits, draw them nearer to us, instead of pushing them away, and render them service. We should make a point of keeping our latrines clean, be ready to clean them ourselves, when necessary, and learn how to do so. Our latrines, which today are like the pit of hell, will be as clean as our kitchens or our drawing-rooms when we have realized the sacredness of the *Bhangi's* profession. It is my firm belief that, holding the *Bhangi* and his work in contempt, we have invited many diseases. I have seen Brahmins' houses which were dirtier than those of *Bhangis.* A *Bhangi's* house has no latrine near it and so it appears clean. It is the opinion of many well-informed doctors that the plague, cholera and other diseases, when they appear among us, spread rapidly because of the fifth in our latrines and our bad habits in these matters. I have myself noticed this. We can maintain our latrines in such a condition that one feels no revulsion while cleaning them and every time we enter them, we find them clean and odourless. Thanks to the sin of untouchability, not only have we ourselves become the Empire's untouchable *Bhangis* but we have also become victims to many diseases and our bodies have grown lacklustre and weak. We have absolutely no idea of how our habits with regard to latrines, etc., have the effect of polluting the air and how very harmful that polluted air is for our health. I shall discuss this subject when, I have time.

I am not enamoured of uncleanliness. Nor am I in love with the *Bhangi.* I am not given to exaggeration. I believe in the holy books of the Hindus and am proud of Hinduism. My [love of] truth, however, keeps me unattached and saves me from a blind acceptance of all that goes on in the name of the shastras. The more I think, in all humility, the more I feel that in the name of religion the Hindus have inflicted upon the *Bhangis* and other castes the same Dyerism which the Empire let loose [upon us]. As I call the Empire's Dyerism Satanism, so do I look upon untouchability as a form of Satanism. I have been

working hard to free Hinduism of this evil and I pray to God to make me fit for still more rigorous *tapashcharya* for the purpose.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-4-1921

273. MY NOTES

WHITE MARRED BY BLACK SPOT

A friend, quoting instances of several people who, taking advantage of the swadeshi movement, are practising dishonesty, writes:

> I for one desire honesty in the country first and then propaganda for swadeshi.

The idea springs from sincerity but is one-sided. I have learnt from Jain philosophy a great many things which were worth learning, one of them being the idea of the many-sidedness of truth. Stated in an extreme form, nothing is true. There are two sides to every question. In the assertion "I for one desire honesty first" is an extreme position. Honesty is, indeed, desirable, now and always. If we say, however, that the propaganda for swadeshi should be postponed until such time as we learn honesty, we may have to lose both honesty and swadeshi. Truth and such other virtues do not of themselves develop in one. They develop as one acts. Our rulers have withheld the grant of swaraj to this day by saying that India can have self-rule when it becomes fit for it and we have allowed them to do so. India is already fit. If the country had been perfect, it would never have been enslaved. But the fitness for swaraj develops as we enjoy swaraj. In the same way, honesty will come through the practice of swadeshi. The idea that swadeshi cannot flourish without honesty is perfectly true and does not contradict the principle of the many-sidedness of truth. By holding that view, we can progress in both things simultaneously. A firm faith that nothing can succeed without honesty helps to develop that quality and we shall then feel no misgivings in conducting any beneficial activity. It is my view that, if we had not abandoned swadeshi through infatuation [for foreign articles] we would have been saved from our present plight and the dishonesty which has crept in among us. I am convinced that the spread of swadeshi means the spread of truth, of the idea of devotion to one's own dharma and of that of swaraj. It is, therefore, my advice to believers in swadeshi, not to be disheartened by the inertia prevailing in the country but to go on spreading swadeshi. We give an object-lesson in truth by propagating swadeshi, introducing the spinning-wheel, by wearing khadi ourselves and inducing others to do so.

DISHONESTY

The instances that this friend cites are about the sale of khadi and the fraud concerning spinning-wheels. He says that khadi-sellers either palm off khadi made from mill-spun yarn as handspun khadi, or make big profits on genuine khadi. Those who sell spinning-wheels charge high prices, regardless of quality. I, too, have been noticing both these malpractices. Every movement has its crooks. The test of the efficiency of the organizers of the new movement lies in their ability to defeat the tricks of swindlers, and the success of the movement depends upon their possessing it. Charging higher prices for khadi will not be possible for long, because, when its production goes up, the sellers will compete with one another and reduce the prices. It is difficult to counteract the sale of spurious khadi. I have been trying to arrange for the testing of pure khadi and to discover the means of doing so. It is difficult to find testers immediately because it is not very easy to detect hand-spun yarn once it has been woven [into cloth]. Meanwhile, all should decide to buy khadi from a place they can rely upon. If even then one is cheated, the sin will be upon the person who cheats, never on the person who gets cheated. Despite such deception, the love of khadi will grow, its dread will disappear [and] khadi will come to be regarded as civilized dress—the country will have this benefit at any rate.

TESTING OF SPINNING-WHEELS

There is, indeed, danger in the sale of bad spinning-wheels; the spinning-wheels sold are such that one cannot spin well on them or their output is extremely low or they break down soon, and there is every likelihood of people coming to feel disgust for the spinning-wheel as such. But it is my hope that a remedy for this will soon be found. Experiments on the spinning-wheel are going on. As the number of those who can judge a spinning-wheel grows, the sale of bad spinning-wheels will cease. In Bombay they have a standard "balance of honesty" for testing gold. I have been thinking if it is not possible to devise a similar means for testing a spinning-wheel. It is only in this way that the use of any good thing spreads. I hope we shall soon be able to judge a good spinning-wheel, just as we can a typewriter, a sewing-machine, etc. The people's faith in the spinning-wheel has been growing so much that I believe we shall soon see good, strong and cheap spinning-wheels in the country's markets. Meanwhile, it will be good if, at every place where the spinning-wheel movement is going on, the organizers themselves learn to distinguish between good and bad spinning-wheels. I shall set down here just this little test:

1. The wheel of the spinning-wheel must turn noiselessly and without stopping.

2. Every part of the spinning-wheel must be well set.

3. The handle of the wheel should be so fixed that it does not slide.

4. The spindle of the spinning-wheel must rotate without noise. For this, the spindle-holders should have been made of straw or leather.

5. good spinner should be able to turn out from the spinning-wheel at least two-and-a-half tolas of yarn in an hour.

No spinning-wheel should be approved which does not satisfy the last test, i.e., which could not be worked for one hour with this result.

CARPENTER VOLUNTEERS

It has become a fixed practice among us to enrol only students as volunteers. I have said before now that it is necessary, instead, to start the practice of enlisting all good young men in volunteer bodies. If we really want to conduct our national activities on a large scale, we should engage many artisans also in such work. When carpenters, blacksmiths and others begin to work for the national good, we shall also succeed in producing cheap and good spinning-wheels. Our condition today is so pitiful that, if we are ready to spin, we do not get carpenters who will make good spinning-wheels in a short time. If we find such carpenters, we do not get blacksmiths to make spindles. If we find blacksmiths and carpenters, we do not get honest and patriotic carders. If, however, we have with us organizations of carpenters, blacksmiths, carders, and others, all working for swaraj, we can help the people to rise to a great height. A letter from a carpenter friend shows how easy it is to do this. He writes:

> What you have written in your article[1] about the construction of the Swaminarayan temple by free labour is correct. The artisans needed for building the temple of swaraj should be supplied by us from among ourselves. We shall estimate the number required for this purpose or for building big schools and have a meeting of the community to distribute the work among ourselves. We shall fix monthly turns and help in the name of the country without asking for wages.

There must be in the country many others like the carpenter who has written this and, if we but try, we can easily engage them in national work, and associations of artisans who will build the temple of swaraj will spring up everywhere.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-4-1921

[1] *Vide* "The Spinning-wheel Movement", 6-2.1921.

274. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MASULIPATAM

April 5, 1921

HINDU AND MOHAMMEDAN BRETHREN AND SISTERS,

I thank the Municipality for the address given to me and the sentiments expressed therein. For me it is a matter of great pleasure and joy that I have been able to fulfil the promise I made to myself and to some friends that I would visit Andhra Jatheeya Kalasala[1], Masulipatam, at the earliest possible opportunity. Although I have previously passed through Bezwada twice, for some reason or other I was unable then to visit Masulipatam. And my joy is therefore all the greater that my hope of visiting it was deferred and realized at this late period. I call it late, because when I first had the idea of visiting the national institution in Masulipatam, non-co-operation was not born. I have now passed two quiet, and what shall always remain with me, sacred days on the sacred grounds of this great educational institution. And I am here to inform you that the expectations that I had formed of this institution have been more than realized after the observations that I was able to make of it during these two privileged days. I see method, organizing ability, and sacrifice written in every inch of that ground. As an Indian I feel proud of it. As the inhabitants of this great Andhra province, I hope that all the Andhra friends are equally proud of it, and I hope that you, the citizens of Masulipatam, consider it a privilege that you have an institution in your midst which is manned by men who are filled with the spirit of sacrifice. I do not hastily bestow praise upon any institution. But I would have been false to myself and I would have been false to you, if I did not convey to you the sentiments that have been fired within me during these two days. I ask you therefore to make that institution your own. Strengthen where you may find it to be weak. Strengthen it further where you find that there is a strength in it. Look up to it as an ideal, and try to perfect it in order to perfect your own ideals. I was surprised and pained to find that although you have two big educational institutions in your midst not one of them had supported this great institution. I had hoped that as the result of non-co-operation the students of Masulipatam High School and College were tired and disgusted as the students all over India have felt tired and disgusted with the institutions dominated by the spirit of this Government. I had hoped that such students at least would have gone to this institution. In other places I have been asked by the student world where they were to go, as there were no national institutions in existence. The student world of Masulipatam have absolutely no such

[1]Andhra National College

excuse in view of the fact that this institution has been in their midst for the last nearly fifteen years. If you are brave boys you would take my advice. You should go to this school, and as scholars in this institution, if you find that there is anything that does not satisfy your head or your heart, you should insist upon the teaching staff to correct those defects.

We are entering tomorrow upon the sacred National Week. The sixth of April, 1919, witnessed India awakened. The sixth of April, 1919, witnessed an awakened India when her Hindu and Mussulman peoples showed a real desire to be united. True swadeshi spirit was also born on that day. The 13th of April, seven days after that great awakening, witnessed a black Sunday. Nearly 1,500 innocent men were butchered at Jallianwala Bagh. The dying were neglected by the butchers and I want the students, I want the pleaders and I want all the sisters who are surrounding me to imagine in their minds the pictureof that one solitary figure of a brave and noble woman, Ratan Devi, weeping over the corpse of her dead husband and fearlessly and in defiance of the order of General Dyer taking in her lap the head, the cold head, of her dear husband. Ratan Devi was your sister and mine. I ask you to imagine what you would have felt if you had been in Ratan Devi's place in that desolate field of Jallianwala Bagh. I do not want you to become irritated against Englishmen. But I want you to turn your searchlight inward. We observed the sacred week by commencing with fasting, prayer and hartal and we closed the week likewise. I hope that you, the citizens of Masulipatam, will tomorrow fast, pray and observe hartal. Fasting is an age-old institution. We fast when we do not feel pure, we fast as a penance for our past sins, and pray to God for making us strong. We pray to God for forgiveness of our sins, and after prayer we turn over a new leaf. I hope therefore that every one of you who has come here will not forget these two necessary ceremonies. I treat the hartal also as a religious observance for tomorrow and tomorrow week. It is not to be deemed as expressing a political demonstration, but it should be interpreted as expression of India's determination to find herself. I would ask you tomorrow and during the whole week to dispel every thought of ill will and malice against any member of this Government, whether he be English or Indian.

The fear with which we are filled is the first sin. We fear Englishmen, we fear the Japanese, we fear every other man but God. And believe me, it is only a man who has no faith in God and who has

no faith in himself, only such a man fears his fellow beings. The second great sin that we committed against India, against humanity and against God was the destruction of the spinning-wheel. I wish I could convince the whole of India that it was due to this great sin of ours, national sin as I call it, that India became degraded and a slave nation. The least expiation we can do is to banish every inch of foreign cloth from our midst, and therefore I ask you men and women of Masulipatam from tomorrow to make up a fixed determination not to wear foreign cloth any more, but to wear only that cloth which is woven and spun by yourselves and not by others. Another sin that we have committed is selfishness. We have thought not of the nation but ourselves, and when we have gone beyond the family we have not been able to progress beyond the city or village. And the least expiation we can do is to cease to live for ourselves only, begin to live for India. The rupture between Hindus and Mohamemdans is another of our sins. We have extended our horizon from the Himalayas to Rameswar, from Bengal to Sind. Hindu-Muslim unity is an established fact. Therefore there remains the spinning-wheel for us to concentrate upon. I would ask you further to think of the things that the All-India Congress Committee has commended to our attention, to find a crore of rupees for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. The Andhra Desh proportion comes to 7_ lakhs of rupees. I hope that men and women of Masulipatam will give their best to this Fund. Presently volunteers will go over to you. Several sisters of Masulipatam have been to me already and given their ornaments and money. I hope that the response from Masulipatam will be no less than elsewhere.

The Hindu, 8-4-1921

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

CONGRESS RESOLUTION ON NON-CO-OPERATI0N[1]

Whereas in the opinion of the Congress the existing Government of India has forfeited the confidence of the country; and

Whereas the people of India are now determined to establish swaraj; and

Whereas all methods adopted by the people of India prior to the last Special Session of the Indian National Congress have failed to secure due recognition of their rights and liberties and the redress of their many and grievous wrongs, more specially with reference to the Khilafat and the Punjab;

Now this Congress while reaffirming the resolution on non-violent non-co-operation passed at the Special Session of the Congress at Calcutta declares that the entire or any part or parts of the scheme of non-violent non-co-operation, with the renunciation of voluntary association with the present Government at one end and the refusal to pay taxes at the other, should be put in force at a time to be determined by either the Indian National Congress or the All-India Congress Committee and that in the meanwhile, to prepare the country for it, effective steps should continue to be taken in that behalf:

(a) by calling upon the parents and guardians of schoolchildren (and not the children themselves) under the age of 16 years to make greater efforts for the purpose of withdrawing them from such schools as are owned, aided or in any way controlled by Government and concurrently to provide for their training in national schools or by such other means as may be within their power in the absence of such schools;

(b) by calling upon students of the age of 16 and over to withdraw without delay, irrespective of consequences, from institutions owned, aided or in any way controlled by Government, if they feel that it is against their conscience to continue in institutions which are dominated by a system of government which the nation has solemnly resolved to bring to an end, and advising such students either to devote themselves to some special service in connection with the non-co-operation movement or to continue their education in national institutions;

(c) by calling upon trustees, managers and teachers of Government affiliated or aided schools and municipalities and local boards to help to nationalize them;

[1] Passed at the Nagpur session on December 30, 1920

(d) by calling upon lawyers to make greater efforts to suspend their practice and to devote their attention to national service including boycott of law courts by litigants and fellow lawyers and the settlement of disputes by private arbitration;

(e) in order to make India economically independent and self-contained by calling upon merchants and traders to carry out a gradual boycott of foreign trade relations, to encourage hand-spinning and hand-weaving and in that behalf by having a scheme of economic boycott planned and formulated by a committee of experts to be nominated by the All-India Congress Committee;

(f) and generally, inasmuch as self-sacrifice is essential to the success of non-co-operation, by calling upon every section and every man and woman in the country to make the utmost possible contribution of self-sacrifice to the national movement;

(g) by organizing Committees in each village or group of villages with a provincial central organization in the principal cities of each Province for the purpose of accelerating the progress of non-co-operation;

(h) by organizing a band of national workers for a service to be called the Indian National Service; and

(i) by taking effective steps to raise a national fund to be called the ALL-INDIA TILAK MEMORIAL SWARAJ FUND for the purpose of financing the foregoing National Service and the non-co-operation movement in general.

This Congress congratulates the nation upon the progress made so far in working the programme of non-co-operation, specially with regard to the boycott of Councils by the voters, and claims in the circumstances in which they have been brought into existence, that the new Councils do not represent the country and trusts that those who have allowed themselves to be elected in spite of the deliberate abstention from the polls of an overwhelming majority of their constituents, will see their way to resign their seats in the Councils, and that if they retain their seats in spite of the declared wish of their respective constituencies in direct negation of the principle of democracy, the electors will studiously refrain from asking for any political service from such Councillors.

This Congress recognizes the growing friendliness between the police and the soldiery and the people, and hopes that the former will refuse to subordinate their creed and country to the fulfilment of orders of their officers, and, by courteous and considerate behaviour towards the people, will remove the reproach hitherto levelled against them that they are devoid of any regard for the feelings and sentiments of their own people.

And this Congress appeals to all people in Government employment pending

the call of the nation for resignation of their service, to help the national cause by importing greater kindness and stricter honesty in their dealings with their people and fearlessly and openly to attend all popular gatherings whilst refraining from taking any active part therein and, more specially, by openly rendering financial assistance to the national movement.

This Congress desires to lay special emphasis on NON-VIOLENCE being the integral part of the non-co-operation resolution and invites the attention of the people to the fact that NON-VIOLENCE in word and deed is as essential between people themselves as in respect of the Government, and this Congress is of opinion that the spirit of violence is not only contrary to the growth of a true spirit of democracy but actually retards the enforcement (if necessary) of the other stages-of non-co-operation.

Finally, in order that the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs may be redressed and swaraj established within one year, this Congress urges upon all public bodies, whether affiliated to the Congress or otherwise, to devote their exclusive attention to the promotion of non-violence and non-co-operation with the Government and, inasmuch as the movement of non-co-operation can only succeed by complete co-operation amongst the people themselves, this Congress calls upon public associations to advance Hindu-Muslim unity and the Hindu delegates of this Congress call upon the leading Hindus to settle all disputes between Brahmins and non-Brahmins, wherever they may be existing, and to make a special effort to rid Hinduism of the reproach of untouchability, and respectfully urges the religious heads to help the growing desire to reform Hinduism in the matter of its treatment of the suppressed classes.

Report of the Thirty-fifth Session of the Indian National Congress

APPENDIX II

VICEROY'S SPEECH ON KHILAFAT[1]

GENTLEMEN,

I am very glad to have had this opportunity of meeting you here this afternoon and at having had laid before me one more representation on behalf of the Muslim community with regard to the present situation. I need hardly remind you, though perhaps it is worth while doing so, that I and my Government have repeatedly brought your contentions to the notice of His Majesty's Government and of the Peace Conferences which have been sitting in Europe on this question. May I remind you that early in the stages of the Peace Conference the Secretary of State, Lord Sinha and the Maharaja of Bikaner, who were then representing India at the Peace Conference, stoutly fought your case before the Peace Conference. But inasmuch as none of these

[1] This was delivered in Calcutta on February 24, 1921, to a deputation representing elected Muslim members in the Bengal Legislative Council and Assembly, who had urged modification of the Turkish Peace Terms.

gentlemen could be said to represent strictly your community, I asked certain other gentlemen to go actually before the Peace Conference itself and plead the Mohammedan cause, and they were His Highness the Aga Khan, Mr. Aftab Ahmad and Mr. Yusuf Ali, and these gentlemen were heard. Now not only have we done this, but every memorial which any sections of your community have forwarded to me has been forwarded to the Secretary of State and has been supported in the most strenuous terms, not only by official documents from my Government, but by personal telegrams from myself. So that I can assure you, from first to last and long before the non-co-operation movement began, that we, as a Government, and I, as the head of the Government, strongly supported your contentions, not only before His Majesty's Government but also before the Peace Conference. And lately in order that we should leave no stone unturned for your case to be represented, not only adequately, but to your own satisfaction, we have again asked certain gentlemen unofficially to go to Europe and present your case there—His Highness the Aga Khan, Mr. Hasan Imam, and Mr. Chhotani, and Mr. Chhotani is accompanied by Dr. Ansari, who will be acting as his secretary.

I should think that a recapitulation of what we have done and what we have attempted to do, such as I have laid before you this afternoon, ought to convince you and, I hope, does convince you, that we have left nothing undone which we could do in order to support your case. I am not acquainted with what is going on in London at the present moment; I have no knowledge, either official or private, of the Conferences which are taking place; but I can assure you that, from first to last, we have espoused your cause and we have fought it in a way which, if I was at liberty to place before you the communications which we have sent home, I think would satisfy every individual.

In conclusion I must again express my great sympathy with you and my determination to the last moment to press every point which we can in favour of your representations.

Speeches by Lord Chelmsford, Vol. II

APPENDIX III

VICEROY'S SPEECH ON NON-CO-OPERATION[1]

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

This is the fourth time on which I have had the privilege and pleasure of being the guest of the Calcutta Club. Naturally at the end of five years one looks back upon sins of omission and commission and it is a matter of regret to me that in 1917 when you were so good as to invite me to be your guest, the preoccupations of the work which I was doing with Mr. Montagu at the time prevented me from accepting your

[1] Delivered on February 23, 1921, at a dinner given in his honour by the Calcutta Club.

kind invitation. Otherwise I should have been your guest every year that I paid a visit to Calcutta. I hope that this practice which you have followed in my case will be followed in the case of my successors because I can conceive no more convenient method of bringing the Viceroy into contact with prominent men, and prominent men into touch with the Viceroy, than these annual dinners. In April 1916, on my assumption of office, I paid a short informal visit to Calcutta to leave, as I said at that time, my card at the former capital. Today I have been able to do no more than spare a few days in order to leave my P. P. C. card. I hope, however, that you, gentlemen, who belong to Calcutta, will have realized from my constant visits to Calcutta my fondness for your great city and my regret that fate has rendered it impossible for me to live amongst you as all my predecessors have done.

Now, as I look back upon the past five years, I realize the great changes that have taken place. There is an old Latin tag *coelum non animum qui trans mare currant.* They change their sky and not their mind who cross the sea. I do not believe myself that this was true even of the days when the poet wrote, because environment has a great influence upon the mind of those who are subjected to change. The principle of it is undoubtedly not true of those who have crossed the floor of a House from the Opposition to the Ministerial Bench, because, naturally, for the first time they cease to be critics and become the criticized. This is inherent in the nature of Parliamentary institution everywhere, but it is inevitable that a man who, for the first time, is made acquainted with the reasons for Government action should see greater justification for what the Government does than in the old days when he was not so well acquainted with facts and was inclined to think that nothing that the Government could do was right.

Now I am sure you will forgive me, on this last occasion of a visit to your Club, if I dwell for a few moments on the unrestful times through which we are passing. I think I may assume that the mere fact of your presence here tonight proves you to be co-operators with Government. We are not the only country which is subject to unrest at the present moment; indeed, look where you like over the world, unrest is almost the order of the day. But you may naturally ask: Granted that this is so, what is your policy with regard to the present situation? Let me summarize the position as I see it. I understand that those who have refused to co-operate with Government do so on the broad ground that I and my Government are Satanic! I am glad to think I still have a sense of humour. I have had many epithets applied to myself in my time, but the epithet of "Satanic" has broken entirely new ground Apart, however, from what I conceive to be its peculiar inappropriateness to myself, it surely must appear singularly ill-chosen when Indians are at the present moment forming the bulk of the Provincial Governments and a large proportion of the Government of India. I pass on however. The Reforms have been inaugurated and responsibility has been in large measure transferred to Indian hands. How amazing it is then that at such a time those who have for years been asking for greater share in the Government should now, like children, be refusing to play! It reminds me of an American quatrain which I came across in the course of my reading the other day:

"Mother, may I go and swim?
Yes, my dearest daughter
Hang your clothes on a hickory limb,
But don't go near the water."

I cannot help feeling that this quatrain sums up the situation so far as the non-co-operators are concerned. And now as to our policy with regard to the non-co-operation movement. The Reforms and the Reformed Councils are the keynote of our policy. Indians now share responsibility with the Government. Therefore I think the Government may well claim from Indians help in combating this agitation. Non-co-operation is spread by propaganda: it behoves us then, British and Indians, to counter it by propaganda. Non-co-operation takes hold of grievances where they may exist: it behoves us, so far as in us lies, to remedy these grievances. Non-co-operation has failed in many of the objects which it set out to attain. An answer in the Imperial Legislature the other day showed how poor the response had been to the demand for the surrender of titles. The existence of the Imperial Legislature and the Provincial Councils shows in this respect too the authors of non-co-operation have not had their way. I much regret that there are many who have felt themselves obliged to stand out from the Councils. The Councils would have been the better for their help and their views in their deliberations, but the outstanding fact remains that the Councils have been established, are composed of admirable material and are doing their work. Non-co-operation was attempted in the *hijrat* movement into Afghanistan. The trail of death and suffering imposed by that exodus upon the unfortunate misguided people who took part in it has, I believe, killed any attempt to revive any such exodus from India. Non-co-operation succeeded temporarily in inducing emotional boys to leave their schools and colleges—but here again as soon as the emotional ebullition had passed, the students have returned in large numbers to their class-rooms. We have then every reason to take heart with regard to the success of the policy which we have adopted. But the non-co-operators having failed with the classes, especially the educated classes, are now devoting their attention to the masses. Here again, we must endeavour by co-ordinated effort to teach the masses aright.

There is a Muslim aspect of the present situation. No one could have done more than I to bring Muslim views and sentiments of the community to the Peace Conferences which have been considering the Turkish Peace Terms, and no one—not a Muslim—could have shown more dislike than I to the terms of the Turkish Peace Treaty. I say then that we have every reason to be especially tender and sympathetic to those Mohammedans who have been led into the non-co-operation movement by their views with regard to the Turkish Peace Treaty. But a moment may come when our policy fails, and when the two alternatives of order on the one hand, or anarchy on the other, alone face us. In such an event there can be only one course for the Government to pursue and that is to uphold the cause of order. We shall then ask all responsible men to range themselves on the side of order, and here I am confident that

the Reformed Councils will play their part. We, as a Government, will place all the facts before them and all our cards on the table, and I am confident that when we prove to them that the alternative is between order and anarchy, there will be only one response made and that is that "we will support you in any action that you may consider necessary to maintain order in the country."

This is my last visit to Calcutta, and I feel that I cannot leave without paying an acknowledgment to Lord Ronaldshay and his colleagues. I should like to acknowledge the loyal co-operation of the Bengal Government with my Government. I should like to recognize the wisdom and sagacity which have marked their administration, and personally thank Lord Ronaldshay for the friendship and support which he has always accorded me. Differences there may have been from time to time, but these differences do not detract from that general policy of loyal co-operation which I have always experienced at the hands of Lord Ronaldshay and his colleagues.

Speeches by Lord Chelmsford, Vol. II

1. NOTES

INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Despite the mission of Sir Benjamin Robertson, the South African Commissions[1] has delivered an adverse finding. Commissions, Lord Morley[2] has often said, serve no useful purpose. They raise false hopes, and, for the time being, divert public attention from matters they are appointed to deal with. They give time for passions to cool down. But they rarely do justice. Indeed, it is notorious that Commissions avoid abstract justice. They offer, or effect, com-promises. But the South African Commission has offered, or effected, no compromise. It has delivered the Indian in the hands of his white rival in trade. It has reaffirmed the principle of white supremacy, as Mr. Andrews so often puts it. The principle has almost become a passion and a religion. In 1901, the late Sir Pherozeshah[3] rated me for 'wasting my time,' as he put it, on South Africa. During the satyagraha campaign, he was the last, as he said himself; to be enthused. And when he was enthused, it was not the justice of the cause (which he never doubted) but it was the incarceration[4] of Mrs. Gandhi which roused his chivalrous spirit, and threw him into the struggle. He used to say that I should return to India and work for the freedom of the whole of India, rather than for a handful of Indians in South Africa.

I thought then, as I think even now, that whilst the un-crowned king of the Presidency of Bombay was right about concentrating on India's freedom, he was wrong in thinking that I should have withdrawn from South Africa. We dare not neglect our countrymen abroad. The battle of India's freedom involves the protection of the rights of the least of our countrymen, no matter where they might be situated. But at the present moment, I must invite our countrymen in South Africa to carry on their battle bravely and single-handed, and help us here in the best way they can. India's fate must be decided

[1] The Africa Enquiry Commission appointed by the Union Government of South Africa which sat from March to July 1920. It was assisted by Sir Benjamin Robertson on behalf of the Government of India.

[2] John Morley, Viscount Morley of Blackburn (1838-1923); Secretary of State for India, 1905-10

[3] Sir Pherozeshah Mehta

[4] In South Africa in 1913; *vide* "Letter to Clement Doke", 24-9-1913.

one way or the other (and so far as I know only one way) during this year. We shall be better able to protect them then, than now.

The South African problem bears the same character as the problem at home. We too are fighting the religion of white supre-macy. The refusal to recognize the Muslim claim, the encircling of the Arabs, the negotiations with the Ameer[1], the refusal to stop the pensions of Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer, and frankly to dismiss men who maltreated the Punjabis in 1919, are symptoms of the same disease. Either that supremacy must go in its entirety, or those of us who recognize the tubercular nature of the disease must perish in the attempt to combat it. The Government of India can, if they wish, put up an energetic and open fight against the proposed breach of faith which the Commission implies. The spirit of the settlement of 1918 was that the position of the Indian all over South Africa must be levelled up, not a single right then existing should be in any way endangered. The Commission has not only put its *imprimatur* on the encroachments already made on existing rights, but it has itself suggested further and egregious curtailment thereof. Between free nations such an authoritative pronouncement would lead to open rupture. The Report of the Commission can only spur my non-co-operation spirit to further effort.

THE MEANING OF SWARAJ

A friend from South Africa writes to say that several Europeans there are prepared to help the struggle for swaraj, but they want to be assured on certain points. As the points raised are of general importance, I gladly deal with them here.

> 1. Does Mr. Gandhi's swaraj mean sovereign independence, or full responsible Government within the Empire on the Dominion lines?

I should certainly be satisfied with full responsible Government on Dominion lines if the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs are redressed. India cannot remain within the Empire if the latter cannot redress the two wrongs; for full responsible Government will have no meaning for India, if she cannot refuse to give pensions to officers who have wronged her, or if she cannot secure a settlement of the Khilafat terms. England then becomes an 'enemy country' for India.

[1] The King of Afghanistan. The negotiations ultimately led to the signing of the Anglo-Afghan Treaty on November 22, 1921.

2. Do the Muslims claim Palestine, or will they restore it to the Jews who are the original owners?

The Muslims claim Palestine as an integral part of Jazirat-ul-Arab. They are bound to retain its custody, as an injunction of the Prophet. But that does not mean that the Jews and the Christians cannot freely go to Palestine, or even reside there and own property. What non-Muslims cannot do is to acquire sovereign jurisdiction. The Jews cannot receive sovereign rights in a place which has been held for centuries by Muslim powers by right of religious conquest. The Muslim soldiers did not shed their blood in the late War for the purpose of surrendering Palestine out of Muslim control. I would like my Jewish friends to impartially consider the position of the seventy million Muslims of India. As a free nation, can they tolerate what they must regard as a treacherous disposal of their sacred possession?

THE NEW VICEROY

I think the duty of non-co-operators is clear regarding Lord Reading. Whilst we may not take part in any demonstrations of welcome, we may not also undertake, or countenance, any counter demonstration. We have no quarrel with Englishmen, or even with officials as such. We seek to, and we must, destroy the system they are called upon to administer, because we regard it as wholly evil in its totality. We must dissociate ourselves from individual officials, who, like Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer, have wronged India, and have been untrue to her salt. Lord Reading has a golden opportunity. He belongs to a race which has a fine imagination. He knows what a 'pariah' means and how he feels If he examines the non-co-operators' case with impartiality, and if he fails in his advocacy of her claims, he must himself become a non-co-operator. He may not ask them to forgive, where there is no frank and full repentance. Nor must he ask the Muslims to give up their just claims or the Hindus to sell their fellow-country men. Lastly, His Excellency may not ask India to postpone the attainment of her birthright, whether for the sake of Lancashire or any other consideration. His Lordship therefore will have [to] have an exceptionally strong will to resist an environment which is almost wholly antagonistic to the Indian case. Non-co-operators must do nothing to add to his diffi-culties. We must give His Excellency the fullest credit for meaning to do well. But I would also warn them against building hopes on Lord Reading doing anything. This is a battle of self-help and self-reliance. We must create the envi-

ronment we need for our free nourishment. And, among the things we must do, one is to secure the goodwill of true men and women by our exemplary behaviour.

SOME TESTS

Mr. T. B. Purohit asks several pertinent questions about non-co-operation. Before answering, it will be, perhaps, better to lay down some general tests. The primary motive of non-cooperation is self-purification by withdrawing co-operation from an unrighteous and unrepentant Government. The secondary object is to rid ourselves of the feeling of helplessness by being independent of all Government control or supervision, i.e., to govern ourselves in all possible affairs; and, in fulfilling both the objects, to refrain from doing or promoting injury, or violence, to any individual or property.

Let us apply the tests to Mr. Purohit's questions which are as follows:

> 1. Whether a non-co-operator can remain a member of a registered library or reading-room?

If I were a member, I would first move my fellow members to disregister the library, and if I cannot, I would resign my membership and agitate for its disregistration, so as to make the people feel self-reliant and independent.

> 2. Whether a non-co-operator can remain a member of existing registered co-operative credit societies or banks which are solely managed by the public for the general public interest?

I have some experience of these societies. And I have no hesitation in saying that registration interferes with their free growth and increases people's dependence upon the Government. The idea of such societies is excellent and should be nursed, but we need not think that we cannot promote such societies without Government aid or inspection. I know the usual arguments in favour of registration. But on an analysis, they will all be found to betray want of faith in ourselves. I would, therefore, in this instance, too, first try to convince my fellow members of the inutility of registration, and, on failure, secede from the society or bank, and educate the public to boycott such societies or banks. I know that, at least in one instance, registration has been removed, and everyone knows that India has thousands of unregistered flourishing banks whose honesty and business-like methods are still among the wonders of the world.

Young India, 6-4-1921

2. A TAXING EXAMINER

I would love to feel that I was an M. A. of the University of Non-co-operation. But my examiners show me that, whilst I have matriculated in that University, I have yet to fill many a term in the college course. Of all my many correspondents, the Sindhi friends are the most searching and, even, provoking. What I present to the readers of *Young India* is but a sample of examination papers set to me. Here is one such from Sind:

> 1. Do you expect that violence will ensue from your movement of non-co-operation ?

If I did, I would not have advised it.

> 2. Explain fully the doctrine of non-violence.

Non-violence is not doing, voluntarily, any injury to person or property. Thus, I would not punish or procure punishment even of General Dyer for his massacre, but I would not call it voluntarily doing injury to him to refuse to give him pension, or to condemn his action in fitting language. It is no part of my duty to protect a murderer even though he may be my son or father. I hold it to be my duty to withdraw my support from him. I will not kill a snake, neither may I harbour it.

> 3. If violence ensues from your movement, will you retire to the mountains ?

If violence results from non-co-operation,or if non-co-operators resort to violence, i.e., if India makes violence her creed, and I have survived, I would not care to live in India. She will cease to evoke any pride in me. My patriotism is subservient to my religion. I cling to India like a child to its mother's breast, because I feel that she gives me the spiritual nourishment I need, she has the environment that responds to my highest aspirations. When that faith is gone, I shall feel like an orphan without hope of ever finding a guardian. Then the snowy solitude of the Himalayas must give what rest it can to my bleeding soul. Needless to say, the violence that would drive me to the Himalayas is not the violence of language or rowdyism which my critics often fling in my face whilst reminding me of the Himalayas. It is violence not due to non-co-operation, nor is it violence of the real non-co-operators. These outbursts are a legacy of our undisciplined past. It is being brought under check day by day. It is so insignificant as to be itself a mighty demonstrationof the peace that reigns supreme in India today. This peace, in the face of provocation attempted by

officials, knowingly or unknowingly, in the shape of their vexations and often illegal notices must, if continued, in itself ensure swaraj within the year. For it shows unity of purpose and determination among the people.

4. What should other non-co-operators do, if such violence breaks out? Should they stop the preaching of non-co-operation?

When (if ever) that tempestuous violence breaks out, true non-co-operators would have died in the attempt to prevent violence Question 3 presupposes my sole survivorship. But assume, that I have scuttled to the Himalayas, (as it would then be to escape death), the remaining non-co-operators would certainly be expected to remain true to their faith in spite of my cowardly retreat and be living witnesses to their faith till the flames overwhelm them. The voice of the preacher will then be drowned in the onrushing torrent of blood.

5. If you retire to the mountains, what will be the fate of the poor students who have boycotted aided or Government institutions?

The questioner forgets that when violence reigns supreme in India there will be no schools, aided or unaided, for students to attend. Only those students are called upon to leave Government schools who consider it to be sinful to remain in them. The question of returning to such schools does not arise in their case. And what has my retirement to the mountains to do with the students' withdrawal? Every student is expected to judge for himself what is best for him and his country. The movement of self-government cannot—must not—be made to depend upon one man. I have but presented India with a new and matchless weapon, or rather an extended application of an ancient and tried weapon. She must reject or accept it for her own use. I cannot use it for her. I can use, have used, it for myself and feel free. Others have done, and feel, likewise. If the nation uses the weapon she becomes free.

6. How far has your movement of non-co-operation progressed?

So far that I feel swaraj running to us. If we keep up the same velocity, we shall be a free nation within this year.

7. Are you aware that most of the non-co-operating workers are irresponsible? Have you ever condemned them?

I am not. On the contrary, I am aware that most of them are responsible, sober, honest and brave workers. I hope I have condemned irresponsibility wherever I have found it.

8. Under what circumstances do you expect to get swaraj in October?

I have often mentioned the conditions in these columns. The correspondent must look up the back numbers.

9. Will the spinning-wheel solve the problem of India's poverty ? If it will, how ?

I am more than ever convinced that without the spinning-wheel the problem of India's poverty cannot be solved. Millions of India's peasants starve for want of supplementary occupation. If they have spinning to add to their slender resources they can fight successfully against pauperism and famine. Mills cannot solve the problem. Only hand-spinning—and nothing else—can. When India was forced to give up hand-spinning, she had no other occupation in return. Imagine what would happen to a man who found himself suddenly deprived of a quarter of his bare livelihood. Over eighty-five per cent of her population have more than a quarter of their time lying idle. And, therefore, even apart from the terrible drain rightly pointed out by the G. O. M.[1] of India, she has steadily grown poorer because of this enforced idleness. The problem is how to utilize these billions of hours of the nation without disturbing the rest. Restoration of the spinning-wheel is the only possible answer. This has nothing to do with my special views on machinery or with the boycott of foreign goods in general. India is likely to accept the answer in full during this year. It is madness to tinker with the problem. I am writing this in Puri[2] in front of the murmuring waves. The picture of the crowd of men, women and children with their fleshless ribs, under the very shadow of Jagannath, haunts me. If I had the power, I would suspend every other activity in schools and colleges, and everywhere else, and popularize spinning; prepare out of these lads and lasses spinning teachers; inspire every carpenter to prepare spinning-wheels; and ask the teachers to take these life-giving machines to every home, and teach them spinning. If I had the power, I would stop an ounce of cotton from being exported and would have it turned into yarn in these homes. I would dot India with depots for receiving this yarn and distributing it among weavers. Given sufficient steady and trained workers, I would undertake to drive pauperism out of India during this year. This undoubtedly requires a change in the angle of vision and in the national taste. I regard the Reforms[3] and everything else in

[1] Grand Old Man, i.e. Dadabhai Naoroji

[2] On the coast of Orissa, which Gandhiji visited on March 28, 1921

[3] Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms embodied in the Government of India Act of 1919

the nature of opiates to deaden our conscience. We must refuse to wait for generations to furnish us with a patent solution of a problem which is ever growing in seriousness. Nature knows, no mercy in dealing stern justice. If we do not wake up before long, we shall be wiped out of existence. I invite the sceptics to visit Orissa, penetrate its villages, and find out for themselves where India stands. They will then believe with me that to possess, or to wear, an ounce of foreign cloth is a crime against India and humanity. I am able to restrain myself from committing suicide by starvation only because I have faith in India's awakening, and her ability to put herself on the way to freedom from this desolating pauperism. Without faith in such a possibility I should cease to take interest in living. I invite the questioner, and every other intelligent lover of his country, to take part in this privileged national service in making spinning universal by introducing it in every home, and make it profitable for the nation by helping to bring about a complete boycott of foreign cloth during this year. I have finished the questions and endeavoured to answer them. The most important from the practical stand-point was the one regarding spinning. I hope I have demonstrated the necessity of home-spinning as the only means of dealing with India's poverty. I know, however, that innumerable difficulties face a worker in putting the doctrine into execution. The most difficult, perhaps, is that of getting a proper wheel. Save in the Punjab where the art is still alive, the difficulty is very real. The carpenters have forgotten the construction and the innocent workers are at their wit's end. The chief thing undoubtedly, therefore, is for the worker to make himself acquainted with the art and the handling of spinning-wheels. I lay down some simple tests for testing them. No machine that fails to satisfy the tests should be accepted or distributed.

1. The wheel must turn easily, freely, and noiselessly.
2. The turning handle must be rigidly fixed to the axle.
3. The posts must be properly driven home and joints well fixed.
4. The spindle must turn noiselessly and without a throb in its holders. Jarring sound cannot be avoided unless the holdersare made of knit straw as in the Punjab, or of tough leather.
5. No machine is properly made unless it manufactures in the hands of a practised spinner at least 2_ tolas of even and properly twisted yarn of six counts in an hour. I know a youngster, who has not had more than perhaps three months' practice having been able to

spin 2_ tolas of the above quality of yarn in 35 minutes. No machine should be given out until it has been worked for at least full one hour in the manner suggested, and found satisfactory.

Young India, 6-4-1921

3. SPEECH AT CHIRALA

April 6, 1921

He said he was overwhelmed with joy for the unique kindness shown him throughout the Andhra Desh. He said he himself had gone to jail a number of times in South Africa and each time he was discharged he felt sorry. He was jealous of those who had the privilege of going to jail because he found greater freedom within the prison walls than under a system of Government which destroyed the spirit and manhood of man and denied him the ordinary nights. He hoped that those who had gone to jail deserved the distinction. He congratulated the women of Chirala on producing one lady at least who could go to jails.[1] He congratulated them on the spirit of non-violence that had marked their struggle. His reading of the papers of the case—he had read every line of it led him to the conclusion that it was a good case. In his opinion the Government grievously erred in imposing a municipality against the unanimous opinion of the people. He knew their difficulties had just begun. Only two courses were open to them as honourable men and women either to offer non-co-operation with civil disobedience or to perform *hijrat* as the Mussulmans would say, or Tulsidas would say *desatyag*[2]. Both weapons were in his opinion equally powerful and equally effective. He asked them not to depend upon the support of the Congress, but rely on their own strong arm, that is, self-suffering. After paying a glowing tribute to their trusted leader, Mr. Dugirala Gopalakrishnayya[3], he exhorted them to realize the matchless beauty of non-violence. After referring to the spinning-wheel as the life-giver of India, he said:

I shall follow the career of the men and women of Chirala with reverence. You are on the threshold of a new age in the history of India. The whole of India is looking on you. It will be a shame if you go back on your word, if you make a single, vital blunder. Observe non-violence and with God as your witness defy the whole world. May God bless you, men and women of Chirala.

The Hindu, 9-4-1921

[1] This lady and eleven other patriots of Chirala were sent to jail for refusing to recognize the municipality imposed on the people by the Government

[2] Exodus from one's own land

[3] The founder of the Ramanagar Ashram

4. SPEECH AT TILAK VIDYALAYA, NELLORE[1]

April 7, 1921

While declaring the institution open, Mahatmaji exhorted the trustees of the institution that they should concentrate their attention and energy on the one important issue of the day, the attainment of swaraj, and said that spinning and weaving were the central factors of the Congress resolution. He did not like the idea of the trustees raising subscriptions for this institution separately inasmuch as it would affect the important Tilak Swaraj Fund, which was recently started and which required a crore of rupees. There should be only one activity for which there should be begging. Therefore he advised the trustees to consult the president of the Provincial Congress Committee before embarking on any scheme. Swaraj was not to be attained by any heroism but by disciplined thought and disciplined action. He warned the trustees against the danger of putting fantastic educational schemes before the country. There was no educational scheme before the country exept one and that was the attainment of swaraj. He wished prosperity to the new institution.

The Hindu, 12-4-1921

5. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, NELLORE[2]

April 7, 1921

MY DEAR HINDU AND MOHAMMEDAN BRETHREN,

You will please excuse me for my inability to speak to you standing. I have also to ask for your forgiveness as I have not been able to come here in time; but I do not feel guilty about it. Our sisters detained me longer than I had expected.[3] It was quite possible for me to have come here directly from the ladies' meeting, omitting my evening meal. But I flattered myself with the belief that you would not have me to make such an indifferent choice. I ask also for your forgiveness that I have not been able to visit Nellore earlier than now.

As soon as I heard that the Hindus and Mussulmans of Nellore were at sixes and sevens, I thought of coming and remaining in your midst for some time. I wanted to know who those Hindus and who those

[1] Delivered at the opening of the Tilak Jateeya Vidyalaya, a national school founded by V. V. S. Garu who had suspended his legal practice in obedience to the Congress mandate. On this occasion, two pieces of hand-spun cloth, prepared during the previous night by the pupils of the Vidyalaya, were presented to Gandhiji.

[2] Delivered in reply to an address presented by the Nellore Municipality

[3] Gandhiji had earlier attended a women's meeting held in the Town Hall.

Mussulmans were who would rather quarrel amongst themselves and retard the attainment of swaraj and the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs. You claim to have an ancient town, and I hope that you will not lag behind other parts of India and have it said of you and against you that the Hindus and Mussulmans of Nellore cannot live together as brothers. But many things interfered with my desire to come here earlier than now. I have endeavoured to ascertain the cause of the quarrel and you will forgive me for saying that the causes were not worse than rupture between the two great communities. I understand that the Mussulmans of Nellore, or let me put it, the majority of the Mussulmans of Nellore, would not allow the Hindus to perform musical functions, to have musical processions passing by their mosques. The Mohammedans contend that but a few years ago there was no such demand made by the Hindu population. I have not known the Hindu case. I have not come here to judge between my Hindu and Mussulman brethren. But as an expert on Hindu and Muslim unity, I propose in all humility to place, for your consideration and acceptance, certain fundamental principles on which, and on which alone, such a unity can remain everlasting. As a *Sanatana* Dharma Hindu, feeling for my own faith, hoping that if the Faith was on its trial, I would be found in the front rank to give my life for its sake as a *Sanatani* Hindu, I wish first of all to address myself to my Hindu brethren, and would say: 'If you would live in amity and friendship with the Mohammedan countrymen, the only way you can do so is never on any account to put a strain upon their religious fervour and always yield to them even though you may consider that their demands are unreasonable and unjust. But there is a condition attached to that submission even to unreasonable demands and that condition is that their demands do not encroach upon the vital part of your religious tenets.' I will take a homely illustration. If my Mohammedan countrymen demanded that I should cease to go to my temple, I would rather perish than concede that demand in order to buy that friendship. Protection of the cow, I hold as dear as life itself and if my Mussulman brother asked me to waive protection of the cow, I again would perish rather than buy his friendship with the blood of my cow. But when he tells me not to play music past his mosque within a few yards, I would not condescend to argue with him but immediately yield to him. Hindus may take it from me that it is no part, no essential part, of Hinduism that we should play music at any time. It is much less an essential part of my religion that I should play music,

instrumental or vocal, passing by a mosque. I would not hesitate to agree to every such demand, to every such sentiment, to every such prejudice of my Mohammedan brethren. And so, if I were a Hindu living in Nellore, I would not even allow a case of this character to go to arbitration; and only by agreeing with our Mussulman brethren on all non-essentials and ceasing to subject them to pinpricks, we will be able to keep their friendship for ever. And there can be no bargaining in friendship. I yield to my Mussulman brethren in every non-essential, because it is natural for me to do so, because my religion demands that I should live at peace with the whole world even at the sacrifice of my life. And therefore, if the Hindus of Nellore were to ask me what they should do because they consider that the demand of the Mussulman brethren is unreasonable and unjust, I would say: 'Do not argue but yield to that unreasonable and unjust demand.' For if we were to engage in a discussion of such trivial quarrels, the world will set us down as children unfit to govern themselves, and you will, therefore, see quite clearly that it would be relevant for the Hindus to tell me that such a thing is really the case, that I have been misinformed, that only a few years ago the Hindus never claimed to play music, passing by mosques. Such pleasures of religious life—because I call these things pleasures, agreeable pleasures—such pleasures of religious life I would hold at the mercy, at the grace of my Mohammedan brethren. What is more, you Hindus are probably 42 to 45 thousand in Nellore. Mussulmans are but seven thousand. Hindus therefore as the elder brother are bound to hold the Mussulman interests as trustees. Your nobility or title to swaraj demands that, as the stronger party, you should assume the privilege of protecting the weak. To my Mohammedan brethren I would urge: 'Never think of making any unreasonable demands. Make it your business to study the prejudices and sentiments of your Hindu brethren. Make allowances for what you may consider to be their weaknesses. God will not hold you answerable on the Judgment Day if He finds that you allowed yourself in your prayers in the mosque to be interrupted by some music that you heard. I have not the shadow of a doubt that God Almighty whom you call also Rahim[1], will understand your humble and gentle plea when you tell Him on the Judgment Day that you could not help it, because you wanted to respect your Hindu brothers' prejudices. The test for friendship, the test for brotherhood

[1] The Compassionate One

is that each party always makes allowances for the weaknesses of the other and I know that on the Judgment Day that party will win the day which will be able to show that it has always surrendered on non-essentials. The life of the great Prophet is for you as a living example of a perpetual surrender of non-essentials.' But I say to the Hindu and Mussulman brethren of Nellore, whether they can agree about their differences or not, whether they can make concessions to one another or not, whether they can come to an agreement on essentials and non-essentials or not, it is not given to them, not to a Jingle Hindu or to a single Mussulman to fly at each other's throats, to throw stones at one another, and to inflict violence on one another. They must have trusted, chosen leaders of each community to form a Board of Arbitration to settle all religious disputes between the two, and if they are not satisfied, they can either go to the Congress or to the Khilafat Committee for a settlement. And finally I would repeat the advice that Maulana Shaukat Ali has been giving times without number both to the Mussulmans and Hindus. When a Mohammedan feels irritated and angry with his Hindu neighbours and when he cannot restrain himself and feels that he must inflict condign punishment on his Hindu brethren, then he must go to Mahatma Gandhi and cut off his head. Similarly he advised the Hindus that if the Hindus felt irritated against the Mussulman neighbours and wanted to pick a quarrel with them, they should not lay their hands upon the Mussulman neighbours but they should go to Shaukat Ali himself; although he is strong and burly, he makes that definite promise that even a Hindu child may take his head from his shoulders. Let Hindus and Mussulmans understand firmly that the cornerstone of swaraj, the cornerstone of the freedom of India is Hindu and Muslim unity. Let both understand that the defence of Islam with reference to the Khilafat through the power of India is only possible if Hindu-Muslim unity becomes a living factor in their life. Let Hindus understand that their full contribution, their unconditional hearty contribution to the defence of Islam automatically carries with it the defence of Hinduism itself. And so my dear countrymen of Nellore, I beseech both of you, whether you are Hindus or Mussulmans, sink your petty differences, never quarrel again, make a firm determination during the sacred week[1], bend down to your knees to pray that He may give you both power and wisdom to remain at peace with one another and make a

[1] The National Week, from April 6 to April 13

firm determination to use all that united, matchless power for the freedom of India, for the freedom of Islam, for retrieving the honour of the Punjab. Both Hindus and Mussulmans have told me in the course of the day that this wretched petty quarrel has resulted in all non-cooperation activity and Khilafat activity not being conducted and carried through to the extent that it was possible for Nellore to do. I hope, therefore, that you will not allow the sun to rise upon you before you have settled your differences and I hope that from tomorrow morning you will set about as thinking, wise business men to work out the programme that has been sketched for you by the All-India Congress Committee, that you will continue to contribute to the Tilak Swaraj Fund that you have commenced today; that you will not rest satisfied until you have placed on the Congress register every adult male and female, Hindu or Mussulman.

It is time that you began to consider it to be a sin to wear an inch of foreign cloth. Let the Mohammedans understand that the wearing of foreign cloth is a badge of the degradation of Islam and let both Hindus and Mussulmans understand that the wearing of foreign cloth is a badge of our slavery. I would ask you not to fall back upon Ahmedabad or Bombay for your clothes, but make it a point of honour to become self-sustained by manufacturing all the cloth for your local needs. Take it again from me, as an experienced spinner and weaver, that it is entirely possible for the 52,000 men and women of Nellore to produce all your cloth in the course of a month. Within one night one weaver was able to produce sufficient cloth for me to last for one year and that sacred cloth produced last night is in my possession and I am proud of it.[1] And so I ask you to divert your attention from your internal Hindu and Muslim dissensions or any other dissension and concentrate that attention on the main issue before the whole nation. Banish all drink, gambling and falsehoods and all vices in your midst and live up to the profession made in your name and my name in that, this battle of non-co-operation is a battle of self-purification. I would ask you finally to remember that the National Week is not yet over. We finished the second day this evening. There are full five precious days in store for us. Let us make the best use of these five days. I would ask you during these five days specially to cultivate friendship between yourselves, Hindus and Mussulmans. I would ask every Hindu to go out of his way whenever

[1] *Vide* footnote to "Speech at Tilak Vidyalaya, Nellore", 7-4-1921.

he meets a Mohammedan brother and to greet him with a pleasant and smiling salaam. Similarly I would ask every Mohammedan brother of mine here, when he meets a Hindu, to go out of his way and greet him with a pleasant smile or salaam or *Vande Mataram.* And so during these 5 or 6 days, you will put forth extraordinary energy so that you may get rid of all mutual distrust and mutual suspicion and of uncleanliness and rise at the end of the week purified and fitter for swaraj, for the defence of the Khilafat, fitter for the retrieving of the honour of the Punjab.

May God help you to carry out the holy purpose which I know you will all set before yourselves.

I will ask you to remain silent and seated, as you are, in this admirable peaceful attitude and allow the volunteers to collect your very best donations for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. I thank you for the great patience and the courtesy with which both Hindus and Mussulmans have listened to me.

The Hindu, 12-4-1921

6. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MADRAS

April 8, 1921

MR. CHAIRMAN[1] AND FRIENDS,

As usual you will extend your forgiveness to me for my inability to speak to you standing. You have just now witnessed the ceremony of *Poornakumbham*[2] performed. It carries blessings and the prayer that the mission on which India has embarked may be successful. I am thankful to those friends who assisted in performing this ceremony and those who conceived the thing. It is a significant fact that in this struggle Hindus and Mussulmans, Brahmins and non-Brahmins, Christians, Parsis, Jews, all who claim this country as theirs are united. But I wish to invite the attention of this meeting and of the authors of this ceremony to the foreign touch that attached to that ceremony. You saw the floral decoration surrounding the *Kumbham.* It was of paper flowers. You might have noticed also the garment in which the *Kumbham* was wrapped; it was foreign cloth. I hope that it is time India will recognize that foreign cloth is a badge of our slavery, that foreign cloth is a badge of the degradation of Islam

[1] S. Kasturiranga Aiyangar, who presided over the meeting

[2] Pitcher filled with consecrated water, offered to welcome a guest

in India. The more I think of the salvation of India—economic, political, moral, religious—the more I think of the Khilafat question, the more I am convinced that if the Khilafat wrong is to be redressed through India, through the Hindus and Mussulmans of India, if India is to gain swaraj during this year, at least we owe it to the motherland that we discard the use of foreign cloth, no matter at what cost. As Maulana Mahomed Ali in one of his recent speeches in Calcutta remarked: "A hundred years ago or more we sold away the spinning-wheel and we purchased our slavery." And I want therefore to invite your attention to the most potent part of the resolution arrived at by the All-India Congress Committee[1] after the programme of Non-co-operation had worked for so many months.

If we want one crore of rupees before the 30th June, we want it not in order to promote deputations to England or America or any part of the world, not for any foreign propaganda, but we want that money and more for introducing the spinning-wheel into every home in India. We want that money in order to pay a mere livelihood to the workers who will come out throughout the length and breadth of Dravid land[2] to introduce the spinning-wheel. Only the other day I was in Masulipatam and I had the honour of visiting a few villages where even today our sisters are spinning beautiful fine yarn not for money but for love. (Cheers.) I therefore hope that if you are going to be instrumental in attaining swaraj during this year, in redressing the Khilafat wrong and the Punjab wrong, you will make during this sacred National Week a fixed derermination to throw away all the foreign cloth that you may possess. I hold it to be a crime to see an inch of foreign cloth in our temples, in our mosques. But I must pass on to some other topics.

I am glad to note that the more we progress the more convinced our countrymen are that the success of our battle depends mainly, if not solely; upon non-violence. In my opinion our non-violence is the greatest part of our non-co-operation. But our non-violence will have to stand the severest stress and the greatest strain that might be put upon it. I have just heard that somewhere in Malabar a non-co-operating father had to witness unprovoked violence done to his son by some policemen. I shall still hope that the story is untrue, that there is some defect, some error about the evidence collected by friends who

[1] *Vide* "Resolutions at A.I.C.C. Meeting, Bezwada, March 31, 1921.

[2] South India

brought the thing to my notice. But let us understand that such a thing is not impossible under this Government or for that matter any other Government. (Laughter.) We had too much of it at the time of the Martial Law in the Punjab two years ago. The greatest time of our triumph will be only when we can stand the tortures without returning any violence whatsoever. This Government must either repent of the wrongs, the violent wrongs done to India, or it must hold India by a system of terrorism. It was only when I came to the conclusion that Dyerism, O'Dwyerism, was not an isolated phenomenon, but that it was a settled policy of the Government bent upon holding India at any cost that I called it a Satanic system of Government. But to non-co-operators there is only one road left open and that is to turn the searchlight inward, to purify ourselves, to exercise the greatest restraint under the gravest provocation. Therefore, I ask fathers of boys who are doing any non-co-operation work and I ask non-co-operators themselves who are actively engaged in propaganda to understand that if they continue this work they should do so knowing that they might be subjected to violence and even then they ought not to retort. If India can only exercise self-restraint during this year of probation, of purification for her, I assure you I can see nothing that can prevent our onward march and establishment of swaraj in India during this year. If you believe in God—and no non-cooperator can be a real non-co-operator who does not believe in God—if you believe in God during this week of prayer, of purification and sacrifice, you will concentrate your prayer to God that He may give every one of us, the whole of India, the power to bear all violence that this Government make use of and subject us to.

It is infinitely more necessary that we non-co-operators control our speech, control our movements and free them even from any danger or any smell of violence. Let our speech and our pen be free of any violent thing. If we would but continue along this course of purification, to use an expression of the late President Kruger, we shall stagger humanity during this year. For what is it that we have seen in the repression, not merely in the Madras Presidency, but in the Central Provinces, in the United Provinces and other parts of India? In spite of the denial of Sir William Vincent I am here to say that the temperance crusade in the Central Provinces has become a crime, and when they talk of putting down non-co-operation by all possible means, they talk of putting down home-spinning, putting down the teetotalism. We are showing step by step through the course of our self-purification that

this Government can hold India in bondage only on the strength of its *Abakari* revenue, only on the strength of the exploitation of India through Lancashire. Therefore I would urge every one of you to sterilise the activity of this Government by showing to the whole of India, by showing to the Moderates and the Liberal party that when they associate with this Government and support the policy of repression inaugurated by this Government they do not want non-co-operationists to carry on the campaign of temperance, to carry the message of goodwill, the message of happiness and the message of chastity of the womanhood of India which the spinning-wheel carried. Day by day we are having ocular demonstration of the fact that this Government has no inherent strength or vitality. (Laughter.) It derives its strength out of our weaknesses. (Hear, hear!) It thrives upon our dissensions.

The Hindu-Muslim disunion, the Hindu-Muslim quarrels, no longer supply food for this Government. (Laughter.) Now this Government, I see and understand, is trading upon the disunion between Brahmins and non-Brahmins. (Cheers.) If this Non-co-operation Movement is a Brahmin movement, and I hope it is a Brahmin movement, the remedy is incredibly simple, because the Brahmins want no loaves and fishes, if they are non-co-operators. But let us make haste to patch up quarrels as we have patched up the Hindu-Muslim quarrel amongst ourselves. I wish to repeat what I said to a select audience of lawyers some time ago in Madras. I have not a shadow of doubt that Hinduism owes its all to the great traditions that the Brahmins have left for Hinduism. They have left a legacy for India, for which every Indian, no matter to what *varna* he may belong, owes a deep debt of gratitude. Having studied the history of almost every religion in the world it is my settled conviction that there is no class in the world that has accepted poverty and self-effacement as its lot. I would therefore urge—a non-Brahmin myself—I would urge all non-Brahmins who may compose the audience and all non-Brahmins to whom my voice may reach that they will make a fundamental error if they believe that they can better their position by decrying Brahminism. Even in this black age, travelling throughout the length and breadth of India, I notice that the Brahmins take the first place in self-sacrifice and self-effacement. It is the Brahmins all over India who silently but surely are showing to every class in India their rights and privileges. But having said so much I wish to confess too that the Brahmins together with the rest of us have suffered of all [*sic*]. They

have set before India, voluntarily and deliberately, the highest standard that the human mind is capable of conceiving; and they must not be surprised if the Indian world exact that standard from them. The Brahimins have declared themselves, and they ought to remain, custodians of the purity of our life. I am aware that the non-Brahmins of Madras have many things to say against Brahmins, for which there is some cause. But let non-Brahmins realize that by quarrelling with Brahmins, by being jealous of them and by mud-slinging they will not better their lot, but will degrade Hinduism itself. I hold that it behoves non-Brahmins, shrewd as they are, to understand the beauty and secret of this movement. This movement is specially designed to dethrone insolence of office. He who has eyes may see what is happening in India today is a process not of levelling down but of levelling up. Let non-Brahmins beware of attempting to rise upon the ashes of Brahminism. And, therefore, I would urge non-Brahmins, if they cannot throw themselves heart and soul into this movement, at least to refrain from interfering with this movement by intriguing with the Government.

The grievances of non-Brahmins against Brahmins are a mere nothing compared to the grievances of *Adi-Dravidas*[1] and *Panchama*[2] against Hinduism. Hindu ism has made them a sort of lepers; and we have become lepers of the Empire in turn. (Laughter.) Non-Brahmins are equally guilty with Brahmins in making the *Panchamas* crawl on their bellies. It is my deliberate conviction that we are suffering this yoke of slavery for the sake of the sins that we have committed against our brothers whom we arrogantly consider to be untouchables. I claim to be a *sanatani* Hindu; I claim to have read our shastras to the best of my ability; I claim to have understood the spirit of Hinduism; I claim to have understood the message of the Vedas and the *Upanishads;* I claim to have lived the life of a *sanatani* Hindu deliberately, knowingly and voluntarily for a period of thirty years; and notwithstanding anything that may be said by any Hindu to the contrary, I ask you to accept the authority of my experiences that there is no warrant in our scriptures for considering a single human being as untouchable. I am content to be a Hindu; I am content to die a Hindu and I am ready and I hope to die for the defence of my religion at any moment; but I should cease to call myself a Hindu if I believe for

[1] Different names for so-called untouchables
[2] *Ibid*

one moment that Hinduism requires me to consider it a sin to touch a single human being. Therefore, I invite the Brahmins and the non-Brahmins of this Presidency to battle against this curse of untouchability and rid themselves of it. I ask you not to mix up intermarriage and interdining with untouchability. And thus if, as Hindus and Mohammedans have done, Hindus among themselves will but close their ranks, we shall consider in the language of the *Bhagavad Gita* that when in our heart occupy an equal place both Brahmin and *Chandala,*[1] that very day you will see there is no non-Brahmin problem remaining for solution.

Non-co-operation in the language of medicine is a kind of aseptic treatment. Antiseptics are necessary only when we first gather dirt and we want to introduce other germs to destroy that dirt; but aseptic treatment presupposes purity from within. Our non-co-operation with the Government, therefore, simply means we have done away with dirt and uncleanliness. We do not want to pretend to have dispelled darkness by making darkness deeper. We do not want to meet or neutralize violence of the Government by greater violence on our part. Our swaraj must not consist of exploitation of any human being on earth. I therefore urge you simply to concentrate your attention upon the three things that the All-India Congress Committee have placed before you. I would like you never to give the slightest excuse to the Government for imprisoning us in regard to our speeches. But I would leave open the gates of prison without a drop of tear from my eyes and send the whole of the womanhood of India to prisons for possessing the spinning-wheel. Let us not be impatient either with the Government or with our friends who are opposed to us today. Rather let us be impatient with ourselves. All our speeches and all our resolutions are now mostly, or should be, addressed to ourselves. And if we can only carry through the simple programme that is mapped out by the Congress, by the Khilafat Committee and by the Muslim League, I repeat my conviction that swaraj we shall attain and the Khilafat wrong and the Punjab wrong we shall redress during this year.

One word to the educated men of Madras and I have finished. You will accept the evidence that I tender that, throughout my long travels; I have noticed that the masses and the women of India are absolutely with us. I ask the educated Indians to accept my testimony

[1] *Bhagavad Gita,* V, 18

that they are neither so unintelligent nor so uncultured as we often consider them to be. They see far more truly through their intuition than we educated Indians do with our intellect clouded by multiplicity of ideas. And I ask you to accept the testimony given by Sir Thomas Munro[1], and con-firm that testimony, that the masses of India are really more cultured than any in the world.

It has become customary with me nowadays, as you all know, that before I retire from the meeting I make a collection for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Volunteers will presently go out in your midst and I ask you to give your best to the Fund. I thank you for the extraordinary patience with which you have listened to me. I pray to God that He may give us the necessary courage and the necessary wisdom to do our duty. (Loud and prolonged cheering.)

The Hindu, 9-4-1921

7. MY ORISSA TOUR

GOPABANDHU DAS

At the time of the famine in Orissa, I realized the poverty of the province but my impression has been that nowhere else were the people likely to be so poor as in Champaran[2]. But I am afraid Orissa beats Champaran in this respect. The difference between the two is that in Champaran the ryots had been impoverished by the oppression of the indigo-planters, whereas in Orissa the suffering is due to the wrath of Nature. Either the crops do not grow through lack of rains or there are floods following excessive rains and the crops and houses are washed off, hence there is always a near-famine in this province.

In this godforsaken region, the one real leader is Gopabandhu Das, who gave all help to Shri Amritlal Thakkar at the time of the famine. Gopabandhu Das became a lawyer and practised for a few years, but finally gave up practice and dedicated his all to the service of the country. He started a school at Sakhigopal, a place twelve miles from Puri.

A GARDEN SCHOOL

It provides both training in a craft and education in letters. The

[1] Governor of Madras, 1820-27
[2] District in Bihar

school had been recognized by the Government but, following the non-co-operation resolution, Gopabandhu Babu did away with the Government control. Some pupils left the school in consequence, while some others joined it. Gopabandhu Babu himself goes begging to collect funds for the school. The school is situated on a 20-acre plot, with pleasant groves. The children are taught in the open under the shade of trees. Among the crafts, the chief is carpentry. Now spinning and weaving have been added. Gopabandhu Babu was a member of the Bihar Legislative Assembly and, therefore, used to invite Governors and other dignitaries. I saw that in their comments they had always praised the school.

SEVA SAMAJ

Gopabandhu Babu has started a Seva Samaj[1]. Some lawyers and other learned gentlemen have joined it. Many of them have been living on about Rs. 10 or 12 a month since the start of non-co-operation. They go begging handfuls of rice, and in this way a Swaraj Ashram has also been established. The diet of these members and of the pupils consists mainly of rice, dal and oil or a few drops of ghee with vegetables, when available. Their monthly expenses come to seven or eight rupees. Formerly they used to have some ghee but have stopped it after non-co-operation started. There will hardly be any other body in the country today kept alive with so much voluntary suffering. When I asked whether this poor diet would not affect their health, Gopabandhu Babu's reply was: "Should we not submit to this privation for the sake of swaraj ?" I was silenced. When a man is faced with suffering, one knows not how but God gives him the strength to bear it.

JAGANNATH

After visiting Gopabandhu Babu's school, we went on to Jagannath Puri. The town is situated on the sea-coast and there is always a breeze there. But let no one conclude from this that, in respect of climate, Puri is in any way superior to Dumas or Porbander or Veraval.[2] "A business man with an established reputation will make money," they say; and so the Bengalis and the Government declared

[1] A voluntary body for social service
[2] Sea-coast towns in Gujarat

this to be a health resort and helped it to acquire a reputation as one. Every year Bengalis repair to the place and come away with good health, and devout pilgrims believe that the *darshan* of Jagannath[1] and gifts to the priests help them to return with a plenteous booty of spiritual merit. When I went for *darshan*, a great many reflections filled my mind. It is an ancient temple, and an imposing one. On the summit blazes the *sudarshan*[2] disc, with a flag fluttering over it. The temple has been built to a great height. The images are of Narayan and Lakshmi.[3] The images, being of a huge size, are awe-inspiring. Thick darkness reigns in the recess where the images are installed. There is neither air nor light. One or two lamps burn dimly, that is all.

FOREIGN APPAREL

The garments in which the images are draped are of foreign cloth! Why so much ignorance and utter thoughtlessness? For the garments of deities in temples, countless virgins, with love in their heart, used to spin fine yarn and, with similar love, innumerable weavers wove it into cloth. Cloth made otherwise was considered unholy. I was lost in thought, wondering how it was that the Brahmin priests had now become insincere and foreign minded. As at other places, here too the priests are a terror. They fleece the devout pilgrims. How is it that Jagannath remains a silent witness to all this wickedness? I recollected the saying, "As the worshipper, so his God." God, the formless one, is a witness to not a few wicked deeds! He has laid down the law of Karma and will have nothing more to do with the matter. How is Jagannath to blame then?

A HEART-RENDING SCENE

Just as I am taken round to see many other things worth knowing about, I was also taken to see the victims of famine. The sight of these hundreds of men and women, boys and girls, mere skeletons without any flesh on them, made me very miserable; it wrung my heart. If, as happened in this case, people hit by famine get no corn and starve to death, what difference will it make whether or not we get

[1] Literally, Lord of the Universe, the name of the deity in the temple
[2] Lord Vishnu's ultimate weapon
[3] In fact, the images are those of Shri Krishna, his brother and sister.

A swaraj? That alone will be swaraj worth the name under which no human being will go without food or clothing for no fault of his or against his desire.

HOME FOR DESTITUTES

With this holy thought revolving in my mind, I went to pay a visit to a home for destitutes started by Lala Amichand, the police chief of Puri. Victims of famine have been brought here and are being taught to make mats and foot-rugs, and also to spin and weave. Spinning and weaving were introduced after the swadeshi and the non-co-operation movements started. I could see from this that the statement that spinning is an insurance against famine was no exaggeration at all. I had a talk with the leaders on this matter and a resolution was passed to the effect that the balance in the Puri Relief Fund should be used to provide victims of the famine with spinning-wheels in their homes.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-4-1921

8. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

April 10, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi, after apologizing for being late, said this was our National Week—it had begun on the 6th and would end on the 13th. The All-India Congress Committee had asked them to depend on themselves alone in their endeavour for swaraj. Their aim was to attain swaraj within one year, whatever might come. Theirs was the duty to redress their Khilafat wrongs and to redress the wrongs of the Punjab. For that purpose the All-India Congress Committee had kept before the country three tasks which it had to perform. The first was to get one crore of members for their National Congress. For that purpose they wanted Mohammedans and Hindus, men and women. He wanted all these men and women to be on the side of the Congress movement and for that purpose the fee was kept at four annas. It was the duty of every

[1] Delivered at a public meeting held under the auspices of the Swarajya Sabha and the Central Khilafat Committee

Indian to join the Congress organization without delay. At least one crore of new members must join the Congress. Their next duty was to collect one crore of rupees for the Tilak Swaraj Fund and he did not think it was a matter of great difficulty. Some people were rather sceptical about their ability to collect that large sum in the whole of India but he had no such doubts. If they could not collect a crore of rupees for the redressing of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs then Indians would never be fit for swaraj. If they could not collect that sum then they would prove their unfitness for the responsibilities of swaraj. He was sure that even Bombay, if it meant business, could collect that sum. Even the Marwari community[1] alone could give that sum; even the Parsi community could give it, and the rich mercantile community of Bombay could very easily collect that single crore of rupees. Was it then impossible to collect that crore from the whole of India? He had no doubts about their ability to collect that amount. He requested the citizens of Bombay to subscribe as much as possible towards the Tilak Swaraj Fund and not to give only that sum which came to their share. They had to collect that sum before the 30th of June.

More important than that was the charkha, on which depended the attainment of swaraj. On the charkha alone swaraj depended. It was their munitions which they needed in their fight for swaraj. They should give up the use of foreign goods and the first step in that direction was the use of swadeshi cloth. They should consider that to clothe themselves in foreign clothes was a shameful thing; they should also consider that to clothe oneself in country made goods was a beautiful thing and that it was spiritual and for the good of India. He wanted to enlist the energies of men and women, rich and poor, old and young, in this great task. He wanted the poorest men for that purpose in the fight for swaraj. If Indians thought that by building mills they would be able to give up foreign goods he did not think it was possible for them to do so, for how could they import so much machinery in one year from foreign countries? Besides, they would have sent a large amount of money to buy the machinery to foreign countries. Only when mill machinery could be manufactured in India he would have no objection to build as many mills as they liked. But, until then he did not believe in building mills. Therefore it was, that the Congress Committee wanted to introduce into the country twenty lakhs of charkhas before the end of June. He wished charkhas to be introduced into every household in this country.

The Mahatma asked the merchants of Bombay whether it was right on their part to import goods of foreign manufacture and thus make India poor and make Indians slaves? Was it not better to live in poverty? Only when they stopped

[1] A Hindu mercantile community from Marwar in Rajasthan

importing foreign goods could they get swaraj. It did not matter whether the lawyers stuck to their courts, or the students to their schools and colleges, but it was of the utmost importance that foreign goods should not be imported into this country. They must wear khaddar, and it was their duty to wear swadeshi clothes only. It was an offence against their country to wear foreign-made clothes and discard those made in this country. He had come from Orissa and Andhra and from what he had seen there he was convinced that the people of Bombay were lagging far behind, and that they were the greatest sinners. He would place the Gujarati community in the front in that respect for they were responsible for the importation of foreign goods in India. Indians had accustomed themselves to wearing fine clothes and if it were not possible for the people of Bombay to give up those luxuries he did not think it was possible to do so anywhere else. For the sake of swaraj, for the sake of the Khilafat wrongs and for the sake of the Punjab wrongs they had got to give up foreign-made goods. Until Indians felt that there was as much beauty in khaddar as in the Manchester calicoes and Japanese goods, they would never get swaraj.

They had a clear duty before them—they must join the Congress; they must collect one crore of rupees for the Tilak Swaraj Fund and they must introduce twenty lakhs of charkhas in the country. If India could achieve this, she could certainly get swaraj in one year. If they could do it swaraj must come to them. In Madras and Bengal, even the most prominent people wore khaddar; why could they not do it in Bombay?

Mahatma Gandhi said he wanted the co-operation of ladies in his task and he wanted their blessings too. But, in the first place, they must be fit to do so. It was not possible for them to bless him unless they purified themselves by wearing Indian clothes and discarding foreign ones. Unless they wore swadeshi clothes they could not give him their blessings. He appealed to them to set before themselves the ideal of Sita; let them suffer like Sita; let them live like Sita—simply and plainly. Only then could India attain swaraj. Let them wear only country-made clothes and let them give their blessings and co-operation to the workers in the cause of their country and then they would have *dharmarajya* in this country. It was the aim of the Congress to join together, heart and soul, Hindus and Muslims to fight for swaraj. In Bengal and Orissa, women had contributed their share liberally towards the Tilak Fund. He appealed to his Parsi sisters to help liberally the Swaraj Fund. He appealed to his sisters to give their share to the Swaraj Fund.

In conclusion, he prayed to God that Hindus and Muslims, Parsis and Jews would join together and do their best for this country and do their duty.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-4-1921

9. MESSAGE FOR LAST DAY OF SATYAGRAHA WEEK

[Before *April 13,* 1921][1]

Today is the last day of the sacred week. Those who believe in God should make it a point to keep a fast and offer prayers on this day. It is the earnest desire of my heart that this should turn out to be the last 13th of April to see us in a state of subjection. But it is not in my hands to bring this about, and not in God's either. Even God will not grant us swaraj. It is for us to win it and there is only one way of doing so. The moment we understand what it is and follow it, swaraj will be ours. We want to see foreign cloth boycotted in the course of this very year. To ensure this, everyone should examine his person and his wardrobe and should forthwith renounce the use of foreign cloth. No one must ask what others do. We should learn to make do with the fewest clothes, should ourselves ply the spinning wheel and urge others to do likewise.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-4-1921

10. NOTES

SUSPEND NON-CO-OPERATION

Mr. Syed Riza Ali has addressed a public letter advising me to suspend Non-co-operation, so as to give Lord Reading[2] a chance of studying the situation in a calm atmosphere. In the first place, I see there is nothing in the atmosphere to prevent a study of the situation. In the second place, what disturbance there is, is either fomented by the authorities, or the situation is so mishandled as to give rise to bloodshed. In the Central Provinces the Government are foisting the drink traffic on a public that is enraged against it. Of Rae Bareilly, not having read newspapers, I have not sufficient data to be able to say anything. In any case, Mr. Riza Ali should address his appeal to the permanent officials who are provoking the people and creating alarm in the country. Thirdly, it is not within the power of any one man, even if he wished it, to suspend a movement adopted by the nation through its representative assemblies. Fourthly, what does Mr. Riza Ali

[1] The message was intended for publication in the Press on April 13.

[2] Who arrived in India on April 1, 1921, as the Viceroy and Governor General of India

mean by suspension of non-co-operation? Should the title-holders temporarily recall their titles, the lawyers resume practice, the schoolboys return to Government schools, the spinners put away their spinning-wheels, carpenters cease making new wheels, and tipplers renew their acquaintance with the publicans? Does Mr. Riza Ali desire that national schools should for the time being close their doors? Unthinkable as it may seem, it is evident that Mr. Riza Ali does not understand the scope of non-co-operation, he does not realize that it is like a virtue whose practice cannot be suspended at will. If Englishmen mean well by India, if Englishmen, who are dependent upon India for their maintenance, will be true to their salt, they must be reconciled to the abolition of the drink traffic and the total destruction of the traffic in foreign cloth and, therefore, also Lancashire cloth. Even when the Khilafat is fully protected, and the Punjab wound healed, the drink revenue cannot be revived nor the use of foreign cloth resumed. What surprises one is that there are intelligent and educated public workers in the country who do not see that this Government must proceed from wrong to wrong, so long as it does not cleanse itself of the original sins. No doubt itcan, if it will, even without redressing the two wrongs, co-operate with the people in the two great dynamic movements—the battle against the drink evil and reinstatement of the spinning-wheel in all its ancient dignity and purity. It will then break the edge of the two wrongs. Such a co-operation by the Government with the people will, however, increase the capacity of the people to ensure rectification of the two wrongs, and for that very reason the Government will not allow the peaceful progress of the drink campaign and boycott of foreign cloth by increased home-manufacture through the spinning-wheel.

MEN, MONEY AND MUNITIONS

These were the words in which Mr. Das summed up the All-India Congress Committee's resolution about one crore members, one crore rupees, and twenty lakhs of spinning-wheels. This programme is neither elaborate nor intricate. It requires practically no sacrifice. It does require organization, will, and industry. We have twenty-one Congress provinces, and, happily, each province has workers capable of organizing their respective provinces for the Congress programme. I would strongly advise them to devote themselves to the work of registering members, collecting subs-criptions, and introducing spinning-wheels. Let the workers remember that there

is no time to lose. We must be able to reach every adult male and female in our respective provinces and give them a chance of coming to the Congress register. We must give a chance even to boys and girls of understanding to subscribe to the Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund, and take to every family the life-giving message of the spinning-wheel. The poorest province need not feel any doubt about its ability to cope with its share of the programme. Orissa is, I believe the poorest province. I asked the workers there whether they would shoulder their share of the burden. They agreed, nor was there any need for them to hesitate with the Lord of the Universe having his seat in Orissa.[1] They could collect their quota, if it came to the worst, from the pilgrims who visit Puri as also from the rich *mahants* and *pandas*[2], who, I feel sure, will gladly pay if properly approached. But our hope must centre in the pies of the poor rather than upon windfalls from single places. Nothing gave me greater confidence and greater hope than the sight of thousands of the verypoor men at Sakhigopal[3] emptying their pockets of their pies and *paisas*. The Biharis are even collecting *muthis*[4] with a proper depot for receiving and using such gifts, the crore rupees should be collected without any difficulty whatsoever.

I suggest workers meeting the heads of all the artisan classes. We want carpenters, blacksmiths, washer men, masons, scavengers, shoe makers, tanners, etc., to understand and take part in this movement. They do not need any previous training in schools to appreciate the necessity of swaraj. They easily understand the intimate connection between swaraj and the spinning-wheel. With our existing caste organizations, which are really trade guilds, we should have no difficulty in reaching the majority of the men and women who are members of these important organizations.

It should further be remembered that both men and money are wanted for one purpose, to manufacture and distribute munitions, i.e., spinning-wheels. We must bring about complete boycott of foreign cloth during this year, and if possible before the end of July next. One crore of rupees and twenty lakhs of spinning wheels is the minimum aimed at by the Congress. It does not include the spinning-wheels that were already working before the 31st December last. Of coarse counts

[1] Here Gandhiji refers to the fact that in Puri is located the temple of Jagannath
[2] Brahmin priests at place of pilgrimage who play host to pilgrims
[3] Village in Orissa which Gandhiji visited in the last week of March 1921
[4] Handfuls of corn or similar useful things

we require 6 Ibs. of cloth per head per year. We, therefore, need 1,800 million pounds per year for the nation. In order to manufacture this quantity of cloth in a year, of say three hundred working days, and if a spindle give _ lb. per day i.e. 150 Ibs. per year, we require 12 million spindles. What the Congress expects by the end of June is 2 million or a sixth of the total requirement. It is not an extravagant presumption to make that if we succeed in introducing two million spinning wheels during three months, the momentum received by the movement will double the number of wheels during the next three months without much effort. We have probably fifty million families in India counting six members for a family. The problem, therefore, is one of only reaching two million out of this large number of families.

If the existing workers have the faith that I have in the spinning-wheel, they will do well to learn spinning and understand the structure of a spinning-wheel so as to be able to distinguish a good wheel from a bad one. They must not on any account introduce a wheel that does not satisfy the test already suggested by me in the issue of the 6th intstant. I need hardly point out that the workers will produce less impression, if any at all, if they do not religiously eliminate foreign cloth from their wardrobe. We are not going to bring about a complete boycott of foreign cloth this year if we do not ourselves make the beginning at once and set an example. One big thing well and truly done must result in giving us confidence, hope, and courage.

THE USE OF THE CRORE RUPEES

A newspaper, I am told, has put the question as to what the Congress will do with its crore. The natural answer is for the use stated in the Congress resolution, i.e., for the attainment of swaraj through non-violent non-co-operation. The only activity involving financial obligations is that of spinning, organizing national service, in some cases supporting lawyers, who might have suspended practice and cannot be included in the national service, and for supporting national educational institutions. The latter three, however, really bear again on spinning. For all the workers and all the schools and colleges must be mainly occupied in promoting hand-spinning and hand-weaving if we are to achieve a complete boycott of foreign goods before the end of the year. These are the only uses that I can conceive in connection with the All-India Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund. Seventy-five per cent of the funds are to be controlled by the provinces collecting them.

And subject to the instructions framed by the All-India Congress Committee, the provinces have unfettered discretion as to their use for the attainment of swaraj.

AMAZING MISCONCEPTIONS

There is a homely proverb in Gujarati which means, a noted banker continually adds to his wealth, as a notorious criminal continually comes in for undeserved blame. Whether I am to be regarded as a reformer or a criminal, the situations I find myself in are most curious and often embarrassing. The people credit me with supernatural powers when the only powers I have are derived from my scrupulous regard for truth, an unquenchable industry, fair play to opponents, readiness always to admit mistakes, and an incessant appeal to reason. But the simple-minded masses will not believe me when I tell them I possess no extraordinary powers. Similarly those who are not accustomed to absolutely honest dealings in politics persist in crediting me with all kinds of wickedness. The *Morning Post* believes that the strike in Fiji was due to the efforts of a sadhu sent there by me. Now I do not knowwho the alleged sadhu is. I have certainly sent no one to Fiji to advise a strike. At the same time the strike having been declared in Fiji, the strikers have my sympathy. All the evidence in my possession shows that Fiji is a huge exploitation camp in which the poor Indian labourers are used by the sugar-planters for their fabulous profits.

"THE TIMES OF INDIA"

Somewhat similar to the misconceptions I have alluded to is that of *The Times of India*, to whose two recent articles a friend has drawn my attention. Not being able to read newspapers regularly, I do not know how much more I must be misrepresented by other journals, when *The Times of India*, which is supposed to know me better, I hope, innocently misunderstands me. One article credits me with having suspended non-co-operation in that I advised the All-India Congress Committee to concentrate on men, money, and the spinning-wheel. I fear I cannot take the credit, for I have not advised suspension, and I have already shown in answer to Mr. Riza Ali how it cannot be suspended. In the other article brought to my notice, I am not now 'the Mr. Gandhi of old' and, therefore, the reader is told, I will not admit defeat which non-co-operators are said to have suffered in the first stage.

I see not only no defeat so far but I am amazed at the awakening among the people. I hold that it is a great thing to have created a strong public opinion against the institutions on which a Government builds its credit. *The Times of India* considers non-co-operation 'to be an easy descent to hell.' I respectfully urge that it is a difficult ascent to heaven. If it was a movement to produce anarchy, surely it could be precipitated any moment. *The Times of India* and other critics who, I believe, are anxious to understand the inwardness of the struggle, will do well to appreciate the fact that not only I but *all* the leaders are doing their utmost to prevent anarchy. It is no use isolating me from the rest. The critics who continue to suspect the Ali Brothers do themselves and the cause a great injustice. The Brothers' position is perfectly dear and intelligible. To them violence is lawful under given circumstances. As Maulana Mahomed Ali often puts it, war is bad but there are worse things than war. The British Government has no two opponents more honourable than the Brothers. They mean no ill in a spirit of wantonness. They are honestly and industriously endeavouring to secure a peaceful settlement. But should their effort prove vain, either for want of response from the Government or the people, as lovers of their faith, they will not hesitate to precipitate war if they could. I refuse to be considered so simple as to be readily taken in by my companions. I believe my companions to be incapable of deceiving me. I believe them to be godfearing, brave, and honourable men, whose association I prize as a privilege. As for my own attitude, whilst my faith would not permit me to invite or encourage a war of violence, I do contemplate with equanimity a state of war in preference to the present state of effeminate peace imposed by force of arms. And it is for that reason that I am taking part in this movement of non-violent non-cooperation even at the risk of anarchy being the ultimate result. The critics of non-co-operation might, if they will, see in everyone an intense desire to prevent anarchy and bloodshed. In any case, whether non-co-operators are understood or not, they cannot afford to lose patience. They must continue to walk along the chosen and narrow path.

ONE MAN ONE VOTE

A question has cropped up whether the Congress constitution allows of plural voting. In my opinion the new constitution is based on the principle of 'one man one vote'. We have avoided property

qualification. And it seems to me that one person cannot have his name registered on more than one register.

REPRESSION IN C. P.

Lala Bhagwandinji has been tried and, having declined to defend himself, has been sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment with hard labour. I have not seen the charge-sheet against him, but this I know that he was Superintendent of the Swaraj Ashram at Nagpur and was doing excellent work. Now the Government has directed its attention to Mr. Wamanrao Joshi of Amraoti. Mr. Joshi is a selfless and enthusiastic worker possessing considerable influence in his district. It seems to be the intention of the C. P. Government to cut off 'tall poppies'. But I hope they will find that there are more tall poppies than they can conveniently cut off.

Young India, 13-4-1921

11. THE NATIONAL FLAG

A flag is a necessity for all nations. Millions have died for it. It is no doubt a kind of idolatry which it would be a sin to destroy. For a flag represents an ideal. The unfurling of the Union Jack evokes in the English breast sentiments whose strength it is difficult to measure. The Stars and Stripes mean a world to the Americans. The Star and the Crescent will call forth the best bravery in Islam.

It will be necessary for us Indians—Hindus, Mohammedans, Christians, Jews, Parsis, and all others to whom India is their home—to recognize a common flag to live and to die for.

Mr. P. Venkayya of the National College, Masulipatam, has for some years placed before the public a suggestive booklet describing the flags of the other nations and offering designs for an Indian National Flag. But, whilst I have always admired the persistent zeal with which Mr. Venkayya has prosecuted the cause of a national flag at every session of the Congress for the past four years, he was never able to enthuse me; and in his designs I saw nothing to stir the nation to its depths. It was reserved for a Punjabi to make a suggestion that at once arrested attention. It was Lala Hansraj of Jullunder who, in discussing the possibilities of the spinning-wheel, suggested that it should find a place on our Swaraj Flag. I could not help admiring the originality of the suggestion. At Bezwada I asked Mr. Venkayya to give me a design containing a spinning-wheel on a red (Hindu colour)

and green (Muslim colour) background. His enthusiastic spirit enabled me to possess a flag in three hours. It was just a little late for presentation to the All-India Congress Committee. I am glad it was so. On maturer consideration, I saw that the background should represent the other religions also. Hindu-Muslim unity is not an exclusive term; it is an inclusive term, symbolic of the unity of all faiths domiciled in India. If Hindus and Muslims can tolerate each other, they are together bound to tolerate all other faiths. The unity is not a menace to the other faiths represented in India or to the world. So I suggest that the background should be white and green and red. The white portion is intended to represent all other faiths. The weakest numerically occupy the first place, the Islamic colour comes next, the Hindu colour red comes last, the idea being that the strongest should act as a shield to the weakest. The white colour moreover represents purity and peace. Our national flag must mean that or nothing. And to represent the equality of the least of us with the best, an equal part is assigned to all the three colours in the design.

But India as a nation can live and die only for the spinning wheel. Every woman will tell the curious that with the disappearance of the spinning-wheel, vanished India's happiness and prosperity. The womanhood and the masses of India have been awakened as never before at the call of the spinning-wheel. The masses recognize in it the giver of life. The women regard it as the protector of their chastity. Every widow I have met has recognized in the wheel a dear forgotten friend. Its restoration alone can fill the millions of hungry mouths. No industrial development schemes can solve the problem of the growing poverty of the peasantry of India covering a vast surface 1,900 miles long and 1,500 broad. India is not a small island, it is a big continent which cannot be converted like England into an industrial country. And we must resolutely set our face against any scheme of exploitation of the world. Our only hope must centre upon utilizing the wasted hours of the nation, for adding to the wealth of the country by converting cotton into cloth in our cottages. The spinning-wheel is, therefore, as much a necessity of Indian life as air and water.

Moreover, the Muslims swear by it just as much as the Hindus. As a matter of fact, the former are taking to it more readily than the Hindus. For the Muslim woman is *purdanashin*[1] and she can now add a few *paisas* to the poor resources that her husband brings to the

[1] One who observes *purdah*

family. The spinning-wheel, therefore, is the most natural, as it is the most important, common factor of national life. Through it we inform the whole world that we are determined, so far as our food and clothing are concerned, to be totally independent of the rest of it. Those who believe with me will make haste to introduce the spinning-wheel in their home and possess a national flag of the design suggested by me.

It follows that the flag must be made of *khaddar*, for it is through coarse cloth alone that we can make India independent of foreign markets for her cloth. I would advise all religious organizations, if they agree with my argument, to weave into their religious flags, as for instance the Khilafat, a miniature National Flag in the upper left hand corner. The regulation size of the Flag should contain the drawing of a full-sized spinning-wheel.

Young India 13-4-1921

12. ORISSA AND ANDHRA

It was my very first visit to Orissa and, save for Bezwada and Nellore in 1916, to Andhra also. I would like to put on record some of the ineffaceable scenes and memories of these provinces. It was a crowded programme and I can only rapidly go through the most important stations.

I was prepared to see skeletons in Orissa but not to the extent I did. I had seen terrible pictures but the reality was too terrible. What can be the meaning of swaraj to these men, women and children, who were merely skin and bone and who lined a road in holy Puri on that memorable 26th day of March? They were not one or two, but many, and yet they were not all. They were the ablest of the starving those who were able to walk fairly long distances. They had come to see one who had sent them rice and from whom they expected more. They cried, and they said in pathetic tones, 'we want food.' Some said, 'when will the prices be reduced?' I understood that the meaning of swaraj to many was cheap food and clothing,—the latter not so much. A rag sufficed to cover their lower limbs. But food they must have.

I went to this scene from a big bungalow where I was accommodated in the midst of plenty. I passed and repassed the huge temple that houses the Lord of the Universe. I met on the way well-fed *mahants* and *pandas* and hundreds of pilgrims who could afford to

spend a few hundred rupees.

The incongruity was great, and my grief all the greater and more pointed.

They took me to an *anathalaya*—a home for orphans. It was established by a humane superintendent of police. I saw there well-looking boys and girls—some spinning and some mat making. Why could not all the Fleshless ones do likewise? They need not then live on begging, the house-leavings, or a handful of rice. They could earn their own living if only they could spin. But who would give them the wheels? Straight came the answer: 'The Congress of course.' The Congress could teach them to gain swaraj through spinning. There is no other occupation that millions can take up, not even mat-making. For millions of mats will not sell. Yarn is the only commodity next to eatables that would have a ready market. I met the Congress leaders. I recited the story to them. Some of them were witnesses with me of the scenes I have described. They agreed that the Congress funds must be utilized chiefly for the spread of the spinning-wheel. And the money they could easily get from *mahants* and and the pilgrims. The Congress Committee even in poor Orissa could thus be self-supporting and could bring swaraj nearer by filling the hungry mouths.

They have workers too. Pandit Gopabandhu Das, an ex-M.L.C., an ex-pleader, and many other things besides, is a selfless leader. He and his band, they tell me, live on rice and dhall. They rarely get ghee nowadays. After non-co-operation, the workers have reduced themselves to the lowest honorarium, even as little as ten rupees per month.

No wonder if I believe that with such earnest men swaraj is possible of attainment during the year.

Pandit Gopabandhu has an open-air school at Sakhigopal, twelve miles this side of Puri. It is a grove-school. It is worthy of visit. I passed a most delightful day in the midst of the boys and their teachers. It is a serious experiment in open-air teaching. Some of the boys are powerful athletes.

Orissa has a good grievance. As the able author of the book called. *The Ooriya Movement* says, Orissa has been vivisected for political purposes. Part belongs to Bengal, part to Bihar, part to the Central Provinces, and part to Andhra. Nothing belongs to Orissa itself. The Congress has recognized the Ooriya-speaking people as one province. Bihar, Bengal, Central Provinces have no quarrel. But

the Andhras dispute the Ooriya claim to Berhampur. I have ventured to suggest some simple rules for their guidance. One golden rule of universal application that we must learn from our present struggle is that the stronger must yield to the weaker. In case of doubt the weaker must have the verdict.

I must close the Orissa impressions with the vivid memory of the thousands of poor people who came to a public meeting at Sakhigopal and emptied their knots of pies and *paisas.* They were like the widow's mite, charged with the most blessings. My faith grew stronger to see those thousands urging one another to pay.

Andhra Desh is unlike Utkal. It is full of vigour. I could see no fleshless bones there. The people are strong, powerful, insistent, generous, and loving. They have faith in the future of their own province and India. Men as well as women have plenty of gold ornaments. It is fatal to show those ornaments to me. I made no secret of the fact that I wanted them for the memory of Tilak Maharaj and for Swaraj. They gave gladly, both men and women. They gave in six days nearly Rs. 50,000 with promises of much more. If they wished, the Andhra people could find perhaps the crore from their ornaments.

I told the Andhra people that in frankness, nobility of bearing and freedom of movement combined with modesty, their women reminded me of the women of Maharashtra. That is a great compliment. I abide by the opinion. Annapurna Devi, a girl of Ellore recently married and educated in Calcutta, gave practically the whole of her ornaments save those which were the sign of her wedded life. She was dressed from top to toe in khaddar. The generosity of the men and women of Andhra was catching.

The Punjabi sisters must give the [pride of] place to the Andhra sisters in fine spinning. I thought there were no more lovable spinners than the Punjabi women. But the Andhra women spin 100 counts. They clean and card their own cotton. I have brought with me some specimens of fine woven yarn which would beat any from Japan, France, or Lancashire. The art was about to die when the swadeshi movement came to the rescue. Some of these ladies were good enough at Masulipatam to give me a demonstration of their powers. It was a soul-stirring sight in that leaf-cottage. They cleaned and carded and spun. For me the wheel gave the music of the spheres.

I must however descend from the soul-stirring to the soul killing discoveries. At Cocanada, just after the great public meeting, on my

return to the bungalow at about 9 p.m. I had a visit from some women and girls. The light was very dim as I entered. There was something uncanny about their movements and their looks. Somehow or other the usual greeting, "Do you spin? What will you give me for the Tilak Swaraj Fund?" would not come to my lips. On the contrary, I asked my host who the ladies were. He did not know. He inquired, and after some hesitation the answer came, "We are dancing girls." I felt like sinking into the bowels of the earth. My host soothed me by saying that there was a ceremony attached to the commencement of life. It made matters worse for me. It gave the damnable thing an air of respecta-bility. I cross-examined. They said in the politest tones they had come to have *darshan.* "Will you[1] take up some other occupation?" "Yes, if it gives us our livelihood." I had not the heart to close with them there and then. I felt ashamed of my sex. I spoke straight the next morning at Rajahmundry, the next halting place. It was the one most painful experience in Andhra. I suppose the sin is common enough in one shape or another in the rest of India. All I can say is that, if we will have swaraj through self-purification, we may not make women a prey to our lust. The law of the protection of the weak applies here with peculiar force. To me the meaning of cow protection includes the protection of the chastity of our women. We will not have a regenerate India unless we learn to respect our women as we respect our mothers, sisters and daughters. Let us cleanse ourselves of the sins that kill the man in us and make us brute.

To turn to pleasanter things again. My visit to Masulipatam brought tears of joy to my eyes. It was my day of silence. I had asked Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramaiya[2] to procure freedom from all noise and demonstration when I entered Masulipatam. The people had, therefore, been warned beforehand. It was early morning when we motored in. People lined the decorated streets, but not a sound was heard. All were noiselessly standing in their places. And as I entered the portals of the national college, no sound, save that of a beautiful hymn struck upon a violin accompanied by a flute, greeted me. I appreciated the gentle love, and I realized the capacity of the people for discipline, and their quick response to varying demands on their patriotic spirit. I praised God for his abundant mercy with tears of joy.

[1] The source has "they" here.

[2] 1880-1959; physician and public worker; President of the Congress, 1948; author of *History of the Indian National Congress*

I was taken to a real *parnakuti,* a leaf-cottage. And whilst I was congratulating the teachers and managers on the method, art and industry they showed in their appointments, I could not help remarking that their activity was not completely national until every one of the students and the teachers devoted practically the whole of their time and attention to spinning and weaving, and the making of their institution a spinning and weaving institute *par excellence.* Whilst I was developing my theme, Mr. Krishna Rao, who was listening to me all the time and rarely partaking in the discussion, with a spiritual sparkle in his eyes said: "Then you consider spinning to be a sacramental rite." "I do," said I. "Thank you for the expression. I shall henceforth make use of it." Spinning is a visible, sacred symbol of national purity, strength, and prosperity. It is a duty enjoined upon all, whether Hindu or Muslim, Christian, Jew, or Parsi. The Andhra National College is an old institution of which the Andhras have every reason to be proud. It is an institution which is a produce of the-Bengal awakening of 1907 and has weathered many a storm. I hope that it will emerge from the present awakening a purer and stronger body. It certainly possesses all the material for becoming a centre, radiating the purest activity in keeping with the present spirit.

Andhra Desh contains a fiery reformer and a warm champion of the suppressed classes. Mr. Ramchandrarao is a Brahmin whose pure soul will not tolerate the curse of untouchability. He has been slaving on behalf of his clients. He is rightly impatient to remove the serfdom of his pariah brother and would gladly advise him to non-co-operate with the other Hindus. Equally ardent as I claim to be on behalf of our suppressed brothers, I warned him against launching out on non-co-operation until a pure and selfless soul rose in their midst; for non-co-operation was a movement of self-purification, self-help, self-reliance; it compelled cooperation of the right type.

The Andhras have captivated me. Bihar has long been my favourite. I came to have faith in Bihar long before non-co-operation was born. Andhra Desh may come a good second, if it does not beat Bihar. Andhra Desh has a self-effacing leader. It has hardy, staunch workers. It has resources, it has poetry, it has faith, it has the spirit of sacrifice. It has many national schools, it has given many lawyers to the cause, it has the greatest possibilities in hand-spinning and hand-weaving, and grows fine cotton. It has two mighty rivers watering the hinterland. It has ports which were at one time famous. It easily takes the lead, or at least disputes it with Bihar. My conviction

remains that even if the so-called major provinces fall, in the event of terrorism (as distinguished from repression) commencing, Bihar and Andhra will save the situation by outdoing the Sikhs in the bravery of the soul, i.e., suffering. I may be wrong in my estimate. Let us all strive to outdo the rest. It is a race in which competition is not only a virtue, it is a duty.

Of an experiment in civil disobedience forced on two beautiful villages and their leader, I must write on another occasion. I must also deal another time with the Hindu-Muslim problem of Nellore. I must close these impressions by noting with gratefulness the fact that in a neighbouring village near a spinning and weaving Ashram[1] conducted by Mr. Hanamantrao and his associates, the Brahmin villagers invited me to walk through their village although I was accompanied by *Panchama* associates. It was a village whose Brahmin street had never before had *Panchamas* walking through it.

Young India, 13-4-1921

13. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, AHMEDABAD

April 13, 1921

Gandhiji in the course of his speech said:

We are no longer fighting for mere righting of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs. We want swaraj which should be *Ramarajya*. This *Rakshasrajya* means continuation of terror and exploitation of the weak. This *Ramarajya* we want to achieve by self-purification. Prayers must have gone out from us during the National Week to instil feelings of justice and mercy in us and to give us power to non-co-operate with vice and to keep us away from violence and anger. We have conducted vigorously our campaigns with regard to withdrawal from Government schools and courts, but we must at times cry halt. We have done what we could for students and pleaders. To work any more for them means economically a waste of time. We must now turn to our body; we must clothe it in swadeshi garments and for that we must take to spinning. It is no sacrifice, because it means saving of 60 crore rupees every year to India. So long as I see a single individual clothed in foreign material, the thought weighs heavily upon me that we are not observing the easiest of the

[1] Presumably the Ashram at Pallipad, five miles from Nellore, which Gandhiji declared open on April 7

conditions for swaraj. I find Gujarat the worst criminal in this respect. In other parts of India people have not taken wholly to foreign clothes. A few swadeshi things at least adorn their persons, but there is hardly any redeeming feature about dress in Gujarat. Congress has ordered one crore of rupees to be collected. This money is not to be spent on sending deputations and carrying on agitation. It is to be used for introducing the charkha into every household.

Gandhiji congratulated Ahmedabad on possessing so brave a man as Dr. Kanuga, who, though injured in the eye by a stone from a hooligan, did not give up picketing duty. Such incidents add greatly to the lustre of the struggle. Generals may fall; their deaths are to be cheered but the army has to march on. Swaraj is impossible to attain without such heroic courage.

He finally appealed to Gujarat to contribute its quota to the national fund and more to cover up the deficit of starving Orissa and march on vigorously removing defects at each stage.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-4-1921

14. SPEECH AT SUPPRESSED CLASSES CONFERENCE, AHMEDABAD[1]

April 13, 1921

Mr. Gandhi regretted in the beginning the small attendance,[2] and said that incidents such as the present took away what little faith he had in conferences as an effective agency of social reform. If therefore he occupied the audience shorter than they expected, it would be because his remarks would not reach all he meant to address and not because his enthusiasm for the work was in any way damped. He was also thankful for the fact that the conference had brought him the pleasure of meeting friends on the same platform. It was not usual for him nowadays to meet friends, co-operation with whom used to be a pleasure and privilege but from whom the present conditions had unfortunately cut him off. It was a happy thing, however, that on the question of untouchability he was in the same boat as they.

Coming to the subject, he said:

I do not know how I am to convince those who oppose the reform, of the wrong position they have taken. How am I to plead with those who regard any contact with the members of the suppressed

[1] This fourth conference of the so-called untouchables was held on April 13 and 14.

[2] The report of the speech says: "There was a large attendance of ladies and gentlemen from the town, though the number of the untouchables was much less than expected, a rumour having spread in the town that Government would arrest those of them who attended."

community as entailing defilement and of which they cannot be cleansed without necessary ablutions and who thus regard omission to perform the ablution a sin? I can only place before them my innermost convictions.

I regard untouchability as the greatest blot on Hinduism. This idea was not brought home to me by my bitter experiences during the S[outh] African struggle. It is not due to the fact that I was once an agnostic. It is equally wrong to think—as some people do—that I have taken my views from my study of Christian religious literature. These views date as far back as the time when I was neither enamoured of, nor was acquainted with, the Bible or the followers of the Bible.

I was hardly yet twelve when this idea had dawned on me. A scavenger named Uka, an untouchable, used to attend our house for cleaning latrines. Often I would ask my mother why it was wrong to touch him, why I was forbidden to touch him. If I accidentally touched Uka, I was asked to perform the ablutions, and though I naturally obeyed, it was not without smilingly protesting that untouchability was not sanctioned by religion, that it was impossible that it should be so. I was a very dutiful and obedient child and so far as it was consistent with respect for parents, I often had tussles with them on this matter. I told my mother that she was entirely wrong in considering physical contact with Uka as sinful.

While at school I would often happen to touch the 'untouchables', and as I never would conceal the fact from my parents, my mother would tell me that the shortest cut to purification after the unholy touch was to cancel the touch by touching any Mussulman passing by. And simply out of reverence and regard for my mother I often did so, but never did so believing it to be a religious obligation. After some time we shifted to Porbandar, where I made my first acquaintance with Sanskrit. I was not yet put into an English school, and my brother and I were placed in charge of a Brahmin who taught us *Ramaraksha*[1] and *Vishnu Puja*[2]. The texts "*Jale Vishnuh sthale Vishnuh*" (there is the Lord present in water, there is the Lord present in earth) have never gone out of my memory. A motherly old dame used to live close by. Now it happened that I was very timid then, and would conjure up ghosts and goblins whenever the lights

[1] Hymns to Rama beseeching protection
[2] Hymns to Vishnu

went out, and it was dark. The old mother, to disabuse me of fears, suggested that I should mutter the Texts whenever I was afraid, and all evil spirits would fly away. This I did and, as I thought, with good effect. I could never believe then that there was any text in the *Ramaraksha* pointing to the conduct of the 'untouchables' as a sin. I did not understand its meaning then, or understood it very imperfectly. But I was confident that *Ramaraksha*. which could destroy all fear of ghosts, could not be countenancing any such thing as fear of contact with the 'untouchables'.

The *Ramayana* used to be regularly read in our family. A Brahmin called Ladha Maharaj used to read it. He was stricken with leprosy, and he was confident that a regular reading of the *Ramayana* would cure him of leprosy, and indeed, he was cured of it. `How can the *Ramayana,'* I thought to myself, 'in which one who is regarded nowadays as an untouchable took Rama across the Ganges in his boat, countenance the idea of any human beings being 'untouchables' on the ground that they were polluted souls?' The fact that we addressed God as the 'purifier of the polluted' and by similar appellation, shows that it is a sin to regard anyone born in Hinduism as polluted or untouchable— that it is Satanic to do so. I have hence been never tired of repeating that it is a great sin. I do not pretend that this thing had crystalized as a conviction in me at the age of twelve, but I do say that I did then regard untouchability as a sin. I narrate this story for the information of the *Vaishnavas* and orthodox Hindus:

I have always claimed to be a *sanatani* Hindu. It is not that I am quite innocent of the scriptures. I am not a profound scholar of Sanskrit. I have read the Vedas and the Upanishads only in translations. Naturally therefore mine is not a scholarly study of them. My knowledge of them is in no way profound, but I have studied them as I should do as a Hindu and I claim to have grasped their true spirit. By the time I had reached the age of 21, I had studied other religions also.

There was a time when I was wavering between Hinduism and Christianity. When I recovered my balance of mind, I felt that to me salvation was possible only through the Hindu religion and my faith in Hinduism grew deeper and more enlightened.

But even then I believed that untouchability was no part of Hinduism; and, that if it was, such Hinduism was not for me.

True Hinduism does not regard untouchability as a sin. I do not

want to enter into any controversy regarding the interpretation of the shastras. It might be difficult for me to establish my point by quoting authorities from the *Bhagavat*[1] or *Manusmriti.* But I claim to have understood the spirit of Hinduism. Hinduism has sinned in giving sanction to untouchability. It has degraded us, made us the pariahs of the Empire. Even the Mussulmans caught the sinful contagion from us, and in S[outh] Africa, in E[ast] Africa and in Canada, the Mussulmans no less than Hindus came to be regarded as pariahs. All this evil has resulted from the sin of untouchability.

I may here recall my proposition, which is this: So long as the Hindus wilfully regard untouchability as part of their religion, so long as the mass of Hindus consider it a sin to touch a section of their brethren, swaraj is impossible of attainment. Yudhishthira would not enter heaven without his dog. How can, then, the descendants of that Yudhishthira expect to obtain swaraj without the untouchables? What crimes for which we condemn the Government as Satanic have not we been guilty of towards our untouchable brethren?

We are guilty of having suppressed our brethren; we make them crawl on their bellies; we have made them rub their noses on the ground; with eyes red with rage, we push them out of railway compartments—what more than this has British Rule done? What charge that we bring against Dyer and O'Dwyer may not others, and even our own people, lay at our door? We ought to purge ourselves of this pollution. It is idle to talk of swaraj so long as we-do not protect the weak and the helpless, or so long as it is possible for a single swarajist to injure the feelings of any individual. Swaraj means that not a single Hindu or Muslim shall for a moment arrogantly think that he can crush with impunity meek Hindus or Muslims. Unless this condition is fulfilled we will gain swaraj only to lose it the next moment. We are no better than the brutes until we have purged ourselves of the sins we have committed against our weaker brethren.

But I have faith in me still. In the course of my peregrinations in India I have realized that the spirit of kindness of which the poet Tulsidas sings so eloquently, which forms the cornerstone of the Jain and *Vaishnava* religions, which is the quintessence of the *Bhagavat*, and which every verse of the *Gita* is saturated with—this kindness, this love, this charity, is slowly but steadily gaining ground in the hearts of the masses of this country.

[1] A *purana* describing the avatars of Vishnu

Many a fracas between Hindus and Mussulmans is still heard of. There are still many of those who do not scruple to wrong one another. But as to the net result, I feel that kindness and charity have increased. The Hindus and Mohammedans have become godfearing. We have shaken ourselves free from the hypnotism of law courts and Government schools and no longer labour under any other hallucination. I have also realized that those whom we regard as illiterate and ignorant are the very people who deserve to be called educated. They are more cultured than we, their lives are more righteous than ours. A little study of the present-day mentality of the people will show that according to the popular conception swaraj is synonymous with *Ramarajya*—the establishment of the Kingdom of Righteousness on earth.

If it can bring any comfort to you, my untouchable brethren, I would say that your question does not cause so much stir as it used to do formerly. That does not mean that I expect you to cease to have misgivings about the Hindus. How can they deserve to be not mistrusted having wronged you so much? Swami Vivekanand used to say that the untouchables were not depressed, they were suppressed by the Hindus who in turn had suppressed themselves by suppressing them.

I suppose I was at Nellore on the 6th of April.[1] I met the untouchables there and I prayed that day as I have done today. I do want to attain *moksha*. I do not want to be reborn. But if I have to be reborn, should be born an untouchable, so that I may share their sorrows, sufferings, and the affronts levelled at them, in order that I may endeavour to free myself and them from that miserable condition. I, therefore, prayed that if I should be born again, I should do so not as a Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaisya, or Sudra, but as an *Atishudra*[2].

Today is much more solemn than the sixth. It is hallowed by the memory of the massacre[3] of thousands of innocents. And I prayed, therefore, also today that if I should die with any of my desires unfructified, with my service of the untouchables unfinished with my Hinduism unfulfilled, I may be born again amongst the untouchables to bring my Hinduism to its fulfilment.

I love scavenging. In my Ashram, an eighteen-year-old Brahmin

[1] Gandhiji was at Nellore on April 7, 1921.
[2] Shudra of Shudras
[3] At Jallianwala Bagh on April 13, 1919

lad is doing the scavenger's work in order to teach the Ashram scavenger cleanliness. The lad is no reformer. He was born and bred in orthodoxy. He is a regular reader of the Gita and faithfully performs *sandhyavandan*[1]. His pronunciation of Sanskrit verses is more faultless than mine. When he conducts the prayer his soft, sweet melodies melt one into love. But he felt that his accomplishments were incomplete until he had become also a perfect sweeper, and that if he wanted the Ashram sweeper to do his work well he must do it himself and set an example.

You should realize that you are cleaning Hindu society. You have therefore to purify your lives. You should cultivate the habits of cleanliness, so that no one may point his finger at you. Use alkali ash or earth if you cannot afford to use soap, to keep yourselves clean. Some of you are given to drinking and gambling which you must get rid of. You will point your finger at the Brahmins and say even they are given to these vices. But they are not looked upon as polluted, and you are. You must not ask the Hindus to emancipate you as a matter of favour. Hindus must do so, if they want, in their own interests. You should, therefore, make them feel ashamed by your own purity and cleanliness. I believe that we shall have purified ourselves within the next five months. If my expectations are not fulfilled, I will think that although my proposition was fundamentally correct, yet I was wrong in my calculation; and I will again say that I had erred in my calculation.

You claim to be Hindus; you read the *Bhagavat*. If, therefore, the Hindus oppress you then you should understand that the fault does not lie in the Hindu religion but in those who profess it. In order to emancipate yourselves you shall have to purify yourselves. You shall have to get rid of evil habits like drinking.

If you want to ameliorate your condition, if you want to obtain swaraj, you should be self-reliant. I was told in Bombay that some of you are opposed to N.C.O. and believe that salvation is only possible through the British Government. Let me tell you that you will never be able to obtain redress by discarding Hindu religion and courting the favour of a third party. Your emancipation lies in your own hands.

I have come in contact with the untouchables all over the country; and I have observed that immense possibilities lie latent in them of which

[1] Morning and evening prayers with a set formula

neither they nor the rest of the Hindus seem to be aware. Their intellect is of virginal purity. I ask you to learn spinning and weaving, and if you take them up as a profession, you will keep poverty from your doors. As regards your attitude towards the *Bhangis* I will repeat what I said at Godhra[1] I cannot understand why you should yourselves countenance the distinction between *Dheds* and *Bhangis.* There is no difference between them. Even in normal times their occupation is as honourable as that of lawyers or Government servants.

You should now cease to accept leavings from plates, however clean they may be represented to be. Receive grain only—good, sound grain, not rotten grain—and that too only if it is courteously offered. If you are able to do all I have asked you to do, you will secure your emancipation, not in four or five months, but in so many days.

The Hindus are not sinful by nature—they are sunk in ignorance. Untouchability must be extinct in this very year. Two of the strongest desires that keep me in flesh and bone are the emancitation of the untouchables and the protection of the cow. When these two desires are fulfilled, there is swaraj, and therein lies my own *moksha*. May God give you strength to work out your salvation.

Young India, 27-4-1921 & 4-5-1921

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Social Conference, Godhra" 5-11-1917.

15. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Monday, [*April 15, 1921*][1]

RESPECTED ANASUYABEHN,

You will now have been restored to health. I consider it a failing in men and women doing public work to fall ill. We are the tools in the hands of India and so even as tools we must ever be clean and sharp-edged. You must have resumed weaving. It will be sufficient if you understand about stretching. If you keep up the practice of walking, some day you will be able to walk for [the purpose of] stretching too. You are eager to learn it in a day; but how is that possible?

I will be going to Godhra on Monday. I am not able to decide whether I should pass through your place or go direct from here.

I could not meet anyone except Panditji and Rangaswami.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original : G. N. 11576

16. SPEECH AT MEETING IN RAS[2]

April 15, 1921

I once advised the people to help the Government when it was in difficulties, saying that, if we wished to secure our rights under the Government, we must first do our duty. Accordingly, as soon as the campaign in the Kheda district had ended, I came to persuade the people to join the army. I had got ready to do soldiering. I do not at all regret what I did. I see that it has brought nothing but profit to the people. By deciding that we should join the army, we showed our nobility. I am not sorry that we did so. I am sorry only for this, that

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's meeting with A. Rangaswamy Aiyengar who had been appointed on the Sub-Committee of the All India Congress Committee which, among other things, was to examine the Congress Constitution and consider necessary changes in it : *vide* also "Letter to Rangaswamy Iyengar", 19-11-1920.

It is likely that this letter was written during the period 1920-1921. Gandhiji visited Godhra in 1921 on April 15.

[2] This and similar other reports of speeches which follow are extracted from the accounts of Gandhiji's tour in Gujarat published in *Navajivan*.

when I went to the brave and stout-hearted *Patidars*[1] and *Thakores*[2], only a few came forward to enlist. The reason for it was not that they did not like the Government or lacked faith in it, but that they did not have the necessary courage. You were not ready to die. You did not like to die for the Government or for anyone else, but now the times have changed. Now I am opposing the Government; I consider it *adharma*[3] on our part to do soldiering for the Government; I have now lost all faith in it. At that time, I did not call this Government Satanic, but today I call this administration a Satanic Government or *Ravanarajya*[4]. That unique devotion with which I went about on foot in the Kheda district and that strength of mine which I used for the Government, that very strength of mine, a part of my noble heritage, I am now employing against the Government, for satyagraha means doing what is right.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-5-1921

17. SPEECH AT MEETING IN BORSAD

April 15, 1921

When I visited Borsad earlier,[5] I did not succeed in my aim, but now there is awakening here. The first mark of awakening is that we should have developed the power of organizing meetings and of controlling processions. That requires training. Just as a fire or a waterfall cannot be utilized unless skilfully controlled, so awakening too is useless without discipline. The first mark of awakening is that, wherever we are, we should understand our duty.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-5-1921

[1] Names of communities forming bulk of the population in the Kheda district of Gujarat

[2] *Ibid*

[3] The opposite of dharma

[4] The rule of Ravana, as distinguished from *Ramarajya* which is traditionally regarded as the ideal political order

[5] During the Kheda Satyagraha in the summer of 1918.

18. SPEECH AT TALUKA CONFERENCE, HALOL[1]

April 16, 1921

For me, there can be decorations, presents and medals of khadi alone. The thing I have been given, however, is no sign of swaraj. One can see in this why we do not get swaraj this very day. You have elected as your president a man who calls himself a farmer and a weaver, and now a *Bhangi* [2]; and you have given him this purse! There is no weight in it either of paper [i.e., currency notes] or silver or gold. You have given me just an empty purse; and a still greater crime is that it is all made of foreign material.[3] Its dye is foreign, its yarn is foreign, the silk thread in it is foreign. Then what is swadeshi in it? I claim to be a leader of the swadeshi movement and I should know what is swadeshi and what is not swadeshi. The beauty of my defini-tion of swadeshi is that if we follow such swadeshi, nobody can prevail over us. Swadeshi for Halol is what is made in Halol itself. Anything made anywhere else in India must be unacceptable to it. We, all of us, should be self-sufficient and should compete for the first place. We shall get swaraj when we vie with one another with ever greater vigour in this matter. This is the key to swaraj.

I cannot bear to see the decorations here in the town. Not even an inch of foreign cloth should be used in them. Instead, such cloth is hung up all round. All the flags and buntings are of foreign stuff. Their dyes are all foreign.Understand, therefore, that these decorations are no better than rags. Since one puts up decorations for the sake of the guest, you should have done what would please me, at least out of courtesy and respect for me! We shall make progress towards swaraj only if we do everything thoughtfully and with understanding. The volunteers whom we see moving about here are dressed in English-style coat-and-trousers of duck cloth. How absurd that volunteers for swaraj work should use duck cloth! If you cannot afford to buy new khadi, I am ready to give you khadi to replace your duck cloth. If

[1] In the Panch Mahals district of Gujarat.Gandhiji presided over the conference.

[2] Literally scavenger, member of a community traditionally regarded untouchable

[3] Some person in the audience interrupted Gandhiji at this point, saying that it was swadeshi. The remarks which follow were in reply to this.

you feel too embarrassed to accept khadi from me, I would advise you to do your work as volunteers wearing only a loin-cloth. It is not that service can be rendered only by dressing oneself up like an Englishman. It is with your love and good behaviour that you should impress the people. If you are seeking to do so with your English trousers, give up the idea altogether. We should discard this apparel at least to keep up our dignity as Indians out to win swaraj. Personally, I would advise the volunteers to spin every day for two hours. You can be true volunteers only when you spin yourselves, get the yarn woven into cloth and wear that cloth.

In our swaraj army, grown-ups would not work as effectively as little boys and girls. The former are steeped in fraud, hypocrisy and pride. If these things disappear, we should get swaraj this very day. Though advanced in age, we should have innocence, like Maulana Shaukat Ali's[1]. This man's mind is as pure and tender as a child's. He wishes ill of none. He fears only God. Learn innocence from him. I have cultivated innocence by constant effort. I have built the embankment, putting a pebble at a time, have filled the pond drop by drop; it is still unfilled. Maulana Shaukat Ali has lived in luxury and yet he has the strength to mount the scaffold this moment. I revel in khadi and the touch of silk is torture to my body, whereas Shaukat Ali is in love with muslin and silk. When, nevertheless, he puts on khadi, the thing must be regarded a miracle. He has embraced the hardships of a fakir's life for the sake of Islam.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-5-1921

19. SPEECH AT CULTIVATORS' MEETING, HALOL[2]

April 16, 1921

You, in particular, need manure to grow corn. Then, how can you despise the *Bhangis*? We want to bring *Satyayuga*[3] into this world. It will certainly not drop from the skies. We have to usher it in through our good deeds. All addictions, therefore, should be given

[1] 1873-1938; nationalist Muslim politician; took a leading part in the Khilafat movement

[2] As the cultivators who had arrived to attend the Taluka Conference could not hear Gandhiji's speech, a separate meeting was arranged for them in the evening.

[3] Literally "Age of Truth"; the Golden Age

up. How can a man who gets intoxicated with liquor, toddy, *ganja*[1] opium and such other things take care of an inestimable thing like a farm? You are verily the protectors of the land, the producers of food for the world. These days I have been applying to the Government epithets like robbers and devils; if you farmers, then, rob the people, how should you be characterized? If you give up your traditional goodness, your heroism and your truthfulness, if you, who are called the fathers of the world, oppress the people, that will be like the sea catching fire. To whom, then, should a man like me turn, one who, having come to dislike legal practice, describes himself as a weaver and a *Bhangi*? But I am sure that you are good and hence it is that I have become a farmer. The farmer's pillow is death. He sleeps with death under his head. Who could frighten him? You are kings, in fact, and I want you to remain so. The king who robs his subjects sins. Therefore, be good in your lives.

Go and give the message from this farmer Gandhi to other farmers, that he has asked them not to steal and not to gamble. Their duty is to grow corn and sell it at reasonable prices. They may not sell at a loss, but it is not right for a cultivator to make unduly large profits like a miserly trader. They will find theirs a worth-while profession only if they save themselves from this.

You need not do labour under compulsion. Will you slave on the farm or for the Government and its dishonest officials? Tell them that you are not serfs but farmers.

Get rid of your addictions and learn self-control. Pray to God as you get up in the morning and then go to your work. It is not good that, in the evening, after unyoking the oxen, you start speaking foul language or singing filthy songs. In the late evening, sing *bhajans*[2] or join in *kirtans*[3]in praise of God. There are no rains these days because the king has become a sinner, and so have the subjects. God does not destroy us completely, since he wants to test us. Be good in your lives, therefore, give up addictions, engage yourselves in *bhajans* and *kirtans*; you will find, then, that you have all the rain you want.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-5-1921

[1] Hemp
[2] Devotional songs and those sung in chorus, respectively
[3] *Ibid*

20. NOTES

LANGUAGE AND THOUGHT

It is rarely that language succeeds as a vehicle of thought. More of-ten than not it conceals thought. Always language circumscribes thought.When, especially, a person translates from another's language, what difficulties are experienced and howlers perpetrated only translators and journa-lists know. We have been in such difficulties time and again. We publi-shed Shri Vamanrao Joshi's statement[1] in bold type on the front page. When we read the printed translation, we ourselves felt ashamed. We felt we had done an injustice to this brave man, or, rather, to readers. The message seemed to go against the ideas and methods which we wish to see prevail. The translation we printed was from English. Shri Vaman-rao's original message was of course in Marathi. The objectionable element we find in our translation is not present in the original at all. "It is not our business to reveal our own shame in public"—is the view we have attributed to Shri Vamanrao.[2] Our courage lies in being ever ready to expose our shame. Shri Vamanrao wishes to cloak the people's shame by himself displaying courage and not by leaving that shame unexposed. By hiding their shame the people become emasculated, just as a disease grows by being concealed. If one Indian apprehends another and a third punishes the latter, there is no shame in this at all. There may be some-thing to be ashamed of in the occasion itself. When, however, swaraj is established, an Indian policeman will arrest an Indian who has committed a crime and the latter will be punished by an Indian judge. That will not seem shameful; in fact, it will be normal and accepted as such. Shri Vamanrao has made his remarks with reference to the present situation. He has pointed to and exposed our shame in an Indian serving [the Gove-rnment] for the sake of the belly, ever the cause of so many sins, arresting another innocent Indian, and in a judge, in the same position as the first Indian, sentencing the latter. But it pains us that we could not bring out in our translation all this

[1] In *Navajivan*, 14-4-1921. Joshi, who had been arrested on a charge of sedition, had stated that he did not want to defend himself.

[2] Joshi had held that their duty was to expose the misdeeds of foreigners and not to expose their own shame in public which, he implied, he would be doing by offering a defence. There was nothing more disgraceful, in his view, than that one

meaning. However, we console ourselves with the thought that such errors are inevitable. We see what an inade-quate instrument language is, especially the language of translation, for expressing our thoughts. Indeed, true speech consists in acting rather than in speaking. How can speeches ever reveal thoughts as action does? Let us all act as Shri Vamanrao does and read his message in his sacrifices, in his courage, in his fearlessness, his simplicity and his humility.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-4-1921

21. LETTER TO NARASINHRAO DIVETIA [1]

GODHRA,
Monday, April 18, 1921

DEAR FRIEND,

Mahadev tells me that the reference to Shri Dayaram Gidumal in my reply[2] to your open letter has hurt you very much. I did not make the remarks to hurt you. I made them to show my regard for you and Dayaramji, to let people know that, no matter what the world may say, you are both holy souls. All the same, if you feel hurt I shall make amends in any way you wish. How can I ever intend to give you pain ?

I also understand that you are offended that I have not yet found it possible to call on you while I could pay a visit to Patel[3]. What defence shall I make? A visit to you should be a pilgrimage. To Patel I went on business—would I have even the time, after that, for a peaceful visit to you? Many of my most cherished dreams remain unfulfilled, as in this instance. Won't you forgive me, taking my word that I have not offended you knowingly ?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Narasinhraoni Rajanishi

[1] 1859-1937; Gujarati poet and ma of letters; professor of Gujarati, Elphinstone College, Bombay

[2] *Vide* "To the Learned Narasinhrao", 29-12-1920.

[3] Presumably Vithalbhai Patel

22. SPEECH AT MEETING IN GODHRA

April 18, 1921

The main reason why we have become the *Bhangis* of this Empire, this Government, is that our *Vaishnavas*[1] and *Shaivas* [2] who call themselves orthodox *sanatanis* [3] behave like beasts towards the *Bhangis* and oppress them. The *Bhangis* are our kith and kin, our blood-brothers. We accept their service and do not even pay them adequate wages, so that they are obliged to live on the remains on our plates which we offer them and are driven to eat carrion. As for service, I do not think that a lawyer, a doctor or a collector serves soceity a whit more than a *Bhangi*. The *Bhangis*' services surely rank much higher than the services of these. If the former were to stop serving, what would be the plight of society? The calamity taht has befallen us is the reward of the sin we have committed against the *Antyajas*[4]. The punishment for our sin has to be shared by the Muslims because they are our neighbours. Many Hindus cite Shastras for avoiding contact with the *Bhangis*. I tell you, however, if there is any Shastra which says that it is sin to touch a *Bhangi*, it is no Shastra. A Shastra can never be beyond the power of reason to under-stand, something which disregards truth. For the rest, the Shastras may be interpreted in any way one chooses. What do we not do in the name of the Shastras? In their name, mendicants consume bhang and smoke *ganja*; in the name of the Shastras, some devotees of a goddess consume mutton and wine and numberless people indulge in immoral practices; in the name of the Shastras, in the Madras Presidency, girls of tender age are forced to become prostitutes. What greater travesty of the Shastras can there be than this? I regard myself an orthodox *Vaishnava*; I believe in the *Varnashrama*[5] way of life. But I tell you, the idea that one gets polluted by touching a *Bhangi* is an excrescence on Hinduism, a kind of dirt which has settled on it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-5-1921

[1] Devotees of Vishnu, the Preserver in the Hindu Trinity, and His incarnation, Krishna

[2] Devotees of Siva, the Destroyer in the Hindu Trinity

[3] Hindus who accept the essentials of Hinduism as unalterable, the division of society into four castes being one of them

[4] Literally "last-born", communities of untouchables in general

[5] The organization of society into four castes, each with a distinctive function, and the division of life into four stages

23. REPLY TO WELCOME ADDRESS BY SURAT MUNICIPALITY

April 19, 1921

I must say that just as not every man can eat or digest a rich dish, I wonder whether I can digest the glowing praises showered on me. Some day, perhaps, I shall deserve them. I am doing my best in that direction. I have been striving to be able to vanquish untruth with truth and anger by refusing to oppose it with anger, and I wish that I should lay down my life in the effort. But, at present, the epithets you have applied to me are misplaced. If, hearing them, I become indifferent or overbearing or smugly assume that I already deserve them because people have offered them to me, immediately my degradation would begin. My effort should be, above everything else, to maintain humility and see that I do not transgress the limits of properiety. The country's good and mine lie in my working with this vigilance.

Your giving me a welcome address bespeaks the marvellous awa-kening in the country. It only means that the Municipality has realized its role. I hope to get much work for the country done through munici-palities. And that is the reason why, in the resolutions adopted at the last two sessions of the Congress,[1] municipalities have not been asked to join the non-co-operation movement. Being what they are, the munici-palities involve some element of co-operation, but then, at present, there is not a single thing of ours which is free from it. There is co-operation even in eating one single grain of wheat. The non-co-operation we are employing at present is so light that even a child can shoulder its burden. If we can carry out intensive non-co-operation, it has such miraculous power that we can get swaraj in a day. But I have taken care to put before the country only a simple form of non-co-operation which the country will have strength enough to carry out, and every municipality can join it. If the municipalities in the country understand this and organize whatever work they can do, swaraj will be easy to win.

As regards what this Municipality can do, all I have to say is, keep the promise you have given to make an effort to act upon the advice of the Congress. Gird up your loins for the removal of untouchability. I have mentioned this first, leaving aside the spinning-wheel. The latter represents the supreme task to which we should bend all our efforts, but there is a still more important task for the Hindus,

[1] At Calcutta in September 1920 and at Nagpur in December 1920

which is to see that not the slightest trace of untouchability survives. Work has to be done in the spinning-wheel movement, but in this our very mentality has to be transformed.

Last night I went to the *Bhangi* quarters in Godhra. I was in agony at the sight of the conditions there. I wonder why Hindus, sharp-eyed as they are, cannot see what is visible even to the naked eye, why they do not know that there is a carbuncle on their back.

You have been elected to get the city cleaned of its refuse, to look after the health of the people, to provide education for the children and to prevent diseases. You can do this only by raising the status of *Bhangis*. There will be no meaning in swaraj if you think merely of filling your pockets, just as England served its own interests on the pretence that it was fighting the War for the sake of small states like Belgium.

Why do I call this Government Satanic? It had drawn the sword not for defending the weak but for devouring them. In our swaraj, in our *dharmarajya*, there will be only one aim, to serve the weak. We can be called true swarajists only if we do *tapascharya*[1] to get pure swaraj which will provide cool shelter to all.

Thus, the uplift of the *Bhangis* is your first duty. Their streets must be clean, their houses tidy; they should have a convenient source of water. I now call myself a *Bhangi*. Personally, I delight in spening some time in a *Bhangi* locality. That is, indeed, a recreation for me. Fondling their children gives me joy. The Municipality, therefore, cannot be said to have discharged its duty so long as the *Bhangi* quarter is not in such condition that a man like me can stay there and observe the rules of hygience.

By a national school, we should at the present time understand a school for spinning, for our education should provide us with the sustaining nourishment, which would make us free and radiant with vigour. I have been correcting my mistake with regard to education. If we try to impart no better education than what the Government provides, we shall go down. If we want to infuse strength into our people, the spinning-wheel is the only effective remedy. It is the basis of a goldern plan for education. Introduce it in the schools and then you will not have to go begging to maintain them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-5-1921

[1] Self-suffering as moral discipline

24. NOTES

FIGURES AND THEIR MEANING

For the guidance of the workers I give below a table showing the population in millions of each Congress Province and the proportion in hundreds of thousands to be collected by it for the Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund[1].

No.	Provinces	Population in millions	Proportion of subscription in thousands
1	Madras	20	650
2	Andhra	21	682
3	Karnatak	12	390
4	Kerala	7	227
5	Bombay	1	32.5
6	Maharashtra	12	390
7	Gujarat	11	357
8	Sind	4	130
9	U. P.	49	1,592
10	Punjab	27	877
11	N.-W. F.	3	97.5
12	Delhi	1	32.5

No.	Provinces	Population in millions	Proportion of subscription in thousands
13	Ajmer Merwara	19	617
14	C. P. (Hindi)	9	292
15	C. P. (Marathi)	3	97·5

[1] The Indian National Congress, in its annual session at Nagpur, on December 26, 1920, resolved to set up the All-India Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund. On March 31, 1921, the All-India Congress Committee meeting at Bezwala decided upon a target of one crore of rupees for the Fund. *Vide* "Resolution at A. I. C. C. Meeting, Bezwada", 31-3-1921.

16	Berar	3	97·5
17	Bihar	29	942
18	Utkal	25	487
19	Bengal	47	1,527
20	Assam	4	130
21	Burma	12	390

Though the sum for the whole of India, for the memory which it is intended to perpetuate and for the purpose which it is to fulfil, is small enough, it will not be collected without persistent and wide spread effort. The surest way of not collecting the sum will be for each province merely to think of its own quota and be satisfied with it. The surest and the quickest way of collecting the sum is for everyone and for every province to collect the whole or the most it can. thus, a few millionaires of Bombay could, if they chose, subscribe the crore required in a day. It would be ridiculous for Bombay to fling its quota at India and rest content. Bombay alone can well shoulder the whole burden. Bombay has allowed India to think always that it can finance public movements. Bombay paid the lion's share to the Jallianwala Bagh Fund, Bombay paid the fattest contribution to the Congress Punjab Sub-Committee. Bombay has always out-distanced every other province in financial assistance. It will be equally ridicu-lous for Gujarat to be satisfied with its own quota of a little over $3\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs. It can easily collect much more, whereas the United Provinces would appear to be hopeless if the past is any guide to the future. They have no rich public workers. Pundit Nehru who always gave liberally has ceased to earn his lakhs per year.[1] India's biggest beggar Pundit Malaviyaji[2] is not as yet available to the move-ment. It would be idle for us to expect the United Provinces to contribute their quota of nearly 16 lakhs. And yet if the forty-nine millions of the popu-lation of these provinces can be touched, if the big zemindars can be interested, what is sixteen lakhs? The savings of the drink bill can pay the whole quota. And it has Hardwar and Benares to fall back

[1] Motilal Nehru had given up his legal practice and plunged into public work.

[2] Madan Mohan Malaviya (1861-1946); President, Indian National Congress, 1909 and 1918; founded the Banaras Hindu University in 1916, and was its Vice-Chancellor during 1919-40; member, Imperial Legislative Council, 1910-20; attended the Round Table Conference in London, 1931-32

upon. The workers can easily get the rich pilgrims who visit these famous shrines to contribute to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. They must have faith, and courage that faith brings. Similarly Bengal. Bengal has many rich men but it has not as yet shone for its patriotic finance. Mr. Das[1] has to beat new ground. With the assistance of the Marwadis and the Gujaratis domiciled in Calcutta, Bengal should have no difficulty. Ajmer Merwara will be hard put to it to find its quota of over six lakhs. It has to work among the different States. Its is perhaps the most difficult plight. For the Mussulmans, Ajmer is a name to conjure with.The thousands of Mussulmans who visit Ajmer Shariff can make a handsome con-tribution to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Every worker must realize that there is not a moment to lose. I invite the heads of each province to send weekly notes of sums collected by them for publication. There must be systematic house-to-house collection. Gujarat has copied the Punjab. It has receipts on coloured art paper, containing a fine portrait of the deceased patriot in a corner. The map of India ornaments the rest of the receipt. At the back are printed the ten conditions of swaraj. The receipt is acknowledged in Gujarati, Devnagari and Urdu scripts. they have one-rupee, five-rupee and ten-rupee receipts. The Punjab had already collected Rs. 1,85,000 up to the 12th instant. The programme[2] put before the country by the All-India Congress Committee is an easy programme for business people. It is an impossible task for idle dreamers or platform orators. India cannot establish swaraj without the swaraj workers developing fine business habits.

AN INJURED EYE

Attention has been drawn in these columns to the temperance activity in Ahmedabad and its great self-restraint. Dr. Kanuga was so seriously hurt in the eye by an unknown stone thrown that he might have lost it. As it was, he had to be laid up for a few days. He stood his ground inspite of the injury till he was relieved. The other pickets continued at their post. There was no panic. Naturally

[1] Chittaranjan Das (1870-1925); President, Indian National Congress, 1922; founded the Swarajya Party in 1923

[2] Apart from collections for the Tilak Swaraj Fund, the Congress had called for the enrolment of a crore of Congress members and the introduction of two million spinning-wheels in the villages and cities. These objectives, embodied in what became known as the Bezwada Programme of the Congress, were to be achieved by June 30, 1921.

there was no complaint. The result was electrical. The drinking party was nonplussed. The stone-throwing lost its force for want of reaction. And I understand that after the incident there has been no stone-throwing at all the effect on the visitors to the drink shops has also been equally great. I regard this as one of the best examples of non-violence and its immediate results. Had Dr. Kanuga complained to the police, or his companions retaliated, there would have been a confusion of issues. All kinds of side issues would have been raised and, as usual, feeling would have run high among parties and, what is worse, the cause of temperance would have suffered a set-back. Dr. Kanuga's bravery, sacrifice and self-restraint have advanced the cause for which he has bled, it has checked any further exhibition of temper on the part of the publicans and their friends and raised the temperance crusade to a very high level.

A MAGISTRATE'S VAGARIES

That O'Dwyerism[1] is not dead in India has been demonstrated by the Cantonment Magistrate of Dehradun ordering on the Satyagraha Day, that shops in his Cantonment must be opened, on pain of the shopkeepers' being banished from it in the event of disobedience of his orders. Little do people know that, in Canton-ments, Magistrates enjoy powers which are elsewhere exercised under Martial Law only. The residents within Cantonment limits are at the mercy of Magistrates. The wonder is that people have so long and so patiently put up with a system of government conceived with a view to check-[ing] their liberty to the point of enslaving them.

EDITORIAL CHANGE

I regret to inform the reader that Mr. Lalchand Adwani, who was Assistant Editor, has been relieved of his charge and has now no connection at all with *Young India* in any capacity. Communications for *Young India* should therefore be addressed simply, Editor, *Young India*.

Young India, 20-4-1921

[1] The reference is to the Martial Law regime in 1919 of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Lt.-Governor of the Punjab, during which the Jallianwala Bagh massacre and other acts of oppression, official high-handedness and brutality were committed.

25. THE MISTS

Whenever I find my friends misunderstanding the movement, I mutter to myself the words of a celebrated hymn: "We shall know each other better when the mists have rolled away." A friend has just sent me the paragraphs on non-co-operation in the *Servant of India* of the 14th instant. It is such a fruitless task explaining resolutions and motives. The year will soon pass away and our actions, more than words, will demonstrate the meaning of non-co-operation.

For me non-co-operation is not suspended, and never will be, so long as the Government has not purged itself of the crimes against India—the Mussulmans and the Punjabis, and so long as the system is not changed to respond to the will of the nation. Surely it was necessary to remove the hallucination about titles, law-courts, schools and Councils. I venture to think that, on the whole, the nationalists have responded nobly in regard to these items. There are no titled men among them, no nationalist lawyer who has not supended practice has any public status among non-co-operators, schools and colleges have furnished boys and girls who are now giving a good account of themselves and who, I make bold so say, will stagger humanity by their sacrifice when the time of their trial has arrived. Those who have refrained from entering the Councils are rendering, as all who care may see, a service which they could not have rendered in the Council halls. The few who have given up their titles have shown the way to the others. All these are acting as leaven in the community. Now, there is little need for verbal propaganda among these special classes. The action and character of those who have renounced titles, schools, courts or Councils constitute a propaganda more telling and effective than speeches. National schools are multiplying themselves, boys are still leaving schools and colleges. The Government statistics are hopelessly wrong. I remember having seen a councillor quoting that less than 3,000 students had left educational institutions. This takes no count of thousands who are studying in nationalized schools. The number of suspensions of practice is steadily growing—see the list of suspensions in Dharwar and Guntur given in another column. Even titles are still being surrendered. And as the timid or the cautious realized that the movement is a serious and a religious effort, that it has taken permanent hold of the people, they too will renounce.

I should not be surprised if the history of the South African movement repeats itself in India. I should be surprised if it proves otherwise. The movement in South Africa started with a unanimous resolution.[1] When the first part began, the majority weakened. Only 150 were found willing to court imprisonment. Then there was a settlement and a breach and a revival. Nobody even believed, save a few of us, that the rsponse would come in time. Well, the last stage commenced with sixteen men and women who sought imprisonment. This was followed by a perfect storm. The whole community rose like a surging wave. Without organization, without propaganda, all—nearly 40,000—courted imprisonment. Nearly ten thousand were actually imprisoned. The sequel is known. The community gained all it had fought for at the time.[2] A bloodless revolution was effected after strenuous discipline in self-suffering.

I refuse to believe that India will do less. To recall Lord Canning's words, under the blue and serene Indian sky a cloud no bigger than a man's thumb may appear on the horizon, but it may any moment assume dimensions unexpected by any, and no man can tell when it may burst. When India as a whole will respond by action, I cannot say. But this I do say that the educated classes to whom the Congress has appealed will one day—and probably during this year—respond in a manner worthy of the nation.

But whether they do or not, the progress of the nation cannot be arrested by any person or class. The uneducated artisans, the women, the men in the street, are taking their share in the movement. The appeal to the educated classes paved the way for them. The goats had to be sifted from the sheep. The educated classed had to be put upon their trial. The beginning had to be made by and through them. Non-co-operation has hitherto, thank God, followed its natural course.

Swadeshi propaganda in its intensive and exclusive form had to come and it has come in its order. It was, and is, part of the non-co-operation programme. It is, I claim, the biggest, the safest, and the surest part. It could not be taken up earlier in its present form. The country had to see its way clear to the spinning-wheel. It had to be purged of the old superstitions and prejudices. The country had to appreciate the futility of the boycott of British goods merely, and

[1] This was the famous "Fourth Resolution"; *vide* "My Notes", 24-7-1921.

[2] For an assessment in retrospect of the South African struggle, *vide* Appendix "The Struggle and what it has Meant", 1914.

equally of *all* foreign goods. It had to see that it lost its liberty by giving up swadeshi in cloth and that it could regain it by revertting to hand-spun and hand-woven cloth. It had to see that it lost its artistic taste and talent, when it innocently ceased to spin and weave by the hand. It had to see that it was not even so much the military drain as the loss of this supplementary industry that sapped India's vitality and made famines an ever-recurring event in Indian life. Men with faith in the spinning-wheel had to rise in every province, and people had to appreciate the beauty and the use of khaddar.

All these things have now happened. The crore men and women and the crore rupees are required to resuscitate this national dharma. The problem is not that of a few charkhas but of putting charkhas in every one of the six crore homes. The problem is that of manufacturing and distributing the whole of the cloth required by India. It cannot be done by one crore rupees. But if India gives one crore rupees, one crore men and women, and introduces two million charkhas in working order in as many homes before the 30th June, she is nearly ready for swaraj. Because the effort will have created, in the nation as a whole, all the qualities that make a nation good, great, self-reliant and self-contained. When the nation has, by a voluntary effort, completed its boycott of foreign cloth, it will be ready for swaraj. Then I promise that the various forts in the Indian cities will, instead of being an insolent menace to the freedom of India, become playgrounds for her children. Then the relations between Englishmen and ourselves will have been purified. Then the Lancashire vote will have been sterilized. And Englishmen will, if they choose, remain in India as friends and equals, with one sole aim—truly of benefiting and helping India. Non-co-operation is a movement intended to invite Englishmen to co-operate with us on honourable terms or retire from our land. It is a movement to place our relations on a pure basis, to define them in a manner consistent with our self-respect and dignity.

But call the movement by any other name. Call it 'swadeshi and temperance'. Assume that all these previous months have been a waste of effort. I invite the Government and the moderate friends to co-operate with the nation in making hand-spinning universal and in making drinking a crime. Neither party need speculate as to the result of these two movements. The tree will be judged by its fruit.

Young India, 20-4-1921

26. DIVIDE AND RULE

Sir William Vincent's[1] speech before the Legislative Assembly makes painful reading. I shall hope that he has been kept in utter darkness by his informants and that the speech is ignorant, not unscrupulous.

It is a plausible defence of the Government's policy of repression. It is a distortion or concoction of facts. It is an appeal to our cupidity and a misinterpretation of the motives of non-co-operationists.

He says that the declared object of non-co-operationists is paralysis of the Government and that "in their effort to achieve the object there is no source of discontent which they have not used". Now both these statements are half-truths. The primary object of non-co-operation is nowhere stated to be paralysis of the Government. The primary object is self-purification. Its direct result must be paralysis of a Government which lives on our vices and weaknesses. Similarly, it is a dangerous half-truth to say that we have left no source of discontent unused. We could not help using sources of legitimate discontent. But non-co-operationists have rigidly refrained from using any and every discontent, if only because we would weaken our cause if we did. The illustration of what I mean will be best seen from the refutation of the very next sentence which Sir William has spoken in support of his contention: "Wherever they find discord between employer and employee, there some agent of emissary of non-co-operation party proceeds at once to foster discontent and promote ill-feeling." This is not only untrue, but it is an incitement to the two to oppose non-co-operation. The avowed policy of non-co-operation has been not to make political use of disputes between labour and capital. They have endeavoured to hold the balance evenly between the two—we would be fools if we wantonly set labour against capital. It would be just the way to play into the hands of a Government which would greatly strengthen its hold on the country by setting capitalists against labourers and *vice versa*. In Jharia, for instance, it was a non-co-operator who prevented an extending strike. The moderating influence in Calcutta was that of non-co-operators. The latter will not hesitate to advance the cause of strikers where they have a just

[1] Home Member in the Viceroy's Executive Council

grievance. They have ever refused to lend their assistance to unjust strikes. "Where there is a racial ill-feeling", declares Sir William Vincent, "these emissaries hurry on their evil errand." He must know that this is a false statement. There is a racial feeling between English-men and Indians. There is the memory of Jallianwala—an evergreen. But "these emissaries" have been varitable messengers of peace. They have everywhere restrained the fury of the unthinking. And I make bold to say that but for the existence of the spirit of non-violence, there would have been more innocent blood spilt in spite of the threat of Dyerism and O'Dwyerism. Our fault has lain in refusing to lick the boot that has kicked, in withdrawing co-operation until there was frank repentance. Non-co-operators are to be blessed for turning the fury of an outraged people from Englishmen to the system they are called upon to administer.

But Sir William is nothing if he is not thorough in his attempt to divide and rule. He declaims: "Where there are quarrels between landlord and tenant, have we not seen this in the United Provinces—there again proceed these emissaries of evil to propagate unrest, and stir up disorder." Sir William should know that the tenant movement is under the control of Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru whose one purpose regarding the tenants has been to educate them to be patient and calm. Sir William has simply attempted to set the landlords against the non-co-operation movement. Fortunately the landlords know as well as the tenants that, so long as they are just, they have nothing to fear from non-co-operators.

The movement, says Sir William, "is purely destructive, and so far as I have been able to ascertain contains no element of constructive ability". It is undoubtedly destructive in the sense that a surgeon who applies the knife to a diseased part may be said to make a destructive movement. This destructive movement bears in it the surest seed of construction as the surgeon's knife contains the seed of health. Is temperance destructive? Are national schools springing up everywhere destructive? Are the thousands of spinning-wheels destructive of a nation's prosperity? They will destroy foreign domination whether it hails from Lancashire or is threatened from Japan.

Having attempted to set classes against masses, Sir William proceeds to paralyze both with the feeling of helplessness and the fear of internal strife and aggression from without. Is Hindu-Muslim unity such flimsy stuff that we shall begin to quarrel as soon as the British

guns are withdrawn from our shores? Were we sixty years ago less able to protect ourselves than we are now? Or is it not a fact that, judged by the Western standard, we were never so helpless as we now are? Self-government, as I have said before, connotes the power of sell-protection, and a country which cannot protect itself is not prepared for immediate and complete self-government. In this one sentence Sir William has unwittingly condemned British rule and proved the necessity of immediate mending or ending of that rule. According to my method—the method of suffering or soul-force,—the country is today prepared for self-protection. According to Sir William's standard, the reforms have nothing in them to enable India even in a hundred years to arm herself for defence against a combination of world powers. Judged by that standard, the reforms do forge stronger the chains that bind India and make her feel helpless. The speaker talks glibly of impending destruction of every vested interest. He needs to be reminded that the greatest vested interest of India—her self-sufficiency—was destroyed by this foreign domination and the speaker's plan will still further deepen India's poverty.

Even as Sir William has misrepresented non-co-operators' motives, so has he misconstrued their methods. We have not failed in our effort regarding the educated classes. I admit that the response in practice might have been greater from them. But I make bold to say that the vast majority of them are with us in spirit, though the flesh being weak, they are not able to make what from their point of view is a sacrifice. We have been trying to act on the masses from the commencement. We regard them as our mainstay, for it is they who have to attain swaraj. It is neither the sole concern of the monied men nor that of the educated class. Both must subserve their interest in any scheme of swaraj, and as soon as the masses have attained sufficient self-control and learnt mass discipline, we shall not hesitate, if necessary, to advise them to suspend payment of taxes to a Government that has never truly looked after their welfare and that has exploited and terrorized them every time they have shown the least symptom of rising against their exploitation.

Sir William has been extremely disingenuous in describing the Government's methods of dealing with non-co-operation. Defence of India Act, he will not use against men who have hurt nobody and who

are restraining people from committing violence. But he is using ordinary statutes against them in an extraordinary manner under a licence given to him by non-co-operators who will not challenge orders in a court of law. He will not conciliate the malcontents by granting swaraj, for that would lead to anarchy. He does not bother his head about the two things which have caused all the unrest and which have acted like two active and corroding poisons in the Indian body—the Khilafat[1] and the Punjab wrongs[2]. He does not tell us what catastrophe is likely to befall India if the Khilafat promises were redeemed and the Punjab wound healed.

He has ornamented his extraordinary speech with an ungentlemanly and insinuating attack upon the Ali Brothers who are putting up a noble fight for Islam and India, and a still more ungentlemanly attack on a 'gentleman of the name of Yakub Hasan', and an ungracious reference to his Turkish wife.

As I have said it was painful for me to read the speech, still more painful to have to criticise it. I assure the reader that, self-restrained as I am in language, the speech has been a severe strain upon my capacity for restraint. I have scored out many an adjective which I believe would accurately describe Sir William's performance. I am sorry.

Young India, 20-4-1921

[1] This was regarding the movement for the reversal of British policy, at the end of World War I, involving the dismemberment of Turkey and affecting the religious status of the Khalifa. The Congress had taken up the issue, as it gravely exercised the minds of Indian Muslims.

[2] The official acts of violence and repression in the Punjab under the Martial Law regime in April 1919, culminating in the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, had roused countrywide indignation. Gandhiji held that with regard to the Khilafat and Punjab wrongs, injustice was being sustained by untruth and insolence. They were to become major issues in the non-co-operation movement.

27. COMMENT ON A PROTEST[1]

I am glad of Mr. Varma's energetic protest. And I hope that the lawyers of Jubbulpore are leading the non-co-operation movement. I must however adhere to my statement that the lawyers were conspicuous by their absence on the day I visited Jubbulpore, and that the two young men referred to by me, were in charge of the whole management.That they are sons of land-holders is true enough. Theirs to-day is co-operation of necessity.The Congress has not yet called upon land-holders to surrender their lands to the Government nor is it ever likely to. These young men, like some land-holders' sons elsewhere, are taking an honourable part in the national uplift and they deserve every encouragement from lawyers. There are no two opinions about the fact that intellect rather than riches will lead. It might equally be admitted by the correspondent that the heart rather than the intellect will eventually lead. Character, not brains, will count at the crucial moment. And I fancied that these young men showed character. I should be sorry to find otherwise.

Young India, 20-4-1921

[1] This was published along with the following letter dated April 10, 1921 from G. C. Varma: "The other day when you left Jubbulpore for Cuttack you had an interview with Gunada Babu at Calcutta. I have seen that interview in the *Independent* of the 2nd instant, which appears to have borrowed it from the *Servant*. I refer you to a statement in that article attributed to you. It runs thus: 'At Jubbulpore, from where he (Mahatma Gandhi) was coming, two young men (sons of rich merchants) were leading the movement very successfully against a whole host of lawyers. Being business men, they were carrying on the work of organization most effectively.'

"This statement is incorrect. The facts are: 'These young men are not merchants. They are foundation stones of the British Government in India. They are Malguzars. Their trade is to realize Rs. 100 from the poor tenants, give the Government Rs. 55 and keep Rs. 45 with themselves as commission, and guarantee to recover the money even in the worst times. What a non-co-operation with the Government !' If these Malguzars are

28. SPEECH AT MEETING IN SURAT

April 20, 1921

Mahatmaji addressed a crowded meeting in the evening attended by 15 to 20 thousand people, on the Tilak Ground. He congratulated the citizens of Surat on the excellent order and management for that day's meeting and said he was glad to see that he had not to repeat his previous remarks about the want of management. He was pleased to hear of the splendid work done by Surat and District.

That district, city, or village which completely discharged its duties can be said to have obtained swarajya. We want swarajya in which all men—even *Bhangis*—have got equal rights. When you find that you are prepared to help the weak, the miserable and the needy, you must conclude that swarajya is approaching nearer. Again swarajya is possible because Hindus and Mohammedans are united. A handful of Europeans are ruling over us because of our weakness. Our very ideas must undergo a great transformation and we must begin to realize that self-government is our birthright. Even Englishmen admit that their Empire in India is based on our weakness. Sir R. Graddock once remarked that Englishmen would rule over India only as long as the people of India would allow them to do so.

Proceeding further, he said that lawyers who had suspended their practice, students who had left Government schools must set a good example for others

[1] not co-operators, no one else is a co-operator. The Malguzari system was an invention of Todermal by which means people could be systematically dominated by the rulers through their mercenaries. These mercenaries are the Malguzars, who you have said are leading the movement. If a lawyer who has not suspended his practice is not a proper person to be an office-bearer, certainly a Malguzar too should not be an office-bearer. A Malguzar is more attached to the Government than a lawyer. In Jubbulpore these young men, Malguzars, are not leading the movement. The movement in Jubbulpore is being led by the lawyers and the whole host of them are supporting it.

"You did not give sufficient time to Jubbulpore, else the members of the Bar would have gladly seen you and discussed the matter with you. I fully believe that it will never be wealth which will lead the movement. It will always be the intellect and I hope you will correct the wrong impression created by the interview. I suspended my practice in November last."

to follow. Their character should attract others towards them. He admired the illustrious examples set by Pandit Motilal Nehru and Mr. C. R. Das. What was wanted for India was ten thousand true soldiers prepared to fight out the battle of independence.

Speaking of the decorations in the city, he said he was pleased with them, but one thing that pained him most was the use of foreign cloth in their decorations. Khaddar ought to have been used in its place.

Turning to the recommendations of the Congress Committee, he asked whether it was difficult to collect one crore of rupees when seventeen crores of rupees were wasted every year after liquor.

As for the spinning-wheel, he said it was the symbol of swarajya. Economically it was the best weapon. Every person could honestly earn two rupees per day by spinning and weaving. He, therefore, advised introduction of spinning-wheels in all families. Proceeding further, he asked the volunteers to carry on their temperance movement and thus make the country free from the vice of drinking. He concluded by requesting the audience to contribute their quota to the Tilak Swarajya Fund.

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-4-1921

29. SPEECH AT MEETING IN BULSAR

April 20, 1921

What has been said by this Parsi friend[1] in his sweet Gujarati is worth bearing in mind. Hindu-Muslim unity means simply this, that each and every community in the country, small or big, will be able to follow its own religion and live in freedom. In this unity lies the strength of 30 crores of the human race. If Hindu-Muslim unity meant the kind of thing which happened in Europe, that the big nations swallowed the smaller ones under the pretence of defending them, I would not thus, at the age of 52, run from place to place. I want neither kingdom nor wealth. I have enjoyed things to my fill. My conscience tells me that my movement is such that even the smallest community in the country can live without fear. It will not be possible to harass anyone—Parsis, Sikhs, Jews or Christians—and no evil glance can be cast even on a defenceless woman—this is the meaning of swaraj. Such swaraj will not be a gift from anyone. It will

[1] Speaking on behalf of the Parsi community, he had remarked: "In this fight for independence, the Parsis are with the Hindus and Muslims. But the Parsis hesitate a little to join it, doubting whether the interests of the community will be safeguarded under swaraj."

not fall from above, nor will it be thrown up from below; we have to establish it. The Parsi friends have a right to take time [to decide]. Let them by all means watch what the two communities do; but I am convinced that there is no danger for them. That is why I have invited them to make an offering in this *yajna*[1] for swaraj.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-5-1921

30. SPEECH AT MEETING IN SISODRA

April 21, 1921

Today you have sanctified yourselves by giving room in your midst to your own brothers [the *Antyajas*], but maintain that sanctity for ever. Do not do this in order that you may have my services or that you may please me, thinking it imprudent to kick a milch cow; do it as a matter of duty. Whatever service I render, I do merely as my dharma. I want no return from you for that service. Dharma has no concern with reward; it is concerned with God. I do not want a salary from the people. God will give me my salary and reward. Hinduism in fact teaches us that, whatever a man does, he must offer it up to God, and only then will it bear fruit. If, therefore, you have done this holy thing today, coming into contact with the *Antyajas*, as a return for my services, it will benefit neither you nor me, but it will be a credit to you only if you have done it because you believe in it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-5-1921

[1] Sacrifice

31. SPEECH AT MEETING IN NAVSARI

April 21, 1921

SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

This is not my first visit to Navsari. I came here for a day in the course of my wanderings in 1915. But times have changed. There is a big difference between then and now. Today, we are in a new era. God alone knows what this era will bring and how we shall be tested before the world. We may plan as we choose, but it is in God's hands to fulfil our plans. Man proposes and God disposes.

Misled by the apparent enthusiasm of the people and by the vows they have taken, a man like me may hope that swaraj will be established, the rule of dharma will prevail within one year; but who knows whether the thing we may establish will turn out to be God's rule or Satan's rule? Who knows now whether our swaraj will be the rule of Satan or *Ramarajya*? My conscience at any rate affirms that we are moving in the direction of dharma. Judging from the progress made, we find that, if we maintain the speed with which we have worked during the last five or six months, we shall certainly succeed in establishing the rule of dharma within the remaining six months.

I am aware that just now I am not in British territory. I am speaking in the territory of Maharaja Gaekwar. My remarks, however, will be of a general nature. My work is meant equally for British India and Indian States. It is certainly desirable that a religious spirit be infused [into the people] in both these territories and any evils among them removed.

But I know that the criticisms which I find necessary to make in British India and the advice I offer to the people there may not be relevant here. I shall, therefore, confine myself to a few general observations.

My especial object in coming to Navsari was to meet my Parsi sisters and brothers in this centre of the Parsis and say a few words to them. Navsari is a big Parsi centre. Bombay too is such a centre, but it cannot be said to be theirs exclusively. Bombay is what in English is called a "cosmopolitan city". Bombay is like Jagannathpuri [1] though it can be called that only if it is holy and I am not prepared to

[1] Puri, a place of pilgrimage in Orissa

consider Bombay to be such. So the real home of the Parsis is Navsari.

This is the birth-place of the late Dadabhai Naoroji[1]. I visited his house. For me, it is a place of pilgrimage. But even apart from my relations with him, how close my association with Parsi men and women is I have shown to some extent in my open letter to the Parsis.[2] Even in that letter, I have not given all my happy memories. There was no space for them in it. My memories about them are so happy and my association with them has been so close that I feel under a debt to them. I wrote that letter to repay my debt. I cannot forget the love which the Parsis have showered on me in India, in England, in South Africa, in Zanzibar and in Aden. I can certainly say this about myself, that I am not ungrateful. I can appreciate the value of a good turn and that is why it will pain me if the Parsis remain aloof or even neutral in the great movement that is now going on.

I have love for the Parsis and respect for their abilities; I know from experience how intelligent and efficient they are. From all this, I believe that they cannot remain aloof from this movement. It will certainly pain me if they do so or refuse to join non-co-operation.

The Parsis have a gift for business. They are second to none in business competition with anyone in the world. The community has a very enterprising spirit. Because of it, the fame of your community of eighty or a hundred thousand has spread all over the world. Wherever you have gone, you have shown your wonderful intelligence and ability. No one can equal the Parsis in generosity. No community has donated as much for philanthropic purposes as the Parsis have done. Andrew Lang has calculated figures of charities done by all the communities in the world and shown that, relatively to their population, Parsi charities exceed all others. The Hindus have given much, but the community is like an ocean and, for a community of such size, its charities are but a drop in it. The Muslims, too, have given donations and the gifts made by the Christians are also well known; however, if any comparison is possible, it is with the charities made by the Jews, and even these the Parsis surpass. The Parsi charities, besides, are meant for all. If such a community puts its ability to good use, it is bound to benefit the world.

But they have a special bond with India. India gave them

[1] 1825-1917; pioneer Indian statesman, often called "the Grand Old Man of India"; President of the Indian National Congress in 1886, 1893 and 1906

[2] *Vide* "To the Parsis", 23-3-1921.

shelter at a critical time. To be sure, she has lost nothing thereby. By accepting them, the Hindus and India as a whole have only gained. The Parsis, too, have gained. They can take pride in India, in calling themselves Indians. Coming over here, the Parsis have both taken and given. I have entertain-ed great hopes of them. I am sure that, thanks to their generosity, they will make no small contribution to the tasks of this new era. I do not ask for a contribution by way of monetary or intellectual help alone. That contribution they will certainly make; what I want from them is a contribution by way of sincere feelings of the heart—in terms of reli-gious feeling. Call to mind the commandments of the Prophet in whom you believe. I have read your scriptures in Gujarati and English, as many as I could get. I felt that I was reading the Vedas or the *Upanishads* or *Gita*. Some Parsis have compared the sayings of Zarathustra with the *Upanishads*. There is great similarity between the injunctions of Zarathustra and those of other religions. I am sure, therefore, that the Parsis will make their contribution in terms of religious feeling.

The world is sustained not by the intellect but by the heart. Not intellect but the *atman*[1] will rule it, that is, virtuous conduct will rule. I do not mean to say that there are no people of virtuous conduct at the present time. I rather use the term "virtuous conduct" in a special sense."Virtuous conduct" means living according to dharma.

Iran is an oriental country. A conflict is going on at present between the East and the West. A whirlwind from the West has overwhelmed us. Either we shall be swept away in it or we may resist it firmly and turn it back. The name of that whirlwind is "materialism" or the "ism" which looks upon money as its God. If we do not resist it but are lured into aping its ways, we shall become materialists, shall look upon money as our God and so perish.

After giving you this praise, I think it is my duty to utter a few words of caution. It is not impossible that, fascinated by English education, your community will be swept off its feet by this Western wind. The Parsis' mother tongue is Gujarati. Most of them live in Gujarat; the Parsis are thus certainly Gujaratis. And yet, as a Parsi sister wrote to me a few days ago, her Parsi brothers take pride in saying that they do not know Gujarati, that they have forgotten it. Not only that, they

[1] Self

waste a good deal of time in scrupulously following English ways. Some Parsi ladies [she said] who helped her much in this work felt ashamed of her for writing to them in Gujarati and told her that they could not write in Gujarati. This shows the unhappy condition of the community.

The English language is the craze of the day. I bear it no ill-will. But is is one thing to learn that language and quite another to make it one's mother tongue. English has no place here except as a language of administration and of business. If, nevertheless, the Parsis make it their mother tongue, it will be their and the country's misfortune. If you embrace it, you will only end up as slaves of the West and forget the wonderful teachings of your ancient prophet.

The nations of Europe are called Christian but they have forgotten the teachings of Christ. They may read the Bible or study the Hebrew language, but they do not act according to the teachings of the former. This wind blowing from the West is opposed to the teachings of Jesus. They have forgotten Jesus himself.

This is my message to my Parsi brethren. If the Parsis present here are not many, it is my request to those who have come that they should convey my message tomorrow to each and every home. You need not feel anxious because you are only a handful. Numbers are of no consequence. Virtue lies not in numbers but in behaving as men, in heroism, in courage. If there should be fifty thousand counterfeit coins, they would be worthless; the value of one genuine coin will be greater than that of any number of counterfeit ones. If, therefoe, the Parsis are genuine coins, they can give a good account of themselves tothe world. I hope they will prove themselves genuine coins.

If you let yourselves be carried away by the wind from the West, if you hanker after pleasures and luxuries, lose yourselves in slothful ease and become worshipers of Mammon, you will forget the divinity in you; and, if you forget the teachings of Zarathustra, you will lose that treasure for which you have become famous, will exchange a pearl for a pebble.

There have been many multi-millionaires among the Parsis. Though they had earned such immense wealth, they did not give up simplicity, ever kept their hearts clean and never forgot God. But I feel some doubts about the Parsi sisters and brothers of the modern age. I fear lest, bewitched by the lure of the West, they lose their

ancient heritage.

I have said more than enough to you. If you are so inclined, you may not at present join in the whole programme of non-co-operation, but in regard to one matter, I pray for your help specially. You will have laid us under a great obligation if you give up all idea of earning money through liquor-booths. It is not Parsis alone who run these booths. Hindus also do so, Anavil Brahmins among them, and Muslims too are engaged in that business. In the Punjab, there are distilleries in the hands of the Sikhs, followers of the brave Guru Govind Singh. I have been appealing to all of them. As the Parsis, however, are a small community, the thing will be easy for them. There are liquor-shops in the hands of Parsis all over India. The first task under swaraj will be to see that there are no liquor-booths and no big distilleries in the country. There may be small distilleries at wsome places to produce alcohol for medicinal purposes. But this alcohol will be treated like opium and arsenic. The latter are difficult to procure, though available at a chemist's shop. In the same way, liquor also should be difficult to procure.

I ask Parsis' help in the great movement for swadeshi. You will be glad to learn that a Parsi sister has placed an order for 40 saris of pure swadeshi. Superfine saris of hand-spun yarn can be produced in Madras. If the Parsi sisters would indulge their tastes, saris to suit their purses can be produced in Bezwada.

Some sisters have indeed adopted swadeshi but, as you know, I am a greedy an, a miser. So I cannot be happy as long as the whole of this little community does not shine with lustre. You see beauty in silk clothes, but you will be able truly to adorn yourselves and India only by wearing khadi. Many Hindus still do not wear khadi, nor do Muslims. But you should not follow others' example. If other people take to wrong ways, we need not do likewise. Your community can set an example to crores of Hindus and Muslims. When I visited a handloom factory in Surat, I was glad to find a Parsi brother doing a bit for swadeshi. But I am not a man who will be satisfied with that little. Introduce a spinning-wheel in every one of your homes. Your Parsi sisters can spin very fine yarn. You spin fine woollen yarn for your sacred thread. Dedicate this gift of yours to the country.[1]

[1] The remarks which followed were addressed to the Hindus in the audience and

This is the only country you have. Outside of it, you do not have an inch of ground which you can call yours. In fact, it is stated in our Shastras that there is no land other than Bharatavarsha in which Hindus may live and attain *moksha*[1] . This is the only land for you in which you can cultivate virtues and display those you have. Make India illustrious, make it a land of heroes.

What shall I say about the Hindus' contribution to the history of the wold ? We have had a glorious past; if, however, we fight merely on the strength of our ancient heritage, we shall lose the battle. We should show ourselves as great as our forefathers. Our sages let their bodies be cut into pieces in order to preserve their dharma. Todd[1] tells us that, whereas in Europe there was but one Thermopylae, in India we find every street and lane to have been a Thermopylae. I shall not go into history to tell you what great heroes India has produced. I shall only say this: Let us place our hands on our hearts and ask ourselves whether we have that heroism in us today.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-5-1921

32. SPEECHES IN SURAT DISTRICT [2]

April 22, 1921

The burden of his message at various places was about four main, points: collection of one crore of rupees by the 30th June, one crore signatories to the Congress creed, and running of 20 lakhs of spinning-wheels, and the curse of untouchability to be removed at the earliest possible stage. India's fitness for swaraj was to be measured by its success in achieving these things. And if they are achieved to-day, the swaraj was there to come to-morrow. . . .

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were reported separately in the account of Gandhiji's tour published in the same issue of *Navajivan*.

[1] Deliverance from phenomenal existance as the supreme end of life.

[2] Author of *Annals of Rajasthan*

[3] Gandhiji visited the principal taluka town and important villages in Surat District between April 19 and 22 and addressed a number of meetings. This is the gist of his speeches.

Mahatmaji's further advice here was now to leave alone the pleaders unable to suspend their practice and the students refusing to give up Government schools. These pleaders and these students havee already suffered in their prestige, as the Government have. The non-co-operators are now to show by their conduct the work they are about and win over the hesitating and the opponents. If, he said, only the district of Surat or even a single village were to concetrate its energies on the sole object of winning swaraj for itself without waiting for other provinces and other people, there was nothing in the world to prevent them from doing so; and again that should be the spirit with which the present programme has to be carried out. If one district or province obtains swaraj, the whole of the rest of India also would do it to-morrow. Swaraj was, further, said to be a natural thing, not an artificial thing to be imported readymade from England or a thing which could be given by anybody, either by Mahatma Gandhi himself or Mahomed Ali[1] or Shaukat Ali. As to these Ali Brothers, he said they have already won and established swaraj for themselves. What is wanted is not Gandhi Raj or Mahomed Ali Raj or Shaukat Ali Raj, but a swaraj, a Ramaraj, in which the meanest member of the depressed class and the weakest woman of the country are to have equal independence and protection.

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-4-1921

[1] 1878-1931; orator, journalist and politician; led the Khilafat Delegation to England in 1920; President of the Congress 1923.

33. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

ON WAY TO SIND,
April 23, 1921

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

Anasuyabehn informs me that you are not well mentally and physically, and that you think too much about your mother. It is only natural that you should be worrying about her. But you have regarded India as your mother. Every elderly woman is a mother. It is unbecoming to think that no one would care for you as your mother did. If we serve our mother, would she not serve us? Now you should take more care of your health and bring about a situation when you do not need any service at all. In any case when there is need, God sends someone to care for even the poorest. Would He then not send somebody to care for you? Be that as it may, I want you to be relaxed. There is a lot of work to be done. There are few who work with sincerity. You must fully do your part.

I am in Hyderabad till the 30th. I shall reach Ahmedabad on the Ist. On the 4th morning I expect to leave for Kapadwanj. On the 5th I shall be at Nandarbar, on the 6th at Bassein, and on the 7th in Bombay. I may make the necessary adjustment in the case of the last three.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

The flag should be as simple as possible.[1] Hence, it is necessary not to give too much attention to the spinning-wheel. I think even a yellow flag would do or, maybe, an ochre one. I have given a specimen to Chandulal.

MOHANDAS

[PPS.]

I think the collection from Bombay should be 30 lakhs at the very minimum.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32716

[1] *Vide* also "The National Flag", 13-4-1921.

34. SOME DOUBTS

My letter about the Parsis had led of quite a lot of controversy. Mr. G. K. Nariman has written an open letter which has appeared in other papers. Those who have been taking interest in the discussion must have read it and hence I do not publish it in Navajivan. The views expressed by Mr. Nariman deserve respectful consideration and the doubts raised in his letter probably occur to other Parsis too. Hence, I shall try to answer them.

Mr. Nariman has given the following reasons or the Parsis not joining non-co-operation.

1. We cannot do without the services of Englishmen for several years more.

2. I should try to get many more Hindus to join the movement before wanting Parsis to do so.

3. To hope to win swaraj through the spinning-wheel is like running after a mirage.

4. When men like Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Shastriar[1], and Sir Dinshaw Wachha[2] oppose the non-co-operation movement, what can the ordinary Parsi do ?

5. Either I do not understand the Khilafat agitation or I am trying to cover up the irreconcilable conflict between Hinduism and Islam.

6. There is an element of exaggeration in my views about the Punjab. Take, for instance, Lala Harkishan Lal's case.

7. The doctrine of non-violence which I preach is ridiculous, it is acceptable only to Jains and those who follow it can only commit suicide. Besides, my movement does involve violence in the form of strikes, ect.

8. Stopping consumption of liquor is all right, but efforts must be made first to wean the people from opium, etc. The more important things, however, is prevention of cow-slaughter. What contribution have I made to this ?

[1] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri (1869-1946); educationist and orator; President Servants of India Society, 1915-27; member, Viceroy's Legislative Council and Council of State; Agent-General of the Government of India in South Africa

[2] Dinshaw Edulji Wachha; prominent Indian politician; President of the Indian National Congress, 1901.

REPLY TO FIRST DOUBT

Our degradation consists in this very idea that we cannot do without Englishmen for some time yet to come, and swaraj lies in getting rid of it. In what sense were we in a miserable stage before the coming of the British? To think, besides, that the moment they leave we shall fight among ourselves is a humiliating idea. Suppose, however, that the fear is justified; we still ought to free ourselves from British tutelage even at the risk of civil war.

REPLY TO SECOND DOUBT

The statement that I should first induce many more Hindus to join the movement before expecting the Parsis to do so bespeaks our weakness. Both Parsis and Hindus are Indians. The thoughtful among both these communities owe the same duty to India. Moreover, many Hindus have already joined the movement and efforts to persuade others to join it are certainly continuing. Parsis should join the movement even if not a single Hindu were to join it or if they themselves should be convinced of its need, before others are. A person who is himself convinced should not wait for others [to join].

REPLY TO THIRD DOUBT

I admit that anyone who thinks that to hope for swaraj through the spinning-wheel is to run after a mirage can never approve of the non-co-operation movement. Gradually, India has begun to understand the truth and it is my faith that it will understand it better still. I certainly do not think that it is running after a mirage to believe that we shall be prosperous only if we return to the dharma which we have forsaken and by forsaking which we have been impoverished. It is being daily confirmed by experience that the spinning-wheel is our natural dharma. I consider it no sin to go back to the condition which existed two hundred or even two thousand years ago. It is evidence of our having exercised our judgment if we adopt again the wholesome practices which we may have given up either through ignorance or under compulsion or through sheer passage of time.

REPLY TO FOURTH DOUBT

It is indeed sad that Panditji and other big leaders have not joined this movement. When, however, leaders differ among themselves, the people must make their choice. If they believe that nothing should be done until all are of the same view, they can never make progress. Under swaraj, everyone will have to make a choice.

REPLY TO FIFTH DOUBT

It is possible that I may not understand the Khilafat issue, though I have certainly studied it to the best of my ability. I do not believe that there is an irreconcilable conflict between Islam and Hinduism. If there is, it means that Hindus and Muslims must remain enemies for ever. I do not believe that it is right for any two groups of human beings to remain mutually hostile for ever. I do not know of any rule to the effect that the Khalifa should wage war for the sake of religion at least once in ten years. I do not know that any religious was has taken place after the Crusades. I have seen nothing in Africa to suggest to me that the Muslims should have no control over Jazirat-ul-Arab[1].

REPLY TO SIXTH DOUBT

I know that there is no exaggeration in my views about the Punjab. If Lala Harkishan Lal himself has gone over to the Government, I have an added reason for non-co-operation. If such a person as even Lala Harkishan Lal feels so little hurt by the humiliation of the Punjab, it seems necessary that we should offer non-co-operation to compensate for this.

REPLY TO SEVENTH DOUBT

The doctrine of non-violence which I preach may possibly seem ridiculous. It represents Hinduism. In its practice, in greater or smaller measure, lies the vitality of all religions. There is religion only to the extent that there is compassion. There can be no limit to compassion and it is not for me to lay down any. Everyone fixes a limit for himself . In *Vaishnavism*, non-violence reigns supreme. I concede that the idea is elaborated with special emphasis in Jain works, but neither the Jain nor any other docrine has a monopoly of non-violence. It is a universal, immutable law. To describe the rules about fasting, etc., found in Jain philosophy as tending to suicide is, to my mind, not to understand that philosophy. But there is certainly no need to discuss here the extreme implications of non-violence. Even if non-violence in such form is not accepted , it cannot be gainsaid that our duty in the present circumstances is to fight peacefully—through voluntary suffering.

That Mr. Nariman has ridiculed the extreme implications of

[1] Literally, "the island of Arabia" which, as defined by Muslim religious authorities, includes Syria, Palestine and Mesopotamia

non-violence and, at the same time, characterized my activity as conductive to violence shows that he has not understood the principle of non-violence. He seems to suggest that the preaching of non-co-operation spreads hatred and that the loss which people suffer through strikes is a form of violence. The essential point of non-violence is to bear no hatred towards the man who has perpetrated violence, though we know what he has done. I cannot purge the people of the violence in their hearts by hiding from them the Punjab outrages or the Khilafat wrong. My duty is, while telling them of the massacre, to teach them to be peaceful. The suffering which strikes cause to some is not violence. One is not responsible for the suffering one may cause to others while doing one's duty. If people stop going to an opium shop and in consequence the owner thereof sustains loss, I am not to blame. He, too, benefits through the suffering caused to him. Non-co-operation means refusal both to help the sinner in his sin and to accept any help or gift from him till he has repented.

REPLY TO EIGHTH DOUBT

Mr. Nariman seems to believe that no propaganda is being done against the use of opium, etc. A movemment is being carried on to make the people give up all addictions. Since people feel tempted to visit liquor shops, picketing of these is justified. And as some Parsi friends are engaged in the liquor trade, I appeal to them to gave it up. I have also been appealing to those who seel opium . But I would argue that, if they can do so, people should give up drinking, irrespective of whether or not those addicted to opium give up their addiction.

Mr. Nariman has raised a number of issues. It is my prayer to him that, although he may oppose me over the Khilafat, the Punjab and other issues, if he finds, on independent reflection, that the consumption of liquor deserves to be stopped , he should urge Parsis to help in bringing this about. In this struggle for self-purification, even if everyone helps in that item of the programme which appeals to him, people will benefit to that extent.

I have been trying to stop the consumption of liquor; what am I doing in respect of cow-slaughter and how much time have I given to it ? This is Mr. Nariman's last shot. It has touched me to the quick. How can Mr. Nariman imagine what deep pain is caused by cow-slaughter to an orthodox Hindu like myself ? While the slaughter of cows continues, I feel that I am myself being slaughtered. I make

ceaseless efforts to rescue the cow. If I have at present staked my life to save Islam, it is in order to save the cow. I do not wish to bargain with the Muslims and so I do not raise the issue of cow-slaughter. My prayer is addressed to God . He alone knows my heart. He sees to it that generosity is rewarded with generosity. I am sure that I am saving the cow by offering my life for the sake of the Khilafat, since, as I believe, by saving Islam I shall certainly have succeeded in saving the cow. Unless

I win the love of the Muslims, I cannot save the cow from the British. I request Mr. Nariman to take my word that my whole effort is directed towards the stopping of cow-slaughter. Anyone who is not ready to sacrifice his life to save the cow is not a Hindu. So long as the Hindus, the Muslims and the Christians do not work sincerely together to defend India, the Hindus will remain Hindus only in name. But the path of non-violence which I follow tells me that I should not kill Muslims or Christians to save the cow, that on the contrary I should lay down my life to save her. Only the purest sacrifice is acceptable to God. I have been striving and requesting other Hindus, as also all the other children of India, to join me in this self-purification. Mr. Nariman is also hurt by cow-slaughter. I invite him to join in this *yagna* of self-purification.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-4-1921

35. EXPERIENCES IN GUJARAT

I have been having so many experiences that I do not have time enough to set them all down and have to omit a good many of them. The workers, being eager to get the utmost out of me during the short time [I am with them], allow me no solitude or quiet for writing. There is no limit to their greed. I, too, am over-eager to render service. I want to do as much as possible, explain things as much as I can ; hence I am not able to place all my experiences before the reader.

Till the time of writing, I have visited Anand, Ras, Borsad, Halol, Kalol, Vejalpur, Godhra, Surat, Olpad and Rander. There is no end to the enthusiasm of the people everywhere. At every place, the meetings were attended by large numbers of men and women. I saw increased spinning-wheel activity in all the places. In almost every town or village, people contributed to the Tilak Swaraj Fund.

A WIDOW'S GIFT

A widow in Anand gave away a bar of gold, weighing about 25 *tolas*, which she had with her. This, from a widow, is a gift indeed. I asked the lady her name. She refused to give it. What need to give one's name and address for money donated for a holy cause ? I did not have the courage to ask any more questions.

A CONDITIONAL DONATION

According to her wont, Mrs. Kothawala attended the meeting at Godhra. She told me that she liked all my activities except non-co-operation and asked me to give a chance to Lord Reading.

I said: “I certainly desire to give a chance to everyone. Lord Reading has only to do justice to get co-operation. Persuade him yourself that he should repent, apologize to the country for the crimes committed and do justice. No dispute will remain then.”

“Tell me that you will give him a chance. Will you write to him and tell him that you will withdraw non-co-operation if he does justice?”

I said: “I shall certainly do so when an opportunity offers itself. But Lord Reading knows as much.”

On this condition, this good lady gave me Rs. 50. If only, on that condition, all women give as much, I think a crore of rupees will be collected immediately.

ORDERLINESS

I have been noticing increasing orderliness at all places, but I found it most in Surat. Wherever we went, we found that the programme could be carried out with the least noise and hustle, as the people had been instructed beforehand. The people having been told in advance, contributions were also collected [before the meeting started]. Women in Surat donated even their diamond rings.

EXPERIENCE AT RANDER

While the Surat Municipality gave me an address of welcome, I came to know that the Rander Municipality had not agreed to give one. All the same, Hindu and Muslim youths took courage and presented addresses, one on behalf of the citizens and another on behalf of the Khilafat [Committee] . The streets, too, were decorated. Still, I could see that the leaders there had kept away. They showed only as much interest as one would expect children to do. I tried hard, but in such an atmosphere I could collect very little at Rander. One

Muslim friend put a five-rupee note into my hand, and a lady gave me five rupees, promised to ply the spinning-wheel for two hours daily and not to wear foreign cloth thenceforth. I have not had a more insipid experience during my entire tour than at Rander.

I would advise the young men of Rander not to feel dispirited. They should give up trying to get people to give welcome addresses, but should certainly work hard to collect funds. Good, hardworking and modest young men can do a lot. They will get contributions from the middle classes. Sceptics will come to have faith. The most hopeful sign is the fact that young men, both Hindu and Muslim, are working hard unitedly and with perfect understanding.

TWO SHORTCOMINGS

I observe that people still do not fully understand swadeshi or are not very particular about the matter. Foreign cloth and foreign paper still continue to be used for decorations. If we want to bring about boycott of foreign cloth this very year, we shall have to give thought to everything we do . We shall have to pay attention even to the smallest detail. Only if we discard foreign cloth as a matter of duty shall we be able to accomplish this great and yet easy task. And the thing should not be delayed either. For those who understand, even cloth produced in Indian mills is foreign cloth. We shall not always be able to tell the difference between foreign cloth and cloth produced by Indian mills. The latter should be for the poor, who have not received the message of swadeshi at all. True swadeshi is that alone in which all the processes through which cotton has to pass are carried out in the same village or town. The town in which this is done will prosper and win its freedom. In order to bring this about, people should be thoroughly vigilant in boycotting foreign cloth.

The second defect is that we still cannot overcome our weakness for offering flower garlands. I see no profit in this practice. A countless number of them are used, to no good purpose. At present we simply have no money to throw away in this manner. Garlands ought to be of yarn only. Yarn can be arranged in many artistic ways and made into garlands; it can be braided in many ways. It can be made into chain-like lengths. There is great love and thoughtfulness in offering a garland of even plain hanks of fine yarn spun by oneself. The person receiving a garland of yarn can make good use of it. A time is coming when, if garlands of yarn are handed over to the poor as gifts, they will have good use for them . No one has any use

for garlands, and using flowers when not needed is so much of a waste.

WORK, WORK, WORK

If we wish to win swaraj during this very year, we should busy ourselves entirely in work. Meetings, processions and things like that are all right to the extent they arouse the people. But, where people have already been aroused , we should merely go on working silently. Every day, one should go round collecting money and persuading people to spin, should get new spinning-wheels made and introduce them into homes which are without them, see to the stocking of khadi, plead with those who may not have started using it to do so and induce enthusiastic persons to carry on work for stopping the consumption of liquor. In this way, everyone must engage himself in some work for swaraj and induce others to do likewise.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-4-1921

36. NOTES

"NAVAJIVAN'S" LANGUAGE

A Parsi sister, a Parsi brother and some others have sent me their criticism of *Navajivan's* language. A constant effort is being made to keep its language simple. I believe that it is not within the scope of *Nivajivan's* effort to improve the language or introduce difficult words into it; its effort is limited to propagating ideas in simplest language , such language as the largest number of people can understand. However, all contributors do not keep this aim in view. Everyone uses certain words peculiar to him. I also see that, in consequence, the language used in *Navajivan* is not always simple. I wish to assure these critics that there is no deliberate attempt to make the language difficult. The aim will always be to keep it simple. I thank the writers for their criticism. I shall certainly take care to see that fewer Sanskrit words are used. I know that a large number of Muslim and Parsi friends read *Navajivan*, as also a good many women who cannot understand difficult words. I consider it my duty to make *Navajivan* easy for them to read.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-4-1921

37. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

April 24, 1921

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

Miss Masurkar has written from Allahabad. We can now send for her if we want to start a girls' school. She says she need not even be paid any salary. But we must definitely give her a salary. Another lady is also willing to come along with her. Prof. Tahalramani has arrived. Now you can consult anyone you want.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32718

38. LETTER TO C.F. ANDREWS

HYDERABAD (SIND),

April 25 [*1921*]

MY DEAREST CHARLIE[1],

I have your letter. I have replied to your query in *Young India*. If the reply lacks fullness, you will ask. I hold very strong views on the question. My recent experiences confirm me in my opinion.

As to chastity between husband and wife I do not carry on any propaganda. It is too sacred for preaching. But with me the thing is more than a pious wish. If I could find a way of stopping procreation in a civil and voluntary manner and whilst India remains in the present miserable state, I would do so today. But I know that it is impossible. At the same time I may tell you that the effect of that article was not inconsiderable. To my knowledge several young men are restraining themselves with profit both to themselves and their views. It surprises me that you do not appreciate the obvious. But I must not argue. It is a fundamental truth to which you must come in time.

I do hope you are better.

Yours,

MOHAN

[1] Charles Freer Andrews (1871-1940); English missionary, author, educationist, and close associate of Gandhiji

[P.S.]

Did I tell you that Lalchand had not only proved dishonest, he had proved unscrupulous and impudent. His misappropriations are manifest. He sought to cover them with further lies.

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's hand : G.N. 965

39. MESSAGE TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"[1]

Of Mr. Horniman, I can say that the more I knew him the more I loved him. Few Englishmen have served journalism and, through that gift, India, with such fearlessness and strength of conviction as Mr. Horniman, and this I am able to say, although I often disapproved of his strong language and invective of which he was a master.

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-4-1921

40. NOTES

SATYAGRAHA IN MULSHI

My heart goes out to these poor people.[2] I wish the great house of the Tatas, instead of standing on their legal rights, will reason with the people themselves, and do whatever they wish in consultation with them. I have some experience of Land Acquisition Acts. I had nearly eighty cases to deal with. Here the reason for the acquisition was not industrial development but insanitation. I know that the people dispossessed never got the exact equivalent. What is the value of all boons that the Tata scheme claims to confer upon India, if it is to be at the unwilling expense of even one poor man? I dare say the problem of disease and poverty can be easily solved, and the survivors will live in luxury if the three crore half-starved men and women, and lakhs of the decrepit humanity were shot and their bodies utilized for manure, or their bones utilized for making knife-handles. And yet no one but

[1] The message was published on the second anniversary of the deportation on April 26,1919 without trial of Benjamin Guy Horniman, editor of *The Bombay Chronicle*. *Vide* "Satyagraha Leaflet No. 7", 26-4-1919, "Mr. Horniman", 7-6-1919 and "Letter to a Lady Friend in South Africa", 18-6-1919.

[2] The peasants of Mulshi village who had threatened to offer satyagraha if their grievances were not redressed; *vide* "Speech at Maharashtra Provincial Conference, Bassein", 7-5-1921.

a lunatic will put up such a suggestion. Is the case any weaker when men and women are not to be shot, but compulsorily dispossessed of their valued lands about which sentiment, romance, and all that makes life worth living, have grown up? I suggest to the custodians of the great name that they would more truly advance India's interest if they will defer to the wishes of their weak and helpless countrymen. The duty of the satyagrahis is written in letters of gold. There can be no satyagraha in an unjust cause. Satyagraha in a just cause is vain, if the men espousing it are not determined and capable of fighting and suffering to the end ; and the slightest use of violence often defeats a just cause. Satyagraha excludes the use of violence in any shape or form, whether in thought, speech, or deed. Given a just cause, capacity for endless suffering, and avoidance of violence, victory is a certainty.

DISAPPEARING UNTOUCHABILITY

Of all the sweet experiences during my Gujarat tour, none was sweeter than the sympathetic manner in which the 'suppressed' were received by the other Hindus. Everywhere the audience has received my remarks on the matter without resentment. At Kalol there was to be a meeting of 'untouchables' to be addressed by me. I pleaded with the Mahajans that they should permit me to address them in the *pandal* erected for the general meeting. After some hesitation they agreed. I was to have gone to fetch these 'outcasts' from their quarters. Their abode was too far from the *pandal* to enable them to come. I, therefore, addressed them near the hospital. But I was glad to note that many orthodox Hindus, who accompanied me, freely mixed with the men and women who had flocked round me from the pariah quarters. But the height of satisfaction was reached when in Sisodra, a big village near Navsari, there were knowingly admitted to the place reserved for the elite of the village all the many *Dheds* who were standing at a distance from the great meeting which I was addressing. As they were admitted, not a man or woman moved or protested. Almost every one in the village was present at the meeting. People from surrounding villages, too, had attended. This deliberated and solemn admission of several hundred men and women of the untouchable class to the centre of a great gathering like the above is to me a sure sign of the pure religious character of the movement . Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel[1] in order to make assurance doubly sure asked

[1] 1875-1950; President of the Indian National Congress, 1931; Deputy Prime Minister of India, 1947-50

those who approved of the step to raise their hands, and quite a forest of hands went up. The experiment was repeated in Bardoli before an equally large audience and with equally satisfactory results. Untouchability is surely disappearing, and with its disappearance the way to swaraj is becoming safe and easy.

A MOUNTAIN OF YARN-BALLS

Sisodra, which but a year ago had no hand-spinning, showed fifty maunds of hand-spun yarn beautifully piled up in a house. Hundreds of spinning-wheels are now working in this and the surroundings villages. The sight of women and children bringing to me presents of yarn is as usual now in Gujarat as in the Punjab. Indeed, the students of Gujarat can certainly give points to the Punjab in spinning. These students have learnt spinning in an incredibly short time and are now organizing villa-ges for spinning work. Let the Punjabis beware. I should be sorry to find the Punjab beaten in the race. It has stubborn rivals in Andhra, Karnatak, and Gujarat. The sceptics should visit the centres where spinning is going on in an organized fashion, and they will discover economic laws which will falsify the teachings of the economics of the textbooks.

A WIDOW'S GIFT

Men and women have given freely of monies and ornaments. But a widow of Anand surprised us all by giving away a nugget of gold valued at Rs.700. I asked her to give me her name. She refused saying the gold was given for God's service.

ENGLISH EDUCATION

A friend asks me to give my considered view on the value of English education and explain my talk on the sands at Cuttack.[1] I have not read the report of the talk. But I gladly respond to the friend's wish. It is my considered opinion that English education in the manner it has been given has emasculated the English-educated Indians, it has put a severe strain upon the Indian students' nervous energy, and has made of us imitators. The process of displacing the vernacular has been one of the saddest chapters in the British connection. Ram Mohan Rai[2] would have been a greater reformer and

[1] *Vide* "Congress Resolution on Non-co-operation", before 27-3-1921.

[2] Raja Ram Mohan Roy(1774-1833); scholar, social reformer and founde of Brahmo Samaj; worked for the abolition of the practice of sati.

Lokamanya Tilak[1] would have been a greater scholar, if they had not to start with the handicap of having to think in English and transmit their thoughts chiefly in English. Their effect on their own people, marvellous as it was, would have been greater if they had been brought up under a less unnatural system. No doubt they both gained from their knowledge of the rich treasures of English literature. But these should have been accessible to them through their own vernaculars. No country can become a nation by producing a race of translators. Think of what would have happened to the English if they had not an authorized version of the Bible. I do believe that Chaitanya, Kabir, Nanak, Guru Govindsingh, Shivaji, and Pratap were greater men then Ram Mohan Rai and Tilak. I know that comparisons are odious. All are equally great in their own way. But judged by the results, the effect of Ram Mohan and Tilak on the masses is not so permanent or far-reaching as that of the others more fortunately born. Judged by the obstacles they had to surmount, they were giants, and both would have been greater in achieving results, if they had no been handicapped by the system under which they received their training. I refuse to believe that the Raja and the Lokamanya could not have thought the thoughts they did without a knowledge of the English language. Of all the superstitions that affect India, none is so great as that a knowledge of the English language is necessary for imbibing ideas of liberty and developing accuracy of thought. It should be remembered that there has been only one system of education before the country for the past fifty years, and only one medium of expression forced on the country. We have, therefore, no data before us as to what we would have been but for the education in the existing schools and colleges. This, however, we do know that India today is poorer than fifty years ago,less able to defend herself, and her children have less stamina. I need not be told that that is due to the defect in the system of Government . The system of education is its most defective part. It was conceived and born in error, for the English rulers honestly believed the indigenous system to be worse than useless . It has been nurtured in sin, for the tendency has been to

[1] Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920); patriot, political leader, scholar an author; one of the founders of the Deccan Education Society, Poona, and of the newspapers *Kesari* and *The Mahratta*.

dwarf the Indian body, mind, and soul.

ANOTHER SECRET TREATY

"Murder will out." One wonders whether those who negotiated Secret Treaties during the late unholy war, ever realized that they would all eventually see the light of day. It is highly probable that they knew that they would be out, and that they, the authors, would have to bear the brunt of criticism. It is highly probable that they derived Jesuistical satisfaction from the fact that, at the time these treaties were negotiated, they could be kept secret and that they served the purpose for which they were intended. Such seems to be the treaty unearthed by *The Bombay Chronicle*, and said to have been entered into between the British Government and the Sheriff of Mecca. If it is true, it shows the depth to which the British ministers descended for the purpose of gaining their end. And now that the end is reached, they treat their own written word as so much waste paper. Is it any wonder that millions of Indians have lost faith in Great Britain and refuse to co-operate with her so long as she will not retrace her steps and purify herself of the corruption that is eating into her moral being?

TOO LATE !

A Parsi friend, who sends Rs.10 for the Tilak Swaraj Fund, writing from Bombay says :

> Your appeal to the Parsis comes too late. The Government of Bombay has already pocketed this time in advance nearly 23 lakhs of rupees, fearing a movement from you. If the Parsis can be assured that no other community would get into their place and that you can eradicate the evil for all times then I assure hearty support from the enlightened Parsi community.

If the Government has taken the full annual charge in advance, those who close their shops for the purpose of advancing the cause of temperance must get a refund when better times come. The liquor dealers are obviously not non-co-operators. There is no reason why they should not apply to the Government for a refund. As for the assurance required by the friend, I can only say that no reform has yet been brought about on his conditions. His argument means that no one need be good unless all become good, whereas reformers set the example by standing alone. My appeal to the Parsis is to join this temperance movement whether the others do or not. As a matter of fact several among the non-Paris have given up drink traffic.

I often receive complaints of ill-treatment from Mesopotamia and from those who have returned from Mesopotamia. Every one of the correspondents has written about the inhuman treatment received by them. The latest letter was not received by me. Maulana Shaukat Ali, one of the recipients, has forwarded his copy to me. I can no longer withhold publication of such letters. The complainants are at least entitled to the relief that publicity of their grievance may bring them. A helpless India cannot do more for her exiles. The letter is signed by three persons. I purposely refrain from publishing their names in order to protect them against harm being done to them by their officers.

It will be noticed that the writers have written to those whose names they have read in papers. The writers complain of ill-treatment by the Arabs. I do not wonder. Helpless themselves, the Arabs vent their wrath against the Indian soldiers and clerks in the hope, I suppose, that they will not dare to offer for service in Mesopotamia. Let me hope that the publicity I am giving the letter will deter others from being allured thereto by tempting offers. In no case should a self-respecting Indian make of the misfortune of the brave Arabs a means of livelihood. I give the letter[1] word for word as received, omitting references to the corps after the names of victims.

Young India, 27-4-1921

41. THE CURSE OF BETTING

You will earn the gratitude and thanks of thousands of wives, both European and Indian, if you can succeed in putting a stop to betting at the races. My husband was an ideal husband—until he took to betting at the races. We are now in debt, and, although he draws a good salary and does not drink alcohol, we are hard up, and I am sure this is the experience of very many wives. I have often implored him on my bended knees not to go to the races but to no purpose. And does it not seem very hard that wives and children should suffer because their husbands cannot refrain from going to the races and losing money ?

It is true that alcohol is ruining thousands, but betting at the races is certainly ruining tens of thousands.

[1] This is not reproduced here.

By practically robbing the public, the W.I.T. Club can afford to pay its European employees handsome salaries. If you were only in the know, I am sure you would agree with me that hanky-panky tricks are carried on by the Turf Club, and thus the public are cheated and robbed of a lot of money. Do, for God's sake, try, and right matters. Things were certainly better when the book-makers were allowed to take bets on the race-course.

Sir, I am sure you are acquainted with a number of men on the new Councils, and, with their aid, I do hope you will succeed in putting a stop to betting at the races. If Government would take over and manage the totes, I am sure, things would be more fair and square. The public invariably lose, and those who win are the owners of horses and their trainers and jockeys; and is it not a scandalous shame that Government should connive at it, simply because some or their big officials are keenly interested in horse-racing?

I had better not offer my signature to this letter as my husband is in Government service; but I pray that you will interest yourself in what I have written and succeed in stopping betting at the races.

This letter has been travelling with me for some time. The readers will share my feelings that it is a pathetic letter. Anonymous letters are rarely valuable. But this one is certainly an exception, though the writer has chosen not to disclose her name.

I know nothing of horse-racing. I have ever looked upon it with horror for its associations. I know that many men have been ruined on the race course.

But I must confess I have not had the courage to write anything against it. Having seen even an Aga Khan, prelates, viceroys, and those that are considered the best in the land openly patronizing it and spending thousands upon it, I have felt it to be useless to write about it. As journalist and reformer, my function is to call public attention to these vices about which there is likelihood of public opinion being created. Much as I disapprove of vaccination, I deem it to be waste of efforts to draw public attention to the evil. I must own that I had not the courage to bring the drink traffic in the campaign of purification. It has come unsought. The people have taken it up of their own accord.

The surest sign that non-co-operation is a movement of purification is that many abuses are being removed by the people without any guidance or preaching. And it is in such hope about betting that I have published the above letter.

I am aware that the writer would be satisfied merely with some

modification. What is required is a total destruction of the pest. Betting at races is a part of the gambling mania. If only the people will non-co-operate, the evil will die a natural death. Thousands who attend the race course do so merely for fun. They attend either to see horses run breathlessly, or because it is the fashion, but they, nevertheless, aid and abet the ruin of many a gambler.

But betting is, I apprehend, more difficult to deal with than drinking. When vice becomes a fashion and even a virtue, it is a long process to deal with it. Betting is not only fashionable but is hardly regarded as a vice. Not so drinking. Fortunately, it is still the fashion to consider drinking a weakness, if not positively a vice. Every religion has denounced it with more or less vehemence. But betting has escaped such special attention. Let us hope, however, that the vigilant public will find a more innocent recreation than attending the race course, and thus show its disapproval of gambling at the race course.

Young India, 27-4-1921

42. A NON-BRAHMIN'S COMPLAINT

TO

THE EDITOR

Young India

SIR,

Mr. Gandhi made some remarks regarding Brahmins and non-Brahmins in the course of his lecture at the Beach in Madras last Friday. His speech has caused great pain to the non-Brahmin nationalists of Madras. It would have been highly preferable if Mr. Gandhi had not at all touched on this point; for from his speech it was evident that he was completely ignorant of Dravidian civilization, religion, culture, and the inner meaning and causes of the present non-Brahmin movement. He does not seem to have recognized the special features of Dravidian civilization which marks off South India from the rest of India. In praising the Brahmins for their contribution to the religion and civilization of India (probably he means North India), he has involuntarily cast a slur on the non-Brahmins whose ancestors have also contributed as much as, if not more than, the Brahmins to the glory of South India as seen in their literature, religion, and philosophy.

It need hardly be pointed out that nothing can offend a whole community like a slur of the above kind, even though it may be done unwittingly by one whose heart is overflowing with love, and for whom the community has the highest regard. Further,

the object of Mr. Gandhi's recent visit and proposed long tour in the South in the middle of the next month is, we may take it, to strengthen the cause, and propagate the movement of non-co-operation.

Surely, making hasty and flippant remarks about a highly vexed question is likely to weaken the cause he advocates and estrange the sympathies of a vast majority of the masses who feel strongly on the movematter.

If he really wants to bridge the gulf unhappily widening between the Brahmins and non-Brahmins of South India, let Mr. Gandhi take up the question in right earnest with an entirely blank and open mind, and then he may in all probability be in a position, after careful study, to find out a solution for the problem. Otherwise he will do well in the interest of the great non-co-operation movement to leave severely alone the Brahmin and non-Brahmin controversy in the course of his forthcoming long tour in South India.

Madras, 11th April, 1921 C. KANDASWAMY

I have received more letters in a similar strain. The correspondents have clearly misunderstood me. I have not seen the report of my speech. I do not, therefore, know whether it lends itself to misinterpretation. But I claim that the Brahmins' service to Hinduism or humanity is unaffected and undiminished by the achievements of the Dravidian civilization which nobody denies or disputes. I warn the correspondents against segregating the Dravidian South from the Aryan North. The India of today is a blend not only of two but of many other cultures.

Young India, 27-4-1921

43. TO GUJARATIS

It is early morning and I am sitting, all by myself, under a tree on the blanks of the mighty Indus. Birds are chirping among the trees. No one is in sight except who or three volunteers. In the distance, on one side, is to be seen the Kotri bridge; on the other nothing but water. On he opposite bank are trees and a few scattered houses, with two or three tiny boats anchored idly in the water. There is a breeze and, thanks to it, the water dances in ripples and makes soft music. Water and sand shine like gold in the sunlight. My Sindhi brethren have bound me securely on all sides with the silken cord of love.

Today is Monday and so they have found for me a secluded and cool spot and lodged me there. When people tell me that my

renunciation is great, I smile. The happiness, tranquillity and joy which are mine, even an emperor is not likely to have. I should think rather that such peace was impossible for an emperor. The very responsibilities of government are a crushing burden on him. In my own experience I have confirmation of the truth that the mind alone is the cause of freedom or bondage.

When I compare this love with what I recently enjoyed in Gujarat, they seem to me to be alike. Wherever I go, I feel as if I was receiving the same love as in Gujarat. The reason is that I can regard Sind, too, as my land and feel the joys and sorrows of the Sindhis as much as I do those of Gujaratis. I do not desise even in my dreams any benefits to Gujarat at the cost of Sind. But my patriotism and my religion make me vigilant lest Sind should learn the weakness of Gujarat. Just as I would never have Sind suffer in order that Gujarat may benefit, about foreign countries, too, I feel the same. I would not be guilty of seeking any benefit to India at the cost of a foreign country. I regard only such an attitude as true patriotism.

But my patriotism is as narrow as it is broad. I have no interest whatever in striving for the welfare of the whole world. I am interested only in the welfare of my own country. I see the good of the world in the good of my country. My *varnashrama* dharma teaches me that there must be some significance in the fact of my being born in India instead of in Europe. Every man is born a debtor. If others owe him anything, he never thinks, should not think, of the fact. The business man who examines his debit account does not have to worry about his credit account. Everyone who learns to discharge his duty gets his rights as a matter of course.

My patriotism directs my attention only to the duties which my country owes. My pride as a Gujarati only tells me what the Gujarati's duty towards India is. If this line of thinking is correct, if my Gujarati sisters and brothers accept it, they certainly know the duty which they owe.

Gujarat by itself can win swaraj before the end of this year. Every person can win his own swaraj, every village can win its own; and everyone, in winning his own swaraj, will be contributing to the winning of swaraj for India.

Those who rest content with paying their own share and no more will show themselves misers. The conditions to be fulfilled for winning swaraj is that it is not enough if everyone pays his own share;

all should give the most they can. When every individual is ready to bear the burden which all together should carry, only then can the burden be effectively distributed, for everyone's capacity is not the same. Moreover, if in a situation like this everyone does his part of the job and no more, the poor will get crushed by the rich.

India has a population of 32 crores. To give—to collect—a crore of rupees means every person paying two pice. If a millionaire gives two pice and no more, who will pay on behalf of the destitutes, the children, the maimed and the brazen-faced? The right thing is that a millionaire should be ready to bear the whole burden. He to whom much has been given should give much.

Gujarat should calculate its share according to this method of reckoning. It is certainly not too much to expect a collection of Rs.10 lakhs from Gujarat. In fixing the amount at 10 lakhs, I do not take into account Gujaratis staying outside. Gujaratis residing in Bengal may, if they choose, send contributions to Gujarat, but they ought to pay their share to Bengal. Gujaratis living in Madras must serve Madras. It will speak for their culture, and India's, if the Gujaratis spend a good part of their wealth at the place where they earn it. It is with these considerations in mind that I fix Gujarati's quota at Rs.10 lakhs.

I have excluded even Bombay in fixing this figure. The Gujaratis living in Bombay must contribute a handsome amount there. I intend to write later about what I expect from Bombay. At the moment, I am banking on 10 lakhs from Gujaratis living in Gujarat.

The practical way for collecting this amount, or any other bigger or smaller amount, is that workers in every district and Indian State should assume responsibility for raising such portion of it as is within their means.

This holds good in regard to [enrolling] Congress members as well. We should expect a larger number of members where the awakening is greater. If towns like Surat and Nadiad, in which the awakening has been great, rest content with enrolling only as many members as it may fall to their share to enrol, we would simply lose the game which we are about to win. In places where the awakening has been great, I certainly expect that every adult above 21 years of age, whether a man or a woman, a *Dhed* or a *Bhangi*, a Hindu or a Muslim, will be enrolled as a Congress member. If a man is too poor to spare four annas, his neighbour should give him that amount and

get him enrolled.

The arguments about membership and funds also applies to the spinning-wheel. Where there is greater capacity for work and greater enlightenment, we ought to succeed in introducing a greater number of spinning-wheels. It is only thus by helping one another in every way that we can succeed in implementing our modest, simple and easy-to-understand programme.

Although the programme is an easy one, it is also one which can never be carried out if we remain indolent. It can be implemented only if all workers work honestly and to the best of their ability all the time. This programme is a test for us, has put us on trial and is the primary stage in our education for swaraj. It is, however, a stage which takes us so ar that, if we emerge successful from the test, hardly three months will be needed for the rest of

he training, for the test is of a kind which will give us self-confidence, courage and strength.

I hope Gujarat will discharge its duty fully.

I have marvelled at the awakening among the women of Gujarat. They have great power in their hands. In the programme

of work for swaraj, the women's share is as great as, in fact greater than, the men's. I pray to God that the women of Gujarat may play their part to the full and win glory for themselves and for the name of Gujarat and of India.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-5-1921

44. MY NOTES

MAKING HARTALS CHEAP

There seems to be an epidemic of hartals. Karachi, especially, has crossed the limit. Five hartals in a month! It is a hartal if someone is arrested, a hartal if someone is released and a hartal again if the Governor pays a visit. Resorting to hartals in this manner deprives them of all value. To me a hartal is a sacred and powerful weapon. A hartal is in place on an occasion of great religious significance, or it may be resorted to for giving expression to people's feelings when they are very strong. If we look upon any and every occasion as of religious significance or let ourselves be moved by strong feelings whenever something happens and so call for a hartal, we shall have made our measure of what constitutes religious significance or strength of feelings cheap indeed. Had I not felt that we could not do without a hartal during the Satyagraha Week, I would certainly not have been instrumental in further lowering the value of hartals in this season of cheap hartals. I hope that henceforth a hartal will be called for at any place only on rare occasions. The best course is not to have a hartal unless the Congress and the Khilafat Committee have discussed the matter and issued a statement calling for one.

PRISON-PALACE

It is, moreover, a sign of weakness on our part to declare a hartal when someone is arrested. Actually, we want to fill the jails. Our delive-rance will be possible only when people in their thousands go to jail. Under an oppressive Government, generally the prison is the only sacred place for a good man. Jail is the dwelling-place of our freedom. When large numbers of wholly innocent men are in jail, we may take it that swaraj is at hand. If we wish to make the jail our natural home under this Government, there is no sense in our declaring a hartal when someone goes to jail. When we have really shed the fear of jail, the Government will not care to imprison us. When we have learnt to bear the cruellest outrages with a smiling face rather than crawl on our stomachs, refuse to salute the Union Jack under force and to rub the nose on the ground,[1] when we can stand up to face Dycrism and receive bullets on the chest instead of being shot in the back, swaraj will be ours that very day; for heroism, the true

[1] These indignities were inflicted on the poeple during the Martial Law in the Punjab in April 1919; *vide* "Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.

Kshatriya spirit, lies in this. For cultivating the spirit, what is needed is not a strong body but a strong, fearless heart. The marks of a Kshatriya spirit are not cruelty and hard-heartedness; it consists, rather, in forbearance, readiness to forgive, compassion, nobility, *apalayanam*[1] and the strength to stand unshaken and fearless even under a shower of bullets. The true Kshatriya does not kill but receives blows on himself. The *mahant*[2] of Nankana Saheb cannot be described as a Kshatriya, he was a murderer.[3] Lachhman Singh and Dulip Singh were true Kshatriyas.[4] This Kshatriya spirit is possible even for a weak and handicapped child. Non-violent non-co-operation is a means of cultivating the Kshatriya virtues. Imam Hussen and Hassan were Kshatriyas. Their oppressor was a tyrant. The child Prahlad[5] was a Kshatriya and Hiranyakashipu a demon. *Varnashrama* does not mean that members of the other castes cannot have the Kshatriya spirit. Members of all the four castes should have the virtues of a Kshatriya, though in a Kshatriya they should be prominent and it is his business in life to cultivate them. But anyone who, born as a Kshatriya, uses his brute strength against the weak is not a Kshatriya but the opposite of a Kshatriya, a *Rakshasa*[6] . The Kshatriya spirit has almost wholly disappeared from India and the aim of non-violent non-co-operation is to revive it.

LACK OF CULTURE

A copy of the pamphlet published at the time of H.E. the Governor 's visit to Karachi has come into my hands. It contains these sentences:

> The Governor is arriving this morning. Do not join the procession in his honour. Our Congress has directed that no Indian should associate himself in any way with the present Government. Observe a hartal on Monday, the 21st instant, the demonstrate to the Government that we desire swaraj. Suspend all work and pray to God for swaraj within a year.

A non-co-operator ought not to be discourteous. We must not omit to address men in authority in terms showing respect, as we intend to show such respect even hereafter. Our non-co-operation is not against the Governor of Bombay as an individual or against the post he holds. It is against the political system as such. There is no

[1] Not running away from battle in fear.
[2] Chief priest.
[3] For the incident referred to, *vide* "Sikh Awakening", 13-3-1921.
[4] *Ibid*
[5] He was persecuted by his father Hiranyakashipu for worshipping Vishnu.
[6] Demon

meaning in our observing a hartal when a Governor visits a part of his Presidency if we have nothing against him in particular, and it is lack of culture to refer to him in unmannerly language. Even when speaking of the man who perpetrated the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, we use his full name. We have, and need have, no compunction in referring to him as General Dyer.The non-co-operator who disregards the formal courtesy of language violates his self-imposed rule of peacefulness.

DEMONSTRATE TO WHOM ?

The Congress directive is not for a hartal on every occasion, but the foregoing appeal makes it seem that it is. What is it we need to demonstrate to the Government through hartals ? We wish to win swaraj by our own strength. If we can gain strength through hartals, let us by all means have them. On this occasion, however, the appeal itself makes it clear that the hartal was intended to demonstrate something to the Government. There is little we need to demonstrate to the Government, or, rather, it is sound work which we need to show. What that work is the Congress has indicated.

MY PRAYER

A gentleman, writing about the prayer I made at the time of the *Antyaj* Conference[1] , says that he could not understand its point. I do not know whether my speech has been correctly reported. My prayer is this: The only thing dear to me is *moksha*. My whole effort is to attain *moksha* at the end of this very life. It is with this aim that I have taken up so serious a movement as non-co-operation. However, if I do not have my aspiration fulfilled at the end of this life and if the sin of untouchability will not have disappeared by then, I would pray to God that I may have my next birth in an *Antyaj* family so that I could suffer all that they do and do rigorous *tapascharya* to mitigate their sufferings. I believe that the spirit of compassion which I have learnt to value as a *Vaishnava* and of which I have drunk deep from Tulsidas's *Ramayana* teaches me to pray for nothing else but this. The cruel oppression of the *Antyajas* in the name of Hinduism is intolerable to me; it ought to be so to every Hindu.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 1-5-1921

[1] *Vide* “Speech at Suppressed Classes Conference, Ahmedabad”, 13-4-1921.

45. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

Monday [*May 2, 1921*][1]

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I have your letter. Your sister said you had some trouble in understanding my letter. I shall explain when we meet. My main point is that you should stop worrying. Mother is bound to depart, leaving her son behind. How long can you grieve over her death?

I shall have to go to Allahabad on the 6th. I shall reach Bombay from Bassein by any available train. Reserve two seats for me for the night train to Allahabad. I would you like to come by the same train. I shall definitely be there on the 10th.

I am also writing directly to Bassein.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

4th Kapadvanj
5th Nandarbar

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32685

46. NOTES

A SET- BACK

If the facts reported in the Press are substantially correct, the Malegaon non-co-operators have been false to their creed, their faith, and their country. They have put back the hands of the clock of progress. Non-violence is the rock on which the whole structure of non-co-operation is built. Take that away and every act of renunciation comes to naught, as artificial fruit is no more than a showy nothing. The murder of the men who were evidently doing their duty was, if the report is correct, deliberate. It was a cowardly attack. Certain men wilfully broke the law, and invited punishment.

There could be no justification for resentment of such imprisonment. Those who commit violence of the Malegaon type[2] are

[1] It appears that the letter was written form Ahmedabad on this date, a Monday. The date is confirmed by Gandhiji's travel schedule as mentioned in the letter, for he reached Allahabad on May 9, 1921. The "6th" in the second paragraph appears to be a slip for '9th'.

[2] In April 1921 a police sub-inspector and four constables were killed in an act of mob violence which was provoked by the trial of Khilafat workers.

the real co-operators with the Government. The latter will gladly lose a few officers if thereby they could kill non-co-operation. A few more such murders and we shall forfeit the sympathy of the masses. I am convinced that the people will not tolerate violence on our part. They are by nature peaceful and they have welcomed non-co-operation because it is deliberately non-violent.

What must we do then? We must ceaselessly preach against violence alike in public and in private. We must not show any sympathy to the evil-doers. We must advise the men who have taken part in the murders to surrender themselves if they are at all repentant. The workers must be doubly careful in their talks. They must cease to talk of the evil of the Government and the officials, whether European or Indian. Bluster must give place to the work of building up put before the nation by the Congress. We must be patient if there is no response to the demand for men, money, and munitions. All police orders must be strictly obeyed. There should be no processions or hartals when known workers are prosecuted or imprisoned. If we welcome imprisonments of innocent men, as we must, we ought to cultivate innocence and congratulate ourselves when we are punished for holding opinions, or for doing things that we consider it our duty to do, i.e., For spinning, or collecting funds, or getting names for the Congress register. There should be no civil disobedience. We have undertaken to stand the gravest provocation and remain non-violent. Let us be careful lest the hour of our triumph be, by our folly, the hour of our defeat and humiliation. I implicitly subscribe to the test suggested by *The Times of India*. It may be recognized that, as a movement relying ostensibly upon soul-force, the only test of its value must be in the absolute sincerity of its upholders. Once let that sincerity fall under justifiable suspicion and those forces are let in which must inevitably end in its moral ruin.

SIND REFLECTIONS

It was a packed programme in Sind. Hyderabad, Karachi, Larkhana, Shikarpur, Sukkur, Rohri, Kotri, and Mirpur Khas, between the 24th and the 30th was a fairly big bite. And as Mr. Mulchand[1] of Sukkur justly remarked, ‘the work could only be half done’. ‘Better half a loaf than none,’ said another friend. Sind has certainly as fine material as any province. It has men, money, and ability. It can lead, if

[1] A lawyer who renounced his practice during Gandhiji's tour

it chooses. But it cannot today, in spite of the advantages mentioned. My letter[1] to "Young Sind" written on the 25th stands without alteration in spite of the later experiences.

Karachi is the worst. Sind is divided into district parties without a central guiding organization. But Karachi has not one party but many groups. It was of Karachi that I heard complaints regarding suspicious finance. Its national public schools, I was told, will not publish accounts. Karachi will not acknowledge one leader. I heard even charges of misappropriation of funds. I do not know how far the charges are justified. But they were brought to my notice with such persistence and by so many persons that I feel I must call public attention to them. We are bound to render a faithful account to the people of every pie they give us. I invite the controllers of national schools not only to render accounts of their dealings but also to put their schools under public management. In my opinion there should be but two funds—the Tilak Swaraj Fund and the Khilafat Fund. All activities should come under one or the other organization. All schools must be financed by these two bodies. There should be no separate collections for separate enterprises. We must collect and organize our energy and resources, not fritter them away by having many agencies. We must demonstrate our fitness for swaraj by sinking differences, avoiding jealousies, and submitting to control from a central organization, by being able to collect and honestly spend large sums of money, by managing the education of our children and our own disputes, by being self-contained in every village as to food and clothing, and by driving away national vices such as drink and untouchability.

National schools are springing up everywhere in Sind. I must warn the managers against preparing big budgets. In my opinion, for this year at any rate, every school and college must principally become a carding and spinning institute. It must pay its monthly expenditure from the labour of the boys and girls who attend them. The capital expenditure should only consist of a little furniture and spinning-wheels. We must not waste national time a present by devoting any time to English studies. Earnestness demands recognition of certain fundamental principles, if swaraj is to be attained within one year, and if we *believe* in the programme of non-co-operation and the resolutions of the All-India Congress Committee.

[1] This is not available

Enough, however, of criticism. There was so much to make one hopeful. The bubbling and almost embarrassing enthusiasm of the people was a soul-stirring sight. The women of Sind gave liberally to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Karachi led with a purse of Rs. 25,000. The purse is meant for me to be used as I choose. I can only make the choice in favour of the Tilak Swaraj Fund.

The following is a rough estimate of the collections:

Karachi	Rs. 30,000
Larkhana	,, 1,000
Shikarpur	,, 15,000
Sukkur	,, 10,000
Rohri	,, 1,000
Nawabshah	Rs. 5,000
Hyderabad	,, 15,000
Mirpur Khas	,, 1,000
Sundries	,, 1,000

Many non-co-operating students are doing most valuable work in Sind. The most cheering event I can record is the fact that the Shikarpuris had a violent quarrel among themselves resulting in the imprisonment of many notable men, but were able, through the effort of Sadhu Vaswani[1] to make up their differences. This naturally resulted in the discharge of all who were arrested. We would be superhuman if we never quarrelled. But we show ourselves as men when we become charitable and amicably settle our differences.

ABUSE OF HARTAL

A correspondent from Karachi writes to me deploring the frequency of hartals in that city. I have also seen a cutting from the *Indian Social Reformer* dealing with the same subject. I agree with the *I.S. Reformer's* criticism that the hartals have become cheap of late. They are fast losing their value. But for the sacred character of the 6th and the 13th April,[2] I would have refrained from advising hartals for those two days. Hartals are either meant as a protest against something extraordinary or a religious demonstration. There was no meaning in declaring a hartal when H.E. the Governor visited Karachi. If it was

[1] T. L. Vaswani (1879-1966); seer from Sind; author of *Gita Meditations, The Face of Buddha*, and other works; founder of Mira Educational Institutions, Poona.

[2] Since the Jallianwala Bagh incident in April 1919, these dates marked the observance of a National Week in the country; *vide* "Satyagraha Week", 23-3-1921.

meant to be a demonstration aga-inst him personally, it was bad taste, for in my opinion, he is among the wisest officials and but for the vicious system he is called upon to admi-nister, he would make a popular Governor. Hartals for imprisonments or discharges are equally bad taste. Imprisonments must not inspire fear in us. Under an unjust Government, imprisonments of innocent men must be regarded as their ordinary lot even as disease is the ordinary state of persons living in insanitary conditions. The Government will cease to imprison us when we cease to fear imprisonments. The Government will cease to exist or (which is the same thing) will reform itself, when its most frightful punishments, even Dyerism, fail to strike us with fear. Hartals therefore in regard to imprisonments are a symptom of nervous fear and must therefore be tabooed. I quite agree with the *I.S.R.* that local leaders ought not to declare hartals without reference to headquarters. As a rule I would say, save the 6th and 13th April, every other hartal should be declared by the All-India Congress Committee and the Central Khilafat Committee in conjunction. It will be a misfortune to cheapen the hartals.

Young India, 4-5-1921

47. A STRING OF QUESTIONS [1]

I have dealt with the first question in a separate-article.[2] As for the second question, I think that only god fearing people can become true non-co-operators. But the programme of non-co-operation does not require a man to declare his faith. Any person believing in non-violence and accepting the non-co-operation programme can certainly become a non-co-operator. As to the third question, the correspondent misapprehends the position. The nation has not embarked on complete non-co-operation, not for want of faith or will, but for want of ability. It has, therefore, not called upon Government servants as yet to give up their posts. But any such servant is free to throw up his office whenever he likes. But there cannot be such a call until all reasonable precautions are taken against an outbreak of violence. Not until the nation is in a position to find occu-pation for such men can the call, therefore, be made. Thus here, there is no

[1] Ahfad Husain of Bareilly had written to Gandhiji on April 15 raising four questions; *vide* Appendix "Ahfad Husain's Letter to *Young India*", 15-4-1921.

[2] *Vide* the following item.

question of expediency as it is generally understood. But purest religion is highest expediency. Many things are lawful but they are not all expedient. The law, the ideal of non-co-operation, is before the country.

As to the fourth question, my meaning of swaraj is that India should be able to regulate her life without any restraint from outside. She should be able to regular her military expenditure and the method of raising her revenue. She should be able to withdraw every one of her soldiers from wheresoever she chooses. How this will be , or can be, done depends upon the nation. India's representatives freely chosen by the people must decide upon the method of execution. If swaraj is not established during one year, if I can help it certainly not a single boy who has left his school or a lawyer his practice will return thereto.

Young India, 4-5-1921

48. THE AFGHAN BOGEY

The reader will find elsewhere a string of questions put by a correspondent. The most important relates to a speech delivered by Maulana Mahomed Ali on the fear of an Afghan invasion. I have not read Maulana Mahomed Ali's speech referred to by the correspondent. But whether he does or not, I would, in a sense, certainly assist the Amir of Afghanistan if he waged war against the British Government. That is to say, I would openly tell my countrymen that it would be a crime to help a Government which had lost the confidence of the nation to remain in power. On the other hand, I would not ask Indians to raise levies for the Amir. That would be against the creed of non-violence accepted by both Hindus and Muslims for the purpose of the Khilafat, the Punjab and swaraj. And I apprehend that Maulana Mahomed Ali could not mean more in his speech than what I have suggested. He could not very well do otherwise, so long as the Hindu-Muslim compact subsists. The Muslims are free to dissolve the compact. But it would be found, upon an examination of the case, that the compact is indissoluble. Dissolution of the compact means destruction of India's purpose. I cannot conceive the present possibility of Hindus and Muslims entering upon a joint armed revolt. And Muslims can hardly expect to succeed with any plan of an armed revolt.

However, I warn the reader against believing in the bogey of an

Afghan invasion. Their own military writers have often let us into the secret that many of the punitive expeditions were manufactured for giving the soldiers a training or keeping idle armed men occupied. A weak, disarmed, helpless, credulous India does not know how this Gov-ernment has kept her under its hypnotic spell. Even some of the best of us today really believe that the military budget is being piled up for pro-tecting India against foreign aggression. I suggest that it is being piled up for want of faith in the Sikhs, the Gurkhas, the Pathans, and the Rajputs, i.e., for want of faith in us and for the purpose of keeping us under forced subjection. My belief (I write under correction) is that the anxiety of the Government always to have a treaty with the Amir was based, not so much upon the fear of a Russian invasion as upon the fear of losing the confidence of the Indian soldiery. Today there is certainly no fear of a Russian invasion. I have never believed in the Bolshevik menace. And why should any Indian Government, to use the favourite phrase of the erstwhile idol of Bengal, 'broad-based upon a people's affection', fear Russian, Bolshevik or any menace? Surely a contented and a powerful India (all the more), in alliance with Great Britain, can any day meet any invasion upon her. But this Government has deliberately emasculated us, kept us under the perpetual fear of our neighbours and the whole world, and drained India of her splendid resources so that she has lost faith in herself either for defence or for dealing with the simple problem of the growing poverty. I, therefore, do certainly hope that the Amir will not enter into any treaty with this Government. Any such treaty can only mean unholy bargain against Islam and India. This Government , being unwilling to part with O'Dwyerism as an 'emergency measure, being unwilling to keep its faith with the Muslims, (I must decline to treat the Government of India separately from the Imperial Government) and being unwilling to let India rise to her full height, wants Afghanistan to enter into a treaty of offence against India. I hope that there is but one opinion so far as non-co-operators are concerned. Whilst unwilling ourselves, we cannot wish others to co-operate with the Government.

Young India, 4-5-1921

49. GANDHI OLD AND NEW

The Times of India has returned to the charge of insincerity which was to be inferred from its previous article which I dealt with recently in these columns. It is a sober article to which no exception could be taken. I am certainly anxious to retain the reputation for sincerity which has been credited to me and which I certainly claim. My article, "The Mists"[1] should generally be regarded as my last word to my critics. I must rely upon my actions for final explanation. No man can be called just, sincere, or good before his death. But I would like to correct some of the misstatements of *The Times of India* writer. Even when I declared satyagraha, I was charged with having fallen from my original non-political state and the state of isolation. Even in South Africa, I was referred by my critics to my past. Every campaign that I have been connected with had its critics who praised my past at the expense of the then present. I state this fact not to disprove the present charge, but to steel my heart against believing in the charge of unconscious insincerity and self-deception. I never suspended satyagraha, I certainly never retired into private life. I suspended civil disobedience, and it remains still suspended, because I believed, as I still believe, the country not to be ripe for it. My Himalayan mistake was my miscalculation of the preparedness of the country. Non-co-operation of the type undertaken is not attended with any danger such as is attendant on civil disobedience. The latter is not *always* a duty as non-co-operation is. Hence it is that I have said that I must continue to advise non-co-operation even though it may result in anarchy. Am I to recall my medals, or advise friends to recall theirs, or advise lawyers to resume practice because, supposing, anarchists have gained the upper hand? Am I to associate myself for fear of anarchy with a dishonest Government which believes in Dyerism as a faith? I know that anarchy as a creed is devilish, but Dyerism is still more so for it is anarchy wearing the mask of constituted authority. Ordered anarchy is infinitely worse than avowed anarchy. Only, in the latter event, I should dissociate myself from the anarchy of the mob as I have dissociated myself from the anarchy of the Government. For me both are evils to be shunned. I have not asked for reprisals against the author of the Jallianwala Massacre. I have asked for nothing more than the stopping of the pensions to the culprits and the dismissal of those who are yet holding office. I have

[1] *Vide* "The Mists", 20-4-1921.

not advised the Sikhs to give any pension to Mahant Naraindas or to keep him in office. I have ventured to advise the Sikhs to waive the prosecution of the murderers as I have advised the nation to waive the prosecution of the official murderers in the Punjab. I claim consistency of conduct about Amritsar and Nankana. I have said repeatedly that I am acting towards the Government as I have acted towards my own dearest relatives. Non-co-operation on the political field is an extension of the doctrine as it is practised on the domestic field. The reference to my association with lawyers, etc., is hardly becoming. As a matter of fact, there are very few practising lawyers now holding office in Congress organizations.

I adhere to my opinion that where non-co-operators are in a majority, none who has not fully non-co-operated should hold office. The Congress Committee has not rejected the proposal. I do not know that practising lawyers presented me with any address in Surat. But I would no hesitate to receive one even from them so long as I was free to wean them from the error of their ways. So far as my association with the Ali Brothers is concerned, I consider it a proud privilege. But in South Africa, I had as my associates murderers and thieves, men who had certainly suffered imprisonment for attempts to murder or steal. Only they carried out their compact as to non-violence as honourably as any other satyagrahi. I see no difference between the old Gandhi and the new, except that the new has a clearer conception of satyagraha and prizes the doctrine of ahimsa more than ever. Nor, I promise *The Times of India* writer, is there any self-deception in this belief. But time must show who is right. Precedent is on my side.

Young India, 4-5-1921

50. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KAPADWANJ

May 4, 1921

The *Bohra*[1] community too has to work for swaraj and serve India. The *Bohras* have to make their contribution to the Khilafat movement. I wish to enlist fully the services of the rich in the task of swaraj. The *Bohras* return with big fortunes from outside. It is incumbent on them to donate to the Tilak Swaraj Fund in full the contributions which fall to their share. I use the word 'donate' because

[1] A Muslim mercantile community; there were a fairly large number of *Bohras* in Kapadwanj, but they had not turned up at the meeting.

it is customary to use it. But it is not the right word, for giving money to the Tilak Swaraj Fund is a business deal, a bargain for swaraj, a duty towards Tilak Maharaj. What is paid in a business deal or to fulfil a duty cannot be regarded as a donation.

* * *

Just as our people fear white men, so do the *Bhangis* fear us. As long as we remain white men to them, we must not hope for swaraj. If we call them *Bhangis* and keep them at a distance, the whole world looks upon us as *Bhangis* and avoids contact with us. Ask anyone who has been to Africa if it is not true that any white man, a drunkard or a prostitute-monger or a gambler, feels polluted by contact with Indians. We cannot travel in trains in the same compartment as the whites, ride in the same trams or walk on the same footpaths; we cannot carry on trade in the same locality in which the whites do so. We cannot buy bread where they buy their bread. I grant that this does not happen everywhere. I will not do injustice to Englishmen. I am not their enemy. But I have seen in many places that we are denied admission to places in which the whites lodge and to rooms which they use for retiring or having refreshments. However, the whites keep us at a distance for reasons of hygiene, fearing that their bodies will be polluted. They do not believe that their souls will be polluted. But we have go into the belief that, if we touch an *Antyaj*, our soul will be polluted and God will punish us! Indeed God is punishing us right now. What greater misfortunes can there be than famines, natural calamities, cholera, the plague and the wickedness of the Government? I, therefore, humbly submit to Hindu society that Hinduism does not consist in clinging to untouchability but in getting rid of that evil.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-5-1921

51. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, KATHLAL

May 4, 1921

It is not in the hands of the Brahmins, or of men, to preserve dharma. It is entirely in the hands of women to do so. The foundation on which society rests is the home and dharma is to be cultivated in the home. The fragrance in the home will spread all over society. A city may have flourishing trade and a big population but, if the homes there were not well-kept, I would unhesitatingly say that that city was

not good. Women are the presiding deities of the home. If they do not follow dharma, the people would be totally destroyed. The reason why Shri Krishna destroyed the Yadava clan was precisely this, that the Yadava women had taken to immoral ways and forsaken their dharma I urge you, therefore, to be pure and follow dharma, and pray that, having made yourselves pure, give me and Maulana Shaukat Ali, i.e., the Hindus and the Muslims, your blessing that we may win success in this fight for swaraj, in this fight for dharma.

[From Gujarait]

Navajivan, 8-5-1921

52. WHY I AM HOPEFUL ABOUT PARSIS

Ever since the Parsis settled in India, they have kept their word to the Hindus, honourably and faithfully. When all others in Bombay were struck dumb, it was the Parsis whose courage made the others also vocal. The Parsis' services to Gujarat will ever be remembered. Even the Gujarati language has been served in no insignificant manner by Malbari[1] Khabardar[2] and others. The Parsis have never fought over matters of religion but have been wholly content that they are able to follow their own religion. There is no community in the world which can even approach the Parsis in the matter of charities. The Parsis are endowed in no small measure with the capacity to see the good in others and assimilate it themselves.

No community in the world as small as the Parsis has ever earned prestige as great as it has. I infer from this that their scriptures are of a high spiritual value; they are simple, easy enough for even a child to understand.

But the Parsi community will commit a serious blunder if it wants of depend on the capital of its past greatness or continued survival and for being able to hold its own.

Like others, the Parsis too are at present caught up in the poisonous wind blowing from the West. They have started giving up their traditional ways of simple living. Luxuries are on the increase among them. As the community possesses plenty of wealth, love of ease seems to have crept into it. As a small community can easily rise

[1] Behramji Merwanji Malbari (1854-1912); poet, journalist and social reformer

[2] Ardeshar Faramji Khabardar (1881-1954)

by following the path of virtue, so it will as easily fall if it takes to the path of immorality. And if it begins to fall, it will certainly not be long before it perishes.

A Parsi gentleman used to visit my father. The two were on intimate terms. I was then a child. How can I forget Edulji Sheth? Every time he came to see my father, his favourite subject of conversation was simplicity. His own way of living was extraordinarily simple. He was related to the late Thakore Saheb of Rajkot too. Edulji Sheth did not hesi-tate to express even before him his views on wasteful expenditure or oste-ntation. His courage was as great as his simplicity and both were as great as his noble bearing. Ever since then I have felt that the Parsi community can do much, give much, if it wills. I am sure it will save itself from this poisonous wind [from he West] and that its enterprising nature and its regard or dharma will save it. It is my faith that the Parsis will continue to serve India as citizens of the country in the same way as they have done in the past. May God endow them with discrimination, right thinking and courage! Whatever the contribution of the Parsis in this holy fight, India can never forget their nobility and culture.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 5-5-1921

53. OFFER OF PRIZE BY A PARSI SISTER

A Sister named Meherbai Bhesania has written a very loving letter from Yokohama, the capital of Japan, It has lain with me unanswered for some time, and I apologize to her for this. I read it again after a lapse of some days. I kept wondering whether or not I should publish it and I was also busy with other things and so could not decide what to do.

It seemed to me doubtful whether, by offering a prize, we could have good national songs. Finally, however, I came to the conclusion that it would not be proper for me not to publish a sister's letter written with the utmost sincerity or not to announce the prize offered by her. I therefore give the letter below. I have omitted a part of it which concerned me alone. Just a few words here and there have been corrected and paragraphs in English have been translated [into Gujarati]. The rest of the letter I give as it is. It is a matter of joy that a sister living so far away takes such interest in this holy fight.

If Goddess Saraswati inspires any poets of Gujarat and they try their hand, not tempted by the prize but to respect a sister's wish conveyed from so far away, I shall be obliged. All entries should be received by June 30 at the latest. If there is an extraordinarily good poem on only one of the subjects, the whole amount of the prize will go to its author. If none of the poems comes up to a certain standard, no prize will be awarded. I shall declare the judge's name later.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-5-1921

54. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

SURAT,

May, 5, 1921

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,[2]

I had your telegram. It had become impossible for me to go there. If you will, you can see that no home in Kathiawad is left without a spinning-wheel. But can a person ever rise to heaven except by giving up his life?[3] Do you yourself spin? Do you use khadi exclusively, at home and outside?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original : G.N. 5728

55. SPEECH AT MAHARASHTRA PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE, BASSEIN

May 7, 1921

Your love has drawn me here. I am sorry I cannot stay in your midst for long. With the President's permission, I shall say in brief

[1] This was followed by Meherbai's letter, which is not given here. It offered three prizes of Rs. 75 each to outstanding songs; One, a prayer to God mentioning the names by which followers of different faiths address Him; a second explaining the lesson to be drawn from Lokamanya Tilak's like; and a third comparing non-co-operators to Arjuna and appealing to them, in the manner of Lord Krishna's exhortation in the *Bhagavad Gita,* to shed their weakness.

[2] A fellow-student and life-long friend of Gandhiji.

[3] A Gujarati saying meaning, "Can anything be ever achieved unless one exerts oneself?"

what I want to.

It is about Mulshi Peta that I must speak first. It grieves me that I have not been able to go there myself and acquaint myself a first hand with the grievances of our brethren there. My knowledge of the details of the struggle is scanty. I rarely get a chance to read a newspaper. I naturally hesitate to speak or write on any matter about which I do not know much. All the same, I have given my views[1] on it in *Young India* without going into details. I convey my sympathy to those who are attending this meeting as representatives of the satyagrahis of Mulshi Peta. People fighting for their rights always have my sympathy. I understand that the people of Mulshi Peta are fighting to defend the ownership of their farms. I stand by them in their claim. I always support people who are ready to defend their possessions at the sacrifice of their lives, but I can never join hands with those who are ready to kill others, be it even for the cause of truth. These people can get my help only for deciding whether they are fighting for truth or untruth. When I was asked about the people of Mulshi Peta starting a satyagraha, I had replied that, if the people had the necessary strength, the experiment was certainly worth trying. They have proved that they possess that strength. Whatever they have been able to achieve is good, so far as it goes. But they can have complete peace only when they are permanently assured of their rights. If a man does not want to relinquish his rights over a plot of land, it is not in keeping with the traditions of our country to obtain possession of it by recourse to law. I was once engaged in a small case; the man owned an ordinary piece of land but he was after me like a mad man to save it for him. As a father does not wish to sell his child, so also a man is naturally unwilling to part with his land. This has been our nature from ancient times. I hope that our Tata Company will take no steps against the satyagrahis of Mulshi Peta. It is welcome to acquire the land even without payment with people's goodwill, but I hope it will make no move to obtain it so long as even one owner is unwilling [to part with his piece]. It may be European civilization to acquire land by recourse to a Land Acquisition Act, but I should have nothing to do with a civilization which I believe to be Satanic. So long, therefore, as the people of Mulshi Peta carry on their fight on peaceful lines, the whole of India should back them.

I wish to see the bravery of Lachhman Singh and Dulip Singh in

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 27-4-1921.

Mulshi Peta. Without raising a little finger, these two warriors stood undaunted against the attack of Mahant Naraindas of Nankana Saheb, and let themselves be killed. Their friends had advised them not to go to the *gurudwara*[1] on that day. Mahant Naraindas [it was known] had made preparations for killing them. But they had replied that they would bow their heads before the Guru Granth Saheb[2] and that they could not be more fortunate than if they died with their heads thus bowed. Their words came literally true. Lachhman Singh went right into the *gurudwara* and was killed as he stood with his head bowed before the Granth Saheb. Dulip Singh was left outside. Naraindas came out to kill him. Dulip Singh told him, "You have gone mad." He had his dagger with him, but he kept it sheathed. He was well-built, as the Sikhs generally are. Had he so chosen, he could have finished off two or three of his assailants then and there, but that was against his principle. He was bound by the Congress pledge of non-violence. He was killed by Naraindas even as he was pleading with him. Only two such men in 33 crores are not enough. We need such heroes not only among Sikhs, but among Hindus and Muslims as well. Lachhman Singh and Dulip Singh were not lacking in physical strength. But they had resolved not to draw their sword against anyone. I shall not say anything further about Mulshi Peta.

If these two brothers acted with great nobility at Nankana Saheb, the residents of Malegaon have displayed an equal degree of heinousness. No matter how foul the language the sub-inspector used or how grave the provocation offered by him, no one who respected the Congress could commit the dastardly act of killing him. It is the solemn pledge of the followers of the Congress that, for winning the country's freedom, they would not kill anyone but would lay down their own lives instead. Was Naraindas in the Punjab more sparing in his abuses? In Malegaon, our brethren abandoned their humanity. That was swaraj can certainly not be won. I am speaking not as a lawyer but as an Indian. It is only when, by desisting from such deeds altogether, we prove our claim to be peaceful that we shall win swaraj, secure justice for the Punjab, succeed on the Khilafat issue and in stopping the crimes being committed at present in the name of justice. The world will then see that, compelled by the strength of our peacefulness, powerful ministers have had to eat their words and stop

[1] Sikh place of worship
[2] Holy Book of the Sikhs

the pensions of O'Dwyer and Dyer. It will discover then that neither Ireland nor Russia not Egypt has the strength that we have. There can certainly be no comparison between them and us. Their movements of non-co-operation are a mixture of various elements. We depend not on cunning and denunciation but on truth. Why do we not stop payment of taxes forthwith? Because in other parts of the country also, there still are people as mad as those in Malegaon. To those people who think that they have a more effective weapon than this one of peace, I appeal to keep out. The least they should do is to refrain from obstructing the progress of the movement.

This is a conference held in Maharashtra. I have already stated in public what I expect from Maharashtra. My faith in it remains. I know that my work will be done when Maharashtra comes to have complete faith in this movement. Nowhere else have I seen the like of Mahara-shtra's capacity for self-sacrifice and its knowledge. Where knowledge is combined with the spirit of self-sacrifice, the *yagna* is perfect. When Maharashtra starts this perfect type of sacrifice with real enthusiasm, the country or this movement will have no need left for an ordinary man like myself. It is only as long as Maharashtra is not awake that there is need for me to work. Many tell me that Maharashtra is behind others. This is true at present. When Maharashtra comes to have a little more faith, its strength will reveal itself. Just as the sunrise needs no anno-uncement by beat of drum, so Maharashtra's awakening will be evident to all. I pray to God that He may grant strength to Maharashtra, so that it can contribute its full share in this *yagna*. Nobody adores the Lokamanya as much as you do. He lived only for swaraj, he went to jail for it and died working for it. If you prove that you are his worthy heirs, we shall either win swaraj this year or die in the attempt. If you can do this. I shall say that you deserved to have Tilak Maharaj born amongst you. If you do not, give me leave to say that you will prove unworthy of him.

If you are convinced at heart that India has progressed more during these five or six months than at any time in the past, you will secure swaraj during this very year. Only then will you bring peace to the soul of Tilak Maharaj. It must be in agony at present, distressed with the thought why Maharashtra still lacks the faith that it can save India by its *tapascharya*.

I trust that there will not be a single person who will go home without taking the pledge of such *tapascharya*. I shall not be taken in

by your raising hands [in support of the resolution]. I am an idolater. What I want is the idol of solid work by you, not the idol of the late Tilak Maharaj. We are out to win swaraj. When some Sindhi brethren asked me what we would do if we failed in our efforts to collect one crore rupees. I told them that they and I would drown ourselves together in the Indus. I know that Maharashtra does not have much money, but it has plenty of strength. With that strength you can have showers of money, if you but choose. How much can you not do in this *pandal*, at this very moment? If you have no faith in anything of this, please tell the world that you, the educated people of Maharashtra, having drunk deep of the philosophy of Bentham and Mill, declare that what Gandhi says is all madness. My only grief will be to think that non-co-operation is beyond the power of reason to understand, though it is not beyond the sphere of faith. However, it is for you to decide what you should do. All that I shall say is , whatever you accept, accept sincerely.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-5-1921

56. MALEGAON'S CRIME

Every non-co-operator has reason to feel ashamed at the wickedness which, it seems, the non-co-operators of Malegaon have perpetrated.[1] The people of Malegaon forsook their dharma, forgot their duty and have done great harm to the country and the national struggle. It is one thing if we do not claim to be civilized and cultured and commit crimes, but it is a different matter to claim that we are cultured and then commit crimes. A dark spot on a black object is not visible, but a black particle in milk will immediately catch the eye. In the same way if, claiming to be pure and white, we get dirty, the world will spit upon us. "Ours is a holy fight", "We insist on peaceful methods", "We will lay down our lives but not kill others": If, after having taken these pledges, we kill anyone, we deceive the world, our own selves and God. The people of Malegaon seem to have done exactly this.

This unworthy act has definitely harmed our struggle. It will certainly delay the coming of swaraj. Who knows we may win it even in a month or so? The speed with which we are advancing is so much

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 4-5-1921.

more than what it was at the start of the movement that it is impossible for anybody to guess how soon we shall have acquired the strength to win our own back. But swaraj is bound to be delayed correspondingly if we make mistakes; even a child can see this. Everyone doing a sum in arithmetic has to start again from the point where he might have gone wrong. We also should do the same.

Our pledge is never to retaliate against any officer, however much he may try to provoke us. We shall submit to beating but will not retaliate, nor yield. Despite this, the non-co-operators of Malegaon have, it seems, cruelly killed one sub-inspector of police and some others.

Some non-co-operators broke the law and they were sentenced for that—they had voluntarily accepted the punishment—but the people forcibly got them released. This is no way to defend the Khilafat or to win swaraj.

The most important aspect of non-co-operation is peace, non-violence. It is those who violate peace that are in reality the people who co-operate, Peace-breakers help the Government much more than the Moderates. The Government can very well afford to lose two or three of its officers if thereby it can suppress the non-co-operaion movement.

I have often stated in my articles before that the Khilafat issue cannot be solved and swaraj cannot be won unless peace is preserved. Things will not be held up if lawyers do not give up practice, students do not leave schools and colleges and others do not non-co-operate in their respective spheres, but no one can violate peace without harming the cause. Hindu-Muslim unity, preservation of peace and swadeshi, that is, the spinning-wheel, these three are indispensable conditions, and among them preservation of peace is the most important. If most people start wearing khadi, a few individuals here and there not using it will not matter, and a few Hindus and Muslims fighting among themselves may also be tolerated. But even one person violating peace and indulging in killing cannot be tolerated, for it is bound to harm the country greatly. Such is the imperative requirement of peace.

But who can make himself responsible for peace in the whole country? This question betrays our weakness. The Government has the strength to suppress the people if they start looting anywhere; it is only when we have acquired like strength for restraining people from violating peace that we shall be able to win swaraj. We must give up

the very idea of swaraj if we cannot influence the people sufficiently to persuade them to remain peaceful. The whole edifice of our fight is based on the faith that we have this influence over the people. If we cannot train people to remain peaceful, we would have to admit that we are not yet fit for swaraj. It is, therefore, necessary that every volunteer attaches the utmost importance to this matter.

Let the drink-addict refuse to give up drink and let the title holder cling to his honours. Let an official be overbearing and let a policeman even beat us. We must bear all this quietly and refuse to be provoked.

What should we do, then? What atonement shall we make for the Malegaon incident? First of all, we should find out the culprits and persuade them to confess their crimes and willingly mount the scaffold. Everyone of us must learn to control his own tongue and see that others do likewise. We must stop making inflammatory speeches and must get over the habit of holding meetings and observing hartals on every occasion, and, instead of constantly pointing to the Government's lapses, we must learn to think of our own lapses, to examine our own weaknesses, and must take steps to remove them. When Pandit Arjunlal Sethi was arrested, crowds collected and indulged in rowdyism. I consider this a sign of cowardice. The people do not wish to go to jail and do not let Sethiji do so either. This is the reason why, whenever anyone is arrested, such people seem to be concerned only with creating excitement. If the people were roused to real heroism by Sethiji's imprisonment, they would understand their duty better and would fully carry out those items of non-co-operation which pertain to them and thus ensure swaraj. They would give us harmful addictions, discard any foreign cloth they may have and forthwith start working on the spinning-wheel, if they have no done so. It would be interesting to know how many of those who indulged in rowdyism on the arrest of Sethiji were drink-addicts, how many used foreign cloth and how many had taken up spinning. He is the worthy son of his father who, though he might have been careless about adopting his father's virtues while the latter lived, adopts them in every particular after the latter's death at any rate, and not the one who gives himself over to lamentatons or revels in giving caste-dinners in the father's honour. Rioting and getting Sethiji released will not help us to win swaraj. That will only delay the event. If, however, we are spurred to exert ourselves more strenuously to do our duty, we shall certainly win swaraj much sooner and also get the strength whereby we shall

welcome Sethiji back in our midst before long. Thus, the only fit atonement for he Malegaon incident is for us to acquire greater control over our minds and our anger, to give up addictions and start plying the spinning-wheel and wearing khadi exclusively.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-5-1921

57. MY NOTES

AN AMAZING ORDER

A public notice has been issued by the Baroda Government about 'avoiding harassment to persons on their way to licensed liquor-booths or when they are entering the booths"! Its sight is only painful. This is what it says.[1]

What kind of freedom can this "freedom of drink" be? There is no doubt that the thief has a right to steal. But has not the honest man also are right to prevent theft? The law goes so are as to give the people the right to use force against a thief and drive him out. How is the freedom to commit a theft protected then? prohibitionists, on the other hand, seek to stop a man from drinking by pleading with him. How does that violate anyone's freedom? The Bardoa Government's notice seems to imply, in plain words, that the drink habit is a virtue and the existence of liquor shops a benefit conferred on the people. If a drunkard or the owner of a liquor shop is abused or beaten up or otherwise subjected to force and the Baroda Government punishes the culprit and issues a prohibitory order against him, its action would be justified. But it is nothing short of encouragement to drink if a man is considered guilty because he stands near a liquor shop, advises an intending visitor not to plunge into the fire of drink and appeals to his better nature. I never thought that the policy of the Baroda Government could be so disgraceful as this. I still hope that this notice is not the result of deliberation but has been issued by some autocratic officer on his own responsibility. If this inference is correct, I hope that the Baroda Government will issue an order withdrawing it.

INCOME FROM LIQUOR

The people should bear in mind that our children get their education from the income accruing from the sale of liquor, opium,

[1] The notice is not reproduced here. It warned people in general and students in particular against interfering with the freedom of intending customers.

etc. If our moral and religious values have not declined, we would give serious thought to the matter and stop educating our children with this tainted income. Be that as it may, we are determined to give up this income completely as soon as we have swaraj. We will certainly not trade in liquor and such other articles. We know that the people cannot bear the burden of any new tax. In fact, we shall have to reduce taxes, and yet provide education to many more children than are studying now. This can be achieved only by the means I have suggested. There should be no fees, no increase in taxes, and yet the best education should be provided. Thus, by introducing the craft of spinning in schools we shall, as they say, kill two birds with one stone.

A PARSI FRIEND'S DEFENCE

Shri Phirozeshah Tehmulji Mistri writes from Jalgaon, saying that he runs a liquor-booth; that he has been engaged in the business since childhood; that he has a large family to support and is fifty-one years old. He adds that, if he gives up his business, four Hindus are eagerly waiting to take over the booth. 'What is the sense, in the sense, in these circumstances, of my giving up my business and depriving myself of the means of supporting my family?' he asks. Will the liquor trade stop as a result of his action? This is the friend's plea. He has my sympathy. One can understand his difficulties. But it is in striving to overcome such moral dilemmas that one shows oneself as a man. If the friend believes it sinful to consume or sell liquor, there is no room for his argument. One does not get the right to commit sins just because thousands of others commit them. And if we are maintaining our family through sin, it would be far better to live by begging.

The friend supplies in his letter some information which is worth nothing and should give us pain. He says he deals in country-liquor and is harassed by volunteers, but they did not have the courage to stop a man from going to a shop of foreign liquor, not even to go and speak to him. He says, moreover, that volunteers do not confine themselves to persuasion . They besiege liquor-booths, abuse people , try to intimidate old employees of the booth and, if intimidation fails to serve their purpose, even beat them up. They also snatch away bottles of liquor from the hands of the owner of the booth. If they suspect a person of keeping liquor bottles in his house, they actually search his house. People refuse to sell him things. If a man is seen coming out of a liquor booth, his face is tarred, he is made to ride a donkey and carried about in a procession in a the town.

It seems from the letter that all these complaints are well-founded. If so, the facts stated in it are truly a shame to the volunteers. It is as much our duty to respect the person of the drink-addict as it is to persuade him to give up drink. If we use physical force to make drunkards give up drink, not only shall we fail in our aim. but our movement will come to harm. Volunteers all over the country must understand that they have absolutely no right to use force on anybody. They must confine themselves to legitimate, courteous means; that is, they may stand near the liquor-booths, politely request the intending visitor to desist, approach the members of his family and speak to other members of his community. Any pressure, beyond this, we have no right to exert. You cannot make a nation ever virtuous by using force. Those who want to be sinners have certainly a right to it. That man alone can be called virtuous who commits no sin though he has the freedom to do so, and such men alone can benefit the country. If we introduce the element of physical force in our efforts to eradicate sin, the evil or which we condemn the Government as Satanic will infect us and we, too, shall become Satanic.

NATIONAL SCHOOL—SPINNING-WHEEL SCHOOL

If we believe that hand-spun yarn alone can win us swaraj, if we have full faith in the power of the spinning-wheel, if we are certain that the economic uplift of India is impossible by any other means, if we agree with the view that millions of people remain perpetually in debt because their incomes are low for want of a subsidiary occupation, we would immediately see that the first lesson we should give our children is in spinning. This will have two results. In the first place, the children will learn to be self-reliant and, in the second, when in schools, too, children are taught spinning, it will soon spread all over the country. It is a somewhat difficult task to induce people who are utterly broken in spirit or who have got into the habit of begging or keeping themselves alive, to take up spinning. If we reserve spinning for such people along and thus make it a profession of the destitute, it will never spread. When, however, the *elite* take to spinning as part of their dharma, the common man will readily do likewise. It is thus easy to see that the only education, at present or both children and adults can be spinning.

SIMPLE REASONING

The reasoning is simple. We should all devote ourselves to that work exclusively which will help us soonest to win swaraj. The only

activity of this sort is spinning. Through it we can achieve boycott of foreign cloth in the course of this very year, and boycott of foreign cloth means swaraj. We cannot win swaraj in one year by improving our knowledge of English and, therefore, our work to that end should be, at any rate temporarily, suspended. Similarly, as we cannot win swaraj in one year by becoming great mathematicians or making big scientific discoveries, we must suspend that effort too. Nor, again, can we have swaraj in one year by starting factories to make paper, pins, etc., and so efforts to that end should also be postponed. In like manner, we may put ourselves questions about any other pursuit and we shall get the same reply. We can see from this that only one activity should find a place in all our educational institutions, colleges, high schools, primary schools and teachers' training colleges. Any education in letters that is considered necessary may be given during the period of relaxation, when the hand requires rest. An educated Englishman used to have his recreation through mere changes of work. If he came out of the House of Commons quite exhausted, he would set himself to observing the movements of ants and flies. When tired of this, he would take to reading books. In this way, he found recreation and rest in his varied pursuits. Why cannot we form this habits in our students? When tired of spinning, they may take up study of Hindi. When tired of that, they may revert to spinning. If they do not have courage or that, they may engage themselves in learning music. When that, too, ceases to be interesting, they may think of taking up the spinning-wheel again. If even after this lapse of time they do not feel inclined to spin, they may learn physical drill and exercise. After that, they may once again think of spinning. In his way they will become spinning-addicts by and by. I there is any addiction which the nation requires at present, it is the addiction to spinning. I suggest this work to the habitual drunkards as the most effective remedy [for their addiction]. The intoxication of the spinning-wheel is by no means less potent than that of liquor. He alone who has experienced it knows its effect. The difference is that while the one kills, the other gives life.

SKILL IN WORK

Without skill, one cannot work the spinning-wheel. It is but a tiny little contrivance, easy to turn and next to nothing in price, but it puts to a fairly stiff test a man's perseverance, his firmness, his sincerity and his patience. Spinning does not mean drawing thread

anyhow from cotton. It means being conversant with all the preliminary processes. Every one who has read the article by "Ramanuja" will understand the point. The women in Andhra who spin yarn of 120 counts know the tests for the quality of cotton, pick out cottonwool from the pods with their own hands, gin it and card it themselves and then prepare their own slivers as white, as soft and as polished as sea-foam. Their skill is employed chiefly in these processes only. After this, producing yarn of 120 counts appears to them child's play. Spinning requires time. The preliminary processes are easy to learn and take less time. It is not necessary that everyone of us must attain to the level of these model women-workers, but it is certainly necessary for everyone to pick up the arts of carding and making slivers. It requires one day only to learn to make slivers. Let us suppose it takes a week to learn carding. Even then every spinner must spare that time and learn carding. Our object will not be served if we use mill-made slivers; it is impossible, besides, to supply such slivers to all places.

The reader should also know that, formerly, carding was actually a profession and not a social duty, and so the carder used to earn his daily wages just as other artisans did. Carders easily earn as much as Rs. 45 a month, at any rate, not less than Rs. 30. Some carders in Bombay earn two and a half rupees a day. A spinner would require so little time to attend to the carding himself that, if his object is to earn, he can have two annas more for every pound of yarn. One can card within a short time all the cotton that one uses up for spinning during a whole day.

MY MISCALCULATIONS

Experience has shown me that I had erred in putting down a schoolboy's earning for spinning at one anna for four hours. Fortunately, I had erred on the side of caution. Being conscious of my ignorance, I had been over-cautious. I had put down the wages for eight hours, spin-ning at no more than two annas. I now see that a spinner can easily turn out in eight hours not 20 *tolas* but 40 *tolas* of yarn. If we put the average wage for spinning 40 *tolas* at four annas, eight hours of spinning brings four annas to the worker. During the Satyagraha Week, the children in the Satyagraha Ashram devoted themselves entirely to spinning. Some of them spun or as many as 10 hours and some started spinning at 4.30 a.m. In the result, one student spun in 10 hours as much as 70 *tolas* of yarn. That comes to seven *tolas* an hour. A good many more spun at the rate of five *tolas* an

hour. None of these had a previous training of more than five months and that, too, not always for even four hours a day. The capacity of these children has opened my eyes and I realize that a careful child can give definitely five *tolas* as hour. At that rate, a child working for four hours for his school can earn for it two pice an hour, i.e., Rs. 320 a month at the rate of four hours daily for 25 days. I take this to be the maximum rate of income. Even supposing, however, that the school gets on an average only two rupees a month, it comes to 40 rupees for every class of 20 pupils. Enthusiastic children can give easily 60 rupees a month to an efficient teacher. This was one mistake.

Further experience suggests that the children themselves should card cotton and make slivers. That would bring an additional income of one anna for every half-pound of cotton. I count the carding and sliver-making charges at two annas a pound. As the work will take up some time, we may put down the additional income for four hours at two pice instead of at four. It would then come to an addition of 50 pice for 25 days. That means that a good child will give Rs. 3-2-0 plus Re. 0-12-6, i.e., Rs. 3-14-6. My earlier estimate was only Rs. 1-9-0. This second mistake of mine lay in my assuming that carding would be a separate work and would have to be entrusted to professional carders.

When spinning and weaving are introduced in schools, they would keep a stock of cotton, etc., and when we take into account the market-price of yarn[1] as well, something more must be added. I do not consider it an excessive estimate at all if we add two pice per pound of yarn. We shall see, when we have worked out all the figures correctly, that this means an immense gain of the nation from every point to view, how immense we shall know if we ask people who manage factories. When I think of the great gain it would mean for the country if, teaching this craft to the hundreds of thousands of children attending schools, we estimate the value of their labour and also take into account the fact that the people will acquire control over the yarnmarket in this way, I feel certain that, if but the nation understood this plain and simple thing, the country's hunger could be ended in a very short time.

One thing still remains . When we have introduced weaving, too, in schools, their earning capacity would increase still further. If we put down two pice an hour for spinning, we may safely count one anna an

[1] As against the cost in the school

hour for weaving. But even if, for that present, we leave weaving out of our calculation, it is certain that a school in which every pupil earns for it four rupees a month, that is, pays a fee of four rupees a month, will require no grant and no donation. It will become self-sufficient and the pupils will have to pay no fee in cash.

I have advised the Surat Municipality to impart education of this type. It intends to forgo a grant of one hundred and ten thou-sand rupees. If it might be possible to do this, no additional taxation would be necessary, the children could be given free education and the swaraj movement would be greatly helped—such is the sovereign remedy I have suggested.

I have not lost sight of the difficulties. The biggest is about accommodation. But where the citizens are helpful, it should be an easy thing to overcome such difficulties. Buildings owned by caste-bodies and other associations, as also temples and mosques, could be used for storing spinning-wheels. Training in spinning cannot be given to all the children who are generally penned up in the present school buildings. Fortunately, the spinning- wheel does need some space but does no breathe, so that, though occupying space, it will purify the air and not foul it and, because of the relatively low impurity in the air, the children's physical condition will improve along with their minds.

SWARAJ THROUGH SPINNING-WHEEL

With the utmost courtesy and giving his reasons, a gentle man raises doubts about the power of the spinning-wheel to bring us swaraj. Though the whole letter is worth reproducing, for want of space I give here only the gist of his argument. He says: “The spinning-wheel can perhaps make up self reliant, can even help us to earn a living comfortably , but it passes my understanding how it can help us to win political power. The spinning-wheel was there in Clive’s time and still we lost our freedom. That is to say, an end to Lancashire’s interests does not mean the end of all the interests of England . Hence, even if foreign cloth ceases to be imported, England will still posses substantial vested interests in India.” These doubts are not pointless, but it ought to be easy for the reader of *Navajivan*, to answer them; in view of the fact that they are nevertheless entertained by this friend, who seems to be a careful and regular reader of *Navajivan*, I see the inadequacy of my own powers of explanation. If I persevere in patiently explaining the matter in different ways, I hope

that readers will be gradually convinced. I am quite sure that there is no flaw in my reasoning. It is my power explaining which must be at fault. The correspondent seems to agree , at any rate, that with the help of the spinning-wheel we can bring about boycott of foreign cloth. If so, I submit that this same power, the power by which, in the face of numerous obstacles and despite harassment by the Government, we can bring about boycott of foreign cloth, ought to serve our purpose for winning political freedom.

Let us now examine the figures. We spend Rs.60 crores on foreign cloth. Next comes sugar, which carries away 23 crores. Then comes steel, with 16 crores. The next noteworthy item, machinery, consumes about nine crores and a half. Of nearly the same order is mineral oil. The remaining items are relatively of minor importance. If we can succeed in the great task which we have undertaken of saving Rs.60 crores, similar ventures for saving the remaining amounts will appear like child's play. That is, if we can eliminate the largest factor in England's policy of exploitation, it will not be very difficult to eliminate the rest. I am convinced that, when this ideal state has been realized,England, with no material interests to serve, will not keep its army here and retain its other powers by force.

Let us know examine this mater from another angle. For winning swaraj, we need honesty, unity, firmness, organizing power, capacity to build up national trade countrywide spirit of patriotism, indomitable cou-rage and spirit of self-sacrifice. The spinning-wheel will be revived throu-ghout the country only when we can show all these qualities. No power on earth can keep in bondage a nation which can display these qualities.

On the day when the country has, as a matter of religious duty, carried out the boycott of foreign cloth, we shall be able to issue an ultimatum to the British Government. By that time, we shall have developed such strength that, if the Government does not respond to the ultimatum—does not respect our wishes, we shall be strong enough even to stop payment of land revenue.

It is true that we had the spinning-wheel in Clive's time. We had not been enslaved then, but the process had begun. As the spinning-wheel increasingly fell into disuse, we became more and more enslaved, or, rat-her, the East India Company came to be more interested in crippling us.

The same gentleman says in another letter that I have been collecting cash, jewellery, etc., and that people have faith in me; but, he asks, what would happen to all this collection when I might not be in a position to exercise control over everyone or if my connection with the swaraj movement came to an end ? This question is an important as the previous one. Whatever I receive in cash and jewellery during my tours, I hand over to the regional Provincial Congress Committee where they have already been formed and I am sure that the provinces concerned keep accounts of the same. To be exact, the collection in Bengal has been handed over to shri Chittaranjan Das, in Bhiar to Babu Rajendra Prasad[1] the Secretary there, in the United Provinces to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, in the Central Provinces to Sheth Jamnalalji,[2] in Delhi to Dr. Ansari,[3] in the Punjab to Lala Lajpat Rai,[4] in Utkal to Shri Gopabandhu Das, in Andhra to Shri Venkatappayya, In Madras to Shri Rajagopalachari,[5] in Karnatak to Shri Gangadharrao Deshpande, in Maharashtra to Shri Narsopant Kelkar , in Bombay to Shri Shankarlal Banker[6] and in Gujarat to Shri Vallabhbhai Patel. A new Provincial Committee has not been formed for the whole province of Sind and there is no cooperation among its different districts, so I have carried with me the contributions received there and am thinking of making arrangments for their management through the All—India Congress Committee. In every place where cash and jewellery have been handed over to others, the persons concerned are highly respected men, they are either Presidents or Secretaries of the local Provincial Committees and enjoy my confidence. Contributors have also been told what arrangements I intended to make in respect of their contributions. The respective Provincial

[1] Dr. Rajendra Prasad (1884-1963); Congress leaders, lawyer and scholar; Chairman, Constituent Assembly of India, 1946-50; first President of India, 1950-62

[2] Jamnalal Bajaj (1889-1942); merchant, social worker and philanthropist; treasurer of the Congress for a number of years and a close associate of Gandhiji

[3] Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari (1880-1936); nationalist Muslim leader; President, Muslim League, 1920; President, Indian National Congress, 1927-8

[4] 1865-1928; Indian patriot popularly known as the "Lion of the Punjab" was deported by the British Government in 1907 and lived for some year in the U.S.A.; President of the Indian National Congress, 1920

[5] Chakravarti Rajagopalachari (1879-); lawyer, journalist, author and statesman; Governor-General Of India, 1948-50

[6] Shankarlal Banker; social worker,leader, printer and publisher of *Young India*. He was arrested and convicted along with Gandhiji in 1922.

Committees are bound to keep accounts of all funds and to publish them and are subject to the control of the All-India Congress Committee in the matter. Thus, the chances of any misappropriation of these funds are the fewest. What more than this can be done? I admit that much of the money being received is owing to the people's regard for me at present. But the people's faith in the work proposed to be done with it and, equally with this, the greatness of the person whose memory we wish to perpetuate, are also responsible for the contributions. Every precaution has been taken to see that the money is spent well. An account of the amounts collected in Gujarat will soon be published, and similar accounts will continue to be published from time to time. It is my advice and request to sisters and brothers in Gujarat to keep all bodies vigilant and be so themselves. Our future depends on our success in collectiong one crore of rupees and our remaining perfectly upright in spending the amount.

"OPEN LETTER" FROM AN "ANTYAJ"

One Shri Juthabhai Shivji has addressed an "Open letter" to me. This is its substance. He says that, if Hindus listen to my speeches about *Antyajas*, they do so merely to please me. Believing that it was the *Antyajas* whose absence I regretted,[1] he points mours but to their lack of faith. Let me tell those who think as Shri Juthabhai does that the regret I expressed was for the absence of Hindu who look upon themselves as orthodox. My speech coout that their absence was not at all due to fears occasioned by false runtained an appeal to them and that is why I wished that they had been present.

It it is true, however, that *Antyajas* were not present in large numbers because of their lack of faith, that fact also is to be regretted. They need to have faith in themselves alone. The object of holding the *Antyaj* conferences was to influence the *Antyajas* much more than to influence Hindu society as a whole. Many of the resolutions passed pertained to internal reforms. I hope, therefore, that *Antyaj* friends will not, owing to any such misunderstanding, keep away from conferences in future.

Shri Juthabhai says further that, before starting any movement for swaraj, we should first launch a fight against untouchability. We shall be justified in condemning British rule after the Satanic oppression of *Antyajas* by caste Hindus is ended. I am in sympathy with this

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Suppressed Classes Conference, Ahmedabad", 13-4-1921.

argument of Shri Juthabhai; there is, however, a serious flaw in it. The struggle for swaraj is a movement for emancipating ourselves from our sins. Self-purification mean being free form sins. So long as the *Antyajas*' untouchability has not ended, that of he Hindus will not end either. The one is int-imately connected with the other. How can swaraj ever be won so long as the sinful practice of treating the *Antyajas* as untouchables is not given up? I think, therefore, that those of Shri Juthabhai's way of thinking need to keep patience and take full part in this movement for swaraj. It is not other Hindus who will grant swaraj to *Antyajas*; they will win their own swaraj. Noone who understands the idea of swaraj will fail to see the need for non-co-operation.

HINDUS OF KALOL

Describing my experiences in Gujarat, I had remarked on the Kalol *mahajans*,[1] regard for *Antyajas*. Afterwards, however, I came to know that they were so enraged at my visit to the *Antyaj* locality, that they said harsh things about it and many of them even took a bath by way of expiation. I was sorry to learn all this. I have been told that one cause for their anger was that, after my departure, some persons forcibly got *Antyajas* admitted into the *pandal* . If anybody did this, I would consider that also wrong. We can progress only by tolerating one another's views, right or wrong. Those who took a bath and those who said harsh things about me were within their rights. People who regard it as a sin to touch *Antyajas* cannot be convinced of their error by force. he sin of untouchability can be washed clean only by being patient with them and explaining to them the meaning of dharma. The only lesson that I want to draw from this incident is that nobody, lured by the prospect of Swaraj or in order to please me, need keep back his views or suppress his feelings and touch *Antyajas*. We can profit from a thing only by doing it thoughtfully and with full understanding. Misplaced regard for others, fear and the like also obstruct swaraj.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-5-1921

[1] The local business communiy or their representative body

58. REPLY TO ADDRESS AT ALLAHABAD CONFERENCE [1]

May 10, 1921

Mahatmaji in a short speech thanked the people of Allahabad for their enthusiastic welcome and said that he had visited Allahabad so many times before that he felt quiet at home there. It had become customary in his recent tours that addresses of welcome were presented to him by various municipalities. The presentation of all address was only an expression of their agreement with the non-co-operation programme and that those who presented the address were with them in their present struggle for freedom. At Allahabad their municipal commissioners thought that as he was a politician, it was no proper for them to present to him a welcome address. They were right from one point of view, but this attitude required a radical change. He wanted the municipalities to realize their own strength and not to remain tame instruments of a routine of work. they should not however think that the address was withheld for some enmity with him. The address presented to him and his brother Maulna Shaukat Ali so far were from smaller municipalities. As for the bigger municipalities, it was difficult to change their course so abruptly.

They should, however, forget this episode and go on with their work as enjoined by the Congress. They had to take-swaraj within that year and to right the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs. This could not be attained by mere conferences and lectures and poems and welcome addresses. If it were possible to attain their object in that manner, they could have easily done it through their congress. There was a time when The Congress and other conferences asked something from the Government, and when they met next year and their demands were not met by the Government, they passed a resolution of protest and there the matter ended. That time had changed now and they had to take their object by their own efforts. The Congress had placed a practical scheme before them and they had to work it in order to achieve what they wanted. If they gave up conferences and poems and welcome addresses, etc., no harm could be done, but if they refrained from doing what the Congress asked them to do they could never attain swaraj.

In their welcome address they referred to the fact that there was another name of the city of Allahabad, viz., Fakirabad, and he wished that the city were worthy of that name in the fullest sense of he word. For their present movement they required the services of fakirs or siritual being and he hoped that the city would give a lead to India in that respect.

[1] An address of welcome on behalf of the citizens was read out by Motilal Nehru at the Allahabad District Conference. Mahomed Ali presided . Besides the delegates and peasants, it was attended by Kasturba, Lala Lajput Rai, Shaukat Ali, Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari, Hasrat Mohani, Dr.Saifuddin Kitchlew, Swami Shraddhanand, Purshottamdas Tandon, Sarojini Naidu and Jawaharlal Nehru.

The Congress wanted them to do three things, viz., to enlist 1 crore members of the Congress, to contribute 1 crore of rupees towards Tilak Swaraj Fund, and introduce 20 lakhs charkhas in Indian homes. He wanted to know how much they did for each . As regards the first, he was glad to be reminded that all hose present before him were members of the Congress, but he wanted them to work more and collect their proper share in proportion of their population.[1]

He was sorry to hear that not much was contributed to the Tilak Swaraj Fund from Allahabad. If Allahabad was poor, he did not want them to contribute in rupees, but even if every man in the province could pay two piece each, they could contribute substantially towards their share. Allahabad was a place of pilgrimage and they could form Seva Samitis to help the pilgrims and then ask them to contribute for the Fund and he was sure that, if they worked hard in this way, they could easily collect an amount which would be equal to, if not more than, the share allotted to them.

Then there was the introduction of 20 lakh charkhas.He did not want them to possess these charkhas and to worship them but to take the same work from them which, as Mr. Mohamed Ali said in one of his speeches, the British Government took from machine-guns. If 20 lakh charkhas were working at least 4 hours daily, he felt sure that in a very short time no Indian will feel ashamed of putting on the cloth made in his own country.

In his recent tours in India, he speaker as well as Mauna Shaukat Ali had shown to the country the absolute necessity of Hindu-Muslim unity and, if the country did not still realize the fact, no amount of propaganda could bring it home to them. They had also demonstrated that they were absolutely non-violent. In this respect he was sorry to note that some of the *kisans*[2] were not strictly adhering to non-violence and strongly deprecated their conduct. They should fully understand that they should not use violent language even for their enemies; instead of being violent, they should create a spirit o suffering and sacrifice, and even in some of them were sent to jail, they should not give vent to angry demonstrations. For it is only by their readiness to go to jail that they could hasten their way towards swaraj. He deprecated the action of the people of Malegaon and asked them of take a lesson from the episode and never allow its repetition. If the speaker of Maulna Shaukat Ali—or Mohamed Ali or any other worker in the cause—was sent to jail they should not kill any sub-inspector even if their men are killed by him. When they had created that spirit in them and when they had lost all fear of jail, which to a worker like himself was a place of rest and comfort, swaraj would not remain at a distance.

[1] The report in *The Pioneer,* 12-5-1921, has : "He desired to know how many persons from Allahabad Distirct and the city had joined the Congress and exhorted his audience to send in their names before the Conference dispersed."

[2] Peasants

He did not know why the Government were so anxious of shut up Maulana Mohamed Ali while the speaker said every word that the Maulana had said. The fault of Maulana Mohamed Ali is said to be that he had said, that when the Afghans attacked India, he would sent the message that the Indians would not help the British Government against the invasion either in money or in men and the speaker endorsed every world of the Maulana. He asked the Hindus not to be afraid of the Afghan bogey, for no religion expected is votaries to be cowards. He knew that the pathans were very strong but no Pathan, however strong, could force him to eat beef or act against his religion. The present Government had forfeited their confidence and unless they (this Government) righted the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs, they should not expect any help from the Indians if the Afghans or any other power invaded India. They were, however, to remain non-violent under all circumstances and never to kill anyone even under the greatest provocation, for in doing so, they would forfeit their claim or swaraj.

In conclusion, Mahatmaji emphasized there was only one religion today for Hindus as well as Mussulmans and that was of get the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs redressed and to save their country from slavery . If they wanted to work or this country, they should follow the Congress lead and act up to its injunctions however insignificant hey appeared to be for the great object in view.

He prayed to God in the end to give them sufficient strength to follow the Congress lead.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 13-5-1921

59. NOTES

SWAMI GOVINDANAND

So, Swami Govindanand has got five years' transportation. He has a tough back. He has undergone previous incarceration without trial. He has put on record his experiences of the tortures he had to put up with in the various goals in which he was placed. He has now gone through the farce of a trial and has been duly convicted. Does the transportation on that account carry and weight, or does it not rather show the hypocrisy of the whole transaction? The form is changed, the spirit remains the same. What is wanted is a change of the spirit. "Handsome is that handsome does." I have read the full next to the Swami's speech. It contains some bitter and offensive language but nothing out of the ordinary. Certainly there is no incitement to violence in it. Disaffection there is. But if he deserved prosecution for uttering disaffection, I am as guilty as Swami Govindanand. I have probably the greatest disaffection for the existing system of

Government. For nobody has perhaps the same horror of the system that I have. One would think that disaffection was an established common fact in India and that so long as the speakers did not incite to violence, they were to be free from the attentions of the police. But the worst of this Government is that it has no consistent policy. The late Mr. Chamberlain[1] used to pride himself on reiterating his belief that a British official's word was as good as a bond. We know by painful experience that, to-day, a British Government's bond is worth no more than waste paper. Happily, India was under no delusion when Sir William Vincent pompously pronounced the sentences conveying to the Indian ear the assurance that non-co-operators were to be left undisturbed so long as there was no incitement to violence. The assurance only meant that non-co-operators were to be left undisturbed so long as their propaganda did not result in effective action. Now that we have gone far beyond the stage of mere demonstration, we need or expect freedom from imprisonment or worse. The more he movement tells, the greater must the repression be. Five years' transportation is clearly intended to produce a theatrical effect. Five years in the life of India to-day mean, I do not know, how many ages. I India is as good as her word, she would have acquired the power long before the expiry of the period to discharge all prisoners unjustly detained. But whether that event is far or near, our duty is clear. We must answer every imprisonment not with anger, as in Malegaon, but with quiet courage and determination. We must prosecute, if we are true to our creed, still more vigorously that concrete constructive programme of the All-India Congress Committee to its full fruition. We must not indulge in empty or provoking demonstrations at each arrest. We must not indulge in bravado. We must seek imprisonment for doing solid work.

MALEGAON MISBEHAVIOUR

I observe that there is a tendency to minimize the guilt of the non-co-operators at Malegaon. No amount of provocation by the sub-inspector could possibly justify retaliation by the non-co-operators. I am not examining the case from the legal standpoint. I am concerned only with the non-co-operator's. He is bound under his oath not to retaliate even under he gravest provocation. We have the brilliant instance of Sardars Lachhman Singh and Dulip Singh and their party.

[1] Joseph Chamberlain (1836-1914); Secretary of State or Colonies, 1895-1903

If we are true non-co-operators, we must develop the power of dying as they died. I would have hailed with joy the immolation of Malegaon non-co-operators if they had died bravely and without providing any justification. That would have brought the day of India's freedom nearer. As it was, who gave the first provocation, again, from the non-co-operator's standpoint? Did they or did they not try to overawe the police? These delirious demonstrations when any of us is arrested are, as I have already observed before, an unseemly exhibition of our anxiety to avoid imprisonment. We have chosen a standard of judgment for ourselves and we must abide by it. I retain the opinion that the non-co-operators, so far as the facts hitherto brought to light show, committed a grievous breach of the code of non-violent non-co-operation. I would ask the public who are interested in the Khilafat or swaraj, religiously to refrain from *all* demonstrations over the arrest or imprisonment of even their dearest leaders. I would hold it no honour to me for the public to proclaim a hartal or hold meetings if I was arrested or Maulana Shaukat Ali for that matter. I would welcome and expect in any such event a complete immediate boycott of all foreign cloth, a more energetic adoption of the spinning-wheel, a more vigorous collection in behalf of the Tilak Swaraj Fund and a flooding of Congress offices for registration as members. I would certainly expect the emptying of Government schools and colleges and more suspensions of practice by lawyers. Killing officers and burning buildings will no only retard he advent of swaraj and the righting of the khilafat and the Punjab wrongs, but are likely to lead to utter demoralization of the nation. We must therefore scrupulously avoid all occasions which would excite the passions of the mob and lead them into undesirable or criminal conduct.

CARPING CRITICISM

Often do young men criticize the conduct of leaders without just cause. The latest instance that has come to my notice is rather striking. A special train was arranged for a visit to Mirpur Khas from Hyderabad during my recent visit to Sind. This was too much for a correspondent. He thought that the leaders had indulged in a waste of national funds. I had not stopped to inquire the reason why the special was arranged. He advised me to cancel the special and give a day more to Sind and save the money. If he had inquired into the matter, the friend would have discovered that without the special it was impossible to take me to Mirpur Khas, that I could not have given a day more to Sind Without disturbing the rest of the programme, that it

was necessary for me to go to Mirpur Khas and that the expense was comparatively small. Criticism of public men is a welcome sign of public awakening. It keeps workers on the alert. Those who pay have a right to ensure economy. There is undoubtedly an extravagance often noticed about popular demonstrations, much money is spent in tinsel splendour. The expense is often thought-less. And we are likely to gain by fearless criticism of public expenditure or general conduct of public men. But all such criticism must be well informed and thoughtful. All carping criticism must be avoided.

Whilst on the question of railway travelling, I must remark that there is still a noticeable desire to avoid 3rd class travelling. I am sorry to say that, being no longer physically able to travel 3rd class, I am deprived of the inestimable experiences of 3rd class railway travelling. It affords an opportunity of contact with the national mind which nothing else does. It enables one to render service which cannot be otherwise rendered. I would therefore urge all workers to avoid 2nd class travelling save in rare cases. No one perhaps knows better than I do the discomfort of 3rd class railway travelling. I put it down partly to callous railway management and partly to bad national habits that ignore the convenience of the neighbours. Observant workers travelling 3rd class would efficiently deal with the disregard both of the management and the passengers. There is no doubt that 2nd class travelling is not within the reach of the masses. And national servants may claim no privileges not enjoyed by the latter.

Young India, 11-5-1921

60. HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

That unity is strength is not merely a copybook maxim but a rule of life is in no case so clearly illustrated as in the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity. Divided we must fall. Any third power may easily enslave India so long as we Hindus and Mussulmans are ready to cut each other's throats. Hindu-Muslim unity means not unity only between Hindus and Mussulmans but between all those who believe India to be their home, no matter to what faith they belong.

I am fully aware that we have not yet attained that unity to such an extent as to bear any strain. It is a daily growing plant, as yet in delicate infancy, requiring special care and attention. The thing

became clear in Nellore[1] when the problem confronted me in a concrete shape. The relations between the two were none too happy. They fought only about two years ago over what appeared to me to be a small matter. It was the eternal question of playing music whilst passing mosques. I hold that we may not dignify every trifle into a matter of deep religious importance. Therefore, a Hindu may not insist on play- ing music whilst passing a mosque. He may no even quote precedents in his own or any other place for the sake of playing music. It is not a mater of vital importance for him to play music whilst passing a mosque. One can easily appreciate the Mussulman sentiment of having solemn silence near a mosque the whole of the twenty four hours. What is a non-essential to a Hindu may be an essential to a Mussulman. And in all non-essential matters a Hindu must yield for the asking. It is criminal folly to quarrel over trivialities. The unity we desire will last only if we cultivate a yielding and a charitable disposition towards one another. The cow is as dear as life to a Hindu; the Mussulman should therefore voluntarily accommodate his Hindu brother. Silence at his prayer is a precious thing for a Mussulman. Every Hindu should voluntarily respect his Mussulman brother's sentiment. This however is a counsel of per-fection. There are nasty Hindus as there are nasty Mussulmans who would pick a quarrel for nothing. For these we must provide *pancha-yats* of unimpeachable probity and imperturbability whose decisions must be binding on both parties. Public opinion should be cultivated in favour of the decisions of such *panchayats* so that no one would question them.

I know that there is much, too much distrust of one another as yet. Many Hindus distruct Mussulman honesty. They believe that swaraj means Mussulman raj, for they argue that without the British, Mussulmans of India will aid Mussulman powers to build a Mussulman empire in India. Mussulmans on the other hand fear that the Hindus, being in an overwhelming majority, will smother them. Such an attitude of mind betokens impotence on either's part. If not their nobility, their desire to live in peace would dictate a policy of mutual trust and mutual forbearance. There is nothing in either religion to keep the two apart. The days of forcible conversion are gone. Save for the cow, Hindus can have no ground for quarrel with Mussulmans. The latter are under no religious obligation to slaughter

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Nellore", 7-4-1921.

a cow. The fact is we have never before now endeavoured to come together to adjust our differences and to live as friends bound to one another as children of the same sacred soil. We have both now an opportunity of a lifetime. The Khilafat question will not recur for another hundred years. If the Hindus wish to cultivate eternal friendship with the Mussulmans, they must perish with them in the attempt to vindicate the honour of Islam.

Young India, 11-5-1921

61. SPINNING AS FAMINE RELIEF

Mrs. Jaiji Petit has sent the following notes[1] of an experiment being conducted in spinning among the famine-stricken people at Miri near Ahmednagar. I gladly publish the notes as the experiments is being conducted under the supervision of an English-woman. The reader will not fail to observe the methodical manner in which the work is being done. All the difficulties have been met and provided for. Even the very small experiment shows what a potent instrument the spinning-wheel is for famine relief. Properly organized it cannot but yield startling results.

Young India, 11-5-1921

62. GREATER USE OF HANDLOOMS

TO
THE EDITOR
Young India

SIR,

All patriotic Indians agree that India should be a self-clothing country, that is that India should not import foreign yarn or piece-goods. The question is as to the best and the quickest means of attaining that object. The charkha has been preached to be the means. We, however, believe that there are easier, quicker, and in every respect better means for accomplishing the object. What are they? Let us declare at once that they are : (1) increasing the number of handlooms in India; (2) preaching that it is the imperative duty of every Indian to be satisfied for the present with comparatively coarse cloths made from yarn produced in India and to avoid using imported cloths and cloths made in

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Spinning as Famine Relief", 11-5-1921.

India from imported yarn (chiefly fine), however comfortable wearing these clothes may be. A little explanation is necessary. One of the cardinal facts to remember in this connection is that, if the total amount of twist and yarn that is now produced in India without the use of charkha were converted into cloth, it would practically suffice to clothe India from her own produce, supposing the country were prepared to wear coarse cloths only. As a matter of fact, about 143 million pounds of twist and yarn made in India are *exported* every year from India. Convert, i.e., weave this stuff into cloth in India and prepare the country for making the small sacrifice involved in being content for the present with the coarse cloth thus produced, and the great problem of making India self-clothing within a very short time is solved. Here the first question that crosses one's mind is whether the existing power-looms and handlooms of India would be able to weave the above huge quantity of yarn into cloth. The answer must be in the negative. What then is to be done? The obvious answer is: increase the number of looms. It would be difficult to increase the number of power-looms at once. A large quantity of machinery (weaving) would have to be imported from foreign lands. That means a delay of two or three years, leaving aside for the nonce the difficulties arising from the unfavourable rate of exchange and the recently imposed high import duty on this kind of machinery. To increase the number of handlooms is not difficult. They can be manufactured here in India within a very short time and at a very small cost. From a calculation based on statistics for the year 1919 published by the Director-General of Satistics, which however I do not wish to inflict on your readers, it can be easily shown that it would be practically sufficient for our present purposes, if we multiply our handlooms to twice their existing number. And I appeal to the readers to consider the matter with all the earnest care that the importance of the question demands, and put their powerful shoulders to the wheel.

Yours faithfully,

S. B. MITRA

The correspondent seems to ignore the fact that the propaganda of hand-spinning involves that of hand-weaving. India cannot be self-contained for her clothing if the hand-spun yarn could not be hand-woven. But the mere multiplying of handlooms cannot solve the problem. The art of hand-weaving is not dead. There are today more handlooms working in India than power-looms. But they mostly weave foreign yarn. I heartily support the proposition that we should use only coarse cloth and induce the weavers to weave only Indian yarn. The correspondent should also have advised 'the leaders' to

appeal to the mill-owners not to export yarn at all. Only it is well nigh impossible to induce the mill-owners to forego the larger profits they make by exporting yarn. If only the mill-owners and the other capitalists took it into their heads, they could certainly bring about a complete boycott of foreign cloth during this year. But even so the problem of hand-spinning remains. It is not enough merely to bring about boycott of foreign cloth. It is absolutely necessary to give the millions of the peasantry a supple-mentary industry. They must utilize, as they did before, their spare hours in some occupation supplementary to agriculture. The millions who are living in semi-starvation for want of occupation must find an easy one in their own homes. This is again hand-spinning. What the correspondent urges is going on. The number of handlooms is increasing, the people are taking less to wearing coarse cloth. But universal hand-spinning alone can immediately solve the problem of the growing poverty of the masses. Let me put my conviction still more strongly. India cannot become a contented, fearless, and self-supporting India without hand-spinning. It is therefore that Mr. Krishna Rao of Masulipatam instinctively recognized the duty (dharma) of hand-spinning as a sacramental rite. The masses with their clear imagination have certainly recognized it as such. I ask everyone who thinks like Dr. Mitra not to divert the national mind from the central fact. Hand-spinning includes all that the correspondent suggests, but it includes much more. An ocean necessarily includes that which is yielded by a river.

Young India, 11-5-1921

63. DRAFT OF ALL BROTHERS' APOLOGY[1]

[On or after *May 14, 1921*]

Friends have drawn our attention to certain speeches of ours which in their opinion have a tendency to incite to violence. We desire

[1] At an interview on May 14, at Simla, the Viceroy drew Gandhiji's attention o certain objectionable features in the speeches delivered by the Ali Brothers, and hinted that Government might prosecute them. Gandhiji asked the Viceroy to withhold action and offered to get the Ali Brothers to issue an apology which he would draw up and show him in advance. This was done and certain changes suggested by the Viceroy were incorporated. The statement was finally issued by the Ali Brothers on May 29, with some verbal variations; *vide* Appendix "Interview-cum-Apology", 4-8-1921.

to state that we never intended to incite to violence, but reco- gnize that certain passages in our speeches are capable of bearing the interpretation put upon them.[1] We, therefore, sincerely feel sorry and express our regret for the unnecessary heat of some of the passages in these speeches, and we give our public assurance and promise to all who may require it that *so long as we are associated with the movement of non-co-operation,* we shall not directly or indirectly advocate violence at present or in the future nor create an atmosphere of preparedness for violence. Indeed, we hold it contrary to the spirit of non-violent non-co-operation to which we have pledged our word.

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-5-1921

64. TANGLED BUSINESS

Writing under the pseudonym "Swadeshi", a friend asks me several candid questions. For my information, he has given his name too. He is an educated man and his questions deserve attention. He asks:

Q. Is not every delegate who joined in unanimously passing the non-co-operation resolution bound to implement it, not by stages, but immediately?

A. Certainly, he is.

Q. If he is and yet does not act accordingly, may it not be that such a delegate takes non-co-operation to be merely a toy to play with? Do not such people deceive themselves and others?

A. They certainly do. Not only that, they even harm the non-co-operation movement. They do not carry out the condition of their soldiership. Where the minimum height prescribed for recruitment is five feet, a person four feet tall is not wanted. In the same way, those who continue to be soldiers of the non-co-operation army but do not carry out its conditions commit uncivil disobedience of its law and are guilty of a crime.

Q. If a large majority of non-co-operators were of this type, would you not feel disappointed? Would not your wonderful optimism suffer?

[1] The statement as issued by the Ali Brothers, however, here read: "We desire to state that we never imagined that any passages in our speeches were capable of bearing the interpretation put upon them, but we recognize the force of our friends' argument and interpretation."

A. The people's test is not yet over. If, however, a majority of non-co-operators remain unchanged even after the 30th June, I would certainly be unhappy. But my optimism would not suffer. As long as I am sure of myself, my optimism will not give way. Moreover, taking everybody else to be like me, I believe that all people will adopt what appears to be the natural and right course. The impostors will leave the movement of their own accord.

Q. Is it not necessary that such delegates be held up to public contempt?

ould I offer it to weak delegates? This being a struggle for self-purification, it has no room whatsoever or holding up anyone to public contempt. But such persons may certainly be subjected to a boycott, that is, may be debarred from being delegates, volunteers or office-holders. I believe that the atmosphere is getting cleaner day by day. There are only a few committees now in which lawyers who have not given up practice still hold any office. There are hardly any students still continuing in Government schools and servingas volunteers. It seems everyone is beginning to understand his own limitations.

Q. Does not the logic which applies to Congress delegates also apply to your followers or those who admire your principles?

A. I have no follower. Or, he is my follower who not only accepts my principles but puts them into practice. There is therefore no sense in describing anyone not acting according to my principles as a follower of mine. A 'follower' of mine needs no certificate. Everyone will recognize him. He is no 'follower' of mine who does not speak the truth and does not act according to truth, who does not strive to be compassionate in speech, thought and action, who does not wear khadi and does not boycott foreign cloth completely, who does not regard the *Bhangi* as his blood-brother, who does not look upon women other than his wife as his mothers and sisters, who is not prepared to lay down his life for the sake of the country, dharma, or truth and, finally, who does not realize his own littleness and behave with humility. To the 'admirer' of my principles also I would apply the same rules. The habit of keeping practice at variance with profession and of tolerating such behaviour has gone so deep that it has become something of a disease. If people who are not prepared to put into practice what they preach stop speaking, I am sure, the world would be spared much sophistry and a good many speeches and

conflicts.

Q. Would you accept swaraj if it is gained through the support of these delegates and admirers, who wax eloquent in preaching to others what they never practise themselves? If you did, how long would such swaraj be preserved?

A. There is no question at all of my accepting swaraj. It will be for the people to do so. As a representative of the people, however, I know that swaraj can never be won through such insincerity. The question, therefore, whether or not it would last long does not arise.

We can see that this friend has asked all these questions in deep sorrow. Doubts like his are bound to occur to many other honest men and women. Every non-co-operator should try to set them at rest by his conduct. The cause for delay in our getting swaraj lies in ourselves.

The friend has raised some other doubts also in the introductory part of his letter. Being worthy of our attention, I reproduce them here in the form of questions.

Q. Do not some of your principles demand sacrifices which it is against human nature to make?

A. Not a single item of non-co-operation demands such difficult sacrifice. The sacrifices involves in non-co-operation are easy to make and not impossible for ordinary human nature and it is because of this, I believe, that the people have welcomed the movement. The main principles are : Hindu-Muslim unity, preserving peace even under provocation, total boycott of foreign cloth, daily spinning for a fixed period, contributing money according to one's capacity, treating the *Bhangi* as one's brother and giving up addictions, immorality, etc. In none of these do I see *sannyasa*[1]. I have demanded nothing which other nations have not shown themselves capable of. The requirement of peace will be considered as something new. But the Sikhs have succeeded in meeting it in a limited sphere. On deeper reflection we shall find that the British have also remained peaceful whenever they wanted to. I have gone to the length of conceding that we shall win swaraj even if we accept the need for peace as a matter of policy, as a weapon of expediency. The non-violence of my conception is the weapon of the strong, of the true Kshatriya. We may, however, consider it as a weapon of the weak.

[1] Renunciation of all desires and possessions

Even then, if the people realize that the use of arms is impossible at present, learn the principle of laying down one's own life and give up all thought of killing others, they can have swaraj this very day.

Q. If you advocate non-co-operation with the rulers, why do you discourage those who suggest non-co-operation with co-operators by preventing *Bhangis* and others from serving the latter?

A. It is not the rulers against whom we employ non-co-operation; we employ it against the policy followed by them. Our non-co-operation is not directed against individuals. We have never stopped any *Bhangi* or potter from serving an official, nor do I consider it desirable that we should. How then can we dissuade *Bhangis* and others from serving our brethren who, holding views different from ours, enter Councils? We wish to win over everybody through love. If you would not have it that way, at any rate, we do not want to force anybody to be on our side but want to propagate our views by awakening people's reason and pleading with them. Non-cooper-ation springs not from hatred but from love, not from weakness but from strength, not from falsehood but from truth, not from blind faith but from faith based on knowledge, from enlightened judgment and from reason; it does no spring from *adharma* but from dharma, from faith in oneself.

Q. Are you only a Mahatma or a statesman as well?

A. In my view, anyone who is a Mahatma is bound to be a statesmnan. A statesman is one who can serve and protect the State—the people. An *atman* may be *mahan*[1] only to the extent that the person has become a servant of humanity.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-5-1921

65. MY NOTES

WHAT WORK WE CAN DO IN INDIAN STATES

A friend from Kathiawad asks what people in Indian States should do. The question is being asked more frequently after the States People's Conference in Kathiawad.

We may not, in Indian States, make any comments about the British Empire, and should refrain from putting them in an awkward

[1] Great

position. There is no need at all to say here how Satanic the Government is. But, even in Indian States, we can take up the movement against drink, giving up drink ourselves and persuading others to do so. We may certainly introduce spinning-wheels and start spinning. Even there, we may certainly give up using foreign cloth and wear khadi; we can, likewise, give up gambling, immorality, etc; we can enrol ourselves as Congress members and contribute hand somely to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. The entire amount can be raised by the residents of Indian States if they choose to make the effort. Anyone who labours to get these things done will have done much or swaraj. Those who regard non-co-operation as a sacrifice for self-purification have no problem. If the residents of an Indian State greet the *Bhangis* as their brethren, they are guilty of no disloyalty to the State.

Indian States are certainly not outside India. There is only one question before the entire country. All are called upon to join a holy war. All are required to learn the lessons of truth, fearlessness and peace. It may be necessary in British India to condemn British rule, but there should be no need at all to do so in Indian States.

CRITICISM UNNECESSARY

Even in British India, however, is it necessary to go on criticizing British rule? Personally, I feel that we would be showing our culture in eschewing all criticism. Whatever criticism is necessary, I make myself. Let me assure readers of *Navajivan* that I never fail to criticize the Government whenever criticism is called for. But we cannot mend or end this Empire by denouncing it; we shall succeed in our aim only by doing our duty and reforming ourselves. We have so much to do by way of spinning, enrolling members of the Congress and collecting contributions for the Tilak Swaraj Fund that we can spare no time for other things. We can complete the programme of work by June only if the handful of us who are working give every moment of our time to the foregoing tasks. How, then, can we waste our time in criticizing the Government ?

I have even grown weary of the crowds on railway platforms and of their shouting. These things will not bring us swaraj. The time for them is over. They may have been necessary when there was no awaken-ing among the people. But now there is no lack of it. We have now control of the Niagara Falls. We have also discovered how to put them to use. What we have to do now is simply to work on silently to

that end.

If it is no more necessary to criticize the Government, it is not necessary to criticize co-operators either. Our criticism consists in our work. It is the experience everywhere in the world that an ounce of practice achieves more than a ton of preaching. Speeches often mirror our deficiencies in regard to practice. The man who talks much hardly acts upon what he says. He who is particular about keeping his word weighs every sentence he utters. Moreover, now that we address our demands not to the Government but to ourselves, whatever criticism we make or discontent we feel should be against ourselves.

VIOLENT NON-CO-OPERATORS

A gentleman from Bhavnagar, who has given his name, reports some painful things about the Jain Girls School there. It is some time that the letter has been with me but, owing to my constant touring, I cannot cope with my correspondence as fast as I would wish. Though he has given me permission to publish his name, I refrain from doing so as I do not want to make him a target of undeserved criticism in Bhavnagar. I know that we have not yet acquired the strength to tolerate criticism even when it is well-meant. Swarajists must, on the contrary, learn to bear with malicious criticism even. This friend says that, even on the sacred day of April 6, a crowd of non-co-operators invaded the Girls' School there to get is closed. If just one of them had approached the authorities with a polite request, there would have been nothing to say against the step.But, according to the correspondent, a whole crowd invaded the place and the leader peremptorily demanded that the school be closed. The Head Master started arguing and was answered with a hail of brickbats. One girl was injured on the head and another was slightly bruised. Just then, fortunately,a non-co-operator who understood the need for remaining peaceful came to the place. He stopped the rain of brick-bats and the attempted coercion. I congratulate this friend. What shall I write about the others? If the account given above is true, they brought discredit on the 6th, broke their pledge and utterly forgot themselves. How can we, who wish to be saved from the policy of making people virtuous by force, coerce anyone?

The correspondent who reported this incident says that, despite this harassment, the authorities of the School studiously refrained from calling in the police for help. I congratulate them on exercising this restraint. Those who violate peace are not non-co-operators, even

though they may abide by all other conditions, and a co-operator who remains peaceful in the face of attacks by non-co-operators is, I would say, a non-co-operator without knowing that he is one.

"EVEN GOD CANNOT, MAKE GIFT OF SWARAJ"

This statement appears in my message for the Satyagraha Week. Shri Rajabali Jhinabhai protests that most people will not understand the meaning of this remark, that it gives the impression that I was even limiting the power of God and may, therefore, have hurt religious-minded people. I count myself a religious-minded man. I believe in the reality of God. I have merely stated a plain fact in plain language and drawn atten-tion of God's law. God has reserved no freedom for Himself to grant a place in heaven to a sinner. One can say that, after laying down His laws, God left things to take their own course. It is because He is Almighty that He has created laws which admit of no exceptions. Swaraj is a state of being of individuals and nations. Just as only a person who eats will have his hunger satisfied, so he alone can be free who throws off subjection. If we do not give up drink and do not discard foreign cloth, if Hindus and Muslims continue fighting with each other, would God make us a gift of swaraj? Can He? Conversely, if, through force of public opinion, we successfully boycott foreign cloth and put a stop to the consumption of liquor, can we fail to win swaraj? Can anybody persistently transgressing God's laws hope that God will give him a place in heaven? Surely, none. Hence, even our prayer should be not for swaraj but for strength to win it. The very meaning of prayer is the expression of intense longing for a particular goal or state.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-5-1921

66. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, SIMLA [1]

May 15, 1921

Mr. Gandhi, replying[2], touched on the incidents connected with his visit and said Pundit Malaviya had sent him a telegram asking him to come up to Simla, and adding that unless he came the Punditji, in spite of his bad health, would be obliged to go to him in order to bring him up to Simla. Soon after the telegram, he received a letter from the Pundit saying that Lord Reading would like to see him if he (Mr. Gandhi) wanted to see H.E. the Viceroy with a view to put the case of the non-co-operation party before him. Mr. Gandhi saw nothing wrong in putting his case before an official.

Accordingly, on reaching Simla, he sent a letter to the Viceroy asking for an interview which was at once granted. He acknowledged that the Viceroy gave him a long, patient and kind hearing. But he could not say either one way or the other about the success of this interview.[3] He placed before the Viceroy what his party stood for and the Viceroy, in his turn, dilated on the difficulties confronting the administration. The interview might both be called successful and unsuccessful.[4]

...[He] said that everything would depend on the people carrying out what they had solemnly resolved upon at the Congress and the Sikh League and Khilafat Conference.

At this moment he could only say that, as long as they stood by non-violence and the spirit of sacrifice for the cause of justice to their country, no power on earth could check them from the attainment of swaraj within this year. They wanted to show to the world that they stood for justice, and nothing but justice to India would solve their problem . He wanted all to behave like those who died at Nankana , freely giving their blood for the sake of their sacred cause and not like Mahant Naraindas bent upon taking others, blood. When this spirit of non-violence and sacrifice came to them , no modern implements of warfare could stay in the way of their liberty .

[1] Gandhiji addressed a meeting of about fifteen thousand people at Idgah ground. He was requested to speak on the purpose of his visit to Simla and the result of his meeting with the Viceroy. Gandhiji's speech was reported in *The Bombay Chronicle* dated May 17 and 19. In the text given here both these reports have been collated.

[2] An address of welcome had earlier been read out.

[3] *Vide* "The Simla Visit", 25-5-1921.

[4] The following paragraph is from the *Chronicle* report dated May 19.

Referring to the oft-repeated threat of an Afghan invasion, in case the British left this country, Mr. Gandhi said as long as he lived he could not telerate any part of his country under foreign domination. He believed this was also the view of every Mohammedan in India. He asked Hindus to have no suspicion about Mohammedans' feelings on this point. He wanted every man belonging to any religion to make common cause with them in this fight for liberty.[1]

He spoke at great length on three essentials o success. The first was getting rid of fear, the fear on the part of Hindus of Mohammedans and Pathans and on the part of Mohammedans of the fear and distrust of Hindus. He said the Afghan danger was nothing but a bogey. He had long known the Afghan character. Whatever their weaknesses, he was sure they were godfearing. He was confident that they would never think of a war of aggression. On the other hand, we would never invite the Afghans to help them in their struggle for freedom. On the contrary, if the Afghans came on an aggressive mission, he would undertake stubborn non-co-operation against them, and would lay down his life before parting with an inch of his Motherland.

He again reverted to the essential necessity of casting off distrust from their hearts by the Hindus and Mohammedans and spoke on the second essential, Hindu-Muslim unity. The entente between them was never entered into in a bargaining spirit. The Hindus espoused the Muslims' cause, because they knew it was their duty and because they knew that nobility could only be answered by nobility. It was fatal, therefore, to compel the Mussulmans to give up cow-killing. They were not the only culprits in the matter and the question of cow-protection was never going to be decided by the arbitrament of force. Implicit trust of and hearty co-operation with the Mussalmans would gain in the end everything. Islam was broad-based on nobility, and it would not endure if it gave up its nobility.

The third essential and the greatest one was of non-violence. In this connection, he made a stirring appeal to the Sikhs to emulate the example of Lachhman Singh and Dulip Singh, who had strength enough to fight Mahant Naraindas but who refused to use any violence.

Lastly, he referred to swadeshi and said that though he would never cease to appeal to the *vakils* and the students to give up the law-courts and schools, their failure to respond was not going to affect the question, if they carried out the boycott of foreign goods. Complete swadeshi meant swaraj.

Concluding, Mr. Gandhi said the attainment of swaraj depended upon the spirit of fearlessness, sacrifice, non-violence, Hindu-Muslim unity and the use of charkha.[2]

[1] The four paragraphs which follow are from the *Chronicle* report dated May

[2] The *Bombay Chronicle* report ends here. What follows is another report extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's visit to Simla published in *Navajivan*.

Will our talks yield any result ? They may or they may not, the chances are even. We have to pray for God's help to achieve what we wish to. I explained our case to the Viceroy and he listened to me for many hours with great patience and affection. I, too, listened to what he had to say. I heard him explain the difficulties of the British Government. I can only say this—if we adhere to the solemn declaration made, with God as witness at the Congress session, the Sikh League and the Khilafat conferences, we shall certainly achieve our cherished goal during this year. Nothing is in the hands of the Viceroy. Don't keep on asking what news cables from England bring. Our fight is for honour and justice, and we have to show to the world that we are ready to die for winning justice. God grants nothing without testing us and, before we can get anything, we must emerge successful from the test. Even the worst scoundrel is ready to do anything to get what he wants; you six-foot tall Punjabis, then, if you do not want to crawl again on your stomachs, if not even one amongst you desired to rub his nose on the ground, learn the lesson which our Sikh brethren have taught. Be ready, like them, to stake your head in a righteous cause. Do not be murderers, like Mahant Naraindas. You cannot win swaraj by killing anyone; you cannot solve the Punjab and the Khilafat questions that way. Not by taking anyone's blood but only by giving your own, by acquiring the strength of Lachhman Singh can you succeed in these things.

* * *

I tell you, as long as you are scared of your holy places being polluted or dishonoured by Pathans, you had better bury your *Hardwar* and immolate your womenfolk on the funeral pyre. You may not be able to fight the Pathans, but, instead of running away, you ought to have in you the strength to stand up against them and die. Have no fear of the Afghans, nor of the Muslims; fear God alone. Even in the days of the Prophet, some timid people, seeing the oncoming hordes, told him that they were only a few and asked him in fear how they could fight. The Prophet's reply was, ''No, you are not alone; God is with you.'' I, too, say to you, do not think yourselves weak. If you are brave, the Afghans also will behave well towards you. I know the Afghans. In South Africa, I had many of them as my clients. I have had experience of their sense of honour. I think even bad ones among them fear God. If you regard the Muslims as your brethren, if you trust them, have no fear of the pathans at all. If they come to attack us, I shall be with you to employ non-co-

operation against them too. I shall not let even a little bit of India be seized by them. God will give me strength at that time to offer up my life before they seize any bit. We have become slaves because of our mutual distrust. If the Muslims tarnish Islam, if the crores of them play foul, Islam will disappear. Theirs and ours is a relation based not on self-interest but on honour.

I tell men of all religions that we wish to be bound in a unity of hearts. Are we not so bound to the Christians ? Do we not accept the help that men like Andrews and Stokes[1] offer us ? We do not desire to make anyone our enemy. We wish rather to give our own blood. If the British remain as servants, as brothers, if they agree to give up their domination and stay on, they are welcome; otherwise they should quit.

In any case, we can get nothing unless we remain peaceful. If you allow yourselves to be provoked, you will lose the game. I have no desire to see General Dyer or Michael O'Dwyer punished, and here, today, on this sacred spot near a holy man's grave, I pray to God that He make their hearts pure.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-5-1921

67. LETTER TO S. SATYAMURTI

SIMLA,
May 16, 1921

DEAR MR. SATYAMURTI[2],

I have been unable to reply to your letter earlier owing to incessant travelling.

I think that your qualified suspension of practice is good enough but I must confess I do not understand your retention of the membership of the Senate.

But above all if you throw yourself into the struggle, it must be with absolute conviction. A man like you cannot serve a cause unless he approaches it with confidence. I would like you to come to it as suitor, not as advocate. I confess to you that I miss the ring of confidence about your letter. I would advise you to see Mr. Rajagopalachari and discuss the matter with him. If you finally come, I do not

[1] Christian missionary, social worker and associate of Andrews

[2] (1887-1943); Congress leader from Madras

apprehend any difficulty about your maintenance. After discussion with Mr. Rajagopalachari, you will please write to me and tell me or even tell him what your requirements will be if you have finally decided to come in.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original : S. Satyamurti Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

68. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, CONGRESS COMMITTEE, SYLHET

SIMLA,
May 17,1921

SECRETARY
CONGRESS COMMITTEE
SYLLIET

GRIEVED. DAS IN CHARGE. COMMUNICATING HIM. SEND DETAILS.

GANDHI

From a Photostat : S.N. 7526

69. TELEGRAM TO C. R. DAS

SIMLA,
May 17, 1921

C. R. DAS
RUSSA ROAD
CALCUTTA

WIRE SUM REQUIRED AND ITS PURPOSE.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N.7525

70. NOTES

HORNIMAN AND COMPANY

Friends have accused me of indifference about Mr. Horniman, and some have also wondered why I rarely write about the Savarkar

Brothers[1]. There is a favourite saying among lawyers, almost enjoying the dignity of a maxim, that hard cases make a bad law. I know to my cost how true the saying is. Many a judge has been obliged to give a decision apparently unjust but perfectly sound in law. Similarly, one may say that hard cases make bad non-co-operation. My business as an economical journalist is to deal with such matters only as have bearing on the one issue before the country. If I mention Mr. Horniman's case or that of the Savarkar Brothers, I can mention it not to influence the Government's decision, but to stimulate the public in favour of non-co-operation. I would be delighted to have Mr.Horniman back as an able and brave comrade. I know that he was unjustly deported. The Savarkar Brothers' talent should be utilized for public welfare. As it is, India is in danger of losing her two faithful sons, unless she wakes up in time. One of the brothers I know well. I had the pleasure of meeting him in London.[2] He is brave. He is clever. He is a patriot. He was frankly a revolutionary. The evil, in its hideous form, of the present system of Government, he saw much earlier than I did, He is in the Andamans for his having loved India too well. Under a just Government, he would be occupying a high office. I there-fore feel for him and his brother. Had it not been for non-co-operation. Mr. Horniman would have returned and the brothers would have been discharged long ago. Now non-co-operation blocks the way. Those who are really interested in the release of the brothers and such others as are suffering imprisonment and in the return of Mr. Horniman, must hasten the fulfilment of the non-co-operation programme and therefore the advent of swaraj. Meanwhile, we must not only put up with the existing incarcerations, but we must seek imprisonment ourselves, by offending the Government in all just, lawful and peaceful ways.

WHAT ARE THEY ?

I am writing these notes in Anand Bhavan.[3] I have just been shown a leaflet for distribution among the *Kisans*. I resent it because it credits me with an unconditional promise of swaraj during the year. But there is nothing offensive in it. On he contrary it exhorts the

[1] They were sentenced of life imprisonment and deported for their revolutionary activities. They were ultimately released in 1937.

[2] Gandhiji met V. D. Savarkar at a function to celebrate Vijaya Dashami in 1909, *vide* "London", after 24-10-1909.

[3] House of the Nehrus at Allahabad

kisans to remain peaceful even in the face of provocation. It is for distributing these leaf-lets that five young men have gone of goal. The leaflets are held by he Magistrate to be seditious, and the young men called upon to furnish security that they will not distribute them. Instead of giving the security, they have preferred imprisonment. This is one clean way of offending the Government.

I have read a notice issued by the Collector of the Allahabad District that Government servants must not wear the Gandhi cap. I would advise every Government servant to wear these beautiful light, inoffensive caps , and brave dismissal and even imprisonment. I was told whilst in Allahabad the overzealous servants of the Government have even been telling poor people that, if they introduce the spinning-wheel into their homes, they will be prosecuted. If a spinning-wheel can by any possibility be turned into a seditious article, its possession will be another honourable method of seeking imprisonment.

THE ZEMINDARS AND THE RYOTS

Whilst the U.P. Government is crossing the bounds of propriety, and intimidating people, there is little doubt that the *kisans* too are not making wise use of their newly-found power, In several zemindaris, they are said to have overstepped the mark, taken the law into their own hands and to have become impatient of anybody who would not do as they wish. They are abusing social boycott and are turning it into an instrument of violence. They are reported to have stopped the supply of water, barber, and other paid services to their zemindars in some instances and even suspended payment to the rent due to them. The *kisan* movement has received an impetus from non-co-operation, but it is anterior to and independent to it. Whilst we will not hesitate to advise the *kisans* when the moment comes to suspend payment of taxes to the Government, it is not contemplated that at any stage of non-co-operation we would seek to deprive the zemindars of their rent. The *kisan* movement must be confined to the improvement to the status of the *kisans* and the betterment of the relations between the zemindars and them. The *kisans* must be advised scrupulously to abide by the terms of their agreement with the zemindars, whether such agreement is written or inferred from custom. Where a custom or even a written contract is bad, they may not try to uproot it by violence or without previous reference to the zemindars. In every case there should be a friendly discussion with the zemindars and an

attempt made to arrive at a settlement. Our capacity for swaraj depends upon our capacity for solving without reference to, or intervention of, the Government, all the varied and complex problems that must arise in the affairs of one of the biggest and most ancient nations like ours.

DISCIPLINE

It is high time that we disciplined ourselves. The demonstrations at railway stations are becoming a menace to the comfort of the travelling public. I am old that some railway passengers who, only a short time before a station demonstration, were praising me, were, after one or two demonstrations any intermediate stations, heard to curse me. I sympathize with them. I had a fellow-passenger with me during the Allahabad journey. Owing to the pressure of the crowds that besiged the station, he was unable to get a cut of tea for go out or his refreshments. I should not at all be surprised if he considered me to be a plague. On my way back from Allahabad, there was an unmanageable crowd on the kanpur platform, yelling the national cries, pressing towards my compartment and making everybody uncomfortable. The noise continued the whole time. The leaders were with difficulty able to make the crowd sit, but it could not be made to stop shouting and yelling. I was asked to stand near the door to give *darshan*[1]. Much to the disappointment of the friends who urged me, I resolutely refused to stir out of my seat unless there was perfect silence.

This din, noise and bustle was due purely to want of forethought, management and organization. It is best now to avoid all demonstrations a stations. We must consult the convenience of the passengers. If there must be a demonstration, national cries must be regulated every facility must be provided for the easy movement of passengers. The nation must be disciplined to handle mass movements in a sober and methodical manner. This means previous training of volunteers and previous discipline of the masses. It is not impossible to give an elementary training in a few days. Wherever the people have been previously instructed, they have responded wonderfully well. Without this training, we never know when there might be an accident. It is the innate good nature of the people that has saved us hitherto from mishaps. But under proper training, we should be able to feel absolutely safe and comfortable in the midst of the biggest

[1] Sight of a person, place or thing considered holy

demonstrations. We cannot afford to be hysterical of mad.

SIKH COLOUR

A friend has just drawn my attention to a resolution passed by the Sikh League inviting me to include the Sikh black colour in the national flag. These friends forget that all other colours are represented on the white strip. We must not be parochial, provincial or clannish. Hindu and Mussulman colours are specially represented, not so much for the numbers they represent, as for the fact that they have remained apart for so long and that their mutual distrust has been an effectual bar against the realization of national aspirations. The Sikhs have never had any quarrel with Hindus. And if one has the Sikh colour separately represented, why not the Parsi, the Christian and the Jewish? I hope the Sikh Leaguers will see the unpractical nature of their suggestion.

I have been flooded with letters suggesting changes in the proposed national flag. I am unable to publish the voluminous correspondence. There is nothing striking in any of the letters. Some deplore the want of artistic beauty about the flag, others would make additions representing Hindu and Mohammedan symbols. The critics have missed the central idea. We must not have any religious symbols and we must find a clear and permanant rallying object. That is the spinning-wheel, according to the vast majority who believe with me that we lost our liberty with the loss of the spinning-wheel, and we can only regain it when we have revived the spinning-wheel and rejected foreign cloth.

TO CORRESPONDENTS

Many friends who send me urgent wires may consider me to be discourteous in that they get no replies to their wires. The fact is that the telegraph department at Ahmedabad seems to have received instructions to delay delivery of my telegrams. The authorities have the right, if they choose, to put such obstacles in my way. And our movement must be capable of being carried on independently of the use of public departments controlled by the Government. I would advise correspondents not to waste money in sending wires, but tran-sact all their business with me through the post, so long as the regular delivery to me of the post is continued by the Government.

Young India, 18-5-1921

71. OUR NEIGHBOURS

Is not my article on the Afghan Bogey[1] an invitation to the Afghans to invade the Indian border, and thus do I not become a direct party to violence? Thus asks Mr. Andrews. My article was written or Indians and for the Government. I do not believe the Afghans to be so foolish as to invade India on the strength of my article. But I see that it is capable to bearing the interpretation put upon it by Mr. Andrews. I therefore hasten to inform all whom it may concern that not only do I not want to invite the Afghans or anybody to come to our assistance, but am anxious for them not to come to our assistance. I am quite confident of India's ability to settle with the Government without extraneous help. Moreover, I am interested in demonstrating the perfect possibility o attaining our end only by non-violent means. I would therefore strain every nerve to keep the Afghans out of the Indian border, but my anxiety to keep them off the Indian border will not go so far as to assist the Government with men or money.

In my article I have put my position as clearly as possible. For me the existing Government is the most intolerable of all, it is the greatest danger to the manhood of India and I would welcome its *re-formation* at any cost. It is my settled conviction that it is a godless Government. That there are good Englishmen and good Indians connected with it makes it all the more dangerous for India. It keeps the nation's eyes off the inherent evil of it. My attack is not against individuals, it is directed against the system, against the aggregate called the Government. The best of viceroys have been powerless to cradicate the poison of the system. The poison is its foundation. Therefore, I can reconcile myself to all the worst that can happen to India in the place of the present system.

What however I would do is totally different from what I can do. I am sorry to have to confess that the movement has not yet acquired such hold on the soldier class as to embolden them to refuse assistance to the government in time of need. When the soldier class has realized that it lives for he nation, and that it is a travesty if a soldier's calling when he undertakes to kill to order, the battle of India's worldly freedom is won without more. As it is, the Indian soldier is as much subject to fear as the layman. He fills the recruiting ranks because he

[1] *Vide* "The Afghan Bogey", 4-5-1921.

believes that there is no other means of livelihood . The Government has made the profession of killing attractive by a system of special rewards, and, by a system of skilfully devised punishments, has made it well-nigh impossible for the soldier, once he is in, to get out without difficulty. In these circumstances I do not delude myself with the belief that the British Government will be without Indian help in the event of an immediate Afghan invasion. But it was my duty, especially when challenged, to put before the nation the position logically arising from non-co-operation. It was necessary, too, to warn the nation against being frightened by the Afghan bogey.

The second part of the question contains, in my opinion, a misconception of non-violence. It is no part of the duty of a non-violent non-co-operator to assist the Government against war made upon it by others. A non-violent non-co-operator may not secretly or openly encourage or assist any such war. He may not take part directly or indirectly in it. But it is no part of his duty to help the Government to end the war. On the contrary his prayer would be, as it must be, for the defeat of at power which he seeks to destroy. I, therefore, so are as my creed of non-violence is concerned, can contemplate an Afghan invasion with perfect equanimity, and equally so far as India's safety is concerned. The Afghans have no quarrel with India. They are a godfearing people. I warn non-co-operators against judging the Afghans by the few savage specimens we see in Bombay or Calcutta. It is a superstition to suppose that they will overrun India if the British post at the frontier was withdrawn. Let us remember that there is nothing to prevent them from overrunning India today, if they wished to. But they are as fond of their country as we claim to be fond of ours. I must devote a separate article to an examina-tion of the difficult problem that faces the residents near the frontier.

Young India, 18-5-1921

72. LET HINDUS BEWARE

Bihar is the land of promise for non-co-operation. For the Hindu-Muslim unity of Bihar is proverbial. I was therefore distressed to find that the unity was suffering a strain which might almost prove unbearable. I was told by all responsible leaders—both Hindu and Mohammedan—who are not given to be panicky, that it was taxing their resources to the utmost to avoid a Hindu-Mussulman disturbance. They informed me that certain Hindus, by name

Gangaram Sharma, Bhutanath and Vidyanand, for instance, had told the people that I had prohibited the use of meat to any Hindus or Mussulmans and that meat and fish were even forcibly taken away from people by over-zealous vegetarians. I know that unlawful use is being made of my name in many places, but this is the most novel method of misusing it. It is generally known that I am a staunch vegetarian and food reformer. But it is not equally generally known that ahimsa extends as much to human beings as to lower animals and that I freely associate with meat-eaters.

I would not kill a human being for protecting a cow, as I will not kill a cow for saving a human life, be it ever so precious. Needless to say I have authorized no one to preach vegetarianism as part of non-co-operation. I do not know the persons named above. I am sure that our purpose will be defeated if propaganda of any kind is accompanied by violence. Hindus may not compel Mussulmans to abstain from meat or even beef-eating. Vegetarian Hindus may not compel other Hindus to abstain from fish, flesh for fowl. I would not make India sober at the point of the sword. Nothing has lowered the morale of the nation so much as violence. Fear has become the part of the national character. Non-co-operators will make a serious mistake if they seek to convert people to their creed by violence. They will play into the hands of the Government if they use the slightest coercion towards anybody in the the course of their propaganda.

The cow question is a big question. The greatest for a Hindu. I yield to no one in my regard for the cow. Hindus do not fulfill their trust so long as they do not possess the ability to protect the cow. That ability can be derived either from body-force or soul-force. To attempt cow-protection by violence is to reduce Hinduism to Satanism and to prostitute to a base end the grand significance of cow-protection. As a Mussulman friend writes, beef-eating, which is merely permissible in Islam, will become a duty if compulsion is resorted to by Hindus. The latter can protect the cow only by developing the faculty for dying, for suffering. The only chance Hindus have, of saving the cow in India from the butcher's knife, is by trying to save Islam from the impending peril and trusting their Mussulman countrymen to return nobility, i.e., voluntarily to protect the cow out of regard for their Hindu countrymen. The Hindus must scrupulously refrain from using any violence against Mussulmans. Suffering and trust are attributes of soul-force. I have heard that, at big fairs, if a Mussulman is found in possession of cows or even goats, he is at time

forcibly dispossessed. Those, who, claiming to be Hindus, thus resort to violence are enemies of the cow and of Hinduism. The best and the only way to save the cow is to save the Khilafat. I hope therefore that every non-co-operator will strain himself to the utmost to prevent the slightest tendency to violence in any shape or form, whether to protect the cow or any other animal or to effect any other purpose.

Young India, 18-5-1921

73. POSTERS[1]

[*May 19, 1921*]

Poster No. 1: To gain swaraj means to introduce a spinning-wheel in every home and to spin yarn with that. Introduce spinning-wheels in your house this very day. Spinning-wheels and cotton can be had from the National School at Princess Street.[2]

Poster No. 2: Swaraj by means of yarn. If you want to have your share in the battle of swaraj, spin as much yarn as possible.

Poster No. 3 : Ordinarily spinning is not a business but a duty. India was prosperous so long as there was spinning. Take up again the work of spinning with a view to make India prosperous again....

Poster No. 4 : Nothing else will advance India more than by removing the famine of yarn...

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1921

[1] These posters were issued in vernacular bearing the title "Mahatma Gandhi's message." The text has been extracted from the official translation in the Bombay Government Records.

[2] This sentence was repeated at the end of each poster.

74. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[*May 20, 1921*][1]

JAMNALALJI

WARDHA

CONGRATULATE SUNDERLALJI.[2] PROBABLY LEAVING TO- MORROW FOR BHUSAVAL. WIRING AGAIN.

GANDHI

From a draft : S.N. 7523

75. A CIRCULAR LETTER[3]

ON WAY TO BHUSAVAL,
May 20 [*1921*][3]

DEAR FRIEND,

I had six interviews with H. E. the Viceroy. There was nothing new said by us. I put before him the three questions[4] and suggestedthree committees for finding a solution to the three questions. He is not likely to adopt the suggestions just yet. But I think we should assist him to understand the situation.

I suggested to him that he should see other non-co-operation leaders as he had seen me. He liked the idea, and said that he would gladly give appointment to all who asked for it. Lala Lajpat Rai has aleady waited upon H. E. He gave him the reason for his having joined the movement and dealt chiefly with the Punjab question. Will you apply for an interview and place before the Viceroy the reasons for your being a non-co-operator? If you propose to seek an appointment you may mention if you like that I had made the suggestion and told you that the Viceroy would be glad to see you if you would seek an interview.

[1] Gandhiji addressed a meeting at Bhusaval on May 21; *vide* the following item. It is likely that this telegram was sent a day before.

[2] He was arrested under Section 124A, I.P.C., and sentenced at Wardha to one year's rigorous imprisonment.

[3] Copies of this circular letter were sent to various leaders who took part in the non-co-operation movement.

[3] Inferred from the reference to interviews with the Viceroy, Lord Reading, whom Gandhiji had met at Simla in May 1921

[4] Namely, the Khilafat, the Punjab and Swaraj; *vide* "The Simla Visit", 25-5-1921.

My suggestion does not necessarily mean that you should yourself go. You may select anyone else you like or send in another name with yours. Nor is this letter to be taken to mean that I want you necessarily to go. You shall be the sole judge.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirwad, p. 355

76. SPEECH AT RAILWAY STATION

[*May 21, 1921*][1]

People coming to station platforms should bring money with them. We have to complete three difficult tasks and get them off our hands this year. The means for doing this were planned in Bezwada.[2] If the collections do not reach the one-crore-rupee mark before June 30, we shall be disgraced and I shall definitely say then that we cannot win swaraj this year. Swadeshi is making progress, but even in this I see that many persons merely wear a swadeshi cap and want to be taken as followers of swadeshi by virtue of that. I now tell you plainly that I do not wish to meet people who will no give up using foreign cloth. We shall not get swaraj till we have made khadi a dress of culture. If it is true that this movement is for self-purification, then, in addition to wearing khadi, you should give up liquor, eschew immorality, learn to be upright, see that you do not lose your head as he people of Malegaon did, stop looking upon *Bhangis* and chamars[3] as untouchables and serve them and the Brahmins alike. Do not bring flowers; for swaraj, bring money instead.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-6-1921

[1] Gandhiji travelled from Khandwa to Bhusaval on this date and addressed a crowd at one of the wayside stations.

[2] The reference is to the Bezwada Congress resolutions *vide* "Resolutions at A. I. C. C. Meeting, Bezwada", 31-3-1921.

[3] Tanners.

77. SPEECH AT BHUSAVAL

May 21, 1921

Gandhiji thanked the people for the welcome accorded to him and then told the audience about his interview with the viceroy. He said:

Both of us frankly expressed our views at the meeting but we should not expect anything much from him. I have no regrets because I had no hopes. It is the people alone who have to win swaraj; no man, not even the Viceroy, can grant it. Swaraj is *dharmarajya,* and it can be achieved soon through the means I have suggested. You must be religious and pure of heart. You must give up drinking and firmly vow to wear only pure swadeshi cloth. Then you will have *dharmarajya.* You must bear in mind that no one who is wicked and of impure heart can succeed in the non-co-operation struggle. Look at Lokamanya.[1] You ought to worship Lokamanya. But you will not worship this great patriot by merely collecting one crore of rupees, which is easily done; you ought to collect one crore of rupees and use it for the attainment of swaraj to which Lokamanya had dedicated his life.[2]

He was the very soul of [the movement for] swaraj, and held swaraj to be his life's mission;—his soul asks you what you are prepared to do for swaraj. Can you not collect a crore of rupees of perpetuate his memory? Swaraj will be nowhere in sight till you have discarded foreign cloth. I shall never step inside a man's house if he does not wear khadi, if he cannot do without fine muslin. Till now I have been telling the Government to do this or the other thing. Now I wish to tell the people what their duty is. I am but their slave. But they can have me as a slave only on certain conditions. They can hope for my services only by observing the conditions which I have laid down before them. There can be nothing but degradation in touching [my] feet.

You must adhere firmly to the principles of non-violent non-co-operation. Any violent deed violates your pledge and is to be despised like the brutalities of Malegaon. You must never forget the importance of Hindu-Muslim unity. My Hindu brethren should at this time leave the question of cow-protection to the goodwill of their Muslim brethren and I do hope that the question will be satisfactorily

[1] Gandhiji here pointed to the garlanded statue of Tilak.
[2] *ibid*

solved, especially when eating beef is not for them a religious necessity.

Sisters should give up wearing fine clothes and should take to khadi. You ought to emulate Sita, the universal mother who, refusing the delicacies placed before her by Ravana, chose to live on fruits.

About untouchability, I have to say that it is not in keeping with the teaching of the Vedas and is foreign to the principles of the Hindu religion. But reforming this system does not mean that we should begin inter-dining and intermarrying.

At the end I have to say that my speech tours will conclude by the end of June and I hope to be able to collect all the money that is needed during the time that is left.[1]

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 29-5-1921

78. SPEECH AT MEETING IN SANGAMNER [2]

May 22, 1921

Today we are fighting the mightiest Empire known. We have three big tasks to accomplish, but our ways do not suggest that we are serious about anything. From the spectacle today, it occurred to me that, if this is how we were working everywhere in the country, India was not fit for swaraj. I bathe in the ocean of love at every place in the country. But love is of no avail until its fire products strength. I do not like being worshipped and I do not like my feet being touched in reverence. The practice is very hateful to me. It can only bring about India's degra- dation. The country will not win swaraj through this touching of feet. I want to see India stand erect. I wish to see it stand up thus before all the countries in the world. I want no Gandhi-raj, I want no one's raj, I want only swaraj. I do not, therefore, want people to touch my feet in reverence.

We have followed Western civilization only in its excesses. We would have done better to imbibe its beauty. This kind of ribbon is used only be women. If you do not know when to use a thing, why do

[1] At the conclusion of the speech, a collection of about four thousand rupees was made on the spot. Some women donated their jewellery.

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour published in *Navajivan*.

you use it at all? You thought that, along with flowers, a ribbon would add to the beauty; this shows that, in India, our ways of doing things are a curious mixture. The Congress has been showing how we can get out of these. There is no propriety and no thoughtfulness in what you do. Do you revere Tilak Maharaj? He has given us one holy word, and one alone, and he passed away with that word on his lips. The legacy bequeathed by Tilak Maharaj is for the whole of India, but your responsibility is greater than that of people in other parts of the country. What answer will you give to his soul on August 1? If you do nothing else, at any rate adopt complete swadeshi and give up the use of foreign articles in temples. I tell the temple priests that I feel unhappy when they take me to a temple decorated with foreign cloth.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-6-1921

79. FIVE HUNDREDTH STOREY

I had heard of Simla. I had not seen the place. I often wished to see it but was always afraid to go there. I felt that I would be lost there, that I would be a barbarian among the others.

I have seen the place now. I have come here to see Bharat-bhushan Pandit Malaviya, who has taken me under his wing. The house is named "Shantkuti" and I am in the midst of coworkers here. The climate is lovely. Nature has withheld nothing of her riches. These hills are a apart of the Himalayas, but I get no peace whatever from outside of me. In fact, if my having peace depended entirely on external surroundings, I would have to run away from this place or else I would go mad.

Simla is named after Mother Shimala, as Mumbai [Bombay] is named after Mumbadevi and Calcutta after Kali. All the three goddesses have proved faithless or, maybe, the devotees have forgotten them. The mere thought of the Kali temple fills me with horror. How can the place be called a temple at all? In literal truth, rivers of blood flow there every day. Who knows what the thousands of goats slaughtered there in the name of religion say in the court of God? How infinite is Mother Kali's patience? Does she really demand cruel sacrifice? People who offer them tarnish her sacred name.

They are guilty of no little wickedness in Bombay, but no daily evil is perpetrated there in the name of religion. The people who frequent share-markets or madly throw away money on horse-racing

know evil to be evil and admit there weakness. Animals are killed in its slaughter-houses for the belly's sake, and not in the name of religion. The knowledge of this slaughter does not make it utterly impossible for one to live in Bombay.

But Simla? Delhi, most certainly, is not the symbol of India's slavery. The place which is he real headquarters of the rulers is Simla. The Simla Municipality[1] told the Viceroy that every year the officials formulated their policies in the quiet and coolness of the Simla hills. We had full experience, in the summer of 1919, of what these policies are. Even the hottest parts of the country give an idea of the temperature of these policies.

After seeing Simla, my views have not changed. No end of money has been spent over the place. Even a proud man like me has had to eat humble pie. The only means of conveyance here is the horse or the rickshaw. I never used the latter while in South Africa, but here I did, thanks to my weakness. All, whether grown - up or young men or women, use it. The car is justifiably prohibited. The horse-drawn carriage can be used only by the Viceroy and one or two other officials, and this also seems to be justified. The roads in this place are narrow; roads cut through steep hills cannot but be so. Naturally, the plying of horse- drawn vehicles on such roads must perforce be restricted.

What is strange, however, is that the rickshaw has become quite an ordinary conveyance, as if it was he most natural thing for any of us to be yoked to a vehicle! I asked the men who pulled the rickshaw which carried me why they had taken up this work. Did they not have a belly to fill? They queried in reply. I know this reply is not quite convincing; it cannot be said, though, that they take pleasure in becoming beasts of burden. On the contrary, my charge is that it is we who force men to become beasts. Why should it be surprising, then, that we have become the Empire's bullocks?

It is not the British alone who use the rickshaw. We use it as freely as they do. We who join them in turning people into bullocks have, therefore, become bullocks ourselves.

There are four men or every rickshaw. Three of them get Rs. 18

[1] Presumably in an address.

a month each and the fourth, their leader, gets Rs. 20. The slopes up and down along the roads are so steep that, even though there are four of them, the men get out of breath. The rickshaw is made to accommodate only one person at a time. Even this is something to be thankful for. Simla is at an altitude of 7,500 feet. If people understand the implications of the fact that the Government is carried on from such a height, they will know what the Empire means. If in Bombay all the shopkeepers had their shops on the topmost floor in the chawls, what would be the customers' plight? The fourth floor probably goes up to a height of 60 feet. The thirty crore customers of this Government, the country's shopkeeper, have to climb not 60 feet but 7,500 feet! Bombay, we know, cannot carry on its trade on the fourth floor. India's trade is carried on, actually, on the five hundredth floor! Is it any wonder that the country starves? I should no longer seem strange that, in the foothills of Simla, three crore innocent children famish for want of food.

So long as a distance equal to the height of five hundred floors separates the Empire from us, Dyerism must needs be used for maintaining the distance.

Swaraj , if run from this height, will be no swaraj.

But the comparison I have made is not just, a thoughtful person may protest. Maybe the master lives on a height of 7,500 feet, but he posts his employees, the *talati*,[1] the *patel*[2] and the *mamlatdar*,[3] on the ground floor! There would be some substance in this argument if it were true that the master lived on the five hundredth floor at his own expense. As a matter of fact, however, he lives there at the customers' expense. He recovers the expenses of living where he does and also charges his usual profit. What wonder that the customers of such a business man become bankrupt, become paupers ?

The arrangement is costlier than even the practice of carrying Ganga water on he kavad.[4] It used to be carried to as far as Rameshwaram[5] . Anyone who has paid for a small-sized pot of it knows

[1] Revenue officials
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*
[4] Pots or baskets slung from the ends of a pole and carried on the shoulder
[5] On the southernmost tip of the Indian peninsula.

whether Ganga water is costly or cheap.

Simla is all congestion. The houses are full, every one of them. Things are bound to be dear. Even water is brought up from 2,000 feet below. One feels embarrassed to use even so much as a jugful of water. In the building in which we stay, we do get water but it takes the carriers, fetching it over a long distance, a whole day to fill enough for our needs. There are no streams in the vicinity of Simla. To win swaraj means to oblige the Government—whether it is British or Indian—to descend from the five hundredth floor to the ground floor and introduce naturalness in its relations with us. The discrimination is not as between white and coloured, but as between high and low. He is a true Brahmin who serves a *Bhangi*, and not the one who rides on the shoulders of one. He is no king who maintains a distance, the height of five hundred floors between him and the subjects. It is in virtue of one's deeds in the past life that one is born for happiness or suffering, as king or beggar. The happy man exerts himself to relieve the suffering of others, and the king to raise the beggar to his level, which means that though a king, he voluntarily becomes a beggar. God, the Ruler, earns his title to rule by making Himself the slave of his slave, makes Himself worthy of worship by purifying the sinner. In Simla I saw the reverse of this and my heart bled.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-5-1921

80. MY NOTES

NEW VICEROY

At Panditji's request , I went to see him at Simla. His health being indifferent, he asked me to go to him instead of himself coming over to see me where I was. How could I permit him to do so ? I myself went to Simla. Panditji told me there that the Viceroy would like to see me. I wrote to His Excellency and told him that, if he wished to see me, I would gladly call on him and tell him all that I had to say. He gave me an appointment . We were together for a long time. He listened, with great patience, courtesy and attention to everything I said. I, too, on my part, listened to him respectfully. The result was that we came to understand each other to some extent.

What the outcome will be, partly I know and partly I do not. It is not in the Viceroy's hands to give us what we want. If he is a good and sincere man and is convinced of what we say, he can help us as a friend. But, otherwise, it is for us to secure what we want. We should have the strength to get it. If a man knows how to take what he desires, the man who will give it to him will not be wanting. Is there any sense in a man carrying with him only a bowl and then complaining against the sea for not giving him a pitcherful ?

We should, therefore, acquire the strength to win swaraj, and secure justice on the Punjab and Khilafat issue. We have not gained this strength yet, but we are acquiring it. There are obstacles, like the incident at Malegaon, which lie in our way. Though our failure to win our goal is due solely to our lethargy, we vent our irritation on others. One essential characteristic of non-co-operation is that one should direct one's anger against oneself.

TO CO-WORKERS

As a result of my interview with H.E. The Viceroy, I can say this, at any rate, to my co-workers, that they should shake off their lethargy and give up empty talk, demonstrations and speeches and go on working all the time.

We have five tasks before us : (1) eradicating untouchability; (2) stopping consumption of liquor; (3) enrolling Congress members; (4) collecting contributions for the Tilak Swaraj Fund; and (5) introducing the spinning-wheel [into every home].

None of these tasks calls for speeches.

For eradicating untouchability, we should serve *Bhangis* and others like them, go to their homes and improve their conditions.

For stopping consumption of liquor, we should stand near liquor booths and try politely to enlighten intending customers, though, if they insist on doing so, they should be allowed to go in. Every community should pass a resolution forbidding consumption of liquor and boycott those who violate it.

Boycotting does not mean stopping the services of washermen, barbers, etc. It means refusing to accept water or food at such person's place and entering into no marriage connection with his family. Boycott is of two kinds, civil and uncivil. The former has its roots in love, the latter in hatred. In fact , hatred is another name for uncivil boycott. Such boycott has no place in peaceful non-co-operation and must be altogether eschewed. The underlying idea in civil boycott is that of refraining from accepting any services from or having any social association with the person concerned. The idea behind the other form is to inflict punishment and pain. We do not want to punish the drink-addict; we want, rather, to express our own grief by refusing to associate with him. This means not to drink water or eat in company with him and not to have any marriage connection with his family. But to prevent people from rendering any services to such a person is sheer heartlessness. Wells and ponds are for the use of all. Services of barbers and washermen and public services like transport should be available to all people, whether good or bad. The barber, the washerman and the water-carrier do not concern themselves with the circumstances of any family before serving it. Even a murderer has a right to be allowed to drink water. In the measure that we thus learn to distinguish between right and wrong, the advent of swaraj will be hastened. I feel the necessity for resorting to boycott or discouraging the consumption of liquor and that is why I have gone into the subject at such length. Uncivil boycott has yielded bitter fruits at many places. Our strength lies in giving up incivility altogether. Once a man has become a drink-addict, he is so utterly enslaved by the vice that he deserves our compassion, and it is only through compassion that we shall be able to reform such persons.

We should not hate even the proprietor of a liquor booth. It is no easy thing for anyone to give up an established business. He should first be able to think of an alternative calling which he can take up. If I can successfully persuade them, I would advise all proprietors of liquor booths to become carders, spinners and weavers. It is beyond all doubt that they can earn from such work all that they need for living . Women and children can give no help in running a liquor

booth. In spinning and weaving, every-one can help and so there will be no question of anybody suppporting anybody else. Everyone can make his or her contribution, be it much or little.

To enrol Congress members , to collect contributions for the Tilak Swaraj Fund or to introduce charkhas, no meetings are necessary. What is required is that a large number of volunteers should go from house to house. Unless people start working in this way, it will not be possible to fulfil the programme as scheduled before the end of June.

We have no time even for talking. From my own experience, I know that every minute spent in idle talk or in giving *darshan* or in doing nothing is wasted for ever. We have no time to spare. To those, especially, who have tasted the joy of working, I would certainly suggest that they should not let a single moment go waste. No moment of our time is ours; we have pledged every moment to the country.

MEANING OF SPINNING-WHEEL

Introducing spinning-wheels does not mean our providing every family with one and then doing no more. It really means that we should see that the family concerned works on it in right earnest and starts wearing khadi. Every spinning-wheel should be working or not less than four hours daily. We may set the minimum output an hour at three *tolas* and every town or village should produce yarn at this rate. Only then can it be said that people have taken to the spinning-wheel . This is a matter of people learning to give up their lethargy, of every worker helping the people to do so. This cannot be done by manufacturing spinning-wheels.

We shall get swaraj only when regular work is done in this way.

I was talking to a friend the other day. I asked him why he gave the first importance to the spinning-wheel. His reply was that, though it would certainly bring us economic freedom and make the people self-reliant, its greatest service would be that it would give men and women time for quiet reflection and help people to be calm and pure. The spinning-wheel will have, on those who work it regularly, an effect which nothing else can produce.

WHO CAN JOIN ?

A friend asks if even co-operators can be members of the Congress. Those who accept the Congress constitution can be Congress members even if they are co-operators. It is my view, however, that

they cannot be delegates.

NATIONAL FLAG

The same friend says that all Indians do not have faith in the spinning-wheel and that many people wonder whether it can achieve anything. Should we not then have some other symbol on the national flag ? He suggests the letter.[1] The truth of the matter is that every symbol, no matter what, is sure to be opposed by someone or other. The spinning-wheel is the only thing symbolizing a power which crores of Hindus and Muslims will accept. Despite the crescent in , all Muslims will certainly not accept it. I am clear in my mind that the national flag should have no religious symbol on it.

KHILAFAT "NOTE"

Another friend finds fault with me for not commenting on rupee-receipts for the Khilafat [Fund] being used as currency notes. I have said nothing because I knew that the Khilafat Committee itself had taken effective measures to stop it. This is the first complaint I have received in the matter. Thousands of one-rupee receipts have already been sold. But only a few persons must still be using them as currency notes. This mistaken idea did get about in he beginning. The practice resulted in loss to the Committee itself and so, on its own, it took strict measures to put an end to it.

MISINTERPRETING "RAMARAJYA"

The same friend, interpreting the term *Ramarajya* literally, asks if it will ever be possible to establish *Ramarajya* till we have men like Dasharatha and Rama. We only mean by *Ramarajya* swaraj or the rule of dharma or people's rule. Such rule can be established only when the people themselves come to have regard for dharma and learn to be brave. It is the effort of the Congress, of all non-co-operaters, to see that the people become so. If the people are to be emancipated only by some king, they will become his slaves, though in himself he may be a man of virtue. What we are striving to achieve, however, is to change the system of Government and the policies and methods of government. Once that is done, we need not worry whether our servants are Englishmen or Indians. We are not even trying to change the British, we are trying to reform ourselves.

SOUTH AFRICA

The gentleman cites the instance of South Africa and asks if we

[1] *Om*, symbolizing the manifestation of the Absolute as sound

shall not be reduced to the same condition in India as in South Africa. We fought and won there, but today we are again in the same old plight. This is a misunderstanding of the situation. The laws which we fought to get amended were certainly amended. The struggle in South Africa was not for changing the system of government. It was directed merely against specific laws. The satyagraha against the Rowlatt Act would have been hailed as a complete success even if the Act alone had been repealed and other grievances had remained underdressed. As it is, the Act never came to be used. Since, however, it has not disappeared from the statute-book and a fight on other issues was forced upon us, if we secure justice on the Punjab and the Khilafat issues and bring about a change in the policies and methods of the Government, that at any rate would have been gained. It is quite possible that afterwards new and unforeseen obstacles may arise. But why should that matter? For the brave, occasions for fighting will always arise. Whenever faced with a problem, the satyagrahi has an armoury of weapons at hand—satyagraha in its various forms and he will be able to find one which the occasion may call for.

WHITE CAP

Calling the white cap a Gandhi cap, a Collector in the United Provinces has forbidden Government servants to wear it. I told the many people who came to see me in Simla that, though in Government service, they could contribute to the Tilak Swaraj Fund and wear khadi, that they could replace their foreign caps with khadi caps. But they said that, if they wore khadi dresses and khadi caps, they would be dismissed. I was pained to hear these words of weakness. If wearing a khadi cap is a crime, the right course is to commit that crime and be dismissed from service. If, moreover, there is a large number of Government servants wearing khadi caps, nobody can afford to dismiss all of them. Even if they are dismissed, they should not mind. Have the people not acquired strength enough even to assert their freedom to wear what they choose? I do hope that all people, Government servants and others, will realize the dignity of a khadi dress and wear the khadi cap at any rate.

PERMANENT ASPECT

Non-co-operation has two aspects, one temporary and the other permanent. The latter concerns all people. After swaraj is won, we will not give up khadi and again start wearing foreign cloth, we will certainly not resume drinking and will not undo the changes we are

introducing in the system of education. We shall not, however, regard it as violation of dharma to resort to courts of law or attend schools and will feel no humiliation in accepting honours conferred on us by the Government.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-5-1921

81. LETTER TO N. C. KELKAR[1]

YEOLA,

May 23, 1921

DEAR FRIEND,

I am getting most restive about the fulfilment of the Bezwada programme. Will you please wire or write to me, so as to reach me, at Laburnum Road on Sunday the 29th instant, the figure for the Tilak Memorial [Fund] collected by your Province to the date of writing or wiring and the balance you expect positively to collect before the 30th June? I expect you have sent your quota to the All-India Congress Committee.

I reach Bombay on the 29th, leave it on the 30th evening for Broach, pass 4 days there, pass 4 days in or about Ahmedabad and then devote the rest of June to Bombay in order to collect as much as I can. If you have any suggestions as to my programme please also wire.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 3113

[1] Narasinh Chintaman Kelkar; editor of the *kesari* and the *Mahratta*; a close associate of Tilak; sometime Secretary of the Indian National Congress; helped Gandhiji in revising the consitution of the Congress in 1920.

82. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

Silence Day [*May 23, 1921*][1]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I got your letter. I see no harm in your having written about Ghanshyamlal. Who is he? Write and tell me who has engaged him. I can not even recall his face. What place does he belong to?

I would most certainly welcome your acquiring proficiency in spinning and if it does not affect your heart, also in carding. I hope you are keeping quite fit.

I see and am pleased to see that your Gujarati is very good and is continually improving. I should like you to read as many Gujarati books as you can manage. As for *Kavyadohan*, you must chew and digest it. What Akho, Narasinh, Shamal Bhatt, Dayaram and Pritam have said in their poems and songs, deserves to be pondered over repeatedly. It is desirable to have a look at the works of modern writers, too. As against them, I wish that you should read Tulsidas as often as you can. I am becoming ever more, not less, fond of him.

Since I believe that you have found the right way of your uplift, l do not feel like giving you any advice. You are advancing in the way you wish to, and I would like to silently watch you do so. l am afraid that I might misguide you by giving you some wrong advice. I propose to reach Bharuch on 31st morning.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 330l6

83. SPEECH AT MEETING IN BARSI [2]

May 24, 1921

Our friend has cheerfully proclaimed that Barsi district[3] will easily complete its part of the task. I cannot congratulate Shri

[1] From the reference, in the last sentence, to Gandhiji proposing to reach Bharuch on May 31; he did so in the year 1921. The letter could not have been written the previous day, i.e. on May 30, but on a silence day prior to that which was May

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour published in *Navajivan*.

[3] This should be *taluka*; in Sholapur district of Maharashtra.

Sulakhe on his method of calculating. If every district, every taluka and every circle in it followed his method, everyone in the country would have done his part by giving only two pice. But out of the 30 crores, three crores do not get even one square meal a day. Who will collect two pice from these three crores? And from the crippled and the handicapped? If the resident's of Bombay argue that they have given their quota and then offer no more, we shall never succeed in the task we have set before us. We must stop calculating in this way. Every man and woman in the country must ask himself or herself what he or she ought to contribute for raising the total collection in the country to a crore. My question to you is : what is the capacity of the people in your district? Let us learn something at least from the life of Tilak Maharaj for whom we express our reverence. Did he ever think that he should be content to give to the country the minimum that every Indian should? Rather, he gave his all. I ask you how many are left now who will do so? Let alone giving your all, have you given even as much as you can?

God never asks anyone to give more than he can. One who gives less than he can is a traitor to the country and his town. Do not be traitors to yourselves. I do not want you to deceive yourselves. We are to fight a powerful Empire. It deceived us, played false with us, and made us crawl on our stomachs. We cannot end that Empire through deceit and Satanism. Deceit can be met successfully by nobility and Satanism by cultivating love of God. Do not delude yourselves. If you really want to perpetuate the memory of Tilak Maharaj, you should adopt the new method of calculation which I have taught you today and, before the death anniversary of Tilak Maharaj is upon us, win the thing which is your birth-right.

When it was said here that 25 spinning-wheels are working and that the khadi produced from them is sent to Bombay and Poona, I was deeply pained. That the khadi is sent out only means that you want fine cloth for yourselves and will not use khadi. That is why you send khadi to other places. Swadeshi should mean, for you, that you look after your needs. Give no thought to Bombay. My patriotism tells me that I must first make my own home independent, then my town and then my pro-vince. Let me tell you that, with your 25 spinning- wheels, you will not be able to give a good account of yourselves in the fight against this mighty Empire. If we really believe in the Congress, we must thorou-ghly understand the principle of swadeshi. I do feel pained at the fact that lawyers have not given up

practice; however, the lawyers becoming fear-less and religious-minded will not make the whole country so. Besides, some eminent lawyers have, in fact, made great sacrifices and displayed nobility. Other layers, who lack faith and are deferred by the fear whether they would afterwards be able to maintain their families, will also give up practice by and by. But the position with regard to swadeshi is that, so long as the whole country does not adopt it, the import of foreign cloth will not stop. I cannot deceive myself. I meet a far greater number of Indians than any other person does, but my voice has not yet reached all the 30 crores. Mill-cloth is for the poor, whom my message cannot reach. Only if it is reserved exclusively for them will mill-owners behave worthily. For such people, of course, there is no choice but to use mill-cloth unless they produce their requirements locally. What this requires is not wealth, self-sacrifice or intelligence. All that is necessary is zest.

Maulana Mahomed Ali has said that we laid the foundation of our slavery when we parted with our spinning-wheels. If you want to throw off your slavery, take up the spinning-wheel again. Unless we take to the charkha, it will be impossible to end the oppression of the country and its stark poverty. I ask you, therefore, not to pat yourselves on the back and say that with 25 spinning-wheels, you have won the day. I fail to see anyone here wearing khadi. We cannot stop imports worth 50 crores merely by wearing khadi caps. You must agree to bear the burden of khadi.

If you want fine cloth, teach your wives, your sons and your daughters to spin yarn of fine count. As recently as 30 years ago, our elders felt ashamed to wear fine cloth. I have still fresh in my mind the sacred memory of my mother. She made it a point to reserve dresses of fine cloth for her daughters-in-law and felt embarrassed when wearing such dresses herself. If you do not adopt the traditional simplicity of India, you cannot resuscitate fine Muslins. If you feel satisfied with having enrolled 4,200 members [of the Congress], who will come forward to enrol the starving masses of Bihar? There will be some hope of our succeeding in our task if , in a population of 120,000 you enrol 50,000. Give up the wrong way of reckoning and adopt the right one.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-6-1921

84. NOTES

MAULANA MAHOMED ALI

I observe that the *Indian Social Reformer* rates me for not having said anything about Maulana Mahomed Ali's speech at Madras, and not having criticized Lala Lajpat Rai's at Bombay. I must not answer the inferencea and the innuendoes contained in the paragraph . Critics do not know under what difficulties I edit *Young India*. I rarely read newspapers. I cannot even get them during my incessant travelling. But having read this criticism, I purposely procured at Simla a copy of the Maulana's speech. I have only just read it. I have twice read the paragraph criticized, and I am of opinion that it contains nothing in it that is objectionable. The speech is certainly not inconsistent with his interview at Allahabad. In the Madras speech, he simply states the Muslim position. In the Allahabad interview, he has accepted my application and restriction of the ideal Muslim conduct. There is no doubt that if the Mussulmans could take up arms, they would do so in defence of Islam. The difficulty arises because of *our* belief in the impossibility of the Afghans invading to defeat the British without wishing at the same time to occupy India. That may be and will be a good reason for Mussulmans, if they are true to India, not joining the Afghans even if they were able. But we may not dispute the theoretical religious right of Mussulmans to state their correct position. We can only honour them for it. The two great qualities of the brothers are their bravery and sincerity. And I can read nothing but these two qualities in the Madras speech.

LALA LAJPAT RAI

Let me take the *Indian Social Reformer* into the secret of my methods. My assistant drew my attention to the hostile criticism of Lalaji's speech and asked me whether I wished to say anything upon it. I had not the text of his speech before me, nor had I seen any criticism. I therefore wrote to Lalaji, asking him to enlighten me on the matter, and suggesting that he should apologize, if a single hasty word was uttered. It has been my privilege on close acquaintance to find him generous, for-giving and frank. He said in his letter that his Bombay speech was a sp-ecially considered utterance, and that he had not attacked any person in it. He had only dealt with the action of the Moderates as a party. He sent me the cutting for my opinion. This was whilst I was in Sind. I was unable to read it and had forgotten all about

it, till the *Reformer's* rebuke reminded me of it. I have now read Lalaji's speech and have much pleasure in stating that I find nothing offensive or discourteous in it. It is undoubtedly in Lalaji's fighting style. It is a party speech. He has adopted, by long residence in the West, the Western form of criticism. But it is the best Western form. There is nothing vulgar in it. His charges are not unjustified by the conduct of the Moderate ministers. His worst charges is that they have merged themselves in the bureaucracy. It is a serious charge to make, but the instances adduced by him surely prove it. The Moderates may retort, if they choose, that outsiders cannot appreciate the difficulties of the ministers. But that is just what proves the error of the great leaders who find themselves allied with the Government. They should have known that such would be their lot, or they should now know by experience, that it is no use being ministers, until they have an effective control over the Government policy. All the preression that is now going on is almost as bad as before. It makes little difference that now there is the farce of a trial. The fact is that most of the political sections of the Penal Code are such as to bring almost every non-co-operation speech under them. I believe that if I was charged, I should have to plead guilty to the charge of sedition. It is the duty of a non-co-operator to preach disaffection towards he existing order of things. Non-co-operators are but giving disciplined expression to a nation's outraged feelings. I should like to see a considered reply to Lala Lajpat Rai's strong indictment. In my humble opinion, the speech of Lala Lajpat Rai does not betray any loss of temper, and is quite in keeping with the advice he tendered the youth of the country in his concluding paragraphs.

'A MESSENGER OF GOD'

I have received a cutting, in which I am reported to be credited with being a messenger of God, and I am asked whether I claim to have any special revelation from God. I have already dealt with the miracles attributed to me. As to this the latest charge, I must disown it. I pray like every good Hindu. I believe that we can all become messengers of God, if we cease to fear man and seek only God's Truth I do believe I am seeking only God's Truth and have lost all fear of man. I therefore do *feel* that God is with the movement of non-co-operation. I have no special revelation of God's will. May firm belief is that He reveals Himself daily to every human being, but we shut our ears to the 'still, small, voice'. We shut our eyes to the Pillar of Fire in

front of us. I *realize* His omnipresence. And it is open to the writer to do likewise.

A SINED CRITIC

It gives me pleasure always to have criticism from Sind. It is always searching and always courteous. Sind suffers from the surfeit of Western education, and therefore, the youths of Sind readily command my sympathy. They are bewildered to find themselves in the maze of Western ratiocination. I must herefore try patiently to answer Mr. Jethamal's open letter, especially as I claim him to be one of my earliest comrades in satyagraha and know him to be a leader of forlorn causes. I do believe in self-determination. Mr. Jethamal does not know that the Mussulmans do not claim Palestine for the Turks as against the Arabs. They claim Mussulman control of Jazirat-ul-Arab of which Palestine is but a part. They would not mind if it was restored to the Arabs without any outside interference. Mr. Jethamal must know that the present population of Palestine is overwhelmingly Mussulman. He should also know that the British mandate is today being imposed upon Palestine and Mesopotamia in the teeth of fierce Arab opposition.

Unlike Mr. Jethamal, I do believe in the distinctive character of the different scriptures. I cannot be party to putting a strain upon the scriptural loyalty of the Mussulmans, where it is not in conflict with reason and justice.

But I am one with Mr. Jethamal in his fear of theocratic priesthood and its interpretations often given to suit occasions. The Mussulman claim is not based on *Futwahs*[1], but on a Koranic injunction which a child can understand. The Mussulman claim is again based upon justice, even apart from the scriptural authority. Jazirat-ul-Arab was under Mussulman control before the War. No right has accrued to the Christians or the Jews over it, as against the Mussulmans of the world in general and of India in particular. The British mandate is an act of treachery towards Indian Mussulmans and of pillage against the world's Mussulmans.

I must not appropriate the easy compliment Mr. Jethamal pays me of attributing to me the courage of saying that I differ from Shri Krishna in the matter of violence. I have the courage of saying that Krishna never taught violence in the *Gita*. My interpretation of the *Gita* is that it has based a religious teaching on a historical incident,

[1] Decrees issued by Muslim divines

and that it does not deal with an earthly war but it deals with the ceaseless spiritual war Going on in the human Kurukshetra. I can understand the *Nirdwandwa* teaching on no other hypothesis. A man who is free from the action of the pairs of opposites is incapable, like the perfect man of the Bible, of injuring any living thing on earth. He kills himself so truly that there is no rebirth for him. But a non-co-operator is not concerned with this part of my personal belief. He is bound to believe in non-violence as the only true policy for the removal of the three-fold fever of India.

In spite of my firm faith in absolute ahimsa, i.e., innocence, I could reconcile myself to Kheda recruiting.[1] My ahimsa teacher me that I cannot carry the world with me by force of arms. I will not cut off the hands of my children for fear of their hurting others. A man is innocent when he is able to do harm and refrains. India's soldiers must have arms so long as they believe in violence. I invited, during the recruiting campaign those who believed in violence to join the battle and not to keep away, because they had a grievance against the Government, as they were inclined to do. I was against bargaining with the Government as I am against bargaining at any time.[2]

I do not anticipate a time in India or the world when *all* will be followers of ahimsa. Police there will be even in *Satya Yuga*. But I do contemplate a time, when in India we shall rely less on brute force and more on soul-force, when the *Brahman* in man will hold supremacy.

Now it must not be difficult for Mr. Jethamal to appreciate my alliance with the Ali Brothers. I believe them to be men of their word, as honourable as any I have had the privilege of meeting. It is enough for me to know that they observe the vow of non-violence, whilst they are in the movement of non-co-operation. They will no more prefer Afghan rule to British rule than Mr. Jethamal does. I believe that time will enable them to see that India can never, not at any rate within a generation, be free by violence. I believe that India and Khilafat can be free during this very year if India responds to the simple programme sketched in these pages from time to time.

SANNYASA

A pleader who has suspended practice asks whether every non-

[1] In accordance with his assurance at the War Conference on April 29, 1918, Gandhiji toured Kheda District in Gujarat, recruiting men to the Army to help the British in the War.

[2] *Ibid*.

co-operator should become a sannyasi and renounce the world. I fear, this question has been asked because I appear to lead the life of a sannyasi, whereas the renunciation required by the non-co-operation programme is infinitely less than was required of thousands of Boer women and children during the Boer War, and of thousands of Englishmen, Frenchmen and Germans during the late War. Great success is possible for us with so little renunciation only because our programme is non-violent, our cause absolutely just, and we are so many.

A DEPENDANT'S PLIGHT

The friend further inquires what a man who is falsely sued is to do. Well, those who have been falsely charged by the Government have gone to gaol. Those who are falsely sued may, if the plaintiff will not go to private arbitration, make a statement and produce even witnesses without engaging a lawyer. He is likely to have judgment in his favour. But at the worst he runs the risk of having to pay a blackguard. Surely wrong judgments have been given before now in spite of the assistance of the ablest lawyers.

DOUBTING NATIONAL CAPACITY

The third question is, ''Do you believe that the constructive part of the non-co-operation programme can attain success without our having a national Government?'' This question betrays helplessness. We are delayed in the attainment of our goal only because of this feeling of help-lessness. We shall attain swaraj only when we feel self-reliant. Even a national government will have to be the nation's creation; not the nation the Government's. Why should we not stop drink without the aid of the Government why should we not be able to boycott foreign cloth without the Government aid ? Non-co-operation enables us to show that, in everything that matters, we can be independent of the Government. A Government is an agency set up by the people. The principal has the right to non-co-operate with the agent when he proves faithless. When, on the contrary, the principal feels helpless, he becomes his agent's slave. Such is our present position and we must get rid of it at any cost.

CONTEMPLATING POSTPONEMENT

The last question of the friend is, ''In case the call of the Congress does not meet with adequate response, will the attain- ment of swaraj be proportionately postponed?'' I dread to contem- plate postponement because it betrays distrust in the nation. Somehow or

other I feel that the nation will respond in time. But the logical answer to the question undoubtedly is that, if the nation does not make an adequate response to the programme, attainment of our goal is likely to be delayed.

THE CURSE OF BETTING

Babu Bhagwandas, the learned Chancellor of the National University, Kashi, has sent me extracts from *Manusmriti* on the sin of betting. I reproduce them below :

> The King should diligently keep gambling (*dyuta*) and betting (*samahvaya*) away from the State; for these two vices destroy the State and the sovereign themselves. (221)
>
> Gambling and betting are indeed as daylight robbery; and the ruler should endeavour diligently to eradicate them. (222)
>
> That wherein inanimate things are used, that is *dyuta*, gambling; that wherein living things are used, that is *samahvaya*, betting. (223)
>
> He who does these himself, or causes them to be done by others, secretly or openly, may be punished by the ruler with (punishment) up to that of death, at the ruler's discretion, like cheats and impersonators pretending to follow vocations other than their rightful ones. Or gamblers and betters (*kitawah*) may be banished from the land, like those who practice prostitution under cover of dancing and singing and acting, or those who make and sell spirituous liquors and other such cruel deceivers and spreaders of vice and followers of sinful trades. (224-228)

SIND COLLECTIONS REVISED

In my note on non-co-operation in Sind, I gave figures of collections during my tour, but they were all approximate. Mr. Jairamdas[1] has now sent a detailed account, which is given below :

Karachi (roughly)	30,000
Larkhana1,387 Shikarpur	17,245
Jacobabad	1,001
Sukkur	3,600

[1] Jairmdas Daulatram (b. 1892); Secretary, Sind Provincial Congress Committee; for some time Minister of Food and Agriculture, Government of India; and Governor of Bihar and Assam.

Rohri	1,002
Hyderabad	7,433
Mirpur Khas	452
Tatta	500
Dadu	500
Tando Allabyar	615
Shahadadpur	75
Miscellaneous	465

	64,275

Young India, 25-5-1921

85. EFFECT OF BETTING

I hope a woman's prophecy will prove true, and that all who prize India's good and the purity of their homes will give up the racecourse.[1]

Young India, 25-5-1921

[1] This was in reply to the following letter from "A Woman":

The Deccan Herald has it that the boycott movement is to spread to the forthcoming race meetings, and that Indians will not be allowed to visit the racecourse on race days. If you really intend to do so, God bless you.

My husband used to be an ideal husband until he was invited by his boss to go to the races with him and unfortunately did so. He took Rs.10/- with him, met with exceptionally good luck, and brought home Rs.300/-. But since then he has never won except a few rupees on two occasions, and has often returned home drunk.

May God grant that your endeavour may be crowned with success.

I am sure that what I have stated will be endorsed by many wives who have the courage of their convictions.

86. THE SIMLA VISIT[1]

Many are asking why I waited upon His Excellency the Viceroy. Some inquire why the author of non-co-operation should seek to see the Viceroy. All want to know the result of the interview. I like the rigorous scrutiny of the non-co-operators who, more than Caesar's wife, must be above suspicion. Non-co-operation is self-reliance. We want to establish swaraj, not obtain it from others. Then why approach a Viceroy? This is all good, so far as it goes. And I should be a bad representative of our cause if I went to anybody to ask for swaraj. I have had the hardihood to say that swaraj could not be granted even by God. We would have to earn it ourselves. Swaraj from its very nature is not in the giving of anybody.

But we want the world with us in our battle for freedom, we want the goodwill of everybody. Our cause, we claim, is based upon pure justice. There are certain things we want Englishmen to surrender. All these things need mutual discussion and mutual understanding. Non-co- operation is the most potent instrument for creating world opinion in our favour. So long as we protested and co-operated, the world did not; understand us. The erstwhile lion of Bengal in his early days used to relate the story of Englishmen who asked him how many broken heads there were in India, if things were really so bad as he represented them to be. That was the way John Bull understood best. The others question the world has undoubtedly been asking is : If things are really so bad, why do we co-operate with the Government is so pauperizing and humiliating us? Now the world understands our attitude, no mater how weakly we may enforce it in practice. The world is now curious to know what ails us. The Viceroy represents a big world. His Excellency wanted to know why I, with whom co-operation was an articles of faith, had non-co-operated. There must be something wrong with the Government or me.

And so His Excellency mentioned to Pandit Malaviyaji and to Mr. Andrews that he would like to see me and hear my views. I went to see Panditji because he was anxious to meet me. I hold him in such high regards that I would not think, even if he was well and I could help it, of letting him come to me. As it was, he was too weak to travel to me. It was my duty to go to him. And when I heard the purport of

[1] Gandhiji met the Viceroy at Simla; *vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Simla", 15-5-1921.

his conversation with His Excellency, I did not require any persuasion to prompt me to ask for an appointment, if His Excellency wished to hear my views. I have devoted so much space to the reason for my seeking an appointment, for I wanted to make clear the limits and the meaning of non-co-operation.

It is directed not against men but against measures. It is not directed against the Governors, but against the system they administer. The roots of non-co-operation lie not in hatred but in justice, if not in love. Gladstone[1] used to draw a sharp distinction between bad actions and bad men. He was accused of discourtesy for using some very strong expressions about the acts[1] of his opponents. He put up the defence that he would have failed in his duty if he had not characterizes their actions as they deserved to be, but he did not therefore mean to convey that his opponents deserved the epithets he had used about their acts. As a youth, when I heard this defen-ce, I could not appreciate it. Now with years of experience and use, I understand how true it was. I have found some of the truest of my friends capable of indefensible acts. For me there are we truer men than V. S. Srinivasa Sastriar, but his actions confound me. I do not think he loves me less because he believes that I am leading India down to the abyss.

And so I hope this great movement of non-co-operation has made it clear to thousands, as it has to me, that whilst we, may attack measures and systems, we may not, must not, attack men. Imperfect ourselves , we must be tender towards others and be slow to impute motives.

I therefore gladly seized the opportunity of waiting upon His Excellency and of assuring him that ours was a religious movement designed to purge Indian Political life of corruption, deceit, terrorism and the incubus of white superiority.

The reader must not be too curious. He must not believe the so-called ‘reports’ in the Press. The veil must remain drawn over the details of the conversation between the Viceroy and myself . But I may assure him that I explained, as fully as I knew how, the three claims—the Khilafat, the Punjab, and swaraj , and gave him the genesis of non-co-operation. His Excellency heard me patiently, courteously

[1] 1809-98; Liberal Prime Minister of England, 1866-74, 1880-85,1886 and 1892-94

[2] The source has “ arts ”.

and attentively. He appeared to me to be anxious to do only the right thing. We had a full discussion of the burning topics as between man and man. We discussed the question of non-violence, and it appeared to me to be common cause between us. Of that I may have to write more fully latter.

But, beyond saying that we were able to understand each other, I am unable to say that there was more in the interview. Some may think with me that a mutual understanding is in itself no small gain. Then, in that sense, the interview was a distinct success.

But at the end of all the long discussion, I am more than ever convinced that our salvation rests solely upon our own effort. His Excellency can only help or hinder. I am sanguine enough to think that he will help.

We must redouble our efforts to go through our programme. It is clearly as follows: (1) removal of untouchability, (2) removal of the drink curse, (3) ceaseless introduction of the spinning-wheel, and the ceaseless production of khaddar, leading to an almost complete boycott of foreign cloth, (4) registration of Congress members, and (5) collection of Tilak Swaraj Fund.

No fierce propaganda is necessary for solidifying Hindu-Muslim unity and producing a still more non-violent atmosphere.

I have put untouchability in the forefront because I observe a certain remissness about it. Hindu non-co-operators may not be indifferent about it. We may be able to right the Khilafat wrong but we can never reach swaraj, with the poison of untouchability corroding the Hindu part of the national body. Swaraj is a meaningless term if we desire to keep a fifth of India under perpetual subjection, and deliberately deny to them the fruits of national culture. We are seeking the aid of God in this great purification movement, but we deny to the most deserving among His creatures the rights of humanity. In human ourselves, we may not plead before the Throne for deliverance from the inhumanity of others.

I put drink second, as I feel that God has sent the movement to us unsought. The greatest storm ragte round it. The drink movement is fraught with the greatest danger of violence. But so long as this Government persists in keeping the drink shops open, so long must we persist in sleeplessly warning our erring countrymen against polluting their lips with drink.

The third place is assigned to the spinning-wheel, though for me it is equally important with the first two. If we produce an effective

boycott of foreign cloth during this year, we shall have shown cohesion, effort, concentration, earnestness, a spirit of nationality that must enable us to establish swaraj.

Membership of the Congress is essential for the immense organization required for dotting the country with the spinning-wheels and for the manufacture and distribution of khaddar, and for dispelling the fear that membership of the Congress may be regarded as a crime by the Government.

The fifth item, the Tilak Swaraj Fund, perpetuates the memory of the soul of Swaraj, and supplies us with the sinews of war.

We are under promise to ourselves to collect one crore rupees, register one crore members and introduce twenty lakhs of spinning-wheels in our homes by the 30th June. We shall postpone the attainment of our goal , if we fail to carry out the programme evolved at a largely attended meeting of the All-India Congress Committee, and arrived at after full consideration and debate.

Young India, 25-5-1921

87. THE FRONTIER FRIEND

The punjabis living on the Frontier[1] deserve the sympathy of the whole of India. They are exposed to attacks from the neighboring tribes, they are defenceless, and from all the accounts received by me, the Government seem to give them little or no protection, and now-a-days the rule for the officers, if anyone complains, is to refer the complaint to the Ali Brothers and to me. If we had charge of the Frontier, I know what we would have done. We would certainly have died in the attempt to defend the unarmed population of the districts. We would have, if necessary, armed the population for self-defence. But what is more, we would have won over the tribesmen and turned them from marauding bands into trustworthy neighbours. But we have to take things as they are. I assume that the Hindus and the Mussulmans are friendly to one another, and that no Mussulman traitorously helps the tribesmen against his Hindu brother. The Mussulman population this side of the Frontier is in an exceptionally strong position to help.

We must not despair of the tribesmen. We have too often considered them to be hopeless. In my opinion, they are amenable to reason. They are godfearing. They do not loot merely for pleasure. I believe that they are themselves coming under the influence of the

wave of self-purification that is spreading.

I know that the process of reforming the tribesmen is slow and tedious. It provides poor comfort to those that are robbed of their possessions or their dear ones.

The difficulty is to be traced to the same cause—we fear Englishmen, and we have becomes slaves. We fear the tribesmen and we are satisfied with our slavery, we are thankful that we are protected by the former against the latter. I cannot imagine a greater humiliation for a self-respecting man [than] to be dependent, for the safety of himself or his family, on those who he thinks prey upon him. I would prefer total destruction of myself and my all to purchasing safety at the cost of my manhood. This feeling of helplessness in us has really arisen from our deliberate dismissal of God from our common affairs. We have become atheists for all practical purposes. And therefore, we believe that in the long run we must rely upon physical form physical danger, we cast all our philosophy to the winds. Our daily life is a negation of God. If then we would but have a little trust in God, i.e., ourselves, we shall find no difficulty with the tribesmen. Only in that case, we will have to be prepared at times to surrender our possessions and, under certain circumstances , our lives rather than our honour. We must refuse to believe that our neighbours are savages incapable of responding to the finer instincts in man.

Thus, consistently with our self-respect, there are but two courses open to us, to prepare in so far as we wish to defend ourselves however weakly against robbery and plunder, or to believe in the capacity of our neighbours to respond to the nobler instinct in man and to endeavour to reform the tribesmen. I apprehend that the who processes will go hand in hand. We must avoid the third at any cost, that is, reliance on the British bullet to protect us from harm. It is the surest way to national suicide.

If my writings can reach the tribesmen, I would certainly urge them to leave their predatory habits. In as much as they loot a single man or woman, they belie the teaching of the prophet whose name they prize above all others and whom they believe to be the messenger of the God of mercy and justice. It is the duty of every Mussulman and Ulema who has any influence with these simple men to tell them that, if they will play their part in defending Islam from impending danger, the least they can do is to refrain from molesting their neighbours, who have done not only no harm to them but who, whether

they are Hindus or Mussulmans, are doing their best to safeguard the honour of Islam.

Young India, 25-5-1921

88. REPRESSION IN THE C.P.[1]

In each province repression is taking its own special turn. In the U.P.[2] the leaders of the movement are being generally left free. Pandit Motilal Nehru, the author of the circular to the *kisans*, is let untouched, but the young men who distributed the circulars are imprisoned, whereas in the C.P., the acknowledged leaders are being picked up one after another and sentenced by an obliging magistracy. The latest instance is that of Mr. Sundarlal. He has undoubtedly a hold on the student world which few possess in the C.P. His is the restraining hand, so far as violence is concerned . But he is a courageous and effective speaker. And therefore, in the opinion of the C.P. Government, he must be put out of harm's way. Here is the charge-sheet against Mr. Sundarlal:

> That you, on or about the 2nd day of March 1921, at Kharangama, by delivering a speech (to about 5,000 people), the substance of which was that the British Government in India was being carried on deliberately and dishonestly with the object of exploiting the country and reducing it to a stage of object poverty and helplessness, and that the British is Government is responsible for epidemics, famines, ch is being so sysdestruction of trade and industries, and all other misfortunes of the country, whitematically marched towards destruction, that the pledges given to Mohammedans have been broken by the Government, tyrannies and atrocities of the worst type were practiced in the Punjab, and people have consequently lost all their faith in the Government, and that the only remedy for this state of things was complete extinction of British rule in India, which is to be brought about by the use of the weapon of non-violent non-co-operation, brought or attempted to bring into hatred or contempt, or excited or attempted to excite disaffection towards the Government established by law in British India and thereby committed an offence punishable under section 124A of the I.P.C. and within my cognizance.

The charge is clear. It is not for violence done or intended. It is

[1] The former Central Provinces; the major portion of the region now forms Madhya Pradesh State.

[2] The former United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, now the Uttar Pradesh State.

purely for spreading disaffection. There is practically nothing in the charge, which has not been repeated during the past twelve months from a thousand platforms. Indeed, it may be stated to be the creed of the non-co-operator to give voice to the popular disaffection towards the Govern-ment and to spread it. Disaffection is the very essence of non-co-operation. It is the belief of every non-co-operator that the Government, meaning always the system, is wicked, it is one of exploitation of India's resources, it has brought on unrecedented paupersim and consequently famine and disease. The system is responsible for India's helplessness. The British ministers have undoubtedly broken their pledges to the Mus-sulmans. This and much more every non-co-operator does believe, and therefore seeks by non-co-operation to destroy the evil. I congratulate Mr. Sundarlal on the prosecution. Indeed, I envy the position occupied by him. Let the C.P. Government remove all the other leaders of the move-ment, and yet they will find that, as a result, he disaffection, which they would crush, is all the deeper and intenser for their mad and thoughtless repression. The duty of the people is clear. They must go on with their programme of construction and thus prepare or the final triumph. We must keep sane in spite of the Government's madness.

Young India, 25-5-1921

89. A KARACHI PROTEST

THE EDITOR

Young India

SIR,

It has pained many a Karachi-ite to read your animadversions on Karachi in *Young India* of the 4th instant.[1] Many of us feel, Sir, that you have unconsciously done our city an injustice. Your remarks, alluding to a local controversy about the accounts of a national school (and not national schools as you write)—a controversy which was the outcome of a pure mis-understanding of one Group of honest workers by another Group of equally honest, though a little uncharitable , servants of the nation—make painful reading. They cast a doubt on the honesty of some upright and selfless people who have sacrificed their all at the altar of the Motherland and who are as much above suspicion as our great leaders, the Ali Brothers, who, too, some time back, were the victims of a malicious attack by some people. In the present

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 4-5-1921.

instance , the maligned gentlemen did submit their accounts at two large public meetings and invited all those that required further satisfaction to go to their office and examine their books. That matter was thought to be dead and bruied, when it was revived by your references to it in your paper. I fear our adversaries will have an opportunity now to cavil at the movement more freely and exultantly than before. You little know, Sir, how our adversaries—not the Government, not the Anglo-Indians, but our own kith and kin of the Moderate Party, who are at present engaged in "outheroding Herod",—turn and twist your utterances and writings (and your not infrequent warnings and snubs to your followers), and how they detach passages out of their context, and hold up non-co-operators to ridicule and derision. Extracts from *Hind Swaraj*, your article on self control in sexual matters, your letter to Khalsaji, and your threat to go away to the Himalayas if people took to violence, all these are the favourite topics with which the movement and its adherents are ridiculed, and your Karachi reflections will add to their number.

As for your disapproval of the hartal organized on the occasion of the Governor's visit to Karachi and your reference to him as our of the best governors, I submit, Sir, that despite all that he may have done or not done—which Bombay or Gujarat or the rest of the Presidency may be thankful for, he has done little for Sind, for which Sindhis may join with you in your generous culogy of him. There never was greater persecution, more tyranny or worse frightfulness in Sind than we have today. Perfectly restrained as you are, even *your* wonted restraint would have been shaken, if you had, during your brief sojourn in Sind, gone over to Sanjhoro, Nawabad and Thar, and heard with your own cars from the people of those places what they had to say about the blood-curdling sufferings inflicted on them by the police and other Government servants. Thereafter, I assure you, Sir, you would have changed your opinion of the Governor, with whose connivance all these frightful things are happening. It was this very Governor, who so far forgot himself as to compare the people with servants and the Government with masters, asking non-co-operators to do what servants ought to do when they are dissatisfied with the conditions of service, viz., "clear out"—clear out of the country. This he is reported to have said to a gathering of "co-operating" notables of Sind. His latest act of 'goodness' was sanctioning the prosecution of our Swami Govindanand who was subsequenlty sentenced to five years' transportation. May we not then respectfully ask of you, Sir, what heinous sin there was in organizing a hartal on the occasion of his visit of Karachi to demonstrate to him that we of Sind were no more the dumb driven cattle of old, whom Lawrence with the indulgent acquiescence of a willingdom could frighten into submission by his high-handedness? That the people had their heart in the

demonstration is borne out by the fact that the hartal was complete—even more complete than the great national hartals of the 6th and the 13th.

KARACHI *I am, etc.,*

8th May, 1921 GIRDHARILAL KHUBCHANDANI

I publish the foregoing with pleasure. I have only removed rhe embellishments. I am sorry if I have done an injustice to any school. It is my duty to publish well-authenticated complaints about public institu-tions. No amount of misrepresentation about them can damage honest national enterprises. As for the Governor of Bombay, I gave my own im-pression. I am still inclined to think that His Excellency does not know the high-handed character of the doings of the Sind officials. But even if the charges against the Government can be established, I am unable to agree that we may resort to hartal every time an unpopular official visits a place. I should feel sincerely sorry if the Governor passed the remarks attributed to him. I have believed the Governor of Bombay to be tactful and sober, and it would be a rude shock to me to find that he had made the tactless and hasty remarks reported of him.

Young India, 25-5-1921

90. REPLY TO MUNICIPAL ADDRESS, SHOLAPUR[1]

May 26, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi first pleaded his inability to make a speech while standing, and made some criticism on presenting the municipal address to him in English. He said it was his duty to point out such mistakes in his own humble way. He further stated that it would have been in consonance with the present spirit in India had the address been given in Marathi or in Hindi. The time had now come when the municipalities had transgressed their former barriers and they were coming forward of present addresses to him, and they Bareilly Municipality took the lead in this matter. As for the silver casket, he would like some rich man from Sholapur to come forward to buy it, so that he would devote the sale proceeds to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. He was satisfied to see that the Sholapur Municipality was doing its own duty. The idea that the Municipalities were meant simply for cleansing the streets must now go and they

[1] Gandhiji reached Sholapur by car from Pandharpur at 3.30 a.m. A procession was taken out and the city obsreved a hartal. At 9 a.m. the Municipality presented him with an address at Ripon Hall.

must take their due share in the body politic. He closed his speech by invoking the help of God to give the Sholapur Municipality the strength and courage to do its duty.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-5-1921

91. TELEGRAM TO MAHADEV DESAI[1]

BAGALKOT,
May 27, 1921

MAHADEO
CARE MATHURADAS
93, BAZAR GATE
FORT, BOMBAY

SUGGESTED ADDITION MAY BE MADE BEFORE BUT THE PASSAGE AFTER SHOULD REMAIN. YOU MAY PUT "NOW" BEFORE "RECOGNIZE". THE ADDED WORD HOWEVER MAY REMAIN BEFORE "SINCERELY". CIRCULATE TO PRESS AS ADVISED AND WIRE SIMLA YOUR SIGNATURE AS SECRETARY ADDITIONS MADE AND SAY THAT STATEMENT WITH ADDITIONS SIGNED AND CIRCULATED, MOTORING BIJAPUR. ADDITIONS SIGNED AND CIRCULATED. MOTORING BIJAPUR. IEAVING BIJAPUR TOMORROW AS ARRANGED. WIRE RESULT BIJAPUR.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the original: S.N. 7532

[1] This was in reply to Mahadev Desai's telegram of May 26/27, reading: Draft signed with only this modification instead of words "but we recognize that certain passages in our speeches are capable" words "nor did we imagine that any passages in our speeches were capable" substituted. And then sentence begins "we however sincerely". Wire instructions express care Mathuradas. For the draft of the Ali Brothers' apology, to which this referred, *vide* "Draft of Ali Brothers' Apology", on or after May 14, 1921.

92. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

BIJAPUR,
May 27, 1921

MATHURADAS
93 BAZAR GATE
BOMBAY FORT

TELL THEM RETENTION RECOGNITION CLAUSE QUITE HARMLESS. IF THEY DO NOT AGREE WAIT ME SUNDAY.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

93. REPLY TO ADDRESSES AT BIJAPUR[1]

May 27, 1921

I am glad that Mr. Gundappa was allowed to speak.[2] It is our duty to hear patiently the views of our opponents. I know the feelings of the non-Brahmins and also their cause. I do not say that the Brahmins are not to blame at all. Even the Brahmins do not claim to be faultless. The Brahmins have disregarded the feelings of their religion and have lost the purity of life. They have fallen from the high position which they once occupied and their degradation marked the commencement of the downfall of India. I am a non-Brahmin and I appeal to my non-Brahmin [friends] not to forget their religion and ideals of life because the present-day Brahmins have degenerated. But you may be surprised to know that it is due to the Brahmins that the non-Brahmins have been conscious of the short-comings and agitating for their rights. The Brahmins, however fallen they may be, are still in the forefront of all movements, political and social. It is the Brahmins who exert for the uplift of the depressed classes, more than anybody else. Lokamanya Tilak is revered by all classes of people for his services to the country. One Brahmin gentleman in Andhra

[1] Gandhiji reached Bijapur from Bagalkot in the evening. He addressed a women's meeting and later, a public meeting of some 12,000 people at Thanbowdi Maidan. Addresses were presented to him by the Municipality and the local Merchants' Association.

[2] Gundappa Shabadi, a Lingayat or non-Brahmin, had earlier expressed his community's grievances.

has devoted his life to the service of the untouchable classes. The late Mr. Gokhale[1] Mr. Ranade[2] and the Hon'ble Mr. Sastri have all done splendid work for the regeneration of the backward classes. These are all Brahmins. I am convinced that the Brahmins are known for their self-sacrifice at all times. You complain of the Brahmin bureaucracy. But let us compare it with the British bureaucracy. The latter follows "the divide and rule policy" and maintains its authority by the power of the sword, whereas the Brahmins have never resorted to the force of arms and they have established their superiority by sheer force of their intellect, self-sacrifice and penance. None need be jealous of their superiority. I appeal to my non-Brahmin brethren not to hate the Brahmin and not to be victims of the snares of the bureaucracy.

The non-Brahmins are wealthy. Agriculture is in their hands; so also commerce. If they hanker after the public services, the way is made quite open to them by the non-co-operation movement. Non-co-operation is for the good of all, Brahmins and non-Brahmins alike. You say the advice to boycott schools and colleges may be acceptable to the Brahmins who are educated but will be decidedly harmful to the non-Brahmins who are still uneducated. You also say that I am a fine product of the modern education. But I must tell you that the modern education has made cowards of us all. Our helplessness and mutual jealousies are due to this education. It has developed a slave mentality in us. The qualities which you attribute to me are not certainly the result of this education. I have long ago freed myself from the hypnotic influence of the education. I am what I am, by the study of my religious and eternal principles of life and such religious and philosophical books as the *Bhagavad Gita*, *Mahabharata*. and *Ram-araksha* compiled by the Brahmins. I ask my non-Brahmin friends to calmly consider these things and I am sure they will be convinced of the truth of what I say.

I and the Ali Brothers live as brothers. And I appeal to the two communities, Hindu and Mohammedan, to live similarly as brothers. The movement of non-co-operation is that of self-purification. We must get rid of the vices which eat into the vitals of our society. We must be ready to sacrifice our life on the altar of the country. We must

[1] Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915); patriot, educationist and politician; President of the Congress, 1905; founder of the Servants of India Society

[2] Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842-1901); social reformer and author; Judge of the Bombay High Court.

practise non-violence at all costs. We must follow the noble example set by Lachhman Singh and Dulip Singh of the Punjab. They did not raise so much as one finger in self-defence though they were strong enough to kill Mahant Naraindas.

I am sorry that this district is famine-stricken. Naturally, therefore, you have not been able to contribute liberally to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. But I regret to hear that there are only 1,400 charkhas working in the whole of the district. Charkha is an insurance against famine. The 87 per cent of the population which live on agriculture have no other means of life in times of scarcity. We must therefore introduce charkha in every home. Thereby we shall be killing two birds with one stone. Thereby the swadeshi industry will thrive and it will result in a complete boycott of foreign cloth. If we are deter-mined to follow the path of non-violence and settle the Brahmin-non-Brahmin disputes and the Hindus and Mohammedans act towards each other in brotherly love, and if the charkha finds its way into every household, I assure you that swaraj will be established during this year.

Lokamanya Tilak has taught us that Home Rule is our birthright.[1] We need not go to schools or to the Councils to practise this *mantra*. charkha will give us the swaraj we require. We have to collect I crore of rupees before the 30th of June. I believe it is not a difficult task to collect I crore in the name of Lokamanya Tilak.

I thank you for honouring me and for the addresses of welcome presented by the Municipality and the merchants of Bijapur. When municipalities and merchants are alive to their duties, they will be able to materially help us to attain swaraj and to obtain justice in regard to the Khilafat and the Punjab.

The Hindu, 3-6-1921

[1] Tilak's famous dictum was : "Swaraj is my birthright and I shall have it."

94. LETTER TO HASSAN IMAM

[After *May 27, 1921*]

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter[1] and enclosure[2] . You may depend upon my doing all I can to allay excitement and prevent trouble. It seems difficult for me to leave this part of India for this month at any rate.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 7537

95. ADVICE TO PEOPLE OF GAYA[3]

I have heard reports that many Hindus use my name in trying to prevent Muslims from eating meat and fish. In the fight of non-co-operation there is not so much as a suggestion about persuading people to take only vegetarian food, to say nothing of using compulsion for this purpose.

It is violence, not non-violence, forcibly to prevent someone from eating the kind of food he likes to eat. I do not wish even to compel people to desist from drinking.

In peaceful non-co-operation compulsion is forbidden. One who interferes with people eating what they choose to eat commits a crime before all men. This kind of coercion will do great harm to our cause. I hope, therefore, that no one will, in my name or in the name of ahimsa, cause obstruction to people eating and drinking as they want or will advocate taking away from people their meat and fish.

Seizing of animals by force in a fair is forbidden.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Hindi]
Aaj, 29-5-1921

[1] Hassan Imam, in his letter of May 27, had urged Gandhiji to visit Gaya to prevent tension and trouble before *Bakr-i-id*.

[2] This is not available.

[3] The note was sent to the District Congress Committee Gaya, presumably in response to Hassan Imam's letter; *vide* the preceeding item.

96. TO THE WEALTHY CLASS IN GUJARAT

The 30th of June is fast approaching. In Gujarat, we have not reached even the figure of two lakhs for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Even in this, the contribution of the really wealthy class is very small indeed.

Do not the wealthy people love doing their duty. And do they not wish to see India able to stand up and face the world? Do they not wish to make their contribution to filling the hungry stomachs of over three crores of men in the country? Is not the good name of India dear to them? Do they not like that India should throw off her slavery? Ary they not in a position , if they so will, to take up Gujara's burden in a day? Is it not possible for the mill-owners of Ahmedabad, by themselves, to raise a contribution of Rs 10 lakhs in a day, if they so decide? If they choose, they can do a lot. I hope they will make their contribution to the movement which is progressing apace in the country.

"If we help, the government will make things difficult for us." I wish that the wealthy classes would shed this fear from their hearts. The days for such fear are gone. And, again, if only one rich man had to give, he could be intimidated; when, however, all agree to give, how can any of them be intimidated?

However, fear is such a thing that, despite one's desire to give, one cannot take courage to be the first to do so. Shedding fears of this nature should also be one of the important results of this big fight. It is my hope that the wealthy classes will be brave and take their full share in the work of national regeneration.

Even if, however, some among the wealthy classes find it difficult to follow the dharma of fearlessness, I hope that they will not give up the dharma of compassion. They will certainly extend whatever help is possible to the famine-stricken. At the time of the virulent outbreak of the plague an d when there was a famine some time ago, the wealthy classes were not found wanting. If they do or can do nothing else, I pray that they will, at any rate, take up the burden of famine relief.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-5-1921

97. TO GUJARATIS LIVING OUTSIDE GUJARAT

Gujarat has not only to meet its share of the demand made at Bezwada, but also to go to the help of the weaker Provinces, and it is for this reason that I have put down Rs. 10 lakhs as its quota. If Gujarat does not take up this burden, I am afraid we shall positively fail to collect one crore of rupees before June 30.

Gujarat, however, has a third burden to bear. There is drought in some parts of it and help is needed there too. I wish to draw the attention of Gujaratis living outside Gujarat to all these three matters. Wherever they are settled, they must do their duty by those regions—about this there can be no argument. But they owe a like duty to Gujarat. If Gujarat is to contribute 10 lakhs, it can do so only if all Gujaratis living elsewhere too keep Gujarat in mind. If they do, Gujarat can contribute not only the full amount of 10 lakhs but even more.

Parsi and Muslim Gujaratis, if I can persuade them to do their duty, can by themselves make up the amount of one crore.

I wish to lay greater stress on the drought in Gujarat. At the time of the Orissa famine, Gujaratis had made an excellent conribution. It will not be wrong, in fact, if we say that it was Gujarat which met the needs of famine relief then. If so, will Gujarat be doing anything special if it meets such needs nearer home?

My appeal is also addressed to those who do not approve of the prevailing wind in other matters. They can contribute to the famine-relief fund in two ways: by contribution to the Tilak Swaraj Fund or, if they object to doing this, by remitting contributions exclusively for the Relief Fund. In fact they can adopt any one of three different modes of contribution: (1) The money may be offered unconditionally—all such amounts will be credited to the Tilak Swaraj Fund; (2) it may be offered to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, but earmarked for famine relief—such amounts will be included in the Tilak Swaraj Fund but will be used entirely for famine relief; and (3) it may be offered exclusively for famine relief with the express condition that the amount is not to be included in the Tilak Swaraj Fund.

Even Government servants and others who oppose non-co-operation can, and I hope will, contribute freely with the proviso mentioned in the third alternative. Accounts for all amounts received are published. All work is entrusted to vigilant secretaries and treasurers.

I, therefore, earnestly entreat Gujaratis to banish every fear and send in their contributions.

It will be some time before this letter is in the hands of Indians living in East Africa, Japan, England and other places. Hence I appeal to persons living in Gujarat and having relations residing in other countries to send cables to those of them as reside in the countries mentioned above.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-5-1921

98. MY NOTES

PILGRIMAGE TO MAHARASHTRA

A visit to the province in which Lokamanya Tilak Maharaj was born, the province which has produced heroes in the modern age, which gave Shivaji and in which Ramdas and Tukaram flourished, is for me nothing less than a pilgrimage. I have always believed that Maharashtra, if it wills, can do anything. Its scepticism, however, is every a cause of grief to me. I always feel that he province in which the best work can be done has done the least. I gather that the workers in Maharashtra hold the same view. After leaving simla, I went to Kalka and then to Ambala. From there I proceeded to Khandwa in the Central Provinces and thence to Bhusaval, Sangamner and Yeola. I am writing these notes on my way to Kurduwadi. For going there, one has to go from Yeola to Dhond and change trains there. As our train arrived late at Dhond and the connecting train had already left, I got some experience of Dhond as well. I felt that the masses everywhere had the same faith but there were not enough workers. people lack capacity for organization, there is no end to noise and bustle and they get crowds of people to fill station platforms. As for the result, however, I found it poor in Bhusaval, Sangamner and Yeola at any rate, though he people who had invited me to these places were capable workers.

Where have we now the time for all this fuss and shouts of victory and bending to touch my feet in reverence? If we can spare time to go to station platforms, why not spend it in plying the spinning-wheet? Why not use it in collecting contributions to the National Fund? Do we not have to enrol a large number of Congress members? The position now is that we shall be able to complete the programme before the end of June, as decided, only if we work round the clock. Though two months have elapsed, we have not done even

two-thirds of the work, not even one-half.

If we fail to complete the programme of work by the end of June, it will only show that our will and capacity to win swaraj are not great.

The collections at Bhusaval and Sangamner could be taken as on the whole satisfactory, but at Yeola, I must say, the collections came almost to nothing. Yeola is a rich town. It has Gujarati business men settled there for the last 200 years and yet the amount collected there for the Tilak Swaraj Fund was the smallest. It is true, of course, that one person alone in Yeola gave Rs. 20,000 for a national school. But, then negotiations for the donation had been going on for a long time. The donor, besides, is well known for his charitable disposition. For the Tilak Fund, however, contributions were to be collected from the general public. The total collections from all, men and women, must have come hardly to Rs. 300, while a small village near Yeola, which we passed on the way, gave the same amount.

IN A DILEMMA

At Yeola I was in a serious dilemma. I was called there specially to receive the Rs. 20,000 mentioned above and to open the national school. We arrived at Yeola at 10 p.m. A public meeting was held at the dead of night, at 1 a.m. I was tired beyond words. After a whole day's journey by car, I had to keep awake. At the meeting, I talked of the national school. While there, I heard that they were going to teach English in the school even this year. To be sure, I was not happy to have to inaugurate such a school but, after expressing my views about teaching English, I said a few words about the starting of the school. I swallowed this one bitter draught. The following day was my sacred day of silence, but I had agreed, all the same, to go and open the school with out speaking. And now I learnt that untouchables were not to be admitted to the school. I have inaugurated many schools but I had not, during this year at any rate, inaugurated a single one like this. I had to send word to the managers of the school that I could not go to inaugurate a school of this type, and the result was that I did not. I was faced, in Karachi, with a similar difficulty about inaugurating a swadeshi store. It was stocked with all manner of goods and so I had to refuse to inaugurate it in the same way that I refused to inaugurate the school. I should not be asked to associate myself with any activities which obstruct the non-co-operation programme or anything else on which I hold strong views.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-5-1921

99. SPEECH AT MASS MEETING, BOMBAY [1]

May 29, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi at the outset regretted very much that they had to sit there since 4 o'clock but he was not to be blamed for the delay, as he had been told that the meeting would begin a 7.30 p.m. All his time was at the disposal of the people and he kept nothing for himself.

The present was no time for meetings in this land; it was time for solid action. They might have known that he had been living for about six days in Simla and he wanted to tell them at once that he had not gone to see the Viceroy for the purpose of getting anything. Pandit Malaviya had asked him to go to Simla, and his friend Mr. Andrews also told him that the Viceroy wanted to see him. Therefore, he went to see the Viceroy and what happened there was this. He had told the Viceroy everything that he wanted to say and Lord Reading had heard him with great patience, kindness and calmness. He had already written in *Young India* all that had taken place there.[2] The Viceroy and he came to know each other better now. And after the interview the Viceroy knew what the speaker wanted to attain by means of non-co-operation.

The destiny of Indians was in their own hands; theirs was a plain and simple duty—they had to be non-violent; they had to stand united—Mohammedans and Hindus. They had to introduce twenty lakhs of charkhas. They had to get one crore of members for the congress and they had to collect a crore of rupees for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. All these things had to be done before the end of June. He was extremely sorry that what was expected of them during the two months had not been accomp-lished by then, and they themselves were to be blamed for that. It was due to their own want of efforts that they had not advanced very much in their programme. If they could not even accomplish he work set before them by the Congress, how was it possible for them to attain swaraj, and how was it possible to set right their Khilafat and Punjab wrongs? He had great hopes that they would not fail in their duty and he earnestly prayed to God that they might be given sufficient strength to do their duty by their Motherland.

What he wanted of them was that everyone of them brothers and sisters should be a member of the Congress organization. If, on account of fear or any selfish motives, they did not become members of the Congress, they would never be fit for swaraj. If they were not prepared to collect one crore of rupees for the sake of swaraj,

[1] Under the auspices of the "F" Ward Congress Commitee and the Matunga Residents' Association, a mass meeting was held at Matunga, a suburb of Northern Bombay, at about 7.30 p.m.

[2] *Vide* "The Simla Visit". 22-5-1921.

how could they ever get swaraj? If they were unable togather one crore of rupees together for the sake of swaraj, how could they fit themselves for swaraj? If they were unable to get this amount together, then they would not and should not get swaraj as they were unfit for it. Just consider how much money was wasted in this city over threatres, cinemas, and other sorts of enjoyments, and how much in drinks in this wide country. Nearly seventy crores of rupees were spent this very year in drink. If they were able to spend so much money over their vices, could they not get a crore of rupees for swaraj? He would not be content to take the individual share of each man in India which came to about two pice each. They had to collect one crore of rupees and it was their bounden duty to do so. He was sure that Bombay alone was capable to giving that large amount to the Fund.

He had that moment received a sum of Rs. 231 from Mauritius merchants which showed that their brethren in distant lands were with them in their desire for swaraj. That very day his friend, parsi Rustomji Ghorkhodu had given him Rs. 12,000 for introducing charkhas in his land. There was a bright example for them to follow. They had only one month remaining to do their duty by their country. He appealed to Bombay which was always in the forefront of all movements in this country. They had given the largest sum for the Jallianwala Fund, and Bombay was capable of giving a large sum to the Tilak Fund. Lokamanya Tilak had told them that swaraj was their birthright and they had to win it. If they were once determined to get swaraj all the 30 crores of them—who could resist their united demand? It was not an impossible thing for them to get together one crore rupees.

He was extremely sorry that they in Matunga had been able to collect only Rs. 5,000 for the Swaraj Fund. Were they going to deceive themselves thet they were doing their duty by collecting such a small amount? Or were they going to deceive their country that they had done their duty by it? At the end of June, they would be offered a test and he hoped they would pass the test successfully on that day. He appealed of the residents of Matunga to give of their best towards the swaraj Fund.

They could not very well say that they had no money to spare. Did they not spend lavishly and all that they could when they wanted to marry their sons or daughters? Or did they spare their money when they required any thing for themselves? The present was the time for India's marriage and they had to give all they could spare for that purpose. They had not to consider how much sum they had to collect. What he wanted was that every one of them should give his best for swaraj. No woman had any right to wear any ornament—more than was required by their religion—at the present time. Women should follow the example of Sita when she followed Ramachandra. She had then discarded all her ornaments, and that is what Indian women should do now. Did they want *Ramarajya*, then let them give their ornaments to the Fund? peculiarly were women fit for such movements; they were

capable of greater efforts than even men and therefore he appealed to them. If women wanted foreign clothes, ornaments, French and Japanese silks, Manchester calicoes, how could they get swaraj? Could they not give up those things for the sake of their country and wear plain khaddar? Many of their countrymen went without proper clothing, and he wanted every one of them to be clothed decently. People, therefore, must consider that Khaddar was the best and holiest of cloth. They had to start a spinning-mill in each household, and how was it possible to do this, except by introducing the charkha? He did not want big mills to grind down their men and women. Indians must consider it a sin to wear foreign clothes and that it was a most improper things to do. Until they considered that khaddar was a holy cloth they would never attain swaraj. As long as they could not produce finer qualities of cloth, they had to be content with the khaddar. There was nothing better, nothing pure and nothing more beautiful than khadar made of yarn spun by thier sisters and brothers. They had to do all these things to right their khilafat wrongs and the worngs of Punjab.

He hoped that dharma had not entirely disappeared from this city. He thought that the people of Bombay were fond of luxuries and ease and finery; that they wanted the good things of this world. But they were not sinful. For the sake of swaraj they had to give up all those things. They had to give up the cinema, the theatre and the grog shop. They must also give up all kinds of vices, adultery. Everyone must consider that every woman, other than one's wife, was one's sister or mother. He prayed to God that He would give them sufficient strength and courage to do their duty by their country in its moment of need. Before hearing Mrs. Naidu, he asked them to give liberally to the Tilak Fund.[1]

You must be eager to know the outcome of [my visit to] Simla. But I did not go there to get anything. I went there at the request of the Hon'ble Mr. Malaviya and I explained to the Viceroy my point of view. He listened quietly, patiently and courteously to everything I said and the only result was that we came to know each other and I could explain to him what it was we desired through non-co-operation. Actually, however, it is for us to secure result.

We have to do our duty. We have to collect one crore of rupees by June 30 and introduce in the counrty 20 lakh spinning-wheels.

I have a right to ask you, and do ask, what you have done. If we cannot ensure the performance of our own duty, how can we become fit for swaraj? I have enough faith in the people of India and in God's grace to be sure that we shall succeed in the task we have undertaken.

[1] This has been reproduced from *The Bombay Chronicle*. What follows is the Gujarati version of the speech published in *Gujarati*.

I wish to see how much you do. First of all, be fearless. If we are not ready to sacrifice one crore of rupees in memory of Tilak Maharaj if we do not have enough honest men to collect this sum, how can we become fit for swaraj? A lot of money is wasted over plays, cinemas, etc. If Bombay decides, it can be itself five a crore of rupees. Everyone should consider the maximum that he can give for the sake of the country. A business establishment in Mauritius has sent me Rs. 251. Mr. Rustomji Ghorkhodu has sent a cheque for Rs. 12,000 from Africa. In the matter of giving money, Bombay stands first. Even for the Jallianwala Bagh Fund, the largest contribution was Bombay's. Wealth comes to Bombay and people can give of it with a free hand.

It is not a big thing for 30 crore people to secure the reins of power in their own hands, but at the moment I shall not go much into that question. Matunga has collected Rs. 5,000, but I cannot be pleased with only so much. You spend so liberally on your sons' or daughters' marriages. Now you are called upon to put a crown on India. This is, indeed, an occasion when none other than the country is being married. Eighty lakhs still remain to be collected. Women should give away all ornaments except those symbolic of their married status. The country will prosper if the women follow dharma. If they want foreign cloth, how can we prosper?

Self-sufficiency in food and clothing—this is what swaraj means. Our mills do not produce enough cloth. Mill-cloth should be available to those who go without clothes at present. The real meaning of swaraj is that every poor person in the counry must have food and clothing, and for this we must understand the nobiliyt of khadi, inroduce the sinning-wheel into every home and tell ourselves that it is sacrilege to wear naything except khadi. When khadi spreads everywhere, the religon of truth will be established in the country. Even if the cloth woven from the yarn spun by our sisters is too heavy, we should be happy wearing it. If you follow the advice I have given, swaraj is not far off.

However much Bombay may be given to luxury and comfort, its heart is tender and, when occasion demands, it is ready to run to the succour of the afflicted. A time will also come when liquor and other pleasures will have disappeared and the people of Bombay will love a pure and virtuous life. In conclusion, I shall only say: you, poeple of Bombay, should give as much as you can.[1]

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-5-1921and *Gujarati* 5-6-1921

[1] At the conclusion of the meeting, Sarojini Naidu along with volunteers went round and collected cash contributions and ornaments from the women.

100. LETTER TO KUNVERJI ANANDJI KAPADIA

BOMBAY,

Tuesday [Before *June 30, 1921*][1]

BHAISHREE KUNVERJI ANANDJI,

Bhavnagar has done nothing so far for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. That means that you have done nothing. Your slackness pains me. You understand the whole thing. You have money. You know the impor-tance of this work, and how the country's progress lies in it. And yet you are not contributing your full share. I ask of you your mind, your heart, your time and your money. You will not get such a chance again. It is my wish that you should help.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 11580

101. NOTES

THE AFGHAN ALARM

It must be a matter of surprise to many people, as it is to me, that Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal[2] should be alarmed at the Afghan cry raised in interested quarters. He is a believer in full swaraj, and I venture to suggest to Mr. Pal that we cannot establish swaraj in India, till we rid ourselves of the feeling of helplessness Swaraj means our prepared-ness to deal with the Afghan and every other menace in our country. The whole scheme of non-co-operation is based on trusting other people, and if they prove untrustworthy, on our being prepared to meet their deceit by self-suffering. I remind Mr. Pal of what he truly said at Allahabad at the Hindu-Mohammedan Conference in reply to Dr. Sapru[3] that the same power of combination, resourcefulness and

[1] From the reference to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, collections for which ended on June 30, 1921

[2] 1858-1932; educationist, journalist orator and political leader of Bengal .

[3] Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru (1875-1949); jurist and Liberal leader; represented the Government of India at the Round Table Conferences in 1930, 1931 and 1932

suffering that would end the present system of slavery would enable us to deal with every other system of a similar nature.

Pan-Islamism, which Mr. Pal fears, is an admirable doctrine in so far as a Mussulman wishes the solidarity of all Muslim states. It would be a dangerous doctrine. If it were to mean a combination of Islamic powers for the purpose of exploiting the world or converting it to Islam by force. No sane Mussulman of my acquaintance has ever entertained the latter idea. The world is growing sick of the domination of brute force.

I assure Mr. Pal that I do not believe in flirtation with any sentiment. I reject those that are bad, and hug those that are good. I do not believe that serious Mussulmans will welcome Afghan rule any more than serious Hindus would. In writing my article on "The Afghan Bogey", I was minded only to defend the correct position of a comrade, and to warn India against being frightened by the interested cry.

I totally dissent from Mr. Pal's view that the event of an Afghan invasion, or even the mere circulation of a rumour of such invasion will incite a very large part of our Muslim population to lawlessness, if not to open "revolt". On the contrary it is my firm belief that the Mussulmans hav too much at stake today—the honour of their religion—to do any such foolish act. As Maulana Shaukat Ali has said so often, the Mussulmans are too shrewd to mix up violence wih non-violence. Mr. Pal has done a grave injustice to the Hindus by attributing to a "very large proportion" of Hindus "a desire to settle their own account with the Mohammedans". He has, I venture to assure him, entirely misread the Hindu mind. The Hindus are as much in earnest about the cow, as the Mussulmans about the Khilafat. And the former know that they cannot save the cow—the cherished dream of every Hindu—without the goodwill of the latter. I promise that the Hindus will forget every wrong done in the past by every Mussulman when the latter helps them to save the cow as I know every Mussulman will feel eternally grateful to the Hindus if he finds that he has retrieved the honour of Islam by thier voluntary aid.

I deny *in toto* he truth of the proposition laid down by Mr. Pal: that Muslims and Hindus would welcome an Afghan invasion. The protests that have been made against the supposed intentions of

Maulana Mahomed Ali are surely enough to convince anybody that India will not tolerate an Afghan invasion.

Mr. Pal suggest that if the Amir invades and if we do not aid the Government, there can only be a revolution. I venture to suggest another alternative. If India, as a non-co-operating, India does not assist, the Government will make terms with the people. I do not consider the British people to be so utterly devoid of common sense or resourcefulness as to leave India, rather than come to terms with her and heal the Khilafat and the Punjab wounds. That India does not yet possess the power to command attention I know only too well. I have simply suggested a contingent alternative.

Mr. Pal sees a difference between Lalaji's[1] and my declaration at Simla and our previous declarations. I know, none—neither Lalaji nor I—has ever welcomed an Afghan invasion. But I gladly lay down my own position in categorical terms.

(1) I do not believe that the Afghans want to invade India.

(2) I believe that the Government is fully prepared to meet an Afghan invasion.

(3) I am sorry to confess that if there was an Afghan invasion, every Raja and Maharaja will render unconditional assistance to the Government.

(4) I believe, too, that we as a people are still so demoralized , diffident and distrustful of Afghan intentions, and Hindus and Mussalmans of one another, that many would in mere panic rush to the help of the Government and thus still further strengthen the chain that binds India.

(5) In theory, it is possible to distinguish between an invasion of India and an invasion of the British Government for the purpose of the Khilafat. In practice, I do not believe in the Afghans invading India to embarrass the Government, and being able in the event of being successful to resist the temptation of establishing a kingdom in India.

(6) In spite of such belief, I hold it to be contrary to the faith of a non-co-operator to render unconditional assistance to a Government which he seeks to end or mend.

(7) A handful of conscientious objectors may make no impression on the then current of events, but they will sow the seed for

[1] The reference is to Lala Lajpat Rai.

raising a manly India.

(8) I would rather see India perish a the hands of Afghans than purchase freedom from Afghan invasion at the cost of her honor. To have India defended by an unrepentant Government that keeps the Khilafat and the Punjab wounds still bleeding, is to sell India's honour.

(9) My faith, however, in the British nation is such that when we have shown sufficient strength of purpose, and undergone enough measure of self-sacrifice, the British people will respond fully. My reading of history is that they do not yield to justice pure and simple . It is too abstract for their 'common sense' . But they are far-seeing enough to respond to justice when it is allied with force. Whether it is brute force or soul-force, they do not mind.

(10) It is the duty of every non-co-operator to let the Afghans know that he believes in the capacity of non-co-operation to restore the Khilafat to the pre-war status, and that India does not want their armed intervention, that non-co-operators would appreciate their refusal to enter into any deal with the British Government for holding India in subjection, and that India has none but the friendliest feelings for her neighbours.

ENGLISH LEARNING

Elsewhere the reader will see my humble endeavor in reply[1] to Dr.Tagore's[2] criticism of non-co-operation. I have since read his letter to the Manager of Shantiniketan. I am sorry to observe that the latter is written in anger and in ignorance of facts. The Poet was naturally incensed to find that certain students in London would not give a hearing to Mr. Pearson,[3] one of the truest of Englishmen, and he became equally incensed to learn that I had told our women to stop English studies. The reasons for my advice the Poet evidently inferred for himself.

How much better it would have been if he had not imputed the rudeness of the students to non-co-operation, and had remembered that non-co-operators worship Andrews, honour Stokes, and gave a most respectfull hearing to messrs Wedgwood, Ben Spoor and Holford Knight at Nagpur, that Maulana Mahomed Ali accepted the invitation

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941); poet and author; was awarded Nobel Prize for literature in 1913; founder of Santiniketan, now a university.

[3] W.W. Pearson; had worked as a missionary in Bengal; an associate of C.F. Andrews; sometime teacher at Santiniketan

to tea of an English official when he invited him as a friend, that Hakim Ajmal Khan[1], a staunch non-co-operator had the portraits of Lord and Lady Hardinge unveiled in his Tabbia College and had invited his many English friends to witness the ceremony. How much better it would have been if he had refused to allow the demon [of] doubt to possess him for one moment, as to real and religious character of the present movement, and had believed that the movement was altering the meaning of old terms, nationalism and patriotism, and extending their scope.

If he, with a poet's imagination, had seen that I was incapable of wishing to cramp the mind of the Indian woman, and I could not object to English learning as such, and recalled the fact that throughout my life I had fought for the fullest liberty for women, he would have been saved the injustice which he has done me, and which, I know, he would never knowingly do to an avowed enemy. The Poet does not know perhaps that English is today studied because of its commercial and so-called political value. Our boys think, and rightly in the present circumstances, that without English they cannot get Government service. Girls are taught English as a passport to marriage. I know several instances of women wanting to learn English so that they may be able to talk to Englishmen in English. I know husbands who are sorry that their wives cannot talk to them and their friends in English. I know families in which English is being *made* the mother tongue. Hundreds of youths believe that without a knowledge of English, freedom for India is practically impossible . The canker has so eaten into the society that, in many cases, the only meaning of education is a knowledge of English. All these are for me signs of our slavery and degradation. It is unbearable to me that the vernaculars should be crushed and starved as they have been. I cannot tolerate the idea of parents writing to their children, or husbands writing to their wives, not in their own vernaculars but in English. I hope I am as great a believer in free air as the great Poet. I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all the lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any. I refuse to live in other people's houses as an interloper, a beggar or a slave. I refuse to put the unnecessary strain of learning English upon my sisters for

[1] 1865-1927; eminent Muslim physician and politician who took a leading part in the Khilafat Movement; President, Indian National Congress, 1921-22

the sake of false pride or questionable social advantage. I would have our young men and young women with literary taste to learn as much of English and other world languages as they like, and then expect them to give the benefits of their learning to India and to the world, like a Bose, a Roy or the poet himself. But I would not have a single Indian to forget, neglect or be ashamed of his mother-tongue, or to feel that he or she cannot think or express the best thoughts in his or her own vernacular. Mine is not a religion of the prison-house. It has room for the least among God's creation. But it is proof against insolence, pride of race, religion or colour. I am extremely sorry for the poet's misreading of this great movement of reformation, purification and patriotism spelt humanity. If he will be patient, he will find no cause for sorrow or shame for his countrymen. I respectfully warn him against mistaking its excrescences for the movement itself. It is as wrong to judge non-co-operation by the students' misconduct in London or Malegaon's in India, as it would be to judge Englishmen by the Dyers or the O'Dwyers.

THE BROTHERS' APOLOGY

The brief statement made by the Ali Brothers about some of their speeches will, I know, give rise to adverse criticism in whispers if not in public. It is best therefore to understand the apology. I am unable just now to go into the whole of the genesis, but I can safely inform the public that, as soon as some friends brought passages in some of their speeches to my notice, I felt that they sounded harsh and seemed to be capable of being interpreted to mean incitement to violence. The air was thick with rumours of their arrest. No non-co-operator con afford to go to prison on a false issue, certainly not on a denial of his faith, i.c., non-violence. I felt at once that I should draw their attention to the passages, and advise them to make a statement clearly defining their position. In the heat of the moment once is likely to use language which may bear a meaning never intended. When one disregards the fear of the law and fears only one's own conscience, one has to be doubly careful. But all the care in the world would sometimes fail to prevent a slip. The Ali Brothers carry a big burden on their shoulders. The prestige of Islam, in so far as they are responsible for it, will be measured by the credit they acquire for the most scrupulous regard for truth and honesty in their dealings, and humility and courage of the highest order in their bearing. My 'alliance' with them, as our friendship has been called, is based upon

my belief in their strict honesty, frankness, fearlessness, courage and humility. I know that they are among much maligned men in India. All kinds of motives are attributed to them. They are said to be making me their easy tool. Time, I am sure, will disprove all these charges. But it was necessary that no hasty expression of theirs was used against them to damage their character or good faith. Nothing can be more hurtful to an honourable man than that he should be accused of bad faith. It was in order to safeguard them, in so far as it lay in their power, against any such imputation, that I advised them to make the statement now published. In my opinion, by making it they have raised the tone and prestige of the Khilafat struggle they are leading. They have set an example to other workers. We are not to seek imprisonment out of bravado. The gaol is the gateway to liberty and honour, when innocence finds itself in it. The statement is a warning to all of us, that we who are fighting the battle for freedom and truth, must be most exact in our language. It would not be a bad thing to read our speeches or not to make any at all. One of the noblest of Mussulmans has imposed this restraint on himself. Maulana Abdul Bari[1] is highly sensitive, and can be betrayed into using under excitement language which he would not use in cooler moments, and which he often does not mean. At the suggestion of friends he has therefore undertaken as a rule not to speak in public at all. I cite this great example for all of us to follow. The Ali Brothers, by their frank statement, have given the guidance. We must not speak, but if we must weigh our words well, lest we say thoughtlessly what we do not mean, and thereby hurt the cause we represent.

MORE PARSI GENEROSITY

Mr. Rustomji Jivanji Ghorkhodu of South Africa has cabled me Rs.12,000 for the purpose of distributing spinning-wheels among the famine-stricken people of Gujarat. The reader will recall his munificent donation of Rs.40,000 for schools. This donation has come in time, because the Famine Committee was hard pressed to meet the want. I hope that those who may not wish to subscribe to the Tilak Swaraj Fund as being for a political purpose will not hesitate to cory Mr. Rustomji's noble example and help the Famine Insurance Fund.

Young India, 1-6-1921

[1] 1838-1936; Nationalist Muslim divine of Lucknow, who took active part in the Khilafat Movement and urged his followers to refrain from cow-slaughtered

102. THE POET'S ANXIETY

The poet of Asia, as Lord Hardinge called Dr.Tagore, is fast becoming, if he has not already become, the Poet of the world. Increasing prestige has brought to him increasing responsibility. His greatest service to India must be his poetic interpretation of India's message to the world. The Poet is therefore sincerely anxious that India should deliver no false or feeble message in her name. He is naturally jealous of his country's reputation. He says he has striven hard to find himself in tune with the present movement. He confesses that he is baffled. He can find nothing for his lyre in the din and the bustle of non-co-operation. In three forceful letters[1] he has endeavoured to give expression to his misgivings, and he has come to the conclusion that non-co-operation is not dignified enough for the India of his vision, that it is a doctrine of negation and despair. He fears that it is a doctrine of separation, exclusiveness, narrowness and negation.

No Indian can feel anything but pride in the Poet's exquisite jealousy of India's honour. It is good the he should have sent to us his misgivings in language at once beautiful and clear.

In all humility I shall endeavour to answer the Poet's doubts. I may fail to convince him or the reader who may have been touched by his eloquence, but I would like to assure him and India that non-co-operation in conception is not any of the things he fears, and he need have no cause to be ashamed of his country for having adopted non-co-operation. If in actual application, it appears in the end to have failed, it will be no more the fault of the doctrine than it would be of Truth if those who claim to apply it in practice do not appear to succeed. Non-co-operation may have come in advance of its time. India and the world must then wait, but there is no choice for India save between violence and non-co-operation.

Nor need the poet fear that non-co-operation is intended to erect a Chinese Wall between India and the West. On the contrary, non-co-operation is intended to pave the way to real, honourable and voluntary co-operation based on mutual respect and trust. The present struggle is being waged against compulsory co-operaion, against one-sided combination, against the armed imposition of modern methods of exploitation masquerading under the name of civilization.

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Tagore's Criticism of Non-co-operation", 2/5/13-3-1921.

Non-co-operation is a protest against an unwitting and unwilling participation in evil.

The Poet's concern is largely about the students. He is of opinion that they should not have been called upon to give up Government schools before they had others schools to go to. Here I must differ from him. I have never been able to make a fetish of literary training. My experience has proved to my satisfaction that literary training by itself adds not an inch to one's moral height and that character-building is independent of literary training. I am firmly of opinion that the government schools have unmanned us, rendered us helpless and godless. They have filled us with discontent, and, providing no remedy for the discontent, have made us despondent. They have made us what we were intended to become—clerks and interpreters. A government builds its prestige upon the apparently voluntary association of the governed. And if it was wrong to co-operate with the Government in keeping us slaves, we were bound to begin with those institutions in which our association appeared to be most voluntary. The Youth of a nation are its hope. I hold that as soon as we discovered that the system of government was wholly, or mainly, evil, it become sinful for us to associate our children with it.

It is no argument against the soundness of the proposition laid down by me, that the vast majority of the students went back after the first flush of enthusiasm. Their recantation is proof rather of the extent of our degradation than of the wrongness of the step. Experience has shown that the establishment of national schools has not resulted in drawing many more students. The strongest and the truest of them came out without any national schools to fall back upon, and I am convinced that these first withdrawals are rendering service of the highest order.

But the Poet's protest against the calling out of the boys is really a corollary to his objection to the very doctrine of non-co-operation. He has a horror of everything negative. His whole soul seems to rebel against the negative commandments of religion. I must give his objection in his own inimitable langugae. "R. in support of the present movement has often said to me that passion for rejection is a stronger power in the beginning than the acceptance of an ideal. Though I know it to be a fact I can not take it as a truth. . . . *Brahmavidya* in India has for its object *mukti*, emancipation, while Buddhism has *Nivana*, extinction. *Mukti* draws our attention to the

positive and *Nirvana* to the negative side of truth. Therefore he emphasized the fact of *dukha*, misery which had to be avoided and the *Brahmavidya* emphasized the fact of *ananda*, joy which had to be attained." In these and kindred passages the reader will find the key to the Poet's mentality. In my humble opinion rejection is as much an ideal as the acceptance of a thing. It is an necessary to reject untruth as it is to accept truth. All religions teach that two opposite forces act upon us and that the human endeavour consists in a series of eternal rejections and acceptances. Non-co-operation with evil is as much a duty as cooperation with good. I venture to suggest that the poet has done an unconscious injustice to Buddhism in describing *Nirvana* as merely a negative state. I make bold to say that *mukti*, emancipation, is as much a negative state as *Nirvana*. Emancipation from or extinction of the bondage of the flesh leads to *ananda* (eternal bliss). Let me close this part of my argument by drawing attention to the fact that the final word of the *Upanishads* (*Brahmavidya*) in *Not*. *Neti* was the best description the authors of the *Upanishads* were able to find for *Brahman*.

I therefore think that the Poet has been unnecessarily alarmed at the negative aspect of non-co-operation. We had lost the power of saying 'no'. It had become disloyal, almost sacrilegious, to says 'no' to the government. This deliberate refusal to co-operate is like the necessary weeding process that a cultivator has to resort to before he sows. Weeding is an necessary to agriculture as sowing Indeed, even whilst the crops are growing, the weeding fork, as every husbandman knows, is an instrument, almost of daily use. The nation's non-co-operation is an invitation to the Government to co-operate with it on its own terms as is every nation's right and every good government's duty. Non-co-operation is the nation's notice that it is no longer satisfied to be in tutelage. The nation has taken to the harmless(for it),natural and religious doctrine of non-co-operation in the place of the unnatural and irreligious doctrine of violence. And if India is ever to attain the swaraj of the poet's dream, she will do so only by non-violent non-co-operation. Let him deliver his message of peace to the world, and feel confident that India through her non-co-operation, if she remain true to her pledge, will have exemplified his message. Non-co-operation is intended to give the very meaning to partiotism that the Poet is yearning after. An India prostrate at the feet

of Europe can given no hope to humanity. An India awakened and free has a message of peace and good will to a groaning world. Non-co-operation is designed to supply her with a platform from which she will preach the message.

Young India, 1-6-1921

103. KHILAFAT AND NON-VIOLENCE

Mr. Vaze of the *Servant of India* has referred me to the article of Mr.Zacharias in his weekly of 5th May last, and asked me to consider the Khilafat from the point of view suggested by the writer. Mr. Zacharias thus puts the question in his elaborate article:

> How could one find an apostle of the principle of ahimsa upholding its very contradiction,—the principle of the Khilafat ? I am not concerned with the truth-value of either the khilafat or the ahimsa principle . But I do say that the one excludes the others; the one thing I do plead for and most earnestly is clear thinking on the part of either side to this problem. It is muddled thinking and the consequent slide into compromise that is responsible for disaster in the recent history of mankind more than any other factor.

After instancing ex-President Wilson's fall, the writer goes on :

> Will the great satyagrahi of the East heed the warning? Will he be faithful to his whole life? . . . . Will he not remain true to himself rather than compromise himself, for the sake even of so precious a thing as Hindu-Muslim friendship is, with this antithesis of his, the principle of Khilafat ?

This fervent appeal requires a restatement of my position regarding the Khilafat. I would be false to my whole life if, even for securing Hindu-Muslim unity, I compromised the Principle of non-violence for which I do claim to stand. It was only when I found that the Mussulman claim was just from every point of view that I plunged myself into it. For me it was a chance of a life time. I felt that if I could but show my loyalty to my Mussulman countrymen in the hour of their trial I would be able to secure everlasting friendship between the two great communities. Any way I felt that the attempt was worth making. I could not conceive the possibility of having a free India without a real friendship between the two.

But argues Mr.Zacharias, the Khilafat is based on force. The Khilafat is the earthly representative of Islam pledged o defend it even with the sword. And how can I, a believer in non-violence, fight to sustain an institution that is permitted to resort to physical force for its

defense?

Mr.Zacharias is right in his description of the Khilafat. He is wrong in his estimate of the function of a votary of non-violence. A beli-ever in non-violence is pledged not to resort to violence or physical force either directly or indirectly in defense of anything, but he is not precluded from helping men or institutions that are themselves not based on non-violence. If the reverse were the case I would, for instance, be precluded from helping India to attain swaraj because the future Parliament of India under swaraj, I know for certain, will be having some military and police forces, or to take a domestic illustration, I may not help a son to secure justice, because forsooth he is not a believer in non-violence.

Mr. Zacharias's proposition will reduce all commerce by a believer in non-violence to an impossibility. And there are not wanting men who do believe that complete non-violence means complete cessation of all activity.

Not such, however, is my doctrine of non-violence. My business is to refrain from doing any violence myself, and to induce by persuasion and service as many of God's creatures as I can to join me in the belief and practice. But I would be undrue to my faith if I refused to assist in a just cause any men or measures that did not entirely coincide with the principle of non-violence. I would be promoting violence, if finding the Mussulmans to be in the right, I did not assist them by means strictly non-violent against those who had treacherously plotted the destruction of the dignity of Islam. Even when both parties believe in violence, there is often such a thing as justice on one side or the other. A robbed man has justice on his side, even though he may be[1] preparing to regain the lost property by force. And it would be accounted as a triumph of non-violence if the injured party could be persuaded to regain his property by methods of satyagraha, i.e., love or soul-force rather than a free fight.

Of course it is open to Mr. Zacharias to reject my claim as a devotee of non-violence, in view of all the limitations I have mentioned. I can only suggest to him that life is a very complex thing, and truth and non-violence present problems which often defy analysis and judgment. One discovers truth and the method of applying the only legitimate means of vindicating it, i.e., satyagraha or soul-force, by patient endeavour and silent prayer, I can only assure friends that I

[1] The source has "lic"

spare no pains to grope my way to the right, and that humble but constant endeavour and silent prayer are always my two trusty companions along the weary but beautiful path that all seekers must tread.

Young India, 1-6-1921

104. SPEECH AT GUJARAT POLITICAL CONFERENCE, BROACH[1]

June 1, 1921

This is a straightforward, simple resolution which even a child can understand. On our success in implementing it will depend whether or not the country is to have swaraj, the Khilafat issue is to be settled and we are to get justice in regard to the Punjab. I request my sisters and brothers of Gujarat to remember the last year. We passed then the non-co-operation resolution before the Congress had done so. Even before there was any question of justice for the Punjab or of swaraj, we, Hindus and Muslims of Gujarat, had decided that we would seek a solution of the Khilafat issue through soul-force. Even if the country as a whole did not realize that a satisfactory Khilafat settlement implied a solution of the questions relating to the Punjab and the demand for swaraj, we had decided that we Gujaratis would sacrifice our all to get the Khilafat problem settled. I want you to call to mind the faith which Gujarat showed on thos occasions.

Shri Vithalbhai has taunted us with failure to do our duty, to make our full contribution. We shall have deserved the taunt if we do not do our duty. If we determine, however, we can do that duty and, in 30 days, will have absolved ourselves of the charge. If my brothers and sisters attending this conference as delegates pay no attention to what the rest of the coun-try does but every moment of the day think of their own duty in Gujarat, we shall certainly succeed in raising 10 lakh rupees, in putting into commission one lakh spinning-wheels and enrolling three lakh members.

It has been asked how the Government is likely to quit because of the spinning-wheel. The reply is that it will not do so merely at the sight of the spinning-wheel, but that, when it sees the faith in yourselves which you will have displayed to the world by starting 20

[1] The speech was delivered by Gandhiji in moving the second resolution of the Conference, advocating vigorous efforts to complete, before June 30, the programme laid down at the Bezwada Congress.

lakh spinning-wheels within the time fixed, it will come down on its knees. Our success in doing this will be a measure of our strength. When you have done this, the world will have realized, and so will have the Government, that you have faith in yourselves, that you really mean to have swaraj. It will not be necessary for us then to ask the army to lay down arms and the people to withhold taxes. So long as the country has not acquired such faith in itself, it will find that the spinning wheel programme is in fact as difficult to carry out as it seems easy. When we have fully implemented it, no one in the country will go hungry and no woman will be obliged to sell her honour for getting work. India will then be enjoying *dharmarajya, Ramarajya or Khudarajya.* It will be a test of Gujarat's strength whether it succeeds in starting one lakh spinning-wheels, enrolling three lakh members and collecting 10 lakh rupees. The question has also been asked why Gujarat should be burdened with the responsibility of raising so much when its share should be three lakhs and no more. We have made Gujarat the foundation on which this struggle is to rest, and who does not know that the foundation carries the heaviest weight ? Hence it is that its quota is fixed at a relatively high figure. If all of us have faith in ourselves, collecting 10 lakhs is no difficult task. If we in Gujarat do not show such faith, with what face can I approach business men in Bombay? We should even lay down our lives to fulfil the programme decided upon at Bezwada. To be sure, we had better die if the task is not completed by June 30. This is the key to swaraj. As soon as this Empire discovers that India has mastered this key, it will either quit or remain here as a servant of the people.

Someone told Maulana Mahomed Ali at Calcutta that people described the idea of winning swaraj with the help of the spinning programme as attempting a miracle. The Maulana answered that perhaps it was so, but, he asked, which was a greater miracle, this one or the fact that a handful of whites coming from six thousand miles away ruled over 33 crores ? To get swaraj, we shall need faith in ourselves and shall have to become united. If we can have priests, like Gujaratis, who give 10 lakhs for the right to worship in the great temple that is India, which includes mosques for Muslims, *Gurudwaras* for Sikhs and temples for Hindus and for Parsis, that would mean that we are fit for swaraj. It will serve our purpose even if Gujarat comes forward alone to fight unaided. If we cannot show this capacity for organization, if we are not ready to make this sacrifice, we had better give up talking about swaraj. There is nothing in this which

means embracing beggary. If you, Gujarati sisters, decided by yourselves to see to this, you can tomorrow produce 10 lakh rupees from Gujarat. Today , when India is a helpless widow, what right have we to adorn ourselves with jewellery or fine dresses? When thou-sands are dying of hunger, how can we deck our selves in gold and silver? If all of you, ladies, keep only as many articles of jewellery as are customary for a married woman to wear and give away the rest, we should have the sum of 10 lakhs in an hour. The day women in Gujarat show this spirit, the very gods in heaven will come down and watch. The women should learn this holy secret of swaraj, of *swadharma*, that at the present time they can preserve heir dignity only by putting away their adornments.

We lack faith in ourselves; some put excessive faith in me. They think Gandhi will manage somehow to raise one crore before June 30. Let me tell you, however, that this is an entirely groundless belief. Even if Gandhi had such strength, the swaraj won through his strength would be Gandhi's rule and not swaraj, and be sure Gandhi's rule will be no better than a monster's rule. What Gandhi desires is that everyone should have gandhi's strength and Gandhi's faith in himself, and be free from his defects and weaknesses. I do not desire my rule, I want swaraj. I want you to have the courage which we three[1] have and the same unity of heart which binds us.

I have also known men who gently reasoned with their wives and got from them their jewellery for the country. Think over this, you men, all of you. Form a resolution that you will plead with your sisters and wives and persuade them to part with their ornaments. Everyone should start with his home. In any good cause one should start with the home. We shall be able to achieve nothing so long as we spare our home and keep it out of such things. I suggest to all the delegates present here that they live as fakirs, make do with a mere *langoti*[2] work day and night to collect 10 lakhs and only then come and say that they did not succeed. At that time, if at all such a time comes, the rich will themselves feel ashamed. We only need to have the fakir's faith.

I am not asking you to live as fakirs for all time. The sacrifices I am asking you to make are much less heavy than what the British men and women made during the last War, then what the Boers, generally

[1] That is, he himself and the Ali Brothers

[2] A strip of cloth worn as a codpiece

regarded as uncivilized, made in South Africa, or than those made by the Arabs. They gave their dear lives for the sake of their motherland. They told the British that they did not want the trams, motor-cars and railways promised by the latter, that their land was dear to them. You should give the much less I am asking you to give in the same spirit in which the Arabs sacrificed themselves.

When we have secured swaraj, you may wear diamonds and pearls and all else by way of adornment. I shall not grudge you those things then. At present I do. Though I have risen above uncharitable thoughts to a great extent , I do get such thoughts when I see anyone in fine dress or jewellery while the country is in its present degraded state. I ask myself what the reason could be that these persons do not understand. Take up this work forth with today. It will be more than enough if you return from the holy banks of the Narmada with this spirit in you. Come what may, do not stop working to advance the good of both Hindus and Muslims, do not give up working for the protection of dharma. If you spend on the building of this great temple, if on this cause, far more sacred than a marriage, you spend as much as you do on building other temples and on the marriage of a son or daughter, collecting 10 lakhs will be no difficult task. If any poor persons happen to have no money to pay, give four annas on their behalf and get their names enrolled on the Congress register. Even the spinning-wheel programme will be child's play if we enlist the services of carpenters and blacksmiths for the cause. I venture to assert that, even if women alone go out and work all the thirty days of the month, collecting 10 lakhs will be mere fun for them. I am weary of making speeches. I have not, however, lost my faith in the women of Gujarat. They are so pure, have such faith, that they are moved the moment they hear anyone talk about *dharmarajya*. My faith in them has come from the way they rain jewellery on me.

I owe my faith to the women and to the *Bhangis*. Only a few days again, a Parsi friend sent me Rs. 12,000. This friend ago, is no other than Shri Rustomjee of South Africa . He has less money than the Tatas, but has a larger heart. I have had no time even to acknowledge the gift. It is such persons who have given me the faith I have.

We shall not get our swaraj from Simla. We shall have it the day we are ready to lay down our lives for the flag that is fluttering here, this flag with stripes of saffron, green and white and with the emblem

of a spinning-wheel. By all means talk and explain your point of view to any Englishman who invites you to do so, but understand that you will get swaraj through your own strength. This is the most auspicious hour. If we disregard it, India will have proved herself as foolish as the man who should go to wash his face when Lakshmi would put a tilak on his fore head. Think of this Conference as the auspicious hour and use it so. If we take a resolute pledge and work, getting ready to lay down our lives, justice for the Punjab, settlement of the Khilafat issue and swaraj, all three will be as good as won.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-6-1921

105. SPEECH ON NON-VIOLENCE RESOLUTION, BROACH[1]

June 1, 1921

As we go ahead, we shall not need to address our petitions to the Government; we shall do that to ourselves. If we are found wanting in that respect, our swaraj bread will be but a half-baked one; it will be well-baked if our petition to ourselves is well addressed. Money, spinning-wheel and members are tangible things, but non-violence is a matter of the heart. It is not something which can be seen by the eye. The country should understand that non-violence is essential for this movement as breath is essential for life. We have no use for the non-violence of the stone, of one who would not be disturbed even when kicked; no use, either, for the non-violence of the brute, of the dog, who, when someone strikes it, barks or runs to bite the person. We need non-violence such as was displayed by Lachhman singh and Dulip Singh. If I may use friend Shaukat Ali's words, it is cold strength we require. So long as we have not acquired it, we shall not be onsidered fit for swaraj. If we hope to win swaraj with the strength of aeroplanes, we shall not succeed even in a hundred years. The Malegaon incident has put back the clock of swaraj. Though it is true that the incident will not cost us swaraj altogether, the cause has certainly received a set-back. We have not made non-violence on our part conditional on the Government remaining non-violent. That would be, really speaking, co-operation with the Government. We want to offer non-violent non-co-operation. Our non-violence will be true non-violence only if, even under a shower of bullets or with bombs

[1] At the Gujarat Political Conference; *vide* the preceding item.

dropping on us from aeroplanes, we go on working peacefully and do not rush to kill a Collector or burn post-offices. When we have cultivated such non-violence, we shall not fear that this Government will be succeeded by Pathans. So long as we have the strength of non-violence in us, we shall be conquered by none.

Besides this lesson of non-violence, we should learn another, that of Hindu-Muslim unity. If we go on fighting among ourselves, our movement will soon be over. We want non-violence not of the weak but of the strong, the non-violence which proceeds from courage. Such non-violence can be practised by one as weak as I am or by one who will be a match for five others like me.When I was a boy of ten or twelve, I used to be frightened of ghosts. At that time, my female attendant Rambha told me that I should repeat Rama's name every time I thought about a ghost. Accordingly, I used to recite the *Ramaraksha* and clear the room of ghosts and spirits. The non-violence India needs is that of the Arab boy who chose death rather than surrender, it is such non-violence as Prahlad displayed. I have been asking Muslims to keep reminding themselves of that Arab boy, and the Hindus of Prahlad, and cultivate non-violence, fortitude and courage like theirs.

The reference to Malegaon is included in the Resolution because we are to forget it and remember, instead, Lachhman Singh's and Dulip Singh's non-violence, their self-sacrifice. Your raising hands here in support of such non violence will mean that, from today, you have shed fear of men and learnt to fear only God.So long as we have not done this, the world will bully us as it has always done. It is through Gujarat that we are to help India cultivate such strength. Non-payment of taxes is to be made possible through Gujarat. We can, however, succeed in this only when we have acquired the strength of non-violence. May God give such strength to everyone.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-6-1921

106. RESOLUTIONS[1]

June 1, 1921

(1) This Conference heartily supports the resolution on nonviolent non-co-operation adopted at the Nagpur session of the Indian National Congress and it calls upon all classes of people to work with greater vigour and in a more organized manner to fulfil the resolution, especially because this Conference believes that the rate at which it is being worked out in Gujarat is not sufficient to guarantee swaraj within the current year.

(2) This Conference deems it obligatory on Gujarat to enrol three lacs of members on the Congress Committees, to collect 10 lakhs of rupees for the Tilak Swaraj Fund and to set one lakh of spinning wheels at work according to the programme sketched out by the All-India Congress Committee at Bezwada and calls upon all workers in villages talakus and districts to contribute their mite before 30th of June.

(3) Non-violence in thought, speech and action is an essential ingredient of the scheme of non-co-operation and its fulfilment largely depends upon the observance of the creed of non-violence, and therefore this Conference urges all to preserve perfect peace even in spite of any persecution or provocation offered by Government officials, to avoid the use of malevolent speech and to concentrate entirely on the work suggested by the I.N.Congress and to cease observing hartals without the special mandate of the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee and to avoid all hostile demonstrations in case of leaders being arrested by Government.

(a) This Conference expresses its sense of satisfaction at the peace observed throughout the country in spite of the repressive policy of the Government and expresses its emphatic regret and disappointment at the acts of violence committed on Government officers and leading co-operators at Malegaon.

The Bombay Chronicle, 6-6-1921

[1] Passed at the Gujarat Political Conference, Broach. Presumably these were drafted by Gandhiji.

107. REPLY TO ADDRESS BY "ANTYAJ" CONFERENCE, VEJALPUR[1]

June 1, 1921

I congratulate non-*Antyaj* friends who are present here, as I hold that the Hindus have been cleansed through them. There was no need at all to present me an address. These days, when asked by anyone, I say I am an *Antyaj*. The *Antyaj's* is a holy profession and we cannot dispense with his services. If no one undertook to clean lavatories, we would simply die of cholera. Forget the idea of presenting an address to me and think of doing some hard work. Improve your conditions, give up liquor and stop killing animals for hide. You may skin dead ones. After doing your work, take a bath and clean yourselves before stirring out. Do not go begging for left-overs. Do not accept such things from anyone. Politely decline them. Accept only what is offered with respect.

By presenting this address to me in a glass box of foreign make you have offered me an insult. You should have given me no address other than a sample of your craftsmanship in hand weaving. You should have no use for foreign things.

The calico from Ahmedabad is for the very poor. You should have khadi, the stamp of culture. Make cloth yourselves, and wear or sell that. Giving up liquor and engaging yourselves in weaving—these are the means of your uplift.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 12-6-1921

108. SPEECH AT KHILAFAT CONFERENCE, BROACH

June 2, 1921

Mr.Gandhi, in moving the seventh resolution, said that he knew that they were willing to go home soon and, therefore, he would not speak at length. They knew where Bannu was situated. The views he held on the Frontier question were well known to the President, and, therefore, he was asked to move the resolution in question. The Muslims of Bannu were armed with sticks and other weapons. They were godfearing and they were aware of the Khilafat question. Had the oppression fallen on us as much as on the Muslims of Bannu, he was sure they would have run away from the place immediately. Some of them were barristers and well-known

[1] In Broach district, Gujarat

persons. They had now sent them a message to carry on their campaign on the basis of truth.

God had been examining them how far they were getting on with provocative actions of Government. They had three ways to resort to whereas the speaker had only one and that was jehad. He would do that with Muslims if they resorted to violence. They might make use of the sword, but he would not. If any Muslim were to unsheathe the sword, he would be committing a great folly . He was, at that time, speaking mainly of khilafat and not of swaraj. They had already warned Government that they should not instigate and oppress the people. The Ali Brothers were willing to suffer any hardship of Government, but they would still follow in the path of non-violent non-co-operation. They should not pay taxes to Government, and do their utmost to help the non-co-operation movement. The Muslims must carry on their national work in Ramadan. Some Hindus were telling him yesterday that the Muslims were telling him [*sic*] to kill cows and if they did not resort to that action they would be committing a great crime. Just as Mecca Shariff was their holy place, in the same way cow was a holy and sacred animal to him. Before resorting to that action they must consult the Ali Brothers . He was sure that Muslims would not do that action. Muslims would be considered always as equals with Hindus, they would be given every right enjoyed by Hindus. They must have faith and confidence in him and in his great movement. He lastly prayed to God to give them enough strength to carry on the national work successfully and peacefully.[1]

The Bombay Chronicle, 6-6-1921

109. THE VICEROY HAS SPOKEN

I have read H.E. the Viceroy's speech. I think it is all right, though it has the flavour of Simla. We do not mind that however. If he wants his record to be judged by the yardstick of "act as you speak", he must act up to his word.

Making after-dinner speeches is a bad practice in itself. After dinner, a man relaxes himself. One is not in a condition immediately to apply one's mind seriously to anything then, especially after a dinner given with such pomp and splendour that newspapers would carry special accounts of it. This explains why Viceregal speeches are not as studied as they should be.

At this time, India needs seriousness. It has been wounded, and the wound has not only not healed but is actually going deeper. It is

[1] Hayat Saheb seconded the resolution and Faizullah Khan supported it. The resolution was put to vote and passed.

still bleeding. It cannot be covered with a bandage, but requires the services of an expert surgeon, a surgeon who has skill and patience. I have known good surgeons going without food when performing risky operations. I have also known some devout *vaidyas* who kept repeating God's name at the time.

Let His Excellency, again,not make light of the Ali Brothers' letter. It was not written for his sake, but for the sake of friends. One need not take exception to his having pointed to the Ali Brothers' speeches. It is a sign of nobility to admit a mistake pointed out even by an enemy. Some of the speeches of the Ali brothers contained remarks which were ambiguous. All that the Ali Brothers' letter means is that no one who is struggling to defend his country and his religion should say anything ambiguous, knowingly or unknowingly. To show their nobility, they have respected the advice given by friends like me and have made a sincere and solemn promise to exercise still further restraint on themselves when speaking.

The Viceroy needs experience yet. He has to study a movement which has had no parallel. His speech suggests a preliminary study. He has tried to be cautious in his speech. The attempt has not wholly succeeded. He has tried to win over non-co-operators, but they cannot be won over by speeches. They will not put a wrong construction on speeches, but they will judge only from action.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-6-1921

110. GUJARAT'S DECISION

I should like to write at length about the Conference held in Broach. But, at midnight, and when thoroughly exhausted, I shall write in brief.

By the end of this month, 10 lakhs of rupees are to be collected, three lakh members enrolled and one lakh spinning-wheels put into commission. This is both easy and difficult for Gujarat.

It appears difficult for lack of workers. If a large number of workers—men and women—come forward, the task is easy. In these three things, even those can help who are not full-fledged non-co-operators, who do not have faith in non-co-operation. Only those who regard non-co-operation as a sin cannot help. I am sure that the number of such persons is fewer than the fingers of a hand.

How can we have this amount? This will be possible: (1) if women surrender their ornaments, (2) if the wealthy give a certain percentage of their earnings, (3) if all people give a certain portion of their earnings, (4) if those who drink give a part of what they spend on liquor, and (5) if some wealthy persons give all they have—there are many such ifs. We have to succeed in our task by satisfying these ifs. If the pledge taken at the Broach Conference is not fulfilled, Gujarat will be put to shame and it will be difficult to secure swaraj before the end of this year. Those who cannot give money should work on the spinning-wheel. Those who cannot do this should enrol members. Everyone should do his duty.

May God preserve Gujarat's honour.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-6-1921

111. MY NOTES

DUTY OF MEMBERS

The following question has been put to me:

You have written on what type of persons should be elected as delegates; it will be helpful if you also let us know who can be members.

It is evident that those who approve of the non-co-operation resolution will elect as delegates only such persons as support it. Hence a delegate should not be a [practicing] lawyer or a title holder,

should be a khadi-wearer and a man who does not look down on *Antyajas*, and so on. For a member, the only conditions are the following :

1. He should be aged 21 years or over.
2. He should pay four annas every year [as membership fee],
3. He should accept swaraj as the country's goal, and
4. He should believe in peacefulness and truth as the only two means of winning swaraj.

Anyone who fulfills these conditions can become a members of the congress, even though he believes in co-operating [with the Government], is a title-holder or a [practicing] lawyer or wears foreign cloth. The Congress is not the organ of a single party and so there should be the minimum of restrictions on becoming its members. Only such conditions as are acceptable to all have been laid down. This is, however, merely what the Congress rules mean.

Personally, I certainly expect that, since non-co-operation has become as widespread as we know it has, everyone will be a non-co-operator. But it may be that my reading of the country's mood is not correct or that the country is not ready to do what it believes in. I certainly want everyone professing to be a non-co-operator to abide by the necessary conditions. If, however, the members of the Congress become non-co-operators in greater numbers, they may even be able to change the views of the Congress at its next session. Day to day, the struggle is becoming purer, the end and the means are becoming clearer. According to the saying " He is a hero who in a crisis stands up undaunted" we are looking for heroes in the country. The Congress is one means of discovering them.

ALI BROTHERS' PLEDGE

The following explanation has been issued under the signatures of Maulana Shaukat Ali and Maulana Mahomed Ali.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-6-1921

[1] *Vide* " Draft of Ali Brothers' Apology", pp.93-4

112. NOTES

THE NEED OF THE HOUR

It will be nothing short of a tragedy if we do not fulfil the Bezwada programme before the end of the month. Seven days of the month will have gone before these notes are out. We have not a moment to spare. We have hardly collected twenty lakhs of rupees as yet. To collect eighty lakhs during the next three weeks may seem an impossibility. But the seeming impossibility can be easily turned into a possibility if we were ceaselessly to work for the collection. Twenty-one provinces, if they will respond according to their ability, can easily furnish the balance. The Bezwada programme is the most concrete ever placed before the nation. If the people are with us and if we have enough workers, one crore of rupees is a mere nothing for thirty crores of people to find for a cause so great as that of swaraj, and for perpetuating a memory so great as that of the Lokamanya. If they choose, the women of India can give the money out of their jewellery, the liquor drinkers can give it out of their drinks. The mill-owners, who have derived the greatest benefit from the swadeshi movement, can find the eighty lakhs in a day. The Marwadis can, without any strain on their resources, find the amount, and so could the *Bhatias*, the *Memons*, the Parsis or the banias. They are all a prosperous community, and have before now more or less supported public movements. If they wish, the Sindhis can also find the amount. The labourers of India could pay the whole amount, if they sacrificed one-twelfth of their yearly earnings. I have consulted many friends as to the amount that can be easily paid by the respective classes mentioned by me. The following may serve as a working basis :

(1) Salaried men to pay one-tenth of their monthly pay.

(2) Lawyers, doctors, merchants and such others to pay one-twelfth of their net annual income as at the end of May last.

(3) Propertied men to pay $2\frac{1}{2}$ p.c. of the valuation of their property.

(4) All the others to pay not less than four annas each.

If all were to pay according to this scale, there would be several crores of rupees. But one is aware that non-co-operators and sympathizers are drawn from all classes. No single class is so wholly non-co-operationist as to feel the personal responsibility for payment. This question of payment is the acid test of our sincerity, earnestness

and capacity. Let us hope that the 30th of this month will not find us wanting.

Questions have been persistently asked as to why this large sum is required. The answer is simple. It is a profitable investment, not for purely personal but for public good. The amount will be devoted chiefly to distributing spinning-wheels and conducting national schools. We have, say, six crore homes, if broken down families may deserve so sweet a name. We must provide thes families with spinning-wheels, and enable them to become real homes. One crore of rupees is surely the least amount required for establishing home-spinning on such a basis as to become self propagating. Similarly, if we are to reconstruct our educational system, we shall need more than one crore of rupees for the purpose.

The second question that has been asked is—what security is there for honest accountancy ? In the first place, we have in Messrs. Chhotani[1] and Jamnalal treasurers of unimpeachable integrity. Secondly, we have in Pandit Motilal Nehru a working secretary of great ability, experience and equally unimpeachable integrity. Thirdly, we have a vigilant working committee composed of fifteen representative Indians, who meet at least once a month in order to be able to exercise effective control over Congress affairs. So much for the all-India finance. The All-India Congress Committee is directly liable for the expenditure of one-fourth of the fund. The remaining three fourths are to be retained by the Provincial Committees for local needs. Each Province is expected to keep efficient watch over its own finance. Finally, the whole income and expenditure, both provincial and central, is subject to be audited by auditors to be appointed by the All India Congress Committee.

As with finance, so with the registration of members, and manufacture and introduction of spinning-wheels. These three are simple and effective tests of our constructive capacity.

I suggest to all Congress and Khilafat workers that they should set apart the last ten days as special Congress days to be solely devoted by them to finishing the Bezwada programme. No speeches are required, no meetings are necessary. Quiet house to house visits and personal canvassing are more effective than meetings for the class of work before us.

[1] Mian Mahomed Haji Jan Mahomed Chhotani: a nationalist leader of Bombay

GUJARAT'S RESOLVE

Gujarat has held its Provincial Conference and its Khilafat Conference at the historic town of Broach. The Conferences met on the banks of the beautiful Narmada. It had also a khaddar and charkha exhibition. The great variety of charkha showed that India's inventive genius was being profitably utilized. Let not the reader, however, imagine that there was among these specimens a charkha with more spindles, yielding a correspondingly larger outturn of yarn. Addresses of the Chairman of the Reception Committee and the President of the Conference were both brief and to the point. The Chairman, Mr.Haribhai Amin, took no more than fifteen minutes to read his simple address. The President, Mr.Vallabhbhai Patel, took no more than thirty minutes to read the whole of his address. I commend the latter to the reader for its simplicity, terseness, relevancy and courtesy. It has not one bitter word for the opponents of non-co-operation. Its criticism of the Government is most restrained. The major part of it deals with the constructive part of non-co-operation.

But the importance of the Conference lies in the resolution allocating to Gujarat its portion of the Bezwada programme. It calls upon Gujarat to furnish more than three times its quota of subscription to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, i.e,. ten lakhs, its almost exact quota of members, i.e., three lakhs, and one lakh of charkhas, i.e., a little less than double its quota. I do not say it will be a proud record if it is fulfilled. It will not be bad, if it is accomplished before the 30th June. The ten lakhs of rupees have been further allocated to the respective districts so as to systematize the collection. The Congress membership in Gujarat stands at 40,514. The Fund stands at Rs.1,40,149 of which Rs.35,000 have been forwarded to the All-India Congress Committee. The total number of spinning-wheels is 20,058.

Gujarat is perhaps the strongest in the matter of nationalizing education, as it is the weakest, perhaps, of all the provinces in the suspension of practice by lawyers—not more than half a dozen having suspended practice. Its progress in national education I must give in the words of the report before me.

> The total number of institutions imparting national education in Gujarat stands at 245, with 32,102 students attending them. The increase is partly due to the inclusion of the municipal schools of Ahmedabad.
>
> The number of candidates who appeared at the examinations conducted by the Gujarat Vidyapith was 46 for the B.A.,4 for the B.Sc., 96 for the intermediate Arts, 46 for the Intermediate Science, and 548 for the Matriculation Examination. The

number of successful candidates was 39,2,65,9 and 374, respectively.

THE PUNJAB GOING AHEAD

I have just seen a copy of the report of non-co-operation work in the Punjab, as submitted to the General Secretary, All-India Congress Committee, from which I extract the following interesting figures. To the times of writing the report, i.e., the end of April, the total collections stood at Rs.2,09,081-As. 13. I have already remarked on the business like character of this collection. The Punjab deserves congratulations for heading the list among all the Provinces. I am not aware that even to-day, any single province can boast of having collected over two lakhs. But on the principle that more is always expected of those who give much, I hope that during this last month of privilege, the Punjab will make still greater effort, and if possible, even beat her own record and retain the first place. I say if possible, because, although Bombay has been practically asleep all this time, I cannot conceive the possibility of any province beating Bombay. But I know that the Punjab has the capacity, and if she adds to it the will, she can certainly come up a close second, if she is not easily the first. Next to Pandit Malaviyaji, I know no one who is so efficient in begging as Lalaji. The Arya Samaj activity has used the middle class to contributing to political movements. The merchants of Amritsar can alone find the balance needed. There is certainly every reason for Amritsar to find the balance. But Jullundhar, Lyallpur, Rawalpindi, Multan, Gujranwala, Sialkot, Hafizabad are all places that can afford to pay handsomely. Lahore itself has many wealthy merchants, and, but for the unfortunate fact that we have no faith in ourselves, the Punjab can certainly share with Bombay the honour of making up the deficiency. At any rate let us hope that she will.

The Punjab's records in point of education is also not bad, though, seeing what the college students and the schoolboys had to go through in the Martial Law days, her record might have been better. Over 350 students are reported to have left their colleges permanently. Of these, 85, being among the most brilliant students, have joined the Indian national service. A board of national education has been established. The Guru Nanak Khalsa College, Gujranwala, has disaffiliated itself from the university. The Provincial Committee has opened a national college at Lahore. Eight old schools, some of them of high standing, have become nationalized, and fifteen new national schools have been started. I wish

Mr.Santanam, the secretary , had furnished the exact number of pupils studying in these national institutions. From what I know of some of these schools myself, the figure is not likely to be under five thousand. Nearly 25 teachers have left Government institutions. Forty-one lawyers have suspended practice, of whom only thirteen are getting subsistence allowance from the Provincial Committee. Panchayats have been established in nearly 80 places. The Punjab had, at the end of April, 258 Congress Committees. The average member-ship is about 75. The Rohtak District comes easily first with 47 Committees.

No part of India can beat the Punjab for spinning-wheels. The report states with pride that there are very few Punjabi homes in which there is not a charkha. "Till recently, they have remained idle, but during the last two months everyone has come back to the habit of spinning." The sad fact, in spite of almost universal hand-spinning in the Punjab, remains that the Punjabis had taken to the tawdry, starchy calico, so uncomfortable in the Indian weather for personal wear, in the place of the beautiful, soft, durable and absorbent khaddar. I read with pleasure, therefore, that "the habit of wearing khaddar clothes amongst the well-to-do classes is growing daily". The Punjab is experiencing difficulty in finding the number of weavers required. Most people do not know that the weavers yielding to the temptations offered by unscrupulous recruiting agents, exchange the honourable calling of weaving for that of murdering. The Punjab, at one time, had probably the largest number of weavers in proportion to her population in all India. I hope, now that weaving is daily becoming more and more honourable and paying, the Punjabis will prefer it to the, at the present moment at any rate, dishonourable calling of so-called soldiering.

The Punjab, then, has no mean record in non-co-operation.

THE ASSAM COOLIES

I have purposely refrained from dealing with this trouble, though I have remained in touch with Mr. Andrews and others, who are on the spot dealing with it. I refer to the trouble only to state that I knew nothing of its coming. I should be sorry if anybody used my name to lead the men to desert their employers. It is clear enough that it is purely a labour trouble. It is admitted that the employers reduced the wages. Both Mr. Das and Mr. Andrews report that the trouble is purely economic, and that the coolies have a substantial grievance. It is evident that the reformed Government has failed to cope with it. I observe that *The Times of India* has made

the most illegitimate use of the trouble to impute enmity to English com-mercial interests in India. It has become the fashion to attribute hatred to non-co-operators. I make bold to say that non-co-operation has alone prevented racial feuds and disturbances, and directed the anger of the people in the proper channel. The aim of non-co-operation is to hurt no interest whatsoever by reason only of its belonging to a race. Its aim is to purge every interest of its injurious or impure character. Every English or Indian interest that is based on injustice or brute force, or is antagonistic to the growth of India as a whole, is undoubtedly in peril. No interest that is supported merely by brute force but not by people's goodwill can possibly survive the fire of non-co-operation. If the Assam planters are not sustained by the exploitation of Indian labour, they have nothing to fear. A time is certainly coming when there will be no more unconscionable dividends. The profits of big concerns must bear relation to the wages of the workers. I lay down these categorical propositions, because I know that non-co-operation is beyond the reach of the bayonet. It has found an abiding place in the Indian heart. Workers like me will go when the hour has struck, but non-co-operation will remain. I am aware, too, that the labouring class in India has not yet become enlightened enough to have the ability to regulate the relations between capital and labour on a just basis. But that time is coming soon—faster than we may imagine. I am hoping that the capitalists, be they European or Indian, will appreciate the new awakening, and the new force that has arisen in our midst.

UNACCEPTABLE

Some newspapers, mistaking the apology of the Ali Brothers as of weak men seeking to avoid the discomfort of the prison life, have suggested that the Government should take similar undertakings from those undergoing imprisonment for political offences, and discharge them. No non-co-operator worthy of his creed can possibly purchase his discharge by giving any undertaking to the Government. Every one of them has probably protested his innocence of violent intent. The Ali Brothers, had they been prosecuted, would still have made the statement now made. That would not have prevented their imprison-ment. The makers of the unacceptable suggestion even know that many have been sentenced for disaffection, or for refusing to give security that they will not speak. It is the duty of a non-co-operator to preach disaffection to the existing system of government, to prepare the country for *civil* disobedience, to refuse to give security of the

kind just referred to. The Ali Brothers have given no undertaking to refrain from any of the first two things. If, therefore, the Government desire to punish only incitement to violence, almost all the men recently imprisoned are entitled to be discharged without any undertaking on their part. So far as non-co-operators are concerned, they are or ought to be totally indifferent. Prison life must be the normal life of the majority of them. And it delights me to read the names of the people who cheerfully prefer imprisonment to giving undertakings to buy their freedom. When every care is taken to avoid a breach of his own faith, a non-co-operator may not give any pledge of any kind whatsoever to anybody.

THE DESTRUCTIVE PART

The Leader has blessed me with undeserved compliment for this programme, and laughed at me for having ever advised the country to adopt the destructive part of non-co-operation. A correspondent of that journal appeals to me definitely to withdraw the rest of the programme. Let me hasten to inform *The Leader* and its correspondent that it is not possible for me to do so even if I wished. The Congress and the Central Khilafat Committee are the only bodies that possess the power. And my faith in the destructive part being as green as ever, I personally could not abandon it, even if the Congress and the Central Khilafat Committee did so. With them non-violence may not be, with one body it is not, the final creed. For me, I have nothing beyond non-violence as a remedy for all ills. Therefore I cannot be party to advising lawyers to return to their practice, or students to Government schools. Nor can I be party to lawyers and Government school and college boys becoming holders of office under the Congress, so long as it retains its non-co-operationist character.

The Vocal propaganda of the destructive part in the first step in non-co-operation is over. We know exactly where we are regarding the titles, the law courts, the schools and the councils. I believe non-co-operators are satisfied that these institutions have lost their former prestige. The opponents are entitled to comfort in the knowledge that the numerical response has not been large enough to be striking. Those that have responded to the call constitute the most effective, though silent, propaganda in the direction. But one thing is clear. There can be no resumption of co-operation till the three conditions laid down by the Congress are satisfied.

The Bezwada programme, I admit, is not in itself enough to

establish swaraj. But I do hold that it is a very substantial step towards it. The fulfilment of the programme will inspire the nation with self-confidence, and enable it to take the other steps, if necessary. One crore electors—for, to become Congress members is to become electors for national representatives, for various bodies—is to find the nucleus for a real electorate under swaraj. To have twenty lacs of spinning-wheels in working order is to know that India is determined to drive out poverty, to become self-reliant and to achieve her economic independence. The collection of one crore of rupees is a tangible token of the nation's determination to achieve her destiny.

We have so fed ourselves with the history of other nations that we find it impossible to believe that we can attain our end without a repetition of thirty years' or a hundred years' war, and therefore without military training and huge armament. We do not care to read our own history and remember that whilst kings have come and kings have gone, whilst dynasties have been formed and destroyed, India has remained unmoved and unaffected. We will not read the lesson of the late War, that it is not so much military preparation we want as a change of our own outlook upon India's future. Habit has forced the conviciton upon us that we, the countless millions, are nothing before one hundred thousand Englishmen, not all of whom are even administrators. As soon as we have discarded the awe of the British rule, and ceased to consider ourselves as cheap as dirt, we shall be free. I know that it is possible to perform this revolution of thought during the year, and it is my hope that India will be ready for it during the time. Hitherto we have promised ourselves many things and fulfilled little. If we were to turn up even two-year-old resolutions of the Congress, we shall find that we have failed even to send petitions we had resolved upon. Hitherto, we have looked up to the Government to do everything for us, and we have found it almost wholly irresponsive in everything that matters. We have therefore been filled with blank despair. We have ceased to believe in ourselves or the Government. The present movement is an attempt to change this winter of our despair ino the summer of hope and confidence. When we begin to believe in ourselves, Englishmen will, I promise, begin to believe in us. Then, and not till then, is there any hope of co-operation between the Government and us. The existing system of Government, it will be found upon analysis, is based upon a scientific study of our weaknesses, which have rather been promoted by it than reduced. Non-co-operation is, therefore, as much a protest against our own weaknesses,

as against the inherent corruption of the existing system. British and Indian, we become impure by belonging to it. The withdrawal from it of one party purifies both. I invite even the sceptics to follow the programme of non-co-operation as a trial, and I promise that there will be swaraj in India during the year, if the programme is carried out in its-fulness.

SWARAJ IS SELF-RELIANCE

An esteemed friend, referring to the Viceregal interview, writes:

> In my humble opinion, these interviews by non-co-operation leaders are, in the present circumstances, a political mistake, and may react on the movement. Back of the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs is the question of swaraj; and India's swaraj means the death of the Empire. Such a death may, in happy circumstances, mean its rebirth as a commonwealth of nations. But where is the statesman today, with a free and generous view of world politics, to look beyond British interests to the deeper values of humanity? Victory of the swaraj movement I conceive in terms of *self-reliance*, not of snatching some *concessions* from Lord Reading. As far as I can see, the hope for an escape from further confusion lies in escape from negotiations with the Government and becoming as a Nation strong in the *will to suffer*. A crucified India will be an India emancipated.

Whilst I do not agree with the writer that the interviews were a political mistake, the statement of our attitude is perfect. Our concern is not with what British statesmen will or will not do. Our business is always of endeavour to keep ourselves on the right track. Our aloofness must not be a sign of our haughtiness or disinclination to explain our view-points to our opponents. We must be prepared to approach the world, if we are firm in our own purpose. But I recognize, too, the force of the objection that there is danger in these interviews. Not being in the habit of having always a reserve of minimum on which there can be no surrender, we may easily slip.

WHO CAN BE CONGRESS MEMBERS?

A friend asks whether prostitutes can become members of the Congress, and whether those who do not accept the creed can become members by simply paying four annas. There is certainly nothing to prevent these unfortunate sisters from becoming members, if they otherwise conform to the constitution. Even thieves have a right to demand admission on compliance with the terms of membership. One can only hope that if the desire to join the Congress is stimulated among the wrecks of society, it is a sign of coming reformation. But we may not *ask* such people to become members for

the purpose of swelling the number. It is equally clear to me that those who will not solemnly accept and sign the Congress creed cannot become members. The test is simple but absolutely necessary:

(1) Attainment of the age of twenty-one.

(2) Desire and effort to obtain swaraj by peaceful and legitimate means.

(3) Payment of four annas per annum.

Anyone, male or female, co-operator or non-co-operator, fulfilling this simple test is entitled to membership without further question.

Young India, 8-6-1921

113. THE VICEROY SPEAKS

What the Viceroy said with reference to Mr. Shafi's speech is perhaps equally true of is own. For His Excellency described Mr. Shafi's speech as postprandial oratory. I have been, in my early days, a student more or less accurate of the so-called historic speeches delivered by various Prime Ministers at the Mansion-house. They seemed to me to have always an air of unreality about them. And it grieves me, after having studied the speech of His Excellency the Viceroy, to have to say that this one also has the same air of unreality about it. Not that Lord Reading had intended to clothe his speech with any such air. On the contrary there are in it evident traces of his having laboured to deliver a true message to an expectant India. But the speech has failed, in my humble opinion, in doing so, because of the many limitations that the office of a Viceroy carries with it. He could not, for instance, override the tradition of claiming infallibility for British rule. He laid it down as a proposition' "beyond the possibility of a doubt", that "here in India there can be no trace and must be no trace of racial inequality". There is no more unreal proposition to the ear of the Indian than this, because his experience, be he ever so tall, belies it. Superiority of race is a passion, has become almost a religion with the average Englishman. Nor does he strive to conceal it from view. It obtrudes itself upon you in India as it does in the Colonies. It is written in the statute-book. One misses in the Viceregal speech a frank recognition of the many failures of the past and, therefore, a sincere desire for opening a new page.

If His Excellency, in my humble opinion, was hardly happy in

his statement of the 'fundamental principle of British rule', he was, I fear, even less so in his reference to Maulanas Shaukat Ali and Mahomed Ali. I recognize that he has been exceedingly cautious in his speech. He has attempted not to wound susceptibilities. As a matter of fact, there was no question of wounding susceptibilities. He need not have spared the Maulanas where they might have erred. The statement made by the Brothers was instigated by me and me along. It is an apology tendered to friends, and not to the Government. It is made not to evade prosecution, but to put themselves right with their own conscience and with their friends. The assurance to them, therefore, that there would be no prosecution so long as they abided by their undertaking was gratuitous, if not offensive. Lord Reading's Government is free to take up prosecution against the Brothers at any moment they choose.

This campaign of non-co-operation has no reference to diplomacy, secret or open. The only diplomacy it admits of is the statement and pursuance of truth at any cost. The Viceroy showed me the speeches; I realized that some passages in them did not read well. They were capable to being interpreted as an incitement to violence, and I realized that, prosecution or no prosecution, there was no doubt in my mind as to the advice I should tender to the Brothers. I venture to suggest to His Excellency that, if he is anxious to disarm non-co-operators, he will do so only by becoming undiplomatic and absolutely frank. The latter seek and need no shelter or protection, and I invite His Excellency to reciprocate by not shielding the offen-ders amongst the governing class.

Indeed, there is no room in the India of to-day and of tomorrow for a governing class. His Excellency will therefore find out his mistake, if he clings to the belief that "Indians will respond whole-heartedly to the just rule which we (British) intend to carry on." I venture to prophesy that it is not what the British intend that will count for the future destiny of India, but what the Indians themselves intend. And they are claiming more and more insistingly to govern themselves, anyhow. Good govern-ment, they are coming to see, is no substitute for self-government.

The fear, then, is not about His Excellency's intentions, which I am convinced are good, but the fear is as to the ideal he is working for. He thinks of a high destiny which is in store for India at some indefinable period, whereas non-co-operators at any rate are of opinion that India's high destiny is even now being frustrated by the

existing system, which appears to them to be devised for her prolonged, if no perpetual, subjection. Sometimes a difference of degree itself constitutes a difference of ideals. And I hold it to be an ideal totally different from India's, when anybody considers that, whilst the distant goal must be one of freedom for India, its present state must be that of tutelage. Swaraj is India's birthright, as the late Lokamanya Tilak truly said. And India throughout these long, long years, has been balked of her birthright. No wonder that she has become impatient.

Lord Reading will, perhaps, now better appreciate the truth of the proposiiton he has read and heard, viz., that any action of the Government that falls short of the fullest reparation, however good it may appear in itself, will, by non-co-operators at least, be charged with a bad motive, that of prolonging India's agony in her slave-state. British rule, today, lies under a shadow. It is tainted with the blood of the innocent victims of Jallianwala, and with treachery towards Islam. And even as the purest milk poured into a poisonbowl will be counted by every sane man as poison, so will every act of the British Government be judged in the light of its immediate past. The unrest of India can only be cured by dealing with the causes which have brought it about, never by covering the bitterness thereof by sweets of office or other privileges, no matter how tempting they may be, if they are not capable of dealing effectively with the causes themselves.

Young India, 8-6-1921

114. TO THE MODERATES

DEAR FRIENDS,

It is a matter of no small grief to me that I find myself estranged from you in ideas, although by training and association I have been brought up in the company of those who have been regarded as Moderates. Partly owing to circumstances and partly owing to temperament, I have never belonged to any of the great parties in India. Nevertheless, my life has been influenced much more by men belonging to the Moderate party than the Extremist. Dadabhai Naoroji, Gokhale, Badruddin Tyabji[1], Pherozeshah Mehta[2] are all names to conjure with. Their services to the country can

[1] 1844-1906; judge, legislator, President, Indian National Congress, 1887.
[2] 1845-1915; President, Indian National Congress, 1890, 1909.

never be forgotten. They have inspired the lives of many like myself throughout our country. I have enjoyed the pleasantest associations with many of the living amongst you. What is it that has flung me away from you and into the lap of the Nationalist party? Why do I find more in common with the Nationalists than with you? I am unable to see that you love your country less than the Nationalists. I refuse to believe that you are less willing to sacrifice yourselves for the counry's good than the Nationalists. Certainly the Moderate party can claim as much intelligence, integrity and ability as the Nationalists, if not more. The difference, therefore, lies in the ideals.

I will not weary you with a discussion of the different ideals. I or the moment, I will simply invite your attention to some of the items in the constructive programme in the movement of non-co-operation. You may not like the word itself. You may intensely dislike, as I know you do, many items in the programme. But if you concede to the non-co-operators the same credit for love of the land that you will claim for yourselves, will you not view with favour those parts of the programme on which there cannot be two opinions? I refer to the drink evil. I ask you to accept my evidence that the country as a whole is sick of the drink curse. Those unfortunate men who have become slaves to the habit require to be helped against themselves. Some of them even ask to be helped. I invite you to take advantage of the wave of feeling that has been roused against the drink traffic. The agitation arose spontaneously. Believe me, the deprivation of the Government of the drink revenue is of the least importance in the campaign. The country is simply impatient of the evil itself. In no country in the world will it be possible to carry on this traffic in the face of the united and the enlightened opposition of a people, such as is now to be witnessed in India. Whatever the errors or excesses that were committed by the mob in Nagpur, the cause was just. The people were determined to do away with the drink curse that was sapping their vitality. You will not be deceived by the specious argument that India must not be made sober by compulsion, and that those who wish to drink must have facilities provided for them.The State does not cater for the vices of its people. We do not regulate or license houses of ill fame. We do no provide facilities for thieves to indulge their propensity for thieving I hold drink to be more damnable than thieving and perhaps even prostitution. Is it not often the parent of both? I ask you to join the country in sweeping outof existence the drink revenue and abolishing the liquor-shops. Many liquor-sellers would

gladly close their shops, if the money paid by them were refunded.

'What about the education of the children?' may be the question asked. I venture to suggest to you that it is a matter of deep humiliation for the country to find its children educated from the drink revenue. We shall deserve the curse of posterity if we do not wisely decide to stop the drink evil, even though we may have to sacrifice the education of our children. But we need not. I know many to you have laughed at the idea of making education self-supporting by introducing spinning in our schools and colleges. I assure you that it solves the problem of education as nothing else can. The country cannot bear fresh taxation. Even the existing taxation is unbearable. Not only must we do away with the opium and the drink revenue, but the other revenue has also to be very considerably reduced if the ever-growing poverty of the masses is to be combated in the near future.

And that brings me to the existing system of government. The country is the poorer for the Reforms. The annual expenditure has grown. A deeper study of the system has convinced me that no tinkering with it will do. A complete revolution is the greatest need of the time. The word revolution displeases you. What I plead for, however, is not a bloody revolution, but a revolution in the thought-world, such as would compel a radical revision of the standard of life in the higher services of the country. I must frankly confess to you that the ever-increasing rate of salaries paid to the higher branches of the Civil Service fairly frightens me, as I hope it would frighten you. Is there any correspondence between the life of the governors and of the governed millions who are groaning under their heels? The bruised bodies of the latter are a standing testimony to the truth of my statement. You now belong to the governing class. Let it not be said that your heels are no softer than your predecessors' or your associates'. Must you also rule from Simla? Must you also follow the policy that, only a year ago, you criticized adversely? It is under your regime that a man has been sentenced to transportation for life for holding certain opinions. You may not plead that he was inciting to violence, for not very long ago you dismissed such pleas. The Ali Brothers have apologized for even a suspicion of violence in their speeches. You will be doing a cruel injustice to the country if you allow yourselves to believe that any fear of prosecution has prompted the apology. A new spirit has been born in the country. The fear of the judge within is more terrible than that of the one without. Do you know that during the past six months several high-souled youths, your

countrymen, have gone to gaol, because they will not condescend to give securiy which, in their opinion, was dishonourable for them to do? It is under you *regime* that the patience of utterly innocent Moplas[1] has been put to a severe test and has as yet not been found wanting. I would gladly think, as I really believe, that you are not responsible for the atrocities that are at present being perpetrated in the name of peace and justice. But you will not let the public or me say that you are helpless where you are not hoodwinked. That, however, would bring me to a discussion of our ideals, which I must no enter upon at the present moment. If the country can only get your assistance in stopping the drink traffic, you will certainly add to the many services that you have rendered it in the past, and, maybe, that one step will open your eyes to many another possibility.

I remain,

Yours, as ever,

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 8-6-1921

115. SAVE THE COW

Professor Vaswani has unfurled the banner of the cow's freedom. The danger has come sooner that I had expected. I had hoped that it would come when India could regard it with equanimity. In my humble opinion, Professor Vaswani might have started the movement under better auspices. Any movement started by Hindus for protecting the cow, without whole-hearted Mussulman co-operation , is doomed to failure.

The Hindus' participation in the Khilafat is the greatest and the best movement for cow-protection. I have therefore called Khilafat our *Kamadhuk*[2] .

The Mussulmans are striving their utmost to respect Hindu susceptibilities in this matter of life and death to the Hindu. The Muslim League under Hakin Ajmal Khan's presidentship carried a cow-protection resolution at Amritsar two years ago. Maulana Abdul Bari has written upon it. The Ali Brothers, for the sake of their Hindu countrymen, have given up the use of beef in their house. Mian Chhotani saved hundreds of cows in Bombay alone during the last

[1] Muslims inhabiting the Malabar region of Southern India

[2] A mythical cow that gave whatever one asked of her

Bakr-i-Id. We could not accuse our Mussulman countrymen of apathy in the matter.

The surest way of defeating our object is to rush Mussulmans. I do not know that Mussulman honour has ever been found wanting. With them, as with everyone, prejudices die hard. We have got enlightened Mussulman opinion with us. It must take time for it to react upon the Mussulman masses. The Hindus must therefore be patient.

There is nothing strange about all the Shikarpur Hindus' having voted unanimously in favour of the prohibiiton of cow-slaughter. Is there a Hindu who will not vote for it? The use of that unanimous opinion for bearing down Mussulman opposition is the way to stiffen it. The Hindu members must have known, must have ascertained, Mussulman feeling. And they should have refrained from going to a division., so long as the Mussulman opinion was against them.

Let us recognize that there is an interest actively working to keep us—Hindus and Mussulmans—divided. That very interest is quite capable of developing regard for Hindu susceptibilities in this respect. I should beware of it, and distrust it. I strongly advise the Shikarpur friends to wait for their Mussulman brethren.

Let them by all means abstain from all meat, so that their Mussulman brethren may have other meat cheaper than beef. Let them consider it a shame to have a single cow or her progeny in distress, or undergoing ill-treatment at the hands of Hindus themselves. Let them develop their *Goshala* so as to make it a model dairy farm as well as a home for aged and infirm cattle. Let them breed the finest cattle in their *Goshala*. They will do real service to *Gomata*[1]. Let the Shikarpuris one and all beocme true non-co-operators, and hasten the redress of the Khilafat wrong. I promise they will save the cow when they have done their utmost to save the Khilafat.

It must be an article of faith for every Hindu that the cow can only be saved by Mussulman friendship. Let us recognize frankly that complete protection of the cow depends purely upon Mussulman goodwill. It is as impossible to bend he Mussulmans to our will as it would be for them to bend us to theirs. We are evolving the doctrine of equal and free partnership. We are fighting Dyerism—the doctrine of frightfulness.

[1] Cow the mother

Cow-protection is the dearest possession of the Hindu heart. It is the one concrete belief common to all Hindus. No one who does not believe in cow-protection can possibly be a Hindu. It is a noble belief. I endorse every word of what Professor Vaswani has said in praise of the cow. Cow-worship means to me worship of innocence. For me the cow is the personification of innocence. Cow-protection means the protection of the weak and the helpless. As Professor Vaswani truly remarks, cow-protection means brotherhood between man and beast. It is a noble sentiment that must grow by patient toil and *tapasya*. It cannot be imposed upon anyone. To carry cow-protection at the point of the sword is a contradiction in terms. *Rishis* of old are said to have performed penance for the sake of the cow. Let us follow in the footsteps of the *rishis*, and ourselves do penance, so that we may be pure enough to protect the cow and all that the doctrine means and implies.

Young India, 8-6-1921

116.SPINNING v. HAND-WEAVING

TO

THE EDITOR

Young India

I have read with great interest Dr. S.B. Mitra's letter and your comments thereon in the issue of May 11.[1] You say, "Hand-spinning includes all that the correspondent suggests, but it includes much more." Thus you imply that hand-spinning includes hand-weaving and some other things.

I am afraid that to most people spinning means spinning only, and as all your force has been laid on the charkha and spinning, and not on weaving and the handloom explicitly, the latter has faded into insignificance in the public imagination. We hear of spinning-wheel classes and competitions, but nowhere of the introduction of new looms, much less of making of thousands of looms, even of the most rudimentary type. For every ten new spinning-wheels introduced, there must be one additional handloom-pit or improved orfly shuttle introduced at the same time and without any loss of time. Otherwise, there will be a great pressure on the existing handlooms, and hundreds of *khandies*[2] of hand-spun yarn will be heaped upon the weaver, who naturally prefers the mill-made yarn, it being

[1] *Vide* "Greater Use of Handlooms", 11-5-1921.

[2] A measure of weight, about 20 maunds.

easier to weave. Up to last year, there was an equilibrium, so to speak, between the number of the handlooms in the counry and the yarn-foreign or Indian mill-made—that remains in the country. By the production of hand-spun yarn in very large quantities in the country this equilibrium is distrurbed, and this state of things can be remedied only by a proportionate increase in the number of looms—ten wheels to one loom roughly. As a humble worker in the field of khadi production in Kathiawad, I am bound to say that while thousands of new wheels are set to work, not even a few dozen new looms are being made. The result is that there is a keen competition between those who produce cloth from mill-made yarn and hand-spun yarn with consequent increase in the cost of weaving.

I take this opportunity of stating that a few months ago I was a sceptic about the possibilities of the charkha. Being quite unacquainted with village economics, I doubted as many paper-economists still do, whether two annas or even three were enough for a single person's subsistence, and therefore whether hand-spinning was a practical proposition. Now, when I see in every khadi-producing centre scores of women being daily turned back, as I have to restrict my operations for want of weavers in the areas concerned, I see all the advantages you advocate as following from the introduction of hand-spinning on a large scale. But I wish you would lay some, if not equal emphasis, on the importance of weaving, as you do on spinning by hand. The loom is not less important than the wheel for clothing India, as for proving a supplementary industry for our semi-starved peasantry.

Amreli, Kathiawad A. V. THAKKAR

20-5-1921

I do not think there is any danger of hand-weaving not keeping pace with hand-spinning. Moreover, the existing looms which are weaving foreign yarn have to be freed. The fact is that we have not as yet been able to reach the requisite strength in our hand-spun yarn. The problem now is to improve the quality of hand-spun yarn, so that it can be easily woven by the ordinary weavers. For the surplus yarn, I suggest its use for making ropes, tape, straps and countless other things that can be easily made. Hand-weaving is not so easily learnt by all as hand-spinning is. At the same time, I do not wish to be understood to imply that no special effort needs to be made for hand-weaving. My point is that it is going on as fast as possible. The weaver's wage has increased because of the appreciation of swadeshi. It ought to have increased. A weaver is any day equal, say, to a carpenter who gets more than the former.

Young India, 8-6-1921

117. TO CORRESPONDENTS[1]

We receive so much correspondence making all kinds of inquiries, that we have found it more and more difficult to reply to individuals by post. We, therefore, propose, in so far as is possible, to reply to the inquiries through this column.

K. S. Subbiahier—To spin hundred counts requires great care and attention. If you are interested in the art, you must travel in the Ganjam District, and study the spinners at work. The dhotis made of such fine yarn, we regret, are not yet available in such large quantities as to need special agents.

K. S. Venkatraman—If you have succeeded in inventing a spinning-wheel to satisfy the conditions of Mr. Revashankar Jhaveri's prize, you should write to the Manager, Satyagraha Ashram, sending drawings and giving the output of yarn per hour.

Mahomed Anwer-ud-din, Panipat—The nut-cutter cannot be traced. If you send us a copy of the receipt, if any, further inquiries will be made. We do not review such articles. Nor do we take advertisements.

Young India, 8-6-1921

118. OUR TRIAL

India took a pledge at Bezwada two months ago, in all earnestness, after discussing the matter through its esteemed represen-tatives, that before the 30th of June.

1. We should collect not less than a crore of rupees for perpetuating the memory of tilak Maharaj, and the funds should be utilized for winning swaraj.
2. We should get not fewer than one crore names of men and women of 21 years and over enrolled on the Congress register.
3. We should get not fewer than 20 lakhs of spinning wheels working in India.

If even one of these tasks remains unfinished by us, the counry will be put to shame, the readers will be put to shame and so shall I be . Here I intend to talk about money. I order to preserve my honour, I must give, if I have the money, a crore of rupees even if I become a beggar in consequence. The reader, too, ought to act in the same

[1] Presumably by Gandhiji

manner. One's honour should be dearer to one than even a lakh of rupees. of work for swaraj means to regard the country's honour as our own, to look upon the country's suffering as ours.

So far we have not collected more than 20 lakhs in all from the country as a whole. Eighty lakhs still remain to be collected. For that, we have only 24 days from now. If we work with the speed with which we have worked so far, these 24 days are nothing to speak of. If we put energy into our efforts, the 24 days are more than enough.

If Gujarat wills it, it can on its own collect 80 lakhs of rupees by the end of this month. But Gujarat does not have so much faith in itself and, therefore, acting like a miser, it has set the limit of its capacity at Rs. 10 lakhs. In a conference at Broach, representatives of gujarat pledged themselves after full deliberation, that they should , as Gujarat's share of the country's burden:

1. give 10 lakhs of rupees:
2. enrol three lakhs of members, and
3. put one lakh spinning-wheels into commission.

The main purpose of this leaflet is to point out to people the duty of collecting 10 lkhs of rupees and to show how it can be fulfilled.

I have suggested the maximum that we may give, but there are no many who will give so much. Most people need some standard of basis of calculation. After discussing the matter with friends, I suggest the following basis:

1. Salary-earners should give not less than a tenth part of their monthly salary.
2. Business men, lawyers, doctors and others in independent professions should give a twelfth part of their net earnings during the previous 12 months.
3. Those who receive rent from immovable property or interest from cash holdings should, if they have mortgaged the property, deduct the amount of the mortgage from its value and pay at the minimum rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on the balance.

If everyone gives on this basis, we shall easily get a crore of rupees.

Reader, whether you are a Hindu or Muslim, parsi, Christian or Jew, whether a man or woman, whether, you are a mill-owner or worker, an imployee or independent business man, do not wait for anyone to approach you for collection, but go, this very day, to any of the

centres fixed for receiving contributions and, without thinking of ohters or making any comparsions, pay at least what you think you can afford, and so discharge your duty.

Obtain a receipt from the centre where you pay.

Let your relatives and friends read this leaflet, collect conributions from them too and pay them up.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-6-1921

119. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING IN WADHWAN[1]

June 9, 1921

Some people say that I have forgotten Kathiawad. There are many things which had better be forgotten. It is better that I stay away from Kathiawad. I am serving it through the work I am doing in British India. At the moment, I am here to beg from you contributions to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. I must collect half a lakh rupees every day. If India does not fulfil her pledge by June 30, it will not be possible to win our goal. I have trust in God. I experience His miracles every moment and I have confidence that our pledge will be fulfilled.

At the Amritsar session of the Congress, I had pleaded for co-operation with the Government because I put faith in the Emperor's proclamation. I read in it the Government's regret [for what had happened]. I had noted Lord Sinha's[2] language. Even Mr. Montagu's eagerness [that we should accept the Reforms] was evident. But, afterwards, experience showed that to co-operate with the Government was to participate in sin; to non-co-operate is to dissociate oneself from evil, to refuse to be a traitor and refuse to do injustice. There is no equal justice for all under this Government. Only on rare occasions does an Indian get justice. There is a great deal of discrimination between white and black.

Because we introduced foreign cloth into our land, our sisters have been dishonoured and people in the Punjab had to crawl on their stomachs. Three crores of people have been reduced to starvation. Even in a place where Lord Jagannath is installed, there are people so

[1] The meeting was held at the residence of the Maharaja of Limbdi.

[2] Satyendra Prasanna Sinha (1864-1928); first Baron of Raipur, lawyer and statesman; Under-Secretary of State for Inida, 1919-20; Governor of Bihar and Orissa, 1920-21; first Indian member of the Viceroy's Executive Council.

lean that their ribs show. Even He withholds His grace from us. We have been impoverished through foreign trade. India loves truthfulness. People say that Kathiawad is full of hypocrisy. Navalram[1] has said that the Kathiawadis are "sweeter than honey". When we shall make our good manners a matter of the heart, we shall have adopted non-co-operation.

Kathiawad can inspire the country with confidence and help it shed its fear. I do not believe that Kathiawad is a land of beggars; the land of warlike people like the *Kathis* and the *Miyanas* cannot be so. There can be no poverty or unmanliness in a region strong by reason of Nautre's bounty, a land of wonders. If Kahiawad wills it, it can inspire the whole of India with confidence and courage. When you come to have faith, you will be able to offer your all.

The women will not suffer as they do if they lay as much store by God as by ornaments. How can we believe that the children of the land of Sudama[2] and Shri Krishna are effeminate? The spinning-wheel will feed people and will support widows, but it will not provide means for extravagance at the time of a daughter's marriage.

Kathiawad should assure me that I can write out and present demand drafts on it any time I choose. If it will, Kathiawad can completely boycott foreign cloth in a year's time. Khadi is not a sannyasi's garb. I am not a sannyasi. I have sons, a wife, sisters and relatives of every description. I love them. I accept their services. I am a fond householder and do not profess to be a sannyasi. Khadi is a symbol of nobility. I have been asking prostitutes to wear khadi, and I tell chaste wowen, too,, that I look upon the body as unclean unless it is dressed in khadi. Just as Sita treated the beautiful clothes sent by Ravana as of less worth than even leaves, so should we regard foreign cloth as inferior to khadi.

How can women have chains of gold round their necks? At a time like this, only necklaces of yarn or *tulsi* beads are proper. At one place, a girl gave me all her ornaments. I told her that her parents might take her to task or that. She replied that she would not ask for the ornaments to be replaced before swaraj was won. I told her that she was yet to marry. She replied: "While India is a helpless widow, how can I think of marrying and becoming the mistress

[1] A nineteenth-century Gujarati writer

[2] A poor Brahmin, childhood friend of Lord Krishna

of a house?" What is this but a glimpse of the Age of Truth?

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 19-6-1921

120. GUJARAT'S DUTY

It may be a mark of wisdom not to embark upon a task in the first instance, but, having undertaken one, it is very necessary that we see it through. The Gujarat (Political) Conference resolved, on the holy banks of the Narmada, to collect by the end of this month 10 lakhs of rupees for the Tilak Swaraj Fund, to enrol three lakh Congress members and to make a lakh of spinning-wheels available. If the Conference doubted its capacity to accomplish all this, it could have rejected he resolution, but, actually, it embraced the resolution with enthusiasm. The Conference means the delegates from Gujarat and Kathiawad. In all seriousness they pledged themselves to complete these three tasks before June 30. If we fail to make good the pledge, we shall prove ourselves unfit for swaraj and it will be difficult for Gujarat to carry on the struggle for it. I believe what I said at the Conference, namely, that even if only one province in the country came forward of adopt complete non-co-operation, we would win swaraj. By its very nature, such action has the property of a right angle. As, in a quadrangle with equal sides, if one angle is a right angle the other three are bound to be right angles, so also if one province comes forward, the others are bound to follow suit. All that is necessary is to help people overcome their fear. If a few persons discover the truth about a creature known to be a tiger and, shedding their fear start playing with it, the others will immediately join them. One person's experience serves to teach others. This is so about swaraj too. What is necessary is for one large group of people to demonstrate their strength.

If, however, Gujarat fails in its effort even to learn the letters of the alphabet, how can it pass the final examination? The Programme laid down by the Conference is merely a test of one's abilily to write the letters. If we fail in this elementary test, we shall only lose faith in ourselves.

By the time this article comes out, nearly half the month will have passed If we want to make good the pledge taken at the Conference, everyone should see where his own duty lies and take up

his share of the work. We can achieve our objective if either a large number contribute small sums according to their means or a few, defying consequences, give their all. If everyone does his duty, we shall have no difficulty in carrying out the programme.

On the basis of its capacity to pay, Gujarat's share cannot be just 10 lakhs. If it has not contributed towards public work in the past, the reason is that it did not want to. It has had its eyes always fixed on Bombay and, therefore, lacks faith in itself. How can Viramgam rest satisfied with a contribution of Rs. 12,000? And Wadhwan with six or seven thousand? These figures are indications of our apathy towards public work. There was, however, a time when it wold have been difficult to collect even these amounts in Viramgam or Wadhwan. If it has been possible to collect them, it should be possible to collect even more in these two places and so too in other towns. Every big town should estimate its capacity and collect the amount falling to its share. In any case, the standards for collectiong which, after consulting friends, I have recommended to the public must be applied.[1] No person wih a fixed salary should give less than 10 per cent of his monthly pay. People getting big salaries should of themselves give more and thus cover others whose salaries are low. Business men, lawyers, doctors and others like them should pay not less than 12 per cent. For top men among lawyers and doctors, though, how can there be a fixed percentage?

Can the lawyer, who earns Rs. 60,000 a year contribute only Rs. 5,000 and feel satisfied with that ? Shri Das thought little of spending half his earnings for public work. When the idea that lawyers should give up practice was first advanced, he had quite readily offered to hand over a hlaf of his earnings. In this way, lawyers of his standing may give gene-rously and screen broher lawyers of weaker mind. Is it much that a man with assets and living on interest should give $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of the value of his property? Would a man owning houses worth a lakh of rupees be doing anything special if he gave Rs. 2,500? Giving two and a half rupe-es for every hundred amounts to giving no more than six months' inter-est. Many people realize rent or interest at the rate not of five per cent but of 12 per cent of the value of the property. For such persons, paying two and a half rupees

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 8-6-1921.

amounts to paying two and a half months' interest. If we look at the matter thus, we shall see that we can easily raise from the towns in Gujarat 10 lakhs before June 30. If we have the *triveni*[1] of capacity, will and efficiency in work, Gujarat will be able to redeem its pledge with no great effort . May God help Gujarat.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-6-1921

121. MY NOTES

RUSTING GUNS

I wanted to write at greater length about my tour in the South, but I have so much to write concerning my later experiences that I must be content with a brief recital of some important memories only. I observe that, wherever there is even a small measure of faith, wherever there are workers, people give with a generous heart. I have no time to describe specific instances from my experience in the course of this tour. I realized the truth of this from what I saw at Barsi, Kurduwadi, Pandharpur and Sholapur. There is only one mill at Barsi. The owner is Shri Yashwantprasad Hariprasad of the Desai family in Bhavnagar. Though a mill-owner he takes part in every public activity of the town and makes his conribution. His way of living deserves to be adopted by other mill-owners. He has built for himself a small hut like the ones in which the workers live. He, the mill-workers and the officers joined in contributing to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. His workers appeared to be contented. Yashwantprasad has profound faith in the spinning-wheel and himself works to promote its use. He teaches even the children of the mill-workers how to spin. He wears khadi himself and exhorts ohers to do the same. There is a good number of other business men in Barsi but, as they did not contribute their full share, the total amount collected turned out to be less than expected.

Kurduwadi is merely a railway junction. The population is merely 2,000 and yet nearly 2,000 rupees were collected there. This, however, was due to the enthusiasm of a single friend from Kutch, Seth Raymal. Pandharpur is the Kashi of the South but, relatively, the experience there was disappointing. However, it requries a separate

[1] The confluence of three holy rivers, the Ganga, the Yamuna and the Saraswati, near Prayag, Allahabad

chapter to itself. Most saints and enlightened men of Maharashtra in olden days went to live there. Sholapur, too, would demand a separate chapter. It is known to be a big business centre in Maha-rashtra. The place has a beautiful temple, standing in the middle of a large tank which is known as Siddheshvar and is holy to the *Lingayats.*[1] There are some mills in Sholapur and there is other business, too. More than 10,000 rupees were collected at this place; but that was not much, considering its flourishing trade.

From Sholapur we proceeded to Karnatak. We visited Bagalkot and Bijapur. There was great enthusiasm at both places. The collections were also good, despite the famine conditions prevailing there. Shri Kaujalgi[2] holds sway in these parts. Recently, the local maistrate has even done him the kindness to serve a notice upon him. Bijapur is famous in the history of Muslim rule. It has a number of historic buildings, mosques and mausoleums. I could go and see Sultan Mahomed's tomb and the Jamma Masjid. Nobody in the world is likely to have spent on tombs as much as Muslim rulers did. The Taj Mahal is no more than a jewelled tomb, I was told that the "Round Dome"[3] of the mausoleum is world-famous. The dome rises to a height of 200 feet. There is a gallery running along the vault. One has to go up 150 steps to reach it. The diameter of the vault must be about 125 feet. Two persons standing at opposite points and talking in whispers, with their faces towards the wall, can hear each other. The Jamma Masjid at Bijapur is also an impressive structure. I saw there a hand-written Koran-e-Sharif which had it leaves beautifully ornamented with drawings of creepers. It is, however, the rusty guns and the ruined forts about which I wish to write. I saw these guns, once the symbols of imerial glory and objects of terror to the people, covered with rust and Hindu and Muslim children sitting on them and playing a horse-riding. The encircling wall,too, I saw,was a heap of ruins and I was reminded of what I had said about the guns in Colaba. I believe that, if India fully implements the non-violent non-co-operation programme, the British guns will rust, wild grass will grow where they lie buried and our children will play *gedi-dada* over the spot and in the forts built by the British Government through- out the country. Very few have put their faith in what I said.Some ridiculed it, and

[1] Literally, the worshippers of Siva; a sect in the South
[2] Hanumantrao Kaujalgi, a Congress leader of Karnatak
[3] The *Gol-Gumbai*

some pitied me for my naivete. But I become more convinced of its truth as days pass. Would anyone, looking at the Delhi Fort, ever say that he could have imagined that the Mogul Empire would one day perish? In the days of that Empire, there must have been persons who were ridiculed by the people for thinking so. I believe, regardless of all this, that there is a greater possibility of this Empire coming down than there might have appeared in the case of the Mogul Empire. No empire can last in the face of the people's unfeigned resentment. It is the cravenhearted whom others seek to frighten. In this country I often see cripples lying full length on public pathways. Nobody threatens them because they have banished all fear from their heart as they lie there. There are quite sure that nobody will harass them in any way. Their presence causes inconvenience to thousands of passers-by but the latter endure it. In the same way, if we become as fearless as these cripples, the guns at Colaba and the fort will no longer seem ferocious beasts growling at us but appear as harmless snakes.

UNOFFENDING CAP

As I write these notes, I read in the papers that Shri Kaujalgi appeared in a court with a white cap and was, therefore, ordered to remove it. On his refusing to comply, he was fined Rs.200 and was ordered out of the court for an hour. At the end of the hour, he again entered the court with the same; unoffending cap. He was, therefore, again ordered to remove it. He repeated his refusal and was fined Rs.200 a second time. The magistrate then ordered him to be produced before another magistrate. Lawyers do not mind practising in courts in which such lawiessness prevails ! Let the lawyers do what they will; if the people cling to the foreign cap even after hearing this, what can be more shameful than that ? When innocent persons are treated as guilty, one way be sure, trumpets will soon be heralding the coming of swaraj.But the shackles of slavery will shine more brightly if, on innocent persons being punished as guilty, people come to be afraid of doing lawful things. I have seen with my own eyes long-terms prisoners polishing their chains clean and being pleased with the shine. The only way to break the bonds of slavery is to be more determined in our non-co-operation the more they subject non-co-operators to repression. If in all the courts of Bijapur they see only white caps, how many persons will the magistrate fine and how will he

compel payment of the fines?

GUJARAT CONFERENCE

I must be brief in giving my impressions of this conference also. The conference should be taken as a preparation for the forthcoming session of the Congress and from that point of view it should be considered to have done commendable work.

The decorations at the Conference were in simple style and only swadeshi materials had been used in putting them up. Seating arrangements for all were on the ground, the president and a few others sitting on a cushioned mattress. The buntings were mostly of Khadi. A swaraj flag was fluttering at the entrance to the *pandal*. People refrained from talking noisily and there was no pressure on space. Seating arrangements for women must be counted very good. The speech by the Chairman of the Reception Committee was short and couched in excellent Gujarati. He took only 15 minutes to read it out. The President's speech, too, was short, simple and framed in courteous language. It breathed as much courage as courtesy. We often assume that bluntness and fiery language are inseparable from courage and fighting spirit. Shri Vallabhbhai Patel has proved that pure strength can go with utmost civility. It took him exactly 30 minutes to read out his speech. The brevity of the wo speeches saved the people much time, imposed no strain on anyone and made it possible for a great deal of work to be done in two days. The idea of morning and evening sessions saved the people from heat. This idea of holding our meetings in the early morning needs to be popularized among us. In summer, especially, all meetings should be held in the early For an ailing man like me, they provided a chair. We should give up this practice and, in place of the chair, introduce the old-style *bajath*.[1] One solitary chair in the midst of others squatting on the ground or on the dais presents an unbecoming sight. We must convince people that a chair is not necessary for showing respect to a man. At one meeting, the provision of chairs led to an embarrassing situation. Only two chairs were provided, one to enable me to speak sitting and the others for the President. Then came a gentleman, a stranger, a little after the meeting had already started. Though all others sat squatting, the gentleman felt that he would be inviting loss of dignity of he did the same. I took in the situation. I did not think it would be proper to explain to him that no loss of dignity was involved in the matter.

[1] Low square table

Immediately, therefore, I vacated the chair for him and I myself sat on the President's table. Had only a *bajath* been provided for me, the embrrassing situation would not have arisen. The incident was of no consequence in itself, but it holds a useful lesson.

The volunteers must be given credit for rendering good service. The results of the training given by Shri Purani were quite evident. All the same, I felt that there was room for greater efficiency. I saw that they did not quite know how to stop people from making noise. They were also wont to collect in small groups. They were perhaps lacking in courtesy to children. A nation which denies respect to its children, women and domestic servants loses its culture. Those, especially, who would serve the public should protect the weak as a part of their duty, address them wih respect and make things easy for them.

Volunteers at any rate must wear nothing but khadi. Most of the delegates attending the Conference were dressed in foreign cloth. This was a painful sight. It is nine months now since the pledge of swadeshi was taken and, if even delegates do not put away the love of foreign cloth, are frightened by the heavincess of khadi clothes or feel ashamed of such clothes, it would be like the sea catching fire. Where shall we find the man who will put our such a fire? I know that the turban and the dhoti present serious difficulties. If we try, however, we can think of and adopt some changes in regard to both these matters. One requires five yards' lengh for a dhoti of fine count. But three and a half yards should suffice if the cloth is coarse. If we require a width of 54 inches for a dhoti of fine count, we should be able to manage with 45 inches for one of coarse cloth. There should be no difficulty at all in getting a piece of white khadi dyed and then set as a turban. Should a turban of this type be felt too heavy, one ought to carry on with a khadi cap till such time as fine khadi can be produced.

It would be a very good thing if, at the forthcoming session of the Congress, we let people see nothing but khadi in Gujarat. Will Gujarat lose anything thereby? On the contrary, it will have filled with plenty the homes of some poor people. Anyone who buys one yard of khadi adds not less than three annas to a poor man's resources. I but one yard of khadi has so much power in it, how will anybody refuse to wear it? Only the man who wears khadi with a clear purpose knows what intense patriotism it symbolizes.

WOMEN'S SACRIFICES

The sight which women presented when I appealed to the public for funds is unforgettable. There was a regular stream of them,

one following another. They rained jewellery and coins in profusion. The men also caught the infection and, it must be said, gave handsomely. While, on the one hand, so much generosity was shown by both men and women, on the other I heard that two men were angry with their wives who had offered some articles of jewellery. Jewellery is the wife's property and the husband has no right of any kind with regard to it. It is my humble opinion that men should not object if women use their jewellery to help a good cause.

But I must declare myself to have been as much disappointed in regard to the women's clothes as I felt happy over. their generosity. Perhaps in no other part of India has the use of English, Japanese and French saris spread as widely as in Gujarat.

This matter deserves the serious attention of women. For the sake of India, for safeguarding the virtue of the women of the Poorer classes in the country, the women of Gujarat should voluntarily put up with he heaviness of khadi saris. An exhibition of khadi, spinning-wheels and hand-ginning tools was organized as part of the Conference. There was no special novelty about the spinning-wheels, but they displayed a number of ingenious devices. While some were light and portable, so that one could carry them about on a journey, some were attractive in appearance or deserved praise for their strength. Perhaps there is nothing on which so much skill is being employed as what artisans at innumerable places are spending these days on the spinning-wheel. It is my prayer that we may succeed in making the forthcoming session of the Congress and the attendant exhibition models for such affairs.

SARKHEJ AND SANAND

The difference between two places, one in which preparatory work has been done and which has a few sincere workers at least and another in which no such work has been done, was clearly seen at Sarkhej and Sanand. At Sarkhej, 1,200 rupees could be collected in one hour from a population of about 2,000, while at Sanand, which has 5,000 residents and enjoys a good trade, the collection came to a mere 500. There is a national school in Sarkhej. There was complete quiet and order in the meeting at Sarkhej, men and women attended in equal numbers and a joint meeting served the purose. At Sanand, separate meetings for men and women were held and at both there was no end of noise and disorder. The meeting at Sarkhej was open to *Antyajas* also. From among the 20 families of *Antyajas* there, they

had collected Rs. 32 for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. In Sanand, we were obliged to visit the *Antyajas* separately and received from them about Rs. 7.

I do not wish to run down Sanand by this criticism. I am cerain that, if a few men of character work as volunteers in Sanand and induce some local gentleman to take interest in their work, the place can stand alongside of Sarkhej. I hope that some volunteer or other will go and post himself in Sanand and the needed awakening will follow. I suggest to the residents of Sanand that they should, without delay, put the public work there on an organized basis and see that the place gets the credit it deserves.

HARMING OTHER COUNTRIES

Referring to my statement that I would never be guilty of seeking India's good at the expense to any other country,a young man asks me what I have to say about the great harm to England which is bound to follow from the spinning-wheel movement and non-co-operation. Such question are asked again and again. Questions which spin very fine sound good; however, if the questioners give up spinning with their mind and take to spinning with the wheel, their mental knots will get unravelled by themselves. I do not at all believe that any harm can come to Engalnd from the spinning-wheel movement or non-co-operation. They are both menas of self-purification. They will purify us and England as well. Just as we may think that the closing of liquor-booths will harm the proprietors and the customers, so may we take a like view of non-co-operation and the spinning-wheel. I do not, besides, believe in setting fire to my house so that I might go on a pilgrimage. As I would not think of harming a foreign country, so would I not permit harm to my own. Just as trade with Manchester harms India and, therefore, deserves to be given up, so Inida's opium trade with China harms the latter and I, therefore, believe that it must be given up. If anybody has been exploiting us and if we seek by non-violent efforts to end the exploitation, no harm can come to the other party.

HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

This same friend is still sceptical about Hindu-Muslim unity. He writes: "So long as Muslims kill even one mute creature in the country or follow the practice of suspending chameleons in their *taboots*[1], unity is impossible." I see sheer ignorance in this view.

[1] Tableaux taken out in procession during Moharram

Crores of Hindus kill other animals and, in the name of religion, suspend creatures as the Muslims do the chameleon and yet we do not fight with them. Why, then, should we quarrel with the Muslims? Tolerance is also one of the virtues of Hinduism as it is of other faiths. Out of regard and love for the Hindus, Muslims refrain these days from killing the cow. I give them my thanks for this, and I think everybody should do the same.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-6-1921

122. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, AHMEDABAD[1]

June 12, 1921

This is Maulana Mahomed Ali's first visit to Ahmedabad. You have given him a cordial welcome and are naturally eager to hear him. I did not wish to stand between you and him for long but, when I arrived here, I felt as if stabbed with a dagger. I cannot now finish in a few minutes. When, at Sabarmati, I learnt that the Maulana Saheb had already arrived, I felt really glad and I forthwith came over here. But what was the first thing I heard on arriving here? That the workers had not reported themselves for duty today. They went to the mills and came away. By acting in this way, they have brought shame on themselves, on Anasuyabehn and on Banker. How you have brought shame on these two, you may reason out for yourselves. In any case, you have most certainly put me to shame.

Mill-workers will not succeed in exploiting me. To tell the truth, I believe that nobody in the country can exploit me. I, who am striving for the freedom of the country shall not be a slave of workers. Perhaps you imagine that Anasuyabehn is only a woman and she can be hoodwinked; and Gandhi is an old man, a withering leaf, all the time out touring the country and he too can be fooled. But you will not succeed. Just now you heard the poem about a tyrant sung by our friend Akhtar. One who wishes to be free from the tyranny of the oppressor will not seek to ensalve others. You would have honoured Maulanas Shaukat Ali and Mahomed Ali best by remaining in the mills and working. You took three holidays to celebrate the *Id*. Despite that, yesterday, too, I forced myself to gulp the bitter

[1] The meeting was addressed by Mahomed Ali. Gandhiji presided.

draught.[1]But it is impossible for me to swallow it today.

You seem to think that Gandhi really wants violence to break out but, being a 'big' man, he cannot say so openly and, therefore, when he asks you to avoid violence, you must understand him to mean that you should resort to it. It is not right for you to draw such a wrong-headed conclusion. YOu did that in April 1919, and killed two innocent persons. Do not persuade yourselves that Gandhi is a big man and, therefore, when he urges you not to set fire to buildings or draw the sword, your duty is to do the opposite. Le me warn you that, if you commit a similar mistake again, you will find that your knife has cut Gandhi's throat. If you think that Gandhi, who loves you like his kith and kin, means just the opposite of what he openly says, you will be cutting his throat with your knife. I tremble at the very thought of your committing such mistakes. I ask you: what business had you to leave your mills? A few men shouted at you and you walked out ! It is not manliness that you have exhibited by running away in this way. If Muslims want to save the Khilafat and Hindus their Hinduism and both their motherland, then they will have to be brave as lions. They cannot afford to be lambs. We do not want to follow the ways of lawless men. We do not seek to save Islam and Hinduism in that way. We are out to show that we are brave men. We do not want to meet deceit with deceit. We do not want to kill the man who comes to kill us, but have decied to lay down our own lives instead. Understand this very clearly. By their conduct today, the workers have disgraced me, have insulted the Maulana Saheb and obstructed the work for swaraj, the Khilafat andIndia. They have checked the rising moon of swaraj, have eclipsed it. How can you do anything which may make me lose heart— one who am wholly engrossed in one single task? I had such faith in the workers. I thought the noble workers who, sitting daily under a tree for 23 days[2], took a pledge with God as witness, would never forget Him. But today you did not think about the Khilafat, about Hinduism and about India.

Now, therefore, as an act of penitence you should beg the millowners' pardon and put in the hours for which you have kept

[1] The workers had taken the day off to attend a meeting addressed by Shaukat Ali .

[2] The reference is to the meetings udner the *about* tree at Ahmedabad where Gandhiji used to address the mill-workers on strike; *vide* "Speech to Ahmedabad Mill-Hands", 26-2-1918.

away from work. There will be nobility in doing so. You are afraid that the mill-owners will trample you down. Such fear becomes lambs. The strong will not feel afraid in this way. They cannot be crushed under foot. But everyone in the world will seek to trample upon a man who is without such strength. In fact, non-co-operation means learning to be men and teaching others to be so.

If you want us to work for you, do not understand us to mean the opposite of what we say. With what face can I now approach the mill-owners for help in the cause of swaraj and the Khilafat? They will roundly tell me that my work will bring ruin to Inida. If they have earned millions, they will say, they have also given. something to the workers, and they must, in return, make good use of the money they give them. If the workers go on spending money the way they do at present, these mill-owners will tell me, India will forget all self-control. I do not wish this to happen but that is the path you seem to have taken. Had I been a mill-owner myself, I would have shown you that you could never succeed in making me your slave. They are lambs before you at present. The mill-owners and you are both waiting for a chance to crush each other and each side fears the other. And so you do not want that, as a result of your seeking their pardon, they should gain he upper hand.

I wish to tell you about the regret expressed by the Ali Brothers. Do you think they have done so to escape imprisonment? They are in no way afraid of it. All three of us are working so that we may be hanged during this year. Have they, then, expressed regret for your sake? Not at all. They have done so for the sake of others who are working sincerely to secure justice on the Khilafat issue. I told them that their speeches were much to vehement and some persons might conclude from them that they wished to incite them to violence. They accepted my humble advice and declared frankly to the whole country that they did not want violence. The Borhters know that peace and the sword are no friends of each other. They have declared that, if non-co-operation fails to solve the Khilafat issue, they will take up the sword and kill the enemy or be killed themselves and thus force a soluiton. My own religion forbids me to take up arms. I would not kill anybody. I would lay down my own life to save Hinduism rather than kill another. Despite this difference between the Ali Brothers and myself, I have been able to convince them that, at the present time, it would be best for us not to take up arms. They have not expressed regret in order to save themselves from being imprisoned. It is,

however, wrong to invite imprisonment by losing control over our emotions. If we try to purify ourselves and make sacrifices, and if the tyrant arrests us for doing so, the world will spit upon him. If a sincere, holy man is sent to the gallows, the oppressor will invite upon himself the contempt of the entire world. We wish that the Government lays its hands on us and hangs us. If Ahmedabad, if Inida, views in a different light the regret expressed by the Ali Brothers, they are wrong. Day by day, we are growing stronger in our nobility. You should cultivate discipline and be men of nobility. If you do not like a particular thing and, having expressed your disapproval, you resist it, one can understand that; but how can it be tolerated if you take the law into your own hands? If you learn this truth, you will have it in your hands to secure justice on the Punjab and the Khilafat issues and win swaraj.

Handbills addressed to workers have been distributed today. It is your duty to contribute to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, to get yourselves enrolled as members of the Congress and to introduce the spinning-wheel in your homes. Rest assured that if you do so, you will have insured yourselves against famine. Mill-workers should not wear mill-made cloth; they should realize that mill-cloth is for the use of the very poor.

I wish to tell you a word or two as regards my relations with the Ali Brothers. I do not think we are any the less close to each other than brothers born of the same mother. I have known them from the time of my visit to Delhi in 1915. I have no left them, nor they me, since that day. They are orthodox Muslims, and I claim to be a strict Hindu. They do not wish that I should compromise my religion, nor I that they should compromise theirs. Though adhering to our respective faiths, we have developed such relations that we are ready to mount the gallows together and be reduced to ashes. Both Hinduism and Islam possess this nobility.

And now I request the Maulana Saheb to address you and give you his message.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-6-1921

123. LETTER TO RANCHHODDAS PATWARI

June 13, 1921

RESPECTED BHAI RANCHHODDAS,[1]

You may differ from me on the issue of *Antyajas*, but I should like you to conribute, and persuade others to contribute, to the [Tilak] Swaraj Fund for helping the spinning-wheel movement and educatonal work. I hope for much from you. Chi. Chhaganlal showed me the article you wrote. I have not been able to read it, however. I shall do so when I get time.

Respectful greetings from

From a photostat of the original in Gujarati: C.W. 2797; also G.N. 4115. Courtesy: The patwari family

124. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI[2]

AHMEDABAD

June 13, 1921

DEAR FRIEND,

Correspondents from Bhavanagar tell me that you are not opposed to all of my activities. I certainly expect help from you, and from everyone else, for the spinning-wheel movement and educaional work. I should like you to contribute to the Swaraj Fund, and persuade others also to do so, the contributions being earmarked for these cause.

Vandemataram from

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3177; also S.N. 27769 and G.N. 5864

125. TO WOMEN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

Jeth Sud 9, Samvat 1977 [*June 14, 1921*]

This is my last leaflet. I do not know what effect these leaflets have produced so far. If even a single class of people to whom they

[1] Dewan of Gondal.

[2] Sir Prabhashankar Pattani, Dewan of the former Bhavnagar State in Saurashtra

are addressed respond fully to the appeal, we should certainly succeed in collecting 10 lakhs by the end of June.

No other class of people in the country has shown evidence of as much awakening as the women. In the past they never attended national meetings in any great number. But now they go in their thousands to meetings everywhere. To a man of faith like me, this very fact is an auspicious sign. It tells me that we are nearing the day when we shall have the rule of dharma.

Even if other classes of people in the country do nothing to uphold its honour, women by themselves can uphold it. They have at all times preserved dharma, have laid down their lives for its sake. Women like Sita and Damayanti have endured untold hardships in following dharma.

Women, in their large-heartedness, even keep alive hundreds of superstitions and senseless practices. If these same women realize the importance of national work, is there anything they can not do ? The naitonal treasury would not remain unfilled after that.

The late Lokamanya Tilak's name is not unknown to women, nor is his memory less dear to them. His strength of character sheds lusture on India and his self-sacrifice is a sustaining memory for the country. Gujarat has been called upon to contirbute 10 lakhs to a fund for perpetuating his memory and establishing swaraj. Women can give cash and jewellery to this Fund. What should women have to do with jewellery in these times ? How can have the heart to wear ornaments when crores of Indians go hungry and tyranny stalks the land? Was Sitaji in Ashok vatika decked in jewellery? Were there any ornaments on Damayanti's person when she went crying in a frenzy of grief in the fores? Was Taramati bedecked in necklaces of pearls and dismonds when she accomanied Harishchandra in his wanderings? To me at any rate it seems an unworthy thing to wear jewellery in these times when *adharma* prevails.

To those women who keep jewellery as provision against a rainy day, I will only say this: "If you trust God, that trust will help you more han your jewellery. Remember that there are crores of women in India who do not own even a small rin of gold weighin no more han a few grains and who have no where to lay heir heads on. God provides food even to these. If you, too, feel no shame in doing physical work, your sacred hands and feet will serve you better than your jewellery will. God will assuredly give food to those to whom He has given

teeth. No honest person who is prepared to work has at any time gone without food. It is only the lazy who feel compelled to depend on jewellery. Let women shake off laziness and also discard jewellery.

The money which women contribute will be so used that it will serve the same purpose as jewellery for it will be spent for supplying spinning-wheels to poor women and imparting the right kind of education to our children. In other words, the money and the jewellery donated by women will profit none else but women. The man who keeps his earnings and spends them for his own pleasures is regarded as a selfish fellow and a traitor to the family, while the man who puts his earnings in the family safe gets the same benefit from their use as the former from his, but is looked upon as a selfless man and a servant of the family. Serving the country means looking upon the country as one's family. Of the money which we contribute the naitonal treasury, too, we get the full advantage. Just as our fellow-countrymen get the benefit of the money we put into this treasury, so do we have the benefit of the money which they put into it. Thus, the women who give any money or jewellery to the naitonal fund will lose nothing at all.

Women can also persuade their husbands and other members of their families to help in this matter. It often happens that, owing to the extravagant habits of their womenfolk, men are not able to contribute to naional causes as much as they would like to. At times, women actually stop their husbands from contributing. I appeal to them to desist from this and to encourage the men to give something. I am also not ignorant of the fact that there are many women who even urge their menfolk to give more rather than less and succeed in their attemts. Let other women follow the example of these.

It is my prayer to those women who read this leaflet to persuade others to read it. I hope that women will not be content with giving something themselves but will also induce thier friends to do so.

Obtain a receipt from the centre where you pay.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-6-1921

126. NOTES

THAT APOLOGY

The Ali Borthers' apology still continues to tax people's minds. I continue to receive letters expostulationg with me for having gone to the Viceroy at all. Some consider that I have bungled the whole affair; others blame the Brothers for having for once weakened, and that in defernce to me. I know that in a short while the storm will blow over. For, in spite of all I have heard and read, I feel that I did the right thing in responding to the Viceroy's wish to know my views. It would have been wrong on my part to have waited for a formal written inviation from His Excellency. I feel, too, that I gave the best advice possible in the interests of Islam and India, when I asked the Brothers to make the statement issued by them. The Ali Brothers have showed humility and courage of a high order in making the statement. They have shown that they are capable of sacrificing their pride and their all for the sake of their faith and country. They have served the cause by making the statement, as they would have injured it by declining to make it.

A REMONSTRANCE

In spite of all that conviction in me, I am not surprised at the remonstrances I am receiving. They but show that the methods now being pursued are new, that the country will not surrender a little of its just demands, and for their satisfaction, it wishes to purely rely upon is own strength.

I give below the relevant parts of the strongest argument in condemnation of my advice and its acceptance by the Brothers. The letter, moreover, is written by one of the greatest among the non-co-operators. It is not written for publication at all. But I know the writer will not mind my sharing it with the reader. For I have no doubt that he represents the sentiments of several thoughtful non-co-operators. It is my humble duty to discuss the issues arising from the incident, and the implications of non-co-operation. It is only by patient reasoning that I hope to be able to demonstrate the truth, the beauty and the reasonableness of non-co-operation. Here then are the extracts:

> The statement of the Brothers, taken by itself and read without reference to what has preceded and followed it, is a manly enough document. If, in the

heat of the moment, they have said things which, they now find may reasonably be taken to have a tendency to incite to violence, they have, in publishing their regret, taken the only honourable course open to public men of their position. I should also have been prepared to justify the undertaking they have given for the future, had that undertaking been addressed to those of their co-workers, who, unlike themselves, do not believe in the cult of violence in any circumstances whatever. But the general words 'public assurance and promise to all who may require it' cannot, in the circumstances, leave anyone in doubt as to the particular party who did require such 'assurance and promise' and at whose bidding it was given. The Viceroy's speech has now made it perfectly clear, and we have the indisputable fact that the leader of the non-co-operation movement has been treating wih the Government, and has secured the suspension of the prosecution of the Brothers, by inducing them to give a public apology and an undertaking.

In this view of the case,—and I fail to see what other view is possible—very serious questions affecting the whole movement arise for consideration. Indeed it seems to me that the whole principle of non-co-operation has been given away.

I am not one of those who fight shy of the very name of Government, nor of those who look upon an eventual settlement with the Government as the only means of obtaining redress of our wrongs and establishing swaraj. I believe in what you have constantly taught, viz., that the achievement of swaraj rests entirely and solely with us. At the same time, I do not, nor so far as I am aware do you, exclude the possibility of a settlement with the Government under proper conditions. Such settlement, however, can only relate to principles, and can have nothing to do with the convenience or safety of individuals. In a body of co-workers you cannot make distinctions between man and man, and the humblest of them is entitled to the same protection at the hands of the leaders as the most prominent. Scores, if not hundreds, of our men have willingly gone to gaol for using language far less strong than that indulged in by the Brothers. Some at least of these could easily have been saved by giving a similar apology and undertaking, and yet it never occurred to anyone to advise them to do so. On the contrary, their action was applauded by the leaders and the whole of the non-co-operationist Press. The case which more forcibly than any other comes to my mind at the moment is that of Hamid Ahmad, who has recently been sentenced at Allahabad to tansportation for life and forfeiture of property. Is there any reason why this man should not be saved ? I find Maulana Mahomed Ali pays him a high tribute in his Bombay speech of the 30th May. What consolation this tribute will bring to Hamid Ahmad from a man similarly situated who has saved himself by an apology and

an under taking, I cannot say. Then there are so many others rotting in gaol who have committed no offence, and a great many more already picked out for the same fate. Is it enough for us to send them our good wishes from the safe positions we ourselves enjoy ?

The Viceroy in his speech has made it clear that the only definite result of the several interviews you had with him is the apology and the undertaking from the Brothers. You have also made it quite clear in your subsequent speeches that our campaign is to go on unabated. It seems that no point involving any principle has been settled, except what needed no negotiating on either side, viz., that there is to be no incitement to violence I do not say that, in this state of things, there should have been no trating with the Government, though much can be said in support of that view. When it was found that the game had to be played out, it would have been quite legitimate for two such honourable adversaries as yourself and Lord Reading to agree to the rules of the game, so as to avoid foul play on either side. These rules would, of course, apply to all who took part in the game, and not to certain favoured individuals only. The most essential thing was to agree upon the weapons to be used. While certain local Governments profess to meet propaganda by propaganda, they are really using repression of the worst type. Many other similar points would, in my opinion, be proper subjects of discussion, even when no agreement could be arrived at on the main issue.

I hope you will not misunderstand me. I yield to none in my admiration of the sacrifices made by the Brothers, and consider it a high privilege to have their personal friendship. What has been preying upon my mind for some time past is, that we, who are directly responsible for many of our workers going to gaol and suffering other hardships, are ourselves practically immune. For example, the Government could not possibly have devised any form of punishment, which would cause some of us more pain and mental suffering, than sending innocent boys to gaol for distributing leaflets, while the author remained free. I think the time has come when the leaders should welcome the opportunity to suffer, and stoutly decline all offers of escape. It is in this view of the case that I have taken exception to the action of the Ali Brothers. Personally, I love them.

MISAPPREHENSION

The letter breathes nobility and courage. And those very qualities have led to a misapprehension of the situation. The unfortunate utterance of the Viceroy is responsible for the misunder-standing.

The apology of the Brothers is not made to the Government. It is addressed and tendered to friends, who drew their attention to their

speeches. It was certainly not given 'at the bidding of the Viceroy'. I betray no confidence when I say that it was not even sugg-ested by him. As soon as I saw the speeches, I stated, in order to prove the *bona fides* of the Brothers and the entirely non-violent character of the Movement, that I would invite them to make a statement. There was no question of bargaining for their freedom. Having had my attention drawn to their speeches, I could not possibly allow them to go to gaol (if I could prevent it) *on the ground of proved incitement to violence*. I have given same advice to all the accused, and told them that, if their speeches were violent, they should certainly express regret. A non-co-operator could not do otherwise. Had the Brothers been charged before a court of law, I would have advised them to apologize to the court for some of the passages in their speeches which, in my opinion, were capable of being interpreted to mean incitement to violence. It is not enough for a non-co-operator not to mean violence, it is necessary that his speech must not be capable of a contrary interpretation by reasonable men. We must be above suspicion. The success of the Movement depends upon its retaining its absolute purity. I therefore suggest to the writer and to those who may think like him that the whole principle of non-co-operation has not only not been 'given away' as the writer contends, but its non-violent character has been completely vindicated by the Brothers' apology, and the case therefore greatly strengthened.

WHO IS FREE ?

What, however, is galling to the writer is that whilst the Brothers have remained free, the lesser lights are in prison for having spoken less strongly than they.

That very fact shows the real character of non-co-operation. A non-co-operator may not bargain for personal safety. It was open to me to bargain for the liberty of the others. *Then* I would have given away the whole case for non-co-operation. I did not bargain even for the Brothers' liberty. I stated in the clearest possible terms that, no matter what the Government did, it would be my duty on meeting the Brothers to advise them to make the statement to save their honour.

UNCONDITIONAL HONESTY

We must 'play the game', whether the Government reci- pro-cate or not. Indeed, I for one do not *expect* the Government to play the game. It was when I came to the conclusion that there was no honour about the Government that I non-co-operated. Lord Reading

may wish, does wish to do right and justice. But he will not be permitted to. If the Government were honourable, they would have set free all the prisoners as soon as they decided not to prosecute the Ali Brothers. If the Government were honourable, they would not have caught youths and put them in prison, whilst they left Pandit Motilal Nehru the arch-offender free. If the Government were honourable, they would not countenance bogus Leagues of Peace. If the Government were honourable, they would have long ago repented for their heinous deeds, even as we have for every crime committed by our people in Amritsar, kasur, Viramgam, Ahmedabad, and recently in Malegaon. I entertain no false hopes or misgivings about the Gover-rnment. If the Government were tomorrow to arrest the Ali Brothers, I would still justify the apology. They have acted in the square, and we must all do likewise. Indeed, inasmuch as the Government are still arresting people for disaffection, they are arresting the Ali Brothers.

The writer is, again, not taking a correct view of non-co-operation in thinking that non-co-operators, who are in gaol, are less fortunate than we who are outside. For me, solitary confinment in a prison cell, without any breach on my part of the code of non-co-operation, or private or public morals, will be freedom. For me, the whole of India is a prison, even as the master's house is to his slave. A slave, to be free, must continuously rise against his slavery and be locked up in his master's cell for his rebellion. The cell-door is the door to freedom. I feel no pity for those who are suffering hardships in the gaols of the Government. Innocence under an evil Government must ever rejoice on the scaffold. It was the easiest thing for the Brothers to have rejected my advice, and embraced the opportunity of joining their comrades in the gaols. I may inform the reader that, when during the last stage of the South African struggle I was arrested,[1] my wife and all friends heaved a sigh of relief. It was in the prisons of South Africa that I had leisure and peace from strife and struggle.

It is perhaps now clear why the non-co-operation prisoners may not make any statement to *gain their freedom*.

DISAFFECTION A VIRTUE

To illustrate the dishonourable character of the existing system of Government, I have two telling instances before me. Principal Gidwani, the Vice-Chancellor of the Gujarat Vidyapith, has received a

[1] This was in November 1913; *vide* "Letter to Indians", before 11-11-1913.

summons from Madras to answer the charge of disaffection in connection with a speech delivered two months ago at Bezwada. There is no question of incitement to violence, as the charge itself would show. Section 124A, under which Mr. Gidwani is charged, run: "Whoever . . . . attempts to bring into hatred to contempt, or excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards His Majesty or the Government established by law in British India, shall be punished. . ." No one preaches hatred or disaffection towards the King. The disaffection which Mr. Gidwani must have preached, the Ali Brothers are preaching ceaselessly. No one, perhaps, excels me in harbouring and promoting disaffection towards it. Indeed, I hold it to be the duty of every good man to be disaffected towards the existing Government, if he considers it, as non-co-operators consider it, to be evil. Having decided not to prosecute the Ali Brothers, the Government should have stopped all prosecutions exept for violence. But under the existing system of Government, even an ex-Lord Chief Justice of England cannot prevent a divorce between profession and practice, unless he tears himself from his environment, and supersedes the corrupt traditions of a corrupt system.

AFFLICTED SIND

A friend sends me the following graphic description of the realities of repression in Sind :

> The Commissioner in Sind has issued a confidential circular asking the *Mukhtiarkars* to start a counter-agitation against non-co-operation. The *Mukhtiarkars* in some places are taking strange steps to check non-co-operation. Besides adopting the frank and open method of starting anti-non-co-operation committees, to which one may not take objection, they have at some places asked the people not to allow the non-co-operation propagandists to lodge with them, and have asked the panchayats to prevent people from attending their lectures. Cases have actually happened in which the propagandists, after they had lodged at a place (Badin), were asked by the host to leave. At Khipro, in Thar Parkar district, a lecturer, while at some distance from the town, wa assaulted by a masked man who did not touch his money, but pulled him down from the camel and struck him with a heavy stick. He took away his swaraj banner and shawl, leaving the watch and money untouched. It is known all over the district that the assault was instigated by a well-known official, but owing to the terrorism of the police which prevails there, people do not come forward to give statements. Things are worse in the Sakkar district. About three weeks ago, the Sakkar District Conference was held at Ubauvro at a

distance of 10 miles from the railway station. The Deputy Collector of the division told the *gharriwallas* not to give their carriages to the wearers of Gandhi caps. The *gharriwallas* dared not incur the displeasure of the Deputy Collector, and they consented to this through fear. When the President, Mr. Virumal Begraj, Mr. Mulchand, a non-co-operating pleader of Sakkar and others arrived at the station from Sakkar, no carriages were available. A bullock-cart driver, who in the end agreed to take them, received a beating from a police Jamadar, and so he also declined to go. The President and others had to walk about a mile in the sun to reach a neighbouring village, where the panchayat go: them conveyances, which brought them to Ubauvro in the heat of the day. At Ubauvro, the people would not come to the Conference, as they had been told that in their absence their houses would be broken into. Arrangements were therefore made by the volunteers of the conference to patrol the town while the people attended the Conference. During the Conference, a Mohammedan backed up by the C. I. D. officials insisted on speaking, but would not say on what resolution. When after all allowed to speak, he attacked one of the workers present in offensive language, but people bore with him patiently. After a short time, another, without any provocation, fell upon two volunteers, and belaboured them and two neighbours with blows and shoes. The persons assaulted did not retaliate. Throughout the Conference, the organizers were living in constant apprehension of an outbreak of violence, but in spite of the persistent efforts of the agents of the officials, their incitement to violence proved futile. The *gharriwallas* refused to take the Conference delegates even on the return journey. At Mirpur Mathelo, where the party got down on the way, Maulvi Taj Mahomed was openly insulted by some of the officials present at the meeting, but he and the audience bore these insults without retaliating by word or deed. Things are edaily growing worse in the district since the Conference. The *Mukhtiarkars* that side have been holding meetings of Mohammedans and telling them that the Hindus were beguiling them and deceiving them. The Mohammedans have therefore been openly telling the Hindus that if they lodge the non-co-operators with them, they (Mohammedans) would commit thefts in the houses of Hindus. In one village, the Congress party got down at the local temple. Soon after, about 30 Mohammedans armed with lathis surrounded the temple, saying that they were waiting to beat the lecturers. In the end, the temple-keeper persuaded the party to leave by another door. At Ghotki, Mr. Choithram Valccha, the young Secretary of the Sakkar Congress Committee, was surrounded by about 30 or 40 Mohammedans armed with lathis. He stood calmly, prepared to receive the beating. At this, a number of young Hindus came up to Mr. Valecha and sat down quietly by him. The local Hindu

panchayat, becoming aware of the situation, sent men for Mr. Valecha and the two or three other Congress volunteers accompanying him. When they went to the panchayat, the 30 or 40 armed Mohammedans followed them and sat in the pancahyat meeting. They said that they wanted to beat Mr. Valecha. The panchayat appealed to Mr. Valecha to leave the town. He replied that he would leave the town when he had finished his work there, and not before. The panchayat seeing him firm, asked the Mohammedans to leave, so that it might proceed with its work. The Mohammedans only laughed in return, refusing to leave the meeting. After fruitlessly waiting for one hour, the panchayat saw no alternative but to persuade Mr. Valecha to leave the town accompanied by about 40 Hindus, who saw him off a the station. No step has been taken by the higher officials, so far as we know. against any one of those who have adopted these methods of threatning, coercion, actual violence and threats of violence to prevent the message of the Congress being carried to the villages. Are these the methods with which Lord Reading or Sir George Lloyd[1] wishes to fight the Movement ?

The lase sentence is evidently a friendly hit at me. It is to remind me that I have said some complimentary things about Lord Reading and Sir George Lloyd. My compliments stand notwithstanding these revelations. They prove the essence of my charge against the system, that it makes the best of administrators powerless for good. Sir George, probably, has as much influence over the Commissioner of Sind as he has over a street urchin. He has to fear the former, and can, if he wishes, even frighten the latter. The great feat of Lord Reading's is to invite Mr. Thompson of the Punjab fame to accept a higher post, and succeed in inducing him to condescend to do so. Sir George Lloyed, where he can personally supervise, shows himself to be tactful and yielding as a rule. Lord Reading can procure palliatives, as in the case just mentioned. But Sir George will not resign, because the Commissioner of Sind says he is as good as Governor Lloyd. Nor would Lord Reading resign, because the officials in the plains laugh at his intentions to do justice. Both honestly believe that, without them, theings might at least have been worse. Non-co-operation has stepped in to show to all who care that they may not flirt with evil and hope to do good. When the basis is evil, a superstructure of good adds strength to evil. It would be wrong to blame such administrators because they fail, for they fail in spite of themselves. Our non-co-operation will open their eyes to the depth of the evil that is in the system if we will

[1] Governor of Bombay and Sind, which then constituted a single province

discriminate between the system and its administrators, all of whom certainly are not bad.

But all this academic discussion about the merits and demerits of administrators can bring little comfort to the Sindhi sufferers; I tender my congratulations to them for their courage and patience under very trying circumstances. If they continue to suffer patiently and bravely, the end will be brought nearer by this unbridled and unscrupulous repression. We must try, by patient endurance, to win over to us our misguided countrymen who become easy tools in the hands of unprincipled officials. Gradually, as in other parts of India, so in Sind, the villagers will shed the fear of the officials, and welcome Congress and Khilafat men as their real friends and deliverers. If we have faith, presently it will become impossible to play the Mohammedans against the Hindus and *vice versa*.

KHADI IN TEMPLES

Foreign cloth has made such encroachments upon our life that we use it even for sacred purposes. Thus I noticed the use of foreign cloth for the decoration of idols in Puri and Ayodhya, and, indeed, in almost all the temples I have visited. Even the sacred thread is not always handmade. It refreshes me, threfore, to find a correspondent from Sind sending the news that Acharya Gidwani of the Gujarat Vidyapith was the first, when he recently visited Sind, to present a khadi cover for the Granth Saheb instead of foreign silk which is usually presented. I hope the good example will be followed by all devotees and foreign cloth replaced in all temples by khadi.

A PARENT'S DUTY

> This year, my third son aged 21 years has passed his B.A. with honous at an enormous expense. He does not wish to enter Government service. He wants to take up national service only. My family consists of twelve members. I have still to educate five boys. I had an estate, which has been sold to pay a debt of Rs. 2,000. In educating my three sons, I have spent all my earnings, and all this in the hope that my third son would secure the highest degree in the University, and then try to retrieve the position I have almost lost. I had expected him to be able to take up the whole burden of my family. But now I am almost led to think that I must give my family up to ruin. There is a conflict of duties on the one hand and motives on the other. I seek you careful consideration and advice.

This is a typical letter. And it is the universality, almost of the attitude, that set me against the present system of education years ago,

and made me change the course of the education of all my boys and others with (in my opinion) excellent results. The hunt after position and status has ruined many a family, and has made many depart from the path of rectitude. Who does not know what questionable things fathers of families in need of money for their children's education have considered it their duty to do ? I am convinced that we are in for far worse times, unless we change the whole system of our education. We have only touched the fringe of an ocean of children. The vast mass of them remain without education, not for want of will but of ability and knowledge on the part of the partents. There is something radically wrong, especially for a nation so poor as ours, when parents have to support so many grown-up children, and give them a highly expensive education without the children making any immediate return. I can see nothing wrong in the children, from the very threshold of their education, paying for it in work. The simplest handicraft suitable for all, required for the whole of India, is undoubtedly spinning along with the previous processes. If we introduced this in our educational institutions, we should fulfil three purposes: make education self-supporting, train the bodies of the children as well as their minds, and pave the way for a complete boycott of foreign yarn and cloth. Moreover, the children thus equipped will become self-reliant and independent. I would suggest to the correspondent that he should invite all the membes of his family to contribute to its upkeep by spinning or weaving. Under my scheme, no child is entitled to education who does not spin a minimm quantity of yarn. Such amilies will acquire a prestige for self-respet and independence not hitherto dreamt of. This scheme does not exclude a liberal education, but on the contrary brings it within the easy reach of every boy or girl, and restores literary training to its original dignity by making it primarily a means of mental and moral culture, and only secondarily and indirectly a means of livelihood.

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127. THE LESSON OF ASSAM

My indictment of the Bengal Government, in the name of humanity, is this that they have oppressed the poor. Where pity was needed, they have employed violence; where tenderness was required, they have brought down their Gurkha Soldiers; where human nature itself was calling aloud for sympathy and compassion, they have forfeited the good name of a humane

Government. And, what is an added injury, when this brutal outrage has been committed, they have called in their Director of Public Information to justify it to the public through the columns of the daily press.

* * *

The issue before the whole of India today and not merely before Bengal is simply this. The Government not only of Bengal, but of India, by its actions, has come more and more to side with the vested interests, with the capitalists, with the rich, with the powerful, against the poor and the oppressed. That is the terrible indictment. That is why the poor, in their misery, have flocked to the banner of Mahatma Gandhi, who is himself the poorest of the poor, and who understands his own poor people. That is why they are even beginning to refuse such help as Government itself is still willing to offer. There was no more fateful sign of these critical days in which we live than that which was told me by an eye-witness at Naihati. These poor Assam-returned labourers were actually starving. The steaming cooked rice was put before them. But when they heard that Government had provided it, they refused to touch it. They were frightened that it was a plot to bring them back on to the plantations. But when the Seva Samiti workers brought them uncooked rice from the people, they were so ravenous that they began to eat the hard rice grains uncooked.

This is a new and ominous event in the history of English rule in India. Those who are not in the midst of the revolution which is going on before our eyes, and who are seated amid their files, will be prudent if they will take timely warning. The Day of Judgment has begun for all. There is now one supreme question which Government will have to face. 'Are you on the side of the rich, or are you on the side of the poor ? Are you on the side of Mammon, or are you on the side of God ?

The reader will recognize the foregoing passages if he has read and wept over the considered written address of Mr. Andrews, delivered in Calcutta just after his return from the scene of the Assam tragedy, which is as yet by no means over. Mr. Andrews writes and says what he thinks. He does not hide the truth from himself or others. He wears himself out in ceaselessly serving humanity. He is as ready to confess his errors as he is to bring charges against the highest in the land, if he finds them to be true. And just because he is true, staunch and godfearing, some newspapers dismiss him with contempt when they do not abuse him. Yet his statements about Fiji, South Africa, East Africa, Ceylon, the Punjab, remain as true today as when they were made. Most of them have been admitted by the respective

authorities. In every one of the cases, he has succeeded in helping the poor and the needy. He will survive many more attacks on his reputation.

But the purpose of writing these lines is not to defned Mr. Andrews. My object in referring to the Assam tragedy is to save my own conscience, and draw a moral from it. As soon as the coolies struck work, I received a wire asking me to go to the scene of what has developed into a national affiction. But I telegraphed and wrote to all I could think of. I had not the courage to leave the work in hand. No man dare leave the service to which he is called, however humble it may be, for answering a call to another, however high it may be, unless there is a clear way open to it. I found none. I could not leave the task in hand. The dumb labourers and God will forgive me if I have erred. For I feel that I am fully serving the labourers whilst I am occupied with the ceaseless prosecution of the Bezwada programme. My grief over my helplessness is all the greater because, somehow or other, the labourers have come to think that they will find me by their side, wherever and whenever they may be in trouble. I am humble enough to know that, in the vast majority of cases, I can send them nothing but my heartfelt prayers and sympathy. The spirit is indeed willing, but the flesh is incapable. I hear, I feel and fret over the hopeless incapacity to help.

Happily God is as powerful as man is weak. He works through an infinitude of agencies. He has Andrewses and Dases ever ready at his beck and call. I remain happy in the faith that God leaves no misery uncared for. We can but do our allotted task in prayerful humility and with all possible watchfulness.

The Assam tragedy has enabled Mr. Andrews to draw up a terrible indictment against the Indian Government. The callous indifference, in the name of impartiality, shown to the immediate watns of the labourers, even assuming that they were in the wrong, the charge of the Gurkhas and the hackenyed defence of the necessity of using force against a perfectly helpless people, mark out the Government as barbarous and utterly unworthy of respect. Why were the Gurkhas let loose upon the coolies ? Everyone knows that the army contains some men simply trained to be brutal and inhuman. When the soldiery is sent in the midst of an unarmed civil population, people know what that means. Everyone knows that the recruits for the army contain some of the worst specimens of humanity. They

may be good for war, but to employ them for dealing with coolies on strike is to side with the rich and the powerful. In every vital matter the Reforms are hopelessly breaking down. There is no doubt that the next few months will witness either a transformation in the sys-tem of Government so that the meanest will count as much as the lofti-est, or a conflict with it such as the world has never seen before. The refusal to take the rice offered in name of the Government was a refusal to live by the hand that humbled. And when that spirit of quiet courage and resignation pervades India, the fate of the Government is sealed. We need to learn, not the art of doing violence but that of suffering violence, of dying. Success by methods of violence will replace one monster of Government by another, and the poor and the innocent will certainly continue to be ground down just as they are today.

Mr. Andrews deplored the sympathetic strike of the steamship employees. Whosoever instigated it did an ill service to the labourers. In India we want no political strikes. We are not yet instructed enough for them. Not to have politcal strikes is to forward the cause of freedom. We do not need an atmosphere of unsettled unrest. It hampers our progress towards the final stages of our programme. A soldier who runs amok is unfit to be in an army. We must gain control voer all the unruly and distrubing elements, or isolate them even as we are isolating the Government. The only way, therefore, we can help strikers is to give them help and relief when they have struck for their own *bona-fide* grievances. We must sedulously prevent all other strikes. We seek not to destroy capital or capitalists, but to regulate the relations between capital and labour. We want to harness capital to our side. It would be folly to encourage sympathetic strikes.

Mr. Andrews has appealed for funds to repatriate our poor countrymen to their hamlets. The appeal tests our capacity for feeling for the hungry and the naked, i.e., for swaraj. I hope Calcutta has already over-subscribed the appeal of that Friend of the Poor[1].

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[1] *Deenabandhu*, the epithet used for Andrews

128. MAGISTERIAL HIGH-HANDEDNESS

The District Magistrate of Lahore has been prohibiting a meeting of the Lahore City Congress Committee. Under the Seditious Meetings Act, public meetings are understood to be meetings to which a member of the public can demand entrance on com- pliance with the rules of admission. All other meetings are private. The Lahore Committee meeting was advertised to be only for members of the Committee. But the Magistrate was not satisfied. He asked the Secretary to wait on him and give him satisfaction. Lala Amirchand naturally declined to dance attendance on the Magistrate, and politely informed him that the meeting was private and had a definite object. The Magistrate nevertheless prohibited the meeting. The Secretary protested that the order was illegal, but informed the Magistrate that he would for the time being obey the order. It is quite evident that the officials are challenging and provoking non-co-operators to offer civil disobedience. A few more such orders, and I promise that the challenge will be heartily taken up. Hitherto, we have obeyed such orders out of our weakness. Now we are obeying out of strength which is daily growing. All over the country, wherever such orders are given, the desire is keen for civil disobedience. It is the exemplary self-restraint and self-imposed discipline which are keeping those who receive such orders from civilly disobeying them. The country will gain fro having undergone still more discipline and exercise still more self-restraint. We shall need much more of both these qualities, before we can regard ourselves as fit for the privileged exercise of civil disobedience. Disobedience to be civil excludes all bluster, all violence. It excludes lawlessness. A civil resister *courts* imprisonment. It is, therefore, wrong to demonstrate against his arrest. There must be real rejoicing, as there is when one has one's heart's desire fulfilled.There could be civil disobedience tomorrow, if we could ensure its restriction strictly to approved laws and orders, if we could be sure that the people would not resort to violence on the arrest of prominent leaders. Civility is to dis-obedience what non-violence is to non-co-operation. Disobedience is the acutest form of non-co-operation—more so than non-payment of taxes. A civil resister becomes law unto himself. Courage and discrimination of a high order are needed for the practice of the virtue of civil disobedience. It is a total denial of the authority of the State, and is permissible only

when the State has proved itself currupt beyond redemption. I may be stupid, but I see not only no sign of repentance about this Government of ours, but I notice a determination on its part to provoke people to vio-lence, and, then, to justify a repetition of Dyerism. The refusal to right the Punjab wrong in the only way possible means that on the people go-ing mad as in Amritsar, their sins will be visited upon the innocent and the guilty alike, and that, in the words of one of the Amritsar officers, the future generations must be made to pay for the sins of the present.

A forced imposition of the British yoke is intolerable and humiliating. A nation awakened to a sense of its self-respect will and must go through the fire of suffering, and bear all the hardships that may be entailed in throwing off the yoke. The English can remain in India only as friends and equals, and if they serve, they must become real servants, scrupulously carrying out the wishes of their employers. There can be no exploitation of Indian labour, and no concessions to British capitalists. They must compete with the meanest of us on equal terms. Their organizing talent, their industry, their resourcefulness must command a market which none can dispute. But the menace of their rifle and their whip must cease for ever. The refusal to redress the Punjab wrong, the refusal to placate Mussulman opinion means that the menace is not to cease. On our part, there must be no compromise with that attitude. Weak or strong, we must fight it to the bitter end, cost what it may. As soon, therefore, as we have secured a reasonably safe atmosphere for the working of civil disobedience, we must launch out into it. *Meanwhile*, let us submit even to the preposterous orders such as the Lahore District Magistrate's. The power of rightful disobedience will come tomorrow, from willing obedience today.

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129. MR. PAL AGAIN

Mr. Pal's[1] letter to the *Englishman* reproduced in the Press requires a full reply. Mr. Pal has evidently been misinformed about many things, and has therefore been tempted to make suggestions, which he would not have, if he had been better informed.

The Government communique, the Viceroy's speech and press reporters' imaginative descriptions of the Simla visit are responsible for the grave misapprehension that has taken place about the visit and the Ali Brothers.

When I went to Simla, I had no notion that I would wait on His Excellency. I knew that both Pandit Malaviyaji and Mr. Andrews were anxious that I should meet Lord Reading. But I went to Simla only to meet Pandit Malaviyaji, who was too weak to overtake me in my journeyings. It was after hearing Panditji that I decided to write to the Secretary to the Viceroy,[2] that if His Excellency wished to hear my views about the struggle, I would gladly wait on him. I waited on him, not for the sake of securing a reversal of the decision to arrest the Ali Brothers, but to tell the Viceroy why I had become a non-co-operator. The first and the longest interview did not turn upon the then impending prosecution of the Brothers at all. The question of the Ali Brothers came up quite in the natural course, and arose out of our discussion of non-violence and how far it was carried out in practice. When His Excellency showed me some of the extracts from the speeches, I recognized that they were capable of bearing the interpretation sought to be put upon them. I therefore told His Excellency that as soon as I met them, I would advise the Brothers to make a clearing statement, irrespective of what the Government may do regarding their prosecution. The statement was not conditional upon a revision of the Government's decision. That the Government revised the decision on the strength of the statement was a wise and natural act on their part. I admit that it has given me relief. But I do

[1] The reference is to Bipin Chandra Pal; *vide* "Notes", 1-6-1921.

[2] The letter is not available.

not believe with Mr. Pal that the arrest of the Brothers would necessarily have led to bloodshed. The Brothers, like me, continue wilfully to break the law of sedition, and, therefore court arrest. Sooner or later, and that during this year if we can carry the country with us, we must bring about a situation when the Government must arrest us or grant the people's demands. The Brothers' statement avoids arrest on a false issue, an issue that cannot be defended.

Whilst, therefore, I was anxious to avoid the prosecution of the Brothers on the ground of incitement to violence, I would welcome a prosecution of them and myself for promoting disaffection towards the Government established by law. We all felt that, having known what was taking place, not to make the statement would be to wrong the cause, and to play into the hands of the enemy.

Mr. Pal is right in thinking that I expect a settlement by discussion and compromise in matters not of vital intrest. But I did not discuss the terms of settlement with the Viceroy. It is for the accredited representatives of the people to do so. There is no fear, I assure Mr. Pal, of my arriving at any settlement over the heads of the people. Nor will there be any confidence when, if ever, the terms of a settlement are discussed. Confidence there must be, when two strangers meet for a friendly intercourse and wish to know each other. We only met to know each other. I wish, however, at once to ease the mind of the reader by telling him, that as an outcome of the interview he need not expect any settlement at an early date, if only because the people have not yet sufficiently prepared themselves for it; and the Viceroy appears to me to be anxious to reconcile the irreconcilable. He cannot pour new wines into old bottles. He cannot keep the Khilafat and the Punjab sores open, and still make India happy and contented.

Mr. Pal is quite right when he says that, if the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs are redressed, I should leave it to the other leaders to carry on the agitation about swaraj, for the simple reason that when India has made her power sufficiently felt in connection with the two great questions, she can have swaraj for the asking. Swaraj is not for me something apart from the people's power to right every wrong, to prevent O'Dwyerism and Lloyd Georgism. The cult of Sir Michael

O'Dwyer stands for terrorism, and that of Mr. Lloyd George for treachery. When we have dealt with these two demons, I suggest to Mr. Pal that we are ready to govern ourselves. If my followers in Bengal do not resent my interview with the Viceroy, they know that for me there is no settlement without a settlement of the two wrongs, they know that time for discussing swaraj schemes will come only after the two obstacles to any scheme of settlement are removed. Without their removal, there is nothing for India save complete independence. the Bengalis who attended the Barisal conference resented Mr. Pal's discussion because, as I apprehend, they considered it to be premature and calculated to interfere with the evolution of the proper swaraj spirit. Mr. Pal's performance was like that of a mason trying to tackle the topmost storey before the foundation was solidly laid. I would humbly urge Mr. Pal not to land the country in an untimely discussion of swaraj schemes, and ask him to accept my assurance, that so far as I am concerned, I would not do a single thing about any swaraj scheme without an open consultation with the representatives of the people. There is no question of consultation about the Khilafat and the Punjab, because the minimum terms are fairly well understood.

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130. SPEECH AT GHATKOPAR[1]

June 15, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi, after thanking the residents of Ghatkopar for their address, accepted the forty thousand rupees which they had collected for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. He accepted these rupees only on certain condition. If the sum they had collected represented the best efforts of the large merchants who were trading in Bombay, but were staying at Ghatkopar then he would at once say that they would never get swaraj this year. He would have been satisfied if they had made the slightest sacrifice, but they had not done that. He was again going to beg of his brothers and sisters to contribute their mite towards that Fund. He was disappointed at the smallness of the amount they had collected, after they had admitted that Ghatkopar was a place where the rich Indian merchants of Bombay were residing. It was not himself alone who was collecting money for the Fund. There were the Ali Brothers on the platform, who, it was stated, managed to lead the speaker by his nose. That was not the fact. The Ali Brothers loved their religion and he loved his own and they were not going to give up their religion. Each had his own dharma and each had to follow it implicitly, come what might. Then there was the great Hakim Ajmal Khan. He was not an ordinary man to come to Ghatkopar casually; his fees were high and he charged one thousand rupees a day for such visits. He was not a doctor versed in the Western methods of medicine; he had a few secret medicines which were very efficacious. Then there was Dr. Ansari who was well-versed in the Western system of medicine—he had gained a diploma to kill people (Laughter.) for if a doctor killed a man they could not take any action against him. (Laughter.) Then there was the great Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, who was a great authority on Islamic religion and law. Why had all these great people come to Ghatkopar? Not for the purpose of making speeches to them! For that was not the time for making speeches, but for work, solid work for the country.

The residents of Ghatkopar had given him personally Rs. 40,000 but what were they going to give to their other guests like the Hakim and Dr. Ansari ? They had also to give something to other workers like Seth Jamnalal Bajaj, Mr. Shankarlal and others who had assembled there. They had not fully realized that this was the time when the prestige of this country would be assessed at its true worth. It was

[1] Gandhiji was accorded a reception by the citizens of Ghatkopar, a sub- urban town of Bombay. Among those present were : V. J. Patel, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Sarojini Naidu, Dr. M. A. Ansari, Dr. B. S. Munje, N. C. Kelkar, the Ali Brothers, Maulana Abdul Bari, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Jamnalal Bajaj and Shankarlal Banker, who had assembled in Bombay for the All-India Congress Committee meet-ing. Gandhiji addressed the gathering after Shaukat Ali had spoken. A similar report of Gandhiji's speech appeared in *The Hindu*, 20-6-1920.

impossible that the people of this country could neglect to keep up the prestige of their country at such a critical time. They had not even got Rs. 40 lakhs so far. They had collected only Rs. 20 lakhs. It would be the duty of this city of Bombay to give the balance of Rs. 60 lakhs and he had not the least doubt about their ability to do so. He had every confidence that the city of Bombay would give the Congress that sum. He had put his trust in the four great communities in this city, nemely, *Bhatias*, *Memuns*, Marwaris and Parsis. He did not know what the Parsis would give him, and how much he could expect of them. Two of them had between them given him a sum of Rs. 1,52,000— Mr. Bomanji and Mr. Rustomji Ghorkhodu. His confidence, therefore, now rested in the two great communities—Marwari and *Bhatia*—whom he saw at every meeting. If they agreed that swaraj was their birthright, then it was their bounden duty to try their best to get possession of it. In that connection he would tell them that until they solved the question of Khilafat to their entire satisfaction, they would never be able. satisfactorily to settle the problem of cow-protection.

When the address was presented to him it was stated in it that at Ghatkopar risided the great merchants of Bombay. If those great merchants had willed it, they could have sent him away from the meeting with promises that they would get him at least Rs. 40 lakhs, if not more. They should have been so determined in the aims they kept before themselves that they should have welcomed any sort of sacrifice, rather than not answering the call of their Motherland at such a critical time in her destiny. The present is the time for collecting large sums and not for more talk. He had great confidence that even if the other communities in the city did not fulfil their duty the two great communities—*Bhatias* and Marwaris—would make up the required amount with the determination that they would never remain slaves of the British Government. It was for that they had to sacrifice their wealth so generously. In the next few months they had to establish swaraj and for that purpose they had to make great sacrifices. They had to make sacrifices of their rich foreign luxuries and clothes. Atia Begum had come to him for the purpose of holding a women's meet-ing in this city; there was, however, a lady with her who was clothed in the luxurious clothes of the West. He, therefore, told her that if the women of Bombay would only wear khaddar he would be their willing slave. The present was not the time for wearing rich ornaments or rich clothes; they had to give up all those luxuries. They had to consecrate themselves to the charkha and they must wear only khaddar. Unless they did that, what was the use of going to a ladies' meeting? Did they know that crores of their countrymen and countrywomen were starving for want of food, going about semi-naked for want of clothes? How could they then have the heart for all the foreign luxuries which they now affected so much? How could they live a life of luxury when so many of their countrymen were suffering? It was the sacred duty of every woman to wear khaddar.

The people who had called him to Ghatkopar should first of all understand their

dharma properly. It was not possible for him to give the people swaraj, not even the Ali Brothers would be able to give them that. It was for the people themselves to take it, it was for the people themselves to win it. If they were afraid of every Kabuli and every Britisher that came to them, how was it possible for them to attain swaraj? He for once could not understand why Indians should at all be afraid of Kabulis or Europeans.They were the brothers of Indians. Indians were quite capable of protecting themselves; they were also able to non-co-operate with them, if necessary. Why, again, should the Hindus be afraid of Mohammedans, and why should the Mohammedans be afraid of the Hindus? If they were a godfearing people and if they stood together united, what was there to be afraid of each other? Unless they had the necessary spirit, ability and energy, Indians would never be able to get and keep swaraj. They should not confuse swaraj with parliaments or assemblies. So long as Indians could not protect their rights they would never be able to get them.

He was afraid that many Hindus had given up their dharma. He was brought up in a *Vaishnava* household and ahimsa (non-killing) was in his blood. Mercy and non-killing was in him and he would never be able to give up these things. In this connection he had received several threatening letters these things. In this connection he had received several threatening letters from *Vaishnavas* because of his connection with the depressed classes. Because he had allied himself with the *Antyajas* they had written to him that dvre things would happen to him within a month or so. To them he would say frankly that if *Vaishnavas* did not want to have anything to do with the untouchables, then they were not the real *Vaishnavas* but only a godless and sinful people. That was not the ideal of a true *Vaishnava*. People who did not want to uplift the untouchables could only be called a godless people. *Vaishnava* religion did not teach them to kill anything or injure anybody; it was full of sympathy and love for other people. The same thing could be said of *Shravakas*. These people were quite willing to feed the dumb animals, but not their fellow creatures who through their misfortunes were starving. These *Shravakas* had the tenderest feeling for the animals but not for human beings. Did they call it religion? If *Vaishnavism* taught them to despise their fellow-creatures, them he for one could not call it a religion but a monstrous perversion of religion. He feelingly appealed to the *Vaishnavas* to give up such hatred for the untouchables. He was not going to tell them to take [food] from the hands of *Dheds* or sweepers. They had to realize that the essence of *Varnashrama* dharma was fellow-feeling for the poor and the down-trodden and the depressed people. Their holy *Bhagavat* had told them what their true religion should be. It was not “touch-me-notism” It was essential that they should have love and feeling for the poor, and unless they had those qualities in plenty they could not call themselves true *Vaishnavas* For what was religion without love for the oppressed and the depressed? It was only a godless and perverted religion.

Coming to the charkhas Mahatma Gandhi said, through the charkha the whole

of India had become vibrant with a new life and it was also a means of righting their Khilafat wrongs. He was not asking them to take food from the hands of the untouchables. Let them leave aside that point and let the people of Ghatkopar take up the other roads leading to swaraj. Charkha was the potent instrument which would right the Khilafat wrongs and the wrongs of the Punjab and would give them swaraj at the same time. He appealed to the residents of Ghatkopar to concentrate their attention on the Congress programme, which they all knew, and he prayed to God that He would vouchsafe to them enough strength to do their duty to their country and reach the goal of swaraj by the right path. (Loud cheers.)

Mr. Gandhi then asked the audience, consisting of both women and men, to contribute their mite towards the Tilak Fund and pay it to the volunteers. At the same time he wanted the contributions to be made with *shraddha*[1]. He did not want them to give anything to their country unwillingly. Those *Shravakas* and *Vaishnavas* who had given any money to the Fund were quite at liberty to take it back, for he did not want such unwillingly-paid contributions. He only wanted money to be given with *shraddha*. Those who wanted to take back their money were at liberty to do so.

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-6-1920

131. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

BOMBAY,
Thursday, [*June 16, 1921*][2]

CHI. MANI[3]

I have your letter. I had told uncle Vithalbhai[4] , even before I got your letter, that we must meet. He is going to Poona. We shall certainly meet. I will write to you afterwards about what happens. Let me know what you thought to be the corrupt things going on in Bombay. Do not feel troubled. I propose to have a full and frank talk with uncle.

You two, brother[5] and sister, should absorb yourselves completely in national work; this means that you should be experts in

[1] Literally, reverence; here dovotion

[2] his is inferred from the reference to the presentation of the purse at Ghatkopar on June 15.

[3] Daughter of Vallabhbhai Patel

[4] Vithalbhai J. Patel (1873-1933); elder brother of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and a fearless and astute constitutional fighter; member of the Bombay Legislative Council and later of the Imperial Legislative Council; the first elected President of the Central Legislative Assembly, Delhi

[5] Dahyabhai Patel

spinning and carding, so much so that no one can excel you. Trust me, all our other activities are for the time being, this is to be kept up permanently. We shall get all our strength from this.

Bhai Mahadev arrived in Bombay yesterday. He has, it may be said, collected a large amount.

We are having good rains here. Yesterday, we got about Rs. 55,000 in Ghatkopar.

Whether I write or not, you should continue to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

Manibehn
C/o Shri Vallabhbhai Patel
Bhadra, Ahmedabad

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne

132. TELEGRAM TO C. R. DAS

[SABARMATI]
[On or after *June 17, 1921*][1]

SENDING WIRE MOTILALJI

From a photostat : S.N. 7573

133. SPEECH ON NON-CO-OPERATION, BOMBAY[2]

June 18, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi said there had always been a great friendliness between the Parsi and the Hindu communities. The Parsis had also shown their love and friendship

[1] This was sent in reply to a telegram from C. R. Das of June 17, 1921, which read : "Impossible electing delegates All-India Congress Committee from Bengal before fifteenth July because of cooly situation East Bengal arranging accordingly as member of Working Committee if further sanction necessary regarding articles nineteenth Congress Constitution. Kindly obtain it by correspondence or otherwise Swaraj Fund about three lacs wiring Calcutta for accurate figures. Wire Maduripur. Kindly inform Motilal Nehru." There were strikes of railway and steamship labour and much unrest East Bengal and Gandhiji visited the region at the request of C. F. Andrews.

[2] Gandhiji addressed the Council of the Parsi Central Association on Saturday afternoon. Hormasji Adenwalla presided.

to the country of their adoption. Personally, he had been connected with the Parsis since he was a boy, and all his life he was in close touch with them and he admired their qualities. He would tell them at once that he had not come there for the purpose of flattering the community; he was only telling them what he felt to be the truth in his heart of hearts. He would not be backward in criticizing their faults if necessary. He had the greatest love and respect for the Parsis, with whom he had come in contact throughout all his activities. There was no community in the world which, with such small numbers, had been able to achieve so much both by their charity and their religion. There was not much difference between the Hindu and Parsi religions, for both placed Truth in the first and the highest place. He quite admitted that so long as their conscience did not ask them to take part in the struggle that was going on at present they were right if they kept themselves aloof, and he would be quite satisfied even if a few Parsis joined his movement with their minds quite made up and convinced of the rightness of their cause. He therefore, appealed to the Parsis to consider the whole situation properly and make up their minds and join the movement. There was as much want of faith among the Parsis as among the Hindus and Muslims, and his prayer to them was that they should consider the 'pros' and 'cons' of the situation and then take part in the struggle. When he had a quarrel with the Political Agent in Kathiawad and he wanted to take steps against him it was a Parsi, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, who told him that it was useless to expect justice in such a case.[1] That was the first lesson he had learnt from a Parsi and since then he had suffered such indignities in his life that he did not think it would serve any useful purpose to give an account of them to the meeting.

The non-co-operation movement was a spiritual movement; it was a spiritual phase in their lives. In all religions they were taught that they should run away from evil, that they should keep themselves apart from it. He was willing to get on with Dyer, but not Dyerism. He quite admitted that many Indians and Parsis had benefited by the British rule and they had become millionaires and were enjoying all sorts of luxuries, but it was not beneficial to the community in general. The British connection had not been at all beneficial to the masses and the best proof of that was to be found in the writings[2] of Dadabhai Naoroji and in Gokhale's testimony. During the discussion on the Manipur affair it was Sir John Gorst who said that it was the policy of the British Government to cut off all the tall poppies under it. Unfortunately for him, his eyes had not been opened until this time. His contention was this : that by the British rule, while some might have benefited, the great masses and the large majority of the people had not benefited in the least, considered from any point of

[1] Gandhiji had sought the Agent's intercession in a matter concerning his brother, Lakshmidas and had been ejected from the Agent's room.

[2] Among these is *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India.*

view—whether it was economic or moral or physical point of view. India was never in a worse condition that it was today. Hindus and Parsis and *Memvns* had been telling him privately that they were quite willing to help his movement in private but not in public, because they had vested interests, and that they were engaged in trade and other things.

He had not the least hesitation in admitting that there was repression and oppression under the Moguls, but Indians had never fallen so low as they had in these times. He for one did not agree that their political condition had improved very much since the enlargement of their councils, etc. He did not agree that India had got any rights at all by the Reforms and, if he could be convinced to the contrary, he was quite willing to withdraw the letter he had written to the Moderates. If the Reforms were real and potent, then the British Government should not be able to do anything illegal to the people, but that was not the case. Only the other day he had received a letter from a gentleman that he was charged with setting fire to the Police Lines and that he was quite innocent of all those things. There were many other things of a similar kind which were taking place in this land now. There never was a more Moderate man in the Punjab than Lala Harkishen Lal who kept himself aloof from all political movements, but he was arrested furing the Martial Law regime and sentenced[1] ; the same was the case with Lala Dunichand and others. Even now there was no more repression in the whole of India than in the province of Bihar where Lord Sinha was the Governor. Lord Sinha was not the man who would tolerate such things, but he was unable to control his civilian subordinates because he was an Indian and they were English. He was unable to take them to task as Sir Edward Gait[2] would have done, if he had been in Lord Sinha's place. He was sure that even if Lord Sinha tried to curb his subordinates, he would never be successful in his object. There were grea leaders in that province like Muzur-ul-Huq and others. Mr. Andrews was not the sort of man to write false things about the Gurkha oppression, but they knew fully what they had done to the coolies at Chandpur. Government had, however, informed the public that only the necessary amount of force had been used by the soldiers and no more and no less. The same things were said by General Dyer. Mr. Gandhi said that he was telling them what his conscience told him was the right thing and nothing else. When the Ali Brothers made a mistake, he drew their attention to it and they at once put themselves in the correct light.

Coming to the success of the non-co-operation movement, Mr. Gandhi said it had succeeded far beyond the expectations of the people. It had driven out of the minds of the people all fear of the authorities, of suffering, of sacrifice and work for

[1] *Vide* "The Lahore Judgement", 23-7-1919.

[2] Lt.-Governor of Bihar and Orissa during the period of satyagraha in Champaran in 1917

the sake of their country. People were willing to do anything for their country. Although the Parsis were a small community, they had produced a Dadabhai and a Mehta and they had rendered the greatest service to this country. Parsis were able to render Valuable services to India by their faith, by their generosity and by their sacrifice. Mehta was called the Lion of Bombay and he hoped that the Parsis would work in such a manner that they would be called the Lions of India. They were a generous people; they had brains and they had money; they had great merchants and they were capable of much self-sacrifice for the sake of their country. If they could work for India by making the necessary sacrifice, they could easily make themselves the leaders of India. He for one expected great things from the Parsis.

In reply to questions from Mr. H. P. Modi, the Mahatma said they had only three months to work by which time they were to get swaraj. He was both sure of getting swaraj and he was not. He was not sure because they had not yet fulfilled the Bezwada programme which was placed before the country. But he had great faith in God and he was sure that India would get swaraj. Non-co-operation was a movement for changing the entire mentality of the people. The public had not, unfortunately, yet fulfilled the Bezwada programme and, therefore, he was sometimes assailed by doubts about getting swaraj in the month of September[1].

Coming to the question of the utility of the charkha, Mr. Gandhi said he believed in it a very great deal and thought it was capable of doing great things for this country. After the food problem was that of clothing the masses. They were not able to clothe them now except with the help of Japan, England and other countries. What he wanted was that India should be capable of clothing her people without the least help from foreign countries. Even if the mills did not export an ounce of yarn or a yard of cloth, they would not be able to clothe the masses. There were about three crores of people who were neither properly fed nor clothed. He said that from his personal experience in this country, and he was only telling them what he had personally seen in Orissa and other provinces, people went about half-naked in those places and they were starving. Rich men would tell him that they should start *sadavrats* (places for giving food to poor people), but he would tell them that he was not a believer in those institutions. He wanted every man to be independent, dependent on his personal labour only. He who had worked as a *Bhangi* (sweeper) knew something about these things and also about what a small addition to wages meant. Amritlal Thakkar had written a very interesting article in the *Servant of India* on the value of spinning to poor people in Kathiawad.

He had introduced the charkha among the *Dheds* of Kathiawad and it was capable of doing immense good to the people. The peculiar climate of India required

[1] In September 1920 Gandhiji had hoped to win swaraj within a year; *vide* "Swaraj in One Year", 22-9-1920.

only the beautiful khaddar for their use, and he implored them to bring it into universal use. When Indians came to use the charkha all over the land, then they would be entirely independent, fearless and self-supporting. The poverty of Indians compelled a large number of women to do such work as breaking stones and he knew from his experience how the poor women lost their chastity and modesty. But the use of the charkha would enable them to remain at home and earn their living. Therefore he said that there were both independence and chastity in the charkha.

According to the Government statistics the average income of an Indian was Rs. 2-4-0 per month, and they must deduct from this the income of the millionaire; in that case the income of a man would be about Rs. 2 per month, and how was it possible for an average man to support himself on such an income? Therefore, any small addition to the wages or income of a family was welcome and relieved the distress.

Coming to the question of education, Mr. Gandhi said it was well-nigh impossible to have compulsory education in India owing to its enormous cost, but by the use of the charkha it would be possible for the people to have their children educated. The charkha would thus be the means of their economic regeneration, wealth and independence. In fact their salvation lay in the use of the charkha. Coming to the question of the crore of rupees, he admitted that he had not yet been successful in collecting the crore of rupees, but he hoped to do so. Reverting again to the question of hand-made things, Mr. Gandhi said, even in England, where machinery was so universally used, hand-made things were considered to be the best and superior to machine-made articles. In Navsari, the Parsis thought the same thing and Indians should thing highly of their hand-made things also. Even in England, they liked to use home-made articles, because they considered them to be the best, and he did not know why Indians should not think in that way. The Parsis had not given him much money, but neither had the *Memons*. His friend Parsi Rustomji had given him large sums and he had so much confidence in the speaker that Mr. Rustomji would give him all his property if he but expressed such as wish. The meeting could rest content that the monies collected would be administered in the best and most honest way, for they could not find better men than Messrs Motilal Nehru, Jamnalal Bajaj, Shankarlal Banker, Omar Sobhani and Chhotani for such a purpose.

> One Parsi gentleman said he wanted to know why they should confine their energies to making khaddar only and not in making other things like silk and other useful articles. In Japan, where he had been, the cottagers did small articles in homes and made a profitable living thereby. They also made the finest silk on handlooms. He asked whether it was not possible to get their people to do that with the help of societies and committees established in every town, who should meet the losses and thus encourage rising industries.

Mr. Gandhi said Japan was a small island whereas India was a vast continent. They had to deal with a population of 30 crores of people in India and, therefore, they

could only make the commonest articles which were universally used in this country. Indians were accustomed to spinning and they could very easily make khaddar in their homes. He did not advocate that they should use khaddar for ever and ever. He was hopeful of making the mulls, for which Dacca was famous, and fine silks. At the present time, the unfortunate thing was that they had to import all fine yarn for making finer kinds of cloth. It was only a question of time when they would be able to manufacture finer counts of yarn and until then they had to be content with khaddar.

Messrs Vimadalal and Dumasia asked Mr. Gandhi what sort of swaraj he wanted and whether their present rulers would have a place in it.

Mr. Gandhi said he wanted the army, police, law and revenue to be fully controlled by the people and they should be in a position to spend their own money. At the present time, they were not able to appoint their Commander-in-Chief, neither were they able to stop the sending of a single sepoy out of India. He was not, however, going to discuss such things as votes, etc. If they were able to control these things now, Indians would be able to move forward gradually. If they could manufacture all requirements of cloth, India would be welf-dependent country, but now they were dependent on other people. So long as they had to thank the Government for every small thing they got from it, they would not be able to achieve much. They should achieve such a position that they would be able to do things without the help of other people. He thought the non-co-operation movement had effected a great change in the mentality of the people, for instance, in Malabar the *Moplahs* who were a spirited people had now become disciplined under its influence.

In reply to another question, Mr. Gandhi said he would be content with Dominion Self-Government. They Viceroy was of the opinion that they should get it gradually, while he was of the opinion that they should get it at once. To those who said that they were not fit to rule themselves yet, he would say that it was because they were kept apart from their legitimate rights; he did not admit that Indians were incapable of ruling themselves. He did not care whether their ministers were Indians or Englishmen. What he wanted was the power of appointment and dismissal at any time he liked. He did not want to dismiss a man simply because of his colour, but for his incompetence. Ministers should have power over the Commissioners and Collectors. He never admitted that Indians were incapable of administering the military department.

One gentleman said they were talking of Hindu-Mohammedan unity but he did not know where the Parsis came in there. Hindus and Muslims would appoint their own men and Parsis would be nowhere.

Mr. N. M. Dumasia said Sri Krishna Gupta had told them that so long as they were not able to defend themselves it was no use getting swaraj. They ought to be able to defend themselves against a foreign government in the

first instance.

Mr. H. P. Modi said they had been working as clerks for so many years and they were not used to do military work and deal with their foreign relations. They had been carrying out things under British control and therefore Indians were not accustomed to do them independently.

Mr. Gandhi said his opinion was that Englishmen were not yet prepared to leave India and he wanted them to remain not on their own terms but on those of Indians. Englishmen would feel ashamed to leave India just now. Another thing was he did not believe that if they got swaraj the next day, they would have to fight all the foreign governments all at once. But even if they had to fight a foreign government, Indians then would go on fighting until victory was theirs. He wanted them to realize that Indians could only get their objectives by means of their own strength, and not with the help of others or by means of tactics or stratagems. They could only keep their rights by their ability to defend them and not by means of parliaments or assemblies.

Mr. Dumasia said it was the rule that a smaller nation should be beaten by a bigger nation. Nothing of great importance had taken place in this world without a war or a battle. It would take many years to get the proper spirit in the nation and years in the life of a nation were like as many moments. Therefore, they had been asked to hasten slowly. Parsis hated both Dyerism and O'Dwyerism, as much as anybody. The Parsi community were always loyal to their rulers, whether they were Hindus or English. They were not prepared to ask the English to go out of this country bag and baggage, and they did not want to get out of the Empire, over which King George ruled. Any movement which did not exclude these things would have their fullest support. They were fully with Mr. Gandhi if he was willing to go forward constitutionally, but not otherwise. They were willing to sacrifice and do everything for their King and their country.

In reply to further questions Mahatma Gandhi said his movement was a great bulwark against Bolshevism. Indians did not want chaos and terror in this land. The minds of the people had been very much purified by this non-co-operation movement, for instance in Sind, Hyderabad and Kaira, people had very much improved morally. The movement had done away with hatred; if hatred of other communities were on the increase he would have kept himself aloof from the non-co-operation movement.

Dr. N. M. Sukhia said from his experience he had found that the Parsi community had been put down by both the Hindus and Muslims in the mofussil. He had seen in Malegaon, in 1886, the same thing. The Parsis would join the movement if they found it to be beneficial to them, otherwise they

would keep themselves aloof from it.

Mr. Gandhi said the British had come to India only some 150 years ago and before that the Parsis were living with Mohammedans and Hindus and they should be able to judge for themselves whether they were better or worse off. They were talking of Hindu-Muslim unity because there was no such unity before and in that unity the unity of all other smaller communities was also included, for instance, the Jews, Christians, Parsis, etc. It did not mean that the other communities were to be excluded from their friendship and that the Hindus and Muslims alone were to be friends. The Parsis were ruling the Congress for so many years and they had occupied very many important positions in it. The Congress was looking after the rights of all the communities equally and he did not think that, in the future, the Parsis would be crushed between the two great communities—Hindus and Muslims. If the Parsis thought that they would not benefit by joining the non-co-operation movement, it was open to them to keep themselves aloof from it. He asked them to join hands with them only if they came to the conclusion that it would be to their good, otherwise not.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-6-1921

134. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

[On or after *June 18, 1921*]

DEAR MR. ACHARIAR,

I have your telegram.[1] The Committee has informed the Punjab friends that they should continue to obey orders till the All-India Congress Committee has decided upon the matter. The A.I.C.C. meets at Lucknow on the 22nd July in the morning. The question of formulating a scheme may be considered then. In my opinion the time has not arrived for it as yet.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 7548

[1] Vijayaraghavachariar had wired on June 18 from Kodaikanal : "Hope Working Committee sends Punjab considered instruction respecting acute present crisis. Malaviyaji desires practicable scheme placed before Viceroy immediately."

135. SPEECH ON SWARAJ, BOMBAY[1]

June 19, 1921

Mr. Gandhi said the people had been sitting in the *mandap* for more than an hour. He was thankful to them for erecting the *pandal*, in the erection of which the rich and poor of the place had taken a hand and in this he saw the sure foundation of swaraj. He was grateful to them for all they had done in welcoming him. He was highly pleased that, in the collection of the funds, all classes and communities had taken part—Hindus and Muslims and Parsis. Therein lay the secret of swaraj. He, however, appealed to his sisters and brothers to give him all they had to give to the Fund. India was working for a *Dharmarajya* and a *Nitirajya*[2] and Indians were going to follow the right path, the straight path and the honest path. He was extremely sorry he was so very late in coming to the meeting, but the fact was that his motor broke down on the road and he had to collect Rs. 60,000 from Mr. Velji Lakhamsee Napoo on account of Mandvi Ward. He hoped the people of Ville Parle would contribute a like amount for the Tilak Fund.

Mahatma Gandhi then referred to the meeting of Parsis and the questions he had been asked there. He said he would explain several points more fully this time. He was told that there was unity between the 23 crores of Hindus and 7 crores of Muslims and that between them the 80,000 Parsis would suffer. It was the duty of the communities who were in a majority to safeguard the interests of the minorities and look after them, and that was the first principle of swaraj which they had to keep in view. The majorities should not neglect the interest of the minorities. Then one *Bohar* gentleman had written to him that he (Mr. Gandhi) was only naming the *Memons* and not the *Bohras* and he had been asked whether he suspected the *Bohras*. To that he would say that he had not meant that at all. He had used the word *Memon* for the whole of the Mohammedan community and not for any particular sect. He would mention in that regard that a *Bohra* gentleman had taken him to his house and presented him with a sum of Rs. 1,000 for the Fund. He, however, deprecated all such doubts and suspicions towards each other, and so long as they entertained any such feelings towards their sister communities, swaraj would never be attained by them.

He had been asked at the previous day's meeting whether they should not wear

[1] Delivered at a public meeting at Ville Parle, a suburb in northern Bombay, at which Gandhiji was presented with a purse for the Tilak Swaraj Fund

[2] Rule of righteousness and morality

mill-made cloth. To that question his answer was that mill-made cloth was for the poorest and the rich and well-to-do people should wear khaddar. If they could not do that, they could not get swaraj. Another Parsi gentleman had asked him as to what he would do in case they were attacked by Japan and other nations. His answer was that man was a selfish creature and, if the Japanese found that they could not send their goods to the Indians, and that they did not use them at all, India would not be of any use to them. If Indians did not care to use foreign made things what use would India be to the Japanese?

He then introduced Maulana Abul Kalam Azad as a great man among the Mohammedans and as one who wielded much influence among them. He was capable of doing immense good to the two communities and he hoped they would listen to him after the collections were made.

The Bombay Chronicle, 20-6-1921

136. TELEGRAM TO JITENDRALAL BANERJEE [1]

[On or after *June 19, 1921*]

ENGAGED FULFILLING BEZWADA PROGRAMME. IMPOSSIBLE ADVISE FROM DISTANCE. WRITING.[2]

From a photostat: S.N. 7547

[1] This was sent in reply to a telegram dated June 19 from Jitendralal Banerjee, a Congressman from Calcutta, which read: "Situation in Bengal urgently demands your presence and counsel. Mr. Das wants further extension and prolongation of strikes but it is the earnest conviction of myself and many true non-co-operators here that these strikes are departures from principle of non-co-operatioon and are jeopardizing success of Bezwada programme. If coming impossible, wire advice after fully considering situation."

[2] Gandhiji's letter is not available.

137. STATEMENT TO PRESS REPRESENTATIVE

Asked by a press representative if he would be appearing before the Military Requirements Committee as a witness in response to the invitation extended to him, Mr. Gandhi stated that he had already written to the Committee, intimating his inability to appear before it, as being a non-co-operator he could not participate in its proceedings.

The Bombay Chronicle, 20-6-1921

138. LETTER TO KUNVARJI ANANDJI

BOMBAY,
June 21, 1921

BHAISHIRI KUNVARJI ANANDJI,

Bhavnagar has so far done nothing for the Tilak Swaraj Fund, which means that you have done nothing. I am pained by your slackness. You understand everything and have money. You know the importance of this work, its bearing on national regeneration, and still refuse to contribute your full share to the Fund. I want you to give your intelligence, your heart, your time and your money, all the four things. Such an opportunity will not come again. I should like you to help.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

139. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAREKH

BOMBAY,
June 21, 1921

DEAR FRIEND,

I hear from Shri Vallabhbhai that the contribution expected from the mills has not yet been received. How can we carry on national work in this way? Either this movement is good and should be supported, or it is bad and deserves to be smashed. But you merely let things take their time. Isn't even Gujarat's honour dear to the mill-owners? Should they not help Gujarat to raise its modest contribution without having to work hard for doing so? I hope you will permit no further delay. You may give anything you choose but I should like you to make a definite commitment. It will not matter if you do not give the whole sum in a lump, but the mills should credit the full amount to the Committee in their books, also provide that the interest on it will accrue to the Provincial [Congress] Committee. The Committee should also be entitled to issue cheques whenever necessary. I certainly expect not less than five lakhs. Everywhere they ask me what the mills have done, the mills which have earned so much through the movement.

Jai Shrikrishna[1] *from*
MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

140. NOTES

AN OUNCE OF ACTION

Remarks in the *Servant of India* on the apology of the Ali Brothers show me more forcibly than anything else the truth of the statement that an ounce of action is worth more than tons of speeches. I cannot conceive the possibility of the *Servant of India* wilfully misunderstanding or misinterpreting the apology. Yet it has devoted to the apology three paragraphs which betray a hopeless misunderstanding of it. For me it was, and even in the light of the fierce

[1] Form of greeting among the *Vaishnavas*; literally, "Victory to Lord Krishna".

controversy that has raged round it, it remains, an object-lesson in the practice of non-co-operation. It is the one act which will stand as a guiding-star to the straying non-co-operators.They must continually purify themselves even in front of their opponents, and at the risk of their action being mistaken for weakness. In the process of putting themselves in the right, they must not count the cost. That is the implication of following truth for truth's sake. The immediate prospect may appear ever so black, a seeker must relentlessly pursue what he knows to be truth. The Prophet would have lost his hold many a time had he not thus treated truth as his absolute and final sheet-anchor. Assuming that I gave my advice to the Ali Brothers out of my strength, and they understood and accepted it in their strength, the apology will be found to have done, as I know it has done, good to the cause of Islam and the country. If, therefore, the last issue of *Young India* has not answered all doubts,[1] I must leave it to time to answer them.

POVERTY OF EXPRESSION

Similar, but less important, misunderstanding has arisen regarding my letter[2] to the Moderates. I am amazed at the poverty of expression I betray so often. I am not by any means an indifferent writer. I take great pains to be accurate and plain. And yet I have succeeded in leaving the impression in a critic' in the *Servant of India*, that I expect the Moderates to join he non-co-operators in picketing. I do nothing of the kind. Picketing might appear to the co-operators to be too clumsy and too incomplete to commend itself to them. But I thought that they would help the temperance cause *in their own way*, i.e., by immediately abolishing the drink-shops. It is the least they owe to the country. Daily, as the heat of the picketing is increasing, the pickets come in for the attentions of the keepers of liquor shops and of their customers. I understand that two pickets were struck by some ruffians and had their heads broken in Ahmedabad. These brave men now daily appear at their post with bandaged heads. A volunteer was slapped in the presence of a crowd in Bombay, and he stood his ground firmly but did not retaliate. Such instances must multiply, as the effect of picketing is felt by the sellers of spirituous liquors. It is impossible to stop this reform, even though pickets lose their lives in the performance of their duty. The work

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 15-6-1921.
[2] *Vide* "To the Moderates", 8-6-1921.

must continue so long as there are enough young men and women found ready to take up picketing, and so long as they are ready to risk their lives without retaliating. It was because I was aware of the danger that I appealed to the patriotism of the Moderates with a view to abolishing at a stroke all drink-shops, and thus saving young men and young women from injury to limb or life. It grieves me, therefore, to find that I failed in my letter to carry the point home. I am aware that, at some future date, temperance reform will come. It is small comfort to a man whose house is on fire that appliances are in course of preparation to deal with such fires.

BRITISH *V.* OTHER GOVERNMENTS

'Observer' in *The Times of India* asks me some questions pertaining to the movement. I am sorry I have not been able to answer them earlier. They would have escaped me had not a friend sent me the cutting.Observer' asks whether the British 'is not a better Government than the Mogul and the Maratha'. I must dare to say that the Mogul and the Maratha Governments were better than the British in that the nation as a whole was not so emasculate or so impoverished as it is today. We were not the pariahs of the Mogul or the Maratha Empire. We *are* pariahs of the British Empire.

WHAT SHOULD PARSIS DO?

'Observer' next asks :

> Are the Parsis to ask their children to leave Government and aided schools when no provision is made for national schools adapted to meet the special requirements of the Parsis? Are the Parsi lawyers to boycott law courts and starve their families? Are the Parsis to give up their lucrative vocations and devote themselves to spinning yarn for three annas a day? The three annas per day will not suffice to pay their daily bill for soda water, let alone whisky and soda. Or, should the Parsis give up their present dress, which is more European than Asiatic, and go back to the days of their ancestors, who used to put on pyjamas with legs wide enough to carry a dozen fowl? Is it possible, thus, to set back the hand of time? Will Mr. Gandhi be so good as to give a convincing reply to these queries?

Parsis are the pioneers in matters educational. They need not withdraw a single child from the present schools. They need only to rid themselves of the infatuation for degrees, and they can today disaffiliate all their schools. They have money enough to pay for their special education. Parsi lawyers, if they boycott law courts, are, I know, resourceful enough to turn their attention to commerce, which is a

speciality with the Parsis, if indeed they will not care to join the national service. They and the nation will be the better for the able Parsi lawyers' renunciation. No one, certainly no Parsi, is expected to give up any lucrative calling not calculated to uphold the prestige of this Government, and to take up spinning instead. But every Parsi with leisure is expected to devote his or her leisure hours to spinning for the sake of the nation. Thus, there is no question of the Parsis giving up their soda. But those who take intoxicating drinks will benefit themselves and the nation by total abstinence. Parsis need not give up their present style of dress, so long as the cloth is handspun and hand-woven. But they will lose nothing by reverting to the ancient simplicity of their forefathers.The old Parsi dress was designed to fit the Indian climate. The European style is ugly and utterly unsuitable for Indian conditions. Only their insularity and unimaginativeness have made the English retain their English style in India, even though they admit that it is most uncomfortable for this climate. I venture to think that thoughtless imitation is no sign of progress. Nor is every reversion to old habits tantamount to 'setting back the hand of time'. Retracing a hasty or erroneous step is surely a sign of progress. And it is contended that during the past hundred years, we have taken many a faulty step. Before, therefore, we can move forward, we must go many steps back to find ourselves on the right track. We lost the way, and I invite 'Observer' and all other Parsis to hasten back to the point where we strayed from the right path.

Young India, 22-6-1921

141. THE CURSE OF BETTING

THE EDITOR
Young India

SIR,

I am glad *Young India* and its Editor have taken up the question of the evils of betting. I feel, however, that a casual article in *Young India* is not enough to root out this evil, imported from the West. The evil has spread from the idle-rich to the commercial communities, the middle classes, the labourers working in factories, and the schoolboys. Over and above thousands of people regularly going to the races week after week, there are thousands more to whom temptation to gamble comes in the shape of bucket-shops openly plying their trade in the heart of the city. The Government have appointed a

committee to consider the question of closing down these shops, and they will have some legislation at the next session. But that is not enough. Public opinion must be created and it must be definitely shown that race-going and betting is as bad as drinking and prostitution. For this, a strong agitation is required, and I hope readers of *Young India* will respond to it.

BOMBAY, *Yours, etc.,*

26-5-1921 SATYA

As I have already said, unfortunately the races and gambling in connection therewith are fashionable. They do not excite the same feeling of shame that drinking does. Race-going, therefore, is more difficult to deal with than drinking. Satya' knows the evils of race-going in a special manner. I invite him to come out in the open and personally tackle the vice which is slowly but surely undermining the morals of society.

Young India, 22-6-1921

142. THE TILAK MEMORIAL FUND

Truly to revere the memory of a person is to achieve his life's purpose. Truly to revere the memory of Bal Gangadhar Tilak, whom India delighted and still delights to call Lokamanya, must be to establish swaraj, and thus for ever to perpetuate his memory. How fine, how noble, if we could establish swaraj on the anniversary of his death? Nor is it impossible to do so during the forty days that remain at our disposal. But my sanguine temperament cannot, visualize swaraj by the the first of August next. By strenuous work, it is certainly possible to establish swaraj on the first day of October next. It must be death to the Congress, if swaraj cannot be established on or before the 31st December next. But it cannot be, if we do not carry out our Bezwada undertaking to raise one crore of rupees. These lines will be published on the 22nd instant. The reader has therefore to think how to complete the crore in eight days.

Let us know how we stand. If all goes well, it may safely be assumed that forty lakhs will have been collected by that date outside Bombay. That menas, let me further state, at least three lakhs in Bengal, four in the Punjab, three in Sind, three in Andhra, three in the C. P., four in Bihar and ten in Gujarat. That makes thirty lakhs. Ten lakhs for the remaining provinces is not an extravagant estimate. Let us assume that all the Provinces but Bombay succeed in collecting all

together forty lakhs.

How to collect sixty lakhs in and through Bombay, that is the question. If we are to reach the total of one crore before the 30th June, the amount must be raised chiefly from the available rich men of Bombay and Calcutta, i.e., those who feel for the movement and believe in it.

There should be not only only no bother about collecting the crore, but there should be certainty of swaraj in a month, if all the rich men of India could realize that their safety lies, not in fearing the existing Government, but in fearlessly helping the movement. Today, if they are making millions, they are sending billions out of the country, i.e., they are taking the millions and assisting to take the billions out of the mouths of thier poor and, in many cases, starving countrymen. Today, they, more than the other classes, are supporting a top-heavy administration, which is keeping up a ruinous military expenditure in order to be able to hold India in the last resort by Dyerism and O'Dwyerism.

But we must take the facts as they are. The richest men are afraid to incur the displeasure of Collectors and Commissioners. Some of them honestly fear the success of non-co-operation. They believe that its success means chaos and destruction of life and property at least for the time being. We must win these over by patiently persevering to impregnate the atmosphere with the spirit of non-violence in thought, word and deed.

Meanwhile, let us realize that the few rich men and the many well-to-do men and women we have with us have to sacrifice more than they are ordinarily used to, if we are to make up the deficiency. A happy beginning has already been made in Bombay. Earnest workers, themselves endowed with riches, are working night and day to make large collections. They are meeting with ups and downs. But they are dauntlessly pursuing their even course.

We must get rid of the habit of waiting to be coaxed. Why should not the moneyed men of Bombay volunteer their assistance and send their gifts? Why should they wait till some one else has begun?

And what of those who cannot give lakhs or thousands each? They can still do much to reduce the burden of the few rich. Let them not wait for a summons from any society. Let each group, each caste, each trade-guild automatically set about collecting and sending to the

provincial centres. The remaining days must be utilized for that purpose and no other by those who have any ability for collection.

It is a shame that the total possible collection of the provinces cannot be more than forty lakhs. There is still time to wipe out the reproach, by each province producing selfless workers for the Week of Grace and Privilege, who would concentrate their energies on collections.

Seeing that so many of the moneyed men are abstaining, and seeing that we have not succeeded in organizing collections among the masses, it follows that some must give their all. I know four Gujaratis, themselves workers of standing and ability, who have given their all. One has died, leaving over Rs. 25,000, the whole of his savings, to the Swaraj Fund. I hope the example of the four workers will prove infectious. One loses nothing by giving in the cause of freedom.

If we are to achieve swaraj during this year, the least we can do is to complete the Bezwada programme by the time fixed. The collection of the crore will be a most visible token of its fulfilment.

Membership and the charkha are no less important. I suggest two meetings, one on Sunday the 26th and the other on the 30th June at every possible village or centre, merely for the purpose of explaining the Congress creed, and inviting all of the age of twenty-one and over, men and women, to become members of any one original Congress Committee. At these meetings, no other work should be done save that of enrolling members and collecting subscriptions for membership. Forms can also be deposited during these days at all places where responsible men will undertake the work of canvassing.

Though we have no census of charkhas, from all the accounts I have received, the spinning-wheel has so far penetrated the masses that it is likely that there are already twenty lakhs of spinning-wheels working more or less indifferently throughout India.

Young India, 22-6-1921

143. DR. POLLEN ON THE WAR-PATH

I have received Dr. John Pollen's open letter. I do not print it here, as it has already appeared in the Press. It is quite like him. He has hardly taken the trouble of studying the non-co-operation movement. Yet he has seen no harm in condemning what he does not know. He asks me to rely upon his own *ipse dixit* in preference to my own experience. The pity of it is that Dr. Pollen's letter represents the average English attitude—laziness to study the other side, and arrogation of omniscience and consequent self-satisfaction. With a people so constituted, either non-co-operation or violence is the only thing that answers. If you murder, they are shocked into action; if you cease to speak to them, they are moved to inquire. The shock produced by murder provokes action, but rarely enlightenment. It creates bad blood, not excluding terrorism. The relief is partial and often proves more dangerous than the disease itself. Whereas the refusal to speak, to participate in the evil, to assist one's own degradation, to co-operate with the wrongdoer, gives strength to oneself, and awakens and purifies the wrongdoer. India, I hope, has chosen the better way for all time. Dr. Pollen is too lazy to see that non-co-operation, being an insurance against violence, necessarily involves the possibility of violence. It is an attempt to supplant violence. The least that non-co-operation has done is to postpone violence, and if it is tried long enough, it will give such strength to the people as would enable them to see that violence is totally unnecessary. Non-co-operation is a spetic treatment. It heals without killing.

Dr. Pollen should have known that I remain just as opposed to boycott of *British goods* as ever. I have always advocated, as I advocate today, boycott of *all foreign cloth for all time*, and boycott of such other foreign goods as India can profitably manufacture. The swadeshi that I have conceived excludes the idea of punishment or revenge. It means self-help and recognition of the natural law that the best service to humanity is to help that part of it which is nearest to you. An India self-dependent will help the whole world, an India helpless and clothed by Manchester and Japan harms both herself and the latter.

Dr. Pollen is wrong in his dates. I did not write to the Viceroy after non-co-operation as he suggests, but long before.[1] I did then

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 29-4-1918.

have faith in the British Government. I began the denunciation of the British administration two years after the open letter to the Viceroy.

Let me further inform Dr. Pollen that, whilst I am a determined enemy of the system of government, to which in my ignorance I was once friendly, I still count myself a friend of the British people. My religion forbids me to have friends and foes. I therefore assure him that I shall for ever be actuated by the same feelings towards the British people as towards brothers, and am now acting towards them as I have acted towards my blood-brothers.

I must adhere to the adjectives I have felt it my duty to use regarding the system, and my business is, whilst calling an evil thing evil, to restrain an outburst of evil passions against wrongdoers. It would be foolish to ignore or hide a disease for fear of the patient running amok in panic. He must be warned of the disease, and provided with a tolerably safe remedy.

Dr. Pollen's ignorant preface is followed by an unsupported denial of all the propositions that I believe in in common with the rest of India, viz. :

(1) The Indian administration is the most expensive in the world.

(2) India is poorer today than it ever has been.

(3) The drink evil has been never so bad as it is today. (Nobody has contended that there was no drink evil in India before the advent of the British.)

(4) India is held in the last resort by a system of terrorism.

Not only does Dr. Pollen deny these truths known to us all, but he asserts that the administration is cheaper than elsewhere, and forgets that the Indian Civil Service is the most highly paid service in the world, and that more than a third of the revenue is absorbed by the military service. Imagine the state of a family which has to devote a third of its income for paying its door-keepers!

Dr. Pollen asserts that India is 'really a marvellously rich country inhabited for the most part by a comparatively poor and reckless peasantry'. He then asks me to multiply the average annual income of Rs. 27 by five, and argues that Rs. 135 a year for a family of five will suffice for its support. I suggest to him that Rs. 2-4-0 per head per month will not feed, clothe and house the poorest among the poor, and that I should still further reduce the average for the masses of poor men, because it is reached by including the millions of

millionaires.The average income of the poor, therefore, is an incontestable proof not only of the poverty but if the semi-starvation of India.

Dr. Pollen has the effrontery to suggest, in the face of an ever-growing drink revenue, that the present administration discourages excessive drinking.

Lastly, Dr. Pollen not only denies the existence of terrorism but contends that 'in all respects in India, they (we) are as free as the Scots, the Welsh, the people of the Dominions, and as the English themselves'.

Only non-co-operation will dispel such hopeless ignorance.

Young India, 22-6-1921

144. OUR SHORTCOMINGS

Whilst Dr. Pollen's criticism, by reason of its ignorance and arrogant assumptions, irritates without helping, an Englishman in Madras, who signs himself 'John Bull', sends the following very helpful and candid criticism :

> Permit an Englishman to send you a few words of appreciation of your work and career, and a few words of explanation. I am moved to do this by your remarks in *Young India* on Lord Reading's speech[1]. You have, it seems to me, the most valuable capacity of seeing and stating the simple truth in greater measure than any other living politician. You see the root of the trouble in India in the fact that the European in India looks down upon the Indian as an inferior. So do I. But what I want you to consider is, first, "whose fault is that?" And second, "How can it be mended?"
>
> Can the Englishman in India help regarding Indians in the mass as inferior to his own people? Those of us who try to see things an they are, what do we see? We find that the Indian is inferior to the Englishman as a servant or employee. He is less conscientious, he takes more holidays, he requires to be watched. We find he is inferior to the Englishman as a master or employer, he has less justice and less generosity. We find him inferior as an animal, he succumbs to disease, he (if of higher class) usually shirks exercise, and is very frequently a worn out old man when he ought to be in his prime. His children die in swarms. Here in Madras, the deaths of children under five frequently are half as numerous as the births. He is inferior as a citizen, very seldom does he

[1] *Vide* "The Viceroy Speaks", 8-6-1921.

resist any pressure towards bribe-giving. He boasts of his humanity because he will not kill animals, but he lets even cows starve to death, and nowhere in any civilized land are horses and oxen so ill-treated as in India. In order to maintain purity of married life, he has built up the institutions of prepuberty marriage and perpetual widowhood, and yet venereal disease is even more rampant in India than in England, and in the name of religion little girls are trained up to prostitution. What record can India show of lives devoted to non-Indian humanity like all those British men and women who (to take one example only) are at work now, in what were enemy countries in the War? If India had obtained complete swaraj and were in danger, would five million men out of every forty-five millions of population voluntarily enlist in her armies?

Out of her vast population, how few are the great men India has produced—three living, Tagore, Bose and Gandhi—an extraordinarily rich crop for India! The population of England in the time of Queen Elizabeth was no greater than that of Mysore today.

All this may seem a very one-sided and mistaken view to you. Probably it is. But how can an Englishman help seeing the comparison between English and Indian in some such light as that?

If so, the remedy is in Indian hands, and not in ours. You are already pointing the way. I do not like your term "non-co-operation", and it does not seem to me to express your meaning. I should prefer "independent action". Let Indians abolish untouchability; let them exercise restraint in marital relations, and not procreate millions of children doomed to early death, let Brahmins learn at school to spin and weave and cease to despise manual labour, let India have one common language spoken and understood from Kashmir to Comorin, whatever local vernaculars are permitted to survive. When there is something to be done, let Indians put their hands to the plough, and not merely say, "The Government must . . . ." These things you have preached, and if all the people who shout "*Gandhiji ki jai*" will do them, Englishmen will speedily entertain much more respect for Indians than they feel at present. When these things are done, there are plenty more to do. Most important of all, perhaps, is to rebel against the tyranny of ancient custom, when it is no longer felt to be right or necessary. You will no doubt be able to point out one task after another. Meanwhile, we wait and see. Will that crore of rupees be paid up? Will the twenty lakhs of charkhas be obtained, and if so, will they be used? Will non-co-operators learn to maintain self-discipline and abstain from riot? Will Gandhi cease calling a Government consisting of men who, on the average, are more ready to make sacrifices for the service of India than the average Indian is, Satanic? Will the temperance crusade lead to any

better result than unbridled illicit drinking?

If we find these questions answered in the affirmative—if—but shall we?

The English are ready to give respect, when it is earned. Do not complain that English do not respect Indians : complain instead that Indians have not commanded respect.

For my own part, I believe you are accomplishing and will accomplish great things. "Man lives by admiration, hope and love." On these great nations are built up. May India be one.

'John Bull's' letter shows that the writer has attempted to understand the movement. Much of his criticism is not wholly undeserved. 'John Bull' has given the experience of the average Englishman. His generalizations, in my opinion, cannot be sustained. His experience is confined to a microscopic minority of Indians, drawn to the cantonments from ambitious motives, and by no means representing the mass of the people. In my opinion, based upon an extensive experience of both the races, man for man the Indian is in no way inferior, in all that matters, to any other race in the world. That as animals we are inferior to Englishmen must be admitted. But that is due more largely to the climate than to anything else. The charge of indifference to the welfare of our animals can also, I think, be easily sustained. I do not believe that, except in large towns, WE suffer more from venereal diseases than the other races. Dedication of girls to prostitution is certainly a serious blot on our culture. If Indians were trained in the same manner as Englishmen, and if India was similarly situated as England, she would give quite a good account of herself. But we have a different culture which, I hope, we will retain to the end of time. India's temperament is not warlike. She would refuse to see any greatness in sending her millions to the trenches for the purpose of killing fellow-men, even though the latter might be in error. India including her Mussulman population, is in my opinion more fitted for self-suffering than for inflicting suffering upon others. It is in this belief that I have ventured to offer to her non-co-operation as a remedy for her many ills. Whether she will really respond or not remains to be seen. If it has been taken up purely from revengeful motives, it will fail. If it has been taken up, as I believe it has been, for the purpose of self-purification and self-sacrifice, it is bound to succeed. That Indians are not a nation of cowards is proved by the personal bravery and daring of her martial races, whether Hindu, Mussul-man, Sikh or Gurkha. My point is that the spirit of fighting is

foreign to India's soil, and that probably she has a higher part to play in the evolution of the world. Time alone can show what is to be her destiny.

But 'John Bull' is entitled to treat all I have said in answer as so much special pleading. I would far rather that we took such criticism as a friendly warning, and that we began to rid ourselves of all our impurities. I agree with 'John Bull' that it is better to command respect than to grumble about the want of it. And that is exactly the reason why India has taken up non-co-operation. The writer does not like the word. I would reject it today if I could find a better. But it is the only word that meets the case. We have co-operated long enough in our own degradation. It is our duty to refuse to do so any longer. One need not even apportion the blame. The fact stands, as 'Jonh Bull' has properly admitted, that the average Englishman has little respect for us. We must therefore stand aside till we and they *feel* as equals.

But there is the other side to 'John Bull's' argument. His attitude betrays race-repugnance. Assuming the shortcomings to exist, just as they are described by the writer, is that a reason for looking down upon Indians as inferior beings? Or, does not the doctrine of equality require mutual regard, irrespective of the possession of the same qualities? Does not 'John Bull' commit the same error that many Hidnus do regarding the 'untouchables'? If I am right in calling the spirit of untouchability Satanic, am I less right in calling the cult of English superiority also by the same name? Do Englishmen behave towards their less fortunate brethren in the same way as they behave towards Indians? Do they not consider themselves to be born to rule, and Indians born to obey, even as Hinduism is said to have consigned the 'untouchables' to perpetual subjection? My whole soul has risen against the existing system of Government, because I believe that there is no real freedom for India under the British connection if Englishmen cannot give up the fetish of their predestined superiority. This attitude of Englishmen has deprived the tallest Indian of any chance of rising to his full height and, therefore, in spite of all the good intentions of individual English administrators, we have really lost in our own estimation, so much so that many of us have come to believe that we require a long course of training under the English, whereas it is my conviction that we are today quite fit to govern ourselves, and therefore we must resolutely refuse to co-operate with them in the administration of reforms that fall short of

full self-government. We will no doubt make mistakes, more perhaps than now. We shall learn through our mistakes, never by being forcibly prevented from making them.

Young India, 22-6-1921

145. TO CORRESPONDENTS[1]

R. SHARMA : The families of non-co-operation prisoners are being looked after by local workers, wherever the need has arisen.

L. N. DAS : Prize charkhas may be sent to Satyagrahashram, Sabarmati, at sender's cost. The prize of Rs. 5,000 is payable to the inventor of a charkha that spins at least three pounds of even and well-twisted yarn in eight hours. The charkha must be made of parts capable of being manufactured in India, and must not cost more than Rs. 50.

B. NARAYANA : If lawyers, who have suspended practice, do not fulfil the other obligations of non-co-operation or have no faith in the movement, they cannot be regarded as non-co-operators by the mere fact of suspension of practice. It is conceivable that a lawyer may suspend practice for devoting his time to destroying the movement. Motive decides the merit of an act.

V. V. SATHE : It is unnecessary to publish your letter. Even those who may be opposing non-co-operation from ignorance, ill-will or want of faith, must be won over by knowledge, love and faith, respectively.

T.M. : The idea of raising a loan for national purposes is not bad. But you are missing the chief object of the Fund, which is to perpetuate the memory of the late Lokamanya. We must fulfil our own undertaking. If we need more money, we may think of a loan. A loan cannot take the place of the memorial fund, which must be a free gift.

R. C. MATHUR : When untouchability has disappeared altogether, it is not feared that *Bhangis* will refuse to do sanitary work, if they are properly paid and well treated. Sanitary work is done well enough, if not better, in other parts of the world. But assuming that the *Bhangis*, on the bar sinister being removed, refuse to do our scavenging, we must be prepared to do it ourselves. The removal of untouchability

[1] Presumably by Gandhiji

implies that there is no sin or shame in cleaning for other people, even as it is no sin for a mother to clean her baby or for a paid nurse to clean her or his patient.

Young India, 22-6-1921

146. SPEECH AT OPENING OF SCHOOL, BOMBAY[1]

June 22, 1921

In the course of his speech Mahatma Gandhi impressed upon the audience that the one object which they should always place before themselves was swaraj and towards that end their energies must be harnessed. Only that education was useful and should be imparted in their institutions which would make their children love their Motherland, make them patriotic, make them realize their duty even at the sacrifice of their lives and win swaraj before the end of the year. They had to spin and wear khaddar; they had to right their Khilafat wrongs and the wrongs of the Punjab. Miss Krishnabai and Miss Jasalakshmi had not come there for the sake of money, but to do their duty to their country.

Mahatma Gandhi said he had been invited to open the school, although he had no intention of opening any schools at the present time. He had already opened many schools and they knew what his views on such matters were and it was no use repeating them. At this present critical time in the destiny of India, they should have only one object in starting such kinds of schools, and that object was the winning of swaraj; it was not only the winning of swaraj, but winning it within this year. Then they had also to put right the Khilafat question and their Punjab wrongs. They could not leave these two questions out of their consideration. If they were determined to win swaraj this year, they had to consider what they should do towards winning it. They should concentrate all their attention on the vital question of winning swaraj and take steps accordingly. He for one did not think that if their children went without any education, they would suffer very much. India was now suffering much and they wanted swaraj to remove her sufferings. In the first instance, they had to get strength enough to protect their children, and he must say that Indians were not strong enough to protect them. They had to realize their inherent strength for that purpose. Indians had not realized fully their ability to do things; they had not yet realized what things they were capable of doing. When people were ready to die in the performance of their duty, they became the greatest warriors, the greatest men.

There was no greater thing in the world than doing one's duty to the country which had given birth to them. Indians had to teach their children to do their duty to

[1] Gandhiji opened the Lokamanya Rashtriya Kanya Shala, Bombay's first national girls' school, at the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya.

which had given birth to them. Indians had to teach their children to do their duty to their country in these critical times. He would ask them even to die for their country in doing their duty. That was the primary object they had in view in opening the Kanya Shala and if they kept that ideal always before them, then they deserved nothing but praise. But if they sought to teach in that school only those subjects which Government and Municipal schools did teach, then he would tell them that it was impossible to win swaraj in that way within this year. The first ideal of theirs was swaraj within this year, and with that end in view they should educate their children. They had to make their children realize the importance of winning swaraj for their country and to make them alive to the needs of their country.

Therefore it was that they should teach spinning in the school. Unless every one of them wore khaddar, he did not think they would get swaraj. If they could boycott all foreign cloth before the end of this year, there would not be the slightest difficulty in winning swaraj, and also in preserving it. Towards that object they had to enlist the sympathies of men and women and children and harness their energies. We had to make them all realize the greatness of the object we had to attain. Indians had to make their children feel for their country. If the school he was going to open that day was going to do all those things, then he would ask all parents to send their children to that institution, for by so doing they would be rendering a great service not only to themselves but to their country also at the same time.

They would be able to teach their children patriotism and show them the way to win swaraj. If, however, the parents had not yet realized what their duty to their country was then it was hopeless for them to expect their children to do their duty. His intention in asking the parents to send their boys and girls there was that the latter should use khaddar, and also induce the former to use khaddar. Some people might say that Gandhi was a fool in asking them to wear khaddar. Every man had to do his duty by this country now. Every one of them had to use khaddar and he prayed to God that He would shower His blessings on the new institution which had been opened by him that morning and that He would make it prosper and succeed.[1]

Mahatma Gandhi said he had forgotten to tell them one thing and he had been reminded of it by Mr. Banker. It was not their intention first to start such schools unless they got the teachers they wanted. They had now succeeded in securing the services of Shrimati Krishnabai and Shrimati Jasalakshmi. The former was the Principal of the Crosthwaite Girls' School at Allahabad and he had met her there while he had been to that city. He had a talk with her then about non-co-operation and also with other women teachers there and Miss Krishnabai had proposed to come down to Bombay to help him in his work to the best of the ability. She was from Maharashtra and she did not like to live in Allahabad; she had been to America for her education

[1] After Sarojini Naidu had spoken, Gandhiji said a few words again.

and was well educated. She had not come to Bombay for the sake of money, but for doing service to her country. It was impossible for Miss Krishnabai to do this work all alone. She was a Maratha lady and they wanted someone to look after the Gujarati girls and for that purpose they had Miss Jasalakshmi Dalpatram Kavi, who was a first assistant in the Mahalaxmi Training College at Ahmedabad. Even before starting this school, she had left her post and was living in the Ashram at Ahmedabad. She had come down to Bombay to do her duty to the country although she hated living in a big city like Bombay. But she had a duty to perform and that was to look after the Gujarati girls. Indians could with the fullest confidence send their children to this school and leave them in the hands of these two able ladies.

Collections for the Tilak Swaraj Fund were then made and some ornaments and much money was collected. A Parsi girl gave her gold bangle, and a Parsi gentleman a cheque.

Mr. Gandhi said many people were telling him that the Parsi community was not giving any money towards the Fund. He wanted to tell them, however, that it was not a fact. He had received help from them before, he was receiving it now and he had every confidence he would receive it in the future.

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-6-1921

147. MESSAGE TO WOMEN'S MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

June 22, 1921

Mrs. Motiwalla read a message from Mahatma Gandhi asking them to pardon him if he was unable to attend the meeting. He had met his sisters of Bombay many a time and what could he say to them often and often? He was hungry for the freedom and sanctity of Hindustan and his prayer to God was that there should be chastity, fearlessness and simplicity in the Indian women. Without the belssings of women no *dharmarajya* could be established in this land. They had to give up the use of foreign cloth within this year and for that purpose he wanted the help of his sisters. Women should consider it a religious duty to use the charkha and khaddar, even though they might have to suffer considerable inconvenience. They must wear only those clothes which were made by their own hands. They should consider it a sin to use foreign cloth. Mill-made cloth ought to be used by only the poor people. He required large funds for this work and for that purpose he wanted the help of women. If they could only work for the Tilak Swaraj Fund, he had no doubt that a large sum could be very

[1] The meeting was held under the auspices of the Rashtriya Stree Samaj at Marwadi Vidyalaya Hall, with H.H. Nazli Begum Rafiya Sultana in the chair. Among the speakers were the Ali Brothers. Sarojini Naidu and others made collections for the Swaraj Fund.

easily collected by them. It was a happy augury to see his Parsi, Hindu and Mohammedan sisters working towards the fulfilment of that object.

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-6-1921

148. LETTER TO S. R. HIGNELL

LABURNUM ROAD,
GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
June 24 [*1921*]

DEAR MR. HIGNELL,

I have often thought of writing about H.E.'s speech and the *communique* about the Ali Brothers. But I have purposely delayed writing in order that I may not take a hasty step or write a thoughtless word. I want to tell H.E. that I was deeply grieved over the *communique* and the speech. In my opinion neither represents a correct statement of the situation as I understood it when I left Simla. I am deluged with the inquiries about the interviews. I suggest that either an agreed statement giving the purport of the interviews should be published or I should be absolved from the obligation to observe confidence regarding the interviews. I need hardly say that so far as I am concerned I have no desire to treat anything I have said to H.E. as confidential.

Probably you will wire H.E.'s decision. My address up to the 30th June is Laburnum. . . .

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand : S.N. 7559

149. SPEECH ON ROLE OF TEACHERS, BOMBAY[1]

June 25, 1921

Mr. Gandhi said, when he was invited by the teachers, he knew for certain that the teachers would not be able to give him much, but still he had accepted their invitation with great pleasure, because he felt, as an experienced teacher, that the key to freedom of India was in the hands of the teachers. During his travels all over the country, he had been telling the people that the key to freedom and the means of redressing their Khilafat wrong and Punjab grievances were in the hands of the

[1] A meeting of teachers and students of primary schools in Bombay was held at Mandvi for presenting Gandhiji with a purse for the Tilak Swaraj Fund.

teachers, both men and women. He acknowledged that the women of India had done their duty to the country in the right spirit. If Indians were poor and were so much down in the world, they were as much responsible for those conditions as their rulers. For, while it was right to say that a ruler got the subjects he deserved, it was also right to say that the subjects got the rulers they deserved. He would also say, at the same time, that the people got the teachers they deserved. It was stated in the *Bhagavad Gita* that what a great man did others also did; what learned men and their rulers did, the rest of the men did. The Congress had passed a resolution asking the teachers as much as the lawyers to do their duty to their country and he was quite sure that the teachers who wanted to serve their country would never have to starve.

When he saw the large number of students being taught, and so many teachers being trained in the training colleges, he felt sorry for his country, because he felt sure that the teachers that would be turned out from these colleges were not the persons to undertake the education and training of the young generation of this country. There was so much slavery in these colleges that he despaired of the future of their country. Shrimati Jasalakshmi, who was trained in a Government college and was now a teacher in the National Girls School in Bombay, had told her experiences to him. She had to leave the college because she felt that it was impossible to preserve her dignity and freedom as long as she continued to serve Government in that college. When an educated and respectable woman said that, they would realize what it really was to serve in the Government schools. That was one of the reasons why India was so down in the scale of nations. He had no hesitation in telling them that teachers, like any other men, had taken up the profession of teaching, because they wanted to earn their livelihood and not because it was a good and noble profession and that they were doing good to the country. Just as lawyers and doctors had taken up their professions as professions, so had teachers taken up theirs, for the sake of making money and for nothing else. Personally, he became a lawyer and went out of India, because his people thought that he would earn more money thereby. He had no intention then of doing any service to his Motherland. He had since then realized that the best thing was to serve one's country. Therefore, he had given up all those and he appealed to the teachers to give their share of sacrifice in the great sacrifice that the country was doing now.

It was the duty of the teachers to be good and conscientious. Let them teach the boys to be good, fearless and truthful, let them make their students observe *brahmachary* (celibacy). He was appalled at the adultery that was prevalent in India and he feared that, if things went on in this strain for ever they would never be fit for swaraj. It was not their business to imitate any other country in such matters. It was the duty of the teachers to teach their boys to be brave and truthful. The swaraj they were going to establish was one based on righteousness and not on unrighteousness. They were out to establish *dharmarajya* and they were not going to do that by means

of force or other ways. When thousands of Muslims were ready to die and not to kill, when thousands of Hindus were ready to sacrifice their lives and not to sacrifice the lives of others, then they could feel sure that swaraj was theirs. With the solution of the Khilafat question the question of cow-protection would be solved.

He again asked students to observe celibacy, for in no other religion was so much stress laid on that question as in Hinduism. Indians should also give up adultery. They should consider every woman except their wife as their mother or daughter or sister. When he saw so much sin committed in this country, he felt despair in his heart of having swaraj broad-based on dharma. If they were determined on having *dharmarajya*, then their teachers must immediately realize that they had to train the boys in the proper spirit. Only when they succeeded in inculcating the right principles in the minds of their boys and girls would they have good citizens. For their *dharmarajya*, they wanted righteous men and women. But if the teachers themselves expected the students to be truthful, if they told lies to their official superiors, the students would learn that lesson from their teachers. Therefore, they had to be taught by personal example. We had to purify ourselves of our sins; we must be free from those things and not be slaves of vice.

As long as men and women realized not their duty to their country and wanted to use fine foreign cloth instead of khaddar, they would never get swaraj. If they did not entirely give up the use of foreign cloth that year then they could never get swaraj that year. They should not feel sure that simply because they might be able to collect a crore of rupees they could easily get swaraj. They had to do many things before they could realize swaraj. The money they would collect would be used for starting schools and colleges and many other things; many more things, however, remained to be done. Therefore he would ask the teachers, both men and women, to guard their bodies and keep them pure and undefiled, with as great care as they had to use in regard to their minds. They must keep their bodies pure as well as their soul. They were bound to do that. They had to give up the use of foreign cloth and they had also to teach the boys to use only khaddar on their bodies and not to wear a single piece of foreign cloth. As long as Indians did not do that the poverty of their country would never disappear. It was necessary for Indians to do so because the chastity of their women would be preserved as they would not have to go out of their homes to break stones on roads. They should introduce charkhas into every home and they should be worked as much by the poor women as by the rich. What good would the rich women do to their country by wasting their time in reading story books, etc.? What was required now in India was the universal use of swadeshi cloth and that could only be done by means of the charkhas.

If everyone of them did their duty, he felt ssure they could easily establish swaraj within that year. Swadeshi, non-co-operation and abstinence were equally important in the progress of their country towards the goal. They had to abolish the

vice of drink from their midst, and for that purpose they should go to the liquor shops determined to be killed in doing their duty in persuading their countrymen not to drink. When they went to those places, they must be prepared even for their death. If a few men died at the hands of the police who were protecting the liquor shops and at the hands of the liquor-shop-owners, they would easily get swaraj. They had to be ready for their death at the hands of the men protecting the interests of the liquor merchants Only that day he had read of the trouble at Arthur Road and he was sorry he was not there to bear the brunt of the assault.

Another thing he wanted to impress upon the teachers was this : they must teach the children, both Hindu and Muslim, to have perfectly friendly feelings for each other. We had to teach them to have perfect unity among the two peoples. It was impossible, there could be perfect unity between these two peoples unless both of them followed and loved their religions properly. It was not intended that Hindus should become Muslims or that Muslims should become Hindus by giving up their own religion.

The next thing of importance was the raising of their depressed classes, their *Dheds* and their *Bhangis*. As long as they kept down these people, the higher classes themselves would be *Bhangis* and *Dheds*. Because by keeping them down, they dragged themselves down to their level. Mr. Gandhi did not ask them to give their children in marriage to the *Bhangis*, or eat with them. What he wanted was that these people should be treated as their brethren, as fellow human beings. So long as these people were down-trodden it was impossible to achieve swaraj.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-6-1921

150. SPEECH AT "ANTYAJ" RECEPTION, BOMBAY[1]

[Before *June 26, 1921*]

I do not go to any place if I am likely to get no money there, but I have not come here with that expectation. I readily accepted your invitation because I know the privations of the untouchable brethren. I know your hardships. I am working hard this year to rid Hinduism of the pollution of untouchability. Swaraj is all-powerful. If untouchability does not disappear, then it will not be *dharmarajya* or swaraj which we shall have won. So long as this Dyerism remains in Hindusim, even if we have swaraj, it will not be true swaraj. Though dirty, unclean, or vicious, let him be what he is, no person can be considered untouchable if we have regard for the true principles of

[1] Gandhiji was presented with an address of welcome by members of the *Antyaj* community.

religion and, most certainly not, if we have regard for the principle of compassion. The idea that we may be defiled by another's touch I don't accept as a necessary part of Hinduism. That which has no truth and non-violence in it is religion at all. What should you do so that the caste Hindus may regard you as touchable unconditionally? Someone said that you should perform purificatory rites. But there can be no impurity in you. No one consuming liquor and flesh is regarded as an untouchable for that reason, though even so you must give up these things. I would not visit a Brahmin if he drinks or eats meat, and I certainly insist on equal purity in you. Not only for my sake but for yours, too, you ought to remain pure.

What does it matter to you how the Brahmins behave? See that your own conditions improve. One person asked me why I did not teach you non-co-operation. But so long as there is evil in us, how can we change the Government with it? We should not cheat people in the name of non-co-operation. If my companion is deceitful, I would leave him. You cannot resort to non-co-operation until you have a good number of men of virtue among you. I have become an intermediary between you and the people. I say this to you only as sincere Hindu. Gandhi will be ready any time to come amongst you and make you fit [to offer non-co-operation]. You should go on working to purify yourselves, for we need to offer a pure sacrifice. I shall do my job.

My sisters, I wish to see the spinning-wheel and the loom in your hands. You, in particular, owe it as a duty to see that everybody is clothed. Bhai Shankarlal has not been able to come here because of a toothache. We who have come will not, you may be sure, take a bath after returning home. Jasalakshmi, grand-daughter of poet Dalpatram Dahyabhai[1], is here. She will be a help to you.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 26-6-1921

[1] Dalpatram Dahyabhai Travadi, 1820-1892

151. SELF-SACRIFICE IN GUJARAT

I do not know of any great sacrifice made by Gujarat for a public cause. I do not regard the sacrifice made at the time of the Broach Conference as a sacrifice by Gujarat. It was merely a sacrifice made in Gujarat. We can speak of sacrifice by Gujarat only when a large number of Gujarati men and women give up their all for the cause for the country.

Nevertheless, we shall never know to what extent the spirit of self-sacrifice shown by the friends who resolved, during the conference at Broach, to offer their all will have helped Gujarat to fulfil its pledge. But a person like me, who has faith, will, if Gujarat passes the test on June 30, believe that the chief reason for this was the sacrifice made at Broach.

However that be, if Gujarat wishes to make a supreme effort to win swaraj this very year, it urgently needs voluntary workers who will dedicate their all to the cause. Look at any other province in the country, and we shall find that till now Gujarat has made fewer sacrifices than it. Maharashtra stands at the top. I would describe Bengal's sacrifices as reckless, but it has certainly not shrunk from any. In the Punjab, too, the people's sacrifice has been of no order. The very conception of the Arya Samaj has been inspired by a spirit of self-denial. The Sikhs' sacri-fices have also been no less.

We cannot claim say such thing for Gujarat. When two young men from Gujarat joined the Servants of India Society, the people were filled with surprise. We took it to be a great act of self-sacrifice when two gentlemen from Surat gave up working for earning money and started running Ashrams. When I spoke of this sacrifice to a professor in the Punjab, he merely smiled and said: "I don't call it a sacrifice at all. Have they given up their all? What hardships do they bear? Do they have to worry for their meals the next day?"

Many years have passed since this conversation and, meanwhile, the professor has even been on a pilgrimage to jail. He didn't have a farthing with him.

Gujarat can hold its head high only when a large number of young men come forward to sacrifice their all; only then will it be fit to make its contribution to the cause of swaraj. It is the duty of each and every province to do all it can for winning swaraj. Every province will be equally disgraced if we fail in securing swaraj before the end of this year. No province can blame another. The province which first

acquires comp-lete fitness for swaraj will win it for itself and will instantaneously make others ready for it. Winning swaraj means helping the country to over-come its lack of faith in itself and to inspire self-confidence in it. From among some lions which believe themselves to be lambs, if even one re-alizes the truth about itself, very soon the others will also know themsel-ves to be lions. If even one province demonstrates the complete success of non-co-operation, other provinces will not be slow in following. One may also be sure that the solutions of the Punjab and the Khilafat proble-ms will follow as a matter of course as soon as even one person has ac-quired the necessary strength. I shall explain some other time in what that strength consists. At the moment, I only want to suggest that, even in working to acquire the needed strength for non-co-operation, large numb-ers of young men and women will have to make the heaviest sacrifices.

If a man offers up his all, how is he to maintain himself? It is cer-tainly better to give up the idea of service and follow some avocation to maintain oneself and one's family than to live on alms and serve [the country]. The fear expressed in the foregoing question is certainly justi-fied if the idea is that one should live on alms so that one may be free to serve others. But every worker is entitled to what his labour is worth. The kind of service I have in view is not one of leading others, but one which consists in labouring for them. He is the true volunteer who works harder, is more honest, more efficient, more humble and has a better sense of discipline than a paid employee. Such a voluntary worker is paid just enough for living. He does not, thus, live upon alms, but gives true service to the country. He gives more than he receives. The man who reserves something for himself and then claims to give his free services to the country is less worthy than another who has offered up his all. If the common experience is different from this, it means that in actual fact the worker giving up his all has been stealing. That is, he has given away all his wealth but not his mind and his body. Not only that; claiming to give his all, he takes more than he has given. If, after giving away the lakh of rupees which I had, I in-volve the country in an expenditure of lakhs and refuse to give all of my time and myself to work, I shall have certainly become a beggar living on alms, nay, more despicable even than a beggar. It is not of sacrifice like this that I have been speaking. The sacrifice which I call for has simply no room in it for behaving like a beggar. Do what one will, such sacrifice cannot be hidden from

others. So long as this state of things does not exist in the country, it is vain to think of having swaraj. A swaraj army will come into existence only when some men and women are ready to sacrifice their all; only then will many others come forward to make ordinary sacrifices, and their sacrifices will be to good effect.

The time has come for such sacrifices. The [Gujarat] Provincial Congress Committee has issued an appeal for volunteers. Incompetent persons and those who do not know what vocation to take up may offer themselves, if they wish to, but the applicants I am looking for are such as will be prepared to give up their all, live on what the country can give them and feel honoured in doing so. We shall never win this great war for a holy cause with the help of those who offer themselves as swaraj workers because they can think of nothing else to do. I hope, therefore, that the sacrifice which the friends have made [at Broach] will infect others and I shall have the good fortune to speak of Gujarat's sacrifice as distinct from sacrifice made in Gujarat.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-6-1921

152. MADHURI AND PUSHPA

Madhuri and Pushpa are girls of six or seven. It was my greedy hunt for contributions to the Tilak Swaraj Fund that had taken me to the family.

While I sat surrounded by the men and women members of the family, all full of love for me, Madhuri came up, walking with slow, hesitant steps. I called her to me. Unfortunately, they had given me a chair, tables and chairs being the normal thing in the family. Seated in a chair, how could I take up Madhrui? So I drew her to me and put her head on my lap.

"I have cheated you."

"Elders may cheat me, not kids. You cannot have cheated me."

I replied with a smile, observing Madhuri's features the while.

"But I have really cheated you; I gave you only a rupee and a half", she said with courage.

"Then, I must say, I have been really cheated. With so many ornaments on you, you gave me only a rupee and a half?" I said, and took Madhuri's little hand in mine. Her bangle danced in my palm. I continued :

"You should then do expiation. Kids should be perfectly innocent. They never cheat anybody. To expiate means to wash off one's sin, to cleanse oneself. You ought to do so now."

"How is it possible to be cleansed now? The fact remains that I have cheated you."

"There is an easy way. You have realized that you ought to have given me your ornaments. That is what made you say you had cheated me. You should now give me all your ornaments and your sin will be washed off."

Madhuri's face, bright till now, fell somewhat. I saw this and resumed :

"What should kids have to do with ornaments? We appear handsome through our actions. Besides, ornaments may be lost. Better give them to help some good cause. And you seem to be a good girl! You confess your error too. You should willingly give your ornaments. I shall utilize them to supply spinning-wheels to the homes of the poor, and to educate children like yourself. Other little girls like you have also given their ornaments."

I paused.

There were two little ruby pendants on Madhuri's ears and on her wrists a pair of bangles with strips of gold and another pair of glass bangles. She whispered :

"Will it be all right if I give these glass bangles?"

I wondered what reply I could give to this child. Shall I take her with me and adopt her as my daughter? But, then, I thought, I have so many daughters like her! And, for the present, I am but a miserly *Bania*, who knows only grabbing. So I said :

"I can get money even for your bangles. But I want all your ornaments. Surely, it should not be so very difficult to part with them! For one thing, your sin will be washed off and, for another, they will come in useful to me. Your ornaments will help us in winning swaraj. Won't you give me all?"

"I shall not give my gold bangle at any rate. Will you accept these (pointing to her pendants)?"

Now that is something. How nice it would be, though, if you gave me these bangles as well?"

Madhuri felt somewhat unhappy. I kissed her and said, "All right, give me your pendants."

She ran away, returning in a minute. While she was removing the pendants, I said : "But have you obtained mother's permission?"

"Yes, she has given her permission."

"She told me to give everything, but I don't like to part with my bangles."

Madhuri removed the pendants and dropped them into my hands. A tiny gold link had fallen on to the ground. She looked for it carefully, found it and handed it to me.

Do what I might, though, I could not overcome my greed. My eyes would not turn away from the bangles. I did not yet know the girl's name, nor whose daughter she was. I now asked and learnt her name, recognized the worthy gentleman who was her father, and said :

"Really, Madhuri, what do you see in these bangles that you love them so much? What should an innocent girl like you do with ornaments? Won't you give your bangles too?"

Madhuri softened. With her own hands, she removed a bangle and put it into my hand. This was a victory for me, I thought.

But the victory was on Madhuri's side. That little girl had stolen my heart. I envied her parents. "May all parents have such children," I prayed from my heart. My faith in the success of our struggle for swaraj grew stronger. I said to Madhuri :

"You have been so wonderful. I will not accept the other bangle even if you give it. But is it willingly that you have given me what you have? You can take them back, if you wish to."

As I said this, I held out the ornaments before her.

"I gave them quite willingly and do not want them back."

The answer brought fresh blood to me.

I went into another room to see the female members of the family. Some other kids had been following the conversation between Madhuri and me.

2

Pushpa, a neighbour's daughter, removed her bangle and put it into my hand.

"Have you obtained your mother's permission?"

"Yes, Sir. It is with her permission that I give this bangle to you."

"And do you know my terms for accepting all these articles? Little girls who give ornaments must not ask their parents to replace them before we have won swaraj. If they have some others, they may wear them; but, for some time, they must not ask for new ones to be made."

"I have got another such bangle with me. I won't ask for a new one. I have given my bangle to you quite willingly."

Madhuri was looking on. She was also discussing something with her mother. She removed the glass bangles and the remaining gold one, and put them both into my hand!

"I accept this glass bangle. But I told you I would not accept your gold bangle even if you offered it. Please, therefore, do not give it. As it is, you have given much."

"So far as I am concerned, I have given it away to you. I do not want it at all. I have given it willingly. Kindly keep it."

Madhrui scored a victory over me. I broke my word and accepted the other bangle. With wrists and ears bare, Madhuri looked more handsome, to me at any rate. I hugged her to my heart.

Overcome with joy, I offered thanks to God.

Madhuri now addressed herself to a task. She set to work to see other girls' wrists stripped bare. Her efforts met with indifferent success.

Will God, however, judge her from the outcome of her attempt? He has said, in truth : "Do your work; leave the result entirely to Me."

For her part, Madhuri did her "work", not for show but for the satisfaction of the great *atman* inhabiting her little frame.

After exhorting Madhuri and Pushpa to wear khadi and ply the spinning-wheel and after securing a promise from the ladies of the family in regard to both, I left, all admiration in my heart for Madhuri and Pushpa.

If we do not get swaraj this very year, even through the sacrifice of such innocent ones, how great must have been the burden of sin accumulated by us, the so-called elders!

May God ever send into the world children like Madhuri and Pushpa! Let us, men and women alike, salute the stainless *atmans* of such children and learn from them.

I have written down this conversation thirty hours after it took place. I have reproduced it as well as I remember it. Even the children's words are given as they were actually spoken, without any embellishment. I noted all the time that they spoke faultlessly.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-6-1921

153. DUTY DURING FOUR DAYS

The 30th June, Thursday, is nearing. *Navajivan* will be in readers' hands on Sunday. Gujarat's and India's test will be completed on Thursday.

1. Gujarat should collect Rs. 10 lakhs for perpetuating the memory of Lokamanya Tilak and for winning swaraj.
2. Three lakh members should join the Congress.
3. Gujarat should take the number of spinning-wheels put into commission to one lakh.

If we resolve, we can complete what remains undone.

Every reader of *Navajivan* should, without waiting for anyone to approach him, pay up what he can at the nearest collection centre and obtain a receipt for it.

Every reader should persuade his friends to contribute.

Every reader, if he is 21 years of age and is not yet a member of the Congress, should become one without delay and persuade others to do likewise.

Every reader should acquire a spinning-wheel, if he has not already got one, and learn spinning.

Knowing that these four days are invaluable and will not come again, every reader should devote as much of his time as possible exclusively to these three tasks.

Every reader should look upon the nation's work as his own and attend to it expeditiously.

No one should think that nothing can be done in the four days which remain.

During four days, thousands will be born and thousands will die.

In but one night, the future of a man like Ramachandra changed; in but one day, Harishchandra gave up everything for the sake of truth and Yudhishthira lost his kingdom in gambling. One day can be of no little value in man's or a nation's life. What may not four days do then? If Gujarat wants swaraj—the rule of dharma—to be won through its efforts, it must score full marks in this first test.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-6-1921

154. TO KATHIAWARIS

As the end of June approaches, my eyes turn more often to Kathiawar. At the moment, I propose to discuss where Kathiawar stands with regard to contributions. I intend to deal with other matters later.

The work for swaraj concerns the whole of India. Indian States stand to gain in no small way through swaraj. Rulers of Indian States know that the swaraj movement has increased their strength and the subjects know that it has increased theirs.

This movement is not for the liquidation of kingship, pwoer or wealth, but for their purification. To the degree that duplicity disappears from us, to that degree will the swaraj barometer register a rise. This movement is for ending duplicity, wickedness and irreligion.

What will be the contribution of the Princes in Kathiawar, and their subjects, to this movement? So far there has been none. If it wills, Kathiawar can raise the balance necessary to complete the figure of one crore. The enterprising people of Kathiawar have gone to a great many places for business. They are certainly contributing to the local funds wherever they reside. I should like them to give more than they do. But, then, these are their contributions as Indians. As Kathiawari Gujaratis, however, what will they send from Kathiawar? What will they contribute towards Gujarat's quota of 10 lakhs? Or, rather, cannot they exert themselves and raise Gujarat's quota to double that figure?

The *Memons* of Porbandar, Ranavav, Kutiana, Jetpur and Dhoraji can, if they decide, rasie one crore from among themselves. Just one *Memon* from Jamnagar can fill the gap of 60 lakhs, if he is so inclined.

But one Prince in Kathiawar, if he understands the sacred duty of spreading the use of the spinning-wheel, can provide a crore of rupees to the Swaraj Fund, for being spent exclusively on that cause.

But I know that I should not entertain any such hope. The Princes or *Memons* do not have such faith yet. The present fund is a test of everyone's faith.

How much would we not willingly spend for curing a disease from which we ourselves suffer? How many of us —Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians and Jews—consider India's disease as their own? What is the number of such persons, whether among the Princes or the poor? How much is everyone of us prepared to spend to cure India of

the fearful tuberculosis from which she suffers? This is the test to which all of us are being put. Every Indian has to answer before June 30. Every Kathiawari must do his duty.

Those who do not believe that India is suffering from tuberculosis or who do not think that any item in the present movement will cure India of the disease, certainly need not contribute anything. I have come across few Kathiawaris who have these doubts and, therefore, I hope for much from Kathiawar.

The people of Wadhwan and Viramgam raised my hopes. Zalawad has had an ill-name on account of its poverty and narrow-mindedness. That same Zalawad has given me a surprise. If Zalawad by itself can contribute more than Rs. 25,000, what must Halar and Sorath and Gohilwad give? And what Bhavnagar? The last is, at present, the biggest port in Kathiawar, with a thriving business. The people are relatively well off. Where is the share it ought to have contributed?

The women of Zalawad, I must admit, disappointed me. I saw a good number of them [at the meeting]. But I was pained to find that the contribution by the women who attended the two meetings at Wadhwan was the lowest I had known at any place in the whole of India. Could it be that they had not heard about swaraj, about *dharmarajya*? Or did the fault the lie with the men? Was it that they had done nothing to educate the women about this holy cause? Let the reason be what it is. I for one have great hopes of my sisters in Kathiawar. They have taken well to the spinning-wheel. Hundreds of poor women among them are earning their livelihood through it and serving Mother India at the same time. Will not the well-to-do women give their jewellery or contribute in cash?

Kathiawaris claim me as one of themselves. That love of theirs will now be tested. If, despite their love for me, I fail in convincing them, how can I ever hope to win over other Indians? If Kathiawar has understood my message, I shall certainly expect its contribution to be the biggest.

May God fulfil that hope!

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-6-1921

155. SPEECH AT BOMBAY MEETING[1]

June 26, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi said he was thankful to the people of Santa Cruz for collecting more than Rs. 30,000 although their share was only Rs. 15,000. He was gratified at this. He was proud of Santa Cruz because he was a resident of Santa Cruz often in the past[2] and he was glad that the people of Santa Cruz had not yet forgotten him. The greater the love and confidence shown in him by the people of Bombay and the rest of India, the greater was his own responsibility to the people, the greater was the burden that rested on his shoulders. What could he tell them at the end of the year? But whatever might be the result of their efforts, he was confident that their labours would never be in vain and that they would be benefited a great deal. However in his heart of hearts he felt certain that they would get swaraj by the end of the year. The women and children of Santa Cruz should not think that they alone had done very valuable work for the cause; they must remember that children and women all over India had done the same thing. All over India, men, women and children, and poor men, had given their quota to the Swaraj Fund. Compared to what the poor had done, he did not think that the rich had done their share of duty. Comparatively, the poor had given more than the rich and the former had done their duty to the country. So had the Bohras, the Parsis and the Christians. He had never any doubt in his mind about the Parsi community, and, comparing to their population the contribution they had made, he would say that they had done more than their share of the work—more than even other communities—to the country. Even at this time of day, he was confident of receiving more money from the Parsis than other communities. If he did not receive it today, he would receive it tomorrow. He was sure that the Parsis were with them and not against them and that they would not keep themselves aloof from other communities.

Swaraj could never be granted to them by other people; it had to be acquired by them. He would tell his friends that so long as they did not solve the Khilafat question and did not get justice for Punjab wrongs, they would never get swaraj. Even more than swaraj, these two things were important. They had to keep them in the forefront of their programme. Whatever other concessions their rulers might give them, they would never be satisfied. These two things were like poisor in their body politic and they had to throw out that poison. So long as people did not feel satisfied that they had got swaraj, they might take it that they had not got it. When everyone of them, rich or poor, high and low, had realized swaraj within himself, then swaraj was surely attained. He would not give them any definition of swaraj just now. But, if the whole

[1] It was held to present Gandhiji with a purse for the Tilak Swaraj Fund.
[2] This was in 1901-2 when he was practising as a lawyer in Bombay.

of India said, either by the end of October or December, that they had not got anything, then he also would say the same thing with them. He could not make them feel or realize or recognize a thing which they themselves were incapable of so doing. They must not think that, because they had got together one crore of rupees, swaraj was already at hand. They must remember that these were the sinews of war and it was a sign that the people wnated swaraj at the end of the year.

He did not think that the residents of Santa Cruz had made a contribution which was beyond their power. When he undertook to collect the crore of rupees he had great faith in the city of Bombay to furnish him with that sum, even if the other parts of the country were not able to do their duty. He did not think that the women and children of Santa Cruz had given him their due share. They must not think of these things in the *Bania* spirit although he himself was a *Bania* (Laughter). Women had great power in their homes and they could give as much as they liked without let for hindrance. He wanted to ask them whether they had given him $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of their whole property. If they wished, they could have easily given him the required sixty lakhs. Within the next four days they had to make good the deficit; they should not think of those things in a *Bania* spirit—they must do their duty to their country. He had been told by Mr. J. K. Mehta with evident pride that they had 40 charkhas in Santa Cruz, wheras he saw before him more than 400 women and he was surprised that they were not using the charkhas.

Mr. Gandhi then spoke at some length on the use of the charkha for driving away poverty from this land. Both rich and poor women should use the charkha and he wanted the blessings of those women who wore khaddar spun and woven with their own hands. He was sure he would reach the goal which he had kept before himself with their blessings. For the swaraj which they all wanted, three months were too many—it was too long a period of time. They wanted to attain swaraj by a complete change in the mentality of the whole of India. He asked them not to rest content with what they had done, but to do their best to give him more and more contributions. It was the duty of Bombay to give him more money, because it was through Bombay that the whole of India, every town and village, was flooded with foreign piecegoods. He wanted the city to atone for its sin by paying the sixty lakhs which was the deficit now. They knew that where there was truth, there was victory.

About their complaint that they wanted their committee to be affiliated to the Bombay Provincial Committee, Mr. Gandhi said that if they wanted to join Bombay, nobody could keep them out of it. If they so desired, the money they had collected could either go to the Maharashtra Committee or the Bombay Committee, the Treasurers of the latter being Messrs Tairsee and Motiwalla. These Treasurers had not the least power to spend a single pie out of these funds. The Secretaries of the Committee were Messrs Umar Sobhani, Banker and Dr. Velkar, and people could rely

on them not to waste a single pice. They had made a mistake in putting their sole trust in him alone, for it was impossible for him to look after all the funds that were collected in India. He had done his best to give the management of the funds to good men—for the atmosphere of India had purfied a great deal. He could assure them that not a single officer in charge of the funds would use the money for his own purpose, and he had the fullest confidence in every one of them. He did not know the names of the members of the Bombay Committee, but he knew the Treasurers and Secretaries and they could be relied upon implicitly. He had not asked them to hand over their monies to Mrs. Naidu because she was not a good accountant, although she might coax them, and even threaten them into giving money for the Swaraj Fund with her sweet voice. (Laughter.) They could therefore give their money with the fullest confidence. As regards the use of those funds, they would be used for opening new schools and colleges and for introducing charkhas. It was not the intention of the Committee to live on interest alone. They wanted to spend the whole capital for the regeneration of India.

Addressing the *Vaishnavas* and *Shravakas*, he said as long as they did not treat the depressed classes as their brethren, they would never get swaraj. So long as one man treated another human being with contempt and with hatred, they could not get swaraj, for they were not fit for it. He appealed to Hindu—*Shravakas* and *Vaishnavas*—to abolish, for ever, untouchability from their midst. The feeling of untouchability was Satanic. Just as they wanted to do away with the Satanic Government, they must also be prepared to do away for ever with this Satanic system from themselves. What could they say of a state of things which did not allow their poor brethren to take water from a well or go to a hospital when they were ill? How could they say that they were fit for swaraj with this bar of untouchability which kept the poor in a down-trodden condition?

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-6-1921

156. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

BOMBAY,
June 28, 1921

PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA
SIMLA

NEVER INTENDED APOLOGY[1] GOVERNMENT. IF I HAD WOULD HAVE STATED CLEARLY. WROTE VICEROY LAST WEEK FOR PUBLICATION AGREED ACCOUNT INTERVIEW OR ABSOLUTION FROM CONFIDENCE.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1921

157. NOTES

OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS

The Viceroy's reply to the Ahmadiyya community shows that he has passed into the hands of a bureaucracy that is clever, united and utterly unscrupulous.His defence of officers and officials supplies the meaning of racial equality. The Viceroy sees no inequality in the impunity with which Europeans may commit crimes against Indian humanity. I recall the extraordinary judgment of a Punjab magistrate, who considers that justice is satisfied when he draws upon his imagination for extenuating causes, and fines a young Irish soldier fifty rupees for interfering with the liberty of an innocent Indian woman.

His Excellency does not care to study the daily Press which is replete with instances of insults hurled against Indians by Europeans. He seems to be unaware of the fact that British officers will not tolerate the presence of Indian judges in their railway compartment. The Viceroy says : There is no foundation, I verily believe, for any suggestion that the British official is anxious to assert racial superiority over the Indian with whom he comes in contact.' I assure Lord Reading that his observation is so contrary to the everyday experience of the average Indian that it must prejudice the people against the soundness of his judgment or even the honesty of his purpose. They will see in his certificates of character to officials and officers a studied refusal to see the truth and do justice. They will not give him the benefit of the doubt and think, as I do, that the Viceroy is not wilfully blind but is not permitted to see things, except so much as the

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 15-6-1921 and 29-6-1921.

bureaucracy is prepared to let him see.

FROM THE FIVE HUNDREDTH FLOOR

The fact is that it is impossible for any Viceroy to see the truth, living as he does on the mountain-tops seven months in the year, and in complete isolation even when he lives on the plains. Imagine a business man in Bombay conducting his business from top-floor, with only lifts and 'phones between him and his clerks and salesmen. The people of Bombay are hardly satisfied with the condition wherein at least there is an unbroken chain of inhabited floors between the top and the ground floors. But with the big business house in Simla and the groaning millions on the plains, there is solid, dead rock, and even the piercing cry of the feeble millions is broken into nothingness, as it heaves up to the mountain-top from the plains. Prince Siddhartha was kept in such isolation that he did not know what misery, want and death were. He was an honest lad. But for an accident, he would have been lost to the world. Well, he was living not much above his people. He had the same coloured pigment as his father's subjects. Whilst Siddhartha was living hardly thirty feet above the people, the Viceroy lives seven thousand five hundred feet[1] above them. It would be no fault in him, if he did not willingly cut himself from the people, that he could not understand the people's hopes and fears. So long as he lives both physically and mentally in Simla, so long will he be kept in ignorance of the truth, even as Siddhartha was. But there is an accident in store for him, as there was for the renowned young prince, whom the world worships as Buddha the enlightened. Non-co-operation is the accident. And if Lord Reading has open eyes and open ears, it will not be long before he sees and hears the truth.

THE SAVARKAR BROTHERS

'Ditcher' of the *Capital* has thrown mud at these brave brothers. He has charged one of them with having, during imprisonment, abused the wireless and plotted with the enemy. He has entered into details, as if the writer had been officially prompted to write the paragraph. If the charge is true, the Government should publish the facts. As it is, it stands, and must have discredited the brothers in the eyes of the public. They are, I understand, not non-co-operators. They claim to be absolutely innocent, and have a clear cause of action against the newspaper concerned. Be that however as it may, Dr.

[1] Simla's mean height above sea-level

Savarkar informs me that one of them, Mr. Ganesh, has already served, if we count the remissions, fourteen years and two months, and that therefore, under the law, he is entitled to discharge. Section 55 of the Indian Penal Code runs :

> In every case in which a sentence of transportation for life shall have been passed, the Government of India or the Government of the place within which the offender shall have been sentenced may, without the consent of the offender, commute the punishment for imprisonment of either description for a term not exceeding fourteen years.

It is clear under this section, that Mr. Ganesh Damodar Savarkar should have been discharged two months ago. The brothers having been removed from the Andamans, the section I have quoted must operate in their favour, and they may not be detained for a period exceeding fourteen years. All remissions already granted must count in reduction of fourteen years. This instance brought to light by the assiduity of an affectionate brother is probably not the only one of its kind. The world will never know how many illegalities have been perpetrated in the name of law. I am loath to imagine that Mr. Savarkar is being wilfully and wickedly detained. But that is poor comfort to the injured.

THE GATEWAY OF FREEDOM

There are still people, even in advanced circles, who doubt the efficacy of imprisonment for securing India's freedom. They think that imprisonment deprives the people of the services of brave men. It is as much as to say that the bravest soldiers should not run any risk for fear of their guidance being lost to the cause they espouse. Such sceptics forget that the Lokamanya owed his immense popularity and influence to his having suffered imprisonment.Jesus's death on Calvary was his crowing achievement. The passion of Imam Hasan on the field of Karbala made Islam a power in the world. Harishchandra is remembered for his endless sufferings. India cannot attain freedom until lakhs upon lakhs have become fearless and are ready to seek imprisonment in their innocence. And if lakhs are not ready, thousands must be actually imprisoned before India attains freedom. Non-co-operation is intended to evoke the truest bravery of the nation. We must be prepared to defy sufferings even unto death if we will be free. He who saves himself shall perish.

MAY WE DEFEND ?

If it is true that we must fill the gaols of India for the sake of

legitimately opposing the will of this Government, it follows that we cannot defend ourselves before a British court of law, much less can we engage counsel. I know, it is possible to imagine hard cases as, say, of the Savarkar brothers. If I knew them to be convinced non-co-operators, I would have no hesitation in advising them to waive any action for damages against their persecutors, even though they may be wholly in the right. Though the abstention in such cases will be due more to the resolution of the boycott of British courts, it will be equally necessary in terms of the law of suffering.

THE APOLOGY AGAIN

Nothing has caused so much waste of time as the Simla interview and the Apology. From among the many letters before me, I wish to deal with only one. A respected friend[1], who is jealous of my reputation for honesty and fairplay, tells me that the talk in Simla is, that I have been unfair to the Viceroy, that I have almost accused him of breach of honour and that I have possibly and unconsciously swerved from the truth in saying that the apology is not made to the Government. I still hold that the apology was not tendered to the Government. If it was, I would not have hesitated to make it clear in the wording itself. It was meant not to be ambiguous. There was no occasion for concealing anything for saving the face of the Ali Brothers. I hasten to assure everyone, not excluding His Excellency, that if I find that I have strayed from truth by a hair's breadth, I shall apologize to him and to the world. I hold truth above my in-fluence in my country or anywhere else. I am not conscious of having accused Lord Reading of breach of honour. A rapid conver-sation is a mental cinematograph. The mind takes in the word-pictures as fast as they come, but it does not retain them all fully or in their exact order in memory. It is possible that we both have carried different impressions of the various interviews. I have given mine with the utmost accuracy, and as much as I could, without being guilty of a breach of confidence. But I see quite clearly that the public is befogged. It will not be satisfied without a fairly full report of the interviews. I am anxious to satisfy its curiosity. To that end I have already entered into correspondence with H. E. the Viceroy, and asked that either an agreed version may be published, or I may be absolved from the promise of confidence. So far as I am concerned, I

[1] This was evidently Malaviya; *vide* "Telegram to Madan Mohan Malaviya", 28-6-1921.

have no confidences to be respected. But I recognize that the position of a Viceroy is totally different from that of a public worker like myself. I must ask those who are eager to know the whole story to be a little patient. Meanwhile, I wish to acknowledge one serious mistake, I see, I have made. I ought to have asked to be shown the *communique* that was to be issued. I was anxious not to go back to Simla and further interrupt my tour, and I was so certain that everything would pass off nicely and creditably to both parties. With all experience of honest misunderstandings and worse, I should have done better. But that was not to be. I am, however, quite certain that although it is unfortunate that a great deal of bitterness has been generated by the controversy, the country's cause will be found to have gained rather than suffered. Meanwhile, I must accept the verdict of the good Maulana Abdul Bari that the harm in the shape of the drooping of the spirits of non-co-operators is apparent, the gain is in the womb of the future. Let us watch and wait.

PARSI GENEROSITY

Mr. Godrej of the safe fame has eclipsed all donations to the Tilak Swaraj Fund with his announcement of three lakhs of rupees. His dona-tions to public purposes have been hitherto quite unknown. But he was induced to appreciate the necessity this time of a public announcement.I tender my congratulations to Mr. Godrej and the whole Parsi community. I wish also to testify that, during the collection week in Bombay, not a day has passed without Parsi donations. Parsi ladies and gentlemen are also making door to door collections. Parsis are also working as pickets. Among the news-papers, too, not all the Parsi papers are hostile to the movement. But Mr. Godrej's generosity puts the Parsis easily first in all India. Parsi Rustomji's [Rs.] 52,000 would in any case have put the Parsis in a respectable position. Mr. Godrej has secured the first place.

DANGER AHEAD

The liquor-shop picketing has an intimate relation to Parsis. We will have to exercise great forbearance towards our Parsi countrymen. While we cannot stop picketing altogether, we must meet the liquor-dealers in conference, understand their difficulties and explain our own. Mr. Godrej has earmarked his donation for liquor prohibition and the uplift of the suppressed classes. Let us not, therefore, think that all Parsis are necessarily hostile to the great temperance movement. At the present moment, an outbreak of violence is most to

be feared from the temperance campaign, unless the Moderate ministers take their courage in both hands, refund all auction bids and close liquor-shops. I assure them that the movement can only be regulated, it cannot be checked. The people are bent on ending liquor-shops, and treating as a crime all liquor-selling except as a medicine by chemists. It is a matter that brooks no delay.

HOW IT PURIFIES

Everyone knows Mr. Abbas Tyabji. Ever since his labours on the Congress Committee's Punjab Report,[1] Mr. Abbas has been doing some service or other to the country, but non-co-operation has revolutionized his life, as it has many other lives. Mr. Abbas, though old, is now working night and day in Kheda in order to finish its part of the Bezwada programme. He is not used to the strenuous life of the peasant. And yet he is at the present moment engaged in mixing with the simple farmers of Kheda on their own terms. Young friends working with him tell me that he is beating every one of them in energy and application. I am sure the reader will appreciate the following from a letter which he wrote to me in reply to mine betraying anxiety about his health. This is what he says :

> I assure you, you need have not the slightest anxiety about my health. I have not been healthier for many years. In fact, the khaddar adopted at Bezwada has simply made me twenty years younger. What an experience I am having! Everywhere I am received most cordially and affectionately even by the women of the villages. Most of the places visited by me have subscribed twice or thrice their quota. It is only the big towns like Anand and Nadiad that lag behind. But Nadiad, where I have already spent four days, is coming up and I feel that it will make up its quota, if indeed it does not even go beyond it. Today I am going to Kapadvanj, and I shall continue to pass my nights at Nadiad; otherwise, the good friends will go to sleep. . . .
>
> Some of our workers are lacking 'go' I suppose, they represent the very respectable class to which I have ceased to belong. God! What an experience! I have so much love and affection from the common folk to whom it is now an honour to belong! It is this fakir's dress that has broken down all barriers. And now men and women meet me as I would have them meet. If one had only known years ago, how the *fenta*, the *saya*, the *angarakha*, boots and stockings separated one from one's poorer brethren! How, so dressed, it was impossible to get them to confide in one is what I realize only now. How much

[1] The reference is to the Report of the Sub-Committee appointed by the Indian National Congress to inquire into the Punjab disorders.

I have missed in life is just dawning on me. . . .

How much the movement has affected the course of my life is only dimly perceptible to me. Still I do perceive it, which is what counts. To realize what pleasure there is in giving is also a fresh experience.

IN PRAISE OF THE CHARKHA

A Christian lady writes :

I shall do my very best in working for winning swaraj by the spinning-wheel. Just before I felt, I succeeded in getting good wheels made. *Rathinums* we call them in Tamil. And the poor women came, and asked me to give them a wheel and to teach them to spin so as to earn a little for their living. I then remembered the word of Christ, "I was naked and you clothed me not", "I was hungry and you gave me not to eat." I hope that my Master will not say that hard word to me on the Day of Judgment. India is naked and starving. Her poor women, whose children are crying for bread, have been tempted to sell their honour in order to feed them. And the more is the pity, as India has enough of natural riches within her own borders. She is like a naked starving woman sitting by the roadside in the midst of cotton, rice and wheat fields. Why are the women of India sitting idle, while foreigners grow fat on her produce? Because they take away the work the women of India ought to be doing. The spinning-wheel will give India work, and give the little ones the morsel of food they are crying for. And to the music of the spinning-wheel the women will sing their beautiful songs, tell their stories of old, and the beauty and the contentment of simple homelife will be renewed. If I had the gift of a poet, I would sing the song of the spinning-wheel, of its beauty and its usefulness, of its poetry and its religious value. I would sing a song of praise to God for helping us in our hour of need. I should ask all my sisters in India to take to the spinning-wheel keeping the wolf of hunger and starvation and dishonour from their door. . . . But I am not gifted. The song is singing only in my own soul. What can I do then but let the spinning-wheel sing its own song, while I am working it and teaching others to do likewise?

This lady has already become a fairly accomplished spinner, and is about to devote her resources to opening a school for girls where spinning will be a special feature.

THE TRUE SPIRIT

The Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee has finished its election of members on the All-India Congress Committee. I give the names in the order in which the members were elected. Abbas Tyabji, Imam A. K. Bawazeer, S. F. Edrus, Anasuyabehn Sara-bhai, M. K. Gandhi, Vallabhbhai Patel, Mahadev Desai, Indulal K. Yagnik, Dr.

Dikshit, Dr. Chandulal Desai, Mohanlal Pandya and Vamanrao Mukadam. The election naturally took place by propor-tional representation. I would not have troubled the reader with the names but for the lesson the election carries with it. The reader will observe that there are three Mussulmans elected and they are first on the list, showing that the electors were determined to ensure their election. Numerically, not more than two need have been elected, but the electors wisely decided to elect all the Mussulman candidates. They next wanted to ensure the election of at least one lady, and so Shrimati Anasuyabai comes next. The most noteworthy feature of the election, however, is that, whilst all good workers have been elected, many equally good and able workers have simply stood aside. They did not stand for election. I commend this spirit of self-effacement to all whom it may concern. There should be no rivalry among workers for offices of honour. All must aim at becoming the most efficient workers. But all cannot possibly be elected to offices of honour, if they also carry heavy responsibility with it. The best way is for everyone to be ready to stand aside, and let the others be elected. Thus is it possible to avoid bitterness, unhealthy rivalry and heart-burnings. The best service is certainly possible, even though one may never hold any office. Indeed, the best workers all the world over are generally the most silent.

MUSLIM REPRESENTATION

Several complaints have been received regarding the advisory resolution of the Working Committee about the Lucknow compact. The only section of the new Constitution bearing on Muslim representation is the one regarding the rights of minorities. As it was brought to the notice of the Working Committee that Mussulmans were getting nervous about their representation and desired obser-vance of the Lucknow compact in the Congress, it was thought advisable to give the guidance in that direction. Attempts are certainly being made to divide us. Mussulmans have only now begum to come in. And it is the duty of the Hindus to hold out every lawful inducement to them to join the Congress. It must be the common meeting ground for all races and religions. Where Mussulmans do not come forward at all in spite of entreaty, the seats can be left vacant for want of candidates, or filled in by others pending the appearance of suitable Muslim candidates. Some friends urge that we should just now think not of special claims, but only of efficiency. Efficiency is

undoubtedly admirable, but we can easily make of it a fetish as our English friends have done. Unity is more important than efficiency. Unity for us is efficiency.The only thing we may not sacrifice to unity is principle or conscience or, which is the same thing, turth.

COW-PROTECTION

Apropos of Hindu-Muslim unity, I would once more revert to cow-protection. No Hindu has this more at heart than I have, but I refuse to be impatient. We will never succeed in stampeding our Mussulman countrymen into stopping cow-slaughter. They cannot feel for the cow in the same sense and measure as we Hindus do. We can only put them on their honour by being honourable ourselves. Bihar still continues to be the storm centre. I would urge both Hindu and Mussulman leaders to take time by the forelock and nip the evil in the bud. Nor must the Hindus of Bihar mix up vegetarianism with cow-killing. The two stand on a different footing. Cow-protection is the creed of twenty million Hindus, vegetarianism is confined to a small minority. The latter cannot be permitted to force its views upon others.

THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

The enlarged and newly-elected All-India Congress Committee is to meet on the 22nd July at Lucknow. It will be a momentous meeting. It has to evolve a programme that would ensure the establishment of swaraj and redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs during the year. It has either to elect a new Working Committee or else confirm the old if all are re-elected members of the new All-India Congress Committee. It will probably be called upon to re-discuss some of the decisions of the Working Committee. Its deliberations will largely decide the question of attainment of swaraj within the year. One is entitled, therefore, to hope that there will be a full house to deliberate upon the vast issues that will be raised before that body.

AFTER JUNE

Some people seem to be under the impression that after the 30th June, no further effort need be made regarding the Bezwada programme. This is an absurd superstition. Even if we have made our crore members and twenty lakhs of charkhas, we must increase both. We may stop the Tilak Swaraj Fund, when we have reached the minimum, but no harm can come if we collect more. As it is, many provinces will be found far short of their quota on the 30th June. They will, therefore, be certainly expected to continue their

collections, at least up to the time of the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee.

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158. THE TURKISH QUESTION

If we mean really well by our Mussulman brethren, we must sympathize with them over the movement going on in Europe to destroy Turkish nationalism. It is a thousand pities that the British Government is secretly or openly leading the movement. Let Hindus not be frigtened by Pan-Islamism. It is not—it need not be—anti-Indian or anti-Hindu. Mussulmans must wish well to every Mussulman state, and even assist any such state, if it is undeservedly in peril. And Hindus, if they are true friends of Mussulmans, cannot but share the latter's feelings. We must therefore co-operate with our Mussulman brethren in their attempt to save the Turkish Empire in Europe from extinction.

Hindus may not then be agitated when Mussulmans become alarm-ed at the slightest hint that the British Government might openly join the Greeks against the Turkish Government in Angora. If Britain should go so mad, India cannot possibly help the British Government in any such design upon Turkey. It would be tantamount to a war with Islam.

England has her choice. She can no longer hold the awakened Hindus and Mussulmans as slaves. If India is to remain equal partner with every other member of the Empire, India's voting strength must be infinitely superior to that of any other member. In a free commonwealth, every partner has as much right to retire if the rest go wrong, as it is his duty to remain so long as the rest are faithful to certain common principles. If India votes wrong, England can retire from partnership, as every other partner can. Thus, the centre of equilibrium must shift to India rather than to England, when India has come into her own. That is my meaning of swaraj within the Empire. Brute force must be ruled out of account in all deliberations. Reference must be had always to reason and never to the sword.

And as with England, so with India. The latter, too, has her choice. Today, we are striving for swaraj within the Empire in the hope that England will in the end prove true, and for independence if she fails. But when it is incontestably proved that Britain seeks to

destroy Turkey, India's only choice must be independence. For Mussulmans, when Turkey's existence, such as it is, is threatened, there is no looking back. They would draw the sword if they could, and perish or rise victorious with the brave Turks. But if, as is certain, thanks to the policy of the Government of India, they cannot declare war against the British Government, they can at least forswear allegiance to a Govern-ment which wickedly goes to war against Turkey. The duty of the Hindus is no less clear. If we still fear and distrust the Mussulmans, we must side with the British and prolong our slavery. If we are brave and religi-ous enough not to fear the Mussulmans, our countrymen, and if we have the wisdom to trust them, we must make common cause with the Muss-ulmans in every peaceful and truthful method to secure Indian indepen-dence. For a Hindu, as I conceive Hinduism to be, whether for indepen-dence or for swaraj within the Empire, there is no road but non-violent non-co-operation. India can have dominion or independent status today if India learns and assimilates the secret and the invincible power of non-violence. When she has learnt that lesson, she is ready to take up all the stages of non-co-operation including non-payment of taxes. India is not ready today, but if we would be prepared to frustrate every plot that may be hatched for the destruction of Turkey or for prolonging our subjection, we must secure an atmosphere of enlightened non-violence as fast as pos-sible, not the non-violence of the weak but the non-violence of the strong, who would disdain to kill but would gladly die for the vindication of truth.

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159. THE WORKING COMMITTEE AND ITS FUNCTION

The resolutions of the Working Committee have come in for some hostile criticism. Its ruling, questioning the propriety of non-co-operating lawyers attending law-courts and non-co-operating defen-dants entering upon their defence in law-courts, has been seriously called in question, and it has even been suggested that its rulings may be disregarded. It is, therefore, necessary to examine the function of the Working Committee. And before we can understand this, we must understand the Congress Constitution.

The goal of the Congress is attainment of swaraj by peaceful and legitimate means.The Congress must be worked so as to hasten India's progress towards her destined goal. The Constitution is so

devised as to tax and prove the nation's capacity for self-government. It undoubtedly sets up a system of voluntary government, in which the only force available is public opinion and the goodwill of the people. And seeing that the Congress is today engaged in opposing and, if need be, destroying the existing system, it follows that the greater the authority of the Congress, the less must be that of the Government. When the Con-gress commands complete confidence and *willing obedience* to its instructions, there is full swaraj. For, then the Government must respect popular opinion ex-pressed through the Congress, or it must commit suicide. The Con-gress must, therefore, become the most united, the strongest in charac-ter and the largest organization in the land. The Congress policy, therefore, must command the readiest acceptance.

The Congress meets in session only once a year. It lays down poli-cies. The All-India Congress Committee is designed to carry out the Con-gress policy as embodied in its resolutions. It must interpret all resolu-tions, and attend to all new matters, with the same authority as the Con-gress. The members may debate upon different propositions and inter-pretations as much as they choose, but except on matters of vital prin-ciple, the dissenters must conform to, and faithfully carry out, the reso-lutions of the majority. The discussions in the Committee are not open for re-discussion in public. In order to make the All-India Congress Com-mittee an efficient body, the Con-stitution has provided for a Working Committee of fifteen, which must meet often and must be able to deal with all the matters delegated to it by the All-India Congress Committee. It is designed to exercise all the functions of the All-India Congress Committee when the latter is not sitting. It must watch and guide public opinion, it must interpret it, it must keep all the subsidiary organizations in working order, it must attend to all-India finance, it must distribute it, and whenever decision on matters of grave importance has to be taken, it must summon a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee for direc-tion. The Working Committee is to the Congress what a Cabinet is to a Parliament. Its decisions must command respect if we are to evolve con-stitutional government during this year. Naturally, therefore, its members must be those who command the greatest respect of the All-India Con-gress Committee and of the nation. It dare not take any hasty decisions, and it must be a homogeneous body. It cannot have two policies or two parties within itself. Whilst the Congress represents the whole nation, and may, therefore, have every type and all parties,

the Working Committee must consist of men representing the policy and the party that have the confidence of the majority of the delegates. Its decisions have largely to be unanimous. When a member cannot pull on with the rest, he can resign, but he may not obstruct or affect the deliberations of the Committee by an open discussion of its deliberations in the Press. Whilst, therefore, the decisions of the Working Committee should be carried out by Congressmen, it is not an irresponsible body. It can be dismissed by the All-India Congress Committee by a vote of no-confidence. Its decisions are subject to be reviewed by the All-India Congress Committee, and even set aside for grave reasons. In my humble opinion, unless the Working Committee carries weight with people, it is hardly possible to attain swaraj during this year. Every one of us must, therefore, work to make the Congress an irresistible body by its resolutions being carried out in every little detail. What the Government does in the last resort by force of arms the Congress expects to do by force of affection. The Government has rendered itself irresistible by striking terror in the hearts of the people, the Congress must make itself felt by securing the free-will acceptance of its doctrines and policies. Non-violence thus runs through everything connected with the people's programme. But each organization ex-pects to succeed by reason of people's co-operation. Loyalty to the Congress decisions is a *sine qua non* of success of the Nagpur determination to achieve swaraj during the year.

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160. THE MESSAGE OF THE CHARKHA

The *Indian Social Reformer* has published a note from a correspondent in praise of the spinning-wheel. The correspondent in the course of his remarks hopes that the movement will be so organized that the spinners may not weary of it. Mr. Amritlal Thakkar, in his valuable note (published in the *Servant of India*) on the experiment which he is conducting in Kathiawad, says that the charkha has been taken up by the peasant women. They are not likely to weary, for to them it is a source of livelihood to which they were used before. It had dried up because there was no demand for their yarn. Townspeople who have taken to spinning may weary if they have done so as a craze or a fashion. Those only will be faithful who consider it their duty to devote their spare hours to doing what is today the most useful work for the country.The third class of spinners are the school-going

children. I expect the greatest results from the experiment of introducing the charkha in the national schools. If it is conducted on scientifice lines by teachers who believe in the charkha as the most efficient means of making education available to the seven and a half lakhs of villages in India, there is not only no danger of weariness, but every prospect of the nation being able to solve the problem of financing mass education without any extra taxation and without having to fall back upon immoral sources of revenue.

The writer in the *Indian Social Reformer* suggests that an attempt should be made to produce finer counts on the spinning-wheel. I may assure him that the process has already begun, but it will be some time before we arrive at the finish of the Dacca muslin or even twenty counts. Seeing that hand-spinning was only revived last September, and India began to believe in it somewhat only in December, the progress it has made may be regarded as phenomenal.

The writer's complaint that hand-spun yarn is not being woven as fast as it is spun is partly true. But the remedy is not so much to increase the number of looms as to persuade the existing weavers to use hand-spun yarn. Weaving is a much more complex process than spinning. It is not, like spinning, only a supplementary industry, but a complete means of livelihood. It therefore never died out. There are *enough weavers and enough looms in India to replace the whole of the foreign import of cloth*. It should be understood that our looms—thousands of them in Madras, Maharashtra and Bengal—are engaged in weaving the fine yarn imported from Japan and Manchester. We *must* utilize these for weaving hand-spun yarn. And for that purpose, the nation has to revise its taste for the thin, tawdry and useless muslins. I see no art in weaving muslins that do not cover but only expose the body. Our ideas of art must undergo a change. But even if the universal weaving of thin fabric be considered desirable in normal conditions, at the present moment whilst we are making a mighty effort to become free and self-supporting, we must be content to wear the cloth that our hand-spun yarn may yield. We have therefore to ask the fashionable on the one hand to be satisfied with coarser garments; we must educate the spinners on the other hand to spin finer and more even yarn.

The writer pleads for a reduction in the prices charged by mill-owners for their manufactures. When lovers of swadeshi begin to consi-der it their duty to wear khaddar, when the required number of spinning-wheels are working and the weavers are weaving hand-spun

yarn, the mill-owners will be bound to reduce prices. It seems almost hopeless merely to appeal to the patriotism of those whose chief aim is to increase their own profits.

Incongruities pointed out by the writer such as the wearing of khaddar on public occasions and at other times of the most fashionable English suits, and the smoking of most expensive cigars by wearers of khaddar must disappear in course of time, as the new fashion gains strength. It is my claim that as soon as we have completed the boycott of foreign cloth, we shall have evolved so far that we shall necessarily give up the present absurdities and remodel national life in keeping with the ideal of simplicity and domesticity implanted in the bosom of the masses. We will not then be dragged into an imperialism which is built upon exploitation of the weaker races of the earth, and the acceptance of a giddy materialistic civilization protected by naval and air forces that have made peaceful living almost impossible. On the contrary, we shall then refine that imperialism into a commonwealth of nations which will combine, if they do, for the purpose of giving their best to the world and of protecting, not by brute force but by self-suffering, the weaker nations or races of the earth. Non-co-operation aims at nothing less than this revolution in the thought-world. Such a transformation can come only after the complete success of the spinning-wheel. India can become fit for delivering such a message when she has become proof against temptation and, therefore, attacks from outside, by becoming self-contained regarding two of her chief needs—food and clothing.

Young India, 29-6-1921

161. A PLANTER'S LETTER

TO

MR. GANDHI AND OTHERS CONNECTED WITH THE NON-CO-OPERATION MOVEMENT

GENTLEMEN,

Have you ever stopped to consider where your non-co-operation movement is going to lead India to? I speak, if permitted to do so, for Assam. Non-co-operation is not the remedy, or I might say, is not the cure for the evident evils you are trying to remedy, but legislation. Legislation and compulsory education are the things required in the order named. Coolies in Assam are very well looked after by all Europeans on European-controlled tea gardens, but even on such gardens, I regret to say that the desire on the part of

your own countrymen to extort money by unfair means from the poor coolie is more prevalent than it should be. The wages on tea gardens are distinctly good. My coolies earn on an average for men Rs. 10-3-8, for women Rs. 6-12-8, for children Rs. 4-15-9. (Sept. 1920 Government Return). In addition to these wages, free fuel, free medicine, free medical attendance, free housing accommodation, free grazing-ground, free *khet* land, rice supplied at much below bazaar rates when there is a famine on—these are the comforts bestowed on all the tea garden coolies of Assam, and I feel sure you will agree with me that "you can take a horse to the water, but you cannot make him drink," and you can take a coolie to the work, but you cannot make him work, and in every trade in the world a man must work. Piece-work is given on tea gardens, and a coolie can easily earn 8 to 10 annas daily, and a woman 4 to 6 annas, i.e., in the busy season. It they work with all the comforts above named, can you non-co-operators truthfully say the tea planter is not doing his duty towards the coolie? No. Your countrymen are beginning to realize that the poor coolie is not quite such a fool as he used to be, and not quite so much can be extorted out of him nowadays, and as the money must come from somewhere, you are endeavouring to take it through the coolie by telling him that he is underpaid, sweated labour, ill-treated and a host of other lies. Where are your reformed Councils and where is your Legislature? At the rate you people are travelling, you will be looking for your rent shortly.

What then is required? In Assam, the pay of the Indian staff should be increased 100 per cent. This would stop the present dissatisfaction amongst the baboo clerks, who in most cases have to support huge families on salaries which are inadequate, and to live they are compelled to get the money from somewhere; hence they extort from the weak, being unable to from the strong. My staff consists of one head and two junior clerks, all disgracefully paid. They do not steal; they can't, because I am too cute for them. I am exceedingly sorry for them, but as I am struggling to live, I cannot help them from my salary. Why should I? My employers do not permit me to pay them more, but it is bound to come sooner or later by agitation and co-operation, not by non-co-operation. The present methods of your followers have a Bolshevik tendency by turning a land now flowing with milk and honey into a chaos, and causing complete disorganization. Agitate, agitate, agitate. Co-operate, co-operate, co-operate. Legislate, legislate, legislate. I ask you to banish non-co-operation from your mind, it is useless.

I want to see in Assam :

1. Free labour. Liberty is wealth.

2. That every Indian can travel to any part of India from famine area to plenty without any restriction.

3. Legislation, the same for the poor and the rich, the same for the

Indian and the European.

4. Legislation for the protection of Indian women and their Eurasian children.

5. The panchayat as a legal power on every tea garden, of which the manager must be president, and if the Indian can be tried by panchayat, so can the European. (My coolies have permission to try me.)

6. Payment of sick allowance to coolies compulsory.

7. Restriction of coolie marriages abolished.

8. Confinement allowance to pregnant women compulsory for six months.

You will admit, all these suggestions are for legislators, not for non-co-operators; therefore agitate, co-operate, legislate, and *Love* "*Mobut*" *Dayal* "*Mia*" *Beechar*.

What are your members of Council doing? Make them work,make them pass suitable laws, make them listen to the voice of the people. My strength is the love of my people (coolies); their strength is the love of their people, Indians, non-co-operators, co-operators, agitators, legislators, or it should be a house that is divided against itself and cannot stand; therefore, co-operate. I co-operate with all Indians that I meet or have dealings with, from the chamar to the Brahmin, from the coolie to the rajah. All are God's own, all are human, all I regard as my brothers. Where I can help I help, where I can alleviate trouble I do so, where I can teach I teach. Let brotherly love continue, it is not obtained by non-co-operation, but brotherly love is co-operation.

I am glad to be able to tell you that I am the manager of the most contented and the best-paid labour force in tea, and I can truthfully say that I have always, ever since I have been in India, made a point of alleviating the sufferings of my coolies, though of course one cannot please all. This has been done by co-operation and no strike has or will take place on the garden under my control. I speak with confidence. So I ask you, Mr. Gandhi, to stay your hand and the hand of your sympathizers, and stop this mad exodus from Assam. Think of the thousands of deaths being caused by this stampede. Two wrongs will never make one right.

I personally am very much against the methods employed in tea on every garden except my own and a few others. They are, I admit, a disgrace to the tea industry, i.e., gardens worked through the baboos. But what is required is co-operation, agitation, legislation, and not your methods, namely, Bolshevism with a non-co-operation tendency. The truth hurts no one.

Apologizing for the tone of my letter, which only speaks my mind,

I remain,

"CHI TACE CONFESSA"

"He who keeps silent, confesses"

I publish this letter without any alteration. The writer has sent me his name, but wishes to remain anonymous. I have seen, both in Natal and Champaran, the writer's prototypes. He means well, but does not know that he is no more than a kind cattle-keeper. Once admit that men may be treated like cattle, many a European manager would earn a certi-ficate of merit from a Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Society. I know from experience that free medicine, free medical attendance, free hous-ing accommodation and free grazing-ground are so many tricks of the trade, designed to keep the 'coolie' a serf for ever. He would be a freer man for being paid full wages and charged for housing and medicine. Free grazing-ground is to him,almost like breathing, indis-pensable. Eurasian children tell on every estate the story of man's and woman's shame. If I had the power, I would stop all the estates where the crime against Indian womanhood is proved by the presence of Eurasian children. I know the problem is difficult. But if the European learnt to respect the chastity of the Indian's woman as his sister's, there would be no Eurasian children born out of wedlock. I am no believer in 'free' intercourse. The subject is too painful, the chastity of man and woman too sacred for me, to enable me to write with restraint on what I have seen on such estates, and heard. I do not for one moment wish to suggest that Indian managers would not commit the same crimes that European managers do. I know that their colour hides the shame in the faces of their crimes' creation. But I do maintain that the European manager does with impunity what the Indian dare not. But I must close this chapter here. The disingenuous suggestion that the manager should be the president of panchayat gives away the planters' case. The corres-pondent's advice regarding non-co-operation proceeds from igno-rance. I can assure him that I never advised a single coolie in Assam to strike. I do not profess to know the problem of labour there. He should, more-over, know that there is no non-co-operation going on with capital or capitalists. Non-co-operation is going on with the existing Govern-ment as a system. But there is bound to be non-co-operation wherever there is evil, oppression and injustice, whether anybody wishes it or not. The people, having found the remedy, will resort to it. If they do so stu-pidly or unjustifiably, they alone will be the real losers. I do not believe that legislation or debates in the Councils can do much good. Not until em-ployers begain to look upon labourers as members of their own family, or until the latter are educated to understand their

own rights and know the method of securing them, will labourers be able to better their position. Legislation in advance of public opinion is often worse than useless. Non-co-operation is the quickest method of creating public opinion, in the present case a change of manners, or as I have often put it, of heart.

Young India, 29-6-1921

162. LETTER TO LAJPAT RAI

[Before *June 30, 1921*]

DEAR LALAJI,

I do hope that the Punjab will contribute as much as Gujarat hopes to, before the end of the month. I say this because I know Amritsar so well and Amritsar has up to now done so badly in the matter of the collection. Amritsar is to the Punjab what Ahmedabad is to Gujarat in the matter of finance. Amritsar of all the places in India has been the hardest hit and therefore should lead in the struggle for making inhuman humiliations impossible. I wish you could make the monied people of Amritsar realize their great responsibility.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the draft in Gandhiji's hand : S.N. 7556

163. MY NOTES

[Before *June 30, 1921*][1]

POT OR TUMBLER

I am writing these notes on the day prior to the day of our test. Whether the product will be a perfect, full-sized pot or only a tumbler, the workers alone know, and God. The result corresponds to the sincerity behind the effort. If those engaged in collection work are sincere enough, the result is bound to follow. There is no doubt now about 10 lakhs being collected from Gujarat. The expectation, rather, is that the actual collection will exceed this figure. And why not? We have plenty, relatively. The mills in Gujarat can by themselves fulfil our expectation. The enterprising business men engaged in trade outside Gujarat can give something. The Princes can give if they but shed fear. We have never, in the past, attempted such tasks as a people, never tested our strength. In our timidity, therefore we put the figure rather low. As we gradually shed our fear, we shall go forward.

[1] This was evidently written before June 30, by which date the programme laid down at the Bezwada Congress was to be completed.

We want, however, three lakh members and one lakh spinning-wheels. Our future depends on whether we succeed in this effort. May God preserve Gujarat's and India's honour.

OUR BURDEN[1]

However, with more money, more members and more spinning-wheels, our responsibility also increases.[2] It is not enough that we have secured the crore. We should know to keep clear and complete accounts. We are not going to put the crore out at interest. We have collected it for our *immediate needs*. We have to elevate national life by means of it. We must boycott foreign cloth. We must introduce a system of national education. We must ameliorate the wretched condition of the suppressed classes. We must free the nation from the clutches of drink. We must banish for ever the spectre of famine from our country. The crore could be used up for all these things. For this, we need honest workers. Our accounts should be open for inspection even to a child. All hopes for assistance in the future must naturally depend upon a proper adminis-tration of the present trust. We have got in our collections the priceless ornaments of sinless sisters. Many girls have given up all such jewellery as was so dear to them. I know the names of some, but I do not care to publish them. They have not cared for publicity. I think them to be so holy that I would not like to take their names in vain. They have given only for the joy of giving. One widowed sister gave me all the pearls and rubies that still remained with her. My heart wept within me, as I accepted them. Are we fit recipients of gifts like these? A widow never likes to part with her ornaments; she holds them with all the greater tenacity. I put this sister on her guard. I asked her to have them back, if there was the least hesitation or bashfulness in the act of giving. She did not withdraw; she was already fully determined on the step she took. What if we use money thus obtained negligently, foolishly or dis-honestly? We should not only be disappointed in our hope of swaraj. We should become the ever hopeless denizens of the darkest hell. I trust that the purity of these sisters—their religious fervour—will keep us on the straight path, will not allow our honour to be tarnished, and will lead to the fulfilment of all our desires and aspirations.

PARSI CONTRIBUTIONS

Whenever I heard people say that the Parsis had not joined the

[1] The translation of this part is reproduced from *Young India* of 6-7-1921.

[2] This sentence is supplied from the Gujarati original.

movement. I have merely smiled. The Parsi population in the country totals one lakh. On the basis only of numbers, their contribution would be full if they gave Rs. 4,120, provided the same number of members and accounted for 824 spinning-wheels. As a matter of fact, Rs.. 4,120 have come from them just by way of petty contributions. The sums which Parsi friends sent anonymously must have come to this total. I also include in this Fund Parsi Rustomjee's contribution of Rs. 52,000. The Parsis must have, I believe, provided 4,120 members too. Some Parsi volunteers have been enrolling members of the Congress and doing excellent work in Bombay. There has been a Parsi lawyer, too, who gave up practice. One gentleman has resolved to utilize his scientific knowledge for the service of the people. It is true that the number of spinning-wheels among them is small, but even so Parsi women, and some men too, have taken up the work. Some Parsis also go out to picket liquor-booths. How can one say, in the face of this, that they in any way done less than others? Not all papers run by them are opposed to the movement. The services of *Sanj Vartman* are known to all. Who has not heard of Shri Bharucha's hard work? As for the work being done by some Parsi ladies, I shall give my experiences some other time, but there is one name I must mention. The grand-daughter of India's "Grand Old Man" has been working tirelessly. She has, actually, adopted a com-pletely khadi dress. Even if the Parsi community had done no more than what they have, we would have reason to be grateful to them, would have no reason for pointing a finger at them.

But the fact is that Shri Godrej has done something which far exceeds any other performances. He has contributed three lakhs. No other single individual has given so much. True, the entire amount is not available in cash today, but it is as secure as if offered in gold. He has earmarked the sum for two of the purest items in our programme, banishing liquor and *Antyaj* uplift. Money was earmarked for the latter cause on his insistence. For myself, I would have preferred to employ only Hindus' money for this work. It is for them to carry out this particular reform. But how could I stand in the way of this friend who offered what he did in utter sincerity of heart? With the receipt of this amount, I believe the total contribution by Parsis, so far as my information goes, will easily come to not less than four lakhs, leaving out the value of the gifts promised by some of them. We cannot thank Shri Godrej and the Parsi community sufficiently.

Contributions have been received from South Africa too. The

Patidar Mandal and the Khatri Mandal have telegrapically sent Rs. 8,275 and Rs. 960, respectively. I expect more yet.[1] I have always found the Patidars of South Africa to be generous.

Some persons seem to be under the impression that, after June, they should not collect or send contributions without permission. This is altogether wrong. All these days we concentrated our attention on the three aims laid down at Bezwada. This does not mean that, after June, we may not enrol new members of get new spinning-wheels made or collect further contributions. After completing the figure of one crore, we may, if we like, stop collections for the Tilak Swaraj Fund, but we are bound to continue them till that time. Our pledge has two aspects, collecting an amount of one crore and doing this before June 30. Even if we fail to collect the required amount before this date but, continuing our efforts, succeed in doing so later, we shall have done our duty. We may feel shame at our failure to do the thing within the time-limit, but we should certainly not prove shameless by refusing contributions altogether or offering less after the time-limit has expired. I hope, therefore, that those who ar still to give their contributions to this Fund will do so even afterwards. As for Gujarat, it will have no need to make any such efforts since it will have fulfilled its self-imposed obligation.

So much about the Tilak Swaraj Fund. What about members and spinning-wheels? Only this, that before June 30 Gujarat should enrol not less than three lakh members and put into commission not less than one lakh spinning-wheels. Our duty, however, is to see that Gujarat enrols every man and woman of 21 years and over, that every home in the province has a spinning-wheel and that everyone, from ripe old men to mere children, is persuaded to learn spinning. If we put the population of Gujarat at 90 lakhs and count the number of homes at the rate of one for every five persons, we get 18 lakh homes. We should not, therefore, rest satisfied till we have put into commission 18 lakh spinning-wheels. There can be no upper limit for the enrolment of members and the spread of spinning-wheels. The more of them we have the greater will be our strength, the brighter the swaraj flag, the stronger the wind filling the sails of the swaraj ship and the faster the speed. From the number of members and spinning-

[1] A footnote in the source says : "After this was written, cables have been received advising remittance of about £100 by the Indian Association of Stanger and Rs. 1,274 from Nairobi."

wheels we reach before the end of June, we would be able to measure our speed, judge whether our energy has increased or decreased and whether our faith has become stronger or declined. Our getting swaraj depends on our continuing to work unremittingly on both these items.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-7-1921

164. SPEECH AT BORIVLI MEETING[1]

June 30, 1921

Mr. Gandhi said Thursday was the last and the greatest day and India was on her trial and he hoped they would not be found wanting. Time was very valuable and he was no going to make a long speech. They had to collect the one crore on that day and they should not fail in their duty. He did not know how he would succeed in collecting the amount, but he had the greatest faith in the capacity and patriotism of Indians and he felt sure in his heart of hearts that they would succeed in collecting the necessary amount. He did not know how much money was collected in Bombay for he had been to Ahmedabad. He did not also know how much was collected in Gujarat which had undertaken to collect Rs. 10 lakhs, although they had actually collected as much as Rs. 12 lakhs and they had every hope of getting Rs. 15 lakhs. On his way from Ahmedabad some gentlemen had handed him a cheque for one lakh and announced the gift of a piece of very valuable land near Bombay. At the door of the *pandal* he had been given a cheque for Rs. 25,000. From Johannesburg he had received a remittance for Rs. 9,000 and from the Khatri community Rs. 1,000.

He had great hopes that the people of Bombay would give him the necessary amount, for the great burden of collecting the Fund rested on Bombay. When he had left Bombay, they had collected about 15 or 20 lakhs of rupees and he had high hopes that India, which was being tried now, would not be found wanting. He had only heard there that there was a large number of rich merchants in Borivli and he prayed to God that they would help the Fund in a liberal spirit.

In Ahmedabad and in Bombay he had heard that the *Vaishnavas* had still great doubts about the movement and he had already written a letter[2] to them which he hoped they would all read. At the present time. India wanted all communities to unite together in one great effort to win swaraj; that did not mean, however, that they should give up their different religions. As long as the world existed, there would always be diversity and differences of opinion and there would be different religions. But they should be united in their efforts to obtain swaraj. They would however never

[1] The public of Borivli presented a purse to Gandhiji on Thursday morning for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. There was a large gathering of men and women. V. J. Patel, he Ali Brothers and Sarojini Naidu were among those present.

[2] *Vide* "To *Vaishnavas*" 3-7-1921.

be able to win swaraj by keeping down the lower classes. To put them down, to look down upon them, to hate them, to abuse them, to give them no access to their wells, to exclude them from their villages, was certainly not *Vaishnavism*. That was a godless religion and *Vaishnavism* was something quite different. Vallabhacharya[1] had never taught his disciples to follow a religion of hate and intolerance. His teachings were to the effect that they should lift up the depressed classes, the people who were steeped in ignorance and poverty. Vallabha-charya had not told them to keep down their brethren. The more he thought about these matters the more firmly he believed that the *Vaishnavas* were wrong in the attitude they had adopted in regard to this question.

He was telling this to them as a man of the world, as an old man, as a man who had much experience of these things. He knew from his South African experiences what it was to be a man of the depressed classes. He was treated as a man belonging to the depressed classes in South Africa; because he had to live apart from the white people in a place called the "location" which was really a *dhedwada* (a place where the sweepers lived), where there were no sanitary arrangements or lights or roads or any other ameni-ties of a civilized town. There he knew what it was to be an *Antyaj* and he had suffered from those things there under which his brethren were now groaning in India. If they could not treat their brethren with consideration, what was the use of their being Indians, and what was the use of their being born in this land?

On account of the cruelties and humiliations which they had suffered at the hands of Englishmen, they had called their Government Satanic and they had decided not to co-operate with them and, were they, Indians, going to treat their brethren in the same manner as the whites were treating them? Was it not worth while to take stock of what they were doing? Was it not worth while to pause and consider what they were doing? He had not asked the *Vaishnavas* to take food at the hands of the depressed classes, but merely to treat them as their brothers. If they could all be united in their resolve, they could have swaraj at that very moment, but they had so many different castes. If Hindus thought that the Muslims were their born enemies, and they should make it their duty to hate them as such, they would never get swaraj. Indians were loath to abolish the bar of untouchabilitiy out of sheer fear, and he would tell them on the last day of June, a day of high resolve and much import, that it was this fear which had forced them to keep down their brethren and to lead a life apart from theirs. Unless their hearts were full of mercy, of pity for the poor, of love for their brethren, Indians would never be fit for swaraj. He had not much fear for the crore of rupees and he did not mind it so much, because anyhow they would be able to collect that amount. But what he wanted them to do was to love their depressed brethren. The swaraj which he wanted was not to be one founded on hate and fear; his was swaraj of the righteous. His was a *dharmarajya*.

From tomorrow they would not hear him talking and begging for money. They

[1] A fifteenth-century philosopher

would hear something quite different. They would have to give up dealing in all foreign things from the next day. Those who dealt in foreign cloth would have to cease doing that. Those who were trading in English cloth must stop doing that and he appealed to his sisters to give up the use of foreign clothes and to use only khaddar. If they wanted to do their duty to their country they should discard the foreign clothes and take to khaddar. If his sisters and daughters loved him and had any respect for him, he appealed to them to give up their foreign clothes and make up their minds once and for all to give up all these luxuries for ever.

In this instance he would tell them a personal incident. Only the other day his wife had told him that she was unable to cook his food and do the household work in the thick khaddar cloth she was wearing and she wanted his permission to wear something lighter, something thinner. While he gave full liberty to his wife in all things, as he had full liberty to do what he liked, he was naturally unwilling to tell her to do anything. But he had to tell his wife that, if she could not cook his food in khaddar, then she had better not cook at all for him, for he would not take anything cooked by her while using unholy foreign things. He would not touch anything which was cooked by his wife while wearing foreign clothes. If Indian women were not willing to make this much sacrifice, were not willing to have this much suffering, then they would have to suffer more Jallianwala Baghs. There was much more suffering in store for them than that which they had to put up with on this last day of the month, to give proper heed to his words[*sic*]. He earnestly appealed to all Hindus and Muslims to give up using foreign things and to use only those things which were made in this country.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-7-1921

165. SPEECH AT PARSI MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

June 30, 1921

Mr. Gandhi in the course of his lengthy speech asked the audience to allow him to speak without interruptions or cheers. He had never said that the Parsis did not know him thoroughly, and that they were not with him. Since he was a young boy he knew the Parsis, and the Parsis knew him. His best and most intimate friends were Parsis, and his relations with the community were of the most intimte kind. Dadabhai was like his father or rather, grandfather, and if they ever got swaraj it would be due to the efforts of Dadabhai and the splendid work he had done for this country. He it was who had taught him the lesson of swaraj when he was a young man. When he went to England taking with him a deputation from South Africa, he was acting and saying what Dadabhai Naoroji and Mehta[2] were telling him. He had never thought that the Parsis were against him, and he had every hope that they would join him in this movement. He was not at all sorry that they had their own doubts in their minds. It was only the Parsis who had lived among thirty crores of Indians for so many hundreds of years and still they had as-serted themselves and become prominent in the affairs of this country. He was not going to flatter them, and he had no such intention. He was telling them what he really felt in his mind. There were many communities in this world who had such small numbers as the Parsis had, but they were not known outside their own countries, to the whole world. But what part was there in the whole world where the Parsi community was not known, although their number was only 80,000? If Bombay was beautiful, if Bombay was noted for its generosity, if Bombay was noted for its public spirit, it was due to the Parsi community. If it were not for the Parsis, Bombay would be like any other city in India, and the whole of India was thankful to the Parsis for this. If anybody had given any lead to Indians in politics it was the Parsis, and he would ask his Hindu and Muslim friends not to blame the Parsis ain any way. If all the communities were united among themselves, they could have swaraj that very moment. He for one was proud that the Parsis came to this country instead of going to any other country, and he was also glad that they were given shelter in Gujarat, to which province they had rendered very valuable services.

When in South Africa the whites had besieged his house in the dead of night and wanted to kill him, it was Parsi Rustomji who had protected him at the risk of his

[1] The Parsis met at the Excelsior Theatre to present Gandhiji with a purse of Rs. 30,001 for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Those present at the meeting included V. J. Patel, Sarojini Naidu, Mr. and Mrs. Marmaduke Pickthall, the Ali Brothers and Dr. Kitchlew.

[2] Pherozeshah Mehta

life and at the risk of his own and that of his people and stood by him. As long as he lived he could never forget what Mr. Rustomji had done for him. The Parsis were full of virtue, truth and honesty and he was proud of them as a race. Even if the Parsis had not collected Rs. 30,000 and had only given him Rs. 5, he would still have been satisfied with them. Mr. Godrej had already handed him a sum of Rs. 3 lakhs and he had shown to the whole of India what the Parsis were capable of doing. The Parsi community had given him liberally in many ways, and it was not a fact that by coming to India they had not done any service to this country. His opinion was that they had paid their debt fully to this country. Natrurally they were a commercial people, and it was a pity that they had taken up Government appointments lately. It was a loss to the whole of India and not to the Parsi community alone. But the education which they had got had made them seek Government employment, and it was a great pity. Commerce had taught them to be honest and collect money and do good to other communities in this country, and he asked them to take stock of the present conditions and their future. They had fully paid their debts to the country by producing such great men as Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozeshah Mehta and Jamshedji Tata. He appealed to the Parsis to take part in the swaraj movement which was now going on in full swing. The Parsis were able to compete with other communities in every department of life. If they had done so much in this country in the past, why were they keeping themselves aloof from the movement now? They were a rich community, possessing crores of rupees, and why had not they given any more money to the Fund? Dadabhai had served India by leading the life of a political recluse for the purpose of making India free, not for Parsis alone, but for all com-munities and races. The speaker was going to speak to them as their friend because he was great admirer of theirs and was very intimate with them for a long time.

Continuing, the Mahatma said, if the Parsis wished it, they could easily accomp-lish anything, because they were a small, compact community of eighty thousand, but that was not so with the Hindus and Muslims. If they could remain independent even before the English came, he did not know why they could not be so when they got swaraj. It was the first duty of Hindus and Muslims to protect the smaller communities in this land. If the Hindus and Muslims were true to themselves, they would see that not a Parsi was starving before they took any morsel of food. If Hindus or Muslims wished to do anything else, then they were working not for a *dharmarajya*. He wanted to make India not Satanic, but he wanted to establish *dharmarajya*. He wanted to make the Parsis fearless and drive away their doubts and he wanted them to devote their energies for the welfare of this country. If they could do so, they could get swaraj this year, and they could also right the Khilafat wrong and also those of the Punjab. If they wanted to rule over the world just as the British were doing, then he would say that Indians were not fit for it, and he prayed to God never to make them fit for it. Did Indians want to make slaves of Negroes, or make them prisoners, or make them work for ourselves and to keep them as beggars? He

wanted them to be free by purifying themselves and then rid the whole world of all its evils.

He appealed to the Parsis to become swarajists that very moment. They were swarajists, but they had some doubts in their minds but he begged of them to become true swarajists. He asked them to consider these questions properly and ask themselves whether Gandhi was a fool to speak of these things. The swaraj that India was going to have was a *dharmarajya*. Indians wanted to establish swaraj based on truth and not on falsehood, and they wanted to keep clear of everything that was false. It was the Parsi religion which had taught him to non-co-operate with Satan; it had taught him to keep apart from Satan, from all evil. He did not hate Englishmen, neither did he want them to be driven out of this country, but he disliked being what Lord Reading called the subjects of Englishmen. His soul trembled to consider of these things. They should have strength enough to resist any evil. It was not necessary for them to have revolvers or to become barristers or lawyers for the winning of swaraj. What was essential was the belief in self, and he regretted that the Parsis were so full of doubts. He begged of them to drive away all those doubts. He appealed to them to become swarajists and to unite with other communites in the cause of freedom.

Mr. Gandhi then referred to the liquor shops. He said there was a great responsibility on the shoulders of the Parsis in Bombay. There were about nine hundred country liquor shops in the town and the majority of them were owned by the Parsis. Many Parsis had approached him and told him that they had already given a year's purchase price to Government and that if their shops were picketed they would be ruined and they would lose all their money. He had considered over these things, and he felt very sorry for the shopkeepers. He was not sorry at all for the Parsis if they were co-operating with Government or if they had not given up their titles. But the liquor shops were a more serious matter. He was sorry that Hindus and Mohammedans were the only pickets. He wished his Parsi brothers and sisters would also picket. He wanted no force to be used because he did not wish any objectionable methods in [the achievement of] the holy object they had. When Parsi women stood in the path of Parsis going to these drink shops they would be ashamed to enter the shops and they would be ashamed to abuse them and they would not beat them. He asked the Parsis to give up drink, and to help their people who had to shut up their shops on account of picketing. He asked them to help the shopkeepers to get a refund of their [licence] fees from the Government and to help them in every possible way. In Ahmedabad a Parsi contractor had complained to him that he had been assaulted by the pickets and he found this statement on investigation to be false. It was the volunteers on the other hand who had been assaulted, and they were now picketing with their heads bandaged and they had not raised their hands to retaliate.

He earnestly appealed to his Parsi brothers and sisters to help the efforts of the other communities to stop drink. He did not think that the Parsi millionaires had not attended the meeting were against his movement, and he appealed to them to help the Parsi liquor contractors in all ways. In the meantime he asked them to help the cause of swaraj. He prayed to God that He would give the Parsi comnunity strength to take

their legitimate part in the struggle which was now going on for the winning of swaraj and make them realize what their duty was at this juncture.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-7-1921

166. SPEECH TO MERCHANTS, BOMBAY[1]

June 30, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi said he thankfully received the amount they gave to win the country's liberty. He hoped they did not expect from him a long speech at the moment, as he was to attend two more meetings in the evening. He had only to say that, if the traders like the cotton merchants of Colaba realized the political situation of the country, it would not at all be difficult to get the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs righted. It was his desire that the trading classes of the country would from now take a prominent part in the politics of their country. Until the trading classes began taking more interest in the affairs of their country, they had no hope for the success in their cause. But there was a happy sign of awakening in these classes now. And if they went on at this rate, swaraj was sure during the current year. It was the first duty of the trading classes to take a leading part in the political situation of their country. He agreed with Mr. Mathuradas who said that their contribution to the Swaraj Fund was not what it ought to have been. Because, they are annually exporting cotton worth crores of rupees to foreign countries and as *prayaschitta* for that sin they must make up the deficit in getting a crore of rupees. The crore must be complete by that night. He had full confidence in the Indian people who, he hoped, would not dishonour the Congress mandate. They could expect forty lakhs from other provinces and the remaining sixty lakhs would be made up by them in Bombay. He fervently hoped they would exert themselves to collect that amount and thereby guard the prestige of their nation. That was the last day of the vow which they took at Bezwada and if the sum was not procured before the day ended, the whole of India would have to be ashamed. At present the honour of the nation rested on the merchants. In money matters only they could help. A beggar like the speaker could not be expected to render any pecuniary help. Concluding, he prayed to God to give them strength to preserve the prestige of the country by securing the necessary amount.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-7-1921

[1] This was delivered at a meeting held under the auspices of the Cotton Association at which cotton merchants and workers presented Gandhiji with a purse of Rs. 2,50,000 for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Mathuradas Vasanji Khimji, President of the Association, welcomed Gandhiji.

167. SPEECH AT BOMBAY MEETING[1]

June 30, 1921

Mahatmaji said the great enthusiasm which he had noticed with the men and women at Bombay promised a hopeful future and he hoped they would be able to realize the vow which they had once taken in Calcutta and then again at Nagpur. He did not know till that hour what exact amount was collected in the country. But only a few minutes ago he had learnt that Kathiawar had collected more than two lakhs and in the morning he received a cheque for Rs. 25,000 from a gentleman. They did not expect anything more than Rs. 50,000 from Kathiawar. From what he had been noticing he was hopeful that a crore would be collected. But he wanted to be sure about it and therefore wanted an assurance from some of the mill-owners of Bombay that, in case the wanted amount was not collected, they would make up the deficit. He earnestly hoped he would get such an assurance. Continuing, he said that he would take that opportunity of speaking a few words to the ladies about the faith and prestige of their country. As everyone knew, women were the trustees of their honour and they were the producers of the nation. The nation could be a strong or an ideal nation only when their women were thoroughly religious and patriotic. At present the chastity and the religion of the Indian women were involved in khaddar. He therefore appealed to them that they should from now on abandon all foreign clothes and adorn themselves and their children in pure khaddar.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-7-1921

168. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO A WOMAN CONTRIBUTOR

ON THE TRAIN,
June 30, 1921

The paragraph in the papers about your jewels takes away all the grace from[2] your gift. I had hoped that it was a silent act of[3] sacrifice. Let me tell you that many girls have given more than you have. They have not wished to advertise themselves. A sister gave me two days ago all her rich jewels—pearl necklaces and ruby bracelets and ear-rings. She gave them with such humility and grace. Her name she does not want. She gave them for the sake of God. I am sorry for you. Pray forgive me for this bitter truth. . . .

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

[1] A meeting was held in the evening under the auspices of the Mandvi Ward Congress Committee at New Chinch Bunder, for raising further contributions to the Tilak Swaraj Fund.

[2] The source here has "for".

[3] *ibid*

169. SPEECH AT BANDRA MEETING [1]

July 1, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi said they had not been able to get any sleep the previous night. They were in the theatre up till 2 a.m. They had not gone there to see the play, but to collect money for the Tilak Fund and when he saw his friend Mahomed Ali bringing in his bag a sum of Rs. 25,000 in addition to ornaments, he was very glad that he had again gone to the theatre after 30 years. That was the reason why the Ali Brothers had not been able to come to the meeting. They were quite tired and exhausted. He himself would not have been able to come there had if not been for his promise to Mr. Patel. He agreed with Mr. Patel that they wanted to collect the amount in small sums from poor men, and he would have been glad if the poor of this land had given him the one crore of rupees by small contributions. They had been able to collect nearly a crore of rupees. Forty-four lakhs had been collected in the rest of India and the balance had been collected in this Presidency. He wanted to publish it that they had been able to collect one crore of rupees and that the self-respect of this country had been kept. By midnight yesterday they had succeeded in collecting about 81 to 82 lakhs of rupees. When they were able to collect such a large sum in so few days, they would be able to collect the balance very easily. He had, however, talked to some four or five rich men about the deficiency and they had promised to make good the balance. He did not want to publish it to the world that he had taken a guarantee because his friends told him that, if their names were published, it would merely be advertising them and that the people would not pay their contributions. He was, therefore, glad to announce to them that the crore would be made up. If the sum had been collected in small contributions, he would then say that the men of Baandra were fit for swaraj. He did not mind at all if the rich people of Bandra had not paid anything. They would be able to pay hereafter. He was not even pained when Mr. Patel had informed him that Bandra would be able to collect only Rs. 10,000. While he congratulated them on collecting the sum, he could not congratulate them on the total numer of members of Congress they had been able to register and also on the number of charkhas they used. He did not so much care for the crore of rupees, but he did care about the crore of members for the Congress. When he was speaking to a friend about the money he required and was telling him that he would not be satisfied with one crore of rupees but that he required many crores of rupees, his friend told him that even the Victoria Memorial Fund had amounted to about Rs. 52 lakhs and that that fund was gathered through the influence of officials by means of "pressure

[1] Gandhiji addressed a meeting held in the morning in a suburb of North Bombay to present him a cheque for Rs. 15,000 for the Tilak Swaraj Fund.

and persuasion" The Tilak Fund had been collected without any pressure and only by means of voluntary contributions. How much greater was their effort then in collecting the amount?

They had fulfilled the Bezwada programme! But now they had to collect the members for the Congress and they should also introduce the requisite number of charkhas into every house. They had six crores of families in this land and in every house there must be a charkha. He would not be satisfied with the number of charkhas alone, or the amount of yarn spun by them. He wanted something more than that. He wanted the sign of the charkha on their bodies, that was to say, they should wear khaddar. If they used khaddar, then it was a proof positive that they were using the charkha. They were living under a delusion for so many years and hence they were using foreign cloth. If they wanted swaraj, they must make use of khaddar only. Indians must use only swadeshi cloth, and they they must use khaddar for every purpose in life. Lokamanya Tilak once told a friend of his that, even if their country was full of disease and malaria, they were not going to go out of India to England and there try for swaraj. India was their motherland and however bad the climate might be, they had to remain there and they must die there. Unless they were able to do that they would never be happy in this land. If they loved India, if they revered Tilak, who had said that swaraj was their birthright, then let Indians give up the use of foreign clothes. Only the day before, a Parsi lady had sent to him her foreign ornaments worth about a thousand rupees; he had not seen her and he did not even know her name. Why should Indians wear foreign-made ornaments? Were all Indian goldsmiths dead? So long as there were Indian goldsmiths who were not getting enough work, why should they wear foreign-made ornaments? He was sure that the Parsi sister who had given him her ornaments was now wearing khaddar, or if she had not done so already, would do so soon. He appealed to them to use *shuddha*[1] swadeshi. He was not appealing for money, for money could be collected anyhow. But the first thing he would ask of them was to give up the use of foreign cloth. After September he was not going to speak of these things. After September, he was going to ask his Muslim friends to use only swadeshi cloth if they wanted to get the Khilafat question decided as they wished. Every one of them men and women must use the charkha and from today they must make up their minds to use only swadeshi cloth. A new epoch had arrived in their activities, and if they used swadeshi cloth, their strength would increase manifold.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-7-1921

[1] Pure

170. TELEGRAM TO "NAVAJIVAN"

BOMBAY,
[*July 1, 1921*]

India has succeeded in raising, by the end of June, a sum of approximately 80 lakhs for perpetuating the memory of the Lokamanya and establishing swaraj. I hope that the people will raise the balance of 20 lakhs without delay. Though the Bezwada programme cannot be considered to have been literally fulfilled, people's response to the Congress appeal may be said to have been excellent. Bombay's gene-rosity on this occasion has eclipsed its past record. It should now join hands with the other provinces to raise the balance as soon as possible. However, the main effort should be directed to bringing about total boycott of foreign cloth and completing the enrolment of one crore Con-gress members.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-7-1921

171. TELEGRAM TO "NAVAJIVAN"

BOMBAY,
[*July 1, 1921*]

Deshbandhu Chitta Ranjan Das has wired to say that Bengal's contribution to the Tilak Swaraj Fund has come to 25 lakhs. India has thus completed the sum of one crore as pledged.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-7-1921

172. BOYCOTT OF FOREIGN CLOTH[1]

God is great. He sends help from unexpected quarters. It was but a few days ago that Mr. Das telegraphed saying Bengal had collected no more than three lakhs. It was no small thing for me to announce that India had not given the full crore on the due date. I struggled with friends for getting the deficit underwritten. They were ready to give it to me, but they would not disclose their names to the world as, in their opinion, it looked like seeking notoriety. They thought that it was better to leave the figure where it was and try to collect the balance before the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee. I capitulated but I was sore at heart that God had not answered my prayer. And yet I knew Him to be an unfailing God. He sent Bengal to the rescue and ratified the nation's undertaking at Bezwada. Let us be humble and praise Him. But we dare not tarry on the road to make merry. We must march forward. Each Province should at least make up its numerical proportion of the crore, although the total collection amounts now to one crore and five lakhs[2]

But our next inevitable step is to bring about a complete boycott of foreign cloth. On the first of August, we celebrate the anniversary of Lokamanya's death. We can, if we make a definite special effort, bring about an almost complete boycott of foreign cloth before that date. I know it requires the consensus of an over-whelming majority. But it is not impossible to reach it if we would work with the same zeal as we have for the collections. Then and not till then will India have attained the power to establish swaraj. I cannot conceive any better celebration of the anniversary of Lokamanya's death than a ccomplete boycott of foreign cloth.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-7-1921

[1] The article originally bore title "What We Must Do Now : Boycott Foreign Cloth by August 1".

[2] This amount, according to a report in *The Bombay Chronicle* of 2-7-1921, was made up of the following contributions (in lakhs) : Bombay city $37\frac{1}{2}$; Bengal 25; Gujarat and Kathiawar 15; The Punjab 5; Madras and Andhra 4; C. P. and Berar 3; Maharashtra (including Bombay suburbs) 3; Bihar 3; Sind 2; U.P. $2\frac{1}{2}$; Karnatak 1; Delhi 2; Ajmer and Merwara $\frac{1}{2}$; Orissa and Assam $\frac{1}{4}$; Burma $1\frac{1}{4}$.

173. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

Saturday, July 2, 1921

You will not hear me speak about money any more. We have now to think only of what we should do next. If money comes, it is welcome. It would be no great sacrifice to spend even 10 crores for the sake of Tilak Maharaj, let alone one crore. For swaraj, we may spend even as much as that, if necessary. But 10 crores will certainly not be required. He is no man of practical wisdom who spends a pie more than necessary. You should now think of only one thing. On August 1 comes the death anniversary of Tilak Maharaj; what shall we do on that day, something which will be worthy of the occasion?

You should admire the *mantra* which Tilak Maharaj gave. Be captivated not by his scholarship or sweet speech, but by his work, the *yajna* which was his life and the sacrifices which he made. You should accomplish the task on which he had set his heart, for which he gave his life, for which he suffered privations. There can be no better memorial to him than that. It is better that you win swaraj, though you may not have collected a single pie, than that you should merely collect thousands of crores. I am quite confident that you will do this. But you can do nothing unless you think in terms of swaraj. You must give up foreign cloth. No one will kill you for doing so, only you will have to do a little persuading with yourselves. In the same way that we give a dose of medicine to a child, women should swallow this bitter draught. Do not wait for August 1, but examine your ward-robe, your body and your head without losing a single day. Foreign cloth constitutes our slavery. You should throw it off, you merchants especially. If anyone offers his contribution to a fund in memory of Tilak Maharaj with a word of abuse for him at the same time, how can I accept that? If I do, Maharashtra will certainly sever my head for doing so. If we wish to have a true memorial to Tilak Maharaj, then all of us must become swadeshi. Unless we do that, we shall not be considered fit for swaraj. If you contribute money, do so only as a token of your resolve to give up foreign cloth. It will not be right of you to contribute anything to the Swaraj Fund, hoping to make it up from business in foreign cloth.

[1] The meeting was held under the joint auspices of the Bombay Commission Agents' Association and the Lingayat Commission Agents' Association. A sum of Rs. 5,001 was presented to Gandhiji as their contribution to the Tilak Swaraj Fund.

Regard foreign cloth as no better than beef or liquor. In your busi-ness as commission agents, you now supply foreign cloth also. Take a pledge, therefore, that hereafter you will not supply such cloth to your clients. Can any Hindu supply liquor to a client who asks for it? How can we ever trade in a commodity which it is not right for us to supply to our clients? In the same way, we cannot trade in foreign cloth. You shou-ld certainly learn to hate not Englishmen or the manufacturers of English cloth, but foreign cloth as such. How can you make money through a trade which enslaves our country? A Parsi brother came to me arguing about liquor. I told him that he must renounce trade in liquor even if he were to become a beggar in consequence. How can you earn money through something the very sight of which is repugnant to both, the Hindus and the Muslims of India? The same is true about foreign cloth.

I do not understand why we may not picket foreign cloth shops as we picket liquor shops. Boycotting foreign cloth is, if anything, more important. Sisters, it is contrary to dharma for you to buy foreign cloth. To buy foreign cloth is to adopt another's child, disowning one's own. You believe that you look beautiful in foreign cloth. But true beauty consists in devotion to duty. Sita preferred to cover her body with leaves, refusing to accept the garment sent by the proud Ravana. You too, sisters, should become Sitas. How can you ask for swaraj without giving up foreign cloth at the same time? Before August 1, you must do this at any rate.

Anyone among you who has the courage to do so should burn his stock of foreign cloth. Those, too, who wish to give it to the poor should give it to me, as they do not know the really poor. Only I know them. If you had known them, you would not have taken delight in going about dressed in foreign cloth and would not be indulging in pleasures. Give up your fascination for foreign things. Then alone will our task be done. Keep the promise implied in the money you have contributed. That is what we want now.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 10-7-1921

174. TO "VAISHNAVAS"

Many among you are my relations, many belong to the same community as I do and many of you are my friends from childhood days. From all these I get letters. In some of them the correspondents compli-ment me on my views about *Antyajas*, in some others they gently remon-strate with me, thinking that I am in error in holding these views, in some the correspondents treat me to harsh words in their anger and in some they actually hold out threats against me.

I regard all these things as a sign of their love for me. There are many others, besides me, who hold the same views about *Antyajas* as I do and do not object to contact with them, but people are angry with me and the reason, as I understand it, is that they believe that, in all other respects, I follow the restraints of dharma to the utmost and am otherwise a good man. They cannot reconcile themselves to what they believe to be my erroneous views about *Antyajas*. They think that these views hold up our progress towards swaraj. Some even believe that I have gone out of my way to invite trouble and have, in my obstinacy, endangered the ship of swaraj.

My own humble belief, against this, is that my concern for *Antyajas* is a credit to my devotion to the *Vaishnava* way of life, that it is an expression of pure compassion, and that it proves my scrupulous regard for the restraints of religious life.

Some *Vaishnavas* believe that I am destroying *varnashrama*. On the contrary, I believe that I am trying to cleanse it of impurities and so reveal its true form. I am certainly not advocating abolition of restrictions on eating and drinking in company with anyone and everyone or on intermarrying among communities. I merely say that the idea that physi-cal contact with some person is a sin is itself sinful.

The attempt to defend the practice of untouchability by citing the similar practice of avoiding contact with a woman during the period of menstruation does not convince me. A chance contact with a woman during this time is not looked upon as a sin. It is held to be violation of a rule of hygiene and so the person takes a bath to be clean again. If anyone avoided contact with an *Antyaj* who had been engaged in sanitary work and had not bathed or otherwise cleansed himself after the work, or, in case he had contact with such an *Antyaj*, went and had a bath, I can understand the idea. But my conscience

can never accept the idea that dharma requires us to keep away scrupulously from everyone born an *Antyaj*.

The inspiration of the *Vaishnava* way is compassion. I do not see a trace of this in our treatment of the *Antyajas*. Many among us never address an *Antyaj* except with a word of contempt. If an *Antyaj* is ever found sitting in the same compartment with other Hindus, there will be a rain of abuse on him. We offer them food left over on our plates, as we do to cattle. If an *Antyaj* has fever or is bitten by a serpent, our *vaids* and doctors will refuse to go to his place and treat him. If anyone should get ready to go, we would do everything in our power to stop him. For their residence, the *Antyajas* get the worst localities, with no amenities like light and public streets. They are provided with no wells for their use. They cannot use public wells and dharmsalas and cannot attend schools. We expect from them the most difficult of services and pay them the least. The sky above and the earth below is all that they have by way of shelter. Is such treatment in keeping with the *Vaishnava* way of life? Is it the way inspired by compassion, is it not rather the way of cruelty? The British Government, against which you have launched non-co-operation, does not treat us with such contempt. We actually cherish our Dyerism towards *Antyajas* as dharma.

Speaking for myself, I believe that we are reaping as we sowed. Treating the *Antyajas* with contempt, we have become objects of the entire world's contempt.

The idea of untouchability is unacceptable to reason. It is contrary to truth and non-violence and, therefore, is certainly not dharma. The very idea of our being high and others low is base. He is no true Brahmin who lacks the quality of the Sudra : readiness for service. He alone is a Brahmin who possesses the qualities of all others, the Kshatriya, the Vaisya and the Sudra and, in addition, has knowledge. A Sudra is not altogether devoid of knowledge. Readiness for service is predominant in him over his other qualities. The *varnashrama-dharma* has no room for distinctions of high and low. The *Vaishnava* tradition knows of *Bhangis* and *Chandals* who attained deliverance. How can a dharma which holds that the entire universe is permeated by Vishnu believe that He is not present in the *Antyaj*?

I have no desire, however, to interpret the Shastras to you. I do not claim to be a man of learning. Every *shastri* is welcome to have

the better of me in interpreting the Shastras. I know with confidence that I have had some experience of what the way of compassion means. This way can have simply no room in it for an attitude of contempt for *Antyajas*.

Moreover, what people will you describe as *Antyajas*? Is a weaver an *Antyaj*? Are wealthy dealers in leather *Antyajas*? Or is it that gold cleanses everything? A chamar who has given up his traditional work, a *Bhangi* who has taken to driving a car or works in a mill, who takes a bath every day and keeps himself clean, is even such a person an untou-chable?

Why argue, however? So long as you believe that physical contact with anyone whom you regard as an untouchable is a sin, you may, if you wish, take a bath after such contact, but my request to you is that just as you do not hold in disregard a mother who is in her period of menstruation, but serve her instead, so should you serve *Antyajas* instead of despising them. Dig wells for them, build schools for them, arrange for *vaids* to visit them, make their suffering your own and so earn their heartfelt blessings. See to it that they have their homes in good areas. Pay them well, respect them, educate them, look upon them as your younger brothers and persuade them to give up drinking, beef-eating, etc. Reward those who do these things. If you act in this way, you will come to see that the idea of untouchability is [as the poet says] a superfluous limb. Some of you have refused to contribute to the Tilak Swaraj Fund simply because of my views regarding *Antyajas*. This is my appeal to you, however: contribute money for the reform of untouchables; you can cert-ainly do so, even if you do not abandon the practice of untoucha-bility. Actually, some *Vaishnavas* have earmarked their contributions for this purpose. Moreover, though you may not like my views about *Antyajas*, you can surely give some money for the swadeshi movement, for famine-relief and for schools. I believe, though, that you would certainly not oppose improvement in the conditions of *Antyajas*, and, therefore, appeal to you that, as evidence of such regard for the principle of compassion, you earmark your contributions for activities intended for their uplift.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-7-1921

175. HOW TO BOYCOTT FOREIGN GOODS[1]

It is needless to say at this time of day that the proposed boycott of foreign cloth is not a vindictive process, but is as necessary for national existence as breath is to life. The quicker therefore it can be brought about the better for the country. Without it swaraj cannot be established or retained after establishment. It is of the highest importance to know how it can be brought about even before the first day of August next.

To arrive at the boycott quickly it is necessary (1) for the mill-owners to regularize their profits and to manufacture principally for the Indian market, (2) for importers to cease to buy foreign goods—a beginning has already been made by three principal merchants, (3) for the consumers to refuse to buy any foreign cloth and to buy khadi wherever possible, (4) for the consumers to wear only khadi cloth, mill-cloth being retained for the poor who do not know the distinction between swadeshi and *pardeshi*[2], (5) for the consumers to use, till swaraj is established and khadi manufacture increased, khadi just enough for covering the body, (6) for the consumers to destroy *pardeshi* cloth as they would destroy intoxi-cating liquors on taking the vow of abstinence or to sell it for use abroad or to wear it out for all dirty work or during private hours.

It is to be hoped that all the parties referred to in the foregoing clauses will respond well and simultaneously. But, in the end, success depends upon the persistent determination of the consumer. He has simply to decline to wear the badge of his slavery.

The Bombay Chronicle, 4-7-1921

176. LETTER TO N. C. KELKAR

BOMBAY,
July 4 [*1921*]

DEAR MR. KELKAR,

Of all congratulations, I appreciate yours most because I am in need of your whole-hearted co-operation, if you can give it out of

[1] The note, which was also published in *Young India*, 6-7-1921, appears to have been issued generally to the Press.

[2] Foreign-made or belonging to a foreign country

conviction. I have your letter[1] about the Working Committee. In future, you will do as the spirit moves you. I only feel that we should make the Working Committee a swift, powerful and homogeneous body. There is room in it for differences of opinion, not conviction. I do believe we can achieve all we want by efficiently working the Congress constitution. But I can't force my faith on India. It will come if we are destined to achieve our freedom this year.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : C.W. 3122. Courtesy : Kashi Nath Kelkar

177. LETTER TO K. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR

GAMDEVI,

BOMBAY,

July 5, 1921

DEAR SIR,

Received yours of the 28th last. I am shortly dealing with the matter referred to in your letter in *Young India*. Thank you for your suggestion.

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI K. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR

TIRUPATI

MADRAS STATE

From a photostat : G.N. 5668

178. NOTES

THE BEGINNING OF RESPONSIBILITY

The unexampled response given by India to the Tilak Swaraj Fund shows the turst she has in her non-co-operation leaders. Will they prove worthy of the trust? Many have given liberally, and all have asked, how will the funds be administered? I have unhesitatingly

[1] This is not available.

replied that the officers of the Provincial Congress Committees are responsible and tried men. If we do not account properly for every pie we receive and do not make a judicious use of the funds, we shall deserve to be blotted out of public life. Let us remember that the poorest people have given of their best. Many have given their all. Washermen, carpenters, blacksmiths, Christians, Jews, Parsis, Sikhs, Jains, Mussulmans and Hindus have paid their mite. On the 16th of June, when the collection commenced in Bombay, the whole amount collected throughout India stood at thirty lakhs, if even at that. I had full faith that forty lakhs would be collected by the end of June by provinces other than Bombay. All India, therefore, subscribed at the rate of more than five lakhs per day during the fourteen days of concentrated effort. The provinces outside Bombay had subscribed up to the 30th June during the same period as Bombay, thirty-eight lakhs—not a bad record. How shall we retain this confidence? We must keep accurate accounts, which even a child can see and understand. The funds ought not to be used outside the purpose of non-co-operation, nor generally for any purpose outside (1) the spread of the charkha and khadi, (2) the removal of untouchability, and hence, the elevation of the suppressed classes, (3) the conduct of national schools, where spinning and weaving are a part of the training and (4) the advance of the liquor prohibition campaign.

These objects necessarily include the upkeep of the national service. It will be through the instrumentality of that service that we shall be able to achieve the objects above named. And to achieve the objects above named is to demonstrate our fitness and ability for attaining swaraj.

I would warn the different Committees against living on the interest of the funds. To invest the money at interest and to use only the interest is to betray want of faith in the nation and in ourselves. The nation's trust must be our capital, and its response from time to time must constitute our interest. If we claim to represent the nation, we must rely upon it to finance yearly institutions established and conducted for it. Living on interest tends to make us irresponsible. The hoards rotting in the name of religion in the various parts of India have made many of these religious institutions a sham, where they have not become hotbeds of corruption. If, therefore, we would profit by our past experience, we would spend almost the whole amount collected by us during the remaining six months. When I placed the financial programme before the All-India Congress Committee in Bezwada, I did so because I knew that we had honest and able men enough to deal with national and provincial finance, and because we needed that amount for use during the year. We cannot

achieve boycott of foreign cloth unless we spend liberally in buying spinning-wheels, hand-spun yarn and khadi. We must conduct the swadeshi propaganda till the spinning-wheel has been placed on a commercial footing and has found a lasting place in every home. Distributed over a large area, the crore is not much to spend till the end of the year. I would suggest every province framing at the end of the month its own considered budget and spending not less nor more. I have suggested a month, for the provinces would hardly have made up their accounts and collected the promised subscriptions before then. More-over, we must wait for the All-India Congress Committee to give us a definite lead for the months to follow. If we succeed in fulfilling the programme in an orderly manner, we cannot fail to establish swaraj before December, if not by the end of September.

BOMBAY'S DECISION

The Bombay Provincial Congress Committee has come to a decision on the question of the management of the big collection made by it in a most business-like and becoming manner. I quote from memory the effective part of its resolution :

> Whereas the All-India Tilak Memorial Fund collections made during the month of June were made not to meet provincial needs merely but in order to fulfil the obligation incurred at Bezwada and in order to meet the requirements of provinces in need of help, in the opinion of the Committee it is desirable to entrust a special Committee with the control and management of the collections. Messrs Raghavji Purushottam, Velji Lakhamsi Napu, Revashankar Jagjivan Jhaveri, Umar Sobani, Jamnalal Bajaj, Ardeshar Barjorji Godrej, Shankarlal Banker and Lakshmidas Tairsi be appointed a Committee to control and manage the said funds, subject to the following conditions :
>
> (1) The non-co-operation expenses of the Provincial Congress Committee to be a first charge on the Fund.
>
> (2) The other provinces to be helped on the advice of the All-India Congress Committee in respect of the spread of the charkha and khadi, elevation of suppressed classes, national schools, famine relief and prohibition of liquor.

It is an act of self-denial, for which the Bombay Committee deserves the warm congratulations of the country. The one intention running through the resolution is to put the administration of the large funds beyond suspicion and on a sound footing.

RESIGNING FOR A MUSLIM BROTHER

Another instance of self-effacement is also furnished by Bombay. The advice of the Working Committee regarding Muslim representation was given after the voting-papers had been issued. The

election results showed that only one Mussulman was elected, and that was Mr. Umar Sobani who could hardly be claimed specially to represent the Mussul-man interest. He is too well known as a public worker to be classed purely as a Mussulman representative. Moreover, in Bombay it was necessary to have at least two Muslim members elected to the All-India Congress Committee. Mr. Vithaldas Jerajani has therefore vacated his seat for a Mussulman representative. It is instances of such brotherly and public spirit make me feel that swaraj is hastening to us. The only danger is that of our running away from it. In my opinion, the incident proves the wisdom of the Working Committee's advice. It came just in time to put us on our guard and honour. The Working Committee warns us that we may not neglect special and tender interests, and that wherever there is the least suspicion of Mussulman coolness, it is up to the Hindus to see that they do notgive the slightest reason for Mussulman coolness or indifferenceor suspicion. And what applies to Hindus and Mussulmans applies also to questions regarding and between the other races. The weaker the interest, the greater must be the regard of the stron-ger party for that interest. Then we need never have any racial differences.

IS IT A BREACH?

Friends have suspected me of having committed a breach of the Congress resolution in that I have appealed to the Moderates to co-operate with us in the liquor campaign and especially in that I have actually invited them to legislate for prohibition.[1] A friend asks, 'Why should we seek the help of the Councils which we have boycotted? Does it not mean a modification of your previous attitude?" I venture to say that it does not. There is all the difference between a challenge and a petition. If I had appealed out of our helplessness, it would have been a breach of the Congress resolution and a modification of my own attitude. But, in my opinion, I strengthen our position when I invite the Moderates in gentle language to do their duty, and prove their claim to be popular representatives. I see nothing wrong in inviting the Moderates and the Government to co-operate with us in all we are doing. I see nothing wrong in appealing to the Moderates, or even to the Government through their authorized channels, to help us in the Khilafat and the Punjab matters, or to shut up all the liquor shops, or to dot every one of their schools with spinning-wheels or to recognize the force of public opinion and to prohibit by legislation the import of foreign cloth. For, if they succeed in doing these things, I would cease to think evil of the institution they adore or administer.

[1] *Vide* "To the Moderates", 8-6-1921.

In making my appeal I have shown them a way to partial reinstatement in public estimation, and have furni-shed myself and the country with a further effective cause, in the event of the failure of the appeal, to demonstrate the wooden nature of the system. I have appealed, not as myself a part of the system, but as an outsider.

OF PICKETING

The Indian Social Reformer contests the utility of picketing in its vigorous style. Without entering upon any examination of its argument, I would perhaps take up less space if I simply stated my view and experience. Picketing in its nature must be temporary, but it is like what a stimulant is in medicine. Drink is more a disease than a vice.I know scores of men who would gladly leave off drink if they could.I know some who have asked that the temptation might be put away from them. In spite of the temptation having been put away at their instance, I have known them to steal drink. I do not, therefore, think, that it was wrong to have removed the temptation. Diseased persons have got to be helped against themselves. If I have a son who is addicted, say, to gambling, and a gambling company imposes itself on me to tempt my boy, I have either violently to knock the company down or to post watches at its offices, in order, if possible, to shame my son into not going there. It is true that there are other gambling companies some distance from my place. Still, I take it, I would be held in the right in having posted a watch at the company's door. I must make it difficult for my son to gamble. If the *Reformer* accepts the doctrine of State prohibition, it must accept the corollary of picketing, so long as the State is a tyranny being perpetrated in the face of public opinion. What, for instance, should the public do if the State were to build palaces in every street for women of ill fame, and issue to them licences to ply their trade? Will it not be its duty, unless it destroys these palaces inhabited by vice, to quarantine them and warn the public of the danger of falling an easy prey to the temptation forced on it? I recognize the necessity of using only men and women of character as pickets and of guarding against violence being offered to those who insist on drinking in the face of public opinion. Picketing is a duty a citizen must discharge when he is not helped by the State. What is a police patrol if it is not picketing against thieves? The police use the gun when the thief betrays an inclination to break into another's house. A picket uses the pressure of shame, i.e., love, when he warns a weak brother against the dangers of the drink evil.The *Reformer* has attributed to picketing claims never put forth on

its behalf.

VIOLENCE IN DHARWAR

If the Congress Committee's telegram to the *Chronicle* may be relied upon, there is little doubt that some unauthorized police officer has been panic-stricken and given the order to fire on an unarmed crowd. The persistent keeping open of liquor shops, as if it was a right of the public to have liquor served to it by the State, is an open and immoral defiance of public opinion. I can only congratulate the families of those who have died. I can deplore the slightest show of force that may have been betrayed by the crowd, but I respectfully warn the Indian ministers in charge of transferred departments that they will belie the traditions of the great party to which they belong if they do not courageously face the grave crisis that is overtaking the country and summarily close every liquor shop and refund the money paid in advance by the poor licence-holders. They may not dread the loss of revenue immorally derived from the twice-cursed traffic. It cannot stand in the face of an awakened and enraged public conscience. As it is, an education supported by a revenue derived from an immoral source is bad enough. Presently, it will stink in our nostrils when it is tainted with innocent blood. I do beseech the ministers to be warned before it is too late. Let it not be said of them that for the sake of revenue they remained callously indifferent to the signs of the times. They dare not wait for hours, much less for weeks. It will be wrong to wait for devising methods of tapping other sources of revenue before giving up the revenue from drink. It will be very like a man refusing to vacate a plague-infected house until another is ready for him. Most people in such circumstances will first vacate, and then search for another and uninfected shelter.

A BRAVE SIKH

Sardar Shardul Singh has always appeared to me to be one of the bravest of non-co-operators. He is a man of fine culture, scrupulously honourable. He has reasoned faith in non-violent non-co-operation. He is a staunch nationalist. He holds the Sikh doctrine dear as life, but loves nationalism equally well. Non-violence is not his final creed in everything. But it is like that of the Ali Brothers, his present creed for India's salvation. He abides by it as honourably as the Ali Brothers, which is saying a great deal. But this State has no use for him except transportation for five years. He is too brave, too honest and therefore, too influential for the Government of the Punjab, and, therefore, he has been put away. It is my conviction that his services to the country are all the greater for his incarceration. It is

a wonderful manifestation of bravery and self-restraint shown all over India that so many gladly face imprisonment, and the people remain quiet and dignified without being cowed down. I hope that the imprisonment of Sardar Shardul Singh will spur the Sikhs and the other Punjabis to greater effort in behalf of non-co-operation. I tender my congratulations to Sardar Shardul Singh and all the others who are suffering for the sake of the motherland.

THE PRINCE'S PROPOSED VISIT

It is a great pity that the talk of the Prince's visit has been revived and a provisional date fixed. India will refuse to welcome a representative of a system of which she is sick unto death. And if his visit is forced upon an unwilling India, there must be the same effective hartal on the day of His Royal Highness's visit that there was on the Duke's visit. I repeat once more that non-co-operators have nothing against the Prince as a man. But he cannot be divested of the office he holds. Whilst it is true that the King and his heirs do not actively meddle in the affairs of State (which is a convenience for the State), he is as effective a representative of the existing system of Government as the most meddlesome Prime Minister or Viceroy. I am disposed to think that, as a supporter of the institution, he is more effective by reason of his isolation. If the Prince comes, he will not come to bless the non-co-operators or the cause, but to sing the song of praise for a Government which is responsible for the dishonour of the Pujnab, for breach of faith with the Mussulmans, for forcing the drink traffic on India, for impoveri-shing her and for so emasculating her that she almost thinks she must remain in slavery for an unthinkable time. In my humble opinion, the projected visit will be an insult added to injury. And it will be the duty of every non-co-operator, respectfully but firmly and in no unmistakable manner, to express his strong disapproval of all such efforts to bolster up a system which is tottering to its fall.

Young India, 6-7-1921

179. BOMBAY THE BEAUTIFUL

Bombay is beautiful, not for its big buildings for most of them hide squalid poverty and dirt, not for its wealth for most of it is derived from the blood of the masses, but for its world-renowned generosity.The Parsis set the tone, and Bombay has ever lived up to her reputation. Bombay's charity has covered a multitude of her sins. In respect of the Tilak Swaraj Fund, Bombay has beaten her past records. Between the sixteenth and the thirtieth June, she subscribed at the rate of two lakhs and a half per day. She enabled India to keep her promise. And I have no doubt, Chittaranjan Das will allow Bombay's claim to the honour of having infected Bengal and let her become the rescuer. For, if Bengal had not leapt from three lakhs to twenty five, in spite of the Herculean labours of Bombay's choicest workers India would have failed to raise the crore. Bombay, then, is beautiful because of her charities.

The figures are not to hand, of the number of members nor of the wheels at work. But the subscription was the most visible token of India's resolve.

India has honoured the late Lokamanya as she has not honoured any other son before. But the crore is but the foundation of the of the monument that we are raising to the memory of the deceased patriot; swaraj is the crown. No monument less than swaraj can revere a memory so great.

Let us however not deceive ourselves. To be true to the spirit of the memorial resolution, each province and each district should have subscribed at least its numerical proportion. Two pice per head was not a contribution beyond the means of the average man or woman. And I hope that every province will strive to make up its quota as early as possible.

The subscription is but a milestone on the journey. The crore cannot give us swaraj, not the riches of the whole world can give it. Before we can be wholly free, we must be economically independent. A man who is forced to starve cannot be expected to pray to God. A starving man will sell his soul. He has no soul keep.Before, therefore, India can think of freedom, she must feel economically independent. And this she cannot do so long as she is almost wholly dependent upon the foreign market for her cloth. One who owes his oxygen to

the pump is a dying man. Is it any wonder that India is in a dying condition? If, then, we want to achieve swaraj during this year, we cannot do so till we have brought about by self-renunciation a complete boycott of foreign cloth. We must, therefore, utilize the money we have for manufacturing as much khadi as possible through handlooms from hand-spun yarn. It must be the chief activity in each province. We must examine the manu-factures of our mills, and persuade the mill-owners to regulate their manu-facture and their profits in accordance with the requirements of the nation. The mill manufactures must be reserved for the poorest among the poor whom we cannot reach for the moment.

The ensuing meeting of the All-India Congress Committee must concentrate on this matter and formulate a programme that should bring about the desired boycott.

But, after all, the burden of boycott has to be principally borne by Bombay, as she has borne the largest part of the financial obligation. Bombay controls the cloth market of India. Bombay imports from Lancashire and Japan. Heavy, therefore, is the responsibility of Bombay importers of yarn and piece-goods. If a successful boycott is to be brought about, they must be prepared to undergo heavy sacrifices for the sake of the country. Mill-owners, too, have a duty to perform. They have made enormous profits. It is the easiest for them to help the boycott movement in a most effective manner. It means a revision of their outlook upon national life. The mill-hands, too, have a duty by the country. Hitherto they have interested themselves only in their own wages. They should now learn to appreciate public welfare. Lastly comes the unfortunate public, which has no say in fixing prices, and has to pay at the bidding of the mill-owner and the middleman. Surely, even apart from the question of boycott, this is a most unsatisfactory state of things. Famine threatens the land. It is high time that each one of us thought about the good of all rather than individual aggrandisement irrespective of national welfare. Bombay the Beautiful has a golden opportunity. She must add to her beauty, or be prepared to lose what she has.

Young India, 6-7-1921

180. AN APPEAL TO MILL-OWNERS

July 6, 1921

TO

THE MILL-OWNERS

GENTLEMEN,

Perhaps you have no faith in the movement of non-co-operation. I know some of you consider that it cannot but end in violence. And if you mean thereby violence on the part of a Government that does not wish to abdicate power, you are right. Dharwar seems to be the latest instance, if its Congress Secretary's report is to be relied upon. Some of you consider that the movement will harm the country whether it succeeds or fails. For the moment I would ask you to dismiss non-violence from your minds. I would urge you to study the movement now being intensified for the boycott of foreign cloth. The Bengalees always tell me, when I go to Bengal, that the mill-owners not only did not help them when the anti-partition agitation was going on,[1] but that they played them false by forcing up prices, by over-sizing and,what is the worst of all, by palming off on them foreign cloth under the name of swadeshi. I do not know what truth there is in these charges. But you will agree that, if they are true, they reflect no credit on the mill-owners.

I would not have recalled these charges if I had no doubt about the course you would adopt during the bigger crisis that has come upon the country. Many friends have told me that the nation is not to expect anything from you. They point out the fact that you have not, with one or two honourable exceptions, paid anything for the Swaraj Fund. I have defended your abstention on the score of shyness or timidity where there has been no conscientious objection. I am loath to think that you will not help the country as commercial men when your help is most needed. The merchants, however, who deal in foreign cloth and with whom I am pleading that they should recognize the feeling in the country and cease to deal in foreign cloth, frighten me by saying that the result of their response will simply mean that you will imme-diately send up the prices and fling in the face of the nation the law of supply and demand in support of the inflation of prices and thus make matters worse than they are at present. They tell me that they would glad-ly give up trading in

[1] This was in 1905 and later.

foreign cloth, if only they could be assured that you will disregard the law of supply and demand and consider it your duty not to raise the prices. I was told by some of you in 1919 that, even if you did not raise prices, it will not be the consumer who would gain but that it will be the middleman who will prey upon the people. I consider such argument to be unworthy of the talented business men that you are. You are well able to control the movement of your manufactures till they reach the consumer. You have only to introduce into your business a little of the national spirit.

I do not say you should be philanthropic, though there would be nothing wrong if you combined philanthropy with business. But I do plead for the conduct of your business on national rather than purely selfish lines. A man is not less business-like because he thinks of the nation as well as of himself and his shareholders. I ask you, therefore, without prejudice to your views about non-co-operation, to issue your assurance that neither the merchants nor the consumer need fear any rise in the prices of your cloth merely because of larger demand by reason of the proposed boycott of foreign goods. This is the least that the country has the right to expect of you.

I remain,
Gentlemen,
Your faithful friend,
M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 6-7-1921

181. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI AND S. SRINIVASA IYENGAR[1]

[On or after *July 6, 1921*]

VIEW ALL INDIA COMMITTEE MEETING OTHER OBLIGATIONS TWO WEEKS IMPOSSIBLE BEFORE AUGUST.

From a photostat : S.N. 7562

[1] This was in reply to a telegram from C. Rajagopalachari and S. Srinivasa Iyengar from Madras on July 6, which read : "Must come here soon for two weeks tour after starting work Bombay."

182. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Wednesday [On or after *July 6, 1921*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I got your letter yesterday. I certainly understood what you had said. I have not, in either instance, put a wrong construction or shown myself prone to do so. It is perfectly true that, when a statement is capable of two interpretations, the right course is to accept the one which is unfavourable to ourselves. The difficulty, in the two instances, was not this; it was what I have described it to be. In reading 'twenty-five lakhs' there was nothing particularly more favourable to us, for, even without this sum, one crore had been made up and the telegram was actually received after the last letter was written. It would make no difference to our cause whether he donated one lakh charkhas or offered them at a lower price. Even now, I do not understand the sentence about one lakh charkhas to mean anything else. There is impatience, it is true, in all these efforts to decide what the sentence means; impatience, too, is a sign of one's being attached and attachment is always a source of error. A person who is free from attachment finds time to reflect and puts a construction which will save the other party; if he is a truthful man, he will, as I have pointed out, correctly guess the correspondent's meaning.

I read what you have said about yourself. What has happened is a distressing thing. It is plain how we come to make mistakes. The right atonement will be never to eat the thing again. But I suggest this: on every *ekadashi*[1] day, have only one seer of warm milk, 80 tolas, and nothing else. Not even fruit or sugar. Drink the quantity in two or three meals, not one. Continue this for one year from the next *ekadashi* onwards.

Read the writings of Shri Rajchandra and reflect over them.

Read Tulsidasji's *Maniratnamala* and reflect over it.

Read Bhartrihari's[2] *Vairag yashataka*, and reflect over it.

1 From the reference to "twenty-five lakhs", it would appear that this letter was written on or after the Wednesday following June 30, that is, July 6; *vide* "Telegram to *Navajivan*", July 1, 1921.

[1] Eleventh day of the bright or the dark half of the lunar month. Pious Hindus fast on this day.

[2] A Sanskrit poet, famous for his aphorisms

Peruse very carefully the chapter on *vairagya*[1] in *Yoga-vasishtha*[2]

Spin daily for not less than one hour, concentrating the mind on the thought that this *yajna* may wash away uncleanliness from you. This, too, for a year, with exemption during travelling and illness.

All other work in the morning to be attended to afterwards. After you have, on getting up, cleaned your teeth and answered the call of nature, if you feel the urge, prayers if you are in the Ashram and then, half an hour's silent reading as above, followed by spinning for one hour. Everything else to wait.

For the duration of the year, always go to bed before nine and never remain in it after four. You may change all this when ill.

Though prescribing this atonement, I neither magnify your lapse nor minimize it. You may drop from this any item you feel like dropping. Do not drop spinning out of a feeling of shame. Do not let any such feeling or the thought of public service hold you back from going to bed at 9. And do not let *The Independent* stand in your way. It is not necessary that one writing for a daily should keep late hours. In any case, the lines along which we propose to run it requires you to do no such thing.

Remember that the hour and a half outlined above is to be a time of silence. Devdas started reading your letter quite innocently not know-ing what it might contain, and then I did not think it proper to stop him.

The reasons you have given against your coming are quite sound and you need not, therefore, come. If Panditji sends for you or Joseph asks you to go and you come over, that would be a different story. I do not mind your not coming, though I would have been happy if you had come.

Though I have seen your error, please do not feel that my love for you is any the less on that account. If I were perfect, there would be no room for any deficiency in me. Being myself an imperfect man yearning for liberation, I would be only increasing my imperfection if I magnify others' lapses.

I have suggested that you daily remind yourself [of your lapse] but the feeling of dejection must not remain. Sincere repentance is incom-patible with dejection. Sin makes a long face. Memory of uncleanli-ness may induce humility in as but never dejection.

[1] Renunciation

[2] A Sanskrit treatise on Vedanta, with many stories

"Keeping an even mind in happiness and suffering"[1] applies to this situation too.

Blessings from,

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 11429

183. OPEN LETTER TO CLOTH MERCHANTS

July 7, 1921

GENTLEMEN,

Yesterday I invited the mill-owners to help the foreign cloth boycott movement. They may or may not help. I shall hope that they will. But you cannot possibly keep yourselves from it, because the majority of you are even convinced non-co-operators. You have made possible the fulfilment of the Bezwada promise regarding the Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund. But you will say that whilst payment was a small matter to you, your trade is a matter of life and death. It is just this hallu-cination that is keeping swaraj away from us. If your trade is a matter of life and death to you, is the country's good less so? Swaraj means that you and I put our country's trade before ours. The appeal to you to refrain from importing foreign cloth is in other words an appeal to subor-dinate your individual gain to the country's.

For every yard you import from England or Japan or America, you take away from the mouth of a fellow countryman at least three annas without giving him anything in return. Let me explain. India has enough labour lying idle in her villages. Formerly this was utilized for manu-facturing yarn and cloth. Foreign imports made them compulsorily idle. And for these long years the vast majority have found no other occu-pation. Hence, every drought sends a shiver through every pitying heart in India. It need not be so. A drought is not an unusual Indian pheno-menon. We feel its deadly effects, because we are living on the margin of starvation. By prolonged idleness we have lost the power of sustenance. Do not imagine that these cottagers can all flock to our dozen cities where labour is scarce and find a living. They are burdened with land which they dare not leave even if they would. And not all the cities of India can hold her millions. Nothing but the restoration of hand-spinning and hand-weaving can possibly bring back lustre to the Indian eye. And I

[1] A reference to the *Bhagavad Gita*, ii, 38

would be false to you and to India if I do not tell you that the merchants more than the mill-owners are responsible for India's deep and distressing poverty. The mill-owners aggravate it, no doubt, when they charge heavy prices. But you are so responsible that, if you stop the importation of foreign cloth, you can revive the ancient and honourable dharma (duty) of hand-spinning and give an impetus to the industry of hand-weaving.

Why, after all, should the abandonment of a trade that harms India be a matter of life and death to many of you? Surely you are resourceful enough to find some other trade beneficial alike to you and the country. The stopping of imports means a saving of sixty crores per year. But it means operation on a much larger capital. It means that all the processes on cotton will be gone throught in India. That means business for you. It means a healthy circulation of money as today it is a progressively exhausting drain of money from our dear country. I ask you to disengage your great talents from an unhealthy channel and direct them into the healthy channels that open out to you. You must organize hand-spinning and hand-weaving. Then, you will not be satisfied with coarse khadi as I am. You will insist on your spinners spinning the finest counts and weavers weaving the world-famed Dacca muslin. You will sink fortunes in it whereas I have only paid our sisters the few thousands you have given me as a charity. For you to leave the unholy trade in foreign cloth is to organize the production and distribution of home-spun. It is an enterprise worthy of your patriotism. You whisper to me that such organization may take a few years. You have not built up your present trade in a moment. If you are satisfied that it is a trade that has impoverished and enslaved India, you will not stop to think of the consequences of its destruction. You will let it go at any cost.

And what is the cost? Not much. You have to stop all further orders for foreign cloth or yarn. That costs nothing. You have a stock of foreign cloth to get rid of. The world's market is open to you for its disposal. There are many uses to which the Indian specialities can be put in, say, Mauritius, South Africa or East Africa. You will but let me think out for you the best method of disposing of the stock of foreign cloth and yarn you have.

Some of you have developed an anxiety for the requirements of the consumer. He will accommodate himself to the shortage,feel none the worse for it and will be better able to appreciate next year the plenty of beautiful khadi of every variety of width and thinness.

I ask you not to put an undue strain upon the consumer. It is not right for you to put temptations in his or her way in the shape of flimsy Japanese dhotis or saris or starchy calico. I urge you rather to cultivate in the consumer the taste to see art in khadi. Evenness, even softness, is not necessarily an art. The most exquisitely made rose flower from silks has no art in it. For it has no life. But the real flower from the garden with most petals gone is any day infinitely superior to the finished artificial product in a dressed window. The former is instinct with life. Would that the merchants of India, ceasing to be mercenary, will study the ancient art and make it their *business* to revive it. There is money in it for you and the country. The greatest art to be revived is swaraj. There is no swaraj without swadeshi. And swadeshi means for India a permanent boycott of foreign cloth. I invite you to lead the way. For you have the ability. May God grant you the strength and wisdom to lead!

I am,

Gentlemen,

Your faithful friend,

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-7-1921

184. TELEGRAM TO GULAM MAHBUB[1]

[*July 7, 1921*][2]

GULAM MAHBUB
MOGA

NO BAIL. NO COUNSEL. SEND PARTICULARS.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 7564

[1] This was sent in reply to a telegram from Gulam Mahbub which read : "We seven Congress workers sued by private persons at the instigation of bureaucracy and its toadies under 107. Case appears private. Advise as to bail for appearance and defence."

[2] Date of the Bombay postal cancellation stamp

185. LETTER TO J. B. PETIT

[After *July 7, 1921*][1]

DEAR MR. PETIT,

Will you please let me have Rs. 500 on account of the two thousand voted by the Association. I have called for the sum for Mr. Banarsidas who is working under Mr. Andrews and who has used up Rs. 500 which I told you were placed in my hands by a Calcutta friend for the purpose. This is of course strictly in connection with the Fiji-returned immigrants who are being looked after by Mr. B under Mr. A's super-vision.

Yours,

From a draft in pencil : S.N. 7565

186. LETTER TO VALLABHABHAI PATEL

BOMBAY,
July 8, 1921

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I reach Ahmedabad on Monday and leave it the same day. Please have a look at my letter to Bhai Indulal[2] as regards the action which the Committee should take. I hope it will decide to non-co-operate. Total boycott of legislatures is our only help.

Please inform Bhai Mavalankar[3] and others.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–Sardar Vallabhbhaine

[1] This draft, presumably dictated by Gandhiji, is written on the back of Banarsidas's letter dated July 7 from Bolpur, asking for Rs. 500/-. The sum was given to Gandhiji by a Marwari gentleman in December 1920, when the former went to Nagpur from Calcutta. Gandhiji had handed over the sum to Amritlal Thakkar and Banarsidas.

[2] Indulal Yagnik, Secretary, Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee

[3] Ganesh Vasudev Mavalankar (1888-1956); lawyer, parliamentarian and Congress leader of Ahmedabad; elected Speaker, Bombay Legislative Assembly, in 1937 and Central Legislative Assembly in 1946; Speaker of Lok Sabha until his death

187. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU

BOMBAY,
[On or after *July 8, 1921*][1]

MOTILAL NEHRU

PRESIDENT INSISTS COMMITTEE DATE AFTER TWENTY-FOURTH VIEW ORGANIZING BOYCOTT. SUGGEST MEETING BOMBAY TWENTY-EIGHTH. WIRE APPROVAL.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 7567

188. LETTER TO KUNVARJI MEHTA

Saturday [*July 9, 1921*]

BHAISHRI KUNVARJI,

I could read your letter only just now. Please congratulate Bhai Makanji and the people of Varad on my behalf. The former showed real courage. It does not matter if, on the first impulse, he asked the man to leave. I count it as a great thing that later he checked his anger and behaved with forbearance and that the residents of the village also remained peaceful.[2]

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original : G.N. 2671

189. AUSPICIOUS HOUR

As the man who wishes to climb to the top of the Girnar[3] has not succeeded in his aim when he has reached as far as the track leading up, so we shall not reach our goal of swaraj if we pause and rest on any step in the ladder taking us up. We shall have to keep climbing

[1] This telegram was sent after Gandhiji had received the following telegram from C. Vijayaraghavachariar from Kodaikanal on July 8 : "Willingly but fix date after Sunday 24th permit warmest grateful congratulations on phenomenal success swarajya fund wire date."

[2] For the incident referred to, *vide* "My Notes", 17-7-1921.

[3] Mountain in Saurashtra

without pausing for rest. It is certainly a matter for satisfaction that we have succeeded in collecting the money. That has given us some confidence. We have had some evidence of how many are with us and who they are, and have now the resources to spend on the tasks which need our attention. The only programme, however, which will give us a distant vision of swaraj is swadeshi. Spending thousands of rupees will not enable us to enter the temple of swaraj. Swadeshi is the one condition we must fulfil for being able to do so. The watchman at the templegate will not ask us how much money we have; he will look at us to see whether we are dressed in khadi and examine us to know whether we smell of liquor. The man who follows the rule of swadeshi will himself feel that he is a free man. Anyone who does not feel so will not be free simply by reason of another person declaring him to be so. Every person should have the feeling of freedom in himself, and this will never come to one who has not renounced the use of foreign cloth.

Japanese saris, French satin and Manchester muslins are but so many forms of addiction. A person in the grip of these addictions will never think of freedom, since by his dress he has become a foreigner who looks upon everything foreign as good, how can we expect such a man to have the spirit of swadeshi in him? What does such a one know of self-rule? In what sense can a person who does not like India's climate, Indian ways of dressing and Indian dishes look upon the country as his? The crores of us have not yet come to dislike India's climate and are happy enough with its wheat and millet *roti*, made with hand, but the cloth it offers fails to please us! Foreign cloth has cast a spell over us. Till we are free from that spell the country will remain enslaved, let there be no doubt about it.

Foreign cloth, even if anyone offered it free to us, can be of no benefit to us, in fact it will only harm us; for a man living on gifts becomes a beggar and a beggar is always a slave; he has sold his soul.

To be able to enter the temple of swaraj, what we need is swadeshi. Swadeshi means boycott of foreign cloth. The country has recognized the power of the spinning-wheel. There is not a single province which is a stranger to it. Khadi is being woven in every province on some scale. People have mastered this art.

However, the spell which foreign cloth has cast over us must break. Until it has broken, the use of the spinning-wheel will not be assured. So long as the country has not recognized the magic power of the spinning-wheel, it will have no strength in its arms and will

acquire no confidence in itself. The auspicious hour when we should start such boycott has arrived.

I shall be put to shame if by October 1 we have not won swaraj and my faith in India will be proved to have been misplaced. If we do not get it by December, India will have failed in her pledge, she will have lost face in the eyes of the world and the delegates who attended [the Congress] at Nagpur will be proved to have been no worthy delegates.

We cannot get swaraj unless we boycott foreign cloth. Through such boycott we clean our bodies and, till we have cleaned ourselves so, we are not fit to chant the swaraj *mantra*.

If, therefore, we wish to enter the temple of swaraj this year, there should be no more delay in completing boycott [of foreign cloth], since, by adopting swadeshi, we shall come into possession of an unrivalled source of strength. If those who have usurped the temple fail to understand our strength even then and refuse to give up possession, we shall have no choice but to give them a fight. Some time is bound to elapse in this. I am confident, however, that we shall not need to fight if we carry out complete boycott of foreign cloth, that we shall get possession of what is ours.

Nonetheless, we should allow for some time for the struggle. If, therefore, we want to have swaraj in October, we should complete the boycott by August 31. We shall know on August 1 whether we shall succeed in doing so. The death anniversary of Tilak Maharaj falls on that day. We may celebrate the day with zest if we have completed our task by that time but, if we have failed to do our duty, we should in our shame stay indoors. As it was during the last days of June that we worked best, so we can strive hard during the remaining days of this month and complete the boycott of foreign cloth. Everyone who describes himself as a non-co-operator must wear khadi and nothing else, and should make do with the fewest clothes. This is a period of transition, a difficult period. Seeing that immediate boycott is bound to reduce our stock of cloth and result in shortage of cloth in the country, we should carry on with fewer clothes. Moreover, everyone may not be in a position to buy new clothes and so we have no choice but to make do with fewer clothes.

We may either make a bonfire of foreign cloth in stock with us, or give it away to be sent to other countries or wear such garments when visiting the lavatory. Should we be poor, we may use such cloth but, seeing that it is a symbol of our slavery, only it we can afford no other course.

To make things easy for the poor, we should maintain depots for receiving foreign cloth in exchange for khadi. We should in this way think out a number of plans and, in so far, at any rate, as our own dress is concerned, we should totally discard the use of foreign cloth before August 1. All of us should resolve to buy no more foreign cloth and to spin a fixed quantity of yarn daily in our homes.

This will not be enough, however. We should visit every cloth shop. We should entreat dealers in foreign cloth to stop importing such cloth and try to see that they dispose of their existing stocks by sending them to other countries.

As the consumers and the merchants have their duties, so have the mill-owners theirs. We should appeal to them not to put up the prices of cloth in consequence of the boycott. Even as it is, they charge such high prices that there is room for some reduction. If, now, they seek to exploit the people's need and put up the prices, they will themselves be acting as foreigners and as enemies of the country. I think they will not go to that length.

We look upon this movement for swaraj as one of self-purification. We are being tested more and more as we climb higher. If everyone of us has the spirit of patriotism and desires to keep it undefiled as he would his own home, I believe it would be the easiest thing to win swaraj during this year. As the country demonstrated one miracle on June 30, we have full reason to hope that it will perform the other miracle of boycott too. May God preserve our honour!

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-7-1921

190. FIVE GREAT "YAJNAS"

There can be many ways of interpreting *yajna*. For the Hindu householder, five *yajnas* are considered essential : the oven, the pestle, the quern, the pitcher and the spinning-wheel. The fewer there are of these the less substantial the household. A glance at them, however, will show that the important sacrifices are the first and the last and the middle three are their offshoots. The quern, the pitcher and the pestle presuppose the oven. The oven would not work at its best in the absence of the quern or the pestle in a home, but still it can pull on. But stop the spinning-wheel and you are without a principal organ. You have paralysis. A man who does no *yajna* for his food and clothing has no right to either. There should be a custom that he who

does not work at his stove must go without food, and he who does not ply his spinning-wheel must go naked. We have discarded the spinning-wheel without discarding clothes. He is a thief who wears clothes without doing any spinning, in the same way that he who consumes food without working for it is a thief. *Yajna* means an offering, a sacrifice of the self, which is what physical labour is. They who work at the oven and the wheel are engaged in an intelligent sacrifice. Even those who are not engaged in such beneficial physical effort have to take some exercise to digest their food.

It will perhaps be clear now what a sin we have committed in giving up the spinning-wheel. India was a happy country, healthy and bright, when in the past millions of its women used to engage themselves in this light but beneficial labour. Today, by giving it up, the country has become miserable, diseased and listless.

The oven, the spinning-wheel, etc., are each of them a veritable grace of the home. If millions of Indian homes are in ruins today, it is because we gave up the spinning-wheel. Let no one suppose that this is an exaggeration. It is possible the reader's own home is not in that condition. But then a shortage of water does not mean that no one can get any water. It means everyone has less than before, many have very little, while some have none at all. Similarly, many families may be able to carry on without the spinning-wheel, but some at least have been completely ruined. Look at Orissa and Champaran. A number of villages there are ruined. What else would happen to a country whose people, 150 years ago, had some work or other all the year round, but 80 per cent of whom today are unemployed for four months in the year?

Work alone is real wealth, metal is a mere token for it. When 80 per cent of a people are unemployed for four months, their earning capacity is reduced by one-third. Despite the capacity and willingness to earn Rs. 3, Indians have for years been working to earn no more than Rs. 2. They cannot find work for more than that. How could such a country help being poor? The only remedy for such a state of affairs is a vow to wear khadi made from yarn spun with our own hands. Then we shall take to the spinning-wheel, willy-nilly, and realize finally that we had made a mistake in giving it up. But, in the meantime we ought to undrtake a determined effort to popularize it. We shall never be eager to introduce the spinning-wheel, nor, after introducing it, shall we be keen to ply it, so long as we continue to be as fond of foreign cloth as we are. A vow to discard foreign cloth will compel us to use the spinning-wheel. Thus the spinning-wheel and boycott of foreign cloth are closely inter-related. We hardly care for a

thing that is not a necessity. It is, therefore, our sacred duty to see that the spinning-wheel becomes a necessity. There is no other way of eradicating India's poverty. For the mistake of giving up so invaluable a thing, there can be no adequate atonement. A small sacrifice may be enough if we make it on our own. If we are to do things under compulsion, who can say what they will be?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-7-1921

191. MY NOTES

The following amounts have been received from South Africa for the Swaraj Fund :

	[Rupees]
Patidar Mandal, J. B.	8,275
Kathiawad Arya Mandal, Natal	2,500
Tongaat—Verulam	1,000
Tailors' Association, Jeda	1,445
Tailors' Association, Durban	530
Patidar Union, Durban	1,001
Through Omar Sheth	5,425
Verulam Temple	1,658½
Darji Harsukharai Mandal	770

For South Africa, this is not a small amount. Other Indians residing abroad should follow the example of out South African brethren.

"YOU WANT TO WIN OVER PEOPLE TO YOUR SIDE"

A gentleman writes to say that I have some motive in my letter to the *Vaishnavas*, in describing their anger as prompted by their love. He says that I wish to win over my opponents by putting things in this nice way.

There is only a half-truth in what the correspondent says. Of course I wish to win over my opponents, but not by saying something in which I do not belive. This friend writes: "If anger is a sign of love, then General Dyer also can be said to have committed the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh out of love." To me, at any rate, this argument seems to proceed from sheer ignorance. A father is often angry with his son because he loves him, but General Dyer's anger was entirely the result of hatred. It is clear enough why I take the anger of the *Vaishnavas* as a

sign of love. They have nothing against me personally. They approve of my other actions. On the question of untouchability, however, they think I am in the wrong and are angry with me for what they take to be my error. They do not write to others who violate established practices, or express indignation over their conduct. We can cite numerous other instances to prove this. I request my correspondent to think again.

I AM REBUKED

A friend writes from Manavadar:

> You say that once justice is done in the Punjab and with regard to the Khilafat, you would hand over the work of the struggle for swaraj to others and retire.

He says that I should do no such think. And he is right. Only, he did not quite understand what I meant. I implied in that statement that justice in these two is the key to swaraj. Once we get that justice, it should not be difficult for anyone to win swaraj. I believe that if we get success in achieving these two objectives, we shall have developed all the strength we need. Otherwise, there is no question of giving up the struggle for swaraj which has started.

SUNDERLALJI'S LETTER

Everybody knows that Sunderlalji was arrested in Jabalpur and that he was sentenced to rigorous imprisonment. He wrote a letter to me before going to jail, from which I quote the following as being likely to be of interest to readers.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-7-1921

[1] Not reproduced here. For the text, *vide* "Notes", 13-7-1921.

192. SPEECH AT MEETING OF CHEMISTS AND DRUGGISTS, BOMBAY

July 10, 1921

I have been drawn here by the hope that many of you will take the pledge of boycotting foreign cloth. I have given reasons why this should be done. Whether or not millowners or foreign cloth dealers help us, the people of India can boycott foreign cloth if they so decide. Boycotting foreign cloth means that the country should stop using cloth imported from foreign countries. Your merely taking a pledge not to use foreign cloth hereafter will not satisfy me. We ought not to use even the foreign cloth which is already with us. I have considered three courses of which we may adopt any one for this purpose. The best thing is to burn whatever foreign cloth we have. Concerning this, many people ask me why we should not give this cloth to the large number of poor people in our country who wander about hungry and naked. They say that burning the cloth will be an act of hatred. My reply is that people's hatred will be intensified only if I am actuated by hatred in asking them to burn foreign cloth. If, however, we realize that we have committed a grave error in taking to the use of foreign cloth, then our deliverance from slavery lies in burning it.

The second course is to send such cloth to other countries. In our own country, we cannot give it in charity even to the poorest of the poor or the most wretched. I place liquor and foreign cloth in the same category. I know that you find it difficult to cultivate dislike of foreign cloth. I have been holding these views for a very long time and so I do not find the thing difficult, whereas you are called upon to change your ideas in a very short time. If it is your view that foreign cloth should be disposed of only by sending it to other countries, you should send the entire stock to me. It will be disposed of as desired by you. If you believe that boycott of foreign cloth will not increase hatred but will strengthen our spirit, that it will strengthen India's determination, then I should certainly like a bonfire to such cloth.

Arrangements are being made to give khadi in exchange for foreign cloth to those who are too poor to buy swadeshi cloth. We have at present two varieties of swadeshi cloth, mill cloth and hand-spun khadi. For us the only cloth is khadi, mill cloth should be

reserved for the poor. Some persons, being slaves to pleasure and comfort, do not like to wear khadi; they feel an aversion to it. But till you are able to make this sacrifice, it will be impossible to end our slavery. If you cannot bring yourself to wear khadi, use mill cloth. If at all you take a pledge, it must be to wear khadi exclusively. There is khadi worth Rs. 10, 000 in the Khadi Bhandar at Kalbadevi and it is selling. I discussed the matter with Shri Narandas Purushottam today and, in a few days, khadi worth and less than Rs. 50, 000 will arrive.

Do not use more khadi than necessary. The country is not in a position to supply as much as people may want. Khadi should be used as economically as ghee and gold. We should indulge in no ostentation so long as we do not have swaraj. The men should have two long shirts and a dhoti each and the women, too, should make do with a few clothes. A friend has said that we should be ready even for hanging, but you will not have to mount the gallows. If the country gets ready for this, we should have swaraj right today. When such a time comes, though, I shall not need to tell you to boycott foreign cloth. At present there is no strength left in us. Some sisters complain that they find it difficult to part with Japanese saris and French silks and to start wearing khadi. But doing this is the test of whether or not we have acquired real strength. Some say that you have given money only for my sake and that the people have not made genuine sacrifices. This too you can disprove by giving up foreign cloth.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 17-7-1921

193. TELEGRAM TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

[On or after *July 10, 1921*][1]

NOTICE MEETING TWENTY-EIGHTH BOMBAY BEING SENT.

From a photostat: S. N. 7568

194. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Monday, July 11, 1921

CHI. MANI,

I got your letter. The object of burning foreign cloth is to create greater aversion to it. The idea, too, that such cloth had better be given away to the poor is born of ignorance. What difference does it make whether or not the poor get cloth worth a few lakhs of rupees? We have done the country great harm by importing such cloth for so many years. I do not think it will do any good now to give it away to the poor. There is some point in sending it to foreign countries. I am, however, asking everyone for his views. We shall adopt the course which appeals to all. You may ask again if you have still any doubt left.

Dahyabhai's monkey-army[2] seems to be doing excellent work. They should, however, bear one thing in mind. They should appeal to people courteously, never ridicule or. . . [3] anyone. Drink addicts are to be pitied.

Kaka Saheb[4] is a fine teacher, there is no doubt about it. I am glad that all of you like him.

I have had many meetings with uncle Vithalbhai. He got a fine resolution passed in his District Board. Visitors tell me that uncle still has no faith in the spinning-wheel and that he even expresses his disapproval in small gatherings. I will, even so, discuss the matter again with him when I meet him. The impression left on my mind by

[1] Vijayaraghavachariar had wired from Kodaikanal on July 10: "Dharwar implores Kelkar supports write urgently Bombay or Dharwar imperative with date."

[2] Schoolboys who served as pickets. The reference is to the army of monkeys in the *Ramayana*.

[3] The source indicates that the text, as printed, is doubtful at this point.

[4] Dattatreya Balkrishna Kalelkar (b. 1885), popularly known as Kaka Saheb, colleague of Gandhiji since 1915

our last meeting was that his doubts about the wheel had been more or less resolved.

Blessings from

BAPU

MANIBEHN
C/O SHRI VALLABHBHAI JHAVERBHAI PATEL
BHADRA, AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne

195. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

GAMDEVI, BOMBAY,
July 11, 1921

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I got your letters. To be sure, Kathiawad has more than fulfilled our expectations. I should like you now to devote yourselves to the pro-duction of khadi.

I shall certainly not start civil disobedience all at once. Your arithmetic is not correct. We shall have six crores spinning-wheels plying without any effort on our part. We have not had to spend much in in-troducing 20 lakhs. It could not have been otherwise for, after we have spent a little, people spontaneously take up anything which is useful to them. The work of enrolling more members is also going on.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Gujarati: G. N. 5717

196. SPEECH AT MEETING OF LIQUOR CONTRACTORS, BOMBAY[1]

July 12, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi said, since he had returned to Bombay, he had realized the position of liquor contractors and he had been thinking what he should advise the Provincial Congress Committee and also the liquor merchants. He had been thinking

[1] Under the auspices of the Parsi Rajkiya Sabha, Gandhiji addressed the liquor traders of Bombay at the Marwari Vidyalaya Hall on Tuesday morning.

deeply over these things and he felt much for the liquor merchants who were earning their livelihood by means of selling liquor to the people. Mr. B. F. Bharucha had supplied him with facts and figures in this regard and many Parsi brethren had also written to him both anonymously and in their own names; he knew from all these what the actual position in the city was with regard to this trade. He wished to tell them that, even if there were only a dozen or so bad men among the small Parsi community of 80,000, they would hurt it while, even if there were five or seven lakhs among the Hindus and Muslims they would not be so glaringly prominent. That was always the case in the world. So, while the few Parsi liquor shop-keepers had come into notoriety, others were forgotton; the example of the Parsi liquor-dealers was very prominently before the country. At the Excelsior Theatre he had told his Parsi friends that they would be able to set an example to the whole country by their noble conduct. Therefore, he was deeply sorry that so many people among the Parsis were earning their livelihood by selling liquor to the public and he thought it was a great discredit to them. He was also sorry that so many widows had to maintain themselves by selling liquor. In his opinion it was better for these women to break stones or even beg their food than to sell liquor to the people.

If he had the means of a Petit or a Tata, he would have fallen at the feel of these Parsi widows and begged of them to give up this trade and take as much money as they liked. He would have been too glad to look after them. If he had any money at his disposal the first use he would make of it would be to offer it to his Parsi sisters and brothers and ask them to give up this liquor trade. Some of his Parsi friends had told him that they could not give up their daily glass of liquor; some had told him that the Parsi religion prohibited drinking, while others had told him that the Parsi religion permitted them to drink liquor. His heart, however, was full of sorrow for his Parsi sisters whether their religion permitted drinking or not. If the poison of liquor-selling continued long, it was enough to destroy a small community like theirs.

His Parsi friends must have heard of Shri Krishna and His prophecy in regard to the Yadavas, who numbered lakhs and even more. Shri Krishna had told them that if they drank and committed adultery, the whole tribe would disappear for ever from the face of the earth. And what was there left now of the powerful Yadavas? Was not adultery a handy companion of drink? He knew from his experience in South Africa what sort of people these liquor sellers and buyers were. Those who sold liquor had to descend to the level of the drunkards and then be on the same level of mentality. He had much experience of these things and he was only telling them what he had actually seen all over the country. He was also of opinion that those who sold liquor could not be honest. He was not only addressing his Parsi brethren, but also *Bhandaris* who had written to him that they were ruined and that they would give up the trade gradually in about 20 or 25 years. Was it possible for this country to wait till then? What did it avail to the country for a thief or an adulterer to say that he

would give up his vice in a few days? If the Parsis did not give up this traffic at once, they would injure their community and their country. They must not take into consideration the apparent prosperity and which they had gained by following the liquor trade. He would appeal to his Parsi friends to look after the Parsi widows whatever it might. Cost them, or however great sacrifice it might entail. It was better for them to do any honest think than get rich at the expense of the vast majority of the people.

As for picketing, he never thought it could be permanently stopped. He had horror of bloodshed, but he was prepared to take every risk in order that the drink evil could be arrested. So long as the pickets did not do violence, he was indifferent to what the Government did. He knew what had happend in Dharwar. He was sure the people had not erred as at Malegaon. He was shocked to hear that Mr. Painter was to be sent to Ahmedabad—a Collector who was guilty apparently of having connived at the murder of innocent men. Mr. Painter, if he dared go to Ahmedabad, would find his hands full. He would have to murder in Ahmedabad innocent boys and girls in order to stop picketing. It was an insult to the people of Gujarat to send an official like Mr. Painter to Gujarat.

Mr. Gandhi then gave his experiences in Durban about picketing when boys of 14 or 15 did their duty without fears or favour, in spite of the tremendous odds against them. Not a single soul was allowed to go unchallenged to the registration office to register himself. Never was any violence used by these young men.

He was for wholesale picketing all over the country; he was aware, however, of the defects which now existed in the system. He knew that bad men had got in as pickets. He had therefore suggested that picketing in Bombay only might be suspended till the end of the month, so that it might be better organized and cover the whole of Bombay. Moreover, all hands were required for organizing boycott of foreign cloth by the 1st of August. But the final decision rested with the Congress Committee. He was not the autocrat that he was made out to be by the *Praja Mitra.* It was not possible for him to order the 32 crores of people what they should do, he could only give advice and guidance. In the mean-time, it was for the liquor merchants to look about and consider what they should do, whether they could not take up any other profession and give up this selling of liquor. The Dharwar incident had tainted the liquor they sold with innocent blood. He was convinced that the pickets in Dharwar had not done anything; they had not assaulted anybody; that the charges which were brought againts them were unfounded and he was firmly convinced that the police were in connivance with the liquor contractors, he laid the responsibility as much on the liquor-dealers as on the officials.

He expected greater things from the Parsi community on account of their nobility, their knowledge and their courage. They knew what an insolent Collector

had done there in Dharwar. He was sure that picketing would achieve the object he had in view, but if possible he wanted it to be done without doing that. The contractors would tell him that they had already paid the Government for their licences. What they had given to Government they could easily get back from them. If they were all determined to get back the amounts they had paid, he was sure they would succeed in their object. They could apply to Government to return the amounts they had paid, as they were not non-co-operators, and if they did not succeed, then they could resort to other measures. If India did not get swaraj by September or even December, let the Parsi contractors consider that the money which they had given to Government would be lying to their credit with the future Government. He would assure them they would never lose their money.

But were they, after all, such poor people that they could not afford losing the sums? Only the day before he had received a letter from a Parsi liquor-seller to say that they were not such poor people as was tried to be made out. Even the widows were not poor and they had a lot of money with them and he believed it. From his personal experience he knew that they were not poor and that they would not be thrown into the streets if they gave up selling liquor to the people. He would ask them not to be timid and be afraid of consequences, but to stand erect as bold men and women. He wanted the Parsis to be with the nation in demanding equality of status. They could no longer brook any sort of subordination. Some people had told him that some of them had been in the trade for more than 20 years and how was it possible for them to give up the business now? They must, however, consider the situation calmly and come to a definite decision on the matter. He himself had given some thought to the problem and he felt that, as they were not poor men, they could easily take up any other profession they liked. He requested them to form a committee and then consider what they should do in the matter, but never to give up hope. Let them take up other professions and trades and see whether they could not prosper as easily as in the liquor trade. But, in the first place, it was their duty to give up the liquor trade now and immediately. Unless they were prepared to sacrifice something for their country, they would never be able to defend their liberty and get swaraj. Only by means of sacrifice could they be fit for swaraj and full liberty. They must depend on their own ability and they must have confidence in themselves. Even the English nation had come to the fore by their self-confidence, and he appealed to them not to lose hope but to have faith in themselves. He would give them the wisdom to make the sacrifice demanded of them.

Mr. Gandhi then said he would answer any questions that might be put to him by the merchants.

The Bombay Chronicle, 13-7-1921

197. NOTES

FRONTIER FRIENDS

Mr. Mahomed Nawezkhan, B. A., LL.B., of Bannu, writes a long letter on my appeal to the Frontier friends. I propose to give a brief summary of it instead of reproducing the whole letter, which is too discursive for the columns of *Young India*. He thinks that the tribesmen who learn the message will gladly respond. He traces the history of the annexation of the territory of the tribesmen, and proves that, before these territories were annexed, there were practically no raids. Moreover, all were equally armed and, therefore, the raided parties were well able to take care of themselves. But after annexation, the tribesmen who were wantonly robbed of their lands treated both the Hindu and the Mussul-man inhabitants of the annexed territories as their enemies, the more so as the latter helped the Government in subduing the tribesmen. The writer, who claims an intimate acquaintance with the situation, is of opinion that the tribesmen have been no respecters of religions, and have subjected to their depredations the Hindus and the Mussulmans alike, and that Mussulmans have never been known to assist the Hindus against the raiders. In proof of impartiality, the writer instance the cordial treatment meted out to the Hindus in the independent territory of the Frontier tribes. He states that the Hindus living there have greater freedom of worship than even in the British territory. Their social status is any day better than under the British Government, and the Maliks[1] are ever ready with all their might to defend their Hindu friends living within their jurisdiction. The writer gives it as his judgment that the British Government in the Frontier Province has sinfully abdicated its function of protecting the inhabitants, who have unfortunately come under the so-called protecting wing of the British Empire. He winds up his letter by saying that the Frontier regulations are worth studying, the procedure there is most arbitrary, and the life and property of the people are at the mercy of military officers who are incapable of giving judicial decisions. Extra Assistant Commissioners, he says, in effect disgrace their commi-ssions and become instruments of injustice and oppression. No man's honour is safe in the hands of these administra-

[1] Heads of tribes

tors.They have the power to put under lock-up any respectable man upon the slightest suspicion.

AN INDIAN REPUBLIC?

An esteemed correspondent writes?

> Your attention must have been drawn to statements made by Maulanas Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali that, if no settlement is arrived at before Christmas regarding our campaign, an Indian republic will be declared at the Ahmedabad session of the Congress. Special importance attaches to this statement as it is not made by an irresponsible person but by responsible leaders like the Maulanas. It is felt, however, that the statement is both unfortunate and premature, and is likely to come in the way of the programme laid down for the country by the Congress. The country as a whole has responded magnificenlty to the appeal of the Congress, and is prepared, excepting certain sections, to work for the attainment of swaraj. I would ask you to give your views regarding the Maulanas' statement, and to assure the public that no departure from the policy of non-violent non-co-operation accepted by the Congress will be made.

I am sorry to have to confess that I have not seen the Maulanas' declaration, but I have no hesitation in giving the assurance that no stone will be left unturned by me to prevent a departure even by a hair's breadth from the policy of non-violent non-co-operation that has been deliberately adopted by the country. Nor do I entertain the slightest fear of any departure from that policy on the part of the Brothers. I have however no difficulty about understanding the Maulanas, mind. They are quite capable of saying that if India does not get the relief she demands in the matters of the Punjab and the Khilafat she will at the next session of the Congress make a declaration of indepen-dence. Swaraj within the Empire is a possibility only if England washes her hands clean of the taint of the Khilafat breach and the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. The Congress creed has been purposely made elastic enough to admit of a demand for independence. To go no further, the Maulanas have, after all, if they have, but reiterated the opinion pronounced by Mr. Andrews, who, unlike me, considers that there is no room in the British Empire for a self-respecting and self-governing India, and who expects that some day I shall myself be driven to that position. I am differently constituted. I never give up hope so long as there is the least chance, and I have faith enough in the British people to feel that whilst they will test our determination and strength to the uttermost, they will not carry it to

the breaking point. They are too self-conscious to part with an India awakened and strong for the sake of shielding Dyerism and O'Dwyerism and of the questionable advantage of Greek friendship. The Nonconformist conscience, which is ignorantly hostile to the just aspirations of the brave Turks, will prove yielding under the Indian strain which is daily gathering force. Long before the Congress meets, if India proves true to herself, I look forward—not to a Declaration of Independence—but to an honourable settlement that will satisfy the just demand of India re the Punjab and the Khilafat, and that will assure to her full immediate swaraj in accordance with the wishes of her chosen representatives. Let the reader, however, not run away with the idea that my forecast is based upon any knowledge of what is going on in Simla or Whitehall. I base it upon my profound belief in the ability of India during the next three months to assert herself, i.e., in the ability of India to carry out an almost complete boycott of foreign cloth, and by still greater self-restraint to prove her ability to adopt civil disobedience of a very stern character.

DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY

I am not, however, blind to the difficulties that bestrew our path. The news from Aligarh is disquieting.[1] I have seen the official version and the other in the *Independent.* I shall apologize to the people of Aligarh if I find that I am in the wrong, but the *Independent* correspondent's version is evasive and attempts to prove too much. It does not deny incendiarism on the part of the mob, and seeks entirely to exculpate the latter. I shall require overwhelmingly strong evidence to prove that the authorities in Aligarh acted wantonly and maliciously without the slightest provocation. I am quite prepared to find that the Police wanted to prevent an aggressive demonstration on the part of the mob, and that in so doing, they lost self-restraint and opened fire. My point, however, is that there should be no aggressiveness on our part at all. Non-co-operators must not bully or threaten. We are developing quite an irresistible courage which comes only from waiting upon God, in other words, from absolute faith in the righteousness of our cause. If we want to finish our programme successfully, and during this year, we have no time for bluster or a show of force. We must be scrupulously truthful to our pledge. We can succeed beyond all expectation only if we remain nonviolent in thought, word and deed. It need not be our final creed, but it must be

[1] *Vide* also "Message to People of Aligarh", 16-7-1921.

our present creed for the attainment of our goal. There need be no difficulty in our not thinking or speaking ill of our adversary, as we have found it easy enough on the whole to restrain ourselves from doing ill to him. We must not use the pledge of non-violence and truth to cover violence and exaggeration, if not untruth. Nor must we be afraid to let our best comrades go to jail. I adhere to the belief, so often expressed by me, that Pandit Sunderlal and now Pandit Makhanlal[1] are serving the community better being in jail for the sake of conscience than they would have being free. Those who think otherwise, in my opinion, do not understand the dynamics of non-co-operation. The dynamic force behind this great movement is not vocal propaganda but the silent propaganda carried on by the sufferings of the innocent victims of a mad Government.

A SUFFERER'S LETTER

A few days before Pandit Sundarlal was arrested, he wrote to me a long letter. I give below a free translation of the relevant part of it. The whole of it appeared to me to be natural and frank. Needless to say, it was written purely for my own edification.

> I have become a firm believer in non-violence for regaining swaraj. My intellect has fully grasped the principle. I have come to regard it not merely as a weapon of the weak, but equally as a weapon of the strong. I wish, however, to confess that for many years I have held the opposite and false doctrine of violence. I am, therefore, assiduously remodelling my life in accordance with the new conception. If I have a feeling of uneasiness over my imprisonment which is said to be pending, it is about the work that I have started in the Central Provinces. I shall be sorry if that work suffers because of a single incautious utterance of mine. But the joy and the satisfaction that possess me at the moment consist in the thought that possibly my life will be better built by the hard discipline of a British jail. To die in jail or to be hammered into shape (after the new style) for the service of humanity is equally pleasing to me. I am therefore fully prepared for the impending arrest.

I am sure that hundreds of non-co-operators who are suffering imprisonment are fired by the same spirit as has actuated Pandit Sundar-lal.The Aligarh people should have joyously allowed their comrade to be imprisoned and stepped into his place and taken up his work. All we need do is to fill up the places that may be left vacant by our co-workers. We have a clear-cut programme. To prosecute it to

[1] Makhanlal Chaturvedi; well-known Hindi poet and patriot; editor of *Karmavir*

the end is to secure all we want.

THREAT AGAINST THE "ZEMINDAR"

The *Zemindar* of Lahore, edited by Mr. Jafar Ali Khan up to the time of his incarceration and now edited by his son, is, I understand, threatened with prosecution. The editor has been asked to tender an un-truthful apology if he wishes to avoid a prosecution. He has been asked to withdraw certain statements made by him which he himself believes. One of them is the reported bombardment of Najef. He has copied the information from other papers. Thousands of Mussulmans believe in the bombardment. He has assured the Government that if responsible independent Mussulmans went to the spot and investigated the matter and denied the truth of the bombardment, he would be prepared to withdraw the statement. One would imagine that the offer was perfectly honourable. He has published a spirited poem, some of whose lines can be interpreted as incitement to violence. He has offered as a non-co-operator to apologize for those lines, not because he fears prose-cution but because he does not want to place himself in a false position regarding his creed of non-violence. The third statement objected to by the Goverment has reference to the report of and commentary upon a case in Bengal, wherein a European is reported to have killed a *khansama* and to have been fined Rs. 300 by the court. The comment objected to is the British courts give licence to Europeans to kill Indians for Rs. 300 as a fine. The comment is no doubt severe, but there is cer-tainly no incite-ment to violence in it, and it is not unjustified by the several mis-carriages of justice recently reported in the Press. The Government have no notion how deep the belief has sunk in the Indian mind that even-handed justice as between Europeans and Indians is almost an impossibility. The fourth charge against the *Zemindar* is the reproduction of Maulana Mahomed Ali's statement regarding the Afghan bogey. This idea of asking for apologies from editors and public men under threat of prosecution is a parody of the apology of the Ali Bro-thers. For the U. P. Govern-ment have been trying the same thing upon the editor of the *Indepe-ndent* and others. I do not know what has happened in Allahabad as a result of the Government's unseemly effort to obtain apologies from self-respecting non-co-operators. The more straight forward and honourable course would be to send to jail all the non-co-operators whom the Government do not like. Let them not move from the Punjab type of humiliation to the subtler type in the shape of abject

apologies.

CO-OPERATION AND NON-CO-OPERATION DEFINED

It is no small thing for the country that Dwijendranath Tagore, fondly known as Bada Dada by his friends, follows with keen attention even in his old age and in his seclusion at Shantiniketan all that is going on in the country. Mr. Andrews has circulated a free translation of his latest thoughts on non-co-operation. Although the whole of it is publi-shed in the daily Press, I cannot resist reproducing his definitions of co-operation and non-co-operation; they are so true and telling. Writing of the former he says:

> Our rulers, in order to hide their despotic measures from the world's eye, dressed up a puppet show in the form of Legislative Councils, in which a few platform orators have been invited to co-operate. Our rulers believe that by doing so they have placed us under an eternal debt of gratitude, but in reality they have only added insult to injury. These Councils cling to us now, and threaten to choke us like the old man in the story of Sindbad the Sailor. If this is the meaning of co-operation, according to our English rulers, then it is no very difficult matter to understand what non-co-operation means to us. We small never accept, even if it costs us our lives to refuse it, anything that will bring evil upon our country. That is non-co-operation.

WORTHY OF IMITATION

Mr. Vithalbhai Patel is never so happy as when he is fighting Municipal or Legislative Councils. He was therefore in his element on the sixth instant, when he moved and carried in the Thana District Board the following resolutions:

> 1. This Board expresses its sorrow to find that the sale of liquor is one the increase, resulting in the loss of public morals, health and wealth.
>
> 2. This Board welcomes the popular movement for removing the evil, and congratulates the organizers upon this exhibition of a spirit of public service.
>
> 3. This Board notes with regret the absence of any power of prohibiting the sale of liquor within its jurisdiction. Therefore, the Board is of opinion that it should take advantage of all the powers it possesses of undertaking picketing on its responsibility, of helping Congress Committees and of compensating those liquor-dealers who may voluntarily undertake to close their shops.
>
> 4. For the purposes aforesaid, the Board hereby appoints a Committee consisting of the Chairman, the Vice-chairman—the mover—and Mr. Acharya

with powers to conduct or control picketing and to bring about total prohibition.

5. The Board authorizes the said Committee to incur an expense not exceeding Rs. 3,000 as a beginning, and will be prepared to incur greater expenditure in future if necessary.

This is distinctly a courageous step. If the Board persists in the enforcement of its resolutions to the bitter end, and brings about a speedy closing of all the liquor shops within its jurisdiction, it will have covered itself with glory, and will have rendered a signal service to the country. I hope that Mr. Patel's initiative will be copied by other members and councillors throughout India. A simultaneous move on the part of local boards and municipalities all over India will strengthen the hands of reformers all over, will force the hand of the Government and is, there-fore, likely to obviate all danger of violence which a three-cornered tussle between pickets, the police and the publicans is likely to precipitate.

THE ARMS ACT

The refusal of the Magistrate of Bijnor District of renew the fire-arms licence in favour of the Assistant Governor of Kangri Gurukul, brought to light by Swami Shraddhanand, is an eloquent demonstration of the utter futility of the Reforms. If Swami Shraddhanand's guess that the refusal is due to his having been prominently identified with non-co-operation turns out to be true, it will show that, in things affecting the daily life of the people, there is absolutely no change in the methods of administration or the conduct of officials except such as has been compelled by the pressure of non-co-operation. But the public were hardly prepared for the callous indifference of the District Magistrate of Bijnor in respect of a citizen of the known standing of Swami Shraddha-nand. I have characterized the indifference as callous, because the gun sought to be licensed was required not for the purposes of sport but of self-defence in the midst of a jungle infested with wild beasts.

UNDER FALSE PRETENCES?

I have already adverted to the prosecution and conviction of Pandit Makhanlal Chaturvedi. I have just received a copy of his statement before the court. He refused to defend himself by leading evidence or otherwise, but made his statement before the court with merely a reiteration of his creed of non-violence. The reader, however, will be startled, as I was, to find that, if Pandit Makhanlal's statement

may be relied upon, he was prosecuted in reality not for what was his actual offence in the estimation of the Government, but for an in offensive speech. The following is the part of the statement I have in mind. From it one can see that when the prosecution was decided upon, Makhanlalji had not spoken at all.

> I have been the editor of the *Karmavir* published from Jabalpur. In the course of my journalistic duties, I have had occasions to ventilate many public grievances and to criticize several administrative measures in the province. The district administration of Narsinhpur had fallen into disrepute, and it became a matter of duty fearlessly to expose in the columns of my paper the scandals connected with the administration of Mr. J. C. Bourne, the Deputy Commissioner. The local official there systematically tyrannized over the people, and as was stated in the Legislative Council, 'a body of police force had invaded a village, tortured the people, spat at their faces, kicked them with their shoes, arrested and maltreated them, starved them for a number of days and lastly violated the honour of women.' As a result of the exposure, I have become the object of Govern-ment wrath, and it is not at all surprising to me that the C. P. Government should prosecute me for a speech made at the Bilaspur Conference on the 12th of March 1921, when the Home Member of the Government publicly announced on the 4th of March in the Central Provinces Legislative Council that my prosecution was already awaiting the sanction of the Government. I venture to state that, if I had not fearlessly exposed the corrupt character of the Bourne regime at Narsinhpur, this prosecution would not have been launched. I admit to having made a speech at the Bilaspur District Conference on the 12th March, but assert that the speech as reported by the Government reporters neither represents my views nor is an honest and correct report of what I spoke at the meeting. I am a strict and loyal adherent of the non-violent non-co-operation creed of the Indian National Congress, and have honestly worked within the letter and the spirit of the resolution as passed at the Nagpur session.

Thus, the Government had decided upon prosecution on the 4th of March, whereas actual prosecution took place for a speech delivered on the 12 th of March. Why was he not prosecuted in connection with his exposure of the administration at Narsinhpur? I do not know whether there is any truth in the charges against the Narsinhpur administration. But there is certainly something very wrong some-where.

BLASPHEMY

A correspondent writes:

> I regret very much to inform you that one constantly sees pictures in which you and other leaders have been represented as Shri Krishna and Pandavas, respectively. Will you not use your influence to stop this, as it must hurt religious feelings of many like myself, who consider Shri Krishna to have been not merely a great man but God incarnate?

The correspondent has my fullest sympathy. I have not seen the pictures, but I hold it to be a blasphemy to represent me as Shri Krishna. I claim to be a humble worker and no more among many in a great cause, which can only be injured rather than advanced by glorification of its leaders. A cause has the best chance of success when it is examined and followed on its own merits. Measures must always in a progressive society be held superior to men, who are after all imperfect instruments, working for their fulfilment. I would therefore urge, with all the strength at my command, enthusiasts or enterprising business men to observe some sense of proportion and withdraw all such pictures, which, like the one under notice, are undoubtedly calculated to wound deep religious susceptibilities.

KARACHI SCHOOLS

I owe an apology to Mr. Jagtiani for not publishing earlier his important explanation regarding his school. The fact is that, during my incessant travelling, I have no been able to cope with all my corres-pondence.Having got breathing time in Bombay, I am endeavouring to overtake arrears, and I have only just come across his letter. Here is the relevant part of it.

> A letter on the subject of suspicious finance of schools has already appeared in *Young India*. I agree with the writer. I am Principal of the "Tilakalaya", about which rumours seem to have been set afloat by some of my opponents. The school was started by me in November last, one month after I had non-co-operated. Not being able to secure assistance from the Khilafat Committee, I depended upon individual support. A new school wants some time to put itself on its on its legs. But in the case of my school, I began at the very start to hear rumours about my "fat salary", although the plain fact is, not only that I have drawn no salary as yet, but that there is a deficit of about Rs. 1,200 up to the 31st of May, 1921. As regards finance, the school has a financial board with Mr. Durgadas B. Advani as Chairman. The board met, and the accounts, duly audited by a professional accountant appointed by the Committee, have been passed and a statement of accounts will be published in

the report. This is the usual procedure which was to be followed. None of the schools receiving public support has followed any other course or been asked to publish accounts periodically. You will thus see the injustice of the reports that have occasioned your writing; the reports are apparently the result of personal grudge.

I am not publishing the remainder, which relates to purely local and personal matters. I do not think that any good purpose can be served by a public discussion of such things. We must develop a capacity for putting up with small annoyances and agreeing with our adversaries quickly.

IN LORD SINHA'S LAND

Orissa is the poorest province, perhaps, in all India. Its people are the most inoffensive. The *Samaj* is an Utkal newspaper. A correspondent describing the official lawlessness in a small State called Keonjhar writes to the *Samaj:*

> You are doubtless getting certain information regarding the affairs in Keonjhar. But the internal conditions are not probably known to you. These internal conditions the State authorites are trying their best to suppress, and thereby reduce the people to utter helplessness. The post-offices are closed, so to say. No one gets a newspaper to read. Letters are neither despatched nor delivered. They are first taken to the authorities for perusal, after which they are dealt with according to their contents. The *Samaj* has been prohibited by circular. So it is not found here. Secondly, no one is allowed to go from one place to another. The roads are guarded by regular watches. The wayfarers are searched on the suspicion of their being in possession of information, and whoever is suspected is prohibited from going further. In this way no stone is left unturned in the attempt to oppress the people who are utterly helpless. One Nishakar Mishra, from among the people who had been beaten, is reported to have died of it. This news has been suppressed. Another, by name Jagadbandhu Chakravarti, is on the point of death, and hardly expected to live. They say that he is in solitary confinement. But no one knows where he is. People strongly believe that the authorities are doing their best to suppress the news of deaths.

I have more corroborative correspondence too on the point. The reader must not confound this State with the States of Western India. In the Utkal States, the English political agent is the supreme master and acts just as he pleases. The *zoolum* described above is going on, because the people countenanced non-co-operation workers. The only comfort I can send them that they should suffer whilst India' chains remain fastened to her. I would advise non-co-operators not to

touch the places where they cannot give any relief in the event of oppression breaking out. If the Utkal people were strong and organized, I would have no hesitation in asking them to enter these so-called State territories, break through every one of the inhuman restrictions and invite all the penalties of the law. But I fear that the time is not yet. We must learn much greater self-restraint than we have up to now. What we have already cultivated is hopeful, but more is undoubtedly needed.

Young India, 13-7-1921

198. A RUNNING SORE

His Excellency the Viceroy in his reply to the Liberal League Deputation from the United Provinces delivered and address which was more cautious than his reply to the Ahmadiyya Deputation. Never-theless, it is necessary to remind His Excellency that in it he has asked India to do the impossible. Liberals and Nationalists, co-operators and non-co-operators, Hindus, Mussulmans, Sikhs, Jains, Parsis, Christians, Jews and all who call themselves Indians insist, each in his own way, upon the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs being righted. His Excellency is still pressing the Khilafat claim. That is hopeful, in that he does not ask the Mussulmans of India and their Hindu and other countrymen to forget the Khilafat wrong. But he clearly asks us to forget the Punjab wrong. The task is as impossible as it would be for a physician to make a patient forget—except under the temporary influence of some stupefying drug—his painful disease. The Punjab wrong is like a running sore, and even as a running sore cannot be healed unless the whole of the poison is removed, so can the Punjab wrong not be forgotten and forgiven unless and until the poison in the shape of pensions to and continued employment of unrepentant and faithless servants has been removed. Does Lord Reading imagine that India is reconciled to the translation of Mr. Thomson to a higher post? He asks us to give him and his Government credit for sincerity and honesty of purpose. He may have that credit, but there arises immediately upon the grant of that credit the belief that there is a fundamental difference between the Govern-ment's and the people's outlook upon vital matters. And so long as Lord Reading and his Government continue, be it ever so sincerely, to ask India to be reconciled to the retention on the pension list or on the service list of the names of those who have, from an Indian standpoint, proved

unworthy of the trust reposed in them, so long there can be no meeting-ground between the Government and the people. If we have even a semblance of respons-ibility given to us, surely we must have the right to dismiss from service those who have atrociously wronged us. To me it is a supreme test of responsibility—the righting of the two wrongs. The injustice of the Khilafat wrong is admitted. The atrocity in the Punjab is written in letters of blood. We admit that we did wrong in Amritsar, in Kasur, in Jallian-wala and in Gujaranwala. We have been made to pay for it heavily. We have been humiliated, kicked. Both the innocent and the guilty have been hanged. We have ourselves made a frank, free and open confession from many a platform. We ask for no humiliation of official wrongdoers. All we ask is that they may not be imposed upon us as masters. And English official once frankly told me that rather than be party, by remaining in the service, to the removal from the pension list of Sir Michael O'Dwyer or General Dyer, he would resign. I told him that, whilst I could see my way to sympathize with such an attitude, he must not expect me to agree with him. Nor did he. Hundreds, if not thousands, of Englishmen and Englishwomen consider Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer as sav-iours of the Empire and the honour of their kind. It is highly likely that, if I were an Englishman intent upon holding India at any cost, I would feel even as they. But I hold that, so long as attitude is retained, so long must co-operation between the Government and the people be impossible. Non-co-operation alone can open the eyes of Englishmen to the fact that co-operation with them in the Government of the country involves an acceptance of their attitude. But it is inconsistent with their position as friends and associates. They may not remain in India on the Strength of their bayonets. They can remain only on the strength of our goodwill. That and that alone must be the binding force between them and us. Let them not mock us by professing equality on the lips and by maintaining behind their entrenchments an unassailable superiority. As a shrewd man of the world, Lord Reading, I hope, will soon recognize the impossibility of reconciling two opposite attitudes. Had there been a middle course, non-co-operators would have adopted it long ago. It is not a question of hatred or ill-will on the part of the vast mass of people. I invite him to drive the probe deep enough, and he would find that weak as we are, we can no longer tolerate the cult of white superiority. Lip professions, well meaning and sincere though they may be, can serve no useful purpose. We are idolatrous enough to demand ocular proof

of equality. Does he not see that the existence of white soldiers may be a necessity for the safety of Englishmen, never for the safety of the Indian Border? Englishmen must be prepared to live in India precisely on the same terms as the Parsis. A mere handful of the latter have remained for the last thousand years as honoured friends and partners. They have needed no special protection, no fort to retire to in times of danger from enraged Hindus or Mussulmans. Have not the followers of Moses and Jesus the faith of those of Zoroaster? The plain fact is that Englishmen are not prepared to remain in India on the sufferance of the millions of Hindus and Mussulmans. The latter are not prepared to give the former any advantageous position by reagon of their controlling all the most destructive appliances that human ingenuity has ever invented. There is no choice before the latter but that of making a supreme effort to neutralize the effect of all those appliances by ceasing to fear them, i.e., by non-resistance. This may all appear to be arrogant or visionary. I hope, however, that Lord Reading at any rate will soon find that I have spoken the real mind of India. And the sooner this fundamental truth is realized, the sooner will there be real hearty co-operation between Englishmen and Indians. I am longing for such co-operation, and it is this very longing which deters me from accepting any apology, no matter how tempting, for co-operation. Non-co-operation is not born of ignorance and ill will, but it is the only effective step towards co-operation, and therefore it rises from knowledge and love.

Young India, 13-7-1921

199. TO EVERY ENGLISHMAN IN INDIA

DEAR FRIEND,

This is the second time I venture to address you.[1] I know that most of you detest non-co-operation. But I would invite you to isolate two of my activities from the rest, if you can give me credit for honesty.

I cannot prove my honesty, if you do not feel it. Some of my Indian friends charge me with camouflage when I say we need not hate Englishmen whilst we may hate the system they have established. I am trying to show them that one may detest the wickedness of a brother without hating him. Jesus denounced the wickedness of the Scribes and the Pharises, but he did not hate them. He did not enunciate this law of love for the man and hate for the evil in him for himself only, but he taught the doctrine for universal practice. Indeed, I find it in all the scriptures of the world.

I claim to be a fairly accurate student of human nature and vivisector of my own failings. I have discovered than man is superior to the system he propounds. And so I feel that you as an individual are infinitely better than the system you have evolved as a corporation. Each one of my countrymen in Amritsar on that fateful 10th of April was better than the crowd of which he was a member. He, as a man, would have declined to kill those innocent English bank managers. But in that crowd, many a man forgot himself. Hence it is that an Englishman in office is different from an Englishman outside. Similarly, an Englishman in India is different from an Englishman in England. Here in India, you belong to a system that is vile beyond description. It is possible, therefore, for me to condemn the system in the strongest terms, without considering you to be bad and without imputing bad motives to every Englishman. You are as much slaves of the system as we are. I want you, therefore, to reciprocate, and not impute to me motives which you cannot read in the written word. I give you the whole of my motive when I tell you that I am impatient to end or mend a system, which has made India subservient to a handful of you and which has made Englishmen feel secure only in the shadow of the forts and the guns that obtrude themselves on one's

[1] Earlier Gandhiji had addressed an open letter to the Englishmen on October 27, 1920.

notice in India. It is a degrading spectacle for you and for us. Our corporate life is based on mutual distrust and fear. This, you will admit, is unmanly. A system that is responsible for such a state of things is necessarily Satanic. You should be able to life in India as an integral part of its people and not always as foreign exploiters. One thousand Indian lives against one English life is a doctrine of dark despair, and yet, believe me, it was enunciated in 1919 by the highest of you in the land.

I almost feel tempted to invite you to join me in destroying a system that has dragged both you and us down. But I feel I cannot as yet do so. We have not shown ourselves earnest, self-sacrificing and self-restrained enough for that consummation.

But I do ask you to help us in the boycott of foreign cloth and in the anti-drink campaign.

The Lancashire cloth, as English historians have shown, was forced upon India, and her own world-famed manufactures were delib-erately and systematically ruined. India is, therefore, at the mercy not only of Lanca-shire but also of Japan, France and America. Just see what this has meant to India. We send out of India every year sixty crores (more or less) of rupees for cloth. We grow enough cotton for our own cloth. Is it no mad-ness to send cotton outside India, and have it manufactured into cloth there and shipped to us? Was it right to reduce India to such a helpless state?

A hundred and fifty years ago, we manufactured all our cloth. Our women spun fine yarn in their own cottages, and supplemented the earnings of their husbands. The village weavers wove that yarn. It was an indispensable part of national economy in a vast agricultural country like ours. It enabled us in a most natural manner to utilize our leisure. Today our women have lost the cunning of their hands, and the enforced idleness of millions has impoverished the land. Many weavers have become sweepers. Some have taken to the profession of hired soldiers. Half the race of artistic weavers has died out, and the other half is weaving imported foreign yarn for want of finer hand-spun yarn.

You will perhaps now understand what boycott of foreign cloth means to India. It is not devised as a punishment. If the Government were today to redress the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and consent to India attaining immediate swaraj, the boycott movement must still continue. Swaraj means at least the power to conserve Indian indus-tries that are vital to the economic existence of the nation, and to

prohibit such imports as may interfere with such existence. Agriculture and hand-spinning are the two lungs of the national body. They must be protected against consumption at any cost.

This matter does not admit of any waiting. The interests of the foreign manufacturers and the Indian importers cannot be considered when the whole nation is starving for want of a large productive occupation ancillary to agriculture.

You will not mistake this for a movement of general boycott of foreign goods. India does not wish to shut herself out of international commerce . Things other than cloth which can be better made outside India she must gratefully receive upon terms advantageous to the contracting parties. Nothing can be forced upon her. But I do not wish to peep into the future. I am certainly hoping that before long it would be possible for India to co-operate with England on equal terms. Then will be the time for examining trade relations. For the time being, I bespeak your help in bringing about a boycott of foreign cloth.

Of similar and equal improtance is the campaign against drink. The liquor shops are an insufferable curse imposed upon society. There never was so much awakening among the people as now upon this question. I admit that, here, it is the Indian ministers who can help more than you can. But I would like you to speak out your mind clearly on the question. Under every system of government, total prohibition, so far as I can see, will be insisted upon by the nation. You can assist the growth of the everrising agitation by throwing in the weight of your influence on the side of the nation.

I am,

Your faithful friend,

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 13-7-1921

200. A CONFESSION OF FAITH

A strange anonymous letter has been received by me, admiring me for having taken up a cause that was dearest Lokamanya's heart, and telling me that his spirit was residing in me and that I must prove a worthy follower of his. The letter, moreover, admonishes me not to lose heart in the prosecution of the swaraj programme, and finishes off by accusing me of imposture in claiming to be politically a disciple of Gokhale. I wish correspondents will throw off the slavish

habit of writing anonymously. We who are developing the swaraj spirit must cultivate the courage of fearlessly speaking out our mind. The subject-matter of the letter, however, being of public importance, demands a reply. I cannot claim the honour of being a follower of the late Lokamanya. I admire him like millions of his countrymen for his indomitable will, his vast learning, his love of country, and above all, the purity of his private life and great sacrifice. Of all the men of modern times, he captivated most the imagination of his people. He breathed into us the spirit of swaraj. No one perhaps realized the evil of the existing system of Government as Mr. Tilak did. And, in all humility, I claim to deliver his message to the country as truly as the best of his disciples. But I am conscious that my method is not Mr. Tilak's method. And that is why I have still difficulty with some of the Maharashtra leaders. But I sincerely think that Mr. Tilak did not disbelieve in my method. I enjoyed the privilege of his confidence. And his last word to me in the presence of several friends was, just a fortnight before his death that mine was an excellent method if the people could be persuaded to take to it. But he said he had doubts. I know no other method. I can only hope that, when the final test comes, the country will be proved to have assimilated the method of non-violent non-co-operation. Nor am I unaware of my other limitations. I can lay no claim to scholarship. I have not his powers of organization, I have no compact disciplined party to lead, and having been an exile for twenty-three years, I cannot claim the experience that the Lokamanya had of India. Two things we had in common to the fullest measure—love of country and the steady pursuit of swaraj. I can, therefore, assure the anonymous writer that, yielding to none in my reverence for the memory of the deceased I will march side by side with the foremost of the Lokamanya's disciples in the pursuit of swaraj. I know that the only offering acceptable to him is the quickest attainment of swaraj by India. That and nothing else can give his spirit peace.

Discipleship, however, is a sacred personal matter. I fell at Dadabhai's feet in 1888,[1] but he seemed to be too far away from me. I could be as son to him, not disciple. A disciple is more than son. Discipleship is a second birth. it is a voluntary surrender. In 1896 I met almost all the known leaders of India in connection with my South African mission. Justice Ranade awed me. I could hardly talk in

[1] This was when Gandhiji was studying for the Bar in London.

his presence. Badruddin Taiyabji fathered me, and asked me to be guided by Ranade and Pherozeshah. The latter became a patron. His will had to be law. "You must address a public meeting on the 26th September, and you must be punctual." I obeyed. On the 25th evening I was to wait on him. I did.

"Have you written out your speech?" he inquired.

"No, sir."

"That won't do, young man. Can you write it out tonight? Munshi, you must go to Mr. Gandhi and receive the manuscript from him. It must be printed overnight and you must send me a copy." Turning to me, he added, "Gandhi, you must not write a long speech, you do not know Bombay audiences cannot stand long addresses." I bowed.

The lion of Bombay taught me to take orders. He did not make me his disciple. He did not even try.

I went thence to Poona. I was an utter stranger. My host first took me to Mr. Tilak. I met him surrounded by his companions. He listened, and said, "We must arrange a meeting for you. But perhaps you do not know that we have unfortunately two parties. You must give us a non-party man as chairman. Will you see Dr. Bhandarkar?" I consented and retired. I have no firm impression of Mr. Tilak, except to recall that he shook off my nervousness by his affectionate familiarity. I went thence, I think, to Gokhale, and then to Dr. Bhandarkar. The latter greeted me, as a teacher his pupil.

"You seem to be an earnest and enthusiastic young man. Many people do not come to see me at this the hottest part of the day. I never nowadays attend public meetings. But you have recited such a pathetic story that I must make an exception in your favour."

I worshipped the venerable doctor with his wise face. But I could not find for him a place on that little throne. It was still unoccupied. I had many heroes, but no king.

It was different with Gokhale, I cannot say why. I met him at his quarters on the college ground[1] . It was like meeting an old friend, or, better still, a mother after a long separation. His gentle face put me at ease in a moment. His minute inquiries about myself and my doings in South Africa at once enshrined him in my heart. And as I parted from him, I said to myself, "You are my man." And from that

[1] Of Fergusson College, Poona

moment Gokhale never lost sight of me. In 1901 on my second return from South Africa, we came closer still[1] . He simply 'took me in hand', and began to fashion me. He was concerned about how I spoke, dressed, walked and ate. My mother was not more solicitous about me than Gokhale. There was, so far as I am aware, no reserve between us. It was really a case of love at first sight, and it stood the severest strain in 1913[2]. He seemed to me all I wanted as a political worker—pure as crystal, gentle as a lamb, brave as a lion and chivalrous to a fault. It does not matter to me that he may not have been any of these things. It was enough for me that I could discover no fault in him to cavil at. He was and remains for me the most perfect man in the political field. Not, therefore, that we had no difference. We differed even in 1901 in our views on social customs, e.g., widow remarriage. We discovered differe-nces in our estimate of Western civilization. He frankly differed from me in my extreme views on non-violence. But these differences mattered neither to him nor to me. Nothing could put us asunder. It were blasphemous to conjecture what would have happened if he were alive today. I know that I would have been working under him. I have made this confession because the anonymous letter hurt me when it accused me of imposture about my political discipleship. Had I been remiss in my acknowledgment to him who is now dumb ? I thought I must declare my faithfulness to Gokhale, especially when I seemed to be living in a camp which the Indian world calls opposite.

Young India, 13-7-1921

201. TO CORRESPONDENTS[3]

ADMIRER : The Ali Brothers do not live upon the Khilafat funds.

R. J. VARMA : Certainly collections must continue even after the All-India Congress Committee meeting, where the full quota for the *taluka*, district or province has not been made up. And no one who has already subscribed can honourably withhold his subscription, because the full quota has been otherwise made up. Pleaders who, having suspended practice in terms of the Congress resolution, resume it, cannot, with any sense of decency, hold office in a Congress

[1] Gandhiji stayed with Gokhale for about a month at the time of the Calcutta session of the Indian National Congress.

[2] This was when Gandhiji decided to launch passive resistance.

[3] Presumably by Gandhiji

Committee.

SWARAJ : If any swadeshi store is selling Japanese cloth in the name of swadeshi, it should certainly be exposed and boycotted. Enlightened active public opinion is the surest remedy against such frauds. Moreover, people should reject all fine stuff. Hand-spun and hand-woven stuff is unmistakable.

Young India, 13-7-1921

202. MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE OF DHARWAR

[Before *July 14, 1921*]

I have been following the doings of Government in Dharwar with the keenest interest. I tender my congratulations to the relatives of the victims of the official tyranny and I congratulate the people in general upon their patience and fortitude. It has given me great pleasure to learn that the arrests have not demoralized the citizens of Dharwar. I have no doubt that incidents like the one at Dharwar will accelerate our march to-wards swaraj if only we retain our patience and the spirit of non-violence. Deliberate and intentional non-retaliation doubles the courage of the people and adds greater sanctity to the cause they espouse. Undeterred, therefore, by the official repression, we must pursue our goal. I understand that the problem in Darwar is complicated by local dissensions and feuds. I urge all to forget these in face of the common danger but if all do not respond, I shall certainly expect non-co-operators to do so. But quietly resigning themselves to whatever jealousies they may be subjected to, they will disarm their opponents. *There is no better remedy to overcome opposition than love and charity*.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-7-1921

203. LETTER TO A CORRESPONDENT[1]

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
July 14, 1921

DEAR SIR,

With reference to your inquiry, I do not consider it unlawful for a *Sanatani* Hindu under given circumstances to eat food cooked in a

[1] The addressee is not known.

clean manner and purely vegetarian with a Mussulman or any other person.

With reference to Maulana Shaukat Ali's having expressed regret about his having given his shoulder to the late Lokamanya's coffin, he did not express regret for the act itself, but he apologized to the Maulanas present for having committed an unconscious breach of Mussulman usage in having shouldered the coffin of a Hindu.

The apology was quite consistent with undiminished regard for the memory of the deceased.

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S. N. 7571

204. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

BOMBAY,
Friday, July 15, 1921

CHI. MANI,

I should like to reply at length to your letter but I do not have the time for it. It will soon be 11 p.m. I shall answer your question though. For those who stock [foreign] cloth for selling it, the question of consigning it to fire or giving it away to others does not arise at all.

I have not yet been able even to read the leaflet[1]. Our cause will prosper in the measure in which we put up with assaults by wine-dealers.

Blessings from

BAPU

MANIBEHN
C/O SHRI VALLABHBHAI JHAVERBHAI PATEL
BHADRA, AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne

[1] This was in connection with the anti-drink campaign.

205. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

Friday [On or after *July 15, 1921*][1]

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I have had a long talk with Gidwani. He feels unhappy. He has some complaint against Kaka and people from the Ashram. Please bring all of them together and resolve the differences. I do not understand what cause he can have had from Kaka to feel unhappy. The latter told me nothing this time. I should be happy if all this heartburning stopped.

Please settle the matter of the grant[2] to Anasuyabehn[3]. Go and see her and give her a cheque or as much as she wants.

Tell Manibehn or Dahyabhai that I had again a long talk with Vithalbhai. I think he understands the importance of the spinning-wheel a little better now. I do feel that his proper field is the Councils. He cannot go among the people, mix with them and serve them. It is not as if he did not want to serve. Only he has not trained himself to do so. He has trained himself for the other work. It seems to me that the two kinds of work require different aptitudes. I have come across no one in Bombay who speaks ill of Vithalbhai.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

BHAISHRI, VALLABHBHAI PATEL, BAR-AT-LAW

BHADRA, AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Sardar Vallabhbhaine

[1] This letter was evidently written some time after the "Letter to Manibehn Patel", July 11, 1921, in which Gandhiji had said he would again discuss the subject of khadi with Vithalbhai when they met next.

[2] For schools

[3] Anasuyabehn Sarabhai, sister of Ambalal Sarabhai, a mill-owner of Ahmedabad.

206. MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE[1]

[Before *July 16, 1921*][2]

Remove your foreign clothes this very day from your house; give them to the Congress Committee at Patni Building or at the nearest place and obtain a receipt.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1921

207. SWADESHI "VRAT"[3]

[Before *July 16, 1921*][4]

I, the undersigned, according to my conscience, and in the name of God, pledge myself to observe one of the three following vows from the 1st of August 1921, *Samvat* 1977 *Ashad Vad* 12th, Monday :

(1) I shall wear pure swadeshi clothes.

(2) I shall use hand-woven clothes made out of mill-made yarn.

(3) I shall use clothes spun and woven in the mills of India.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1921

208. METHODS OF BOYCOTT

BOMBAY,
July 16, 1921

The boycott is proceeding quietly. The demand for khaddar has greatly increased. Although so far only seven business men have signed the pledge about not importing foreign cloth, a good many others have stopped placing orders. The orders already placed are being cancelled. It is regrettable that Calcutta has done very little in

[1] A leaflet issued by the Bhuleshwar District Congress Committee contained this message from Gandhiji.

[2] The date of this message is not available. It is, however, possible that it was sent about the same time as the following item.

[3] Vow. According to Bombay Secret Abstracts the different Swadeshi Sabhas of the Bombay Presidency had been instructed to take people's signatures on this.

[4] The date of this pledge, which was presumably drafted by Gandhiji, is not available. It is however, likely that it belongs to the same time as the following item.

discharging its duty in this matter. In all business centres organized and intensive efforts should be made to promote the boycott. This is the time for Marwari business men to prove their patriotism. Every man and woman in the country, irrespective of which party they support, should do their best to give up foreign cloth finally.

There should be no hartal anywhere in India on August 1, when the death anniversary of Lokamanya Tilak falls. The people should rather rejoice on that day, confident that our strength is increasing and that we are moving faster towards our goal. It will be far from fitting on that day to grieve over the memory of the departed patriot. . . .

Congress workers must foster among people a love for swadeshi. Till a complete boycott of foreign cloth is achieved, they should encourage people in boycott and it should be their first duty to produce khaddar. During the transition period, we should make do with half the cloth we need, otherwise we shall have to suffer a steep rise in the price of cloth and great scarcity. So long as the charkha does not ply in every home and all weavers do not use hand-spun yarn, we should be sparing, like a miser, in using swadeshi cloth.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 18-7-1921

209. MESSAGE TO PEOPLE OF ALIGARH

July 16, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi has sent a message to the effect that Aligarh affairs have deeply grieved him. Now that the goal is so near, the residents of Aligarh will not, he hopes, set the clock back by showing any weaknes in the form of losing patience or resorting to violence or disowning responsibility for violence committed by any section of the public, whether non-co-operators or not.[1]

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 17-7-1921

[1] The message was circulated both in Urdu and Hindi.

210. SPEECH AT PAREL, BOMBAY[1]

July 16, 1921

Mr. Gandhi said one of the great duties they had taken in hand was now accomplised, but a greater and more difficult task lay before them to achieve before realizing swaraj. People who wanted to amass a crore of rupees could only do so by incessant efforts and work, and without these it was not possible to get anything in this world. The work they had undertaken to do was one of greatest difficulty and required greater sacrifices on their part than the mere earning of money. If they wanted to get swaraj, if they wanted their Khilafat and Punjab wrongs—which even the Viceroy was asking them to forget and forgive—redressed, then they had no other course but to make this sacrifice for their country. They wanted swaraj within the shortest possible time. It could not be done without serious effort. If he were convinced that they had not the necessary strength of purpose to do their duty, he would never have spoken to them of swaraj. There was strength latent in them; they had only to realize it. A sister out of the nobility of her heart had sent a sari to him worth about Rs. 900 for the fund. It weighed perhaps 12 to 15 lbs., and he was surprised to find that she could wear such a heavy sari. It was richly embroidered. He had no doubt that she could not have parted with it without a pang. She must have worn that heavy sari with pleasure. He asked the sisters present to wear khaddar saris which were not half as heavy for the sake of their country.

They had willingly parted with their money and their ornaments. He knew that parting with the clothes they considered fine was not easy. But he expected them to make that sacrifice if they wished to contribute their full share to the national effort. The handsome contribution of one crore was but an earnest of their desire to attain swaraj, but it was not sacrifice. Boycott of foreign cloth required a sacrifice of their convenience and even their taste. Both men and women were called upon to make that sacrifice. He had a visit that day from two young Indians, recent arrivals from London—one a Bengali and the other a Parsi. Both were very earnest. He answered many questions and asked only one in return. Were they prepared to give up their foreign clothes? They were both frank and lovers of their country. They both admitted that it was the right thing to do. But one of them said he might be too weak to give up his foreign clothes. He was quite sure that if they were not ready to give up even their foreign clothes, they were not ready for swaraj.

When he mentioned one year's limit for the attainment of swaraj, he knew what he was doing. He had laid down definite conditions which the Congress had embodied in a resolution. He claimed to have the same degree of knowledge for

[1] At a meeting held at Morarji Gokuldas Hall at Parel

remedying India's ills as a physician would for his patient's disease. But it would be no fault in the physician if the patient would not try the remedies prescribed and therefore could not be cured. He had prescribed a remedy which, in his opinion, India could without much difficulty adopt and assimilate. The programme laid down by the Congress was really a perfect programme. Swadeshi in that programme was the one item which needed not mere partial acceptance, but it had to be accepted *in toto.*

They had a glorious opportunity of demonstrating their willingness. The first of August was near. Had they made themeselves worthy to celebrate the memory of Lokamanya? Were they fit enough to recite the *mantra* that he had bequeathed? Even as certain preliminary ablutions were necessary for a Hindu to recite his *Gayatri,* or for a Mussulman to perform his *namaz,* if either was to be efficacious, even so was it necessary for them to wear khadi dress on the first of August if they were to become fit for the recitation of the swaraj *mantra* given to the nation by Mr. Tilak. In his opinion, renunciation by every Indian of foreign cloth was the one thing indispensable for the economic independence of India and the attainment thereby of swaraj. This consummation was not beyond India's ability. He hoped the people had also the will.

He wanted to draw the attention of the audience to the summary dismissal of Mr. Kashalkar by Messrs Shaw Wallace & Co. His only crime was that he had the courage to wear a homespun khadi cap. It was too much for the manager and young Mr. Kashalkar was dismissed because he would not relent. He deserved congratulations on his bravery. Was not the incident a striking proof of India's slavery? In any other country, a manager who so gratuitously interfered with the liberty of an employee regarding his personal dress, would have to apologize or himself accept dismissal. He hoped that it was not yet too late. All the employees of Messrs Shaw Wallace & Co., if they had any spirit of *camaraderie* and self-respect would themselves, even if only by way of protest, appear in khaddar dresses and caps and ask for reinstatement of Mr. Kashalkar.

This dismissal had for him a deep significance. The manager by his simple act of dismissal of a poor Indian employee had given a political colour to the transaction, and he had insulted the whole nation for he had resented the performance of a national act on the part of Mr. Kashalkar and every one of the audience was concerned with the dismissal. If for no other reasons for the sake of protecting young men like Mr. Kashalkar from insult, they were bound to adopt khadi dress and khadi caps. The strength of their national spirit was to be tested only over incident like this. Their capacity for swaraj meant the ability to protect all those who were wronged even as Mr. Kashalkar was wronged.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-7-1921

211. REPORT OF THE NON-CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE[1]

In view of the threatening situation regarding the Turkish Government in Angora, we have been asked by the Central Khilafat Committee to report upon the best way of meeting it.

As a committee appointed to deal with non-co-operation matters only, we have no authority to consider any means outside non-co-opera-tion. But the success already achieved by the non-violent non-co-operation movement makes it unnecessary, in our opinion, to consider any means outside it. When, at the end of this month the results of the pursuits of the Bezwada programme of the Congress are tabulated, we shall be in a still better position to gause the success of non-co-operation, and to take, in consultation with the All-India Congress Committee, which meets at Lucknow on 22nd July, such steps as the situation may warrant.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

In so far as non-co-operation is concerned, it is obvious that every further step to be taken must be determined by the condition of the people of India. It has already been suggested that the progress made in the last three months justifies the advisability of having recourse to civil disobedience, The disregard of Muslim and Indian opinion once more displayed by the Government of Britain in the matter of their attitude towards the Turks coupled with the gross misuse of law in India in order to suppress the non-co-operation movement in spite of its non-violence may force us to adopt civil disobedience at an early date. However, since the All-India Congress Committee is to consider this proposal in its meeting at Lucknow, it is advisable to await its decision.

Nevertheless we desire to point out that the situation in Europe ought to stimulate the people, and particularly the Mussulmans, to great exertion in regard to the programme already before the country, i.e., in respect of titles, councils, schools and colleges, law courts and recruiting. We hold that it is high time the soldier class refrained in a higher measure than it has hitherto done from joining the army. We consider it to be the duty of the Indian soldiers to refuse to assist the British Government, should it require them to fight against the Turks.

[1] This was signed by Gandhiji, Shaukat Ali, Dr. Kitchlew and Ahmed Haji Sidigg Khatri.

The Muslim Ulemas should exert themselves to the fullest extent to bring home to the Muslim soldiery the commandments of Islamic law concerning them, and all non-co-operators should now lay special stress upon the opinion expressed by the Working Committee of the Congress with regard to the duty of the Indian soldier in the event of the reopening of hostilities against the Turks.

MAIN FEATURES OF NON-CO-OPERATION PROGRAMME

Above all, we desire to place on record our conviction that a greater effort is necessary to carry out the Bezwada programme, if we are successfully to cope with what appears to be the undoubtedly hostile attitude of the British Government towards the Turks and Islam. No adult Indian, male or female, should delay in registering hir or her name in the Congress register or contributing to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. We consider the introduction of the spinning-wheel in every home, the universal use of khaddar, and the complete boycott of foreign cloths as indispensable for the attainment of our end, along with the enlistment of all people and particularly the Mussulmans, as members of the Khilafat Committee and their contributing liberally for the sufferers from Smyrna, who must otherwise constitute a terrible drain on the already reduced resources of the Turkish Government of Angora.

We therefore urge redoubled efforts in these directions and expect response commensurate in its readiness with the gravity and urgency of the situation. We have taken not of the universal feeling of indignation produced by the news that Britain was contemplating further hostile action against Turkey and consider that it is our duty to direct this feeling into channels productive of the greatest good, so that India may attain all the sooner the greater purpose of redressing the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and the crowning achievement of swaraj which it has set before itself. The goal is not distant, but still the greatest effort is needed to reach it before Turkey is irretrievably weakened. This apprehension alone should stir every Mussulman to exertion in behalf of fulfilment of the non-co-operation programme.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-7-1921

212. WHY A BONFIRE?

A sister from Cambay writes—and letters to the same effect have also been received from others—to say that foreign cloth, instead of

being burnt, should be given away to the poor or exported to other countries. After weighing all the arguments, I still feel that foreign cloth should be thrown into the fire. If we look upon the use of foreign cloth as sinful, if we believe that its use has impoverished the country, that because of it countless numbers of our sisters have been rendered homeless, we should look upon foreign cloth as so much dirt and, just as we would not pass on to others the dirt on our person, so we should not pass on this dirt of foreign cloth to others. Had we not resolved to eschew the use of such cloth altogether, we ourselves would have continued to wear it till we had exhausted our stock. Having decided to give up its use, let us do so in fact. Giving it to someone else to use is as good as using it oneself. In giving it to others, we wish to earn the merit which accrues from a good deed. It seems to me that we cannot claim to have earned any such merit. We would throw away rotten grain; so also should we throw away foreign cloth. Hindus, Muslims, Parsis should all of them regard foreign cloth as unholy; if we do so, we would certainly not use it. To create this feeling, I think it is necessary that we discard the foreign cloth in our possession and throw it into the fire. The sentiment which will be generated by our doing this is of great value in my eyes. It is necessary, I think, to arouse so strong a feeling against foreign cloth that no one would dare try to deceive us in this matter. I shall, for this reason, regard ourselves purified if, on August 1, we burn all our garments of foreign cloth.

It is essential that we cultivate aversion to foreign cloth. Some people ask me if this would not lead to hatred of foreigners. In this movement, we should learn to condemn evil but, at the same time, love the evil-doer. Man is not as evil as his deeds. We are all full of failings; how then can we look down with contempt upon one another? All religions teach us to serve the wicked. The test whether a man is truly religious lies in his being free from the extremes of passionate attachments and hatred. He alone has known God who, having cause for anger, keeps it under control. It is the duty of every human being to know God. Keeping one's temper under control is not the dharma of only the sannyasi; the latter, in fact is required to keep many other difficult vows as well. We should, therefore, burn cloth but bear no ill will to those who produce it. Let Manchester and Japan go on doing so. If we do not purchase it, what can they do? If we do not wish to drink liquor, what can the owner of the liquor-booth do? If we think aright, we shall discover that the key to swaraj is in our pocket. Let us

burn up the love of drinking which has possessed us and burn up our love of fine silken cloth. Let us cast out the craving we feel for numberless tasty dishes. If we have not learnt to look upon all women as our sisters, let us bandage our eyes. The authors of the Shastras have so graphically described the harmful effects of all the things against which they wish to create dislike, that anyone who reflects upon these will indeed develop it. Is it right, however, to create dislike of people who produce these things? Should we burn the man who makes liquor, or the foreigner who weaves silk or the man who makes confectionery, and should we burn beautiful women? Should we not, rather, burn up our cravings and the things which excite them? Which of the two will find it possible to win swaraj—the one who gives up liquor or the one who burns the man who produced it?

The person, however, who, by burning foreign cloth, is likely to learn not to give up its use but to hate its producer would do better not to burn it; he is not fit to do so.

Those who still prefer to send cloth abroad rather than burn it will also be doing a commendable thing. Our Muslim brethren have been sending cloth to Smyrna and our purpose will be served even if we hand over our stock to be sent along with that. If only we give up the use of foreign cloth our main purpose will have been served. If people differ about the right use of discarded cloth, everyone may follow his own inclination in the matter.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-7-1921

213. WHAT WILL MERCHANTS DO?

What should merchants who deal in foreign goods do with their stocks? What would become of the country if such merchants are reduced to penury? Should they not have some notice?

It was not right, from the very outset, to trade in foreign goods. It is the lure of that trade which has led us into our present position, made slaves of us, forced our farmers to be idle for four months and left us without the means to face a famine. Foreign trade has ruined the country completely. The question what the people engaged in such trade would do should not be raised at all. They should be courageous. To have the strength for swaraj means that all of us should look to the good of the country and be ready to sacrifice our

personal interest for its sake. They should ask themselves why they carried on this trade so far, and should put up with the loss involved in giving it up.

Then, again, it is not difficult to dispose of foreign cloth. The stocks can be sold abroad. Some goods would ordinarily not suit the needs of other countries. Merchants do not have to be told that, even so, some use can be found for them outside.

Merchants will not become beggars. Money has been compared to the dirt on one's hand. A business man earns one day and loses the next. His ability to earn is his safeguard and security. Money comes in and goes out, but one's ability to make money remains. A man who has lost in one kind of business finds out another. I have heard these brave words from many a business man, "A merchant will never be a beggar.".

Is it impossible for merchants to give up trading in foreign cloth and take to selling khadi? New cloth worth sixty crores of rupees has to be produced.Will not this work provide a living for thousands of merchants? "What shall we do?" are words which bespeak indolence.

The fact is that we have not realized that the boycott of foreign cloth means swaraj; so long as passionate devotion to the cause of swade-shi is not generated in all sections of the public, boycott wil not succeed and, until boycott succeeds, we shall not get swaraj. It is essential, therefore, that the business community should be inspired with the strength to sacrifice its trade in foreign cloth for the sake of the country.

It is ignorance to say that the merchants have had no notice. They got it in September last. The matter has been talked of since then. But the merchants did not heed the notice. The Congress passes resolutions and they are soon forgotten; naturally, therefore, who takes notice of them? Merchants have not realized that times have changed. Who is to blame for that? I have spoken about boycott of foreign cloth at each and every meeting since September. Those who pursue unworthy occupations, those who are addicts, those whose conduct is immoral, those who treat the untouchables with contempt all of them have had notice as early as the movement for non-co-operation and self-purification started. At any given time, one or the other aspect of the movement will be stressed as considered necessary.

But it ought to be taken that notice has been served against sin, against acquisition of wealth in disregard of the interests of the people.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-7-1921

214. MY NOTES

WORTH EMULATING

Which non-co-operator wil not be delighted to read of the incident that took place in Varad and a report of which was sent to newspapers by Shri Kunvarji Vithalbhai? Professor Makanji deserves to be congra-tulated on the patience and forbearance he displayed. When all of us, in like manner, have learnt to submit to blows without getting provoked, it will not be long before we win swaraj. The people of Varad could have easily punished the person who, in his folly, inflicted such indignities on Professor Makanji; but they restrained themselves and thereby gave proof of their true courage. A word of comment is necessa-ry about the professor's companions having abandoned him and run away for fear of being beaten up. Whatever the danger to us, we should not run away and leave a companion alone, but, on the contrary, protect him even at risk to our own lives. In protecting someone, what is required is not the strength to strike but the strength to lay down one's life. Not running away from battle has been described as the quality of the brave, of the Kshatriya. Each of the four castes must, in some measure, have the qualities of the others. It is sheer ignorance to believe that Brahmins and *Vanias* do not need courage or cannot possibly have it. Every one of us must have the strength to protect himself or others by striking back, one exposes oneself to the danger of being killed, and the degree of risk involved is the measure of one's courage. In making this criticism, I do not wish to blame the professor's companions. These are new experiences for us. So long as we have not acquired sufficient courage to face danger, we are bound to make such mistakes. We shall not be inviting any danger upon ourselves as long as we do not resort to force and thereby violate our pledge to remain peaceful.

CHARGE AGAINST ALI BROTHERS

A gentleman writes to say that, during the collection of contributions [to the Tilak Swaraj Fund] in June, he heard an allegation against the Ali Brothers to the effect that they drew from

the funds of the Khilafat Committee six to seven thousand rupees every month for their own use. Another person writes to say that their daily living expenses come to ninety rupees, which they draw from the funds of the Khilafat Committee. I take note of these two letters here as I have often heard this criticism. I know that this report is absolutely incorrect. It is simply not true that the Ali Brothers meet their expenses from the funds of the Khilafat Committee. The expenses of both, which are but meagre, are met by their personal friends. It could be said that both the brothers have become fakirs for the sake of the country and for Islam. What a contrast between their expenses and way of living four years ago and their mode of dressing and their simple diet now!

SWADESHI

Traitors or persons who looked only to their interests were respon-sible for our being enslaved and we continue to be slaves because we cannot give up our selfishness. At this time when the work of swadeshi is making rapid progress, traitors have been more active. I have received three complaints. Some persons in Bombay have been selling caps made of decaying foreign baize, foreign thread and foreign satin, exploiting the swadeshi movement and my name for the purpose. These caps are black. My advice to those who wear swadeshi caps is that they use only white caps made of khadi. A coloured cap does not have the dignity, cleanliness and comfort of a white one. The latter can always be washed. Black caps are dirty and they smell. Anyone who has any notion of cleanliness will certainly not use caps which are constantly absorbing perspiration. A cap lined with leather is, besides, not good for the brain. How can a Hindu be happy with a cap in making which leather has been used? The British use such caps, but only when going outdoors and, besides, they change them frequently. We who use the same turban or cap for a number of years and keep one on all the time should find a leather cap intolerable. A khadi cap, being clean and light, is wholly harmless. Moreover, to what better use could khadi of the coarsest variety be put than to making caps? One who is eager to dress himself in khadi from head to foot should begin with the head straight away. The khadi cap can be used by all, the rich and the poor. Those who can afford will wash the khadi cap regularly, tailors will make designs on it and add more layers to it. By all means let such alterations be made, but the idea that all should have the same kind of cap on their heads is well worth

considering. The conclusion should be that only the khadi cap is to be regarded as swadeshi. Such a cap needs no stamp. A swadeshi cap should be one that could be identified even by children. Just as we can become true swarajists only by freeing ourselves from deceit and hypocrisy, so also should we keep away from these in the matter of caps. To those who are trying to sell foreign caps by passing them off as swadeshi, I would say that, even if they cannot carry on their business in an honest way, they should not practise dishonesty in a matter which concerns national welfare. There should be honour even among thieves. They do not practise theft amongst themselves. Some do not touch the poor. A great *yajna* is on in the country; can we not rise above the unworthy desire to exploit this to serve our base self-interest? I should tell the people without any hesitation that those who cheat them in this manner deserve to have their shops totally boycotted.

SWADESHI LONG CLOTH

What applies to caps applies also to long cloth. I have received a letter from as far away as Simla in which the correspondent tells me that some people have been selling Japanese long cloth as swadeshi after rubbing off the Japanese markings, washing it and stamping it again with a Bombay marking, and that some textile mills are also involved in this. I hope that this time the mill-owners at any rate will not be a party to any treachery to the country. While this sacred movement is on, the country expects help from them.

It is necessary that the customers, too, should be on their guard. If people give up being fascinated by fine cloth, there will be less chance of their being cheated. People, on their own, will also be able to recognize swadeshi goods if they give up the use of variously starched materials. The way to be rid of all these difficulties lies in using unbleached khadi. If every town makes the khadi that it needs, there would be no possibility of anyone cheating anyone else.

No one else can help the swadeshi movement as much as the mill-owners can. The mill-owners of Ahmedabad have brought glory to their name by contributing to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Shri Ambalal Sarabhai has enhanced their reputation by declaring his intention not to raise the prices, to open his own shop where goods will be sold to individual customers at wholesale prices and by helping the swadeshi movement in this way. We have not been able to get his full support because he has some fears about non-co-operation. I hope that he will

be fully in the movement when the non-co-operator, by his self-restraint, has assured everyone that there is no ground for any fears. Meanwhile, the letter in which he conveys his decision not to raise prices will undoubtedly be of great help to us. I hope that following the example of Shri Ambalal, other mill-owners will help the swadeshi movement.

Actually, what the dealers tell me is that not only should the mill-owners not raise the prices but that even the present prices are excessively high, higher than the prices of cloth from Japanese mills. Mill-owners must discuss this matter and come to a firm decision.

They should also assess the needs of the country and accept fewer orders from abroad. Yarn, too, is being exported in large quantities, and this policy, perhaps, needs to be suitably revised. It may be, however, that this matter requires further consideration. So long as people abroad need our goods, we may feel that we should continue to supply their needs wherever we have been doing so. Our position is different from England's. There is a kind of coercion in England's trade with us, which is probably absent from our trade with other countries. This is a separate matter and a rather delicate one. Three things are certain beyond doubt. The traffic in opium is totally immoral. We have been a willing party to the immorality of which the Government of India has been guilty in this matter. The sin of having harmed China will always remain on our heads. Food-grains and cotton should certainly not be exported until the needs of our country are fully met. Instead, large quan-tities of food-grains were exported during the War. So far as cotton is concerned, the magnitude of our guilt will become more plain in the future.

Another matter, the last, on which we seek the mill-owners' co-operation concerns the genuineness of their goods. They should not sell as swadeshi cloth made from foreign yarn and they should not starch cloth excessively. I hope that the mill-owners will discuss these matters and come to decisions which would be in the interest of the country.

WHO GAINS?

Who, apart from the rich, benefits by non-co-operation? If non-co-operation leads to riots or fighting, which classes of people will have a hand in these?

A correspondent asks these questions. Non-co-operation could benefit none if it did not benefit the poor. It is a weapon which will

benefit all and do no harm to any worthy institution or person. It is a weapon which helps us to defend the rights of the poorest of the poor.

As non-co-operation can never lead to riotings or fightings, the question who will have a hand in them is irrelevant. Should rioting or fighting break out, it will no longer be a movement of non-co-operation, it will have ceased to be so. If riots spread in the country, it will mean that the country has abandoned non-co-operation. Rioting and non-co-operation are incompatible things. Should there be trouble, the mischievous elements will believe for a while that they have stood to gain. Things have always happened so. The correspondent who put the two foregoing questions did not remember that this was a holy fight, a movement of self-purification, for learning to fear God and shed fear of men.

"IN A PREDICAMENT"

A sympathetically inclined Parsi gentleman expressed some doubts at the end of the meeting of Parsis. As these are worth considering, I briefly take note of them here. The gentleman argues:

> (1)Do you know that all leaders do not share your views? Perhaps you are not aware that, in Bombay, the common criticism against Parsis is none too proper, that there is malice in it. What steps have you taken, or propose to take, to put an end to this?
>
> (2)Parsis are in a predicament. They are unable to leave national work because of their genuine patriotic feelings; on the other hand, they find it difficult to endanger whatever security they enjoy at present. After the reins have passed out of your hands, or in the event of your death, the Parsis would certainly be crushed if, following a powerful national awakening, mutual regard does not prevail among the different classes of people.

These two doubts cannot be brushed aside. If my views about the Parsis are my own and not shared by the people, the fear expressed by this gentleman should be taken into account. It is certainly true that the remarks made about the Parsis in some circles are not without malice. The faults of a small community like the Parsis are conspicuous and their virtues remain in the dark. It is, therefore, always necessary for us to bear their virtues in mind. Our affection for people will increase only if we constantly think of their virtues. If we look upon the Parsis as our brothers and sisters, we are sure to recognize their generosity, their patience, their civility, their intelligence, their faith in God, their innate simplicity, and shall not see in them a single fault which we do not find in the rest of us. I cannot think of

any harm that has been done to India by the presence of the Parsis here. It is plain enough that India has been benefited by their coming. The main charge against them is that they have merely imitated the civilization of the West and are gradually giving up Indian culture. On deeper reflection, we shall see that this also is not true. I admit that Western civilization has had a very undesirable effect on them but not, relatively, more than on the Hindus and Muslims. However, because of their small number and because of the fact that they are concentrated in Bombay, the changes that they have adopted are more apparent, whereas Hindus and Muslims who, for all practical pur-poses, have become Englishmen do not send out prominently before us as such persons are scattered all over the country. The truth of this state-ment will be fully realized by any Indian going to England. I saw little difference between Parsis, Muslims and Hindus there. All seemed perfectly Anglicized.

BUT NOW?

Just as a change has come over Hindus and Muslims, similarly Parsis also have begun to change. Parsi youths have recognized the ideal of simplicity. Parsi girls have taken to wearing khadi. Those who do not have the courage to wear khadi wear cloth made in Indian mills. I believe that as soon as the current among the Parsis changes its direction, things will change greatly in no time. The Parsi community has given me the impression that it will not turn disloyal. Being a small commu-nity, it may not seem to have come forward in the measure that the Hindus and Muslims have done but my conviction that they are at heart Indians and that they love India will never be shaken. I do not know in what matter they have remained backward. Hindus and Muslims there-fore, should have regard for Parsis and should not always be watching their faults or pointing at them.

Our Parsi brethren have no cause for fear at all. One who has harmed no one should have no fear. The Prophet Zoroaster has taught us that nobility will always be rewarded by nobility. If a small community may have some cause for fear, it has also reason to be unafraid. The Parsis, knowing that they have done no harm to India, should be convinced that India, in turn, win do them no harm. Only that community or person which wishes to serve itself or himself in disregard of the country's interests has cause for fear. An innocent person, even if he is in a minority of one, has no cause for fear. Finally, I would most certainly appeal, in all humility, to my Parsi

brothers and sisters to throw themselves heart and soul into this movement, seeing that it is for self-purification. In this movement, we should trust one another and selfconfidence is the means whereby such trust can be inspired in others. And self-confidence means swaraj.

IRREVERENCE

A gentleman has written to me, drawing my attention to pictures depicting me as Krishna and has asked me to stop such impropriety. I have not seen a single such picture, nor do I wish to see any. These things seem to me to violate propriety. We describe Shri Krishna as the Supreme *Atman* is its infinite perfection. We look upon him as the incarnation of God, as the perfect yogi of the *Gita.* We do not think of Lakshmi as a woman, like any other in this world. We describe her as the perfection of God's *maya,* as the *dhatri* who sustains the world. To depict me in the likeness of Shri Krishna and my wife in that of Lakshmi is to shame us both. If, seeing these likenesses, we come to cherish notions about ourselves, we shall be guilty of sin. I am fully aware of my imperfections. I am but a humble creature aspiring after *moksha* and striving towards perfection. My wife is just an ordinary woman who strives to keep pace with her husband, suffering in innumerable ways as she does so. Our domestic life, I believe, is a happy one, but I have no other desire except to go to my final rest while doing my duty on the path of service. I am not at all enamoured of the adoration of the world and my work has no such aim. Its only aim is my welfare. The self in me assures me that I do everything in the belief that it is my dharma to act as I do and, when any action is undertaken as being required by one's dharma, there can be no expectation of the world's adoration by way of reward. I feel extreme aversion to giving a single moment for receiving adoration. It does not, therefore, please me even to see my pictures being sold. To see myself, then, being depicted in the likeness of any perfect man or my wife in that of a perfect woman cannot but be intolerable to me. Those who have been selling such pictures will put me under their obligation if they destroy them. People who wish to honour me can do so only by loyally acting upon the principles which I have placed before the public. Those who pay me lip service or who collect my pictures while ignoring my principles insult me and people who represent me by holy images are guilty of irreverence. A wise man of old has said that no man should be called good befor he is dead. He alone can attain *moksha* who, even in the face of death, does not cease thinking of

God; he alone can be called good who does not forsake his goodness till his death.

ONE DOUBT

Two gentlemen from Bhavnagar hae inquired, who can attend the Congress as delegates:

> Cannot those who have not joined non-co-operation attend as delegates? After all, the Congress is a national organization.

This is quite true. When the voters are all non-co-operators, a co-operator is not likely to be elected as a delegate. If the Congress has voting members who are in favour of co-operation and if their votes add up to a majority,or if they can collect sufficient votes to elect a delegate who advocates co-operation, they may certainly do so and the election would be perfectly legal.

ANOTHER DOUBT

A gentleman from Bombay asks:

> If the *Dheds* and the *Bhangis* start going in for education, they will want to take up jobs or get into business; who will then do their work?

There are other questions also in this letter, but I do not give them as the answer to these is contained in the answer to the foregoing question. This question itself shows the frightfulness of untouchability as we understand it today. There is nothing but scorn of untouchables in our everybody behaviour towards them. I think the very notion that education would make them give up being sweepers is wrong. The reason for it, however, lies in ourselves.We look down on the profession of a *Bhangi*, but, in fact, it is sacred work as it is concerned with cleanli-ness. A mother is regarded with all the greater feeling of sanctity because she removes the faeces of the child. We respect a woman who nurses the sick and is engaged in removing things which smell most offensively. Should we not worship the person who always cleans our lavatories and thereby helps us to remain free from disease? By treating such persons as low, we have sunk low ourselves. Anyone pushing another into a well himself falls into it along with the other. We have no right, thus, to look down on the *Bhangis* and others like them as belonging to low castes.

Even though Bhoja Bhagat was a *Mochi,* we sing his devotional songs with love and revere him. Which reader of the *Ramayana* does not worship the hunter for his devotion to Rama? Moreover, if *Bhangis* and others give up their profession, we need not oppose them

or get alarmed. We shall not be fit for swaraj so long as we seek to force any work on people. We should learn to keep our lavatories clean. They will be as clean as our reading-room when we feel ashamed of keeping them dirty. The fifth in our lavatories, the foul odour and the gases which are generated in consequence are a blot on our culture and bespeak our ignorance of the laws of hygiene. The condition of our lavatories is a proof of our unworthy attitude to the *Antyajas* and the cause of many of the diseases from which we suffer. The idea that contact with members of other communities will make us lose our caste or defile us betrays our weakness. Contact is unavoidable so long as we are in the world, and the test of the reality of dharma for us lies in our remaining pure in spite of it. The way of compassion requires that we educate the *Bhangis* and other communities like them to be clean, that we work for their advancement and treat them with respect. To do this, it is not necessary to sit down to meals with any member of such communities; what is required is a change of heart.

OLD AGE—A GROUND OF CRITICISM?

A reader who calls himself "A Student of *Navajivan*" writes:

> Two of the foremost scholars of Gujarat have, at an advanced age, and when the country is in such predicament, accepted posts of professors of Gujarati in Government colleges! I had certainly expected that you would comment on this unhappy event but, after vainly scanning two consecutive issues of *Navajivan*, I feel disappointed and am astonished at your silence in this matter. I am sure your have thought over this matter and have deliberately decided to refrain from making any comments. If you enlighten us by giving us your reasons, I and many others who perhaps feel as I do will remain puzzled no longer.

The "Student's" guess is correct. I have deliberately refrained from commenting. I was indeed pained by two of our elderly scholars accepting Government posts. But how can one criticize their action? There can be no rule against the aged becoming professors nor any that all old men should be non-co-operators. Then, we cannot say that men of learning can never be in favour of co-operation. If, thus, the old and the learned have the right to support co-operation, on what ground can we criticize their action? That men of age and learning see nothing wrong in accepting Government posts will certainly give something like a shock to non-co-operators and make them pause and think. But, then, even among the non-co-operators there are some old

and learned men and I believe, therefore, that we need not think too much about the matter. I think both these learned men have accepted Government posts after careful deliberation and not because they were tempted by any thought of personal gain. Hence,"Student" and others who feel like him are not justified in blaming these two elderly gentlemen. To me, the surprise expresssd by "Student" seems to suggest lack of tolerance. Others, especially our elders, should have the same freedom of thought and action which we claim for ourselves.

ENEMY IN GUISE OF FRIEND

I read a postcard received by the editor of *Prajamitra.* It is written from Ahmedabad. It is signed, but has no address on it. The signatory is a Muslim gentleman. Its language will hardly bear being reproduced. It abuses the editor for criticizing my views. I hope that the writer of this postcard, whoever he is and whatever his community, will read this note. The writer, professing to be a friend, has acted like an enemy. We shall not be able to advance the cause of the Khilafat or swaraj by threatening or abusing anyone in this manner. If we wish to advance them, we should learn civility and humility. If the editor of *Prajamitra* disa-grees with some one, how can he in any way be criticized for that? News-papers would have no value if their editors did not have the right to express their views freely. We want the removal of all restrictions im-posed by the Government on newspapers; should we, then, tolerate peo-ple imposing restrictions by means of threats? We may try to change people's views and their attitudes by love, by persuasion and by example. Threats will not succeed. Everyone, therefore, and specially a non-co-ope-rator, should improve his language, purify his thoughts and make them gentler. How can anyone whose tongue is sanctified by uttering God's name, in whose heart dwells God, have unworthy words on that tongue and unworthy thoughts in that heart even for a moment? Any person who joins the army of non-co-operators with a foul tongue and an evil mind or heart, though he may claim to be a friend, acts like an enemy.

LIMITS OF UNTOUCHABILITY[1]

It is not necessary for me to add a single word to this article. My attacks are not directed against untouchability as interpreted by Shastriji. By all means we may take a bath after coming into contact with an un-clean person. I have employed strong language only

[1] The comments which follow were appended to an article on this subject by Vasantram Shastri.

against untoucha-bility as it is practised and which is inspired by sheer malevolence. If all *Vaishnavas* come to share Shastriji's views, I shall have no quarrel with them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-7-1921

215. SPEECH AT MEETING OF WEAVERS, BOMBAY[1]

July 17, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi said it was not the first time he had come to Madanpura, for two years ago he had been there to see their work. But this meeting was for a different purpose altogether. When he had come there last there was no fear about the Khilafat question and they were sure of getting justice at the hands of their rulers, because the Prime Minister of Great Britain had promised to do the right thing by them. But the British Government had done a great deal of harm to the Mohammedans, and until their grievances were righted, their minds could not be at rest. On account of the doings of the Government in Punjab, the minds of the people were also very much disturbed. As long as a single sepoy could not be stopped by the Indians from being sent to foreign countries to fight for the British, so long could they not be said to have real power in their hands. They had found a powerful weapon now, and that was non-co-operation, and the Congress had laid down in definite terms what they should do in that regard. But the reponse of the people had not been great, for they had not given up their titles, and they had not boycotted the schools or the law-courts. Therefore, he said that the people had not done their duty. But, in spite of this, the prestige of the Government had gone, for people now did not set much store by Government titles; people had been attending the law-courts not because these were good or they were sure of getting justice there, but because they were a sign of their degradation and their fall.

The duty before the weavers was clear and that was to help the swadeshi movement to the best of their ability. If the weavers could help the movement they could bring back prosperity to the country. It was most unfortunate that the weavers were using foreign yarn; he appealed to them to give up the use of foreign yarn, and use only swadeshi and hand-spun yarn. Not only should they use the fine counts but also the lower counts of hand-spun yarn. In no country did weavers use mill-made yarn. They used the fine counts but also the lower counts of hand-spun yarn. In no country in the world, not even in Japan, were there such weavers as they had in India. He was proud to be a weaver himself, because on them the prosperity of this country

[1] Held on Sunday night at Madanpura, under the auspices of the Byculla Congress Committee

depended. Whenever anybody asked him to what profession he belonged, he proudly told him that he was a cultivator and a weaver, but not a barrister. The weavers could bring prosperity to this country by using hand-spun yarn and they should not think that by using it they would be ruining themselves. The present was not the time either for showing their skill or putting on fine clothes. They had to wear rough clothes until swaraj was theirs and Khilafat and Punjab wrongs were redressed. If they would but try, they could easily weave cloth from the hand-spun yarn, and he hoped that, as long as handmade yarn was available, they must not think that they would be getting lower wages by hand-spun yarn; he assured them that they would earn as much as they were earning now. He asked them to give up the stock of foreign yarn which they might have on their hands. On the first of August[1] he did not want to see anyone wearing foreign clothes, and he would request anyone who wanted to go to Chowpatty on that day not to go there if he had any foreign clothes on him. He asked the weavers to meet Mr. Mahomed Ali and Mr. Khatri and discuss their difficulties with him. If they could boycott foreign clothes by the end of August, they could easily get swaraj.

The Bombay, Chronicle, 19-7-1921

216. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

BOMBAY,
July 18 [*1921*]

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I am neglecting you if not writing to you can be called a neglect of duty. You are ever with me in spirit. I had thought you were in Simla. I have not seen Stokes' open letter. But this week's *Y. I.* will have a leading article on *begar*[2] and on the position of women.[3] I have dealt with your message to Bengal in the matter.

Do please get well. Give my love to Gurudev and tell me how he is keeping in health.

With love,

Yours,
MOHAN

[PS.]

Polak has lost his sister Sally.

From a photostat: G. N. 1309 and G. N. 2639

[1] This was the date fixed for the inauguration of the campaign for boycott of foreign cloth.

[2] Forced unpaid labour; *vide* "The Shadow of Simla", 21-7-1921.

[3] *Vide* "Position of Women", 21-7-1921.

217. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

July 18 [*1921*][1]

MY DEAR HENRY,

Poor Sally. She had such marked features that I almost feel as if she is talking to me now ≈ my whole heart goes out to you, Millie and Mater. May God give [you] the strength to bear the burden He has put upon you. I shall hope, though you gave me none, that Pater has survived the operation. The youngsters must be grown up young men now. You say nothing about Ceilia.

With love to you all,

Yours,
BHAI

[PS.]

I received your letter just now but I thought I would not delay writing in order to seek leisure for a long letter.

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

218. SPEECH AT MEETING OF MUSLIM WOMEN, BOMBAY[2]

July 19, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi rose to address the meeting. . . . He said that he had long connections with Mussulmans and that the gentleman who took him to Africa for the first time was a Muslim friend. He regarded all these present to be his sisters. All their efforts for the attainment of swaraj were meant for safeguarding their religion and there was no distinction whatsoever in his mind between the Hindus and the Muslims.

The Mahatma said that, in his opinion, all religions were good. Sometimes mistakes crept into religion at the instance of some misguided followers. Whatever was written in the holy Koran was all good, and there was truth in all religions. They all stood up for the cause of Islam and they did not want at all a Satanic raj in the world.

In the Satanic raj he could not do any good. He had received a telegram from

[1] From the reference to Sally's death; vide "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 18-7-1921.

[2] The meeting, attended by over 500 Muslim women, was held at Nepean Sea Road in the afternoon. Gandhiji spoke in Hindustani.

Aligarh that afternoon intimating him that Mr. Sherwani had been sent to jail notwithstanding the fact that he was working for peace. There might arise an occasion when all good men might be sent to jail, and everybody should be ready for that occasion. In Africa, Hindus and Muslims, regardless of sex, went to jail and preserved the honour of their country. Those who were steeped in luxury would be unable to bear jail life where they would not get tea ten times a day and would not get fine clothes.

For the sake of your religion you should give up all luxury and begin to wear khadi. Until India gets swaraj and the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs are righted, everybody should regard foreign cloth as not permissible. When we gat swaraj, we would be able to prepare all kinds of swadeshi cloth and so you shall have to give up all luxury for six months.

He was very happy to hear of the spinning of Mrs. Haji Yousuf Sobhani. They should all keep the charkha near them as they kept their sons in their laps. Remembering God in their heart, they should spin on the charkha for the sake of swaraj and Khilafat at least for some hours every day. By the charkha not only the honour of Indian womanhood would be preserved, but they would be in a position to earn an independent living within doors. They could do more for the cause of their country by the charkha than by the sword. Many Indians got about Rs. 8 to Rs. 15 a month which was not quite sufficient for the maintenance of their families. In Bijapur, Bahen Ganga introduced two thousand charkhas into the homes of poor Indians, and as a result of this they were getting good and commendable hand-spun yarn from that place and they (the poor Indians) were earning thereby an independent living.

Continuing, the Mahatma said that they could manufacture the best Dacca muslin formerly, but owing to the present Government, their weavers were in a sorry plight and were quite unable to do their professional work. They should not go to Manchester for fine cloth. One Indian woman had given him an embroidered sari weighing about twelve seers and if they could wear saris of such weight, why could they not wear saris made of khaddar? Women could undergo greater pains and trouble than men and therefore nothing prevented them from the free use of the khadi. Mrs. Mazhar-ul-Haq gave him four bangles of diamond. Such a sacrifice showed that swaraj was coming nearer for women loved their ornaments very much. That woman was beautiful who had got in her heart the idea of God. They should give up all outward signs of beauty. They should not go to Japan, France and China for fine cloth. They should all pray for the success of Hindus and Muslims, but their prayers would be effective when they had pure hearts and bodies covered with swadeshi cloth. That was a difficult resolution. But if they once determined to resort to it, it would be very easy indeed.

Concluding, the Mahatma exhorted those present by saying that they either should burn foreign cloth or sent it to Smyrna. He thanked them for inviting him and giving him a patient hearing.

The Bombay Chronicle, 20-7-1921

219. SPEECH AT MEETING OF LIQUOR CONTRACTORS, BOMBAY[1]

July 19, 1921

Mr. Gandhi said he had told them on the last occasion that picketing was in the hands of the Congress Committee and that he could but advise them what they should do. They, however, knew the result of his advice. Some of the contractors had already seen the petition which was intended to be sent to the Government and, as they were not non-co-operators, there was not the least objection in their doing so. If they were non-co- operators they would not have liquor shops. The contractors had a perfect right to petition the Government. It was suggested that they were servants. Even if they were, there was still nothing wrong about their asking the Government for a refund of the fees they had paid to it. It was impossible for Government forcibly to close their shops. For that they would have to pass a new law. But the contractors could so on receiving a refund of their fees.

They knew about the Dharwar and Aligarh tragedies and he wanted to tell them that the liquor shops were most responsible for the deaths of so many people. Mr. Sherwani of Aligarh was one of the mostly well-known and respectable persons of that place; he belonged to the Muslim nobility and was a Cambridge graduate. He had received a telegram from Aligarh that Mr. Sherwani had also been arrested yesterday. Mr. Sherwani had done his best to pacify the crowd; he had done his best to keep them peaceful; but he had refused to 'rub the nose'. He had kept up the spirits of the people and he was arrested. Who has responsible for all this trouble? The whole trouble began with picketing. Mr. Gangadharrao Deshpande has sent him a telegram from Belgaum that he and other friends had been ordered not to picket the shops in the Cantonment there and Mr. Deshpande had asked his advice whether they should disobey this order. His advice to Mr. Deshpande was that, although the order was illegal, he must obey it and that restraint would fit them for civil disobedience. He thought it was the duty of the liquor vendors to bow to the wishes of crores of their countrymen. By closing their shops they would benefit their country, and what was good for their country was also good for them. He knew it for a fact that some of the contractors were in a bad financial condition and it was the duty of the community to

[1] Held under the auspices of the Parsi Rajkiya Sabha at the Marwadi Vidyalaya Hall

see what they could do for these people. But they must admit that, by keeping their shops open, the vendors were doing a disservice to their country.

Mr. Gandhi warned the contractors that if nothing was done at the end of August there would be great trouble. When picketing was resumed it would be taken up seriously, The picketers would welcome imprisonment and even be shot rather than give up their adopted task. He felt that the shops must be closed even if there were rivers of blood by reason of the picketers not stopping at the Government's bidding. He could not promise the contractors that picketing would not begin afresh in the month of August, for what they had undertaken to do they must successfully accomplish, at whatever cost it might be. He had already received letters complaining that he had not done right in stopping picketing. He was blemed for giving weak advice to the Ali Brothers, he was blamed for stopping the satyagraha movement and now he was blamed for stopping picketing. Whatever advice he had given to the Ali Brothers it was not weakness, but of strength, and so it was regarding satyagraha and picketing. He therefore, beseeched the liquor-dealers to listen to the nation's cry and prevent the impending sacrifice. He would welcome death in the act of picketing rather than from disease. And he had no doubt there were many who have prepared to do likewise.

At the end of his speech he invited the contractors to ask him any questions they liked and appealed to them to do their duty by the country at this moment.

Mr. Maneckji Baria said there was dishonesty in every profession and not among the liqour sellers only. The question before them was who was to close the shops and when? The liquor business had been going on for thousands of years and it was not possible to stop it all at once. They should close the shops gradually. There was no shame or dishonesty in any profession, if it were but followed honestly. Everybody had to look after his own interests, and even Mr. Gandhi who was the soul of swadeshism would not prefer a country cart, if he had to go to Colaba, but a fast foreign victoria. They could only stop drinking by inducing the people to give up the habit and by no other means. They had already applied to Government for a refund and as soon as they got it they would stop their shops. Government could only assess their losses on the total sales of the whole year and not of a part of it. He would ask Mr. Gandhi this question: he had said he would get swaraj by the end of September and in that case, could they not pass a law and stop the sale of liquor? From what date did Mr. Gandhi want shops to be stopped?

MR. GANDHI: From today (Laughter and cheers.)

Mr. Baria said if Mr. Gandhi wanted to stop the trade from today he should be a God!

Mr. Gandhi said he wanted the thing to be done today, but the question was could he do so? He wanted many things to be done, but he might not be able to do

them!

Mr. Gandhi, in replying[1] , said he hoped they had made a further advance at this meeting. He asked them to sign their names in the memorial only if they wished to do so. About rivers of blood flowing in the month of September he said there would be many men like Mr. Sherwani, Mr. Mahomed Ali and himself to do picketing and if they were arrested hundreds of other people would replace them. If even those were arrested thousands of his countrymen would be forthcoming ready to sacrifice their lives and the only think the Government could do was to shoot them and shed their blood. What had happened at Dharwar and Aligarh? Perhaps the crowd had thrown stones at Dharwar. The reply was bullets. That was the custom in India. A dangerous situation was bound to arise when the people were pressed between the Government, the contractors and the drinkers. Therefore, he had said that rivers of blood would flow in September unless the shops were closed. In the end he asked them to see Mr. Bharucha in the matter of the memorial and consult him.

The Bombay Chronicle, 20-7-1921

220. LETTER TO K. P. JAGASIA BROTHERS[2]

BOMBAY,
[After *july 19, 1921*]

DEAR SIRS,

With reference to your letter of the 19th July last, I am unable to advise you except to say that you should do what every merchant is doing. The idea of raffle does not commend itself to me.

Yours truly,

From a photostat: S. N. 7580

221. TELEGRAM TO BELGAUM PICKETERS

July 20, 1921

OBEY EVEN THE ILLEGAL ORDER AGAINST PICKETING, AS THAT WILL SURELY IN THE FUTURE STRENGTHEN THE CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT. TRY HARD TO BOYCOTT FOREIGN CLOTH.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1921

[1] To questions from the audience

[2] Jagasia Brothers, General Import and Export merchants of Karachi, had written to Gandhiji, complaining of heavy losses in business and stock of foreign cloth lying idle due to the swadeshi movement. They had sought Gandhiji's advice as to how to meet their liabilities and asked whether he would approve of their disposing of unsold stocks through a lottery.

222. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETINGS, POONA[1]

July 20, 1921

Addressing a mass meeting in the Camp, Mahatma Gandhi said not an inch of cloth must be imported from foreign lands. In days gone by, India used to manufacture more than sufficient quantity of cloth. The Indian cotton industry was ruined by the servants of the East India Company. The imported cloth cost them Rs. 60,00,00,000. They must be prepared to wear khadi and spin cotton. They must en-courage the weavers to take up swadeshi yarn for weaving into cloth. Swadeshi was a religion. Swaraj was an impossibility without rigorous obedience to this religion.

Coming to picketing, the Mahatma said that picketing was a great and good movement, but drunkards must not be belaboured. They must not be abused. Volunteers should be strictly non-violent. Liquor merchants should close down their shops. The country wanted to get rid of drink; the latter had turned drunkards into devils. The Mahatma concluded by appealing to the audience to take to swadeshi in right earnest[2] .

Mr. Gandhi, in addressing the meeting, said that foreign cloth included cloth wov-en of foreign yarn, and asked all to be careful and scrupulous about it. He reminded the audience of Lokamanya Tilak's sufferings in the cause of freedom and asked them to im-bibe his spirit. He said he was indifferent to boycott of schools and of law courts as it att-ained its object, but he insisted upon Hindu-Mohamedan unity, non-violence, and mainly upon the boycott of foreign cloth. If they could but succeed in this boycott by the end of August, swaraj was virtually obtained. He paid compliments to Maharashtra and asked them to have faith.

Addressing a huge mass meeting on Shanwarwada grounds, the Mahatma said that that was a sacred day. They had assembled there to celebrate the anniversary of Tilak Maharaj. He was the teacher of the great *mantra* of swaraj. Swadeshi was the simplest possible method to obtain swaraj. It would clothe the naked and feed the hungry. Twenty millions of Indians were half-starved. Maharashtra was wise, Maharashtra possessed learning, Maharashtra would spare no sacrifice but, continued the Mahatma, Maharashtra lacked in faith. Swaraj within a year was a certainty if

[1] Earlier Gandhiji unveiled a bust of Tilak and paid tributes to him. He also addressed meetings of women and Khilafat workers.

[2] The paragraphs which follow are taken from two reports of Gandhiji's speech at a second public meeting held on Shanwarwada grounds which unanimously resolved to adopt swadeshi and boycott foreign cloth. The first paragraph is from a report in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 22-7-1921.

Maharashtra would take to swadeshism with unflinching faith. Concluding, the Mahatma hoped that Maharashtra would prove worthy of Tilak Maharaj.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-7-1921

223. SPEECH AT OPENING OF COLLEGE BUILDING, POONA

July 20, 1921

While opening the buildings of Tilak Mahavidyalaya, Mahatma Gandhi, after in introductory speech by the Secretary, Prof. Gharpure, said that national schools and colleges had been started all over the country. He paid a special compliment to Bihar, for the latter, having suddenly shaken off sloth and slumber, had practically succeeded in carrying out almost all the items of the N. C. O. programme. Mr. C. R. Das had provided for the Bengal N. C. O. students, and his sacrifice in that respect was simply unparalleled. Gujarat also had a national university. But, proceeded the Mahatma, the latter institutions in point of the system of education [*sic*]. He was glad to see that provision for commercial and industrial training was made in the Tilak Mahavidyalaya. That was, no doubt, a special feature of the institution. The fact, therefore, that the Mahavidyalaya was not a mere imitation of the Government institutions would suffice to silence *The Times of India* henceforth. In conclusion, he hoped that the Vidyalaya would produce students worthy of the name of him after whom it had been christened.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-7-1921

224. NOTES

SOME IFS

If you are a *weaver* feeling for the country, the Khilafat and the Punjab :

(1) You should weave only hand-spun yarn, and charge so as to give you a living. You should overcome all the difficulties of sizing and adjusting your loom to the requirements of coarse yarn.

(2) If you cannot possibly tackle hand-spun yarn for warp, you must use Indian mill-spun yarn for it and use hand-spun for woof.

(3) Where even the second alternative is not possible, you should use mill-spun yarn for both warp and woof.

But you should henceforth cease to use any foreign yarn, whether it is silk or cotton.

If you are a *Congress official* or *worker*, you should get hold of the weavers within your jurisdiction, and place the foregoing propositions before them for acceptance and help them to the best of your ability.

If you are a *buyer*, insist upon the first class of cloth, but if you have not the sense or the courage to do so, take up the second or the third, but on no account purchase foreign cloth or cloth woven in India but made of foreign yarn.

If you are a *householder* :

(1) You should make a fixed determination henceforth not to buy any foreign cloth.

(2) You should interview the weaver in your neighbourhood and get him to weave for you enough khadi out of homespun and, failing that, to weave out of Indian mill-spun yarn.

(3) You should deliver to the Congress Committee all your foreign cloth for destruction or sending to Smyrna or elsewhere outside India.

(4) If you have not the courage to give up your foreign cloth, you may wear it out at home for all dirty work, but never go out in foreign cloth.

(5) If you have any leisure, you should devote it to learning the art of spinning even, properly-twisted yarn for the sake of the

nation.

If you are a *schoolboy* or *schoolgirl*, you should consider it a sin to receive literary training before you have spun, carded or woven for the nation for at least four hours per day till the establishment of swaraj.

CONGRESS COMMITTEES

People are asking me whether one crore members have been placed on the Congress register. I have not the accurate figures before me, but I do know that we have nearly reached the figure, if we can be satisfied with the mere mechanical registration. Let us however, understand the implication. It is that we have one crore men and women who believe in and wish to work for the Congress creed. Boycott of foreign cloth is the acid test. If we have one crore of men and women of one mind in India, we must have an ocular proof of it in our streets and villages. Do we see as we walk about that one out of every thirty men and women is dressed in khadi or at least swadeshi? Do the majority of those who make our audiences present the appearance of swadeshi? The answer must be a reluctant but an emphatic no. I would, therefore, advise all Congress organizations to mind nothing but swadeshi till we have brought about a complete boycott of foreign cloth. In order to be able to do this, it is high time that every Congress worker dressed himself or herself in coarse khadi. That *must* be the swaraj soldier's uniform. I am looking forward to the All-India Congress Committee meeting, hoping that the members will bear on their persons the mark of soldiership. If we are to attain complete boycott, say, by the 31st August, the Congress organizations must become carding, spinning and weaving institutes. Congress workers must become experts in carding, spinning and weaving. Let them not write helplessly to the Ashram at Sabarmati for information and guidance. Thank God, every province has now some knowledge of these processes. The workers in each province must befriend carders (*pinjaras*), spinners and weavers, learn the trade from them, so that they may be able to protect it and not compete with them. Let them also befriend carpenters and blacksmiths for charkhas and spindles. Let them stock sufficient khadi and sell it at cost price, the cost to include the expense of running the store. In other words, every Congress office must, for the time being, be an arsenal for the storage and manufacture of peaceful ammunition. Is this a ludicrous or impossible demand? Was not every available hand in England, France

and Germany working for furthering the objects of the War? If we beli-eve that swaraj is unattainable without swadeshi, does it not follow that we must ceaselessly and intelligently devote our attention our boycott, manufacture and distribution to the almost entire exclusion of every other activity? All meetings, and all declamation at our meetings when they are held, must be stopped. We must consider our weaknesses and shortcomings rather than contemplate the rulers. Contemplation of the latter can only breed hatred, weakness and helplessness. That of the for-mer and consequent action will give us courage, strength and hope. If, therefore, we hold meetings, they must be simply business meetings to demonstrate the necessity of boycott and manufacture, and to show the way thereto.

THE COMING A.I.C.C. MEETING

Much depends upon the coming meeting of the All-India Congress Committee. we have no time for wrangling or idle discussion. We must be able to say whether India can be organized during the next few months for the establishment of swaraj and vindication of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs, whether we are of one mind on the essentials of success, and whether we are prepared to work heart and soul therefor. It is to be hoped that responsible officials in their respective provinces will come prepared with figures as to

(a) the amount of the Tilak Swaraj Fund,

(b) the number of members on the Congress register,

(c) the number of charkhas in working order, and their total output to-date,

(d) the number of carders,

(e) the number of weavers of (1) hand-spun, (2) Indian mill-spun and (3) foreign yarn,

(f) the number of importers of foreign cloth.

They will also come prepared to give the necessary information on the prospects of civil disobedience and suspension of payment of taxes.

The Committee meeting, I hope, will be business-like and chary of wasting a single moment of national time in vain discussion.

MILL-MADE KHADI

A correspondent draws my attention to the fact that there is now on the market khadi made in our mills and even brought from Japan. I find it difficult to believe this. Has commerce fallen so low that it

must intrude upon even sacred soil? Our mills have enough work for their machines without trying to take the bread out of the mouths of the poor workers in their cottages. But let the consumer beware. Hand-spun is unmistakable, especially when it is unbleached and unwashed. Let him beware of cloth that looks like mill-made and is yet claimed to be hand-spun and hand-woven. The fact is that hand-spun has and ought to have an individuality about it. It must have a finish peculiar to it, and it should never have the dead glossiness of mill-made cloth. Hand-spun khadi has a roughness that is soothing. Hand-made khadi is absorbent, light, pleasant to the touch, and it cannot be produced at 4 annas a yard without sweating both the weaver and the spinners, unless it is manufactured entirely from waste when it is flimsy and wears away after a few washes. And it is best always to buy from stores one knows. The Congress Committees in Bombay and Ahmedabad have taken to certifying stores where pure khadi can be purchased at reasonable prices. Only that is khadi whose warp and woof are hand-spun and which is hand-woven.

THE "KIRPAN"

The *kirpan*—the Sikh scimitar—is for the Sikh,"what," says the Secretary of the Sikh Young Men's Association, "the sacred thread is to the Brahmin." And now the Punjab Government is trying to divest the Sikhs of their 'sacred thread' by restricting its length and breadth. Much as I abhor the possession or the use of arms, I cannot reconcile myself to forcible prohibition. As I said three years ago, this forcible disarmament of a people will be regarded by history as one of the blackest sins committed by the British Government against India. If people want to possess arms, they ought to have them without ado. But, in the case of the Sikhs, who have held *kirpans* without let or hindrance all these years, the crime is worse. The Secretary has no difficulty in proving that this war against the *kirpan* has synchronized with repressive measures adopted against this brave community. The reason too is obvious. The Sikhs have attained political consciousness. They are not content merely to kill at the bidding of their officers. They want to weigh the pros and cons of a cause in which they are called upon to fight. Above all, they want to know where they 'come in'. They want to become equal partners. This is intolerable, and they must be put down. The bravest among them have, as the Government imagine, been silenced. I can only hope that, rather than surrender their sacred weapon, the Sikhs will court imprisonment. We cannot

learn discipline by compulsion. We must learn not to use arms or to use them with responsibility and self-restraint, notwithstanding the right to possess them.

THE BEAUTY OF IT

By the kind permission of Pandit Motilal Nehru, I reproduce the following instructive and entertaining description, word for word, of his life at Ramgadh where he was recently recuperating :

> The climate and the surroundings of the little hilltop on which I am perched all by myself save for one servant has agreed with me remarkably. There is a trace of asthma and cough still left, but it is bound to disappear with returning health and strength. The only pity is that I am not allowed sufficient time for the after-cure, and this is due to the past sins of professional life which are still following me. Out of the hundreds of briefs on my hands when I suspended practice, there were two which I could not give up. One of these cases came on immediately before Sarup's[1] marriage, and was to a certain extent responsible for the break-down of my health, and the other is now interfering with my rest-cure. It is a long original trial and begins on the 5th of July requiring three or four days' previous study. I am trying to have it shunted off after the all-India meeting in Lucknow, but have provisionally fixed the 30th June as the date of my departure from Ramgadh. If I am only allowed a couple of weeks more, I can promise you that I would be as strong as a bull, but perhaps it is not safe for a non-violent non-co-operator to be so strong in body.
>
> You will be interested to know the kind of life I am leading here. In the good(?) old days, two kitchen establishments—one English and the other Indian—accompanied me in the hills. After chotahazri in camp, we would start off for the jungle with a full equipment of rifles, shot guns and ammunition, and on occasions, with quite a little army of beaters and killed such innocent creatures as came on our way till late in the afternoon—lunch and tea being served in the jungle with as much punctitious care as at home. A hearty dinner awaited our return to camp, and, after doing full justice to it, we slept the sleep of the just! There was nothing to distrub the even tenor of life except occasional annoyance at a stupid miss which saved the life of some poor beast. And now—the brass cooker (purchased in Delhi when we were all there for the opening of the Tibbia College) has taken the place of the two kitchens, a solitary servant, not over-intelligent, that of the old retinue, three small bags containing rice, dal and *masala* that of the mule loads of provisions (I

[1] Vijayalakshmi Pandit

shall never excuse Kamla[1] for making these bags of *bideshi*[2] cloth instead of khadi)—one square meal of rice, dal, vegetables, sometimes *khir* (milk and rice cooked together) in the middle of the day, that of breakfast, lunch and dinner *a l'anglaise*—lots of fruit with morning and afternoon tea and an occasional egg or two when available. The shikar has given place to long walks and the rifles and guns to books, magazines and newspapers (the favourite book being Edwin Arnold's *Song Celestial* which is now undergoing a third reading). When it rains hard, as it is doing now, there is nothing but to write silly letters like this. "What a fall, my countrymen!" But really I have never enjoyed life better. Only the rice has given out, and I have applied Brahmin-like for a dole from the ministerial stores of Jagatnarayan[3] who happens to be near.

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225. THE SHADOW OF SIMLA

If proof were wanted that the movement of non-co-operation is neither anti-British nor anti-Christian, we have the instance of Mr. Stokes, a nationalized British subject and staunch Christian, devoting his all to the eradication of the evil of *begar*. Mr. Stokes is a convinced non-co-operator and Congressman. I think I am right in saying that he has come to it by slow degrees. No Indian is giving such battle to the Government as Mr. Stokes. He has veritably become the guide, philosopher and friend of the hill-men. The reader should know that *begar* is going on under the shadow of Simla, under the Viceroy's nose as it were. And yet Lord Reading is powerless to remedy the mischief. I have no doubt that he is willing enough. But he cannot carry the district officers and others with him. And some of the officials are so unscrupulous that if they cannot have their way in the territories directly administered, they do so through the native States. Now, on the hills near Simla there are small native States in which the British officer is all-powerful, more so in his own jurisdiction than the Viceroy. He can make the states do as he wills, and yet profess to be unconnected with their doings. There is one such state under the Court of Wards. And it is here that, through the influence of the Deputy Commissioner of Simla, repression is going

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru's wife
[2] Foreign
[3] Eminent lawyer who was a member of the Hunter Committee.

on in order to suppress the *begar* movement. The chosen way, which, as a Parsi friend corrected me, dates not from British days but from Adam's, is to lop off tall poppies. The axe must be laid at the root. And so the most efficient and cultured of the poor hillmen named Kapur Singh has been under lock and key. Here is a graphic description of the way evidence was collected :

> People were subjected to a reign of terror. The Simla police were brought, a number of them arrested all the people scared by threats of
>
> machine-guns and Kala-pani. . . . It was in such an atmosphere that the evidence for the prosecution was collected.

This reminds one of the Punjab martial law days.

Naturally, the hillmen feel sore about this persecution of their trusted leader. I hope that under Mr. Stokes' inspiration, they will resolutely refuse to do any *begar* at all even for full value until their leader is discharged. They must not weaken, but must invite upon their devoted heads the wrath of the authorities and face imprisonment even as he did.

Why this persistence in exacting *begar*? For the authority, the influence and the comfort of the officials and officers depend upon the continuance of *begar*. Without it, they cannot sport and kill wild beasts in the forests of the Himalayas. The Duke could not have been taken for shikar to the mountain fastnesses, if *begar* had gone out of use. For the doubtful pleasure of shooting tigers and innocent 'game', a way had to be cut by impressing the labours of thousands of unwilling villagers. If the beasts had intelligent speech at their command, they would state a case against man that 'would stagger humanity'. I can understand the shooting of wild beasts which come to annoy us. But I have found no cogent reasons advanced for wasting treasures upon organizing parties for satisfying man's thirst for blood. And yet, if there was no *begar*, there would be no 'sport' for the officers or the globetrotters. I need not have the practice of Indian princes and precedents from the *Mahabharata* flung in my face. I decline to be slave to precedents or practice I cannot understand or defend on a moral basis.

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226. POSITION OF WOMEN

Shrimati Saraladevi of Katak writes :

> Don't you admit that the treatment of women is as bad a disease as untouchability itself? The attitude of the young 'nationalists' I have come in contact with is beastly in ninety cases out of a hundred. How many of the non-co-operators in India do not regard women as objects of enjoyment? Is that essential condition of success—self-purification—possible without a change of attitude towards women?

I am unable to subscribe that the treatment of women is a 'disease as bad as untouchability'. Shrimati Saraladevi has grossly exaggerated the evil. Nor can the charge levelled against the non-co-operators of mere gratification of lust be sustained. A cause can only lose by exaggeration. At the same time, I have no difficulty about subscribing to the proposition that, in order to fit ourselves for true swa-raj, men must cultivate much greater respect than they have for woman and her purity. Mr. Andrews has struck a much truer note than this lady, when he tells us in burning language that we dare not gloat over the shame of our fallen sisters. That any non-co-operator could have been found willing to relate with gusto that there were some of these erring sisters who reserved themselves for non-co-operators is a degrading thou-ght There can be no distinction between co-operators and non-co-operators in this matter of vital importance for our moral well-being. All of us men must hang our heads in shame, so long as there is a single woman whom we dedicate to our lust. I will far rather see the race of man extinct than that we should become less than beasts by making the noblest of God's creation the object of our lust. But this is not a problem merely for India. It is a world problem. And if I preach against the modern artificial life of sensual enjoyment, and ask men and women to go back to the simple life epitomized in the charkha, I do so because I know that without an intelligent return to simplicity, there is no escape from our descent to a state lower than brutality. I passionately desire the utmost freedom for our women. I detest child-marriages. I shudder to see a child widow, and shiver with rage when a husband just widowed with brutal indifference contracts another marriage. I deplore the criminal indifference of parents who keep their daughters utterly ignorant and illiterate and bring them up only for the purpose of marrying them

off to some young men of means. Notwithstanding all this grief and rage, I realize the difficulty of the problem. Women must have votes and an equal legal status. But the problem does not end there. It only commences at the point where women begin to affect the political deliberations of the nation.

To illustrate what I mean, let me relate the enchanting description a valued Mussulman friend gave me of a talk he had with a noted feminist in London. He was attending a meeting of feminists. A lady friend was surprised to find a Mussulman at such a meeting! She inquired how he found himself there. The friend said he had two major and two minor reasons for so doing. His father died when he was an infant. He owed all he was in life to his mother. Then lie was married to a woman who was a real partner in life. And he had no sons but four daughters—all minors—in whom as a father he was deeply interested. Was it any wonder that he was a feminist? He went on, Mussulmans were accused of indifference to women. There never was a grosser libel uttered. The law of Islam gave equal rights to women. He thought that man for his lust had degraded woman. Instead of adoring the soul within her, he had set about adoring her body, and he had succeeded so well in his design, that woman today did not know that she had begun to hug her bodily adornment which was almost a sign of her slavery. He added with his voice almost choked, if it was not so, how could it be that the fallen sisters delighted most in the embellishment of the body? Had we (men) not crushed the very soul out of them? No, he said regaining self-possession, he wanted not only the mechanical freedom for women, he wanted also to break down the shackles that bound her of her own will. And so he had intended to bring up his daughters to an independent calling.

I need not pursue the ennobling conversation any further. I want my fair correspondent to ponder over the central idea of the Mussulman friend's discourse and tackle the problem. Woman must cease to consider herself the object of man's lust. The remedy is more in her hands than man's. She must refuse to adorn herself for men including her husband, if she will be an equal partner with man. I cannot imagine Sita ever wasting a single moment on pleasing Rama by physical charms.

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227. TO CORRESPONDENTS

P. SISHTA : The object of the Congress resolution[1] regarding *vakils* was to undermine the prestige of the courts of law, through which the Government consolidates its power.

N. H. MODI : Without considering the constitution, those who resort to *rasad* and *begar* should certainly not become office-bearers in Congress Committees. In my opinion, the resolution of the Congress debars nominated members from holding office. Nor can an Honorary Magistrate become an office-bearer. Persons under twenty-one, no matter how well-educated they may be, are certainly disqualified for membership. Personally I cannot believe in co-operators handling non-co-operation work successfully. I would therefore leave untouched a place where no non-co-operator can be found to organize work. A non-co-operating Mussulman would certainly not wear a Turkish cap of foreign make. Anyone employing paid agencies for canvassing votes for seats on Congress Committees I would regard as an unworthy candidate. I would suggest to this corres-=pondent and others that, after all, the choice lies with the electors. If non-co-operating electors choose to elect co-operators or persons of questionable character, no constitution can succeed in preventing their entry into public life, and if co-operators join the Congress as they have a right to, they will undoubtedly carry the election of candidates of their choice, where they are in a majority. The Congress constitution does not respect parties. It is the non-co-operation resolution of the Congress, carried practically without a dissentient voice, that makes it necessary for the proper working of the resolution that non-co-operators should elect staunchest adherents of the Congress programme.

K. B. LAL GUPTA : It has never been claimed that the charkha can keep a family. It is claimed that a charkha can provide food for a poor person. Its greatest claim is, however, that it is indispensable for national prosperity.

B. S. M. : As to giving evidence in false criminal or civil cases, I refer you to the Working Committee's interpretation. Even where municipalities nationalize schools, it will certainly be better if they allow their schools to be controlled and regulated by Congress experts

[1] This had called upon lawyers to boycott courts.

wherever their services are available. Even if the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs are righted, non-co-operation cannot be stopped until swaraj is attained. The keeping of the details of the Simla interview from the public is not, in my opinion, a sin of secrecy. One does not commit that sin when one refuses to disclose confidence given by a friend. Respect for confidence is quite consistent with avoidance of secrecy. We may not keep anything secret for fear of punishment of other evil befalling us.

TEJ SINH VARMA : Your kind offer to take up Fiji and Assam men has been forwarded to Mr. Andrews. His address is Shanti niketan, Bolpur, E. I. Ry.

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228. A TRAVESTY OF CIVILIZATION

Fond as I am of reading literature, it is rarely that I get the opportunity of reading any. A number of the *Nation* issued last Christmas week has been lying with me for months. It contains a thoughtful essay, entitled 'Law and Gospel'.[1] It has such a bearing on the present movement that I offer no excuse for reproducing it in full for the benefit of the many readers of *Young India* who could not have seen it. The able writer of the essay calls the world-revolt an essentially religious movement. The reader must judge whether Indian non-co-operation, based as it deliberately is on a frank acceptance of non-violence (however much we may fail in its application), is not the most religious of all the movements going on in different parts of the world for freeing mankind from the yoke of a system falsely called civilization.

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229. DISCARDING OLD AND CREATING NEW

Non-co-operation has two aspects—discarding old and creating new, destruction and reconstruction. We cannot proceed without either. They are fully comprehended in the steps we have taken so far to rise to the point where we stand today and, in my opinion, we can make no further progress except by continuing in the same manner. Peaceful non-co-operation seems impossible to me in any other way.

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Law and Gospel", 21-7-1921.

It is my settled conviction that we cannot advance even one step without adopting swadeshi. Through it alone can all our powers be developed. In swadeshi alone are present both purposeful destruction and purposeful creation. It alone provides exercise to all limbs of the body which is the nation and tests their strength. To this day, the people have not thrown themselves heart and soul into any work. Success in the experiment of swadeshi is impossible except through single-minded devotion to the task. A nation which has learnt to work with such devotion holds swaraj in the palm of its hand; without swadeshi, swaraj is as much of an impossibility as a flower in the sky.

For success in swadeshi, we shall have to discard the use of foreign cloth altogether and shall have to produce more cloth in the country. So far, we have been afraid to destroy. As we have now discovered the *ratnachintamani*[1] of the spinning-wheel, we have got hold of the supreme tool for creation. But we need to pay careful attention to the aspect of dis-carding. The pace of creation can be increased only up to a certain point, after which it will follow its own course. Destruction can be carried out in an instant. In order to destroy, it is necessary to have a strong desire to do so. We shall be ready to destroy when our ideas have changed.

It has been said, on the basis of experience, that renunciation cannot be kept up in the absence of aversion to objects of desire. We should feel the same aversion or dislike towards foreign cloth as for anything which is filthy. Till we feel such aversion, we shall again and again feel drawn by Japanese saris and Manchester muslin, shall demand such material, and dealers professing to offer these will deceive us by selling the original stuff instead. So, for the present, we should refuse to touch even such articles as resemble foreign material. We should be careful lest we get cheated. If we are to feel such aversion against foreign cloth, we should also be clear in our mind that foreign cloth is at the root of our slavery. All else has come in its wake. The East India Company's fort followed foreign cloth and was built for the sake of such cloth.

The 1st of August should be to us a day of great remembrance. It is the first death anniversary of the man most beloved of the people in this age. What miracle shall we perform before the world on that day?

In what way should we express our reverence for the Loka-

[1] The fabulous gem which fulfilled one's desires

manya? In one way alone: by all of us resolving on that day to give up the use of foreign cloth altogether. On that day all the people in a town or village should get together at one place and throw away all their stock of foreign cloth, never to have such cloth again. This is the highest worship and, by this single act, we can ensure the attainment of swaraj within this year. Hence from now on to the 1st of August we should have, whether eating, drinking, sitting or standing, only this thought in our mind : how we may give up the use of foreign cloth and persuade others to do likewise. As we worked hard to collect the money, we should work harder still to get people to re-nounce the use of foreign cloth. Every community and caste should make its own arrangements.The different communities should collect foreign cloth from among their members and hand over the stock to the Congress. A receipt should also be obtained. Women will find the thing hard. It was easy to contribute money, easy even to give away jewellery, but it would be extremely difficult to discard beautiful saris of foreign make. Nevertheless, they should swallow this bitter draught. This is the last such draught for the nation as a whole. Afterwards only a handful of men and women will have to be ready to court imprisonment. May God give this spirit of self-denial to the men and women of Gujarat.

The time before us is short, but we ought to finish the work within this period.

Creation is the second aspect. Those who have started wearing khadi should work to get more khadi produced. Any delay in this would be sinful. We shall most certainly require a large quantity of khadi if the people give up using foreign cloth altogether. We have been destroying foreign cloth because we want to promote the use of khadi and we want this because in that way we spread the use of the spinning-wheel, giving people work and bringing some decency in their simple life in huts. The average income of an Indian is twenty-six rupees a year, and this is the easiest way to double the figure. Where millions are concerned, there can be no other way. Every home in Gujarat, therefore, should start working on the spinning-wheel and every village should produce khadi made out of hand-spun yarn. For the present, this should be the main plank in the programme of the All-India Congress Committee. We shall give proof of our capacity for work by our success in persuading people to discard and to create.

Those who know what the Congress is and respect it cannot possibly use mill-made cloth. If they do, such cloth will not be

available for the poor and its price will rise. If we wish to enhance the prestige of khadi and increase the income of the weavers, we shall have to see that khadi comes to be adopted as the dress of culture. It is not possible to restore the former glory of India and revive the craftsmanship which once flourished in it unless we make the right use of khadi. After swaraj is won, the upper classes will be welcome to get yarn of the finest count produced and have once again Dacca muslin to wear. Today, however, even for them khadi is the only proper thing.

It would not be too much to expect of Gujarati merchants that they will not henceforth import foreign cloth. Influential leaders of the Congress should visit each town where foreign cloth is sold and request the merchant concerned to give up business in such cloth. Thus, the most important task to which members of the Congress should address themselves is to see that every section of the public turns towards swadeshi.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-7-1921

230. TELEGRAM TO KHWAJA ABDUL MAJID

GRANT ROAD, BOMBAY,
July 21,1921

KHWAJA SAHEB
NATIONAL MUSLIM UNIVERSITY
ALIGARH

PLEASE CONGRATULATE SHERWANI'S[1] RELATIVES. HOPE THAT PEOPLE WILL APPRECIATE HIS IMPRISONMENT BY SHAKING OFF LAZINESS AND FOLLOW NON-CO-OPERATION PROGRAMME ESPECIALLY BOYCOTT FOREIGN CLOTH AND ATTENDING TO HANDSPINNING HANDWEAVING.

GANDHI

From a copy: A. M. Khwaja Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] T.A.K. Sherwani had been arrested in Aligarh; *vide* "Speech at Meeting of Muslim Women, Bombay", 19-7-1921.

231. SPEECH AT OPENING OF BANK PREMISES, BOMBAY [1]

July 21, 1921

I am not connected with banking business and banking institutions and I know very little of the management thereof; I was induced to come here by friends and I am attracted here by their love. I sometimes come here to beg for money for the sake of our motherland. I have also to approach you for persuading you to abandon foreign cloth and to encourage swadeshi in which lies the key to swaraj. We should have the ability to carry on a big bank, to manage efficiently crores of rupees, in the course of our national activities. Though we have not many banks amongst us, it does not follow that we are not capable of efficiently managing crores and tens of crores of rupees. Banking business is carried on in our country for the last many hundreds of years. Our Marwaris are born bankers and they would have managed not only crores but hundreds of crores of rupees had they been born in any other land but India. But since they are born in this poverty-stricken land, their capacity is but poorly valued. A writer has said that most of the recent wars are due to economic causes. At the same time it can be said that the rich people are the means of doing immense good to suffering humanity. I hope also that the bank will be carried on on high moral principles and I wish it every prosperity. Now I declare the premises open.

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-7-1921

[1] Gandhiji opened the new premises of the Union Bank of India, Ltd., at 4 p.m. Seth Ratansi Dharamsi Morarji presided.

232. MESSAGE TO PEOPLE

[*July 21, 1921*][1]

Remember the holy name of "Lokamanya' on the 1st August by discarding foreign cloth and wearing khaddar. Boycott is an indispensable condition for the attainment of swaraj and redress of the Punjab and Khilafat wrongs.

Lakhs of brothers and sisters—Hindus and Mohammedans, Parsis, Christians and Jews—all should come to honour the memory of the Lokamanya on the 1st August.

Those who will not wear khadi, at least our mill-made cloth, need not attend. To come dressed in foreign clothes is an insult to the memory of the deceased Lokamanya. Give away the foreign cloth to volunteers or send it to the stores opened in the Ashoka Building in Princess Street[2]. To make a bonfire of them is the best way; but, if you wish, they will be sent to Smyrna or some other country.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1921

233. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, BOMBAY [3]

July 21, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi, who, on rising to speak received an ovation, said that it was after a very short time that they met there again that night. The last occasion was the meeting for collecting money for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. At that time there were several ladies present. Tonight he was to address the people on swadeshi. He could not say exactly whether by the end of this year they would be in a position to make a complete boycott of foreign cloth. If they all helped in the cause, they would perhaps achieve their object soon. He had been telling the people since September last that, if the people of India helped in the national cause, they would be in a position to get swaraj by September next. Swadeshi was a movement which could be resorted to quite willingly by both the rich and the poor. Even Government servants could wear without any hesitation *shuddha* swadeshi clothes. If he thought that they would

[1] The leaflet containing the message was, according to the source, distributed on this date.

[2] In Bombay City

[3] Held under the auspices of the Mandvi District Congress Committee at 9 p.m. at Mandvi, the meeting was also addressed by Sarojini Naidu.

succeed in responding to the country's call, he would consider his object well served. He must tell them plainly that after the 31st of July he would not ask them anything about swadeshi, because before that period everything (foreign) should be completely boycotted.

. . . When a man thought that to speak untruth was bad, then alone he would realize what he was doing. So he would point out to them that according to the Shastras of all religions they should not deceive themselves by partly wearing swadeshi clothes and partly foreign. He had been telling them since 6th April that unless Hindus understood that only by joining hands with the Mussulmans they could have the Khilafat wrongs righted, and unless Muslims thought that only by joining hands with Hindus they could succeed in achieving their object, they would not be in a position to attain the goal of swaraj. Yesterday he with his brother the Maulana, and Bahen Naidu moved about from place to place in Poona and helped in celebrating the anniversary of Lokamanya Tilak. He had to work there from morning till late in the evening for the sake of the late Lokamanya and to convince the people he addressed to boycott all foreign-made clothes.

. . . They should be very careful in wearing clothes manufactured in mills. Machine-made cloth was not desirable from the national point of view. That man or that woman was beautiful who did his or her work to the satisfaction both of himself or herself and of the country. He would, further, request the ladies in front of him to wear khadi without any *shanka* (fear) because unless they boycotted foreign cloth, they could not lay claim to swaraj.

Concluding, the Mahatma said that those who were willing to boycott foreign-made clothes may either send them to Smyrna for the relief of the poor or anywhere else out of India or may have them burnt on the 1st of August. But, anyhow, they should completely destroy foreign clothes. Of course, everybody would like to preserve his old foreign clothes presented to him by his dear friends or relations in token of love, but even such in obedience to the call of the country should be destroyed or sent elsewhere.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-7-1921

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

AHFAD HUSAIN'S LETTER TO "YOUNG INDIA"

BAREILLY,
April 15 [*1921*]

TO
THE EDITOR,
YOUNG INDIA

SIR,

You know that Maulana Mahomed Ali has publicly declared from a platform in the Madras presidency that he would assist the Amir of Afghanistan if he came towards India against those who have emasculated Islam and who are in wrongful possession of the Holy Places, etc. I think Indian opinion is divided on this question. The Moderates are bent upon crushing any such movement. Even the nationalists such as Lala Lajpat Rai and Messrs C. R. Das and Malaviya have not spoken out their mind—nay, even you have not taken any notice of this very important speech. It may be high treason to show sympathy and give open assistance to the King's enemy, but in these days of frank talk and candid speech one is eager to hear the decision of leaders. It is a vital question. The publicists—I have the honour of being one—are at a loss to form any opinion.

The next point on which I beg to address you is this : Do you suppose that only the godfearing, or, for that matter, believers in one God, are to be non-co-operators? A friend of mine who is a rationalist—thank God I myself am a staunch Mussulman,—is a pukka nationalist. He is ready to sacrifice everything at the altar of the Motherland and for the restoration of justice to a weaker nation, but he has nothing to present to God because he denies His very existence. My friend is ready and has already undertaken to wear khaddar. He is an admirer to Tilak Maharaj and freely adds to the Fund by frequent donations. But is he a "non-co-operator"? Has he got a place in your list? Can he be admitted to your Ashram if he is not deficient in other requisites?

The third difficulty lies in the fact that you say that to be a member of this Government—Satanic as it is—is sinful but still you tolerate the existence of so many of your fellow-countrymen in that service and in those associations. You do not invite them to your fold *at present*. Is it justifiable? If to serve the present Government is a social or religious crime, which I think it is, then why let them be there? Does expediency hold good in the domain of religion, self-purification, and self-reliance?

And lastly, what do you mean by "attaining swaraj within one year"? Does it imply that the Nation would at the coming session of the Congress declare itself free and out of the British Empire? Or if [*sic*] merely the consciousness of freedom, the adoption of swadeshi, and the partial boycott of law courts and schools mean swaraj within India. And if, may God forbid, our boycott movement fails, then does it mean that those who have been asked to give up their study or practice for *one* year can return to the tabooed institutions?

Yours, etc.,

AHFAD HUSAIN

Young India, 4-5-1921

APPENDIX II

SPINNING AS FAMINE RELIEF

In the month of August 1920, when the severity of the famine was being felt, the idea of introducing spinning as a famine relief to respectable middle class people was started and Miss Latham kindly gave a spinning-wheel to introduce the work. Attempts were made to introduce the work especially among the *Dhangars* who were used to spinning wool but they proved futile. Spinning a thin thread of cotton was thought an impossibility in a village which did not know anything about it. Doubts were also entertained as to whether the work, if taken up, would be paying or at least helpful. In such different difficulties and objections, the wheel remained idle for nearly three months, and in spite of vigorous efforts nobody seemed willing to take up the work. In December 1920, Miss Latham again sent four more wheels, through the kindness of Mrs. J. Petit, and some cotton. They were given for trial to different persons. Signs now seemed a little hopeful and at last one *Ramoshi* woman was prevailed upon to take up the work seriously. This was about the 20th of January 1921, since when the work has assumed a different shape. The example of this woman was copied by two more who undertook to take up the work. Through great perseverance 4 lbs. of yarn were prepared by these three spinners and it was sent for sale. In the meantime many women began to make inquiries and expressed a desire to take it up if it helped them financially in some way. A rate of spinning @ 6 as. a lb. was therefore fixed and it helped other spinners to join the work.

Here another difficulty, viz., that of funds, came in the way. All the five wheels were engaged, and five more prepared locally were also engaged. The stock of cotton was also exhausted. It seemed that the work would suffer for want of funds to prepare wheels, purchase cotton, and pay the workers. Rao Bahadur Chitale personally saw this difficulty and helped the work with a grant of Rs. 100. Miss Latham, when she knew of this difficulty, kindly sent another hundred. These two grants came at the right time and gave a stimulus to the work. Local gentlemen helped with their

own cotton.

The demands for wheels went on increasing day by day. People being too poor to pay for the wheels, it became necessary to get the wheels prepared locally and lend them to the workers. Twenty-seven more wheels were prepared which also gave work to local carpenters who had no work on account of famine. One carpenter improved the wheel by making it more light and useful for finer yarn. The prices of the wheel were paid at Rs. 3, Rs. 3-8-0, and Rs. 4 per wheel according to the quality. Three of these wheels have been sold for Rs. 9-8 as. The total sum spent on these wheels is Rs. 103-8-0 which includes the sum for the wheels kindly sent by Mrs. Petit.

Though local cotton was secured for the work, it proved too bad for beginners. A new method therefore was introduced to improve the local cotton, which not only helped the work but also provided work for a few more persons. Raw cotton was secured and the dry dirt and the leaves in it were carefully removed before it was ginned. The rate for this work was fixed at one pice per lb. Any old man who did this work got an opportunity of earning one anna a day, by cleaning 4 lbs. of raw cotton. After it was thus cleaned, it was ginned with a hand-gin which gave work to some women who ginned, at the rate of one anna per 10 lbs. One woman could thus earn 2 as. and 6 pies each day. This ginned cotton was then cleaned by a *pinjari* who charged at the rate of one anna per pound and earned about 8 as. per day. It would have been better and easier too, if cotton had been purchased from the mills, but as this cleaning process of the local cotton provided work for a few workers it was thought the more desirable in these days. A major portion of these cleaning charges is however made up by the sale of cotton seed secured after ginning. The following statement will show the expenses incurred for this and the price of raw cotton for every 60 lbs.

		Rs.	As.	Ps.
Price of 60 lbs. of raw cotton @ 20 Rs. a patia (240 lbs.)		5–	0–	0
Removal of dirt, waste and dry leaves @ 1 pice per pound		0–	15–	0
Ginning of 52 lbs. of raw clean cotton @ 1 as. per 10 lbs.		0–	5–	3
Cleaning the lint (17 lbs.) by a *pinjari* @ 1 anna per lb.		1–	1–	0
	Total	7–	5–	3
Deduct price of cotton seed 35 lbs. @ 20 lbs. per Re.		1–	12–	0
Net charges for 17 lbs. of clean cotton		5–	9–	3

Thus the cost of one pound of cotton comes to 5 as. and 3 pies only. The proportion of waste, viz., 8 lbs. in 60 lbs. of raw cotton, is too high and could be avoided by securing better and cleaner cotton.

There are at present 29 wheels going and there is still a great demand for

wheels. But the funds being limited, more wheels could not be prepared and provided. Spinning is done by those who absolutely knew nothing about it previously. Consequently the yarn is still of an inferior sort. It is improving day by day but if a competent teacher could be secured, it would improve rapidly. Amongst the spinners, some are full-time workers and others are leisure-time workers.

About 2 lbs. of yarn are now prepared every day and the quantity will increase as the spinners get used to the work. The rate for spinning is fixed @ 6 as. a lb., though many workers complain that it is not enough. As the yarn sent for sale realized a price of 12 as. a lb., the spinning charges could not be increased without a loss. Every lb. of yarn requires as. 11 pies 3 for expenses, as 0–5–3 for cotton and 0–6–0 for spinning. Thus every lb., leaves a profit of 9 pies only. The establishment and other charges are not calculated. With the present rate of spinning @ 6 as. a lb., one spinner earns 3 as. per day by spinning 20 to 24 tolas, more earn 2 as. a day by spinning 15 tolas and the rest $1\frac{1}{2}$ as. a day for 10 tolas, the beginners excluded. The more the spinner is used to the work, the more he will earn.

An attempt was made to prepare cloth out of the yarn and three and a half lbs. of yarn were given to a weaver for weaving. He however charged an exorbitant rate for weaving. He prepared nine and a half yards of cloth and charged Rs. 3-9-0 for it, practically I rupee a lb. The cloth cost Rs. 6-0-6 and was sold at Rs. 6-3-0, with a profit of as. 2 pies 6 only. To obviate the difficulty about weaving, a separate loom with one teacher to teach weaving to local persons is urgently required. Many local people wish to learn this art. A separate loom will reduce the cost of the cloth prepared on it below the prevailing market rate. About 6 lbs. of yarn are given to different weavers to ascertain the exact wages but all this difficulty can only be removed by having a special loom.

When there was a shortage of cotton and the workers had no work, wool was introduced for spinning till cotton was ready. This work was willingly taken up by the *Dhangars*. They were however required to spin finer thread of wool than they usually prepared. They took some time to pick up the work, and now there are 10 wool spinners working fine thread. They are also paid at 6 as a lb. for spinning. Wool worth Rs. 31, @ 2 lbs. a rupee, was purchased, and though the cotton was ready, the wool spinning was continued by starting a separate department, as the *Dhangars* readily took up the work. The whole process of cleaning the wool is also done by the *Dhangar* women, who get an extra anna per lb. for it. The sorting of wool is carefully looked to. The majority of wool spinners use their own spinning-wheels but a few are now asking for the improved wheel for preparing finer threads.

Dhangar weavers being locally available, blankets after the Pandharpur and Dawangiri pattern are being prepared from this finer thread and different designs have been suggested to them. The *Dhangars* being a stubborn race do not readily adopt

the new improvement, but this work has set them to work up new designs of blankets which will permanently help them in their own profession. They now require a broader and improved loom and instructions in colouring wool. Efforts are made to secure a clever full-time weaver who will introduce a better method of weaving. Two blankets were prepared and sold at cost price, one for Rs. 5-13-6 and the other for Rs. 6-6-0. Orders are being received for more blankets now, but to continue the work would require some funds.

To keep so many persons working is not only an ideal form of famine relief, but a means to promote village industries, and remove the demoralizing effects of successive famines. Thus stands the work of about one month. It now requires an improved handloom, a good teacher, a special loom for wool, more spinning-wheels (which the neighbouring villagers are also demanding) and many other things. The work is going on vigorously and it is hoped will not be allowed to suffer for want of funds.

Young India, 11-5-1921

APPENDIX III

INTERVIEW-CUM-APOLOGY

His Excellency's attention has been directed, and notably by Mr. Gandhi, to various statements that have appeared, and to inferences that have been drawn in the public press, relating to the conversations between His Excellency and Mr. Gandhi concerning Mr. Shaukat Ali and Mr. Mahomed Ali, which in some respects do not correctly represent the purport of those communications.

The interviews between the Viceroy and Mr. Gandhi resulted from a conversation between the Viceroy and Pandit Malaviya relating to the conditions generally prevailing in India. His Excellency informed Pandit Malaviya of the Government's decision to commence criminal proceedings against Mr. Shaukat Ali for having made speeches inciting to violence and the discussion turned upon the disturbances that might possibly ensue. Pandit Malaviya expressed the opinion that it would be of advantage for His Excellency to meet Mr. Gandhi. His Excellency replied that he would be gald to meet Mr. Gandhi and hear his views if he applied for an interview. On the next day, Mr. Andrews saw His Excellency and suggested that he should see Mr. Gandhi. It should be observed that various important matters were discussed during these conversations and that the proposed interview between His Excellency and Mr. Gandhi was intended to have reference to the situation generally. His Excellency is, however, aware that Pandit Malaviya in inviting Mr. Gandhi to Simla did not refer to the contemplated proceedings against Mr. Shaukat Ali and Mr. Mahomed Ali.

In due course Mr. Gandhi came to Simla, at the request of Pandit Malaviya and

Mr. Andrews, and asked for an interview with His Excellency, which was immediately arranged. At the first interview no mention was made of the proposed prosecutions. The conversation related to the causes of discontent in India. Upon the next occasion His Excellency stated that, according to the Government reports, responsible non-co-operators had made speeches inciting to violence contrary to the doctrine advocated by Mr. Gandhi. Mr. Gandhi repudiated incitement to violence on the part of any of the responsible non-co-operators and said that if he was satisfied that any of them had incited to violence, he would publicly repudiate them and their teachings unless they withdrew their statements that amounted to incitement to violence. His Excellency mentioned the names of the Ali brothers and promised to show Mr. Gandhi passages in their speeches which, in his opinion, were calculated to incite to violence, and when the passages were actually read to Mr. Gandhi he admitted that they were capable of bearing the interpretation His Excellency put upon them. He, however, asserted that he was convinced that it was not intended by Mr. Shaukat Ali and Mr. Mahomed Ali to incite the audience to violence. Mr. Gandhi added that he would see them as soon as he left Simla and advise them to express publicly their regret for the unintentional incitement contained in the passages. His Excellency, thereupon, asked whether, in view of the importance of the document, Mr. Gandhi would show him the draft of the statement he intended to advise Mr. Shaukat Ali and Mr. Mahomed Ali to publish.

It was at this stage that the Viceroy said that it was proposed to institute criminal proceedings against Mr. Shaukat Ali and Mr. Mahomed Ali in respect of these passages and that, if Mr. Gandhi showed him the statement and it satisfied him from the standpoint of his Government, he would use his influence to prevent the institution of prosecution, for, the Viceroy said, the object of the Government would be attained if the making of speeches of a violent character was in future prevented. Mr. Gandhi readily agreed to show the statement. The draft statement was duly shown by Mr. Gandhi to His Excellency, who pointed out that the introduction of certain paragraphs gave the statement the appearance of a manifesto including that of the religious creed of Mr. Shaukat Ali and Mr. Mahomed Ali. The Viceroy observed further that the statement was incomplete so far as it did not contain a promise to refrain in the future from the speeches inciting to violence and added that after, publication of the statement Mr. Shaukat Ali and Mr. Mahomed Ali could give any explanation by means of speeches provided they did not infringe the law. Mr. Gandhi agreed to delete the paragraphs in question and to add a passage to cover promises of future conduct. His Excellency then informed Mr. Gandhi that if Mr. Shaukat Ali and Mr. Mahomed Ali signed the statement as then altered by Mr. Gandhi, with the addition of the promise as to the future conduct, steps would be taken to suspend the institution of proceedings and that no prosecution would take place so long as the promises given in the published

statement were observed. The Government remained free to take up prosecutions for the past speeches. The Viceroy added that, in the event of the publication of the statement by Mr. Shaukat Ali and Mr. Mahomed Ali and of the Government refraining in consequence from the prosecutions it would be necessary to issue a *communique* explaining the attitude of the Government. There was however no desire to bargain. Mr. Gandhi even said that, whether the prosecutions took place or not, he would be bound, after having shown the extracts to his friends for their own honour and that of the cause to advise them to express publicly their regret.

During the whole discussion His Excellency and Mr. Gandhi were actuated by the desire to prevent any untoward events that might result from the prosecutions, as also to prevent speeches inciting to violence. The Viceroy informed Mr. Gandhi that he might not be able to prevent the commencement of proceedings if the statement was not published with the least possible delay. There was already much discussion of the speeches not only in India but also in the United Kingdom. Mr. Gandhi agreed that the statement should be published without delay. Mr. Gandhi then left Simla and some days afterwards telegraphed to His Excellency that Mr. Shaukat Ali and Mr. Mahomed Ali has signed the statement with immaterial alteration and sent it to the Press for publication. The alteration was as follows:– For the passage in Mr. Gandhi's draft statement "We desire to state that we never intended to incite to violence but we recognize that certain passages in our speeches are capable of bearing the interpretation put upon them," Mr. Shaukat Ali and Mr. Mahomed Ali put, "We desire to state that we never intended to incite to violence, and we never imagined that any passages in our speeches were capable of bearing the interpretation put upon them, but we recognize the force of our friends'argument and interpretation."

After the publication of the statement an official *communique* was issued by the Government. The terms of the *communique* were not actually settled until just before its issue and Mr. Gandhi never saw it although the substance of it as already indicated had been communicated to him. The main part of the interviews between His Excellency and Mr. Gandhi consisted of conversations which ranged over the various causes of discontent in India including the Punjab disturbances, the Khilafat agitation, the Treaty of Sevres and the general conditions of the people. Mr. Gandhi did not submit any scheme of swaraj to His Excellency, nor was a scheme of swaraj discussed at the interviews.

Young India, 4-8-1921

APPENDIX IV

TAGORE'S CRITICISM OF NON-CO-OPERATION

(1)

March 2, 1921

It is in the fitness of things that Mahatma Gandhi, frail in body and devoid of material resources, should call up the immense power of the meek, that has been lying waiting in the heart of the destitute and insulted humanity of India. The destiny of India has chosen for its ally, Narayana, and not Narayanasena, . . . the power of soul and not that of muscle. And she is to raise the history of man, from the muddy level of physical conflict to the higher moral altitude. What is swaraj? It is *maya*. It is like a mist, that will vanish, leaving no stain on the radiance of the Eternal. However we may delude ourselves with the phrases learnt from the West, swaraj is not our objective. Our fight is a spiritual fight, . . . it is for Man. We are to emancipate Man from the meshes that he himself has woven round him, . . . these organization of National Egoism. The butterfly will have to be persuaded that the freedom of the sky is of higher value than the shelter of the cocoon. If we can defy the strong, the armed, the wealthy, . . . revealing to the world the power of the immortal spirit, the whole castle of the Great Flesh will vanish in the void. And then Man will find his swaraj. We, the famished, ragamuffins of the East, are to win freedom for all Humanity. We have no word for 'Nation' in our language. When we borrow this word from other people, it never fits us. For we are to make our league with Narayana, and our victory will not give us anything but victory itself; victory for God's world. I have seen the West; I covet not the unholy feast, in which she revels every moment, growing more and more bloated and red and dangerously delirious. Not for us is the mad orgy of midnight, with lighted torches, but awakenment in the serene light of morning.

(2)

March 5, 1921

The idea of non-co-operation is political asceticism. Our students are bringing their offering of sacrifices to what? Not to a fuller education but to non-education. It has at its back a fierce joy of annihilation which at its best is asceticism, and at its worst is that orgy of frightfulness in which the human nature, losing faith in the basic reality of normal life, finds a disinterested delight in an unmeaning devastation, as has been shown in the late War and on other occasions which came nearer to us. *No* in its passive moral form is asceticism and in its active moral form is violence. The desert is as much a form of *himsa* (negligence) as is the raging sea in storm; they both are against life.

I remember the day, during the swadeshi movement in Bengal, when a crowd of young students came to see me in the first floor hall of our Vichitra house. They said

to me that if I would order them to leave their schools and colleges they would instantly oblige. I was emphatic in my refusal to do so, and they went away angry, doubting the sincerity of my love for my motherland. And yet long before this popular ebullition of excitement I myself had given a thousand rupees, when I had not five rupees to call my own, to open a swadeshi store and courted banter and bankruptcy. The reason of my refusing to advise those students to leave their schools was because the anarchy of a mere emptiness never tempts me, even when it is resorted to as a temporary measure. I am frightened of an abstraction which is ready to ignore living reality. . . . You know that I do not believe in the material civilization of the West just as I do not believe in the physical body to be the highest truth in man. But I still less believe in the destruction of the physical body, and the ignoring of the material necessities of life. What is needed is establishment of harmony between the physical and spiritual nature of man, maintaining of balance between the foundation and superstructure. I believe in the true meeting of the East and the West. Love is the ultimate truth of soul. We should do all we can not to outrage that truth, to carry its banner against all opposition. The idea of non-co-operation unnecessarily hurts that truth. It is not our hearth fire, but the fire that burns out our hearth and home.

(3)

March 13, 1921

Today, at this critical moment of the world's history, cannot India rise above her limitations and offer the great ideal to the world that will work towards harmony in co-operation between the different peoples of the earth? Men of faith will say that India requires to be strong and rich before she can raise her voice for the sake of the whole world. But I refuse to believe it. That the measure of man's greatness is in his material resources is a gigantic illusion casting its shadow over the present-day world—it is an insult to man. It lies in the power of the materially weak to save the world from this illusion and India in spite of her penury and humiliation, can afford to come to the rescue of humanity. . . .

. . . The ideal of India is against the intense consciousness of the separateness of one's own people from others, and which inevitably leads to ceaseless conflicts. Therefore my one prayer is, let India stand for co-operation of all peoples of the world. The spirit of rejection finds its support in the consciousness of separation, the spirit of acceptance in the consciousness of unity. India has ever declared that unity is Truth, and separateness is *maya*. This unity is not a zero, it is that which comprehends all and therefore can never be reached through the path of negation. Our present struggle to alienate our heart and mind from those of the West is an attempt at spiritual suicide. If in the spirit of national vaingloriousness we shout from our house-tops that the West has produced nothing that has an infinite value for man, then we but create a serious cause of doubt about the worth of any

product of the Eastern mind. For it is the mind of man in the East and West which is ever approaching Truth in her different aspects from different angles of vision; and if it can be true that the strength of West has betrayed it into an utter misdirection, then we can never be sure of the standpoint of the East. Let us be rid of all false pride and rejoice at any lamp being lit at any corner of the world, knowing that it is a part of the common illumination of our house. . . .

The West has misunderstood the East which is at the root of the disharmony that prevails between them. But will it mend the matter if the East in her turn tries to misunderstand the West? The present age has powerfully been possessed by the West; it has only become possible because to her is given some great mission for man. We from the East have to come to her to learn whatever she has to teach us; for by doing so we hasten the fulfilment of this age. We know that the East also has her lessons to give, and she has her own responsibility of not allowing her light to be extinguished, and the time will come when the West will find leisure to realize that she has a home of hers in the East where her food is and her rest.

Letters to a Friend

APPENDIX V

LAW AND GOSPEL

"Civilization—the true civilization—exists. . . . It is the Man who said, 'Love one another', or 'Return good for evil'. But for two thousand years these phrases have been merely repeated."—From Duhamel's *Civilization*.

It is impossible, we hope, for us nominally Christian folk to celebrate the birth of Jesus without a feeling of shame, or even of hypocrisy. What we must think, have we to do with him, or he with us? What, in fact, *should* we do if he reappeared in our society? It is clear that we should not recognize him, and that long before three years of his Ministry had expired State and Church would combine against him in the old Judaean fashion, to bully, to betray, and to kill, in truth, there would be no need for Jesus to eassy a second travail. We are known by our fruits. For six years not a Christian deed has been done in the name of any Christian nation, nor, save in mockery of man's despair or in vain appeal to the moral sense of his rulers, has one christian word been spoken in their behalf. It may even be said that our Christianity, professed but not followed, does us more harm than good, for while we use it to consecrate war, and to cloak greed and polity as religion, we mask our souls with a new and deep falsification. the Christian world is a simple dwelling, built for humble-minded men. We rear our proud temples on self-love and the deprecitation of our neighbour. Worshippers of Moloch and Mammon, of Power and of Empire, would it not be better for us to own up, and, confessing that the God we worship lives not in the spirit of Jesus, follow a frank Diabolism in place of a sham

Christianity?

Well, that would be a counsel of honesty for our rulers, but it would be one of despair and final ruin for the world. Society has, indeed, become a scene of suffering and discontent. But after what has happened, could we expect it to be anything else? If happiness had followed such a Treaty as that of Versailles, or, conversely, as the peace that Germany would have made had she been victorious, then, indeed, the soothsayers might well have proclaimed the downfall of the Gospel of Jesus, and the triumph of its assailant. A pagan world might have celebrated such an event, and settled down to this job of "assimilating" its victims, but not a community of Christian peoples, each of them enjoined by its religion to cherish the other. They did indeed go unwarned into the catastrophe that has befallen them. But now that their eyes are opened, they must see that what their rulers sowed for their enemies, they have reaped, and that on the principles and the policy of the war no nation can live. Once that discovery is made and applied, there is no reason for despair, but, on the contrary, every hope of the amendment of civilization. And it is being made. One by one the landmarks of 1914 recede. It is probable that excessive private wealth will disappear as the result of the general impoverishment of the war. Excellent. It is certain that every statesman and Government that made the war (most have gone already) will be broken or fall into discredit. A good riddance. It is clear that every fresh trial of force by these rulers will yield decreasing results, unitl, by one means or another, by the failure of money and credit, the direct or the indirect action of the workers, or the passive resistance of whole communities, it is forbidden or rendered innocuous. It is probable that a great number of experiments will be made in industry, tending either to modify the capitalist system or to abolish it. Thus the inevitable struggle between the better and the worse elements in civilization has begun, and at Geneva and elsewhere the re-militarized Powers are confronted, even in their own Governments, with the demand for a standard of international justice and humanity. Everywhere, therefore, the false society that made the war and that the treaty set up again is crumbling Science, the great renovator, looks askance at a second enlistment with Death. The smaller nations, strengthened by their abstinence from war, begin to refuse submission to the tyranny of the great, and if they are threatened again, will form protective leagues of their own. Met with force, they will resort to the equalizing aid of science, or counter the Empires on the ground of spiritual power in which they excel. Thus Ireland has her chance to overcome England, and the East to recover its freedom from the West.

He must be blind, indeed, who does not see in this world-revolt an essentially religious movement, in which our crude materialism will meet and be overthrown by the appeal to sympathetic understanding and love. It was fated that the Churches, which preach Christianity as a professional mystery which few can

comprehend, rather than as a rule of life which all can follow, should ignore this sign in the heavens, or treat it as a vision of judgment on their special enemies rather than of mercy and relief to all mankind. Nevertheless, a relief it is. For evils which are implanted in the thought and practice of the modern State must end by destroying it. The acts of cruelty and licence of which the national soldiery have been guilty in White and Red Russia, in Poland and in Ireland, have been crimes of society rather than of individuals, and the men who must stand at the bar to answer for them are the directors of church and school, of politics and the Press. Save for the war, most of the boys who committed them would have followed the plough, or tended the loom, and lived in as much innocence and happiness as our still primitive culture and moral growth allow. But the world which threw away or depraved its youth in a senseless quarrel, and let the peace blight the childhood of Central Europe, is not a sane or a possible social organization. For six years man has thrown every constructive and provident contrivance away, and lived like a wolf-pack in a hard winter. But all the while his table was spread, and none need have ravened on his neighbour. Then why need we suffer more? Why die, as we are dying, in our sins? We know the law, and how terribly it has prevailed against the outrage of our de-civilization. But there is the gospel too. The genius of Christianity came from the soul of man and lives there still, an unexhausted and incalculable treasure of practical wisdom, and a promise to him of eventual mastery of the almost forgotten Art of Life.

Young India, 21-7-1921

1. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, BOMBAY[1]

July 22, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi, who, on rising to speak, received an ovation, said that he had been addressing men and women everywhere in the city and he thought he would not be in a position to speak to them anything new on swadeshi. A gentleman had come to him from Lucknow who told him that something was going wrong in the United Provinces. A man had been incarcerated by Government for three days in a very dark cell for some trivial offence and was still in jail. The gentleman from Lucknow asked the speaker as to what a man in that position should do. He advised him to bear all hardships with patience. They should all create in their hearts the virtue of patience. He was not sure whether that story told by the gentleman was true or not, for it was very difficult to remain incarcerated for three days in a dark room. Of course, he had an experience of such an incident, because they had not forgotten as yet the cruelties perpetrated on Indians by foreigners in the Punjab. Therefore the story related to him might be true.

He would again tell them that, if they did not understand their duty towards the country, they were not then right in asking for freedom. He was going to speak to them on swadeshi that night. There were other stories related to him by someone that there were three persons arrested by Government. One of them was a Congress Secretary who on being arrested by Government apologized to the Government and the remaining two also apologized. They (the three men) had now given up the national cause and were remaining aloof from the movement. They should feel ashamed of such action. He would appeal to those present to be fearless as far as possible, for when their object was laudable, why should they care for the Government? If they were not willing to undergo hardships and troubles they should give up the movement at this stage. He, therefore, appealed to every man and women present in the hall to be ready for *dukha* (pain) at any time for the sake of their country.

The had opened a depot for foreign-made clothes, where they could send their clothes without any hesitation. If they did not succeed in boycotting foreign cloth by 31st July they would be put to great shame in the eyes of their fellow men and in the eyes of the world at large.

The Mahatma asked whether they had made any preparations for the 1st of August. There was no shame at all in sending away their clothes to that depot for foreign-made clothes. Some *bahens* (sisters) when asked to boycott their foreign made saris said that they were unwilling to do so. No doubt there were

[1] Held under the auspices of the "O" Ward Congress Committee at the Morarji Gokuldas Hall, at 9 p.m.

other women who were ever ready to wear the khadi dress. Whatever *pardeshi* (foreign) clothes a woman had at present, she should give them up in obedience to the call of the nation. If men and women present at the meeting were not willing to boycott their foreign-made clothes, they had no right, no claim whatever to swaraj.

Whatever he had got to say that night he had already said many times and he would now ask those who were willing to do what he desired to raise their hands. But before they raised their hands he must tell them that the so-called swadeshi cloth manufactured in mills should not at all be resorted to; for his advice to them was to avoid all machine-made cloth. The supreme virtue of khadi was that it was hand-spun and hand-woven.

Bezwada khadi saris, the speaker said, were now not available in large stocks but in their absence, they could very easily wear khadi saris and on the 1st of August they would see many women wearing khadi saris. He would again tell them that there was no shame at all in adopting that dress for it was their national dress. They should not keep *nirasha* (pessimism) in their mind, but they should be courageous in fighting the battle of Indian nationalism.

He then asked those men and women willing to dress themselves on the 1st of August and thereafter in khadi to raise their hands. At that request nearly all present in the hall raised their hands. Some women were found somewhat unwilling to raise their hands.

The Mahatma again appealed to them to boycott foreign-made clothes and wear khaddar dress without any fear or favour. Still he would ask them not to be led away by any threats . . .

Concluding, the Mahatma said he had nothing more to speak on the swadeshi movement, for he had been speaking constantly on the same theme for the last so many days. He had great faith in his countrymen and he therefore prayed to God that the great movement he had set on foot would bear good results in the end. (Prolonged cheers.)

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-7-1921

2. SPEECH AT BOMBAY MEETING[1]

July 23, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi said before he commenced the proceedings of the meeting, he would read out a letter from Mr. Jayakar[2] who was laid up with fever and, therefore, had expressed his inability to attend the meeting and contribute his quota of tribute to the memory of the Lokamanya. He then requested Mr. Lalit to recite his song about the late Lokamanya.

In addressing the meeting, the Mahatma said that the work for which they had gathered was sacred. They had a long programme that afternoon. He would not detain them long.

Mr. Tilak was not noted for making long speeches. He was noted for brave deeds. The country loved him not for his oratory. It was possible to name some of his contemporaries who were better orators from the ornamental standpoint. He (Mr. Gandhi) therefore did not need to detain the audience with a long speech. He would draw their attention to some of the most marked qualities which made him the idol of the people, qualities which were so needed for the nation when it was making a supreme effort to obtain its emancipation during the year. The truest tribute they could render to the memory of the deceased was by imitating his qualities and weaving them into their own lives. One great quality that the country prized in the Lokamanya was his fearlessness. It was so marked a quality in him that some even accused him of rudeness. We know that he never spared the bureaucracy. He therefore roused its ire and was accused of raising hatred against Englishmen. He knew however that if Mr. Tilak was unsparing in his criticism of the bureaucracy, he was ready to give praise to its members when it was merited. He remembered, during the last Calcutta session, which the deceased attended, Mr. Tilak presiding at a Hindi Sammelan. He was coming from a strenuous discussion at the Congress session. But he was able to deliver a learned extempore speech at the Sammelan. He gave unstinted praise to English scholars for their service to the vernaculars. He said that future historians would acknowledge their service. That did not mean they had come to India for the purpose of benefiting the vernaculars but he said it would be unjust not to acknowledge the debt India owed to the many Englishmen who had helped them to

[1] Held at Empire Theatre, under the auspices of the Parsi Rajkiya Sabha. Marmaduke Pickthall, Mahomed Ali and Sarojini Naidu were among those present. A number of ladies in the audience, including Perin Captain, grand-daughter of Dadabhai Naoroji, were dressed in khadi. Money raised on admission to the function was set aside as help for the best biography of Tilak.

[2] M. R. Jayakar (1873-1959); Bombay lawyer and liberal leader, political negotiator and peace-maker

appreciate their own languages.

The second great quality which the country needed so much was Mr. Tilak's self-sacrifice. He never stinted himself for the service of his country. He did not bargain. For him sacrifice of self was a pleasure. The speaker said he did not need to give illustrations because the audience knew the examples of sacrifice better than the speaker. The third great quality was his extreme simplicity. Mr. Tilak had always observed swadeshi. If khadi had been manufactured in his time he would have unhesitatingly worn it. He could not believe him to be capable of seeking personal adornment. He appealed to the audience to copy Mr. Tilak's swadeshi spirit. They must not do it in a niggardly spirit. He had heard that ladies who had done so wonderfully in June were hesitating to part with their foreign saris. He could not forget the jewels a Parsi sister had sent at the Parsi meeting. He wanted the ladies to continue in the same spirit about swadeshi. If it was a difficult thing they must recall Mr. Tilak's example. This was no time for shedding tears over their wardrobes. He hoped that the citizens of Bombay would signalize the 1st of August by discarding all their foreign cloth and wearing khadi. He then called upon Shrimati Sarojini Naidu to speak.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-7-1921

3. MY NOTES

Danger from Thieves and Robbers

There is always danger from thieves and robbers in Kheda district. Such danger is there in other places, too, in greater or less degree. Swaraj also means being able to defend ourselves. It cannot be that others protect us and we enjoy swaraj. The people should possess the strength to protect themselves. Such strength may come in either of two ways. One is to permit thieves and robbers to do their work, that is, to own no property, and the other is to use force against them. All men are not willing to lose their belongings or to own none and so people devise means of intimidating thieves and robbers by force. Some employ watchmen and some fight themselves. One of the chief duties of a king is to protect his subjects from thieves and robbers. We can enjoy swaraj only if the people take over this duty themselves. We must, therefore, acquire this capacity. The job is not difficult. The residents of villages and towns should train their own volunteers and arrange for guard duty. Every village ought to have lights. If even this is done, the fear of thieves will largely dis- appear.

But, along with this, and with greater vigour, must proceed the work of reform. If it is important to protect oneself from a thief, it is

more important still to reclaim him. Theft and robbery are a kind of moral disease. We ought to have remedies for a disease. Thieves, too, should be regarded as part of society and efforts should be made to reform them. There is no reason to believe that they cannot be brought round, if only we meet them, explain things to them and try to educate them. We should have patience with them and love them. It is absolutely necessary for us to take up these two tasks.

THEFT ON RAILWAYS[1]

There is no end of complaints about thefts and corruption on railways. If all these are true, they are a matter of deep national shame, especially at a time when the whole country is passing through the fire of purification. Government certainly have nothing to do with these malpractices; the responsibility is entirely ours. I have even heard that a bribe must be offered in times of famine when wagons are needed for the transport of grass. We may send anything we please by a railway parcel, but if it is at all vulnerable, its contents are bound to be tampered with. Only recently, a Bombay merchant received a parcel of khadi through the railway and found that part of it was stolen. If railway servants happen to see this, they will kindly consider this request of mine to have some regard for the public and to find out other and honest means of adding to their income. It is my advice to associations of railway servants that they may lay no less stress upon their members' performance of their duties than upon the vindication of their rights. If these complaints continue to exist even under swaraj, the administration then will be as costly as it is now. Swaraj can be maintained only where there is a majority of loyal and patriotic people to whom the good of the nation is paramount above all other considerations whatever, including their personal profit. Swaraj means government by the many. Where the many are immoral or selfish, their government can spell anarchy and nothing else. I am in this movement only as I believe that the many are good and true at the bottom, but, being cowardly and careless, are ignorant of their inherent qualities, and that when once they have realized the power of goodness, they will begin to practise it and succeed in the attempt.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-7-1921

[1] This translation appeared under Gandhiji's signature in *Young India*, 28-7-1921.

4. SPEECH AT SANTA CRUZ, BOMBAY

July 24, 1921

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I have come here today with a big hope in my heart. Brother Vithaldas told me yesterday that in Bombay foreign cloth was not being collected as speedily as money had been collected and, therefore, if a good beginning was made at some place,the work would proceed vigorously and the people, too, would respond well. In giving money, a beginning was made by Matunga but, in regard to foreign cloth, we have started with Santa Cruz in begging invitations. I myself sought this invitation.

Why do people feel that this work is something new we have taken up? The Congress passed the resolution on swadeshi last September. The Khilafat Committee had accepted it even earlier. From that time we have been propagating swadeshi jointly with Maulana Mahomed Ali. We have spoken about it wherever we have gone. If we succeed in securing a solution of the Khilafat problem, we shall have acquired the necessary strength for winning swaraj. But we cannot gain that strength except through a total adoption of swadeshi.

Swadeshi has two aspects:

(1) boycott of foreign cloth and

(2) production of other cloth in its place. It is my conviction that, if the mills alone produce all this cloth, India will not be able to win swaraj, or, having won it, will not be able to keep it. Until there is a spinning-wheel plying in every home in India, we shall not get swaraj.

Swadeshi, Hindu-Muslim unity and peace—these three are the main planks in our movement. This one [swadeshi] concerns all, Hindus, Muslims and Parsis.

If we had not forsaken swadeshi cloth when the East India Company came to India for trade and had not been tempted by the muslins and prints from England, our subsequent history would have been quite different. We can now win swaraj only if we adopt swadeshi once again. In the same manner, if we abandon Hindu-Muslim unity or peace, we shall lose swaraj as well. We have been so moulded that we are always inclined towards peace. It is not that after we have swaraj, no one will hurt another, but even so these are the

essential conditions for winning and maintaining swaraj.

It will be quite a different matter, in my view, if other States seek to conquer India with the sword. In any case, it cannot be denied that the bitterness between Hindus and Muslims is decreasing day by ady. That is to say, this work [of bringing about unity between them] is proceeding and no particular effort is required for the purpose. As regards peace, too, no fresh effort is necessary. No sacrifice is involved in these two things. But swadeshi certainly requires sacrifices. We have to look after all the numerous communities with equal care. We cannot do without the services of cobblers, carpenters or blacksmiths. If we do not develop our strength as represented by each one of these, we shall certainly not succeed in getting swaraj. Swadeshi cannot be brought about by the efforts of one man alone. Money may be contributed by one person but to have one crore men and women as members of the Congress, that number of men and women are needed. Similarly, to turn the whole country swadeshi, each and every Indian must make himself so. For this work, thirty crores have to make sacrifices. Everyone must boycott foreign cloth with a clear understanding of the purpose. This was impossible a year ago. But now if we mean to, we can ensure complete boycott as early as this August. I have said that we can win swaraj within one month after we have ensured boycott of foreign cloth; in saying this I mean that, having done this job, we shall send an ultimatum to the Government. We have the capacity to produce cloth, but lack faith. The position in this matter is the same as with regard to food. There is an oven in the house and so food is no problem. Likewise, if there was a spinning-wheel lying in the house, we would certainly work on it and by and by get used to the work. The construction of our spinning-wheel is so beautifully simple that it is quite easy to make one. I believe we are in a position to boycott foreign cloth. There is a magic power in the spinning-wheel but, in order that this power may work, India needs to have faith. I think, however, that India has now acquired such faith.

India s uffers from a disease. The love of find cloth has not yet left the people. A khadi sari is too heavy for women in India, women who observe difficult vows! When I hear men and women say that they cannot give up fine cloth, I feel pity for them. If people tell me this, I shall say t hat we shall not get swaraj. If, even then, anyone offered it to us, I would decline to accept it. I would ask him if he knew what kind of people they were to whom he offered

swaraj. These people, I would say, have got indigestion. We have contracted tuberculosis, there is an unnatural flush on our cheeks. How strange that we do not like what is made in our country and like what is made elsewhere? Of how much worth is what you have given me today? I want what you have safely stored away. Understand your dharma and boycott all foreign cloth. What happiness have you found in this world? How can we bear to live under a Government based on a system which follows the very opposite of justice in everything? We must become swadeshi-minded. Swadeshi is both the means and the end. If you look upon foreign things as totally unworthy of use, give them away. This is not a kind of boycott in which, when conditions have changed, we may resume buying foreign cloth, for swaraj will be preserved only so long as we keep up the boycott. After we get swaraj, we may enter the councils and attend courts of law, but we certainly cannot start wearing foreign cloth. To think otherwise is to deceive ourselves. This work [of ensuring complete swadeshi] demands that all the crores in the country should act.

Please follow swadeshi completely. Cast off any foreign materials you have.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 31-7-1921

5. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

July 26, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi said that the 1st of August was nearing and they had to do their duty to their country before that date. The witness of their duty was their own bodies; the signs of their duty and sacrifice were on their own bodies. It would not be necessary, then, to ask anyone if he had done his duty, for the signs would be apparent to everyone. Some people thought that by giving their quota towards the one crore already collected they had already done their duty. They should not think so. That fund was for the Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund, and, as long as they had not gained swaraj, it could not be said they had done their duty to the great departed. It was not enough to collect money; they had to get swaraj. when they had complete swadeshi in this country, they could say they had swaraj. He did not mean by that that on the very day they had full swadeshi they could get swaraj. He had asked for a

[1] Held under the auspices of the Girgaum Congress Committee at the Marwari Vidyalaya Hall, Sarojini Naidu and Mahomed Ali also spoke.

month's time from the day they had complete swadeshi for getting swaraj. By adopting swadeshi they would be laying the foundation-stone of swaraj, and in a month's time they would get swaraj.

Instead of 20 lakhs of charkhas in the whole of India, Lala Lajpat Rai had assured him that in the Punjab alone there were forty lakhs. There were as many charkhas in every household there as there were women, and a Punjabi woman thought it an insult if she was asked whether she could spin. Women liked spinning, but it was the men who were responsible for its disuse in this country by adopting Manchester dhotis. Now that swadeshi was being adopted, the charkha had become popular all over the country. There was enough cotton in this country; there were enough men to spin. The only thing wanting was will on their part to utilize all these things. As it was the desire of all that they should be united into one nation whether they were Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians or Jews to attain swaraj, so it was essential that they should have complete swadeshi to win swaraj. Real swadeshi cloth would be made of Indian-spun yarn. There should not be the slightest trace of foreign yarn in it. Those saris which were made of foreign yarn must be discarded. Some men and women did not like to give up all their clothes at once; they wanted to keep back some, but by this means they would not fit themselves for swaraj. They had merely wasted their money in buying foreign cloth; they had kept a large number of their own countrymen in a condition of starvation. And those tainted clothes they must at once throw away. White khaddar must be worn not only on the 1st of August, but always after that.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-7-1921

6. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, BOMBAY[1]

July 26, 1921

Mahatmaji spoke on swadeshi and the immediate need of wearing khadi. He said it was through khadi we are to carry the programme of attaining swaraj in the near future; this was not the time for them to keep quiet, this was a time when we should all be awake and save our country from the hands of foreigners. Every year about 60 crores of rupees were being carried away from our country.

He put it to them what proportion of that went to benefit our countrymen? If two annas' cloth was bought, out of it 7 pice went into the pockets of foreign merchants. And if they bought khadi worth two annas, one or two pice went into the pockets of Indian merchants and the remainder went to our workers. When such was the case, they should all be ready by the 1st of August to burn all their foreign

[1] At a meeting held at Byculla under the auspices of the Byculla District Congress Committee

clothes, which he would repeat were nothing but full of sin. Let us do away with the sin by burning them at the sacred place where our great leader Lokamanya Tilak was cremated. If some of them were not prepared to burn them, they were welcome to send them to Smyrna. they would be failing in their duty to their departed leader Lokamanya if they could not make that work successful. He hoped to see them all on the Chowpatty sands on the 1st of August to do their sacred duty to their country.

In this connection, he would not omit to give some advice to the carpenter brethren of Byculla. He had not come there to accept a purse from them but to tell them to their face that the success of swadeshi was a part of their duty. Their duty was to make fine and cheap spinning-wheels—as many as possible to adorn every Indian home. He knew well that his carpenter friends were experts in making attractive almirahs and other pieces of furniture. But now they must not waste time in making such things. He appealed to them to produce thousands of spinning-wheels, which were the stepping-stones to swaraj. They should join hands and start making spinning-wheels from the following day. He hoped they would follow his advice.

The Bombay Chronicle, 28-7-1921

7. TELEGRAM TO HAKIM AJMAL KHAN

[Before *July 28, 1921*][1]

HAKIMJI AJMAL KHAN

DELHI

DEEPLY GRIEVED. ALL-INDIA COMMITTEE MEETS TWENTY-EIGHT BOMBAY CAN GO ALIGARH AFTER 1ST AUGUST. ORGANIZING BOYCOTT FOREIGN CLOTH WHICH WILL SUFFER CHECK IF YOU WANT ME ALIGARH THIS MONTH REPLY.

From a photostat: S. N. 7574

8. NOTES

THE WHITE CAP

An employee of the British India Steam Navigation Company has been discharged for the effrontery to wear the khadi cap. Messrs Shaw Wallace and Co. set the ball rolling. This is an insult, the enormity of which we have not yet realized. We have stooped so low that we do not notice the curve. And yet, such insults are more humiliating for nations than physical blows delivered wilfully or in a

[1] The telegram was evidently sent before the meeting of the A.I.C.C. on 28-7-1921 at Bombay.

fit of anger. The crawling and rubbing the nose were physically less painful than the floggings,[1] and yet there are no two opinions that the former humiliated India more than the latter. What is there in a bow? And yet a Prince nearly lost the gadi because he had forgotten to bow at the correct angle and retire from a Viceroy's presence in the required manner.[2] It was the homage exacted by insolence for its sustenance. So have the two firms dismissed their poor clerks, because they had the manliness to wear their national dress or the insignia of their faith if you like. The proud firms could not brook an exhibition of manliness on the part of their clerks. The moment the men of India realize their manhood, and the women their womanhood, India becomes free. No power in the world can then keep freedom from her. These two dismissals, therefore, should have a world of meaning for us. And I must confess to a feeling of painful disappointment over the supmeness of the employees of these firms. They should have shown at least the courage of the common labourer. India can show examples of a wholesale strike for the sake of an injured comrade. Have the clerks of these firms no feeling for their comrade? Can they claim kinship with the whole of India? What would they have done if a blood-brother had been so treated as these two brave young men? It is not yet too late for employees of these firms to make amends. they can still wear white khadi caps by way of protest and demand the reinstatement of their fellow clerks in their respective offices.

I venture, too, to warn the managers of the two great firms. Non-co-operators have steered clear of racialism. They are fighting against a vicious system with all their might. They have no quarrel with individual Englishmen. But if the latter take sides as the managers of the two houses have done, it will be difficult to avoid a racial outburst. There is danger of European firms being boycotted if the European merchants do not treat this matter as one of urgency and enforce rectification of the grievous mistake committed by the firms in question.

Fishing for Apologies

The correspondence published in the *Independent* between

[1] The reference is to official excesses during the martial law regime in the Punjab in April 1919.

[2] The incident referred to relates to the conduct of Sayajirao Gaekwar, ruler of Bardoa, during the King-Emperor's Durbar at Delhi in 1911.

Messrs Jawaharlal Nehru, Joseph and Ranga Iyer and the U.P. Government proves that my visit to the Viceroy and my advice to the Ali Brothers to apologize for some of their speeches was a blunder from a political standpoint. It is becoming more and more clear that, as Maulana Abdul Bari has said, whilst the harm done by the visit and the apology is patent, the good that they might have done is too latent to be seen by the public. Happily, I am not a politician. And I see the good hidden behind the discreditable use the U.P. Government have made of the Brothers' apology to lead Messrs Jawaharlal Nehru and his friends into a trap. The Government have even copied the phraseology of the Brothers' apology. Dirt is popularly and correctly described as matter misplaced. In precisely the same manner, whilst I hold that the Brothers' apology was an honourable transaction being in its place, the apology required by the U.P. Government would have been a dishonourable transaction being out of its place. But that Government had tough people to deal with. They were not to be duped by false analogies, nor frightened by threats of imprisonment. The Government, therefore, has before it the choice of further proving its incapacity and intolerance by launching prosecutions against the three public workers for speeches or writings which the public and they themselves had long forgotten. If it prosecutes the 'offenders', it will prove itself incapable of dealing with the root cause of the unrest, and it will prove itself intolerant of well-merited hostile criticism. To call a spade a spade may seem harsh to the spade, but the simple truth is more likely than anything else to go home. A Government that does harsh things cannot be truthfully described by sweet words. The publication of the correspondence therefore has been a great service to the cause of swaraj. It has cleared the atmosphere, and it serves as guidance for all who are placed in the same position as the three friends. A non-co-operator may not give an apology or undertaking to purchase freedom from prosecution. He must at the same time, whenever his attention is drawn to anything said by him which is calculated to incite to violence, immediately correct his error and keep himself true to his creed. If the Government wish honestly to deal with non-co-operators and wish to imprison them because they do not like non-co-operation even though it is and remains non-violent, it has only to charge them under Section 124A, and everyone of us must plead guilty, because it is our creed to harbour and to promote disaffection towards the Government as a system. We are out to destroy the system, and that, I am told, amounts

to sedition in terms of that section. If it is permissible in law to compass destruction of existing system, every non-co-operator is a pledged loyalist.

MISUSE OF JOURNALISM

It is something that *Capital* has apologized to Mr. Ganesh Damodar Savarkar for the remarks made by 'Ditcher' and referred to in these columns. The charge underlying 'Ditcher's remarks was so serious that it involved the brothers in serious trouble. Can an editor of a responsible newspaper when challenged claim immunity by hiding himself behind the fact that he had merely given currency to a rumour? Can he base an elaborate argument upon a rumour which for the wealth of details contained in the description almost amounts to a statement of facts? Can I, for instance, level all manner of charges against the King by prefacing them with a statement that they are based on a rumour? Can I after having made such charges draw elaborate inferences most damaging to His Majesty? I have only put the case in this blunt manner to show that I would be guilty of ungentle- manly conduct rendering me liable to summary dismissal from decent society for having in a cowardly manner sought to tarnish the reputation of the first gentleman in the Empire. Is the case any different when the objects of such insidious attacks happen to be two cultured and brave Indians, and the author of imputations a European journalist? Mr. Ganesh Savarkar has raised himself in the estimation of his countrymen by magnanimously waiving the right of prosecution for a foul imputation against his honour. But is journalistic honour satisfied by a mere apology, tendered as it appears to me in a half-hearted manner? The reply to Mr. Savarkar's solicitors starts with an excuse for conduct which is wholly inexcusable. No journal having the slightest regard for justice and fair play can afford to give currency to rumours, unless the editor has sifted them and believes them to be founded on fact. I do hope that both English and Indian newspapers will take serious notice of the matter and let the editor of *Capital* know that he has been guilty of conduct unworthy of an honourable journalist.

WHY BURN?

Critics have overwhelmed me with their rebuke regarding the burning of foreign cloth. After having considered every argument advanced against it, I cannot help saying that destruction is the best method of dealing with foreign cloth. The Provincial Congress

Committee has left it optional to the givers to choose between destruction and despatch to Smyrna or elsewhere. The discussion of the question therefore lacks the importance it would have had if destruction had been the only method prescribed for dealing with foreign clothes. The propriety of destruction depends upon the intensity of one's belief in the necessity of discarding foreign cloth. Just as a converted teetotaller will not hand the contents of his wine cellar to a needy neighbour, so would a votary of swadeshi, if he feels as keenly as the teetotaller, refuse to give to the poor the contents of his wardrobe. I hold that the wearing of foreign cloth in India is almost as bad as drinking. I am not sure that it is not even worse than drinking in some respects. For the last hundred and fifty years India has been importing foreign cloth at the expense of her great cottage industry, i.e., spinning. As Mr. Romesh Chandra Dutt[1] has pointed out in his study of the history of the deliberately planned destruction of the spinning and weaving industries of India, Bihar which was once one of the richest provinces of India was reduced to poverty by the systematic and cruel destruction of her flourishing industry of spinning and weaving. If we only realized the magnitude of the injury done by the East India Company and of the sin committed by us in yielding to the persecution of the Company's *gumastas*[2] or the temptations put in our way, we would hang our heads in shame. Our great national industry would not have perished, our women would not have been forced to labour on public roads, millions of our people would not have been obliged to remain a part of the year in enforced idleness if we could have retained swadeshi. In my humble opinion cloth which revives such black memories and is a mark of our shame and degradation is fit only to be destroyed. It certainly cannot be given to the poor. We should have much greater regard for their feelings and their national culture than to think that we serve them by giving them what to us is a mark of our slavery. Should not India's poor have a sense of patriotism? Should they not have feelings about dignity and self-respect in the same manner as we have? I would not have the meanest of us remain without a spirit of true patriotism. Just as we would or at least ought to recoil with horror from giving them rotten food or food we will not eat, so should we feel about giving

[1] 1848-1909; member of the Indian Civil Service; author of *The Economic History of India Since the Advent of the East India Company*, presided over the Lucknow session of the Congress in 1899

[2] Clerks

them foreign cloth. A moment's thought would also show that much of the finery we are throwing away is perfectly useless for the poor. Of what use can the dirty hats and caps stinking with our perspiration be to them, or the rich silk saris and the finest muslins that are being given up? They had no value except for the weavers who loved these things. They cannot clothe the famine-stricken. The things that are really useful to them are very few indeed. But I do not base my argument for destruction upon the uselessness of the clothing discarded. My argument goes much deeper if only because it is based upon a sentiment on which alone the noblest in us is and can be reared. Why should and Englishman resent an insult to a tattered flag? But he does, and rightly thinks that he must. What harm is there in gaining a million by concealing my faith for a moment? But I may not for the kingdom of the world. For exactly similar reasons we may not use foreign cloth for the poor in India. And it is after all making a convenience of an act of renunciation to send cloth thus discarded even to Smyrna or elsewhere abroad. But the moral objection to the despatch abroad is certainly not so strong as to its use at home.

Foreign Yarn

The Indian Social Reformer objects to the exclusion of foreign yarn from the definition of swadeshi. It is impossible to retrace steps, to reform, to purity without some destruction and some hurt being caused somewhere. The weavers do not think that they will have to sit idle if they do not weave foreign yarn. They can without difficulty weave mill-spun yarn and exercise all their artistic talent upon it, if only for the time being we consent to be satisfied with less fineness. When foreign cloth and foreign yarn are not available in the Indian market, I can see no impediment to India's ability to reproduce the beautiful fabrics of old. The real art has died out, and tawdry things that pass for art have found a place in wealthy homes, because there are no patrons of real art. I look forward to the time, as soon as we reach normal conditions, when our rich men will have attached to their establishments houses for their special spinners and weavers whose business it will be to manufacture artistic cloth for the benefit of their patrons.

Women as Pickets

A Parsi sister writes to say that when picketing is recommenced in Bombay, she is quite prepared to join any party that may be raised and she hopes that many other sisters will come forward. She is of opinion that if women respond in large numbers, their presence will

be an effective check on violence. I entirely endorse her remarks, and hope that many other sisters will send in their names to the Committee at Bombay as candidates.

DESECRATION OF GRAVES

A friend from Agra draws my attention to Mr. David's letter to the Press regarding the desecration of the graves of Christians in the Indian Presbyterian cemetery at Ajmer. I am sorry that the letter has escaped me. Mr. David rightly remarks that fanaticism and bigotry would mar the harmonious development of the Indian nation and are fatal to the growth of unity. Hindu-Muslim unity, as I have often said, means the unity of all those for whom India is their home irrespective of caste, creed or colour. Desecration of graves is a specially dastardly crime. Even laws of war respect the sanctity of graves. Only a depraved nature can delight in wicked desecration of graves. But the crime in question becomes still more wicked when we remember that at the present moment the nation is trying to harmonize all its discordant elements. There are many Christian sympathizers of our struggle. Mr. Andrews is a staunch Christian, and India has no truer worker than Charlie Andrews, rightly called the friend of the poor. I hope that the Congress Committee at Ajmer will look into the matter and help our Christian countrymen in every way.

Young India, 28-7-1921

9. NOBLE REPENTANCE AND ITS LESSON

I have just received the following pathetic letter from Mr. Yakub Hasan :

> I now realize that I have committed a serious indiscretion in a moment of weakness. Ever since the significance of my folly had dawned on me, I am suffering excruciating pain in my heart which is nearly driving me mad. I owe an apology to you as the head of the movement, and I offer it in the most humble[1] manner possible. As my guide and leader, scold and chastise me as much as I deserve, but I hope you would for God's sake forgive me my sin. I would undergo a penance to make my peace with God and to undo any disservice that my action may have done to the holy cause that I sincerely and earnestly endeavoured to serve before this according to my lights.

The letter has a ring of sincerity about it which disarms all criticism. I have informed Mr. Yakub Hasan it is not for me to forgive

[1] The source has "humiliating"

him. Who knows that I should not prove as weak as he has in the face of danger ? God alone can forgive. For He alone knows us through and through. We have His promise through His word revealed in many lands and to many peoples that when a man confesses before Him his weakness with a pure and humble heart, He forgives. Being weak ourselves let us not throw a stone at a brother who has confessed his weakness.

But let Mr. Yakub Hasan's plight serve all of us as a danger signal. For though victory seems to be in sight, there is danger of our not being able to stand the last heat when it comes, as it must. Let us make up our minds that this Government will try us through and through before it really bends to the will of the people. We must be prepared in our thou-sands to fill the jails of India. We must be prepared not to mind cholera breaking out within their precincts. It is far more sufferable than the moral chronic cholera of slavery we are suffering from. Brave Sherwani has gone to jail without a fault, if the report of the farcical trial be true. Someone or other is daily going to jail in the United Provinces. Now comes a telegram from the Andhra Province to the effect that two important workers have been sentenced to one year's imprisonment at Guntur—one is a barrister. Mr. Venkatappaya, who sends the wire, says that more repression is expected. It was bound to come sooner or later. If we stand the fire without flinching, swaraj this year is a certainty.

But there is danger not only of weakness. There is danger too of people losing their heads under provocation and retorting. This danger of people going mad is more serious than inability or unwillingness to suffer. It is up to every worker throughout India that he prevent violence even at the risk of losing his life in the attempt.

The best answer that India can give to the impending universal repression is to perform the act of renunciation of all foreign cloth in utter disregard of the figures flung in our faces by wise economists. If we have the will, we can manufacture in three months' time all the cloth we need through hand-spinning and hand-weaving. Have we the will to be satisfied, pending attainment of swaraj, with khadi ?

Young India, 28-7-1921

10. HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

Everybody knows that without unity between Hindus and Mussulmans, no certain progress can be made by the nation. There is no doubt that the cement binding the two is yet loose and wet. There is still mutual distrust. The leaders have come to recognize that India can make no advance without both feeling the need of trust and common action. But though there is a vast change among the masses, it is still not a permanent quantity. The Mussulman masses do not still recognize the same necessity for swaraj as the Hindus do. The Mussulmans do not flock to public meetings in the same numbers as the Hindus. This process cannot be forced. Sufficient time has not passed for the national interest to be awakened among the Mussulmans. Indeed it is a marvel that whereas but a year ago the Mussulmans as a body hardly took any interest in Congress affairs, all over India thousands have registered themselves as members. This in itself is an immense gain.

But much more yet remains to be done. It is essentially the work of the Hindus. Wherever the Mussulmans are still found to be apathetic, they should be invited to come in. One often hears from Hindu quarters the complaint that Mussulmans do not join the Congress organizations or do not pay to the Swaraj Fund. The natural question is, have they been invited? In every district Hindus must make special efforts to draw out their Mussulman neighbours. There will never be real equality so long as one feels inferior or superior to the other. There is no room for patronage among equals. Mussulmans must not feel the lack of education or numbers where they are in a minority. Deficiency in education must be corrected by taking education. To be in a minority is often a blessing. Superiority in numbers has frequently proved a hindrance. It is character that counts in the end. But I have not commenced this article to lay down counsels of perfection or to state the course of conduct in the distant future.

My main purpose is to think of the immediate task lying before us. *Bakr-i-Id* will be soon upon us. What are we to do to frustrate the attempts that will then be made to foment quarrels between us—Hindus and Mussulmans? Though the situation has improved considerably in Bihar, it is not yet free from anxiety. Over-zealous and impatient Hindus are trying to force matters. They lend

themselves an easy prey to the machinations of mischief-makers not always prompted by the Government side. Protection of the cow is the nearest to the Hindu heart. We are therefore apt to lose our heads over it, and thus be unconsciously instrumental in doing an injury to the very cause we seek to espouse. Let us recognize that our Mussulman brethren have made great efforts to save the cow for the sake of their Hindu brethren. It would be a grave mistake to underrate them. But immediately we become assertive, we make all effort on their part nugatory. We have throughout all these many years put up with cow-slaughter either without a murmur or under ineffective and violent protest. We have never tried to deserve self-imposed restraint on the part of our Mussulman countrymen by going out of our way to cultivate friendly relations with them. We have more or less gratuitously assumed the impossibility of the task.

But we are now making a deliberate and conscious attempt in standing by their side in the hour of their need. Let us not spoil the good effect by making our free offering a matter of bargain. Friendship can never be a contract. It is a status carrying no considera-tion with it. Service is a duty, and duty is a debt which it is a sin not to discharge. If we would prove our friendship, we must help our brethren whether they save the cow or not. We throw the responsi-bility for their conduct towards us on their own shoulders. We dare not dictate it to them as consideration for our help. Such help will be hired service, which the Mussulmans cannot be blamed if they summarily reject. I hope, therefore, that the Hindus of Bihar and indeed all the parts of India will realize the importance of observing the strictest forbearance, no matter what the Mussulmans do on *Bakr-i-Id*. We must leave them to take what course they choose. What Hakim Ajmal Khan did in one hour at Amritsar, Hindus could not have done by years of effort. The cows that Messrs Chhotani and Khatri saved last *Bakr-i-Id* day, the Hindu millionaires of Bombay could not have saved if they had given the whole of their fortunes. The greater the pressure put upon the Mussulmans the greater must be the slaughter of the cow. We must leave them to their own sense of honour and duty. and we shall have done the greatest service to the cow.

The way to save the cow is not to kill or quarrel with the Mussulmans. the way to save the cow is to die in the act of saving the Khilafat without mentioning the cow. Cow-protection is a process of purification. It is *tapasya*, i.e., self-suffering. When we suffer volunt-

arily and, therefore, without expectation of reward, the cry of suffering (one might say) literally ascends to heaven and God above hears it and responds. That is the path of religion, and it has answered even if one man has adopted it *in its entirety*. I make bold to assert without fear of contradiction that it is not Hinduism to kill a fellow-man even to save the cow. Hinduism requires its votaries to immolate themselves for the sake of their religion, i.e., for the sake of saving the cow. The question is how many Hindus are ready without bargaining with the Mussulmans to die for them and for their religion? If the Hindus can answer it in the religious spirit, they will not only have secured Mussulman friendship for eternity, but they will have saved the cow for all time from the Mussulmans. Let us not swear even by the greatest among them. They can but help. They cannot undertake to change the hearts of millions of men who have hitherto given no thought to the feelings of their Hindu neighbours when they slaughter the cow. But God Almighty can in a moment change them and move them to pity. Prayer accompanied by adequate suffering is a prayer of the heart. That alone counts with God. To my Mussulman friends I would but say one word. They must not be irritated by the acts of irresponsible or ignorant but fanatical Hindus. He who exercises restraint under provocation wins the battle. Let them know and *feel* sure that responsible Hindus are not on their side in their trial in any bargaining spirit. They are helping because they know that the Khilafat is a just cause and that to help them in a good cause is to serve

India, for they are even as blood-brothers, born of the same mother—*Bharata Mata*.

Young India, 28-7-1921

11. NON-VIOLENCE

It is my conviction that we are in sight of the promised land, but the danger is the greatest when victory seems the nearest. No victory worth the name has ever been won without a final effort, more serious than all the preceding ones. God's last test is ever the most difficult. Satan's last temptation is ever the most seductive. We must stand God's last test and resist Satan's last temptation, if we would be free.

Non-violence is the most vital and integral part of non-co-operation. We may fail in everything else and still continue our battle if we remain non-violent. But we capitulate miserably if we fail in

adhering to non-violence. Let it be remembered that violence is the keystone of the Government edifice. Since violence is its sheet-anchor and its final refuge, it has rendered itself almost immune from violence on our side by having prepared itself to frustrate all violent effort by the people. We therefore co-operate with the Government in the most active manner when we resort to violence. Any violence on our part must be a token of our stupidity, ignorance and impotent rage. To exercise restraint under the gravest provocation is the truest mark of soldiership. The veriest tyro in the art of war knows that he must avoid the ambushes of his adversary. And every provocation is a dangerous ambush into which we must resolutely refuse to walk.

The story of Aligarh is an illustration in point. It seems clear enough that sufficient provocation was given by the police. We have long recognized that it is their business to do so. The people of Aligarh walked into the trap laid for them. They allowed themselves to be pro-voked, and resorted to arson. It is not yet clear who killed the constable in mufti. The burden is on the people to show that they did not.

Let us be hard on ourselves. If we wish to walk along the straight and narrow path (which is necessarily the shortest), we must not be self-indulgent. We may not throw the blame for any mishap on the badmashes. We must be responsible for their acts. Or we declare ourselves unfit for swaraj. We must gain control even over them. Even they must realize the necessity of not inter- fering with the national and the religious work we are engaged in. In a movement of purification, the whole country is lifted up not excluding the wicked and the fallen. Let there be no mistake, that is our deliberate claim. If it is merely a lip claim, we shall prove ourselves guilty of having set up a system more Satanic than the one we condemn as such.

Therefore whilst we are following the course of non-violent non-co-operation, we are bound in honour to live up to it in thought, word and deed. Let us make the frank confession if we are too weak or too incredulous to live up to our creed.

The reader must not run away with the idea that I feel we are not standing the test. On the contrary I believe that we have obtained a marvellous hold over the people, that they have understood the necessity of non-violence as they have never done before.

But it would be wrong for us not to take due warning from the slightest deviation from the path deliberately chosen by us.

I find it necessary too to utter the word of caution, because the provocation by the Government is on the increase. It is the greatest in the U.P. The arrest of Mr. Sherwani at 5 o'clock in the morning, his swift trial, conviction, sentence and removal the same day are enough to irritate the most sober-minded. The details of the trial show that the magistrate knew little of law and cared less. The evidence before him, if all of it has been given to the Press, was quite insufficient for a conviction. It almost seems that the conviction and sentence were prearranged. The production of evidence in that case was a huge farce. We are having a rehearsal of trials under the ordinary law. Where is the difference between an executive order and a judicial trial? The latter is more deadly as it is more difficult to expose. To say that a man had no trial carries greater conviction of injustice than to have to say that the trial was farcical. Repressive laws may be repealed; it does not follow therefore that repression will be done away with. The substance will be the same though the form is changed. What we want is a change of substance, of spirit, of heart.

And if we desire that change, we must first change ourselves, i.e., be proof against repression. Just as we may not retort with violence, so may we not weaken under repression no matter how severe or trying it may be.

An authentic rumour comes from the U.P. that at least three more or less noted workers found the jail life too trying, gave undertakings to refrain from certain acts and procured their discharge. If this is true, it is sad. We must be firm as a rock. There must be no going back. We must be able cheerfully to bear any torture that may be our lot in the jails of India. We may expect no quarter from the Government. We must expect it to do the worst it can whether within or without the law. Its one purpose is to bend us, since it will not mend itself.

I am not passing harsh judgment on the Government. Dharwar and Aligarh are the latest instances of Government's defiance of propriety. If I am to credit another rumour, in a U.P. jail a brave Mussulman prisoner was put in a dark cell and locked up in it for three days in the midst of foul stenches. My informant asked me, what a man who could not bear these stenches was to do. the harsh but deliberate answer I gave was, that he was even then not to apologize, he was free to dash his head against the walls of the prison rather than submit to the wish of the tyrant. This is not an idle expression of opinion, but a titbit from my South African

experiences. The jail life in South Africa was not a bed of roses. Many a prisoner had to undergo solitary confinement. Hundreds had to do sanitary work. Several fasted. One woman was discharged a skeleton because the authorities would not allow her the only food she would eat. But she had a proud and resolute spirit. Out of the thousands who suffered imprisonment in South Africa, with one or two exceptions in the early stages I do not recall a single instance of a prisoner having weakened and apologized to purchase his freedom. Some like Parsi Rustomji, Imam Kadir Bavazir, Thambi Naidu and many others whose names I could set down never flinched but repeatedly sought imprisonment. The Temple of Freedom is not erected without the blood of sufferers. Non-violent method is the quickest, the surest and the best. Let us be true to our solemn oath taken at Congress and Khilafat gatherings, and triumph is at hand.

Young India, 28-7-1921

12. MY NOTES

Clash in Mhow

Mhow is an important Government centre near Indore. Its population includes both Hindus and Muslims. Only a few days ago, news of a clash between Bohra and Sunni Muslims appeared in newspapers, printed in some inconspicuous corner. It is believed that, as a result of the clash, one Bohra was killed and several others were wounded. The origin of the quarrel, it is said, was the refusal of Bohras to contribute money to the Swaraj Fund. For whatever reason it may be, we find the relations between Bohras and Sunni Muslims strained. We saw this was so in Godhra too. A similar thing happened in Ratlam. The Bohra community in the whole of the country adds up to only three lakh members. It is the duty of the larger communities to make such small groups feel secure. Even if the Bohras take no part whatever in the Khilafat or the swaraj movement, they should certainly not be subjected to harassment for that reason. It is possible that members of a very small community may not come forward [to join such movements] out of timidity or fear of consequences. In this situation, it will only be proper not to put any pressure on them. I have even been told that, at Mhow, the Hindus joined others against the Bohras. I believe that, if people of the same religion fight among themselves, others should remain perfectly neutral and should try to bring about understanding and harmony

between the two groups. Just as it is improper for Muslims to take sides in a quarrel among Hindus, so it is unbecoming of Hindus to take sides in a quarrel among Muslims. It is the duty of every Khilafat worker to stop such clashes wherever any may be threatened.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-7-1921

13. TELEGRAM TO A NON-CO-OPERATOR AT HYDERABAD

July 29, 1921

NON-CO-OPERATORS CANNOT GIVE EVIDENCE.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1921

14. DISCUSSION ON BOYCOTT AT A.I.C.C. MEETING, BOMBAY

[Before *July 30, 1921*][1]

GANDHIJI : Where are the hopefulness and energy which we displayed when we collected a crore of rupees in the month of June? Do we now have misgivings whether we shall succeed in bringing about boycott of foreign cloth? Our weakness is the only cause of our fear. If we consider the matter calmly, we shall realize that there will be nothing else for us to do after we have succeeded in bringing about the boycott. The more I think of it the more I am convinced that we shall not even be required to advise soldiers to lay down arms or tax-payers to refuse to pay taxes. If we can effect a complete boycott, only a few people will then have to court jail by offering civil disobedience or make other sacrifices. You need not, therefore, feel dispirited or give way to despair or lose heart.

I have with me here a number of questions about swadeshi and boycott, which I shall try to answer.

QUESTIONS. What is wrong if we undertake not to buy any new foreign cloth henceforth and continue to wear the clothes we have till the stock is exhausted?

ANSWER. I cannot understand how we can keep a thing after we have realized that we violate our dharma in using it. If we violate it by using foreign cloth, how can we keep such cloth even for a moment?

[1] The A.I.C.C. met from July 28 to 30.

I shall have committed a wicked sin if we force ourselves into somebody's house and smash his oven. The imports of foreign cloth have done this to our poorer classes, have utterly destroyed our [cloth] industry and reduced many of us to the verge of starvation. We have, through this trade, destroyed the very means of our livelihood. This also has been a terrible sin. When somebody has broken the chains on our feet, shall we preserve the fragments? I realize that we have developed the same sort of attachment for foreign cloth which a slave who has long been in chains develops for them, and that is why we raise such questions.

Q. Even if we throw away our garments of foreign cloth, why should we not give them to our poor, half-naked brothers and sisters? Why should we not give comfort to their hearts by making them a gift of those clothes? Why should we send them out of India to foreign countries?

A. If someone has flung beef into our house, should we throw it out or give it to a poor person? It may indeed be acceptable to some poor people, but why should we give to another person anything which we think sinful to use? Do we give our half-cooked or stale food to anybody to eat or do we throw it away? Our people are in such miserable straits that some persons may be ready to eat even stale food. But you will concede that offering them such food does not reflect credit on our generosity or our nobility. We have resolved that we shall congregate at Chowpati on the 1st of August clothed in khadi or, at any rate, in swadeshi garments. We wish that not a single person should come there except in such clothes. Do you, then, wish that the poor people should not attend that meeting? How can they come there wearing garments of foreign cloth discarded by you? Why should they, too, not come properly clad? We pride ourselves on our generosity in giving food, but we lack discrimination in expressing our compassion. Why should the poor adorn themselves with what we have discarded? Why should we have to give alms to the poor? The only gift we can bestow on the poor is to make them self-reliant; our movement is for making them like us. "Like us" does not mean wealthy, it simply means that they do not starve or go naked for want of clothes. The worst of sinners has the right, like ourselves, to breathe. There is no Shastra which says that he has no right to eat, drink and cover himself. Who has the right to beg? No one except a saintly man who has given us, and continues to give, the free gift of knowledge, has this right. We show lack of consideration and commit sin in giving alms. I believe that many of our charity kitchens are

symbols of sloth and sin. We should create such conditions in the country that no person will have to beg for alms. If we want to make the poor self-reliant, it is necessary to teach them some vocation or other. Only today an Englishman came to discuss this matter with me. I was explaining to him how odd it would be if he offered his hat or his suit to a poor man. I do not see on the head of anyone of you who have gathered here a turban or a cap which can be of use to a poor man. What will they do with the fine and multi-coloured saris of our sisters here? They simply do not wear such things. Had we been considerate, our dress would have borne some resemblance to that of the poor. I know the shepherdesses of Kathiawar. They would decidedly throw away the saris presented by you. Is there any poor woman who may need your silk sari? Shall we offer such saris to starving folk? Why should we create confusion in their minds? The *Gita* has forbidden us to act in this way. Why do you think that poor people will be all bliss if you give them your discarded articles? When they realize that we have given them things which we deem sinful, they will curse us. If you feel for people who are starving, give them something out of what you have kept for your own use. Why should you not give them some khadi from what you have for your use? The merit which accrues from good deeds is not earned cheaply.

Q. We may hand over our garments of foreign cloth for being sent outside; but why should they be consigned to fire? Why should the human labour which produced them go waste?

A. I would behave like a civilized man to foreign countries too. Why should we not buy mill-cloth and send it to them? I shall concede this, that it is less objectionable to send such cloth to Smyrna than to gift it to people here. There are things which may be sinful, not always and everywhere, but only at a particular place. It is so with foreign cloth. For European countries which are mostly dependent on other countries for their requirements of cloth and do not grow cotton, use of foreign cloth is not a sin. We can send back to Europe cloth which was manufactured there and imported into our country. It would not be proper for me to enter into argument with Muslim friends on this point, so I yielded and allowed the option of sending the cloth discarded by us to Smyrna. Our primary duty, however, is to make a bonfire of such cloth.

It is asked why an article on which human labour has been expended should be destroyed. But is there anything in this world on

which human labour has been expended and which will never be destroyed? My turban is well-shaped and my brother followed the profession of winding turbans. If, however, it comes to be infected with plague germs, should I, merely because it was wound by my brother, refrain from destroying it? It is, of course, my duty to destroy it. We look upon the human body as a raft with the help of which we may cross the sea of earthly existence. God has ordained the destruction of even such an essential instrument. He destroys a great many things. Are we, then, wiser than He? We have a right to destroy the thing produced by us.

Q. Why are we expected to destroy the cloth which we bought under the impression that it was swadeshi, which we were told was swadeshi? Swadeshi meant one thing till this day and now it is being defined to mean another. How can we be sure that after a while, it will not be defined in yet another way? Should we discard our clothes every time?

A. If someone gives us arsenic mistaking it for *chirata*, shall we swallow it? The question will never be asked. If somebody gives me a pice coated with mercury and if I tender it at a shop as a half-rupee coin, would not the police arrest me? We ought to discard a thing the moment we discover that it is not what we took it to be. The definition of swadeshi remains the same that I gave in 1919, but at the time I framed that definition there was no khadi even on my body. How could I put before the country something which did not exist? Today we have it in heaps. All we need now is self-confidence. We have modified the definition of swadeshi from time to time as we found practicable. A man may free himself from all forms of slavery, but he must still be a slave of his comrades. I, too, had to defer to the views of Shri Omar Sobhani and Shri Shankarlal Banker, and, for their sake I formulated the second pledge to the effect that one could use cloth woven with mill-made yarn produced from indigenous cotton. The matter did not stop there. Shrimati Ramibai Kamdar saw a difficulty even in this, and so I formulated the third pledge. There is, however, only one genuine form of swadeshi and I am now asking everybody to take that pledge.

Q. Does not the burning of cloth involve a breach of the pledge of non-violence?

A. Cleansing of filth is not violence. That is sin which leads to the degradation of the soul. Some violence is unavoidable. Shastras tell us that breathing involves violence. Even plants have life. Even

then we eat vegetables and yet do not think that we commit violence in doing so. If we look through a microscope, we shall find that even water is full of bacteria. Milk, too, is seething with bacteria. Even then, we see no harm in drinking water, and milk actually is considered to be a very nutritious food. I am committing some violence even as I am speaking to you now, but this violence is unavoidable and we do not regard it as sin.

It is a sin if you eat two morsels when you can do with one. The *Gita* says that we are thieves if we are not moderate in eating, and yet we arrange sumptuous community dinners. At every step we disobey the teachings of the *Gita*. What right, then, have we to ask this question?

> Q. If, through want of faith or out of false regard for others or out of fear, a person hands over some of his garments of foreign cloth, and only some, and afterwards buys foreign cloth again, it would do the country harm rather than good. Why should we then try to collect such garments or cloth? Why should we not merely explain to the people the slavery involved in foreign cloth and leave them free saying "Do what you think best."

A. Why should we doubt or distrust anybody? Why should we believe the other man to be a dissembler? Why should we think that somebody has not been sincere in parting with his cloth? Whatever one's motive in doing a good deed, it does yield some benefit. If someone speaks the truth out of fear, even this will save the world from the harm that would have otherwise resulted from his lying. If a man does a good thing with an evil motive, it will harm him and he will not get the merit which accrues from a good deed; still, the world will certainly benefit from the goodness of his act. A man who discards foreign cloth and wears swadeshi, both out of fear, may not get for himself the merit of a virtuous act, but his wearing swadeshi will provide work to some artisans in the country and his action will certainly result in that much good. We should, however, presume that what people have offered they have done with sincere faith.

The suggested application of "Do what you think best" is also mistaken. When did Lord Krishna say these words? Only after He had Arjuna securely in his grip. The Lord explained to him what his duty was, pleaded with him in various ways and then asked him to do what he thought best. We, too, should explain things to the people, appeal to their sense of honour and then, if they are still not

persuaded, we may tell them to do what they think best.We should not, of course, wish to kill anyone. Even if, however, we are not ready to lay down our own lives instead, we must boycott foreign cloth. We shall not be following dharma if we sit back with folded arms and do nothing. I shall continue to attend meetings like this till the 1st of August, but afterwards I shall stop doing even that. I shall go on pleading for swadeshi only up to the 31st of August. Afterwards, I shall give up that too. I am a practical business man. I shall go on with the crushing of any quantity of oil-seeds only as long as I believe that it is worth while doing so, and stop afterwards. I have much other business to attend to.

Q. How can those people who earn only eight to ten annas a day afford to boycott foreign cloth? How can a man earning Rs. 100 to 150 a month discard foreign cloth and get new garments made from swadeshi cloth or khadi? Should they incur a debt? Should they beg? Should they not rather rest content with a pledge not to purchase foreign cloth henceforth?

A. Even such a poor man should cleanse himself of the filth of foreign cloth. If the worst comes to the worst, let him beg for khadi afterwards; let him borrow money from friends or get it through hard labour, wearing, meanwhile, no more than a *langoti*. A strong determination will help us to overcome many difficulties. Such determination is a form of prayer and it does bear fruit.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-9-1921

15. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, BOMBAY[1]

July 30, 1921

Mr. Gandhi said on the 30th June Indians had done their duty to their country and they must be proud of it, for they had realized that they could do a thing without the support, the patronage, of Government. Their fear about want of money was now removed and even now he was receiving, unasked, funds from his Parsi, Mohammedan and Hindu friends for the Tilak Swaraj Fund and that showed that Indians were realizing their duty to their Motherland. He was now sure that, if the money that was already collected was spent properly, they would not only be able to collect one crore of rupees, but even four crores. He, however, wanted swaraj before the end of the year

[1] Gandhiji spoke to a crowded meeting of Parsis, held under the auspices of the Parsi Rajkiya Sabha, at Excelsior Theatre.

and that would mean they would not have to collect any more monies. But man proposes and God disposes, and his desires might not be fulfilled. If all Indians—men and women—did their duty to their country, he was sure of success. The All-India Congress Committee had now decided that they should put their energies in producing as much khaddar as possible. Without having swadeshi they could not have swaraj. Indians did not like to wear what was produced in this country but only those clothes which came from England, France and Japan, as they thought that country-made cloth was not beautiful or artistic enough for their requirement. If they could think like that, how could they realize swaraj? The two lungs of India were food and clothing and if they were diseased the country could not live long. How many crores of people there were in this country who were on the verge of starvation? If

they thought about them they would find that it was their duty to provide for those starving Indians. If they read the history of this country they would find that since India gave up weaving and spinning and took to foreign cloth India was suffering from poverty and as long as they did not try to remedy these things their sufferings would continue. If the Parsi millionaires gave all their money to the poor of this country their sufferings would not cease, for did they want to keep those crores of persons dependent on their *sadavarts* ? Or did they want to make them self-dependent? By their own efforts, by their own work, these people should earn their livelihood and get their clothing, and they must not be taught to depend upon others for their necessaries. There was only one way of providing work for the poor in this country and that was by Indians wearing khaddar. Some people might ask him why all those poor persons did not come to towns like Ahmedabad and Bombay where there was so great a scarcity of labour. He did not think that the poor of India would leave their homes and migrate to the towns for work in the mills. Supposing they did that, what would be the result? Indians would have to starve, for who would till the soil and produce wheat and other cereals for them? India would then be a jungle and the people would have to starve. It was therefore not possible for the whole population to migrate to towns. So long as there was a single man starving in this country, so long it was the duty of Indians to be economical and not to indulge in useless luxuries. Therefore he was telling his friends that whatever reforms they might get, whatever resolutions they might pass in the Councils, so long as they could not remove the poverty from this land, all their efforts would be in vain. He would appeal to his Parsi friends to realize the true position of India, diagnose the disease from which the country was suffering and then try to remove it by means of observing swadeshi. Let the Parsis show to the whole country—however much steeped in luxury they might be, however much they might like to use costly things and clothes —that once they had realized the serious position of this country they were willing to do their duty by their Motherland and not only fall in line with other communities, but to lead the other backward communities to the goal of swaraj. He

for one believed fully that a community which was always taking the lead in many questions in this country would also lead the country this time and would not fall behind. It was impossible for the country to make a move forward without taking all the different communities with it and India could not afford to leave a single community behind. Parsis who had been taking a leading part in so many questions, he had no doubt, would do so also in this regard. The Parsis should not say that because they had two months before them they would do nothing until the 30th September and give up everything on the last day. The Parsi community would be put to test on Monday next[1] and he knew they would not be found wanting, for he knew his Parsi friends thoroughly. How could he not know a community with whom he had lived for so many years? The men and women who had given so much money to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, who had given up their ornaments, should not fail in their duty now on the 1st of August. Let them all give up their foreign clothes on that date! What they thought was sinful to wear they should not keep for a single moment with them. They must realize that by wearing these foreign clothes they were starving millions of their own countrymen. Those foreign clothes should be destroyed and must not be kept with them, for they were tainted. What was sinful for them to wear was also sinful for poor men to wear and therefore he was against their clothes being given to poor men even. But they might be sent out of India to Smyrna if they so desired.

He would ask them to wear khadi and allow poor men to wear the mill-made cloth. Whatever was hand-made was more artistic, more beautiful and better on the whole than what was made on the machine. All that was made on the machine was for the poor and the rich men should spin their own yarn and send it to their own weavers to be woven into any kind of cloth they liked. That was the practice formerly before they took to foreign cloth. We had forgotten all the artistic crafts that were in this country and had taken to mill-made foreign things simply because they came from France or England. Were they incapable of all originality among themselves that they should resort to foreign countries for everything? Had they forgotten all their crafts and were they so much dependent on foreign countries for their requirements? He appealed to them to give up their foreign things and make some sacrifice for their country. It was not actually a sacrifice that they were making; they were only serving their country. He was glad that all the members of the All-India Congress Committee numbering something like 300 had come down to Bombay dressed in pure white khaddar. He often remembered what Mr. Pickthall had said about this. He had said that if they wanted to adopt any new colour they must first wash themselves white of all their impurities—they must adopt pure white khaddar before they took any coloured cloth. There was purity, there was holiness and there was beauty in khaddar

[1] August 1. The boycott campaign was to be launched on that day.

and it did not cause any inconvenience to those who wore it. It was the badge of our Indian nationality and they must wear it now. He then asked them to sign their names after due consideration to the pledge which was circulated among them. They must do so only after full consideration as he did not want to shame them into signing the pledge. It should be purely voluntary and there should be no sort of compulsion whatever.

The Bombay Chronicle, 31-7-1921

16. MY NOTES

WHITE-CLAD INDIA

On the day of the birth anniversary of Tilak, I was astonished to see Mr. Pickthall, the editor of the *Chronicle*, come to the meeting dressed in khadi, with a khadi cap, and still more pleased by his speech, brief but full of the purest sentiments. He said : "This is a movement of self-purification. India will lose nothing by wearing only white clothes for some time to come. Let them fill in colours after they have, clad in white, achieved their goal." We wear white khadi as we have no time to get it dyed. Moreover, many of us do not like colours, as they are of foreign make. That Mr. Pickthall should see in the whiteness of khadi the purity of our movement—this struck me as a very beautiful idea. Today, we look upon all colours, whatever their source, as beautiful. In truth, however, they are ugly spots. Beauty and art lie in colours which have been used to dye the right material with due regard for the times and after satisfying oneself as to their source. What a difference there is between a child's brush-work on a piece of paper and an artist's drawing into which he has infused a soul! At present our fascination for colours is of the same order as that for the dabs of paint made by a child's brush. No artist will arise in the country and we shall see no paintings in its shops so long as the majority of people do not start wearing white clothes. There can be no beauty of design, as they say, except on material of quality; in very much the same way, we cannot have a variety of designs pleasing to the eye and the mind so long as we do not make a beginning with pure, white khadi. The colours we have today are much like the colour of a white-washed tomb. One who hopes to see the development of Indian art must throw out the rubbish of foreign cloth and prepare a white background. Just as we clean up our yard before painting designs in it, similarly it is necessary to clean up immediately the rubbish of foreign cloth which is lying on the country's doorstep.

A Parsi Sister

Our Parsi brothers and sisters have started taking a very active part in the national movement. Shri Godrej, it appears, has decided to run his whole business of making safes in the interest of the country. Parsi youths have come forward to picket liquor-booths. Parsi men have started wearing khadi. Perinbehn, grand-daughter of the country's "Grand Old Man", has taken to dressing in thick khadi from head to foot. Parsi sisters have contributed their jewellery to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. The Parsi Political Association celebrated the birth anniversary of Shri Tilak in the Empire Theatre. Now one Parsi sister from Bombay has expressed a desire to take part in the picketing of liquor-booths and has invited other women to do likewise. This lady has suggested that if other women also join in picketing much of the present fear that it might lead to violence will disappear and we shall also have saved ourselves from the allegation that among the pickets are undesirable characters too. I offer my congratulations to this lady.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 31-7-1921

17. CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION ON ELECTIONS[1]

[Bombay,
July 31, 1921]

Mahatma Gandhi proposed the following resolution :

XVII. Without prejudice to the constitutional questions relating to the elections to the All-India Congress Committee held in Bengal and Madras last month and without going into the merits thereof, in view of the fact that fresh elections must take place in or before November next all over India and in view of the fact that a heavy intensive programme is at present set before all Congress organizations, this Committee considers it undesirable, in the interests of the country, to disturb the said elections and advises such persons from Bengal and Madras as feel themselves aggrieved to co-operate with the Provincial organization in both the Provinces with a view to the prosecution of the programme to a successful issue.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1921

[1] The Congress Working Committee met at Manibhavan, Laburnum Road, at 8.30 a.m. The resolution was seconded by Mahomed Ali and passed by a majority.

18. SPEECH AT INAUGURATION OF KHADI EXHIBITION, BOMBAY[1]

July 31, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi, in declaring the Exhibition open, said he was thankful to the President and to Mrs. Atia Begum for the great trouble they had taken in this regard. The latter had worked day and night to make it a success. He knew there were other workers with her, and he would give his praise to them also, but Atia Begum was the driving force behind the whole show. He was glad there were such women in this country with such organizing powers, and he thanked the President and her sister for what they had done in the matter. He was gladder that the organizer was a Muslim woman.

It was their misfortune that people should have to be told at this time of day that many things could be made out of khaddar. He hoped that people would take advantage of the Exhibition. Defining khaddar, he said it must be purely hand-spun and hand-woven and made in this country. He was glad that this country was now capable of manufacturing the finest cloth, particularly in the Bezwada and Ganjam districts. Many of the sisters present at the meeting must be wearing saris manufactured in those parts of the Presidency and they should be proud that this country was capable of manufacturing saris of such fineness. But the man who was mainly responsible for producing such fine cloth in this campaign was also there. His sin was that he had popularized khaddar in his province and encouraged its production there. Mahatma Gandhi did not say that simply because he was popularizing khaddar.

He was put into jail, but so far as he could see there was nothing against him except this crime of making the use of khaddar very popular among the people. Government was now afraid of such people, and by book or by crook it was trying to put such people into jail.

It was, therefore, our duty to go to jail wearing pure white khaddar like Venkatappaya, the lion of Andhra, one of the staunchest workers in the cause of Congress and swadeshi. Government was resorting to such oppression because they had seen that the people were determined to do what they said they would do before the 30th of September. When they had begun their work they had already given an ultimatum to the Viceroy. He congratulated both Mr. Sherwani and Mr. Venkatappaya of Andhra on the splendid courage they had shown in going to jail in fulfilment of their duty to their country. But the people should not be afraid of such oppression, for as long as they did their duty they had nothing to fear in this world. He appealed to the people

[1] The exhibition was organized by the Rashtriya Stree Sabha.

to do what they could for the country by sacrificing their personal conveniences and luxuries and taking to khaddar. When he had been to Puri, he saw there people dying of hunger, and there were about three crores of such people in this country. When our peasants were working the charkha in their spare time, they used to supplement their income, thus keeping the wolf from their doors, but now that the people had taken to Manchester cloth the occupation of the peasantry had gone and they were starving. In the temple of Jagannath itself the image of the god was clothed in foreign calicoes and he had asked the priest there whether he was not shaming God Himself by this means.

People had been complaining that the price of khaddar had been increased by his friends Vithaldas Jerajani and Narandas Purshottam. He would tell the people that these friends were doing that business in order to cover the working expenses and they had no intention of making any sort of profit out of the transaction. Some people were complaining that the weavers were asking more money for their khaddar. It is was so where was their crime? Had anybody complained when the lawyers and doctors and increased their fees ? Some of them were taking as much as Rs. 1,000 per day and where was the harm of the poor weavers asked for a few annas more? Had they not their families to maintain and by getting a few annas more would they not be giving their families what they were lacking for so many days? But why should the people complain on that account? People should not mind even if the weavers increased their prices more than they had already done.

He wished every household in this country to be turned into a spinning mill and every lane into a weaving mill for the regeneration of this country. If their women could devote their spare time to weaving which they now wasted in going to cinemas, etc., India would be able to support herself as far as clothing went.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-8-1921

19. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, BOMBAY[1]

July 31, 1921

I regard this day as sacred for Bombay. We are removing today a pollution from our bodies. We are purifying ourselves by discarding foreign cloth which is the badge of our slavery. We attain today fitness to enter the Temple of Freedom (swaraj).

Some say that destruction of discarded clothing is a token of

[1] The historic meeting inaugurating the swadeshi campaign with a bonfire of foreign clothes was held near the Elphinstone Mills at Parel, a suburb of Central Bombay. Printed copies of Gandhiji's speech were distributed in advance at the meeting. This translation was published in the newspapers.

anger and ill-will. Whether it is or not depends upon the point of view from which we burn such clothes.

Why should we bear ill-will towards the English, the Americans, the Japanese or the French? They will continue to dump down their cloth in our midst as long as we choose to buy it. Therefore if we are angry, we should vent our anger against ourselves. We shall cease to think ill of foreign nations when we have ceased to be tempted by foreign fineries.

I observe that the events happening in Turkey are agitating our Mussulman countrymen. They are impatient about the Khilafat wrong. I venture to suggest to them that the shortest and the straightest way of serving the Khilafat is swadeshi. For, by adopting swadeshi we make India powerful. And increase of India's power means an increase in our power to defend the Khilafat.

But the uppermost thought in our mind today must be to purify ourselves for celebrating tomorrow the anniversary of Lokamanya's death. We cannot purify ourselves until we have pledged ourselves to swadeshi. I, therefore, hope that those who have given up their clothes for distribution or sending abroad will make a fixed determination never any more to wear foreign cloth. I am sure that the best method of perpetuating Lokamanya's memory is the attainment of swaraj. And swaraj is impossible without swadeshi. And the inauguration of swadeshi can only be signalized by a complete and permanent boycott of foreign cloth. Hence I look upon the ceremony of burning as a sacrament. And I consider myself fortunate that the sacred ceremony is to be performed by me. May God remove all our uncleanliness whether within or without! May India have the strength to carry out her solemn determination to bring about a complete boycott of foreign cloth by the 30th September next!

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-8-1921

20. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, BOMBAY[1]

July 31, 1921

In the course of his speech Mahatma Gandhi said that the charkha was their sword with which they must fight the battle of swaraj and win it for their country. The charkha was the only weapon which would enable them to protect their dharma and it was their duty to bring khaddar into universal use in this country. On swadeshi alone

[1] At a meeting held in the compound of Motisha's temple in Parel

depended their salvation and it was their duty to give up for ever the use of all foreign cloth. The foreign clothes which they were now using were so many bonds which bound them hand and foot to foreigners and if they wished to see their country free for ever they must give up their foreign clothes. It was the bounden duty of every Indian to think of his poor brethren who were on the verge of starvation, because they had given up the use of swadeshi cloth and taken to foreign things. Now that they had realized the fate of their poor countrymen, were they going to allow them to remain in their present condition for ever? He hoped not. He had not the least doubt that those who had not already given up their clothes would do so immediately. He also appealed to his sisters present there to give up their foreign finery and wear khaddar for the sake of their country. Only by adopting complete swadeshi could they ever hope to free their country from the bonds in which at present it was. For true swadeshi meant true swaraj and they must have swaraj for their country. He earnestly appealed to the audience to do their duty to their country at this critical juncture and win swaraj for ever.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-8-192

21. LETTER TO J. B. PETIT

[End of *July, 1921*]

DEAR MR. PETIT,

I thank you for your note of the 18th instant. I thought the note was [for] Rs. 2,000. I write from memory. Do please send Rs. 500/- out of the Rs. 2,000 note.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : G.N. 8231

22. MESSAGE TO PEOPLE OF KHEDA DISTRICT

[Before *August 1, 1921*]

BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF KHEDA,

I have always hoped for much from you, and now that you have found a place for Bhai Abbas Tyabji in your hearts, my hopes have risen. Your contribution to the Tilak Swaraj Fund has exceeded expectations. The country's second pledge, which now remains to be carried out, is more difficult, but certainly it cannot be so to you. A farmer can have no love for foreign cloth. He would feel ashamed to have to wear garments of fine cloth. The one thing which, more than anything else, can banish fear from Kheda district is the spinning-wheel. We have realized its miraculous power. Hereafter we must

depend on it alone. To do so, we ought forthwith to give up foreign cloth. No day can be more auspicious for that purpose than the death anniversary of Tilak Maharaj. On that day, make a bonfire of your foreign clothes and so cleanse yourselves. Having done so, resolve that you will in future manage with a few garments of any quality available and that you will produce in Kheda itself all the khadi you require. May God help you in this!

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 7-8-1921

23. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, BOMBAY

August 1, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi said the large crowd had not come there to hear speeches. They had all come there to worship Lokamanya Tilak. They had come there to pay their tribute to Tilak Maharaj. His message would appear in the newspapaers and the people could read it there. His heart rejoiced to see so many people there who were determined upon winning swaraj within this year. We had to do our best to get freedom within this year. For that purpose we had taken the oath to boycott all foreign cloth by the 30th of September. It was their duty to see that they kept their oath religiously. He did not want to say anything more, as the incoming tide was advancing rapidly. The patience with which they had sat there showed that they were all non-violent non-co-operators. He hoped that Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Sikhs, Christians and Jews would observe the oath which they had taken. Tilak had taught them that swaraj was their birthright and only by winning that freedom would they be doing their duty to their country. He appealed to them to go home quietly and observe the swadeshi vow not only now, but for ever and ever. He exhorted them never to give up swadeshi even after they had got swaraj.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-8-1921

24. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

August 1, 1921

It was the magic of Lokamanya Tilak's name that brought together the two lakhs of men and women on Mr. Sobani's ground yesterday. It was to me a soul-stirring sight. Bombay the beautiful lit yesterday a fire which must remain for ever alive even as in a Parsi temple and which must continually burn all our pollutions, as yesterday we burnt our greatest outward pollution, namely, our foreign clothing. Let it be a token of our determination never to touch foreign cloth. Untouchability of foreign cloth must be held to be a duty with every Hindu, Mussulman, Jain, Sikh, Parsi, Christain, Jew and all other religious communities which have made India their home. Let it be a common necessary factor for all Indian creeds. Untouchability of foreign cloth is as much a virtue with all of us as untouchability of the suppressed classes must be a sin with every devout Hindu. It was thereore a noble sacrifice we made yesterday. Bombay qualified herself for celebrating Lokamanya's memory. Let us treasure the memory of his great self-sacrifice, his dauntless courage and his austere simplicity. He made patriotism a religion. Let us dedicate ourselves for realization of his dream of swaraj. No memorial less than swaraj can fittingly perpetuate his memory.

And as I said yesterday, there is no deliverance of India without true swadeshi. It was the true and necessary sacrificial fire we lit yesterday.

As with the outer, so with the inner. To me, yesterday's outward fire is the symbol of the inner fire that should burn up all our weaknesses of the head or the heart. Our purified reason must show us the true economics of swadeshi. Our purified hearts must make us strong to withstand the temptation of yielding to the charms of foreign cloth. Howsoever good it may be outside India, it is not good enough for India.

If it was a true fire we lit yesterday, if it is a true homage we have met today to render to the memory of Lokamanya, we will take good care not to deceive ourselves or the nation. Khadi is on a fair way to become the State dress, it is not the foreign muslin that will henceforth

[1] The meeting was held at Chowpati. The text of this speech was printed and distributed to the audience.

deck our bodies on auspicious occasions, but the sacred khadi reminiscent not of sweated labour or the enforced idleness and pauperism of India's millions, but of the reviving poetry of the home life and of the incoming prosperity of the poorest toiler. And if that is to be the significance of yesterday's sacrament and today's demonstration on the very spot where twelve months ago the sacred remains of our deceased countryman were cremated, there must be no turning back upon our resoluton, there must be no make-believe, no mere show. We must give up the use of foreign cloth once for all. We must realize that foreign cloth in our possession is valueless, even as the richest milk if it is discovered to be infected is fit only to be thrown away. It we are no longer to wear foreign cloth, is it not so much burden locked up in our trunks? Do they not, in Europe, give up valuable things when they have gone out of fashion? I utter this word of caution at this early stage, because I know that many have given up only a part of their foreign clothing in the hope, evidently, that some day they might be able to wear what they kept. Collection of foreign cloth is not like collection of funds and jewellery of which only a part need be given by many. Collection of foreign cloth is like collection of refuse, every particle of which an industrious and careful housewife puts in the dustbin. So much depends upon our ability to revolutionize our taste for the tinsel splendour if the shops for the sale of foreign cloth are to be an exception in our bazaars. Let us not hanker after imitations. If we do, we are likely to have fraudulent imitations of khadi from foreign markets. For the time being and during the transition period, the coarser and unwashed khadi is the best.

I swear by swadeshi as it affords occasion for an ample exercise of all our faculties and as it tests every one of the millions of men and women, young and old. It can succeed only if India *acts as one mind*. And if India can do so in swadeshi, she will have learnt the secret of swaraj. She will then have mastered the art of destruction and construction in a scientific manner.

To us the spot where we burnt a part of our sins yesterday has become hallowed. Let me hope that Mr. Sobani who was already contributed generously to the movement and who has given his son to it, will part with just the plot on which the sacrificial fire was lighted and enable the nation to erect a fitting monument to commemorate the sacred event. And so must we acquire this site where we have met today and where we cremated the remains of Lokamanya. Here out

of his ashes rose the force of non-co-operation. It was on the 1st of August last that non-co-operation was inaugurated. And it was in Parel on Mr. Sobani's ground yesterday that the nation commenced what is to me almost the final stage in its march towards swaraj. May God grant that india shall not be found wanting on the 30th of September next.

A word about the volunteers, and I have done. We are often accused of incapacity of organization. Yet there was no police needed yesterday, and there was no mishap. All work from collection down to burning was organized by the volunteers. All honour to them and the other helpers. It is by such patient, silent and peaceful effort that we hope to win freedom's battle.

Young India, 4-8-1921

25. NOTES

PRIDE OF ANDHRA

After all Konda Venkatappaya and his barrister and *vakil* friends have been arrested. When the news of the first two arrests of a well-known barrister and *vakil* came, I was prepared to hear that Mr. Venkatappaya was shot dead. He had proclaimed a week's hartal over the arrests in anticipation of the Committee's sanction. I felt that the hartal was a bad move. And I think so still. His next telegram was that the hartal was going on peacefully. Then came the telegram announcing the arrest of his four associates and of himself. I believe Konda Venkatappaya to be the pride of Andhra. He woke up in that great country when everyone else was asleep. He has great strength of character. He has accepted non-violence as his creed and he is fully living up to it. With so many others he has for years dedicated himself to the service of the country. And when he is arrested, to me it is the surest sign of the complete insanity of the Government. It is also a sign to me of victory hastening to us. Only, the Andhra friends must remain calm and unperturbed. They are a brave and spiritually-minded people. They have dogged pertinacity. They have a fine body of workers. And they can give a good account of themselves during these few months of strenuous work. They can best honour the imprisoned leaders by becoming leaders themselves and organizing swadeshi. They must discard foreign cloth. Ours is a country in which we do with just enough cloth to hide our nakedness. Andhra has still got the skill to produce the finest hand-spun

yarn obtainable in India. Let every Andhra man and woman be engaged in this great work during the next two months, no matter what happens to whom. Imprisonment of the best of us ought not to arrest the progress of our work; it should on the contrary add to our speed.

Indian Soldiers and Civilians

Bureaucracy does not mean Englishmen merely; it also means thousands of Indians trained by them. It is a vicious system which taints all who belong to it. And so it has come about that now the Indian soldier and the Indian civilian are being used more and more for advancing the system. Who are the men at the back of the Guntur arrests? Indians. Who gave the order to fire in Matiari? An Indian. Who charged the poor labourers of Assam? Indians. Who conducted the mock trial of Maulana Sherwani? An Indian. The Gurkhas who charged had not the courage to disobey the orders to assault innocent men and women. The Indian officers and magistrates in various places have not the courage to refuse to punish or shoot innocent men. Our demoralization is complete when we become willing tools in the hands of the tyrant. I should not at all be surprised if we find that the next Jallianwala is organized and worked under Indian guidance. And it would go down to posterity as training in swaraj! The profession of a soldier or a judge cannot be an honourable calling under a system of government that is designed to keep millions of men under subjection as long as possible. But we must put up with tyranny of our own kith and kin as we do with that of the foreigner. Let us not weakly imagine that we may frighten them into giving up their job! They will do so only when they are tired of it, never by our making their life intolerable. We must challenge them to do the worst even as we challenge the English official or officer. As a matter of fact they can only be pitied. And being irresponsible, they are more likely to make fatal blunders than an English official. The latter often imposes upon himself a restraint which his consciousness of being a member of the ruling race requires whereas the Indian runs at the most the risk of losing his post. The repression now assuming definite shape in our land is therefore of a far more dangerous type than hitherto. We must be prepared to face it patiently and fearlessly.

The Sikh Colour

The Sikh friends are needlessly agitated over the colours in the proposed national flag. They want the black colour also to be

inserted on the ground of their military importance. Apart from the merits, their agitation has no point, as the flag has not even come before the All-India Congress Committee for discussion or decision. And in view of their objection I do not propose to bring it up before the Committee at all, so long as I have failed to convince them of the unreasonableness of the demand. On the merits, I have not the shadow of a doubt that they should withdraw the objection. The white includes all other colours.To ask for special prominence is tantamount to a refusal to merge in the two numerically great communities. I would have had only one colour if there had been no quarrel between Hindus and Mussulmans. The Sikhs never had any difference with the Hindus. And their quarrel with the Mussulmans was of the same type as the Hindus. It is a dangerous thing to emphasize our differences or distinctions. We must seek for points of contact. Distinguished Mussulman friends on hearing of the Sikh claim advised me to adopt a single colour, either white or red. But that too would be inadvisable. The two colours red and green should be there to perpetuate the growing unity. I am aware of the difficulty of Sikh nationalists. The Government agents in the Sikh camp are making all kinds of mischievous suggestions to breed dissensions. And they are naturally afraid. The best thing is not to worry. If they attempt to set right every grievance manufactured against Hindus or Mussulmans or against the non-co-operation movement in general, they will find that they will have no platform to stand upon. Whether they are few or many, Sikh nationalists must know their own mind and stand unmoved by anything said by their detractors.

SIKH REPRESENTATION

Whilst therefore I believe the complaint regarding the national colours to be unsound, I regard the Sikh fear about representation at the present stage to be justified. They have been assured by the Congress communal representation if the Mussulmans insist upon the Lucknow compact. The Working Committee issued only advisory instructions because of attempts to divide Mussulmans. The Sikhs therefore are entitled to similar assurances. There should be no difficulty about issuing them. It is largely a question for the three communities in the Punjab to settle among themselves. The Committee can only issue helpful instructions.

The Agreed Statement

His Excellency the Viceroy has now issued a statement[1] agreed between him and me regarding the interviews I had the honour of having with him. The statement sets forth all the details that the public need know. I do not propose to discuss it. In my opinion, it makes it clear that the apology, as I have calle the statement of regrets initiated withme,wasconceived before Iever knew of the impending prosecution for the speeches that were shown to me and that it was neither suggested nor mad for fear of the prosecution of the Brothers, certainly not to avoid imprisonment. It is my firm belief that the Brothers have rendered a great service to the cause by making the statement. I do not regret having given them the advice. I wish also to place on record my appreciation of the willingness with which Lord Reading approached my request for the publication of an agreed statement, In the lengthy correspondence[2] that ensued between us for settling the form and the language of the statement, I did not observe on His Excellency's part my inclination to avoid mention of any relevant detail. On my part I had informed him that I had no intention to hide anything whatsoever The public therefore have a full statement from both sides.

Bad of Karachi

Though I have not read the papers regarding the stoning of Europeans in Karachi by acrowd that was incensed against the imprisonment of Swami Krishnanand, from what I have heard through friends from Sind I must confess that those who threw stones have done a disservice to the sacred cause they had at heart. They have also shown little honour to the Swami by breaking the pledge of non-violence. The Swami is undoubtedly a popular and fearless worker. He had been producing by organized picketing a marked impression on the receipts of the liquor-dealers. I hear, too, that he was falsely charged with having assaulted someone. Granting all this, it was the clear duty of the populaceto observe perfect self-restraint. It is a most thoughtless thing to assault innocent Europeans, because the police have wrongly prosecuted and a magistrate convicted. Incidents such

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Interview-cum-apology", 4-8-1921.

[2] This is not available.

as these make civil disobedience difficult, if not impossible. Let the crowd that so misbehaved in Karachi honour the Swami by boycotting foreign cloth, and by spinning or weaving.

A Sign of the Times

One of the happiest experiences of the A.I.C.C. meeting in Bombay was the fact that a Telugu member asked speakers who knew Hindustani to speak in that language, and the Tamil President accepted the suggestion and straightway appealed to the next speaker to speak in Hindustani. The idea was popular, and several speakers adopted it. There are now many schools in Dravida-land teaching Hindustani. Much however still remains to be done. I hope that when the Committee meets next, the Dravidian members will have made headway with their Hindustani. Let the would-be delegates to the Congress also take note.

Young India, 4-8-1921

26. CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

Civil disobedience was on the lips of every one of the members of the All-India Congress Committee. Not having really ever tried it, everyone appeared to be enamoured of it from a mistaken belief in it as a sovereign remedy for our present-day ills. I feel sure that it can be made such if we can produce the necessary atmosphere for it. For individuals there always is that atmosphere except when their civil disobedience is certain to lead to bloodshed. I discovered this exception during the satyagraha days. But even so, a call may come which one dare not neglect, cost what it may. I can clearly see the time coming to me when I *must* refuse obedience to every single State-made law, even though there may be a certainty of bloodshed. When neglect of the call means a denial of God, civil disobedience becomes a peremptory duty.

Mass civil disobedience stands on a different footing. It can only be tried in a calm atmosphere. It must be the calmness of strength not weakness, of knowledge not ignorance. Individual civil disobedience may be and often is vicarious. Mass civil dis-obedience may be and often is selfish in the sense that individuals expect personal gain from their disobedience. Thus, in Sout Africa, Kallenbach and Polak offered vicarious civil disobedience. They had nothing to gain. Thousands offered it because they expected personal gain also in the shape, say, of the removal of the annual poll-

tax levied upon ex-indentured men and their wives and grown-up children. It is sufficient in mass civil disobedience if the resisters understand the working of the doctrine.

It was in a practically uninhabited tract of country that I was arres-ted in South Africa when I was marching into prohibited area with over two to three thousand men and some women.[1] The company included several Pathans and others who were ablebodied men. It was the greatest testimony of merit the Government of South Africa gave to the move-ment. They knew that we were as harmless as we were determined. It was easy enough for that body of men to cut to pieces those who arrested me. It would have not only been a most cowardly thing to do, but it would have been a treacherous breach of their own pledge, and it would have meant ruin to the struggle for freedom and the forcible deportation of every Indian from South Africa. But the men were no rabble. They were disciplined soldiers and all the better for being unarmed. Though I was torn from them, they did not disperse, nor did they turn back. They marched on to their destination till they were, every one of them, arrested and imprisoned. So far as I am aware, this was an instance of discipline and non-violence for which there is no parallel in history. Without such restraint I see no hope of successful mass civil disobedience here.

We must dismiss the idea of overawing the Government by huge demonstrations every time someone is arrested. On the contrary we must treat arrest as the normal condition of the life of a non-co-operator. For we must seek arrest and imprisonment, as a soldier who goes to battle seeks death. We expect to bear down the opposition of the Government by courting and not by avoiding imprisonment, even though it be by showing our supposed readiness to be arrested and imprisoned *en masse*. Civil disobedience then emphatically means our desire to surrender to a single unarmed policeman. Our triumph consists in thousands being led to the prisons like lambs to the slaughter-house. If the lambs of the world had been willingly led, they would have long ago saved themselves from the butcher's knife. Our triumph consists again in being imprisoned for no wrong whatsoever. The greater our innocence, the greater our strength and the swifter our victory.

As it is, this Government is cowardly, we are afraid of imprisonment. The Government takes advantage of our fear of jails.

[1] Gandhiji was arrested near Palmford on November 6, 1913, while leading men, women and children into the Transvaal on their "Great March".

If only our men and women welcome jails as health resorts, we will cease to worry about the dear ones put in jails which our countrymen in South Africa used to nickname His Majesty's Hotels.

We have too long been mentally disobedient to the laws of the State and have too often surreptitiously evaded them to be fit all of a sudden for civil disobedience. Disobedience to be civil has to be open and non-violent.

Complete civil disobedience is a state of peaceful rebellion—a refusal to obey every single State-made law. It is certainly more dangerous than an armed rebellion. For it can never be put down if the civil resisters are prepared to face extreme hardships. It is based upon an implicit belief in the absolute efficiency of innocent suffering. By noiselessly going to prison a civil resister ensures a calm atmosphere. The wrongdoer wearies of wrongdoing in the absence of resistance. All pleasure is lost when the victim betrays no resistance. A full grasp of the conditions of successful civil resistance is necessary at least on the part of the representatives of the people before we can launch out on an enterprise of such magnitude. The quickest remedies are always fraught with the greatest danger and require the utmost skill in handling them. It is my firm conviction that, if we bring about a successful boycott of foreign cloth, we shall have produced an atmosphere that would enable us to inaugurate civil disobedience on a scale that no Government can resist. I would therefore urge patience and determined concentration on swadeshi upon those who are impatient to embark on mass civil disobedience.

Young India, 4-8-1921

27. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

ALIGARH,
August 5, 1921

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I got your letter. It does not matter that you could not meet me. You had my blessings along with my good wishes. You will come to no harm there, nor will you experience my difficulty. I do understand the condition of Mathuradas, Durga and others. I had very much wanted to go and see both of them. But how could I have managed this in Bombay? Speaking of Bombay, it could not have done better than it did, could it?

We are to meet on the 10th and so I write no more.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Prabhudas[1] has arrived. Stokes has also come with him.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 11416

28. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MORADABAD[2]

August 6, 1921

GENTLEMEN,

I have not been able to understand the purpose of the peace councils the Government of the United Provinces is setting up everywhere. If they are really intended to uphold peace, why do they not seek our colla-boration in their work? After all, the aim of our non-co-operation move-ment is also to maintain peace while we work to secure swaraj. When both have the same end in view, where is the need for the separate exis-tence of these peace councils? It is for you to reflect on the matter. Yes, if these councils, in the name of peace, cause breach of peace if they pro-voke unnecessary excitement among people, are ever ready to resort to rowdyism and thus misuse their name, then I must advise you to keep them at an arm's length. Do not run after a mirage lest you have to repent afterwards. It is for me to give you counsel. But if some people will not accept it, they are free to act as they like.

Then Gandhiji dwelt at length on the need for boycott of foreign cloth and taking to swadeshi. He said.

Though, for the time being, the price of khadi will be high, it will still be more economical as compared to muslin, for where you need eight muslin snirts in a year you will require at most four khadi shirts.

I say this on the basis of my long experience of khadi. If you act on my advice and with all your heart take to khadi, spin and give up foreign cloth even as you throw away a coffin, God, Who is

[1] Son of Chhaganlal Gandhi, Gandhiji's nephew

[2] Gandhiji arrived in Moradabad from Aligarh at 10 a.m. He addressed a women's meeting in the Town Hall during the day and exhorted them to use swadeshi cloth and take to spinning. In the afternoon he spoke at the public meeting held in Maharaja Theatre.

kindness itself, will not remain indifferent. He will be moved in His throne and be our help in our efforts to secure swaraj.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 15-8-1921

29. FITNESS TO PAY HOMAGE

Any work done by a person not qualified to do it will yield no fruit. Should a washerman try his hand at shaving, he would only draw blood, should a lawyer try to practise medicine, the result would be disastrous. An utter rogue may not receive the deity's grace by going to the temple; prayers offered without cleansing oneself God will not accept.

Similarly, if we pay homage to Tilak Maharaj without having first made ourselves fit to do so, it will not be acceptable. One who simply dislikes India, who is irritated by its climate, who looks upon Indian customs as uncivilized, who turns his face away at the sight of Indian food and feels repelled by Indian dress, what homage can such a one offer to Tilak Maharaj? Would the latter's soul accept such homage? God is pleased only with one who offers anything, be it only leaf, flower, fruit or water, with devotion, and devotion means whole-hearted emulation.

The time has come which will test all those who profess adoration. How shall we celebrate the death anniversary of the Lokamanya today? Shall we resolve to achieve swaraj during this year? Shall we discard the garments of foreign cloth in which we adorn ourselves?

One who does not do his duty can win no rights. How can he who has not paid his debt ask for a letter of discharge? As swaraj is our birthright, so swadeshi is an obligation laid upon us by the fact of our having been born where we were. There can be no swaraj without swadeshi. "Swaraj is my birthright" is the first part of the Tilak-Gita; the second part runs: "Swadeshi is the duty born with me."

If, therefore, we wish to celebrate or observe the death anniversary of the Lokamanya in a fitting manner, we can do so only by taking the pledge of swadeshi. We cannot chant the *mantra* of swadeshi unless we give up altogether the use of foreign cloth. Such cloth is like so much dirt. We cannot be clean unless we get rid of it, and, before we have cleansed ourselves, we are not fit to enter the

temple of swaraj. As Maulana Mahomed Ali has stated, our desire to win swaraj by peaceful means does not mean that we can go on living as we please. If we sacrifice nothing and merely go on repeating the slogan of non-violence, it would be sheer apathy or laziness on our part. Non-violence not accompanied by sacrifice and work is a state of death. Who can ever enjoy the peace which is that of a corpse? What should we do with such peace? A coward takes shelter in his home at the sight of danger. Remaining peaceful in the sense in which he understands the word 'peaceful' will bring destruction on his home. The peacefulness to which we have pledged ourselves is an expression of strength. If we do not have even the strength, the courage or the desire to give up the use of foreign cloth, our peacefulness is hypocrisy. Hypocrisy is play-acting; can tears shed in acting ever bring enlightenment?

Everyone, therefore, who would pay homage to Tilak Maharaj must necessarily take the pledge of complete swadeshi. A man may constantly have the Lokamanya's name on his lips without having first adopted swadeshi in his dress, but his doing so will yield no more fruit than a parrot's recital of the *Bhagavat*.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-8-1921

30. NEW PLEDGE

The pledge taken at Bezwada may be regarded as fulfilled. Its fulfilment required the collection of a crore of rupees; God has granted the country success in this and so upheld its good name and honour. The second pledge which was taken is a more difficult one to fulfil, and this is natural. We must completely give up the use of foreign cloth before the thirtieth of September.

In this matter, Gujarat does not have to ascertain its part of the task. All are required to boycott foreign cloth totally, and so there is no question in this of one doing more or less than another. Imports of foreign cloth can be stopped only if its use is given up by all; Gujarat's contribution, therefore, will be—all Gujaratis doing this.

For this, we should meet every Gujarati-speaking person and everyone living in Gujarat and convince him. A realization of this is enough to reveal the difficult nature of our task. But, shall we accept defeat because the task is difficult? It is so very difficult for us to banish the use of foreign cloth? Are our silks and fine clothes dearer

to us than our country? Even if we doubt the power of swadeshi to bring us swaraj, we cannot possibly doubt the necessity of using only swadeshi articles.

Seen in this light, our task appears simple. We did not feel happy in giving money; in giving up legal practice, the question of livelihood was involved; in leaving Government schools, there was the fear of our remaining without education. What fear can we have when discarding the use of foreign cloth? There can be no harm at any rate. Why store something for which there is no use? A bottle of medicine, whatever it may have cost us, is thrown away once the disease is cured. When the enchantment has vanished, we would take no more than a second to cast away even the most gorgeous adornments. Are we so much under the spell of foreign cloth that we cannot possible give up wearing it? I am sure no one will think about the money paid for such cloth. If we do, we shall be guilty of the sin of miserliness. A miserly mother makes her child sick by forcing him to eat what is left over on his plate. True economy consists in throwing the food away. In the same way, true economy consists in discarding one's stock of foreign cloth.

The giving up of foreign cloth will mean the introduction of simplicity and an end to living in pretentious style; khadi clothes besides, last longer as they are more durable. On whose monthly expenses come to a hundred rupees will now find that his expenditure for the entire year is much less. For such a person, throwing away foreign garments worth thousands should be no hardship. By discarding foreign cloth forthwith we save the country crores of rupees. That being so, throwing away foreign cloth worth lakhs or crores of rupees will be a sign of far-sightedness.

Swadeshi is the last stage of our journey. If we fail in it, we would have nothing for it but to give up the hope of winning swaraj this year. I hope, therefore, that Gujarat will take up this work without delay and do its duty.

Though everyone may have an equal duty in this matter of renouncing [the use of foreign cloth], Gujarat can be in the forefront in producing cloth. We shall have no shortage of cloth if each school and each home takes up spinning and weaving. If Gujarat does not throw itself heart and soul into the work of khadi, we shall lose the game when we have almost won it.

Let us understand the meaning of swadeshi. Not only do we

want, through it, to retain the sixty crores of rupees being sent to other countries but also wish, by making crores of men and women produce cloth of the same value, to see this amount distributed in their homes. By this means, we wish to banish hunger from the country. I, therefore, regard banishing foreign cloth as banishing hunger. Moreover, the number of charity institutions distributing food to the needy is no the increase. Hundreds of thousands of people do no work and live on alms, thereby putting their ochre robe to shame. An able-bodied person should have nothing to eat if he does no work. Today, we simple have no work of a kind which we could offer to any begger. When the spinning-wheel and the loom come to be looked upon as honourable work in the country, only the Brahmins and the fakirs who disseminate knowledge among the people will continue to live on alms. The people will love feeding the incapacitated and the crippled. Rogues will no longer be able to roam around in the garb of sadhus and beg for alms. Thus swadeshi will mean the end of fraud and the rule of goodness.

I hope that, having understood this, Gujarat will immediately step up the work of carding, spinning and weaving in every home, thereby serving itself and the country.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-8-1921

31. MY NOTES

Bombay Surpasses Itself

Bombay paid homage to Tilak Maharaj in a befitting manner. On Sunday, July 31, about two lakhs of people performed a *yajna* and set fire to their filth on a plot of land belonging to Sheth Haji Yusuf Sobani. Innumerable people, who had doubts as to the propriety of burning, doubted no longer. Not less than one and a half lakh articles were burnt. Those who still had black caps of foreign make on their heads felt ashamed when the sacrificial fire was lit and there followed a rain of caps.

The enthusiasm of the people on that day can hardly be described. The whole ground, overflowing with men and women dressed handsomely in white khadi caps and khadi clothes, gave one the impression that the entire population of Bombay had assembled there. The flame that was kindled on that day symbolized the flame that is aglow in the country's heart today. I hope that this flame will

not die out so long as even an inch of foreign cloth remains in our homes; and may a similar flame be lit every week, not only on that holy ground, but in every town and every street of India and may our filth of foreign cloth be burnt up in it. The men, women and children of Bombay, purified by this act of renunciation, went, clad in pure khadi, where Tilak Maharaj had been cremated on the Chowpati maidan and paid homage to that noble soul. Never, perhaps, have so many people assembled with so much devotion in their hearts on the death anniversay of even an emperor.

In June, Bombay made a munificent contribution to help the country to keep its pledge and thus justified its reputation as the city beautiful and, in the next month, it prepared the ground for the next step and showed itself more beautiful still.

But much remains yet to be done. Bombay has not completely swept out the dirt of foreign cloth. Those men and women who parted with their garments of foreign cloth did so half-heartedly. So long as this filth is not totally removed, we shall not have been completely purified and as even a small amount of dirt left over can produce poisonous gases, so a little of foreign cloth left over can do great harm. I hope, therefore, that the dirt of foreign cloth will be swept out of each nook and corner, whether in Bombay or elsewhere. So long as this filth has not been completely thrown out of our homes, there will always be the danger of the plague of foreign cloth coming back. If we are determined to have swaraj, foreign cloth should become intolerable to us for ever and this can be so only if we deliberately set fire to it.

Victory or Defeat

Long ago a correspondent asked me whether the victory here would be any better than the one in South Africa. To me this question seemed to reveal as much bitterness as ignorance. The correspondent did not know what the problem in South Africa was. He suggested that the hardships in South Africa had remained. There, the movement was directed against a particular law. In this our success was complete. The repeal of the Asiatic Act, the removal of the colour bar from the Immigration Act, recognition of the validity of Hindu and Muslim marriages and the repeal of the three-pound tax—these were the successive demands and the Government there was forced to concede them all.

I look, upon this as total victory. But the greatest victory is the

fact that it was satyagraha which enabled the Indian population in South Africa to retain their foothold there. This again was the reason for the campaign against Indians in other colonies losing a little of its vehemence. It is because of this that the entire world took note of Indians in South Africa. The Asiatic Act was the first step in a policy aimed at complete elimination of Indians. It was possible to force its reversal as soon as it was taken. The same may be understood about our struggle here. The acceptance of the demand regarding the Khilafat will not preclude the possibility of its existence being threatened again at some future date. Our getting swaraj will not necessarily mean that we may not lose it again some time in the future. One can retain something only so long as one can wield the weapon employed to attain it. With soul-force lost, we are certain to lose that which has been attained by such force. What has been attained through self-control will be lost in a minute if one violates the laws of health by eating and drinking anything one feels tempted to.

Satyagraha and its off-shoot, non-co-operation, are weapons which admit of no defeat. How can there the any defeat for one determined to fight unto death? Defeating a man means forcing him to admit defeat while he is alive. Who will say that the soldier lying dead on the field of battle has been defeated? None is this world can defeat a satyagrahi who refuses to compromise on his demand. The soul is its own enemy as also its own friend.

Breach of Peace in Karachi

Swami Krishnanand has been arrested in Karachi and put into prison. He was a popular figure. He has done excellent work in the anti-drink campaign. I have been informed that the charge against him was baseless. It cannot be denied that all this was enough to hurt and anger the people, but non-co-operation has taught us to express our anger in a profitable manner. If the people have genuine affection for Swami Krishnanand, they would give up drinking, picket liquor shops peacefully, throw their foreign cloth into the fire, ply the spinning-wheel, start working handlooms and produce khadi. Working in this manner, they should win swaraj and get the Swami released or, continuing the Swami's work, court imprisonment. Instead of acting in this way, some persons resorted to violence and threw stones at Englishmen going their way. This certainly did not secure the Swami's release, and swaraj has receded a little. Swaraj could be won this very day but we do not get it because we cannot

restrain our anger. How can we hope for swaraj if we violate the chief condition to be fulfilled for winning it? I advise the Congress and the Khilafat Committee workers in Karachi to seek out the guilty, try to reason with them and see that they are repentant. Such incidents of breach of peace also delay the starting of civil disobedience. Either we should be capable of preventing such outbreaks of violence or the Government's power will do so. Even the inexperienced can see that, so long as we are dependent on the Government for preventing outbreak of violence, the peace-loving section of the public will not even wish to have swaraj, and swaraj will not be possible so long as there is no irresistible desire for it among the masses.

HINDUS AND MUSLIMS

The *Vanias* and Muslims of Atarsumba fell out over a trifle. A Muslim woman there has her house near a Hindu temple. This poor woman passed her days peacefully there. Gradually, the *Vania* trustees of the temple encroached on her land. The poor woman was somewhat irri-tated. She may have said something and this enraged the *Vanias*. They abused and insulted her. The woman complained to the local Muslims. The latter were aroused and sought out each *Vania* and gave him a beat-ing. Shri Abbas Tyabji came to know of this. He sent Shri Mohanlal Pandya to restore peace. Both the parties listened to him, and the dispute was settled. When the Muslims attacked the *Vanias*, the latter, not having the strength to defend themselves, took shelter in their houses. I have narrated the events as they were described to me. But this is exactly the manner in which tensions between the two communities have arisen or grown. The *Vanias* had done a wrong in harassing the woman and encroaching upon her land. Even if the woman had been to blame for anything, it was the *Vanias*' duty to overlook it. Instead, they brought an army to crush an ant. I can see what provoked the Muslims into their error, but it was grave error all the same. They should have looked for the guilty *Vanias* and complained against them to the *Panch*. If there was no *Panch* they should have approached the nearest Congress-Khilafat Committee and sought redress. Instead of doing this, they adopted the unjust course of punishing the entire *Vania* community and were guilty of the same wrong against the *Vanias* of which the latter had been guilty against the woman. Fortunately, Shri Pandya appeared on the scene and settled the dispute. In what happened on either side, the guilty adopted the policy of crushing the weak. So long as even one party acts in this manner, the root cause of trouble will never be

eliminated. The most important thing which swaraj means is that one should protect the weak and never fear the strong. The *Vanias* should have admitted their mistake and, if attacked even then, should have submitted to the blows. By taking shelter in their houses, they showed themselves cowards and unfit for swaraj. There is no doubt that some time or other we shall have to learn facing blows. Taking shelter in homes whenever threatened with danger is no evidence of our ability to manage our affairs under swaraj. Peaceful non-co-operation is an unfailing remedy. The *Vanias* should have adopted the policy of reasoning calmly with the Muslims. Peacefulness does not indicate cowardice; it indicates the capacity to face blows fearlessly without returning them. Anyone who reflects will see the truth that the strength found in non-violence is not to be found in the sword.

WAS BHOJA BHAGAT A "MOCHI"?

Bhojaji, a teacher, and another person write to inform me that Bhoja Bhagat must have been a *Leva Kanabi*. One gentlemansays with confidence that he was a *Kanabi*. I have no proof in sup- port of my belief [that he was a *Mochi*], except that I learnt this in the course of my studies as a boy and that a relation of his was once brought by someone to see me. I had even asked this relation whether he was still following the cobbler's profession. So far as I can recall, he had replied in the negative. He did not, however, say that Bhoja Bhagat was not a *Mochi*. The reader will forgive me if I have made a wrong statement. I am certain that Bhoja Bhagat's soul will not be grieved at his having been described as a *Mochi*. Despite this slip, the point of my argument remains.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-8-1921

32. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

ON WAY TO LUCKNOW,

Sunday [*August 7, 1921*][1]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I write this letter as we near Lucknow. We have planned to reach there[2] on Wednesday morning and leave the same evening for Arrah.

I am eagerly waiting to hear that Joseph has been arrested.

[1] Gandhiji arrived in Lucknow from Aligarh on this date, which was a Sunday.

[2] Allahabad

Ranga Iyer, I feel, should not be left without company.

People's shouting now gets on my nerves.

If possible, please have prepared for me some *pedas*[1], *puris*[2] with soda[bicarb] mixed [with the flour] and *golpapadi*[3]. On this journey, I have only *pedas* with me and their stock is also likely to get exhausted. The journey, too, is a long one. Perhaps you may not easily get there ghee made of goat's milk. It will not matter if *pedas* alone are prepared. We get at every place a large number of caps.

I have written to Valji to tell him that he should send you proofs of *Young India*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 11421

33. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ON WAY TO LUCKNOW,
Sunday, August 7, 1921

CHI. MATHURADAS,

These questions have just lain with me. I have gone through them today and made corrections. Now you can make any use of them you want. I hope your health is all right now. I tried hard to come but how could I ? Write to me. My travel plan is as follows:

8th Lucknow
9th Kanpur
10th Prayagji
11th to 15th Patna—Address Rajendra Prasad Vakil
16th to 20th Gauhati, Assam Congress Committee
Write to me about Durga's health also.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] A sweet prepared from milk
[2] Fried cakes of flattened unleavened dough
[3] A preparation of flour and jaggery

34. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, LUCKNOW[1]

August 7, 1921

. . . . I must warn you that any kind of restiveness or disorderly behaviour will only be an obstacle in the way of our attaining our aim. Boycott of foreign cloth is the sole remedy for the Khilafat, for removing evils and for helping Angora. Look at the excesses of the Government of the United Provinces. In its policy of repression this province has far surpassed any other province. I will nevertheless ask you to remain peaceful. If you can raise an army of fifty thousand workers prepared to guard the gate of freedom, you have my word for it that no power on earth can defeat this army, and it will be able, in just three months, either to mend this Government or end it. I must repeat that careful attention need to be paid to Hindu-Muslim unity. I would say to each of these two communities that it should show sympathy towards the other. Let there be no rioting during the ensuing *Bakr-i-Id*. To Hindus I would say that if they are keen on protecting the cow they can do no better than unhesitatingly and unselfishly help the Muslims over the Khilafat question.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 10-8-1921

35. OPEN LETTER TO KATHIAWAR PRINCES

LUCKNOW,

Monday, Shravana [*August 8, 1921*]

SIRS,

I have often thought of addressing a word to you but dropped the idea. I have, however, heard and come to know a few things which make me feel that it is my duty to place my views before you.

Is it necessary for me to tell you that my connection with Kathiawar is very close? The fact, however, that I was born in Kathiawar is not the only tie which binds me to it. My father served three States as Chief Minister. My uncle served one State and my grand-father, too, had similar service to his credit. Quite a few members of the Gandhi family have had their living through service

[1] Held at Aminuddaula Park. According to the source, about a hundred thousand people attended. Mahomed Ali was present.

in Kathiawar States. I have therefore, more than ordinary relations with you. I owe a special duty to you.

Hence, I feel pained whenever I hear stories of misrule in any of the Kathiawar States. I have looked upon Kathiawar as the land of heroes and cherished the hope that it will make its full contribution to the *yajna* of the swaraj movement and bring glory to Bharat.

Please do not be scared by the word "swaraj". I should like you not to let the words "swaraj" and "non-co-operation" frighten you. Let people say, if they will, that this is an anarchical movement, that it aims at spreading disloyalty and that it will ruin the country. Being certain that these things are said in ignorance, you should also defend me before your friends.

Our Shastras teach us that we should oppose injustice even at the risk of our life. My father taught me the same thing by his example. It will do the country no harm if people learn to have courage.

I have not, however, started this letter with the intention of writing about swaraj. I have made the foregoing remarks in order that my ideas about swaraj may not put you off.

I have received numerous articles about your administrations and heard numerous complaints made to me in person. To this day, however, I have not thought it proper to publish any of them. I have always thought that everything will be all right in the end and this is my belief even now. If the misrule of the mighty Empire is ended, that of the smaller States will end of itself. Self-purification is a process which takes time to be securely started, but once it is, it spreads quickly.

But I hear now that in some States the authorities ridicule the spinning-wheel, in some they look upon it as a disease and try to stamp it out, in others they subject citizens to unfair pressure in order to check a movement of permanent significance like swadeshi and in some, again, they set their face against the use of khadi and regard the wearing of a khadi cap as a crime. I hesitate to believe all this but there is so much evidence before me that all of it could not be untrue.

Kathiawar is a land of such resources that it should not be necessary for any of its residents to leave it for other regions. To embark upon a business venture in a big way deserves all praise, but I have known hundreds, nay thousands, of Kathiawaris who leave the land merely in search of a living. This pains me and I wish that it should pain you as well. I missed, during my present tours, the

former brightness in the homes of the sturdy, handsome peasants of Kathiawar.

I remember I saw villages, before the famine of '35[1], overflowing with milk and butter. I have been a witness to serving of ghee with a spoon being regarded as want of hospitality. I recall having helped myself to the rich buttermilk offered to me in their shining bowls by tall, hefty women of Kathiawar who seemed to me as big as mountains.

Today, I see not buttermilk but merely white-coloured water. Let alone kettle-shaped containers for ghee, even the modest spoons are a rare sight now. With abundance gone, people feel hemmed in and start running away.

You may be certain that, if the Princes help, the spinning-wheel and the loom will make Kathiawar more glowing with life and energy than it was. Kathiawar's population is estimated at 26 lakhs. This can easily keep five lakh spinning-wheels working. This means an income of not less than Rs. 7,500,000 every month. If the women in Kathiawar spin for no more than eight months in a year, singing devotional songs as they spin, they can put into their homes sixty lakh rupees annually. You will not need to pay a single pie towards this. Do you really envy the people of Kathiawar earning money in this way? Would you ridicule them?

If but one lakh from among the *Meghwals*[2] in Kathiawar, dressed in their thick khadi jackets and full-sized trubans, work on the loom, they will earn not less than 20 lakhs a month. If, likewise, they weave for eight months, they will pocket one crore and sixty lakhs annually. Should you not show farsightedness and encourage whole-heartedly such profitable work?

I would expect, rather, that even in your durbars you would give a place of honour to the khadi woven by the poor, that the dress to be worn in durbar would be of khadi and that you yourselves would wear nothing but khadi woven by your subjects and look the more princely for doing so.

Your *shastris*, I am sure, will convincingly show to you that it is no worthy principle of goverment that the people of Manchester or Japan should make merry with your money while the people of Kathiawar go hungry. If you want muslin, have good quality cotton grown and encourage expert spinners and weavers.

[1] Of the Vikram era, corresponding to 1879-80

[2] A community of weavers

What can rulers accustomed to live in the hill tracts of Kathiawar have to do with comforts and luxuries? How can they think of maintaining a whole troupe of dogs? They should, rather, be ready to lay down their lives for their subjects, suffer when they suffer and eat only after they have fed them. If a king turns a trader and a Brahmin an actor, who will teach and preserve dharma?

I do not want the people of Kathiawar to carry on agitation against the British Government from within your territories and thereby create an awkward situation for you. I understand your delicate position. I have sympathy for you. You may not join the non-co-operators, but I humbly entreat you to look upon swadeshi as a separate matter and help your subjects to work for its progress independently of the rest of the programme.

May I ask one thing more? How can liquor-booths be tolerated in Kathiawar? How can one believe that you really need the revenue which you get from liquor? When the people are making an attempt to give up drinking and persuade others to do so, I would expect all wine-bottles to be banished from your durbars too. If Rama, on being told of the dhobi's remarks, abandoned the chaste and devoted Sita, would you not, knowing what the people want, banish liquor from Kathiawar?

How, again, can one tolerate the setting apart of special compartments for *Antyajas* on your trains, the fact that they experience difficul-ties in getting tickets and are pushed about when they try to? You should invite your subjects, reason with them and explain to them that the ill-treatment of *Dheds* and others has nothing of compassion in it, that on the contrary it is oppression, and you should, in this way, bring happiness into the lives of these wretched people and earn their heartfelt blessings.

I have heard much else. I do not wish to go into all that here. They are old stories. I have written this leaflet simply to entreat you not to impede the current of purifying oxygen which is circulating at present. I beg of you to understand the love which has prompted me to write this, to read it with love and act upon my humble suggestion. I pray to God that He may bless you with a sense of justice and grant that the Princes of Kathiawar and their subjects find their happiness on the path of right.

Your loyal servant,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-8-1921

36. LETTER TO BENNET

Monday [*August 8, 1921*][1]

DEAR MR. BENNET,

I thank you for drawing my attention to the evil of prostitution in Lucknow. I have known of it and have talked about it too. I shall do so again before leaving. But I shall write about it too in *Young India*. Thanks for your offer of help in the matter.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 11668

37. ANSWERS TO EDITOR'S QUESTIONS

August 8, 1921

Mr. Mackenzie, editor of the *Indian Daily Telegraph*, in a letter to Mr. Gandhi asked for an answer to the following questions :

(1) Is the divergence of views between yourself and Lord Reading likely to increase or diminish?

(2) When do you expect to establish swaraj?

(3) Has the Prime Minister in your opinion grown more Satanic or less?

(4) Seeing that they spring from your magnificent country, have you no word of encouragement for the new Ministers and the Councils which are aiming at ultimate swaraj?

(5) Do you believe in a sense of humour to sweeten the cares of everyday life?

Mr. Gandhi replied as follows :

(1) The divergence is as likely to increase as to decrease.

(2) I expect to do nothing but endeavour to acquire government over my own self but I do expect India to establish swaraj during this very year.

(3) The Prime Minister is to me an enigma. He has certainly not discharged his debt to India.

(4) The Ministers have done nothing to deserve encouragement

[1]From the reference to drawing of Gandhiji's "attention to the evil of prostitution in Lucknow" by the addressee, whose letter was quoted by Gandhiji in his *Young India* article of 18-8-1991; *vide* "Notes", 18-8-1921. This is corroborated by the words. "I shall do so again before leaving". Gandhiji was in Lucknow on Monday, August 8, 1921.

from me. They will when they have washed their hands clean of a system which, in my humble opinion, is using them as tools for promoting India's degradation. (Witness what is happening in the United Provinces.)

(5) If I had no sence of humour, I would have committed suicide long ago.

The Leader, 10-8-1921

38. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KANPUR[1]

August 9, 1921

There is an omission in the address you have presented. There is no mention in it of Maulana Shaukat Ali. This is prejudicial to Hindu-Muslim unity. Such unity is of the greatest moment today. On it depends the solution of the Khilafat question, the undoing of the Punjab injustices and, finally, the attainment of swaraj. Cow-protection also depends on Khilafat. Hindus must be prepared to make sacrifices for Khilafat without desiring anything in return. Every morning I pray for the cows. Cow-slaughter is the result of the sins committed by Hindus; it is owing to these sins that we are deprived of the sympathy of our brethren. We must repent for those sins. For a satisfactory solution of the Khilafat question it is of utmost importance that there should be Hindu-Muslim unity. Khilafat alone will unite the two communities.

At the same time, it is also necessary that there should be peace and non-violence. We should conquer anger and pray to God that anger may vanish from our hearts.

There can be no swaraj without swadeshi. Women should make it a duty to wear khadi. They should give up fine cloth. It have full hope that we shall have swaraj by the first of January. I we do not have swaraj by that date life will become difficult. We have forgotten the value of being self-supporting. We must learn how to die. If we are fired at, we should receive the bullet on our chest and not on the back. If the English wish to stay in our country, they must learn to

[1] Earlier in the day, Gandhiji was taken in procession and he addressed a meeting of cloth merchants at the Marwari Vidvalaya and advised them to boycott foreign cloth. He also spoke at a women's meeting on swadeshi. At the meeting in the evening, of which this is a report, Gandhiji was presented an address on behalf of the citizens of Kanpur.

live like brothers or even servants. They cannot now stay here as our masters. Women should, as a matter of duty, boycott foreign goods and ply the charkha, so that even if I am imprisoned or hanged, swaraj will still be secured.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 11-8-1921

39. INTERVIEW TO "AAJ"

August 9, 1921

QUESTION : What would our duty be if the price of swadeshi cloth went on rising and that of foreign cloth falling?

A. The meaning of the swadeshi pledge is that we are not to accept foreign cloth even if we get it gratis, just as a Hindu will not eat beef even if bread becomes too dear.

Q. If cloth were woven in India from foreign yarn, would you consider it swadeshi or foreign?

A. It would be foreign cloth.

Q. If the capital invested in a mill were Indian but its management was in European hands, would it be considered a swadeshi or a foreign mill?

A. It would be a foreign mill. A swadeshi mill is one whose capital as well as management is Indian. Cloth produced in swadeshi mills should be set apart for the poor. Congress workers should wear pure khadi only.

Speaking about the excesses committed by the police at a meeting in Banaras on August 1, Gandhiji said that they should forgive the police, or they would not be fit for swaraj.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 10-8-1921

40. LETTER TO MANILAL KOTHARI AND FULCHAND SHAH

[KANPUR,
August 9, 1921][1]

BHAISHRI MANILAL AND FULCHAND,

With reference to the proposal for holding a [special] session of the Kathiawad Political Conference at Wadhwan and the sug- gestion regarding its presidentship, I wish to say that it is not possible for me to express an opinion now. If you ask me when my tour is over in September, I shall be able to give a definite reply. If I decide to accept the presidentship, I will not have things half done. I cannot rest content with merely expressing an opinion on civil disobedience. I am, therefore, unable to decide at this stage whether I should accept the presidentship.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Gujarati, 14-8-1921

41. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, ALLAHABAD[2]

August 10, 1921

Mr. Gandhi began by saying that he had intended to say something about the repression that was being resorted to in the United Provinces, but now he would give up that intention. He would now only congratulate those fellow-workers who had gone to jail. They must realize that the work for swaraj should not slacken by any of them being imprisoned. As long as they did not realize that, they would not be fit for swaraj or independence, If they wanted to achieve swaraj within this year, they had to give up every fear for jail or even death. Rather they should think that every imprisonment or death of an innocent person brought swaraj nearer. As long as they did not feel like that, he would think they had not been able to grasp the meaning of non-violent non-co-operation. Non-co-operation did not mean sitting idle. It meant organizing their forces, for non-co-operation required great power. He said he would

[1] The date is stated in the source

[2] Held in the evening on Swarajya Sabha grounds, the gathering numbered over 10,000 and was presided over by Motilal Nehru. Mahomed Ali and Stokes also spoke.

not bow down his head before the Union Jack—the flag before which the Punjab boys, during the martial law days, had to bow thir heads—as long as the Government did not repent and ask for pardon for its former doings. This required great strength.

Proceeding, Mr. Gandhi referred to the situation in the United Provinces. Small boys were being sent to jail and yet it was declared that there was no repression. The U.P. Government was more clever than the Punjab Government. It did not touch the great leaders for fear of there being disquiet in the province as a result of their arrest, but it was condemning small boys to solitary confinement. This was intensive repression. Such methods were intended to lead to the terrorization and demoralization of the people. The *kisans* were also being subjected to such pressure. They were being forced to become members of Aman Sabhas and to remain aloof from the non-co-operation movement. He was not prepared to blame the high authorities for this, for he was not yet sure whether the Governor and his colleagues knew this thing or not. He had as yet respect for the Raja of Mahmudabad and Mr. Chintamani[1] and others. Their hands also were now polluted with sins, but they did not commit them willingly or voluntarily. They had now become members of Government and so their heads were turned. They now declared that it was the non-co-operators themselves who were using force against their opponents. He did not deny the allegation wholly, and in connection with the events at Aligarh and Malegaon, he had expressed his repentance and had condemned the violent doings. Yet he maintained that on the whole the work of non-co-operation was being done peacefully.

Mr. Gandhi went on to say that he wanted this spirit of peacefulness to advance. Even if the Government sent them to jail or shot them down, they should not even curse or socially boycott the Government officials. When they had acquired so much mastery over themselves swaraj would be theirs and they would be able to get justice in connection with the Punjab and the Khilafat. But that would not be possible as long as the Hindus and Mohammedans were not united. The *Bakr-i-Id* was coming. If the Hindus wanted to save the cow, they should sacrifice their heads in the sacred fire of the Khilafat. But they were not to do this in a bargaining spirit nor should they force their Mohammedan brethrem to spare the cow.

Coming to the question of swadeshi, he said that espousing the cause of swadeshi meant a saving of sixty crores of rupees annually, food for their starving countrymen and the protection of their women's chastity. But, above all it meant preparation for civil disobedience. If they could make the item of swadeshi successful by September, he would think that they were then strong enough to give

[1] Sir C. Y. Chintamani (1880-1941); journalist, author and politician; Law Member in Viceroy's Council, 1920-22; president of the Liberal Federation in 1923 and 1927

the Government an ultimatum. Further it would mean proclaiming to the whole world that India had organized its strength. He was for burning their foreign clothes. If they wanted to help Smyrna they should send cash or new clothes and not their discarded clothes. But if they so liked it, he did not mind their being sent there. But they should part with all their foreign clothes. They should act up to the decision of the All-India Congress Committee and take up handlooms and spinning-wheels. Then they should depend on the cloth that might be prepared within their own district and should not import cloth from other places, though they might have to remain half naked. This would eliminate the danger of foreign cloth being imposed on them as swadeshi.

Concluding, he said he was going to apply the torch to the heap of foreign clothes that was collected there. He was doing that sacred work without any feeling of enmity towards anyone. His religion was love, non-violence and peace. Finally he expressed his hope that more could be expected in this connection from women than from men, and, therefore, he appealed to them to take their share of the work.[1]

The Leader, 12-8-1921

42. NOTES

BURNING IN BOMBAY

If anybody had any doubt as to the necessity and the practical value of burning foreign clothes, those who witnessed the ceremony at Mr. Sobani's yard in Parel must have had their doubts set at rest. It was a most inspiring sight witnessed by thousands of spectators. And as the flames leapt up and enveloped the whole pyramid, there was a shout of joy resounding through the air. It was as if our shackles had been broken asunder. A glow of freedom passed through that vast concourse. It was a noble act noble performed. It has, I am sure, struck the imagination of the people as nothing else could have so far as swadeshi is concerned. And it was as well that it was not rags that were burnt but some of the finest saris, shirts and jackets were consigned to the flames. I know that in some cases choicest silks kept by mothers for their daughter's wedding were given up for burning. The value consisted in destroying such costly things. Not less than one lakh and a half pieces were burnt including articles worth several hundred rupees each. I am sure it was all for the good of the country. It would have been a crime to have given such things to the poor. Just

[1] At the conclusion of the meeting, Gandhiji lit a huge bonfire of foreign cloth.

imagine the poor people wearing the richest silks. To say the least it would have been highly inartistic and incongruous. The fact is that the majority of the articles burnt had no correspondence with the life of the poor. The dress of the middle classes had undergone such a transformation that it was not fit to be given to the poor people. It would have been like giving discarded costly toilet brushes to them. I hope therefore that the burning process will continue and spread from one end of India to the other and not stop till every article of foreign clothing has been reduced to ashes or sent out of India.

Of Tamil Women

A friend writes from Tirupati :

> The greatest obstacle in the way of success of our movement in Madras are our women. Some of them are very reactionary and a very large number of the high class Brahmin ladies have become addicted to many of the Western vices. They drink coffee not less than three times a day and consider it very fashionable to drink more. In dress they are no better, they have given up the homely cleap cloth and are running after costly foreign cloth. In the matter of jewels, Brahmin ladies excel all others. Among Brahmins, *Shri Vaishnava* ladies are the worst sinners. When men are trying to return to a purer life, our ladies are becoming extravagant. While going to temples to worship God, they cannot think of a plain, simple dress. They must wear the costliest jewels available and still more costly laces. I know of many honest women who refuse to go to temples because they have not got rich clothes and costly jewels.

I am loth to think that what the friend who is himself a non-co-operating *Vaishnava* pleader says is all true. And I am inclined to dis-believe the statement that the Tamil sisters are worse than the rest in the matter of love of gaudiness. All the same, his letter ought to serve as a warning to the Tamil sisters. They must revert to the original simplicity, and certainly God will be better pleased with those who wear the spotless khadi sari as a symbol of inner purity than with those who are gaudily dressed. Our temples are not meant for show but for expression of humility and simplicity which are typical of a devotional mood. There should be a continuous propaganda amongst women in the Madras Presidency with reference to the evil complained of.

The White Cap in the C.P.

The wearing of white caps by Government servants has been

officially regarded as a crime in the Central Provinces, and the decision has been publicly endorsed in the C.P. Council. The doctrine laid down by that Government is most servile and dangerous. If the white cap is the badge of the non-co-operation party, the use of khadi may be equally regarded as such and penalized. And thus may swadeshi become a sin in the Government dictionary. Foreign cloth was forced upon India two hundred years ago. The attempt has now commenced forcibly to prevent India from reverting to swadeshi. Any well-meaning Government sensitive to public opinion would have encouraged the use of khadi by its servants. I deny that the use of the white cap is any sign of non-co-operation. I know many who are averse to non-co-operation and yet have adopted the white khadi cap as a convenience and as a symbol of swadeshi. The Congress has not yet invited Government servants to throw up their employment, but I do expect of them to have courage enough to wear what dress they like and retain freedom of action even at the risk of losing their employment. If Government servants will but take concerted action, they will find that the Government is powerless to punish them. But whether that is possible or not, I do hope for the sake of themselves that individuals will be found even among Government servants who will not hesitate to wear the white cap.

Darkness in Gwalior

Passing through Gwalior, I was surprised to find that the people at the station were afraid of approaching our compartment. There was no sign of swadeshi on the platform. Nobody offered us their foreign caps as at every other station. I soon learnt the reason. Non-co-operation is practically prohibited in this State. The wearing of the khadi cap and the possession of the spinning-wheel are regarded with disfavour if not as a crime. It is unthinkable that the Maharaja has himself such reactionary views. His Highness has my sympathy. The poisonous influence of the Government is nowhere more apparent than in the Indian States, which are powerless for making substantial reforms, but are often made unwilling instruments for curtailment of the freedom of their subjects. What is more, the protecting wings of the sovereign power have made them like the rest of India emasculate and irresponsible. When, therefore, a prince is self-willed and intent upon oppression, he has certainly infinitely greater powers for mischief within his own State than the Viceroy himself. This is one of the greatest evils inherent in the existing system of Government. I hope, however, that the information given to me at Gwalior station is

exaggerated and that repression in that State has not taken the virulent shape it is alleged to have.

IMITATE LAHORE

The Municipality of Lahore which contains a majority of non-co-operators has resolved that all its cab-drivers and such other employees shall wear khadi caps and that all municipal de- partments are to use as much khadi as possible. The lawyers of Amritsar are said to have adopted khadi for their dresses. I hope that the other municipalities will follow the good example set by Lahore and that the lawyers all over India will follow the Amritsar precedent. This is about the least that they can do for the country and swadeshi.

LABOURERS' MITE

The public have no idea of the part labourers have played in contributing to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Twenty-one thousand mill-hands of Ahmedabad have paid nearly Rs. 54,000 to the Fund and this at the prescribed rate, i.e., one-tenth of their monthly wages. Seven thousand have become members. Similarly, though not so scientifically or largely as the Ahmedabad labourers, the Bombay labourers have also sent their purses unasked. It is a sign of the times. As the labourers become more organized and think of the country as well as themselves, they will fight for a due adjustment of prices of manufactures to the making of which they contribute so much labour. And, then, there will be no question of mills charging exorbitant prices just to swell the shareholders' dividends irrespective of the interests of the working man or the consumer. A time must come, and the sooner the better, when there would be a respectable proportion between dividends, wages and prices.

INDISCIPLINE

My experience of the resumed tour is not happier than the past. I had expected that, after all I have written and spoken and after the discipline we have gone gone through, I would witness disciplined and considerate demonstrations on the way. I was, however astonished to find vast, noisy and pressing crowds at stations. They were intense and insistent at Agra and Tundla. At the latter place it was difficult to pass through the crowd. Naturally they did not hear what was said to them. They only shouted the louder when anyone asked them to keep quite. And when I was pushed into the dining room, the crowd hovered about it and in its eagerness to have a peep, it broke the panes of the door of the dining room. It would not be satisfied till I took

the people to the shed outside the station. The contrast after my speech was great. The crowd attended to instructions, was less noisy than before, did not make a rush for may compartment and made room for us to pass through. I have passed several times through Tundla, but I have never before noticed a crowd there at all. Upon inquiry I found that this time people had come from neighbouring villages just for *darshan*. This *darshan* has become a most embarrassing process and consumes valuable time. It puts an undue strain upon my nerves and deprives me of the peace I need for writing during the odd moments I get during my travels. The difficulty is largely due to want of forethought and organization. Workers must either organize these demonstrations in a methodical manner or not have them at all. Happily these are friendly demonstrations and, therefore, never cause trouble. But imagine the chaos that must ensue if we undertook hostile demonstrations. What would happen if we had to manage such crowds under fire or under angry excitement? I could see in Tundla that mass civil disobedience was an impossibility with a crowd like the one there. We can do no effective work unless we can pass intructions to the crowd and expect implicit obedience. Volunteers must therefore undergo training in handling crowds. An Indian crowd is easily the most manageable and docile in the world. But it needs previous preparation. And when we have not had it, it is the wisest thing not to bring together crowds.

DEMONSTRATIONS

It is now easy enough to understand how the incendiarism could have taken place at Malegaon and even at Aligarh. An undisciplined crowd had gathered. Such a crowd contains mischiefmakers waiting for an opportunity. And when a crowd is excited, it yields passive obedience, that is, it is driven by the momentary impulse. We therefore play into the hands of the 'enemy' when we organize at trials demonstrations we cannot control. Our purpose today is to establish a calm and non-violent yet determined atmosphere. All our determination is frittered away under an unexpected fire opened by disciplined soldiers. Therefore we must scrupulously avoid all demonstrations over imprisonments. We must let go unnoticed all whom the Government wants. As soon as we have acquired sufficient self-control, we shall be ready for civil disobedience and swaraj. This self-control can only be attained by complete swadeshi. A boycott of foreign cloth and effort put forth to manufacture the required

quantity of khadi will give us a self-confidence which nothing else can.

Sorry for Liberty

Mr. Venkatappaya wires expressing his deep regret that he has been set free whilst his comrades are still in custody. I share his sorrow. Presently the jail will be the only fit place for a self-respecting Indian. Everybody in Aligarh envies Maulana Sherwani his lot. Mrs. Khwaja tells me she is cut up to find that her husband is free whilst her husband's companion in work is in prison. It is the true spirit. And swaraj is possible during this year only if our men and women consider it their good fortune to be in jail striving for freedom. Evidently the right spirit pervades the people of Guntur, for Mr. Prakasham who ran post-haste to Guntur on hearing of the arrests wires that several pleaders have suspended practice and that the people are preparing more strenuously than before to carry out the Congress programme of non-co-operation. When we work outside the jails with a free sense of responsibility, we shall not be long being imprisoned and whilst we are not, we have faith that we are not idling away the nation's time.

Force on 1st August

X. Y. Z. angrily asks me what my experience of the 1st of August is. My experience of the 1st August is that I have never seen a better-behaved crowd. I believe him when he tells me that some people were forced to give up their foreign caps. But these instances I am sure were exceptions. The use of force is certainly out of place for the swadeshi propaganda and I have no doubt can only defeat the purpose we have in view. We cannot make India wear khadi by force. It must be a mark of freedom and respectability which it cannot be if any force is used for its propaganda.

Bengal and Madras Elections

I have no doubt that there will be heart-burning over the decision of the Working Committee on the Bengal and Madras elections. More so as the decision was given in the teeth of the chairman's ruling that the elections were contrary to the constitution. I can sympathize with the aggrieved parties. But I would ask them to give due weight to the reasons for the Committee's decision. In my opinion the Committee could not have given a decision on merits without taking evidence from the parties concerned. This the Committee had no time to do if it was to go through the programme

set by the All-India Congress Committee. Pending the investigations, the members would have remained as they are. Nothing much is, therefore, lost by the aggrieved parties by waiting till November. Moreover, it is a wrong policy to bring up such cases before the All-India Congress Committee before every possible effort has been made to redress such grievances locally. What we want to cultivate is ability to check and correct irregularities by the force of local public opinion. Neither the Bengal nor the Madras Committee can possibly defend an untenable position in the face of enlightened public opinion. And in the present leaders have got blind public opinion behind them, no decision of the All-India Congress Committee will give the injured parties any relief. The Congress has got a democratic constitution, but unless there are democrats to work it and use the barometer of public opinion for their guidance, there is no doubt that the constitution will be worked for autocratic ends. A hasty interference by the central body can but increase acerbities and splits. The Working Committee has therefore deliberately evaded the legal issue, refrained from going into the merits, put both the parties on their honour and appealed to them to set matters right by local endeavour. We have no time for academical discussions or legal subtleties. We must think less of office, and more of service.

An English Friend's Caution

I reproduce below the relevant part of a letter from an English friend whom I have known for years and who is a great seeker after Truth. She says :

> Some of your words have seemed very beautiful, others have seemed unlike yourself and I have been troubled. Why should I criticize? I do not know the complex situation, how can I judge whether there is sufficient cause for the radical upheaval you are trying to bring about? When I look back and see how I reverenced you, and the ideal for which you stood to me, I could wish that things had stood still, and that nothing had ever happened to make me wonder whether I was mistaken. Of course, this is a very weak thought, and, of course, I must brace myself up to face the actual facts of today. In so far as you are right I can but reverence you still, only that I cannot tell how far you are right. Of one thing I feel pretty sure, that if you are wrong you do not *wish* to succeed, the great majestic Right is far dearer to you than your own endeavours. How curious it is that we do not know what the Right is, and yet we are far more anxious that It should prevail than that our own schemes should succeed!

I have no doubt that many of my friends feel as this friend does.

Another English correspondent has put the same thought more bluntly and says that I appear to him to be countenancing evil so that good may come. I can only assure both the correspondents and those who think like them that I have no desire to see anything but Right triumph. I have never believed and I do not now believe that the end justifies the means. On the contrary it is my firm conviction that there is an intimate connection between the end and the means so much so that you cannot achieve a good end by bad means. And I am not aware of having resorted to a departure by a hair's breadth from the strictest truth and right as I know them. Indeed I am sure that I would long ago have stood discredited had I compromised truth for a single second. I am fully aware that I am trying a most dangerous experiment—that of inducing thousands of Mussulmans, and, for that matter, Hindus too, to become and remain strictly non-violent although their final creed permits them to resort to violence under given conditions. It has been my misfortune to be misunderstood whenever I have taken up a new cause. Friends and adversaries alike have been startled by the new and (for them) unexpected applications of some ancient truth. I was accused of fomenting trouble in South Africa to such an extent that I was often in danger of losing my best friends. The majority of them as also my adversaries afterward came to acknowledge that I was right and they had not understood the implications of the doctrine I was trying to illustrate in practical life. And so I feel it is with non-co-operation. I consider it to be one of the gentlest practices of ethical conduct. It and it alone can pave the way for a genuine understanding between Englishmen and Indians; it and it alone can promote, if anything can, real friendship between the East and the West. It and it alone can enable India to realize the full height of her own unique culture. In spite of many appearances to the contrary, I see the day coming when Englishmen and Indians will come to regard one another as friends and fellow-workers.

Young India, 11-8-1921

43. ESSENTIALS OF SUCCESS

To finish the boycott of foreign cloth programme before the 30th September next it is no doubt necessary to revise our taste, revert to simplicity and cut down our wants to a minimum. No non-co-operator can afford to wear more than three articles of dress. We must not hanker after the Bezwada finery but must be satisfied with the coarsest khadi. But this is only a preliminary. Swadeshi will fail if we are not business-like. We have hitherto tried to act on the students and they have responded to the best of their lights and ability. Many non-co-operating students are doing valiant work as pickets or propagandists. A non-co-operation school attracts to it all public activity. But we cannot achieve full success in swadeshi through the schoolboys only. We must touch the hearts of the weavers of India. We must organize them. Those weavers who for want of scope for their art have left their calling should be induced to come back to it. We must hold their meetings and tell them why they should weave hand-spun yarn even though it may be uneven, and why they should consider it a sin to touch foreign yarn. Similarly we must induce carders (*dhunias*) to prepare slivers for spinning. We must also induce clothiers to introduce patrioti-sm into their trade and sell hand-spun cloth and give up selling foreign cloth. We must have for swadeshi shops inspectors who are experts in distinguishing between foreign cloth and swadeshi and between hand-spun and machine-spun. This great work cannot be done unless we are able to organize ourselves on a grand scale. And such organization is utterly im-possible unless every Congress body is able to concentrate upon swade-shi, i.e., boycott and production to the exclusion of every other activity.

The ideal no doubt is for every village to spin and weave for itself just as today most villages grow corn for themselves. It is easier for every village to spin and weave for itself than to grow all its corn. Every village cannot grow wheat or rice, but every village can stock enough cotton and spin and weave without any difficulty. But it must be some time before we can arrive at that happy state. Meanwhile, those provinces that are at all organized for the work, for instance the Punjab, must not only immediately exclude all foreign cloth from their own markets but must send out to the parts of India that need their superfluous stock of khadi. Punjab, Andhra, Bihar and Gujarat seem to be the best organized provinces for the manufacture of khadi.

And they must busy themselves with the work so as to anticipate a famine of khadi.

And if we would do this great and glorious work, we must cease to talk, or if we do talk, our talk must take the shape of business. We must cease to wrangle and offer hair-splitting objections to every position as also to take interest in them if anyone insists on indulging in these things. The Congress must cease to be a debating society of talented lawyers who will not leave their practice, but it must consist of producers and manufacturers, and those who would understand them, nurse them and voice their feelings. Practising lawyers can help by becoming silent workers and donors. I sympathize with them for their desire to be in the limelight. But I would urge them to recognize their limitations. Their day will come when the nation is again in a position to go to law-courts and debating assemblies for justice or legislation. Today it has no faith in either, for they are corrupt beyond description. Both law and law-courts fail to do justice when the question is between the Government and the people. The test of their usefulness lies in their ability to adjudicate evenly between the two parties, not in their giving just laws as between different parts composing the people. The latter justice is like that of the lion interposing to keep the lambs from eating one another or dying of disease so that he may have all of them for food.

Young India, 11-8-1921

44. TO THE WOMEN OF INDIA

DEAR SISTERS,

The All-India Congress Committee has come to a momentous decision in fixing the 30th September next as the final date for completing the boycott of foreign cloth begun by the sacrificial fire lit on the 31st July in Bombay in memory of Lokamanya Tilak. I was accorded the privilege of setting fire to the huge pile containing costly saris and other dresses which you have hitherto considered fine and beautiful. I feel that it was right and wise on the part of the sisters who gave their costly clothing. Its destruction was the most economical use you could have made of it, even as destruction of plague-infected articles is their most economical and best use. It was a necessary surgical operation designed to avert more serious complaints in the body politic.

The women of India have during the past twelve months worked wonders on behalf of the motherland. You have silently worked away

as angels of mercy. You have parted with your cash and your fine jewellery. You have wandered from house to house to make collections. Some of you have even assisted in picketing. Some of you who were used to fine dresses of variegated colours and had a number of changes during the day have now adopted the white and spotless but heavy khadi sari reminding one of a woman's innate purity. You have done all this for the sake of India, for the sake of Khilafat, for the sake of the Punjab. There is no guile about your word or work. Yours is the purest sacrifice untainted by anger or hate. Let me confess to you that your spontaneous and loving response all over India has convinced me that God is with us. No other proof of our struggle being one of self-purification is needed than that lakhs of India's women are actively helping it. Having given much, more is now required of you. Men bore the principal share of the subscriptions to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. But completion of the swadeshi programme is possible only if you give the largest share. Boycott is impossible *unless you will surrender the whole of your foreign clothing*. So long as the taste per-sists, so long complete renunciation impossible. And boycott means complete renunciation. We must be prepared to be satisfied with such cloth as India can produce, even as we are thankfully content with such children as God gives us. I have not known a mother throwing away her baby even though it may appear ugly to an outsider. So should it be with the patriotic women of India about Indian manufactures. And for you, only hand-spun and hand-woven can be regarded as Indian manufactures. During the transition stage you can only get coarse khadi in abundance. You may add all the art to it that your taste allows or requires. And if you will be satisfied with coarse khadi for a few months, India need not despair of seeing a revival of the fine rich and coloured garments of old which were once the envy and the despair of the world. I assure you that a six months' course of self-denial will show you that what we today regard as artistic is only falsely so, and that true art takes note not merely of form but also of what lies behind. There is an art that kills and an art that gives life. The fine fabric that we have imported from the West or the Far East has literally killed millions of our brothers and sisters, and delivered thousands of our dear sisters to a life of shame. True art must be evidence of happiness, contentment and purity of its authors. And if you will have such art revived in our midst, the use of khadi is obligatory on the best of you at the present moment.

And not only is the use of khadi necessary for the success of the swadeshi programme, but it is imperative for every one of you to spin during your leisure hours. I have suggested to boys and men also that

they should spin. Thousands of them, I know, are spinning daily. But the main burden of spinning must, as of old, fall on your shoulders. Two hundred years ago, the women of India spun not only for home demand but also for foreign lands. They spun not merely coarse counts but the finest that the world has ever spun. No machine has yet reached the fine-ness of the yarn spun by our ancestors. If, then, we are to cope with the demand for khadi during the two months and afterwards, you must form spinning-clubs, institute spinning competitions and flood the Indian mar-ket with hand-spun yarn. For this purpose some of you have to become experts in spinning, carding and adjusting the spinning-wheels. This mea-ns ceaseless toil. You will not look upon spinning as a means of liveli-hood. For the middle class it should supplement the income of the fami-ly, and for very poor women, it is undoubtedly a means of livelihood.

The spinning-wheel should be as it was the widows' loving companion. But for you who will read this appeal, it is presented as a duty, as dharma. If all the well-to-do women of India were to spin a certain quantity daily, they would make yarn cheap and bring about much more quickly than otherwise the required fineness.

The economic and the moral salvation of India thus rests mainly with you. The future of India lies on your knees, for your will nurture the future generation. You can bring up the children of India to become simple, godfearing and brave men and women, or you can coddle them to be weaklings unfit to brave the storms of life and used to foreign finery which they would find it difficult in after life to discard. The next few weeks will show of what stuff the women of India are made. I have not the shadow of a doubt as to your choice. The destiny of India is far safer in your hands than in the hands of a Government that has so exploited India's resources that she has lost faith in herself. At every one of women's meetings, I have asked for your blessings for the national effort, and I have done so in the belief that you are pure, simple and godly enough to give them with effect. You can ensure the fruitfulness of your blessings by giving up your foreign cloth and during your spare hours ceaselessly spinning for the nation.

I remain,
Your devoted brother,
M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 11-8-1921

45. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, GAYA[1]

August 12, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi then addressed the audience and said that he felf ashamed to have come from Allahabad to speak on the subject of protection of cows. The two Maulanas[2] had told them what their religion had got to say on the subject. One might not perform *Gayatri* and *Sandhya* and protect a cow [and] might be called a Hindu. At the same time Hindu religion did not tell them to kill Mohammedans or the English. They should be also prepared to bear the suffering caused by cow-sacrfice.

In am impressing for a long time [the fact] that cow-sacrifice is due to the enmity of Hindus towards Mohammedans. If, suppose, the 65,000 populace of Gaya were to suppress cow-sacrifice against 10,000 Mohammedans by force, some among the Mohammedans would certainly come forward to say, "I shall sacrifice a cow in your presence."

To wrest cows from the hands of the Mohammedans was not Hindu-like. It was said in the *Gita* that to use force was not religious and religion did not consist in using force. Both the *Ramayana* and the *Gita* pointed to that very conclusion. The essence of dharma consisted in maintaining peace and not in abusing others. They might appeal, but not use force. If any Hindu went against these. tenets, he could be said to have never read either the *Mahabharata* or the *Manusmriti*. The Hindus should save the Khilafat. If they worked in peace and harmony they would create love for Indians. If they supported Khilafat the necessity of cow-sacrifice would go away by itself. The Hindus should not think that Mohammedans would be their enemies. In Bombay, Messrs Chhotani and Khettry had saved hundreds of cows. If they left them to their discretion, cows would be saved.

If the Government servants did not side with them they should not assault them or abuse them. It was their duty to love them.

The third point that he impressed on them was swadeshi. Bihar, he said, was a beautiful and holy place. There the trade flourished once. Many of their people accepted service under the East India Company. At first it was difficult for him to introduce swadeshi. In Champaran, boys who followed swadeshi were laughted at. It was through God's grace that the necessity of it was being recognized gradually. He had noticed a *panda* (Gayawal) boy in *videshi* clothes from head to foot. That pained him much. It made his heart ache to learn that *pandas* had become so indiscreet.

[1] Gandhiji addressed a public meeting of some 20,000 people at 9.30 p.m. He was accompanied by Mahommed Ali and Azad Subhani.

[2] Mahomed Ali and Azad Subhani, who had spoken earlier

Pandas were the custodians of dharma and sannyasis. Proceeding, he said that they must give up prostitution and gambling, otherwise they could not expect to win swaraj.

The Searchlight, 21-8-1921

46. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

GAYA,
August 13, 1921

MATHURADAS
CARE ABAD SHIVAJI BAZAR GATE
BOMBAY FORT

CERTAINLY CAN PRINT FORT SPEECH NAVAJIVAN.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

47. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

BIHAR SHARIF,
August 13 [*1921*][1]

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your two letters. Seeing that the whole movement has been conceived in a spirit of service of the poor, I am not likely to go wrong about the burning. To me it seems utterly degrading to throw foreign cloth in the face of the poor because we have no longer any use for it, that cloth which has brought pauperism to the land and reduced thousands of women to a life of shame. Not even the poor will understand a sudden manifestation of pity for them in the shape of silk kerchiefs, flimsy saris and flimsier shirts, not to speak of thousands of stinking caps. The central point it burning is to create an utter disgust with ourselves that we have thoughtlessly decked ourselves at the expense of the poor. Yes, I see nothing wrong in making it a sin to wear cloth that has meant India's degradation and slavery. What I am trying to do just now is to perform a surgical operation with a hand that must not shake. I would respect the

[1] Gandhiji was in Bihar Sharif at this time in 1921.

wonderful love put into cloth prepared by a sister in Europe but I could not even then reconcile myself to the use of forbidden cloth even as one must not take at the hands of one's mother indigestible food given in ignorant love. Lady Roberts sent me what she thought was a preparation possessing the qualities of milk but which was said not to have been made from cow's milk. As soon as I discovered that it was made from milk, I wrote to her and asked to be relieved from having to take it. She not only saw the point but apologized for the mistake. The fact is I look upon life as one of discipline and restraints. These things are often caricatured as in the tortures that the so-called yogis go through. But in their essence they will stand the closest scrutiny. You cannot have an adequate notion how the people are silently and unconsciously transferring their hatred of sinners to sin itself. English ladies in Bombay were warned on the 1st of August And there was Stokes and an English nurse on the platform surrounded by no less than three lacs of men and women. God only knows how the whole thing is going to shape ultimately. All I know is that many there are today who are doing it all for love of humanity.

Yes, the money in Petit's hands is mine and yet I have no control over it. I wish you had told me earlier of his refusal. I am going to try. Please let me know what Malaviyaji has said. If you have any difficulty of course you will fall back on me. What is the final date of your departure?

I had a nice time with Stokes. We were together for about six days during my travels in the U.P.

I agree with you that we must work against opium just as much as against drink. I do feel that if the swadeshi programme is gone through properly and peace and Hindu-Muslim unity persist, we must get swaraj this year. Opium and such abominations must then disappear at the very start of the new life.

With love,

Yours,

MOHAN

From a photostat : G.N. 962

48. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

GAYA,

Saturday [*August 13, 1921*][1]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I have your letter. Self-surrender does not, should not, deprive one of one's originality. It only means that the person has realized his little-ness and, therefore, relies on somebody in whom he has faith. When in doubt, such a person does not insist on his own view but yields to the friend's. Arjuna harried Krishna with no end of questions. The tortoise was a lover of God. His wife would tempt God right till the last. Though [he][2] scorned the counsellors and sent them away, she kept complaining to God all the time. Self-surrender does not mean giving up one's judgment. Sincere self-surrender is not inertia, it is energy; knowing that there is someone to whom to turn ultimately, the person undertakes, with due regard for his limitations, a thousand experiments one after another. But they are all undertaken with humility, knowledge and discri-mination. I count Maganlal's self-surrender to be of the highest order, but he has never, I believe, surrendered his judgment. Your way is quite diffe-rent. You have too little initiative and, therefore, whenever you get some-one to whom you can look up, what little you have deserts you. Because too much reading has dulled your originality, you want to be an assistant. One may wish to work independently and yet be extremely modest.

Your motive in wanting to live with me is sincere, but it is wrong. You merely wish to imitate the West. If I always keep someone with me merely in order that a record of my activities may be kept, I myself would come to behave unnaturally. It is one thing that someone may remain by my side in the usual course of things and keep notes unobtrusively, but quite another that a person should keep notes of everything of set purpose. Did anyone take notes of Rama's activities? The world has lost nothing because no one did so. If extensive notes of Johnson's talks were taken, they have conferred on the world no incomparable benefit that I know of. We do not at all look at this matter merely from the point of view of literature. However, I do want you always to be with me. Since your grasp is so

[1] J. B. Kripalani's suggestion to Gandhiji to have a Bengali with him, referred to in the letter, was made on this date and Krishnadas accordingly joined Gandhiji soon afterwards.

[2] Illegible in the source

good and you are so well-equipped, I should like you to understand everything about my life and work. I have a great many ideas, but they find expression only as occasions arise. There are subtleties, sometimes, which no one follows. My unexceptionable comments on Vasantram Shastri's letter[1] were understood neither by Kaka nor by Swami. You understood them a little better than they. My considerateness in those comments went unnoticed. The tempting thought does not leave me, therefore, that If I had a man life you by my side he could, in the course of time, take up my work. I do not wish yet to employ you exclusively on any one task, but want you, instead, to gather experience. If, moreover, you get acquainted with everyone whom I know, our work in the future will be easier.

There was a telegram from Valji and Swami promising that no errors would be left in future issues. The Professor[2], moreover, wants me to have one Bengali with me. It will, therefore, be convenient if you join me when you are free from there. If you yourself feel like taking up *Young India* to run it independently and develop it, I do not mind. Personally, though, I believe the paper will not be needed after I am gone. Perhaps some of you believe that, if you continue to spread my message, you will be able to run it. Even for this, it is not necessary that you should join it. On the contrary, I feel that after you have matured through experience you will be better equipped to run *Young India* by yourself. Talk to Jawaharlal Nehru about the *Independent*. He must find someone from U.P. How is it he cannot find any from among these vast Hindi-speaking people? What about Kapil Dev Malaviya[3]? In any case, place all the facts before Jawaharlal and discuss the matter.

You have done well to remind me about the matter of Rs. 25,000. I am taking steps to make the necessary arrangements. The printing must improve.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am advising Devdas to stay on there for the time being. I don't have the time to go over the letter again.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original : S.N. 11417

[1] *Vide* "My Notes", 17-7-1921

[2] J. B. Kripalani

[3] A political worker of U.P.

49. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Saturday [*August 13, 1921*][1]

I did not know that the illness you have passed through was so serious. Even then, I had it in my mind till the very last to go and see you. But how could I do so? I reached Boribunder just five minutes before time. Things turned up one after another and kept me engaged. I do understand your desire, but it is my lot to sacrifice my dearest ones. I have had to do this on a number of occasions, and the course I took was the only right one. So, while conceding that your desire is legitimate, I would also ask you not to feel disappointed if it is not gratified. Hereafter, whenever you feel impatient, you should let me know through someone that I must go and see you. If all of you act in this way, I shall feel safe. I stop here as we are nearing the station.

[From Gujarati]
Bapuni Prasadi

[1] The date is given in the source.

50. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BIHAR SHARIF[1]

August 13, 1921

. . . While thanking the municipal commissioners for the address presented to him and his brother Maulana Mahomed Ali, [Gandhiji] asked them to take their legitimate share in the present struggle of eradicating various abuses prevailing in the country. Referring to the cow-sacrifice, he asked the Hindus to help the Mussulmans in the Khilafat question and to pray every morning for the protection of the cow if they wanted the question to be solved properly. Concluding, he appealed to everyone present to take to the charkha and to work out the boycott of foreign cloth before the 30th September. The whole audience maintained silence throughout their speeches. The meeting closed at about 8 p.m., after which Mahatmaji attended a meeting of *purdanashin* ladies when he was presented with cash and ornaments.

The Searchlight, 21-2-1921

51. THE FEAR OF DEATH

[*August 14, 1921*][2]

I have been collecting descriptions of swaraj. One of these would be : Swaraj is the abandonment of the fear of death. A nation which allows itself to be influenced by the fear of death cannot attain swaraj, and cannot retain it if somehow attained.

English people carry their lives in their pockets. Arabs and Pathans consider death as nothing more than an ordinary ailment; they never weep when a relation dies. Boer women are perfectly innocent of this fear. In the Boer war, thousands of young Boer women became widowed. They never cared. It did not matter in the least if the husband or the son was lost; it was enough and more than enough that the country's honour was safe. What booted the husband if the country was enslaved? It was infinitely better to bury a son's mortal remains and to cherish his immortal memory than to bring him up as a serf. Thus did the Boer women steel their hearts and cheerfully give up their darlings to the angel of Death.

The people I have mentioned kill and get killed. But what of those who do not kill but are only ready to die themselves? Such

[1] The meeting was held on the Debi Sarai grounds at 6 p.m. Gandhiji was presented addresses on behalf of the Municipality and spoke after Mahomed Ali.

[2] The Gujarati original was published in *Navajivan*, 14-8-1921.

people become the objects of a world's adoration. They are the salt of the earth.

The English and the Germans fought one another; they killed and got killed. The result is that animosities have increased. There is no end of unrest, and the present condition of Europe is pitiful. There is more of deceit, and each is anxious to circumvent the rest.

But the fearlessness which we are cultivating is of a nobler and purer order and it is therefore that we hope to achieve a signal victory within a very short time.

When we attain swaraj, many of us will have given up the fear of death; or else we shall not have attained swaraj. Till now mostly young boys have died in the cause. Those who died in Aligarh were all below twenty-one. No one knows who they were. If Government resort to firing now, I am hoping that some men of the first rank will have the opportunity of offering up the supreme sacrifice.

Why should we be upset when children or young men or old men die? Not a moment passes when someone is not born or is not dead in this world. We should feel the stupidity of rejoicing in a birth and lamenting a death. Those who believe in the soul—and what Hindu, Mussulman or Parsi is there who does not?—know that the soul never dies. The souls of the living as well as of the dead are all one. The eternal processes of creation and destruction are going on ceaselessly. There is nothing in it for which we might give ourselves up to joy or sorrow. Even if we extend the idea of relationship only to our countrymen and take all the births in the country as taking place in our own family, how many births shall we celebrate? If we weep for all the deaths in our country, the tears in our eyes would never dry. This train of thought should help us to get rid of all fear of death.

India, they say, is a nation of philosophers; and we have not been unwilling to appropriate the compliment. Still, hardly any other nation becomes so helpless in the face of death as we do. And in India again, no other community perhaps betrays so much of this helplessness as the Hindus. A single birth is enough for us to be beside ourselves with ludicrous joyfulness. A death makes us indulge in orgies of loud lamentation which condemn the neighbourhood to sleeplessness for the night. If we wish to attain swaraj, and if having attained it we wish to make it something to be proud of, we must perfectly renounce this unseemly fright.

And what is imprisonment to the man who is fearless of death itself? If the reader will bestow a little thought upon the matter, he will find that if swaraj is delayed, it is delayed because we are not prepared calmly to meet death and inconveniences less than death.

As larger and larger numbers of innocent men come out to welcome death, their sacrifice will become the potent instrument for the salvation of all others; and there will be a minimum of suffering. Suffering cheerfully endured ceases to be suffering and is transmuted into an ineffable joy. The man who flies from suffering is the victim of endless tribulation before it has come to him, and is half dead when it does come. But one who is cheerfully ready for anything and everything that comes escapes all pain; his cheerfulness acts as an anaesthetic.

I have been led to write about this subject because we have got to envisage even death if we will have swaraj this very year. One who is previously prepared often escapes accidents; and this may well be the case with us. It is my firm conviction that swadeshi constitutes this preparation. When once swadeshi is a success, neither this Government nor any one else will feel the necessity of putting us to any further test.

Still it is best not to neglect any contingency whatever. Possession of power makes men blind and deaf; they cannot see things which are under their very nose, and cannot hear things which invade their ears. There is thus no knowing what this power-intoxicated Government may not do. So it seemed to me that patriotic men ought to be prepared for death, imprisonment and similar eventualities.

The brave meet death with a smile on their lips, but they are circumspect all the same. There is no room for foolhardiness in this non-violent war. We do not propose to go to jail or to die by an immoral act. We must mount the gallows while resisting the oppressive laws of this Government.

Young India, 13-10-1921

52. DEFINITIONS OF SWARAJ

I take the reader's leave to put before him the various definitions of swaraj which I keep formulating in my mind.

(1) Swaraj means rule over one's self. One who has achieved this had fulfilled his individual pledge.

(2) We have, however, thought of swaraj in terms of some symbol or image. Swaraj, therefore, means the complete control by the people of the country's imports and exports, of its army and its law courts. This is the meaning of the pledge taken in December. Such swaraj may or may not have room for the British connection. If there is no solution of the Punjab and the Khilafat issues, there will be no room for such connection.

(3) But then it is possible that sadhus as individuals enjoy swaraj even at present, and that, even when we have a parliament of our own, people may not feel that they are free. Swaraj, therefore, means easy availability of food and cloth, so much so that no one would go hungry or naked for want of them.

(4) Even under such circumstances, it may happen that one community or section seeks to suppress another. Swaraj, therefore, means conditions in which a young girl could, without danger, move about alone even at dead of night.

(5) These four definitions will be found to include many others. Nevertheless, if swaraj has infused—and it ought to infuse—a new spirit in every one of the classes which make up the nation, it will mean total disappearance of the practice of treating *Antyajas* as untouchables.

(6) End of the Brahmin-non-Brahmin quarrel.

(7) Complete disappearance of the evil passions in the hearts of Hindus and Muslims. This means that a Hindu should respect a Muslim's feelings and should be ready to lay down his life for him, and *vice versa*. Muslims should not slaughter cows for the purpose of hurting Hindus; on the contrary, they should on their own refrain from cow-slaughter so as to spare the latter's feelings. Likewise, without asking for anything in return, Hindus should stop playing music before mosques with the purpose of hurting Muslims, should actually feel proud in not playing music while passing by a mosque.

(8) Swaraj means that Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis,

Christians and Jews should all be able to follow their own faith and should respect those of others.

(9) Swaraj means that every town or village should be strong enough to protect itself against thieves and robbers and should produce the food and cloth that it requires.

(10) Swaraj means mutual regard between the princes or zemindars on the one hand and their subjects on the other, that the former should not harass the latter and the latter, in their turn, should give no trouble to the former.

(11) Swaraj means mutual regard between the rich and the working class. It means the latter working gladly for the former for adequate wages.

(12) Swaraj means looking upon every woman as a mother or sister and respecting her to the utmost. It means doing away with the distinctions of high and low, and acting towards all with the same regard as for one's brother or sister.

It follows from these definitions that in swaraj (1) the Government will not trade in liquor, opium and things of that kind; (2) no speculation can be permitted in food grains and cotton; (3) no person will break a law; (4) there can be no room at all for wilfulness, which means that a person cannot act as a judge when he is himself charged with something, but should let the charge be examined in a duly established court in the country.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-8-1921

53. UNTOUCHABILITY AND NATIONALISM

A gentleman from Ankleshwar has written a long letter in which he says that, by introducing the issue of untouchability in the national movement, I have done great harm to the country, that I have exaggerated matters in discussing this issue and have unnecessarily supplied a cause for rift amongst us. There are endless allegations in that gentleman's letter. He will forgive me for not replying to them here.

Some social questions are of such magnitude that they cannot but be made political issues. If we dismiss the question of Hindu-Muslim unity as a social one, our cart will get stalled in the very first stage of the journey. The problem of Brahmins and non-

Brahmins in the South has become so acute that any political party which tries to bypass it will commit suicide. It is easy to decide whether or not a particular issue should be taken up in the national struggle. There is no choice but to solve a problem which, if left unsolved, would block our progress. I am positively of the view that, had I not taken up the problem of untouchability, our struggle would have made no headway. We simply could not mount the heaven-bound plane, leaving behind those six crores of people whom, in our profound ignorance, we regard as untouchables and exploit to the utmost. They would cling to the plane and, as they are buried in the ground, it could not take off at all. I would not have taken up this question had I felt that they could have been carried along somehow, hanging on to the plane. I got the impression from the correspondent's letter that he has no idea whatsoever of the present system of Government.

The structure of the Government rests entirely on the foundation of our weaknesses. Today, it may be the Hindu-Muslim question, tomorrow it may be that of Brahmins and non-Brahmins, then again that of untouchability, on another occasion that of the subjects and the rulers, the capitalists and the workers, the pleasure we take in drinking and such other things. This Government has exploited all these weaknesses of ours. It is because of this that I have described our movement as one of self-purification. I have described untouchability as the greatest blot on Hindu society as the latter has been guilty of Dyerism in its treatment of the communities regarded as untouchable.

I shall not walk into the trap of the Shastras and allow myself to be fooled. I cannot brush aside the evidence of my eyes. Wherever I look, I see hatred for the untouchables, A correspondent proudly asserts that, had Hindu society really cherished hatred for the *Antyajas*, the latter would have perished long ago. I, on the other hand, feel that we have not destroyed them because we needed them to do our sanitary work. Who would destroy slaves? Those who wish that their burdens should be car-ried do not destroy their beasts. When I think of the heavy burden which we have made the untouchables to carry and the extent to which we have reduced them to the position of slaves, life itself becomes unbearable to me. However, since I believe that our atrocities are the result of our igno-rance and are not deliberate, I have been trying to awaken Hindu society by harsh words, though with great affection and humility. We have no moral

justification at all for our present treatment of the *Antyajas*.

I like the idea of having a bath after coming into contact with anything dirty. I myself take one and advise others to do so. But that we should avoid anyone who, though outwardly as clean as myself, when questioned as to his community turns out to be an *Antyaj*—is intolerable to me.

Protection of the weak will be of the utmost importance in swaraj. If we are not prepared to ensure it, if we do not let them draw water from wells, force them to live in the filthiest localities, do not permit them to attend our schools or, if we do, reserve separate benches for them, if we regard ourselves polluted by their touch though, perhaps, they attend looking cleaner than we do, certainly, this is not Hindu Shastra it is only the element of extremism in it and is pure Dyerism.

A gentleman from the party of *Antyajas* says in a letter to me that Lord Clive had overcome others with the help of the *Antyajas*. I have not gone into this matter, but I have no doubt about its being so. Even today, if the *Antyajas* show themselves gullible enough, there are many Clives who are ready to exploit any person or class and suppress others who may lift their heads. The Gurkhas have the same blood in their veins as we; who used them against the innocent workers of Chandpur? The Sikhs' eyes have opened now, but has this brave community not been sufficiently used in the present political system for suppressing us?

We put the noose round our own necks by covering up our weaknesses, giving them the appearance of strength and postponing their reform.

If the followers of a religion in which it is customary to set aside a portion for the poor before sitting down to a meal, throw from a distance into the laps of the *Antyajas* what is left over in their plates, throw rotten grain and such other things, what should we call such wicked conduct if not Dyerism?

This correspondent says that, when the *Antyajas* were brought in to attend the Broach Conference, people kept to their seats merely out of their regard [for me], but they were certainly pained at heart. I should be sorry if this is true. If we want swaraj, we should learn to state our views and act on them even though we happen to be in a minority of one or two.

I know that I have pained many devout Hindus by my writings

and speeches on untouchability. But I also know that I have been, and am, prompted by no malice in acting as I have done. When the *vaid* prescribes *chirata*, the patient, though he may make a sour face, knows that it is for his good.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-8-1921

54. COMPROMISE?

This is not the only letter[1] of its kind which I have received. Some friends have also remonstrated with me orally for welcoming Mr. Vasantram Shastri's article. I adhere to my opinion all the same. I would welcome any article like the above and criticism in the same spirit. It is gratifying to know that there are many now who see that the practice of untouchability is an evil and suggest that there is no room at all for compromise on this issue. The critics of Mr. Shastri's article look at it from their own point of view. I considered it from Mr. Shastri's and was happy to find that he regarded the practice of untouchability as a matter of hygiene. I can understand the idea of avoiding contact with an *Antyaj* in the same manner in which one avoids contact with a woman in her monthly course. It is not difficult for me to understand how the practice of avoiding contact with a *Chandal*[2] may have arisen.

The true reformer, without giving up his stand, welcomes those who come nearer to him because he believes that, in the course of time, they will understand the meaning of the reform. I have denounced the sort of untouchability which is being practised in the name of the Shastras and I have no intention of modifying my attitude in any respect. But I shall salute anyone who, though he may take a bath on touching an *Antyaj*, loves *Antyajas*, gets water tanks built for them, helps them to get educated, makes their suffering his own, will not eat before he has fed them, respectfully gives an *Antyaj* a seat in a railway compartment and nurses him if he becomes ill. I will pray to God to forgive such a man if he believes that his soul has been polluted by contact with an *Antyaj*. I will not change my view or my

[1] The letter, not reproduced here, purported to be from a *sanatani* Hindu and complained against what he regarded as Gandhiji's compromising attitude in his comments on Shastri Vasantram's article; *vide* "My Notes", 17-7-1921.

[2] One of the communities traditionally regarded as untouchable

practice or method in any respect whatever. I will not compromise with untouchability. But to the extent that any persons move towards the ideal, I shall honour them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-8-1921

55. MY NOTES

BURNING OF CAPS

The work enthusiastically begun in Bombay is progressing with great vigour. At every place in our journey, caps made of muslin, velvet and felt pile up in heaps. Muslims throw in their Turkish and Astrakhan caps. Some throw in their turbans. A friend has commented that the telephone and the telegraphs seem ineffective when compared with the telepathic communication going on in the country. With the speed of air, the idea has spread among the people that it is sinful to wear foreign cloth or have it in one's house. At each and every place, therefore, we receive something or other. What surprises me is that we rarely see anyone hesitating to hand over his clothes for burning.

OUR GROUP

During this journey, our group consists not merely of one of the Ali Brothers and myself, but also includes Maulana Azad Subhani of Kanpur and Mr. Stokes, who lives in Kotgarh near Simla. The latter is member of the Congress. He has dedicated his time to working for the removal of the practice of forced labour which obtains in the hills. Mr. Stokes is married to an Indian Christian lady and has six children. He has not, to this day, taught his children a single word of English. They know only two languages—Pahari and Hindi. He, too, threw his clothes into the sacrificial fire on July 31 and now dresses himself in a dhoti, shirt and cap, all made of khadi. As he has some time to spare now, he is accompanying us on this journey in order to get some experience. For many years now Mr. Stokes has been living in purely Indian style. the change in dress, though, is recent.

SHOUTS OF VICTORY AND TOUCHING OF FEET IN REVERENCE

The malady of bursting forth into shouts of victory and touching my feet in reverence is as active as ever. I had hoped that, after all that I have written on the subject, I would find things changed. But ever since we entered the United Provinces I have had so much of

them that I feel disgusted. There is no end to the enthusiasm of the people, but I find all this enthusiasm being fritered away in shouting and touching my feet. My ears, too, are no longer strong enough to tolerate loud noises. In a crowd of thousands, people's attempts to touch my feet are so troublesome that every moment I feel afraid I may fall down.

VOLUNTEERS

Of volunteers, there is a large number, but they are not yet fully aware of their responsibilities. They lack training. If we wish to start civil disobedience, volunteers must become perfectly efficient. They ought to be able to stop the shouting, to prevent people from touching my feet and to make themselves heard. If volunteers cannot manage this, they will be of no help at a critical moment. We should, therefore, look upon the training of volunteers as an essential part of our struggle.

VERIFICATION

Everyone asks me how we shall be able to verify whether or not we are following swadeshi. There are two methods of doing so. In the market-places today we rarely see anything but foreign clothes on people's bodies—men's and women's. We find, in our decorations such as those which we hang over our doors, only *madarashi*[1] and other foreign material made in Manchester. Our buntings, bands, etc., we see, are made of foreign material. We find the same thing in our temples and mosques. When we see khadi instead, we shall know that the age of foreign goods has come to an end. Our cloth-shops and the dwellings of our weavers will provide an even more reliable criterion. We shall know that the era of swadeshi has finally come to prevail when foreign cloth is not easily available in our shops and khadi is all that meets the eye, and when we find no foreign yarn on the looms of weavers. How can there be shops selling foreign cloth if there are no customers for it? This consummation can be brought about only if both the Hindus and the Muslims see the right course. What can Muslims by themselves do if crores of Hindus do not overcome their liking for fine muslin? What can Hindus alone do if crores of Muslims do not do so either?

PAYING FOR ONE'S MISTAKES

Since we neglected some sections of society, we are now faced with difficulties. Wherever I go, I observe absence of co-operation

[1] A kind of cloth

on the part of merchants and weavers. Merchants to some extent have come into the movement, but we have made no effort at all to get in touch with weavers. We must, therefore, educate them. So long as we have not educated them, our difficulties will continue to increase, for if merchants continue to import foreign goods and weavers to use foreign yarn and do not even touch hand-spun yarn, where shall we be? The authorities of every Congress Committee should now get in touch with merchants and weavers, enrol them as members, and persuade them to introduce the needed changes in their business or work. Such an attempt was made in Moradabad and it proved successful. The Committee there called merchants together in a meeting along with the workers. After they were convinced and had had their difficulties resolved, they willingly took the pledge not to purchase foreign cloth. I find Gujaratis in good numbers wherever I go. Many of the families have settled in the particular provinces since a hundred or two hundred years ago. Today at every place, they are going on happily with their work and, wherever they are, they live harmoniously with the local people. In some places, thanks to their efforts, one finds the work of the Congress proceeding securely. Moreover, though they join in the work, they remain humble. It gives me great happiness to see Gujaratis thus displaying their virtues in other parts. If we could rid ourselves of every kind of fear, we could do still greater service to the country.

POWER OF NON-VIOLENCE

From my experience everywhere I see that, wherever people have properly understood the lesson of non-violence, they have risen highest. The non-violence which proceeds from fear or weakness is not true non-violence. That alone can truly be called non-violence which is combined with strength and energy. Just as we do not wish to violate peace in our relations with the British, so also we must not put it aside when dealing with our own people serving as officers, soldiers and policemen. A gentleman has put the question to me whether non-violence is to be followed among ourselves or only in our relations with the British. Such a ques-tion should not arise at all. We shall lose even if we do not remain peaceful with our own people. A non-co-operator must remain respectful, peaceful and humble towards all. The braver the man the more peace-loving he should be, and the humbler he is the bigger he is. A shallow person, who starts hitting and abusing at the slightest provocation, loses his str-ength. Peacefulness is also like the vital fluid, form of energy, an invisi-ble

one. Anyone who builds up a store of it in himself becomes a strong *brahmachari*. By defining *brahmacharya* in purely physical terms, we have ceased to regard as guilty those who lose their temper every second. Just as the observance of *brahmacharya* in its physical aspect is essential for the welfare of the body, so also is spiritual *brahmacharya* necessary. I am convinced that we have only succeeded in prolonging our movement by getting angry with those who co-operate with the Government and by abusing the police. We would have all power in our hands today if we had, in thought, action and speech, remained peaceful, respectful and humble towards all our opponents.

TO PARSI WOMEN

I know that Parsi sisters in fairly good numbers read *Navajivan*. They may have some difficulty in understanding its language. I try to make my language as simple as possible and to avoid conjunct letters. But one cannot completely set aside the rules of grammar. The Parsis have disfigured Gujarati to such an extent that to enter into competition with them would be tantamount to murdering the language. I, therefore, request these women readers to take some trouble to understand the words which they find difficult, or ask someone to explain the same to them. They will have no difficulty at all after they have taken pains to read through a few issues in this manner. It behoves our Parsi brothers and sisters to try and improve their language. At present it seems that there are three varieties of Gujarati : Parsi Gujarati, Muslim Gujarati and Hindu Gujarati, although our Muslim brothers do not spoil Gujarati as much as the Parsis do and have no difficulty in following the Gujarati of *Navajivan*. Khabardar, Malbari and other writers have shown that the Parsis, if they want, can write good Gujarati. I find pure Gujarati used in some of the letters which I get from Parsis. A little pride in one's language is all that is required. Given this pride, the Gujarati of the Parsis will soon improve and come up to the general level.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-8-1921

56. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

PATNA,
Monday, August 15, 1921

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have sent an article for the special *Pateti* issue of *Sanj Vartman.*[1] I have had it copied. I have not read the copy. If there are any mistakes left, please see to them. Meet Kapadia and see if he has any difficulty in reading the handwriting. I wish that there should be no mistakes and no omissions in the article.

Your health will be all right now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

57. LETTER TO OMKARNATH PUROHIT

ON WAY TO PATNA,
August 15, 1921

DEAR OMKARNATH,

I have your letter. I send you the printed letter. I do not see in it anything so unjust that you must proclaim its injustice by publishing the letter. You should keep your word about not publishing it. Whether you act upon the advice contained in it it is for your heart to decide.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

OMKARNATH PUROHIT
C/O LALA CHANDULAL
RAJA KA BAZAR
AGRA

From a photostat of the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand : G.N. 6088

[1] *Vide* "Benevolent Parsis", 10-9-1921.

58. APPEAL TO RESIDENTS OF SIMLA HILL STATES[1]

August 15, 1921

BROTHER HILLMEN,

Munshi Kapur Singh and his associates are undergoing trouble for your sake in order to rid you of the injustices of which you are the victims for a long time past. Are you going to give them up without efforts? I am sure in this matter you would not incur the displeasure of the whole country. I hope that so long as your friends and helpers are in jail you will, in pursuance of Mr. Stokes' advice, refuse to give *begar* to the British Government and the State. Do not allow any excess on your part; remove anger from your minds during the time your brothers are under custody. It is much better for you to undergo hardships and be ready to fill jails for the sake of your faith (dharma) than to give *begar* to any official. Remember that, if on this occasion you prove unworthy, you will perpetuate your slavery and for all time to come you shall continue to be treated as slaves. In your efforts I am with you with all my heart and soul.

The Leader, 18-8-1921

59. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

ON WAY TO CALCUTTA,

[Before *August 17, 1921*][2]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I have your letter. Motilalji certainly wants you to stay on, but the main thing for you to consider is what you yourself would like to do. If you find the work there very strenuous or if the place does not suit your health, do come away. Can one be more important to a man than be his right hand? "If only I were the right hand" could have been written either in grief or with knowledge. If in grief, I would say you have not understood me. If you wrote it with knowledge, all is well. Two brains can drift apart from each other, but can a hand be separated from the brain to do anything? I am training you to work as a brain. Santaram, being a "permanent Under-Secretary", cannot

[1] This was issued originally in Hindi and was widely distributed among the residents of the Simla Hill States.

[2] Gandhiji was in Calcutta on August 17.

leave. I should like you to understand your position rightly.

You will not understand the secret of my keeping Pyarelal[1] here. You do not know that part of my life. Ba and I do not have the same temperament. Ba does not understand me. I have not yet found in the Ashram a single woman of the type I want. Managing the kitchen is [a difficult thing]. Only a few can do it. I consider the work beyond your capacity. So far Maganlal, Vinoba, Chhotelal[2], myself and to some extent Bhuvarji[3] have proved equal to the task. There is science in our cooking. There were numerous difficulties on account of Gokibehn[4]. We do want one responsible man [in the kitchen]. I think that I am making the best use Pyarelal. When the proper time comes I shall shift him from there and put him elsewhere.

While Joseph is out, your asking for Devdas or Pyarelal to join you seems to be rather an exorbitant demand. You should find someone of a lower level than these two. You can have Prabhudas with you.

Would it suit you to continue staying with Joseph after Durga has recovered? But that is a distant thing. I must first know what your own desire is. I will not now send you to take up *Young India*. Did you receive my last letter? You will either continue there or be with me—this is what I think at present.

I read your articles. All of them are good, that is, they call for no comments. You have given a good reply to Bipin Chandra[5] .

Write to me at Gauhati. I shall be in its neighbourhood up to the 25th.

Kristodas[6] , who was to join me for *Young India* work, has come. He is with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original : S.N. 11413

[1] Pyarelal Nayyar; Gandhiji's secretary since 1920; biographer of Gandhiji

[2] Chhotelal Jain, a former anarchist, later an inmate of the Satyagraha Ashram

[3] An inmate of the Satyagraha Ashram

[4] Raliatbehn, Gandhiji's sister

[5] Bipin Chandra Pal

[6] A variant of "Krishnadas"

60. SPEECH AT MIRZAPUR PARK, CALCUTTA[1]

August 17, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi at the outset said that he would not speak for more than five minutes and hoped that the audience would kindly give him a patient hearing, as he was to leave for Assam that evening by the Darjeeling mail.

He said that he believed that they had all read the resolutions of the All-India Congress Committee which had reference to the fact that there must be a complete boycott of foreign clothes before the 30th of September next and he urged the audience to see that that resolution was carried into effect. He appealed to them to use swadeshi clothes and he desired that they should burn the foreign clothes they were still wearing or send them to Smyrna. Pointing to his own dress which consisted of a khadi cloth and a 'swaraj' cap, he said that though khadi was a bit coarse they should not be discouraged. He reminded the audience that if they were determined to follow the resolutions *in toto*, he promised them swaraj and the undoing of wrongs done to the Khilafat and to the Punjab in October next. He also advised them—both Hindus and Mohammedans—to be united in their efforts just like two sons of a mother, and be prepared to fight their battle peacefully and to present a bold front in their struggle for freedom by absolutely non-violent means.

In conclusion, Mahatma Gandhi again appealed to the audience to throw away all their foreign clothes and to burn them if need be, reminding them at the same time that he would address them again and devote a longer time when he returned to Calcutta in the course of a few days after his tour in Assam.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-8-1921

[1] Gandhiji addressed the meeting, attended by over 15,000 Hindus and Muslims, at 4.30 p.m. Abul Kalam Azad and Mahomed Ali were present.

61. LETTER TO KHWAJA

[After *August 17, 1921*][1]

DEAR KHWAJA SAHEB[2],

You will please forgive me for not acknowledging your wire earlier regarding cow-sacrifice. I know that in many parts of India, the work done was marvellously good indeed. You wanted me to wire regarding scarcity of grain. It is no use my wiring anything now. I shall hope to meet you on the 4th[3] when you will mention the matter if the situation still requires consideration.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 7599

62. REPRESSION IN THE UNITED PROVINCES

The following note was prepared for me by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, now over two months ago, reviewing repressive measures in the United Provinces to the 30th May. Other matters having absorbed my attention, I have not been able to deal with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's notes. They, however, read as fresh today as in June. And the reader will find in them almost a complete answer to the official repudiation of the charge of repression.[4]

Young India, 18-8-1921

63. NOTES

A HINDI "NAVAJIVAN"

So many Hindi-speaking friends have been anxious for me to make myself responsible for publishing a Hindi edition of the

[1] This was in reply to Khwaja's wire dated August 16 received at Monghyr on August 17 which read : "Only two cows sacrificed yesterday against 6 last year over 200 previous years response to swadeshi very hopeful wheat four seers per rupee rumours of further fall causing great excitement in city serious development apprehended. Please wire advice."

[2] Presumably Khwaja Abdul Majid, Vice-Chancellor of the National Muslim University of Aligarh which later became Jamia Milia Islamia of Delhi

[3] Gandhiji was to reach Calcutta on September 4 to attend the Working Committee meeting to be held on the 6th.

[4] For the text of the note, *vide* Appendix "Jawaharlal Nehru's note on repression in the United Provinces", 18-8-1921.

Navajivan. I have myself been anxious to do so. But it has not been hitherto possible. The editing of the *Navajivan* and *Young India* is difficult enough to cope with. But there is no doubt that I am in love with my ideas and theories. I am firmly of opinion that they are good for India, and if I may say it in all humility, good for all. And so I am yielding to the pressure of friends and workers to issue a Hindi edition. I know that several translations in Hindi appear in different parts of India. But the desire has been to put under one cover an authorized free translation of selected articles from the *Navajivan* and *Young India*. This is now being done. The Hindi of the edition will really be Hindustani, a resultant of Hindi and Urdu—simple words understood by both Hindus and Mussulmans. An attempt will be made to avoid ornamentation. Indeed I would love to give a simultaneous transcript in the Urdu characters. But that cannot be as yet. Let me not also hide the secret from the reader that it is my regard for the Marwari friends, and notably, Jamnalalji that hastened the issue of the Hindi *Navajivan*. Jamnalalji has made the declaration as publisher and Mr. Shankarlal Banker as printer. The Hindi *Navajivan* like the Gujarati and English editions will not contain any advertisements. It has also to be self-supporting like the other two and will therefore depend for existence on the support if receives. The subscription for the Hindi edition will be Rs. 4/- yearly and Rs. 2/- half-yearly. I would advise intending subscribers to send only half-yearly subscriptions. The Hindi *Navajivan* is merely a trial. I have only a limited staff. But for the exhaustless energy and resourcefulness of Swami Anandanand I would have refused to take the responsibility. We have found that it is voluntary labour that is most efficient. And it is not easy to tap that class of labour whether bodily or mental. I would therefore invite Hindi lovers of non-co-operation as a doctrine of life to confine their patronage to six months as a trial. Needless to say the concerns are not meant for profit. Any margin left therefore will be devoted to the development of the three editions. The readers will also be interested and pleased to learn that Maulana Mahomed Ali has placed at my disposal his machinery, type and other material of the *Comrade* free of charge. Thus the battle of non-co-operation with forces of evil (as I consider the Government to represent) is dependent upon closest co-operation between forces of good as I consider non-co-operation to represent in spite of all the faults and limitations of non-co-operators.

FRAUDULENT IMITATIONS

A friend writes from Madras :

> The piece of cloth which I enclose herewith is a sample of what is being sold in Madras at from 10 to 15 annas per yard by the Bombay Swadeshi Stores under the name of pure khadi, i.e., hand-spun and hand-woven. How is one to be protected against such frauds? I have little doubt that the sample is of foreign make.

I have seen the sample and there is not a shadow of doubt that it is neither hand-spun nor hand-woven. It is possible that it might be a production of Indian mills, though it shows Japanese rather than Indian finish. The pity of it is that such stuff is being sold in swadeshi stores. But we must be prepared for such frauds. They are an eloquent testimony to the fact that the swadeshi spirit is rising. How to detect and check these frauds is the question. The golden rule, of course, is that we must spin our own yarn and get a weaver to weave it under our superintendence. That time is undoubtedly coming. When we cannot spin for ourselves, we must get the spinning done by the thousands of spinners coming into being all over the country. Where we cannot do it, we must in choosing our khadi reject every piece of cloth that looks at all like mill-made. For coarser counts it will be most difficult to distinguish between imported cloth and that manufactured by our mills. Hand-spun khadi lacks the dead polish of the mills but is rougher to look at, porous, light to handle, and pleasant to the touch. It is never glossy. Another safeguard I suggest is that the cloth should be unbleached. A third alternative which is not free from danger is that in every Congress district there should be swadeshi shops licensed by the Congress and there should be expect inspectors who should constantly inspect the stock in licensed shops. If possible, every article should be stamped. I know that we are not organized and trained enough for undertaking this work on a universal scale. But till every district has begun to manufacture all khadi for itself, some such inspection is undoubtedly necessary, and whatever can be honestly improvised should be done.

PLAGUE-SPOTS OF LUCKNOW

An English friend writes to me at Lucknow :

> I am just writing to ask you to write a word before you go to someone in authority among your supporters here in regard to the brothels in Lucknow. I was talking to the military police this morning in Aminabad, and it seems that there are some fifty of these places in that locality frequented by soldiers

(some of whom have been court-martialled as it is out of bounds)—Europeans and Anglo-Indians. He did not say anything about Indians but I heard the other day that they also go to these women. A word from you as to this debasing of manhood and lack of self-control would do more than anything else to counteract this evil. I will pledge myself to do all I can to help in the matter.

I wish I could share the English friend's belief that my word has the power he attributes to it. As I write this paragraph, the picture of the dear sisters who visited me at Cocanada after nightfall haunts me. They were dearer to me after I learnt of their shame. It was only by suggestion they could tell me what their life was. As the spokeswoman spoke to me, she had shame and sorrow written in her eyes. I could not bring myself to hold them guilty. I devoted my speech after this meeting to the necessity of personal purity. My heart, therefore, goes out to the fallen sisters of Lucknow. They are driven to a life of shame. I am satisfied that they do not go to it from choice. And the beast in man has made the detestable crime a lucrative profession. Lucknow is noted for its love of ease. But Lucknow is also the seat of a Mussulman divine. It has its full share of all that is noble in Islam. For the Hindus Lucknow is the capital of the Province where the spotless Sita and Rama roamed and reigned. It recalls the best days of Hindu purity, nobility, bravery and steadfastness to truth. Non-co-operation is self-purification, and I urge all the non-co-operators and others to deal with this moral plague of Lucknow. I hope no custodian of Lucknow's good name will remind me that Lucknow is no worse than the other cities in India. Lucknow has come in by chance as an illustration. We are responsible throughout India for the purity and the safety of our womanhood. Why should not Lucknow lead?

Young India, 18-8-1921

64. THE KHILAFAT

At Lucknow I found natural impatience on the part of the Mussulmans regarding the Khilafat. Maulvi Salamatulla voiced in moderate language the public feeling regarding the position of the Angora Government when he said that the British attitude was becoming unbearable. There is no doubt about the growing distrust of the British declarations about friendliness towards the Turks. Nobody believes either that the British declarations are genuine or that

the British Government is powerless to afford relief. In their impatient anger the Mussulmans ask for more energetic and more prompt action by the Congress and Khilafat organizations. To the Mussul-mans swaraj means, as it must mean, India's ability to deal effectively with the Khilafat question. The Mussul-mans therefore decline to wait if the attainment of swaraj means indefinite delay or a programme that may require the Mussulmans of India to be-come impotent witnesses of the extinction of Turkey in European waters.

It is impossible not to sympathize with this attitude. I would gladly recommend immediate action if I could think of any effective course. I would gladly ask for postponement of swaraj activity if thereby we could advance the interest of the Khilafat. I would gladly take up measures outside non-co-operation, if I could think of any in order to assuage the pain caused to the millions of Mussulmans.

But, in my humble opinion, attainment of swaraj is the quickest method of righting the Khilafat wrong. Hence it is that for me the solution of the Khilafat question is attainment of swaraj and *vice versa*. The only way to help the afflicted Turks is for India to generate sufficient power to be able to assert herself. If she cannot develop that power in time, there is no way out for India and she must resign herself to the inevitable. What can a paralytic do to stretch forth a helping hand to a neighbour but to try to cure himself of his paralysis? Mere ignorant, thoughtless and angry outburst of violence may give vent to pent-up rage but can bring no relief to Turkey. Nor can it increase the power of India to assert herself. And the measures taken to put down vio-lence may well lessen the speed with which we are marching to our goal.

But there is no cause whatsoever for despair. The whole of the Congress programme has been framed and measures are being adopted to meet the Khilafat crisis. There is no doubt that two months for finishing the swadeshi work is a most intensive measure calculated to bring the best out of the nation. And if India completes the boycott by September and comes to her own in October, surely it must satisfy the most sanguine temperament and the most impatient and ardent Khilafatist as I claim myself to be.

The fact is that all the workers are not convinced of the possibility of completing the swadeshi programme during the time fixed or of its power to effect all that is claimed for it. Such doubters have to stand out, unless they can suggest a better and quicker method

and get it accepted by the country. In spite of their doubt, they should faithfully plunge them-selves into swadeshi work and give the experiment a fair trial. And does not this doubting of India's ability to go through the swadeshi program-me show, if the doubt is justified, that India has really no interest in the Khilafat or it has no desire to sacrifice anything for it? Is it a big sacrifice for every Hindu and Mussulman to discard all foreign cloth and to use only khadi? And if India is not to have that ability, will it not also be proof that India is unfit for any higher sacrifice and therefore unfit for helping Turkey? Let us all work for complete boycott of foreign cloth and the manufacture of the required quantity of khadi and we shall be in sight of the heaven.

A suggestion was seriously put forth at Lucknow that we should boycott Ralli Bros., a Greek firm, and avenge ourselves against the Greeks and should invite the labourers to stop work on the export cargo. The suggestions, it seems to me, are as absurd as they are impossible to carry out. Assume for one moment that we can in a moment extinguish the business of Ralli Bros., how can that affect the Greeks? Ralli Bros. do not send all or a great part of their flour to Greece. Theirs is a world trade. And it is more difficult to deal with their trade than with swadeshi. Any such attempt apart from its inherent wrong can only expose us to well-deserved ridicule. Interference with the labourers working on export cargo is equally fantastic. If we had such absolute control over the masses, we should have won our battle long ago. To stop the export of cargo requires not only a permanent or an indefinitely long stoppage of work by the existing labourers, but it presupposes our ability to stop any replacement of withdrawn labour. I fear we are not organized enough for the work. Any such attempt can only end in failure, if not worse.

The only feasible suggestion is the immediate taking up of civil disobedience. I am convinced that the country is not ready for its adoption on an extensive scale. It can be safely and successfully adopted, if the country evinces sufficient organizing ability, resourcefulness and discipline necessary for bringing the eminently practical swadeshi enterprise to a successful end. Let us hope and pray that the country will.

Young India, 18-8-1921

65. A VENOMOUS PROSECUTION

During my travels in the United Provinces, I have come across extraordinary tales of repression. For the present I propose only to deal with two cases of prosecution which I do not hesitate to consider venomous. Messrs Mohansinh Darmal and Shambhunath, a Zemindar of Sitapur and ex-Tahsildar, were called upon to show cause why they should not file security for an offence described thus in the summons :

> Whereas it appears from the report of the Patwari at Ramgadh that
>
> (1) Th. Mohansinh of Ramgadh,
>
> (2) B. Shambhunath, late Naib Tahsildar at present at Bhowali and Bhunyadhar are taking part in anti-Government agitation and selling notes for the Tilak Swaraj Fund, as such agitation against the Government established by law is likely to eventually lead to a disturbance of the public tranquillity and breaches of the peace, hence these persons are called on to show cause why they should not be bound over to keep the peace for one year in personal bonds of Rs. 1,000 each and each in two sureties in Rs. 500 each.

On the face of it, the summons discloses no offence. But the painful humour of the situation is accentuated upon reading the Patwari's statement. It refers to the accused having paid the collections to Pandit Motilal Nehru and having been found in the company of such a confirmed non-co-operator as Pandit Nehru (sen.) in a place like Ramgadh, a sanatorium. It is true, the magistrate has not the courage to mention this very relevant fact, but as the second accused made it abundantly clear in his statement, his being with and having served Panditji was the sole offence. The accused is a well-known man in his district. He is known also to be a consumptive in the last stages. His right lung is almost gone. The other, and his bowels are badly affected [*sic*]. He had not taken any active part in any political work for many months. He had not made any speeches. He was in Ram-gadh like Panditji himself recouping his health. Thus there was absolu-tely no excuse for the magistrate to arrest the accused or to go on with his trial after the arrest. The fact is, the magistrate's idea was evidently to terrorize all those who had anything to do with non-co-operation even to the extent of collecting subscriptions or helping non-co-operation in villages. It may be said that such things are really an exception and that their importance need not be exaggerated. I am unable to subscribe to the doctrine. The

magistrate in the instances quoted may have adopted an original method of acting, but my observation of the United Provinces leads me to the conclusion that there is subtle terrorism going on in the United Provinces as nowhere else except perhaps in Sind, designed solely to kill non-co-operation activities, no matter how non-violent and otherwise innocent they might be. A most unscrupulous use is being made of the statement of regrets issued by the Brothers. The users know the manner and the method of the Brothers' apology. But for them distor-tion of a brave act is the least wicked among the wickednesses that they resort to for the sake of bending non-co-operators and weaning others from their ways. I am satisfied that the poorer people who dare to accept the banner of non-co-operation are molested in order to prevent them from joining Congress Committees, and they are by equally questionable methods made to join the so-called peace-promoting organizations which are as a matter of fact anarchical in the sense that the methods adopted for promoting them are both illegal and immoral. The United Provinces Government are doing in a clever and cowardly manner what Sir Michael O'Dwyer's Government did in an honest blunt manner. He followed up the logic of his policy and had the courage to arrest all the leaders and to create an atmosphere for an open Jallianwala. I have drawn attention else-where to the fact that tragedies worse than Jallianwala had been enacted in the Punjab during the recruiting period but they passed unnoticed because leaders were not arrested. The U. P. Government will not arrest leaders of the front rank except in isolated cases like Mr. Sherwani's. They have arrested Mr. Ranga Iyer. They have not as yet touched Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru or Mr. Joseph though all the three issued their challenge sim-ultaneously. I have taken the trouble of reducing to writing the results of my observation in the United Provinces, because I saw Mr. Chintamani's speech energetically defending the measures of his Government,and because I was pressed to encourage ministers who were working out the Reforms to the point of complete responsible government. In my humble opinion the Reforms and the Reforms ministers are being used, wherever possible,for sustaining the clever but unscrupulous bureaucracy. That the ministers are unconscious and unwilling instruments does not lessen the evil of the policy, though it is an extenuating circumstance in favour of the ministers. I am loth to believe that Raja Saheb Mahmudabad and Mr. Chintamani know what they are doing. I am inclined to think that they are irresistibly drawn into the bureaucratic

net, and the plausibilities put before them induce them to excuse what they would otherwise condemn without any hesitation. The Raja of Mahmudabad is stated by the *Independent* to have defended the action of a District Judge who suspen-ded an acting *munsarim* in East Badaun for failing to produce a written declaration of loyalty by his son who had been served with a notice under section 144. He was suspended on the 10th May pending production of the required declaration. No doubt the son was living with the father. The result was that on the 6th of June the father produced the son's appli-cation to join an Aman-sabha and procured reinstatement by selling his son's liberty of action. If we could but peep behind the scene, we would probably find confidential despatches seeking to justify the suspension of the poor *munsarim*. Be that however as it may, we have here the melan-choly fact that pressure is being put upon Government servants in order to compel their boys to withdraw from the non-co-operation movement. I have no doubt that the Raja Saheb of three years ago would have written and spoken far more energetically against such wicked demoralization of officials and their families than I am doing. What is however still more to the purpose than the drawing of attention to the fact that ministers are being made tools in unscrupulous hands is that non-co-operators must not be disheartened over the illegalities and the immoralities referred to here, but that they should realize that such repression and even worse must be expected by us and cheerfully accepted as the lot of reformers all the world over. The persecutors really believe that we are in the wrong, that we are harming the country and that means do not matter so long as the movement for which we stand is crushed. Repression, there-fore, must be treated by us as a prelude to victory and must, therefore, be welcomed and be utilized by us for making our determination still more rigid.

Young India, 18-8-1921

66. A CONFESSION OF ERROR

God only knows how often I have erred. Those who charge me with infallibility simply do not know me. My own experiences have taught me to be humble enough to know and to appreciate the fact that life consists in struggling against errors. When I launched out light-heartedly on civil disobedience in 1919, I saw that I erred grievously. As soon as I perceived at Nadiad the want of foresight, I

called it a Himalayan miscalculation. It was not an exaggeration. And if India has not lost in moral growth thereby, it is because I had the wisdom to make a clean and full confession. I wish similarly to make another confession during these few weeks of concentrated swadeshi work. I have already made the confession in my talks with students and professors. But a more definite and more public confession is necessary as well for my mental peace as for the present propaganda. All these nine months' experience has confirmed the correctness of the boycott of government educational institutions. But I was weak about the alternative suggested, and I was weak because I distrusted my ability to carry conviction. I cared for the consequence instead of leaving it to God. And therefore in my weakness I said the boys, after leaving schools, could roam about the streets, follow the same course of instruction or best of all take to hand-spinning till swaraj was established. I discovered soon after the Nagpur Congress resolution that I had erred in suggesting several alternatives. But the mischief was already done. It started in September last. I began to retrace my steps in January, but repair is always patch-work. And so the spinning-wheel remains more or less an excrescence or an idle pastime in most non-co-operation schools. I should have boldly said the whole truth and suggested hand-spinning and hand-weaving as an integral part of the proposition regarding boycott of educational institutions. It is true that probably fewer students would have come out. But they would have done far greater work than all the thousands who have left schools and colleges without a definite notion about the alternative. They would by this time have become experts in hand-spinning and hand-weaving, and our swadeshi work would have been easier. I know that the students and the professors of non-co-operation schools are doing their best. But it must be admitted that they are labouring under a handicap. They did not come with any conviction about hand-spinning of swadeshi in general. They simply considered the question, as they had a right to, from the educational standpoint. It was enough for them that they diminished the prestige of the Government by withdrawing from its educational institutions. It is hard on them now to be told that their boycott to be complete involved manufacture of yarn and khadi, that the preliminary training for the new method—the swaraj type—of education meant during the war period the learning of hand-spinning and the other processes of cloth manufacture and actual production.

But the mistake having been made, I at least must pay the

penalty of trying patiently to convince the doubters that it would have been better to have insisted on hand-spinning as a necessary part of the educational item in non-co-operation. I invite those who share my belief to hasten to repair the mistake and earnestly take up the work of production of yarn and khadi in all national institutions which they influence. They will not ask me to supply them with teachers. I have far too few. But I jot down for them the processes that bale cotton, which is what we usually have today, has to go through. It must be first carded. There is no district in India which has no carders, i.e., *pinjaras* or *dhunias*. They can card and a mere watching them for a day or two enables one to understand the process. A week's practice at the rate of six hours per day will enable one to card moderately well.

The carded cotton has to be turned into slivers or *punis*, an incredibly simple and easy process.

The cotton is now ready for hand-spinning, which can be learnt from any spinner. Yarn to be yarn must be free from dirt, even and well-twisted. If it is not well-twisted or even, it cannot be woven.

The next process is sizing. It is rather difficult to practise. I have no scientific formula giving the quantity of ingredients. It must be learnt from an experienced weaver.

Joining the thread is also a process to be separately learnt. It requires like cycling a little knack which is easily acquired.

Lastly comes weaving which is purely a matter of practice. One learns the principle in a day. The reader must not be surprised at the ease with which I claim processes can be learnt. All natural and necessary work is easy. Only it requires constant practice to become perfect, and it needs plodding. Ability to plod is swaraj. It is yoga. Nor need the reader be frightened of the monotony. Monotony is the law of nature. Look at themonotonous manner in which the sun rises. And imagine the catastrophe that would befall the universe if the sun became capricious and went in for a variety of pastimes. But there is a monotony that sustains and a monotony that kills. The monotony of necessary occupations is exhilarating and life-giving. An artist never tires of his art. A spinner who has mastered his art will certainly be able to do sustained work without fatigue. There is a music about the spindle which the practised spinner catches without fail. And when India has monotonously worked away at turning out swaraj, she will have produced a thing of

beauty which will be a joy for ever. But it cannot be without the spinning-wheel. Therefore the best national education for India is undoubtedly an intelligent handling of the spinning-wheel.

Young India, 18-8-1921

67. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

ASSAM,

Thursday [*August 18, 1921*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I wish you to stay on there. There are a good many things you have to learn from experience there—*Young India* and Hindi and Gujarati *Navajivan*. You can do much in the Hindi section. Moreover, you will be able to give mental peace to Ba. There are carding and spinning also if you would only take interest in them. You can act as the physician and heal the wounds caused by small bickerings which may occasionally occur. I, therefore, think that you will spend at least this month there with profit. It is time now for us to cross the Brahmaputra. I shall not write further, as the post has to be got ready for despatch before that. I had long talks with Harilal. He told me that he, too, had started wearing the khadi cap since the beginning of this month.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original : S.N. 7631

68. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[After *August 18, 1921*][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

What is the good of wishing you a long life?

I wish you to make greater and greater progress. Whether the body exists or not, the spirit grows or decays. I certainly wish you improved health. That will be possible only when you are wholly free from care and fear. Now that time is approaching. As you settle down,

[1] Gandhiji was at Calcutta on August 17 and at Gauhati on the 19th. Presumably he crossed the Brahmaputra on the 18th, which was a Thursday.

[2] Inferred from the contents of the letter. Gandhiji reached Assam on August 18, 1921.

you will bloom more and more and your confidence will grow.

If internally we discover truth and follow the path of non-violence, that is, love, and externally develop the activities of carding, spinning and weaving, we need nothing more. If swaraj and swadharma are based on swadeshi, then let us be the best of carders, spinners and weavers.

What I see in Assam reveals to me what India had been and what it has become.[1] That is why I was happy to read your article about looms in the *Navajivan*. Develop still further weaving, carding and spinning and make these processes more scientific. The rest of the things can be done by others; but engage only qualified persons in these things.

If we have to erect more buildings, we do not want to take the money for it from the Congress. It can be obtained from elsewhere. Let me know how much we should spend and go ahead.

Can Pyarelal[2] be freed from the kitchen? Tell me how that can be done if that is possible. You may send the reply to this at Calcutta through Harilal. Prabhudas is with me; also a Bengali gentleman and Jamnalal. They will accompany me during the Assam tour.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Sabarmati Museum

69. THE "HINDI NAVAJIVAN"

Although I am aware of the difficulties in bringing out *Navajivan* in Hindi, the insistence of friends and the zeal shown by co-workers impel me to venture on starting a Hindi edition of this paper. I am in love with my ideas. I am convinced that by following them people will gain much. I have therefore long cherished the desire to put them across in Hindi. But it was not the will of God so far that this desire be fulfilled. I have always endeavoured to make Hindustani the national language of India. That no language except

[1] For Gandhiji's experiences in Assam, *vide* "Experiences in Assam-I", 4-9-1921 and "Experiences in Assam-II", 11-9-1921.

[2] Pyarelal was at that time in charge of the Kitchen at the Satyagraha Ashram

Hindustani can be the national language is beyond doubt. Only a language spoken by tens of millions of Hindus and Muslims can be a language common to the whole country, and I was sad as long as *Navajivan* was not published in this language.

Lovers of Hindustani must be warned not to look for any excellence of language in *Hindi Navajivan*. It will only be possible to give translations from *Navajivan* and *Young India* in the paper. I have neither the time nor the ability to write articles, etc., in Hindustani.

Propagation of Hindustani is not the chief motive behind the venture. Its aim is chiefly to propagate non-violent non-co-operation. The success of non-violent non-co-operation is next to impossible so long as those who speak Hindustani have not thoroughly grasped the doctrine of non-violence and non-co-operation. Hence the need for *Hindi Navajivan*. I pray to God that *Hindi Navajivan* may be of help to those who understand Hindustani alone.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 19-8-1921

70. LETTER TO MARWARIS

DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Urged by your love for me, I make bold to bring out the *Hindi Navajivan*. Ever since I returned to India, I have been coming closer and closer to you. You have been indulgent towards my activities and you have helped me a lot. You have effectively supported the movement for spreading Hindi. It is largely owing to the assistance given by you that the work for the furtherance of Hindi goes on so well in the Dravidian provinces. You brothers and sisters are votaries of non-co-operation. You take interest in national life. You have realized that wealthy men and women cannot keep aloof from national life.

You have love for religion. You give away lakhs in the cause of religion. You have courage too. Yours is the first place in amassing wealth. The chances of victory in the righteous warfare that is going on in India today are slender if the rich keep away from it.

The full success of the step that the all-India Congress Committee has taken for the achievement of swaraj depends only on

help coming from you. The Congress has decided that by September 30 the boycott of foreign cloth should be complete. I was relying on you when I suggested that the date be September 30. It is but proper that the *Hindi Navajivan* be brought out to intensify this national campaign.

What we see in national life today is the commerical outlook and the slave outlook. Wisdom and valour seem to be lacking. It is necessary now for our commercial society and our slave society to acquire wisdom and valour. We should realize that our country lies crushed because of the trade in foreign cloth. And we should have the courage to give up that trade. If we do not have even the little courage needed for giving up this trade, we cannot pursue our dharma. It is no *punya* if, having piled up crores by harming our brothers and sisters, we give away a few lakhs in charity. It is therefore my prayer to you, brothers and sisters, that you add to your past service by now showing courage in boycotting foreign cloth and making khaddar.

Yours,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 19-8-1921

71. UNTOUCHABILITY

I have received so many comments on Shastri Vasantram's letter[1] giving his interpretation of untouchability that it would take up too much space to publish them all. However, I regard these comments as a good sign. Everyone of the correspondents wants the issue to be determined on a religious and philosophical level. Their comments show that they will not be satisfied with a purely pragmatic solution of the problem. If Hindu society, though providing *Antyajas*[2] with all facilities, continues to look upon them as untouchables even if they take a bath after coming into contact with filth, these fundamentalists would regard it as unbearable and sinful. These correspondents are not reformers. They do not believe that all that is ours is bad and all that is European is good; they are men of moderation. They look upon themselves as Hindus and take pride in the fact. They attach the utmost importance to self-restraint. I am overpowered with joy at this and, in their uncompromising attitude, I see an early deliverance from the sin of untouchability.

We occupy ourselves so much with hair-splitting discussions about what the Shastras mean that, instead of turning dust into corn we turn corn into dust, cling to the bran and leave the grain, run after insipid whey and forget the butter. The letters lying around me indicate that we are about to leave behind the age of songs and enter the age of action. There are four castes, and not five. The practice of untouchability is not evidence of self-restraint, it is not a restriction inherent in the caste system. To regard as untouchable those also who are outside the pale of the caste system is not the way of compassion but of hard-heartedness. The soul is never polluted by the touch of the leper; on the contrary, if such contact is inspired by a spirit of service, it is elevated. Service of the *Bhangi*[3] is dharma; compassion lies in nursing an ailing *Bhangi* before others. If such a *Bhangi* has been engaged in sanitary work, to take a bath [after contact with him] is simple hygiene and is absolutely necessary, but failure to do so does not threaten one with spiritual ruin. There can be sin in refusing to

[1] Published in *Navajivan*, 17-7-1921

[2] Etymologically, "last-born" lowest on the social scale; traditionally charged with sanitary duties

[3] One of the communities attending to scavenging work

touch a *Bhangi* when the occasion requires us to do so. It is sinful not to welcome a *Bhangi*, who has bathed himself, to take a seat by our side, and it is ignorance to believe that his touch will pollute us. I find from the letters addressed to me that such an attitude is widespread now. I have already published one of these letters. I now give below a second one, from Shri Ambalal Sakarlal Dave[1].

> I read with interest Shastri Vasantram's discussion on untouchability as regards its basis in the Shastras, but in order that a person like me, ignorant of the Shastras, may not be lost in the mazes of discussions about the meaning of the Shastras, will he be kind enough to clarify these two points?
>
> 1. Would you, who have dedicated yourselves to God all your thoughts, actions and speech, your possessions and your life, bathe on having touched a *Chandal*[2]? By coming into contact with such a person, do you think you are purified or defiled? Would you permit him to enter a temple dedicated to Krishna if he wished to do so?
>
> 2. If the *Bhangi* who cleans your lavatories comes to your house at two o'clock in the afternoon after a bath and looking dean, would you let him into your drawing-room?
>
> I believe that clarification of these two issues will terminate all discussion on untouchability.

I can place only one construction upon Shastriji's article. Nevertheless, I shall certainly publish the reply he gives. Meanwhile, I wish to caution Shri Sakarlal. The debate on untouchability will not terminate with Shastri Vasantram's pronouncement. Even if Shastriji's reply is favourable, the filth that has accumulated over a long period cannot be washed away all at once merely through argument. Action alone can help us to be rid of it. It will disappear only when those of us who believe that there can be no sin in touching anyone, that it is a sin to take a bath on touching a *Bhangi* even though he may have washed himself and be clean in body, engage ourselves in their service and, in the process, have physical contact with them from time to time. For the rest, there will always be those who say and believe that it is sinful on touch anyone who may have had an untouchable forbear as long ago as a hundred generations. We shall be able to win them over with our conduct, as uncompromising as respectful, and the good results following from it.

[1] A Gujarati educationist

[2] One of the communities regarded as untouchables

I look upon untouchability in the form in which we practise it as sinful and have been advocating its abolition from a purely religious motive. Swami Shraddhanandji[1], however, says in a letter that, in the north, some Englishmen are inciting untouchables against non-co-operation also. Had we not taken up a fight against untouchability everywhere in the country, our opponents would today have been exploiting it to the full. Satan always enters through a small hole and makes for his coming and going an entrance large enough for everyone to see. One who would shape his life according to dharma will not permit a single brick in the fort of dharma to get loose.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-8-1921

72. MY NOTES

BIHAR TOUR

The Bihar tour has proved a very troublesome thing to me because of the services I had rendered in Champaran and because of the Bihari temperament. Even in small towns, thousands of people assemble and, by their loud shouting and attempts to touch my feet, they try my patience. With all of them wanting my *darshan*[2], they do not give me a moment's respite. I get no peace anywhere, by day or night. As for going out for a walk, it is out of the question. With a few efficient workers, any work could be got out of people with such faith, and Bihar has been doing such work. Some of the workers in Bihar are men of such simple and pure lives and their faith in non-violent non-co-operation is so firm that they have created a deep impression on the people and have done much good and quiet work. In places where, only a year ago, but a few spinning-wheels were plying, they are now in use in thousands of homes, thousands of yards of khadi are being woven and thousands have started wearing khadi exclusively.

In Bihar, Orissa and such other provinces, the spinning-wheel which yields a daily wage of two annas is a sufficient means of livelihood for any person. Many who work even as farm-labourers do not get more than this. For such work, one should have a hardy

[1] 1856-1926; nationalist leader; known as Mahatma Munshiram before he became a sannyasi; founder of the Gurukul at Kangri near Hardwar

[2] Sight of a person, place or thing considered holy

constitution. But the spinning-wheel can be used by any weak-bodied girl and she can, if she will, earn two annas daily. No other aspect of non-co-operation has produced the same effect on the people as the universally accepted and if, by means of it, we do not succeed before spinning-wheel movement. Some have come to worship it as a means of profitable employment. It has become popular among all classes, among both Hindus and Muslims. If it does not come to be September 30 in producing all our requirements of cloth and cannot, in consequence, boycott foreign cloth, that will be solely due to our lack of organizing ability and efficiency.

WEAVERS' MEETING

There is a small town in Bihar called Bihar Sharif. It has a population of 25,000. The well-known Tirthankar Mahavira Swami[1] was born, and also died, in its neighbourhood. There are majestic temples here, on the way to Bihar Sharif. The place is known as Sharif because it is associated with a famous Muslim saint. The place, they say, is esteemed second only to the shrine of the Pir in Ajmer. There are About five hundred weavers living here. Most of them are Muslims. The Congress Committee and the Khilafat Committee held a special meeting of the weavers. All of us pleaded with them at this meeting and they have agreed to use in the future exclusively hand-spun yarn for weaving, and mill yarn only if they must. Till now, they have been using foreign yarn exclusively, though they themselves told me that their forefathers used only hand-spun yarn. From now on, if these weavers are supplied good hand-spun yarn, they will most certainly use it to the exclusion of other yarn. If no enthusiastic workers come forward, they will as certainly continue to use foreign yarn even though they have agreed to use hand-spun yarn. Our task now is to persuade weavers, carders, carpenters, blacksmiths and others to take interest in public work. I hope that in every town of Gujarat, Congress workers will get in touch with such artisans, enrol them as members and secure their services. Let us not mind if they earn well; we should be satisfied if only they give preference to public work and charge for such work at a little less than the prevailing rate.

GREAT "YAJNA"[2]

Renouncing the use of foreign cloth is a great *yajna* in which we

[1] Last of the line of seers whose teachings evolved into Jainism
[2] Sacrifice

are engaged. Swaraj lies in our being completely successful in it. We need not, however, feel anxious how such a mighty task can be accomplished within a month; for anyone who is distracted by fear loses his wits, feels dizzy and cannot see his way. If we reflect, we shall see that swaraj is quite easy to win, for it is our birthright. So, assuring ourselves that swadeshi must be easy, we should give ourselves up wholly to the work. To do this, we should have determination and be industrious. The more I tour the country, the more I see that the easiest way for us is to weave in our own homes the cloth we require. It is much easier to teach everyone how to spin and weave, sitting in his own home and living in his own town, than to assemble vast numbers at one place and use their labour. As Shri Amubhai has shown, the task which, even if we proceed at a fast pace, we shall take not less than 25 years to accomplish through mills, we can, given conviction, accomplish in 25 days. But just as anyone starting to cook a meal cleans his utensils first, so also should we cleanse ourselves of the filth of foreign cloth. Unless we do so, our lethargy will not leave us. As a man who has been rendered incapable of walking for some time is afraid of giving up the support of the stick even after he is cured and limps for fear of falling down, we too shall not be able to stand on our feet as long as we lean on foreign cloth for support.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-8-1921

73. TO THE PEOPLE OF BIHAR

TEZPUR,

ASSAM,

Bhadrapada Krishna 4 [*August 22, 1921*][1]

The faith and devotion of the Biharis are beyond description. I know well your love for mother cow. You are the admirers of Tulsidas[2], supreme among devotees. You follow the religion of compassion. There is only one golden way of saving mother cow you should help your Muslim brethren in saving that other cow which is the Khilafat. Conquered thus by love, our Muslim brethren can save the cow. Our religion does not teach us that in order to save an animal

[1] Gandhiji was in Tezpur on this date.

[2] Great Hindi poet; author of the Hindi epic, *Ramacharitamanasa*

we should take a human life. We should sacrifice our own lives for the life we wish to save. Our religion calls it *tapascharya*. We can follow religion only through *tapascharya*. *Tapascharya* emerges out of compassion and in compassion alone is dharma.

How can we say anything whatever to others so long as we have not rid ourselves of sin? Do we not kill cows with our own hands ? How do we treat the progeny of the cow? What crushing burdens do we not lay on bullocks! To say nothing of bullocks, do we give enough feed to the cow? How much milk do we leave for the calf? And who sells the cow [to the butcher] ? What can we say of the Hindus who do this for the sake of a few rupees? What do we do about it?

Cows have always been slaughtered for English soldiers. What have we done about it? Taking all this into account, why should we be angry with our Muslim brethren who slaughter cows considering it a matter of religion? Then least we can do is to clean our soiled hands.

It was a great mercy that on the day of *Bakr-i-Id* our Muslim brethren maintained complete calm, were very considerate to us and, so far as they could, refrained from slaughtering cows. We are grateful to them for this.

But it is necessary to make sure that this is so in future years also. Therefore we should give up [eating] goat's meat, etc. If we do this, the price of these animals will go down and the price of cows will rise. We should make the very trade in cows impossible. We can do all this only when in our work we show discrimination, compassion, reason and self-sacrifice.

You have great faith in religion. Living in the sacred land which produced Janaka, Buddha and Mahavira, holding to patience and your religion, you can do great work and show to the whole of India the righteous path which will lead to the saving of mother cow.

Your servant,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 2-9-1921

74. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

TEZPUR,
Silence Day [*August 22, 1921*][1]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV[2],

I hope you have received my letters. You too must have written to me, but no letter has reached me so far. If you had been with me in Assam, your gift for poetry would have got sufficient food. But we are not born for enjoyment in this land of duty. We have, therefore, to draw what poetry we can from Assam and Prayag[3] both.

The following itinerary is very nearly correct.

23	Jorhat
24-25	Dibrugarh
27	Silchar
28-29	Sylhet
3l-1	Chittagong
3rd	Barisal
4th	Calcutta

We shall be staying in Calcutta for about ten days. We may have to go to Bolpur for a day during that time.

Other news you will find in *Navajivan* and *Young India*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11422

75. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

MERDAN,
August 24, 1921

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I thought of writing to you many times but could not manage it. Today I have a few moments.

It is possible to do a lot of swadeshi work in Assam, but the

[1] Gandhiji left Tezpur on the 22nd in a boat and reached Jorhat *via* Nowgong on August the 24th, instead of the 23rd.

[2] 1892-1942; Gandhiji's secretary for 25 years

[3] The addressee was at Prayag, i.e., Allahabad.

people are lazy. Women are tremendous weavers. But they never want to weave more than what they need for personal use. They had abandoned spinning which they have now resumed.

Work must be going on in full swing there. Collect the money from those who have given the names.

Jayakar's amount of Rs. 25,000 has been reserved for the *Independent.* We can be free from this bother if we can reserve Rs. 25,000 from Umar's money. You should make some arrangement that seems to you suitable to send Rs. 50,000 to Motilalji.

Here I get great help from Jamnalalji. There is a large population of Marwaris here and all of them are engaged in the trade of foreign textiles. Many of them have taken a vow of swadeshi.

Jamnalalji wants me to spend at least ten days in Calcutta. In that case, I think I cannot leave Calcutta before the 10th.

My travel schedule is as follows:

25-30 Silchar, Sylhat, etc.

31- 1 Chittagong

2- 3 Barisal

4-12 Calcutta (4 Pollock St.)

I hope you are looking after your health.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32689

76. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

JORHAT,
August 24, 1921

REVERED SISTER,

I do want very much to write to you, but where is the time?

I did send you a magazine but could not send you one on swadeshi. Now I will not send it as it can be of no use.

Let me know how the work there is going on. I suppose you would hardly be going to the Ashram. But you must. Send me all the news. All our endeavours rest on the success of swadeshi.

What are the workers doing? What is the position of the mills ?

Ask Amubhai and let me know what are the materials used in sizing. I think I am not mistaken that animal fat is also used. Let me know for what other things it is used.

Blessings from

BABU

[PS.]

My tour programme;
25th-30th—Silchar
31st-lst—Chittagong
2nd-3rd—Barisal

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32816

77. STATEMENT OF REPRESSION IN PRINCELY STATES

[Before *August 25, 1921*]

In the course of my journey to Gwalior, I was shocked to see that people at stations shrank even from approaching our train. On platforms there was no swadeshi cloth to be seen at all. In this State the non-co-operation movement has been completely stopped. Wearing a khadi cap or possessing a charkha is regarded with disfavour—it is in fact considered an offence. I firmly believe that the Maharaja Sahib's thinking cannot be so mean. My sympathy is wholly with the Maharaja. The poisonous influence of the Government is nowhere so marked as it is in the Indian States. For while the States can effect no reforms of any kind, they are frequently made to strike at the liberty of their subjects. Besides, under the aegis of the Government they have also become, along with the rest of India, weak and irresponsible. Therefore, if a self-willed ruler wants to tyrannize over his people, he can give even more trouble than the Viceroy. This is the greatest defect in the present administrative set-up. I hope that much of what I have been told at the Gwalior Station is exaggerated and that the repression carried on here is not as terrible as it is reported to be.

[From Hindi]
Aaj, 25-8-1921

78. NOTES

NON-CO-OPERATION IN ANDHRA

I am writing these notes at Mr. Mazharul Hak's[1] Sadakat Ashram in Patna situated on the banks of the Ganges. I have always considered Bihar to have done the best for non-co-operation. Andhra I have put next. But it is difficult to say which Province will do better. Anyway the local Government are certainly assisting the people in their discipline. This is what Mr. Konda Venkatappayya says in his latest letter:

> In my last letter I informed you that after the arrests of myself and three merchant friends of mine, the pleaders of this city resolved to boycott the courts till the 31st December. After our release the Bar at Bapatla, the next important town in this district, has also resolved to do the same. Mr. Prakasam[2] and myself are proceeding to other stations in this district to have the courts similarly boycotted by the pleaders. The city of Guntur has one District Court and two Sub-courts besides two District Munsif's Courts and several Magisterial Courts. In Bapatla there is a Sub-court and two District Munsif's Courts. At present all these courts stand abandoned except by a few. We hope to have the courts in other stations in this district similarly abandoned. Arbitration boards to hear and dispose of both original suits and appeals have been formed and the first sitting of these courts will commence the day after tomorrow (i.e., Monday, the 8th instant). It is aimed to have all the suits and appeals now pending in the courts to be withdrawn from the British courts and referred to the arbitration courts. After regular establishment of parallel courts and the paralysation of the administration of justice in the British courts in this district, I have every hope that other districts will soon follow the example. Our aim is to complete this work in our district and next proceed to other districts if they do not begin to do it themselves in the meanwhile.
>
> The merchant community in this district, particularly in this city, have had a remarkable awakening. On the day of Lokamanya Tilak's[3] anniversary almost every one of them wore the new swadeshi clothes and attended the procession and the meeting. The cloth merchants here are willing

[1] A leader from Bihar; one of the founders of Muslim League; later, its president; gave active support to Gandhiji in Champaran

[2] T. Prakasam (1816-1957); editor, *Swarajya*; was called "Andhra Kesari", lion of Andhra; first Chief Minister of composite Madras State

[3] Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920); political leader, scholar and writer.

to deal in swadeshi cloth, provided they are shown a way to dispose of the foreign goods now in stock with them. In the whole of this district, there is 29 lakhs worth of foreign cloth and yarn of this, about half is got from Indian mills. In this town of Guntur, the merchants have with them three lakhs worth of foreign cloth and yarn. They are willing to re-export the stock to any place outside India, and to deal solely in swadeshi cloth and yarn.

I therefore request you kindly to refer me to some friends in Bombay who may be willing to inform me as to what the cloth merchants in Bombay propose to do with their foreign stock, and if there is any way of helping our merchant friends here to get rid of their stocks without loss to them by export to places outside India.

I hope that the enthusiasm of the pleaders will prove true and lasting. This boycott of law-courts even by way of protest will do good to them and the country. Regarding the difficulty of the merchants, all I can advise them is that they should themselves devise a method of sending out the stock through the principal dealers. I wish, too, that the merchants in Bombay will come to the assistance of the dealers throughout India and try to re-export as much stock as is possible. But supposing no arrangement is arrived at, the dealers in foreign cloth and yarn should not force the sale of their stock but sell only to customers who insist on buying foreign cloth. I do not expect that the whole of India will all of a sudden understand and accept the duty of renouncing the use of foreign cloth. There is still more than a month left and much can be done during that time if no further purchases of foreign yarn or cloth take place.

HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

Mr. Saiyad Mahammad, President, Khilafat Committee, Unnao, writes as follows to the editor:

I have road with pain and anxiety occasional remarks in your paper about the Mussulmans not joining the Congress. It is a matter for regret that the Hindu leaders in districts generally feel a sort of estrangement from their Mussulmans neighbours and both the Hindu and Mussulman workers in small districts are fired with the ambition of personal advertisement and claim a superiority which is the most dangerous poison to real unity. The result is that the Hindu workers hardly take any active part in the Khilafat movement, and the gulf thus gets wider. The Congress Committees are doing nothing so far as the propaganda world is concerned, and they think that their work is quite different from that of the Khilafat Committees. This evil in small districts is

most deplorable, and in spite of my most earnest endeavours to bring about a complete union, matters have not gone beyond a surface unity. Once the Hindus understand and realize this power of unity, I can confidently say that the cow sacrifice in this district will be reduced to almost nothing. Our great impediment is their aloofness.

I should be very sorry, indeed, if the Hindus of Unnao are apathetic the Khilafat cause. I have no doubt that the more interest the Hindus take in the Khilafat, the nearer comes swaraj. Let us not ignore the fact that it is not yet possible to induce Mussulmans to take interest in swaraj except in terms of the Khilafat. It is sad but it is true. The two communities have remained so long estranged; the Mussulmans had unconsciously almost come to think that India was not their home. The peril to the Khilafat has opened their eyes. The Hindus can take note of the fact, help their Mussulman countrymen and help themselves, and thus for all time cement Hindu-Muslim union. Happily for both, whatever may be true of Unnao is most certainly not true of many other places where the Hindus are doing all they can to help the Khilafat movement. There can be no real progress if the awakening is not general among both the communities.

TAMIL SISTERS AGAIN

A South Indian lawyer sends me the following note:

> Khadi is not as widely used in the Tamil province as in the other provinces, mainly because the womenfolk do not wear it. The spinning-wheel is not much in evidence for the same reason. Plain white cannot be worn by married women here. They can only wear dyed saris. In former times cotton was the only wear of ladies. Now, except by the poorest, cotton saris are discarded, and silk saris form the daily wear. Silk saris were at first locally manufactured at Koranadu (near Mayavaram) and later on at Conjeevaram, and dyed with Indian dyes. They cost from Rs. 10 to 30. They were only occasionally used. Lately the market has been exclusively captured by Bangalore saris dyed with German or English dyes, the least of which costs about Rs. 50. This presses on the poor Brahmin householder, especially as he has to clothe the members of his family only with these; and when it is the daily wear, he has to go in for a number of them. On marriage occasions the minimum cost of a sari fit for presentation is above Rs. 100. Many a decent family is ruined by a marriage, mostly on this account. This ruinous habit, which was confined to the Brahmins, has spread among other classes also.
>
> Besides the question of expense, there is the other aspect of comfort

and convenience. Silk is non-absorbing and heavy and working or cooking in it is martyrdom. It is always hot here except for one or two months of the year. There is also the peculiar insanitary habit of not washing the more costly saris lest they should lose colour and get crumpled. The perspiration and smell emitted are awful.

Many a householder on the verge of ruin would feel grateful to you if you would bring about a return to economy, simplicity and comfort.

I hope the workers in Madras will deal with the evil complained of in the correspondent's letter. I dread my forthcoming visit to Madras. I share the correspondent's feeling that the Tamil woman is over-fond of her silk sari. There is no more unwholesome garment than silk in a hot climate like that of Madras. And one hundred rupees for a sari is a criminal waste of money in a poor country like India. Men are no better, for they are proud of their hand-woven puggrees, dhotis and *uparnas* little thinking that the yarn used for these things is all foreign. Strange as it may appear, absorbent khadi is cooler than the fine garments which are so prized by men. I am hoping, however, that my faith in the spirituality of Tamilians will be realized even in the difficult matter of swadeshi, and that they will perceive the spiritual necessity of complete renunciation of foreign cloth and return to the charkha. In the melting plains of Madras and Andhra, I can imagine no industry so helpful as the gentle-moving charkha. Dravida land is responsible for sending out the largest number of emigrants to a life of servility and exile. Restoration of the charkha automatically solves the difficult problem of enforced emigration. Land alone cannot support the poor peasantry of India even if there was no assessment to be paid.

PRACTISING LAWYERS

Letters continue to pour in regarding practising lawyers holding offices in Congress Committees. Ever since my arrival in Bengal, the question has been still more pressingly put to me. An ex-student from Dhubri writes to ask whether I expect the movement to succeed under the leadership of practising lawyers. I cannot conceive the possibility of the movement, which is one of self-sacrifice, succeeding if it is led by lawyers who do not believe in self-sacrifice. I have not hesitated to advise that electors rather than be ably led by such lawyers should be content to be more humbly guided. I can certainly imagine a brave and believing weaver or cobbler more effectively leading than a timid

and sceptical lawyer. Success depends upon bravery, sacrifice, truth, love and faith; not on legal acumen, calculation, diplomacy, hate and unbelief.

THE BREAD PROBLEM

The same student says that many Bengalis cannot do national work or leave slavery because of the bread problem. It is not so much the bread problem as the bread-labour problem. We the educated classes have lost the art of labouring for our bread. With the wages of weavers, carders and spinners rising daily, there is certainly no bread problem. Any man who weaves for eight hours a day may earn even at the commencement at least one rupee per day. Accomplished weavers today earn two rupees per day. We must not think of earning a livelihood by deskwork merely.

NON-VIOLENCE AS A POLICY

His last question is the most important of all.

> Do you hope, that this non-violent war which is based on love and soul-force will succeed with those who take it merely as a matter of policy? Pure non-violence necessitates more courage and love of country. But as a weapon of the weak, it will breed fear in the face of coming repression.

The questioner has partly answered the question himself. Non-violence may succeed, even if it is adopted as a matter of policy rather than creed, if it is combined with courage and real love for the country or the cause. Hatred of the wrongdoer does not necessarily mean love of the country. Our difficulty arises from the fact that many people make a pretence of non-violence without believing in it even as a policy. The Ali Brothers[1] believe in it purely as a policy, but in my opinion there are no two truer believers in non-violence as a policy than they. They do believe that violence can only hurt the cause, and that non-violence if extensively practised can entirely succeed. A man who honestly practises truth as a policy certainly gains its material results, but not the one who feigns truth.

VOLUNTARY OBEDIENCE

If we are to achieve swaraj during this year, we must show signs of its coming in every department of life, most of all in the working of Congress organizations. Unless we conform to laws and rules that we

[1] Mahomed Ali (1878-1931) and Shaukat Ali (1873-1937) ; prominent leaders of the Khilafat movement.

ourselves now make, we are not likely to do better when we have attained swaraj. The Treasurer bitterly complained to the Working Committee at its last meeting that several provincial committees had not yet sent in 25 per cent of their collections. Some were reported to be withholding because other provinces had not made their returns. On the contrary, I would suggest that each province should vie with every other in being most exact in discharging all its obligations. Thus and thus only may we expect to become self-governing, and command respect for our demands. If the Congress organizations are to work efficiently, all the instructions of the Working Committee should be faithfully and promptly carried out. The Committee has come to the decision that not less than one fourth of the total provincial collections should be devoted to swadeshi, i.e., hand-spinning and hand-weaving. Twenty-five lakhs is not a large sum to spend throughout India, if we are to cope with the demand for khadi. Indeed the more a province spends on this head, the better it will have done.

CHRISTIANS AND NON-CO-OPERATION

An Indian Christian from Basrah North writes:

> I am sorry to say that you do not take us Indian Christians as the people of India, as I have seen many-times *Young India* mentioning Mussulmans, Hindus, Sikhs, etc., but omitting the Christians.
>
> I should like you to believe that we Indian Christians are also the people of India, and take much interest in India's own affairs. I am sure, there are very few who have followed non-co-operation as Indian Christians have. I have much sympathy for my motherland's affairs. 1 am also a follower of non-co-operation.
>
> I promise to give some news about the state of Indians in Mespot now and then.

I assure the correspondent and other Indian Christians that non-co-operation is no respecter of creeds or races. It invites and admits all to its fold. Many Indian Christians have contributed to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. There are some noted Indian Christians as non-co-operators in the front rank. There is constant mention of Mussulmans and Hindus, as they have hitherto regarded one another as enemies. Similarly there always has been some cause when any race has been specially mentioned in these columns.

A persistent correspondent from Simla asks me whether I intend to found a sect or claim divinity. I have answered him by a private letter. But he would have me make a public declaration for the sake of posterity. I should have thought that I had in the strongest terms repudiated all claim to divinity. I claim to be a humble servant of India and humanity, and would like to die in the discharge of such service. I have no desire to found a sect. I am really too ambitious to be satisfied with a sect for a following. For I represent no new truths. I endeavour to follow and represent Truth as I know it. I do claim to throw a new light on many an old truth. I hope that this declaration will satisfy my inquirer and others like him.

Young India, 25-8-1921

79. A MOCK TRIAL

I have already dealt in a previous issue[1] with the disgraceful behaviour of a Karachi crowd on 25th July last upon the receipt of the news that Swami Krishnanand, a popular preacher, reformer and the soul of the picketing movement in Karachi, was arrested tried and sentenced to one year's rigorous imprisonment inside of three hours. The court house was surrounded by the military, and the trial took place practically with closed doors. The Swami was arrested on the 20th but set free after an hour's detention. He was without a warning re-arrested on the 25th on the same charge. He was charged with having assaulted a constable "in the discharge of his duty". Prof. Vaswani[2] who was in touch with the Swami and who was present, at the court, testifies[3] that the Swami never assaulted the constable, but that on the other hand, he, the Swami, was fairly severely assaulted by the latter for having refused to move on whilst he was engaged in a conversation with a friend. The crowd believed implicitly in the innocence of the Swami. And in its madness, it selected every European passer-by and everyone with a European hat for venting its wrath. Among the Europeans assaulted was Mr. Price, M.L.A.

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 4-8-1921.

[2] T. L. Vaswani (1879-1966); sage from Sind; author; founder of Mira Educational Institutions, Poona

[3] In his letter to Price ; *vide* Appendix "Prof. T. L. Vaswani's Reply", 25-8-1921.

Whatever the provocation, however great the Swami's innocence and whatever his status, the crowd had no business to lose temper. Victory is impossible until we are able to keep our temper under the gravest provocation. Calmness under fire is a soldier's indispensable quality. A non-co-operator is nothing if he cannot remain calm and unperturbed under a fierce fire of provocation. We must lie on the bed chosen by us. We must not expect the Government to remain calm in all circumstances. It has its creed as we have ours. It is calm up to a point. It will sit still so long as we seem to play. Its creed is to strike terror immediately we are serious. The Swami and his following were serious, and the Government delivered the blow. It was at this stage that our creed was put upon its trial and we failed. It is true but it is irrelevant, that Prof. Vaswani and other staunch workers tried to curb the fury of the mob and even partly succeeded and prevented worse things from happening. The fact that matters very much is, that the crowd lost self-control at all. There was no occasion for it to gather. Having gathered it ought to have remained coolhumoured throughout. It was entitled to vent its anger by discarding all foreign cloth, by making up its mind to turn to weaving and picketing liquor shops. That would have been a death-blow to the Government. As it was, its impotent rage was very near a death-blow to the movement for which the crowd ostensibly stood.

There should be no mistake. There is no civil disobedience possible, until the crowds behave like disciplined soldiers. And we cannot resort to civil disobedience, unless we can assure every Englishman that he is as safe in India as he is in his own home. It is not enough that we give the assurance. Every Englishman and Englishwoman must *feel* safe, not by reason of the bayonet at their disposal but by reason of our living creed of non-violence. That is the condition not only of success hut out own ability to carry on the movement in its present form. There is no other way of conducting the campaign of non-co-operation.

Let us bear the Swami's farewell message in mind: "Carry on the anti-liquor campaign and help the *Bhangi.*" He could not have delivered a better message. If we banish liquor and raise the *Bhangi* to our level, low as it is, we are very near swaraj.

Of course the Sind authorities have lost their head. I see proclamations prohibiting people from walking where and as they like, from carrying anything but walking-sticks.

The European residents too have lost self-control. I do not wonder. They are a handful in the midst of many. Prof. Vaswani wrote a dignified letter of sympathy to Mr. Price, regretting the incident. He had met Mr. Price before. Mr. Price wrote a splenetic letter in reply. Prof. Vaswani wrote again. Mr. Price was still angry. I reproduce letters out of the interesting correspondence that passed between the two, —one from Mr. Price by no means his worst, and one from Prof. Vaswani calm and dignified. The latter is also valuable as a cogent statement of a non-co-operator's position.

The lesson of the "mock trial" as Prof. Vaswani has truly called it and the aftermath, is that we must expect more mock trials as the heat of non-co-operation grows and the closing months approach, and that we must be prepared calmly to face the imprisonment of innocents without retaliation and fury, or we must be prepared to court well-deserved disaster. It will be a cruel pity, if, when we are so near the cherished goal, we should all back by our inability to control crowds.

Young India, 25-8-1921

80 . CHIRALA-PERALA

Chirala-Perala is in fact one village not far from the sea, with a nice climate and containing a compact population of about 15,000. The place is situated in the Andhra Province, and possesses in Mr. Gopal Krishnayya a talented and self-sacrificing leader, who has by his perseverance and sacrifice been able to hold the people together without difficulty. Municipal government is a transferred department. The minister in charge began last year to make his presence felt by these brave people. A vexatious trading licence was imposed upon them. They retorted by trading without a licence. The result was a prosecution and convictions against the resisters, who, including an old woman went to jail. The Government has been endeavouring to impose a municipality on the people, who protested against the measure. But what could a minister who had accepted office in the teeth of public opposition do but seek to impose his will upon the people and show that he cared little for it?

Let us see what the municipality meant to the people; certainly not better sanitation, for the place was unusually well kept by the people themselves; certainly not more education, for the people were

non-co-operators. It meant more taxation, more interference with their liberty. This was an intolerable evil for the people.

They therefore decided to remove to a bare place of ground near by, outside the municipal area. They erected huts there for residence and evacuated Chirala-Perala about May last. Nothing daunted, the minister has sought and received the assistance of the Revenue Department which has levied penal cesses in respect of the sheds on the ground that they were erected on Government waste. The rate for each shed is Rs. 10-2-6, whereas the value thereof is only Rs. 25. If this payment is not made, the occupants have to vacate the sheds.

The commencement of repression is thus described in its note by the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee:

> In the repression at Chirala-Perala, the roll of honour is lengthening. Already 12 men and one woman have served out their term of imprisonment for refusing to pay the municipal taxes. Three men are now undergoing rigorous imprisonment in the Central Jail at Rajamahendri, six more are awaiting orders of incarceration. It is extraordinary that these six were sentenced to imprisonment nearly a month ago and the sentence held in abeyance. We have not heard of any other instance in which convicted persons are quietly told that they might go home and await orders, not even bail bonds being taken from them. Many more in Chirala-Perala are prepared to fill the prisons. The struggle is being carried on with remarkable vigour and persistence, though the dislocation of business caused by the evacuation and the loss of living in the case of poorer inhabitants have entailed serious hardship.
>
> The property of the convicted persons has been attached and brought to sale a number of times at Bapatla and at Guntur for realizing the amount of fine levied on them. But no bidders have come forward in either place. This is an eloquent testimony to the sympathy generally felt for the sufferings of the Chirala-Perala patriots.

Here we have a concrete instance of the meaning of the reforms and responsibility. I doubt not that the minister believes that what he is doing is good for the people. Did not the English officials whenever they imposed anything on us even the Rowlatt Act, seek to justify the imposition on the ground of public weal? What non-co-operation is fighting among other things, is the spirit of patronage. We must have the liberty to do evil before we learn to do good. Even “liberty” must not be “forced” upon us. The democratic spirit demands that a most

autocratic minister must yield to a people's will or resign office. He must be patient enough to carry enlightened public opinion with him even in the most perfect measures of amelioration.

The brave people of Chirala-Perala have challenged the Government to do its worst and refused to have a municipality. They need not have done so. They might have waited for swaraj. But they chose to do otherwise. The responsibility is entirely theirs. They may not now yield in any circumstance whatsoever. Nor must they under provocation lose their heads. They must cheerfully let the Government subject them to any penalty it chooses to inflict upon them. By their meek and unyielding suffering they will cover themselves and India with glory, and will give an object lesson to the country in non-violence.

Young India, 25-8-l921

81. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

DIBRUGARH [ASSAM],
August 25, 1921

CHI. MANI[1],

I have been carrying your last letter with me from place to place. It seems to me a tough job to convert your uncle Vithalbhai. At his age, it is difficult for him to adopt a different line of work, especially as he thinks that he has been successful with his own way of fighting.[2] We can only have patience, agree to differ from him and go our own way.

I hope the boycott[3] and the work of khadi production over there are going on apace. Assam impresses one as altogether a different kind of land. I have given the more interesting part of the tour in *Navajivan*[4] and will not, therefore, write about it here. I have had a talk with Bhai Indulal[5]. I wish to have a heart-to-heart talk with

[1] Daughter of Vallabhbhai Patel

[2] Membership of legislatures

[3] Of foreign cloth

[4] *Vide* "Experiences in Assam-I", 4-9-1921 and "Experiences in Assam-II", 11-9-1921.

[5] Indulal Yagnik; an active political worker from whom Gandhiji took over *Navajivan*

Kumudbehn[1] and comfort her. This will depend on her willingness and my leisure. I do not think I shall be able to go there before October. I trust you and your brother[2] are giving plenty of help to father in his work. He has a heavy burden to carry and, God willing, he will be able to cope with it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall be in Chittagong and Barisal from the 31st to the 3rd and in Calcutta from the 4th to the 12th.

BEHN MANIGAURI
C/O VALLABHBHAI JHAVERBHAI PATEL[3], BAR-AT-LAW
BHADRA
AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne

82. SPEECH AT DIBRUGARH

[*August 25, 1921*][4]

BROTHERS,

This is our last night in Assam. Tomorrow we shall leave for Chittagong. We have by now said everything to the Assamese that we had to say. And now before I proceed further I should like you to tell me how many tea plantation workers are here. If my voice reaches you, these workers who are here may raise their hands. I see that there are very few workers present at this meeting.

I had hoped to be able to meet our working brethren here. I have spent at least twenty years of my life among workers in Africa. In India also wherever I go I keep in touch with the workers. I do not know what the condition of the working class in Assam is. Tomorrow

[1] Wife of Indulal Yagnik

[2] Dahyabhai Patel

[3] 1875-1950; Congress leader from Gujarat who became the first Deputy Prime Minister of India

[4] Gandhiji was in Dibrugarh on this date; *vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 22-8-1921.

I shall have a talk with the representatives of planters. But I had hoped that before that I should be able to have a heart-to-heart talk with the workers. The mission on which I came here has occupied my time so completely that I was not able to go to the tea gardens and speak to the workers. I shall ever regret this. But I am also comforted by the thought that if God grants me success in the task that I have undertaken it will not be necessary to go to the workers. The sufferings of the Indian people have to be mitigated or swarajya will have no meaning. Our swarajya should be such that the humblest man or maid working in a tea plantation can freely go from Kashmir to Cape Comorin without a single ruffian teasing them; otherwise it would be no swarajya. The struggle that is going on started because the British rule has done India no good. I cannot get entangled any more in petty things. For a time I had thought that love would put everything right. But the experience of the Punjab and the injustice committed against Muslims in the name of justice have convinced me that in no other regime would such tyranny be possible. And since then I have called this a Satanic regime.

If we wish to remove this Satanism, if we wish to mitigate the suffering of the workers and stop the atrocities inflicted on women, there is no power that can prevent us.

If we had not lacked faith in God this stark poverty would not have descended on India.

Our struggle does not spring from enmity. But we cannot accept anyone's overlordship. *We accept no one except God as our Lord and Master*. This is the meaning of swarajya. It is heinous to love a regime where untruth reigns, barbarities are perpetrated, and false despatches are sent. We therefore seek no justice from its courts and do not wish to have our children educated in its schools and colleges. This is called non-co-operation. We do not incite anyone to rioting. We can achieve swarajya prayerfully and peaceably and heal the wound of the Muslims.

We must understand thoroughly what self-purification means. Give up drinking alcohol, smoking ganja and eating opium. Give up visiting prostitutes. I am well acquainted with the habits of workers. You cannot live comfortably on your wage of eight or nine rupees a month. You drink in order to forget your misery. But the simplest remedy for misery is that, while you should put up with suffering, you should [not] put up with any unjust punishment that a tyrant may

inflict on you. India has not yet understood this principle fully. The day I am persuaded that India has learnt this, the country can become free. Today India lacks the power for peaceful, civil disobedience of laws. I hope we shall have this power by October. But this power will not come through drinking and debauchery. Therefore give up drinking, give up debauchery. This has a very deep meaning. If you would rather have nothing to do with dirty things, you should become pure yourselves.

We do not realize how our country has fallen through foreign trade—even more than it has by drinking and opium. We have not looked at the evil and sin there is in it. My brother Andrews[1] asks me why I burn English cloth, while there is a famine in Khulna. We do not realize what a crime it is to wear foreign cloth. For self-purification, and for showing the world what self-purification is, it is necessary to give up foreign cloth. If India can do this, it can become free by October.

I humbly beseech my Marwari brethren of Dibrugarh that, if they wish to serve Assam, if they wish to serve dharma—and I know that they are keen to serve dharma and they love it—they should give up using foreign cloth.

I am sorry that there has been no proposal to perform, during this our last night here, the sacred task of burning foreign cloth. It is a sad thought that Dibrugarh could not perform this *yajna*. Do you shrink from burning even dirt?

If you wish to end the sufferings of workers, if you wish to guard the chastity of women and the ancient culture of India, then burn foreign cloth. Why do workers have to come here [to Assam] from such great distances? The only reason I can see is that they have given up the charkha. Even the peasants have given it up. Then the land does not produce enough. So a million people from outside have come into Assam. This is an indication of our sin.

I shall close my speech with a prayer to God to grant us strength to give up foreign cloth and guard the honour of our women.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 9-9-1921

[1] C. F. Andrews (1871-1940); British missionary who took great interest in Viswabharati University founded by Tagore; his devoted services for many years in the cause of the Indian people won him the name "Deenabandhu", brother of the poor; he was deeply attached to Gandhiji.

83. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

ON THE WAY TO SILCHAR,
Saturday [*August 27, 1921*][1]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

We have crossed the border of Assam, as the province is defined by the Congress and are now entering the Surma Valley. The scene too has changed. We thought of you often during our voyage on the Brahmaputra. But do we always get, and can we always eat, the food we relish? There have been no letters at all from you. As a matter of fact, we have received no mail after we left Gauhati, and I am afraid we may not get any till we reach Calcutta. We may just manage to reach there on the 4th. Annapurnadevi's address is: Chataparru, Ellore, Madras Presidency.

Please send me the address of Esther Faering[2] if you remember it.

I am anxious to have news of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11412

84. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

ON TOUR,
August 29, 1921

MY DEAR HENRY,

So you are having your full dose of domestic afflictions. May they show you to be truly courageous and god-fearing and I hope that friends in London have been found to share your sorrows. I know what London is in these matters.

I am so immersed in my work and incessant travelling that I hardly feel that there is any such thing as domestic sorrow. The misery about me is so great. To read of semi-starved millions was so

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 22-8-1921.

[2] A Danish missionary who came to India in 1916 and later joined Sabarmati Ashram; Gandhiji treated her as his daughter.

different from seeing them.

With love to you all,

Yours,

BHAI

From the original : Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy : National Archives of India

85. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SYLHET,

ASSAM,

August 30, 1921

EVENT[1] COMING. HAVE GUJARAT DAY'S HARTAL, LABOURERS JOINING AFTER LEAVE. WEDNESDAY THURSDAY CHITTAGONG SATURDAY BARISAL SUNDAY AND AFTER CALCUTTA.

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine

86. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SYLHET,

ASSAM,

[*August 30, 1921*][2]

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. I have sent you a telegram[3] today; a copy of it is enclosed. If we have the necessary strength, I for my part would suggest that there should be a hartal in Ahmedabad, but only so long as the Prince is there, care being taken to see that poor people get all the provisions they need. In the event of such a hartal being observed, martial law is likely to be proclaimed. We should face it and meet death if it comes to that. But I do not think we are ready for this; we haven't yet the necessary strength. We should, therefore, rest content with what we can do. We should tell the people how they could dissociate themselves from the visit. The Municipality should have as little to do with it as possible. No one may salute the Prince and, if he visits Government schools, the boys may not rise from their seats. If

[1] Visit of the Prince of Wales

[2] As given in the source on the basis of the post mark

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

we are strong enough for such action, we should organize picketing outside his office and prevent people from seeing him. We can think of many more ways of showing our displeasure without being rude. All these we may adopt and make our attitude known to the public. My advice is that we announce the full boycott programme right now and start training the people to act peacefully but firmly. We must have the strength to make it impossible for the Prince to parade his position in Ahmedabad.

More than this I cannot say from this distance. Only, I would ask you not to undertake anything beyond your capacity. It is essential to avoid failure. Apart from this, if there is any possibility of a breach of the peace following determined opposition by us, please do not make any attempt to carry out my suggestions.

It is in the fitness of things that you have accepted the Chairmanship of the [Congress] Reception Committee. Such honours will not turn our heads when service of the people is our only aim in life.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine

87. SPEECH TO RAILWAY WORKERS, CHITTAGONG

August 31, 1921

(The workers of the Assam-Bengal Railway had gone on a strike to serve no selfish interest but to secure to the labourers who had abandoned the tea plantations justice for the cruelty which they had suffered at Chandpur. The Government had beaten up and driven them from the railway station, and refused to help them to return to their home towns. This had hurt the railway workers. They had no common bond with the plantation labourers. The latter hailed from Bihar and other provinces whereas most of the railway workers came from Bengal. Their strike, thus, had no element of self-interest in it. I met these strikers at Chittagong. I told them what they should do. Notes of that speech were taken down. Since some of the ideas are likely to prove useful, I publish the summary here believing that, though it is not complete and I have not been able to revise and

abridge it, the speech may be read with profit.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI)

I thank you all for the address which you have presented to me; but I do not wish to detain you long over expressions of gratitude.

I shall not enter into a detailed discussion whether it was proper or improper on your part to have gone on a strike and continued it for so many months, because I am not in possession of all the facts. I know only what I heard yesterday after coming here. It is not possible for me to express any opinion on the basis of that limited knowledge. You must have already heard from some of your leaders what I wrote in *Young India* about the Assam Bengal Railway strike. In that article also, I did not express any opinion since I did not have enough information to form one. I did not know your circumstances, your grievance. I did not know whether you had sufficient justification for striking work; and I do not know that even now. I can see, however, that your strike, unlike other strikes, is not motivated by self-interest. You have struck work not for any rise in wages but for the sake of others. You have gone on a strike to express your sympathy for the sufferings of your brothers as a result of the atrocities at Chandpur. I did not imagine that workers in India had become strong enough to go on a strike out of concern for other people's sufferings. This is not true of the entire working class, but in your case, I am told, you have struck work only out of sympathy with the sufferings of your brethren.

And if that is the reason why you have gone on strike, it becomes your duty not to return to work, any of you, until the hardships of plantation labourers have ended, until they get justice.

When can we say that their hardships have ended? When can it be said that justice has been done for the atrocities committed at Chandpur? Only when the Government expresses regret, apologizes for the beatings and pays the labourers the railway fare which it refused under pressure from the planters. The Commissioner who ordered Gurkha soldiers to throw out from the railway waiting-sheds, in the middle of the night, poor and exhausted working men and women and their children, was born in India and is one of us. He should be ashamed of himself. He should, on his own, offer an apology.

You can return to work only when all this is done. If the

Government acts thus, one may not mind the railway company not paying you for the strike-period on the ground that you had given no notice. The railway company might employ you as if you were fresh recruits, it may tell you that you will be employed as and when vacancies arise and may even stipulate new service conditions,—you may submit to all this, but only after the Government yields. As long as the Government refuses to bend, you ought not to return to work no matter what they offer you or how hard they try to win you over.

You should not go down on your knees even if the Congress Committee does not help you with funds or your leaders desert you. Why should a person, who can work with his hands and feet, have to go down on his knees? Such a man ought to remain independent and not rely on others for anything. Whether it is I or the Congress Committee, if any leader deserts you' after having advised you to go on strike, you must not waver. I have read the notice which was served on you yesterday. It says:

> Many of you have now returned to work. The rest of you also should report for duty immediately. We are advising you in your own interest. Some irresponsible leaders incited you to go on this strike and have now deserted you. Do not be misled by them any more. If you delay returning to work, you will lose your jobs too.

You need not be frightened by this notice. You are not going back to work; do not mind those who have returned. They have acted unworthily; you should preserve your honour.

Times change and one age succeeds another. This one belongs to the weavers. You can stand on your own feet if you adopt this profession. Do not think that this work will not solve your problem. Weavers can today earn twice as much as others. Those of you, moreover, who wish to go back to your villages may do so, your fares will be paid to you. You may live there, till your piece of land and spin during spare hours. Apart from this, you may do any other work of your choice and become self-supporting. If all of you belong to Chittagong, here also you can combine farming and weaving as I have suggested and thereby make Chittagong the pride of India. It is not at all difficult to do this. God is most merciful and just. A man can learn to spin within three days, carding is also easy and even weaving can be mastered within a month if properly attended to. There is one thing, of course. Railway employees habitually take bribes or steal. If you

wish to have your bread without working for it, you will write to me the very next day that you cannot go on with weaving. If however you are willing to work and if you work for twelve hours daily, you will be positively writing to me within a month that the way suggested by me has made you self-supporting and that now you fear no one except God. It is not hard to work for twelve hours a day. I am an old man, I do not have much energy now, and yet I can work that long. Why, then, cannot you young men do so? If you work hard and live a thoughtful life, you will know God, for a man who does not possess good characters who drinks and visits prostitutes, cannot work strenuously for twelve hours. You cannot expect maintenance from the Congress Committee but, since you have struck work, you can ask for spinning-wheels. The spinning-wheels will provide you maintenance. You should continue your strike with the the help of the spinning-wheel, offer love and sympathy to those who suffer and, as long as this Satanic Government does not yield, let none of you go back to work.

For not less than thirty years now I have lived in the closest contact with labourers. Even when I was practising, I accepted generally working men's briefs. I lived with them, moved with them and slept and ate with them. I have conducted a number of strikes before now. I consider myself an expert in conducting strikes. With God's grace, I succeeded in all of them, the only reason being that I advised workers to stand on their own feet I refused to support them by raising funds. Why should a man, sound of body and limb, feed himself with money from another? I most certainly would not seek financial assistance from my brother or my friend if I should happen to lose my job or if my business is ruined. I would seek my brother's help only when I was ill or incapacitated. When there was a strike by forty thousand men and women in South Africa, I straightway wired to Mr. Gokhale[1] to tell him that he should not worry at all and that there was no need to raise funds in India and send the money there. As long as there was no money, things went on very well; it was only when funds started flowing in that difficulties arose. The workers secured their demands. We did not have to continue the strike for as long as six months. It was called off within a few weeks on a

[1] G. K. Gokhale (1866-1915); founder of the Servants of India Society; President, Indian National Congress at Benares in 1905

settlement being reached. The strikers used to get one *roti*[1] and an ounce of sugar daily. On this ration, they walked twenty miles every day. Their women and children also accompanied them.

That one was a very big strike. Compared to it, your strike is a very small affair. During that strike large numbers submitted to beatings and assaults without so much as opening their mouths. Not less than ten thousand people walked into jails without uttering a single syllable. Among the ranks of the strikers were many hefty Pathans. Once a Pathan working in a coal-mine came to me and bared his back before me. It was all sore and swollen. He told me he had received the blows without the slightest movement of his body, that the tyrant had all but skinned him alive; but he submitted to it all because of the pledge he had taken before me in the name of God. Were it not for this, how dare the man beat him, he asked. He could have crushed the like of him in no time.

I told him that he was indeed a brave man. And, in that strike, he was not the only Pathan who behaved in this way. There were many Others like him. Some persons who had served terms of imprisonment for theft or murder had also joined the Strike. All of them, however, had only one thought in their minds, that the pledge they had taken had to be honoured even at the cost of their lives. All of them were brave people. I want you to be equally brave. I ask you, once again, not to look to the Congress or depend upon it. God has given us teeth and He is sure to provide us food. This land of Bengal is so very fertile. You have abundant rains here. Nature is all smiles upon you. Why should people here at all die of hunger? How can people here be anyone's slaves? They should be completely free. If they so choose they can, this very day, win freedom for the whole of the country. I feel ashamed to think that, when there is famine in Khulna, they should approach merchants in Bombay for money and that the Khulna people can be fed only if the money is forthcoming.

Let us think what needs to be done now. Either all of you go back to your villages and find out for yourselves some means of livelihood, or you set up some sort of a corporation of your own. If you wish to go back to your villages, the Congress Committee should pay you the fare for the journey. I would, however, advise you to set up a corporation. As one fighting for swaraj, I would ask you to card, spin and weave. After a month of training, you will earn from this

[1] Flat, round unleavened bread

work one rupee daily. The greater your skill the more you will earn. By taking up this work, you will also be serving the nation. Your family members will then cease to be liabilities since they too can lend a hand in this work. Moreover, your courage will have an effect on public opinion and those who have deserted you may again join you. This will of course need determination. Our forefathers laid great stress on honouring one's pledge. Dasharatha said that the tradition of Raghu's descendants enjoined them not to break a pledge, even if that meant losing one's life.

Many of you have returned to work with the Railway; they are ignorant, weak men. You should not abuse them; nor should you employ force to compel them to give up their jobs again. That will not be right for you. If you refuse to go back on your pledge, silently keep up the strike and earn your bread by spinning and weaving; if you live a godly life, they will themselves feel ashamed; public opinion will make them feel so.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 15-9-1921

88. NOTES

LOVELY ASSAM

I am writing these notes at Tezpur on the banks of the mighty Brahmaputra. Tezpur was known as Shonitapur and is reputed to have been the capital of the demon Banasur, whose daughter Usha was married to Aniruddha[1]. Devotees can point out the place where Hari[2] and Hara[3] fought. Assam is a land of magnificent vegetation. Some of the river scenery is hard to beat throughout the world. I have seen the gorgeous scenery on the Thames. But I cannot recall anything as superior to the lavishness with which nature has decorated the great stream on whose banks I am writing these notes.

Upper Assam alone has a population of over 37 lakhs. Every women of Assam is a born weaver. No Assamese girl who does not weave can expect to become a wife. And she weaves fairy tales in cloth. Some of the old patterns that our host Mr. Phooken showed me

[1] Grandson of Lord Krishna
[2] Vishnu, the preserver
[3] Siva, the destroyer

were of matchless beauty. And as I saw these beautiful patterns, I could not help shedding a silent tear over India's past glory and her lost art. Where is to be found in all the fine rich foreign saris in India, that beautiful blending of soft colours so pleasing to the eye? The vegetable dyes of Assam are almost extinct. When Assam became a British possession, its women ceased to spin and sinfully took to weaving foreign yarn. And now, what the women of Assam are saving through weaving, they are losing through buying foreign yarn. And the saris I see today are not anything to be compared to the old patterns I have seen for beauty or softness. Assam, if its workers do their duty, can play a most important part in developing swadeshi. Its women can weave much more than enough for themselves. Forty thousand acres are under cotton cultivation today, an acre yielding on an average 133 lbs. But of course Assam can grow much more. Some of the cotton I saw was very beautiful and long-staple. And fine spinning is still in existence in isolated homes as in Andhra. Every one admits that the Assamese have ample time at their disposal. I have elsewhere reproduced an extract from an English writer's observation confirming the view. Assam has plenty of wood, sound and durable, just the kind for making spinning-wheels. Let us hope that Assam will rise to its full height in the matter of swadeshi.

The Assamese are cursed with the opium habit, but the movement against vice has spread throughout the length and breadth of India. I am told that many people have given up the habit all-togetherand that abstinence is on the increase.

I understand that some Government officials have made use of a slip I have committed in ray booklet *Hind Swaraj*, in which I have bracketed the Assamese with the *Pindaris* and other wild tribes[1] have made ample amends to the people. It was certainly on my part a grave injustice done to the great Assamese people, who are every whit as civilized as any other part of India. They have a fine literature some of which is written on bark of *agaru* tree with beautifully coloured illustrations said to be very old. And of course I fell in love with the women of Assam as soon as I learnt that they were accomplished weavers. Being weavers, they have used economy in their dress without impairing its beauty or its efficiency as cover. And to me it is a sign of very high culture to see the Assamese women and girls wearing little or no jewellery. They are like women all over India naturally shy and

[1] *Vide* "Hind Swaraj", 22-11-1909, footnote 6.

modest with extremely refined and open faces.

My stupidity about the Assamese rose, when about 1890 I read an account of the Maliipur expedition, when the late Sir John Gorst defended the conduct of the officials towards the late Senapati, saying that governments always liked to lop off tall poppies. Being an indifferent reader of history, I retained with me the impression that the Assamese were *jungli*[1] and committed it to writing in 1908[2]. However my slip has afforded consolation to some officials, amusement to my audience before which I corrected the slip, and a splendid opportunity to me of paying a tribute to the simple and natural beauty of the Assamese sisters and of enlisting them on the side of India and swadeshi.

I must not omit to mention the fact, that out of nearly seventy-eight Assamese pleaders, fifteen have suspended practice, probably the highest percentage throughout India.

Lastly, I must congratulate the Congress Committees on the excellent order preserved at all the meetings. All rush and noise have been avoided with wonderful discipline.

OFFICIOUSNESS

The officials in Assam are evidently unused to large demonstrations and gatherings. They have forbidden to the demonstrators the use of public grounds. The Nowgong officials however positively irritated the people. The Deputy Commissioner would not allow a little platform with a canopy to be erected on the football ground, and after having allowed its use had it dismantled because, he said, the chairman of the committee was guilty of a breach of faith in that he had erected the platform. The committee in disgust held the meeting on private ground. Nor was this all. The Deputy Commissioner endeavoured to control the attendance at the railway station and wanted the names of the chosen few who were to go to the platform. He would not allow any procession for fear of disturbance. As a matter of fact, the crowds have been nowhere so restrained or well-behaved as in Assam, even in the demonstration of their affection. And any experienced official could have seen, that affectionate demonstrations, no matter how noisy could not possibly end in trouble or mischief. But Assam is a place, where, I understand,

[1] Uncivilized
[2] Slip for 1909

officials will not tolerate any awakening among the people. Only the other day, at Tezpur, an official summarily and forcibly had certain quarters evacuated by the residents, because their buffaloes interfered with his sport. Another official during the war period carried fire and sword among a little border tribe called *Kukis*, and slaughtered them like goats, sparing neither women nor children. I understand, that the whole of this shameful massacre was suppressed from the public, though it is common knowledge among the people. No wonder that in Assam things have been carried so far, that its permanent capital is 4,000 feet above the sea level, It has no capital on the plains at all. Shillong is, I have been told, to all intents and purposes a European settlement. And the Government never descends from its inaccessible heights.

A MUNICIPAL MODEL

The Raipur (Central Provinces) Municipality has adopted by a majority the following proposals:

> That all the boys reading in the municipal schools should have the national uniform of khadi coat or *kurta*[1] and khadi cap from the 1st August, 1921.
>
> That the 1st August 1921 should be declared a holiday in all the municipal schools and offices in honour of the late Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak.
>
> That this Committee expects its servants to use country-made cloth.

That all dresses supplied to municipal servants should be of khadi.

It is a wise use the Raipur Municipality has made of its powers. Indeed all the municipalities can carry out all the constructive permanent features of non-co-operation without being wholly non-co-operationist. There is not one among the foregoing proposals, to which reasonable exception could possibly be taken by anybody. Any municipality which adopts swadeshi, the vernacular of its province as the medium of its proceedings, the amelioration of the suppressed classes, the abolition of the drink-traffic, prostitution and such other things, will assist the work of national purification, and thus justify its existence.

[1] Long shirt

We are familiar with the official ban put upon the khadi cap in various parts of India. In Bihar, I heard that a magistrate actually sent hawkers to sell foreign cloth. Mr. Painter of Dharwar fame has gone one better, and has issued an official circular in which he says:

> All officers subordinate to the Collector and District Magistrate are desired to take steps to make people realize, that inasmuch as India produces less than her population requires, a boycott of foreign cloth and its destruction or export must inevitably lead to a serious rise in prices, which may lead to a serious disorder and looting, and that these consequences will be the result, not of any action on the part of Government but of Mr. Gandhi's campaign.

In two other paragraphs means are indicated of combating the swadeshi propaganda, i.e., by holding meetings, and by dealers who are opposed to boycott attending the Collector's Office at stated hours. The Madras government have issued a still more pedantic circular. The meaning of these circulars is obvious Pressure is to be put upon the dealers and others not to countenance boycott. The subordinate officials will take liberties which the authors of circulars may not even have contemplated. Fortunately for the country, these threats now produce little or no impression upon the public, and the swadeshi movement will go on in the teeth of the official opposition, be it secret or open, unscrupulous or honourable.

The officials are so ignorant and obstinate, that they will not take the only effective course for avoiding the feared disorders and looting", viz, making common cause with the public and stimulating production. Instead of recognizing the agitation against foreign cloth as desirable and necessary, they regard it as an evil to be put down. And then it is complained, that I call a system which seeks to thwart healthy public agitation, Satanic. Why should there be any dearth of indigenous cloth? Is there not enough cotton in India ? Are there not enough men and women who can spin and weave ? Is it not possible to manufacture all the required number of wheels in a few days? Why should not each home manufacture its own cloth, even as it cooks its own food ? Is it not enough in times of famine to distribute uncooked grain among the famine-stricken? Why should it not be enough to distribute raw cotton among those who need clothing? Why this hypocritical or false alarm about the dearth of cloth, when it is possible in India to manufacture enough for India's needs in a month even without the aid of the mills? The people have been purposely or

ignorantly kept in the dark hitherto. They have been wrongly taught to believe, that all else cloth needed cannot be manufactured in India's homes as of yore. They have been figuratively amputated and then made to rely upon foreign or mill-made cloth. I wish the people concerned will give the only dignified answer possible to these circulars. They will forthwith burn or send out all their foreign cloth, and courageously make up their minds to spin and weave for their own requirements. It is incredibly easy for everyone who is not an idler.

BOGUS ADVERTISEMENTS

I continue to receive complaints about bogus advertisements in swadeshi. The Manager of Satyagraha Ashram who has handled almost all the so-called improvements and inventions, writes to say that he has lately received an advertisement from Calcutta which beats all previous record. He is of opinion that as yet nothing has been found to beat the original charkha in simplicity, ease or output, and warns all spinners against investing in any of the new designs. He advises all Congress Committees to scan all such advertisements in their respective jurisdictions, and after giving each machine at least a month's trial to pronounce an opinion upon these designs. Whilst swadeshi is taking root, fraudulent inventions are bound to come before the public. Congress Committees therefore must guide it in all such matters.

A Tuni correspondent writes to say, that Bombay buyers have gone to Andhra Desha to buy fine cloth. He says, that in spite of his warning, cloth woven out of foreign yarn was sent by some merchants from Bezwada. He warns all buyers against buying such cloth. He says that practically all swadeshi stock is exhausted. The moral is of course clear. "Beware of fine cloth." Fine hand-spun yarn cannot be had in abundances and therefore it is best for Congress workers to avoid buying fine khadi. As Shrimati Sarojini Naidu[1] said at Farrukhabad, it is better to cover ourselves with leaves than to wear foreign cloth. Those who are fired with such a spirit will not fall into the dangerous trap of fine cloth as yet. A time will soon come, when there will be no dearth of fine hand-spun that is capable of being woven.

[1] 1879-1949, poet, patriot, Congress leader and a close associate of Gandhiji

A SEASONABLE PUBLTCATION

Dr. Syed Mahmud of Patna has rendered a service to the Khilafat by bringing out this booklet on the Khilafat and England. It is easy reading, and makes out for the busy man a fairly complete case for the Khilafat. Dr. Mahmud has been careful to support every one of his propositions by copious extracts. He proves the treachery of British ministers from their own writings and speeches. He has had go difficulty in showing that England, even when she was regarded as Turkey's friend, was a friend out of necessity, because she was Russia's foe. The history of England's relationship with Turkey has been one of betrayal, of secret treaties hostile to Turkey's interests, the brave and trusting Turks always believing in England's promises. Here are Lord Palmerston's reasons for the support of Turkey in his days: "We support Turkey for our own sake and for our own interest." When these very sound reasons ceased, Turkey was sold. It was at the time of the Berlin Congress of 1877, that the secret leaked out that Britain had exacted the cession of the island of Cyprus from Turkey. Disraeli and Salisbury, the two English plenipotentiaries, kept the secret from the Congress, although they were under an obligation to disclose it. "They stood convicted of nothing less than a direct and recorded lie!" Did the discovery lead to the return to Turkey Of Cyprus ? Not at all. England placated outraged France by recognizing the latter's right at the first convenient opportunity to occupy Tunis, by recognising her special interest in Syria and giving an equal share to her in the financial spoliation of Egypt. No wonder Mr. Blunt has said: "To the Cyprus intrigue are directly or indirectly referable half the crimes against Oriental and North African liberty our generation has witnessed." Dr. Syed Mahmud traces the treacherous dealings of England regarding Egypt, Tripoli and the Balkan War, and shows clearly that Turkey was practically driven out of the alliance with England. Is it any wonder that no Mussulman trusts British ministers' friendly professions? They will forfeit all title to be called followers of Islam, if they rest themselves before compelling England to do the right thing by Turkey and India.

PUNJAB PROSECUTIONS

Maulvi Saiyad Habib has been sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for three years, avowedly for his writings in his paper, the *Siasat*, but in reality for the influence he exercises over the Mussulmans. Mr. Zafar Ali Khan's son, Mr. Akhtar Ali Khan, and his

cousin, Mr. Gulam Kadar are under trial. The conclusion is foregone. Thus every Mussulman and every Sikh non-co-operator of note is to be put "out of harm's way". They would not apologise, they would not withdraw anything for there was nothing to withdraw. Disaffection in their writings certainly there was. But a non-co-operation journal to be worthy of the name has to preach disaffection. I therefore congratulate these gentlemen upon their well-earned honour. I can only hope, that the Mussulmans and the Sikhs will appreciate the Government action by completing their part of the swadeshi programme. The people will have deserved these trials and convictions, if they generate enough power to be able to discharge these friends from jails long before their period is over.

AN INDICTMENT

A friend has sent me a copy of the notice served on Pandit Radhamohan Gokulji of Nagpur, calling upon him to file security for good behaviour or to go to jail. The Pandit is safely lodged in jail. But I have before me the extracts that were attached to the notice, and said to be from his speeches delivered at various times. I have read and re-read the extracts. I now present them to the reader in the order in which they were given in the notice.

SPEECH DATED 20TH JUNE 1921 AT SEONI

1. We are fighting against a tyrannical Government. See. . . how long can the tyrant Government . . . prosecute us? The Western people . . . are not Christians.

2. Unless all the jails in India are full of Indians, you cannot achieve your object. To the last child . . . let the struggle for liberty be continued.

3. When the Romans were ruling over England, they became cruel and supercilious. Once they . . . whipped Queen Boadicea; the result is, where is Rome today ?

4. Close the slave houses (schools) of the Satanic Government.

5. In the face of two laws, one for Indians and another for Europeans, we cannot help remarking, the Government are dishonest and wish ill to the people.

6. So long as you are fighting against the tyrant Government, do not produce children.

SPEECH DATED 21ST JUNE 1921 AT SEONI

1. He then referred to the non-co-operation movement, by means of which a bloodless revolution could be caused, this oppressive system of Government could be broken and swaraj attained.

2. It is our duty to destroy a Government, which is capable of acting so dishonestly.

3. What did we get in return for the money and men we gave to the bureaucracy? The Rowlatt Act which provides neither for appeal nor for argument.

4. Imperial preference is being forced on us today. We cannot buy at a cheaper rate outside the British Empire, nor can be sell at a better price to an outsider.

5. The laws on which our very honour depends are made and discussed in a foreign language . . . at a distance of thousands of miles. We are certainly not bound to obey such laws.

6. You should be prepared to undergo transportation and to get yourself beheaded like Robert Moore.

7. Do you deserve to be called human beings, if you do not consider it your duty to destroy that ill-born Government, which has caused sticks to be introduced into the private parts of women?

SPEECH DATED 5TH JULY 1921 AT NAGPUR

1. The Sinful British Government taught the Chinese to smoke opium and Indians to drink (alcohol).

2. The Government. . . cut up the Turkish kingdom but left European kingdoms intact.

3. The Indian (Marwari) traders are dacoits who rob for the benefit of the bigger dacoits.

4. The British and Japanese Governments are cousins and both are devilish. As the British imprisoned people, so the Japanese executed non-co-operating students in Korea.

5. The Government is so sinful, that its sins will recoil on its own heat and it will perish like the Roman and the Egyptian Empires.

There is in the foregoing extracts nothing, that hundreds of speakers including myself have not said on various occasions and from a thousand platforms. There is only one sentence to which an objection may properly be taken, and that is No. 7 in speech No. 2.

The charge does occur in the statements made before the Congress Committee. But it is against individuals and not against a whole corporation. The Government could not properly be described to have "caused" the infamous barbarity, as the Government can be said to have made India crawl on her belly in that lane in Amritsar. But it is not for the inaccuracy or the over-colouring that the Pandit has been sentenced. His is a severe but accurate indictment covering eighteen charges in three speeches. And almost every one of them can be sustained. The speaker has been impartial in his condemnation, as shown by his reference to the Marwaris and the Japanese. It must moreover be remembered, that the speaker spoke in Hindi, and the extracts are given without their context. The lesson, however, for us workers is to continue to do our work fearlessly and earn imprisonment, even as Pandit Gokulji and many others have done.

THE NAGPUR PLEADERS

The pleaders of Nagpur have done well through the ordeal to which its Sessions Judge subjected them. He required non-co-operating pleaders to show the consistency between their suspension and their oath as lawyers. All of them said, that they had suspended in obedience to the Congress call. Mr. Mahomed Samiulla Khan added, that his declaration of allegiance was subordinate to allegiance to God and His Prophet, which latter nothing could override. Mr. Narayanrao T. Vaidya said, that times had very much changed, that the oath of allegiance would have to be changed to suit the circumstances and that otherwise no self-respecting lawyer would care to practise in any British Court. The lawyers deserve congratulations on their fearless attitude. Times are indeed gone, when people could be frightened into slavish submission. Man does not live by bread alone. He has at his disposal a sustenance far richer than the richest bread can afford.

Young India, 1-9-1921

89. NATIONAL EDUCATION

So many strange things have been said about my views on national education, that it would perhaps not be out of place to formulate them before the public.

In my opinion the existing system of education is defective, apart from its association with an utterly unjust Government, in

three most important matters:

1. It is based upon foreign culture to the almost entire exclusion of indigenous culture.

2. It ignores the culture of the heart and the hand, and confines itself simply to the head.

3. Real education is impossible through a foreign medium.

Let us examine the three defects. Almost from the commencement, the text-books deal, not with things the boys and the girls have always to deal with in their homes, but things to which they are perfect strangers. It is not through the text-books, that a lad learns what is right and what is wrong in the home life. He is never taught to have any pride in his surroundings. The higher he goes, the farther he is removed from his home, so that at the end of his education he becomes estranged from his surroundings. He feels no poetry about the home life. The village scenes are all a sealed book to him. His own civilization is presented to him as imbecile, barbarous, superstitious and useless for all practical purposes. His education is calculated to wean him from this traditional culture. And if the mass of educated youths are not entirely denationalised, it is because the ancient culture is too deeply embedded in them to be altogether uprooted even by an education adverse to its growth. If I had my way, I would certainly destroy the majority of the present text-books and cause to be written text-books which have a bearing on and correspondence with the home life, so that a boy as he learns may react upon his immediate surroundings.

Secondly, whatever may be true of other countries, in India at any rate where more than eighty per cent of the population is agricultural and another ten per cent industrial, it is a crime to make education merely literary and to unfit boys and girls for manual work in after-life. Indeed I hold that as the larger part of our time is devoted to labour for earning our bread, our children must from their infancy be taught the dignity of such labour. Our children should not be so taught as to despise labour. There is no reason, why a peasant's son after having gone to a school should become useless as he does become as agricultural labourer. It is a sad thing that our schoolboys look upon manual labour with disfavour, if not contempt. Moreover, in India, if we expect, as we must, every boy and girl of school-going age to attend public schools, we have not the means to finance education in accordance with the existing style, nor are millions of

parents able to pay the fees that are at present imposed. Education to be universal must therefore be free. I fancy that even under an ideal system of government, we shall not be able to devote two thousand million rupees which we should require for finding education for all the children of school-going age. It follows, therefore, that our children must be made to pay in labour partly or wholly for all the education they receive. Such universal labour to be profitable can only be (to my thinking) hand-spinning and hand-weaving. But for the purposes of my proposition, it is immaterial whether we have spinning or any other form of labour, so long as it can be turned to account. Only, it will be found upon examination, that on a practical, profitable and extensive scale, there is no occupation other than the processes connected with cloth-production which can be introduced in our schools throughout India.

The introduction of manual training will serve a double purpose in a poor country like ours. It will pay for the education of our children and teach them an occupation on which they can fall back in after-life, if they choose, for earning a living. Such a system must make our children self-reliant. Nothing will demoralize the nation so much as that we should learn to despise labour.

One word only as to the education of the heart. I do not believe, that this can be imparted through books. It can only be done through the living touch of the teacher. And, who are the teachers in the primary and even secondary schools? Are they men and women of faith and character? Have they themselves received the training of the heart ? Are they even expected to take care of the permanent element in the boys and girls placed under their charge? Is not the method of engaging teachers for lower schools an effective bar against character? Do the teachers get even a living wage? And we know, that the teachers of primary schools are not selected for their patriotism. They only come who cannot find any other employment.

Finally, the medium of instruction. My views on this point are too well known to need re-stating. The foreign medium has caused brain-fag, put an undue strain upon the nerves of our children, made them crammers and imitators, unfitted them for original work and thought, and disabled them for filtrating their learning to the family or the masses. The foreign medium has made our children practically foreigners in their own land. It is the greatest tragedy of the existing system. The foreign medium has prevented the growth of our

vernaculars. If I had the powers of a despot, I would today stop the tuition of our boys and girls through a foreign medium, and require all the teachers and professors on pain of dismissal to introduce the change forthwith. I would not wait for the preparation of text-books. They will follow the change. It is an evil that needs a summary remedy.

My uncompromising opposition to the foreign medium has resulted in an unwarranted charge being levelled against me of being hostile to foreign culture or the learning of the English language. No reader of *Young India* could have missed the statement often made by me in these pages, that I regard English as the language of international commerce and diplomacy and therefore consider its knowledge on the part of some of us as essential. As it Contains some of the richest treasures of thought and literature, I would certainly encourage its careful study among those who have linguistic talents and expect them to translate those treasures for the nation in its vernaculars.

Nothing can be farther from my thought than that we should become exclusive or erect barriers. But I do respectfully contend, that an appreciation of other cultures can fitly follow, never precede an appreciation and assimilation of our own. It is my firm opinion, that no culture has treasures so rich as ours has. We have not known it, we have been made even to deprecate its study and deprecate its value. We have almost ceased to live it. An academic Grasp without practice behind it is like an embalmed corpse, perhaps lovely to look at but nothing to inspire or ennoble. My religion forbids me to belittle or disregard other cultures, as it insists under pain of civil suicide upon imbibing and living my own.

Young India, 1-9-1921

90. ETHIC OF DESTRUCTION

The reader, I am sure, will appreciate my sharing with him the following pathetic and beautiful letter from Mr. Andrews:

> I know that your burning of foreign cloth is with the idea of helping the poor, but I feel that there you have gore wrong. If you succeed in Boycotting all, or a greater part, of foreign cloth, it seems to Erie self evident that the price of mill-made cloth will rise and it will hit the poor. But there is besides a subtle appeal to racial feeling in that word “foreign” which day by

day seeds to me to need checking and not fomenting. The picture of you lighting that great pile, including beautiful fabrics, shocked me intensely. We seem to be losing sight of the great beautiful world to which we belong and concentrating selfishly on India, and this must (I fear) lead back to the old bad selfish nationalism. If so we get into the vicious circle from which Europe is now trying so desperately to escape. But I cannot argue it out. I can only say again, that it shocked me and seemed to me a form almost of violence; and yet 1 knots how violence is abhorrent to you. I do not at all like this question of foreign cloth being made into a religion.

I was supremely happy when you were dealing great giant. olows at the great fundamental moral evils, drunkenness, drug-taking. un-touchability, race arrogance, etc., and when you were, with such wonderful and beautiful tenderness, dealing with the hideous vice of prostitution. But lighting bonfires of foreign cloth and telling people it is a religious sin to wear it, destroying in the fire the noble handiwork of one's fellowmen and women, one's brothers and sisters abroad, saying it would be "defiling" to wear it I cannot tell you how different all this appears to me. Do you know I almost fear now to wear the khaddar that you have given me, lest I should appear to be judging other people as a *Pharisee* would, saying, "I am holier than thou!" I never felt like this before.

You know how, when anything that you do hurts me, I must cry out to you and this has hurt me.

I wrote *The Modern Review* articles Which I have enclosed with such eager joy, because l felt certain that I had found your own life's meaning. But now my mind cries out to you that you are doing something violent, distorted, unnatural. . . . You know that any love is stronger than over, just as your love for your brother was when you felt he was doing something wrong. Do tell me what you mean. What you said in *Young India* about burning[1] did not convince me a bit

It is so like him. Whenever he feels hurt over anything I have done (and this is by no means the first such occasion), he deluges me with letters without waiting for an answer. For it is love speaking to love, not arguing. It is the outpouring of an anguished heart. And so it has been over the burning of foreign clothes.

What Mr. Andrews has put in loving language, correspondents already out of tune with me have written in coarse, angry and even vulgar words. Mr. Andrews' being words of love and sorrow have

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 28-7-1921.

gone deep down in me and command a full answer, whereas the angry ones I was obliged to lay aside save for a passing reference. Mr. Andrews' being non-violent, charged with love, have told. The others being violent, charged with malice, took no effect and would have evoked angry retorts, if I was capable of or disposed to such retorts. Mr. Andrews' letter is a type of non-violence we need in order to win swaraj quickly.

This is however by the way. I remain just as convinced as ever of the necessity of burning. There is no emphasis in the process on race feeling. I would have done precisely the same thing in the sacred and select family or friendly circles. In all I do or advise, the infallible test I apply is, whether the particular action will hold good in regard to the dearest and the nearest. The teaching of the faith I hold dear is unmistakable and unequivocal in the matter. I must be the same to friend and foe. And it is this conviction which makes me so sure of so many of my acts which often puzzle friends.

I remember having thrown into the sea a pair of beautiful field-glasses, because they were a constant bone of contention between a dear friend[1] and myself. He felt the hesitation at first but he saw the right of the destruction of a beautiful and costly thing, a present withal from a friend. Experience shows that the richest gifts must be destroyed without compensation and hesitation if they hinder one's moral progress. Will it not be held a sacred duty to consign to the flames most precious heirlooms, if they are plague-infected? I can remember having broken to bits, when a young man, the loved bangles of my own dear wife, because they were matter of difference between us. And if I remember right, they were a gift from her mother. I did it, not out of hate but out of love—ignorant, I now see in my ripe age. The destruction helped us and brought us nearer.

If the emphasis were on all foreign things, it would be racial, parochial and wicked. The emphasis is on all foreign cloth. The restrictions makes all the difference in the world. I do not want to shut out English lever watches or the beautiful Japanese lacquer work. But I must destroy all the choicest wines of Europe, even though they might have been prepared and preserved with all the most exquisite care and attention. Satan's snares are most subtly laid and they are the most tempting, when the dividing line between right and wrong is so

[1] Kallenbach, a German associate of Gandhiji; *vide An Autobiography*, Part IV, Ch. XXX.

thin as to be imperceptible. But the line is there all the same, rigid and inflexible. Any crossing of it may mean certain death.

India is racial today. It is with the utmost effort, that I find it possible to keep under check the evil passions of the people. The general body of the people are filled with ill will, because they are weak and hopelessly ignorant of the way to shed their weakness. I am transferring the ill will from men to things.

Love of foreign Cloth has brought foreign domination, pauperism and what is worst, shame to many a home. The reader may not know, that not long ago hundreds of "untouchable" weavers of Kathiawar having found their calling gone, became sweepers for the Bombay municipality. And the life of these men has become so difficult that many lose their children and become physical and moral wrecks; some are helpless witnesses of the shame of their daughters and even their wives. The reader may not know that many women of this class in Gujarat for want of domestic occupation have taken to work on public roads, where, under pressure of one sort or another, they are obliged to sell their honour. The reader may not know that the proud weavers of the Punjab, for want of occupation, not many years ago took to the sword, and were instrumental in killing the proud and innocent Arabs at the bidding of their officers, and not for the sake of their country but for the sake of their livelihood. It is difficult to make a successful appeal to these deluded hirelings and wean them from their murderous profession. What was once an honourable and artistic calling is now held by them to be disreputable. The weavers of Dacca, when they wove the world-famous *subaum*, could not have been considered disreputable.

Is it now any wonder, if I consider it a sin to touch foreign cloth? Will it not be a sin for a man with a very delicate digestive apparatus to eat rich foods? Must he not destroy them or give them away? I know what I would do with rich foods, if I had a son lying in bed who must not eat them but would still gladly have them. In order to wean him from the hankering, I would, though able to digest them myself, refrain from eating them and destroy them in his presence, so that the sin of eating may be borne home to him.

If destruction of foreign cloth be a sound proposition from the highest moral standpoint, the possibility of a rise in the price of swadeshi cloth need not frighten us. Destruction is the quickest method of stimulating production. By one supreme effort and swift

destruction, India has to be awakened from her torpor and enforced idleness. Here is what Mr. Allen, the author of the *Assam Gazetteer*, wrote in 1905 of Kamrup:

> Of recent years the use of imported clothing has been coming into favour, —an innovation which has little to recommend it, as the time formerly spent at the loom is not as a rule assigned to any other useful occupation.

The Assamese, to whom I have spoken, realize the truth of these words to their cost. Foreign cloth to India is like foreign matter to the body. The destruction of the former is as necessary for the health of India as of the latter for the health of the body. Once grant the immediate necessity of swadeshi, and there is no half-way house to destruction.

Nor need we be afraid, by evolving the fullest swadeshi spirit, of developing a spirit of narrowness and exclusiveness. We must protect our own bodies from disruption through indulgence, before we would protect the sanctity of others. India is today nothing but a dead mass movable at the will of another. Let her become alive by self-purification, i.e., self-restraint and self-denial, and she will be a boon to herself and mankind. Let her be carelessly self-indulgent, aggressive, grasping; and if she rises, she will do so like Kumbhakarna[1] only to destroy and be a curse to herself and mankind.

And for a firm believer in swadeshi, there need be no pharisaical self-satisfaction in wearing khadi. A Pharisee is a patron of virtue. The wearer of khadi from a swadeshi standpoint is like a man making use of his lungs. A natural and obligatory act has got to be performed, whether others do it out of impure motives or refrain altogether, as they do not believe in its necessity or utility.

Young India, l-9-1921

[1] Younger brother of Ravana in the *Ramayana*

91. LETTER TO REHANA TYABJI

UNREVISED CHITTAGONG ,
September 1 [*1921*]

MY DEAR REHANA[1],

I have your sweet letter. Both you and mother are right but I have not a shadow of a doubt that you are more right. Mother has given her worldly wisdom. You have given the dictates of your instinct unspoilt by the bitter experience of the world. Discarded foreign garments cannot be given to the middle class. That will be no swadeshi. If people shunt me by conveniently making me a saint I cannot help. I do not ask the public to do all the things that may qualify me as a saint. I am simply asking them to develop the soldier spirit which is so indispensable for swaraj. If to attain swaraj is to become saints then I want us all to become saints and you may in your own winsome manner bear down the opposition of mother. We must subordinate the *Bania* spirit of calculation and bargain and like soldiers of God do pure sacrifice. The delicate colours and fineness, we had before. And you must work for all that your vanity or taste may need. Today there is only one taste—and that for swaraj and no other. If my argument convinces you I look to you to convince mother and let me know that you have cleared your wardrobe of all rubbish. I reach Calcutta on Sunday and probably remain there till 12th. My address there, would be 4, Pollock Street.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9634

92. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

CHITTAGONG,
September 1 [*1921*]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I have your long letter written in pencil. I found it difficult to read. Other letters in pencil sometime come to me and I find them also difficult to read. From this I conclude that my pencil letters too must cause a lot of difficulty to the addressees. I have always felt that

[1] Daughter of Abbas Tyabji

it was a crime to write a letter in pencil. However in my difficult predicament, I took that liberty. But I cannot tolerate that crime when somebody else commits it. I know you have committed no crime, for you wanted to keep a copy. It often happens that the first carbon copy is clearer.

I have changed my mind.[1] It would be better for you first to meet me in Calcutta and then send for Durga. If you have decided to stay on there, send a wire to Devdas[2]. But I feel it would be better to do whatever is to be done after we meet and discuss things and am therefore sending you a wire[3] with an altogether different message.

I read about the Malabar incident later. I have already written and despatched an article about it for *Young India*.[4] It would have been better if I had sent you a copy. As to your articles, etc., I shall be able to see them only after I reach Calcutta.

I cannot imagine that either Malaviyaji[5] or the Poet is envious of me. Both lack fearlessness and are proud of their opinions and ideas. You can tolerate pride if it is not accompanied by fear. They cannot look at non-co-operation from our point of view, cannot overlook the shortcomings of non-co-operators, as we do and so may oppose us. Besides, they are confused by the novelty and simplicity of my ideas. To believe anything more than this about them seems to me positively sinful. Bipin Babu[6] and Vijayaraghavachariar[7] may think all sorts of things about me. Ramakant I consider but a child. He appears to have opposed me to show that he is a man of independent views. We should leave him alone and go on offering our comments as journalists without acrimony. Do point out the Poet's and Malaviyaji's ideas on . . .[8] whenever there is an occasion for doing so. This cannot be done freely in *Young India*, but it can be easily and tactfully done in the *Independent*.

[1] Gandhiji wrote two sentenees and crossed them out, and hence this.

[2] 1900-57; youngest son of Gandhiji

[3] This is not available.

[4] *Vide* "The Two Incompatibles", 8-9-1921.

[5] 1861-1946; founder of the Benares Hindu University; President, Indian National Congress, 1909 and 1918

[6] Bipin Chandra Pal (1858-1932); educationist, journalist, orator and political leader of Bengal

[7] 1852-1943; President, Indian National Congress, 1920

[8] A word is illegible here in the source.

It will be easy enough to have garlands for Indu made of hand-spun yarn.

I have no objection to your taking coffee. It is more essential, to my mind, that you keep fit. I see, and it is my considered view as well, that ordinarily one does not need it. I did not notice any benefit from it when I used to take it. My not taking it now certainly means so much less burden [on the stomach] and less risk of harm.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11418

93. MOPLAH OUTBREAK

Though I am here far away in the north-east at present, I have received some reports of the sudden outbreak of violence in Malabar. I am writing this article on the train, on Friday[1], the *Janmashtami*[2] day. The reader will have the article in his hands after nine days. Meanwhile, further reports will have appeared. But we can discuss some principles on the basis of the reports already received, regardless of whether the facts turn out to be more serious or less.

The Moplahs are Muslims. They have Arab blood in their veins. It is said that their forefathers came from Arabia many years ago and settled in Malabar. They are of a fiery temperament, and are said to be easily excitable. They are enraged and resort to violence in a matter of seconds. They have been responsible for many murders. Many years ago a special Act was also passed to subdue them. There are said to be a million of them. The community, though illiterate, is courageous. They have simply no fear of death. They always set out for fighting with a pledge not to return defeated. That is why it is generally said that the Moplahs think nothing of assaulting or killing anyone. Mr. Yakub Hussain was stopped and later imprisoned because it was feared that they would break out into violence. It is not clear as yet what led to their present outburst. They are reported to have taken the lives of six officers, four Indian and two British. It is believed that some others also may have been killed. Five hundred Moplahs are

[1] August 26

[2] Birthday of Lord Krishna

believed to have been killed. It is also reported that they have resorted to arson and looting. Calicut and some areas to its north are under martial law at present.

Thus, for the time being progress has been arrested in Malabar and the Government has had its way. It is well versed in the art of suppressing such revolts. Many innocent men must have been, and more will be, killed. Who will come forward to blame the Government ? And even if anyone does, what is the chance of the Government paying attention to him?

That is a Government which prevents or stops violence. Malabar has demonstrated that we non-co-operators have not yet gained full control. A Government to be worthy of its name should be able to get the people under control. There is only one way in which we can gain such control, and that is through non-violence.

Even if we wish to attain our goal through violence and bloodshed, we should have the strength to carry out our intention. It is needless to consider what we should do in order to acquire such strength, because victory through such means is beyond our wits and capacity to plan.

It is evident, however, that we have departed from the path of peace. We cannot follow both methods at the same time, of peace on one side and violence on the other. If we do, we shall gain success through neither.

It is clear that we have not been able to make our influence felt by the Moplahs. A change of heart has not been brought about in them to such an extent that they will never resort to violence. Their violence is likely to alarm us, it impedes our progress.

Those at any rate who believe that we can win only through non-violence should realize that we shall have to redouble our efforts to preserve peace. We should always remember that we must not, even inwardly, approve of violence.

Other provinces should devote themselves earnestly to their duty. It ought not to be difficult to win swaraj before the end of this year even if only one province makes an all-out effort. I think swaraj during this year is quite within the bounds of possibility if one province at least carries out the non-co-operation programme fully, though other provinces may be slack. But I cannot assert with confidence that we shall win swaraj through the peaceful efforts of one province despite violence in one or more of the other provinces. I

see numerous obstacles, but our duty is plain to me. We should exercise stricter self-restraint, become purer, be more alert and make heavier sacrifices. The two forces pull in opposite directions, so that our cart can go forward only when our non-violence is the stronger of the two. If, out of the four bullocks attached to a cart, one either dies or breaks himself loose, the other three have to carry his burden. If, however, one of the four does not die or break loose, but opposes the others or pulls in the wrong direction, the others have not only to carry hip burden but also to acquire the strength to prevent him from doing mischief. Thus, the sincere non-co-operator has now a heavier burden to carry.

I see all the time that the most serious obstacles in our path come not from the Government but from ourselves. The former's perversity does not obstruct us as much as our own weakness, our own perversity and our own lack of understanding. We shall be able to raise ourselves if we see through the Government's perversity; our own perversity and our weakness will hold us back. It is rightly said that the *atman*[1] is our only enemy as also our only friend. The complete victory of non-violent non-co-operation will be possible only if we conquer this enemy inside us.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-9-1921

94. PREPARATION FOR CONGRESS

The Congress session will again be held, after many years, in Ahmedabad. This year's session will be quite different from all others. A new constitution, new hopes and a new era! For, if the Congress acts upon the resolution it has passed regarding itself, that is, if the people redeem their own pledge, we shall be assembling to celebrate the coming of swaraj. But can we expect such a happy occasion within four months from now? Can old chains be broken in a second?

The doubt itself furnishes the reply. It certainly takes time for a sick person to recover, but should it be only an illusion of illness which the person is suffering from, it will vanish in a moment if it vanishes at all. No matter when it vanishes, it will do so in a moment.

[1] Self; the reference is to the *Bhagvad Gita*, VI.5.

When the time comes for breaking the chains of one who has worn them for ten years, would the act of breaking take any time? It is only a question of our fear leaving us. When the bandage [over a person's eyes] is removed, what else can happen than that he will that very moment be able to see. We would need to think further if the conditions for breaking the chains were of a difficult nature; but there are only three essential conditions: (1) Hindu-Muslim unity, (2) remaining peaceful and (3) swadeshi.

All that is required for the fulfilment of the first two is a change of heart. This requires no big sum of money, or much education or the sword, that is, brute force. But it is not my purpose in this article to argue that we are bound to get swaraj during this year or show how to win it. Its purpose is to examine, from a practical point of view, what Ahmedabad and Gujarat should do to ensure the success of the forthcoming Congress.

Gujarat's duty will be to look after the comforts of the guests. We shall have fulfilled our first and special duty if we extend fitting hospitality to them.

We shall have to attend to arrangements for the guests' stay and their meals, and look to their requirements by way of facilities for bathing, sanitary arrangements and lighting.

This time, we shall provide facilities for one style of living only, and that will be the Indian style. It seems to me that we simply cannot accommodate, on the campus, those guests who wish to live in the English style. We should notify at this very stage that the stage that the Congress is unable to undertake the responsibility of providing accommodation for those who live in perfect English style. It should suffice if we provide them with the names and addresses of hotels.

But we should provide the very best facilities in Indian style. Today, the distinction is between an Indian style of accommodation which is dirty and the English style of accommodation which is clean. On the contrary, the rule should be, the greater the simplicity the greater the cleanliness and the greater the outer pomp the greater the amount of the filth within. But in modern times we associate simplicity with lack of cleanliness. We shall have to give up this attitude.

The arrangements for lavatories are generally very unsatisfactory. We shall have to have a large number of them and the necessary arrangements to keep them clean will have to be made. If we depend for this on the *Bhangis* alone we shall not be able to

maintain the degree of cleanliness we should like to. If we have freed ourselves from the sin of untouchability, we should have no objection to cleaning lavatories. Pits will have to be dug to serve as lavatories and, if we keep large quantities of dry earth ready, cleaning them up would be no problem. My suggestion is that we should issue instructions regarding this in Hindi, Urdu, Gujarati and in as many other languages as possible and these could then be distributed among the delegates.

Bathing arrangements should be planned as carefully as the lavatories. People should be supplied hot or cold water as desired. There should be separate volunteers for this section.

There should be separate arrangements for urinals.

I have often observed that arrangements for drinking water are not satisfactory. We should supply it by means of temporary taps or some other less expensive methods, so that water would be easily available to all. Again, as there should be arrangements to supply water, so there should also be some arrangements for the disposal of the water that may be spilt. In Nagpur we saw pools of water all over the place.

We shall have to think out most careful arrangements for meals as well. The general impression is that the arrangements in Nagpur were relatively good. We shall ourselves have a lot of trouble if we provide separate kitchens for Bengal, Punjab, Madras and each of the other camps. Perhaps the best course would be right now to ascertain from the secretary of each committee their requirements. We know the maximum number of the delegates that may come from each place, so there should be no difficulty in making the required arrangements.

I should like to make a suggestion right at this stage. All the delegates from Gujarat should become volunteers. We shall, of course, require other volunteers; but our hospitality will shine out if the delegates from Gujarat enrol themselves as volunteers and look into the arrangements, while demanding no service for themselves. We should all convert ourselves into full-fledged volunteers if we do not wish to see any mismanagement.

We should hope that in all one lakh people will attend and hold out promises which will attract such a numbers.

This time we have only discussed things from the point of view of what will be convenient to us. More in another issue.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-9-1921

95. MY NOTES

HOW TO GUARD AGAINST BEING CHEATED

Letters are coming in from everywhere telling me that greedy persons have been selling foreign or mill-made cloth by passing it off as khadi and they also put up the price of such cloth. This does not surprise me. When the entire system of government is based on fraud, what else can we expect from people? Go where you will, to law-courts, shops or hospitals, even to legislatures, everywhere you will see cheating. Non-co-operation is intended to save us from this. Our non-co-operation is directed not against individuals but against their misdeeds. There is, however, always the danger, in trying to save ourselves from one kind of sin, of being caught in another. And so long as we like to have cloth like that made in the mills and so long as our cloth is not woven before our eyes, so long the danger of being cheated will remain. The easiest safeguard against this is that every village should produce its own khadi and that people in the cities should buy only such khadi as does not look like mill-made cloth, and that too preferably stamped with a Congress mark. Even if all these precautions are taken, there is no guarantee that there would be no danger of fraud. We have no choice but to put up with this as inevitable. It is worth noting that the complaints of fraud come only from cities. I hope that before long people will stop ordering khadi from Bombay and that, on the contrary, the citizens of Bombay will order their requirements from neighbouring places. There will be less possibility of fraud in the khadi coming from villages.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4 -9-192l

96. EXPERIENCES IN ASSAM—I

THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

I had merely heard the name of Assam. Ever since I read, in England, the story of the invasion of Manipur, I had been under the misapprehension that the people of Assam were backward and uncivilised. This is how I came to describe them in *Hind Swaraj* as

being uncivilized. This had hurt the people of Assam. The remark had been fully exploited by the officers. Could the Assamese feel any affection for the ignorant man who had once supposed them to be uncivilized? But the people today have learnt to look into a person's heart, how is it possible that they should be angry with a man for his genuine ignorance ? Even so, I took the very first opportunity in a public meeting to ask forgiveness for my mistaken description of them. People laughed heartily when I described my error. They had not expected me to apologize.

Who would call the people of Assam uncivilised? Anyone who does so must himself be an uncivilised person like myself. Who would regard as uncivilised a people whose women weave the most beautiful cloth and wear only what they themselves have woven?

As Gujarat is in the west of India and to the south of the Vindhyas, Assam is in the extreme east and north of the country. It is the north-east corner of India. From there one can, walking along the banks of the Brahmaputra, go to Tibet and following a foot-tract southwards through the mountains reach Burma. Wherever you turn your eyes in Assam, it is all green. One of the hills in Assam, Cherapunji, has the heaviest rainfall in India, an average of 368 inches a year. Actually in 1861 the rainfall amounted to 805 inches, and of this 366 inches of rain fell in the month of July alone! Nowhere is the rainfall less than 60 inches. And so with the rainfall on the one hand and the river Brahmaputra on the other, what can one expect but greenery all round in rich profusion? Moreover, it is all hills and hills on either side of the river, so that a scene of the highest beauty meets the eye in whichever direction it turns.

The house in which we are put up is just by the riverside. The river, in front, flows peacefully. I deliberately use the word "peacefully". As the water is deep, I see no turbulence in it. So big is the Brahmaputra that large ships can sail on it throughout the year. If only we could acquire such serenity and enjoy such peace, within what a short time we could win swaraj! We do not want the roar of shallow waters, but want rather the peace that is in the stillness of deep waters and the strength which it reveals.

A large variety of plants and many kinds of fruit grow here. Tea, of course, is there. But can anyone say that we have gained any benefit from it? We all know the harm it has done. Fruits such as bananas, pine-apples, oranges and custard apples grow in plenty here.

Among cereals paddy is the chief crop.

The people are trustful and simple. Both the Hindus and the Muslims speak Assamese. Bengali and Assamese are said to be sister languages. The script is the Bengali one. As I tour the country I see that, if all the Indian languages were written in the Devanagari script this would greatly strengthen the idea of our being one nation. There should be only two scripts, the Urdu and the Devanagari. There can be no doubt that there would be little difficulty in understanding Assamese, Bengali, Punjabi, Sindhi and other languages if they were written in the Devanagari script. If this could be done, students of all these languages would be saved much time and would find the languages very easy to learn.

But this was by the way. The people of Assam can be said to be relatively happy. Their land does not require much cultivation. The flood waters of the rivers fertilize it, so that the people are able to earn their livelihood with little labour. Few "reforms" have been introduced in Assam as it came under British rule much later and consequently the people have saved their wealth and preserved their prosperity. They never work as labourers. Since, however, the tea gardens cannot be maintained without labourers, the required number are brought from the United Provinces. Hence it is that we hear many stories of atrocities on them and that an incident like the one at Chandpur could take place.

Fifty years ago, the conditions were such that Assam produced all the needs of its people. The reader will be pleased to know that even today every woman in Assam knows weaving. She weaves all the cloth she needs for herself. All women in families of consequence as in ordinary families are weavers. They do not weave for a living, but do so in their spare time in the home. A girl who cannot weave will never get a partner. The owner of the house where I am staying is a big zamindar and has money enough and to spare, but his seventy-year-old mother, his sisters and his wife, all weave. His daughter of ten or eleven also weaves.

Assam produces a good quantity of silk, and so the women weave both silk and cotton yarn. They can also work exquisite designs on the cloth. Fifty years ago, every woman used to spin as well as weave. But with British rule came foreign yarn and this spelt ruin, total and complete. Attracted by that yarn, the women gave up spinning. Fortunately, because of the custom that one who does not weave

cannot marry, they kept up their weaving. Spinning is easy enough for women who are used to such work, and so there has been an awakening among them and they have again started spinning. At the time when foreign yarn was introduced in Assam, a British critic had observed that these women had not gained anything from it since they had not taken up any other work in place of spinning.

Even today, forty thousand acres of land in Assam are under cotton cultivation. This cotton must be of a very high quality, because the slivers of cotton which were shown to me reminded me of what we see in Andhra. They were very clean, soft and free from dust particles. I have been given a sample of cloth, so fine that it can almost rival Andhra cloth.

The Assamese-speaking population of Assam numbers thirty-seven lakhs. Of this number, no less than ten lakhs are women. If they spin and weave for India, Assam could not only meet its own cloth requirements but could also provide India with a large quantity of khadi.

It seems that the Congress workers in Assam are efficient. My host belongs to the Senapati family of this province. He is a barrister of long standing. He is a big zemindar and was a member of the Legislative Assembly. He has much public work to his credit. Today he is a staunch non-co-operator. Shri Bardoloi is the Secretary. He too is a barrister of long standing and a man with property. He has adopted full non-co-operation. There are seventy-eight Assamese lawyers, of whom fifteen have given up practice and are engaged in non-co-operation work. About 500 volunteers are working under them. Many of them are students who have left their colleges.

The people of Assam are addicted to opium and throw away lakhs of rupees on it. These workers inform me that the opium-habit is greatly on the decline after the starting of the non-co-operation movement. It is said that the revenue from it has decreased by twenty-five per cent. There were also large numbers who smoked foreign cigarettes but you will hardly find any doing so now. Those who still smoke use the country-made *bidi*. But even this is being left off. I am informed that, thanks to non-co-operation, people are introducing reforms on their own.

WOMEN'S MEETING

Three separate women's meetings were held, one for Marwari[1] sisters, one for Assamese and the third for Bengalis. Of these, the Assamese and the Bengali women came to the meetings clad in their simplest saris instead of in their very expensive foreign ones. Many felt ashamed because they did not have khadi saris. The Marwari sisters were dressed entirely in foreign clothes. But Shri Jamnalalji[2] informs me that even they have now asked for khadi saris. Maulana Mahomed Ali's wife[3] was present at this meeting, and she pleased the people by her khadi dress. She is a good speaker and, wearing a *burka*[4], even made a speech.

BONFIRE OF FOREIGN CLOTH

I am writing this note in Gauhati. It is the principal city of Assam. The journey from Calcutta takes nineteen hours. A huge public meeting was held here, and at this meeting there was a bonfire of a large heap of foreign cloth. I saw in the heap a great number of fine dhotis, fine saris and caps and a good quantity of lace. The sacred task of lighting the bonfire was, of course, left to me. The sight after the bonfire was lighted seemed grand to me. Hundreds of fine shirts and other garments of foreign cloth flew up in the air and fell back into the fire. There were very few caps among these as they are not much in use on this sides. Here, too, khadi has come into use, so that those who wear caps use mostly caps made of khadi.

MARWARIS

Marwaris are found in large numbers in Assam. All external trade is in their hands. As I have already said, the people of Assam, because of the fact that their lands yield good crops, rarely go in for trade or seek jobs, and the result is that trade is controlled by Marwaris and Government posts are monopolised by Bengalis. Many of these Marwaris trade in foreign yarn and foreign cloth. The majority of them—about sixty-five business

[1] Inhabitant of Marwar in Rajasthan

[2] Jamnalal Bajaj (1889-1942); treasurer, Indian National Congress for many years; Gandhiji regarded him as his fifth son.

[3] Begum Sahiba; vide "Speech at Madras", 15-9-1921 and "Notes, 29-9-1921 under the sub-title 'A Brave Woman'.

[4] A veil

men—pledged themselves not to import foreign yarn or cloth from now on.

ASSAM MUSLIMS

There is a large population of Muslims in Assam but they take little part in public affairs. They do not even have a proper idea of the Khilafat. But now one finds that there has been an awakening amongst them, too. One may say that they have been awakened by the Hindu leaders. As a result, one finds no hostility between Hindus and Muslims here. The presence of Maulana Mahomed Ali and Maulana Azad Sobhani has led to a greater awakening and an infusion of courage among the Muslims.

ENJOYING ONESELF AT OTHER PEOPLE'S EXPENSE

I have said above that Gauhati is the principal city of Assam. But it is not its capital. Shillong is the capital. It can be reached by car from Gauhati in about five hours. It is 4,000 feet above sea-level. I have not been able to go there, but it is said that the place is a European centre. If one could live all the year round in Simla, it would have been the permanent capital and not one for the summer alone. If it were possible to live in Darjeeling throughout the year, it would have been the permanent capital of Bengal. Does not the Bombay Presidency have three capitals? For some time it is Bombay, for a while Ganeshkhind and in the summer it is Mahabaleshwar. But because the climate of Shillong is such that Europeans can live there throughout the year, it has been made the [permanent] capital of Assam. Can the cry of the labourers toiling in the fields reach up to such a height? Might is right in all matters. The planter can live in Shillong or run up there whenever he needs to. Dare any of his labourers go there? Even the poor man's appeal would get crumpled and torn by the time it reaches Shillong.

BRAMAPUTRA AND THE GOVERNMENT—WHAT A CONTRAST!

The Brahmaputra is such a large river that from a woman it is transformed into a man—it is a *nada*[1]—but there is no limit to its humility. Though he dwells on the top of the Himalayas, he descends to the plains to bring happiness and carries on his bosom thousands of men and their goods from one place to another. For this reason he is worshipped by the whole of Assam and even I, who come from the

[1] The masculine form of nadi meaning "river"

extreme west, involuntarily bow my head. Our Government, after disembarking at Apollo Bunder[1], uses the services of innumerable labourers and steam and electricity to climb up, and lodges itself in Simla or Shillong and snarls at people from there. What wonder if people in their fear cry out, "Save us save us"! The Brahmaputra gives solace. The Government which has its headquarters in Shillong scorches the people from that height and, for this reason, the Assamese have left off saluting it, co-operating with it. What can the people do but run away if the Brahmaputra in his fury should inundate fields and drown villages? And what can they do but flee when scorched by the blazing fire of the Government ? The Assamese have realized that the golden way for them is non-co-operation.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-9-1921

97. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON[2]

ON TOUR,

September 4, 1921

MY DEAR ESTHER,

I found your letter awaiting me on my return to Calcutta from the East Bengal tour.

I wish you and yours a happy life of service.

I was longing for your letter and to hear how you were doing.

I cannot understand your not getting *Young India*. I am inquiring.

When you return to India, you will find the Ashram devoting its best time to carding, spinning and weaving. I wish you would study Danish hand-spinning, hand-weaving, if there be any such in Denmark.

God is great. Not by the effort we are making, but by His grace it is possible to gain swaraj this year. And then you return without hindrance.[3] There will be just as much steadfastness needed to

[1] In Bombay

[2] This was written after hearing the news of the addressee's marriage with E. K. Menon in Denmark.

[3] The British Government, for a time, refused her permission to return to India.

work out swaraj as is needed for attaining it. Let Anne Marie[1] work here for its attainment and you will work there to make it a success.

With love to you both,

Yours,

BAPU

My Dear child, pp. 73-4

98. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

148, RUSSA ROAD,

CALCUTTA,

Silence Day [*September 5, 1921*][2]

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. About visitors [to the Congress] I will write a notes[3] in *Young India.*

I am in fact pining to return there, but work will not allow me to leave the place. Rajagopalachari[4] wires from Madras to say that I must not leave Calcutta before I get another telegram from him. In any case, the work before me is not likely to be finished *before the 12th.*

The swadeshi movement in Bengal has slackened. Quite a number of spinning-wheels are no doubt being plied, but the yarn is not properly accounted for; nor is weaving attended to as it ought to be.

Civil disobedience had better be postponed at least during this month. Let there be as much picketing as possible, in terms of the Delhi Resolution. It seems better that we start civil disobedience only when we are ready to carry it to the bitter end. If I can discuss the matter with co-workers, I shall be in a better position to judge. It is

[1] Anne Marie Petersen, who along with Esther, worked in South India; was an inmate of Sabarmati Ashrarm for some time.

[2] This letter was written by Gandhiji on a silence day during his stay at Calcutta. According to the itinerary given in "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 22-8-1921, Gandhiji was to reach Calcutta on September 4, 1921, and stay there till September 12.

[3] Vide "Notes", 22-9-1921, under the sub-title 'The Congress Not a Show'.

[4] Chakravarti Rajagopalachari (b. 1879); statesman, first Indian Governor-General

enough if, for the present, we concentrate on swadeshi, including both the boycott of foreign cloth and the production of khadi.

From your letter, I take it that there are at present no bickering going on there in the Vidyapith.

Please take care of your health. There is plenty of work to be disposed of before December. The face of the country is bound to be transformed. Whether it will become a lion's or a jackal's is in the hands of God, or perhaps in our own.

The Viceroy's speech has disillusioned me still more. If the Prince is not coming for political reasons, why is he coming at all and at whose expense? But, for the present, we simply need not worry about this.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI PATEL, BARRISTER
BHADRA
AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuaa Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine

99. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

CALCUTTA,
Silence Day [*September 5, 1921*][1]

CHI. MANI

I received your letter just now. My appeal is for burning garments only. Some people have foreign carpets in their houses and foreign coverings on their couches, but most of them would not like to part with them. I have, therefore, not asked these to be discarded. It is enough if they do not make any fresh purchases of such articles. We should ask the people to part with their clothes only. I will write in *Navajivan* on the subject.

It is good you are visiting the [Jain] *apasras*[2] during *Pachusan*[3]. Do any women in the congregation hand over their foreign clothes ?

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] A place of residence for Jain sadhus
[3] Religious festival of the Jains celebrating the birth of Mahavira

I shall have to stay on in Calcutta till the 12th at any rate. I shall consider what to do after that. It seems certain that malpractice have now entered the manufacture of Bezwada saris. The best thing is to leave those saris alone.You did well in writing to Kumudbehn. She will feel comforted by your letters.

Mahadev will come here tomorrow to see me.

Here too there are two enthusiastic girls of your age, who wear khadi exclusively and help Deshbandhu Das's[1] sister in her Nari Mandir[2] work.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4 : Manibehn Patelne

100. SPEECH AT PUNJAB SABHA MEETING, CALCUTTA

September 7, 1921

A meeting convened under the auspices of the Punjab Sabha was held on Wednesday afternoon at the Khalsa Dewan Association, 62, Sambhunath Pandit Street, Bhowanipur. Lala Meghraj Jai presided. There was a large gathering composed mostly of Sikhs. There was also a sprinkling of Marwaris. Several Sikh ladies were also present. . . .

Mr. Gandhi in the course of his address said at the outset that last time when he came to Calcutta he appealed to the people for contributions to the Tilak Swaraj Fund and he was pleased to get a ready response for the good of the whole of India. Mr. Gandhi wanted the foreign clothes to be either burnt or sent to Smyrna. He urged the complete boycott of foreign goods and he advised the gathering to use hand-spun cloth—cloth that was produced on charkhas. He was prepared to give swaraj to the people of the whole of India and to undo the wrongs done to the Khilafat and to the Punjab if all of them tried their level best to clothe themselves with swadeshi clothes. That was the resolution passed by both the Congress and the Khilafat Committee. The All-India Congress Committee also passed a resolution that there should be a complete boycott, of foreign goods before the 30th of September and that the people should be clothed in their own country-made clothes. Mr. Gandhi exhorted them to

[1] C. R. Das (1870-1925); lawyer, orator and author; President, Gaya Congress, 1921; founder, Swarajya Party, 1923

[2] Women's, institute

see that the above resolution was carried into effect if they really meant to do good to the country. Continuing, Mr. Gandhi said that he knew that the Sikhs were a very powerful community. If they were really sincere and earnest in their work and took to the charkha he had no doubt that they would be able not only to clothe their own community but the people of the whole of India. He wanted them to follow the principle of non-violent non-co-operation in its entirety and should on no account adopt any measures that would lead to violence. He very much regretted the Nankana Saheb tragedy[1] and said that this event was more outrageous than that of the Punjab. It was natural that they (Sikhs) took this event in that light and he had heard and had seen reports of their meetings but Mr. Gandhi asked them to forget all those events. It was true that the sin committed by the cities had no atonement and that it was the general belief that the only atonement for those wrongs was that they should be severely punished. Mr. Gandhi did not like to punish them and in his opinion it was God alone who would punish them. In Conclusion Mr. Gandhi advised the Sikhs to see that the great task in which they were engaged was accomplished peacefully.

Maulana Azad Sobhani and Lala Lajpat Rai[2] also spoke on the subject of non-co-operation and boycott. . . .

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 8-9-1921

101. SPEECH TO MARWARI MERCHANTS CALCUTTA

September 7, 1921

Mr. Gandhi had a conference with the piece-goods merchants in the night at 124, Canning Street, which lasted till midnight. Mr. Gandhi urged them not to sell foreign cloth and not to enter into a fresh contract. The merchants, however, stated that they had already agreed to act according to the resolution passed by the Marwari Chamber of Commerce which expressly stated that they were not going to purchase foreign cloth till 31st December, 1921. Mr. Gandhi wanted from them an undertaking that they would not purchase any more foreign cloth without any specified time limit. Mahatma Gandhi, however, gave them further time to consider the matter and promised to address them again before the 13th instant when he was expected to leave Calcutta.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 9-9-1921

[1] Vide "Speech at Nankana Saheb", 3-3-1921 and "Message to Lahore Sikhs on Nankana Tragedy", 4-3-1921.

[2] 1865-1928; social reformer, writer and political leader; deported in 1907; founder, Servants of the People Society; President, Indian National Congress, 1920

102. NOTES

THE ALI BROTHERS

I hope that the rumour about the impending prosecution of the Brothers is untrue. If the Government really desire that the issue between them and the people should be decided on merits and by the ripening of public opinion, they will leave the Brothers alone. I shall certainly hope, that the people will remain calm, dignified and firm, in spite of their prosecution and incarceration. But their incarceration will make the task of preservation of peace more difficult than it already is. No two men have so successfully restrained the Mussulmans as these two patriots have. They have, in season and out of season, in private and in public, preached and practised non-violence. And even in respect of the speeches, some parts of which seemed to bear a contrary interpretation, I know that they never meant violence. The prosecution of the Brothers would, therefore, mean an intention to strangle the ever-growing Khilafat agitation in India, and would amount to a direct challenge to the Indian Mussulmans, and indeed, to the whole of India. For the Khilafat has become an Indian question. It is no longer merely a Mussulman grievance.

But I write this more to warn the people than the Government. If the people have understood the message of the brave Brothers, it is that they must stand the gravest provocation for the sake of their religion and country, that they must be prepared to suffer for either to the utmost, that the interests of Hindus and Mussulmans are identical and therefore they must sink or swim together, and that they must be true as steel and brave like lions and must tell the truth as they know it even on the gallows. The greatest honour the people can do to the Brothers is to follow the non-co-operation programme to the better and win swaraj during this year. Anger over their incarceration will be madness. We have dared openly to desire and to prepare for the end of the existing system of Government, and challenged its administrators to do their worst. We must neither be surprised nor angry, if they treat us seriously and take up the challenge. For they must, some day or other, take us at our word and put us to the invited test, or mend in accordance with our will. We shall be committing a grievous breach of the laws of the game if we are found wanting when we are weighed in

the scales of our own make. The only prescription for non-co-operators when anyone is arrested, is to put forth redoubled zeal in the prosecution to our programme, i.e., boycott of foreign cloth and manufacture in our own homes of the cloth we need. There must not be any hartal.

A THREATENED INFLICTION

I have just heard, that Mr. Painter, who has distinguished himself by his wanton provocation of the people of Dharwar,[1] is to be promoted and inflicted upon Gujarat as Commissioner. An official, who in the public estimation has disgraced himself, earns rewards from the Government for meritorious services. I hope, that Gujarat will mark in a suitable and special manner its disapproval of the insult sought to be offered by the Dharwar Collector being imposed upon it. Gujarat will have, if the rumoured appointment is actually made, a unique opportunity of showing how such insult can be dealt with in a non-co-operation spirit. We must distinguish between the man and the Commissioner. We must boycott the latter and render social service to the former. We must therefore permit him to receive all he may reasonably need as man for creature comforts, but if we have the people with us, the Commissioner, Mr Painter, may not get a blade of grass for the upkeep or the dignity of his office. We must therefore inculcate among the people the habit of refusing salaam to him in virtue of office. They must not send any applications to him. They must not, whilst he is touring in the country, supply him with any convenience whatsoever. He must be made, in every dignified and peaceful manner, to feel that he is not wanted as an official in Gujarat. The municipalities containing non-co-operators should refuse to recognise him as Commissioner in every way possible. If we have developed the spirit of real independence and manliness, we would refuse to put up with an official who has forfeited public opinion as Mr. Painter has. What, for instance, would be said of us, if Col. Frank Johnson or Gen. Dyer[2] were imposed upon us? We have to pass through certai rigid tests as proof of our capacity for self-government. One of them is refusal to submit to national insults. Indeed, if we had evolved that capacity sufficiently, I would expect even the employees,

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 1-9-1921, under the sub-title 'How to Kill Swadeshi'.

[2] Officer Commanding, Amritsar, who ordered firing on a peaceful assembly of people at Jallianwala Bagh

who would come under Mr. Painter's direct control, to resign by way of protest. We have such mortal fear of loss of livelihood, that the employees are the last to be expected to develop that sense of self-respect, which is so necessary for national existence. But their reluctance will not materially interfere with attainment of swaraj this year, if the general public is responsive enough. It is time for them to assert themselves individually as well as collectively. We must begin our battle with a disciplined and complete hartal, when that gentleman enters Ahmedabad if he does. And to that end, seeing that there is ample time, the Provincial Congress Committee should secure permission from the Working Committee for declaring a hartal all over Gujarat in the event of Mr. Painter being sent to Gujarat in any official capacity. If a hartal becomes necessary, I need hardly say that it must be completely voluntary. The labourers should participate after due notice and permission.

HYPOCRISY UNMASKED

Hitherto official letters have been noted for their reserve and unornamental style. If offence has been intended, it has been covered under severely restrained language. But officials have now begun to throw off the mask and like ordinary mortals they have taken to expressing their pleasure or anger in so many words, instead of allowing their acts only to speak for themselves. I have noticed this in the official correspondence in Assam. But the most refreshing illustration comes from Gujarat. The editor of the *Prajabandhu* wrote to the Deputy Commissioner of Salt and Excise, drawing his attention to grave irregularities committed by his subordinates in dealing with picketing. The editor's letter contains nothing offensive. He adopted simple dignified language. He did not argue. He only put a question. But the Deputy Commissioner was prejudiced against picketing, and he thus gave vent to his pent-up feelings:

> Since you send me an extract from your paper, and press for a reply, I give you one. Your so-called picketing campaign, undertaken with the avowed object of injuring the lawful Government, cannot be called a genuine social measure undertaken for the good of the people. It is like the washing of an elephant. Owing to the violence of the persons engaged in your campaign, I understand, that the Excise staff in Ahmedabad are far too busy in preserving order and avoiding a breach of the peace, while carrying on their ordinary duties, to be able to spare time in investigating your complaint of some technical infringement of the licence conditions. I presume, that you are only making the complaint (believed to be an unfounded one) with the object

of further harassing the government officers, and I shall certainly not lend my authority for any such purpose. If, however, you have any other motives, you can renew the complaint after restraining the objectionable conduct of your adherents.

The only remark I need make is, that the editor is not conducting the campaign of picketing, he claims no adherents. He simply discharged a public duty by drawing attention to serious, not technical, breaches of liquor-licensing law on the part of or at the instance of liquor dealers.

Young India, 8-9-1921

103. THE MEANING OF THE KHILAFAT

I continue to receive letters from far and near, warning me against my interest in the Khilafat. Here is a typical letter from an old friend from New Zealand:—

> Just a few lines to say. I do not forget you. Were I in danger of so doing, the cables that often appear in our papers would prevent me forgetting. I see, you have a mighty problem you are trying to solve in regard to India. Whether you are facing it in the wisest way I cannot say, for l am not in a position to judge. I would esteem it a favour, if you would hand enclosed post office order for 10/- to the publisher of your paper, *Young India* I think it is called, if it is published in English, or to the publisher of any paper in English representing your side of the case. Perhaps as an old friend, I may be borne with if I speak freely, even although I should be speaking without full knowledge. It always grieved me, that you should be an arch-supporter of the Turkish Empire, and that the Khilafat question should be turned to political ends to undermine and cripple and confuse the administration of the British Government in India. Turkey's crimes against Bulgarians, Greeks and Armenians call to heaven for judgment. I wonder, how far the Muslims in their All-India Khilafat Congress during recent years protested against those atrocities and dissociated themselves from the Turkish policy of extermination of a noble, excellent, industrious and gentle race (the Armenians). The blood of these martyrs will cry to heaven for justice, and not one can be forgotten by Him who marks the sparrow's fall. If Turkey's history has been one of rapine and massacre, is it not therefore to be shorn of its power as no longer worthy to be trusted with it? If political power is not to be used to maintain justice, freedom and fraternity of tributary races, but is to be used for oppression, persecution, extermination, robbery and rapine, is such a nation not to be judged by other powers and deprived of her power to continue

a malevolent sway ? To be shorn of political power need not deprive Islam of its spiritual weapons, if it has such. By its spiritual force let it live, or die if it has not such. Political power is a curse to any religion, and history shows, it has often been used tyrannically, e.g., the Roman Catholic Church.

I do not know what are exactly the aims of the non-co-operators, but it would appear they have come to object, *in toto*, to any British officials in the country. Rome was not built in a day, and a constitution cannot be framed ahead of the conditions of a country. Suppose all British officials were to leave bag and baggage tomorrow and Natives put in their place, would the administration be as pure as it is, would justice be done everywhere through the courts of your great country? I understand, that the Indians fear the Native police, and their officials (Natives) are peculiarly open to bribery and corruption. Before a people can be self-governing there must be a basis of national character on which to build and with which to build, and has the day come, when there are forces running through your various spheres of social, educational and political life that are regenerative and purifying?

Political propaganda, if revolutionary, may easily attract the basest and most malevolent among men, and if they capture the control of machinery of organisation, the blind and more than blind will lead those who follow their dictum to the pit. I am sure, that you personally have not departed from your noble ideals and unselfish spirit of patriotism and justice, and freedom of soul, but there may be great slumbering forces awakened in the state of society around you, that may carry you far beyond the points of wisdom and measures that make for true national well-being. Your country has an the elements that might make India a Russia, a Sinn Fein Ireland, a land of civil war, inter-tribal bloodshed. Division may easily spread through a land like India, your independent princes become arrayed on opposing sides, and no strong controlling unifying power be forthcoming to preserve peace, conserve progress, lead the way to *fuller* national life. Your pathway must be surrounded by snares and pitfalls which you can only escape by a clear vision of the will of God and unfaltering adherence thereto. As long as you coincide with the wishes of the popular clamour, there will be many who will cry "Hosanna" and will strew your path with palm leaves, but if you adhere to the high principles of the vision of God, the same people will cry, "Crucify him, away with him." You know the parallel. He unfalteringly followed the will of God and they rejected Him. His aims were too pure, His kingdom too spiritual, His methods too divine. He died, but God raised Him up and made that resurrection the life of the world's thought, made Him meet the need of all the men as Saviour, High Priest to represent, King to rule over.

Courage, brother; do not stumble,
Though thy path be dark as night;
There's a star to guide the humble,

Trust in food and do the right
Let the road be rough and dreary
And its end far out of sight,
Foot it bravely, strong or weary,
Trust in-God and do the right.
Perish policy and cunning,
Perish all that fears the light!
Whether losing, whether winning,
Trust in God and do the right.
Trust no party, sect or faction,
Trust no leaders in the fight;
But in every word and action
Trust in God and do the right.
Trust no lovely forms of passion,—
Fiends may look like angels bright,
Trust no custom, school or fashion;
Trust in God and do the right.
Some will hate thee, some will love thee,
Some will flatter, some will slight;
Cease from man and look above thee;
Trust in God and do the right
Simple rule, and safest guiding,
Inward peace, and inward might,
Star upon our path abiding,—
Trust in God, and do the right.
Courage, brother, do not stumble,
Though thy path be dark as night;
There's a star to guide the humble;
Trust in God, and do the right.

The great thing is to have divine wisdom, the deep insight into principles and far-seeing wisdom of true statesmanship. You are doubtless familiar with the life of Abraham Lincoln, his clear sighted vision, his absolute integrity, tender-heartedness, humility, humour, humaneness.

I often say to my friends, "If you heard Mr. Gandhi's side and the great grievances that exist under the present order of things, you would understand his

opposition."

The question is, what is the best way for the welfare of India to correct existing abuses. Strikes, violence arouse passions, and a hundred discontents and ill-feeling, and in most cases defeat their own ends. Reforms that come along constitutional lines, if the gain is to be accompanied by good feeling and unity and peace. Gains by revolutionary means cannot be a natural evolution. From my distant corner I can only earnestly pray, that God may guide and direct and bless you, and make you an instrument for the true well-being of India.

The warmth and the sincerity are unmistakable. I know the friend to be a devout godfearing Christian. But it must be evident to anyone who knows anything about the Turkish question, that my correspondent is strongly prejudiced against the Turks. His picture of the Armenians as "a noble, excellent, industrious and gentle race" betrays the extent of his ignorance about the question. He cannot be blamed for it. The Turkish side has been sedulously kept from the English-reading public. All these good Christians scattered about in different parts of the world have only one class of reading presented to them. The missionary journals are fanatically, I was going to say, criminally anti-Turkish and anti-Islam. The very word harity about which St. Paul wrote so magnificently is absent from the minds of the writers in the missionary journals, when they write about Islam and Turkey. The Turk is to them the arch-infidel created by God only to be cursed. It is this prejudiced but honest attitude that stands in the way of Truth and Justice.

I have no desire to defend Turkey against the Armenians or the Greeks. I am not prepared to deny Turkish misrule or misdeeds. But the Greeks and the Armenians have an infinitely worse record. What is more, the defence of the Khilafat is the defence of a pure ideal. It is not necessary to defend the conduct of individual Popes in order to support the institution of Papacy. Oppose all Turkish misrule by all means, but it is wicked to seek to efface the Turk and with him Islam from Europe under the false plea of Turkish misrule.

What is still worse is, that the defeat of the Central Powers should be utilized to crush Islam. Was the late war a crusade against Islam, in which the Mussulmans of India were invited to join ? To say that the Mussulmans may have anyone they choose as their spiritual head, but that they may not interfere with the disintegration of Turkey, is not to know the Khilafat. The Khilafat must ever be the Defender of the Faith of the Prophet, and therefore nobody can become or remain

Khalifa, immediately he is deprived of or loses the power of defending Islam against the whole world. One may dispute the ethics of the doctrine in the abstract, but England is not engaged in a war against Islam because it is unethical. In that case England has to renounce her association with millions whose faith is divorced from ethics.

As a matter of fact, is there anything immoral in a religion seeking to sustain itself by possession of temporal power? In practice has not Christianity been sustained by temporal power? And even in Hinduism, have not Rajput Kings been custodians of Hinduism ?

What I venture to commend to the many Christians who honestly think like my friend, is to join the defence of the Khilafat as an ideal, and thus recognize that the struggle of non-co-operation is one of religion against irreligion.

For my part I have the clearest possible conscience in this matter. The end to me is just. I fight to bolster up no fraud or injustice. The means are equally just. In the prosecution of the fight, truth and non-violence are the only weapons. Self-suffering is the truest test of sincerity.

Young India, 8-9-1921

104. THE TWO INCOMPATIBLES

Violence and non-violence are two incompatible forces destructive of each other. Non-violence for its success therefore needs an entirely non-violent atmosphere. The Moplah outbreak has disturbed the atmosphere, as nothing else has since the inauguration of non-co-operation. I am writing this at Sylhet on the 29th August. By the time it is in print, much more information will have reached the public. I have only a hazy notion of what has happened. I have seen only three issues of daily papers containing the Associated Press messages. One cannot help noting the careful editing these messages have undergone. But it is clear that Moplahs have succeeded in taking half a dozen lives and have given already a few hundred. Malabar is under martial law. The reprisals on the part of the Government are still to follow. The braver the insurgents, the sterner the punishment. Such is the law of governments. And I would not have minded the loss of ten times as many lives as the Moplahs must have lost, if only they had remained strictly non-violent. They would then have brought swaraj

nearest. It is any day worth all the price we can pay in our own lives. For the Moplahs it would have meant too the immediate redress of the Khilafat wrong. God wants the purest sacrifice. Our blood must not contain the germs of anger or hate. It is not a sacrifice freely given that exacts a price. The Moplahs have demanded a price. The sacrifice has lost much of its nobility. Now it will be said, that the Moplahs have received well-merited punishment.

There would have been no martial law, if only the Moplahs had died. And if there had been, it would have been thrice welcome. It would have ended the system of Government which is decimating the land.

Of course nowadays it is the fashion to make non-co-operation responsible for every affliction, whether it is a famine, a coolie exodus or a Moplah rising. It is the finest tribute that can be paid to the universality of non-co-operation. But nothing has been produced by the Madras Government in support of the charge.

Our own duty is clear. Non-co-operators must wash their hands clean of all complicity. We must not betray any mental or secret approval of the Moplahs. We must see clearly, that it would be dishonourable for us to show any approval of the violence. We must search for no extenuating circumstance. We have chosen a rigid standard for ourselves and by that we must abide. We have undertaken to do no violence even under the most provoking circumstances. Indeed we anticipate the gravest provocation as our final test. The misguided Moplahs have therefore rendered a distinct disservice to the sacred cause of Islam and swaraj.

We may plead, as indeed we must, if we have acted honestly, that in spite of our efforts we have not been able to bring under check and discipline all the turbulent sections of the community. The choice for the people lies between the gentle and self-imposed rule of non-violence and non co-operation, and the iron rule of the Government. The latter is now demonstrating its power and ability to counteract all the forces of violence by its superior and trained violence. We have no answer, if we cannot show that we have greater influence over the people. We must be able quite clearly to see for ourselves and show to the people, that display of force by us against that of the Government is like a child attempting with a straw to stop the current.

I am painfully aware of the fact, that we have not as a people yet

arrived at the settled conviction, that India cannot attain immediate swaraj except through complete non-violence. We do not even see, that Hindu-Muslim unity must vanish under the strain of violence. What is at the back of our mutual distrust, if it is not the fear of each other's violence? And swaraj without real heart-unity is an inconceivable proposition.

What is it that hinders attainment of swaraj, if it is not fear of violence? Are we not deterred simply through that fear, from taking all our steps at once? Can we not, if we can be sure of non-violence, issue today an ultimatum to the Government either to co-operate with us or to go? Do not the Moderates keep aloof, mainly because they distrust our ability to create a non-violent atmosphere? Their timidity will derive nurture from the Moplah outbreak.

What then must we do? Certainly not feel despondent. We must go forward with greater zeal, greater hope because [of] greater faith in our means. We must persevere in the process of conversion of the most ignorant of our countrymen to the doctrine of non-violence as an indispensable means as well for redressing the Khilafat wrong as for attaining swaraj.

The Moplahs are among the bravest in the land. They are God fearing. Their bravery must be transformed into purest gold. I feel sure, that once they realize the necessity of non-violence for the defence of the faith for which they have hitherto taken life, they will follow it without flinching. Here is the testimony given to Moplah valour by the writer in the *Imperial Gazetteer of India.*

> The one constant element is a desperate fanaticism; surrender is unknown; the martyrs are consecrated before they go out and hymned after death !

Such courage is worthy of a better treatment. The Government dealt with it by passing years ago a special Act against them. It has already set its machinery in motion for the present trouble. The Moplahs will no doubt die cheerfully. I wonder, if it is possible for us to transmute their courage into the nobler courage of non-violence. It may be impossible to achieve the miracle through human effort. But God is noted for His miracles. Many consider, that attainment of swaraj this year, if it is realized, must be counted a miracle. It has got to be preceded by a miraculous conversion of India, not excluding its bravest sons, to the doctrine of non-violence at least in its restricted scope, i.e., as an indispensable condition for securing India's freedom.

Young India, 8-9-1921

105. THE WAY TO SAVE THE COW

The visit of Maulanas Mahomed Ali and Azad Sobhani and myself to Bihar was undertaken in order to check the growth of misunderstanding on the cow question. We delivered many speeches at many places. The substance of one speech of mine I am able to give to the reader by the courtesy of a friend who took down the notes.

At the commencement of his speech Mr. Gandhi referred to the touching of the feet which had become embarrassing, and said:

People do these things in a spirit of hero-worship, and in Bihar particularly there is an abundance of that spirit. People even talk of an avatar. As a Hindu, I believe of course, in avatars. I believe, that in the pursuit of his plan, God sends His special messengers on earth, upon whom the effulgence or the glory of God specially shines, and who in our Shastras are known as avatars. But that is not the case here. In my view, the condition of India is such, that there can be no coming of an avatar at this time. We must first purify ourselves and the country by hard, strenuous work on right lines, before we can even think of an avatar. And in India, what we want now is not hero-worship, but service. We want more and more servants for the country. The swaraj that we want does not mean, that on the destruction of the present raj, somebody else's will be established, whether he be a Gandhi, or to take the names of my brothers, a Maulana Shaukat Ali and a Maulana Mahomed Ali. We know, that whatever may have been the case in past days, India is so wide awake now that there can no longer be any repetition of these things. We do not want that there will be one man to rule and everyone else to be his slave. We have had enough of slavery. What we want is to inspire the people with our own faith, and a living desire to serve the country. We want that every Indian be transformed into a Gandhi, a Maulana Shaukat Ali and a Maulana Mahomed Ali; and then the swaraj of our dream will be realized in its entirety. My submission to you, therefore, is, that you do not put obstruction in the way of the easy prosecution of our work by the touching of feet or \unnecessary shoutings and *jayajayakars*[1]. It is unthinkable, that a whole crowd of people can touch me. But when those who are near me begin to fall at my feet, the crowd is tempted to

[1] Shouts of victory

follow suit, and indescribable confusion follows. So those who are near me should never touch my feet. They should not even bow low before me. Not only do I not like these things, but there is a possibility of my getting seriously hurt. I desire the country to move with a speed greater than the speed of the Punjab Express. We have got to attain swaraj within this year, so that we may celebrate its attainment in December next. I implore you once again not to do anything that may hinder the smooth progress of our work, for it means nothing but so much loss to the country.

I now come to the question which has really brought us to your place. As soon as I set foot here, I inquired whether there was peace between the Hindus and Mussulmans of this place. It was no small gratification to me to hear, that there was no misunderstanding between the two communities at Sasaram. But I am told that there is no earnestness about Congress work here. The Congress Committee and the Khilafat Committee that are in existence do very little work. My request to these two Committees is that they put more energy into their work. I wanted to inquire about many other things, but I was so tired that I could not do so. On the question of cow-killing, I say that with the Hindus it is their dharma to protect the cow. The Hindus have many differences amongst them as regards religious belief, and religious and social customs and practices; but on the matter of the protection of the cow all Hindus are united. And I go so far as to say, that the cow question is the central and common fact in Hinduism, which differentiates it from all other religions of the world. In India the need for the cow is very great. Not only do the people drink her milks but her male offspring is used for cultivating the land. The Hindus reverence the cow as they reverence the Brahmin. But the case is not so outside India. So there is no prohibition in the religion of our Mussulman brothers against the slaughter of cows. And if a Mussulman brother slays a cow, for instance during *Id*, on what ground can a Hindu raise his hand to strike him? Is he enjoined by the Shastras to kill a fellow-man in order to save a cow? There is really no such injunction in the Shastras; but on the contrary it is against the Shastras to do so. No Hindu raises his hand against an English brother, because he eats beef; nor does he prevent thousands and thousands of cows being led to the slaughterhouse for the use of Englishmen in India. What I mean to say is this; in order to save the cow you can only sacrifice your own life; you cannot take another's life, nor can you even cherish anger against him. My brother Maulana

Mahomed Ali in one of his speeches today said one thing on this matter, which I realize as very true. He says, that three fourths of the responsibility for cow-slaughter in India lie with the Hindus; and the Mussulmans are guilty of only one-fourth. For the cows that are slain really come from Hindu custody. I have actually seen in Bombay shiploads of cows being sent out from India for slaughter in other lands. It is the Hindus that do cow-selling business, and not the Mussulmans. And my brother's suggestion that if an artificial price of say a hundred rupees for each cow could be set, cow-slaughter will automatically diminish, seemed to me to be very practical. It all depends upon us. In Bombay one cow given for the Tilak Swaraj Fund was sold for five hundred rupees, and another for a higher sum. If the *shraddha*[1] of both the buyer and the seller is sufficiently roused, all this is quite easy and practicable. My submission to the Hindus, therefore, is, that if you are really anxious to save the cow, do not quarrel with our Mussulman brothers, but live with them in peace. Do not try to force their hands. Give yourselves up wholly to their service in this hour of their sore need without asking for a return. I look upon the Khilafat problem for the Mussulmans in the same light as the cow problem for the Hindus. It is my firm belief, that the solution of one will automatically lead to the solution of the other. I do not say this in a spirit of bargain. If our offering of service to our Mussulman brethren be genuine and spontaneous, if we really sacrifice our lives for the safety of their religion, I have no doubt, that another law higher than the law of contract will operate, and solve the cow problem in India.

I wish to touch on another matter, before I close. I have come to know, that there are about five hundred families of Mussulman weavers in this place. But as they are looked down upon by fellow-Mussulmans, there is a tendency amongst them to give up their calling. It is absolutely necessary, that we check this tendency. Amongst us, Hindus, social distinctions based on karma do exist. But so far as I know, Islam does not recognize such differences. Mussulman society is based upon the theory of perfect equality. So it does not at all appear to me reasonable that these *julahas*[2] should be discredited in society. There is nothing dishonourable in the

[1] Spirit of reverence
[2] Weavers

profession of weaving. In my opinion, the two most essential things in India, the things on which the existence of India depends, are agriculture and weaving. They are like the two lungs of a living being. If one goes wrong, if it is diseased or rotten the other lung may do duty for a time no doubt, but cannot keep up life for long. So it has been with India. She has been weakening in proportion to the decay of her weaving industry. And the programme of swadeshi, which we have started, is like the cure of a diseased lung, so that waste may be repaired, and new blood may flow into it making it healthy and strong. The moment we come to realize this absolute importance of agriculture and weaving for India, we shall lose all sense of contempt for the agriculturist or the weaver. We shall, then, see that they are objects of the highest regard. We must recognise, that without the help of our weavers, there can be no success of swadeshi in India. By swadeshi I mean that every province must produce its own cloth. If you depend upon Bombay for your cloth, that will be no swadeshi for Bihar. My appeal to the Congress Committee therefore, is, that it should lose no time in distributing charkhas to every home in Bihar. When that is done, every home becomes a spinning factory at our disposal. And with the production of yarn on this scale we can easily hope to see every lane transformed into a weaving factory. The question is very urgent for the whole of India, but more especially for Bihar. For of all the provinces of India Bihar is the poorest. I have included Orissa under Bihar here. But if we take them separately, Orissa comes to occupy the lowest place, and Bihar comes just above it. I gathered my idea about the extent of poverty in Bihar, when I was engaged in my work at Champaran. I came to know then, that the women in Bihar had in most cases to be satisfied with a single piece of cloth; indeed, they had no cloth other than the one which they wore. They told my wife,—they felt ashamed to tell me so directly,—that if I went to their houses, I would find nothing but old, worn out and tattered rags. They also said, “Gandhi asks us to bathe every day, but if we are to remain naked after washing the piece of cloth that covers our nakedness, we can’t do so even for the sake of Gandhi.” Such is the extent of poverty in Bihar. And if these women are given charkhas to work and paid two annas each for their daily labour, I have no doubt that they will take up the work in right earnest and pursue it

with energy. I have known the indigo planters get work from them at the rate of six pice per head per day, and in that place if they find that the charkha yields them two annas daily, the thing will catch on automatically without any effort at preaching. These are the lines on which we have to start work immediately. I expect much from Bihar. I have some special claim upon her. I hope Bihar will not deny me that claim. I expect you all to explain the thing I have said to men of the villages. The villagers are not likely to understand these things, but you who live in towns have wider experience of the world. So it is your duty to make these things intelligible to the villagers. Three things are vital to this movement for swaraj, without the fulfilment of which we can never hope to make any headway in our struggle. First, there must be absolute Hindu-Muslim unity. There must be a feeling of brotherliness amongst the Hindus and Mussulmans. This is the first condition of the success of this swaraj movement. Secondly, this peaceful and non-violent movement must always be kept peaceful and non-violent. It is easy for a man who bestows even the least thought on the subject to realize that we shall never succeed by violence. If we draw the sword, that will be simply to our own undoing, if only because we do not possess the modern implements of warfare such as aeroplanes, etc. So you must under no circumstance disturb the peace. We must observe peace with English and among ourselves, co-operators and non-co-operators, zamindars and ryots, in thought, word and deed. And thirdly we must immediately boycott all foreign cloth and manufacture for our needs in our own homes and villages. Then we attain the power to achieve the three ends.

Young India, 8-9-1921

106. SPEECH AT HARISH PARK, CALCUTTA

September 8, 1921

. . . Mr. Gandhi said that some months ago when he came to Calcutta for the purpose of collecting money for the Tilak Swaraj Fund he said that the required sum should be realized before 30th of June last and he was pleased to hear that that mission was successful. This time the Mahatma wanted a complete boycott of foreign goods before the 30th of September. Swadeshi was in full swing in all other provinces and the Mahatma wanted to have an assurance from the brothers and sisters of Bengal whether they would be able to help him in his new mission. The Mahatma expressed his regret at the weak response of Bengal as it lagged behind all other provinces in this respect. He knew that Bengalis were intellectually strong and ahead of other provinces but he failed to understand why she was backward in this noble cause. It was Bengalis who first initiated the swadeshi cult in Bengal and it was in Bengal that fine hand-spun clothes could be produced in former times and he was surprised to hear their inability to carry on the work at the present time. He was confident that when the Bengalis would be able to realize that the use of swadeshi cloth would enable them to attain swaraj they would be able to accomplish this great task within the remaining twenty-four days of the current month. He regretted that the pleaders should have still continued their practices but the moment Mr. Das ant Pandit Motilal Nehru[1] suspended their legal practice his mission had been fulfilled. The Pujas were fast approaching and it was the great festival of the Hindus when they were required to purchase a number of clothes. Mr. Gandhi appealed to the people with folded hands not to purchase even a pice worth of foreign goods, particularly clothes. He hoped that if they readily responded to his appeal they would get the blessings of the Providence.

Continuing Mr. Gandhi said that there was a good deal of difference between the swadeshi movement in the days of the partition of Bengal and the present movement. At the time of the partition of Bengal restrictions if any, were confined to the boycott of foreign clothes. By foreign clothes it was meant clothes manufactured in London, but allowance was given for the use of goods manufactured in Japan. The present swadeshi cult meant total boycott of foreign clothes of all descriptions and it was restricted to only hand-spun clothes. At that time the movement was set on foot to get redress of certain grievances but the present had a higher and nobler object in view, namely, the attainment of swaraj. He advised the gathering to totally boycott

[1] 1863-1931 ; lawyer and politician; twice President of the Indian National Congress.

foreign goods, burn them .... Some people had asked the speaker to send these clothes to Khulana for famine-stricken people there. Mr. Gandhi said he was opposed to their views as he did not like that these poor people should be polluted with the poison. If they want to help these people they . . . as well send their own swadeshi cloth and they themselves should *wear lungiyas*[1] ....

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 9-9-1921

107. TELEGRAM TO CONGRESS AND KHILAFAT COMMITTEES, FARIDPUR

[Before *September 10, 1921*]

CONGRATULATE BADSHAH MIAN ABU KHALID RASHIDUD MIAN[2] ON HIS ARREST. THOUSANDS OF HIS DISCIPLES AND FRIENDS ARE LIKELY TO GET EXCITED. I WOULD URGE THEM TO SHOW THEIR REGARD BY IMMEDIATE ADOPTION OF SWADESHI, THAT IS, BOYCOTT OF ALL FOREIGN CLOTH AND MANUFACTURE OF KHADI BY MEANS OF HAND-SPINNING AND HAND-WEAVING. I TRUST THAT THE PEOPLE WILL KEEP QUITE CALM AND DIGNIFIED. MAULANA AZAD SOBHANI WITH CERTAIN FRIENDS IS PROCEEDING TO FARIDPUR TO PACIFY THE PEOPLE.

GANDHI

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 10-9-1921

108. BENEVOLENT PARSIS

[*September 10, 1921*][3]

Whenever I think of Parsi philanthropy, I realize that if the tiny Parsi community has become renowned in the world, it is because of its philanthropy. Among the well-known communities the Parsis are the smallest. Why does the world care for a community of eighty thousand men and women? The Parsis possess no armed strength, they employ no craftiness nor do they practise any magic; or, one may say, their philanthropy is their magic.

[1] Waist-cloth

[2] A religious divine of Bengal

[3] The article first appeared in the Pateti (Parsi New Year's Day) number of Sanj Vartaman. In 1921, Pateti fell on this date.

If the Parsis had earned millions and then locked them up in safes, they would have perished long ago. Philanthropy is a soul-force and in virtue of this soul-force which they possess the Parsis enjoy everyone's respect and are able to maintain their position.

Parsi philanthropy, however, takes the form of giving money. Money comes in and goes out. What will be their fate if they can earn money no more? Monetary philanthropy is only a very small part of soul-force. When talking to Parsi friends, I have often said that the Parsis are now being put to a test. If they wish to retain their glory only by counting their millionaires, they will not succeed. I have told Parsi friends that there was every danger of their spiritual growth being arrested because of excessive wealth. Every literate Parsi knows by now that I am simply in love with his community. I have also given the reasons for my love. This love of mine has been hurting me ever since I observed certain signs of moral weakening among the Parsis.

No community can survive merely by imitating others or if it remains rolling in luxury. I saw that Parsi life had become easygoing. Hospitals for Parsis, exclusive accommodation and other facilities forParsis, separate funds for Parsis! I was alarmed. I saw that their philanthropy had assumed a form which held the danger of the community's losing its present position. Any community whose members live on what others' charity provides is bound to perish. A man can digest and assimilate only such amenities and comforts as he has earned by his efforts. Real manhood consists in availing oneself as little as possible of amenities provided by one's community. A man must let himself he tested on the anvil of difficulties.

Men are not born for imitating one another. Even a child has an individuality—his distinctive character. Eating, drinking and other such actions are performed by animals too. We are distinguished from animals because of one thing alone, that we have reason, we have discretion and the faculty of moral choice. What we do after reflection, the animal does instinctively. We may observe the behaviour of an ant and imitate its perseverance, but our imitation will have some originality if it is intelligent. Such imitation is not really imitation; if, however, a slave tries to imitate his master, he is bound to come toppling down.

When, therefore, young Parsi men and women started taking part in non-co-operation, I was delighted. One of the intentions behind non-co-operation may be to defeat the Government, that is

injustice, but I wish to impress upon the hearts of Parsi men and women the chief motive underlying it. Non-co-operation means self-purification. It is a principle of medical science that disease-carrying germs cannot infect a person whose blood is quite pure. Healthy blood itself destroys such germs. Likewise, if we ourselves become pure and just, how can anyone oppress us? It is a wrong policy to fight the oppressor. The right course is to suffer, to bear his ill-treatment without submitting to his injustice. Once we have stood such an ordeal, nobody can use violence against us.

There is, in fact, no limit to self-purification. But the limits we have prescribed for ourselves are so narrow that even a child can reach them.

1. Why should we neglect our own and run after what is others? That we should trade with foreigners when millions in India are dying of hunger is a crime against ourselves. To stop this crime, we should exclusively use indigenous cloth and give up foreign cloth however attractive it may be and, to be able to do this, we should all start carding, spinning and weaving. In this way we shall become self-supporting.

2. For following this rule of pure swadeshi, it is essential for us to adopt simplicity. We may also have to change our aim in dressing. We should dress not for decoration but for covering the body. We may, therefore, wear only such and so many clothes as are necessary in view of our climatic conditions. White is the coolest colour suitable to the Indian climate. It is pleasant to the eye. Any stain on a white garment is immediately visible and we are obliged to clean it. Burdening the body with a coat over and above a *sadra*[1] and a shirt or a blouse is positive cruelty to the body. If anything is required over *a sadra,* it may be shirt. Anything else is unnecessary. English-style trousers simply cannot match khadi pyjamas. We do not need chairs in our country. They may be necessary in countries with a cold and moist climate. We have no justification at all for wearing stiff and tight trousers. Loose and smooth pyjamas suit us best, as they enable us to sit on the floor. In this country, no other garment is as dirty as socks. If you wear them for a couple of hours in the summer, they stink. If the feet are left exposed, they remain clean and there is not the least beauty in covering them. No consideration of modesty is involved in

[1] A loose garment of fine cloth worn under the shirt

the matter of covering any parts of the body except the one whose sight may excite impure desires in us. Putting on boots is a cruelty in this country. Our feet can be sufficiently protected against mud or thorns by *chappals*[1] or slippers. In our country, shoes are known as shields against thorns or a protection for feet.

3. I do not know how the Parsis came to acquire the habit of drinking. I shall never be convinced that the Prophet Zoroaster has sanctioned drinking. In any case what is inconsistent with reason cannot be Shastra though it may be regarded as such. Nothing which teaches immorality can be Shastra. Liquor may be a necessity on the North Pole, but in temperate zones, where the climate is equable, drinking is certainly a heinous sin. While in England, I once attended a Parsi gathering. Everything was going on with perfect decorum. There was music and singing. Then followed a round of drinks. All propriety vanished. I felt ashamed to remain there and ran away. I observed such behaviour at Hindu and Muslim gatherings, too, in England. Is anyone who has sailed in a ship unacquainted with the unrestrained behaviour of passengers who get drunk ? I have come across quite a few "moderate drinkers". It is true that they do not roll in gutters, but—?

Parsi men and women should, therefore, take a pledge to give up drinking entirely.

4. I myself never eat meat. I did so once when I did not know better; I have repented my action ever since and atone for it very severely. Both of us, my wife and I refused to eat meat when we were at death's door and the doctor prescribed meat-diet. I do not wish to survive even for a moment by eating meat. I have learnt from my discussions with Muslim friends that austere fakirs among them abstain from meat with a view to mastering anger and the cravings of the senses. However, I am not asking Parsi men and women to become vegetarians. Through my close contact with them, I know that their diet includes too much of meat and chicken. I should certainly urge them to avoid an excess of these so that they may have control over the palate. It is my considered opinion that the crores of Muslims who do not eat meat regularly have lost nothing in consequence; on the contrary, they have gained something.

[1] A kind of sandals

I humorously refer to Parsis as *pa rishi*[1]. I expect much by way of enlightenment and soul-force from this community of eighty thousand. Being small, it can introduce useful reforms in a short time. I should like the Parsis to introduce such reforms and so be perfect modern sages of India. Prophet Zoroaster's was a highly moral life. I should like to see the utmost development of such virtues among the Parsis. The *yajna* of the swaraj movement requires the services of virtuous, fearless, simple, brave, honest and resolute men and women.

We are now in a position to understand the new meaning of philanthropy. It does not mean donating money only; it means dedication of one's all, body, mind and possessions. Felicitating the Parsis on their New Year Day, I beg the Parsi brothers and sisters that they dedicate to India all these powers. This will enhance the worthiness of Parsi philanthropy, worthy as it is. I pray to God that it may be so.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-9-1921

109. SPEECH TO KHILAFAT VOLUNTEERS, CALCUTTA

September 10, 1921

On Saturday afternoon about 500 volunteers belonging to the Khilafat Committee and the Burrabazar Congress Committee assembled at the residence of Mr. C. R. Das when Mr. Gandhi, Maulana Mahomed Ali and Pandit Motilal Nehru inspected them. In addressing the volunteers Mr. Gandhi said that he was very glad to see them. He believed that through the help of the volunteers he would be able to win swaraj. He knew that the volunteers enlisted themselves being prepared even to lay down their lives for the attainment of swaraj, for Khilafat and the Punjab. He advised them to maintain discipline . . . It had been complained to him by outsiders as well as by the Marwaris that the volunteers had some time been offensive. He very much regretted such conduct on the part of volunteers, if they had really done so.

Referring to the picketing, Mr. Gandhi said that they would continue doing so but that must be tempered with kindness, courtesy and friendly feeling. They would not do anything which would hurt the feeling of anybody as otherwise they would do the greatest harm and mischief to the cause.

Speaking of the apprehended arrest of Ali Brothers, he said that he knew that his two Brothers were soon going to be arrested and imprisoned and he hoped that if

[1] One-fourth of a sage

such a thing came to pass the volunteers should not be excited over the matter and should keep their passions under control ....

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 11-9-1921

110. INTERVIEW T0 THE PRESS

[On or before *September 11, 1921*]

Interviewed by a press representative as to the published versions of the interview[1] between Dr. Rabindranath Tagore and Mr. Gandhi the latter declined to make any statement whatsoever saying that though there was nothing secret about the interview, he questioned the right of the public to know all that had happened at interviews between two public men. He declined to make any statement also because he said that an attempt was made in all the imaginary reports[2] to discredit him and his cause, but he knew that both the cause and himself were absolutely safe in the hands of the poet, the reports notwithstanding.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, l1-9-192l

111. EXPERIENCES IN ASSAM—II

ON THE BRAHMAPUTRA

The ship is sailing on the river. The days of my third-class travel came to an end long ago. We are all sitting at the moment on the first class deck. Whenever I think about the third-class, I feel ashamed of travelling by first or second class. But I know that, in a strenuous tour like this, where I am constantly on the move, my health cannot stand the strain of a journey by third class. I believe that we should be sturdy enough to be able to travel by third-class, that our bodies should be sufficiently trained for the purpose. So long as we fight shy of travelling third-class, conditions in this class will not improve and its hardships will not disappear. If all the hundreds of public workers start travelling by first or second class, public funds will be exhausted in travelling and our ship of swaraj will make no progress. It is necessary for us every moment to pause and think before spending public funds. I say this, being ill at ease because of a remark which one rich gentleman, a public worker, made before me. The moment I brought up the subject of khadi, he said: "You cannot understand our

[1] At Calcutta on September 6

[2] For example in the report in The Statesman, 10-9-1921

plight. You can get a car whenever you want, you will get ten glasses of goat's milk if you ask for one, everyone gives you khadi; but others, even a wealthy person like me, will find public service an expensive job if I have to pay each time taxi and hotel fares and for all the khadi that I require." This gentleman is a member of the All-India Congress committee; he does not hesitate to spend money; but I realize that his daily expenses in Bombay could not have amounted to less than twenty rupees. I do feel that there is a good deal of substance in his argument. However, I am helpless in my present situation. I know that my weakness has reduced my capacity to serve. I do not now have the courage to ask everyone to go walking. Because I myself am weak, I imagine others to be so and often unnecessarily take pity on them. Otherwise, one who wishes to serve the public does not have to spend overmuch. Third-class fares are not so high that one cannot afford the expense and, moreover, one should make it a point to spend nothing on transport at any place one visits. One should eat simple food and dress simply. But we have pampered ourselves so much that we think we cannot do what hundreds of thousands of other people do every day.

I had wanted to describe the river but came out instead, with what has been troubling my mind. The river looks as vast as the sea. Far away in the distance, on the two sides, one sees the banks. The river is about two miles broad, or even more. The journey will take 15 hours. The peace on the river fills the heart with a sense of grandeur. The moon, hidden behind the clouds, is shining with a faint gleam on the water. The ship's propellers make a gentle sound as they cut through water. Except for this, there is peace all round. And yet I find it difficult to have peace of mind. Neither the river nor the ship is mine. It is through the favour of that same power whose tyranny has disillusioned me, whose operations have inflicted wounds on the country, enfeebled it and reduced it to a state of penury, that I sail on the river and go in this ship—this thought disturbs me in the midst of all this peace. Nevertheless, I cannot blame the Government. Why should I blame the Government if thirty crores of Indians do not understand their duty? Should I blame the usurer who charges me excessive interest, or myself for paying it? It is the business man's nature to trade with me. It is for me however to choose whether or not to trade with him. Why do I trade with him? Who can force foreign cloth on me if I do not want it? Realizing that it is my weakness to blame the power behind the trader, I recover my peace and get

absorbed in my duty, aware that my work lies with the people.

ELEPHANTS OF ASSAM

Assam is as well-known for its elephants as it is for the weaving skill of its women. I was even shown a work on *hasti vidya*[1], written on bark, which was two hundred years old. Besides the writing, it contained many beautiful pictures of elephants and other things. The colours used in these were exquisite, such as one hardly comes across nowadays. The paintings are so well proportioned that, looking at them, one cannot but take pride in the ancient art of Assam.

An elephant is valued at anything up to Rs. 6,000. He is used as a beast of burden and in hunting. A person who knows about these matters told me that a wild elephant is subjected to much cruelty when it is first caught. As the elephant likes music, the mahout also tries to win him over with it. It understands our language so well that it can clearly recognize words of anger or affection. This person told me that every elephant in Assam is familiar with the word *shabash*[2]. Needless to say, ivory is inplenty in Assam. I was happy to learn that here not only is the elephant not killed for the sake of his tusks but that killing it for this purpose is actually forbidden.

ASSAM SILK

Two varieties of silk are produced in Assam. Both these are obtained from worms. One type of worm is called *andikeri* and the other *mooga*. In obtaining the former's silk, the worm is not destroyed in the process. Its cocoon is spun like cotton. The *mooga* spins its own silk. When the *mooga* has completed the spinning, it is exposed to sun and destroyed. The cocoon is then boiled and the silk is pulled out by wrapping it round a bobbin. This process was carried out before me. Both these varieties of silk are produced in large quantities in Assam but, though the industry is still alive, the use of foreign yarn has become widespread and many weavers—both men and women—-use only such yarn as warp.

PROCESSING OF COTTON

I also observed cotton being processed. I see that fine cloth like that made in Andhra will by and by be produced here too. I have

[1] Elephant lore
[2] Well done !

been given a sample recently made. I was shown saris of very fine cotton which were two hundred years old. In many places even Egyptian cotton has been planted. I saw such cotton being spun unginned. The other cotton, I saw, was being spun in the same way as it is done in Andhra. Each seed is first combed out with fish teeth, so that all the fibres are separated. The cotton that remains entangled in the comb is spun as it is and then woven into khadi. The seeds and the cotton which is still sticking to them are then separated and the latter is carded. Each seed is processed in this way. Such cotton is spun and the finest yarn is prepared out of it. If the women of Assam respond with zeal, there will be no limit to the help that they can give. I feel that Assam's capacity to help the swadeshi movement is even greater than that of the Punjab. If the women here take up spinning and weaving, they will do so out of love for the country and not for love of money. As in Andhra, each woman cards her own cotton.

SHONITPUR

We have now reached Tezpur. Its ancient name is Shonitpur. It is said a British officer found it difficult to pronounce "Shonitpur". He asked what *shonit*[1] meant in Assamese and was told that the Assamese equivalent was *Tez*. He then named Shonitpur "Tezpur" ! In ancient times, Tezpur was the capital of Banasura and it is for this reason that the authors of Puranas are supposed to have called it Shonitpur. The legend about this place says that Chitralekha carried off Aniruddha from Dwaraka and brought him here for Usha. It is said that Arjuna went right up to Manipur. Pandu is the first city we come to on the eastern banks of the Brahmaputra. The Pandavas, when living in disguise, came as far as this place. Five miles from Pandu on the river bank is Gauhati and we have arrived at Tezpur from there. Gauhati, too, has an ancient name. It is believed that the battle between Hari and Hara took place near Tezpur, and devotees even show the footsteps of Rudra on the spot where they fought. In this way, wherever I go, I get proofs of the unity of India in the past.

PLANTER-RULE

Tezpur has a population of six thousand. Even so it has a municipality, a railway line, electricity and running water as well. How

[1] A Sanskrit word for "blood"

did it come to have all these things? The question can be readily answered. There are large tea gardens very near Tezpur. The railway line is for bringing the tea, which is then exported from this port. Indeed, the people believe that it is the planters who rule Assam. The British Government is there of course, but the real power is with the planters. Mr. Andrews says that it was to oblige the planters that the poor workers were beaten up at Chandpur.

The Brahmaputra water is not considered good for drinking, as the Ganga water is and, therefore, in many places, even with the river at their doorsteps, people use tap water. This water is filtered through some salts before it is used. In this very town a reservoir has been built at a height of ninety feet; water is filtered in it and then supplied to the people through taps.

EAST BENGAL

A SCENE BEYOND DESCRIPTION

After leaving Dibrugarh, the train passed through some parts whose beauty is still vivid before my eyes. Lumding Junction may be regarded as the border of Assam. After leaving it, the railway line ascends gradually. It climbs on, one ghat after another. It can be said that the ghats on the way to Poona can stand no comparison with these. There is a sudden change in the air. Even the sick would feel fresh. Wherever one looks, there are green hillocks. There is no limit to the clouds in these parts. Quite often one sees them below the hills. Sometimes we clearly see puffs of steam going up and mingling with the clouds. The large rivers flowing down the ghats seem to be running a race with the train. I have not seen such a sight anywhere else in the world. I have seen a number of them in Africa, England and other places, but I do not think there is any which could be compared with this.

Our destination was Silchar. It has a very heavy rainfall, no less than two hundred inches. Hence the humidity here is extreme. Wherever one looks, one finds pools of water. Silchar is at the foot of the hills. So we found the heat there to be oppressive. But the people's love was such that thousands had collected in the maidan despite the rain. At every place, the gift consisted of an address always inscribed on khadi. The days of ostentatious addresses are over. I was afraid that people in these parts would insist on English, but did not find that they did anywhere. People have grown so used to Hindustani that even

in Bengal anyone speaking in English would feel embarrassed. In Silchar, we stayed with a gentleman called Babu Kaminikumar Chanda. Before the days of non-co-operation, he was a member of the Imperial Council and practised as a lawyer. He has now boycotted the legislature, given up practice and is working for non-co-operation. His wife and daughters have taken up spinning. The spinning-wheels which I saw were rather inconvenient to work. They were small deed and none too strong, with a very small plank. They could produce very little yarn. Even so, the spinning-wheel has taken its place in the national schools and elsewhere.

After spending a day in Silchar, we went on to Sylhet. There, Muslims form about fifty-five per cent of the population. There is relatively little awakening among them here in these parts. It is because of this that only Rs. 216 were collected for the Khilafat and Smyrna Funds despite this large percentage of Muslims. The entire burden of the work is borne by a Muslim lawyer of Sylhet, named Maulvi Mahomed Abdulla. Thanks to his efforts, a school for weaving has been functioning. Incidental to this, some carpentry work is being done and spinning-wheels and looms are being made. This enterprising spirit has developed after the starting of non-co-operation. The meeting in Sylhet was convened in an *Idgah*[1]. Mahomed Ali said that he had not seen anywhere else an *Idgah* as beautiful as this. It is located on the most beautiful hill in Sylhet. About five thousand people can be accommodated on that hill. All round it there is green grass and below there is an open maidan with a lake in it. Both the hill itself and the place below it were filled to capacity with people. The population of Sylhet must be 20,000, but, as people had come from the entire district, there were actually more than 20,000 at the meeting.

CHATGONG

From Sylhet we went on to Chittagong. Its, Bengali pronunciation is as I have spelt above. This is a large and beautiful port. It is known as "Chatgong" because it consists of four villages. There are many Arabs in this place and, as a great Pir once lived there, it is also known as Islamabad. Many Buddhists also used to live there and so they too had their own name for it. There is a large river near Chittagong and, only a small distance away, is the Bay of Bengal.

[1] Mosque

Because of the large number of hills, there is much natural beauty. The court and the railway office there are on the largest hill. A well-known lawyer of this place, Mr. N. Gupta, has much work to his credit. He has given up his large practice. He is captain of the volunteer corps. Hundreds of volunteers in Bengal have started wearing khadi shirts and the swaraj cap. All of them wear the dhoti. Volunteers on the Bombay side look upon the dhoti as an obstruction in their work. I did not find the volunteers in these parts thought so. Hundreds of thousands of Muslims in East Bengal wear the dhoti. The chief outward difference one finds is that, whereas Hindus are generally bare-headed, Muslims wear caps. After the spread of khadi, however some Bengali Hindu volunteers too have started wearing khadi caps.

IF ALI BROTHERS ARE ARRESTED?

On reaching Sylhet, I saw a telegram reporting the arrest of the Ali Brothers. I, therefore, began to refer to this in my speeches. I am quite convinced that the two brothers are completely innocent. By this I mean that so long as they adhere to non-violent non-co-operation, they will not be guilty of violence in thought, word or deed and will dissuade others from it. They are holding on to their pledge, straining every nerve in the effort. They are, however, brave men. It is not through fear that they refrain from employing violence or spreading the spirit of violence among others, but with a deliberate effort keep their anger and their emotions under control. When such innocent persons are put into prison, it is natural that the people's feelings should be aroused. If, at that time, the people turn towards the right-path they will be saved; if, on the contrary, they lose self-control and take the wrong path, they will be destroyed. The only way, therefore, is to remain peaceful on the imprisonment of the Ali Brothers and, giving up the indifference we have shown till now in following swadeshi, take to it with greater enthusiasm and make a bonfire of whatever foreign cloth we may still have with us. Everyone who has till now been slack in starting work on the spinning-wheel should shake off his indifference and spend some time daily in spinning. Those who still commit the sin of sending their children to Government schools should stop doing so; those lawyers who have not had, to this day, the courage to give up practice should now sacrifice it. Only if everyone acts in this manner shall we succeed on the Khilafat issue, win swaraj, be able soon to open the prison gates with

our own hands and secure the release of our innocent Brothers and others who are in prison through the wrath of the Government. I explained this to the audiences at great length.

VOLUNTEERS

From Chittagong onwards, I observed that the volunteers were working harder. I saw in them better capacity for enforcing discipline. Even though a large procession has been taken out at that place, no one rushed towards the car from behind. Thousands stood in lines in silence and let the car pass. As even cries of victory had been disallowed, the scene appeared grand to me.

STRIKERS

It was at this place that there was a large contingent of strike-ing [railway] workers. I spent much time with them. But as my speech to them is to appear in *Navajivan*,[1] I will say nothing about it here.

BARISAL

After leaving Chittagong, we went to Barisal. On the way to Barisal is a place called Chandpur. Here I saw the spot where innocent workers had been assaulted by the Gurkhas. My heart bled and our slavery was brought home to me. These were only poor labourers. India came to know something about them because of the strike that took place on their account. If the persons who were brought out of their homes at midnight at the 'point of the bayonet had been important men, the country would have been afire. Swaraj should mean equal justice for the rich and the poor. Will this be so in our swaraj? If it is not, that swaraj would not be real swaraj.

Barisal is the home of the well-known leader of venerable age, Babu Ashwini Kumar Dutt. The principal crop in these parts is paddy. Shri Ashwini Kumar Dutt had started in this place, forty years ago, a magnificent school at a cost of Rs. 50,000. Today, the school has joined the non-co-operation camp. Its principal is Shri Jagdish Babu. He is a life-long *brahmachari*[2]. He is over fifty at present. Everyone told me that he is a learned man, with an excellent character and full of humility.

It can be said that the work of swadeshi is being carried on fairly

[1] *Vide* "Speech to Railway Workers, Chittagong", 31-8-1921.

[2] One who observes brahmacharya, celibacy

well in Barisal. In the foregoing schools, students showed me the yarn which they hand spun; it was very fine. There is a separate weaving department besides, with about eighty looms. At present they have goods worth Rs. 15,000 produced on the looms. Except in Shri Joshi's factory in Surat, nowhere have I observed as much cleanliness as I found in this weaving-shed. I did not find a single piece of yarn or a speck of dirt on the floor. The work, too, I saw, was clean. The weaving school was started only this year.

In Barisal, I found the volunteers to have better control than even those in Chittagong. Even though it was a vast gathering, excellent order was maintained. The volunteers had kept a way ready for us. We found things very easy for us as repeated requests had been made in advance that people should not try to touch my feet in reverence.

Barisal is one of those places where the Hindus and the Muslims, during the Bengal partition days, lived in harmony with one another despite their differences. Everyone gave credit for this to Babu Ashwini Kumar.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-9-1921

112. FALLEN SISTERS

There are many other experiences of Barisal worth recording. But I do not have the time to narrate all. There is one, however, which I simply cannot omit and that concerns the fallen sisters of Barisal. I shall never forget that scene. Some of these sisters of Barisal are enrolled on the Congress register and have even contributed to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. There are about 350 of them. They had written to me, asking me whether they could meet me. They wished to take greater part in Congress work. Why should they not, if elected, hold offices as well? On my return at night, from the meeting, I saw about a hundred women standing on one side. I took the hint. Very cordially, I led them to the terrace. I kept an interpreter with me and dismissed all the other men. I asked them to speak out without any reservations. There were, among them, four or five girls too about ten years of age. Some were past their youth. The remaining must have been between twenty and thirty. I give a summary of their conversation with me in the form of questions and answers.

QUESTION: I am glad, sisters, that you have come. You are as sisters and daughters to me. I wish to share your suffering. If, however, you keep anything from me, I shall not be able to help you.

ANSWER: We shall give truthful replies to all your questions.

Q: Some of you look advanced in age. Do these still follow your profession ?

A: No, sir. Those of us who are advanced in age beg for a living.

Q: Does this become you?

A: Hunger drives one to do anything.

Q: Are these little-girls in the same plight?

A: We have come here with the hope that you will show us some way out. None of us wishes to continue in this profession.

Q: What about those of you who are young? Are they not allured by the pleasures which this profession offers?

A: There may be a few who are.

Q: Do any of you get children?

A: Some get them.

Q: How many of you are there?

A: Three hundred and fifty.

Q: How many children in all do you have?

A: About ten at present.

Q: Are they boys or girls?

A: Six are girls, and the rest, boys

Q: What do you do with your sons?

A: One is grown up and married to oneof the girls among

Q: Would you entrust your daughters to me?

A: We would if you undertook to look after them

Q: How many of you are serious about giving up your professions?

A: All.

Q: Will you do the work I suggest?

A: We know what you want. Some of us have already started spinning.

Q: I am very-glad to know that. But have those sisters who have started spinning given up their profession?

A: Do we not have our debts? How can we maintain ourselves by this work alone?

Q: How much do you earn at present? You feel ashamed in replying. I can understand your hesitation. I am talking to you, but my heart is in agony. Do let me know what you earn at the moment.

A: Many of us earn sixty rupees, which comes to two rupees a day.

Q: I know that you cannot earn that amount by spinning. You should, however, give up now the many tempting pleasures in which you indulge at present. It is not you alone whom I ask to do this. My wife also has stopped wearing jewellery. There are girls of tender age with me. Their parents can afford to give them jewellery and other things and yet they dress themselves in half-length saris of khadi and wear no jewellery. So it does not pain me at all to request you to give up your adornments.

A: We shall try to make our lives simple. Some will do so immediately, and some others by and by. One of us gave away all she had to the Ramakrishna Mission and now lives by begging.

Q: I bow to that sister. It is certainly good that she has given away everything. But I find that (turning towards her) you have sound limbs; it would, therefore, be more virtuous for you to live in a simple manner by spinning. I should like every man andwoman in the country who is not a cripple to feel ashamed to beg. It is now possible to say this. We have discovered the spinning-wheel, which is our *kamadhenu*[1]. I would not be satisfied even with you sisters taking up spinning. You should learn to weave and card as well. If you do, you will be able to earn all you need for a living.

A: Show us the way and we shall follow it.

Q: How many of you are ready to give up your profession to-morrow ?

In response to this, eleven sisters stood up at once. I asked them to think it over. They told me that their decision was final. They had already thought over the matter. The problem was how to make the thing possible. So I said:

Marriage is now out of the question for you. So, no matter how you have lived in the past, if henceforth you live pure lives the world will forget your sins. Further, you may keep yourselves aloof from the affairs of the people with homes and families, that is, can become

[1] Sacred cow which according to fable, yielded all that one desired

sannyasinis. You can serve Bharatavarsha. You could almost clothe the whole of Barisal if a large number of you spin and weave for twelve hours daily, singing devotional songs the while. If all the women of your class in the country give up their unworthy profession and take up the sacred work of spinning and weaving, the country will prosper in no time. I hope, therefore, that you eleven sisters will stick to your decision. I am here just on a tour, but I shall commend your case strongly to the local leaders and I am certain that the local Congress Committee will help you in every way. May God bless you.

Reader! I do not know how you, whether you are a man or a woman, will think or feel on reading this. I have not described to you everything. I have painted the scene as best as I could. One can have a true idea of the reality only by seeing it. I was all the while overpowered with shame and was trying to realize the magnitude of the crime perpetrated by man against woman. These women did not choose their fallen life; it is man who drove them to it. For the gratification of his desires, he has committed a great atrocity on women. Anyone who is moved by this should, by way of atonement if for nothing else, give a helping hand to fallen sisters. As the picture of these sisters grows more vivid in my mind, the thought strikes me,—what if they had been my sisters or daughters? Why this 'if'? They are so indeed. It is my and every man's task to work for their uplift. This is why the music of the spinning-wheel is so dear to me. The wheel is a kind of wall for the protection of women. I cannot think of any other thing which may serve as a support for such sisters in India. The task, however, cannot be accomplished till good men in every city take it up. In Barisal, the persons who are working among these sisters are the noble-minded Shri Sharat Kumar Ghosh and his co-worker, Shri Bhupati Babu, a lawyer who has joined non-co-operation. I merely took advantage of the ground prepared by them.

Sisters, now that you know, you too must reflect on this. You alone can reach the inner shrine in the hearts of the fallen sisters. Till you come for ward to work for the emancipation of such women, efforts by a man like me will be unavailing.

Swaraj means the emancipation of the fallen.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-9-1921

113. MY NOTES

CHILDREN'S BLESSINGS

Many sisters write to me, as also many youths; it is only from children that I seldom get a letter. An unexpected letter has come from one and here it is:

> I am very eager to do what you want us to do. I have started wearing khadi....[1] and I have believed in non-co-operation from the very beginning....[2] did not believe in it. But now he believes in it. If you get all the children in the country to join non-co-operation, your success will be certain.

At every place I ask for women's blessings in this holy struggle, for I believe that they are pure and tender-hearted, that they are free from guile or deceit. They sincerely believe this struggle to be for a holy cause.

But children are even more innocent at heart than women. In what way can one ask for their blessings? Can they take even one step without their parents' permission? Hence, I have done nothing in regard to children except to play with them. I was, therefore, pleased to get this letter. I can see that the language is not a child's. The letter seems to have been inspired by their teacher. But it is indeed what I ask and desire, that parents give their children educat-ion in the essentials of dharma, teach them non-co-operation with sin and the use of the weapon of non-violence and obtain their blessings in this sacred tasks.

Women, children, the lame, the crippled, all can join the movement, and they should. The greater the number of these that join, the sooner shall we win. There is no distinction here of high or low, of big or small. Anyone who has a big heart is big, and anyone with a small heart is small, is a cripple. Hence children's blessings are sweet to me. The Viceroy's goodwill will not help us to win swaraj, but the blessings of pure-hearted children certainly will.

HOW TO CELEBRATE DIWALI

A gentleman has been good enough to remind me that if as it

[1] The source omits the name.
[2] *ibid*

happened last year, I do not write about Diwali in time, many people will pay no attention to the matter and go in for unnecessary expenditure. There are two months yet for Diwali; during this period, we can win swaraj and celebrate a true festival of lights. We should, therefore, complete boycott of foreign cloth during this month and see that we are able to produce all our requirements of cloth with the help of the spinning-wheel so that we may have swaraj in October and then celebrate a true Diwali. The right way to prepare for the Diwali celebrations is to secure swaraj before that time. Why should it be impossible for us to win swaraj within this time? The only obstacle in our way is our weakness.

Supposing, however, we do not get swaraj before Diwali, what should we do? Most certainly, we should go into mourning. We should prepare no sweets, indulge in no feasting and no merrymaking and, refraining from all enjoyments, pray to God. It is only after he had practised penance for fourteen years that Bharat[1] saw the day when he could celebrate Diwali. Shall we act otherwise? Why sing when there is no occasion for singing? Why eat when there is no appetite? Why celebrate anything while we do not have swaraj ? On Diwali day we should eat the simplest of meals. Rising early, we may sing devotional songs and spend the entire day in spinning. During these days, we should wear nothing but khadi and, if we wish to gift any clothes, we should give only khadi. How can we have fireworks at all?

There are, thus, two ways of celebrating Diwali; one is to celebrate it after we have won swaraj and the other is to work for securing swaraj. Which of the two courses we should adopt depends on the strength we possess.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-9-1921

[1] Brother of Rama in the epic Ramayana

114. SPEECH AT MIDNAPORE [1]

September 13, 1921

Mr. Gandhi said:

From the nature of my reception at Midnapore I cannot persuade myself to believe that the educated folk of Bengal have been estranged from me or have discountenanced my movement or the attainment of swaraj.

He then gave his message to the people of Midnapore to adopt the swadeshi cult, to preserve the non-violent nature in their propaganda work and to strive for the Hindu-Mussulman unity. If these three things be uppermost in their thoughts, words and actions, said Mr. Gandhi, then the attainment of swaraj, he believed, could not be delayed beyond the end of the current year, if not by the end of October next.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 15-9-1921

115. TELEGRAM TO DR. T. S. S. RAJAN

[Before *September 14, I921*]

ARRANGE A SHORT TOUR[2] WITH THREE-HOUR SILENCE DAILY.

The Hindu, 11-10-1921

116. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREW

ON THE WAY TO MADRAS,
September 14 [*1921*]

MY DEAREST CHARLIE,

Mahadev has given me a graphic description of Shantiniketan. It has made me sad. There is dissension there and even bitterness. You yourself are torn by internal conflict he says. I know that youwill find your peace. Whether I lose you in the struggle or keep you, you will remain the same to me even as Polak is. I know too that you will do as the spirit leads you. I want you not to be sad on my account.

Mahadev tells me you resented my taking away Banarasidas. But

[1] At a college playground
[2] Of Madras Province

I am not taking him away. He wrote to me and told me too, that so far as you were concerned he was free to settle where he chose. From the point of view of the work he has to do, I told him Bombay was better. And he made the choice. But he is free to remain in Shantiniketan and I shall still try to find money for him so long as he works for the cause of the emigrants.

Here is Natrajan's[1] letter about your proposed visit to East Africa.

I expect to be in Madras for eight days. With love.

Yours

MOHAN

PS.,

CARE CONGRESS OFFICE

I have just seen the enclosed. I read the original in *The Statesman*[2]. I felt that no relative of the Poet could have written such an untruth. No relative was present at the interview[3], and I took no notice of it. But evidently there is a relative at the back. Or the *Bengalee* would not have taken it seriously. Will not the Poet read it and if it is an untruth will he not contradict it? Even you can. But please consult the Poet and do what you can.

From a photostat: G.N. 987

117. MESSAGE TO BOMBAY CITIZENS

[After *September 14, 1921*][4]

The following message sent by Mahatma Gandhi to Bombay was booked to us from Waltair yesterday, but has not till now been received.

Maulana Mahomed Ali was arrested at Waltair under Sections 107 and 108 to be called upon to give security, to be on good behaviour for one year. The place and date of trial is unknown. The Begum Sahiba and Mr. Hayat were permitted to see him after arrest.

He and I were going to address a meeting outside the Station.

[1] Editor, The Indian Social Reformer, Bombay
[2] Of 10-9-1921
[3] At Calcutta on September 6, C. F. Andrews being present
[4] Mahomed Ali's arrest referred to in the message was on September 14.

He was arrested. I continued going to the meeting and addressed them.

There is no cause for sorrow, but every cause for congratulation. There should be no hartal. Perfect peace and calmness should be observed. I regard the arrest as a prelude to swaraj and the redress of Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs, if we can remain non-violent, retain Hindu-Muslim unity despite the madness of some Moplahs, and fulfil the swadeshi programme.

I hope every Indian, man or woman, will completely boycott foreign cloth and take up spinning or weaving during every spare minute.

By striving like the Maulana, be insistent on religious and national rights.

Let us earn imprisonment. I am conscious of the Maulana's innocence and I am sure the imprisonment of the innocent will enable the nation to reach the cherished goal.

The Maulana was quite calm. So is the Begum sahiba. She accompanies me during travel. So does Maulana Azad Sobhani.

GANDHI

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-9-1921

118. NOTES

EFFECT OF HARTAL

Mr. Konda Venkatappayya justifies the hartal in Guntur and gives some other valuable information in a letter I have just received. I give it below for the benefit of the reader[1].

> As regards the hartal, you hold it to be a bad step. However, please allow me to state that the awakening which the people of Guntur have had since the days of the hartal was almost impossible to secure even through years of strenuous propaganda. The restraint and self-discipline, which they have cultivated within this short time, are also remarkable. No doubt there was some disturbance on the fifth day of the hartal. . . The reason for our release is not the discovery of anything to contradict the evidence against us, but the fact that the voice of the people was against him [the District Magistrate]. The merchants closed the shops, the pleaders boycotted the courts, the people

[1] Only relevant portions are reproduced here.

assembling daily in huge monster meetings were stoutly protesting against the proceedings more than all. There was a move amongst the clerks in the Government offices to resign their appointments. Almost everybody in the town felt the injustice of the proceedings. These were the causes of our release. Under the circumstances it is difficult to overestimate the importance and the utility of the hartal. The driving force, which had brought about such union amongst the people, is in my humble opinion not a little due to the hartal, which was most willingly undertaken by the merchants and heartily appreciated by the people in general. Arrangements were made to supply necessaries to the poor and the needy by keeping a few of the shops open. At a large meeting of the labourers in the factories, shops and railway goods-sheds, help voluntarily offered to them by way of relief to the needy amongst them was refused. They stated that they would most willingly suffer for the sake of the cause rather than receive any help.

The above facts have, I hope, at least disclosed some extenuating circumstances. . . .

My general opposition to hartal without permission of the Working Committee must still stand. That the hartal in Guntur bore good fruit is creditable to Guntur and its workers. But the very description given by Mr. Venkatappayya shows, that it is attended with danger and requires skilful handling. My own analysis of the situation in Guntur is, that the arrests prior to the hartal galvanized the Gunturians into activity. In so far as the hartal overawed the Government into discharging the leaders, it was bad. I would again suggest, that it was the renunciation of pleaders and the threatened resignation of the clerks which brought about the release. And if it was the hartal which determined the renunciation of the pleaders, it was decidedly good. What we need is greater response to the concrete programme of non-co-operation, and if we can get it by hartals, I for one would always advocate them.

Young India, 15-9-192l

119. A PROTEST AGAINST BURNING

TO
THE EDITOR
YOUNG INDIA

SIR,

Your idea that all foreign cloth collected on the 1st of August should either be burnt or seat to Smyrna, with the support it found in the last meeting of the All-India Congress Committee, has bewildered me; and the issues it involves appear to me to be so far-reaching, that I have ventured to write this letter. The first of August is come and gone, and that which is destroyed can never be restored; but in our calmer moments we may reflect on our actions in a different light from that in which they were conceived, and prevent a recurrence of what on reconsideration we should find to be wrong.

The non-co-operation movement, shorn of its superfluities and the passing tangle of conflicting opinion, has always appeared to me to be a symbol of India's regeneration, and a mighty echo of the voice of its soul, forgotten through many years of abandoned ideals, broken power, selfishness and ignorance, and the spirit of ahimsa in which it was conceived was to me the unfailing cure of all ills of life, should man rise to that height of the soul. But I cannot help thinking of the burning of all foreign cloth in honour of the memory of Lokamanya Tilak as a travesty of what, in my humble opinion, I regarded as the lofty ideals that inspired the movement.

It is argued that all foreign cloth should be burnt, because (1) it is a mark of dependence and a badge of slavery for the rich and poor alike, and (2) it is a garb of sin forced on India by the wickedness of the East India Company and perpetuated by our own helplessness and ignorance. In both cases we can get rid of it only by destruction; and the clothing of even the poorest among us with such cloth would be as sinful as offering rotten or poisonous food to a hungry man. But, with strange inconsistency, we are told that it may, however, be sent to the people of Smyrna.

I do not wish to discuss the assumptions on which the foregoing arguments are based; but, while I realize the necessity of swadeshi and believe in the moral and partially economic value of khadi, the revival of the spinning-wheel and restoration of the great staple industry of India, I think it would be easy to prove that, so long as the total imports of India exceed four times the value of its foreign cloth, we are as

many times dependent and so slaves for our other requirements, which, too, should on that account be burnt. It could even more convincingly be argued that books written by foreigners and in a foreign language, machinery, medicines and other products of modern science and human skill and intelligence, in which, for the present, they have advanced more than we have, are a much deeper mark of dependence and a greater badge of slavery, mental and physical, than foreign cloth, and we should get rid of these as well by destruction. And then, in the opinion of some, why not in the same way of the foreigner too—the source of all our ills? If, again, by yielding to the wickedness of the East India Company which crippled our weavers and killed our industry, Indians of those times and through them their sons of today are guilty of sin, which may be atoned for only by setting fire to the cause of their crime, why not burn only *English* cloth and spare the rest? Again, if one may not offer rotten or poisonous food to a poor and starving Indian, might he offer it to a helpless Turk ? To send our cast-off foreign clothes to the people of Smyrna appears to me to be much more sinful than offering them to our own countrymen; for it is dishonourable for one nation to offer its shreds and leavings to another, and the wrong done to Islam by the foreigners, the allies, is more recent and in the opinion of many, greater than the harm done by the East India Company to ourselves; and can we regard it moral or in any way justifiable to send to the people of Smyrna cloth manufactured by those very foreigners and cast off by us as the garb of sin? Well may such charity be said to degrade both the giver and the receiver.

In conclusion I would point out, Sir, that the analogy between rotten food and foreign cloth can hardly be maintained; and so long as there are thousands of our own countrymen who are literally naked ant enough khadi has not been manufactured to clothe them, there are many who would regard it as a sin to burn a single yard of foreign cloth or send it out of the country when it is required more urgently at home.

I do not question the spectacular effect of destruction by fire or its efficacy to catch popular imagination and rouse quick, if temporary, enthusiasm; but I cannot think that, you have been actuated by such considerations in the face of such utter need of so many of our poor, naked and famine-stricken countrymen.

Yours, etc.,

N. V. THADANI[1]

HYDERABAD,

[1] Principal, Hindu College, Delhi and Sind National College, Hyderabad, Sind; educationist; author of the Mystery of the Mahabharata

SIND,

3rd August, 1921

I gladly print Mr. Thadani's closely reasoned letter. I have already admitted the weakness of the argument in favour of sending foreign cloth to Smyrna. But it is a concession to Mussulaman opinion. Nevertheless the use of foreign cloth is poison in India, certainly not in Smyrna; for the cloth industry has never been Smyrna's lung, as it has been India's. In burning foreign clothes we are burning our taste for foreign fineries. The effect upon India would have been equally disastrous, if Japan instead of England has tempted us in the first instance. The motive was to punish ourselves and not the foreigner. We are boycotting not British but all foreign cloth. The one would be meaningless as the other is a sacred duty. The idea of burning springs not from hate but from repentance of our past sins. A moment's reflection must show the writer, that burning must make us earnest and thus stimulate, as it has stimulated, fresh manufacture. The disease had gone so deep that a surgical operation was a necessity. The ill-clad or the naked millions of India need no charity but work that they can easily do in their cottages. Have not the poorany feeling of self-respect or patriotism ? Is the gospel of swadeshi only for the well-to-do ?

Young India, 15-9-1921.

120. CONFUSION OF THOUGHT

TO

THE EDITOR

YOUNG INDIA

DEAR SIR,

I have seen your argument about the utility of picketing. The very same arguments appealed to non-co-operating students of Bengal, when they fell flat before the gates of Calcutta University College and the Senate House, and thereby hoped to dissuade the law examinees from taking their examinations. With folded hands they entreated their examinee brothers not to drink the insidious poison. And you are certainly aware of the amount of success they obtained in their novel way of picketing. The examination halls wore a deserted appearance and a subsequent supplementary examination had to be held. But it was you who then disapproved of the picketing, and everything had to be given up. The results so nobly achieved were lost, and Bengal repents today that her youths have a tarnished fame on their brow to be proud of. When the picketing party laid themselves flat before the gateways, they did so on the very argument that "diseased persons have got to be helped against themselves." As brothers, who deemed themselves blessed in truly understanding your advice about modern education and in possessing boldness enough to leave their colleges, they thought it a duty incumbent upon them to dissuade their brothers from appearing at the examination. Lying flat on the ground is indisputably an oriental way of moral persuasion. It was nothing but humility preached in its real aspect. If I am truly inspired with the feeling that drinking is a dire vice and everyone has to be saved from its clutches, shall I be deemed using physical force if I lie down in front of the drinking den and ask the intending drinker to trample over my body and get his drink? Here in this case I appeal to his heart. And by moral persuasion I understand appealing to the heart. By laying themselves in front of the Senate House, the Bengal pickets appealed to the heart of the examinees and certainly that was moral persuasion. I shall be glad to know why you disapproved of the method of the Bengal pickets, as they used to appeal to the heart of the examinees and did not use physical force in any way.

BENARES,
12th July, 1921 S. N. RAY

The writer assumes without warrant, that I would countenance liquor shop picketing of the type described in his letter. If the

unseemly obstruction of the passage had been persisted in, there would have been a revulsion of feeling in the country, such as would have thoroughly discredited non-co-operation. Moreover, it is a far-fetched analogy to compare the drink habit with education. In the matter of education, it is a conflict of ideals, and non-co-operation is for this generation a new ideal. Whereas in the matter of drink, the conflict is between abstinence and a recognized vice. A young lad considers it a virtue to go to a Government college, a drinker knows drinking to be an evil habit. The educated youth read newspapers, know all the arguments for and against. Visitors to liquor shops read nothing, and not being in the habit of attending meetings, hear nothing. Picketing, therefore, in the case of colleges and schools was not only superfluous, but in the manner it was carried out, constituted a sort of violence utterly unjustified in any event, and for a non-co-operator a breach of his pledge. I am glad, therefore, that the picketing stopped, if it did, as a result of my severe criticism.

Young India, 15-9-1921

121. OUR FALLEN SISTERS

The first occasion I had of meeting those women who earn their livelihood out of their shame was at Coconada in the Andhra province. There it was a few moments' interview with only half a dozen of them. The second occasion was at Barisal.[1] Over one hundred of them met by appointment. They had sent a letter in advance, asking for an interview and telling me that they had become members of the Congress and subscribed to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, but could not understand my advice not to seek office in the various Congress Committees. They wound up by saying, that they wished to seek my advice as to their future welfare. The gentleman who handed me the letter did so with great hesitation, not knowing whether I would be offended or pleased with the receipt of the letter. I put him at ease by assuring him, that it was my duty to serve these sisters if I could in any way.

For me the two hours I passed with these sisters is a treasured memory. They told me that they were over 350 in the midst of a population of about 20,000 men, women and children. They represent

[1] *Vide* "The Fallen Sisters", 11-9-1921.

the shame of the men of Barisal, and the sooner Barisal gets rid of it, the better for its great name. And what is true of Barisal is true, I fear, of every city. I mention Barisal, therefore, as an illustration. The credit of having thought of serving these sisters belongs to some young men of Barisal. Let me hope that Barisal will soon be able to claim the credit, too, of having eradicated the evil.

Of all the evils for which man has made himself responsible, none is so degrading, so shocking or so brutal as his abuse of the better half of humanity to me, the female sex, not the weaker sex. It is the nobler of the two, for it is even today the embodiment of sacrifice, silent suffering, humility, faith and knowledge. A woman's intuition has often proved truer than man's arrogant assumption of superior knowledge. There is method in putting Sita before Rama and Radha before Krishna. Let us not delude ourselves into the belief, that this gambling in vice has a place in our evolution because it is rampant and in some cases even state-regulated in civilized Europe. Let us not also perpetuate the vice on the strength of Indian precedents. We should cease to grow the moment we cease to discriminate between virtue and vice, and slavishly copy the past which we do not fully know. We are proud heirs to all that was noblest and best in the by-gone age. We must not dishonour our heritage by multiplying past errors. In a self-respecting India, is not every woman's virtue as much every man's concern as his own sister's ? Swaraj means ability to regard every inhabitant of India as our own brother or sister.

And so, as a man I hung my head in shame before these hundred sisters. Some were elderly, most were between twenty and thirty, and two or three were girls below twelve. Between them all, they told me, they had six girls and four boys, the eldest of whom was married to one of their own class. The girls were to be brought up to the same life as themselves, unless something else was possible. That these women should have considered their lot to be beyond repair, was like a stab in the living flesh. And yet they were intelligent and modest. Their talk was dignified, their answers were clean and straight. And for the moment their determination was as firm as that of any satyagrahi. Eleven of them promised to give up their present life and take to spinning and weaving from the following day, if they received a helping hand. The others said they would take time to think, for they did not wish to deceive me.

Here is work for the citizens of Barisal. Here is work for

all true servants of India, men as well as women. If there are 350 unhappy sisters in a population of 20,000, there may be 52,50,000 in all India. But I flatter myself with the belief that four fifths of the population of India, which live in the villages and are purely agricultural, are not touched by the vice. The lowest figure for all India would therefore be 10,50,000 women living on the sale of their own honour. Before these unfortunate sisters could be weaned from their degradation, two conditions have to be fulfilled. We men must learn to control our passions, and these women should be found a calling that would enable them to earn an honourable living. The movement of non-co-operation is nothing, if it does not purify us and restrain our evil passions. And there is no occupation but spinning and weaving which all can take up without overcrowding. These sisters, the vast majority of them, need not think of marriage. They agreed that they could not. They must therefore become the true *sannyasinis* of India. Having no cares of life but of service, they can spin and weave to their heart's content. One million fifty thousand women deligently weaving every day for eight hours means that number of rupees per day for an impoverished India. These sisters told me they earned as much as two rupees per day. But then they admitted, that they had many things needed to pander to man's lust, which they could discard when they took to spinning and weaving, reverting to a natural life. By the time I had finished with my interviews, they knew without my telling them, why they could not be office-bearers in Congress Committees if they did not give up their sinfulness. None could officiate at the altar of swaraj, who did not approach it with pure hands and a pure heart.

Young India, 15-9-1921

122. REPRESSION IN SIND

The following note[1] was prepared at the end of June by Mr. Ghanshyam Jethanand Shivdasani[2], and like the others has lain with me unattended to during my wanderings. The reader is familiar with the Matiari shooting, and the trial and convictions of Swami Krishnanand[3] and others, which took place after June.

Young India, 15-9-1921

[1] Published in *Young India*, 15-9-1921 and 22-9-1921; not reproduced here.

[2] Deputy Leader, Sind Congress Assembly Party; Secretary, Lok Sevak Mandal, Bombay .

[3] *Vide* "A Mock Trial", 25-8-1921; also Appendix "Prof. T. L. Vaswani's reply", 25-8-1921.

123. APPEAL TO HINDI-LOVERS

MADRAS,
September 15, 1921

DEAR HINDI-LOVERS,

For three years now, the work of spreading Hindi has been going on in Madras. Money was collected in Bombay for this special purpose. However, the work has now increased to such an extent that this amount as well as what is forthcoming in Madras itself is no longer adequate. I am convinced that the work in Madras is going on well.

If you are satisfied and if you have sympathy for this great cause, I earnestly appeal to you to give liberally all you can by way of financial assistance.

Yours,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi : S.N. 8156

124. INTERVIEW TO "DAILY EXPRESS"

MADRAS
September 15, 1921

Taking advantage of the arrival of Mr. Gandhi in Madras on Thursday morning, a representative of the *Daily Express* called on the non-co-operation leader and interviewed him in regard to various questions that are at present agitating the minds of the public in which Mr. Gandhi is either directly or indirectly concerned.

Asked what proportion of the Crore Fund had been collected and where the money had been deposited, Mr. Gandhi said that the bulk of the Fund had been collected and was deposited with the several provincial committees. So far as he was aware the monies were deposited in various banks the largest part of it being deposited in Bombay.

[REPRESENTATIVE :] How will the amount collected be utilized ?

[GANDHIJI:] The amount collected is being utilized chiefly for swadeshi, i.e., for encouraging hand-spinning and hand-weaving, in national educational institutions, for famine relief and in connection with the temperance campaign and the untouchables. You

may take it roughly that 50 per cent will be devoted to hand-spinning and hand-weaving.

In view of the outbreaks of violence that have occurred in Malabar, and in other centres previously, what steps will you take to ensure adherence to non-violence ?

The only answer that I can give to this question is that I will do it by speeches, by talks in private also, by correspondence and by popularizing hand-spinning, because I consider hand-spinning as the greatest and the most efficacious antidote. If I could only get the whole of India to become busy with this development, it would stop all violence in the movement

Do you think that there are bound to be exceptions to observance of nonviolence as in the case of the Moplahs?

Yes, there are bound to be exceptions, but I am positive that there would have been much greater violence, more widespread, if there had been no non-co-operation continuously emphasizing non-violence. I should like to answer fully and frankly all the questions that may arise from my answer in order to make my position absolutely clear.

With regard to the question of picketing, I take it that there is a strong body of opinion that objects to picketing. If you find, after experience, that the two opposing forces would result in any form of disorder, do you intend that, in spite of that, picketing shall continue?

Yes, it will continue so long as there is no violence used by those who are picketing. I would not take into consideration the violence that may be offered either by the liquor dealers or by the people who want to visit these liquor shops; the third party being the Government. In several cases in Bihar, the Magistrate had actually given half a crown and said: "Here's half a crown, you go and insist upon drinking, because it is your birthright and you are entitled to drink." So of that kind of violence, I shall take no notice so long as the non-violent party remain true to their principles, but if they do not remain true then, of course, all picketing will cease.

Then there is the question of the boycott of cloth. My information here is that there has been an increase in the price of the Indian goods that come from Bombay. If the boycott of imported goods continues, I calculate myself that there is bound to be a further increase in the price of Indian-made goods. If that occurs, will it affect your campaign?

It would not affect my campaign because it is really not a question of the mills. I continually bring to the ears of the people that true swadeshi means home-production. I therefore want the people to be totally indifferent to the mill manufactures.

Even of the Indian mills?

Yes. I am not boycotting Indian mills as such, because that is unnecessary. But if the people fall back upon Indian mills, only then I will boycott Indian mills also because they will not solve the ultimate problem. I know that the swadeshi gospel has not been understood; certainly it has not been assimilated by all the body of workers, much less by the critics.

Is it your object not to support at all even the consumption of Indian mill-made goods ? We have a strike here now in which five or six thousand of the workers in one of the Indian mills have come out. Would it not be possible in accordance with your own programme to provide a percentage of them with handlooms instead of insisting upon all of them going back to the mills?

I am doing that; I have done that in the case of the Assam-Bengal strike.[1] They had struck work out of sympathy for the outraged coolies from the Assam tea plantations. The Government have not repaired the mischief which they had done and ruthlessly maltreated them. If I can prevent all the men from rejoining as on the Assam-Bengal Railway and Steamer Co.'s, I shall do so and I shall advise the Congress Committee to vote as much as they can in order to give every one of the strikers, a spinning-wheel and to give groups of them handlooms, and establish for them a colony to give them every facility. When I heard of a strike of women in mills I sent similar messages. We are trying to reduce the number of women labourers.

Do you solely object to the conditions under which the workers have to live or do you object to the introduction of Western machinery? If the conditions in all the Indian mills were improved to a certain extent, and they were given satisfactory housing and satisfactory wages, would your objection to mill production continue?

Yes, my objection will continue because it is not based on antipathy to Western machinery. Here the question of West and East does not arise. The question of West and East is ever present in my mind but in connection with the machinery as you have put it, I am against concentrating the manufacture of cloth in the hands of a few, just as I would be against concentrating the cooking of our food in

[1] *Vide* "Speech to Railway Workers, Chittagong", 31-8-1921.

hotels. Millions of people in India used to occupy themselves usefully and honourably at least eight hours perday. Today the most tragic result of the British rule has been— unintended by the British people I admit—that over 20 millions of the people of India remain in enforced idleness for six months in the year.

If further outbreaks cannot be prevented, will you abandon the non-co-operation movement as you formerly abandoned the civil disobedience campaign ?[1]

I am sorry I cannot do so for the civil disobedience campaign was aimed at a particular Act. This non-co-operation movement is aimed at the whole system of Government and as it is aimed at the whole system of Government it is not possible for me to abandon it. I cannot possibly say so, because it is a big movement and there are tremendous risks to be taken, in order to do away with the greatest of them which is the continuance of this system.

In the event of Great Britain conceding Dominion Status to India, what, in your opinion, are the essential features of such a proposed settlement?

If the Dominion Status is conceded, I must state the Khilafat and the Punjab questions will have to be put out of the way.

If the whole issue of the Khilafat were referred to the arbitration of the League of Nations, would you agree to abide by the decision as both England and France have agreed in relation to the Silesian question?

I could not do so, because it would be camouflage. I know it depends upon Mr. Lloyd George[2]. Mr. Lloyd George has to go as far as the nation would let him. I do not believe that Mr. Lloyd George is deliberately mischievous. He has become entangled with the reactionary element in the British Empire.

If the dispute were referred to the League of Nations it would be entirely out of his hands.

But he would still be able to affect the deliberations of the League. I will put it in a concrete way. Is there anything to prevent the Prime Minister from withdrawing all the forces from Mesopotamia and having nothing to do with Mesopotamia ? The mandate in Mesopotamia and Palestine is with the British nation. I marvel why if they are honest they are insistent upon their remaining in Mesopotamia.

[1] *Vide* "Press statement on suspension of civil disobedience" and "Letter to the press on suspension of civil disobedience", 21-7-1919.

[2] British statesman; Prime Minister of England, 1916-22

Would you assent to the idea that the disputed territories should he transferred to Turkey under a mandate from the League of Nations ?

I do not mind at all, but there will arise general difficulties. What I say is that there should be absolutely Muslim control without the slightest control of the Great Powers, directly or indirectly, over all the Peninsula and there should be no interference whatsoever with Turkey. If the Arabs do not want anything to do with Turks, let them fight it out amongst themselves.

Would you be content if the British were to retain control at Basra but not over the remainder of Mesopotamia?

It cannot be done. No, let trade proceed without political interference, or control.

Failing such a settlement, do you agree with Mr. Mahomed Ali that the Congress at Ahmedabad should declare for an Independent Republic?

No, for this reason, that a mere declaration of independence would not satisfy me. It would not satisfy me to declare an Independent Republic. To do that we must be able to fight with the British Government not along the lines of violence, but non-violence. But we are not sufficiently organized. Lord Salisbury used to say when he was irritated by some questions, "It does not matter; somehow or other we have muddled through to success up to now, so the hon'ble member need not worry." We have done in the same way. I am not taking the sole credit for retaining non-violent non-co-operation. God has come to our help and assistance.

If India were to receive Dominion Home Rule, would not that be regarded as settling the issues raised by the Punjab automatically?

Yes, it would settle the issues automatically.

Then your suggestion of a settlement is that the Government of India should be made wholly responsible to the legislature?

Indian Legislature. Oh, yes; certainly.

Are you anxious to take over the whole control of the Army at once, or would you make an exception of that subject?

I think we are entirely ready to take up the whole control of the Army which means practically disbanding three-fourths of it. I would keep just enough to police India.

If the Army were reduced to that extent, do you not apprehend anything aggressive from the frontier territories?

No.

My information derived from military sources, is that there are over half-a-million armed men on the frontier?

You are right, I agree. These tribes have frequently attacked India hitherto.

Why hitherto? Why do you think they will refrain from doing so when India possesses Home Rule?

In the first instance the world's views have changed and secondly the preparations that are now made in Afghanistan are really in support of the Khilafat. But when the Khilafat question is out of the way, then the Afghan people will not have any design on India. The warrior tribes who live on loot and plunder are given lakhs of rupees as subsidy. I would also give them a little subsidy. When the charkha comes into force in India, I would introduce the spinning-wheel among the Afghan tribes also and thus prevent them from attacking the Indian territories. I feel that the tribesmen are in their own way God-fearing people.

Referring to the Moplah outbreak Mr. Gandhi continued:

I have not yet been able to understand the genesis of the outbreak except the provocation—very great provocation—which I believe was caused when the mosque was surrounded. I do not understand the looting of so many Hindu houses. Whilst I was in Calcutta I had what seemed definite information that there were only three cases of forced conversions. But I now understand that some other cases also have been brought to the notice of the Congress people and they are very much regretted. The Moplah lawlessness is a thing which takes one back, but I do not think that it seriously interferes with the Hindu-Muslim unity.

It shows the gigantic nature of the task which the party of non-violent non-co-operators has set before itself and to a superficial observer it might appear that nowadays without some degree of violence or exercise of force all these turbulent things cannot be held under check. That is not what I believe and that is the reason why I put a swadeshi programme to the forefront as an indispensable condition. If we can bring it out that will itself, in my opinion, ensure such a degree of non-violence as is necessary to change the life of India.

In so far as the Moplahs are concerned, instead of manufacturing piecegoods they have manufactured arms?

But that is a reflection really upon the British administrators that instead of getting hold of all these turbulent tribes and making them peaceful they have used them for their own base ends. It is a sad thing which the future historians will have to note against the British administration. I am coming now in touch with the Nepalese. They are a splendid people. I met a little girl and I parted with her the day before yesterday. She is spreading the knowledge of non-violence among the Nepalese, because there never has the slightest attempt been made to make them peaceful.

If it is the case that the British administration has failed to keep the Moplahs non-violent, is it not the case that your movement has failed equally?

I cannot say that it has failed owing to my movement. My movement started not twelve months ago and against heavy odds, Government laughing, my own people laughing. It was most difficult for me to make them understand the word "non-co-operators". No reformer has been so hampered as I am. I know that the difficulties are all of my own making, but I had no choice. If, therefore, I say that non-violence is a matter of mere policy, they do not understand what this policy is. When dealing with the Hindu-Muslim problem, non-violence must be our final creed. If I can succeed in doing that, then of course, we shall attain our goal quickly. The British Government intervenes if a non-co-operator goes to these Moplah districts. He is prevented. It is our case that those places, where this violence has taken place, were those least touched by non-co-operators.

Don't you think that the whole of the Moplahs are under the control of the religious leaders and not of the political?

True; that is why I have brought religion into politics. I have endeavoured and endeavoured very successfully to make these religious pandits understand that they cannot exist without the political life of the country affecting them; otherwise the largest part of theirs goes out of their control. Here is a disturbance going on. I could have taken one of the Ali Brothers and quelled it in no time if the Government system had been honestly administered. If we had failed it would have cost us our lives. We would have been killed. It would have been nice for the Government and for us; but when we died, out of our ashes the spirit of non-violence would have risen.

The Hindu, 16-9-1921

125. INTERVIEW TO "MADRAS MAIL"[1]

[*September 15, 1921*]

[REPRESENTATIVE:] You look upon the propaganda of boycott of foreign cloth as the constructive side of non-co-operation though it involves the destruction of the existing stock of foreign cloth?

[GANDHIJI:] I look upon swadeshi as the constructive side of non-co-operation, as I expect it to lead to the manufacture of all the cloth needed by the nation by means of hand-spinning and hand-weaving.

Do you think, Mr. Gandhi, it is possible in view of the existing conditions of the country to produce sufficient to meet all the needs of the people?

Certainly, even as it is possible for us to cook our daily supply of food, if the manufacture of cloth be our hands as it was only two or three hundred years ago.

Have not the conditions altered materially with the introduction of machinery, apart from other causes?

No disturbance has been really created by machinery, such as that it cannot be corrected. It is a mental state which has got to be put right. It is not as though hands, nor is it as if all the hours that the nation devoted to manufacturing cloth and spinning yarn, are now utilized to any other or better purpose. The hours are there unutilized and the hands as well.

You believe that the concentration of manufacture under the factory system could equally and effectively be carried out for the purpose of meeting the needs of the nation by hand-spinning on an extensive scale in the homes and cottages of the people?

Certainly.

In other words you think it is only a question of extensive manufacture through the agency of hand-spinning and hand-weaving in rural areas in the country rather than intensive manufacture under the factory system?

Most certainly so.

Do you think that all our modern requirements could be adequately and effectively answered without the use of machinery?

[1] A representative of *Madras Mail* called on Gandhiji at Ramjee Kalyanjee's residence at San Thome.

Modern requirements so far as cloth is concerned, yes, they can be; but during the transition stage the nation will have to do with a limited supply till the beautiful fabric of India is revived.

But how is it necessary, Mr. Gandhi, to destroy the existing stock in use of foreign cloth in this country to achieve this end?

Because the nation has to realize the crime that it has committed in abandoning its home industries and taking to foreign cloth, it is a necessary penance in order to demonstrate a change of heart.

Penance, Mr. Gandhi, presupposes a sincere feeling for the abandonment of the practice or ideal of the people?

Certainly.

Do you think that the people of this country have actively helped in the destruction of indigenous industries or do you not agree that in any system of competition between manual labour and machinery, indigenous industries are bound to go to the wall?

Although under diabolical pressure, nevertheless people deliberately sacrificed their own national industries when there was no question of competition.

I don't quite follow you, Mr. Gandhi.

It is historically true that when we gave up our home industries there was no competition between the handloom and the machinery.

But I thought that people had not voluntarily given up their industries, but found themselves unable to cope with the competition of machine-made goods imported into this country?

My point is that owing to the political advantages which the East India Company had obtained they were in a position to force upon the people machine-made goods.

But were not these machine-made goods at the same time cheaper than indigenous products?

Never. Over and over again the people of the country were terrorized into giving up their occupation of cloth manufacture. By such means as for instance the cutting of their own thumbs by the weavers themselves when their labour was impressed.

But could it have gone on such a scale as to effectively kill indigenous industries ?

Certainly, the continuance of the process over a certain length of time was bound to have that effect unless people treated those home manufactures as a part of their religion.

Do you consider the political conditions now favourable in your opinion for a revival Of indigenous industries, which you contend had been killed by the East India Company?

I consider the conditions very favourable because people realize that if hand-spinning and hand-weaving are not revived now, there is nothing but deeper and deeper starvation day after day staring the nation in the face.

It is part of your programme, then, to enforce this lesson on the masses ?

Yes. It is being done on a very vast scale.

At the same time if the factory system and machine-made goods coming to India are continued, do you expect any very large success for the movement even though people, out of considerations of patriotism and economy, agree to devote their attention to hand-spinning ?

Your question supplies the answer. If people resort to these things from patriotic and economic motives then it can be done.

But does your study of our people and their present condition encourage you to think that patriotic considerations will prove such a powerful factor as to give a strong impetus to indigenous manufactures on a large scale, unaided by the State?.

Yes, certainly. That is why I say that hand-spinning and hand-weaving accepted by the people on a universal scale ought to lead automatically to swaraj.

But internal disturbances of the kind in Malabar, you will agree, Mr. Gandhi, are a powerful set-back to the movement of non-violent non-co-operation ?

My answer is yes.

Do you not also agree, Mr. Gandhi, that your movement has a great deal to do with this outbreak in Malabar?

All the information that I have collected, and which I have no reason to doubt, points to the fact that violence broke out in those parts which were least touched by the activities of non-co-operators and my information goes further that non-co-operators were deliberately prevented from entering those disturbed parts.

Notwithstanding protests from respectable leaders not in your camp against the evil consequences of non co-operation on a large scale, you still think that it is the only means, if not the chief means for a people situated like India to attain swaraj?

It is the only means; in no other way, can India attain swaraj for a century.

So long as there are large masses of people who do not come under your

influence directly but who read of non-co-operation in the Press and hear on platforms, do you not think that the movement is calculated to create ill-feeling against those in authority without giving them suggestions as regards ways and means to remedy the state of affairs which they are made to believe is attributable to the existing Government?

That question assumes that nobody does really preach about non-violence.

But I think you will agree, if I am not flattering you, that it wants Mr. Gandhi in every quarter where there is trouble of one kind or other believed to be consequent on the spread of the doctrine of non-co-operation ?

I cannot flatter myself that it required my personal presence everywhere to bring about a tranquil atmosphere because I know there are many who have been able to bring about and retain that atmosphere. I do believe that if the Government had allowed Mr. Yakub Hassan to go to Malabar what had happened there afterwards would have been prevented and I am positive that the Government, instead of giving a change of air to Mahomed Ali at Waltair, had invited him to Malabar, he would have brought about perfect peace and many lives would have been saved and many Hindu households would have been left undisturbed by the Moplah fanatics.

But what do you think will be the effect on your movement of the arrest of Mr. Mahomed Ali? Will it conduce to make the Mohammedan section among your followers violent?

I hope not, and I believe that if India remains non-violent and yet firm, I know swaraj is within sight. Seeing that Government do not want to consult public opinion, the only alternative left open to Government is to kill out those who represent that opinion at least temporarily.

Is that what you say they are doing?

I have no doubt about it in my mind.

But so long as there are these big “IFs” underlying your ideal you will not save people for fearing that, despite the best of goodwill in the world on your part, there may be occasions for violence, when they have not your philosophic temperament or strong will to keep them under control ?

There always is the danger and no reformer has yet been able to carry out his reform without large risks.

So long as there are such large risks, do you think Government is not justified in fearing such measures as ill their wisdom they think necessary?

Government cannot possibly be justified seeing that the Government are opposing the just aspirations of the people.

But is that not a matter on which there is large difference of opinion among Indians themselves?

My answer is that there is no difference of opinion as to the demands of people about the Khilafat and the Punjab. I mention this because Government could not have imprisoned Maulana Mahomed Ali if the Government had any intention of satisfying Khilafat demands.

Notwithstanding the Malabar outrages, you do not despair of Hindu-Muslim unity?

I don't despair for the simple reason that no sane Muslim approves of what a few Moplahs have done. It is too much to expect when you have to deal with masses of mankind that there will be no wrong done by any single individual.

That is the very thing that is being urged against your non-co-operation ?

Yes, but has the Government erased the word "risks" out of their vocabulary?

The Hindu, 16-9-1921

126. SPEECH AT MADRAS

September 15, 1921

A monster meeting was held last evening at 5.30 at the Beach, opposite the Presidency College to hear Mahatma Gandhi on "Swadeshi". . . .

On the motion of Mr. S. Kasturiranga Aiyangar[1], Mr. Yakub Hassan was voted to the Chair. . . .

Mahatma Gandhi, who on rising was received with an enthusiastic ovation, addressed the audience in clear and ringing tones for over an hour and was heard with great attention. The speech was in English and was translated sentence by sentence by Mr. A. Ramaswami Aiyanger[2] first and then by Mr. S. Satyamurti[3]. Mahatmaji said:

[1] Congress leader of Madras who was a member of Civil Disobedience Enquiry Committee; editor, *The Hindu*, Madras

[2] Editor, *Swadeshamitran*, a Tamil daily of Madras and later of *The Hindu*; General Secretary of the Congress, 1926-27; Member of Legislative Assembly

[3] 1887-1943; Congress leader from Madras and orator

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

As usual I have to offer my apologies to you for my physical inability to speak to you standing. I would like all the audience that is at the back to preserve complete silence if they want to follow my remarks. I would ask the whole of the audience also neither to give applause nor to cry out "shame", "shame". If you are in earnest about fulfilling the programme set before the country by the National Congress held in September at Nagpur, believe me, you will not be able to do so either by applause or by "shame", "shame". It is necessary for us to become far more serious and business-like than we have hitherto been. We have only a few months in order to fulfil our programme and to establish swaraj. We have far too little time, humanly speaking, in order to obtain redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs. Happily I see signs about me every day that God is with us. And I know —I have no doubt you also know—that God can make us succeed even if we may seem, humanly speaking again, to be the weakest.

I verily believe that this arrest at Waltair of Maulana Mahomed Ali has come to us as godsend. God only knows how he tried, his brother tried and I tried to keep them out of jail by every honest, legitimate means worthy of non-co-operators. All that a brave man can do, Mahomed Ali did in order to keep himself on the straight and narrow path; and the burden rests upon the shoulders of the Viceroy to show what new situation has developed to justify the arrest of Maulana Mahomed Ali when he was on a mission of peace and goodwill. Ever since that celebrated and much discussed statement signed by the Brothers, Maulana Mahomed Ali has been more or less with me. I am here to testify to the whole of this audience and through this audience to the whole of India that I have not found Maulana Mahomed Ali to depart by a hair's breadth from the promise that he made to India in the name of God, that he will not incite to violence. I assure you that in private and in public, in season and out of season, Maulana Mahomed Ali has emphasized the necessity for observance of complete non-violence by the people of India. He has been telling everyone who has met him and he has been assuring all the audience, numerous as they were that the only condition—indispensable condition—of success whether for swaraj or for the Khilafat wrong or for the Punjab wrong was the complete retention of non-violent spirit by the people of India. But the Ali Brothers arc no cowards. And if

anybody dreamt or thought that the statement meant a change in their attitude or a change in their language, they were mistaken. I have not had the privilege of meeting two braver and truer souls. I assure you that both the Brothers are transparently sincere. But I admit they are capable of and are fond of using strong language and calling a spade a spade. (Suppressed laughter.) They as brave men and as strong men have endeavoured and were able to pour a little bit of their own bravery and strength into their audience. But in their own incomparable manner they have also disciplined themselves to the best of their ability with the strength and bravery that they infected their followers with. It is my conviction that no two Mussulmans have tried more than they have to retain a non-violent atmosphere throughout the length and breadth of India; and the Government need not, therefore, be surprised if I charge them with having imprisoned or attempted to imprison the Khilafat with the imprisonment of Maulana Mahomed Ali.

It was open to the Government, powerful as that Government is, to invite the Ali Brothers and me to enter the disturbed area and give us an opportunity to procure calmness and peace in that disturbed land. I am sure that much innocent blood would have been spared. I am sure that the desolation of many a Hindu household would have also been spared. But I must be forgiven if again I charge the Government with a desire to incite the populace to violence. They have no room in this system of government under which we are governed, for strong, brave and true men. The only place they have for such men is their prison.

My heart goes out to those men who have been so much afflicted in Malabar. I am aware that our Moplah brethren, undisciplined as they have been all these long long years, have gone mad. I am aware that they have committed a sin against the Khilafat and against their own country. The whole of India to-day is under an obligation to remain non-violent even under the gravest provocation. The desolation of the Hindu households shows clearly to me that the message, the healing message, of non-violent non-co-operation had not penetrated Moplah households in that area. And I have evidence which I have no reason to doubt, that those parts in which our Moplah countrymen went mad were not touched by the spirit of non-co-operation. I am aware that non-co-operators were deliberately prevented from going to those parts by the authorities.

But I hope that my Hindu countrymen will keep their senses. Even assuming, as I am not prepared to assume, that all the stories that have come to us through Government circles of forced conversions are true, you, the Hindu part of this audience, will believe with me that that ought not to put such a strain upon our loyalty to the creed of Hindu Muslim unity as to break it. We must not expect all of a sudden every Hindu and every Mussulman to become absolutely faithfulto this creed. It do not know a single sensible Mussulman who approves either secretly or openly of these forcible conversions, nor need we Hindus disturbed about the future of these brethren of ours.

My reading of our shastras convinces me that a man who is forced to do anything against his will needs no *prayaschitta*[1]. Our friend Mr. Yakub Hassan has told the Tamil land that these men who are supposed to have been forcibly converted are inadmissible in the faith of Islam. As a devout Hindu knowing what he is speaking, I assure you that not one of those Hindus has forfeited his right to remain in the Hindu fold. I understand that the Government is placing every obstacle in the way of the Congress and the Khilafat workers taking relief to those desolate homes and I am told that at the same time the Government itself is taking no pains to provide relief to these poor people who are supposed to be starving. Whether they give us permission or do not, I have no doubt that it is our clear duty to collect as much funds as we can for the relief of these sufferers and see to it that they get what they require. The Congress Committee has already voted a certain sum of money and I know that the Khilafat Committee also is endeavouring to vote a certain sum of money for the relief of these sufferers. But I suggest to the Mussulman countrymen in the Madras Presidency that it will be a graceful act on their part if they were to collect even pies from every home for the relief of their Hindu brethren.

I know today that this Presidency is perhaps the most afflicted throughout India. We do not yet know fully what measures the Government are taking in order to repress the strong and the rising forces of the people in this land. I have no reason to disbelieve the testimony that has been given to me this morning that many young men quartered in Malabar have been insulted because they have had the audacity to wear khaddar caps and khaddar vests. I understand that these keepers of the peace in India have torn the pure vests of

[1] Atonement

khaddar and burnt them to ashes. I understand the authorities in Malabar have invented new methods of humiliation, if they have not gone one better than the authorities in the Punjab.

The "Reform" ministers have shown their teeth in the Andhra country. They have imposed upon an unwilling populace a municipality. In the teeth of universal opposition in another part of the Andhra country, they have been endeavouring forcibly to collecta grazing tax. And I understand that under a *fatwa*[1] from these ministers innocent cows have been torn from their calves and consigned to the pounds, where they have not even grass and water to eat and drink. What are we to do in the face of these repressive measures, not only at the hands of English administrators, but also at the hands of the so-called responsible ministers? Are we to answer to these repressions with violence ? The result in that case, we know, is certain. We know that the result of any violence done by the people who are under an oath not to do violence, is certain destruction. If you want to secure the release of Maulana Mahomed Ali, if you want to secure the release of those innocent cows, if you want to avoid the repetition of the humiliations that are being imposed upon our countrymen in Malabar, in the name of law, order and peace, if you want to resist the pressure that is being put upon our gallant countrymen in Chirala and Perala, the only remedy before you is complete observance of non-violence. The self-respect of the nation demands that the only way to secure the release of Maulana Mahomed Ali and all those who may be unlawfully imprisoned by this Government is to establish swaraj and for the first parliament of swaraj to pass the first measure of discharge of these innocent prisoners with becoming honours. We must ask for no quarter from this Government; and we must expect none. We must challenge the Government to do its worst and before it yields to the expressed will of a determined people, we must expect that Government to take up the challenge and answer it in the only manner in which a tyrannical and insolent Government can answer.

But I want you to turn the searchlight inward. What shall we do then to attain swaraj during this very year? I can present my countrymen with no other programme but the well-tried programme of non-violence, Hindu-Muslim unity and swadeshi. Our non-violence and our attachment to Hindu-Muslim unity must be expressed through swadeshi. It grieves me to find, therefore, in this audience so

[1] Decree of a Muslim divine

very few people expressing the swadeshi spirit on their own persons; and when I see Begum Mahomed Ali Sahiba and when I see my sisters in front of me, my heart breaks. Begum Sahiba is as gently brought up as those sisters of mine. But she is not ashamed, on the contrary, she takes pride in wearing heavy khaddar. And if you, my dear sisters, have followed the trend of my remarks, I hope that you will change your heart tomorrow, and throw away your foreign silks and foreign fineries and dress yourselves in pure holy khaddar. When I think of Maulana Mahomed Ali and still more of his bigger and bulkier brother, Maulana Shaukat Ali, all dressed and drenched in their khaddar costumes, and when I cast my glance over this vast audience, my heart breaks again. You cannot get swaraj with a spirit such as is exhibited here. The country expects you to give up your foreign and fine clothing, your caps made of foreign cloth and your dhotis made out of the fine foreign yarn. The country expects every man, woman and child to spin away for all the time that he or she can find at his or her disposal. Not until the message, the peaceful and sacred message of the spinning-wheel has penetrated almost every home of India is swaraj attainable by non-violent methods.

At this stage an interval of ten minutes was allowed for Mohammedans to offer their evening prayer. Meanwhile silence was strictly observed at the meeting. After the *namaz* Mahatmaji, continuing, said:

The spinning-wheel to me is a sign of our reviving prosperity and a significance of self-confidence. The spinning-wheel is a sure test of our assimilation of the spirit of non-violence. The spinning-wheel is the common bond that will tie not only Mussulmans and Hindus but all the other people professing other religions and who are domiciled in India. The spinning-wheel is the symbol of the chastity of the womanhood of India. In the absence of the spinning-wheel I give you my testimony that thousands of our poor sisters are giving themselves to a life of shame and degradation. The spinning-wheel is the widow's companion. And it was the spinning-wheel which supplemented the slender resources of the millions of the peasantry of India. It is the spinning-wheel which has purified many a man before now; and the universal adoption of the spinning-wheel in our homes means to me a complete demonstration of the fact that we have ceased to consider that the head is the only thing we need care for. The spinning-wheel is therefore a demonstration to me that those who spin the wheel realize the supreme dignity of labour. The spinning-wheel is

the solace of the untouchable whom we have hitherto so sinfully despised. The spinning-wheeli the honourable substitute that can be presented to our fallen sisters throughout the length and breadth of our land, and it is only when the spinning-wheel has found a sure and established footing in our homes that it is possible for India to embark upon mass civil disobedience. Not whilst our blood is hot with rage, not whilst we are in a state of excitement can disobedience be proclaimed in the land which can, by any stretch of imagination, be called civil. If we want to spread throughout the length and breadth of India the spirit of non-violence in order that we can work out our salvation during the year, there is no other weapon but the spinning-wheel which can purify us. It is not the mills of Bombay nor the mills of Ahmedabad which should clothe you, but you should have ability and you should have self-respect enough to insist upon clothing yourselves by your own sacred hands. But I hope no one in this audience will use my remarks as a cover for his weakness and for his continuing in the foreign dress in which I see the audience. On the contrary, if you feel as I do that we are in honour bound to fulfil our sacred resolution come to during last December, you will see to it that you go about the streets of Madras with only a *langoti*[1] on you until you have clothed yourselves by the sweat of your brow. The Ali Brothers want no hartal from you. They want no demonstrations by means of mass meetings from you. But they want from you an expression of your fixed determination of valour, of courage, of fearlessness, of truthfulness and of non-violence. They certainly expect the school boys who have flocked to their audience to respond, if they have any shred of feeling and regard for them, to cease to go to the schools of the Government whose system they are resolved upon destroying. They expect weak title-holders, weak councillors, weak lawyers who believe in the message of non-co-operation and yet have not the courage to give up what they have. They expect all these classes now to respond and respond in a brave manner.

But whether these select classes recognize their duty or not or whether, recognizing their duty, they can rise to the occasion or not, there is no reason for anyone of us here to reject the message of swadeshi. We want swaraj not merely for classes but we want it for masses including the untouchables and the weakest men and women

[1] Loin-cloth

in the land. Ours, thank God, is an army in which men, women and children, the leper and the diseased, all have the same honourable place side by side with the privileged. For, do we not claim and do we not say from a thousand platforms that the present Government is a kingdom of Satan and do we not claim that we seek to substitute the kingdom of Satan by the kingdom of God? And has not the lowest of us an equal place with the highest in the kingdom of God ? I have so often said on this sacred Beach, in the presence of the rolling waves and in the name of God, that I have an abiding belief in the religious instincts of the Tamilian and the Telugu people with whom I have hadthe privilege of eating, drinking, sleeping and suffering in South Africa. I am hoping and praying that the future historian will not have to testify that, whereas the people of Dravida land talked of the name of the kingdom of God with their lips, they were following the ways of the kingdom of Satan. Let us not justify the charge levelled against us by our opponents, that under cover of non-violence and truth we are violent and untruthful on many an occasion. Swaraj as Tilak Maharaj has said, is our sacred birthright, Khilafat is a sacred treasure with our Mussulman countrymen; redress of the Punjab wrongs is a sacred trust. Let us not betray our birthright, our religion and our trust by proving false to a creed to which we subscribed twice over last year. We have set before ourselves a standard and we must abide by that standard and prove true to it. Let us not, by proving untrue to our creed, deserve the curse of our future generation.

The next few months must be to us times of turmoil, troubles, imprisonments and many other things. All the world over darkness is the deepest before dawn and I want you with the eye of faith to see the rays of dawn coming out through this deep darkness that has overshadowed the land. And I ask the men and women of this great Presidency to discharge their trust in such an honourable manner that the future generations may be able to say that the Madras Presidency was in no way behind other presidencies in doing its duty. I pray to God that He may give all strength and courage and a fixed purpose to enable us to reach our goal.

You will give Begum Sahiba, who will speak to you a few words, a most respectful and attentive hearing. She will be followed by Maulana Azad Sobhani, and he is a great Muslim divine. When non-co-operation was finally decided upon by the Central Khilafat Committee long before September last, he was the representative

chosen by the Central Khilafat Committee to expound the doctrine of the Khilafat. I am therefore sure that you will give him the same patient hearing that you have been kind enough to give me. Finally, I would urge you to remain undemonstrative not only at this meeting but at all of our meetings. Non-violent discipline demands that we do not unnecessarily heat our blood by useless demonstration, noise or signs. I say this from my wide experience that it is not possible to observe always peace when all people are talking and making noises even though they may be of affection. In spite of our knowledge of what our opponents are doing, of what our countrymen who are opposing us are doing, I would urge you to observe a respectful andforbearing attitude even towards them. Gentleness and love, I assure you, will win us many an opponent who has hitherto given us battle. As we progress, we will have many an occasion to be incensed by writings, speeches and acts of our opponents. I would urge you not to return their evil, if we believe it to be evil, with our evil. They are bound by no creed of non-violence as you and I are and we need not be surprised nor angry for anything that they may do. Let us take care of ourselves and the future is assured. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the great attention that you have paid to the remarks that I have made before you.

The Hindu, 16-9-1921

127. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, MADRAS

September 16, 1921

Under the auspices of the Sarvajanik Mitra Mandal, Mahatma Gandhi addressed a ladies meeting in Soundarya Mahal at 4.45 p.m. on Friday last....

Mahatmaji . . . addressed the meeting in Gujarati. . . and impressed upon the audience the desirability and necessity of using swadeshi clothes. He felt sorry to see that the ladies present were all dressed in foreign clothes. He said that if they were offered *rotis* prepared in Japan and England they will unhesitatingly refuse to consume them however delicious they may be. In the same way they must make it a religious point not to use foreign clothes and fineries at all because they are the source of the national degradation. He advised the ladies to burn their foreign clothes and to make resolute determination to use only the hand-woven swadeshi clothes which must be prepared by their own hands. He then dwelt upon the utility of the charkha and said that it is the life-support of a widow, a companion of any forlorn woman and now it must be a dear friend of every self-respecting Indian lady. Charkha

is a mechanism which does not require any great strength or skill to use it. Even a poor weak boy can work at it.

Introducing Mrs. Mahomed Ali, Gandhiji said, that the ladies should follow the example of Begum Sahiba. Her husband has been recently arrested by the Government but she did not show the least sign of fear or nervousness. She is dressed in khaddar although she has to wear heavier clothes than any of you will have to do. He said that the ladies have a fancy for fineries but they must always bear in mind that beauty does not lie in anything outward. If a woman is good and dutiful she is beautiful, otherwise she is ugly. Exhorting the audience Gandhiji said that if they have any sense of self-respect and if they want to keep honour of their children and the nation at large, then they must give up their liking for pomp and show and lead a simple, rigorous life. Sitaji, when she was a captive in the Ashokavatika was offered all sorts of fine things by Ravana but she indignantly refused to use any of them, she preferred to live on fruits and cover her body with the bark of the trees. So, as long as India is in the chains of slavery and dharma raj is not established, every man and woman of India must look down upon the foreign clothes as something really untouchable.

In the end he advised the northern ladies to mix freely with their Madrasi sisters and said that they must bring up their children properly. They must infuse bravery, courage in them.

The Hindu, 19-9-1921

128. SPEECH AT PIECE-GOODS MERCHANTS' MEETING, MADRAS

September 16, 1921

An important general body meeting of the Madras Piece-Goods merchants' Association was held last evening in the Association premises to discuss the question of boycott of foreign cloth with Mahatma Gandhi. The meeting was largely attended by the members of the Association. Maulana Azad Sobhani, Messrs Yakub Hassan, C. Rajagopalachari and T. S. S. Rajan were also present at the meeting. The speeches were in English and were translated by Mr. C. Rajagopalachari.

Mr. Ramjee Kalyanjee on behalf of the Association welcomed Mahatmaji. . . . Mahatma Gandhi in reply said:

GENTLEMEN,

It gives me the greatest pleasure really to meet you here this afternoon. It has been my good fortune to enjoy the sweetest of relations with the piece-goods merchants. As you know I had several meetings with them in Bombay and in Calcutta, and throughout my

travels in the different parts of India I have taken good care to see the merchant community. You will be glad to learn from me that in all these places they have been in full sympathy, as they ought to have been with this great swadeshi movement, and you will be glad to learn also that with the exception of Calcutta the merchants by a very large majority have agreed to stop importing any further foreign cloth. The Calcutta merchants, I know, have found some difficulties. They suggested that they would stop imports only up to 31st December and should reserve to themselves the liberty for exchanging and selling foreign yarns amongst them with their existing stocks. I was unable to accept that proposition, because I felt that was nothing but camouflage. And I would have been an unwilling instrument for entering into secret bargains. In a movement of this character which we claim to be pure and religious, there is really no room for secrecy or for under-hand dealings. It is much better that those who cannot see their way to stop importing foreign cloth should say so frankly and openly and continue their trade than that they should say one thing in the public and do quite the opposite in private. But of course I sympathize with our Calcutta merchant friends, in that they are the largest importers of foreign cloth throughout India. But you will be glad to hear that even they are now taking a more patriotic attitude than they have taken hitherto. Mr. Jamnalalji who specially remained in Calcutta in order to carry on negotiations with those big houses telegraphed to me today saying that several of them had now shown reasonableness and national interest in the subject. So you see that the whole of India really is rallying to the swadeshi flag. And therefore I was delighted to find assurances of your sympathy with this movement; and if you can only abide by the undertaking you have given in your statement, viz., that you will not import hereafter foreign cloth, it will largely answer the purpose which we want to fulfil. I know that we have throughout India today, probably 40 crores worth of piece-goods for sale. I do not see much difficulty in 40 crores worth of foreign cloth even disappearing in India amongst the multitude. But I must totally dissent from the view that the stock that you have at present is not capable of being sent out of India altogether. As you know there is a large quantity of piece-goods imported into India for re-export. I know that there are certain styles which are not salable with any degree of profit outside India. But surely there is still a large quantity of stock which is just as salable outside India as inside it. And I would ask you to tax yourselves and see whether you cannot get rid

of some at least of your foreign stock outside India. I see, for instance, no difficulty whatsoever in sending out of India all the foreign yarn that you might have. But if you will take with me a broad and national view of our own position I have still one more suggestion to make. But I know that before you can realize the suggestion by execution you must also have the same faith that I have. If all the merchants throughout India were to be true to the country and were to give their best energies and their splendid ability to the attainment of swaraj . . . if you share the belief with me that swaraj is attainable during the very year, and if you intend upon working it up then, like sensible men that you are, you may even hold your stock in reserve to be disposed of by the State through its firstparliament; any such decision on your part cannot but redound to your credit and cannot but be a credit to the country immensely. But I know that this is a counsel of perfection. At the same time other countries have in action transformed many more things. I know what happened in South Africa when the great war with the English was going on. The South African Dutch are a brave and a godfearing people; and having an immutable faith in the destiny of their own country, they counted no cost to be too heavy to pay in order to retain their country's freedom. But as I say, if you cannot have patience and if you have not the faith that we can attain swaraj during this very year, then, as I say, you will cease to import any foreign cloth either directly or indirectly and cease to enter into bargains amongst yourselves. That would entirely satisfy the present requirements. I want to put before you a few mathematical problems. Today our importers are really nothing more than commission agents. You get perhaps Rs. 5 out of every hundred rupees worth of cloth. But Rs. 95 entirely goes out to your principals. Now, imagine that you are the manufacturers of the cloth that we need in India itself. Then the whole of the hundred rupees would remain in India; and see that we shall still want almost all the cloth that we have been hitherto importing from outside. Who is going to trade with 60 crores of rupees per year? I need not tell you that you are the people. You are strong. You know the value of figures. You know your own country's need. Then is it any impossible proposition that I place before you when I suggest that you should take charge of the whole of the swadeshi movement? Does it require any very extraordinary bravery on your part to dot the country with your own agents or *gumastas*? You will simply spread charkhas and handlooms, taking and collecting yarn from all those thousands and thousands of India, stocking,

selling and converting the yarn into cloth for India. It is really your privilege and your duty to organize hand-spinning and hand-weaving throughout the length and breadth of the land. I would therefore ask you, not to feel despondent altogether as to the future of the country, and what the future of the imports of India will be when foreign cloth is entirely boycotted. I assure you that the future of India under swaraj is the brightest possible. I have no shadow of doubt that in a very short time many people in India would be laughing [at themselves] that they did not see the beauty of such a simple thing and that it had not occurred long ago that they should be undertaking this business. I would like you to cross-examine me even as your friends in Bombay, Calcutta andelsewhere have done. Nothing tends to elucidate difficulties more than hearty discussions. I thank you for gathering here and inviting us to address you this afternoon.

Afterwards a general discussion ensued . . . Mahatma Gandhi in replying to each of the merchants agreed that the initiative should come from the consumers and said that there was not the slightest suggestion in his remarks that they should repudiate the contracts made, and, as it was incumbent upon them in the cause of the motherland to co-operate with the whole of India in making the swadeshi programme a success, wished they should cease to give any further orders. If they were able to alter the taste of the people as he expected they would surely be, the people would certainly go to them; and nobody had got a greater opportunity of doing substantial propaganda work than they, the piece-goods merchants had. He deprecated the credit system obtaining among the merchants as fatal to their commerce and commercial morality, and it should therefore never be regarded an impassable barrier to undertaking to stop future orders. Swaraj was sure to come and with it new economic laws would come to prevail. With regard to the suggestion that boycott should be gradual, Mahatmaji said that they had sufficient notice of it as early as one year back and an honest merchant would never find cause to complain of financial difficulties, consequent on the giving up of the credit system. This, Mahatmaji illustrated by referring to the case of Mr. Mohamed Kachalia in South Africa who orginally carried on business on credit on a large scale and when his European customers out of political motives pressed him to clear off their dues, he boldly sold away all his property and paid his creditors to the last pie and then started business with no credit and rose to such a prosperous condition that those very European merchants were tempted to offer him their goods on credit again. That was an example which they would do well to follow and a braver merchant they could not find. Personal difficulties, no doubt he appreciated, but swaraj meant sacrifice, and even a merchant was called upon to take an unselfish view of his calling. Now that *Deepavali* was approaching they should not pin their faith to any combinations of colours and

fancies in cloth and they would find that the people had altered their faith so that *Deepavali* would mean greater self-denial and greater sacrifice....

The Hindu, 17-9-l921

129. SPEECH TO LABOURERS, MADRAS

September 16, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi addressed a large gathering of labourers (now on strike) at the Beach opposite the High Court at 6.45 p.m. Among others present were Messrs Yakub Hassan, A. Rangaswami Aiyangar, S. Satyamurti, Salla Guruswami Chetty, S. Srinivasa Aiyangar, Safi Mohamed, Kasturiranga Aiyangar, Venkatarangam Naidu and M. K. Acharya. Mahatma Gandhi spoke for more than 45 minutes in English and the speech was translated into Tamil by Mr. M. S. Subramaniya Aiyar of *Swadeshamitran*. He said:

FRIENDS,

I was not able to be here punctually at 6.30. I have been talking to our merchant friends and they occupied me longer than I thought I would have to be. I well remember the scene that presented itself to me last time when I had the pleasure of meeting you. A fellow-labourer myself, my heart has always gone out to the labourers of Madras in their sorrows and their troubles. I want to come to the subject of this evening without any further ceremony.

I know that about ten thousands of you have struck work. It grieves me to find that you have trouble amongst yourselves. It grieves me to find that you are divided into two parties. It grieves me further to find that the two parties represent not two different views but two different castes. I understand that the *Adi Dravidas*, our *Panchama*[1] friends, are ranged on one side and you, the others, on the opposite side. I understand further that these *Panchama* brethren have resumed work, whereas you, a large majority have not done so. And I understand further that there has been some pressure exerted by some of you on those brethren of ours, who have rejoined work. I understand further there are continuous quarrels and squabbles between these two parties. I am therefore here to warn the majority against using the slightest pressure against the minority. As one knowing the labourers for a period of 25 years, very nearly 30 years, as one experienced in handling large strikes even affecting more than

[1] Literally, belonging to the fifth caste; an outcaste

50,000 people at a time, I know that nothing is so demoralizing to labourers than that they should use force against a single one of their brethren. The lowest one of us, the fewest of us must have the right ofexercising his own free choice even though you may consider that he has erred. Therefore I would urge you to leave those 3,000 brethren of ours severely alone. I would urge you not to think low of them. I would urge you even to be kind to them. Certainly you will never swear at them. I would ask you not even to go to them to wean them from their service. Believe me when they find that you exercise no pressure against them, when they find that you have not a trace of ill will against them, they will of their own free choice and accord come to you. Nor will you consider that they are low caste and you are high caste.

All those who are Hindus I warn them, beware of thinking that there is high caste and low caste in Hinduism. Caste there undoubtedly is in Hinduism, but caste has been created for giving us a sense of duty, not of privileges and rights. Each caste is born to serve mankind. The Brahmin serves with his knowledge, a Kshatriya serves with his power of protection, a Vaisya with his commerce, and a Sudra with his hands and feet. But believe me all are equal in the sight of God and he is the greatest who serves best. There is no such thing as a fifth caste in Hinduism. Untouchability is a sin against God and humanity. It is a blot on Hinduism. I urge you, fellow labourers, to dispense from your minds the idea that the *Panchama* brethren are untouchable or lower than anyone else. If we had not treated them with contempt, if we had not maltreated them even as we claim we were ill-treated in Jallianwala Bagh, there would have been no difficulty about the attainment of swaraj. Believe me that this unhappy land will never return to happiness, unless Hindus with a supreme effort have got rid of this curse of untouchability. Therefore considering the whole question from every point of view I advise you strongly not to interfere with our *Panchama* brethren in anything they may do.

Your course in my opinion is absolutely clear and straight. It is your right and privilege to demand that if the company wishes to re-employ you, the company has to take all of you or none. It is your right to be advised by whomsoever you may choose and the company cannot dictate to you that you may not be advised by outsiders. You must insist upon your inherent right of selecting any Chairman or President you like of your Union whether out of your own ranks or

anybody else. You have a right consistently with the condition of affairs in the country to determine for yourselves the terms on which you will rejoin service. You have a right to demand such wages as will enable you to sustain life, to educate your children and live as decent human beings. You are entitled to the same fresh water and fresh air as your employers. You are entitled to insist upon having leisure and recreation from day to day. But you have also corresponding duties to perform. You must render diligent and faithful service to your employers. You have to look after the property of your employers as if it was your own. You must not seduce a single one of the employees from service. You may not absent yourselves without permission. These simple rights and duties once being understood must always be insisted upon and fulfilled as the case may be.

The next question therefore that arises is what are you to do if the employers will not employ you on your own terms. After having respectfully tendered your submission to your employers you should no more think about that submission. But you must set about working for your own livelihood. I have therefore suggested to the mill-hands of Ahmedabad and the railway employees on the Assam-Bengal Railway and the employees of the River Steam Navigation Company that they should always have a supplementary occupation to fall back upon, and the only occupation that thousands upon thousands of our countrymen can usefully occupy themselves in is hand-spinning, carding and weaving. All these three things are as easy as they are universal. I assure you and I ask you to accept the assurance of an experienced spinner and weaver. If you will diligently work at this occupation for not less than 8 hours a day; you will, each one of you, earn as much as Re. 1 per day. As a spinner you will earn perhaps Re. 3 per day but as an accomplished weaver you can command a wage of Re. 1 per day. Your wives, your sisters, your mothers, your little children of 7 of 8 years can all lend a helping hand to you in earning your livelihood in this fashion. The more there are of you, the more you earn. The question therefore for those who have got large families is solved automatically and when you have learnt the dignity of your state and when you have also understood you have an occupation to fall back upon, you will not be violent either against your employers or against those who choose to seek employment under them. If you will but follow my advice you will find that you will not only become self-reliant, but the relation between yourselves and your employers will be of the healthiest character. When every

labourer, man or woman, in the land thinks of swaraj and self-purification, let me assure you that if you accept my advice you will accelerate the day of swaraj. If you are Mussulmans you will soon find that you are not only supporting yourselves honourably, but you are discharging your obligations to Islam in the most faithful manner.

I know that in the beginning stages even if you accept my advice you will require a little capital to start with, but I have not a shadow of doubt that everyone of you who is an honest worker will have no difficulty in getting a handloom, a spinning-wheel or a carding bow. Whether you accept this or not, please remember that any violence, any disturbance, committed by you will recoil with redoubled force upon your own heads. You will forefeit all public sympathy and every man's hand will be against you. Therefore you will make up your minds not to go near the mills, not to seek collision with your *Panchama* brethren; but you will be engaged in quietly organizing yourselves for work. Labour has no occasion to go a-begging.

One word more and I have finished. I would like you all, you and your wives and your children, to take your share in the great national movement that is sweeping across the length and breadth of the land. The things that the country demands of us are capable of being done by every one of us. I would like you to swear before God that we shall not resort to violence for the freedom of our country or for settling quarrels between Hindus and Mussulmans, to resolve that God is our witness, that in spite of the madness shown by some of our Moplah countrymen we Hindus and Mussulmans shall remain united for ever, and to take a solemn vow that henceforth we shall never wear foreign cloth or use it for any domestic purpose and that we shall wear only such cloth as is made out of hand-spun yarn and hand-woven. Saying that we claim to fight the battle of religion we will not defile our bodies by touching wine or women. We shall not gamble, we shall not steal, nor shall we deceive any people. I make bold to say that if you, the ten thousand labourers of the Madras mills, will make this solemn resolution and abide by it, you will find at the end of the chapter that you will have contributed not a little to the attainment of swaraj and to the solution of the Khilafat and the Punjab problems. May God bless you with the wisdom and courage that are required today of every Indian. You heard yesterday from my lips, if you were at all present on the Beach, that Maulana Mahomed Ali was arrested at Waltair. He was arrested and will be imprisoned for your sake and my sake. You and I know him to be an honest Mussulman and a brave

Indian. You and I know him to be lover of his religion and his country. He and his brother have suffered already for their country and for their religion; and our honour and our affection for these brothers demand from us not violence, not anger but a fixed determination to catty our programme to success. They want no hartal, nor madness from us. But they expect us to remain united and to carry out boycott of foreign cloth even though every one of us may have to be satisfied with a loin-cloth. They expect us by fearlessly turning our faces godward to establish swaraj within this very year and release them under the first resolution of the swaraj parliament.

I thank you for the exemplary patience with which you have listened to me. Maulana Azad Sobhani Saheb who, as some of you at least know, is a great Mussulman divine, will now say a few words to you to which I am sure you will give respectful attention. . . .

At the close of the meeting a big bonfire was made of foreign clothes of all kinds . . .

The Hindu, 17-9-1921

130. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

ON THE WAY,
Septmeber 17, 1921

REVERED ANASUYABEHN,

I have your letter. I sent you a copy of the telegram I sent to Mangaldas about the workers. Here is another telegram. Now nothing remains to be done. I hope to reach Bombay on October 2. It is a Monday.

The news of Bapubhai's health is saddening. I am sending a telegram about it. I can't make anything of Shankerlal's health. He is not looking after himself. I have written to him.

I feel that our struggle will have to be more intense because of the Shaukat Ali-Mohmed Ali incident.[1] We shall think about it when I come.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32828

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[1] *Vide* also "Notes", 8-9-1921.

131. SPEECH AT CUDDALORE[1]

September 17, 1921

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I thank you for the addresses presented this evening, and also for the Tilak Swaraj Fund purse. I thank you too for the purse presented by Muslim friends for Smyrna Relief Fund. I know that you would have been better pleased if Maulana Mahomed Ali had been present to receive the purse. But if we do not have in our midst Mahomed Ali, we have Maulana Azad, a divine in his place. And if the Muslims are so minded to learn all about the Khilafat and the Koran they have a safe guide and friend in Maulana Azad.

Surely, if we are to attain swaraj this year, and to redress the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs this year, we should follow non-violent non-co-operation without causing the slightest confusion. Love that expresses itself in confusion is blind love. And what today India requires most is enlightened love. And enlightened love translates itself not in vocal demonstrations but real, substantial actions. The honour of every Indian demands that we should not rest quiet for a single minute until Maulana Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali are released from prison by our own efforts. Their discharge will be a proper discharge from prison if and were it to be by the reason of our having attained swaraj. And swaraj if it means nothing else, undoubtedly means discipline. I hope therefore that leaders of this place will see to it that they give practical demonstrations to the citizens in conducting meetings in discipline, so that orders are obeyed implicitly. For, we have understood, the Congress in two successive sessions has shown us the way to attain swaraj. And that is the way of non-violence. And we shall not succeed till we practise non-violence with full knowledge. I hope therefore that the people of Cuddalore District will have preliminary lessons by propaganda and practice. There is no doubt that we are at the present moment in an excited state. On the one hand repression by the Sircar irritates us, on the other, hope of something good in future throws us off our balance. It is just the state that predisposes to violence. And any violence on the part of the non-co-operators certainly blocks the way

[1] On Gidlam grounds, S. Srinivasa Iyengar presiding; the address in English was translated into Tamil by M. K. Acharya.

to swaraj.

And in my humble opinion the spinning-wheel is the greatest steadying force amidst us. Just think what splendid results you could have shown if you had been devoting all your time to spinning for the sake of the nation in the name of God instead of waiting for me so long a time. It is high time that we unlearn the habit of listening to speeches and an idle curiosity to have a look at the leaders. And I assure you that I would have declined to go over here on account of ceaseless travelling if it was not for the assurance given that it would lead to complete establishment of swadeshi. I see that most of the sisters present, and the men of the audience have something or other of *videshi*[1] cloth on their person. But let me hope that you will come to an unalterable decision to throw off the foreign cloth on your person and in your boxes. And you will see to it that a spinning-wheel finds a place in every home and manufacture your cloth instead of getting it from either Manchester and Japan or even Bombay and Ahmedabad.

The third condition of success is Hindu-Muslim unity. But I am satisfied from all my observations that if the spinning-wheel finds a place in the home it will create unity. We call our movement a movement of self-purification. And I was therefore glad to understand from Dr. Rajan[2] that the movement of temperance has made a considerable headway in this Province. I hope that you will drive away the curse of drink from your midst in its entirety.

One word to my Hindu countrymen and women. Probably the curse of untouchability does not inflict any other part of India as this Presidency. It is in this land of religious devotion and worship that this shadow defiles you. It is in this sacred land that the untouchable is treated worse than what we complain of at the hands of our rulers. Swaraj is a meaningless term if we disenfranchised permanently one-sixth of the population of India. Speaking as a *sanatani*[3] Hindu, as I claim to be, there is not the slightest authority for untouchability in our Shastras. And it grieves me to think of that in a land where Shankara and Ramanuja were born and preached. I repeat the declaration I have made from many a platform that unless we remove such a blot there is no swaraj for India. Believing as I do in the law of

[1] Foreign
[2] Dr. T. S. S. Rajan, who was present at the meeting
[3] Orthodox

karma, it is the fittest retribution that God has given us for making one-sixth of the people as Pariahs, thereby making ourselves Pariahs of the world. Hinduism, Islam, Christianity and all the great religions of the world are in the melting pot today. And believe me; if we cannot get rid of it, Hinduism will be at the bottom of the list. I hope therefore that you and especially leaders of public opinion and sisters will hear my remarks and will give due consideration to the Congress resolution regarding untouchability. I thank you for the patience you have shown in listening to me and I hope you will give a respectful hearing to the words of my friend Maulana Azad who will speak in Hindustani. . . .

Later there was a bonfire and *videshi* clothes worth Rs. 1,000 or so were burnt amidst defening cries of *Mahatma ki jai*, *Vandemataram* and *Allah-o-Akbar*. The Mahatma left the place for Porto Novo *en route* to Kumbakonam.

The Hindu, 19-9-1921

132. CIRCULAR LETTER

[After *September 17, 1921*]

DEAR FRIEND,

In view of the arrest[1] of Maulanas Shaukat Ali. and Mahomed Ali and others, it is necessary for some of us to meet and consider the situation. The Working Committee meets at Ahmedabad on the 6th October. But it would be well if we could meet at Bombay on the 4th October at Laburnum Road at 1 p.m. sharp. Will you please let me know at Bombay whether you would attend ? I reach Bombay on the 2nd October.

Yours sincerely,

[PS.]

From your province I have only invited you and . . . You will please bring any other friend whose presence may be helpful.

Madras	Yakoob Hussain
United Provinces	Khwaja
Bom[bay]	Mrs. Naidu
United Provinces	Maulana Abdul Bari

[1] Shaukat Ali's arrest mentioned in the letter was on September 17 at Bombay. *Vide* "Speech at Trichinopoly", 19-9-1921.

Behar	Abdul Kalam Azad
Punjab	Stokes
Bengal	Das
Central Provinces	Jamnalalji
Punjab	Lalaji
Delhi	Hakimji
,,	Dr. Ansari
Sind	Jairamdas
Madras	Rajagopalachari
,,	Kasturi
United Provinces	Jawaharlal
Andhra	Venkatappayya
Maharashtra	Kelkar
Karnatak	Gangadharrao
Gujarat	Vallabhbhai
Gujarat	Vithalbhai
Behar	Rajendra
United Provinces	Hasrat
Andhra	T. Prakasam

From a photostat: S.N. 7628

133. BITTER EXPERIENCES IN CALCUTTA

I have given some description of my tour in East Bengal. There the people assembled in their thousands and yet they did not tire me. In Calcutta, however, I am completely exhausted. For one thing, I could not go to sleep till midnight and, for another, there were loud shouts of victory. It is too much for me. I get exhausted hearing them the whole day. My ears cannot endure them and, as they mean nothing, I find them painful. I am quite clear in my mind that this shouting does not help us. When people had no spirit in them, when they were afraid even to express their views, I suppose the shouting gave them some confidence in themselves. This was my experience in Champaran. Hundreds of people used to come and sit round me just in order to feel such confidence. Although their love made me feel impatient, I bore with them. Here, too, I get the same love. Shouts of victory are an indication of unthinking adoration, which profits

neither the people nor me.

I have here considered this shouting from my own point of view. Touching of my feet in reverence is equally painful. I sometimes get hurt. Sometimes I barely save myself from a fall. I shiver in fear when setting out for meetings.

I see a danger in these shouts. Let us imagine that a crowd of love crazy people has been shouting; while they are engaged in this, people hear nothing with their ears and see nothing with their eyes. Let us imagine, further, that somebody starts trouble and two or three men hit out with sticks. I see all this and I tell them with gestures and words to stop fighting. But who will listen to this frail reed-pipe? Meanwhile, let us imagine, the fighting spreads, people take sides and there is bloodshed. All this can happen without anybody wanting it. I believe this is what happened in Amritsar[1]. I do not believe that anybody had planned to kill the innocent bank manager. But the people's blood was boiling and some wicked persons took advantage of that situation.

I feel, therefore, that this non-violent struggle of ours has no room for any shouts of victory, or, if at all, only for those utteredin the right manner, at the right time and repeated the fewest times. It would appear that volunteers in Calcutta have not been trained to keep order at meetings, for I have noted that, if the people are instructed beforehand, they generally obey the directions. Expression of love cannot be forced on anyone. If it is explained to the people that remaining quiet is also a sign of love or respect, they will immediately understand the idea. I tried this experiment in two meetings. My feet got crushed as I was passing through the mass of people and I was irritated by the sloganshouting. At one place, it took me twenty minutes to reach the rostrum. At both these places I devoted one-fourth of my speech to the need for remaining quiet at meetings, preserving peace and making room for the leaders to pass. The result, at both the places, was that on our leaving the meeting they made way for us, there was no slogan-shouting and the people did not get up till we had left and so, while earlier it had taken twenty minutes to make our way through the crowd, it took only one minute while leaving.

From this experience, I judge that, if the people are given instructions in advance, they will certainly understand them and act

[1] In April 1919

accordingly. It is my belief that by and large the people realize the need for preserving peace and are eager to do so

Now let us suppose the converse of all this. Imagine for a while that the people are all quietly seated. Everybody's eyes and attention are turned to the leader who is the guest. Imagine now that a quarrel starts somewhere in this peaceful gathering. Imagine that everyone remains calmly seated where he is. The result would be that the voice of the leader would reach every person in the audience. He can even go to the men who are fighting and calm them. Even if this does not happen, the fighting would not spread when nobody wants it and we would not be accused of disturbing public peace. In the army, this is how they act. Everyone keeps to his place. No person can leave his place and go elsewhere till he is ordered to do so, nor can he interfere in other matters. We, too, are a non-violent army fighting for swaraj. We also have to do our duty keeping to our own place. We need not concern ourselves with what others are doing. We know that other workers will look after matters in their respective fields. A non-violent army demands, or should insist upon, greater discipline, self-restraint and orderliness than what are necessary in an army equipped with arms.

I had a bitter experience of scheming as well as of love in Calcutta. The bitterness prevailing among the different parties in Calcutta will, I think, be hardly found anywhere else. I see nothing but poison in the writings of the English papers which oppose non-co-operation. There is no limit to the malicious criticism of the writings of non-co-operators and no end of lies which are spread against them. As if this were not enough, the writings and speeches of our great poet, Rabindranath Thakur, are used to such wicked purposes that I simply cannot understand how people have the courage to misrepresent things so completely. Observing these lies, I often picture to myself the conditions in *Ravanarajya*[1]. Where there is no discrimination in the choice of means, cunning and deception should not surprise us. It would never have been possible for Ravana to carry off Sitaji if he had appeared before her as the demon which he was. He could do so only by assuming the form of a sadhu. When saintliness is thus used as a cover, destruction soon overtakes the man. I see the English papers here spreading falsehood in the name of truth. I have referred to this poisonous atmosphere merely in order

[1] Rule of Ravana, based on complete disregard for moral values.

that the non-co-operators may draw a lesson from it, that they should keep away from such falsehood. We should never forget that our weapons are non-violence and truth.

A spinning-wheel exhibition is being held here in the National College. I saw there about fifteen types of new spinning-wheels. The ingenious devices they display are endless. A good many young men have been putting their talents to good use. Some of the spinning-wheels were beautiful indeed. Some were very small. I saw one which could be carried in a little box. One could be put in a chest while another was fitted with a musical instrument. But I did not see any which could match the conventional type in producing yarn. The conclusion, therefore, which I certainly draw from all these attempts at invention was that the spinning-wheel had now become very popular and that improvements in the existing type were exercising the ingenuity of innumerable engineers.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-9-l921

134. WHAT SHOULD GUJARAT DO ?

We considered how, from the point of view of practical arrangements, we can make the ensuing session of the Congress a good success.[1] Let us now examine the matter from the point of view of larger considerations.

If a province invites a session of the Congress, it is presupposed that the province has the right to do so and is fit to exercise the right. Every province, of course, has such a right, but a province may or may not be fit to exercise it.

We have invited the Congress session and thereby increased our responsibility, have pledged ourselves to implement its resolutions more effectively than other provinces and declared our resolve to do our utmost to that end.

According to the resolution of the Congress, we must secure this year a settlement of the Khilafat issue and justice regarding the Punjab. The Congress has also indicated the means to be adopted to achieve these objectives and the All-India Congress Committee has shown how to employ them:

[1] *Vide* "Preparation for Congress", 4-9-1921.

1. Remaining peaceful.

2. Strengthening Hindu-Muslim unity.

3. For effecting complete boycott of foreign cloth, every province and every village should employ the spinning-wheel and the handloom to produce the khadi it needs.

After a tour of the Surat district, Shri Vithalbhai Patel came to Calcutta for the meeting of the Congress Working Committee. He reported that Gujarat, and particularly the Surat district, was ready for swaraj. Men and women both.

I asked him: "Are any men and women ready to go to jail, and do the rest promise to remain peaceful?"

Shri Vithalbhai replied: "In Surat district, thousands of men and women will come forward to court imprisonment and peace will be preserved even if they are imprisoned."

I was as much surprised as pleased to hear this. I was not ready for such an answer. That thousands of women of noble Gujarat should be ready to go to jail may seem unbelievable. But everything is possible with God. He is doing miracles all the time. The axis of the earth He has created never wears out! His sun never forgets to rise! Were it not that these things happen before our very eyes, would we believe them?

However, if Gujarat, or Surat, is really ready, they will have to provide some indication of their readiness beforehand. We see signs of the coming sunrise two hours before the event. Similarly, we should be able to observe the twilight hour between the vanishing of the darkness of slavery and the rising of the sun of swaraj. The fact that we have succeeded in collecting the money is one indication, but the real sign is swadeshi. Has Gujarat made a bonfire of foreign cloth or totally renounced its use? Has it stopped ordering foreign cloth? Have the people in the villages of Gujarat started wearing khadi, producing their own requirements? Do the weavers of Gujarat weave only hand-spun yarn? Have the agents in Gujarat stopped running up to Bombay for cloth? Have the *Meghawals* in Gujarat, who had left off their profession, taken up weaving again? Do all women in Gujarat spin as a matter of duty? Are the foreign cloth shops in Gujarat about to close down? The answers to these questions will decide whether it is fit.

So long as we have not started wearing khadi, so long as both men and women love foreign cloth, who will believe them even if they

declare that they are ready to go to jail ? I hope nobody will argue: "I can go to jail, but I do not have the courage to wear khadi; I feel ashamed to spin and I find weaving tedious." If we have lost the capacity to preserve peace, our capacity to make noise at meetings should also leave us. We should be able to see thousands of people moving in perfect silence. As long as we lack such discipline, who will believe that we shall never resort to violence despite efforts to provoke us?

Shri Vithalbhai, when reporting as above, also said that, If I held it necessary that we should also be rid of the uncleanness of untouchability, there was no possibility of our getting swaraj this year, for not a single school was ready to admit children of *Dheds*[1] or *Bhangis*.

I am convinced that, if we let our minds remain tainted with the uncleanness of our prejudice against the *Dheds* and *Bhangis*, God will never help us to win swaraj and the Englishmen's contempt for us will never disappear. Self-purification is the foundation on which our swaraj is to rest. Securing swaraj is like ascending to heaven. Yudhisthira refused to enter the gate of heaven without his dog. Do we hope to get into the temple of swaraj ourselves, leaving our *Bhangi* brethren behind and running at top speed towards it? If we cherish any such hope, we are in for a bitter experience. Reaching the gates of the temple, we shall find that they are closed.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-9-1921

135. MY NOTES

WHERE WILL PEOPLE PARK THEIR SHOES?

Everybody is hoping, or fearing, that no chair will be seen at the Ahmedabad Congress. A friend, therefore, raised a query: "But where will all these people deposit their shoes?" I replied: "Everybody can remove his shoes and carry them under his arm and, to help them to do so, we shall keep small khadi sacks for sale." People may also bring their own sacks. If shoes are removed and put into these sacks, there would be no problem whatever. Another method, followed in Europe, is that everybody deposits his shoes with a custodian and gets

[1] Untouchables

a token from him The token may be returned and one may have one's shoes back any time one likes. I have no doubt that the better way is to carry them in a sack. The test of our efficiency lies in making advance provision for everything to the minutest detail.

FOOD ARRANGEMENTS

While discussing food arrangements with people, I felt that we should maintain language-wise kitchens and instruct the secretaries of the respective regions to bring their own cooks. Our responsibility will be to supply provisions, water, plates, utensils, etc. This idea was approved by everyone here with whom I discussed it. This will leave no room for complaint about food arrangements. Very often people from one region cannot digest food from another region. Probably the Khilafat Camp will make arrangements for non-vegetarians. For those who are accustomed to living and eating in the English style, we may not make any arrangements in the camp but negotiate with hotel-keepers and communicate their rates and addresses to various Provincial Committees so that such people may make their own arrangements directly. If we do this, we shall be saved many anxieties and everybody will be provided for according to his taste. To this end, we should start correspondence with the different provinces right now and make all arrangements. We should advise them as to what we consider desirable and, after obtaining their comment, the arrangements should be finalized.

HOW MANY TO ARRANGE FOR ?

We may assume that ten thousand persons will attend the Congress, including visitors and delegates. We shall, however, do well to presume that the population of Ahmedabad will go up at least by one lakh, taking into account spectators and sight-seers. As we are bound to arrange for their boarding and lodging, it is imperative that we make the requisite arrangements in advance instead of leaving people to fend for themselves. .

EXHIBITION

As part of the Congress session there is bound to be an exhibition. I think that we should display in it only products of ancient Indian crafts and khadi, and the various steps in the processing of cotton. We need not at all exhibit mill cloth. I noticed this error in the Bombay exhibition. It will be proper for us to exhibition only

cloth in which both warp and woof are hand-spun. Ahmedabad even today remains a veritable storehouse of ancient crafts. We may well find room for carvings in wood or ivory and ancient paintings but, in respect of cloth, we should resolutely refuse to admit anything except khadi and implements required for the manufacture of khadi. I place these ideas before the Committee for their consideration. I hope that it will not be assumed during the discussion that my views ought to be accepted because they are mine; I should like the Committee to examine this suggestion impartially along with suggestions from others.

VOLUNTEERS

A great deal will depend on the sincerity, courtesy and resourcefulness of the volunteers. I saw in Bengal that all volunteers wore dhotis. In East Bengal, I found that both Hindus and Muslims wore dhotis. Muslims wore caps and Hindus did not. I did not hear any complaint from anywhere that the volunteers felt their movements restricted unless they wore trousers. l have a good deal of experience in this matter and I have come to the conclusion that peaceful volunteers uniform must not emulate that of a policeman or a soldier. The very presence of a volunteer of non-co-operation should suggest non-violence. A military uniform is inconsistent with this. It is the practice of many volunteers to carry swords or other weapons. They should give this up. At a public meeting at Howrah, a volunteer carried a dagger, but Maulana Mahomed Ali took it away from him. If we have decided that we will kill no one, that we shall lay down our own lives instead, why should we need swords? What will a sword symbolize?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-9-1921

136. SPEECH AT KUMBAKONAM

September 18, 1921

FRIENDS,

I thank you for all these addresses and the sentiments contained in them. I am sorry, and I know that you will share my sorrow, that Maulana Mahomed Ali and his Begum are not with us. Happily I have Maulana Azad Sobhani of Cawnpore with me. I hardly think that in

this din and noise you will have the opportunity of hearing his message. There are three indispensable conditions that we have to fulfil if we desire the attainment of swaraj and the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs this year.

They are, firstly, absolute unity between the Hindus and Mussulmans, each party retaining their own ties in spite of the madness of some Moplahs. The second condition is non-violence, and the third condition is swadeshi. And it has been unfortunate to find that swadeshi has made the least headway in this Presidency. You must all discard foreign cloth and take up spinning and weaving. There is a fourth condition which must be fulfilled by the Hindus, and that is the removal of the curse of untouchability. Unless we remove that blot it is utterly impossible to get swaraj.

I know that of all places in India, Madras is the worst regarding untouchability. I hope, therefore, that the people of Kumbakonam will take care to set their house in order in this respect. We cannot keep a fifth part of the Hindu humanity outside the pale of society and claim to have swaraj. The conditions that I have mentioned to you are easy of fulfilment, and I pray to God that He may give you and me wisdom and courage to follow them out in their entirety.

The Hindu, 19-9-1921

137. LETTER TO SIDNEY BURN[1]

[After *September18, 1921*]

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th instant. I had intended to pass through the Pudukkottai State on my way to Chettinad. But in view of your letter[2], I shall alter my route.

I have, etc.,

From a photostat: S.N. 7618

[1] Sir Sidney Burn, I. C. S., Administrator, Pudukkottai State; later judge, Madras High Court

[2] Which read: " . . . you will not be allowed to pass through this State. If you will attempt to do so you will be stopped at the frontier by the police."

138. LETTER TO MANAGER, EASTERN BANK

TRICHY, MADRAS PRESIDENCY,
September 19, 1921

DEAR SIR,

Will you please hand to bearer cheque for £90 received by you on my behalf from Mombasa?

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

THE MANAGER
THE EASTERN BANK
BOMBAY

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

139. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

TRICHINAPALLY,
Silence Day, September 19, 1921

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have both your letters. I do not think that all Muslims, or a majority of Muslims, commit excesses. But even if we assume that they do, their excesses are nothing in comparison to those committed by the Government. I have the same remedy for dealing with the Muslim excesses: either non-violence or, if you do not like it, brute force. But if we do not want to consider either, then there is the scheme of swadeshi. Hindus and Muslims cannot come together unless they learn the lesson of peace. All these questions arise from a misunderstanding of non-violence.

In Ahmedabad I paid no attention to the talk of proclaiming independence. We have not the strength to do it. And so long as we do not have the strength what is the use of talking about it? If we had the strength, I would certainly agree to a proclamation of independence.

You may discuss . . .'s[1] case when I come there. Right now you must concentrate on improving your health. A short sojourn in Allahabad may brace you up. If not there is Sinhgarh or Abu or Girnar. There are any number of such places.

I am going to have to run around for some more time. It appears I shall reach there on the 2nd.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

140. SPEECH AT TRICHINOPOLY[2]

September 19, 1921

FRIENDS,

It gives me much pleasure to renew your acquaintance in this historic city. I thank the Municipality for its address and also the Congress Committee for its address. I know that you are all sorry that Maulana Mahomed Ali is not in our midst tonight, nor is Begum Sahiba, but you see to my right a learned Muslim divine in the person of Maulana Azad Sobhani. He has been moving amongst the Mussulmans of Trichinopoly during the day. I have no doubt that the Mussulmans of this place understand exactly what their duty is by Islam and their country. You may not all know that Maulana Shaukat Ali also was arrested in Bombay on the 17th instant, and up in the Punjab, the same honours were given to Dr. Kitchlew[3]. I do not know the reason that actuated the Government in arresting Dr. Kitchlew, but the Bombay Government have been good enough to inform the public of the reasons why they have arrested the Ali Brothers. The first reason stated by the Bombay Government is that they have tampered with the loyalty of the Army. The Government *communique* goes on to state how they tampered with the loyalty of the Army. The Brothers were a party to a resolution at a conference in Karachi which

[1] Illegible

[2] Dr. T. S. S. Rajan translated Gandhiji's speech in English into Tamil, sentence by sentence.

[3] A Congress Worker from the Punjab, an associate of Gandhiji; winner of Lenin Peace Prize.

called upon the Mussulmans to warn any Mussulman against serving in the Army and telling every Mussulman soldier that in terms of Islam it was a sin to serve in the British Army. I am sorry that I was not present at that historic conference in Karachi and had I been present there and had the conference permitted me, I should also have been one of those who would have supported that resolution. (Laughter,) Only a Mussulman can say whether it is a sin for a Mussulman to serve in the British Army at the present moment, but as a Hindu and as an Indian, I know what my duty and what the duty of every Hindu, every Indian, should be on such an occasion. I know that it is a sin for a single Indian to serve either in the British Army, or in any of the civil departments of this Government, and if a public declaration of this character even in the presence of soldiers constituted the offence of tampering with the loyalty of the soldiers of the British Army, let me tell this meeting and through this meeting the Government of India, that I have committed the offence of tampering with the soldiers serving in the British Army, times without number. Nor is it a new offence it was an offence deliberately committed by me in the month of September last year, and it was an offence committed also by the Indian National Congress in the month of September at Calcutta[1] and deliberately repeated at Nagpur[2]. If neither the Congress nor I have hitherto gone to individual soldiers and individual employees in the Government departments, it is not because of want of will, but because of want of ability. In our unfortunate country in which poverty is day by day deepening and in which starvation faces lakhs upon lakhs of our countrymen and countrywomen, it has not been possible for us, up now to call upon the soldiers individually, to appeal to them and ask them for the sake of their country and for the sake of their religion to give up their employment and do their duty. What I venture to warn the Government is that as soon as the country has received and assimilated the gospel of the spinning-wheel and swaraj and as soon as the soldiers and others are ready to take up the spinning-wheel and the handloom, I promise that if I have got still the strength left in me and the personal liberty that is vouchsafed to me by this Government, I promise that I shall undertake to go to every one of the soldiers and every one of those who are serving in the civil departments of

[1] *Vide* "The Non-co-operation resolution", 5-9-1920.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Congress resolution on Non-co-operation".

Government to give up his employment and take up the spinning-wheel; but even at this very moment, I invite every soldier who calls himself an Indian and every servant in Government employment that if he has understood the message of swadeshi, it is his bounden duty to have his employment under this Government which has emasculated this country, which has put affronts upon Islam and which has made itself responsible for the tragedy of Jallianwala Bagh. I say that it is a sin for anybody to serve this Government and if they have got a hope in swadeshi they will do well to leave their employment under this Government.

The second reason given by the Government of Bombay is that these Brothers have made speeches inciting to violence. I know the Brothers, I know almost all the speeches that they have delivered and I venture from this platform to deny that charge *in toto*. The Brothers have ever, in private and in public, to my knowledge weaned the people from any tendency to violence, but I shall tell you the reason why the Government have laid their hands upon the two Brothers. They are brave, they are truthful and they are lovers of their religion and their country and they have acquired an influence upon Indians such as no other Indians have acquired during their lifetime over them. Theirs is a name to conjure with among the Mussulmans and they have found an abiding place in the hearts of millions of Hindus and Mussulmans. They stand, as no Mussulmans have stood, for Hindu-Muslim unity. This Government has no room for brave people, for fearless people, for people who are truthful, who are lovers of their country and their religion and who have acquired an influence over the masses, but whilst I must analyse the mentality of this Government, and whilst I must draw your attention to the sins of this Government, I would warn you against becoming excited and going in for violence. I tender my congratulation to our countrymen throughout India that in spite of provocation of this grave type given to the country, the country has observed what I venture to call divine peace. I hope that the peace that reigns supreme in India today is due not to the fear of the British bayonet, but is due to a consciousness of our growing strength and a consciousness of our own pledge solemnly given in September and repeated in December. If in spite of the existing provocation and in spite of still further provocations that may be in store for us, if we keep to our promise and retain this peace up to the end, I assure you that this very Government will still apologize to India for the wrong done to the Khilafat, for the wrong done to the

Punjab and for the wrong done to the Ali Brothers. Let us understand what this Government stands for. It has chiefly sustained itself for all these long years by a system of terrorism as its final refuge. We have for the last 12 months repeatedly challenged the Government to do its worst. If we deliberately and consciously run into fire, we must not blame the fire for scorching us. We have known by previous experience what this Government is capable of doing under certain given circumstances. We have lighted the fire of Government's ire, let us not now in a cowardly manner run away from it and, if we stand the rigorous test to which we are subjected today, I promise that inside of three months you will establish swaraj in India, and you will call yours a free country. Let non-violence be a weapon not of the weak, but of the strong even as it was with the two Brothers. When the Government understands that no amount of provocation will goad us into madness, but that we have proposed henceforth to remain sane, you will find that there will be nothing that this Government can do to oust us from the position that we ought to occupy. I ask the Mussulmans as also the Hindus, if they have understood the spirit of the working of the Brothers, if they have understood the spirit of the message of non-co-operation and if they are lovers of their religion and their country, I ask both Mussulmans and Hindus, not to be irritated but remain calm and firm in their determination to vindicate the honour of their religion and their country.

There is only one thing and one thing only that has got to be done by every woman and every man in India and that is to discard all the foreign clothes and all the foreign fineries which have hitherto been a sign of our bondage. It is not enough that you away a few rags from your houses and from your boxes but it is necessary for the women of Trichinopoly to part with their finest saris which they have hugged to themselves hitherto which are made from foreign yarn. That will give me the measure of your affection for your religion for your country and for the Ali Brothers and let the men of Trichinopoly, whether they are Hindus or Mussulmans, permit themselves to be measured by the same standard and let them not be found wanting tomorrow morning. You may not have the splendid organizing talent and the inexhaustible energy of Maulana Shaukat Ali. You may not have the eloquence of a Mahomed Ali, but every Hindu and every Mussulman can easily imitate their faculty for renouncing every happiness on earth for the sake of their religion and their country. You can discard even as they have done every foreign

garment about you. You can wear as heavy khaddar as these two big Brothers have been wearing for the last six months. That will be the true measure of your affection for them. That will be a tangible demonstration of your recognition of true non-violence and recognition of Hindu-Muslim unity for we are united immediately we show that we have a common purpose.

The students in Kumbakonam and the students in Madras also asked me what was their duty at a critical period of our history. Their clearest duty was placed before them in September and December and that was to leave every school which was either managed by the Government or aided by it and I congratulate those students of Trichinopoly who had the courage of their conviction and who could see the necessity for abandoning Government schools. I congratulate them on having done splendid work during these months and I render my sympathy to those students who for some reason or other could not see their way to leave their old schools, but they can still serve their country if they will. They can religiously set apart a definite hour or two, as the case may be, for spinning on behalf of India. They can adopt khaddar like everybody else. On the altar of swadeshi we can invite co-operators and non-co-operators, those who are serving the Government and those who are not serving the Government, we invite all who care to call themselves Indians. Just as it is our primary duty to eat the food that is grown in India and cooked in India, so is it our primary duty to clothe ourselves with cloth that has been spun and woven in India; and, just as we realize instinctively that the true law of economics requires that we should cook our own food in our own homes, so the law of economics instinctively demands from us that we spin and weave our cloth in our own homes.

Like the students, lawyers also have enquired of me in Bengal, in Madras and also in Kumbakonam and it is not for us to point the finger of scorn at them, if they have not seen their way to suspend practice, but I venture to invite them to follow the gospel of swadeshi and in every way possible to help the swadeshi movement, at least they are expected to have the courage of wearing khaddar in the law-courts. If they have faith in swaraj, I certainly expect them and their household to set apart an hour or two every day for winning religiously. If today people of different types and qualities have found themselves on public platforms, I hope that the lawyers will be

patient enough and realize the dignity of labour and realize the dignity of service among the rank and file. Courage, endurance and above all, fearlessness and spirit of willing sacrifices are the qualities that are required today in India for leadership. I have not a shadow of doubt in my mind that an illiterate *Panchama* brother who can exhibit these qualities in their fullness is more able than a frail person like myself to lead a movement of this character, for what we are pining for is not a complicated thing, but a very simple thing called swaraj, our birthright. I have no doubt in my mind that simple godfearing women can lead a movement of this character if they have the qualities that I have mentioned and I invite the women of Trichinopoly to play their part and give their full share on the altar of sacrifice. Seeing that our battle is non-violent, I warn everyone in this audience against the spirit of intolerance seizing hold of us. Students who have left schools or colleges or lawyers who have suspended practice may not adopt an air of superiority and look down upon those students and lawyers who have not conformed to the Congress resolution. There is room enough on the swaraj platform for the weakest and the strongest of Indians. The army of non-violence can take in children and even disabled men if they have got a true heart.

One thing more in connection with the Moplah revolt and I shall have done. I know that what has happened in Malabar has been preying upon all of us who have understood anything about the situation there. My heart bleeds to think that our Moplah brethren have gone mad. I am grieved to find that they have killed officers. I am grieved to think that they have looted Hindu houses leaving many hundreds of men and women homeless and foodless. I am grieved to think that they have endeavoured forcibly to convert Hindus to Islam and by all these acts they have done an injury. . . but all the same let us have a due sense of proportion. Their acts are not the acts of all the Muslims of India even, nor, thank God, of all the Moplahs. Every Mussulman of note that I know has repudiated every one of their acts. Let our loyalty to Hindu-Muslim unity therefore remain firm and changeless. Our loyalty to that creed may still have to suffer greater shocks, but so long as we are satisfied, that there is nothing in Islam to warrant any of the things that these misguided Moplahs have done, and so long as we are satisfied as I am satisfied that no sensible Mussulman approves of these acts, or any single one of them, our loyalty to the creed of Hindu-Muslim unity need not suffer any shock whatsoever. Let us not also for one moment imagine that had it not

been for the British bayonet, peace could never have been restored in Malabar. All the world over, wherever there are men and women they fight sometimes, they sometimes break their heads and run amok, but there has never been any difficulty about settling their own quarrels. Where was the Government and its police when the first Moplah ran amok? What is the use of a Government that knows only how to exact reprisals, but does not know how to protect life in its initial stages? Of what use is a Government whose police are never expected to run the slightest risk and which takes a thousand lives against one life. Of what use is a Government which, having known the temperament of the Moplahs for years and years, failed to bring the lesson of peace to them. Lastly, what is the use of a Government that left those Hindus absolutely unarmed for self-defence. With the Moplahs of Malabar, I know that non-violence is not their final creed as it is mine. The Government of Bombay has thrown dust into our eyes by connecting the Moplah outbreak with the arrest of Ali Brothers. Even before non-co-operation was born in India, such outbreaks have occurred all over and the Government was powerless to protect life and property in the initial stages, as it was unable hopelessly to protect life and property in Shahabad three years ago.[1] Where was its power of protection when nearly, if I am right, for a week or at least three or four days, the whole villages were given up to pillage and plunder by infuriated Hindus against Mussulmans. Therefore I hope that this big meeting will draw the only lesson that is possible from the Moplah outbreak, not to swerve an inch from our settled programme, but to go forwardwith redoubled effort and finish it during this very year so that we can establish swaraj.

I understand that in connection with a kind of riot in connection with a theatre Manager nearly 40 persons have been arrested. I must confess that I like the idea of that arrest. Every Congressman, certainly every Congress leader must hold himself responsible for the observance of peace in his own village and district and whether we have been in a particular affray or not, let the Government hold us as hostages, in connection with every such affray anywhere for there is no doubt about it that we must hold ourselves responsible for awakening India to life. We must hold ourselves responsible for also making the people feel their own strength, and the duty therefore

[1] The reference is to the riots which had broken out there during September-October, 1917.

undoubtedly devolves upon every one of us to see to it that people continue to remain in a disciplined state. . . We may disclaim legal liability but we may not escape moral liability for any outbreak of violence in any part. . . Let us have no noisy demonstrations, no shouts, no pressure to be put upon a single man who is a co-operator as behoves peaceful men. When we attend meetings let us make no noisy demonstrations; but, let us silently work away at the spinning-wheel and complete the boycott of foreign cloth, if possible, even during this very month. Let us occupy every spare moment at our disposal in manufacturing yarn and weaving cloth. I know no other way of winning swaraj and winning also the release of the Ali Brothers and all those who may be imprisoned who are innocent men.

I thank you for the exemplary patience with which you have listened to me, I hope that you will listen to Maulana Azad Sobhani with the same amount of patience.

The Hindu, 22-9-1921

141. MESSAGE TO CONGRESS COMMITTEE, KARUR

TRICHINOPOLY,
September 20, 1921

I am sorry that the programme already drawn up does not permit my paying Karur a visit. I know how well you have worked for temperance reform. But I was sorry to hear of the pressure put upon a theatre manager for contributions to the Tilak Swaraj Fund or a temple. If we are to attain swaraj during this year we must be able to control all the unruly elements amongst us and prevent violence from whatever cause arising . . understand that over forty citizens have been arrested who had no hand whatsoever in the investment of the theatre. Nevertheless I congratulate those who are arrested. The arrest, I regard as a compliment paid to us. It shows that the Government expect us to keep the peace even by those who are unconnected with the movement. I hope that as true non-co-operators they will go to prison. I hope, too, that in spite of what the Government may do non-violence will be strictly observed and finally I hope that the wives and other relations of those who have been arrested will keep firm and allow the latter to go to jail without offering any defence whatsoever.

The Hindu, 26-9-1921

142. SPEECH IN REPLY TO MUNICIPAL ADDRESS, SRIRANGAM

September 20, 1921

The Mahatma in the course of his short reply said that the money realized from the sale of the silver plate presented to him would go to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, for he had absolutely no boxes to keep such gifts. He drew the attention of the Municipality and in fact of every municipality which deserved its existence to three things; if they wished to take part in the great movement of national regeneration, they should see that no citizen of Srirangam should be without khaddar and no citizen had foreign cloth in his house. Secondly, they should see the drink evil was entirely obliterated in their midst. Thirdly, there should be no blot of untouchability; there was no sanction in the Hindu religion for this blot which was eating into the very vitals of India and he was sure when they got out of this curse, they were entitled to swaraj. When 22 crores of Hindus were steeped in this Satanic superstition, it was impossible for Mussulmans to make progress independent of Hindus. He therefore urged upon the people of Srirangam who had such magnificent temples which should constantly remind them of their duty to banish the idea of untouchability.

The Hindu, 22-9-1921

143. SPEECH AT MEETING, SRIRANGAM

September 20, 1921

FRIENDS,

I thank you sincerely for the beautiful address, I call it beautiful because it is printed on leaves. The beauty of it is, let me tell you, somewhat marred in that you have written your address or printed it not in your own language, or the national language, Hindustani, but in a language which has really no place in our national intercourse. English is a language of diplomacy and of international commerce. I know you will not misunderstand me because I may request use of the English language as one of the greatest of world languages. I think that there is a great deal in the English literature which we could learn with profit. But even as dirt is described as matter "misplaced" so also is our use of English in the wrong place as here obnoxious. Each time I have to use English in order to transmit my thoughts to my countrymen and each time I hear English in our mutual intercourse, I feel deeply the sting of ever-growing humiliation. And so, as you

know, I have collected from our Marwari friends Rs. 50,000 for Hindi propaganda in your Presidency. I do hope, therefore, that instead of making a vain effort to attain eloquence in the English language we shall strive earnestly to become eloquent in our own vernaculars and in the national language. In these days of unbelief it is a rare thing for one to hear the beautiful music of the Sanskrit language. I tell you, although the verses were unfortunately in my own praise, I did not mind enjoying the Sanskrit verses so beautifully pronounced by the blind poet under that leaf cottage. If we really love our country we must cultivate a taste for all that is good, for all that is noble in our country. It, therefore, grieves me when I see our women coming out of our homes bedecked in foreign garments coloured in an kinds of fantastic manner. You with your bare clean bodies and with your *tilak*[1] on the forehead are beautiful to look at. But I despair of our country why I see even you hugging foreign cloth. You who seem to be leading a state of happy and prosperous life in this little happy island, little realize what the introduction of the *videshi* clothes has meant to India. It has meant literal ruin and starvation to millions of Indian homes. Bad as is our military drain and the drain in the shape of pensions given to men who have not made India their home, bad as is the drain in the shape of home charges[2], nothing had so emasculated the nation as its enforced idleness by the deprivation of cloth manufacture. This disappearance of the second large source of revenue to India had driven thousands of women to a life of shame and degradation. It has unfitted us to resist the ravages of famine and disease. And so we have in India the unparalleled phenomenon of many millions of men who are undergoing semi-starvation but who are as cultured as any on the face of the earth living in almost perpetual bondage under one lakh of Englishmen. If your outward sympathy is an expression of the inner, and if you miss the presence of the Ali Brothers as I do, you will have no hesitation about discarding your garments made of foreign yarn and even the most learned among you talking to the spinning-wheel as a sacrament. Further, if the outer symbols of your Hinduism are an earnest of your inner purity, you will get rid of the curse of untouchability. As a *sanatani* Hindu I venture to assert that there is no warrant for untouchability in Hinduism. I am surprised that it has assumed a

[1] Vermilion marks

[2] Payments made in England for so-called services by Englishmen

virulent form in this land of Shankara and Ramanuja. I assure you, you have misread the teachings of these great men if you consider that they would have regarded the very shadow of a *Panchama* brother to be a pollution. I hope, therefore, that you will exorcize the demon of untouchability from your midst and embrace the *Panchama as* a blood brother. That ours is a movement of self purification is apparent from the fact that the drink evil is disappearing from us. I congratulate you on your share in the campaign. I hope that you will put forth greater effort in all directions and give your full quota to swadeshi, temperance, and untouchability.

The Hindu, 22-9-1921

144. REPLY TO EDITOR, "INDIAN DAILY TELEGRAPH"

[*September 21, 1921*][1]

Mr. Gandhi has replied to another set of questions put to him by Mr. J. M. Mackenzie, editor of the *Indian Daily Telegraph.*

[QUESTION] I : Do you think that the South African republic deserves kicking for withholding the one demand which India went to the Imperial

Conference to seek and can you not pay a fresh visit to the land of your early triumphs in order that the whole of India may rest satisfied ?

[ANSWER :] The question in India is really an enlarged edition of the South African. If I succeed here, the other is automatically solved.

2: As you have not yet gained self-mastery, can you realize and mark the dismal state of the rest of us tossed about by climate which is so thoroughly debauching ?

Being imperfect I do realize the imperfections of my fellow beings and hence my belief in non-violence.

3: Do you fear that the awesome fate of Russian people may overtake your beloved country, if you compel it to part with everything but its distressing nakedness ?

I do not know the fate of Russia, but I do know Indian. This enforced nakedness is being turned into voluntary . . I am practising my theory and therefore cannot go wrong in my calculations.

4: Seeing that both Obstinate and Pliable fall into the slough of despond, don't you think that there is something to be said for the methods of Mr.

[1] Released on this date from Lucknow by the Associated Press of India.

Ready-to-halt or even Mr. Facing-both-ways or are you determined to carry your bundle to the gate of the City Beautiful?

You have given me the choice of two evils. I prefer Obstinate and Pliable to Ready-to-halt and Facing-both-ways, but I hope I belong to neither class. I own I have as my company all those lonely gentlemen of whom you have written. You will find in the end that I was a light-weight champion. I put away all my bundles at the commencement of the journey.

5: As you have collected so much money, do you not feel that country-side would appreciate a donation from you towards Queen Victoria in honour of the sovereign whose love for India must have inspired you with worthy feelings at the start of your career?

Can I persuade you to believe that I am engaged in erecting much more desirable memorial to the late Queen than the one you contemplate?

6: In view of the existing conditions, what is your solution for South African trouble ?

My solution for South African trouble is to give India what she wants. First cast out the beam and the mote will take care of itself.

The Hindu, 22-9-1921

145. SPEECH IN REPLY TO MUNICIPAL ADDRESS, DINDIGUL

September 21, 1921

CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF DINDIGUL,

I thank you sincerely for the address that you have given me and the sentiments contained therein. I can only expect your address as a manifestation of your desire to associate yourselves fully with the spirit of self-sacrifice that is spreading throughout the length and breadth of India. As I said elsewhere, I venture to point out to you here also three things which you can tackle usefully and without the slightest injury to our political status and that is temperance, swadeshi and untouchability. You are the custodians of the health and the interests of the citizens of Dindigul . . . and your *Panchama* brethren whom you represent in the Municipal Council . . . and therefore you should get rid of untouchability which is one of the ways to obtain

swaraj for India. Similarly it is open to you to organize boycott of foreign clothes and the manufacture of swadeshi clothes in a manner in which any authority can do satisfactorily because you control the citizens of Dindigul and also in the teetotal campaign. I can only hope that by personal example and by passing resolutions in your Council and resetting the whole machinery, you will achieve these three objects . . . I thank you once more for the address.

The Hindu, 26-9-1921

146. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, DINDIGUL[1]

September 21, 1921

The citizens of Dindigul presented Mahatmaji with purse in aid of the Smyrna and the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Mahatma Gandhi then made the following speech which was translated into Tamil by Dr. T. S. S. Rajan:

When I saw your representatives in Trichinopoly insisting upon Maulana Saheb and myself coming to this town, I thought you would show me some extraordinary results of non-co-operation. I had expected you all to be dressed in khaddar homespun and homewoven. I had expected to find every house in Dindigul with a spinning-wheel. But I find only much noise and enthusiasm here.... If we want swaraj or the release of Ali Brothers and their comrades, our enthusiasm should be developed in the proper channel. You have only three hundred spinning-wheels in Dindigul; you have a population of thirty thousand of whom ten thousand are Mohammedans and twenty thousand are Hindus. Counting five to a family on an average, you should have at least 6,000 families here with 6,000 spinning-wheels running from day to day. There is no swaraj without swadeshi. Swadeshi means not only the production of our country's needs, but also getting redress for the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs in a non-violent way. I understand that you are divided into petty factions. There is certainly no swaraj if everyone wanted to mind his own business nor if Hindus wanted to observe their superiority or segregate the *Panchamas.*

Throughout my travel in this Presidency nothing had oppressed me so much as the untouchability. I claim to be a *sanatani* Hindu with a due sense of my responsibility to my religion. I venture to say that

[1] At the maidan near the Rock

there is no warrant in Hindu Shastras for untouchability. Unless, therefore, we are prepared to give up treating human beings as less than dogs, we have no right to swaraj. I have given you all the conditions necessary for the attainment of swaraj and redress for the Punjab and Khilafat grievances. If the Muslims love their Khilafat as much as their lives, if the Muslims and their Hindu brethren love Ali Brothers and if the Hindus and the Muslims want swaraj they should all take to spinning and weaving. Let Hindus and Muslims treat one another as their blood-brothers and whilst each remains firm in his faith, each must sacrifice for the other, that we should all be non-violent in spite of the gravest provocation that we might receive, that Hindus should put an end to untouchability and embrace their *Panchama* brethren. I don't want you to eat and drink with them or have inter-marriages. But your Hinduism demands you to give an equal right to all human beings. I want you to give the *Panchama* the same right which any human being has a right to ask of you and which you claim from all the rest. These conditions being fulfilled, I have not a shadow of doubt that we will have swaraj within this year. May God help us in our attempts.

The Hindu, 26-9-1921

147. SPEECH AT MADURA

September 21, 1921

FRIENDS,

I thank you for these addresses this evening. We cannot attain swaraj by presentation of ten thousand addresses even. It makes me very sad to hear all this noise and I do not propose to tax you with words which would tackle your patience. You say in your addresses that this is a dharma war. Demonstrations and noise of this kind are against swaraj. I am sorry I came to Madura to see all this babble. I hope your leaders will tell you what your duty is for the attainment of swaraj. If you want dharma raj in India you must work your spinning-wheel which is a sign of peace and Hindu-Muslim united. You should remove untouchability because the religion does not allow it. You should see that drinking is completely stopped. I hope your leaders would advise on all these points.

The Hindu, 26-9-1921

148. NOTES

BENGAL

Bengal is a big province, and the reader will not be surprised if he finds these notes predominantly devoted to Bengal doings. I have not hesitated to say in private conversations, that in point of swadeshi, of all the provinces Bengal stands at the bottom. The mass appearance in a Bengal village or town does not wear the swadeshi stamp. Khadi is least in evidence in Bengal. But the signs of a coming revival are not wanting. The charkha has not taken deep root as yet, as it has done elsewhere. But it is becoming general everywhere. I saw it in its diminutive form at Silchar and Sylhet. It is almost a toy. It is good enough for spinning, but its yield is very little. It was more in evidence at Chittagong, and of a better type. They have devised an ingenious little portable thing which the boys and girls like. It is neat, beautiful and cheap. But like the Silchar pattern it does not give as much yarn as the original type. In Barisal, on the other hand. we saw a clever contrivance in which you move the wheelwith a pedal. They were not able to give me the yield of the machine. But, I should not be surprised if it gives as much as the ancient wheel. All these inventions show that the *rentio*[1] is growing in popularity and has come to stay. In Barisal, moreover, it was a pleasure to see very fine and even yarn, turned out by the boys of the National School. The quantity displayed was not to be despised. The weaving shed in Barisal appeared to be nice, neat and roomy. The looms were all fly-shuttle after the Serampur style. The organizers have under their control nearly 80 looms. In an adjoining room they had stock worth about Rs. l5,000. They have not yet learnt the absolute necessity of using only hand-spun yarn both for warp and woof. I do urge upon all Congress organisations the paramount necessity of *their* using only hand-spun yarn for both warp and woof. The mixed thing has already become marketable. And the Congress workers need not—ought not to—waste their time over things which an ordinary trader can attend to.

But, of course, these looms and the few wheels I saw cannot clothe Bengal. And Bengal cannot help the swaraj movement, if it has

[1] Spinning-wheel

to depend upon Bombay and Ahmedabad for the cloth supply. Just as a man forced to be hungry cannot be induced to think of God, so may not millions of Bengalis forced to remain in a state of semi-starvation, think of or appreciate swaraj. The first indispensable condition of swaraj is, that each province be comes self-contained for its food and clothing.

But Bengal will not lag behind when once she fully awaken ed. She has a fine imagination. Her villages retain their simplicity. Her sons are clever and pushful, her daughters graceful, simple and lovely. Both men and women are intensely religious. Their faith is ennobling. The memory of the charkha is still alive. Bengal has but to realize, that she manufactured the finest fabrics not merely for herself, not merely for India but for the outside world as well, and she will beat her own past record, glorious as it is. Bengal is beginning to realize, that if her millions of women have forgotten the art of spinning, no other activity has replaced it, and that the root cause of her poverty as well as of the rest of India, is the enforced idleness of her peasantry. I feel sure, that Bengal is about to understand the full message of the spinning-wheel, and then she will take India by storm.

As a friend said, Bengal has to unlearn much. Like several other provinces, she has not a clean slate to write upon. She has for instance to unlearn that cloth woven in Dacca from foreign yarn is swadeshi.

OF STRIKES

The Assam-Bengal Railway and the steamer strikes were out of the ordinary, the first attempt, as I have found, to have strikes out of sympathy for those outside labour unions. The strikes were therefore sympathetic, humanitarian or political. I had the pleasure of meeting the strikers all over the railway line, but specially at Gauhati, Chitttagong and Barisal. Having talked to them freely, I have come to the conclusion, that the people did not fully realize the cost of their undertaking. But having embarked on the strike, they have endeavoured to suffer the consequences. It is always dangerous and uncharitable for an outsider to say, what he would have done if he had the handling of a situation. But if one may hazard an opinion, I think that the labourers were not ready for a philanthropic strike. In my opinion the labourers and artisans of India have not yet arrived at that degree of national consciousness, which is necessary for successful sympathetic strikes. The fault is ours. We, who have interested ourselves in national service, have not until recently studied the wants

and aspirations of these classes, nor taken the trouble of informing them of the political situation. We have hitherto believed, that only those who had passed through high schools and colleges were fit to take part in national work. It is hardly therefore proper to expect the labouring and the artisan class all of a sudden to appreciate, and sacrifice themselves for, interests outside their own. We may not exploit them for political or any other ends. The best service we can render them and take from them at the present stage is to teach them self-help, to give them an idea of their own duties and rights, and put them in a position to secure redress of their own just grievances. Then and not till then are they ready for political, national or humanitarian service.

Any premature precipitation of sympathetic strikes must therefore result in infinite harm to our cause. In the programme of non-violence, we must rigidly exclude the idea of gaining anything by embarrassing the Government. If our activity is pure and that of the Government impure, the latter is embarrassed by our purity, if it does not itself become pure. Thus, a movement of purification benefits both parties. Whereas a movement of mere destruction leaves the destroyer unpurified, and brings him down to the level of those whom he seeks to destroy.

Even our sympathetic strikes therefore have to be strikes of self purification, i.e., non-co-operation. And so, when we declare a strike to redress a wrong, we really cease to take part in the wrong, and thus leave the wrongdoer to his own resources, in other words enable him to see the folly of continuing the wrong. Such a strike can only succeed when behind it is the fixed determination not to revert to service.

Speaking, therefore, as one having handled large successful strikes, I repeat the following maxims, already stated in these pages, for the guidance of all strike leaders:

1. There should be no strike without a real grievance.

2. There should be no strike, if the persons concerned are not able to support themselves out of their own savings or by engaging in some temporary occupation, such as carding, spinning and weaving. Strikers should never depend upon public subscriptions or other charity.

3. Strikers must fix an unalterable minimum demand, and declare it before embarking upon their strike.

A strike may fail in spite of a just grievance and the ability of strikers to hold out indefinitely, if there are workers to replace them. A wise man, therefore, will not strike for increase of wages or other comforts, if he feels that he can be easily replaced. But a philanthropic or patriotic man will strike in spite of supply being greater than the demand, when he feels for and wishes to associate himself with his neighbour's distress. Needless to say, there is no room in a civil strike of the nature described by me for violence in the shape of intimidation, incendiarism or otherwise. I should therefore be extremely sorry to find, that the recent derailment near Chittagong was due to mischief done by any of the strikers. Judged by the tests suggested by me, it is clear that the friends of the strikers should never have advised them to apply for or receive Congress or any other public funds for their support. The value of the strikers' sympathy was diminished to the extent, that they received or accepted financial aid. The merit of a sympathetic strike lies in the inconvenience and the loss suffered by the sympathizers.

As to what should be done now for or by the strikers, who have in spite of threats and temptations manfully held out—and they are more than 50 per cent—I have already given my opinion to the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee. And by that I wish to abide. If the strikers struck on the sole issue of sympathy for the outraged coolies at Chandpur and without intimidating their brethren, they had every moral right to do so, and they showed an unexpected measure of patriotism and fellow-feeling. I hope that they will refuse to rejoin service, until the Government have fully and frankly apologized, and refunded to the parties concerned the monies paid for the repatriation of the coolies.

MISCHIEVOUS ASSIDUITY

There is a District Propaganda Committee at Barisal, which certainly deserves credit, if mere assiduity is any passport to credit. Experience, however, shows, that assiduity, when it is mischievous, commands not credit, but incurs discredit. Such, it seems to me, is the activity of the District Propaganda Committee of Barisal. It is avowedly against non-co-operation. When we reached Barisal, a registered letter was delivered to me containing certain questions for me to answer at the public meeting, that was to be addressed by Maulana Mahomed Ali and me. The questions were printed. They were delivered to one personally by hand also. I answered every one

of the questions fully. The next day, to my surprise, I had a report of the answers presented to me for correction. The report was a Caricature of my answers. Then followed a messenger, who handed me another batch of papers for reading and explaining. And yet up to today I do not know the author of these communications. They were all unsigned. I have never known such irresponsibility on the part of a public body. I was informed that the work was all done by Government officials, and therefore, at public expense. I missed in all this attention shown to me the slightest desire for enlightenment or attempt to convince me of my error. It would have been something, if the Committee had invited me and my companions to a discussion It would have been still betters if being a public body it had taken advantage of our presence to bring the parties together. The only thing I discovered in this assiduous attention was an unholy desire to discredit the work of local non-co-operators. I read this activity in the light of what I have seen during my Bengal tour. There seems to me to be wilful and malicious misrepresentation of non-co-operation and non-co-operators. I find misrepresentation of my views. Sentences are torn from my speeches and distorted. The latest is the exploiting of the interview I had the privilege of having with the Poet. Fanciful and unauthorized reports have appeared in the Press. Whilst there was nothing secret about it, the interview has been considered to be a secret. It almost appears to be an attempt to divide us. But it must fail. The Poet is too great to be touched. Non-co-operators must resolutely refuse to believe anything that is imputed to him. There are differences of opinion between us. They do not affect my regard for the Poet in any way whatsoever. The Poet is as good a lover of India as I claim to be, and that love is an all-sufficing bond between us. I must therefore resolutely refuse to be drawn into the controversy raging round the interview.

But to return to the questions. In spite of my feeling that the questions were mischievously put, I answered them, as I have said, at the public meeting. I do not propose to reproduce my answers here in detail. But the reader will find the questions themselves interesting and showing the manner of the precious [*sic*] propaganda.

[QUESTION:] 1. You have denounced political strikes. Your followers here have supported the steamer strikes and spent thousands of rupees from Congress funds in feeding the strikers. Is this right?

[ANSWER :] See my remarks on strikes.

2. Many hundred boys have left schools and colleges under your orders, and now spend their time, insulting and intimidating peaceful and law-abiding people. What is going to be the future of these boys? How will they earn their living?

If the boys are insulting and intimidating, it is wrong. I do not believe many of them are. The future of the boys is bright, in that they are now free. They will earn their living by the sweat of their brow. They can still receive and are receiving literary training.

3. You have condemned hartals. Your followers here have declared several hartals, and instigated the shop-keepers to refuse to sell goods to Government officers and loyalists. Do you condemn this?

I have never condemned all hartals. When there is a hartal, no one can be served. But it would be wrong to exclude from service special classes or persons. It is true that hartals should only be declared on the rarest occasions.

4. During the recent hartal the non-co-operators prevented the municipal sweepers from working for two days, stopped the water supply and caused great danger to the health of the people. Was this right?

I fear that the information contained in the question is at least partially true. We do not want to deprive our opponents of the necessary social services. They must be rendered to all, even as the sun gives his heat to all without distinction.

5. Babu Sharat Kumar Ghosh, after his arrest for inciting the crowd to insult, loyalists said that there must be no water, light, or sweeper service in the town and the place should be turned into a burning ground. Was he right or wrong in saying this ?

I have since read Babu Sharat Kumar Ghosh's speech supplied by the Committee. There are passages in the speech, which bear the meaning sought to be put upon it. But from the glowing accounts I have received about Sharat Babu's very high character and spirituality, I must refuse to believe, that there is violence in Sharat Babu. I feel sure that if he has committed a slip, he will be the first person to acknowledge his mistake.

6. All these things were done in your name by persons who shouted *Gandhi Maharaj ki jai.* Do you approve of it? If not, how will you prevent your Followers from doing such wrong in future?

My "followers", I hope, are assimilating the spirit of non-violence. But if it ever comes to pass that *they,* under cover of non-violence resort to violence, I hope to find myself the first victim

of their violence, but if by a stroke of ill-luck or by my own cowardice I find myself alive, the snow-white Himalayas will claim me as their own.

7, 8 & 9: Is there enough swadeshi cloth in the county to clothe the inhabitants? Will not the boycott of foreign cloth raise the price? Is not the price too high already? Will not this boycott cause great hardship to the poor and inevitably lead to *hat*[1] looting as happened before? Are not the inhabitants of Khulna in need of cloth already? Will this boycott help them? Is it right to burn cloth which might be given to relieve their distress?

Did not the Bombay mill-owners make vast profits from high price of cloth during the war because foreign cloth was scarce? If there is boycott now, will not they make greater profits? Is it right to take money from the poor and give it to the rich?

All great nations depend on foreign trade. If imports are stopped, exports will also stop and Indian traders will be ruined. Do you desire this? Do you wish India to be a strong nation or a weak one?

These questions are either due to gross ignorance or malice. All these questions on swadeshi have been answered in these pages with sufficient detail. If the District Propaganda Committee will, instead of raising such questions, simply concentrate on multiplying spinning-wheels and looms, there will be enough cloth and to spare, for famines will practically be things of the past. Is it not a money famine in Khulna? If the people had money, they could get rice. They are able-bodied enough to work the wheel and the loom. Every one of them can by the spinning-wheel earn enough for food. Yes, indeed, the Bombay mill-owners did make profits before. But the present swadeshi scheme requires every province to manufacture its own cloth and spin its own yarn. Boycott of foreign cloth does not mean boycott of all foreign trade. India will certainly import what she requires for her growth, and export what she does not need. India cannot well be weaker or more helpless than she is today. Swadeshi, thank God, is removing that weakness.

10. How much of the crore of rupees for the Tilak Swaraj Fund has been actually realized? How much only promised? How much already promised for schools, colleges, hospitals, charity, etc., and not really available for general purposes of swaraj? How much subscribed by Bombay mill-owners in hopes of reaping great profits from foreign cloth boycott?

[1] Bazaar

The accounts of the Fund will be duly published. The framer of the question will be interested to know, that the Bombay mill-owners did not subscribe much. Only one, Maulana Haji Yusuf Sobani, gave a handsome sum, because he is a staunch non-co-operator and has given his son to the cause. The majority of the mill-owners gave nothing.

There is one thing I should add. I heard, whilst at Barisal, that Surendra Babu, when he went to Barisal, was hooted. I was deeply grieved to hear this. Non-co-operators cannot hoot anyone—not their worst enemy. Hooting after all is a form of violence. But to hoot Surendranath Banerjea[1] is to forget ourselves. We differ from him today. But we may not forget his past services. He was at one time the idol of Bengal. He gave voice to our sentiments. May we now hoot him? Surely, every leader who differs from us is not an enemy of the country. We may not attend his meetings. Having attended, we may even oppose him. But our opposition and dissent must be courteously and even respectfully expressed, especially when it is a veteran leader whom we oppose.

CHRISTIAN NON-CO-OPERATORS

A Christian student writes:

> Though we are Christian students, you are national leader, and we feel that we ought to learn from you what India stands for and what is her spiritual heritage. Will you therefore send me your criticism of Western Christianity with constructive suggestions regarding organization, worship and ministry?

My inquirer did not know that he was taking me beyond my depth. It is a pleasure to me, however, that Indian Christians are taking growing interest in the national movement. I know, that hundreds of poor Christians in Bombay paid what they could to the Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund. I know that several educated Christians are devoting their splendid talents to national work. I propose, therefore, to satisfy my inquirer—not in the way he would have me to—but in the only way I can.

India of the near future stands for perfect toleration of all religions. Her spiritual heritage is simple living and high thinking. I consider Western Christianity in its practical working a negation of

[1] 1848-1925; one of the founders of the Indian National Congress and its president in 1895 and 1902

Christ's Christianity. I cannot conceive Jesus, if he was living in the flesh in our midst, approving of modern Christian organizations, public worship or modern ministry. If Indian Christians will simply cling to *The Sermon on the Mount*, which was delivered not merely to the peaceful disciples but a groaning world, they would not go wrong, and they would find that no religion is false, and that if they act according to their lights and in the fear of God, they would not need to worry about organizations, forms of worship and ministry. The Pharisees had all that, but Jesus would have none of it, for they were using their office as a cloak for hypocrisy and worse. Co-operation with forces of Good and non-co-operation with forces of Evil are the two things we need for a good and pure life, whether it is called Hindu, Muslim or Christian.

WHAT TO DO?

I have dealt with the arrest of Maulana Mahomed Ali at length in a leading article[1]. Therein I have mentioned only those things which are absolutely indispensable for gaining swaraj during the year. But there are many other things which we can do to hasten the advent of swaraj.

For instance, title-holders can renounce titles, lawyers can suspend practice, grown-up students can leave schools and colleges and take to spinning, and councillors can resign their seats.

This is a war between religion and irreligion. We are therefore expected to give up drink, gambling and incontinence. Untouchability is Satan's device. We must give that up. Then there is swaraj even before the end of October. I look upon this arrest as God's gift. Let us make the best use of it.

WHAT NOT TO DO ?

And just as these are so many things that each one of us can and should do, there are some things that we dare not do. We maynot proclaim hartal. We may not burn public buildings, we may not kill anybody, we may not swear at anybody. We may not quarrel among ourselves, we may not be intolerant towards those who do not see eye to eye with us. Our tolerance will gain more recruits to our cause than our intolerance. "There is no compulsion in religion" is as true in the matter of "forcible conversions" to the doctrine of non-co-operation

[1] *Vide* "The Last Act?" 22-9-1921.

as to Islam. We must not fear anything and anybody except our weaknesses.

MY TESTIMONY

Friends are asking me, whether I do not consider it a breach of faith on the part of the Viceroy to have countenanced the arrest of Maulana Mahomed Ali. I cannot accuse Lord Reading of a breach of faith, because his assurance as to waiving of prosecution was gratuitous. But it is certainly up to him to show clearly the new circumstances that have arisen since his Simla speech to justify Maulana Mahomed Ali's arrest. Of course, he did not expect the Maulana to seal his lips or to water down his speeches. The apology was an act of brave and fearless men. They expressed regret, if in a heated moment they had used an expression that might mean incitement to violence. I know the Brothers to be brave, honest and godfearing. Ever since the famous statement, Maulana Mahomed Ali has been travelling with me. He has made many speeches. But whilst he has been strong in every one of them, he has been careful to preach non-violence. His work on behalf of non-violence in private has been more solid still. The Brothers have been preaching the non-violence of the strong. They have practised what they have preached. The Government of Madras knew, that we were proceeding upon an errand of peace. They knew that Maulana Mahomed Ali was bound to preach Hindu-Muslim unity. His message would have reached that Moplahs, and their fanaticism might have received a check. If he had been permitted to go to the disturbed area, he would have ensured peace without the loss of a single drop of blood. But that would have irreparably damaged the prestige of the Government and demonstrated the triumph of non-violence.

PROOF

If proof be wanted in support of my inference, it is supplied by the letter received by me from the Chief Secretary on my arrival in Madras. This is the text:

> In the event of your proposing to visit Malabar District I am directed to inform you that the military authorities consider that the condition prevailing in the area under martial law make it undesirable that you should enter or stay therein. In this view His Excellxency the Governor-in-Council concurs. I am further directed to tell you that the military authorities have issued instructions, that should you go to the martial law area, you should be

turned back.

The Government have hitherto credited me with good intentions. They have professed no distrust of my motives. Everybody has testified to the fact, that my presence has everywhere a peaceful effect. This prevention order—for order it undoubtedly is — forces upon me the inference, that the Government do not want peace, that they do not want exposure of the exaggerations indulged in their behalf, and what is the worst of all, they do not want to stop the second edition of the Punjab that is being enacted in unhappy Malabar.

THE CRIME OF WEARING KHADI

I propose to give only one illustration of what I mean. Respectable young men have had their khadi vests and caps torn from them, and had to witness their being burnt. One man had his cap spat into, and was then forced to wear it. Is there here a change of heart or of methods? I have many other stories of atrocities. But I do not repeat them for want of verification. Even men, who were known to have prevented looting, etc., have been arrested, simply because they were Congressmen. So respectable a man as Mr. Keshava Menon of Calicut has been prevented from leaving Calicut. The order was served on him after my visit was announced. In what way could public safety be injured by Mr. Menon's leaving the disturbed area? From all the accounts I have received, Mr. Thomas, the author of the Malabar troubles is copying Sir Michael O'Dwyer[1] without possessing the latter's frankness. Perhaps he is tongue-tied. I am doing him an injustice. The Governor of Madras has taken up the position of Lord Chelmsford. He leaves everything to his lieutenant.

PICKETING AND LOVE

A writer in the public Press indignantly asks: "How can I reconcile picketing with my doctrine of love? Is not picketing a form of violence or undue pressure?" It can be that certainly It has been that in several cases, I am sorry to say. But it has been also an act of love, I know. Several sisters and young lads have gone on picketing purely out of love. Nobody has accused me of hatred against Marwaris. Nobody can possibly accuse Sheth Jamnalalji of hatred against his own caste-men and fellow merchants. And yet both he and

[1] Lieut. Governor of Punjab, 1913-19 responsible for Jallianwala Bagh tragedy .

I are countenancing picketing of Marwari foreign cloth shops. When a daughter stands guard over her erring father, she does it purely out of love. The fact is, that there are certain acts that are common to all classes of men. And when they are not in themselves objectionable, the motive alone decides their quality. My own position becomes complicated by reason of my having to invite and rely upon the co-operation of those who are not all actuated by motives of affection.

UNDER SWARAJ

Another writer, pointing to the Moplah outbreak, shows, that swaraj of the non-co-operator's dream can only be Moplah raj. I suggest a better inference. What the present Government in its essence is, is most forcibly brought home to us by the Moplah outbreak. Three things are absolutely clear:

1. In spite of all the most modern weapons of destruction at its disposal, the Government has not been able to protect life and property. It is no answer that they restored order after the event.

2. In spite of long rule the Government has criminally failed to make Moplahs peaceful citizens.

3. Whilst on the one hand they have failed to discipline Moplah valour and harness it for purposes of peace and God, they have taken no care to train the Hindus for self-protection from their lawless countrymen.

Non-co-operators have not yet attained swaraj. Whilst they may be charged with inability to have acquired control over all the forces of evil, they cannot honestly be credited with the happenings in Malabar. Assume that the non-co-operators fomented troubles, it was the duty of the Government to forestall them and prevent disorders. The clearest way of forestalling would have been to redress the wrongs on which non-co-operators have so successfully hung their theme.

It is however easy enough to say what swaraj would be like under non-co-operation regime. In the first place, no cause would be given for such grave discontent to the people. In the second place, Moplahs would have been brought under healthy influence, and thirdly, in the event nevertheless of outbreaks, peace makers would have gone out at considerable risk to themselves to restore peace. The unequal contest such as is now going on would be impossible under swaraj.

"MALICE AFORETHOUGHT"

It is useful for governments to attribute previous malice to their critics. But in Madras I have come across a clear case of previous malice on the part of the Government. They have arrested the printer, the proprietor, the publisher and three editors of an article published in May last in a Tamil paper called *Deshabhaktan.* To an average reader the article is an exhortation to observe non-violence. The Viceregal declaration on the Ali Brothers' statement had led everyone to suppose, that there were to be no prosecutions for anti-Government writings, so long as there was no violence in them. But the fact of the prosecution does not much matter. It marks, let us say, a change in the policy. After all the Viceroy's was not a declaration to bind him for eternity. What is malicious is the prosecution of the innocent printer, publisher, proprietor and all the three editors. They could have found out the actual writer and punished him. If they did not know the writer's name, they could have called upon the declared editor to disclose the name of the writer. But under the pretence of prosecuting for alleged sedition, they wanted to stop the publication of an influential vernacular newspaper. If all the six men charged were to defend themselves, they might be discharged. That would not matter to the Government. Their object was to crush the *Deshabhaktan* by any means whatsoever. They have succeeded and are happy. I call this malice aforethought. The Press Act may go. But the spirit behind it abides.

THE CONGRESS NOT A SHOW

I observe complaints about the wise action of the Reception Committee in limiting the issue of visitors' tickets to three thousand. In my opinion, even three thousand visitors are too many, if we wish to treat the Congress not as an annual show but a business assembly meeting year after year to settle the nation's programme for the ensuing twelve months. The limitation of the number of delegates presupposed a limitation of the number of visitors. It is impossible in an unwieldy assembly to carry on calm debates and take votes. I cannot therefore help feeling, that the Reception Committee was quite right in fixing a limit for visitors' tickets.

But this does not mean, that the annual gathering should lose its demonstrative character. The Reception Committee is therefore organizing lectures on popular subjects not only by the prominent

Congressmen but also by other noted speakers. An instructive swadeshi exhibition is being arranged. There will be sacred concerts too for the spectators. I believe that the Committee is providing for one lakh of spectators. Every encouragement will be given to the people to visit Ahmedabad during the season, and adequate instruction and amusement will be provided for them without in any way interfering with the business part of the programme. Thus the ideal the Reception Committee has kept before itself is, by separating the business from the show, to emphasize both.

REPRESSION IN SIND

Here is a wire received from Sind which speaks for itself:

> Repression in Sind increasing. Public firm. On 24th August Maharaj Dwarka of Dadu was sentenced to one year's imprisonment. On 9th Maulvi Fatehali of Karachi got one year. On 3rd September Sheikh Abdul Majid got 2 years and Maharaj Vishnu Sharma, editor of the *Hindu* three years. Besides several pickets at Karachi and Sukkar have been sent to jail.

Besides this, I have cuttings from newspapers describing the horrible state of repression going on in that Province. I can only hope, that with the increase of repression there will also be an increase in the determination of the people to gain swaraj during the year. Not sacrifice so much as intelligence and hard work are wanted to complete our programme.

THE IMPASSABLE BARRIER

The existence of untouchability must remain an impassable barrier in the path of our progress, which we must break down with supreme effort. There seems to be a lurking thought with many of us, that we can gain swaraj and keep untouchability. They do not even see the contradiction inherent in the thought. Swaraj is as much for the "untouchable" as for the "touchable". A correspondent from Narayanavaram writes:

> In our parts *Panchamas* are very badly treated by the Hindus, especially the Brahmins. In the villages they are not allowed to go about the streets inhabited by Brahmins. They must stand at a considerable distance when speaking to Brahmins.

Read "Sahibs" for "Brahmins" and "Indians" for *"Panchamas"*, and see how you feel. And yet I have no doubt, that some Sahibs are infinitely better than some Brahmins. God will not let us have swaraj so long as we treat a brother as an outcaste by reason of

his birth. A man's karma is responsible for what he is, they say. But my karma does not compel me to throw stones at a sinner. Religion is made to uplift and not to keep a man crushed under the weight of his karma. It is a prostitution of the grand doctrine of karma to consign a man of lowly birth to perdition. Rama felt privileged to find himself honoured by a fisherman. The Hindu religion is replete with illustrations of great men lifting their unfortunate brethren from their miseries. Will not the modern Hindus copy their own great men, and once for all rub out the blot of untouchability that so defiles Hinduism?

Young India, 22-9-1921

149. "FRAUDULENT IMITATIONS"

TO
THE EDITOR
YOUNG INDIA

SIR,

We beg to draw your attention to the matter published in the issue of the 18th August under the heading of "Fraudulent Imitations" and to request you to clear the ambiguity existing therein.

Although the Madras letter quoted by you in your above said issue only refers to "Khadi sold in Madras at from 10 to 15 annas per yard by the Bombay Swadeshi Stores", still, however, owing to the mention of the *Bombay Swadeshi Stores* therein, many of our customers inquire after it and ask for an explanation, as our Store is generally known by the name of "Swadeshi Stores" or "Bombay Swadeshi Stores."

It is quite clear to us, that the said letter does not concern us in any way, as we have neither a branch nor an agency in Madras, nor do we keep such stuff in our Stores; but to remove the doubt or misinterpretation from the mind of our customers and the public in general, we approach you with this hope and trust, that it will receive your immediate attention and you will be pleased to clear the point in your next issue.

Yours, etc.,

MANAGER,
THE BOMBAY SWADESHI CO-OPERATIVE STORES CO. LTD.

I gladly publish the foregoing. My note was certainly based on a complaint from Madras.

Young India, 22-9-1921

150. THE LAST ACT?

The much talked of arrest of Maulana Mahomed Ali took place at Waltair, whilst we were on our way to Madras**.** I am writing this in the train, just after writing out a few telegrams. The train halted at Waltair for over twenty-five minutes. Maulana Mahomed Ali and I were going outside the Station to address a meeting. Hardly had we gone a few paces from the entrance, when I heard the Maulana shouting to me and reading the notice given to him. I was a few paces in front of him. Two white men and half a dozen Indian police composed the party of arrest. The officer in charge would not let the Maulana finish reading the notice, but grasped his arm and took the Maulana away. With a smile on his lips he waved good bye. I understood the meaning. I was to keep the flag flying. May God help me to prove worthy of the message of a comrade with whom it was a privilege to work.

I continued my journey to the meeting place. I asked the people to remain calm, and fulfil the Congress programme. I then retraced my steps, and went where the Maulana was being detained. I asked the officer in charge whether I could see the Maulana. He said he had orders to let his wife and secretary only meet him. I saw Begum Mahomed Ali and secretary Mr. Hayat coming out of the detention room.

Waltair is a beauty spot in Andhra. It is a sanatorium. I envied the Maulana his arrest at such a lovely place. He was contemplating staying at Waltair a few days to rest and complete his accounts of the deputation. But the unexpectedly long stay in Bengal and the Moplah outbreak had rendered it impossible.

God had willed it otherwise. He wanted to give the Maulana enforced rest. And I know that he is happy in his detention.

Here is a copy of the warrant of arrest:

TO
F. E. CUNNINGHAM, ESQ.
DEPUTY INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE
C.I.D. AND RAILWAYS
MADRAS

Whereas Mahomed Ali is to be called on to show cause

why should not be bound over to keep the peace or to be of good behaviour for a period of one year under Sections 107 and 108 Cr. P.C. you are hereby directed to arrest the said Mahomed Ali and produce him before me. Therein fail not.

J. R. HUGGINS
DT. MAGISTRATE
VIZAGAPATNAM,
September 14, 1921

Is it not funny, that he who has not only been himself peaceful but has endeavoured, and that successfully, to ensure peace among others and who has been a pattern of good behaviour, should be called upon by an insolent power to be "bound over to keep the peace and be of good behaviour"? A Government that is evil has no room for good men and women except in its prisons.

What has happened to the younger is bound to happen to the elder brother. They call themselves Siamese twins. They are inseparable. And if the one has misbehaved, the other undoubtedly has. I hope, that by the time this is in print, India would have learnt of the Maulana Shaukat Ali's arrest.

In imprisoning Maulana Mahomed Ali, the Government has imprisoned the Khilafat. For the two brothers are the truest representatives of the Khilafat. They cannot rest so long as the Khalifa remains practically a prisoner and their holy places virtually under non-Muslim control. The imprisonment of either or both means flat refusal to recognize the Khilafat claim.

The Government will however find, that they have not succeeded in imprisoning the spirit of the Brothers, and that the Khilafat struggle will rage all the fiercer for their imprisonment the spirit of the Brothers will live in every true Hindu and Musulman who will keep the Khilafat flame steady and shining

But the Brothers today stand for more than the Khilafat. They want swaraj and the redress of the Punjab wrong equally with the redress of the Khilafat wrong. They are too honourable to sell themselves even for securing the redress of the Khilafat wrong. To them the three are inextricably mixed up. It cannot well be otherwise, for to grant or to get the one is to grant or to get the other.

For me the imprisonment is a good omen. The Government were playing with the thing so long as they were arresting the rank and file. Every government that does not wish to yield to popular will

is bound to arrest popular leaders and attempt to crush the popular spirit. With the Indian Government it has become the code of honour to arrest and imprison leaders and yield to popular will when there is no grace left in the giving.

This imprisonment therefore may safely be regarded as a preliminary to the establishment of swaraj. Only the swaraj parliament can unlock the jail gate, and relieve the Brothers and their fellow-prisoners with becoming honours. For this is a fight to the finish.

The best tribute we can pay the Brothers and their fellow prisoners is to throw away all doubts, fears and lethargy. We have been doubtful as to the value of non-violence and swadeshi for attainment of our goal, and our ability to finish the programme within the year. We have entertained fear regarding our ability to undergo the necessary sacrifice, and we have been prosecuting our programme lazily. Let us imitate the courage, the faith, the fearlessness, the truthfulness, and the vigilant incessant activity of the Brothers, and we shall certainly attain swaraj. "Therein fail not" were the concluding words of the Magistrate's order. Well, the officer in charge "failed not"! Many an English officer, be it said to his credit, has lost his life in trying not to fail. The Congress and the Khilafat command, mandate, advice, whatever it may be called, is: "Therein fail not". Shall we, during the remaining period of grace, so work as to be able to report to the Congress, we have "failed not" ? The orders are clear:

1. Be non-violent even under the greatest provocation.

2. Preserve Hindu-Muslim unity even under the severest strain.

3. Boycott the use of foreign cloth even though you may have to be satisfied with the merest loin-cloth and take to hand spinning during every odd moment that can be spared.

When we have carried out these conditions, but not till then, are we ready to offer civil disobedience, that will compel obedience from the mightiest Government to a people's wish.

Young India, 22-9-1921

151. WANTED EXPERTS

Attacks on hand-spinning notwithstanding, I cling to the belief, that swaraj is unattaianable without the beautiful art becoming universal in India. The reasoning applied to the proposition is incredibly simple. India cannot live unless her homes become self-supporting. They cannot become so, unless they have a supplementary occupation. It will, therefore, not avail if all our cloth was manufactured in our mills. If hand-spinning became universal, every home would get a share of the crores and without any complicated machinery being necessary. And India is able to manufacture all her own cloth. It is understood, that when spinning becomes universal, the millions of weavers and lakhs of carders will revert to their original occupation.

This is the economic aspect of hand-spinning.

It will save our women from forced violation of their purity. It will, as it must, do away with begging as a means of livelihood. It will remove our enforced idleness. It will steady the mind. And I verily believe, that when millions take to it as a sacrament, it will turn our faces godward.

This is the moral aspect of spinning.

And when it has become universal and traffic in foreign cloth has become a thing of the past, it is the surest sign that India is earnest, sober, and believes in the non-violent and religious character of her struggle.

At present outsiders do not believe in our ability to boycott foreign cloth and to manufacture enough for our requirements by hand-spinning and hand-weaving. But when it becomes an established fact, India's opinion, too, will become an irresistible force, and if necessary, she can then, but not till then, resort to civil disobedience in order to bend a recalcitrant Government to its will.

This is the political aspect.

Therefore I was sad to see, that in all Bengal I found no one who was a spinning-expert and who devoted his whole time and attention to nothing but spreading the gospel of hand-spinning, teaching, organizing and advising. I found, that the masses were ready to take it up but they did not know how to go about it. What is true of Bengal is perhaps true of most provinces. We should have in each province a

standard charkha and a body of experts to whom one can refer for advice and guidance. Much splendid talent could be utilized, if there was expert knowledge available. Who is to decide upon the utility or otherwise of over fifteen inventions that were exhibited in the National College Hall at Calcutta? I saw everywhere different kinds of charkhas in use. But I saw no attempt to test the capacity of these wheels. Thousands are spinning today in Bengal, but there is nobody to measure their work. I therefore advise all Congress Committees to set apart at least six men and six women with faith in their mission in this direction. They need not look to Satyagraha Ashram for personal guidance. What can be given is being imparted through the special articles that are being published weekly in these pages. I ask those who would become experts to study them with careful attention. But no one need expect to become an expert by merely studying those articles. Practice alone will make one perfect. Millions will spin for supplementing their resources, all will spin as a sacrament, some must spin for reducing it to a science. These latter must spin during the initial stage for eight hours per day. And as they spin on, they must match the quality of the yarn. They must measure every day their output and the exact time they have worked. They must learn the process of carding and weaving. They must know the different qualities of cotton, they must know the different types of wheels, and they must be able to execute ordinary repairs.

We will not attain swaraj, unless we have organized ourselves in a methodical, intelligent and co-operative manner. Swadeshi means non-co-operation in the second great department of national life.

We are boycotting because we are now ready for manufacture of our cloth by hand-spinning and hand-weaving. But we will not be able to sustain the boycott, unless each one of us becomes a spinner during the transition period and unless each province begins to organize its own production. This cannot be done if we have not a number of experts in each province.

Young India, 22-9-1921

152. MESSAGE ON LOIN-CLOTH, MADURA

September 22, 1921

Only a few days are left for us to complete the boycott of foreign cloth enjoined by the All-India Congress Committee. It is not yet too late if every Congress worker will devote his and her exclusive attention to the boycott. If everyone realizes that with out swadeshi, i.e., boycott of foreign cloth and manufacture of all the required cloth by hand-spinning and hand-weaving, there is no swaraj, and without swaraj there is no settlement of the Khilafat and the Punjab problems, there should be no difficulty in bringing about the desired boycott and the required manufacture.

I know that many will find it difficult to replace their foreign cloth all at once. Millions are too poor to buy enough khaddar to replace the discarded cloth. To them I repeat my advice given on the Madras Beach.[1] Let them be satisfied with a mere loin-cloth. In our climate we hardly need more to protect our bodies during the warm months of the year. Let there be no prudery about dress. India has never insisted on full covering of the body for the males as a test of culture.

I give the advice under a full sense of my responsibility. In order therefore to set the example I propose to discard at least up to the 31st of October my topi and vest and to content myself with only a loin-cloth and a *chaddar* whenever found necessary for the protection of the body. I adopt the change because I have always hesitated to advise anything I may not myself be prepared to follow, also because am anxious by leading the way to make it easy for those who cannot afford to change on discarding their foreign garments. I consider the renunciation to be also necessary for me as a sign of mourning and a bare head and a bare body is such a sign in my part of the country. That we are in mourning is more and more being borne home to me as the end of the year is approaching and we are still without swaraj. I wish to state clearly that I do not expect co-workers to renounce the use of vest and topi unless they find it necessary to do so for their own work.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Madras", 15-9-1921.

I am positive that every province and every district can, if there are enough workers, manufacture sufficient for its needs in one month. And to that end for one month I advise complete suspension of every other activity but swadeshi. I would even withdraw pickets from liquor shops trusting the drinker to recognize the new spirit of purification. I would advise every non-co-operator to treat imprisonments as his ordinary lot in life and not think anything about them. If only we can go through the course of organizing manufacture and collecting foreign cloth during the month of October abstaining from all meetings and excitement, we shall produce an atmosphere calm and peaceful enough to embark upon civil disobedience, if it is then found necessary. But I have a settled conviction that if we exhibit the strength of character, the faculty of reorganizing and the power of exemplary self control all of which is necessary for full swadeshi, we shall attain swaraj without more.

M.K.GANDHI

The Hindu, 23-9-1921

153. SPEECH AT THIRUPPATHUR

September 22, 1921

The citizens of Thiruppathur presented Mahatmaji with an address in Tamil and a purse. Mahatma Gandhi in the course of his reply said that in India twenty-two crores of people had no work for six months in the year and that if every house would have a spinning-wheel which could be worked for a few hours during leisure time by every member of the family, surely, then they would be able to supply the whole of India with swadeshi clothes adequately. Cotton grew more than what they required for the adequate clothing of thirty-two crores of people. Till that time when all Indians were able to get adequate supply of hand-woven and hand-spun clothes, they (the Indians) should be ready even to wear a *langoti* and go out. They should take pride in wearing hand-made clothes however coarse they might be. Mahatmaji then explained why he had changed his dress and said that he would wear only a little piece of cloth until that time when Indians rich and poor alike would be able to get adequate supply of clothes. Mahatmaji then said that he was immensely pleased to see in the address that the citizens of Thirupathur had almost stopped drinking and wished that drinking should be completely stopped not only in that place but also in other places around Thiruppathur. He then exhorted them to accord an equal treatment to the *Panchamas*.

The Hindu, 26-9-1921

154. SPEECH AT KANADUKATHAN

September 22,1921

FRIENDS,

I thank you for the addresses and purses that have been presented to me now. But we cannot get swaraj by merely the presentation of purses and addresses. If you want swaraj and redress the Punjab and Khilafat grievances and the release of the Ali Brothers, you should take the swadeshi vow and discard all foreign clothes. Both men and women should do so. You should introduce spinning and weaving in every home. You should not take pride in your money, and those who are too poor should be satisfied with a mere *langoti* and no matter what the Government might do in giving us provocation, we should all be very patient and non-violent. We must have perfect Hindu-Muslim unity. Hindus should cease untouchability. There is no warrant for untouchability in the Hindu Shastras. I am saying this as a *sanatani* Hindu who has lived for over forty years as a true Hindu. We must not drink or gamble. We should control our animal passions. If we do this, surely then we could have swaraj and redress to the Punjab and Khilafat wrongs and the release of the Ali Brothers.

The Hindu, 26-9-1921

155. SPEECH AT KOTTAYUR

September 22,1921

FRIENDS,

I thank you for your address and purse. I shall thank you still more when you have discarded your foreign clothes. If you are not able to get enough khaddar cloth you should go about with a mere *langoti*.

Sisters, there were many like you in jail in South Africa with me. I don't want you to go to jail now. But I want you to spin yarn and discard all foreign cloth. You can colour it as you like. Unless we have swadeshi, unless we give up-drinking, unless there is perfect peace in the country, unless you are able to control your animal passions and unless there is absolute unity between the Hindus and Muslims there is no swaraj.

The Hindu, 26 9-1921

156. SPEECH AT DEVACOTTAH

September 22, 1921

FRIENDS,

I thank you for the addresses and purses presented to me just now. As I don't accept any costly gifts, your silver and gold plates will go to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Whilst I understand and appreciate your love and affection underlying all this, I must confess to you that they bring very little consolation. This beautiful hand-spun yarn and the fact that you have forty spinning-wheels running here from day to day gives me some consolation. But 40 spinning-wheels in a big place as this is like a drop of milk in an ocean. Just as there is a horse in every house here, so there should be a spinning-wheel in every house. And as *prayaschitta* for our past sins, I expect every man andwoman to spin for at least some time every day during leisure hours. I cannot be satisfied so long as I see that your dhotis are made of yarn from foreign countries. I promise you that if you wore the coarsest cloth as I wear you will be able to carry on your banking business well not only in India but also in Rangoon and other places. But if you wear fine garments for pleasure's sake and if you decline to wear garments hand-spun and hand-woven by our sisters, then there will be no swaraj for India. Your purses and addresses are good if your intention is to carry out swadeshi. But they are perfectly useless unless your purses and addresses are given as an absolute and final step towards attainment of swaraj and redress for the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs and the release of Ali Brothers. So, I hope that from tomorrow you will boycott all foreign clothes and use only hand-spun and hand-woven clothes. I hope also that there is no drink in your village. If there is, I hope you will drive away that curse. In Hinduism there is no such thing as untouchability and we are bound to treat our *Panchama* brothers as our own brothers. I see men here, as in Andhra, are fond of wearing diamond rings and ear-rings. I wish I could persuade you to return to your original simplicity and return all that to the Tilak Swaraj Fund—or to any other Fund you like. I thank you once more for your kindness in presenting to me these addresses and purses and conclude with the hope that you will all follow the programme of swadeshi.

The Hindu, 26-9-1921

157. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 23, 1921

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I have not had a single letter from you after I came to Madras. As regards swadeshi, nothing has been done about it here. It is to be seen what can be done now. You must have noticed the great change I have introduced in my dress—I could bear the pain no longer.

Shri Rajagopalachari has no doubt put in great effort in Madras, but I have send Madras lagging behind even Bengal. I am now fed up with this wandering and these shouts [of victory]. I hope you are keeping fit. Please come to Bombay on the 4th if you can.

After the letter forbidding me to go to Calicut,[1] it is very easy for me to offer civil disobedience.

I am writing this letter on my way to Tinnevelly. Rajagopalachari is keeping very bad health. He has low fever, cough and asthma.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11415

158. INTERVIEW TO "DESHABHIMANI"

TINNEVELLY

September 23, 1921

The following is an account of the interview between Mahatma Gandhi and Mr. T. K. Madhavan, Editor, *Deshabhimani*, Quilon and a leader of the *Ezhava*[2] or *Tiyya*[3] community of Travancore at Tinnevelly.

T. K. MADHAVAN: Thank you Mahatmaji for having given me this opportunity of paying my respects to you. My community has been much benefited—morally much more than materially—by your charkha movement. Weaving and toddy-drawing are the two hereditary professions of my community. We supply the greatest part of labour in Malabar. Before you took up swadeshi and the boycott of

[1] For the text of the letter *vide* "Notes", 22-9-1921, under the subtitle "Proof".

[2] Considered to be untouchables

[3] *ibid*

foreign clothes other communities used to mock at us . . . The enthusiasm you have created for Indian-made clothes is partly responsible for the removal of social stigma attached to weaving. We are trying to push up weaving . . .

MAHATMAJI: Very glad you push up hand-weaving.

Total prohibition forms one of the chief items of our programme. Our Guru, His Holiness Brahmasri Narayana Guru Swami issued in August last year a birthday message advising us to cease all connection with liquor . . . . We are trying our best to see that tapping is stopped . . . . We are also instructing our people not to bid in the ensuing auction sale of shops by excise authorities. The Government of Travancore seems to be not a little agitated over our movement for stopping toddy drawing . . . .

It gives me very great pleasure to know that your Guru is advising people to follow temperance. I hope you will vigorously carry out his massage.

We thank you that you have put removal of untouchability in the very forefront of your programme. So long as one-seventh of the population of India is branded as untouchables. . . you are quite right in holding that India cannot have complete swaraj.

Yes, I do hold that India cannot have complete swaraj so long as untouchability is not blotted out from India. Hence it is that I have put it down as the very first item in my programme.

We *Ezhavas* in Travancore are trying to remove the stigma of untouchability by getting all public temples thrown open to all classes of Hindus. . . . We take it as a matter of reforming Hinduism. . . . The removal of untouchability is an abstract idea. Temple-entry is a concrete representation of the abstract idea.

Removal of untouchability assumes a concrete shape when you demand temple-entry. On strategical grounds, I would ask you to drop temple-entry now and begin with public wells. Then you may go to public schools.

You seem to mistake our position in society for something analogous to that of *Panchamas* in British India. Except half a dozen schools including the one in Trivandrum situated just on the southern side of His Highness the Maharaja's Palace, all public schools in this state are open to us. . . .

You are ripe for temple-entry then.

A committee of officials and non-officials appointed last year by the Travancore Government has recently reported that a good number of temples in Travancore are maintained out of public funds and that it is the duty of the Government to continue to so maintain them....

Well, it is a matter of civil right even here.

I was a member of the last session of Srimulam Popular Assembly.... Travancore High Court convicted some members of our community for entering and offering worship in a temple on the ground that our presence in the temple was "defiling" under Section 294 of T.P.C. . . . We have protested against that in the Popular Assembly and requested the Government to publish Proclamation abolishing untouchability as was done by the enlightened and patriotic Government of Japan. Nair Samajams have passed resolutions against untouchability. . . . This is the position of our agitation for temple-entry under the circumstances. What will Mahatmaji advise us?

I would certainly advise you to offer civil disobedience. You must enter temples and court imprisonment if law interferes. It is wrong to prevent you from entering temples on grounds of religion. You must keep strict non-violence. You must not go and enter temples in masses. Go only singly. You must act with perfect self-restraint.

What is the attitude of the Congress in the matter? . . .The gist of Mr. Sankara Menon's[1] presidential speech was to the effect that he was not sure if the Congress Committee could take up the question without consulting the Congress authorities. . .

If Mr. Sankara Menon said that Congress Committee could not take the temple-entry question, he is wrong.

A listener pointing to a gentleman who was seated also close by said, "This gentleman here is *a Nadar.*"

T. K. M. : Our position in Malabar society is on all fours with the position of *Nadars in* Tamil society.

LISTENER: Our Congress Committee has the same difficulty in our district. The majority of the people here object to *Nadars* being admitted into temples.

You are not to care what the bulk of the people think of it. Because the majority is against you, are you going to fly away from your principles?

T. K. M.: Will you please address the Congress Committee in Travancore on the subject ?

Oh yes, gladly I will do that. To whom shall I write ?

l think you had better write to Mr. C. Sankara Menon, B.A., B.L.

Yes.

[1] An erudite lawyer; president of the Quilon Congress Committee

Are you for caste, Mahatmaji?

Yes, I am for caste.

Are you for caste, Mahatmaji, in regard to inter-dining and inter-marriage ?

I am against both on hygienic and spiritual grounds. Eating is as dirty a business as evacuating, the only difference is evacuation is a matter of relief. You mix the rice you have to eat with curry. Would you treat it as a clean thing after a few minutes ? Would you like to touch it even ? It is not good to touch it on hygenic grounds. I will not inter-dine with another and I will not inter-dine even with my son. If one man says he will not inter-dine with another owing to repugnance, I oppose that. You must get rid of that repugnance.

What is your position in regard to inter-marriage ?

I oppose that on spiritual grounds. Suppose you have to choose your wife from among the million women. You exercise your passion in respect of such a good number. If the extent of your choice is less, you restrict the exercise of your passion to that limited extent. You are benefited spiritually by curtailing the extent of your choice of women. It is better that you restrict your choice exclusively to your caste.

Suppose that a man of one caste falls in love with a woman of another caste and that woman reciprocates his love. Will you stand in the way of their marriage ?

I will not stand between them and their marriage on grounds of non-violence. Suppose my son wants to marry my daughter. I will not stand in the way of their marriage. But one thing I will do. I will not allow them room under my roof.

The time being up, Mr. Madhavan requested Mahatmaji to give an authoritative statement of his opinion on temple-entry question. Immediately Mahatmaji wrote his opinion on a foolscap paper and handed it over to Mr. Madhavan. On reading that, Mr. Madhavan said: “Nothing is mentioned in this on the part the Congress party should take in the agitation.” Then Mahatmaji added the following sentence to what was already written:

Asked whether the Local Congress Committee should help in the matter, of the rights of *Ezhavas* and others, Mr. Gandhi emphatically said that it was their duty to do so.

On reading this Mr. Madhavan asked: “Does it clearly state that the Local Congress Committee should take temple-entry is an item of their practical programme?”

Yes, it is clear on that point. The word "should" is there.

Mr. Madhavan wished good bye and left his presence.

The Hindu, 30-9-1921

159. SPEECH AT TINNEVELLY

September 23, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi who appeared in a single loin-cloth . . . delivered a stirring address which was translated then and there by Mr. T. R. Mahadeva Aiyar and by Dr. Rajan. . . .

FRIENDS,

I thank you for the address and the purse for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. But more than for the address and the purse I wish to thank you for the absence of any noisy demonstrations. I must confess to you that although these noisy demonstrations are a symbol of your affection and although behind them no mischief is meant they shake my nerves. And what with the repetition of these demonstrations and with the delicate condition of my body I have become totally unfit for these noisy demonstrations. If I had felt that these noises advance the cause of swaraj and the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs in the least little bit I would not have minded them. But I know that for the great work that lies in front of us during the coming three months these noises are not only unnecessary but are harmful to the cause that is dear to you and me. If we are to gain swaraj, if we are to redress the Khilafat and Punjab wrongs this year and if we are to receive the Ali Brothers and their associates, all our work must be silent, effective and determined. I therefore tender you my hearty congratulations and also to those leaders who have organized this great assembly upon complete absence of noise. And if all over India meetings of this character could be organized silently and expeditiously as this meeting has been I see everything that is hopeful in front of us. This deliberate, self-imposed and intelligent silence of ours is quite in keeping with our creed of non-violence. It is a matter of the keenest joy and the greatest satisfaction and for the deriving of the greatest hope that in spite of the arrest of the Ali Brothers India has remained calm and unperturbed. Any hartal in any part of India or even a universal hartal in any part of India or even a universal hartal throughout the length and breadth of India would have been a clumsy demonstration and in my opinions, be nothing when compared with what the Brothers deserve. If we are worthy of their bravery, courage, faith, energy, love of religion and country what we

need do is to follow them. We must adopt simplicity and khaddar even as these Brothers, who only a short time ago were indulging in pardonable luxuries; they have to wear heavy khaddar on account of their large build. We must realize as they have realized that swaraj and the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs lie through our acceptance of the spinning-wheel in our homes and complete boycott of all foreign cloth and wearing only what we can manufacture in our own homes. I was therefore grieved to see a friend and fellow-worker of the satyagraha days coming to me and presenting me a rich garland of flowers, dressed in foreign cloth. I asked him why he was not dressed in khaddar and why he put on foreign garments all over his body. His sorry reply was that there was not sufficient khaddar. And it was in order to answer objectors of this character you see me having reduced my garments to a single loin-cloth and Maulana Azad Sobhani having reduced himself to the minimum of garments required by Islam. Will you tell me now that you cannot get sufficient khaddar in your district even to provide yourself with a single loin-cloth? Yours is one of the richest cotton-growing districts of India. And for people of this district to say that they have not enough khaddar cloth to go round is like people who produce rich and sufficient wheat telling that they have not sufficient food. Hundred and fifty years ago practically every woman of India knew how to spin fine yarn and millions of Indians knew how to weave that beautiful yarn into cloth. And knowing as I do both cooking and weaving I can say that the art of weaving is easier than the art of cooking. If you want to get rid of the grinding slavery of centuries, if you want to help the Mussulmans to redress the Khilafat wrongs, if the Mussulmans here feel, as I have no doubt that they do, for the Khilafat, is it too much to think that you should insist on reducing your wants to a minimum and wear the simplest cloth. What we are about is not a matter of play but a matter of seriousness. The Nagpur Congress attended by 14,000 delegates from all parts of India was not joking with the country when it announced its determination to attain swaraj within this year and when it made a concrete programme insisting on swadeshi as an integral part of it. Hakim Ajmal Khan[1], in his old age, Dr. Ansari[2], Maulana Abdul Bari[3] and many other distinguished Mussulman countrymen of ours and Pandit Motilal

[1] 1865-1927; eminent Muslim physician and politician who took a leading part in the Khilafat movement; President, Indian National Congress, 1921

[2] M. A. Ansari (1880-1936); a nationalist Muslim leader; President, Indian National Congress, 1927

[3] 1838-1936; nationalist Muslim divine of Lucknow who took active part in the Khilafat movement and urged his followers to refrain from cow-slaughter

Nehru, in his old age, having been born with a silver spoon in his mouth, and C. R. Das enjoying a practice that was second to none in all India, were not joking when they adopted khaddar. Their wives are not joking when they also have adopted heavy khaddar just as heavy as you see myself, Maulana Saheb and Dr. Rajan are wearing and spinning from day to day as a sacrament. I would like every one present in this audience, men and women to consider it a point of honour to attain swaraj in this year and to believe like these distinguished countrymen of ours that swaraj is to be attained through the spinning-wheel. And if you mean business you will see to it that all the carpenters of this district are busy in making spinning-wheelsand handlooms; you will see that all the weavers give up weaving foreign or even Indian mill-made yarn; you will also see to it that every home in this district has a spinning-wheel working for a definite number of hours every day. I believe in the capacity of the spinning- wheel to do all these things because it is a symbol of non-violence and Hindu-Muslim unity; because I know that unless we are non-violent and believe in the efficacy of non-violence to cure all our ills we shall not be able to make the spinning-wheel a success. Just as I have mentioned to you the most potential thing we have to do, I am aware that there are some problems that stare the Hindus in the face and which require solution if we are to attain swaraj this year. You have your Brahmin and non-Brahmin question, the *Nadar* question and the question of the *Panchamas.* In my opinion all these questions resolve themselves into one, viz, untouchability. Claiming to be a *sanatani* Hindu as I do, I dare tell the whole of this audience that there is no provision for untouchability in the whole of our Shastras. I consider it, as a Hindu, to be sinful to consider that the touch of a human being can pollute me. I feel humiliated when anybody informs me that in your temples which you call the houses of God you deny admission to *Nadars.* The solution of the Brahmin and non-Brahmin problem seems to me to be incredibly simple. If my reading of the Shastras is correct, then in my opinion a Brahmin claims no privileges and sums up his life in four letters viz, "duty". It is his proud privilege to give all the posts of honour and emoluments to those who choose to take them. He remains supremely confident in the fact that his serving humanity with his knowledge entitles him to an honourable place in life. I have no doubt that if we are to win swaraj either this year or in hundred years to come we cannot get it unless the Hindus are united and are able to purge themselves of all dirt, error, superstition and sin. I would consider myself to be an unworthy partner of my Muslim companion if I could not compete with him in all that is best in Islam. So you will see that the whole problem

resolves into two things, for both the Hindus and the Mussulmans, to follow the programme of swadeshi and bring about a complete boycott of foreign cloth, and for the Hindus alone to get rid of this curse of untouchability and all that it implies. The Ali Brothers and their associates do not desire to be released from the jails of this Government except through the first Act of a swaraj parliament. May God help you and me to fulfil the condition of swaraj during this year, to redress the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and to release Ali Brothers who are now in jail. I hope and I know that you will extend the same patience that you have extended to me to the Maulana Saheb.

The Hindu, 27-9-1921

160. TO THE MUSSULMANS OF INDIA

MADURA,
September 24, 1921

DEAR COUNTRYMEN,

Whilst the arrest of Maulanas Shaukat Ali and Mahomed Ali has touched every Indian heart, I know what it has meant to you. The brave Brothers are staunch lovers of their country, but they are Mussulmans first and everything else afterwards. It must be so with every religiously-minded man. The Brothers have for years past represented all that is best and noblest in Islam. No two Mussulmans have done more than they to raise the status of Islam in India. They have promoted the cause of the Khilafat as no two other Mussulmans of India have. For they have been true, and they dared to tell what they felt even in their internment in Chhindwara. Their long internment did not demoralize or weaken them. They came out just as brave as they went in.

And since their release from internment, they have shown themselves true nationalists, and you have taken pride in their being so.

The Brothers have by their simplicity, humility and inexhaustible energy fired the imagination of the masses as no other Mussulman has.

All these qualities have endeared them to you. You regard them as your ideal men. You are therefore sorry for their separation from you. Many besides you miss their genial presence. For me, they had

become inseparable. I seem to be without my arms. For anything connected with Mussulmans, Shaukat Ali was my guide and friend. He never once misled me. His judgment was sound and unerring in most cases. With the Brothers among us I felt safe about Hindu-Muslim unity, the value of which they understood as few of us have.

But whilst we all miss them, we must not give way to grief or dejection. We must learn, each one of us, to stand alone. God only is our infallible and eternal guide.

To be dejected is not only not to have known the Brothers, but it is, if I may venture to say so, not to know what religion is.

For do we not learn in all religions, that the spirit of the dear ones abides with us even when they physically leave us? Not only is the spirit of the Brothers with us, but they are serving better by their suffering, than if they were in our midst giving us some of their own courage, hope and energy. The secret of non-violence and non-co-operation lies in our realizing, that it is through suffering that we are to attain our goal. What is the renunciation of titles, councils, law-courts and schools but a measure (very slight indeed) of suffering? That preliminary renunciation is a prelude to the larger suffering, the hardships of a jail life and even the final consummation of the gallows if need be. The more we suffer and the more of us suffer, the nearer we are to our cherished goal.

The earlier and the more clearly we recognize, that it is not big meetings and demonstrations that would give us victory, but quiet suffering, the earlier and more certain will be our victory.

I have made your cause my own, because I believe it to be just. Khilafat, I have understood from your best men, is an ideal. You are not fighting to sustain any wrong or even misrule. You are backing the Turks, because they represent the gentlemen of Europe, and because the European and especially the English prejudice against them is due, not to the Turks being worse than others as men, but to their being Mussulmans and not assimilating the modern spirit of exploitation of weaker people and their lands. In fighting for the Turks, you are fighting to raise the dignity and the purity of your own faith.

You have naturally therefore chosen pure methods to attain your end. It cannot be denied, that both Mussulmans and Hindus have los much in moral stamin Bothof us have become poor representatives of our respective faiths. Instead of each one of us becoming a true

child of God, we expect others to live our religion and even to die for us. But we have now chosen a method that compels us to turn, each one of us, our face towards God. Non-operation presumes, that our opponent with whom we non-co-operate resorts to methods which are as questionable as the purpose he seeks to fulfil by such methods. We shall therefore find favour in the sight of God only by choosing methods which are different in kind from those of our opponents. This is a big claim we have made for ourselves, and we can attain success within the short time appointed by us, only if our methods are in reality radically different from those of the Government.

Hence the foundation of our movement rests on complete non-violence, whereas violence is the final refuge of the Government. And as no energy can he created without resistance, our non-resistance to Government violence must bring the latter to a standstill. But our non-violence to be true must be in word, thought and deed. It makes no difference that with you non-violence is an expedient. Whilst it lasts, you cannot consistently with your pledge harbour designs of violence. On the contrary we must have implicit faith in our programme of non-violence, which presupposes perfect accord between thought, word and deed. I would like every Mussulman to realize, whilst the occasion for anger is the greatest, that by non-violence alone can we gain complete victory even during this year.

Nor is non-violence a visionary programme. Just imagine what the united resolve of seven crores of Mussulmans (not to count the Hindus) must mean. Should we not have succeeded already, if all the titled men had given up their. titles, all the lawyers had suspended their practice and all the students had left their schools and all had boycotted councils? But we must recognize, that with many of us the flesh has proved too weak. Seven crores are called Mussulmans and twenty-two crores are called Hindus, but only a few are true Mussulmans or true Hindus. Therefore, if we have not gained our objective, the cause lies within us. And if ours is, as we claim it is, a religious struggle, we dare not become impatient save with ourselves, not even with one another.

The Brothers, I am satisfied, are as innocent as I claim I am, of incitement to violence. Theirs, therefore, is a spotless offering. They have done all in their power for Islam and their country. Now, if the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs are not redressed and swaraj is not

established during this year, the fault will be yours and mine.

We must remain non-violent, but we must not be passive. We must repeat the formula of the Brothers regarding the duty of soldiers and invite imprisonment. We need not think that the struggle cannot go on without even the best of us. If it cannot, we are neither fit for swaraj nor for redressing the Khilafat or the Punjab wrong. We must declare from a thousand platforms, that it is sinful for any Mussulman or Hindu to serve the existing Government whether as soldier or in any other capacity whatsoever.

Above all we must concentrate on complete boycott of foreign cloth, whether British, Japanese, American, French or any other, and begin, if we have not already done so, to introduce spinning-wheels and handlooms in our homes and manufacture all the cloth we need. This will be at once a test of our belief in non-violence for our country's freedom and for saving the Khilafat. It will be a test also of Hindu-Muslim unity, and it will be a universal test of our faith in our own programme. I repeat my conviction that we can achieve our full purpose within one month of a complete boycott of foreign cloth. For we are then in a position, having confidence in our ability to control forces of violence, to offer civil disobedience, if it is at all found necessary.

I can therefore find no balm for the deep wounds inflicted upon you by the Government other than non-violence translated into action by boycott of foreign cloth and manufacture of cloth in our own homes.

I am,
Your friend and comrade,
M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 29-9-1921

161. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

TINNEVELLY,
September 24, 1921

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter[1] reached me here, having wandered from place to place. I am certainly glad that you wrote to me. You have the right to do so. Though I cannot claim to have understood you thoroughly I have known you for years as my well-wisher.

You put the greatest emphasis on the Prince's visit. I think your argument about the visit is the weakest. The Prince is coming here to uphold the prestige of the present Government. His visit now is uncalled for. I do not consider him as outside the Government. Nobody will oppose him as an individual, but he should have no quarter as the future head of the present system. Your quotations from our Shastras about loyalty can hardly apply here. What a great difference between Rama and Ravana!

But what you write about other matters does weigh with me. I do not at all want to lessen children's respect for their parents. However I do believe that such sad results as you describe havefollowed. But this incivility is a transitory phase. Besides, just as a son should have respect for his father, the father also should have love for his son. But this also I do not find. The real malady is that both lack the religious spirit. Having said and admitted this, I may also tell you what I think about the matter. The people have on the whole benefited by our programme in regard to schools [and colleges].

I do not know anything about Shri Shukla's resignation[2]. I know Manilal[3] has a hot temper. I have been taking all possible measures ins regard to such things. This is a grim struggle. I have plunged into it in the hope that in the end the people will become religious-minded. I feel immense joy when I see the beautiful transformation in the lives of many. At the same time, I am grieved to

[1] In this private and confidential letter dated 12-9-1921, the addressee had drawn Gandhiji's attention to the danger-spots in the non-co-operation movement.

[2] Barrister D. B. Shukla had resigned from the Kathiawar Parishad owing to sharp differences with co-workers which came to the fore at Dhrangadhra where the Parishad was held.

[3] Manilal Kothari, a political worker of Gujarat

see that many have joined the fight just to feed their ego. But who am I [to judge others] ? I am not at all worried, for I am carrying on the fight with a detached mind and trust that God will save me from all sins.

I remember your repeating to me the verse[1] which you have quoted. I keep it in mind and carry my burden. Will God blame me if the cart is broken or the rider unwary?

We shall discuss things if and when we meet.

I hope to go to Bombay on the 2nd.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3176; also G.N. 5863

162. VICTORY FOR ALI BROTHERS

I interpret the arrest of the Ali Brothers as their victory; and their victory is ours for I see in it the dawn of swaraj. The moments of child-birth are unbearable for the mother. It is darkest before daybreak. The very word "break" suggests this.

I feel the same way about the arrest of the Ali Brothers. Many others have been arrested, and many more will be arrested; but these arrests, although they are of consequence cannot have the same significance as the arrest of the Ali Brothers.

The Ali Brothers did their best in the cause of swaraj. I am perfectly sure that their sacrifice is holy. They were completely faithful to their pledge to remain non-violent. This does not mean that their speeches were altogether free from harshness or bitterness, but they prevented violence. Preventing violence does not mean keeping the people quiet by suppressing facts; it really means remaining peaceful even after one has come to see that it is impossible to tolerate this Government.

The Brothers gave vent to their indignation, described the Government's black deeds for what they were, and yet, by example and by argument, taught people to remain peaceful.

Their non-violence is a matter of expediency. Unlike me, they

[1] तानकृत्स्नविदो मन्दान् मन्दान कृत्स्नविन्न विचालयेत् । "He who knows the truth of things should not unsettle the slow-witted who have not the knowledge" *Bhagaved Gita*, III.29

do not accept it as an absolute principle at all times and in all situations; but, at this hour and in this situation, they accept, and have persuaded others to accept, non-violence to be the highest duty. If they had chosen, they could have killed some people or got them killed, though they might pay with their lives afterwards. They have shed all fear of death but, being practical and sincerely religious men, they realized that it is a crime to kill anyone in anger and this Islam forbids. They were convinced and could fully satisfy others that the present situation is not among those in which violence is sanctioned by Islam.

This is why I assert that they have fully kept their pledge to remain non-violent and are yet brave and dauntless. Their services (in the cause of) their religion and to society are beyond doubt. When fearlessness, daring and a spirit of dedication are found together, the sacrifice is supreme. Sacrifice always brings the fulfilment of one's cherished desire. I believe, therefore, that the moment of our victory has arrived, when we shall have swaraj and justice for the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs.

There are, however, certain conditions for this victory. The *yajna* performed by one person benefits another only if the latter accepts the *yajna* as his own obligation. Victory will not be ours unless we accept the Ali Brothers' *yajna* as our own. To do this means to act as they have done, to emulate their courage, their dauntlessness and their spirit of dedication. The Brothers are in jail; who will now lead the Khilafat movement ? if the Muslims take up this feeble attitude, it will mean that they have not understood the Brothers. No Hindu or Muslim should entertain the timid fear as to who will draw the chariot of swaraj after the Ali Brothers. We have very little needfor leaders or guides now. It would not be an exaggeration to say that there is no need at all. We know the path and have some experience of it. There are three essential conditions both for Hindus and Muslims: remaining peaceful, Hindu-Muslim unity and swadeshi. These duties are equally obligatory on people of all religions. In addition, Hindus have to cleanse themselves of the stain of untouchability.

The Moplahs indulged in violence and invited destruction on themselves to no purpose. They have demonstrated that Hindu-Muslim unity cannot be maintained if peace is not preserved. We should not, therefore, yield to anger or lose our balance, whatever the provocation on the part of the Government.

Hindu-Muslim unity is as much of a duty as preserving peace. Some Moplahs losing their heads does not prove that all Muslims are bad. Three years ago, Hindus had done the same thing at Shahabad. That did not prove all Hindus bad. Unity between two parties means that, even when there is a difference between them, they do not act as enemies but settle the dispute peacefully. We can say that, by and large, unity prevails in a family. That does not, however, mean that the members never quarrel. I do not doubt that we shall occasionally fall out while struggling to preserve unity. Even on such occasions, our leaders will restrain us. Hindu-Muslim unity would indeed have been endangered if Muslim leaders or the leaders of Moplahs had praised the latter's madness instead of condemning it. I do not, however, think that there is any Muslim who approves of the Moplahs' lunacy. I have not come across such a Muslim. However that may be, even a child can see that, if Hindus and Muslims fight among themselves, we are bound to need the services of a third party. Thus, Hindu-Muslim unity is the second imperative condition for swaraj.

An equally important condition for swaraj is swadeshi, which means the spinning-wheel. The latter symbolizes Hindu-Muslim unity, our peaceful intentions, our discipline, our industry and capacity for organization, our business acumen, our benevolence, our fellow-feeling for the poor and our desire to protect women. If the Hindus alone work the spinning-wheel, they will benefit, no doubt, but we shall not have swaraj. If we are angry and our blood is boiling, we cannot think of working at the spinning-wheel. The latter is an image of peace and gives us a sense of security about our livelihood. So long, therefore, as we do not have the spinning-wheel plying in every home, our desire for peace and our unity will not be demonstrated.

The loom, the carding machine and other implements are included in the spinning-wheel. If people start using them, India will regain her light. In their absence, boycott of foreign cloth cannot be undertaken or, if undertaken, cannot be kept up. We seek mill-owners' help, we need the goodwill of importers of foreign cloth, but ultimately we have to rely upon ourselves. If we are sincere, the whole world is sincere. Nobody can ever cheat a sincere person. Hence, every one of us should boycott foreign cloth and engage himself in one or other process of cloth-making.

These, then, are the essential conditions for securing the release of the Ali Brothers. There are three of them but ultimately they are

reducible to one, namely, swadeshi, since the first two are implied in it. Strict implementation of swadeshi will lead to swaraj and the first task of the sovereign parliament under swaraj will be to demand the release of the Ali Brothers and all others arrested for non-co-operation.

These are the conditions which apply equally to Hindus and Muslims.

If the Hindus do not understand the real spirit of their Hinduism, India will never get swaraj. It seems possible to me that the Khilafat issue may be settled without untouchability having disappeared, but unless it disappears we shall never get swaraj. If 22 crore Hindus suppress a fifth of themselves, it will not be swaraj, it will be *Ravanarajya*, it will not be dharma but the opposite of it. I am writing this article from Kumbakonam[1] in Madras Presidency. The town is well-known for its temples and it has learned Dravidians among its residents. The Brahmins of the place, however, feel themselves polluted if the shadow of a *Bhangi* falls on them! The *Bhangi* may even get a good beating, will certainly be visited with a torrent of abuse. The Dyerism of untouchability is nowhere else so rampant as in Madras. How dare an untouchable ever think of entering streets inhabitated by Brahmins! The untouchables are deliberately kept ignorant. If an animal becomes sick, someone may attend to it, but an untouchable has God alone to protect him. The groans of innocent untouchables are sufficient to keep swaraj away from us. In Madras Presidency, this problem is assuming an alarming character day by day. There is deep hostility between untouchable labourers and the rest and on occasion they even fight with one another. Love for untouchables, brotherly behaviour towards them and refusal to treat their touch as polluting will not only bring swaraj but also regenerate Hinduism. Hindus, who look upon cow-protection as a sacred duty, must not forsake the untouchables. We shall be fit to chant the *mantra*[2] of swaraj only it we treat *Antyajas* as our own brothers even though they may be unclean or eat carrion or drink, even if in fact, they have in them all the defects to be found in the world.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-9-1921

[1] Gandhiji was in Kumbakonam on September 18, 1921.

[2] Sacred formula

163. MARTIAL LAW

SERVED WITH A NOTICE

I received a letter from the Madras Government the day I reached Madras. It said:[1]

I have not sent any reply to this letter. What reply can I give? I should like to give only one : "I have read your letter. I cannot but go. You may do what you choose."

But how can I give such a reply? I have myself suspended civil disobedience and have asked others to do the same. In an atmosphere in which people do not know the difference between civil disobedience and criminal disobedience, how can a man in my position resort to civil disobedience all of a sudden? With these considerations in mind, I gave up the idea of sending a reply. I have in this way let slip an opportunity for winning swaraj which had presented itself to me, hoping that, in the months still left, people will grasp the full significance of civil disobedience and we shall be able to employ it without any fear and so win swaraj for all.

I am writing this article from Trichinopoly.[2] Here, I have been served with one more order, from Pudukkottai State. It is signed by some English official of the State. I had to pass through the territory of that State on my way to Chettinad. Fearing that even my passing through the State might have some influence on its subjects, the officer writes: "His Highness has come to know that you intend to pass through his territory. If you attempt to do so, the guards at the border will turn you back." I have sent a reply to this. "Received your letter. I certainly intended to pass through your territory but, in view of your letter, I shall take another route to Chettinad."

I, however, regard these to be good omens. If we know how to use these opportunities, we can certainly win swaraj this year. The means, too, are quite easy. We should devote ourselves to our work and then welcome arrest if it comes. We are not yet fit to go to jail. We have not realized the value of swadeshi and the importance of the spinning-wheel. How many workers from amongst us ply it regularly with faith and as a matter of duty ? How many have discarded all their

[1] For text, *vide* "Notes", 22-9-1921 under the sub-title "Proof".

[2] Gandhiji was at Trichinopoly on September 19, 1921.

foreign clothes? Even a blind man can see that the Government simply cannot tolerate boycott of cloth. It has been employing a variety of measures to deter us from such boycott.

Students giving up schools and colleges, lawyers giving up practice, drink-addicts giving up drinking—the Government certainly dislikes these things, but it may put up with them. It simply cannot tolerate swadeshi, however. The British came to our shores to trade in foreign cloth and rule the country to preserve this trade. Foreign cloth is the heaviest tribute being exacted from us. If we stop paying this, the Government will cease to be a ruler and will become a servant.

The end of September is nearing. I do not know what progress, even in Gujarat, boycott has made, and how many spinning-wheels are in use. I shall not be able to return to Gujarat before October. I hope that on my return I shall find khadi everywhere, on the persons of all men and women and in all homes, and shall see a spinning-wheel in every home.

The Khilafat wound is there, of course, the Punjab wound is still open; to these is now added the one in Malabar. I am sure that Gujarat can heal these wounds, if it so wills. It would not be an exaggeration to say that, to be a witness to its doing this, I have let go the auspicious opportunity of being in jail. This was one of the reasons for my forbearance.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-9-1921

164. HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

A close friend writes *:*[1]

The correspondent is a devout Hindu who believes in the need for Hindu-Muslim unity. Even then he has this fear. If it is felt by a person who is a firm believer in unity, what wonder if it is also felt by those who have always been sceptical about unity? I, therefore, think it advisable to answer these fears publicly. If we are growing more fearless day by day, it should be possible for us to discuss all our doubts publicly. I can clearly see that the fear expressed above betrays

[1]The letter which is not given here expressed the correspondent's fear that success on the Khilafat issue might embolden fanatical Muslims to attempt forcible conversion of Hindus.

ignorance of the true meaning of non-violence, of Islam and also of Hindu-Muslim unity.

Those who accept non-violence as part of dharma are convinced that no hatred or violence can survive in its presence. If the Hindus in Malabar had the spirit of non-violence in them, no Moplah could have forced them to do anything. But, it will be objected, every one cannot have such a spirit, and the objection has force in it. The reply is that, even if a small section of Hindus display real non-violence, others will be protected—such is the power of non-violence. What is my reply, however, if somebody argues that Hindus do not believe in non-violence ? Well if that is so, the question does not arise, for he who does not believe in non-violence will defend himself by fighting, whether he is alone or in a group. Anything which can be won through armed might can also be won through the power of non-violence. Even the person who fights with arms is considered brave only when he opposes a powerful enemy. One who believes in non-violence faces the enemy unarmed and his strength, therefore, has no limit to it. He who cannot safeguard his dharma is not worthy of it. Those who were forcibly converted, why did they submit to force? Why did they not give up their lives? Or, why did they not fight and beat back the enemy, or die fighting? If it was the Englishman's protection which saved them, they have as good as accepted the Englishman's religion; if my protection had saved them, they would have accepted my dharma. A dharma of their own, they had none. One's dharma is a personal possession. One is oneselfresponsible for preserving it or losing it. What can be defended in and through a group is not dharma, it is dogma.

Islam does not sanction forcible conversion; it even prohibits the use of force. It is wrong to say that Islam has employed force. All those who profess a religion are not true followers of it. Does Hinduism sanction killing of Muslims for saving cows? No. Do we not know, even then, that Hindus lose their heads and fight with Muslims on this issue? If Islam recognizes the use of forces it is not religion but irreligion. I am positive that Islam does not sanction the use of force if it did, would not all Muslims openly avow so? No religion in this world has spread through the use of force. In my opinion, the history of Muslim empires which is taught to us entitles much exaggeration. Victory on the Khilafat issue will certainly increase the strength of Muslims and enhance their courage, but to think that they

will use these against Hindus is to suggest that Muslims have no sense of honour, that it is in their nature to return evil for good, that, in other words, they have no true religion in them ! All my experience is to the contrary. I have known honour and honesty in a great many Muslims.

Hindu-Muslim unity, however, does not mean that no Muslim or Hindu will ever make a mistake. If we remain unperturbed even if somebody makes a mistake, then only can it be said that unity is a living reality.

But let us think over this problem a little more. The Government does not forcibly cut off the tuft of hair on our head but has it left a soul in us ? Compared to the violence of the Government, I think the violence of the Moplahs is not worth speaking of. The other day, in an instant a Government official had people stripped of khadi and thus, both Hindus and Muslims, of their dharma. Who deprived both Hindus and Muslims of their manliness ? We simply do not have the strength to face the armed might of the Government. We were not reduced to such straits during the Mughal rule. I can right now devise methods of fighting the armed strength of the Moplahs with similar strength. Against the military might of the Government, however, I, though I pride myself on my knowledge of these matters, cannot discover a method of armed struggle, nor have the Ali Brothers succeeded in discovering any.

Moreover, the preservation of Hindu-Muslim unity depends upon the acceptance of peaceful methods by both the communities. Leaders of both communities must agree to settle their disputes exclusively through peaceful means, that is, through the good offices of arbitrators.

Finally, those Hindus who have been forcibly converted to Islam ought not to be looked upon as Muslims or regarded as defiled, they have every right to be counted as Hindus. They stand in no need at all of going through purificatory rites.

I should also add that every Muslim who heard the stories of Moplah atrocities was pained by them, and also that, if our people were allowed to go there at this time, the Moplahs themselves would apologize for their deeds. I am sure that they will positively apologize when we have swaraj. All that they know is fighting. They are our ignorant brethren. The Government of course has done nothing to

reform them but neither have we done anything. Is not this the fault of the Hindus of Malabar?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-9-1921

165. MY NOTES

MOPLAH RIOTS

There is no doubt that the Moplah riots have been a great set-back. In Madras Presidency, they are becoming sceptical about Hindu-Muslim unity. Many feel that people will not remain peaceful to the end. Others have been dazed. Not that they do not attend public meetings or take part in other activities; there is, however, widespread fear about how things will develop. Hundreds of Moplahs have been killed and the killing is still going on. As a result, the swadeshi movement has come to a stop in Malabar. That is what the Government wanted. The declaration of martial law has given an excellent opportunity to the Government to suppress the swadeshi movement. It is said that, with the declaration of martial law, khadi clothes worn by people were torn away and thrown into fire. Khadi caps, spinning-wheels, etc., were among the things burnt. The result was that khadi caps and spinning-wheels, which used to be displayed in the shops of Calicut, had disappeared in one day. If the Moplahs had not turned mad these intolerable consequences would not have followed. If they had not indulged in killing and bloodshed, any officer who dared to burn khadi clothes today would have been dismissed or khadi would have become more popular; but the Moplahs' lunacy has produced the opposite result. They themselves knew nothing about swadeshi and the rest are a cowardly lot. These do not mind wearing khadi but they still do not have the strength to die. Hence, out of fear, they forsook khadi and the spinning-wheel. We have an important lesson to learn from this. We wear khadi and put on a khadi cap as a matter of religious duty. It should be impossible for anyone, with threats and intimidation, to make us give them up. We ought to be ready always to lay down our lives for swadeshi and should display greater zeal for popularizing khadi.

ALL HONOUR TO THAT DEVOTED WIFE

I marvel at the courage displayed by the Begum Sahiba of

Maulana Mahomed Ali. When she returned after visiting her husband who had been arrested at Waltair, I asked her if she was in any way afraid. She said she had no fear of any sort, that the arrest was to come and that her husband had done no more than his duty. I found no trace of nervousness in her tone. Even after the arrest, she has been touring with us and has kept up her courage. She attends both men's and women's meetings, wearing a *burka,* and makes brief speeches which go straight to the heart. She advises everybody to remain peaceful, to wear khadi and ply the spinning-wheel. She appeals to Muslims for contributions to the Smyrna Fund. Only a few months ago, her love for luxury knew no limit. She was very fond of fine cloth. Today she wears a green gown made of coarse khadi. A Muslim woman needs to wear many more garments than her Hindu sister, and the Begum Sahiba carries no light body. Even so, she submits to these hardships for the sake of her religion and country. As a result, Muslim sisters too come out everywhere so that they may have her *darshan.*

I find that the attire of Muslim sisters in the Madras Presidency is very plain. While there is no limit to the variety of colours in the costumes of Hindu women, in the attire of Muslim sisters I see nothing but white, rough cloth. This is a very holy sight to me. The variously coloured saris of Hindu women disagreeable to me at the present hour.Absence of Swadeshi

The use of swadeshi seems to have spread even less in the Madras Presidency than in Bengal and, among the women one may say that it is practically nil. But I have been assured that efforts in this direction will he intensified now. Love for spinning has spread spontaneously among the poor. Merchants in Madras told me that the demand for foreign cloth in that part was very small and the sale of swadeshi goods had gone up very much. This may well be so. If it is, it is plain that the spread of swadeshi owes little to the efforts of Congress workers and that the awakening has been spontaneous.

MADRAS LEADERS

The blame for this poor spread of swadeshi certainly lies with the leaders. And yet, the number of voluntary workers in Madras is by no means small, and Shri Rajagopalachari's ability and Dr. Rajan's devotion are of the highest. But these workers had to create a new climate, and they came up against many difficulties. The fact that they have not been deterred by the difficulties and are carrying on the

work despite them is as surprising as it is gratifying. I have great faith in the Madras people's regard for dharma. The masses are as simple-hearted as in other provinces. Their capacity for hard work is unlimited. One cannot be certain, therefore, that Madras, which is in the rear today, will never be in the forefront. Madras has weavers in plenty and their skill is of the highest order. I met the chief workers among them at Kumbakonam. They have undertaken to use hand-spun yarn exclusively.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-9-1921

166. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

ON THE TRAIN,

September 25 [*1921*]

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letter. Of course with me the burning[1] is not vital to the movement. One may be in it although one may not like burning. From Mahadev's talk, I gathered that probably you had begun to doubt the truth of the whole movement. I therefore wrote to you that even if you did, my affection for you would remain changeless and unaffected.[2] But naturally it consoles me to find that you believe in the movement as much as ever before. I do want to retain the co-operation of all the friends I can. At the same time I feel the truth of the movement so much that I shall be content even to stand alone and defend it. There is no other way of ridding ourselves of the worship of violence and all its offshoots.

I hope you will benefit by the voyage.

Do please remember me to Mrs. Petit and Mr. Petit[3]. With love.

Yours,

MOHAN

[PS.]

I have sent you a wire[4] today.

From a photostat: G.N. 955

[1] Of foreign cloth

[2] *Vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 14-9-1921.

[3] Sir Dinshaw Petit (1873-1933), member, Legislative Council, Bombay

[4] This is not available

167. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

ON WAY TO COIMBATORE,
Sunday [*September 25, 1921*]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I have your letter accompanied by your letter to Urmila Devi. I did not get the earlier one.

Bengal did indeed depress me. But Madras did still more. I know that the real work is to inspire Congress workers themselves with faith in the spinning-wheel. I looked in vain for that in Bengal, as also here, and that makes me nervous. The masses have that faith, but they want backing, they want expert training. Everyone is there to exhort people to do the spinning, but none to do it himself. Such is our plight. What can we say about Sarup and Ranjit? But I think Jawaharlal will understand. It may not be long, before I retire to the Ashram and attend exclusively to this work.

The degradation of India torments me so much, that if India refuses to be emancipated, resurrected by the end of the year, that torment may consume me. That is what I meant to say when I said I would not survive December, etc. Surely I have lost none of my faith. I am only puzzled when I trust to calculations of my intellect, and build on them. But in that dread hour the voice within whispers to me, "It is not thou, it is He who is doing it all." I then remember the dialogue of the tortoise and his mate, *mameru* and similar works and am myself again. I shall arrive in Bombay on the 2nd proximo. I hope you will be there on the 4th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11419

168. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

ON THE TRAIN,
September 25, 1921

CHI. MANI,

Two letters from you are lying with me. Your work appears to be going on well. We shall meet there in a few days. Hence I write nothing about it.

I was much grieved to read what you write about Kumudbehn I should certainly like to meet her. I shall positively be in Ahmedabad on the 6th. I do not know how long I may have to stay there; if, however, Kumudbehn goes to the Ashram while I am there, I can have a talk with her. I want to help her and bring her peace of mind. Even this letter you may send on to her.

I hope to arrive in Bombay on the 2nd. I shall have to stay there till the 4th.

Uncle Vithalbhai way is quite different from ours. We need not worry about him. Let him do and say what he thinks fit.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

SHRI MANIBEHN PATEL
C/O SHRI VALLABHBHAI, BARRISTER
BHADRA
AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne

169. LETTER TO BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

ON THE TRAIN,
September 25, 1921

BHAISHRI,

I read your postcard only now.

I could not send you the money. I shall now give it to you in Bombay. I shall arrive in Bombay on the 2nd October and will stay there till the 4th. I want you to be in Bombay while I am there.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI[1]
SHANTINIKETAN
BOLPUR
E. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2578

170. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

COIMBATORE,
September 26, 1921

CHI. RAMDAS,

Today I have sat down to write to all of you brothers. I am here in a beautiful city in Madras Presidency. The atmosphere is excellent. This city, Coimbatore, is at a height of there thousand feet. Today is my silence day. It is 26th of September.

I take it that you will read the letter to Manilal which I have just finished.[2] If Manilal does not send it to you, ask him to do so and also send this letter to him. If I do not write to all of you brothers, I am sure you will not think that I do not remember you. There may be a reason why I do not write. But you can have no reason not to write. Even then, I get few letters from you. And from Manilal, almost none.

I have your last letter. You have done well in going back to stay with Bhai Khanderia. I see that you are still in a state of indecision. On

[1] Resigned from Chief's College, Indore, in July 1920 and joined C. F. Andrews at shantiniketan; later, co-author of his biography

[2] Not available

the one hand, you say you have decided to stay on there, and on the other, your letter suggests that you will return here before December. I do not understand this. It is possible, though, that you might have decided to stay with Bhai Khanderia only for a specific period of time. I will know from your next letter.

There is nothing to be surprised at in my wishing you to be here to help me. Even so, in Manilal's letter I have....[1]

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

171. LETTER TO K. P. KESHAVA MENON

SALEM,
September 27, 1921

MY DEAR KESHAVA MENON[2],

I have your letter. I am asking the Committee here to send you Rs. 10,000 for relief of distress among the refugees.[3] Of course you will only give to those who do not receive Government aid.

I am quite clear that we cannot entrust . . . [4] Committee. But we can send volunteers to distribute relief under the supervision of the non-official committee. That is, the non-official committee may do that. We do not do any political work. But the money must be in our hands.

As for the budget, I shall put it before the Working Committee. Of . . . in prison should be supported. I shall see to the Bajaj Fund[5] too for *vakeels.*

Yours sincerely,

(M. K. GANDHI)

From a photostat exhibited at the Kerala Pavilion, Gandhi Darshan, New Delhi, 1969-70

[1] The letter is incomplete.

[2] A Congress worker of Malabar

[3] The reference is to the Moplah revolt in Malabar in which a number of Hindus were killed and hundreds rendered homeless; *vide* "Moplah outbreak", 4-9-1921, "The Two Incompatibles", 8-9-1921, "Speech at Madras", 15-9-1921 and "Speech at Trichinopoly", 19-9-1921.

[4] The source is illegible here.

[5] The Jamnalal Bajaj Fund of one lakh of rupees given for the maintenance of lawyers who had suspended practice in response to the Nagpur resolution of 1920

172. SPEECH IN REPLY TO MUNICIPAL ADDRESS, SALEM

September 27, 1921

I thank you sincerely for your beautiful address and the beautiful casket in which the address has been put. As you are aware, I have not anything to put silver plates and silver caskets into. The silver will therefore be devoted to public purposes. I congratulate the Salem Municipality on the record of progress which you have shown in your address. The more so, in that, your schools freely admit the *Panchama* children and that your Council contains a *Panchama* councillor. Nothing less can be expected of a place which has contributed to the Congress, its President[1] and one of its Chief Secretaries. You have told me that you are willing to do all that you can within the compass of your act. . . for non-co-operation. You have here mentioned the three chief things on which the attention of non-co-operators is concentrated and if you add two more things, I think that you complete very nearly the programme of non-co-operation. I have not a shadow of doubt that your Act permits you to remain non-violent and to spread the gospel non-violence throughout the Salem District or throughout your town and I am sure also that your Municipal Act does not prevent you from promoting Hindu-Muslim unity. Then the last two things and temperance can best be promoted by concentrating our attention upon swadeshi and though I see more progress in swadeshi in Salem than elsewhere in the Madras Presidency I am not at all satisfied for all you have done for swadeshi. I do not know whether the councillors have religiously carried out the gospel of swadeshi in their homes. I do not know whether the councillors have qualified themselves for swadeshi propaganda by becoming themselves accomplished spinners. I have a suspicion that in all your municipal schools you have not yet made spinning compulsory. I invite you to follow the example of the Municipality of Lahore for prescribing khaddar dress for all municipal employees, and you know what the introduction of spinning-wheel and khaddar means to your town. I assure you that it adds 25 per cent to the total income of the town. I know that you are a great weaving centre and if the Municipality will do its duty it can

[1] C. Vijayaraghavachariar

easily persuade the weavers not to touch the Japanese or any other foreign yarn and so you have a great programme of swadeshi which no act that can possibly be devised by the Madras Government can prevent you from following and you can copy the example of the Thana Municipality to undertake picketing liquor shops for yourselves and if you have sufficient funds you can devote, also like the Thana District Board, certain amount to the Congress Committee and the Khilafat Committee for picketing liquor shops. After all, our movement is one of self-purification and searching self-respect. There are other ways in which we can perform both these processes and I feel sure that the Salem Municipality will not remain behind in self-purification and assertion of self-respect, and I thank you once more for your address.

The Hindu, 29-9-1921

173. *SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, SALEM*[1]

September 27, 1921

After addresses were read by the District Congress Committee, the Vanniakula Kshatriyas and the Sowrashtra community, Mr. C. Vijayaraghavachariar was voted to the Chair. Mahatmaji . . . said that the more ill-advised the prosecution was, the more innocent the Ali Brothers were, the more successful would be our efforts to attain our goal by suffering. He said that the answer to the prosecution was a complete and immediate boycott of foreign cloth and the introduction of the spinning-wheel in every house. He then laid great emphasis on the removal of untouchability. As he understood the *varnashrama*[2] dharma there was no warrant for the doctrine of pollution by the touch of any human being. The *varnashrama* was a scheme of service and not a scheme of privileges. Evil thoughts, words and deeds polluted men and women, not the touch of any human being.

The Hindu, 30-9-1921

[1] At Municipal Hostel ground

[2] The four castes and stages of life sanctioned by Hinduism

174. SPEECH IN REPLY TO MUNICIPAL ADDRESS, TIRUPATI

September 28, 1921

The Mahatma . . . told them that they should spread the gospel of swadeshi within their Municipality, introduce spinning-wheels in all their schools, promote temperance, take steps to get over the curse of untouchability and devise measures to combat famine. He said they could indulge in all those pleasures without infringing the Municipal Law.

The Hindu, 5-l0-l921

175. NOTES

AFFLICTED MADRAS

Madras is suffering from many afflictions. It has its Brahmin and Non-Brahmin problem, it has its *Panchama* problem, it has its labour problem, it has repression of a severe type such as is always to be met with where a Governor is amiable but hopelessly weak and dependent purely upon his advisers. The Chirala-Perala repression[1] I have already noticed. Now the Government is trying to exact from an unwilling peasantry a grazing tax which it can ill afford to pay. I understand that in its mad pursuit after collection, the Government impounded about 200 cattle, some of which were torn from their calves. The cattle were taken to a pound where there was neither sufficient water nor fodder. That took place in the Andhra country. Near Trichinopoly where I am writing these notes, there is a place called Karur with a population of about 20,000. Its people have done good work in the cause of temperance. Now about 40 persons, all members of the local Congress Committee, have been arrested for alleged complicity in all investment of a theatre by the rowdies of the place, consequent upon its manager's refusal to pay the subscription to a charity or to the Tilak Swaraj Fund—I do not know which. This investment took place some time ago. The crowd was dispersed. But now these men have been arrested. All over, there is talk of repression. And possibly there will be still more after the arrest of the Ali Brothers. The people however have kept calm, brave and non-violent.

[1] *Vide* "Chirala-Perala" 25-8-1921.

The Malabar trouble is out of the ordinary, but it has filled its cup of woe.

Panic has so far possessed the Government, that one does not know what they will do next moment. There is a Pudukkottai Raj near here. I had to go to a group of villages. I was to pass through the Raj on my way. Even this was too much for the Raj, and I received the following letter:

> We have reason to believe that you are intending to proceed on the 20th instant from Trichinopoly to Chettinad; we are further informed that you proposed to travel by road through this State.
>
> Assuming that this information is correct, I write to say that you will not be allowed to pass through this State. If you attempt to do so, you will be stopped at the frontier by the Police.

I merely wrote as follows in reply:[1]

I regard everything that these States do as an indirect act of the Government. But as I consider them to be more helpless than the direct British subjects, I have always thought it necessary for non-co-operators not to give battle to them. It would create needless complications. But one cannot help noticing the insanity of refusing even a passage through a place. And what could I have done to the subjects of the State but preach on temperance, swadeshi and untouchability?

THE "PANCHAMAS"

But I must resist the temptation of dealing with the varied problems. As in all my Madras speeches, I have dealt most with the *Panchama*, i.e., the untouchables, problem, I propose to deal briefly with it in these notes. Nowhere is the "untouchable" so cruelly treated as in this Presidency. His very shadow defiles the Brahmin. He may not even pass through Brahmin streets. Non-Brahmins treat him no better. And between the two, the *Panchama* as he is called in these parts is ground to atoms. And yet Madras is a land of mighty temples and religious devotion. The people with their big *tilak* marks, their long locks and their bare clean bodies look like *rishis*[2]. But their religion seems almost to be exhausted in these outward observances. It is difficult to understand this Dyerism towards the most industrious

[1] Not reproduced here; *vide* "Letter to Sidney Burn", after September 18, 1921.

[2] Seers

and useful citizens in a land that has produced Sankara and Ramanuja. And in spite of the Satanic treatment of our own kith and kin in this part of India, I retain my faith in these Southern people. I have told them at all their huge meetings in no uncertain terms, that there can be no swaraj without the removal of this curse from our midst. I have told them, that our being treated as social lepers in practically the whole world is due to our having treated a fifth of our own race as such. Non-co-operation is a plea for a change of heart, not merely in the English but equally in ourselves. Indeed, I expect the change first in us and then as a matter of course in the English. A nation that can throw away an age-long curse in a year, a nation that can shed the drink-habit as we shed our garments, a nation that can return to its original industry and suddenly utilize its spare hours to manufacture sixty crores worth of cloth during a single year is a transformed nation. Its transformation must react upon the world. It must constitute even for the scoffer a convincing demonstration of God's existence and grace, and so I say, that if India can become transformed in this wise, no power on earth can deny India's right to establish swaraj. In spite of all the clouds that are thickening on the Indian horizon, I make bold to prophesy, that the moment India has repented for her treatment of the "untouchable" and has boycotted foreign cloth, that moment India will be hailed, by the very English officials who seem to have hardened their hearts, as a free and a brave nation. And because I believe, that if Hindus will, it is possible for them to enfranchise the so-called *Panchamas* and extend to them the same rights that they claim for themselves, and it is possible for India, if she wills, to manufacture all the cloth she needs even as she cooks all the food she eats. I therefore also believe that swaraj is attainble this year. This transformation cannot take place by any elaborately planned mechanical action. But it can take place if God's grace is with us. Who can deny that God is working a wonderful change in the hearts of every one of us? Anyway it is the duty of every Congress worker everywhere to befriend the untouchable brother, and to plead with the un-Hindu Hindus, that Hinduism of the Vedas, the Upanishads, Hinduism of the *Bhagavad Gita* and of Sankara and Ramanuja contains no warrant for treating a single human being, no matter how fallen, as an untouchable. Let every Congressman plead in the gentlest manner possible with orthodoxy, that the bar sinister is the very negation of ahimsa.

Babu Motilal Ghosh, whose mind is fresh like that of a youth though he is too frail even to move, summoned Maulana Mahomed Ali and me chiefly to urge us to invite the lawyers to the Congress fold and in effect to restore them to their original status of unquestioned leadership of public opinion. Both the Maulana and I told him, that we did want the lawyers to work for the Congress, but that those who would not suspend practice could not and should not become leaders. Moti Babu said, that my mention of cobblers in the same breath as lawyers had offended some of them. I felt sorry to hear this. I remember the note[1] in these pages, and it was certainly not written to offend. I have said many hard things about lawyers, but I have never considered them to be guilty of caste prejudices. I am sure, that the lawyers have appreciated the spirit of my remark. I hope I am never guilty of putting a sting in any of my writings. But I certainly meant no offence in the paragraph referred to by Moti Babu. Having been myself a lawyer, I could not so far forget myself as want only to offend members of the same profession. Nor can I forget the brilliant and unique services rendered to the country by lawyers such as Pherozeshah Mehta[2], Ranade[3], Taiyabjee[4], Telang[5], Manmohan Ghose, Krishnaswami Iyer, not to speak of the living ones. When no one else had the courage to speak, they were the voice of the people and guardians of their country's liberty. And if today the majority of them are no longer accepted as leaders of the people, it is because different qualities are required for leadership from what they have exhibited hitherto. Courage, endurance, fearlessness and above all self-sacrifice are the qualities required of our leaders. A person

[1] *Vide "Notes"* 25-8-1921 under the sub-title "Practising Lawyers".

[2] 1845-1915; one of the founders of the Indian National Congress; twice elected President in 1890 and 1909

[3] Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842-1901); economist, historian and social reformer; one of the founders of Indian National Congress; became judge of Bombay High Court in 1893.

[4] A nationalist Muslim leader from Gujarat; former judge of Baroda High court; was one of the commissioners appointed by the Sub-committee of the Congress to report on the Punjab disorders.

[5] Of the Bombay High Court; one of the founders of the Indian National Congress

belonging to the suppressed classes exhibiting these qualities in their fulness would certainly be able to lead the nation; whereas the most finished orator, if he have not these qualities, must fail.

And it has been a matter of keen satisfaction to me to find the lawyers all over India, who have not been able to suspend practice, readily assenting to the proposition and being content to work as humble camp-followers. A general will find his occupation gone, if there were no camp-followers in his army.

"But", said Moti Babu, "there is a great deal of intolerance that has crept into our movement. Non-co-operators insult those lawyers who have not suspended practice." I fear that the charge is true to a certain extent. Intolerance is itself a form of violence and an obstacle to the growth of a true democratic spirit. Arrogant assumption of superiority on the part of a non-co-operator who has undergone a little bit of sacrifice or put on khadi is the greatest danger to the movement. A non-co-operator is nothing if he is not humble. When self-satisfaction creeps over a man, he has ceased to grow and therefore has become unfit for freedom. He who offers a little sacrifice from a lowly and religious spirit quickly realizes the miserable littleness of it. Once on the path of sacrifice? we find out the measure of our selfishness, and must continually wish to give more and not be satisfied till there is a complete self-surrender.

And this knowledge of so little attempted and still less done must keep us humble and tolerant. It is our exclusiveness and the easy self-satisfaction that have certainly kept many a waverer away from us. Our motto must ever be conversion by gentle persuasion and a constant appeal to the head and the heart. We must therefore be ever courteous and patient with those who do not see eye to eye with us. We must resolutely refuse to consider our opponents as enemies of the country.

Lawyers and others who believe in non-co-operation but have not, from any cause, been able to non-co-operate in matters applicable to them, can certainly do silent work as lieutenants in the matter of swadeshi. It requires the largest number of earnest workers. There is no reason why a practising lawyer should not make khadi fashionable by wearing it even in courts. There is no reason why he and his family should not spin during leisure hours. I have mentioned one out of a variety of things that can be done by practising lawyers for the attainment of swaraj. I hope, therefore, that no practising lawyer and

for that matter no co-operating student will keep himself from serving the movement in every way open to him. All cannot become leaders but all can be bearers. And non-co-operators, I hope, will always make it easy for such countrymen to offer and render service.

A PERTINENT QUESTIONS

I paraphrase below what a friend writes regarding the influence of the Moplah outbreak on Hindu-Muslim unity:

> I am a staunch believer in Hindu-Muslim unity. But this Moplah outbreak has raised doubts in me. Success in the Khilafat means strength to Islam. Strength to Islam means attempts at conversion. Have we not often been given the choice between Islam and the sword? Can people such as the Moplahs learn the beauty of non-violence? And even if they appreciate non-violence for the sake of their faith, will they not use violence for the sake of spreading their faith ? My belief in the necessity of Hindu-Muslim unity is there. But do you not think that the questions I have raised are relevant?

The questions are indeed relevant, if only because they have occurred to one so sane as the writer is. But in my opinion there is a misunderstanding about the whole question. Our advocacy of the Khilafat would be wrong if Islam were based on force. There is nothing in the Koran to warrant the use of force for conversion. The holy book says in the clearest language possible, "There is no compulsion in religion." The Prophet's whole life is a repudiation of compulsion in religion. No Mussulman, to my knowledge, has ever approved of compulsion. Islam would cease to be a world religion if it were to rely upon force for its propagation.

Secondly, historically speaking, the charge of conversion to Islam by force cannot be proved against its followers as a body. And whenever attempts have been made to convert by force, responsible Mussulmans have repudiated such conversions.

Thirdly, the conception of Hindu-Muslim unity does not pre-suppose a total absence for all time of wrong by any of the parties. On the contrary it assumes, that our loyalty to the unity will survive shocks such as the forcible conversions by Moplahs, that in every such case we shall not blame the whole body of the followers but seek relief against individuals by way of arbitration and not by way of reprisals.

Fourthly, acceptance of non-violence for organizing India's freedom involves acceptance of non-violence for Hindu-Muslim solidarity. The Moplahs have certainly broken the rule. But they were

prevented from having access to the new manifestation. Whilst they had heard something about the Khilafat vaguely, they knew nothing of non-violence.

Fifthly, we need not suspect any evil befalling India under swaraj for it is tolerably certain, that had the Congress and the Khilafat workers been permitted to penetrate the Moplah territories, they would have been able to nip the evil in the bud. As it was, it is a matter capable of proof that the Khilafat workers, wherever they could go, were able to exercise great restraining influence. To me the Moplah madness is proof of the Hindu Muslim solidarity, because we kept calm. As members of a family, we shall sometimes fight, but we shall always have leaders who will compose our differences and keep us under check.

Sixthly, in the face of possibilities of such madness in future, what is the alternative to Hindu-Muslim unity? A perpetuation of slavery? If we regard one another as natural enemies, is there any escape from eternal foreign domination for either of us? Is not the present domination worse than the possibility of forcible conversions or worse? Is Hinduism worth anything, if it cannot survive force? Cannot the Mussulmans too ask the same question as the friend has asked? Is there no possibility of a repetition of pillage and murder on the part of Hindus as happened in Shahabad three years ago? Is not the remedy therefore clearly Hindu-Muslim unity at all hazards ? The Hindus as also the Mussulmans, whenever one of them goes mad, have two courses left open. Either to die valiantly without retaliation, that will at once arrest the progress of mischief; or to retaliate and live or die. For individuals both the courses will abide as long as the world lasts. All questioning arise, because we have become helpless. We have forgotten the divine art of dying for our faiths without retaliation, and we have equally forgotten the art of using force in self-defence at the peril of our lives. And Hindu-Muslim unity is nothing, if it is not a partnership between brave men and women. We must trust each other always, but in the last resort, we must trust ourselves and our God.

THE PROPER SPIRIT

A friend, in reply to a letter asking her to dedicate herself more fully to swadeshi, writes:

> When I think of the little work that I have done all these months, I cannot help my tears. I wish I could open my heart to show you what is in it. In your first letter you asked me to take up this work in a religion spirit, and

> I can assure that I have taken it up as my religion. In my heart I have never been able to separate religion and patriotism. For me both are one.... We profess to be many things, but when we come to self-analysis, we find we are nothing.... We have lost all our capacity of feeling. We do not feel sufficiently the pangs of slavery.... Otherwise how can people be so indifferent, while time is flying so swiftly ?

It is not possible for me to share the whole of the beautiful letter with the reader. I have simply quoted as much as I could dare, in order to induce the readers, both men and women, to copy the religious zeal of this sister, who, the reader may be informed, is rendering patriotic service in her own sweet and selfless way.

A BRAVE WOMAN

Whilst I am sharing with the reader my enjoyment of woman's work in the cause of the country, I must not deny myself the pleasure of recounting my experiences of Begum Mahomed Ali. She began, last time we were in Bombay, to assist her husband publicly in his work. She commenced with collections for the Smyrna Fund. She joined us in our arduous and incessant travels in Bihar, Assam, and East and West Bengal. She began to speak at women's gatherings. And I could perceive, that she had gifts of eloquence no less than her brave husband. Her speeches lost nothing in effect for brevity, and I do not know that she could not give lessons to her husband in the art of saying as much as possible in as few words as possible. Let the reader know, that Begum Sahiba was dressed from head to foot in heavy khadi, and a Mussulman sister has to wear many more articles of dress than her fortunate Hindu sister. She retained the orthodox veil. It would be a mercy, if some Mussulman divine were to find out authority to enable women public workers to discard the *purdah*, especially when the veil too has to be of khadi. Anyway she bore herself bravely even in the melting climate of Assam.

> Her greatest trial and triumph came, when at Waltair her husband was torn away from her. I saw her, as she came out of the room where her husband was detained. She walked along the platform with a steady step. And when I asked her whether she was not happy that her husband was at last arrested, she replied without a tremor that she was, because he was going to jail for his God and his country. The reader is already familiar with the brave words with which she sped her husband on his journey. We continued our journey to Madras. There was a vast public meeting on the Beach. The audience was totally

unfamiliar to her. She attended the meeting, and spoke in her sweet Hindustani in a loud voice without faltering. And as sentence after sentence was rolling out of her lips, I could not help saying to myself that she was the brave wife of a brave husband. I felt proud of her as a companion in our journey. Here is a free rendering of her speech:My Hindu and Mussulman brothers and sisters, I am glad to be able to tell you that I am not sorry for my husband's arrest. I have asked him to be happy in his imprisonment, and I have promised to carry on his work to the best of my ability. I hope that both my Hindu and Mussulman brothers will ceaselessly work and attain swaraj. If you want to see Maulana Saheb released early, you should all wear khadi, all my sisters should spin daily for the sake of our religion and our country. In the place of Maulana Saheb, there should be many coming forward to serve Islam and India. I must also ask the Mussulman brothers here to contribute as much as they can to the Angora Fund.

WELL DONE NAGPUR

The Municipality of Nagpur certainly deserves congratulations for its public service, in that it has taken a referendum on total prohibition. The result is striking. Two thousand three hundred and forty-three voters registered their votes. Of these two thousand three hundred and thirty-two recorded their in favour of total prohibition. Six voted with reservations, and only *five* voted against prohibition. The reader will be pained to find, that of the five voters against prohibition two were graduates. It is possible to look at the revelation in another light, and say that the two graduates had the courage of their conviction to incur popular odium and vote in accordance with their conscience. There is no doubt as to the educative value of such a referendum. I wish, the Secretary of the Congress Committee at whose instance the poll was taken, had given the full strength of the electoral roll. It is to he hoped, that other municipalities would follow the example of Nagpur.

Young India, 29-9-1921

176. TAMPERING WITH LOYALTY [1]

His Excellency the Governor of Bombay had warned the public some time ago, that he "meant businesses", that he was no longer going to tolerate the speeches that were being made. In his note on the Ali Brothers and others he has made clear his meaning. The Ali Brothers are to be charged with having tampered with the loyalty of the sepoy and with having uttered sedition. I must confess, that I was not prepared for the revelation of such hopeless ignorance on the part of the Governor of Bombay. It is evident that he has not followed the course of Indian history during the past twelve months. He evidently does not know, that the National Congress began to tamper with the loyalty of the sepoy in September last year, that the Central Khilafat Committee began it earlier and that I began it earlier still, for I must be permitted to take the credit or the odium of suggesting, that India had a right openly to tell the sepoy and everyone who served the Government in any capacity whatsoever, that he participated in the wrongs done by the Government. The Conference at Karachi merely repeated the Congress declaration in terms of Islam. Only a Mussulman divine can speak for Islam, but speaking for Hinduism and speaking for nationalism, I have no hesitation in saying, that it is sinful for anyone, either as soldier or civilian, to serve this Government which has proved treacherous to the Mussulmans of India and which has been guilty of the inhumanities of the Punjab. I have said this from many a platform in the presence of sepoys. And if I have not asked individual sepoys to come out, it has not been due to want of will but of ability to support them. I have not hesitated to tell the sepoy, that if he could leave the service and support himself without the Congress or the Khilafat aid, he should leave at once. And I promise, that as soon as the spinning-wheel finds an abiding place in every home and Indians begin to feel that weaving gives anybody any day an honourable livelihood, I shall not hesitate, at the peril of being shot, to ask the Indian sepoy individually to leave his service and become a weaver. For, has not the sepoy been used to hold India under subjection, has he not been used to murder innocent people at Jallianwala Bagh, has he not been used to drive away innocent men,

[1] This was one of the articles for which Gandhiji was sentenced to six years' imprisonment.

women and children during that dreadful night at Chandpur, has he not been used to subjugate the proud Arab of Mesopotamia, has he not been utilized to crush the Egyptian? How can any Indian having a spark of humanity in him and any Mussulman having any pride in his religion feel otherwise than as the Ali Brothers have done? The sepoy has been used more often as a hired assassin than as a soldier defending the liberty or the honour of the weak and the helpless. The Governor has pandered to the basest in us by telling us what would have happened in Malabar but for the British soldier or sepoy. I venture to inform His Excellency, that Malabar Hindus would have fared better without the British bayonet, that Hindus and Mussulmans would have jointly appeased the Moplahs, that possibly there being no Khilafat question there would have been no Moplah riot at all, that at the worst supposing that Mussulmans had made common cause with the Moplahs, Hinduism would have relied upon its creed of non-violence and turned every Mussulman into a friend, or Hindu valour would have been tested and tried. The Governor of Bombay has done a disservice to himself and his cause (whatever it might be), by fomenting Hindu-Muslim disunion, and has insulted the Hindus, by letting them infer from his note, that Hindus are helpless creatures unable to die for or defend their earth, home or religion. If however the Governor is right in his assumptions, the sooner the Hindus die out, the better for humanity. But let me remind His Excellency, that he has pronounced the greatest condemnation upon British rule, in that it finds Indians today devoid of enough manliness to defend themselves against looters, whether they are Moplah Mussulmans or infuriated Hindus of Arrah.

His Excellency's reference to the sedition of the Ali Brothers is only less unpardonable than his reference to the tampering. For he must know, that sedition has become the creed of the Congress. Every non-co-operator is pledged to preach disaffection towards the Government established by law. Non-co-operation, though a religious and strictly moral movement, deliberately aims at the overthrow of the Government, and is therefore legally seditious in terms of the Indian Penal Code. But this is no new discovery. Lord Chelmsford knew it. Lord Reading knows it. It is unthinkable that the Governor of Bombay does not know it. It was common cause that so long as the movement remained non-violent nothing would be done to interfere with it.

But it may be urged, that the Government has a right to change its policy when it finds, that the movement is really threatening its very existence as a system. I do not deny its right. I object to the Governor's note, because it is so worded as to let the unknowing public think, that tampering with the loyalty of the sepoy and sedition were fresh crimes committed by the Ali Brothers and brought for the first time to His Excellency's notice.

However the duty of the Congress and Khilafat workers is clear. We ask for no quarter; we expect none from the Government. We did not solicit the promise of immunity from prison so long as we remained non-violent. We may not now complain, if we are imprisoned for sedition. Therefore our self-respect and our pledge require us to remain calm, unperturbed and non-violent. We have our appointed course to follow. We must reiterate from a thousand platforms the formula of the Ali Brothers regarding the sepoys, and we must spread disaffection openly and systematically till it please the Government to arrest us. And this we do, not by way of angry retaliation, but because it is our dharma. We must wear khadi even as the Brothers have worn it, and spread the gospel of swadeshi. The Mussulmans must collect for Smyrna relief and the Angora Government. We must spread like the Ali Brothers the gospel of Hindu-Muslim unity and of non-violence for the purpose of attaining swaraj and the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs.

We have almost reached the crisis. It is well with a patient who survives a crisis. If on the one hand we remain firm as a rock in the presence of danger, and on the other observe the greatest self-restraint, we shall certainly attain our end this very year.

Young India, 29-9-1921

177. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

[*September 1921*][1]

CHI. RAMDAS,

Do you meet Mr. Kallenbach[2]? He may be writing to you. I remember Miss Schlesin[3] every day. I believe you have not forgotten her. You should meet her even if you have to make a search for her. Her public service is such that it is never to be forgotten.

You see that I have written the letter with a fountain-pen. One day a letter written with Mahadev's pencil came to me. I had to labour to read it. Therefore, I started using a fountain-pen even using violence over my mind. I like very much to use the reed pen. But the reed pen will take double the time; hence I have taken up the fountain-pen.

Harilal is doing his own cloth trade. He makes enough income in that. It seems to me that his greed is greater. It should be considered that his health is all right. He does not have his old strength. But he is able to look after his own work. Devdas is good. I should say that I am well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Motanan Man, p. 21

178. SPEECH AT BELLARY

October 1, 1921

After the addresses were read, Mahatmaji replied in Hindi. He regretted that no address had been given to him by the Khilafat Committee. He did not know whether a Khilafat Committee was in existence or not. If there was one he regretted the omission. He stated that he had received innumerable letters from Bellary about local differences amongst *vakils*, councillors, Hindus and Mussulmans. Until there was concord and peace, there could be no Congress work and so he appealed to all to merge their differences and unite. With regard to the differences about Andhra and

[1] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 1-9-1921.
[2] Hermann Kallenbach
[3] Sonja Schlesin

Karnatak questions, Mahatmaji stated that it may be taken up after swaraj was obtained. He appealed to the people to take to the charkha and manufacture of khadi. He regretted that the response from Bellary in the matter of suspension of practice was poor, nay, practically nil. He thanked the people for having come and welcomed him in such large numbers, though it was midnight.

The Hindu, 3-l0-1921

179. MY LOIN-CLOTH[1]

[*October 2, 1921*]

All the alterations I have made in my course of life have been effected by momentous occasions; and they have been made after such a deep deliberation that I have hardly had to regret them. And I did them, as I could not help doing them. Such a radical alteration—in my dress,—I effected in Madura.

I had first thought of it in Barisal. When, on behalf of the famine-stricken at Khulna, I was twitted that I was burning cloth utterly regardless of the fact that they were dying of hunger and nakedness, I felt that I should content myself with a mere loincloth and send on my shirt and dhoti to Dr. Roy, for the Khulna people. But I restrained my emotion. It was tinged with egotism. I knew that the taunt was groundless. The Khulna people were being helped, and only a single zemindar could have sent all the relief necessary. I needed therefore nothing to do there.

The next occasion came when my friend Maulana Mahomed Ali was arrested before my very eyes. I went and addressed a meeting soon after his arrest. I thought of dispensing with my cap and shirt that moment, but then I restrained myself fearing that I might create a scene.

The third occasion came during my Madras tour. People began to tell me that they had not enough khadi to start with and that if khadi was available, they had no money. "If the labourers burn their foreign clothing where are they to get khadi from?" That stuck into my heart. I felt there was truth in the argument. The plea for the poor overpowered me. I expressed grief to Maulana Azad Sobhani, Mr. Rajagopalachariar, Doctor Rajan and others, and proposed that I

[1] First published in Gujarati in *Navajivan*, 2-10-1921. Its translation in *The Hindu* was reproduced from the *Independent*.

should thenceforth go about with a loin cloth. The Maulana realized my grief and entirely fell in with my idea. The other co-workers were uneasy. They felt that such radical change might make people uneasy, some might not understand it; some might take me to be a lunatic, and that all would find it difficult if not impossible, to copy my example.

For four days I revolved these thoughts, and ruminated the arguments, I began telling people in my speeches: "If you don't get khadi, you will do with mere loin-cloth but discard foreign clothing." But I know that I was hesitating whilst I uttered those words. They lacked the necessary force, as long as I had my dhoti and my shirt on.

The dearth of swadeshi in Madras, also continued to make me uneasy. The people seemed to be overflowing with love but it appeared to be all froth.

I again turned to my proposal, again discussed with friends. They had no new argument to advance and September was very nearly closing. What should I do to complete the boycott the close of September? That was what was for ever troubling me.

Thus we reached Madura on the night of the 22nd. I decided that I should content myself with only a loin-cloth until at least the 31st of October. I addressed a meeting of the Madura weavers early next morning in loin-cloth. Today is the third day.

The Maulana has liked the idea so much that he has made as much alteration in his dress as the *Shariat* permits. Instead of the trousers, he puts on a *lungi*, and wears a shirt of which the sleeves do not reach beyond the elbow. Only at the time of the prayers, he wears a cap, as it is essential. The other co-workers are silently watching. The masses in Madras watch me with bewilderment.

But if India calls me a lunatic, what then? If the co-workers do not copy my example, what then? Of course this is not meant to be copied by co-workers. It is meant simply to hearten the people, and to make my way clear. Unless I went about with a loin-cloth, how might I advise others to do likewise? What should I do where millions have to go naked? At any rate why not try the experiment for a month and a quarter? Why not satisfy myself that I left not a stone unturned?

It is after all this thinking that I took this step. I feel so very easy. For eight months in the year, you do not need a shirt here. And so far as Madras is concerned, it may be said that there is no cold season at all, and even the respectable class in Madras wears hardly anything more than a dhoti.

The dress of the millions of agriculturists in India is really only the loin-cloth, and nothing more. I have seen it with my own eyes wherever I have gone.

I want the reader to measure from this the agony of my soul. I do not want either my co-workers or readers to adopt the loincloth. But I do wish that they should thoroughly realize the meaning of the boycott of foreign cloth and put forth their best effort to get it boycotted, and to get khadi manufactured. I do wish that they may understand that swadeshi means everything.

The Hindu, 15-10-1921

180. TO WOMEN

[*October 2, 1921*]

DEAR SISTERS,

I have been thinking all this time about the kind of message I should send to you on my birthday, which falls today. What interest can our sisters have in my birthday? What is the reason that they know me? Pondering on this question, I feel that they do so because they recognize my love for them. They know that I value their honour and that I have shown the best means of safe guarding it. This means is swadeshi. In following swadeshi, women can do much more than men. When, in the past, the daughters of India spun and clothed themselves and others, India may have been poor but she was not as abject as she is today. It is plain to me that today the women in the country are unable to preserve their virtue as they could do in the old days. I, therefore, once again put before them the same idea.

All women should devote at least one hour daily to spinning Realizing that simplicity is dharma, women should regard them selves adorned through it, regard as sacred whatever quality of cloth is produced from yarn spun by girls and wear such cloth for the purpose of covering their bodies.

I see, too, and I want women as well to see, that this is the only way to win swaraj.

The best way to show our regard and affection for a person is to follow his example.

My aim in everything which I ask my countrymen to do is to

revive tile *satyayuga*[1].

Our first task in the country is to educate women. Education will help them to safeguard their virtue. For doing this what we require is not much erudition but strength of character.

The love you have shown me today encourages me to ask you to show love of another kind by resolving to bring back the *satyayuga.* India is certainly capable of defending herself. If we decide to use exclusively cloth made in India we shall in a very short time haveensured strong protection for the country. That is why I am trying to popularize the spinning-wheel. It enables women to safeguard their virtue. There is no other occupation which will help millions of our women to spend their time usefully sitting at home. To ply a spinning-wheel does not require much of intelligence either. The country should learn to be self-reliant. It will be so when it has brave men and brave women. The courage we should display is of the kind required in satyagraha, which is superior to the courage of arms. If we can do this, we are bound to be free. Save the millions of rupees which are drained out of the country and protect your sisters.

If you are convinced that the work I am asking you to do needs to be done, come forward, for the sake of the country, to take it up.

1. Go among the poor and, wherever you find people suffering for want of food and clothing, introduce the spinning-wheel, banish hunger and help people to become self-supporting.

2. Wherever you find the surroundings very dirty, women and children disease ridden and the general state one of moral laxity, the people should be provided with the means for a sober, clean, healthy and pure life and, in this way, be made aware of their present condition and ways of living.

3. Wherever you see the need for efforts to spread knowledge and a desire to undertake such efforts, you should provide the necessary means and should, yourselves, work actively.

For this work, it is first necessary to cultivate self-purification, that is, spiritual growth, sisterly regard for others and intellectual humility.

There is, thus, an excellent and fruitful field of work for the Bhagini Samaj[2], if the Samaj would take it up. The field is so large

[1] The age of truth

[2] A social service organization of women in Bombay

that, if it does solid work, seemingly bigger tasks will count as nothing by comparison and great service will have been rendered to the cause of Home Rule without the phrase being so much as even mentioned. In the past, when there were no printing presses and few facilities for public speeches, when we could cover 24 miles in as many hours instead of a thousand as now, there was only one effective means of propagating ideas, namely, one's work. Today, we rush from place to place with the speed of air, deliver speeches and write articles, and yet we find it almost impossible to persuade people to act as we want them to. From every direction we hear words of despair. To me it is clear that, as in the past, so in the present too we shall not succeed in impressing the people with speeches and writings as effectively as we can with work. It is my humble prayer to the Bhagini Samaj that it should attach the first importance to quiet work.

It is a huge waste if, from all these books which people read, nothing is put into practice. Try, therefore, to act upon at least an ounce of what you read in books rather than attempt to read a ton load of them.

I do not want to name the many sciences there are in the world, but it is safe to believe that you have grasped the meaning of any science to the extent that you put it into practice.

It is not proper that we pay no attention to acting on the numerous pledges that we take. Any pledge once taken should be scrupulously kept, at the cost of one's life if necessary.

Let your life be governed by high ideals. In Rome, the ideals themselves changed, but in India we have Still not forgotten ours. Whether Hindus or Muslims, we are all heirs to our forefathers. We can hope to preserve that heritage only by constantly fixing our attention on high ideals of life. With our forefathers, aspiration for goodness was the central motive of their life, but it seems to have vanished from us. Wherever we turn, we find hypocrisy. We have got into the habit of resorting to lies in every small matter. We must root that out and fill our lives with truth.

Your humble brother,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 6-10-1921

181. DHARMA OR "ADHARMA"?

I invariably start and prick up my ears when, at times, even well-wishers or others who believe in non-co-operation come out with difficult questions and tell of their bitter experience. What follows is the gist of a letter from a friend who has been moved to write out of love. He has the country's good at heart, and is no coward. Dharma is dear to him, while his experience of human nature is considerable. I give here in my own words the substance of his letter as far as I can recollect it.

While no one questions your intentions and your means too are clean, would you say that what you advocated with regard to students was altogether wise? Is it possible to be certain that your action will not have unhappy results? To me at any rate these results are visible even today. In trying to teach the spirit of freedom, we have lost domestic discipline. Filial regard on the part of children seems to have disappeared. What boots it to gain swaraj if domestic sanctities are to be its price ? Is the spinning-wheel the proper thing for a child ? He may do as he pleases later in life. If children disobey their parents, they cannot but lose their dharma.

It is understandable that you should have faith in your non-co-operators, but is it not likely that you are being deceived ? Do you really believe that everyone is as sincere as you are ? I for one see many around who are selfish, vain and hypocritical, I am sure you would not be happy to discover that you had lost the sincere men and retained only irrespossible people around you. How I wish I could lend you my eyes to see that all that glitters is not gold!

It is in the hope that you may win in the end that I have voiced these misgivings and encroached upon your time.

The original letter is even more simply and politely written than I have been able to suggest. Such letters, manifestly prompted by love, always make me wonder whether the ordinary restraints of civilized life are being violated.

Some children have possibly become rude. But, then, if the *Gita* has been used to justify the throwing of bombs, why be surprised at misconstruction of my words? I am sure, however, that the movement of leaving schools has had on the whole happy results. The original idea was sound. I am firmly of the view that it is a sin to attend schools

run by this Satanic Government. Children under the age of 16 were not called upon to join this movement, while those above 16, surely, have the necessary discretion to decide for themselves. But I always wonder if parents today have a proper under standing of their own duty. What would be the duty of children whose parents are morally depraved? When parents are dissolute and vice-ridden, what is the right course for growing sons and daughters to follow? What course should the children of slaves adopt ?

We should not be surprised if in these matters the consequence of too narrow an interpretation of domestic sanctities are unfortunate. Should the children of parents subsisting on bribery agree to being supported with such riches or should they renounce them. Simply because some Hindu parents may have forsaken their dharma, should the children follow suit?

We shall have, in this age, to set a limit to our filial devotion as much as we do to our loyalty to the State.

In a place where the king is dissolute and harasses his subjects, where he enjoys all luxuries and comforts at the expense of the people, where, instead of being a protector of his subjects he has become a parasite on them—if loyalty to such a king is not a sin, then what is called virtue must be a sin. In the past, devotion to a king meant devotion to a king like Rama, not to one like Ravana. It is understandable that at the instance of Dasharatha Rama should readily take himself to the wild forest, but Prehlada accepting the gift of kingship from Hiranyakashipu would mean the eclipse of dharma.

You may swim in your father's well but it does not mean you may also drown yourself in it.

At no stage of our struggle has the youth of the country been encouraged to adopt an attitude of licence. Only those young men who were disciplined and could endure suffering were advised to leave Government schools and colleges even though they might be getting useful knowledge in them. There are many who continue in schools to please their parents. Only a few have left schools in defiance of their parents' wishes, and of these, fewer still have subsequently taken to undisciplined ways.

There is in this world no dearth of men who in the name of conscience really gratify their selfish desires. Such men will of course bring discredit to dharma, but should that stop us from so much as

talking about conscience? I am absolutely certain that by placing the spinning-wheel in children's hands I have done the highest service to the country. I look upon the spinning-wheel movement as of lasting importance. In concentrating on the training of children's minds to the exclusion of everything else, we have done them a great wrong. A considerable portion of our lives is taken up in trying to provide the body's needs. We have committed a great sin in neglecting education in the use of the means which help us to meet these needs. The country will be happy only if this education is taken up again. By using the spinning-wheel as an instrument of vocational training, which in this case is our duty, we serve several purposes at the same time.

The second misgiving of our friend causes me concern. Dharma would get a bad name and people would come to harm if this sacred struggle is vitiated by hypocrisy. In that case people would fight shy of the very name of dharma or be content to accept orthodoxy as dharma.

Some undesirable elements must admittedly have found their way into our struggle, and I know that there are hypocrites who, under the cover of non-co-operation, are out to serve their selfish ends. But I do not think that hypocrisy has taken possession of the movement Should that happen, our condition would be even worse than it is today because it would nurse our cowardice. Hypocrisy flourishes only where there is fear. The fear of the consequences of sin tempts the cowardly sinner to resort to a pretence of virtue and thus he becomes doubly a sinner. In order to hide his godlessness, so that he may fill his belly, he makes a big show of piety and not only wastes sandalwood[1] but adds to his sins. Whatever is humanly possible to keep such persons out of the struggle has, I feel, been done, and it is with this consideration that I have retained my freedom to act as I think best in the last resort. The moment I see hypocrisy all round me, I shall unhesitatingly flee the struggle. Hypocrites cannot be non co-operators and it is the service of the latter I have accepted.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-10-I921

[1] Paste of sandalwood is applied to the forehead as a mark of piety.

182. MY NOTES

PEOPLE OF MADRAS

My tour of Madras was something of a disappointment. I am a great admirer of the people of Madras. Memories of the pleasant experience I had with them in South Africa are still fresh in my mind. I have often seen their great capacity for suffering. But in the matter of swadeshi Madras lags behind. I see that their women remain the least touched by swadeshi. And yet, an awakened Madras can do much. In contrast to the smartness of the women in Madras, Gujarati women stand now where. The former are highly intelligent. No other Indian women are as deft with their hands. Women there have the ingenuity to make the most worthless-looking thing pay.

It is not that Madras is lacking in workers either. Very few of our workers have the wisdom, the integrity and the ability of Shri Rajagopalachari. He has fully understood the meaning of our struggle and, in a moment of crisis, he can be resolute and patient.

How is it, then, that Madras disappointed me? I think there are two reasons for this. In the first place, so deep has been the influence of the English language on the region that a person in Madras who knows English cares very little for Tamil. The Bengali, too love English, but that has not made them give up Bengali. In fact, hardly any other Indian language except perhaps Urdu has been able to produce the quality of literature that Bengali has, so well has it been cultivated. Tamil in Madras has been as good as given up, with the result that not only has Tamil not prospered, but there is a wide gulf separating the English-knowing section from the Tamil-speaking class. Shri Rajagopalachari and his colleagues are making every effort to bridge the gulf, but this will take some time.

The other important reason for my disappointment is that, their genuine regard for dharma notwithstanding, people in Madras have allowed blind religious orthodoxy to take such complete possession of them that mere outward forms of religion remain and the inner spirit has vanished. The *Antyajas* in the region suffer more indignities than they do in almost any other part of the country. The Brahmins are more sharply separated from the Non-Brahmins than anywhere else. And yet no other region makes such abundant use of sacred ash,

sandalwood paste and vermilion powder. No other part of the country has quite so many temples and is so generous in providing for their maintenance. As a result of this, on the one hand the educated people are getting increasingly estranged from religion and becoming more cynical in consequence, and, on the other, total darkness and ignorance prevail among the orthodox.

In such a case, however, once the darkness has disappeared, light is not delayed. As soon as the ordinary people are convinced of the darkness that is within them, it will vanish by itself.

That is why I see rays of hope even in the midst of gloom. Congress workers tell me that, without any effort on their part, the people have taken up the spinning-wheel. Khadi is being produced even in places where they have done no work and thousands have started wearing khadi caps. The majority of the Congress workers wear khadi exclusively. If I am asked what conclusion I have reached from my experience in Madras, I would say that despite this experience, I have not given up hope of winning swaraj before the year is out.

He who fights from a sense of dharma never despairs. If one's ends are clean and one's means are pure, one ought to be confident of success. Only when such a person fails to achieve his end within the expected time will he say 'There must have been some error in my calculation, but I am sure of success along this path.'

GUJARATIS IN MADRAS

Wherever I see Gujaratis I observe that they are bringing credit to Gujarat. At every place they mix with the local population as much as they can. They readily contribute what is expected of them and try to spread the message of non-co-operation to the best of their ability. Everyone whom I ask has a good word for them. They keep out of local politics. The impression which I have thus formed of them is of a group giving priority to the claims of public service. They have been sending money even from South and East Africa, and have been taking part in the struggles there. I include among these Gujaratis Gujarati-speaking Parsis and Muslims, for I notice that Gujarati-Speaking Memons too have some work to their credit. Wherever I come across an isolated Parsi here and there, I get an experience of their love for me. I had such an experience even as far away as in the north east corner of Assam. There was only one Parsi

there, but he did not hesitate to show, as well as he could, his sympathy for the cause of non-co-operation.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-10-1921

183. DRAFT OF A MANIFESTO

October 4, 1921

We, the undersigned, consider that the *communique* of the Government of Bombay, dated regarding the Ali Brothers and others has laid down principles which are subversive of all freedom of expression of opinion, and we desire to state that it is the inherent right of everyone to express his opinion without restraint about the propriety of citizens offering their services to the Government whether in the civil or the military department.

We, the undersigned, state it as our opinion that it is not only contrary to the Muslim religion as declared by their Ulemas but also contrary to national dignity for any Indian to serve as a civilian and more especially as a soldier, under a system of Government which has brought about India's economic, moral and political degradation and which has used the soldiery and the police for repressing national aspirations, as for instance at the time of the Rowlatt Act agitation, and which has used the soldiers for crushing the liberty of the Arabs, the Egyptians and the Turks who have done no harm to India.

We are also of opinion that it is the duty of every Indian soldier and civilian forthwith to resign his post and find out some honourable means to support himself.

And with that end in view we suggest to everyone in Government employ to learn hand-spinning and hand-weaving, which whilst advancing the national cause would enable them to earn an honest and an honourable living.

We urge the country in general to finish the boycott foreign cloth and take to hand-spinning and hand-weaving and stimulate manufacture of khaddar by such means.

A complete boycott of foreign cloth and manufacture by hand-spinning and hand-weaving will enable everyone to earn his or her living without falling back upon Government employment, and enable the Congress to call out both soldiers and civilians and even to

take up mass civil disobedience.[1]

From a photostat: S.N. 7633

184. A MANIFESTO

[BOMBAY,
6.50 p.m., October 4, l921][2]

In view of the prosecution of the Ali Brothers and others for the reasons stated in the Government of Bombay *communique* dated the 15th September 1921, we, the undersigned, speaking in our individual capacity, desire to state that it is the inherent right of everyone to express his opinion without restraint about the propriety of citizens offering their services to, or remaining in the employ of, the Government, whether in the civil or the military department.

We, the undersigned, state it as our opinion, that it is contrary to national dignity for any Indian to serve as a civilian, and more especially as a soldier, under a system of Government, which has brought about India's economic, moral and political degradation and which has used the soldiery and the police for repressing national aspirations, as, for instance, at the time of the Rowlatt Act agitation, and which has used the soldiers for crushing the liberty of the Arabs, the Egyptians, the Turks and other nations who have done no harm to India.

We are also of opinion, that it is the duty of every Indian soldier and civilian to sever his connection with the Government and find some other means of livelihood.

M. K. GANDHI
ABUL KALAM AZAD (CALCUTTA)
AJMAL KHAN (DELHI)
LAJPAT RAI (LAHORE)
MOTILAL NEHRU (ALLAHABAD)
SAROJINI NAIDU (BOMBAY)
ABBAS TAIYABJI
N C. KELKAR
KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA (GUNTUR)
G. HARISARVOTTAM RAO (GUNTUR)
ANASUYA SARABHAI
JITENDRALAL BANERJI
MUSHIR HUSEN KIDWAI (DELHI)
SHYAMA SUNDARA CHAKRAVARTI (CALCUTTA)
RAJENDRA PRASAD (PATNA)

[1] The last two paragraphs have been scored out in the source.
[2] From a photostat of the draft : S.N. 7632

V. J. PATEL
VALLABHBHAI J. PATEL (AHMEDABAD)
M. R. JAYAKAR (BOMBAY)
D. V. GOKHALE (POONA)
S. G. BANKER
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU (ALLAHABAD)
GANGADHAR B. DESHPANDE (BELGAUM)
LAKSHMIDAS TERSI
UMAR SOBANI
JAMNALAL BAJAJ
M. S. ANE (AMRAOTI)
S. E. STOKES (KOTGADH, SIMLA)
M. A. ANSARI (DELHI)
KHALIQUZZAMAN (DELHI)
K. M. ABDUL GAFUR (DELHI)
ABDUL BARI (LUCKNOW)
KRISHNAJI NILKANTH (BELGAUM)
C. RAJAGOPALACHARI (MADRAS)
AZAD SOBHANI (LUCKNOW)
HAZRAT MOHANI (CAWNPORE)
MAHADEO HARIBHAI DESAI
BARJORJI FRAMJI BHARUCHA
YAKUB HASAN
B. S. MUNJE (NAGPUR)
JERAMDAS DOLATRAM
M. R. CHOLKAR (NAGPUR)
V. V. DASTANE (BHUSAVAL)
AHMED HAJI SIDICK KHATRI (BOMBAY)
GUDUR RAMACHANDRA RAO (ANDHRA)
D. S. VIJAYRAO (LAHORE)
B. L. SUBBARAMAYYA (ANDHRA)
MIA MAHOMED HAJI JANMAHOMED CHOTANI

Young India, 6-10-1921

185. LETTER TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

[Before *October 5, 1921*]

THE EDITOR OF
THE [*BOMBAY*] *CHRONICLE*

SIR,

Persistent rumours supposed to be well founded were brought to me in Madras and have been repeated with greater emphasis in Bombay that my arrest is imminent. If the rumour is well-founded the Government will certainly deserve congratulations for consistency after the arrest of the Ali Brothers and their co-prisoners, for, now the battle is being waged not against violence, so-called or real, or incitement thereto, but against the very principle of non-co-operation for which the Congress and the Khilafat Committees stand, and that principle is promoting disaffection against the established Govern-

ment and promoting non-co-operation with the Government by all classes, including civilians and soldiers. The success of that propaganda, it is obvious, means the dissolution of the existing system of Government and it would be unbecoming for those who are avowed non-co-operators to question any steps that the Government may take in order to crush the movement, and I cannot conceive a more logical step than to arrest the author of the movement, unless the administrators of the system intend to change it in accordance with the wishes of the non-co-operators. The country has shown by its dignified calm attitude after the arrests of the Ali Brothers and others, that it has realized the necessity of non-violence. I expect the retention of the same non-violent atmosphere after my arrest or that of any other worker. The people will show their true courage and appreciation of non-violence and of imprisonments for the sake of one's religion and one's country as an honour to be prized not only by remaining absolutely peaceful but by refraining from hartals or any such demonstration. Any hartal following the arrest of myself or any other worker would be a breach of discipline, and, therefore, no mark of respect or affection for the arrested worker. The only way to show one's regard is to demonstrate greater zeal in prosecuting the Congress programme of swadeshi and hasten the advent of swaraj thereby. I would certainly expect, in the event of my arrest, every man and woman in India who believes in the message of swadeshi, but through laziness or weakness has not yet discarded foreign cloth and taken to hand-spinning and hand-weaving, to discard all foreign cloth and take up the spinning-wheel and the handloom. I would expect the Hindus on no account to relax their efforts for the Khilafat or barter it away for so-called swaraj, for swaraj, without the conciliation of the Mussulmans, is, in my opinion, an inconceivable thing.

Yours etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-10-1921

186. MESSAGE TO WORKERS, CEDED DISTRICTS

October 5, 1921

Mr. Harisarvothama Rao wires from Bombay under date October 5:

Mahatma Gandhi permits the sending of the following message to the Ceded Districts workers:

Concentrate attention on swadeshi, boycott, completely maintain perfect silence at meetings, avoid demonstration of all description as the first essential discipline of deliberate peaceful action. Teach volunteers to down sticks and stand to duty. I request all to meet at Tadpatri on the 14th instant.

The Hindu, 6-10-1921

187. NOTES

FAMINE RELIEF

The visit to the Ceded Districts brought abundant proof of the spinning-wheel being the greatest insurance against famine, and being also the best measure of relief. There is a severe famine raging in some parts of these Districts. One of the workers told me that a woman not being able to support herself and her children had drowned herself and her children. It is not possible to give doles of charity to hundreds of thousand of men. And men who live on charity lose all sense of self-respect. It is not as if there is no corn to be had in the affected area. People have no work and no money. The Government's relief works consist in breaking and carrying stones. A friend remarked that the Government had roads torn down and repaired in order to find work for the men and women in distress. Whether roads are torn down or not, road repair is the only relief work the Government provides. I understood, that the actual wage that found its way into a woman's hands was an anna or five pice, and not more than ten pice into a man's hands. I saw on the other hand, that a Congress Committee was paying three annas per day to *Panchama* women working at the spinning-wheel for eight hours a day. And what is being done for the *Panchama* women can be done for thousands of famine-stricken women and for that matter men. In these Districts three annas a day, even for men, is a veritable boon. But the

spinning-wheel has possibilities which no other occupation has. For it involves the preliminary processes of ginning and carding and the subsequent process of weaving. In the Ceded Districts it is possible without much difficulty to teach weaving. And if the whole of cloth manufacture can be organized, thousands of men can find permanent occupation in their own homes. Every worker freely acknowledged, that both the workers and the afflicted people had begun to realize the possibilities of the spinning-wheel, and already the people were filled with hope and the workers had commenced organizing spinning and weaving everywhere. I met people who told me, they used to laugh at my statement that the spinning-wheel was the best famine insurance, but practical experience convinced them of the truth of it.

I know, this is but the commencement of the transformation. But when it is complete not a man nor woman having sound hands need beg or starve. Today we have the humiliating and debasing spectacle in a famine year of thousands, though well able to work, living on charity and semi-starvation for want of useful work.

THE ONLY ACTIVITY

Therefore I suggest to every Congress and Khilafat worker the advisability of organizing hand-spinning and hand-weaving in his respective district to the exclusion of every other activity. We should be ashamed of resting or having a square meal so long as there is one able-bodied man or woman without work or food. I would urge moneyed men against giving indiscriminate charity or free meals. We shall be cursed by the future generation, if we divide India into givers and receivers of alms. If we want the nation to have any self-respect at all, we must provide against the recurring scarcity. Let those, therefore, who wish to feed the poor, find spinning-wheels for them and provide facilities for learning the various processes.

EXPRESSION OF OPINION

When in any movement violence is religiously eschewed, it becomes a propaganda movement of the purest type. Any attempt to crush it is an attempt to crush public opinion. And such the present repression has become. Why should I not express my profound conviction,

1. that it is sinful to serve the Government in any capacity whatsoever, especially that of a soldier,

2. that it is sinful to drink intoxicating liquors,

3. that it is sinful to wear foreign cloth,

4. that it is sinfulto gamble or speculate in foods tuffs orcotton ?

The Government may, as it is carrying on a counter-propaganda, successfully draw recruits for civil and military employment, by various methods induce people to drink and wear foreign cloth and speculate in foodstuffs and cotton and thus continue to govern so long as people intentionally or ignorantly co-operate with it. It will fall the day the people are convinced to the contrary. And just as I carry on my propaganda among the winebibbers and the cotton speculators to wean them from their evil ways, I claim the right to tell the soldier face to face what is his duty in accordance with my opinion. Why should the soldier be kept in ignorance of what is going on in the country ? Is the Government afraid, that if he comes to know the truth, he will no longer serve it? A Government worth the name should be able fully to educate the soldiery and hold its loyalty. But in India everything is armed, —peace, loyalty and opinion. Only the people are disarmed. Our duty therefore is clear. We must claim, even though it be on the gallows, to hold and openly to express any opinion we choose, so long as we do not directly or indirectly cause violence. That is the battle of non-violent non-co-operation. It must be fought to the finish. I warn the public, that the prosecution for "tampering with the loyalty of the army" is but the precursor of prosecutions for tampering with the loyalty of the people to foreign cloth. What was the burning of the khadi vests and caps of the young men of Calicut? What is the crusade against the students of the Vizagapatam Medical School, if it is not an insensate crusade against khadi?

THE SOLE TEST

But this is exactly the kind of test through which we must pass, if we are to gain swaraj. If it is true that this Government exists for its special interests which are antagonistic to those of the people at large, it must vindicate its position at any cost, and we must not be angry with it on that account. Its attempt at suppressing the growth of free public opinion is no new discovery. We have known these attributes of the Government and it is for our knowledge of their existence that we are seeking to destroy the system under which it is being carried on. It exists for the slow but certain exploitation of India and her raw products, and for so enervating India as to make her perpetually

subservient to the foreign exploiters, in other words to imprison us in our own homes. And the system devised to bring about such a state of things is one of rewards and punishments, rewards in the shape of titles and emoluments for those who assist the system, and punishment, even terrorism, for those who seek to end or mend it. So the Government is bound to make a desperate attempt to stifle all expression of opinion and all activity that would injure its special interests. Let us not delude ourselves into the belief that the Government has been generous enough to stay its hands up to the last moment. Let us admit at once that the Government is the most powerful and resourcefull corporation the world has ever seen. It bides its time, it does allow its opponents to play; but it strikes immediately they betray seriousness. There can be no question of generosity about a robber who holds on to the stolen property as long as he ever can allow the robbed to make all the childish attempts possible for the recovery of stolen property, but is ready to cut him down as soon as he becomes serious and is likely to succeed in his attempt at recovery. When a robber acts in such a methodical manner, we consider him to be clever in his unscrupulousness and we regard him as hypocritical when he puts on the air of injured innocence. Our resourcefulness lies in not playing into the hands of this Government. We must not be goaded into madness and violence by its imprisonments whether mild or dramatic. We must not flinch from the gallows. I love the Ali Brothers as I love my blood-bothers. But I would not plead with the Government if its judges sentenced them to be hanged. I would know that it was a glorious death they had died and would envy them their good fortune. If they are sentenced to penal servitude for life, I would know that I would release them by the establishment of swaraj at the earliest opportunity.

The only remedy (and it is a most efficacious remedy) open to us is to let the Government do its worst, believe that its worst is the best for the country, and therefore to remain unruffled by repression and prosecute our appointed programme to the finish in the full belief that it must bring the relief we are seeking. That programme is the introduction of hand-spinning and hand-weaving in every home and village.

AN APT ANECDOTE

Maulana Azad Sobhani, who has been doing wonderful work for swadeshi, was telling me a thrilling story of Egyptian coolness and

bravery. He told me that once the soldiers surrounded an Egyptian mosque and wanted to prevent nationalist propaganda inside it. The congregation was listening to a young man speaking to it. He would not desist and was shot. The congregation remained unmoved. Another young man took up the discourse and was shot whilst he was going on, and thus seven young men were shot till the discourse was finished, the congregation remaining unmoved all the while the glorious sacrifice was going on. The Egyptians do not believe in non-violence. But they are fine soldiers. They did not want the mosque to be blown to pieces nor the whole congregation in a vain attempt to retaliate. They wanted to show that they would not be cowed down, and no orders could bend their spirit. And so, as if nothing had happened; the discourse was finished. Death and life became with the congregation synonymous terms. The moral of the story is unmistakable. We who are pledged to non-violence are endeavouring to cultivate the bravery of the seven young Egyptians and the congregation. We must acquire the courage to face death in the pursuit of our goal without even wishing to kill, and victory during the remaining three months is a certainty.

THE THICKENING PLOT

For the Government is marshalling all its forces. I have just learnt, that Mr. Phooken, a barrister and member of the aristocracy of Assam has been called upon to file security for keeping the peace. I had the pleasure of meeting him during my tour. He is a soldier and a sportsman. But he has become a convinced non-violationist. He believes, that nothing but non-violence can possibly put hope in the Indian breast and make swaraj possible during the year. But Mr. Phooken is a brave worker. He and his co-workers wish to revive swadeshi to the full, and the Assam Government do not like the idea. In Andhradesha a powerful zemindar, Kumar Raja of Gampalagudem, has been similarly treated, because he had the courage to do temperance work. These are but two stray instances I have come across in the papers I have been able to secure during my travels. I have no doubt that many such workers are being silenced and manymore will be. This is all good news, if we who remain behind will continue the work of our more fortunate comrades who are being imprisoned. I do call them fortunate, for it is the privilege of the oppressed to be in prison. Where tyranny rules, prison for a just man is an honourable place. It is the price that a tyrant exacts from those

who cross his path or purpose. These imprisonments should teach us to persist in our effort. We need no leaders when the way is mapped out for us. We are in the happy position of knowing what to do and how to do it. Let us show ourselves worthy of swaraj by feeling not despondent but elated over the incarceration of leaders and going on with our work with the calm courage of the Egyptian congregation in the anecdote related by me.

NO MORE STICKS

During our travels in Madras and the Ceded Districts as elsewhere, we found much dissipation of energy. Vast crowds gathering everywhere and waiting for hours in order merely to have a glimpse. The yelling and the noise were unbearable. We noticed, too, that wherever previous preparation was made as in Trichinopoly, Chettiand, Tinnevelly and other places, the order was all that could be desired, and we were able to go through a great deal of work without any difficulty. In the Ceded Districts, however, we saw the volunteers carrying bamboo sticks seven feet in length. These were meant to be used for forming chains to protect the guests from the crowds rushing towards them. I could see that the sticks were a hindrance, interfered with easy movement and constituted a danger in the midst of crowds. I was myself in danger of having my eyes hurt more than once. And instead of feeling the protection of the volunteers, I felt the danger of their long sticks causing me serious injury any moment. I showed the volunteers that strong ropes would serve their purpose much better than these sticks. Maulana Azad Sobhani saw the point of my remarks, and as the sticks could never be used by the volunteers under the pledge of non-violence for causing hurt, he induced them at Tadpatri to put them away. I would suggest such a change to all volunteer corps. As our movement is avowedly peaceful, it is much better even to drop sticks. Soldiers of peace that we are, we should copy the ordinary soldier as little as possible whether in point of uniform or otherwise.

WANT OF TRAINING

It was painful to notice the want of training among the volunteers in many places. Except at the few places such as I have mentioned, they were always a hindrance in spite of the best of motives. They would insist on surrounding, if not mounting, the cars. They would insist on walking in front and obstructing the passage.

They did not know how to march in step. They would not walk in twos. It was most difficult to pass instructions to them. It is high time they were thoroughly organized and were instructed to follow certain rules.

CHAIRS OUT OF PLACE

As a rule now, one rarely sees chairs at public meetings. They are all in the open air. A little platform with or without canopy is generally improvized in the centre. As I cannot speak standing, a chair is as a rule provided for me, and therefore naturally for my companions. These chairs mar the harmony of the surroundings. I suggest the use of the simple old square table for me to speak from. We can certainly revive the old art in keeping with our simple and natural surroundings. I was pleased to observe throughout the tour, that for covering and decoration khadi only was invariably used.

"ETHICS OF DESTRUCTION"

Bada Dada (Dwijendranath Tagore, Shantiniketan) has sent me the following upon reading the article headed "Ethics of Destruction"[1]. It is naturally a source of joy to me that one so venerable and learned should agree with the ethical position taken up by me in opposition even to those whose opinion I value and respect. The reader will be glad to find that in Bada Dada we have a *rishi* who in his quiet seclusion follows the national movement with the avidity of a young man of five and twenty, anal is constantly thinking of it and praying for its success. Here is the letter:

> There was a merchant who suddenly became bankrupt, and was reduced to utter poverty; at the same time his wife was bed-ridden, suffering from acute rheumatic pain. There was an apothecary who dealt in patent medicine and always wanted cash payment from his customers. A doctor friend came to see the lady, and at the same time her daughter also came from her father-in-law's house to see her sick mother and brought with her a ten-rupee note so that she might buy the patent medicine which could cure her pain immediately. She handed over the note to the doctor, and told him to get the medicine from the apothecary's shop which was near at hand, and went back. The doctor said that the medicine, no doubt, would give her instant relief, but at the same time it would injure her health to sucha degree that she would remain decrepit throughout her life. However, the doctor said that he knew an electrician who

[1] Dated 1-9-1921

was a next door neighbour and could cure rheumatism by electric treatment, his charge being Rs. 10/- per day. In a month he would perfectly cure the disease for good without in the least injuring her general health.

But the patient insisted that she wanted immediate relief, and repeatedly asked the doctor for the bank-note so that she might send for the medicine at once. But the doctor repeatedly said that he could not conscientiously give her the note for the purpose, and he considered it to be a sin to do so. But the lady implored and beseeched him to give her the note. The doctor then took the match-box from his pocket and burnt the note to ashes; and said that she need not be afraid, for he was going to bring the electrician immediately at his own expense, which her husband would pay back as soon as he repaired his fortune. When the hope of obtaining instant relief was thus frustrated in a moment, the patient said to the doctor, "Do as you think fit". So the doctor immediately brought the electrician who assured her that she would be permanently cured within a month, if she allowed him to treat her. Then the doctor did what he had promised to the satisfaction of all parties.

Was the burning of the note a virtuous or a sinful act?

The above is exactly analogous with Mr. Gandhi's cloth-burning. Mr. Gandhi refuses to give to the poor the relief that could have been given by distributing the foreign cloth among them. In order to avoid making them permanently miserable creatures, he promised to make them permanently happy by providing them with clothes made by their own hands.

Young India, 6-10-1921

188. HINDUISM

In dealing with the problem of untouchability during the Madras tour, I have asserted my claim to being a *sanatani* Hindu with greater emphasis than hitherto, and yet there are things which are commonly done in the name of Hinduism, which I disregard. I have no desire to be called a *sanatani* Hindu or any other if I am not such. And I have certainly no desire to steal in a reform or an abuse under cover of a great faith.

It is therefore necessary for me once for all distinctly to give my meaning of *sanatana* Hinduism. The word *sanatana* I use in its natural sense.

I call myself a *sanatani* Hindu, because,

1. I believe in the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Puranas and all that goes by the name of Hindu scriptures, and therefore in avatars

and rebirth,

2. I believe in the *varnashrama* dharma in a sense in my opinion strictly Vedic but not in its present popular and crude sense,

3. I believe in the protection of the cow in its much larger sense than the popular,

4. I do not disbelieve in idol-worship.

The reader will note that I have purposely refrained from using the word divine origin in reference to the Vedas or any other scriptures. For I do not believe in the exclusive divinity of the Vedas. I believe the Bible, the Koran, and the Zend-Avesta to be as much divinely inspired as the Vedas. My belief in the Hindu scriptures does not require me to accept every word and every verse as divinely inspired. Nor do I claim to have any first-hand knowledge of these wonderful books. But I do claim to know and feel the truths of the essential teaching of the scriptures. I decline to be bound by any interpretation, however learned it may be, if it is repugnant to reason or moral sense. I do most emphatically repudiate the claim (if they advance any such) of the present Shankaracharyas and shastris to give a correct interpretation of the Hindu scriptures. On the contrary I believe, that our present knowledge of these books is in a most chaotic state. I believe implicitly in the Hindu aphorism, that no one truly knows the Shastras who has not attained perfection in innocence (ahimsa), truth *(satya)* and self-control *(brahmacharya)* and who has not renounced all acquisition or possession of wealth. I believe in the institution of gurus, but in this age millions must go without a guru, because it is a rare thing to find a combination of perfect purity and perfect learning. But one need not despair of ever knowing the truth of one's religion, because the fundamentals of Hinduism as of every great religion are unchangeable, and easily understood. Every Hindu believes in God and his oneness, in rebirth and salvation. But that which distinguishes Hinduism from every other religion is its cow-protection, more than its *varnashrama*.

Varnashrama is, in my opinion, inherent in human nature, and Hinduism has simply reduced it to a science. It does attach to birth. A man cannot change his *varna* by choice. Not to abide by one's *varna is* to disregard the law of heredity. The division, however, into innumerable castes is an unwarranted liberty taken with the doctrine. The four divisions are all-sufficing.

I do not believe, that inter-dining or even inter-marriage

necessarily deprives a man of his status that his birth has given him. The four divisions define a man's calling, they do not restrict or regulate social intercourse. The divisions define duties, they confer no privileges. It is, I hold, against the genius of Hinduism to arrogate to oneself a higher status or assign to another a lower. All are born to serve God's creation, a Brahmin with his knowledge, a Kshatriya with his power of protection, a Vaisya with his commercial ability and a Sudra with his bodily labour. This however does not mean that a Brahmin for instance is absolved from bodily labour, or the duty of protecting himself and others. His birth makes a Brahmin predominantly a man of knowledge, the fittest by heredity and training to impart it to others. There nothing, again, to prevent the Sudra from acquiring all the knowledge he wishes. Only, he will best serve with his body and need not envy others their special qualities for service. But a Brahmin who claims superiority by right of knowledge falls and has no knowledge. And so with the others who pride themselves their special qualities. *Varnashrama* is self-restraint and conservation and economy of energy.

Though therefore *varnashrama* is not affected by inter-dining or inter-marriage, Hinduism does most emphatically discourage inter-dining and inter-marriage between divisions. Hinduism reached the highest limit of self-restraint. It is undoubtedly a religion of renunciation of tile flesh so that the spirit may be set free. It is no part of a Hindu's duty to dine with his son. And by restricting his choice of a bride to a particular group, he exercises rare self-restraint. Hinduism does not regard a married state as by any means essential for salvation. Marriage is a "fall" even as birth is a "fall". Salvation is freedom from birth and hence death also. Prohibition against inter-marriage and inter-dining is essential for a rapid evolution of the soul. But this self-denial is no test of *varna*. A Brahmin may remain a Brahmin, though he may dine with his Sudra brother, if he has not left off his duty of service by knowledge. It follows from what I have said above, that restraint in matters of marriage and dining is not based upon notions of superiority. A Hindu who refuses to dine with another from a sense of superiority misrepresents his dharma.

Unfortunately, today Hinduism seems to consist merely in eating and not-eating. Once I horrified a pious Hindu by taking toast at a Mussulman's house. I saw, that he was pained to see me pouring

milk into a cup handed by a Mussulman friend, but his anguish knew no bounds when he saw me taking toast at the Mussulman's hands. Hinduism is in danger of losing its substance if it resolves itself into a matter of elaborate rules as to what and with whom to eat. Abstemiousness from intoxicating drinks and drugs, and from all kinds of foods, especially meat, is undoubtedly a great aid to the evolution of the spirit, but it is by no means an end in itself. Many a man eating meat and with everybody but living in the fear of God is nearer his freedom than a man religiously abstaining from meat and many other things, but blaspheming God in every one of his acts.

The central fact of Hinduism however is cow-protection. Cow-protection to me is one of the most wonderful phenomena in human evolution. It takes the human being beyond his species. The cow to me means the entire sub-human world. Man through the cow is enjoined to realize his identity with all that lives. Why the cow was selected for apotheosis is obvious to me. The cow was in India the best companion. She was the giver of plenty. Not only did she give milk, but she also made agriculture possible. The cow is a poem of pity. One reads pity in the gentle animal. She is the mother to millions of Indian mankind. Protection of the cow means protection of the whole dumb creation of God. The ancient seer, whoever he was, began with the cow. The appeal of the lower order of creation is all the more forcible because it is speechless. Cow-protection is the gift of Hinduism to the world. And Hinduism will live so long as there are Hindus to protect the cow.

The way to protect is to die for her. It is a denial of Hinduism in and ahimsa to kill a human being to protect a cow. Hindus are enjoined to protect the cow by their *tapasya*[1], by self-purification, by self-sacrifice. The present-day cow-protection has degenerated into a perpetual feud with the Mussulmans, whereas cow-protection means conquering Mussulmans by our love. A Mussulman friend sent me some time ago a book detailing the inhumanities practised by us on the cow and her progeny. How we bleed her to take the last drop of milk from her, how we starve her to emaciation, how we ill-treat the calves, how we deprive them of their portion of milk, how cruelly we treat the oxen, how we castrate them, how we beat them, how we overload them. If they had speech, they would bear witness to our

[1] Penance austerity

crimes against them which would stagger the world. By every act of cruelty to our cattle, we disown God and Hinduism. I do not know that the condition of the cattle in any other part of the world is so bad as in unhappy India. We may not blame the Englishman for this. We maynot plead poverty in our defence. Criminal negligence is the only cause of the miserable condition of our cattle. Our *pinjrapoles*[1], though they are an answer to our instinct of mercy, are a clumsy demonstration of its execution. Instead of being model dairy farms and great profitable national institutions, they are merely depots for receiving decrepit cattle.

Hindus will be judged not by their *tilaks*, not by the correct chanting of *mantras*, not by their pilgrimages, not by their most punctilious observance of caste rules but by their ability to protect the cow. Whilst professing the religion of cow-protection, we have enslaved the cow and her progeny, and have become slaves ourselves.

It will now be understood why I consider myself a *sanatani* Hindu. I yield to none in my regard for the cow. I have made the Khilafat cause my own, because I see that through its preservation full protection can be secured for the cow. I do not ask my Mussulman friends to save the cow in consideration of my service. My prayer ascends daily to God Almighty, that my service of a cause I hold to be just may appear so pleasing to Him, that He may change the hearts of the Mussulmans, and fill them with pity for their Hindu neighbours and make them save the animal the latter hold dear as life itself.

I can no more describe my feeling for Hinduism than for my own wife. She moves me as no other woman in the world can. Not that she has no faults. I dare say she has many more than I see myself. But the feeling of an indissoluble bond is there. Even so I feel for and about Hinduism with all its faults and limitations. Nothing elates me so much as the music of the *Gita* or the *Ramayana* by Tulsidas, the only two books in Hinduism I may be said to know. When I fancied I was taking my last breath, the *Gita* was my solace. I know the vice that is going on today in all the great Hindu shrines, but I love them in spite of their unspeakable failings. There is an interest which I take in them and which I take in no other. I am a reformer through and through. But my zeal never takes me to the rejection of any of the essential things of Hinduism. I have said I do not disbelieve in idol-worship. An idol does not excite any feeling of veneration in me. But I think that idol-worship is part of human nature. We hanker after symbolism.

[1] Shelters for crippled and aged cattle

Why should one be more composed in a church than elsewhere? Images are an aid to worship. No Hindu considers an image to he God. I do not consider idol-worship a sin.

It is clear from the foregoing, that Hinduism is not an exclusive religion. In it there is room for the worship of all the prophets of the world. It is not a missionary religion in the ordinary sense of the term. It has no doubt absorbed many tribes in its fold, but this absorption has been of an evolutionary imperceptible character. Hinduism tells everyone to worship God according to his own faith or dharma, and so it lives at peace with all the religions.

That being my conception of Hinduism, I have never been able to reconcile myself to untouchability. I have always regarded it as an excrescence. It is true that it has been handed down to us from generations, but so are many evil practices even to this day. I should be ashamed to think that dedication of girls to virtual prostitution was a part of Hinduism. Yet it is practised by Hindus in many parts of India. I consider it positive irreligion to sacrifice goats to Kali and do not consider it a part of Hinduism. Hinduism is a growth of ages. The very name, Hinduism, was given to the religion of the people of Hindustan by foreigners. There was no doubt at one time sacrifice of animals offered in the name of religion. But It is not religion, much less is it Hindu religion. And so also it seems to me, that when cow-protection became an article of faith with our ancestors, those who persisted in eating beef were excommunicated. The civil strife must have been fierce. Social boycott was applied not only to the recalcitrants, but their sins were visited upon their children also. The practice which had probably its origin in good intentions hardened into usage, and even verses crept in our sacred books giving the practice a permanence wholly undeserved and still less justified. Whether my theory is correct or not, untouchability is repugnant to reason and to the instinct of mercy, pity or love. A religion that establishes the worship of the cow cannot possibly countenance or warrant a cruel and inhuman boycott of human beings. And I should be content to be torn to pieces rather than disown the suppressed classes. Hindus will certainly never deserve freedom, nor get it if they allow their noble religion to be disgraced by the retention of the taint of untouchability. And as I love Hinduism dearer than life itself, the taint has become for me an intolerable burden. Let us not deny God by denying to a fifth of our race the right of association on an equal footing.

Young India, 6-10-1921

189. NOT GOOD ENOUGH

The report of the Repressive Laws Committee would have excited thrilling interest fifteen months ago. No one now cares whether these laws are repealed or retained. They have ceased to frighten us because we have ceased to fear arrests and imprisonments. We are now seeking not repeal of particular laws or regulations but a total repeal of the system that has made them possible. We know now that the Government could have done (under ordinary law) all the things (with slight variations) that they have hitherto done under the laws that are to be repealed. Under pressure of necessity the law-advisers of the Government have discovered a potency in Sections 144, 107 and 108 of the Criminal Procedure Code of which they were before unaware. The fact is, that even if the ordinary law were to be changed without a change of spirit the people of India will not benefit by it.

Though therefore the report has no interest for the people, it is a document of abiding interest to the student of the political situation in the country. The report could have been written in identical language ten years ago by the most reactionary of the civilians. The Committee concludes:

> Their retention (of Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act and part 2 of the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act 1918) is necessary in view of recent occurrences and possible developments which we cannot but regard with the greatest apprehension.

I have no doubt that every repressive measure that has ever been undertaken has been passed under the same "stern sense of duty" under which the laws mentioned are being retained.

I refuse to think that the officials who passed all the repressive laws took wanton delight in repression. Lord Curzon[1] certainly considered the partition of Bengal a matter of public necessity, and the opponents of the measure as enemies of progress. Sir Michael O'Dwyer honestly believed that the educated classes were idiots who did not know their own welfare, meddled in things they never knew, and were no benefactors of the masses in whose name they professed to speak. General Dyer undoubtedly thought, that unless he could

[1] Viceroy of India, 1899-1905.

teach us a lesson, every Englishwoman's life was in jeopardy. Only, in all these three cases we (including the majority of the members of the Committee) considered the officials to have perverted minds incapable of understanding the proud spirit of Bengal, of understanding the agony of educated India which knew by instinct the wants of the masses more truly than the officials in spite of their winter picnics amongst them, and of knowing that Indians would not be guilty of such diabolical unmanliness as General Dyer in his unsoldier-like manner thought us to be. We then used to think the officials were wrong in overriding the people's wishes even though the latter might be in error. We argued to our complete satisfaction, that we were the best judges of our own condition. But now a change has come over some of us. Some of us occupy the position analogous to that of the officials. These consider themselves to be "trustees" for the ignorant masses who are being misled by visionaries, if not also by unscrupulous agitators, and therefore in the teeth of their stubborn opposition (ignorant it may be), they carry on "reformed" legislatures, suppress a revolt in Malabar by sacrificing precious blood although we have offered men ready to go to Malabar unarmed and persuade the Moplahs to stop their mad career of pillage and plunder. They sincerely believe that by so doing they are serving the country.

Thus we are no better than before; probably, if not certainly, we are much worse off. For now there is not only a foreign bureaucracy to cope with, but we have also a national bureaucracy to contend against. Well has Lala Lajpat Rai remarked in his forceful analysis of the report, that what we want is not a change of masters but a change of the system, a change in the relations between the people and the state. The latter must represent the people or be ended. The reason for the strange phenomenon disclosed in the report is to be found in the fact, that the non-official members are irresponsible but they sincerely feel that they know our interests better than we. How can any tinkering therefore answer the aspirations of a people that are awakened and are prepared to suffer for what they understand to be their rights?

Young India, 6-10-1921

190. 30TH SEPTEMBER

The All-India Congress Committee after a full debate fixed 30th September as the final date for completing the boycott of foreign cloth. The choice lay between 30th September and 30th October. The argument advanced in favour of September was, that if boycott could be completed in October, it should be possible in September. It must be confessed that we have failed in fulfilling our resolution. Much work has certainly been done. Khadi has become much more popular and even fashionable. In many places the quality has also improved. There are certainly many more spinning-wheels working, many new looms have been made, and in the ordinary course the progress made would be consider satisfactory. But as a war measure tile record is altogether small.

After all the success of the movement depends upon the consumer. The importer has certainly helped. But the consumer has been satisfied with a partial boycott. He has given up his cap chiefly. Some have parted with their vests but very few with the their *dhotars*[1]. The consumers have not helped manufacture to an appreciable degree. Manufacture of yarn has been confined to the poor. The consumer has not realized the necessity of a complete change. He has not visualized the new life we must lead under swaraj. It is not by temporizing we shall succeed. A complete transformation is a necessity of the case.

At the same time I saw in Bengal as well as Madras that the desire was there. Most people were hopeful, and said that with a little more time they would be able to organize manufacture without difficulty. In the matter of swadeshi the women presented greater difficulty. They could not reconcile themselves to the change so readily as men. But it is the overcoming of these difficulties that would give us courage, hope, stamina and above all knowledge of the true condition of India. Swadeshi means a real industrial revival and consequent of grinding and growing pauperism in the land. And when we have found ourselves able to become self-contained without state aid regarding our cloth supply and have solved what had appeared to be an insoluble problem for the poverty of India, we shall have confidence in our ability to manage our own affairs.

[1] Dhoti

Today Sir William Vincent[1] is able to make us dance to his tune. He makes the self-styled representatives of the people believe, that the British power alone can protect the interests of the minorities; he is able to convince them that all those long years India has proved unable to find officers and men who could defend her borders against invaders.

But all this will be changed. Sir William himself will play a different tune, when he finds that without the British power and indeed in spite of it, we are able to dispense with foreign aid for the supply of our vital needs.

Swadeshi is our Khilafat, it is our cow of plenty. When we have protected swadeshi, we shall find that we have the power to protect the Khilafat, and that we have the ability to manage our own affairs including the defence of our borders.

If thirty crores of people *will*, if the crore members of the Congress *will*, I am sure that we can boycott foreign cloth and manufacture enough for our wants during this month. Three conditions are necessary: we must discard all foreign cloth, do with the least possible cloth during the transition stage, and get all the khadi we need woven by the village weaver out of yarn spun by ourselves or our neighbours.

Young India, 6-10-1921

191. PITFALLS IN SWADESHI

The letter given above[2] has been written by a merchant friend. He has filled his coffers with a roaring trade in foreign cloth, but he has now come to understand where the good of the country lies and to appreciate the importance of the spinning-wheel, that is of khadi. We should give serious thought to all the dangers he mentions.

We try needlessly to encourage the use of mill cloth, and it is also a mistake to go running to buy it. Indian mill cloth will always be in demand. If, by our actions, we tempt the mill-owners, the quality of cloth is bound to deteriorate and the traders in such cloth, who are concerned only with their profits, will be tempted to put up the prices. We cannot expect the dealers to conduct their business

[1] Member, Governor-General's Executive Council

[2] Not given here. The letter drew attention to the danger posed to the swadeshi movement by people's growing interest in mill cloth in preference to khadi.

for the good of the country till the people themselves have that good at heart. Which is easier of the two, that I should put up with the discomfort of wearing khadi,—if discomfort it is—and, if its price is high, pay that price; or that the mill-owners should forgo their profits of crores of rupees ? It is foolish to expect any big sacrifices from the mill-owners. They will be the last, not the first, to wake up, and we should conduct our struggle on that assumption. To blame them on this ground is to blame human nature. In their place we would certainly behave in much the same way. Those of us, therefore, who have accepted swadeshi as a religious duty should not use mill-made cloth.

Naturally, therefore, hand-spun and hand-woven khadi is all that is left to us. In the name itself, "khadi", there is no magic. The magic lies in its virtues. In appearance, too, it is not very attractive. We would have readily taken to hand-spun and hand-woven cloth if, instead of looking like khadi, it had the softness and the finish of muslin. But let it be inscribed in letters of gold that it is only through universal use of hand-spun and hand-woven cloth that the country's poverty can be abolished and that, only if this is done, will swaraj be possible. In short, khadi imported from Japan or produced in our mills is not khadi but something which merely looks like it, and we must keep away from it.

A man from Nadiad should not have to go to Ahmedabad or Bombay for real khadi. He should himself produce it in Nadiad, for the idea is to save that much money for the people of Nadiad. Or, he may use khadi woven in his own district from yarn also spun in the district. This simply cannot be expensive. A home-made loaf is always cheaper than that sold in the market. It works out cheaper in the long run that I should give two annas to a neighbouring weaver than one pice to Manchester, for something from these two annas will return to me whereas, by starving him to feed a weaver in Manchester or Bombay, I shall make my neighbour a burden on myself. I shall have to open an alms-house for his benefit. In this country, we have been deluding ourselves with the notion that in opening such charitable homes we do a virtuous deed. We do not see, rather we do not want to see, that behind the circumstances which necessitate the starting of such home lies a moral wrong. How would we relish it if someone were to deprive us of our property and then start a charity home for us? Or, if through long practice we become used to begging, what

kind of an impression about us will a stranger carry away? Yet, by giving up our age-old crafts of spinning and weaving, we have actually become beggars and, if we do not take heed, will become worse still. Finally, according to the principle that he who eats without having performed a sacrifice is a thief, we shall have proved ourselves thieves.

The false pride of Bengalis does not disturb me. Even if Gujarat alone carries out the pledge of swadeshi, Bengal will certainly follow suit. It certainly does not seem easy to wean the people in Madras from their love of attractive clothes but, at such a moment of spiritual awakening, we should not be surprised to see those who seemed to be in the forefront falling behind while those who seemed to be lagging behind forge ahead. Efforts are being made in Bengal too.

Not knowing the truth about picketing in Bengal, the correspondent has been unfair to the Bengalis. Those who picketed in front of the Marwari shops were Marwaris and volunteers of the Khilafat Committee. The Bengalis had no hand whatever in the matter. The picketing was started with the purest motive and was throughout carried on in a disciplined manner. A Marwari gentleman like Sheth Jamnalalji took a leading part in it.

But it is about the women that I am most worried, We have so far kept them totally ignorant about such vital issues and it is only recently that they have started taking interest in them. Until their love of foreign cloth is exorcised from them, the cause of swadeshi will not prosper. Fortunately, there has been, within a short time, so great an awakening in their midst that I observe profound changes coming over them. It is most necessary, however, that men atone to the full for their indifference in the past. Once foreign cloth has disappeared completely from their midst, the women will not take long to catch up. But even men have not ceased to care for outward show. They have not yet completely overcome their fondness for fine cloth. Dhotis, for example, they must always have mill-made, and the heaviness of khadi seems an inconvenience. How can we expect anything from women when men themselves have not completely turned away from such things? There are, thus, many obstacles in our path of swadeshi. When we have removed them all, we are sure to see the sun of swaraj rising on the horizon.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 6-10-1921

192. MY NOTES

EAST AFRICA

We read reports in our newspapers about the plight of Indians in East Africa and friends over there also keep me informed about things.[1] But I rarely refer to the matter in *Navajivan* or *Young India*. I hope this will not be taken to imply that I am not aware of their plight or that there is a falling off in my sympathy for them. I am in the position of a person who, attacked with swords from all sides, ignores pinpricks. The pathetic condition of India's economic, political and religious life pains me so deeply that by comparison all other misfortunes seem of no account to me. It is also clear to me that the solution of East Africa's problem will have to wait till India's problem is solved. When the well is full, water is bound to flow into the trough; in the same way, once India's ills are cured those of the Indians in East Africa are bound to be. If we were not busy applying effective remedies for India's malady, all of us would have instantly combined to take up the East Africa problem.

This is not to suggest that Indians in East Africa should not make any efforts on their own. That they must do. All that I mean is that they will get, and have been getting, real help from India not on their specific account but as part of the struggle to cure India's ills. India's strength, they realize, has grown so much that it is a constant help to them. Their own strength, too, has increased.

The whites in East Africa have crossed the bounds of defency and seem determined to disregard all canons of English law. This is uncivil disobedience of law. When disobedience of law is for selfish ends, it is not civil disobedience. The whites sought General Smuts' help in their attempt, but have received none from that quarter. I am confident that Indians in East Africa will come to no harm, provided they display courage, keep within the bounds of civility and propriety and remain truthful. An untruthful man is always a coward. The intentions of the British in East Africa are evil and, therefore, if the Indians scrupulously keep on the path of truth, the insolence of wickedness in the British will remain curbed. Keeping on the path of

[1] The reference is to the disputes that had arisen between European and Indian colonists concerning proposals for racial segregation in residential and commercial areas.

truth means that Indians should see that their case is strong, that it is not overstated and should overcome their own failings. One charge which as always levelled against us, and which is justified, is that we do not know what is cleanliness, that even when we are reasonably well off, our homes are dirty, that we make things dirty everywhere and huddle together. To the extent that there is truth in this, we should reform ourselves.

The other charge is that we cheat the Negroes. This charge is baseless. In fact, those who make it are themselves greater cheats, out we should of course change our ways in so far as it is true.

The third charge, which is not brought but which we know can be levelled, is that we are incapable of working unitedly. It is true we are free from racial pride, but we hardly think of the community's good in our preoccupation with private and selfish ends. When we display this failing in foreign countries, despite the fact that we are a small number there, it stands out conspicuously and shows us in the most unfavourable light.

If the Indians in East Africa remain free from these failings, or get rid of them, and keep up their courage, they will come to no harm.

RISHIKESH

Rishikesh is an important place of pilgrimage on the way from Hardwar to Gangotri. From here the pilgrims begin their slow climb of the mountain range. Nature has lavished all her beauty on the place. The hills, the dancing, impetuous Ganga and her clear waters, all compel admiration for the foresight of the *rishis*, for their aesthetic sense and their simplicity. At the time of the Kumbh fair, however, I saw what the place had been reduced to by their descendants. Unscrupulous sadhus, with little else but the name of sadhu about them, were busy robbing the innocent pilgrims. The sight of physically unclean pilgrims fouling this holy place all over brought tears to my eyes. The *rishis* of old used to go miles out into lonely jungle to answer such calls. But Rishikesh today has a sizable population. That they should shamelessly foul the banks of the Ganga and then believe that they have been "out in the jungle" is the utmost limit of lethargy, ignorance and uncleanliness. I had seen all this myself five years ago, but my heart cries out and my head hangs in shame on reading the terrible account sent by a correspondent after an experience of three months in the place. There is no limit to the wickedness which fills this holy place.

The person who has sent this account has given all particulars of names and addresses, and there is no suggestion from him that the account should not be published. But I do not have the courage to publish it with all these particulars. Some portions of the account are unprintable. The writer gives a vivid picture of the licentiousness of the sadhus their love of pomp and luxury and their debauchery. There is also a painful description of the diseases they are prone to. We are told how poor pilgrims are robbed and how, in innumerable cases, the sadhu's garb is used to gratify selfish desires, why it is that Swargashram gives just the contrary impression. Who can clean up all this moral filth? The letter suggests that Shankaracharya and I should do something to remedy this state of affairs, but, for the present at any rate, I do not think it is within my power to attempt any such cleansing. The most I can do is to publish a summary of the letter. If any persons living there are moved by this narrative to do something, let them make the attempt. The moral corruption to be found in the holy places of the Hindus is so dreadful that no improvement is possible unless there is a fundamental change of attitude in a majority of them. The transformation of these places from dens of vice into abodes of virtue depends on the degree to which there is a change of heart among the Hindus during this holy struggle. Cleaning up these places will really mean regeneration of Hinduism. This will require the highest *tapascharya* and effective local work.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-10-1921

193. LETTER TO GANGADHARRAO DESHPANDE[1]

[Before *October 8, 1921*]

DEAR GANGADHARRAO[2],

I hear that it is your turn now to have the good fortune of living in the jail palace. I envy your luck. You and others who go to jail add to the burden of those who remain outside. But we will surrender all our worries to God. I am sure you will insist on having a spinning-wheel while in jail. Rest assured we shall not allow you to enjoy the

[1] This letter was read out at a public meeting at Hubli on October 15 by Rangarao Ramachandra Diwakar who was acquitted on October 8. *Vide* also "Speech at Public Meeting, Bombay", 17-11-1921.

[2] A political worker of Karnatak; popularly known as the "lion of Karnatak"

pleasure of living in jail beyond the end of this year.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-10-1921

194. FOREWORD TO "TO AWAKING INDIA"

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

October 8, 1921

In the following pages Mr. Stokes has not only given his argument in support of burning foreign cloth, but he has also given the economics of swadeshi in a nutshell. If we will but remember that destruction is as useful and necessary as construction for any organic growth we should have no difficulty in understanding the necessity of burning foreign clothing for the quick programme set before the country. But Mr. Stokes' effort must prove helpful at a time when there is a fierce attack being made against burning.

To me this opposition shows the strength of attachment we have cultivated for foreign fineries and an inadequate appreciation of the misery that the use of foreign cloth has brought to millions of the homes of India. But I must not enter into argument; I write this merely to commend Mr. Stokes' able essays to the attention of the reader.

M. K. GANDHI

To Awaking India

195. SPEECH AT FUNCTION OF WORKERS' SCHOOLS, AHMEDABAD[1]

October 8, 1921

I have come to you after a long time. It is now two and a half months since I met you last. Many things have happened during the interval and neither you nor I know what things are yet in store. We must live as God may ordain.

[1] At the Sevashram of Anasuya Sarabhai; Lala Lajapat Rai and C. Rajagopalachari were present.

Before explaining to you what is happening in the country today, I shall first deal with your own problems. I hear that there are some differences between the workers and the mill-owners. The arbitrators are to meet shortly to consider these matters. The award of the arbitrators should be patiently awaited. In the past the workers had on one occasion lost their patience, but ultimately they heeded their advisers and postponed the strike.

The mill-owners have not been able to start grain shops as they had promised to do. I shall exert whatever influence I have to get this done. We should not become impatient. Strikes should not be resorted to in a hurry. Those who demand justice should learn to wait. We have accepted the method of arbitration. We should be content with what is awarded by the arbitrator. It is possible that those workers who are not members of the Union may get benefits which they would not have got otherwise.

Sometimes we get whatever we demand; but we should not put forward unreasonable demands. If we do, we shall be open to the same charge which is levelled against the mill-owners. They are accused of taking unfair advantage of people's hardships. What else can be the meaning of the rise in prices? We should not follow their example. Our demands should be reasonable. Generally the workers' demands are so.

The relationship between workers and employers should be one of partnership. It is fitting that this relationship should be like that between father and son. As the son benefits from the wisdom and experience of the father, so should the workers from those of the employers. I am working to create conditions in which employers will not exploit workers and workers will no cheat employers.

I now come to the present situation. The relationship between a government and its citizens should also be like that between father and son. But the Government wants to exploit India as much as it can. We are not likely to get anything from it. If at all we get anything it will be something similar to what they have done in whisking away the Ali Brothers. This is like the relationship between a master and his slave. We have to secure their release not by fawning upon the Government or petitioning it, but by winning swaraj and then exercising our power under swaraj. We have to break these shackles by means of khadi, as was described in the song sung by the student here. The thousands of innocent men and women who will go to jail hereafter will have to

secure their release in the same manner. This will not be a difficult task if we embrace swadeshi. But we are not yet ready to give up foreign cloth. For workers, khadi is the only thing. Workers are not so poor as not to afford khadi. They should wear only khadi, which is a dress of culture. They can have their own yarn, their own spinning-wheel and loom and they should wear khadi woven with their own hands. Till this becomes possible it is better that they wear, if necessary, no more than a loin-cloth as I do.

I insist that even khadi for your use you should not buy. You should wear only hand-made khadi woven by yourselves. After you have done this, you may ask me why the Ali Brothers have not been released, why we have not got swaraj and why justice has not been secured on the Khilafat issue. I shall be ready to answer all these questions from you.

It is rumoured that the Government will arrest me. It has a right to do so. I have used language similar to the Ali Brothers'. We should not fear the Government; we may fear God alone. According to my dharma, as I understand it, violence is a sin and, as long as the compact between Hindus and Muslims remains, violence should be taboo even for the latter. If they arrest me, you should not start setting fire to buildings, nor should you get angry or use abusive language. If today you are not enthusiastic about swadeshi, see that, after my arrest, you pursue it more vigorously and ply the spinning-wheel day and night. If the Hindus harbour any unworthy thoughts about the Muslims, they should banish such thoughts and so should the Muslims with regard to the Hindus. No workers should take liquor, commit theft or treat the *Dhed* or the *Bhangi* as untouchable. This is what I expect from you.

I do not want to go on touring. I have no new ideas or arguments. I now wish to see only solid work.

I shall not be able to attend such gatherings henceforth. It is difficult for me to spare even as much time as I have done on this occasion. I should, therefore, be spared such duties. Please give up adoring me and get busy with the work which I have called upon you to take up. If you do that, swaraj is as good as in our hands.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-10-1921

196. TELEGRAM TO GOPABANDHU DAS[1]

[After *October 8, 1921*]

ONLY FILE BOLD TRUE STATEMENT. NEVER MIND CONSEQUENCE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7636

197. IF I AM ARRESTED

Rumours are afloat that I may be arrested. Everyone says that he has reliable news. In Madras a gentleman even sent a telegram saying that I had been arrested.

It would not be surprising if the Government did arrest me. The Government has the right to do so. I have committed the very same crime for which the Ali Brothers and their companions have been arrested. It would not be wrong to say that I am the real culprit behind their crime. What is the sense in leaving the root alone and chopping off the branches? I was the person to assert that one could openly tell even soldiers that they were committing a sin in serving this Government. Again it was I who called for the destruction of the present system. If the Ali Brothers can be arrested for these two crimes, why not I?

Why should anyone be angry if I am arrested? How else would the Government know whether my views are shared by large sections of the people or only by a handful of them? Only that man may be said to hold certain views who is prepared to suffer for them. Why should the Government not test whether I really hold the views which I claim to do?

This is how non-co-operation works. Either the Government mends itself or arrests non-co-operators, fines them or sends them to the gallows.

If people are true non-co-operators, if they are brave and wise, they will not be cowed down or yield to anger or resort to violence or

[1] In reply to his letter dated October 8 in which, as editor of the *Samaj*, an Oriya weekly, the addressee had asked for the advice of Gandhiji whether he should defend or not in a complaint of alleged defamation of police constables by his journal

strikes in the event of my or any other non-co-operator's arrest. They should rejoice at the arrests as if nothing unexpected had happened or, rather, that only the expected had happened. They should be happy to think that we would now soon arrive at the destination.

Whoever loses his self-control takes to violence or goes on a strike, will only disgrace me and cause me pain, will be a traitor to the motherland. If such a man claims to be a non-co-operator, he would be violating his own pledge.

The way in which the country remained peaceful on the arrest of the Ali Brothers was, in my view, simply grand. I see our victory in that. I hope for a similar or even a better demonstration of peace on my arrest. We have to win, and so live by dying and not by killing.

I wish and hope that my arrest will have only one result, namely, that men and women will then understand what even now I find it difficult to explain to them, discard all sluggishness and hesitation about it and act upon it and so win swaraj. If we still have any weakness for foreign cloth left in us, I wish that it should disappear. At present people consign to the fire only a small part of their stock of foreign cloth; on my arrest they should immediately make a bonfire of all foreign cloth in their homes, no matter how large the stock. Really speaking, this should have been done on the arrest of the Ali Brothers. Following their arrest swadeshi activity has considerably increased among people, but not enough.

I hope that, on my arrest, every man, woman and child who has not yet started plying the spinning-wheel will immediately do so. I do hope that they will learn to have regard for *Antyajas*, will mix with them and share their sufferings.

I also hope that the *Antyajas* will reform themselves, desist from drinking and give up other addictions, abandon meat-eating, observe cleanliness and earn an honest living by spinning and weaving.

Everyone should remain peaceful and see that others also do so.

Hindus should be ready to lay down their lives for the sake of Muslims and Muslims for Hindus. They should honour one another's religion; accordingly, Hindus should think that the defence of the Khilafat is their religious duty, so much so that, if necessary, they should be ready for delay in swaraj for its sake. Muslims can have no interest in swaraj if the Khilafat issue is not settled.

Nobody should think that it would be all darkness after Gandhi.

It is not right to think in that way; on the contrary, it is a sign of weakness. If we are fit for swaraj no leader should be considered indispensable. Everybody should have the capacity to understand and protect the interests of the motherland.

It is, however, necessary to appoint someone to be the leader. Hence we should immediately proceed to appoint as leader any person whose views, methods and character appeal to large numbers and, though we may occasionally quarrel and argue with him, one should finally display perfect discipline and obey him. Once we have known the means of winning swaraj and understood how we may serve the cause of the Khilafat, there will be nothing about which we do not know what to do. There are no more things for us to learn. All that is necessary is to act; India will reap as she sows.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-10-1921

198. GUJARAT'S TEST

I have returned to Gujarat to know what truth there is in the good reports I heard about it while I was touring. It was the first to accept non-co-operation. Even at that time I had said that complete non-co-operation by Gujarat alone would of course win swaraj for it, but that it would also do so for the rest of the country. I still hold that view. Failure to win swaraj by the end of this year will be a matter of shame to me no doubt, but it will be so to the whole country as well and especially to Gujarat. I shall certainly disclaim responsibility by saying that the conditions I had laid down were not fulfilled and that, therefore, it was none of my fault. But what excuse will Gujarat be able to give? It can only say: "We could not keep the pledge we took, and serve us right too." It is, therefore, the duty of every Gujarati to see that such a humiliating confession does not become necessary.

I heard Gujarat being praised, but I find Gujaratis have not resigned Government jobs. Only a few of the lawyers have given up practice. The students have done reasonably well, but only relatively.

What, then, is the work for which Gujarat is being given credit ?

It is in regard to swadeshi. What more can we say about Gujarat than that it has done reasonably well in this field too? Swadeshi is the one thing in which we really believe. Until every province and every district spins and weaves the cloth it requires and boycotts foreign

cloth, swaraj will remain an impossibility. Hence the credit which is being given to Gujarat is justified only if it is with regard to swadeshi.

The other matter is the movement concerning untouchables. I have referred to it in my notes. We can undoubtedly claim that in Gujarat untouchables can freely attend public meetings. But can we be satisfied with that? We cannot even think of securing a kind of swaraj from which they will be excluded. To think of it would mean that we wanted to shake off our own slavery to others while remaining slave-owners ourselves. Will God ever tolerate that ? Is this ever possible, either ? Are the slaves themselves likely to permit it ? Again, can we be sure that our owners too will not take care to win over our slaves to their side and have an alliance with them against us? We, Gujaratis, therefore, should carefully consider whether we have really prepared ourselves for swaraj, whether we have scored full marks.

I know we have done very good work for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Our meetings are well organized. We have also achieved considerable success in propaganda against drink. We see that khadi is becoming quite popular in Gujarat. Ordinarily all this would be considered satisfactory as signs of a sleeping Gujarat waking up. A person who has put forth great strength in swimming but has not strength enough for the final dash to the shore will be drowned and it will certainly be said that he put forth too little strength. We have to look at the matter in this light. Have we put forth enough strength to win swaraj ? I do not say we have, nor do I say are have not, for we have still two and a half months left and we can do a great deal in that time. It does not matter that our first deadline, which was September, has passed, for that only reflected my optimism. We should remember, however, that the same programme was accepted by the Congress in December with full knowledge of its implications. We did so well between September and December [in 1920] that the delegates felt confident and adopted the one-year time limit. In effect, therefore, the nation's pledge commenced from December and, considering what Gujarat has done so far, we need not be surprised if it is able to achieve its goal in the two and a half months which still remain. It will be a sad thing if it does not.

I am told that people in Gujarat are ready for imprisonment, that there are some for whom even hanging holds no terror and that, in any case Gujarat will preserve peace till the very end. This remains to be seen, however. Truly speaking, we have had no occasion to go to

jail in the last twelve years. But that is no matter for regret, for we do not wish to seek imprisonment by violating moral values. For the present, it is enough that we are mentally prepared.

But let us be clear as to what is meant by being ready for imprisonment. The day on which we are imprisoned without being guilty, that day we should regard as auspicious. Our relatives, too, should not be unhappy or shed tears at our imprisonment and we should be able to look upon the hardships of jail-life as so many comforts.

Being prepared for imprisonment also means that we should not be disturbed if our property is confiscated and auctioned. I have even met "brave" men who told me that they were ready to go to jail but not to have their property attached and that, if it was, they would not be able to bear the loss. This state of mind does not suggest readiness for imprisonment. Under an unjust rule, owning property is beyond the reach of most. Only a few can own it and these latter are partners in injustice, or become so at the crucial moment, that is, when injustice shows itself in its true colours. Being ready for jail, therefore, implies being unconcerned at loss of property.

The truth is that we use the word "jail" as a synonym for suffering. Readiness for jail means nothing less than the refusal to submit to the Government, whatever the penalty. This includes readiness to be hanged, though ordinarily we do not understand imprisonment to include hanging. It remains to be seen how many are ready to fight and uphold the honour of the country and respect for dharma even at the risk of being hanged.

The sacrifice we wish to make is a pure one. The least our self-purification should include is

1. acceptance of swadeshi,
2. giving up the practice of untouchability,
3. unreserved acceptance of truth and non-violence, and
4. Hindu-Muslim friendship.

I should like every Congress Committee and the Khilafat Committee to draw up their accounts on this basis.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-10-1921

199. MY NOTES

END OF THE TOUR

Hardly anyone could have toured India as I have done in the last 13 months. The tour was as good as a *pradakshina*[1] of the country. It was in the nature of a pilgrimage to me. I covered the country from Karachi in the west to Dibrugarh in the east and from Rawalpindi in the north to Tuticorin in the south. I have said what I wished to say and there is nothing new for me to say. I have already explained the conditions for securing justice on the Khilafat and the Punjab issues and winning swaraj. The responsibility now rests entirely with the people. They can follow swadeshi and win swaraj. Without swadeshi, there can be no swaraj.

I should not now be troubled with invitations to visit places, for it is necessary that for the three months that remain I should retire to one place, think, write and answer people's doubts.

Much can be done by the people in three months. If all took a vow of silence and gave themselves wholly to solid work, our goal would definitely be achieved. Work alone, not words, will win swaraj.

SILENCE IS WORK

Who can hope to rival the perfect silence of God, and His work, too? He needs no time even so much as to stretch Himself, or to sleep. When we are asleep He is awake. He does not interrupt His work even to find time for eating. Can we say, either, that He sits down to relax? Who can ever fathom His way? He has no rest, nor does He want any, such is His misfortune. And with all this, He never makes mistakes. This believer in swaraj has voluntarily forsworn the ability to make mistakes. If we but learnt something from Him, be it ever so little, swaraj would be ours in no time. Always silent, He is most active. Why do we not learn from Him that the best strength lies in silence? Let us leave the Government to its doings and its babbling and go on doing our duty—the duty of civil obedience and disobedience of law.

MEANING OF SILENCE

This divine silence is no evidence of inertness, of the darkness of ignorance or of weakness. It signifies, rather, serenity, illumination of

[1] Circumambulation of an object or person regarded as holy

knowledge and dauntless courage. He who treats his body as mere stone and acts accordingly may sit motionless at one place and yet move the whole world. Will anyone want to hit a stone? You may crush it to powder, but it will never apologize, nor will it act and build a house for you. You will merely spend yourselves hitting at it. The more you hit it, the more obstinately it will refuse to work for you and build. Who can ever vanquish one whose body has been toughened in this way? In man, God and the stone meet. Man is but a stone endowed with consciousness, and so it is that the Shastras tell us that he alone is truly victorious who has subjugated his body. Silence, therefore, means subjugation of the body. If we have become slaves of the Government, it is because we have become slaves of our bodies, of physical comforts. We can throw off slavery if we can subjugate our bodies. We become free only to the extent that we shed our fond attachment to our bodies.

How can the Government suppress us ? What could it do if we refused to avail ourselves of its benefits? If we can reject the riches it offers, the peace it has established and the comfort it has made possible, we can shake off our slavery this very day.

SILENCE IN PRACTICE

Not everyone, however, can observe complete silence, can train his body to have the toughness of stone. That is why we live in communities and, adding up small measures of silence, rest content with a little happiness. The way we have found for practising such modest subjugation of the body is that of swadeshi. There is no reason why everyone, whether young or old, cannot make even this small sacrifice, for a little spinning and weaving cannot be burdensome to anyone. The spinning-wheel is the symbol of Hindu-Muslim unity, the thing which brings home to us the fact of our being one, the people in Madras, the Kannadigas, the Bengalis, the Gujaratis, the Maharashtrians, the Punjabis, the Sindhis, the Marwaris and the rest. Anyone who, knowing this, refuses to ply the spinning-wheel and yet talks of swaraj is a beggar begging for things to which he has no right. There can be no swaraj for beggars. Hence, those who aspire after it should, silently and ever repeating inwardly God's name in thoughtful devotion, spin golden yarn as an expression of their love of the country. Only when we see every Indian himself weaving yarn produced in his home or getting it woven by his neighbour and wearing exclusively cloth so, made even as he eats only what Is

cooked at home, then shall we have swaraj, and not before.

Is there anyone who doubts that what I am suggesting is within the capacity even of a child? Nothing could be easier. We have needlessly made out the thing to be difficult and, having done so, feel helpless, suffer the ravages of famines, invite misery upon ourselves through our notions of untouchability and feel, that we, Hindus and Muslims, are mutual enemies.

A DOCTOR'S EXPERIENCE

There is a doctor in Hansot. He and his wife spin for not less than three hours daily. He learnt to spin only four months ago. After two months' practice, he was turning out yarn of 30 counts. In that period he had produced more than enough yarn for two long shirts. He now wears shirts made from this yarn. With great love, he made a present of the extra piece to me at Guntakal. I carry it with me and show it proudly everywhere. The doctor's wife spins yarn of even finer count. If he keeps up his effort, the doctor should be able to produce annually 36 yards of fine khadi. No man surely needs so much in a year.

HOARDING OF COTTON

I should like to draw the reader's attention to the warning about cotton given by my friend, Laxmidas Purushottam. The prices of cotton, he says, have gone up and are still going up. Some say the increase in prices is the result of speculation in cotton. According to a close friend, the increase is due to a poor harvest of cotton in the U.S.A. The truth lies in the two explanations taken together. The bullish trend is due to both poor harvest in the U.S.A. and speculation. I had [let us suppose] 50 maunds of cotton till yesterday and, selling it at Rs. 22 a maund, I was making a profit of Rs. 4. Having come to know today about the poor harvest in the U.S.A., I raised the price from Rs. 22 to Rs. 38. How am I entitled to the additional Rs. 16? The whole world is being made to suffer through this perverse economics, a practice unworthy of a *Vanik*[1]. The science which tells us that America's need is our opportunity is a science not for men but for monsters. Swaraj is nothing but shaking ourselves free from the hold of this idea. Laxmidas has suggested how to do this in one field. Although prices have risen, everyone should at this time buy and store some cotton, no matter even if he or she does not know

[1] Member of the trading community

spinning. Every farmer, moreover, should be warned that under no circumstances should he sell his whole crop of cotton. He may sell thesurplus if the crop exceeds his needs. He will be a short-sighted farmer who, tempted by the prospect of immediate gain, sells his entire crop. Every farmer should in fact store his requirements of grain and cotton, preferably for the whole year so that he can face one bad harvest at any rate.

I am not saying anything new. Our ancestors, who, far from being barbarians, were a civilized and intelligent people used to do exactly this 100 or 150 years ago. Many used to act in this way even as late as 30 years ago and counted themselves happy. We of today, short-sighted that we are, sell our cotton at a high price, waste our free time doing nothing and then buy cloth at higher prices and flatter ourselves as being civilized! I would call our "uncivilized" ancestors more sensible and far-sighted. I certainly wish that we stopped living according to our notions of how *Patidars*[1] should live and become real farmers.

THE CEDED DISTRICTS

Some of his best territory which the Nizam handed over to the British Government and which is a part of the Telugu or Andhra region is known as the "Ceded Districts". My visit to that area was the last lap of my tour of the country. For three days and nights there, I practically did nothing but address public meetings. In these three days we covered Kalikiri, Chittoor, Tirupati, Renigunta, Razampet, Cuddapah, Tadpatri, Guntakal, Kurnool and Bellary. Most of these places are under partial or complete famine. The population of the Districts is some 28 lakhs. Starvation through famine has become so acute that some prefer to drown themselves with all members of their families. It is not that there is no grain in the market, but people do not have the money to buy it with nor do they have work which would earn them the money. Only a few can go and do the work, offered by the Government, of repairing public roads, which means carrying and breaking stones. In this work, women earn barely five pice and the men nine daily. Again, the wage may be three annas, but for every anna there is the inescapable commission of one pice to be made over to the supervisor. Thirty years ago the people of this District used to spin and weave, and even today the women have not lost the skill. In

[1] Community of farmers

Tadpatri, I saw *Antyaja* women spinning with great facility in the Congress House. They make three annas for an eight-hour day, and there is no commission to be paid. No scoundrel can cast his evil eyes on them, and they make more than the men who work at breaking stones. Thousands of men and women in the Ceded Districts blessed me for reviving the sacred work of spinning. If the respective Congress Committees of the different areas do good work, there will be no famine in the Ceded Districts next year. Prices may remain high but, through spinning and weaving, people will be able to make enough with which to buy food.

MALICIOUS GOVERNMENT

A close friend points out that those who inveigh against non-co-operation seem to forget that all these years the Government has non-co-operated with our culture, our language and our race. We would be the biggest fools if we do not resort to non-co-operation against this system. A fresh example of the Government's non-co-operation even at the present day, and an example which reveals its meanness, is seen in its dealings with Mr. Godrej. This large-hearted gentleman has donated money to the Tilak Swaraj Fund earmarking the contribution for the uplift of the untouchables and for propaganda against drink. This provoked a secret circular from the Government to the effect that no Godrej safe should be ordered for any of its departments, which used to go in for numbers of them in the past. Because Mr. Godrej contributed to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, the just Government has boycotted his safes. How should the people deal with such a malicious and vindictive Government, if not by resorting to non-co-operation with it?

DIWALI

Diwali is the day on which we celebrate Rama's victory, and Rama's victory is the victory of dharma. Diwali can, therefore, be properly celebrated only by one who follows dharma. Self-respecting and self-reliant people alone can celebrate it. Till we have won swaraj, I deem it our dharma to abstain, during Diwali days, from merry-making and feasting. I fail to understand how, at a time when hundreds of innocent men are in jails for the sake of their dharma and their country, we can indulge in any pleasures at all. Can anyone whose brother gets nothing better in jail than thick cakes of *bajra* to eat feast on *shrikhand* outside? Is anyone whose brothers and sisters

are starving without food likely to think of dances and parties? We generally buy "dazzling" foreign cloth for Diwali. I suggest that nobody should buy a single piece of cloth which he does not need and, if one must, one should buy hand-spun khadi, though even this sparingly.

ALI BROTHERS' COMPANION

Even in jail the Ali Brothers think of the spinning-wheel. A telegram from them says that they and their companions in jail have asked for some spinning-wheels to be supplied to them, so that they could spend their free time in spinning! If all of us were as conscientious as this, we should certainly get swaraj very soon. It remains to be seen how the Government treats this request.

ABOUT "ANTYAJAS"

We should now ask ourselves what we have been doing for the *Antyajas* in Gujarat. Is every Congress Committee doing something in the matter? The Committee in Tadpatri has provided work to *Antyaja* women on its own premises. People are free to mix with them, and they with people. We can, in this and many other ways, demonstrate that *Antyaja* men and women are our own brothers and sisters. Only, we need to be serious about the matter. How many wells have we dug for them? How many new schools have been opened for them? How do we ourselves treat them at home? Do we give them left-overs to eat? This last question should particularly engage the attention of women. Removal of untouchability does not mean merely that we no longer take a bath on coming into contact with an *Antyaja*, believing ourselves polluted by such contact. We should, rather, think over the meaning of this practice and rid ourselves completely of the terrible contempt which lies behind it. Till we have done this untouchability will persist. Its disappearance is bound to be felt by every *Antyaja* man and woman.

OUTRAGE IN NAME OF RELIGION

Tomorrow is the last day of *Navaratri*[1]. Last year the officiating priest in the temple of Bhadrakali was prevented by the *mahajans*[2] from sacrificing a goat to the Goddess. An understanding was arrived

[1] The first nine days of the bright half of *Asvina*, which generally fall in October

[2] Associations of traders

at under which the latter agreed to pay him Rs. 600 every year, and the priest was to perform other ceremonies but refrain from sacrificing a goat.

This year the priest says that he is not bound by the previous year's agreement. If he says this, he is guilty of one more sin, that of breaking one's pledged word.

I understand that a stay order forbidding the priest from sacrificing a goat is likely to be issued. We should not? however, be concerned at all whether such an order is issued or not.

Those who regarded themselves as Hindus can never be a party to such a sacrifice. I am firmly of the view that it is the negation of dharma to sacrifice any animal in the name of religion. The place in which such sacrifices are made can be no temple, and a Hindu can never think of visiting it. Mother Kali demands no animal sacrifices. If anything, she wants us to sacrifice ourselves. It is only by slaying our Sins, our evil, that we can make ourselves fit to stand before her. To those Hindus who desire to offer a sacrifice on the eighth day, I suggest that they should, dressed in hand-spun khadi, take a pledge to follow truth, practise non-violence and strive to subjugate the body. Anyone who does so will certainly be offering the purest sacrifice and such a person will also have become fit for swaraj. I, therefore, hope that, should the priest be obstinate and stick to his intention to kill a goat, no Hindu will visit the temple and be a party to the sin of offering the sacrifice and thus blaspheme against God.

Saturday, Aso Sud 7 [*October 8, 1921*]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-10-1921

200. SPEECH ON WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION, BOMBAY

October 9, 1921

Mrs. Naidu presided at the meeting and Mahatma Gandhi moved the resolution before the meeting, supported by the various leaders like Lala Lajpat Rai, Maulana Azad Sobhani, Babu Rajendra Lal, etc. . . . After the resolution, which was similar to that of the Karachi Resolution, was passed all standing, the Mahatma lighted the heap of foreign clothing and it burned on merrily amidst the loud noise of crackers and bursting flames. . .

Mahatma Gandhi moved:

This meeting of the citizens of Bombay re-affirms the following resolution of the Working Committee held in Bombay on the 5th instant:

The Working Committee congratulates the Ali Brothers and their comrades upon their prosecution and having considered the Resolution of the Khilafat Conference held at Karachi, regarding Military Service under the Government, the Working Committee is of opinion that the Resolution virtually reaffirms the principle laid down by the Congress at its special session in Calcutta, and its ordinary session in Nagpur last year, that it is contrary to national dignity and national interest for any Indian to engage or remain in the service of a Government in any capacity what so ever, a Government that has used the soldiers for the purposes of crushing the national spirit of the Egyptians, the Turks, the Arabs and other nations. The Working Committee has been only deterred from calling out the soldiers and the civilians in the name of the Congress because the Congress is not yet ready to support these Government servants who may leave Government service and who may not be able themselves to find means of livelihood. The Working Committee, however, is of opinion that in pursuance of the spirit of the Congress Resolution on non-co-operation it is the clear duty of every Government employee, whether soldier or civilian, who can support himself without Congress assistance to leave such service.

The Working Committee draws the attention of all Indian soldiers and police to the fact that carding and hand-spinning and hand-weaving afford them, by undergoing training for a brief period, an honourable means for independent livelihood. The Working Committee is further of opinion that the reasons given for the prosecution with reference to the said Karachi Resolution constitute an undue interference with religious liberty.

In proposing the resolution Mahatma Gandhi said it divided itself into two parts. The first part dealt with the Karachi Resolution and was intended to be its confirmation from the national standpoint, And if it was a crime in the Ali Brothers and their fellow prisoners to have supported the Resolution, it was a crime for the speaker and the audience to propose and pass the resolution. He considered it their duty to state their position clearly. It was their duty to inform the sepoy that it was wrong to help a Government which had forfeited the confidence of the country. The speaker was informed that the resolution was said to be worded cleverly after the fashion of a lawyer so as to avoid the clutches of the law. It was said that, like the Khilafat Resolution, the present one did not require everyone to tell the sepoy to lay down arms. He differed from that view. He was of opinion that by the resolution everyone endorsing it told the sepoy that it was his duty to give up service if only he

could support himself otherwise. If his voice could reach the sepoy he certainly told him that if he believed in his faith whether he was a Hindu or a Mussulman or believed in his own country, he should leave the service even if he had to earn his livelihood by breaking stones. One who wanted to be a soldier of India could not be a sepoy of a Government which has served against India. Those who murdered the innocent men of Jallianwala were no soldiers; they were mere animals. Those who ran no risks, but only killed were again no soldiers but animals. He had, therefore, no hesitation in telling the sepoy through the audience that he should lose no time in severing his connection with the Government if he cared for his country and religion.

One thing the resolution did not require the people to do namely to carry on secret propaganda. They had ruled out secrecy from their book of non-co-operation. They were ashamed to say in secret what they were not prepared to say in public. If therefore the Government held it a crime to recite the creed of non-co-operation, he invited them to arrest those who took part in the evening's proceedings. If it was a crime to tell the soldier that it was unlawful for him to serve the Government in terms of his religion and nationalism, he (the speaker) invited Government to arrest him and those who supported and carried the resolution.

The other part of the resolution pointed out to the soldier the way to an honourable livelihood. It referred to swadeshi. He asked the audience not to carry that resolution if they did not believe in swadeshi and the power of the spinning-wheel to banish poverty from the land. The resolution told the soldier that he could earn his living by carding and weaving. He verily believed with Maulana Mahomed Ali that they did not need lead and gunpowder. Yarn balls were their lead and the spinning-wheel was their gun. He said last September that it was possible to gain swaraj, to redress the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs during the twelve months following if they fulfilled certain conditions. Twelve months had passed but there was no swaraj. The fault was theirs. They had done much but had not fulfilled the minimum required. He wished to share the blame.

He was sorry that he had not the power of convincing every lawyer that it was wrong to practise before the courts which gave no justice. He was sorry that his *tapasya* was not enough to carry conviction to every student that it was wrong to belong to Government schools. He knew that he had not been able to convince every man and woman of Bombay that it was sinful to wear anything but khaddar. But they need not mind him. If the country still carried out the swadeshi programme during the month, swaraj was a certainty during the year and so was redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs. He adhered to his faith in the spinning-wheel. He had no doubt that it and it alone could solve the problem of India's poverty. Its acceptance, to him, was a test of the reality of Hindu-Muslim unity and [of freedom] from violence. He would not be party to general civil disobedience if they could not fulfil the swadeshi

programme. He would not be satisfied unless khaddar had become universal; foreign cloth a rarity. He wanted to see the men and women of Bombay to be dressed in khaddar only. He was told that the sale of khaddar was to the extent of Rs. 18,000 in July, Rs. 13,000 in August and Rs. 7,000 into September in Khadi Bhandar. He wanted to see lakhs worth of khadi sold. He wanted to see the spinning-wheel at work in every house in Bombay. Bombay had led in the matter of Tilak Swaraj Fund. Let Bombay lead in swadeshi and gain the privilege of offering general civil disobedience. He had erred in the April of 1919 in hastily embarking on civil disobedience. He was a very imperfect human being, liable to err. God alone was free from error. But he was knowing enough not to err twice about the same thing. He could not advise civil disobedience without swadeshi. He knew the science of civil disobedience. He knew its power and its risks. A completely non-violent atmosphere was a necessity, and it could not be ensured unless the nation had recognized the tower of the spinning-wheel and settled down to it. If they believed in swadeshi and its results, he expected to see a spinning-wheel at work in every home, he expected all castes and creeds to take up the spinning-wheel and khaddar. He expected princely men to take to charkha and the mill-hands to take up the spinning-wheel. And whenthey had done that they would safely go to individual soldier and openly ask him to give up his service.

He had found many shedding tears to see him reducing his dress to a mere loin-cloth. He could not do otherwise after having witnessed what he had. He wanted no pity for himself but he did want India, if he was to revert to his normal dress, to adopt full swadeshi. He had visited the Ceded Districts. It was going through a famine—women were reported to have drowned themselves and their children for want of food. It was not possible for him to wear mote clothing than he did after knowing such deep distress.

He would presently put the torch to the pyramid of clothing in front of them. To him it was a symbol of the fire raging in their breasts. This burning was a mere show unless it was a replica of internal fire.

They revered the memory of the Lokamanya. They need not go to his commentary on the *Gita* to learn Tilak *Gita*. The speaker could tell them what it was in one word. The first half was supplied by the Lokamanya himself viz., “Swaraj is our birthright”. He would supply the second half. The spinning-wheel is the means to attain it. He was sure that if the deceased had been alive, he would be on the same platform with them. Was he not a lover of swadeshi? Had he not practised it as it was then practised for years? He, the speaker, knew that the deceased believed in non-co-operation. He certainly doubted the country’s ability to follow it up. Let them remove the doubt and by complete rehabilitation of swadeshi establish swaraj during the year. He invited the Mussulmans who felt so deeply for the Khilafat and the Hindus who felt

equally for the cow to take up the spinning-wheel and ensure the success of swadeshi.

The Bombay Chronicle, 10-l0-1921

201. SPEECH TO WOMEN, BOMBAY

October 9, 1921

Under the auspices of the Rashtriya Stree Sabha a public meeting of women was held on Sunday afternoon at the Marwari Vidyalaya Hall, when Mahatma Gandhi, Lala Lajpat Rai and others spoke on "The Present Situation". The meeting was for ladies dressed in khaddar and swadeshi clothes alone Mrs. Naidu presided.

Mahatma Gandhi said before him were sitting Hindu, Mohammedan and Parsi women. They had come there, knowing well that they had to attend in khaddar dress only. He personally had come there not to tell them anything new, but to give them an account of the country's doings. By becoming members of the Congress they had shown their willingness to follow its mandates, come what might. They knew that eight of their country's leader had been arrested in Karachi for passing certain resolutions and he wanted the meeting to pass those very resolutions and to go to jail if necessary. They should not think that because they were women they would not; that was wrong. They must know that the Government would do anything to gain their object. They knew from what had happened in South Africa that the Government were not willing to leave their women free. Lala Lajpat Rai had asked them to steel their hearts so that they should not shed a single tear when their nearest and dearest were arrested. They had to Follow the example of the mother of the Ali Brothers and Maulana Mahomed Ali's wife. Although none of their religions taught them to weep for the dead, still they did weep are mourn for their dead relations. That was wrong. They should not mourn to those who were sent to Jail, because they knew that they were fighting for dharma raj, for swaraj. The swaraj he wanted to establish was dharma raj, it was Rama raj. So long as a single Indian was starved to death, whatever rights the might get in the parliament, real swaraj was not theirs; so long a there was godlessness in the country, what was the use of getting rights and votes. He wanted dharma raj, a raj based on all that was good and virtuous. They would get that only when they were resolved upon getting it. Lalaji had already told them that they should not shed a single tear ever if their leaders were hung by their necks by their Government. He hoped that the women would do that and never forsake their dharma.

Coming to the question of swadeshi, Mahatma Gandhi said he saw before him many women who were not wearing even swadeshi clothes; some of the were wearing mill-made clothes. He asked them whether they had empty their boxes of all their foreign clothes. They must also remember that mill-made clothing was for the poorest of the poor and not for the well to do likethose present

here. They must only wear those clothes which they had made with their own hands. Formerly people were known by the dress they wore and a man's worth was assessed by his clothes. That mentality they should change in these days. He had been to see a village called Dattamandal in the Nizam's dominions and he saw there people starving for the last four years on account of famine. Those men and women had no work to do and they were slowly dying, starving. If he but told the audience what he had seen in that place they would cry for mere shame. People were dying uncared for. He regretted much that although he had been preaching to them swadeshi for the last one year not much progress was done. He had seen in this country men, women and children dying of hunger—mere bags of bones, mere skeletons —because they had no work to do. They were ready to do any work, but they were unable to do it for there was none for them. Sometimes, Government was employing them to break stones on the road sides. Seeing all these things, how could Indians, men and women, clothe themselves in fineries? If they wanted to abolish poverty from this land, and abolish nakedness, then they must use the charkha. Crores of their people would then be able to get their living by keeping their self-respect. If Indians would accomplish this, swaraj was theirs. Indians had no right to waste their money in luxuries and also waste their time. Whatever they saved they must give to the poor. God was to be found in the houses of the poor, of the *Chandalas*, of *Dhed* and of *Bhangis* and not in the houses of the rich and the great. He would only pray to God that if he should be born in this land he might be born a *Dhed*. The boycott of courts, the boycott of schools, the giving up of titles, boycotting of the councils—all those had not been done successfully and people had failed in their duty towards the country. The time was for the women to act now. They had to use the charkha with a view to get victory. Without dharma they would never get swaraj, they would never be able to right the wrongs of the Punjab, and they would never get their Khilafat wrongs righted. If they could achieve swadeshi nothing would be able to stop them from their goal. If they had the necessary virtues for the swaraj, which they were striving for, no government would be able to stop them from their goal. The time was short. They had failed to achieve swaraj before the end of last month, and would they have the necessary *shraddha*, the necessary faith ? The charkha was their only means now. In conclusion he asked them to cast off their foreign clothing, use khaddar and adopt the charkha as their weapon for fighting for swaraj.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-10-1921

202. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, SURAT[1]

October 12, 1921

Mahatmaji addressed the audience for about half an hour and exhorted the people to concentrate their attention on swadeshi only. He said he knew Surat and Surat knew him. He had heard very good reports about Surat during his recent tour, and the sea of white caps before him was not surprising to him. He was, however, pained to find his sisters of Surat yet not taking to khaddar. If, he said, swaraj was to be established through Gujarat, and if Surat was to lead, much yet remained to be done within the short period of two months and a half.

Good work was no doubt done by Surat till then, but yet much remained to be done. Swadeshi must permeate every particle of their blood. It ought to be realized that it was a sin to touch foreign cloth. Mahatmaji said he had explained and said all he had to say and explain up till then. Swadeshi was the only work now to be done. For perfect peace, for Hindu-Muslim unity, for relief to the poor and the famine-stricken, for the chastity of the women, there was but one thing, viz., the charkha. Khaddar cap or a coat for the meeting only was not enough, though that was something. He was now thinking of economizing his time and energy and instead of wasting words was going to employ himself whole-heartedly in khaddar production only. That would be a better service to the country. He then explained why he adopted the present change in his dress and took only to the loin-cloth. He wanted to set an example, when so many of his own countrymen and women were going naked. Hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar was the need of the hour, and if Surat alone did this no civil disobedience will have to be resorted to. They should give up all processions and even meetings. Time was to be spared for spinning and weaving. That was more eloquent than his own speech. He was going to set the example shortly. His message to Surat was swadeshi and swadeshi alone. Time though short was enough for the honest and determined persons. This was a religious crusade and they could not cheat God. To Hindus he especially pointed out the sin and curse of untouchability. God would not forgive them if untouchability remained. God hears these six crores of untouchables and he has consequently made their oppressors untouchables to the rest of the world.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-l0-l921

[1] On the bank of the Tapti near the historic old castle

203. NOTES

ALL ABOUT THE BROTHERS

It is the good fortune of the Brothers to have staunch friends. It is equally their good fortune to have strong critics. A friend writes to me that I am so infatuated with them that I refuse to see anything bad in them. He is right. It is the privilege of friendship not to be suspicious. But he is a bad friend who does not know his friend's weaknesses. I know those of the Brothers, but having weaknesses myself I am tender towards theirs. I feel that they are the best and the bravest among co-workers with whom I have had the privilege of working. So much for the general charge.

THEIR INCONSISTENCY

But here is a particular charge against them. Says a crorespondent:

> May I put before you the following problems, which I have even after a very long and deep deliberation been unable to reconcile with the non-co-operation doctrine. Will you kindly say whether my difficulties are something real or only superficial?
>
> Non-co-operation requires that no accused should give any help whatsoever to the proceedings in the British court in which he is tried. But, is not the statement given by the Ali Brothers, a sort of help given to the court? This the Crown Prosecutor himself made clear, when he said that his work was much lightened by the utterances of the accused. . . .
>
> The second problem which perplexes me is this. We have not as yet launched on civil disobedience. Hence we all must obey at present the orders of the British officials. Even you did not infringe the order which prohibited you from entering Malabar. If so, was it proper for Maulana Mahomed Ali to disobey the Magistrate of Karachi and lose temper with him, when he asked him to sit down? Was this not an express breach of the Magistrate's order? Was it creditable to Maulana Mahomed Ali to ask the Magistrate whether he did not believe in God, and to decline to sit down when asked to do so and say, "Let me see what you can do"?
>
> To my mind, even when civil disobedience is started, we all must be humble. A non-co-operator must be humility incarnate. He must never under any provocation whatsoever lose temper or show any force. He must not know impudence except in name only. If these remarks be just, this

action of the Ali Brothers is wholly unjustifiable, and may well be reckoned as a piece of impudence, pardon me for using this word.

I think it would have been far better, far more prudent and worthy of leaders like the Ali Brothers to have remained tongue-tied, as it were, in the court instead of helping it in any way or behaving with the authorities impetuously.

I know this last remark may cause unpleasantness to you. If so, I solicit your pardon, but I could not help making this remark. I know you would justify the Brothers' action anyhow, but how, I know not.

The letter is frank but well meant. Many friends have put the same questions to me, and I have endeavoured to satisfy them to the best of my ability. But the foregoing letter requires public treatment. If there is inconsistency, it is due to the All-India Congress Committee which has permitted statements. One may question the soundness of the Committee's decision, but one may not charge the Brothers with inconsistency.

The All-India Congress Committee based its decision upon my advice. I owe it perhaps to the public to give my reasons. The statement enables the accused to declare his own position, and if it is made before the court, it is permanently on record. Moreover I have faith in India's ability to win swaraj during the year. I expect tens of thousands to be in jail before swaraj is established. I expect the swaraj parliament to discharge all non-co-operation prisoners who have not been proved guilty of moral crimes. The statements will be a valuable aid to the judges under swaraj. Again I am most anxious, that criminals do not take advantage of non-co-operation and making no statement leave the public to infer their innocence. A statement to satisfy this test must always be brief, to the point and not at all argumentative.

Maulana Mahomed Ali's statement does not fall under that category. He entered into a long and elaborate dissertation of the law of Islam. He evidently "used" the court not for defence but for advertising the cause. People have read his statement before the court with avidity. If he had written it as an essay, it would have fallen flat. I am therefore prepared neither to condemn nor defend the statement.

It could certainly have been much briefer. But it has become impossible for Maulana Mahomed Ali to be brief. I have known him to take an hour over his speech under a promise of being brief! The second charge is more serious. In the refusal to sit down, there was no

question of civil or uncivil disobedience. But it was a question of taste. All the scenes jarred on me. There was certainly no impudence but there was unnecessary defiance. I admit that a non co-operator should be all humility. And the behaviour of the prisoners was far from humble.

But I have again been unable to condemn the behaviour of the prisoners. They have answered a purpose and not a bad purpose at that. We are much cowed down. The courts have an overawing atmosphere about them. Respect for law and the courts is one thing. Fear of them is another. In my opinion the Brothers and their fellow-prisoners were out for mischief. They wanted to rob the courts and prisons of their terror. They therefore deliberately hurled defiance at the court. If the magistrate had entered into the humour of the situation, the Brothers would not have been assertive as they were. The court wanted to stand on dignity. The Brothers would have none of it. I do not deny that there was a better way, but I verily believe that the Brothers have rendered a service to the cause even by their defence[1]. They could have damaged the cause by putting on humility. They have once more proved themselves to be truthful and natural. That to me is their most lovable trait. We must remember, that we do want the present courts brought into disrepute because we believe them to be disreputable. But whilst I cannot condemn the Brothers' defiance, I do not present it as a pattern to copy. Those who try will fail. For let me tell the reader, that the Brothers have no feeling against the magistrate, and I have no doubt that they are as courteous to the magistrate when he is off the Bench as they are to me.

AN EYE WITNESS

The reader will perhaps better judge the scene from the following letter received from an eye witness.

> You must have read the proceedings of the case in the Press, but 1 consider it my duty to write to you the impressions of a silent Spectator. At the very outset an attempt was made to snub the "Hero" accused, but the unfortunate Mr. Magistrate was facing none else, but Maulana Mahomed Ali. The gentleman had his "well-merited rebuke".
>
> I confess that it was for the second time in my life that I entered a court to hear a case. . . . The so-called court of justice of Lord Reading's regime

[1] Misprint for "defiance"; *vide* "Notes", 27-10-1921 under the sub-title "In Defence of Mr Tyagi".

in a country governed by law and order is in no way better than a theatre. Sir, I am wrong. The actors in a theatre play their part honestly to please the spectators who pay for their amusement. But the "Daniel" of the British Court, whether white or black, knows no such thing as fair play, and I am confident that justice is not the word in their dictionary.

I am not a lawyer, so I could not follow the technical irregularities of the case, but if law has anything to do with common sense, then I can dare to say that the whole show in the Khaliqdina Hall was one great farce . . .

It was amusing to hear the witnesses and the way in which the conspiracy was being proved, and the speech made by the Government counsel in summing up the case hardly needs any comment.

I have personally come to the conclusion, that the making of a statement also in these courts is nothing but a cry in the wilderness, unless it be to serve the purpose of propaganda in the form of a last appeal to the countrymen.

A CONTRAST

The following letter from Bulandshahr will still further elucidate the point I am trying to make.

I have to bring to your notice the most unbecoming action of the District Magistrate during the course of a political trial which began on the 3rd instant.

Mahashaya Mahavir Prasad Tyagi[1] was prosecuted . . . in the court of Mr. Dobbs, the District Magistrate. . . . When the examination-in-chief of the witness was over, the Court asked the accused if he wanted to cross-examine the witness. Thereupon the accused said that he did not. He only wanted to have the fact noted, that the English translation of the notes[2] did not tally with the original as frankly admitted by the Government pleader before the Court.... The Magistrate declined to make the note and said, "You speak nonsense"[3]. The accused was offended at the remark and retorted, "I suppose it is yours". Thereupon the Magistrate ordered Balwant Singh, constable No. 55 who was in charge of the accused to slap him. The constable hesitated and most unwillingly gave the accused a light stroke on the back side of his neck. Thereupon the District Magistrate again ordered him to give a sharp slap on the face which he did when so forced to do. The accused patiently suffered the insult and humiliation. The accused was all along undefended. . . .

The extreme action of the District Magistrate has created a strong

[1] b. 1899; member, A.I.C.C since 1923
[2] Of the speech delivered by the accused
[3] According to Mahavir Tyagi, the Magistrate actually said: "It is your folly"

sense of excitement and indignation amongst the public here. . . . A mass meeting. . . was held . . . and appropriate resolutions passed. . . .

The resolutions passed at the public meeting held in Bulandshahr congratulate the accused on his self-control, bravery and resignation. But I have grave doubts as to the propriety of the use of the adjectives. Why did not the accused utter a word of protest? Why did he not refuse to be tried by the so-called Magistrate? The Magistrate clearly committed a crime, and so did the unwilling constable. Did the accused remain dumb because of love and humility? Silence or passivity must not be used as a cloak for fear or worse. Was not the attitude of the Brothers more manly and natural ? There are occasions such as the one at Bulandshahr, when a man's own strength must be his sole protection. And I have no doubt, that the Brothers, when they defied the court, had in mind the political debility of their countrymen.

HINDUSTANI IN COURTS

Dr. Kichlew deserves congratulations for his having declined to speak in English. Save on rare occasions we should certainly insist on giving evidence before the courts in our mother tongue. The best of us are at a disadvantage, when we have to speak or argue in English. And if all refused to use any but their own language, we should soon get rid of translators, and the judges will be obliged to *know* the language of the province in which they serve. In no other part of the world are judges ignorant of the language of the people among whom they dispense Justice.

CAUSE OF DECAY

A correspondent asks, "Is it not true that the loss of Hindu kingdoms is on account of the people having attained to the highest order of spirituality?" I do not think so. We know as a matter of fact, that the Hindus have lost each time for want of spirituality, in other words moral stamina. The Rajputs fought amongst themselves for trifles and lost India. Of personal bravery there was a great deal, but of real spirituality there was a great dearth at the time. Why did Ravana lose and Rama with his monkeys win if it was not for the latter's spirituality? Did not the Pandavas win because of their superior spirituality? We often confuse spiritual knowledge with spiritual attainment. Spirituality is not a matter of knowing scriptures and engaging in philosophical discussions. It is a matter of heart- culture,

of immeasurable strength. Fearlessness is the first requisite of spirituality. Cowards can never be moral.

THE ROOT CAUSE

The same correspondent further asks, "Don't you think that the success of the present foreign Government is due to the oppression of the poor, the weak, of the so-called untouchables by the higher classes?" This oppression by us of our own kith and kin is certainly the root cause. It is a fall from spirituality. The curse of foreign domination and the attendant exploitation is the justest retribution meted out by God to us for our exploitation of a sixth of our own race and their studied degradation in the sacred name of religion. Hence it is that I have put the removal of untouchability as an indispensable condition of attainment of swaraj. Slave-holders ourselves, we have no business to quarrel with our own slavery if we are not prepared unconditionally to enfranchise our own slaves. We must first cast out the beam of untouchability from our own eye before we attempt to remove the mote from that of our "masters".

EVEN AGAINST WOMEN

Mrs. Sengupta is a cultured Englishwoman married to a cultured Bengali. Whilst Mr. Sengupta[1] was under arrest, Mrs. Sengupta went out to the cloth bazar in Chittagong to tell the consumers to buy khadi and avoid foreign cloth. This was a serious offence for a woman to commit, and therefore she received a notice under Section 144 ordering her to desist. She has obeyed the notice because of the Congress embargo. Whatever may be said of men, Mrs. Sengupta could not be suspected of any intention to create trouble or offer any intimidation. Her inspiring presence would no doubt have shamed buyers into abstaining from going to foreign-cloth dealers. And that would have been bad from the Magistrate's standpoint. The order, therefore, is a virtual prohibition against swadeshi propaganda. But it will not surprise me in the least, if this Government, which chiefly rules to protect merchandise in foreign cloth, must end when foreign cloth is boycotted. The Government must grow madder with the progress of real swadeshi.

ECHO FROM GAUHATI

What has happened in Chittagong has been copied in Gauhati.

[1] A leading barrister of Bengal

There the workers have been prohibited from peacefully warning consumers against making purchases of foreign cloth for the Puja holidays. The order is issued against

> all persons within Gauhati Municipality to abstain from intimidating or causing annoyance to all persons engaged in sale or purchase of goods by threats or shouts or gestures or show of force, to abstain from loitering in the public roads or in the neighbourhood of shops or markets for purposes aforesaid, to abstain from doing other or any such acts as are likely to cause annoyance to persons lawfully engaged or disturbance of public tranquillity.

Mr. Bardoloi who has wired the text adds, "This is only a device to stop peaceful picketing".

THE REMEDY

I would advise workers to be chary of cloth picketing except when it becomes imperatively necessary. But when it does, the Working Committee has now given leave to disregard orders like the Chittagong and Gauhati ones, and fearlessly continue picketing, and court imprisonment. Prisons will be palaces, when we fill them for swadeshi which is the oxygen of national life.

Young India, 13-10-1921

204. THE GREAT SENTINEL

The Bard of Shantiniketan has contributed to *The Modern Review* a brilliant essay[1] on the present movement. It is a series of word pictures which he alone can paint. It is an eloquent protest against authority, slave-mentality or whatever description one gives of blind acceptance of a passing mania whether out of fear or hope. It is a welcome and wholesome reminder to all workers that we must not be impatient, we must not impose authority no matter how great. The poet tells us summarily to reject anything and everything that does not appeal to our reason or heart. If we would gain swaraj, we must stand for truth as we know it at any cost. A reformer who is enraged because his message is not accepted must reti to the forest to learn how to watch, wait and pray. With all this one must heartily agree, and the Poet deserves the thanks of his countrymen for standing up for truth and reason. There is no doubt that our last state will be worse than our first, if we surrender our reason into somebody's keeping. And I

[1] "The Call of Truths" by Rabindranath Tagore in the October issue

would feel extremely sorry to discover, that the country had unthinkingly and blindly followed all I had said or done. I am quite conscious of the fact that blind surrender to love is often more mischievous than a forced surrender to the lash of the tyrant. There is hope for the slave of the brute, none for that of love. Love is needed to strengthen the weak, love becomes tyrannical when it exacts obedience from an unbeliever. To mutter a *mantra* without knowing its value is unmanly. It is good, therefore, that the Poet has invited all who are slavishly *mimicking* the call of the charkha boldly to declare their revolt. His essay serves as a warning to us all who in our impatience are betrayed into intolerance or even violence those who differ from us. I regard the Poet as a sentinel warning us against the approach of enemies called bigotry, lethargy, intolerance, ignorance, inertia and other members of that brood.

But whilst I agree with all that the Poet has said as to the necessity of watchfulness lest we cease to think, I must not be understood to endorse the proposition that there is any such blind obedience on a large scale in the country today. I have again and again appealed to reason, and let me assure him, that if happily the country has come to believe in the spinning-wheel as the giver of plenty, it has done so after laborious thinking, after great hesitation. I am not sure, that even now educated India has assimilated the truth underlying the charkha. He must not mistake the surface dirt for the substance underneath. Let him go deeper and see for himself whether the charkha has been accepted from blind faith or from reasoned necessity.

I do indeed ask the Poet and the page to spin the wheel as a sacrament. When there is war, the poet lays down the lyre, the lawyer his law reports, the schoolboy his books. The Poet will sing the true note after the war is over, the lawyer will have occasion to go to his law books when people have time to fight among themselves. When a house is on fire, all the inmates go out, and each one takes up a bucket to quench the fire. When all about me are dying for want of food, the only occupation permissible to me is to feed the hungry. It is my conviction that India is a house on fire, because its manhood is being daily scorched, it is dying of hunger because it has no work to buy food with. Khulna is starving not because the people cannot work, but because they have no work. The Ceded Districts are passing successively through a fourth famine, Orissa is a land

suffering from chronic famines. Our cities are not India. India lives in her seven and a half lakhs of villages, and the cities live upon the villages. They do not bring their wealth from other countries. The city people are brokers and commission agents for the big houses of Europe, America and Japan. The cities have co-operated with the latter in the bleeding process that has gone on for the past two hundred years. It is my belief based on experience, that India is daily growing poorer. The circulation about her feet and legs has almost stopped. And if we do not take care, she will collapse altogether.

To a people famishing and idle, the only acceptable form in which God can dare appear is work and promise of food as wages. God created man to work for his food, and said that those who ate without work were thieves. Eighty per cent of India are compulsorily thieves half the year. Is it any wonder if India has become one vast prison? Hunger is the argument that is driving India to the spinning-wheel. The call of the spinning-wheel is the noblest of all. Because it is the call of love. And love is swaraj. The spinning-wheel will "curb the mind" when the time spent on necessary physical labour can be said to do so. We must think of millions who are today less than animals, who are almost in a dying state. The spinning-wheel is the reviving draught for the millions of our dying countrymen and countrywomen. "Why should I, who have no need to work for food, spin?" may be the question asked. Because I am eating what does not belong to me. I am living on the spoliation of my countrymen. Trace the course of every pine that finds its way into your pocket, and you will realize the truth of what I write. Swaraj has no meaning for the millions if they do not know how to employ their enforced idleness. The attainment of this swaraj is possible within a short time, and it is so possible only by the revival of the spinning-wheel.

I do want growth, I do want self-determination, I do want freedom, but I want all these for the soul. I doubt if the steel age is an advance upon the flint age. I am indifferent. It is the evolution of the soul to which the intellect and all our faculties have to be devoted. I have no difficulty in imagining the possibility of a man armoured after the modern style making some lasting and new discovery for mankind, but I have less difficulty in imagining the possibility of a man having nothing but a bit of flint and a nail for lighting his path or his matchlock, ever singing new hymns of praise and delivering to an aching world a message of peace and goodwill upon earth. A plea

for the spinning-wheel is a plea for recognizing the dignity of labour.

I claim that in losing the spinning-wheel we lost our left lung. We are therefore suffering from galloping consumption. The restoration of the wheel arrests the progress of the fell disease. There are certain things which all must do in all climes. The spinning-wheel is the thing which all must turn in the Indian clime for the transition stage at any rate and the vast majority must for all time.

It was our love of foreign cloth that ousted the wheel from its position of dignity. Therefore I consider it a sin to wear foreign cloth. I must confess that I do not draw a sharp or any distinction between economics and ethics. Economics that hurt the moral well-being of an individual or a nation are immoral and therefore sinful. Thus the economics that permit one country to prey upon another are immoral. It is sinful to buy and use articles made by sweated labour. It is sinful to eat American wheat and let my neighbour the grain-dealer starve for want of custom. Similarly it is sinful for me to wear the latest finery of Regent Street, when I know that if I had but worn the things woven by the neighbouring spinners and weavers, that would have clothed me, and fed and clothed them. On the knowledge of my sin bursting upon me, I must consign the foreign garments to the flames and thus purify myself, and thenceforth rest content with the rough khadi made by my neighbours. On knowing that my neighbours may not, having given up the occupation, take kindly to the spinning-wheel, I must take it up myself and thus make it popular.

I venture to suggest to the Poet, that the clothes I ask him to burn must be and are his. If they had to his knowledge belonged to the poor or the ill-clad, he would long ago have restored to the poor what was theirs. In burning my foreign clothes I burn my shame. I must refuse to insult the naked by giving them clothes they do not need, instead of giving them work which they sorely need. I will not commit the sin of becoming their patron, but on learning that I had assisted in impoverishing them, I would give them a privileged position and give them neither crumbs nor cast-off clothing, but the best of my food and clothes and associate myself with them in work.

Nor is the scheme of non-co-operation or swadeshi an exclusive doctrine. My modesty has prevented me from declaring from the house top that the message of non-co-operation, non-violence and swadeshi is a message to the world. It must fall flat, if it does not bear fruit in the soil where it has been delivered. At the present moment

India has nothing to share with the world save her degradation, pauperism and plagues. Is it her ancient Shastras that we should send to the world ? Well, they are printed in many editions, and an incredulous and idolatrous world refuses to look at them, because we the heirs and custodians do not live them. Before, therefore, I can think of sharing with the worlds I must possess. Our non-co-operation is neither with the English nor with the West. Our non-co-operation is with the system the English have established, with the material civilization and its attendant greed and exploitation of the weak. Our non-co-operation is a retirement within ourselves. Our non-co-operation is a refusal to co-operate with the English administrators on their own terms. We say to them, "Come and co-operate with us on our terms, and it will be well for us, for you and the world." We must refuse to be lifted off our feet. A drowning man cannot save others. In order to be fit to save others, we must try to save ourselves. Indian nationalism is not exclusive, nor aggressive, nor destructive. It is health giving, religions and therefore humanitarian. India must learn to live before she can aspire to die for humanity. The mice which helplessly find themselves between the cat's teeth acquire no merit from their enforced sacrifice.

True to his poetical instinct the Poet lives for the morrow and would have us do likewise. He presents to our admiring gaze the beautiful picture of the birds early in the morning singing hymns of praise as they soar into the sky. These birds had their day's food and soared with rested wings in whose veins new blood had flown during the previous night. But I have had the pain of watching birds who for want of strength could not be coaxed even into a flutter of their wings. The human bird under the Indian sky gets up weaker than when he pretended to retire. For millions it is an eternal vigil or an eternal trance. It is an indescribably painful state which has to be experienced to be realized. I have found it impossible to soothe suffering patients with a song from Kabir. The hungry millions ask for one poem—invigorating food. They cannot be given it. They must earn it. And they can earn only by the sweat of their brow. . . [1]

In these verses is contained for me the whole truth of the spinning-wheel as an indispensable sacrament for the India of today.

[1] Here followed in the source verses 8 to 16 from the *Bhagavad Gita, Ch.* III. For their English rendering, *vide* "Notes", 20-10-1921, under the sub-title "The Charkha in the *Gita*".

If we will take care of today, God will take care of the morrow.

Young India, 13-10-1921

205. WHAT WILL BOMBAY DO ?

The first bonfire of foreign cloth was lighted by me in Bombay on 31st July. The second bonfire, of the same magnitude, was lighted last Sunday. The 31st of July was also a Sunday.

It was Bombay which displayed generosity and upheld the country's honour, completing the target for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Bombay has laid the foundation for swadeshi. Swadeshi and Hindu-Muslim unity were discussed for the first time at the mammoth meeting for satyagraha held on the Chowpatty sands.

There are both Hindus and Muslims in Bombay; it is the principal centre of the spirited Parsis. Bombay has worthy Gujaratis and, tough, mountain-bred Marathas. It has also merchant-warriors, Memons, Bhatias, Parsis and Sindhis. The Bombay people are enterprising. They make a fortune one moment and lose it the next and give no thought to the matter.

Bombay has Strength enough to win swaraj, if only it would use that strength.

It is now accepted on all hands that swadeshi is the key to swaraj.

The help of merchants and women is necessary for winning the battle of swadeshi.

Merchants in other regions have not taken the same interest in the swaraj movement as those in Bombay. Will they help by sacrificing their interests? If they but think, they will see that no sacrifice is involved, as they had no right to the profits they have been making from foreign goods. In fact, the country has suffered heavily through this trade. Nothing has harmed the country as much as trade in foreign cloth. If, therefore, the merchants who carry on this trade understand the truth, they will expiate their sin and purify themselves. Will they overcome their greed ?

And why should they not ? Japan's awakening came after her wealthy people had sacrificed their wealth and the power that wealth brings. The strength to fight comes from self-sacrifice. A people who can fight has learnt to fight only by sacrificing their wealth and property. Physical strength and soul-force both presuppose sacrifice

of wealth.

In this movement, however, no such sacrifice is involved. When we undertake any work after mature consideration, it involves the least sacrifice. If merchants voluntarily and consciously give up trade in foreign cloth, they can make an honest living by starting business in khadi. We need some people to take up business of such capital investment that it will ultimately yield an annual profit of 60 crore rupees. How many merchants and shop-assistants would be required for such a business?

One thing, of course, is essential. Merchants should be ever active and thoughtful. Those lazy merchants who merely follow others, gamble or carry on business left by their father and make what profit they can in the ordinary course of things—these merchants will earn nothing unless they shake off their lethargy. A lazy man can never be brave; he can never win swaraj. Swaraj and lethargy are born enemies of each other.

The women of Bombay, like its merchants, are awake. Where shall we find women as advanced as in Bombay? The swadeshi movement can make no progress without their support, which means that we cannot win swaraj without it. We should not ask their help merely that they may give us the benefit of their presence. They are not invited just to make speeches. The country today begs of them the favours of utmost simplicity and hard work. Women will have to have good understanding and patriotism. If they do not shake off their fascination for foreign cloth and they obstinately insist on having dreadfully coloured saris, satins and muslins, what can poor men do?

Nor can women be forced to take the vow of swadeshi. If that is the only way to make them swadeshi-minded, I would rather that they continued with foreign cloth. Swaraj lies in their awakening, in the sacrifices voluntarily made by them. If women give up foreign cloth, they must do so out of a sense of duty. Muslim women should understand the cause of the Khilafat, Hindu women should understand the importance of the cow and all women should understand their responsibility for the eradication of poverty, which is a duty they owe to their neighbours. If, thus, the women in the country realize that it is morally wrong to wear foreign cloth, regard it as their duty to wear khadi and to ply the spinning-wheel every day, swadeshi will spread with the speed of wind. Bombay women can do this.

This also applies to the men in Bombay. They should overcome

their love of fine clothes and take up the spinning-wheel. This alone will advance the cause of swadeshi.

I am convinced that, if the country understands the idea of complete swadeshi, she will secure swaraj without having to resort to civil disobedience or non-violent revolt. It is possible, however, that such good fortune may not be ours and thousands of Indians may have to go to jail or die. If one province alone adopts complete swadeshi, that may not have so powerful an effect as to usher in swaraj. Should, however, one province or district be fully prepared, why may it not have the freedom to revolt ? Is it unlikely, besides, that the strength of that one province or district will win freedom for the whole country? I am emphatically of the view that this is possible. Can we expect Bombay to be ready to take the lead in this manner?

Bombay alone can answer this question. Those who do not adopt complete swadeshi have no right to revolts for they will not be able to control their anger and, at the critical moment, they will not find it possible to remain peaceful. We would then lose the battle we are about to win. We must not make this mistake.

That Bombay has learnt the lesson of peace and has become responsible, that it has determination and the Hindus, Muslims and Parsis living in it have become of one mind and heart—all this will be shown by people taking up carding, spinning and weaving, by khadi, in short. The citizens of Bombay will be fit to rise in peaceful revolt if men, women and children in their thousands take to carding, spinning and weaving and to wearing khadi.

This does not mean that every man and woman must spin or wear khadi. It is likely that Englishmen or the advocates of co-operation will not wear it. It is also possible that Government servants may not muster the necessary courage. We may, therefore take it that a stray shop selling foreign cloth will continue to do business on account of these customers. But the scene in bazaars, mosques, temples, at gatherings and marriage-parties will certainly have changed. At all these places and on such occasions we shall see nothing but khadi. Things on the stage and in theatres will also wear a different look. If people dislike foreign cloth, will they go to see plays in which such cloth is used? It seems impossible to me that the use of khadi can spread unless people's fascination for foreign cloth disappears. I would certainly expect the exclusive use of khadi in all places frequented by ordinary, free citizens.

Bombay can bring this about by the end of this month. When it has, it may start a peaceful revolt by itself.

I hope no one will ask what connection khadi has with peaceful revolt. I have explained above that the spinning-wheel is a symbol of our peacefulness. When, besides, people are being invited to take it up as such, those who have no faith in peace will not ply it at all or do so with zeal. Since we invest the spinning-wheel with the qualities of courage, honesty, simplicity and peacefulness, it will become the means of promoting more and more virtues.

The revolt for winning swaraj and saving the Khilafat cannot succeed with only a few people. It requires thousands. If we wish to generate through Bombay alone the necessary strength to win swaraj, we need a hundred thousand fighters. This may include both men and women, of any age over 16 years. No institution or organization can provide food for all these fighters. If the Congress starts doing this, we are bound to lose the battle. If we calculate the daily expense at the rate of eight annas each, even then it comes to 50,000 rupees. If we take that the battle will last for a month, the expense for feeding this number will by itself come to one and a half million. If it becomes necessary to provide for their families, it is simply impossible to estimate the expenditure. In any case, the figure I have mentioned will have at least to be doubled.

We are not prepared for an expenditure of this order and, even assuming that such an amount is not too much for Bombay, we shall gain nothing from it; on the contrary, we shall lose the struggle. One cannot be sure of the type of people who will join. Those who volunteer to bear the burden of the country's struggle should be first-rate men in respect of character, honesty and courage. The test for judging even this is the spinning-wheel and other work connected with the processing of cotton. Till the fighters realize that they can earn their livelihood by carding or weaving, it will he impossible for us to recruit hundreds of thousands of them.

We are now in a position to consider what Bombay should do in order to lead the way.

1. Every intending fighter should learn the processes of carding, spinning and weaving before the end of this month. He must spin for not less than an hour daily.

2. The people of Bombay should start wearing principally hand-spun khadi before this month is out.

3. Before the end of this month the scene in the markets, temples, mosques and theatres of Bombay must undergo a transformation so that nothing but khadi will be seen in any of these places.

4. The city's men and women should spend their spare time in carding, spinning or weaving.

5. If the citizens of Bombay have still a lingering faith in the efficacy of violence, they should give it up.

6. If there is still anything wanting in Hindu-Muslim unity, any coldness, the deficiencies should be overcome.

If all this can be done by the end of this month, then in November Bombay can launch upon civil disobedience of laws on a mass scale.

The Prince of Wales will land in Bombay on November 17th. Can Bombay display its strength before that date? Bombay should rise in revolt only after, and not before, it has fulfilled the simple conditions laid down above. Only that province which does so can start civil disobedience.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-10-l921

206. MY NOTES

LOSING INTEREST

When I am told that people have lost interest, that they should be given something new, I get worried. I then conclude that people have not realized the meaning of swaraj, of a war of dharma.

The means to swaraj can be constantly changing only if swaraj itself means something new every day. I for one cannot think of any means other than swadeshi. If, therefore, we have lost interest in swadeshi, we shall eventually lose it in swaraj as well.

A man who is too weak to breathe cannot have long to live. A healthy man does not even realize that he is breathing, or that his pulse is beating or that his eye is doing its work. Such a man never feels strain in carrying out essential functions. A poet never feels fatigued for using his powers. If anyone does, he is no poet. One who can so play on a *sarangi* that it seems to play of itself will never tire of the instrument. Similarly, if we have been permitted through and

through by the spirit of swadeshi, we cannot lose interest in it. On the contrary, we shall realize that the distance we have travelled towards swadeshi is the distance we have travelled towards swaraj. And just as we can feel no fatigue on the road to swaraj, so can we feel none on the road to swadeshi. As we near the goal of swadeshi, we should feel invigorated much as a man who gets nearer to pure and refreshing air does. Our strength increases with every step in our journey of swadeshi. Where are they now who a year ago used to laugh at the spinning-wheel? Shri Prafulla Chandra Ray[1], one of our foremost scientists, a peer of Shri Bose[2], an expert on delicate instruments and one who is associated with a number of business houses, has had to confess that for the four and a half crores of men and women of Bengal the only hope is the spinning-wheel. Those who tire of an activity of this nature simply do not understand it.

Moreover, what can a tired soldier accomplish ? The soldier who is always changing his strategy is bound to lose. We, on the other hand, have all the time been going forward. We have been able to make a few inroads into the citadels of the legislature, of the title-holders, of the lawyers and of the students, and could manage with what little we won. But foreign cloth stands in our path obstructing all progress. Till that fortress has fallen, we should not expect swaraj. Swaraj is possible only after its complete destruction. Hence, without demolishing this bastion of foreign cloth, whether it takes one month or many, we cannot hope to advance. We have been able to pass the other forts by digging our way through them.

Swaraj is something that has to be experienced. Only the patient can say finally whether he has been cured. Because a patient's complexion has regained colour and he has put on weight, the doctor will say that he is well even if he cannot sit up. The patient, however, will not agree that he is well. In much the same way, every person will have to be a witness to himself and say whether swaraj has been won. If, therefore, it is established that the people are tired of spinning, carding or weaving, of khadi, I shall conclude that they do not want swaraj. A man who has been fasting or, leaving rice, consuming bran is out, we would say, to commit suicide. Similarly, it can be said of anyone who chooses to keep away from swadeshi that he does not desire swaraj.

[1] 1861-1944; scientist and patriot
[2] Sir J. C. Bose, F.R.S., botanist

Can it be said that the workers and the members of their families have adopted swadeshi so completely that they like to hear no more of it? Till a non-co-operator has adopted complete swadeshi for himself and his family, it is much too early for him to lose interest or get disheartened. I am certain that the whole country will go swadeshi once all non-co-operators have become genuine followers of swadeshi as a matter of duty. Our loss of interest today is like a child's. When it finds sums difficult, it wants to do something else. The teacher who indulges the child when it loses interest in this way or feels defeatedacts as its enemy. The child must be made to finish the sum on which he is working. In the same way, we must, we cannot but, complete the swadeshi *yajna* which we have undertaken. Our loss of interest comes from our inadequacy and ignorance. We do not know the price that swaraj demands or, if we do, we are not ready to pay it. Our love of Khilafat goes no further than attending meetings and contributing money. If this is how things stand, we shall never get swaraj. Before we can get it, we shall have to be hard workers and give up our love of meetings, processions and speeches. If we think that there is still need for such playthings, we must admit that swaraj is far off.

VOLUNTARY OBEDIENCE

A friend put to me the following questions:

QUESTION: Shall we need some laws under swaraj?

ANSWER: Yes, we shall.

If so, surely people will have to respect them?

Of course, but they will do so willingly. The laws will have been enacted with their consent and will, therefore, be readily respected. Does this surprise you in any way?

To be sure, yes. I must admit I have my doubts about this.

I asked him why he said this.

From experience.

That startled me. I asked: Kindly tell me what you mean. I feel disturbed.

Let us see. Twenty thousand persons passed the resolution for non-co-operation at Nagpur. Naturally it was binding on those at any rate who passed it. Can we claim, however, that all those 20,000 have implemented it ? Have all the lawyers who attended the session given up practice? Have all the students present there left schools and colleges? Have all carried out the pledge of swadeshi ?

Have they all taken up the spinning-wheel ? But we may leave all this. Have the resolutions of the Congress Working Committee been implemented everywhere ? And what could be said of the Congress could also be said of less important bodies. In how many of our institutions do members abide by the rules they themselves have framed ? I have some experience of public life. I observe that people rarely respect their own rules. Can we enjoy swaraj till we have corrected this failing? Don't you feel that swaraj lies in our readiness to respect the rules we prescribe for ourselves in our present plight? If we lack this today, we are not likely to get it after we have won swaraj. In other words, swaraj is impossible if we cannot respect our own rules. Moreover, nothing could be easier than obeying laws we have ourselves laid down. In this, we do not have to go and ask others to do anything. The matter concerns only those of us who raised our hands [in support of the resolutions], and I refer only to those Congressmen who are non-co-operators. When I think about them, my heart sinks, I feel doubtful whether we shall get swaraj this year.

In reply I said: There is some truth in what you say. Not all of us obey the rules we lay down. You will admit, though, that we are not today as negligent in this matter as we were twelve months ago. We can say that people have by and large respected the Nagpur Resolution. Where they have not respected it, they admit their weakness and are trying to overcome it.

With this reply, I partially succeeded in satisfying the questioner but I was myself not satisfied. The doubts seemed to be serious enough. I was set athinking. I told him at the moment that I would write about the matter in *Navajivan*, but I find that as I write this I feel more troubled by his doubts. While my defence of the people seems justified, I can see that we shall need greater readiness on our part to implement our own resolutions. We cannot rest content with the logic of "on a heath a castor-oil plant is king". We are being tested by the touchstone of swaraj, and do not prove pure gold. There is in our gold more than the usual admixture of other metals. Only the expert can discover how much of gold there is in what he tests. So far as we are concerned, we should reveal in the test the highest degree of purity necessary for winning swaraj. Till we do so, how can we have the needed strength? The questioner's argument is also valid, namely, that we members of the Congress should be able to prove ourselves, without any special effort on our part, gold of one hundred per cent purity. It is evident that all of us do not obey the resolutions of the Working Committee and our respective provincial committees with machine-like regularity.

There is a reason for this negligence. All this time, we have been raising our hands in support of resolutions without proper consideration, out of fear or a sense of shame or through hope of some gain. This does not become a lover of freedom. Even if he is in a minority of one, he would vote against a resolution with which he does not agree, and in a democratic organization he would be congratulated on his boldness and respected. We may, thus, oppose any resolution which we disapprove, discuss every resolution threadbare and adopt it only if we are convinced finally that there is good in it. But having once adopted a resolution, we should carry it out whole-heartedly. Assuming that one such man in a thousand would enable us to win swaraj, we need 300,000 men who would fully implement the resolutions of the Congress and try to get others to do the same. There has been an increase in the number of such men, but I know for certain that their number does not come to 300,000.

Moreover, we have in the past always looked to the Government. Our resolutions were addressed to it and we had, therefore, little else to do besides passing resolutions. During the past 12 months we have been stressing one thing exclusively, and that is that we ourselves should act.

It is not too late yet. If we work hard and fully implement all the resolutions which have been passed, I think we shall advance very far.

Many things remain neglected owing to lack of planning, inefficiency and disinclination to work hard. It is our duty to shed lethargy, to improve our efficiency and to learn to think out everything carefully. A swarajist cannot afford to be wanting in these respects.

WEARING KHADI AT THE TIME OF MARRIAGE

The distinction of being the first to be dressed exclusively in khadi at the time of their marriage goes to a Parsi couple. Last Sunday, Mr. Lavangia,President of the Khandwa Congress Committee, was married to Miss Dinbai Patel. The couple were dressed exclusively in khadi. The priests had also khadi robes on them and the guests, too, were requested to come dressed in khadi, so that at the function one saw for the most part khadi on every side. In other matters, too, a simplicity about the ceremony was maintained. The bridegroom's father had offered Rs. 500 to the Swaraj Fund. Let us hope this regard for swadeshi and simplicity will be widely emulated. I am sure every reader will join me in wishing this couple a long life of service to the

nation.

COLOUR BAR

Shri Manilal Barrister has to his credit many services to the people of Fiji. On being deported by the Fiji Government, he went to live in New Zealand. He tried to set up practice there and applied the court for enrolment. The white Law Society of New Zealand made inquiries in Fiji. The Government of Fiji expressed doubts about Shri Manilal's loyalty and, in consequence, his application was rejected. The conclusion is that Shri Manilal cannot work and earn a living in New Zealand. No offence has been proved against him in Fiji, and there was nothing against his conduct in New Zealand either. Shri Manilal's disloyalty consisted in the colour of his skin, in his services to his fellow-men. If a brown-skinned person, who is also an Indian and serves his fellow-countrymen, is not disloyal in the eyes of the white men, who else would be? And yet there are many simple-minded and liberal Indians who argue that we shall, that we can, come into our own only through co-operation with the Government.

EAST AFRICA

Everywhere, I see only the bitter fruits of co-operation with the Government. The whites of East Africa do not like even Mr. Andrews' going there and are, therefore, preparing to oppose him. This means that they wish to do him some harm. Simultaneously, they are having discussions with the British authorities and trying if they can deprive us of our rights. So far the British authorities have not told them categorically that Indians shall not be deprived of a single right of theirs. If indeed Indians have to lose their rights, that would be daylight robbery. It is my earnest hope that the Indians there will not compromise their rights. The only way in which India can help them in the matter is by herself acquiring the strength to help. This strength consists in swaraj.

FRUIT OF UNTOUCHABILITY

Why have we thus become untouchables everywhere? The reason is clear to me. God's ways of punishing man for his sins are mysterious. The world treats us as we have been treating six crores of our brethren. This stigma we carry with us wherever we go. I have noticed that even the Negroes of Africa look down on us as slaves. We shall not become worthy of the world's regard till we feel genuine

compassion for the untouchables. Since we deceive ourselves and become indolent in the name of religion, we fall ill the more low. Our own plight seems to me more pitiable hand that of the untouchables, because we have to receive kicks both from God and the world. The untouchables, on the other hand, suffer only our kicks. They will get none from God. Even I regard to their failings, arguments in their defence, the facts of their disabilities, will be advanced and will be accepted as valid. To cleanse ourselves of this filth of untouchability is to cleanse our hearts. Till that is done, nothing that we may do is likely to yield fruit. There is no hope for a man whose heart has hardened and, when it is in the name of religion that a person has become cruel, we can say that his heart has hardened indeed. It isdifficult to convince a person who sacrifices animals in the name of religion that his action is cruel. It is easier to convince one who gets them killed for the sake of his palate. We shall, therefore, be able to rid Hinduism of this evil only if we give serious thought to the problem and dispel from our hearts the contempt we harbour. Unless this is done, not objecting to contact with an *Antyaja* will not by itself save one from sin. Free contact with *Antyaja* will mean that we have expelled the poison which has come to permeate the otherwise wholesome system of caste-restrictions: it means abandoning our notions of high and low and developing a sense of brotherhood in all our relations. Only when this is done can we say that we have ended the practice of untouchability. As things are today the evil has become so pervasive that even among *Antyajas* there are established distinctions of high and low. By shunning contact with *Dheds, Bhangis* and others, we have bred in their hearts too the desire to claim superiority over some others. Disappearance of the idea of untouchability means being free from such a desire, and this precisely is the meaning of the line, "The notion of being defiled by touch is like a superfluous limb."

Congress workers should never show themselves indifferent in this matter. Whenever they see evidence of any distinction of high and low, they should set their face firmly against it. While we do not wish to destroy the customary restraints which people accept as religious, we do not want, either, to see ignorance accepted as religious restraint. The essence of such restraint lies in suffering oneself, not in making others suffer. Anyone who inflicts suffering on others is a man of self-indulgence not of self control. Forcing others to perform all kinds of actions in order that one may enjoy the pleasures of heaven

is not the way to live a life of self-control. For eradicating the practice of untouchability and shedding the cruelty that lies behind it, it is very important that we always do something for the service of the untouchables, understand their difficulties, look after their orphans, go to their dwellings and do some useful work for them, admit a few of their children to our schools, if we are running any, and explain to the other children in our charge the necessity of doing this, visit their neighbourhood in every village and secure for them the facilities which they lack. The habit of thus looking on them with love and understanding will have such an effect on us that we ourselves shall be purified in the process and our hardness will melt away. Swaraj in fact means the development in us of a desire to share the sufferings of all.

CONVENIENCE OF PUBLIC

There will be so many changes at the forthcoming session of the Congress that, if the people do not understand them, they may go away dissatisfied and even disorganization may follow. The success of the session depends no less on the people than on the office-bearers and the volunteers. If the people appreciate the value of organization and respect the regulations, the arrangements will succeed completely, otherwise we may certainly expect trouble. Many are not happy about the restriction on the number of spectators announced already, but a little reflection will convince them of its necessity. The Congress is the executive organ of the nation. When thousands congregate to watch it at its work, making arrangements for those thousands comes to be the biggest practical problem. When, therefore, the Congress is engaged in implementing decisions and formulating policies, it is not a spectacle for thousands to watch.

One solution is not to admit spectators at all, but this cannot be done immediately. Some at least have to be allowed. The Reception Committee, therefore, has decided to make arrangements for a maximum of three thousand spectators. Who these three thousand should be has still to be decided. Paid admissions have been stopped, and the Committee has reserved to itself the right to admit a few prominent individuals. Having thus restricted the number, the Committee has decided to meet every possible need. People should accept these restrictions in good spirit.

Everyone, however, will be able to see and attend every part of the proceedings worth attending. A payment of four annas do will entitle a person to remain on the campus the whole day. He will be

able to attend all the functions, music programmes, speeches, etc., at the session. Only, he will not be allowed inside the enclosure when the Congress is in session. He will also be able to hear every speaker. Thus a payment of four annas will enable all to satisfy their curiosity. I expect not less than 100,000 spectators for the session, and they will find satisfactory arrangements made for everything which may be of instructive value to them.

PARSI VOLUNTEERS

Mr. Shapoorji Behramji Gotla writes from Navsari:[1]

I hope others will take up this suggestion and, if it is notpossible to form a separate unit, they will at any rate join one of the units; already formed.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-10-l921

207. LETTER T0 A. G. KANITKAR

SABARMATI,
October 17 [*1921*]

DEAR FRIEND,

I was pleased to receive your letter.

I do not believe in the present scouts organization. Nor could I possibly advise anyone to associate himself with any welcome to the Prince who is being brought here to support a hideous wrong. I quite agree with you that our fall is due to our departure from our ideals of simplicity and love. Not till we have reverted to swadeshi and removed untouchability is any peace possible for India.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

A well-behaved English boy should be as dear as a brother.

From the original: C. W. 5799. Courtesy D P. Joshi

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. It appealed to Parsis to raise a volunteer corps of their own for the forthcoming session of the Congress in December and the writer offered his services to become one of its members.

208. LETTER T0 BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

SABARMATI,
Monday [*October 17*, 1921][1]

BHAISHRI BEHRAMJI,

I saw your letter only today. If I find a good *Dhed or Bhangi* boy, I shall send him to you. It is difficult to get such boys. I didn't know at all that you take vegetarian diet.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the original : C.W. 4360. Courtesy : Tehmina Khambhatta

209. LETTER TO BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

[Before *October 19, 1921*][2]

BHAISHRI,

I have your letter. There is no need for you to take a job, nor is it necessary to go to the office of the Association when you have no work there. I also saw your letter to Shri Petit. I was pained to read it. I see that it is full of anger. When you had left the matter to me, you need not have written to him.

This will also make my work a little difficult; but you need not worry. My hint is for the future.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI
HIRABAG
GIRGAUM
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2579

[1] From the postmark
[2] From the postmark of arrival in Bombay on October 19, 1991

210. TELEGRAM TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR[1]

[*October 19, 1921*]

C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARYA

SALEM

HOW CAN NEHRUJI[2] DISREGARD WORKING COMMITTEE[3] RESOLUTION? SORRY YOU ARE ANGRY. HOW CAN YOU THREATEN SCHISM? MEETING MUST BE HELD. YOU SHOULD DO AS CONSCIENCE DICTATES.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7640

211. TELEGRAM T0 MOTILAL NEHRU

AHMEDABAD,
October 19, 1921

I AGREE WITH YOU THAT THE PRESIDENT CANNOT DISREGARD THE WORKING COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTION. THE COMMITTEE SHOULD MEET IN DELHI AS RESOLVED.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-10-1921

[1] In reply to his telegram dated October 19 which read: "Nehruji threatens fight by counteracting. He would fight shadow. I shall start schism or faction. Pray wire him insisting on your inborn gospel of love or our noble cause would suffer needless civil ridicule. Will fix any date or place you wish. Only Hyderabad or Karachi soon after trial appeals morally politically best. I will attend sharing risks."

[2] Pandit Motilal Nehru, General Secretary of the Congress

[3] Which convened the All-India Congress Committee meeting on November 4.

212. LETTER TO G. V. SUBBA RAO

SABARMATI,
October 19,1921

DEAR FRIEND,

Agriculture is no doubt better than weaving as an occupation, but it requires a greater outlay of capital expenditure and an amount of patience, perseverance and outdoor labour, which is not likely to be suited to a Government servant fresh from his deskwork, whose means, again, generally speaking may be so limited as to make it impossible to begin farming even on a modest scale.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 3622

213. LETTER TO K. P. KESHAVA MENON

SABARMATI,
October 19, 1921

MY DEAR KESHAVA MENON,

I am sorry in the midst of rush I have overlooked your application to the Bajaj Fund. I have got the list but it does not say how much you require. Please wire your requirements.

As to the grant you may use your discretion but I would like you to consult Mr. Mathuradas about spinning.

I hope the delay in dealing with the lawyers' papers will not cause inconvenience.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Have you not been paid anything out of the Bajaj [Fund]?

From a photostat exhibited at the Kerala Pavilion, Gandhi Darshan, New Delhi, 1969-70

214. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

ASHRAM,
Wednesday [On or after *October 19, 1921*][1]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I cannot but retain the cheque you have sent me. You will have to draw upon me when you require it. It seems as if Motilalji will never be free from the illnesses [in the family].

Is it not a shortcoming of my *tapascharya* that I cannot convince people in the matter of swadeshi? A perfect *tapasvi,* though silent, does influence through his sincere feelings. Some do so by a mere hint, some by word of mouth and some by writing. What is the meaning of all this ? Those who wear khaddar only in my presence do so out of love for me and not owing to my *tapascharya.* Surely, a free India of the future is not going to import its foodgrains from abroad. Nor will it import cloth. Are we going to import bottles of water and medicines from England ? Our dharma will change when our country ceases to grow cotton. We shall then have to leave the land.

I hope you are aware that Kishorelal has retired to a hut set up in a solitary place.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 1060

215. NOTES

THE CHARKHA IN THE "GITA"

In the last issue I have endeavoured to answer the objections raised by the Poet against spinning as a sacrament to be performed by all. I have done so in all humility and with the desire to convince the Poet and those who think like him. The reader will be interested in knowing that my belief is derived largely from the *Bhagavad Gita*. I have quoted the relevant verses in the article itself. I give below Edwin Arnold's rendering of the verses from *his Song Celestial* for the benefit of those who do not read Sanskrit.

Work is more excellent than idleness;

[1] Kishorelal Mashruwala, mentioned in the last para of the letter, retired to a hut on Friday, October 14, 1921.

The body's life proceeds not, lacking work.
There is a task of holiness to do,
Unlike world-binding toil, which bindeth not
The faithful soul; such earthly duty do
Free from desire, and thou shalt well perform
Thy heavenly purpose. Spake Prajapati
In the beginning, when all men were made,
And, with mankind, the sacrifice— "Do this!
Work! sacrifice. Increase and multiply
With sacrifice! This shall be *Kamadhuk,*
Your 'Cow of Plenty', giving back her milk
Of all abundance. Worship the gods thereby;
The gods shall yield ye grace. Those meats ye crave
The gods will grant to Labour, when it pays
Tithes in the altar-flame. But if one eats
Fruits of the earth, rendering to kindly heaven,
No gift of toils that thief steals from his world."
Who eat of food after their sacrifice
Are quit of fault, but they that spread a feast
All for themselves, eat sin and drink of sin.
By food the living live; food comes of rain.
And rain comes by the pious sacrifice,
And sacrifice is paid with tithes of toil;
Thus action is of Brahma, who is one,
The Only, All-pervading; at all times
Present in sacrifice. He that abstains
To help the rolling wheels of this great world,
Glutting his idle sense, lives a lost life,
Shameful and vain.

Work here undoubtedly refers to physical labour, and work by way of sacrifice can only be work to be done by all for the common

benefit. Such work, such sacrifice can only be spinning. I do not wish to suggest that the author of the Divine Song had the spinning-wheel in mind. He merely laid down a fundamental principle of conduct. And reading in and applying it to India I can only think of spinning as the fittest and most acceptable sacrificial body labour. I cannot imagine anything nobler or more national than that for say one hour in the day we should all do the labour that the poor must do and thus identify ourselves with them and through them with all mankind. I cannot imagine better worship of God than that in His name I should labour for the poor even as they do. The spinning-wheel spells a more equitable distribution of the riches of the earth.

BENGAL'S RESPONSE

For the satisfaction of those who have not studied the Poet's article, let me inform them that the Poet is not altogether against the spinning-wheel. He does not see the necessity of spinning for all. But I am convinced, that as we go forward there will be no one doubting the efficacy and supremacy of the charkha for banishing India's distressful and growing poverty. Dr. P. C. Ray's frank recognition of the charkha is a valuable acquisition. More than all this recognition is the news coming through letters, that wherever Deshabandhu Das and his devoted wife go, crowds give up their foreign clothing and take upthe charkha. Here is the translation of an extract from a letter received by a Bengali friend from his father living near Chandpur made known to India by the Gurkha charge on that dreadful night when helpless coolies were driven away from the station-yard.

> Yesterday there was mass singing in procession, an exhibition of hand-spun yarn and a huge mass meeting at the Nirode Park. . . . There was a huge bonfire in which such a large mass of topis and cloth was burnt as I cannot describe. The Shah merchant of Pal's market brought over to the meeting his whole stock of foreign cloth and threw it into the fire. The charkha has not yet spread so much, but I am expecting better results now. In my family your mother, sister and three brothers are all spinning very good yarn. . . . . .

This is merely a sample of what is happening all over Bengal. I doubt not, that when Bengal's imagination is touched, she will find herself in the front.

THE HONOURS LIST

The Honours List is daily increasing. If we are renouncing one

kind of titles from the Government, we are asking for another and true variety. Gangadharrao Deshpande is the latest selection. His name and the names of many I can think of convince me of the approaching victory. Only we must remain steady under the volley. If we continue to respond to the Government warrants without fuss, without noise and without anger, we may feel certain of immediate success. I continue to receive letters from friends inquiring what will happen when all the leaders are taken away. The questioners betray their unbelief in, if not their unfitness for, swaraj by putting the question "What will happen when all the leaders die?" Our fitness for swaraj can only be demonstrated by our capacity to continue our work in spite of the withdrawal of leaders by death or imprisonment. Surely the memory of imprisonment should act as a spur to greater and more disciplined action. Another friend who felt disappointed when I was not arrested as was rumoured I would be on the fifth, showed a robust faith in himself and the cause. We must be able to stand on Our own legs without support even as we breathe naturally and without artificial aid. If Karnatak is the country I have imagined it to be, Gangadharrao Deshpande's arrest and imprisonment must mean complete boycott of foreign cloth and much greater production of khadi. Karnatak cannot rest satisfied till by its own effort it has secured the freedom of the imprisoned and still-to-be-imprisoned patriots.

OTHER LEADERS

There is little doubt that the Government of Bombay are going about their business in a methodical manner in picking out leaders. For in Pir Turab Ali Shah and Pir Mujadid they have arrested two Mussulmans who have a very large following and whose influence was exercised in order to curb the violent tendency among the rank and file. Of course, Mr. Deshpande's unrivalled influence in Karnatak was also for peace. One would almost think the Government of Bombay was ashamed of its own moderation and was trying to make up for past neglect. The Dharwar judgment and the Sind and the Karnatak arrests point to the fact that the Bombay Government is almost inviting people to violence. But let us hope that it has become awakened too late for the purpose. The country seems to have understood which way lies its interest and will not play into the hands of the Government. Given Hindu-Muslim unity, intelligent acceptance of non-violence by the masses, and systematic work in swadeshi, and nothing can possibly keep us from attaining swaraj during this year.

The reader will recollect the assault instigated by the District Magistrate of Bulandshahr upon Mr. Tyagi who was being tried in his court and who was therefore under his protection.[1] I have now before me the apology he tendered to the accused. Here it is.

PRISONER AT THE BAR,

Before today's proceedings go any further, I wish to say something.

I do so for two reasons,—the first, that I am trying you, and it is not right that you or anyone else should Suspect that you will not be tried fairly and in a proper manner. The second, that no officer of Government can wish that any incident should happen to give any section of the community reasonable grounds for resentment, especially as unscrupulous persons are ready to exaggerate such incidents.

At the first hearing I was impatient and you were insolent. I did wrong in having you slapped; and I regret that I did so.

I now tell you, that if you are respectful to the Court, you will find me courteous. If you do not behave properly, I shall find proper means of dealing with you. You will in any case be tried fairly andpatiently; and you will have a full opportunity at the proper stage to make any relevant remarks you have to offer.

I may add that out of regard to the loyal members of your community who are doing good work in this District, if you are proved innocent of the offence of which you are accused in this or in any other court, I shall send 50/- to the Malabar Relief Fund.

W. E. J. DOBBS

It is evident to me that the apology was offered under pressure, even as Sir Michael O'Dwyer was made to apologize to the late Council for his offensive remarks. Insincere and mechanical as the wording is, at that very sitting the magistrate broke his promise of giving the accused a patient hearing by expunging from his statement a passage which he did not like. His offer to pay Rs. 50/- to the Malabar Relief Fund for the sake of the loyalists if he was proved to be innocent shows the incorrigibility of the magistrate. The donation was meant to purge the offence committed by the magistrate. The "loyalists" could have nothing to do with the innocence or guilt of

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 13-10-1921, under the sub-title "A Contrast".

the accused. Why then should the donation be conditional upon proof of the accused's innocence? This assault by the magistrate raises an issue of the gravest import. Could such a man occupy, the position of a magistrate for a single day under any civilized Government? Could for instance the Lord Chief Justice of England assault a prisoner being tried before him and still retain his high office ? If the Government of India was not in reality a lawless and totally irresponsible government, the magistrate would have been suspended and prosecuted as a common felon. An assault by a judge upon an accused whilst he is on his trial before that judge is not an ordinary assault that could be treated lightly.

There should be limit even to co-operating patience. Do the Indian ministers concerned feel an easy conscience over the magistrate's crime against the nation ? Or do they think that they have no responsibility because the magistrate does not belong to their department ?

A non-co-operator's duty is simple. Each such violation of law and morals on the part of Government officials must result in making us more determined in our purpose. We may not be satisfied till the system under which such atrocious conduct is possible is uprooted.

ACCUSED'S STATEMENT

Two days before the second hearing of the case Mr. Tyagi sent to the magistrate the following statement:

> *Vandemataram*
>
> In the Court of the District Magistrate, Bulandshahr.
>
> From Mahavir Tyagi accused under Sections 124 and 153 I.P. Code.
>
> I, Mahavir Tyagi, an innocent accused, am compelled to file the following statement: I want to say through this writing that as the said Magistrate, while proving his tyranny and incompetency on the 3rd instant, treated me in the open Court in a way which was calculated to insult and wound myself, my creed and my nationality, by forcing me to stand with "attention", threatening to have me kicked by the Police and actually getting me slapped, an action on the part of the Magistrate which was absolutely illegal and barbarous, therefore in order to preserve my national, religious and personal honour and self-respect, I have, as a protest, decided to take a vow of silence and make a "speech strike" in this Court which has set every law at naught.
>
> (Note:—The following words here in the statement were, against the wishes of the accused, expunged by the Court and signed and dated : *"Jaisi ki*

Punjab main meri Bahnaun ki behurmati ki gai our voh behurmati insaf ke liye Darbar-i-illahi main pesh hai", i.e., just as my sisters in the Punjab were insulted and their outraged honour is seeking its justice before God, in the same way) I leave to God my own insult which is far less than the outrage on the honour of my said sisters. It is possible that the extraordinary treatment meted out to me was intended to provoke the general public, but, I, from my own experience, would say that now Indian public is sufficiently educated. They can put up with every tyranny but would not go a step behind in the non-violent course chalked out for them by the Mahatma (Gandhi).

Praying to God for the liberation of my country,

Iam,

The Silent,

MAHAVIR TYAGI

BULANDSHAHR JAIL,
October 4, 1921

It is a courageous and outspoken statement, and if it represents Mr. Tyagi's own sentiments, it requires a modification of the view questioning his courage at the time he was assaulted. As the case is of very considerable importance, involving as it does the question of the bodily safety of prisoners, it is necessary to examine somewhat fully the issues arising from it.

In my opinion the "speech strike" and adopting the title of "the silent," do not help at all. it was the clear duty of the prisoner on the day he was struck to refuse voluntarily to remain in the court. He should have refused there and then to submit to further trial by the so-called judge. He should certainly have sat down as a mark of disowning the court's jurisdiction. All this would have probably meant more assault certainly more punishment. But the secret of non-violence treated as a weapon of the strong means the inviting of suffering and personal injury in order to avoid tyranny. Ordinarily the movement requires or permits us to attend courts under warrants, because it did not anticipate duct such as the Bulandshahr magistrate's. But the extraordinary conduct of the magistrate requires an extraordinary remedy.

The statement rightly emphasizes non-violence. But I do not wish to be misunderstood. The pledge of non-violence does not require us to co-operate in our humiliation. It therefore does not require us to crawl on our bellies or to draw lines with our noses or to

walk to salute the Union Jack or to do anything degrading at the dictation of officials. On the contrary our creed requires us to refuse to do any of these things even though we should be shot. It was therefore, for instance, no part of the duty of the Jallianwala Bagh people to run away or even to turn their backs when they were fired upon. If the message of non-violence had reached them, they would have been expected when fire was opened on them to march towards it with bare breasts and die rejoicing in the belief that it meant the freedom of their country. Non-violence laughs at the might of the tyrant and stultifies him by non-retaliation and non-retiral. We played into General Dyer's hands because we acted as he had expected. He wanted us to run away from his fire, he wanted us to run on our bellies and to draw lines with our noses. That was part of the game of "frightfulness". When we face it with eyes front, it vanishes like an apparition. We may not all evolve that type of courage. But I am certain that swaraj is unattainable this year if some of us have not the courage which enables us to stand firm like a rock without retaliating. The might of the tyrant recoils upon himself when it meets with no response, even as an arm violently waved in the air suffers dislocation.

A Relevant Question

And just as we need the cool courage described above, we need perfect discipline and training in voluntary obedience to be able to offer civil disobedience. Civil disobedience is the active expression of non-violence. Civil disobedience distinguishes the non-violence of the strong from the passive, i.e., negative non violence of the weak. And as weakness cannot lead to swaraj, negative non-violence must fail to achieve our purpose.

Have we then the requisite discipline? Have we, a friend asked me, evolved the spirit of obedience to our own rules and resolutions ? Whilst we have made tremendous headway during the past twelve months, we have certainty not made enough to warrant us in embarking upon civil disobedience with easy confidence. Rules voluntarily passed by us and rules which carry no sanction save the disapproval of our own conscience must be like debts of honour held far more binding than rules superimposed upon us or rules whose breach we can purge by paying the penalty thereof. It follows that if we have not learnt the discipline of obeying our own rules, in other words carrying out our own promises, we are ill-adapted for disobedience that can be at all described as civil. I do therefore

suggest to every Congressman, every non-co-operator, and above all to every member of the All-India Congress Committee to set himself or herself right with the Congress and his or her creed by carrying on the strictest self-examination and by correcting himself or herself wherever he or she might have failed.

THE NEXT MEETING

The forthcoming meeting of the All-India Congress Committee will nearly decide our fate so far as the attainment of our three ends during this year is concerned. We must have a programme which, if we vote for it, we must carry out at the cost of our lives. I am hoping that everyone will come with the fullest information about his own constituency on every point. I hope that everyone will come with a clean slate so far as his own obligations under the programme are concerned. Let every member realize, that he or she is a representative of the people and especially his electors in a manner in which the stalwarts in the reformed councils cannot claim to be. Let him think out the meaning of his responsibility, if he as a representative is to play his part in attaining the national goal during the next two months.

MORE SIGNATURES

Telegrams and letters have poured in upon me from Deshbandhu Das downwards authorizing me to insert their signatures to the Manifesto[1] on the Karachi Resolution. I am not announcing all the names, because I hold it to be unnecessary. It was a demonstration to show the Government that the Mussulman divines were not the only ones who held it sinful to serve thepresent Government, and the Ali Brothers and their co-accused were not the only persons to approve of the Karachi Resolution. The others will sign the Manifesto, if the Government will graciously honour the signatories with arrest and imprisonment.

CONGRESS FINANCE

I have seen criticism in the Press regarding the collection and the administration of the Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund. The public have certainly the right to know all about the Fund and other Congress collections. In my opinion the Congress finance has never been in a more satisfactory condition. It will be possible to speak with

[1] *Vide* "A Manifesto", 4-10-1921.

greater definiteness, when Mr. Sopariwala who has been appointed all-India auditor has inspected all the Congress branches and reported upon their condition. The announcement made on the 1st of July as to the collections stands. There was a mistake made by me in reading Mr. Das' wire. My reading was, that fifteen lakhs were collected and ten more were as good as collected. I learnt on meeting him, that fifteen lakhs were definitely promised, and he expected to bring up the figure to twenty-five lakhs. When I was last in Calcutta, Mr. Das had not succeeded in collecting fifteen lakhs that were definitely promised, but he certainly expected to collect that and the additional ten lakhs. In any case the crore was assured without the ten lakhs. The figures for all the other provinces were an understatement. Most of the monies have certainly been collected. Some debts fare still outstanding. Every province knows its finance. The accounts are kept by each province and they are open to the inspection of every member. In some provinces, I know, the accounts are published periodically and are also audited by local auditors. Most branches have prepared their budgets and are spending according to the budgets sanctioned. It is possible that some provinces have spent more extravagantly than others, it is equally possible that in every province extravagance in some department or other may be proved by an outsider. But I do know that in the majority of cases monies have been and are being spent with the knowledge and sanction of the members of provincial bodies. In every province, in so far as I am aware, the chairmen are men of highest probity. In Messrs Jamnalal Bajaj and Umar Sobani the All-India Congress Committee has treasurers who command universal respect, and in Messrs Nehru and Ansari and Rajagopalachari it has secretaries whom it will be difficult to surpassin ability, industry or integrity. I have therefore no hesitation in assuring the busy reader who is solicitous about the Congress finance that all that is humanly possible has been done by the Congress authorities to ensure. proper collection and administration of all new Congress funds.

FOREIGN POLICY

The draft resolution on foreign policy approved and circulated by the Working Committee has created a mild sensation. That some people are surprised at the Working Committee seriously discussing the question shows that in their opinion India is not ripe for swaraj. I have endeavoured to show before now, that everybody and every

nation is always ripe for swaraj, or to put it another way no nation needs to undergo tutelage at the hands of another. Indeed whilst we are maturing our plans for establishing swaraj, we are bound to consider and define our foreign policy. Surely we are bound authoritatively to tell the world what relations we wish to cultivate with it. If we do not fear our neighbours, or if although feeling strong we have no designs upon them, we must say so. We are equally bound to tell the world whether we want to send our sepoys to the battle-fields of France or Mesopotamia. We must not be afraid to speak our minds on all that concerns the nation.

A correspondent from Ludhiana has sent me a string of questions, showing how the public mind is agitated. He begins:

1. Shall India's foreign policy be governed by any other consideration but that of its population ?

Naturally the interest of India must be given preference over all others.

2. Should Indian men or money be used for fighting the battles of England, etc. ?

Yes, if India has entered into treaty obligations to fight for other nations.

3. Shall the law of the land be subordinate to the special interest of any Sect, league or society ?

Certainly not. But the law may be such as to provide assistance to friendly neighbours as we would, if we were free today, be assisting the Turks with men and money to the best of our ability.

4. Should any government be made a tool for the protection of any religion, race or class?

The swaraj government to be worth the name will certainly protect the religions professed in India and the races domiciled in India.

5. How are things to be settled when Shastra or *Shariat says* one thing and the country's need is against it?

The question is really irrelevant. The need of one sect or the religion professed by it must be the need of the country.

6. Should the relations between the zemindars and the ryots be based on mutiny?

I hope they never will be so based under swaraj, but that then they will be happy and mutually beneficial.

7. Should loyalty to one's motherland be conditional, and if so, how ?

Loyalty to the country is always subordinate to loyalty to God.

Young India, 20-10-1921

216. HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY A CAMOUFLAGE?

The editorial notes in the current number of The *Modern Review* contain reflections on Hindu-Muslim unity, which deserve a reply. The talented editor has headed them with the word "camouflage" and has evidently come to the conclusion that the unity is only so-called. In my opinion, however, it is not only not a camouflage but is fast becoming a permanent reality. I have made the admission in these pages that it is still a sapling requiring delicate handling. But it is certainly not a pretension or make-believe if only because both realize the truth of the common danger.

It is unfortunately still true, that the communal or the sectarian spirit is predominant. Mutual distrust is still there. Old memories are still alive. It is still true that at elections considerations not of fitness but of religion prevail. But to recognize these facts is to recognize the difficulty of union. When both parties know them and are honestly trying to achieve unity in spite of them, it is hardly just to call the attempt or the limited achievement a camouflage.

It is not correct to say that the appeal of the Khilafat associations against cow-killing leaves the Mussulmans cold and unresponsive. In the first place, is it not a cheering phenomenon that the Khilafat workers themselves are Mussulmans working to preventcow-killing? In the second place, I venture to that the appeal has had wonderful success in almost all the parts of India. Is it a small matter that the burden of cow-protection has been taken over almost entirely by the Mussulman workers? Was it not a soul-stirring thing for Hindus to witness Messrs Chotani and Khatri of Bombay rescuing hundreds of cows from their co-religionists and presenting them to the grateful Hindus?

It is certainly true that both Maulana Mahomed Ali and I are careful enough "not to tread on each other's corns". But for frankness of treatment it would be difficult to bear us. For us the unity is not "a house of cards" as the writer cruelly suggests, but it is such a substantial fact that we would die to keep it intact. Let me inform the reader that throughout all our journeyings there has never been a jar

between us, never any mental reservations. The cruellest cut however is given in the following sentence:

> Reading between the lines of their speeches, it is not difficult to see that with one of them the sad plight of the Khilafat in distant Turkey is the central fact, while with the other the attainment of swaraj here in India is the primary object in view.

I claim that with us both the Khilafat is the central fact, with Maulana Mahomed Ali because it is his religion, with me because in laying down my life for the Khilafat I ensure the safety of the cow, that is my religion, from the Mussulman knife. Both hold swaraj equally dear because only by swaraj is the safety of our respective faiths possible. This may seem a lower ideal. But there is no concealment in it. For me the attainment of the Khilafat through India's power is the attainment of swaraj. Love is the basis of our friendship as it is of religion. I seek to gain Mussulman friendship by right of love. And if love persists even on the part of one community, unity will become a settled fact in our national life. It is unjust to suggest of Maulana Mahomed Ali that he speaks in elegant Urdu ununderstandable of the majority of Bengali Mussulmans. I know that he has been trying his best to introduce into his Urdu speech as much simplicity as possible.

It is unfortunately true, that there are still Hindus and Mussulmans who out of fear of one another consider foreign domination a necessity. And that has not a little to do with the delay in the attainment of our goal. We do not yet clearly perceive that the possibility of a free fight between the two communities is a lesser evil than the existence of foreign domination. And if it is the interposition of the British Government which keeps us from fighting one another, the sooner we are left free to fight, the better for our manhood, our respective religions and our country. It will not be a new phenomenon if we fought ourselves into sanity. The English carried on internecine warfare for twenty-one years before they settled down to peaceful work. The French fought among themselves with a savage ferocity hardly excelled during recent times. The Americans did nothing better before they evolved their commonwealth. Let us not hug our unmanliness for fear of fighting amongst ourselves. The able writer of the "notes" loves unity as much as any of us and suggests that there must be "a root and branch change, a radical transformation and reconstruction from the foundation". But he leaves the reader to

guess the remedy. It would have been better if he had made concrete suggestions. He would evidently have us inter-marry and inter-dine if only by way of a beginning. If that is the radical transformation desired by him and if it is a condition precedent to the attainment of swaraj I very much fear that we would have to wait at least for a century. It is tantamount to asking Hindus to give up their religion. I do not say that it is wrong to do so, but I do suggest that it is reformation outside practical politics. And when that transformation comes, if it is ever to come, it will not be Hindu-Muslim unity. And what the present movement is aiming at is to achieve unity even whilst a devout Mussulman retains his faith intact and a devout Hindu his. It have therefore often said to my audiences, that the Ali Brothers and I serve as an object-lesson to all Hindus and Mussulmans in Hindu-Muslim unity. We both claim to be devoted to our respective faiths. In spite of the greatest regard for the Brothers I would not give my daughter in marriage to one of their sons, and I know that they would not give theirs to my son, assuming that in spite of his being a Hindu, he so far reformed himself as to covet the hand of their daughter. I do not partake of their meat foods, and they scrupulously respect my bigotry, if my self-denial may be so named. And yet I do not know three persons whose hearts are more united than those of the Ali Brothers and myself. And I wish to assure the reader, that the unity is not a camouflage but it is a lasting friendship based upon exquisitely delicate regard and toleration of one another's views and habits. And I have no manner of fear that when the protecting hand of the British is withdrawn from me, either the Brothers or their friends would violate my freedom or attack my religion. And I base this security from fear first upon God and His promise of safety to every creature of His who endeavours to walk in His fear, and then upon the honourable conduct of the Brothers and their friends, although I am aware that physically any one of them is more than a match for twelve like me put together. And so from the particular instance I have generalised for the whole of India, and shown that Hindu-Muslim unity is possible if only we have mutual toleration, and faith in ourselves and therefore in the ultimate goodness of human nature.

Young India, 20-10-1921

217. THE MEANING OF THE MOPLAH RISING

A correspondent from Scotland takes me to task for not dealing sufficiently with the Moplah rising in these columns. The result, he says, has been that those in Great Britain who are in the habit of studying Indian affairs have been induced to believe that an Islamic kingdom is established in India. The reproof is not wholly undeserved, but I have not shirked duty in the matter. I have been simply helpless. I wanted to go to Calicut and reach the bottom of the trouble as I believed I could have. But the Government had willed it otherwise. I am sorry to believe but it is my belief, that the men on the spot do not want to end the trouble. They certainly do not wish to give non-co-operators the credit for peacefully ending the trouble. They are desirous of showing once more, that it is only the British soldier who can maintain peace in India. And I could not then give battle to the Government by disregarding the instructions not to enter the disturbed area.

I should like to think better of the men on the spot. It is contrary to my nature to believe in the depravity of human beings. But there is so much evidence about me of the depravity of the bureaucratic mind that it will stop at nothing to gain its end. It is the literal truth I tell, when I say that before I went to Champaran, I did not believe the stories I was told of atrocities committed against the peasantry of Champaran. When I went there, I found the state much worse than was described to me. I had refused to believe that innocent people could have been Murdered in cold blood without warning as they were in Jallianwala Bagh. I had refused to believe that human beings could be made to crawl upon their bellies. But on reaching the Punjab, I found to my horror that much more than what I was told had happened. And all this was done in the name of peace and order so-called, but in reality for the purpose of sustaining a false prestige, a false system and an unnatural commerce. It is true that a strong Lieutenant-Governor was able to attain justice in Champaran in the face of overwhelming opposition. But that was really an exception due to exceptional causes. And so I feel the Moplah revolt has come as a blessing to a system that is crumbling to pieces by the weight of its own enormity.

The Moplah revolt is a test for Hindus and Mussulmans. Can

Hindus friendship survive the strain put upon it? Can Mussulmans in the deepest recesses of their hearts approve of the conduct of the Moplahs? Time alone can show the reality. A verbal and forced philosophic acceptance of the inevitable is no test of Hindu friendship. The Hindus must have the courage and the faith to feel that they can protect their religion in spite of such fanatical eruptions. A verbal disapproval by the Mussulmans of Moplah madness is no test of Mussulman friendship. The Mussulmans must naturally feel the shame and humiliation of the Moplah conduct about forcible conversions and looting, and they must work away so silently and effectively that such things might become impossible even on the part of the most fanatical among them. My belief is that the Hindus as a body have received the Moplah madness with equanimity and that the cultured Mussulmans are sincerely sorry for the Moplah's perversion of the teachings of the Prophet.

The Moplah revolt teaches another lesson, viz., that each individual must be taught the art of self-defence. It is more a mental state that has to [be] inculcated than that our bodies should be trained for retaliation. Our mental training has been one of feeling helpless. Bravery is not a quality of the body it is of the soul. I have seen cowards encased in tough muscles, and rare courage in the frailest body. I have seen big bulky and muscular Zulus cowering before an English lad and turning tail if they saw a loaded revolver pointed at them. I have seen Emily Hobhouse with a paralytic body exhibiting courage of the highest order. She was the one noble woman who kept up the drooping spirits of brave Boer generals and equally brave Boer women. The weakest of us physically must be taught the art of facing dangers and giving a good account of ourselves. What was more detestable, the ignorant fanaticism of the Moplah brother, or the cowardliness of the Hindu brother who helplessly muttered the Islamic formula or allowed his tuft of hairs to be cut or his vest to be changed ? Let me not be misunderstood. I want both the Hindus and Mussulmans to cultivate the cool courage to die without killing. But if one has not that courage, I want him to cultivate the art of killing and being killed, rather than in a cowardly manner flee from danger. For the latter in spite of his flight does commit mental *himsa.* He flees because he has not the courage to be killed in the act of killing.

There is yet another lesson the Moplah outbreak teaches us. We dare not leave any section of our countrymen in utter darkness and

expect not to be overtaken by it ourselves. Our English "masters" were uninterested in the Moplahs becoming orderly citizens and learning the virtue of toleration and the truth of Islam. But we too have neglected our ignorant countrymen all these long centuries. We have not felt the call of love to see that no one was left ignorant of the necessity of humaneness or remained in want of food or clothing for no fault of his own. If we do not wake up betimes, we shall find a similar tragedy enacted by all the submerged classes. The present awakening is affecting all classes. The "untouchables" and all the so-called semi-savage tribes will presently bear witness to our wrongs against them if we do not do penance and render tardy justice to them.

Young India, 20-10-1921

218. T0 THE READER

I have said elsewhere in this issue that, as far as lies within my power, I shall spend the remaining part of this year in Gujarat, and that too in the Ashram.

My only reason for doing so is to have as much time as possible to myself for thinking and writing and for meeting those whom I should meet. I cannot do this if persons drop in at all hours simply to see me. People's affection for me is such that there is a stream of visitors throughout the day. In such conditions I cannot work as much as I should like to do.

I would, therefore, request those readers of the *Navajivan* who are regular visitors to the Ashram not to come merely to see me. The better course for them would be to devote in carding, spinning and weaving the time they would spend in coming here to see me. Those who wish to put any questions to me would get a reply if they write to me.

Those who needs must come would save their time if they to so by appointment, or come between three and four in the afternoon. I would request that no one should in any case come in the morning, except by special appointments, as I devote my mornings to writing and such other work.

We shall accomplish our task in the time which remains with us only if we, who wish to serve the public, put ourselves and others to the best possible use from the point of view of public service. In doing so, I expect the fullest co-operation from the readers of *Navajivan* at

any rate, and I believe that if all readers of *Navajivan* make the best possible use of the advice given in it and act upon it, even that would take us to our destination in time. Truth, courage and hard work are essential. If we do not get swaraj this year, we shall have only our indolence to blame.

Hard-working men and women should take stock each day how their time has been spent and maintain a daily balance-sheet. They should not waste a single moment in idle talk, and should keep the good of the country in mind while earning living. They should go further and devote their spare time wholly to national work.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-10-1921

219. MY NOTES

MY SURAT EXPERIENCES

I have come back after a day's visit to Surat, where I had gone just to see how things were going.

There were invitations to visit Navasari, Kathor and other places, but I could not accept them. If in Gujarat too I go on visiting places, the purpose for which I have stopped touring would be defeated. It is best that I remain in the Ashram, write and make what suggestions I can from there.

I have done enough talking. If it is felt at any place that only my presence would infuse some strength into the people there, I think it is necessary that we should learn to do without such strength for the present. It is more necessary to increase our strength wherever we have acquired some and organized it so that it can be effectively employed. Only then shall we succeed in our resolve to win swaraj this year. Swaraj, in my view, lies in the skill with which, we are able to exploit the awake-ning in the country. At this stage, therefore, I can be of better service to the people by offering guidance and setting an example in spinning.

I had gone to Surat on a sort of inspection tour to see for myself how far it was ready for swaraj. I saw there a veritable sea of white caps and found khadi being used on a fairly large scale. I am not, however, likely to be taken in by these things. There is little enthusi-asm for khadi among women in Surat. They attended the meetings in large numbers but, I noticed, in saris of foreign material. With all that,

the work they have done in the Surat District is quite considerable. At present, it seems to me, the competition is between Surat and Kheda. Nevertheless, I feel that Surat is still not strong enough to start civil disobedience. Not all the [Congress] workers of Surat have yet become proficient in carding, spinning and weaving. The city still does not have thousands of men who feel confident that, in the event of their imprisonment, their families will be able to maintain themselves without support from public funds by carding, weaving, etc.

But I do believe that Surat can be ready in this manner within a month. People there have come to appreciate the real value of swadeshi, only it has to be put on a firmer footing. For that, I think it is necessary that the workers in the District devote their energies exclusively to this work. Spinning and weaving should be given the first place in the existing schools. Teachers too should take up this work. There should be many, not just one, who can identify the varieties of yarn, its count, staple, etc. Till we are permeated through and through with the spirit of khadi, till our women have fallen in love with it, we shall not be fit for swaraj, for, till then, we shall not be in possession of the means of banishing hunger from the land and shall not, in consequences be well-equipped for the service of the poor. Till we are, we lack the qualification to start civil disobedience.

I was asked in Surat what was to be done if people would not increase the use of khadi still further and take greater interest in spinning and weaving. The answer is simple. Do those of us who ask this question themselves spin and weave? If there is nothing further to be gained from trying to persuade others, why should we not utilize every moment of our time in making a science of carding, spinning and weaving and acquiring the highest proficiency in them? Should we not believe that by attaining perfection ourselves we shall be teaching perfection to others ? A creeper needs a hedge against which to grow. There is no point in complaining that swadeshi is making no progress or that people take no interest in it. We do not have even 100 workers in every district who are experts in carding, weaving and spinning. With those hundred, we can train 1,00,000 more. But what can we do if we have none? I would, therefore, advise workers of the Surat District to attain and help others to attain perfection in swadeshi. They can certainly do this much, if not more, in this month. Swadeshi then will automatically spread everywhere. If with all these efforts we do not succeed, we shall know that we are still not ready for

swaraj. This is our work, whether we do it now or later.

NON-CO-OPERATION IN RANDER

While I was on my inspection tour of Surat I also visited Rander. I had been to Rander earlier too, and had then expressed my disappointment at people's lack of interest there.[1] But all that has changed. There is now a fine national school there, the wine shop has closed down and everywhere you see men in khadi. There is virtually no demand for foreign cloth. There is a large Muslim population in Rander, and some of them are millionaires. These last have set apart Rs. 60,000 worth of foreign cloth for being sent to Smyrna. Sons of wealthy Muslims have taken up picketing wine shops. Thus, from every point of view Rander has made great progress in non-co-operation. All this enthusiasm has come during the past two months, in the wake of Maulana Shaukat Ali's last visit to the place. True, the Rs. 25,000 which the people of Rander have contributed to the Angora Fund is far from enough for a community which can give lakhs, and the revered Maulana Azad Sobhani gave them a piece of his mind for that. I hope that, though the citizens of Rander have entered late in the race, they will outstrip all others in the Surat District in every matter. For this to happen, every youth and every woman in Rander should get busy with the spinning-wheel or the loom. The notion that a wealthy person need do no work should be banished from our minds. It has bred idleness and poverty among us. The rich too should work for the good of the people. Aurangzeb had little need to work, but he used to sew caps. We, who are already so poor, are doubly under obligation to work. Since we have become slaves through the use of foreign cloth, it is trebly our duty, for promoting swadeshi, to card, spin and weave.

FOOLISH SUPERSTITIONS

A gentleman in Surat gave me ten rupees saying that the gift was in fulfilment of a resolution he had made. It seems someone had recovered from an illness after he had vowed that he would make an offering to me if he did so. I accepted the money, since it was for a charitable purpose, but asked the person who gave it to me not to accept in future money offered on such grounds. Our country labours under a crushing weight of superstitions and

[1] *Vide* "Experiences in Gujrat", 24-4-1921.

addition to it in my name would pain me very much indeed. We shall not be able to take the country forward by adding to the number of our superstitions. The practice of making vows of this kind is an ancient one. It may be, as some people believe, that the element of faith in it is a good thing in itself, but I am convinced that the practice does not deserve to be encouraged. Hence, wherever people are found using my name in that way, they should be dissuaded from doing so. Such resolutions may be made in anyone's name and the practice will spread. If all those who vow to make an offering in a particular manner if they recover, some are bound to recover. The poor fellows do make the offering, but what connection could their recovery have had with their vow? I can understand those recovering from illness making some offering to me, if those who do not recover despite their vow could fine me. In the latter event, I would become bankrupt paying the fines and be left fit for no social service. But since I am not prepared to pay a fine to those who do not get well, I do not wish to accept gifts from those who do. It seems best to me that we should refuse a contribution even to a public cause, if it is offered in this manner.

What is true of superstitious vows is true also of the practice of offering reverence [to a human being]. The practices of touching a person's feet, of bowing with the whole body prostrated on the ground, waving lights before him, etc., also deserve to be discontinued. How much of people's time would be wasted if lakhs of them did these things? I am put out by all these people coming for my *darshan*. I would be driven crazy if all of them decided to prostrate themselves in reverence before me, or I would be compelled not to show even the courtesy of noticing them. I would, therefore, suggest that we should stand at a distance and fold our hands to the other person or salute him and give up all other formalities. People can come to no harm if we do so, for mutual respect is a matter of mental attitude and we can express it at the proper time. The only worship that I ask for, if I have at all earned it, is that the people should promptly act upon any suggestion of mine which they approve of and secure swaraj. That is the only real worship worth offering; worship in any other manner may be misplaced and we should refrain from offering it.

NATIONAL QUALITY OF NATIONAL SCHOOLS

A correspondent asked a few questions some time ago to know

in what the specifically national quality of a national school consisted. Of these I answer some which are likely to be of interest.

QUESTION: will a student graduating from a national institution of learning be free from the worry of finding work for a living?

ANSWER: He should certainly be free from such worry. That is no knowledge which does not confer even this freedom. That alone is knowledge which helps one to win three kinds of freedom—economic, social and spiritual. One who does not have freedom of the first kind cannot possibly have that of any other kind.

Should not self-sacrifice be the sacred duty of everyone serving in a national institution?

Of course it should be. He who cannot give up self-interest cannot, in my opinion, become the servant of the nation.

Should not a *snataka*[1] dedicate his life to the service of the nation?

This principle does not apply always. After a nation's life has been organized on moral principles, whoever lives an honest, fearless life is doing some service.

When we say that Government schools do not build character at the same time that they impart knowledge, do we not mean that in a national institution character-building will get special attention?

That is certainly what we mean. Even imparting knowledge should aim at character-building. Knowledge is the means and character-building is the end.

You would, then, consider it essential that teachers of national institutions should have a strong moral character ?

Of course.

Does this not mean that a teacher who smokes and drinks should be kept out of such institutions?

We have certainly risen to a high enough level to be able to do without a teacher who drinks. I dare not say the same thing with regard to smoking. I know from experience that a person who smokes may be upright in other ways. It is necessary to remember, while observing the moral character of others, that we do not become self-righteous watchmen.

It is pathetic, is it not, to see students becoming physical wrecks by the time they matriculate and being almost completely spent by the time they graduate ?

[1] Graduate of the Gujarat Vidyapith, a national university of Ahmedabad established in October 1920

If I have any say in the matter, I would stop further education of any boy who had lost his health.

Is it not necessary that all the faculties of a pupil receiving national education should be developed?

Yes, of course, they should. He alone is healthy in mind who is healthy in body, and when the mind is healthy the soul also is healthy—this is obvious.

Is it not desirable to keep married students under the age of 21 out of national schools?

They should be, in theory. Married life and studies do not really go together.

Don't you think our education should spread the idea that a widower should not marry again?

I should certainly like education which does that.

Should corporal punishment have any place in a scheme of national education?

Certainly not.

If a student develops contempt for national education, whom would you hold responsible?

Generally, the teachers and the students both are responsible, but more often the teachers.

Don't you think languages figure too prominently in our school curricula ?

Several languages of the same family cannot be much of a burden on the students. I believe that one can learn, for example, the four languages, Hindustani, Gujarati, Marathi and Bengali, without any strain. But English, Greek, Latin and Arabic have no common ground.

Shouldn't the teacher have a higher status in society than a minister? If the Viceroy could be paid Rs. 1,000, should not the teacher be paid Rs. 2,000?

There is a price on the Viceroy's services; there is none on the teacher's. He will, therefore, always be poor. He should be happy earning enough for his minimum needs and teaching. The Viceroy puts down his price; if the teacher did that, he would be useless as a teacher.

I give here my reply to a question put by another correspondent, since it concerns our present subject.

Should a teacher marry a girl who is his student? Likewise, should a boy marry a girl studying in his class?

I at any rate would consider both very improper. A girl who is my student should be as safe [with me] as my daughter, and a girl in

my class as safe as a sister. That pure brother-and-sister relationship is the only proper relationship between boys and girls studying together. This is all I should like to say in reply to this question, but it is an important enough question for a fuller discussion. I have no doubt in my mind about the correctness of my reply to the first question. With regard to the second, however, I see some difficulties in these modern times when thousands of boys and girls attend the same school. In any case, in every institution that I have managed I have insisted on the foregoing rule being followed and the results have always been happy.

FLATTERING WEAVERS

A friend wonders whether it would not be profitable to plead with weavers as we have done with lawyers, merchants, students, etc. I have indeed said something about this in a previous issue and, if I do not write oftener on it, that is because weavers as a class are not literate and cannot read. There can be no doubt that, if a desire for serving the nation can be aroused among the artisans, and particularly among weavers, we would achieve the goal of swadeshi in a short time. Millions of weavers in the country— Hindus and Muslims—help foreign interests. They use foreign yarn worth millions of rupees in weaving, and some produced in our mills too. If, however, they exclusively accept hand-spun yarn for weaving and go on improving the quality, the country's face would brighten up and crores of rupees would find their way into the homes of our people.

If the weavers wake up and decide exclusively to weave hand-spun yarn, not only would millions earn a little by spinning but, along with them, thousands of others employed in ginning, carding and starching would get more work to do. The daily earnings of thousands of carpenters and blacksmiths would go up. Total swadeshi would not only bring a straight gain of 60 crores of rupees to the nation, but create work in other professions which would earn many more crores and revive beautiful arts and crafts which once flourished in the country. At present we have degenerated into mere unskilled labourers.

Everyone, therefore, can see the importance of inducing the weaver class to work for the service of the people. We can do this best by ourselves becoming weavers. It is one thing to approach weavers because we need their help, and quite another to tell them something for their own good. The only way to serve their good is to learn their

profession ourselves, understand the science of it and explain it to them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-10-1921

220. LETTER TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

SABARMATI,
October *21, 1921*

I have received the ruling and the statement of the President of the All-India Congress Committee and have read the statement thereon issued by Pandit Motilal Nehru. In my humble opinion the President's position is wholly untenable. It is for the All-India Committee to pronounce the final judgment on the President's ruling. But it will be against all constitutional usage to override the resolution of the Working Committee to convene a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee for the 4th November. I entirely endorse the position taken up by Pandit Motilal Nehru and hope that every member of the All-India Congress Committee will attend the meeting at Delhi on the 4th November. At the same time I recognize that the President feels conscientiously that the Working Committee has gone wrong in not disturbing the elections in Madras and Bengal. But it was equally a matter of conscience for the Working Committee not to disturb them. The All-India Congress Committee alone can be the final arbiter.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-10-1921

221. OPTIMISM

Optimism indicates faith; only an atheist can be a pessimist. The optimist lives in fear of God, listens with humility to the inner voice, obeys its promptings and believes that God ordains everything for the best.

The pessimist vainly thinks that it is he who does everything. When he fails in some undertaking, he leaves himself out and blames others; indulges in vain prating about not being sure whether God exists and, finally, concluding that this world is worthless and he alone good, but that his merit is not recognized, puts an end to his life. If he does not do that, he merely endures an existence which is little better

than death.

The optimist lives delighting in thoughts of love and charity and, since there is none whom he looks upon as his enemy, he moves without fear whether he is in the forest or in the midst of men. He has no fear of ferocious animals or equally dreadful men, for his soul cannot be bitten by snakes nor pierced by the sinner's sword. Such a one will not give too much thought to his body, will rather look upon it as a fragile vessel of glass which is fated to break some day and will not go roaming all over the world to preserve it in health. The optimist will not kill or harass any human being. With his inner ear ever attuned to the sweet music of his soul, he will live floating on an ocean of joy.

The pessimist, being himself a prey of violent attachments and dislikes, looks upon every person as his enemy and fears him. He has of course no such thing as the inner voice. Like the honey bee, he flits from pleasure to pleasure, daily tiring of them and daily seeking new ones and, finally, dies, unloved, unwept and unsung.

Such being my views, I hope no one will believe that I ever told anyone I would commit suicide if swaraj was not won this year. Except for saving oneself from rape, suicide is, according to me, a major sin and an act of cowardice. Why indeed should I commit suicide because India may not have won swaraj? If she sincerely desires swaraj, let her fight for it and get it. She has realized its value, and has even tasted of it. If now she cares enough for it, let her pay the price and secure it. Whether or not she does so, what reason is that for me to commit suicide?

I did, however, mention one thing before some friends. When asked what I would do if we had not got swaraj by January, I said I had so great a faith in the country that till the very end of December I would continue to believe that we would definitely get swaraj. What, therefore, I would do in January, I did not know at all, I said. With people's leave, I would retire to a solitary place and live by myself, or would welcome helping the country, to the best of my ability, in drafting its constitution under swaraj. I should not like to remain alive next year if we have not won swaraj by then. I am, in that event, likely to be pained so deeply that this body may perish—I would desire that it should.

I have seen so much suffering in the country, economic and moral, that, if I have not perished in the flames, it is because of the

hope which people have inspired in me. “We shall have purified ourselves in a day”, and “Today our millions will get some flesh on their skeletons”—I am sustained from day to day by such hopes. I believe that one year is enough in which to realize them. In September [1920], I was the only one who believed and said that this was possible.

In December, others unanimously took up the programme. If now the Congress fails to fulfil its pledge, what would be the position of a person like me? It would surely mean bankruptcy for me no less than for the Congress. If, putting my trust in the Congress, I issue a draft and then find that it is not honoured, where should I turn? I very much desire that in the event of our failing to get swaraj [in this year], everyone else should suffer on January 1 as much as I would. Everyone should feel the want of dharma as much as of food.

A friend asked me if this was not cowardice. I do not think so. I see in it an expression of compassion; it is plain common sense to me. There is no point in continuing to give service when it is not valued as such and none in living if there is no good in it. When the body itself is worn out, would it not be better to live on the Ganga water and let it slowly perish than to keep it alive, a mere skeleton, by treating it with *vasantmalati*[1] or some such stuff? As far as I can see today, I shall never advise any course but “adopt swadeshi and win swaraj”. If I cannot think of anything else at all, of what service can I possibly be?

We are now on the last rung of the ladder. To take a step further up without recouping ourselves where we stand would ultimately mean a set-back for us. I remember, when I was climbing the ghat for going up to Sinhgad[2], a point came beyond which I simply could not continue to climb. I could resume the climb only after I had rested for a while and regained my strength.

We are in the same position. Till we have completely succeeded in the swadeshi programme, we shall not get the strength to push forward. My remaining alive, therefore, or continuing to live in society, depends on the success of swadeshi.

This is how I see things; this is the state of my mind today. What tomorrow will bring, God alone knows.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-10-1921

[1] An Ayurvedic drug.

[2] A mountain fort near Poona in Maharashtra

222. TO MILL-WORKERS

BROTHERS,

Ever since my return to Ahmedabad at the end of my tour, I have been hearing that the drink habit has decreased among all sections of people but that the liquor-booths which are frequented by mill-workers continue to flourish, that, moreover, the customers there pay no heed to volunteers, actually abuse them and even beat them. I do not know what truth there is in this. I am sure that there are hundreds of workers who would not approve of such conduct.

Those who are labouring in your cause have been doing so in the hope that you will reform yourselves and be happy, that you will give up your bad habits, learn to save money and pay off your debts, that you may have good houses to live in and your children may get education, that you will learn to be clean and, in your free time, will read good books and reflect over them, in every way, you should enjoy a good reputation in society.

Those who are trying to help you will not be satisfied by merely getting a wage-rise or some bonuses for you. If you accept their services only for securing an increase in wages and do not change your way of life, you will lose their services and public opinion, which today is on your side, will no longer be there.

Not only should you become good, but you should also take part in the holy movement of self-purification going on in the country today. You should understand and do your duty about the Khilafat and the Punjab agitations and in the movement for swaraj. If you wish to do so, you must give up your vices. We are carrying on this struggle in the name of God. Do you think God would help a drunkard, a gambler or a dissolute person? How can a Muslim addicted to drink serve the cause of the Khilafat ? What help can a Hindu, who is given to drinking, render to his Muslim brother?

Whenever I raise with your employers the issue of wage-increase or bonus for you, they simply ask me: “What good do you hope to do by asking for increase in wages? Do you think the workers will spend the money to eat better food? Will they purchase better clothes? Will they educate their children? Will they not rather, spend, it on drinking more?” When I hear this, I hangmy head in shame. You should save me from this humiliation, and that you can do only

by giving up drink.

You, readers, most likely do not drink; how, then, can you be held responsible for your co-workers ? The answer to this question is that swaraj lies in accepting responsibility for one's associates. It is for you to win over other workers and shame them into reform. You should keep a watch on those of them who are drink-addicts. Yours should be the burden of improving them. It is only when, in this manner, you bring about a daily improvement in your conditions, that you will have earned a wage-rise, bonus and so on. You can easily see that public sympathy will not remain on your side for ever if you do not improve. I hope, therefore, that you will make every effort to rid yourselves of the evil of drinking.

Your well-wisher,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-10-1921

223. MY NOTES

CONDITIONS FOR VISITING

I keep getting requests to visit various parts of Gujarat. It was suggested that I should go to Dakor and other places. I also received requests to visit Petlad and Sojitra. I have, however, begged to be excused, till the end of this month at any rate. I have then to go to Delhi. After returning from Delhi, I intend to go round a little in Gujarat. I have certainly not given up my hopes of Gujarat. I assuredly cherish the hope that Gujarat will make every sacrifice in this holy fight and, therefore, I expect that I shall be taken to such places only where men and women use khadi for all purposes—on public holidays and important occasions, at home and outside. Everyone should see to it that my time is not wasted. Even if we have only one district well prepared, we shall be able to put up a strong fight and win. I shall be ready to encamp in such a district. For that, however, the following conditions must first be fulfilled:

1. Hindus and Muslims there should be living like blood-brothers; not in fear of each other, but in loving harmony.

2. The Hindus, Muslims, and Parsis in the district, all should be convinced in their hearts that victory on the Khilafat issue with India's

help is possible only through a peaceful struggle.

3. The people of that district should have realized that, together with the spirit of non-violence, they need to have courage even to mount the gallows. At least one in a hundred must have such courage; that is, in a population of five lakhs, there should be not less than 5,000 such persons quietly determined to face death.

4. The Hindus of that district. should have I learnt to regard untouchability as a sin and to treat the *Bhangis, Dheds* and others with kindness.

So much by way of action on the mental plane. Besides this, as a token of their sincerity and proof of their zeal,

5. over 90% of the people of that district should have renounced the use of foreign cloth and should be wearing khadi made from yarn which they themselves have spun and got woven in their own district, and should possess one spinning-wheel for every ten persons among them, and this should be in actual operation.

It is not at all difficult to satisfy these conditions, and even one such district will be able to win swaraj. The whole of Gujarat prepared in this way, then, would undoubtedly win it. Similarly, if any district has one man in ten who is ready, if necessary to lay down his life for the cause, then, too, swaraj would be a certainty. The reader will see that there is but one explanation for all this. We describe our struggle as one of truth and non-violence. If our lives are filled with these, the fulfilment of the conditions mentioned should be but child's play to us. Moreover, we should all remember that we must not hate or abuse or insult our opponents—be they Englishmen or advocates of co-operation wearing the same skin that we do. We have to fight relying on our own strength, not maligning these people.

Ours is a civilized struggle, and to a civilized man none in this wide world is an enemy, none whatsoever.

DIWALI

Diwali is near at hand. I have already indicated once before[1] how to prepare for it, but I touch upon the subject again. Let us purify ourselves in preparation for Diwali. The worship of the spinning-wheel is worship of the goddess Lakshmi, and so everyone should equip his home with one spinning-wheel of the best

[1] *Vide* "My Notes", 9-10-1921.

quality. We should produce at least some yarn on it and, for that purpose, it should be kept working for the whole day by every member of the family taking a turn at it. The yarn so produced should be credited in our books to the country's account.

Children will of course want new things. Girls may be given dolls made from hand-spun khadi and boys may be given attractive satchels of khadi. Ropes made out of hand-spun yarn could be given to the children for a game of tug-of-war. We should get at least one garment of such khadi made for every person in the family, though we should spend on buying only as much even of khadi as we need.

Children who ask for crackers should be told that the time for them will come only when we have got swaraj and hunger has been banished. Till hunger has disappeared, we simply cannot spend anything on crackers; but, in order to cleanse ourselves we could have on the Diwali day a pretty good bonfire of whatever foreign clothes still remain with us and enjoy the sight of our own garments in flames.

A Jain correspondent, however, points out that innumerable insects perish in these bonfires and there is so much destruction of life—the sight is simply unbearable. Would it not be better, he asks, to put away our garments of foreign cloth and lock them up? From the present Jain point of view, this is a relevant question. That the smallest insects are our kin, our brethren, and that it is our dharma, therefore, to have compassion on them,—these are deathless words. But we cannot stop there. Despite their truth, we light ovens and cremate dead bodies. Creation as much as destruction is a form of violence. There is no destruction not followed by creation and no creation which is not preceded by destruction. We cannot escape paying for our own actions. If we admit that we must give up the use of foreign cloth, destroying it through fire does the least degree of violence. In a situation in which we are obliged to choose between two forms of violence, we can do no more than choose the lesser one. If the garments are locked away, white ants, etc., will get at them and the work of destruction and creation will proceed so rapidly that destruction through fire would have been a much lesser evil. There is less violence in at once killing a man than in letting him starve to death. This is why I have said that it is against the principles of our struggle to refuse to supply food and water to anyone living in our midst. For the present, however, I shall not go deeper into this question, for we can discuss it more fully when we have an

opportunity some other time. Here, I shall only state my opinion that setting fire to garments of foreign cloth is, from every point of view, an act of lesser violence and is necessary for the good of India and hence for that of the world.

But what can Diwali possibly mean to Muslims ? It is purely a Hindu festival. For this very reason I would suggest that Muslims too should associate themselves with it. The religious part of it will of course be for the Hindus only, but as it is for them a festival day, the Muslims too might join in and, to the extent that it can be used to serve the cause of the whole nation, they and all the other communities should join in celebrating the day. We should also offer our greetings to Muslims, Parsis and Christians on their respective New Year Days and join in any public celebrations they may have on those days. It is surely our duty to share one another's joys and sorrows. I hope, therefore, that during this Diwali festival of the Hindus, all the other communities will join in the celebrations and help forward the cause of swadeshi in every possible way.

MESSAGE OF SPINNING-WHEEL IN THE "GITA"

In last Sunday's issue of the *Navajivan,* I tried to answer the Poet's[1] arguments on the subject of the spinning-wheel. I said in the course of my reply that personally I read the message of the spinning-wheel even in the *Gita.* In support of my argument, I quoted some verses from Chapter III. I know full well that the meaning I have read into them will not be found in any of the commentaries on the book, interpreted literally. It is not recently that I have come to read the meaning which I do; I have read it, the commentaries notwithstanding, since 1909. The verse says that he is a thief who eats without performing *yajna*. If here we understand the meaning of *yajna* rightly, there will be no difficulty in accepting the interpretation I have put upon it. The straightforward meaning of the line, "*Yajna* brings rain"[2] can only be that, if man labours trees will grow and if trees grow they will attract rain. Physical work for the welfare of the people is the only true *yajna*. The *yajna* in which some living creature, or be it even fruit, is given as an offering is no true *yajna*. Agriculture is one such *yajna* for the welfare of all. The farmer

[1] Rabindranath Tagore; the reference is to a Gujarati translation of Gandhiji's article, "The Great Sentinel", 13-10-1921.

[2] *Bhagavad* Gita, III. 14

consumes only a part of the fruit of his labour; whether he means to or not, he toils chiefly for the people. Not everyone, however, can take up this work; it requires a strong body hardened by work in cold andheat. But everyone can operate the spinning-wheel. Even a scientist like Dr. Ray has convincingly showed how a man, though he may not be able to support himself exclusively by the spinning-wheel, may still help in meeting the people's needs. Today, moreover, when the country is on the verge of ruin, the spinning-wheel is the only means of saving it. Spinning, therefore, is a true *yajna*. "He who does not conform to this universal wheel lives merely for the gratification of his own desires, lives his life, in other words, to no purpose."[1] At the present time, that universal wheel can mean for us only the spinning-wheel. It is possible that, when the verse in question was written, the great poet and seer might not have had the spinning-wheel in mind, but then poets write for all time and it is the perfection and beauty of a poem that it lends itself to meanings which its author never had in mind. As statements of principles, such lines are timeless. They yield rich fruit. It is my humble opinion that we have a right to pluck any number of beautiful fruits which may grow on the tree of such priceless and imperishable able poetry. Poet and menial, master and servant, mistress and maid, all must work for the common good. The millionaire may not work or ply the spinning-wheel for himself, but he must for the sake of the country and the people; otherwise, in the words of the *Gita*, he lives his life to no purpose.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-10-1921

224. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, AHMEDABAD[2]

October 23, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi said that the subject of swadeshi was worn threadbare, and, if after twelve months of preaching in season and out of season, he had not driven conviction home to the people, no useful purpose would be served by crying himself hoarse at the present moment, more particularly because there were some in the audience who had apparently cast his message to the four winds. In the columns of *Navajivan* he had week after week been ringing changes on the immutable truth that if they wanted to see *Rama-rajya* once more restored in India, he could conceive of no

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 16

[2] Under the auspices of the Ahmedabad Rashtriya Stree Mandal

other efficient weapon than the determined effort put forth by women to wear khadi. Had they followed in the footsteps of Sita, the history of India would have been written far otherwise. With the spirit that flinched not at the privations of forest life she went into a voluntary exile, and were the same constancy to prevail in India, the attainment of *dharmarajya* was only a question of time.

If they desired to compel respect after the manner of Sita, they should set aside indolent repose and turn with ever increasing earnestness and enthusiasm to the charkha.

The yarn they would turn out by assiduously plying the spinning-wheels would cover the nakedness of India and deliver her from the slough of economic serfdom.

Proceeding, Mahatma Gandhi went on to observe that service was in the nature of religion to women. Animated by the will to serve they would bring about the salvation of the country far more effectively than the graduates in their midst. India wanted men and women who would freely move among the working classes and share their joys and sorrows. Indiscriminate charity which deprived beggars of all incentive to work was fraught with danger to self-reliance and the only way to strike at the root of mendicancy was to induce the beggar to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow by means of the spinning-wheel. He had decided to put on a loin-cloth in consideration of India's nakedness and would be ill at ease until all and sundry worked at spinning-wheels to clothe the scantily-clad millions. If they were attracted to the meeting out of curiosity to see him dressed in a loin-cloth, if they put on khadi to keep up appearances they would be practising a trick on him. They might deceive him and even deceive themselves by dissembling their real sentiments, but by no means that human ingenuity could devise, could they deceive God. It was idle to continue to wear foreign clothes on the ground of exhausting the existing stock. Would they drink liquor if they had a bottle of wine in stock. On no specious excuses could they justify the use of foreign clothes, when once they were convinced of their impurity. Did not Sita reject the costly garments in preference to the *valkals* (leafy clothing) in the Ashoka Forest ? It was her heroic defence of chastity against numerous temptations and threats that secured her primacy of position in the salutation: "Sita-Rama". If they excelled in the refinements of the culinary art, they could as well show proficiency in spinning the finest yarns. He looked forward to seeing them all dressed in khadi on the occasion of the forthcoming session of the Congress. They had hitherto cheerfully given anything he demanded and he felt confident that the response to his demand for delivering foreign clothes would be equally generous.

The Hindu, 11-11-1921

225. MESSAGE TO TEACHERS OF BOMBAY NATIONAL COLLEGE[1]

October 24, 1921

Card, spin, weave;
Spin, weave, card;
Weave, card, spin.

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 117

226. LETTER TO BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

SABARMATI,
October 24, 1921

BHAISHRI BANARASIDAS,

Your letter. I wish you too should now write nothing to Mr. Jehangir Petit.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 2560

227. LETTER TO D. B. SHUKLA[2]

SABARMATI,
Tuesday, Aso Vad 9 [*October 25,1921*]

BHAISHRI,

You are pressing me to visit Kathiawar. I am also eager to go and see for myself the enthusiasm which has spread and the self-purification which has come about among the people of Kathiawar, and see the blessed sight of thousands of women dressed in sacred khadi.

But you know I am helpless at present. I can only say that I will take the first opportunity to go there. All India now knows that there is no limit to my greed, and it will [of course] not be satisfied as long

[1] Asked by the teachers of the College for advice as to how they should best spend their vacation, Gandhiji, who was observing silence, wrote this.

[2] This was sent by the addressee to *Gujarati* for publication in its Diwali, issue. It was, however, published in a subsequent issue under the caption "Gandhiji's Message to Kathiawar".

as there is a single home without a spinning-wheel or a single street without a handloom or a carding-bow. You have done much but I know for a certainty that you have not done this. It is, therefore, my special appeal to one and all that they devote their attention to carrying out the swadeshi [programme] even if that means putting aside other activities. I can say from the experience of my own deficiencies that, until the volunteers become expert in carding and weaving, they cannot work properly.

I hear that in. Kathiawar the *Antyajas* are looked down upon and ill-treated. They still encounter hardships on trains. We have not come to regard them as our own brothers and sisters and, so long as we lack this spirit of love, I would consider the so-called self-purification as no more than make believe. I pray that Kathiawar will not tolerate this outrage which is being committed in the name of religion.

I am convinced that Kathiawar need not rule out the other activities which are part of the struggle being specially carried on in British India. I know that in some places the relations between the princes and their subjects are strained. I am confident that, if people devote themselves to the two activities I have mentioned above and go on working silently the other difficulties will automatically be solved. I would advise the people to put up with the hardships they may have to suffer meanwhile.

I believe that the position of the princes is worse than that of their subjects. Moreover, the chaotic conditions in the Indian States about which I hear are, in my view, but an echo of the far greater chaos prevailing in British India. And why should we get involved in this matter at the present juncture? If we have come to know God, why not trust to Him in regard to all our inevitable sufferings? Those who fear God become free from other fears. I should, therefore, like you to give up all fear.

Respects from

Your younger brother

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]
Gujarati, 6-11-192l

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S NOTE ON REPRESSION IN THE UNITED PROVINCES

Repression in U.P. has on the whole not been of the flashy type—the arrest of prominent leaders, etc.—but it has been very thorough and there are few who have not felt the force of it. It may be considered under three heads :

1. In its relation to the *kisan* movement,
2. The trial and conviction of young workers,
3. The use of Security Sections and Sec. 144.

1. THE "KISAN" MOVEMENT

A very determined and persistent effort made by Government to kill this movement. Early in February, Ramchandra, Kedarnath and Deo Narain were arrested. There was no disturbance of any kind and Government was emboldened to take concerted action to crush the *kisans*. Columns of cavalry, artillery and infantry were marched through the principal districts and people were forced to supply *rasad* [1], etc., to the troops. In one place schoolboys were made to salute the European troops.

In Rai Bareli and Fyzabad, large numbers of *kisans* were arrested ostensibly for the part they took in the looting in January. Most of these *kisans* were innocent and their sole offence was that they were *panchas*[2]. Hundreds were kept in jail and then released without trial. Hundreds are still in jail awaiting trial. Some weeks ago there were nearly 700 *kisans* in the Fyzabad jail. They had been there for three months without trial. Prisoners who have been released say that the men in jail are given such bad food that cholera has broken out and they are dying in numbers.

In Sultanpur and Pratapgadh districts there was no disturbance of any kind. But even here hundreds of *panchas* and *sarpanchas*[3] are in jail or have been made to give security. The usual offence charged against them is: तुम सभाके सरगना हो और लोगोंको सभामें शरीक होनेपर मजबूर करते हो।[4] Sometimes it is added that नाउधोबी बन्दकर दिये गये हैं।[5] There was some truth in these allegations in December last and in January. But since then, there has hardly been a single case of social boycott in these districts. False cases are started on these allegations and conviction almost invariably follows. Most of these cases are instituted by private parties at the instigation of the local police or zamindar.

[1] Provisions
[2] Village officers.
[3] *ibid*
[4] "You are a ringleader of the Sabha and you force others into joining the Sabha."
[5] "The services of the barber and the washerman have been withheld."

instigation of the local police or zemindar.

The Seditious Meetings Act has been in force in Fyzabad, Pratapgadh, Sultanpur and Rai Bareli. Before this Act was applied, all meetings were prohibited under Sec. 144 in some of these districts. This order was obeyed and no meetings were held. In spite of this the Seditious Meetings Act was enforced.

Our workers in these districts are harassed in a variety of ways. A host of C.I.D. men and uniformed policemen follow them and precede them. Villagers are threatened lest they join the Congress or help us in any other way. They have been told orally that to use a charkha is against the law, to shout "*Mahatma Gandhiki jai*" is a heinous offence, to sign the Congress form is illegal, etc., etc. Men who have signed are threatened with legal proceedings and bribes are extorted to hush matters up.

Six young student workers in Pratapgadh were sent to jail for distributing leaflets. They were asked to give security but they refused to do so. A similar case was started against six others at Sultanpur but it has been withdrawn. Two workers have been sentenced to 6 months' rigorous imprisonment on a false charge of breaking the provisions of the Seditious Meetings Act. One of these was beaten and kicked by a policeman.

It is difficult to give a proper idea of the hundred and one methods by which Government has tried to crush the *kisans*. The zemindars and the few local persons who call themselves Moderates have allied themselves to the Government and have succeeded in making the life of the average *kisan* a burden almost too great to be borne.

In the other districts of the U.P. a similar attempt, but on a much smaller scale, has been made to put an end to the *kisan* movement.

2. Conviction of Workers

A considerable number of Congress and Khilafat workers have been proceeded against and sentenced. None of the leaders of the movement have so far been touched but many of their efficient lieutenants have gone. Among the more prominent persons against whom sedition cases have been started may be mentioned Pandit Dev Ratan Sharma of Dehra Dun.

Hamid Ahmad, a Khilafat worker in Allahabad has just been sentenced under Sec. 121 A to transportation for life and forfeiture of property. His offence was having made a speech in which, after enjoining non-violence for the present, he said that if N.- C.- O. failed, Muslims would resort to the sword.

A number of Congress officials in the districts have also been sentenced under Sec. 108 or 124 A.

Some volunteers have been sent to jail in connection with the anti-drink campaign.

3. Security Sections and Sec. 144

There has been an extraordinarily wide use of the sections and there is hardly a prominent worker who has not been served with a notice under Sec. 144. Even Maulana Mahomed Ali has received such a notice. I have a list of over a hundred with me and this is very incomplete.

Sec. 144 has also been used to proclaim whole districts and prohibit meetings there. It has been made to serve the purpose of the Seditious Meetings Act.

In one case at least a notice under Sec. 144 ordered that no Khilafat receipts should be sold and the person concerned should not belong to any such organization.

Security Sections are also taking the place of the Press Act. Securities amounting to Rs. 30,000 were demanded from the editor and printed of the *Pratap* for certain articles written therein. The securities have been given.

4. Misceilaneous

Many gun licences have been confiscated. Government servant have been threatened with dismissal because then relatives were non-co-operators. Orders have been sued prohibiting the use of the Gandhi cap. Notices have been issued threatening those who collect and those who pay subscriptions to the Swaraj Fund.

Congress and Kisan Sabha offices have been raided by the Police.

In Banaras, some students and others were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment.

Young India, 18-8-1921

APPENDIX II
PROF. T. L. VASWANI'S REPLY[1]

DEAR SIR,

Your letter dated 30th reached me by post yesterday.

I could have no objection to a friendly meeting. I am still of opinion that a meeting in the mood reflected in your letters will be fruitless. In your last letter, indeed, you seem to suspect that I am an "agitator" using that mock-trial as a "political dodge", and "the unhappiness of my friend'? for "the purposes of political agitation." For the love and esteem l have for friends in Europe, for the reverence I have for her poets and prophets of freedom, I must bear with what my European brethren in this country may say of me and my motives.

I am glad you say the sentence passed upon my friend seems to be very severe. I am an optimist; and I yet hope when you look into the matter carefully, you will agree with me, that the sentence is *absolutely unjust.* Justice demands his *acquittal.*

[1] This was written on the "Tilak Day" as indicated in the letter.

The "decision *of* an Indian magistrate"—you say. As I sat in that room hearing the case and then the judgment, I felt my Great Motherland was insulted. It looked as though conviction was pre-arranged. It, certainly, was not a judicial trial.

You say: "There are means open to you for getting revision" (of the sentence). Why not take them? *The only just revision would be the Swami's acquittal.* But he will not appeal to the higher court. Why not? you ask. Then let me quote you this from a letter of the Poet Tagore: "I remember when in my school days I used to get blows and insults from a teacher who was particularly foul in his language and unjust in his dealings, I refused to complain or to cry. In fact I tried to *maintain my dignity by ignoring* my *punishment and thus 1 had my moral victory."* Doesn't it explain the Swami's attitude? And the longer he is locked up, the smaller must look the Government in the eyes of honest men.

Yes,—there is unrest—and deeper than you may know of. The way to lessen it? I indicated it in my last letter. Sind officials must be just and responsive to the New Spirit. You value ideas, you say, for their worth in practical application. And it is in practical application that the ideas of freedom and equality and justice professed by the official class have failed us again and again. From my point of view, indeed, *the true idealist is practical* and the *man sincerely practical is an idealist;* there is *idealism* in his action. In the sentence inflicted on the Swami, I see the desire to show *strength. Such strength is weakness.* For power which tramples upon justice is weakness,—*the weakness of violence.*

Your culture and travels notwithstanding, you justify, so it seems to me,— the policy of Government. I can account for this only in one way,—you know nothing of the humiliation and sufferings experienced by a subject nation. Dyer shot down between 300 and 400 Indians; and he enjoys a pension of £900 a year and his European admirers presented him a purse, I believe, of about £30,000! But innocent Indians, like the Swami, are rotting in jail—for loving their count0ry! There was a time British officials were credited with great virtues,—tolerance, sympathy, justice; and even in 1914 when the War broke out, the National Congress resolved that "India would stand by the Empire in all cases and at all hazards." Today, the Congress is boycotting the visit of the Prince of Wales,—for no fault of His Royal Highness ! Why ? The unrest is deepening everyday. Why? The gulf between the State and the Nation, Government and People, is widening day by day. Why? Government is only too anxious to brandish the big stick; Government has faith *in force.*

Do you know how many of our young men are in jail today for political opinions ? Writing on the Tilak Day, can I forget that some of the best among those who have worked for India have had their patriotism penalized at one time or another?

Tilak the Scholar, Tilak the Patriot was sent to jail,—more than once. Annie Besant was interned, Lala Lajpat Rai was deported. Bipin Chandra Pal was not allowed to enter the Punjab. They were no rebels. But they loved India! How many young men in Bengal were sent to jail for the politics of national freedom? And some of them,—how were they sent to jail? A Bengali professor was interned,—without being convicted of any crime! He was interned in a distant jail,—without the knowledge of his mother. She took long to know of her son's plight. She petitioned for a proper inquiry into her son's case. She was informed that her son was in solitary cell and had become insane! Two ladies were arrested in a village by police. They were sent to jail. The press exposed the police *zulum*. Government confessed the mistake and ordered the release. But the ladies were still detained in prison,—for a fortnight! A telegram ordering their release had been mislaid! And after their release, no policeman was punished! Only last week, the police fired upon an unarmed crowd in Matiari, a village in Sind, one man died; about a dozen were wounded; a white-washing official version ran round the Press; a non-official version was held back by the telegraph authorities in Sind as "objectionable" ! The story of Jallianwala is known to you. Where, I ask, where in any civilized European country will such things be permitted, today? Deportations, internments, and imprisonment of innocent men! Flogging and whipping and shooting of innocent men! This is the story of India for years as of no other country in Europe which I have seen and known. The reason is not far to seek. *They are free: India is in bondage.*

I spoke of British Imperialism. I said it was in conflict with the Spirit of Man in Asia, in Persia, in Mesopotamia; in Egypt, in India—its dominant motive has been economic control of the East; and here in this country we are trying by peaceful swadeshi to resist its "peaceful penetration". In Egypt and India and now in Muslim lands,—as in Ireland,—the Empire is in conflict with the principle of nationality. But this is a subject which needs a separate discussion.

You refer in your letter to the "true ideal of personal liberty" and ask for my remarks. I saw it in the *Gazette*—most hurriedly, I regret; and it is not before me at this moment. But I suppose your idea is to show that picketing the liquor shops is in conflict with the true ideal of personal liberty. I speak,—subject to correction. I should be sorry; indeed, if you really thought picketing inconsistent with personal liberty. Personal liberty is an ideal dear to the Frenchman. It is not in conflict with picketing as the Swami practised it. His picketing was *moral persuasion*. Drinking is disallowed in Hindu and Muslim scriptures. In a country like India, a national

government would pass a measure of prohibition. The Government here resists popular opinion and national instincts; and the people wish to achieve by picketing what a national government easily would, by *prohibition.* Gokhale, I believe, started picketing at Poona years ago and some of the most earnest reformers regard picketing a moral duty. Picketing, however, may like several other innocent things be abused and become coercion. All *intimidation, coercion, social boycott, violence, in conflict with my ideal of personal liberty*. I do not know if the Swami would, in theory, subscribe entirely to my view of personal liberty. I know many of ray friends would not; they would not object to putting an end to the scandal of liquor-traffic by means of *social boycott*. One thing I am sure of. The Swami was always for *persuasion*, never for *intimidation or coercion*. One thing I repeat with emphasis. He did *not* assault a policeman; he did not use any criminal force. I asked him the question; his answer was an emphatic "no"; he would not tell a lie; and I would believe him against all your policemen. He did *not* assault anyone, I say, and he used no criminal force. But he did something more dangerous! He carried on his anti-drink campaign with energy ! He threatened to reduce revenue derived from an immoral traffic! And a giddy Government clutching at a policy of coercion have sentenced him to 12 months' rigorous imprisonment to "create impression"! The sentence *has* created "impression." For as the news will spread form town to town, India will know how justice and common sense are mocked in Shed—in this "new era" of "reforms"!

Yours truly,

T. L. VASWANI

Young India, 25-8-1921

1. NOTES

MUNICIPALITIES BEWARE

The Government of Bombay note regarding the Ahmedabad, Surat and Nadiad municipalities shows that it refuses to see the writing on the wall. Its dictatorial tone is now no longer in keeping with the rising spirit of the people. Its incitement to the individual ratepayers to sue the councillors who believe they have performed their duty is hardly dignified. The proper course for the Government was to let the municipalities take their own course and not to invite trouble. As it is, the Government note is calculated to precipitate a crisis. The councillors must take up the challenge and dare the Government to disregard the municipalities if they choose. The municipalities must have the right to misgovern themselves if they wish. If a city is misgoverned, it is as much the ratepayers' fault as is the councillors'. But our wise Government whilst recognizing the independent existence of the municipalities wants to stick to the letter of the law which killeth and would itself rule instead of letting the municipalities alone so long as they do not cost the Government anything. The municipalities must now take up the challenge and prepare for action on their part. Government may succeed; in getting a few ratepayers to file suits. That will be the least it can do. The most it can do is to disband the municipalities concerned. And the most of the Government should prove most welcome, if only the protestants are a strong body. Assuming that they are, they must simply educate the ratepayers to understand what is happening and to prepare them for battle. I can see swaraj peeping even through the Government note if the latter take and the former are ready for action. So long as there is no disbandment, the municipalities have all power; as soon as there is disbandment, the Government is powerless assuming of course that the ratepayers are strong, intelligent and united. The ratepayers are all that but they require to be organized for action. Hitherto the people have been the football of officials or so-called representatives. Non-co-operation enables the people to become the players in the game. Representatives *must* represent or they perish.

THE VISITORS TO THE CONGRESS

The Reception Committee of the Congress is trying to make the Congress session a purely business session. In its anxiety to do so, it

has restricted its own number and the number of visitors. It was impossible to avoid limitation of the number of visitors when the number of delegates was limited. The question therefore before the Committee was to devise a method of selection. The only qualification possible was a monetary qualification subject to free tickets for a few distinguished guests. The idea is purely to restrict the number of applicants, not to make money. For the first time, the annual gathering will cease to be an instrument for collecting funds for the annual expenditure. Elaborate preparations including exhibition, musical concerts and popular lectures by all the celebrated speakers of the day for a fee of eight annas per day are in progress. The prohibitive fee has been imposed only for visitors to the Congress session, the idea being to discourage applications from visitors. I am anxious that the public should understand and appreciate the position of the Reception Committee upon whose shoulders devolves the responsibility of organizing the first session under the new constitution and under exceptional circumstances. The success of the Congress depends principally upon the willing and hearty co-operation of every member of the public.

WAR ON THE KHADI CAP

Mr. Dharamadas Udharam of Karachi writes, saying that he was cashiered by his employers Messrs Forbes Campbell and Co., for having dared to wear the khadi cap. I congratulate him upon his courage in accepting dismissal rather than giving up his cap. If he were not demoralized, every clerk serving no matter where would invite dismissal by a simultaneous adoption of the khadi cap. This would really have the effect of the firms recognizing the inevitable and seeing the folly of warring against harmless dress. Indeed this war is being waged to strike awe among employees and keep them submissive and even unmanly. In Madras the Director of Public Instruction will not allow the inspectors of schools to introduce spinning-wheels if only because, the Director says, they are given a political significance. On the same reasoning even a lecture on abstinence should be taboo because it has for non-co-operators a political significance. This war against swadeshi in a variety of ways shows that it is distasteful to the Government. In other words the Government cannot tolerate the economic independence of India. Should these indications not make us resolute in the prosecution of the swadeshi programme?

SOLDIERS

The prosecution of the Brothers and their companions and the Manifesto[1] have reached the barracks, and soldiers are inquiring how they can support themselves if they leave. One correspondent asks on their behalf as to what would happen to them under swaraj. As for the first, the Working Committee has shown them the way. Every soldier can easily become a weaver and carder. Carding requires strength of arm which every soldier must have. And a carder in Bombay earns anything between two to three rupees per day. Many weavers of the Punjab have left the handloom for the sword of the hireling. I consider the former to be infinitely preferable to the latter. I refuse to call the profession of the sepoy honourable when he has no choice as to the time when and the persons or people against whom he is called upon to use his sword. The sepoy's services have more often been utilized for enslaving us than for protecting us, whereas the weaver today can truly become the liberator of his country and hence a true soldier.

A friend has suggested, that agriculture should also be added to weaving and carding advised by the Congress. It cannot be as an immediate measure, because, agriculture cannot be taken up with ease, and it requires a capital outlay which renders it impracticable for our purpose.

What will happen during swaraj is easily answered. The soldiers will not then be hirelings, but they will form the national militia for defensive and protective purposes alone. They will have a voice in the moulding of the affairs of the nation. And they will certainly never be sent to cut down inoffensive Turks or Arabs in the West or equally inoffensive Chinese or Burmese in the East.

IN DEFENCE OF MR. TYAGI

Babu Bhagwandas who has been closely following the movement has sent in the following learned note[2] in defence of Mr. Tyagi.

The reader will note that I made some amends last week as soon as I saw Mr. Tyagi's statement.[3] I considered the caution to be

[1] On the Karachi Resolution; *vide*"A Manifesto', 24-10-1921.

[2] Not reproduced here

[3] *Vide"*Notes", 20-10-1921, under the sub-titles"A Magistrate's Apology", and"Accused's Statement".

necessary because of my experience of our silence being a result of our weakness. Unfortunately it is not confined to the individual. It has become a national vice. When I cited Mr. Tyagi, his case was merely the latest illustration of that vice. As I have explained before now, bad as the Moplah madness is, the fact of others having submitted to the madness is worse. Why did they live to tell the tale of their forcible conversions? Nobody can keep our religion for us. Each one of us man or woman must be one's own defender. God who has given us religion has given also the power of defending it. Everyone has not the power to strike; all, the lame, the blind and the dumb have the power to die. The cowardly assault by the magistrate was an attack on Mr. Tyagi's manhood and therefore his religion. By some act of his, be it called defiances, impudence, insolence, he ought to have invited more slaps and"created a peaceful scene". This would have, been truest non-co-operation. But I do not blame Mr. Tyagi or anybody. Manliness has been deliberately killed out of us. And we have been disarmed into mute submission. As the author of non-violence in its modern presentation I am anxious to guard myself against our weakness being apotheosized. I would far rather not shower congratulations for bravery till we are positive about it. For the rest, we have every reason to be thankful for the progress we have made in shedding our fear and awe of authority. Non-co-operation arms both the weak and the strong with a powerful weapon. And I should not be ashamed of our submission to insults even out of weakness so long as we realized that it was due to weakness and attempted every time to outgrow it.

Babu Bhagwandas is curious to know what could be worse than fear. I had in mind cowardice.

It is curious to note that whilst Babu Bhagwandas has in view of Mr. Tyagi's statement and in ignorance of my amends, rightly protested against my condemnation of weakness I hastily inferred in Mr. Tyagi's case, Maulana Mahomed Ali has, as will appear from his letter[1] printed elsewhere, energetically protested against his action being called a defiance. The word"defence" occurring in my notes at the end was a misprint for"defiance".[2] These protests are to me most welcome signs of the national desire to be correct to a fault. The Maulana will not appropriate even credit for

[1] *Vide*"A Gaol Letter", 27-10-1921.

[2] *Vide*"Notes", 13-10-1921, under the sub-title"Their Inconsistency".

an act which might, judged from the highest standard, be considered a breach of culture, and Babu Bhagwandas will not let me impute fearsomeness to an act which might be capable of being understood to be strictly in accord with non-violence of the brave. Let us close the controversy with the hope and the prayer, that our country may become brave and yet gentle and chivalrous to a nicety.

Young India, 27-10-1921

2. TO CORRESPONDENTS

BISHANDAS CHADDAH: You should visit important centres in India and study the indigenous art before proceeding elsewhere. You will find the German spinning-wheel producing no more than ours.

BHAGIRATH MISHRA: When you are non-co-operating in respect of a whole system which you deem evil, you cannot co-operate with it because another crops up. You must, in that case, non-co-operate in respect of both. Hence my"threat" to seek the shelter of the Himalayas, should violence become universal in India and should it not have engulfed me.

M. S. SHANKARARAMAN: Ritual is often a help to worship. Prayer is the intensest longing of the soul and is indispensable to our evolution.

BINDUMADHAV: One thing at a time is a golden rule. If we were to taboo many things, we shall succeed in tabooing everything else we desire. When you have shaken the centre, The rest falls at a touch.

Young India, 27-10-1921

3. A GAOL LETTER

"NONE SHALL PREVAIL BUT GOD"

JAIL,
KARACHI,
October 18, 1921

DEAR BAPU

Naturally I have long been thinking of writing to you, but for one reason or another I put it off from day to day. However, when I read in the papers more than one reference from your pen to my wife's action after my arrest at Waltair and to her subsequent activities, I felt impelled to write to you, if only a line,—a thing so difficult for

me as you have publically admitted!—just to tell you how deeply you have touched me. As I have told you once perhaps, ours was a”love-marriage” from the very first, which is somewhat uncommon in India; but even apart from that every year of our married life made my wife a dearer partner to me than she was before, and the way she took the last few eventful years of internment and incarceration and of the”risks” we have been running since our release at the end of 1919, endeared her to me more than ever. But to tell you the truth she was never half so dear to me as I found her at Waltair when she stepped into the little Railway Police station, and jauntily asking me not to worry about her or the girls, bade me good-bye and marched off steadily to the train—all within a minute or two. Well, I have read more than one reference in your writings, to my own self or to”the Brothers” all too complimentary and I am too”natural” to deny that every such reference gave me pleasure and quickened my pulse. More than once I have read a”defence” or an”apology” from your pen when you stood up for us against some critic’s onslaught and cheered us up at a time when we were tempted to be not a little irascible. But nothing you have yet written in praise or in defence of us has gladdened my heart so much as your repeated reference to my dear brave wife! Indeed I have been so deeply touched that I am even inclined to forgive you and not be jealous of you for the seductive praise you have showered on her! So there! I only hope this very trying trial will now soon be over and she will be free once more to continue her work and earn more seductive praise from you.

By the way, I wonder if you ever saw my letter to Tairsee in which I gave him some idea of the things as they actually happened on the fourth day of the Magisterial Inquiry. You who know how vilely even the *Chronicle* reported my speeches can perhaps understand how risky it is to form one’s opinion about affairs and incidents”reported” by”amateur” journalists innocent of all knowledge of stenography and so interested in hearing and seeing things when they become unusually lively as to ignore altogether the duty of noting them down for the paper they represent. When I was not in a prison, I had not enough time at my disposal, nor enough patience to go about correcting *every day* the inaccuracies in the reports of my speeches. Now that prison life gives me more leisure and preparation for a convict’s life necessitates the cultivation of greater patience, I am not as free as I used to be to leave such inaccuracies uncorrected. But surely that is no reason for people to

place implicit reliance in the printed word. When I read the meagre and inaccurate and wholly misleading reports of the court proceeding of the fourth day, I felt that we would be misjudged by some people at least, and as I was referring in my letter to Tairsee to the awful topsyturvydom of the *Chronicle* which misplaced paragraphs and sentences by the dozens in the report of my statement, I also took the opportunity of mentioning some of the circumstances which led to the"defiance" of the Court. But really we were *not*"out for mischief". For three days the proceedings went on smoothly and the Court could not accuse us of"defiance" any more than the Counsel for the Crown could accuse us of"defence." But the trouble began with Maulana Hussain Ahmed Saheb's statement. The Court refused to call a qualified interpreter, and it was this that led Kitchlew to insist on speaking in Urdu when the Magistrate wanted to begin with another of the co-accused for whom the interpreter would not, he said, be needed. On the following day the atmosphere was entirely changed though we do not know what led to the change over-night. It was the Court that was"defiant". Kitchlew's statement which was on the same lines as mine was objected to at every fresh sentence and the Magistrate would not take it down. Then he insisted on asking the Shankaracharya to get up if he wanted to make a statement, which, the Shankaracharya said, he could not do on religious grounds. It was this which compelled me to expostulate with the Magistrate *without any passion*. I asked him whether he would insist on a religious personage of the Shankaracharya's position in the Hindu hierarchy paying respect to the conventions of a court even if he thereby had to show disregard of what he considered divine law itself. The Magistrate belonged to a community the origin of which in the history of India dated back to a migration from its own motherland for fear of having to disregard what it considered divine law. He had such a great belief in the respect due to a British law-court. Had he no belief in God? And all that appears in the papers is the bare interrogatory:"Have you no belief in God?" His reply to my appeal was an order in the worst possible tone to sit down. But while I refused to comply, I *never* said,"Let me see what you can do" I said he could use *force*; but there was no law which could compel an accused person to sit down. Poor Shaukat did his best to placate the Magistrate and pleaded with him not to interrupt him while he was making his statement, as it put him off completely. But clearly the Magistrate was determined that nothing like my statement of the previous day should go on record

now or be even heard by those co-operations and others who attended his court. When Maulana Hussain Ahmed Saheb began his statement, he neither got it interpreted by the Court interpreter (who had already confessed his incompetence to interpret an exposition of Islamic law) nor made the least effort to understand what the Maulana Saheb was saying. Nothing was taken down. But even this was not enough. His indifference was impudent enough, but he added to that one or two direct insults, such as,"It is not necessary to recite the entire Quran here." Maulana Niser Ahmed Saheb's very brief statement fared no better. And so indifferent was the Magistrate to every requirement of law and procedure that hecommitted us to the Sessions *without* having received the remainder of my statement which *at his own request* I had promised to give in writing if he sent me a shorthand typist. But then the whole thing was *meant* to be a farce; for on the very *second* day when even the Prosecution evidence was not half-finished, he passed order on the Public Prosecutor's application for summons being issued for two witnesses to the effect that it served no purpose to lengthen proceedings unnecessarily, and it would suffice if these witnesses were summoned for the Sessions trial! A foregone conclusion even for the Magistrate!! And on the 29th before the inquiry was over, the Judicial Commissioner comes himself to inspect the Hall for the Sessions and discusses the plans with the Public Prosecutor!!! As I said to the Courts they might as well have sent the carpenters to prepare the scaffold! When any reference was made to Islamic law, the Magistrate was impatient and used to say,"We have nothing to do with *fatwas* here". Shaukat was so exasperated that he said to him,"What is the use of your asking me about such trifles? Ask me what Islamic law lays down for such a set of circumstances." But all in vain, and even Shaukat, could stand this no longer and"the whole blessed show"! But would you believe it, soon after this inquiry was over and the Magistrate retired for a time, he was a new man once more! In the second case against Shaukat and in the next case against me, he was once more the man he had been on the third day. What brought about this second metamorphosis I cannot say. But you can judge of the"normal" atmosphere of the Court (including the accused) from the fact that on the last day the Public Prosecutor came hurrying to me and asked,"Will you mind coming back into the court? One of the witnesses has put in the wrong exhibit and I should like to recall him." I agreed and said:"Anything you please," and when the C.l.D. reporter had sworn again that the exhibit he was then

putting in was my speech, I pleasantly told the Magistrate I waived my right of demanding the witness's prosecution for perjury for swearing before that quite another document was my speech, and the Magistrate equally pleasantly thanked me! The fact is the Magistrate, as we all knew, was always an automaton (and I told him on the eventful day I was sorry that a fellow countryman of mine was being used to do a dirty job), but on the day following my statement he came"wound up." Since then, I understand, even those from whom he expected praise for his loyalty and compliance have expressed their indignation at his spoiling a"historic state trial", which was intended to typify"justice"? under"the New Dispensation" by his disregard of law and procedure. That is why Ross Alston of Allahabad and Alim are coming to improve the thing as best they can, and a qualified interpreter is coming from Lahore. But the whole thing was a farce and nothing can improve it. For our part, we have no desire to be defiant and are not out for mischief. Nevertheless we are not going to be dumb driven cattle, and non-violence does not require that passivity. Violence has much to answer for and many a Mussulman will have his eyes opened on the day of judgment when the true limits of"violence" are to be defined once more by his own leading case. But non-violence too has a good deal to answer for, and I already see that its apostle is already disillusioning some of its meek votaries who would cover cowardice with that label.

And good-bye now. Love to Devdas and the little ones and affectionate salaams to Ba.

The cheque must have been sent to the Khilafat Fund. Mother and my wife do not need any financial assistance, but we are such awful beggars that we will swallow everything for our cause. Our affectionate greetings to your own great and dear self.

Yours ever,

MAHOMED ALI

I am sure that the reader will appreciate my sharing the foregoing letter with him for more reasons than one. In my opinion it is a human document showing the whole of the man in the Maulana. The letter had naturally to be passed by the Magistrate. I had not the heart to expunge a single word from the letter.

Young India, 27-10-1921

4. HONOUR THE PRINCE

The reader must not be surprised at the title of this writing. Supposing that the Prince was a blood brother in a high place, supposing that he was to be exploited by neighbours for their own base ends, supposing further that he was in the hands of my neighbours, that my voice could not effectively reach him and that he was being brought to my village by the said neighbours, would I not honour him best by dissociating myself from all the ceremonial that might be arranged in his"honour" in the process of exploitation and by letting him know by every means at my disposal that he was being exploited? Would I not be a traitor to him if I did not warn him against entering the trap prepared for him by my neighbours?

I have no manner of doubt that the Prince's visit is being exploited for advertising the"benign" British rule in India. It is a crime against us if His Royal Highness is being brought for personal pleasure and sport when India is seething with discontent when the masses are saturated with disaffection towards the system under which they are governed, when famine is raging in Khulna and the Ceded Districts and when an armed conflict is raging in Malabar; it is a crime against India to spend millions of rupees on a mere show when millions of men are living in a state of chronic starvation. Eight lakhs of rupees have been voted away by the Bombay Council alone for the pageant.

The visit is being heralded by repression in the land. In Sind over fifty-six non-co-operators are in jail. Some of the bravest of Mussulmans are being tried for holding certain opinions. Nineteen Bengal workers have been just imprisoned including Mr. Sengupta, the leading barrister of the place. A Mussulman Pir and three other selfless workers are already in jail for a similar"crime". Several leaders of Karnatak are also imprisoned, and now its chief man is on trial for saying what I have said repeatedly in these columns and what Congressmen have been saying all over during the past twelve months. Several leaders of the Central Provinces have been similarly deprived of their liberty. A most popular doctor, Dr. Paranjapye, a man universally respected for his selflessness, is suffering rigorous imprisonment like a common felon. I have by no means exhausted the list of imprisonments of non-co-operators. Whether they are a test of real crime or an answer to growing disaffection, the Prince's visit is, to say the least, most inopportune. There is no doubt that the people do not

want His Royal Highness to visit India at the present juncture. They have expressed their opinion in no uncertain terms. They have declared that Bombay should observe hartal on the day of his landing at Bombay. It is a clear imposition upon the people to bring the Prince in the teeth of their opposition.

What are we to do in the circumstances? We must organize a complete boycott of all functions held in the Prince's honour. We must religiously refrain from attending charities, fetes or fireworks organized for the purpose. We must refuse to illuminate or to send our children to see the organized illuminations. To this end we must publish leaflets by the million and distribute them amongst the people telling them what their duty in the matter is and it would be true honour done to the Prince if Bombay on the day of his landing wears the appearance of a deserted city.

But we must isolate the Prince from the person. We have no ill will against the Prince as man. He probably knows nothing of the feeling in India, he probably knows nothing about repression. Equally probably he is ignorant of the fact that the Punjab wound is still bleeding, that the treachery towards India in the matter of the Khilafat is still rankling in every Indian breast, and that on the Government's own admission the reformed councils contain members who, though nominally elected, do not in any sense represent even the few lakhs who are on the electoral rolls. To do or to attempt to do any harm to the person of the Prince would be not only cruel and inhuman, but it would be on our part a piece of treachery towards ourselves and him, for we have voluntarily pledged ourselves to be and remain non-violent. Any injury or insult to the Prince by us will be a greater wrong done by us to Islam and India than any the English have done. They know no better. We can lay no such claim to ignorance, we have with our eyes open and before God and man promised not to hurt a single individual in any way connected with the system we are straining every nerve to destroy. It must therefore be our duty to take every precaution to protect his person as our own from all harm.

In spite of all our effort, we know that there will be some who would want to take part in the various functions from fear or hope or choice. They have as much right to do what they like as we have to do what we like. That is the test of the freedom we wish to have and enjoy. Let us, whilst we are being subjected by an insolent bureaucracy to a severe irritation, exercise the greatest restraint. And if we

can exhibit our firm resolve to have nothing to do with it by dissociating ourselves from its pageant at the same time that we show forbearance towards those who differ from us, we would advance our cause in a most effective manner.

Young India, 27-10-1921

5. THE SECRET OF IT

There is no doubt that non-co-operation is an education which is developing and crystallizing public opinion. And as soon as it is organized enough for effective action, we have swaraj. We cannot organize public opinion in a violent atmosphere. Just as those who have been forced by the Moplahs to recite the *kalma* are no Mussulmans, even so those who call themselves non-co-operators from fashion or compulsion are no non-co-operators. They are a hindrance and no help. Our tyranny, if we impose our will on others, will be infinitely worse than that of the handful of Englishmen who form the bureaucracy. Theirs is a terrorism imposed by a minority struggling to exist in the midst of opposition. Ours will be a terrorism imposed by a majority and therefore worse and really more godless than the first. We must therefore eliminate compulsion in any shape from our struggle. If we are only a handful holding freely the doctrine of non-co-operation, we may have to die in the attempt to convert others to our view, but we shall have truly defended and represented our cause. If however we enlist under our banner men by force, we shall be denying our cause and God, and if we seem to succeed for the moment, we shall have succeeded in establishing a worse terror.

We shall also retard our cause if we suppress opinion by intolerance. For then we shall never know who is with us and who is against us. The indispensable condition therefore of success is that we encourage the greatest freedom of opinion. It is the least we can learn from the present"masters". Their Penal Code contains drastic punishments for holding opinions they do not like. And they have arrested some of the noblest of our countrymen for expression of their opinion. Our non-co-operation is a defiantly open protest against that system. We may not in the very act of fighting the restraint on opinion be guilty ourselves of imposing it on others. These reflections are due to a sense of uneasiness I feel about

publishing the names of correspondents who express opinions we may not relish. I do not wish to expose them to the mental violence of the readers who may not like those opinions. We must have the courage and the charity to hear or read all sorts of nasty things said about us or to us. It gives us an opportunity of converting them. I propose to make the attempt in respect of a correspondent who has sent me a formidable list of questions about the struggle which deserve public notice. He commences thus:

You will admit that both your followers and non-followers are in a state of suspense as regards the aims of your political activities. Can you therefore be charitable enough to enlighten them by answering the following questions?

1. Are you really a Mahatma?

I do not feel like being one. But I do know that I am among the humblest of God's creatures.

2. If so, will you define the word Mahatma?

Not being acquainted with one, I cannot give any definition.

3. If not, did you ever tell your followers that you are not one?

The more I repudiate, the more it is used.

4. Is your"soul-force" attainable by the ignorant masses?

They have it already in abundance. Once upon a time an expedition of French scientists set out in search of knowledge and in due course reached India. They tried hard to find it, as, they had expected, among the learned ones but failed. Unexpectedly they found it in a pariah home.

5. You say, machinery has been the bane of civilization. Then why do you allow yourself to travel in railway trains and motor cars?

There are certain things which you cannot escape all at once, even whilst you are avoiding them. This earthy case in which I am locked up is the bane of my life, but I am obliged to put up with it and even indulge in it as this friend knows. But does he seriously doubt that the machine age was responsible for the organized murders during the late war? Asphyxiating gas and such other abominations have not advanced us by an inch.

6. Is it a fact that formerly you travelled third-class in railway trains and now you travel in special trains and first-class carriages?

Alas! the correspondent is correctly informed. The Mahatma-ship is responsible for the special trains, and the earthy case for the degradation to the second-class.

7. In what relation do you stand to Count Tolstoy?

As a devoted admirer who owes much in life to him.

8. Why do you not define swaraj? Do you not feel that you are in duty bound to define the word at least to your followers?

In the first place the word is indefinable in the second place, if the correspondent will turn to the file of *Young India*, he will find a workable definition there. I will try another here. It means complete freedom of opinion and action without interference with another's right to equal freedom of opinion and action. Therefore it means India's complete control of sources of revenue and expenditure without interference from or with any other country.

9. What will be your own position when swaraj is obtained?,

I would certainly like a prolonged and perhaps well-deserved holiday.

10. When swaraj is attained, how are the political and religious interests of Mussulmans to be safeguarded?

They will not need any safeguarding, because every Indian will be as free as every other Indian, and because there will then be mutual toleration, respect and love, and therefore mutual trust.

11. Do you honestly believe that Government will pack up and beat a hasty retreat from India on the 31st of October 1921 or at any other time within this year that you will be pleased to fix?

The Government is the system, and I do believe that it can be destroyed even before the 31st October, if the Hindus, the Mussulmans, the Sikhs, the Parsis, the Christians and the Jews of India *will.* I am still hoping that they will destroy it before the end of the year. But under the new system not a single Englishman who wishes to remain in India as her faithful servant need leave the country.

12. Do you not think that the Government is too weak to check your propaganda?

I certainly do, and it is becoming daily weaker.

13. Would you leave your own son undefended if (which God forbid) he was being prosecuted for murder, not for sedition?

I really believe that I have the courage to do so. I certainly had the hardihood to give that advice to many a dear friend. I have already advised a dear friend of the Andhra district to stake the whole of his valuable property by not defending a civil suit which has been brought against him from pure political malice.

14. What should your son (for example) do if some one defrauded him of some money and had made himself scarce?

My son if he is a good non-co-operator would certainly let the thief keep the money. Maulana Shaukat Ali was robbed of Rs. 600 nine months ago. He knew the person who had robbed him. He thought no more about it.

15. What was the effect of your satyagraha on the Punjab?

Sir Michael O'Dwyer would not let the message of satyagraha reach the Punjab. Some Punjabis therefore got excited; a few went mad. Sir Michael O'Dwyer became madder still and butchered innocent men by deputy. But satyagraha is a powerful tonic, and now the Punjab is as lively as any other province of India, and is showing in spite of her mercurial population a degree of self-restraint that is worthy of emulation by the rest of the provinces.

16. Do you really believe that non-co-operation Call remain non-violent?

Certainly. The wonderful restraint shown by the people over the arrests in Sind, Karnatak and East Bengal is proof of it.

17. How do the forcible conversions of Hindus and pillage of Hindu homes reflect upon the unity of Hindus and Mohammedans in India?

They have put a severe strain upon Hindu patience, but it has stood the strain and its survival proves that the unity is based on knowledge. No Mussulman approves of the Moplah fanaticism.

18. What is the actual cause of this rupture of Hindu-Muslim unity in Malabar?

There is no rupture of the unity in the disturbed area. The Moplahs could not at any time have considered Hindus as their brethren. The causes of the violence are that as in the Punjab in 1919, so in Malabar now the message of non-co-operation was only vaguely delivered when its progress was arrested by the authorities. The Moplahs were never particularly friendly to the Malabar Hindus. They had looted them before. Their notions of Islam were of a very crude type. They were kept in utter darkness by the Government and neglected both by Mussulmans and Hindus. Being wild and brave but ignorant, they have mistaken the mission of the Khilafat and acted in a savage, inhuman and irreligious manner. It is quite improper to judge Islam or the Mussulmans of the rest of India by the present conduct of the Moplahs.

19. Can you say what made you to couple the Khilafat with the Punjab wrongs?

The Khilafat wrong was born before the Punjab wrong, and I

made it my own in the year 1918 at the Delhi War Conference (*vide* my open letter to the Viceroy)[1]. Non-co-operation was conceived at Delhi in 1919 before the Punjab wrong had taken definite shape. The latter was tacked to the Khilafat, when it became clear that it required as drastic a remedy as the Khilafat.

20. Can you say why the Mohammedans of India are so demonstrative for the Khilafat, when the Mohammedans of other Islamic countries do not seem to care for it?

I do not know that non-Indian Mussulmans do not care for the Khilafat, but if they do not and the Indian Mussulmans do, for me it is proof enough that the latter have developed greater religious consciousness than the former.

21. Since the Sultan of Turkey has failed to defend the Muslim holy places, has he any right now to be considered a Khalifa?

This is hardly a question for a Hindu to answer. But if I may venture a reply, the Khilafat rests in the Turks by right of valiant defence for hundreds of years. The Sultan may have failed, the Turks have not. The Khilafat agitation does not centre round an individual but round an idea, which is at once temporal, spiritual and political. If the Turks cannot defend, if the Mussulmans of the world do not by their power of opinion and active sympathy stand by the Turks, both they and the latter will suffer irretrievably. Such an event will be a calamity for the world, for I believe that Islam has its place in the world as much as Christianity and every other religion. Chivalry demands the support of the Turks in the hour of their need.

22. Is the economic law that man must buy in the best and the cheapest . market wrong?

It is one of the most inhuman among the maxims laid down by modern economists. Nor do we always regulate human relations by any such sordid considerations. An Englishman pays more (and rightly) for the English collier in preference to cheap (say) Italian labour. Any attempt to introduce cheap labour into England will lead to a revolution. It would be sinful for me to dismiss a highly paid faithful servant because I can get a more efficient and cheaper servant although the latter may be equally faithful. The economics that disregard moral and sentimental considerations are like wax-works that being life-like still lack the life of the living flesh. At every crucial

[1] Vide"Letter to Viceroy", 29-4-1918.

moment these new-fangled economic laws have broken down in practice. And nations or individuals who accept them as guiding maxims must perish. There is something noble in the self-denial of the Mussulman who will pay more for food religiously prepared or a Hindu who will decline to take food unless it is ceremonially clean. We lost when we began to buy our clothing in the cheap markets of England and Japan. We will live again, when we appreciate the religious necessity of buying our clothes prepared by our own neighbours in their cottages

23. Is picketing non-violent?

It certainly has been non-violent in the vast majority of cases. It was the easiest thing to resort to violence in picketing, but the volunteers all over have exercised great restraint.

24. Do you explain the beauty (spiritual or otherwise) of bonfires, when many people are going half-naked in the country and are shivering at the thought of the coming winter?

I do; for I know that their half-nakedness is due to our criminal neglect of the fundamental law of life in India that she should wear only hand-spun just as she must eat only home-cooked food. My giving my discarded foreign clothes to them will only prolong the agony. But the warmth generated by the bonfires will last for the coming winter, and if the bonfires are kept up till the last piece is burnt, the warmth will last for ever, and each successive winter will see the nation more and more invigorated,

Young India, 27-10-1921

6. UNTOUCHABILITY IN HINDU SHASTRAS

I gladly publish the fore-going[1] so that the readers of *Young India* may have the other side. Mr. Aiyar is a learned *vakil*, and one would have expected of him better knowledge of my position than he betrays in his letter. I laid emphasis in all my speeches in the Madras Presidency on the unreasoning and cruel prejudice against the untouchables. Do we treat the"untouchable" *Panchamas* as we treat our mothers and sisters whilst they are untouchable? I still confess my

[1] R. Krishnaswamy Aiyar's letter in defence of untouchability, quoting texts from Manusmriti and other Shastras, published in Young India, 20-10-1921 and 27-10-1921; not reproduced here

literary ignorance of the Shastras, but I do profess to understand the secret of Hinduism. And I venture to say in all humility but with all the strength I can command, that to perpetuate untouchability in the manner we have done is a serious blot in Hinduism, an unwarranted abuse of the *Smritis* and a negation of love which is the basis of Hinduism. I therefore do not hesitate to call"untouchability" as practised today a Satanic activity. I invite Mr. Aiyar to devote the talents God has given him to the service of the outcastes among his countrymen, and I promise that he will see the meaning of life that I see in the Hindu Shastras.

Young India, 27-10-1921

7. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

October 27, 1921

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Where is the time to write to you at all? The amount standing in the name of Nirmalabehn should be sent to Vallabhbhai and placed in the account of Harijan work. The amount standing in the name of Bharucha should be held over. If it is possible to get some interest on it, it should be done. It represents the award money for a biography of Tilak. It may take another year before the payment is made. Devkarandas is not likely to be persuaded right now. If I have conquered the six enemies[1], then people may accept what I say as the word of experience. But I am myself not aware of any such conquest. Have I yet given up fear of snakes and the like? That I have not done so is because the Self in me is stupefied by ignorance.

How is your health? Do come to Delhi if you feel like coming. I shall not be going to Delhi from Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Viz., kama, krodha, lobha, mada, moha and matsara (lust, anger, greed, intoxication, delusion and jealousy)

8. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, AHMEDABAD

October 29, 1921

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I do not have a single word to say now. I cannot think of one, even if I try hard. My present mental condition does not permit me to make a speech anywhere or to take part in a procession. In any case, why should I have to make speeches or take part in processions in Bombay, Ahmedabad or Gujarat?

The work should be carried on as if I was not present in Gujarat. If I have still to rouse Gujarat through my exhortations, then I must admit that we shall not get swaraj this year. The very meaning of swaraj is that Gujarat should be ready to stand on its own feet and even forget me. Young and old, all should show such fearlessness that, even if the best and the most important men fall or are imprisoned, people will remain undaunted and say that the struggle started by Gandhi is now, theirs, that, if Gandhi has gone mad and lost his head, they will not follow his example. When we have this temper, it will be swaraj.

When I was invited to come here, I asked them to consult Vallabhbhai. I follow the wishes of that leader. The leader who has been shaking the whole of Gujarat knows best whether or not I should speak here. I can never do anything in disregard of his wishes. I can offer him advice and make suggestions, but I cannot do anything against his wishes. Not to trust anyone, in the first instance, is a sign of wisdom. But having trusted a person, one must trust one's head to his judgment. It will not then do to find fault with him over every little matter.

What else may I tell you today? Whatever I had to say I have told you already. I like to light an oven. If I am asked to apply the match-stick to any oven, I would do it only too readily. I am a believer in non-violence. There is non-violence and love in every fibre of my being. I have no desire to harm anyone; I have never wished ill to anybody; I have never thought of killing anyone. Though a believer in non-violence, I love to consign foreign cloth to fire because, in burning foreign cloth, we commit no sin but only effect self-purification. We commit sin even when we bathe, eat or cook. Likewise, we may be committing sin when we burn foreign cloth, but today we have no choice but to do so. We cannot live without

breathing or drinking water or cooking; we know these things to be essential and do them all, though we know that we commit sin while doing them. The Hindus even aspire to escape from the encumbrance of this body, but do not commit suicide for that purpose.

Today we have no other way to break the chains of slavery. We would, if we could, break them speedily without adopting swadeshi. But how can that be? In this very capital of Gujarat, women, and some men, have the courage to join processions and attend meetings dressed in garments made of foreign yarn. As long as this is so, how can we hope to break the chains? Even mill-cloth is meant not for us but for the very poor. If we reserve this cloth for us and offer khadi to the poor, the latter will ask,"Why don't you yourselves wear khadi? You give us coarse khadi while you cannot do without fine muslin, *jagannathi* and calico." I have already said that one who wishes to serve the poor should give up all adornment. An atmosphere will then have been created in which the poor will not be able to plead in this manner and will not ask for mill-cloth. They will feel ashamed and tell you that they, too, should be given the khadi which you wear.

But thousands of men and women in Ahmedabad still wear garments of foreign cloth. The women, moreover, entertain all manner of fancies, that it is inauspicious to burn clothes which they have been wearing all these days. How can burning dirt be inauspicious? How can we cling to our filth? This way of arguing is wholly the result of viewing one's duty upside down. When we do not preserve our rotting corn, how can we preserve foreign cloth which is the sign of our slavery?

Now we do not have even two full months. The Congress will be meeting on December 25. If we do not have the flag of swaraj unfurled by that time, what will be the use of having convened the Congress? How can we accomplish this? I told Vallabhbhai that there is a reason why Chitta Ranjan Das has not sent a telegram accepting the presidentship of the Congress. He is trying to make Bengal feel ashamed. He has been saying to Bengal:"You are sending me right to the western end of India; what account shall I give there? I do not want to bring shame on Bengal. What is the reason that the whole of India has chosen a Bengali for the Congress presidentship? People elsewhere think so well of Bengal that they believe it must have something to show." This is how Deshbandhu Das has been appealing to Bengal. His sending telegram depends on the people's response.

Just as the Ali Brothers could at the last moment attend the

Amritsar Congress, if in like manner we cannot welcome here at the Ahmedabad Congress non-co-operators like the Ali Brothers, Maulana Mujadid and those others who are about to be sent to jail, or have already been jailed, what is the point in holding the Congress at all?

As I said in Bombay, this bonfire is good if it is a symbol of the fire which has been raging in our hearts. What shall we gain if we merely enjoy lighting this bonfire just as children enjoy firing crackers? If that is all there is in it, this bonfire is a meaningless blaze, mere mischief. If, however, it was a sign of the fire in our heart, I would ask whether the women present here would have dared to come dressed in garments of foreign or mill-made cloth.

When the women wear whatever khadi, coarse or fine, is available, just as they eat bread made at home, whether thick or thin, and then question me why Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali have not been released, why other fighters are not being released, why we do not get swaraj, I will say that I had miscalculated, that there was nothing left in swadeshi now and, therefore, would suggest something different to them. Today, however neither India nor Gujarat nor Ahmedabad is in a position to ask me this question.

It is true that there has been a great deal of awakening in us and that the use of khadi has increased; however, if I am asked how many people there are in Ahmedabad who have burnt all their clothes, I would say that I do not know, but that there may not be more than ten or twelve such persons. About a thousand women in Ahmedabad have started wearing khadi, but how can this suffice? Of what account are a thousand women in the whole of Gujarat? How many men and women in Gujarat ply the spinning-wheel in their free time?

Dr. Ray writes to say that all the men and women in his factory have started plying the spinning-wheel. And he adds that he has not seen in any machine the magic which he has glimpsed in the spinning-wheel. Have the men and women in Ahmedabad done so much for swaraj that they can ask me questions about it?

Swadeshi is beneficial to crores. It is a sign of a union of hearts between Hindus and Muslims, of compassion towards the poor. We should never think of burning down Government buildings or of engaging in violence when leaders are arrested. If they want to arrest me at this meeting, there should be such an atmosphere that even a peon can fearlessly take me away in the presence of you all. At that

time, no one should shed tears; rather, there should be a brighter glow on the faces of all and everyone should think that now swaraj has been won.

When I am arrested, everyone should discard all his garments of foreign cloth. Women should leave here as many of their garments as they can consistently with their modesty and discard others when they reach home. Just as, after their periods, women bathe in order to cleanse themselves, so polluted by foreign cloth, their should take a bath and resolve not to wear it in future.

Staying in Gujarat, I go from place to place and address my appeals to people. My own desire is, if there is any taluka where swadeshi is being completely followed and where men and women are ready to go to jail or even to mount the gallows, to go and work from there. The conditions on which I may be invited have already been given in *Navajivan*, but I recount them here again:

1. Complete swadeshi should be followed.

2. Contempt for *Dheds* and *Bhangis* should be shed and they should be looked upon as our blood-brothers.

3. Hindus and Muslims should regard one another as blood-brothers.

4. Everyone should realize that there is no other means as effective as peace for winning swaraj.

If we are able to do something, it is because we have learnt to remain peaceful and acquired courage. It is because we did not lose our heads when the Ali Brothers were arrested that the latter could play with the court as they liked. Had we lost our senses, they could not have done this. If, now, the Government says that it will not tolerate their conduct, the Ali Brothers will ask the Government to quit. The court has seen this fearlessness of the Brothers and, therefore, it says nothing. If we lose our heads, the Government will lose its.

There are three essential conditions for winning swaraj:

1. We should preserve peace and see that others too do so.

2. We should relieve the sufferings of the poor.

3. As Hindu-Muslim unity is still a tender plant, it should be nursed carefully.

How can Hindus and Muslims afford to be angry with one another? I get many letters about Malabar. One of the correspondents

says that"there is no union of hearts between Hindus and Muslims". I am convinced that this reflects only the writer's belief. The hearts of both Hindus and Muslims are soft. Muslims should not believe that they and the Hindus are the only parties concerned. There is also a third, God, between them. Why should not the Hindus, too, believe that the Muslims will not kill those who love God? Only if they are complete hypocrites will they kill such persons. At present, however, neither the Hindus nor the Muslims give up hypocrisy, and yet both talk about winning swaraj, of saving the Khilafat and protecting the cow. If the Hindus wish to protect the cow, they should leave the matter to the goodwill of the Muslims. Then God will certainly come and reside in the hearts of Muslims and protect the cow. Islam does not forbid killing of cows, but it is the Muslims duty to refrain from doing anything that may hurt their neighbours' sentiments. The Hindus and the Muslims will not be able to win swaraj with timid hearts; they will be able to do so only if they are clean in their heart, and then they will also be able to save the Khilafat and protect the cow.

Even if only one taluka of Gujarat shows such heroism, it will win swaraj for itself and secure it for others. Let the bonfire that we are lighting today generate such strength in us that we do not rest till we have reached our goal.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-11-1921

9. LETTER TO DR. M. S. KELKAR

[After *October 29, 1921*][1]

MY DEAR DOCTOR,

I really must not publish your letter. The foolish questions were published because they came from a hostile party and I think I have turned the folly to good account.[2]

You have not understood the psychology of my statement about December[3]. Such must be my feeling today.

[1] Inferred from the contents

[2] The reference to"the foolish questions" appears to be to the article"The Secret of It"; vide"The Secret of it", 27-10-1921.

[3] The"statement about December" probably is the reference made during the"Speech on Swadeshi" dated 29-10-l921, ibid, p. 360.

There is no danger of Civil Disobedience being postponed now.

I should be delighted if you succeed in waking up the Jalgaon weavers.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6644; also C.W. 3298. Courtesy: Dr. M. S. Kelkar

10. HOW STRONG?

How strong the municipalities of Ahmedabad, Nadiad and Surat are should be known in a few days. All the three have rejected Government control over their education departments and have been growing from strength to strength till this day. It is said that now the Government has decided to test them. Its note is in the nature of a threat [to the municipalities] and incitement to ratepayers. It says that those who supported the resolution to free education [from Government control] have rendered themselves liable to prosecution by any ratepayer. We know the motive behind this suggestion. The Government's second step now is likely to be to get some ratepayer to sue one of the councillors. I trust that the Government will find no ratepayer to sue a councillor who has acted out of a sense of duty and I also trust that, if tiny such ratepayer comes forward, the councillor will remain fearless. If we do not develop the strength to brave such risks, how can we claim to be fit for swaraj?

Another thing the Government can do is to suspend the municipalities and to carry on the administration of the cities itself by appointing committees. This is the utmost it can do. If it does that, I see in the situation the possibility of our winning swaraj. If the Government acts in this manner and if we are ready, we shall get the battle we wanted; how can a battle coming thus unexpectedly fail to please a warrior?

As a drowning man clutches at a straw, the Government catches hold of whatever comes to hand and sinks the deeper. Are we ready?

If the residents of the three cities are ready, the Government is bound to beat a retreat. It will certainly be ridiculous of the Government to get someone to file a suit. The second step is to supersede the municipalities. It is a step which should be welcomed. So long as the municipalities are not superseded, power will remain in the hands of the councillors themselves. When they are superseded,

power will certainly not pass into the Government's hands but it will be in the hands of the people. This is the meaning of civic power. The power which the councillors have has been given to them by the citizens, not by the Government.

As long as the citizens had not awakened, they counted for little with the officials and the councillors. They could make the former dance as they pleased. Now times have changed. The citizens have ceased to be puppets, they have become, or should become, actors in a drama. The Government, therefore, will not have a picnic after suspending the municipalities.

Do the citizens have this degree of awakening among them? Are the councillors really and in truth the voice of the citizens? This will be known now. The councillors should explain the Government note fully to the citizens and make them understand their duty. Only three things are to be pointed out:

1. If the Government starts its own schools, we should not send our children to them.

2. If the Government, having suspended the municipalities, wishes to take civil administration into its own hands, the citizens should not pay rates. Let the Government get money from outside and clean the latrines.

3. If the Government takes over control, we should take the civic administration in our hands.

Ours is a fight with truth as a weapon, so that neither will the Government succeed if it resorts to fraud nor we if we are guilty of hypocrisy. If the citizens have really acquired consciousness, no one can deprive them of it. If they have not, the councillors cannot create it. If, therefore, we explain to the people every step of the Government and consult them in our march forward, we shall discover, and also show to the Government, that it has no strength at all. The Government's strength lies in our weakness. If we acquire strength, we ourselves shall be the government; and our acquiring strength means the mental, emotional, social and political education of the two and a half lakh people of Ahmedabad, the thirty-five thousand people of Nadiad and the one lakh people of Surat. They should know with their minds whom to trust and, through their hearts, that happiness can only follow suffering; should know with their minds and their hearts that, just as our dealings in the family should be pure, so also must our social conduct be pure; this means that, as our homes should be clean,

so our streets and our towns should be clean; as the home should be free from strife, so should society be free from it and, as we would be ready to lay down our lives for the family, so should we be ready to lay it down for society; they should know, as following from all this, that, if the relationship between the king and his subjects becomes vitiated, that is, becomes a relationship between the privileged and the unprivileged, between the employer and the employee, or between master and slave, we should have no more to do with that king, with that system of government. From this, we can deduce rules to guide our conduct in all matters.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-10-1921

11. UNDERSTANDING AS DISTINCT FROM LITERACY

My plight is beyond description. A *Garasia*[1] friend of the *Gohel* class wrote a letter to me on 12th April, which I have kept aside all these days. It was not written for publication, but discusses suggestions for action by me. It has been travelling all along with me. Every week I take it up and put it away hoping to deal with it later on. The letter is written in a beautiful and legible handwriting, but is rather long. Anyone who writes a letter of nine pages to me can hardly expect me to read and think over it. It is because I liked the opening sentences that I preserved the letter, and I have now been able to read the whole of it.

I should like this gentleman and others who may write to me to understand my position. They should bear in mind that, as a rule, one who expresses all his ideas in a clear hand on a single page will receive an early reply. If the best of ideas have been expressed in a single sentence; why cannot we state in one sentence what we want? As we go ahead with our work, we shall realize that we can carry on public work with the fewest words. I have nowhere come across such compressed language as the"military" language of the British. I have seen orders being given in a single word. Even words are abbreviated. There are strong reasons for this. Where action is required, the maze of words is cut down to a minimum. It would be almost a crime to speak of a commanding officer. He is referred to in correspondence merely as C.O.

[1] Name of a community in Gujarat and Saurashtra

In other words, where there is understanding, letters, i.e., knowledge of the letters is not very necessary. Would he, who has truly understood what *moksha*[1] means and realized the *atman*, read the Vedas? What would one whose stomach is full do with *basudi?*[2] Of what use is a book showing the way to the Himalayas to one who has already seen them? It is for this reason that I had written with reference to *Garasias, Kathis*[3] and others that it was understanding more than literacy which they needed for improvement in their conditions.

That prompted this same *Garasia* friend to write to me:"If you think that understanding is more important than literacy, you are the right person to awaken it in us. We are addicted to drink and opium and are given to idling away our time. Barring this, we suffer from no such caste intrigues as trouble other communities. You want people to have greater strength for self-defence. Actually, we have this as part of our inheritance. If we realize what we are, we can once again become true servants of the country—we aspire to be so. Tell us how we may become this." This is the substance of the letter.

My task has become simpler as I am replying to this question after six months because, during this period, I have written a great deal and, if this has been read with understanding, I need not add a single word. Moreover, if anyone reads all my writings at a stretch, I am sure he could make the following criticism."This man has said the same thing day in and day out. He must have become the editor of *Navajivan* for doing this." The criticism would be justified. I have burdened myself with *Navajivan* in order to go on repeating the same truth.

I, who was born in the land of the *Mers* and the *Vaghers* in Kathiawar, know their virtues and vices, and of *Kathis* too. It, apart from others, they alone become true to themselves, they could rouse Saurashtra and also do great service to the country as a whole. The legend goes that when Mulu Manek and Jodho Manek, after their arms had been smashed, used their feet to fire their guns and went on fighting, and all for a trifle, their courage knew no bounds. If, however, they are sung in songs even today, it is not because they could aim straight but because they had the strength to hold out

[1] Liberation from phenomenal existence as the supreme end of life
[2] A preparation of boiled milk
[3] A community in Saurashtra

against a big force and could carry death in their pockets, so to say. There was only one battle of Thermopylae in Greece, but I fancy that in Barda[1] there have been many such battles.

I expect only one thing of the *Kathi* Rajputs. Your forefathers died fighting for their *garas*[2]. If you wish to be worthy of your inheritance, then, for the sake of a *garas* like India, be true Kshatriyas and get ready to lay down your own lives, giving up all thought of killing others. Killing is not the dharma of the Kshatriya. The Kshatriya who kills anyone weaker than himself is not a Kshatriya but a murderer; one who stands up against a strong man in order to protect the weak and kills him is forgiven his violent action; but the true Kshatriya is he who, not killing even a strong man, dies defending the weak. His dharma is to die, and not to run away. It is not his dharma to inspire fear of death in others it is to be rid of this fear himself. This explains why he is ready to defend others. One who would do this needs to shed the fear of death more than he needs to learn wrestling. What should an unarmed *Kathi* youth do against a giant who is armed from head to foot and protected by armour? Will he let a poor girl fall into the latter's hands or will he lay down his life before the giant, trusting the girl to God's protection, and thus teach her too a lesson in unarmed courage? Why did Sita rest her eyes on two boys in saffron robes, ignoring other giant-like men? She had felt Rama's soul-force. That innocent girl was unaware as yet that he had the strength to lift Shiva's bow.

But who can give the kind of protection which Rama could? One who is a *brahmachari*, who has conquered sleep and eats little, one who is free from vices and is truthful, one who speaks little, who suffers because he thinks of others' sufferings and refuses to keep with himself anything beyond his immediate needs since he would not have what is denied to others. Some persons will have to have hearts as large as the sea for such compassion. I admit that Rajputs, if they decide, can be ready for this earlier than others. Today, however, there is in the country only one class of people, a new one,—that of slaves.

As long as India is in bondage, a true Kshatriya can neither sleep nor rest in peace nor enjoy wearing good clothes. Anyone who

[1] In Saurashtra

[2] Share in State lands as inheritance

wants to be such a Kshatriya can become one. People of all the four castes and all religions should become Kshatriya enough to protect themselves. Kshatriyas take upon themselves the sufferings of others and also protect them. All of us cannot become Kshatriyas; some will remain weak. This movement of ours is for drawing up a census of Kshatriyas. The day for presenting our accounts is at hand. But one who cannot use the spinning-wheel cannot become a Kshatriya capable of freeing India in this age.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-10-1921

12. MY NOTES

MESSAGE TO THE "DHEDS"

A leaflet in Gujarati under this heading has been distributed by the Government among our *Dhed* brothers. The leaflet says that a rumour is current to the effect that the houses of those *Dheds* who do not join non-co-operation will be burnt down and that the Government will not protect them. The message states that these rumours are false, and that "measures are being taken for the progress of all sections of the people, without any distinctions".

If anyone has threatened our *Dhed* brothers or burnt the house of any of them, then he cannot be called a non-co-operator, or a Hindu or even an Indian. I simply cannot believe that such a threat has been held out by anyone. If it has been held out, however, what protection can the Government offer the *Dhed* brothers? What protection has it given in the past? How has the Government been able to protect *Dheds* when rude Hindus abuse them in trains? What protection does it give to those who, on their identity being discovered in offices, are harassed by the officers themselves, and to those who are without wells, houses and schools? I should indeed like to know what the Government has done to improve their condition.

Yes, the Government has certainly done one thing. There is no doubt that it has got much forced work out of them, taught some of them to eat beef and encouraged them in their vices. Their moralcondition has not been improved one bit. Permission has, of course, now been given for a meeting of theirs to be held in the Town Hall. The meeting is for honouring the Prince. This serves the

Government's own interest. So far as I know, this is the first time that a meeting of *Antyajas* is to take place in the Town Hall in Bombay. This is nothing but flattery or bribing. Moreover, the Government will readily welcome anyone who may want to join in honouring the Prince. By acting thus, it is insulting the innocent Prince of Wales and using him to serve its own interest. If the poor man knew how he is to be honoured, it is doubtful whether he would come to India at this time; if, nevertheless, he did come, it would speak no end for the British people's sense of discipline. At the call of duty, both the King and his subjects would be ready to make any sacrifices. If the sacrifice was not for base self-interest those who made them would be fit for *moksha*.

But my purpose is more to point out to the Hindus their duty than to dwell on the shortcomings of the Government or of the British. It is because the Hindus have not understood their dharma that we see attempts being made to lure our *Dhed* brothers with inducements. I visualize endless occasions of quarrelling in these attempts to drag them to opposite sides. Hence these two developments, the Government's message and the Town Hall meeting, hold a lesson both for the *Antyajas* and the others. The former should not allow themselves to be deceived by the message or the meeting in the Town Hall. Let them fight the Hindus in a civilized way for what they consider their rights, respect the rules of Hindu society, give up eating meat, etc., especially beef, clean themselves physically after doing sanitary work, give up dissoluteness and so clean their hearts as well. Other Hindus should show regard for the *Antyajas*, admit them in Congress committees, understand their hardships, defend them if they are molested by anyone, look upon them as their own brothers and get rid of the notion that contact with them is sinful.

However, a thoughtful and considerate Hindu told me in the course of a conversation that, according to the Hindu religion, touch, even the vibrations emanating from *prana*[1], have an effect on the other person and it is, therefore, considered advisable that one should stay away from such people. He added:"It is because the Hindus knew about such intangible effects and guarded themselves against them that they have survived for thousands of years and have been able to compose wonderful Shastras."

Stated thus, the idea is true. Contact with dirt—association with

[1] Life-force

the wicked—defiles us while the company of the good cleanses us. But all this is not said in the Shastras to foster contempt or teach exclusiveness. It is said to persuade people to live in solitude and exercise self-control, and refers not to contact with *Antyajas* but to contact with all human beings. We have to purify ourselves inwardly and we can do this better by serving our *Antyaja* brothers and improving their lot. We put our hands even into gutters in order to clean them, and are none the worse for contact with their contents. If, moreover, we always think of others' evils and keep away from everyone, we should become utter hypocrites because, when we dwell on others' evils, we regard ourselves as so perfect that we think we have nothing to set right. In other words, we become the lowest of the low. The *Dheds* and the *Bhangis* are within ourselves. We need to rid ourselves of them, take a bath on coming into contact with them. Many of the *Dheds* and *Bhangis* outside of us, though engaged in sanitary work, are so simple, so good and upright that they deserve reverence. The *Dheds* and *Bhangis* have no monopoly of vice nor have the other communities of virtue. We should, therefore, take care lest, failing to understand the meaning of certain statements in the Hindu Shastras and some of their ideas, we stick to their letter and fall.

SWADESHI AND "BRAHMACHARYA"

A friend writes to say that while swadeshi is gathering momentum in the country, there is no advance in regard to *brahmacharya*. How will swaraj be achieved so long as men and women do not hold their minds under control? This seems a fine idea, but there is no necessary relation between the two things. Swadeshi and *brahmacharya* are two distinct matters. Khadi is sacred as compared to foreign cloth. The wheat from Charotar is sacred as compared to American wheat. But just as one who eats wheat from Charotar may yet be wicked and sensual, so may also be a person who wears khadi. Therefore, by attributing greater sanctity to khadi or swadeshi we shall only be harming ourselves. It would not be possible to propagate swadeshi at all if khadi dress came to be regarded as the means to perfection. The good and the wicked, the healthy and the sick, the righteous and the sinful— all should purify themselves at least to the extent of adopting khadi. There is patriotism in it, and it comprehends the duty of compassion and friendship towards one's countrymen and one's neighbours. Hence I regard wearing of khadi also as a form of self-purification. If crores of people achieve even this little measure of self-purification, the sum total of the merit

earned thereby would be so high that we would regain that birthright of ours which we have lost. At present, we are striving for government by ourselves, whether perfect or imperfect. For this, swadeshi is essential and sufficient.

Only a few will observe *brahmacharya*, though we wish that all should. If everyone observed it, we would gain the kingdom both of this world and the other. It is part of our dharma to observe it but, by linking it up with swadeshi, we make the latter, which is easy to follow, as difficult as *brahmacharya*.

Having thus seen and explained the difference between the two, I would certainly add that every worker whether man or woman, should observe *brahmacharya* till we have won swaraj. We, workers, are so few in number and, on reflection we shall find that we are so poor, too, that we have neither the time for begetting children nor the means of bringing them up. Who would benefit by children being born to a diseased person? What an immoral thing it would be for a consumptive to beget children? If this is so, what are we to say about slaves? The great tragedy is that, while thinking of the gratification of our desires, we do not think at all about the offspring. We are such slaves to our desires that we have lost all good sense. The birth of children is the accidental result of our indulgence, and not the desired, worthy and sacred fruit of a man of self-control having done his duty as a householder to limited extent only. Very often it is an unwanted and painful fruit.

I am certain that those dedicated persons at any rate who are engrossed in the service of the people cannot possibly desire sex-pleasure. How can they spare time for it, either? It is in the hope that there will be no such person that I am making my modest offering to this *swaraj-yajna*. If the ultimate aim is merely to get power transferred to the people, I am sure I am not so childish as to spend myself in meaningless efforts to secure this toy. I indeed believe that those who accept even this outward freedom as their goal for the present and work for it will realize that they will not achieve it till they become truthful, compassionate, brave and fearless, adopt simplicity in their lives and follow swadeshi. While making this effort, some at least cannot escape laying their hands on the *ratnachintamani*[1]. I have joined this effort and am ever unperturbed because I know that it will raise the moral level of the nation, and I certainly wish, therefore, that

[1] A fabulous jewel supposed to have the virtue of fulfilling a wish instantly

volunteers, both men and women, will take a pledge to observe *brahmacharya* till we have won swaraj. They should not cheat themselves when taking it, should not take it at my asking. They will be able to keep the pledge and it will bear fruit only if it is taken with understanding and determination . . . .

THE NAMES RAMA AND RAHIM

Writing to me, a Sikh gentleman says that swadeshi is all right, but I who believe in God, why do I not put the name of God before all else? Why do I not ask everyone to pray, repeating the name by which he knows God, Khuda, *Ishwar* or Rama, whichever it may be? It is true that I do not do this. I am certain that one cannot attain heaven through mere repetition of words. One must be fit for such repetition. I believe that, so long as we wear foreign cloth, we are not fit to take the name *Ishwar* or Allah. A man who cuts another's throat with Rama's name on his lips profanes that name. Likewise, the Indian who, refusing to use the cloth woven by the hands of another Indian, gets his requirements from hundreds of miles away and so cuts the throat of his brother, too is not fit to take the name of God. In this connection, I have already pointed out the importance of the spinning-wheel. Spinning is such restful work that, as we make the hand one with the yarn, we can attune our hearts to God. Devotion to God, like *brahmacharya,* cannot be linked with swadeshi. Even a person whose lips do not utter God's name would, if he follows swadeshi, gain to that extent. Even an atheist following swadeshi would benefit himself and the country thereby. One who has God ever in his mind and heart will of course do much good to himself and the country. Swadeshi is the power which takes us towards God, as it raises us higher. I have written all this about the suggestion of this friend in order to make it clear that, if we do not worship God, we cannot look upon our struggle as a holy one. We who are fighting to defend our dharma should certainly not forsake God's name, should ever keep repeating it in the depth of our hearts. We should repeat it with each heart-beat, that is, unceasingly. Swadeshi helps us to do this, but the two ideas do not mean the same thing. While swadesh is the dharma attaching to the body, chanting the name of God is a property of the *atman.*

"PEOPLE'S FAIR"

"People's Fair" means a fair for the people. Two Parsi sisters

write to me to say that a people's fair is to be held at the time of the Prince of Wales's visit and some persons believe that people could attend it. They say that they can understand the idea of not joining in honouring the Prince, but why should one not attend fairs, fireworks, etc., of which the municipality will bear the cost? This argument is not correct for, if expenditure is the only thing to be taken into consideration, the Prince will be honoured at our cost. The money which the Government spends is ours. Our argument is that we should not attend a function in arranging which we have had no voice, even if the expenses are met with our money. If a robber held a feast at our expense, would we attend it? Even so, I can see no difference between a party for honouring the Prince and a function for celebrating his visit. If we should keep away from one, we should keep away from both.

INTELLIGENCE AND THE SPINNING-WHEEL

I have been receiving numerous criticisms on a statement made by the Poet in his article[1]. It is to the effect that the spinning-wheel will curb the mind of the man who plies it. I do not wish to publish the criticisms since the Poet's statement is merely an inference. Millions of spinning-wheels are in use in the country today. I know that among the people who ply the wheel are lawyers, doctors and philosophers from all provinces. Suffice it to say that the evidence of their experience is against the Poet's inference. I have questioned hundreds of students and they have not found the spinning-wheel to be an enemy of intelligence. The experience of doctors and lawyers is similar. A well-known novelist of Bengal once came to see me merely to tell me his experience. He said that he plied the spinning-wheel regularly and that, in consequence, his art had improved. I do not wish to read too much into all this. I only wish to show that the intelligence of the intelligent is sharpened by body labour of any kind and, if the work is beneficial to the people, it becomes sanctified. Spinning, being clean, light and pleasant work is the best form of such body labour and is, in the present plight of the country, the wish-fulfilling tree of heaven for us.

"APPEAL TO ISMAILI FIRKA JAMAT''

Writing under this heading, Mr. Fidahussain Daudbhai

[1]"The Call of Truth" by Rabindranath Tagore in the October issue of The Modern Review, Calcutta

Poonawala says that all Muslims, Khojas, Bohras and others owe it as duty to give the fullest co-operation in swadeshi; if they do not, they will have to suffer in future. This is my belief too. Those who do not adopt swadeshi fully will certainly be left behind. The appeal is a long one. I have only mentioned the central idea. I have not considered it necessary to publish the whole of it as the other arguments advanced in it are well-known.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-10-1921

13. LETTER TO MAIN MOHAMMED HAJI JAN MOHAMMED CHOTANI

October 31, 1921

DEAR CHOTANI MIAN,

I thank you for your letter offering one lakh spinning-wheels. I am sure that the fact of your very liberal donation will strike the imagination of India and particularly the Mussulmans. In forwarding your letter to the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee I shall ask the Secretaries to bear in mind your desire that the members of the Maiman Community should receive preference. I do not know whether you have fixed any particular sum in your own mind that you wish to devote for the purpose, for experience teaches me that a cheap spinning-wheel in time becomes an expensive wheel. A good wheel, substantial and heavy, will not cost less than six rupees. If, therefore, you do not want to make so large a donation I would suggest your reducing the number of charkhas. And I would also suggest you not using the whole of the amount you may wish to devote so much for spinning as for paying a somewhat higher rate to the poor women for the yarn that they might spin and for engaging a special staff for doing the work. This will enable you to use your donation practically under your supervision and in the most economical manner as is being done in Kathiawar. Of course, I venture to send you these observations for your guidance. The merit of your act is in no way affected by them.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7649

14. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

New Year's Day[1] *Silence Day* [*October 31, 1921*]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

New Year's Day and Silence Day—this is a happy coincidence for me. My vow of spinning begins from today—to spin half an hour every day before the second meal, and forgo the meal in case I fail to do so. This is not a very great thing, but, thanks to the vow, my spinning will now be somewhat regular. The vow is not binding when I am in a train.

I have received your letter of Diwali greetings and the *bhajans*. Why did you write these? Your duty was to leave your [sick] bed early. How can you wake up Durga, or for the matter of that anybody else, for this work? I received your telegrams too. One of them has the phrase"Emblezon University" which none of us here could understand. Vijayaraghavachari is not a cunning man, nor is he a *rishi*. He may have dropped"not" through oversight; but why did he not correct himself in reply to my strong wire to him?

My blessings to you both—may you enjoy health of body, mind and heart during the new year.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11423

15. LETTER TO RANCHHODLAL PATWARI

SABARMATI,
Padvo,[2] *October 31, 1921*

MU. BHAISHRI,

How good of you to think of your younger brother on the Diwali day[2]. Your blessings have borne fruit. For the present, I have no intention of going to that side.

What may I wish you?

Pranam from

MOHANDAS

MU. BHAISHRI RANCHHODLAL PATWARI

DIWAN SAHEB

GONDAL

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 34025

[1] The first day of the month of Kartika according to the Vikram era

[2] That is, Kartik Sud 1, observed in Gujarat as the New Year Day

16. CABLE TO PARSI RUSTOMJI

November 1, 1921

PARSI RUSTOMJI[1]
DURBAN

POWER POSTED TRUST REQUIRES MODIFICATION. AUTHORIZE USE FORTY THOUSAND WEAVING SCHOOL AND SEND MORE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7725

17. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

November 1, 1921

It is dawn. Your letter is lying before me. Why should you apologize for what you wrote?

There may be an element of egoism in my article or conduct without my being aware of it. The word *klesha* [anguish] here should be interpreted in a different way, though I cannot say how. I feel pain when I see others suffer. It is the nature of compassion that whenever one is unable to relieve the suffering of others one suffers unbearably. Logic will not avail when one is describing the condition of one's mind. I have given a graphic description of my feelings. It may be that these feelings were not quite pure. However, my state of mind at the time of writing the article[2] had also in it a yearning for *moksha*—my aspiration for *moksha* was by no means weak then—but the fact is that I am no more than an aspirant after *moksha*. But I am not yet fit for *moksha* in this life. My *tapascharya* is not intense enough. I can control my passions no doubt, but I have not yet become completely free from them. I can control the palate, but the tongue has not yet ceased relishing good food. He who can restrain the senses is a man of self-control; but the man whose senses have become, through constant practice, incapable of enjoying their objects has transcended self-control, has in fact attained *moksha*. I would not be tempted to give up my striving after *moksha* even for the sake of swaraj, but that does not mean that I have attained *moksha*. You will, therefore, notice many

[1] Indian merchant of Natal; took prominent part in Gandhiji's satyagraha campaigns in South Africa

[2] Vide"Optimism", 23-10-1921.

defects in my language. For me, even the effort for attaining swaraj is a part of the effort for *moksha*. Writing this [letter] to you is also a part of the same effort. If I find it a hindrance in the path of *moksha*, my pen would drop down this very moment, such is my yearning for *moksha*. Nevertheless, the mind is like a drunken monkey; mere effort is not enough for controlling it. Our [past] actions also must be coming in our way.

In my article"Optimism" I have suggested a rule of conduct, viz, that we should cease to have any dealings with a person who breaks a promise. This is the sign of a detached person. If even next year I find that the atmosphere in India is unfavourable and still we go on harping the same tune, it would be an outrage. In that case, I must first acquire the necessary fitness. This is why silence has been considered the best speech. Whatever I may do will be, I am sure, quite natural to me, for I will say and act upon nothing but what I believe to be the truth.

But"Enjoy what you get today, who ever has seen tomorrow?" has been accepted as their motto alike by libertines and the self-controlled.

May the new year bring happiness to you.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 38-9

18. LETTER TO VALJI DESAI

ON THE TRAIN,
Wednesday [*November 2, 1921*][1]

Please ask the Press to send the proofs of *Young India* for this time only at the address of the Rajasthan Seva Sang, Ajmer. They should be posted on Wednesday evening or early morning on Thursday so that they may reach Ajmer by the morning mail.

Vandemattaram from

MOHANDAS

BHAISHRI VALJI DESAI
YOUNG INDIA

AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 6040. Courtesy: Valjibhai Govindji Desai

[1] The letter bears the postmark:"Ajmer, November 3, 1921". It was written while Gandhiji was on his way to Delhi. He returned to Ajmer on Wednesday, November 11, 1921.

19. NOTES

HUNGER STRIKE

I cannot sufficiently warn non-co-operation prisoners against the danger of hastily embarking upon hunger strikes in their prisons. It cannot be justified as a means for removing irksome jail restrictions. For a jail is nothing if it does not impose upon us restrictions which we will not submit to in ordinary life. A hunger strikewould be justified when inhumanity is practised, or food issued which offends one's religious sense or which is unfit for human consumption. It should be rejected when it is offered in an insulting manner. In other words it should be rejected when acceptance would prove us to be slaves of hunger.

AT LAST

Mr. Sengupta the leader of Chittagong and the soul of the Assam-Bengal Railway strike movement has at last got his imprisonment with eighteen others. It is not a long spell. He and his companions have got only three months' rigorous imprisonment. Mrs. Sengupta writing about her husband says he was quite happy over the prospect of being sentenced. I was told whilst in Chittagong that its citizens had nearly attained swaraj."Nearly" is an elusive word. It may be next to completion or it may be farthest away from it, and yet"nearly" may be used for either state. But if the people of Chittagong want to attain swaraj completely, they must spin and weave all their cloth in their own homes and offer no temptation to dealers in foreign cloth. Its courts must be deserted and the Government schools must be empty. In that case the citizens may not even need civil disobedience. But they may not have that measure of strength or unanimity. Still if the majority desire swaraj, it cannot be stopped by the minority. The majority however in order to establish its authority must go through the fire of suffering, by means of civil disobedience.

WHY SUFFER?

Let there be no mistake about the meaning of these imprisonments. They are not courted with the object of embarrassing the Government, though as a matter of fact they do. They are courted for the sake of discipline and suffering. They are courted because we consider it to be wrong to be free under a Government we hold to be wholly bad. No stone should be left unturned by us to make the Government realize that we are in no way amenable to its control. And

no government has yet tolerated such open defiance however respectful it may be. It might safely therefore be said that if we are yet outside the prison walls, the cause lies as much with us as with the Government. We are moving cautiously in our corporate capacity. We are still voluntarily obeying many of its laws. There was, for instance, nothing to prevent me from disregarding the Madras Government's order and courting arrest,[1] but I avoided it. There is nothing to prevent me save my prudence or weakness from going without permission into the barracks and being arrested for trespass. I certainly believe the barracks to be the nation's property and not that of a Government which l no longer recognize as representative of the people. Thus there is an apparent inconsistency between the statement on the one hand that it is painful to remain outside the prison walls under a bad Government and this deliberate avoidance on the other hand of arrest upon grounds which are not strictly moral but largely expedient. We thus avoid imprisonment, because first, we think that the nation is not ready for complete civil revolt, secondly, we think that the atmosphere of voluntary obedience and non-violence has not been firmly established, and thirdly, we have not done any constructive corporate work to inspire self-confidence. We therefore refrain from offering civil disobedience amounting to peaceful rebellion, but court imprisonment merely in the ordinary pursuit of our programme and in defence of complete freedom of opinion and action short of revolt.

Thus it is clear that our remaining outside the jails of a bad Government has to be justified upon very exceptional grounds, and that our swaraj is attained when we are in jail or when we have bent the Government to our will. Whether therefore the Government feel embarrassed or happy over our incarceration, the only safe and honourable place for us is the prison. And if this position be accepted, it follows that when imprisonment comes to us in the ordinary discharge of our duty, we must feel happy because we feel stronger, because we pay the price of due performance of duty. And if exhibition of real strength is the best propaganda, we must believe that every imprisonment strengthens the people and thus brings swaraj nearer.

SOMETHING STRIKING

But friends whisper into my ears, we must do something striking

[1] Vide"Notes", 29-9-1921, under the sub-title"Afflicted Madras".

when the Prince comes. Certainly not for the sake of impressing him, certainly not for the sake of demonstration. But I would use the occasion of his imposed visit for stimulating us into greater activity. That would constitute the most glorious impression upon the Prince and the world, because we would have made an impression upon ourselves. The shortest way to swaraj lies through self-impression, self-expression and self-reliance, both corporate and individual. I would certainly love the idea of filling the jails before the Prince arrives, but I see no way to it except after very vigorous swadeshi. There is great progress undoubtedly in that direction, but there is not revolutionary or lightning speed. Arithmetical progression will not answer, geometrical progression is absolutely necessary. It is not enough for us to be washed by the swadeshi spirit, we must be flooded with it. Then thousands of us involuntarily, as if by a common impulse, will march forward to civil disobedience. Today we are obliged very rightly to measure every step for want of confidence. Indeed, I do not even feel sure that thousands of us are ready to suffer imprisonment, or that we have so far understood the message of non-violence as never to be ruffled or goaded into violence.

WEEDING OUT

The Government of Madras is fast weeding out all tall poppies. Mr. Yakub Hasan and Dr. Varadarajulu are the latest victims. Mr. Yakub Hasan is known to everybody as an indefatigable Khilafat worker and nationalist. He has already suffered imprisonment for civil disobedience, be could not avoid if he was to prevent violence on the part of a Calicut mob. In a weak moment he allowed himself to be released before his time. He tendered a handsome apology for a weakness which anybody in Mr. Yakub Hasan's position might have been guilty of The Government of Madras has given him an opportunity of showing the stuff of which he is made. Dr. Varadarajulu is' not so well known outside the Madras Presidency, but he is locally known for his ability and industry, and respected for his self-effacing love of the country.' He has been organizing a band of earnest workers and has been doing most effective swadeshi work He has been now arrested for some speech or other of his like Mr. Yakub Hasan for his Tanjore speech. The fear of an outbreak of violence has now almost gone. People have realized, that their progress lies in remaining perfectly non-violent. Every such arrest leads to greater diminution of Government prestige and exposes it to contempt or

ridicule. The ridicule and the contempt poured upon it by non-co-operators are not half as damaging as the ridicule and contempt invited by the Government itself by means of the arrests.

A REST CURE

And prisons have lost their terror for the people. Hardly a non-co-operator save in one or two cases has betrayed the slightest hesitation to go to gaol. On the contrary the majority have regarded it as a rest cure. Given an atmosphere of non-violence, —a prime necessity—disappearance of fear of jail and greateractivity by reason of imprisonments, and we have an ideal state for the establishment of swaraj.

PROOF OF HEALTH

That imprisonments instead of producing demoralization act as an incentive to healthier national growth is evidenced by two letters received from accurate observers. A friend writes from Barisal:

> East Bengal is indebted to Pir Badshah Mian's arrest for the Hindu-Muslim unity which is now quite firm and the boycott of foreign cloth which is now complete among the masses.

Equally emphatic is the testimony from Andhradesha. The Andhra letter says:

> The real swadeshi spirit has not yet seized the hearts of the people though there is ample evidence of growing conviction in favour of the movement. In many places the required khadi is not available. The weavers are not yet quite willing to weave the swadeshi yarn, and for those that are willing there is not adequate supply of yarn.... One thing that seems to accelerate the progress is the policy of repression adopted by the Government. Many a sleepy hollow has been roused to activity by the arrest and imprisonment of someone or other of the Congress workers, and if these arrests and imprisonments are made on a large scale, there will undoubtedly be speedier progress in all directions. As we go on, we find apprehension of violence growing less and less.

Everyone who writes to me from Karachi testifies to the growing strength of the people side by side with their growing discipline and self-restraint and a growing adoption of swadeshi. And all this, because the distinguished prisoners are being tried in Karachi. This trial is an object-lesson to the Government and the people in non-violence coupled with courage bordering on defiance."We have no respect for your courts" was for the first time heard at Karachi in a

British-Indian court of law. What is more, the judge is powerless to deal with this open contempt of court. Why? Because the big bulky brusque Shaukat Ali who uttered the sentiment had no feeling against Kennedy the man. He showed real fellow-feeling for the man in the judge by letting him know that he loathed the system which he was blindly encouraging.

THE LOGICAL RESULT

The logical result of all this reasoning is that we must quickly organize ourselves for courting arrests wholesale, and that not rudely, roughly or blusteringly, certainly never violently, but peacefully, quietly, courteously, humbly, prayerfully and courageously. By the end of December every worker must find himself in jail unless he is specially required in the interest of the struggle not to make the attempt. Let it be remembered, that in civil disobedience we precipitate arrests and therefore may keep few outside the attempt.

REQUISITE CONDITIONS

Those only can take up civil disobedience, who believe in willing obedience even to irksome laws imposed by the state so long as they do not hurt their conscience or religion, and are prepared equally willingly to suffer the penalty of civil disobedience. Disobedience to be civil has to be absolutely non-violent, the underlying principle being the winning over of the opponent by suffering, i.e., love.

For the purpose of the Khilafat, the Punjab or swaraj, civil resisters must implicitly believe in the necessity of Hindu-Muslim unity based not upon expediency but upon real affection. Civil resisters must believe in swadeshi and therefore use only hand-spun. Humanly speaking, if not even one out of the two hundred and fifty districts of India is thus ready, I consider the attainment of swaraj during this year nearly impossible. If one district can be found where ninety per cent of the population have completely boycotted foreign cloth and are manufacturing all the cloth required by them by hand-spinning and hand-weaving, if the whole of the population of that district, whether Hindu, Mussulman, Parsi, Sikh, Christian or Jewish, is living in perfect amity, if the whole of its Hindu population is purged of the sin of untouchability and if at least one in every ten of its in habitants is capable of suffering imprisonment or even mounting the gallows, and if while that district is civilly, peacefully and honourably resisting the

Government, the rest of India remains non-violent and united and prosecutes the programme of swadeshi, I hold it to be perfectly possible to establish swaraj during this year. I shall hope, that there are several such districts ready. In any case the method now to adopt is for workers to concentrate on and develop their own districts without reference to the rest. They must not invite imprisonment till they are ready, nor must they avoid it if it comes to them unsought. They should make no speeches but simply finish the swadeshi programme in a business-like manner. Where workers find no response from their districts, they must not get disheartened but should simply become expert carders, spinners and weavers. Their out-turn will be their best and whole work whilst their neighbours are thinking what to do.

DIVIDE AND RULE

A correspondent draws moral from the arrest of Mr. Yakub Hasan in Madras, and imprisonments of Mr. Ansari in Delhi, of Pir Mujadid in Sindh and Pir Badshah Mian in Bengal, that the Government are trying to divide us, that they are bribing the Hindus into submission by leaving them mostly alone, and that by the time the Congress meets no Mussulman non-co-operator of note will be left free to attend and guide the Congress regarding its policy on questions affecting the Mussulmans. I hope that the correspondent's prognostication is not true and that the Government will not commit any such fatal mistake. I think the Government has realized that it cannot divide Hindu and Mussulman non-co-operators. If it has arrested Pir Badshah Mian, it has arrested Dr. Banerji, Nripen Babu and Babu Sengupta. If it has arrested Mr. Yakub Hasan, it has also arrested Dr. Varadarajulu. But if the Government does imprison all the noted Mussulmans, it will still further solidify the two communities and give the Hindus a unique opportunity of fighting the battle of the Khilafat single-handed. And if the Hindus have any grit in them, they will be able to force the Government by peaceful and honourable means to imprison them also.

A WELCOME DONATION

The reader must have seen Chhotani Mian's letter to me donating one lakh of charkhas. Chhotani Mian deserves the warmest congratulations for his generous help. I have ventured to show to him how he can utilize the sum he might have set apart for the purpose. It is not a simple matter to distribute one lakh of charkhas in a useful

way. They can only be given to deserving persons. Arrangements must therefore be made to supply slivers and collect yarn.

TWO STUDENTS

Messrs Mahomed Hussain and Shafique Rahman Kidwai are students of the National Muslim University. They were posted in the Andhra District by Maulana Mahomed Ali. They were there doing great work in a most unassuming manner. They have already gone to jail whilst their chief is still on his trial. The circumstances in which they went to jail are graphically described in their letter written on their way to prison, which I give below in full:

> After seeing you off at Guntakal we went to Adoni where we received a wire form Mr. Harisarvottam Rao calling us to Cuddapah because three Congress workers had been arrested there. We went there on the eleventh October and were working with some of our Guntur friends. We held several meetings and formed Congress and Khilafat Committees. On the 21st October in a monster meeting of over six thousand people, we distributed the *fatva* and the audience reiterated the Karachi Resolution standing. We also procured 1400 signatures on the spot and collected two thousand and five hundred rupees for Angora. On the evening of the 24th all the workers were served with an order under Sec. 144, gagging us for two months. Yesterday, early in the morning, we were served with summons to appear before the court and furnish securities for good behaviour. Accordingly we went to the court and had an informal talk with the Superintendent of Police (a European) for two hours, with the permission of the Collector. The case then began and we were charged under Sec. 108 for seditious speeches and under Sec. 124-A for seducing the soldiery by distributing the *fatva* and explaining it. After two prosecuting witnesses were examined, we gave our statement and the court adjourned till four in the afternoon. Everyone was amazed to see that we were allowed to go to our place in the city without any sort of police custody. We returned to the court at four and the Magistrate asked us to furnish securities which we refused to do. The Magistrate then sentenced us to six months' simple imprisonment and said,"Gentlemen, it is a painful duty to sentence men of your stamp." He then shook hands with us. The Superintendent then embraced us and said,"I wish to work hand in hand with you for the good of the country." Even then they did not take us in custody. We went to the mosque, said our prayers and walked to the station with the people of the town and there we found a sub-inspector and two constables waiting to take us to Central Jail, Vellore. This sort of behaviour was never expected from the police as they behaved with Mr. Ramamurti and others very roughly. We are glad that we

have followed in the footsteps of our loving and respected Principal Maulana Mahomed Ali and congratulate ourselves that we are the first to be imprisoned for the so. called seducing the military by distributing the *fatva* and reiterating the Karachi Resolution. We have done our duty and request you to bless us with your prayers. We are cheerful at heart and pray to God to endow us with courage and strength to undergo all rigours and hardships.

I do not know whom to congratulate most, the brave young men, the Magistrate and the police, or the Principal who has moulded the character of these young men. As for the Government which send such innocent men to prison, I can only say it is digging its own grave in a way no non-co-operator can.

TEN PRECIOUS REASONS

The Bihar Government Publicity Bureau has issued leaflets in Hindustani giving ten reasons why foreign cloth should not be boycotted. The reader should know how the reforms are working and the public is being misled at its own expense. Here are the reasons:

1. Cloth manufactured in India is not sufficient for our needs.

2. People being used to wearing fine cloth for a long time find it heavy to wear garments made from Indian yarn.

3. Even Indian mills use foreign yarn for the fine cloth they weave.

4. If we give up foreign cloth, we shall be in the same plight we were in 1905, when owing to swadeshi agitation Indian mills sent up prices and drained our wealth. Thus mill-owners mill fatten themselves on our ruin.

5. So long as foreign cloth is imported, there is competition between Indian cloth and foreign cloth, and thus the null-owners cannot raise prices very high.

6. There are not enough mills and handlooms in India for the cloth required.

7. Hand-spinning is not profitable because it yields no more than two annas per day.

8. Handlooms produce very little; therefore much cannot be produced from them.

9. By such boycott there will be great unrest and commotion, and India's progress will be greatly arrested.

10. By the rise in the price of cloth the poor will suffer much and discontent will spread all over.

I hope that Lord Sinha[1] knows nothing of these precious reasons, but he cannot escape responsibility. I admit that it is not humanly possible for any man to *control* the details of all the departments of a big province. But that is just the reason why no self-respecting person should serve this Government. The system is designed to drain India dry and perpetuate the foreign yoke in the interest of the foreign capitalist, chiefly the Lancashire manufacturer. But for this selfishness running through every department, the circular I have translated will be an impossibility. The most natural thing that a national government will do will be to multiply handlooms and spinning-wheels, and flood the market with plenty of hand-spun. A national government will prevent the mill-owners from unduly raising prices, a national government would take advantage of the glorious upheaval to stabilize a great cottage industry. It did not strike the author of the precious reasons, that the millions do not even now wear fine cloth, that spinning is intended for leisure hours, that millions will not need to pay anything for spinning, that they will do it themselves and that therefore hand-spun will always be comparatively cheap for them as home-cooked food is cheaper than hotel-cooked. The moral of the Government leaflet for us should be to redouble our efforts in behalf of swadeshi and lose no time in ending a system which is like a canker eating into the very vitals of the nation.

THE "KUKIS"

A friend has sent me a Government *communique* on my reference to the *Kukis* during my Assam tour. I am sorry, I did not see the note for many days after its publication. But even as it is, I am unable to withdraw anything I have written. My informants told me that true facts were hushed up. Who would have known anything of the diabolical acts of the Punjab Government during the martial law days but for the Congress inquiry? What did the public know of the cruelties practised by the military during the revolt of 1857 till Kaye and Malleson lifted the veil? Who knows the true facts of many an expedition undertaken to punish our neighbours from time to time? I am in a position to say, that even now the public do not know much, if

[1] Governor of Bihar and Orissa, 1920-21; first Indian member of Viceroy's Executive Council

anything at all, of the fiendish cruelties practised in the Punjab during The dark recruiting days. I have evidence in my possession which was submitted to the Punjab Government but which I have withheld from the public because I was not able for want of time to follow up the details that came to light. I have seen enough of denials that cannot possibly be denied in an authentic manner. I have therefore deliberately preferred the evidence of the most respectable men of Assam to the authoritative but interested statement on behalf of the Government. I am reluctantly obliged to adhere to the note on the *Kukis* contradicted by the local Government.

A *Statesman* correspondent paints the *Kukis* in the blackest colours. I do not know the tribesmen. I hold no brief for them. They may be worse than they are painted. But if I was an officer in command of a punitive expedition, I would not be guilty of the atrocities that were attributed to the expedition by my informants.

FOR EMPLOYEES

A correspondent inquires:

> Would you advise the servants of railway companies, European firms and others who do not want their servants to subscribe to national funds or, wear khadi, to resign in obedience to the Congress call?

I should have thought that such a question could not require solution at this almost the last stage in the struggle. The surprise to me is that any person can still remain in an office where he cannot follow his religion or maintain self-respect. That hundreds of clerks find it impossible to leave their offices although they are prevented from wearing the life-giving khadi or subscribing openly to a national fund, shows the depth to which we have sunk. It did not require the stern lesson of non-co-operation to learn the elements of self-respect. And yet that is just what non-co-operation has been doing all these months. I commend to every employee the example of the brave Vizagapatam medical students who would not leave their khadi dress for the sake of being able to remain in their school.[1]

CHIRALA-PERALA

The brave people of these little places arc still continuing their

[1] Vide"Notes", 17-11-1921, under the sub-title"Brave Students"; also"Notes", 24-11-1921, under the sub-title"More about Medical Students".

fight.[1] Their leader Mr. Gopala Krishnayya is in jail. But they have not lost heart. They are still in their huts. A letter before me says:

> The people have remained firm. The fact that some of the most prominent leaders in the village have been but recently prosecuted for omission to pay the municipal taxes and have cheerfully gone to jail, has made them firmer in their resolve not to go back to the village. At the present moment both the villages are strong in their determination to stick to the position they have taken up in spite of all the losses, hardships and privations which the evacuation has brought upon them. There are some poor people whose huts have fallen down and some more requiring new huts.

It is such stuff from which swaraj can be evolved. There should be no demoralization when the leaders are gone, and there should be no surrender in the face of fire.

Young India, 3-11-1921

20. ANOTHER GURKHA CHARGE

It almost seems as if Bengal is to be the first in suffering and therefore the first in winning swaraj. The Chandpur outrage is still fresh in the memory. Now comes the news of an equally terrible outrage in Chittagong. Let Babu Prasannakumar Sen, Secretary of the District Congress Committee, tell the tale in his own words:

> I take this opportunity of giving you an account of the latest turn of events at Chittagong. Mr. Sengupta, President, and St. Mohim Chandra Das, Secretary, Chittagong District Congress Committee, and sixteen others were arrested on the 2nd July last for taking part in a procession without licence contrary to a notice previously issued by the local authorities under Sec. 30 of the Police Act. Their trial came up on the 19th October. They were charged under Sec. 151 I.P.C. and Sec. 32 of the Police Act. The accused did not offer any defence and were each sentenced to undergo rigorous imprisonment for three months on the 20th of October. It was known in the town that the noble prisoners would be taken to the Central Jail at Alipur the same evening. People began to collect before the jail gate from 4 o'clock. Band parties, concert parties and *sankirtan* parties were also brought in. In the evening the whole town was illuminated and there was bomb firing and rocket flying. This the people did without any instructions from the Congress organization. Shortly after 8 p.m. the prisoners were taken out of jail and placed in police

[1] Vide"Chirala-Perala", 25-8-1921.

carriages for being conveyed to the railway station. A procession with torch light, band parties, concert parties followed the carriages in an extremely orderly manner.

The procession having reached the approaches of the railway station, a *posse* of Gurkhas numbering about a hundred and armed with guns came out of ambush. Lights were put out by some person not yet known, and the Gurkhas suddenly and without any notice whatsoever sprang upon innocent and peaceful persons with all the savagery they could command with cries of *maro, maro, lagao, lagao*. . . . It is reported that nearly a hundred persons got bleeding wounds in different parts of their bodies, and about three hundred persons received aching blows. The District Magistrate, Mr. Strong, and Additional District Magistrate, Mr. Burrows, were present on the spot. One prominent Peace and Order Association man was seen taking part in the assault and crying at the top of his voice, *maro*, *maro*, and after the assault was over, he was seen in company with the District Magistrate. After the assault outside the station premises, a European military officer, presumably commanding the Gurkhas, entered the platform. He made a show of proceeding to the compartment reserved for prisoners, but made a sudden left wheel and began to push people who had been there with platform tickets. No warning was given, no request was made to move away from or clear the platform. . . Both outside and inside the platform, serious loss of life would have occurred, had not people remained calm and non-violent under great provocation. . . .

The local Congress Committee, the Chittagong Association and the local Khilafat Committee met at an extraordinary emergency meeting on the morning of the 21st instant and appointed an independent committee of enquiry. . . . Photographers have been engaged to take photographs of the wounded. We shall be thankful if you kindly advise us as to what steps should be taken to redress our grievances in this respect.

Swadeshi propaganda is being pushed on with greater vigour than heretofore. . . .

Up to now thirty persons have been convicted in connection with the Congress propaganda, and twenty-seven of them are still in jail. Prosecution is pending against six.

The facts are set forth with such precision, that it is hard to suspect any exaggeration. And yet it is equally hard to credit the authorities with such utter callousness as is to be inferred from the description given by Prasanna Babu. Manifestly the crowd was in a holiday mood. Thank God, prisons have ceased to frighten us. The people therefore illuminated their houses, and went in a procession to

see the prisoners off. There could be no violent intent in this. But it was too much for the Magistrate. He evidently thought that the deterrent effect of the punishment he had inflicted was being counteracted by these rejoicings and that in time he might have to turn the whole of Chittagong into a prison to accommodate the whole population. He therefore resorted to the Gurkha charge. It is difficult (assuming the truth of the report) in any other manner to account for the brutal action taken against totally innocent holiday-makers. It is clear, too, that the members of the so-called Peace and Order Associations are playing into the hands of the bureaucracy. These are no doubt trying circumstances. But we counted the cost when we entered upon the course. We must pay it. We must go through the fiery ordeal, and prove our purity before we are admitted to the promised land. The leaders and the people of Chittagong deserve to be warmly congratulated upon their exemplary self-restraint and calmness under circumstances the most provoking. I can tender no other advice than to say that they should pursue their even course in spite of greater dangers still. The only redress that is open to us is each time to show greater courage and greater self-control, till at last the tyrant falls exhausted under the weight of his own effort. The non-co-operators of Chittagong ought not to feel irritated against the members of Aman Sabhas or of the Government. They but act according to their natures. A non-co-operator's nature is neither to retaliate nor to bend. He must stand erect unmoved by the storm raging round him. If we may truthfully sing and pray, let us sing:

So long Thy power has blest me, sure it still
Will lead me on, o'er moor and fen,
O'er crag and torrent, till the night is gone.[1]

Young India, 3-11-1921

21. CO-OPERATION

Probably very few workers have noticed that progress of hand-spinning means the greatest voluntary co-operation the world has ever seen. It means co-operation among millions of human beings scattered over a very wide area and working for their daily bread. No doubt agriculture has required much co-operative effort, but hand-spinning requires still greater and more honest co-operation. Wheat

[1] From Cardinal Newman's poem"Lead Kindly Light"

grows more by nature's honesty than by man's. Manufacture of yarn in our cottages is dependent solely on human honesty. Hand-spinning is impossible without the willing and intelligent co-operation of millions of human beings. We have to arrive at a stage when the spinner like the grain-seller is assured of a steady market for his yarn as well as the supply of cotton slivers if he or she does not know the process of carding. Is it any wonder if I claim that hand-spinning can drive away as if by magic the growing pauperism of the masses? An English friend sends me a newspaper cutting showing the progress of machinery in China. He has evidently imagined that in advocating hand-spinning I am propagating my ideas about machinery. I am doing nothing of the kind. I would favour the use of the most elaborate machinery if thereby India's pauperism and resulting idleness be avoided. I have suggested hand-spinning as the only ready means of driving away penury and making famine of work and wealth impossible. The spinning-wheel itself is a piece of valuable machinery, and in my own humble way I have tried to secure improvements in it in keeping with the special conditions of India. The only question therefore that a lover of India and humanity has to address himself to is how best to devise practical means of alleviating India's wretchedness and misery. No scheme of irrigation or other agricultural improvement that human ingenuity can conceive can deal with the vastly scattered population of India or provide work for masses of mankind who are constantly thrown out of employment. Imagine a nation working only five hours per day on an average, and this not by choice but by force of circumstances, and you have a realistic picture of India.

If the reader would visualize the picture, he must dismiss from his mind the busy fuss of the city life or the grinding fatigue of the factory life or the slavery of the plantations. These are but drops in the ocean of Indian humanity. If he would visualize the picture of the Indian skeleton, he must think of the eighty per cent of the population which is working its own fields and which has practically no occupation for at least four months in the year and which therefore lives on the borderland of starvation. This is the normal condition. The ever-recurring famines make a large addition to this enforced idleness. What is the work that these men and women can easily do in their own cottages so as to supplement their very slender resources? Does anyone still doubt that it is only hand-spinning and nothing else? And I repeat that this can be made universal in a few months'

time, if only the workers will. Indeed it is on a fair way to becoming universal. Experts only are needed to organize it. People are ready, and what is most in favour of hand-spinning is that it is not a new and untried method but people have up to recently been using it. Its successful reintroduction does need skilful endeavour, honesty and co-operation on the largest scale known to the world. And if India can achieve this co-operation, who shall deny that India has by that one act achieved swaraj?

Young India, 3-11-1921

22. TO CORRESPONDENTS

AVADH BEHARI LAL: I am sorry I cannot publish your letter as it is impossible to open the columns of *Young India* to a discussion of Hinduism. My article must be my last word on Hinduism till I have more leisure. It is in no way intended to serve as authority for others. It was intended merely to give my own definition of *sanatana* Hinduism. I may be utterly wrong and be repudiated by every *sanatani*. I should hope even then to be able to stand by my faith. If the great mass of Hindus repudiate my claim, I shall be content to remain an outcaste.

G. S. RAMAMIJRTI: Untouchability cannot be given a secondary place on the programme. Without the removal of the taint, swaraj is a meaningless term. Workers should welcome social boycott and even public execration in the prosecution of their work. I consider the removal of untouchability as a most powerful factor in the process of attainment of swaraj and for that matter also the Khilafat. Impure Hinduism cannot help the process of Islamic purification.

LAL: Prayer is undoubtedly a great aid to national regeneration. The charkha assists prayer. It is never a hindrance. A mere mechanical prayer is worse than useless, for it deceives one into self-complacency. Non-co-operation is mass education. The masses do not need to be told to pray. Only life has to be breathed into their prayers.

J. BHATTACHARYA: I wish I could publish your letter if only for its brilliance. But I am afraid it will be misunderstood. There is altogether too much blind following in the country. The instances you quote are inapplicable to the present movement which essentially consists in making everyone think for himself. My conception of

swaraj is not that of many blindly following one man. The Poet[1] has rightly protested against that tendency and not against enlightened obedience to chosen leadership.

Young India, 3-11-1921

23. CANONS OF INTERPRETATION

Principal A. B. Dhruva of the Benares Hindu University has contributed to the Gujarati monthly called *Vasanta* a learned article on the true method of interpretation of the Shastras and its applicability to the place of untouchability in them. Copious correspondence, some of a technical nature and some based on what in my opinion is an ignorant conception of the Shastras, has been received by me. The writers, I am aware, are actuated by honest motives. It is not possible to devote the columns of a small weekly like *Young India* to all this correspondence. I am anxious nevertheless to satisfy these correspondents through some learned authority. Principal Dhruva in my opinion is such an authority. His learning is beyond question and so are his honesty and impartiality. His article cannot fail to be of interest to those who are anxious to secure a just and speedy solution of the question of untouchability. I have had it translated for *Young India*. Nothing has consoled me so much as to find Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji and the learned Principal both claiming to be and accepted as orthodox Hindus ranging themselves whole-heartedly on the side of the removal of this blot upon Hinduism.

Young India, 3-11-l921

24. EDUCATION AND NON-CO-OPERATION

TO
THE EDITOR
YOUNG INDIA

SIR,

In the *Kartik* issue of the *Pravasi*, a Bengali monthly edited by the reputed journalist Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, appears an article over the initials S.C. on the present educational activities of Russia. In this article

[1] Rabindranath Tagore in"The Call of Truth"

occurs a passage to which I wish to draw your attention. I am translating it below.

"But even under the stress of the present upheavals Russia has kept burning her torch of learning, faint though it is. None has advised her, like the wise patriots of our country (India), to let education wait. Russia knows that no vital antagonism (incompatibility) exists between war and education, as exists between water and oil."

I apologize for the bad rendering but this is the idea contained in the few Bengali lines I refer to.

I do not exactly understand what the writer means by these lines and as Mr. Gandhi is one of the"wise patriots who have advised us to let education wait", I would respectfully request him to express his views on the above passage, as such a view is held by a section of the community which declares itself to be"sane" and"rational".

Yours, etc.,

PHANINDRANATH DASGUPTA

PURULIA,

I am not surprised at the view expressed in the *Pravasi*. In my humble opinion it betrays at once ignorance of the position of the"wise patriots" and a distorted view of education. The Russians are not non-co-operating with their existing institutions. And yet in a state of war there too"the torch of learning is burning faint" even as in non-co-operation schools. But what happened in England when it was at war with Germany? How many schools were then going on in England? I know, that the Inns of Court and many colleges were practically closed. I know that during the Boer War not a Boer child had literary education. The Boer children's education consisted in suffering for the sake of their country. The fact is that the present peaceful movement is so silent and gentle on the whole, that it is possible for those who do not believe in the doctrine to continue the education of their children under a system against which the country is"waging war". That the movement is the more effective for its gentleness will, I prophesy, be recorded by the future historian with grateful appreciation. Lastly we have little reason to be proud of our educational institutions which by their very nature are accessible to a mere fringe of our population. In our state of intoxication we do not perceive the disastrous effect of the present system of education on the country. I have taxed myself to find something to the credit of the system in the way of a solution of the vital problems affecting the

country. I have failed to find a single thing of that character. There are today 7,851,946 children receiving instruction in our schools. I claim that it is impossible under the present system even to double the number of learners during the next fifty years. If education is to be universal, the system will have to be revised out of all recognition. This is possible only by non-co-operation. Public conscience cannot be stung into quickness with a milder remedy.

Young India, 3-11-1921

25. HINDUS IN AFGHANISTAN

TO

THE EDITOR

YOUNG INDIA

SIR,

If an insignificant Indian, who does not believe in the attainment of swaraj by non-co-operation and who thinks that the Khilafat agitation is strengthening the hands of those who, in their heart of hearts, are preparing for the restoration of Muslim rule, far more despotic and iniquitous than the present"Satanic" Government, if such an Indian who yet loves his country in his own way, deserves any attention, then may I make the following enquiry?

1 read in Bellow's *Journal of Political Mission to Afghanistan* that the Hindkis, i.e., Hindus of Afghanistan were subject to many indignities and iniquitous disabilities; for example they had to pay the *Jaziya*, they must were a distinctive dress, they must not ride a horse upon a saddle, etc. These things were, of course, sanctioned by the Muslim Government of Afghanistan. I am not aware of any change for the better since. You have many friends, Khilafatwalas, who have openly declared in favour of an Afghan invasion of India. Will you inform the Hindus, if the legal disabilities of the Hindus of Afghanistan have been removed? If not, should you not plead for their removal as strongly as you are doing in the ease of the so-called"slave-like' treatment of Indians by the"Satanic" Government? The race to which this"Satanic" Government belongs never treated Indians so unfairly as the Muslim rulers of Afghanistan did the Hindus.

I believe that you are doing greater good by your strong attitude regarding untouchability than by your support of the Khilafat. If you can remove untouchability and the provincial differences among Hindus, you

will become one of the greatest benefactors of humanity. The Muslims are strong enough to take care of themselves.

I am, etc.,

R. C. BANERJEE

RATAN GANJ,

October 24, 1921

I do not know anything about the treatment of Hindus in Afghanistan, but I am prepared for the moment to assume the truth of the statement referred to by the correspondent. It would be relevant, if we were trying to introduce Afghan rule in India. I am only concerned with the present misrule in India, which, if it permits me to ride a horse, has reduced me to serfdom in my own country. Nor can I be deterred from overthrowing the present misrule for fear of Afghan or other Muslim rule creeping in. The correspondent will find that when we have attained swaraj, we shall have attained the ability to resist any other misrule. We shall have learnt, without the necessity of a training at Sandhurst, the art of dying for country and religion.

Young India, 3-11-1921

26. SPEECH ON CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE, A,I.C.C., DELHI

November 4, 1921

Mr. Gandhi in moving the resolution[1] . . . said that if asked as to the progress made by India during the last ten months he would unhesitatingly say that India had been able to make tremendous headway. If they were simply to gauge the quantity of progress there was every reason to feel proud of it, but if he were to judge that progress in terms of swaraj as a physician and was asked to say whether it was sufficient for the removal of the triple disease that they were suffering from, then he had to confess it fell far short of the requirements. Hence the necessity of repetition and emphasis, in the course of the civil disobedience resolution, of the complete fulfilment of all vital items of the programme of non-co-operation so far sanctioned, particularly those mentioned in the resolution. He read to the audience a telegram from Maulana Mahomed Ali's Private Secretary depicting the hardships they were undergoing by being treated as ordinary prisoners. He therefore warned all against light-heartedly launching on civil disobedience. He continued, certainly they should not expect gentleness from this Government nor had they any right to expect it. They

[1] Vide"The All-India Congress Committee", 10-11-1921.

were prepared to give no quarter to the Government and should expect none. The bigger the injustice and hardships they were put to and the greater the patience and unflinching determination they observed, the sooner would swaraj come.

Proceeding, Mr. Gandhi defined civil disobedience as civil revolution which, wherever practised, would mean an end of Government authority in that particular area and open defiance of Government and its laws. It was a gigantic step and, although provincial autonomy was being granted to provincial organizations in this matter, he advised all to wait before launching on it and see what he did, if it was at all possible in his own district of Gujarat, and after seeing the result they should follow his example which should open the eyes of the whole world to their wonderful achievement. He knew that at present mass civil disobedience was impossible and he would be quite satisfied if in such a big continent only one tahsil or district fully prepared should practise it rather than that the whole unprepared masses should partake in it. He advised caution and virtually asked them to wait till he gave the lead from Gujarat in the course of the next fortnight. He reiterated his warning that in view of the gigantic step which the resolution allowed nothing should be done without full recognition of the realities so that once a step was taken there should be no tracing back . . . .

When Mr. Gandhi concluded his opening speech, a volley of amendments rushed forth . . . to secure relaxations in the conditions. . . . Mr. Gandhi and the supporters of his view emphasized that, having pledged and believing that it was only through complete fulfilment of swadeshi programme that they could attain swaraj, it would be laying the axe at the very root of the edifice so far built if they were to omit strict compliance with the swadeshi programme. It was much better to have only one tahsil or one district in the whole of India which could practise civil disobedience rather than the entire country unprepared for it. . . .

After heated discussion . . . all amendments for deletion of strict swadeshi clauses were defeated . . . Mr. Gandhi urged that they should arrive at a conclusion which all of them should feel as the right one and should earnestly and sincerely try to put into practice. . . .[1]

The Hindu, 7-1l-1921

[1] The meeting agreed to authorize the Working committee to relax the conditions in exceptional cases.

27. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C., DELHI

November 5, 1921

On the resolution regarding renouncing Government service Mr. Gandhi said that while the motion declared it as an inherent right of every citizen to offer his advice on Government service, he emphasized that Congress Committee was not issuing a mandate that all must go to the barracks to advise the soldiers to come out. This mandate was not issued not for fear of imprisonment but due to their inability at present to provide all soldiers who would come out. There was however full freedom for individuals on their own responsibility to actually go to the barracks and ask the soldiers to leave the army. Personally he had advised hundreds of soldiers to give up the service.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 8-11-1921

28. SPEECH AT MATHURA[1]

November 5, 1921

Mr. Gandhi . . . dealing with the question of attainment of swaraj by the end of October, said he had never said that he could personally bring about conditions which would bend [sic] them for it. It was for those who as delegates of the last Indian National Congress had pledged themselves to carrying out the programme of non-co-operation laid down by the Congress and the people of the country, to blame themselves for not having fulfilled their pledge. The country had not yet proved its capacity for it. The simple course of renunciation and discipline which alone could help them to win swaraj had not yet been completed. It was all the more incumbent on the country now to put forth all its energy to complete the remaining programme before the end of this year and if they succeeded in doing so he staked his life on the assurance that they would get swaraj by the end of the year.

Resolutions were adopted on civil disobedience, boycott of the Prince's visit and expressing that the Indian National Congress should at its forthcoming session definitely assert and declare to the world the Indian people's inalienable right and ultimate will to independent sovereignty, excluding all relations with foreign powers and nations including Great Britain.

The Hindu, 11-11-1921

[1] Pandit Motilal Nehru presiding

29. DUTY OF HINDUS

I draw the attention of all Hindus to the touching letter given below[1] which I have received from the Antyajashram at Godhra.

Every Hindu should hang his head in shame on reading this letter. We, and not the boy's parents, are responsible for the beating which he got. We have despised *Antyajas*, given them our leftovers and rotten food to eat, persuading ourselves that we were doing a virtuous deed. We paid them as little as possible and drove them to begging. Not only have we made them carry our filth, but we have also made them eat filth. We have been giving them our discarded garments to serve as finery. The result is that the *Antyajas* now like begging and feel proud when they get left-overs. When parents return home with rotten grain, the children dance with joy. The master whose slaves rejoice in their slavery has sinned beyond measure. This is the position of the Hindus.

The child who got a beating for his reformed habits and for refusing to eat left-overs was our child. After reading this article, let all parents look at their children and ask themselves how they would feel if the latter were in the same plight as the other child. And how pure was that boy! Though beaten he refused to eat meat! What must be the mental condition of those who regard such a child as untouchable? Will they be able to enjoy swaraj? Will they protect others?

At the moment, however, I do not wish to say anything about untouchability to the caste-Hindu parents. Will they not have even simple compassion on their"untouchable" brothers? Is it also in the Shastras to give them dirty, left-over food and pay them as little as possible? I request all parents:

1. Not to give *Antyajas* cooked food;
2. to give them only uncooked grain;
3. not to give them garments of foreign cloth or worn-out and dirty clothes;
4. to raise their wages, if they are low, and
5. whatever they give, to give it with love.

[1] Not translated here. The letter, written by a teacher in the Antyajashram described the unhappy condition of the pupils in their homes. The parents disliked their children's reformed habits and treated them very harshly.

I urge those *Antyajas* who may read this article to resolve that they will not accept or eat rotten grain or left-over food or meat and advise them to send their children to the national schools which may be started for them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-11-1921

30. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

DELHI,
Silence Day [*November 7, 1921*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Dil means the self, because it means the heart. *Tandurust* [healthy] is a hackneyed word. I wanted to write to you about [the health of] your body, but how could I be content with wishing you only physical health?

I always looked upon Parasram as a son though I saw his faults. I have regarded you as a friend. I feel no hesitation in welcoming Durga as a daughter at the very first meeting. Jamnalal has been persistently claiming to be a son, but somehow I cannot put myself in the position of a father to him.

About one *bhajan* of yours, I felt that I had read it. However, why should not a similar one suggest itself to you? But I have already replied to you yesterday in this regard before your letter reached me. Your thinking constantly about the *atman* during your illness covered swaraj as well. It was not at all necessary to think about swaraj separately.

We must perform the duties arising from the existence of the body. Eating, bathing, going from place to place for begging, all these we do, thinking them to be legitimate activities, and show aversion only to bread-labour; purification of the mind is achieved by mental *yajna*, that of the *atman* by *yajna* of the atman, and of the body by *yajna* of the body [i.e., physical labour]. Man cannot make a proper return for the food he gets for his body by doing mental work. One does *yajna* [of the body] if one labours without expecting food in return. At the present time and in this country, *yajna* of the body can

[1] From the references to Dil, tandurust and a bhajan of the addressee, it is evident that this letter was written on the Silence Day immediately following the one on October 31, 1921; vide"Letter to Mahadev Desai", 31-10-1921.

be performed only by working on the spinning-wheel, for its absence has enfeebled the body of the country. If the climate of India and our needs change, we can take up another kind of *yajna*. If it comes about that for getting water in our country we have always to dig wells, then digging of wells would become a sacrifice to some extent. But then, as long as such a state of things continues, bodily *yajna* is necessary just as *brahmacharya* and other things are necessary. And because it is only a duty attaching to the body, the latter can be free from the obligation of performing this *yajna* when it does not consume food. But unlike in the case of prayer which being an act of the mind or the heart, a man like me believes or persuades himself that he is performing it all the twenty-four hours and does not have a fixed time for it every day, one cannot persuade oneself that one is performing bodily *yajna* without actually doing so, since it is an act to be performed by the body. One may not perform it with one's whole heart behind it and so deceive people, that would be another matter; but perform it, one must. This answers both your questions on the subject.

I misunderstood Sri Das's telegram. I also misunderstood Chotani Mian's letter. There was no attempt deliberately to create a false impression. Chotani Mian did not correct my impression even when I had a personal talk with him. It is true we did not have a long talk. But one who fails to get the real meaning is not being wholly truthful. I know, of course, if I can completely follow non-violence, truth and *brahmacharya* in action, speech and thought, then we should certainly get swaraj this year; we may also get it if someone else from among us can do these things, or if the *tapas* of all of us taken together proves sufficient for the purpose. In the first instance, however, I hate not given up this hope in regard to myself . . .[1] spare no effort. ..[2]

From a photostat S.N. 11424

[1] The original is damaged here.
[2] *ibid*

31. CONVOCATION ADDRESS AT NATIONAL COLLEGE, LAHORE[1]

November 9, 1921

Gandhiji began by saying that he considered himself fortunate in being asked to confer degrees on students of the National College. He congratulated the candidates and also blessed them. He prayed to God to grant them strength to live up to the pledge they had taken that day. Let their hearts be steeled henceforth to serve their country. To him the acceptance of a degree only meant the undertaking of a determination to be ready to win the country's freedom by doing practical work. That was the way pointed out by the history of all nations. He had Witnessed three great wars and had observed how education approximated to the national ideals of the time. When he thought of September last he did not feel sorry. They had decided what sort of education to impart to India of the future. They had not been able so far to achieve the amount of success they desired. The result of bad treatment in a certain school had been that a student had written to him regarding his determination to commit suicide. Readers of *Young India* would remember it. If in future any student is badly treated he hoped he would not write to him thus. He had received a telegram from Vizagapatam that the students of the medical school-had determined not to go back because their Principal had expelled them for wearing khaddar. They had resolved to serve their country and free her from bondage. He had replied congratulating them on their resolve. The best surgeon was he who devised the best remedy for their country's salvation. Thousands died of the plague, cholera, malaria, etc. but he did not mind that; but he did mind if a single individual lived in slavery.

If people did not feel like that even after December next, he felt as if he would commit suicide. But he would not do so as he did not approve of putting an end to one's existence. He would think of only one occasion when it would be better to kill oneself. That was when a man cast an evil eye on another woman. Another occasion was for a woman when she found a man bent upon wickedness towards her. At such a time it was better for her to immolate herself. Indian ladies were chaste even as was Sita.

He has just listened to the beautiful strains of *Vandematram.* In 1915 he had heard the same in Madras.[2] It was then that he bethought himself what that song really meant to them. Had they the right to sing thus? They saluted Mother India and invoked her protection. But what was India's present plight? Millions of her children got one meal a day and that too consisted of but bread and salt. There were no

[1] Delivered in Hindi at Bradlaugh Hall; Lala Lajpat Rai presided.
[2] *Vide* "Why not in Golden Letters", 8-2-1908.

vegetables, etc., to partake. Could they; honestly say that their motherland gave them protection? They were the un-worthy children of the motherland.

A Hindu from Peshawar who stood six feet high had come to him and complained that frontier Mohammedans molested their women. Why had he not died defending his women? Only that morning someone had told him something which in effect amounted to this that he (Mahatma Gandhi) was mad if he sought the friendship of Muslims. His reply was that he desired Muslim friendship because he had courage. If one Mohammedan did something wicked, it was not right to ban the whole class. Similar was the case with Hindus who were guilty of Dyerism in regard to untouchables. If Mohammedans in the Punjab were more than fifty per cent, Hindus need not be afraid of them. Hindus did not want to play false towards Mussulmans; then why need they be afraid of the latter? All ancient teaching pointed out that virtue was the reward of virtue and treachery should be met with more treachery. All had taught the same lesson whether Dayanand[1] or Ramanuja or Madhva. If Hindus wanted to deal honestly they need fear none. The same applied to Mohammedans and Sikhs.

Lalaji had said towards the close of his speech that the time was coming before December next when probably he (Mahatmaji) and Lalaji himself and, others would be arrested. In that case they should not indulge in incendiarism and the cutting of rails, they should not cast an evil eye on an English lady, nor go on hartal. Such conduct on their part would mean that they were cowards. The true hero is he who remains peaceful and non-violent. They should restrain their anger, each one of them should be a leader unto himself. Then swaraj was attained. They should remember the example of Prahlad, the gallant youth who defied Hiranyakashipu the swordsman, because his God was with him.

If a certain leader of theirs became haughty or over-bearing he should be removed. They should cultivate within themselves the attributes of Wordsworth's "[Character of of the] Happy Warrior". Swaraj was no difficult thing to achieve.

The next condition for swaraj was charkha. It was said in the Punjab that spinning was the work of women. But the inventor of the spinning-jenny in England was a man, Hargreaves by name. Similarly it was said that cooking was the special work of ladies. In a Paris hotel there was a cook who was an expert. He knew far better the art of cooking than any lady could lay claim to. He was drawing a pay equal to that of the Viceroy of India. He was not sure whether the Viceroy deserved the large salary he was in receipt of but he knew that the Paris cook deserved his pay. They should remember that it is their duty to spin. The moment they gave up the charkha, they also gave up their dharma. If they wanted to free India, they should use the charkha. They could not banish poverty from their land until they took to charkha. By

[1] Swami Dayanand Saraswati (1824-83); founder of the Arya Samaj

becoming swadeshi he meant using pure swadeshi and not mill-made yarn. In their national schools weaving and spinning was taught. When civil disobedience would be launched every student in the Punjab should regard it his duty to dress himself in khaddar.

Lalaji had asked him to speaks a few words to the students. He wanted to remind the students of the Punjab that they had been forced to salute the the Union Jack. They were made to march 18 miles a day. All sorts of insults were heaped on them during martial law. They should consider it *haraam*[1] to use foreign yarn. They should take to charkha and *kargha*.

After Mahatma Gandhi had finished, Lala Lajpat Rai thanked Mahatmaji for the trouble he had taken in coming over to them and addressing them.

The Hindu, 19-11-1921

32. NOTES

A PLEA FOR SPINNING

A determined opposition was put up against the conditions regarding swadeshi that were laid down in the civil disobedience resolution passed by the All-India Congress Committee at Delhi. It was directed against two requirements, namely that the civil resister offering resistance in terms of that resolution was bound to know hand-spinning and use only hand-spun and hand-woven khadi; and that in the event of a district or tahsil offering civil disobedience *en masse* the district or the tahsil concerned must manufacture its own yarn and cloth by the hand. The opposition betrayed woeful ignorance of the importance of hand-spinning. Nothing but hand-spinning can banish pauperism from the land. Paupers cannot become willing sufferers. They have never known the pain of plenty to appreciate the happiness of voluntarily suffering hunger or other bodily discomfort. Swaraj for them can only mean ability to support themselves without begging. To awaken among them a feeling of discontent with their lot without providing them with the means of removing the cause thereof is to court certain destruction, anarchy, outrage and plunder in which they themselves will be the chief victims. Hand-spinning alone can possibly supply them with supplementary and additional earnings. Hand-weaving for many and carding for a limited number can provide complete livelihood. But hand-weaving is not a lost art. Several million men know hand-weaving. But very few know

[1] Sinful

hand-spinning in the true sense of the term. Tens of thousands are, it is true, turning the wheel today but only a few are spinning yarn. The cry all over is that hand-spun yarn is not good enough for warp. Just as half-baked bread is no bread, even so ill-spun weak thread is no yarn. Thousands of men must know hand-spinning to be able in their respective districts to improve the quality of the yarn that is now being spun in the country. Therefore those who offer civil disobedience for the sake of establishing swaraj must know hand-spinning. Mark, they are not required to turn out yarn every day. It would be well if they did. But they must know how to spin even properly twisted yarn. It was a happy omen to me that in spite of the opposition the amendment was rejected by a large majority. One argument advanced in favour of rejection was that the Sikh men considered it an undignified occupation to spin and looked down upon hand-weaving. I do hope that the sentiment is not representative of the brave community. Any community that despises occupations that bring an honest livelihood is a community going dozen an incline. If spinning has been the speciality of women, it is because they have more leisure and not because it is an inferior occupation. The underlying suggestion that a wielder of the sword will not wield the wheel is to take a distorted view of a soldier's calling. A man who lives by the sword does *not* serve his community even as the soldiers in the employ of the Government do not serve the country. The wielding of the sword is an unnatural occupation resorted to among civilized people only on extra-ordinary occasions and only for self-defence. To live by hand-spinning and hand-weaving is any day more *manly* than to live by killing. Aurangzeb was not the less a soldier for sewing caps. What we prize in the Sikhs is not their ability to kill. The late Sardar Lachhman Singh will go down to posterity as a hero because he knew how to die. The *mahant*[1] of Nankana Saheb will go down to posterity as a murderer. I hope therefore that no man will decline to learn the beautiful life-giving art of hand-spinning on the ground of its supposed inferiority,

MILL-SPUN *v.* HAND-SPUN

The attack against the requirement that a resistant district or tahsil should manufacture its own cloth had more reason than prejudice in it. And if the present intention was to require every tahsil

[1] Custodian of a temple

to join in offering mass civil disobedience, the requirement would be impossible of fulfillment. But nobody expects every tahsil or district to be ready for civil disobedience and thus to be self-contained during the few remaining months. It is enough if only a few tahsils are ready. Swaraj must be held an impossibility during the year if not even a few tahsils are self-contained and thus ready for swaraj. Any tahsil which grows its own food, spins its own yarn, weaves its own cloth and is ready to suffer for its freedom is certainly ready to establish swaraj during the year. And if even one tahsil can accomplish the task, it will be like a light lighting a whole house. I hold successful civil disobedience to be impossible without the pioneer effort being made under almost ideal conditions. There are no doubt parts of India where complete manufacture of woollens and calico by hand-spinning is not a present possibility. But when those parts where it is a present possibility are completely organized, there should be no difficulty about relaxing the requirement regarding such parts.

HINDUSTANI

Hindustani, i.e., the language of the common people, is fast becoming the medium of expression in the All-India Congress Committee. There are members in the Committee who do not understand a word of English, and there are members from the Madras Presidency who do not understand Hindustani. The Bengali members understand Hindustani with difficulty. The latter however appreciate the necessity of Hindustani speech and do not grumble at the proceedings being conducted in Hindustani. It was a real sacrifice for the Dravidians. At the last meeting only one member attended from Madras and not many could come from Malabar. But when all the Dravidians attend, the difficulty becomes serious. And yet there seems to be no way out of it save for the Dravidians to pick up enough Hindustani as early as possible. Those who do not know English cannot be expected to learn English and the popular assemblies must more and more tend to contain members who do not understand English. Apart therefore from the sentimental and national value of Hindustani, the necessity of all national workers learning Hindustani and the national proceedings being conducted in Hindustani is being increasingly felt. Whilst however this was recognized at the last meeting, the Dravidian and the Bengali members would not listen to a hard and fast rule being adopted by the Committee. They would gladly tolerate Hindustani voluntarily spoken

but will not have it imposed by a resolution of the Committee. The matter was finally referred to the Working Committee. In the face of the divided feeling the Working Committee will find it difficult to bring out a suggestion that will be unanimously accepted by the members.

MR. TYAGI'S LETTER

I had thought I had closed the controversy arising out of my writings[1] questioning Mr. Tyagi's bravery. But it gives me pleasure to be able to present the reader with a free translation of a letter received by me from him on his way as a prisoner to Meerut:

> I was not able to see *Young India* containing your defence of your dear friend Maulana Shaukat Ali. I received it rather late as I was fortunately in jail at the time. I have the unhappy news of your reference to me as chicken-hearted and cowardly. I cannot describe to you the pain I felt when I saw myself described by those adjectives. I try to console myself with the belief, that what you have written was written in good faith but my soul refuses to be satisfied. Your opinion seems to be that on being slapped I should have attempted to leave the court and suffered the consequence of any such attempt. I admit I could have done so. But the spectators it is likely, on witnessing more violence, which, it is certain, the magistrate blind with power would have done to me, might have laid their hands on him. The result would have been firing. And by my loss of restraint, hundreds of my countrymen would have been shot. This was the only thought that deterred me. And yet I did not remain totally inactive. Have you not yet seen the letter I wrote to the magistrate immediately after the incident ? When the magistrate, after the administering of violence, asked me whether I had any statement to make, I replied in a loud voice, "I decline to make any statement before a court so unjust and lawless as yours and in which accused are assaulted by it." Is not the above statement sufficient evidence that I was not cowed down? Whatever I did at the time I did for my country's good and I never thought that it would be displeased with my action. I alone know how difficult it was for me to remain calm on receiving the slap. If you still think I have erred, you will forgive me. My respects to my country.

Indeed Mr. Tyagi's countrymen who were present and witnessed his bearing did realize that he had acted in the country's

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 13-10 1921, under the sub-title "A Contrast"; also "Notes", 20-10-1921, under the sub-titles "A Magistrate's Apology", and "Accused's Statement".

interest, I, a distant critic, not knowing that he had let the magistrate understan by his subsequent conduct that his submission was that of the brave, simply analysed the facts as they were sent to me and did this brave countrymen an unintended injustice for which my thousand apologies to him. I know I am most careful in my selection of facts and acts which I criticize or admire from week to week. I know I am most anxious to avoid undeserved blame or praise. But I realize more and more the difficulty of a journalist who is desirous of conveying only the correct news and moulding public opinion in a correct manner.

NON-VIOLENT CONDUCT

The reader will naturally guess that I must have received more protests against the paragraph on Mr. Tyagi. Most of them were answered by my second reference containing my amends, but a Motihari correspondent tells me that my criticism has befogged him. He does not know what he should do in the same circumstances. I confess it is difficult to lay down an infallible rule. Cowardice, bravery, hate, love, untruth, truth are all qualifies of the heart. It is easy enough to dissemble virtue as it is difficult always for an outsider to discover it in another. The safest rule is to take men's words at their face value till one has proof to the contrary. I judged Mr. Tyagi's conduct as it was presented to me in its incomplete form. What our own conduct should be might be deduced from the following illustrations. Prahlad was forbidden to take the name of God. Whilst before the prohibition he was going about his way in a silent manner, now he became aggressive and drew on his head the most terrible punishment which he bore cheerfully. Daniel used to worship in secret, but when the prohibition decree was issued against him he flung open his door, worshipped God in public and was led like a lamb to the lion's den. Hazarat Ali, who was more than a match for his adversary, kissed his hand when the latter spat upon him, and when the brave Ali felt that if he retorted it would be the retort of anger. But I know that we possess neither the unalloyed bravery nor the godliness and therefore the true perception of these sages of old. We are not free from anger or fear. We are trying to imbibe the lesson of non-violence and learn fearlessness. Our non-violence is mixed. It is most of the weak and somewhat of the strong. The safest rule for us is to run the risk of becoming and feeling strong. Therefore when a magistrate gives me a slap, I must so act as to invite another. I must

however never give any cause for the first slap. If I am rude I must apologize, if I am defiant I must be meek, if I swear I must humble myself. My conduct before the court must be punctiliously correct. Need I say that it cannot be put on and off at will? It must, in order to appear graceful, be natural. Lastly, whatever we do, we must err on the side of non-violence, if we would reach our goal in the quickest manner possible.

TEMPERANCE WORK A CRIME

A friend sends the following note showing how the officials conceive their duty to the people:

> The visible symbols of our gathering national strength . . . are afforded by the series of prosecutions upon which the Government has launched.... Our progressive advance is marked by the thickening of repression.... So far ... no prosecution has been conducted ... expressly on the charge of doing temperance work. That privilege belongs to Bihar. There is no better illustration of the sinful character of the Government than the case against Kumar Kalika Prasad Sinha, nephew of the Maharaja Bahadur of Gidhaur, who has gone to jail for one year, having declined to furnish security. The charge sheet . . . reads:
>
> "Whereas it appears to me from a report of the police dated the 3rd October 1921 that you, Kalika Prasad Singh alias Hiraji, son of Rao Maheshari Prasad Singh of Mahuligadh P. S. Jamui are a leader of the non-co-operation movement . . . one of your principal objects being the stopping of the sale and purchase of excisable articles, and whereas in your endeavour to attain that object you . . . are importing and engaging persons to picket excise shops . . . and whereas . . . your personal conduct is likely to lead to further breaches of the peace . . . I hereby order you under Sec. 107 Cr. P. C. to show cause before me on 19-10-21 why you should not be required to execute a bond for Rs. 1000/- and furnish two sureties each in Rs. 500/- to keep the peace for one year."

Comment on this is superfluous. The Kumar submitted to the court a spirited statement denying the charge of intimidation and turning upon the Government by saying that the violence was all done by the so-called defenders of law and order.

IS BLOODSHED NECESSARY?

A correspondent asks:

> Do you not in the heart of your heart believe that swaraj in the end can never be attained without bloodshed? Is not non-violent agitation a mere

method suited to present times, to unite and discipline people ultimately for a stage of violence and bloody revolution?

This is a frank question. It shows that some people still do not believe in the truthfulness of the present struggle. There is no earthly reason why, if non-violence was a preparation for violence, I should not say so. When I have committed several offences against the state law, why-should I hesitate to say that the present struggle is a preparation for violence? As a matter of fact, not only do I believe a bloodless revolution to be perfectly possible, but many others implicitly believe in non-violence for the purpose of gaining India's freedom. The Ali Brothers absolutely say what they mean and mean what they say. They believe in the use of physical forces i.e., violence, under certain circumstances; but they believe that the circumstances of India do not warrant the use of violence. When "unity and discipline" are attained, we who are thirty crores will consider it unmanly and beneath our dignity to do violence to one lakh of Englishmen. It is want of cohesive thought, calmness and charity in the face of fraud and terrorism, which is responsible for the still lingering impotent rage in our midst. And it is because I believe implicitly in non-violence and believe that violence is ruinous for India, that I have said that when violence becomes the creed of India, I should seek the shelter of the Himalayas.

IS KHADI A PASSING PHASE?

The same writer further asks:

> Is it possible that when you will concentrate your energy upon some other part of the programme and pay less attention to the agitation of swadeshi, khadi may lose its popularity and people may revert to old fineries ? Is not this inferable from the illustration of students now pouring in large numbers in Government schools and colleges which suffered tremendous loss at an hour when withdrawing students was the topic of the day?

The illustration chosen is not happy. The schools and colleges have never recovered from the blow given by the agitation to their prestige. No doubt many who left under excitement have reverted to their old haunts. But witness Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee's wail over the loss suffered by the Bengal colleges. The correspondent is probably unaware of the fact that the leaven is still working. But in any case the school agitation was confined to an infinitesimal number and was in its nature of a temporary character, whereas swadeshi applies to every man, woman and child in India. It is of a permanent nature. Swadeshi

is not to be suspended on the attainment of swaraj which is impossible without swadeshi. Lastly, reversion to foreign fineries is an expensive thing. Therefore, whilst I am prepared to grant that there are people who simply put on swadeshi for show and they are likely to fall out in the end, the vast majority will remain staunch to swadeshi. Swadeshi is not merely a means. It is both a means and an end.

THE EFFECT OF MY ARREST

The correspondent's third question is:

> Do you not believe that the Government hesitates to arrest you not because of our moral victory but because it fears violent mobs bursting out throughout the country? And is it not your conviction that the movement will either go down in speed or be spoiled when you are in a lock-up?

It is difficult to know the Government's mind. I do not know that it has a mind. My surmise is that Government feels the moral force of the movement. and fears an outbreak also. That there is still fear of an outbreak is no credit to us. If we could absolutely ensure non-violence under every variety of provocation, we have swaraj that very moment. We have certainly gone a long way in that direction, and it strengthens my faith in the possibility of swaraj being established during this year. I should be deeply disappointed and feel hurt, if my arrest should result in slackening the speed or the movement being spoiled. On the contrary it is my conviction that my arrest will result in removing all sloth and quickening the pace.

INTEREST OF MINORITIES

The final question of this searching examiner is:

> What guarantee is there that when swaraj is obtained, the smaller communities such as the Parsis will not be ruled out by the larger? We often-talk of our noble relations, but what crucial test is there that in the swaraj parliament racial prejudice will not assert itself?

The movement is its own test. It is a movement of free growth of opinion. It is one of purification and a nation purified will deserve the curse of mankind, if it allows petty prejudices to rule its deliberations. Moreover the methods being pursued by us provide every interest with power of self-defence. It is the secret of non-co-operation, that it arms the weakest of the community with the power of self-determination and protection.

Young India, l0-11-1921

33. THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

The present All-India Congress Committee met for the last time at Delhi on the 4th November.[1] The arrangements were under the control of the renowned Hakimji Ajmal Khan. He is ailing and badly needs rest. But he will not have any. His spacious house and Dr. Ansari's have been turned into dharmsalas for the accommodation of guests, whether Hindu or Mohammedan. The Hindus have their prejudices scrupulously respected. Those who will not take even water at a Muslim house are provided separate quarters. Here in Delhi one certainly finds Hindu-Muslim unity in full working order. The Hindus implicitly and gratefully accept Hakimji's leadership and they do not hesitate to place their religious interests too in his keeping.

The All-India Congress Committee is the people's parliament elected annually. It has year by year grown in importance and representative character. And today it is undoubtedly the mouthpiece of all those adult men and women belonging to any religion or party who can afford to pay four annas, who accept the simple creed of the Congress and who have cared to have their names entered in the Congress register. As a matter of fact, the delegates include Hindus, Mussulmans, Sikhs, Christians almost perhaps in their numerical proportion. I do not know whether it has Parsis and Jews. It has a very fair proportion of women delegates. It has also *Panchama* delegates. If any interest is under-represented, the fault lies with that interest. The delegates are all unpaid and attend at their own expense and pay for their own board and lodging. If the healthy practice on the part of the inviting cities of entertaining the delegates as guests has sprung up, it is a sign of the liberality of the citizens, no part of their statutory obligation. The majority of these elected representatives travel third-class and are satisfied with mere elementary comforts. The house of this people's parliament consisted of a temporary canvas *pandal* with a few shrubs to decorate it. Chairs and tables were provided, I presume, because it would have been difficult to ensure sufficient cleanliness and freedom from dust in the compound where the *pandal* was erected. Yellow-coloured khadi cloth served as tablecloth for the President's table. The members, both men and women, were dressed mostly in coarse khadi, a few only had what is now known as the Bezwada fineness. The dresses were simple and of Indian style. I have

[1] *Vide* "Speech on Civil Disobedience, A.I.C.C., Delhi", 4-11-1921.

gone into these details, because All-India Congress Committee to many of us is a model for the future parliament under swaraj. It is in keeping with the real state of India. It is somewhat a rejection of the poverty of the country, its simplicity and of its climatic requirements.

Contrast this with the false show, the pomp and the extravagance at Simla and at the new Delhi!

As the outer, so the inner. The most important business of the nation was finished ill a most business-like manner inside of twelve hours. Nothing was done or allowed without the closest scrutiny. The resolution on the dispute between the President and the Working Committee was discussed in the calmest manner possible. Jealous of its own rights, the Committee ratified the decision of the Working Committee that the right of interpretation of substantive law belonged to it rather than the President. It would not however allow anything to appear in the resolution which could by any stretch of imagination be considered discourteous to the President.

The resolution of the session was, however, the one on civil disobedience which I give below:

> Whereas there is not much over one month for the fulfilment of the national determination to establish swaraj before the end of the year, and whereas the nation has demonstrated its capacity for exemplary self-restraint by observing perfect non-violence over the arrest and imprisonment of the Ali Brothers and the other leaders, and whereas it is desirable for the nation to demonstrate its capacity for further suffering and discipline, discipline sufficient for the attainment of swaraj, the All-India Congress Committee authorizes every province on its own responsibility to undertake civil disobedience including non-payment of taxes, in the manner that may be considered the most suitable by the respective Provincial Congress Committees subject to the following conditions:
>
> 1. In the event of individual civil disobedience, the individual must know hand-spinning, and must have completely fulfilled that part of the programme which is applicable to him or her, e.g., he or she must have entirely discarded the use of foreign cloth and adopted only hand-spun and hand-woven garments, must be a believer in Hindu-Muslim unity and in the unity amongst all the communities professing different religions in India as an article of faith, must believe in non-violence as absolutely essential for the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and the attainment of swaraj, and if a Hindu, must by his personal conduct show that he regards untouchability as a blot upon nationalism.
>
> 2. In the event of mass civil disobedience, a district or tahsil should be treated as a unit, and therein a vast majority of the population-must have

adopted full swadeshi and must be clothed out of cloth hand-spun and hand-woven in that district or tahsil, and must believe in and practise all the other items of non-co-operation:

Provided that no civil resister should expect to be supported out of public funds, and members of the families of civil resisters undergoing sentence will be expected to support themselves by carding, hand-spinning and hand-weaving or any other means;

Provided further that upon application by any Provincial Congress Committee, it is open to the Working Committee to relax the conditions of civil disobedience, if it is satisfied that any conditions should be waived

Those who were eager to start civil disobedience immediately brought forward a series of amendments which they supported with considerable skill, and yet the speeches were models of brevity. Every one of the amendments was rejected after the fullest discussion. The chief debater was Maulana Hasrat Mohani who being impatient for civil disobedience could not understand the imposition of the tests laid down for would-be civil resisters. One and only one addition was accepted at the instance of the Sikh delegates. They are most sensitive about their special rights. If therefore, Hindu-Muslim unity was maintained, Hindu-Muslim Sikh unity in the Punjab must also be insisted upon. "Then why not mention the others ?" was the burden of other speeches. The result was that 'unity among all the communities professing other religions" was added. It is a wise addition, for it shows that Hindu-Muslim unity is not a menace but it is a symbol of unity among all.

Whilst, therefore, there is perfect unanimity in the Committee, it would be wrong to suppose that there is no obstruction or opposition in the Committee. The Maharashtra party is a capable and drilled body. It has adopted the programme more from loyalty to the Congress and the rule of majority than from deep conviction. It is giving a trial to a programme in which it has no implicit faith. It makes its presence felt by mild obstruction But it is too patriotic to carry obstruction to the point of destruction. Mr. Abhyankar[1] fortifies it by his sledge-hammer oratory. Mr. Aney[2] supports it by his calm logic. Mr. Jamnadas Mehta[3] is the free lance of the party. He effectively uses the Committee for developing his debating skill and

[1] M. V. Abhyankar from Nagpur
[2] M. S. Aney (b. 1880) from Berar
[3] 1884-1955; member, A.I.C.C., 1921-31

obstructive tactics. The Committee refuses to treat him seriously, and he lets you know that he does not expect to be treated seriously. The house laughs at his expense and he heartily joins in it. He enlivened the proceedings at the outset by proposing himself to the chair if no other member would allow himself to be proposed in the place of; member of the Working Committee. He considers the members of the Working Committee to be all honourable men, and the measure of the honour is that they are constantly in his opinion arrogating to themselves rights they do not possess.[1] The reader, however, must not think that all this is done with any poison in the performance. I have not known a better-behaved or more good-humored assembly. And I regard the Maharashtra party to be an acquisition of which any nation would feel proud. Indeed I refer to The party to emphasize my contention that the Committee is composed of men who know their minds and who are determined to give a good account of themselves in their effort to win India's freedom.

Young India, 10-11-1921

34. THE MOMENTOUS ISSUE

The next few weeks should see civil disobedience in full working order in some part of India. With illustrations of partial and individual civil disobedience the country has become familiar. Complete civil disobedience is rebellion without the element of violence in it. An out and out civil resister simply ignores the authority of the state. He becomes an outlaw claiming to disregard every unmoral state law. Thus, for instance, he may refuse to pay taxes, he may refuse to recognize the authority of the state in his daily intercourse. He may refuse to obey the law of trespass and claim to enter military barracks in order to speak to the soldiers, he may refuse to submit to Limitations upon the manner of picketing and may picket within the prescribed area. In doing all this he never uses force and never resists force when it is used against him. In fact, he invites imprisonment and other uses of force against himself. This he does because and when he finds the bodily freedom he seemingly enjoys to be an intolerable burden. He argues to himself, that a state allows personal freedom only in so far as the citizen submits to its regulations. Submission to the state law is the price a citizen pays for his

[1] For Mehta's protest against this, *vide* "A Protest", 1-12-1921.

personal liberty. Submission, therefore, to a state wholly or largely unjust is an immoral barter for liberty. A citizen who thus realizes the evil nature of a state is not satisfied to live on its sufferance, and therefore appears to the others who do not share his belief to be a nuisance to society whilst he is endeavouring to compel the state without committing a moral breach to arrest him. Thus considered, civil resistance is a most powerful expression of a soul's anguish and an eloquent protest against the continuance of an evil state. Is not this the history of all reform? Have not reformers, much to the disgust of their fellows, discarded even innocent symbols associated with an evil practice ?

When a body of men disown the state under which they have hitherto lived, they nearly establish their own government. I say nearly, for they do not go to the point of using force when they are resisted by the state. Their "business" as of the individual is to be locked up or shot by the state, unless it recognizes their separate existence, in other words bows to their will. Thus three thousand Indians in South Africa after due notice to the Government of the Transvaal crossed the Transvaal border in 1914[1] in defiance of the Transvaal immigration law and compelled the Government to arrest them. When it failed to provoke them to violence or to coerce them into submission, it yielded to their demand. A body of civil resisters is, therefore, like an army subject to all the discipline of a soldier, only harder because of want of excitement of an ordinary soldier's life. And as a civil resistance army is or ought to be free from passion because free from the spirit of retaliation, it requires the fewest number of soldiers. Indeed one PERFECT civil resister is enough to win the battle of Right against Wrong.

Though, therefore, the All-India Congress Committee has authorized civil disobedience by Provincial Congress Committees on their own responsibility, I hope they will put due emphasis on the word "responsibility" and not start civil disobedience with a light heart. Every condition must be given its full effect. The mention of Hindu-Muslim unity, non-violence, swadeshi and removal of untouchability means that they have not yet become an integral part of our national life. If an individual or a mass have still misgivings about Hindu-Muslim unity, if they have still any doubt about the necessity of non-violence for the attainment of our triple goal, if they

[1] On November 6, 1913; " Is India Aroused", 28-9-1907.

have not yet enforced swadeshi in its completeness if the Hindus among that mass have still the poison of untouchability in them that mass or that individual are not ready for civil disobedience. Indeed it would be best to watch and wait whilst the experiment is being carried on in one area. Reverting to the analogy of the army, those division that watch and wait are just as much co-operating actively as the division that is actually fighting. The only time, whilst the experiment is going on, that individual civil disobedience may be resorted to simultaneously, is when the Government obstruct even the silent prosecution of swadeshi. Thus if an order of prohibition is served upon an expert spinner going to teach or organize spinning, that order should be summarily disregarded and the teacher should court imprisonment. But in all other respects, in so far as I can judge at present, it will be best for every other part of India scrupulously to respect all orders and instructions whilst one part is deliberately taking the offensive and committing a deliberate breach of all the unmoral state laws it possibly can. Needless to add that any outbreak of violence in any other part of India must necessarily injure and may even stop the experiment. The other parts will be expected to remain immovable and unperturbed, even though the people within the area of experiment may be imprisoned, riddled with bullets or otherwise ill-treated by the authorities. We must expect them to give a good account of themselves in every conceivable circumstance.

Young India, 10-11-1921

35. HOW CELIBACY CAN BE OBSERVED

A volunteer has written to me a very pathetic letter saying that, despite his earnest efforts, he cannot observe *brahmacharya*. He suffers from discharges in sleep and often wished to commit suicide. I see panic in this mentality. As long as a man is not doing a wrong deliberately or a man and a woman do not look at each other with a lustful eye, there is no cause for concern. Having learnt to control our mind while we are awake, we should trust to God for what happens in sleep. If there is a discharge in sleep, we should understand that the mind is not yet totally free from lust. "Sense-cravings subside in a man who refrains from gratifying them, but pleasure in their objects remains; it vanishes only when he has had a vision of the supreme."[1]

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 59

This is a statement of experience and is literally true. Sinning is possible only so long as the atman has not realized itself. Once it is illuminated, all possibility of sin vanishes. One who constantly strives to observe brahmacharya should follow these rules:

1. He should be moderate in eating.

2. He should eschew from his diet spices, excessive ghee, fried articles, sweets, meat, etc.

3. He should of course never take liquor, but even tea, coffee, and other similar drinks may be taken only for medicinal purposes.

4. He should wash his private parts with cold water twice or thrice [a day] and should pour cold water over them.

5. He should never take heavy meals.

6. He should give up late meals in the evening.

7. His last meal should always be light so that he goes to bed with an empty stomach.

8. He should not read erotic books, should not talk above or listen to such things.

9. He should look upon every woman as his sister and never look at anyone with greedy eyes. He should never allow any such thought in-his mind that this woman is good-looking and the other is not. If beauty consisted in shape or colour, we would have gratified our sight by looking at statues. Beauty lies in virtue and this is not a thing which can be perceived by the senses. He should control his passions by reflecting that a man who thinks of his mother or sister as beautiful or not beautiful commits a sin.

10. He should never be alone with a woman.

11. He should always keep his body and mind well occupied. I believe regular spinning to be a great help. This is only a guess. I am not yet in a position to speak from experience. It is my conjecture that the spinning-wheel helps more in acquiring self-control than any other type of physical work.

12 He should ever keep repeating God's name for self purification. A theist believes that God sees the inmost depths of our heart, that He watches our movements even when we sleep. Such a man, therefore, should remain vigilant for all the twenty-four hours. Whatever the work we may be doing, mental or physical, we should never forget to go on repeating God's name. His name delivers us from all our sins. After a little practice, everyone will discover that it is

possible to keep repeating God's name while One is doing anything or thinking about anything. Inward repetition of God's name is the only exception to the general rule that a person can think about only one thing at a time because it is spontaneous to the *atman*. Other thoughts are the product of ignorance. For one who knows that God does everything, who is wholly absorbed in thoughts of Him, what remains for such a one to do or to think about? Such a person stops thinking about his separate identity and regards himself only as an instrument in God's hands. I believe it is impossible to observe perfect *brahmacharya* in action, speech and thought without this constant remembering of God.

Anyone who observes these rules will certainly succeed in mastering his senses. Striving in this manner, he should stop worrying and not be troubled in the least by discharges in sleep. He should regard them as evidence of his not being watchful enough and should become more vigilant, but should not in the least feel nervous. Yes, if his thoughts become impure and he is tempted to infect another person with his impurity, he may by all means commit suicide. Committing suicide is a thousand times preferable to sleeping with another's wife.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-11-1921

36. MY NOTES

AN ADVISER

Says one adviser: "There was a comment once in *The Indian Social Reformer* to the effect that Gandhi blindly clings to his inner voice and then does not care to think over or even wish to know what other great men think about him." He then-politely adds that, if this criticism is justified, it is a matter of regret. He proceeds to quote from famous British writers who say that every public servant must take into account what his critics or opponents say against him and, therefore, he advises me that I ought to read and ponder over the criticism by the learned Mrs. Annie Besant[1] and others. He concludes the letter with an apology for quoting from British writers. I get many such

[1] 1847-1933; President of the Theosophical Society; founder of the Central Hindu College, Benares; President, Indian National Congress, 1917

letters, and I like to have them. The correspondent need not have apologized at all. I do not look down upon British writers. I have read the works of Many and profited from them. I literally adore some British writers. It is the duty of every humble and sensible man to read and reflect over adverse criticisms. A man learns more from his critics than from his followers. Hence I think first about how many people disapprove of my views rather than how many approve. And if I do not easily change my views once formulated, one good reason for it is that usually I have already examined with care what is said against them. There is not a single criticism by the learned Mrs. Annie Besant which has escaped my careful consideration. One thing, however, is true. I give prime importance to my inner voice. Opposed to it, even the works of great men have, they ought to have, no weight with me. No other course would be right for a swarajist. If a man does not give the first importance to his inner voice, he will forfeit his humanity and lose all his worth. We should know, to be sure, that everyone does not hear the inner voice. It is heard only by one who is ever devoted to study and is a man of discrimination, humility and faith. I do not neglect to study and am not devoid of discrimination and humility. Faith I certainly have. I strive my best to cultivate self-restraint. I believe, therefore, that I hear the inner voice. Everyone can be what I am and hear the inner voice. The man who hears it has gained the strongest support. He can then examine the words of the greatest of men. He may sometimes err in his judgment, but, when he does so, he admits the error in all humility and expiates for it.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

The same correspondent asks me: "If you advise civil disobedience, why don't you, at the same time, advise refusal to submit to the penalty for disobedience?" Such refusal however, would only lead to anarchy, because there would be nothing "civil" about it. The word "civil" suggests that the order alone is to be disregarded, not the penalty. In any case, there can be no question of refusing to submit to the penalty. Civil disobedience has its source in soul-force. Glorying in his physical might, the tyrant seeks to conquer the world. The man of soul-force hands over his body to the tyrant and keeps his soul free, for no tyrant can do anything to a man's soul. Prahlad offered civil disobedience, but was not scared when thrown from the top of a hill. He even embraced as if it were a friend a red-hot pillar. With a smile on his face, Sudhanva plunged into a cauldron of boiling

oil. Joseph, the prophet, preferred to go to jail to obeying wicked orders. A civil resister may not pay a fine, for that would be his voluntary act. Being imprisoned is not a voluntary act, since it is the oppressor who throws him into jail.

A QUESTION INSPIRED BY FEAR

The same correspondent asks: "Supposing as a result of non-co-operation, the British severed their connection with us; how can we be sure, in that case, that India will not be invaded by Afghanistan or some other power? If that happens, we should be where we were."

The question does indeed worry some persons. If it worries many we shall not get swaraj, for those who are afraid of Afghanistan, Japan, or some other country will necessarily prefer to remain under the British umbrella. Swaraj means no more and no less than being free from this fear. If we get the strength to drive out the British, will that same strength not help us to resist Afghanistan or Japan ? So long as we have not fully adopted swadeshi we Shall remain a prey to fear. The complete adoption of swadeshi is like the virtue of a perfectly faithful wife. Just as no ruffian can cast an evil eye on such a woman, so will none be able to look with a covetous eye at Mother India, attired in self-spun and self-woven clothes. Of what profit will a self-reliant India be to Japan ? How can Afghanistan harm India if her sons, Hindus and Muslims, have become united ? He alone has reason to be afraid of Japan who does not want to follow swadeshi. He may fear the Afghan who doubts the Muslims' sense of honour. The swarajist should shed all fear.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-11-1921

37. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, LAHORE

November 10, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi supported the resolution and in doing so made a speech in the course of which he said that while seconding the resolution of congratulations to the Ali Brothers and others, he wished to say that if they wanted to release the Ali Brothers and other non-co-operators from jail within the year, then they should follow the programme of non-violent non-co-operation. The Ali Brothers had sent a message to say that they wished to be released only by the orders of swaraj government. If they wanted to strive for the righting of the Khilafat and the Punjab

wrongs there was only one way to do so. He wished to congratulate the Punjab on its progress but the Province had not made progress sufficient for winning swaraj within the year.

In the first place, the Prince's visit should be totally boycotted. A resolution to that effect had been passed by their Municipal Committee but attempts were being made to secure a reversal of that resolution, but he firmly hoped that they would not allow themselves to be disgraced. He congratulated the Municipality on its decision. They were not the enemies of the Prince nor did they wish to insult him. He went further and said that if anybody would dare touch a single hair of the Prince, they should be ready to protect him (the Prince) with their lives. That was their duty. But there was also the duty to India. The Prince was coming as a Prince to strengthen the present Government. If they had any sense of humanity or love of country or any regard for the Khilafat or the Punjab wrongs, then no matter who came, Prince or no Prince, they should boycott his visit. As he had said once in Poona, even if Gokhale came to strengthen the present Government, they should not offer him welcome. He hoped that the Punjab would offer no welcome to the Prince.

Another matter which had been dealt with by the Municipality was in regard to the Lawrence Statue which had on it the inscription: "Will you be governed by the pen or the sword ?" The day had come when none could threaten India. Indians did not want to be frightened by the sword nor influenced by the pen of anyone. He congratulated their Municipality. When their Municipality had resolved on a thing, all men and women should unite. They were no enemies of Lord Lawrence, but they did not like the inscription of the statue to remain. Things in India had changed. India feared none but God. They did not want that statue to remain. They should hold a meeting and say to the Government: "You shall have to remove the statue."[1]

As stated in the resolution, they would follow the Ali Brothers. If the Government wanted to guard the statue with soldiers, British, Sikhs, Gurkhas or Pathans, then the people should say, "We shall die but have it removed." Every man whom the Municipal Committee orders, should be ready to go to remove the statue. It would be better if some women went and faced bayonets and showed readiness to go to jail. He did not believe the present Government was so uncivilized. It would yield. But if Government behaved madly, they should be ready to uphold their honour and suffer in doing so. If the time came, they should show that they did not care for soldiers. During their trial, the Ali Brothers did not leave their chairs when asked to do so but of their own free will they gave up chairs and spread their cloaks on the ground and sat on them. What they wanted was cool courage. No one, however, was to go at night to remove the statue. They should do everything in the open. They should give notice. Some 12 years ago, somebody had gone at night and put a string of shoes round the

[1] *Vide* "The Pen or the Sword", 17-11-1921.

statue. None should do such a thing.

If they continued non-violent, they would snatch Jazirat-ul-Arab, Smyrna and Thrace and Palestine but if a Hindu, Mohammedan or Sikh committed murder or even uttered abuse, such a man should be regarded as an enemy of the nation. They were to be non-violent. They should cultivate courage like Lachhman Singh and Dalip Singh who died as martyrs at Nankana Saheb. The *mahant* on the other hand, was regarded as a murderer. They should learn how to die.

He wished to congratulate the *Zamindar*. First, Maulana Zafar Ali Khan went to Jail, then his son followed him and then the third editor of the paper. Another had stepped in the editor's place and he (the speaker) wished him to go to jail also. He wished women to take the place and suffer. They should not mind what happened under Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, or the Press Act. He hoped the *Zamindar* would continue till its press was confiscated by the Government.

In conclusions, he wished to remind them that there were three things necessary. First was non-violence; second, Hindu-Muslim unity and third, charkha.

The Tribune, 12-11-1921

38. TEST

The time of Gujarat's test is approaching. It is not a question of months now, but weeks. Soon we shall be counting the days and then only hours.

On the one hand, Gujarat has to make the Congress session a glorious success and see that it is not found wanting in hospitality, practical efficiency and generosity.

On the other hand, Gujarat has to show itself worthy of the honour it won by being the first to declare itself in favour of non-co-operation[1]. It should organize at least one taluka which will be ready, and have the strength, to face death.

I have already given the conditions to be fulfilled for this. It may be said that the All-India Congress Committee has accepted them. These are conditions which can be stated in concrete terms, but we should also pay attention to something else about which no resolution can be passed and yet without which no taluka can fulfill the other conditions. Is it any wonder that a person who has learnt the theorems of geometry merely by rote without understanding them

[1] At she Gujarat Political Conference held at Ahmedabad on August 27, 28 and 29, 1920.

should occasionally commit a howler? What would be his plight if, having memorized a step with "therefore", he says "because"? Just as this person would betray his unintelligent cramming, so will anyone claiming to have fulfilled the All-India Congress Committee's conditions without understanding them be able to proceed no further than the gate. On reaching it, he will find that he does not know the secret of opening it.

This struggle, from its very nature, is one of dharma. Call it practical or idealistic, political or social,—no matter by what name it is known—it is rooted in dharma. We are fighting it for the sake of dharma and in the name of dharma. The Ali Brothers put all their cards on the table. "When it is a question of choice between the law of God and the law of the state, between the Koran and the Penal Code, we certainly prefer to obey our Khuda and our holy Koran." This was their attitude. This fight is thus for enabling everyone to understand and follow his own religion, whether Hinduism or Islam, Zoroastrianism or Christianity. Everyone should be ready to lay down his life for his faith. He who gives his life will be saved. He who takes another's life will lose his own. If one could truly follow one's dharma by killing others, lakhs of men would have attained *moksha* by now.

The only course, therefore, in an hour of difficulty is to pray to God. He who lacks such faith in Him will abandon the struggle sooner or later. A counterfeit rupee may pass the hands of a hundred shop-keepers but it will not command better value for that. It is sure to be returned from the banker's counter at last. And all those persons through whose hands it may have passed will have been polluted by its touch, more or less. In the same way, those of us who are counterfeit coins are sure to turn back at the last moment.

The game is for those who enjoy playing it, and the field of battle for those who are ready for the consequences. The invitation is to one and all, but only those who are really hungry may sit at the table. Others may sit, if they like, but they will suffer afterwards from an overfull stomach. One who is not hungry will not relish the sweetest dishes, and a hungry man will feast even on a plain *jowar*[1] *rotla*[2]. Similarly, those alone will stand their ground who have understood the meaning of non-co-operation and the secret of dharma. Everything is

[1] Millet

[2] A thick, round cake of unleavened bread

plain to the man of understanding, but to one who lacks understanding everything is difficult. What will a mirror avail to a man who is blind?

These are no-easy times. Let us not take a hasty step and repent for it afterwards. If no taluka in Gujarat is ready, we may return the *hundi*[1]. But, having once signed it, we must pay the amount in full. This is the time for Gujarat to make its choice. Once the choice is made, there can be no retreat. If, in a quixotic spirit of bravado, we accept the challenge now and can do nothing afterwards, we shall be shamed to death. At this stage, however, Gujarat need feel no fear or hesitation.

Let us now see in what our fitness consists:

1. Remaining peaceful
2. Hindu-Muslim unity
3. Swadeshi
4. Removal of untouchability

All this is easy enough.

Civil disobedience? We are not strangers even to that. "The jail", of course, goes with it. Well, we will take it in our stride. So many of the best have been in prison, have had a taste of it. Why, then, cannot we do as much? So this, too, is not difficult.

But . . . ?

If martial law is proclaimed? If the Gurkhas descend upon us? If Tommy Atkins takes over? And then, suppose they spear us, shoot us down and force us to crawl on our bellies? Let them come, by all means. If they order us to crawl? We may die, but not move on our bellies. Supposing they spear us, what then? Instead of dying of the plague, we shall fall to the spear. If they shoot us, we will certainly not turn our backs. We have enough courage now to uncover Our chests and receive the bullets as fearlessly as we catch the flying *moi* in *moi-danda*[2]. We should convert Gurkhas into our friends. If they do not respond, what greater joy than dying at our brothers' hands? As we say this, we do feel proud of Ourselves.

But how shall we feel while acting?

I do trust that timid Gujarat will rise to the occasion this time. But the pen trembles even as I write this. When has Gujarat had any

[1] A bill of exchange or a draft

[2] An Indian game

occasion to hear the thundering of guns? When did it ever see rivers of blood flowing? Can Gujarat stand the sight of guns shooting away like so many crackers bursting and heads being smashed like earthen pots?

If it can see unaffected others' heads being smashed, it will cease to be "Gujarat the Glorious". If it can see its own heads being broken, it will win immortal fame, What is the training required for this?

Faith in oneself. That faith no resolution of the All-India-Congress Committee can inspire. God is the protector of the weak. He it is who gives courage. He who enjoys Rama's protection can be harmed by none. Since He is the giver of this physical frame, let Him claim it back. This body cannot be preserved by anything we do. Like the rupee, it should be readily expended in a good cause. And what more glorious occasion to sacrifice it than in the attempt to free ourselves from this tyranny? Anyone who sincerely feels thus will, with a smile on his face uncover his chest and receive the bullets fearlessly as if they were no more than rubber balls.

Only if it has this unshakable faith may any taluka of Gujarat plunge into the battle.

It is not necessary that all must have such faith. I have stated what measure of it will suffice. It does not matter if those who lack this faith do not have the strength to face a hail of bullets. But they must have the grit to refuse to surrender and bend their knees even if their houses are plundered. Let them plunder, if they will. We are bound to return to these very homes, if we survive; if we die in the attempt to recover them, well, that will be swaraj.

If even one taluka does not have this strength, how can we show our firmness for swaraj? But, on the day when one single taluka emerges successful from this test, that day we shall definitely have won swaraj, because on that same day India will have proved its skill in wielding a divine weapon.

And it is not as if we would have displayed any extraordinary strength in doing all this. To act thus is but part of man's nature. The Boer women showed this heroism. Hundreds of thousands of Britons showed it, and Turkish men and women are showing it today.

But there is a difference. These others may kill as well as die. We, however, know that immortality is won only by laying down one's life. Is it in any way difficult to give up the way of killing and learn

that of dying ? For dying, one requires dauntless courage. The man of faith will have it in the winking of an eye. For killing, one requires strength of body and skill in shooting. One needs to learn, besides, a thousand other evil things before one can become proficient in killing and the end-result is that one earns for oneself the title of a murderer.

But some Hindu will demur and say, "This is all about the Kshatriya spirit. Has not Gujarat been always a stranger to it? We know only trade and commerce." Gujarat may be as described above, but this cannot be the meaning of Hinduism. Everyone, whatever his caste, should have the qualities of all the four castes. The distinctive quality of one's own may predominate in one, but a person altogether devoid of the qualities associated with castes other than his own is no man. Be mother who knows how to die for the sake of her child is a Kshatriya woman, and the husband who gives up his life to save his wife is a Kshatriya. But we do not call such brave persons Kshatriyas, because it is not their profession to protect the world.

At this juncture, it is everyone's dharma to protect India—that is, the world—because this has ceased to be anybody's dharma in particular—so it seems at any rate.

So much about the Hindus. What are the Muslims, Parsis and others in Gujarat expected to do ? India is theirs too, and so also Gujarat. It is their Dharma as well to free India from her slavery and they can do this only by laying down their lives.

Everyone, therefore, who calls himself an Indian, be he a Hindu, Muslim, Parsi, Christian, Jew, or anyone else, has to learn and master this *mantra* of dying without killing. Only the man who has faith in God can learn it and act on it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-11-1921

39. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SABARMATI,
Tuesday [*November 15, 1921*]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Even a mother will not serve [food] without [the child] asking for it.[1] Unless you shout, you will have no customer for your berries.[2] How will a mother know what the child wants? And the condition of the berry-seller's basket the woman alone knows. If, therefore, you asked for the thing and had it, what is there to be ashamed of?

I got your *bhajans* and have read them. Maybe poetic talent grows during illness, but, in displaying it, do you not delay your recovery ? If you refrain from exercising it and even then it shows itself after recovery, it would be worthier of admiration.

If we regard illness as an opportunity for listening to the promptings of the inner voice [for self-examination] and constantly look within ourselves, that enhances our strength.

I have received a telegram from Motilalji telling me that your health is quite all right.

May God grant you the strength to keep your vows.

May you both be happy and be active in service.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11414

40. LETTER TO A. S. FREEMANTLE

[After *November 15, 1921*]

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your letter of the 15th instant. I am publishing the correspondence in full in *Young India*—not your letter authorizing publication.

Yours faithfully,

From a Photostat: S.N. 7663

[1] Gujarati sayings
[2] *ibid*

41. SPEECH ON BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF RAJCHANDRA, AHMEDABAD

November 16, 1921

SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

I wish to refresh your memory. You may have forgotten the occasion, but I have not. After my return from England, we had met in the Premabhai Hall in Ahmedabad to celebrate the birth anniversary of this illustrious person. I had said then that, if we continued our disorderly noises, far from adoring the great man to respect whom we had gathered, we would be profaning his name. After this, with some difficulty people were made to keep quiet for a while. Much water has flowed down the Sabarmati river since then. We, too, have gone through many experiences, both sweet and bitter, and have learnt to some extent the lesson of keeping order at meetings. It is one of the simplest rules of civilized behaviour to arrive at a meeting in time and not to leave one's seat till it ends. If I may say the same thing with reference to our subject today, this rule is the first lesson in the path of compassion.

We must suffer inconvenience ourselves so that others may be comfortable. It is licence, not discipline, to act upon the impulse of the moment without pausing to consider how our action may affect others in the world. Such behaviour argues the Satanic temperament, not the godly. It is the Satanic way to embrace disorder as order. Where it is all noise and no consideration or respect for anyone, it is the Satanic way which the people follow. We cannot point to one specific mark through which we may recognize an action as being Satanic. Every action is prompted by mixed-motives. An action which springs from restlessness in the heart and creates the very image of restlessness, should be regarded as characteristic of the Satanic way.

I stand first, these days, in using the word "Satanic". Not that I am enamoured of it. The world may imagine that I am, but my conscience tells me that I am prompted by nothing but compassion in using it. There is no hatred and no anger behind it. I describe things as I see them. In this, I merely follow the way of compassion. Today's occasion is twice welcome as affording an opportunity for reflection over the meaning of compassion.

We revere the person for honouring whose memory we have gathered here. I, too, rank myself among his adorers. A critic can

never be this. This is, therefore, not the place for sceptics. Even such persons may attend in a spirit of humility to get their doubts resolved. If, however, the motive is to find food for one's scepticism, the rule of civilized behaviour requires that one should leave this place. Everyone in the world should have freedom. The sceptic should certainly have a place where he can be himself, but likewise the devotee or the worshipper, too, should have a place where he can go ahead with his work undisturbed by criticism. I assume, therefore, that only those who love the poet and hold him in reverence have come to this meeting. It is to these persons that I say that today's occasion is twice welcome.

The man in whose hallowed memory we have gathered here was the living embodiment of this religion of compassion. He understood it well and had perfected it in his life. This same compassion inspires our present activities in the country. It is not anger which prompts them. The situation as it has developed has given us sufficient reason to be angry and has hurt us deeply. But, even at this unhappy hour we pause and think how we may act so as not to hurt the opponents; how, on the contrary, we may do a good turn even to them. Non-co-operation springs from compassion and not from anger. Afraid that we may be in the wrong, we refuse to be angry with the opponent and, instead, ourselves flee from him.

This certainly leads to serious results. Those persons or institutions against which we employ non-co-operation are indeed hurt by our action, but the religion of compassion does not teach that we may never hurt anyone. That is not the meaning of compassion I have learnt from the Poet. True compassion lies in doing what is good or performing our duty even at the cost of inflicting pain on others through our action.

I have often declared that I have learnt, and learnt much, from the lives of many persons. But it is from the Poet's life that I have learnt most. It was from his life that I understood the way of compassion. There can be no act which will not hurt the feelings of someone or another, but the pain must have been inflicted out of compassion. Two conditions have to be satisfied for this purpose:

1. We can do something which hurts someone only if it hurts us more than it hurts him.

2. Our motive must be absolutely pure. We should have no other thought in our mind than the welfare of the other person.

Let us suppose that my son is a drink-addict and a smoker and is given to dissolute ways. He asked me for some money. Till now I used to give him whatever he asked for, because I was a blind father. From my association with Raychandbhai, however, I learnt that not only should I myself not drink and smoke and live an immoral life, but that I must save others too from these things. It is, therefore, my duty to refuse to give a penny to my son, even to snatch away a wine-glass from his hand if I see him holding one. If I come to know that he keeps his liquors in a particular chest, I must burn it. If I see a wine bottle, I must smash it. The son will certainly hurt, and he will look upon me as a heartless father. But a father who understands the meaning of compassion is not afraid of hurting his son or of being cursed by him. The way of compassion and benevolence dictates that, in such circumstances, one should snatch away the wine-bottle from the son's hand. I would not do this forcibly but, if I come to know that he keeps his liquor bottle at a particular place in the house, I would seize it from there and smash it.

Raychandbhai suggested an excellent rule of guidance in following this way, that we may not displease others in ordinary matters, may not start reproaching people over trifles in the name of the path of compassion. If we understand this simple rule, many things, which otherwise puzzle us, we would do out of deference to others. It may be I do not understand why we should wear khadi and am in love with fine muslin; but, then, it happens that in the society in which I live all wear khadi, and we commit no wrong in wearing it. I should, then, follow society. Raychandbhai taught me this simple rule.

Once, in Bombay, we were discussing the path of compassion. The point was whether one may use leather. In the end, we both agreed that we cannot do without leather. Professions like agriculture must go on. However, if we cannot do without it altogether, we should certainly refrain from wearing on the head anything containing leather. I have always been a man who would not miss a chance for a jest. I asked him to examine the cap on his head. He was a man ever wrapped in contemplation and never thought about what he wore and how he covered himself. The fact that there was a leather-strip in his cap had entirely escaped him. But as soon as I pointed it out, he tore the piece off. I don't suppose that my argument was so cogent that it convinced him instantly. He did not argue at all. He simply thought that my motive was good and that I held him in reverence. So why

should he enter into an argument with me ? All he did was quietly to pull out the leather-strip and I am sure he never again thereafter wore any head-dress containing leather. Even if, however, somebody tells me that he actually saw the Poet wearing such a cap after that, I would not be hurt. If I had occasion to mention the thing to him again, he would have immediately torn off the piece of leather. It might have remained through over sight.

In this lies the greatness of great souls. Such behaviour shows that they are free from egotism. They are ready to learn even from children. It is the characteristic of great men not to mind difference of views in small matters. To those who, in the name of the religion of compassion, always differ with others in every small matter and claim to be guided the voice of conscience, I would say that they hear no such voice, or that, as in animals, the *atman* in them is not yet awake. This is so with most of us. The difference between man and the brute is that in the former, the *atman* can wake up to the full. If we follow the world in ninetynine things, in regard to the hundredth thing we may tell it that its way is not right. But how can a man who is at daggers drawn with the world from his birth can act with love for the world?

In most cases, we should behave as though we were inert things. The difference between wholly inert matter and living matter as practically nil. The entire world seems to be inert matter, the *atman* shines but rarely. Those who live on a higher plane act on this principle. I saw that Raychandbhai did this.

Had he been living today, he would have certainly blessed the present movement. It is based on dharma. No man who is imbued with compassion can but join it. The movement is sure to produce excellent effects in the political, economic and other spheres. But the happiest result will be that it will have saved many persons and made some fit for *moksha*. If we do not discover this by the end of the year, life will become unbearable to me.

Raychandbhai often used to say that he could bear being transfixed with spears, but could not bear being stabbed with the spear of the lies, the hypocrisies and the oppression which prevail in the world and of irreligion masquerading as religion. He was full of indignation over oppression and I often saw him boil over. The whole world was his kith and kin. The grief which we feel at the death of our own brother or sister, he used to experience at the existence of

suffering and death in the world. If somebody argued that the people suffered for their own sins, he would ask what drove them to sin. We call the time the Age of Kali when the path of virtue is not easy but lies through hills and valleys. During this Age, virtue is a; rare sight in the world and vice flourishes, masquerading as virtue. If, in such a state of affairs, we wish to follow the path of compassion, our hearts must be filled with unendurable pain. Far better, we should feel, that the body should become feeble and perish than that we should go on living in these conditions.

This seems to me the real reason why Raychandbhai died at such an early age. It is true indeed that he suffered from a disease, but the pain he felt at the sight of suffering in the world was unbearable to him. If the physical disease had been the only cause, he could have won the battle against it. But he was troubled with the thought how in these-evil times one could realize the *atman*. Such a feeling is an indication of the spirit of compassion.

It is not the height of compassion to avoid killing a bug. True, a bug may not be destroyed, but, at the same time, one should see that one does not permit bugs to breed. Letting them breed is more cruel than destroying them.

All of us let them breed. Jains do that and so do I, a *Vaishnava*[1]. We do not know cleanliness. When we go on adding to our possessions, we do not think of the consequences. What else put breeding [of bugs] can we expect from accumulation of unnecessary things ?

It is indeed a form of compassion not to kill insects such as bugs and mosquitoes. But the refusal to kill a human being is the higher form of it. What should we do when we are forced to choose between killing a human being and destroying a bug? Circumstances may possibly arise in which it may be our duty to save a bug at the cost of human life. But the other way about is also possible. I am suggesting a way which will save us from either of these contingencies. This is the true spirit of compassion.

The Poet used to say at times: “Had Jainism not fallen into the hands of those who are called Jains, it would have filled the world with marvel at its truths. The *Vanias*[2] bring discredit on the truths of Jainism. They scatter corn over ant-hills. If any preparation of potato

[1] A worshipper of Vishnu

[2] Community traditionally engaged in trade and commerce. Most Jains belong to this community.

chances to get into their mouth, they feel prices of conscience. In such small matters, they are ever punctilious. They are welcome to be so, but those who imagine that this is the height of Jainism really stand on the lowest level of dharma. That level is for the fallen, not for the pure in heart." Many Jains, therefore, say that Rajchandra knew nothing about dharma, that he was a hypocrite and an egotist. I know, however, that he had not a trace of hypocrisy and egotism.

Though it is true that bugs and other insects should not be killed, that is not all that the spirit of compassion means. That is only the first step. During some past age, the belief must have come to prevail that there was no sin in destroying insects to save human life. A sage may have then arisen who must have laid stress on protection of insects and proclaimed: "O fool! Do not destroy insects for preserving the transient body. Pray fervently, rather, that it may perish today rather than tomorrow." From this sentiment arose ahimsa.

But the man who beats his wife or child, though he shrinks from killing a tiny bug, is not a Jain, nor a Hindu, nor a *Vaishnava*. He is a cipher. On this sacred day of the Poet's anniversary, let us give up the narrow meaning of compassion and interpret the word in the broadest sense. It is a sin to hurt the feelings of a single person or to regard him as an enemy. Anyone who wants to see General Dyer hanged, or Sir Michael O'Dwyer burnt alive, is neither a Jain, nor a *Vaishnava*, nor a Hindu. He is nobody and nothing. The very essence of ahimsa lies in burning our anger and in cleansing the soul. Who am I to judge General Dyer? I know that I am myself full of ill will. How many persons I may be murdering in my mind! What right have I to judge General Dyer? I have, therefore, resolved not to retaliate if anyone attacks me with a sword. This is the path of compassion and the underlying principle of the non-co-operation movement.

But in my speeches I do not mention the word "compassion". I am talking about it today because this is the anniversary celebration of Srimad Rajchandra. I know that the result of this movement will be to spread the spirit of compassion. When that result follows, people will recognize it by themselves.

There is greater sin in killing a serpent or a tiger in a human form than in killing a real serpent. We kill a tiger out of fear, not in anger. If there really is a Dharmaraja who judges our sins and good deeds, he will perhaps have pity on the person who may have killed a tiger and forgive him, because he will have only followed the natural

instinct of the beast in him. One beast will have killed another. But behind the murder of a human being, there is the spirit of revenge and anger, of pride and hypocrisy. Dharmaraja will say: "You fool! What endless scheming and swindling must have preceded the murder!"

I tell Jains, and others too, that compassion does not merely mean not killing bugs, ants and other insects, though certainly they should not be killed. It also means that no soul born as a human being must be cheated. And yet what else do the businessmen do ? If any Jain would show his account books to me, I would immediately prove that he was no Jain. How is the cloth in which we trade produced? Dealers ought to consider whether the manufacture of cloth is not tainted, whether it is not true that animal fat is used in sizing cloth. It must be, besides, repugnant to businessmen to charge exhorbitant rates of interest. This is not worthily done by a Jain. Dealers may reasonably add to the cost of an article one pice or two pice for their services. But why all this cunning higgling and lying? And the interest which is charged for money lent is so cruelly high that it kills the debtor. Wherever I go, I hear complaints against *Vanias*, both Jains and *Vaishnavas*. Many whites ask me to see first what excessive rates of interest our own people charge.

We must cease to be unscrupulous *Vanias* and become Kshatriyas. The Vaisya's dharma does not mean doing no manual work, no ploughing, no heroism and no consideration for right and wrong. The true Vaisya, rather, shows himself heroic in his generosity and discrimination in his business; he follows the Brahmin's dharma, too, by exercising his discrimination and deciding that he may not sell liquor or fish, that he may deal only in pure khadi. We shall fall into sin if others slave for us and we merely lend money and earn interest. At least by way of *yajna*, we should do some bodily labour every day.

Primarily, the *Vania's* sphere is business, but he must also possess the qualities of the other castes. If I should have to engage a Kabuli or a Pathan to protect my wife, it would be better, though I am a Hindu, that I should divorce her and set her free. But what do we find many *Vanias* doing? Most of them have engaged North Indians and Pathans as watchmen. You may do even that; I do not mind it. If, however, you lack the strength to protect your wife and children, you had better retire into a hermit's cottage and live there as befits your dharma. It will not, then, be your duty, as *Vanias*, to come forward to protect the world. The Kshatriyas will do that whenever and wherever

they find people suffering.

The biggest lesson I learnt from Rajchandrabhai's life is that a *Vania* should always live as befits a *Vania*. At present *Vanias* are not true *Vanias*. It is not necessary, for becoming true *Vanias*, to be a great pundit or read bulky volumes. Anyone who does not let himself be defiled, who observes the rules of *yama*[1] and *niyama*[2], who keeps away from untruth and takes care never to do anything contrary to dharma, who has not a trace of lust in his heart and is full of the spirit of compassion, such a person will be fit for the Absolute state; the realization of that state will not be beyond his reach. That is why I do not ask you to learn Sanskrit or to read the *Bhagavati-sutra*. Whether or not you read it, I am indifferent in the matter.

As early as when the anniversary was celebrated in Wadhwan, it was resolved that a library with the name of "Rajchandra Pustakalaya" should be started. There was a proposal for constructing a special building for it. I did not, at that time, show much enthusiasm for The idea. I told the people that, without a soul, the building would be a mere structure of brick and mortar. Today the three-year-old resolve has borne fruit. The circumstances are favourable. We have a worthy man like Jinavijayji to help us. The library of the Puratattya Mandir has also been amalgamated [with this]. Its benefit will be freely available to whosoever takes the trouble to go there.

Please carry home with you what you heard here today and translate it into practice in your life. You may leave here what seemed to you questionable, but forthwith start acting upon what ever you found acceptable, what pleased your ears and your heart.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-11-1921

[1] Rules of moral and ethical discipline and external religious observances
[2] *ibid*

42. MESSAGE FOR PUBLIC MEETING, BOMBAY

Before November 17, 1921

I am sorry that I cannot personally come to Bombay this time even for a day.[1] But I hope that you will excuse me when you know that the work which has detained me here is of greater importance than the worthy task before Bombay.

If you wish to bring glory to Bombay;

1. Not even a child should attend any celebration arranged in honour of the Prince of Wales;

2. No one, young or old, should attend any entertainment programme even if admission to it is free—there are many other days for such things.

3. No man or woman should stir out of the house at all on the 17th without some unavoidable work.

4. Even by mistake one should not go out of curiosity to see what is happening, in the direction of the place where a celebration in honour of the Prince has been arranged.

5. Everyone should stay at home and spin and, if one does not know spinning, concentrate on it for eight hours and learn it from someone.

6. Everyone should spend some time at any rate in singing devotional songs or in prayer. Let city-dwellers not think that God does not exist, or that, even if He exists, it is not necessary to remember Him or seek His help in national work.

7. At the very hour when the Prince will be landing, a bonfire of foreign cloth should be lighted on the open ground by the side of the Elphinstone Road. For this purpose, we should start collecting foreign cloth in such parts of the city from which we have not collected any so far.

8. If the trains, etc., are running, no passenger should be forcibly dragged out.

9. Workers must not stop work without obtaining prior leave.

10. We can be fit for swaraj only if everyone is free to do what

[1] He was, however, persuaded to come. *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Bombay, 17-11-1921.

he chooses in every matter.

Please remember:

Our reason for not joining functions in honour of the Prince is not that we have anything against him personally. He has done us no harm. The reason is that the bureaucracy is using him for its own purposes and that we do not wish to help it in this. It is as much our duty, therefore, to ensure the safety of his person, to refrain from so much as a suggestion of insult to him, as to boycott all functions in his honour.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 20-11-1921

43. LETTER TO HAJI SIDDIK KHATRI

[Before *November 17, 1921*][1]

BHAISHRI AHMED HAJI SIDDIK KATRI,

I send with this the draft of the Resolution. If you wish to make any changes, you may do so. Please read my suggestions given in *Young India*. It would be advisable to have the appeal signed by some eminent Maulana and get it distributed at all places. We shall succeed only if we maintain on the 17th perfect peace in the whole of India. If from today up to the 17th we work hard enough, I am sure that on the 17th all business will be suspended and peace maintained. We shall succeed in this matter only if we strictly adhere to the truth. It is necessary that leaders say the same thing in public as in private.

HAJI SIDDIK KHATRI
HILAL MANZIL
85, ABDUL REHMAN STREET

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 6162

[1] The letter was written in connection with the demonstrations on the occasion of the visit of the Prince of Wales who was to arrive in Bombay on November 17.

44. NOTES

MY INCONSISTENCY

A correspondent asks some pertinent questions in the following pungent fashion:

> When the Zulus broke out for liberty against the British usurpers, you helped the British in suppressing the so-called rebellion. Is it a rebellion to try to shake off the foreign yoke? Was Joan of Arc a rebel? Was George Washington a rebel? Is De Valera one? You may say that the Zulus had recourse to violence. I then ask, was the end bad or the means? The latter may have been so but certainly not the former; so you will be kind enough to explain the riddle. In the last War, when the gallant Germans and Austrians were fighting so bravely against a world combination, you raised recruits for the British to fight against the nations that had done India no harm. Whenever there is a war between two races, one has to hear both parties before coming to a decision, either for or against any of them. In the last war we had a one-sided version only and that from a nation certainly not renowned for truthfulness or honesty. You have all along been an advocate of passive resistance and non-violence. Why then did you induce people to take part in a war the merits of which they knew not, and for the aggrandizement of a race so miserably wallowing in the mire of imperialism? You may say you had faith in the British bureaucracy. Is it possible for any person to have faith in an alien people all whose acts have run so glaringly counter to their promises ? It cannot have been so with a person of such high attainments as yourself. So you will please answer the second riddle.
>
> There is another point to which I should like to refer. You are an advocate of non-violence. Under the present circumstances we should be strictly non-violent. But when India will be free, should we strictly eschew arms even if a foreign nation invaded us ? Would you also boycott railways and telegraphs and steamers even when they will have-ceased to promote exports of the products of our soil?

I hear and read many charges of inconsistency about myself. But I do not answer them as they do not affect anyone but myself. The questions however raised by the correspondent are of general importance and deserve notice. They are by no means new to me. But I do not remember having answered them in the columns of *Young India*.

Not only did I offer my services at the time of the Zulu revolt[1] but before that at the time of the Boer War[2] and not only did I raise recruits in India during the late War, but I raised an ambulance corps in 1914 in London[3]. If therefore I have sinned, the cup of my sins is full to the brim. I lost no occasion of serving the Government at all times. Two questions presented themselves to me during all those crises. What was my duty as a citizen of the empire as I then believed myself to be and what was my duty as an out and out believer in the religion of ahimsa—non-violence?

I know now, that I was wrong in thinking that I was a citizen of the empire. But on those four occasions I did honestly believe that in spite of the many disabilities that my country; was labouring under, it was making its way towards freedom, and that on the whole the Government from the popular standpoint was not wholly bad and that the British administrators were honest though insular and dense. Holding that view, I set about doing what an ordinary Englishman would do in the circumstances. I was not wise or important enough to take independent action. I had no business to judge or scrutinize ministerial decisions with the solemnity of a tribunal. It did not impute malice to the ministers either at the time of the Boer War, the Zulu revolt or the late War. I did not consider Englishmen nor do I now consider them as particularly bad or worse than other human beings. I considered and still consider them to be as capable of high motives and actions as any other body of men and equally capable of making mistakes. I therefore felt, that I sufficiently discharged my duty as a man and a citizen by offering my humble services to the empire in the hour of its need whether local or general. That is how I would expect every Indian to act by his country under swaraj. I would be deeply distressed, if on every conceivable occasion every one of us were to be a law unto oneself and to scrutinize in golden scales every action of our future national assembly. I would surrender my judgment in most

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Congress Meeting", 24-4-1906; "Indian Volunteers", 23-6-1906 ;Indian Stretcher-Bearer Corps", '19-7-1906.

[2] *Vide* "Indian Ambulance Corps", 13-12-1899;"Indian Ambulance Corps in Natal" , 14-3-1900; "The Natal Volunteer Indian Ambulance Corps", 12-11-1904.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary for Interior", 21-1-1914; "Speech at Mass Meeting", 25-1-1914.

matters to national representatives, taking particular care in making my choice of such representatives. I know that in no other manner would a democratic government be possible for one single day.

The whole situation is now changed for me. My eyes, I fancy, are opened. Experience has made me wiser. I consider the existing system of Government to the wholly bad and requiring special national effort to end or mend it. It does not possess within itself any capacity for self-improvement. That I still believe-many English administrators to be honest does not assist me, because I consider them to be as blind and deluded as I was myself. Therefore I can take no pride in calling the empire mine or describing myself as a citizen. On the contrary, I fully realize that I am a pariah untouchable of the empire. I must therefore constantly pray for its radical reconstruction or total destruction, even as a Hindu pariah would be fully justified in so praying about Hinduism or Hindu society.

The next point, that of ahimsa, is more abstruse. My conception of ahimsa impels me always to dissociate myself from almost everyone of the activities I am engaged in. My soul refuses to be satisfied so long as it is a helpless witness of a single wrong or a single misery. But it is not possible for me, a weak, frail, miserable being, to mend every wrong or to hold myself free of blame for all the wrong I see. The spirit in me pulls one way, the flesh in me pulls in the opposite direction. There is freedom from the action of these two forces, but that freedom is attainable only by slow and painful stages. I cannot attain freedom by a mechanical refusal to act, but only by intelligent action in a detached manner. This struggle resolves itself into an incessant crucifixion of the flesh so that the spirit may become entirely free.

MORE CASES IN POINT

I was again an ordinary citizen no wiser than my fellows, myself believing in ahimsa and the rest not believing in it at all but refusing to do their duty of assisting the Government because they were actuated by anger and malice. They were refusing out of their ignorance and weakness. As a fellow-worker, it became my duty to guide them aright. I therefore placed before them their clear duty, explained the doctrine of ahimsa to them and let them make their choice which they did. I do not repent of my action in terms of ahimsa. For under swaraj too I would not hesitate to advise those who would bear arms to do so and fight for the country.

WHAT OF THE FUTURE ?

That brings me to the second question. Under swaraj of my dream there is no necessity for arms at all. But I do not expect that dream to materialize in its fullness as a result of the present effort, first because the effort is not directed to that end as an immediate goal and secondly because I do not consider myself advanced enough to be able to prescribe a detailed course of conduct to the nation for such preparation. I am still myself too full of passion and other frailties of human nature to feel the call or the capacity. All I claim for myself is, that I am incessantly trying to overcome every one of my weaknesses. I have attained great capacity, I believe, for suppressing and curbing my senses, but I have not become incapable of sin, i.e., of being acted upon by my senses. I believe it to be possible for every human being to attain that blessed and indescribable sinless state in which he feels within himself the presence of God to the exclusion of everything else. It is, I must confess, as yet a distant scene. And therefore, it is not possible for me to show the nation a present way to complete non-violence in practice.

RAILWAYS AND TELEGRAPHS

The question about railways and telegraphs is really too insignificant in relation to the great doctrine I have just discussed. I am not myself banishing the personal use of these conveniences myself. I certainly to not expect the nation to discard their use nor do I expect their disuse under swaraj. But I do expect the nation under swaraj not to believe that these agencies necessarily advance our moral growth or are indispensable for our material progress. I would advise the nation to make a limited use of these agencies and not to be feverishly anxious to connect seven hundred fifty thousand villages of India by telegraph and railways. The nation, when it feels the glow of freedom, will realize that they were needed by our rulers more for our enslavement than for enlightenment. Progress is a lame woman. It can only come hopping. You cannot send it by wire or rail.

FALLEN SISTERS

The reader will be glad to learn that the work of reclaiming the fallen sisters of Barisal has been taken up in right earnest. Dr. Roy writes, saying that many of them have been visited, and spinning is being introduced among them. Jagadish Babu who has been in charge of Babu Ashvini Kumar Dutt's school for years has promised to guide

the young Workers who have undertaken this responsible service. I hope that those who have taken up this much-needed service will not leave it half-finished. They must be prepared for disappointments, they must expect slow progress. It is only in such work that is free from excitement or immediate promise of renown that one's love of service for its own sake is tested. I commend the example of Barisal to the other cities also. This purifying work has to be done even after swaraj. Not everyone is qualified for it. Those therefore who feel the call and have the requisite purity should turn their attention to the eradication of this growing vice. The movement naturally has two branches, the reclamation of fallen sisters and the weaning of men from the degrading vice which makes man look upon his sister with lust and tempts him to make her a prey to it. The qualities required for both the branches of work are the same, and the work should be simultaneously done in both the branches if it is to bear fruit.

INFLUENCE OF AN IMPRISONMENT

In the same letter in which he describes the work among the fallen sisters of Barisal, Dr. Roy writes as follows:

> East Bengal is indebted to Pir Badshah Mian's arrest for the Hindu-Muslim unity which is now quite firm and boycott of foreign cloth which is now almost complete among the masses.

Evidence of this character is pouring in from every direction. We must not however rest on our oars. There is still much work to be done. Both the unity and the boycott are tender plants requiring protection and careful watering. The Hindu-Muslim unity must be sustained by each seeking every occasion to serve the other in a silent unostentatious manner. Boycott of foreign cloth can be perpetuated only by the universal adoption of hand-spinning, and every cottage spinning the health-giving music of the wheel. Every group of villages must have an expert who will insist upon the yarn improving in strength, evenness and then fineness. There are enough weavers in India if we can supply them with handspun yarn that can be woven just as well as mill-spun yarn. This one act will bring down prices of Indian mill-woven cloth as nothing else will.

A MYSTIC'S PRAISE OF SPINNING

A friend sends me the following from George Macdonald's *The Prince and Curdie* on hand-spinning:

> As he hesitated, he heard the noise of a spinning-wheel. He knew it at

once, because his mother's spinning-wheel had been his governess long ago, and still taught him things. It was the spinning-wheel that first taught him to make verses, and to sing, and to think whether all was, right inside him; or at least it had helped him in all these things. Hence it was no wonder he should know a spinning wheel when he heard it sing.

THE CHITTAGONG OUTRAGE[1]

In reply to my wire[2] Prasanna Babu has sent the further details which I give below

> Though the people were strictly non-violent and the Gurkhas fell upon them and assaulted them, the bureaucracy have devised noble means of saving their necks by issuing notices under Sec. 144 upon leaders, volunteers, and outsiders indiscriminately, prohibiting them from forming and joining in processions in public streets on the ground that the people who formed the procession on the 20th instant pelted the police and did other violent acts. Such notices were issued on the 27th instant, wherein it is alleged that the Magistrate came to know of the procession and injuries done to the police by the people only on the 25th from the report of the Police Superintendent.
>
> They have also managed to institute a false case under Sec. 144 and 147 I.P. Code against Maulvi Mahomed Kajimali, President, Khilafat Committee, Kalishankar Chakravarti, Editor *Jyoti* (the local vernacular daily), Premananda Datta, Suhkhendubikas Sen, and Mahomed Sirajulhaque, volunteers, yesterday. All the five accused were arrested and except the second and the fifth accused who have come out on bail, the rest have preferred *hajat*. Premananda Datta was at Dacca an the 20th, still he has been brought on the record as an accused.
>
> The people are calmly working out the Congress programme. Hardly anyone is seen in the street with foreign cloth on. We may assure you that the boycott movement is a success here.

This studied attempt to throttle the movement is bound to fail. The non-official commission referred to in the previous notice of the outrage has acted with the greatest promptness and already issued its report, which bears out the facts as stated by the local Congress secretary. The report shows that at least 104 persons were "hit and wounded". Among these was a nine-year-old boy and at least one lady whose protestation that she belonged to the female sex availed nothing. Some of the wounds were of a serious nature.

[1] *Vide* "Another Gurkha Charge", 3-11-1921

[2] Not available

BRAVE STUDENTS

Whilst the All-India Congress Committee was in session, the following interesting telegram was received from the brave medical students of Vizagapatam who, it will be remembered, have been dismissed from their college for their effrontery to wear khadi:

> Thirty nine medical students, Vizagapatam recently dismissed for wearing khadi caps offer their respectful *pranams*[1] on eve this eventful Congress Committee session which must decide question of swaraj by December. Response Mother's call resolved suspend education during period struggle join national service. Therefore organised ourselves into Sevasamiti Ramadandu carrying swadeshi propaganda to very doors. Been so far self-reliant for funds. Assure you Congress Committee our loyalty our humble services in swaraj cause. Prepared share hardships future struggle. Awaiting your instructions and help through our President Sundarrao or Barrister Prakasham.

I commend this wire to the attention of every student. These young men have shown themselves self-respecting by wearing khadi caps and bravely suffering for the sake of self-respect, and patriotic by devoting their time to national service.[2] This country is suffering from the chronic disease of slavery. Those who spend themselves in finding and applying the true remedy for that disease become true surgeons and physicians, and when that universal disease is cured, most of the other diseases will disappear without further application, and the country will be better prepared to train medical men and women in order to treat the rest.

FEUDATORY STATES

The All-India Congress Committee having defined the Congress policy regarding foreign states, the demand was naturally made to define its policy towards our own states. The broad outlines of Congress policy were formulated by the Congress at the Nagpur session, namely of non-intervention in the internal affairs of these states. The states themselves could not wish for anything better or more unequivocal. And the All-India Congress Committee can only define the policy within the four corners of that resolution. Strictly in accord with that resolution, Congress workers have refrained from taking the message of non-co-operation to the states, except its

[1] Salutations

[2] *Vide* also "Notes", 24-11-1921, under sub-title "More About Medical Students".

permanent, purifying or economic parts which would hold good even without non-co-operation. These are the drink evil, swadeshi, Hindu-Muslim unity, non-violence and untouchability. The Congress can have nothing but goodwill towards these states, so long as their subjects are well treated. And even when they are ill-treated, the Congress cannot and will not exercise any pressure or force save that of public opinion. And therefore nationalist organs do not hesitate to discuss, when necessary, in strong language the grievances of the subjects in some of these states. The thoughtless and wanton ill-treatment, for instance, of Sheth Jamnalalji and his party in the confines of Bikaner State whilst they were prosecuting merely their campaign of swadeshi has justly evoked hostile criticism. The liberal States may therefore look for every encouragement from the Congress, and the reactionary ones at the most fierce criticism of their methods and measures. Moreover the Congress cannot but sympathize with the States in their humiliating plight. The imperial power has used them as pawns in its game of exploitation. They are least able to resist the illegitimate and insidious pressure that is brought to bear upon them from time to time. They must therefore realize that the increase of people's power means decrease of the humiliating influence described by me.

FROM ACROSS THE OCEAN

How the Karachi prosecutions have been appreciated even beyond the seas will appear from the following cable just received from Mr. Aswat, Chairman of the Transvaal British Indian Association:

> Convey community's heartiest congratulations families Ali Brothers Dr. Kitchlew and others for the cause of the Motherland. We pray to God to crown the movement with success.

I have only printed one out of many such telegrams or letters received from our countrymen living outside India.

Our countrymen in America too are actively helping the country's cause. Two cablegrams have been received of late from New York. I reproduce the latest:

> Greetings from one thousand Americans open air meeting. We wish civil disobedience programme a success.

To all the young students and others living in the far West I would like to say one word. They would best serve the country by

interpreting the movement as it is and in terms of the East instead of seeking to find Western parallels and giving it a Western colour. It is my conviction that in its present form it has no parallel. It is Eastern, better still Indian in conception and peculiarly suited to the Indian soil. It is too early to say how the West with its modern rush will receive it when it has taken deep root enough to spread its branches to the West. As yet it is still in its infancy and often appears in a Western setting. It has unfortunately to be confessed that it still appears and commends itself to many only in its destructive form. Whilst the latter is absolutely essential, it is the constructive which is the permanent and the best part of it. I am painfully conscious of the fact that to many it appears only to be a preparation for violence, whereas non-violence is not only an integral but the only sustaining part of non-co-operation. It is by itself the largest part of construction. Non-violence at once makes it a religious movement and throws man on God as his only Rock and Refuge. By non-violence the non-co-operator burns his boats and makes steady headway in all weathers. By non-violence the non-co-operator appears before his Maker in his nakedness and commands divine help. He may not appear before Him with his Bible or the Koran or Gita in the one hand and his gun in the other. He appears on the contrary with hands folded, a humble suppliant before the great white Throne. Let the young men abroad understand the essential part of the movement and then attempt to interpret it to the West. Help thus intelligently given will, they will find, bear far richer results than what they have achieved already.

NEW FEATURES OF THE CONGRESS

The ensuing Congress is expected to present several new features. Addresses by distinguished men irrespective of political profession on their special subjects is one. The second is a musical concert in which musicians of all India are invited to take part. It is being arranged by Mr. N. M. Khare of the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya. I trust that there will be a general response from the country. Secretaries of provincial and district Congress committees can assist the enterprise. Some artists may not even see the Congress notices. Indian music of the best type is a decaying art for want of encouragement. We little know the wonderful results that the simple musical instruments of India yield. Somehow or other we have come to labour under the delusion that nothing that does not cost much money or does not come from the West has any real art or value in it. The

coming concert is intended from the Congress platform to disabuse the popular mind of the fallacy. There will be in connection with the concert an exhibition of Indian musical instruments. I hope that lovers of Indian music will assist Mr. Khare by corresponding with him at the earliest possible time. Needless to say only those who are at the top of the profession should be invited by the Congress officials to send in their names.

THE BAR SINISTER

I believe in God working through us and for or against individuals and nations as surely as I believe in the sun rising regularly at the appointed hour from day to day. When therefore I hear that a particular school debars untouchables from attendance, a shudder runs through me and I know that we are not yet fit for swaraj. A letter from the Madras Presidency lies before me, complaining that the head master of a school even instigated his boys against the pending admission of a *Panchama* boy. I am hoping that such unthinkable prejudice is fast becoming a thing of rare occurrence. I have no manner of doubt, that if we seem yet to be far from swaraj, it is because of our weaknesses and our not having carried out the self-imposed conditions, one of the greatest of which is the removal of the bar sinister against one sixth of our countrymen. The Congress workers should realize the necessity of conducting a vigorous campaign against it. It need not in any way interfere with their swadeshi work, for the simple reason that intensive swadeshi work itself is one of the most potent influences in favour of our suppressed countrymen. India cannot be self-contained if the message of the spinning-wheel does not enter the homes of these, the most helpless of our fellow-countrymen. And the message cannot be delivered to them unless we think of them as our blood-brothers and sisters requiring all the gentleness and love we can give them.

DERA ISMAILKHAN

The secretary of the District Congress Committee of Dera Ismailkhan writes, saying that Messrs Pairakhan, Devidas, Nirmaldas, Kishanchand Bhatia, Haji Ahmed Din, Allah Baksh and Mahomed Ramzan were required to file security because they had repeated the Karachi Resolution. They having refused to give security were convicted to two years simple imprisonment. The secretary adds that the trial was farcical and lasted only two hours. Lala Pairakhan is a

member of the All-India Congress Committee. He was for fifteen years in Government service in Baluchistan, but left it after the Jallianwala Bagh massacre and joined the Congress of which he was local secretary when he was arrested. The correspondent says that these convictions took place before judgment in the Karachi case. What however is more puzzling is, that while those who repeated the Resolution at Bombay and led the way are left untouched, those who followed the signatories to the Bombay Manifesto have been imprisoned. I congratulate the more fortunate men of Dera Ismailkhan.

THE KORAN TAKEN AWAY

The secretary of the District Khilafat Committee, Mirpurkhas writes to say that Maulvi Abdul Karim Saheb who was recently convicted and is serving imprisonment in the Hyderabad jail has been deprived of the Koran. Is it because the Maulvi is comparatively unknown that the Koran has been taken away from him and not from the distinguished prisoners of Karachi? It is this kind of thoughtless and unnecessary persecution that breeds ill will which it is difficult to check. No one minds a fair fight, but the deprivation of his religious book from a prisoner is the extreme of meanness.

PREJUDICE AND INSOLENCE

A correspondent from the Tanjore District writes, saying that he and his brother though Brahmins felt that rather than lead a lazy life, they should do some work and they "turned their hands to the plough." So they began agriculture. Thereupon their fellow-villagers became disgusted and excommunicated them. They however remained firm in their resolve. When the Shankaracharya of Kumbakonam visited their part of the District, they went with their offering which was rejected because they had committed the sin of labouring for their livelihood. My correspondent tells me he is not at all put out by the Shankaracharya's action. I congratulate the brothers on their public spirit. Excommunication from a tyrannical society is indeed a reward of merit and should be welcomed. To say that a Brahmin should not touch the plough is a parody of *varnashrama* and a prostitution of the meaning of the *Bhagavad* Gita. Surely the qualities predominantly ascribed to the different divisions are not denied to the others. Is bravery to be the prerogative only of the Kshatriya and restraint only of the Brahmin? Are Brahmins,

Kshatriyas and Sudras not to protect the cow? Can anyone remain a Hindu without readiness to die for the cow? Yet strangely enough, I have a letter from the Madras Presidency seriously telling me, that cow-protection has nothing to do with any but the Vaisyas. When there is so much ignorance combined with insolence she best thing to do is to incur all risks and pursue the path of reform expecting time to prove the truth of one's position. If we combine love with firmness, we shall disarm all opposition in the end. Reformers may neither relent nor become angry.

KHADI IN THEATRES

A correspondent suggests, that if all the theatres at Bombay and elsewhere only adopted khadi for their costumes, the use of khadi would become still more fashionable than it is already. The idea is certainly good. But its enforcement largely depends upon the audience. If the spectators were to insist upon khadi dresses, the proprietors will be compelled to adopt them. They have as a rule no taste save what the public imposes upon them. The best way to enforce the adoption of khadi dresses in theatres is for the regular theatre-goers to ask for khadi costumes. They will have to see to it, that no sham khadi creeps in by stealth. For in theatres more than elsewhere truth is likely to be sacrificed to so-called art or taste. The audience, I suppose, will insist on colours and gaudiness. And whilst it is perfectly possible to have a subdued and beautiful blending of colours on khadi and to have a certain amount of ornamentation about it, the thick variety—and that is the only thing that requires to be made popular—does not lend itself to fantastic combinations without giving rise to positive ugliness. The adoption of khadi on a large scale in theatres therefore means a revolution in public taste and return to simplicity and natural beauty. Our theatres of today are no test of national morals or national taste as in other countries. They are an answer to morbid tastes and an unnatural, unassimilable growth in the nation. Any enterprising manager who recognising the progressive improvement in public taste will make radical changes in his scenery and costumes will certainly deserve the thanks of the theatre-going public.

AN INGENIOUS SUGGESTION

The interest that is being taken in the khadi movement all over India is really remarkable. The suggestion about popularizing khadi through the theatres comes from a Poona graduate. A Punjab correspondent bases this upon his experience of the Punjab. The winter in the Punjab is probably the severest in India, and one of the

adopted to keep up the warmth of the body is by wearing cotton-padded garments and by using cotton-padded blankets. They really give greater warmth to the body even than woollen vests and woollen rugs. But the cotton clothing gets indescribably dirty after a time. What the correspondent suggests is that these garments or the cotton inside them should be renewed every winter. The blankets lend themselves to renewal in the easiest manner. So what he says is that the cotton used for padding should be recarded and spun for manufacturing khadi. The first covers if they are foreign must naturally be destroyed, and one need not go into the merits of destruction for justifying the burning of these things which have gathered dirt in many cases for years. But after the covers are made of khadi, they can be used for summer wear after removing the padding. And for the winter following, according to the correspondent's suggestion, new cotton should be purchased. For an industrious home the suggestion is really fine, and for the poor most economical. For there is no waste and cleanliness is ensured. If the poor people will but learn the necessary simple tailoring, they can have warm or cool health-giving clothing from year to year to suit the different seasons without much cost. If the whole thing is managed judiciously, the reader will observe that a family can be clothed and covered by purchasing a certain quantity of cotton from year to year and at the most paying the family weaver for weaving. The cost of carding and spinning and tailoring is saved. These things can be attended to without difficulty during leisure hours and without encroaching upon the hours required for recreation, or, as the late Lord Kelvin used to say of himself, recreation might be had from change of occupation. But I know the Punjabi as well as I know the Gujarati. And I know that he has ample time at his disposal for attending to his sartorial requirements. But to carry out the correspondent's wise suggestion necessitates a transformation in national habits. Who can deny that it is needed if the nation is no longer to live in a penurious state ? As Mr. Andrews has very properly pointed out in his two articles[1], the economics of the Torrid Zone cannot be the same as of the Temperate. To make India industrial by concentrating labour in one place is to kill the nation. To make India industrious by providing healthy and necessary supplementary occupation in the cottage is to make India healthy, wealthy and therefore happy and contented.

Young India, 17-11-1921

[1] Entitled "Hand-spinning and Hand-weaving" in *Young India*, 3-11-1921 and 10-11-1921

45. THE PEN OR THE SWORD

In Lahore on the Mall there is a statue of John Lawrence with a defiant look in the face with the pen in the right hand and the sword in the left. The writing underneath is, “Will you have the pen or the sword ?” As a work of art it is said to be very good. But it has always been a matter of offence to the citizens of Lahore. They neither want the pen nor the sword imposed upon them.

The statue is municipal property. It was put up in the early eighties when the sense of self-respect was not so keen as now, though I understand that even when it was put up, some of the citizens keenly felt the indignity. Recently the Lahore Municipality passed a resolution by a majority vote ordering removal of the statue to the Town Hall building pending final disposal. The resolution was sent in due course to the Government as all resolutions are. Three Or four days after, an engineer was sent by the Municipality to see how the statue could be removed. Without any notice to the Municipality, the Deputy Commissioner sent a party of police to turn away the engineer and his men. And when the Municipality wanted to know why and how this undue interference took place, the Commissioner issued the following orders[1]. . .

It is clear that the Deputy Commissioner was guilty of assault in having sent the police to turn out the engineer who was doing his legal duty. The Commissioner’s order is an illustration of the meaning of the pen. The Commissioner’s pen is just as much an outrage as the Deputy Commissioner’s sword. The commissioner, because he has the sword, has arrogated to himself judicial powers which do not belong to him. Whether the Municipality has or has not the power to dispose of its own property is purely for a court of law to decide. And what right has the Commissioner to impute malice to the Municipality? The fact is that the Commissioner cannot tolerate the disappearance from a fashionable quarter of Lahore of the spirit that the statue represents. So he has not hesitated to dictate the law to the Municipality.

[1] Not reproduced here; it suspended the execution of the Municipality’s resolution.

Thus what was but an ordinary incident in the affairs of a Municipality which has responded to the new awakening has become a matter of the highest public importance. The citizens, the rate payers of Lahore must by public meetings support the councillors who have been instrumental in passing the resolution. The councillors must take prompt action and give notice, if they have not already done so, that unless Government show good reason to the contrary, the Municipality must do its duty and remove the statue.

The Commissioner has unintentionally given a golden opportunity to the civil resisters of Lahore to try civil resistance in the cleanest and the most intensive manner. If the Government defy the Municipality and use its brute force to prevent removal of the statue, the civil resisters can, after due notice to the Government, proceed to the site with the intention of removing the statue and themselves for arrest or being shot if the Government so wishes.

But this last step can only be taken by disciplined people. It can only be taken when Lahorians are ready to act as one man. There should be no crowds gathering. Only a few individuals can go at a time, say five, of whom one will become the spokesman. They must not bluster, must not argue but simply court arrest. For the immediate object would be not the removal of the statue but inviting arrest. Removal must be the result, if enough men and women offer themselves as sacrifice. There must be a perfect spirit of non-violence prevailing among the people in order to ensure the success of such civil disobedience. Whilst I point out the drastic remedy of civil disobedience, I must warn the citizens of Lahore against adopting the advice without the greatest deliberation. My own experience of a Lahore crowd is that it does not think. It knows no discipline. The volunteers must work methodically amongst the people to create an atmosphere of peace and discipline. I was grieved to notice, that at the Convocation meeting organized on the 9th instant by the National Board of Education several people had entered Bradlaugh Hall without tickets and without permission. This is not merely uncivil but criminal disobedience. For they entered by force where they knew their force would not be resisted by force. Such men are unfit for civil disobedience which presupposes a scrupulous and willing observance of all laws which do not hurt the moral sense. Obedience to laws of voluntary associations as the rule of the managers of the Convocation is only the first step to voluntary and ungrudging obedience to the

laws imposed by the state. Thoughtless disobedience means disruption of society. The first thing therefore for those who aspire after civil disobedience is to learn the art of willingly obeying laws of voluntary associations such as congresses, conferences and other bodies and similarly obeying the state laws whether they like them or not. Civil disobedience is not a state of lawlessness and licence, but presupposes a law-abiding spirit combined with self-restraint.

Young India, 17-11-1921

46. WHAT IS ABUSE?

A correspondent from the United Provinces writes:

Now-a-days the atmosphere is surcharged with clamorous denunciations against the Government. . . . Practically every speech is a mere list of invectives and imprecations. . . .

I for my part heartily abhor this evil. . . .

Violence, to me, does not mean actually assaulting and killing others, but covers also bad language. If so, I cannot see how to justify your own use of the epithets,"Satanic","devilish" and"barbarous" for the Government. There is not the least shadow of doubt that these words come under violence, but that you being the apostle of non-violence utter violence is even in dream unimaginable.

So much for abusive language. Now I take up another question. You always say that you and your followers have arrayed yourselves against the English Government, and not against Englishmen. While you hate the system and want either to mend it or end it, you have absolutely no ill- feeling towards Englishmen themselves. Clearly therefore, though you want to do away with the system, you do not desire to expel the English. If so, even those who claim to be your true followers have not fully imbibed this high principle. I may substantiate this with a typical instance. In the U.P. Political Conference recently held at Agra, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, while advocating the boycott of foreign cloth, said that if there were any who earnestly desired to expel the English from India, he was one of them, and the means he had found for achieving this was only swadeshi. This has appeared in the Press, and I think you might have read it. Now can Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru be said to have understood your doctrine which makes us differentiate between a man and his action so as to make it quite possible for us to condemn the man's action without bearing any ill will towards him? Here at least I can emphatically say that Nehruji's words can be justified in no case, but still I want to know whether you approve or disapprove of them.[1]

[1] For Jawaharlal Nehru's reply, *vide*"Notes"; 8-12-1921, under the sub title"Men and Measures".

In so far as non-co-operators indulge in abuse, it is undoubtedly violence, and a breach of the pledge of non-violence. But I must dissent from the opinion that"practically every speech is a mere list of invectives and imprecations." I assure the write that the speeches are as full of invectives against ourselves as against the Government, and they are more full of argument in favour of non-violence, Hindu-Muslim unity and swadeshi than of invectives. The best proof of my statement perhaps is that the people have made such wonderful response in all these three matters. Surely the people have not made the progress without having been effectively appealed to.

But after all what is abuse? I find that the dictionary meaning is"misuse, perversion, bad use". When therefore we call a thief or a rogue a rogue, we do not abuse him. A leper takes no offence being described as such. Only the man using a particular adjective must mean it and be prepared to prove it. I am therefore unable to condemn the use of adjectives in every case and on every occasion, nor is the use of condemnatory adjectives always a sign of violence. I am fully aware, that the use of even deserved adjectives may be a sign of violence as it would be when it is used to excite violence against the person condemned. Condemnation is legitimately used when it is employed to wean the person from his bad habit or the audience from association with him. The Hindu Shastras are full of condemnation of evil-doers. They have pronounced curses upon them. Tulsidas who was the quality of mercy personified has filled the *Ramayana* with adjectives against the enemies of Rama which it would be difficult to excel. Indeed the names themselves chosen for the evil-doers are significant of their qualities. Jesus did not hesitate to draw down divine wrath upon those whom he called"a generation of vipers, hypocrites, whited sepulchres". Buddha did not spare those who killed the innocent goats in the name of religion. Nor are the Koran or the Zend-Avesta free from such use. Only all these seers and prophets had no evil intention in them. They had to describe persons and things as they were and resort to language so as to enable us to make our choice between good and evil. Having said this much, I am at one with the writer that the more sparing we are in describing the Government or the Governors, the better it is for us. There is too much passion and too much evil in ourselves to warrant the constant use of offensive language. The best use we can make of this Government is to ignore its existence and to isolate it as much as possible from our life, believing that contact with it is corrupting and degrading.

I have said repeatedly, that this movement is not intended to drive out the English, it is intended to end or mend the system they have forced upon us. I have not read Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's speech referred to by the correspondent, but I know him too well to believe that he could have said what is imputed to him. I know that he does not desire their withdrawal from wanton delight and that he will be the first man to harbour as a bosom friend every Englishman who is a lover of India and who wishes to remain as her servant indeed. Nor even in an independent India, do we contemplate prohibition against the residence of Englishmen in our midst on terms settled by the future state of our hope.

Young India, 17-l 1-1921

47. TO CORRESPONDENTS

C. N. VENKATASHASTRI: For the reasons already given in these columns, your letter, I am sorry, cannot be published. I would, however, recommend a reperusal of my article on Hinduism[1], and you will find more points of contact than of differences between us. You have scratched the surface, I have gone to the root. Our efforts have therefore yielded necessarily different results.

A. H. JAYASINHANI: 1. As a non-co-operator, I neither own nor disown George as my king. I have dissociated myself from the system administered under the King's name. I keep myself free to give my allegiance to him, if I can attain my full growth in his kingdom and can secure full redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs.

2. As non-co-operators we *must* work in the jails for we do not non-co-operate with jails as such. We submit to the courts' discipline when we are dragged to the courts. Civil disobedience by its very nature requires us to yield complete obedience to jail regulations, for as civil resisters we *invite* imprisonment and therefore are bound to suffer the rigours of its discipline. But we can civilly resist such regulations as are not only irksome or hard to bear but are humiliating or specially designed to degrade non-co-operators. Our self-respect demands willing obedience to jail discipline. The same self-respect may require resistance to misbehaviour euphemistically

[1] *Vide* "Hinduism", 6-10-1921.

called discipline. For instance we would refuse to draw lines with our noses whether within or without jails.

Young India, 17-11-1921

48. CIVIL v. CRIMINAL

When a man wilfully breaks his own laws, the disobedience becomes criminal. For he commits the breach not against himself but against someone else, and not only escapes punishment for the breach for there is none provided against himself by the maker of laws, but he avoids also the inconvenience caused by their observance. What is true of the individual is true of the corporation. At the present moment one observes this criminal breach by the Government of its own laws throughout India. Sections of the Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code are being freely abused. And because non-co-operators refrain from questioning orders issued by officials, bare-faced illegalities are being committed by them with impunity. We have seen this in Bulandshahr, in Chittagong, all over Sind, and nowhere so systematically and so deliberately as in the Madras Presidency. Mr. Yakub Hassan has pointed out with great justification that his arrest and conviction are contrary to the spirit of the Viceregal pledge. Indeed it is against not only the spirit of Lord Reading's pledge but it is against the letter even of his predecessor's *communique* in which it was declared in solemn tones that so long as non-co-operation remained non-violent there would be no repression. No one dare accuse Mr. Yakub Hassan of having incited to violence in his Tanjore address before an audience of picked representatives. Nor was any violence done in the Tanjore district as a result of his speech. The Magistrate in the case of Mr. Iyer of the *Deshabhaktan* actually admitted that there was not a trace of violence in the writing that was impeached and that it actually contained exhortations to non-violence. Mr. Ramaswami Iyenger, leading pleader of Coimbatore, has been arrested for a spirited letter to *The Hindu* though there was no violence in it. And so have Dr. Varadarajulu and Mr. Gopalkrishnayya been arrested for their speeches and writings, although it is known that they not only do not incite to violence but that theirs is actually a restraining influence in the face of provocation. Is it any wonder if one infers from this campaign of repression an intention on the part of the Government to invite

violence? In not one of these cases I have mentioned has there been any outbreak of violence as a result of the speeches and writings concerned. And so we see that the Government is guilty of criminal breach of its own laws. And what legal remedy has the afflicted individual against the Government? There is certainly no sanction provided against the Government in law when it prostitutes the law itself to its own base ends. When therefore a Government thus becomes lawless in an organized manner, civil disobedience becomes a sacred duty and is the only remedy open specially to those who had no hand in the making of the Government or its laws. Another remedy there certainly is, and that is armed revolt. Civil disobedience is a complete, effective and bloodless substitute. And it is as well that by exemplary restraint and discipline in the way of submission to unjust and even illegal orders we have created the necessary atmosphere for civil disobedience. For thereby on the one hand the tyrannical nature of the Government has been made more manifest, and on the other by willing obedience we have fitted ourselves for civil disobedience.

It is equally as well that civil disobedience is being confined even now to the smallest area possible. It must be admitted that it is an abnormal state, even as a corrupt and unpopular Government should be in civilized society like disease an abnormal state. Therefore, only when a citizen has disciplined himself in the art of voluntary obedience to the state laws is he justified on rare occasions deliber-ately but non-violently to disobey them, and expose himself to the penalty of the breach. If then we are to achieve the maximum result in the minimum of time, whilst fiercest disobedience is going on in a limited area, perfect submission to the laws must be yielded in all the other parts so as to test the nation's capacity for voluntary obedience and for understanding the virtue of civil disobedience. Any unauthorized outbreak of disobedience, therefore, in any part of India will most certainly damage the cause and will betray an unpardonable ignorance of the principles of civil disobedience.

We must expect the Government to take the strictest measures to suppress this impending defiance of authority, for on it depends its very existence. Its instinct of self-preservation alone will actuate measures of repression adequate for suppression. And if it fails, the Government of necessity disappears. That is, it either bends to the national will or it is dissolved. The greatest danger lies in violence

breaking out anywhere by reason of provocation. But it would be wrong and unmanly to invite the sternest measures and then to be incensed against them, apart from the fact that it will be a breach of our solemn pledge of non-violence. I may be arrested, thousands who take part in the peaceful revolt may also be arrested, imprisoned, even tortured. The rest of India must not lose its head. When the proper time comes, the rest of India may respond by undertaking civil disobedience and inviting arrests, imprisonments and tortures. It is the sacrifice of the innocent we want to make. That alone will appear pleasing to God. And therefore, on the eve of the great battle to nation is embarking upon, my earnest exhortation to every non-co-operator is to fit himself for civil disobedience by fulfilling to the letter and in the spirit the conditions of civil disobedience laid down at Delhi,[1] and to ensure non-violence everywhere. Let us not be satisfied that we remain non-violent individually. We boast that non-co-operation has become universal in India. We boast that we have acquired sufficient influence even over the unruly masses to restrain them from violence. Let us prove true to our claim.

Young India, 17-l1-1921

49. INTROSPECTION

Correspondents have written to me in pathetic language asking me not to commit suicide in January, should swaraj be not attained by then and should I find myself outside the prison walls. I find that language but inadequately expresses one's thought especially when the thought itself is confused or incomplete. My writing in the *Navajivan*[2] was, I fancied, clear enough. But I observe that its translation has been misunderstood by many. The original too has not escaped the tragedy that has overtaken the translation.

One great reason for the misunderstanding lies in my being considered almost a perfect man. Friends who know my partiality for the *Bhagavad Gita* have thrown relevant verses at me and shown how my threat to commit suicide contradicts the teachings which I am attempting to live. All these mentors of mine seem to forget that I am but a seeker after Truth. I claim to have found the way to it. I claim to be making a ceaseless effort to find it. But I admit that I have not yet

[1] *Vide* "The All-India Congress Committee", 10-11-1921.

[2] *Vide"*Optimism", 23-10-1921.

found it. To find Truth completely is to realize oneself and one's destiny, i.e., to become perfect. I am painfully conscious of my imperfections, and therein lies all the strength I possess, because it is a rare thing for a man to know his own limitations.

If I was a perfect man, I own I should not feel the miseries of my neighbours as I do. As a perfect man I should take note of them, prescribe a remedy and compel adoption by the force of unchallengeable Truth in me. But as yet I only see as through a glass darkly and therefore have to carry conviction by slow and laborious processes, and then too not always with success. That being so, I would be less than human if with all my knowledge of avoidable misery pervading the land and of the sight of mere skeletons under the very shadow of the Lord of the Universe, I did not feel with and for all the suffering but dumb millions of India. The hope of a steady decline in that misery sustains me; but suppose that with all my sensitiveness to sufferings, to pleasure and pain, cold and heat and with all my endeavour to carry the healing message of the spinning-wheel to the heart, I have reached only the ear and never pierced the heart, suppose further that at the end of the year I find that the people are as sceptical as they are today about the present possibility of attainment of swaraj by means of the peaceful revolution of the wheel; suppose further, that I find that all the excitement during the past twelve months and more has been only an excitement and a stimulation but no settled belief in the programme, and lastly suppose that the message of peace has not penetrated the hearts of Englishmen, should I not doubt my *tapasya* and feel my unworthiness for leading the struggle? As a true man, what should I do? Should I not kneel down in all humility before my Maker and ask Him to take away this useless body and make me a fitter instrument of service?

Swaraj does consist in the change of government and its real control by the people, but that would be merely the form. The substance that I am hankering after is a definite acceptance of the means and therefore a real change of heart on the part of the people. I am certain that it does not require ages for Hindus to discard the error of untouchability, for Hindus and Mussulmans to shed enmity and accept heart-friendship as an eternal factor of national life, for all to adopt the charkha as the only universal means of attaining India's economic salvation and finally for all to believe that India's freedom lies only through non-violence and no other method. Definite,

intelligent and free adoption by the nation of this programme I hold as the attainment of the substance. The symbol, the transfer of power, is sure to follow, even as the seed truly laid must develop into a tree.

The reader will thus perceive that what I accidentally stated to friends for the first time in Poona and then repeated to others was but a confession of my imperfections and an expression of my feeling of unworthiness for the great cause which for the time being I seem to be leading. I have enunciated no doctrine of despair. On the contrary I have felt never so sanguine as I do at the time of writing that we will gain the substance during this year I have stated at the same time as a practical idealist, that I should no more feel worthy to lead a cause which I might feel myself diffident of handling. The doctrine of labouring without attachment means as much a relentless pursuit of truth as a retracing after discovery of error and a renunciation of leadership without a pang after discovery of unworthiness. I have but shadowed forth my intense longing to lose myself in the Eternal and become merely a lump of clay in the Potter's divine hands so that my service may become more certain because uninterrupted by the baser self in me.

Young India, 17-11-1921

50. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

November 17, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi in the course of his speech said he had come to Bombay almost against his wish as he had got some urgent work in hand, which had been entrusted to him by the All-India Congress Committee and he was unable to spare a single moment for any other purpose. But at the urgent request of Mr. H. S. Khatri and Mrs. S. G. Banker, who had sent him repeated telegrams, he had come down to Bombay to be present at the meeting. He congratulated the people on the perfect calm they had so far preserved in spite of the provocation which they had been offered by arresting some of their volunteers and their captain for sticking posters on the walls asking the people to boycott the festivities in connection with the Prince's visit. He did not see anything objectionable in the posters; on the other hand, they were doing honour to the Prince, because they were telling him the truth. There could be nooffence at all in telling the Prince the truth. In fact it was their duty to tell him the truth that the welcome which was being extended to him was given by the officials

[1] At 10.30 a.m., behind Elphinstone Mills

and that the people—the large majority of people—had no share in it. The Mahatma advised the people to keep the peace and be non-violent even if all the posters were taken away from them, for Indians had to get redress for their Khilafat and Punjab wrongs. Non-violence was their creed and they had to keep to that principle whatever it might cost them. Therefore, he congratulated the people of Bombay on their non-violence. When civil disobedience was once begun either in Bardoli, Anand or Nadiad talukas he wanted the people of Bombay to keep perfectly quiet, whatever might happen there. Formerly people were afraid of going to jail, but now everyone was anxious to get into it; men and even women had come to him and asked him anxiously whether they could not go to jail. To soldiers it was the same whether they died in their duty, whether they went to jail, or whether they remained quiet doing their duty. In every case they had to obey the orders which were given to them. They were the army of swaraj and every one of them had to obey the orders given to him. In Bardoli when civil disobedience was begun there might be firing but every one of them in Bombay should sit quiet-there should be no hartal, or trouble of any kind. Then only could they have swaraj. He felt sure that without the necessary sacrifices on their part they would never get swaraj. He also felt that without complete Hindu-Muslim unity there could be no swaraj. He felt that there was no complete unity between the two communities now. The Hindus were afraid of the Muslims and the Muslims were afraid of the Hindus. All these feelings of doubt and suspicion should disappear for ever. Those suspicions of each other were there because we had become cowards and had given up our religion. Those who were ready to die in the name of their religion were real patriots and religious men. Therefore, he was telling his Hindu brothers that so long as they were true Hindus there was nothing to fear from any other religion, even if a six-foot Pathan came to them brandishing a knife they had nothing to fear. The same advice he had also given to his Muslim friends. Even now there were lurking in the minds of each community some doubts about the other. The next thing was swadeshi. Some of the women and men who had come to the meeting had still some foreign clothes on their bodies. In this instance, he said, Maulana Azad Sobhani had made it a business of his to beg for any foreign clothing which he might see his friends wearing and then destroy it. People should not mind wearing even thick khaddar. Mrs. Naidu had complained to him that it was a difficult thing to wear thick khaddar. But since she was the first or the second person to sign the satyagraha vow she was bound to wear thick khaddar. If they were unable to wear thick khaddar it was because they had grown weak and were not strong enough to do so. In the Punjab a sister had asked him what she should do about her clothes and his advice to her was that she should content herself with a petticoat and a skirt. They should have as little clothing as possible.

The people were in duty bound to do their work in a non-violent manner; so long as they believed in non-violence, swadeshi and Hindu-Muslim unity. They had

no business to resort to violence. Then they would not have any occasion to die. There was not much difference between life and death; in fact, they were one and the same. Until they were ready to die they would not get swaraj and redress the Khilafat and Punjab wrongs. Then only would they be able to set at liberty the Ali Brothers and Gangadharrao Deshpande. He had written[1] to Gangadharrao Deshpande—he did not know what impelled him to do so —that he should take as much rest as he could before the 31st December, for after that he would come out of the jail and would have to work for the country. For setting their friends free Indians must either have swaraj, or they must go to jail; or die in the service of their country. He had come to the meeting to tell them of this. The people of Bombay were fond of fine clothes and luxuries, but as soon as they were ready to work and die for swaraj, swaraj was theirs. He had still great hopes in the people of Bombay. The time was short and they must be up and doing their duty. He was not sure what would happen before the 31st of December. He constantly prayed to God that either he should be put into jail, or shot dead, or that India be made free. His idea of swaraj in this country was not anarchy. He wanted the people to become godfearing and virtuous, truthful and religious and brave men. He did not know what would happen to him and possibly these might be his last words. Therefore, he would appeal to their to do than duty by their country fearlessly. They were not ready to kill, but they were ready to die. They must convince the Government by their attitude that to kill them or repress them was a sin and a thing which could not be done. Unless they trusted others they would not be trusted by others. He asked them to trust other men, and by so doing they would become friends with their rulers. But whether they were friends or not, Indians should not harbour in their hearts any feelings of hatred for their rulers. They should fight for swaraj without any hatred towards the other party. If he could make Indians understand this then swaraj would be theirs. He wanted them to be convinced that to die was a greater and braver thing than to kill. He also asked them that as long as the Prince was amongst them they should not harm even a hair of his head, and they should not harm the Government officers. If Government wanted to kill them, then let them kill Indians, for they were ready to die. He thanked God that he had given him an opportunity of speaking to them that morning.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-11-1921

[1] *Vide*"Letter to Gangadharrao Deshpande", Before 8-10-1921.

51. LETTER TO DAYALJI AND KALYANJI

Thursday [*November 17, 1921*]

BHAISHRI DAYALJI AND KALYANJI,

It grieves me to tell you that a violent riot has broken out in Bombay. Wine shops have been burnt down. One of them is still burning as I write this. Innocent people have been harassed and their clothes forcibly removed. A tram has been smashed and lamps have been broken. Personally, I feel that the people have crossed all bounds. Six policemen have lost their lives. A few of our people have also died. We have had a foretaste of swaraj. I have been put to shame. It is difficult to say what will happen tonight. In this condition, how can I go there? I am, therefore, sending someone else, who will tell you everything and explain the position. It is now likely that there will be some change in our programme too. If the riot turns more violent, our plans will remain plans and events will wait on God's will. On your side, I take it, there is complete peace.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2669

52. A DEEP STAIN

[*November 13, 1921*][1]

Under the above heading Mr. Gandhi published the following note after having witnessed the unfortunate disturbances in Bombay:

The reputation of Bombay, the hope of my dreams, was being stained yesterday[2] even whilst in my simplicity I was congratulating the citizens[3] upon their non-violence in the face of grave provocation. For the volunteers with their captain were arrested during the previous night for pasting posters under authority on private property. The posters advised the people to boycott the welcome to the Prince. They

[1] Issued as a leaflet on this date; *vide Navajivan*, 24-11-l921.

[2] November 17, when the Prince of Wales arrived in Bombay and demonstrations against his visit including bonfires of foreign cloth resulted in riot on a large scale

[3] *Vide"*Speech at Public Meeting, Bombay", 17-11-1921.

were destroyed. The Swaraj Sabha's office was mysteriously entered and the unused posters, so far as I am aware not declared unlawful, were also removed. The Prince's visit itself and the circumstances attending the ceremonials arranged and public money wasted for the manufacture of a welcome to His Royal Highness constituted an unbearable provocation. And yet Bombay had remained self-restrained. This, I thought, was a matter for congratulation. The burning of the pile of foreign cloth was an eloquent counter demonstration to the interested official demonstration.

Little did I know that at the very time that the Prince was passing through the decorated route and the pile of foreign cloth was burning, in another part of the city the mill-hands were in criminal disobedience of the wishes of their masters emptying them, first one and then the others, by force, that a swelling mob was molesting peaceful passengers in the tram-cars and holding up the tram traffic, that it was forcibly depriving those that were wearing foreign caps of their head-dresses and pelting inoffensive Europeans. As the day went up, the fury of the mob now intoxicated with its initial success rose also. They burnt tram-cars and a motor, smashed liquor shops and burnt two.

I heard of the outbreak at about l o'clock. I motored with some friends to the area of disturbance and heard the most painful and the most humiliating story of molestation of Parsi sisters. Some few were assaulted, and even had their saris torn from them. No one from among a crowd of over fifteen hundred who had surrounded my car denied the charge as a Parsi with hot rage and quivering lips was with the greatest deliberation relating the story. An elderly Parsi gentleman said,"Please save us from this mob rule." This news of the rough handling of Parsi sisters pierced me like a dart. I felt that my sisters or daughters had been hurt by a violent mob! Yes, some Parsis had joined the welcome. They had a right to hold their own view free of molestation. There can be no coercion in swaraj. The Moplah fanatic who forcibly converts a Hindu believes that he is acquiring religious merit. A non-co-operator or his associate who uses coercion has no apology whatsoever for his criminality.

As I reached the Two Tanks I found a liquor shop smashed, two policemen badly wounded and lying unconscious on cots without anybody caring for them. I alighted. Immediately the crowd surrounded me and yelled *Mahatma Gandhi ki jai.* That sound

usually grates on my ears, but it has grated never so much as it did yesterday when the crowd unmindful of the two sick brethren choked me with the shout at the top of their voices. I rebuked them and they were silent. Water was brought for the two wounded men. I requested two of my companions and some from the crowd to take the dying policemen to the hospital. I proceeded then to the scene a little further up where I saw a fire rising. They were two tram-cars which were burnt by the crowd. On returning I witnessed a burning motor car. I appealed to the crowd to disperse, told them that they had damaged the cause of the Khilafat, the Punjab and swaraj. I returned sick at heart and in a chastened mood.

At about five a few brave Sindhi young men came to report that in Bhindi Bazar the crowd was molesting every passer-by who had a foreign cap on and even seriously beating him, if he refused to give up his cap. A brave old Parsi who defied the crowd and would not give up his *puggree* was badly handled. Maulana Azad Sobhani and I went to Bhindi Bazar and reasoned with the crowd, told them that they were denying their religion by hurting innocent men. The crowd made a show of dispersing. The police were there but they were exceedingly restrained. We went further and on retracing our steps found to our horror a liquor shop on fire. Even the fire brigade was obstructed in its work. Thanks to the efforts of Pandit Nekiram Sharma and others, the inmates of the shop were able to come out.

The crowd did not consist of hooligans only or boys. It was not an unintelligent crowd. They were not all mill-hands. It was essentially a mixed unprepared crowd and unwilling to listen to anybody. For the moment it had lost its head. And it was not a crowd but several crowds numbering in all not less than twenty thousand. It was bent upon mischief and destruction.

I heard that there was firing resulting in deaths and that in the Anglo-Indian quarters everyone who passed with khadi on came in for hard beating, if he did not put off his khadi cap or shirt. I heard that many were seriously injured. I am writing this in the midst of six Hindu and Mussulman workers who have just come in with broken heads and bleeding and one with a broken nasal bone and other lacerated wounds and in danger of losing his life. They went to Parel led by Maulanas Azad Sobhani and Mouzam Ali to pacify the mill-hands who, it was reported, were holding up tram-cars there. The

workers, however, were unable to proceed to their destination. They returned with their bleeding wounds to speak for themselves.

Thus the hope of reviving mass civil disobedience has once more in my opinion been dashed to pieces. The atmosphere for mass civil disobedience is absent. It is not enough to say that such an atmosphere is to be found in Bardoli, and, therefore, it may go on side by side with the violence in Bombay. This is impossible. Neither Bardoli nor Bombay can be treated as separate, unconnected units. They are parts of one great indivisible whole. It was possible to isolate Malabar. It was also possible to disregard Malegaon. But it is not possible to ignore Bombay.

Non-co-operators cannot escape liability. It is true that non-co-operators were ceaselessly demonstrating everywhere with the people at considerable risk to themselves, to arrest or stop the mischief and that they are responsible for saving many precious lives. But that is not enough for launching out on civil disobedience or to discharge us from liability for the violence that has taken place. We claim to have established a peaceful atmosphere, i.e., to have attained by our non-violence sufficient control over the people to keep their violence under check. We have failed when we ought to have succeeded. For yesterday was a day of our trial. We were under our pledge bound to protect the person of the Prince from any harm or insult. And we broke that pledge in as much as any one of us insulted or injured a single European or any other who took part in the welcome to the Prince. They were as much entitled to take part in the welcome as we were to refrain. Nor can I shirk my own personal responsibility. I am more instrumental than any other in bringing into being the spirit of revolt. I find myself not fully capable of controlling and disciplining that spirit. I must do penance for it. For me the struggle is essentially religious. I believe in fasting and prayer, and I propose henceforth to observe every Monday a twenty-four hour's fast till swaraj is a[ttained] . . . .[1]

The Working Committee will have to devote its attention to the situation and consider in the light thereof whether mass civil disobedience can be at all encouraged until we have obtained complete control over the masses. I have personally come deliberately to the conclusion that mass civil disobedience cannot be started for the present. I confess my inability to conduct a campaign of civil

[1] The source is blank here.

disobedience to a successful issue unless a completely non-violent spirit is generated among the people. I am sorry for the conclusion. It is a humiliating confession of my incapacity, but I know that I shall appear more pleasing to my Maker by being what I am instead of appearing to be what I am not. If I can have nothing to do with the organized violence of the Government, I can have less to do with the unorganized violence of the people. I would prefer to be crushed between the two.

Young India, 24-11-1921

53. APPEAL TO BOMBAY CITIZENS

November 19, I921[1]

MEN AND WOMEN OF BOMBAY,

It is not possible to describe to you the agony I have suffered during the past two days. I am writing this now at 3.30 a.m. in perfect peace. After two hours' prayer and meditation I have found it.

I must refuse to eat or drink anything but water till the Hindus and Mussulmans of Bombay have made peace with the Parsis, the Christians and the Jews, and till the non-co-operators have made peace with the co-operators.

The swaraj that I have witnessed during the last two days has stunk in my nostrils. Hindu-Muslim unity has been a menace to the handful of Parsis, Christians and Jews. The non-violence of the non-co-operators has been worse than the violence of co-operators. For with non-violence on our lips we have terrorized those who have differed from us and in so doing we have denied our God. There is only one God for us all, whether we find him through the Koran, the Bible, the Zend-Avesta, the Talmud or the *Gita*. And He is God of Truth and Love. I have no interest in living save for proving this faith in me. I cannot hate an Englishman or anyone else. I have spoken and written much against his institutions, especially the one he has set up in India. I shall continue to do so if I live. But you must not mistake my condemnation of the system for that of the man. My religion requires me to love him as I love myself. I would deny God if I did not attempt to prove it at this critical moment.

[1] This was issued as a leaflet under the caption"Mr. Gandhi's Appeal to Bombay Citizens"; *vide Navajivan*, 24-11-1921.

And the Parsis? I have meant every word I have said about them. Hindus and Mussulmans will be unworthy of freedom if they do not defend them and their honour with their lives. They have only recently proved their liberality and friendship. The Mussulmans are especially beholden to them, for the Parsis have, compared to their numbers, given more than they themselves to the Khilafat funds. Unless Hindus and Mussulmans have expressed full and free repentance, I cannot face again the appealing eyes of Parsi men and women that I saw on the 17th instant as I passed through them. Nor can I face Andrews when he returns from East Africa if we have done no reparation to the Indian Christians whom we are bound to protect as our own brothers and sisters. We may not think of what they or the Parsis in self-defence or by way of reprisals have done to some of us.

You can see quite clearly that I must do the utmost reparation to this handful of men and women who have been the victims of forces that have come into being largely through my instrumentality. I invite every Hindu and Mussulman to do likewise. But I do not want anyone to fast. Fasting is only good when it comes in answer to prayer and as a felt yearning of the soul. I invite every Hindu and Mussulman to retire to his home, ask God for forgiveness and to befriend the injured communities from the bottom of his heart.

I invite my fellow-workers not to waste a single word of sympathy for me. I need or deserve none. But I invite them to make ceaseless effort to regain control over the turbulent elements. This is a terribly true struggle. There is no room for sham or humbug in it. Before we can make any further progress with our struggle we must cleanse our hearts.

One special word to my Mussulman brothers. I have approached the Khilafat as a sacred cause. I have striven for Hindu-Muslim unity because India cannot live free without it and because we would both deny God if we considered one another as natural enemies. I have thrown myself into the arms of the Ali Brothers because I believe them to be true and godfearing men. The Mussulmans have to my knowledge played the leading part during the two days of carnage. It has deeply hurt me. I ask every Mussulman worker to rise to his full height, to realize his duty to his faith and see that the carnage stops.

May God bless everyone of us with wisdom and courage to do the right at any cost.

I am,

Your servant,

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 24-11-1921

54. LETTER TO GIRDHARILAL DAYAL

SABARMATI,
Kartak Vad 4 [*November 19, 1921*][1]

SHA. GIRDHARILAL,

Received your letter. I am sorry that your brother-in-law has been injured. What other remedy than patience can I offer?

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHA. GIRDHARILAL DAYAL
2ND FLOOR
THAKKAR KANJI KESHAVJINO MALO
SATRISHI GALI
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 7680

55. AN APPEAL TO THE MAVALIS

[*November 20, 1921*][2]

TO THE MAVALIS OF BOMBAY,

The most terrible mistake I have made is, that I thought non-co-operators had acquired influence over you and that you had understood the relative value, the political wisdom of non-violence though not the moral necessity of it. I had thought that you had sufficiently understood the interests of your country not to meddle with the movement to its detriment and that therefore you would have wisdom enough not to give way to your worst passions. But it cuts me to the quick to find that you have used the mass awakening for your own lust for plunder, rapine and even indulging in your worst animal appetite. Whether you call yourself a Hindu, Mussulman, Parsi, Christian or Jew, you have certainly failed to consider even your own religious interests. Some of my friends would, I know, accuse me of ignorance of human nature. If I believed the charge, I would plead guilty and retire from human assemblies and return only after acquiring knowledge of human nature. But I know that I had no difficulty in controlling even the Indian Mavalis in South Africa. I was

[1] Bears the Dead Letter Office postmark of December 10, 1921. *Kartak Vad* 4 was 19-11-1921.

[2] Issued as a leaflet on this date; *vide Navajivan*, 24-11-1921.

able because I had succeeded in approaching them through co-workers where I had no personal contact with them. In your case I see now that we have failed to reach you. I do not believe you to be incapable of responding to the noble call of religion and country.

See what you have done! The Hindu and Mussulman Mavalis have violated the sanctity of Parsi temples, and they have exposed their own to similar risk from the wrath of Parsi Mavalis. Because some Parsis have chosen to partake in the welcome to the Prince, the Hindu and Mussulman Mavalis have roughly handled every Parsi they have met. The result has been, that the Parsi Mavalis have now turned their attention to Hindus and Mussulmans. Certainly the Parsi Mavalis are less to blame. Hindu and Mussulman Mavalis have rudely, roughly and insolently removed the foreign cloth worn by some Parsis and Christians, forgetting that not all Hindus and all Mussulmans, nor by any means even a majority of them, have religiously discarded the use of foreign cloth. The Parsi and the Christian Mavalis are therefore interfering with the Hindu and Mussulman wearers of khadi. Thus we are all moving in a vicious circle and the country suffers.

I write this not to blame but to warn you and to confess that we have grievously neglected you. I am doing the penance in one way. The other workers are doing it in another way. Messrs Azad Sobhani, Jayakar[1], Jamnadas Mehta, Sathe, Mozam Ali and many others have been risking their lives in bringing under control this unfortunate ebullition. Shrimati Sarojini Naidu has fearlessly gone in your midst to reason with you and appeal to you. Our work in your midst has only just begun. Will you not give us a chance by stopping the mad process of retaliation? The Hindus and the Mussulmans should be ashamed to take reprisals against the Parsis or the Christians. The latter must know it to be suicidal to battle against Hindu and Mussulman ferocity by brute strength. The result is they must seek the assistance of an alien Government, i.e., sell their freedom. Surely the best course for them is to realize their nationality and believe that the reasoning Hindus and Mussulmans must and will protect the interests of minorities before their own. Any way the problem before Bombay isto ensure the absolute protection of the minorities and the acquisition of control over the rowdy element. And I shall trust that you, the Mavalis of Bombay, will now restrain your hand and give a

[1] M. R. Jayakar (1873-1959); lawyer and Liberal leader; Judge, Federal Court of India, 1937

chance to the workers who are desirous of serving you. May God help you.

I am,

Your friend,

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 24-11-1921

56. EATING STEEL PELLETS

To take the lead in starting civil disobedience is a more difficult task for Gujarat than eating steel pellets. Even if, however, one single taluka passes the test, then I have no doubt that swaraj will be in our hands in no time. Such success will mean that an army of satyagrahis has been organized in that taluka. I have already stated that everyone is eligible for enlistment in this army, men and women, the young and the old, the cripple and the disabled, the weak and the strong, Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians, Jews, Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, *Dheds* and *Bhangis.* Even a child of the stamp of Prahlad is welcome, if there is any such coming forward. Parents, too, can send their children to enlist themselves. Notwithstanding that the army will be such a mixed crew, it can give a better account of itself than the opponent's army. How can this army, besides, require any expense? The only qualification needed for a soldier of this army is fearlessness. He ought to have the strength to lay down his life and that means he ought to have faith in God.

The other qualifications which I have asked for[1] are not needed at all times. They are essential only under the present circumstances.

But though this appears easy on paper, the task will be difficult in practice so long as it is not properly understood. The taluka which offers to start civil disobedience must have undergone a complete change. The soldiers in its army will not be wasting a moment in idleness. When, therefore, the fight actually begins, every satyagrahi man and every woman will either be offering civil disobedience for courting imprisonment or will be spinning or weaving, carding or ginning cotton. No one, without exception, can sit idle even for a moment, whether he be rich or poor. Among the soldiers of an army,

[1] *Vide*"Test", 13-11-1921.

no distinction of rich and poor can be made. When King George V was a naval cadet, like any other member of the crew he slept on the floor and ate hard bran bread and stewed tea or coffee without milk. And that is as it should be.

The taluka, therefore, which has organized itself or is organizing for civil disobedience should prepare a separate register for every village in its area and fill in the following details:

1. Name of the village

2. Distance from the head-quarters

3. Total population—giving separately the numbers of adult men and women, of boys and girls under 16, of Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians, *Dheds* and *Bhangis*

4. The number of spinning-wheels

5. The number of hand-looms

6. The number of hand-carding tools

7. Stock of cotton

8. Whether it has a school and, if it has, the number of pupils attending it

9. Number of policemen

10. Other marks of British authority

11. Number of persons ready for imprisonment

12. Number of liquor shops

13. Number of persons, if any, who favour co-operation with Government.

If we have organized ourselves into an army, there must be a representative leader and a people's *panch* in every village. There should be batches of 20 persons each, one of whom should be the leader. There should be further batches of 20 such leaders each with one of the 20 appointed as leader. As far as possible, the batches should not be formed on the basis of Hindus and Muslims or distinctions of any other kind. The best way is for neighbours to form a batch. Where public opinion has been educated, this task should present no difficulty at all. Such organization is in truth an indication of public opinion having been educated.

If every village has good workers, this work can be easily completed in two days. Our villages do not have a large population and the work can be practically finished in one meeting held in the

morning. I shall expect full information on all these details in the taluka to which I may be invited to go.

Why do I name this small task as"eating steel pellets"? Because we have lost the fighter's spirit and forsaken service of others we have become oblivious of loyalty to community or creed or kinship. It is not for ourselves that we shall be laying down our lives; we shall be doing so for the people. Before, however, we do that, the people should be awakened or we should die in the attempt to rouse them.

The fact is that we have either actually forgotten the habits of industry or, in the work in which we spend our time, we take no account of people's happiness or welfare. We are so short-sighted as never to look beyond the interests of our family. All our religions, however, teach us that the individual must be ready to die for the family, the family for the village, the village for the taluka, the taluka for the district, the district for the province, the province for Bharatvarsha and, finally, the latter for the world. This is the ideal of patriotism for which I live; and death in the attempt to demonstrate it will be as dear to me as life itself. To live without this ideal is as good as death to me. If there is any real happiness in this transient world, it lies in suffering at the suffering of others, in dying while protecting others. He who lives in this way ever lives in bliss. It is no difficult task to do all this. All that is necessary is change of heart and some thinking. This need not take a long time, for sacrificing the body for the sake of one's neighbour comes spontaneous to the *atman*.

If the taluka which comes forward has realized this truth, what seems to be as hard as eating steel pellets will look as easy as eating gram specially boiled soft for an old man like me.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-11-1921

57. WHAT IS TRUTH?

There is a story in the gospel, in which a judge inquired,"What is truth?", but got no answer. The holy books of Hindus tell of Harishchandra who sacrificed his all at the altar of Truth and let himself, his wife, and his son be sold to *a Chandala*. (What, by the way, must be the position about untouchability in those early days?) Imam Hussein and Hussein lost their lives for the sake of truth.

The fact remains, however, that the question posed by that judge has not been answered. Harishchandra renounced his all for the sake of the truth as he knew it and so won immortal fame. Imam Hussein gave up his dear life for truth as he understood it. But Harishchandra's truth and Imam Hussein's truth may or may not be our truth.

Beyond these limited truths, however, there is one absolute Truth which is total and all embracing. But it is indescribable, because it is God. Or say, rather, God is Truth. All else is unreal and false. Other things, therefore, can be true only in a relative sense.

He, therefore, who understands truth, follows nothing but truth in thought, speech and action, comes to know God and gains the seer's vision of the past, the present and the future. He attains *moksha* though still encased in the physical frame.

If we get one single person, before the 31st of December, who would practise truth to such perfection, swaraj should be ours this very day.

Some of us are no more than *satya-agrahis*, those, in other words, who aspire to follow truth scrupulously, but they hardly succeed in doing so even in the limited sphere of speech. We thus see that observance of the vow of truth is no easy matter.

A friend remarked:"You have taken the vow of truth; and yet you misread the telegram from Mr. Das[1] so as to interpret it in your favour and announced Bengal's contribution to be 25 lakhs instead of what it was, 15 lakhs. Were you not, in this case, guilty of a subtle form of untruth?" I did not deliberately interpret the telegram in my favour. I am not in the habit of reading meanings which suit me. But I was certainly hasty in interpreting the telegram. It was received late at night after 12. I state this fact not by way of extenuation but to show that truth must shine as brightly as ever even when one has mounted the gallows. He who yearns to follow the truth at all times and under all conditions must not be guilty of such haste. One who always follows truth is never guilty of untruth in word or deed even unknowingly. In fact such a person becomes incapable of acting in this manner. According to this definition, I certainly lapsed from truth.

My only consolation is that I never claim anything beyond a sincere endeavour to keep the vow of truth. It never happens that I tell

[1] C.R. Das

a lie deliberately. I do not remember having deliberately told a lie any time in my life, except on one occasion when I cheated my revered father. It has become part of my nature to speak the truth and act in accordance with truth. But it is impossible for me to claim that truth, which I perceive but dimly, has become part of my life. I am not beyond indulgence in unconscious exaggeration or self-praise or taking interest in describing my achievements. There is a shade of untruth in all these and they will not stand the test of truth. A life wholly filled with the spirit of truth should be clear and pure as crystal. Untruth cannot survive even for a moment in the presence of such a person. No one can deceive a man who always follows truth, for it ought to be impossible that untruth will not be exposed in his presence. The most difficult vow to keep is the vow of truth. Out of lakhs who may strive to follow truth, only a rare person will succeed completely in the course of his present life.

When somebody utters a lie before me, I get more angry with myself than with him because I then realize that untruth still exists somewhere deep in me.

The word *satya* comes from *sat,* which means"to be","to exist". Only God is ever the same through all time. A thousand times honour to him who has succeeded, through love and devotion for this *satya,* in opening out his heart permanently to its presence. I have been but striving to serve that truth. I have, I believe, the courage to jump from the top of the Himalayas for its sake. At the same time, I know that I am still very far from that truth. As I advance towards it, I perceive my weakness ever more clearly and the knowledge makes me humble. It is possible to be puffed up with pride so long as one does not know one's own insignificance. But once a man sees it, his pride melts away. Mine melted away long ago. I can very well understand why Tulsidas called himself a villain. This path is for the brave alone; the timid had better not tread it. He who strives for all the twenty-four hours of the day ever meditating on truth, whether eating, drinking, sitting, sleeping, spinning or easing himself, doing anything whatever, will certainly have his whole being filled with truth. And when the sun of truth blazes in all its glory in a person's heart, he will not remain hidden He will not, then, need to use speech and to explain. Or, rather, every word uttered by him will be charged with such power, such life, that it will produce an immediate effect on the people. I do not have this truth in me. But, as I happen to be treading this path, I am in the

unhappy condition of the castor-oil plant which, as they say, is king on a tree-less heath.

Truth cannot exist without love. Truth includes non-violence, *brahmacharya*, non-stealing and other rules. It is only for convenience that the five *yamas* have been mentioned separately. The man who commits violence after knowing truth falls from truth. That a man who has known truth can be lecherous is as inconceivable as that darkness may exist despite the sun shining. If, we have, before 31st of December, even one person who will follow truth to this perfect degree, swaraj is a certainty, for everyone will have to obey his word as law. The sun's light does not need to be pointed out. Truth shines with its own light and is its own proof. In these evil times, it is difficult to follow truth in such perfection but I know it is not impossible. If a large number from among us strive to follow it even in some measure, we can win swaraj. We can also win it if a few of us pursue it with utmost consciousness. Only, we must be sincere. It will not do merely to make a show of following truth. It does not matter if we follow truth only to the extent of one anna in a rupees, but it must be truth and not something else. The little measure of it which we follow must not in any circumstances, be mixed with deliberate falsehood. It is my earnest desire that, in this holy *yajna*, all of us will learn to follow truth as a matter of principle.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-11-1921

58. NOTE TO REV. J. KILLOCK[1]

Silence Day, November 21, 1921

I thank the English friends for going.[2] I do not rise because rising is a strain. I am anxious for us all to be friends although we may differ as poles as under.

From a photostat C.W. 4502

[1] Professor, Wilson College, Bombay

[2] To disturbed areas as members of an inter-communal team to restore and peace

59. NOTE TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Monday (morning), November 21, 1921

Have it copied and translated into Gujarati and show it to me. I do not have the energy to translate it. I have a good deal of other writing to do.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

60. STATEMENT BEFORE BREAKING FAST

[*November 21, 1921*]

Mr. Gandhi broke his fast in the midst of a gathering of co-operators, non-co-operators, Hindus, Mussulmans, Christians and Parsis. There were speeches of goodwill by a representative of each community. The members of the Working Committee were also present. Mr. Gandhi made a statement in Gujarati before breaking his fast. The following is its translation:

FRIENDS,

It delights my heart to see Hindus, Mussulmans, Parsis and Christians met together in this little assembly. I hope that our frugal fruit-repast of this morning will be a sign of our permanent friendship. Though a born optimist, I am not in the habit of building castles in the air. This meeting therefore cannot deceive me. We shall be able to realize the hope of permanent friendship between all communities, only if we who have assembled together will incessantly strive to build it up. I am breaking my fast upon the strength of your assurances.[1] I have not been unmindful of the affection with which innumerable friends have surrounded me during these four days. I shall ever remain grateful to them. Being drawn by them I am plunging into this stormy ocean out of the haven of peace in which I have been during these few days. I assure you that in spite of the tales of misery that have been poured into my ears, I have enjoyed peace because of a hungry stomach. I know that I cannot enjoy it after breaking the fast. I am too human not to be touched by the sorrows of others, and when I find no remedy for alleviating them, my human nature so agitates me that I pine to embrace death like a long-lost dear

[1] *Vide* "Citizens Appeal", 24-11-1921.

friend. Therefore I warn all the friends here that if real peace is not established in Bombay and if disturbances break out again and if as a result they find me driven to a still severer ordeal, they must not be surprised or troubled. If they have any doubt about peace having been established, if each community has still bitterness of feeling and suspicion and it we are all not prepared to forget and forgive past wrongs, I would much rather that they did not press me to break the fast. Such a restraint I would regard as a test of true friendship.

I venture to saddle special responsibility upon Hindus and Mussulmans. The majority of them are non-co-operators. Non violence is the creed they have accepted for the time being. They have the strength of numbers. They can stand in spite of the opposition of the smaller communities without Government aid. If therefore they will remain friendly and charitable towards the smaller communities, all will be well. I will beseech the Parsis, the Christians and the Jews to bear in mind the new awakening in India. They will see many-coloured waters in the ocean of Hindu and Mussulman humanity. They will see dirty waters on the shore. I would ask them to bear with their Hindu or Mussulman neighbours who may misbehave with them and immediately report to the Hindu and Mussulman leaders through their own leaders with a view to getting justice. Indeed I am hoping that as a result of the unfortunate discord a *Mahajan* will come into being for the disposal of all inter-racial disputes.

The value of this assembly in my opinion consists in the fact that worshippers of the same one God we are enabled to partake of this harmless repast together in spite of our differences of opinion. We have not assembled with the object today of reducing such differences, certainly not of surrendering a single principle we may hold dear, but we have met in order to demonstrate that we can remain true to our principles and yet also remain free from ill will towards one another.

May God bless our effort.

Young India, 24-11-1921

61. TO CO-WORKERS

November 22, 1921

COMRADES,

Past few days have been a fiery ordeal for us, and God is to be

thanked that some of us have not been found wanting. The broken heads before me and the dead bodies of which I have heard on, unimpeachable authority are sufficient evidence of the fact. Workers have lost their lives or limbs, or have suffered bruises in the act of preserving peace, of weaning mad countrymen from their wrath. These deaths and injuries show, that in spite of the error of many of our countrymen, some of us are prepared to die for the attainment of our goal. If all of us had imbibed the spirit of non-violence, or if some had and the others had remained passive, no blood need have been spilt. But it was not to be. Some must therefore voluntarily give their blood in order that a bloodless atmosphere may be created. So long as there are people weak enough to do violence, there will be others weak enough to seek the aid of those who have superior skill or means for doing it. And that is why the Parsis and the Christians sought and received the assistance of the Government such that the Government openly took sides, and armed and aided the latter in retaliatory madness, and criminally neglected to protect a single life among those, who though undoubtedly guilty in the first instance were the victims of the pardonable wrath of the Parsis, the Christians and the Jews. The Government has thus appeared in its nakedness as a party doing violence not merely to preserve peace but to sustain the aggressive violence of its injured supporters. Its police and military looked on with callous indifference whilst the Christians in their justifiable indignation deprived innocent men of their white caps and hammered those who would not surrender them, or whilst the Parsis assaulted or shot, not in self-defence but because the victims happened to be Hindus or Mussulmans or non-co-operators. I can excuse the aggrieved Parsis and Christians, but can find no excuse for the criminal conduct of the police and the military in taking sides.

So the task before the workers is to take the blows from the Government and our erring countrymen. This is the only way open to us of sterilizing the forces of violence. The way to immediate swaraj lies through our gaining control over the forces of violence, and that not by greater violence but by moral influence. We must see as clearly as daylight that it is impossible for us to be trained and armed for violence effective enough for displacing the existing Government.

Some people imagine, that after all we could not have better advertised our indignation against the welcome to the Prince than by letting loose the mob frenzy on the fateful seventeenth. This

reasoning betrays at once ignorance and weakness, ignorance of the fact that our goal was not injury to the welcome, and weakness because we still hanker after advertising our strength to others instead of being satisfied with the consciousness of its possession. I wish I could convince everyone, that we materially retarded our progress to our triple goal.

But all is not lost if the workers realize and act up to their responsibility. We must secure the full co-operation of the rowdies of Bombay. We must know the mill-hands. They must either work for the Government or for us, i.e., for violence or against it. There is no middle way. They must not interfere with us. They must either be amenable to our love or helplessly submit to the bayonet. They may not seek shelter under the banner of non-violence for the purpose of doing violence. And in order to carry our message to them, we must reach every mill-hand individually and let him understand and appreciate the struggle. Similarly we must reach the rowdy element, befriend them and help them to understand the religious character of the struggle. We must neither neglect them nor pander to them. We must become their servants.

The peace that we are aiming at is not a patched up peace. We must have fair guarantees of its continuance without the aid of the Government, sometimes even in spite of its activity to the contrary. There must be a heart union between Hindus, Mussulmans, Parsis, Christians and Jews. The three latter communities may and will distrust the other two. The recent occurrences must strengthen that distrust. We must go out of our way to conquer their distrust. We must not molest them if they do not become full non-co-operators or do not adopt swadeshi or the white khadi cap which has become its symbol. We must not be irritated against them even if they side with the Government on every occasion. We have to make them ours by right of loving service. This is the necessity of our situation. The alternative is a civil war. And a civil war, with a third power only too happy to consolidate itself by siding now with the one and then with the other, must be held an impossibility for the near future.

And what is true of the smaller communities is also true of the co-operators. We must not be impatient with or intolerant to them. We are bound to recognize their freedom to co-operate with the Government if we claim the freedom to non-co-operate. What would we have felt if we were in a minority and the co-operators being in a

majority had used violence against us? Non-co-operation *cum* non-violence is the most expeditious method known to the world of winning over opponents. And our struggle consists in winning opponents including Englishmen over to our side. We can only do so by being free from ill will against the weakest or the strongest of them. And this we can only do by being prepared to die for the faith within us and not by killing those who do not see the truth we enunciate.

1 am,

Your faithful comrade,

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 24-11-1921

62. NOTES

O ! FOR SHAUKAT ALI

During these days of great trial for me, I have felt the gravest need of Maulana Shaukat Ali by my side. I can wield no influence over the Mussulmans except through a Mussulman. There are many stalwart and good Mussulmans I know. But no Mussulman knows me through and through as Shaukat Ali does. Now I feel that I have to represent him and to speak to the Mussulmans things I used always to reserve for him. I observe that one of my appeals has already been misinterpreted. If Maulana Shaukat Ali was by me, I would not perhaps have needed to write the paragraph relating specially to Mussulmans. Probably if he was in Bombay on the 17th, the disturbance would not have occurred at all. Many things could have been prevented. Indeed on the 17th if Mian Chhotani had been in Bombay, if Mr. Ahmed Haji Khatri had not been laid up in bed, things would have taken a different turn. But I do not wish to cry over spilt milk. I have introduced Maulana Shaukat Ali in the matter to tell my Mussulman friends that I shall shoulder the additional burden and that I expect them not to misunderstand me. I consider their interest a special trust which I shall not be consciously guilty of betraying. I expect too friends unhesitatingly to tell me wherein I err, and I assure them that I shall make the fullest confession if I am satisfied of my error. Only I warn them betimes, that as I do nothing hastily and without good grounds, they must not be surprised if I do

not easily admit errors. That it is necessary for me to pen this paragraph shows that each has to write about or to the other with the greatest delicacy. It is a torturing performance like walking on thin ice. But we must take facts and things as they are and turn them to the best account.

GOOD AND BAD

The reader will appreciate the statement that during these four days I have been receiving accounts both good and bad. Non-co-operators injured! Hindus and Mussulmans assaulting Parsis! Parsis shooting them! Christians assaulting those wearing khadi caps or dress! Hindus and Mussulmans assaulting Christians! These bits of information are interspersed with the news that Parsis are saving Hindus and Mussulmans from the other Parsis, some Christians saving Hindus and Mussulmans, the latter sheltering both, non-co-operators at great peril to their lives seeking to bring about peace. It has never been my misfortune to be torn between two powerful and conflicting emotions. And then to guide friends in such a difficult situation, to send them to enter the jaws of Death and yet for me to avoid death ! It is the fast that has been my outward staff and it is heart prayer that has been my inward strength. On the 17th I felt as if all my strength had vanished. Why was I unable permanently to influence the crowd? Where was the power of ahimsa in me? What was I to do? I could not, I would not, ask the aggrieved parties to seek Government aid. We had no panchayats to deal out justice. There was no one I could approach who could bring about peace. I could not and would not organize a trained physical force party. What relief could I give to the sufferers from mob violence? If I allowed myself to be torn to pieces by justly incensed Parsis or Christians, I would only give rise to greater bloodshed. Whilst as a soldier I must avoid no unavoidable risk, I must not recklessly run the risk of being killed. Then what was I to do? At last came the fast to my rescue to soothe my soul. If I may not give my self to be killed through human agency, I must give myself to God to be taken away by refusing to eat till He heard my prayer. For me, a bankrupt, that was the only thing left. I could not draw upon the people from their innocence. They dishonoured the cheque I presented personally on the 17th.[1] I must now somehow or other recoup lost credit or die in the attempt. I must draw upon God for

[1] *Vide"*Speech at Public Meeting. Bombay", 17-11-1921.

further credit to enable me to transact His business. I could only do so by humbling myself, crawling in the dust before Him, denying myself the food He has given. I must in thousand ways show Him that I am in earnest, and if I am not found worthy to conduct His business, ask Him to recall me and refashion me according to my worth and His will. And so I have tacked up the fast. The news of the hurt received by co-workers or the hurt received by the combatants no longer perturbs me. For me there is only my own non-violence as my help. If it does not answer, I must not worry. Thousands die in other parts of India and their deaths trouble me but do not worry me. Even so in this case if I could but do all I know, I need not *then* fret and fume. This fast then has been to me a penance, purification and reparation. It is also a warning to workers that they may not play with me in the movement. Only those who believe in non-violence need remain in the struggle. It could be conducted without difficulty and complications by a few staunch and true workers. It can only be harmed by insincere workers though many. Lastly it is a remedy for hastening peace. But the last is the derivative ends. It comes as a result of penance, purification and reparation. It is the credit sent by God.

WORKERS BEWARE

I am receiving remonstrances against the fast. Some have taken up sympathetic fast. I assure all these that they are wrong. For me fast was a necessity. I was the guilty party, I was the bankrupt. The business of the others is to understand the situation, to rid themselves of violence if any, to spread non-violence among others and believe that the slightest violence must injure the cause. They must take up the charkha, they must promote not merely Hindu-Muslim unity but they must now promote unity among all communities. Hindu-Muslim unity is not worth a day's purchase if it does not prefer the interests of smaller communities to its own. Christians and Jews in India are not foreigners, nor are Parsis. We must go out of our way to be friendly to them and to serve and help them, above all to protect them from harm from ourselves. The workers must similarly make friends with co-operators. They must not speak ill of them whether they are English or Indian. We must believe in the truth of our cause and in our capacity for self-suffering. We have at any rate for the time being announced to the world in the name of God, that we do not propose to harm any Englishman no matter what he does to us. We shall be guilty before God and man if under the cover of our pledge we injure a

single English or Indian co-operator.

THE MEANING OF PEACE

Friends have misunderstood the meaning of the peace that I have referred to in my second appeal. The peace I want has to be made by non-co-operators. It does not mean surrender of principle or policy so as to find a common platform for work. That in my opinion is an impossible task, for the methods of the various groups are so radically different. When one party finds it for the good of the country to enter the councils and another to abstain, there is no meeting ground. But because we differ from one another, we need not behave indecently towards one another, nor need we break one another's heads. The creed of non-violence, while it persists, requires us not to retaliate. I am convinced, that if we can produce an atmosphere of toleration, we can extend our scope limitlessly. Today we are caged by our own doubts and suspicions. We are not sure that the thousands who flock to our meetings will observe non-violence. If we were not so popular, we should make much greater progress than we have made hitherto. And for this goodwill on our part towards our opponents is an absolute necessity. Let us not talk of the errors and omissions of the Government or its supporters. Let us dispassionately devote our energy, our speeches, writings and action to the working out of our own programme. Let us attain control over the rowdiest element, and we can establish swaraj immediately.

MORE ABOUT MEDICAL STUDENTS

I am able this week to publish the correspondence referring to the Vizagapatam medical students. It is long but both interesting and instructive. It shows the mentality of the medical authorities and also of the Government. The final orders dismissing the students were passed under advice or with the cognizance of the Government of Madras. The reader will note that the dress regulations were not strictly carried out at all and that after the caps were coloured black there was no excuse whatsoever for banning them. But the fact that the students had the audacity to wear khadi was enough to rouse the ire of the college authorities.[1] The reader will also note the humiliating character of the dress regulations. The tuft of hair or a bald head, a mark both of religion and respectability must be hidden because it offended the Western taste of the Western professors. They could not

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 17-11-1921, under the sub-title "Brave Students".

enter the college with Indian shoes on. They must wear English shoes or remain bares foot. Thus the students are taught at an impressionable period of their lives to discard national dress. As a matter of fact Indian shoes for the Indian climate are infinitely superior to the English shoes as being airy and therefore more hygienic. The introduction of socks is inelegant and totally useless for the hot climate of India. Socks wearers know the stench that their socks emit in this climate. But for our slavery, we would sweep away without a moment's thought all these injurious and unbecoming innovations,

Young India, 24-11-1921

63. THE MORAL ISSUE

As soon as we lose the moral basis, we cease to be religious. There is no such thing as religion overriding morality. Man for instance cannot be untruthful, cruel or incontinent and claim to have God on his side. In Bombay the sympathizers of non-co-operation lost the moral balance. They were enraged against the Parsis and the Christians who took part in the welcome to the prince and sought to"teach them a lesson". They invited reprisals and got them. It became after the 17th a game of seesaw in which no one really gained and everybody lost.

Swaraj does not lie that way. India does not want Bolshevism. The people are too peaceful to stand anarchy. They will bow the knee to anyone who restores so-called order. Let us recognize the Indian psychology. We need not stop to inquire whether such hankering after peace is a virtue or a vice. The average Mussulman of India is quite different from the average Mussulman of the other parts of the world. His Indian associations have made him more docile than his co-religionists outside India. He will not stand tangible insecurity of life and property for any length of time. The Hindu is proverbially, almost contemptibly mild. The Parsi and the Christian love peace more than strife. Indeed we have almost made religion subservient to peace. This Mentality is at once our weakness and our strength.

Let us nurse the better, the religious part of the mentality of ours."Let there be no compulsion in religion." Is it not religion with us to observe swadeshi and therefore wear khadi? But if the religion of others does not require them to adopt swadeshi, we may not compel them. We broke the universal law restated in the Koran. And the law

does not mean that there may be compulsion in other matters. The verse means that if it is bad to use compulsion in religion about which we have definite convictions, it is worse to resort to it in matters of less moment.

We can only therefore argue and reason with our opponents. The extreme to which we may go is non-violent non-co-operation with them even as with the Government. But we may not non-co-operate with them in private life, for we do not non-co-operate with the men composing the Government, we are non-co-operating with the system they administer. We decline to render official service to Sir George Lloyd the Governor, we dare not withhold social service from Sir George Lloyd the Englishman.

The mischief, I am sorry to say, began among the Hindus and the Mussulmans themselves. There was social persecution, there was coercion. I must confess that I did not always condemn it as strongly as I might have. I might have dissociated myself from the movement when it became at all general. We soon mended our ways, we became more tolerant but the subtle coercion was there. I passed it by as I thought it would die a natural death. I saw in Bombay that it had not. It assumed a virulent form on the 17th.

We damaged the Khilafat cause and with it that of the Punjab and swaraj. We must retrace our steps and scrupulously insure minorities against the least molestation. If the Christian wishes to wear the European hat and unmentionables he must be free to do so. If a Parsi wishes to stick to his *fenta*[1] he has every right to do so. If they both see their safety in associating themselves with the Government, we may only wean them from their error by appealing to their reason, not by breaking their heads. The greater the coercion we use, the greater the security we give to the Government, if only because the latter has more effective weapons of coercion than we have. For us to resort to greater coercion than the Government will be to make India more slave than she is now.

Swaraj is freedom for everyone, the smallest among us, to do as he likes without any physical interference with his liberty. Non-violent non-co-operation is the method whereby we cultivate the freest public opinion and get it enforced. When there is complete freedom of opinion, that of the majority must prevail. If we are in a minority, we can prove worthy of our religion by remaining true to it in the face of

[1] Traditional Parsis cap

coercion. The Prophet submitted to the coercion of the majority and remained true to his faith. And when he found himself in a majority he declared to his followers that there should be no compulsion in religion. Let us not again either by verbal or physical violence depart from the injunction, and by our own folly further put back the hands of the clock of progress.

Young India, 24-11-1921

64. TO THE CITIZENS OF BOMBAY[1]

BOMBAY,
November 26, 1921

By God's grace we are once more at peace. We are no longer engaged in the occupation of breaking one another's heads, throwing stones or burning buildings. Nevertheless some of us have still anger, bitterness and fear in us. This is evident from the language of numerous visitors and correspondents. We can call it a real peace only when our minds are free from these impurities. The first step towards such a consummation is that Hindus and Mussulmans make a clean confession of their guilt. Those who cast the first stone must be held guilty. If I begin by using an abusive word I must take the consequences of all that may follow. If Hindus and Mussulmans made the beginning by forcibly removing foreign caps or by throwing stones, they were the guilty party. Moreover, they are in an overwhelming majority. And it is largely Hindus and Mussulmans who have taken the pledge of non-violence. Therefore it is they who should realize their responsibility in the first instance.

I am not here considering the responsibility in law. I am simply thinking of it as between man and man. If Parsis and Christians do not feel their share of the guilt, it is difficult to establish a lasting peace. If Parsis and Christians had not retaliated when Hindus and Mussulmans began violence, they would have been considered angels, and they would have given to the world an astonishing proof of their soul-force. But they not only defended themselves, which was quite right, but they also were angered and went beyond the limits of self-defence. Some of them used greater violence than was necessary.

[1] This appeared under the caption"Way to Peace" and with the introduction:"The following is the translation of a Gujarati appeal issued by Mr. Gandhi."

And if they do not admit as much, it would be difficult to attain immediate heart-peace, because Hindus and Mussulmans will not acknowledge their complete innocence even after provocation. If only one party were to continue its guilt and the other consistently remained patient and suffering, the guilty party would be exhausted in the effort, if there was no reaction following action, the world would attain salvation. And generally we answer abuse with a slap. A slap is returned with a double slap. The latter is followed by a kick, the kick by a bullet, and so the circle of sin ever widens. But generally those who believe in taking a tooth for a tooth after a time forgive one another and become friends. Is it impossible for us to follow this common rule? I do not therefore hesitate to ask Parsi and Christian friends to recognize this rule of mutual forgiveness and forget one another's wrongs.

But I do lay stress upon the special responsibility that rests upon Hindus and Mussulmans. Whether the Parsis and the Christians forgive or not, Hindus and Mussulmans are bound to purify themselves by Confessing their guilt, asking God for forgiveness and by remaining peaceful. Those who have suffered losses or are deprived of their dear ones are bound to feel the effect of the injury received. Some of them are too poor to bear the losses. We must appreciate their position. And I trust that there will be an impartial non-official committee appointed to investigate the losses suffered by those who cannot bear them and to collect the funds necessary for assisting them. At the same time I hope no one will seek the assistance of law or Government. This advice I tender not merely as a non-co-operator, but also from my wide experience that such matters are more truly and more expeditiously adjudicated by private arbitration. That is also the way to avoid acerbities. The easiest method of achieving peace is to give up the idea of complaining against one another in a court of law and to concentrate our attention upon taking preventive measures, so that there is no recurrence of such madness. And I hope that Bombay will retrieve her lost reputation by adopting such measures.

I remain,

Your servant,

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 1-l2-l921

65. MESSAGE TO MILL-HANDS OF BOMBAY[1]

[Before *November* 27, 1921]

MILL-HAND FRIENDS,

I do not know you personally but, having myself become a labourer for the sake of the labourers in the country, I am intimately connected with you. I desire that you should all report for work as soon as the mills open and never suspend work again unless permitted by the employers, nor take part in rioting any time in future.

Your well-wisher,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 27-11-1921

66. TO THE LIBERALS[2]

[*November 27, 1921*][3]

FRIENDS,

We are all so preoccupied with other affairs that the events in Malabar hardly attract the attention they deserve. The ending of the trouble has become a matter of great urgency. It is one of simple humanity. Be the Moplahs ever so bad, they deserve to be treated as human beings. Their wives and children demand our sympathy. Nor are they all bad. And yet there can be no doubt that many innocent men must have beep adjudged guilty. Forcible conversions are horrible things. But Moplah bravery must command admiration. These Malabaris are not fighting for the love of it. They are fighting for what they consider is their Religion and in the manner they consider is religious. The vast majority of them have nothing personal to gain by continuing their resistance. Their sin is not of deliberation, but ignorance.

If we permit the extermination of Such a brave people, it will be remembered against us and will be accounted as Indian cowardice.

[1] A leaflet carrying this message was distributed in the labour areas of of Bombay.

[2] This appeared under the caption"About Moplahs".

[3] Released on this date

I make bold to say that had Mr. Yakub Hasan been allowed to go to Malabar, had I not been warned against entering Malabar, had Mussulmans of real influence been invited to go, this long drawn out agony could have been avoided.

But it is not yet too late.

The sword has been tried for three months, and it has failed to answer the purpose. It has not bent the proud Moplah. Nor has it saved Hindus from his depredations and lust. The sword has merely prevented the Moplah from overrunning the whole of the Madras Presidency. It has exhibited no power of protection

I am sure you will not plead incapacity. It is true that the police and the military are not transferred subjects. But you cannot escape moral responsibility. You are supporting the policy of the Government regarding Malabar.

Nor, I hope, will you retort by blaming the non-co-operators. They cannot admit any responsibility for the trouble at all, unless all agitation is to be held blame-worthy I admit however that non-co-operators were not able to take their message to the Moplah homes. That would be a reason for more, not less, agitation.

But I have not taken up the pen to argue away non-cooperators, blame. I ask you to consider the broad humanities of the question, compel the Government to suspend hostilities, issue promise of free pardon for past depredations upon an undertaking to surrender, and to permit non-co-operators to enter Malabar to persuade the Moplahs to surrender. I know that the last suggestion means the giving of importance to non-co-operators. Surely you do not doubt their numbers or influence. If you do, you should find other means of dealing with the trouble than that of extermination. I am merely concerned with the termination of the shameful inhumanity proceeding in Malabar with both Liberals and non-co-operators as helpless witnesses. I have chosen to address this letter not to the Government but to you, because the Government could not have taken the inhuman course of destruction without your moral support. I beseech you to give heed to my prayer as of a dear friend.

I am,
Your friend,
M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 1-12-1921

67. TO BARDOLI—ANAND

SISTERS AND BROTHERS OF BARDOLI AND ANAND,

You have been shocked beyond words. You were nursing high hopes. You had taken up the challenge to win swaraj, heal wounds of your Muslim brothers and of the Punjab and secure the release of the Ali Brothers from jail—all in this year and through your sacrifices.

But God had willed otherwise."If man had his way, none would suffer." This is the truth Narasinh[1] sang. We cannot command the result. All we can do is to aspire and strive. Even a man like Ramachandra was ordered, at the very hour when he was to be installed on the throne, to go and live in a forest. What are we, then?

I am thinking of the grief of my dear friend[2], my co-worker in the Punjab inquiry, whom I have seen shedding tears over the suffering of the Punjab, who, in old age, has started working like a young man, who having lived in comfort all his life, has renounced that life for your sake and mine and revelled in doing so. He is deeply pained at the thought that now he cannot send his Kaira District and specially his own Anand Talukas immediately to jail. Let me assure him and you all that the fruits of patience will be sweet.

No irreparable harm has been done. We have not lost the game. On the Contrary, we have succeeded in turning pain into happiness. There was disturbance of peace for a while, but we seem to have recovered our peace. God has saved us from a great tribulation through a small infliction.

I have received one letter from Bardoli, another about Bardoli, and I have seen a third letter about Kaira. These three letters state that you are not ready in the right sense—either with regard to non-violence or about swadeshi. In one letter, the Correspondent gives details of incidents and says that, in Bardoli, force has been used. Foreign caps have been snatched away, owners of liquor shops have also been persecuted and foul language has been freely used. In both the talukas, people wear khadi only for show. Many persons wear it when they go out but, in their houses, garments of foreign cloth fill the trunks and are seen hanging from the pegs. Women have adopted swadeshi even less than men. The letter about Kaira warns me that all that shines white is not milk, that there is much which does not meet

[1] 1414-1479; saint-poet of Gujarat

[2] Abbas Tyabji

the eye, is deliberately concealed. If anyone protests, poor soul, he is silenced.

I do not say that all this is true. There may be some exaggeration in it. But we learn a good deal from our critics. We would soon be free from our shortcomings if we learn to see us through their eyes. It is only others who can see our backs.

From you I expect the purest sacrifice. Only such offering is acceptable to God. During the waiting period we have got unsought, overcome all your shortcomings. Take up earnestly the holy work of spinning. See that in every home they daily spin good, strong yarn free from particles of cotton pods, that no one goes without food and that no home remains defiled with the filth of foreign cloth. Collect the figures I have suggested.

If you have forcibly taken away anybody's clothes, go and apologize to him. Harbour no resentment against those who may co-operate with the Government. Serve them when they are in distress. Do not flatter officials nor be afraid of them. Do not fear the police. Regard them as your brothers and love them. Withdraw your children from Government schools, if any are still attending them. Never use force for propagating non-co-operation. If there is even one person in your village who co-operates with the Government, bear him no ill will. Remember, instead, that he has as much right to hold his view as you yours.

If there are any disputes among the residents of your village, settle them. There can be no room for quarrelling in satyagrahi villages.

If contempt for *Dheds* and *Bhangis is* still lurking in your minds, shed it. Invite their children to attend your schools and treat them with love. Visit their quarters. Provide them facilities for water and other necessities, if these are absent. Do not give them your left-overs to eat. Raise their wages, instead, or give them uncooked grains.

If there are drink-addicts in your village, entreat them, beseech them to desist and thus save them from the evil. If they do not listen, let them drink. If there is a liquor booth in your village, plead with the owner gently. Do not get angry with him. Have compassion on him, instead.

If there are any bullies or habitual thieves in your village, do not be afraid of them either, nor intimidate them. Look upon them, too, as your brothers and show regard for them. In order to reform them, first understand their condition sympathetically and then try to bring

about a change of heart in them. At the same time, acquire the strength to protect yourselves, your families and your property from their depredations. For this purpose, appoint watchmen from among yourselves. They will never have to fight with the thieves. If there is a vigilant watch, thieves will not visit your locality. The saying that the vigilant need have no fear is quite true. Even then, it may happen that a ruffian will attack you. In that case, do not give way to fear. You ought to know all the bad characters of your taluka.

Anand, especially, is graced with the shrine of Dakorji. I described once[1] the state of things in this place. Anand Taluka could be said to be really fit only when you have reformed both the outer and the inner condition of the place. Has the dispute Over the temple property been settled? Is the pond clean? Have the pilgrims ceased to be pilgrims in name only and become honest devotees? Have the evils ceased? Has the town become entirely clean? Has foreign cloth been banished from the temple? Do the people in your taluka still have to take their disputes to the law courts?

Have no doubt that, if non-co-operators are true to their salt, if their hearts are filled with love, everyone will be won over by that love. I declare on oath that we can still win swaraj before the end of this year if your two talukas can fully implement all the items of the non-co-operation programme. And that is not a tall order either, if you but think about the matter. If you are all sincerely concerned, it is easy to fulfil the programme. It is, of course, a difficult matter if you have been working without proper understanding or with hatred in your heart, not love.

I have repeatedly said that non-co-operation springs from love, not hatred. Soul-force is love-force and the world is ruled by this force. If you want to free India through your strength, shower love on others. If you like being called the helper of the distressed, you must become the very images of tolerance, heroism, truth and other virtues. Mere show will never win us swaraj.

If you want to win swaraj this year, despite Bombay's error, You will have to bring about a far higher degree of self-purification than you have done so far. That means you will have to become true Hindus or Muslims or Parsis or Christians, as the case may be.

And never forget to show brotherly love for the Parsis and

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 2-11-1919, under Sub-title"Ccentre of Pilgrimage".

Christians living in your midst. You must remove their fears through your pure love for them.

Do not give up the hope you have placed in me, and see that I do not have to give up my hope in you. I will come to see you as early as possible. Meanwhile, press on with your preparations.

Your servant,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 27-11-1921

68. MY NOTES

AFTER THE FAST

I have started writing these Notes after ending my fast, while most of the material for *young India* was written during the fast. I find no difference, however, between my thoughts then and now. The views I held before I commenced the fast remain unchanged.

ONE CHANGE

Only in one respect have I changed my view. That, again, is not due to the fast, but to what I myself saw in Bombay on Thursday the 17th instant and to the incidents on Friday and Saturday which were reported to me. I can now see that we are not yet ready for civil disobedience. To start it in Bardoli at present will only mean losing the game. The primary aim of civil disobedience is to win swaraj, secure justice on the Khilafat issue and make the Government of India apologise to the people for the Punjab incidents. It is certain that not a single one of the three aims can be gained through civil disobedience under the present circumstances. Bombay and Bardoli-Anand have such close links that each side wants to and can help the other. If we start civil disobedience in Bardoli and Anand and consequently Bombay turns violent, a little reflection is enough to show that not only will Bombay not help us, but that actually it will harm the cause. Undisciplined disobedience is nothing but the fullest co-operation with the Government. Have we still to learn that this Government is kept in power by our weakness, our habit of breaking laws at will and our violence? Even the non-co-operation of some lawyers has not weakened the Government as much as our remaining peaceful. Similarly, it is strengthened more by our violence than by the

co-operation of the other pleaders, because our rioting gives it an opportunity for repression, for starting a reign of terror and thereby consolidating its power. Thus, unruly behaviour at one place with civil disobedience at another is as futile as grinding corn in a quern and then collecting in a dish the flour as it comes out of it or soiling a piece of cloth immediately it has been washed. One may go on pouring water in a leaky jar, but not a drop will remain. In the same way, no amount of discipline exhibited in an atmosphere of violence will avail us. We must first create an atmosphere of discipline and peace throughout the country. Happily or unhappily for us, we make the claim that the whole of India is with us, with the non-co-operation movement. It is our Claim that not only are the many lakhs enrolled on the Congress register with us, but that we have such influence over the crores outside that they too are with us. We must claim this. If the people are not with us, for whom are we to struggle and win swaraj? If they are with the Government, can we compel them to be free? Our present movement for swaraj and for the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs rests on our claim that we voice the people's grievances and that we are employing means which they have accepted, that is, that people want to win swaraj through peaceful methods.

If this belief of mine is not right, I, we, have committed a grave error. If those of us who have faith in non-violent means are only a handful, it means not that we can do nothing but that our plan should be different. In that case, non-co-operators being led to prison need not be followed by crowds. If, like those who co-operate with the Government, we too enjoyed no regard from the people, we could have offered civil disobedience to our heart's content, because then nobody would have violated peace in our name.

DIFFERENCE

The civil disobedience, which we soon expected to start in Gujarat was to be offered on behalf of the whole country. We had hoped that, through it, we would win swaraj and strengthen the movement for Khilafat. Hence, it was necessary that the whole country should preserve peace and thus show its moral support. Apart from this, anyone may offer civil disobedience for a local grievance, as people are doing just now in Chirala-Perala and Mulshi Peta. We have even sympathy for the people in these places and we may help them if we can. In any case, we can remain neutral. But the effect of violence

is so harmful that, if we impulsively start it in Bombay to show our sympathy with Chirala-Perala, the people there would have to suffer all the more.

GREATEST NEED

So the first and the greatest need of the hour is to see that an atmosphere of peace prevails everywhere. If we still have any doubt about the need for peace, we should shed it. We must get control over the *goondas.* They, too, are our brothers. We cannot disown them nor can we afford to submit to them. If we allow ourselves to be ruled by them, the country will not have swaraj *but goonda* raj. To let them rule is to destroy both themselves and us. We must know, however, that the public will not tolerate *goonda* raj even for a moment. Rather than incur the risk of immediate danger to life and property held by *goonda* raj, the public will instantly welcome the protection offered by the Government. We must, therefore, find out the *goondas,* discuss things with them in a friendly spirit, explain to them what is best for our dharma and our country and entreat them not to obstruct national work by their rioting. Let nobody suppose that all this will take a long time. It can be done in Bombay in a fortnight. I look upon the *goondas* as plain and simple folk misguided into wrong ways through their karma. We, in our blind selfishness, have led them into evil ways or kept them there. Hence, it should be easy for us to ensure that they do not interfere in this holy fight of ours. They can be persuaded to desist from their usual looting and fighting for the duration of the non-co-operation movement. If we cannot exercise even that much influence over them we shall prove ourselves unfit for swaraj. Suppose the British power left India; who then will protect us against the evil ways of the *goondas?* This is not to be decided after we have won swaraj. It is rather a pre-condition of our winning it that we answer the question now. If we cannot win them over through love, we certainly do not have the strength of arms to control them. Besides, a person like me would at any rate prefer to die at their hands rather than try to save his life by killing them.

DIFFICULTIES IN THIS

This change is easy to bring about, but there are difficulties in the way. At present, six different views prevail in the country.

1. People who believe that swaraj is impossible except through violence and bloodshed. They are, therefore, utilizing the prevailing

atmosphere of peace to prepare for violence.

2. Those who think that our interests will be served through both the methods, of violence and of non-violence, used simultaneously, and so welcome incidents of violence. The aim of these people is not self-purification but only harassment of the Government.

3. Those who do not like a non-violent experiment anywhere to be abandoned because of continuing outbreaks of violence despite all efforts to check them.

4. Those who believe that we may attempt only what can be achieved with the Government's co-operation.

5. Those who accept the method of peace as an experiment, advocate it as a policy, and are unhappy inwardly while the experiment is in progress.

6. Those who work with the conviction that the method of non-violence is the only way for winning the country's freedom and bringing about Hindu-Muslim unity, and disapprove of rioting by people, whether planned or unplanned.

A little reflection ought to show us that persons belonging only to the fifth and sixth categories help us and they alone will advance our cause. Persons of all other categories harm us. We have to win them over through gentleness, persuasion and service. The fourth category, of those who believe in co-operation, is not really so dangerous as to do us much harm. Moreover, we know who belong to this category; they have their own organization and carry on their activities in public. People in the first three categories have no organization, no institution or association to which they belong. They are scattered all over the country and influence the people whenever they can. As they are isolated individuals, it is difficult to reach them. But whenever there is trouble, they come out in the open and spread lawlessness among the people. When some of these, with an honest but a mistaken motive, infiltrate into non-co-operators' bodies, and propagate their own views through them, their activities become more harmful and dangerous. People of all these three categories were active in Bombay from Thursday to Sunday. That is why we used to hear all kinds of rumours and the very crowd which had come round and had started dispersing was persuaded by some other persons to collect again.

C.I.D.

Some people argue that all this was the work of the C.I.D. I completely refuse to believe this. It is true that the C.I.D. had a hand in the disturbances. Some members of the C.I.D. would not be happy unless there was trouble. But, besides the C.I.D., there were some persons with their own views and they also were inciting people; and the *goondas*, especially, whose very profession it is to loot and riot, were spreading wild rumours and doing their work.

ONLY ONE WAY

We have only one remedy. Our way is straight and clear. We must acquire influence over all these elements. If, when everyone is trying to make pawns of the people in their own game, the masses clearly see the wisdom of listening to non-co-operators only, they would never be eager to join a riot. Peace will spread and settle in the country when we have acquired such control. And the fact that peace has been established again indicates that we do have the power to restore it and preserve it. What is necessary is that we should be honest and energetic. We should have complete faith in the means we have adopted. We must be ever vigilant. The workers of Bombay forgot their responsibility and were caught napping. They assumed that the people of Bombay had now fully understood that there should be no violence. They, therefore, made strenuous preparations to organize the boycott of the functions to welcome the Prince of Wales, but did not simultaneously take the precautions to preserve peace which they should have done. With what result, we have seen. Be that as it may, one thing is certain. We can claim to have proved ourselves superior to the Government only when we remain peaceful despite C.I.D.'s tricks; only then can we rightly claim to be fit for swaraj. If we continue to deceive ourselves by shifting the blame to the police, we are sure to lose the battle. We cease to be soldiers, if, when the enemy batters us, takes us unawares, we complain that he will not let us win, gives us no breathing time even! We can hope to win only when we can prove that we have the strength to carry on the fight, let the enemy do what he will. As long as we cannot create an atmosphere in which we shall succeed in preserving peace despite anything the Government may do, we must give up all hope of winning the fight.

SELF-EXAMINATION

Our duty, therefore, is to see our own fault instead of blaming

the police. Why did we turn out to be such simpletons that we believed all kinds of rumours? Did we not commit atrocities? Did we not snatch away foreign caps, set fire to tram-cars and liquor shops, join in rioting when we saw others rioting? Did we not entertain ugly thoughts in our minds, bear hatred for people who wanted to co-operate with the Government? If we did all this—and I myself saw that we did—then, with folded hands, we should pray to God for forgiveness, atone for our sin and take a solemn vow never to act in this way again. The saying,"Be good and the world will be good to you," contains a great truth. Because we ourselves are impure and cowardly, we look upon officers and every policeman as our enemy. If we cast off fear, we would cease to fear policemen, whether in plain clothes or in uniform and would not be misled by anyone. We want to fight relying wholly on soul-force. This strength no one can give us. God alone can grant it. Let us overcome our weaknesses and we shall have won swaraj.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-11-1921

69. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

Monday, [*November 28, 1921*][1]

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I have received your detailed letter. I shall definitely look forward to know such details at least for the time being.

We need two committees to serve our purpose :[2]

(1) To find and assess the damage done to private persons or private property during the recent disturbance and to collect funds necessary for the proposed relief.[3]

(2) To inquire into the part played by the police and the military during the recent disturbance with special reference to the charge that they took sides.

[1] From the contents; *vide*"Notes", 18-11-1919, under Sub-title"Centre of Pilgrimage"."Notes", 18-11-1921, under Sub-title"Reverse of Truth". Gandhiji left for Surat on December 1, a Thursday.

[2] What follows in this paragraph is in English.

[3] On November 17, when the Prince of Wales arrived in Bombay, there were demonstrations against his visit, including bonfires of foreign cloth, resulting in riots on a large scale.

Our purpose will be served by having two such committees. There is no reference in this to the origin of the disturbance because it is not necessary and it will lead to more dissentions. Both the committees should meet *in camera* and only the required evidence to be published by the committee(s) should be made public.

There should also be co-opted members in both the committees. I have already given the names. Let Prof. Giddes give his speech. It would be good to invite both the sides. If (the members of) these two committees go and the co-opted members join them and if the Parsees and the Christians do not lodge any complaint with the Government, then we can make considerable headway.

Do keep in contact with Chhotani Mian. We can certainly not engage lawyers for the people. Those who want to may do so. But as a committee we cannot be a party to it. Even as individuals for whom non-co-operation is a matter of duty, we cannot do it. Therefore, those who are arrested, would not be able to have from us legal help, etc.

I saw that steps had already been taken in the case of Anasuya-behn before I reached. Bhai Mohanlal has vacated the premises and elections are to be held soon.

Settle the matter about sending money to Gujarat for the swadeshi movement immediately.

Take proper care of your health. I think I shall leave for Surat on Thursday morning.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati : S. N. 32700

70. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

SABARMATI,
Tuesday, [*November 29, 1921*][1]

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

You would have received my reply sent yesterday. It is good that you met Sir Prabhashankar[2] and others. The important thing is that we should love our colleagues while adhering to our own programme. If our faith is in peace there is no other way.

[1] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Abbas Tyabji", 1-12-1921.

[2] Prabhashankar Pattani

It will be good if I too have a talk with Umar. This great task can be accomplished only when all his doubts are dispelled and he is absorbed in work.

I hope to reach Bardoli on Thursday evening. From there I expect to reach Bombay on Sunday. I shall stay there till Wednesday if I think it is necessary, but I do wish to leave earlier if I can. Will it be all right if I decide only when I am there whether I should take the chair on Wednesday?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati : S. N. 32570

71. NOTES

REVERSE OF TRUTH

The Government of Bombay has contradicted my statement[1] to the effect that the police and the military took sides during the recent trouble and that not they but the citizens restored peace. I am sorry for the contradiction. I was unprepared for it. I must add to my charges a third now to complete the picture. The police or the military were powerless to protect the life and property of the citizens. On the seventeenth I observed that they could not prevent tram-cars and motors from being burnt. They could not prevent the liquor shop in Bhindi Bazar from being reduced to ashes. Nor did they do better on eighteenth or nineteenth. Incendiarism and looting went on unchecked. When anybody applied for protection, he was flatly told that they could not spare any more men, all hands being occupied in connection with the welcome to the Prince.

Could the police and the military possibly restore peace when they were able to protect none and nothing in the disturbed area? The credit for restoration of peace is not claimed for non-co-operators alone. I claim it for both co-operators and non-co operators, for Hindus, Mussulmans, Parsis and Christians including Englishmen. If all the peace-loving citizens had not joined, order could not have been restored. I claim the credit for Mian Chhotani. On the 20th instant but for Sir Pheroze Shethna who succeeded in inducing the military to stay their hands, a crowd would have been fired upon whereas it was

[1] Vide "A Deep Stain", 18-11-1921.

dispersed within five minutes by the efforts of Dr. Pavri and Mr. Banker. I can multiply instances of such dispersal on behalf of the citizens irrespective of creed or party. Mrs. Naidu was often asked by the military to help disperse crowds. Indeed if co-operating and non-co-operating Parsis had not helped, it would have been impossible to restore peace. At the peace breakfast it was Mr. H. P. Modi who claimed the credit for the citizens. Though Mr. Purushottamdas administered a polite rebuke to the non-co-operators for the previous excitement, he did not disclaim the credit for the establishment of peace on behalf of the citizens. Mr. Natarajan too gave unstinted praise to those who had brought about the much desired peace. Mr. K. T. Paul and Mr. Douglas did no less. Mr. Vimadalal in proposing thanks specially mentioned Mian Chhotani.

As to taking sides, whilst the police failed to protect the Parsis, many of the latter admitted to me that they looked on whilst Parsis hooligans were dealing destruction. But I do not wish to labour this point. I have no desire to blame individual members of the police or military. I hope one day to bring them over to the side of truth and innocence. Most are Indians, and I certainly do not despair of Englishmen responding in the end if only non-co-operators will be true to their creed of non-violence. Credit may however be given for the forbearance of the police and the military in that they did not want only take life, they did not attempt terrorism. Let me close this chapter by instancing Malabar and Madras. Because the people are not permitted to work, the Malabar trouble is still going on; because people did not or could not work, murder in the strike area in Madras was rampant for close on two months. The Government of Bombay may, if they choose, claim the credit for refraining from interference with the people who were trying to restore peace.

WHO WAS AT THE BOTTOM?

People were not wanting who persisted in saying that the whole trouble was engineered and kept up by the secret police. Throughout the six years I have been in India, I have been hearing such charges against the C.I.D. I have myself received the attentions of that body. But I am unable to subscribe to the wild rumours that are set afloat about it. I admit that it is corrupt, that many charges can be borne out, but there is much exaggeration in them. It would be terrible if they were all true. And it would be proof of our rank cowardice. Many things imputed to the department are possible only among the people

bereft of personal bravery and self-respect. During the Bombay disturbances, responsible men credited the secret police with having set afloat all the rumours about assault on Mrs. Naidu, myself and others, about damage to mosques and churches, etc. The C.I.D. was reputed to have brought about the fires and the wrecking of tram cars. I am unable to believe all these statements; and if they are true, the people of Bombay must be easily gullible and too foolish to exercise the rights of citizenship. Among the qualities required to enable us to attain swaraj is certainly ability to checkmate the C.I.D. If we can be easily incited to things that hurt us or introduced to believe things we ought not to we can never gain our end. If we are openly and truly non-violent, we cannot possibly go wrong. Either the C.I.D. or we work upon the inflammable material in our midst. If we cannot keep it under control, we must bid good-bye to all idea of freedom in the near future.

BEWARE OF RUMOURS

One of the many lessons to be learnt from the events is that we must never believe rumours and that we must have Congress and Khilafat offices in every ward or large street where people can verify rumours. If we are acting as one man with one minds—and we must if we are to succeed—we must learn never to act without thinking and on mere rumours. Three-fourths of the panic was caused by mischievous rumours. What does it matter if the people hear of temples destroyed or some big leader killed or injured? They may not act without advice. Does an individual soldier act on his own behalf on hearing of a general's death or of a desecration of his mosque or temple? If he were to act so, he would harm the cause and be liable even to be shot. It is much more necessary for us to act in concert when we are willing soldiers of peace and more capable of restraint than armed soldiers and when we have to win not a single battle but the freedom of our country and religions.

OBLIGATORY EXAGGERATION

Exaggeration is always worthy of condemnation but there is one exception to the rule. It is obligatory in connection with our own faults. We are short-sighted regarding them, and they appear in their true bearing only when they are magnified a thousand-fold. We are long-sighted regarding other people's faults. Understatement in their case is therefore a necessity. And if we perform the two processes

simultaneously and conscientiously, we are likely to arrive at the happy mean. Mussulman friends have quarrelled with my saying that theirs was the leading part in the riots. And both they and the Hindus have taken exception to my statement that they were the aggressors and therefore the guilty party. I have given the greatest consideration to both the objections and have come to the conclusion that I must adhere to my original statement. We shall never cleanse ourselves, unless we know the whole truth against ourselves. I would be untrue to the Mussulmans if I did not say what I knew or felt, and I would be no Hindu, if for fear of losing Hindu esteem or otherwise I did not tell the truth. Needless to say it is no part of my business to consider the legal consequences of such statements. The Government may do what it chooses. If the Parsis and Christians are wise, they will not play into its hands. But as a non-co-operator I am unconcerned with legal consequences. Those who did damage were non-co-operators, sympathisers or mere mischief-makers. The first two must feel delighted, if innocent, to be imprisoned, for we court imprisonment of the innocent. If they have done wrong, they need not be sorry for punishment. The mischief-makers need not expect protection from me. Therefore the best protection I am capable of giving, the best service I am capable of rendering is to tell the truth in utter disregard of consequence. It is not possible on any other terms to carry on this great struggle affecting crores of people in which you are always dealing with novel situations and uncertain elements. Our only infallible weapons in the midst of such uncertainties are truth and non-violence.

FEAR OF IMPRISONMENT

Much though we have advanced in shedding fear of imprisonment, there is still a disinclination to seek it and an anxiety to avoid it. We must remain scrupulously honest and non-violent, and at the same time be anxious almost to find ourselves in the jails of the Government. It must be positively irksome if not painful for us to enjoy so-called freedom under a Government we seek to end or mend. We must feel that we are paying some unlawful or heavy price for retaining our liberty. If therefore when being innocent we are imprisoned, we must rejoice became we must feel that freedom is near. Is not freedom nearer for the imprisonment of hundreds who are now cheerfully undergoing it for the sake of the country? What can be

better for non-co-operators of Bombay than that though innocent, they should be imprisoned for the sake of the guilty?

A PURE HEART

But my remarks will be appreciated only by those who have changed hearts,—not by those Hindus and Mussulmans who still believe that the Parsis or the Christians were more in the wrong than the Hindus and the Mussulmans. The many letters of protest I have received show that many Hindus and Mussulmans believe the Parsis and the Christians gave the first offence. Although I know the contrary, I am prepared to assume that they did. Are not Hindus and Mussulmans still bound by virtue of their pledge, of their numbers and of their religion not to retaliate but to be friend and protect them even if they have to go out of their way to do it?

MAULANA BARI'S "FATVA"

Let Maulana Abdul Bari speak. I offer no apology for reproducing the *fatva* he issued on learning the particulars about the Bombay disturbances:

> We do not at all desire to inflict any insult or bodily harm on the Prince of Wales. We only wish to save him from being deceived by official prestige and to show him the real feelings of India and its people. The means we have adopted is to declare a hartal from which all violence should be excluded. . . .
>
> We consider the Bombay riots to be opposed not only to our political creed but also to our *shariat*. . . if such disturbances are not prevented in future, the minorities will no longer have faith in Indian democracy. . . .

RIGHTS OF MINORITIES

Unless therefore we remove the last trace of ill will against Parsis, Christians or Jews, we shall fail in our purpose. The condition of such protection is not that minorities accept our political or other opinion. That would be no protection. Protection so be true has to be given in spite of the dissent, even opposition of minorities. Indeed we must jealously guard the rights of minorities if we are to have perfect freedom of opinion in the country. Even a child must be able to express its opinion freely. The rule of majority would be a barbarous imposition, if it were utilized to crush the minority. What we want in a

free India is not a dead level but a variety of opinion and conduct in which the sanest will prevail by the weight not of might but of right. We have been groaning too long under the weight of authority. And the weight of majority can be as brutal as that of the bullets of a minority. We must therefore be patient with our Parsi or Christian brother if we will be free. I see in the blind prejudice against the Parsis and the Christians a menace to Hindu-Muslim unity itself. If we cannot tolerate Parsi or Christian difference, what guarantee is there that Hindus, if they felt the superiority of their brute strength, would not impose their will upon the Mussulman minority, or the Mussulmans, if they believed themselves to be capable of wielding superior brute strength, would not crush the weak Hindu in spite of his numerical superiority?

AN ECHO FROM BENGAL

Here is an apposite letter from Bengal written by a friend who knows what he is talking about. He says:

> I desire to tell you, that if civil disobedience is begun in Eastern Bengal, the consequences will be much more serious. The Mussulmans there number more than 70 per cent of the total population. The majority of them are turbulent. As soon as the passions of these men are roused, they will fall upon the Hindus, commit horrible outrages and terrorize the Hindu landlords and creditors. The saner and the more respectable section among them will fail to control the turbulent. Hindu-Muslim unity will vanish at the first touch. In Calcutta too the state of things will be extremely bad. I earnestly request you to take a much less optimistic view of men and things in India. Excuse me for saying that you know more of men and things of South Africa than of men and things in the parent country. You seem now to be against starting civil disobedience. But if you change your mind, I cannot look upon the results except with a feeling of horror or dismay. Your noblest ideals will be shattered to pieces and the country will be a prey to greater oppression and trouble. What you have done during these years will be undone.

This is not the only warning of the kind received by me. Bombay is one of the greatest nerve centres. It has naturally therefore stirred people. The protection of the rights of minorities means the protection of the weak. And protection of the weak means protection of old men, children and women and all those who may be helpless. And if today the united strength of Hindus and Mussulmans is used against Parsis and Christians, tomorrow the unity will break under the strain of cupidity or false religiousity,—not a delectable picture of

swaraj by any means. For India, there is no alternative to non-violence, complete and true, if she is to be free. Non-violence then must not be used as a preparation for violence. To realize this is to realize swaraj and religion. Let the Hindus and the Mussulmans beware of misreading their *Gita* or Koran. And by way of trial let them use their joint strength to protect the minorities and they will learn to protect one another.

NOT POLICY BUT CREED

And this cannot be done unless the year's experience teaches us to regard non-violence as our *final creed for the attainment and retention of India's freedom and of the unity of all the sects and denominations of India*. This still leaves each community free to fight for the preservation of its religion, and all together to fight for India's defence. But non-violence must not be a policy or expedient to be tried for gaining India's freedom or consolidating unity. Hindus and Mussulmans must therefore begin by loving and serving Parsis, Jews and Christians including Englishmen, whether they are co-operators or other. And if we are to do this, our speeches must be free from bitterness and in the process of conversion, we must not touch even a child in order to remove its foreign cap, nor use force against drunkards to wean them from drink. We must rest our cause solely upon appeal to reason, to the head and the heart, never to brute force whether verbal or physical. When we have millions of the people of India freely and intelligently on our side, we have swaraj. The greatest fear of co-operators is that non-violence is a cloak for violence and that in spite of the effort of the well-meaning, the movement is bound ultimately to pass into the hands of the unruly and the turbulent. We cannot dispel this fear by argument. We can only do so by an unbroken chain of facts which need no proof. Whilst we have made much headway, we cannot claim that we have neither speech nor action to our debit. Love, charity, humility, gentleness do not need any articulate proof. We must therefore put greater stress on non-violence and less on non-co-operation. Non-violence is non-co-operation. The Government's haven of refuge is violence. Is ours non-violence? Have we finally withdrawn ourselves from their school of violence? It is their greatest educational institution. The day we demolish the prestige of violence in its entirety, that day we establish swaraj. And to be able to do this, we must learn to love the Englishman whilst we hate his system under which he pretends to

govern India. In the words of Maulana Abdul Bari we have no quarrel with the Englishman, we quarrel with his rule of force.

PRACTICAL HINTS

If then we love our opponents, our love must show itself in our actions. We must invite them to our platforms and give them a patient and courteous hearing, we must not revile them in speaking of them, we must not cry"shame" when we hear their names, we must render them social service as readily as we would render to those who agree with us. All we may not do is to render them political service or give them political association. We must avoid all exciting speeches and avoid all noises: *Mahatma Gandhi ki jai* and other sounds should be strictly forbidden. We must be able to conduct our meetings without such noises. And if we do not attract vast crowds without such noises we shall fare all the better without them. I would regard a district or tahsil that cannot be brought under such restraint to be unfit for civil disobedience. Picketing should be regarded with the gravest suspicion. There is no doubt that it has not everywhere been of a strictly non-violent nature. There has been verbal violence or a show of violence. It is better therefore to suspend picketing at least for the time being or till we have attained much greater self-control and gained greater experience. We may confine our attention just now to working among the drinking class.

HARTALS

The hartals wherever the Prince is taken may be proclaimed if absolute peace can be guaranteed and compulsion of any kind whatever avoided. If the tram-cars run, we must not interfere with them. If the people use them, we know that they do not want to join us. If a single man wishes to keep his shop open, we must protect him in his freedom. It has a great value only if it is strictly voluntary.

PARSIS AND CHRISTIANS

Parsis and Christians of Bombay have before them a time of great trial and temptation. It is just possible that they will be tempted to file complaints against Hindus and Mussulmans. It will be a fatal blunder to succumb to the temptation. They ought to rise to the occasion and refrain from seeking relief or reparation through courts of law. Quarrels are sometimes inevitable in spite of the best of precautions. They know that the sanest element among Hindus and

Mussulmans deeply regret the unfortunate quarrel and are ashamed of the Hindu and Mussulman aggression. Parsis and Christians should now seek only such relief as a non-official committee can secure for them. Whilst it is true that Hindus and Mussulmans must keep their heads cool even if the latter seek reparation through the Government, they will put a severe strain upon human nature if they prefer official action to non-official.

OF THE GOVERNMENT

Correspondents, whilst congratulating me for apologizing to the Parsis, Christians and Jews, have rebuked me for not doing likewise by the Government. In making the suggestion, they have missed the central point of apology. I cannot apologize to a system of its *administrators* when that system is responsible for the troubles at least equally with, if not more than, non-co-operators. I start with the assumption that the administrators of the system relish these troubles and invite them by providing for them first in the way of giving provocation by unpopular measures and secondly by making *frightful* preparations to crush any outburst of popular resentment. Apology has been tendered to administrators as men in as much as it has been tendered to Christians, Englishmen and co-operators. I have said that in as much as non-co-operators insulted a single person who took part in the welcome to the Prince, they insulted the Prince and broke the pledge of non-violence. I am not aware of non-co-operators having in any shape or form injured the Government during the three disgraceful days. On the contrary I feel and know that the misguided mischief-makers strengthened the Government. The reader will see that apology to a Government which has been served or has benefited would be an inappropriate act. One of my minor objects is to injure the Government as a system and therefore the status of its administrators. But this I do by remaining strictly non-violent and dissociating myself from it in every possible and non-violent manner and by inducing others to do likewise. Indeed, if non-violence became the common creed of both the Government and the people, there would be little room for any quarrel ending in non-co-operation.

MORE NOTABLE IMPRISONMENTS

Maulana Sherar was an effective speaker in the Madras Presidency and a staunch Khilafat worker. He was also a good writer. The Madras Government have silenced this worker for one year. The

Punjab Government have arrested Pandit Nekiram Sharma who is not unknown to Bombay audiences and who was instrumental in saving precious lives when on the 17th instant a liquor shop was reduced to ashes in Bhindi Bazar. Mr. Gangadharrao Deshpande has got six months simple imprisonment. I had hoped that he and others would not be permitted to rest beyond the end of the year. The Bombay occurrences seem to have dashed my hopes to pieces. Before then I was certain either of our ability to unlock the prison gates or at least of joining the comrades in their rest-houses. Now—? God alone can tell.

ARREST OF BRAVE SIKHS

A telegram in *The Bombay Chronicle* shows that the Punjab Government have goaded the Sikhs to civil disobedience. The Government had prohibited a Sikh divan that was to be held at Amritsar. This proved too much for the Sikhs. They held the divan with the result that eleven noted Sikhs have been arrested. Among these are the veteran Sardar Khadag Singh, President Gurudwara Committee, Sardar Bahadur Mehtab Singh who recently resigned on the Gurudwara question the Deputy Presidentship of the Punjab Council and Government leadership, also Sardar Dan Singh, President Amritsar City Congress Committee. If the Sikhs continue to remain calm and yet firm, then the incarceration of the Sikh leaders must bring about the desired solution of the Gurudwara question.

STRIKES

When hartal takes place what should mill-hands and other employees do, who cannot get leave from their unsympathetic or alien employers? In terms of non-violence there can be but one answer. An employee who gives himself leave uses violence, for he commits a criminal breach of the contract of his service. He cannot absent himself without the permission of his employer. All he can do is to resign if he is not satisfied with his employer. But this too a body of employees may not do all of a sudden. For they may not in order to enforce their political opinion threaten to leave without due notice. In short mill-hands and such other employees should not be encouraged to coerce their employers into giving leave. Non-violent action is not quite so simple as one may imagine. I have heard men describing as non-violent the holding tight of the legs of persons proceeding to drink-shops. Similarly youngsters have classed foul abuse of liquor dealers among non-violent acts. This is merely playing with language

and bore bitter fruit in Bombay We must be true to ourselves if we wish to give non-violence a fair trial. Even if we cannot make our thought non-violent, we must so regulate our speech and action as to make them completely innocuous. If we find it impossible or too difficult to practise we must give up the attempt but we must not blame one of the greatest doctrines of life for our incapacity. If failure has to be written against us, it won't be failure of non-violence but of the violent to respond to it.

AN ANDHRA DEFINITION

Swaraj has been variously defined. Mr. Gopal Krishnayya who has been tried a second time and sentenced to undergo further imprisonment to run concurrently with the first made a long statement before the Magistrate. It is more a theological discussion of his belief than a statement of his political creed. It certainly shows that there was neither violence nor incitement to it in the speech that was the subject matter of prosecution. But I am concerned only with his interesting definition of swaraj. Here it is:

> It is not the common political suffering that is to weld together the Hindu and the Muslim like the Greeks of old during the Persian invasions, but the mutual respect, regard and love for each other's dharma. . . . and the necessity for its individuated preservation that can and shall achieve it. Swaraj, therefore, means the preservation of Hindu dharma, Muslim dharma, Christian dharma, Parsi dharma, Sikh dharma, in short *swadharma* of all and a co-ordinated federation of all, which are now being threatened with destruction by positivist godless philosophy, industrial anarchy and spiritual famine that beset the world at the present moment.

Surely we are nearing our goal when men of character are being imprisoned for their religious beliefs.

SARDAR GURDUT SINGH

It is no small matter for one to remain in hiding for seven years and escape the police and then openly to surrender oneself to them, yet Sardar Gurdut Singh has succeeded in performing the wonder. I have before me his open letter and other papers. In the midst of other diversions these papers do not attract me. But I cannot withhold my congratulations from the Sikhs for their having kept their peace when Sardar Gurdut Singh surrendered himself and the Magistrate took charge of him. We must be certain of non-violence to such an extent that we may undertake the boldest steps with perfect confidence.

There is nothing to beat swadeshi to make us non-violent. I entirely agree with a correspondent who sends me a long letter saying that I should insist upon due fulfilment of swadeshi before a single tahsil embarks upon civil disobedience. I know that violence would be an impossibility if the whole of India became swadeshi, i.e., carried out complete boycott of foreign cloth by manufacturing the whole of the khadi supply in her millions of cottages. Would that the Sikhs and other Indians simply concentrate upon manufacture of hand-spun yarn and hand-woven cloth.

TEN DAYS FOR THE KHADI CAP

The khadi cap came in for much attention during the late disturbance in Bombay. Dr. Sathe was severely assaulted because he would not surrender his khadi cap. Now I hear that sailors in the Fort forcibly dispossessed many innocent wearers of their khadi caps. I can only hope that this senseless persecution will stiffen the resolve of the nation and that thousands will be prepared to die for the khadi cap which is fast becoming a visible mark of swadeshi and swaraj. The most glaring instance however comes from Bengal. Mr. T. H. Ellis, S.D.O. of Brahmanbaria District, Comilla, Bengal, issued on the 16th instant the following notice:

> The Government has decided that the wearing of what are called Gandhi caps constitutes an offence under section 228 I.P.C. Gentlemen are warned that this order will be enforced.

Consequently a volunteer who wore a khadi cap in spite of the order was fined Rs. 10/- which he refused to pay. He preferred to go to jail for ten days. I reproduce below the Section 228:

> Whoever intentionally offers any insult or causes any interruption to a public servant while such public servant is sitting in any stage of a judicial proceeding, shall be punished with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months or with fine which may extend to one thousand rupees or both.

Thus the wearing of a khadi cap is henceforth to constitute an insult to a public servant in Bengal! I hope that the S.D.O. has arrogated to himself powers that have never been given to him or any other magistrate by the Bengal Government. In any event if the order is at all general, bare-headed Bengal will soon begin to patronize khadi caps if only out of sheer sense of self respect. I congratulate the volunteer who has been the first to receive the honour of

imprisonment for the offence of wearing a khadi cap.

PUSSYFOOT'S CERTIFICATE

I was agreeably surprised to receive the following from Pussyfoot. I had hoped to have the privilege of meeting Dr. Johnson but our programme always clashed. It is therefore special satisfaction for me to be able to receive a letter from him acknowledging our temperance work:

> MY DEAR MR. GANDHI
>
> While sailing away from your country, my mind keeps going beck to the wonderful work that you are doing for the temperance cause in India and, consequently, for the whole world. . . .
>
> Please present my kind recollections to your good wife and your brother with whom I did have the privilege of a little visit.
>
> AT SEA, *Cordially yours,*
> *November 19, 1921* W. E. JOHNSON

I can share the letter with the reader without blushing for the simple reason that I can claim no credit for the work which Dr. Johnson truly calls wonderful. It has not even taken two years to accomplish what has been done. But the credit belongs to a multitude of unknown workers who fired by the religious nature of the movement spontaneously took up temperance work. I wish that such glorious work had not been marred by the wanton and violent burning of liquor shops in Bombay. Let me hope that all trace of compulsion will be removed from the reform and that we shall soon see an India become voluntarily dry.

IMPLICATIONS OF REMOVAL OF UNTOUCHABILITY

I take the following from the letter of a Bengali friend:

> You have placed the removal of untouchability in the fore-front of the programme of national work. But you have not, so far as I am aware, given any clear explanation as to what exactly you intend it to mean. The question of intermarriage apart, it may be taken to mean any one of three possible courses. It may mean either not considering the touch of a man ceremonially unclean or agreeing to take water at his hands or not refusing to partake of food, more particularly rice, prepared by him.

I can generally answer the question by saying that removal of untouchability means disappearance of a fifth caste. It therefore does mean at least that mere touch of a man shall not be regarded as a pollution. The so-called untouchable should enjoy the same freedom that the touchables do. Generally speaking therefore water handled by

the erstwhile untouchable will not be regarded as polluted. Removal of untouchability does not include partaking of rice or other food cooked by the untouchable or any other. That is a matter of reform in the institution of caste and not covered by the programme about untouchability. Restrictions about marriage and inter-dining may be undesirable and may require modification. But I do not regard them as a blot upon Hinduism, as I do untouchability. The latter puts a class of human beings beyond the pale of social service and therefore is an inhuman institution.

Young India, 1-12-1921

72. A PROTEST

The Editor
YOUNG INDIA

SIR

I accept in the right spirit the stern rebuke which you have been pleased to administer to me in *Young India* of the 10th instant[1] as coming from a wise and sagacious general to an erring soldier; but you will, I pray, permit me a few words of mild remonstrance. It was not very pleasant to read your strong remarks, but it was positively painful to find that in writing about me in the way you had done you had been less than just to your own great self. That calm dignity, that scrupulous fairness to the worst opponent, that flowing charity and that sweet reasonableness which are such conspicuous features of your method of controversy were unfortunately very nearly absent in this particular instance.

I was convinced that our meeting at Delhi in spite of the President having adjourned it was a defiance of constitutional proprieties. . . that the Bengal and Madras members had no right to be there in view of the President's ruling that their election was void. . . . I felt that the Working Committee was . . . fast constituting itself into a power behind the throne. I saw with dismay that the All-India Congress Committee in its admiration for the great personalities who adorn the Working Committee was not only gifting away to that body one after another of its own powers, but what was worse, those also of the President's without the latter's permission and against his will reducing him thereby to the position of a mere puppet. . . . My whole soul rebelled against this topsy-turveydom. I do not think that the Congress Constitution

[1] *Vide* "The All-India Congress Committee", 10-11-1921.

contemplates the President as a mere figure-head whom the Working Committee can order about as it likes. He owes his office to the choice of the nation. He derives his authority directly from the Congress and he embodies, in the theory of the Constitution, the collective wisdom and authority of the entire body of delegates. His is the sole right of interpreting and construing the Congress Constitution and his rulings in these matters as also on questions of procedure are final and conclusive; this is not to say that his rulings are always correct, but the way to set them right is not by dealing a death blow to the dignity of the President's office as was done at Delhi. . . . Your severe castigation far from shaking my conviction has made it stronger. . . . to characterise my attitude as obstruction is to utter the language of prejudice; to pour ridicule over honest differences of opinion . . . and to suggest that anybody came all the way from Bombay to Delhi at considerable inconvenience and no little expense simply to amuse and to be amused is perhaps the most unkindest cut of all, and, if I may say so, not in the true Gandhian vein.

I dare say your reference to the Maharashtra party is intended to be complimentary, but I am certain that it will not be read as such even outside Maharashtra. Speaking for myself . . . I venture to state—not in the spirit of idle boasting but of meek gratefulness—that the whole district where my humble lot had been cast will entirely repudiate your estimate of my mentality, and you yourself will some day realize with pain that you had dealt unjustly with a humble follower and co-worker. . . .

HARVEY ROAD, *Yours, etc.,*

BOMBAY, JAMNADAS M. MEHTA

November 17, 1921

I gladly find room for Mr. Mehta's protest. I can assure him that I meant no offence but that my remarks were made with perfect goodwill. If Mr. Mehta was absolutely serious about his objection, I must be pardoned for saying that I could see no argument in his speech. But I entirely accept Mr. Mehta's assurance about his seriousness.

Young India, 1-12-1921

73. TO CORRESPONDENTS

A. MAHOMED YASIN: The Ulemas' Conference Lahore has passed a resolution condemning forcible conversions. I agree with you that

Moplahs and Hindus of Malabar have hitherto lived as friends and that the trouble would not have arisen but for the rashness and negligence of the Collector.

C. V. Naidu asks:

1. Are the taxes to the municipalities and local boards also not to be paid when such institutions are thrust on the people as in the case of Chirala?

If civil disobedience for local relief is resorted to, it would be legitimate to withhold payment of such taxes and it would be equally legitimate to withhold them if ratepayers in a particular area adopt that form of civil disobedience for swaraj. Obviously the second mode would be wholly inapplicable where a municipality is popularly elected and where there is no non-co-operation with regard thereto. In every case retention of non-violent atmosphere is presumed.

2. Cam a non-co-operator seek to enter the municipalities and local boards as an elected member?

Non-co-operators are as a matter of fact entering the municipalities all over India, particularly where there is a prospect of non-co-operation majority.

3. Do you think that Southern India with its untouchability is fit for adopting any form of civil disobedience? (Andhra is excluded; only Tamil is intended.)

If no part of Tamil India gives up the sin of untouchability it cannot be qualified for the exercise of the privilege of civil disobedience.

A PARSI: Much as I dislike vaccination, I must resist the temptation of opening the columns of *Young India* for the advertisement of what friends call my numerous fads. Vaccination and such other evils have to await solution till we begin to breathe the breath of freedom.

Young India, 1-12-1921

74. IN THE NAME OF HUMANITY

My letter to the Liberals[1] speaks for itself. In it I have not touched upon unproved or one-sided accounts of the happenings in Malabar. But I have before me correspondence which mentions inhumanities before which the Punjab ones dwindle into insignifi-

[1] *Vide* "To the Liberals", 27-11-1921.

cance. The asphyxiation of prisoners is the most startling though by no means the most callous among the inhumanities that are said to be enacted in impenetrable Malabar. The Hindu mind is blinded by prejudice fed by interested accounts. I do not deny forcible conversions or other atrocities by the Moplahs. But my soul refuses to revenge itself upon innocent Moplahs or upon the women and children of the guilty ones, nor can I delight in torturing those who have done wrong. Such reprisals are not human.

Let me not go into further narration of facts or allegations. I only plead for calmness. What is the Government doing? Why has it proved so powerless for protection? Or is its function confined only to reprisals and isolating the Moplahs and their prey, the Hindus?

Grant that the non-co-operators started the mischief by exciting the Moplahs against the Government, are non-co-operators keeping up the flame of Moplah passion? Are they preventing the Government from stamping out the rebellion? Why will the Government not grant permits to non-co-operators to go and plead with the Moplahs? Let them be shot if they turn traitors to their pledge. Let the Government take hostages for good conduct. It is utterly inhuman to persist in wanton destruction and desolation when a possible way is open to them and when non-co-operators have offered under certain conditions to go and attempt to bring about peace.

Though the task of conciliation has been certainly rendered most difficult, I do not despair of success, if full facilities are offered to non-co-operators to enter the disturbed area and reason with the Moplahs. Their valour, however misguided it is, is worthy of better treatment.

I do beseech the Hindus of the Madras Presidency to become calm and find room for the misguided Moplahs in their hearts. Their religion does not teach them to condemn whole classes of people for the faults of a few. Let them too bear their share of burden. They knew the Moplah and sinfully neglected to make him a better neighbour. We are reaping the reward of our past neglect. Let us not now indiscriminately condemn the Moplah as a friend unworthy of human sympathy. Islam has undoubtedly suffered for the brutalities practised by the Moplahs, but Hinduism is suffering equally with Islam for thirsting for Moplah blood. It is bad enough for one to commit rape or murder, but it is equally bad if not worse to seek to flay the rake or murderer and to rape his womenfolk and murder the

rest of his family. I do not know that the rake or the murderer cannot plead sudden passion as all extenuating circumstance. Can the seeker after unbridled revenge plead anything in palliation? Let not the Hindus by their thirst for Moplah blood justify Dyerism and O'Dwyerism. If we may resort to frightfulness and humiliations in respect of the Moplahs, do we not justify the action of Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer who under a sense of fancied wrong and fear resorted to terrorism in the Punjab? The Hindu passions are, I fear, being exploited by the Government to keep up the Malabar Trouble. Let Hindus of Malabar and Madras beware!

Young India, 1-12-1921

75. DISBANDMENT OF VOLUNTEERS

Bombay has given a handle to the Provincial Government for undertaking systematic repression and attempting to snuff out non-co-operation. The notifications of the Bengal, the U.P., the Punjab and the Delhi Governments disbanding volunteer organizations are an answer to Bombay. I for one welcome these notifications. They obviate the necessity for forcing civil disobedience. If we are ready for the Government challenge, we can have an immediate trial of strength. It is one of the beauties of civil disobedience that a civil resister can choose his own time of battle. For he need not disobey till he thinks it is right for him to do so. No amount of provocation by the Government can goad him into disobedience.

If therefore the provinces where the notifications have been issued are ready, they have merely to refuse to disband and every one of the volunteers must surely find himself in jail. But we must be sure of our ground. The allegation against the corps is that they are assemblies to use force and not to keep peace. Our first duty is to examine the charge and purge ourselves of guilt if there is any in us. Every volunteer who has been guilty of using force or even threat of force by word or act must be relieved of his charge.

The resolution of the Working Committee[1] regarding volunteers has come in time though quite by accident. I hope that it will be taken up in every province by the respective Congress and Khilafat Organizations and that all volunteer organisations will be combined into one and no volunteer will be retained who does not believe in

[1] Passed at Bombay on November 23, 1921

non-violence. Then we may give battle if there is interference with these organizations. The condition, however, of giving battle is that when imprisonments commence, the rest remain quiet and peaceful. It is high time that we went to jail without noise or fuss. If we believe in the virtue of silent suffering we must make it easy for the Government to arrest us. It becomes difficult when each time we want to make a show and have a precession. Imprisonments must become an every-day occurrence. We make no fuss when we go out for a walk or a picnic. I do ask for the same indifference about going to jails. I accept Mr. Jayakar's formula of statement before the court. If there is a choice between making or not making statements, I have no hesitation in giving my vote against making them. Imprisonments must cease to cause sensation, for the latter creates excitement and excitement may lead to violence. Violence interferes with a ceaseless flow of innocent imprisonments.

Retention of non-violent atmosphere is more important than imprisonments. Therefore no province will be justified in taking the risk of an outbreak of violence and precipitating imprisonments by disregarding the orders of disbandment. We shall lose nothing in the long run by waiting to stabilize non-violence. Our capacity for swaraj consists in our anticipating and thwarting every plan to lead us unto violence whether it be through the C.I.D. or any other channel.

Young India, 1-12-1921

76. TO CORRESPONDENTS

D. V. Rao asks:

1. Do you believe Krishna was wrong in not having preached the doctrine of non-violence to Arjuna? Or was he right in advocating war and violence?

In my opinion the *Bhagavad Gita* is a purely religious, not historical, treatise. It has taken a historical and secular incident to build up a grand religious doctrine. It deals with the war that is eternally waging between the forces of evil and good, Ormuzd and Ahriman, Hyde and Jekyll in the human breast. We cannot do enough violence to all the evil passions that well up on that little Kurukshetra. Historically considered the *Bhagavad Gita* tends to show that Arjuna having made the choice could not, yielding to false sentiment, withdraw from the battle. The author of the *Gita* never advocated war or violence. It is a sermon on non-violence. Fight without anger and

passion can only be spiritual.

2. Did Rama err and sin in resorting to violence against Ravana to recover Sita? Or is violence justifiable only under special circumstances? If so what are those conditions?

I look upon the *Ramayana* in the same light as the *Bhagavad Gita.* The weapons that Rama used were purely spiritual. The victory of Rama over Ravana is a celebration of the victory of good over evil, of humility over arrogance, of a weak and virtuous woman with the help of God over man turned beast.

X. Y. Z. asks :

I. How long are we to be non-violent, supposing the Government tried to molest us in wicked ways?

Certainly till we have disarmed the Government. When we took the pledge we did not expect the Government to let us down gently.

2. If we get swaraj how are we to be protected against invasions of foreign nations?

You must see the old files of *Young India*. But generally it may be stated that we need not apprehend any trouble from foreign powers, but if they invade us without any offence on our part, we must trust to our capacity for suffering to be able to defend ourselves against all aggressors.

3. Will the feudatory States retain their rule?

Certainly. We have no design upon them. They will have more real power than they have now. They will naturally be amenable then to the pressure of public opinion whether within or without their borders.

4. Are you going to proclaim a republic if you are successful in civil disobedience? Maulana Shaukat Ali expressed such opinion.

Civil disobedience of the fierce type contemplated at Delhi by me has been knocked on the head by Bombay for some time to come. In any case I do not think that non-co-operators have so far consolidated their power or done so much constructive work as to warrant the declaration of an effective republic at the end of the year. In no case does it rest with one man to proclaim or not to proclaim a republic.

5. Will you give compensation to the Parsis who have been principally the mischief-mongers?

You evidently beg the question by calling Parsis”the mischief-

mongers". I am firmly convinced that Hindus and Mussulmans started the mischief. I shall certainly hope that Parsis and Christians will be patriotic enough not to seek compensation through the Government and that there will be a non-official committee consisting of impartial co-operators and non-co-operator to receive and inquire into the claims for compensation by all private persons who might have suffered during the unfortunate disturbance.

Young India, 1-12-1991

77. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

Thursday [*December 1, 1921*]

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your letter yesterday in Ahmedabad. Now I hear you are laid up in bed. Soldiers are not permitted to get ill! You must therefore be up and doing quickly. Your health and strength are today of paramount importance and you cannot be spared for a single day. This is to make you quickly better but not make you leave your bed prematurely. Please give yourself all the rest you need so that there is no relapse. Haste in such matters is waste.

According to your instructions I have written down an appeal to the *Dharalas*[1] which I have handed to Mr. Fulchand.

I hope to be in Bardoli up to Saturday evening and then go to Bombay hoping to return by Thursday at the latest. And then if you are better and wish it, I shall give you two or three days for Kheda. Our preparation must be solid and substantial. Swadeshi must take deep root, untouchability must go in reality and Hindu-Muslim unity must be true. All this is impossible without a truly non-violent spirit.

My love to the whole family and prayers for your health.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9597

[1] A community in Gujarat

78. SPEECH AT BARDOLI

[*December 3, 192l*][1]

He said he had nothing but the heartiest congratulations to offer to the people of the taluk from what he had been able to see within the two days of his stay. It was a great tribute to the people that they had gone such a long way in removing the bar of untouchability from their minds and the general standard of peace they had maintained did them the greatest credit. But it was not without the deepest regret that he learned that much had been left to be desired in the matter of swadeshi which was the very essence. They were still dependent on outside generosity for their khaddar, which showed that weaving had not yet accompanied spinning in the villages. This was necessarily a serious disqualification. It was no difficult task to set up a few handlooms in every village. The reason the women spun coarse and weak yarn was that the yarn had never been put to the test of weaving in their own villages. It was not enough that the vast majority of his audience had worn khaddar. He could not ignore the fact that most of the women had not worn due to want of a sufficient supply of khaddar. The remedy was in their own hands. He was sure they would not agree to having their flour kneaded from outside to save trouble in the kitchen. The arrangement would be absurd and equally so was the spinning without weaving. If they took it into their minds he knew they could accomplish it soon. Swaraj in their case was a matter of months, certainly not of years. He wished that now that they had accomplished such a great deal, they worked harder still for perfection. If they had hitherto welcomed the untouchables in their midst in public meetings and also allowed them the use of their wells, they might legitimately be expected now to go a step further and visit their homes for example, and persuade suspicious parents to send their children to national schools.

Boycott of Government educational and other institutions too might be secured in the future by the methods different from and better than those that had been adopted in certain cases in their taluk. After all, fasting too as had been reported to have been undertaken by some of the volunteers with a view to compel parents by appealing to their sense of pity to withdraw their children, was a form of moral violence. Such a course generally resulted in unwilling submission which was hardly to be desired by the non-co-operators who advocated the utmost freedom for all. But he was anxious that his reference to any defects in the splendid achievement of Bardoli should not be misunderstood as an expression of disappointment. Whilst he was unable to give full marks to Bardoli tahsil declaring it fit for the immediate adoption of civil disobedience it gave him the greatest pleasure to be able to assure

[1] This is a summary of Gandhiji's speech reported to have been made"just before he left Bardoli taluka" on Saturday, i.e., December 3; *vide* the preceding item.

them for their consolation that he had not known any other taluk so well on the road to preparedness for civil disobedience, that is, swaraj. Their simplicity and earnestness were unmatched. Hindu-Muslim unity was nowhere so secure as there. He only hoped that Bardoli would continue its great career in the same enthusiastic fashion and accomplish in due course of time what little yet remained to be done by way of preparation. Then and only then could they summon him once again and say,"Fight us our battle", and give him the pleasure of leading the peaceful revolution, if such be still necessary.

The Bombay Chronicle, 10-12-1921

79. MASTER KEY

The three-fold suffering, water of love alone can cool.

—TULSIDAS

In big institutions, they have a special key which fits the locks on all doors. The key for each room opens that room and no other; but one officer has a key which fits all locks. In English, they call this latter,"the master key". I have used its equivalent in Gujarati, *vadi chavi,* as the title of this article.

Through the boycott programmes, people are expected to keep away from legislatures, students from schools and colleges and litigants from law-courts. If these three classes of people are not sufficiently influenced by our appeals, doubts about the success of these programmes arise.

But love is the master key in these cases—and the sovereign remedy.

Non-co-operation without love is Satanic; non-co-operation with love is godly. It was out of love that the Prophet carried on non-co-operation with the Arabs of Mecca for full 13 years. He opened their eyes with his love. It was certainly not hatred which impelled Mira to non-co-operate with Kumbha Rana. She lovingly submitted to the punishment which the Rana inflicted on her. Our non-co-operation also springs from love. Without it, everything is hollow. Love is not merely the master key, it is the only key. If those who have left Government schools hate the others who have not, then sacrifice is lifeless and dry. Our boycott of councils will have no meaning if we cherish ill-feeling for those who get elected to them. To try to win over with love those who differ from us is the way of

dharma, to get angry with them is the Satanic way—the atheist's way.

Be it admitted to our shame and disgrace that our sacrifice has been vitiated, in some measure, by anger, ill will and similar feelings and this is why it has not shone to the best effect, nor yielded results. If all those who joined the boycott had borne no ill will to those who did not join, our position today would have been extremely good; we would have been about to win swaraj.

So our foremost duty is to shower love on people. Doing this does not mean becoming one of them. That would be unthinking love. It would mean our being a party to what they do. That is real love through which we love even our opponents, decline to look upon them as fools and serve them. It is nothing to wonder at if one Hindu loves another Hindu; a Hindu's goodness lies in loving a Muslim equally well and respecting his manners and customs. Is there anything extraordinary in a person who co-operates with the Government being on good terms with another such person? Real strength and humility in a non-co-operator lie in loving an advocate of co-operation and being patient with him despite acute differences with him. We show no dignity in running down such a person, pouring contempt on him and hooting at him. Dignity lies in going barefoot to his house and being of service to him.

We have not properly attended to this part of our duty. Though I have been writing about it, I am sorry that I have not stressed the point as well as I should. The experience in Bombay has opened my eyes. It has brought home to me the shallowness of my tolerance. If every time I had strongly condemned verbal attacks on those co-operating with the Government, we would have advanced much further by now. If, every time a cap was snatched away, I had expressed my strongest disapproval of the action, things would have been much better today than they are. I know that, for a mar who has the privilege of being the leader of such a great fight, it is a heinous sin not to exercise the utmost vigilance. If the general in this battle is much too weak or mild or feels himself helpless, he had better give up his leadership.

Now that we have realized our error, let us not be guilty of it again.

We should now banish from our minds all resentment against those who co-operate, against Parsis, Christians and Englishmen. Let us regard them too as our brothers and stop ostracizing them. We should not interrupt their water-supply or prevent barbers from serving them. We should see that their needs have been provided before we think of ours and should take pleasure in serving them. If,

and only if, we understand this law which all religions teach, we shall get swaraj easily enough and soon. At every place, therefore, where preparations are afoot for starting civil disobedience, the first thing we should do is to meet every person who co-operates with the Government and demonstrate our friendly regard for him in spite of our differences with him.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-l2-1921

80. HINDU-MUSLIM-PARSI

I continue to be flooded with letters from Hindus and Parsis, both men and women. The correspondents blame each other's community. This is not the way to forge real unity. Hindus and Muslims should remember that Parsis are a small community and are mostly concentrated in one place. That is why their faults are immediately noticed and their virtues are easily forgotten. If we always see only faults in other members of our family, we shall end by imagining that we are the only perfect ones in the world. All others will seem to us so full of defects that we shall feel defiled even by their touch. But the truth is that a person who always points at others' evils is himself generally the greatest sinner of all.

He who picks holes in others only betrays his own weakness. Those Hindus and Muslims who always speak against Parsis are themselves weak, there is no doubt about it. If we see only our own faults, we shall ourselves rise and raise others too. Our great error has been that we forgot tolerance. Having accepted a new religion, we forgot its restraints and became fanatics. We discovered non-co-operation and came to understand its efficacy, and so we believed that all those who did not understand it lacked intelligence and wisdom, that they were traitors and sinners. By doing this, we only disgraced our non-co-operation. We forgot that only yesterday we ourselves graced meetings of people who favoured co-operation. We lost patience. We forced people to take off their foreign caps, but conveniently overlooked the foreign dhoti on our waist!

We started criticizing Parsis severely, taking it for granted that they would never come round. We forgot that they had contributed to the Angora Fund and to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. We lost sight of the fact that many of them wore khadi and that even Parsi women had

started wearing it. We forgot all this and became enraged with our Parsi brothers and sisters. We did not remember the sacrifices made by some of them.

But some people ask me:"What about the fact that it was the Parsis who started all the trouble?" Would we not do better to think what we would have done, had we been only a lakh? If we but imagine ourselves reduced from the twenty-two crores or the seven crores that we are to the number of one lakh and think how we would behave then, we would understand what it is to be in such a plight. Every reader must have had the experience of living as a member of a minority at some place or other. Let him recall his feelings at that time. When Hindus and Muslims have still not shed fear of each other, why should they expect all at once that the Parsis should give up their fear? If Hindus and Muslims, having created bad blood between them and the Parsis, imagine that they will rule the country, they will be cherishing a wicked desire. It is their primary duty to befriend the minority communities and convince them that they are safe in independent India. If they only try to win over the minorities, they will discover invaluable jewels among them.

Let us never forget that God is the Help of the helpless. If we protect the weak, we shall qualify ourselves for His protection. When Maulana Abdul Bari Saheb wrote to the effect that success or failure in winning the friendship of the minorities will provide our test, he was stating the simple truth. So long as we do not allay their fears, we shall never ourselves be free from fear.

Hindus and Muslims should not desire, or act as if they desired, that members of the minority communities should come seeking their favour. It is our duty to take the initiative, and cultivate friendship with Parsis, Christians and members of other minority communities.

I do not suggest that, in doing this, we should flatter them. It is essential that we share their sufferings, take care not to quarrel with them, bear with them even if they co-operate with the Government, abstain from criticizing their dresses of foreign material, never get angry with them on this score and sincerely look upon them as our brothers. If two Parsis and a Christian happen to be our neighbours, we should not act as if they were utter strangers to us; our duty is to serve and cultivate their acquaintance.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-12-1921

81. FORTHCOMING SESSION OF CONGRESS

When this issue is out, there will be 20 days to go before the Congress session. This session will be completely different from the previous ones. Though it may not celebrate the winning of swaraj, it will have to do something very like it, i.e., will have to prove its fitness for swaraj in everything it does. Efficiency in management, perfection of manners, and a spirit of fearlessness and independence which will leave nothing to be desired—we shall have to display all this.

Our management should be so perfect that we must not appear to have lost sight of the smallest detail. The arrangements for board, lodging, bathing and sanitation should be satisfying in every way. There should be a place for throwing refuse, and a place for storing water. Perfect cleanliness must meet the eye everywhere despite accumulation of waste water, refuse and night-soil. No puddles should be seen anywhere. Though latrines will be used by all, everything must present a clean appearance. Answering the call of nature is an elementary function of the body and, as all of us who will be assembling for the Congress will have their physical needs, cleanliness should receive our first attention. Khadinagar ought to provide an object-lesson in cleanliness.

People should be educated beforehand through leaflets and speeches so that they do not make noises, do not collect in crowds anywhere in Khadinagar, and obey the directions given by the volunteers. They should not enter grounds to which entry is forbidden and should not insist on going towards a place when stopped. They should see that, in any part which they enter, they do not inconvenience others. All these are proofs of our capacity to live as members of a community and should be in evidence on this occasion.

Volunteers must not speak with disrespect even to the poorest. They must not order anybody about as if they were policemen, but say politely what they wish to say. A volunteer's manners should be the exact opposite of a policeman's.

Shopkeepers should be honest in the price they charge for every article and should not think of robbing the guests. This will be evidence of our being a cultured people.

There will be a whole crowd of non-co-operators, both genuine and otherwise. Let them not imagine that they have been sent to rule

over the earth. They should rather think that they are born only to serve others. Let us hope that everyone will attend the session in khadi. All members [of the Reception Committee] and delegates should be clad in khadi, but nobody should insult guests or tourists or visitors, whatever their dress. Those who are known to be in favour of co-operation should also be listened to with respect. Not even a child should be touched physically. No person should be held by his garment. Though the poet's line,"Look, none dares to catch the poor goat by the ear as she moves leisurely by" turned out wrong about the British rule, we should see that it does not about swaraj.

If we are thinking of thrusting the whole burden of management on the Chairman of the Reception Committee, we had betterwrite off the Congress session as a failure. The Chairman is only our agent. He can succeed and win credit only if thousands come forward to help him. Volunteers should be his hands and feet. Things can be managed only if they move round all parts of Ahmedabad and let people feel the charm of their presence. No new-comer should be at a loss to find a place for want of proper guidance, and delegates, whether known to us or not, should get all facilities.

These things are no more than a test of our fitness. I pray to God that the citizens of Ahmedabad and the people of Gujarat will emerge successful from it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-12-1921

82. MY NOTES

MY IGNORANCE

There is no limit to my ignorance of the geography of Gujarat. A resident of Anand and Shri Abbas Saheb, Kheda's captain, triumphantly point out an error[1] made by me and tell me that Dakor is not included in the Anand taluka so that I burden the latter with the responsibility of reforming it. Though I know that Dakor is included in the Thasra taluk, somehow an impression remained with me, when writing the article, that it was in the Anand taluk. I apologize to the reader for my ignorance, but wish all the same to cling to the statement I made in error. Though, for administrative convenience,

[1] *Vide* "To Bardoli-Anand", 27-11-1921.

Dakor is included in the Thasra taluk, Anand cannot disown its responsibility. It is not possible that all the residents of the Anand taluk should become religious-minded, that is, brave, courteous and truthful, and yet should produce no effect on the neighbouring Dakor. I do not put the burden of reforming Dakor on the Anand taluk, but I shall treat the former as a barometer registering the improvement which takes place in the Anand taluk.

CHANGE THE HEART

The reforms I need, the reforms which can win success for Anand and Bardoli, will be useless if they are superficial. They should go deep. People's hearts should be changed. There should be no pretence of fearlessness; but fear should be truly destroyed. Peace should not be put on but should be intelligently practised. Khadi should not be merely worn but passionately loved. The spinning-wheel should not be formally worshipped but plied in every home as a religious duty. This alone will lead us to victory. If we remain slaves at heart, we would never attain freedom.

A NOVEL STRUGGLE

This is a test of satyagraha, of our firmness in clinging to truth. To this day, there has been no nation in the world which claimed to adhere to truth and won its freedom. By adopting the means of their choice, nations did not win independence but acquired power over others. England is not free, but only powerful. It has enslaved us. To a slave, his master seems free and he strives to be like the latter and so finds pleasure in enslaving others. Such a slave never becomes really free, but is always subservient to anyone stronger than he is.

TRUTH MEANS TRUTH

But, at the moment, I do not wish to take the reader so deep into the matter. Let our freedom be of what kind it will, we have resolved to win it through satyagraha. We shall not, therefore, get it through hypocrisy. Those who have joined satyagraha without understanding its meaning or, if they understand it, have joined it with ulterior motives, will be able to satisfy neither themselves nor the people and, in the end, they will feel that they have gained nothing, and that will

indeed be so. Shall we really be free from the sin of untouchability if we look down upon *Dheds* and *Bhangis* and mix with them merely for show? So long as we do not purity our minds and look upon them as our brothers and sisters and share their sufferings, we shall not win freedom, for until then we shall simply not be fit for it. It is on their account that our progress will be retarded. How far can a person walk by pretending that he has no fever and persuading himself that he is strong enough? If, merely through fear, we have been making a show of Hindu-Muslim friendship, we cannot possibly remain together till the last and our insincerity will be betrayed at the critical time. How can we win swaraj without being tested to the utmost? Even if British officials are deceived, Hindus and Muslims will, in such circumstances, start fighting amongst themselves. We shall never be able to make a beginning with swaraj. Right from the start the two communities will hate and fear each other. We shall, therefore, go forward only if our friendship is genuine.

OUR CONDITION

Though I am impatient to get swaraj, I can be equally patient and wait for it. It is my advice to all to be like me. It will be easy to win swaraj if we really adopt the means we have decided to adopt. Without them, I think it impossible to get swaraj not only this year but in this generation.

We should bear in mind that we are altogether in a different position than others. Our numbers are our strength, and they are also our weakness. In no other country except India are there followers of two different religions who, right to this day, regard each other as enemies; in no other country do the majority of the people have a cowardly fear of using arms and in no other country are human beings the victims of so much hatred as *Dheds* and *Bhangis* are in India. Hence, the remedies for the ills of our country should also be new.

LEST WE FORGET

I hope Gujarat will not remain complacent. Our task will not be accomplished with wooden swords. The sword of satyagraha is stronger and sharper than a sword of steel. Fighting with it is no child's play but a serious affair. There is no room in it at all for falsehood. If we learn to be truthful, we can win swaraj this year.

We will not, however, act in a different way after we have won swaraj, and our difficulties will not have decreased. At present most of us are engaged in fighting, that is, in receiving blows. But afterwards we shall have to build, find solutions to delicate problems and to run the government. Will we reintroduce untouchability at that time? Will we wear less khadi, or more rather? Will we set fire to the spinning-wheels, or have more of them working? Will the Hindus and the Muslims then forget each other and both forget the Christians and the Parsis and behave as utter strangers to one another? Shall we have then no schools to run? On the contrary, shall we not have to run even the schools which are at present known as Government schools? Shall we then be crowding the courts, or will the very system of pleading be altered and important changes introduced in the constitution of the courts? Let no one be too sure, either, that all at once we shall have a profusion of efficient people. If there is scarcity of such persons today, there will be more of it afterwards. We shall have to run the administration. For this, we have sown the seed at Nagpur. As we have sown, so shall we reap.

AFTER A YEAR

If, therefore, any people believe that we shall have a holiday after December, they will be making the greatest error. Whether we get swaraj now or after some time, we shall not be acting in a different way after it is won. We shall have to continue to work for self-purification even then. What remains undone now will have to be finished later. If Anand, Bardoli and other talukas wish to fight, they should realize that, having taken the field once, they cannot retreat even if it takes a year or several years. If it is certain that victory will be theirs provided they take the lead, they should also resolve to put up with hardships for the time being. No one will comment if they do not take the first step. If they do, however, they Will have no option but to stand firm and die or win. Such courage and fortitude are absolutely necessary.

NO NEED TO BE DISHEARTENED

I do not write this to dishearten Gujaratis, but to point out to them their duties and responsibilities. I write this so that Gujaratis do not enter the field under the misapprehension that there is nothing very difficult about the thing and then, by retreating, invite ridicule upon themselves. Those who have understood our struggle and have learnt to follow truth and non-violence will not at all be dismayed by

what I have said here. I have given this warning in clear words so that if any Gujarati has yet not understood the meaning of our fight, he may now clearly understand it.

SACRED WITHIN LIMITS

I have often shown that the sanctity of khadi lies in the fact of its being swadeshi. Wheat is sacred grain, but it is eaten by a sannyasi and also by a thief. Likewise, the wicked and the virtuous both may wear the sacred khadi. Anyone who forsakes what is the dharma of an Indian in so far as his body is concerned commits an error and harms the country. It is true that, in this period of transition, other virtues are attributed to khadi and hypocrites prosper in their hypocrisy by dressing themselves in khadi. This cannot go on for long. When khadi comes to be regarded as our national dharma, it will be esteemed for its real value. Those who have understood the duty of wearing and producing khadi will never stop wearing it even though they may observe its misuse at some places.

There will be no difficulty now in seeing the answers to some questions raised by a friend, questions which appear like moral dilemmas. It is our good fortune that in some places in the country people now consider it necessary to use khadi at marriages and deaths. At some marriages which took place in Ahmedabad recently, khadi was used—though not solely—to a large extent. It is reported that one bridegroom refused to marry the bride if she was not dressed in a khadi sari. The question raised is, whether, in order to encourage the use of khadi, we should attend weddings which are otherwise objectionable. Supposing our not attending hurts the couple and they go to the length of even giving up khadi! It is cowardice to ask such a question. We should not allow ourselves to be bribed by khadi. We should value each thing on its merits. If an old man of sixty dressed in ochre-coloured khadi, wearing a string of rosary beads and his body smeared with sacred ash, sets forth to marry a girl of twelve, we should certainly not attend the marriage merely to encourage the use of khadi or commend his simplicity. Similarly, we should not attend the marriage if a young man of twenty-five, on the death of his wife, gets himself engaged to another girl on the cremation ground itself and goes the very next day to marry her. There are different standards for khadi and for marriage. Just as we would hesitate to attend an otherwise unexceptionable marriage if khadi is not used on the occasion, so also we should not go to celebrate the marriage of an

ill-matched pair though either may be loaded with khadi.

There is a letter from another friend on this same subject, and he writes with a sad heart:

> We do recognize the importance of khadi but, at a wedding where the bride, the bridegroom and their close relatives are dressed in khadi and all the women also are in khadi, what should we do when they start singing immodest marriage songs which shock the ears? Should we, for the sake of khadi, force ourselves to hear the songs, or disregarding khadi, save our ears from being polluted by them?

I have not reproduced the question with the intention of giving an answer. The correspondent has riot stated it to get one. He has only drawn my attention to this custom in the hope that I shall criticize it. He wonders how we can hope for the rule of dharma to be established when even small girls receive such education in immodesty. The question makes me feel unhappy. When women sing such immodest songs, they must hardly be conscious of their being so. If such ugly customs live on, the responsibility lies with the men. It has simply not occurred to them to share their new knowledge or awakening with the women. Men can easily employ uncompromising satyagraha in such matters. This is the age of the young. If they are virtuous and humble, they can end such evils in no time. Educated girls can also resort to satyagraha against such customs and end them. Every girl or woman who reads this can take up such matters and oppose the customs. They would soon disappear if intelligent women refuse to follow them.

ILL-MATCHED PAIRS

The problem of ill-matched pairs and men marrying for the second or third time is a difficult one. Perhaps, this disease is to be found in Kathiawar more than anywhere else. It is almost impossible. to eradicate it so long as there are poor parents who are ready to sell their daughters and sensual rich men are ready to pay so that they may be able to gratify their lust. Only if, through the spiritual awakening which is taking place in consequence of the movement for swaraj, men learn to keep their passions under control will no old man of sixty who may have lost his wife set out the next day to marry again. This reform cannot be brought about by society taking upon itself to keep a watch on its members misdeeds. Denunciation will not stop suffering of this kind. It can be stopped only through gentle

persuasion and compassion. The father who sells his daughter and the man who purchases an innocent girl, both suffer from a disease and deserve pity. If all of us go on merely denouncing such persons, they will harden their hearts and lose all sense of shame. However, if we treat their disease and appeal to their sense of decency, they will certainly come to have good sense. Each caste can bring about immediate reform in this matter. For a person who has a sense of right and wrong, not to attend such a marriage is not, according to me, merely a means of ending this evil, it is his dharma. In following this dharma, however, one should be prompted by compassion, not by contempt and pride.

TO "DHARALAS", "GARASIAS" AND OTHERS

You claim to be Kshatriyas. In this holy *yajana* we need the co-operation of all communities and castes. Swaraj will be difficult to win so long as we do not learn to look upon one another as our brothers and to protect one another.

The Kshatriyas' function is to protect. Instead of doing this, many of our *Dharala* brothers have taken to a wrong path. The Government often extends to them the law pertaining to criminal tribes.

I appeal to you to use your courage and capacity for suffering in the service of the country. The courage required in laying down one's life is superior to that required for killing, and the whole world admires it. I hope that you will show the courage to die, without killing anyone, for the sake of the country.

I beg of you to forget past enmities and remove your neighbours' fears by adopting peaceful ways.

If you start carding, spinning and weaving in your homes, even during lean years you will never suffer from want of food or clothing. All these three processes are easy to learn and the work is an honourable occupation for respectable people. Any family can maintain itself with this work. I hope you will take it up.

Your well-wisher,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-12-1921

83. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[1]

Tuesday, December 6, 1921

After hearing about what is going on there, I think you should now be brave. This means that, whenever necessary, you should speak out, calmly but firmly, and put up opposition. If there is no bitterness, and no anger under any circumstances, even when you oppose, you will be listened to by one and all. On the other side, you should keep your electors well-informed and see that your constituency becomes strong. If in this way the truth comes out, the trouble which broke out for a while will calm down. Those of you who insist that everything should be done in a clean way should meet together and decide what ought to be done. You should have no anger in your heart, but only love and compassion towards those who appear to be committing a mistake. That is bound to influence them. This is the path of *Rajayoga* which I have shown to you. You are fit for that path. I want you not to give way to despair.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 41

84. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

ASHRAM,

December 7, 1921

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I have received both your letters. The steps you have taken, seem to be appropriate. I have written to you a letter yesterday. It is good to take all measures without feeling upset and remaining neutral. It will also be proper to clarify the issue fully with Mrs. Naidu.

Your second letter indicates that you have not understood me. A lot of money has been lying with the Navajivan. I felt that instead of allowing that money to remain idle it would be better that you withdrew the amount put in by you and used it for some other purpose. I Hence, had instructed Anandanand long ago to send that

[1] This is in reply to several communications from the addressee to Gandhiji regarding activities in Bombay.

money to you. But the matter remained in abeyance because of audit objection. In the end I had written that the money may be sent without waiting for audit clearance and that is how he has sent you the money. How can there be any question of removing your name? Do not have any misunderstanding. I myself decided on this meausre purely in the interest of procedure. It is as good as your withdrawing the capital invested by you in your own factory when it is released. Even now if there is anything unexplained write to me so that I may explain. Ultimately, you must follow your own wishes.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32699

85. TELEGRAM T0 C. R. DAS

[On or after *December 7, 1921*][1]

HEARTIEST CONGRATULATION. FIFTY WOMEN OF BENGAL LED BY YOUR WIFE AND SISTER. SWARAJ IS CERTAIN AND NEAR. I ENVY YOU, HOPE PERFECT PEACE.

Amrit Bazaar Patrika, 13-12-1921

86. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

SABARMATI,

Friday, [Before *December 8, 1921*][1]

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I enclose an application addressed to the trustees. We intend to incur a sizeable expenditure to help the untouchables here. Some money has already been spent. Hence this application. Some money has to be spent on the Vidyapith too. All the Gujarat money has been either spent or is blocked. It is not possible to withdraw the money tied up with swadeshi. So you must place this application before the trustees immediately. After they pass the application, we shall obtain the sanction of the Working Committee.

[1] Mrs. Das and others were arrested on December 7. They were, however, released immediately.

[1] From the contents; *vide e* "Lettern to K.P. Keshava Menon", 27-10-1921; 19-10-1921 ;" L etter to Shankerlal Banker", 8-12-1921

You would also have received Mathuradas's application for carrying on swadeshi work in Malabar. The work can be started if the application is disposed of early.

You must have provision of at least Rs. 10,00,000 for swadeshi work in Gujarat. Without that it will not be possible to organize Kathiawar to the extent desired.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati : S. N. 32695

87. NOTES

NO DESPAIR

What will happen in the Punjab where Lalaji is to be imprisoned and in Assam where Messrs Phooken and Bardolai have been already convicted and similarly in Ajmer where Maulana Mohiuddin, Chairman of both the Khilafat and the Congress Committees, has been imprisoned?—such was the question asked by anxious inquirers. My answer was that the cause would progress for the incarceration of these chiefs. As a result of these imprisonments I should expect greater restraint, a greater sense of responsibility in these provinces. I should expect a greater output of khadi, a greater awakening among the students and the lawyers. Bravery of the leaders must prove infectious, if we are fit to govern ourselves. We must rise higher *with* repression not *after*. It will pay a government based on force to resort to repression each time people are cowed down by it even though they may revive in the end. Governments by force live for the day and thrive only upon repression. They die a natural death when their forcible measures do not answer the purpose for which they are intended. We never deserved our leaders, if after their withdrawal we could not make their spirit exhibit itself in and through us.

SIKH IMMOLATION

The Sikh countrymen are solving their own and India's problem. All their best men are offering themselves as sacrifice for the sake of their faith. In soldierly fashion one after another they are seeking imprisonment without fuss and flutter and without the slightest violence. If the same calm courage continues, they willwithout a shadow of doubt solve their own and with it also

solving India's problem. All India is watching with eager expectation this religious manifestation among the Sikhs.

REWARD OF ADOPTION

It is surprising that, so far as I know, no wire has been received by the Bombay Press regarding Mr. Stokes arrest in Lahore. I see a paragraph in *The Tribune* referring to the event. I cannot imagine that no wire has been despatched about such a sensational arrest. My inference is that the wires notifying the arrest have been suppressed or delayed as were the wires about the arrest of the Ali Brothers. Mr. Stokes was arrested on the 3rd instant at Lahore cantonment in connection with articles contributed by him to *The Tribune* as calculated to"spread sedition and promote hatred between different classes of His Majesty's subjects." The District Magistrate offered to release Mr. Stokes on bail but he refused to be so released. This is a unique move on the part of the Government. Mr. Stokes is an American who has naturalized himself as a British subject and who has made India his home in a manner in which perhaps no other American or Englishman has. He rendered eminent services during the War and is known in the highest quarters as a well-wisher of the Government. No one can suspect him of ill will. But that he should feel with and like an Indian and share his sorrows and throw himself into the struggle has proved too much for the Government. To leave him free to criticize the Government was intolerable and so his white skin has proved no protection for him. The Government is determined to quash the movement at any cost. But it is beyond its ability to do so. Mr. Stokes' arrest perhaps demonstrates the weakness of the Government's case as not even Lalaji's does. Lalaji has no reward of war service to his credit. Lalaji is known to be"an agitator". He is not a white man. When therefore Mr. Stokes is put away the strongest suspicion arises in respect of the *bona fides* of the Government case even in the estimation of an outsider.

BARDOLI

I have paid in the company of Maulana Azad Sobhani the much expected visit to Bardoli taluka. It has a population of nearly one hundred thousand. It has about 140 villages. It had about sixty-five Government schools. Of these fifty-one have been nationalized. The Government schools are continued in some cases but have an attendance of less than 10 boys. The national schools have charge of

over six thousand children including a few hundred girls. Hand-spinning is compulsory in all these schools, though it is not yet being regularly taught or practised. Most of the schools have been nationalized only during the past three months. In all the villages I found the women taking keen interest in the national movement. We met thousands of people and visited six villages during the two days of our stay. The majority of men were dressed from top to toe in hand-spun khadi and a large number of women too were so dressed. Those who were not complained that they could not obtain khadi. This does not however mean that the people, either men or women, have given up the use of their old foreign stock. Many, I am sorry to say, still use it for domestic wear. Much is still left to be done in the shape of manufacture of khadi. There is a good number of wheels but very few looms in the taluka. The reader will be pained to hear that its staple crop is cotton which has hitherto been all exported. There is complete harmony between Hindus and Mussulmans. The relations with the co-operators have not been bitter. The untouchables freely attend meetings. I have however suggested that it can hardly be considered satisfactory so long as the managers of national schools do not go out of their way to bring untouchable children to their schools and villagers do not take a personal interest in the welfare of these suppressed countrymen. Many liquor shops are deserted. From all the accounts received by me there has been little or no intimidation resorted to in order to achieve this very wonderful result. In two or three cases volunteers visited villages, and on the parents hesitating to withdraw their children from Government school; sat *dharna*[1] and fasted until the poor bewildered parents had complied with their request. I told the workers, that even this kind of pressure bordered on violence, for we had no right to make people conform to our opinion by fasting. One may conceivably fast for enforcing one's right but not for imposing one's opinion on another.

There was, too, a social boycott of a liquor dealer who had not kept his promise. I have advised even against such a boycott among a people so helpless as ours. Strong public opinion must for the time being be our only remedy for correcting internal abuses. Social boycott such as stopping barbers, washermen, etc., is undoubtedly a punishment which may be good in a free society but it becomes oppressive in a country which has for years been governed by force.

[1] Sitting at one spot for the purpose of exerting moral pressure

But I was remarkably struck by the almost completely peaceful manner in which the taluka of Bardoli has made a radical change for the better in many departments of life. It was an agreeable surprise, too, to find the movement being handled by elderly men who have never taken part in politics. The reader will be pleasingly astonished to find that all the wonderful work in Bardoli has been done by unpaid volunteers. Bardoli happens to be a taluka in which there are few paupers and most people have easy means of livelihood. This manifestation of public life is all the more remarkable on that account and is mainly if not entirely due to the utterly selfless services of a band of able and enthusiastic workers who only know to do or die. But in spite of all this great work I was reluctantly obliged to give my verdict in which Maulana Azad Sobhani fully concurred and which was accepted by the noble band of workers, that Bardoli, before it challenged the might of a great empire, must complete its swadeshi programme to the extent of manufacturing sufficient hand-spun to clothe itself, must freely admit untouchables into the national schools and must be so far non-violent that solitary unarmed co-operators and English and other officials might feel absolutely secure in their midst. And these conditions, God willing, the good people of Bardoli have undertaken to fulfil in a few months' time. An elderly co-operator put down six months at the outside. An enthusiastic young man who knew what he was talking about put down the period at one month. I close this happy recollection of our visit to Bardoli by informing the reader, that several co-operators whom I met testified to the peaceful and zealous manner in which the volunteers had worked in this taluka which, let us hope, will still have the privilege, if necessary, of giving battle to the Government.

PRESIDENT ELECT

Lord Ronaldshay has addressed a homily to the President-elect and warned him in effect that if he does not behave himself at Ahmedabad, His Excellency will teach him a lesson. I know that it will not be the President's fault if he misses the lesson. He has sacrificed his all for his country. He is taking up the high office of President at the most critical period in the history of the country. He is tirelessly infusing new life into Bengal. He is preaching and practising the gospel of non-violence in season and out of season. He will need all the loyal co-operation that we can give him in his arduous task. It will be rendered light if all the delegates come prepared with full and

fixed determination to prosecute the struggle to a victorious end in the face of every danger.

DELEGATES

I am hoping that in every case delegates will have been elected in accordance with the constitution. The delegates should thus be the real representatives of the electors who have had their names registered in Congress books. Where a delegate has been imprisoned, a by election should take place to fill the vacancy. There should be a full house to pass the necessary resolutions. My ideal of a delegate is that he bears a spotless private and public character, that he knows the condition of his district in terms of the Congress programme, that he knows hand-spinning so as to be able to teach it, that he habitually wears hand-spun khadi, that he believes in non-violence as his creed for the attainment of the national goal and for the perpetuation of Hindu-Muslim-Sikh-Parsi-Christian-Jew unity, that he practises in his own person all that part of the programme of non-co-operation which is applicable to him, that he has prepared himself for imprisonment and placed at the disposal of the nation the bulk if not the whole of his time. In addition if he is a Hindu, he must have discarded untouchability and done some service during the year to the untouchables of his district. It is surely not much to expect six thousand staunch, true and fearless whole-time workers for the service of thirty crores of people. I would expect too the full proportion of Mussulman and Sikh delegates. I hope too that every province will send a fair number of women and untouchables as delegates.

MEN AND MEASURES

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has sent the following frank and full reply in answer to my inquiry regarding the charge[1] brought against him by a correspondent of transferring his condemnation of the existing system of Government to its English authors and administrators:

> I spoke on three occasions at the Provincial Conference at Agra. I cannot repeat the language I used but I am very clear as to what I meant. On the first occasion I protested against some veiled references to violence. Hasrat Mohani was our President and in his presidential address he expressed his dissatisfaction with the creed of non-violence. Several other speakers used

[1] *Vide* "What Is Abuse?", 17-11-1921

violent language and apparently looked forward to a time when violence would have full play. All this took place on the Karachi Resolution. I laid stress on the non violent character of the struggle and said that swadeshi was our only hope.

On the second day, I proposed the swadeshi resolution. Notice of an amendment involving a boycott of British goods had been given. It was on this occasion that I probably used the phrases and words which have been misunderstood by Mr. Gandhi's questioner. My whole argument was that so far no way but that of swadeshi had been shown to us to achieve our freedom. I dealt with violence and disposed of it. I then dealt with various other objections. I stated that I desired most earnestly to rid India of English domination and the charkha and swadeshi were apparently the only means to bring this about.

I spoke a third time in answer to the amendment about boycott of British goods. I had opposed this amendment, and a very heated debate had taken place, about a score of speakers having spoken on either side. The amendment was put to the vote and lost.

It is evident that I have been misreported by some papers. I have not so far seen any report of my speeches and do not know which paper can have done so. My references to"English domination" or the"English Government" have been made to apply to the English people. I may have used the words vaxzstksa dks fganksLrku ls vyx djuk[1] or some such language, and the reporter may have seized hold of this without reference to the context. As a matter of fact, the very circumstance that I proposed to expel"the English" by swadeshi ought to have convinced the listener that I referred to the system and not to individuals. It would be absurd to try to expel a single Englishman by the charkha.

I cannot of course say that my feeling towards Englishmen as such is entirely impersonal. I hate the system but sometimes, in spite of myself, I cannot help feeling ill will towards a certain individual for some time at least, and sometimes the ill will is transferred to the English people as a whole. But the feeling is always momentary. I am really surprised at the general absence of ill will against the English.

It is somewhat curious that the sentences to which exception has been taken occurred in a speech opposing a boycott of British goods. I opposed this on the ground, *inter-alia,* that it was opposed to the basic principle of non-co-operation, that it was based on hate and not love and so

[1] "To expel the English from India"

on. No one who heard me and who understood Urdu could have gone away with the impression that I was taking part in a crusade against individual Englishmen.

It is always difficult to differentiate between a man and his action. I can well believe that if an Englishman insulted me, I would flare up and hit him. But I think this would be weakness on my part. I have not enough control over myself. I am apt to lose temper at the slightest provocation. I am occasionally *very* angry with Englishmen. But I have never experienced the desire to"expel" Englishmen as such. In spite of everything I am a great admirer of the English, and in many things l feel even now that an Englishman can understand me better than the average Indian.

The letter illustrates the danger of relying on newspaper reports. The late Sir Pherozeshah Mehta so dreaded the reports that he never made an important pronouncement except in writing. The late Mr. Gokhale used often to insist upon revising reports of his own speeches. If these masters of oratory were in danger of being misreported, what is to be said of those who make their speeches in Hindustani and have the misfortune to be reported in English? In spite of all the goodwill in the world, reporters have rarely succeeded in reporting my speeches correctly. Indeed the best thing would be not to report speeches at all, except when they have undergone revision by the speakers themselves. If this simple rule were followed much misunderstanding could be avoided.

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88. IN EARNEST

The arrest of Lala Lajpat Rai and Messrs Lalkhan, Santanam and Gopichand in the Punjab, of Messrs Phooken and Bardolai in Assam, Babu Jitendralal Bannerjee in Bengal, Maulana Mohiuddin and others in Ajmer and Mr. Harkarannath Mishra and others in Lucknow means business. It shows not merely that the Government is in earnest but that it is not going to tolerate non-co-operation any longer; no longer is it a question of putting down violence, it is one of compelling co-operation. And this is as it should be. The Government had to appear in its true colours some day or other. No Prince had such welcome as is being offered to the Prince of Wales. The chosen leaders of the people are being put away so that the latter may accept the lead of the Government and so that there may be no hartal on the

day of the Prince's entry into the various provinces.

All this the Government of India, constituted as it is, has a right to do, and we non-co-operate because it claims and exercises such right on due occasion. The right consists in its imposing its will upon the people, not recognizing that of the people to have their own way except on pain of being imprisoned. The issue is clear, and neatly summed up in the Lawrence statue whose removal the Government will not allow although it is the property in law of the people. It must govern by the pen or the sword. Once more the choice has been offered to the people. Will they accept the honourable imposition of the sword and reject the degrading dictation of the pen?

The people cannot complain if after fifteen months' training they do not know what to do. Indeed the best thing they can do is to do nothing, i.e., to remain as they were and continue as if nothing extraordinary had happened. England did not stop the War because Lord Kitchner died."Business as usual" was her motto. She was well organized for violence—well enough to do without a general or to find an endless succession of generals. Are we so well organized for non-violence as to do without leaders, i.e., have an endless succession of them?

In the person of Lala Lajpat Rai the Government have arrested one of the greatest of us. His name is known all over India. His self-sacrifice has enshrined him in the hearts of his countrymen. He has laboured as very few have for non-violence side by side with the freest expression and organization of public opinion. His arrest typifies as nothing else can the attitude of the Government.

The Punjab has lost no time in choosing a successor. The Punjabis could not have made a better choice than by electing Agha Sufdar. He is one of the truest of Mussulmans and one of the bravest of Indians. His services are all rendered in a most unassuming manner. I have no doubt that he will command the same loyal co-operation that Lalaji has. The best honour that the Punjabis can do to Lalaji is to continue his work as if he was in their midst. It is blind, foolish and selfish love which dissolves with the disappearance permanent or temporary of the earthy tabernacle which holds the deathless spirit. The Punjabis may not always get an Agha Sufdar to guide them in the place of Lalaji. He may be removed from their midst sooner than we may expect. In well-ordered organizations leaders are elected for convenience of work, not for extraordinary merit. A leader is only first among equals. Some one must be put first,

but he is and should be no stronger than the weakest link in the chain. Having therefore made our selection we must follow him, or the chain is broken and all is lost.

I wish I could impart my faith to the people that nothing much remains to be done in order to take us to the heaven. The way is clear before us. The President-elect has stated it in unequivocal terms:

> My first word and my last word to you is never to forsake the ideal of non-violent non-co-operation. I know it is a difficult creed to follow. I know that sometimes the provocation is so great that it is extremely difficult to remain non-violent in thought, word and deed. The success of the movement however depends upon this great principle.

In order to enable us to enforce this great principle in our own lives we must avoid all occasions for provocation. We therefore need no demonstrations now nor big meetings, we must discipline those who have become awakened to withstand provocation and to do constructive national work which is organisation of carding, hand-spinning and hand-weaving so as to enable the nation to supplement her slender resources and to find work for the idle hours of the millions. Hindu-Muslim unity is an article of faith with us. It is not to be cultivated or demonstrated except by all working together for national uplift and therefore devoting their time exclusively to manufacture of khadi.

As soon as we have attained a complete boycott of foreign cloth and begun to manufacture our own khadi in our respective provinces and villages, we can become free probably without having to resort to mass civil disobedience. Therefore aggressive civil disobedience should be avoided, at least till after finishing the boycott of foreign cloth and qualifying for the manufacture of hand-spun khadi. Defensive civil disobedience which is forced on us in the prosecution of our campaign we ought to welcome whenever it comes.

It will be a distinct sign of weakness and unfitness for swaraj, if these imprisonments dishearten or demoralize us. He is no soldier who is afraid or unwilling to pay the toll demanded of him. The more he is called upon to pay, the more glad he is to find himself the first to have to pay. Let us believe and know that we must provide the Government jails with all the work they can take. I am convinced that it is not argument but suffering of the innocent that appeals both to the persecutor and the persecuted. The nation will shed her slothful indifference and the Governors their callousness by the sight of such

suffering. But it must be the willing suffering of the strong and not the unwilling suffering of the helpless weak. Those who have gone or are about to go to jail can say,"It is finished." We who remain outside have to prove worthy of their finished work by continuing their work till we have set them free. or have joined them. He serves best who suffers most.

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89. WHAT TO DO?

Mr. Jayaker's address has been followed by a conference of all Maharashtra at Akola. Mr. Jayakar is a thinker, he loves his country. He commands and deserves respectful attention. Those who gathered together at Akola are earnest, patriotic, seasoned soldiers. They are amongst the boldest and the most disciplined workers in the land. And one has to pause and think when they dissent from a programme.

Mr. Jayakar's address and the proceedings of the Akola conference have made me think furiously. There is no difficulty about understanding and appreciating the suggested modifications. It is a programme, if I may venture to say so, of unbelief. It is based upon the assumption that swaraj is not attainable within a short time and that we must make such use as we can of the existing machinery with a view to improving it. The programme now being worked is based upon the belief that the existing machinery is worthless and its use only retards our progress and distracts attention .

The corner-stone of the national movement is non-cooperation with violence whether of the pen or the sword. Education and legislation are the instruments today in the hands of the violent. To make use of their law-courts or their legislatures or their schools is to take part in their violence. There is a fundamental distinction between the two processes. The one is aseptic and the other antiseptic They are diametrically opposite. In the one you rely upon the inherent purity of the system to destroy all poisonous germs that have entered the body, and in the other you resort to outside applications, stronger poisons to destroy the intruding germs. Both may be effective but they cannot be used at the same time. We definitely rejected the antiseptic treatment last year. The majority at Maharashtra frankly suggest a return.

We are no longer in the dark. We have the results of fifteen

months' working of the new methods. Rejection of courts, schools and councils is an integral part of the programme. We may not give up parts because we have not achieved full success, if we are convinced that in themselves they are desirable. Although we have not succeeded in emptying the three institutions we have demolished their prestige. They neither worry nor dazzle us. That many parents, many lawyers and many law-givers have not responded, shows that we must make a greater attempt to wean them, not now by arguing but by the exemplary conduct of abstainers. For me they are the Government. Just as I may not apply for a paid post because no Government servant resigns, I may not join the ranks of voluntary servants because the latter do not come away. I am convinced that the country has risen because of the abstention even of the few from association with these emblems of the existing Government.

Inadequate response is an eloquent plea if you will for establishing better schools and panchayats, not for confession of incapacity by returning to the fleshpots of Egypt.

But we have passed the stage of argument. When the sun is shining, you do not need to demonstrate its heat giving power by argument. And if anybody shivers in spite of being in the sun, no amount of argument can convince him of the sun's warmth, nor may you quarrel with the shivering one. He must seek other means, if there be any, of warming himself. My plea is for everyone to act according to his belief. The Congress provides the widest platform. Its creed is incredibly simple. A full-fledged co-operator as well as a nationalist who wants a change in the programme can work in it. Let us not push the mandate theory to ridiculous extremes and become slaves to resolutions of majorities. That would be a revival of brute force in a more virulent form. If rights of minorities are to be respected, the majority must tolerate and respect their opinion and action. There is no reason whatsoever why nationalists may not practise as lawyers or send their children to Government schools or seek election to the councils and still belong to the Congress. Only they may not act in the name of the Congress so long as they have not brought round to their view the majority of Congressmen. It will be the duty of the majority to see to it that minorities receive a proper hearing and are not otherwise exposed to insults. Swaraj will be an absurdity if individuals have to surrender their judgment to the majority.

I wish to make a personal appeal to all Congressmen. I would

ask them to believe me when I say that as leader and originator of the movement inaugurated at Calcutta, I would feel hampered if I have not the hearty co-operation of those who vote for the Programme. I would gladly find myself in a minority and confidently expect to march to victory. This Government cannot stand for one day the determined religious opposition of one district, if only the others will not interfere in the manner Bombay did.

There is room enough in our great country for as many parties as there are honest men. I would welcome an efficient able organization containing men, who believe in using Government institution, and finding what warmth they can give them, even as I would have all organization to extend toleration to those whole-hoggers who wish to cut off all possible connection with the Government. There is no reason why a province which can carry the people with it should not organize itself even on either basis.

I plead, that is to say, for a truthful programme and truthful parties. Let people only work programmes in which they believe implicitly. Loyalty to human institutions has its well defined limits. To be loyal to an organisation must not mean subordination of one's settled convictions. Parties may fall and parties may rise, but it we are to attain freedom, our deep convictions must remain unaffected by such passing changes.

We are on the eve of a new life. We may not see the image of swaraj risen before us at the end of the month but we must feel the warm glow of the coming event in no unmistakable fashion. And we shall feel it only if everyone of us will try to be true to himself. To believe in the infallibility of our means is to attain swaraj. The vote of the Congress this year must not be any more in the nature of an experiment. It should be an emphatic endorsement or rejection of the existing programme.

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90. MOPLAH TRAGEDY

Here is an extract from a pathetic letter received by me regarding tragedy :

> You could not have missed the Moplah death wagon even amidst the Bombay city tragedy. However I send you two cuttings which tell the tale. It is not a tragedy. It is but a symptom of the mentality that is in charge of affairs

in Malabar. The spirit at the top sets the standards of humanity and duty for those below. The second Press *communique* shows us the mentality of the Government of Madras. It admits that Moplah prisoners regularly"travelled" in luggage sealed wagons—"with no evil effects whatsoever"! Only the daily increasing callousness to suffering and brutalzation of all concerned made them put in more and more into the given space till the point was reached when 127 full sized men were pushed into an iron van 18 ft. by nine ft. and seven and a half feet high and sealed up without door or windows open, covered goods fashion. The dimensions yield an area of 162 sq. feet for 127 men. They could not possibly sit down. All standing, they could just fill the space tight. Naturally this crucifixion lasted not much over six hours. Will this climax of inhumanity bring it all to an end? If military operations are suspended and the causes for desperation among the whole Moplah community removed, and you and friends arc permitted to go into the disturbed area, we can guarantee peace within a week.

The same time I received the foregoing letter I received the following unexpected cutting from *The Servant of India:*

Fortified by an inexhaustible faith in the power of non-co-operators to restore order in Malabar without the use of force, Mr. Gandhi thinks that the present hostilities—for the continuance of which strangely enough he holds Government solely responsible—mean a wanton destruction of the Moplahs. It is unthinkable that the hostilities will terminate only after the whole Moplah race is exterminated, but to those who have the misfortune not to share the simple faith of Mr. Gandhi in the magical powers with which the non-co-operators are gifted, the problem presents complications to which happily Mr. Gandhi's mind is a stranger. However the casuistry of his appeal to the Liberals is hard to beat. He is precluded by his principle of non-co-operation from directly approaching Government in regard to anything; and therefore he wishes to approach them *via* Liberals in the matter of Malabar. For his appeal to the Liberals is for the purpose of getting Government to agree, among other things, to let non-co-operators go to the disturbed area. Is this not co-operation, we ask. In the second place, there is no general prohibition; the non-co-operators as a body are at liberty to travel about in Malabar just as well as anybody else, and they have not yet brought peace to that harried district. But if Mr. Gandhi alone is able to restore order, we would humbly suggest that when the time comes for commencing civil disobedience, he had better select this prohibition order for non-compliance. In that case he would be able at once to break the Government and to prevent the cruelties which are now in progress. In the meantime, he might try and

convert at least the non-co-operators in Malabar that the best way to stop the trouble is for Government to withdraw their troops. The complaint that we have heard is that instead of Government emptying excessive force, they are not employing enough, and are thus deliberately protracting the agony just to teach non-co-operators a lesson.

I was totally unprepared for such a terrible misunderstanding my position by The *Servants of India.* I have employed no casuistry in addressing my appeal to the Liberals. The question of operation does not arise at all. Nor am I ashamed to approach the Government directly a thousand times for permission for a party of peace to proceed to Malabar. In my appeal I have fought the intervention of the Liberals for the sake of compelling the Government to grant the permission. I had assumed knowledge on the part of the Liberals that I was threatened to be turned back when it was known I was about to proceed to Calicut, that Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, when as secretary he tried to proceed to Malabar for relief work, was refused permission that Mr. Yakub Hasan asked for permission, as soon as the outbreak took place, to go to Malabar to be able to pacify the Moplahs. I am quite willing to admit the helplessness of non-co-operators in many matters. The very creed of non-violence brings it about. Non-co-operators do not hesitate to seek permission where it has to be obtained for doing things that promote peace. Their creed prevents them from giving *voluntary* co-operation wherever abstention is possible. Neither do they seek Government assistance where it is possible to avoid it.

The writer of the paragraph cruelly suggests civil disobedience. It is not a weapon to be used for the sake of bravado. If civil disobedience could have ended the trouble, it would have been undertaken long ago. Mass civil disobedience will be undertaken even on this simple issue, when there is a certainty almost of non-violence being observed.

Why is it"strange" that I consider the Government solely responsible for the trouble? They could have avoided the trouble by settling the Khilafat question, they could have avoided it by allowing non-co-operators to take the message of non-violence to the Moplahs. The outbreak would not have taken place if the Collector had consulted the religious sentiment of the Moplahs.

I do indeed accuse the Government of punishing the Moplahs after they have done the mischief instead of protecting the Hindus

from Moplah outrage. Would the Government have acted in the same leisurely fashion if English families had been in danger instead of Hindus, and would it have inhumanly treated so-called rebels had they been Europeans instead of being Moplahs? I am sorry to be forced to the conclusion that the Government are betraying criminal negligence alike in their duty of protecting Hindus and of treating Moplah rebels as human beings.

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91. INDIAN ECONOMICS

A friend has placed in my hands a bulletin on Indian Piece-Goods Trade prepared by Mr. A. C. Coubrough C.B.E. by order of the Government of India. It contains the following prefatory note:

> The Government of India desire it to be understood that the statement made and the views expressed in this bulletin are those of the author himself.

If so, why has the Government of India burdened the taxpayer with the expense of such bulletins? The one before me is 16th in the series. Do they publish both the sides of the question?

The bulletin under review is intended to be an answer to the swadeshi movement. It is an elaborate note containing a number of charts showing the condition of imports and home manufacture of piece-goods including hand-woven. But it does not assist the reader in studying the movement. The painstaking author has bestowed no pains upon a study of the present movement or its scope. That the Government of India treats the greatest constructive and co-operative movement in the country with supreme contempt and devotes people's money to a vain refutation instead of a sympathetic study and treatment is perhaps the best condemnation that can be pronounced upon the system under which it is carried.

The author's argument is:

1. The movement if successful will act not as a protective but a prohibitive tariff.

2. This must result in merely enriching the Indian capitalist and punishing the consumer.

3. The imports are non-competitive in that the bulk of the kind of piece-goods imported are not manufactured in India.

4. The result of boycotting such piece-goods must be high

prices without corresponding benefit.

5. The boycott therefore being against the law of supply and demand and against the consumer must fail in the end.

6. The destruction of hand-spinning which I have deplored is due to natural causes, viz., the invention of time-saving appliances and was therefore inevitable.

7. The Indian farmer is responsible for his own ruin in that he has indolently neglected cotton culture which was once so good.

8. The best service I can render is therefore to induce the agriculturist to improve the quality of cotton.

9. The author concludes:

> If instead of filling homes with useless charkhas he were to start a propaganda for the more intensive cultivation of cotton and particularly for the production of longer-staple cotton, his influence would be felt not only at the present day but for many generations to come.

The reader will thus see, that what I regard as the supreme necessity for the economical salvation of India, the author considers to be rank folly. There is therefore no meeting ground here. And in spite of the prefatory note of the Government of India reproduced by me, the author does represent the Government attitude. I have invited them and the co-operators definitely to make common cause with the people in this movement at any rate. They may not mind its political implications because they do not believe in them. And surely they need not feel sorry if contrary to their expectation, the rise of the charkha results in an increase in the political power of the people. Instead of waging war against khadi, they might have popularized its use and disarmed the terrible suspicion they labour under of wishing to benefit the foreign manufacturer at the expense of the Indian cultivator. My invitation is open for all time. I prophesy that whatever happens to the other parts of the national programme, swadeshi in its present shape will bide for ever and must if India's pauperism is to be banished.

Even though I am a layman, I make bold to say that the so-called laws laid down in books on economics are not immutable like the laws of Medes and Persians, nor are they universal. The economics of England are different from those of Germany. Germany enriched herself by bounty-fed beet sugar. England enriched herself by exploiting foreign markets. What was possible for

a compact area is not possible for an area 1900 miles long and 1500 broad. The economics of a nation are determined by its climatic, geological and temperamental conditions. The Indian conditions are different from the English in all these essentials. What is meat for England is in many cases poison for India. Beef tea in the English climate may be good, it is poison for the hot climate of religious India. Fiery whisky in the north of the British Isles may be a necessity, it renders an Indian unfit for work or society. Furcoats in Scotland are indispensable, they will be an intolerable burden in India. Free trade for a country which has become industrial, whose population can and does live in cities, whose people do not mind preying upon other nations and therefore sustain the biggest navy to protect their unnatural commerce, may be economically sound (though as the reader perceives, I question its morality). Free trade for India has proved her curse and held her in bondage.

And now for Mr. Coubrough's propositions:

l. The movement is intended to serve the purpose of a voluntary prohibitive tariff.

2. But it is so conceived as neither unduly to benefit the capitalist nor to injure the consumer. During the very brief transition stage the prices of home manufactures may be, as they are, inflated. But the rise can only be temporary as the vast majority of consumers must become their own manufacturers. This cottage manufacture of yarn and cloth cannot be expensive even as domestic cookery is not expensive and cannot be replaced by hotel cookery. Over twenty-five crores of the population will be doing their own hand-spinning and having yarn thus manufactured woven in neighbouring localities. This population is rooted to the soil and has at least four months in the year to remain idle.

If they spin during those hours and have the yarn woven and wear it, no mill-made cloth can compete with their khadi. The cloth thus manufactured will be the cheapest possible for them. If the rest of the population did not take part in the process, it could easily be supplied out of the surplus manufactured by the twenty-five crores.

3. It is true that non-competitive imports are larger than those that compete with the manufactures of Indian mills. In the scheme proposed by me the question does not arise, because the central idea is not so much to carry on a commercial war against foreign countries as to utilize the idle hours of the nation and thus by natural processes to

help it to get rid of her growing pauperism.

4. I have already shown that the result of boycott cannot in the end be a rise in the price of cloth.

5. The proposed boycott is not against the law of supply and demand, because it does away with the law by manufacturing enough for the supply. The movement does require a change of taste on the part of those who have adopted finer variety and who patronize fantastic combinations of colours and designs.

6. I have shown in these pages, that the destruction of hand-spinning was designed and carried out in a most inhuman manner by the agents of the East India Company. No amount of appliances would ever have displaced this national art and industry but for this artificial and systematically cruel manner of carrying out the destruction.

7. I am unable to hold the Indian farmer responsible for the deterioration in cotton culture. The whole incentive was taken away when hand-spinning was destroyed. The state never cared for the cultivator.

8. My activity, I am proud to think, has already turned the cultivator's attention to the improvement of cotton. The artistic sense of the nation will insist on fine counts for which long staple is a necessity. Cotton culture by itself cannot solve the problem of India's poverty. For it will still leave the question of enforced idleness untouched.

9. I therefore claim for the charkha the honour of being able to solve the problem of economic distress in a most natural, simple, unexpensive and businesslike manner. The charkha therefore is not only not useless as the writer ignorantly suggests, but it is a useful and indispensable article for every home. It is the symbol of the nation's prosperity and therefore freedom. It is a symbol not of commercial war out of commercial peace. It bears not a message of ill will towards the nations of the earth but of goodwill and self-help. It will not need the protection of a navy threatening a world's peace and exploiting its resources, but it needs the religious determination of millions to spin their yarn in their own homes as today they cook their food in their own homes. I may deserve the curses of posterity for many mistakes of omission and commission but I am confident of earning its blessings for suggesting a revival of the charkha. I stake my all on it. For every revolution of the wheel spins peace, goodwill and love. And with all that, inasmuch as the loss of it brought India's slavery, its voluntary revival with all its implications must mean India's freedom

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92. TO CORRESPONDENTS

R. V. BAHULEKAR: 1. Please read answer to correspondents in the last issue. Pity and hatred may be the same to a man who has become perfect. Only he will then have little cause for killing. For me an imperfect being love and hate are two distinct and opposite sensations, and reading the *Bhagavad Gita* in its applicability to imperfect men, I find it hard to believe that we can kill without being angered. In my humble opinion it is a prostitution of the Vedanta to apply to imperfect beings conduct possible only for perfect beings.

2. I advised the cultured untouchables of Travancore that they might singly demand entrance to temples if they could exercise restraint and stand insults from the keepers without seeking the assistance of courts of law. My advise to untouchables generally is not to test the right of entry into temples whilst the evil of untouchability is otherwise still in existence. In no case have I advised entry into sanctuaries. In theory I do claim that custodians of Hindu temples should throw open to untouchables those parts which are open to other classes.

S. GOVINDSWAMI IYER: If you believe in non-co-operation, you cannot join the students' military Corps.

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93. SWADESHI IN THE UNITED PROVINCES

The progress of swadeshi in the U. P., a report[1] of which has been prepared by the U.P. Provincial Congress Committee, is full of lessons for the other provinces of India, both as regards the success achieved in the several lines of organizing work as well as the difficulties that had to be encountered. The work was considered under the following heads (1) Distribution of charkhas; (2) organizing a khadi depot; (3) supplying hand-spun yarn to weavers and inducing them to weave only such yarn; and (4) organizing the boycott

The U. P. Provincial Congress Committee deserves congratulations upon its progress in swadeshi. I hope however that it will not be satisfied till its khadi is all made of hand-spun yarn. Development of hand-spinning is the key to the solution of India's poverty. Experts are required to improve and regularize the quality of hand-spun yarn.

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[1] Only the opening paragraph of the condensed report published in *Young India*,1-12-1921 is reproduced here.

94. LOVE NOT HATE

SABARMATI,

December 8, 1921

A telegram from Allahabad says Pandit Motilal Nehru, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Pandit Shamlal Nehru and Mr. George Joseph, Editor of the *Independent* have been arrested. It was received at 11 o'clock last night. It positively filled me with joy. I thanked God for it.

I had not expected Panditji's arrest. In our discussions I used to tell Panditji that he would be about the last to be arrested. Sir Harcourt Butler would not have the courage to lay hands upon him. His friend Rajasaheb of Mahmudabad would decline to remain in office if he was to be arrested. I marvel at Sir Harcourt Butler's philosophic courage. Panditji has been working against tremendous odds. He has been battling against his old enemy asthma. I know that he has never worked for his rich clients, nor even for the afflicted Punjab as he has slaved for pauper India. I have pleaded with him to take rest. He has refused to do so. It rejoice to think that he will now have respite from the toil that was wearing him out.

But my joy was greater for the thought, that what I had feared would not happen before the end of the year because of the sin of Bombay was now happening by reason of the innocent suffering of the greatest and the best in the land. These arrests of the totally innocent is real swaraj. Now there is no shame in the Ali Brothers and their companions remaining in jail. India has not been found undeserving of their immolation.

But my joy, which I hope thousands share with me, is conditional upon perfect peace being observed whilst our leaders are one after another taken away from us. *Victory is complete if non-violence reigns supreme in spite of the arrests. Disastrous defeat is a certainty if we cannot control all the elements so as to ensure peace.* We are out to be killed without killing. We have stipulated to go to prison without feeling angry or injured. We must not quarrel with the condition of our own creating.

On the contrary our non-violence teaches us to love our enemies. By non-violent non-co-operation we seek to conquer the wrath of the English administrators and heir supporters. We must love them and pray to God that they might have wisdom to

see what appears us to be their errors. It must be the prayer of the strong and not of the weak. In our strength must we humble ourselves before our Maker.

In the moment of our trial and our triumph let me declare my faith, I believe in loving my enemies. I believe in non-violence as the only remedy open to the Hindus, Mussulmans, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians and Jews of India. I believe in the power of suffering to melt the stoniest heart. The brunt of the battle must fall on the first three. The last named three are afraid of the combination of the first three. We must by our honest conduct demonstrate to them that they are our kinsmen. We must by our conduct demonstrate to every Englishman that he is as safe in the remotest corner of India as he professes to feel behind the machine gun.

Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism and Judaism—in fact religion is on its trial. Either we believe in God and His righteousness or we do not. My association with the noblest of Mussulmans has taught me to see that Islam has spread not by the power of the sword but by the prayerful love of an unbroken line of its saints and fakirs. Warrant there is in Islam for drawing the sword; but the conditions laid down are so strict that they are not capable of being fulfilled by everybody. Where is the unerring general to order jehad? Where is the suffering, the love and the purification that must precede the very idea of drawing the sword? Hindus are at least as much bound by similar restrictions as the Mussulmans of India. The Sikhs have their recent proud history to warn them against the use of force. We are too imperfect, too impure and too selfish as yet to resort to an armed conflict in the cause of God as Shaukat Ali would say. Will a purified India ever need to draw the sword? And it was the definite process of purification we commenced last year at Calcutta.

What must we then do? Surely remain non-violent and yet strong enough to offer as many willing victims as the Government may require for imprisonment. Our work must continue with clock-work regularity. Each province must elect its own succession of leaders. Lalaji has set a brilliant example by making all the necessary arrangements. The chairman and the secretary must be given in each province emergency powers. The executive committees must be the smallest possible. Every Congressman must be a volunteer.

Whilst we must not avoid arrest we must not provoke it by giving unnecessary offence.

We must vigorously prosecute the swadeshi campaign till we are fully organized for the manufacture of all the hand-spun khadi we require and have brought about a complete boycott of foreign cloth.

We must hold the Congress at any cost in spite of the arrest of everyone of the leaders unless the Government dissolve it by force. And if we are neither cowed down nor provoked to violence but are able to continue national work, we have certainly attained swaraj. For no power on earth can stop the onward march of a peaceful, determined and godly people.

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 8-12-1921

95. COMPLAINT OF THE UNTOUCHABLES

Two *Antyaja* Friends write as follows:[1]

There is, in this complaint, a measure of ignorance and of anger arising from ignorance, but, that apart, the letter deserves consideration. By passing resolutions and talking about their problem we have raised hopes in them. It was absolutely necessary to do this. It was necessary also that hopes should be raised in them and to tell those *Antyaja* friends that what has happened should be sufficient answer to them. Another answer can be that they lay the entire burden on me. I can understand the sting in their words. They accuse me of being satisfied with the more or less that I do myself and of being gullible enough to be taken in by others who only befool me. However, if I do something, there are others who may be doing less but still they do it.

Untouchability is an attitude of the mind, not a concrete object. To eradicate it, therefore, is not as easy as to persuade pupils to leave schools. No agitation, therefore, like the one with regard to schools can be suggested in respect of untouchability. A change of heart is necessary for this reform, as it is for accepting the principle of non-violence. The movement, therefore, can only be carried on along the same line as that for non-violence. Just as the extent to which the latter has been accepted by the people can be measured from the occasional incidents of violence which occur, so can progress in the removal of untouchability be measured from occasional evidence of

[1] Not reproduced here

its survival. No rule of arithmetic can be applied to judge this. You cannot work out as an arithmetical exercise,"If so many Hindus have mixed with so many unit touchables within such a period of time, what time will it take for all the crores of Hindus to mix with all the millions of untouchables?"—and ascertain the progress from the answer. But we get a measure of the progress from incidents which occur from time to time. The issue was first discussed as a principle in the Gujarat Vidyapith. As a result, the principle of admitting *Antyaja* pupils in its schools was accepted even at the risk of putting its very existence in danger, and some members who had tendered their resignations on this issue were allowed to leave the Vidyapith. If, again, the existence of an institution like the Dakshinamurti Bhavan is in serious danger today, the reason is the same. The teachers who are the very soul of the Bhavan are fighting a life-and-death struggle there to get the principle accepted. I cannot claim credit for either of these two results. I would have been defeated if the majority of the members of the Vidyapith had opposed me. But, on the contrary, they themselves believed in the principle independently of my view. In the holy fight which is being waged in the Dakshinamurti Bhavan, I cannot claim to have a hand even as an individual member. It was because of this issue that several proffered donations to the Tilak Swaraj Fund were withheld, but the managers of the Fund did not care for the loss. *Antyajas* have freely attended hundreds of public meetings in Gujarat and elsewhere. The All-lndia Congress Committee has sanctioned an expenditure of more than Rs. 50,000 for *Antyaja*-welfare activities at various places. This amount excludes the money already spent by the Provincial Committees. Non-co-operators have thus been working all over India and independently of party considerations. In every province, enthusiastic young men of character have been, with the utmost sincerity of purpose, sacrificing their all in the service of *Antyajas*. This is the first time that, in every constituency, *Antyaja* brothers have been elected delegates though they had expressed no such desire.

This for the satisfaction of the authors of the letter and other *Antyaja* friends like them who feel disappointed. But, while we may draw their attention to such a movement having spread, we must admit at the same time that there is some truth in their complaint. Many persons simply make a show of mixing [with *Antyajas*] in order to hoodwink others, and are not sincere about the matter. Mixing with them in this spirit will yield bitter fruit. The

practice of untouchability is an offence against dharma and its disappearance will bear fruit only if the prejudice is shed from the heart. The campaign against it is not a political move so that we may do just enough to throw dust in people's eyes. Nor is the movement undertaken in order to please or bribe *Antyajas*. Our only object is to satisfy our own conscience; our very conception of this evil is that, as long as Hindu society does not rid itself of it, it will continue to block our path invisibly, if not visibly, and will prevent our success in winning swaraj The consequences of karma are hard to comprehend; its law admits of no exception. We always reap, visibly or invisibly, the fruits of our good and bad deeds, of our sins and virtuous acts.

There is not a shred of doubt in my mind that so long as we have not cleansed our hearts of this evil and have not accepted the path of non-violence, so long as Hindus and Muslims have not become sincerely united, we shall not be free. Our progress in all these three fields is impossible to measure by any visible yardstick. Till we succeed in regard to all three, we shall not get swaraj and when we get it, we shall have succeeded in them. So long as Hindu society turns a deaf ear to the six crores of *Antyajas* crying for justice at our doors, we shall not get swaraj, never.

But even if caste-Hindus wash off their sins, will *Antyajas* ascend to heaven in consequence? For that, they themselves should strive. They should give up drinking, refuse to eat leftovers, stop eating meat and, though for the sake of service, engaged in the most uncleanly work, remain clean and worship God. All this is for them to attend to. Others cannot do it for them. To banish hunger from among them, they have the spinning wheel and the handloom at their service. Thousands of *Antyajas* have taken them up and prospered. The swadeshi movement is such that it feeds and strengthens all the limbs and I, for one, am certain that it is swadeshi which will, in time, end our abject poverty.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-12-1921

96. TELEGRAM TO MRS. MOTILAL NEHRU[1]

AHMEDABAD,
December 8, 1921

MRS. NEHRU
ALLAHABAD
CONGRATULATE YOU KAMLA. MAY GOD GIVE YOU COURAGE HOPE.

GANDHI

From the original. Courtesy: Municipal Museum, Allahabad

97. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[SABARMATI,
December 8, 1921][2]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your telegram as also your letter. I hope Mrs. Nehru is calm and unruffled. Carry on your work without worrying.

Devdas is going there; you will have all the help that he can give. Ask for more help if you need it. Improve the standard of the *Independent.* Keep a good control over [correspondents'] reports. It does not matter if you get fewer [reports] but see that they are good. Take Satisbabu's[3] help if you can get it. I have not written to Andrews, but you can write to him. I have not written because it may imply some kind of pressure.

I should be glad to have a letter from Mrs. Nehru.

There is always a danger in taking vows prescribed by others. Take those that you can and which you think worth taking from among the ones suggested to you and then stick to them tenaciously. You need not take them if you do not have the strength to take them just now. There is no harm in not taking them, but there certainly is in not keeping them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 11428

[1] On the arrest of Motilal Nehru and Jawaharlal Nehru on December 6

[2] The addressee's telegram was received late at night on the 7th and Devdas left for Delhi on the 8th morning.

[3] Satis Chandra Mukerji

98. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

SABARMATI,
December 8, 1921

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

The Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee has not secured even Rs. 1 lakh so far. Let me know if there is any hitch. They are in great difficulty here—and every time I tend to be proved wrong.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32688

99. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

[On or before *December 9, 1921*][1]

DEAR MOTILALJI,

This time the unexpected has happened.[2] It is all for the good. I envy you and Jawaharlal. If we go at this rate swaraj may burst upon us even without warning.

I think that Godbole[3] should continue the routine work. I would like you to send your instructions, views and wishes as to the present and the future. I wrote today [to] Sarup[4] and Ranjit saying, unless they had been advised by you otherwise and if they could, they should go to Allahabad.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: Motilal Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] From the reference to Sarup and Ranjit who were going to Allahabad to become proprietors of the *Independent; vide"*Letter to Mahadev Desai", 9-12-1921;"Letter to Mahadev Desai", 9-12-1921.

[2] The reference is to the arrest of Motilal Nehru and Jawaharlal Nehru on December 6, 1921.

[3] M. S. Godbole who was at this time helping in the work of the *Independent*

[4] Vijayalakshmi Pandit

100. LETTER T0 MAHADEV DESAI

Friday [*December 9, 1921*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV

Received your telegram. I am not happy that you have had to pay security for publishing the *Independent.* But it is our duty to do whatever Panditji wishes. I would certainly be pleased if you are arrested. Do tell Panditji, however, that it would be better not to pay any security if it is again demanded and to issue a hand-written paper instead. It is the easiest thing to do. They will certainly arrest you, but that does not matter. Sarup and Ranjit are going there, they also can become proprietors. I shall certainly try to send someone from here.

Pyarelal can certainly come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the original: S.N. 106028

101. TELEGRAM TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

AHMEDABAD,
December 9, 1921

ACHARYA
SALEM

CONSIDER NEWS MOST CHEERING NOT GLOOMY. AGREE RAJARAM SHOULD REMAIN AHMEDABAD TILL CONGRESS AHMEDABAD.[2] WE CAN BUT WATCH AND PRAY.

GANDHI

From a copy: C. Vijayaraghavachariar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The addressee paid security and took charge of the *Independent* on the 7th.

[2] The Congress session was scheduled to be held in Ahmedabad on December 27 and 28, 1921.

102. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SABARMATI,

Saturday [*December 10, 1921*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I can understand your difficulty. Give Shankerlal such help as you can. It is enough if we behave properly even in difficult times. I see nothing wrong in your keeping aloof where you find it difficult to meet people or mix with them.

Your letter to the Central Board is entirely proper. Wherever you find it being slack in practice, you must criticize it. And wherever you feel that you are required even indirectly to associate With anything immoral, you must withdraw yourself.

I shall try to draft the resolution also.[2] I do not think I shall be arrested before the Congress session. But if I am, nothing like it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The addressee received the letter on December 11, 1921. The Saturday preceding it fell on December 10.

[2] For the resolution passed at the Ahmedabad Congress session, *vide*"Speech at Congress Section, Ahmedabad-1", 28-12-1921.

103. TELEGRAM TO MRS. BASANTI DEVI DAS[1]

[On or after *December 10, 1921*]

CONGRATULATE YOU AND YOUR HUSBAND. EXPECT YOU AHMEDABAD.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 13-12-1921

104. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO SHYAM SUNDER CHAKRAVARTY[2]

[AHMEDABAD,

After *December 10, 1921*]

It is a delightful thing to hear of these arrests; two things are needed to ensure early establishment of swaraj—a ceaseless stream of civil resisters, and a non-violent atmosphere. I hope that Bengal will lead in both these matters.

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 170

105. ONE YEAR'S TIME-LIMIT

I am being implored, on the one hand, not to carry out my threat to retire to the Himalayas if we do not get swaraj by the end of this year. On the other hand, I am asked what face I shall show to the people if we fail to get swaraj. How great will be the people's disappointment? Having made a promise, I shall now realize what an error I have made.

I expect that readers of *Navajivan* will not think in this manner. But I know that some of them do. My promise was conditional. Laying down conditions which could be easily fulfilled, I told the people:"Fulfill these conditions and win swaraj."

But friends can argue that, when laying down conditions, a man of practical wisdom would consider the other party's capacity to fulfil them. This is true. It is also true that I claim to be such a man. If I think I cannot make this claim, I should not remain in public life.

[1] On the arrest of C. R. Das on December 10

[2] This was written when the addressee, editor, *Servant* of Calcutta became the President of the Bengal Congress Committee after the arrest of C. R. Das on December 10, 1921

If, therefore, people are obliged to ask, at the end of the year, When they would get the promised swaraj, my claim of practical wisdom would have been disproved and I must betake myself to the Himalayas.

However, if the people clearly realize that the only way to get swaraj is the one I have pointed out and feel that they have covered a long distance on the road, have almost reached its end, they will have no ground for reproaching me nor I any reason for running away to the Himalayas. We shall then almost have won swaraj. One who has discovered the path to liberation always obeys the *yama* and *niyama* disciplines, who observes his chains loosening day by day, has as good as attained liberation. He does not swerve from his path. As the days pass, he goes from strength to strength. He needs no guide. The man who doubts has his moorings nowhere and is doomed to perish. Though moving on the road, he does not advance because he does not know where he is.

Similarly, if all the delegates who will be assembling [for the Congress] in this month agree without much argument that the path we have taken is the only one which can lead to swaraj, that we already see swaraj in the distance, that we have achieved more during this year than during any previous year and that they, the delegates, are determined to adhere to this path—then, I would say, we have as good as got swaraj. It is due to lack of effort on our part that something will still remain to be secured. A little more effort and our swaraj will be complete.

Those who believe, and those who have spread the belief, that Gandhi will somehow get them swaraj before December, both these classes of persons are, whether or not they know it, their own and the country's enemies; they have not understood the meaning of swaraj at all. Swaraj means self-reliance. To hope that I shall get swaraj for them is the opposite of self-reliance. I can only point out the means; it is then for the people to work and secure swaraj. I am a *vaidya*; I prescribe the medicine, explain the manner of taking it, mention the other things to be taken with it and specify the quantity to be taken every time. It is ultimately for the patient to act and do the best he can.

If, at the end of the year, the people have not realized through their own experience that swaraj will be won through non-violence, through unity of Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians and Jews,

through swadeshi and the removal of untouchability, then I shall have been proved totally deficient in practical wisdom and I must retire to the Himalayas.

It is true that I had expected much more than this. I had expected that we would not only discover the path during this year, but would also see the image of swaraj before our eyes, would have arrived at a settlement with the rulers and, non-co-operation having been withdrawn, would have commenced genuine co-operation. I am afraid we shall not see ourselves placed in this happy position during the days which remain. On the contrary, our non-co-operation will have become more intense and co-operation will appear to be out of the question altogether. But this phase itself will bring co-operation nearer. It is the darkest before dawn. The pain before delivery being almost unbearable, the woman doubts whether the delivery will ever take place. In the same way, the hour of birth of our freedom will be the most difficult period for us.

Bombay put an obstacle in our path. We ourselves had planned to start a fight and invite suffering upon ourselves; Bombay made this impossible. But, fortunately for us, the Government itself has given us an opportunity of doing so, having intensified repression. If we fearlessly avail ourselves of the opportunity it has offered, we shall see before long freedom become a reality.

Why do I not, however, say categorically that this will not happen during the present year? I do not say this because I do not know for certain. I am not omniscient. I am not God. I believe God to be omnipotent. No one knows when He will bring about profound changes in our hearts. Did I know that, on the 17th November, even while I was voicing great optimism, heartbreaking things were being done? How can I be sure that, while I am myself uncertain whether we shall see freedom become a reality during the days which remain, God is not actually preparing this result? If I am the doctor, I am the patient too. I have not won the freedom for which I have been striving. I have discovered the path and I will never abandon it. But the freedom which I want is still far away. I would not be surprised, however, if I got it in this month. I can assure the readers that I have spared no efforts. I am in truth seeking my own *moksha* through my efforts to win swaraj for India. When I feel that instead of progressing towards *moksha*, I am forging chains for myself, that instead of rising I am falling, no one will be able to hold me back. At present, though, I

do not feel that my bonds have become stronger. I state most emphatically that I do not know what the state of my mind will be on the 1st of January. The reader will thus see that the struggle for swaraj is a spiritual effort for me, a means of attaining *moksha*. My effort is purely selfish and will remain so.

In one sense, I do not wish to see freedom become a reality this year. I wish to see all fanciful notions about me dispelled. I want people to know that I am but a small creature. I see nothing but harm to the people and to me in my being looked upon as a giant. I shall not mind if people believe that my calculations have been wrong, that I am a fool or that I am an impractical man. Instead of their believing that they got anything through my strength, it is much better that they should believe every achievement to be the result of their own *tapascharya* and self-purification—much better indeed that it should be so in fact. I only want the people to have this faith in me."He fearlessly placed before us that he thought to be the truth at the time." I desire no better certificate than this. I do not deserve anything more.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-12-1921

106. BARDOLI

I shall never forget Maulana Azad Sobhani's and my visit to the Bardoli taluka. Both of us marvelled at the simplicity, goodness, sincerity and determination of the people in that taluka. There is no doubt that the work there has been done very well. We have both felt that, on the whole, that taluka can organize itself for civil disobedience in the shortest time.

There are about sixty-five Government schools there. Fifty-one of these have already become national schools. And there is no doubt that enthusiasm mounts wherever schools become national. It is only a few weeks since schools came under the control of the people and, therefore, the progress is rather slow. Children are required to work on the spinning-wheel. The use of khadi has increased very much among men. All were seen wearing a shirt, dhoti, or half pants, and a cap. There was a fairly good number of women in khadi saris at the meeting. There is excellent unity among Hindus and Muslims. People do not object to contact with the *Dheds* and the *Bhangis* who attend

meetings and they are allowed to sit with others. The people of the taluka have behaved very peacefully while doing all this. They have also maintained good relations with the officials, nor is there any hostility towards those who co-operate with the Government.

We cannot but congratulate the people on this progress.

The picture, however, is not complete. The people should have such measure of control over the schools that no person would even think of Government schools or of the education given in them. Schools should be so organized that children do not roam about but under teachers of upright character, learn to build their own character. Hindu boys and girls should learn Sanskrit and study the *Gita*, and Muslim children should learn Arabic and study the Koran. All children should spin beautiful, strong, well-twisted yarn of even texture; some of them should card and weave as well. Khadi should become more popular among women and all men and women should exclusively wear khadi. Not only this but the khadi required by the taluka should be spun and woven locally and mill-made yarn should not be used at all. Progress in this is very slow. The looms are few in number. In comparison, the number of spinning-wheels is quite good, but there should be many more of them and they should be in regular operation. It should be impossible, or very difficult, to get foreign or millmade cloth in Bardoli.

It is not enough that *Dheds* and *Bhangis* can attend meetings freely. The meaning of ending the practice of untouchability should be fully grasped. People should come to love *Dheds* and *Bhangis*. Their children should freely attend national schools; if they do not, we should go and fetch them, persuading the parents to send them. We should visit their localities and inquire about their hardships. We should plead with them and persuade them to give up their bad habits. It is good indeed that there are no quarrels at all between Hindus and Muslims, but the ill-feeling that they harbour against each other must disappear. Our conduct towards Parsis, Christians and those who co-operate with the Government should be so courteous that they do not entertain the slightest fear of non-co-operators. We may get liquor-booths closed only if we can do so by reasoning with the owners. The latter must not be ostracized and kept out of common gatherings. We may bring them and the drink-addicts to listen to us, as well as we can, with love. There should not be even the slightest appearance of coercion on them. They should feel absolutely secure.

A whole army of volunteers need not go to bring the pupils out of schools, need not go into a village and start a fast. Only if the people are awakened in the right manner and they voluntarily withdraw their children from Government schools will the results be genuine.

I have certainly formed the impression that the people have done very good work. But they betray some ignorance in their work. People seem to think that it will be necessary to wear khadi only till December end, that afterwards they will not have to run schools and will not need to mix with the *Dheds* and *Bhangis.* Work done in such a spirit will be insincere and will have a bad rather than a good effect. I do not now think it possible that we shall have power in our hands in December. But, even after we have got it, we shall be wearing cloth spun and woven in our talukas or villages, our schools will not be run by any outsiders and their management will be entirely in our hands. Instead of two authorities, as at present, there will be only one when we have swaraj. If the Government is ours, of course the control will be ours. We shall have to be as hard-working then as we are now and shoulder as much responsibility then as we do now. We shall, even then, mix with the *Dheds* and *Bhangis* and love them. In what we are doing today, we are training ourselves for swaraj and making ourselves fit for it. In effecting any changes, therefore, we should understand their meaning and know that they will stay afterwards. Only then shall we be fit [for swaraj].

I believe that the Bardoli taluka is fully capable of doing all this. The deficiency I have pointed out is partly due to lack of time and, partly, to ignorance. I am, therefore, not at all disappointed; I believe that the people will be able to overcome these shortcomings within a very short time and be completely fit for offering civil disobedience.

The supporters of the Government whom It met also testified to everything having been done peacefully and told me that Bardoli would be ready in six months' time. Shri Kunvarji, who is the soul of the taluka, believes that they will succeed in a month's time in spreading spinning and weaving and other activities. The reports of either are likely to contain an element of unconscious exaggeration. However, the good m on my mind that they will not take long to deserve a certificate of fitness.

What impressed me especially was that the workers were not only young men, but included grown-ups as well. The women, too, take interest. The volunteers do honorary work. Whatever expenses

are incurred are met by Bardoli itself. Hence, the entire taluka, and not merely a certain section of it, can be said to have awakened.

Bardoli's responsibility has now increased. Bardoli inspired me, when I was in Delhi, to give concrete shape to the plan of civil disobedience and this increased the enthusiasm in other provinces too. In consequence, some great fighters are in jail. Having thus been instrumental in rousing enthusiasm, Bardoli cannot rest now. It must complete the process of self-purification and, for this purpose, it must put in a Herculean Effort. The required effort will be easy to make if people work wisely and unceasingly and if their change of heart is genuine.

The reader will see that I have not discussed the question whether or not the people have the capacity to suffer, to go to jail or to face bullets. I have not even inquired of anyone. It is my experience and my faith that, when a person does his duty faithfully, he soon gets the strength to suffer. Bardoli, moreover, is making all this effort in order to be fit to go to jail; how can I, then, insult it by asking the question of whether it has the necessary strength? At this time, going to jail is a difficult thing. It is, of course, easy to keep out. If a person does not spin, does not wear khadi, is not honest or polite, has ill will towards all and refuses to mix with the *Dheds* and *Bhangis* will anyone ask such a person to go to jail? A taluka which clings to the practice of untouchability will never be invited to court imprisonment. I, therefore, do not at all doubt Bardoli's courage or its readiness to go to jail.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-12-1921

107. MY NOTES!

WELCOME COLONEL PRATAPSINGHJI

I have been hearing for a week now that, at the time of the Congress session, the Government will hand over control of Ahmedabad to Colonel Pratapsinghji and his men and that the Colonel has undertaken to deal with the delegates attending the Congress. I am absolutely sure that the rumour is unfounded. The Government is not so timid or wicked or foolish as this rumour suggests. It is sufficiently equipped to put down the Congress

delegates. I do not believe that the Government would like to survive with Colonel Pratapsingh's help. I am told, however, that the simple-minded mill-workers have been frightened and feel agitated. No one should hear such rumours or, having heard them, spread them further. If there is danger of any kind, the Congress will let the people know. It is a sign of cowardice to get frightened by any and every kind of rumour, and cowards cannot win swaraj or preserve it after winning it. Such fear, moreover, is also a sign of lack of faith in God. Why can we not tell ourselves,"God's will be done", and remain calm?

Let us suppose, however, that Colonel Pratapsinghji arrives with his men. Is that any reason to get frightened? He, too, is one of us. His men also are our own people. We should offer him our services, welcome him and cheerfully face his men's bullets as well. Why should we at all give them a chance to shoot? Will they molest people going about their way peacefully? If they do, we may let them and continue on our way. Will they snatch away our khadi caps? If they try to, we should hold fast to our caps and submit to the blows. If, despite that, they succeed in snatching away the cap, we should put on another, come out again and submit to more blows. In the end, they will get weary of the business. Those who cannot submit to blows may not pass along the road on which they are stationed, but should not in any case put away the white cap. A vegetarian, for instance, will not go to any country, like the Arctic region, in which he cannot live without meat. If by chance he finds himself in such a place, he will meet death but not eat meat. That alone is dharma which is followed at the cost of one's life; anything else is mere convenience or amusement.

If we have resolved to give up fear of white soldiers, why should we fear Colonel Pratapsingh's brown men?

Fear is a sign of our harbouring violence and hostility. Anyone whom we regard as an enemy is sure to become so. If we treat even an enemy as a friend, he will certainly become one in the course of time. Man is made by his thoughts. We reap as we sow. It cannot happen that one sows friendship and reaps enmity. Our non-co- operation is a means of winning over even an enemy with love.

This is not only the Hindus' dharma. Islam teaches the same thing. It gives the first place to patience. It has room for war, but only as a last resort and when one's side is less numerous than the tyrant's, when refusing to fight may be a sign of cowardice and when the person who leads the host into the battle is an illustrious soul trusted

by all and without any selfish aim. This is not, cannot be, the position in India. We are more numerous than the opponent. There is no one to be our leader in fighting. For us to fight will be no sign of manliness. We have not exhausted all other means. We have not yet fully learnt the lesson of peace and not completely adopted swadeshi. We have not learnt to be truthful; we, Hindus and Muslims, have not yet rid ourselves of mutual ill will and a large number of us love co-operation with the Government. I have heard many *aalims* say that, in these circumstances, fighting will be not jehad but *fasad*.

From the point of view of whichever religion we consider the matters we can arrive at only one conclusion. We wish to conquer the enemy with love and therefore, whether it is a white army or a black one which is sent, our attitude towards it should be the same. Accordingly, we should be ready to say"Welcome, Colonel", if Colonel Pratapsinghji, or some other Colonel, does indeed come with his men, though I believe that no Colonel Pratapsinghji is coming to teach us a lesson.

HAS DAS BEEN ARRESTED?

A similar rumour is afloat about Das having been arrested. I certainly not believe that he has been arrested. But it is more likely that he has been arrested than that Colonel Pratapsingh will be coming. With increasing repression and the clouds in the Indian sky constantly changing their colour, how can anyone know who will be arrested and when? And why should we at all care to know who else has been arrested? Even if all the leaders be arrested, we will not resort to violence. If we have been lazy so far, we should start working; if, with the leaders in our midst, we are inclined to be a little irresponsible, in their absence we should take the responsibility upon ourselves and assume leadership. In our struggle, everyone is entitled to be a leader, since the leader is one who does greater service. If leadership is for service, how can it incite envy?

We should, therefore, rejoice if Deshbandhu Das has been arrested, feel enthused rather than despondent and have hope that the hour of our victory is drawing near. We shall get nothing at all without being tested and, if we do get anything, we shall not be able to retain it. As food taken when one is not hungry is not assimilated, likewise the happiness which comes to us without our suffering for it can be of no profit to us. We become stronger as our bonds break one after one through our internal strength. If, however, a person who has been

bound for some time is unexpectedly set free by somebody else, he seems to behave, actually does behave, like one who has been crippled. The same thing happens to us. The imprisonment of our leaders, therefore, heralds the dawn of our freedom.

Let us not mind if Lalaji is absent from the Congress, or Das, or Mohiuddin, or Phooken from Assam, or Shanti Swarup of Farukhabad, or Harkarannath of Lucknow, or Gupta from Andhra, or Yukub Hassan of Madras or Kitchlew or Stokes or Pandit Nekiram, or Pandit Sunderlal, or Bhagwandinji, or Pir Badshah Mian, or Jitendralal Bannerjee, or Sengupta; what does it matter if they or other fighters like them are not present? Let us not mind if the Ali Brothers are absent and so is the contingent of brave Sikh Sardars. Though they may not be physically present, their souls will be with us, will watch the strength we display and judge us. They will see whether or not we were worthy of their sacrifices. Soldiers are not afraid of being wounded. They know that to be wounded is to prove one's courage, and to prove one's courage is to win. We should cling to our faith that anyone who serves when outside the prison serves better still if, though innocent, he is imprisoned.

TO PARSI BROTHERS AND SISTERS

I know that in many places our Parsi brothers and sisters feel uncomfortable and are afraid of Hindus and Muslims. I feel ashamed even to write this. It should be a matter of shame to Swarajists if, when we are chanting the *mantra* of swaraj, any community or innocent person has reason to feel apprehensive. At any rate I assure our Parsi brothers and sisters that hundreds of Hindus and Muslims are ready to lay down their lives for them and for other small communities like the Christians. Perhaps some British officials are frightening them, deliberately or otherwise. But it becomes Parsi friends not to let others frighten them; they should, instead, regard Hindus and Muslims as their brothers and trust them. Let us resolve that we shall die at one another's hands or be saved by one another. Trust begets trust, while distrust produces greater distrust.

While giving this assurance, I advise Parsi friends, wherever they feel the slightest concern, to inform the Congress or the Khilafat office in the area; those in charge of the offices will not fail to make arrangements to protect them. Many Parsi brothers told me in Bombay that several Memons had given full protection to Parsi men and women. Parsi families were given shelter in some Marwari homes.

I am sure there are no Parsis who believe that the entire Hindu or the entire Muslim community has turned against them and the Christians.

Some Parsi friends write to me about the losses they have suffered. The only consolation I can give them is that I am consulting Parsi leaders to see if we can set up a committee to look into such cases. If such a committee is formed, arrangements will be made to compensate all those who have incurred losses and who cannot overlook them. Personally, I do not wish that any Parsi should approach the Government for compensation.

KAPADVANJ AND THASRA

Some cultivators inform me that this year the crop in some places in the Kapadvanj and Thasra talukas has been less than four annas and in others between four and six annas, and they ask me what they should do in these circumstances. As a non-co-operator, the only advice I can give is that they should not approach the Government for relief; however, if they have courage they can notify the Government that they are unable to pay the assessed revenue as the crop has been less than four annas. If the Government does not accept the cultivator' assessment, let it nominate a *panch*[1] on which it and the cultivators will be represented equally. Both parties should abide by the *pancha's* award. Should the Government refuse to accept the proposal for a *panch*, cultivators can decline to pay the revenue and let the Government collect it by auctioning their belongings. Before taking such a step, however, cultivators should consider the matter from every point of view.

1. Will they remain united?

2. Can they suffer their cattle, utensils and other household goods being auctioned?

3. Can they remain peaceful?

If all these three questions can be answered in the affirmative, they can, as explained above, ask for the appointment of a *panch* and, if this is not agreed to refuse to pay the revenue. The cultivators should also bear in mind that the Congress will be able to give them no assistance in this struggle which concerns them alone. They will have to rely on their own strength. They should have competent leaders among them. There should be no room for the slightest

[1] A board of arbitrators

dishonesty.

This for relief of the cultivators' local distress. If they wish to join the struggle for swaraj and Khilafat, they should be ready to suffer more. No questions about crop-assessment can be raised in this connection. Before joining the struggle, they should fully adopt swadeshi, persuade the women to do the same and do away with the evil of untouchability. Only then will they be held fit to offer civil disobedience.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-12-1921

108. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

SABARMATI,

December 11, 1921

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. If you are reterring to the amendments suggested by Mr. Jayakar[1], they are in my opinion destructive of the vital parts of our programme. To return to Government schools and law-courts is to rob non-violence of half its charm. But your letter leads one to hope that you are coming. In that event you will press your views. I would gladly agree to any amendment which may not destroy or mutilate the programme.

I wrote to you yesterday.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C. Vijayaraghavachariar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru

109. TELEGRAM TO HARILAL GANDHI[2]

[On or after *December 11, 1921*]

WELL DONE GOD BLESS YOU. RAMDAS[3], DEVDAS AND OTHERS

[1] M. R. Jayakar
[2] After his arrest on December 11; he was Gandhiji's eldest son.
[3] Gandhiji's third son

110. TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI[1]

[SABARMATI,
On or after *December 11, 1921*]

YOU MAY COURT ARREST AT ANY TIME.

BAPU

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 171

111. LETTER TO C. M. DOKE

SABARMATI,
December 13 [*1921*][2]

MY DEAR CLEMENT[3],

What a perfect delight to have had your letter! It has revived all the sweetest memories of pleasant companionship. Pray send my best love to mother, Olive[4], Willie[5] and Mrs. Evans.

I assure you I am doing nothing without prayer.

Mrs. Gandhi and Ramdas are with me. Devdas is in Allahabad. Harilal has just gone to prison in Calcutta as a civil resister. Manilal[6] is attending to *Indian Opinion* in South Africa.

Do please write occasionally.

With our regards to you and Mrs. Clement.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 744

[1] This was sent after the arrest of Harilal Gandhi.

[2] Judging from the references to Devdas and Harilal, this letter was evidently written in 1921.

[3] Son of Rev. J. J. Doke who was a close associate of Gandhiji in South Africa

[4] Daughter of Rev. Doke

[5] Eldest son of Rev. Doke

[6] Gandhiji's second son

112. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Tuesday, December 13, 1921

I have your letter. Hope you have recovered from the injuries you had received. At present, we must keep fit and be ready to receive Goddess Fortune's favour.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 41

113. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

Tuesday, [December13, 1921][1]

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I have your letter. Your volunteers should be of the very best. I would welcome Mr. Alam[2] being appointed captain. He is a competent person. But the most important thing is that we should have a man who can maintain peace. You should have a detailed talk with him. Speak to Dr. Mahmood too. He is a simple and straightforward person. We should secure the maximum help from him in everything we do.

The matter about the Parsees is now in their own hands.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Malaviyaji[3] *wants to see me again. He will be reaching there on the 17th. Ask him to come here. You should be here by the 22nd.*

[1] Literally, wait for Goddess Lakshmi to put the auspicious *tilak* on the forehead.

[1] From the contents; *vide* also Vol. XXI, p. 569.

[2] Dr. Mohamed Alam

[3] Madan Mohan Malaviya (1861-1946); foundder of the Benaras Hindu University, twice President of the Indian National Congress.

114. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA[1]

[On or after *December 14, 1921*]

PANDIT MALAVIYAJI

BENARES CITY

IMPOSSIBLE LEAVE AHMEDABAD. WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING HERE TWENTY-THIRD WILLS GLADLY ATTEND YOUR CONFERENCE IF YOU HOLD AHMEDABAD OR AFTER CONGRESS WHICH PLEASE ATTEND.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7715

115. NOTES

DESHBANDHU DAS[2]

Lord Reading[3] has been as good as his word. The highest in the land has not been immune from arrest.[4] Lord Ronaldshay[5] had perhaps given the public to understand that he would not he arrested till after the Congress and then too if he did not behave himself. But Lord Reading's threat was later than and therefore cancelled, the implied opinion of Lord Ronaldshay. Why should the President elect be left free if he enlisted volunteers and issued manifestos? There was no cessation in the activity for bringing about hartal on the day of the Prince's[6] arrival in Calcutta. It was some such reasoning, I suppose, that was applied in effecting the arrest of the President elect. His arrest was accompanied by that of other prominent workers. Maulana Abul

[1] This was in reply to Madan Mohan Malaviya's telegram of December 14, 1921 which read:"Thanks for telegram. Arriving Ashram eighteenth. Convening conference of representatives of all parties at Bombay on 22nd 23rd to consider what united action should be taken in present situation. Trust you attend. Wire".

[2] C. R. Das (1870-1925); lawyer, orator and author; President, Indian National Congress, 1922; founded the Swarajya Party in 1923

[3] Viceroy of India, 1921-26

[4] The reference is to the arrest of C. R. Das, the President elect of the Congress, on December 10, 1921

[5] Then Governor of Bengal

[6] The Prince of Wales, who was then on a tour of India

Kalam Azad[1], one of the most learned among Mussulman divines, Maulvi Akram Khan, Secretary of the Khilafat Committee, Mr. Sasmal, Secretary of the Provincial Congress Committee and Mr. Padmaraj Jain, who exercised influence over the Marwaris, were arrested with the President elect. This must be obviously to prevent hartal. These arrests mean that the authorities do not want to tolerate even quiet persuasion and canvassing. They want in fact a forcible opening of shops. They will not adopt the way of Colonel Johnson[2] and threaten to open the shops and put soldiers in charge, but they wish to influence the timid shopkeepers by arresting their leaders. The merchants of Calcutta have now a chance of showing their determination and independence by observing complete hartal in spite of the withdrawal of leaders. It is more necessary than ever for the people now to observe hartal on the 24th. The idea of making a demonstration has now become a subsidiary object. The honour of their leaders requires the people of Calcutta to observe a complete hartal. It will be a proof of their confidence in their leaders and proof also of the exercise of their own free will. I am hoping that the people of Calcutta will not fail to do their obvious duty on the 24th instant. And now that their leaders are withdrawn from them, every non-co-operator will constitute himself a leader for keeping the peace. They cannot do better than simply keep themselves at home on the 24th except volunteers whose duty it will be to protect from harm those who may choose to open their shops. I assume that both the Congress and the Khilafat Committees have elected fresh office-bearers. Our true test is certainly now. The assumption of leadership today is like the assumption of Lord Mayorship by the late MacSwiney[3]. It carries with it the liability for immediate imprisonment. If the nation is truly awakened, there should be a ceaseless flow of leaders and men and women to be led. Our supply must always be equal to the demand made upon us by the Government. We win when we have established

[1]1889-1958; Nationalist Muslim Congress leader; twice elected President of the Indian National Congress; Education Minister; Government of India

[2] Military officer in command of the Lahore area during the Martial Law in April and May, 1919

[3] Irish patriot and Lord Mayor of Cork. He died in 1920 after a 65-day fast unto death for the emancipation of Ireland.

sufficient credit for ourselves for being able to cope with the demand.

THE USE OF IT ALL

Let there be no doubt about the propriety of us all going to jail. If we are unable to meet the demand, let us be men enough to own that we are in a minority, and if we have faith in our programme, we must turn that minority into a majority not by preaching but by living up to our preaching. Let us realize the full force of the truth that an ounce of practice is worth tons of preaching. It is true economy to use all the resources we have instead of wasting time in acquiring fresh resources. The latter will come as we use what we have. Supposing, however, that we get no further response, let us rest assured that those who refuse to go to jail will find out their own way of work It will be at least sincere. That part of India which believes in non-co-operation by suffering will 1 done its full share. If we go to jail fifty times and get no addition to our numbers, I hope still to be able to say,"We must repeat the performance till we have impressed the whole of India with the truth of our way." That is the way of religion and no other. We want swaraj for men who love and would suffer for freedom. We want to support the Khilafat[1] through such men, for they only are true Hindus, true Mussulmans and true Sikhs.

THE SIMPLE BEAUTY OF IT

To understand the simplicity of our programme is to realize its true beauty. There is nothing more to be done but to spin and court imprisonment, and spin even in the prisons if they will let us. Whilst we are spinning or going to jail we must retain the correct attitude of mind, i.e., of non-violence and friendliness between the various faiths. If we cease to hate Englishmen, co-operators and those who do not see eye to eye with us, if we cease to distrust or fear one another and if we are determined to suffer and work for the bread of the whole nation, i.e., spin, do we not see that no power upon earth can withstand us? And if we believe in ourselves what matters it whether we are few or many, or whether we are arrested or shot? And surely in all I have said I have presented a programme not for perfect men but for practical men who are good, true and brave. If we cannot even become good, true and brave, have we any right to talk of swaraj or religion? Can we

[1] The Caliphate of Turkey. The object of the Khilafat movement was to ensure that the Sultan of Turkey was restored to the status which he enjoyed before World War I.

call ourselves Hindus, Mussulmans, Christians, Jews, Sikhs, Parsis? Have we any business, if we are not that, to be talking of Khilafat and the Punjab?

GOVERNMENT NON-CO-OPERATION

Therefore, if we believe in our programme, we must not mind if the Government non-co-operate with us in every particular. I hear from Mr. Rajagopalachari[1] and Agha Safdar[2] that they are not permitted to send full telegrams. It is a surprise to me that they permit the transmission of any telegrams at all or let us travel or meet each other. Having made up my mind to expect the worst, nothing that the Government does in the shape of curbing our activity surprises or irritates me. It is struggling for its very existence and I feel that I would have done much the same that this Government is doing if I was in its place. Probably I should do much worse.Why should we expect it to refrain from using the powers it has? Only we must find the means of living and carrying on our non-co-operation without its aid. We must keep our heads even if inter-provincial communication is denied to us. Having got our programme, each province must be able to carry on its own activity. Indeed, it may even be an advantage, for, in the event of communication being cut off, we should be unaffected by reverses in other provinces. Thus, for instance, the Punjab need not be affected by Gujarat weakening and surrendering body and soul to the Government or, say, Assam. going stark mad or becoming unexpectedly violent. Let not the reader fear any such possibility, for, Assam is keeping exceptionally sane in spite of grave provocation and Gujarat will give, I hope, a good account of itself in the near future. The Government of Bombay probably knows its business better than others. It has certainly greater forbearance and tact. It is giving the non-co-operators as long a rope as they want. And as the latter do want to be hanged if they do not get what they want, they are taking the longest rope. But that is by the way. Clouds no bigger than a man's hand have a knack of appearing in the Indian horizon and all of a sudden assuming dangerous dimensions. The point I wish to drive home is that we must prepare ourselves against and for all complications and never be baffled by them, certainly

[1] Chakravarti Rajagopalachari (b. 1879); statesman and first Indian Governor-General

[2] President, Punjab Provincial Congress Committee, after Lala Lajpat Rai's arrest on December 3, 1921

never be taken aback when the expected happens.

SLOW BUT SURE

If the luxury of wires be denied to us, we must manage with the post. If the postal communication be also stopped we must use messengers. Friends travelling to and from will oblige us. When the use of the railways is denied, we must use other methods of conveyance. No amount of slowness imposed fro without can checkmate us, if we are sure within."Rock of ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in Thee" is a prayer common to all religions. If we can but throw ourselves into His lap as our only Help, we shall come out scatheless through every ordeal that the Government may subject us to. If nothing happens without His permitting, where is the difficulty in believing that He is trying us even through this Government? I would take our complaints to Him and be angry with Him for so cruelly trying us. And He will soothe us and forgive us, if we will but trust Him. The way to stand erect before the tyrant is not to hate him, not to strike him but to humble ourselves before God and cry out to Him in the hour of our agony.

FROM AGHA SAFDAR

Here are two beautiful letters[1] from Agha Safdar showing how the brave Punjabis are being hampered and tried and proving themselves true, how the gallant Sikhs are defying the whole strength of the Government stupidly directed against its erstwhile noblest friends and supporters, and how all the Punjab leaders are working with one mind and how they are all keeping an unruffled temper in the midst of exceptional difficulty. But let the great and good Agha Saheb speak for himself and his proud though much afflicted Punjab:

I

> . . . You must have learnt through the Associated Press the circumstances under which the arrests were made. Lalaji[2] wished very much to abide by your wishes and not court arrest, but it could not be helped, and he, being the President of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee, could not stay away from the meeting. The meeting was called immediately after the orders were passed stopping public meetings and disbanding Volunteer Corps, . . .[3] The

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

[2] Lala Lajpat Rai (1865-1928); Nationalist leader of the Punjab

[3] Following the disturbances in Bombay on November 17, 1921,"Local Governments were . . . informed that for the purpose of checking the increasing

District Magistrate stopped the meeting labelling it as seditious, but as the order was illegal it was decided not to obey it.

Lalaji, Santanam[1], Gopichand[2] and Lal Khan are now in the Central Jail. They are happy and contented. Beddings and books were supplied to them hut they declined to take food from outside and are having the jail food.

The case is coming up for hearing on 7th December and it is said the trial is to take place under Sec. 145 I.P.C. . . .

The whole of the province is quiet and peaceful. We are laying stress upon khadi and boycott of *videshi*[3] cloth. . . .

Our *Khalsa*[4] friends are still busy holding public meetings at Amritsar but no further arrests are being made. Total arrests have been 21 out of whom 11 have already been convicted. Similar divans have commenced meeting in Lahore and so far one arrest has been made.

We are all trying our best to keep a non-violent atmosphere and have every hope to succeed, as people are gradually imbibing the spirit and are keeping under control even under provocative circumstances. . . .

II

I hope you have got my letter I wrote to you this morning. A public meeting was advertised at 4 p.m. in the Bradlaugh Hall which was to be presided over by S. Prem Singh Sodhbans. Strong police force with lathis and rifles surrounded the hall and all the approaches thereto by two noon and kept the guard till after 4 p.m. None was permitted to enter the premises. . . . S. Prem Singh arrived by 3.30 p.m. but was stopped by the police force and ordered to clear off by a European police officer. He turned round along with the crowd and held a meeting at some distance passing a resolution congratulating Lalaji and his comrades, and then dispersed the meeting. The whole affair ended quietly. . . . I have, however, just heard that a student was badly

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volume of inflammatory speeches the application of Seditious Meetings Act . . . would be sanctioned . . . also . . . Part II of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908 should he vigorously employed for combating the illegal activities of volunteer associations, whose drilling picketing and intimidation were threatening peace of the country. . . . The Government of India ... instructed the provincial administrations to deal promptly with incitements to violence to sedition, to the inception of civil disobedience." *India in* 1921-22

[1] K. Santanam; politician and lawyer; Secretary of the Sub-Committee appointed by the Congress to report on the Punjab disorders of 1919

[2] Dr. Gopichand Bhargava (b. 1890); entered politics under Lala Lajpat Rai; imprisoned during 1942-3; Chief Minister, Punjab

[3] Foreign

[4] Literally, pure. A name given to the Sikhs

beaten by a police constable and is lying in the hospital in a precarious state. Pandit Rambhaj Dutt has just gone out to see him.

Lalaji and others were interviewed in the jail yesterday. They are all keeping good spirits. Treatment accorded to them has not been exceptional. They are all kept in separate cells and are living on jail food. . . .

At Amritsar, I hear from Girdharilal, there has happened something untoward. Sikhs were peacefully holding their public meeting when all of a sudden a few sadhus appeared on the spot and began beating promiscuously with their iron sticks. The Sikhs remained non-violent and got a few persons injured. Simultaneously, with the advent of the sadhus there appeared the Deputy Commissioner along with police and military force on the spot. The Deputy Commissioner was permitted entrance. But the Sikh leader, Gyani Sher Singh, refused official intervention and declined any help from the Deputy Commissioner. The position is said to be well in hand and no further violence is reported.

. . . It is just reported that the student maltreated by the police is feeling well.

Nothing that I can add can enhance the beauty of the simple narrative given by the Agha Saheb. I have not altered a single word inthe two letters. I bow in reverence to Lalaji and his comrades who refused even whilst under trial anything but jail food, and I tender my congratulations to Sardar Prem Singh Sodhbans who conducted the meeting with such calm dignity in defiance of the magisterial order and in the face of the provoking presence of the police. I congratulate the young volunteer with his broken head. The serious affray at Amritsar must await separate treatment when full details are available. There seems little doubt that the Sikhs have behaved with wonderful courage and restraint:. When born fighters become non-violent, they exhibit courage of the highest order. The Sikhs have historical evidence of such exhibition in their midst. They are now repeating their own history. Let me hope and pray that they will carry out the instructions of Sardar Khadag Singh[1] to remain nonviolent to the end, to become simple in their tastes and wear only khadi.

IN THE ABSENCE OF PRESIDENT

The arrest of our President elect need not perturb us. His spirit will preside over our deliberations. We know what message he has for the country. He has become the living embodiment of it. We must elect some one to act for him out of the remnant that is permitted to

[1] A Congress leader of the Punjab

meet at the Congress. Certainly no Congress has ever met under happier auspices than this will. What seemed impossible has been rendered almost possible by the welcome repression of the Government. That many of the best of us are in jail is swaraj. I would call it the fullest swaraj if the Government simply invited every non-co-operator to offer himself on or before the 26th instant at the nearest police-station for arrest and imprisonment to be under custody till he has apologized for his non-cooperation or till the Govenment feels the necessity for repentance. I would forego the Congress in spite of Vallabhbhai Patel[1] and his devoted band working night and day to make the reception of the delegates and visitors worthy of the capital of Gujarat. For me any such order of the Government will be complete swaraj. It will be good for the Government to rid itself of non-co-operators and it will give the latter their heart's desire. Their formula is swaraj or jail. But in the absence of any such new year's gift from the Government, we may be certainly thankful for the smallmercies they have favoured us with. I give below the list of the biggest prisoners I could think of as having won. their spurs during the past few days:

LAHORE

Lala Lajpat Rai	Dr. Satyapal
K. Santanam	Dr. Gurbakshrai
Dr. Gopichand	S. E. Stokes
Malik Lal Khan	

AJMER

Maulana Mainuddin	Maulvi Abdulla
Mirza Abdul Kadir Beg	Sayed Abbas Ali
Hafiz Sultan Hasan	Maulvi Nuruddin
Maulvi Abdul Kadir Bodhari	

ALLAHABAD

Pandit Motilal Nehru	Maulana Sherar
Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru	N. Sherwani
Pandit Shyamlal Nehru	Kamaluddin Jafferi
Pandit Mohanlal Nehru	Ranendranath Basu

[1] 1875-1950; Congress leader from Gujarat; first Deputy Prime Minister of free India

Purushottamdas Tandon	George Joseph
Gaurishanker Mishra	K. B. Mathur
Pandit Kapildev Malaviya	

LUCKNOW

Harkaran Nath Mishra	Maulana Salamatullah
Chaudhary Khaliquzzaman	Mohanlal Saksena
Sheikh Mahomed Shaukatali	Dr. Lakshmisahai
Dr. Shiv Narain Saksena	Hakim Abdul Wali
Pandit Balmukund Vajpai	Lal Bahadur Shripati

BENGAL

C. R. Das	Jitendralal Banerji
Master C. R. Das	Maulana Abul Kalam Azad
Akram Khan	Padmaraj Jain
Sasmal	Maulana Abdul Muswir-Sylhe

DELHI

Shankarlal	Asaf Ali

ASSAM

T. R. Phooken	Kaladhar Chaliha
N. C. Bardolai	R. K. Chaudhary
Bishnu Ram Mehdi	Mahibuddin

MADRAS

Venkatasubbayya	Lakshminarasinham

I have given the names from memory. The list is not exhaustive, I know, but it may not be even fully representative. It is, however, sufficiently illustrative of the temper of the country. It is to me an eloquent demonstration of the fitness of the country for swaraj if my standard be accepted, viz., those who are prepared to suffer are the fittest for self-government.

BENGAL'S DUTY

Bengal's duty is clear. It has to return a fitting answer to the arrest of the President elect and other chosen leaders. The arrest of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad is an event of importance equal with the arrest of the President elect. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad has an all-India reputation, especially among the Mussulmans. He is a seasoned soldier having been interned for years in Ranchi. He stands

high in the ranks of the learned men of Islam. His arrest must sink deep in the hearts of the Mussulmans of India. What answer will the Hindus and Mussulmans of Bengal return? Action can only be answered by counter-action. We know what the answer should be. Will the thousands of Bengali Hindus and Bengali Mussulmans enrol themselves as volunteers and be arrested? Will Bengal wear only khadi or nothing? Will Bengali students give the answer that the President of the Congress expected from them in his moving appeal?

TRIUMPH OF NON-VIOLENCE

I take it for granted that the Hindus and Mussulmans of Calcutta in particular and Bengal in general will keep absolutely quiet. If the present calm is an index for the future, the evil done by Bombay has been almost entirely undone.[1] The lesson of Bombay has gone home. It must abide for all time. Let the young men of Calcutta rally round the leaders who are left. Let them not be impatient. Let them keep their heads cool and their hands on the spinning-wheel. Every non-co-operator must find himself and herself on the register of volunteers, and the list should be day after day published in the Press so as to make it easy for the Government to arrest whomsoever they choose. The splendid emotion of Bengal should be translated at this supreme juncture in our national history into cool energy of the highest order. No bluster, no fuss, no bravado. Only religious devotion to the cause and a fixed determination to do or die.

TO ALL CONGRESS OFFICIALS

I invite all Congress secretaries to send me a list of imprisonments to date and the appointment of new secretaries and chairmen in the place of those arrested, and send me, if need be, daily a diary of events in the same admirable manner that Agha Safdar has done. I would like them to be brief and to the point and write only on one side of the paper in a clear hand so as to enable me to print with ease what may he considered necessary.

ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

The eventful meeting of this Committee takes place on the 24th instant. On its decision will rest the future programme. Every member Who can will, I hope, attend the meeting. Every member will be

[1] The reference evidently is to the riots in Bombay on November 17, 1921 the day the Prince of Wales arrived there.

expected to give his own Independent opinion, To give one's opinion is to act according to it. No mechanical majority is of value at this moment of national history. If we vote for a particular programme we must have faith in it and we must be prepared to enforce it at the risk of our lives. 'We must widen the gates of prisons and we must enter them as a bridegroom enters the bride's chamber. Freedom is to be wooed only inside prison walls and sometimes on the gallows, never in the council chambers, courts or the schoolroom. Freedom is the most capricious jilt ever known to the world. She is the greatest temptress most difficult to please. No wonder she builds her temples in jails or on inaccessible heights and laughs at us as we attempt to scale the prison wall or (in the hope of reaching her temple on some Himalayan height) wade through hills and dales strewn with thorns. The members of the Committee must, therefore, come with a fixed purpose whatever it may be. It is well with us if not believing in courting imprisonment we own the fact: and suggest other remedies I would decline, if I was the only one, to give my vote for prisons, if I did not believe in them at this stage or any other. And I would vote, without faltering, for them if I believed in them and even though I had no supporter. No leisurely programme can meet the situation. We who are outside the prison walls have constituted ourselves trustees for those who are inside those life-giving walls and we best discharge our trust by imitating our principles and getting inside those walls, throwing the burden of the trust on our successors.

THE WORKING COMMITTEE

This outgoing Committee will meet for the last tune under most trying circumstances. Of the fifteen members Deshbandhu Das, Lala Lajpat Rai, Pandit Motilal Nehru[1] and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad who was just appointed at Delhi in the place of Maulana Mahomed Ali[2] will be absent being His Majesty's guests in some of those hotels called prisons. I, therefore, suggest that the provinces from which these patriots come should send one representative each a day earlier so that they may at least give the benefit of their advice to the Committee although they may not vote thereat. I would suggest to the other provinces also which are not directly represented on the Committee to

[1] 1861-1931; lawyer and politician; twice President of the Indian National Congress

[2] 1878-1931; brother of Shaukat Ali and a prominent leader of the Khilafat movement

send one representative each to guide the deliberations of the Committee.

WINTER IN AHMEDABAD

Friends have asked me to draw the attention of delegates and visitors to the fact that the climate is not quite so mild as in Bombay nor so severe as in Delhi or Amritsar. It is necessary for them to bring a moderate supply of winter clothing. As chairs have been dispensed with in the Congress *pandal*[1], delegates will be supplied with khadi bags at a nominal price to keep their shoes in, but it is open to them to bring their own bags. It will be most inadvisable to leave shoes outside the *pandal* and after much deliberation the Reception Committee has decided not to make any arrangements for taking custody of the shoes of those who wish to leave them outside. At the Khilafat Conferences it is usual for people to carry their shoes in pieces of paper or otherwise. The bags are a most convenient and useful contrivance to meet the difficulty. The Reception Committee is making elaborate preparations for electric lighting, water-pipes and latrines so that the health and comforts of delegates may be as fully conserved as is possible in the circumstances. But I must not anticipate the comforts or discomforts that are being provided by the Reception Committee.

RESIGNATIONS

One reads in the papers lists of resignations by Government servants in all Departments. A copy of one such resignation has been sent to me from Belgaum. The Head Clerk to the Assistant Director of Public Health has tendered his resignation as a protest against the conviction of Gangadharrao Deshpande[2], the leaderof Karnatak. In his resignation he described his own personal grievance but that was not sufficient inducement for him to leave Government service. In Assam quite a number of pleaders have suspended practice as a protest against the repressive policy of the local Government. I trust that these instances of resignations and suspensions will multiply.

A CROP OF DIFFICULTIES

A Bihar correspondent, who gives his name, writes as follows:[3]

[1] covered enclosure erected for special occasions
[2] Prominent politician, known as the"Lion of Karnatak"
[3] Only excerpts reproduced here

> . . . I had sided with non-co-operation with the full belief that it was religiously compulsory upon every Muslim. I never deceived myself with any hope of India's regeneration through non-co-operation. . . . I do not mean that I consider non-co-operation to be less effective but I do most strongly say that our countrymen are not capable of adhering to it with perfect non-violence. . . . I think the morale of the country has so far deteriorated that it is beyond possibility that our present generation can effectively practise non-co-operation with non-violence. Is it not strange that a responsible leader like yourself could shut his eyes to this apparent and abject condition of things?
>
> . . . after so much evidence of failures, why do you still stick to dating the advent of swaraj by months? If it was only to rouse the teeming masses, I am afraid the idea was not well conceived as is clear from recent happenings. To give out absurd hopes is nothing but playing with people's passion.
>
> . . . Let us first train the countrymen and then mareh them to do battle. We have begun the fight with bad soldiers. . . .
>
> I should like to hear through *Young India* your views.

He is a well-known Bihari. There is no doubt about his honesty. I, therefore, gladly respond to his suggestion to give a public reply to his letter. Though non-co-operation was, in the first instance, conceived in connection with the Khilafat, neither I nor my first associates ever thought that non-co-operation with the British Government involved any sacrifice whatsoever of the country's interests. On the contrary, we believed that if we could compel surrender to the just demands of the Mussulmans of India regarding the Khilafat, we could also compel surrender in the matter of the Punjab and, consequently, in the matter of swaraj. Non-violence was believed from the very commencement to be an integral part of non-co-operation, and if the former failed the latter failed *ipso facto*. Indeed the recent happenings have furnished abundant proof of the progress of non-violence. They show, I hope conclusively, that Bombay's aberration was an isolated instance in no way symptomatic of the general condition of the country. A year ago, it would have been impossible for the Government to arrest so many leaders of the front rank in so many parts of the country leaving the people absolutely self-controlled. It would be a mistake to suppose that it is the machine gun which has kept all the people under restraint. No doubt it has its share, but he who runs may see that there are hundreds, if not thousands, of people in India today to whom machine-guns have ceased to be a terror. Nor can I subscribe to the doctrine that the

country has suffered deterioration. On the contrary, every province can demonstrate the marvellous revolution brought about by this movement of purification in the lives of people. A distinguished Mussulman friend was telling me only the other day how the younger generation of Mussulmans was reclaimed from a life of indolent and atheistical luxury to one of religious simplicity and industry.

We are certainly in a hurry to get swaraj. Who can help it? Were the Moplahs in the death wagon in a hurry when in their asphyxiated state they were crying out for a breath of fresh air and a drink of water?[1] The death wagon of foreign domination in which we are suffering from moral asphyxiation is infinitely worse than the Moplah death wagon. And the wonder is that all these long years we have not felt the want of the oxygen of liberty. But having known our state, is it not most natural for us to cry out for the fresh air of swaraj? I am unable to accept any blame for having set the time-limit. I would have been wrong not to do so, knowing as I did that if the people fulfilled the conditions which were capable of easy fulfilment, swaraj was a certainty inside of twelve months. If the atmosphere of non-violence is truly established, I make bold to say that we shall achieve the substance even during the remaining days of this year, though we might have to wait for the form yet a while. The time-limit was not fixed in order to rouse the teeming millions, but it was fixed in order to rivet the attention of Congressmen and Congresswomen on their sense of immediate duty and on the grand consequence of its fulfilment. Without the time-limit we would not have collected the crore nor would we have introduced so many spinning-wheels, no manufactured thousands of rupees worth of hand-spun khadi anddistributed lakhs amongst the poorest workers in the country. It is not a sign of bad soldiery to find Bengal, the United Provinces, and the Punjab supplying prisoners as fast as Government can take them. And, when the word is passed round the other provinces for repression of a violent type, I doubt not that they will shine just as brilliantly as the three fortunate ones I have mentioned.

SOME PROOFS

The following letter[2] from the surviving Secretary of the U.P.

[1] The Moplahs, Muslims settled in Malabar, rose in revolt in August 1921 and looted Hindus and committed arson and murder. On November 19, about 70 Moplahs died of asphyxiation while being conveyed by train to Bellary for imprisonment.

[2] Only excerpts reproduced here

Provincial Congress Committee, Mr. Jiaram Saksena, speaks for itself:

> Of all the local office-bearers of the U.P. Provincial Congress Committee, I am the only unfortunate Secretary who is yet out of jail. It has, therefore, fallen to my lot to inform you of what has recently happened here.
>
> The Provincial Congress Committee office was searched at about midnight and the registers of the U.P. Congress Committee, Executive Council and other subordinate bodies were taken away by the Deputy Superintendent of Police who conducted the seareh. Besides, the Khilafat Committee office and the houses of the gentlemen arrested were searched.
>
> We have now started civil disobedience in Allahabad in an organized and systematic form. National Volunteers are being briskly recruited. . . . Yesterday a batch of a dozen volunteers was sent out for a round in the city with national badges on their arms, singing patriotic songs. . . . none was taken in custody. . . . Today the same batch with another of a dozen volunteers paraded the town. . . . No arrests took place today. . . .

Of equal value is the following from a Lahore correspondent:[2]

> The general atmosphere is very good. People are fearless and non-violent. The City Congress Committees are sending out volunteers to hold meetings in different parts of the town at the same hour, to read out the same written speech, and to sing the same song and disperse within ten or fifteen minutes. Yesterday (the 8th instant) twenty such meetings were held in twenty centres . . . Fear of arrest or the jail is gone.

Surely, this is a record of which any country would be proud.

LEST WE FORGET

The same Lahore correspondent, however, regretfully mentions that the khadi movement has suffered a set-back and that khadi is not so much in evidence in Lahore as it used to be some time ago. If this is so, it is a bad sign. A mere filling of the jails will not answer the whole purpose. If India does not return to swadeshi, no amount of going to jail will make her self-contained or fill the mouths of the hungry millions. Without the four vital parts of the programme, which are meant not for particular classes but for all, we cannot establish swaraj. The reader must not be tired of my repetition of them: Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Parsi, Christian, Jew unity; swadeshi, i.e., manufacture and use of hand-spun khadi to the exclusion of all foreign cloth; removal of untouchability by Hindus; and observance of non-violence by all. These are like the four posts of a bedstead. Remove one of them and it cannot stand.

BAN ON KHADI CAP

A friend has sent me papers in connection with a tussle that a local pleader is having with a Sub-Judge of Devrukh in the District of Ratnagiri over his khadi cap. Mr. J.V. Vaidya, the local pleader in question, had the following order passed against him by the Sub-Judge:

> Mr. Vaidya has appeared in Court today in a khadi cap, commonly known as the"Gandhi cap". In conformity with the views of the High Court as expressed in the recent letter of the Chief Justice addressed to the District Judge, Ratnagiri, extract of which was forwarded to the Devrukh Bar, I have told Mr. Vaidya that I consider his appearance today in a khadi cap as amounting to disrespect of the Court and have ordered him to leave the Court at once and not to appear again before this Court in a cap unless and until the District Judge or the High Court directs otherwise. I have also warned him that if he appears in a cap after this order, he will expose himself to all the consequences of a contempt of Court. A copy of the statement of Mr. Vaidya and of this order will be forwarded to the District Judge for such action as he may deem fit to take in the matter.

The following is a copy of the extracts from the Chief Justice's letter for communication to the Bar:

> The High Court is decidedly against the wearing of Gandhi caps in Court by pleaders and would consider any pleader wearing a Gandhi cap in Court as guilty of disrespect to the Judge.
>
> We hope that the good sense of the pleaders will prevail provided they know what the views of the High Court are.
>
> No pleader should appear in Court if he wears any head-dress except a turban.
>
> Please inform these pleaders that the High Court strongly disapproves of their conduct.

To this the Sub-Judge appended the following hope:

> The undersigned hopes that the pleaders will conform to the views of the High Court herein expressed and that there would be no occasion for the undersigned to enforce them in this Court.

Side by side with a discussion of matters of urgency, I do not hesitate to occupy the space at my disposal for discussion of an order which affects only a few pleaders. But the principle underlying this war against khadi caps is of the highest importance. It shows how innocent but moral and economic movements are attempted to be killed by their adversaries. Surely, the Chief Justice outside his official position could not possibly take exception to a headgear which is

accepted as respectable by thousands of men all over India occupying a high station in life. Nor do pleaders who adopt the national cap do so out of any disrespect for the Court, but they do it out or respect for themselves and the nation to which they belong. They do it because they do not wish to conceal their religion or their politics, whichever way one regards the adoption of the khadi cap. A man who does not respect himself becomes menial. Are pleaders menials or officers of the High Courts? Custodians as they claim to be of the people's liberty, are their to submit to a deprivation of their own? I understand that Mr. Vaidya has decided to give up his practice, if he cannot carry it on with dignity and self-respect. He has, therefore, lodged a protest against the order, ceased to appear before the Sub-Judge till the matter is decided in his favour. And I learn further that the other members of the local Bar are also conferring among themselves as to the steps to be taken for vindicating their honour and freedom of action in the matter of dress. One does hope that when pleaders are unable to suspend practice or students to withdraw from Government schools and colleges, they will at least put up a brave fight in order to sustain their own personal honour even as the medical students of Vizagapatam have done.

KRIPALANI AND CO.

A telegram has been received from Banaras advising me that Professor Kripalani[1] and fifteen members of his Ashram have beenarrested. The sacrifice of the innocents is proceeding apace. Professor Kripalani is an educationist who has identified himself with his pupils. He has a number of devoted pupils whose character has been transformed by his touch. He implicitly believes in non-violence to which he has come by laborious processes. He has been devoting his own and his pupils' energy to the development of the constructive side of swadeshi, and has been conducting an ideal institution in Banaras. He had reduced his wants to the barest necessaries of life and has been living with his pupils sharing with them the drudgery of the institution as also its privileges which mainly consist in his own inspiring company to his pupils. I have no advice as yet as to why he and fifteen of his pupils have been arrested. I dare say it is for

[1] Acharya J. B. Kripalani (b. 1888); took part in Champaran and Non-co-operation movements; Lecturer, Benares Hindu University, 1918-20; started Gandhi Ashram for khadi and village work in 1920; Principal, Gujarat Vidyapith, 1922-7; President, Indian National Congress, 1946

volunteering. For, he is not the man to shirk danger. Anyway, he has led the way for other such institutions. Let the purest-minded become volunteers and be imprisoned. The instruction of the Working Committee in this matter must be strictly followed. The purest-minded alone are fit to go to jail as civil resisters and no other. If we have been lax hitherto, let us be rigorously strict in our selection. I fervently hope that those who have not clean minds or who do not believe in non-violence or swadeshi or any vital part of non-co-operation, will refrain from applying. They will serve by their abstention.

SWORD-STICKS

Whilst considering the question of selection of volunteers, I was grieved to learn that there were places in Calcutta in which sword-sticks and such other weapons were found. Soldiers of non-violence should have neither sticks nor swords. We must eschew every symbol of violence whilst our weapon is non-violence. As Chhotani Mian[1] in his manifesto very properly says, we must not even think of violence.

IRELAND AND INDIA

Lord Reading has flung Ireland in our faces. Let us contemplate for a moment that romantic nation. I would like the reader to believe with me that it is not the blood that the Irishmen have taken which has given them what appears to be their liberty. But it is the gallons of blood that they have willingly given themselves. It is not the fear of losing more lives that has compelled a reluctant offer from England but it is the shame of any further imposition of agony upon a people that loves its liberty above everything else. It is themagnitude of the Irish sacrifice which has been the deciding factor. The late President Kruger[2], when with a handful of his undisciplined countrymen he hurled his ultimatum against the British Empire, said he would stagger humanity. He meant that he would sacrifice every Boer man, woman and child and leave not a single Boer heart to subdue, but he would gladly let Englishmen roam about the desert soil of South Africa dyed with the blood of the Boer martyrs. And England yielded when she was tired of concentration camps in which Boer women and children died like flies, and then she was choked with the bloody feast that the Boers had provided for her. And even so has Ireland been staggering

[1] A Nationalist Muslim leader of Bombay

[2] 1825-1904; President of the Transvaal, 1883-1900

humanity for many a long year. And England has yielded when she is able no longer to bear the sight of blood pouring out of thousands of Irish arteries. I know for certain that it is not legal subtleties, discussions on academic justice or resolutions of councils and assemblies that will give us what we want. We shall have to stagger humanity even as South Africa and Ireland have been obliged to. Only instead of repeating South African and Irish histories non-co-operators are learning from the living examples of these two nations the art of spilling their own blood without spilling that of their opponents. If they could do that, they could attain swaraj within a few days or a few months. But if they want slavishly to follow South Africa and Ireland, Heaven help India. Then there is no swaraj during the present generation. And I know that the swaraj promised by Mr. Montagu[1], no matter how well-intentioned he may be, will turn out to be a delusion and a snare. Councils are no factories for making stout hearts. And freedom is miasma without stout hearts to defend it.

WHAT IS SWARAJ?

The Times of India questions whether I have any clear notion of swaraj. If the writer will go through the back numbers of *Young India*, he will find a complete answer to the question. But I may mention here briefly that the least that swaraj means is a settlement with the Government in accordance with the wishes of the chosen representatives of the people. Therefore, the Congress representatives, if they can make good their claim by providing an inexhaustible supply of prisoners, will have a determining voice in any settlement that may be made. Swaraj, therefore, means the capacity of the people of India to enforce their demands. I totally dissent from the Viceroy's view that swaraj must come from the BritishParliament, unless it comes through the sword. The British Parliament will only ratify the people's wish when the"sword" has made it irresistible. Non-co-operators are trying to use the sword of self-sacrifice in preference to that of steel. India's soul is pitted against British steel. We shall not have to wait long to know what popular swaraj is.

WORK IN JAILS

An esteemed friend asks me whether, now that the Government have provided an opportunity for hundreds to find themselves

[1] E. S. Montagu (1879-1924); Secretary of State for India, 1917-22 and co-sponsor of Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms

imprisoned and as thousands are responding, it would not be better for the prisoners to refuse to do any work in the jails at all. I am afraid that suggestion comes from a misapprehension of the moral position. We are not out to abolish jails as an institution. Even under swaraj we would have our jails. Our civil disobedience, therefore, must not be carried beyond the point of breaking the unmoral laws of the country. Breach of the laws to be civil assumes the strictest and willing obedience to the jail discipline because disobedience of a particular rule assumes a willing acceptance of the sanction provided for its breach. And immediately a person quarrels both with the rule and the sanction for its breach, he ceases to be civil and lends himself to the precipitation of chaos and anarchy. A civil resister is, if one may be permitted such a claim for him, a philanthropist and a friend of the State. An anarchist is an enemy of the State and is, therefore, a misanthrope. I have permitted myself to use the language of war because the so-called constitutional method has become so utterly ineffective. But I hold the opinion firmly that civil disobedience is the purest type of constitutional agitation. Of course it becomes degrading and despicable if its civil, i.e., non-violent character is a mere camouflage. If the honesty of non-violence be admitted, there is no warrant for condemnation even of the fiercest disobedience because of the likelihood of its leading to violence. No big or swift movement can be carried on without bold risks and life will not be worth living if it is not attended with large risks. Does not the history of the world show that there would have been no romance in life if there had been no risks? It is the clearest proof of a degenerate atmosphere that one finds respectable people, leaders of society raising their hands in horror and indignation at the slightest approach of danger or upon an outbreak of any violent commotion. We do want to drive out the beast in man, but we do not want on that account to emasculate him. And in the process of finding his own status, the beast in him is bound now and again to put up his ugly appearance. As I have often stated in these pages what strikes me down is not the sight of blood under every conceivable circumstance. It is blood spilt by the non-cooperator or his supporters in breach of his declared pledge which paralyses me, as I know it ought to paralyse every honest non-co-operator.

Therefore, to revert to the original argument, as civil resisters we are bound to guard against universal indiscipline. Jail discipline must be submitted to until jail Government itself becomes or is felt to be

corrupt and immoral. But deprivation of comfort, imposition of restriction and such other inconveniences do not make jail Government corrupt. It becomes that when prisoners are humiliated or treated with inhumanity as when they are kept in filthy dens or are given food unfit for human consumption. Indeed, I hope that the conduct of non-co-operators in the jail will be strictly correct, dignified and yet submissive. We must not regard jailers and warders as our enemies but as fellow human beings not utterly devoid of the human touch. Our gentlemanly behaviour is bound to disarm all suspicion or bitterness. I know that this path of discipline on the one hand and fierce defiance on the other is a very difficult path, but there is no royal road to swaraj. The country has deliberately chosen the narrow and the straight path. Like a straight line it is the shortest distance. But even as you require a steady and experienced hand to draw a straight line, so are steadiness of discipline and firmness of purpose absolutely necessary if we are to walk along the chosen path with an unerring step.

I am painfully conscious of the fact that it is not going to be a bed of roses for any of the civil resisters. And my head reels and the heart throbs when I recall the lives of Motilal Nehru and C. R. Das in their palatial rooms surrounded by numerous willing attendants and by every comfort and convenience that money can buy and when I think of what is in store for them inside the cold unattractive prison walls where they will have to listen to the clanking of the prisoner's chains in the place of the sweet music of their drawing-rooms. But I steel my heart with the thought that it is the sacrifice of just such heroes that will usher in swaraj. The noblest of South Africans, Canadians, Englishmen, Frenchmen, Germans have had to undergo much greater sacrifices than we have mapped out for ourselves.

AGHA SAHEB SAFDAR

No telegram but a letter has been just received that the Agha Saheb was arrested at Sialkot on the 10th instant whilst he was on a flying visit there. He was followed by a dense crowd. The Agha Saheb refused to be arrested unless there was a warrant or he was forced. At last the Magistrate had to come and order his arrest. The Agha Saheb obeyed this cheerfully though the Magistrate was not able to say why he was being arrested. As soon as the jail gates were opened, some of the crowd rushed in and asked to be arrested also together with the Agha Saheb. These intruders were naturally driven out. My

correspondent tells me-also that the Magistrate was insulted by the crowd. I congratulate the Agha Saheb but I cannot congratulate the crowd which had no business to follow the Agha Saheb. Those who entered the jail were guilty of misbehaviour in terms of the pledge of non-violence and those who insulted the Magistrate damaged the cause which they sought to espouse and were guilty not only of a breach of their pledge but of cowardice. The police party, I understand, was small. The officer in charge, I understand, behaved courteously. Probably relying upon our non-violence, the Magistrate was insufficiently protected. I warn the non-co-operators that any deviation from our pledge will postpone the advent of swaraj, which seems to be rushing towards us."non-violence in thought, word or deed" must be our motto.

I understand that the Agha Saheb appointed Lala Dunichand as his successor[1] in office. I wish the new President the same good luck that has blessed Agha Safdar Saheb.

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116. WOMEN'S PART

The women of Calcutta have obstructed the gentlemen of Calcutta by trying to sell khadi and a telegram in the newspapers has announced that they have been consequently arrested[2]. The company includes the devoted partner of the President elect[3], his widowed sister and his niece.[4] I had hoped that in the initial stages, at any rate, women would be spared the honour of going to jail. They were not to become aggressive civil resisters. But the Bengal Government, in their impartial zeal to make no distinction even of sex, have conferred the honour upon three women of Calcutta. I hope that the whole country will welcome this innovation. The women of India should have as much share in winning swaraj as men. Probably in this peaceful struggle woman can outdistance man by many a mile. We know that she is any day superior to man in her religious devotion. Silent and dignified suffering is the badge of her sex. And now that the Government of Bengal have dragged the woman into the line of fire, I hope that the women all over India will take up the challenge

[1] As President, Punjab Provincial Congress Committee
[2] On December 7, 1921, or. a charge of obstructing the highway
[3] C. R. Das
[4] They were released subsequently.

and organize themselves. In any case, they were bound, when a sufficient number of men had been removed, for the honour of their sex to step into their places. But now let it be side by side with men in sharing the hardships of jail life. God will protect their honour. When, as if to mock man, her natural protectors became helpless to prevent Draupadi[1] from being denuded of her last piece of cloth, the power of her own virtue preserved her honour. And so will it be to the end of time. Even the weakest physically have been given the ability to protect their own honour. Let it be man's privilege to protect woman, but let no woman of India feel helpless in the absence of man or in the event of his failing to perform the sacred duty of protecting her. One who knows how to die need never fear any harm to her or his honour.

I would suggest to the women of India quietly but without loss of time to collect names of those who are ready to enter the line of fire. Let them send their offer to the women of Bengal and let the latter feel that their sisters elsewhere are ready to follow their noble example. It is likely that there will not be many forthcoming to brave the risks of a jail life and all it must mean to women. The nation will have no cause to be ashamed if only a few offer themselves for sacrifice in the first instance.

Men's duty is clear. We must not lose our heads. Excitement will not protect our women or our country. We have asked Govarnment neither to spare women nor children. It certainly did not in the Punjab during those martial law days. I consider it decidedly more civilized that the officials in Calcutta should under a legal pretence arrest our sisters in Calcutta for what they consider is a crime than that a Bosworth Smith in the Punjab should spit upon, swear at and otherwise humiliate the women of Manianwala.[2] We did not offer our women to be insulted thus wise. But we do offer our women for imprisonment if they will arrest them in the prosecution of public service. We must not expect the Government to look on with indifference whilst the women are spreading the gospel of swadeshi and undermining the very basis of its existence— its traffic in foreign cloth and the consequent ability to exploit India's resources. If, therefore, we men allow our sisters to take part in the swadeshi

[1] Heroine of the *Mahabharata*; admired for her dauntless spirit

[2] *Vide*"Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders", On or Before March 25, 1920.

agitation, we must concede the right of the Government to imprison them equally with men.

We must, therefore, control our anger. It will be cowardly to challenge a duel and then swear at the adversary for taking up the challenge. Men must fill the jails. Men must prove to the Government that the awakening is not confined to a few men but it has permeated the masses, that the spirit of non-violence possesses not merely a select number but that it possesses the best part of India. We must show by our conduct that the sudden eruption was an exception and not a symptom of a general disease. And now, when the cause for irritation is almost the greatest, is the time for showing the greatest forbearance and self-restraint. I modify the adjective by using an adverb before it. For, I do not think that the greatest irritation has yet been offered. I can conceive occasions which may cause irritation to the straining point. If we are to gain freedom and vindicate the honour of the Khilafat and the Punjab, we must pay a much higher price and not lose equanimity in the midst of the greatest possible irritation. Let us prepare for the worst and give credit to the Government for decency by expecting the least. Let us acknowledge frankly that in most cases they are obeying the laws of war by being courteous. If they handcuffed Pir Badshah Mian and Dr. Suresh Banerjee, they have not done so in the case of the Ali Brothers, Lala Lajpat Rai, Maulana Mohiuddin or Pandit Motilal Nehru. Nor would I quarrel with handcuffing if they imposed it on all. It is a jail regulation to handcuff a prisoner. I should certainly have loved to travel to Allahabad to see Pandit Motilal Nehru and his son being handcuffed together and made to walk to their destination. I would have loved to watch the radiant smiles on their faces in the consciousness of their handcuffs hastening the advent of swaraj. But the Government did not provide any such treat. What I do not expect, what I do not want for the sake of man's dignity, is a repetition of the petty and degrading insults of the Punjab or the unthinkable inhumanities of the Moplah death wagon. But non-co-operators have stipulated for no such immunity. We have conceived the possibility of the worst happening, and under a full sense of our responsibility pledged ourselves to remain non-violent. Swaraj is within our grasp; let it not step away from us by self-forgetfulness.

With leaders in jails, there should be hartals wherever the Prince goes. No meetings are necessary to organize them. The people have sufficient training for spontaneous action. Let the Government realize that it was not force but willing response that brought about hartals. There must be nowhere any unauthorized or ill-conceived civil disobedience. Every forward step must be taken with the greatest

deliberation and calmness. The people can discuss things in their own homes. The merchants meet a thousand times for business. They may easily discuss and decide matters arising out of the situation as it develops hourly. But whilst I would like hartals to follow the Prince, I would take no risk of violence and would not countenance the slightest exercise of force or threat of it. Absence of prescribed hartal would somewhat discredit us, but an outbreak of violence would retard our progress and may even indefinitely postpone swaraj.

I hope, too, that every vacancy in the ranks of delegates will be filled and that there will be a full attendance at the Congress of members who will have made up their minds as to what they want and how they will have it.

Whilst this was being printed, advice was received that the three ladies were discharged after a few hours' detention. Nevertheless, I allow the writing to go to the public as the argument holds good in the main. I observe, too, that the ladies have been discharged with a caution.

Young India, 15-12-1921

117. FROM LALA LAJPAT RAI

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I am writing this to you so early as, in all probability, I will be arrested by this evening. I am sorry I may look to have disregarded your wishes but the circumstances are such as leave me no alternative. We have called a meeting of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee for today at 2 p.m. The Deputy Commissioner calls it a public meeting. . . . Most probably he will prohibit the meeting. He has also served us with a notice calling *ward meetings* of ward Congress Committees also public. This means an entire stoppage of work. His orders are illegal. . . .

Under the circumstances, it is impossible for me to keep away from the meeting. It will be sheer cowardice. Please pardon me if my action does not meet with your approval . . . . Rest assured I will not bring disgrace on your movement. Pardon me if I have ever seemed to be critical and distrustful. In all my actions only one motive has been uppermost in my thoughts, viz., that of loyalty to my country and my people. If I have erred, I have erred in good faith. Even in my criticisms of my Moderate friends I have no other motive. . .

The Sikh non-co-operators have set a noble example. . . . The Sikh community has so far kept its temper admirably well in spite of the provocations given. Most of the arrests have been made in the presence of hundreds and thousands. . . . Our Sikh friends deserve all the praise one can bestow on brave, noble, sufferers in the cause of truth.

We have selected Agha Safdar as my successor in the office of the

President, Provincial Congress Committee and I have in consultation drawn up a programme for immediate action. . . .

Mr. Stokes was this morning arrested.[1]

Your devoted comrade,

LAJPAT RAI

December 3, 1921

7 a.m.

The reader will appreciate my sharing the foregoing[2] with him. It is remarkable how every leader has made complete arrangements in anticipation of going to jail. Of course Lalaji could not have acted otherwise than he did. I was anxious for him, if it was naturally possible, not to seek arrest till after the Congress[3]. But in the circumstances that faced him, he could not avoid attending the meeting without hurting the cause. A general ceases to be a general when he shirks battle that is offered to him. In every action of Lalaji I see nothing but thoughtfulness and calm courage. I fully endorse Lalaji's tribute to the Sikhs. Their resolute behaviour, their religious fervour, their calmness and their suffering command my highest admiration. One sees in everything that is happening in the country the throes of a new birth. May God grant that no hasty action, no outbreak of violence impedes our unmistakable progress towards our destined goal!

Young India, 15-12-1921

118. CHRISTIANS AND SWARAJ

THE EDITOR, *Young India*

SIR,

At this time when there is so much questioning about the attitude Of Indian Christians towards swaraj, I, as a representative of a large class of thinking Christians, should like to draw the attention of your readers to certain important facts with which very few of our Hindu and Muslim compatriots are acquainted.

Let me, in the first place, point out clearly that the so-called Indian

[1] *Vide*"Notes", 8-12-1921, Under Sub-title"Reward of Adoption".

[2] Only excerpts reproduced here

[3] Which was to be held at Ahmedabad towards the end of December 1921

Christians are a community built up very largely by peoples in the West. . . . The two agencies which have completed the work of denationalizing the Christian church in India have been: (i) the Western missionary societies, (ii) our own Hindu and Muslim brethren. . . . Our Hindu and Muslim relations ... ostracized and boycotted us. . . . on our adopting a different religion. . . .

Through the influence of missionaries, Indian Christians adopted English ways of dress and living which instilled in them a sense of their own importance and completely destroyed the last germ of patriotism and national zeal. . . . God's name be praised that in spite of the missionaries' efforts to keep us down, a real awakening has, after all, come upon our community, and with growing means of education and prosperity a real sense of devotion to our motherland is also fast developing. . . . You will find that some Indian Christians are even worse Anglo-Indians in their views than many Europeans and Anglo-Indians themselves. But if you are true Indians, be patient with such . . . befriend them and prove to them that all Indians, whether they be Hindus, Muslims, Parsis or Christians, are the sons and daughters of the self-same mother and so true brothers and true sisters. . . . Assure your Christian brethren of your real love for them and you will find that the Christian Indian, when he is once inspired with the love of his country, will lay down his very life in her service and shed his very blood in her noble fight for freedom.

I am, etc.,

A CHRISTIAN SON OF MOTHER INDIA

I publish this letter[1] with the omission of two passages of personal reference because of the appeal made to Hindus and Mussulmans. I do not like the unqualified reference to the European missionaries. Though much of what the writer says regarding them is true, there are many European missionaries who are not anti-Indian or anti-Hindu or anti-Muslim. The task before nationalists is clear. They have to win over by their genuine love all minorities including Englishmen. Indian nationalism if it is to remain non-violent, cannot be exclusive.

Young India, 15-12-1921

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

119. OF SPINNING-WHEELS

THE EDITOR, *Young India*

SIR,

The District Congress Committee has no expert spinner appointed whom they can and should consult about the charkha to be selected for introducing to the public. . . .

Most of the workers have yet to realize that a thin spindle with revolutions over 150 to one of the wheel is necessary for turning out good weavable yarn.

The charkha recommended in *Young India* is taken as a pattern in some places, but the revolutions of the spindle (which is generally at least half an inch in diameter) being lower than 40 increase the time as it is necessary after drawing out a length of yarn to turn the wheel so many times to ensure the proper twist.

The result of all this is seen in the number of charkhas Iying idle or producing yarn which is refused by weavers being undertwisted and uneven. . . . if the Committee is going to spend the major portion of the Tilak Swaraj Fund on this item, it must lay down a clear stipulation when giving the money, that every District body thus supplied with money must have an expert spinner . . .

Yours etc.,

(DR.) A. K. NULKAR

November 21, 1921 VICE-PRESIDENT, EAST KHANDESH DISTRICT CONGRESS COMMITTEE

I gladly publish the foregoing[1] to stimulate interest in the matter of improvement in the existing spinning-wheels and to show what keen interest educated men are taking in hand-spinning. I commend Dr. Nulkar's example for emulation.

Young India, 15-12-1921

[1] O nly excerpts reproduced here

120. A PUZZLE AND ITS SOLUTION[1]

Lord Reading is puzzled and perplexed. Speaking in reply to the addresses from the British Indian Association and the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce at Calcutta, His Excellency said:

> I confess that when I contemplate the activities of a section of the community, I find myself still, notwithstanding persistent study ever since I have been in India, puzzled and perplexed. I ask myself what purpose is served by flagrant breaches of the law for the purpose of challenging the Government and in order to compel arrest.

The answer was partly given by Pandit Motilal Nehru when he said on being arrested[2] that he was being taken to the house of freedom. We seek arrest because the so-called freedom is slavery. We are challenging the might of this Government because we consider its activity to be wholly evil. We want to overthrow the Government. We want to compel its submission to the people's will. We desire to show that the Government exists to serve the people, not the people the Government. Free life under the Government has become intolerable, for the price exacted for the retention of freedom is unconscionably great. Whether we are one or many, we must refuse to purchase freedom at the cost of our self-respect or our cherished convictions. I have known even little children become unbending when an attempt has been made to cross their declared purpose, be it ever so flimsy in the estimation of their parents.

Lord Reading must clearly understand that the non-co-operators are at war with the Government. They have declared rebellion against it inasmuch as it has committed a breach of faith with the Mussulmans, it has humiliated the Punjab and it insists upon imposing its will upon the people and refuses to repair the breach and repent of the wrong done in the Punjab.

There were two ways open to the people, the way of armed rebellion and the way of peaceful revolt. Non-co-operators havechosen, some out of weakness, some out of strength, the way of peace, i.e., voluntary suffering.

[1] This is one of the articles for which Gandhiji was tried and sentenced in March 1922

[2] On December 6, 1921

If the people are behind the sufferers, the Government must yield or be overthrown. If the people are not with them they have at least the satisfaction of not having sold their freedom. In an armed conflict, the more violent is generally the victor. The way of peace and suffering is the quickest method of cultivating public opinion, and, therefore, when victory is attained, it is for what the world regards as Truth. Bred in the atmosphere of law-courts, Lord Reading finds it difficult to appreciate the peaceful resistance to authority. His Excellency will learn by the time the conflict is over that there is a higher court than courts of justice, and that is the court of conscience. It supersedes all other courts.

Lord Reading is welcome to treat all the sufferers as lunatics, who do not know their own interest. He is entitled, therefore, to put them out of harm's way. It is an arrangement that entirely suits the lunatics and it is an ideal situation if it also suits the Government. He will have cause to complain if, having courted imprisonment, non-co-operators fret and fume or"whine for favours" as Lalaji puts it. The strength of a non-co-operator lies in his going to jail uncomplainingly. He loses his case if, having courted imprisonment, he begins to grumble, immediately his courtship is rewarded.

The threats used by His Excellency are unbecoming. This is a fight to the finish. It is a conflict between the reign of violence and of public opinion. Those who are fighting for the latter are determined to submit to any violence rather than surrender their opinion.

Young India, 15-12-192l

121. MUNICIPALITIES IN TROUBLE

The municipalities of Ahmedabad, Nadiad and Surat are again in trouble about their education departments.[1] The Government intends to declare the municipalities unfit to run the departments and then take over their administration. It has, therefore, issued notices to the three municipalities to the effect that it will take over the control of their education departments unless they carry out its directions before 5 p.m. on the 17th instant. Where the municipality has the support of a clear majority for its decision, it will be difficult

[1] These municipalities had decided to impart national education in their schools and to refuse Government grants; for Nadiad Municipality's decision, *vide"* A Muncipal Enterprise", 9-2-1921.

for the Government to take over the administration of a department.

In the present circumstances, a non-co-operator can continue as member of a municipality for one reason only, namely, to increase the strength of the people by every legitimate means and to reduce the control of the Government. Where there is a majority of those who co-operate with the Government and it is not possible to realize this aim, a non-co-operator should certainly not continue as a member merely for creating disorder or obstructing the proceedings. He should realize that such tactics do not increase the strength of the people but are only a waste of time. Experience shows us that a person who commands a majority cannot be clamoured out of his decision. When his principles are involved he does not hesitate to make the fullest use of his majority. The rule of majority yields excellent results in matters in which no fundamentals are involved. Where, however, fundamentals are involved, the convention of bowing to a majority leads to society's decline. It is, therefore, desirable that we continue members of only those municipalities in which we command a majority.

Let us examine the present situation from this angle. One way to prevent the control of education from passing into the hands of the Government, as also to cut short all argument with it, is to entrust the administration of education to the national institution in each town and to subsidize it with grants. A municipality has the power to make such grants. If this can be done, the Government's taking over the education department will be of little significance. It will not get control over the present students, who will remain self-reliant. The Government administrator may start new schools if he so chooses. No citizen will prevent him. From where, however, will the Government get the children to attend its new schools? We believe that all children who want schooling are already attending the existing municipal schools. Again, the Government will face difficulties in financing its new department. The municipalities will never sanction the expenditure of their own free will. The Government will have, therefore, to distrain upon the municipalities every time they need the money. This, again, will lead to ultimate discomfiture of the Government.

The second way, if the (Government appoints its administrator, is that the municipality should advise the school-teachers not to carry out the administrator's orders and let him take whatever steps he

likes. This too will wear out the Government.

The third way is to work among the voters in case the Government succeeds in taking over the administration of the existing schools. That is, the people should be so educated that they will see to it that no child attends Government schools, and all people will send children to the new [national] schools instead.

All these three ways cannot be adopted simultaneously; we should select one of them and concentrate upon it. It is the duty of the members to educate the voters so thoroughly that they would be ready for any step which might be necessary.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-12-1921

122. MY NOTES

TO PARENTS

Parents who send their children to schools or Ashrams have certain obligations to fulfil. Their failure to fulfil them harms the children, the institutions as also the parents themselves. Parents should acquaint themselves with the rules of the institution to which they want their children to be admitted. They should know the habits and needs of their children and adhere to the decision once it is taken. During the time when the children are supposed to stay in the Ashram, they should not be called away to serve their parents' convenience or in order that they might be of service to the latter; how, then, can they be called away to attend marriages? Why should children be invited on such occasions? Just as parents do not involve children in their other social affairs, so also they should not involve them in the business of marriages. During student-life, children's attention should not be distracted from their studies; moreover, during this period, children should remain *brahmacharis*[1]. If they are compelled to attend marriages and such other functions, they may find it difficult to do this. It is, therefore, necessary that we deliberately keep children away from such celebrations. Besides, at a time like this, when the very idea of marriage seems improper, it is an outrage on a child who, left to itself, would keep away from a marriage, to tempt it with the thought of attending one. In these days when we have become

[1] Celibates

weak-willed, when the strength to resist temptations has diminished, it is necessary to encourage a person in his determination to submit to a rule or make some sacrifice. If, instead, we ourselves oblige him to disregard a rule, we shall be encouraging weakness. What has been said with regard to marriage applies to many other affairs. Parents who desire to bring up their children thoughtfully will be able to recall many such occasions when, instead of helping the progress of their children, they have retarded it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-12-1921

123. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Thursday [*December 15, 1921*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your two letters. Your handwriting is as bad as the contents are beautiful. Try your best. I know that you are under pressure for time these days. Nevertheless, you have got to make the effort.

Harilal has done good work. Have just heard that he has been sentenced to six months' rigorous imprisonment.

More in my letter to Mahadev[2].

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 7775

[1] Harilal was arrested on Sunday, December 11, 1921
[2] Mahadev Desai (1892-1942); Gandhiji's secretary for 25 years

124. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Thursday [*December 15, 1921*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I did write to you almost everyday. Swaruprani's[2] letter is wonderful, which means your letter is wonderful, does it not? But surely we do not want to get anything credited to our account? All our obeisances to the many gods ultimately reach Keshava [the Supreme Deity], as a matter of course We dedicate to Krishna whatever we do and so need have no worry.

Das's pamphlets are very brilliant. It seems he has drunk deep of the nectar of non-violence. Bengal has indeed risen to the top. At present, Gujarat stands last. I am even glad of this.

Pyarelal[3] will tell you the rest. Make full use of him and take care of your health. I want you to send Devdas to jail. That is one of the reasons for sending Pyarelal there.

I shall not write a separate letter to Godbole[4]. Let him come here with all the papers, etc. Some of the work will be finished quickly if he comes here. I don't think there is any need of him there.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Surely, Godbole does not have to get his name registered as a volunteer.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11427

[1] In his letter to the addressee, dated December 8, 1921, which was a Thursday, Gandhiji had expressed the wish that Swaruprani should write to him; he also mentioned that he could readily send Pyarelal to assist the addressee. This letter was presumably written on the following Thursday.

[2] Wife of Motilal Nehru

[3] Pyarelal Nayyar, Gandhiji's secretary since 1920; biographer of Gandhiji

[4] M. S. Godbole; former professor, Gujarat Vidyapith; Joint Secretary, A.I.C.C.

125. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Thursday [*December 15, 1921*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I got both your letters together. I do not share your misgiving. I do not wish to give up the use of footwear, but I shall think over it. We should do what we can and leave the rest to Him. Today I am sending a copy of the resolution to Shankerlal. Please see it. You must take all the rest that you need to recover your health. If you can you may drop in on the 22nd.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

93 BAZAR GATE STREET

FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

126. TELEGRAM[2]

[About *December 15, 1921*][3]

NON-CO-OPERATORS PURELY ON DEFENSIVE. NO CONFERENCE CAN DO GOOD UNLESS GOVERNMENT PENITENT AND PREPARED RECOGNIZE SUPREMACY PUBLIC OPINION

GANDHI

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 173

[1] From the postmark

[2] Sent in reply to a telegram from a landowner of Jabalpur, which read:"Situation extremely grave. Both sides equally determined. Undesirable happenings not unlikely. Your responsibility serious. Round Table Conference advisable. Viceroy also requested to hear."

[3] From the source

127. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD[1]

[On or after *December 15, 1921*]

RAJENDRA PRASAD[2]
CHAPRA
DO ENLIST LEAVING INSTRUCTION [TO] YOUNG, RELIABLE TEN ENSURING NON-VIOLENCE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7726

128. TELEGRAM TO SRI PRAKASA[3]

[On or after *December 15, 1921*]

SRI PRAKASA[4]
SEVASHRAM
BANARAS
HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS. WAS TOTALLY UNPREPARED FOR SUCH CONSUMMATION.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7729

[1] Sent in reply to Rajendra Prasad's telegram received on December 15, 1921, which read:"Government proclaimed Volunteer Corps unlawful. Shafi, Janakdhari and fifty volunteers arrested for disregarding proclamation. We propose that Haque, Brijkishore, Deepanandan, myself should enlist. Wire instructions Chapra."

[0] 1884-1963; statesman and scholar; Chairman, Constituent Assembly of India. 1946-9; first President of India

[3] This was sent in reply to Sri Prakasa's telegram of December 15, 1921, which read:"Father arrested under Section 107 Criminal Code, all well."

[4] b. 1890; son of Bhagwandas, the eminent scholar of Banaras; Congress leader and freedom fighter; India's High Commissioner to Pakistan; later, Governor of Bombay

129. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

[On or after *December 15, 1921*][1]

GOOD. HOPE YOU WILL GET MAXIMUM PENALTY.

GANDHI

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 172

130. DRAFT TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA[2]

[*December 16, 1921*][3]

WISH YOU WOULD RECOGNIZE THIS IS FIGHT TO THE FINISH. NON-CO-OPERATORS ARE PURELY ON THE DEFENSIVE. IF PROVOKING ORDERS DISBANDMENT AND STOPPING PUBLIC MEETINGS WITHDRAWN PRESENT CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE STOPS AUTOMATICALLY. BOYCOTT OF WELCOME MUST PERSIST SO LONG AS GOVERNMENT IRRESPONSIVE PUBLIC OPINION. CONFERENCE WILL BE ABORTIVE UNLESS GOVERNMENT TRULY PENITENT AND DESIROUS REMOVE RANKLING GRIEVANCES AND YIELD FORCE OF PUBLIC OPINION. WILL HOWEVER DISCUSS SITUATION JAMNADAS[4] KUNZRU[5]

GANDHI

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, Vol. II, P. 132

[1] The addressee was served with a notice under the Criminal Law Amendment Act at 12 noon on December 15, 1921, and was asked to take his trial on the same day at 4 p.m. The trial was, however, adjourned and, according to the source, Gandhiji sent this telegram on receiving news regarding the case.

[2] 1861-1946; founder of the Benares Hindu University; twice President of the Indian National Congress

[3] This telegram was dictated to Krishnadas, Gandhiji's secretary, immediately on receipt of Malaviya's telegram of December 16, 1921, which read:"Am arranging deputation of about seven to Viceroy on 21st to press upon him necessity of Round Table Conference. Hence going to Calcutta, Jamnadas and Kunzru reach Sabarmati tomorrow to explain situation. Desire to have your authority to say that if conference is accepted and Government stays hands and releases leaders, you will withdraw opposition to Prince's welcome and suspend civil disobedience till termination conference. Calcutta address till 21 No. 31 Burtillo Street." According to Krishnadas, this draft was not sent. For the reply which was sent after Jamnadas and Kunzru met Gandhiji, *vide"*Telegram to Madan Mohan Malaviya", 19-12-1921.

[4] Jamnadas Dwarkadas, a leading member of the Home Rule League

[5] Hriday Nath Kunzru (b. 1887); President of the Servants of India Society; Liberal politician and parliamentarian

131. TELEGRAM TO BEGUM KHURSHED ABDUL MAJID[1]

AHMEDABAD,
December 16, 1921

BEGUM KHURSHED KHWAJA SAHEB
NATIONAL MUSLIM UNIVERSITY
ALIGARH

CONGRATULATE YOU YOUR BRAVE HUSBAND. I KNOW ALIGARH BOYS WILL LOYALLY OBEY YOU.

GANDHI

From a copy: A. M. Khwaja Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

132. CIRCULAR LETTER[2]

SABARMATI,
December 16, 1921

DEAR FRIEND,

I do not know who will be able to attend the A.I.C.C. meeting. I, therefore, send you draft resolution which I would like to have passed. Will you please send me your criticism if you cannot attend? And of course you will not come even if you are free if your presence is required in your province for keeping the peace. The draft is not for publication at all.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9545

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram in which she had informed Gandhiji of her husband's arrest, adding,"my husband having been arrested, I shall run the university"; *vide*"Notes", 18-12-1921, Under Sub-title"All Honour To That Wife".

[2] This was presumably sent to Congress workers in the various provinces

133. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM,
Friday [*December 16, 1921*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I got your letter. The description of the prisoners is given in beautiful language but a shabby hand, so that the latter cancels the beauty of the former.

I am awaiting a wire to tell me that you have gone to jail and Mahadev has been arrested.

Please let me know by wire whether or not Mrs. Nehru and others are coming. Today I do not propose to write a separate letter to Mahadev.

You both ought to keep good health. With Pyarelal there, you should no longer feel short of help.

Anna[2], Gomtibehn[3] and Sarkar's[4] sister-in-law have arrived in the Ashram. Vasumatibehn is also here.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Andrews[5], Jamnadas and Kunzru are coming tomorrow.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 7677

[1] Jamnadas Dwarkadas and Hriday Nath Kunzru mentioned in the postscript arrived at the Ashram on December 17, 1921

[2] Harihar Sharma; earlier, member of Ganganath Bharatiya Vidyalaya, Baroda; active worker of Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha

[3] Wife of Kishorelal Mashruwala

[4] Patwardhan Yadawadkar, honorary worker on the editorial staff of *Young India*. He died during the Nagpur Congress in December 1920; *vide*"In Memoriam", 12-1-1921.

[5] C. F. Andrews (1871-1940); British missionary; co-worker of Tagore and Gandhiji; honoured as"Deenabandhu" or"brother of the poor"

134. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

Thursday, [About *December, 16, 1921*][1]

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I have received your two letters together.

Enclosed is the draft of a resolution[2] to be moved at the Congress. Please show it to Bhai Umar, Mrs. Naidu, Jayakar and others whom you think should see it and let me have your opinion and theirs. I am sending the draft to Vitthalbhai also. It is not meant to be published. I shall also send it to Chhotani Mian. All the copies may not be ready today. Do stay on there if it is necessary. I feel that Bhai Umar should come for the Working Committee. But if he too cannot come and has to stay back in order to maintain peace, he may stay back. Mrs. Naidu, I think, will certainly come.

There is no intention of bringing out a bulletin. The rumours appear to be unfounded. For the rest, read what I have written about swaraj in *Young India*. However, do write if you think it necessary.

Picketing has been stopped. For the present we have no need to resume it. Even by way of expiation for the burning of Parsee wine shops, it is necessary not to resume picketing.[3] We certainly cannothave special volunteers to do picketing. We shall have to fight when the new corps is declared illegal. We shall have only one volunteer corps and picketing will not be its task for the present. Many of them will be there simply to court imprisonment. Others will be there to serve. You can divide them into two groups if you wish. But I think it would be advisable not to divide them into groups right now.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I have received one letter. Read it and then destroy.

From a copy of the Gujarati : S. N. 32719

[1] From the contents; *vide*"Circular Letter", 16-12-1921.

[2] Which was moved later at the Congress Session at Ahmedabad on December 28, 1921; ibid.

[3] On November 17, 1921, in Bombay, a violent riot had broken out in which Parsee wine shops had been burnt down and Parsee women had been molested; *vide* "Letter to Dayalji And Kalyanji", 17-11-1921.

135. TELEGRAM TO JIARAM SAXENA[1]

[On or after *December 16, 1921*]

JIARAM[2]
CONGRESS COMMITTEE
ALLAHABAD

WORKING COMMITTEE TWENTY-THIRD.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7723

136. TELEGRAM TO MAULANA ABDUL BARI[3]

[On or after *December 16, 1921*][4]

WE HAVE EVERY REASON PRAISE GOD FOR HIS MERCY. HOPE YOU ARE WELL.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 7724

[1] Sent in reply to Jiaram's telegram of December 16, 1921, which read:"Letter Received. Kindly wire date Working Committee."

[2] Secretary, U. P. Provincial Congress Committee

[3] 1838-1926; Nationalist Muslim divine of Lucknow who took active part in the Khilafat movement

[4] This telegram was sent in reply to Maulana Abdul Bari's telegram of December 16, 1921, which read:" Have come back from Hyderabad today. I was

137. TELEGRAM TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR[1]

[On or after *December 16, 1921*]

ACHARYA[2]

SALEM

YOU MUST JUDGE SITUATION THERE AND DECIDE ABOUT COMING.[3]

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7728

138. TELEGRAM TO SHYAM SUNDER CHAKRAVARTY[4]

[On or after *December 16, 1921]*

VACANCIES SHOULD BE FILLED UP.

From a photostat: S.N. 7731

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very much pleased by the victorious spirit of Maulvi Salamatullah and my other dearest Hindu-Muslim friends. I congratulate you on their arrest. We are proud of the citizens of Lucknow and Allahabad for their patienee, tolerance, orderly manner, unity of action, and obedience to Congress orders. The correct report about hartal both in Lucknow and Allahabad is that it was complete, and perfect non-violence prevailed. Have just seen Pandit Motilalji and Maulana Salamatullah with their comrades in jail. All are cheerful and happy. Have just heard about your son's arrest. Hearty congratulations. Hopeful sign."

[1] Sent in reply to Vijayaraghavachariar's telegram of December 15, received by Gandhi on the 16th, which read:"Kindly wire whether my arrival 24th Sufficient if you think my attendance absolutely necessary earlier most inconvenient."

[2] C. Vijayaraghavachariar (1852-1943); leading lawyer and active Congress-men; presided over the Nagpur Congress session, 1920

[3] Presumably to attend the Congress session at Ahmedabad

[4] Editor of the *Servant*, Calcutta; succeeded C.R. Das as President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee

This telegram was sent in reply to Chakravarty's telegram of December 16, 1921, which read:"Kindly wire opinion if places of imprisoned All-India Congress Committee members may be treated vacancies and filled up."

139. THINGS THAT SINK

December 17, 1921

To imprison those who, whether high or low, break the commandments, to treat them as common felons, to deprive them of their prison privileges, one can understand. I would not call that foul play. If you incur the wrath of one who is over you or who has you under his power for the time being, to be punished by him for your disobedience is what you expect. But if he humiliates you, if he makes your children do things you and they do not like and which you are not required in law to do, if he treats you like dirt, it becomes unbearable. One learns that in Cocanada a Magistrate had the swaraj and the Khilafat flags pulled down, that he issued orders prohibiting the use of such flags for one week, that the children of a school were compelled to salute the Union Jack, that a distinguished Professor in Calcutta, going out in his academic costume and on the strength thereof going up to an officer to stop a wanton hunt of inoffensive men, was brutally assaulted for his innocent inquiry as to the cause of the hunt, that a party of brave cultured young men were kicked about by those who were their warders for the time being. These are things that sink. These humiliations show that there is little change in the manners of our"masters". The O'Dwyerian spirit has not died out. Of what use is it that Lord Ronaldshay sends for the injured Professor, soothes him and assures him that the thing will not happen again? What will not happen again? The Professor will not be assaulted? Of course he will not be during the present crisis. The Professor himself will not again presume upon his academic costume and challenge an officer very soon. But has the officer any respect for the Professor? The Professor did not seek relief for himself. He interceded for injured humanity. Will Indian humanity be protected and respected in future because of His Lordship's assurance? It is the habitual training given to the soldier that matters. He is converted into a vicious animal to be let loose on harmless people on given occasions. The Dases and the Azads have gone to jail to prevent a repetition of such unmanly and brutal exhibitions. They have welcomed imprisonment in order that even the worst criminal may be protected against wanton injury, that even he may not have his self-respect wounded. They have not gone to jail for any mechanical transference of power. The organic change they want, that Lala Lajpat Rai has been pining for years, that has become the breath of life for the ease-loving Motilal Nehru and has made of him practically a fakir, is not to be brought about by Lord Ronaldshay, however well-intentioned he may be in his apologies, nor by Lord Reading's smooth phrases and his personal

care that officers and men might not overstep the limits of law. The organic change will be and call only be brought about by the suffering that has come to the people and for which, thank God, they find themselves prepared. A cautious friend in order to restrain my optimism tells me, that the suffering has only just begun, that for the end in view we must pay a much higher price still. He really expects that we shall have to invite a repetition of Jallianwalas and that instead of approaching the triangles of the crawling lane fame tremblingly and reluctantly, we shall have now to walk to them cheerfully and with a steady step and suffer lashes for refusing to crawl.[1] I assure the friend that my optimism has room for all these things and much worse that he can imagine. But I promise, too, that if India remains calm and unperturbed and does not retaliate even mentally—a very dlflicult process I admit and yet not so difficult in India's present exalted mood—our very preparedness and consequent absence of reaction will exhaust the brute spirit for want of nutrition, and Lord Reading, instead of talking big things to us, will himself adopt the human language of penitence and see ample occasion in the Indian atmosphere for a new diplomacy. Whereas if we forget ourselves and our pledge, we must be ready for a thousand Jallianwalas and India being turned into a vast shambles. The President elect has prepared us for such a consummation. He is sure that we have shed the fear of the prison. He is almost certain probably from the experience of his brave son and his company that we will be prepared to undergo the ordeal of assaults. But he bids us give up the fear of death itself. If that time is in store for us, I hope that there will be nonviolent non-co-operators enough in India, of whom it will be written:

"They suffered bullets without anger and with prayer on their lips even for the ignorant murderer."

Well, if the reports are to be credited, two Assamese volunteers have been whipped, the volunteers of Lahore have meekly borne the wanton assaults committed on them. This fight is not a joke. We have disciplined ourselves for the past twelve months and more, and we must now go through it to the end. There is no turning back.

Young India, 22-12-1921

[1] For the incidents mentioned, *vide*"Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders"

140. WHAT WILL GUJARAT DO?

Five hundred fighters in Bengal have been arrested within the last ten days. Between two and three hundred persons must have been arrested in U.P., and about a hundred have been arrested in the Punjab. If the number of arrests is not larger in these two provinces, it is not the fault of the non-co-operators there. From the letters which I have received, I find that in all these three provinces the Governments get as many fighters as would please them to arrest. If the number of arrests so far appears small, it is due to the Government's own laxity. Hundreds are ready in every province to make the pilgrimage to jails.

At this hour, Gujarat is calm and quiet, waiting in patience. This composure, patience and silence appeal to me much, because I am sure that hundreds of Gujaratis are just waiting to court arrest. Gujarat had hoped to be the first to fill prisons; but that honour has gone to Bengal. If, however, we Gujaratis are in fact ready for imprisonment, we need not envy Bengal. I trust that when our hour arrives we shall quickly catch up with Bengal.

That hour is drawing near.

If Bardoli or Anand does not get ready, we cannot launch mass civil disobedience; but there is no restriction whatsoever on individual civil disobedience. Mass civil disobedience may bring the desired result early, while individual civil disobedience may mean some delay. It is my earnest hope that Bardoli at least will get ready and we shall be prepared both for mass and, if necessary, for individual civil disobedience.

Let Bardoli, Anand and Nadiad prepare themselves for mass civil disobedience; in other parts, individuals should keep themselves ready for the call. In every village, those who are willing to court imprisonment should get their names enrolled in the local village committee register. If there is no village committee or if no one is ready to take up the work of enrolling names, volunteers should register their names with the taluka committee. Village committees should send the names to the taluka committee. These names should be ultimately registered with the Gujarat Provincial Committee.

Those who do not believe that freedom can be won only by peaceful means, who, being Hindus, are not ready to give up the practice of untouchability, who are not good at spinning, who have not completely forsworn foreign cloth, who do not exclusively wear

hand-spun and hand-woven khadi, and who do not recognize the need for unity of the Hindus, the Muslims, the Sikhs, the Parsis, the Christians and the Jews, should not even think of courting arrest and should decidedly abandon the idea of getting their names enrolled as volunteers.

Those who have not purified themselves or have not given up liquor, will be rendering a service to the country by keeping away from this holy war, for by doing so they will show that they understand their limitations.

Those who get enrolled as volunteers will have to provide their own maintenance. They should not expect the Congress committee concerned to provide it. A person who desires to serve the country but cannot find a single friend to finance his needs at such a juncture cannot, in my view, be fit for national service. A volunteer's expenses cannot be heavy and surely they cannot be a burden on anyone.

What I have said about men applies to women too. Although it is not necessary to bring them out to court arrest, such of them as have tasted the nectar of patriotism should, however, keep themselves ready.

A friend from Kathiawar inquires what people in Indian States can do. Subjects of these States should not be enrolled within the States themselves. Such of them, however, as wish to court imprisonment may register their names with the Provincial Committee and even those who are not ready to register their names may cultivate the qualities I have mentioned as necessary for volunteers.

Our calm and patience will justify themselves and be appreciated as evidence of true courage only if we thus prepare ourselves and keep ready in our thousands to fill the jails. If, when the time comes, we are unable to display such strength and make the required sacrifices, we shall be looked down upon as spineless cowards. I have, however, no misgivings about Gujarat's courage.

All that I desire is that wisdom should accompany courage. The wisdom we require is about the need for swadeshi and for eradicating untouchability. Every person should enlighten his or her family and every married man should educate his wife about these matters. Our women have not yet developed sufficient love for khadi. Their fascination for multicoloured foreign cloth with insufferable designs has not yet disappeared. They have not yet rid themselves of the sin of untouchability. No effort has been made to explain these things to them with patience and love. It is easy for everyone to attempt this in

his own family. One may understand that success will not follow in all cases, but our efforts must begin at home, and just as we share our fresh acquisitions with our family members first, likewise they should be the first whom we should invite to join us when we undertake a new kind of sacrifice or try to bring about some reform.

Gujarat may remain busy this month with preparations for the Congress which is to meet in the last week of December but, in January, it will have no choice but to get ready for the test. Hence I wish to alert Gujaratis right now. The Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee's primary task in the new year according to the Christian calendar will be to prepare Gujarat for selfsacrifice.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-12-1921

141. CIVILITY

Civility, good manners and humility—these virtues are at such discount these days that they seem to have no place at all in the building of our character. If a person observes mere physical celibacy, he acts like a Bajirao[1], frowns upon and runs down everyone else and we tolerate his rudeness as we do kicks from a milchcow. Similarly, if a person is truthful in speech, we give him a licence to be sharp-tongued and a khadi-wearer can come down in fury upon those who do not wear khadi. In like manner, a person who offers civil disobedience sometimes acts as if he had a licence to be insolent to others. These corporals of the army of incivility are not a true *brahmachari* or a truth-lover or a khadilover or a civil resister, as the case may be. All the four of them are as far away from their vows as the north is from the south. It may be safely asserted that a person deficient in good manners lacks discrimination and that, lacking discrimination, he lacks every thing else. Vishvamitra's[2] *tapascharya*[3] was considered incomplete till he had learnt civility.

Civility and humility are expressions of the spirit of nonviolence

[1] One of the Peshwas of the Maratha Empire

[2] A sage in the *Ramayana*. He had renounced his kingdom to practise austerities and be the equal of sage Vasistha, but did not succeed till the egotistic motive had left him.

[3] Self-suffering as moral discipline

while incivility and insolence indicate the spirit of violence. A non-co-operator, therefore, ought never to be uncivil. However, the most persistent charge levelled against non-co-operators is that they lack manners and are insolent, and the charge has much substance in it. We are apt to believe that in becoming non-co- operators we have done something very great, as if a person who had done no more than pay his debt had thereby become entitled to get an address.

This lack of manners delays our victory in the struggle we are carrying on, for, as politeness disarms anger and hatred, incivility increases hostility. Had non-co-operators remained courteous towards those who co-operated with the Governments, had they, instead of abusing the latter, shown respect towards them, the existing bitterness between the two would not be there and the unhappy events[1] which were witnessed in Bombay would not have taken place. A student who has left his Government school should not harass or abuse another who may not have left his but should try, instead, to win him over with love. He should continue to render him the same service as he used to do before. A lawyer who has given up practice should not turn up his nose at another who may not have done so, but should maintain with him the same cordial relations as before. A person who has resigned from, Government service should not run down another who may not have left it.

Had we, right from the beginning, approached our task in this spirit, it is possible that we would have reached our goal by now and the country would have advanced much further than it has done. The Moderate party would not then have kept away from us.

I trust no one will understand politeness to mean flattery. Nor does it mean hiding our regard for our dharma. To be polite means to show respect towards others while clinging to our own dharma. Because I put a vermilion mark on my forehead, I may not sneer at another who does not do so. If I face the east when praying, I should not feel contempt for my Muslim brother who says his *namaz* with his face towards the west. Ability to pronounce Sanskrit words correctly does not entitle me to speak contemptuously of the sounds in the Arabic language. A lover of khadi, while wearing a khadi cap himself, can still be tolerant of a person who wears a sola hat and love him. If a man all clad in khadi starts swearing at a person wearing garments of foreign cloth, he will be acting as the most effective

[1] The riots on November 17, 1921

propagandist of such cloth. The incidents in Bombay have not made khadi more popular. On the contrary, it now stinks in the nostrils of some.

If we, khadi-lovers, wish to see the whole of India wearing khadi, we should patiently plead with people who used foreign cloth. However much we speak against such cloth, we should display nothing but love for those who use it. The plague is a dreadful disease but we, too, are likely to catch it if we turn away from any person who has got it. We may desire the disease to be rooted out but not the patient to be killed. If we look upon wearing foreign cloth as a kind of disease, we should attend on a person who suffers from it. May not a person who wears foreign cloth look upon us as the victims of a disease? By all means, let him do so. If, nonetheless, we continue to give our services to each other, sooner or later we shall discover which of us was in error. If we do not act in this way, we shall never discover the difference between what is dharma and what is *adharma*[1].

Just as it is necessary for us to be courteous to those who co-operate with the Government, so those of us who are imprisoned will also have to behave with civility in the prison. It is difficult to observe jail rules and yet maintain one's self-respect. Some of these rules are naturally humiliating. For instance, we have no choice but to let ourselves be confined in a cell. We must, thus, respect the rules which apply to all prisoners. At the same time, we should firmly oppose any measure which is intended merely to humiliate us. Once we have taught ourselves to behave with courtesy, we shall instinctively know how to act in a particular situation.

Where there is egotism, we shall find incivility and arrogance. Where it is absent, we shall find a sense of self-respect together with civility. The egotist thinks too much of his body. The man of self-respect recognizes the *atman*[2], is ever thinking about it and, in order to realize it, is always ready to sacrifice his body. He who holds his self-respect dear acts towards everyone in a spirit of friendship, for he values others' self-respect as much as he values his own. He seeshimself in all and everyone else in himself, puts himself in line with others. The egotist keeps aloof from others and, believing himself superior to the rest of the world, he takes upon himself to judge everyone and in the result enables the world to have the measure of

[1] The opposite of dharma
[2] Self

his smallness.

Hence, the non-violent non-co-opetator should regard civility as a distinct virtue and try to cultivate it. The importance attached to it provides the measure of an individual's or a nation's culture. A non-co-operator should realize very clearly that incivility is another name for brutishness and eschew it completely.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-12-1921

142. MY NOTES

ALL HONOUR TO THAT WIFE

Khwaja Saheb was at the head of those who manage the affairs of the National Muslim University. I count him among the most straightforward Muslims. He is as proud of his country as he is of his religion. He belongs to a noble family. As a barrister, he lived in great style. Today, he has embraced a fakir's life in the cause of his faith and the country. I have just received a telegram from his wife, Khurshed Begum, informing me that he hag been arrested by the Government. She says:"You will be pleased to know that, my husband having been arrested by the Government, I shall run the university." I was very much pleased to receive this telegram, for, with instances such as the Khwaja Saheb's holy sacrifice on the one hand and the patience and courage of his Begum on the other, who can stop the coming of swaraj? Begum Khurshed will find no difficulty in carrying on her work, for the brave and straightforward students of the university will muster round her and it is possible that they will do for her what they did not do for Khwaja Saheb. Besides, she will certainly give them better training in spinning than what Khwaja Saheb could.

Victory will assuredly be ours when many Indian women are inspired by such courage. At this time of great awakening, I request women to cultivate good capacity for organized work. They, too, should start working together. And the simple way of doing so is for them to get engrossed in their own work, instead of criticizing one another. One whose only aim is service has no time for criticizing others.

PARSI SISTERS

I have received a letter—an extremely painful one—from a Parsi sister in Bombay. Her complaint is such that I would like to spend a life-time investigating its root cause, but it is not possible to undertake an inquiry on the basis of her letter alone. If that sister happens to read this, I request her to send me her name and address or to meet me. I shall certainly not print her name, but I shall make all possible inquiries and assist her as much as possible if she gives me all the facts. If men and women who are in distress write anonymous letters and do not give facts which can be verified, it is easy to see that nothing can be done to help them.

I should also like to request those Parsi sisters who know me that they should make all possible inquiries and inform me if they come across any cases of suffering.

However well ordered a society may be, there is bound to be an area of it in which, despite all measures, cruelties cannot be prevented. We do not even come to know of the crimes which are committed today in London, New York, Chicago and Paris, the cruel things which are secretly done in these cities. No one can investigate them either. Even the alert police of these places cannot detect them. I believe we cannot even imagine some of the crimes which are committed in these cities. It is the duty of each one of us, men and women, to assist as many persons in distress as we can, and, through our services, bring relief to the distressed and thus discharge our social debt. That country in which a large number of people regard others' sufferings as their own and find remedies for them enjoys swaraj.

THE HABIT OF BLAMING THE POLICE

A slave, a coward, is usually afraid and, therefore, puts the blame always on others. Among the letters which I have received regarding the painful incidents which took place in Bombay, there are some in which all the blame has been put on the police.

If the police are as corrupt as they are said to be in these letters, for that too we are to blame. Is it we, or some others, who tolerate such crimes? The police also are our brothers. If we look upon all policemen as our enemies and if we do not feel responsible for every wicked persons, how are we going to run the Government? How, under swaraj, shall we exercise control over such a corrupt police force or wicked persons? In the swaraj of our conception, the British

who will have stayed on will be people's servants and remain as our brothers. We shall not be able then to burden them with the responsibility of protecting the innocent. Who then will keep the wicked under control?

Even a moment's reflection will make it clear to us that we cannot win swaraj so long as we are unable to influence the police and those whom we describe as bad characters. The Government is able to rule by keeping them under check. We shall be able to run the Government by winning them over through love or by becoming even more cruel and wicked than they are. The third alternative is to rule by punishing them. We do not have the strength to do this even if we wish to do it. This means that either we should wait for 200 to 400 years till we have acquired such strength and then think of swaraj, or win them over today through love.

The very existence of this class is a sign of the prevalence of *adharma* and wickedness. We shall not win swaraj by adding to the sum total of this wickedness. We can enjoy peace in the country only by conquering *adharma* through dharma. We tolerate the British Government for this very reason, that it protects the weaker section of the people by keeping this class of wicked persons generally under check. But the reason I oppose it is that, while offering such protection, the price that it exacts from the public is so heavy that it has itself become a rule of the wicked. In other words, as the price of such protection we have to sacrifice our self-respect. If, in order to deliver ourselves from such tyranny, we seek the help of the bad characters, we shall be in a sorry plight indeed. The result will be the same if we estrange them either. We should, without flattering them, win them over with love and stop being afraid of them. In other words, we should make them see their dharma. If some among them see it, others will soon learn from their example. The same principle applies to the police. Why should we fear the police? Even if they come wearing white caps, why should they be able to deceive anyone? If we are good, the whole world is good. Why should we be such cowards that we may be deceived? Supposing a policeman, dressed in khadi, cruelly beats up someone. Why should we get excited in consequence? We should plead with him; If he does not listen, we should give up the effort and if we have the necessary strength, lay down our lives while trying to stop him in his evil course. If we do this, we shall have given proof of our courage. The police will

certainly improve when they see this courage of ours. The police become brutalized by beating up cowards. If a policeman attacks a brave person he will certainly get frightened afterwards. I have received a letter from a friend in Lahore in which he says that when even strong young men do not resist the police, the latter lose courage. They cannot harden themselves to beat such persons. Of course they cannot. I have had personal experience of many such instances. This fearlessness cannot be taught, it can only be cultivated through one's own effort. My correspondents, therefore, should realize that it is certainly our task to gain control over the bad characters, but we would be throwing ourselves from the frying pan into the fire if we try to do so through flattery. Although they are our brothers, they are like persons afflicted with a disease and we should treat them but should not place ourselves under their treatment. The police will become our friends the day we cease to fear them. Shedding fear of the police does not mean beating or abusing them, it means letting ourselves be beaten and abused by them, as the brave son of Chitta Ranjan Das did. He could have beaten the police in return. His friends were all strong young men. But they let themselves be beaten. To suffer being abused is one way; it is the way of non-co-operation. But to return two words of abuse for one is co-operation because then we shall be the guilty party. To let ourselves be overborne by abuse is to be enslaved by it. To suffer abuse does not mean doing the will of the person who abuses. It means the contrary. We should not even chant the name of Vishnu[1] if anyone tries to force us with abuse to do so. If the person who abuses us asks us to crawl on our stomach, we should walk holding ourselves erect. If he asks us to sit down, we should stand up and face his bullets. If we act in this way, he will be totality defeated, because his aim of bending us will not be fulfilled. Ravana carried away Sita on his shoulder but Sita did not do his bidding. Though he had thus the privilege of carrying her, he failed to be sanctified by physical contact with this Mother Divine but she, a helpless woman, became the Goddess Mother of the world. One should, therefore, let oneself be abused and beaten without fear. In this lies true courage. One who lets himself be abused through fear of being beaten is neither man nor beast. India is today learning the lesson of manliness. It will win swaraj if it masters this lesson aright.

[1] The Preserver in the Hindu Trinity

THREE FEARS

The three articles of Shri Deshbandhu[1] published before his imprisonment are indicative of his ecstatic state of mind, and are worth pondering over."Remain peaceful in thought, word and deed.""Win over the Moderates, too, with gentleness." These are immortal words and are all the more beautiful for being penned at the time that they were. There are equally beautiful sentences describing the three fears. He says:"We have conquered the fear of prison", and then, as if addressing his son:"We have almost conquered the second fear—that of being beaten." The third fear is of facing bullets. When we have conquered that, swaraj is bound to follow. In fact, the key to swaraj lies in conquering this fear. If we could shed our fear of beatings or of death, neither the Government nor the bad characters can lord it over us, and we can win swaraj only if we have among us people who have conquered these three types of fear, otherwise we shall never get it.

BREACH OF PROMISE

A gentleman writes:[2]

This is but simple justice. The only difference is that I did not give the promise relying on my own strength. I am no more than the people's servant. I am their representative, their clerk. A clerk cannot make promises on his own. If, therefore, the Ali Brothers and their colleagues are not free on 31st December, I will put the blame on my correspondent and on the people. I will put it on the people of Bombay. I shall have been deceived by those very people who attended hundreds of meetings to hear me. I was taken in by the spectacle of the crowds on the 17th and the blazing bonfire on that occasion and I said:"This evening I shall leave for Bardoli and Anand and put them to the test, and I believe that we shall win swaraj in the middle of December through the civil disobedience which will be started there and because of the peace you have preserved; we shall get the prison gates opened and welcome the Ali Brothers, Gangadharrao Deshpande and others in our midst." In saying this, I put my

[1] C. R. Das

[2] The extract is not translated here. The correspondent had said that if Gandhiji failed to secure the release of the Ali Brothers before December 31, as he had promised he would, he would invite the same charge of breach of promise which he levelled against Lloyd George.

faith in the people of Bombay and India. The entire nation will have committed breach of promise if the Ali Brothers and others are not released this month. I, too, may be included among the guilty. Let people think that I was rather simple-minded to have reposed such faith. No matter what they say, I will always act on such faith.

According to me, however, the actual result is as good as the fulfilment of the promise. Is not the imprisonment of Lalaji, Das, Motilalji, Abul Kalam Azad, Mohiuddin, Salamatullah, Agha Safdar, Jawaharlal and others the same thing as securing the release of the Ali Brothers? Those hundreds who have accompanied them have gone to fetch the people who are in jail. It is for us to reinforce their efforts. If the country remains completely peaceful and, at the same time, people continue to court arrest, if they let their heads be broken and lay down their lives, we shall certainly be able to secure the release of the prisoners. I assure the correspondent that the imprisonment of the leaders has warmed the hearts of the Ali Brothers so much that their chains have fallen away, so to say. Occasionally, obstacles like the thoughtless behaviour of the people of obstruct our progress, to our great loss. The people got excited when Agha Safdar was arrested. Some broke into the prison and some insulted the Magistrate. It is utterly wrong of us to use force or insult or abuse anyone. If, nevertheless, people go on committing errors, what is their poor representative to do? If he feels very unhappy, he may at the most resign and run away to the Himalayas.

ERRORS IN "NAVAJIVAN"

Another gentleman has pointed out some errors in *Navajivan.* My inquiry shows that there have been no such errors as he believes to have been made. In case, however, other readers also are under such misapprehension, in order to clear it I should like to say that I do not write all that appears in *Navajivan,* that I cannot go through all of it and also that I do not translate my articles which appear in *Young India.* Utmost care is taken to avoid errors. My co-worker who does the translation is, in my Opinion, the best I could find. But even when everyone makes an honest effort, errors will occasionally remain. Translating from one language into another is always more difficult than it appears. The original meaning can be preserved to some extent only if one has equal command over both the languages and is acquainted with the subject-matter. It is for this reason that atranslation has always less value than the original. The reader,

therefore may rest assured that he will discover no error in *Navajivan* which has remained there through negligence and that, when any error important enough to need correction is pointed out, it will be corrected immediately on attention being drawn to it.

WITH BLOWING OF CONCHES

The circumstances under which Deshbandhu Das was arrested are interesting. He was arrested in his own house. When the police arrived at about four in the afternoon, all were having tea. Mr. Sasmal, the Secretary, went downstairs to meet the police. On his introducing himself, he was arrested. Meanwhile, Deshbandhu Das had also gone down.

"Do you wish to arrest me?"

"Yes, if you please."

"Well, I am ready."

Having said this, Deshbandhu did not go up to meet his wife but accompanied the police. When the carriage taking him away came out, people outside shouted with joy and the women upstairs blew conches. In Bengal, it is customary to blow the conch when welcoming a person or bidding farewell to anyone on an auspicious occasion. This is regarded as a good omen. When women give up crying on their husbands, sons or fathers being arrested and, instead, rejoice on the occasion, knowing that their imprisonment will serve the country and dharma, we shall see dharma prevail and *adharma* destroyed. I, therefore, see in this blowing of the conch India's victory.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-12-1921

143. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Sunday [*December 18, 1921*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sure the reason for the shabby get-up of the *Independent* is defective machinery.

It is certainly proposed to have a resolution about volunteers passed at the Congress. Only the right type of men will be enrolled. You must have seen the draft.

Please let me know whether Swaruprani and other ladies are likely to come[2] and, if yes, when.

Hand over the accompanying letter to Mrs. Joseph[3].

Godbole is already here. Malaviyaji is busy with preparations for the Conference.

Let me know about your and Durga's health.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Since Mrs. Joseph has gone to Calcutta, I am sending her letter to the address given by her.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11425

144. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

SABARMATI,
December 18, 1921

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I had been to Karamsad yesterday. Hence, I have not been able to write about the late Dhondi. I have read his papers today. In such cases it seems proper that the Provincial Committee pays the money after investigation.

[1] In his letter of December 15, 1921, to Mahadev Desai, Gandhiji had expressed the wish that Godbole should go to Ahmedabad. he is mentioned in this letter as being"already here". Evidently, this letter was written on the Sunday following the letter of December 15.

[2] To attend the Congress session at Ahmedabad

[3] Wife of George Joseph

Jamnadas and Kunzru have arrived today. Bhai Kanji will give you news of them.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32720

145. TELEGRAM TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR[1]

[On or after *December 18, 1921*]

Ordinary

ACHARYA

SALELI

NO DIFFICULTY SHRADDHA[2].

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7744

146. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA[3]

December 19, 1921

MALAVIYA

SAW JAMNADAS KUNZRU. PLEASE DO NOT WORRY REPRESSION. CONFERENCE WILL BE ABORTIVE UNLESS GOVERNMENT TRULY PENITENT AND ANXIOUS SETTLE THREE THINGS.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7730

[1] Sent in reply to Vijayaraghavachariar's telegram of December 17, 1921, received by Gandhiji on the 18th, which read: ``Local situations best handled after Congress. Can you arrange accommodation for performing *shraddha*. Also remember we can legally elect only acting substitute for Sriyut Das who must remain permanent President throughout year."

[2] The Hindu ceremony of oblation for the spirit of deceased ancestors

[3] Sent in reply to Malaviya's telegram of December 16, 1921; *vide* footnote to"Draft Telegram to Madan Mohan Malaviya", 16-12-1921.

147. TELEGRAM TO C. R. DAS AND ABUL KALAM AZAD[1]

December 19, 1921

C. R. DAS
A. K. AZAD

YOUR WIRE COMPOSITION DATE CONFERENCE SHOULD BE PREVIOUSLY DETERMINED. RELEASE SHOULD INCLUDE PRISONERS CONVICTED FOR"FATWAS"[2] INCLUDING KARACHI ONES. SUBJECT TO THESE CONDITIONS IN ADDITION YOURS WE CAN IN MY OPINION WAIVE HARTAL.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7730

148. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

[*December 19, 1921*][3]

BHAISHREE SHANKERLAL,

I have received your cheque. I take it you will send the balance soon. If you are unable to come send your comments on the resolution.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 11540

149. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

SABARMATI,
December 20, 1921

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

Invitations to the Liberals have been sent only as a matter of courtesy. They can come and witness everything as observers. They do not have the right to enter our organization in any other way. It is

[1] Sent in reply to Das and Maulana Azad's telegram of December 19, 1921, which read:"We recommend calling of hartal on following conditions: 1. Government calling a conference soon consider all questions raised by Congress. 2. Withdrawl of recent Government *communique* and police and magisterial orders. 3. Releasing all prisoners under this new law unconditionally . Reply immediately care of Suprintendent, Presidency Jail, Calcutta."

[2] Decrees of Muslim divines

[3] From the Postmark

another matter if any of them privately holds discussions.

You must have received the tickets by now. The authority of the Reception Committee had to be specially invoked for getting the sanction for these tickets. The Reception Committee had stopped issuing free tickets two months ago. Mr. Jinnah being a sensible man, would be quite useful as an intermediary.

If Dudabhai and Marwadi Master have been elected as delegates and if they ask for the train fare, etc., it would be proper to give it. The money for that purpose should be provided only by the Provincial Committee.

Accommodation can be provided for poor Maharashtrians if they are small in number. But they cannot be given tickets as observers. They would be able to see everything except the business sessions of the Congress. The minimum number of people should be encouraged to attend the business sessions.

The news about the arrest of Jairamdas has been received.[1]

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

150. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[2]

Tuesday, December 20, 1921

. . . I shall be staying in Khadi Nagar[3] from the 22nd instant. You also may stay there. I shall keep you with or near me. Your leg will soon be better here. The climate here is quite suitable for such wounds.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 41

[1] Jairamdas Daulatram was arrested on December 20.

[2] 1894-1951; social worker and author; co-worker of Gandhiji; Secretary, Bombay Congress Committee, 1922-23

[3] The venue of the thirty-sixth session of the Indian National Congress, Ahmedabad

151. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS ON ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

[*December 20, 1921*][1]

Referring to Lord Ronaldshay's speech at the Bengal Legislative Council on Monday last, Mr. Gandhi made the following statement to the correspondent of the Associated Press at his Ashram late in the night:

I have read Lord Ronaldshay's speech in the Bengal Legislative Council. Whilst I appreciate the note of conciliation about it, I cannot help saying that it is most misleading. I do not want to criticize those parts of the speech which lend themselves to criticism. I simply want to say that the present situation is entirely his own and the Viceroy's doing. In spite of my strong 'desire to avoid suspecting the Government of India and the Local Governments of a wish to precipitate a conflict with the people, up to now all that I have heard and read leads me to the conclusion that my suspicion is justified. Whilst I do not wish to deny the existence of some sort of pressure, even intimidation, on the part of individuals, I do wish emphatically to deny that in connection with the phenomenal hartal on the 17th November in Calcutta, there was any intimidation, organized or initiated by or on behalf of the local Congress or the Khilafat Committees. On the contrary, I am certain that the influence exerted by both these bodies was in the direction of avoiding all intimidation. Moral pressure there certainly was and will always be in all big movements, but it must be clear to the simplest understanding that a complete hartal such as Calcutta witnessed on the 17th November would be an impossibility by mere intimidation. But assume that there was intimidation. Was there any reason for disbanding Volunteer Corps, prohibiting public meetings and enforcing laws which are under promise of repeal? Why has no attempt been made to prove a single case of intimidation? It grieves me to have to say that the Governor of Bengal has brought in the discovery of sword-sticks in one place in Calcutta to discredit large public organizations. Who intimidated the people into observing a complete hartal in Allahabad after all the leaders were arrested and in spite of the reported undue official pressure that was exercised upon shopkeepers and *ghariwallas*[2] at that place? Again His Lordship says:

[1] A brief report of the interview appeared in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 21-12-1921, under the date line"Ahmedabad, December 20".

[2] Drivers of carriages

> If we are to assume that this development means there is genuine desire to bring about improvement, there must be a favourable atmosphere. In other words, it will be generally agreed that truce must be an essential preliminary to any possible conference. If responsible leaders of non-co-operation now come forward with the definite assurance that this is the correct interpretation, I should then say we were in sight of such a change of circumstances as would justify Government in reconsidering the position. But words must be backed by deeds. If I were satisfied only that there was a general desire for the conference and that responsible non-co-operation leaders were prepared to take action, then I should be prepared to recommend my Government to take steps in consonance with the altered situation.

This is highly misleading. If wherever the words"non-co-operation leaders" occur, the word"Government" were put in and if the whole of the statement came from a non-co-operator, it would represent the correct situation. Non-co-operators have really to do nothing, for they have precipitated nothing. . They are over-cautious. The disturbance in Bombay[1] was allowed to override their keen desire to take up aggressive civil disobedience but in the present circumstances the phrase"civil disobedience" is really a misnomer. What non- co-operators are doing today, I claim, every co-operator would do tomorrow under similar circumstances. When the Government of India or the local Governments attempt to make our political existence or agitation, no matter how peaceful, an utter impossibility, may we not resist such attempt by every lawful means at our disposal? I cannot imagine anything more lawful or more natural than that we should continue our volunteer organizations purging them of every tendency to become violent and continue also to hold public meetings taking the consequences of such a step. Is it not proof of the law-abiding instinct of hundreds of young men and old men that they have meekly, without offering any defence and without complaining, accepted imprisonment for having dared to exercise their elementary rights in the face of Government prosecution? And so it is the Government which is to prove its genuine desire for a conference and an ultimate settlement. It is the Government which has to arrest the fatal course along which repression is taking it. It is the Government that is to prove to non-co-operators its *bona fides* before it can expect them to take part in any conference. When the Government does that, it will find that there is an absolutely peaceful atmosphere. Non-co-operation, when the Government is not resisting anything

[1] On November 17, 1921

except violence, is a most harmless thing. There is really nothing for us to suspend. We cannot be expected, until there is actual settlement or guarantee of settlement, to ask schoolboys to return to Government schools or lawyers to resume practice or public men to become candidates for the Councils or titleholders to ask for return of titles. In the nature of things, it is, therefore, clear that non-co-operators have to do nothing. Speaking personally, I can certainly say that if there is a genuine desire for a conference, I would be the last person to advise precipitating aggressive civil disobedience, which certainly it is my intention to do immediately I am entirely satisfied that the people have understood the secret of non-violence; and let me say the last ten days' events have shown that the people seem clearly to understand its inestimable value. If then the Government recognizes that non-co-operators mean business and intend to suffer limitlessly for the attainment of their goal, let the Government unconditionally retrace its steps, cancel the notifications about disbandment of volunteer organizations and prohibition of public meetings and release all those men in the different provinces who have been arrested and sentenced for so-called civil disobedience or for any other purpose given under the definition of non-cooperation but excluding acts of violence, actual or intended. Let the Government come down with a heavy hand on every act of violence or incitement to it, but we must claim the right for all time of expressing our opinions freely and educating public opinion by every legitimate and non-violent means. It is, therefore, the Government who have really to undo the grave wrong they have perpetrated and they can have the conference they wish in a favourable atmosphere. Let me also say that so far as I am concerned I want no conference to consider the ways and means of dealing with non-co-operation. The only conference that can at all avail at this stage is a conference called to deal with the causes of the present discontent, namely, the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and swaraj. Any conference again which can usefully sit at the present stage must be a conference that is really representative and not a conference to which only those whom the Government desire are invited.

Young India, 22- l 2-1921

152. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA[1]

[On or after *December 20, 1921*]

REGRET EXCEEDINGLY INABILITY GIVE UNDERTAKING ASKED. NON-CO-OPERATION CAN CEASE ONLY AFTER SATISFACTORY RESULT CONFERENCE. IN NO CASE HAVE I ANY AUTHORITY DECIDE FOR CONGRESS.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7730

153. TELEGRAM TO MAHADEV DESAI[2]

[On or after *December 20, 1921*]

MAHADEV DESAI,
ANAND BHAVAN,
ALLAHABAD

BRAVO, GET AS MANY VOLUNTEER COPYISTS AS POSSIBLE. MULTIPLY ON RONEO.[3] GIVE BRIEFEST NEWS AND INFORMING ARTICLE.. DAILY VOLUNTEERS TO SELL PAPER.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 7748

[1] This was in reply to Malaviya's telegram of December 20, 1921 which read:"implore you wire immediately to following effect: If points mentioned in Das's telegram to you accepted and composition and date conference agreed upon, you will call off hartal and see that pending conclusion of proposed conference non-co-operation activities other than those relating to national education, swadeshi and prohibition of intoxicants without picketing in any case will be suspended and that a real truce will be observed on your side. Such assurance essential in best interests of cause we all hold dear."

[2] This was in reply to Mahadev Desai's telegram of December 20, 1921 which read:"Security forfeited this morning. Notice served says articles"Mrs. Motilal Nehru's Message," and"Let Us Also See It Through" contained words having tendency to interfere administration law order. Next notice wired *Young lndia.* Intend issuing manuscript paper from tomorrow. Wire detailed instruction though hourly expecting arrest."

[3] To bring out the handwritten *Independent; vide"*Notes", 22-12-1921, under the sub-title"The *Independent* Suppressed".

154. TELEGRAM TO SHYAM SUNDER CHAKRAVARTY[1]

[On or after *December 21, 1921*]

MY OPINION EITHER CONFERENCE CAN TAKE PLACE WITHOUT SUSPENSION NON-CO-OPERATION OR IF TRUCE ESSENTIAL TERMS CONFERENCE ITS COMPOSITION ETC. MUST BE PREVIOUSLY SETTLED. WE ARE NOT OFFERING AGGRESSIVE CIVIL DIS-OBEDIENCE IF GOVERNMENT MEAN WELL THEY SHOULD RETRACE STEPS BY UNCONDITIONALLY WITHDRAWING NOTIFICATION DISBANDMENT AND PUBLIC MEETINGS AND DOING PARTIAL REPARATION BY DISCHARGING THOSE UNWARRANTABLY IMPRISONED. WAS IT NOT WICKED ENFORCE LAWS WHICH WERE UNDER PROMISE OF REPEAL? LET THEM PUT DOWN VIOLENCE VEILED OPEN OR INTENDED BUT WE MUST RESIST WITH OUR LIVES THIS WANTON VIOLENT SUPPRESSION FREEDOM OPINION.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7730

155. TELEGRAM TO JAMNADAS DWARKADAS[2]

[On or after *December 21, 1921*]

MY WORD TO YOU ABIDES. PREPARED INDIVIDUALLY UNCON-DITIONALLY ATTEND ANY CONFERENCE. VICEROY PUTTING YOU WRONG TRACK. TELL ME CONCRETE TERMS TO BE OBSERVED ONLY. CANNOT WAIVE VOLUNTARY HARTAL TILL TERMS STATED TELEGRAM[3] DAS SATISFIED.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7753

[1] Sent in reply to Chakravarty's telegram of December 20, 1921, received by Gandhiji on the 21st which read:"Bengal opinion favours opportunity for negotiation which proposed conference will afford giving assurance of real truce. Thought reasonable releases suggested by you may be expected before conference actually meets. Wire advice immediately."

[2] Sent in reply to Jamnadas Dwarkadas's telegram of December 21, 1921, which read:"Can you imagine how heart-breaking it is for me. Cannot express despair in words. Came full of hope only to find that your subsequent telegram to Panditji and Das practically cancelled all you told me. Fail to understand. I venture to believe it is *not* yet too late. Earnestly beg of you to respond to the appeal for truce, in larger interest of country. You of all can not fail to take higher standpoint. Your consent may yet enable us to bring about conference which country at large including large number of your followers desire. Pray wire fully."

[3] Of December 19, 1921

156. LETTER TO N. S. HARDIKAR

[Before *December 22, 1921*][1]

DEAR DR. HARDIKAR,

I would like you to tell the students in America that the best way in which they can serve the country there is to understand the non-violent character of the struggle. The violence which reigns supreme in the world today will only be conquered by non-violence, i.e., love. I would like the students also, when they write about the struggle, to be accurate in their facts and figures, which I often observe, they are not.

Yours sincerely,

M. K GANDHI

From a copy: N. S. Hardikar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

157. NOTES

December 19, 1921

A DELECTABLE ASSORTMENT

Here are titbits I pick up from letters, wires, and reports which have deluged me during the week:

> "Two Mohammedan workers have just returned with heads broken by a zemindar supporter of the Government." Sind.
>
> "Volunteer organizations declared unlawful. Provincial, District, and other Congress offices, searehed throughout Bihar. Papers, account books, cyclostyles, Congress seals, swaraj flags seized. Provincial Committee resolved to continue Volunteer Corps enlistment. Public enthusiastic and cheerful." Bihar.
>
> "Today (17th December) armed police took possession of the Shankar Hall, a religious institution of the Assam *Mahapurushia* sect in a part of which Barpeta Congress Committee established office. The action was without notice to the Shankar Hall authorities. The guarding constables are smoking inside the hall which is strictly prohibited, the wounding religious feeling of the people. The belongings of the Congress were carelessly thrown out by police who have been using it as their dwelling house, thus preventing people from performing religious ceremonies. People are still adhering to

[1] The addressee had quoted this letter in his letter dated 22-12-1921 to Indian residents in America.

non-violence. Work proceeding rapidly." Barpeta, Assam.

"Houses of Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhary, Professor Ruchiram Sahany, Lala Lajpat Rai, Congress Committee offices, Khilafat offices, Sirajdin's house, Sarala Devi's[1] press searehed. Volunteers in Lahore and Amritsar severely beaten by the police. Prisoners reported to be caned in the Central Jail, Lahore."

I have given this assortment to show that swaraj is within easy grasp, if we can survive this treatment. Surviving means bravely facing it without losing temper. Let the administrators of an expiring system have the pleasure of being able to say, `'We tried but failed." When the moth describes its violent revolutions round a lamp, he is surely dying. So is this Government fast disintegrating under the weight of its own violence. What is it, if it be not madness, to seareh private homes and public offices when they must know that there is nothing hidden, when they know that non-co-operators have no secrets? But these searehes are no doubt intended to make the people feel as uncomfortable as they possibly could be made to feel. A correspondent tells me that already the jails are feeling the pressure. The jail authorities were unprepared for the number of men who are being daily sentenced. They have no room and no work for so many. Naturally, therefore, resort must be had to other methods of terrorizing. Consequently, we must expect even assaults with greater frequency. The reported caning is the worst thing yet come to light. I still hope it is untrue. I have taken the bit from *The Tribune* which is one of the most responsible journals that India has the good fortune to possess. This report reminds one of the lashings during the martial law regime in Lahore. It was at first denied but subsequently admitted. The reader will remember Col. Johnson justifying the use of the lash as a deterrent and as a swift method of punishment when imprisonment does not answer.[2] Well, whether the report be true or not, we must prepare for the worst. No suffering is too great a price for freedom. It will be all the dearer when we have paid a heavy price for it.

But worse in some respects is the occupation of a temple in Barpeta. It is a grave and uncalled for provocation. But I must plead

[1] Sarladevi Chowdharani, wife of Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari and niece of Rabindranath Tagore. She and her husband became followers of Gandhiji in 1919.

[2] *Vide*"Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders" On or Before March 25, 1920.

for non-violence even under such grave provocation. Let it be remembered that our pledge is unconditional. We must stand by it at all cost. An intruder cannot defile a temple. Only votaries can by their unworthiness. In the language of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, let us think of the greater temple, namely, India, which has been defiled for so many years by our submission to slavery. And if we have stood that defilement all these long years, let us not be provoked into madness by the illegal encroachments upon local temples and their still greater defilement by the intruders' abuse of them. Is Lord Reading prepared to plead extenuation even in this case on the ground that the officials are engaged in the performance of a very trying duty?

CHITTAGONG'S TOLL

The same day that I received a graphic description of things in Chittagong, I received too a wire advising me that Babu Prasanna Kumar Sen[1] who had sent the letter was also arrested. The number of volunteers arrested there had reached a total of three hundred. The reader will find the following excerpts from Babu Prasanna Kumar Sen's letter to be interesting:

> So long we have been literally at our wit's end to find out the best means of beginning civil disobedience. Following the resolution of the Working Committee at Delhi, we set out carefully educating our people to strict non-violence. Our propagandists were to return by the 8th December, but before the due date the Government of Bengal goaded by the Anglo-Indian extremists went almost mad over the hartal in Calcutta on the 17th November, rushed on to take advantage of forgotten laws and forsaken methods and proclaimed volunteer associations illegal. Thus it has come to our help.
>
> For the last few days national volunteers in batches of not more than five have been going out with grim determination and cheerful anxiety to find themselves in jail. The discipline and self-restraint they are exhibiting are excellent, and if you do not think me guilty of exaggeration, I should not hesitate to declare them in this respect equal to best disciplined soldiers in the battle-fields. Within the last three days total arrests number sixty-three. Volunteers are pouring in from the moffussil and it is believed in no time authorities will find the Chittagong jail too small to accommodate the brave lads.

Thus the Government has declared peace to be unlawful and keepers of it to be criminals. It puts the people through periodical

[1] Lawyer and Secretary District Congress Committee, Chittagong

discipline to observe peace not of their free will but only under restraint.

MIXED MOTIVES

A friend tells me that the Government is suppressing the volunteer organizations because it is not sure that they will always remain peaceful. The correspondent adds:

> They think at present under your mandate they are non-violent, but any day your orders or the orders of your successors may change and the volunteers may be asked to be armed in military fashion—a standing rebel army against the Government army.

The other hypothesis suggested by the same correspondent is that the Government dread this non-violence more than an armed revolt. The police-officers are getting tired and unnerved by being ordered to molest people who do not retaliate. Some of them confess,

> Non-violence is a dreadful foe to meet. Violence we understand and do not mind. But it makes one feel so small to beat a man who does not beat you back.

The fact is that both the suggestions are sound. The Government dread the future and want to guard against the people acquiring the power to offer armed resistance and they dread the rapid evolution of peaceful strength. In short, they want us to be neither men nor women. They would have us belong to the neuter gender.

UNSEXING PROCESS

Belgaum furnishes a forcible illustration of the unsexing process being tried at present in India. A friend has prepared for me the following summary of a report from Belgaum:

> The district authorities of Belgaum have devised an original method of suppressing non-co-operation. Mr. Hayter, the Superintendent of Police, issued a circular calling upon all Sub-Inspectors to use their power to stop the spread of non-co-operation. The Sub-Inspectors on their part circularized the village police that"all non-co-operation speakers should be forcibly suppressed. They should not be allowed to enter villages and should be expelled from villages. And speakers should be prevented from speaking. The Deputy Superintendent of Police hopes that it is enough if police *patels* are given to understand this. Superior officers will render proper assistance in the matter." But when the ex-lawyers in the non-co-operation camp raised the question of law in this matter, the D.S.P. came down with his circular No. 6359 of 1921 saying that section 51(B) of the District Police Act which

empowered the police to prevent the commission of offence was sufficient for his purpose. The D.S.P. further says,"Wherever these N.C.O.[1] gentry open their mouths in public, they commit offences under section 124A or 153A Indian Penal Code. Therefore, police-officers should do everything possible, consistent with law, to render the offence difficult."

The humour of all this was that armed with these notifications, the Sub-Inspector of Bailhongal, a taluka in Belgaum, actually proceeded physically to stop the mouth of one of the Secretaries of the District Congress Committee, when the latter was about to deliver a speech at Bailhongal. Let the Secretary speak:

> . . . When I rose to address the meeting, the Sub-Inspector of police stood in front of me and told me not to speak. Asked for a written order he refused to give one but showed me Circular No. 6359 referred to above . . . . He further told me that if I persisted in speaking, he would physically stop my mouth by laying his hand upon it . . . This being a somewhat novel proceeding . . . I obeyed the order and did not speak. The local Magistrate and *Mamlatdar was* present throughout. . .

Let me complete this lurid picture by adding a summary of events in Allahabad:

> On the 25th November last *a Gazette Extraordinary* was issued by the Government extending the application of the Criminal Amendment Act of 1908 to the U.P. and declaring all Volunteer Corps of Khilafat, Congress and similar institutions having as their object boycott of foreign cloth, picketing or boycott of the Prince's visit as unlawful assemblies.
>
> On the same day, according to the announcement previously made, a meeting of the Provincial Congress Committee was held which resolved to form a Volunteer Board on the lines laid down by the Working Committee. A form of pledge was drawn up and 75 members present at the meeting signed it as volunteers. The first victim of Government wrath was Pandit Harkaran Nath Mishra of Lucknow who had gone to Lakhmipur to address a meeting. Then followed the arrests at Lucknow of Maulana Khaliquzzaman and others of the Congress and Khilafat Committees on the morning of 6th December. On the evening of the same day Pandits Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru[2], Purushottamdas Tandon[3] and others were arrested, who have since been

[1] Non-co-operator

[2] 1889-1964; statesman and writer; India's first Prime Minister, 1947-64; Bharat Ratna; author of *Glimpses of World History, Autobiography*, etc.

[3] 1882-1962; lawyer and eminent leader of U.P.; founder, Hindi Sahitya Sammelan; President, Indian National Congress, 1950; Bharat Ratna. He was at that time Chairman of the Allahabad Municipality.

sentenced to various terms of imprisonment for enlisting as volunteers. Then followed a short pause which was broken on the 11th instant by the arrest of 67 volunteers, mostly while painting a placard on the walls of Anand Bhavan[1] requesting the people not to participate in the Prince's reception. The climax, however, was reached on the 13th instant when the whole Provincial Congress Committee was besieged by the police while in session, and the whole body of members excepting the two secretaries and two others were arrested. The Committee sat at 1 p.m. and continued the meeting till 9 in the evening. At about half past five, the police under one D.S.P. named Mr. Fergusson arrived with some six motor vans for carrying prisoners, entered the premises of the Committee and blocked all passages. They searehed the office till 9. When, the meeting having terminated, the members informed the D.S.P. of their intention to leave, the D.S.P. went over to the meeting and demanded the proceedings to be shown to him and finding a resolution therein recommending all district and tehsil Congress Committees to organize Volunteer Corps, declared that an offence had been committed under the Criminal Law Amendment Act. He then asked all present one by one whether they were members of the committee and had supported the resolution. All the members having replied in the affirmative, he arrested fifty-five of them including all the prominent workers of the province.

During the search B. Shitalasahai editor of the *Swaraj* was kicked, boxed and otherwise assaulted by Mr. Fergusson so much so that blood came out of his skin. But he bore all that patiently. Several others also were badly treated and pushed and assaulted by the same officer. Everybody kept his temper. There was no search or arrest warrant produced, nor did the officers have their bodies searched before beginning the search. All papers, records and seals of the Provincial Congress Committee have been seized by the police and put under sealed locks.

It is evident to me that this utter disregard of law and decency is not an individual act but is part of a deliberate plan to suppress all healthy public life, to provoke popular violence and then issue a much enlarged edition of Jallianwala. With the best intention to put a charitable construction on the series of acts described above, I have been unable to come to any other conclusion,

VICEROY'S SHARE

I am sorry that I suspect Lord Reading of complicity in the plot to unman India for eternity. A friend has suggested an alternative. He says that whilst Lord Reading must be held responsible for the threats used by him in his recent utterances, he might be quite unaware of the

[1] Motilal Nehru's residence

lawlessness of the subordinate officials or that he must have become helpless, the subordinate officials having simply disregarded his wishes to be strictly within the law. I must reject both the interpretations. Lord Reading, if he is trying legitimately to suppress popular lawlessness, must study and regulate the development of his campaign which he will not even allow to be called repression. If his subordinates being interested parties have gone out of hand, he must forthwith resign, at least publicly disown and condemn such illegalities and assaults and not attempt to excuse them on the flimsy plea of"trying times". I have myself suggested a possible explanation. His Excellency sympathizes with our aspirations, and knowing his own countrymen, realizes that we have got to be severely tried before they think of coming to terms; he is, therefore, trying and directing repression to see how far we are capable of bearing it and, therefore, sincere in our desire for freedom, and then having made out a case for us his clients, desires to compel a settlement. I am afraid, however, that I have to state the case only to be rejected. Human nature does not work quite that way. Lord Reading is not so entirely selfless, and if he is, he cannot possibly remain in charge of a Government which under its present constitution can give no relief to the people. It is, therefore, with the greatest reluctance that I am forced to conclude that Lord Reading is trying to emasculate India by forcibly making free speech and popular organization impossible. I am prepared to believe that in all this he thinks that he is doing good to us and that we are not yet fit to be called men and women. He will soon have his eyes opened. We must not quarrel with his belief. Nor need we feel anxious about it. Let us acquit ourselves like men and women and we shall find that everything and everybody become favourable to us.

ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

The pages of *Young India* are rarely occupied with an examination of what rulers think. It is an idle speculation. But as the papers are discussing, advising and debating upon such a conference, I have considered it appropriate to devote some space to an examination of the mentality of the chief actor in the drama now being played in India. In my opinion, such a conference is bound to prove abortive till Lord Reading is disabused of the idea that non-co-operation is confined to a few misguided zealots. If he wants co-operation and contentment, he must placate non-co-operators. He must see that non-co-operation is not the disease, it is the chief

symptom of a disease. The disease consists in a triple injury to the people of India. And no palliative will soothe the patient so long as the centre of the disease is not tackled. Outside the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and the grant of swaraj in accordance with a scheme framed by the chosen represen-tatives of the people, repression is the easiest and the shortest way to a settlement. No Viceroy can, I freely confess, possibly allow things to drift. I admit that he must suppress civil disobedience as he would an armed rebellion unless he is prepared to remedy the evil towards which the disobedience is directed. Abstract truth has no value unless it incarnates in human beings who represent it by proving their readiness to die for it. Our wrongs live because we only pretend to be their living representatives. The only way we can prove our claim is by readiness to suffer in the discharge of our trust. We are on a fair way to proving ourselves worthy of it. But I hardly think we can yet claim to have given conclusive proof. Who knows if we shall not be found wanting when imprisonment means utter discomfort and even lashes? Who knows how many of us are ready to mount the gallows?

In my opinion, therefore, a conference at which the Government is represented will be useful only when the latter has tried the non-co-operators to its satisfaction and measured their strength in quantity and quality.

But since non-co-operation is a method of cultivating public opinion, I would certainly welcome a conference of co-operators and non-co-operators. I am sure that they want the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs redressed, I am aware that they want freedom for the country as much as non-co-operators. It has given me much pleasure to see almost every moderate journal condemning the present repressive policy of the Government. I had expected nothing less. And I know that if non-co-operators keep self-restraint, do not become violent, do not abuse their opponents, every liberal will become a non-co-operator. Indeed even Englishmen will veer round to the non-co-operators and the Government will, as it then must, capitulate. That is the expected and intended working of the method of non-co-operation. It reduces friction to a minimum. And if today it seems to have produced a contrary effect, it is because non-co-operators have only now begun to see that it is not enough to have been fairly non-violent in deed. It is equally necessary to be non-violent in word and thought. It is unlawful for a non-co-operator even to wish ill to his enemies. What our opponents dread most is

undisciplined violence breaking out under cover of non-violence. They do not believe in our sincerity, i.e., of the vast majority of us. They see in it nothing but chaos and perdition. This repression, therefore, has come as a blessing in disguise. It is showing them and us that we have acquired influence over the populace to keep it under check even under provoking circumstances. Our restraint has not yet been tried long enough to be considered permanent. We are still in a state of uncertainty. The people in Sialkot did stray away from the line, be it even so slightly. We have had so many such little jerks that we do not possess the sense of security required to inspire an outsider's faith in the movement. I would, therefore, welcome every opportunity of meeting the co-operators on neutral ground or for showing the *bona fides* of non-co-operators. The Government has shown itself in true colours by declaring its intention to suppress non-co-operation as such. It was on safe ground so long as it sought to put down violence or incitement to or approval of it. I have, therefore, no doubt that the co-operators will rise to a man against the Government madness—this vain attempt to stifle expression of opinion and agitation for redress of grievances. But I warn our friends against entertaining the idea of a conference with the Government till they find that it is truly penitent and means to appreciate the popular side. Let there be no conference on the boycott of welcome or the right of holding public meetings or forming associations of volunteers or others so long as they have no violent purpose. Boycott of the welcome will and must continue so long as the people's wishes are flouted, and public meetings and associations are elementary rights on which there can be no parleying. We must fight for them.

Let it be understood that non-co-operators are not offering civil disobedience that they had intended to. Their insistence on calling and attending public meetings and forming peaceful volunteer associations ought not to be dignified by the name of civil disobedience. Non-co-operators are merely on the defensive. They have not taken, as they certainly intend to take, the offensive as soon as they are fairly certain of non-violent atmosphere. The government has obliged them by anticipating them and providing them with a test of their own capacity.

December 20

The Government must have thought that Bombay having stopped picketing of liquor shops, all other places would necessarily follow suit. But Poona has shown that it is a right that cannot be abandoned without good cause. As soon as orders were issued to prohibit picketing, Mr. Kelkar[1] says:

> We decided to break the orders and this morning notice has been sent to the District Magistrate that we shall even today proceed to break the order at a place and time specified. Myself, my son and Messrs Bhopatkar, Gokhale, Paranjpye and about 16 others will form the first batch. Succession will, I am sure, be provided for by those who are left behind. Let us see how far Poona gives an account of itself in this matter.

The party went, they were arrested, their names taken, and they were let off. Fresh parties have since been regularly going with the same result. Of course Maharashtra will never lag behind in suffering. It possesses the hardiest body of workers in India. It is remarkable how in every province the front rank leaders have run the boldest risks. But whilst Mr. Kelkar and his party had not the good fortune to be imprisoned, the Ajmer people fared better. On prohibition notices being issued, the workers regarding picketing as a"religious right" took up the challenge. Pandit Chand Karan Sarda says:

> *Swaraj Sena*[2] volunteers were posted on all liquor shops. The Government also posted its police force and mounted *sawars* on each shop with orders to arrest the pickets. As soon as one batch was arrested, the reserve volunteers took their place. The police arrested only 17 volunteers who were summarily tried and sentenced to 4 months and 3 weeks' rigorous imprisonment.

They offered no defence. No more arrests seem to have been made at Ajmer. Where picketing can be practised without violence and ill will against the liquor dealer or the drinker, it is a moral duty. That it has advanced the cause of temperance as nothing else has, no one can deny. Only the other day at Karamsad[3] the Christian and Hindu *Dheds* gratefully informed me that as a result of picketing they had banished drink from their midst. Bombay has forfeited the right for the time being at any rate because of its wanton and malicious destruction of Parsi liquor shops and its disgraceful behaviour towards

[1] N. C. Kelkar (1872-1947); political leader from Maharashtra; author and journalist

[2] Swaraj Army

[3] Gandhiji was at Karamsad on December 17

Parsis and Christians on the fateful 17th November and the two following days. I hope, however, that wherever picketing is practised, it will be entrusted to men or women of unimpeachable character and carried on in the friendliest spirit. We do not want to make people virtuous by force.

LIBEL ON MAHARASHTRA PARTY

Apropos of Mr. Kelkar's letter, I must not omit to mention that the criticism passed against the leaders who went to Akola was most undeserved. Here is what Mr. Kelkar says in the letter from which I have quoted:

> Before concluding I wish earnestly to repudiate the most unkind charge levelled against me and the Akola Conference. Personally I was a mere witness and nothing more than a Regulator of Debate. None of the propositions passed or rejected had my full concurrence so far as their wording went. I was negotiating for a compromise amendment, but whatever one may say about the Conference at Akola, I want you to believe that the Conference having been decided upon in July or August last was held as mere matter of course, and it is cruel to say we joined the Conference because we thought it a good opportunity for airing our views as the ranks of leaders were being depleted owing to repression, or what is worse still, for saving our skin.

I heartily endorse every word of what Mr. Kelkar says. It should be remembered that the letter was written when he was just expecting to be imprisoned.

SELLING KHADI

The lead given by Shrimatis Vasantidevi Das[1] and Urmiladevi[2] in selling khadi from house to house and hawking it in streets has been quickly taken up in the other parts of the country. Shrimati Sarala Devi writes:

> I have to go immediately to the city to arrange to send 40 ladies in 20 groups under two volunteers each to sell khadi in 20 lanes.

In Madras too they are organizing similarly. I cannot conceive any better occupation for ladies especially, besides, hand-spinning than popularizing khadi by hawking it themselves. It is fine training in throwing off false pride or false modesty. And it is a most harmless challenge to the police to arrest them if they dare. But if the practice is to become common, it must be regulated by grownup ladies of position and without any bluster. Needless to say, there should be no undue pressure put upon the public to buy. We must not sicken them.

[1] Wife of C. R. Das
[2] Vasantidevi's sister

Our business is merely to take this most useful national ware to their doors and give them the choice of buying or rejecting it.

A WORTHY WIFE

> Gladly inform husband arrested this morning. He asked me to wire you that he went filled with joy. Hope I shall continue his work to my utmost capacity. Aligarh is peaceful yet fully energetic. Khurshed Khwaja.

I tender my congratulations to Khurshed Begum on her having sent such a noble message just as her husband was going to jail. Khwaja Saheb[1] is a barrister brought up in the lap of luxury. I have known him as a dandy conscious of his handsome features which he tried to set off with the finest fitting European clothes he could buy in the market, and I know him now as practically a fakir. He is one of the bravest and the truest of Mussulmans. He is as good a lover of India as he is of Islam. When Maulana Mahomed Ali could not possibly reside permanently at the National Muslim University, he fell back upon Khwaja Saheb who left a growing practice in Patna to serve the University. I know that Khwaja Saheb implicitly believes in non-violence but he also believes in deathless courage and knows the art of dying. Before the Rowlatt Act was born and when with some Mussulman friends I was thinking of embarking upon satyagraha for the purpose of compelling the release of the Ali Brothers[2], I asked Khwaja Saheb how many Mussulmans would join and be prepared to die without killing. He said at once,

> Shwaib[3] is certainly one. He is our Bayard *sons peur et sans reproche.* And probably, I am half of Shwaib. I am sorry I cannot give you many more names.

This talk took place in 1917 or 1916 but I have not forgotten the earnestness and the truthfulness and the humility that were written in those noble features as he was speaking the few sentences. Times have changed. Khwaja, I have no doubt, is a whole man and many more Mussulmans have proved their bravery as was expected by Khwaja Saheb. No wonder his proud wife does not hesitate to say:"Hope I shall continue his work to my utmost capacity." Let not the reader laugh incredulously. I know the Aligarh boys. They will twine themselves round Khurshed Begum as perhaps they did not in the case of Khwaja. When a pure woman adds bravery and mother liness to her purity, she becomes at once a magnet in a way no man

[1] Khwaja Abdul Majid, then Vice-Chancellor of the Aligarh University
[2] Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali
[3] Shuaib Qureshi, editor of *New Era*

can. Dr. Mahomed Alam will look after the brains of the boys, but she will capture their hearts and turn them into gold. And what is more, as the students have to become masters of the art of spinning, Khurshed Begum, I doubt not, will out-distance both her husband and Dr. Mahomed Alam in teaching that art. Begam Mahomed Ali has collected monies where her husband might have failed. I have already given my opinion that she is a better speaker than the Maulana. Let me take the reader into the secret that it was Shrimati Vasantidevi and Urmiladevi who set Bengal on fire. I have before me a letter showing that the visit of the three ladies and their arrest struck the imagination of Bengal as the big sacrifice of Deshbandhu Das had not. It could not be otherwise. For woman is sacrifice personified. When she does a thing in the right spirit, she moves mountains. We have misused our women. We have possibly neglected them. But the spinning-wheel, thank God, is transforming them. And when all the leaders and others who are in the good books of the Government have been honoured with imprisonment, I have not the faintest doubt that the women of India will finish the work left by men and they will do it far more gracefully than men.

BABU BHAGWANDAS[1]

When Professor Kripalani and his pupils were arrested, I said to friends,"How nice if Babu Bhagwandas is arrested. After all the Professor does not belong to Banaras. But Babu Bhagwandas won't be." I did not then know that Babu Bhagwandas was the author of the very cautious leaflet which Professor Kripalani was hawking. The next day his son sent the joyful message[2] that Babuji was arrested and quite happy over the arrest. Babu Bhagwandas is a non-co-operator who has been always non-violent in thought, word and deed. He is a Sanskrit scholar. He is a deeply religious man. He is a zemindar. If Mrs. Besant[3] was the creator of the Central Hindu College, Babu Bhagwandas was its maker. His arrest, therefore, constitutes a sacrifice entirely pleasing to God. And the holy city could not possibly offer any better sacrifice. Babu Bhagwandas, as the readers of newspapers are aware, was trying to get the Congress to formulate a scheme for

[1] Scholar and public worker; took leading part in establishing Kashi Vidyapith, a national university at Varanasi

[2] *Vide* footnote to"Telegram to Sri Prakasa", on or after 15-12-1921.

[3] Annie Besant (1847-1933); President of the Theosophical Society; President, Indian National Congress, 1917

swaraj. He has been labouring hard for it. He has sent me a long list of suggestive questions which I have not been able to handle owing to the recent developments. His one anxiety was to avoid violence. If his arrest does not betray an anxiety on the part of the Government to invite violence, I do not know what can. Fortunately, God often overrules man's plans and every event indicates more and more certainly that He is overruling the plans of this Government. The people are calm in spite of it.

REMARKABLE PROOF

A remarkable proof of the fact is furnished by the following[1] from Amritsar by Lala Girdhari Lal[2]:

> Yesterday, 14th instant, 21 Punjab national volunteers passed in procession starting from Chawk Farid through Hall Bazar preaching use of khadi. Mr. Beaty, D.S.P., and M. Fakir Hussain, Sub-Inspector, asked volunteers to disperse. Volunteers offered themselves for arrest but refused to disperse. At this Mr. Beaty and M. Fakir Hussain began to beat volunteers mercilessly with cane and hunter. . . . Faces and bodies of volunteers bear marks of severe blows. Sub-Inspector used filthy abuse against Khilafat volunteers and public bore this cowardly attack silently and calmly. Volunteers only said that if police consisted of brave men, they must either arrest or shoot them (volunteers). . . . These courageous and bleeding volunteers again started swadeshi propaganda a little further up. . . . In spite of this grave provocation all is calm and quiet.

He thus amplifies the details in a letter[3] from which I take the following:

> The sight was most provoking. What I admire most is that the volunteers undauntedly began their procession again with smiling faces although their bodies were smarting with the pain of the blows and cuts of the hunter. Many feel the pain today and are not likely to be free from it for some days.
>
> I rang up D.C. on the phone and asked him under whose orders and under what law were the volunteers beaten so shamefully. He pleaded ignorance of this severe beating. D. C. said. that he had given orders that volunteers' processions were to be dispersed as Government had declared National Volunteers Corps also as unlawful. He further said that his orders were to use minimum force. When I informed him that not minimum but maximum force

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

[2] President, District Congress Committee, Amritsar

was used, he said he would enquire. I wanted to know why he did not enforce the law and arrest the volunteers. He replied that his orders were otherwise. They do not wish to arrest ordinary volunteers.

In Lahore on 13th a like treatment was meted out to the volunteers. . . . they were beaten on their backs with the butt-end of the police batons. Later on the volunteers were set free in batches one or two miles away from the city at two in the night. Their coats were removed. In this severe winter of the Punjab nothing could be more inhuman. . . . I learn that the the PunjabGovernment has sent circulars to all District Officers to disperse volunteer processions by force but not to arrest them. It is done solely to humiliate as also with a view to provoke violence. . . . So far people have observed peace.

God will soon reward the patience of the Punjabis who are bearing their sufferings in the bravest manner. What is happening in the Punjab we may expect throughout India, if the supply continues and there is no room in the Government prisons for so many prisoners. In a war of give and take, too, we would have to sacrifice many lives. When we have only to give, I have no doubt that the toll will not be, cannot be, so heavy as when we take and give. This is a commercial view to take of a sacred act. But it is a true view and I see no harm in our realizing that by refraining from retaliation we make ourselves responsible for the least possible human suffering.

A SPOTLESS SACRIFICE

Police has just arrested me under 124A. Thanks to Almighty for this privilege for humble service to motherland. I go without rancour or any other feelings but that of duty done truthfully and firmly for India's liberation. I feel that I shall be serving the country not less usefully and joyfully inside the prison walls than I have endeavoured to do outside them.

Thus wires Jairamdas[1]. His letter received the same day informed me of the arrests of Mr. Vesumal Tejumal, Maulvi Fatteh Mahomed and Maulvi Syed Abbas all three prominent workers. These cases have brought up the total arrests to 95 for Sindh. I consider Jairamdas's a spotless sacrifice. I know that he had never harboured ill will even in thought, a claim that cannot be advanced for many. He has been ever punctiliously truthful and self effacing. The Government must know that Jairamdas would never encourage or contemplate violence. He

[1] Jairamdas Daulatram (b. 1892); Congress leader from Sind; joined Non-co-operation movement in 1920; Minister of Food and Agriculture, Government of India; Governor of Assam. He was then Secretary, Sind Provincial Congress Committee.

has been ever mindful to yield voluntary obedience to the laws of the state. He knows, therefore, the meaning of civil disobedience. But the only use the state can make of Jairamdas is to imprison him. It is such imprisonments that hasten the advent of swaraj in the religious sense of the term.

DOINGS IN DELHI

The sacrifice that Delhi is offering is also in the interest of peace. I am publishing the following[1] from Dr. Ansari[2] to show what extraordinary precautions Delhi is taking to keep up a peaceful atmosphere:

> On the 14th no volunteers were sent. On the morning of the 15th, 43 submitted themselves for arrest. . . .
>
> On the 16th 2 batches of volunteers comprising 40 and 46 respectively marched to Daryaganj Police Station and Sabzimandi but were not arrested in spite of their repeated requests. . . .
>
> On the 16th there was an unusual display of force on the part of the authorities. . . . There were also mounted police, a number of sergeants, the D.C., the S.P. and the D.S.P., one Magistrate and several Indian Police-officers stationed at the Kotwali. All the banks were guarded by the police and a number of police pickets were placed at different places. A crowd had gathered in front of the Kotwali as crowds always do when they see such display of force, but our men in mufti kept them on the move and perfectly peaceful. But . . . some sergeants became aggressive in dispersing the crowd and used their whips in beating the harmless people. The Indian police showed marked restraint. . . but the sergeants' assaults on the people caused a number of serious injuries to them.
>
> In spite of this violence the people showed a calm courage and did not retaliate. . . .
>
> . . . we ascertained that the cause of all this display of force was the false rumour. . . that Hakim Ajmal Khan Saheb[3] was going with a force of one thousand volunteers on the 16th.
>
> We have changed our plans for the future, when we propose to employ the volunteers in their normal duties regarding the distribution of charkhas, the collection of yarn from the different quarters, the production and sale of khadi.

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

[2] Dr. M.A. Ansari (1880-1927); physician and politician; President, Indian National Congress, 1927

[3] 1865-1927; physician and politician; President, Indian National Congress, 1921

> The fact that they have refused to arrest the volunteers is a clear proof of our moral victory, but we do not propose to rest on our oars. There is a vigorous movement set on foot in the city to enrol every adult male in the N.V.C.[1] We hope soon that every shopkeeper and his assistants, every tonga-driver, every coolie and cartman, in fact every single inhabitant of Delhi will appear dressed in the swadeshi uniform of N.V.C. even when following his daily vocation . . .

The letter exhibits a religious spirit about the manner of conducting the campaign in the teeth of the hooliganism of the authorities. The infection of Lahore and Amritsar is evidently spreading. The unprovoked assaults by custodians of order reported from Amritsar, Lahore and now Delhi, in the north, and their equally wanton behaviour in Calcutta, in the east, are putting a strain upon peaceful nature beyond endurance. Can anything but a fine religious spirit account for the calmness that is being sustained among the people of India?

REMARKABLE PLEDGE

To show the thorough nature of the work of ensuring peace that is being done in Delhi, I extract the following remarkable pledge from Mr. Asaf Ali's[2] letter which he wrote when he offered himself and fifty-two others for arrest:

> With full consciousness of the omnipresence and omniscience of Gods I declare that it shall be my solemn duty, (I) to attain swaraj by peaceful means, (2) to preserve and foster unity between the members and followers of the various communities and religions of India, (3) to regard no class or community as contemptible or untouchable, (4) to sacrifice life and property for the honour and interests of my country, (5) to wear clothes made of cloth hand-spun and hand-woven in the country, (6) to obey without demur the orders of the officers, (7) so long as I am not discharged from the Corps, to observe myself and persuade others to observe nonviolence (for as long as the Congress continues to follow this policy) and (8) finally, I will cheerfully bear privations and troubles which may confront me during my connection with the National Volunteers Corps and neither I nor any of my dependents and relations expect any compensation.

THE TOLL FROM DRAVIDA LAND

Madras and Andhra are slowly but surely creeping up and

[1] National Volunteer Corps

[2] 1888-1953; barrister and nationalist Muslim politician; took a leading part in the Khilafat Movement; India's Ambassador to the United States of America

I should not be surprised if the Dravidians come up to the level of Bengal which has now 1,500 imprisonments to its credit. Erode alone has done bravely in the matter of temperance Mr. Ramaswamy Naiker[1] has, therefore, been rewarded with one month's simple imprisonment. During the past fortnight, thirty-seven convictions have taken place already in this little place. And now Mrs. Naiker and Mr. Naiker's sister are to take up picketing. The Criminal Law Amendment Act has just been put in force there, Lord Willingdon[2] has stated his policy. Like Sir Harcourt Butler[3] he too wants to maintain the respect for law and order. We may any day, therefore, expect a perfect hurricane of arrests where at present only a breeze seems to be blowing. They are conducting Mr. Rajagopalachari's and Mr. Subramania Shastri's case under summons. The trial is practically finished. Rajagopalachari has asked for the highest penalty. I hope that the Magistrate will oblige him and transfer from friends to jailers the care of his ailing body which is causing anxiety to his fellow-workers. Like Pandit Motilalji he has been wearing away his body ever since the commencement of non-co-operation. Dr. Ansari is now the sole surviving Secretary of the Congress and I have no doubt that he will not be long getting his reward for meritorious service. The Government is preparing the country for the final declaration that the Congress and the Khilafat Committee are unlawful organizations, in which case everyone connected with them must render himself liable to arrest. Nor will such a declaration be a strange procedure. The Congress, if it is allowed to continue its peaceful career, must supplant the present Government, a contingency the latter cannot contemplate with equanimity. The Congress, if it is worth existence, cannot depart by a hair's breadth from its course and if it survives the present test, it will do so not by the sufferance of the Government but by the weight of its own unrivalled influence upon the masses. Viewed in that light, the survival of the Congress after the Government's challenge is swaraj.

ATTENDANCE A CRIME

A telegram from the Lahore Publicity Board says that the Deputy Commissioner of Hazara District has warned the delegates

[1] E. V. Ramaswami Naiker, a Congressman who later left the Congress and founded the Dravida Kazhagam

[2] Governor of Madras, 1919-24; Viceroy of India, 1931-36

[3] Governor of U.P.

elected to the Congress that"if they attend the Congress, they are liable to be expelled from the District under Section 36 Frontier Crime Regulations." I hope that the Congress delegates in Hazara will take up the challenge and now regard it a point of honour to attend the Congress in their full strength. The Hazara Commissioner's action is in keeping with the raiding of the Congress and Khilafat offices in Bengal, the United Provinces and Assam. The unity of method betrays unity of design and, therefore, pre-arranged plan to kill the movement by killing the Congress and the Khilafat Committees.

RESPONSE FROM BIHAR

Thus runs a wire[1] from Patna:

Another telegram reads:

> Eighteen batches volunteers paraded town 10 to 4 Monday chiefly law-courts. Appealing litigants send cases panchayats. One prominent *vakil* being requested follow example, other *vakils* abused, slapped two volunteers Habib and Abdul Majid who remained perfectly non-violent continued work more firmly. People realizing the truth of non-violence. Use of khadi getting general. Preparing for *further* civil disobedience.

Bihar, the land of Janaka[2] and Sita, the land of perhaps the most afflicted and docile people in all India, is a land of sorrows. Bihar is a province which has kept most non-violent. It has shown splendid results in most items of non-co-operation. Whereas eighteen months ago, the charkha and the use of khadi were unknown to Bihar, its villages today contain thousands of them, and thousands of men and women now habitually wear khadi. It contains both among its Hindus and Mussulmans, probably, the most selfless workers throughout India who work silently and without bragging. No one has uttered a whisper about the sincerity of its leaders. And yet even Bihar has come in for this ruthless interference with peaceful activity.

But it is all for the good of the country. The Bihari will feel all the stronger for the imprisonments, the kicks and the slaps if they are borne ungrudgingly, valiantly and without ill will. Let the people be tried as to their faith in non-violence, in khadi, in temperance, in avoidance of litigation, in self-restraint and self purification. That would be also our fitness for swaraj.

[1] Not reproduced here; it reported arrests of a dozen leading men besides 150 volunteers

[2] Father of Sita in the epic *Ramayana*

THE "INDEPENDENT" SUPPRESSED

It will be remembered that immediately after Mr. George Joseph's arrest when a new declaration was made by Mr. Mahadev Desai as publisher and printer, a security of Rs. 2,000 was demanded. Under Panditji's advice, the security demanded was lodged and the paper reappeared after a day's suspension. The security was deposited on the 7th instant. It was forfeited on the 20th. There was no change of tone or policy, for, there was nothing to change. The *Independent* was edited by a barrister who wrote always under restraint and with dignity. On Mr. Joseph's incarceration it was taken up by Mr. Mahadev Desai with whose style the readers of *Young India* are not unfamiliar. The security was forfeited because of its articles,"Let Us Also See It Through" and"Mrs. Nehru's Message". The first contains a list of volunteers and the second is a balanced review of the position. But the local Government contend that the articles"contain words which have a tendency to interfere with the administration of the law and with the maintenance of law and order." The law we know, the notification of disbandment; the order too we know, the prohibition of the holding of public meetings. And the *Independent* has certainly, in common with the whole of the nationalist Press, encouraged interference with such law and such order.

But the Government will soon find out its mistake. The *Independent* may die but the spirit that it has evoked among the people cannot die. The *Independent* may not be printed but it can be written. If the editor is a trustee for his employers, he has also his own individuality to keep. Mahadev Desai, the editor, lives, although the printer in him may sleep for a while. And I am hoping that he will now write his paper instead of printing it. The readers will benefit by the enforced condensation of news and editorial notes. For multiplying copies I suggest the use of roneo, cyclostyle or chromograph. And if the law or its arbitrary interpretation permits the Government to confiscate even a cyclostyle or a roneo, Mr. Desai's pen can still serve the country until he himself is confiscated and lodged in the Central Jail of Allahabad. Nationalist Press proprietors beware. They may not abandon their mission till the bottom penny has been spent up in the cause.

A "HOPEFUL SIGN"

There is no doubt that all this repression has stirred the lawyers and the students throughout India. Many lawyers in Calcutta would

have nothing to do with the reception to the Viceroy. Many Howrah lawyers have suspended practice. The Bar Association of the Punjab has lodged an energetic protest against the trial of Lala Lajpat Rai and others in jail and against the prohibition of attendance at the trial save to a few members of Lalaji's family. Many more pleaders in Bihar and Assam have announced suspension of practice. From Delhi, Dr. Ansari writes:

> The most hopeful sign of all is the fact that our work has produced good effect on the lawyers and well-to-do people. They have formed all association for the assistance of the relatives of those who have gone to jail. Many of them have subscribed liberally from their income. So far they have arranged for a monthly sum of over Rs. 2,000 for this purpose. They have done this without any request or desire on our part, purely from a humanitarian point of view.

STUDENTS PROTEST

As with the lawyers so with the students. Many Bengal colleges are practically empty. Some students have struck for a period, others indefinitely. The Dayal Singh College students resolved to use khadi dress only from the 16th instant and to boycott the welcome to the Prince. They have also voted congratulations to the leaders who are undergoing imprisonment. It is a step in the right direction that the students of the Dayal Singh College have taken. Even if the student class have not been touched by the moving appeal of Shrimati Vasantidevi to leave their colleges, they are expected to take note of and give their due share in the mighty movement that is daily gathering force. Let them ponder over items like this taken at random from the Calcutta Press:

> Two boys, Ramji. Prasad of 9 and Haribans Missir of 10 years of Chataria National School were caned mercilessly in the presence of the District Magistrate under his order by his orderly for reciting the *fatwa* regarding Government service but the brave lads asked the Magistrate to do what he could to the point of bending their backs to break the bones and said that even then they would not give up reciting the *fatwa*.

LANGUAGE OF THE HEART

This fire of suffering has brought forth some fine thoughts clothed in beautiful language. I must confess that I have seen nothing like it before in all the ponderous speeches and addresses which have tickled our ears or delighted our intellect. Whether one looks at Lalaji's manifesto, Pandit Motilalji's message, or Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's, one cannot fail to be struck with their beauty. But no

one has been more touching, more fervent, more prolific than the President elect. He has poured forth short, crisp messages that have come straight from the heart. I wish some enterprising publisher will collect all these messages and publish them in book form. But I cannot resist the temptation of culling two passages from his message to the students given after hearing of two years' rigorous imprisonment awarded to Professor Jitendralal Banerjee. The first is a striking quotation from Jiten Babu's own vigorous statement before the court. Here it is:

> If it is a sin to have demanded liberty for my countrymen with full and passionate intensity of soul, then I have sinned grievously, sinned beyond pardon or penitence and I rejoice that I have so sinned. If it is an offence to have asked my people to shake off the fetters of foreign servitude that degrades and dwarfs our humanity, then I am one of the most offending souls alive, and I rejoice that God gave me the courage and hardihood to commit such an offence. And as the All-merciful gave me courage and strength in the past to speak out the truth that is within me, so I hope that He will give me endurance in the future to go through the agony of man's unrighteous persecution.

And here are the closing paragraphs of Deshbandhu's appeal:

> What is Jitendralal Banerjee? I ask the students of Calcutta to realize the truth of his life. Words cannot convey it. The work that he did, the life which he lived, the qualities of his head and heart, all culminating in the grand sacrifice which he had the courage to make—these are more eloquent than any words that I can employ.
>
> I ask again, what is Jitendralal Banerjee? I wish with all the craving of my heart the students of Calcutta knew how to answer this question. He had given his life for the well-being of his dear devoted students. Are there none now to tell us the meaning of his sacrifice not by speaking angry words, nor by shedding idle tears but by taking up the cause he loved so well and by strengthening that cause by their own sacrifice?
>
> Merely existing is not living. I wish I could say students of Calcutta were living as men should live, as Jitendralal Banerjee lived. Now that his body is imprisoned, is there no one amongst the students of Calcutta who has the heart to hear the call of his soul?

Let no one underrate the importance of these appeals as mere emotion. Let no one belittle or scoff henceforth at Bengal's emotion. Bengal has moved out to the call of the country in a manner not expected even by me with all my staunch faith in Bengal. All the response that is being made is not confined to Calcutta merely, nor to Chittagong but to every place in Bengal where repression has gone. It is not froth. One does not undergo suffering by empty appeals or empty emotionalism. Bengal has proved the solidity of her emotion.

AN INSISTENT MESSAGE

Max Muller has somewhere written that truth must be repeated till it has gone home even as we are all enjoined to repeat not vainly but deliberately the name of God till we realize Him. The Sikh Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee which seems to possess a most efficient publicity bureau, has sent the second message of Sardar Khadak Singh from his imprisonment. It is almost a verbal repetition of the first. The Sardar Saheb tells the *Khalsa* that every Sikh should wear khadi, take simple food. Non-violence is the key to success. He further expects that all members of the Akali *jathas*[1] in particular and the Sikh public in general shall at once give up the use of tea. What the Sardar Saheb says is but too true. High thinking is not possible without simple living. If we are to identify ourselves with the masses, we have to live as simply as is consistent with health. There can be no other cloth for us but khadi. A simple life conduces to non-violence. I have not been able to understand the Sardar's insistence on the abstinence from tea. Whether tea has grown on the Sikhs more than any other drink, I do not know. I should have expected an exhortation to give up intoxicants of all kinds. But perhaps some Sikh friends will explain the stress laid on the disuse of tea.

CHARKHA IN THE MADRAS COUNCIL

The spinning-wheel was the subject of a debate in the Madras Council when one of the members introduced a resolution recommending that the Government should introduce improved patterns of spinning-wheels and stimulate hand-spinning and hand-weaving. The resolution was thrown out after a full discussion, 23 members voting in its favour. The arguments that were advanced against the resolution were that"khadi was nothing better than gunny and that no man of common sense would prefer it to cheap mill-made cloth," that"in this age of machinery, it would be criminal to go back to hand-spinning," that"hand-spun yarn was weak," and lastly, that"the spinning-wheel had been found to be economically unsound and that therefore public money ought not to be spent on it". All these arguments were sufficiently met by the advocates of the wheel in the Council. But the point of interest was that the doctrine of economic unsoundness of the wheel, enunciated by the Minister in charge of the Department in question, was opposed by the economics expert of the Madras Government, Dr. Slater, who appealed to the Minister"to keep an open mind" in the matter. Dr. Slater appreciates the fact that the agriculturists of India who are growing poorer need

[1] Bands of Akali Sikhs

some such supplementary occupation as spinning. But his expert opinion was disregarded by the prejudiced majority of the Council who would noteven study facts, who do not know that the Madras Presidency to the present day manufactures very fine hand-spun khadi. They have not taken the trouble to learn that even a scientist like Dr. Ray[1], who passed all his life in making minute researches and promoting big companies, has become a convert to the charkha. Is it any wonder that ladies and gentlemen of station who know the message of the spinning-wheel find it necessary to hawk khadi in order to popularize its use?

Young India, 22-12-192l

158. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*December 22, 192l*][2]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I shall certainly try to write to you regularly. Khwaja has been arrested. His wife writes to say that she will continue his work.[3]

I am sending you the draft of the resolution as I think it ought to run. Please go through it carefully and offer your suggestions if you have any. It is useless to send a telegram because telegrams are not delivered. Some of them, no doubt, they do deliver.

I want you to send Devdas to jail immediately. You will understand the significance of this.

I found the English of Swaruprani's message excellent.

Take care of your health. I go over what Kristodas[4] sends. It will not matter if you print off what I have revised without looking into it further.

Today's *Young India* also can fill half of your *Independent.* We have not been getting *Independent* for the last two days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original : S.N. 11426

[1] Dr. (Sir) P. C. Ray (1861-1944); scientist and patriot

[2] The letter from Khwaja's wife mentioned by Gandhiji was quoted by him in *Young India* of December 22, 1921, the issue referred to in the last paragraph as"today's *Young India*".

[3] *Vide* 'Notes", 22-12-1921, under the sub-title"A Worthy Wife".

[4] Krishnadas, Gandhiji's secretary

159. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI[1]

Friday [On or before *December 23, 1921*]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I read your letter. There is no end to your joy as there is none to your"grief". One can look at the matter as one wishes. May you remain firm in your resolve.

You may stay on there or . . . as long as you feel that your presence is necessary. You have many obligations to your family to be discharged and have got to repay them.

It is not clear to me whether or not you should take the responsibility of seeing your sisters married. If I were in your place I would make the position clear with my father. And if it was left to me to arrange their marriage, I would depend upon Him Who gave away the customary presents on behalf of Narasinh Mehta[2] to his daughter's in-laws at the time of her first pregnancy, and would send my sister to her father-in-law's with only a garland of yarn round her neck. This is my advice. You should discuss things with Durga[3] . . . and if she is in mourning, . . . to . . . father and seek his advice. After doing all this, you should follow the dictates of your conscience. If you give away everything, it will not matter; and if you do not give anything, I shall defend you before the whole world. What I said yesterday was the outpouring of my soul. I alone have to be carried away in its current. Others have not to. If, on their seeing the current that is carrying me, a similar current begins to flow in them, they may let themselves be carried away by it. The thing simply cannot be done on the advice of others. The reply Mathuradas gave was correct. He who wants to give away everything will do so of his own accord.

Yes, you are right in consulting me. I would give you the advice that I have given above. What is necessary is that we should learn to be more and more self-confident.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S.N. 8763

[1] Presumably written before the addressee's incarceration on December 24, 1921, for his father died in 1923 and one of his sisters was married in 1922. The source is damaged in places.

[2] 1414-79; saint-poet of Gujarat and devotee of Shri Krishna

[3] Wife of Mahadev Desai

160. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

[*December 23, 1921*][1]

The Working Committee sat both this morning and evening and exhaustively discussed the main resolution dealing with the Congress programme and the future work. Among other matters considered was the selection of the president to act for Mr. Das and, as had already been suggested, Hakim Ajmal Khan was selected for the office. His name will be submitted to the All-India Congress Committee for confirmation at its tomorrow's sitting.

Mahatma Gandhi interviewed by a representative of *The Bombay Chronicle* after the meeting was over said that the meeting was noted for absolute harmony and complete unanimity of opinion among those who took part. Besides the members of the Committee, there were leading representatives of the provinces and others specially invited. There is considerable feeling among Karnatak, Maharashtra and one or two other provinces that foreign propaganda, which was dropped last year,[2] should be resumed and carried out on completely new lines so as to present the outside world with impartial information regarding India's position. It is understood that a resolution in this behalf will be brought forward at the Subjects Committee meeting. It appears that Gandhiji is not in favour of such propaganda, but the outcome of the discussion will be awaited with interest. With reference to the Viceroy's speech[3] Gandhiji was not apparently disappointed since he himself had previously anticipated that result. The speech had merely justified his own view regarding the futility of such deputation. It was by mere accident, said Gandhiji, that he had seen the report of Lord Ronaldshay's speech and had thought that it should be answered. He had already replied[4] to it and nothing he had said was not justified by result. . .

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-l2-1921

[1] *Vide"*Telegram to Jiaram Saxena", on or after 16-12-1921.

[2] *Vide"*Speech on Foreign Propaganda , Nagpur", 29-12-1920.

[3] Delivered at Calcutta on December 21, 1921 in reply to the deputation led by Malaviya

[4] *Vide"*Interview to Associated Press on Round Table Conference", 20-12-1921.

161. TELEGRAM TO JAMNADAS DWARKADAS AND H.N. KUNZRU[1]

[On or after *December 23, 1921*]

AM STILL PREPARED ATTEND ANY CONFERENCE UNCONDITIONALLY. DO YOU NOT SEE WHEN OFFENSIVE NOTIFICATIONS WITHDRAWN AND PRISONERS DISCHARGED. THERE IS NO ACTIVITY LEFT TO BE STOPPED? CAN YOU POINT ONE? BUT I AM, AS INDIVIDUAL, WILLING ATTEND IN SPITE NON-WITHDRAWAL NOTIFICATIONS AND NON-CO-OPERATORS CONTINUED DEFENSIVE. WISH YOU COULD REALIZE DEPUTATION PUT ON WRONG SCENT.

From a photostat: S.N. 7730

[1] Sent in reply to a telegram sent by the addressees from Calcutta on December 22, 1921, which was received by Gandhiji on December 23. The following are some excerpts from the telegram:"Read with profound regret your telegram to Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya which shattered all hope of arnicable settlement . . . Your assurance you would make no conditions precedent to joining conference . . . made us confident you would not reject proposal that pending conference there should be suspension activity on either side . . . . Viceroy's speech although one may not agree wholly with it, very conciliatory in tone and temper. He asked only for a temporary truce . . . Conference can still take place if neither side would insist on the other acknowledging itself to be in the wrong as a necessary preliminary . . . Earnestly request you reconsider matter . . . We understand Bengal is in favour adoption such a course. Please revise decision and bring peace to country. Terms reference composition, etc., we believe can be settled easily if indispensable preliminary condition accepted . . . You think Government particularly unjustified in using Criminal Law Amendment Act and Seditious Meetings Act which they had promised to repeal . . . As matter fact Government refused repeal Criminal Law Amendment Act Part Two in view existing situation and postponed decision to repeal Seditious Meetings Act in order see whether by next session Assembly better atmosphere would prevail country . . ."

162. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS ON VICEROY'S SPEECH

AHMEDABAD,
December 24, 1921

Interviewed by an Associated Press correspondent, Mr. Gandhi made the following statement regarding His Excellency Lord Reading's speech[1] at Calcutta in reply to the deputation led by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya:

I must confess that I have read the Viceregal utterance with deep pain. I was totally unprepared for what I must respectfully call his mischievous misrepresentation of the attitude of the Congress and the Khilafat organization in connection with the visit of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. Every resolution passed by either organization and every speaker has laid the greatest stress upon the fact that there was no question of showing the slightest ill will against the Prince or exposing him to any affront. The boycott was purely a question of principle and directed against what we have held to be the unscrupulous methods of the bureaucracy. I have always held, as I hold even now, that the Prince has been brought to India in order to strengthen the hold of the civil service corporation which has brought India into a state of abject pauperism and political serfdom. If I am proved to be wrong in my supposition that the visit has that sinister meaning I shall gladly apologize.

It is equally unfortunate for the Viceroy to say that the boycott of the welcome means an affront to the British people. His Excellency does not realize what a grievous wrong he is doing to his own people by confusing them with the British administrators in India. Does he wish India to infer that the British administrators here represent the British people and that the agitation directed against their methods is an agitation against the British people? And if such is the Viceregal contention and if to conduct a vigorous and effective agitation against

[1] Delivered on December 21, 1921, in which Lord Reading had, according to *lndia in 1921-22,"* fully explained the reasons which led Government to enforce special Acts; emphasized his determination. to protect law-abiding subjects, and, further, in view of the approaching visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, conveyed grave warning as to the effect likely to be produced on the public and Parliament of the United Kingdom by affronts offered to the Heir to the Throne. His Excellency insisted also as a condition precedent even to the discussion of any project of a conference, on the imperative necessity for the discontinuance of the unlawful activities of the non-co-operation party."

the methods of the bureaucracy and to describe them in their true colours is an affront to the British people, then, I am afraid, I must plead guilty. But, then, I must also say in all humility that the Viceroy has entirely misread and misunderstood the great national awakening that is taking place in India. I repeat for the thousandth time that it is not hostile to any nation or any body of men, but it is deliberately aimed at the system under which the Government of India is being today conducted and I promise that no threats and no enforcement of threats by the Viceroy or any body of men will strangle that agitation or send to rest that awakening.

I have said in my reply[1] to Lord Ronaldshay's speech that we have not taken the offensive. We are not the aggressors. We have not got to stop any single activity. It is the Government that is to stop its aggravatingly offensive activity aimed, not at violence, but at lawful, disciplined, stern, but absolutely non-violent, agitation. It is for the Government of India and for it alone to bring about a peaceful atmosphere if it so desires. It has hurled a bomb shell in the midst of material rendered inflammable by its own action and wonders that the material is still not inflammable enough to explode.

The immediate issue is not now the redress of the three wrongs[2]. The immediate issue is the right of holding public meetings and the right of forming associations for peaceful purposes, and in vindicating this right, we are fighting the battle not merely on behalf of non-co-operators, but we are fighting the battle for all India down from the peasant up to the prince and for all schools of politics. It is the one condition of any organic growth and I see in the Viceregal announcement an insistence on submission to a contrary doctrine, which an erstwhile exponent of the law of liberty has seen fit to lay down upon finding himself in an atmosphere where there is little regard for law and order on the part of those very men who are supposed to be the custodians of law and order. 1 have only to point to the unprovoked assaults being committed not in isolated cases, not in one place, but in Bengal, in the Punjab, in Delhi and in the United Provinces. I have no doubt that as repression goes on in its mad career the reign of terrorism will overtake the whole of this unhappy land.

[1] *Vide*"Interview to Associated Press on Round Table Conference", 20-12-1921.

[2] Of the Khilafat, of the Punjab and of the denial of swaraj; *vide*"Notes", 22-12-1921, under the sub-title"Round Table Conference"

But, whether the campaign is conducted on civilized or uncivilized lines, so far as I can see, there is only one way open to non-co-operators —indeed, I contend, even to. the people of India. On this question of the right of holding public meetings and forming associations there can be no yielding. We have burnt our boats and we must march onward till that primary right of human beings is vindicated.

Let me make my own position clear. I am most anxious for a settlement. I want a round table conference. I want our position to be clearly known by everybody Who wants to understand it. I impose no conditions, but when conditions are imposed upon me prior to the holding of a conference, I must be allowed to examine those conditions and, if I find that they are suicidal, I must be excused if I do not accept them. The amount of tension that is created can be regulated solely by the Government of India, for the offensive has been taken by that Government

The Leader, 26-12-1921

163. TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[On or after *December 24, 1921*][1]

SIMPLY DELIGHTED ABOUT MAHADEV. HOPE DURGA IS STRONG AND WELL. SHE AWAY RETURN IF SHE WISHES. HOPE YOU ARE CONTINUING THE PAPER TILL ARREST AND OTHERS READY TAKE YOUR PLACE.

BAPU

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-1-1322

164. MY NOTES

GOOD INTENTION PUNISHED

I have discovered through long experience that editing a journal is no light task. An editor should in the first place, accept responsibility for his own lapses. Next, he is held responsible for anything which even his assistant may write, as also for the errors of

[1] This telegram was evidently sent soon after the conviction of Mahadev Desai on December 24, 1921, under the Criminal Law Amendment Act for publishing the manuscript edition of *Independent*.

reporters or other contributors. If a compositor makes a slip, then again the res-ponsibility is the editor's; even if it is a proof-reader who has slipped, the editor has to face the music. If the machine fails and the copy misses the post or the types do not come out clearly, the editor will have to answer for the lapse. He cannot just write and leave everything else to others. I can cite incidents of all these types. The latest one, however, is such as will make the reader smile. It has led to a serious misunderstanding on the part of a friend. In *Navajivan's* issue of December 11, there was a note[1] about Parsis which contained the following sentence:"At any rate I assure my Parsi brothers and sisters that hundreds of Hindus and Muslims are ready to lay down their lives for them and for other communities except the Christians." As originally written, the words were *vi.*[2] *nani*[3]. What I meant was:"that hundreds of Hindus and Muslims are ready to lay down their lives for them and for other small communities like the Christians". The point after *vi.* having been left out, the result was another case of"[*Kaka*] *Ajmer gaya*" [4] becoming"[*Kaka*] *aaj mari gaya.*"[5] A Christian friend read the sentence wrong and has protested to me. My other writings on this subject and the construction of the sentence leave no room for misunderstanding its purport. One should not be surprised however, if a person not familiar with *Navajivan* happened to read only this passage and were to misconstrue it as above. One of my aims in writing this paragraph is to apologize to this Christian friend and others who may have misread the sentence. Another is to request all readers to take a lesson from the error in this case, that, even when an all favourable construction may seem justified, a favourable construction should be accepted if the statement will bear it. My third aim is to plead for some sympathy for the editor. Realizing that the editor cannot possibly look after everything, readers should excuse unavoidable errors in the paper published under his name. I do not, however, say all this to secure a licence for mistakes. The editor is bound to discharge properly the responsibility which has come upon him, or leave the job. No one is forced to accept the editorship. If the printers, the compositors and the proof-readers are

[1] *Vide*"Notes", 11-12-1921, Under Sub-title"To Parsi Brothers and Sisters".

[2] Abbreviation for"and others"

[3] Small. *Vinani,* read as one word, means"except"

[4] Uncle went to Ajmer

[5] Uncle died today

not all of them efficient, the editor alone is to be held responsible. Why did he, in such circumstances, accept the editorship? This, however, is only an ideal. If anyone decides not to start at all unless he can realize the ideal right now, he will never realize it. The reader, therefore, may certainly regard himself as a whip with which to punish the editor. Only, he should exercise discrimination in using the whip. One person may use it like Dyer and another may, like the large-hearted king, keep one for show and only on rare occasions let a restive horse know, when its misbehaviour is marked, that it is not entirely for show.

VISIT TO NEHRUJI IN JAIL

A letter received from an Ashram inmate who recently visited Pandit Motilal Nehru in Lucknow Jail is so good, most of it, that I reproduce it below:[1]

RESIDENTS OF RAJKOT

How can I help being pained when anyone criticizes Rajkot? A sister told me a few days ago that, if I went there now, I would see nothing but khadi everywhere and that I would see very few people wearing foreign cloth. The lady lives in Rajkot at present and generally wears khadi outside her home. From her own practice, she seems to have assumed that everyone in Rajkot wears khadi. But a young man who observes the vow of complete swadeshi, is a resident of Rajkot and has not travelled much, has this to say about the city :[2]

This is no mild stricture. I found it confirmed, by chance, in what was said by another friend from Kathiawar who is a shrewd observer. If we discount the element of exaggeration which the criticism may possibly contain, the rest of it is likely to be based on facts. Kathiawar contributed handsomely to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Amreli has an excellent arrangement for khadi work. Kathiawar produces a good quantity of khadi. I know all this. It is painful to know, however, that Kathiawaris living in big cities have not been able to give up their love of foreign cloth. Kathiawar should have been less infected by so-called progress. Its rocky soil should produce hardy, straightforward, brave, simpleminded and generous people. If, instead, we find love of pleasure increasing in its cities, what will come out of the high hopes which have been raised on its behalf? If Kathiawar does not make its full contribution to the *swaraj-yajna*, I, for one, feel

[1] The letter is not translated here.

[2] The extract is not translated here. The correspondent had said that Rajkot had made no progress in the field of swadeshi.

that it should sever its connection with the rest of the country. I have been hoping that, when the time for courting imprisonment comes, Kathiawaris will provide their quota of volunteers. If, however, we have not by then cultivated sufficient simplicity to wear khadi, how shall we be able to endure the austerity of jail life? When Deshbandhu Das wears khadi and plies the spinning-wheel, when Maulana Shaukat Ali, for whom it was difficult to adopt khadi, has started wearing it and works on the spinning-wheel in jail, should the residents of Kathiawar's cities keep away from khadi? I can now understand the reason for the complaint once made to me, to the effect that Kathiawar produces a good quantity of khadi but that the demand for it is not much. Will a time also come when the robust women of Kathiawar will indeed make *rotlas*[1] of *bajra*[2] and, in the early morning, churn liquid curds to obtain rich butter from them, but will give the *rotlas* to dogs and, their stomach too weak to digest butter, have some tea and biscuits, eat *fulkas*[3] made from mill-flour obtained from Bombay because the Kathiawar wheat is too heavy for their digestion and too red in colour to please them? If someone, following Green, were to write a history of the rise and decline of our people, omitting the wars of kings, he would certainly be able to prove that as India took more and more to fine cloth, soft to the touch, the people also became increasingly weaker in constitution and lost their spirit. Will a *Rabari*[4] woman of Kathiawar, six-foot tall, wear a *bhatigar*[5] sari of Japanese muslin if somebody gave her one? And will she go out grazing her cattle dressed in such a sari? We have taken a wrong path altogether. Giving up cultivation of inward beauty, we fell under the spell of outward adornment and lost the country, forsook our traditional ways, sacrificed our health and, as for the *atman*, sent it to sleep.

Will the young men of Kathiawar give up talking and start working? Will the women of Kathiawar follow the example of Shrimati Vasantidevi and go round selling khadi? Will the people of Kathiawar hear our *Dhed*[6] and *Bhangi*[77] brothers crying for justice? People who consider themselves polluted by their touch will never go to jail, they are not fit to do so.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-12-1921

[1] Thick, round cakes of unleavened bread
[2] A variety of millet
[3] Thin, light cakes of unleavened bread
[4] A community in Gujarat tending cows
[5] Multicoloured
[6] Communities traditionally regarded as untouchable
[7] *ibid*

165. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING, AHMEDABAD

December 25, 1921

The All-India Congress Committee met this morning and was engaged the whole day in a prolonged discussion of the main resolution moved by Mr. Gandhi regarding organization of volunteers? extension of civil disobedience, investing Gandhi or his successors with the full authority of the All-India Congress Committee to act in its name in case of emergency. . . .

Before the debates the President Hakim Ajmal Khan was flooded with amendments from all sides. Hasrat Mohani[1], the President elect of the All-India Muslim League, persistently led the opposition demanding the deletion of those phrases in the resolution which excluded the possibility of resort to violence, or even the thought of it, so long as the pledge was in force. . . on the ground that his religion allowed him to take to violence in case non-violence failed.

The debate revealed difference of opinion on this point among Mahommedan members themselves. Some expressed the opinion that the adoption of Maulana Hasarat's amendments would be a change in the Congress Creed itself. . . .

In moving his resolution in the morning Mr. Gandhi made a long speech announcing that he had agreed to slight additions or alterations in his original resolution as the result of a conference last evening with the leaders of the Maharashtra party who, whilst loyally accepting the programme of non-cooperation in all its details, had made no secret of their dissatisfaction with some of its items. He assured all that, while there was little of surrender of the main principle in those modifications, they could be sure of the hearty, willing and believing co-operation of the party which was unrivalled in its strength and sacrifice and which had traditions behind it of great services and filled India with an indomitable spirit of democracy. The great leader of that party, who became an All-India leader and who found a lodgment in the hearts of millions of his countrymen, died developing that spirit of democracy.

Proceeding, Mr. Gandhi pointed out that this party had desired the introduction into the resolution of a provision offering shelter against mischievous insult to those lawyers, teachers and others who, though quite as patriotic and honest as any non-co-operator pretended to be, had not found their way to make sacrifices in the particular form demanded by the Congress. But while he objected to the insertion of such provision, as it would lead to dangerous interpretation, he emphatically declared that they must fully respect all such people who, though considered weak from the non-co-operator's standpoint, were patriots every inch of them. He would not criticize lawyers in a carping spirit because it was the lawyers who had rendered

[1] 1875-1951; Nationalist Muslim leader

signal services to the country when everyone else was shivering with fear.

He continued:

I ask everyone of you to go away with the spirit of goodwill towards Moderates, lawyers, schoolmasters, Government servants and C.I.D.s[1]. The Moderates are our countrymen, they are rallying round us today and when they find that the liberty of the country is really at stake, they are giving full expression to their views. It does one's soul good to read the leading articles in *The Leader* and the *Bengalee* and, after all, are we going to wash away the services of Sir Surendranath Banerjee[2]? I cannot possibly help shedding a tear when anything is said disparagingly of him. I urge upon this Committee to understand the admirable spirit in which the Maharashtra party has pleaded for toleration for those who do not see eye to eye with us. I am perfectly sure that when the time comes for sacrifice, Maharashtra will not be behind Bengal, or rather it is likely to come at the top.

Mr. Gandhi then expressed the hope that after his explanation, the provision proposed by the Maharashtra party would not be pressed because he wanted that the spirit which actuated it should be fully assimilated by all non-co-operators.

Concluding, Mr. Gandhi emphasized the programme and said:

Either we step into the new year with a full belief in this programme and finish it with lightning speed or we dissolve this compact of non-violence. So it is a fight to the finish with the Government in our own special manner. My belief in non-violence is so great that, if the country can only assimilate the mental attitude needed for the practice of real non-veiolence we can promise swaraj in form and substance even before the end of this month.

The Hindu, 26-12-1921

[1] Members of the Government's Criminal Investigation Department

[2] 1848-1925; President of the Congress in 1895 and 1902; later, one of the leaders of the Moderate Party

166. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

December 26, [*1921*][1]

MY DEAR PADMAJA[2],

I am surprised not to see you in Ahmedabad. You have to be bright, strong and active if you want to do your bit of service in the battle for freedom.

With love,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

KUMARI PADMAJA NAIDU
GOLDEN THRESHOLD
HYDERABAD

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

167. SPEECHES AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING, AHMEDABAD

December 27, 1921

After four hours' sitting this morning, the All-India Congress Committee came to definite decisions on the most momentous issued. It not only adopted by a very overwhelming majority Mr. Gandhi's central resolution,[3] but also defeated a formidable opposition of 52 members led by Hasrat Mohani who fought for a change in the Congress Creed in order to definitely lay down the attainment of swaraj without the British Empire as the object of the Congress . . . .

In opening the meeting, the President, Hakim Ajmal Khan, announced that he had received notices of amendments to Mr. Gandhi's resolution, which in their real-meaning came into conflict with the Congress Creed itself. He, therefore, ruled them out of order, but suggested that if the movers so desired they could bring them forward as substantive propositions.

As the position looked somewhat confused, Mr. Gandhi made a short speech in course of which he analysed the contending issues and placed them clearly before the House. He said that if Hasrat Mohani and others desired, they could move separate resolutions urging change in the Congress Creed, but, as his resolution was then

[1] The year has been inferred from Gandhiji's being in Ahmedabad on December
[2] Daughter of Sarojini Naidu
[3] *Vide*"Speech at Congress Session, Ahmedabad-I", 28-12-1921.

before the House, he wanted all to remember that those who thought like Hasrat Mohani should not vote for his (Gandhi's) resolution, because the very basis of his motion was that the present Creed must remain intact and that non-violence alone should be the weapon to fight their battle to the end- The Hasrat Mohani party, on the other hand, he said, stood for complete independence and fighting the battle by all possible means. The issue was plain and he desired that those who did not want a change in the existing Creed should vote at least for the spirit underlying his resolution, remembering that, if later on they voted for the resolution of Hasrat Mohani, they would nullify Mr. Gandhi's resolution.

The speech over, Mr. Gandhi's resolution was put to vote and carried amidst acclamation, only 10 voting against.

Hasrat Mohani then moved his first amendment to the Creed, proposing the attainment of swaraj by all possible and proper means in place of peaceful and legitimate means.

This amendment did not get any appreciable support and the mover thereupon withdrew it.

His next amendment declaring swaraj without the British Empire proved to be the main bone of contention.

He was supported by a dozen members . . .

An equal number of speakers opposed the amendment. . . .

Mr. Gandhi then made a short speech. He said he wanted to make it clear that today his hope of getting redress of Punjab and Khilafat through the British Government was ever so much greater than it was at any time 15 months ago. Within the Congress Creed there was still a chance for two parties who wanted swaraj within or without the British Empire, but there could be no room for those who wanted to resort to violence, because the moment anyone joined the Congress he must sign a pledge of non-violence in terms of the Creed. Mr. Gandhi emphasized that the attainment of swaraj would by itself break imperialism. India even then would be certainly free. Concluding, he warned all against estranging from them the Moderates and others who were sympathizing with them, by taking steps which make the present easy task one of great difficult tasks.

Before the amendment of Mohani was put to vote all the visitors were asked to leave . . . it was rejected by a great majority, only 52 voting for it . . .

The Hindu, 28-12-1921

168. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING, AHMEDABAD

December 28, 1921

The Subjects Committee had its final sitting today and before adjourning rejected by an overwhelming majority Pandit Malaviya's proposition urging the Congress to declare its desire for a round table conference on reasonable terms and to delete from yesterday's main resolution that clause which advised aggressive civil disobedience.

The committee met at eight in the morning. . . Hakim Ajmal Khan could not come . . . .

Mr. Gandhi was thereupon voted to the chair.

In opening the proceedings Mr. Gandhi informed the house that the Madras members including messrs Vijayaraghavachariar, Kasturi Ranga Iyengar[1] and Satyamurti had been pressing upon him the desirability of the passing of a resolution in reply to the Viceroy's Calcutta speech, emphatically pronouncing on the part of the Congress that the destinies of India were not in the hands of the British Parliament but in the hands of the Congress and that the British Parliament could merely ratify the wishes of the people of India. On the other hand, he said Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Jinnah were pressing that the Congress should definitely state its position with regard to the suggestion for a round table conference.

Mr. Gandhi left it to the committee to adopt motions on the lines suggested by the two parties for he had not himself been able to draft resolutions which could meet their wishes. He said telegrams had passed between him, Pandit Malaviya, Mr. Das, Maulana Abul Kalam and Mr. Shyam Sunder Chakravarty on the subject of a round table conference. He had agreed with Messrs Das and Chakravarty to waive the hartal on the 24th of this month provided the notifications regarding the disbandment of volunteers and the prohibition of public meetings were withdrawn, and the prisoners undergoing imprisonment as a result of these notifications released. Mr. Gandhi said that he went a step further in his demand and wanted the *fatwa* prisoners, including the Karachi prisoners, also to be released because it was from the time of the Karachi trial that Government went mad. He added he did not want protection for those who had committed violence. To another telegram from Mr. Chakravarty saying that on

[1] Journalist and Congress leader of Madras

certain conditions Calcutta opinion favoured a round table conference, Mr. Gandhi had replied that either the conference should take place unconditionally, Government doing whatever it liked and non-co-operators doing whatever they chose, or, if a truce was essential then it was necessary that the terms and the composition of the conference were previously decided and the prisoners including the Karachi prisoners discharged and the objectionable notifications withdrawn unconditionally.

Continuing, Mr. Gandhi said he wanted to make his position quite clear.

Personally, I have not attached the slightest importance to the question of a conference. I think that it will be inconsistent with the dignity of the Congress to pass a resolution about the conference when there is nothing in the Viceregal pronouncement to show that the Congress is called upon to make any response. On the other hand there is nothing in the main resolution, which I hope you will pass today unanimously in the Congress *pandal*, which bangs the door in the face of the Viceroy or anybody who wants a round table conference, but there is in that resolution something which is extremely dignifying, namely, that if they want a round table conference that can only be had if we have certain indications of a change of heart, that we will really have a successful result from the conference. It will go hard with us if we go to a conference and come away from it with absolutely empty hands, but I assure you I find nothing in the Viceregal pronouncement that inspires me with confidence.

The Viceroy, he continued, had already declared his helplessness over the Punjab and the Khilafat and had presented the reforms in their face. Of course there was much in the view that when business men put their heads together they were not going to come away with absolutely empty hands, but

I say it is not for the Congress to make any such declaration upon the flimsy ground and upon the mere hope of catching a straw. And who catches a straw except a man who is about to be drowned? But not the Congress which is pulsating with life today. (Prolonged applause.)

Concluding, Mr. Gandhi asked Pandit Malaviya whom he described amidst applause as the noblest Indian to state his point of view. . . .

The Leader, 30-12-1921

169. SPEECH AT CONGRESS SESSION, AHMEDABAD—I

December 28, 1921

As Mahatma Gandhi got down the platform to reach the rostrum in his usual loin cloth, there was an enthusiastically devotional and deafening applause. Having taken his seat on the rostrum, he spoke in Hindi as under:

MR.PRESIDENT, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Hakimji Saheb[1] has allowed me 30 minutes and I hope to be able to keep within the limit prescribed. The President, however, missed to add that the time taken in reading the resolution in Hindi and in English would be excluded. (Laughter.)

Those of you who do not know English will kindly excuse me. Later on, I shall give the substance of this in Hindi.

He then read out the resolution in English rendering it in Hindi, paragraph by paragraph, as he proceeded:

> Whereas, since the holding of the last National Congress, the people of India have found from actual experience that, by reason of the adoption of non-violent non-co-operation, the country has made great advance in fearlessness, self-sacrifice and self-respect, and whereas the movement has greatly damaged the prestige of the Government, and whereas the country on the whole is rapidly progressing towards swaraj, this Congress confirms the resolution adopted at the special session of the Congress at Calcutta and reaffirmed at Nagpur, and places on record the fixed determination of the Congress to continue the programme of non-violent non-co-operation with greater vigour than hitherto, in such manner as each province may determine, till the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs are redressed and swaraj is established, and the control of the Government of India passes into the hands of the people from that of an irresponsible corporation.
>
> And whereas by reason of the threat uttered by His Excellency the Viceroy in his recent speeches and the

[1] Hakim Ajmal Khan

consequent repression started by the Government of India in the various provinces by way of disbandment of Volunteer Corps and forcible prohibition of public and even committee meetings in an illegal and high-handed manner and by the arrest of many Congress workers in several provinces, and whereas this repression is manifestly intended to stifle all Congress and Khilafat activities and deprive the public of their assistance, this Congress resolves that all activities of the Congress be suspended as far as necessary and appeals to all, quietly and without any demonstration, to offer themselves for arrest by belonging to thevolunteer organizations to be formed throughout the country in terms of the resolution of the Working Committee arrived at in Bombay on the 23rd day of November last, provided that no one shall be accepted as volunteer who does not sign the following pledge:

With God as witness, I solemnly declare that,

l. I wish to be a member of the National Volunteer Corps.

2. So long as I remain a member of the Corps, I shall remain non-violent in word and deed and shall earnestly endeavour to be non-violent in intent, since I believe that, as India is circumstanced, non-violence alone can help the Khilafat and the Punjab and result in the attainment of swaraj and consolidation of unity among all the races and communities of India whether Hindu, Mussulman, Sikh, Parsi, Christian or Jew.

3. I believe in and shall endeavour always to promote such unity.

4. I believe in swadeshi as essential for India's economic, political and moral salvation, and shall use hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar to the exclusion of every other cloth.

5. As a Hindu I believe in the justice and necessity of removing the evil of untouchability and shall, on all possible occasions, seek personal contact with and endeavour to render service to the submerged classes.

6. I shall carry out the instructions of my superior officers and all the regulations, not inconsistent with the Spirit

of this pledge, prescribed by the Volunteer Board or the Working Committee or any other agency established by the Congress.

7. I am prepared to suffer imprisonment, assault or even death for the sake of my religion and my country without resentment.

8. In the event of my imprisonment, I shall not claim from the Congress any support for my family or dependents.

This Congress trusts that every person of the age of 18 and over will immediately join the volunteer organizations.

Notwithstanding the proclamations prohibiting public meetings, and inasmuch as even Committee meetings have been attempted to be construed as public meetings, this Congress advises the holding of Committee meetings and of public meetings, the latter in enclosed places and by tickets and by previous announcements, at which as far as possible only speakers, previously announced, shall deliver written speeches, care being taken in every case to avoid risk of provocation and possible violence by the public in consequence.

This Congress is further of opinion that civil disobedience is the only civilized and effective substitute for an armed rebellion, whenever every other remedy for preventing arbitrary, tyrannical and emasculating use of authority by individuals or corporations has been tried, and, therefore, advises all Congress workers and others, who believe in peaceful methods and are convinced that there is no remedy save some kind of sacrifice to dislodge the existing Government from its position of perfect irresponsibility to the people of India, to organize individual civil disobedience and mass civil-disobedience, when the mass of people have been sufficiently trained in the methods of non-violence and otherwise, in terms of the resolution thereon of the last meeting of the All-India Congress Committee held at Delhi.

This Congress is of opinion that in order to concentrate attention upon civil disobedience, whether mass or individual, whether of an offensive or defensive character, under proper safeguards and under instructions to be issued from time to time by the Working Committee or the Provincial Congress Committee concerned, all other Congress activities should be suspended whenever and wherever and to the extent to which it may be

found necessary.

This Congress calls upon all students of the age of 18 and over, particularly those studying in the national institutionsand the staff thereof, immediately to sign the foregoing pledge and become members of National Volunteer Corps.

In view of the impending arrests of a large number of Congress workers, this Congress, whilst requiring the ordinary machinery to remain intact and to be utilized in the ordinary manner whenever feasible, hereby appoints until further instructions Mahatma Gandhi as the sole executive authority of the Congress and invests him with the full powers of the All-India Congress Committee including the power to convene a special session of the Congress or of the All-India Congress Committee or the Working Committee, such powers to be exercised between any two sessions of the All-India Congress Committee and also with the power to appoint a successor in emergency.

This Congress hereby confers upon the said successor and all subsequent successors appointed in turn by their predecessors all his aforesaid powers.

Provided that nothing in this resolution shall be deemed to authorize Mahatma Gandhi or any of the aforesaid successors to conclude any terms of peace with the Government of India or the British Government without the previous sanction of the All-India Congress Committee, to be finally ratified by the Congress specially convened for the purpose, and provided also that the present Creed of the Congress shall in no case be altered by Mahatma Gandhi or his successors, except with the leave of the Congress first obtained.

This Congress congratulates all those patriots who are now undergoing imprisonment for the sake of their conscience or country and realizes that their sacrifice has considerably hastened the advent of swaraj.[1]

It has taken me exactly 35 minutes to read the resolution in

[1] These paragraphs are from the *Report of the Thirty-sixth Indian National Congress*. Those following are from *Young India, 19-1-1922,* where they appear with the introductory note: "The following is the text, as revised by him, of Mr. Gandhi's speech at the Congress session, introducing the central resolution."

English and in Hindustani. I shall hope, if I can at all avoid it, not to take even the 30 minutes that Hakimji Saheb has allotted to me. And I do not propose, if I can help it, to take all that time because I feel that the resolution explains itself. If at the end of fifteen months, incessant activity, you, the delegates assembled in this Congress, do not know your own minds I am positive that I cannot possibly carry conviction to you even in a two hours' speech; and what is more, if I could carry conviction to you today because of my speech, 1 am afraid I would lose all faith in my countrymen because it would demonstrate their incapacity to observe things and events; it would demonstrate their incapacity to think coherently; because I submit, there is absolutely nothing new in this resolution that we have not been doing all this time, that we have not been thinking all this time. There is absolutely nothing new in this resolution which is at all startling. Those of you who have followed the proceedings from month to month of the Working Committee, of the All-India Congress Committee every three months, and have studied their resolutions, can but come to one conclusion, that this resolution is absolutely the natural result of the national activities during the past fifteen months; and if you have at all followed the course, the downward course, that the repressive policy of the Government has been taking, you can only come to the conclusion that the Subjects Committee has rightly come to this resolution; and that the only answer that a self-respecting nation can return to the Viceregal pronouncements and to the repression that is overtaking this land, is the course mapped out in this resolution.

I am not going to take the time of the English-knowing friends over the religious subtleties of the pledge that the volunteers have to take. I wish to confine my remarks in Hindustani to that subject. But I want this assembly to understand the bearing of this resolution. This resolution means that we have outgrown the stage of helplessness and dependence upon anybody; this resolution means that the nation through its representatives is determined to have its own way without the assistance of any single human being on earth and with the help of only God above.

This resolution, whilst it shows the indomitable courage and the determination of the nation to vindicate its rights and to be able to stare the world in the face, also says in all humility to the Government: "No matter what you do, no matter how you repress us, we shall one day wring reluctant repentance from you; and we ask you to think

betimes, and take care what you are doing and see that you do not make 300 millions of India your eternal enemies."

This resolutions if the Government sincerely wants an open door, leaves the door wide open for it. If the Moderate friends wish to rally round the standard of the Khilafat, and round the standard of the liberties of the Punjab and, therefore, of India, then this resolution leaves the door wide open for them too. If this Government is sincerely anxious to do justice, if Lord Reading has really come to India to do justice and nothing less—and we want nothing more—then I inform him from this platform, with God as my witness, with all the earnestness that I can command, that he has got an open door in this resolution if he means well, but the door is closed in his face if he means ill, no matter how many people go to their graves, no matter what wild career this repression is to go through. There is every chance for him to hold a round table conference, but it must be a real conference. If he wants a conference at a table, where only equals are to sit and where there is not to be a single beggar, then there is an open door and that door will always remain open. There is nothing in this resolution which anyone who has modesty and humility need be ashamed of. This resolution is not an arrogant challenge to anybody but it is a challenge to authority that is enthroned on arrogance. It is a challenge to the authority which disregards the considered opinion of millions of thinking human beings. It is a humble and an irrevocable challenge to authority which in order to save itself wants to crush freedom of opinion and freedom of association —the two lungs that are absolutely necessary for a man to breathe the oxygen of liberty; and if there is any authority in this country that wants to curb the freedom of speech and freedom of association, I want to be able to say in your name, from this platform, that that authority will perish, unless it repents, before an India that is steeled with high courage, noble purpose and determination, even if everyone of the men and women who choose to call themselves Indians is blotted out of the earth. God only knows, if I could possibly have advised you before to go to the Round Table Conference, if I could possibly have advised you not to undertake this resolution of civil disobedience, I would have done so.

I am a man of peace. I believe in peace. But I do not want peace at any price. I do not want the peace that you find in stone; I do not want the peace that you find in the grave; but I do want that peace

which you find embedded in the human breast, which is exposed to the arrows of a whole world but which is protected from all harm by the power of the Almighty God.[1]

Young India, 19-1-1922; also *Report of the Thirty-sixth Indian National Congress*

170. SPEECH AT CONGRESS SESSION, AHMEDABAD—II

[*December 28, 1921*][2]

SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

I shall not repeat to you what I have said in English. What I shall tell you, you already know and understand. Our problem is what to do about our Sikh brethren. I ask you to go on doing your work peaceably till the attainment of swaraj. You should be peaceful in thought and intent. While you maintain peace with the hand, you must also keep the tongue clean. Our speech so far has not always been clean. Those who would act peaceably ought to keep their speech also clean. If we want to retain the anger that is in our hearts, then I must tell you that it will be impossible to keep peace with the hand as well as the tongue. I will say to every- man and woman, if they would do any work, that they should remember this in their conduct and proceed about their work after taking a vow [of peace], after clearing their hearts of anger. I must ask you, if you wish to see India free, to take such a pledge. If you fail in this, you will do harm to the work. Harm will come to the Hindus as well as to the Muslims.

The mad Hindu will say that Mussulmans destroyed the temple of Somnath; the mad Mussulman will talk in the same vein. He will think of the might of Afghanistan. If you choose to give up peace, there will be no peace. There will be peace only if we maintain it. We have to keep in mind also the situation that prevails in India. If you want that the Hindus, Mussulmans and Parsis should live in mutual love, you must take this pledge. It will not do to draw the sword. Those who are thus disposed will only follow the English. Then there is also this: we are prepared for imprisonment; we are prepared to put up with beatings; we are prepared even for death. Our religion tells us

[1] After this, Gandhiji spoke in Hindi; for the text of his speech, *vide* the following item.

[2] From the *Report of the Thirty-sixth Indian National Congress*

this. And what is the other condition? The other condition is that we should master our anger and put up with things. But if we merely tolerate without mastering our anger then it is not tolerating. When a man spat at Hazrat Ali the latter did not become angry. If he hadbecome angry Islam would not be there today. It is a traditional way of ours. It is not laid down either in the *Granth Saheb*[1] or in the Koran. Our religion tells us that if we act with patience, God will say, "Well done." We should not use the sword. It would be well if you should act in this way. If you wish to go and lay down your life, do so. Dying for India is not suicide. Suicide is bad both for Hindus as well as Mussulmans. Rather than violate a woman's chastity it is better for one to go and drown oneself. Suicide is bad but this type of suicide is good.[2] You have worked for fifteen months. You should continue working in this way. Have you or have you not benefited from peace? Is there or is there not something in non-co-operation? Swaraj is in self-control. Swaraj is not for the faint-hearted. Were Shaukat Ali here he would have said that we must all die for swaraj. It is not too great a price to pay for swaraj. If you want to work I say to you: "Lock yourself up in a room and seek guidance from God." If you cannot do this ask your hearts whether what I am telling you is not something important. If you feel it is not, then you may reject this resolution. If you feel it is, then respect it. And respecting it means acting on what is in it. Now what have you to say to this? If anyone goes against it, he will be creating great difficulties. You should work in the way I have suggested and peacefully secure swaraj and solve the Punjab and Khilafat questions.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 2-l-1922

[1] Holy book of the Sikhs

[2] The *Aaj* report is obscure here. The last three sentences have been taken from *Report of the Thirty-sixth Indian National Congress.*

171. SPEECH ON HASRAT MOHANI'S MOTION—I[1]

AHMEDABAD,
December 28, 1921

MR. PRESIDENT, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

It grieves me to see that we have among us delegates who thoughtlessly proclaim that they want this and they want that. It shows that we are not aware of the situation that confronts us. At the same time I feel happy that there are men who are not afraid of speaking out. The time was when the very mention of swaraj frightened us. But today we have the courage to say that we cannot stay in the British Empire and want complete independence. And I am convinced that we shall not be afraid to voice even bolder sentiments.

You heard the bomb-shell that Hasrat Mohani burst. He has placed before us but one thing: complete independence. His resolution contradicts the previous resolution; it is also contrary to the Creed of the Congress. We cannot do a tiny thing but want to think of a very big thing—this is the meaning of Hasrat Mohani's resolution. What is good in his resolution is already contained in the resolution of the Congress. Hasrat Saheb's resolution will frighten away many people. We have not even fully achieved Hindu-Muslim unity. And we want to talk of big things in advance of it. This will only hinder our progress. I hope you will reject Hasrat Saheb's motion.

[From Hindi]

Report of the Thirty-sixth Indian National Congress

[1] Delivered at the Congress session in reply to Hasrat Mohani's motion which read: "The object of the Indian National Congress is the attainment of swaraj or complete independence, free from all foreign control, by the people of India, by all legitimate and peaceful means". Gandhiji spoke first in Hindi and then in English; for the latter speech *vide* the following item.

172. SPEECH ON HASRAT MOHANI'S MOTION—II

December 28, 1921

The following is the revised speech delivered in opposition to Maulana Hasrat Mohani's proposition on independence:

FRIENDS,

I have said only a few words (in Hindi) in connection with the proposition of Mr. Hasrat Mohani. All I want to say to you in English is that the levity with which that proposition has been taken by some of you has grieved me. It has grieved me because it shows a lack of responsibility. As responsible men and women we should go back to the days of Nagpur and Calcutta and we should remember what we did only an hour ago. An hour ago we passed a resolution which actually contemplates a final settlement of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and transference of the power from the hands of the bureaucracy into the hands of the people by certain definite means. Are you going to rub the whole of that position from your mind by raising a false issue and by throwing a bombshell in the midst of the Indian atmosphere? I hope that those of you who have voted for the previous resolution will think fifty times before taking up this resolution and voting for it. We shall be charged by the thinking portion of the world that we do not know really where we are. Let us understand, too, our limitations. Let Hindus and Mussulmans have absolute, indissoluble unity. Who is here who can say today with confidence, "Yes, Hindu-Muslim unity has become an indissoluble factor of Indian nationalism?" Who is here who can tell me that the Parsis and the Sikhs and the Christians and the Jews and the untouchables about whom you heard this afternoon—who will tell me that those very people will not rise against any such idea? Think, therefore, fifty times before you take a step which will redound not to your credit, not to your advantage, but which may cause you irreparable injury. Let us first of all gather up our strength; let us first of all sound our own depths. Let us not go into waters whose depths we do not know, and this proposition of Mr. Hasrat Mohani lands you into depths unfathomable. I ask you in all confidence to reject that proposition, if you believe in the proposition that you passed only an hour ago. The proposition now before you rubs off the whole of the effect of the proposition that you passed only a moment ago. Are

creeds such simple things like clothes which a man can change at will? For creeds people die and for creeds people live from age to age. Are you going to change the Creed which with all deliberation, and after great debate in Nagpur, you accepted? There was no limitation of one year when you accepted that Creed. It is an extensive Creed; it takes in all, the weakest and the strongest, and you will deny yourselves the privilege of clothing the weakest amongst yourselves with protection if you accept this limited Creed of Maulana Hasrat Mohani which does not admit the weakest of your brethren. I, therefore, ask you in all confidence to reject his proposition.

Young India, 19-1-1922

173. A MODEL PRISONER

> Should non-co-operators shout *Vande Mataram*[1] inside jails against jail discipline which may excite ordinary prisoners to violence, should non-co-operators go on hunger strike for the improvement of food or other conveniences, should they strike work inside jails on hartal days and other days? Are non-co-operators entitled to break rules of jail discipline unless they affect their conscience?

Such is the text of a telegram I received from a non-co-operator friend in Calcutta. From another part of India when a friend, again a non-co-operator heard of the indiscipline of non-co- operator prisoners, he asked me to write on the necessity of observing jail discipline As against this I know prisoners who arc scrupulously observing in a becoming spirit all the discipline imposed upon them.

It is necessary, when thousands are going to jail, to understand exactly the position a non-co-operator prisoner can take up consistently with his pledge of non-violence. Non-co-operation, when its limitations are not recognized, becomes a licence instead of being a duty and, therefore, becomes a crime. The dividing line between right and wrong is often so thin as to become indistinguishable. But it is a line that is breakable and unmistakable.

What is then the difference between those who find themselves in jails for being in the right and those who are there for being in the wrong? Both wear often the same dress, eat the same food and are subject outwardly to the same discipline. But whilst the latter submit to discipline most unwillingly and would commit a breach of it secretly, and even openly if they could, the former will Willingly and to the

[1] The refrain of a patriotic song composed by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee

best of their ability conform to the jail discipline and prove worthier and more serviceable to their cause than when they are outside. We have observed that the most distinguished among the prisoners are of greater service inside the jails than outside. The coefficient of service is raised to the extent of the strictness with which jail discipline is observed.

Let it be remembered that we are not seeking to destroy jails as such. I fear that we shall have to maintain jails even under swaraj. It will go hard with us, if we let the real criminals understand that they will be set free or be very much better treated when swaraj is established. Even in reformatories by which I would like to replace every jail under swaraj, discipline will be exacted. Therefore, we really retard the advent of swaraj if we encourage indiscipline. Indeed the Swift programme of swaraj has been conceived on the supposition that we being a cultured people are capable of evolving high discipline within a short time.

Indeed whilst on the one hand civil disobedience authorizes disobedience of unjust laws or unmoral laws of a state which one seeks to overthrow, it requires meek and willing submission to the penalty of disobedience and, therefore, cheerful acceptance of the jail discipline and its attendant hardships.

It is now, therefore, clear that a civil resister's resistance ceases and his obedience is resumed as soon as he is under confinement. In confinement he claims no Privileges because of the civility of his disobedience. Inside the jail by his exemplary conduct he reforms even the criminals surrounding him, he softens the hearts of jailors and others in authority. Such meek behaviour springing from strength and knowledge ultimately dissolves the tyranny of the tyrant. It is for this reason that I claim that voluntary suffering is the quickest and the best remedy for the removal of abuses and injustices.

It is now manifest that shouts of *Bande Mataram* or any other in breach of jail discipline are unlawful for a non-co-operator to indulge in. It is equally unlawful for him to commit a stealthy breach of jail regulations. A non-co-operator will do nothing to demoralize his fellow prisoners. The only occasion when he can openly disobey jail regulations or hunger-strike is when an attempt is made to humiliate him or when the warders themselves break, as they often do, the rules for the comfort of prisoners, or when food that is unfit for human consumption is issued, as it often is. A case for civil disobedience also arises when there is interference with any obligatory religious practice.

Young India, 29-l2-l921

174. INTERVIEW WITH BENGAL DELEGATES[1]

AHMEDABAD,

December 29, 1921

MAHATMAJI: What I suggest is that you ask me what you like.

A DELEGATE: The question is difficult. We like to know what would be the procedure of our work.

MAHATMAJI: The resolutions that we have passed may be summed up really in this manner that we want to answer the repression of the Government expressed in the two notifications about the disbandment of volunteers and the prohibition of public meetings. Therefore we meet them by simply enrolling all men and women as volunteers and we meet the notification prohibiting public meetings by holding public meetings and committee meetings whenever necessary and even when unnecessary. But there are two ways; one is by goading the Government to take action against us by holding public meetings even when it is unnecessary. But my advice is: Do not do that. That will become offensive, not in the offensive sense of the term, but as the opposite of defensive. We need not and we ought not to take the offensive till we have exhausted the defensive. Therefore, so long as you can go on with enrolment of volunteers and taking work from them in the ordinary course, and so long as you can go on with your public meetings that may be required for your purpose—for your propaganda— for instructing the people-—you should go on ceaselessly. That by itself is bound to result in risks. Do not worry so long as you are doing your duty. Do not worry as to what is happening to prisoners. There are ways. Naturally one way of releasing prisoners is to go to jail; but our goal is not the release of prisoners, our goal is, the attainment of swaraj and getting the key of the jail in our possession. That is our goal. Therefore, if you can reach that goal by doing all the national work that you have been doing but in an honest spirit, ceaselessly, without waiting for a single minute, then I tell you that it is more and more blessed to be in jail than to be outside—that is from a selfish standpoint. I assume that you are all true and honest men, and I am sure that you are so; and if you are not—all of you—I want you to be so. Then you may depend upon it

[1] Published in the source as the "full text of the report of the Conference held on 29th December last at Ahmedabad" between Mahatma Gandhi and the Bengal delegates.

that without a single one courting imprisonment for the sake of it, we will attain swaraj.

And you have got, therefore stiffer terms. You are to enrol men and women as volunteers; we have all to comply with those seven or eight pledges and the compliance with those is the automatic attainment of swaraj—absolutely real. If all the Indians sign those pledges and carry them to the letter, and in the spirit in which they are written, it is finished. You do not need to do anything more at all.

In spite of the non-violence that has been observed in Bengal to an enormous extent, I still doubt whether your minds are non violent. And yet I would like you to remember what Mr. Das has said. He did not ask you to go to jail with him, but he has asked you to remain non-violent in thought, word and deed. How many of us are non-violent in thought, word and deed? But if he expects us today to go to jail, which he does, whether he says it or not—there is no doubt about it—he expects all of us to go to jail, but the condition precedent to our seeking imprisonment is, that we have become non-violent in thought, word and deed. That is really the first thing for us to do.

Do not take the offensive, but take up the defensive by signing the pledge—knowing its contents, and knowing its importance—or do not sign the pledge at all. If you have signed that pledge without knowing its full importance, withdraw your name. If you have any hesitation at all about belief in that pledge, on no account I expect you to take up mass civil disobedience. You have to wait for me. The conception of civil disobedience is entirely mine, and I tell you it is not borrowed from anywhere else— the whole of the conception of civil disobedience is presented to you. The word is not mine. I am most anxious that such experiment of a world-wide importance should not be tried in an improper or unscientific manner, so that it may not be a failure. I want to guard ourselves against failure; I may fail myself but that is a different thing. But you will certainly be blamed and you will probably begin then to blame civil disobedience itself, when you have committed some atrocious blunder. Therefore, I say: Do not take up mass civil disobedience at all. Confine yourself to individual civil disobedience of a defensive character. A child even can take up that. So much in connection with one part of our programme of what is to be done

In Bengal today I know that there is a great deal of impatience and, therefore, intolerance, and let me also tell you, you won't, I am

sure, misunderstand me when I tell you that of all the places throughout India, I have not seen so much bitterness amongst ourselves as I have seen in Bengal, and therefore, so much intolerance. Take the two schools in Madras. There is Mr. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar representing really the moderate section of non-co-operators, and take the school that is led by Dr. Rajan[1]—but the relation between them is sweet. Then take the case of co-operators and non-co-operators. The relations between them are by no means so estranged as they are in Bengal. I had occasion to remark that in Barisal. I do not know if that suggestion was ever reproduced. But every word of what I said then wholly stands true today. We in our impatience have believed that we ourselves are paragons of perfection and that those who differ from us are not only not well-wishers of the country, but its enemies. And therefore, we consider that even our best leaders-—take Mr. Surendranath Banerjea—have I not seen what is written in the papers about him and what I have heard in private conversation—we seem to think, that he is an enemy of the country. I do not think he is so, I tell you that he is not an enemy of the country. If I went to Madras and said that Mr. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar was an enemy of the country, they would have resented that statement—they would not have tolerated it. But I know that in Bengal you would have tolerated my saying that Mr. Surendranath Banerjea was an enemy of the country. Take the extreme section. Mr. Thiagaraya Chetty[2]—I am not prepared to say that he is an enemy of the country—though really he has now come to the surface of public life—was by no means of a hopeful character.

A DELEGATE: But the life of Sir Surendranath has never been of a hopeful character.

MAHATMAJI: So far as I know—he has to say so. Therefore, I would warn you, if you are to be true to your non-co-operation and non-violence, not to be so uncharitable and not to think so ill of our own countrymen. And after all, is it not a reflection upon ourselves? Somebody told me that it is the pride of Englishmen that they were able to say during the last Great War there was not a single Englishman [who was a] spy, whereas we consider that barring ourselves every other Indian is an enemy of the country. This of course represents the view of-a school of pessimism. When we have

[1] Dr. T. S. S. Rajan; leading Congressmen, later Minister in Madras

[2] Founder of the Justice Party in Madras

got such elongated [*sic*] opinion of ourselves, we are committing national suicide.

I want to warn every Bengali friend who has come here that if he wants to release these prisoners full of hope, and with our own power, there are ways and ways of releasing them. The most natural way to release them before their time is by our own power. The second method is—they are released by efflux of time; and the third is, and this is so hopelessly weakening—that they are released after their time. But, when they come from prison, they will find a new India, not the India of their hope, but an India in which they cannot live possibly for two days together. But I cannot contemplate the possibility of the last condition. But the condition will become a serious probability if the spirit of intolerance continues to haunt us. So it is against the very spirit of non-co-operation. Non-co-operation is not a doctrine of despair. Non-co-operation is not a doctrine of hatred and hopelessness. It is a doctrine of love. But, I do not want you just now to think of the Government with which we are non-co-operating. I simply want you to stretch your charity to your own countrymen—whether they are Moderates, whether they are in Government employ, in the police or in the C.I.D.—whatever they are, I ask you to be charitable towards them. And if you can, we shall have infinitely greater power than we have today. And I cannot urge upon you this one thing with too much earnestness.

I wish I could reproduce the conversation I had with Moti Babu. Of course, I cannot describe to you in detail the conversation[1] I had with him when I visited him in Calcutta last about the lawyers and how he urged me not to be harsh upon them. I know I have said many unpleasant things that could be proved and that were proper and then, too, in no uncharitable spirit and certainly not with a view to estranging them from us. I was anxious that they should be dislodged From their leadership, or the sole leadership which they possessed.

But there never was the slightest intention that they should be branded out of public service. On the contrary, I endeavoured to harness every lawyer—even a practising lawyer—with national service,—but[2], if he cannot fulfil the conditions, he cannot very well work officially in Non-co-operation Committees and so on. But, the

[1] *Vide* "Intervciew with Motilal Ghose", 10-9-1920.

[2] The source has 'because'

question undoubtedly arises that if lawyers may not do so and that was the question which was hotly discussed at Nagpur—what about others who do not fulfil the terms, as for instance the merchants. This was pressed home by Mr. Kelkar and he once challenged me in a public meeting, and even suggested that I was partial to the merchants, which of course was wrong. But, as I said in my address, we expected more from the lawyers, because they were leaders. We expected less from the merchants, because they never aspired for leadership. We have taken their money and no more. Therefore, so much could not possibly be expected from the merchants. There is no question of dispute between lawyers and merchants. But that is one thing, and to say that lawyers should be hunted out of our circles is totally another—even if we do not remove from our midst merchants who do not fulfil the terms. If we have in our midst people who do not fulfil the terms, let us at least be charitable to the lawyers, and in a becoming manner, in a dignified manner, receive the benefit of their knowledge and of their service. So I would ask you to see whether you can get the assistance of every lawyer in the manner, in the limited manner, I have suggested. I do not want you to take lawyers as chairmen of your committees. I have no doubt that it will be dangerous because today the most important thing is fearlessness, bordering upon recklessness, and unless we are prepared to take the boldest risk consistent with the pledge of non-violence, we cannot possibly finish our programme within the limited time at our disposal. Therefore, I ask you to take service from the lawyers in every other department but in leadership, and for leadership, take an untouchable if he has got iron courage, a brave heart, and if he is so reckless as to sacrifice all the things of the earth that are nearest and dearest to him, including his nearest relatives, his children, if he is prepared to leave all these and follow this path, then I would say that an untouchable is any day an infinitely superior chairman to a lawyer who is a finished gentleman, a brilliant member of his profession with a record of unique success, but he is absolutely no good for us. So, I would certainly ask you not to install anybody but honest and bravest men in your chairs. But, apart from that I would ask you to seek their co-operation. Go out of your way and get the co-operation of lawyers. But, that is again a smaller thing than the one which I have mentioned to you. Be charitable to all. Remember that we want to take them with us in our programme of swaraj. We do not estrange our countrymen from that. And, if we cannot possibly enlist

their sympathy and their co-operation, there is something wrong in us. We have certainly not fulfilled to the letter and spirit the pledge of non-violence. So I would ask you really to think of these things, and remember them. I do not know if I have any thing more to say.

Questioned as to how a practising lawyer can serve the country according to the resolution, Mahatmaji said:

A practising lawyer can certainly wear khadi, but he cannot be a volunteer.

QUESTION: Suppose a lawyer out of sheer necessity is forced to remain a practising lawyer—he cannot be a volunteer, he has got a large family to support, he cannot risk going to jail.

MAHATMAJI: I know; such lawyers and such persons must keep out today because we cannot possibly find maintenance for thousands of people, and the present resolution is planned not in order to get the largest member of recruits at the sacrifice of quality, but to get the largest number consistently with the highest requirements as to quality. In other words, we must not risk quality for quantity. We shall really postpone the attainment of swaraj if in our search for quantity we sacrifice quality and, I can prophesy, we shall lose the battle in the end. I may tell you I can get all the labourers of the Ahmedabad mills—there are fifty thousand of them today—but I do not want a single one of them to sign the pledge without understanding it. I want only those who have been in the struggle for years, who understand the value of the pledge that they take up. I can see my way to get swaraj even with the fewest possible men of that type. I do not want a crore of volunteers who do not know what non-violence is, and who, because of their weakness to offer violence, follow or pretend to follow the Congress programme. I would far rather that they become co-operators frankly, veer to the Government side, and do what they like.

P: In that case, work will stop in some places for want of men.

MAHATMAJI: I don't mind that you have many associations, and many men about you to do your work, who do not want to go to jail. You will certainly get their help in connection with your work among the untouchables, or for temperance work, or in connection with swadeshi, but they cannot be members of the Volunteer Corps.[1] The

[1] Gandhiji subsequently disowned this statements *vide* "Practising Lawyers and Volunteering", 2-2-1922.

Volunteer Corps is being formed in defiance of the Government notification, and only those are fit to go to jail who are pure-minded men.

SJT. ANANGA MOHAN GHOSE: I admit that, but call sacrifices only be sufficient for leadership, without intelligence?

MAHATMAJI: Two things are necessary—sacrifice and honesty. I said that if you have got an honest and a brave man he can lead today.

ANANGA BABU: He must have intelligence too.

MAHATMAJI: I cannot possibly imagine that a man who is offering intelligent sacrifice is not really intelligent enough to lead. Really, I feel that I can give you scores of instances of such men who are leading today.

ANANGA BABU: So far as our experience goes, we do not find such men.

MAHATMAJI: Because we have not given a chance so long to our other countrymen. We have really isolated them and so far we have insisted upon only those becoming patriots who know English—that has been our ban. Such men are certainly wanted.

ANANGA BABU: We fail to find non-co-operators with the necessary qualification to take up charge of the committee or become the president and so on.

MAHATMAJI: I do not deny that there is difficulty, but we can do all our work with the materials we have at hand today, if only those materials could be rendered efficient, and sufficiently mobile, and brave enough to lead us.

ANANGA BABU: Another question with regard to volunteers: There is a clause that the volunteers cannot expect anything in case they go to jail, but so long as they work as volunteers are they to get any remuneration?

MAHATMAJI: If they are getting it, they may; but personally, I would, for these Volunteer Corps, ask for men who do not require any money at all. The programme we contemplate is that as soon as one registers oneself as a volunteer he will be arrested in due course in a few days, but if the Government simply does not do anything and yet does not withdraw the notification, then the question of payment occurs, and then the payment has got to be made to those whose services are required, but not to those who simply register their names, and are not in the active volunteers' list, or in the profit-bearing list. I would not really care for volunteers who would go about from village to village delivering speeches. That time is gone, but we want volunteers who can organize swadeshi or any such thing and bring in money to us and organize India so as to get rid of our wretched

pauperism.

SJT. GUNADA CH. SEN: The Congress Resolution speaks about cessation of all other activities—shall we not then go on with our swadeshi, national schools and so on?

MAHATMAJI: So far as necessary. We may not be opening new centres which require the services of many volunteers. We cannot spare so many because we want all hands to be enlisted for going to jail and if the Government take them we-must supply every available hand. Therefore, the use of "so far as necessary" comes here. If we find [that we have] exhausted the list of those who are engaged in swadeshi, we have got to draw them from the national schools which absorb a very large staff. That staff must be made free. When all other national activities stop, it means the staff have come out.

SJT. SURESH CH. MAJUMDAR: You have spoken about public meetings: kindly instruct us whether we are to send volunteers out on the streets to court arrest for the sake of arrest, as we are doing hitherto.

MAHATMAJI: You may do that so long as they continue to arrest, but when they do not I would not worry about that. But as long as they continue to arrest, there is no other work but simply to go out and be arrested.

A DELEGATE: Can we stop paying chowkidari tax?

MAHATMAJI: Not yet. That would be offensive civil disobedience.

Questioned as to the meaning of untouchables, Mahatmaji said:

Untouchables are all those whose touch we in our arrogance think defiles us—that is untouchable. Therefore, we must not only mechanically touch them; we must serve them. We must eat after we have found food for them, that is, found the means of procuring their livelihood, if they are starving. We must drink after we have given them to drink, if they are thirsty. If one is suffering from fever or bitten by a snake, I would kiss that wound, just as I would if my son were bitten by a snake. No interdining, no interdrinking, no intermarriage. That is, it is not prohibited. but that is not insisted upon.

Questioned as to whether one can volunteer oneself and go straight to jail with foreign clothes on, Mahatmaji said:

It is not only mischievous but injurious to the cause. All those who come must wear khadi. It is a privilege to go to jail. He does not oblige us by going to jail. He obliges himself.

A delegate remarked that in that case there would not be enough volunteers as pure hand-spun, and hand-woven could not be had in Bengal in sufficient quantity.

MAHATMAJI: If, then, there are not enough volunteers in Bengal, I should think she should be swept into the Bay of Bengal and make room for better men and women.

A delegate from Midnapur having questioned as to who would take up the work of the teachers of the national schools in case they went to jail, Mahatmaji said that Midnapur ladies who were expert spinners might take up their work.

QUESTION: When the public are assaulted, what is the duty of the volunteers?

MAHATMAJI: They should go and intervene to prevent that and receive the blows themselves.

A BARABAZAR DELEGATE: What would they do with the merchants who signed and gave an undertaking not to order foreign cloth up to February and March?

MAHATMAJI: We have to ask them to sign again.

Mahatmaji, after having spent two hours with the delegates, retired.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 14-1-1922

175. LETTER T0 DEVDAS GANDHI

Friday [*December 30, 1921*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

Herewith Mrs. Joseph's letter. I have written to her to say that you will send her money from there. You may meet the Directors of the *Independent* and make the necessary arrangements or take whatever other steps which may suggest themselves to you. See that she does not find herself in difficulty when you go to jail.

I am very glad that Govind[2] went to jail. That they have not yet arrested you is a deliberate thing on their part. Do not worry about this. If they do not arrest you, the new undertaking will be put on its feet; if they do your arrest will arouse the people.

Paul Richard[3] is staying here at present. I introduced Kishorelal[4]

[1] Paul Richard referred to in the last paragraph was in Ahmedabad during the last week of December, 1921. He visited the Gujarat Mahavidyalaya on Saturday, December 31, 1921, accompanied by Gandhiji.

[2] Son of Madan Mohan Malaviya. He was arrested on December 20, 1921, for picketing but was subsequently discharged.

[3] A French writer

[4] Mashruwala

to him. The former had recently been here to meet him and so met me also. Miss Petersen[1] is here today. She came yesterday and will leave today. Mr. Richard will leave on Sunday. Mrs. Santanam is still here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 7683

176. INTERVIEW WITH U. P. CONGRESS LEADERS

AHMEDABAD,

December 30, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi said:

It is not necessary just yet to start civil disobedience. It is enough to get ourselves enrolled as volunteers—regardless of our being arrested or not—and to continue the work entrusted to us.

My methods of securing swaraj are the very reverse of those advocated by Hasrat Mohani. If I thought we were fit for it I would at once declare complete independence—because having made such a declaration it would be a sin to go on using the railway, post and telegraph and so on. If a majority of people join me, complete independence can be secured within just three months.

Now if my countrymen desert me, or even my wife deserts me, I am ready to work alone.

It is the wish of Sir Harcourt Butler, the Governor of the United Provinces, that there may be a rebellion such as that of 1857 and that then the people may plead for pity.

It would be better for the present to halt the work of setting up the national *Kotwali*[2]. But since the work has begun it is only right that it should be continued.

I am sorry that the work of propagating swadeshi in U. P. has not been done as much as was necessary. I am dissatisfied about it.

In the offices of Congress Committees the work of enrolling volunteers should be continued.

[1] Anne Marie Petersen, who along with Esther, a Danish Missionary, worked in South India and lived at Sabarmati for some time.

[2] Literally, police station. Here, headquarters

Pandit Motilal Nehru wants that the *Independent* should be brought out in Hindi and Urdu. Volunteers should extend full help in its publication.

We should not entertain violent thoughts even towards thieves and dacoits. Ahimsa should be our sole mode of conduct.

So long as people are not ready for jail, so long as we have not got ready to face death and have not mastered anger, the problems of the Punjab atrocities and Khilafat cannot be solved.

Swaraj means our full control over the army.

Lists of volunteers should be published in newspapers and sent on to the national *Kotwali*

Volunteers should move about and sell khadi. Their dress should be that of a low paid *chaprasi.* Picketing of shops selling foreign cloth is unnecessary. But picketing of liquor shops should continue.

National schools should be turned into hand-spinning and hand-weaving factories. Boys below eighteen years of age should work in them and women should supervise them.

Students over eighteen years of age and teachers who refuse to be volunteers should be expelled from schools

The Hindi *Swarajya* published from Allahabad should be handwritten. Those whose properties are attached should renounce them with pleasure, for it is a sin even to own property in such a tyrannical regime. The properties will be given back to the owners as soon as swaraj is attained.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 1-1-1922

177. MESSAGE TO UTKAL[1]

December 30, 1921

Interviewed by Sjts. Bhagirathi Mohapatro, Gopbandhu Chowdhury, Niranjan Patnaik and Naba Krishna Chowdhury, Mahatmaji delivered the following message on the 30th December last (1921):

[1] The old name of Orissa. The message is reproduced in the source from *The Servant.*

Utkal haunts me. The scene I have witnessed is simply shocking. Banish poverty from the land. Give the message of charkha to every home. Make Utkal the store-house of khaddar for the rest of India. Feed the hungry men and women. This is the best political training that you can give to your people. Don't worry yourselves with the question of aggressive mass civil disobedience. If the Government throws a challenge, go on recruiting volunteers and at least fifty thousand Utkalis, I hope, will fill up the jails.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-1-l922

178. SPEECH AT GUJARAT VIDYAPITH, AHMEDABAD

December 31, 1921

Mr. Paul Richard delivered a lecture at the Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad, on Saturday morning, on "Message of India", Mahatma Gandhi presiding. Mr. Richard spoke in French and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu read a translation.

Mahatma Gandhi said he thought it was a great honour to be present at the lecture. Although he could not spare time owing to his having to interview the Congress delegates for the last two days, he had come to the lecture to hear Mr. Richard. He asked the audience to take up and follow what was good in Mr. Richard.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-1-1922

179. LETTER TO DAYALJI AND KALYANJI MEHTA

Friday [*1921*][1]

BHAI DAYALJI AND KALYANJI,

I wrote you a letter yesterday. It is now the morning hour. I have read the enclosed letter. I am sending it for both of you to read. There may be exaggeration in it, but it does not appear wholly baseless. Still, you must both give careful thought to it. We must do nothing that is unclean. Do not feel enraged even inwardly with the writer of the letter. If what he writes is nothing but the truth then he should be considered a satyagrahi. If he has exaggerated or resorted to falsehood, he deserves to be pitied. There should not be any ill-will towards him. For this reason, I am forbidding others to give out the name.

I am staying on here today and tomorrow. I shall leave on Saturday and reach there in the morning. I shall spend Monday there. Then there is Tuesday too. I shall let you know if there is a change. If both of you wish that the Working Committee should meet in Bombay, it is possible to do that too.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2672

[1] The date could not be determined. See, however, letter to the addresees in "Letter to Dayalji and Kalyanji", 17-11-1921.

180. TELEGRAM TO MAULANA ABDUL BARI[1]

January 1, 1922

DICTATORSHIP DOES NOT ARISE WHILE WORKING COMMITTEE CAN BE CALLED. AUTHORITY SAME AS WORKING COMMITTEE'S WHEN LATTER NOT POSSIBLE CALL. IMPRISONMENT ASSAULT DEATH TO BE SUFFERED NOT FOR THEIR SAKE BUT FOR SAKE RELIGION OR COUNTRY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7779

181. DIRECTIONS T0 KRISHNADAS[2]

[*Silence Day, Mondays January 2, 1922*][3]

Directions to Kristodas

Where are all the letters received in Khadi Nagar and not assorted?

You may prepare a digest of the convictions and interesting paras in the reports.

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, Vol. II, p. 250

[1] In reply to Abdul Bari's telegram from Bombay, dated December 31, 1921, which read: " . . . Kindly wire answer of following so that I may remove doubts arising from religious point of view: Is your authority as a dictator the same which Working Committee had or more? Can Working Committee confiscate dictator's authority. What will be main object of Volunteer Corps to suffer imprisonment, assault, even death while serving for country or to suffer them for the sake of them?"

[2] From a facsimile

[3] From the source

182. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Wednesday [*January 4, 1922*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

Your paper[2] has been coming, no doubt, but there has been no letter from you. Even in the midst of all this labour, do not forget to improve your handwriting. This time, you will see in *Young India* a great deal [of matter] from *Independent. We* propose to give a digest of all the issues of your paper, so that you will easily have its weekly [edition]. You have used the phrase "mute silence". What could this "mute silence" be?

The impression of letters [in your paper] is not yet clear enough to be legible. I think it would be better if you discontinue typing altogether. The person who writes for you has a good hand.

Your third page is not good. Too much space has been left in typing. Who will give news about the Governor of Bengal? The man who writes that Malaviyaji breaks the law must be sent to the gallows. He did not even go to Madras.

On the second page, the title "Round Table Conference" appears twice.

Today members of the Nehru family left for Lucknow, all of them in third class. You may write a note on this. Urmiladevi, too, travels in the same way.

I shall be in Bombay on the 14th. The Moderate Conference is being held on that day. I may have to be there on the 15th also. Sundaram will stay on here for the present.

You should go over every line of your paper. You may still reduce the matter, but you should see that what you give is sound and in a presentable form.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] The members of the Nehru family left Ahmedabad after the Congress session which ended on December 28,1921, and Govind Malaviya was sentenced before January 8, 1922.

[2] The handwritten *Independent*, which Devdas had been bringing out after Mahadev Desai's arrest and conviction

[PS.]

You ought to give news regarding swadeshi, Those who have leisure should work for swadeshi, spin, card, weave, sell and so on.

I have received a wire about Govind's re-arrest. I cannot imagine why he has been arrested this time. I shall know about it from you hereafter.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 7720

183. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SABARMATI,
Posh Sud 6 [*January 4, 1922*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. You have left your watch here. Most probably I shall be coming to Bombay on the 14th. Ask for it then.

See Durga's letter published in *Navajivan*.[2] It has been despatched today.

You must console Anand by talking to her about Prahlad, Dhruva, Sudhanva, Gopichand, etc. She is religious-minded. So she will understand. Going to jail is also for the sake of religion and many have gone to jail.

Permission to meet Mahadev[3] will certainly be granted. It is good to go there once. But if you go there, you should be prepared to go to jail, should an unforeseen eventuality arise.

Christo Das is a yogi. With him I think I am in good company. His modesty, calm, thoughtfulness and seriousness are qualities of a high order.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The addressee received the letter on January 6, 1922. *Posh Sud 6* corresponded to January 4 in that year.

[2] For Gandhiji's comments on Durga Desai's letter, *vide* "Notes", 8-1-1922, Under Sub-title "Another Illustration".

[3] Who was sentenced on December 24, 1921 to one year's rigorous imprisonment for publishing the hand-written issue of the *Independent*

184. INTERVIEW TO "SWARAJYA"[1]

[Before *January 5, 1922*]

The special correspondent of the *Swarajya* writes from Ahmedabad:

I interviewed Mahatmaji on the present situation, regarding the proposed truce[2].

QUESTION: What is the opinion of Lala Lajpat Rai and Motilal Nehru?

ANSWER: As regards Motilalji, his opinion is contained in the latest issue of *Young India*[3]. Lalaji has asked me not to worry about those who are in jail.

Suppose volunteer organizations arc not declared unlawful in other provinces and public meetings are not prohibited, then what should volunteers and Congress workers do, to get into jails?

In their case civil disobedience can only be of an offensive nature. For this they should wait till I have launched upon it. Meanwhile, they must go on organizing the volunteers, must spin at least four hours a day, and produce at least one *tola* per hour, of even, twisted yarn of about 10 or 12 counts.

Should the volunteers picket foreign cloth shops and liquor shops?

They may be picketed by people who understand their responsibility, and do it peacefully.

How long do you expect the struggle to continue in the new year?

I don't know. In the present state, it may not continue for more than two months. We must be prepared for indiscriminate flogging and shooting by the Government from all parts of India. We must not flinch even then. The present struggle is not so much to right the Punjab and Khilafat wrongs, much less for swaraj. We are now fighting for the elementary rights of free speech and freedom to form associations, and on this question we expect Moderates and others to be with us. When this intermediate skirmish will be finished, our way will be clear.

Mahatmaji added that any swaraj scheme must include the control of the military and the police.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-1-1922

[1] Reproduced by the source from the Swarajya

[2] Being negotiated by Malaviya

[3] Dated 29-12-1921, under the caption "Another Gaol Letter" Motilal had written: ". . . 'No reduction in the triple demand,' should be the only basis of any negotiations . . . "

185. NOTES

JAIL TREATMENT

> Starvation, or its alternative, canine food, no covering much less any worth the name to protect against the severe Delhi winter, microbe-infected, lice-laden, blood-stained tatters, the worn off relics of common felons, and finally, the awful ghastly climax, preferential treatment or release, constantly suggested and enforced in favour of the very rare civil resister, whose frailty succumbs to the temptation.

Such is the report sent by Lala Shankar Lal of Delhi as he was being taken from the Delhi Jail to Mianwali. The friend that has sent me the report says:

> We have heard of the closed Moplah death wagon, but this Delhi Jail wherein some of the best and noblest of our workers have been clapped, has by ingenious cunning been converted for non-co-operators into an open area where death and the devil hold their court. Emotion chokes me as I write. Is it that the hand which is silencing many a Shankar Lal in our beautiful and lovable country is stifling also my feeble voice? Woeful tales of non-co-operators being flogged till the hand that flogs them tires of the process, of civil resisters being stripped of all vestige of human covering and subjected to a slow and gradual death from toxicity and infection, have filled my ears.

The writer is a highly cultured sensitive young man. I have removed some of the descriptive passages from the letter. Unused to suffering he has been deeply touched by the version of the ill-treatment given in the Delhi Jail to non-co-operators. But the substance of the charge is true. For it is corroborated from many sources unconnected with one another. There seems to be no doubt that the Government having failed to bend the non-co-operators and to extort an apology from them by mere confinement, the order has gone round for inflicting physical hardships on civil resisters. There does come a time when with all the will in the world the flesh refuses to suffer any further and makes the spirit its unwilling slave. The administrators are exploiting their knowledge of this to humble the proud spirit of civil resisters. And I would not be surprised if some of them not being able to stand the inhuman treatment that is evidently being systematized apologize in order to escape unbearable torture of the flesh.

But if the spirit has at times been found weak enough to yield to the flesh after a certain point, it has also been found superior to the

most excruciating tortures. Given sufficient previous mental preparation, the very extreme of suffering becomes an anaesthetic that deadens pain; where the spirit is willing, the exultation induced by the willingness counteracts the sensation of pain. The pleasure of serving one's country or religion more than balances the pain involved in it.

It is then the duty of a civil resister to bear all torture of the flesh but it is equally his duty to resist insanitation or humiliation. He will cheerfully take the lash. He must not crawl. He will cheerfully go bare-bodied and shiver to death. He must resolutely reject germ-laden filthy blankets or shirts. He may go without food, but he must refuse to take bread or dal laden with pebbles. He may do without his bath but he must refuse to bathe in foul water. Where submission is unmanly resistance becomes a duty.

Well have the civil resisters got the privilege of voluntary suffering. It is the noblest service. They are purifying the jails. Even felons are entitled to human treatment. Let the authorities give the Plainest food and clothing but both must be clean and sufficient.

It is no pleasure to me to publish accounts of inhuman treatment no matter where and by whom meted out. I do not want to believe that human beings can be so brutal as many stories related about them would prove them to be. I am most anxious that this fight is fought in a sportsmanlike spirit. It cuts my human flesh to the quick to find human beings not playing the game.

But if it is to be a dirty game on the other side, so be it. Non-co-operators have made no stipulation, they have no choice but to take things as they come to them and cut their way through every difficulty. Is it not reported of the Japanese that when they came to a ditch their army could not cross, they filled it with human corpses? Shall we do less because we are vowed not to kill but only to be killed? Our pledge exacts from us more than from the Japanese soldier. For we must go through the fire without the drum beat of war.

The charge brought by my correspondent is serious. Let me adduce corroborative evidence. Here is a graphic and detailed description of the treatment of Mahadev Desai, the editor of the *Independent.* Readers of *Young India* know his connection with this journal.[1] He is one of the soberest of workers. He has a most sensitive frame. A friend visited him with Mrs. Desai. The writer says:

[1]Mahadev Desai was the publisher of *Young India*.

> We are preparing for strong repression. I have wired you regarding Mahadevbhai's imprisonment. He had received a summons to attend court for trial. He was quite joyful when he went to jail. We went yesterday to see him but the jailer would not let us. I took food, clothing and books. But the jailer would not take them. This morning we were able to meet him. He has been put with the ordinary criminals and is being subjected to all the jail regulations. He was dressed in jail clothes. He had a black shirt with sleeves reaching to the elbow and half pants. The clothes were dirty, stinking and lousy. He had two blankets which could not have been washed for months and which must have been and were full of lice. He had a rusty iron bowl for water, so rusty as to make the water unfit in a few minutes for drink. Therefore, that water could not be drunk during night. It would be found perfectly yellow in the morning There is a dirty tank from which drinking water is taken and which is used for bathing too. I do not know whether buckets are supplied. A loin-cloth is supplied for bathing. But no towel is allowed for drying. After the body is dried in the sun the same dirty clothes have to be worn again. It is impossible in the cold climate of this place for the weak body of Mahadevbhai to wash these clothes and to remain bare-bodied whilst these clothes are drying. He has only jail food. He took nothing last night. He had something like gruel this morning. It contained pebbles and other dirt. For natural purposes the prisoners have to go out. And they use the drinking pot to carry their water in. For night use an uncovered pot is supplied. The only thing not yet done is to put irons on.

I hear from another quarter that special instructions have been issued to subject him to ill-treatment for the reason that Mahadev Desai's was a calculated defiance of authority. That the *Independent* could be issued independently of printing and the consequent declaration proved too much for the authorities.

Well, I have no doubt that Mahadev Desai will prove his editorial skill inside the prison walls by retaining his independence in the face of physical tortures. Let me console the reader with the information that Mahadev Desai carries with him a heart of love which has place in it for his torturer and carries too a stock of spiritual anaesthetics in the shape of sacred *bhajans*[1] which he will sing to ward off all feeling of pain. I do believe it as literally true that Mirabai[2] never felt the pains inflicted upon her at the instance of her husband. Her love of God

[1]Devotional songs

[2]A medieval saint-poetess of Rajasthan. Queen of Mewar, she spent her days in the worship of Shri Krishna, incurring her husband's displeasure.

and conscious repetition of that precious name kept her cheerful for ever. I can only picture the Rajput women of old rejoicing as they leapt into the funeral pyre with the name of God on their lips. Latimer[1] certainly never felt the pain as he majestically stretched forth his hand straight into the fire. His faith in God and His righteousness had saved him. The age of miracles is not past. But a little faith in God and His protecting power, and we are ensured against *unbearable* sufferings. Let no civil resister with faith in his mission doubt that at the crucial moment God will protect him.

I shall be surprised if Mahadev Desai does not by his humble yet dignified bearing melt even the stony hearts of his persecutors.

But to resume the corroborative narrative. Let us look at Lucknow. Things seemed to be going only too well there. The necessary conveniences were allowed to Pandit Nehru and his co-prisoners. So much was this the case what I had begun to think that the United Provinces Government, whilst they followed out the consistent policy of imprisoning those who chose to disregard their notifications, were civilized enough to treat political prisoners with courtesy and decency. But a change seems to have come over even Lucknow. I have just received the information that Sheikh Khaliquzzaman and ten others have been removed from the District to the Central Jail and the conveniences that were given them are to be withdrawn and that probably the visits would be disallowed. Pandit Nehru and the remaining prisoners have sent an energetic protest against such invidious distinctions and have asked to be treated in every respect in the same manner as other political prisoners. It must be a matter of pride to every Indian that some of the best men of India are today putting themselves on a par with the common people and seeking no privileges for themselves.

1st January

Since writing the foregoing notes I have received a wire saying that Mr. Desai had been seen again and that he was hale and hearty and was better treated. I am glad for the sake of the authorities that the treatment has been changed for the better. But the insanitation described above should have been impossible from the very beginning. That a Mahadev Desai has compelled better treatment is a

[1]Hugh Latimer (c. 1485-1555); the English reformer who was condemned as a heretic and burnt at the stake

matter of little moment. The question is one of larger humanity. What must be the condition of ordinary prisoners? Have they any rights? This imprisonment of cultured men is from that standpoint a godsend. The political prisoners will incidentally solve this question of human rights.

THE NEW "INDEPENDENT"

The written edition of the *Independent* commenced *by* Mr. Mahadev Desai when the security of Rs. 2,000 was forfeited continues its difficult career. It has been regularly published in its new form. Arrangements have been made for a succession of editors should the present one be arrested. Its front page is proudly ornamented with the names of the editors and assistant editors already imprisoned within a short space of time. These are Messrs Ranga Iyer[1], George Joseph, Kabadi and Mahadev Desai. 1 do not think any other paper except the *Zamindar* of Lahore has such a proud record. I publish in another column gleanings from the seven issues to hand. I have already published in full the first issue. The reader will not fail to notice the care with which the news items are collected, collated and compressed nor will he fail to note the condensed thought in the editorial notes. I do hope that the Allahabad public will watch the experiment with sympathy and support the appeal made by its youthful editor. The enterprise is fraught with great possibilities. The Government may not stop at anything and arrest every one of the editors. The object of the new experiment is to demonstrate that when there is a sufficient number of men to stand its punishments, no Government can enforce its will in opposition to that of the people. Before we feel and become free we must be able to dispense with all its favours. We must acknowledge that in spite of our non-co-operation we do indulge in many things by the grace of the Government. If it chooses, it can isolate everyone of us and deny to us the use of railways, post and telegraph. All it cannot curb without our consent is the spirit within us. And in order that India's spirit may be and remain free, we must be prepared to face and conquer every obstacle the Government may place in our way.

Indeed, if the editor can secure the services of good copyists, he will be able to make a thousand copies without difficulty. I would advise him to be still more sparing of words. He will find that by a

[1] C.S. Ranga Iyer

little practice he will be able to say all that he has to say in two sides of a foolscap sheet. I promise that the compressed newspaper will be far more readable than the long drawn out agony that the printed sheets inflict on the public from day to day. When all the padding, the verbiage, the flaring headlines and advertisements are removed from the average daily, one will find that the remainder can be easily reduced to a foolscap sheet. Let the editor try to give the news and the thoughts the others do not give and he will find that his copy will be multiplied a thousandfold without effort. At the same time let him remember that a written daily requires a different type of organization. Its agents are more copyists than distributors. The manager of a written daily will keep a list of agents and subscribers who are served by such agents. The agents in their turn will have local copyists who will make enough copies for their respective areas. Thus a more intimate and living relation can be established between the staff of a written daily and its readers. What is more, when the idea is properly worked out, it will be found that there is less worry, less waste of time, energy and money and more lasting and quicker results.

NOTICE TO A BARRISTER

Mr. T. A. K. Sherwani, it will be remembered, was in charge of the National Muslim University when immediately after the disturbance in Aligarh he was arrested. Mr. Sherwani is undergoing his sentence at the central prison at Naini, Allahabad. He has now been served with a notice from the High Court to show cause why his name should not be struck off the roll of advocates or why he should not be suspended from practice on the ground that he has been convicted under Section 153A I.P.C. He has to show cause on the 23rd instant. Two years ago the best of lawyers would have shivered to receive such a notice. It would have been regarded as an impending doom. Today happily things have changed. I know that the notice has not disturbed a single night's rest for Mr. Sherwani. He had already suspended practice as a non-co-operator. And he has faith enough in himself and his country to know that when swaraj is established as it must be very shortly, his name will be restored with honour, even if it is removed by the High Court on the 23rd.

Young India, 5-1-1922

186. THE CONGRESS AND AFTER

THE SUBSTANCE

The Congress week was a week of joy and celebration. None thought that swaraj was not attained. Every one seemed to be conscious of the growing national strength. There was confidence and hope written in every face. The Reception Committee had provided for admitting one hundred thousand visitors to the Congress *pandal*. But the lowest calculation puts down the figure at two lacs. The rush was so great that it became impossible to issue either season tickets or the entrance tickets. And this phenomenal attendance would have been still larger if all kinds of false rumours had not been started to scare away people. The imprisonment of leaders and workers and their courage has filled the people with a new hope and a new joy. There was a feeling in the air that the people had found in suffering the surest remedy for the attainment of freedom and breaking down the mightiest force that might be pitted against it.

The Constitution has worked for a year and in my humble opinion it has proved a thorough success. There was a serious business air about the Subjects Committee which had ample time for deliberation. It was a Committee not chosen haphazard, but deliberately by electors who knew what they were doing. The Congress itself was an impressive spectacle. Hakimji[1] made an ideal and patient President in the place of Deshbandhu Chitta Ranjan Das. The delegates insisted upon their doubts being solved before they voted. They insisted on understanding everything that was going on.

Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel, Chairman of the Reception Committee, took no more than fifteen minutes to read his address in Hindi. There were no speeches to induct the President. The whole of the function was performed by the All-India Congress Committee. That saved at least two hours of the twelve thousand delegates and visitors. The President's address took no more than twenty minutes. Every speech was to the point and not a minute was allowed to be wasted in idle talk.

In the nature of things too it could not well be otherwise. The resolutions were addressed to the nation. They presented a programme of earnest work that had got to be done if the nation was to find her place in the world.

Extraordinary care was, therefore, taken both in the Subjects

[1] Hakim Ajmal Khan

Committee and the Congress to see that the resolutions were properly understood before they were voted upon.

So much for the business side.

THE EXHIBITION

The spectacular was no less impressive. The *pandal* itself was a majestic structure covered with khadi all over. The arches also of khadi, the Subjects Committee *pandal* of khadi. A beautiful fountain surrounded by green lawns ornamented the front of the *pandal*. At the back was a large *pandal* for Overflow meetings where all that had gone on in the Congress *pandal* was explained to the thousands of spectators, men and women, who could not gain entrance for love or money.

The whole ground was a blaze of light at night, and being on the river bank and just at the end of Ellis Bridge, presented for full eight days for thousands of admiring spectators on the other side a gorgeous appearance.

The exhibition ground was quite near. It attracted huge crowds. It was a complete success. The attendance was beyond all expectation; no less than forty thousand visited the exhibition daily. It was a unique demonstration of what India can produce. The chief attraction was the party from Chikacole who demonstrated all the processes of cotton leading to the drawing out of yarn up to 100 counts. No machinery could possibly make the snowlike slivers that the delicate hands of the women of Andhra produced with their simple bones. No machine could draw the exquisite thread that the delicate fingers of the Andhra women drew. The music of the spindle, as it performed its gentle revolutions, is incapable of being reproduced. The evolution that khadi has undergone during the year could also be studied in a room where every variety of khadi was collected. The paintings from Shantiniketan and elsewhere and the beautiful carvings afforded instruction to the close student as well as the ordinary spectator. The musical concerts in which musicians from all parts of India took part was an irresistible attraction for thousands of spectators. It ended in the convening by Vishnu Digamber Shastri[1] of the first All-India Musical Conference whose object is to popularize music in national assemblies and organize *bhajan mandalis*[2].

[1] Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar, an eminent exponent of Indian classical music

[2] Groups singing devotional songs

KHADI IN EVIDENCE

The Khadi Nagar, the adjoining Muslim Nagar, and the Khilafat *pandal* next to it were a triumphant demonstration of Hindu-Muslim unity and an ocular demonstration of the hold that khadi has on the public. The Reception Committee used only khadi manufactured in Gujarat and worth three hundred and fifty thousand rupees. The Committee paid Rs. 50,000 for the use of the khadi. All the tents including a big kitchen and storehouse were covered with khadi. Nearly two thousand volunteers, both Hindu and Mussulman and including a few Parsis and Christians, looked after all the arrangements for the guests in both Khadi Nagar and Muslim Nagar.

The sanitary arrangements were a special feature. Trenches were dug for the purpose. Perfect privacy was secured by khadi partitions. And the excreta were covered over with clean earth after every use. Every time the trench was used, it was, therefore, found to be in a clean condition. The work of attending to the trenches was done not by paid *Bhangis*[1] but by unpaid volunteers belonging to all castes and religions. Those only were taken who had no repugnance to this necessary work. The reader may not know that the process is so clean and so expeditious that the cleaner does not have to touch either the excreta or the earth. He has but to take a few shovelfuls of the cleanest earth, and with it carefully cover up the dirt. The result of this simple attention was that the camp was clean, sweet and free from the plague of flies. All the camps were lighted by electricity.

WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

I must not omit to mention the Women's Conference presided by Bi-Amma, the brave mother of the Ali Brothers. It was a soul-stirring spectacle. The whole of the spacious *pandal* was filled by no less than fifteen thousand women. I do not say that they all understood what was going on. But I do say that they knew instinctively what it was. They knew that their assembly advanced India's cause and that they were expected to play their part side by side with men.

In the midst of all this rush there was, so far as I am aware, no accident. The police, be it said to their credit, never interfered with anything or anybody. On the Congress side of the bridge, all

[1] A backward Hindu Community traditionally regarded as untouchable

arrangements were left to the Congress and the Khilafat volunteers.

THE DARK SIDE

So far I have given the bright side of the picture. But like every picture the Congress picture, too, has its shades. Though there was the greatest enthusiasm, there was at times unruliness on the part of the visitors. When they grew impatient, they made a rush for the *pandal* and forced entrance once or twice. It was all good-humoured but it could also prove disastrous. We must be able to regulate such functions in perfect order and that is possible only when the mass of people instinctively and voluntarily obey instructions from their own men: Self-restraint is the key to swaraj, self government. Even the delegates were not all punctilious in obeying instructions. Some of them would not even occupy the blocks reserved for them. They did not hesitate even to suggest that they were out for civil (?) disobedience and would, therefore, sit where they liked. Even some members of the All-India Congress Committee were not above such incivil criminal disobedience. Some delegates would not pay for their board and lodging. And I am sorry to say that there was even impersonation by at least one Gujarati who used a friend's ticket as visitor although he knew that the ticket bore his friend's name and that it was non-transferable. What adds to the grief is that he is a well-known member of the Provincial Congress Committee.

AND AFTER

When, therefore, I think of the darker side of the picture my heart sinks within me. I know why there is delay in our realizing our ideal. But when I think of the brighter side, the picture is too attractive to enable the shades materially to mar its beauty. At the same time it would not do for us to be forgetful and relax our vigilance. The movement depends for its success only upon developingour moral strength. Even as one false note spoils a whole musical piece, so does a single individual suffice to crush a great movement like ours. Let us remember that we have staked our all upon Truth and Non-violence. Whatever others may be able to do being free from any such pledge, bound by our own pledge we are sure to, fall to pieces if we break our own deliberate pledge. As, therefore, I have often said in these pages, the thorough working of the Congress Constitution leads automatically to the establishment of swaraj. Let us see.

Though the All-India Congress Committee has a fair balance still at hand, the provinces undoubtedly will have used up the monies left with them. They have an automatic source of income. Every Congress member is liable to pay four annas per year to enable him to retain his or her vote. If, therefore, each province has its quota of members, it must be able to collect at least Rs. 50,000, counting two lacs to be the least number on the roll of membership. I have been told that this is merely a mirage, that it costs more to collect the amount than it is worth. A government that spends more than it earns is a despotic or a corrupt government. The Congress is claimed to be a voluntary organization. And if we are unable to collect our subscriptions at a nominal cost, we have no right to exist. Under swaraj we shall expect to get our revenue at no more than 2_ per cent cost and then not by force but by the free will of the people. The least, therefore, that we are entitled to expect is that every province must now be able to finance itself. It ought not to be difficult again to get at least one crore members, i.e., twenty-five lacs of rupees throughout all India for membership. Indeed, if we are a growingly popular organization, say a government, we should be able to double our membership. We should be able to have enough number of unpaid honest volunteers to do just this one work of collection and no more. If we have not them, we must declare our bankruptcy. If we represent a healthy and natural growth, we must be able to collect this nominal personal annual tax without any effort whatsoever. And as with the Congress organizations, so with its many institutions, colleges, schools, weaving factories, etc. No institution is worth keeping that does not command local support by reason of its own moral strength. Only that institution is a necessity in a district which is supported by its inhabitants. The biggest missionary institutions financed from America or England are a superimposition and have nowhere been assimilated by the people. If the missionaries had from the very commencement relied purely upon the goodwill and support of the people, they would have rendered infinitely greater service to India. Even so if Congress organizations and institutions are supported from the central body, they are likely to become foreign growths and hardly beneficial to the people. It may be laid down as a general rule that no local institution should exist which is not locally supported. Self-reliance is the surest test of capacity for self-government. It is

possible that there are places or provinces which have not yet become self-conscious. They will need to be developed and helped in the initial stages. They cannot today be counted in any scheme of battle we may devise. In this swift struggle we must rely only upon those places that have developed political consciousness. It must, therefore, be in the rarest cases that the central body may be expected to finance local effort.

UNTOUCHABILITY

Similarly we must make a Herculean effort to deal with the question of untouchability. Not until the "untouchables" certify to the reformation in Hinduism, may we claim to have done anything in the matter. To my dismay I have found much misunderstanding on this question even in one of the most advanced and best awakened provinces, namely Andhra. The removal of untouchability means the aboliton of the fifth caste. There should, therefore, be no objection to a *Panchama*[1] boy drawing water from the common well of a village and to his attending its common school. He should freely exercise all the rights of a non-Brahmin. In the name of religion we Hindus have made a fetish of outward observances, and have degraded religion by making it simply a question of eating and drinking. Brahminism owes its unrivalled position to its self-abnegation, its inward purity, its severe austerity,—all these illumined by knowledge. Hindus are doomed if they attach undue importance to the spiritual effects of foods and human contacts. Placed as we are in the midst of trials and temptations from within, and touched and polluted as we are by all the most untouchable and the vilest thought currents, let us not, in our arrogance, exaggerate the influence of contact with people whom we often ignorantly and more often arrogantly consider to be our inferiors. Before the throne of the Almighty we shall be judged, not by what we have eaten nor by whom we have been touched but by whom we have served and how. Inasmuch as we serve a single human being in distress, we shall find favour in the sight of God. Bad and stimulating or dirty foods we must avoid as we must avoid bad contact. But let us not give these observances a place out of all proportion to their importance. We dare not use abstinence from certain foods as a cover for fraud, hypocrisy, and worse vices. we dare not refuse to serve a fallen or a dirty brother lest his contact should

[1] A backward Hindu community traditionally regarded as untouchable

injure our spiritual growth.

HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

There is still much left to be desired as to Hindu-Muslim unity. The combination is still suspected to be a menace to the free existence and growth of the small communities. Let us not repeat the mistakes of the past regarding our attitude towards the Moderates or the Independents. They must not feel unsafe in our company but by our toleration we must disarm their suspicion and opposition except as to our ideals.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

We dare not pin our faith solely to civil disobedience. It is like the use of a knife to be used most sparingly if at all. A man who cuts away without ceasing cuts at the very root and finds himself without the substance he was trying to reach by cutting off the superficial hard crust. The use of civil disobedience will be healthy, necessary, and effective only if we otherwise conform to the laws of all growth. We must, therefore, give its full and, therefore, greater value to the adjective "civil" than to "disobedience". Disobedience without civility, discipline, discrimination, non-violence is certain destruction. Disobedience combined with love is the living water of life. Civil disobedience is a beautiful variant to signify growth, it is not discordance which spells death.

Young India, 5-1-1922

187. LEGALIZED PILLAGE

Whilst imprisonments of thousands of non-co-operators and their unavoidable hardships fill me with delight, the incidents I am about to relate, though they bring swaraj nearer, do grieve me. I would fain not think so ill of the Government as its acts now make me do.

The hartal[1] in Calcutta was apparently as thorough as it was in Allahabad. The citizens did not go mad as some did in Bombay on the 17th November, although the danger in Calcutta of a breach of the peace by the people was the greatest. Their peacefulness was exemplary. Their secretary Babu Satkodipati Rai, Sardar Luchman Singh and Swami Vishwanand were arrested, as it would appear, for no

[1] on December 24, 1921

fault save that of trying to keep the peace. Yet the people remained calm. Soon it will be possible to say of our countrymen that they can act without leaders or that all are leaders.

This spontaneous hartal in spite of the Herculean efforts to break it and preservation by the people of the peace despite provocation enraged the "civil" guards and the Europeans generally. The Viceroy is clearly to blame for it. He has brought the Prince when he should not have. Having brought him, he is trying to enforce public welcomes wherever the Prince is being taken and having failed in so doing, His Excellency has excited the passions of the British residents by calling the boycott an affront to the Prince and the British nation. The expected has happened. The police and the civil guard have construed the various declarations of the Government to be a licence to do as they please. They have looted shops. They have, if the reports in the *Servant* are true, walked into mosques with shoes on and even committed thefts. Innocent men have been injured. Some have even been killed. The people of Calcutta have borne this legalized lawlessness with great forbearance. They have done the right thing. In my opinion the shoes of scoffers have not desecrated the mosque in question. The amazing forbearance of the mosques-goers has made it more sacred and proved the religious nature of the struggle.

The authorities have behaved no better in parts of Bihar. Here is what the Secretary of the Thana Congress Committee, Sonpur, writes:

> On the 21st December 1921, at about 3 p.m., 10 volunteers with some workers were patrolling the road asking the shopkeepers to observe complete hartal on the 22nd instant, during the Prince's visit. When they reached the Sonpur Police Station, the S.P. (Mr. Parkin) who has been posted here on account of H.R.H. the Prince's visit came out with about 100 constables and snatched away from the volunteers flags, badges and even khadi clothes which they had on them and tore everything to pieces.
>
> Immediately after this the S.P. marched up to the Congress office followed by a band of constables in plain clothes and with lathis in their hands. On reaching the office the S.P. ordered the constables to plunder (*"Maro aur looto"* were the words he used); whereupon the constables broke open the door and entered the office room pushing the volunteers right and left and assaulting them. Mr. Parkin then thoroughly searched the office, and breaking open a box which contained cash and an almirah which contained records, he then removed all records, khadi pieces, national calendars, pictures, badges, khadi caps, and religious books such as the *Ramayana* and

the *Gita* which were there and burnt them in front of the office. They have also taken away about Rs. 120 in cash which was sent here from the District Congress Committee for distribution among the flood-affected people and also as contribution to the national school.

The following from Banaras completes the dismal picture of daylight robbery by the very Government that professes to act in the name of law and order:

During the last three days the volunteers did not parade the streets to court arrest. Altogether nearly 500 were arrested, most of them were released after 24 hours or fined Rs. 10. In default, the police stripped them of their blankets, coats, caps, shoes, watches etc.

One hears of such things done by hooligans. In law the persons and property of citizens are held so sacred that they cannot be touched without processes of law. I have seen debtors in courts walk away in unconcern with gold chains dangling on their waistcoats in spite of orders of payments against them. I have seen accused charged with crimes being fined and yet walking away with diamond rings on their fingers covering the amount of their fines. In all such cases recovery has been made after warrants of public attachment and public sales. But the law that is being just now administered against non-co-operators is a law without restraint. The caprice of an official represents the whole law in India. I imagine that even under martial law some of the things that are reported to have happened could not be done with impunity. It is a pity that human beings can be found and used for playing a game so low as is being played by the Government of India.

Young India, 5-1-1922

188. INDEPENDENCE

Maulana Hasrat Mohani put up a plucky fight for independence on the Congress platform and then as President of the Muslim League and was happily each time defeated[1]. There is no mistake about the meaning of the Maulana. He wants to sever all connection with the British people even as partners and equals and even though the Khilafat question be satisfactorily solved. It will not do to urge that the

[1] During the Congress and the Muslim League sessions held at Ahmedabad in December 1921

Khilafat question can never be solved without complete independence. We are discussing merely the theory. It is common cause that if the Khilafat question cannot be solved without complete independence, i.e., if the British people retain hostile attitude towards the aspirations of the Islamic world, there is nothing left for us to do but to insist upon complete independence. India cannot afford to give Britain even her moral support and must do without Britain's support, moral and material, if she cannot be induced to be friendly to the Islamic world.

But assuming that Great Britain alters her attitude as I know she will when India is strong, it will be religiously unlawful for us to insist on independence. For, it will be vindictive and petulant. It would amount to a denial of God for the refusal will then be based upon the assumption that the British people are not capable of response to the God in man. Such a position is untenable for both a believing Mussulman and a believing Hindu.

India's greatest glory will consist not in regarding Englishmen as her implacable enemies fit only to be turned out of India at the first available opportunity but in turning them into friends and partners in a new commonwealth of nations in the place of an Empire based upon exploitation of the weaker or undeveloped nations and races of the earth and, therefore, finally upon force.

Let us see clearly what swaraj together with the British connection means. It means undoubtedly India's ability to declare her independence if she wishes. Swaraj, therefore, will not be a free gift of the British Parliament. It will be a declaration of India's full self-expression. That it will be expressed through an Act of Parliament is true. But it will be merely a courteous ratification of the declared wish of the people of India even as it was in the case of the Union of South Africa. Not an unnecessary adverb in the Union scheme could be altered by the House of Commons. The ratification in our case will be of a treaty to which Britain will be party.

Such swaraj may not come this year, may not come within our generation. But I have contemplated nothing less. The British Parliament, when the settlement comes, will ratify the wishes of the people of India as expressed not through the bureaucracy but through her freely chosen representatives.

Swaraj can never be a free gift by one nation to another. It is a treasure to be purchased with a nation's best blood. It will cease to be a gift when we have paid dearly for its The Viceroy was confused

when he said that swaraj would have to come from the Parliament unless it came by the sword. He paid no compliment to his country when he allowed his audience to infer that England was incapable of listening to the moral pressure of suffering, and he insulted the intelligence of his audience if he wished it to understand that the British Parliament would give swaraj when it wished irrespective of India's desires and aspirations. The fact is that swaraj will be a fruit of incessant labour, suffering beyond measure.

But His Excellency is unused to any substitute for the sword and, therefore, does probably think that by exercising our debating skill in the legislative councils, some day or other we shall be able to impress the British Parliament with the desirability of granting us swaraj. He will soon learn that there is a better and more effective substitute for the sword and that is civil disobedience. It is daily becoming increasingly clear that civil disobedience will afford the course of suffering through which India must pass before she comes to her own.

We have not come to our own. There is still mutual distrust between Mussulmans and Hindus. The untouchables have not yet felt the glow of the Hindu touch. The Parsis and the Christians of India do not yet know their future under swaraj to a certainty. We have not yet learnt the art nor realized the necessity of obeying our own laws. The spinning-wheel has not yet found a permanent place in our homes. Khadi has not yet become the national garment. In other words, we have not yet understood the art or the conditions of self-protection.

There is still a body of opinion diminishing in volume but not yet negligible which considers that violence alone will bring swaraj to us and that, therefore, violence might be permitted to continue side by side with non-violence, i.e., our non-violence should be regarded as merely a prelude to and a preparation for violence. Those who hold these views little know that their attitude constitutes a fraud upon the world. Our pledge requires that whilst we are under it we believe in the efficacy of non-violence for the quickest attainment of our goal. Each one of us is under a sacred obligation to cancel the pledge as soon as he believes that swaraj is unattainable by non-violence or except by violence. Non-violence is a creed while it lasts. It is an expedient because it is an experiment. But whilst we are under the pledge we are not only bound to believe in and observe non-violence but we are equally bound to persuade others to be non-violent and condemn

those who do violence. I am more than ever convinced that we have not reached our goal because even we who have subscribed to the Congress creed have not all remained non-violent in word and deed nor endeavoured to be non-violent in thought or intent.

Young India, 5-1-1922

189. THE IMMEDIATE ISSUE

Swaraj, the Khilafat, the Punjab occupy a subordinate place to the issue sprung upon the country by the Government. We must first make good the right of free speech and free association before we can make any further progress towards our goal. The Government would kill us if they could by a flank attack. To accept defeat in the matter of free speech and free association is to court disaster. If the Government is allowed to destroy non-violent activities in the country, however dangerous they may be to its existence, even the Moderates' work must come to a standstill. In the general interest, therefore, we must defend these elementary rights with our lives. We cannot be coerced into welcoming the Prince nor can we be coerced into disbanding volunteer associations or giving up any other activities which we may deem desirable for our growth.

The safest and the quickest way to defend these rights is to ignore the restriction. We must speak the Truth under a shower of bullets. We must band together in the face of bayonets. No cost is too great for purchasing these fundamental rights. And on this there can be no compromise, no parleying, no conference. Withdrawal of notifications of disbandment and prohibition orders and discharge of all who are imprisoned for non-violent activities must precede any conference or settlement. We must be content to die, if we cannot live as free men and women.

I wish I could persuade everybody that civil disobedience is the inherent right of a citizen. He dare not give it up Without ceasing to be a man. Civil disobedience is never followed by anarchy. Criminal disobedience can lead to it. Every State puts down criminal disobedience by force. It perishes, if it does not. But to put down civil disobedience is to attempt to imprison conscience. Civil disobedience can only lead to strength and purity. A civil resister never uses arms and hence he is harmless to a State that is at all willing to listen to the voice of public opinion. He is dangerous for an autocratic State, for

he brings about its fall by engaging public opinion upon the matter for which he resists the State. Civil disobedience, therefore, becomes a sacred duty when the State has become lawless, or which is the same thing, corrupt. And a citizen that barters with such a State shares its corruption or lawlessness.

It is, therefore, possible to question the wisdom of applying civil disobedience in respect of a particular act or law; it is possible to advise delay and caution. But the right itself cannot be allowed to be questioned. It is a birthright that cannot be surrendered without surrender of one's self-respect.

At the same time that the right of civil disobedience is insisted upon, its use must be guarded by all conceivable restrictions. Every possible provision should be made against an outbreak of violence or general lawlessness. Its area as well as its scope should also be limited to the barest necessity of the case. In the present case, therefore, aggressive civil disobedience should be confined to a vindication of the right of free speech and free association. In other words non-co-operation, so long as it remains non-violent, must be allowed to continue without let or hindrance. When that position is attained it is time for a representative conference to be summoned for the settlement of Khilafat, the Punjab and swaraj but not till then.

Young India, 5-1-1922

190. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[After *January 5, 1922*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

If I have read your letter correctly, it means that Choudhary should put in two months. If so, it would be better if he did that first. I am not sure that I have understood fully what you have written. I find some difficulty in deciphering your handwriting too.

Your criticism of Maulana Hasart is not justified. He has pointed out the impossibility of a parallel government.

I have had no letter yet from Malaviyaji.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 7919

[1]From the reference to Devdas Gandhi's criticism of Hasrat Mohani, the first part of which was reproduced in *Young India* on 5-1-1922

191. LETTER TO HARIBHAI DESAI

[After *January 5, 1922*][1]

It is good that Mahadev is jailed. He will get rest thereby. The work outside is so heavy that he would have fallen ill. Although there is hardship in jail now, I am sure that conditions will improve very soon. Mahadev has the knack of winning over people wherever he goes. I am sure that by speaking sweetly and modestly he will have any undue hardship in jail life removed. You should neither lose patience nor worry.

Mahadev Desai's Early Life, p. 64

192. TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
January 6, 1922

DEVDAS GANDHI
ANAND BHAWAN
ALLAHABAD

CONGRATULATION KRISHNA KANT[2] KHANNA SYED MOHIUDDIN AND GOVIND UPON THEIR GOOD FORTUNE.[3] HOPE STREAM VOLUN TEERS WILL REMAIN UNINTERRUPTED.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 7790

[1]An account of the ill-treatment meted out in jail to Mahadev Desai, the addressee's son, had appeared in *Young India*, 5-1-1922; *vide* " Notes", 5-1-1922, under the sub-title "Jail Treatment". It is likely that this letter was written following the publication of that item.

[2] Nephew of Madan Mohan Malaviya and editor of *Abhyudaya*

[3] *Vide* "My Notes", 8-1-1922, under the sub-title "Malaviyaji's Son".

193. WELL DONE, BUT WILL THIS CONTINUE?

Gujarat can claim to have given an excellent account of itself.[1] Khadi tents were erected at a cost of three and a half lakhs, canopies constructed, electric lights installed, a picturesque exhibition was held, *bhajans* were sung and the splendour of Indian music demonstrated. Hindus and Muslims lived side by side. Not an angry word was uttered by either. Gujarati girls worked as volunteers, Gujarati youths served the delegates even by performing the tasks of scavengers; a huge meeting was held for women and speeches were delivered. All who spoke in the Congress *pandal* respected the law of-economy and talked to the point. No one indulged in long harangues and an effective but moderately worded resolution was passed in answer to the policy of repression adopted by the Government.

No one doubts that by doing all this Gujarat has enhanced its prestige as also that of India. But what is to follow?

Nothing has been left undone to present a bold appearance nor have brave words been lacking; but will brave deeds follow? WillGujaratis be able to compete with Bengal, U.P. and the Punjab? Will they win the credit of getting the prisoners released and securing swaraj? Will they go to jail? Will they submit to beatings and face even death, without anger? If we understand things properly, this will be but child's play. If not, it will be as difficult as breaking boulders.

We must be non-violent in thought, word and deed. Even a *Bhangi* must be regarded as a brother. We must behave with consideration and love towards our Parsi, Jew and Christian brothers and also those who co-operate with the Government. Nor may we show anger to a British neighbour. We must scrupulously follow swadeshi. We must wear only khadi. It is our duty to go to jail, to take beatings, even to die, for the sake of truth—for following truth.

He who keeps this difficult vow will live though slain, and will give new life to his country. Many others have died, have had their heads broken or have gone to jail. They did not enhance India's prestige nor saved her. On the contrary, they brought her a bad name. India's ills will not be cured by the sufferings of criminals or their tears. The remedy for her malady lies in the sacrifice of the

[1] During the Congress session in Ahmedabad in December 1921

innocent.

Ravana carried away the chaste and devoted Sita and the demon kingdom was destroyed. Had he kidnapped a prostitute, the world would not today be remembering Ravana, adoring the prostitute. If a criminal is punished too severely, the world does not care. If, however, even the hair of an innocent person is touched, the world will not bear it.

But what did I see? One of the most respectable delegates from Gujarat got hold of another's ticket for attending as a visitor a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee.[1] This gentleman was caught and a volunteer brought him to me. I felt ashamed. I felt it would be better for me to run away from Gujarat. For a moment I was so shaken that I wondered if it was worth while struggling for swaraj. If this person goes to jail, how will the country benefit? I did not at that time regard this incident as unimportant, nor do I do so now. Even one small sore on the body can prove fatal. Even a minute amount of arsenic falling into fifty maunds of milk renters the latter useless. If fresh milk comes into contact with filth, we throw it away.

Gujaratis, whether you are men or women, take heed. Do not in a moment lose all that you have won. This fight has no use for untruth. There can be no hypocrisy or deceit here. Your responsibility is great. This fight can be won only by humility, civility, courage, charity, and purity in thought, word and deed.

Those who are impure may stay away. There is dirt in Gujarat as there is elsewhere in the world. But impurity cannot be permitted to mingle with purity. Those who cannot adhere to truth may—they must—stand aside; those who cannot speak the truth should remain dumb. In time even their habit of thinking unworthy thoughts will leave them, for they will have no reason to do so. What need was there to attend the meeting with another's ticket? What was there to see?

Murmurings continually reach my ears that the conditions are too difficult. But there is absolutely nothing new in them.

What we planned and decided upon at Nagpur and at Calcutta, and have reiterated in thousands of meetings, has now been incorporated in the pledge. Now that the time has come for us all to declare openly our intention, why are we upset? Were we all these days

[1] It seems he was a delegate to the plenary session of the Congress but had not been elected a member of the All-India Congress Committee.

merely deceiving people by saying that we meant to win swaraj by truth, by love, by removing the blot of untouchability and by self-sacrifice? Or, did we imagine that these conditions were for others and not for us?

I hope that no thoughtful Gujarati man or woman will fail to enter his or her name in this holy *yajna*[1]. It does not matter if Bardoli or Anand is not ready. Neither will find it possible to hold back. Individual civil disobedience, however, we can undertake even today. I am sure there are persons in every town and village who are ready for this. They should now fill the jails.

Personally, I wish that as long as Gujaratis have not gone to jail, there should be no settlement and no non-co-operator serving sentences of imprisonment should be released. While, however, cherishing this unkind wish, I assume that one who has voluntarily courted imprisonment will not wish to be released till the goal has been reached, and to see it reached it is absolutely necessary that we go through a good deal of suffering. If Gujarat does not go through this suffering, which other province will? The way to reduce the suffering to the minimum is for the best men and women to take upon themselves the largest share of it. I, therefore, appeal to every Gujarati man and woman to read and understand the pledge to be taken by every volunteer and sign it. Having done so, they should avail themselves of the many harmless ways of courting imprisonment which are open to them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-1-1922

194. KHILAFAT CONFERENCE

The Khilafat Conference and Muslim League meet generally *at* the same time as the Congress. This enables Hindus and Muslims to learn a great deal from each other and to strengthen their friendship. A person like me who has faith in God cannot *but* see His hand behind the fact that the President of the Khilafat Conference also happened to be the President of the Congress. Deshbandhu's arrest has done greater service than his attending the Congress would have done and Hakimji, being free, accepted the burden of Congress

[1] Sacrifice

presidentship in addition to that of the presidentship of the Khilafat Conference and thereby strengthened Hindu-Muslim unity. The Khilafat camp and the Congress camp thus came so close to each other that nobody would think of them as separate camps.

For similar reasons, it was suggested by Shri Abbas Tyabji that there was no longer any need for the Muslim League to continue as a separate body. When Hindus and Muslims were becoming united in heart, where was the need for two separate political bodies? So long as they were fighting with each other for their respective rights, there may have been such a need. Now the Khilafat Committee should be sufficient. It should, of course, continue, as it is connected with religion.

There is, thus, a perfectly genuine and convincing reason for the view that the Muslim League should be wound up. Yet, so long as Muslim opinion has not crystallized in favour of this course, it will be safe not to propose dissolution of the Muslim League.

I have written about the discussions in the Khilafat Conference and the Muslim League on the question of severing the British connection in any event.[1] It is, therefore, unnecessary to say more here. I prefer to write about the daily increasing amity between the two communities which I observed during the Khilafat Conferenceand the Muslim League session. The impressive spectacle of large numbers of Muslims on the dais in Congress meetings and of Hindus in the Khilafat Conference and the sessions of the Muslim League freely taking part in the proceeding is a memory worth treasuring by all.

Though Hindu-Muslim relations are thus improving, we are not free from dangers. There still remain in our paths many deserts to be crossed, many forests, valleys and hills. The road has yet to be cleared, metalled and rolled. It is still very necessary to employ all possible means to promote this unity. These are now widely known to all. They are:

1. to share each other's joys and sorrows,
2. to respect each other's feelings,
3. to shed fear of each other, and
4. to pay special attention to tasks in which the interests of

[1] Gandhiji attended the Khilafat Conference on December 27 and the Muslim League session on December 30

both parties are involved.

The Khilafat has shown us the way to fulfil the first requirement.

By refraining from interfering in each other's religious observances, Hindus and Muslims can display mutual regard.

The fact that the Hindus are in a majority should not frighten the Muslims and the Hindus should rid themselves of the fear that, with the help of other Muslim nations, Indian Muslims will suppress the Hindus.

Swadeshi and spinning involve the interests of both. If Hindus and Muslims equally realize their significance and benefit, unity between them would be very much strengthened.

But the best method of strengthening it, is for both Hindus and Muslims to take it upon themselves to protect the minority communities. They should love and respect Parsis, Christians and Jews, protect them and never so much as dream of harassing them or forcing them to do anything. In this way, protecting and serving them will become a tradition among Hindus and Muslims and, in the measure that the spirit of service grows among us, we shall become more united.

A person becomes worthy of others' regard in the measure he does his duty. One who is always seeking his rights does not attend to his duties and eventually comes to be regarded as it tyrant who thinks only of his rights. We are fighting the Government because it recognizes only its own rights and does not so much as consider its duty towards us.

If Hindus and Muslims attempt to pose as patrons or benefactors of each other, they will certainly end up as enemies. If, on the other hand, they regard themselves as each other's servants, the bond of mutual regard will grow stronger day by day and a time will come when nothing can break it. Fire will not burn it nor will water dissolve it. Only when such a wonderful bond has been forged between the two communities will the flower of freedom bloom in all its beauty. When this happens, arguments, such as whether we should strive for complete independence or maintain our connection with the British, whether we should fight with the sword or win our freedom by peaceful means, will become superfluous. When this auspicious moment arrives, we shall only have to ask and we shall receive. It is, therefore, the sacred duty of all of us—Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians, Jews—to stop worrying about the future and to strive for improving conditions in the present. May God help us all to do this!

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-l-1922

195. MY NOTES

AWAKENING AMONG CHRISTIANS

I have noted that non-co-operation has brought about a great awakening among Christians too. A conference representing all the Christians in the country was held a short time ago in Lahore under the presidentship of Mr. Mukerji. Very good resolutions regarding swadeshi and prohibition were adopted at the Conference. The swaraj-spirit can be felt in all their proceedings. Speakers dwelt at length on the need for adopting khadi. Everyone has realized now that khadi is the poor man's life-line and that the spinning-wheel means prosperity in the poor man's home, and so Indian Christians have also embraced the movement. Although the President spoke against non-co-operation, he, too, wants swaraj. In his speech, he strongly criticized the Government's repressive policies.

THE PRINCE OF WALES IN INDIAN STATES

A question has arisen what the subjects of Indian States should do when the prince visits their States. It seems to me that, since they have not started non-co-operation against their rulers, they may not do anything which might embarrass the State. They are not bound to honour a guest of the State, but at the same time they are not entitled to agitate against such a guest being honoured. When, therefore, the Prince visits an Indian State, the public should not declare a hartal or hold a protest meeting. Thoughtful subjects of these States, however, are sure to feel bound up with the rest of the country and, therefore, they should as far as possible refrain from taking part in functions held in honour of the Prince. In the States, there is very little democracy, in fact none at all. the public there does not have to associate itself with the actions of the ruler. People join only in activities which interest them or under compulsion. In all such matters, therefore, a person will be admired for courteously exercising his freedom as an individual. In Indian States, the relationship between the ruler and the ruled is governed entirely by self-interest. If the ruler is a good man, he can do some good; if he is a bad man, the subjects have no appeal against him other than to take up arms or offer non-co-operation. This seems to be the state of relations between the rulers and the ruled in British India, where the Government acts in

disregard of the people's interests and, as a result, non-co-operation has been launched. The condition of the Indian States is at present so difficult that it would be a serious matter for their subjects to start non-co-operation. Such a step can be taken only where oppression has become intolerable and the subjects have developed collective soul-force.

SOME QUESTIONS

I am asked so many questions that if I attempted to answer them all, I would have time for nothing else. I, therefore, answer only those which seem to me important. There is, however, an anonymous letter containing questions which I shall consider, not because of their importance, but because they illustrate the ignorance which still prevails among the people. My object is to enlighten even such people.

Q. What are you going to do with swaraj?

A. I am working myself to secure what I want; what the people want, however, they alone can secure.

Q. What are you going to do with the money you have collected?

A. The various Provincial Committees are utilizing it. I have no right to use even a pie of it. The accounts of the Fund have already been published.

Q. Who will rule under swaraj after your death?

A. Swaraj means one's own rule. Everyone has to rule over himself. When all have learnt to rule over themselves, then it will be rule by all, by the people. My living or dying is irrelevant to the issue. I am merely a physician.

Q. Why do you write in English?

A. Because I want to spend all that I have in the service of the country.

Q. Why do you travel by train?

A. That is the Government's kindness and I avail myself of it to further my own work.

Q. You want people to wear khadi, but it is dear.

A. Foreign cloth is costly even if you get it free and khadi is cheap even if it costs more, because all the money spent on the latter goes into the homes of the poor in the country. Moreover, khadi lasts longer and the simplicity that goes with the use of khadi influences other aspects of life and its fragrance makes public life clean and

wholesome.

Q. Why do you play with people's lives?

A. I do nothing of the kind. People come forward to sacrifice their lives for their country or their religion because this gives them joy.

Q. Why do your co-workers wear boots and European clothes ?

A. This merely illustrates my consideration for others. I wish to maintain friendship with them and show, with love, that neither European clothes nor boots are necessary in India.

Q. Why do you interfere in matters of religion?

A. I do not interfere in anyone's religion. Nor are people so simple, either, that they would allow me to do so. But I try to place before them those principles which are common to all religions and I intend to go on doing so.

LEST THEY GO WITH THE WIND!

The strong wind of peaceful non-co-operation is delightful and stimulating, but we must take care that khadi is not carried away or yarn does not fly away in this wind. Those who are engaged in propagating khadi must certainly register their names as volunteers, but they must not neglect spinning or khadi either. They need not come forward to court arrest. They are to act as watchmen. These latter come out when the need for protection arises; otherwise they remain engaged in their own work. Those who have been working for propagating swadeshi ought not to get arrested except for spinning, or selling khadi. Of course, if the number of others going to jail from among those doing other work is insufficient and the swadeshi workers come to their aid, itwill be a different matter. The true soldier is he who dies at his post. Death while doing one's appointed task ensures one's welfare, whereas attempting to do another's duties is fraught with danger.[1]

THE KHADI PLEDGE

It is indeed surprising that of all the conditions in the pledge which the Congress has prescribed for the volunteers, the one requiring the use of khadi is felt to be the most exacting. As a matter of fact, one would expect that the condition of non-violence even in thought or even when one is assaulted would be regarded as more

[1] *Bhagvad Gita*, III.35

difficult. If, however, the condition of wearing khadi is felt to be difficult, the reason must be that when we break this rule we know that we do so and the fact of our having broken it is immediately observed by others as well, so that one cannot in this matter deceive either oneself or others. My advice is that we should show as much vigilance in all the conditions as we are obliged to do in regard to khadi. The meaning of the condition about khadi in the pledge has not been clearly understood. But it can have only one meaning. It can apply only to the clothes we wear. One should certainly discard foreign or mill-made cloth from our bedding, etc., but this is not made obligatory in the pledge as there are difficulties in the way of immediate self-purification to this extent. For many, such a step may even be beyond their means. Once, however, we have made this change-over in regard to the clothes we wear, it is unlikely that, for other purposes in the home, we would continue to use mill-made or foreign cloth in preference to khadi. It is not at all difficult now to use khadi for one's clothes. If a man is very poor, he may limit himself to a loincloth but this should be of khadi.

One more question has been raised in this matter, viz., is khadi to be worn by volunteers only when on duty or at all times? As long as one's name stands in the list of volunteers, having taken the pledge one must wear khadi at all times, in private and in public.

BRAVE MOTHER

During the Congress week, I received a letter from the mother of Shri Govindji Vasanji Mithaiwala, but at the time I could not use it in *Navajivan.* Some of the facts of this case have appeared in newspapers but I do not wish to discuss them here. A gentleman has replied to certain statements made in the court by Shri Govindji's mother. I do not wish to comment on this either. I Wish exclusively to draw attention to the heroism of the late Sakarbai which shone out during the hearing of the case. She went bravely to the police; in the court, too, she stood near her son in the dock and protected him so that he might not yield to weakness. Shri Govindji has always lived in luxury. His wound was not yet healed; he has had no experience of the hardships of jail-life. His friends had tried to get him released on bail and to persuade him to allow himself to be defended, telling him that this was an individual case and had no political significance. Sakarbai stood near the dock in order to protect her son against all these dangers and to uphold the truth. She herself refused to get Shri

Govindji released on bail. This lady knew that one who takes a pledge of non-co-operation may not defend himself in court, whether the charge against him is true or false, whether the case is public or private. In order, therefore, to see that this pledge was honoured, she mustered courage to attend the court. News of similar instances has come from other places also. Help and courage are being offered in various ways by mother to son, sister to brother, wife to husband. It is in this firmness and courage that I glimpse the coming of freedom. Women and men are at present bringing glory to India not by their learning but by their truth and heroism.

ANOTHER ILLUSTRATION

Shri Mahadev Desai's wife is in Allahabad. She is herself a volunteer, goes out to work, cooks for and feeds other volunteers and helps them in other ways and spins regularly. Immediately after Mahadev Desai was arrested, she wrote a letter to me which would bring gladness to any reader. I, therefore, reproduce it here:[1]

She has of course my blessings, but who am I to bless ? Indian women are developing heroism with their own *tapascharya.* It is not as if only one or two men have gone to jail. Large numbers of them have gone and their wives are keeping up courage; they willingly let their husbands and other relatives court arrest and are ready to go to jail themselves. A wire has just come to say that the ill treatment of Shri Desai has now stopped. Jail is bound to mean suffering, though unnecessary suffering can be averted by courage and courteous behaviour on our part. But, whether it is thus averted or not, and however severe the hardships of jail-life, we must brace ourselves to bear them.

MALAVIYAJI'S SON

Malaviyaji's youngest son, named Govind, and his nephew Krishna Kant Malaviya were arrested some time earlier, fined and released. The son has been arrested again for making a speech and has been given one and a half years' hard labour. I regard this as India's good fortune. That Malaviyaji's son should go to jail for non-co-operation reminds one of our ancient religion traditions. Shri Govind spared no effort to obtain Panditji's permission. As long as he

[1] The letter is not translated here. She assured Gandhiji that her husband's arrest had not at all made her unhappy.

could, he respected his revered father's wishes. The father, too, on his part, gave his son full freedom. When, after the arrest of Pandit Jawaharlal and others, Govind could no longer restrain himself, he wrote a very courteous letter to his father and joined the freedom fight. I know that there has not been the slightest diminution in Govind's devotion towards his father. I am sure that Panditji, too, is not angry with Govind for his action. The relationship between father and son remains as affectionate as ever and will always remain so. Thus, in this s*warajyajna,* people have learnt to obey their conscience and we see father and son in different camps. All these are signs of spiritual awakening—of swaraj.

DEVOTEES IN JAIL

Different from this case of Govind, though equally uplifting, is the lesson we get from the incarceration of Prof. [J. B.] Kripalani in a Banaras jail. His nephew writes:[1]

GUJARAT'S GOOD FORTUNE

The dispute regarding the schools in Nadiad, Surat and Ahmedabad will provide an opportunity to people to court imprisonment and the residents of Godhra have, so to say, the Ganga flowing by their doorstep. Processions have been banned there for two months. This period expires on the 17th. During the intervening period, therefore, the people of Godhra have a chance to fill the jails, on condition that they remain peaceful and fulfil the other requirements of the pledge. The Magistrate's notice is as follows :[2]

This ban-on hymns and innocent national songs cannot be tolerated. I hope that in situations of this kind the Provincial Committee will give permission to the towns or talukas for individualcivil disobedience and that Gujarat will make a start and exhibit her capacity for sacrifice.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-1-1922

[1] The letter is not translated here. The nephew had received a letter from J. B. Kripalani saying that he had kept up in jail the daily routine of the Ashram.

[2] Not translated here

196. TELEGRAM TO ESTHER MENON[1]

SABARMATI,
January 11, 1922

GOD BLESS YOU BOTH.

GANDHI

From the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child*, p. 74

197. NOTES

TOO OPTIMISTIC

C. Rajagopalachari is an accurate student of satyagraha. He began to follow it when it was first commenced in South Africa. In my opinion, he knows the science of Satyagraha as no one else perhaps does. And he has tried to live up to it for years. When, therefore, the opportunity for going to jail came to him, he embraced it without a second thought. He felt that although he was guiding the movement in Madras in his own unassuming manner, he would serve and guide it better being in prison. The reader will, therefore, appreciate the optimism underlying the following from him written immediately on receiving the sentence of three months' simple imprisonment:

> Three months' simple is all too little, but if swaraj is won by you easier it makes no difference. I hope when I come back, you will have finished the swaraj work and got back to your normal occupation of research in dietetics.

Whilst I feel that swaraj has already come in a sense (and that is an important sense), the extraordinary situation that has arisen will not permit me quite so soon to revert to my favourite "normal occupation of research in dietetics". This letter was written on the 21st ultimo, as I have said, just after the sentence. The following long letter was written the same day but before the sentence:

> I have your note enclosing draft resolutions.
>
> I am not in favour of including in the resolution the claim that we have

[1] *Nee* Esther Faering, a Danish missionary whom Gandhiji treated as his daughter. She came to India in 1916 and later joined Sabarmati Ashram

This telegram was evidently sent after her marriage with Dr. Menon and their return from Denmark. The Menons were then helping Miss Petersen with her school and Ashram at Porto Novo.

achieved swaraj in substance though not in form. I understand the meaning of the claim, but feel that it should rather go into your writings than become part of the resolutions of Congress.

I do not see any specific resolution sanctioning in express terms mass or individual civil disobedience. I think it would be necessary and desirable to have a clear resolution on the subject. As the resolutions are drafted, there is only one form of civil disobedience sanctioned, viz., disobeying the volunteer organizations prohibition. I fear this prohibition may be removed or at least slackened; and there are other forms of disobedience handy such as orders under S.144. I, therefore, suggest that after the resolution about volunteer organizations, we should have a resolution sanctioning civil disobedience in such form and with such limitations as may from time to time be issued by the Working Committee or yourself.

I have no idea what results the pressure of "constitutionalist" visitors will have on the proceedings of Congress. But I press on you my view that no negotiations should be undertaken now nor till we have advanced a bit further in the civil disobedience struggle. The Ali Brothers, Das, Lalaji and Panditji should have a voice not only in the negotiations but also in fixing the time when we should enter truce. Moreover, a conference of the Government and Congress should be the only machinery. Congress should nominate the non-official leaders of all parties. Congress, not Government, should nominate Moderate leaders. We are always corrupted by Government nomination. I am positive that there should be no resolution of Congress in this session referring to or anticipating any negotiations. We may have a special session, if necessary, later.

I do not like the idea, some people have, that we should now wrangle over and divert the attention and energy of the country to questions of what form of government and what constitution should be put forward as our claim for India. This question may be taken up when we are nearing the end of the struggle.

Some people are talking of parallel Government. I have never discussed this with you and therefore have to venture an opinion without sufficient examination. I do not think it physically possible to have a parallel Government. As long as there is a Government running on the basis of violence, we cannot have a parallel Government without counter-violence. On the basis of non-violence we can only work up non-co-operation or civil disobedience, not run a parallel, positive set of institutions beyond a very limited extent. the method of non-violence can, as the world now stands, only take up a negative and destructive attitude and follow it up with a new

Government but not run a contemporaneous parallel Government as the Irish are supposed to have done. If I have not expressed myself clearly do not worry about it. I referred to the subject as I believe some may press a resolution on the subject.

I do not know when we shall next meet or under what circumstances. But I feel I am realizing the object of my life as I am approaching the prison.

The following was written on the 20th ultimo:

I am feeling more and more strongly every day that the truce and negotiations have been forced a little too early. I wish you could find some way to put them off till we won a few more battles. Government would like very much to negotiate at once, because necessarily our terms would be less than what they would be after a month. And our Moderate friends are too eager to enter now; they see we are not terror-struck and must win, and they out of their incorrigible weakness wish to end the strife before it should get severer, and there is so much competition among them for a good idea, that it gets to be premature. Government is shrewd. They have seen their error and realized that we won't be bullied. So they are quietly retracing. Madras Government have definitely declared they won't declare associations unlawful and so also Bihar and Orissa Governments.

Government now see that the Moderates have deserted them. But it should stop there, till the thing gets a bit more mature. The Prince must go back and then in February we should think of settlement after Gujarat has given an account of itself. It is absurd in any case that people should talk of conferences when Nehruji and Das and Lalaji are in prison. They should fix the time for the armistice.

The Moplahs are now going in 3rd class compartments with only bars in the windows. We see constables giving water and even running about for it at some stations. The crucifixion of the seventy has not been in vain. Thousands of Moplahs have since had human treatment.

I have been giving the letters received from imprisoned workers for they demonstrate, as nothing else can, the fierce nature of the struggle as also the grim determination of the people. Rajagopalachari's reflections on the resolutions have, the reader will notice, been mostly anticipated. His advice not to mention in the central resolution anything about a settlement has much to be said in its favour. Weak as we have been and possibly still are, there is need for us not to divert our attention from the path of suffering. Yet I feel that the mention in the manner made in the resolution was inevitable. We must know and confess our weakness and we must act, too, in

anticipation of becoming strong. I should not be surprised if we have many truces and settlements and several abortions before we come to the end. A true soldier takes life and things philosophically. He is unattached to results. His is to work with all his might, treating suffering and rest alike. His rest is but a preparation for greater suffering if need be. We must develop the faculty of suffering without the atmosphere of excitement. Voluntary suffering being a new experience, there is a feeling that if the excitement of the moment subsides, we may not respond to a fresh dose of repression, whereas permanent readiness to suffer is an essential condition of swaraj. Does not England provide for a permanent armament in order to keep herself immune from attack? No doubt it is mad, it is suicidal and it amounts to a denial of God and His justice. But she cannot do otherwise so long as she considers it necessary to impose her commerce and to prey upon other nations. She wishes to be feared by the nations of the earth and has to pay heavily for it. India, I hope, wishes to be loved by them and, therefore, must depend upon perpetual readiness to suffer for her freedom. We have involuntarily suffered so long that it is difficult for us even to imagine that we can do without it. Let us transmute the unwillingness into willingness to suffer and we are protected against a combination of all the nations of the earth. Anyway that is the course India has chosen, and as soon as it becomes an established fact that our capacity to suffer has become normal, we are altogether a free nation. When we have attained that state we shall approach conferences and settlements without misgiving and with perfect equanimity.

Rajagopalachari's reference to the now human treatment of Moplah prisoners has a lesson for us. Many of us will have to die before we are free from our prolonged political asphyxiation which is worse than the physical asphyxiation of Moplahs although it so shocked our humanitarian instinct. The Moplahs who died in that death wagon will not have to answer before God for unmanliness, if they were, as many must have been, innocent prisoners. Not so with us who knowingly and weakly submit to political degradation. I trust that the Moderate friends who see Rajagopalachari's letters will not mind his friendly hits at them. The letters were not meant for publication. They were naturally written without reserve which publicity imposeson a writer. But I have hoped that the Moderate friends will not misunderstand Rajagopalachari. There is no denying the fact that there is today a temperamental difference between co-operating

Moderates and non-co-operating Extremists. The latter impute timidity to the former rather than faithlessness to the country. Both are well-wishers and servants of the country. It is open to the Moderates to consider Extremists to be rash and even reckless. We must be able to stand such honest criticism without feeling irritated or offended.

"ALREADY FREE"

The readers of *Young India* are not unfamiliar with Mr. W. W. Pearson's[1] name. He has been associated with Dr. Tagore's work at Shantiniketan for several years. He was deported for having written a pro-nationalist book on India. He has recently been permitted to return to his work at Shantiniketan from where he sent through Mr. Andrews the following message during the Congress week. After a personal reference he wrote:[2]

> I want also to add something of a more public nature which may be used publicly or not at the Congress. . .It is this:
>
> . . . Your work has borne its fruit, for India is already free. . .
>
> But at the same time, although complete and unconditional swaraj is assured, I would urge the adoption of some practical constructive programme of social service . . .
>
> The Irish Agricultural Organization Society will, I am convinced be the firm foundation on which the structure of Irish freedom can be built. India also will need such a basis on which can be constructed a free and independent State and for this an immediate programme of practical swaraj is an essential condition.

I share Mr. Pearson's view that India is "already free". She became free when Lalaji, Pandit Nehru, Chitta Ranjan Das and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad were arrested. She became free as soon as it became clear that repression had fallen flat and that the people were not to be deterred from forming associations and holding public meetings even though they were assaulted and flogged. Freedom was ours when we were ready to pay the price for it. The settlement of our differences with the administrators is a matter of time. We cannot be said to be free so long as we need a certificate of freedom. He is not healthy who has need to prove his health by producing a health certificate. Every man and woman who visited the Congress *pandal* felt in his or her own person the glow of freedom.

[1] A Christian missionary and an active supporter of Indians

[2] Only excerpts reproduced here

Whilst Mr. Pearson has noticed in the Indian air the electricity of freedom, he misses the constructive side of the movement. The spirit of freedom is like the leaven all-pervading. The constructive work which gives the movement stability cannot be felt. It has to be observed by seeing the work that is silently but surely going on in thousands of homes. He will find it in swadeshi, in the spinning-wheel. India will be permanently organized to the extent that hand-spinning is organized. India's joint family system which affects even Mussulmans and her other special characteristics make further and immediate agricultural organization impossible. The small holdings daily getting smaller, the custom of vivisecting farms must ever make mere agriculture in spite of improvements a poor remedy for driving away her poverty. But the restoration of the spinning-wheel to its ancient status at once supplies the felt want and automatically provides for the natural increase in families. It defies the pranks of the monsoons and constitutes a general insurance against many risks. It gives the country an incentive to industrial effort and renders co-operation on a national scale absolutely necessary for success. The khadi movement is revolutionizing the village life and putting hope into millions of human breasts. No wonder Dr. Roy[1], in order to accelerate the charkha movement, it is reported in the Calcutta Press, went to his native village, Katipara, and

> exhorted everybody to take to spinning during leisure hours, for, according to him, the charkha would prove the salvation of the country. With great emphasis he said that his heart's desire would be fulfilled if, within a period of six months, the villagers could clothe themselves with clothes spun and woven by themselves.

CONGRESSMEN BEWARE !

Whilst on the khadi movement, I would like to warn Congress Committees or Khilafat Committees against relaxation of effort in the matter of swadeshi. Concentration on civil disobedience must mean double zeal for swadeshi. Civil disobedience without swadeshi is death without hope of creation. It is like tearing down a field without any prospect of sowing a new crop. Civil disobedience should mean an added incentive to the khadi movement. All the women, old men, the children who are not imprisoned, must devote their spare energy,

[1] Dr. P. C. Ray

everyavailable minute, to the work of manufacturing yarn and khadi and of spreading it among others. My faith is as bright as ever that perfect swadeshi leads automatically to swaraj. Swadeshi is to the nation what personal purity to the individual.

THE "TIMES" TESTIMONY

In its trade supplement of 10th December, the writer of the trade notes dealing with the cotton trade depression says:[1]

> The depression in the cotton trade is quite unrelieved. . . . Lancashire's patience, courage and confidence are being sorely tried.
>
> A more important consideration for the cotton trade is that the agreement among the merchant dealers in Calcutta not to buy imported cloth is coming to an end. While there has been much talk about the boycott continuing until February and later, the period to which the compact actually applied ends with the close of the year, and there seems to be little probability of the prohibition continuing beyond that date. . . . In any case, as far as is known, there is no proposal before Calcutta to renew the prohibition. With this particular feature of the Gandhi movement out of the way, it seems practically certain that there will be a revival in trade with India. . . . and if India comes in even for modest quantities of goods, other markets are likely to follow.

I wish it were possible to hold out any hope whatsoever of the prospect pictured by the writer materializing. Swadeshi is not a temporary programme. It is coeval with swaraj. The khadi hand-spun and hand-woven must be religiously the covering for India. Boycott of foreign cloth is not a measure of punishment, it is a measure of purification and permanent relief. It cannot be exchanged for swaraj. The latter is rather dependent upon the former. Pressure on England there is by means of swadeshi. But if England became totally indifferent about the khadi movement, it would still have to continue. In so far as Lancashire depends upon the Indian market for its piece-goods trade, it will have to revise its programme. No consideration can possibly induce India to remain idle and pauper for the sake of Lancashire or any other interest. If all goes well and if England and India are to become and remain friends and partners at will, as I hope and wish they will, there are plenty of other things England can sell to India and the latter can profitably receive from the former. Cloth she may not receive from anyone whether friend or foe. An India, regenerate, well-to-do and free, will furnish a better market to England and to theworld than an India

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

groaning under the heels of English and other exploiters.

IN GOD'S HANDS

Though the letter from Badadada[1] and the one from an English missionary have a personal touch about them, they are so important that I cannot resist the temptation of putting them before the public. Badadada's letters I always regard in the nature of blessings for me. It is a matter of great consolation to me that at this time of life he takes such lively interest in the struggle and gives it his blessings. The letter[2] published in this issue besides blessing the movement solves a spiritual difficulty that must have perplexed many an earnest seeker. A reformer having to deal with measures and men as they are must take risks and is bound to accept acts performed even from expedience. Hence the necessity of acts being always morally sound. Honesty from policy is as acceptable as honesty for its own sake. But dishonesty is unacceptable even though it may be actuated by excellent motives. A good motive increases the value of a good act. But a good act done even from a bad motive does not lose all its value. It is at least good for the world. The doer alone is the loser because having a bad motive he deprives himself of the share in the merit of his own act. In the matter of non-violence, then, all that we need to guard against is pretence of non-violence for the sake of covering violence.

"An English missionary" is a well-known worker in missionary circles. She has kindly sent her name as well as her address. The transparent honesty of the writer and the frank confession made by her show the English residents of India the way to peace.[3] I have no doubt that if only non-co-operators remain true to their pledge of non-violence to the end in spite of the greatest provocation, every Englishman and Englishwoman in India will become a full nationalist. Non-co-operation with our own humiliation by Englishmen must lead eventually to co-operation in friendship with them. The events that are happening just now show clearly how untenable the existing state is.

[1] Dwijendranath Tagore, eldest brother of Rabindranath Tagore; affectionately called "Borodada"

[2] Not reproduced here

[3] In her letter, not reproduced here, she had expressed admiration for Gandhiji and sympathized with the cause of Indian nationalism, deploring the "culpable blindness and misunderstanding of many of my people."

But the charm of both the letters is in each writer from his or her own standpoint recognizing the hand of God in the movement. I am painfully aware of the fact that during the late War both the English and the Germans claimed God to be on their side. I do not yet know that the German defeat is a test of God's desertion of them or that the English victory betokens God's grace. God's ways are inscrutable. He often tests His favourites through defeats and manifold tribulations. I accept, therefore, their estimate because the struggle is being admittedly conducted for a right cause and by means that are at least professedly and in the case of many non-co-operators certainly non-violent. Non-violence assumes entire reliance upon God. I should certainly lose my head, if I were to arrogate to myself the credit for the wonderful manifestation of courage, purity and truth. But it becomes easily explicable if we believe that God is guiding the movement and is using poor things like me as instruments in His hands.

HUNTED

Mr. Manilal Doctor's[1] case to which Mr. Banarasidas Chaturvedi[2] draws attention in these columns is a remarkable instance of how a man can be hunted down in the "great" British Empire for holding an opinion. Because the Fiji Government have reported against him although nothing has been proved against him in a court of law, he has been denied residence and practice in New Zealand, Australia, Singapore and now Ceylon. So far as the public is aware Mr. Manilal's crime is that he has served his countrymen and has been exercising potent influence over them. The Fiji Government has been challenged by Mr. Manilal to prove a case against him, but it has been too cowardly to do so and too mean even to maintain him after depriving him of the means of livelihood. This secret maligning of

[1] Barrister and son-in-law of Gandhiji's old associate, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta. For several years he fought for the cause of Indians in Mauritius. In 1912, he went to Fiji from where he was deported without trial in 1920. Subsequently, he was refused permission to practise law in New Zealand and Australia. In Singapore, he was disallowed residence. On his way back from New Zealand, he was denied permission to practise in the Supreme Court of Ceylon and was ordered by the Governor to quit by January 9, 1921.

[2] 2 (b. 1892); Member of Parliament, journalist and Hindi writer; resigned from Chief's College, Indore, in 1920 and joined C. F. Andrews at Shantiniketan; co-author of *Charles Freer Andrews, A Biography*

men is one of the worst features of the Empire system, betraying its weakness rather than strength. An Empire that requires such calculated persecution of a man without even offering to prove anything against him deserves only to be dissolved. Be it remembered that Mr. Manilal Doctor is a barrister of many years' standing. People are used to thinking that lawyers can at least protect themselves against persecution. Well, the lawyers of none of the places where Mr. Manilal has tried to establish himself have even attempted to protect one of their own profession. Indeed the Law Society and the Court in New Zealand actually conspired to keep Mr. Manila Doctor out of his practice.

THE MALAVIYAS

The most remarkable feature in the remarkable non-co-operation struggle is the fact that it has divided families. And of all such instances none is so striking as the division in the Malaviya family. It furnishes, in my opinion, an object-lesson to India in toleration and civil disobedience. Pandit Malaviyaji's toleration is really beyond compare. I know that he is against seeking imprisonment. I know, too, that if he believed in it, he is not the person to shirk it. I should not be surprised to find him, when the agony has reached white heat and when his faith in British justice is completely gone like mine, to be the foremost in seeking imprisonment. But whilst he is himself against the course of civil disobedience for the present, he has never interfered with the choice of even those who are nearest to him and over whom he has unquestioned authority by right of love and eldership. On the contrary he has left even his own sons absolutely free to do as they please. To me the instance of Govind's civil disobedience is one to treasure. Panditji tried hard to wean that brave boy in his own gentle and sweet manner. Govind tried his very best to carry out what he knew to be his father's wish up to the last moment. He prayed for light. He was torn by conflict of duties. The arrests of the Nehrus proved too strong for the young man. And invoking the blessings of his great and great-hearted father, he decided to throw himself into the struggle, and the jails of India probably hold no more joyous heart than Govind Malaviya's. I make bold to say that he has by his act of civil disobedience proved as dutiful to his father as he has been dutiful to his country. Govind's act is a pattern for our time in dutiful civil disobedience of children. There is, I am sure, no gulf between father and son. Probably Malaviyaji is prouder of his son Govind now than he was before the latter's decision to seek imprisonment. It is truthful

acts like these which prove to me the religious nature of the struggle. I cannot resist the temptation of quoting Govind's courageous statement[1] before the court.

I invite the reader to join me in congratulating both the father and the son. The country has every reason to be proud of both, and where youths show the courage that Govind has shown, the result of the struggle is a certainty.

LALAJI'S LETTER

At last the trial of Lala Lajapat Rai, Pandit Santanam, Malek Lalkhan and Dr. Gopichand is over. Lalaji and Pandit Santanam have eighteen months each and Malek Lalkhan and Dr. Gopichand sixteen months each.[2] The conviction was a certainty notwithstanding the farce of forcing on the distinguished prisoners a counsel for their defence even in the teeth of their protest. Just before the sentence was pronounced Lalaji was able to send me the following cheerful note:[3]

> Very many thanks for your affectionate note and the message. . . I never went on hunger strike because I am opposed to any fuss for the sake of comfort.... I am engaged in compiling the History of India, Hindu Period, for the use of national schools and national colleges. Santanam is making very good use of his time by studying Sanskrit and religious books. I had been informed of what was done at Ahmedabad and about the Round Table Conference. Please do not be influenced by our "troubles" in arriving at any decision about principles. Rest assured we are prepared to suffer for any length of time and in every way to achieve what we desire. Now that we are in for it, we should see it through.

Let us hope that Lalaji and Pandit Santanam will be permitted to continue their studies. I would venture to suggest to him and his comrades that they copy the example of Messrs Shaukat Ali and Rajagopalachari and their companions and add the spinning-wheel to their literary pursuits. I promise that both the History of Lalaji and the Sanskrit studies of Pandit Santanam will in no way suffer for the change of occupation.

I commend Lalaji's reference to tile proposed Round Table Conference to those public men who, actuated by the finest instinct in man, are trying to hasten a settlement for the purpose of securing the

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] Lajpat Rai and Santanam were sentenced on January 7, 1921

[3] Only excerpts reproduced here

discharge of the prisoners who are in jail for the crime of loving their country and obeying the voice of conscience. We may put no obstacles in the way of an honourable settlement, but we would be unjust to the imprisoned patriots if out of consideration for their bodily comforts, we were hustled into an unsatisfactory peace. We would not read correctly the temper of the country if we yielded unjustifiably a tittle for the sake of minimizing self-invited sufferings.

A CORRECTION

Shrimati Urmila Devi sends the following correction from Calcutta which I gladly publish:

> As I find a few mistakes in the printed interview in *Young India* arising out of the fact that it was given in a hurry and your representative consequently missed a few points, I would request you to publish the following corrections in *Young India:*
>
> 1. In answer to the question as to what I thought of the present general situation in Bengal I said:
>
> It is marvellous. Bengal has come to her own now. During the last session of the A.I.C.C. meeting in Delhi, I was sad because I felt that Bengal was not responding fully to the swadeshi programme and consequently was not in a position to lead this movement. I always want Bengal to lead in every movement. Now I have not the least apprehension, for, I feel that Bengal is leading now.
>
> 2. In answer to the question as to the cause of the present outburst in Bengal, I said:
>
> The illegal order of the Government is the general cause. The arrests of ladies and leaders have given a great impetus to Bengal.

AN INSTRUCTIVE TABLE

By the courtesy of the Secretary of the Reception Committee I am able to give the following table showing the number of delegates who attended the Congress and their composition:

NUMBER OF DELEGATES

No.	*Name of Province*	*No. of delegates under the Constitution*	*Actual Arrivals*
1.	Andhra	360	383[*sic*]
2.	Kerala	160	33
3.	Maharashtra	292	263
4.	Karnatak	320	304
5.	Gujarat	185	185

6.	Bombay	18	17
7.	Burma	100	56
8.	Punjab and N.W.F.	540	518
9.	Sind	71	63
10.	Delhi	100	92
11.	Rajputana	400	399
12.	Utkal	300	108
13.	C.P. (Marathi)	50	44
14.	Assam	63	17
15.	Berar	61	58
16.	Madras	410	162
17.	Bengal	986	373
18.	United Provinces	960	888
19.	C.P. (Hindustani)	209	205
20.	Bihar	588	558
		6,173	4,726

ANALYSIS OF THE ATTENDANCE

No.	*Ladies*	*Mussul-mans*	*Parsis*	*Sikhs*	*Antyajas*	The rest
1.	8	10				365
2.	1					32
9						253
4.	9	29				266
5.	11	22	5		2	145
6.	3	2				15
7.						51
8.	17	67		54		380
9.	1	11				51
10.	7	13		4		68
11.	11	13				375
12.		3				105
13.	1	5				38
14.		2				15
15.	2	5				5
16.	2	13				147
17.	10	36		4		323
18.	10	114		3		761
19.	6	29				170
20.	7	83				468
	106	469	5	65	2	4,079 [sic]

It will be noticed that out of the total permissible (6,173) as many as 4,726 attended the Congress. Hitherto the number has been swelled by local delegates who could under the old constitution become delegates for the asking by simply paying Rs. 10. This time not even Pandit Malaviyaji could be regarded as a delegate because he was not elected. The actual attendance of 4,726 was, therefore, a fine record. That the United Provinces and Bengal, in spite of so many arrests, could have sent 888 and 373 respectively and the far off Assam should have sent 17 and Utkal 108, shows the keen interest that is being taken in the National Assembly. No less remarkable is the attendance of 106 lady delegates representing almost all the provinces. The attendance of 65 Sikh delegates must also be regarded as altogether remarkable. Hardly few [*sic*] Sikhs attended two years ago. But now that community is everywhere pushing itself forward in all national movements. The number of 469 Mussulman delegates is a good number, but we must not be satisfied till we have got the full quota which must be more than 1,200. I am sure that there were more than 2 "untouchable" delegates. I cannot imagine the Punjab and the Andhra provinces not sending any such delegates. The presence of 5 Parsi delegates is, of course, beyond their numerical proportion which is 2. The Parsis, as I have so often remarked, have in proportion to their numbers occupied the foremost place whether in point of sacrifice, attendance, ability or generosity. I know, as a matter of fact, that there were at least two Christians. And of course, if Messrs Stokes and George Joseph had been free, they would have attended. But it is up to the Hindus and the Mussulmans to go out of their way to induce a more general interest in the movement on the part of the Christian community.

VISITORS

If the attendance of delegates was most satisfactory, that of visitors was not less so. The troubled state of the country scared away the richest men, and so not a single ticket for Rs. 5,000 each was taken up. 21, however, paid Rs. 1,000 each, 20 paid Rs. 500 each, 162 Rs. 100 each, 81 Rs. 50 each and 1,686 Rs. 25 each, making a total of Rs. 93,400 in receipts. The Reception Committee contributed more than its quota. The total strength was filled up, the receipts being Rs. 78,625. 11,26l season tickets of Rs. 3 each were issued permitting attendance everywhere at the Congress sessions. 64,469 four-anna tickets were issued. As I have already remarked the issue of season

and entrance tickets had to be stopped owing to the great rush. Altogether Rs. 2,49,527 were received by the Reception Committee in various fees.

ALL-INDIA CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE

This Conference held under the presidency of Mr. Mukerji was striking for the interest it evinced in the political life of the country. From the President down to the ordinary delegate, there was insistence on the necessity of Indian Christians sharing the national awakening.

> We must demonstrate by words and deeds that Christianity has made us neither un-Indian nor un-national. Can it be for a moment conceived that we as a community shall dissociate ourselves from our brethren, Hindus and Mussulmans, whatever differences there may be in our religious convictions ?,

says Professor S. C. Mukerji. The Conference adopted sixteen resolutions touching almost every phase of national life. It condemned the repressive measures, urged withdrawal of Government notifications and discharge of prisoners, it advised non-co-operators to suspend the campaign of non-co-operation, urged a round table conference, approved of total prohibition, sympathized with the Indians beyond the seas. I must give the full text of the swadeshi resolution showing as it does the extent to which the spirit of swadeshi has touched the Indian Christian mind:

> This Conference is strongly of opinion that a true swadeshi spirit should dominate every sphere of Indian Christian life which would, in its turn, serve to give a real impetus to all indigenous enterprises in the country. That as an art expression of our swadeshi spirit we must forthwith start wearing clothes of Indian manufacture. In view of the fact that the Indian Christian community has been very frequently and severely accused of lacking the swadeshi spirit, this Conference recommends that all Provincial Leagues make strenuous efforts to find ways and means of inculcating the swadeshi spirit in the Indian Christians through the local leagues and lose no time in putting such a programme into effect.

All this is very encouraging. I hope that the resolution will be followed up by corresponding action and that charkha and khadi will be as popular among the Indian Christians as they have become among the Hindus and Mussulmans. It remains for the Hindus and Mussulmans to cherish the response of the Conference and make it a point to cultivate the friendliest relations with the Christian countrymen.

MORE NOTABLE ARRESTS

News of arrests continue to pour in from all sides. Shyam Babu's[1] pen will no more adorn the columns of the *Servant.* He has been imprisoned because he will not recognize the authority of the court by giving evidence as a witness. The Congress resolution neither requires one to go to that length nor prevents onefrom so doing. Shyam Babu has chosen the more unbending attitude. Having got the chance of joining the workers in the Calcutta prisons, he would not miss it. The readers of the servant which established for itself a stable reputation within two years of its inauguration in the face of great difficulties will miss his directing hand. But I have no doubt that Shyam Babu is better serving the country by being in jail. His example of suffering is a more powerful editorial than what even his able pen could produce.

Karnatak has been honoured with the imprisonment of Mr. Majli who took Mr. Deshpande's place in Belgaum. For his parting message he has reproduced the late Mr. Hume's words, "What avail your wealth, your learning, Empty titles, sordid trade ? True self-rule were worth them all, Nations by themselves are made." Mr. Majli was asked to furnish security to be of *good behaviour.* As he did not know that he was guilty of bad behaviour, he refused to furnish security and preferred to go where persons of good behaviour find today their true shelter. Mr. Majli wants to be discharged from prison only by a free India and prays to all to wear pure khadi, the emblem of pure and liberated India, and discard foreign clothes, the emblem of foreign yoke.

For default similar to Mr. Majli's, Dr. B. Subramaniam, Secretary, Andhra Provincial Congress Committee, has been sentenced to one year's rigorous imprisonment at Cocanada.

THE GURDWARA MOVEMENT

The latest *communique* from the Sikh Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee shows that the Commissioner offered to return the Keys of the Golden Temple at Amritsar upon certain conditions. To this belated offer the following spirited reply was sent by Sardar Bhagat Jaswant Singh. After acknowledging the official communication he says:

[1] Shyam Sunder Chakravarty

> I have the honour to draw your attention to the following resolution passed by the S.G.P. Committee on the 6th December 1921:
>
> Resolved that no Sikh should agree to any arrangement about the . restoration of the Keys of the Golden Temple, unless and until all the Sikhs arrested in connection with the Keys affair are released unconditionally.
>
> I am, therefore, instructed to inform you that the Committee cannot avail itself of the proffered temporary and conditional restoration of Keys, unaccompanied by the unconditional release of all the Sikhs arrested in connection with the Keys affair.

The Sikh *communique* appends the following pertinent observations to the foregoing:

> From the above correspondence it is clear that the Government has got to objection now to handing over the Keys of the Durbar Saheb to the Shiromani Committee temporarily, pending the decision of the civil suit regarding the Golden Temple. Could not the Government have adopted this very attitude from the beginning ? While the Keys remained with the Gurdwara Committee, the Government could at the same time have pleased itself by carrying on its civil suit in which, of course, as now the Gurdwara Committee would have taken no part. Where was the necessity of creating so much heart-burning by taking away the Keys forcibly and arresting hundreds of Sikhs for protesting against high-handed action the futility of which the Government now tacitly admits?

APOLOGIZING

It is reported from Allahabad that "eight accused under the Criminal Law Amendment Act were released on tendering apology and regretting the joining of illegal associations and unseemly and foolish agitations"! Having known what happened only a few months ago in Mathura, I distrust this message. In Mathura, sham non-co-operators were arrested and were made to apologize; and then it was claimed on behalf of the authorities that non-co-operators had apologized. But whilst I distrust the message, I would like workers to profit by it. We need not be surprised if, when large bodies of young men are daily being imprisoned, some of them weaken and retrace their steps, especially if the treatment even temporarily is anything like what was given to Mahadev Desai.[1] It is better for us to be satisfied with fewer imprisonments rather than that we should have weak persons offering themselves under the impulse of the moment and then succumbing.

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 5-1-1922, under the sub-title "Jail Treatment".

The Jamnalal Bajaj[1] fund of one lac of rupees that was given last year for the support of lawyers who had suspended practice as a result of the Nagpur resolution[2] is nearly, as it was intended to be, exhausted. The lawyers cannot go back to practice with any show of decency, and I am sure that many will not countenance even the idea of a return when the country is showing such a wonderful example of self-sacrifice. But it would not be proper to leave thelawyers to their own resources. I would, therefore, certainly suggest to the Provincial Committees that they should take up the burden subject to assistance from the central fund, if it was at all found necessary. The rearrangement should be quickly made so as to avoid suspense and delay in the even tenor of national work.

This, however, is the least among the difficulties that surround the lawyer class at the present moment. They are eager to take part in the national awakening. The spirit is willing, the flesh is weak. I still feel that practising lawyers cannot lead. They cannot but weaken a movement which demands complete, almost reckless, sacrifice. The whole cause can be lost if top men weaken at a supreme crisis. But the Congress has purposely opened an honourable door for them. The original draft was perhaps uncertain as to any but full non-co-opetators being entitled to sign the volunteer pledge. The conditions for them are easy of fulfilment, being mostly matters of belief. The use of khadi may cause some little inconvenience at first but I feel sure that they will not mind it, if otherwise they believe in the requirements of the pledge. And as among non-co-operators imprisonment covers a multitude of defects, practising lawyers who go through the fire of imprisonment will by that one fact come to occupy the position of honour which once was theirs. There is also the general resolution appealing to and inviting all including full co-operators to take up such activities as do not admit of any sacrifice or any difference of opinion. I hope, therefore, that lawyers will to the best of their ability and opportunity respond to the country's call in many of the various ways open to them. Where all are expected to help none should be found wanting or indifferent. Non-co-operators on their

[1] 1889-1942; merchant, banker, social worker and philanthropist; devoted follower of Gandhiji; served as Treasurer of the Congress for many years

[2] On non-co-operation adopted at the Nagpur Congress in 1920

part instead of priding themselves upon their achievements should be humble enough to receive all the aid that might be rendered to the country's cause. The spirit of toleration should take the place of intoleration and exclusiveness. It can do no credit to the movement or good to the cause if a man who has nothing or little to sacrifice claims by reason of his putting on khaki the right of slighting practising lawyers or others who may be honestly and according to their lights serving the country in various ways. Whatever is offered upon the altar of service to the motherland with a willing heart must be thankfully received.

DISTRESS WARRANTS

Inquiries are being made in several places as to what should be done in cases where fines are imposed and distress warrants issuedfor recovery. One finds a readiness to suffer imprisonment and assaults but not loss of goods. The anomaly is at first sight difficult to understand but it is really easy to appreciate. We are so much tied down to our goods and other possessions that when no disgrace attaches to imprisonment, we prefer the inconvenience to loss of property. But we must perceive that we will lose a winning game if we are not prepared to sacrifice our earthly possessions as well as bodily ease for the sake of it. In an ill-managed State, a man with conscience pawns to it his goods, all other wealth, and his body and sets his conscience free. This struggle, therefore, can give us victory only if we become indifferent to everything through which the State can press us into subjection to its will. We must be prepared, therefore, to let our goods and our land be taken away from us and rejoice over the dispossession even as we rejoice today over imprisonments. We may rest assured that the Government will be more quickly tired of selling our chattels than it is already of taking charge of our bodies. And if we are sure, as we must be, of winning full swaraj before long, we must have faith enough to know that all the land that can be taken away will return to us intact and the best part even of money. When Belgium was overrun by the Germans, the Belgians knew that they would return to their own lands so long as they retained the will to suffer for the restoration of their property. The late General Botha[1] was a fugitive from his own rich possessions including hundreds of acres of land

[1] 1862-1919; Boer general and statesman; Prime Minister of the Transvaal, 1907, and of South African Union 1910-19

and finest cattle in South Africa. He did not count the cost, put up a fine fight and became virtually the crowned king of South Africa and had all his property returned to him with honour. We may not do less than the Boers and the Belgians especially as ours is a struggle in which we are pledged to make all sacrifice and exact none. We must voluntarily though temporarily embrace poverty if we will banish pauperism and pariahdom from the land. The sacrifice of the ease by a few of us is nothing compared to the reward which is in store for us, viz., the restoration of the honour and prosperity of this holy land.

Young India, 12-1-1922

198. NEXT IS GUNPOWDER

The reader will peruse with careful attention the informing resume[1] by K. of the new type of repression that is fast coming into vogue. It is possible that there is exaggeration in the details but almost all the reports hitherto received from non-co-operation quarters have proved so accurate and the denials so false that I am not disposed to discount the graphic details collected by K. from the correspondence received by me and from the newspapers.

The police are mostly our own countrymen but it is evident that they are being incited to become lawless by the example and the precept of their superior officers. When a mob becomes unruly, it knows no better; when the police become unruly, their action is deliberate and unpardonable. The mob frenzy can be controlled, the police frenzy spells disaster for an unprepared people. We have groaned under it all these long years. Thank God, India is today prepared to meet the ordered frenzy of the Government.

We must tear down the mask of the so-called. enforcement of the ordinary law against so-called intimidators and we must invite and welcome honest martial law. O'Dwyerism[2] and Dyerism[3][3] are honest ideals, be they ever so indefensible. But what is going on in India today is indescribable hypocrisy.

If it is true that under the cover of distress warrants the police have entered our homes in Banaras and taken away ornaments even

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] The repression practised by Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Lieutenant- Governor of the Punjab, and General Dyer during the Punjab disorders of 1919

[3] *ibid*

from the inmates, if it is true that in Bulandshahr under the pretence of preserving order they have entered people's homes in order to assault them, if it is true that they have stripped prisoners almost naked in order to execute distress warrants, the case is complete for the fiercest civil disobedience of the most aggressive type consistently with the preservation of non-violence on our side. We must not wait for gunpowder to be used upon helpless people nor can we afford to put an undue strain upon the people's patience by merely remaining on the defensive and letting the Government agents pillage and plunder our homes. We must draw the gunpowder on our own heads and that too at the earliest possible opportunity. We, the principal workers, cannot afford to watch with philosophic calmness these exasperating criminal assaults upon inoffensive people although they are volunteers and have, therefore, undertaken to suffer.

The shooting of a Mussulman youth by a European "youth,' (are European youths armed?) for the crime of wearing or selling (whichever it was) a khaki cap, cannot be passed by in silence. We must avenge the wrong if necessary by inviting the shooting on our own heads.

The Government want to goad us into violence or abject submission. We must do neither. We must retort by such civil disobedience as would compel shooting.

They want civil war. We must not play into their hands. Here is what I call open canvassing for civil war. The Magistrate of Aligarh is responsible for the following circular[1] to the *raises*[2] of the Aligarh District:

> As you are doubtless aware the Khilafat and Congress Volunteers have been declared by the Local Government to be illegal associations and orders have been received for their suppressions. . . .
>
> The number of police at my disposal is limited and I am very reluctant to ask for military assistance. . . .
>
> I am, therefore, writing to a number of the leading *raises* and gentlemen of the District to ask for their assistance....I would ask you kindly to select 50 of your retainers and tenants, stout able-bodied men, whom you could send in, on receiving a message that they are required for enrolment as special police.

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

[2] Men of property

A present it is only necessary that selection of the men should be made and list prepared of their names and residence. . . .

We must refuse the bait by letting the gullible *raises* do as they like. We must seek only such forms of civil disobedience as would prevent any clash with our own people, whether turned into civil guard or still laymen. Given unflinching courage and preservation of complete non-violence, the fight can be brought to a victorious end inside of a month. May God grant India light and courage.

I had hoped that the pledge to face death was a distant event. Evidently God wills that we must be tested thoroughly and well. In His name was the battle begun. He must give us the strength to go through it.

Young lndia, 12-1-1922

199. DESHBANDHU'S ADDRESS[1]

I must apologize to the public for the delay in issuing Deshbandhu Das's presidential address. It was received by me in a fragmentary condition with instructions to revise it and put it in shape. The reader will be glad to learn that beyond restoring one sentence which had been ruled out and adding one to complete a thought and beyond slight verbal immaterial alterations, the address is being printed as received. I see from the sentences ruled out in the original that Deshbandhu's intention was to give a review of the year's work and his considered opinion in detail on non-co-operation. But sufficient appears in the printed text to enable us to know his opinion. We know it, too, from his emphatic and stirring messages to the country just before he was silenced. In appreciating the address the reader will be helped to know that it was prepared just before his arrest. The reader will not fail to note the marked self restraint with which the address is prepared as also the fact that Deshbandhu believes in non-violence as his final creed. That the only use the Government has for such a man is to put him in prison is about the greatest condemnation it can pronounce upon itself.

Young *India,* 12-1-1922

[1] Owing to his arrest, C. R. Das could not deliver his presidential address at the Congress session at Ahmedabad in December, 1921; it was subsequently published in *Young India* with this prefatory note by Gandhiji.

200. LIBERTY OF THE PRESS

One by one the pretensions of the Government that the reforms[1] represent more liberty and more concession to popular feeling are dropping out under the stress of circumstances. The pretensions can be justified only if they can stand the test under a severe strain. Liberty of speech means that it is unassailed even when the speech hurts; liberty of the Press can be said to be truly respected only when the Press can comment in the severest terms upon and even misrepresent matters, protection against misrepresentation or violence being secured not by an administrative gagging order, not by closing down the Press but by punishing the real offender, leaving the Press itself unrestricted Freedom of association is truly respected when assemblies of people can discuss even revolutionary projects, the State relying upon the force of public opinion and the civil police, not the savage military at its disposal, to crush any actual outbreak of revolution that is designed to confound public opinion and the State representing it.

The Government of India is now seeking to crush the three powerful vehicles of expressing and cultivating public opinion and is thus once more, but happily for the last time, proving its totally arbitrary and despotic character. The fight for swaraj, the Khilafat, the Punjab means fight for this threefold freedom before all else.

The *Independent* is no longer a printed sheet. The *Democrat* is no more. And now the sword has descended upon the *Pratap* and the *Kesari* of Lahore. The *Vande Mataram*, Lalaji's child, has warded off the blow by depositing Rs. 2,000 as security. The other two have had their first security forfeited and are now given ten days' notice to deposit Rs. 10,000 each or close down. I hope that the security of Rs. 10,000 will be refused.

I assume that what is happening in the United Provinces and the Punjab will happen in the others in due course unless the infection is prevented from spreading by some action on the part of the public.

In the first place I would urge the editors of the papers in question to copy the method of the *Independent and* publish their views in writing. I believe that an editor who has anything worth saying and who commands a clientele cannot be easily hushed so long as his body is left free. He has delivered his finished message as soon as he is put under duress. The Lokamanya spoke more eloquently

[1] The Montford Reforms of 1919

from the Mandalay fortress than through the columns of the printed *Kesari.* His influence was multiplied a thousandfold by his incarceration and his speech and his pen had acquired much greater power after he was discharged than before his imprisonment. By his death he is editing his paper without pen and speech through the sacred resolution of the people to realize his life's dream. He could not possibly have done more if he were today in the flesh preaching his *mantra*[1]. Critics like me would perhaps be still finding fault with this expression of his or that. Today all criticism is hushed and his *mantra* alone rules millions of hearts which are determined to raise a permanent living memorial by the fulfilment of his *mantra in* their lives.

Therefore, let us first break the idol of machinery and leaden type. The pen is our foundry and the hands of willing copyists our printing machine. Idolatry is permissible in Hinduism when it subserves an ideal. It becomes a sinful fetish when the idol itself becomes the ideal. Let us use the machine and the type whilst we can to give unfettered expression to our thoughts. But let us not feel helpless when they are taken away from us by a "paternal" Government watching and controlling every combination of types and every movement of the printing machine.

But the handwritten newspaper is, I admit, a heroic remedy meant for heroic times. By being indifferent to the aid of the printing room and the compositor's stick we ensure their free retention or restoration for all time.

We must do something more. We must apply civil disobedience for the restoration of that right before we think of what we call larger things. The restoration of free speech, free association and free Press is almost the whole swaraj. I would, therefore, respectfully urge the conference[2] that is meeting on Saturday next[3] at the instance of Pandit Malaviyaji and other distinguished sons of India to concentrate upon the removal of these obstacles on which all can heartily join than upon the Khilafat, the Punjab and swaraj. Let us take care of these precious pennies and that pound will take care of itself.

Young India, 12-1-1922

[1] Literally, a sacred verse

[2] Of leaders of all parties

[3] January 14, at Bombay

201. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

[Before *January 14, 1922*]

Mahatma Gandhi who has expressed his readiness to attend the Conference, interviewed by our representative, stated that there was no budging from the position that had been taken up by the Congress regarding the Round Table Conference and the conditions[1] that he had defined in the Congress Subjects Committee as precedent to any such conference must be satisfied by Government before the Congress could be expected to fall in with the idea. So far as he was concerned, his object in accepting the invitation, said Mahatmaji. was to see if he could bring round his Moderate friends on the narrow issue which he had presented to the readers of *Young India* lastweek[2]—namely, the issue of freedom of speech and freedom of association. Mahatmaji hoped it would be possible to persuade his Moderate friends to see eye to eye with the Congress on that issue.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-1-1922

202. SPEECH AT LEADERS' CONFERENCE, BOMBAY[3]

January 14, 1922

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya opened the proceedings . . . and requested Sir Sankaran Nair[4] to take the Speaker's chair. Sir Sankaran Nair then took the chair and called upon Mr. M. A. Jinnah[5] to place draft proposals on behalf of the conveners before the Conference for its consideration. After Mr. Jinnah had done this, the Speaker called upon Mr. Gandhi to open the discussion.

Mr. Gandhi began by thanking the conveners for bringing all parties together on a common platform and added that he was pining for an opportunity to lay bare his heart to his Moderate friends. He pointed out that so far as he was personally concerned, he was quite willing to attend any conference without making any conditions; but so far as the Congress and the non-co-operators were concerned, the position was different. Certain conditions which he outlined in his speech, including the release of political prisoners besides those imprisoned under the Criminal Law Amendment Act and the Seditious Meetings Act, must, he said, necessarily be fulfilled

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Subjects Committee Meeting, Ahmedabad", 28-12-1921.

[2] *Vide* "The Immediate Issue", 5-1-1922.

[3] Published in *The Bombay Chronicle,* 18-1-1922, under the sub-title ''Official Report of Proceedings". An earlier report appeared in *The Bombay Chronicle,* 16-1-1922, excerpts from which have been given in footnotes wherever necessary.

[4] 1857-1934; President, Indian National Congress, 1897; Judge of the Madras High Court; appointed member of the Viceroy's Executive Council in l 915

[5] 1876-1948; Muslim leader; founder and first Governor-General of Pakistan

by the Government before the non-co-operators could accede to the proposal for a round table conference. He did not insist on the humiliation of anybody, not even General Dyer, but was only concerned to see that the Government went to the Round Table Conference in the true spirit of penitently undoing the harm which their action had caused.[1] He mentioned a long list of events which had caused great discontent in the country and added that unless thesecauses were removed and the harm undone, the Round Table Conference would not be held in the proper atmosphere of peace and harmony. In accepting the invitations to the Conference, he and his fellow non-co-operators wanted to prove their sympathy for the object of the Conference but beyond that he was of opinion that it world be fair to all sections who had met there that the non-co-operators should not be parties to the resolutions of the Conference, though he promised his co-operation in the deliberations of the Conference and his

[1] Here *The Bombay Chronicle,* 16-1-1922, has: "Mahatmaji mentioned a long list of Government's sins of omission and commission which had made the situation what it was today, which was worse than that under martial law. And he mentioned, as an illustration, the case of Sitamarhi in Bihar which had been saddled with punitive police. He asked the Conference if they realized what the stationing of punitive police meant, and as long as such things were happening in the country by the express sanction of Government, the talk of a conference must be futile. Continuing, he regretfully acknowledged that some non-co-operators had been guilty violence and he apologized to them all for such conduct. But barring such incidents which were few and far between, the progress made by the non-co-operation movement was quite satisfactory and he had no reason to be disappointed with the results already achieved. As regards the suffering voluntarily and cheerfully borne by his co-workers, Mahatmaji pointed out that not one of the sufferers had ever complained. There was Maulana Shaukat Ali who had lost 30 Ibs. in weight during his incarceration but he had wanted to reduce his weight. Dr. Kitchlew wanted to gain in weight and he had gained, while Pandit Motilal Nehru had found the rest in jail which he had vainly looked for when free. As for Lala Lajpat Rai he was using his time in writing a text-book for national schools. So that, said Mahatma Gandhi, who adroitly gave a humorous turn to this portion of his speech, they had no reason to regret it at all.

"Proceeding Mahatmaji pointed out that in accepting the invitation to the Conference, the non-co-operators merely wanted to prove their sympathy for and with the conveners, but beyond it, they did not intend to be party to the passing of the resolutions by the present Conference. But that did not mean that they did not want to associate themselves in the effort to bring about an honourable settlement under a proper atmosphere. There was a wall between the N.C.O.'s and other parties. It could not be broken without the former surrendering a vital principle or by the latter joining them. A conference was not their goal, but a proper declaration of penitence on the part of the Government, and there could be no favourable atmosphere until the Government retraced their steps ...."

support on behalf of his party and, in particular, the Working Committee of the Congress in arriving at proper conclusions.

The Speaker then invited a general discussion in which Messrs S. R. Bomanji, J. A. Wadia, J. B. Petit, S. Srinivasa Iyengar, Sheshagiri Ayer, Satyamurti, Gokaran Nath Misra and Kunzru took part.

Mr. Gandhi in reply explained why the non-co-operators had not identified themselves with the resolutions of the Conference and also the reason why it was desirable for them to do so. He appealed to the Moderates and the Independents to form a link between the Government and the non-co-operators and added that the non-co-operators were willing to give them every help to make the work of the Conference a success.

ln the course of the debate, Mr. Gandhi spoke on behalf of the non-co-operators once more making clear his position as their leader with reference to the resolutions accepted by the Conference.[1]

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-1-1922

203. WOMEN OF GUJARAT

When Smt. Vasanti Devi Das, Urmila Devi Sen and, Suniti Devi were arrested[2], some sisters from Ahmedabad decided to form a Volunteer Corps and court arrest. Consequently, forms of the pledge were placed before them. The first idea was to publish the list after fifty names had been enrolled. This happened before the Congress session.

Meanwhile, the Bengali ladies were released. The Government did not have the strength to hold them for long. In consequence, the publication of the Ahmedabad list was suspended, though signatures continued to be obtained. As a result of the effort, about 140 women signed up and more are following suit. Of these, three women have had some experience of jail in the past.

Of what consequence, however, are the signatures by themselves? What is of inestimable value is the firm determination which, we hope, has inspired them.

[1] *The Bombay Chronicle,* 16-1-1922, has: "Before adjourning, the Conference appointed a Committee finally to settle the terms of the resolutions to be placed before the Conference today [January 15]."

[2] *Vide* "Women's Part", 15-12-1921.

If, in this way, the signatures have value, the responsibility of those who have obtained them has also increased. And since I am the author of this idea, my responsibility is the greatest.

If it had been merely a matter of replacing one Government by another, I would never have advised women to come forward. I have seen that there is much sordid work in an effort to secure that. But, at the end of this struggle, we hope to establish *Ramarajya*[1] and the poor hope to get protection, women to live in safety and the starving millions to see an end of hunger. When the struggle ends, we hope to see the resurrection of the spinning-wheel, decrease in the poison of communal discord, eradication of the practice of untouchability so that the so called untouchables may look forward to being treated as our brothers, the closing of the liquor shops and the disappearance of the drinkhabit, the preservation of the Khilafat and the protection of the cow, the healing of the Punjab wounds, the restoration of our traditional culture to its rightful place and the introduction, in every home of the spinning-wheel to take its place along with the oven.

How can women stand aside from a movement which is inspired by such great hopes? I have, threrefore, been requesting women to come forward and take part in it. It is these hopes, I think, which have roused women throughout the country.

But should I, trusting to this enthusiasm, advise women to go to jail? I feel that I cannot do otherwise. If I did not encourage them to do so, that would be a reflection on my faith in them. A *yajna* is incomplete without women taking part in it. Fearlessness is just as essential for women as it is for men. I thought, therefore, that it would be good if women give their signatures and get used to the idea of going to jail. It also occurred to me that if women ceased being frightened by the thought of jail, it would be easier for men to court arrest.

But just as I have a responsibility, so also have these sisters who have made a beginning. Having given their signatures, they should start work. Women can picket liquor shops. Customers will surely be put to shame by their presence. If any women want to take up this work, they will have to carry wooden plates round their necks,[2] like Abbas Saheb. They will also have to find out the homes of drink-addicts and persuade them to abstain. I would first suggest to the women that they should postpone the picketing of liquor shops

[1] Rule of Rama, traditionally regarded as the ideal political and social order

[2] *Vide* "Nadiad's Effort" in the succeeding item.

for the present and start going round to sell khadi. Pure khadi is not available in all khadi shops. Moreover, those who have not so far thought about swadeshi will not go to these shops and will wear khadi only if it is taken to their doors. If women carry khadi with them, they can display it and thus tempt even those who wear foreign cloth ormill-made cloth to buy it. They should go from house to house and sell khadi. They should also keep a stock of khadi caps and sell these. As they go about doing this, they will lose their fear and the Government then will feel impelled to arrest them. As long as the work does not affect the Government's revenues nor increase the people's strength in any way, it will not arrest women. Besides, it will he more fitting if women think of going to jail after they have developed capacity for organized work.

I also hope that women will fulfil the conditions of the pledge they have taken. I believe that they will remain peaceful andbear love for Hindus, Muslims and all others. But will they wear pure khadi even in their homes? Will they regard *Dhed*[1] and *Bhangis* as brothers? Will they stop giving left-over and rotten food to them and cease to regard themselves as defiled by contact with them? The women who have given their signatures belong to all communities. If these women can fulfil their pledge in its true spirit, then the 140 will soon become 1,400 and this number will rise to 14,00,000.

It is in this hope and faith that I give the sacred names of these women.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-1-1922

204. MY NOTES

NADIAD'S EFFORT

It would appear that the efforts made at Nadiad by Abbas Saheb and his band to court arrest have been wasted. They carried wooden plates hung from their necks. This certainly made good show, but it did not help them to get arrested. And so they were disappointed. A satyagrahi must never lose hope. He keeps on trying and trusts in God. It is for Him to give the reward, and He gives it as and when He wills. There is no arbitrariness in His will. He never makes a mistake.

[1] A backward Hindu Community traditionally regarded as untouchable

There is always pure justice in what He wills. This Judge, therefore, gives to us what our efforts deserve.

One reward has been gained. That Abbas Saheb should go about carrying a wooden plate hung from his neck and inscribed with slogans, is no ordinary event. What a contrast between what he was then, a judge admonishing others, and what he is now, an ex-judge who, with a wooden plate hanging from his neck, had sallied forth with his comrades, determined to let himself be manhandled by the police!

The effect on the students will be an additional gain. Those who do not come round even after this will feel ashamed of themselves. Their parents will also start thinking. How can children attend schools of a Government which can, in broad daylight, force open our houses without even a warrant from a court? In such schools, they will merely receive instruction but learn nothing. That is much too heavy a fee to pay for mere instruction. Who will want to be educated at the cost of his self-respect and integrity ?

Since those of us who go out for picketing remain courteous, our picketing is bound to have some results. Only those things which are intrinsically objectionable should be picketed, so that our action will be both morally justified and legitimate. As long as there is no coercion in our picketing we have the right to picket anything which public opinion condemns. We should not, however, exercise this right and start picketing all such items. Where there is a strong difference of opinion, picketing would be a form of coercion. Would it not annoy us if some article of which we approved but others disapproved was picketed? As a general rule, therefore, we should picket only those things against which public opinion has been educated fairly well. Personally, I am convinced that in Nadiad public opinion is opposed to Government schools. Where pupils have not been withdrawn from such schools, we have to take it that the parents are not in favour of such a step; and when the parents are not in favour, how can we say that public opinion is united behind non-co-operation?

Education is, of course, essential. A knowledge of letters is necessary, but it is not everything. It is not an end, it is only a means. What does it matter if one lacks knowledge of letters, provided one has understanding? The great teachers and reformers of the world were not men of letters. Had Christ or Mahomed any knowledge of letters? Yet the light which they gave and the service which they rendered,

neither learned philosophers nor economists have done. President Kruger of the Boers knew only enough to enable him to sign his name with difficulty. The late Amir of Afghanistan had also no better education. But both these were men of profound wisdom.

Some may protest that I am referring to uncommon men. That is true. But I am using these illustrations to prove that a knowledge of letters is not indispensable. Even today a large part of humanity is illiterate, but that does not mean that they are bereft of understanding. We live because of them. With their simple understanding, they keep the wheels of society moving. My point is that, if our children remain without education during the freedom struggle, both they and society will benefit. Just as we would be wise to abandon for the time being any building in which poisonous gases had spread, so we shall profit if we abandon Government schools which are poisonous in their own way. Those parents who will not understand even this are probably not impatient for swaraj. The Government has forcibly taken overmunicipal schools in Nadiad and, if we still send our children to these schools, then we deserve the treatment we have received. It was, therefore, right that Abbas Saheb and his comrades went about with wooden plates hanging from their necks.

PEOPLE'S SPIRIT

The spirit of the people of Surat, Ahmedabad and Nadiad is being tested. The municipalities in all these cities are non-co-operating in the matter of education.[1] In all three, the people's chosen representatives have, by a majority, nationalized the education being given by the municipality. The Government's action in taking possession of the school buildings cannot be tolerated.

It is for the people to see that this robbery perpetrated by the Government is not rewarded. If parents refuse to send their children to schools run in the name of the Government and teachers refuse to serve in them, the buildings forcibly taken over by it will remain empty and the funds which have been illegally confiscated will be returned. We must not get frightened by the Government's robbery but rest confident that we shall get back the buildings and the funds which the Government has taken over.

But, until then, what about the children? If the public is

[1] *Vide* "Municipalities in Trouble", 15-12-1921 and "My Notes", 8-1-1922, under the sub-title "Gujarat's Good Fortune"

enlightened, we should be able to use the community buildings for teaching children; if even these are not available, we can teach them in open spaces, make them spin and sing hymns and teach them drill. In accordance with the Congress Resolution[1], most of the teachers should get ready to go to jail. We should, therefore, change the present system of education so that a minimum of teachers will be required. I would have no hesitation in handing over the children to the care of elderly women. They will, of course, be spinning; in addition, they will keep an eye on the pupils. If the latter have been taught good manners, they will be more respectful to these women and learn to be more courteous. The women, on their part, will be doing a service.

.WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION

Women must make their full contribution in this struggle. They served as volunteers and made the Congress session a great success. This was the first experiment of its kind in the history of the Congress. It is a matter of joy for Gujarat that this good fortune fell to its women. The experiment was a complete success andcreated a good impression on all. If women start contributing their share in every field of service which is safe for them, our capacity for work will be doubled.

We also know that the Government will not, as far as possible, arrest women. Men, of course, are to get themselves arrested. Women, therefore, will have to take over much of the men's work.

NEED FOR FEARLESSNESS

All that is needed for this purpose is fearlessness. Only those who are pure can possess it. Our minds have become so corrupt that we are always apprehensive about women's purity. In acting thus, we defame all people in the world. We regard woman as so weak that we think she is incapable of preserving her virtue, and man so fallen that his attitude towards woman can be only lustful. Both these notions are disgraceful. If our men and women are really what we think them to be, then we must confess that we are entirely unfit for swaraj. We have no reason to assume that Englishmen and women observe no restraints. Englishwomen do all kinds of work by way of service, whereas if we require a nurse, we find it difficult to get anyone who

[1] Adopted at Ahmedabad in December 1921; vide "Speech at Congress Session, Ahmedabad-I", 28-12-1921

will do the work.

If swaraj is really drawing nearer, women will daily become more capable of protecting their honour. They must shed their fear. The notion that a woman is incapable of preserving her virtue is false. It is contrary to experience and a matter of shame for both men and women. There certainly are brutish men in the world who commit such crimes, but that man does not exist nor will he ever be born who can force himself upon a woman who values her chastity. It has, of course, to be admitted that not every woman possesses this spiritual strength and purity. We ourselves have brought this about. From the very start, we train our girls in such a way that they become incapable of protecting themselves. By the time the girl has become a woman, the false teaching has taken firm hold of her and she is convinced that a woman is utterly helpless before a man, whoever he may be. If, however, there is such a thing as truth and purity in the world, I wish to state categorically that woman has within her sufficient strength to preserve her chastity. The woman who calls upon Rama when in danger will surely be protected by Him. Which evil man will dare to approach a woman who is prepared to die? Her very eyes will shine with such light that any vicious man will be unnerved by it.

The power to die everyone has but few desire to use it. When someone wishes to dishonour a woman, when a man is in danger of being overmastered by lust, such a man and woman have a right to commit suicide. It is indeed their duty to do so. Those who have the necessary strength of mind can do it with ease. Even in the grip of no matter how strong a person, any man or woman can kill himself or herself by biting off the tongue or, if the hands are free, by pressing the wind-pipe. If a person is prepared to risk death, no matter how securely he or she is tied,—tied to a tree— he can struggle himself free provided he does not mind broken bones. The strong overpower the weak because the latter cling to life and, therefore, do not resist to the point of death. A black ant sitting on a lump of jaggery will rather let its leg be broken than allow itself to be dragged away from it. If a child pulls very hard, its parents let go of its hand for fear that the arm may get dislocated. Every person has the strength necessary to let any limb of his be broken, but he cannot endure the resulting pain, the pain of dying. It is, however, the duty of every man or woman fighting for freedom to be ready to suffer this pain. If we pray to God daily for such strength, we shall surely receive it. I urge every sister to

pray thus on arising every morning: “O God, keep me pure, give me strength to preserve my chastity, strength to preserve it even at the cost of my life. With Thee as my Protector, whom need I fear ?’, Such a prayer made with a pure mind will surely protect every woman.

BUT WHAT ABOUT MEN ?

As I discuss this matter, I feel ashamed of being a man. is man, who was born of woman, whose mother carried him for nine months, for whom she suffered pain, who slept only after putting him to sleep and ate only after she had fed him,—is man born an enemy of that mother’s kind that they should live in fear of him? A woman does not run away from a tiger; she runs away only from man’s lust. I have already pleaded with women. I wish to plead with men as well. Is not a man bound to remove the fears of women, of whom his mother was one? Should he not always pray: “Take my life before I cast lustful eyes upon any woman. If I ever incline to immorality, give me the strength to kill myself. Remove from me all uncleanliness so that no woman will fear me but will feel safe with me as with a brother” ? I pray to God that, as long as our men are incapable of protecting our women, He should keep us in slavery. If in a country the men do not protect the women, they are not men at all and are fit only to remain slaves.

MY HOPE

But I am confident that in India both men and women know the limits they should observe. Both have tasted the sweetness of purity. The girl volunteer whom I saw was without fear. I was filled with joy to see a girl standing fearlessly near the Ellis Bridge and selling khadi caps. Did she fear anyone? She knew that all men were her brothers. If one is good oneself, so is the world. The women who flocked in their thousands to the Congress *pandal* went there without fear. If, therefore, women refrain from taking part in activities which are safe for them, it will be because of men’s selfishness or the women’s laziness or ignorance. If a woman is not allowed freedom from household chores or if she wastes her time in decking herself up or in gossiping, what service can she do to her country?

READINESS TO DIE

In the fact that Abbas Saheb was not arrested in Nadiad, God’s purpose may be that he who has known the sufferings of the Punjab and has often wept over them, cannot escape with mere imprisonment.

Such a one can pass the test only by dying. It was Gujaratis who first passed the resolution of non-co-operation. How can imprisonment suffice for them? Their lot must be death. Can this possibly be the reason why God does not send Abbas Tyabji to jail?

To tell the truth, what fear has jail now for us ? Does anyone mind the hardships of jail? The prisoners convey their view to me and tell me: "Do not, for our sakes, accept an unfavourable compromise. We are not impatient." We should not claim undeserved credit for braving dangers which have lost all terrors for us. There is no way for us but to go forward. The intermediary stage of receiving beatings is being cleared by the Punjab and it seems as if the country has left only death for us. I personally would wish it so. If India is required to conquer the fear of death as well, then may this burden fall upon Gujarat. Gujarat has enjoyed much praise. Death is not too great a price to pay for the honour of holding the Congress session here. And he who voluntarily meets death will ever rest in blessed sleep. Death is but a long sleep. Muslim and Christian friends believe that the dead shall rise again on the Day of Judgement. Hindus say that death is the passing from one body to another until finally one reaches the plase where there is no sleep. All three believe that death is not complete annihilation. The test of one's faith in dharma comes at the moment of death. He who dies wailing, who does not want to die, descends into purgatory. Rather than die in this way, should we not go forth to meet death like a friend? It is beyond doubt that, if Gujaratis—Indians—shed the fear of death, the fewest will actually have to meet it. We are slaves because we are afraid. If we could get rid of the fear of jail, of being beaten, of dying, of losing our property, then we would never want to kill, would never kill, a single human being. Thus readiness to die goes hand in hand with giving up the desire to kill. When we are ready to die, no one will be particularly eager to kill us. This is why the universe has been described as a wave in one's mind. If we wish to inspire fear in others, only then shall we ourselves have cause for fear; we may be killed only if we wish to kill others. Serpents bite us only because they fear us.

It is easy to say that one should shed the fear of death, but I know that it is not easy to shed it. I do not, therefore, expect that all Gujarati men and women will give up this fear in a moment. But I do earnestly hope that there are in Gujarat passionate lovers of swaraj who have discarded all fear of death and stand eager to embrace death

for the sake of their country and their dharma. May their number increase, I pray, and may the time of our testing come soon.

READY TO SACRIFICE LIFE, BUT NOT PROPERTY

"We will go to jail, let ourselves be beaten, meet death, but will not sacrifice our property. Where has Congress made any mention of property ?" So say some brave warriors who are ready to die but not to let go their land or allow their cattle or goods to be sold. The reference to the Congress is meaningless. It made no separate mention of property assuming that one who is ready to die will be ready to lose his all. But our attachment to property, movable and immovable, is such that even when giving up our life we are not willing to part with it! This is, therefore, a matter to which we must give some thought.

For terrorizing us, the Government will use every means which can bring us to our knees. If it discovers that we regard a fine as more of a hardship than imprisonment, it will impose fines. Already in some places imprisonment and fines are imposed simultaneously.

We must completely give up our fear of losing property. Under a tyrannical government, the rich also have to be partners in tyranny. Under such a government, therefore, poverty becomes the path of virtue. We should thus realize that, if we want to non-co-operate, we must give up all attachment to wealth. Only when we are ready to starve to death rather than submit to tyranny will our non-co-operation be complete.

It should also be noted that when large numbers have shed the fear of punishment by fine, it becomes difficult for the Govenmentto collect the amounts. It is far more troublesome to auction the property of a thousand people than to send them to jail, Punishment can be imposed only on a comparatively small number. When many people act in a particular way, it becomes almost impossible to stop them. Property may be confiscated, but to whom is it to be sold? Land may be taken over, but it cannot be picked up and put down somewhere else. Is there anyone who would be willing to bid for another's land?

Moreover, those who believe in swaraj should have faith in their expectation about the ultimate result. They should, therefore, have confidence that, even if their property is confiscated by the Government today, they will get it back when swaraj is won. General Botha owned thousands of acres. None possessed cattle like his. All this was seized by the British. But he did not yield. He held out with

determination and, finally, not only did he regain his property but became the *de facto* king of the whole of South Africa. He was confident that, if he survived, he would get back his property and, if he died, he would go to heaven. We who do not wish to resort to violence in our struggle should be even more unconcerned about our property. The question will be asked how we can maintain ourselves if our property is seized by the Government. If we have taken the pledge not to yield even if we starve, why should we worry about ourselves or our people starving? In this large country there will always be someone to give us food, and, moreover, we have with us now our beloved spinning-wheel. Why, then, should we worry? When a whole family has become expert in spinning and weaving, its members do not have the slightest reason to worry about their livelihood.

All our fear arises from lack of faith. If we put our faith in God, that is, if we trust that everything will happen as ordained by Him, we would never worry. But it is only when we on our part have done our best that we can console ourselves with "whatever is to happen will happen". Man's efforts are assuredly rewarded by God's grace. Putting faith in God means that, even when our property is being seized, we continue to give Him our praise. If we praise Him in anticipation of our property being spared, that is only a bargain. God is not pining for bargains He wants devotion and He severely tests the love of His devotee. He is as cruel as He is merciful. When He judges, He shows consideration to none. He shows no favour. He rewards both devotees and unbelievers according to their deserts. The devotee does good and receives the right reward. The bad man's actions are wicked and he gets his punishment.

In our struggle there is no room for hypocrisy, hatred or impatience. It is for this reason that it has been called a holy war. May Gujarat demonstrate religious spirit—I live in the confidence that she will.

THE PURCHASER WILL PERISH!

I hear that the Kheda District is pure only in name. The people there will not attack any Government employee but, should anyone come forward to bid for a *Patidar's* property which is being auctioned, he cannot hope to escape with his life. The *Patidar,* so proud of his blood, will not miss an opportunity to have his revenge. What sort of non-violence is this? Whoever buys our property automatically becomes a Government man. If so, how can we, having

passed a resolution saying that no supporter of the Government should be injured, kill the person who buys our property? Moreover our pledge makes no such exception. If *Patidars* or others compromise their pledge in this manner, be it only in thought, we cannot win swaraj. Our pledge is not that we will secure swaraj by any means, fair or foul. It is the general principle of the Congress, which is especially binding on non-co-operators, that it will fight for swaraj by peaceful and truthful means. It must not be forgotten that the conditions of truth and non-violence are binding on all who join the Congress. There are innumerable occasions in non-co-operation when people may get provoked and start fighting. That is why, by way of added precaution, the adjective "non-violent" has been joined to it. I, therefore, hope that *Patidars* and others who are anxious to save the honour of Gujarat will banish from their minds all evil thoughts and shed every fear.

BARDOLI-ANAND

These two talukas owe a special duty. If they do not quickly get ready, Gujarat will be put to shame. The Hindus and Muslims of U.P. and Bengal and the Hindus, Sikhs and Patham of the Punjab have already passed the test of fearlessness, of readiness for imprisonment and ability to endure beating. If, now, Bardoli and Anand which have been much talked of do not get ready soon, we shall lose face. We are, of course, ready for imprisonment, but we have to make ourselves fit, and cultivate the strength, to lay down our lives. If we become fit, we shall get the necessary strength. All should start wearing khadi. The Committee has with it some sacred khadi which was used in Khadi Nagar. This should be used first, and afterwards only khadi producedin one's own district should be worn. Women, too, should accept this common dharma. In every home people should work hard and spin strong, good quality yarn. Every village should take up carding, people should treat *Dheds* and *Bhangis* as brothers and serve them, admit their children to national schools and go personally to fetch them and show them kindness. They should also remove the fear of those in their midst who may be co-operating with the Government. Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, and Christians should cultivate good relations with-one another. What is difficult in all this? What sacrifice does it involve? The spinning-wheel and khadi bring us money. The other things require abandoning our wrong ideas. That cannot be a burden. I want the people of Bardoli to labour day and night to qualify

themselves and on the 20th at the latest send me an assurance, through their Secretary or President, or a written statement from either of them, that they are now fit and ready [for the campaign]. Similarly, the residents of Anand should by that date, or even earlier, send an assurance through Abbas Saheb.

IF THEY ARE TRUE

If these friends are true and bold, they should stop paying revenue to the Government from today onwards. Those, at any rate, who have resolved to join the fight should stop doing so. I hope the residents of the taluka will not first pay up the revenue and then declare that they are ready to fight.

WHAT ABOUT THE OTHERS ?

Some people tell me that the whole of Gujarat is ready to suspend payment of revenue and ask me if I would not advise them to do so. I can give no such advice. I would not restrain anyone who voluntarily withholds payment. Who am I to compel him? But I would not take the risk of advising all the people to stop payment of revenue.

We seek to serve no interest of our own by refusing to pay it. Our refusal must be civil. If we wish to disobey the revenue law civilly, it is essential that we purify ourselves. Hence, those who regard unity of Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Parsis as a moral obligation, who have understood the significance of non-violence, who treat *Dheds* and *Bhangis* as brothers and do not think themselves defiled by their touch, who wear khadi exclusively and have the courage to die and to let their property be confiscated, these may certainly withhold payment without seeking my advice.

This, however, refers to individuals. I can never advise the whole population to withhold payment so long as the slightest need remains to educate the people further. The main reason for this is that I am not convinced that people in all the talukas of Gujarat are ready to the extent that they will not give way to anger when their properties are auctioned on their withholding payment. It is, therefore, wiser to advise the general mass of people to pay. If any of them still refuse to pay, they may do as they choose. Those who pay may help in any other way they can. All people in the rest of the country will be paying revenue and will not, by doing so, have betrayed the cause. We shall seek their help in many other ways. I have, therefore, two

different courses to advise:

1. If Bardoli and Anand want to offer mass civil disobedience, the people in these talukas should withhold payment even if, in consequence, *Inami* lands[1] are taken over by the Government.

2. To the people in the remaining talukas, my advice is that they should pay up the revenue dues but help the non-co-operation movement in other ways.

Those who, despite this advice, withhold payment on their own responsibility, having firmly resolved to abide by all the conditions of the pledge, will deserve our congratulations. But they must not be puffed up with pride, thinking that they have displayed great courage and the rest have been timid, Believing that everyone serves according to his capacity, even those who make heavy sacrifices should remain humble and come forward to give even more.

SHRI MAHADEV'S LETTER

I reproduce below a letter from Shri Mahadev Desai, leaving out only the salutation and the signature.[2] I believe that the posting of the letter was a breach of jail discipline. In South Africa, I refused even to act upon such letters, but in this case I feel that Mahadev Desai's harmless breach of a rule is pardonable. There is no other way to expose in time the Dyerism being practised in jails. If anyone suffers for this indiscipline, it will be Mahadev himself. I will not mind if he, too, like Lakshminarayan, is flogged till he gets sores on the back. Mahadev did right in taking this risk and writing. If any time theGovernment gives the slightest latitude to prisoners, they may put it to good use as Mahadev has done in writing this letter. I do not at present wish to comment upon the facts given in it. At the moment, I am simply bathing in a sea of joy and amazement at the courage and restraint displayed by the country. I had not hoped for this degree of self-purification. The prisoners shouted cries of victory, not in a spirit of defiance but because they believed that they had a right to do so. When Mahadev drew Lakshminarayan's attention to the error, how candidly did he admit it at once? Truly, God's hand is behind our struggle.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-1-1922

[1] Lands held under privileged tenure

[2] The letter, not reproduced here, described the maltreatment, including flogging, of political prisoners, and mentioned particularly two volunteers, Kailash Nath and Lakshminarayan, who had been flogged.

205. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR[1]

Sunday Morning [*January 15, 1922*][2]

I got your note just when I was in the thick of a meeting. I have now got up early to reply to your note and to frame resolutions for the 10 o'clock meeting.[3]

I have taken the insult offered to you as I have taken the insults offered to me by Mr. Patel[4] not once but on many occasions. It has become second nature with him. I had really come to think that you and he had, somehow or other, become the best of friends. Now, if you permit me, I should like to show your letter to Mr. Patel for his own good. I take it, you know, that he and I frankly do not agree. His way is not my way. He knows that we travel in different directions, so much for Mr. Patel.

I have no party save that of Truth. I want to live for nothing but Truth. Whether you remain in the non-co-operation ranks,or whether you do not, I cannot desert you, even as Icannot desert Malaviyaji, no matter where I find him for the time being. For, I consider you to be a man of Truth. You have left in me the impression that you are too cultured to do anything wrong, knowing it to be such.

The Story of My Life, Vol. I, p. 524

[1] M. R.. Jayakar (1873-1959); lawyer and liberal leader; Judge, Federal Court of India; Vice-Chancellor, Poona University

This letter was sent in reply to Jayakar's letter of January 14, 1922, in which he had complained about Vithalbhai Patel's remarks on the first day of the Leaders' Conference at Bombay.

[2] From the source

[3] Presumably of the Committee set up on the previous day by the Leaders' Conference. Gandhiji dissociated himself from the resolutions passed by the Conference; *vide* the succeeding item.

[4] Vithalbhai Patel (1873-1938); elder brother of Vallabhbhai Patel; called to the Bar in 1908; Member of the Bombay Legislative Councils first elected President of Indian Legislative Assembly, 1925-30

206. SPEECH AT LEADERS' CONFERENCE, BOMBAY[1]

January 15, 1922

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

It is quite proper that Mr. N. V. Gokhale should ask three or four questions. He has asked those questions and I think I should render full explanation of what part I have taken in assisting the Committee to frame these resolutions. You will see there are not many vital changes in the resolutions as they were read to you yesterday. The Conference should remember that I do not propose to be a party to the resolutions of this Conference and so far as I am concerned, the non-co-operators also will not become parties. ("Hear, hear.") They will not take part in the discussion either. I am humbly of opinion that it is the special prerogative and duty of those who are not non-co-operators to consider fully the bearings of these resolutions and to accept them or to reject them as they choose. I defined the functions of non-co-operators yesterday and I repeat every word of what I said yesterday, and their function is this, namely, of advisers; but they do not identify themselves with these resolutions. That does not mean that they do not hold any opinion about these resolutions. They do certainly hold an opinion about these resolutions. There are certain things which the non-co-operators are called upon to do in the event of certain contingencies. Personally, I may explain to you what the attitude of the non-co-operators will be with reference to the obligations that these resolutions seek to impose upon them. With reference to the first resolution, I have absolutely nothing to say beyond what I said yesterday. I say it remains intact.

The second resolution also remains intact. With reference to that I have to tell the Conference, that I repeat the remark I made before the [Conference] Committee, that the resolution will be placed before the Working Committee[2], if it is sent to it officially by this Conference, and the Working Committee will consider that resolution, and I have assured the Conference Committee, and I repeat the assurance, that I

[1] According to *The Hindu*, 17-1-1922, the Committee appointed by the Conference on January 14 had met on January 15 before the resumption of the Conference and Gandhiji had attended this meeting "as an adviser and unofficially". The Conference resumed its session at 6 p.m. and this speech, taken from *The Hindu*, 18-1-1922, was published under the description "full text of Mahatma Gandhi's speech"

[2] Of the Congress

shall advise the Working Committee to suspend general civil disobedience contemplated by the Ahmedabad Congress resolution pending the negotiations that the Committee to be appointed by this House will enter into with Government in the hope that there will be a round table conference granted. But beyond the 31st of this month, it will not be possible for me to advise the country to suspend general civil disobedience. I must also tell you that I was pressed to extend that limit of time but I feel grieved that I could not do so. I want to tell the reason very briefly for my inability to do that. To me even 15 days matter. Another reason I placed before you yesterday in view of what was going on in the country today. As to the repressive acts in the country, in spite of the faults or the crimes that the non-co-operators may have committed, hold these acts of repression to be absolutely indefensible and the only answer that the non-co-operators can give is general civil disobedience. But in order to buy the support of those countrymen of mine who are not non-co-operators, in order to enlist their sympathy on our side, I have reluctantly said that we shall postpone general civil disobedience for a fortnight. ("Hear, hear.") I expect I shall be able to carry the Working Committee with me in this matter. We had an informal discussion on the subject last night amongst ourselves—the non-co-operators, and I was authorized by them to say that they had decided to wait for a fortnight in order to enable the Committee appointed by this Conference to enter into negotiations with the Viceroy. That will put us square with the Viceroy and show that we are reasonable people. We do not taboo a round table conference if a round table conference can be summoned with any prospect of success. And what is most important of all is that we want to place ourselves right with those of our countrymen who do not see eye to eye with us. Discharge the *fatwa* prisoners, discharge political prisoners against whom convictions exist or prosecutions are pending under the ordinary law or under the Criminal Law Amendment Act and the Seditious Meetings Act. This is what we asked for yesterday and they are the conditions which I have been urging. My non-co-operator friends will perhaps be angry that I have been yielding to the blandishments of my Moderate friends. If they charge me with that, I am guilty. (Laughter.) With reference to political prisoners convicted or under prosecution under the ordinary law, I told you yesterday that it would be the Committee to be appointed by this Conference which could decide whether all such prisoners could

be covered by the recommendations of this Conference, but I was borne down by the logic of facts and the pressure of friends. Therefore, I said, "If you want to appoint one nominee from yourselves and another from Government with power to appoint an umpire, I shall accept the proposal". I hope that my non-co-operator friends will not be angry with me for having accepted this proposal. As regards the persons who have been imprisoned in virtue of the normal law of the country which has been misused or misapplied, this small Committee will consider their cases and recommend their discharge. I have no hesitation in feeling that in the hands of that Committee the interests of our imprisoned countrymen will be quite safe. You will see that in yesterday's resolution there was a condition that activities of a hostile nature would cease today. I placed a phrase before the Committee in this connection and I found that I had landed myself into difficulties. (Laughter.) You will be surprised to find that the keen intellect of Pundit Kunzru detected a flaw in it, and that flaw put me on the proper track, and I said "No". I do not want to use any phrase of a general character, not for one moment. Our struggle is of the purest character. We have nothing to conceal from the country or from the Viceroy. So far as I am concerned, they should all know exactly what is in our minds. There is the question of activities of a general hostile character to be suspended pending this Round Table Conference. I can only bring myself to accept a definite thing, and, therefore, in order to enter into a compromise have sacrificed the interest of a number of women of Erode (Madras) and of Mr. Lavate of Poona. I have said that we shall suspend even the liquor shop picketing during the time the Conference is going on. This sacrifice I have made in order that I can gain the other purpose that neither the Viceroy nor anybody else can charge us with breach of faith. Provided those conditions that are to be fulfilled by Government are accepted by Government, we shall suspend hartal, we shall suspend picketing, and we shall suspend civil disobedience. Of course, it grieves me to say that we shall have to suspend lawful, peaceful and *bona fide* picketing of liquor shops, but I hope that my non-co-operator friends willnot be angry on that score. The chief thing that I want to say is that no other non-co-operating activity is to be suspended. Mr. Kunzru asked me whether if these prisoners are discharged and this notification is withdrawn, I would not stop enlisting volunteers. I say "No" emphatically. I would not stop the enlistment of volunteers for a single moment. It is not what we can

possibly undertake to do on the ground that it . . .[1] preparation for civil disobedience. The preparation will not be of an offensive character nor of a hostile character. It is in the interest of those who are now ready for embarking upon general civil disobedience. They will have to embark upon civil disobedience at a given moment, so that they should keep the atmosphere of preparations ready for themselves. I do not consider that there I am doing anything of a hostile character. But I want this Conference to understand what are the implications of the undertaking that I have proposed to give after consulting the Working Committee which will meet tomorrow after the deliberations of this Conference are over. I have finished the whole of my work. I said to the Subjects Committee also that these things are all right. The Government may or may not grant these things today. To me the chief thing is that the Viceroy should not be able to say that we have given away the Khilafat. There is no open mind about the Khilafat. There is no open mind about the Punjab. The irreducible minimum has been before the country for a long time. All that can be discussed is, how to give effect to the Khilafat terms that are demanded, how to give effect to the Punjab terms that are demanded. ("Hear, hear.") I do want to appreciate all the difficulties that face the Government, but the vital principle of these demands is full Dominion Status. How is that to be arrived at? At the Round Table Conference also my emphatic submission to the Viceroy will be for a scheme in accordance with the spirit of this demand for full Dominion Status that will be evolved by duly elected representatives of the people of this country. I mean by the expression "duly elected representatives" all those elected representatives, elected under the Congress constitution, that is to say, under the four-anna franchise. That is, those who pay four annas each will be duly registered as voters and they will elect representatives. These representatives will evolve a scheme for full Dominion Status. I know this is a big question. I do not conceal that from you, from the country or from myself. I know also, I feel keenly, that this country is not really ready for making a demand of that character. I have many misgivings about the Round Table Conference becoming successful. But I would have been false to my creed, to those friends whose association I have the privilege of enjoying and to the Viceroy—I do not want to be false to the Viceroy—I shall be false to myself, if I withheld these things from

[1] Some words are missing here

you, or from the country. So far as my advice is accepted by the non-co-operators or by the country I shall certainly press that they should not take a little less. Till we have all these things *we* shall not be free from the miseries that the country is oppressed with today. We gloat in our miseries, we take glory in them. We do not want the miseries to be sprung upon us as a surprise. As Lala Lajpat Rai said, this country is screwed up. I have less faith in the interests of my own countrymen because they have not suffered enough. Therefore I have got my own misgivings. I feel that the Committee that will be appointed will convey this humble message of mine in the name of non-co-operators to the Viceroy, that if he wants to convene the Round Table Conference, he should summon that Conference expecting that the non-co-operators will be satisfied with nothing less than what I have said. I am here to confess that we are fully able to take charge of all military dispositions of the country and that we are fully able to deal with all foreign complications. The worst that may happen is that we may be blotted out from the face of the earth. I am quite willing to be blotted out from the face of the earth so long as I can breathe the free atmosphere of India. ("Hear, hear..')

The Hindu, 18-1-1922

207. SUMMARY OF TELEGRAM

[Before, *January 16, 1922*]

Mr. M. Singaravelu, President, [Madras] City Congress Committee, writes:

Mahatmaji wires to us that whilst he was delighted that almost complete hartal was observed, there was damage done by some people to the decorations, etc., and advises us to strain every nerve to find out the disturbing elements for further control.

The Hindu, 16-1-1922

208. THE LAW OF FRIENDSHIP

Many Hindus have been offended by Maulana Hasrat Mohani's speech about the Moplahs.[1] Some Congress workers in Madras have written letters[2] complaining against him. It would be better for the reader to pay attention to neither side. The Maulana takes one view while the Hindus of Malabar take another. The Maulana, assuming a certain state of affairs, is applying the law of war to it. The Hindus of Malabar have described the situation as they believe it to be, and have protested against the Maulana's remarks. The Maulana considers that the Moplahs had started a jehad and, according to the rules of jehad, those who help the enemy become enemies themselves. The Hindus gave information to the Government's officers and, therefore, became enemies; in such circumstances, the Moplahs would have fought even Muslims, let alone Hindus. The Malabar Hindus say: "The Moplah uprising cannot be called a war, or, even if it is regarded as war; Hindus, who are themselves slaves, cannot be regarded as enemies. Even if some Hindus, to protect their lives, reported the whereabouts of the Moplahs, they should not for that reason be regarded as enemies; if, nevertheless, they are so in the eyes of the Moplahs, at least their women and children and their temples should remain inviolate. All Hindus should not be regardeds enemies because of a few. What the Moplahs have done does not exemplify neighbourliness nor have they followed the law of war. Defence of the Moplahs is not justified and is likely to create suspicion in the minds of the Hindus." I think this argument is reasonable, but I do not blame the Maulana. He looks upon the British Government as an enemy. He would defend anything done in fighting it. He thinks that there is much untruth in what is being said against the Moplahs and he is, therefore, not prepared to see their error. I believe that this is his narrowness, but it should not hurt the Hindus. The Maulana speaks what is in his mind. He is an honest and courageous man. All know that he has no ill will against the Hindus.

[1] During their uprising in August 1921, the Moplahs had committed atrocities on the Hindus and Hasrat Mohani in his Presidential speech at the Muslim League session in Ahmedabad, had justified their conduct as legitimate retaliation.

[2] For excerpts from two of these letters, *vide* footnote I to "Hindus and Moplahs", 26-1-1922.

What he says is not out of hatred for the Hindus but out of anger against the British rule.

What should the Hindus do in these circumstances? They should defend the Malabar Hindus and explain their view to the Muslims without getting angry with the Maulana or Muslims in general. Those Hindus who believe that some Moplahs indulged in criminal acts have a right to criticize them. Those Muslims who deny the charge are free to defend the Moplahs. Neither party speaks from first-hand knowledge.

It should be remembered, besides, that all Muslims do not argue as the Maulana has done. Many of them have condemned the Moplahs' conduct. The Government has thoroughly exploited the Moplahs' madness. They have punished the entire Moplah community for the madness of a few individuals and have incited the Hindus by exaggerating the facts. Malabar Hindus, like the Moplahs, are an excitable people and the Government has incited them against the latter. The measures which the Government has taken are not for the protection of the Hindus; they are only for its own protection.

Both Hindus and Muslims are weak. It is the weak who get angry and hate others. The elephant does not hate the ant. One ant hates another ant. Neither the Hindus who are filled with fear because of the Moplahs' misdeeds or the Maulana's defence of them, nor the Muslims who, without examining the facts, rush to the defence of the Moplahs, have understood Hindu-Muslim unity, which is one of the conditions [for the success of non-co-operation]. Hindus should not lose hope merely on account of the misconduct of a few Muslims or the Maulana's ignorance. The Muslims should stop putting up a defence like the Maulana's. If, however, both sides to a quarrel could show wisdom simultaneously, would the quarrel or the bitterness ever have come about? There must always be two sides for a dispute to arise. When one party commits an error, it behoves the other to remain calm. Only then can Hindu-Muslim unity survive. To remain good provided the other side remains good—this is no law of friendship, nor of war. It is but a bargain. In friendship, there is no room for bargaining. Friendship can exist only between brave parties and bargaining between weak parties. We are both weak and strong. Consequently, the relationship of Hindus and Muslims is both one of friendship and of bargaining. Let us hope that, day by day, the element of bargaining will disappear and that of friendship grow. Ifone side progressively purifies itself and becomes stronger, this

friendship will become permanent.

Bravery does not mean browbeating others. He is not a brave man who uses his strength to terrorize others. The brave man is he who, though possessing strength, does not use it to intimidate others but, on the contrary, protects the weak. Can a brave man know fear? Muslims are physically strong. Even if they have the support of the whole world, Hindus should not be afraid of them but, placing their trust in God, should refrain from deviating, by a hair's breadth, from the path of justice. Muslims, too, should be ashamed to seek help from outside and should trust the Hindus despite the latter's numerical superiority. However, even if both sides do not act in this civilized manner and only one side does so, there need be no disruption of Hindu-Muslim unity. That is, even if one side is firm in doing its dharma, there will be no enmity between the two. He alone may be said to be firm in his dharma who trusts his safety to God and, untroubled by anxiety, follows the path of virtue. If Hindus apply this rule to the Moplah affair, they will not, even when they see the error of the Moplahs, accuse the Muslims. They will help those Hindus who have suffered losses and will enable them to stand on their feet.

Swaraj means that even if a person is in a minority of one, he may oppose the rest and be unafraid. Hindus should not depend wholly on the Muslims good sense. Nor should the Muslim be frightened by the meanness of some Hindus. Each community should rely on its own strength and help the other. Why should a single Hindu have run away on account of the Moplahs' atrocities? Why should even one Hindu have reported the whereabouts of the Moplahs out of fear of the British troops? No Hindu was bound to report where the Moplahs had taken shelter. Why should a single Hindu have made a show of going through Islamic religious rites out of fear of the Moplahs? The rule which we follow in our fight against the British rule, viz., laying down our lives, should be followed in all cases of oppression. If we are ready to die at the hands of the tyrant rather than do his bidding, we shall be stronger than even the lion. Anyone who overpowers a tyrant by killing him will one day be tempted to become a tyrant himself, for, instead of looking to God for support, he will have learnt to depend on his own brute strength. A person who regards himself as God is bound to be destroyed. He can never be free because he has sought to usurp God's place and, in consequence, has lost his own rightful place. He has yet to strive and know what he is.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-1-1922

209. MY NOTES

A GUJARATI'S REMORSE

If I do not admonish Gujaratis, who else will? I have heard that the person who had attempted to enter the Congress meeting with another's ticket[1] now feels extremely sorry. I am glad to hear this. The incident had pained me greatly because I trusted everyone. After one has repented, there is no more need for shame. Abbas Saheb once told me a story about himself, and that too very proudly. Though he lived like a king, once in a light moment he felt tempted to defraud the railway. However light-hearted, his action was theft all the same. He bought a second-class ticket for a relation of his and put her in a first-class carriage. The Tyabji family having become younger in spirit, now enjoy travelling third class. In the past, they always travelled by first class. When he reached home, he felt ashamed of himself."I am the nephew of Badruddin", he thought."If the world hears of my dishonesty, what will it say? And even if my action is not known, what would Badruddin have said? How can I forgive myself?" Repenting thus, the gentleman returned to the station. Remitting money for the purpose, he sent a wire asking her to pay the excess and get the ticket changed at the next station. By thus spending double the amount that he would have saved by his dishonesty and publicizing his misdeed to the entire station, he atoned for his error immediately. He can now narrate the incident to illustrate the nobility of the Tyabji family. Similarly, if this friend has felt sincere remorse—and everyone tells me he has—then he has indeed escaped a great danger. He has no longer any reason to feel ashamed and now he serves both the country and himself with great vigilance. There are no degrees in purity. Just as all right angles are of equal magnitude, so is all purity. As long as there is even a trace of impurity in us, we cannot be regarded as pure. Therefore, when judging ourselves, we should forgive nothing. We have a perfect right to be merciless to ourselves, to get angry with ourselves. If we learn this art, our attachments and aversions, poor things, may have some rest—and it is our duty to see that they get it.

LALAJI'S LETTER

Lalaji has received a sentence of 18 months, so also has his

[1] *Vide* "The Congress and After", 5-1-1922.

comrade Pandit Santanam. Two others, Malek Lalkhan and Dr. Gopichand have got 16 months each. In a letter, written before the sentence was passed, Lalaji says in effect:"Do not worry about us. Do not think of our hardships and let the national cause suffer. Now that we are in for it, we should see it through. I did not go on a hunger-strike. I would not do that in order to secure special privileges. I am writing a history of India for the national schools. Pandit Santanam is engrossed in the study of Sanskrit. It is not a small matter for India that nowadays men of stainless character and learning are taking the place of criminals in our jails. The history of modern India commences now."

POETIC QUALITY

Once when I was talking with the Poet[1] about the Jallianwala Bagh Memorial and trying to persuade him to interest himself in it, he replied,"What poetry is there in it to attract me? Only what is poetic can have interest for me, a poet. In Jallianwala Bagh, unsuspecting men who had been trapped were shot down. Such an incident cannot inspire new life in people. It merely illustrates their utter helplessness. Does it deserve a memorial?" There was deep meaning in this criticism. I explained that the proposal for a memorial had not been made from a poet's point of view. I said that, if the public forgot Jallianwala, it would be incapable of creating poetry. When he had understood me, he agreed to write a letter for the Bombay meeting and did so. But as he felt that the meeting lacked poetry, he could not summon the courage to attend it.

But now the Poet has got a poetic subject. A lion like Lalaji will not be helplessly led into jail; he walks into it deliberately. There, he does not ask for any special privileges for himself. On the contrary, he regards hardships as privileges. Satyagrahis submit to beating in several places and allow their property to be seized, not from weakness but as a sacrifice. Sufficient material for poetry is thus piling up and the poets in the country can lay their hands on as much of it as each likes.

An English poet-painter has said that the people's art flowers at the end of a war. This is a half-truth. In so far as one people destroys another, it is not art but evil which flowers. It is to the extent that people willingly suffer and sacrifice their lives that art flowers. That is

[1] Rabindranath Tagore

why now, at the end of the Great War, England and Germany are not progressing; on the contrary, poison has spread in them. It is true that both have suffered, but the intention was rather to inflict suffering than to suffer. Neither country has cleansed its heart. Both, therefore, are again preparing to fight.

In this kind of war in pursuit of self-interest, there is a greater possibility of the vanquished reforming themselves. So Germany may perhaps rise. But there appears to be no such possibility for England. England has one hope and that is our non-co-operation. If our non-co-operation is truly a self-purification, then both we and England will rise to great heights. Where even one man performs *tapascharya*, the atmosphere is cleansed. When soda is applied to dirty clothes, the dirt is washed away. Self-purification is like this soda. With non-co-operation, it is unlikely that we shall rise and England fall. Our non-co-operation has offered England an opportunity for cultivating humility and repenting. If England avails herself of this opportunity, she will emerge glorious. If she does not, and if our movement is not genuine non-co-operation, England is already fallen but we also shall be crushed more than we now are. We are impotent. Although we are crushed under Britain's heel, we do not know we are. We, therefore, help her to crush us. But the tyrant who crushes others will degrade himself. Just as a foot placed in mud cannot but get dirty, so those who hold us down cannot escape degrading themselves.

I am, therefore, confident that in consequence and at the end of our struggle, the poets of India will have a sea of poesy from which they may carry away as much as they choose and yet not lack for more.

DESHBANDHU'S ROAD

Just as Lalaji is an exemplary prisoner in the Punjab, so Deshbandhu Chitta Ranjan Das in Bengal. When his case was heard in the court, his khadi and his simple exterior so impressed the lawyers that they could not but stand up in his honour. Only a few months ago, he was a jewel among the lawyers of Bengal. Why would they not stand up? He was offered a chair, but he courteously refused it. He remained standing in the dock throughout. The chair was placed before him but he did not use it.

Thus, on all sides, we see flowing the nectar of heroism, of endurance. I am now impatient to see Gujarat counted among the

provinces in which it flows.

POONA'S COURAGE

Perhaps readers of *Navajivan* do not know that I am in love with Poona. I expressed my admiration as long ago as 1915[1] when I returned from England. Poona's sacrifices are intelligent. No other place equals Poona in scholarship. Nor is there anywhere her simplicity and her voluntary poverty. Sanskrit learning spread from Poona. The Lokamanya and Gokhale lived here. The city has shrunk from no sacrifice. Poona can do much. Even now I feel that in making sacrifices, Poona will outstrip all. Shri Narsopant Chintaman Kelkar is carrying on his work with thoroughness. The Government also is testing him cleverly. The picketing of liquor shops is getting very well organized. The best non-co-operators go out to picket. Shri Kelkar sends out his entire family for this purpose. The Government merely imposes fines. If it refuses to arrest anyone, what can the Poona non-co-operators do? Women have now been sent out. I certainly envy this. I had hoped that the women of Gujarat would really take the lead in this matter. Bengal started, but the Government did not take up the challenge. The Poona women, by their action, seem to have created a situation in which either the Government must arrest them or repeal its law. Smt. Kelkar, Smt. Gokhale, Shri Gokhale's sister, Smt. Indumati Naik, Smt. Yashodabai Phadke and four other women set out to picket liquor shops. They were removed to the police-station and there set free. It is clear that there cannot be even a suggestion of force in this picketing and the liquor-booths are sure to close down as a result of it. Poona's women are intelligent and strong-minded. I have no fear about the outcome of the movement which they have started. It cannot but gather momentum and the Government will have to admit defeat. The fighters of Maharashtra have accepted the method of non-violence as a practical policy and there is no doubt, therefore, that they will proceed non-violently. And where there is a confluence of non-violence, sacrifice and wisdom, there can be no result other than victory.

It now remains for the women of Gujarat to compete with those of Poona. When will the men of Gujarat equal the sacrifice of Poona? Even if they keep pace with it, I shall be satisfied. Up till now, Gujarat has set no value on poverty, simplicity, heroism, fortitude and service

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Poona Public Meeting", 13-2-1915.

of the country. Now Gujarat is showing zeal, but she has still to be tested by suffering. May God save Gujarat's honour.

FRUIT OF SACRIFICE

Sacrifice means that the parson making it dies or suffers' for another. Those who suffer to advance their own interests make no sacrifice. Such persons do not deserve to be called human beings. The scripture has described those who live only for themselves as thieves.[1] It appears from a letter from Shri Rajagopalachari that the Moplah prisoners are not being ill-treated now. They are kept in properly ventilated carriages and are also given water, etc., on the way. Thus, as a result of the sacrifice of seventy Moplahs, the rest have got some relief. The Moplah prisoners who died had not sought death. Poor creatures, they were merely killed. If, then, innumerable Indians deliberately court suffering for the sake of the country, is it surprising that the latter should prosper? The man who purifies himself and gives up all for the sake of others will enjoy greater power than even an emperor. O God! Wilt Thou not give to any of us such purity and such strength to suffer? We will live as Thy slaves, but this is the strength we wish to have. We do not ask for a throne. We want the sufferings of those in misery to end. As the helpless Moplahs were choked to death, wilt Thou not give us the strength to come forward willingly to die in like manner for the sake of the country and the world? Grant it, I beseech Thee. And we shall ever remain grateful.

WE HAVE INDEED BECOME FREE

Pearson, who lives in Shantiniketan with the Poet, has recently returned to India after an absence of five years. Having witnessed what he had never witnessed before—people's capacity to suffer for the country—he has sent the following message through C. F. Andrews:

> I am whole-heartedly with you in your splendid struggle for freedom. Your work has borne its fruit, for India is already free. Her spirit is no longer in subjection. Swinburne in his"Songs before Sunrise" writes:
>
> Open thy soul to see,
>
> Slave, and thy feet are free:
>
> Thy bonds and thy beliefs are one in kind.
>
> This is true of India, for we all realize now that India is no longer blind and,

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 12

therefore, her feet are free. Of this I personally have not the shadow of a doubt and I am able to see India after an absence of five years.

Hundreds of prisoners are today witnesses to this fact. Deliberate courting of imprisonment has given the country a vision of the goddess of freedom. India's chains snapped when Shaukat Ali, Motilal Nehru, Lalaji, Chitta Ranjan Das and Abul Kalam Azad went to jail. Let a settlement come when it will. Who knows whether happiness will come through a settlement or whether it lies in giving a stiff fight and going through painful suffering? A settlement is of the nature of a certificate. A dull student may require one. He who is confident in his possession of knowledge, will he use a certificate to prove it? Where is the need for a doctor's certificate to one who is healthy? The thousands who attended the Congress felt the glow of freedom. If they did not, then Pearson's letter has no meaning either.

But thousands felt the dawn of a new age just as Paul Richard did. If we are sure of this, then we need not worry about a settlement.

A"RISHI'S" BLESSING

The Poet's father was known as *Maharshi* or great sage. I have seen that the Poet's elder brother, who is now over 70 years of age, also deserves this title. Even today his strength is impressive. In India's progress he sees that of the world and looks upon the non-co-operation movement as a holy struggle. I welcome a letter from him as in the nature of a blessing. I occasionally place before readers letters from him which are likely to be of interest to them. At the time of the Congress session he sent a wire but, not satisfied with that, he has now sent a letter. I give its substance below:[1]

SIKH HEROISM

Sikh courage reaches greater heights every day and along with their courage grow their endurance and their spirit of non-violence. The Government is now willing to return to the Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee the Keys of the Golden Temple of Amritsar which they had earlier taken possession of. But the Committee has refused to accept them until the Government agrees to release every Sikh leader who has been arrested. The Government, therefore, is in a dilemma. If it releases the Sikhs, it will be ridiculed and the strength of the Sikhs

[1] A Gujarati translation of the letter followed. For the original letter, *vide Young India*, 12-1-1922.

will increase two-fold. If it does not release them, their strength will increase ten-fold. It must, therefore, decide whether it would be wiser for it, to allow the Sikhs' strength to increase ten times or to releasethe Sikh prisoners and be laughed at, taking consolation in the fact that the strength of the Sikhs will then only be doubled.

AN ENGLISHWOMAN'S CONFESSION

There is no doubt that non-co-operation is producing its good effect even on the British. I have with me three letters of which two cannot be published. But there is one from an Englishwoman which I must publish. This lady has given her name and address; she does not want these to be made public, though she desires that the letter should be published. The substance of the letter is as follows:[1]

Frankness shines in every line of this letter. This woman sees the hand of Christ in all my work. A devout Hindu may see the hand of Rama or Krishna and a Muslim that of *Khuda* and the Prophet. For myself, I shall be satisfied if it has the hand of Truth. God, with His thousand names, is included in truth and I am certain that, if we abide by Truth and non-violence, we shall rise higher everyday and the very British, who today seem to be our enemies, will become our friends and upholders of nationalism.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-1-1922

210. LETTER TO" THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

[*January 16, 1922*]

SIR,

What purports to be an interview with your correspondent appears in today's[2] issue of the *Chronicle*. I never gave your correspondent or anyone else an interview. The conversation reported was not for publication. I should not mind if all the humour and the gestures that accompanied the conversation could be reproduced. As it is, the whole interview is a caricature of a random talk. As it is difficult for me to correct the impression created by the interview

[1] A Gujarati translation of the letter followed. For the original letter, *vide Young India*, 12-1-1922.

[2] Of January 16, 1922

without dotting the i's and crossing the t's, I must ask your readers to dismiss the whole"interview" from their minds. I hope Sir Sankaran Nair will not see the"interview", but ifhe does I shall ask him to see the forthcoming issue of *Young India*[1] too.[2]

Yours etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-1-1922

211. WORKING COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTION[3]

January 17, 1922

A meeting of the Working Committee of the Congress was held in Bombay[4] on 17th January to consider among other things the recommendations of the Malaviya Conference. The resolution passed by the Committee on the subject is given below:

The Working Committee places on record its thanks to Pandit Malaviyaji and his fellow conveners for convening the conference of persons belonging to the various political parties in the country, for the purpose of considering the existing tension, and having considered the resolution of the conference, the Committee resolves that the offensive civil disobedience contemplated by the Ahmedabad Congress be not started till the 31st day of January 1922 or pending result of the negotiations undertaken by the Committee of the Malaviya Conference for a round table conference, whichever may be the first date.

The Working Committee considers it necessary for the purpose of creating an atmosphere favourable for a successful round table conference that:

(a) All notifications and notices declaring illegal and prohibiting

[1] *Vide*"The Malaviya Conference" 19-1-1922.

[2] The source published the following note along with this letter:"In view of Mahatma Gandhi's statement about my conversation with him regarding the Conference and its achievements, I extremely regret that through a misunderstanding of the position, on my part, an unfortunate impression should have been caused. In the circumstances, I willingly accept the entire blame for the mistake. I may add that I have Mahatmaji's generous assurance that there was not wilfulness on my part and that he has forgiven the error of judgment. —Your Special Representatative."

[3] Presumably drafted by Gandhiji

[4] At Gandhiji's residence, according to the report in *New India*, 18-1-1922

the formation of volunteer corps, public meetings, picketing and other normal activities of the Congress or the Khilafat Committees be withdrawn and prisoners undergoing prosecution orconviction in respect of such notices be discharged or released as the case may be.

(b) All *fatwa* prisoners including the Ali Brothers and their companions be released.

(c) All other prisoners already convicted or under trial for non violent or other innocent activities be dealt with and discharged in the manner appointed therefor in the third resolution of the Conference and

(d) Simultaneously with the performance of the foregoing acts by the Governments concerned and in the event of a round table conference being called and pending such conference, all hartals, picketing and civil disobedience should cease.

In order to avoid any misunderstanding about the Congress demands, the Working Committee desires to draw the attention of the committee appointed by the Malaviya Conference to the Khilafat, the Punjab and the swaraj claims as stated publicly from time to time from Congress platforms and to state that therefore the Congress and the Khilafat representatives will be bound to demand full settlement of the three claims.

Young India, 19-1-1922

212. LETTER TO K. VENKATAPPAYYA[1]

BOMBAY,
January 17, 1922

DEAR VENKATAPPAYYA[2],

I have given much anxious thought to the no tax campaign going on there[3]. Apart from the possibility of suspension of mass civil disobedience by reason of a round table conference ever forthcoming, I think that you are not yet ready for non-payment of taxes. Fifty per cent of the population of the area of experiment has not yet, I apprehend, got rid of untouchability nor is that proportion of population accustomed to ways of non-violence, nor to khaddar

[1] The source has reproduced this from *Janmabhumi*.

[2] President, Andhra Provincial Congress Committee

[3] In Andhra

manufactured in the respective areas. I omit the other items such as the unity between races and creeds. In these circumstances, I think it is the bounden duty of all of us to refrain from mass civil disobedience till the masses have undergone the necessary discipline and self-purification. In any other case, massdisobedience will be not *civil* but *criminal* and will, therefore, render us unfit to conduct our own affairs as an orderly civilized nation. I, therefore, strongly suggest that you advise the ryots in all the districts to pay up at least the first instalment and devote the whole of the time and the energy of all the workers to acquiring the necessary qualifications. This opinion, I know will disappoint many ardent spirits, but I am sure our success lies in that disappointment, for if the people are really eager for swaraj, and eager for civil disobedience, they will make the necessary mental change, under the pressure of that strong desire. The inimitable aptitude of Andhra women for artistic spinning and of Andhra weavers for artistic weaving should make the production of khaddar in the respective areas easy of accomplishment. But whether the acquisition of these qualifications is difficult or easy, we dare not avoid it without endangering the attainment of our cherished goal.

Yours sincerely ,

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 21-1-1922

213. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

January 17, 1922

Mahatma Gandhi was interviewed yesterday by our representative about the letter[1] written by Sir Sankaran Nair to *The Times of India* in regard to the recent Round Table Conference held in Bombay. Sir Sankaran, it might be remembered, walked out of the Committee meeting owing to difference of opinion.

The Mahatma said:

I have read Sir Sankaran Nair's letter to *The Times of India* with deep pain. It bears in itself traces of hurried draftsmanship and anger. I propose, therefore, not to answer seriatim the many misrepresentations it contains, but to give only broad facts.

Between the Conference and myself there was perfect harmony in spite of differences of opinion. I make bold to say that on matters

[1] For excerpts from the letter, *vide* Appendix I.

that were not of vital importance I yielded without hesitation. The resolutions are the result of mutual discussion and deliberations. It is undoubtedly true that I want the Government to bepenitent, not in order to humiliate it, but in order to set it right with the people, and there will, certainly, be no peace in the land and no settlement until the Government acknowledges its mistakes and retraces its steps. The resolutions are calculated to enable the Government to do so gracefully. Nobody questions the right of the Government to put down violence. Sir Sankaran forgets what I said in reply to Mr. Jehangir B. Petit, namely, that I could conceive even the existence of justifiable martial law, when it is introduced to protect people and has the endorsement of public opinion. The present proceedings of the Government, which bear all the characteristics of martial law, without the odium of the name, are intended neither to protect the people, nor have any public backing whatsoever. They are intended to consolidate the power of an utterly irresponsible bureaucracy. The Khilafat claim certainly includes the evacuation of Syria by the French, but Sir Sankaran should remember what I said. I declared in the clearest possible language that I would be satisfied if Great Britain sincerely supported the Mussulman claim regarding Syria. I said that the Mussulmans, and I, in common with them, thoroughly distrusted Great Britain's intentions regarding the aspiration of Turkish Nationalists and the just claims of Indian Mussulmans. It is open in a round table conference to the Government to demonstrate to the satisfaction of non-co-operators that Great Britain is ready to do all in her power to satisfy the Mussulman claim. Sir Sankaran hardly does justice to himself, or to me, when he reports me as having said that I wanted the evacuation of Egypt, as a term of peace. In answer to an ejaculation about Egypt I remarked that although the Khilafat demand did not, and would not include the evacuation of Egypt, when India had full swaraj she could certainly not permit a single Indian soldier to leave India in order to coerce the brave Egyptians into submission to a foreign yoke.

Sir Sankaran's attack upon the Ali Brothers is hardly worthy of him. The Ali Brothers do believe in the possibility and necessity of the use of violence for the vindication of religious or national rights. But, I know that they are absolutely at one with the Congress programme and that they are more than ever convinced that as India is circumstanced, non-violence is the only remedy open to her for the attainment of her freedom.

Sir Sankaran ought to know better than to impute to me a promise of swaraj within one year. If I had made any such promise I would not have kept my head on my shoulders. All that I said was that India could have swaraj within one year, less time, if she fulfilled the conditions categorically named at Calcutta[1] and repeated at Nagpur[2] in 1920.

Lastly let me correct Sir Sankaran by saying that the case of the Ali Brothers does not fall within the reference to the arbitration, but, being included among the *fatwa* cases, falls in the same category as imprisonments in virtue of the recent notifications. It surprises me to notice that Sir Sankaran imagines that a round table conference is possible without the presence of the Ali Brothers. That the Government might not see its way to release such formidable opponents as the Ali Brothers. I can well understand, and they will release them only if Government desires to placate Indian opinion and substitute the force of public opinion for the force of arms.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-1-1922

214. THE MALAVIYA CONFERENCE

The Conference was both a success and a failure. It was a success in that it showed an earnest desire on the part of those who attended to secure a peaceful solution of the present trouble, and in that it brought under one roof people possessing divergent views. It was a failure in that, though certain resolutions have been adopted, the Conference did not leave on my mind the impression that those who assembled together as a whole realized the gravity of the real issue. The mind of the Conference seemed to be centred more on a round table conference than upon asserting the popular right of free speech, free association and free Press which are more than a round table conference. I had expected on the part of the Independents to declare their firm attitude that no matter how much they might differ regarding the method of non-co-operation, the freedom of the people was a common heritage and that the assertion of that right was three-fourths of swaraj; that, therefore, they would defend that right even with civil disobedience, if need be.

[1] In the Congress session held in September
[2] *ibid*

However, as the attention of the Conference could not be riveted on that point but on a round table conference, the discussion turned upon the essentials of such a conference.

My own position was clear. I would attend any conference as an individual, without any conditions. My purpose as a reformeris to convert people to the view I hold to be right and therefore to see everybody who would care to listen to me. But when I was asked to mention the conditions necessary for an atmosphere favourable for a successful conference, I had to press home certain conditions. And I must own that the Resolutions Committee approached my viewpoint with the greatest sympathy and showed every anxiety to accommodate me. But side by side with this, I observed an admirable disposition on its part to consider the Government's difficulties. Indeed the Government's case could not have been better presented, if it had been directly and officially represented in the Conference.

The result was a compromise. The withdrawal of notifications and the discharge of prisoners coming under the notifications and of the *fatwa* prisoners, i.e., the Ali Brothers and others who have been convicted in respect of the *fatwas* regarding military service, was common cause. The Committee saw the force of the suggestions that the distress warrants should be discharged, the fines imposed upon the Press, etc., should be refunded and that the prisoners convicted for non-violent or otherwise innocent activities under cover of the ordinary laws should be discharged upon the proof of their non-violence. For this purpose I had suggested the Committee appointed by the Conference. But on the Resolutions Committee showing that it would be difficult for the Government to accept such an uncontrolled recommendation, I agreed to the principle of arbitration now imported in the resolution. The second compromise is regarding picketing. My suggestion was that in the event of the round table conference being decided upon, non-co-operation activities of a hostile nature should be suspended and that all picketing except *bona fide* peaceful picketing should also be suspended, pending the result of the Conference. As the implications of hostile activities appeared to me to be too dangerous to be acceptable, I hastily withdrew my own wording and gladly threw over even *bona fide* peaceful picketing, much though I regretted it. I felt that the friends interested in liquor picketing for the sake of temperance would not mind the temporary sacrifice.

I agreed too to advise the Working Committee to postpone general mass civil disobedience contemplated by the Congress to the 31st instant in order to enable the Committee and the Conference to enter into negotiations with the Government. This, I felt, was essential to show our *bona fides.* We could not take up new offensives whilst negotiations for a conference were being conducted by responsible men. I further undertook to advise the Committee, in the event of the proposed conference coming off, to stop all hartals, pending the Conference. This I hold to be inevitable. Hartals are a demonstration against bureaucracy. We cannot continue them, if we are conferring with them for peace. Workers will bear in mind that as yet no activity of the Congress stops save general civil disobedience. On the contrary, enlistment of volunteers and swadeshi propaganda must continue without, abatement. Liquor shop picketing may continue where it is absolutely peaceful. It should certainly continue where notices unnecessarily prohibiting picketing have been issued. So may picketing continue regarding schools or foreign cloth shops. But whilst all our activities should be zealously continued, there should be the greatest restraint exercised and every trace of violence or discourtesy avoided. When restraint and courtesy are added to strength, the latter becomes irresistible. . Civil disobedience being an indefeasible right, the preparations for it will continue even if the Conference comes off. And the preparations for civil disobedience consist in:

1. the enlistment of volunteers,
2. the propaganda of swadeshi,
3. the removal of untouchability,
4. the training in non-violence in word, deed and thought,
5. unity between diverse creeds and classes.

I hear that many are enrolled as volunteers in various parts of India, although they do not wear khadi, do not believe in complete non-violence, or, if they are Hindus, do not believe in untouchability as a crime against humanity. I cannot too often warn the people that every deviation from our own rules retards our progress. It is the quality of our work which will please God and not quantity. Not all the lip Mussulmans and the lip Hindus will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Islam is no stronger than the best Mussulman. Thousands of nominal followers of Hinduism belie their faith and discredit it. One true and perfect follower of Hinduism is enough to protect it for all

time and against the whole world. Similarly, one true and perfect non-co-operator is any day better than a million non-co-operators so called. The best preparation for civil disobedience is to cultivate civility, that is, truth and non-violence, amongst ourselves and our surroundings.

THE DEMANDS

In order that all may approach the Round Table Conference with perfect knowledge of the Congress demands, I laid all our cards on the table and reiterated the claims regarding the Khilafat, the Punjab and swaraj. Let me repeat them here:

1. So far as I can write from memory, full restoration to the Turks of Constantinople, Adrianople, Anatolia including Smyrna and Thrace. Complete withdrawal of non-Muslim influence from Arabia, Mesopotamia, Palestine and Syria and, therefore, withdrawal of British troops, whether English or Indian, from these territories.

2. Full enforcement of the report of the Congress Sub-committee[1] and, therefore, the stopping of the pensions of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, General Dyer and other officers named in the report for dismissal.

3. Swaraj means, in the event of the foregoing demands being granted, full Dominion Status. The scheme of such swaraj should be framed by representatives duly elected in terms of the Congress constitution. That means four-anna franchise. Every Indian adult, male or female, paying four annas and signing the Congress Creed, will be entitled to be placed on the electoral roll. These electors would elect delegates who would frame the swaraj constitution. This shall be given effect to without any change by the British Parliament.

"If the Congress programme is so cut and dried, where is the necessity for a conference?"—asks the critic. I hold that there is and there always will be.

The method of execution of the demands has to be considered. The Government may have a reasonable and a convincing answer on the claims. The Congressmen have fixed their minimum, but the fixing of the minimum means no more than confidence in the justice of one's cause. It further means that there is no room for bargaining.

[1] Appointed to enquire into the Punjab disorders of April 1919. For its report, *vide*"" Congress Report on the PunjabDisorders", On or Before 25-3-1920.

There can, therefore, be no appeal to one's weakness or incapacity. The appeal can only be addressed to reason. If the Viceroy summons the conference, it means either that he recognizes the justice of the claims or hopes to satisfy the Congressmen, among others, of the injustice thereof. He must be confident of the justice of his proposals for a rejection or reduction of the claim. That is my meaning of a meeting of equals who eliminate the idea of force, and instantly shift their ground as they appreciate the injustice of their position. I assure His Excellency the Viceroy and everybody concerned that the Congressmen or non-co-operators are as reasonable beings as may be found on earth or in India. They have every incentive to be so for theirs is the duty of suffering as a result of rejection of any just offer.

I have heard it urged that on the Khilafat the Imperial Government is powerless. I should like to be convinced of this. In that case, and if the Imperial Government make common cause with the Mussulmans of India, I should be quite satisfied and take the chance with the Imperial Government's genuine assistance of convincing the other powers of the justice of the Khilafat claim. And even when the claim is admitted much requires to be discussed regarding the execution.

Similarly regarding the Punjab. The principle being granted, the details have to be settled. Legal difficulties have been urged about stopping the pensions to the dismissed officials. The reader may not know that Maulana Shaukat Ali's pension (I suppose he occupied the same status as Sir Michael O'Dwyer) was stopped without any inquiry or previous notice to him. I believe that service regulations do provide for removing officers and officials from the pensions list on proof of gross neglect of duty or disloyal service. Anyway, let the Government prove a case for refusal to grant the Punjab demand save the plea of the past services of these officials. I must refuse to weigh their service to the Empire against their disservice to India, assuming the possibility of two such things coexisting.

The swaraj scheme is undoubtedly a matter on which there will be as many minds as there are men and women. And it is eminently a thing to be debated in a conference. But here again there must be a clean mind and no mental reservations. India's freedom must be the supreme interest in everybody's mind. There should be no obstruction such as the preoccupation of the British elector or the indifference of the House of Commons or the hostility of the House

of Lords. No lover of India can possibly take into account these extraneous matters. The only question to consider will be: Is India ready for what she wants? Or does she ask like a child for food she has no stomach for? That can be determined not by outsiders but by Indians themselves.

From that standpoint, I do consider the idea of the Conference for devising a scheme of full swaraj premature. India has not yet incontestably proved her strength. Her suffering is great indeed, but nothing and not prolonged enough for the object in view. She has to go through greater discipline. I was punctiliously careful not to make non-co-operators party to the Conference resolutions, because we are still so weak. When India has evolved disciplined strength, I would knock myself at the Viceregal door for a conference, and I know that the Viceroy will gladly embrace the opportunity whether he be an eminent lawyer or a distinguished militarist. I do not approachdirectly because I am conscious of our weakness. But being humble I make it clear through Moderate or other friends that I would miss not a single opportunity of having honest conferences or consultations. And so I have not hesitated to advise non-co-operators thankfully to meet the Independents and place our services at their disposal to make such use of them as they may deem fit. And if the Viceroy or a party desires a conference, it would be foolish for non-co-operators not to respond. The case of non-co-operators depends for success on cultivation of public opinion and public support. They have no other force to back them. If they forfeit public opinion, they have lost the voice of God for the time being.

For the manner of preparing the scheme, too, I have simply suggested what appears to me to be a most feasible method. The All-India Congress Committee has not considered it nor has the Working Committee. The adoption of the Congress franchise is my own suggestion. But what I have laid down as the guiding principle is really unassailable. The scheme of swaraj is that scheme which popular representatives frame. What happens then to the experts in administration and others who may not be popularly elected? In my opinion, they also should attend and have the vote even, but they must necessarily be in a minority. They must expect to influence the majority by a constant appeal to. the logic of facts. Given mutual trust and mutual respect, a round table conference cannot but result in a satisfactory and honourable peace.

The abrupt withdrawal of Sir Sankaran Nair was an unfortunate incident. In my opinion, he had nothing to do with my, or later, with Mr. Jinnah's opinions. As Speaker, especially, he was exempt from any implied or express identification with anybody's views. I cannot help feeling that Sir Sankaran erred in the conception of his duty as Speaker. But as we progress towards democracy, we must be prepared even for such erroneous exercise of independence. I congratulate Sir Sankaran Nair upon his boldly exercising his independence, which I have not hesitated to call cussedness in private conversation, and upon the independence of the Committee in not suffering a nervous collapse but quietly electing Sir Vishveshwarayya[1], and voting thanks to the retiring Speaker for the services rendered.

Young India, 19-1-1922

215. WORSE THAN MARTIAL LAW

For the time that savage repression continues, I must fill the pages of *Young India* with authentic tales of repression till India puts an end to it by an act of supreme sacrifice. I call the repression savage because it is wooden, wild, uncultivated, cruel. Grant that there is intimidation and even violence resorted to by some non-co-operators in pursuit of hartal or other activity. Is it difficult to find and punish the culprits? If the Government cannot get witnesses, does it not show that the whole populace is behind the so-called intimidation? An act, however reprehensible in itself, when it becomes the act of a people, ceases to be a crime capable of being dealt with by its laws. Therefore, repression by an irresponsible government can never be a popular act or an act designed for the safety of the people. But in the present instance, repression is designed to suppress the rising agitation directed against the misdeeds of the Government and is, therefore, doubly unpardonable.

However, it is not the purpose of this article to demonstrate its unjustifiable character, but to demonstrate its brutal quality, to show that it is worse than martial law.

The Punjab martial law was comparatively a civilized measure and being so named at least served the purpose of producing a shock.

[1] Sir M. Visvesvaraya, eminent engineer; former Dewan of Mysore

The acts now being done under the protection of the ordinary law but really without any law at all are absolutely without any check. Martial law has its own code of honour, but this state of lawlessness has none.

Take the Faridpur flogging. Dr. Maitra is a well-known physician of Calcutta. He is a non-party man. He has given a graphic report of his visit to the Faridpur Jail. Two cultured men, one a head master, were tied to a whipping triangle and whipped for the offence evidently of not salaaming the jail officials. When Dr. Maitra visited the jail, the punishment was not even registered anywhere. He found many prisoners including under-trial ones in handcuffs for whole nights. One prisoner had standing handcuffs for three days.

> Nearly double the number of prisoners have been huddled together in particular rooms or cells of the jail than their allotted capacity of accommodation, without adequate attention to their diet, clothes and bedding in this cold weather.

The only thing that the Bengal Government have to say, is not to deny any of the acts but to justify them on the ground of discipline. The Government *communique* says,"The punishments have had the desired effect and discipline has since been maintained."

Now let us travel to Allahabad. The U. P. Government have produced a certificate of character from Mahadev Desai who is able to say truthfully that now he is humanely treated. But let the reader digest the blood-curdling story of the ill treatment of the prisoners in the Naini Jail including the flogging, supplied by him.

From Sitamarhi comes the news that a fine of Rs. 25,000 and a punitive police have been imposed upon its inhabitants. Sitamarhi is a sub-division in Bihar. The fine and the punitive police means sacking of the households of Sitamarhi. The *Motherland* gives an account[1] of the looting of villages—Sihulia, Chandarpur and Bharatawa.

In Sind things are no better, as the following letter[2] from the Sind Congress Committee will show:

> *The Hindu.* publishes a letter from one Rahmat Rasool, a Punjabi martial law prisoner who along with two other co-accused is now confined in Hyderabad Central Prison. He writes that on their arrival in this jail from the Andamans in November last, they were locked up in a cell meant for prisoners condemned to death and there no meals were given to them for three days, till

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] Only excerpts reproduced here

> the Medical Officers saw them and got them meals. Later on, whenever the Superintendent approached them they were required to raise their hands as a Muslim does in prayer with the greeting—"Sarkar is one." This immoral rule interfering with the fundamental principles of Islam, Rahmat Rasool refused to obey, telling the Superintendent that for him God alone is one and that he can raise his hands in prayer before God alone . . . with the result that his religiousness was rewarded with the fivefold punishment of thirty stripes, six months' solitary confinement, six months' gunny-clothing, six months' cross fetters and six months' bar-fetters . . . the political prisoners . . . are all treated as if they were worse than even common criminals . . . .
>
> It will also be remembered that in July last police had fired on innocent people in Matiari, killing one and wounding several others. The Government Commission report has been pigeon-holed in Bombay Secretariat . . . .
>
> Recently, with a view to recover a fine he [Sub-Inspector] entered the house of a convicted and imprisoned non-co-operator and forciblyremoved his property from the possession of *purdah* ladies occupying the house, including a gold nosering which he forcibly snatched from the nose of the convict's brother's wife . . . .

Neither person nor property, neither man nor woman is safe from the attention of the Government. Nor is life easy in the jails. Mere custody of the body does not satisfy the requirements of the Government. Tortures and humiliations have also been added.

Thus we have martial law less Jallianwala Bagh. And this is worse. Jallianwala Bagh, though atrocious, was the cleanest demonstration of the Government intentions and it gave us the needed shock. It was an open air transaction. What is now going on is being done inside the cold prison walls or in little unknown villages and, therefore, has no theatrical value. Our duty, therefore, clearly is to invite martial law and"no damned nonsense" and evolve the courage to draw the rifle fire not in our backs as in 1919 but in our open and willing breasts and without resentment.

Young India, 19-1-1922

216. A CORRECTION

TO

THE EDITOR, *Young India*

SIR,

I have just seen your note[1] on Agha Safdar's arrest. Your correspondent has indulged in some gross untruths. I may tell you that (I) the Magistrate was not insulted by the crowd, (2) the crowd did not enter the jail, (3) the police officer's attitude was not courteous. You have entirely misreported on these three vital points . . . . You would in future test the credentials of a correspondent before publishing his statement.

Yours sincerely,

SIALKOT, 20-12-1921 SECRETARY,

CITY CONGRESS COMMITTEE

I gladly publish the correction by the correspondent.

Young India, 19-1-1922

217. HOOLIGAN1SM IN MADRAS

Dr. Rajan in a letter written on the 13th, the day of the hartal[2] in Madras, writes:[3]

The Madras hartal has been thoroughly successful. The whole city seems to be dead for the day . . . . But I never dreamt of the underlying risks of a hartal in a great city. We had prided ourselves that the inflammable parts of the city had been brought under control. . . . I, Ramanathan and Audinarayana Chettiar were at three or four danger spots and averted an impending riot. It is hard to lay the blame on any particular party. The mob simply get furious at those who defy public opinion, but yet a kind word, a gentle remonstrance from those who represent the Gandhi party pacifies them. The sight of the armed men irritates them. One little boy was bayonetted in his thigh in the city. So far we have heard of no other incidents. Just as I am writing, I hear that two were shot at near MountRoad. . . .

Lord Willingdon, the Governor, and Sir P. Thyagaraja Chetty, the chief of the ministerial party, went in person to the Kotwal Bazaar, the heart of the

[1] *Vide"*Notes", 15-12-1921, under the sub-title"Agha Saheb Safdar".

[2] Observed to boycott the Prince of Wales' visit to Madras

[3] Only excerpts reproduced here

city. They promised military aid . . . .

Later, I went to Mount Road on foot. A Parsi cinema house"Wellington" was the scene of the tragedy. There was a threatening crowd in front of the cinema and there was some stone-throwing. A Parsi fired from upstairs in the midst of the crowd. One of the crowd died on the spot and I was told two more were injured. The crowd got excited, broke into the theatre and smashed windows and furniture. After some time they were brought under control and the whole of the locality is under military guard. Cavalry and armoured cars are patrolling. This road happens to be the route through which the Prince has to travel to and fro. But the Prince's route has been changed, along the beach.

I am just now informed that Sir Thyagaraja Chetty is besieged in his own house by the crowd. He did not attend the Council today when the Prince came. . . . I understand nothing has happened to his person nor is likely to happen.

I have reproduced Dr. Rajan's letter not to congratulate Madras on the successful hartal, but to bemoan the outbreak of hooliganism on the day of hartal. It were better if there was nohartal and no hooliganism. It is no defence that the wantondestruction was the work of hooligans. For, it is complete proof of non-co-operators' unfitness for self-government in Madras. Those who claim the capacity must be able to control all forces of violence. Hartal was not peaceful because what happened to the poor cinema-keeper would have happened to the others if they had dared to keep open their shops. I hold the firing by the cinema man to be justifiable inasmuch as his theatre would have been destroyed if he had not fired. The mob's increased fury was an exhibition of insolent rage against deserved punishment. The investment of Sir Thyagaraj Chettiar's house was a cowardly interference with personal liberty. The crowd that prevented the knight from doing honour to the Prince dishonoured itself and enhanced the value of the honour Sir Thyagaraj Chettiar was prevented from doing. It might be the crowd's way, but it was not non-co-operators' way of"doing business".

Dr. Rajan and his lieutenants left no stone unturned to make and keep the hartal peaceful. All honour to them. But Madras teaches us a lesson as Bombay has. We have still much work to do before we can really establish a swaraj atmosphere. Either we believe in a successful peaceful revolution or we believe that non-violence is merely a preparation for violence. If the latter represents the true state of things,

we must revise our creed. But I am optimistic enough to believe that India has imbibed the spirit of non-violence in a most remarkable way. The exemplary self-restraint exercised in Amritsar, Lahore, Aligarh, Allahabad, Calcutta, Barisal and other places too numerous to mention, shows that where only pledged non-co- operators work, we can rely upon non-violence being observed, but where, as in Madras, an undisciplined mob gathers together, non-co-operators have no control. We must not despair of devising a remedy against repetition of the Madras hooliganism. Equally unfortunate is the attack in Hardoi upon Mr. Baker who has fortunately escaped death. The stray maniacs are most difficult to trace or handle. I doubt not that it is the work of some unknown person unconnected with non-co-operation. But we must deal with such cases also. In a non-violent atmosphere such occurrences must be almost impossible. But it must be confessed that the requisite atmosphere has not yet been reached. It will only be, when we have eradicated violence from our thoughts.

Young India, 19-1-1922

218. N0TES

NON-PAYMENT OF TAXES

I observe a desire in some places to precipitate mass civil disobedience by suspending payment of taxes. But I would urge the greatest caution before embarking upon the dangerous adventure, We must not be indifferent about violence, and we must make sure of masses exercising self-control whilst they are witnesses to the confiscation of their crops and cattle or forfeiture of their holdings. I know that withholding of payment of taxes is one of the quickest methods of overthrowing a government. I am equally sure that we have not yet evolved that degree of strength and discipline which are necessary for conducting a successful campaign of non-payment of taxes. Not a single tahsil in India is yet ready, except perhaps Bardoli and to a lesser degree Anand. More than fifty per cent of the population of such tahsil has to rid itself of the curse of untouchability, must be dressed in khadi manufactured in the tahsil, must be non-violent in thought, word and deed, and must be living in perfect friendliness with all whether co-operators or non-co-operators. Non-payment of taxes without the necessary discipline will be an act of unpardonable madness. Instead of leading to swaraj, it is likely to

lead to no-raj. I must, therefore, repeat the caution I have so often uttered that mass civil disobedience ought not to be tried in the first instance, except under my personal supervision, and certainly never without the fulfilment of the conditions laid down at Delhi[1]

"SARKAR SALAAM"

I have reproduced the letter from Sind, showing what is required of prisoners in Hyderabad.[2] A telegram has been received from Noakhali, enquiring whether non-co-operation prisoners should utter the formula"Sarkar Salaam". In my opinion that formula, as also *Sarkar ek hai*, is degrading, and the latter is even profane. No religiously minded person can say or believe: Sarkar is only one! That can be said only of God, and Him alone. Therefore, whilst I would advise political prisoners to conform to the jail regulations in so far as they are intended to keep discipline, they must evenat the risk of their lives resist all degrading practices which may be imposed in the name of discipline. Similar to the"Sarkar Salaam" formula is the practice of stretching forth the palm of one's hands in front of officials or that of sitting in a crouching posture. These things may be necessary for dangerous criminals, but a non-co-operator must not be expected to conform to such unmanly exhibitions of themselves.

NEW SPINNING-WHEEL

An improved spinning wheel with many spindles was exhibited at the Ahmedabad exhibition. It is perhaps the most successful of all efforts. But I warn the public against waiting for revolutionary inventions. The existing charkha is perfect of its type. In the interest of economy of mental effort and national time, I would urge lovers of swadeshi to forget improved charkhas that are expected to give much larger output of yarn than the ancient type. Let all energy be devoted to making the ancient pattern more durable and cheap and portable.

CHRISTIAN AWAKENING

Mr. Andrews writes as follows:[3]

> When I was in Lahore a short time ago in order to see Mr. Stokes in the Central Jail, a group of some fifteen to twenty Indian Christian students came to see me . . . they asked me particularly concerning my recent visit to East

[1] *Vide"*The All India Congress Committee", 10-11-1921.

[2] *Vide*,"Worse than Martial Law", 19-1-1922.

[3] Only excerpts reproduced here

Africa and Uganda. I tried to point out to them how beautiful a thing it would be, if some of them could go out to Central Africa, not to make money, but simply to help the Africans in love . . . two of them came back and said to me,"We wanted to come back on behalf of everyone of us to tell you that we had a short informal meeting outside after we had left you, and we passed a unanimous resolution asking you to give to Mahatma Gandhi our love and to tell him that our hearts were with him."

YOUNG MEN'S SACRIFICE

The young Mr. Barua who has gone to jail thought it worthwhile to send the following long telegram[1]. I give it as a sample of earnestness and desire to act correctly.

FROM AMERICA

The national movement is producing a deep impression upon our people outside India. Prof. Kosambi writes[2] from Cambridge (Mass.):

> The accompanying appeal for the T.S.F.[3] was issued here about seven weeks ago and the subscription that was collected up to this date is $ 156 or Rs. 570 for which I am enclosing a cheque herewith . . . Most of the contributions come from the poor Indian students who have to depend upon their labour or scholarships for the maintenance in this country. . .
>
> From the time of the Boston Tea Party and the Battle of Bunker Hill up to the Sinn Fein movement in Ireland, all the nations on earth had employed force as the only weapon to liberate themselves from domestic or foreign tyranny; but it was left to India under your leadership to discover a new means for freedom, which is, as the *Nation* (New York) puts it,"a secret not learned in centuries of warfare". And the Press of this country from the most radical to the most conservative is unanimous in praising you and the Indian national movement. This is indeed a great gain to us. . . .

I omit the appeal as its purport appears in the letter. The money has been earmarked for the depressed classes work.

Young India, 19-1-1922

[1] Not reproduced here. Mr. Barua had said that he had founded a non-co-operation organization at Golaghat, his birth-place, and that since he was going to jail, his brother would"fulfil the task".

[2] Only excerpts reproduced here

[3] All-India Tilak Swaraj Fund

219. FLOGGING IN PRISONS

The following is the translation of a letter[1] received from Mr. Mahadev Desai on his way to the Agra Jail. It is possible that the posting of the letter is a breach of jail discipline. I hate any breach of discipline but in this instance I have no choice. Duty compels me to publish the letter as it has compelled Mr. Desai to post the letter. I do not mind Mahadev Desai being rewarded with flogging for the indiscipline which is certainly more mischievous than the refusal to wear lousy clothes or the innocent shouts of *jais*[2].

Young India, 19-1-1922

220. TELEGRAM TO K. VENKATAPPAYYA AND OTHERS[3]

[Before *January 20, 1922*][4]

YOU ARE THE BEST JUDGES OF THE SITUATION. IF DELHI CONDITIONS ARE SATISFIED AND IF YOU FEEL CONFIDENT, I HAVE NO RIGHT TO INTERFERE. GODSPEED. HE WILL BLESS ALL HONEST HUMBLE EFFORTS. KEEP ME DAILY INFORMED.

GANDHI

The Hindus, 23-1-1922

[1] Not reproduced here; *vide*, however, footnote to"My Notes" ,15-1-1922, under the sub-title"Shri Mahadev's Letter".

[2] *Jai* means victory.

[3] Sent in reply to a telegram from Venkatappayya and others which read:"After deep and respectful consideration of your letter [of January 17, 1922] . . . I. . . submit the following regarding Guntur . . . The movement is far ahead. Village officers, including *Panchama* and Christian *vettians*, are resigning in large numbers. Arrests. . . are increasing in different places. . . *Panchama* and Christians are enlisting. Excepting wells, untouchability is disappearing. The attachment, though very provocative, the people are peacefully submitting. Cooking vessels, even with food, are distrained even by Christian officials entering Brahmin kitchens, but these acts are not objected to. The taluqs in experiment are self-sufficient in khaddar. Not less than 60 per cent in villages, including women, wear khaddar We respectfully submit that Delhi conditions are satisfied.

"The Military arrived at Guntur with armoured cars and motor lorries. Advocacy of payment under the circumstances will result in the ultimate effacement of our district from the movement seriously jeopardizing even other districts. Awaiting your favourable consideration. Reply."

[4] The addressees sent the text of this telegram on January 20, 1922, for publication in *The Hindu.*

221. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM,
Friday [*January 20, 1922*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

The money is to be paid not for Harijan temples but for Harijan work. Harijan work may pertain to a temple, school, club or party. Money should be provided so long as the intentions are not dishonest. We are not providing from the special fund because something must be done by the Provincial Committee also. Amritlal Thakkar has taken the responsibility of forming the trust of the temple and looking after its management. If he was going to spend the money on his own or if there was no plan for the temple, then we would not pay. Besides, he is not in a position to take money for the temple from Birla. Hence we should forget the temple and remember that the money is to be paid only for helping the Harijan cause. You will have regained your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

222. LETTER TO A FRIEND[2]

January 21, 1922

MY DEAR . . . ,

I assure you that I shall take no hasty step. I am constantly praying for light and guidance.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 207

[1] The addressee received this letter on January 21, 1922. The Friday preceding it fell on January 20.

[2] Addressee not known. According to the source, Gandhiji had been receiving many letters"cautioning him against any indiscriminate or hasty step" and this letter was written by him, just before his departure for Bardoli,"to a very particular friend of his".

223. WHERE IS SWARAJ?

After the arrest of Lalaji, Das, Nehru and Maulana Abul Kalam, God knows what happened, but people have ceased to ask,"Where is swaraj?" My anxiety has disappeared and I feel that nobody will henceforth ask me for any explanation. People have started sending wires:"Congratulations on attainment of swaraj." Paul Richard came and spoke on December 31 as if a new era had dawned. Pearson wrote from Shantiniketan saying that, on returning after an absence of five years, he found that India had become free.

Swaraj is a state of the mind. When it becomes permanent, swaraj will take visible shape. But, the state of mind having changed, it has already arrived.

Although I never let go an opportunity for a settlement, I am hesitant to seek one now after discovering India's strength. If there is a political settlement before we have developed our full strength, what will be our fate? Such a settlement will be like a baby born before its time and dying soon after. There was an overnight revolution in Portugal and a new government was established with the result that revolutions followed one another and there was no stable government. Everybody congratulated Turkey when there was a sudden change of government there in 1906. It, however, turned out to be a short-lived affair. The revolution came and vanished like a dream. Turkey has had to suffer much since then and no one knows how much more still its brave people will have to suffer.

With these experiences in my mind, 1 feel perplexed and do not know what is good. At this juncture, I positively shake with fear. If there is a settlement, who knows where it will lead us?

People have not yet realized clearly that swaraj can be secured with the help of a contrivance which even an inexperienced village carpenter can make and which an innocent and tender girl can operate. As days pass, however, I get more convinced that India will win freedom only though this machine and in no other way.

Have we been convinced, even now, that the real education of the people consists not in literacy but in building up character and in learning to use one's hands and feet—to work with the body? Parents even in Gujarat have not overcome their hankering after literacy. They, too, have not yet recognized the right place of literacy ineducation and do sot concede that children should first be taught

respect for moral rules, then comes the training of their bodies and proficiency in some craft which will secure them their livelihood, and then the training of the intellect, instruction in the three R's by way of embellishment. Abbas Saheb informs me that most parents are simply unwilling to withdraw their children from the Government high school at Nadiad. All parents in Gujarat are not yet ready to send their children to the national schools which inculcate a better outlook in them, or to appreciate the value of the training in freedom which they impart.

As regards lawyers, the position is worse still. Have they overcome their infatuation for law-courts? Have we started settling our disputes among ourselves? Have the lawyers realized that justice should not be costly? Even now, religious leaders who are considered to be pillars of their respective faiths hope to secure justice in the Privy Council in disputes concerning their religious affairs. Lawyers have not yet overcome the allurement of fat fees and, in consequence, the cost of justice continues to be counted in terms of gold and guineas. If there is a settlement today, we shall not have suffered to the very soul and, after the settlement, who will be interested in these matters? The law-courts will carry on as they are doing today. How, then, shall we establish *Ramarajya?* In *Ramarajya,* justice cannot be sold.

Have the Hindus and Muslims achieved complete unity? Has their mutual distrust disappeared? Is there an identity of ideals in regard to the future of the country? Both have realized the need for friendship, but their hearts have not yet united; they are in the process of being united. If there is a settlement, this process will be interrupted. It is, therefore, fruitless to talk of freedom as long as the two have not-united.

As long as the truth about the self
Is not understood,
Your spiritual effort
Has not borne fruit.[1]

These lines are completely true about swaraj. We may substitute"swaraj" for self and we shall clearly see how. We have yet to understand the meaning of the different aspects of swaraj. If Hindu-Muslim unity means enmity towards Parsis, Christians or Jews,

[1] The lines are from a poem by Narasinh Mehta.

that unity will be a curse for the world. So long, therefore, as we have not fully understood the meaning of Hindu-Muslim unity, the very desire for settlement is wrong.

Have we, besides, imbibed the spirit of non-violence, which is the prerequisite of dedicated effort? Have we accepted the fact that our peaceful non-co-operation is a sign of strength? We still regard our non violence to be the weapon of the weak, do not recognize its real worth and so we bring discredit to it. This is as foolish as giving away a guinea taking it to be a half-rupee coin. Non-violence is a weapon of the strong and is respected only when employed by them. Non-violence means forgiveness and this is the glory of the brave. He who does not eat because he has no appetite does not acquire the merit of fasting. If someone does not kill because he cannot kill, he practises no virtue. There can be no virtue in anything done unwillingly. When the fighters who are getting ready in Bardoli and Anand do not harass or do not harbour ill will against any Parsi or Englishman or any other person co-operating with the Government, then only will they be considered fit to be enrolled in a non-violent army. One who uses non-violence as a cover for violent thoughts is not only a traitor to his own country but to the entire world, because the world is watching intently, like a person thirsting for water, our experiment with the weapon of non-violence. As long as the country has not learnt to regard non-violence as a weapon of the strong, we should look upon a settlement as something which will defile us and we should keep miles away from it.

What shall I say, moreover, to Hindu readers? Though I regard myself to be a devout Hindu, I make bold to say that, as long as Hindus do not treat *Dheds* and *Bhangis* as their own blood-brothers, they are not themselves Hindus. There will be a shower of flowers from the heavens when caste Hindus embrace *Bhangis* with affection. Then alone will the cow receive real protection. Compassion and hatred of man by man cannot go hand in hand. The shortcomings of *Dheds* and *Bhangis* have to be overcome through love. The words of Anandshankar Dhruva always ring in my ears. Our enemies are the *Dheds* and *Bhangis* in our hearts. They are the real untouchables. The human beings in flesh and blood, whom we commit the sin of treating as untouchable, are our kith and kin. We should mix with them andserve them and thereby earn the merit which accrues to virtuous

deeds. If a *Vaishnava*[1] *sucks* out poison injected by the bite of a serpent into the body of a *Dhed* or a *Bhangi* and afterwards enters a temple without taking a bath, even the temple will be sanctified. It would be like Sudama[2] or Vidura[3] visiting Krishna at his home. As long as we have not plucked out the weed of untouchability or have not understood, as Anandshankar Dhruva has done, the real meaning of untouchability, we should not even think of a settlement.

We can fulfil these great tasks and purify ourselves only by suffering. He alone who is prepared to die for liberation can attain it. Those who do not welcome their death go to miserable worlds. One who dies voluntarily becomes fit for liberation. Similarly, if we steadfastly cling to the means indicated above, give up the fear of death, then, and then only, shall we win freedom—swaraj. Das, Lalaji, Motilalji, Abul Kalam Azad and others are teaching us the *mantra* of dying willingly. It seems we have learnt that lesson, and so no one asks the question,"Where is swaraj?" Everyone says that, now that we have the strength to die willingly, we have won swaraj. The rest is all a mirage.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-1-1922

224. JOINT CONFERENCE

The All-Party Conference convened by Bharat Bhushan[4] Malaviyaji has ended. Let us examine its gains.

It can be said that those who doubt the utility of non-co-operators participating in such a conference have not understood the meaning of non-co-operation. A non-co-operator does not let go a single opportunity for co-operation. Every time, however, he considers whether such co-operation will advance his cause. Every peaceful movement is sustained by public opinion. One who is pledged to propagate his views peacefully has no other strength except the justice of his cause and, therefore, he is always ready to

[1] Devotee of Vishnu

[2] A fellow-student of Krishna. He later paid a visit to his boyhood friend living as a renowned Prince in Dwarka and Krishna felt greatly honoured by the visit.

[3] An humble character in the *Mahabharata* who held Krishna in reverence

[4] "Ornament of India"

explain them to everybody. It was thus the duty of non-co-operators, when invited, to accept the invitation

Though they attended the Conference, they did not become a party to it. They refrained from voting. Non-co-operators were willing to utilize the services of neutral persons as intermediaries, and I think that was the right attitude. They enhanced the prestige of the National Congress and saved people's time by proceeding systematically and by selecting me as their sole spokesman. Besides, in a conference like this, there was more for non-co-operators to listen to than to explain. By adopting this attitude, we maintained decorum. The Conference went through its business without hot exchanges.

Sir Sankaran Nair got angry for no reason. In the first place, he got angry over my stand.[1] He did not like my laying down so many conditions one after another. At that very stage, he expressed his desire to withdraw. But, finding that Malaviyaji, Mr. Jinnah and others did not like his attitude, he cooled down. When, however, the matter of releasing *fatwa* prisoners came up, he could bear no longer and walked out of the Conference.

He had been appointed the"Speaker". A president can adopt a partisan attitude, but a"Speaker" has no right to do so. A"Speaker" is appointed to conduct the meeting in accordance with the rules of procedure. He has no right to express his own views. Sir Sankaran Nair, therefore, ought to have refrained from expressing his views. Instead, he intervened in the discussion and ultimately left the chair. Everyone regretted this but nobody felt discouraged. As soon as he had left the meeting, Panditji proposed Sir Visvesvaraya and he took the chair. A year ago, Sir Sankaran Nair's leaving the chair would have created a sensation and led to much persuading. But now the people have become free, they know their rights and the limits beyond which one must not go and are, therefore, able to manage such situations with patience.

All the resolutions adopted at the Conference can be said to be reasonable. They could have been more elaborate and stronger. If, however, the resolutions which have been passed are acted upon by the Government, the foundation for a settlement will have been laid.

But there is little hope that the Government will act upon the recommendations of the Conference. It will be a bitter pill for it to

[1] *Vide* "Extracts from Sir Snkaran Nair's Letter", 17-1-1922.

release the Ali Brothers. If it permits enrolment of volunteers and holding of meetings, releases the hundreds who have been arrested and returns the securities of the presses, it will then have to accept the demands in respect of the Khilafat, the Punjab, etc. If it does not accept these demands, the freely expressed public opinionwill be so strong that no government in the world can afford to ignore it.

There is every possibility of a happy outcome if the Government convenes a conference after accepting these conditions. We can see, however, that it will do nothing of the sort. What, then, was the good of attending the Conference convened by Malaviyaji? It is that our demands got wider publicity and the Moderates cannot argue now that we do not wish to meet or to listen to anybody. We showed humility by attending the Conference. Those who are resolute and strong would meet their adversaries and critics a hundred times and yet stick to their own views as long as they are convinced that they are in the right.

As I write this, I have before me the reports of the debates of the Central Legislative Assembly in Delhi on this subject. From the debates, it would appear that many of the members are not at all aware of the present conditions in the country. We were being urged to enter such a legislature. We can see that it is a legislature which respects not public opinion but the views of the Government. Let nobody think that if there were in the Assembly others—non-co-operators themselves in place of the present members—the result would have been better. They also would have been in the same plight. Let us suppose that all other members in the legislature were united; even then the Government would have followed its own way. As long as the Government remains power-drunk, no person can achieve anything by entering the councils. While the Executive is totally independent of the Legislature, no other result is possible.

As long as we have no control over the army and the police, we are bound to remain dependent. And there are many simple minded people among us who believe that, in order to acquire this control, we ourselves should learn military drill and control the mischievous elements. The non-co-operation movement shows that if we cease to be afraid of the army, we can win power without learning military discipline. For this purpose, we should learn the lesson of peace, the hearts of Hindus and Muslims should be cleansed, or moral character

should be reformed and we should have greater self-confidence.

We have not yet acquired the necessary self-confidence. In view of this weakness of ours, I made it clear to Malaviyaji that I would, of course, attend if the Viceroy called a conference, but that we were not equipped with sufficient strength to compel acceptance of our demands. We have not yet acquired sufficient control over mischievous elements and the forces of violence. There was, no doubt, a successful hartal in Madras, but soon the trouble-makers went back to their old ways.[1]

A poor cinema exhibitor was harassed and Sir Thyagaraja Chetty's house was surrounded by miscreants. These people are also counted among non-co-operators. They, too, had joined the hartal. The volunteers could not bring them round. The incident means that when the Government relinquishes power, it is the rowdies who will rule, not we. If, thus, every time there is trouble the rowdies have their way, how can non-co-operation succeed? We should, therefore, give up all hope of winning swaraj as long as we have not acquired sufficient influence over such elements.

And yet, how can we at all give up hope? When we see people getting the strength to bear flogging and to suffer the hardships of prison, we know that they are bound to get all power. All that is necessary is to cultivate still greater capacity to suffer and to purify our hearts still further. We have to learn to lay equal emphasis on both the terms in the phrase"civil disobedience", learn to disobey and yet remain civil. Disobedience without civility will destroy us, whereas disobedience with civility is completely safe.

As a consequence of the Conference, we have only to suspend mass civil disobedience till January 31 at the furthest. No other activity of ours need be suspended. We should continue to enrol volunteers. The swadeshi movement should not he halted for a moment. The movement for washing away the stain of untouchability should go on. We should keep on trying to wean away drink-addicts. The less the enthusiasm we show in these tasks, the longer will the attainment of swaraj be delayed.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-1-1922

[1] *Vide*"Hooliganism in Madras", 19-1-1922.

225. MISERY IN HAPPINESS

One who has a conscience and thinks cannot easily get bodily happiness. He is oppressed by the misery of others and pines away. He cannot bear to see the suffering round him. Such a pitiable condition is Mahadev Desai's, for, he tries to judge the rightness of every action of his. He was happy as long as he was suffering physically, since he had been all too eager to go to jail in order that he might suffer. But now that he is happy in jail and the jailor is favourably inclined, he suffers inwardly. Others are more or less in the same plight as Mahadev Desai. The discussion which has started in the Agra Central Jail,[1] where all the non-co-operators have been brought together, could not have taken place when these same prisoners were themselves suffering and were even sometimes flogged. At that time, they had a glimpse of the sun of swaraj peeping from behind the mountain of suffering and they used to forget their pain in the warmth of its rays. But now, when they have swaraj in jail, enjoy some freedom, these freebooters in the army of swaraj are fighting among themselves just as robbers fight for a share of the booty. The description of the fight had better be read in Mahadev Desai's own words. I have not reproduced every word of the letter, as I did in the case of the previous letter, but have omitted certain sentences and given only the relevant part. It was written on the 15th.[2]

There is a lot for us to learn from this letter. Mahadev Desai's letter clearly shows that after we have secured power, we shall not be able to maintain the propriety and the restraint which we have been showing during the struggle.

Let us recognize that there is a great difference between power and swaraj. At present, most of us are fighting merely for power and authority. In this scramble, I see obstacles and impediments in our path. I see violence coming out of it. In the struggle for swaraj, there can be only healthy rivalry. Swaraj means self-rule, rule over oneself. In this struggle, he wins who bends and bears. It requires great self-restraint. In a scramble for power, everyone wants to be the first, so everyone fights against everyoneelse. Under autocratic rule, the foremost wins; under swaraj, on the contrary, the hindmost wins. Thus,

[1] Whether they should agitate against distinctions of class among political prisoners arrested in connection with the non-co-operation movement

[2] The letter is not translated here

there is between the two as much difference as there is between an elephant and a horse or, rather, between east and west. If we remember that weare carrying on a fight for swaraj, we shall overcome all obstacles.

If Mahadev Desai's companions recognize this difference and behave accordingly, all will be well, the non-co-operation prisoners will win pure swaraj in jail and its fragrance will spread all over India. Though Mahadev Desai feels apprehensive, I am confident that he and the non-co-operation prisoners who are with him will come to the right decision[1] and, getting up at 4 o'clock, say morning prayers, sing devotional songs in praise of Allah and Krishna and thus sanctify the jail.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-1-1922

226. MY NOTES

"THERE IS ONLY ONE GOVERNMENT"

There is a letter from Sind which contains the news that prisoners in jails are made to say,"There is only one Government", and the words are shouted from a distance when some official visits the jail and the prisoner is obliged to stand up. News has been received from another place that prisoners are made to shout,"Salutation to the Government". Jairamdas of Sind, who is in the Sabarmati Jail, was ordered to hold his arms down, palms outwards, and stand up, when any official approached him. He disobeyed the order and hence the permission granted to him to read newspapers has been withdrawn. In some other place, a prisoner is asked to bow down his head, put his hands on the floor and stay in that uncomfortable position.

It has been asked whether a non-co-operator prisoner should obey such orders. Doubts have arisen in people's minds because of the article[2] on the model prisoner which appeared in *Young India*. The matter is easily decided. It is our principle never to obey any rule

[1] Mahadev Desai had started group prayers in the manner of the Satyagraha Ashram at Ahmedabad and some prisoners had objected to the inclusion of Sanskrit verses.

[2] *Vide"*A Model Prisoner", 29-12-1921.

which inflicts humiliation or which is intended to insult our manhood. Certain things can never be permitted in jail. Generally, the prisoners are rough people who are in jail for crimes involving moral turpitude. It is only now that prisons have become a gateway to freedom. The jails, therefore, have certain rules to which lovers of liberty will never submit.

If a statement like"There is only one God", the kind of statement that can be made about God alone, is applied to the Government, no prisoner who really understands dharma or cares for self-respect can ever accept it, so that there is no choice but to disobey a rule of this sort without fear of the consequences. One should not mind if one is severely punished for this in jail, is put in a dark cell, has to suffer hardships or endure flogging or is even made to starve. One may have to bear all this, but one must civilly disobey a rule of the kind described.

I for one welcome this opportunity. The many evils of prison-life will now get automatically reformed. We are discovering to what extent force is employed even in jails. The very basis of this Government is force. Where flattery of the few and oppression of the many is the general policy, we say that the Government follows the methods which prevail in a demon's kingdom.

But what holds good outside [jail] also holds good inside [it]. We need civilized strength even inside jail—civility on the one hand and the utmost strength on the other. Our movement can progress only if we use discretion in everything we do. We should also understand the difficult position in which the jail officials are placed. Since they are always thrown among criminals, they are rough in their methods and occasionally cruel. On coming into contact with cultured prisoners, jail warders and others cannot all at once change their behaviour. Moreover, so long as the jail regulations remain in force, they are bound to follow them. We have, therefore, no option but to put up with certain hardships and hence we should use our judgment and take thought every time we are inclined to resist. For instance, we may not say,"Salutation to the Government", but we should certainly salute the warder, respect him and stand up when he comes. A prisoner is but a prisoner. He should not forget what kind of behaviour is proper in jail and what restraints are necessary there. Ultimately, we have to melt the hearts of even the jail officials and make these people gentle and compassionate.

KATHIAWAR

A friend wants to know whether volunteers should be enrolled in Kathiawar. My advice is,"No." A resident of Kathiawar who is willing to be enrolled as a volunteer should himself sign the pledge in British territory and give his name and address. In Kathiawar, only constructive activities like swadeshi, abolition of untouchability, propaganda against drinking, national education, etc., should be taken up. The same friend says further that they have started producing khadi in several places but that the people have become so comfort-loving that many of them do not like to wear it, with the result that while stocks of khadi have accumulated in many places, the people use mill-made or foreign cloth. This is disquieting news. It is of course like ordering rice from elsewhere, refusing to use *bajra* growing in one's own field. And it is because of this thoughtless attitude that we have become beggars and slaves and, if we do not change it, we shall be impoverished still further. If Kathiawar, which grows cotton, red wheat and *bajra*, has to import cloth or foodgrains, how can it remain prosperous?

"SWARAJ ASHRAM"

Shri Phooken has written a letter from Silchar Jail in Assam in which he has called the jail"Swaraj Ashram". He adds that anyone who wants swaraj will be admitted into this"Swaraj Ashram" and says further that as long as there can be no peace with honour, the prisoners have no desire for peace at all, and that, in jail one can get a very fine idea of what swaraj means.

REFUSAL TO PAY TAXES

In Gujarat, as also in the rest of the country, it is being debated whether the people should withhold payment of land revenue. The more I think about this, the clearer it becomes to me that we are still not fit to do this. Anyone who refuses to pay taxes with a view to saving money is certainly a thief, and we shall not win swaraj with the help of thieves. Such swaraj will be a government of thieves. The swaraj will be of the same quality, as, and will be controlled by, the people with whose help we win it. And hence I have been telling the people that they should not desire swaraj to be secured even by my efforts. Even Gandhi-rule will not be swaraj. Therefore, my only desire is that all should try to copy me—that is, cultivate self-restraint to the extent at least that I have done; be truthful in speech, firm,

determined, self-possessed and fearless. We can thus see that we should hesitate even to seek help. I often caution my co-workers and tell them that, in their impatience, they should not obtain help from all and sundry. They should see that their means are the purest. A surgeon who does not keep his instruments clean and well-sharpened sometimes kills his patient or, at any rate, inflicts on him avoidable pain. From this, we should understand that, so long as the cultivators have not been trained to make sacrifices in a peaceful manner and to work in the national cause, it would be a great sin to turn them towards the path of non-payment of taxes and we ourselves would have to suffer the consequences.

It is my advice, therefore, that individuals may, after full consideration, do what they like, but it will be in the country's interest that all others, save people in Bardoli and Anand, should pay up the taxes. There are many other simple ways of civilly disobeying the laws and these we can adopt without any fear. People who do not wish to pay taxes will be justified in with-holding payment only if they fully observe the conditions laid down for non-co-operators.

WHAT ABOUT PICKETING?

All our activities except mass civil disobedience continue in the intervening period till January 31 and, therefore, we go on with the picketing of liquor shops and schools where we have been doing it. If we stop it at any place for our own reasons, it will be a different matter. Picketing, hartal and civil disobedience will be completely suspended only when there is a round table conference. One does not know when such a conference will be held, if ever. And, moreover, before we stop these activities, all swarajist prisoners should have been released.

HELP FROM AMERICA

Some of our leaders still believe that we should maintain an agency to publicize our activities in England, America and other countries. I am convinced that this will mean mere waste of money; not only that, it will actually do us harm. We shall have to engage some persons [for the work] and we shall in that case lose the independence which we enjoy today. Our present attitude is that we will fight with our own strength and not with any help from abroad.

I believe, moreover, that in the measure that our work here is solid, it will get known by itself. He who wants to magnify a thing

needs to advertise it; but he who is humble, that is to say, he who trusts in God, minimizes whatever he does and values his work modestly. There is sufficient power in every action to publicize it, and that is why it is said that truth will be known. This applies to both good and bad actions. A crime, however much one may try to hide it, will always be discovered. The sun can never be hidden by a wicker basket, and if we could put together thousands of suns and make each of them twice as large as the present sun, the light of truth would be assuredly brighter than their combined light. Why, then, shouldwe seek publicity for our struggle based on truth, which shines with its own light?

We have recently had from America an illustration of this truth. An Indian resident there has collected and sent us Rs. 570; he also informs us, moreover, that the Americans have been taking deep interest in our struggle. Prof. Kosambi, who undertook this effort, writes:[1]

HAND-WRITTEN NEWSPAPER

The *Independent* continues to be published as a hand-written paper. Another paper, named *Swaraj*, has also ceased publication in Prayag[2] as its security has been forfeited. Hence this paper, too, is being now brought out as a hand-written paper. I have before me its first issue. It is published in Hindi and has four pages. The editor lets himself go now; he is free to commit as many nominal crimes as he may wish. I see in it nothing but crimes from the point of view of the bureaucracy. But the paper will certainly continue to appear until all the contributors are arrested. With more help from copyists, its circulation will increase.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-1-1922

[1] The letter is not translated here

[2] Traditional name for Allahabad

227. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Sunday [*January 22, 1922*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I at last got your letter today. The copy of the *Independent* is not clear. It should be such that there should be no difficulty in reading it. It does not matter if you can make fewer copies. Should not your articles also be clear? To bring out such a newspaper is also an art. You should find out how lithographing is done.

Send me the full details of your meeting Joseph in connection with the Modern High School.

Blessing from

BAPU

MASTER DEVDAS GANDHI

ANAND BHAVAN

ALLAHABAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 7809

228. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Sunday [*January 22, 1922*][2]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

If the Bombay Committee has the money earmarked then certainly the amount can and should be given from it. The money so set apart is not meant to be kept. It is only desirable that the Provincial Committee should pay it. Even now I would take it to mean that the money is to be given not for the temple but for the uplift of Harijans. Even then, I see no harm in your arguing the case with the Provincial Committee. I have consulted Bhai Shankerlal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar.

[1] From the postmark on the postcard in Gandhiji's hand

[2] The postmark bears the date January 23, 1922.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

CITIZENS' APPEAL

The following appeal signed by representatives of all communities was issued to the public:

The citizens of Bombay will be glad to learn that, thanks to the concerted efforts of Hindu, Mussulman and Parsi leaders, peace has been restored in most parts of the town. From morning till night they went about in the town, in carriages, pleading with people to be quiet and to preserve peace, and the latter responded to their appeals. Some excitement still, no doubt, prevails in a few localities. Everyone should endeavour to restore quiet in those parts. It behoves us all to forgive and forget the errors of one another. Hindus, Mussulmans, Parsis, Christians and Jews, who have their homes in India, ought to live as brothers and sisters and bear with the differences and failings of one another. We have all to be ashamed of the stain on the fair name of Bombay. Only by restoring and preserving peace can that stain be wiped out, and we appeal to all the citizens of Bombay for hearty co-operation in the matter.

Young India, 24-11-1921

APPENDIX II

EXTRACTS FROM SIR SANKARAN NAIR'S LETTER

TO

THE EDITOR, *The Times of India*

SIR,

In view of certain statement which have already appeared in the Press, may I seek the hospitality of your columns for this letter.

We were called to confer together and devise means to come to an honourable settlement. I have come to the conclusion along with many others that any further conference with Mr. Gandhi and his followers is useless, and he will not be a party to what I consider any honourable settlement, or that any settlement will be faithfully carried out.

It is only right that I should give my reasons.

The signatories to the manifesto placed certain proposals before the Conference yesterday. M . Gandhi did not accept those resolutions. This morning the

Committee, appointed by the Conference, which at his own request—the reason will be apparent later—did not contain himself or any of his followers, framed, however, in consultation with him, resolutions to meet his wishes as far as possible. They also were not accepted by him. In the two long speeches he delivered he defined his own position so far as any conference with the Viceroy is concerned as follows:

"Penitence" on the part of Government must be shown. In order to create a favourable atmosphere the Government must unconditionally retrace all steps they have recently taken; not only cancel the notifications extending certain provisions of law; release all Congress and Khilafat volunteers arrested and convicted but all others convicted recently under what I shall call the ordinary provisions of the Penal Code and the Procedure Code. This later demand was subsequently modified in one particular. This, Mr. Gandhi said, is not due to any sympathy with them but only to create a favourable atmosphere and to show penitence on the part of Government. . . .

He further expressed his opinion, referring no doubt to the Government: "You dare not declare martial law, however far we go." Mr. Gandhi's followers, even those who expressed a mild dissent in some respects, support him in his attitude. . . .

Mr. Gandhi does not want a conference or a settlement except on his own impossible terms . . . .

In regard to the Punjab he emphasized the fact that the Congress party would be satisfied with nothing less than carrying out the proposals made in the Congress Sub-Committee report. It includes not only the punishment of the subordinate officials but the practically impossible condition of the deprivations of pensions of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Dyer, etc.

With reference to the Khilafat matter, Mr. Gandhi said that the French must leave Syria—of course an impossible condition. They want England to leave Egypt. On this it is not necessary to make any comment.

So far as swaraj is concerned, he wants at once in the central and provincial Governments full Dominion status, as may be determined by the duly elected representatives of the people. For the election of representatives the Congress constitution as to franchise, etc., should be accepted.

He emphasized over and over again that these are the minimum demands which must be accepted by the Government and the Round Table Conference. . . .

The release of some of the convicted persons like the volunteers, the constitution of a tribunal to consider the cases of others are made conditions precedent to holding a conference. I do not object to a tribunal for reconsideration if the Government are willing to accept the suggestion, though all the judges are not to be appointed by Government. This observation does not apply to the cases of the Ali Brothers and others in their position whose (*fatwa* prisoners) release is, however, demanded as an essential preliminary to any conference.

The demand however that certain prisoners should be released before we can agree to such a conference mast in my opinion be dropped if we want a conference. I

agree that the Government should not interfere with Mr. Gandhi's movement as long as there is no apprehension of any violence. . . .

As regards Messrs Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali and others in that category the Government's position is stronger. It is within the knowledge of Mr. Gandhi and many of us that they do not accept the principle of non-violent agitation. In view of the promise of Mr. Gandhi that he would obtain swaraj within a year if his method of non-violent agitation is followed, they did not press for violence. That year has elapsed, and the Mussulmans feel that the pact with Mr. Gandhi is over .... the Mussulmans are not under the restraint of the self-imposed obligations of Mr. Gandhi.... they will not hesitate to resort to violence not only against Government but also against others who may not join them in their agitation. Recent occurrences also support this.

All circumstances point to the conclusion that they and their friends will continue the agitation on their release. I do not think it right, therefore, to insist for their unconditional release or make it a condition precedent for the conference with the Government. The only ground of differentiation, the superior obligation to follow the religious injunctions even against the laws of the country, has only to be stated in view of what is happening in Malabar to be discarded. It is on the other hand, a strong argument against unconditional release which would leave them free to follow a line of conduct declared illegal by the courts and which may be attended by disastrous consequences. An additional reason is the fact that Mr. Gandhi and his friends and the accused themselves welcome the arrest and convictions. I trust, therefore, that I shall not be deemed uncharitable if I state that the demand for the release by them is for the humiliation of Government or to preclude a round table conference as suggested. It is possible that the refusal to release these persons might be used as a pretext for civil disobedience, i.e., non-payment of taxes etc. The movement will then stand naked in all its illegality and hideousness. It is a fitting consummation of a policy which had its origin in false promise of attainment of swaraj within a year—a statement calculated and therefore made to mislead the ignorant masses which all its intelligent supporters must have known to be impossible of attainment . . . .

Being of opinion that I cannot associate with Mr. Gandhi and his followers in asking for a conference or in any other respect, for reasons some of which are given above, and differing from the Conference on these vital questions, on which the Conference agrees with Mr. Gandhi, I have felt bound to Ieave the Conference, of which I was the speaker. . . .

C. SANKARAN NAIR

The Times of India, 17-1-1922

1. LETTER TO JOSEPH J. GHOSE

[*Tuesday, January 24, 1922*][1]

DEAR MR. GHOSE[2],

I thank you for your letter. I have just received the following wire from my son to whom I sent your letter as soon as I got it:

> Ghose's letter astounding. Allegations false. Allahabad volunteers best behaved.9

Is there likelihood of your having been misinformed? It is likely that my boy has been misled. I cannot imagine his deceiving me. I should, with your assistance, like to reach the bottom of this difference of opinion. I may add that my boy is very careful and his judgement is as a rule sound. I believe too that he thoroughly understands the spirit of the struggle. Will you not see him and discuss the matter with him? I am asking him to meet you.

I am not disposed to stop all picketing. I think it has moral value if it is absolutely peaceful.

You had certainly a perfect right to punish the boys who did not obey you. And boys who disobey must take the risk of being rusticated.

I am sorry you are having all this trouble.

Yours

From a photostat: S.N. 7656

2. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Tuesday [*January 24, 1922*][3]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your telegrams. That Sherwani has been struck off the rolls is quite welcome. After all, he is not going to practise until we have the reins of Government in our own hands.

I have sent a copy of your telegram to Ghose. You may see him by appointment and explain to him the whole thing. I send you a copy of the letter I have written to him.

We do not want to hide any of our faults.

[1] From Ghose's reply dated January 31, 1922 (S.N. 7810)

[2] Joseph J. Ghose; then Head Master, Modern High School, Allahabad

[3] The news of Sherwani having been struck off the rolls was wired to Gandhiji by the addressee on January 23. The Tuesday following was January 24.

I am leaving for Bardoli on Thursday night. Afterwards, I shall have to stay there most of the time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 7656

3. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

SABARMATI,
January 25, 1922

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I still think that the Conference[1] has done much good. It has cleared the air and defined our position as never before. Sir Sankaran's[2] action will be forgotten. But the attitude of non-co-operators will, I think, be remembered to their credit.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C. Vijayaraghavachariar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

4. NOTES

AN ENGLISH LADY BLESSES

"An English lady" who sends her name and address, writing from Calcutta, says:

> It elevates one to see the admirable way in which Mr. Gandhi shows us the truth and opens our eyes to the atrocious things that our so-called noble Government are doing daily. The letter that an "English missionary" has written is admirable.[3] I am afraid, there are many more like her, but are too proud to come forward and acknowledge the noble work that Mr. Gandhi is doing. His patience and work are like the spring that lies hidden far below. No matter what the world may preach, God will give him a harvest greater than he expects. It is only those who work in silence reap the harvest. Millions are

[1] The Leaders' Conference, also known as the Malaviya Conference, was held in Bombay on January 14 and 15, 1922; *vide* "Speech at Leaders Conference, Bombay" , 14-1-1922 ; 15-1-1922.

[2] Sir Sankaran Nair, Chairman of the Leaders' Conference, quit it on January, 15, when the Committee appointed by the Conference held meeting in Bombay. For Gandhiji's interview regarding this, *vide* "Women's Part", 15-12-1921.

[3] *Vide* "Notes", 12-1-1922, under the sub-title "In God's Hands".

watching and judging him. But there is One above all, watching and judging each struggle in his daily life, and when his toil and struggle are over, his work and name will live for ever. His name will be worshipped by millions who have gained freedom by his hard work. God bless and spare him and his tear wife, and give them both health and strength to go on until this struggle is over, which will not be long.

It is not without hesitation that I share this letter with the reader. Although written impersonally, it is so personal. But I hope there is no pride in me. I feel I recognize fully *my* weakness. But my faith in God and His strength and love is unshakable. I am like clay in the Potter's hands. And so in the language of the *Gita*, the compliments are laid at His feet. The blessings such as these, I confess, are strength-giving. But my reason for publishing this letter is to encourage every true non-co-operator in the non-violent path he is pursuing, and to wean the false ones from their error. This is a terribly true struggle. It is not based on hate though men of hate are in it. It is a struggle which is based on love, pure and undefiled. If I felt any hatetowards Englishmen or those who in their blindness are associated with the blind administrators, I have the courage to retire from the struggle. A man who has the least faith in God and His mercy, which is His justice, cannot hate men, though at the same time he must hate their evil ways. But having abundant evil in himself and ever standing in need of charity, he must not hate those in whom he sees evil. This struggle, therefore, is intended to make friends with Englishmen and the whole world. It cannot be by false flattery, but by plainly telling Englishmen of India that their ways are evil and that we will not co-operate with them so long as they retain them. If we are wrong in so thinking, God will forgive us, for we mean no ill to them and we are prepared to suffer at their hands. If we are right, as sure as I am writing this, our suffering will open their eyes even as it has opened those of "an English lady". Nor is she the only one. I meet Englishmen during my travels. I do not know them, but they greet me cordially and wish me success and pass on. True, as against scores who thus bless me, there are hundreds that curse me. These curses also I am bidden to lay at His feet. They come from ignorance. Many Englishmen and even some Indians consider me and my activity to be mischievous. Non-co-operators must tolerate even these. If they get angry and retaliate, they lose the battle, whereas if they suffer, they win without fail and without delay. *The whole of the delay is due, !I am convinced, to our shortcomings.* We have not been always non-violent. We have, contrary to our pledge, harboured ill will. Our opponents, the English administrators, their co-operators, the talukdars, the rajas have distrusted us and have felt afraid of us. We are bound by our pledge

to clothe them with the fullest protection. Whilst we may not help them in the exploitation of the poor and the weak, we must not harm them. Though they are in a hopeless minority, they must be made to feel safer in our midst than they are behind the bayonets. If we were in a hopeless minority, ours would be an easier position—we would long ago have proved our faith. As it is, our numbers embarrass us. The dissatisfaction with the present regime is common to us; but not the burning faith in non-violence. We must not be satisfied till we have rendered impossible the disgraceful scenes that took place in Madras. We must not, with non-violence on our lips, obstruct court proceedings. Either we seek imprisonment, or we do not. If we do, we must let the Government take us away as fast as they wish. The struggle is prolonged to the extent that we fail to understand the implications of non-violence.

ADMITTED AS A BOARDER

If anyone has any doubt about the true inwardness of the struggle, I hope the following[1] from Babu Prasanna Kumar Sen will help to dispel it. At the time of being sentenced, he was Secretary of the District Congress Committee of Chittagong.

> I have been admitted as a boarder in His Majesty's Hotel for two years and a half. During the last 4 or 5 years I was always thinking of bidding adieu to my profession as a lawyer . . . and retiring to Hrishikesh in the Himalayas for spending the rest of my days there in religious pursuits as a recluse. So long I could not . . . .
>
> Now the All-Merciful Father has showered His immense blessings on me by suddenly taking me off from the midst of worldly bustles and vouchsafing unto me complete rest within the prison walls . . . .
>
> I am now fully convinced, my dear Mahatmaji, that this temporary rest will . . . qualify me for the attainment of the highest object of human life—*the eternal nirvana.*

I assure the reader that Prasanna Babu's wish to attain supreme happiness in jail is not an idle dream. I know Hrishikesh. It certainly holds blackguards on earth as it holds saints. I know the prison life. Only a pitch black wall separated one of the greatest murderers of South Africa and me. We were both in isolation cells by design, for we were both considered dangerous to society. I had to suffer most in that cell for nearly two months. But I learnt most when I suffered most. It was the time of the fattest harvest. Whilst the suffering lasted, it was difficult to bear. But it is now one of the richest treasures in life's memory. We have today converted the jails into heavens of

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

refuge for liberty-loving men. They can be easily turned into abodes for attaining *nirvana*. The prison cell where Socrates drank the poison cup was undoubtedly the way to bliss. He lives today through the memory of that ineffaceable scene.

"SWARAJ ASHRAM"

Prasanna Babu pictures the jail as a means to attain the highest state. Babu Tarun Ram Phooken calls his jail "Swaraj Ashram." Sjt. Phooken is an Assam leader. I may inform the reader that he is a first class shot and a fine sportsman. But he has learnt the secret of suffering. Writing from the Silchar Jail he says:

> I think I was doing enough mischief from the Government point of view to justify my arrest and imprisonment. I am obliged to you and alsoto the officials concerned for the peace and safety secured for me here. I trust you will soon be able to secure peace and safety for those outside the jail. We will accept them when they come in all humility but, I hope not in humiliation. We should seek no temporary peace, but permanent peace based upon equality and on the principle of common participation for common benefit, for, I believe that sort of peace only can be lasting. Peace on any other terms is sure to leave a sting behind which will be beneficial neither to the governed nor to the governors.
>
> If we play the game manfully, honourably and without malice or bitterness, it does not much matter, in my humble opinion, whether we win or lose; for selfless sufferings, if there be any, will not and cannot be lost eternally.

The letter is countersigned by the Superintendent of the jail. Motilalji warns me from his hotel in Lucknow against embarking upon any premature and patched up peace. He is willing to be in jail indefinitely. There are many Swaraj Ashrams cropping up in our midst. But there are none so true as the jails. They are built not with money but with stout hearts.

IN BURMA

The nationalist wave is spreading. I have made room for two articles on Burma. Swami Shraddhanandji[1] and Mr. Abbas Tyabji gave me glowing accounts of the national awakening in that land of elephants and wonders. The spoliation of Burma by the British is a sad chapter in their sad history. And sadder still to me is the fact that Indians have not hesitated to take part in the spoil. I have never been able to take pride in the fact that Burma has been made part of British

[1] Mahatma Munshiram (1856-1926); later known as Shraddhananda; nationalist leader of Arya Samaj; took prominent part in public activities in Delhi and the Punjab

India. It never was and never should be. The Burmese have a civilization of their own. The Buddhism of Burma is quite different from the Buddhism of India, as European Christianity is totally different from Christ's Christianity. I wish to say nothing in disparagement of either. The message of Jesus was too strong for the European mentality. The message of the Buddha was too strong for the Burmese mentality. Both the nations have profited by the messages they received to the extent of their receptivity. But there is no doubt that Europe has still to understand the deep meaning and the mysteries of the mission of Jesus, as the Burmese of the Buddha. This the latter can only do, if they are enabled to progress along their own lines. It is, therefore, a matter of the keenest joyto me that there is a wonderful awakening in Burma. There is no doubt that the Burmese, if they persist ill their effort, can solve their simple problem much more quickly than we can with diversity of bewildering complications.

IN AMBALA

The Punjab is truly working wonders. The Sikh must take and they fully deserve, the credit for producing the non-violent atmosphere. Their pertinacity, their amazing sacrifice at Nankana Saheb,[1] the imprisonment of their best leaders and the Govenment's complete surrender, have filled the Punjab with pride and hope and the spirit of sacrifice and non-violence. The reader will not, therefore, be surprised to read the following from Lala Duni Chand of Ambala:[2]

Lala Duni Chand has nursed Ambala for years. He had, before non-co-operation days, a very lucrative practice of which he used to devote the largest part to the many public works which he had initiated. He had, therefore, no difficulty in getting round him a band of self-sacrificing young men to work with him. He is now having them to go to jail without any difficulty. Swaraj is the visible immediate fruit of sacrifice. The citizens of Ambala are, therefore, feeling the advent of swaraj. The awakening among the women of the Punjab as elsewhere is an event whose value we are not at the present moment able to measure adequately. If the truth is to be told, it was Mrs. Duni Chand who paved the way for Lala Duni Chand's sacrifice. She it was who prepared him for it. Nor is Mrs. Duni Chand's the only instance. I have the privilege of knowing several sisters who are responsible for their husband's greatness.

[1] In February 1921; *vide* "Sikh Awakening", 13-3-1921.

[2] The letter not reproduced here, described the non-co-operation activities and arrests of volunteers in Ambala district.

IN ROHTAK

As in Ambala, so in Rohtak. The pages of *Young India* have made the public familiar with the sacrifice of Lala Sham Lal. Only his was undertaken in spite of his wife and parents. He had to battle against tremendous difficulties. But he bore then all town. He has now the honour of being arrested in common with other friends. These men are the pride of their country. They are not fanatics. They are hard-headed business men who have given up their businesses at the call of country and religion. They are no breakersof peace. They are the keepers of it. And a government must be on the very verge of bankruptcy that finds it necessary to lock up such citizens.

IN AMRITSAR

Lala Girdhari Lal, President, District Congress Committee, Maulana Mahomed Daud Gaznavi, President, Khilafat Committee, Master Sunam Rai, President, City Congress Committee, and Sardar Ravell Singh, President, District Sikh League, were arrested and are now convicted because they had the audacity to arrange a public meeting in the teeth of the Seditious Meetings proclamation. Amritsar has already contributed a good number. Now all the presidents have been taken away. They have got two years' rigorous imprisonment each and Rs. 500 fine each, or three months more in default. They have all been taken to Mianwali Jail. The beauty of it is that no matter where you look, no Congress Committee is without its officers. The people have learnt that in a well-managed organization the officers live for ever, though individual holders of office may die, be imprisoned, or desert. The idea itself is really magnificent connoting as it does the unity of man and his estate.

IN LAHORE

The capital of the Punjab is doing no less. Lala Duni Chand of Lahore says in a letter dated 14th instant:[1]

Such work is bound to renovate the nation. It is little wonder, therefore, that the Punjab Government have threatened measures "more systematic and rigorous than any which have hitherto been adopted" in order to deal with civil disobedience. The notice in question says:

> It will be impossible to allow any incitement to pass unnoticed, or to tolerate any dabbling in this form of mischief by Government servants or pensioners. It will, unfortunately, be necessary to add substantially to the

[1] Not reproduced here. The letter described the holding of a public meeting and women's activities for the propagation of khaddar.

burdens of the province by the entertainment of such additional police and executive staffs as may be necessary for the maintenance of order.

The notice argues:

> Successful, it (civil disobedience) could only be an education of the criminally inclined among the population in methods which they would be naturally ready to put into practice against any kind of government, present or future; unsuccessful, it could only throw back the course of progress and establish well founded doubts of the political maturity of thosewho deliberately introduced so dangerous a poison into the veins[1] of their motherland.

The writer of the notice has overargued the Government case and thus overreached himself. The notice has merely resulted in stiffening the backs of the people. In the first place, civil disobedience is not and cannot be instilled into the minds of the criminally inclined people. The educated class, the women, and students are hardly criminally inclined. And even the peasantry cannot be classed among "the criminally inclined". If the people had not learnt to be peaceful, they would not have stood the assaults and insults that Dr. Gokul Chand Narang and his fellow-commissioners have so graphically described in their able and closely reasoned report on the allegations of assaults[2] committed by the police on the 13th day of December 1921 in Lahore. Secondly, the civil disobedience is not aimed at all Government, present or future. It is aimed only at the present Government which has criminally defied the will of a whole people. Thirdly, why is it mischievous or poisonous to tell people not to obey a Government which has systematically emasculated the people? Are the people to continue to be party to humiliations imposed upon them by an irresponsible bureaucracy?

But let us look at Dr. Gokul Chand Narang's report. In my opinion, it provides abundant justification for disciplined civil disobedience, if the people are to live as free men. The Committee has found that:

1. The volunteers were carrying on peaceful work.

2. The police "with long brass bound lathis" suddenly came down upon the volunteers and the public and belaboured them without warning.

3. The volunteers on refusing to disperse in spite of injuries received by them were arrested, discharged and rearrested and after a few hours' detention about one o'clock at night were deliberately set

[1] The source has "views."

[2] *Vide* "Notes", 22-12-1921, under the sub-title, "Remarkable Proof".

down at separate places far away from their homes.

4. The volunteers were filthily abused by the custodians.

How are the people to deal with such legalized criminality? Are they meekly to submit to it or are they as self-respecting men to disregard authority by disobeying orders? If the things Dr. Gokul Chand Narang has described happen in a city like Lahore, what must be the plight of poor villagers? If the newspaper reading public were not utterly ignorant of the village life and indifferent to the hardships of villagers, the fetish of law and order in whose name unspeakable horrors are perpetrated would have been destroyed long ago. The campaign of civil disobedience is designed to evolve true law and order which the public will consider it a privilege and a duty to obey.

IN BENGAL

Things are no better in Bengal. In the name of "law and order", meetings are being forcibly broken up. Pandit Ambika Prasad Bajpeyi, editor of *Swatantra*, Pandit L. N. Garde, editor of *Bharatmitra*, are the latest additions to the roll of honour. The trial of Deshbandhu Chitta Ranjan Das and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad is dragging its weary length. In the Barisal Jail, six political prisoners are reported to be consigned to solitary cells for alleged breach of discipline. They are said to have been ordered to be put into fetters. Naren Babu, President of the Perojpur Sub-Divisional Committee, complained that the prisoners were "pulled by the ears". Khan Bahadur Maulvi Nemayet-ud-din who visited the prisoners is reported by the *Patrika* to have said that the cell prisoners were likely to suffer mental derangement if they were not removed from the cells. No doubt, even this inhumanity is to be defended in the interest of "law and order". Well may even Sir Hormusji Wadia declaim against such "law and order".

Thank God, that in spite of the trials Bengal is passing through, Babu Hardayal Nag, the President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee and Vice-President of the Khilafat Committee, was able to issue the following manifesto:

> I again congratulate the citizens of Calcutta on their calm and cool behaviour at the public meetings held yesterday. Civil disobedience is in its experimental stage. Its success entirely depends upon the success of non-violence. Naturally some crowds gathered. It is most satisfactory to note that the crowds never displayed any attitude of retaliation under the baton charge of the police. Our national workers calmly and fearlessly went on with the proceedings of the meetings in spite of police interference. As a matter of fact, there was no disturbance of any sort ant non-violence triumphed once again in the public squares of Calcutta.

A Bengali friend writes to ask whether Bengal which has produced the fierce school of anarchists will keep non-violent to the end. Manifestos such as the above and the self-restraint of the people to which it refers do indeed fill me with hope. The anar- chists were after all lovers of their country. They were sick unto death of the unmanliness with which not long ago we submitted to every wrong and insult. They were tired of the "policy of mendicancy". But the fiercest anarchist's breast must swell with pride when he sees round him the wonderful manifestation of unexampled courage that is being shown by men and women, young and old. "Mendicancy" has given place to dignified self-assertion and civil defiance of authority that has entrenched itself behind arrogant repression. No other method could possibly hasten the country's progress by an inch or a second. We want more, not less, of the spirit of non-violence to enable us to finish the struggle. And I am sure that if there is still any one with a belief in the necessity of violence for India's salvation, he cannot but be deeply stirred by the quiet courage Bengal is exhibiting today.

AN EMBARRASSING RELEASE

Babu Bhagwandas has been suddenly and unconditionally released long before his time. He has my sincere sympathies. I was hoping to inform the public that Babu Bhagwandas was making literary researches and was quite happy in his solitude. Naturally he feels the discrimination made ostensibly in his favour but really against him. As he says in a public letter, if he deserved to be discharged, many others did likewise. Of those arrested in Banaras, he was certainly the arch offender. He drafted the notice about hartal, he had it printed, he instigated Prof. Kripalani to hawk the notices. Why should the author of all this mischief be discharged before his time:? Thus cogently argues Babu Bhagwandas. But I doubt not that he will have many opportunities of courting the attention of the authorities. If the forcible dispersals of public meetings in Bengal, Punjab and elsewhere be all index of the mind of the authorities, we have to go through much greater heat than we have as yet done. The treatment we are receiving is after the Turkish bath style. In order to make it bearable the Government are taking us through a graduated series of heated chambers.

THE POLICE CONFERENCE

The address delivered by Babu Purna Chandra Biswas, Deputy Superintendent of Police, as President of the All-India Police Conference held some time back in Calcutta, has not drawn the same amount of public attention as its importance deserves. Purna

Babu has lucidly stated the whole case for the police. There is no doubt about the unpopularity of the police in India, and the present outrageous acts of repression have probably added to it. But we must not forget that the police are mere instruments wielded by the Government. The President says:

> Here in India, the laws are made by Government and the people are of opinion that the laws are made to rule them, to control their natural aspirations and not for their benefit. We maintain the dignity of these laws and enforce them. That is one reason why we are so very unpopular.

Again—

> With the inauguration of the Reforms Scheme, the people have begun to realize that it is the laws that arc unpopular and not the police, and that our only fault is that we are to carry out these unpopular laws.

The idea of ruling the people, of dominating them, of controlling the natural aspirations, as the President says, runs through the whole system of bureaucratic organization in India. And as that work is done more directly through the agency of the police, it is interesting to read the confession of a distinguished member of that service on the matter:

> When I speak of our unpopularity, I cannot refrain from uttering, though unpleasant it may be, that our conduct rules and the attitude of our superiors rather accentuate our estrangement from the public. We cannot accentuate our arrangement from the public. We cannot freely mix with them, independently invoke their hearty co-operation and sympathy, for which there is the greatest need for our duties; if we do so, we are, on flimsiest pretexts, looked upon with suspicion by superiors, even penalized and our promotions are stopped. I ask, comrades, who are responsible for this? I can at once say, we have absolutely no fault except that we belong to this unpopular department, and it is our superior and conduct rules that widen this gulf.

But though the Government utilizes the Indian police in this way, does it treat them any the better on that account? The ban of racial inferiority sits upon them as tightly as upon the general mass of the people, as the long list of their grievances will show. It is producing restlessness in the service, indications of which are not wanting. The President thus cautiously expresses it:

> What will be the effect, if the subordinate police refuse to obey the command of their superior officer for dispersing or firing on a riotous mob? You may laugh at the idea, I too know that such a thing is impossible or, at least, undesirable. But no one knows how things change. You must not forget that the people of the country are no longer afraid of jail, and this spirit has also been imbibed by the subordinate police.

Purna Babu had to pay for all this outspokenness. He was summoned before Sir Henry Wheeler and ordered abruptly to join

duty. But the delegates mildly demonstrated against the order and Purna Babu was triumphantly brought back from his train and taken in a procession to the Conference to finish the proceedings.

A CONTRADICTION

The Hon'ble the Chief Commissioner of Delhi has taken the trouble of controverting the allegations[1] made in *Young India* of the 5th instant about jail treatment. In so far as the reply controverts specific charges about the Delhi Jail, I remain unconvinced. In so far as it refutes general charges, it is irrelevant. One may safely presume that food in the Delhi Jail, as also clothing, are no better than in the other jails. We have the testimony of Messrs Santanam and Desai to support Lala Shankarlal as to the quality of food issued. The wearer alone knows where the shoe pinches. Lala Shankarlal has made no charge about flogging. The correspondent, who sent his allegations, does not mention flogging in the Delhi Jail. He had only heard of flogging in some jails. Well, it has been officially admitted so far as the Punjab and Bengal are concerned. So far as Allahabad is concerned, Mr. Mahadev Desai's serious allegations remain uncontradicted. Discharge of prisoners in a state almost of nudity in Banaras also remains unchallenged. The shocking disclosures made by Dr. Gokul Chand tell their own tale. In all these circumstances, the Delhi Chief Commissioner's report can carry no weight in India. Nothing will please me better than to be able to admit that all my informants were wrong, and that there was no inhumanity in the treatment of prisoners-in the Indian jails. Of the apologies, the written *Independent is* bringing out facts to show how they are extorted. Corroboratioin of a startling character comes from Bengal. And I am not prepared to disbelieve the charge brought by Lala Shankarlal about the Delhi Jail. Have not the Government stated that if the prisoners apologize they will be discharged? The days are gone of summary dismissal of charges, which are made after due sifting and with some sense of responsibility. No one in India will be perturbed or taken in by the language the Chief Commissioner has seen fit to use. He says, "The allegations contained in the article are couched in language so extravagant, that they are unlikely to convince the intelligent reader." This is what I venture to call ridinga high horse. The officials will have to come down from their pedestal of seclusion and exclusion, and mix and think with the common folk, if they wish to become their servants and friends. The Chief Commissioner would have done better if he had said that whilst hardships were inevitable in the initial stages, the authorities were doing their best to isolate the

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 5-1-1922, under the sub-title "Jail Treatment".

political prisoners and were giving them better treatment. This would have been a becoming and truthful statement. For, whether it is true of the Delhi Jail or not, I thankfully admit that in AGRA, for instance, things have considerably improved. A large number of political prisoners from different places have been concentrated there, and are being humanely treated. The question of larger humanity still remains. The usual offenders are equally entitled to clean, sufficient clothing, clean and sufficient food and decent sanitary accommodation ensuring privacy. All these were lacking when Mahadev Desai was treated as an ordinary prisoner. It is not much comfort to find that he and his companions are now treated well. It was a bad use the U.P. Government made of his generous nature to have published the certificate of good treatment he issued when he began to be specially treated. I abide by every word that I published in *Young India* (5th January) of the inhumanity of treatment on his admission to the Naini jail.

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5. FRAUGHT WITH DANGER

Jhajjar is a tahsil town in the Rohtak district with a population of about 11,000. It has got a municipality with 4 nominated and 8 elected members. The President is elected. Yet the Municipality was not sympathetic towards popular activities. Therefore, the local Congress workers, rightly or wrongly, issued a notice upon the Municipality without any permission from the District Congress Committee, that if it did not make itself popular within 15th to 22nd January, the Congress Committee would take possession of the Town Hall. The Municipality ignored this notice altogether. On the other hand, the local leading worker, Pandit Sri Ram, was charged under Section 107, and sent to prison for a year by the D.C. on the 15th January, the first day of the allotted period. The Pandit unveiled a portrait of the Lokamanya[1] in the Town Hall on that day, forwhich the D.C. had given previous permission upon an application from the Municipality. After Pandit Sri Ram's imprisonment, the President of the local Congress Committee and the volunteers took possession of the Town Hall on the 16th. A regular guard of volunteers was set up. The volunteers took possession also of the four gates of the town and disturbed the octroi arrangement. As soon as this news reached Rohtak, I started for Jhajjar, for Lala Shyamlal was not present there, having gone to Ferozepur-Jhirka to attend a Congress Committee meeting. The people are even bent on violence. I advised them at night to remain non-violent, which produced some effect. But an influential preacher of non-violence is necessary to convert them. On the 18th night, at 8 p.m., some respectable citizens of the town called together the Congress workers and Municipal Commissioners

[1] Bal Gangadhar Tilak

and tried to settle the matter amicably. All the elected members excepting the President, who was absent, and two nominated members of the Municipality, agreed to resign. And it was decided also that the Town Hall would be under the control of the Congress Committee. However, the matter will be finally settled at noon today. The volunteers are still guarding the premises. The people have proclaimed by *panchayati* a social boycott of the six witnesses who stood against Pandit Sri Ram, viz., the Tahsildar, *Thanedar, Lambardar,* and the President, Vice-President and Secretary of the Municipal Committee. The Town Hall was erected with public subscription in memory of the late Queen Victoria. For some 5 or 6 years it remained uncared for, but now for the last ten years or so, the Municipality has taken charge of the building. If the settlement arrived at the conference of the 18th night is not observed, popular excitement will grow which may, I fear,ultimately lead to violence. The local leaders and volunteers are unbending. I am writing this at 10 a.m. on the 19th. Please guide us as to what to do by wire or by letter to the address at Rohtak.

Thus writes (the original is in Hindi) Lala Daulatram Gupta, acting President of Rohtak District Congress Committee. The action of the Congress workers in Jhajjar is audacious and inspiring. But it is fraught with the greatest danger. It has reached the border line of violence and indiscipline. I can fully appreciate the noble desire of the people to possess their own property. Municipalities are perhaps the greatest fraud palmed off upon India. The Government has hitherto used them for consolidating its power. But where the citizens are united, they can attain the municipal home rule in a moment. I have not yet described the quiet, orderly and evolutionary revolution that is going on in three big municipalities in the Bombay Presidency, viz., Ahmedabad, Surat and Nadiad. Of that, some other time. It is not as yet a completed picture. But Jhajjar will outpace the three municipalities, if it remains steady and absolutely non-violent. Possession of the Town Hall can be retained without any ado, if the citizens of the place are unanimous. It cannot be retained, if there is real opposition. Any outbreak of popular violence will be a crime of the first magnitude, because it would be wanton and unprovoked. India, in the language of Maulana Abul Kalam, is the greatest Gurdwara; it is the largest Town Hall. And if we have not yet succeeded in possessing it, we may wait for the occupation of the Town Hall of Jhajjar. The Congress officers must surrender it, (1) if there is the slightest fear of violence, (2) if the elected members oppose the act of occupation, (3) if the Committee at Rohtak, or failing that, the Committee at Lahore vetoes the occupation, (4) if the police demand it at the point of the bayonet, unless the occupiers are prepared to die at their post without retaliation or resentment, and if the other citizens are certain not to get excited, impatient and violent.

The occupation appears to me to be a hasty act, but if it can be

defended non-violently, the defect can be cured.

There is no harm in surrender. We shall gain strength by retracing every false or hasty step. What may have been taken wrongly, must be given up, and can be retaken by methodical work. In the case of Jhajjar, if the Town Hall has to be surrendered, it can be retaken by the elected members, who are in a majority, passing a resolution giving the use to the Congress Committee. If the elected members will not do so, the electors may, by a requisition, call upon the elected members to give effect to their views.

Social boycott of the witnesses who gave evidence against Pandit Sri Ram is clearly a mistake and will defeat its own end. We must not resort to social boycott of our opponents. It amounts to coercion. Claiming the right of free opinion and free action as we do, we must extend the same to others. The rule of majority, when it becomes coercive, is as intolerable as that of a bureaucratic minority. We must patiently try to bring round the minority to our view by gentle pursuasion and argument. Having been trained only to do things by order and under fear of punishment, we are likely, in the consciousness of strength we are daily acquiring, to repeat the mistakes of the rulers in an exaggerated form in our relations with those who may happen to be weaker than we are. That will be a worse state than the first.

I am aware that, by discussing Lala Daulatram Gupta's letter publicly, I am exposing the actors in the little drama in Jhajjar to misrepresentation and risk. The authorities can easily distort and exaggerate the facts related, as they are often prone to do. But as the matter is of great importance, and as the workers have exposed themselves to greater risks than I can possibly expose them to, I have felt it my duty publicly to discuss the pros and cons of the act of occupation which, though fraught with danger, commands one's admiration for its bravery. Non-co-operators have burnt their boats. They have no secrets. But correspondents who wish to write in confidence are welcome to do so. I shall respect their confidence. But as all my work is done in open daylight, and as my post passes through the hands of many helpers, I would like to discountenance confidential correspondence as much as possible. Though the Government, be it said to their credit, have generally not tampered with my correspondence, the correspondents must also note that like all correspondence mine is equally at their mercy.

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6. BEWARE OF OURSELVES

I gladly publish, though not without sorrow, a letter[1] from *a* Madras correspondent on the recent occurrences in that city. Evidently, the hooliganism was far more serious than described in the first impressions given by Dr. Rajan.[2] Mr. Rajagopalan is justified in blaming the non-co-operators.

It is difficult to distinguish between hooligans and non-co-operators when hundreds or thousands take part in smashing cars, swearing at innocent passengers or threatening a cinema-keeper. Non-co-operators cannot "have the cake and eat it too". They claim to be millions. They claim to have almost the whole of India at their back. We must either regulate our procedure in accordance with our creed or dissociate ourselves entirely from all mass activity, even if it involves self-ostracism. We have still many hartals to go through. Let Delhi, Nagpur and other places beware. I would advise them not to have any hartals at all, if they cannot, with certainty, avoid the disgraceful scenes enacted in Bombay and unfortunately repeated in Madras. I hope that the Madras Congress Committee will sift the matter thoroughly and take all the blame that attaches to it. After the frightful experience of Bombay, Madras should have been fully insured against all risk of mob violence. Mr. Rajagopalan's letter is fortified with another from an active non-co-operator. As he makes detailed charges giving names, I simply content myself with giving a few extracts. The writer says:

> An eye-witness to the mad excesses of that day, I shall be false to my creed of non-violence if I do not deplore the hartal as a miserable failure. The racial bitterness of the Puliantope days has revived. You have probably read the bitter speeches of the "non-Brahmin" leaders in their confederation. At a time when you are straining your every nerve to bring the Moderates round to your point of view, we in Madras have succeeded in widening the gulf between

[1] The letter, from V. R. Rajagopalan of Presidency College, Madras, is not reproduced here. The following are some excerpts: ". . . The Madras non-co-operators behaved in such a way that all were shocked. They molested those who wanted to go and see the Prince. Trams were blocked and the inmates were peited with stones . . . The few tram-cars which had the audacity to run . . . were stopped, glass panes were broken, footboards were smashed to pieces, and one was about to be set on fire . . . Some girl-guides and lady students who were going in tram-cars were spat at, were abused in the most violent and vile language, and were molested . . . Scouts were deprived of their turbans and were also pelted with stones . . . "

[2] *Vide* "Hooliganism in Madras", 19-1-1922

> us and the non-Brahmins on the one hand, and the Adi Dravidas on the other. The least that we can do by way of reparation is a frank confession of our weakness, and a religious endeavour from now to promote inter-communal unity, specially between the *Panchamas* and others.

I do not hesitate to criticize the Government for sparing neither man, woman nor child. But the Government have no creed of non-violence to fetter their discretion. Their creed is terrorism in the last resort. But non-co-operators have to be above suspicion. Madras leaves much to be desired if the two letters referred to by me at all tell a true story. I have little doubt that it is in the main true. The non-co-operators and their friends have certainly not left man, woman or child free from their unholy attention. It was a bad augury of swaraj to have interfered with women, to have molested the poor scout boys, and otherwise played havoc with the liberty of the people, no matter how provoking their participation in the welcome to the Prince was.

We have more to fear from ourselves than from the violence or mistakes of the Government. The latter, if we use them aright, do us good, as they have already. Our own violence or untruth will be veritable death for us. If we are not able to set our own house in order, we shall certainly destroy ourselves. Non-co-operation will be a byword of execration and reproach.

In this connection I cannot help noticing a cutting given to me from the *Rangoon Daily News*. It runs:

> We are credibly informed that the wife of Nizamuddin, hackney carriage owner, East Rangoon, got a divorce from her husband on Thursday last on the ground that he disobeyed the *fatwa* in taking his *gharries* and persuading others to ply at the time of the Prince's visit.

I make bold to say that whoever granted the divorce (assuming the truth of the statement) grievously erred against the law of Islam and decency. Divorces are not so lightly granted in Islam. If hartals can be brought about by means such as the foregoing statement suggests, they can do no good whatsoever. They are no free expression of public opinion. But I am less concerned with the expedience of hartals than with the good name of Islam and non-co-operation. The law of non-co-operation demands perfect toleration and respect for the opposite opinion and action. The law of Islam, in so far as a non-Muslim can speak of it, requires equally strict toleration. Nothing could have so deeply hurt the Prophet as the intoleration of the people of Mecca during the early period of his ministry towards the new faith he was preaching. He could not possibly, therefore, at any time have been party to intolerance. "There

shall be no compulsion in religion" must have descended to him when some of his new converts were more zealous than wise in the preaching of the new faith.

Whether we are Hindus or Mussulmans or what, does not matter. The spirit of democracy which we want to spread through out India cannot be spread by violence whether verbal or physical, whether direct, indirect, or threatened.

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7. POLES ASUNDER

The debate in the Assembly and the Council of State affords the clearest possible justification for my distrust of the Government and, therefore, any round table conference at the present moment.[1] The Government supporters consider the Congress demands to be impossible and repression to be the only way possible to put down non-co-operation. If I believed the Congress demands to be impossible and the use of force to be justifiable for putting down the pursuit of impossible ideals, I should also vote with the Government. I have, therefore, no difficulty about understanding and even appreciating the attitude of the Government and its supporters

But I oppose the Government and thoroughly distrust it, because I so thoroughly understand its attitude. India can never attain freedom by going along the route the Government will take her.

Let us see.

Why is the Khilafat demand impossible? All that the Congress asks in effect is that the Government of India and the Imperial Government, if they wish to retain the people's co-operation, should work with them in getting the demands fulfilled. They should, therefore, perform that part of the obligation which rests with them, and vigorously prosecute the rest as if it was their own grievance. What will the Imperial Government do if France were to attempt to deprive England of Dover, and India were secretly to help France or openly to

[1] The following are excerpts from the report of this debate in India in 1921-22: " . . . The Delhi session of the Indian Legislature began in the middle of January . . . Among the most dramatic debates of the session was that initiated in the Legislative Assembly on Mr. Iswar Saran's motion for the immediate abandonment of the so-colled "repressive" policy of Government. . . On the Government side, Sir William Vincent and Dr. Sapru made convincing and forceful speeches . . . Both the original motion and various amendments to it were decisively negatived. The Council of State endorsed the Assembly's approval of the policy of the Executive by rejecting a motion for a session of the two Houses to settle the lines of a round table conference . . .'

show indifference or hostility to England's struggle to retain Dover? Can Indians be expected to sit idle when the Khilafat is vivisected?

What is impossible about the Punjab demand? Why do they talk about the legalities of the case? If they will take careof the moralities, legalities will take care of themselves. As a boy, I learnt a legal maxim that where there is a conflict between Law and Equity, the latter should prevail. It is not with me a copy-book maxim. But I am told it is immoral to ask for the deprivation of a pension, which is but deferred pay. Why has Sardar Gauhar Singh been deprived of his "deferred pay" and why are the other pensioners threatened if they should take part in the present agitation? Does a servant who vilifies his employer receive pay or pension? Have Sir Michael O'Dwyer or General Dyer ever admitted their "error of judgment" ? Why should the children of the murdered men of Jallianwala Bagh, or the men who were brutally flogged or made to crawl, although they had done no wrong, pay those who were responsible for these barbarities? I do not know a single principle of ethics, save that of might, that can justify the continuation of pensions to servants who are unrepentant. The viewpoints of the two parties are so different that what appears to be just and moral to the one, appears unjust and immoral to the other. I venture to claim that in asking for the stoppage of pensions, the Congress is just without being vindictive. It waives prosecution of impeachment. It waives penalties. It merely refuses still further to participate in the wrong by continuing to give pensions. The truth is that the Government still considers the two offenders to be distinguished servants of the Crown. *That* attitude has to be changed before a repetition of the Punjab becomes impossible.

As with the Punjab so with swaraj. It appears to the Government impossible to return to India what is hers. Reforms by instalments is the motto. The underlying idea is not to give anything unless it is absolutely necessary. The differences are so great that I dread to think of swaraj before the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs are put away. They seem so simple in the statement. But they are as difficult as swaraj because their redress means obedience to India's will.

This is all cold logic. There is nothing impossible about the demands. The impossibility consists in the unwillingness of the power holders to part with the power that should never have been theirs

Why should there be repression at all if only the Government will do their duty? Assume that violence is a certainty if mass civil disobedience is precipitated. Are the people to be balked of their rights for fear of violence? It does not strike the cooperators that they uphold injustice and add insult to it, when they accuse

civil resisters of precipitating a crisis. The Government aredeliberately inviting a crisis. They are precipitating violence by removing everyone who has any influence over the people and who can keep them non-violent. Co-operators do not see that the action of the Government is like that of a man who refuses to give food to a hungry man and then threatens to shoot him whilst he is attempting to help himself.

In the midst of an enervating atmosphere such as ours, the duty before non-co-operators is clear. They must keep exemplary patience. They must not be goaded into precipitate action. They must refuse battle where they are not ready. It is no business of the Government to keep us non-violent or to help us to remain so. Even their method of restraining violence is exasperatingly violent. In one respect, however, we must feel thankful to them, for their protest and criticism amount to nothing but this, that we I do not know how to practise our creed and that we are incompetent to inflict successful violence, even if we would. Let us admit both these arguments. We must be true to our creed. Then it is common cause that the Government must lay down arms. And let those who do not believe in the creed at least see that *India is neither ready nor willing to meet violence with violence.* I wish those who believe in the necessity of violence for India's freedom will realize the truth of my position. They must not think that because *they* are ready and willing to do violence, India is likewise ready or willing. I claim that India is unready, *not* because she is helpless but because she is unwilling. Therefore, non-violence is unexpectedly succeeding, whereas violence, in spite of the vaunted talk of human nature, would have failed. India's past training for ages, I mean the training of the masses, has been against violence. Human nature in India has advanced so far that the doctrine of non-violence is more natural for the people, at large than that of violence. Let us also remember that the experiences of Bombay and Madras prove my proposition. If the people of India were violent by nature, there *was* enough in Bombay and Madras to give rise to an unquenchable conflagration. A little violence, like dirt, is enough to disturb or soil a peaceful or clean surface, but either being a foreign addition is soon removed. To train India for violence and thus to wrest swaraj by violence is a work of ages. I verily believe that this wonderful manifestation of energy and national consciousness is purely and simply due to the advent of non-violence. People have come to their own. Let no hasty action arrest its progress.

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8. NON-PAYMENT OF TAXES

The idea of non-payment of taxes is in the air. The Andhras have made us more familiar with the cry than any other part of India. Whilst the Congress has given provincial autonomy to every province, I have ventured to warn the provinces against embarking upon a non-payment campaign till I had tried the experiment myself in some area under my own supervision.[1] I abide by that warning. I must also draw attention to the fact that we are not to start offensive civil disobedience till the 31st instant, or if it is sooner, till the Malaviya Conference Committee knows the result of its negotiations and knows that the proposed Round Table Conference is not to come off. Therefore, any suspension of taxes at the present moment can only be regarded as temporary holding back pending the result of the negotiations carried on by that Committee. But 31st January will be soon upon us. And it is necessary to consider the question of nonpayment of taxes in all its bearings.

On this subject a friend who is in deep sympathy with the national movement, and who is a fairly accurate student of it, thus expresses his apprehensions:

> I have often thought to what extent the non-violent non-co-operation movement transgresses the religious limits, when it embarks on civil disobedience in the form of non-payment of taxes. I look upon the non-violent non-co-operation as essentially a spiritual movement. I know Mr. Gandhi does not think it otherwise. Will not the programme of the non-payment of taxes transgress the religious limit and lead to violence and bring into the movement people who are not as yet saturated with the principle of non-violence? Is not Mr. Gandhi holding out, however unconsciously, a material bait for his spiritual movement by which he means to conquer the Government? Recent events have shown that the temper of violence and the belief in violence are not eliminated from our character in the mass. And, therefore, it would be a leap in the dark fraught with disastrous consequences to carry out the programme of civil disobedience in the form of non-payment of taxes. I am, therefore, most anxious that Mr. Gandhi should not begin civil disobedience in this form as yet.

The validity of the objection lies in the statement that the non-payment campaign will bring into the movement peoplewho are not as yet saturated with the principle of non-violence. This is very true, and because it is true, non-payment does “hold out a material

[1] *Vide* “Letter to K. Venkatappayya”, 17-1-1922.

bait". It follows, therefore, that we must not resort to non-payment because of the possibility of a ready response. The readiness is a fatal temptation. Such non-payment will not be civil or non-violent, but it will be criminal or fraught with the greatest possibility of violence. Let us remember the experience of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru when the peasants, after they had taken the pledge of non-violence, told him that if he advised them to do violence, they would be certainly ready to do so. Not until the peasantry is trained to understand the reason and the virtue of civil non-payment and is prepared to look with calm resignation upon the confiscation (which can only be temporary) of their holdings and the forced sale of their cattle and other belongings, may they be advised to withhold payment of taxes. They must be told what happened in holy Palestine. The Arabs who were fined were surrounded by soldiers. Aeroplanes were hovering overhead. And the sturdy men were dispossessed of their cattle. The latter were impounded and left without fodder and even water. When the Arabs, stupefied and rendered helpless, brought the fine and additional penalty, as if to mock them, they had their dead and dying cattle returned to them. Worse things can and certainly will happen in India. Are the Indian peasantry prepared to remain absolutely non-violent, and see their cattle taken away from them to die of hunger and thirst? I know that such things have already happened in Andhra Desh[1]. If the peasantry in general knowingly and deliberately remain peaceful even in such trying circumstances, they are nearly ready for non-payment.

I say "nearly ready", for non-payment is intended to transfer the power from the bureaucracy into our hands. It is, therefore, not enough that the peasantry remain non-violent. Non-violence is certainly nine-tenths of the battle, but it is not all. The peasantry may remain non-violent, but may not treat the untouchables as their brethren; they may not regard Hindus, Mussulmans, Christians, Jews, Parsis, as the case may be, their brethren; they may not have learnt the economic and the moral value of the charkha and the khaddar. If they have not, they cannot gain swaraj. They will not do all these things after swaraj, if they will not do them now. They must be taught to know that the practice of these national virtues means swaraj.

Thus civil non-payment of taxes is a privilege capable of being exercised only after rigorous training. And even a *civil* disobedience *is* difficult in the case of a habitual offender against the laws of the

[1] Andhra Province

State, so is Civil non-payment difficult for those who nave hitherto been in the habit of withholding payment of taxes on the slightest pretext. Civil non-payment of taxes is indeed the last stage in non-co-operation. We must not resort to it till we have tried the other forms of civil disobedience. And it will be the height of unwisdom to experiment with non-payment in large or many areas in the beginning stages.

I hear the talk even of refusing payment of rent to zemindars. It must not be forgotten that we are not non-co-operating with zemindars, whether Indian or foreign. We are engaged in a fight with one big zemindar—the bureaucracy—which has made of us and the zemindars themselves serfs. We must try to bring round the zemindars to our side, and isolate the big zemindar. But if they will not come to us, we must be patient with them. We may not even proclaim a social boycott against them. That is to say, we may not refuse social service such as dhobi, barber, etc., to them. In areas under permanent settlement, therefore, there can be no non-payment campaign except in respect of cesses that might be payable directly to the Government. But the mention of zemindars merely shows the difficulties that beset us in the pursuit of no-tax campaign. All things considered, therefore, it is my deliberate opinion that the no-tax movement for the objects of the Congress should be for the time being left to me; meanwhile, workers can develop their own districts along constructive lines. They can discover various other methods of offering mass civil disobedience, and then, as the people become purified and enlightened, lead them on to non-payment.

As for the Andhras, where preparations on an intensive scale have already been made, I do not wish to damp the ardour of the worker. If they are satisfied that the people in the selected areas fulfil all the tests laid down at Delhi, and that they are capable of endless suffering without retaliation, I have nothing to say but to pronounce "God bless the brave Andhras". They must know the responsibility will be entirely theirs for any mishap that may occur. They will not be blamed by anybody if they do not take up the no-tax movement.

Young India, 26-1-1922

9. TERRORISM RUN MAD

I am giving the following summary of accounts[1] of repression gathered from various sources. In everyone of the cases, the reports are from the most responsible men one could think of. And yet some of the indecent savagery described by my correspondents seems almost to be unbelievable. But anything is possible in this land of affliction. I ask the reader to remain unmoved like me and rejoice with me in these sufferings. I invite every reader to pray with me that God will keep His promise not to try us beyond endurance and will always arm us with courage and patience to bear lightly the sufferings it may please Him to send us to. Nothing happens without His will. Let us keep to the pledge of non-violence and refrain from anger or ill will towards those that persecute us. Let us not also give *unnecessary* cause for irritation to the authorities. The irritation that comes from our lawful conduct such as refusal to shout *Sarkar ek hai,* or in abject fashion to bring our open palms together in the presence ever of the mightiest, as has happened to Jairamdas, we must give ever at the point of death.

Young India, 26-1-1922

10. HINDUS AND MOPLAHS

Though the letters on the Moplah trouble and the Mussulman attitude by Messrs Keshav Menon and others have already appeared in the Press, contrary to my wont I publish the two communications[2] for

[1] Published in *Young India,* under following titles: "Desecration in Assam", "Inhumanity in Barisal", "Flogging in Sultanpur", "The Wail of Meerut", "Lawless Law in Chittoor" and "Filth at Narsinghpur Conference".

[2] Not reproduced here. The following are some excerpts from these:

"The resolution passed by the Khilafat Conference at Ahmedabad about the Moplahs of Malabar, and the telegram . . . by Maulana Abdul Bari Sahib . . . published in the Servant of Calcutta on 20th December, compel one to doubt if the Mohammedans or even Hindus outside Malabar have any correct knowledge of the happenings in this unhappy district. . . one would have expected a kind word from our Mohammedan friends for the unfortunate Hindu victhns of the Moplah atrocities.... the Khilafat Conference, while congratulating the Moplahs for the sacrifices of their lives in the cause of their religion, has not a word of condemnation for the atrocities committed by them on the Hindus . . . a true satyagrahi has no option but to proclaim the truth . . . Truth is infinitely of more paramount importance than Hindu-Muslim

the importance that attaches to them. Possibly the fact of their publication in the pages of *Young India* will be some balm for the wounds that the Moplah madness has inflicted on the Hindu heart. The writers were entitled to give vent to their pent up feelings.

Maulana Hasrat Mohani is one of our most courageous men. He is strong and unbending. He is frank to a fault. In his insensate hatred of the English Government and possibly even of Englishmen in general, he has seen nothing wrong in anything that the Moplahs have done. Everything is fair in love and war with the Maulana. He has made up his mind that the Moplahs have fought for their religion. And that fact (in his estimation) practically absolves the Moplahs from all blame. That is no doubt a travesty of religion and morality. But to do irreligion for the sake of religion is the religious creed of Maulana Hasrat Mohani. I know it has no warrant in Islam. I have talked to several learned Mussulmans. They do not defend Hasrat Mohani's attitude.

I advise my Malabar friends not to mind the Maulana. In spite of his amazingly crude views about religion, there is no greater nationalist nor a greater lover of Hindu-Muslim unity than the Maulana. His heart is sound and superior to his intellect, which, in my humble opinion, has suffered aberration.

The Malabar friends arc wrong in thinking that the Mussulmans in general have not condemned or have in any way approved of the various crimes committed by the Moplahs. Islam protects, even in war, women, children and old men from molestation. Islam does not justify jehad except under well-defined conditions. So far as I know the law of Islam, the Mop lahs could not, on their owninitiative, declare jehad. Maulana Abdul Bari has certainly condemned the Moplah excesses.

But what though the Mussulmans did not condemn them? Hindu-Muslim friendship is not a bargain. The very word friendship

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unity or swaraj . . . atrocities committed by the Moplahs on the Hindus are unfortunately too true . . . A few prominent Mussulman leaders, it is true, have condemned the Moplahs atrocities . . . But, how far have the Mussulmans in general, exerted to undo the wrongs committed by their co-religionists in Maiabar?"

". . . Maulana Mohani justifies the looting of Hindus by Moplahs as lawful by way of commandeering in a war between the latter and the Government . . . Maulana perhaps does not know that .-. . There was no adversary to the Moplahs at the time whom the Hindus could possibly have helped or invited, and the attack on them was most wanton and unprovoked. . . Maulana justifies the other barbarities committed by the rebels on the ground that they were more by way of retaliation on the Hindus who were suspected to have invited the military or aided them.... Does not the Maulana realize that such opinions emanating from him are bound to have disastrous consequences?"

excludes any such idea. If we have acquired the national habit, the Moplah is every whit a countryman as a Hindu. Hindus may not attach greater weight to Moplah fanaticism than to Hindu fanaticism. If instead of the Moplahs, Hindus had violated Hindu homes in Malabar, against whom would the complaint be lodged? Hindus have to find out a remedy against such occurrences, as much as the Mussulmans. When a Hindu or a Mussulman does evil, it is evil done by an Indian to an Indian, and each one of us must personally share the blame and try to remove the evil. There is no other meaning to unity than this. Nationalism is nothing, if it is not at least this. Nationalism is greater than sectarianism. And in that sense we are Indians first and Hindus, Mussulmans, Parsis, Christians after.

Whilst, therefore, we may regret Maulana Hasrat Mohani's attitude on the Moplah question, we must not blame the Mussulmans as a whole, nor must we blame the Maulana as a Mussulman. We should deplore the fact that one Indian does not see the obvious wrong that our other brethren have done. There is no unity, if we must continuously look at things communally.

Critics may say, "All this is sheer nonsense, because it is so inconsistent with facts. It is visionary." But my contention is that we shall never achieve solidarity unless new facts are *made* to suit the principle, instead of performing the impossible feat of changing the principle to suit existing facts. I see nothing impossible in Hindus, as Indians, trying to wean the Moplahs, as Indians, from their error. I see nothing impossible in asking the Hindus to develop courage and strength to die before accepting forced conversion. I was delighted to be told that there were Hindus who did prefer the Moplah hatchet to forced conversion. If these have died without anger or malice, they have died as truest Hindus because they were truest among Indians and men. And thus would these men have died even if their persecutors had been Hindus instead of Mussulmans. Hindu-Muslim unity will be a very cheap and tawdry affair, if it has to depend upon mere reciprocation. Is a husband's loyalty dependent upon the wife's, or may a wife be faithless because the husband is a rake? Marriage will be a sordid thing when the partners treat their conduct as a matter of exchange, pure and simple. Unity is like marriage. It is more necessary for a husband to draw closer to his wife when she is about to fall. Then is the time for a double outpouring of love. Even so is it more necessary for a Hindu to love the Moplah and the Mussulman more, when the latter is likely to injure him or has already injured him. Unity to be real must stand the severest strain without breaking. It must be an indissoluble tie.

And I hold that what I have put before the country in the

foregoing lines is . simple selfish idea. Does a Hindu love his religion and country more than himself? If he does, it follows that he must not quarrel with an ignorant Mussulman who neither knows country nor religion. The process is like that of the world-famed woman who professed to give up her child to her rival instead of dividing it with the latter—a performance that would have suited the latter admirably.

Let us assume (which is not the fact) that the Mussulmans really approve of all that the Moplahs have done. Is the compact, then, to be dissolved? And when it is dissolved, will the Hindus be any better off for the dissolution? Will they revenge themselves upon the Moplahs by getting foreign assistance to destroy them and their fellow Mussulmans, and be content to be for ever slaves ?

Non-co-operation is a universal doctrine, because it is as applicable to family relations as to any other. It is a process of evolving strength and self-reliance. Both the Hindus and Mussulmans must learn to stand alone and against the whole world, before they become really united. This unity is not to be between weak parties, but between men who are conscious of their strength. It will be an evil day for Mussulmans if, where they are in a minority, they have to depend for the observance of their religion upon Hindu goodwill and *vice versa.* Non-co-operation is a process of self-realization.

But this self-realization is impossible; if the strong become brutes and tread upon the weak. Then, they must be trodden under by the stronger. Hence, if Hindus and Mussulmans really wish to live as men of religion, they must develop strength from within. They must be both strong and humble. Hindus must find out the causes of Moplah fanaticism. They will find that they are not without blame. They have hitherto not cared for the Moplah. They have either treated him as a serf or dreaded him. They have not treated him as a friend and neighbour, to be reformed and respected. It is no use now becoming angry with the Moplahs or the Mussulmans in general. Whilst Hindus have a right to expect Mussulman aid and sympathy, the problem is essentially one of self-help, i.e., development of trength from within. It would be a sad day for Islam if the defence of the Khilafat was to depend upon Hindu help. Hindu help is at the disposal of the Mussulmans, because it is the duty of the Hindus, as neighbours, to give it. And whilst Mussulmans accept help so ungrudgingly given, their final reliance is and must be upon God. He is the never-failing and sole Help of the helpless. And so let it be with the Hindus of Malabar.

Young India, 26-1-1922

11. REPRESSION IN ANDHRA

By the time this is in print, probably all eyes will be turned towards Andhra Desh. Its plucky people are preparing to offer mass civil disobedience in certain tahsils and are consequently deferring payment of tax for the time being. I have warned the Andhra Committee that if the Round Table Conference comes off, those who are deferring payment of taxes due will have immediately to pay them and that they should prepare for the difficult fight only if the people are thoroughly disciplined for nonviolence and are otherwise able to conform to the conditions named by the All-India Congress Committee at Delhi.[1] Mr. Venkatappayya, however, informs me that the people are disciplined and ready and that they can fulfil the conditions laid down. The Government of Madras are evidently seized with nervous fear over these suspensions. They are drafting additional police to Guntur and making demonstrations. They are suspending the operation of the ordinary method of tax collection and have threatened to adopt a summary procedure. They are reported even to be arming themselves with extraordinary powers. In those circumstances, I offer no apology for presenting the readers of *Young India* with the following report[2] of repression received from the Secretary of the Provincial Committee. The report covers the period between 3rd January to 15th January. The report enables the reader to understand the inwardness of the movement and the measure of sacrifice the Andhra people are preparing for. May Got give them courage, powers of endurance and wisdom to do the right thing at the right time.

Young India, 26-1-1922

[1] *Vide* "Letter to K. Venkatappayya'', 17-1-1922, and "Telegram to K. Venkatappayya and Others", Before 20-1-1922.

[2] Not reproduced here

12. SPEECH AT SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, AHMEDABAD[1]

January 26, 1922

I am going today to Bardoli for the preparation of successfully carrying out the programme of civil disobedience and non-payment of taxes. I shall be back here in a week, maybe a month, or a year, or perhaps I may not return at all. But one thing is certain: we shall either win swaraj for India or we shall die. India is slowly getting to be a holy land, aye, a purified country. When truth is on our side, is defeat ever possible? There is salvation or *moksha* today. [Lay] down your life gladly for truth. If some-body asked me, "Where is Brahman[2], what is it like?" then I shall change this query and say, "Where is truth or satya, what is it like"? Truth is Brahman. Everybody after getting up early in the morning should pray to God at least for a minute: "Oh! Almighty God! Give me strength to die for my religion, to die for the whole world". There is no salvation in death when dying, there is salvation in death when dying willingly, when dying gladly. Remember what Shri Krishna told Arjuna about the *Sthitaprajna*[3] in the second chapter of the Gita. Try to live like that. There is pleasure and happiness in living, if God gives us strength to die willingly and gladly while suffering innumerable ! hardships and tyrannies. God has given me strength to die for my country and for my religion.

There is a sort of contentment in self-denial. Last night I was reading a book by Prof. Vaswani[4]. When writing about self-denial he has given the instance of Rana Pratap Singh[5]. His thoughts are very beautiful. The self-denial of Pratap was very great. After the fall of Chittor and when he found it impossible to recapture it, what was the promise that he exacted from his loyal standards? That was the promise of self-denial on their part: "Until Chittor secures its

[1] For Gandhiji's comments on this report, *vide* "Notes", 9-2-1922, under the sub-title "Too Sacred for Publication"

[2] The Absolute

[3] The man of steady intellect

[4] T. L. Vaswani (1879-1966); sage from Sind, author and founder of the Mira educationl institutions, Poona

[5] Of Mewar, who fought bravely against the Moghul power in India for many years and never submitted to it

independence, we-shall not enjoy any luxuries, we shall sleepon mother earth, we shall eat only roots and nuts, we shall give up all earthly happiness and practise complete self-denial". That was their resolve. I call Rana Pratap Singh a *Sthitaprajna*. Let everyone practise self-denial and be a *Sthitaprajna*.

The Hindu, 2-2-1922

13. NORTH-SOUTH

From the discussions about a settlement which took place in the two Houses of the Central Legislature, we can see that our position and that of the Government are as far apart as the North Pole and the South. This is precisely why I have said that negotiations with the Government at this juncture are useless. The Government is still power-drunk. It still hopes to suppress [the movement] with the power of its guns. It has no faith in the strength of our convictions or in our capacity for sacrifice. And, as long as the Government hopes tosuppress us, even if it agrees to negotiate with us for a settlement, it will be in the manner of a master negotiating with his servant.

The supporters of the Government say that our demand is so absurd that it cannot possibly be conceded. Calling something impossible[1] does not make it impossible. Or, rather, in one case, the thing may be impossible for want of inclination and in another for lack of ability.

The Government has never been able to explain what is impossible in the demand about the Khilafat. Its impossibility lies wholly in the Government's guilty intention, its unwillingness to grant the demand. What is there impossible in the British vacating Arabia? What impossibility or obstacle can there be in returning its territory to Turkey? If the British people cannot tolerate this, then India will have to consider whether she should not sever the British connection completely. The Government's unwillingness to satisfy the Khilafat demand certainly cannot be advanced as a valid argument.

The same is true about the Punjab issue. Which demand of ours about the Punjab is impossible for the Government to concede? As regards pension, Maulana Shaukat Ali and Sir Michael O'Dwyer were on the same footing as officers. Yet the Government did not consult

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Extracts from Sir Sankaran Nair's Letter", 17-1-1922.

anyone when stopping Maulana Shaukat Ali's pension, while it cannot bring itself to stop the pensions of Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer. The reason is not far to seek. Those whom the Government believes to be good men and pillars of its rule, we regard as enemies. It does not wish to forget the past services of Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer, while in our opinion these services are of no value at all, and the thought of their disloyalty to India shown in the Punjab in 1919 is even today painful to us.

This is also true about the demand for swaraj. We want swaraj today, whereas the Government asks us to wait till we are fit for it.

Thus, there is a great gulf between us on every issue. There is no possibility of its disappearing till we are fully tested. If, therefore, a conference for a settlement is held before the two sides have come to see eye to eye, one may welcome it, but let no one hope for a happy outcome.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-1-1922

14. ENROLMENT OF VOLUNTEERS

It is observed that the work of enrolling volunteers is not going on as vigorously as it ought to be. The Provincial Congress Committee office does not overflow with candidates wishing to be enrolled as volunteers, as its ticket-counter was raided during the Congress Week. There used to be, such a demand for tickets for admission to the meetings of the Subjects Committee that the President and the Secretary went almost crazy. Whom should they oblige and whom not? Why should not enrolment of volunteers, too, proceed with the same speed?

Some say that if the condition regarding khadi is omitted, enrolment will be faster. Personally, I do not believe that it will be so. No one who wishes to enrol himself as a volunteer will object to khadi. It can never be that a volunteer who offers to take a pledge to be ready to die will hesitate to wear khadi or that he will not buy khadi worth Rs. 5 or Rs. 10, if necessary. A man will even borrow this amount and become a volunteer. Do not some men incur debts in order to indulge their addictions? Why, then, should it not become an addiction with us to go and enrol ourselves as volunteers?

Some say that, if the pledge about untouchability is omitted, a large number will come forward to be enrolled. This, too, is

notcorrect. There is, I believe, little question here of expense or inconvenience; the main thing required is a change of heart. We cannot enter the heaven of swaraj, leaving the untouchables behind. This objection, however, merely illustrates the saying: "Unwilling to dance, one finds fault with the courtyard."

Moreover, neither I nor even the Working Committee has the power to grant exemptions from conditions. The resolution was passed by the Congress and can be modified by it alone. And I for one regard the very idea of getting it modified as cowardice.

Again, every condition included in the pledge is a matter of principle. How can anyone alter principles? The exemption provided for at the Delhi session relates to the condition of wearing hand-woven cloth produced in one's own district. The Working Committee can permit a district in the Punjab which cannot itself produce woollen cloth, to import cloth of hand-spun wool from another district or province. But can anyone grant exemption in the matter of untouchability or non-violence or in regard to the question of unity among Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians and others? Those who really want to enrol themselves as volunteers and are eager to go to jail can observe all the conditions easily.

Hence, if we get the names of only a few volunteers in Gujarat, I shall merely conclude that more persons do not want to register their names, or that most people do not like the manner in which the movement is being carried on.

But it is far better that people should not register their names because of lack of faith in the conditions in the pledge than that they should ignore those conditions and register. Only those who are prepared to fulfil *in toto* the conditions of the pledge should register their names, no matter if their number is small. A few sincere people may by and by become many. But it will certainly not benefit us ultimately to have a large number of volunteers who have enrolled themselves half-heartedly. It is the duty of a workman, when a building is under construction, to take regular measurements and check whether it is coming up according to plan.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 29-1-1922

15. GOVERNMENT'S CIVILITY

There is advantage in seeing the virtues even of an enemy. There certainly is goodness in it. But a complacent person who believes that the enemy can have no virtue will invite defeat.

The Government knows that there is the possibility of a real struggle in Bardoli. The Collector, therefore, has issued an "explanation", which is interesting. The Government could have called it a "notification", instead of giving it the civilized title of "explanation". It has, however, chosen to offer an "explanation" to the people. There cannot be greater civility even in the bulletin of the Provincial Congress Committee than is to be found in this "explanation". The very arguments advanced are those which a non-co-operator would use.

The explanation is signed by "H. B. Shivdasani". He is, of course, one of us. It should not be surprising if he has issued such a courteous explanation on his own initiative. Indian officers would not be doing anything extraordinary if, though servants of the Government, they learn to be civil.

If, however, the language of the explanation has been chosen by an English officer, and deliberately, I regard the fact as an important change and as an auspicious beginning for our struggle. It is not a small thing that both the parties can fight, standing firm on their ground and yet with courtesy and without ceasing to be civilized. We would like such a fight to go on for ever. Our poets showed their culture in their descriptions of even the battles between Rama and Ravana. They have depicted Mandodari[1] as a virtuous wife. After Meghnada's[2] death, Ramachandra gave all facilities desired by Sulochana[3]. Valmiki[4], the father of poets, as also the devotional poet Tulsidas[5], have unreservedly praised the *tapascharya* of Ravana and others.

It is my ambition that we should fight such a civilized war. No other manner of fighting will become a non-co-operator. Incivility is a kind of violence. As long as we, who profess to be under the pledge of non-violence, remain bound by that pledge, we arepositively obliged to maintain civility, both Hindus and Muslims. And if one side maintains civility up to the end, it is certain ultimately to influence the other party. I feel inclined to see the beginning of such civility in this explanation. The Government is welcome to take possession of our fields or shoot us in a civilized manner.

After this preface, I give the "explanation" below:[6]

[1] Ravana's wife
[2] Ravanass soil
[3] Meghnada's wife
[4] Author of the first *Ramayana*
[5] Author of the *Ramacharitamanasa* in Hindi
[6] Not reproduced here

While welcoming this explanation, I merely wish to say that not a single *Patidar* of the Bardoli taluka has been kept in the dark. All men and women have been told that the Government

1. can sell the entire-crop,

2. can give away for a song a crop worth lakhs,

3. can remove even cattle, and household utensils,

4. can confiscate even *Inami* lands,

5. can imprison people,

6. can cut off railway, telegraphic and postal communications, surround the Bardoli taluka, and try to wear out the people by blockading them thus. The people may fight only if they can bear all these hardships.

Further, the people of Bardoli have also been told that, if on the whole they remain firm in their determination, adhere to truth, preserve complete peace, shed all fear, remain united among themselves, keep up complete non-co-operation, maintain friendly relations with the *Dheds* and *Bhangis* and do not regard them as untouchables, adopt complete swadeshi and wear only hand-spun, hand-woven cloth and spin and weave the required cloth in Bardoli itself, then not even a hair of theirs will be touched and they will not only get back their confiscated lands but will also end others' sufferings and, themselves becoming free, play a big part in liberating the whole country.

In this struggle, there is no place for hypocrisy, outward show and falsehood, and nothing should be kept hidden. All should fight with their own strength or rely on God. People should, therefore, take every step after careful consideration. The cultivators of the Bardoli taluka are thoughtful men. I believe that they are prepared to suffer anything and to be ruined for the sake of their country, and that is why I pay them compliments everyday.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-1-1922

16. USUAL PRACTICE

NEW YEAR FOR CONGRESS

Congressmen ought to realize that those who wish to keep the Congress alive should pay up the annual tax. If everyone not not pay even four annas, then the Congress cannot meet this year. The organization will pass under the control of those who pay this sum. Just as the strength of the Congress is in its voluneers, so also is it in its

four-anna members. What counts is not the four annas but the membership. I am afraid that a crore of members were not enrolled on the Congress register last year. Whether or not this number was enrolled, if the Congress is a living organization and if the people have come to take interest in it in the course of one year, then this time more people should come forward to get themselves enrolled. The greater the number of members, the greater the strength of the Congress.

Moreover, this year young persons of the age of 18 also can get themselves enrolled. Both men and women are entitled to do so. I earnestly hope that no man or women who has attained the age of 18, to whom swaraj is dear and who wishes to secure swaraj through non-violence and truth, will fail to get his or her name enrolled at the taluka or the village Congress office. If people have genuine enthusiasm and feeling for the Congress, it should not at all be necessary to engage volunteers for this work. By paying the small sum of four annas, people declare their faith in the Congress.

CONGRESS FUNDS

When people get their names registered in this way, the Congress of course gets some money from the fee collected. But the principal benefit of the money so received goes to the respective taluka [Congress] committee. The Congress plainly needs money for other expenditure. Let us take the instance of Gujarat itself. It may be said that a good amount was collected in Gujarat last year. We spent all that we had collected. It was of course necessary to do so, and this was exactly what was expected. There have to be fresh collections for the new year. Certainly, money is required for activities such as swadeshi, uplift of the *Antyajas*[1], education, etc. If we do not again collect money this year, our work cannot proceed. I hope, therefore, that those who wish to encourage the activities of the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee will themselves send in their own contributions. Anyone who desires may earmark his contribution, that is to say, he can send it to be credited to any specific account which he chooses. I hope that those readers of *Navajivan* who wish to contribute will send as much as they can. The contributions of those who send them through *Navajivan* will be acknowledged in the paper. I must remind everyone that the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee has published a statement of accounts regarding every pie. The expenditure incurred has been only as sanctioned by the sub-committees of the [G.P.C.] Committee. The best justification of the money spent are

[1]A backward Hindu Community, traditionally looked upon as untouchables, later described by Gandhiji as Harijans, God' folk

the Vidyapith, the schools affiliated to it and the Swadeshi Department with its branches, in which the entire collection has been invested. The days when people's money was spent over foreign newspapers and in such other ways are gone. If we wish to support the two big activities, the Vidyapith and swadeshi, we have no choice but to collect funds.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 29-1-1922

17. MY NOTES

AHMEDABAD, NADIAD AND SURAT

The fight of these municipalities is developing very well. The way it is developing holds a lesson for the country. If the citizens of these three cities extend full support to their representatives, they will be able to demonstrate what local self-government is. It is easy to develop local self-government into national self-government. The means for securing both are the same. The effect of both is also the same. For winning local self-government, residents of the particular area have to make sacrifices, while for national self-government all the people in the country have to do so. Who can stop these three municipalities from becoming absolutely independent? Instead of people paying taxes to the municipalities set up by the Government, there is nothing illegal in their paying them only to representatives freely elected by them, nor need they fight anyone in doing so. Power, then, will of itself fall into their hands. There will be the same representatives, the same building, the same employees and the same laws even (if you choose); all you have to do is not to recognize the Government's authority. This is called peaceful revolution or new birth. The people have merely to examine their hearts. The way in which the municipalities have functioned till now only shows that, really speaking, the people have taken no interest in their work. All sorts of men got into them in the name of the people and served only themselves or the Government. I do not mean that the people did not benefit at all from such municipalities. They have got street lights, their latrines are kept clean, and they have also received medical facilities. Yet the people have not come to feel that the municipalities are their own. The people of Ahmedabad never came to look upon the Municipality's income as their own, as they do the *mahajans*[1]. The members hardly took interest in its meetings. Now in all the three cities they have started attending meetings and taking keen interest in

[1] Traditional repres native bodies looking after the affairs of a community or a professional or business group

the proceedings. They have not acquired full self-confidence as yet, else they would be masters of the entire administration. The only difference is' that today, if the people do not pay taxes, action can be taken against them while, after the control of the Government has disappeared, they may pay only if they choose. Only taxes paid in this way are paid voluntarily.

We are no strangers to such a tradition. Till recently, we used to pay our community levies with pleasure. We pay the *mahajans'* taxes first. Only, there was no political awakening till now; people did not take interest in that field. Unlike now, men of affairs of all communities did not take up such work. When all communities start taking interest in it, swaraj will be a certainty, without our making the slightest effort for it. There is oppression only when a few desire to rule the many. This is a general rule. The many do not have to coerce a few, or the subtle violence implicit in the very fact of a majority suffices for the purpose. India is the only country in which the mass of the people, though they have become conscious, regard themselves as weak.

Is there anything which these municipalities cannot do? Are we not capable of looking after the lighting of our cities, their streets, latrines, homes for the disabled, etc.? Who kept the latrines of Khadi Nagar clean? Who built the township, planned roads in it, set up catering arrangements, provided for medical attendance and guarded the huts at night? Who controlled all that traffic there? Reckon up in terms of time, work and the number of men, and you will get the measure of swaraj achieved. We ourselves assume, without reason, that we lack ability. Can anyone else point out a remedy?

I earnestly hope that the residents of the three cities will take the utmost interest in the work of the municipalities, encourage their representatives and emerge victorious in the unnecessary dispute with the cities which the Government has started, and thus win their freedom.

OUR PROTECTION

Since we want to be independent of the protection afforded by the Government's power, we have necessarily to think out how we might ensure our protection. So far, the Government's police, its military, its guns and swords protected us. Who will do so when the Government leaves? Who will protect us from the danger of robbers and dacoits? So long as such questions are asked, we are fit neither for swaraj nor do we deserve to be called men.

Why cannot we protect our cities and villages right now? The seven-and-a-half lakh villages of India ask no such questions. They

are not protected by the Government. Villages manage to protect themselves and those which are unable to do so get robbed even today. Even the Government has not protected villages, no one can protect them, against internal disorders. They ought to be ready to protect themselves or train themselves for the purpose.

From every town and village, persons should come forward as volunteers whose job it would be to protect the people and who would do night-patrolling. In this matter, too, no one can restrain us. Only, the people themselves need to get ready for this work.

It requires not arms but courage. One who is awake is in less danger of being robbed. Obviously, all cannot keep awake day and night, and hence some should be ready to do night-patrolling. Lights and patrolling, these two, are enough to keep cities safe.

In addition to this, we should also take other steps for reforming people. We should seek out thieves and, instead of punishing them, try to educate them. Once we have met a thief personally, he will not probably dare to commit thefts again. Those for whom stealing is a profession are likely to give trouble, but the effect of the general purification is sure to be felt by them too. It is for sadhus to reinforce this. If they become true sadhus, they will certainly attach the utmost importance to this work. Sadhus should mix among members of communities which regard robbery, dacoity, etc., as their profession and should rescue them from their evil ways. They should persuade them to take up other work. The point is that we should regard even these people as brothers instead of as enemies, and serve them. The habit of stealing is also a kind of disease. Presuming that, being a psychological disease, it is more difficult to treat, we have not undertaken its diagnosis and treatment. We treat a person who has indigestion or fever, or is sick. Why, then, do we not treat one who steals, prevaricates or deceives, as if he were ill? Why do we not seek a remedy other than sending him to jail? Why do we not punish one who is ill in body, instead of treating him with medicine? Personally, I believe that both deserve compassion or both merit punishment.

But, in our indolence, we have stopped thinking and so we assume that the rule, "Jaggery for one and oil-cake for another"[1], is an immutable law. When we have come forward to win swaraj for India through non-violent non-co-operation, we shall indeed have to seek remedies for even robbery. and other like dangers through peaceful methods, and such remedies are certainly possible.

The Government too teaches us this. Since it punishes, it also

[1] A Gujarati saying

enlists, to some extent, the help of institutions like the Salvation Army for reforming communities which are given to robbery and other evil ways. We are in a better position than the Government to undertake this task; for we have the whole class of sadhus and fakirs for the purpose. If its members cultivate the qualities of true sadhus and fakirs, they can be of the utmost help ill this work. Let no one think that organized efforts are necessary for this purpose. Inhabitants of every village or town in which national awakening has taken place should, without waiting for a lead from others, make arrangements for their protection and undertake the work of reforming [the thieves]. If this is satisfactorily done even at a few places, the practice will spread to other villages.

AN ENGLISHWOMAN'S BLESSINGS

An Englishwoman writes from Calcutta:[1]

I naturally feel embarrassed in publishing this letter. It contains compliments to me. But I hope that I have no vanity in me. I can see my weaknesses. However, I have unshakable faith in God and His power and mercy. I am merely clay in the hands of the Great Potter. My duty, therefore, is to offer up that praise to Him. For me, the only meaning of this lady's blessings is that they may strengthen me.

My aim, however, in publishing this letter is that it may inspire sincere non-co-operators to remain firm on the path of non-violence and to dissuade those among them who are misguided from taking to the path of violence. I believe that our non-violence is sure to produce others the effect which it has had on these Englishwomen[2].

But, then, hatred must be eliminated from our struggle. This has its source in love, not hatred or anger. We wish to turn even enemies into friends. I am sure that if we work without hatred, even stony hearts will be melted by our capacity to suffer. The cause of the delay lies in our own deficiencies. If we continue to suffer with a calm mind, we shall gain complete victory in a very short time.

But we did wrong things in Madras, as also in Bombay. Our minds are not free from anger. Even now our non-violence is not that of the strong, it is only a sign of our weakness. If we recognize our numerical strength, we shall become watchful. As Maulana Mahomed Ali says, thirty crores need not fear one lakh. If they do, the fault must

[1] For the letter, not reproduced here, *vide* "Notes", 26-1-1922, under the sub-title "An English Lady Blesses".

[2] The correspondent and another Englishwoman whom she had mentioned in her letter and who had written earlier in the same strain. Her letter was published in *Young India* of 12-1-1922.

be theirs. When they have shed fear, they will have swaraj in their hands. Moreover, if thirty crores seek to gain their object by threatening a lakh, there will be no greater sinners than they. We can, therefore, show even our manliness only by suffering.

Even if only a handful of us Indians have awakened and the rest are slumbering, we should not have recourse to violence. In that case, we should know that our task is to awaken the slumbering.

Thus, from whatever point of view we consider our position, we shall see that we have to work in a spirit of non-violence and love. As things are, however, on the one hand we wish to go to jail and, on the other, seek to intimidate courts by our shouting. I still receive complaints that at some places, when a non-co-operator's case is being heard, people fill the court-room to capacity. No wonder, then, if courts change their venue and sit in jail.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-1-1922

18. AWAKENING IN A ANDHRADESHA

January 29, 1922

To the date of writing, the following two telegrams[1] have been received at the *Young India* office from the Secretary of the Provincial Congress Committee:

> l. The Andhra Provincial Congress Working Committee met yesterday at Guntur. . Several ryots from different parts of the district. . .also attended the meeting. . .A graphic description was given how many male adults, including very aged men, enlisted themselves as volunteers in each one of the 50 villages in the neighbourhood of Pedarandipadu and how everyone, fully clad in khaddar, has been serving and observing strict non-violence in spite of provocation sometimes given by the military drafted there, the attachments of movables and high-handed removal of carts and bulls even without a show of distraint. They have also stated that in almost all villages, all the village officers. . . have resigned their appointments. Accounts of resignations of village officers in other areas also were given. The Working Committee after prolonged deliberation as a measure of special caution adopted the following resolution: "This Committee is of opinion that the Guntur District Congress Committee should, instead of carrying on the campaign of non-payment of taxes in several talukas simultaneously as previously resolved by them, limit the area and appoint a committee to investigate as to how far the Delhi conditions arc satisfied in the said area and resolve on the question of final

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

refusal of taxes in accordance with the opinion of the said committee."

2. Guntur Congress Committee met day before yesterday. . .for the purpose of considering, amongst other things, the resolution of the Working Committee of the Provincial Congress Committee of the 25th on the question of non-payment of taxes. . . Leading ryots from different talukas in the district and some Congress workers also attended the meeting. Having been invited to explain the situation in their respective talukas and *fircas*, representative ryots gave accounts of the progress of the movement among the people. Most of them showed their determination to carry on the campaign in spite of all difficulties, while some expressed that some of the conditions of the Delhi resolution had not been fully satisfied in the *fircas* to which they belonged, and that there was need for further preparation in the matter of untouchability, and in one or two even in respect of non-violence. Mr. Prakasam[1] addressed the meeting dwelling at some length on the responsibility of the step taken up by the people of the District. He quoted and explained the letter of Mahatmaji regarding non-payment of taxes published in *The Bombay Chronicle* of the 26th[2]. Mr. Venkatappayya stated that the necessity for conveying this arose out of the letter addressed to him by Mahatmaji and subsequent correspondence with him. Delhi resolution referred to areas where intensive preparations had been made....

The following is the Associated Press message about the Government preparations:

In regard to the state of affairs in Guntur where civil disobedience and non-payment of taxes campaign and resignation of village officers are in operation, Madras Government propose to undertake emergency legislation in the direction of amending Madras Revenue Recovery Act (2 of 1864) mainly to do away with intervening period allowed under the present Act between distraint and attachment of property and to bring at once to sale effects of ryot who refuses to pay his dues. Other steps will also be taken by Government on the executive side, such as institution of disobeying area [*sic*] subject to such exemptions as may be ordered by the Government in favour of persons who shall, by date to be prescribed, have paid into Government treasury or to officer appointed for the purpose taxes due from them. Where land is bought in by Government owing to combination to prevent bidding, opportunity will be taken to provide land for members of depressed classes. With regard to resignations of village officers, the Government say they cannot be accepted under the circumstances and if officers refuse to carry on duties, they must be dismissed.

[1] T.Prakasam (1876-1957); editor, *Swarajya;* was called "Andhra Kesari,"—Lion of Andhra; Chief Minister of Madras

[2] Evidently a slip for "23rd"; *vide* "Letter to K Venkatappayya", 17-1-1922, published in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 23-1-1922.

In my opinion, the Government has the right to take precautionary measures of the kind foreshadowed. It has the right to suspend ordinary legislation when it is threatened with combined suspension of its revenue. That a wise Government would not exasperate public opinion into refusal to pay taxes is, of course, true. But a Government that rides roughshod over popular opinion, cannot be expected to allow itself to be extinguished without an effort. The least, therefore, it would do is to protect its revenue collection. Nor is it possible to cavil at the proposed transfer of confiscated property to the members of the depressed classes. Such an arrangement should suit both parties. Non-co-operators have undertaken to be non-violent, to risk the loss of their all for the purpose of gaining their end and must, therefore, allow their belongings to be sold. The Government, on the other hand, must try, if it can, to break the movement of non-payment and to apply all remedies just enough to secure collection. The proposal to allow the depressed classes to bid for and purchase forfeited lands is ideal. What can be better than that the forfeited lands should be temporarily occupied by the very classes whom we want to see raised from their depressed state?

I use the adverb "temporarily", for the present occupiers must have faith in their mission to know that they must get swaraj and that under swaraj they must be restored to their original status with honour added thereto. The depressed classes, who are being used as pawns in the game by the Government, cannot be adversely affected by dispossession, for, it will be the primary care of the swaraj Government to see them well-settled! happy and contented.

So much for the necessary Government measures. The panic that has possessed them shows a guilty conscience. They do not rely upon their popularity to secure payment. They have to rely upon the bayonet and persecution to do so. They are arresting popular leaders and goading the people to violence so as to enable them to justify "bloody" measures.

And therein lies the test of the Andhras. They have hitherto proved their bravery and sacrifice. Their chosen leaders have gone to jail. Their cattle have been taken away from them and they have remained still. The worst, however, is yet to come. When the Government military [*sic*] is opened on them, they are expected to expose their willing breasts, not their unwilling backs, to the bullets and still not harbour revenge or resentment. They must let their utensils and belongings be taken away from them whilst, like Draupadi or Prahlad[1], they arc praying to God and proving their faith

[1] A devotee of God persecuted by his unbelieving father, the demon-king, Hiranyakashipu. Gandhiji often spoke of him as an ideal satyagrahi.

in Him.

Non-payment is a privilege. It is meant not to enrich the resisters, but by their voluntary poverty to enrich the nation. And they can exercise the privilege only if they have purified themselves, only if they are wearing hand-spun khaddar to the exclusion of foreign cloth and, if being Hindus, they have washed themselves clean of the taint of untouchability and are prepared to treat the untouchable as a privileged brother. They must not grudgingly touch him, but they must lovingly embrace him and serve him. The touch must be a token of true penitence even as we expect the Government to be truly penitent regarding the many wrongs done to us. No niggardly acceptance of the inevitable will appear pleasing to God. It must be a thorough change of heart. We must share our schools with them, we must share our public places with them. We must nurse them in their sickness as we would nurse a brother. We must not be their patrons. We must not twist religious texts against them. We must expunge texts that are of doubtful origin and are capable of interpretation against their human rights. We must gladly give up custom that is against reason, justice and religion of the heart. We must not ignorantly and superstitiously cling to bad custom and part with it when we must, like a miser parting with his ill-gotten hoard out of pressure and expediency.

I have dwelt at length upon untouchability because I have received wires and letters warning me against accepting assurances of compliance with the Congress condition about untouchability. They tell me that the Andhras are not ready to give up untouchability. I urge the leaders to be strictly on the watch. The slightest deviation from the right path will irreparably injure our cause. God requires the purest sacrifice. Hinduism is on its trial equally with Islam and Christianity. Hindus will be false representative of their religion of the Upanishads, which recognizes no privilege but that of merit and which accepts nothing that does not appeal to the heart and reason.

The Andhras are a virile people proud of their traditions. They are a devoutly religious people capable of sacrifice. Much is expected of them by the country and I have every hope that they will not be found wanting. They will lose nothing by waiting if they are not ready for exact fulfilment of all conditions. But they will lose all and ill-serve the country if they go to battle without full preparation.

Young India, 2-2-1922

19. SPEECH AT BARDOLI TALUKA CONFERENCE [1]

January 29, 1922

MR. PRESIDENT, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

This is my third visit to Bardoli. The first time I came here, I merely inspected the preparations made by the brothers and sisters of this taluka. At that time, there was no responsibility on you or me. The second time[2] I came here, a great responsibility had fallen on both you and me, as the All-India Congress Committee had already passed its resolution on civil disobedience and Bardoli's preparedness was to be assessed in terms of that resolution and announced to the country. I certainly could not say that Bardoli was actually ready. I had returned after my last visit with the impression that Bardoli could get ready. I had toured the villages of the taluka, questioned people and gathered information. As a result of my inquiries, I could not say that the progress of the taluka in regard to swadeshi and untouchability was satisfactory.

If there are separate schools for the untouchables elsewhere, it may not matter, but here untouchability must positively be considered a sin. You cannot rest satisfied with having separate schools for *Antyajas.* It is your duty to persuade the *Antyajas* of those villages which have national schools to enrol their children in those schools and you should let them sit with your children. Before we pass today's resolution, such villages ought to agree to this. I have, however, learnt after coming here that they have not done so. During my last visit, I had gone to Wankaner town of this taluka; I saw at that time that the children of *Antyajas* did not attend the national schools. The workers of the place had at that time undertaken to remedy this deficiency. But, as the President said today, the *Antyaj* children in Wankaner have still not started attending the national schools. I know that this is not due to any aversion-towards *Antajas,* but only to the workers' negligence. If we want swaraj and justice in regard to the Khilafat and the Punjab, then it is not enough that we feel no aversion; we cannot show negligence either.

The position about swadeshi is the same. Even in this matter, the brothers and sisters of Bardoli taluka have not done all they should have done. You are not yet in a position to produce all the khadi you

[1] Delivered while moving the resolution on civil disobedience

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Bardoli", 3-12-1921.

require for yourselves. You still do not have as many handlooms as you require for weaving the khadi you need. All the sisters of Bardoli have not yet taken a vow to spin daily for a minimum of two or three or four hours and produce yarn which is good and can be used in weaving, and to get it woven. Certainly more spinning-wheels are plying in Bardoli taluka today than fifteen days or a month ago and it is also true that more yarn is being produced, but this is not enough. If you want to get credit for securing swaraj for the whole of India, if you wish to save the honour of Bardoli, you will have to spin in your taluka more yarn, and of finer quality, than you are doing at present.

I believe that you do feel that the Hindus, the Muslims, the Parsis and the Christians are all brothers, though I know that all taint has not yet left the minds of the Hindus and the Muslims. The smaller communities still do not have a sense of security. The fear of Hindu-Muslim friendship has not disappeared from the minds of minorities like the Parsis, the Christians and others. Swaraj necessarily means the rule of the majority. If, however, a large mass of people get more power and misuse their increased power, that will not be swaraj, that will be oppression or tyranny. If that happens, the tyrants are sure to be destroyed. What is happening in the country today is quite the opposite of this. A handful of men are tyrannizing over crores. The tyranny of the English, however, is bearable. When a handful of Englishmen tyrannize over crores of Indians, then these crores also co-operate to make that tyranny possible. If we had power in our hands, I do not think that we, too, would not oppress small and weak communities exactly as the British oppress us.

If a handful of people want to rule over crores, they can either do so through terror or by oppression, or else they may live as fakirs and control things as well as they can. But to become such fakirs requires a philanthropic instinct and selflessness. In their absence, a few can impose their rule on the many only by resorting to wickedness.

The British Empire has at the present time fallen a prey to greed and avarice. It was greed which brought it here. The East India Company was drawn here by its greed. After coming here, it saw that trade could not be carried on without political power. It saw here mines of gold and silver, namely our bodies and the clothes thereon. To plunder that gold and silver, its Government stripped us naked. Itremoved our clothes by holding out temptations to us through tyranny and all manner of oppression.

They have taken possession of thousands of *bighas*[1] of land in

[1] A measure of land

Bengal, Champaran and Assam and raise crops[1] on them. But even there, the labour is entirely our people's. All trade is done either through intimidation or deceit. This Empire, thus, has been ruling over us by resorting to all the four methods *sama*, *dama*, *bheda* and *danda*.[2] But to blame it for this is a sign of unmanliness.

If, following in the footsteps of this Empire, 81,000 Hindus and Muslims, out of a population of 84,000 in Bardoli taluka, oppress the 3,000 Parsis, Christians and others, harass them, what will the world say about us? The world will call down curses on us as Krishna did on the tyrannical Yadavas[3], and we shall perish.

If we have acquired confidence in our own strength, we do not need arms or guns for establishing *Ramarajya;* all that is needed is awakening and knowledge.

Surely, you do not believe that the Government rules over you by the power of its guns. In a population of 85,000 there are only a few officials who represent the Government. They rule you wholly with your consent, by skilfully winning your confidence. But the moment you feel that you do not want to live in subjection to those officials, that if they want to stay on they are welcome to remain as your servants, then the 85,000 of you will win your own freedom. I have come here in the hope that you will be able to do this. To win freedom, it is necessary neither to kill a single official nor to abuse any. All that you need to do is to tell them plainly that you do not wish to co-operate with them.

Lord Willingdon once said[4] in the course of a reply to a welcome address that no one in India could say "No", that everyone knows only how to say "Yes, Sir", "Yes, my lord". Now that we have learnt to say "No" as advised by him and declare that we do not want to co-operate with him, he has become angry. If your connection with us is to be preserved [we tell him], let it be civilized dealing, as between friends, based on mutual respect. If instead, you want to remain as our masters, then we do not want to co-operate with you. Such co-operation is no co-operation; what you desire is our slavery.

The key to success in our fight is unity. Hindu-Muslim unity itself means protection of Parsis and Christians, and it implies the corollary that we will not harass any Government official, but maintain

[1] Of jute, indigo and tea

[2] Conciliation, bribery, division, and punishment

[3] Lord Krishna's kinsmen. With the advent of the *Kaliyuga*, they were possessed by the spirit of evil and, after an orgy of drinking, fought among themselves and were all killed.

[4] *Vide* "Speech at Gurukul Anniversary - Meaning of Swedeshi", 20-3-1916.

proper relations with every one of them, treating him as a friend. Maintaining proper relations simply means that we do not insult an official, do not hate him, do not address him slightingly but accord him the respect due to his position. We should tell him that we do not want to be enemies with him, but that we do not want his rule either. Apart from this, we may tell him, there is no quarrel between us. He cannot rule anyone in our town with a show of force. The official, too, must be convinced that he and his children can, without any fear, go into your villages any hour of the day or night and need not carry a pistol.

I have come here believing that you understand all this. If we do not sincerely practise such non-violence but are mere hypocrites, then I want to prophesy that we shall lose the game in no more than a month. If Hindu-Muslim unity is an outward show and if inwardly we harbour distrust of each other, the Muslims will think of asking for help from the Afghans, or the country may turn to Japan or may ultimately approach the British and ask them to carry on the Government. It would be far better that we die than find ourselves in such a plight. In such circumstances, the only thing for a person like me is *hijarat*, that is, leaving the country. It is not that *hijarat is* advised only in Islam. Tulsidas has said that one should run away from a place where sinners live. The wicked are also to be saluted, but from miles away. As long as we can, living in this country, chant the *mantra* of swaraj, there is dignity in our work. When, however, we find that we have no supporter left in the country we shall have a right to leave it.

Having regard to the condition of the country, we have only one way of saving ourselves—the way of non-violence.

I explain all these matters before proposing the resolution in order that no one from among you may raise his hand in support of it without understanding it. Swaraj cannot be won by raising one's hand. The only way in which we can get it is by sacrificing our lives, ourproperty and possessions and bearing the loss of our household utensils and cattle.

If, till such time as all women have started spinning, the men do not take it up and they idle away their time, we are as good as dead: we are certainly ready to die, but we want to die purposefully and after purifying ourselves. For that, we should always carry a rosary in our hand, and the spinning-wheel is the only true rosary. This incantation should go on all the time in our hearts: "India is naked and I wish to clothe her." Those who spin at this time are doing God's work. If all of you men are ready to give one, two or three hours [daily] to the

spinning-wheel, if you are ready to carry on with a loin-cloth in case khadi made in Bardoli taluka is not available, then only may you support this resolution.

I was told this morning, in the course of a discussion with Shri Vithalbhai and some delegates, that Bardoli was not yet ready. This shows that we are not trying to deceive God. He can never be deceived. A human being can be deceived, but we do not deceive any; and we shall not deceive ourselves either. So I decided to announce Bardoli's preparedness only after 15 days. But I thought that I should meet the representatives of all the towns before drafting the resolution, in order that those who are ready may not be disappointed. Those who said that they were not ready were volunteers engaged in active work, and their reply showed their caution. Afterwards, we met the representatives and, from among all those who were there, the representatives of 25 villages said that they were quite ready that very day. I told them that they would have to admit *Antyaj* children to their schools the very next day, that the Gita did not mention five *varnas*[1]. I asked than if they were ready to assimilate this fifth *varna* to one of the original four. This simply means that we should treat the *Antyajas* in the same way in which we should treat the *Dublas*[2] and others. This equality of treatment is not to be brought about by subjecting the *Antyajas* also to the same sort of ill treatment to which you perhaps subject the *Dublas* and others. Just as we permit *Dubla* children to attend our schools and enter our homes so must we permit *Antyaj* children too; if the former can draw water from our wells, so should the *Antyajas*. What we do as a matter of duty, we should not do grudgingly; if any thing, we should adopt a liberal attitude. If there isanyone among those present here who thinks that he may mix with *Dheds* for the time being in order to make use of a madman like Gandhi, to him I say that he will be deceiving God, me and you all. If you have such hypocritical intentions, then rest assured that you will perish at the hands of the *Antyajas* themselves.

Do not conclude that I am a polluted person, a reformer. A rigidly orthodox Hindu, I believe that the Hindu Shastras have no place for untouchability of the type practised now. I certainly do not want to enter into a discussion about the Shastras. I am only placing before you the substance of the Shastras as I have understood them. This form of untouchability is a violation of dharma. Anyone who practises it will surely be called to account by the God of Death and he will have to suffer. Even a plea of ignorance will not save him. It is

[1] Divisions of society; the *Gita* mentions the traditional four in Chapter IV

[2] A backward community in South Gujarat

not stated anywhere in the Hindu Shastras or in the scriptures of other religions that one who sins in ignorance does not have to suffer the consequences. Only, such a person has to suffer a little less than another who sins deliberately, but suffer he must. Such is the inexorable law of karma. Do not think that, from the practical point of view, it would be wise today to mix with *Antyajas.* If you really believe that there is no dharma in doing so, then say it in so many words. That will not pain me. I will go elsewhere to beg and ask the people if they are ready to start civil disobedience on this condition. If no one comes forward, then I alone will offer civil disobedience.

It is necessary to explain clearly the condition of non-violence also. Muslims and some students of the *Gita* tell me that it is a religious duty to use the sword on some occasions. Lord Krishna himself urged Arjuna to battle. For me, however, non-violence is the highest dharma. I do not mind if you think of it as a practical necessity. But the removal of untouchability is an absolute duty. When I ask you to eradicate untouchability, I do not mean that you should eat and drink in the company of *Antyajas* or have marriage ties with them or drink water out of a jug used by one of them, without cleaning it. The Hindu religion does not compel anyone to use any article from which another has eaten. By this resolution, you bind yourselves to treat the *Antyajas* in the same way as you treat the Sudras. Raise your hands in support of this resolution only if you have understood this.

There is no doubt at all about your enthusiasm. It is because of your enthusiasm that you have been asking people to come here. But it is only when you get rid of untouchability and adopt swadeshithat I shall believe that you are ready to go to jail and to let your lands be auctioned, that you desire to liberate your country. Surely, anyone who sets out to free a big country like India must make correspondingly big sacrifices.

No one should believe that, since I shall be camping here, I shall save you. On the contrary, there is trouble wherever I go; the hearts of us all are in turmoil. I have not come to see that you live in peace, I have come to shake you out of it. There is no peace except through the sacrifice of peace. But the peace sacrificed is our own. When our hearts are in turmoil, when we have endured long and painfully in the fire of suffering, only then shall we get real peace.

Perhaps you believe that it will suffice if you go to jail; but jail-going by itself will not avail us. The Government will remove your crops. I am certainly going to advise you to commit legitimate theft.

The Government has ten heads and twenty arms.[1] When you decline to pay land revenue, the very next day the Government's mounted troops will be on the scene. We will not, then, fight with the soldiers. Let them take our Crops of cotton, grain or vegetables and anything else they can carry away with them. If, however, the Government leaves the crops standing, we will certainly remove them home. If this is regarded as theft, then let the Government punish us, even kill us. Mohanlal Pandya[2] stole onions thus on my advice and became famous as the onion-thief. But that was legitimate theft. The Government will seize your cattle. Do not abuse the man who may come to lead them away; instead, hand them over to him yourselves. Only if you behave thus will you be considered fit for withholding payment of land revenue. You will have to be ready to bear all this loss. If the Government can profit by seizing your property, it will mean that you will have to bear the loss of property worth ten lakhs rather than pay revenue of two lakhs.

Are you prepared for all this? If you are, I will propose the resolution. If anyone wants to ask a question or has not understood something, he should get his doubt resolved.

Q. We can bear it if our property is attached, but what should we do if the Government's men outrage the modesty of our wives and daughters?

A. We have lost our faith in ourselves and in mankind. Although I am in such a condition at present that even a fifteen-year-old boy can knock me down, my wife and I live together because I have the strength to protect her. I challenge any young man or even an Afghan to attempt any outrage on her. I have the strength to die and, as long as one has this strength, one need have no fear at all. You may ask what one should do if they bind one's hands and feet or point a pistol at one. The houses of many who had pistols with them have been robbed and their women have been outraged, their spick and span pistols [in working order] notwithstanding. One does not need a pistol to protect oneself, one needs only courage.[3]

1. As explained by me, do you regard promoting friendship of the Hindus, the Muslims, the Parsis and the Christians as your sacred duty?

2. Those who believe that, looking to India's present condition,

[1] Like Ravana, in the *Ramayana*

[2] An active worker in Kheda satyagraha.

[3] At this point. Gandhiji waited for more questions to be asked. Then, to ascertain the representatives' preparedness, he put questions. According to the report in *Gujarati* weekly dated February 5, 1922, the audience expressed support by raising hands at the end of every question.

only one method, that of non-violence, can bring us swaraj and secure justice in regard to the Khilafat and the Punjab, may raise their hands.

3 Those who believe that the country cannot reach her goal without adopting swadeshi and those brothers and sisters who have decided to give up the use of foreign or mill-made cloth, and have resolved that they will not use khadi made outside Bardoli taluka, may raise their hands.

4. Do you believe that the practice of untouchability is contrary to dharma? Further, are you ready to let *Antyaj* children sit with yours in national schools?

5. Without minding it if your crops, your cattle and property are seized and you are reduced to beggary, are you ready to lose your all and to go to jail—and all that without getting angry— for the sake of the country's honour?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-2-1922

20. BARDOLI'S DECISION

January 30, 1922

Bardoli has come to a momentous decision. It has made its final and irrevocable choice. Vithalbhai Patel, the President, addressed a conference[1] of the representatives of the Taluka in a speech impressive for its warning. He certainly did not mince matters. There was an audience of khaddar-clad representatives numbering 4,000. There were five hundred women, a large majority of whom were also in khaddar. They were interested and interesting listeners. It was an audience of sober, responsible men and women with a stake.

I followed Vithalbhai and went through every one of the conditions of mass civil disobedience laid down by the Congress.[2] I took the sense of the meeting on every one of the conditions, separately. They understood the implications of Hindu-Muslim-Parsi-Christian unity. They realized the significance and the truth of non-violence. They saw what the removal of untouchability meant; they were prepared, not merely to take into national schools, but to induce untouchable children to join them; they have had no objection to the untouchable drawing water from the village wells. They knew that they were to nurse the untouchable sick as they would nurse their ailing neighbours. They knew that they could not exercise the

[1] Held on January 29, 1922

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

privilege of non-payment of revenue and other forms of civil disobedience until they had purified themselves in the manner described by me. They knew, too, that they had to become industrious and spin their own yarn and weave their own khaddar. And lastly, they were ready to face forfeiture of their movables, their cattle and their land. They were ready to face imprisonment and even death, if necessary, and they would do all this without resentment.

There was an old dissentient voice on the question of untouchability. He said, what I said was right in theory, but it was difficult in practice to break down the custom all of a sudden. I drove the point home but the audience had made up its mind.

Before the larger meeting I had met the real workers, about fifty in number. Before that meeting Vithalbhai Patel, some workersand I conferred together and felt that we would pass a resolution postponing the decision for about a fortnight, to make the swadeshi preparation more complete and removal of untouchability more certain, by actually having untouchable children in all the sixty national schools. The brave and earnest workers of Bardoli would not listen to the postponement. They were certain that more than 50 per cent of the Hindu population were quite ready about untouchability and they were sure of being able to manufacture enough khaddar for their future wants. They were bent on trying conclusions with the Government. They bore down every objection raised by Vithalbhai Patel, and Abbas Tyabji, with his hoary beard and ever smiling face, was there to utter the warning. But they would not budge an inch from their position and so the resolution[1] which I give below was unanimously passed:

> After having fully understood and considered the conditions as essential for the starting of mass civil disobedience, this Conference of the inhabitants of the Bardoli Taluka resolves that this Taluka is fit for mass civil disobedience.
>
> This Conference is of opinion:
>
> (a) That for the redress of India's grievances, unity among Hindus, Mohammedans, Parsis, Christians and other communities of India is absolutely necessary.
>
> (b) That non-violence, patience and endurance are the only remedy for the redress of the said grievances.
>
> (c) That the use of the spinning-wheel in every home and the adoption of hand-spun and hand-woven garments to the exclusion of all other cloth by every individual are indisp-

[1] Originally framed in Gujarati

ensable for India's freedom.

(d) That swaraj is impossible without complete removal of untouchability by the Hindus.

(e) That for the people's progress and for the attainment of freedom, readiness to sacrifice movable and immovable property, to suffer imprisonment and, if necessary, to lay down one's life, is indispensable.

This Conference hopes that the Bardoli Taluka will have the privilege to be the first for the aforesaid sacrifices, and this Conference hereby respectfully informs the Working Committee that unless the Working Committee otherwise decides or unless the proposed Round Table Conference is held, this Taluka will immediately commence mass civil disobedience under the advice and guidance of Mr. Gandhi and the President of the Conference. This Conference recommends that those tax-payers of the Taluka who are ready and willing to abide by the conditions laid down by the Congress for mass civil disobedience, will refrain, till further instruction, from paying land revenue and other taxes due to the Government.

Who knows the issue? Who knows whether the men and women of Bardoli will stand the repression that the Government may resort to? God only knows. In His name has the battle been undertaken. He must finish it.

The Government have acted hitherto in a most exemplary manner. They might have prohibited the Conference. They did not. They know the workers. They would have removed them long ago. They have not done so. They have not interfered with any of the activities of the people. They have permitted them to make all preparations. I have watched their conduct with wonder and admiration. Both sides have up to the time of writing behaved in a manner worthy of chivalrous warriors of old. In this battle of peace, it ought not to be otherwise. If the battle continues in this fashion, it will end only in one way. Whoever has the ear of 85,000 men and women of Bardoli will gain the day.

The Working Committee has to sit and pass its judgment upon Bardoli's decision. The Viceroy has still choice and will have yet another choice given to him. No charge of hurry, want of preparation or thoughts, no charge of discourtesy will it be possible to bring

against the people of Bardoli.

Therefore,

Lead kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on;
The night is dark, and I am far from home;
Lead Thou me on.

Young India, 2-2-l922

21. TO THE PATELS OF BARDOLI

BARDOLI,
January 30, 1922

The Taluka Parishad had committed itself to a very serious and solemn duty and has taken a grave responsibility upon its shoulders. We trust that in this sacred work of regenerating the country, the *Patels*[1] of Bardoli will do their duty to the utmost. Many of them have expressed their readiness to give up their posts. We hope that from now on every Patel will look upon himself no longer as a *Patel* in the service of the Government but as a *Patel* in the service of the community. We, therefore, expect that their letters of resignation will be placed in our hands without delay.

We have not yet lost hope that the Government will repent of its sins and purify itself and so we do not propose to forward the letters of resignation immediately to the Government. But the moment civil disobedience is announced, we intend to forward them. Meanwhile, we should go ahead with preparations as if we had decided to start civil disobedience immediately. We expect, therefore, that every *Patel* will hand over his letter of resignation to us without delay.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI
VITHALBHAI JHAVERBHAI PATEL

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 2-2-1922

[1] Village headmen who help in the collection of Government dues from tic cultivators

22. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, SURAT[1]

January 31, 1922

Dr. Choithram[2] has told you that there is a possibility of the Government arresting me in about ten days and hence you expressed a desire to meet me. But I must say that now I have no desire at all to go to jail. I would rather be killed by a bullet, or die by hanging. And I also wish that many other Gujaratis should ask for a similar death. For some time past, I have been praying to God for this very thing—that He may give me death at the hands of this Government.

I cannot hear the reports or bear the thought of the sufferings of our people in different parts of the country. Some have their belongings seized and some are flogged. The Government disperses meetings by force. How can we tolerate all this? Courting imprisonment is not the way to stop what is happening. The remedy lies in another Jallianwala Bagh and I wish that, if the Government's oppression does not stop immediately, we should have many repetitions of the Jallianwala Bagh in Gujarat.

But there should be one big difference. The people had collected in the Jallianwala Bagh for a holiday, they had no idea at all that they might be shot down. They had no such desire. Had they known that they might be shot down, perhaps no one would have even gone there. As for us, however, I wish that we should face the bullets willingly. Let some General Dyer stand before us with his troops. Let him start firing without warning us. It is my prayer to God that, if that happens, I should continue to talk to you cheerfully even at that time just as I am doing now and that you should all remain sitting calmly then, under a shower of bullets, as you are doing now. It would be a great thing for Gujarat if, at that time, your ears and backs were turned towards me but your chests and your eyes faced the direction from which the bullets came and you welcomed them. Gujarat has talked A lot, has passed enough resolutions; but, while almost the whole of the country has been suffering, we have had practically to suffer nothing. This does not mean, I know, that we have lagged behind others in

[1] For Gandhiji's account of the circumstances in which he delivered this speech, *vide* "My Speech at Surat", 5-2-1922.

[2] Dr. Choithram Gidwani Congress leader from Sind; President, Sind Provincial Congress Committee; later Member of Parliament

doing our duty. We are not in jail because the Bombay, Government will not arrest people. I hope this means that our lot is not just being imprisoned but being killed by bullets.

If we do not constantly wish that it be so, there is danger of our becoming self-conceited. We should, moreover, purify ourselves more and more every day while cherishing this desire. The mutual ill will among Hindus and Muslims must disappear. The two communities still fear and distrust each other and the Parsis and the Christians fear Hindus and Muslims. The citizens of Surat have done much, but they have a lot more to do yet. Here, too, the men and women continue to run after luxuries. The people are still disinclined to take up the spinning-wheel. They still love silk or fine cloth, foreign or mill-made cloth. Some are ready to wear a long shirt and cap of khadi, but find a dhoti of khadi too heavy to wear. Though our prejudice against the untouchables is waning, we are not yet ready to regard them as our blood-brothers. How many among us would be ready to suck out the poison if one of them was bitten by a snake? How many would offer to attend on any of them who might get fever just as we would serve our brother or sister, mother or father in such a condition?

Why should we blame the Government? If we must blame anyone, we should blame ourselves, reproach ourselves for not having improved, despite bitter experiences, and carried out the required degree of self-purification, for not having shown enough selflessness and made enough sacrifices. I often feel that we shall not be able to rid ourselves of our numerous evils and fears till we have shown in action that we can die in large numbers. As we have not suffered much till now, I pray for myself and for Gujarat that we may have to go through more suffering than what the other provinces have had to bear. Only the new Bharat that will be born as a result of that suffering will be a fit country to live in, and only with such strength can we help to heal the wounds in the hearts of our Muslim brethren. Through such suffering alone can we secure Justice for the Punjab and in such strength lies swaraj.

Let the Government, therefore, arrest me if it chooses to do so. One need not at all feel unhappy if it does, need not be disturbed or lose one's head. I actually hope that, when I am arrested, the weaknesses which still remain in us will disappear, that the register of volunteers will also get filled with your names, my brothers and sisters, and all of you will start wearing hand-woven khadi made from

hand-spun yarn and become absolutely fearless. The Surat Municipality has shown great courage. The citizens should give their representatives full support. It is not enough that you have made education independent [of Government control]. There is no danger of imprisonment or such other punishment in making the entire Municipality independent. All that is required is resourcefulness, self-confidence and mutual trust. We should ourselves clean our latrines and roads. We should ourselves look after the needs of the poor among us and attend on the sick; we should collect necessary funds for these purposes and see that they are properly managed.

In all this, where is the need for Government's help or for its laws? Unfortunately, we had no confidence in ourselves. The mahajans had become dishonest. The people, too, had become obdurate. This was to the advantage of the Government. If the citizens of Surat voluntarily pay to the mahajan such taxes as they themselves fix, and if the latter spends the money on the activities I have mentioned and maintains full and clear accounts, you will have in the *mahajan* an independent municipality. Today's municipality is but a caricature of the *mahajan*. To have the Government's municipality is to exchange dependence for independence.

I hope that the citizens of Surat will stand firm in their decision, that they will do much more than what they have done and thereby bring glory to their city, to Gujarat and to India.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-2-1922

23. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR [1]

Tuesday Night [*January 31, 1922*][2]

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

You will see my letter[3] to the Viceroy. It is being posted to him tomorrow. I am going to delay publication till the 4th. That meets your requirement also. I do not think I could do more.

I hope you will find the letter to be unexceptionable. It gives the Viceroy more than he could possibly require. He need not call a round table conference. The more I think of it, the more clear it is to me that he cannot call the conference but he can easily adopt my suggestion, if he wishes so.

I am sending a copy to Malaviyaji.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 10-2-1922

24. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

[*January 31, 1922*][4]

BHAISHRI SHANKARLAL,

Enclosed is a copy of the letter being sent to the Viceroy.[5] That letter will go to Delhi by tomorrow's post. It will be released to the Press on the 4th morning. Get some copies made and give one to Sir Stanley Reed on my behalf and another to Brelvi. It will be well to deliver both on the 3rd. Give the enclosed copy to Vithlbhai. If he has not reached office, show it to Jayakar. If he has, let him himself take the letter to Jayakar.

[1] Sent in reply to a letter dated January 30, 1922 from Jayakar and Natarajan, Secretaries of the Leaders' Conference which had met at Bombay on January 14 and 15. In this letter they had enclosed copies of their correspondence with the Viceroy who had turned down their proposals as a basis for a round table conference, and had asked Gandhiji to postpone his programme in Bardoli pending further communication in about three days' time.

[2] From Jayakar's *The Story of My Life*.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 1-2-1922.

[4] From the contents it is evident that Gandhiji wrote the letter on this date; *vide* "Letter to M.R. Jayakar", 31-1-1922.

[5] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 1-2-1922.

I am leaving for Bardoli tomorrow morning. Send a telegram at Bardoli if you have anything to communicate. Unless I send another telegram, the letter should appear in the Press on the 4th. It will be good if you can get it translated into Gujarati under your supervision and give it for publication. If it is possible, I shall myself do it. There is still time for it.

Dayalji wishes that if you are not needed there for two or three days, you should do some work in Bardoli. But I think, Jayakar and others will want a lot of help from you there. But come if you can free yourself.

Today both Hakimji and Dr. Ansari came; so did Dr. Choithram and Chhotani Mian.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 32697

25. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

[*Before February 1, 1922*][1]

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

My heart goes out to you. I do not want to hurt you with a harsh word or a kind word harshly uttered. I want your week of silence to be a week of privilege. Do not think of helping Ba during the week. But use the wheel. It is a real companion. Study Hindi and think deep. Write what you like. Do not read much just now.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3201

[1] The silence mentioned in the text was presumably the first occasion when the addressee undertook to observe silence for a week which expired on or before February 1, 1922, for, on February I his second silence had begun; *vide* "Letter to V. A. Sundaram", 1-2-1922.

26. LETTER TO VICEROY[1]

[BARDOLI,
February 1, 1922][2]

TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY
DELHI
SIR,

Bardoli is a small tahsil in the Surat District in the Bombay Presidency, having a population of about 87,000 all told.

On the 29th ultimo it decided under the presidency of Mr. Vithalbhai Patel to embark on mass civil disobedience, having proved its fitness for it in terms of the resolution[3] of the All-India Congress Committee which met at Delhi during the first week of November last. But as I am perhaps chiefly responsible for Bardoli's decision, I owe it to your Excellency and the public to explain the situation under which the decision has been taken.

It was intended under the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee, before referred to, to make Bardoli the first unit for mass civil disobedience in order to mark the national revolt against the Government for its consistently criminal refusal to appreciate India's resolve regarding the Khilafat, the Punjab and swaraj.

Then followed the unfortunate and regrettable rioting on the 17th November last in Bombay, resulting in the postponement of the step contemplated by Bardoli.

Meanwhile repression of a virulent type has taken place with the concurrence of the Government of India in Bengal, Assam, the United Provinces, the Punjab, the Province of Delhi and, in a way, in Bihar and Orissa and elsewhere. I know that you nave objected to the use of the word "repression" for describing the action of the authorities in these provinces. In my opinion when action is taken which is in excess of the requirements of a situation, it is undoubtedly repression. The looting of property, assaults on innocent people, the brutal treatment of prisoners in the jails including flogging can in no sense be described as legal, civilized or in any way necessary. This official lawlessness cannot be described by any other term but lawless

[1] This was published in the newspapers on February 4, 1922, For the Government's reply *vide* Appendix "Government of India"Communique"on Gandhiji's Letter to Viceroy", 6-2-1922.

[2] From *India* in 1921-22

[3] *Vide* "The All India Congress Committee", 10-11-1921.

repression. Intimidation by non-co-operators or their sympathizers to a certain extent in connection with hartals and picketing may be admitted but in no case can it be held to justify the wholesale suppression of peaceful volunteering or equally peaceful public meetings under a distorted use of an extraordinary law which was passed in order to deal with activities which were manifestly violent both in intention and action, nor is it possible to designate as otherwise than repression, action taken against innocent people under what has appeared to many of us an illegal use of the ordinary law, nor again can the administrative interference with the liberty of the Press under a law that is under promise of repeal be regarded as anything but repression.

The immediate task before the country, therefore, is to rescue from paralysis freedom of speech, freedom of association andfreedom of the Press. In the present mood of the Government of India and in the present unprepared state of the country in respect of complete control of the forces of violence, non-co-operators were unwilling to have anything to do with the Malaviya Conference whose object was to induce Your Excellency to convene a round table conference. But as I was anxious to avoid all avoidable suffering, I had no hesitation in advising the Working Committee of the Congress to accept the recommendations of that Conference.[1] Although in my opinion the terms were quite in keeping with your own requirements as I understood them through your Calcutta speech and otherwise, you have summarily rejected the proposal.

In the circumstances, there is nothing before the country but to adopt some non-violent method for the enforcement of its demands including the elementary rights of free speech, free association and free Press. In my humble opinion the recent events are a clear departure from the civilized policy laid own by Your Excellency at the time of the generous, manly and unconditional apology[2] of the Ali Brothers, viz., that the Government of India should not interfere with the activities of non-co-operation so long as they remained non-violent in word and deed. Had the Government's policy remained neutral and allowed public opinion to ripen and have its full effect, it would have been possible to advise postponement of the adoption of civil disobedience of an aggressive type till the Congress had acquired fuller control over the forces of violence in the country and enforced greater discipline among the millions of its adherents. But this lawless repression (in a way unparalleled in the history of this

[1] *Vide* "Working Committee's Resolution", 7-l-1922.

[2] *Vide* "Draft of Ali Brothers Apology", 30-5-12921.

unfortunate country) has made the immediate adoption of mass civil disobedience an imperative duty. The Working Committee of the Congress has restricted it to only certain areas to be selected by me from time to time, and at present it is confined only to Bardoli. I may, under said authority, give my consent at once in respect of a group of 100 villages in Guntur in the Madras Presidency, provided they can strictly conform to the conditions of non-violence, unity among different classes, the adoption and manufacture of hand-spun khadi and untouchability.

But before the people of Bardoli actually commence mass civil disobedience, I would respectfully urge you as the head of the Government of India, finally to revise your policy and set free all the non-co-operating prisoners who are convicted or under trialfor non-violent activities and to declare in clear terms a policy of absolute non-interference with all non-violent activities in the country whether they be regarding the redress of the Khilafat or the Punjab wrongs or swaraj or any other purpose and even though they fall under the repressive sections of the Penal Code or the Criminal Procedure Code or other repressive laws subject always to the condition of non-violence. I would further urge you to free the Press from all administrative control and to restore all the fines and forfeitures recently imposed. In thus urging I am asking Your Excellency to do what is being done today in every country which is deemed to be under civilized Government. If you can see your way to make the necessary declaration within seven days of the date of publication of this manifesto, I shall be prepared to advise postponement of civil disobedience of an aggressive character, till the imprisoned workers have, after their discharge, reviewed the whole situation and considered the position *de novo*. If the Government makes the requested declaration I shall regard it as an honest desire on its part to give effect to public opinion and shall therefore have no hesitation in advising the country to be engaged in further moulding public opinion without violent restraint from either side and trust to its working to secure the fulfilment of its unalterable demands. Aggressive civil disobedience in that case will be taken up only when the Government departs from its policy of strictest neutrality or refuses to yield to clearly expressed opinion of the vast majority of the people of India.

I remain,
Your Excellency's faithful
servant and friend,
M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 9-2-1922

27. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

BARDOLI,
February 1 [*1922*][1]

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

I am glad the silence has agreed with you and that you are again silent.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3190

28. A NOTE

[Before February 2, 1922][2]

. . . .[3] They were not willing to sit waiting for the Saheb. So these two workers, after waiting for almost five hours, sent a message: "We cannot wait any longer," and got up to leave. "Don't you know you are at the bungalow of the Agent Saheb? You will be regarded as prisoners." At last they were called in. Then a gust of wind blew in the form of heated arguments. "We are public workers, and so cannot obey your orders." "In what way are you public workers? You are a public nuisance", the Agent Saheb said heatedly. The workers were not wanting in repartee.

The meeting was held. The hunting must be stopped. The feelings of the Mahajans would be hurt if that did not happen. There should be a call for a strike. People must observe fast on the day of the hunt.

There was a strike, but both of them were arrested. They were released by the Governor's order. There is also the news that the Sardar's interview in connection with the hunting was cancelled. If it has been cancelled, I must congratulate the Governor Saheb.

For the Hindus, hunting is a matter that touches their sacred religion. My impression is that even Islam forbids hunting for mere enjoyment. There are many utterances in the Koran bearing on

[1] *Vide* letters to V. A. Sundaram dated Before February 1, 1922, and 3-2-1922.

[2] From "Notes", 2-2-1922 under the sub-title"Political Agencies", which has reference to Manilal Kothari and Mansukhlal Mehta's arrest in connection with the agitation against hunts arranged for British officials. This was obviously written before their arrest as Gandhiji says here that they should "go to jail" for it.

[3] The first page of the note is missing in the source.

kindness to living creatures. Be that as it may, how can the Hindus tolerate hunting for fun?

But Rajas have always indulged in the practice. Even Ramachandra went hunting . But who can say? It is like talking about untouchability. Who knows the history of how untouchability was practised when it was in vogue? Today it prevails in a ghastly, ruthless form and deserves only to be wiped out. Similarly, we do not know why Ramachandra went hunting and what its purpose was. But we do know the principle of the religion of kindness. What is opposed to it is opposed to the scriptures. Whatever was opposed to the public opinion was also, for the kings, opposed to the scriptures. Affected by the words of a mere washerman, Ramchandra abandoned Sita.

Hence, hunting can never be for pleasure. If there have to be games, let there be games of ball and stick, and so forth even for the king. But hunting is against religion. It would be creditable for a Kathiawadi if he adheres to this religious principle and fights for it. It is desirable that other things are not mixed with this religious struggle.

It would have been all right if the question had not been raised at all. But having been raised, it has got to be seen through to the end. But now the thing has been set aside.

The Agent has created a new issue. Who would put up with an order that people belonging to a particular region stay out of that region? Can those of Kathiawad leave within twenty-four hours? All this to what purpose? Those living in Kathiawad cannot thus go away. And now, Manilal Kothari and Mansukhlal Mehta should humbly convey to the Agent that they cannot abide by such an order. A person has a birthright to live where he is born. Kathiawadis have the birthright to reside in Kathiawad. We know that the ruling chiefs have fenced round their own little territories and are tossing around people born in the same soil. But for the Kathiawadis, the Agent himself has created this wonderful situation. Let the two workers go to jail for this. If other kathiawadis would also like to solve the problem, they too should go to jail. For a Kshatriya, a war foisted on him is a matter of religion. And the work we are doing in India today is aimed at the regeneration of the Kshatriyas and the Brahmins. The religions of the Vaishyas and Shudras remain. But, for want of enlightened knowledge and valour, the religion of the Vaishyas is reduced to business-mindedness and the religion of the Shudras, which is the religion ofservice, is reduced to slavery. The result is that all the four religions have almost been eliminated. The religion of a Kshatriya is not to kill but to die, not escape from fear of death. Knowledge means knowing the distinction between the spiritual and the unspiritual. Giving more

or all our time for the realization of our eternal soul rather than to the transient body is knowledge, and opposing every activity opposed to one's soul to the point of death is valour. To a certain extent, within their limitation, even the Vaishyas and the Shudras should also possess both these qualities.

If the Kathiawadis are willing to cultivate these two qualities, they should not keep themselves away from this struggle. There would be no harm in it if at present they confined themselves to this struggle. It would be no small gain. A large number of Kathiawadis should sacrifice their lives in this great fight or get toughened in battle. But if the greedy Kathiawadis are not content with this indirect benefit, they may as well start a sacred struggle in Kathiawad. They must remember that for this the atmosphere is not favourable in Kathiawad. That land is not ready for the struggle. There are no roads charted in the jungles of Kathiawad and therefore the task is difficult and a great sense of discrimination is required. If they put the Princes in an inconvenient position, it is likely to harm both the sides. Hence, my advice would be that Kathiawad should carry the present struggle to its end and then the Kathiawadis should offer sacrifices in this great struggle. There is always more water in a lake than in a well. Hence, it would be wise if they feel content that they have exercised patience. But, if they wish to start a sacred struggle to improve their economic, moral and political condition in Kathiawad itself, they are entitled to do so. I am merely writing as a prudent Bania about the timid, careful, neutral and calculating Kathiawadi.

Any Kathiawadi can tell me that I am looking at Kathiawad of the past; that I do not know the resurgent Kathiawad pulsating with new life. That may be so, but again my Bania sense suggests to me that perhaps I who hold the strings of the whole of Kathiawad, understand it better than those who see all strings, whether thick or thin, as the same things.

After giving this much warning and realizing that any advice is meant just to be heard, I wish that the Kathiawadis should do their duty in the light of their understanding and ability and that God help them. If they succeed, a critic like me would compliment them. And if they make mistakes, if they are defeated and disheartened, he wouldrudely remind them with the words "Did I not say so?" and then stand aside. Hence, we may lend our ear to everyone, but do only what we have decided. That alone is the first, middle and the last lesson of swaraj. He who follows the dictates of his own mind always knows God and fears Him.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 11287

29. NOTES

FROM THE BIG BROTHER

The reader will appreciate the following letter[1] from Maulana Shaukat Ali to his son:

I do not think that I need add anything to the letter by way of supplementary instructions. Besides laying down the instructions, it serves another useful purpose. It sets at rest all doubts as to the Brothers' attitude.. I know that they are not implacable. They are most reasonable but, thank God, they are also firm. They will yield not an inch out of their weakness. They will yield everything to reason. Being godfearing they are capable of entering into their opponents' real difficulties. Given perfect sincerity in the opponent and readiness to do the right and acknowledge the wrong, no opponent need fear or distrust them. But to think of placating Mussulmans without placating the Brothers is to attempt to ignore Islam in India.

[1] Not reproduced here. Writing from jail in Karachi, Shaukat Ali had described conditions in jail, declared his determination to resist the humiliating ones and had suggested the following instructions for workers going to jail: " . . . I would suggest that all workers be told beforehand about the following:

1 They must be courteous to all, especially to their fellow prisoners and Indian warders who are weak and helpless and made to do dirty work. We must lift them up and give them real courage and teach them patriotism and discipline. Along with this we must have full confidence in ourselves and in our capacity for suffering.

2 We must ask for clean food, clothing and bedding. But this is the least important thing in my opinion. The more important things come later.

3 We must do as much work as we can easily accomplish without detriment to our health- If forced to do more than our strength or circumstances permit, we can really retaliate by refusing to work, the only weapon in our hands . . . *We must teach this Government, both outside the jail and inside of it, that it cannot coerce or force us to do things against our wishes*. . . There are some very humiliating practices which we *must* refuse to perform:

(a) Every evening all clothes are taken off and only in a little slip we show that we have not concealed anything in our groins.

(b) Jail parade, where you are made to do things which kill self-respect and, in the name of discipline, humiliate you.

(c) Paying the call of nature with many people round about you and a warder watching you, and so forth.

(d) *Azan* must be openly said by each 5 times daily at prayer time [Whether or no the jail authorities objects to this] . . ."

FRIGHTFULNESS IN MEERUT

Kazi Bashiruddin Ahmed, Secretary, District Khilafat Committee writes:[1]

It is not without deep grief that I reproduce this letter and the one that follows. I feel humiliated and ashamed to find that human nature can stoop so low. I have no reason to doubt the accuracy of the statements of my correspondents.

My advice to all these brave co-workers is: "Abide by your pledge of non-violence; forgive the persecutors; they are evidently mad; they do not know what they are doing; never mind the abusive language; it fouls the utterer, not the unwilling listener; the assaults do injure our bodies, but they can only do us good if we can only bear them manfully and without resentment." For me this exhibition of unmanly lawlessness on the part of the police is one more proof of the corrupt nature of the system. Barbarism has been cultivated and human nature deliberately degraded for the sake of sustaining power, usurped in the commercial interest of a minority intent upon exploiting and draining this poor country which I fondly believe was once rich in men and material.

INHUMANITY IN BANARAS

Here is the substance of a telegram that was to be sent from Banaras but which was returned by the telegraph office as objectionable:

> Authorities beating and sending people naked home in cold midnight; foul abuse and obscene jokes with boy volunteers. Patriots should afford relief in this direction before talking of conference or compromise.

The reader will note the stinging rebuke to the "patriots" for thinking of conferences and compromises whilst such inhumanities are being perpetrated. The facts briefly set forth in the telegram are supplemented with details in a covering letter, but I am not free as yet to give them. Professor Kripalani, who is the instigator of the wire, is himself in his jail taking measures that may result in the cessation of the degrading inhumanities described in the telegram.

For those who are outside jails the course is clear. Irritation and excitement will do us no good. We must recognize the gravity of the problem. The greater the dirt, the greater the need for self-purification and self-sacrifice. We can gain nothing by vilifying the police. They are creatures of circumstances. Their training has not

[1] His letter, not reproduced here, described civil disobedience activities in Meerut and the barbaric behaviour of the police.

improved the nature they brought with them, probably it has been made worse.

It is for the first time they are handling their cultured countrymen with a high purpose. We must not expect a sudden change in the police. Patience and gentleness will convert them into decent men with fellow-feeling. For me swaraj commenced when the-best of us found themselves inside prison walls. Ever since it has been a steady accession of strength and a steady reformation. The latter is not to begin after a settlement but it will be the result of real and ever growing reformation. Shall we not blame ourselves, too, for the police brutality? Have we not too long neglected them, too long feared them, thought ill of them and considered them to be past redemption? If we were to retain the same attitude of mind, we shall find so many groups to be beyond hope, that we shall have only ourselves left as paragons of perfection and patterns of virtue. In other words, there would be no swaraj at the end of such exclusive assumption of virtue. Let us, therefore, take a portion of the blame ourselves for the vices of the police and the weakness of our general surroundings. But our patience will be justified only if we exchange for love of ease and comfort, love of pain and suffering. In spite of the gruesome news served out to us from day to day, we can afford to be happy if we have done our little best in the cause. We must after all leave the result in the hands of God.

PUNJAB OFFERING

The impartial Punjab Government have given the opportunity to Jullundur, which seemed to be left out, of covering itself with honour. They have arrested its leading worker Lala Hans Raj, a barrister belonging to an old noble family which has rendered many a service to the Government. Lala Hans Raj's offence consists in his having dared like Lala Duni Chand of Ambala personally to picket the liquor licence auction. One would have thought it to be a merit for a barrister to exchange his brief for moral reform. But in India Government look at things differently. Lala Hans Raj will ,however, be none the worse for his jail experiences. His grateful countrymen will put a higher valuation upon his services as a national prisoner than as a successful barrister.

Lala Duni Chand left with his son a letter to be sent to me from which I copy the following:[1]

[1] The excerpt, not reproduced here, contained news of Duni Chand's arrest for picketing an auction sale of liquor contracts in Court premises and of arrests of other volunteers for picketing liquor shops.

Mrs. Duni Chand sends a small letter saying how glad she 'was to part with her husband, weak in body though he was, for she knew that he was serving the people.

INTERFERENCE WITH RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

It has fallen to the lot of Pandit Arjunlal Sethi to suffer religious persecution in jails. When he underwent a long term of imprisonment in Jeypore he had to hunger-strike for being disallowed to perform religious ceremonies. He is now serving in Sagor Jail. His son who is in Ajmer says:

> Inhuman treatment is reported to be meted out to my father. He has been suffering from bad pneumonia. In spite of his illness, he was made to grind. It was when he was thus pressed that he had tendered an apology which he withdrew immediately he came to his senses. Nowadays he is being forced to take eggs and wine. He has lost in weight.

I do not know how far this news is true. The son has not been able to see his father. If the information received by him is correct it is a case of pure torture. Anybody can see that he is too frail to be given the task of grinding. To force a patient to take brandy or eggs is a crime against religion. I know a young civil resister in South Africa, Revashanker Sodha, had eggs forced down his throat. He bore down his persecutors by simply vomiting out the liquid as soon as it was forced down. The authorities had not the heart to repeat the cruelty in the face of such fixed determination. Needless to say the brave lad recovered in spite of his refusal to take eggs and is today hale and hearty. Opinions may differ as to the wisdom of rejecting foods prescribed by doctors. But here we are not concerned with the medical aspect. I hold that a man has a perfect right to refuse to be cured at the cost of what he believes to be his religious conviction specially when he is under duress.

"MOTHERLAND" AT BAY

Maulvi Mazharul Haq's[1] *Motherland* has been called upon to lodge security. It has proved too independent for the Bihar authorities. It has mercilessly exposed their delinquencies. It has dared to think aloud. Frankness must be muzzled. The editor has proudly declined to lodge security and has declared his intention of bringing out his paper as a handwritten sheet. He should command the services of a numberof volunteers to make copies of his thoughts from day to

[1] 1866-1930; Nationalist leader of Bihar; one of the founders and later, president of the Muslim League; supported Gandhiji during Champaran satyagraha and the non-co-operation movement

day. Compression of news and thoughts will perhaps be better valued by the reader, if only for the special effort it will cost so many workers to copy. The value of an elegantly written copy of the *Gita* is any day greater than of the printed copies. I notice *in* the *Chronicle* that the *Bande Mataram* security of Rs. 2,000 has been forfeited. I presume, it too will have to join the ever increasing army of handwritten newspapers. It is merely a question of time when every non-co-operating newspaper will be suppressed. The printing can be suppressed but the suppression of writing is difficult. But I observe that the Orissa authorities served notice on leaders not to write notices about recruiting volunteers, etc. To suppress the written word, the Government will have to imprison the bodies of offending writers. Then will the thought be entirely free. And the silent word of a true and tested man is more potent than the written or the printed word of one whom the people do not know or recognize as their own. Let no non-co-operator with the wonderful lesson of the past three months of repression and the consequent awakening, for a single minute feel disturbed by the suppression of newspapers conducted in the interest of non-co-operation.

MORE WRITTEN NEWSPAPERS

Swaraj of Allahabad which had its security forfeited has come out as a written newspaper. It is edited by Babu Ramkrishna Laghate. It is elegantly written. The art of calligraphy is going out of fashion by reason of the introduction of printing and typewriting. The issuing of written newspapers, if it has to be continued long enough, is bound to result in the revival of the beautiful art. Some of the old manuscripts are "things of beauty and joy for ever". Gauhati, too, has come out with a written newspaper. It is written both in Hindi and Assamese and is issued bi-weekly. The price is three half *paisas*. Of all the three written newspapers the Gauhati copy is the clearest for reading. It is called the *Congress.* In point of calligraphy Swaraj is the best. The *Independent* print is indistinct. Either the Roneo or the tracing on the Cyclo must be bad. All the three papers will have to train a special staff of volunteers or paid workers so as to be able to issue copies that can be deciphered as easily as the printed sheet. And they will have to cultivate the art of compressed expression. I feel sure that, compactly written as all the three newspapers are, there is room for further compression without making the thought obscure. The object must be to give the reader what he cannot-get elsewhere in the shape of thought or facts. The managers must see every copy and

destroy all unreadable faint impressions even as a printer does. I remind the conductors of these admirable papers that the *Satyagrahi*[1] which had a short-lived career consisted only of one side of a foolscap sheet.

DEFERRED PAY

The Government have found no difficulty in stopping the deferred pay, as pensions are nowadays called, of Mr. Vinayakrao Joshi of Dharwar for no other reason than that he has tried to serve his country, whereas Sir Michael O'Dwyer who never loses an opportunity of vilifying educated Indians and of insolently patronizing the masses as if they were little children always needing the attention and care of an elder, and General Dyer, who still believes that he performed a simple duty when he massacred the innocent men in Jallianwala Bagh, continue to draw pensions. We are told that there are legal difficulties in stopping their pensions and that if the legal obstacle can be surmounted, it would be immoral to take away their pensions. Verily there is one law for an Indian, another for an Englishman; one law for a patriot, another for a persecutor. What is moral in the case of one is immoral in the case of the other! I congratulate Mr. Joshi on his spirited reply to the Government and on his patriotic courage in forgoing his pension when it became a matter of choice between service of his country and retention of his pension. Mr. Joshi's sacrifice strengthens India's cause. His material loss is Indians' moral gain.

POLITICAL AGENCIES

Repression is slowly spreading its net in all directions, and nowadays precedes the Prince's visit as if to prove to the people the might His Royal Highness represents. As he is expected in Indore, Babus Badrilal Aryadutta and Chhotelal have been deported from Indore Camp by the Agent to the Governor-General. Orders have also been issued prohibiting public meetings within the Residency area. It may be that public life is not so well organized in these Residencies as in British India proper. But if it is, I have no doubt about the- duty of the residents of the Camp. If they can retain the non-violent spirit and if they are at all well organized, they should hold meetings notwithstanding the orders, and risk deportation or imprisonment. In my opinion those who are deported should return to be arrested. A

[1] Gandhiji's unregistered newsweekly first issued On April 7, 1919, in defiance of the Press Act during the agitation against the Rowlatt legislation. Its publication was stopped when Gandhiji suspended civil disobedience; *vide* Vol. XV.

similar story comes from Kathiawar. It seems that the Princes of Kathiawar have arranged shikar parties and other non-political but expensive amusements for H.E. the Governor. The subjects of the States are angry, not over the Governor's visit, but over the expensive amusements arranged in his honour. Probably the Governor does not even appreciate them. Why should these functionaries always want amusements? It is not as if they are without any whilst they are working at headquarters. Indeed these amusements themselves must become a task for at least some of them. Neither party can be natural at these shows. They must put on their best behaviour and observe their respective distances. They must always act both officially and correctly even when they are meeting unofficially. In the circumstances, it would certainly save a great deal of time and expense if these amusements were cut down and the visits limited to State business only. Moreover, the shikar parties offend vegetarian Kathiawar. The people of Kathiawar cannot but resent, even when they say nothing, the waste of animal life for no purpose whatsoever. I am told that in order to draw the beasts of prey, goats have to be sacrificed for days in advance. Such shikar, over which so much innocent blood is spilt and is without any risk of life or limb on the part of the shikari, is robbed of all charm and becomes a mild copy of the law that prevails between the Government and the people in India, whereby the public are always the sport of the Government which never runs any risk. It is not the Mosaic law of tooth for tooth but it is the law of bullets against brickbats, life for a scratch. When the hunter runs no risk, it is not good sport but is downright cruelty. But the Agent to the Governor in Kathiawar evidently could not tolerate protest meetings even against the extravagance of the Princes and has therefore, it appears, prohibited public meetings and arrested Messrs Manilal Kothari and Mansukhlal Ravjibhai Mehta.

All this activity in the Agencies is a new development. I congratulate those who are arrested. The law of non-violence is just as imperative in the Agencies and the States as it is in the pure British Area. What is more, the residents in the States must not embarrass the latter in respect of or in the interest of the movement of non-co-operation with the Government. They may fight against their local grievances but even then not in the intensive non-co-operation manner except under very grave circumstances and except when public opinion is with them. In the States the subjects cannot claim to have exhausted all their resources with the Princes themselves. They must form public opinion, carry on agitation and otherwise organize themselves. I often hear the talk that the Congress became useful only when non-co-operation came in. This is an utterly wrong view of the

situation. The Congress agitation paved the way for non-co-operation. The latter was the fitting corollary to the previous Congress activities. The Congress has always been in India the greatest demonstrative and effective agency for ventilating people's grievances. It has always been a true register of popular strength and weakness. The States subjects, too, must have their Congresses and Conferences quite apart from the British Indian prototype and probably differently managed. They may learn from the mistakes of the parent body but they have to go through that preliminary discipline. A mere unexaggerated exposure of a wrong is by no means a small matter. Wrong like vice flourishes in secrecy. It dies of sunlight. Therefore let the subjects of the States organize themselves quickly and in a methodical manner without mixing up and spoiling their local matters with the National Congress. The State subjects can work as so many are doing in the Congress and for the Congress outside the States area.

A WARNING VOICE FROM BENGAL

There is a friend, an old and tried servant of the nation, who never fails to inform me of threatening clouds that appear time and again on the horizon in Bengal. This time he warns me against countenancing a general non-payment movement. He thinks that precipitate action is quite likely in Bengal as most of the leaders are in jail. I cannot complain but I cannot help noting that the imprisonment of leaders is due to the criminal folly of the Government which has treated the real peace-makers as if they were peace-breakers. The Government are inviting violence. They are, as if of a set purpose, preparing the country for violence. But here again I must not complain. I admit that most of us had expected all this and more, and yet we came to- the conclusion that we had to take our courage in both our hands and move forward without faltering. Our trust then was, as it today is, in God.

But I know that we must take every possible precaution to avert every unexpected crisis. I have therefore strongly advised and advise again that wisdom requires that all parts of India should wait for the experiment which I have undertaken personally to supervise. Bengal has done much. She has worked wonders, she has suffered much, is still suffering and is still keeping herself under great restraint. I would appeal to all the Bengal leaders to rest on their oarsand not to take a single new step. Let them by all means assert the right of free speech and free association. But there is no occasion for embarking on mass civil disobedience, or non-payment, which is one phase of it. The workers will have taken the masses through a richer discipline by

advising them to pay the rents due for the current period.

WHAT ABOUT ANDHRA?

"Then why have you advised Andhra in favour of non-payment? Have you not committed a breach of your own compact with the Malaviya Conference not to start mass civil disobedience up to 31st instant?" asks another friend. *(These notes are being written on the 30th).* Well, I have not advised the Andhras to start mass civil disobedience. I could not prevent them from preparing for it. Their suspension was merely to a period inside the due date for the purpose of feeling their way. The Government have certainly precipitated matters. But the Andhra people are shrewd and I hope they know the art of humility. In spite of the Government provocation, I have every hope that they all will be humble enough not to undertake mass civil disobediene unless they find that they are absolutely ready, and are sure of being able to fulfil all the conditions laid down by the Congress, non-violence being by no means the least of them. I would certainly be better pleased if no other part of India, not excluding Andhra, was to try the experiment till the result of mine was definitely known.

DANGER OF MASS MOVEMENT

Whilst there is every reason for self-gratification over mass awakening, it would be foolish to ignore its undoubted dangers. I have just read a notice in the papers that a girl has been pretending to be my daughter and receiving on that account all kinds of attention. I do not mind owning, I should be proud to own, thousands of good, restrained girls as my daughters. They will do credit to me and the country. The world would recognize them as members of an ever increasing family by adoption. As it is, I have to remark for the tenth time that I do not possess the good fortune to have a daughter. There is a tiny "untouchable" girl whom I do proudly call my adopted daughter. She has brought happiness to me and I hope by the time she has grown up she will bring truth and humility to her future field of service. Today she is a veritable "devil". She believes in all play and no work. She finds it hard to work without the ebony ruler which used to keep her straight in her parental home. But I do not mind this charming idler of seven years claiming me as father. There are also some grown up girlswho permit me the pleasure of claiming them as my daughters, but then they make it difficult for me to live up to the standard they exact from me. They are ever in danger of my being a discreditable father to them. But I must inform all the girls of India that I decline to run the risk of being discredited by their forcible

adoption; I want certainly to adopt all the exacting girls like the ones whose names, too, I dare not give to the world.

But the reported forcible adoption of me by a girl is a comparatively harmless pastime. I hear that a gentleman by name Motilal Puncholi hailing from Udaipur claims to be my disciple and to preach temperance and what not among the rustics of the Rajputana States. He is reported to he surrounded by an armed crowd of admirers and establishing his kingdom or some otherdom wherever he goes. He claims, too, miraculous power. He or his admirers are reported also to have done some destructive work. I wish that people will once for all understand that I have no disciples. I have for the time being at any rate no existence apart from the Congress and the Khilafat committees. All my activity is referable to these two organizations. None works in my name; none has authority to use my name save under my own writing. No one has any writing from me to do any work save the Congress or the Khilafat work. And nobody has any authority from me to use any arms, even sticks, against any person.

I understand that these brave but simple rustics have been induced to refuse payment of taxes due to the State to which they belong. They are even told that I have asked the tax-payers belonging to the Sirohi State not to pay more than Rs. 1¼ each. Now I know nothing of all this. No one has consulted me about the matter. Pandit Ramakant Malaviya, Chief Minister of the State, has kindly brought the matter to my notice and he tells me that great mischief is being done in my name. If my writing reaches these countrymen at all, I would like to tell them that they should lay all their grievances before the State authorities and never resort to arms. If they wish to withhold payment of tax which they-consider excessive, it is their right. But it is a right never to be exercised lightly. They must cultivate public opinion and let their case see the light of day. If they do not take these precautions they will find everything and everybody arrayed against them and they will find themselves heavy losers in the end.

Young India, 2-2-1922

30. DR. RAY ON CHARKHA

It gives me real pleasure to publish in full the following translation[1] of a closely reasoned preface of Sir P. C. Ray to a Bengali booklet on charkha. Valuable as his wonderful chemical researches

[1] Not reproduced here

and organization of industries have been, I have no doubt that his organization of the home spinning will be more valuable and wonderful still. The chemical researches have brought renown to India, the industries with which he has identified himself have brought Bengal a few lacs of rupees and provided work for talented Bengalis, but the introduction of home spinning means banishment of starvation or semi-starvation and degradation from millions of Bengali homes, of famines and consequent diseases and the introduction in these homes of the sunshine of smile which a contented stomach brings. I entirely endorse Dr. Ray's remarks that Bengal gained nothing during the first swadeshi agitation by bringing cloth from Bombay or Ahmedabad instead of Manchester or Japan. In order to enable us to feel the full and immediate effect of swadeshi, we must manufacture yarn and cloth in our millions of scattered homes. Swadeshi will bind them as nothing else can.

Young India, 2-2-1922

31. INDIANS ABROAD

To
The Editor, *Young India*
sir,

. . . our countrymen in Kenya have to face a great agitation by the European Colonists, while the condition of our helpless brethren in Fiji is growing worse everyday. The troubles and difficulties of the e people are too numerous to be related here.

At this time . . . it cannot be expected, that the Indian public will be able to devote a great deal of attention to the problems of Indians abroad, still it is our duty to do something for these unfortunate countrymen Of ours in the Colonies. . . .

. . . We have decided to do propaganda work for the Colonial Indians in an organized way We shall be thankful if our countrymen in the Colonies will send to us regularly accounts of their difficulties, which will be circulated here through the English and vernacular papers. Any suggestions for the proper organization of this work will oblige us.

We are, etc.,

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM — TOTARAM SANADHYA[1]
SABARMATI — BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

I hope that these earnest workers will get all the assistance they

[1] He had spent many years in Fiji and written a book describing his stay there. Later, he joined Gandhiji's Ashram at Sabarmati.

are asking for. I feel humiliated to think that in spite of expert knowledge of the condition of our countrymen beyond the seas, I am doing nothing specially for them. I take comfort in the thought that there are two specialists, besides Charlie Andrews, who are interesting themselves in the matter. For me, the swaraj work includes the service of the pariahs of the Empire.

Young India, 2-2-1922

32. A CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY'S GENERALIZATIONS

TO
Mr. M. K. Gandhi

SIR,

Until a few days ago I had no personal experience of the results of your propaganda in India. But on 13th January, the day of the arrival of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales in Madras, whilst I was driving through the streets of Georgetown, I was set on by a band of rowdies shouting *Gandhiji ki jai"*, pelted with bricks and tiles, had dry earth poured over me and was forbidden to proceed on my journey. Also one of the lamps of my carriage was lifted out of its socket and carried off . . What I suffered was also the fate of Many other, only some suffered much more seriously. I am fortunate to have escaped without bodily injury. . .

My experience has enlightened me as to some things. I would like to communicate them to you.

You profess to be working for the good of India. So many others profess, Christian missionaries for instance, of whom I am one, so also the British Government. Both of these can point to a past with an immense accomplishment of benefit achieved for this country and its people. . . .

I would like to ask you what have you accomplished of definite improvement in the country and positively good result?. . . Hitherto, youhave been the rouser up of troubles. For those in the Punjab, It was you who were the font and origin, and no one else. Also you have put ideas into the minds of Mohammedans of Khilafat wrongs. As regards the Khilafat, whether to wrong or to right, neither India, its people, nor Government have anything whatever to do, nor desire any. It is a matter entirely outside India. You profess to promote swaraj, yet have offered no constructive ideas of what that is to be, except the puerile and impracticable ones of khaddar and charkha, mere childish notions of what is to benefit the whole of a great nation. How do you intend to carry out swaraj? Are you in any way at all preparing yourself or anyone else for its responsibilities? What are you actually inaugurating of deeds of practical arrangements? You talk of something that is to eventuate in

some vague way. All are sounding words, undefined and indefinite.

Have you studied history and noted the progress of nations? Have you at all noted that progress is made by growth and gradual development; and not by revolution and destruction? Do you ever notice how God works through nature, that the life of plants and animals grows by slow advance, by evolution not revolution. Do you ever watch the sky and the movement of the stars? Those that can be seen to move rapidly are falling and in process of destruction and ruin. The suns and systems which continue through the ages can scarcely be seen to move at all. Have you waited for the dawn of morning to come in? Does it roll up like the shutter of a shop? To ascend a mountain the climber has to take slow and painful steps one after another. To descend quickly he needs only step over the precipice and he is at the bottom in a few seconds. Think Mr. Gandhi, think.

I believe you wish the good of India, as many others do, but your present methods are on the wrong road. For India to be fit for swaraj it must grow into it, not be manufactured. The process of growth has been going on. The British Government and people were helping it to grow and will continue the good work, and will rejoice when at last all the burden and responsibility is off their shoulders. But,—it is a big alternative,—the results of your method of attempting to atain swaraj, even so far as only already evident, ought to show you that you have adopted the wrong course. The disorders which you have stirred up in the Punjab, Bombay, Malabar and elsewhere, the riotings, robberies, cruelties, arson, murders, all these should open your eyes to the fearfully mistaken method you have chosen. Why are you still so blind? You are stirring up evil forces which you cannot control, and rejecting to unite with good forces, which can control and can make for forward movement. While claiming independence you are only too clearly showing that you are incapable of using it. Turn again, O Mahatma! turn again, if you are really a great soul. Enter the strait and narrow path ofself-renunciation and stern discipline and co-operative enterprise. Cease mere shouting and waving of flags. Do something positively good yourself, and not be merely a mouth to find fault with the good that others, imperfectly it is true, but with earnest and unselfish purpose, are at least attempting to do.

Yours sincerely,

G. H. MACFARLANE

MADRAS,

25th January, 1922

This letter[1] is a set-off to the two letters from two English ladies recently published in these columns.[2] They are also Christian

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

[2] *Vide* "Notes", 12-1-1922, under the sub-title "In God's Hands" and `'Notes",

missionaries. It is clear that Mr. Macfarlane has not followed or studied the movement. A missionary of all people should know that it is most dangerous to generalize from particular instances. No doubt it was cowardly on the part of the Madras mob to have assaulted Mr. Macfarlane and robbed him of his lantern. Every sensible man has condemned the madness. Every sensible man admits that it has harmed the cause, for the reason that violence has been done out of false sympathy for non-co-operation whose basis is non-violence.

But are the things that have happened in Bombay and Madras, new experiences in the world's history? Have they not frequently happened in Europe? Have they not repeatedly happened in England and Scotland? Do not enraged mobs express themselves precisely as the Madras and the Bombay mobs have? Have not the Irish done much worse things than the Bombay and the Madras mobs? And have they not got what almost amounts to swaraj because of their hooliganism?

I detest the hooliganism of Bombay and Madras, but from a different standpoint. it detest also the Irish hooliganism. There is, however, a difference between the Irish hooliganism and the Bombay and the Madras copy. The Irish was practical and honest. It was practical because it was not out of tune with the Irish atmosphere. It was honest, because the Irishmen made no secret of their doctrine. The Indian hooliganism is both unpractical and dishonest; unpractical, because so far as I know the Indian mind, hooliganism cannot flourish in India. The Indian mind is not attuned to it. It is dishonest, because the Indian movement professes to be absolutely, though expediently, non-violent. Non-co-operators must not handle what they cannot keep non-violent.

But Mr. Macfarlane is so horrified at the hooliganism of Madras that he considers India to be unfit for swaraj. On the contrary I hold that even hooliganism may be a better state than the existing unnatural and dishonest condition. It has got to be ended at any cost. Only, the present leaders cannot handle a violent movement. The majority of them have neither the desire nor the qualifications for it. They are making a Herculean effort to keep it non-violent.

Mr. Macfarlane claims that India has immensely benefited under the existing system of Government. In my opinion the sum

26-1-1922, under the sub-title "An English Lady Blesses".

total of its activity has been moral, material, and political injury to India. The moral standard is lower today than it used to be. The immorality of the present age is refined and therefore illusive and more dangerous. Materially, there is deeper pauperism today than before. Politically, India is so emasculated that her people scarcely know their degradation.

The writer asks to know the accomplishments of the movement. It has brought about a tremendous awakening among the people. Whereas they had given up hand-spinning entirely, today thousands of homes are spinning hundreds of thousands of yards of yarn. Whereas hand-spun garments had gone out of use, today thousands of men and women are wearing khaddar which has resulted in driving away hunger from thousands of homes. The people know that swaraj means their power over the purse, the law, the police, and the military. They know that there can be no peace till the Punjab wound is healed and the Khilafat wrong is redressed.

The nations have progressed both by evolution and revolution. The one is as necessary as the other. Death, which is an eternal verity, is revolution as birth and after is slow and steady evolution. Death is as necessary for man's growth as life itself. God is the greatest Revolutionist the world has ever known or will know. He sends deluges. He sends storms where a moment ago there was calm. He levels down mountains which He builds with exquisite care and infinite patience. I do watch the sky and it fills me with awe and wonder. In the serene blue sky, both of India and England, I have seen clouds gathering and bursting with a fury which has struck me dumb. History is more a record of wonderful revolutions than of so-called ordered progress—no history more so than the English. And I beg to inform the correspondent that I have seen people trudging slowly up mountains and have also seen men shooting up the air through great heights.

Swaraj is India's birthright. The British system has balked her of it. India is struggling to regain her lost liberty, and in doing so sheis trying not to repeat but to make new history. In the process she betrays a woeful desire to repeat it as in Bombay, Madras and Malegaon. Malabar is not to be mixed up with the movement. Independence necessarily means freedom to err. Lastly, I assure the writer and others who think like him that the movement is not one of ill will but of goodwill towards all. Time alone can prove the truth of it. The agony does not permit us to see the new birth concealed beneath it. Let us watch, wait, and pray.

Young India, 2-2-1922

33. PRACTISING LAWYERS AND VOLUNTEERING

TO

The Editor, *YOUNG INDIA*

SIR

1. Is it permissible for practising lawyers to enrol themselves as volunteers?

Writing about lawyers in *Young India* dated the 12th instant,[1] you observe, "But the Congress[2] has purposely opened an honourable door for them. The original draft was perhaps uncertain as to any but full non-co-operators being entitled to sign the volunteers' pledge. The conditions for them are easy of fulfilment being mostly matters of belief."

On the other hand, in a report of your conference with the Bengal delegate at Ahmedabad,[3] published in *The Tribune* of 20th January 1922, the following passage occurs:

"Questioned as to how a practising lawyer can serve the country according to the resolution, Mahatmaji said:

A practising lawyer can certainly wear khadi but he cannot be a volunteer.

P: I fear that work shall stop in some places for want of men.

MAHATMAJI: . . . You will certainly get their help in conncetion with your work among the untouchables, or for temperance work or in connection with swadeshi, but they cannot be members of the Volunteer Corps. The Volunteer Corps is being formed in defiance of Government notification and only those are fit to go to jail who are pure-minded men." Is this report in any way materially incorrect or has there been lately a change in your views on the subject? To the ordinary practising lawyer the matter is not quite free from difficulty. For, whilst the Congress resolution[4] is comprehensive enough to include co-operators and non-co-operators, lawyers and laymen alike, it seems quite inconsistent, almost hypocritical, on the part of a practising lawyer to enrol himself as a volunteer.

For one thing, it is entirely against the spirit of all the Congress resolutions on non-co-operation and your own interpretations of them, that a man, who has failed to obey the call of the country, should appear before the public in any prominent form of public activity.

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 12-1-1922, under the sub-title "About Lawyers"

[2] Held at Ahmedabad in December 1921

[3] For the report as published in *Amrita Bazar Patrika,* 14-l-l922, *vide* "Interview with Bengal Delegates' 29-12-1921

[4] *Vide* "Speech at Congress Session, Ahmedabad-I", 28-12-1921.

2. Clause (4) of the pledge[2] requires every volunteer to wear only "hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar to the exclusion of every other cloth". Is the word khaddar used here in its narrow literal sense, signifying hand-woven cotton cloth or is it used in a more comprehensive sense as to embrace all kinds of fabrics, woollen, cotton, silken etc., made out of hand-spun yarn and woven with the hand?

I am, etc.,

RAMDAS CHHOKRA

BAR-AT-LAW

LYALLPUR

In publishing the foregoing I have removed all the critical part. As I read the Congress resolution, it is certainly open to lawyers to join the Volunteers' Corps. I know that the wording was purposely changed by the Subjects Committee to find room for incomplete non-co-operators. I have not read the report of my conversation with the Bengali delegates in the Khadi Nagar. But I do not remember having said that lawyers could not become volunteers as contemplated by the Congress resolution. My notes in *Young India* were written almost the same time as the conversation. What I distinctly remember having said is that lawyers cannot become office-bearers. They could not become members of executive committees. But the Volunteers' pledge is for the purpose, among others, of nullifying the effect of the disbandment notices of the Government. In my opinion a lawyer who conscientiously signs the pledge is sufficiently pure for the purpose of going to jail. And the very fact of his readiness to go to jail, ensures suspension of practice for the period of imprisonment. Suspension contemplated by the non-co-operation resolution is meant to last till swaraj is attained, which a lawyer may not be able to brave, though he may not mind, by signing the pledge, the risk of loss of practiceshould he have to go to jail. In the one case suspension is a certainty, in the other a possibility—very remote if a large number took the pledge. The gain in lawyers signing the pledge is great. They show their open sympathy with the cause, in a limited sense perhaps, and they definitely and in their own persons advance the cause of swadeshi. I would give much to see the lawyers having the courage of discarding their totally unnecessary foreign cloth and foreign cut and taking up the khaddar dress and thus identifying themselves with the wonderful manifestation of the mass spirit. All the cloth that is hand-spun and hand-woven whether wool, silk or cotton is khaddar. But it is expected that no one will take to silk or woollen khaddar

except when it is required by climatic or other urgent considerations. The fashion certainly should be as Dr. Ray says,[1] to weir the coarse khaddar. Let me repeat what I have said before, that khaddar that is coarse to look at is, like tussore silk, soft to the touch, and protects the skin much better than the soft-looking khaddar.

Young India, 2-2-1922

34. TO KHOJA BROTHERS AND SISTERS

A Muslim friend has written a long letter about the poor progress of swadeshi among the *Khojas*[2]. I reproduce the following portion from it:[3]

I have not addressed a special appeal to the *Khojas* till now, as I had no occasion to do so. We cannot ignore even a group of five men in this national and religious struggle, not to speak of a group of 2,50,000. We should accept what people give and then appeal to them for more. The *Khojas* are in fact a prominent community. they have money and also ability; some of them are men of wide outlook. They have some liberal-hearted gentlemen among them. Sometimes I even meet open-hearted men and women belonging to that community. Some of them, I know, read *Navajivan* carefully and regularly. If I could, I would certainly draw the *Khoja* brothers and sisters towards non-co-operation or, if not to that, at least towards swadeshi.

Swadeshi is such an all-embracing and simple duty which everyone can discharge that no Indian should ever forsake it. An eight-year-old Telugu girl writes: "Having faith that swaraj can be won through the spinning-wheel, I ply it regularly and spin. I believe that we shall get swaraj if we do this."

I have told this girl in reply that my faith in the spinning-wheel is the same as before. I certainly believe that, only if the people start spinning daily as a matter of religious duty, give up foreign cloth, wear khadi and all the time pray to God for help while spinning and do no more, we shall win swaraj.

Those people, therefore, who do not understand all the items in the non-co-operation programme, or if they understand them, do not have the strength to act as required, should at any rate start following the swadeshi-dharma immediately. Many *Khoja* sisters have told me

[1] In his preface to the booklet *Charkha* by Satis Chandra Das Gupta

[2] A community among Muslims

[3] Not translated here. The correspondent had asked Gandhiji to address a special appeal to the two and a half lakh *Khojas* and persuade them to adopt Khadi and spinning.

that, owing to the custom of wearing silk and fine cloth, the poorer among them are not able to attend *Khoja* gatherings. Some fail, out of timidity, to give up foreign cloth and some are so much enamoured of silk clothes and fine muslin that they turn up their noses at the very thought of khadi. People who thus despise anything belonging to their own country practically become foreigners though native born. Those people, especially, who give up the use of swadeshi cloth—cloth woven by women from whatever quality of yarn is available—should certainly be regarded as traitors to the country.

If all Hindus and Muslims behave in this manner, how can the country's poverty be abolished What occupation but stone-breaking will poor women then have? Even a famous chemist like Dr. P. C. Ray has been convinced that famine will vanish from Bengal not through his researches in chemistry but through the spinning-wheel. He has only recently got designed a spinning-wheel called the Khulna spinning-wheel and supplies such spinning-wheels to the famine-stricken people through his numerous factories. He no more gives them free rice but tells them that they should spin in order to get rice. In this way, he has been introducing the spinning-wheel in the poverty-stricken villages of Khulna. He has taken a pledge that, if the four villages there with which he is in very close contact do not, within six months, spin enough yarn to meet their requirements, he will have nothing to do with them. This saintly chemist now wears only khadi and takes pride in doing so. He feels ashamed to wear anything except khadi.

Khoja brothers and sisters should ponder over such examples and follow them. I know that in a small community like the *Khojas,* among whom poverty is practically unknown, it is difficult for anyoneto adopt simplicity all at once. They make donations to charities and feel that they have done their duty. I shall say this to them. "Why do you believe that you are a small community? Do you not include yourselves among the thirty crores [of Indians]? You certainly have your share of their joys and sorrows. As long as even one brother out of these thirty crores is only skin-and-bone and even one sister has to sell her honour for want of employment, you, I and all others should feel ashamed." I hope, therefore, that the *Khojas* and such other communities which have not yet appreciated the importance of swadeshi will come to appreciate it immediately and that the spinning-wheel and khadi will be introduced in all *Khoja* homes, be they rich or poor. and I hope also that not only will no one feel

ashamed to wear khadi but actually everyone will look upon it as a real ornament.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 2-2-l922

35. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

BARDOLI
February 3, 1922

I envy your spinning-wheel and *Ramayana*. The latter, I hope, is not a wretched translation of Valmiki, but the original of Kamban[1] of which I have read so much in Pope's[2] Tamil Hand-book.[3]

Jail diary

36. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

BARDOLI,
February 3 [*1922*][4]

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

I have your notes. Of course you do not expect me to write to you often. I am prayerfully following your development under silence. You will certainly benefit by it. One meal may be called a semi-fast, often it is no fast at all. But it mat[ters] little what it is called. You are going through discipline and that is enough.

If you are not giving regularly three to four hours to the spinning I [shou]ld strongly advise you to do so now.

I entirely agree with you that to perfect oneself is to serve one's country to perfection. And perfect service of the country is possible only when it is not inconsistent with the service of whole humanity. The ways of perfection are many. Some attain it by silent meditation and some by act[ive] work. The motive in either case must be love of

[1] Author of the Tamil *Ramayana*

[2] G. U. Pope (1820-1908); did missionary work in South India; author of *First Lessons in Tamil, A Handbook of the Ordinary Dialect of the Tamil Language and other works*

[3] On p. 176 of his *Handbook* (7th Edition, 1911) G. U. Pope refers to Kamban as "a great master of Tamil rhythms"

[4] The original has "1921", but on February 3, 1921, Gandhiji was not at Bardoli, nor was the Bardoli problem an issue under discussion; the year 1921, therefore, is evidently a slip for 1922

service.

You need not, therefore, worry about Bardoli so long as you are sure that what you are doing is in the same direction.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3202

37. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

BARDOLI,

February 3, 1922

CHI. MAHADEV,

I hope you got my reply to your letter. I make use of your letters regularly.

I do not see any difficulty as long as you do everything with the permission of the jailor. There can be still less difficulty when it is necessary to break the jail rules deliberately and openly. I have already written to explain when the rules may be disobeyed.

You must have seen that a decision has been taken that Bardoli should make the start. I have now, according to our practice, sent an ultimatum to the Viceroy which expires on the 11th. This means that we have got to do something tangible on that day. My letter must have reached the Viceroy today. If he concedes the demands put forth in it, civil disobedience will be suspended for the time being. The demands are that the Viceroy should withdraw his notification, should release the prisoners and declare that our peaceful activities will not be interfered with. If he concedes these demands, we would resume our work of organizing our movement peacefully. Freedom of the Press is covered by our demands. The Viceroy will not perhaps grant this demand, but he will have to ultimately, if Bardoli shows its strength of self-sacrifice and if the other parts of the country remain peaceful.

You must now be running self-government there. You should elect the president and other office-bearers and see to it that everyone accounts for every minute of his time.

Ramdas and Krishnadas are with me. Gangabehn too has come. In a few days, I shall call some weavers, spinners, etc., from the Ashram. True, weaving activity here is progressing rather too slowly.

Vithalbhai will most probably stay here.

Your health ought to become very good

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 7866

38. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

BARDOLI,
February 4, 1922

MATHURADAS
93 BAZARGATE ST.
BOMBAY

YOU ACTED MOST WISELY.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

39. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

BARDOLI,
February 4, 1922

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your wire. I did not expect better results about East Africa, nor do I expect more from South Africa at present. The Indians will all the same hold their own somehow. Whilst you should do all you can, I would like you to see with me that it is not to be expected that the condition in the colonies can possibly improve before it has considerably improved in India. You can have no notion of the wicked deeds that are happening in India in the name of Law and Order. They are really worse than in the Punjab. Fortunately now the people are knowingly submitting—not out of their weakness but out of their strength. There is room still for improvement I know. Hence the decision of Bardoli.

If there is anything on which we must talk, you will come over to Bardoli. It is 1½ hours' journey from Surat. There is a good train from Colaba to Surat at 9.20 p.m. reaching Surat at 6 a.m. You reach Bardoli at 10 a.m.

You must read my letter[1] to the Viceroy.

With love,

Yours,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 2609

40. ANGAD'S MISSION OF PEACE

It is a rule of civilized fighting that a warrior, having mobilized all his strength, acts with the utmost modesty. From then onwards, he never forsakes courtesy. At the commencement of every battle, he gives due Warning to the opponent, cautions him and requires him to rectify his mistake and remove the cause of the conflict.

Rama made such an appeal to Ravana. On arriving at Setubandh Rameshwar[2], he collected together his army of vanaras[3] and held a discussion as to who should convey the warning to Ravana. To many, of course, this step seemed unnecessary, while some saw weakness in it. To make an appeal to a proud person like Ravana amounted to feeding his pride. Rama listened to these arguments attentively and explained to his army that Rama's soldiers should not worry whether the peace mission would have any effect on Ravana or not. They should only think of what civilized behaviour required of them. If this made Ravana prouder, he would become all the more over-confident. What would Rama lose by that? He was bound to become the stronger for having given due warning and done his duty. He chose the strong, patient, and courteous Angad and sent him on a peace mission to Ravana.The latter, of course, got irritated. Was he likely to listen to reason? In the end, however, he lost his kingdom and his life.

Following this same principle of civilized behaviour, we have sent a courteous peace offer to the Viceroy. He is not likely to pay attention to it. How does that affect us? Actually, his not paying attention to it will greatly increase our strength. The world, too, will turn more definitely in our favour. Our world of course means our brothers who still think that we are misguided and who support the Government.

This time the issue is different. Before we secure a settlement about the Khilafat, the Punjab or swaraj, we have to settle accounts with the Government and its supporters in regard to another matter.

[1] Of February 1,1922

[2] A town on the southern tip of India

[3] Monkeys

This Government has always maintained its control by distracting the people's attention. The real disease is ignored and attention is focussed on something else. The Bengalis' disease was the grievance about partition. If they were driven by that disease to throw bombs, the Government described this bomb-throwing as their disease and tried to make the people forget the original disease. Using the bomb-throwing as an excuse, it tried systematically to harass innocent citizens and to emasculate the people. A like disease was the Rowlatt Act. In the excitement caused by that disease, the Punjab became delirious. The Government perpetrated a massacre in order to cure the province of this disease, and in this way tried to conceal the original disease. Now, the country suffers from the triple fever of the Khilafat, the Punjab and swaraj. It is in agony with suffering. A fire within sometimes leads to insanity. Taking this insanity to be the real malady, the Government has adopted a policy of repression. Thus, it has become a rule with it to make the people forget the real malady, to look upon its effects themselves as the disease and to follow a policy of repression to cure them of that.

We have now learnt by experience that we should give the Government no opportunity to deceive the people. We may not mind whether or not it cures the real malady, but we should not let it assume the evils resulting from that disease to be the disease itself and try to suppress them. The Government has maintained its rule till today by doing exactly this. If the people are hurt by any mistake of the Government or by its arbitrary actions, and even lose their head in consequence, then in suppressing them the Government will try to make the public forget its high-handedness; this we should not permit it to do. If we can wrest from it this weapon for ever, it will not be able to adopt autocratic methods. Once repression becomes impossible autocracy will give way to the reign of public opinion.

Fortunately, the Government itself has focussed attention on this issue by resorting to repression. We should forthwith take up the challenge. The Government may harass us as much as it likes but a fourth demand has been added to the earlier three, and it should get priority over them. We should create conditions in which it would be impossible for the Government to resort to repression.

Repression means gagging us, dissolving our associations and suppressing our organs of public opinion. How can we bear Lalaji's *Bande Mataram* being forced to stop publication? Can we see Mazharul Huq Saheb's *Motherland* being suppressed? Jafar Ali Khan's *Zamindar*, Habib Khan's *Siyasat* and Radhakishan's *Pratap* —all these have been suppressed. The *Independent* was suppressed long ago, and so was the *Swaraj of* Prayag. The remedy for all this

must surely be in our hands. Such repression ought not to be allowed to go on.

A government which does not wish to submit to public opinion will always try to silence protests by the people. If it fails in the attempt, that will be its defeat. In the peace offer, therefore, which has been dispatched from Bardoli, the demand that the Government should stop repression is given the first place. When we can express our views freely, when our organs are allowed to be published and we can form our associations in freedom, we are as good as free; three-fourths of swaraj will have been then established. A vigorous expression of public opinion will by itself suffice to bend the Government. It is certainly part of the meaning of swaraj that we should have freedom of action and expression. Only murder will be outlawed then. Even under swaraj, we shall not get the right to murder anyone.

It has been indicated in that peace offer that, if the Government releases all persons imprisoned for peaceful activities and stops repression, we shall suspend civil disobedience for the present. In aggressive civil disobedience, an individual or a group respectfully disobeys even innocent man-made laws on purpose to defy authority. The civil disobedience which we are carrying on all over the country today has been forced on us and, therefore, it is defensive. One simply cannot avoid it. This means that we express our view though the Government gags us, hold meetings though these are prohibited, publish newspapers when orders are passed for their closure. All this is defensive Civil disobedience. We have been offering it and will certainly go on offering it as long as arbitrary orders continue to be issued. But the other type of civil disobedience, which is not for self-defence but is meant to harass the Government, which is a form of revolt, we may call off if the Government abandons its policy of repression. I feel that we should suspend it on this condition. For, if the Government removes the restrictions over our speech, our pen and our associations, it will have to concede our other demands in a short time.

That is to say, the task before Bardoli today is to secure the release of our fighters and compel the Government to give up repression. If Bardoli achieves this, it will have done its job fully.

If, however, the Viceroy does not concede even this, what will Bardoli do? If he does not concede even the right to express public opinion, how can we avoid launching aggressive civil disobedience? A man may be on the defensive up to a certain limit, but beyond that he may even start an offensive. Aggressive civil disobedience may be

looked upon as a kind of non-violent offensive.

We have explained all this to the Viceroy. By making this peace offer, we have shown the highest culture. The offer means that, if the Viceroy grants by the 11th instant the demand made on behalf of Bardoli, the civil disobedience to be started by the latter will be postponed for the time being. After the fighters are released, we shall carry on the fight as all of us together may decide to do. Personally, I believe that, if our demand is accepted, there will be little need for us to start mass civil disobedience. The acceptance of our demand can mean nothing else. I, therefore, think that the demand for freedom of speech, writing and association is unlikely to be accepted.

Bardoli should go ahead with all its preparations. Deficiencies which still remain should be removed and every man and woman should pray to God for strength to bear loss of life or property.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-2-1922

41. MY SPEECH AT SURAT

I like to give summaries of others' and my own speeches and I know I have the ability to do this, but I rarely get time for that. It happens that I have the time and the inclination to give a summary of my speech at Surat on the 31st.[1]

On that day, there was a meeting of the Working Committee in Surat. It was attended by Hakim Ajmal Khan, Mian Chhotani, Dr. [M.A.] Ansari, Dr. Choithram [Gidwani], Shri Kaujalgi and Shri Vithalbhai Patel, all members, and me. Taking advantage of this occasion, they had arranged a meeting for the citizens of Surat. It had been decided that I should not attend the meeting and so I was busy with my work. Meanwhile, Shri Dayalji came and' informed me that the audience demanded my presence. The reason was that Dr. Choithram had needlessly dropped a remark at the meeting that I might possibly be arrested within ten days. On the audience insisting that, in that case, they would like to see me, Shri Dayalji came to persuade me and I went.

Generally, I go to a meeting prepared with an outline of what I am going to say. This time, however, I had not thought about anything at all. But the thought which had been in my mind for some time past came up vividly before me and I put it before the citizens of Surat in such emphatic language as I had not used before. I think

[1] For the speech, *vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Surat", 31-1-1922.

every Gujarati should know what I said.

I should like to see that same thought in everyone's mind. I, therefore, wanted to give my Surat speech for the benefit of all.

There was a time when I felt how good it would be if I were in jail. But now my desire to go to jail has nearly vanished. I feel that imprisonment is only a rest and a luxury for me. I have no fear at all that, if the Government imprisons me, it will harass me in jail. Other prisoners have had to suffer more or less, and so their imprisonment had and continues to have value to that extent. And so this is what I said.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-2-1922

42. HOPES HELD OUT

Bardoli has held out great hopes. May God grant the people of Bardoli courage and good sense! Just as a pledge was taken in the masjid in Pretoria in South Africa, just as this was done at Muzaffarpur for Champaran, just as the mill-hands of Ahmedabad took a pledge under a tree on the river-bank, just as the *Patidars* of Kheda took a pledge at Nadiad, so the representatives of the *Patidars* of Bardoli took a pledge under a tree and they and others did so once again in the Conference *pandal*.

In the same way as the previous pledges were fulfilled somehow, will not God help us to fulfil this one too? Some will fall and others will take their place; in the end, however, will not our hopes be fulfilled? Truth always wins, and it is the divine law that, as long as there is even one person prepared to lay down his life to vindicate truth because it is truth, so long is the victory of truth certain even though crores may be ranged against it. This law admits of no exception. But then, have I made a mistake in trusting Bardoli? I go on making mistakes and every time God rectifies them. People deceive me a thousand times; even so, how can I distrust them? As long as I see the slightest excuse for trusting people, I will certainly trust them. It is foolish to continue trusting after one has had definite ground for not trusting. But to distrust a person on mere suspicion is arrogance and betrays lack of faith in God. It is faith that keeps the world going.

[1] For the speech, *vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Surat", 31-1-1922

If I knew that certain people always deceived me and yet I went on trusting them, there would be no limit to my foolishness. The people of Bardoli have been so frank with me that I felt it a sin to distrust them. I was sceptical when I sat down for discussion with their representatives, but they inspired trust in me.

The people of Bardoli are simple-minded and trustful; they do not care for comforts. They are neither very rich nor very poor; they are not violent, nor are they cowards. They are not quarrelsome but affectionate. There are no serious disputes among them. They have maintained cordial relation with officials. Since they have no local grievances, their request to be allowed to fight is altogether unselfish. They have worked hard to make themselves fit and spared no effort to that end. They have not become perfect in the matter of swadeshi, but they are trying honestly to be so. They have shaken off untouchability to an extent to which no other part of the country has done. I, therefore, believe that, if any taluka is fit [for civil disobedience], Bardoli certainly is.

Some people may feel that the people of Bardoli are known to be rather meek and so they will soon get tired of going to jail, will be afraid to face death and will lose all courage when the Government starts seizing their properties. My experience right to this day has been that it is the meek who patiently submit to suffering. Aggressive people cannot bear suffering. They make others suffer.

And is not this struggle itself meant for the meek? It is planned not to turn the meek into aggressive people but to make them brave and to teach the aggressive to be humble, while preserving their courage. If the struggle can be won only by aggressive people courting imprisonment, we may take it that we are already defeated for, in that case, it is they who will rule. If that happens, we shall have to say that God is the support, not of the meek, but of the aggressive. Then Europe's doctrine of might being right will hold good even here. Is it for this that the Ali Brothers, Das, Lalaji and Motilalji have gone to jail?

We wish to eschew an aggressive spirit, as also hypocrisy, arrogance, violence, untruth, brute force, etc., and to ensure victory of non-violence, straightforwardness, humility, simplicity, truth and soul-force. Therefore, the first quality we should look for is what we call meekness. When meekness is infused with courage, it shines at its best. I expect this to happen in Bardoli too.

However, Bardoli has much more to do yet than what it has already done. It will have to work harder still. I heard these new words in Bardoli—"*Ujla lok*"[1] and "*Kaliparaj*"[2]. The former include *Patidars, Vanias,* Brahmins and others. The latter include *Dublas* and others. The people who have taken interest in and joined this struggle are the so-called respectable classes, and especially the *Patidars* among them. It is believed that the people of the *Kaliparaj* classes will follow the others and it seems likely that they will do so. But that will not be enough. Even the people of the *Kaliparaj* classes should learn to think of the country's good. They also should share in the [national] awakening. That they do not do so means that they live in utter slavery. The very distinction of respectable people and *Kaliparaj* classes should disappear. That people should think of themselves as higher or lower in relation to some others is an intolerable state of affairs. God alone is high and we are all low. If there are any grades in God's court, they must be according to one's deeds. Those who have served more will be high, those who have served less will be low. That is to say, in God's court a servant will become the leader. If a Sudra becomes a man of knowledge, there will be no Brahmin like him. He alone is a Brahmin who has no other use for his knowledge than service to others. If any Sudra can rival a Brahmin in service, the latter will be a Brahmin only in name. A Brahmin should have courage, practical wisdom and the spirit of service in a superlative degree, for he possesses knowledge. With the help of his knowledge he can display these three virtues to best effect. If, however, a Brahmin is timid, lacks practical wisdom and, giving up service, starts playing the leader, then he is no man of knowledge; he is an egotist. Hence the respectable and the *Kaliparaj* classes in Bardoli will have to reverse their roles. It will be best if the very word *Antyaj* is never used in Bardoli.

Volunteers, therefore, should now try to bring the *Kaliparaj* classes gradually into the movement. It is not enough, moreover that we admit *Antyaj* children into our schools or permit them to draw water from our wells. We shall have to help the *Antyajas* to rid themselves of the bad habits they may have contracted. It is as necessary to draw their attention to the need for a daily bath and such other rules, to persuade them to give up flesh-eating and to hold the

[1] Literally, fair-complexioned people
[2] Literally, dark-complexioned people

cow in reverence, as it is to mix with them.

The same about swadeshi. One cannot condone the wasting of even one hour by a resident of Bardoli. Men women and children, all should give their spare time to carding, spinning and weaving. The spinning-wheel, at any rate, should be introduced into every home. It is necessary to remove the almost complete dearth of weavers. The greater the number of young men who learn weaving, the better it will be. Bardoli will be an ideal taluka in every way only when we see attractive khadi being woven in every village or town in it.

There should not be a single village in Bardoli taluka in which the Congress flag does not fly. These are not tasks which can wait till we have won swaraj. Doing this-work is swaraj. There will be swaraj when people learn to Keep good relations among themselves, to obey one another and respect laws made by themselves.

There is no doubt that the evil of drink exists in Bardoli. People generally think that persuading drink-addicts to give up drinking is a difficult task. The difficulty proceeds from our lack of will. If we reason with friends who drink and open their eyes to the harm done by liquor, they will certainly listen to us.

All this work can be done only if we get a good number of volunteers.

Doing these things is a preparation for jail. It is possible that if we work in this way, we may not have to go to jail at all. Our fitness for going to jail consists in our purity and hence the residents of Bardoli should work unremittingly and remove whatever deficiencies still remain. Only then can the taluka be considered fit enough to shoulder the burden of the whole country

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-2-1922

43. APPEAL TO PEOPLE OF BARDOLI

BARDOLI

Sunday, Maha Sud 8 [*February 5, 1922*]

LEAFLET NO. 1

BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF BARDOLI,

I intend to address, as regularly as possible, open letters to you.

It is not a light responsibility which you and I have undertaken. You have taken upon your shoulders a burden for the whole of India. You aspire to stand first in the test.

You wish to make the heaviest sacrifices and, with that end in view, you have been working for complete self-purification.

May God fulfil your wishes. But, then, God's grace does not descend upon us unless we strive.

I have just learnt that *Antyaj* children have already been enrolled in 18 national schools. I was indeed very happy to hear this. As long as there is a single national school without *Antyaj* pupils, it cannot be said that the resolution of the Parishad[1] has been carried out.

Similarly, spinning-wheels must be introduced into every home. No man or woman who has joined non-co-operation may wear anything except hand-spun khadi.

I hope that no intelligent person in the Bardoli taluka will pay land revenues no matter if the Government attaches property, imposes *chothai*[2], carries away cattle or takes away the utensils on. daily use. This is the minimum suffering we should bear.

What are we to do, someone may ask, if our lands are confiscated and we are rendered homeless? I do not think that the Government, if it wants to rule in a civilized manner, will confiscate lands. There is no doubt, however, that it has the power to do so if it chooses. We must be ready to become homeless. But anyone who fights for swaraj must have the faith that he will regain his land after swaraj is won. Even in an armed fight, the fighters have the confidence that they will get back their land when they win. How, then, can this

peaceful struggle have any other result? But, while the struggle is going on, we should be ready even to lose our lands.

The very basis of this struggle is faith in oneself; that is, faith in God. I pray that all of you should have that faith.

Your servant and well-wisher

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 12-2-1922

[1] The Bardoli Taluka Conference held on January 29, 1922

[2] One fourth of the assessment exacted as fine for failure to pay revenue dues

44. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

February 5 [*1922*][1]

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your welcome letter. You were certainly right in your attitude. Let the Government do what they choose. Please keep me informed of what goes on. At this stage I am not publishing the news. As you see I am in Bardoli preparing for mass civil disobedience. You must have read my letter to the Viceroy.

With love to you all,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child,* p. 74

45. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

BARDOLI,
February 5, 1922

I interviewed Mahatmaji on Sunday[2] morning. He was quite hale and hearty and was about to begin in his daily round the item of spinning. His son Ramdas brought him a spinning-wheel and Mahatmaji as he went on turning the wheel replied to my questions . . . .

QUESTION: What has led the Working Committee to lay emphasis on foreign propaganda now, thus reversing the decision of the Nagpur Congress? ANSWER: The question is wrongly put. The Nagpur Congress did not taboo foreign propaganda by way of dissemination of news and the Working Committee has now called upon me to submit a scheme for dissemination of news in foreign countries and now I am taxing my wits to see what more the country can do beyond its sufferings to disseminate news in foreign countries.

How do you intend to organize the propaganda?

The question I answered by my reply to the first, that I have got to think out whether anything can be done by way of supplementing propaganda through sufferings. My own impression is that sufferings constitute the best and the most eloquent propaganda. However, as the Working Committee has put the burden on my shoulders, I shall

[1] The letter to the Viceroy mentioned in the text is evidently that of February 1, 1922.

[2] February 5

endeavour honestly to try and see whether anything more can be done.

Does not the fact that such a radical journal as the *Nation* of London should misread the situation in India and suggest your deportation show that there is abysmal ignorance in England regarding the true significance of your movement and that the Nagpur Congress decision was to a large extent responsible for this state of things?

I do not think so. In my opinion the British public and also other foreign countries are better informed today than they were before the Nagpur Congress. But ignorance such as the *Nation* has betrayed will always be there, when newspapers have to deal with events all the world over. In my opinion such ignorance is inevitable and we shall never be able to overtake it except by being more or less indifferent to what they say but doing everythingthat we can by our action to avoid the possibility of ignorances. Let me give an illustration. When I am deported or even executed the eyes of the whole world would be opened to the enormity of the wrong but not till then. Today English journals are entitled to distrust both my actions and my motives but when I am no longer on the scene to challenge ignorance by my speech these publicists will find it necessary to inform themselves better—that has been my experience. I could not interest South Africa or even India in the question relating to the status of the British Indians till people began to suffer and I have, therefore, learnt that it is no use talking to people who do not want to listen. Our sufferings will create a receptive atmosphere.

What do you think of the suggestion made recently in the Chronicle that an alliance of understanding should be come to with the leaders of suffering subject nations like Egypt and Ireland to fight the imperialism of the Western Nations by non-co-operation propaganda?

I should love to see such an alliance but that will come in its own time. It is my humble opinion that we are not getting sufficiently advanced in the direction to form a useful alliance. I do not believe in paper alliances. They will come naturally when we are ready.

Do you think that the defeat of the Bengal Government on the resolution for the withdrawal of repression and release of political prisoners will compel the Government to abandon repression or do you expect it to defy the Council? If the Councils are defied, do you not think that the Reforms will be shown once more to be a farce and will it not be a deliberate blow to the self-respect of the co-operators to continue a minute more in the Council?

It is as likely as not that the Government will recede from their untenable policy because of the resolve of the council. Had there been no non-co-operation such a resolution would have been treated with indifference, but now if they defy the Council, Government will have nothing but naked brutality to fall backupon and I cannot make such

interpretation of their action. In my opinion the very fact of repression such as is now going on is positive proof of the farcical nature of the Reforms. But flouting the Council's opinion will certainly be an ocular demonstration to the Councillors of their own impotence.

What do you make out of the release and re-arrest of Lala Lajpat Rai?

I can only pity a government which resorts to such shortsighted folly, of re-arresting Lala Lajpat Rai. It can only stiffen the attitude of the Punjabis and of Indians in general.

Do you expect to be arrested the moment Bardoli begins mass civil disobedience and are you convinced after your stay in Bardoli for over a week that the movement will not collapse in your absence?

It is very difficult to say what government will do to me when the time-limit expires. But I certainly do not expect the people of Bardoli to collapse immediately I am arrested. But if they do collapse, Government's action in arresting me will be certainly justified, by reason of any such weakening. If India is really ready then my arrest like the arrests of all other workers must result in non-co-operative activities being stimulated and the atmosphere of non-violence being retained. Personally I have no misgiving on the point, but it is difficult for anybody to say with certainty what will happen after my arrest. There is so much superstition regarding my supposed powers, human and superhuman, that sometimes I feel that my imprisonment, deportation and execution would be quite justified. This belief in the possession of superhuman powers by me is really a bar to national progress and Government will deserve the thanks of reasonable humanity, if they remove me from the people's midst and do not afterwards become mad themselves, but deal with justice and without terrorism. But recent events do not fill me with any such hope about the Government.

Are you convinced, apart from the resolution at the Bardoli Conference[1], that Bardoli is really fit to undertake such a step? Has Bardoli become self-sufficient so far as production of pure khadi is concerned?

So far as I can see I certainly think that Bardoli is fit. No taluka is so much insured against non-violence as Bardoli and this assurance has undoubtedly counted with me a great deal in making up my mind. It has not been self-sufficient as yet, but it will be so presently. People are willing but further organization is necessary.

Can you still maintain in face of cases of assaults and flogging that still many more sufferings on an extensive scale in the present movement is the only shortest cut to swaraj with minimum sufferings?

[1] Of January 29, 1922

I have no doubt about it, because painful as the sufferings are, they would be still more if there was retaliation on the part of people. If people remain sufficiently non-violent, Government efforts would be exhausted for want of reaction. It is a scientific truth which admits of no exception. Therefore, whatever sufferings the people might have to go through now they would be hundred times greater if they offered violence against Government violence.

May I know if the sufferings of hundreds of young men in jails weigh upon your decision to take steps regarding mass civil disobedience? Do you not think that they should be honourably acquitted as early as possible having gained all that they fought for?

Certainly, and therefore it is that I have made their release and stoppage of all barbarity the exclusive issue for mass civil disobedience at the present moment.

Do you not expect Government to baffle your attempts by conniving at your civil disobedience activities at least for a long time to come? Can they not forgo their land revenue or postpone it till some distant day rather than precipitate an undesirable situation? What steps do you propose to take in that case?

Government can certainly do that. If they do, I will respect their wisdom and restraint by refraining from taking any irritating action. But that really means that, Bardoli having attained its freedom, her example would be infectious and, unless Government want to yield to popular opinion, they will make it a point of prestige to collect revenue at the point of the bayonet.

Do you believe the Muslims of India will stick to the irreducible minimum of the Congress demands with the same zeal even after the Khilafat question is settled to their satisfaction?

I have not a shadow of doubt in my mind about it, if only because what is gained in the matter of the Khilafat can only be retained by a self-governing India untrammelled by any dictation from Downing Street.

Do you notice any special characteristics of the peasantry of Bardoli?

It notice nothing special except the beautiful simplicity and innocence of the Bardoli farmers.

Was the letter recently addressed to the Viceroy due to any sort of Inspiration from any of the members of the Malaviya Conference?

It was entirely my own creation. As a matter of fact the members of the Working Committee were for a moment surprised at what they considered was change of front, though I thought that I had sufficiently prepared the ground in the *Navajivan* and *Young India*. There is no change of front in the manifesto, but it is simple adaptability to the exigencies of the situation. Supposing you are

making for a point and an impassable barrier has been placed in your way by the enemy. Your point of attack is naturally shifted and you will concentrate all your forces upon the barrier before you make further progress. That is precisely what I have done with the full approval of the Working Committee.

What do you expect those of the Moderates who took part in the Malaviya Conference to do in the event of the failure of the Viceroy to satisfy your conditions?

I would certainly expect them to rally round the standard of free speech, free association and a free Press and I expect them to ally themselves with non-co-operators at least to that extent, unless they find another and more expeditious method of forcing justice on the issue raised by me. So far as I understand there is no difference of opinion in the country.

Do you think the Viceroy will give effect to those conditions?

He ought to.

May I know, if you do not mind, what is going to be your first move in respect of mass civil disobedience?

My first move naturally would be to consolidate the movement for non-payment and then I shall have to see in what other directions I can offer civil disobedience without any danger of violence. You will remember I have the whole of the statutebook to break through save those resolutions which are also a part of the moral government of the universe.

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-2-1922

46. SILENCE DAY NOTES

[*February 6, 1922*][1]

I do not think South Africa Indians are ready for sacrifice nor is the pinch so great there—

East Africa Indians if they have any grit whatsoever should offer every form of passive resistance they can—

Churchill could not have made that speech without having India

[1] *Young India* of February 16, 1922, carried an article by C. F. Andrews on Churchill's speech mentioned in these notes. On February 4, Gandhiji invited Andrews to Bardoli for a talk; vide letter to Andrews of that date. On February 8, Andrews wrote to Gandhiji (S.N. 7896) saying that he had been unable to discuss all that he wished to "on-Monday' Gandhiji's "quiet day." These notes must therefore have been made on Monday, February 6.

Office squared. The Viceroy—nothing could be better than that the Viceroy and Montagu should resign on this question[1].

But the Indian members too should do likewise, if they have any sense of self-respect—But I am sorry to say I have little hope at the present moment.

Water question is settled here. The "untouchables" can fetch water at the same wells—

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

You need not send my note on spinning if you strongly disaprove of it. We shall discuss it.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 2633

47. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

BARDOLI,
February 6, 1922

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

I have received your letter and your telegram also. I observe that my action in writing to the Viceroy has not pleased the Committee. I am sorry. I thought that I was careful enough if I did not start civil disobedience for nearly a fortnight. I died not understand that it was not right even to write to the Viceroy. I purposely-waited for three days before publishing the letter as was your desire.

I have been most careful too regarding what should, in my opinion, be done by those who sympathize with the prisoners and with the objects of the movement. Please convey this to the Secretaries of the Conference.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Story of My Life, Vol. I, p. 556

[1] The question of barring Indians from holding land in the Highlands and reserving it for Europeans only.

48. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Monday, February 6, 1922

You again, failed to come. I take this to be due to laziness on your part. Whatever dicisions you make you must carry out.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 43

49. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

[*February 6, 1922*][2]

CHI. PARASRAM[3],

I have your letter. Is any work in connection with the spinning-wheel being done in Allahabad?

Blessings from
BAPU

MASTER PARASRAM
ANAND BHAVAN
ALLAHABAD

From the Hindi original: C.W. 5994. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

50. REJOINDER TO GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

[BARDOLI,
February 7, 1922][4]

I have very carefully read the Government's reply to my letter to His Excellency. I confess that I was totally unprepared for such an evasion of the realities of the case as the reply betrays. I will take the very first repudiation. The reply says:

> They (the Government) emphatically repudiate the statement that they

[1] The addressee had agreed to Gandhiji's suggestion to spend the weekends at Bardoli.

[2] From the postmark

[3] Parasram Mehrotra was at this time working in the office of the *Independent,* later he became a member of Gandhiji's Secretariat and Hindi teacher in the Ashram.

[4] This rejoinder was dictated by Gandhiji immediately on his seeing the Government's *communique* dated February 6, 1922, (*vide* Appendix "Government of India "Communique" on Gandhiji's Letter to Viceroy") in the newspapers at Bardoli on February 7, 1922, and was telegraphed to Associated Press at Delhi.

have embarked on a policy of lawless repression and also the suggestion that the present campaign of civil disobedience has been forced on the Non-co-operation party in order to secure the elementary rights of free association, free speech and a free Press.

Even a cursory glance at my letter would show that, whilst civil disobedience was authorized by the All-India Congress Committee meeting held on the 4th November at Delhi, it had not commenced. I have made it clear in my letter that the contemplated mass civildisobedience was indefinitely postponed on account of the regrettableevents of the 17th November in Bombay. That decision was duly published, and it is within the knowledge of the Government as also the public that Herculean efforts were being made to combat the still lingering violent tendency amongst the people. It is also within the knowledge of the Government and the public that a special form of pledge was devised to be signed by volunteers with the deliberate purpose of keeping out all but men of proved character. The primary object of these volunteer associations was to inculcate amongst the masses the lessons of non-violence and to keep the peace at all non-co-operation functions. Unfortunately the Government of India lost its head completely over the Bombay events and perhaps still more over the very complete hartal on the same date at Calcutta. I do not wish to deny that there might have been some intimidation practised in Calcutta, but it was not, I venture to submit, the fact of intimidation but the irritation caused by the completeness of the hartal that maddened the Government of India as also the Government of Bengal. Repression there was even before that time, but nothing was said or done in connection with it but the repression that came in the wake of the notifications proclaiming the Criminal Law Amendment Act for the purpose of dealing with volunteer associations and the Seditious Meetings Acts for the purpose of dealing with public meetings held by non-co-operators came upon the non-co-operation community as a bombshell. I repeat then that these notifications and the arrests of Deshbandhu Chitta Ranjan Das and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in Bengal, the arrests of Pandit Motilal Nehru and his co-workers in the U.P. and of Lala Lajpat Rai and his party in the Punjab made it absolutely necessary to take up—not yet aggressive civil disobedience—but only defensive civil disobedience otherwise described as passive resistance. Even Sir Hormusjee Wadya was obliged to declare that if the Bombay Government followed the precedents set by the Governor of Bengal, U.P. and Punjab, he would

be bound to resist such notifications, that is, to enrol himself as a volunteer or to attend public meetings in defiance of Government orders to the contrary. It is thus clear that a case has been completely made out for civil disobedience unless the Government revises its policy which has resulted in the stopping of public meetings, public associations and the non-co-operation Press in many parts of India.

Now for the statement that the Government "have embarked on a policy of lawless repression". Instead of an ample expression of regret and apology for the barbarous deeds that have been committed by officials in the name of law and order I regret to find in theGovernment reply a categorical denial of any "lawless repression". In this connection, I urge the public and Government carefully to consider the following facts whose substance is beyond challenge:

1. The official shooting at Entally in Calcutta and the callous treatment even of a corpse;

2. The admitted brutality of the Civil Guard;

3. The forcible dispersal of a meeting at Dacca, and the dragging of innocent men by their legs although they had given no offence or cause whatsoever;

4. Similar treatment of volunteers in Aligarh;

5. The conclusive (in my opinion) findings of the Committee presided over by Dr. Gokul Chand Narang about the brutal and uncalled for assaults upon volunteers and the public in Lahore;

6. Wicked and inhuman treatment of volunteers and the public at Jullundur;

7. The shooting of a boy at Dehra Dun and the cruelly forcible dispersal of a public meeting-at that place;

8. The looting admitted by the Bihar Government of villages by an officer and his company without any permission whatsoever from anyone, but as stated by non-co- operators at the invitation of a planter and the assaults upon volunteers and burning of khaddar and papers belonging to the Congress at Sonepur;

9. Midnight searches and arrests in Congress and Khilafat offices.

I have merely given a sample of many"infallible proofs" of

official lawlessness and barbarism. I have mentioned not even a tithe of what is happening all over the country, and I wish to state without fear of successful contradiction that the scale on which this lawlessness has gone on in so many provinces of India puts into shade the inhumanities that were practised in the Punjab if we except the crawling order and the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh. It is my certain conviction that the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh was a clean transaction compared to the unclean transactions described above, and the pity of it is that because people are not shot or butchered, the tortures through which hundreds of inoffensive men have gone-through do not produce a shock sufficient to turn everybody's face against this Government, but as if this warfare against innocence was not enough, the reins are being tightened in the jails. We know nothing of what is happening today in the Karachi Jail, to a solitary prisoner in the Sabarmati Jail and to a batch inBanaras Jail, all of whom are as innocent as I claim to be myself. Their crime consists in their constituting themselves trustees of national honour and dignity. I am hoping that these proud and defiant spirits will not be bent into submission to insolence masquerading in the official garb. I deny the right of the authorities to insist on high-souled men appearing before them almost naked or pay any obsequious respect to them by way of salaaming with open palms brought together or rising to the intonation of *"Sarkar ek hai"*. No godfearing man will do the latter even if he has to be kept standing in stocks for days and nights as a Bengal schoolmaster is reported to have been.

For the sake of dignity of human nature I trust that Lord Reading and his draughtsmen do not know the facts that I have adduced or, being carried away by their belief in the infallibility of their employees, refuse to believe in the statements which the public regard as God's truth. If there is the slightest exaggeration in the statements that I have made I shall as publicly withdraw them and apologize for them as I am making them now, but as it is I undertake to prove the substance of everyone of these charges if not the very letter, and much more of them before any impartial tribunal of men or women unconnected with the Government. I invite Pandit Malaviyaji and those who are performing the thankless task of securing a round table conference to form an impartial Commission to investigate these charges by which I stand or fall.

It is the physical and brutal ill treatment of humanity which has

made many of my co-workers and myself impatient of life itself, and in the face of these things I do not wish to take public time by dealing in detail with what I mean by abuse of the common law of the country but I cannot help correcting the misimpression which is likely to be created in connection with the Bombay disorders. Disgraceful and deplorable as they were, let it be remembered that of the 53 persons who lost their lives over 45 were non-co-operators or their sympathizers, the hooligans, and of the 400 wounded, to be absolutely on the safe side, over 350 were also derived from the same class. I do not complain. The non-co-operators and the friendly hooligans got what they deserved. They began the violence—they reaped the reward. Let it also not be forgotten that with all deference to the Bombay Government it was non-co-operators, ably assisted by Independents and Co-operators, who brought peace out of that chaos of the two days following the fateful 17th.

I must totally deny the imputation that "the application of the Criminal Law Amendment Act was confined to associations, themajority of the members of which had habitually indulged in violence and intimidation." The prisons of India today hold some of the most inoffensive men and hardly any who have either resorted to violence or intimidation and who are convicted under that law. Abundant proof can be produced in support of this statement as also of the statement of the fact that almost wherever meetings have been broken up there was absolutely no risk of violence.

The Government of India deny that the Viceroy had laid down, upon the apology of the Ali Brothers, the civilized policy of non-interference with the non-violent activities of non-co-operators. I am extremely sorry for this repudiation. The very part of the *communique* reproduced in the reply is in my opinion sufficient proof that the Government did not intend to interfere with such activities. The Government did not wish it to be inferred that "speeches promoting disaffection of less violent character were not an offence against the law" I have never stated that breach of any law was not to be an offence against it, but I have stated, as I repeat now, that it was not the intention of the Government then to prosecute for non-violent activities although they might amount to technical breach of the law.

As to conditions of the Conference the Government reply evidently omits to mention the two words "and otherwise, after the

words "Calcutta speech" in my letter. I repeat that the terms as I could gather from "the Calcutta speech and otherwise" were nearly the same that were mentioned in the resolutions of the Malaviya Conference. What are called unlawful activities of the N.C.O. party being a reply to the notifications of the Government would have ceased automatically with the withdrawal of those notifications, because the formation of Volunteer Corps and public meetings would not be unlawful activities after the withdrawal of the offending notifications. Even while the negotiations were going on in Calcutta the discharge of *fatwa* prisoners was asked for, and I can only repeatwhat I have said elsewhere that if it is disloyal to say that military or any service under the existing system of Government is a sin against God and humanity, I fear that such disloyalty must continue. The Government *communique* does me a cruel wrong by imputing to me a desire that the proposed Round Table Conference should be called "merely to register" my "decrees". I did state in order to avoid any misunderstanding the Congress demands as I felt I was in duty bound, in as clear terms as possible. No Congressman could approach any conference without making his position clear, andI expected the ordinary courtesy of not considering me or any Congressman to be impervious to reason and argument. It is open to anybody to convince me that the demands of the Congress regarding the Khilafat, the Punjab and swaraj are wrong or unreasonable, and I would certainly retrace my steps and so far as I am concerned rectify the wrong. The Government of India know that such has been always my attitude.

The *communique* strangely enough says that the demands setforth in my Manifesto[1] are even larger than those of the working Committee; I claim that they fall far below the demands of the Working Committee, for what I now ask against total suspension of civil disobedience of an aggressive character is merely the stoppage of ruthless repression, the release of prisoners convicted under it and a clear declaration of policy. The demands of the Working Committee included a round table conference. In my Manifesto I have not asked for a round table conference at all. It is true that this waiving of a round table conference does not proceed from any expedience but it is a confession of present weakness. I freely recognize that unless

[1]*Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 1-2-1922.

India becomes saturated with the spirit of non-violence and generates disciplined strength that can only come from non-violence, she cannot enforce her demands and it is for that reason that I now consider that the first thing for the people to do is to secure a reversal of this mad repression and then to concentrate upon more complete organization and more construction, and here again the *communique* does me an injustice by merely stating that civil disobedience of an aggressive character will be postponed until the opportunity is given to the imprisoned leaders of reviewing the whole situation after their discharge, and by convenniently omitting to mention the following concluding sentences of my letter:

> If the Government make the requested declaration I shall regard it as an honest desire on its part to give effect to public opinion and shall, therefore, have no hesitation in advising the country to be engaged in further moulding public opinion without violent restraint from either side and trust to its working to secure the fulfilment of its unalterable demands. Aggressive civil disobedience in that case will be taken up only when the Government departs from its policy of strictest neutrality or refuses to yield to the clearly expressed opinion of the vast majority of the people of India.

I venture to claim extreme reasonableness and moderation for the above presentation of the case.

The alternative before the people therefore is not, as the *communique* concludes, "between lawlessness with all its disastrous consequences on the one hand and on the other the maintenance of those principles which lie at the root of all civilized Governments.". "Mass civil disobedience" it adds, "is fraught with such danger to the State that it must be met with sternness and severity." The choice before the people is between mass civil disobedience with all its undoubted dangers and lawless repression of lawful activities of the people. I hold that it is impossible for any body of self-respecting men, for fear of unknown dangers, to sit still and do nothing effective whilst looting of property and assaulting of innocent men are going on all over the country in the name of law and order.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7885

51. LETTER TO MEMBERS OF WORKING COMMITTEE [1]

Confidential (Not for publication)

BARDOLI,
February 8, 1922

DEAR FRIEND,

This is the third time that I have received a rude shock when I have been on the eve of embarking upon mass civil disobedience. The first was in April 1919 the second in November last[2], and now again I am violently agitated by the events in the Gorakhpur District. What has happened in Bareilly and Saharanpur where volunteers have been attempting to take possession of Town Halls has added considerably to the shaking. The civil disobedience of Bardoli can make no impression upon the country when disobedience of a criminal character goes on in other parts of the country, both for the same end. The whole conception of civil disobedience is based upon the assumption that it works in and through its completely non-violent character. I may be a bad student of human nature to believe that such an atmosphere can ever be brought about in a vast country like India, but that would be an argument for condemning my capacity for sound judgment, not for continuing a movement which is in that case bound to be unsuccessful. I personally can never be party to-a movement half violent and half non-violent, even though it may result in the attainment of so-called swaraj, for it will not be real swaraj as I have conceived it. A meeting of the Working Committee is, therefore, being called to consider the question on the 11th instant at Bardoli, first whether mass civil disobedience should not be suspended for the time being; and secondly, whether if it is suspended it should not be discontinued for a definite and sufficiently long period to enable the country to do organizing constructive work and to establish an indisputably non-violent atmosphere. I want to have the guidance of all the friends I can. I would like you to send me your opinion

[1] The following are excerpts from the introductory note in the source: "The civil disobedience at Bardoli, . . . was to have been started On the 12th February, 1922, on the expiry of the time-limit granted to the Viceroy . . . . But Mahatmaji suddenly changed his whole plan of action on the 8th, and . . . circulated a private letter to the members of the Working Committee indicating this change . . ."

[2] *Vide* "A Deep Stain", 18-11-1921.

even though you may not be able to attend, either by letter, if it reaches in time, or by wire.

I am sending this letter only to the members of the Working Committee, but I would like you to consult all the friends you meet ant if any of them wishes to come to take part in the deliberations please bring or send him or them.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, pp. 223-4

52. LETTER TO DR. M. S. KELKAR

Wednesday, February 8, 1922

DEAR DR. KELKAR[1]

I think the money was paid to the Committee for swadeshi only. I do wish you will get the expert appointed and set about working soon. Please show this to Mr. Dastane[2]. I note what you say about the preacher. I am on my way to Bombay for a day.

Yours sincerely

M. K.GANDHI

DR. KELKER
C/O DR. NULKAR
JALGAON
E. KHANDESH

From a photostat: G.N. 6107

53. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

BARDOLI,
February 8 [*1922*][3]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

You will pardon me, I know, for writing to you so rarely. But how can I pardon you for not writing? You cannot plead want of time.

[1] Dr. M. S. Kelkar; claimed to cure all diseases by the use of ice; known popularly as "Ice Doctor"

[2] A Congress worker of Khandesh in Maharashtra

[3] From the contents

I am making use of the enforced leisure I have got just now. I am waiting for the Bombay train which is late.

My life you know. Ramdas is not my companion and nurse. Devdas is attending to important work in another province. He has shaped wonderfully. Harilal is in prison. I am expecting to be deported. Even execution has been suggested. It sounds all funny. But I know that not a blade of grass moves without His will. And what does it matter what happens so far as we know it will be by His will. Ours is but to do.

How nice it would be when you can come and work side by side as of yore. Life is here changed. It is extraordinarily simple. But it has its charms.

Do please write occasionally. I would like you not merely to read but to study *Young India*.

I often meet Andrews. If I had leisure I would describe all my companions. But here is the train. Mahadev Desai whom I had commissioned to write to you is in jail and so are several thousands.

With love,

Yours,

UPPER HOUSE

[PS.]

Ramdas is here whilst I am writing this. Permanent address Ahmedabad.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

54. NOTES

FROM HIS SOLITARY CELL

Here is a titbit from C. Rajagopalachari from Vellore Jail:

> . . . I am allowed to write one letter a month and to receive similarly one letter a month, and am completely shut out from all politics, news and newspapers. . .
>
> My asthma persists, though by keeping my stomach light I hold the upper hand over the enemy. I have gone down from 104 to 98 lbs. but that does not matter. . . .
>
> Your eyes would flow with delight if you saw me here in my solitary cell spinning.

This is a curious Government. The same law is supposed to reign in the country and yet what is a crime in Bengal is not a crime in

Madras. And the treatment in a Madras Jail is not the same as in a U.P. jail. George Joseph in the Agra Jail has all the comforts and privileges including newspapers. Rajagopalachari in Vellore Jail must live in solitude and have no newspapers. Rajagopalachari does not mind the deprivation of newspapers. I know that I would esteem it a privilege to be without any, but difference in treatment is obvious. Rajagopalachari's loss of flesh is a more serious matter. This, of course, may not be due to want of nourishing food but if the solitary cell is anything like I know, it must be almost death to an asthamatic patient. When you are locked up in a cell you are in a box with a few holes for just enough ventilation to keep you alive. There is little light and no cross ventilation. The air in a short time becomes thick and foul with your own exhalations. And you are doomed to re-breathe your own emissions. The least that humanity demands is that C. Rajagopalachari should have, if he has not, all the fresh air he can get day and night.

FROM DELHI JAIL

Mr. Asaf Ali writes a descriptive letter from the Delhi Jail. I copy from it extracts of public interest:[1]

> . . . it is a matter of no little surprise to me that my health has appreciably improved since my incarceration....
>
> . . . The discomforts of prison life Will be throughout our lives the most cherished of our memories like the scars of warriors....
>
> Kindly remember me to Pandit Motilalji and Jawahar if you write to them as I cannot and please give my love to my Akka, I mean Mrs. Sarojini Naidu.

The reader will remember that civil disobedience in Delhi was started by Mr. Asaf Ali and fifty-two other volunteers.

SHERWANI DISBARRED

The Allahabad High Court has not enhanced its prestige by disbarring Mr. Sherwani who had disbarred himself long before the Court took action. It is clear that some one must have instigated the Court to take action. Whoever did so has ill-served the High Court of Allahabad. The proceedings against Mr. Sherwani cannot frighten a single lawyer. They must have made some ashamed of being practitioners in a court which punishes a man for his political creed. The Court in my opinion was bound to take public notice of the fact

[1] Only excepts reproduced here

of non-co-operation and therefore of the fact that Mr. Sherwani was precluded by his creed from offering any defence in the lower court.

LALAJI'S REARREST

The Punjab Government could not do even a simple act of penitence gracefully. They were advised that the judge who convicted Lalaji and his companions did not know the law. They had therefore to release them. Instead of all being released together they were released separately and some at midnight. But that was by no means the most graceless part of the performance. Lalaji was rearrested immediately after his discharge. By this action the Punjab Government have shown themselves more vindictive than penitent. The release they could not help, nor could they help their pettiness. They did not want Lalaji to be free for a single moment and therefore they rearrested him. Although an under-trail prisoner, his people including his son are not allowed to see him. They knew that Lalaji would not escape "justice" if they served on him a summons. But such a natural and courteous step was too simple for the Punjab Government. I congratulate Lalaji on his rearrest and sympathize with Pandit Santanam, Malik Lalkhan and Dr, Gopichand for their premature discharge.

PENSION OR DEFERRED PAY

I have now procured paragraph 351 of Section 1, Chapter 15 of General Rules regarding ordinary pensions, under which Mr. Joshi of Dharwar has been deprived of his pension. The rule reads as follows:

> Future good conduct is an implied condition of every grant of a pension. The local Government, the Government of India, and the Secretary of State in Council reserve to themselves the right of withholding or withdrawing a pension or any part of it, if the pensioner be convicted of serious crime or be guilty of grave misconduct.
>
> The decision of the Secretary of State in Council on any question of withholding or withdrawing the whole or any part of a pension under this Regulation shall be final and conclusive.

To a layman, it is one and the same thing whether you call it pension or deferred pay or anything else. It cannot be given to a servant who has proved faithless in the discharge of his duty or who, on the termination of active service, by his future conduct proves undeserving. A servant on pension has, perhaps, need to be more careful about his conduct than a servant in active service for the

simple reason, that whilst on duty he is under watch, off duty he is on trust. Judged by this standard and considered as a public servant, Mr. Joshi has not only done nothing reprehensible but has done what any honourable man will do, that is to say, in the evening of his life put such talents as he has unreservedly at the disposal of the public, although in law he is entitled to pass his time in rest and retirement. A government responsive to public opinion cannot be treated as different from the public. The interest of the latter must be the paramount consideration of the former; therefore, if Mr. Joshi is now, in the light of existing facts, throwing in his lot with the public he is as much serving the Government as the country. If Sir Michael belonged to the same public service and was bound by the same code of honour as Mr. Joshi or Maulana Shaukat Ali, it is Sir Michael O'Dwyer who stands condemned out of his own mouth and who, in terms of the regulation I have quoted, ought to be deprived of the pension of which by constant and venomous vilification of his paymasters he is proving himself totally unworthy. That Sir Michael may really believe what he says and may honestly hold the opinion that educated Indians are idiots or traitors to their country and that the uneducated masses deserve to be treated no better than the cattle, is beside the point. God alone knows a man's motive. But man can only Judge another by his acts. And just as non-co-operators are very properly and rigidly judged not by their motive as it is set forth in their pledge or declared from a thousand platforms, but by their acts and those of their associates, so also must public servants on pension or otherwise be judged by what they do and not by what they think or say they think.

THE ALI BROTHERS

I reproduce the following telegram[1] received from Karachi by post because it would not be sent by the authorities:

> Maulana Mahomed Ali reduced 25 Ibs. in jail. . . .
>
> Medical Officer recommended groundnuts or extract of cheese by way of food for Maulana Mahomed Ali on account of diabetes. Superintendent not disposed but after all provided groundnuts worth one anna per day and on Maulana's insistence raised it to two annas. This serves as his morning meal.
>
> . . . Maulana Shaukat Ali, Doctor Kitchlew, Maulvi Nisar Ahmed, Pir Gulam Majid were asked on Saturday the 28th to submit to search of their person, a practice commonly followed in jail in case of convicts. This consists in making the-prisoners absolutely naked with the exception of a

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

Iangoti[1] made loose. The prisoners in this condition are asked to raise hands and open their mouths as though to show if there was anything hidden anywhere. This humiliation Maulana Shaukat Ali and his companions were saved so far. On Saturday the 28th on being asked to submit to this they refused. On Monday the 30th their person was forcibly searched and as punishment for refusing voluntarily to submit to this indignity, humiliation, the forenamed leaders have been confined to solitary cells for one month . . .

Maulana Mahomed Ali protests and demands like treatment.

The leaders in jail ready to obey all jail rules except those that offend against their religion or against their sense of honour and dignity as Indians or human beings.

The jail authorities were up to the last moment asked by the leaders to refer the matter to Government but they refused to wait[2].

It is evident that instructions have gone forth that the policy of wise discretion is to give place to the policy of cast iron rigidity of enforcement of prison rules. Imagine Maulana Shaukat Ali or any of the high-spirited prisoners standing almost naked before the jailor and in the presence of one another and submitting to what to them must be a most humiliating examination. I can understand the necessity and utility of such examination of confirmed criminals for whom alone the ordinary prison regulations are framed but it is nothing short of lunacy to enforce obedience to such regulations on the part of men who apart from their political agitation have been regarded as orderly citizens and in some cases even as distinguished public men. To enforce some of the present regulations in respect of such prisoners is hopelessly to ignore the reality and to court trouble. Ordinary discipline must be exacted from the best of men when they happen to be in prison, more so when they court imprisonment. Discomfort of jail life they must expect and cannot grumble at. Respect for the jail officials must be exacted from them if they will not give it voluntarily and gracefully. But discipline must not take the form of humiliation. Discomfort must not be torture, and respect must not take the form of crawling on one's belly. And therefore, on pain of being put in irons, in solitary confinement or of being shot, non-co-operating prisoners must decline even in the name of discipline to stand naked before the jailer, must decline in the name of discomfort to wear stinking clothes or to eat food that is unclean or indigestible and must similarly decline even in the name of respect to open out their palms or to sit in

[1] Loin-cloth
[2] Write

a crouching position or to shout *Sarkar if hai* or "Sarkar Salam" when a jail official is passing. And if the Government is now intent upon putting us through the fire in the jails and subjects us to physical pains in order to bend us, we must respectfully decline to be humiliated and must fall back upon God to give us strength to withstand studied humiliation and to suffer physical tortures instead. Let the proud Brothers and their comrades purify the Karachi Jail. Let the proud Sindhi Professor Kripalani sanctify the Banaras prison, for I understand that Professor Kripalani and his pupils who are undergoing imprisonment in Banaras have found it impossible to countenance the unutterable humiliations that those non-co-operators who have been brought to the Banaras Jail have been subjected to. It passes comprehension that in the United Provinces, where the treatment of political prisoners is supposed to be ideal, whilst it is certainly all that could be desired in Agra and Lucknow, that in Banaras and elsewhere it should be otherwise. Does it mean that the local officials are out of control and disregard orders from headquarters and have become a law unto themselves? Let the public imagine from these incidents what untold sufferings the criminals must be undergoing in the jails of India. I am not inclined to believe that political prisoners are alone specially singled out for that treatment. On the contrary, I believe that the real criminals are much worse treated for they are easily cowed down in jails, and jailors and warders being almost irresponsible become despotic and subject criminals to heartless treatment. We who have in our ignorance or selfishness hitherto supported a system of government under which a microscopic minority has brought under subjection millions of human beings will have to answer before our Maker for many a crime against humanity committed nominally in the name of law and order, but really in the interest of this minority—crimes that have never seen the light of day and of which we could not have even heard but for the immolation of non-co-operators.

In the face of the humiliation sought to be imposed upon the prisoners, it seems petty to have to criticize the meanness of authorities in Karachi in withholding from Maulana Mahomed Ali even the diet prescribed by the Jail doctor and necessitated by the disease which the Maulana is suffering from. I am really hoping that the information about the refusal to supply the Maulana with cheese or enough groundnuts is not correct and that there is a reasonable explanation for it.

But be the treatment what it may, the course before those who are not in prison is clear. We must not be irritated into taking a false or a hasty step. We are dealing with a system that is rotten to the core and that has debased humanity whether English or Indian. We are really dealing with a disease. I refuse to think that either Englishmen or Indians are fiends by deliberation. On the contrary, I am confident that they do not know what they are doing. It is certain that they do not think that they are doing anythingwrong and it is highly probable that many of them even consider that terrorism is a part of humane treatment in given circumstances, even as many of us in our impatience do things in ordinary relations which we cannot justify except under the plausible plea of necessity.

Since writing the foregoing I have received the further news that the Brothers have refused to be voluntarily searched, that search was forcibly made, that they were "punished in cells" (meaning, I presume, solitary confinement) and that the men in charge were behaving in an ungentlemanly manner. I should be extremely sorry to find all this to be true. There was reason to believe that the Government attitude towards known public men in the prisons would be perfectly gentlemanly and that they would not be subjected to any indignities. If the reported ill treatment of the Ali Brothers proves to be true, the Government will have themselves to thank if the agitation against them reaches white heat.

It is evident that God wants non-co-operators to be tried through and through. 1 know that the Brothers are brave enough to stand the fiery ordeal and come out scatheless. All the Karachi prisoners are picked men, well able to take care of themselves. The public will nevertheless feel keenly the indignities that are being heaped upon the Brothers, Dr. Kichlew, Pir Gulam Majid and their companions. Notwithstanding all this senseless irritation and provocation we must be self-restrained. Our final salvation lies in the strictest adherence to our pledge. If we feel keenly let us be still more non-violent, not less so; let us further concentrate on civil disobedience, let us lose no time in fulfilling the conditions necessary for civil disobedience. Let Hindus, Mussulmans and other races come still closer, let us rid ourselves of the remnants of foreign cloth still in our possession, let us bestir ourselves to manufacture more hand-spun khadi. Our progress depends upon calmly fulfilling the programme mapped out by ourselves and not wasting a single minute in idle fretting and fuming.

Let us not worry about the ill treatment of those who are in jail. The Government have made no terms with us as to treatment. We have unconditionally surrendered our bodies to them even to be hacked to pieces without a quiver if God will give us the strength. We must not lose temper on any account.

FALSE CHARGES

In their feverish anxiety to support the policy of repression, the officials in charge of the defence of that policy have not hesitated to make use of statements that cannot be supported. Maulana Abdul Bari Saheb writes to me saying that he has never contemplated, approved of or incited to violence after he entered into the national compact to observe the strictest non-violence in connection with the movement of non-co-operation. He says that he has both preached and practised it fully and conscientiously. The unregistered *Independent* says:

> Maulana Abdul Bari I writing in the daily *Hamdam* contradicts the statement made by Sir William Vincent in the course of the Censure Debate that he (the Maulana) was a votary of violence. He denies having made any speech during the last four months. In his latest written address read before a meeting of the Muslims, he strongly advocated non-violent non-co-operation as the only means open to the Indian Muslims for the redress of the Khilafat wrong. He has not lost hope, he says, in the non-violent Congress and Khilafat programme in the end forcing the hands of the British Government to redress the Khilafat and Punjab wrongs and enabling India to remain as a free partner of the British commonwealth of self-governing nations.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru writes as follows about the charge brought against him:

> Sir Ludovic Porter, Finance Member of the Government of the United Provinces, is reported to have made the following remarks in his speech delivered in the U.P. Council On the 23rd January:
>
> "I allude to Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru. His final effort was a speech somewhere in the west of the Provinces in which he quoted word by word the sedition section, i.e., the promotion of disaffection against the Governments by law established, and the section which deals with promoting hatred between classes of His Majesty's subjects, and he said that the object of his life was to carry out this promotion of sedition and disaffection."
>
> This is incorrect. On no occasion and in no speech have I quoted the sedition section or any other section of the Penal Code word by word or in any other manner. I do not carry about a copy of the Indian Penal Code with me and I have not thought it worthwhile to learn any of its sections by heart. What I

> have stated, however, on more than one occasion is that I considered it my business, as it was the business of every Indian, to promote disaffection against the present system of government in India. And I was thus continually sinning against Section 124 A of the Indian Penal Code. I have never, I trust, said anything which might lead people to think that I desire to promote "hatred between different classes of His Majesty's subjects". I have endeavoured to the best of my ability, whenever an occasion offered itself, to do the very reverse of this. And indeed if it were otherwise I would be a bad non-co-operator and utterly unworthy of being a humble follower of the great leader whose mission it is to demonstrate anew to the world the invincible might of love and truth

It never occurred to these officials who have libelled the character of two honourable public men that if they have preached or approved of violence, the charges should be fully proved against them by incontestable evidence. Will Sir William Vincent apologize to Maulana Bari and Sir Ludovic Porter to Pandit Jawaharlal ?

A COMEDY OF ERRORS

Not knowing any other Lala Shyam Lal but of Rohtak I have committed a bad blunder and have paid premature compliments to Lala Shyam Lal of Rohtak instead of his namesake who is also a *vakil* but of Hissar. I apologize to Lala Shyam Lal of Hissar and accept of him, what Lala Shyam Lal says in his letter, that all the flattering remarks I have made about him apply to the Hissar friend "with greater force". Lala Shyam Lal of Rohtak adds:

> His example is inspiring. Soon after his arrest, his noble wife has thrown herself into the work and this has given great impetus to the Congress activity in the Hissar District.

CAUTION ABOUT CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

Writing of his own District Lala Shyam Lal says:

> The District Magistrate here does not believe in making arrests unless there is apprehension of a breach of the peace. The result is that our volunteers are having their own way. No foreign cloth is being imported. No liquor contract has been sold.

Lala Shyam Lal then inquires whether in the districts where no arrests are made people should go out of their way to court arrest. I thought that I had made the position absolutely clear in previous issues. Whilst we may do nothing to avoid arrest in the ordinary course of our duty, we must not go outside our beat in order to

compel arrest. That would be either aggressive civil disobedience or criminal disobedience. The latter is out of question. The former, i.e., aggressive civil disobedience is a right to be exercised when necessary and when we are thoroughly ready, and is also a duty we must discharge if we are ready and circumstances require the performance of it. But aggressive civil disobedience whether mass or individual is a most dangerous weapon though also most effective among all the peaceful weapons at our disposal. I am myself satisfied that the country as a whole is not ready for this form of self-assertion. We have to go through much greater and stricter discipline. We have to understand the exact, I was almost going to say, the spiritual value of obedience to laws and discipline which may be irksome and even repugnant to us. Assertive civil disobedience is a right that accrues to us only after severe *tapasya* through which we have not yet gone. Any premature resort to assertive civil disobedience therefore may precipitate a crisis we neither anticipate nor want, and which we must avoid by every means we can think of. The least therefore that we must do is to await the result of the experiment I personally wish to conduct. It is a new thing and surely simple prudence requires us to watch that experiment. Indeed, if aggressive civil disobedience, whether mass or individual, is attempted in other parts of India, it is likely to embarrass me and damage country's cause. I invite the attention of all non-co-operators to the resolution of the Working Committee which now makes it incumbent upon all the Congress organizations to refrain from aggressive civil disobedience except with my express consent and so far as I can see the only exception I am likely to make will be in favour of a group of 100 villages in Andhradesha. But even there I have informed Sjt. Konda Venkatappayya that if it is at all possible for him to avoid taking the offensive I would appreciate it and that he would resort to it only if he found that retracing would be demoralizing and if humanly speaking he was certain of non-violence being observed throughout Andhradesha and also certain that the other conditions laid down by the Congress strictly fulfilled. I have a suspicion that in many parts of India the condition about the hand-spun khadi is not being strictly out and that we are not yet everywhere cured of the disease of untouchability. In my opinion the ability to go to jail is of far less consequence than ability and the readiness to observe in their fullness the conditions about Hindu-Muslim-Sikh-Parsi-Christian unity, about untouchability and hand-spun khadi. Without a due fulfilment of

these conditions, we shall find that all our going to jail is bravado and so much wasted effort. Self-purification is the main consideration seeking the prison. Embarrassment of the Government is a secondary consideration. It is my unalterable conviction that even though the Government may not feel embarrassed in any way whatsoever by the incarceration or even execution of an innocent, unknown but a purified person, such incarceration will be the end of that Government. Even a single lamp dispels the deepest darkness. Non-co--operation is not allopathic treatment, it is homoeopathic. The patient does not taste the drops given to him. He is sometimes even incredulous, but if the homoeopathy are to be trusted, the tasteless drops or the tiny pills of homoeopathy are far more potent than ounce doses or choking pills of allopathy. I assure the reader that the effect of purifying non-co-operation is more certain than the effect of homoeopathic medicine. I do wish, therefore, that everywhere non-co-operators will insist upon due fulfilment of all the conditions of civil disobedience. One may be a lawyer, title-holder, even a councillor and yet properly eligible for civil disobedience if he is sincerely non-violent in thought, word and deed, wears hand-spun khadi as a sacred duty, shuns untouchability as an intolerable evil and believes in the unity of all races and classes of India, as for all time essential for the well-being and the attainment, as also retention, of swaraj.

AGGRESSIVE *V.* DEFENSIVE

It is now necessary to understand the exact distinction between aggressive civil disobedience and defensive. Aggressive, assertive or offensive civil disobedience is non-violent, wilful disobedience of laws of the State whose breach does not involve moral turpitude and which is undertaken as a symbol of revolt against the State. Thus, disregard of laws relating to revenue or regulation of personal conduct for the convenience of the State, although such laws in themselves inflict no hardship and do not require to be altered, would be assertive, aggressive or offensive civil disobedience.

Defensive civil disobedience, on the other hand, is involuntary or reluctant non-violent disobedience of such laws as are in themselves bad and obedience to which would be inconsistent with one's self-respect or human dignity. Thus formation of Volunteer Corps for peaceful purposes, holding of public meetings for like purposes, publication of articles not contemplating or inciting to violence in

spite of prohibitory orders, is defensive civil disobedience. And so is conducting of peaceful picketing undertaken with a view to wean people from things or institutions picketed in spite of orders to the contrary. The fulfilment of the conditions mentioned above is as necessary for defensive civil disobedience as for offensive civil disobedience.

A WELL-DESERVED SNUB

Mr. P. V. Hanmantrao of Tanjore is reported to have apologized and asked the Madras Government for discharge. The latter have properly asked for security on the ground that a non-co-operator has betrayed the trust reposed in him. The Madras Government say that Mr. Subramania Siva, a prisoner who was ailing and who applied for his discharge, undertook not to take part in politics for some time and has now turned round and denies having apologized. Mr. Subramania Siva is a well-known public worker. I hope he will clear himself by making a full statement and if he apologized in a weak moment I hope he will have, like Mr. Yakoob Hassan, the courage of making a manly confession. Everybody knows that he is suffering from a fell disease and the public will certainly overlook his weakness if he apologized in the circumstance. He must also keep his promise, if he made it, of not taking part in politics for one year. Non-co-operators cannot afford to be weak, they cannot hide their weakness. Above all they must be scrupulously honest and must rigidly perform all their promises even though they might have been made in a weak moment, unless their performance involves any immorality.

AMONG CHRISTIAN CIRCLES

The talk, I hear, is going the round among Christian circles that I have said in private conversation that, had India been equipped for the use of arms, I would certainly have resorted to and advised the use of arms. I had fondly hoped that such a thing could never have been said and believed of me in India. I assure my Christian and other readers that I have never made any such statement to any person whatsoever. On the contrary, it has been my belief and practice for over forty years deliberately to practise the doctrine of non-resistance to evil, not to retaliate. There are more instances than one in my public life when with the ability to retaliate, I have refrained from doing so and advised friends to do likewise. My life is dedicated to the spread of that doctrine. I read it in the teaching of all the greatest teachers of the world, Zoroaster, Mahavir, Daniel, Jesus, Mahomed, Nanak and a host of others. Indeed, I am not sure that we do justice to

Moses when we impute to him the doctrine of retaliation in the sense that he made it obligatory on his followers to exact tooth for a tooth. It may be my wish that is father to the thought. But I do think that in an age when people were unrestrained in their appetite for the enemy's blood, Moses restricted retaliation to equal measure and no more. But I must not lead the reader into religious discussion. Whilst, however, non-violence is now, has ever been, and I pray to God, it ever may be my final creed for all occasions, it is true that there are thousands in the ranks of non-co-operation with whom non-violence is an expedient or a policy to which they are not committed for all time and all circumstances. They believe that for India, as she is constituted, there is no method but that of non-violence for regaining her freedom. And this they believe not merely because she has no arms or training in them but also because with her diverse creeds and races there is nothing for her but constant internecine strife, if her children began the habit or invoking the god of war for every occasion. The best of us are beginning to see more in the doctrine of non-violence than when we first approached it.

In this connection my attention has also been drawn to a paragraph in the *Dnyanodaya*. Sadhu Sundar Singh, it is there stated, "made quite plain his profound disapproval of Mr. Gandhi's method telling him in so many words that they can lead India to nothing but ruin and useless suffering". I am sorry that the Sadhu's name has been thus dragged into the controversy. But now that it has been, in justice to the Sadhu and the cause, I must say that so far as *my* recollection goes, not only did he not disapprove of my methods in "so many words" but he entirely approved of them and agreed that India had no other choice. We had the closest communion. The Sadhu came purposely to understand some things about which he had no first-hand knowledge. He did not know, for instance, what the implications of the Hindu-Muslim friendship were and where the minorities stood and whether the movement could remain non-violent to the end. We had long discussions over all these and other matters and he certainly left on me the impression that for a religious man there was no course left open. The greatest difficulty undoubtedly is about the masses keeping non-violent to the end. With men nothing may be possible, for God nothing is impossible. I would fain have avoided any reference whatsoever to our conversation. But the friends who have brought the matter to my notice tell me that Sadhu Sunder Singh is on the waters and that the paragraph in question is being exploited to wean Indian Christians from the movement. It has to

stand or fall on its own merits. No certificate can save it if its professors betray their trust; no condemnation can injure it permanently if the professors remain true to it to the end. But I felt that I could not withhold from the public what I knew about Sadhu Sunder Singh's views.

IS A NEW AGE DAWNING?

Mr. Pearson has answered the question in the affirmative in his article, the first part of which I am publishing in this issue. Some may consider the article to be too hopeful. It is, however better to be hopeful than despondent. The best proof perhaps of the dawning of a new age is to be found in the wonderful reception that Europe and America accorded to the Poet of Asia[1] who represents thenew spirit and the new hope. He was not honoured for his birth or even for his learning. He was honoured for the new message for which he stands. But it seems almost too much to hope that the dawn will come before the sordid spirit of imperialism, for which Britain seems to stand, is completely broken up. Britain must cease to be an Empire and become truly a Commonwealth or die before the new age is ushered. She is today the greatest menace to the peace of the world if only because some of her best men sincerely believe that she is the one Power that is keeping the peace today. They refuse to see that an armed or imposed peace is no peace. Unless therefore somehow or other Britain changes her policy and therefore her heart, a world war more serious even than the Anglo-German must precede the dawn. Let us pray and work for the necessary change of Britain's heart.

TOO SACRED FOR PUBLICATION

There are things one does not like to see published, not because there is anything secret about them but because they are too sacred for publication. Sometimes the published version gives an impression totally different from the spoken word even though the reporting may be ever so accurate. When I call a little child a fiend in perfect good humour or with a frown, it would not do to report me as having called some one a fiend without giving long explanations as to the why and the how. Some such disservice has been done by the manifestly friendly reporter of a conversation and a discourse at Satyagraha Ashram as reported in *The Bombay Chronicle* of the 2nd instant.[2] I

[1] Rabindranath Tagore

[2] The conversation, as also reported in The *Hindu, 2-2-1922,* read: "The night

dislike such things being reported. In a swift conversation there are many things understood. An accurate report of such a conversation is impossible without copious footnotes. I am for instance reported as having said that Shantiniketan is for material progress and Satyagraha Ashram exists solely for spiritual progress. When the Poet sees this he will either laugh at it if he remembers that I could not possibly say or mean any such thing about Shantiniketan, or he will be angry and despondent that even I should be so hopelessly ignorant and inartistic as not to see the spirituality of Shantiniketan. The Poet, I feel sure, is not likely to do me the injustice of thinking me capable of holding the belief imputed to me. I could say to the Poet, as indeed I have done, that Shantiniketan lacks discipline. He had laughed over it and even endorsed my criticism and justified it saying he was a Poet and Shantiniketan was for his amusement. He could only sing and make others sing. I was free to introduce all the discipline I liked but he was only a Poet. The reader must know that I have lived at Shantiniketan for more than once. I am permitted to regard it as a home of retreat. My boys have had shelter there and at the Gurukula when I was away in England.[1] My conversation with the Hindi teacher was on the basis that both he and I were lovers of Shantiniketan. How can Shantiniketan be otherwise than spiritual when the author of pure spiritual poetry is the dominating spirit there? I am not so dull as to think that a place where Devendranath Tagore[2] lived could be devoid of spirituality. The readers of *Young India* are aware that I receive spiritual draughts from Shantiniketan from time to time sent by Badadada who is incessantly watching over me and praying for the success of my mission. I hasten to inform the reader that I regard

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before Mahatmaji called the old occupants to his side and asked their opinion about the Ashram. Different opinions were expressed. Some found the rules of the Ashram strict, others wanted them still more strict. Then the teacher of Hindi at Gujarat Mahavidyalaya, who was formerly at the Shantiniketan, said, 'We from U.P. do not like the food for the evening meal and to get up in the morning at four. Well, it is absolutely impossible for me.' Bapuji smiled and said, 'You see your Shantiniketan is for material progress, while Satyagraha Ashram exists solely for spiritual progress. You say at Shantiniketan there is more individual liberty, but I do not call that liberty I call it licence. It is nice to get up early. It is after prarthana every morning that I write for *Navajivan* and Young *India.* I can concentrate ever so well in the morning than at any other time. You see it is not difficult to get up early if you go to bed early. As for me, you know that ten o'clock is my bed time'."

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mahatma Munshiram", 8-2-1915.

[2] Father of Rabindranath Tagore

many professors and teachers of Shantiniketan as highly spiritual and good men whose association I have valued as a privilege. I must further inform the reader that I consider Bengal to be the most spiritual among our provinces. The whole of my conversation which is unfortunately reported was carried on in a humorous strain. I have often claimed among lovers of Shantiniketan greater spirituality for Satyagraha Ashram than Shantiniketan. But such competition and claim must not be interpreted into an assumption of superiority. I am most desirous to keep Satyagraha Ashram veiled from the public. We are there a band of humble unlettered workers knowing our own failings, trying to understand them still further and undoubtedly intent upon finding the truth and wanting to live and die for it. Comparisons between kindred but not identical institutions must never be made. But if a comparison must be made, in spite of the early rising and the discipline of Satyagraha Ashram, I would vote really and sincerely for Shantiniketan as an elder brother. It is older by far in age and I know it is so also in wisdom. But there is that "but". The inmates of Shantiniketan must beware of the race that the little place in Gujarat is running.

Having said so much of Shantiniketan by way of reparation, I have no time or space left for giving my version of the morning discourse[1] nor must I attempt it. It came from the very depth of my soul. I could not report it myself with the same force. I heard a sister give it in one sentence. It was so true. I wish the unknown friend had never thought of reporting it. The report does not convey the central truth of it.

IN HOLY BANARAS

What is going on in Banaras is graphically described in the following telegram:[2]

> . . . volunteers sentenced twentieth six weeks rigorous for distributing notices inviting volunteers, enlistment. Till now treated simple imprisonment. Second instant imposed labour. Refused. Confined solitary cells, besides insanitation. Starving waterless. . . . Kripalaniji, others, even ordinary criminals protest hunger strike since third today . . . position anxious.

IN ANDHRA

The reader will peruse with profit a note prepared by Mr. Narsinha Rao regarding the preparation in Andhra for civil

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Satyagraha Ashram, Ahmedabad", 26-1-1922

[2] Only excerpts reproduced here

disobedience. I supplement it with the following from Deshabhakta K. Venkatappayya written on the 2nd instant :[1]

IN POONA

Mr. N. C. Kelkar and his courageous band are making headway. The Government will not imprison them. They have now imposed a fine of Rs. 50/- on Mr. Kelkar for picketing. This of course he has refused to pay. If Mr. Kelkar and the others continue to picket in spite of the fines, they must suffer material ruin. I hope they will all stand that test. To put up with loss of property is as necessary as loss of life for the national uplift.

IN THE SABARMATI JAIL

As if there was design in the move, an echo of the Karachi Jail comes now from Sabarmati Jail. Jairamdas [Daulatram] will not salaam in the degrading manner prescribed, he will not submit to the search. He is, therefore, confined to a solitary cell, he is deprived of light and sandals. It is said that he will have still further penalties imposed on him, if he does not yield. He may be put in irons and kept standing for three days. Such penalty has been paid before now by our forefathers, it has been paid in all times and in many lands. I hope that God will give strength to the prisoners who have challenged the authorities and that they will not surrender though they should have to die.

Young India, 9-2-l922

55. THE ONLY ISSUE

It was not without deep thought and prayer that I wrote the letter to His Excellency the Viceroy. It is not a threat because every word in it is meant. It is a heartfelt prayer to the tyrant to desist from evil. Lord Reading is not the tyrant. The system of which he is himself an unconscious and helpless victim is the tyrant. But every system becomes embodied in a person. Today it is personified in Lord Reading, no matter how unconscious he is of it. I have invited him in all humility seriously to consider the position and ask himself whether the official lawlessness can in any case be justified. Let him turn to the

[1] The letter, not reproduced here, described non-co-operators' activities at Guntur and Nellore.

week's summary[1] to which the old heading "In Cold Blood" is restored. It is all true if the witnesses are not all liars. Should these things be?

But what of defiance of authority? Must defiance (non-violent at least) indeed of authority be met by barbarous and wicked abuse of it?

If the Viceroy cannot or will not see such an incredibly simple issue must India sit still? Defensive civil disobedience must continue at any cost. If the whole of India were to say that even peaceful public meetings may not be hold without permission, that peaceful volunteer associations may not be formed without permission, and that newspapers cannot be published without permission, that prohibition cannot be accepted. For a man may not be expected to ask for another's leave to breathe or eat or drink. The three things I have mentioned are the breath, the food and the drink of public life.

Young India, 9-2-1922

56. IN A TANGLE

Sir Henry Wheeler has given us an accurate expression for describing the position of the Bengal Government and for that matter even the Government of India. He considered the debate in the Bengal Legislative Council on the resolution calling upon the Government to cancel all the repressive notices and to discharge all the prisoners convicted under them "a hopeless unreality". For him who perhaps does not know what is going on in Bengal except what his subordinates choose to tell him, the debate may be "a hopeless unreality". The fifty Councillors who have first hand knowledge of things as they are, refused to be misled by Sir Henry's oratory. To them, the position taken up by the Bengal Government was "a hopeless unreality". The lawlessness in the country described by Sir Henry Wheeler existed only in his imagination. What was real did not in their estimation need the drastic measures that the Bengal Government had taken. The Councillors knew that such lawlessness as existed in Bengal was disciplined, civil, non-violent and necessitated by the thoughtless action of the authorities. Sir Henry Wheeler failed to drive home to his audience his conviction that Chitta Ranjan Das,

[1] Of accounts of atrocities committed by the police published in Young India, 9-2-1922

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Shyam Sundar Chakravarti and now even Babu Hardayal Nag, the aged President of the Provincial Congress Committee, had any mischievous intention. With the imprisonment of these trusted leaders of the people and many other innocent workers in their minds, the terrifying description given by Sir Henry Wheeler appeared to the members as unreal as it possibly could be and failed to fright on them into rejecting the resolution. The Councillors deserve congratulations for the courageous stand they took up for Freedom of opinion, because the lawlessness that Sir Henry Wheeler complained of amounts to no more than insistence in defiance of prohibitory orders upon the exercise of the right of free speech and free association.

Forcible dispersal of peaceful meetings, search and seizure of Congress and Khilafat papers and assaults upon the public were such a grim reality with the Councillors that they had no choice left to them but to support the resolution. It is worthy of note that Sir Henry Wheeler's amendment was by no means of an uncompromising nature. He offered a non-official committee to go into the matter, but the Councillors very properly rejected the compromise. They were not prepared to have the evidence of the own sensesdisputed by any committee. The Bengal Government must now find itself in a tangle. If it releases the innocent prisoners and recalls its precious notices, the Congress and Khilafat organizations must go on with redoubled vigour. If it refuses to carry out the resolution, it must forfeit the support of the Moderates to a large extent. Of course, it can live without that support, as it has done all these long years. But it must know that a new era has dawned upon India. The people are no longer amenable to repression. They are becoming increasingly conscious of their strength. They are becoming increasingly inured to sufferings. No government in the world can possibly repress into submission a people strong and willing enough to suffer.

What is true of Bengal is true of Bihar. The Bihar Council also has spoken in no uncertain terms. The Council of the United Provinces has accepted a compromise, but even there the Government has really no case. It has become difficult for me in spite of doubling the size of *Young India* to quote all the reports of terrible repression received from almost every part of India. It is not now mere imprisonment. It is shameful disregard and equally shameful distortion even of repressive news.

Sir Henry Wheeler has given us also another good expression — "tyranny of words and phrases". He would not be tyrannized by the word "repression". He says every law is repressive and that the public should not be frightened by the word but that they should look at the reality. Let us then face the reality and go behind the tyranny of the phrase "Law and Order". Sir Hormusji Wadia eloquently reminded the Malaviya Conference that many a dark deed was done in the time of the Bourbons in France and elsewhere in the sacred name of "Law and Order". If we would get rid of the magic spell of those two words, we would find that lives and property of the people of India have been rendered unsafe by the acts of the administrators of "Law and Order". It is a sign of the times that the people, even Councillors, refuse to live under the "tyranny of words and phrases" and be deceived by the hopeless unreality of the Government's position. Non-co-operation is a strong solvent and we shall soon find that both the Government and the people will have to come to-grips with hopeful realities and get out of the maze of hopeless unrealities in which both have hitherto lived.

Young India, 9-2-1922

57. VIOLENCE IN THE CAMP

Doctors Rajan and Shastry, two of the best workers of Madras, have been arrested together with two others evidently in the cause of, shall I say, intemperance. The Madras Government have discovered a method of breaking up Congress and Khilafat organizations without resort to the Criminal Law Amendment Act and the Seditious Meetings Act. They will do better than Bengal and the United Provinces. They will avoid the reproach of having enforced the Acts which have become the object of criticism in the country. And I hear that in Madras, at any rate, it is the redoubtable Sir Thyagaraj Chetty more than Lord Willingdon who is bent upon breaking up these organizations. For non-co-operators, who are against measures and not men, it is one and the same thing whether the actor is an Indian or an Englishman. It is my certain conviction that Englishmen who serve under Swaraj Government will be as good as Indians. And we are sorrowful witnesses of the fact that some of our countrymen can, under the existing system, become just as efficient administrators of a vicious system as Englishmen. We have, therefore, to fight the system irrespective of men. We, who have been victims for four generations

of dual law, one for Englishmen and another for ourselves, must not be guilty of it ourselves. Let Madras, therefore, be tried and purified even under Sir Thyagaraj Chetty's rule.

If we are true to ourselves, we shall be able effectively to deal with all our opponents, whether they be our own countrymen or Englishmen. But a letter received from Dr. Rajan four days before his arrest emphasizes the warning given to us by recent happenings that we have to beware more of ourselves than of our opponents. Here is his letter evidently not written for publication nor for privilege. it is both a confession and a criticism. Writes Dr. Rajan:

> One of your young friends, G. V. Kripanidhi by name, wrote the editorial in the *Swarajya* on the 15th instant entitled "To Our Shame" regarding the hartal troubles in Madras. Mr. Prakasam was absent, away at Bombay. The day prior to the hartal I was able to prevail on the organizers that the volunteers should be made to do police duty and protect those that opened their shops and that went to the Prince's visit. But later, Mr Prakasam insisted that they must remain indoors. There was bitter comment against that article and I felt it my duty to support the leading article, a copy of which I send for your perusal.
>
> Just two days ago, Mr. Singaravelu Chettiar, President Madras District Congress Council, held a public meeting on the Madras beach. The first resolution congratulated the citizens of Madras on their successful hartal and the second resolution condemned the excesses committed that day. Mr. Prakasam did not agree with your criticism of my letter to you and said in his speech that my letter did not give you sufficient data to draw the conclusions you have drawn. I wired to Mr. Singaravelu not to have this ugly meeting but evidently no notice seems to have been taken of it. It is indeed a great pity that I am not strong enough to induce our non-co-operators to see their mistakes, while they are gloating over their success that the public of Madras have redeemed the pledge given to you regarding the hartal. Yet the grim fact remains that violence and undue coercion have made the hartal a failure for non-violent non-co-operation. Whilst this struggle for non-violence exists against the violence of our own men, one may well hesitate to take a single step forward in civil resistance. I have often written in the local press about the weakness of our party in the fact that some of our non-co-operators do not have the same faith in non-violence as they should have.
>
> Salem has been the target of attack by the local Government this week. Almost all the workers, speakers, volunteers, including myself and Ramaswamy Naiker, have been served with 144 asking us not to hold any

public meeting or advocate abstention from drink. Civil disobedience (individual) has been started, and already three non-co-operating *vakils* and fifteen others have disobeyed and are in Jail. Yesterday three more disobeyed the order and twelve have been arrested. The Chairman of the Municipality and four practising *vakils* have been served with notices under 144 preventing them from addressing any meeting. Today at Madura 17 volunteers have been arrested for picketing. So far there has been no violence anywhere. I have not yet offered disobedience but I intend doing during the course of the week or after 1st February.

I am rather taken aback at my own change—from a revolutionary of the India House of 1908 to the non-violent non-co operator of l922. It is indeed a change but this change of heart, the peace of suffering, the perfect unconcern of the mind with which it is faced, seem well nigh impossible but for living examples. Years ago I would have fumed and fretted against any restraining orders. I would have vowed vengeance against the policeman that served the notice, against the official that issued the illegal and mad order, but today I have not got any ill will against them, but would be thanking the official for having given one more proof, feeble as it is, to the many glaring instances of the utter disregard of truth and righteousness of the present administrative machinery which has made monsters of mild and good men, ant I have nothing but pity for the erring official. Even for his sake suffering seems to be the only remedy open to us at this juncture.

Hostile papers make capital out of your writing in the *Navajivan* that "you are at sea" with regard to swaraj. It has given room to misconceptions. It may be that the Associated Press has advantageously extracted only portions of it. It strikes me as if you are unduly pessimistic. I do not know whether you felt exactly on the verge of hopelessness about non-violence and untouchability. Progress in our present condition is possible only under limitations and till the restricting limitations are shattered no robust growth is possible. Swaraj will break our limitations and give us sufficient light and air. Any scheme of swaraj must aim at breaking these barriers of progress, and it is a question which should come first. There is no use letting more of our countrymen getting Europeanized and ridicule the charkha as the wonderful Madras ministry has done. The national deterioration must stop. I think it would be better if you could reproduce the whole of your article of the *Navajivan* in Young I*ndia* with any comment you think necessary thereon. I have unnecessarily made this letter lengthy. Kindly excuse trouble.

I need not remark now upon the fact that nowadays people are being singled out for imprisonment for the sake of their non-violence

if they are also influential. I reproduce the letter for the warning it contains. There is little doubt that there are some among us who do not implicitly believe in non-violence even while they are under the pledge, i.e., they do not mind the assistance of those who would do violence. They seem to believe that violence can run parallel to non-violence and the two together accelerate the progress of the country towards its goal.' Such an attitude besides being hypocritical is positively against the country's interest. Two *opposite* forces may run parallel but they *cannot both go in the same direction!* If non-violence was a camouflage or a preparation for violence, an accidental or intended outbreak of it might be by way of trial a great gain even during the pendency of so-called non-violence. But that is not India's religious battle. God is witness above and He is just enough to chastise every double dealing. Our present belief is that India cannot gain anything by violence and must gain her three ends by non-violence alone unsupported by violence. If therefore we will win, there must be on the part of non-co-operators an unequivocal and emphatic mental and vocal condemnation of every act of violence done out of sympathy for their cause. Let those who do not believe in non-violence or believe in both running together form a party of their own and fight out the issue. That would make a non-co-operator's task difficult but not so difficult as when he has to fight an enemy in his own camp. His system must be kept pure. Any impurity from within will be an organic disease and may prove fatal. No attack from without can ever prove fatal. The first and indeed the only condition of success therefore is that we must be true to ourselves.

The confession, therefore, that Dr. Rajan has made is an invigorating process. It strengthens him and the cause for which he stands. Non-co-operation is a vicious and corrupt doctrine, truly an "ugly" word, if it does not mean down-right self-purification. Stubborn and implacable resistance against internal corruption is enough resistance against the Government. As soon as the process of self-purification is complete, we shall miss the system we appear to be fighting.

There is nothing in the *capital* that is being made out of my writing in the *Navajivan* referred to by Dr. Rajan. I observe that the *Swarajya* has already published a fair translation of the whole article which was written after careful thought. It explains itself.

Young India, 9-2-1922

58. NOTE ON TERMS OF AGREEMENT WITH COMMITTEE [1]

[*February 9, 1922*]

l. As regards Mass Civil Disobedience,

Mr. Gandhi intends advising the W.C.[2] to stop it till 31st December 1922.

2. As regards other items,

Mr. Gandhi to advise the W.C. to restrict picketing of liquor and cloth-shops to such means as are devoid of provocation or defiance of law, and in particular

(1) to confine it to places where atmosphere of perfect non-violence is maintained;

(2) to employ as agents only men of responsibility and beyond a certain mature age;

(3) motive of picketing to be not provocation or defiance of law, but promotion of the merit of the question itself.

This is not necessarily to be under the same time limit, as this will be implied in the resolution on M.C.D.[3]

3. Volunteers,

not to be listed for Mass Civil Disobedience, nor for defying the law, but for carrying on the activities of social, moral and economic reform.

4. Preparatory activities of an offensive, hostile or provocative character to be suspended pending R.T.C.

5. The terms offered at the Representative Conference in Bombay to remain open.

Gandhiji says cls. 4 & 5 are not necessary, as they are implied in l-3, but if it is necessary at any time for a R.T.C. to give these as assurances, the same will be given.

From a photostat: S.N. 7909

[1] The Committee appointed by the Leaders' Conference of January 14 and 15, 1922. In *The Story of My Life*, Jayakar writes in his entry for February 9, 1922: ". . . I noted down certain terms on which he [Gandhiji] and the Committee had agreed and I gave those terms to him. He is as honest as usual and-admitted them . . ."

[2] Working Committee

[3] This is in Gandhiji's hand.

59. MY NOTE

OPRESSION IN BALIA

I reproduce below the vivid description of the oppression now going on in Balia which Chi. Devdas Gandhi has given.[1] Balia is one of the poorer districts of the United Provinces. The people there are energetic, simple-minded and trusting. They are patriotic. I often planned to go there, but I have not been able to do so. Since the district is on the Bihar border, its people are more like the Biharis. I can picture to myself the oppression they suffer. My heart bleeds when I think of it. I feel unhappy that I could not go there. If I survive the anguish which I feel now, I hope to go on a pilgrimage to Balia. May this hope of mine comfort the people of Balia. The sacrifices of towns like Balia will surely liberate this country. May God grant the people there still greater strength to bear suffering, and may the example of Balia serve to make Gujarat more eager to suffer!

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-2-1922

60. TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI

BOMBAY,
February 9, 1922

DEVDAS GANDHI
CONGRESS OFFICE
GORAKHPUR

YOUR WIRE. SEND FULL ACCURATE REPORTS[2]. KEEP PEOPLE NON VIOLENT. GET ALL INFORMATION. TELL WORKERS AM DEEPLY GRIEVED. KEEP CALM. GOD WILL BLESS YOU. RETURNING BARDOLI TONIGHT

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 7898

[1] In a letter to Gandhiji, which is not translated here

[2] About the Chauri Chaura incidents

61. NOTE ON CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IN GUNTUR [1]

[Before *February 10, 1922*]

If Andhra stops civil disobedience, I shall be glad. But if it cannot stop, I shall not mind it provided of course that complete control is attained over forces of violence and all conditions are fulfilled.

M. K. GANDHI

Andhra Government Records

62. SPEECH TO CONGRESS WORKERS, BARDOLI [2]

[*February 10, 1922*][3]

I regard those who have assembled here as some of the best workers in the country. In fact, I can see the condition of India at the present time truly reflected by this small assembly. What I have heard now confirms me in the belief that most of those who are present here have failed to understand the message of non-violence. This convinces me that the country at large has not at all accepted the teaching of non-violence. I must, therefore, immediately stop the movement for civil disobedience.

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, pp. 226-7

[1] Found in the source under the following description: "The note in pencil sent by Mahatma Gandhi to the President of the Guntur District Congress Committee through Sri B. Pattabhi Sitaramayyah regarding the no-tax campaign in the Guntur District". The report is dated February 10, 1922.

[2] The source says: " . . . Mahatmaji summoned . . . the whole body of workers, and all those who were present at Bardoli today, to discuss with him the propriety or otherwise of starting civil disobedience in the face of the terrible happening at Chauri Chaura. He asked for the opinion of everyone present , . . almost everyone, young and old, declared . . . that if Mahatmaji retreated after throwing out a challenge to Lord Reading in the manner he had done by his rejoinder to the Government *communique*, the whole country would be disgraced before the world. Only three persons dissented from this view . . ."

[3] From the source

63. WORKING COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTIONS AT BARDOLI [1]

[*February 12, 1922*]

The working Committee of the Congress met at Bardoli on the 11th and 12th instant and passed the following resolutions:

1. The Working Committee deplores the inhuman conduct of the mob at Chauri Chaura in having brutally murdered constables and wantonly burnt the Police *Thana* and tenders its sympathy to the families of the bereaved.

2. In view of Nature's repeated warnings, every time mass civil disobedience has been imminent some popular violent outburst has taken place indicating that the atmosphere in the country is not non-violent enough for mass disobedience, the latest instance being the tragic and terrible events at Chauri Chaura near Gorakhpur, the Working Committee of the Congress resolves that mass civil disobedience contemplated at Bardoli and elsewhere be suspended and instructs the local Congress Committees forthwith to advise the cultivators to pay the laud revenue and other taxes due to the Government and whose payment might have been suspended in anticipation of mass civil disobedience, and instructs them to suspend every other preparatory activity of an offensive nature.

3. The suspension of mass civil disobedience shall be continued till the atmosphere is so non-violent as to ensure the non-repetition of popular atrocities such as at Gorakhpur or hooliganism such as at Bombay and Madras respectively on 17th November 1921 and 13th January last.

4. In order to promote a peaceful atmosphere, the Working Committee advises, till further instructions, all Congress organizations to stop activities specially designed to court arrest and imprisonment, save normal Congress activities including voluntary hartals wherever an absolutely peaceful atmosphere can be assured and for that end all picketing shall be stopped save for the *bona-fide* and peaceful purpose of warning the visitors to liquor shops against the evils of

[1] Presumably drafted by Gandhiji. These resolutions were passed by the Working Committee; which met at Bardoli on February 11 and 12, and were subsequently adopted by the A.I.C.C. on February 25; *vide* ''Resolution at A.I.C.C. Meeting, Delhi", 25-2-1922, and Young *India*, 2-3-1922.

drinking, such picketing to be controlled by persons of known good character and specially selected by the Congress Committees concerned.

5. The Working Committee advises, till further instructions, the stoppage of all volunteer processions and public meetings merely for the purpose of defiance of the notifications regarding such meetings. This, however, shall not interfere with the private meetings of the Congress and other Committees or public meetings which are required for the conduct of the normal activities of the Congress.

6. Complaints having been brought to the notice of the Working Committee that ryots are not paying rents to the zemindars, the Working Committee advises Congress workers and organizations to inform the ryots that such withholding of rents is contrary to the resolutions of the Congress and that it is injurious to the best interests of the country.

7. The Working Committee assures the zemindars that the Congress movement is in no way intended to attack their legal rights, and that even where the ryots have grievances, the Committee's desire is that redress should be sought by mutual consultations and by the usual recourse to arbitrations.

8. Complaints having been brought to the notice of the Working Committee that in the formation of Volunteer Corps great laxity prevails in the selection and that insistence is not laid on the full use of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar, and on the full observance by Hindus of the rule as to the removal of untouchability, nor is care being taken to ascertain that the candidates believe fully in the observance of non-violence in intent, word and deed, in terms of the Congress resolution, the Working Committee calls upon all Congress organizations to revise their lists and remove from them the names of all such volunteers as do not strictly conform to the requirements of the pledge.

9. The Working Committee is of opinion that unless Congressmen carry out to the full the Congress constitution and the resolutions from time to time issued by the Working Committee, it is not possible to achieve its objects expeditiously or at all

10. The foregoing resolutions will have effect only pending the meeting to be specially convened of the All-India Congress Committee and thereafter subject to confirmation by it, the Secretary to call such meeting as early as possible after consultation with Hakim

Ajmal Khan.[1]

THE NEW PROGRAMME

Whereas the Gorakhpur tragedy is a powerful proof of the fact that the mass mind has not yet fully realized the necessity of non-violence as an integral, active, and chief part of mass civil disobedience, and whereas the reported indiscriminate acceptance of persons as volunteers in contravention of the Congress instructions betrays want of appreciation of the vital part of satyagraha, and whereas in the opinion of the Working Committee, the delay in the attainment of the national aim is solely due to the weak and incomplete execution, in practice, of the constitution of the Congress and with a view to perfecting the internal organization, the working Committee advises all Congress organizations to be engaged in the following activities:

1. To enlist at least one crore of members of the Congress.

Note (*i*): Since peace (non-violence) and legitimateness (truth)[2] are the essence of the Congress creed, no person should be enlisted who does not believe in non-violence and truth[3] as indispensable for the attainment of swaraj. The creed of the Congress must, therefore, be carefully explained to each person who is appealed to, to join the Congress.

Note (ii): The workers should note that no one who does not pay the annual subscription can be regarded as a qualified Congressman. All the old members are, therefore, to be advised to re-register their names.

2. To popularize the spinning-wheel and organize the manufacture-of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar.[4]

Note: To this end all workers and office-bearers should be dressed in khaddar, and it is recommended that with a view to encourage others they should themselves learn hand-spinning.

3. To organize national schools.

[1] In the modified version passed by the A.l.C.C., these paragraphs form Resolution I and those that follow appear as Resolution III and have been assigned to February 12; *vide Young India*, 2-3-1922.

[2] Here the A.I.C.C. resolution has: "Since peaceful and legitimate means"

[3] The A.I.C.C. resolution has "believe in such means"

[4] Here the A.I.C.C. resolution adds: "and popularize its use by house-to-house visits".

Note: No picketing of Government schools should be resorted to; but reliance should be placed upon the superiority of national schools in all vital matters to[1] command attendance.

4. To organize the depressed classes for a better life, to improve their social, mental and moral condition, to induce them to send their children to national schools, and to provide for them the ordinary facilities which other citizens enjoy.

Note: Whilst, therefore, where the prejudice against the untouchables is still strong separate schools and separate wells must be maintained out of Congress funds, every effort should be made to draw such children to national schools and to persuade the people to allow the untouchables to use the common wells.

5. To organize the temperance campaign amongst the people addicted to the drink habit by house-to-house visits and to rely more upon appeal to the drinker in his home than upon picketing.6. To organize village and town *panchayats* for the private settlement of all disputes, reliance being placed solely upon the force of public opinion and the truthfulness of panchayat decision to ensure obedience to them.

Note: In order to avoid even the appearance of coercion, no social boycott should be resorted to against those who will not obey the *panchayat's* decisions.

7. In order to promote and emphasize unity among all classes and races and mutual goodwill, the establishment of which is the aim of the movement of non-co-operation, to organize asocial service department that will render help to all, irrespective of political[2] differences, in times of illness or accident.

Note: A non-co-operator, whilst firmly adhering to his creed, will deem it a privilege to render personal service, in case of ill-ness or accident, to every person whether English or Indian.

8. To continue the Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund[3] and to call upon every Congressman or Congress sympathiser to pay at least one hundredth part of his annual income for the year 1921. Every province to send every month 25 per cent of its income from the

[1] Here the A.I.C.C. resolution has: "to draw students from government and aided schools".

[2] This word is dropped in the A.I.C.C. resolution

[3] *Vide* "Speech on Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund", 31-12-1920.

Tilak Memorial Fund to the All-India Congress Committee.

9. The above resolutions shall be brought before the forthcoming session of the All-India Congress Committee for revision, if necessary.

10. In the opinion of the Working Committee a project is necessary for the purpose of finding employment for those who may give up Government service and to that end the Committee appoints Messrs Mian Mahomed Haji Jan Mahomed Chhotani, Jamnalal Bajaj and V.J. Patel to draw up a scheme for consideration by the said[1] special meeting of the All-India Congress Committee.[2]

Young India, 16-2-1922

64. CONDITIONS FOR SWARAJ

We have discussed the conditions for swaraj several times before now. But, as long as we have not learnt to observe them, we must continue to think about them and tell ourselves that there can be no swaraj till then. If we do this, we shall escape many dangers. We shall then get angry only with ourselves and will refrain from doing wrong things.

The Congress has pointed out these conditions many times in different ways and has at last made them obligatory on those who enlist themselves as volunteers. The result is that we do not get volunteers in sufficient numbers now, and even those who come forward do not observe the conditions fully.

If a patient does not take the medicine in the way prescribed by the *vaid*[3], the fault is his, not the *vaid's*. Similarly, if we do not observe the conditions for swaraj, we ourselves are to blame.

At the moment, however, we need not go into the question of who is to blame. We are concerned only with how we may win swaraj. Just as a patient will not recover without taking the right medicine, so also swaraj cannot be won without observing the necessary conditions. Swaraj cannot be won merely by people becoming volunteers. It will be won only by volunteers observing the conditions laid down for

[1] The A.I.C.C. resolution has "next".

[2] This paragraph forms Resolution II in the modified version passed by the A.I.C.C. and, along with Resolution I, has been assigned to February 11.

[3] Physician practising the Ayurvedic system of medicine

them. If recruits are required to have a minimum height of five feet, any pigmies of four feet who manage to get in will certainly not help to win the battle but will become a burden, and may possibly be the cause of their side being defeated. Similarly, if some volunteers inclined to violence join those who observe the condition of non-violence, they can only do harm. When enlistment as volunteers is open only to those who wear nothing but hand-spun khadi at home and outside and on all occasions, how can persons who wear khadi containing mill-made warp,or who wear pure khadi only at the time of enrolment and while on duty as volunteers, help to win swaraj? These persons resort to deception right from the start. The condition about khadi, which should seem easy, is felt to be difficult. What involves the minimum of expense is looked upon, it seems, as very expensive.

Perhaps people do not believe that swaraj can be won through khadi. If that is so, they should not have voted in favour of khadi at the Congress and at the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee. If we are not serious even about what we do, we shall not advance any distance worth speaking of. The work we have done will also be wasted.

If we are demanding swaraj for the sake of the poorest of the poor and the lowest of the low, for the sake of victims of famines and for all those who live by begging, if we wish to banish hunger from the country, then we shall find that we cannot do without hand-spun khadi, for by no other means can we provide the homes of such people with the necessaries of life.

The same about untouchability. Anyone who believes that untouchability is a part of Hinduism has no right to become a non-co-operator. This Government has made a science of social distance. Go where we will, we are treated as untouchables, We are treated as fit only to receive kicks and abuses, as fit to be kept at a distance. Our right place is in jail. All these are signs of our being treated as untouchables. We mark all of them in our behaviour towards the *Dheds* and the *Bhangis.* What right, then, do we have to swaraj as conceived by the Congress, and how can we get ourselves enrolled as Congress volunteers? A Hindu who thinks that untouchability is part of his dharma should see in a moment that he has no right at all to remain a non-co-operator. And, if all those who regard themselves as Hindus are not sincerely ready to give up untouchability, I at any rate will declare, though I may be in a

minority of one, that there can be no swaraj, that Hinduism will perish, unless this sinful practice is abolished. To cling to the sin of untouchability as a part of dharma and at the same time to hope to preserve Hinduism, protect the cow, practise non-violence and have equal regard for all, —I believe all this to be impossible. Just as crops will not ripen without sunshine, so we shall certainly not reap the harvest of swaraj till the darkness of untouchability has vanished.

There can be no swaraj without fearlessness. And yet the Hindus fear the Muslims and the latter fear the former. The Parsis and the Christians fear them both. How, then, can we get swaraj? How can anyone who has not shed all fear, that is to say, does not look upon all Indians as his brothers and sisters, be considered as a lover of swaraj? How is he fit to join the Volunteer Corps?

Hence, I would certainly tell the Gujaratis at any rate that, if they wish to have swaraj at an early date, they ought to fulfil all the conditions explained above. No matter if they are practising lawyers, title-holders or members of any council, if they observe these conditions they can join the Volunteer Corps. On the other hand, if a person has given up practice, relinquished a title, left a Government school or resigned from a council but he does not observe even one of these conditions, then he is not a swarajist. He cannot join the Volunteer Corps and he is not fit to go to jail. His going to jail or sacrificing his life will not bring swaraj. It may happen that his going to jail may help to end this Government; in that case, however, it will be replaced by a government worse than this.

But I cannot conceive of such a government. I, therefore, believe that we shall not get swaraj by going to jail if we do not observe the conditions explained above. It is true that by going to jail and by facing beatings, we get certain kind of fearlessness, but swaraj cannot be won by fearlessness only. Just as one gains *moksha*[1] if one has fearlessness along with knowledge and discrimination, so also swaraj can be won only if, in addition to being fearless, we understand and observe the conditions for swaraj. Those who killed Lachhman Singh[2] and his associates were men who feared nothing. But no one regards them as swarajists. We shall not win swaraj by collecting together such desperadoes. And even if we can imagine for a moment that it can

[1] Deliverance from phenomenal existence

[2] *Vide* "Sikh Awakening", 13-3-1921.

bewon, then it will be a government by desperadoes, from which the true non-co-operator will run miles away.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, l2-2-1922

65. GOVERNMENT'S REPLY

The Government's reply[1] to our offer[2] of peace will pain the reader. Nowhere is there any sign of repentance or an admission of error. From the beginning to the end, the Government claims itself to be innocent and attempts to prove the non-co-operators to be the guilty party.

I thought of two explanations after reading that reply. Either they have deliberately told lies in it or those who drafted the reply have so much faith in the officials that they are not at all prepared to believe that the latter can do any wrong. I have rejected the first explanation out of regard for human nature at any rate, and accepted the second.

Both attitudes are terrible. One must guard against either mistake—telling lies and doing wrong deliberately, or being blind to one's errors and continuing to be under the delusion that one is entirely innocent.

I believe the Government's error is of the latter type, for I believe that man errs unintentionally more often than otherwise. If non-co-operators do not readily see their errors, why should we not believe the same to be true about the Government? Our duty is to use a microscope to see our faults and employ a telescope to observe those of others, the error barely visible even so. The man or woman or the society that adopts this principle will always be happy. One who looks upon his own defects as mountain-huge will have very little time to point out the faults of others. A person will then feel miserable for his own mistake and, since he does not, by his very nature, wish to be unhappy, we will soon remove his mountain-like defects.

I wish to follow this same rule and to use a telescope to see the Government's mistakes. The reader should keep in mind one

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Government of India "Communique" on Gandhiji's Letter tio Viceroy", 6-2-1922.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 1-2-1922.

characteristic of the telescope. It shows us only distant objects, and those too as dim and small images; objects close at hand, it does not allow to be seen at all. I know that I have always overlooked the Government's minor mistakes. But now the Government has crossed the limit. In its reply, it has sought to make out some of its wrong actions as prompted by its virtues and has ignored those which could not possibly be so represented. For example, about the notices it has issued banning meetings and speeches, it says that the ban had to be imposed only because of the mischievous activities of the non-co-operators. The truth, however, is that the Government has been able to offer no evidence which would justify this ban. Even so, it was possible to advance an argument in support of it and, therefore, a wrong action was represented as good. But how can seizure of property, beating up of people, burning of khadi and raids on Congress offices at night be defended? No matter what crimes people commit, how can the Government's officials unlawfully seize property or beat up people? The Government, therefore, has altogether ignored this charge. A similar policy of exaggeration or silence has been adopted in the letter in regard to other serious matters too. I do not wish to take the readers' time by analysing the reply from this point of view. A reply was of course expected, and I even knew that it would contain nothing important. But I was certainly not prepared for the shamelessness that I find in the actual reply. I had thought that it would contain something to conciliate the Moderates. But they also have been ignored and, for the non-co-operators, the position remains the same as before. For thinking people can there be any evidence more convincing than this reply of the Government's attitude of regarding us as untouchables?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-2-l922

66. GORAKHPUR'S CRIME

Gorakhpur is most probably the biggest district in the country. Its inhabitants are a spirited people. From the news which has appeared in papers, it seems that they have showed their spirit in the wrong way. They set fire to a police station,[1] killed 21 innocent

[1] On February 4, 1922

policemen and burned their bodies; a young son of a sub-inspector was also among the killed. According to newspaper reports, people went to disperse a Friday market which was being held there. At first a few men went to the spot, but they were turned back. Thereupon a big crowd went there! This included some volunteers too.

I and other thoughtful non-co-operators will have to hang our head in shame for this incident. There is other news also which raises doubts in our minds about peace being preserved.

This augurs ill for the beginning which Bardoli was to make. The two methods—of peace and violence—cannot be employed at the same time. If the people want to employ violence, those employing peaceful methods will have to chalk out another path for themselves. The votaries of peace will have to non-co-operate both with the Government which worships violence and those among the people who do the same.

If the people of Gorakhpur district had no interest in the movement, we shall have to admit that the non-co-operators have had much less effect than we thought they had. On every important occasion, some such obstacles block our path. When our people die, my heart does not beat fast or, if it does, I can control it. When, however, even one co-operator is killed, I am humiliated and feel apprehensive about our progress. Everyone who believes exclusively in the method of peace ought to feel as I do.

I am writing this on my way to Bombay.[1] I am proceeding there on the invitation of *Bharatbhushan* Pandit Malaviya. The Working Committee meeting convened in Bardoli will take place on Saturday[2]. The reader will have this article in his hands on Sunday. As I do not wish to take upon myself the responsibility for suspending mass civil disobedience, I want to consult the Working Committee.

I always stand firm in my dharma. It can be tested only at such times. As long as I see the spirit of non-violence spreading, I would be ready to run many risks; when, however, I see that my movement is being exploited by others, I simply cannot take even one step further.

I am awaiting more news from Gorakhpur. I place my thoughts before readers because I want every one of them to help me. This is a new kind of struggle. Those who have faith in methods of peace must

[1] February 8, 1922; *vide* "Letter to Dr. M. S. Kelkar", 8-2-1922.
[2] February 11, 1922

search their hearts. They will have to devote themselves exclusively to propagating non-violence. This struggle is intended not to spread hatred but to end it. It is not intended to create barriers between people but to bring them together. It is not one in which we may use a combination of means, but is one in which we have to use discrimination and distinguish between right and wrong.

I am certainly the one most responsible for the crime of the people of Gorakhpur district, but every genuine non-co-operator is also responsible for it. All of us should be in mourning for it. But the matter can be further discussed only when we have more details. May God save the honour of India and of non-co-operators.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 12-2-1922

67. MY NOTES

WHY "FAITHFUL SERVANT"

A gentleman writes to say:

> You have signed your letter to His Excellency the Viceroy as "Your faithful servant and friend". I hope the word "servant,' crept in through oversight and that you yourself did not write it.

I hope that this gentleman will not be displeased to know that I deliberately used the word "servant". I look upon His Excellency the Viceroy as a nobleman holding a high office and do not wish to give up the language of civilized usage in addressing him. Non-co-operation does not imply uncivilized behaviour. Non-violent non-co-operation means civilized non-co-operation. An uncivilized person has no right to resort to non-co-operation. Moreover, we should go out of our way to be courteous to those against whom we employ non-co-operation, lest they take offence and feel that we bear a personal grudge against them. This is what the weapon of non-violent non-co-operation means. As a non-co-operator, therefore, I was bound to use civilized language in my letter to the Viceroy. I have also deliberately used the word "friend" along with the word "servant". By using this word, I have indicated that, although I am a servant, I am not a slave. One can be an enemy though one may use the word "servant". By using the word "friend", I have indicated that it is a religious principle with me not to look upon anyone as an enemy. I have also, by using it, refused to hold myself inferior to the

British and conveyed my intention of corresponding with them only on terms of equality. I indicated my faith in non-violence by using the word "faithful" and assured him that there was no danger of my becoming hostile to him or to his people. In this way, although the words used with my signature are part of civilized usage, they have been used intentionally and serve some purpose.

"DO NOT KNOW HOW TO DO IT"

A friend writes with reference to the boycott of a reception to the Prince of Wales at some place:[1]

The description is very apt. This is no way of preserving peace. We ourselves are now responsible for hindering our progress. Just as a person who overeats cannot help suffering from indigestion, similarly one who has a biting tongue cannot prevent violence from breaking out. A glutton does not welcome indigestion; similarly, the man with a sharp tongue may not approve of violence. Nevertheless, if both these persons do not know where to stop or do not keep with limits, the results will be other than what they want. The reason why the spirit of violence still lurks in some places is that we have not yet taken measures to overcome it. Thought is reflected in words and words in their turn inevitably lead to action. If we do not control thought and restrain speech, it is useless to attempt to prevent their inevitable result. It is for this reason that it had to be stated clearly in the Congress resolution this time that violence should be eschewed even from thought; Maulana Bari Saheb, for instance, says in a letter of his that he does not permit violence to affect him even in his thoughts. It is not enough to say that such are the orders of the Congress or that Gandhi has said so. We shall readily find arguments in support of the principle only if we, too, think in the same way.

Moreover, when people wanting to honour the Prince were described as "donkeys" or "monkeys", those who used such terms were clearly guilty of violence in speech; they abused others, showed their anger and violated the pledge which they had taken. They forsook civilized manners. We should never use such terms to describe our rivals or opponents. Our language should always breathe the spirit of peace. To hope that anyone who joins the procession may be

[1] The passage is not translated here. The correspondent had complained that public speakers *who* pleaded with people to preserve peace were undoubtedly sincere in their desire but did not know the right language to persuade them to do so.

divorced by his wife is to wish that he should be punished. What would be the country's plight if, following this advice, the wives of all those who attended the function in the Prince's honour left them? That would be nothing but coercion.

If we desert our partner because he or she does not change his or her views the moment ours change, or does not understand them, that would be an utterly barbarous practice. If it came to prevail, the world could not endure for a single moment. We ought to remain friends with people even when our views differ. Otherwise, what is the meaning of Hindu-Muslim unity? What a great difference there is between the views of a Hindu and those of a Muslim! While one looks upon it as his dharma to face the east when praying, the other faces the west; while the one grows a *shikha* on his head, the other grows a beard ! Despite this, Hindus and Muslims respect each other, bear with each other and neither seeks to use force against the other. If, then, Hindus and Muslims have sincerely pledged themselves to act in this manner, how can the non-co-operators of the present day use force against those who co-operate? If, however, the former do use force against the latter, non-co-operating Hindus are bound to fight with non-co-operating Muslims. Hence, I believe genuine Hindu-Muslim unity to be impossible till non-co-operators decide to win over co-operators only by friendliness.

OPPOSITION TO "NAVAJIVAN"

A lover of *Navajivan* writes from Veraval:[1]

It is difficult to understand the opposition to Navajivan and khadi caps in Kathiawar. However, anyone who recalls what Shri Amritlal Thakkar[2] had to put up with in Veraval will not be surprised by the incident described above. I think that the circulation of Navajivan in Kathiawar means the spread of good thoughts. The khadi cap and the khadi dress signify prosperity for Kathiawar. It would save sixty-five lakhs of rupees if its population of twenty-six lakhs used annually, on an average, cloth worth two and a half rupees and produced khadi of that value. Everyone can figure out for himself how much the economic condition of Kathiawar would improve if this amount continues to accumulate year after year in the

[1] The letter is not translated here.

[2] 1869-1951; a member of the Servants of India Society and a leading worker in the cause of the depressed classes and aboriginal tribes

homes of the people in Kathiawar. From this calculation, other equally encouraging figures can also be deduced. If we take each family as consisting of five members, its annual income will increase by twelve and a half rupees. When we calculate the average, we know that each individual does not save the exact amount but that the whole community benefits to that extent. This would mean that the poor families of Kathiawar which need money and are obliged to live in straitened circumstances would get the benefit of this saving of sixty-five lakhs; or, it could also be taken to mean that the people of Kathiawar have a pile of sixty-five lakhs of rupees lying unguarded before them and everyone may help himself to as much of it as he can. This, of course, would be civilized looting. Moreover, as the amount would be distributed through the spinning-wheel, the money would reach only the homes of the poor who needed it. That there should be any opposition to khadi which produces such happy results and to *Navajivan* which propagates khadi, non-violence and truth, is a reflection on our times. In Kathiawar, there can be only one answer to such opposition, viz., that all Kathiawaris should start wearing khadi exclusively. If this is done, the Port Commissioner will find it difficult to ban khadi. Again, as the income from *Navajivan is* used only for public purposes, I can even state disinterestedly that, if every literate person starts subscribing to Navajivan the ban imposed in Veraval will also have to be lifted. When large numbers start doing a thing, it is almost, if not quite, impossible to stop them even by threatening to shoot them.

ABOUT NATIONAL SCHOOLS

A gentleman writes to warn us in regard to national schools and says that no attention is being paid to primary schools. If, he says, nothing further is done after converting these schools into national schools and children go without education, parents will feel disgusted and withdraw their children; they may even leave them again to the kindness of the Government. Of course, there is much truth in this. There is a great difference between grown-up students who know their responsibilities and children under ten years. Immediate arrangements should be made for the education of children of tender age. In places where civil disobedience is not in progress, people have no reason either for not attending to these matters. In such places, work is but a part of the preparation for civil disobedience, for we shall become fit for it not by public demonstrations but through work. Preparation for

civil disobedience means intensifying constructive and productive activities such as popularizing khadi and the spinning-wheel, improving the quality of yarn and increasing its output, increasing the number of weavers, improving the quality of slivers, banishing drink, placing national education on a sound foundation, mixing with untouchables and so on. It is from these that the strength for civil disobedience is derived. Such work should indeed proceed vigorously in places where no civil disobedience is going on. Similarly, the various bodies of the Congress should be strengthened. The work of enrolling members and collecting four annas from each member should be carried on energetically. Congress offices should be established in every town and village and in each of them five office-bearers should be immediately appointed. We shall never be ready for civil disobedience throughout the country if all this work is not attended to.

I hope, therefore, that the provincial committees will issue directions to the volunteers about the work to be done by them.

GIFT OF GOOD HEALTH

The gentleman who has drawn our attention to primary schools has also something to say about preserving health. According to him, I have not written enough about the physical benefits of *brahmacharya*[1] and about exercise. The correspondent belongs to Surat. He says that the people of Surat are keen enough but, being weak in body, they cannot come forward to endure imprisonment and such other hardships which satyagrahis have to suffer. How can we expect them to submit to beatings?

The gentleman is right in drawing our attention to this. However, it is difficult to write repeatedly on a subject like *brahmacharya.* I believe, moreover, that it should not be practised merely for the sake of good health. To do so is to pay a rupee for an article worth a pie. I have taken it for granted that anyone who engages himself in promoting the other activities in the swaraj-programme will readily understand the necessity of practising *brahmacharya.*

Nevertheless, the importance of *brahmacharya* cannot be overemphasized. Not only does a person who does not practise it cease to be a human being, he is not even on a level with the animals.

[1] Literally, "living in the *Brahman,* the Absolute"; in common usage, celibacy, as an essential condition for attaining this state

The latter instinctively observe *brahmacharya.* An animal has neither the sensation of taste nor does it enjoy sensual pleasures. It is governed by the limits of its nature. Hence, in often comparing a person who does not practise *brahmacharya* to an animal, we insult the latter. The man who violates the laws of *brahmacharya* ends up by becoming impotent. It is for this reason that we come across, as symbols of our shame, newspaper advertisements in big letters both in English and in Gujarati of medicines supposed to increase one's virility. The fact that they can afford advertisements which take up so much space is itself an indication of our miserable plight. *Brahmacharya* should be a property of man's nature, as it is of the *atman.* The *atman* of anyone who does not practise *brahmacharya is, so* to say, in a state of darkness. One whose *atman is* awakened will never put his body to an extremely unclean use and one which has painful consequences.

Good thoughts, by themselves, make the practice of *brahmacharya* possible and easy. If the reader thinks quietly for a moment in solitude and calls up before his eyes the full picture of the degradation involved in violating the law of *brahmacharya,* will he not feel disgusted? However, when a man yields to base thoughts, he forgets himself, gets intoxicated without taking liquor and, in that unconscious state, takes pleasure in a base activity, forgets the bitter experience which follows the momentary pleasure and is his old self again.

A brahmachari cannot possibly be weak. His mind, his body and his soul are at his command. He has no need for brute strength. Many seem to think that a *brahmachari is* a man of such strength. He has indeed unlimited capacity for enduring physical suffering. It can be said of his body that it knows no fatigue. Such *brahmacharis* are rare.

To *a brahmachari* exercise is part of his daily routine. He should have plenty of fresh air. There is hardly any other outside agent which is as much responsible for our remaining weak as impure air. A young man whose occupation does not require physical exertion must have a daily walk of at least two hours by way of exercise. He should walk in a clean and quiet place, at a normal pace, holding his body straight looking towards the ground and his mind at peace. If, while walking, the person cleanses his heart and mind with pure thoughts as his lungs with fresh air, he is sure to become stronger both physically and mentally. a

brahmachari, should not be merely a moderate eater but a spare eater. Even though he is active, he gets less exhausted than others and, therefore, he requires the minimum quantity of food. It is necessary for him to eschew spices and sweets altogether. What we describe as rich food should also be avoided. Pulses are poison to those who do brain work. They hardly need eat anything besides wheat, milk, some green vegetables and, if they can afford, a little fruit.

I feel, however, that I have gone beyond the limits I had set for myself. There are many points connected with *brahmacharya* and all these cannot be dealt with in a single note. Even so, I have set down the foregoing views in commenting on the suggestion made by the correspondent from Surat, with the idea that they may be of some value to those brothers and sisters who look upon this movement as a holy one.

"ACTIVE AND "RESERVED"

The Congress has classified its volunteers into two categories — *Active*[1], which means "working regularly", and *Reserved*[2], which means "in excess of immediate needs". There seems to be some misunderstanding about the meaning of these two terms. Some people seem to believe that active workers are those who make speeches and organize demonstrations, go touring villages and towns, while reserved workers are those who spin.

This is surely a complete misunderstanding of the meaning of the terms. "Active" workers are those volunteers who can give, and do give, all their time to Congress work. "Reserved" workers are those who have specially enlisted themselves as volunteers because the Government treats it as a crime to do so, but who do not really expect to take up active work and will come forward to get arrested in order simply that they might be in jail. In other words, "Reserved" workers continue to earn their living but court imprisonment when that becomes necessary, while "Active" workers devote themselves wholly to Congress work whether or not they are required to court imprisonment. Such workers either have their own means or the Congress may employ them as paid workers if it considers this necessary. They may also go out and make speeches and so on when the occasion demands it. However, so long as these workers are not entrusted with some special duty, they should occupy themselves in spinning, carding and weaving khadi. They must at any rate

[1] Gandhiji uses the English terms.
[2] *ibid*

spin,whether or not they take up the other twoactivities. This has been made compulsory in the Delhi resolution.[1] Moreover, spinning and making others spin are the two principle constructive activities laid down by the Congress. Hence, it will be to the benefit of the people if Congress volunteers and leaders acquire proficiency in this work. The organization has to suffer much through volunteers who avoid their responsibilities in these two matters. Thousands lose their earnings because of them. If we have a large number of people who are proficient in this work, we can improve the strength, the fineness and the evenness of the yarn which is produced. But we have only a handful of persons who are wholly devoted to swadeshi, who love spinning and are proficient in it. According to me, therefore, the first duty of the "Active" volunteer is to acquire complete proficiency in spinning and, after doing so, devote all his spare time to this work.

Even if we develop strength to endure any amount of suffering, the gates of swaraj will never open to us if we do not know the key to India's economic freedom and use it. We should learn to suffer with an intelligent purpose. We should know why we should go to jail. As long, therefore, as we have not become honest about swadeshi and have not realized its importance, we should entertain no hope of winning swaraj, we have no right to get it nor the capacity to manage it. The most important item on our programme, I am convinced, is spinning and making others spin.

ABOUT "ANTYAJAS"

What is true about khadi is also true about *Antyajas.* How can we ever get swaraj if untouchability is not abolished? How can we even accept it? We have no right to complain about the Government's treatment of us as long as we hope to lord it over the *Antyajas.* God rewards or punishes us according to our deeds. As man is ignorant and weak, he does justice by for-giving others. As God is omnipotent and omniscient, He does justice by meting out the punishment that one deserves. If we deceive ourselves in this matter, God will see to it that we remain without swaraj. A young man gives us a warning about this, which I give in his own words.[2]

FROM A POET OF GUJARAT TO THE POET OF ASIA

Everyone knows that poet Nanalal[3] has resigned his job. He has

[1] *Vide* "The All India Congress Committee", 10-11-1921.
[2] The passage is not translated here.
[3] (1877-1946) an eminent Gujarati poet

addressed the following letter to the great poet, Rabindranath Tagore.[1]

We are glad that Shri Nanalal has addressed this letter to the Poet and that he has resigned his job. Let him remain neutral. However, Gujarat will certainly ask him whether, after having addressed this letter, he is not bound to see that neither he nor others rest in peace till the desired result is achieved. His first task is to get together all those in Gujarat who are neutral.

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

A gentleman who describes himself as "a well-wisher of the Bardoli Taluka" has put to me in all frankness some fifteen questions. I do not reproduce the questions for want of space. However, I shall try to answer them in such a way that the reader will easily be able to guess the questions.

1. When I came to Bardoli earlier, I had asked the people to make better preparations. This time, going there after two months, I accepted the preparations as adequate, for I saw that more work had been done than what I had seen two months ago. I found there better preparations in regard to untouchability than anywhere else, and I am less afraid of violence breaking out in this taluka than in any other. Moreover, I am all admiration for the workers of this taluka.

2. I am convinced that this taluka observes better than any other the conditions which have been laid down. Moreover, why should we discuss a taluka which has simply not offered itself?

3. Relatively, a larger number of persons wear hand-spun cloth and the number is daily increasing.

4. The number of spinning-wheels in operation is enough to meet the taluka's requirements of yarn regularly.

5. Very little foreign cloth is sold in the taluka now. People have not got rid of their stock of such cloth but, I regret to say, have stored it away.

6. There must be hardly any persons in this taluka who look upon it as a sin for anyone to let oneself be touched by a *Dhed* or *Bhangi*.

7. People are carrying out the various items of the non-co operation programme fairly satisfactorily.

[1] Not translated here. Nanalal had said that a fight between the Government and the non-co-operators seemed inevitable and that it was the duty of those who were neutral in the struggle to see that both sides respected the rules of civilized fighting.

8. I think that in this taluka there is relatively less of hypocrisy, show, deceit, falsehood, etc. This is my reason for-selecting it to start the struggle.

9. It is a great sin to force anyone to join even in the best of undertakings.

10. I hope that very few persons will pay revenue dues. It will be a sin if a non-co-operator speaks rudely even about the few who do.

11. Bardoli is a small taluka; the virtue of its people lies in the fact that they are unsophisticated, know nothing about political matters and are as meek as sheep. They have discrimination and can judge right and wrong. They understand the difference between worldly good and the higher good. Those who think see nothing to fear in this struggle. The goat does not go to the butcher of its own free will; if, then, the men and women of Bardoli—whether in their credulity or of their own free will and faith—go to jail without being forced to do so, if they let their property be attached and meet death without anger in their hearts, the world will worship them. They will win swaraj for India and win undying fame for themselves in history.

12. The very fact that I have selected a taluka like Bardoli even though Ahmedabad happens to be my permanent headquarters and has so much more of wealth, shrewdness, intelligence, business activity and a spirit of venture, reveals the especial beauty of this struggle. Swaraj can be won only if a humble and meek taluka like Bardoli gives proof of quiet courage. This is a struggle of the poor, of the innocent. In it, we should see people meek as sheep shedding their fear of one as strong as a tiger. This can happen only if Bardoli fights. I cannot fight with confidence through Ahmedabad or Bombay despite their wealth. I would constantly be afraid of being deceived or of violence breaking out in these places. In Bardoli, I have nothing to fear. God alone knows what would happen to me if I am deceived by Bardoli.

13. Shri Vithalbhai's speech about civil disobedience was intended to express not his lack of faith but his support. In that speech he uttered a note of warning and expressed doubts whether peace would be preserved till the end; now that civil disobedience is about to be started, what objection can he have?

14. I do not think that non-co-operation is a dangerous type of war. I am certain that simple but peaceful villagers can do better in it than people living in big cities. There will certainly be reason for fear, and

there will be ridicule too, if people take to their heels the moment repression starts; however, people who, though they do not fight shy of imprisonment, resort to violence are more dangerous and, even worse than that, will bring greater disgrace. We shall not lose the battle because of people who run away, but the atmosphere in the country is such that, out of fear of those who resort to violence, people may even give up in the end all talk of swaraj.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-2-1922

68. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Silence Day [*February 12, 1922*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

Of course, I constantly think of you, but do not find time to write to you.

I got your wire; I hope you received mine sent from Bombay.

I have started a fast today. It will end on Friday. Surely, I could not have done less, could I? To start civil disobedience in an atmosphere of incivility is like putting one's hand in a snake-pit. Please do not be nervous on account of my fast. In any case do not take that as an example. It is the woman giving birth to a child who suffers the pains, others only help. I too, wish to give birth to the ideals of non-violence and truth, so that I alone need bear the pains of fasting, etc. You and others may carry out self-purification to help me in my task and go on doing your appointed tasks. You personally are of course doing this. You have no share in these sins.

Keep sending me all the news from there regularly.

You will be glad to know that Harilal's sentence has not been reduced. I had not liked the news[2]. He is happy there. Malaviyaji left for Bombay yesterday. He was present at the Working Committee meeting.

I am sending you the following telegram:

"Your wire. Working Committee has indefinitely postponed Mass Civil Disobedience, other minor activities offensive character.

[1] The five-day fast undertaken as a penance for the Chauri Chaura disaster began on the evening of Sunday, February 12, 1922

[2] Earlier, news had been received that his sentence was reduced

Am fasting till Friday evening by way of penance and warning people who with my name on lips have brutally hacked constablesto death. Strongly advise wrong doers confess guilt and deliver them-selves authorities. Do not fast yourself, do not worry, but work and pray."

Send telegrams and write letters to me regularly. Malaviyaji should reach there within a couple of days.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 7-10-1923

69. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

[*February 12, 1922*][1]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have embarked on a fast from today for Gorakhpur's sin. It will end on Friday. This was the least I ought to have done. The civil disobedience has been suspended for the present. I have your letter. What you did was well enough. I will not enter into further discussion on the matter just now.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. PRABHUDAS
C/O KHUSHAL GANDHI
NEAR THE MIDDLE SCHOOL
RAJKOT SUBURB

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33053

70. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[*February 12, 1922*][2]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Fasts are my lot. I consider myself fortunate for that and regard fasts as good omen. Crimes will certainly take place in this world. We are no doubt responsible for them but they are an indirect responsibility. However, there are certain crimes for which we are directly responsible. We have but to atone for those. One such crime is that of Chauri Chaura. So, I have decided to fast till Saturday

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's fast; he started the five-day fast on this date.
[2] From the contents; vide "Letter to Devdas Gandhi", 12-2-1922.

morning.[1] None of you should feel nervous. If you feel that there is need to do something in the provinces. . . .[2] Those who feel like observing partial fast may do so. Everyone should do his duty there as if nothing has happened.

Now let us wait and see when collective non-violent disobedience is resumed. It will not be this year—that is what I feel.

Now Ba need not go there this week. Look after Nirmala and the children . . . it seems that the woman inmate of the Ashram has good relations with Nirmala, but you can have a better idea of that.

Jamnadas will go there. Let him come here if he wants to. During his stay there, he should learn to translate my articles from *Young India*. I understand about. . . .[3]

What arrangements have you made for Saraladevi? Doctor has given other articles. How do you intend to use them?

The useful portion of this letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32887

71. TELEGRAM TO ZAHUR AHMED [4]

[After *February 12, 1922*][5]

THANKS WIRE. MISREPRESENTATION INEVITABLE. BUT GOD WITH US. LET US DERIVE STRENGTH FROM HIM RATHER THAN FROM PUBLIC SUPPORT.

GANDHI

Seven months with mahatma gandhi, p. 235

[1] The five-day fast was started by Gandhiji on February 12, 1922 as penance for the Chauri Chaura violence.

[2] A few words at these places are illegible in the source.

[3] As supplied in the source. Gandhiji, who was arrested on March 10, was tried and sentenced to 6 years' imprisonment on March 18, 1922.

[4] Of the Central Khilafat Committee

[5] The source mentions that this telegram was sent in reply to Zahur Ahmed's telegram informing Gandhiji of the "current agitation" in Bombay against his decision to suspend civil disobedience. This decision was ratified by the Working Committee at its meeting at Bardoli on February 11 and 12, 1922.

72. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Monday, February 13, 1922

Could not help [fasting]. The fast will end on Friday evening. To do anything less than this seemed impossible. This is the least that I could do. This will be no suffering for me at all. Do not worry. Take good care of your health. Do not start a fast yourself. It is only the woman in childbirth who has to bear the pains. Others can but help. Today I have sent a telegraphic message to the Associated Press.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 45

73. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

Monday [*February 13, 1922*][1]

BHAI SHANKERLAL,

I have started a fast[2] at Naradev to last till Friday evening. Do not be perturbed. In no case start a fast. Absorb yourself in your work. Yesterday I wanted to talk to you but I could not see you. See about that cheque. Whatever anyone may say, we have to shoulder our responsibility.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

SHANKERLAL GHELABHAI BANKER
SEVASHRAM
MIRZAPUR
AHMEDABAD

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 11541

[1] From the reference to the fast, which Gandhiji had begun on Sunday evening, that is, February 12, 1922

[2] This was undertaken as a penance for the violent incidents at Chauri Chaura; *vide* "The Crime of Chauri Chaura", 16-2-1922.

74. LETTER TO CHIMANDAS I. JAGTIANI

BARDOLI,
February 14, 1922

MY DEAR CHIMANDAS[1],

I have your letter.

I quite agree with you in the remarks you have made about the atmosphere in India. You will see that the Working Committee has come to the right conclusion. I am only hoping that all the different Committees will heartily co-operate. If they do we should have no difficulty whatsoever. Maganlal[2] is here, and I shall talk to him about a weaver for you in Sind. He told me he had already written offering the services of a demonstrator. A demonstrator is one from whom intelligent people can learn themselves. A teacher is more than a demonstrator. He must have the gift of imparting knowledge. There are not many such in the Ashram, but a demonstrator who is thoroughly competent can be easily spared. You and some others can pick up the art from him.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

CHIMANDAS, ESQ.
CONGRESS WEAVING ASHRAM
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat: G.N. 5736

[1] Dr. Chimandas Isardas Jagtiani, a Congress leader from Sind

[2] Maganlal Gandhi (1883-1928); son of Khushalchand Gandhi, Gandhiji's cousin; sometime manager of the Phoenix Settlement and later of the Satyagraha Ashram at Sabarmati demonstrator. He must have the gift of imparting knowledge.

75. TELEGRAM TO SYED MAHMUD [1]

[On or after *February 14, 1922*]

RESOLUTIONS PASSED ON MERIT NO TRUCE WHATSOEVER. HOPE BENGAL WILL FULLY CARRY OUT W.C.'S RESOLUTIONS AND ADVISE PAYMENT CHOWKIDAR OTHER TAXES.

From a photostat: S.N. 7913

76. TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI

BARDOLI
February 15, 1922

DEVDAS
CONGRESS COMMITTEE
GORAKHPUR

MIND PRESS REPRESENTATIONS CORRECT AND FORGET SEND ME FULL LETTER AM QUITE BRIGHT.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7918

77. LETTER TO SIR DANIEL HAMILTON

BARDOLI,
February 15, 1922

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Hodge[2] writes to me to say that you would like to have an hour's chat with me, and he has suggested that I should open the ground which I gladly do. I will not take up your time by trying to interest you in any other activity of mine except the

[1] Dr. Syed Mahmud (b. 1889); Congress leader from Bihar; jailed during freedom movement; Secretary, Central Khilafat Committee; member of Parliament. The telegram was sent in reply to Syed Mahmud's telegram of February 14, 1922, which read: "Working Committee's decision published today greatly surprising. People in Bengal and Bihar are disappointed. Great anxiety prevails. Bengal may not perhaps obey. Pray wire if any truce is made."

[2] A friend of Gandhiji and the addressee

spinning-wheel. Of all my outward activities, I do believe that the spinning-wheel is the most permanent and the most beneficial. I have abundant proof now to support my statement that the spinning-wheel will solve the problem of the economic distress in millions of India's homes, and it constitutes an effective insurance against famines.

You know the great scientist, Dr. P. C. Ray, but you may not know that he has also become an enthusiast on behalf of the spinning-wheel.[1] India does not need to be industrialized in the modern sense of the term. It has 7,50,000 villages scattered over a vast area 1,900 miles long, 1,500 broad. The people are rooted to the soil, and the vast majority are living a hand-to-mouth life. Whatever may be said to the contrary, having travelled throughout the length and breadth of the land with eyes open and having mixed with millions, there can be no doubt that pauperism is growing. There is no doubt also that the millions are living in enforced idleness for at least 4 months in the year. Agriculture does not need revolutionary changes. The Indian peasant requires a supplementary industry. The most natural is the introduction of the spinning-wheel, not the handloom. The latter cannot be introduced in every home, whereas the former can, and it used to be so even a century ago. It was driven out not by economic pressure, but by force deliberately used as can be proved from authentic records. The restoration, therefore, of the spinning-wheel solves the economic problem of India at a stroke. I know that you are a lover of India, that you are deeply interested in the economic and moral uplift of my country. I know too that you have great influence, I would like to enlist it on behalf of the spinning-wheel. It is the most effective force for introducing successful co-operative societies. Without honest co-operation of the millions, the enterprise can never be successful, and as it is already proving a means of weaning thousands of women from a life of shame, it is as moral an instrument as it is economic.

I hope you will not allow yourself to be prejudiced by anything you might have heard about my strange views about machinery. I have nothing to say against the development of any other industry in India by means of machinery, but I do say that to supply India with cloth manufactured either outside or inside through gigantic mills is an economic blunder of the first magnitude, just as it would be to

[1] *Vide* "Dr. Ray on Charkha", 2-2-1922.

supply cheap bread through huge bakeriesestablished in the chief centres in India and to destroy the family stove.[1]

Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 6-4-1922

78. LETTERS TO S. A. BRELVI

BARDOLI,
February 15, 1922

I appreciate the affection underlying your telegram[2]. I could not break the fast in the middle of it, a fast that was so solemnly undertaken, but I assure you that I am not feeling it at all. All my activities are going on just as usual, and by providing me with shorthand assistance Mr. Bomanji[3] has just at the proper moment made my way so easy.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-2-1922

79. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

BARDOLI,
February 15, 1922

MY DEAR MAHADEV

I have not heard from you for a long time, nor of you or anybody in your jail. Please let me know if you are permitted to write. Do not stop writing because you cannot do so in Gujarati. As I do not

[1] The following are excerpts from Sir Daniel Hamilton's reply: ". . . with reference to your remarks regarding the charkha I may say from my own personal knowledge of Indian rural life, that given a fair chance, with the help of modern finance, not only the spinning-wheel but the handloom can compete successfully with steam power, the reason being that the four months' labour which is now Iargely wasted in the agricultural off season costs nothing. No yarn or cloth can be cheaper than that which costs only the price of the raw material.

. . . I quite agree with your opinion regarding the evils of the huge factory system. . . What I want to see grow up in India, and I think it is what you want also, is a swaraj; whose power will be measured in terms of healthy life rather than in terms of unhealthy money. . . . Meantime, I hope you will not be too hard on the Government.... I should like to think of you not as the destroying angel of the old regime, but as the Master Builder of the new. . ."

[2] The telegram from S. A. Brelvi, editor of *The Bombay Chronicle,* expressed anxiety about Gandhiji's health during his fast following the Chauri Chaura tragedy.

[3] S. R. Bomanji

know what latitude you are permitted in the jail, I have not written to Govind although he is constantly before me in my mind. I had his charming letter. Malaviyaji has permitted me to reproduce his letters to Govind and Krishna Kant which I shall be doing some time.

I hope you all appreciated the suspension of mass civil disobedience. You will read the whole of my reasons in the forthcoming issue[1] of the *Young India* if you are permitted to get that paper. You will not worry about my fast. By the time you receive this, the little fast will have been over. I had really intended to undertake a much bigger thing, but I felt that this would be enough for me as also for those erring ones to whom it is addressed.

Malaviyaji, Mr. Jayakar and Mr. Natarajan were here on Saturday last. Malaviyaji stopped two days, the others one day. Devdas is still at Gorakhpur doing very good work. Pyarelal and Parasram are in Allahabad. I am staying on in Bardoli for some time. Maganlal and some others from the Ashram are in Bardoli in order to extend the operations of the handloom and the spinning-wheel.

This is the third day of my fast. It is early morning, and I am dictating this letter. I do not feel any the worse for the fast. I therefore do not expect any very great weakness on Friday.

Yours,
BAPU

SJT. MAHADEV H. DESAI
C/O THE SUPERINTENDENT
DISTRICT JAIL
AGRA

From a photostat: S.N. 7921

80. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

BARDOLI,
February 15, 1922

QUESTION: Have you resolved on any definite programme of activity on your own part in the immediate or near future?

ANSWER: If your question refers to my personal programme, for the time being I propose to remain in Bardoli and watch the effect upon all the people of the constructive programme placed before them by the Working Committee, which, I am hoping, will be accepted by the All-India Congress Committee. There is enough work and enough variety for every real worker, but you will notice that it

[1] Of February 16, 1922

resolves itself into two things: spread of non-violence and spread of khaddar. The one is to mark a definite inward change and the other to mark a definite outward advance. India cannot hold her own against the world without non-violence, and she cannot become economically free without the universal adoption of the spinning-wheel.

Do you mean to go on any tour of India in the near future?

So far as I can see, not in the immediate future except that I shall have to go to Delhi to attend the All-India Congress Committee meeting.

People say that you will be compelled by circumstances to abandon all political activities and devote the rest of your life to tackling social problems like untouchability, intemperance and so on. Is there any such likelihood?

Not so far as I can see the present temper of the nation. In spite of the aberrations which I have noted India's has become solidly non-violent. I think, both the classes and the masses, and so long as Congressmen continue to endorse the programme laid down and not reject the gospels of non-violence and the spinning wheel, I am not likely to abandon my present vocation. For me there is no distinction between politics and religion. Politics are a sham without a religious backing; and if I am today immersed in the political life of the country it is because politics, i.e., the political conditions of the country are the predominant part of the national life. No advance is possible without touching the political life at one point or another.

In view of the danger of violence would it not be better to give up all idea of mass civil disobedience and concentrate on items of less risk such asdefiance of notifications under the Criminal Law Amendment Act and perfect the organization in at least one city, say Calcutta, and fill the jails?

I do not think that it is necessary to give up the idea of mass civil disobedience. There is nothing wrong in the idea. It is not only not an immoral thing but it is a right of the people which can never be surrendered. It simply means that the masses should be trained to act non-violently. What is there wrong in that ideal? I confess that I am not going to embark upon mass civil disobedience hastily. I would want almost absolute assurances before I think next time of embarking upon mass disobedience myself. After all, the civil disobedience in South Africa was mass civil disobedience; there were no untoward incidents in that campaign. The disobedience in Kaira in 19l8 was also mass civil disobedience and there was not a single instance of violence. Mass civil disobedience for the whole of India and in the name of India is merely an extension of a successful programme. I would certainly not have stopped the Bardoli programme had there been no danger of it being thoughtlessly copied

by other parts of India. I am certain that in spite of outbreaks of violence in other parts of India, the people of Bardoli would have kept fully non-violent but that would not have served the national purpose. If Bardoli had to offer mass civil disobedience for local grievances I would certainly not have been stopped.

If you can effect a breach in one place or break a single link you will break the whole chain. Will it not, therefore, be advisable to concentrate on the fight for municipal rights and bring Government to its knees?

You cannot do it through a single programme. It will certainly help, but to attain swaraj through mere municipal reform would be a slow process. I am certainly hoping that Ahmedabad and Surat will give a good account of themselves and demonstrate the utter futility of the coercion which the Government of Bombay has thoughtlessly attempted and whilst, if Ahmedabad and Surat succeed, their success will indirectly help the national movement, it will not solve the question of swaraj. Swaraj movement means mass education which you cannot impart directly through a few cities perfecting and achieving independent government. Indeed the disciplined opposition that Ahmedabad, Surat and Nadiad are pluckily offering has become possible because of the general awakening. When the experiment is completed and if it becomes successful, the people will see how the citizens of these three places will have shown grit, constructive ability, capacity for suffering and all other noble qualities that go to make a nation great. But that experiment by itself cannot give India swaraj within the time contemplated by the Congress programmes.

Are you going to organize municipal fight in Ahmedabad and Surat?

I am not; but I am hoping that the citizens of both these places will not give up a struggle which they have commenced in right earnest.

There is a class of people who have begun to think that your idea of India attaining a non-violent condition is Utopian; and they say that even if after two years' incessant effort on your behalf to teach non-violence to your countrymen the country becomes pacific and you begin your civil disobedience campaign, any single mad cap by a violent deed of political complexion can disturb the harmony They add that you cannot expect all the 315 millions of the Indians to be non-violent even after centuries of preaching: "The great prophets like Buddha, Chaitanya, Nanak, Kabir who preached only love and non-violence have not succeeded even after 2,500 years in making India entirely non-violent. Violence is bound to exist so long [as] humanity is not raised to the condition of angels and saints. Even if the country remains quiet for a long period to come, what guarantee is there that oppression may not engender violence on the part of some individuals? The mob-mind when outraged

beyond control is bound to be inflamed and go mad. Should the whole country, for the crimes of a few individuals, set at rest the longing for swaraj, a satisfying solution of the Khilafat and justice to the Punjab atrocities?"

In the face of such hard facts, is it not wise to accept violence as inevitable and only try to check it and not stamp it out completely from the surface of India? Many say that the risk will always be there and civil dis-obedience without such risk will never be practicable. They urge that you yourself said the Choice is between lawless repression and mass civil disobedience with all its dangers. May I know what you have got to say in reply to this?

This sermon in question betrays woeful ignorance of the struggle and the bearing of non-violence upon it. I do not mean you are ignorant. You are merely the mouthpiece for people who are sceptics. I should certainly despair of success if I attempted anything that Jesus, Buddha or Mahomed failed to achieve. On the contrary my attempt is exceedingly humble or simple. I do not believe that India cannot be taught to see the very simple truth that for her to thing of attaining swaraj by an armed conflict is an impossible dream for several generations. There is no country on the face of the earth so ill fitted for an armed conflict as India. It may be that the forces of violence may not be sufficiently controlled in order to conduct a campaign of non-violentmass civil disobedience. If that is the conclusion at which all the leaders arrive it does not mean that India cannot attain her freedom by non-violent means. There are many forms of civil disobedience open to a satyagrahi; but I confess that mass civil disobedience is the shortest cut. If it proves to be impossible I have no doubt that a milder programme of civil disobedience can be conceived so as to give the people a training in self-sacrifice. From this the masses will learn the law of suffering, in its applicantion to the nation, as they today practise it for domestic affairs. There is certainly no swaraj without going through the fire and suffering and it gladdens my heart to read reports that I daily receive of people undergoing incredible suffering without retaliation for the sake of the nation.

I have, therefore, absolutely no misgivings on the point. I am not trying to achieve the impossible. Violence there always will be, and I should not be perturbed by stray cases of violence. I have advised suspension of civil disobedience because the violence practised near Gorakhpur was not individual, not in connection with any private wrong but from a vague sense of political wrong. I do not despair of the people bearing the necessity of self-restraint on occasions such as at Chauri Chaura which led to popular violence. Under much graver provocation the masses have ramained calm during the year almost all over India; as when public meetings have been forcibly broken up. These were all occasions for outbreak of

mob fury but the people have kept exemplary restraint. I believe that slowly but surely the spirit of non-violence is spreading. It is really not so difficult or impracticable as the string of questions put to me suggests. The incident at Chauri Chaura would hare been impossible if the Congress and the Khilafat organizations were perfect. It is all a question of perfecting the Congress organization. And it is the ABC of political science that you can do little unless you have got a fairly good organization. The Government succeeds because it can offer organized violence. The Congress will succeed when its organization which is based on non-violence is also perfected. The constructive programme mapped by the Working Committee is an attempt in that direction. It should also be remembered that non-violence being an organic charge can be organized in muchless time than violence. Think of what India has done in the way of non-violence during the 18 months—calculate the generations that must elapse before you can teach India the use of arms!

Have you no fear that the machinery of Congress organization will be loosened and there will be absence of zeal on Account of repeated disappointments?

I have absolutely no such fear for the simple reason that earnest workers must realize as they have realized already, that there must be in all organic growth constant adaptability to changes that take place in the environment.

Have you no fear, Mahatmaji, that as the result of the suspension people might lose faith in your principle of non-violence?

I have none.

What about the prisoners at least 15,000 of whom have gone to jail in expectation of the early attainment of swaraj? Will not that question alone drive you to discover some form of resistance at least to get them released?

The issue has been changed by the Gorakhpur tragedy. The Congress must, for the time being, sacrifice the prisoners. They must suffer for the popular misdeeds at Gorakhpur.

Do you think the fanatical portion will not get out of hand through indefinite suspension of mass civil disobedience?

I hope not. If the fanatical portion will get out of hand it will demonstrate lack of Congress discipline and, therefore, justify suspension of mass civil disobedience.

Do you now expect the Moderates to rally to the Congress in any appreciable numbers?

I certainly hope that many Moderates will take the opportunity now offered of rallying round the Congress standard.

When the moment for beginning civil disobedience will arrive do you hope to commence it at Bardoli?

If mass civil disobedience has ever to be embarked upon I am certainly expecting that the honour will be given to Bardoli. But I am hoping that by that time not merely Bardoli but many other places will be ready for self-sacrifice.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-2-1922

81. NOTES

THE ALI BROTHERS

Much information has been received during the week about the Brothers. I have seen, too, the contradiction by the Government. Moreover, the Brothers and Dr. Kitchlew were produced in the balcony of the jail to an impatient and angry crowd that had heard all kinds of ugly rumours including the reported death of one of the Brothers. If the Magistrate's version is strictly correct, the reports from Karachi are exaggerated. But after the production by the authorities of Mr. Mahadev Desai's certificate of character, although they knew that Mr. Desai had suffered grievously before the certificate, I discount the Magistrate's half contradiction. It is at the same time true that there has been inaccuracy in the Karachi reports. We now see that they have not been as inhumanly treated as the reports would lead one to believe. But the authorities are themselves to blame if they would observe needless secrecy about jail treatment and will not permit relatives to meet them. Surely if they have nothing to hide, they should not hesitate to permit relatives of prisoners to see them, not as a privilege, not for the prisoners' sake, but for their own sake when the anxious relatives suspect treatment worse than the authorities are prepared to admit.

SABARMATI PRISONERS

Take for instance the Sabarmati prisoners. I understand that the information[1] given by me last week is quite accurate and that the ill treatment refers not merely to Mr. Jairamdas but to Maulana Hassan Ahmed and two Dharwar prisoners who are in the same jail. The Maulana and one of the Dharwar prisoners, Mr. Dabhade, are old men near sixty. To punish them in the manner they were being punished for their objection to be searched, is surely inhuman and cannot be justified even in the interest of "law and order" about which the

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 9-2-1922; under the sub-title "In the Sabarmati Jail".

Government betray such feverish anxiety. Here is an extract from my correspondent's letter:

> Mr. Jairamdas has grown thinner. He was allowed to read *The Times of India* and the *Sind Observer* by the Inspector General of Prisons, but the Bombay Government by an order has stopped the papers. The Inspector General had allowed him to get books from outside and allowed the use of lamp upto 10 p.m., but the higher authorities have prohibited these too. Recent Government orders are that no concessions be shown to political prisoners and the rule of daily search be put into force in their case. Maulana Hassan Ahmed and two other prisoners have also refused to be searched; so they were all punished with handcuffs at night. This was for three nights. Other punishments were to follow if they did not submit. It would be no surprise if whipping also is resorted to. Owing to handcuffs they cannot get proper sleep and cannot answer calls of nature during night. During the day-time they are put to work. Maulana Hassan Ahmed cannot say his prayers owing to handcuffs which are put on from 6 p.m. to 6 am. Mr. Jairamdas was allowed shoes in the beginning. This has been disallowed.

Let the Government deny these serious allegations if they dare.

DELEGALIZING CONGRESS OFFICES

The following from the Congress Secretary, Faridpur, speaks for itself[1]:

It is not an easy matter to advise what to do when one is subjected to the terrorism of the kind described. It is a matter simply of not being "washed out". It is possible that the landlords will take fright and not give us their houses for offices. We must then hold them in the open whilst we are kept free. If they take us all to jail and keep us together, we must hold consultations there and evolve swaraj in the jails, as they are doing in Agra, by spinning, by having mixed prayer meetings and mixed hymns, and otherwise acting together in so far as the jail regulations will permit. When they are tired of beating us they will certainly take to shooting us. And when they do that and if we do not quail and can sing out "eyes front", we have established swaraj, because we have attained infinite capacity for suffering.

"AS IN ALL OTHER COUNTRIES"

I would not have pictured such a grim prospect before us but for the callous defence, offered by Sir William Vincent, of almost every charge brought by me in proof of lawless repression categorically denied by the Viceroy. It is evidently now considered

[1] The letter, not reproduced here, described how Congress offices had been "broken up", volunteers beaten and landlords warned not to let out houses for unlawful assemblies or offices.

necessaryto throw off the veneer of polish which used formerly to be given by total repudiation of uncomfortable facts. As such a thing has become practically impossible in view of the courage with which the public has now come forward to expose every wrong, the Government have taken up the bold attitude of defending every atrocity. Sir William evidently considers the members of the Assembly to be specially gullible. For, after treating them to general denials, telling them it is not the province of the Assembly to review the measures of the Provincial administrations, he thus defends the gravest of the charges:

> There are two particular charges however to which I must draw attention. One relates to the dispersal of unlawful assemblies by force and I want to make it quite clear that, where it is necessary to disperse unlawful assemblies and such assemblies refuse to disperse when ordered to do so by competent authority, it is the intention of the Government that "as in all other countries" they should be dispersed by force when this is necessary. In such cases force is the only remedy. In the second place attention is drawn, in this statement of Mr. Gandhi's, to the question of searches and arrests by night. The Government of India will give no undertaking that searches and arrests will not be made by night or by day as may be found necessary.

This is as frank as one could wish. It does not much matter that the use of force against unarmed men and midnight trespasses are resorted to in the name of ordinary processes. It merely sustains the charge that this Government is ordinarily bad and intolerable. The open avowal was indeed necessary, for the jails having lost their terror, the next thing to do was to set up a system of corporal punishments and open robbery so as to make the people realize what refusal to submit to the will of the administrators meant for them. We must therefore expect greater use, not less, of corporal punishments and nocturnal raids. When we get used to these as our common lot, the next natural step is day and night shooting. And I have recently been preparing the non-co-operators to expect that final reward reserved for lovers of freedom. Willing death is deliverance. According to Hindu belief the highest known form of freedom, i.e., salvation, is possible only when a man voluntarily surrenders his body and becomes totally indifferent to bodily wants. Political freedom of a disciplined character is a prelude to the higher type. It is therefore in the fitness of things that we should voluntarily surrender our possessions including our bodies for the attainment of national freedom.

Sir William defends the assaults and looting because they are resorted to in "all other countries". I take leave to deny that peaceful assemblies, no matter how unlawful, are ever dispersed by force in any

other country or that it has been ever before done even in India. Such assemblies are dealt with by summoning the conveners, and if necessary the audience, and imprisoning them. Abolition of corporal punishment is the first step to civilized government. Let the public bear in mind the fact that these public meetings take place not to preach or practise violence but to test a precious public right. Speakers and spectators may be arrested but certainly not assaulted and dragged.

As if Sir William felt the shame of his brutal confession, he wound up his brazen defence by irrelevantly dragging in the Gorakhpur incident, to prove that volunteers who sign the pledge of non-violence are not all non-violent. The brutal conduct of the Chauri Chaura crowd was indefensible. One does not know whether it contained volunteers. Let-the volunteers who do violence be punished by all means; but no such mob misconduct can possibly excuse the use of force against innocent and inoffensive men

But non-co-operators must beware of being enraged by such lawlessness of the Government. They have to live it down by patient suffering and not even mental retaliation. The incidents I am collecting from week to week are intended to prove the infinite capacity of the Government to use force. We must, therefore, develop an equally infinite capacity for suffering if we are to replace Government by force by Government based upon popular will. Force will be used even under popular Government, but it will then, "as in all other countries" be used against those only who seek to thwart the public will by force. Mr. Montagu puts the Moderates clearly on the wrong track by telling them that European Governments are based on force. It would be impossible in London or Paris to disperse peaceful crowds even though they might have gathered together in breach of a law, unless they have gathered to use or to preach the use of force.

SUSPENSION

But Chauri Chaura has opened up a new duty before non-co-operators. The resolutions of the Working Committee reproduced elsewhere[1], call upon non-co-operators for the time being to suspend all civil disobedience activities, mass as well as individual. Till the All-India Congress Committee has met, all civil disobedience must stop whether defensive or offensive. I am hoping that the All-India Congress Committee will confirm the action of the Working Committee. In my opinion, mass civil disobedience must be stopped

[1] *Vide* "Working Committee's Resolutions at Bardoli", 12-2-1922.

for a long time, at least to the end of the year. It is evident that we have not obtained the necessary control over the masses. Individual offensive civil disobedience too must stop for some time. But the Working Committee leaves untouched all normal Congress activities which are necessary for our purpose, although they may be prohibited. Thus we must enrol volunteers in strict conformity with the pledge, though not for defiance of the notifications, but for actual Congress work. So must we carry on khaddar propaganda. It will be noticed that the Working Committee has discounted picketing foreign cloth shops for the time being. The only-picketing permitted is in connection with liquor shops and that too by persons of proved good character. I hope therefore that all workers will loyally abide by the resolutions of the Working Committee and enthusiastically take up the constructive work sketched by it. The programme of construction should bring together all parties with the common goal—the Khilafat, the Punjab and swaraj.

A SILENT WORKER

Andhradesha has lost one of its finest silent workers. K. Hanumantharao laboured for the great educational institution[1] at Masulipatam which is the pride of Andhradesha. He lived for it and died for it. Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya[2] writes the following touching letter[3]:

The friends of the deceased have lost no time in issuing an appeal for one lac of rupees for a memorial to the deceased. It is not intended to use the money in vain show but to put on a sound footing the financial condition of the institution for which the deceased slaved day and night. I heartily commend the appeal not only to every Andhra patriot but also to many others who knew Hanumantharao or visited his noble institution.

AGHA MAHOMED SAFDAR

Although the successor of Lala Lajpat Rai, Agha Mahomed Safdar, was arrested and tried and released by the Sialkot Magistrate, it was not to be expected that he would remain free for any length of time. He has now been re-arrested and is to be tried in Lahore. He was arrested whilst he was about to address a meeting at Ghartal, a village 18 miles from Sialkot. The audience consisted of over one thousand villagers. There was no violence. And the meeting was continued by

[1] The Andhra Jatheeya Kalasala

[2] 1880-1959; medical practitioner, politician and author; editor, *Janmabhumi;* President, Indian National Congress, 1949; Governor of Madhya Pradesh

[3] Not reproduced here; it described the passing away of Hanumantharao and appealed for funds for the institution for which he had worked

the companions of the Agha Saheb as if nothing had happened.

SIKH HONOUR

The Sikh awakening seems to be truly wonderful. Not only has the Akali party become a party of effective non-violence but it is evolving a fine code of honour. The Gurdwara Committee is now insisting on the release of Pandit Dina Nath, a non-Sikh who was arrested in connection with the keys affair[1]. I must re-produce the courageous notice[2] issued by the Committee.

AHMEDABAD AND SURAT

Ahmedabad and Surat Municipalities have been superseded—not because they have been found inefficient but because they have been too efficient and too independent.[3] These two municipalities and that of Nadiad have been putting up a brave, dignified and orderly fight against the Government interference and undue control. Their crime consisted in freeing primary education from Government control. They gave up Government grant. Be it noted that the elected councillors who have commanded a majority have always acted after close consultation with the rate-payers. But that is just what the Government evidently does not want. It makes the public opinion effective.

The duty before the councillors and the electors is quite simple. They must still retain control of primary education. The rate-payers may refuse to pay the rates to-the nominated committee that the Government may impose upon the citizens and they must pay for the national education of their children. The councillors must keep together and put up as it were a national municipality in so far as it is practicable In my opinion there is hardly a department, for the running of which enlightened citizens require Government aid. There is no earthly reason why the Ahmedabadis, the Nadiadis and the Surtis should not be able to sweep and light their own streets, educate their own children and look after their sick and their water-supply without hanging on to the Government. The police control they do not possess. The only thing for which they may need Government assistance is in enforcing payment of rates. Replace Government force by force of public opinion and you have the sanction for collecting rates. More money is raised in Ahmedabad by voluntary contributions than by enforced rates. The public will watch

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 12-1-1922, under the sub-title "The Gurdwara Movement".

[2] Not reproduced here

[3] Early in February, the Ahmedabad Municipality was suspended and the Collector took over its work.

the duel between nominated committees and popularly elected representatives in awakened constituencies.

CROWDED OUT

An important letter about the Delhi Jail treatment confirming the information given in these pages has been crowded out this week together with much other important matter.

Young India, 16-2-1922

82. THE CRIME OF CHAURI CHAURA

God has been abundantly kind to me. He has warned me the third time that there is not as yet in India that truthful and non-violent atmosphere which and which alone can justify mass disobedience which can be at all described as civil, which means gentle, truthful, humble, knowing, wilful yet loving, never criminal and hateful.

He warned me in 1919 when the Rowlatt Act agitation was started. Ahmedabad, Viramgam, and Kheda erred; Amritsar and Kasur erred. I retraced my steps, called it a Himalayan miscalculation[1], humbled myself before God and man, and stopped not merely mass civil disobedience but even my own which I knew was intended to be civil and non-violent.

The next time it was through the events of Bombay that God gave a terrific warning. He made me eyewitness of the deeds of the Bombay mob on the 17th November. The mob acted in the interest of non-co-operation. I announced my intention to stop the mass civil disobedience which was to be immediately started in Bardoli. The humiliation was greater than in 1919. But it did me good. I am sure that the nation gained by the stopping. India stood for truth and non violence by the suspension.

But the bitterest humiliation was still to come. Madras did give the warning, but I heeded it not. But God spoke clearly through Chauri Chaura. I understand that the constables who were so brutally hacked to death had given much provocation. They had even gone back upon the word just given by the Inspector that they would not be molested, but when the procession had passed the stragglers were interfered with and abused by the constables. The former cried out for help. The mob returned. The constables opened fire. The little ammunition they had was exhausted and they retired to the *Thana* for safety. The mob, my informant tells me, therefore set fire to the *Thana*. The self-imprisoned constables had to come out for dear life

[1] *Vide*"The Duty of Satyagrahis", 6-7-1919.

and as they did so, they were hacked to pieces and the mangled remains were thrown into the raging flames.

It is claimed that no non-co-operation volunteer had a hand in the brutality and that the mob had not only the immediate provocation but they had also general knowledge of the high handed tyranny of the police in that district. No provocation can possibly justify the brutal murder of men who had been rendered defenceless and who had virtually thrown themselves on the mercy of the mob. And when India claims to be non-violent and hopes to mount the throne of Liberty through non-violent means, mob-violence even in answer to grave provocation is a bad augury. Suppose the "non-violent" disobedience of Bardoli was permitted by God to succeed, the Government had abdicated in favour of the victors of Bardoli, who would control the unruly element that must be expected to perpetrate inhumanity upon due provocation? Non-violent attainment of self-government presupposes a non-violent control over the violent elements in the country. Non-violent non-co-operators can only succeed when they have succeeded in attaining control over the hooligans of India, in other words, when the latter also have learnt patriotically or religiously to refrain from their violent activities at least whilst the campaign of non-co-operation is going on. The tragedy at Chauri Chaura, therefore, roused me thoroughly.

"But what about your manifesto to the Viceroy and your rejoinder to his reply?" spoke the voice of Satan. It was the bitterest cup of humiliation to drink. "Surely it is cowardly to withdraw the next day after pompous threats to the government and promises to the people of Bardoli." Thus Satan's invitation was to deny Truth and therefore Religion, to deny God Himself. I put my doubts and troubles before the Working Committee and other associates whom I found near me. They did not all agree with me at first. Some of them probably do not even now agree with me. But never has a man been blessed, perhaps, with colleagues and associates so considerate and forgiving as I have. They understood my difficulty and patiently followed my argument. The result is before the public in the shape of the resolutions of the Working Committee.[1] The drastic reversal of practically the whole of the aggressive programme may. be politically unsound and unwise, but there is no doubt that it is religiously sound, and I venture to assure the doubters that the country will have gained by my humiliation and confession of error.

The only virtue I want to claim is Truth and Non-violence. I lay no claim to super human powers. I want none. I wear the same

[1] Passed at its meeting at Bardoli on February 11 and 12, 1922

corruptible flesh that the weakest of my fellow beings wears and am therefore as liable to err as any. My services have many limitations, but God has upto now blessed them in spite of the imperfections.

For, confession of error is like a broom that sweeps away dirt and leaves the surface cleaner than before, I feel stronger for my confession. And the cause must prosper for the retracing. Never has man reached his destination by persistence in deviation from the straight path.

It has been urged that Chauri Chaura cannot affect Bardoli. There is danger, it is argued, only if Bardoli is weak enough to be swayed by Chauri Chaura and is betrayed into violence. I have no doubt whatsoever on that account. The people of Bardoli are in my opinion the most peaceful in India. But Bardoli is but a speck on the map of India. Its effort cannot succeed unless there is perfect co-operation from the other parts. Bardoli's disobedience will be civil only when the other parts of India remain non-violent. Just as the addition of a grain of arsenic to a pot of milk renders it unfit as food so will the civility of Bardoli prove unacceptable by the addition of the deadly poison from Chauri Chaura. The latter represents India as much as Bardoli.

Chauri Chaura is after all an aggravated symptom. I have never imagined that there has been no violence, mental or physical, in the places where repression is going on. Only I have believed, I still believe and the pages of *Young India* amply prove, that the repression is out of all proportion to the insignificant popular violence in the areas of repression. The determined holding of meetings in prohibited areas I do not call violence. The violence I am referring to is the throwing of brickbats or intimidation and coercion practised in stray cases. As a matter of fact in civil disobedience there should be no excitement. Civil disobedience is a preparation for mute suffering. Its effect is marvellous though unperceived and gentle. But I regarded a certain amount of excitement as inevitable, certain amount of unintended violence even pardonable, i.e., I did not consider civil disobedience impossible in somewhat imperfect conditions. Under perfect conditions disobedience when civil is hardly felt. But the present movement is admittedly a dangerous experiment under fairly adverse conditions.

The tragedy of Chauri Chaura is really the index finger. It shows the way India may easily go if drastic precautions be not taken. If we are not to evolve violence out of non-violence, it is quite clear that we must hastily retrace our steps and re-establish an atmosphere of peace, re-arrange our programme and not think of starting mass

civil disobedience until we are sure of peace being retained in spite of mass civil disobedience being started and in spite of Government provocation. We must be sure of unauthorized portions not starting mass civil disobedience.

As it is, the Congress organization is still imperfect and its lnstructions are still perfunctorily carried out. We have not established Congress Committees in every one of the villages. Where we have, they are not perfectly amenable to our instructions. We have not probably more than one crore of members on the roll. We are in the middle of February, yet not many have paid the annual four-anna subscription for the current year. Volunteers are indifferently enrolled. They do not conform to all the conditions of their pledge. They do not even wear hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar. All the Hindu volunteers have not yet purged themselves of the sin of untouchability. All are not free from the taint of violence. Not by their imprisonment are we going to win swaraj or serve the holy cause of the Khilafat or attain the ability to stop payment to faithless servants. Some of us err in spite of ourselves. But some others among us sin wilfully. They join Volunteer Corps well knowing that they are not and do not intend to remain non-violent. We are thus untruthful even as we hold the Government to be untruthful. We dare not enter the kingdom of Liberty with mere lip homage to Truth and Non-violence.

Suspension of mass civil disobedience and subsidence of excitement are necessary for further progress, indeed indispensable to prevent further retrogression. I hope, therefore, that by suspension every Congressman or woman will not only not feel disappointed but he or she will feel relieved of the burden of unreality and of national sin.

Let the opponent glory in our humiliation or so-called defeat. It is better to be charged with cowardice and weakness than to be guilty of denial of our oath and sin against God. It is a million times better to *appear* untrue before the world than to *be* untrue to ourselves.

And so, for me the suspension of mass civil disobedience and other minor activities that were calculated to keep up excitement is not enough penance for my having been the instrument, however involuntary, of the brutal violence by the people at Chauri Chaura.

I must undergo personal cleansing. I must become a fitter instrument able to register the slightest variation in the moral atmosphere about me. My prayers must have much deeper truth and humility about them than they evidence. And for me there is nothing so helpful and cleansing as a fast accompanied by the necessary

mental co-operation.

I know that the mental attitude is everything. Just as a prayer may be merely a mechanical intonation as of a bird, so may a fast be a mere mechanical torture of the flesh. Such mechanical contrivances are valueless for the purpose intended. Again, just as a mechanical chant may result in the modulation of voice, a mechanical fast may result in purifying the body. Neither will touch the soul within.

But a fast undertaken for fuller self-expression, for attainment of the spirit's supremacy over the flesh, is a most powerful factor in one's evolution. After deep consideration, therefore, I am imposing on myself a five days' continuous fast, permitting myself water. It commenced on Sunday[1] evening; it ends on Friday evening. This is the least I must do.

I have taken into consideration the All-India Congress Committee meeting in front of me.[2] I have in mind the anxious pain even the five days' fast will cause many friends; but I can no longer postpone the penance nor lessen it.

I urge co-workers not to copy my example. The motive in their case will be lacking. They are not the originators of civil disobedience. I am in the unhappy position of a surgeon proved skill-less to deal with an admittedly dangerous case. I must either abdicate or acquire greater skill. Whilst the personal penance is not only necessary but obligatory on me, the exemplary self-restraint prescribed by the Working Committee is surely sufficient penance for everyone else. It is no small penance and, if sincerely carried out, it can become infinitely more real and better than fasting. What can be richer and more fruitful than a greater fulfilment of the vow of non-violence in thought, word, and deed or the spread of that spirit? It will be more than food for me during the week to observe that comrades are all, silently and without idle discussion, engaged in fulfilling the constructive programme sketched by the Working Comittee in enlisting Congress members after making sure that they understand the Congress creed of truth and non-violence for the attainment of swaraj, in daily and religiously spinning for a fixed time, in introducing the wheel of prosperity and freedom in every home, in visiting "untouchable" homes and finding out their wants, in inducing national schools to receive "untouchable" children, in organizing social service specially designed to find a common platform for every variety of man and woman, and in visiting the homes which the drink curse is desolating, in establishing real

[1] February 12, 1922

[2] It was held on February 24 and 25 at Delhi

panchayats and in organizing national schools on a proper footing. The workers will be better engaged in these activities than in fasting. I hope, therefore that no one will join me in fasting, either through false sympathy or an ignorant conception of the spiritual value of fasting.

All fasting and all penance must as far as possible be secret. But my fasting is both a penance and a punishment, and a punishment has to be public. It is penance for me and punishment for those whom I try to serve, for whom I love to live and would equally love to die. They have unintentionally sinned against the laws of the Congress though they were sympathizers if not actually connected with it. Probably they hacked the constables—their countrymen and fellow beings—with my name on their lips. The only way love punishes is by suffering. I cannot even wish them to be arrested. But I would let them know that I would suffer for their breach of the Congress creed. I would advise those who feel guilty and repentant to hand themselves voluntarily to the Government for punishment and make a clean confession. I hope that the workers in the Gorakhpur district will leave no stone unturned to find out the evil-doers and urge them to deliver themselves into custody. But whether the murderers accept my advice or not, I would like them to know that they have seriously interfered with swaraj operations, that in being the cause of the postponement of the movement in Bardoli, they have injured the very cause they probably intended to serve. I would like them to know, too, that this movement is not a cloak or a preparation for violence. I would, at any rate, suffer every humiliation, every torture, absolute ostracism and death itself to prevent the movement from becoming violent or a precursor of violence. I make my penance public also because I am now denying myself the opportunity of sharing their lot with the prisoners. The immediate issue has again shifted. We can no longer press for the withdrawal of notifications or discharge of prisoners. They and we must suffer for the crime of Chauri Chaura. The incident proves, whether we wish it or no, the unity of life. All, including even the administrators must suffer. Chauri Chaura must stiffen the Government, must still further corrupt the police, and the reprisals that will follow must further demoralize the people. The suspension and the penance will take us back to the position we occupied before the tragedy. By strict discipline and purification we regain the moral confidence required for demanding the withdrawal of notifications and the discharge of prisoners.

If we learn the full lesson of the tragedy, we can turn the curse into a blessing. By becoming truthful and non-violent, both in spirit and deed, and by making the swadeshi i.e., the khaddar programme complete, we can establish full swaraj and redress the Khilafat and the

Punjab wrongs without a single person having to offer civil disobedience.

Young India, 16-2-1922

83. TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI

BARDOLI,
February 16, 1922

DEVDAS
CONGRESS COMMITTEE
GORAKHPUR

CONDITION FIRST CLASS. I TOO DID NOT UNDERSTAND YOUR TELEGRAM. COULD NOT MAKE OUT THE HORRORS YOU REFERRED.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7924

84. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Friday [*February 17, 1922*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I am sorry that there are no letters from you. I can understand that you should be busy all the while, but at a time like this I do expect to have detailed reports from you. If I get them, I can know the situation and also think about further steps. Amongst the multifarious duties of a soldier, submitting the report of his work to the general is one.

The fast will end today in an hour's time. Except that I feel weak, I have suffered nothing. I am sure you get copies of *Young India* and *Navajivan.*

I shall be in Delhi on the 24th. I shall leave here on the 22nd. You may take it that I shall be at Delhi on the 24th and 25th. After that, I may have to go to Calcutta. Nothing is certain. Ba is of course here.

Hope you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[1] The letter was written on the last day of the five-day fast untertaken on account of the Chauri Chaura incidents.

[PS.]

This is what has appeared in the *Times.* You may give a reply if you think one is called for. Send to me the reply you give. Return the cutting also to me.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 7682

85. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

SABARMATI JAIL,
[*March 18, 1922*]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

It did not seem correct that I should go away without having written to you. Take good care of your health. My spinning wheel....[1] I, therefore, wish you all success in your endeavour.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original S. N. 33015

86. DEVINE WARNING

A man is pardoned if he errs once; if he errs a second time, even then a liberal-minded person will pardon him. But what if he errs thrice? What else will he merit except dismissal?

We describe anyone who gets cheated once as simple, and anyone who gets cheated twice as credulous. If, now, a person allows himself to be cheated thrice, what but a fool should we call him?

Bardoli's civil disobedience has vanished like a dream. God meant to stop it at the very moment when it was to start. There is nothing to wonder at in this. If for one like Rama the hour of coronation turned out to be the hour for going to the forest[2], why speak of Bardoli? It is only when we have had the experience again and again of things which had once appeared real to us having faded away into dreams, that we shall learn the true meaning of swaraj. At present, only one meaning of swaraj seems true to me. Swaraj is nothing but the sincere effort to win it. The thing itself will seem to

[1] A few sentences here are illegible in the source.

[2] King Dasharatha was forced by Kaikeyi, his youngest queen and Rama's step-mother, on the strength of an old promise he had made to her to abandon the proposed installation of Rama on the throne and to send the prince, instead, to live in the forest for fourteen years. Rama willingly honoured his father's word.

move further away from us the more we run after it.

This is true of every ideal. As a person becomes ever more truthful, truth runs farther away from him because he knows that what he mistakenly thought to be truth was not really the truth.

Hence, one who follows truth—one who acts rightly—is ever humble; he sees his shortcomings more clearly day by day. *Brahmacharya* is ever running away from a person who tries to observe it, for he discovers that, deep down, desire is still strong in him. He is never satisfied with being able to observe physical continence. *Moksha* also recedes farther away from an aspirant. This fact inspired the profound expression "neti"[1]. A number of great *rishis*[2] in ancient times set out to seek *moksha,* to realize the *atman.* In its pursuit, they descended into many valleys and climbed many hills, jumped over thorny hedges and discovered, at the end of the journey: "It cannot be this" Who knows how many of them caught afaint glimpse of *moksha?* And yet they were so discerning, so intelligent that, as we know, they were not deceived.

I, therefore, see ever more clearly that for us swaraj lies in our struggle to win it.

In 1919, Ahmedabad and Viramgam, Amritsar and Kasur showed my error and satyagraha was suspended.[3] Last November, I witnessed in Bombay man's barbarism and again suspended mass civil disobedience.[4] Even then I did not learn the lesson completely. Now it is Chauri Chaura which has punished me. Who knows how many more such blows are in store for me! If now people reject my leadership and regard me a fool, they will not be to blame.

If I do not know human nature, why do I meddle with such affairs ?

I just cannot hold myself back. I also cannot but admit my error when I see it. I would welcome being dismissed, I would be very happy indeed to be counted a fool, but I will certainly not defile my soul by retaining the filth of error in my body.

"If the king gets angry, the city will shelter me; if God is displeased, where shall I turn?" I do not know if Mira actually composed any song with this line, but she certainly lived her life in that spirit. We may bear the world's reproaches, but we should not be

[1] Literally, "not this"; descriptions of God in the Vedas often conclude with this assertion of the inadequacy of every description of Divine reality

[2] Seers

[3] *Vide* "Press Statement on Suspension of Civil Disobedience", 21-4-1919.

[4] *Vide* "A Deep Stain", 18-11-1921.

guilty in the eyes of God. We should heed His warning.

Had we proceeded with the proposed civil disobedience in Bardoli despite the divine warning from Gorakhpur, we would have certainly regretted the step. The people would have suffered much and our regard for truth and non-violence would have been discredited. We are-known as cowards and then we would have been regarded as liars as well. If other parts of India remain peaceful, then only should Bardoli start disobedience—that was what I said, that was the condition. If Bardoli had started civil disobedience despite the violation of that condition, then it too would have sinned.

If anyone argues that such peace will never be preserved in the country, we may not contradict him. This is, however, an argument for giving up the path of satyagraha and civility. Let the country do anything it likes after renouncing the path of civility; our duty is only to see that it does not follow untruth while talking of truth and does not commit violence while talking of non-violence. Bardoli has observed those conditions well enough, and so have I. By acting thus, both have served the people and I personally have proved my fitness as a servant. By admitting errors, the people will rise higher, not fall lower.

Truly, it is God Who has saved our fair name. I should have taken a warning from the Madras incidents. I should also have done so from the letters I received from our opponents and from non-co-operators. I did not take the warning; but, then, if a person who enjoys God's kindness does not get warned by a sign, God warns him by beat of drum and, if he does not understand the warning even then, He warns him by thunder and lightning and by a downpour of rain. By doing a duty which requires no great effort, we have escaped big dangers.

If we have had to bend, to retreat, it is in order that we may advance. A person who strays from the path must first return to the point where he left it. After he has returned to it, his progress will be resumed. That is to say, we, who were slipping down when the Working Committee passed its resolution, began to rise again after that.

But this did not satisfy me. I, therefore, felt it necessary to undertake further atonement. My agony had begun the moment telegrams about Gorakhpur were received. But it was necessary that I go through bodily suffering as well. Considering the magnitude of my error, I should not have contented myself merely with a five days' fast. I wished to fast for 14 days. But I let it be five days. If this atonement is insufficient, I shall have to pay the balance sooner or

later, along, with compound interest. Anyone who repays his full debt in time saves himself from having to pay a greater amount later.

Atonement should not be advertised. But I have publicized mine, and there is a reason. My fast is atonement for me but, for the people of Chauri Chaura, it is a punishment. The punishment inflicted by love is always of this nature. When a lover is hurt, he does not punish the loved one, but suffers himself; he bears the pangs of hunger and hits his own head. He is unconcerned whether or not his loved ones understand his suffering.

But I have also made my fast public by way of warning to others as well. I have no alternative left to me. If a non-co-operator deceived me—and I regard almost the whole of the country as a non-co-operator—he may have my body. I fondly believe that the country wants me to live. If that is so, by undertaking bodily suffering I suggest to the country that it should not deceive me. If it likes, it may well disown me after rejecting the condition of non-violence. But, so long as it accepts my services, it will have to accept non-violence and truth.

This time I have been content with a fast of five days. If, however, the people refuse to take the warning, five days may become fifteen and fifteen become fifty and I may even lose my life.

I am writing this article on the third day of my fast[1]. I am perfectly clear in my mind that the Hindus, the Muslims, the Parsis, the Christians and the rest will get swaraj only by following the path of non-violence and it is by following the same path that they will serve the cause of the Khilafat and get justice in regard to the Punjab. It was accepted at the Congress session and in the Khilafat conferences. If, despite this, we give it up, we shall be fighting not for our dharma, not for God, but for *adharma* and for Satan.

We should not follow the bad example of others, not even that of Gazi Mustafa Kamal Pasha. “If a short man runs with a tall one he may not die, but he will certainly fall ill” is a true saying. Even a wise man acts in accordance with his nature, and so does the rest of the world. What, then, can one gain by coercion ? I speak the truth when I say that India will never come to rule an empire through physical strength. It is doing violence to her nature to expect her to win anything through such strength. By her very nature, India is a lover of peace. That is why, whether she knows it or not, she has gone crazy over non-violent non-co-operation based on truth. No one came

[1] Which commenced on February, 12

forward to follow the bad example of the mad men of Ahmedabad and Viramgam. No one, likewise, will imitate the example of the mad folk of Chauri Chaura. Such madness is not in India's nature, it is only a disease. On the other hand, Mustafa Kamal Pasha succeeded with his sword because there is strength in every nerve of a Turk. The Turks have been fighters for centuries. The people of India have followed the path of peace for thousands of years. We shall not discuss at the moment which people did the better thing. Both violence and non-violence have a place in the world. The *atman* and the body, both succeed. Whether eventually the *atman* wins or the body, this is not the occasion to consider. If we wish to discuss it, we may do so after we have won swaraj. Let us, at present, employ the easiest means to gain it. India's nature cannot be changed in a moment. I am convinced that those who wish to free the country with the help of the sword will need ages to succeed in their effort.

If even the Muslims of India try to follow in the footsteps of Mustafa Kamal Pasha, they will taint the fair name of Islam. Islam attaches the utmost importance to peace. Patience is far better than anger, than the use of physical force. The people of India have followed peace and truth for a long time. Let them win swaraj this very day by adopting them again; if they discard these, they had better remain slaves. One cannot in the same moment proceed towards both east and west. The path followed by the West is one of violence and atheism; it looks like it for the present at any rate. The path followed by the East, it has long been proved, is one of peace, dharma and of faith in God. The centre of the West at the present day is England. That of the East has been India since time immemorial. The world thinks that England rules an empire and India is her chief maid-servant. Our present effort is to win deliverance from this slavery. If this land of Bharat wishes to end her slavery, she can do so only with the help of her old weapons of non-violence and truth.

There is at the present time not a single country on the face of the earth which is weaker than India in point of physical strength. Even tiny Afghanistan can growl at her.

With whose help does India hope to fight with England? Japan's? If it fights with the help of Kabul, or of some other country, it will have to accept the slavery of that country. Hence, if the country wishes to be free in this generation, it can count on no help other than

God's. And God protects only those who follow truth and non-violence. Thus, the divine warning from Gorakhpur wants us to understand this if we wish to see our dreams come true. We must cultivate the spirit of non-violence.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-2-1922

87. WHAT ABOUT THOSE IN JAIL?

A gentleman has written a long letter to me from which I take the following:[1]

There is another letter expressing exactly similar views. I am sure others, too, have felt this doubt. What wonder if they have? But such doubts show that these doubting Thomases have not yet understood the significance and the-beauty of the struggle. The charge against Pandit Malaviya has been levelled simply out of ignorance. Panditji had no hand at all in the suspension of civil disobedience. I resolved on it as soon as I heard in Bardoli about the Gorakhpur incident. I even wrote letters to that effect from Bardoli. I consulted colleagues and decided to convene a meeting of the Working Committee. Thereafter I went to Bombay. There is nothing surprising if 'Panditji also wants the same thing. But the decision was taken, independently of him, by the Working Committee and me.

Now let us turn to its merits. Is it right for us to try to get the prisoners released even by breaking our pledge? Not to give up truth even if, in consequence, we lose a kingdom and a throne, even if we sacrifice our family and our life—that is real satyagraha. If we secure the prisoners' release by forsaking truth, they themselves will feel ashamed. They wish to be released only after swaraj has been won. They want to be released with honour. They have gone to jail in order to suffer, looking upon this suffering as happiness and upon happiness outside jail as suffering. If, therefore, the step we took seemed right otherwise, we could not have refused to take it out of consideration for the prisoners.

Moreover, could we have secured their release by going on with civil disobedience? The power we had to get them released was the power of our non-violence. Bardoli could show its strength only if

[1] The extract is not translated here. The correspondent had asked whether Pandit Malaviya felt no concern for the many leaders and thousands of non-co-operators who were in jail, and why he was trying for a settlement while they were still in prison.

peace was preserved elsewhere in the country. Non-violence and violence cannot go hand in hand. Night and day cannot exist together. Thus, in whatever way we look at the matter, we reach the same conclusion, that we had no choice. but to suspend civil disobedience.

That does not mean that we have nothing to do now. If a Kshatriya does not succeed along one path, he looks for another, a straight one. From the point where he discovers that he has gone astray, he returns to the original spot and again tries his strength. We have to do the very same thing. No one will forget the prisoners.

I know the anguish in Panditji's soul. He is as keen to get the prisoners released as we are. He, too, wants to get them released without loss of honour to the country.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-2-1922

88. MY NOTES

TO THE PEOPLE OF BARDOLI

You have done well. It is not for any fault of yours but because of Gorakhpur that civil disobedience has been suspended. However, as we all belong to India, Gorakhpur's crime has its effect on us too.

To a soldier, it is all the same whether he is asked to fight or to stop fighting. He goes forward or stops as he is ordered. The people of Bardoli should stop as the Working Committee has ordered them and prove themselves true soldiers by immediately paying up the revenue.

Civil disobedience may be suspended, but satyagraha is never suspended. It should be the very breath of our life. Hence, we should honour the resolutions which the Working Committee has passed in order that we may remain wedded to truth and to prove that we are so wedded.

Although the people of Bardoli were impatient to start civil, disobedience, they did indeed have their shortcomings. I want you to overcome these and make yourselves more fit for offering civil disobedience.

During my stay in Bardoli, I saw that the *Kaliparaj* communities live almost in a state of slavery. It is the duty of the advanced communities to bring them out of their state of ignorance. They will deserve being called advanced communities only if they do so. The spinning-wheel should be introduced into the homes of the *Kaliparaj*

communities. Their children should all attend national schools and they themselves should be given some general education.

I want the people of Bardoli to fulfil all the conditions laid down by the Congress and so make themselves more fit [for civil disobedience].

Only the *Kaliparaj* communities drink. You should go and meet them in their homes, talk to them with love and persuade them to give up drinking. In order that they may do this, they should be given milk, buttermilk or sweet water.

You can establish *panchayats*[1] this very day and settle your disputes among yourselves. You can improve your schools and give all-round education to your children there. You can add to your income and secure economic freedom by introducing the spinning-wheel in every home and training up weavers and carders in each village, and with only the profits from these activities you can run your courts and your schools, carry on propaganda against drinking and promote swadeshi.

The Congress has also pointed out to you the way to do all this. One means is for every man and woman to become a member of the Congress, and another is for all of you to contribute one per cent of your last year's income to the Tilak Swaraj Fund.

You can win a good measure of freedom by working in this way, and now you will be regarded as fit to offer civil disobedience only if you can win that freedom in a planned manner.

TO EVERY GUJARATI

What applies to the citizens of Bardoli applies to all Gujaratis. The idea behind suspending civil disobedience is to make ourselves more fit for it. We should, therefore, earnestly take up the constructive programme laid down by the Congress.

I know that the Kheda district of Abbas Saheb, which has been full of enthusiasm will be greatly disappointed. Those who were getting ready for individual civil disobedience will now find it painful to pay up the taxes. They can, however, prove themselves true soldiers only by not looking at the matter in that light and, instead, by paying up the taxes and devoting themselves to constructive work. We can now see that it is more difficult to persuade everyone to become a member of the Congress and collect from him one per cent of his last year's income than to make him agree to go to prison. When we have completed "all these tasks, not only Bardoli but the whole of Gujarat

[1] Representative bodies looking after the affairs of a village

may start civil disobedience.

TO CITIZENS OF AHMEDABAD AND SURAT

National civil disobedience has been suspended but a golden opportunity lies before you. You have a local grievance. You can give a good proof of the mettle of the people in your city. The Government appointed the Committees[1] against your wishes. Personally, I have been much grieved by your fellow-citizens coming forward to serve on them. This, however, should cause no disappointment. They will not be able to function without the co-operation of citizens. No children, of course, will attend the schools run by the Committees unless you send them there. Nor need you pay taxes against your wishes. Let there be, on the one hand, the Committees appointed by the Government against your wishes and, against them, let there be your city's *mahajan*. People will then know what support the Committees have.

You can carry on this work with the utmost civility and in a perfectly peaceful manner. After discussing matters with the Committees, take up all the responsibilities which you can shoulder and leave those which you cannot. I am eager to watch a civilized competition between the two. There is no doubt that even if one party takes care not to overstep the limits of propriety, the other, too, will have no choice but to act in like manner. If, therefore, the citizens work without ever using harsh language, they will certainly win. The first duty of the residents of these cities is to see that not a single one of the national schools passes out of their control. For this, enthusiastic workers and funds are all that is needed. If we cannot find these, we are bound to be defeated.

SATYAGRAHA BY DHASA DURBAR

Desai Gopaldas is the Durbar[2] of a town called Dhasa in Kathiawar. The people of that place lead a very happy and simple life. The relationship between the Durbar and his subjects is as cordial as between father and son. The movement for swadeshi, the removal of untouchability and similar activities are proceeding in Dhasa with great vigour. Being a *Patidar*[3], however, Shri Desai could not restrain himself when Abbas Saheb took charge of the Kheda district; he left the management of affairs in Dhasa to his wife and plunged into the movement in Kheda. Everyone has seen the correspondence

[1] For the circumstances which led to the Government action, *vide* "Municipalities in Trouble", 15-12-1921.

[2] Ruler of a small principality

[3] A community in Gujarat, consisting chiefly of peasant-farmers

betweenhim and the Commissioner. Everyone of his letters bears testimony to his spirit of satyagraha. The nation will advance only through such sacrifices. The atmosphere in Japan changed overnight when the nobles offered their lands and all their other possessions for the service of the people. The poor also understood the importance of that sacrifice and all engaged themselves in national work. Similarly, when a large number of Durbars and zemindars in India start making sacrifices for the people, the resulting union between the rich and the poor will be a sight for the world to see. Today, it is the poor and those belonging to the middle class who are chiefly carrying on the non-co-operation movement. There is even some danger for the country in this. The somewhat delicate situation in which we find ourselves today will also end if the upper classes take full part in the movement. This requires courage and a Kshatriya spirit. Shri Desai has displayed these. I hope that others will take a lesson from his example.

THE CASE OF GOVINDJI VASANJI

Shri Govindji Vasanji, the proprietor of the well-known sweets-shop of Bombay, is in jail. I wanted to comment on this case earlier, but could not do as I did not have the relevant papers. I have just got them.

Shri Govindji will have to enjoy rest in jail for six months. I welcome the sentence all the more for being one of hard labour. It is my experience that those sentenced to simple imprisonment do not really serve a term of imprisonment. Those sentenced to hard labour alone can do so. The former are likely to get bored, while for prisoners undergoing rigorous imprisonment, time passes happily. The mind can turn the prison into a palace; on the other hand, if it constantly dwells on thoughts of imprisonment, it could make prison a place of misery. Anyone who finds prison life hard is no non-co-operator. Mirabai welcomed the-cup of poison as nectar.[1] Holding a cup of poison in his hands, Socrates addressed to his dear pupil a discourse on the immortality of the soul which the world will ever cherish. His gentle language bears testimony to the fact that there was no trace in-his heart of any ill will or anger for the warder who gave him the cup or the judge who sentenced him to take poison. The history of the world provides many such instances.

It is not only in regard to political offences that non-co-

[1] Her husband, incensed at her spending most of her time in devotion to Shri Krishna in the company of sadhus and mendicants, is said to have sent her a cap of poison, wanting her to end her life and stop bringing discredit to him and his family.

operators are to refrain from taking part in court proceedings. They may not defend themselves in courts from which they have decided to keep away even if they are charged with base crimes. The misfortune lies in having committed a crime, not in the fact that the world regards one as guilty. Many sinners conceal their sins from others and, passing for eminent religious leaders, live a burden to the world; such persons win no great reward in life. We look upon them as impostors.

We do not regard everyone who has been sentenced by a court as a criminal; on the contrary, all who have had experience of courts know that many innocent persons are punished and the guilty often escape punishment. As a lawyer, too, I have come across many such instances. Going to a court is like playing a game of *chopat.* For some, the dice may turn up favourably, for others, unfavourably. There is no reason to believe that they alone are worthy men who are favoured by the dice. Every player of *chopat* will readily recall instances in which the player always got the wrong number up, and failed to get the right number despite his most anxious efforts. It was not because of lack of skill in gambling on their part that the Pandavas lost while Duryodhana won.[1] Poor Yudhisthira spared no efforts.. The Pandavas, however, were destined to attain immortal fame, to prove afresh that dharma always involved suffering. They were, therefore, defeated. But the world reveres the defeated Pandavas.

Shri Govindji's world consists of his friends. What do his friends think about him? I have not yet met a single friend of his who believes him to be guilty. Even now I see before me his face bathed in tears. When I did not even know that he might be prosecuted or that some action might be taken against him, he came to see me in order to remove any suspicions that I might have and, with tears in his eyes, told me that he had taken no part whatever in inciting anyone. "You will certainly believe that I, who often spend my time with Parsi friends and who owe my money to Parsi patrons, would at least have the sense to realize that I would be guilty in the eyes of the world and of God, were I to incite anyone against Parsis." These are the words he uttered on that day, in a voice choked with emotion. He related much else in the same strain and convinced me of his innocence.

I believe that he would have been acquitted if he had defended himself. Some able lawyers had offered to take up his case, but his brave mother refused their services. "My son is a satyagrahi. I know

[1] Yudhisthira, the eldest of the Pandavas, played against Duryodhana guided by Shakuni, Duryodhana's maternal uncle, and lost successive games with increasingly heavy stakes till he had forfeited their share of the kingdom and their personal liberty. The story is told to the *Mahabharata.*

that he is innocent. It is possible that he may go to jail if he does not defend himself. However, he would bring shame upon me and upon our family by breaking his pledge. I do not want him to be defended." By arguing thus, that brave mother saved her son. Shri Govindji might perhaps have succumbed had it not been for his mother's courage and her blessings. But he chose to go to jail and so kept his pledge. There have not been many such instances in which non-co-operators did not defend themselves though charged with offences which would cast a slur on their good name. Shri Govindji Vasanji merits congratulations. I look upon his example as one which deserves to be followed by others.

No one should ask why, if I believe that Shri Govindji would have been acquitted if he had defended himself, we should refuse to take part in court proceedings and why people should not be free to defend themselves when charged with non-political offences. It is because of such temptations that falsehood, deceit, etc., have so far prospered in the world. No one has asserted that British law-courts never give justice. But is there any Indian who does not know that it is almost impossible to get justice in these courts when the case has any political implications? Tilak Maharaj strove hard to vindicate his reputation. At that time, we did not consider it wrong to defend ourselves in courts; on the contrary, it was the right thing to do. Tilak Maharaj, however, did not succeed. In the Punjab, Lala Harkishan Lal and others poured out money like water in order to pay lawyers; could they save themselves? Again, we know that Lala Lajpat Rai, Chitta Ranjan Das, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and others are completely innocent, and also that they could not have saved themselves even if they had engaged eminent lawyers. It is for this reason that, where the Government is blind in its intoxication of power, it is one's dharma to sacrifice even the few benefits that one may derive from it. Law-courts are one of the strong pillars which sustain a government. In ordinary circumstances, people may even accept the help which this pillar can give, but thoughtful people should not be tempted by such help.

TO "BHATIA" SISTERS AND BROTHERS

A Bhatia[1] gentleman writes as follows:[2]

The *Bhatias* have not spared themselves in serving the nation. Being well-to-do, they have contributed large sums. Some *Bhatia* sisters have been giving their time and serving the country very well.

[1] A business community in Kutch

[2] The letter is not translated here.

However, the rich still seem to find it difficult to adopt khadi. They have no reason for this. Those who are sincerely filled with zeal for service of the country will render whatever service is necessary. There is no other service as valuable as helping the swadeshi movement, that is, plying the spinning-wheel and using khadi. This dharma, though easy to follow and free from all risks, is very important in its results. It will not at all seem unusual if the rich in the country follow the dharma of wearing khadi. One reads in English history that the British people, including the nobles, gave up the use of lace and such other things which were imported from outside and for years carried on with thick, coarse cloth made in England itself. Anyone who realizes that khadi alone can end starvation in the country, can preserve the virtue of her women and can prevent famines—will such a person ever use foreign or mill-made cloth? I hope that *Bhatia* brothers and sisters will give up their indifference and whole-heartedly embrace the dharma of wearing khadi and plying the spinning-wheel.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-2-1922

89. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

BARDOLI,
February 19, 1922

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I see that all of you are terribly cut up over the resolutions[2] of the Working Committee. I sympathize with you, and my heart goes out to Father[3]. I can picture to myself the agony through which he must have passed but I also feel that this letter is unnecessary because I know that the first shock must have been followed by a true understanding of the situation. Let us not be obsessed by Devdas's youthful indiscretions. It is quite possible that the poor boy has been swept off his feet and that he has lost his balance, but the brutal murder of the constables by an infuriated crowd which was in sympathywith non-co-operation cannot be denied. Nor can it be denied that it was a politically-minded crowd. It would have been criminal not to have heeded such a clear warning.

[1] Sent to Jawaharlal through his sister, as he was then in jail; *vide* the following item.

[2] Of February 11 and 12

[3] Pandit Motilal Nehru

I must tell you that this was the last straw. My letter[1] to the Viceroy was not sent without misgivings as its language must make it clear to anyone. I was much disturbed by the Madras doings, but I drowned the warning voice. I received letters both from Hindus and Mohammedans from Calcutta, Allahabad and the Punjab, all these before the Gorakhpur incident, telling me that the wrong was not all on the Government side, that our people were becoming aggressive, defiant and threatening, that they were getting out of hand and were not non-violent in demeanour. Whilst the Ferozepur Jirka incident[2] is discreditable to the Government, we are not altogether without blame. Hakimji complained about Bareilly. I have bitter complaints about Jajjar. In Shahajanpur too there has been a forcible attempt to take possession of the Town Hall. From Kanouj too the Congress Secretary himself telegraphed saying that the volunteer boys had become unruly and were picketing a High School and preventing youngsters under 16 from going to the school. 36,000 volunteers were enlisted in Gorakhpur, not 100 of whom conformed to the Congress pledge. In Calcutta Jamnalalji tells me there is utter disorganisation, the volunteers wearing foreign cloth and certainly not pledged to non-violence. With all this news in my possession and much more from the South, the Chauri Chaura news came like a powerful match to ignite the gunpowder, and there was a blaze. I assure you that if the thing had not been suspended we would have been leading not a non-violent struggle but essentially a violent struggle. It is undoubtedly true that non-violence is spreading like the scent of the otto of roses throughout the length and breadth of the land, but the foetid smell of violence is still powerful, and it would be unwise to ignore or underrate it. The cause will prosper by this retreat. The movement had unconsciously drifted from the right path. We have come back to our moorings, and we can again go straight ahead. You are in as disadvantageous a position as I am advantageously placed for judging events in due proportion.

May I give you my own experience of South Africa? We had all kinds of news brought to us in South Africa in our jails. For two or three days during my first experience I was glad enough to receive tit-bits, but I immediately realized the utter futility of interesting myself in this illegal gratification. I could do nothing, I could send no message profitably, and I simply vexed my soul uselessly. I felt that it was impossible for me to guide the movement from the jail. I therefore simply waited till I could meet those who were outside and

[1] Of February l, 1922

[2] The shooting of December 23, 1921

talk to them freely, and then too I want you to believe me when I tell you that I took only an academic interest because I felt it was not my province to judge anything, and I saw how unerringly right I was. I well remember how the thoughts I had up to the time of my discharge from the jail on every occasion were modified immediately after discharge and after getting first-hand information myself. Somehow or other the jail atmosphere does not allow you to have all the bearings in your mind. I would therefore like you to dismiss the outer world from your view altogether and ignore its existence. I know this is a most difficult task, but if you take up some serious study and some serious manual work you can do it. Above all, whatever you do, don't you be disgusted with the spinning-wheel. You and I might have reason to get disgusted with ourselves for having done many things and having believed many things, but we shall never have the slightest cause for regret that we have pinned our faith to the spinning-wheel or that we have spun so much good yarn per day in the name of the motherland. You have *Song Celestial* with you. I cannot give you the inimitable translation of Edwin Arnold, but this is the rendering of the Sanskrit text. "There is no waste of energy, there is no destruction in this. Even a little of this dharma saves one from many a pitfall." "This dharma" in the original refers to Karma Yoga, and the Karma Yoga of our age is the spinning-wheel. I want a cheering letter from you after the freezing dose you have sent me through Pyarelal.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

A Bunch of Old Letters, PP. 23-5

90. LETTER TO HARI G. GOVIL

BARDOLI,
February, 19,1922

DEAR MR. GOVIL,

I have your letter, I am glad you recognize the truth of non-violence.

We should deal patiently with those who do not understand it. It is a new experiment and we shall have to be extremely patient if we would make headway. Impatience also is a form of violence.

I have no message for the world till the message I am humbly trying to deliver to India is truly delivered and imbibed. If it is successfully delivered in India, I know that my physical presence will now here be necessary to emphasize it, but that it will permeate the

whole world without the shadow of a doubt. But every worker abroad who endeavours to study the movement and interpret it correctly helps it.

We can gain absolutely nothing by exaggeration or distortion of facts.

Just as non-violence required exemplary patience, it also requires exemplary truthfulness and a fine appreciation of one's own limitations.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi and Non-Violent Resistance : The Non-cooperation Movement in India, Gleanings from American Press, pp. 14-5.

91. LETTER TO VIJAYALAKSHMI PANDIT

[BARDOLI ,
February 19, 1922]

MY DEAR SARUP[1],

If you think that the above[2] can give the prisoners in Lucknow any solace, please read it to Jawaharlal when you see him next. Do tell me otherwise how things are shaping there. Some one of you is I hope coming to Delhi. Ranjit sent me one of father's letters to you to read.

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

Pyarelal tells me, letters addressed to you are likely to be delayed; hence this is being sent through Durga.

A Bunch of Old Letters, pp. 23-5

[1] Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit; sister of Jawaharlal Nehru
[2] The preceding item

92. TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Bardoli,
February 20, 1922

DEVDAS GANDHI
CONGRESS COMMITTEE
GORAKHPUR

CERTAINLY COME DELHI IF POSSIBLE.[1]

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 7945

93. LETTER TO CHAIRMAN, A.I.C.C.

BARDOLI,
February 22, 1922

TO
THE CHAIRMAN OF THE WORKING COMMITTEE
OF THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE, DELHI

SIR,

At the meeting of the Working Committee held at Surat on 31st January last, the following resolution was passed:

> The Working Committee records its firm conviction that dissemination of correct news about Indian political situation in foreign countries is absolutely essential[2] and refers to Mahatma Gandhi all the correspondence on the subject of foreign propaganda now with the Working Secretary, with a request that he should prepare a definite scheme in that behalf at an early date so as to enable the next meeting of the Working Committee to consider it.

Having considered the resolution and the papers forwarded to me by the Secretary, I beg to report as follows:

In my opinion it is not only undesirable but it may prove even harmful to establish at the present stage any agency in any foreign country for the dissemination of correct news in such country about the political situation in India, for the following reasons:

[1] Gandhiji was about to leave for Delhi after his five-day fast, to attend A.I.C.C. meeting there to be held on February 24 and 25.

[2] In December 1920 it was decided to suspend foreign propaganda and to wind up the British Congress Committee and its journal *India,* published from London; *vide* "Speech on Foreign Propaganda, Nagpur", 29-12-1920.

First, because it would distract public attention and instead of making the people feel that they have to rely purely on their own strength, it will make them think of the effect of their actions on foreign countries and the support latter can render to the national cause. This does not mean that we do not care for the world's support, but the way to gain that support is to insist upon the correctness of every one of our actions and rely upon the automatic capacity of Truth to spread itself.

Secondly, it is my experience that when an agency is established for any special purpose, independent interest ceases to a certain extent and what is distributed by the agency is previously discounted as coming from interested quarters.

Thirdly, the Congress will not be able to exercise effective check over such agencies, and there is great danger of authoritative distribution of wrong information and wrong ideas about the struggle.

Fourthly, it is not possible at the present moment to send out of India any person of importance for the sole purpose of disseminating news in foreign countries, for such men are too few for the internal work.

I am therefore of opinion that the work of publishing the Congress Bulletin should be better organized, if necessary, by engaging a special editor for the purpose and by sending the Congress Bulletin regularly to the chief news agencies of the world. The editor should be instructed to enter into correspondence with these newspapers or news agencies which may be found to interest themselves in Indian questions.

It is my firm opinion based upon experience gained through the conduct of the journals I have edited in South Africa and here that the more solid the Congress work and the sufferings of the Congress men and women, the greater the publicity will the cause attain without special effort. From the exchanges of letters and correspondence that I receive day by day from all parts of the world in connection with the conduct of *Young India*, I observe that never was so much interest taken in Indian affairs throughout the world as it is today. It follows that the interest will increase in the same proportion as the volume of our sufferings. The very best method of disseminating correct information about the political situation, therefore, is to-make the Congress work purer, better organized and to evoke a greater spirit of suffering. Not only is curiosity thereby intensified, but people become

more eager to understand the inwardness and the exact truth about the situation.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 9-3-1922

94. NOTES

AN EXCELLENT CHOICE

In selecting Sardar Kharak Singh as the successor to Aga Mahomed Safdar as President of the Provincial Congress Committee, the Congress Committee has made an excellent choice. It could not have done better. In honouring Sardar Saheb the Committee has honoured itself. The election of Sardar Kharak Singh is also a delicate compliment paid to the Sikhs for their bravery, sacrifice and patriotism. Nowadays the office of President of a Congress Committee, a Khilafat Committee or a Gurdwara Committee is no sinecure. Prosecution for some offence or another under the ordinary or extraordinary laws imposed by the Government upon the people of India almost follows as a matter of course in many provinces. With the exception of a few provinces, some office bearers of the various Committees have contributed their quota to His Majesty's hotels. I congratulate Sardar Kharak Singh, therefore, upon his courage in taking up the reins of office at this stormy period of the nation's career.

SATISFACTORY FOR BOTH PARTIES

The imprisonment of leaders seems to satisfy both the Government and the public. It is obvious that they satisfy the Government, otherwise they would not have performed the thankless task of imprisoning leaders. They believe that thereby they will be able to suppress the non-co-operation movement. It is equally obvious that the people are satisfied with these imprisonments because the movement, wherever they take place, is making headway. The latest instance comes from Nellore. Although this place was doing steady work it was not pulsating with vitality as it must be doing now. An esteemed worker writes:[1]

> . . . here too the authorities have been co-operating with the people to push up our movement. Recently, they have rendered us a distinct service by awarding

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

a year's rigorous imprisonment to the President, Secretary and three other members of the District Congress Committee. The Secretary is Mr. Ram Reddy, when you last came to Nellore. He belongs to the most influential family of the Reddy community and his prosecution has carried our gospel to far-off nooks and corners which would have otherwise been impenetrable ....

Mr. Venkatappaya wrote to me only the other day fearing that the Government would not go on with Mr. Reddy's prosecution because he was a most influential leader in his district. He was afraid because the dropping of the prosecution might have damped the rising enthusiasm of the people. The Government have, however, dispelled Mr. Venkatappaya's fears, and Mr, Reddy's imprisonment seems to have galvanized Nellore into activity it has never seen before.

ONLY "SIX MONTHS SIMPLE" FOR THE PRESIDENT

If Begum Abul Kalam Azad and the Maulana himself complain about the inadequacy of the sentence pronounced upon the Maulana Saheb, what must be the feeling of the President[1] of the Congress and his devoted partner on having heard that he together with Mr. Sasmal was to have only 6 months' simple imprisonment? Why on earth the trial should have been dragged and judgment postponed if such an untheatrical sentence was to be pronounced, only the Government can tell. The gossip that was sent to me along the rails was that the Government were seeking a suitable opportunity for discharging both the Maulana and the Deshbandhu. The latest gossip which is supposed to be authentic, I dare not disclose. Nor is it of importance for the reader to know. We must take, not even excluding the President, our lot as it comes to us. I am receiving biting letters from correspondents accusing me of simplicity, of hard-heartedness, of faintheartedness and all such kindred weaknesses. Some correspondents tell me that I have sold the cause of the prisoners. Others tell me I have thrown all my non-co-operation views to the winds and I have been faithless to the President of the Congress. Fortunately, many years of service have given me a fairly tough hide and these shafts do not pierce it, but I do assure all these impatient critics that not a particle of the principle of non-co-operation has been surrendered by the resolutions. On the contrary, refusal to suspend mass civil disobedience in the face of grave warning from Nature would have meant a complete surrender of the fundamental principle of non-co-operation. The discharge of prisoners I purposely brought to the surface when it became a point of national honour, because with the change of issue from the immediate attainment of the triple goal to the immediate attainment of

[1] C. R. Das, the President-elect

the three-fold freedom the demand for the discharge of prisoners became a natural consequence. But Chauri Chaura has raised another immediate issue, viz., terrible penance and a fierce process of purification, and this penitential purification requires the sacrifice of the imprisoned workers and the temporary sacrifice of many of our activities which have revivified the nation. But such things happen in all wars, much more frequently in spiritual warfare such as ours is claimed to be. I call it spiritual in the sense that we have resolutely declined to make use of physical force for the attainment of our end. We were in danger of being drifted away from our moorings, and it was necessary for us to return, but the return is merely meant to give us greater purity, greater perception and therefore greater strength, and if non-co-operators have to become seasoned soldiers for the nation's battle, they will doubtless understand the value of waiting and preparing. He who waits for preparation or otherwise, advances the cause as much as the warrior who stands three feet deep in the trenches. All our sufferings will have been lost upon us if we do not realize these elements of the science of war, whether it is spiritual or physical.

MALABAR RECONSTRUCTION

Mr. Madhava Rao and others of the Servants of India Society and the Secretaries of the Young Men's Christian Association have jointly issued a series of questions regarding reconstruction in Malabar. The questions have been elaborately framed and cover all the departments—economic, industrial, educational, civic and general. I propose to deal with only one. In my opinion it solves all the other questions. It will be found a most difficult task to organize loans or the other things in connection with the resettlement of the afflicted people of Malabar. If, however, the people in want are supplied with spinning-wheels, most of the questions will be automatically solved. The thing can be done with the least capital possible, and it would be a permanent addition to the industries of Malabar wood, which is so much required for the spinning-wheels, is a matter of no consequence in Malabar, and many by-industries will receive strength and encouragement without any extra effort. I would, therefore, heartily commend to the organizers of the reconstruction scheme this one single proposition as the central truth round which all the other propositions should be made to revolve. They will then find that any scheme so constructed will lead to economy, efficiency and the least waste.

IDEAL FATHER AND SON

Some weeks ago, I dealt with the imprisonment of the three Malaviyas and in doing so showed with what humility and with what

respect for his revered father, Govind Malaviya, when he simply could not resist the voice of conscience, courted imprisonment in spite of Panditji's wish to the contrary.[1] The public will be pleased to have the following translation of the letter Panditji wrote to Govind Malaviya who has sent a copy to me. The original is of course in Hindi.

With blessings to Govind. May you live long.

I have received your letter. I am sorry I could not acknowledge it earlier because of my distractions. I am not displeased with you. Please be quite at ease on this score. I certainly did not approve of the picketing of the Modern High School. A school is not like an abode of sin or a case distributing poison such that it would be justifiable to picket it so as to prevent children from going there, but both you and Krishna were quite right in going to the public meeting and giving to the audience the message of the Congress. The policy adopted by the Government is altogether improper. I am hoping that it will be reversed. Do keep yourself perfectly happy. Mr. Gandhi sent me the letter you addressed to him about your imprisonment.

The foregoing is dated the 13th January.

The following was sent by Panditji to Krishna Kant Malaviya bearing the same date:

I am sorry I have been so busy that I could not write to you or to Govind these many days. I am writing now at 11 p.m.

You were perfectly right in addressing the meeting. Do not allow your mind to be oppressed with any idea that I disapproved your having done so. I said at the All-India Congress Committee (or rather at the Subjects Committee) meeting at Ahmedabad that if the Government would not withdraw the notification declaring Congress volunteers "unlawful associations", such volunteers would be justified in disregarding the notification and in going to jail for it.

The Conference which I have convened along with others will take place to-morrow. The enclosed letter will show you the object of the Conference. Mr. Gandhi is here and so are Sir Sankaran Nair, Sir Visveswarayya and many others. We have had many hours of preliminary discussion today. I expect some good will come out of it.

Keep yourself perfectly cheerful. Do not let any of your fellow sufferers be under the impression that I had any hand in the alteration of your sentences from rigorous into simple imprisonment for six months. Idid not complain to anyone about your sentences, though I did feel pained at the brutality of the sentences.

I intended to see you both in the jail on my return to Allahabad. But now that you have been removed to Agra, I may not be able to see you for some

[1] *Vide* "Notes" 12-1-1922, under the sub-title "The Malaviyas".

time. However, that is of little consequence. There is very heavy work before me during the next few months which will gratify your heart. More hereafter.

In sending me a copy of the letter Govind remarks that the circular letter convening the Conference was not delivered to Krishna Kant. He also asked me not to publish the two letters without Panditji's permission. As both the letters I considered to be of public interest, I felt that they should be printed, and having obtained the necessary permission I have shared them with the public. To me both are precious letters. They are an illustration of what a family life should be. There is mutual toleration between the different members of the same family and perfect independence retained by and given to the younger ones. What is more, the letters reveal the nobility of Panditji's character. If he is not in jail today it is not because he is afraid of it but because he has not yet seen his way clear to it. Who that is in intimate touch with him does not know that he is borne down with anxiety and torn asunder by an eternal conflict of duty? I have often felt that if he was carried away to prison it would be a positive deliverance for him from constant anxiety and worries attendant upon a public life such as his.

I have reproduced the letters in order to plead for general toleration on the part of non-co-operators. I want the readers to share with me the belief that though Panditji has a record of public service unequalled by any living Indian, there are men among the Independents and the Moderates who find themselves estranged against us, not because they are weak but from a stern sense of duty. If we would only cultivate the necessary spirit of humility, charity and toleration towards our opponents and will not impute unworthy motives, I know that we would win many over to our side who are today ranged against us because of our intoleration. When a majority becomes intolerant it is feared, distrusted and in the end detested, and very-properly so. If non-co-operators have, as I believe they have, the vast masses with them, surely it behoves them to be tolerant, kind and respectful towards the minority even whilst they retain their own view-point as stubbornly as ever. Intoleration is weakness and justifies the charge often brought against us that the movement, although it is not intended to, does engender hatred. I hope the two letters I have reproduced will put non-co-operators on their guard.

The Gorakhpur tragedy was nothing but a forcible illustration of intoleration. We often forget that one of our duties consists in converting even the police and the soldiery to our views. We will never do so by terrorism. The mob inhumanity to the police has added to

the corruption that is rampant amongst them and has now called forth the reprisals which shock us. Let us bear in mind the fact that a corrupt government and a corrupt police presuppose the existence of corruption among the people who submit to government and police corruption. After all, there is considerable truth in the statement that a people deserve the Government that they have. It does not need a religious belief in the doctrine of non-violence to make us see that we have to win the Police and the Military, largely consisting of our own countrymen, over to our side by kindness, toleration and even submission to their brutality. Surely, in a majority of cases they know not what they are doing.

ESSENCE OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

A friend, a Congress official, writes from Simla:[1]

> . . . certain members, belonging to different Congress organizations, have found out certain novel methods of disobeying law by staging certain plays which have been proscribed by the Government, for instance *Zakhm-i-Punjab* which was staged sometime ago in Multan and very recently in Simla, resulting in arrests in both the cases. Now may I ask your opinion about this form of disobedience practised before the date fixed in the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee, viz., 15th January 1922? Further, were the actors in these plays justified in informing the Government in a spirit of defiance beforehand that they were going to stage a proscribed play and by such action inviting arrests?
>
> Furthermore, I will draw your attention to the stormy literature which is issuing forth from Delhi and other places and is being recited by small boys and by certain irresponsible volunteers containing matter which is obviously inconsistent with the principle of non-violent non-co-operation. May I ask if this kind of propaganda instead of proving helpful will not bring about mischievous results?

The staging of the play was certainly not justified if it was done before the l5th January. It was also not justified if it was done without the consent of the Provincial Congress Committee. Every form of civil disobedience was subject to the previous sanction of the local Congress Committee. The staging of the play was also unjustified if the play itself was calculated needlessly to excite passions and to induce hatred. Assuming that all the conditions I have named were fulfilled, the managers were quite right in giving previous information to the Government in a dignified manner, because the essence of civil disobedience is that it is public and made specially known to those interested in arresting.

As to the "stormy literatue", it is a sad thing that pamphlets

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

such as the writer alludes to are being published and so largely patronized. The writer has mentioned two such booklets. I am, however, not printing the names. Some other correspondent sends me one of the booklets also for my edification and advice. The title as well as the contents are objectionable and breathe nothing but hatred. It is our duty to bring every wrong to public notice, but there are ways and ways of doing the thing. No point is gained by putting things offensively. The offence contain in the fact itself. To embellish such facts is to detract from the demerit, and at the present moment when people are under the pledge of non-violence, publication of such literature is highly reprehensible. It spreads anger and makes the task of offering civil disobedience more and more difficult.

I HAVE LOST ALL CREDIT

A friend from Lahore without giving his name sends me the following thundering note:[1]

> On Tuesday the 11th I read the *Tribune* and the resolutions therein, passed at the emergency meeting of the All-lndia Congress Working Committee. . . .
>
> The people are of this opinion that you have turned your face and become fickle-minded. They will co-operate with the Government without any hesitation and join the ceremony Of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. . . .
>
> Some merchants are under the impression that you have removed all the restrictions from all liquor shops and *videshi* cloth.
>
> Truly speaking, each and every one in Lahore city is holding meetings . . . and . . . are condemning the action of the All-India Congress Committee.
>
> I now for my sake ask you these questions:
>
> 1. Will you now give up the lead of this movement ? If so, why ?
>
> 2. Will you be good enough to let me know why you have given such instructions to all Provincial Congress Committees? Have you given an opportunity to Pandit Malaviya for a round table conference for a settlement or has Pandit Malaviya agreed to embrace your movement in case the Government has not turned true to its words ?
>
> 3. Grant a compromise is arranged and the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs are redressed and In the case of swaraj the Government may only extend the reforms, will you be satisfied with that or continue your activities till you have got the full dominion status?
>
> 4. Suppose no decision is arrived at. Will Pandit Malaviya and all others who are connected with this conference come to your side or will their fate remain in the balance just as now?

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

5. In case no decision is arrived at, will you give up the idea of civil disobedience, if there is danger of violence?

6. Is your intention now to disband the present Volunteer Corps and enlist those who know spinning and wear hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar?

7. Suppose violence has made its appearance when you have started your mass civil disobedience, what will you do at that time? Will you stop your activities at the very moment?

There is much more criticism in this letter than I have reproduced. The writer tells me that the people are so disgusted that they now threaten to become co-operators and are of opinion that I have sold Lala Lajpat Rai, Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das, Pandit Motilal Nehru, the Ali Brothers and others and tells me that if I give up the leadership there are thousands who will leave this world by committing suicide. I may assure the citizens of Lahore in particular and the Punjabis in general that I do not believe what is said of them. I used to receive such letters even during the Martial Law days because of the suspension of civil disobedience, but I discounted all the news and on my reaching the Punjab in October[1], I found that I was right in my analysis of the Punjab mind and I discovered that there was no one to challenge the propriety of my act. I feel still more confident of the correctness of the decision of the Working Committee, but if it is found that the country repudiates my action I shall not mind it. I can but do my duty. A leader is useless when he acts against the promptings of his own conscience, surrounded as he must be by people holding all kinds of views. He will drift like an anchorless ship if he has not the inner voice to hold him firm and guide him. Above all, I can easily put up with the denial of the world, but any denial by me of my God is unthinkable, and if I did not give at this critical period of the struggle the advice that I have, I would be denying both God and Truth. The telegrams and letters I am receiving from all parts of the country thanking me for my decision—telegrams from both non-co-operators and co-operators—confirm my belief that the country appreciates the decision and that the Lahore writer has given undue prominence to some heated bazaar talk which was bound to take place after the Bardoli decision which all of a sudden disturbed all previous calculations. I can understand the effect of the first shock, but I am also sure that when the people begin to analyse the implications of non-violence, they will come to no other conclusion than that of the Working Committee.

And now for the questions of the correspondent:

l. I am not likely to give up the lead of the movement unless I

[1] 1919

have a clear indication that the people want me to. One method of giving that indication is an adverse vote of the Working Committee or the All-India Congress Committee.

2. I assure the public that Pandit Malaviyaji had absolutely no hand in shaping my decision. I have often yielded to Panditji, and it is always a pleasure for me to yield to him whenever I can and always painful to differ from one who has an unrivalled record of public service and who is sacrifice personified. But so far as the decision of suspension is concerned, I arrived at it on my reading the detailed report of the Chauri Chaura tragedy in the *Chronicle.* It was in Bardoli that telegrams were sent convening the Working Committee meeting and it was in Bardoli that I sent a letter[1] to the members of the Working Committee advising them of my desire to suspend civil disobedience. I went thereafter to Bombay at the instance of Panditji who, together with the other friends of the Malaviya Conference, undoubtedly wished to plead with me for a suspension and who were agreeably surprised when I told them that so far as I was concerned my mind was made up, but that I had kept it open so that I could discuss the point thoroughly with the members of the Working Committee. The suspension has no reference to a round table conference or to any settlement. In my opinion, a round table conference is bound to prove fruitless. It requires a much stronger Viceroy than Lord Reading has proved to be to perceive the situation in the country and then to describe it correctly. I certainly feel that Pandit Malaviyaji has already come into the movement. It is not possible for him to keep away from the Congress or from danger, but the Bardoli decision was arrived at purely on its merits and I could not have been shaken from the original purpose had I not been unnerved by the Chauri Chaura tragedy which was the last straw.

3. Nothing short of a full Dominion status is likely to satisfy me personally and nothing short of complete severance will satisfyme if the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs remain unredressed, but the exact form does not depend upon me. I have no clear-cut scheme. It has to be evolved by the people's representatives.

4. At the present moment there is no question of a settlement. Therefore, the question as to what Panditji and all others will do is premature if not irrelevant. But assuming that Panditji holds any conference and that its resolutions are ignored by the Government, Panditji and others will act as all self-respecting men do in such circumstances.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Members of Working Committee", 8-2-1922.

5. I can never give up the *idea* of civil disobedience, no matter what danger there is of violence, but I shall certainly give up the idea of *starting* mass civil disobedience so long as there is a certain danger of violence. Individual civil disobedience stands on a different footing.

6. There is no question of disbanding any Volunteer Corps, but the names of those who do not conform to the Congress pledge have certainly to be removed from the list if we are to be honest.

7. If we have understood the essential parts of non-violence, we can but come to one conclusion that any erruption of widespread violence—and I call the Chauri Chaura tragedy widespread for the purpose—automatically stops mass civil-disobedience. That many other parts of the country have nobly responded to the spirit of non-violence is good, but it is not good enough to continue mass civil disobedience even as a most *peaceful* meeting is disturbed if one man obstructs or commits violence. Mass civil disobedience for becoming successful requires a non-violent environment. The reason for restricting it to one single small area is to prevent violence elsewhere. It, therefore, means that mass civil disobedience in a particular area is possible when the other areas passively co-operate by remaining non-violent.

MORE WRITTEN NEWSPAPERS

The Sikh friends have come out with the *Azad Akali* both in Gurumukhi and in Urdu. Their effort is more readable and more artistic even than the Gauhati paper which I praised only the other day. Every sheet is so clear. Then there is the *Assam Congress Bulletin*, a weekly just started at Tezpur. This is purely in English. The print is not so clear as in the *Azad Akali*. I do not get the time to go through all these newspapers, but I hope that the editors of these written newspapers take special care in the selection of news, that they do not put in a single fact which cannot be fully substantiated and that they do not indulge in criticism that is calculated to excite hatred, seeing that such newspapers cannot be controlled by any Government in the world, so long as there are people ready and brave enough to write them. They must be specially restrained in the choice of language. It would be terrible if written newspapers were to indulge in undisciplined language. So long as the country is under the spell of non-violence, every word uttered or written in anger or malice retards our progress.

BAN ON KHADDAR CAPS

It was a pleasure to me to receive the following from Maulvi Zafarulmulk Alavi of Lucknow who is at present undergoing

imprisonment in the Fatehgarh Jail. The reader may not even remember that he was among the earliest victims. His arrest had created a sensation as it was unexpected. A man of literary tastes, he was living in practical retirement. He was fearless and truthful in his writings. Hence his arrest. From his letter the reader will see with what scrupulous care he is discharging himself in the jail. Like so many other non-co-operation prisoners, he is helping the authorities in preserving jail discipline. Let the letter[1] speak for itself:

> I have purposely refrained from writing to you during the last 15 months that I spent here, as I was thoroughly satisfied with my lot...
>
> There have, however, arisen some points in connection with the jail life of non-co-operators which I should like to bring to your kind notice . . .
>
> The other point is rather serious. Two non-co-operators who were lately made simple prisoners and are therefore allowed to put on their own clothes, have been prohibited from wearing the Gandhi cap. . . .
>
> I spoke to the officer concerned and was assured that personally he was not particular about it. In fact he had merely carried out the wishes of the District Magistrate. . . .
>
> According to the jail regulations, all simple prisoners wear their own clothing . . . Thus it is clear that this prohibition is only an innovation of very recent date and is simply obnoxious and humiliating. . .
>
> The Inspector General of U.P. Jails is about to visit this jail very shortly and the matter will be referred to him who is likely to settle it satisfactorily, if his discretion has not already been tied by an order of the local Government. In that case, of course, it will be our duty to disobey the order at all costs.

The difficulty, however, about khaddar caps is one of principle on which there can be no surrender. The simple imprisonment prisoners have the right to wear their own dress. It is thereforean insult to them to deprive them of their caps. I hope that the Inspector General has solved the difficulty as expected by the Maulvi Saheb.

It is no pleasure to have to fight the Government in the jails. They might be treated as neutral ground where the animosities may be buried. Death closes many a controversy. Imprisonment is civil death. Is it not possible to keep the political animosities outside the prison walls? But I know it is too much to expect this Government, which lives on pretensions of decency, to observe the laws of the game even behind the iron bars. Liberty will be all the dearer for the price that is being exacted of us.

As I write these bitter lines, the voice within me asks whether I

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

am doing justice to the Government! Do I not know that the prisoners are having a royal time of it in the Agra Jail? But the answer swiftly comes—all jails are not Agra Jails. Whatever is given is extorted. Whatever can possibly be denied is withheld. I hear Pandit Motilalji saying to me: "What is my comfort worth if my next-door neighbour, who does not happen to be a well-known barrister, does not get the creature comforts that I get!"

SIND PRISONERS

Mr. Virumal Begraj who is a great social reformer and the soul of Sukkur writes while being taken from Sind to an unknown destination :[1]

It is the greatest revelation that workers are being replaced as fast as they are arrested. It is the surest sign of the vitality of the movement.

DR. KICHLEW—NO. 776

Dr. Kichlew's letter[2] reproduced elsewhere will be read with mingled satisfaction. We can envy his gain in weight, his buoyancy, but we cannot congratulate the Bombay Government on the treatment of political prisoners.

Dr. Kichlew rightly calls attention to the fact that when in the Punjab he was charged with a more serious offence, he had decent treatment, whereas now when the charge is in reality nothing, he and his fellow-prisoners are treated as common felons. But the interest of the correspondence will centre in Col. Wedgwood's[3] frank letterwhich Dr. Kichlew has sent for publication. "Gandhi-ism" referred to by Col. Wedgwood is nothing but a return to truth and simplicity. Truth must always be simple. And nothing that is simple and truthful admits of violence. "Gandhi-ism" is a revival of the old maxims which are common both to the East and the West. "Live and let live" is what non-co-operation stands for. The modern motto is hideous exclusiveness based upon violence. Equality and Fraternity are mere lip-phrases and mutual intercourse is not based on mutual love but is on mutual repulsion and consequent preparedness to do violence. It is, however, too early yet to talk of "Gandhi-ism". India has to stand the test and vindicate the supremacy of non-violence over violence before

[1] The letter, not reproduced here, mentioned that, while the writer and others had been sentenced to imprisonment, their "young friends" were carrying on all national activities.

[2] Not reproduced here

[3] A British Labour leader and Member of Parliament who visited India in December 1920 and attended the Nagpur Session of the Congress.

the ideal can be approximated.

A CORRECTION

In *Young India* of 2nd February I reproduced a letter from Pandit Arjunlal Sethi's son regarding Pandit Sethi's treatment in the jail.[1] I have now learnt that the son was misinformed and that no brandy or eggs were administered to Arjunlalji. He is reported also to be properly fed and clothed. Whilst correspondents have generally sent most accurate accounts, too much care can never be exercised in transmitting news. Correspondents should always err on the side of under-statement. Exaggeration not only discredits us but it produces a contrary effect on the opponent, whereas accuracy of statement brings home the guilt to the person accused, whether he confesses it or not. I have invariably found that a truthful exposure of wrong has always brought about some mitigation. I have found also that exaggeration has generally increased its intensity. Truth softens even an untruthful person. Untruth can only harden him, for he is a stranger to truth.

RATHER FREE THAN SOBER

Just as I am writing these notes, my assistant puts into my hand a cutting from the *Leader* containing the text of Pandit Gopinath Kunzru's letter describing in the calmest manner possible what befell him and his friend when they were purchasing in Agra brandy from a liquor shop for outward application for a patient. The volunteers would not allow them to take the brandy in spite of all the assurances of *bona fides* given by Pandit Kunzru. This is not only not non-violence but is unadulterated violence. Peaceful picketing does not mean that so long as no physical violence is used, any kind of pressure could be exercised. The volunteers, it they had remained true to their pledge, would have allowed safer passage to Pandit Gopinath and his friend. The picketers, duty is merely to warn drinkers against the vice of drink, not molest them or otherwise prevent them, if they will not listen. If we may force temperance upon the people believing it to be good for them, the English administrators and their Indian supporters are certainly performing an analogous operation. They too force the present system on us well believing that it is good for us. If the swaraj volunteers may, therefore, take such liberties as they have undoubtedly taken in respect of Pandit Gopinath

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 2-2-1922, under the sub-title "Interference with Religious Liberty".

Kunzru, they are seeking not to change the *system* but to change masters. I would rather have India to be free than sober if freedom has to be sold to buy sobriety.

FOREIGN CLOTH

On the one hand instances such as the foregoing make one cautious about even liquor picketing. On the other, complaints have reached from two places regarding the stopping of the picketing of foreign cloth shops by the Working Committee. All suspensions are to depend upon the decision of the All-India Congress Committee. But whilst one wishes the total prohibition of the use of foreign cloth, if the picketing is at all forcible, I for one cannot possibly vote for it. The clearest issue before the country is whether we are to have non-violence in thought, word and deed or whether we are to have mixed activity. But I need not speculate further, because the fate will be decided by the time these notes reach the subscribers.

FROM FAR OFF SILCHAR

Here is another letter[1] from Babu Tarun Ram Phooken from Silchar Jail which he this time calls Sadhana Ashram.

Young India, 23-2-1922

95. A GREAT STATEMENT

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's statement to the Court has been just received by me. It covers thirty-three closely-typed foolscap sheets. But it is worth reading. The original is naturally in the Maulana's polished Urdu. The English translation is not bad, but one could wish it was-possible to get a better translation. The statement has much literary beauty. It is elaborate and eloquent. It is bold and uncompromising but subdued. A sarcastic vein runs through the whole of it. It is an eloquent thesis giving the Maulana's views on the Khilafat and nationalism. I hope that it will be possible to procure printed copies of the statement. I would advise the Maulana's secretary to have the statement carefully revised.

As I laid down the statement I felt more clearly than ever the necessity of boycott of law-courts. But for the boycott, we could never

[1] Not reproduced here. Phooken had expressed his growing conviction that unless people were prepared to suffer without the desire for retaliation, they would fail in their fight.

have evolved the fearless strength that we have. Instead of the noble declarations of the President, Lalaji, Panditji, we would have had pettifogging lingual quibbles which cannot raise a nation. Without the boycott we could never have had the Maulana's statement which in itself constitutes good political education.

What a change between 1919 and 1922—nervous fear of sentences and all kinds of defences in 1919; utter disregard of sentences and no defence in 1922! In 1919 the nation could have done no otherwise; in 1922 it could have done no less without deserving execration of the world. The effect of the boycott is not to be measured by the number of suspensions of practice. The true measure is to be found in the departure of the halo that only two years ago surrounded the courts of law. They still remain the haunts of money-changers and speculators. They are no longer repositories of national or even individual liberty. That is to be found in the stout hearts that the nation is fast developing.

The Maulana's statement is hardly meant for, though addressed to, the Court. It is meant for the public. It is really an oration deserving penal servitude for life. Well might the Maulana laconically exclaim after his one year's rigorous imprisonment: "This falls far short of what I was waiting for."

The following extracts[1] which I have culled from the statement will enable the reader to form his own conclusions.

Young India, 23-2-1922

96. MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD

Begum Abul Kalam Azad sends me the following telegraphic message[2] by letter post:

> Judgment has been delivered today in the case against my husband, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. He has been sentenced to only one year's rigorous imprisonment. This is astoundingly less than what I was waiting for. . . . I make bold to inform you that I offer my humble service to fill up the gap caused by his absence in the rank of national workers in Bengal. All those activities which he performed will still continue to be carried on normally. . . . Before this, during his last four years' internment, I have gone through a first test, and I am confident that in this my second trial, I will with God's grace

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] Only excerpts reproduced here

come off triumphant. . . . From today I will discharge all the duties connected with the Bengal Provincial Khilafat Committees with the assistance of my brother. My husband has asked me to convey to you his loving and reverent greetings and the Following message: "At the present juncture both the sides— the Government and the country—are wholly unprepared for any compromise. The only duty before us is to prepare ourselves. Bengal will, in the next stage, also retain the lead which it has established today. Kindly add the name of Bengal to that of Bardoli Taluka. And if any time comes for a settlement, do please not give to our release the importance which is unfortunately being attached to it today. Have the terms of settlement fixed with the single end in view of our national aspirations, unconcerned with the question of our release."

I have not yet received the telegram although the letter of advice tells me that it was sent both to Ahmedabad and Bardoli. I am able to give the telegram to the public only because the Secretary of the Bengal Provincial Khilafat Committee has very kindly sent me a copy by letter post at the instance of the Begum Saheba. It is a matter of no small comfort that ladies occupying the highest station in life, are coming forward one after another to step into the breach created by the withdrawal of male national workers. I tender my congratulations to Begum Abul Kalam Azad for her having offered to take her share in the public work. The readers will take to heart the message of. the Maulana. It is perfectly true that neither the Government nor the country is today prepared for any compromise. The Government will not be till we have suffered long and sufferedmore. Bengal has certainly led in the direction. Bardoli has yet done little. Twice has it been baulked of its privilege by cruel Nature, but it is a matter of no consequence whether it is Bengal or Bardoli which leads, so long as we get rid of a system which, as is daily becoming more and more clear, is based upon terrorism. In the present mood of the country there is little danger of the vital interests being sacrificed, as the Maulana fears, to the momentary pleasure of securing the release of How prisoners.

Young India, 23-2-1922

97. SHAKING THE MANES [1]

How can there be any compromise whilst the British Lion continues to shake his gory claws in our faces? Lord Birkenhead[2]

[1] This is one of the articles for which Gandhiji was tried and sentenced in March 1922.

[2] 1872-1930; British lawyer, politician and scholar; Lord Chancellor and later, Secretary of State for India

reminds us that Britain has lost none of her hard fibre. Mr. Montagu tells us in the plainest language that the British are the most determined nation in the world, who will brook no interference with their purpose. Let me quote the exact words telegraphed by Reuter:

> If the existence of our Empire were challenged, the discharge of responsibilities of the British Government to India prevented and demands were made in the very mistaken belief that we contemplated retreat from India—then India would not challenge with success the most determined people in the world who would once again answer the challenge with all the vigour and determination at its command.

Both Lord Birkenhead and Mr. Montagu little know that India is prepared for all "the hard fibre" that can be transported across the seas and that her challenge was issued in the September of 1920 at Calcutta[1] that India would be satisfied with nothing less than swaraj and full redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs. This does involve the existence of the "Empire", and if the present custodians of the British Empire are not satisfied with its quiet transformation into a true Commonwealth of free nations, each with equal rights and each having the power to secede at will from an honourable and friendly partnership, all the determination and vigour of "themost determined people in the world" and the "hard fibre" will have to be spent in India in a vain effort to crush the spirit that has risen and that will neither bend nor break. It is true that we have no "hard fibre". The rice-eating, puny millions of India seem to have resolved upon achieving their own destiny without any further tutelage and without arms. In the Lokamanya's language it is their "birthright", and they will have it in spite of the "hard fibre" and in spite of the vigour and determination with which it may be administered. India cannot and will not answer this insolence with insolence, but if she remains true to her pledge, her prayer to God to be delivered from such a scourge will certainly not go in vain. No empire intoxicated with the red wine of power and plunder of weaker races has yet lived long in this world, and this "British Empire", which is based upon organized exploitation of physically weaker races of the earth and upon a continuous exhibition of brute force, cannot live if there is a just God ruling the universe. Little do these so-called representatives of the British nation realize that India has already given many of her best men to be dealt with by the British "hard

[1] In the Special Session of the Congress

fibre". Had Chauri Chaura not interrupted the even course of the national sacrifice, there would have been still greater and more delectable offerings placed before the Lion, but God had willed it otherwise. There is nothing, however, to prevent all those representatives in Downing Street and Whitehall from doing their worst. I am aware that I have written strongly about the insolent threat that has come from across the seas, but it is high time that the British people were made to realize that the fight that was commenced in 1920 is a fight to the finish, whether it lasts one month or one year or many months or many years and whether the representatives of Britain re-enact all the indescribable orgies of the Mutiny days with redoubled force or whether they do not. I shall only hope and pray that God will give India sufficient humility and sufficient strength to remain non-violent to the end. Submission to the insolent challenges that are cabled out on due occasions is now an utter impossibility.

Young India, 23-2-1922

98. MILL CLOTH

If hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar, whether cotton, wool or silk is to be the order of the day, what is the place of mill cloth in the national economy, is the question often asked. If millions of villagers could receive, understand and take up the message of the spinning-wheel today, I know that there is no room for mill cloth whether foreign or Indian in our domestic economy and that the nation will be all the better for its entire disappearance.

This statement has nothing to do with machinery or with the propaganda for boycott of foreign cloth. It is purely and simply a question of the economic condition of the Indian masses.

But unless Providence comes to the rescue and miraculously and immediately drives the masses to the spinning-wheel as to a haven of refuge, the Indian mills must continue to supplement the khaddar manufacture for a few years to come at any rate. It is devoutly to be wished that a successful appeal could be made to great mill-owners to regard the mill industry as a national trust and that they should realize its proper place. The mill-owners cannot wish to make money at the expense of the masses. They should on the contrary model their business in keeping with the national requirements and wipe out the reproach that was justly levelled against them during the Bengal

Partition agitation[1]. Even now complaints continue to come from Calcutta and elsewhere that Indian mills are charging for their dhotis more than Manchester although their dhotis are inferior to the Manchester. If the information is correct it is highly unpatriotic and such a policy of grab is likely to damage both the cause and the country. At the moment when the country is going through the travail of a new birth, surely it is wicked to charge inordinate prices and thus not merely to stand aloof from the popular movement but actually to be callously indifferent to it.

The mill-owners might also, if they will take a larger view of the situation, understand, appreciate and foster the khaddar movement and study the wants of the people and suit their manufactures to the new needs of the country.

But whether they do so or not, the country's march to freedom cannot be made to depend upon any corporation or groups of men. This is a mass manifestation. The masses are moving rapidly towardsdeliverance and they must move whether with the aid of the organized capital or without. This must therefore be a movement independent of capital and yet not antagonistic to it. Only if capital came to the aid of the masses, it would redound to the credit of the capitalists and hasten the advent of the happy day.

Nor was it otherwise before. India's history is not one of strained relations between capital and labour. The conception of four divisions is as religious as it is economic and political. And the condition has not been affected 'for the worse by the admixture of Islamic culture which is essentially religious and therefore beneficial to the poor. Islam seems to forbid the hoarding of capital as it literally forbids usury.

And even at the present moment it is not possible to say that capital is standing out. It was the modest capitalist who subscribed so liberally to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. But it has to be admitted with pain that the bulk of the mill-owners unfortunately stood out. Manufacture of piece-goods is the largest industry in the country. It is time for it to make its choice. Will it . . . [2] or will it drift?

Young India, 23-2-1922

[1] In 1905

[2] Some words are missing here in the source.

99. NO END TO MY SORROWS

The Manager of the *Lokamanya* has forwarded to me the following interview between the representative of that paper and M. Paul Richard. He asks me to publish it and to offer my remarks upon it. I do so not without great hesitation and reluctance, but often a public worker has no choice. He has to overcome reluctance as also hesitation. It was sorrowful for me to have to correct what was an honest but gross misrepresentation of my views about Shantiniketan.[1] There are some things which one holds sacred and which one does not care to discuss in public. The interview that I am now asked to publish adds to my many sorrows. Here is it:

> QUESTION: After the last postponement of civil disobedience at Bardoli, the number is increasing among the non-co-operationists who do not under stand the mind of the Mahatma. What do you think about it?
>
> ANSWER : Everything is easy to understand in the attitude of Mahatma Gandhi if one remembers that his true aim is not what people generally think, but what he has expressed to me a few days ago, saying, "I do not work for freedom of India, I work for non-violence in the world and that is the difference between me and Mr. Tilak. Mr. Tilak was telling me, 'I would sacrifice even truth for freedom of my country' but I am ready to sacrifice even freedom for the sake of truth." In the light of these words you can understand the reason of the actual postponement of national programme, until the spirit of violence has been shaken everywhere in India; that means probably until the end of the world !
>
> The mind of Mahatmaji can be expressed in a word "Non-violence at any cost"; just as the mind of Mrs. Besant and of the Moderate party can be expressed by the motto "Law and Order at any cost"; and such is also the will of the Government. But the will of the national soul behind and above all is "At any cost a new Law and a new Order".
>
> This will of the new spirit in India, Asia and all over the World is the only one which by any way is sure to triumph.

I had a rare time with M. Paul Richard. We had many happy hours together. I could see at once that our views of life were fundamentally different in some respects, but that did not matter in the slightest degree to me. We met each other as distant acquaintances. We parted as the best of friends and though it is now my lot to

[1] *Vide* "Notes". 9-2-1922, under the sub-title, "Too Sacred for Publication".

criticize what M. Paul Richard has said, my regard for his learning, for his humanity and his philosophy remains undiminished. But I cannot help expressing my deep regret that he should have related what was sacred conversation between him and me and that in an attenuated form. He makes me cut a sorry figure in that interview. It is not possible to deny the substance of it, and yet torn from its context and put in the language of M. Paul Richard it makes me look so utterly ridiculous. The Maharashtra party and I are endeavouring to understand each other. We are coming daily nearer. That party would rightly resent any reflection on my part upon the career or the character of one of the greatest of Indians and one who rules that party's hearts as no other man rules the hearts of any other set of men. M. Paul Richard and I were engaged in a deeply religious discourse. I was trying to give to him the fundamentals of my own faith. I was arguing upon the sharp difference that both he and I observed between us, and whilst I was elucidating my point I came upon the differences between the Lokamanya and myself in a reverent spirit. After many a frank chat with the Lokamanya I had come to see that on some vital matters we could never agree. Drawing illustrationsfrom his inexhaustible store of Sanskrit learning, he used to challenge my interpretation of life and frankly and bluntly would say, truth and untruth were only relative terms, but at bottom there was no such thing as truth and untruth just as there was no such thing as life and death. Whilst I could not resist the abstract presentation, I detected a flaw in its application to actual life and I put it before him in all reverence. In my opinion, we never misunderstood each other. At Sinhagad where both he and I were trying to take rest we came closer together.[1] I noticed that he was fearless and sincere in the enunciation of his views and he tried to live up to them. I could discover also the reasons for the marvellous hold he had on millions of his countrymen. I have claimed no superiority for myself. I only know that we fundamentally differed, but my respect for him grew with greater contact, and I believe that his affection for me also grew as time went on. The remarks, therefore, that were made to M. Paul Richard were made, I assure the reader, in no disparagement of the character of the illustrious deceased and I hope that the bald presentation of that difference in the interview will not in any way

[1] Tilak had a discussion with Gandhiji at Sinhagad on May 1, 1920; *vide* "Letter to Esther Faering", 2-5-1920.

acerbate the members of the great Maharashtra party whose hearty co-operation in the national struggle I value so highly and in order to conciliate whom I go many a mile so long as I have not to sacrifice my principle.

M. Paul Richard's presentation of my views about non-violence is really a caricature. I have no doubt that he understands me in the manner in which he has represented me. There is undoubtedly a sense in which the statement is true when I say that I hold my religion dearer than my country and that therefore I am a Hindu first and nationalist after. I do not become on that score a less nationalist than the best of them. I simply thereby imply that the interests of my country are identical with those of my religion. Similarly when I say that I prize my own salvation above everything else, above the salvation of India, it does not mean that my personal salvation requires a sacrifice of India's political or any other salvation. But it implies necessarily that the two go together. Just in the same sense I would decline to gain India's freedom at the cost of non-violence, meaning that India will never gain her freedom without non-violence or through violence. That I may be hopelessly wrong in holding the view is another matter, but such is my view and it is daily growing on me. I have so often remarked that whatever may be true of other countries, India's salvation lies only through the path of non-violence. If M. Paul Richard had understood me correctly he would have pacified his interviewer by saying that I believed that India could gain her liberty quickly only through non-violence and that therefore so long as the country accepted my guidance the country would have to be satisfied with my limitations and therefore permit me to guide her so long as the country believed that, as it is circumstanced, it had no means open to her for gaining her end except by non-violence and truth. M. Paul Richard has made the position worse by remarking that if India's freedom depends upon non-violence it will never be attained. It passes comprehension how he could have omitted to take notice of the phenomenal progress made by the country in the direction of freedom. Indeed, I claim that India is substantially free today, she has found the way, she is asserting herself, she has thousands of her children—men and women —who have learnt the sovereign virtue of sacrifice without retaliation, and it is my certain conviction that if only workers will work out the constructive programme placed before them with industry and honesty, I have not a shadow of a doubt that we shall gain all the three ends in no time. I

do not for one moment believe that the Congress workers cannot control forces of hooliganism that exist in the country. Only we have not tried whole-heartedly to gain control.[1]

Young India, 23-2-1922

100. OUR LAXITY

A reliable correspondent writes to me saying that in Allahabad and Benares the volunteers have been enlisted without regard to their qualifications. Hardly 50 could be found dressed in hand-spun khaddar from top to toe. Some more could be found wearing khaddar for outer covering, all the rest being foreign cloth. The same correspondent says that some of the volunteers do not mind an occasional drink and that they are not tested as to their belief in non-violence and that in many instances the local Congress officials have lost control over them. It has been officially reported that there are 96,000 volunteers enlisted in the United Provinces. If it is a fact that there are so many volunteers on the roll and that the vast majority of them do not conform to the Congress conditions, they are worse than useless. The complaints mentioned by me are formidable, yet as a matter of fact, I have not exhausted them all. The same news comes from Calcutta, again from a reliable source. My informant tells me that hundreds who have gone to jail know nothing about the pledge, are not dressed in khaddar, are not dressed even in Indian mill cloth but have gone to jail wearing foreign cloth, and that they have had no training in non-violence. A correspondent from Rohtak writes bitterly complaining that in many parts of that district the volunteers do not obey instructions and make the position of Congress officials most difficult and embarrassing.

If one-tenth of these complaints is true I fear that we have not been able to cope with the wonderful awakening and to bring under control all the new additions to the Congress organization. It is possible that it is nobody's fault that this is so. The Government precipitated a crisis by hurling the notifications about public meetings and volunteers at us. The challenge had to be and was taken up. New and inexperienced men found themselves clothed with office and they were called upon to deal with a crisis which would have taxed to its

[1] M. Paul Richard's reply to this article was published in *Young India* 16-3-1922, under the title, "His Sorrow Is My Sorrow".

utmost the capacity even of the experienced leaders withdrawn from public guidance.

There is much-to be said in favour of this argument. No one need therefore be blamed, but we must not blink the facts. On the contrary we must face them sternly, boldly and set our own house in order. No army in the world has yet marched to victory, which has not consisted of soldiers possessing the qualities expected of them. An army of peace has greater need to exhibit the qualities laid down for its soldiers. It would not do to retort that the standard is too high. A recruiting officer who takes recruits below the standard renders himself guilty of dishonesty, in he takes such recruits knowingly. All he can do is to report to the headquarters that he cannot get recruits on the conditions' prescribed, but on no account will he be justified in departing from them.

The conditions laid down by the Congress were read by myself in detail to the whole audience last December in the Congress *pandal*.[1] They were exhaustively discussed by the All India Congress Committee and the Working Committee and then they were explained by me to the delegates and visitors from the different provincesat numerous informal discussions. The plea of impossibility of fulfilment cannot therefore be accepted. The delegates knew what they were about. They were nearly 6,000. They came to represent their respective constituencies and there should have been no difficulty about the fulfilment of the conditions.

I should personally be satisfied with 300 volunteers thoroughly understanding and complying with the conditions, but I should not care to lead a struggle with 30,000 volunteers who know nothing of and careless about the conditions. The reason is obvious. In the one case I have at least 300 stalwarts to support me, in the other case I have to carry a burden of 30,000 men, not volunteers, who are a drag upon me. The 300 would help me, would obey instructions, but 30,000 will certainly not carry out instructions and may throttle me. We must therefore once for all make up our minds that all the resolutions which are passed by the Congress Working Committee have to be fulfilled literally. They are part of a swift and practical programme upon whose due fulfilment rests the future of India, the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and the attainment of swaraj.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Congress Sessions Ahmedabad-I", 28-12-1921.

Resolutions by themselves mean nothing if they are not to be carried out in full. We used to complain when our resolutions which were in days gone by addressed to the Government were not carried out by it. Who is to complain when the resolutions voluntarily and deliberately passed by us are not carried out by ourselves? I, therefore, strongly advise all Congress and Khilafat organizations to see that they are strictly enforced in their respective jurisdictions. If they do not, it is they who will endanger the movement and no one else. It is for us to make or mar the future.

Young India, 23-2-1922

101. PRISONERS IN DELHI JAIL

With the exception of one irrelevant paragraph I am giving the letter[1] as received without even removing the picturesque though inoffensive adjectives. It must be clear to any impartial observer that a mere denial by interested parties, however highly placed they may be, will not be enough to remove the bad taste in the mouth left by these revelations.

Young India, 23-2-1922

102. GOVERNMENT DENIALS

1. ON BEHALF OF THE BIHAR GOVERNMENT

The Bihar Publicity Officer sends me the following for publication in reply to my statement in my rejoinder to the Government of India's reply to my manifesto addressed to H.E. the Viceroy:

> In the manifesto dated the 7th February issued by Mr. Gandhi from Bardoli, mention is made of certain acts of "lawless repression" by the Government, which in his opinion justify resort to civil disobedience. Among these instances is the following item: "looting, admitted by the Bihar Government, of villages by an officer and his company without any permission from anyone". The reference is evidently to the Dhanaha Thana incident, and the plain implication of this statement is that the looting was carried out under the orders of the officer in charge of the police company and

[1] Not reproduced here. This letter from Hadi Hassan, Secretary, District Congress Committee, Delhi, described the maltreatment of non-co-operator prisoners in Delhi Jail, in reply to a Press *communique* issued on the subject by the Chief Commissioner, Delhi.

that this fact is admitted by the Bihar Government. The instance of the statement made by the Chief Secretary in the Legislative council to which Mr. Gandhi evidently-refers is as follows:

"On the 27th December 1921, on receipt of information from Mr. Mackinnon, Manager of the Baikunthpur Factory, that certain village were in a very disturbed state, the military mounted police marched through Pipariah, Bairatwa, Chanderpore and Sihulia. The allegations of looting in village Pipariah appeared on the finding of the District Magistrate to be entirely without foundation. Some looting, however, did take place in the other three villages. The District Magistrate was of opinion that the looting which occurred was in no way systematic but sporadic, a few *sowars* slipping down side-lanes and taking articles from owners. The Inspector in charge knew nothing about it till the villagers of Sihulia came up and complained; when the property was, under the orders of the Inspector, restored on the spot. The Inspector General of Police hat been requested to take disciplinary action against those *sowars* against whom there was definite evidence of having taken part in looting, and the Sub-Divisional Officer, Bettiah, is to take cognizance of any offences that may be disclosed during the "enquiry."

The statement made by Government makes it clear that the published reports of the looting were much exaggerated and that such looting as took place was the act of individual *sowars*. It also shows that Government will not countenance any breach of discipline like that of which the sowars were guilty on this occasion.

Mr. Gandhi's manifesto certainly tries to put a very different complexion on the whole affair.

I gladly publish the note, but I must confess that it carries no conviction to me. The substance of the statement of the Chief Secretary is not half as damning as the original which I have read and which appears in The *Searchlight* (27-1-1922). The crossfire to which the Chief Secretary was exposed in the Bihar Council is a study in hedging and fencing. The Chief Secretary is unable to deny that the officer himself did not take part in looting. These villages of Champaran I know very well. They have no winding lanes. Looting does not cease to be looting when the looted property is restored. The admissions wrung from the Chief Secretary by the Councillors leave on the reader's mind the impression that there is more behind the admissions than appears on the surface. Let one add, too, that the officer and the *sowars* went in spite of prohibition against the mounted police parading without any magistrate accompanying them. No explanation is still forthcoming as to why the officer rode out with his *sowars* and what action has been taken against him for the breach

of discipline which the Government have been compelled to admit. Let it be noted too that the villagers had nothing to deserve the looting expedition. As the summary admits "on receipt of information from Mr. Mackinnon, Manager of the Baikunthpur Factory, that certain villages were in a very disturbed state, the military mounted police marched through Pipariah, etc". I know what these marches mean to the villagers of Champaran. I am most anxious to be convinced that officialism has not reached the state of degradation which popular reports describe and which the Government are reluctantly obliged to admit in part or in full. But all my effort in that direction, I regret, has proved fruitless.

Young India, 23-2-1922

103. RESOLUTION AT A.I.C.C. MEETING, DELHI

February 25, 1922

The following resolution was passed on the 25th ultimo at the session of the All-India Congress Committee held at Delhi.

The All-India Congress Committee having carefully considered the resolutions passed by the Working Committee at its meeting held at Bardoli on the 11th and 12th instant, confirms the said resolutions with the modifications[1] noted therein and further resolves that individual civil disobedience whether of a defensive or aggressive character may be commenced in respect of particular places or particular laws at the instance of and upon permission being granted therefore by the respective Provincial Committee; provided that such civil disobedience shall not be permitted unless all the conditions laid down by the Congress or the All-India Congress Committee or the Working Committee are strictly fulfilled.

Reports having been received from various quarters that picketing regarding foreign cloth is as necessary as liquor-picketing, the All-India Congress Committee authorizes such picketing of a *bona-fide* character on the same terms as liquor-picketing mentioned in the Bardoli resolutions.

The All-India Congress Committee wishes it to be understood that the resolutions of the Working Committee do not mean any abandonment of the original Congress programme of non-co-opera-

[1] *Vide* footnotes to "Working Committee's Resolutions at Bardoli", 12-2-1922.

tion or permanent abandonment of mass civil disobedience but considers that an atmosphere of necessary mass non violence can be established by the workers concentrating upon the constructive programme framed by the Working Committee at Bardoli.

The All-India Congress Committee holds civil disobedience to be the right and duty of the people to be exercised and performed whenever the State opposes the declared will of the people.

Note*:* Individual civil disobedience is disobedience of orders or laws by a single individual or an ascertained number or group of individuals. Therefore, a prohibited public meeting where admission is regulated by tickets and to which no unauthorized admission is allowed, is an instance of individual civil disobedience, whereas a prohibited meeting to which the general public is admitted without any restriction is an instance of mass civil disobedience. Such civil disobedience is defensive when a prohibited public meeting is held for conducting a normal activity although it may result in arrest. It would be aggressive if it is held not for any normal activity but merely for the purpose of courting arrest and imprisonment.

Young India, 2-3-l922

104. TEST FOR AHMEDABAD AND SURAT

The residents and city-fathers of Ahmedabad and Surat[1] are about to be put to a test. How far we have imbibed the spirit of public service, to what extent the citizens look upon one another as members of a family, in what degree they possess the qualities of firmness, respect for their pledged word, self-sacrifice and perseverance—all this will be seen now.

If all the representatives of the citizens display these qualities, there can be only one result—the committees nominated by the Government will remain idle for want of work.

There can be no better proof of the hollowness of the Reforms than the supersession of these two big municipalities. Had the city-fathers acted arbitrarily, it might perhaps have been right to deprive them of their power; but in this case the Government knows, and so does the Indian "minister" for Local Self-Government, that

[1] *Vide* "*My* Notes", 19-2-1922, under the sub-title "To Citizens of Ahmedabad and Surat".

the citizens and their representatives are of one mind in this dispute, that both wish to preserve the autonomy of the Education Department. Despite this, the Government and "our" minister have superseded the municipalities, instead of taking whatever remedies are available under the law, and have thereby flouted public opinion. It has been thus proved that the Reforms confer altogether arbitrary powers on the Government and that the people would derive no benefit at all from them.

But, instead of considering the advantages or disadvantages of the Reforms, it would be more appropriate here to consider what is in the interest of the citizens. The pledge which they have taken should be honoured. If they accept defeat on such simple issues, I would say, and the world too would say, that they are not fit for local self-government. As our fitness for swaraj is to beproved by winning it, so also it is to be proved by displaying our capacity to preserve it. We shall be considered strong only if we can defend the country against external aggression. Only that person's body is considered healthy who remains healthy even when attacked by germs from outside. Education is the central issue in this battle. The citizens may or may not protect their rights in other matters; but they would be completely defeated if they accept defeat in the field of education. If this happens, it will be proved beyond doubt that the citizens have not learnt to think or act independently. If the people give in, that would prove that the representatives, being resourceful, went on fighting the Government and the citizens enjoyed watching the fight, but that the latter did not bother in the least to think or act independently.

It is, therefore, the primary duty of the citizens of these two cities not only to retain complete control over their children's education, but also to put it on such firm foundation that no one should be tempted to go to a Government school.

We shall discover, if we make this attempt, that anything which is not done spontaneously will not last long. Only if the citizens are true non-co-operators will they refuse to send their children to Government schools. If they care for the quality of their children's education, they will put it on a sound foundation. Likewise, educated persons in Ahmedabad and Surat will give their services for teaching, the citizens will offer convenient accommodation for schools and meet various other requirements and thus demonstrate to the

Government-nominated committees that they are ready for any number of sacrifices for the sake of their children's education.

We have to face the urgent problem of funds for this educational programme. It is my considered view that the citizens have the right to refuse to pay the educational cess they have been paying. Whether or not they insist on this right, it should not be difficult for the residents of Ahmedabad and Surat to collect the required amount. By collecting it, they will demonstrate their strength and unity. Money given for the purpose of education is no philanthropy. It is investment of the best kind. Parents will get full return on it. I hope that the residents of the two cities will manage all these things without delay. If Ahmedabad and Surat succeed in these tasks, there is not a shadow of a doubt that they will provide a splendid example for the rest of the country to follow. It cannot but have a profound effect on the kind of swaraj the country will have.

If these two cities can achieve this without rousing the least hatred or resentment and without violation of peace to the slightest extent, we shall have demonstrated effectively how non-violent non-co operation should be carried on.

I should like the citizens to assert their independence in other matters also; however, it is my considered advice to leaders to move slowly and take every step after careful deliberation.

I hear it said that the citizens have lost heart because of the suspension of civil disobedience in Bardoli and the loss of control over the municipalities. If this be so, they have not understood the meaning of non-co-operation nor have they understood the nature of their own fight. In non-co-operation, resolutions such as those passed at Bardoli are quite normal. In a great war, one strategy after another is adopted and abandoned. The aim behind all is one and the same. It is sometimes as necessary to abandon a strategy as it may have been to adopt it. There is no room for defeat in a satyagraha struggle, whereas there is every possibility of one in an ordinary battle; but, even when defeated, the troops do not lose courage. We Indians have been accused of being unable to stand a defeat. Defeat in a single battle sees us running away in confusion. I cherish an earnest hope that India will give a lie to this accusation. As for the Bardoli resolutions, I do not regard them as signs of our defeat at all. I look upon them, rather, as sure signs of our regard for truth and our courage.

Moreover, the struggle in Ahmedabad and Surat is a local one.

It must not be affected by the Bardoli resolutions. Why, again, should there be any disappointment because of the supersession of the municipalities? Our actions were deliberately intended to bring about this result. The underlying purpose of the struggle is to see that at every step the Government places itself in a false position. It is designed to expose its autocratic ways. The net result of the nomination of committees by it is that the municipalities of Ahmedabad and Surat are now completely in the non-co-operation camp. The citizens alone can now check their advance in that direction. It is true that we have lost control over a few buildings and other things. What does that matter? The representatives of the people can meet under a mango tree. It is not necessary for them to meet in granite buildings for transacting their business. The new committees cannot insist on getting the latrines cleaned against the will of the people; nor on lighting the streets.. The citizens can demonstrate within one week that the committees can do only what they permit them to do. I, therefore, see no reason for the leastfeeling of frustration. Such a feeling can only be a sign of our ignorance.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-2-1922

105. MY NOTES

IN THE CALCUTTA JAIL

Harilal Gandhi writes from the Calcutta Jail:[1]

The news which appeared in the papers, that the sentences of the prisoners in Calcutta Jail have been reduced by half, has turned out in many cases to be without foundation.

HOW CAN WE POSSIBLY PAY "CHOTHAI"?

The leading *Patidars* of Karamsad[2] had come forward to offer civil disobedience with such courage that they were prepared to be ruined. Now that they are required to pay up the revenue dues under the Bardoli Resolution, they feel unhappy. To add to this, the Government officials, in their vindictiveness, demand *chothai* which the *Patidars* simply cannot bring themselves to pay.

[1] The letter is not translated here.

[2] In Anand taluka, which was preparing to offer civil disobedience under the leadership of Abbas Tyabji

But did we ever expect any decency from the Government? Is it ever likely to miss an opportunity of victimizing people? Decency on our part consists in permitting them to have their revenge without getting angry ourselves. We should not even petition the officials to waive the demand.

To pay such fines is part of our atonement. If people are prepared to be ruined, what objection can they have to paying a fine?

But those who pay such fine may rest assured that, when we have swaraj or when there is a settlement, their fines will be refunded if they demand that they should be. I would particularly advise those from whom *chothai* is demanded that they should pay it up and keep an account of the payment.

The path of satyagraha has its own laws; it requires discrimination and readiness to suffer. We should not hope that we shall have our revenge on such officials when our turn comes. If anyone punishes us but we do not retaliate, the other person's fund of hatred will be exhausted. It is a universal law that an action which meets with no reaction finally spends itself. One who has understood this law will never think of taking revenge.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IN JHARIA

I had told the delegates who had assembled for the Congress week that the people should not plunge into active civil disobedience in Jharia, and I had said that I would write a note on this in *Navajivan.* I beg forgiveness of these gentlemen for having forgotten to do so. The circumstances in Jharia are exceptional. There are thousands of workers there. Besides them, only well-to-do Marwari, Gujarati, Bengali and other business people who have dealings with them live there. To start active civil disobedience in this place will certainly mean arousing the working class. Even individual civil disobedience is likely to cause excitement among them. I have, therefore, given my emphatic advice against starting active civil disobedience in this place at present. To introduce civil disobedience among workers would be inviting trouble. In such places, therefore, activities like promoting the use of khadi, popularizing the spinning-wheel and carrying on propaganda against drinking should be greatly intensified and, since Jharia is a mine of wealth as much as, and because, it is a centre of coal mines, it should provide the money required for all the activities in Bihar. Ramjas Babu and other rich gentlemen of the place can give the fullest help in such work. If they solve the Bihar Provincial

Congress Committee's difficulties about money, spread the use of khadi among workers, themselves spin and persuade the latter to spin and weave, see that they give up drinking and make them aware of their duties and then of their rights, I would think that they had fully served the cause of non-co-operation.

PLEADING IN AGENCY COURTS

A friend writes to ask me if it is true that I have expressed the view that every non-co-operator can practise in Agency courts. I have given such advice to no one. However, with reference to the cases of Shri Mansukhlal and Shri Manilal Kothari which have recently come up in Kathiawar, I have indeed said that they can defend themselves in Agency courts and engage counsel. Both of them are subjects of Indian States and are trying to uphold their own and others' rights in these States. They are not non-co-operators with regard to matters arising out of circumstances in Indian States. Hence, if they wish to take up the problems of these States theywill have to be ready for fighting in courts and for similar steps, otherwise they will run the risk of having the worst of both the worlds.

This certainly does not mean that a lawyer who has joined non-co-operation may appear in cases in Agency courts or that a non-co-operator may himself resort to legal proceedings in them, nor does it imply that he can engage a lawyer in any matter arising out of his actions as a non-co-operator within the jurisdiction of an Agency; but it does mean that, if a non-co-operator has money claims in an Indian State, he can take the matter to a State court and engage a lawyer for the purpose. We are not offering non-co-operation against the Indian States or the law-courts there; hence dealings with the latter need not be avoided altogether.

But all such things are full of complications. Non-co-operators, therefore, should take care not to place themselves in such difficult situations. It is for this very reason that I have often said earlier that, for the present, it is not desirable for non-co-operators living in Indian States to get involved in local problems, otherwise they will run the risk of getting completely entangled in them. However, according to the present policy in regard to non-co-operation, I think there can be no objection to anyone who does not mind being so entangled or who involuntarily gets involved in such a dispute, fighting out the matter in a court of law.

The foregoing gentlemen have been arrested in connection with

matters relating to Indian States and the Agency officer has attacked the rights of the subjects of Indian States. I see no objection to their taking legal steps in this matter. Though both of them are non-co-operators in British India, they have been arrested in Kathiawar and they can, therefore, get released on bail and defend themselves.

It may be objected that an Agency, too, is part of the British Empire. Someone may argue that what I have said seems reasonable enough so far as courts in Indian States are concerned, but that it is difficult to accept that position with regard to courts in the Agencies. There are two aspects of this. Just as the Agency is part of the British Empire, it is also part of the Indian States concerned. Agencies exist because Indian States exist. Hence, it is permissible for one to go to Agency courts in matters relating to Indian States, but a person cannot defend himself, or get himself released on bail, if he had gone to the Agency to preach non-co-operation and was arrested for that reason. This is why I have been advising people from the very beginning that non-co-operation should not be introduced in Indian States, that people should work there to promote only such activities as swadeshi which give no cause for objection, and these, too, from a purely economic and moral point of view, and consequently that we should have no Congress Committees, etc., in Indian States and that those who wish to join the Congress may get themselves enrolled in any Committee in British India.

There is a way of resolving all these difficulties in an unexceptionable manner. We shall never go wrong if we always follow it. If in any step we wish to take we are motivated by any kind of fear or self-interest—for instance the fear of imprisonment—we should not take that step. A non-co-operator must be fearless and unselfish; if he is truthful, non-violent, fearless and unselfish, he will make no mistake. He will consult his conscience and then go ahead unhesitatingly.

INSTANCE OF OPPOSITE KIND

In the note above, we considered instances of conduct which might appear to be contrary to the principle of non-co-operation. A correspondent from Indore reports an opposite instance. He says that, at the time of the visit of the Prince of Wales to Indore, three gentlemen, Pandit Arya Datta, Sheth Chhotalal and Sheth Badrinarayan, all residents of Indore Cantonment, were ordered to leave the area. They disregarded the order and were arrested in consequence. They neither engaged lawyers nor defended themselves and are now

undergoing sentence of simple imprisonment for a month. Thus, in this instance, people were arrested and imprisoned for offering non-co-operation as advised by the Congress. The same correspondent reports further that fourteen other volunteers have also been arrested. An athlete named Ramnarayan kept up his self-control even when beaten up by a soldier, though he had strength enough to fight back.

NOTION OF BEING DEFILED IS LIKE A SUPERFLUOUS LIMB"[1]

An Antyaj friend from Amreli writes:

> There is intense contempt for Antyajas in the land of your birth. The less said about the evil of untouchability in Kathiawar, the better I have been as far as Porbandar. There is less of it by one or two per cent in Rajkot, Bhavnagar and Amreli; but, on the whole there is much more of it in Kathiawar than in Gujarat.

What if it happens to be my land of birth? A man does not show that he is a good son by drowning himself in his father's well. As I quote this extract from the letter, I feel ashamed of the land of my birth. That Kathiawar, the home of a lover of God like Narasinh Mehta[2], which was witness to the excellence of Sudama's character, where Swaminarayan[3] preached his mission and Arjuna's chariot-driver[4] cast a spell over men and women, if the wise people of that very same Kathiawar regard *adharma* as dharma, cherish prejudices about touching and not touching as if they were sacred and hold human beings in contempt, can anything but degradation be the result?

If, however, I give up hopes about Kathiawar, I would have to give up faith in my own self. I have not forgotten the fact that young men from Kathiawar had undertaken to clean the latrines in Khadi Nagar.[5]

A number of young men there are engaged in serving Antyajas. The value of such service should be judged not by adding, but by multiplying, the numbers of the instances. If this is done Kathiawar will be absolved of the charge which is often levelled against it. The solution of this problem depends on the patience and civility of its young men and their spirit of religious earnestness. If they disregard propriety and criticize their elders disrespectfully, they will not

[1] The line is attributed to Akha, a Gujarati poet of the 17th century.

[2] Who freely mixed with so-callcd untouchables in devotional gatherings

[3] Swami Sahajananda (1781-1830), founder of a *Vaishnava* sect called *Swaminarayana*

[4] Shri Krishna

[5] At the time of the Congress session in Ahmedabad in December 1921

succeed in propagating their views about ending untouchability. When young men scrupulously follow dharma in all other respects while regarding untouchability as contrary to dharma, they will not fail to have an impact on society.

MOTILAL TEJAVAT AND THE "BHILS"[1]

In order to look into this matter, Shri Manilal Kothari went at my request to Shirohi and other places. It seems from the reports received from him that Shri Motilal Tejavat has been working mainly to persuade the *Bhils* to give up drinking and flesh-eating. It is beyond doubt that his activities have brought about an awakening among the *Bhils.* There would have been no ground for criticism if he had stayed at one place so that the *Bhils* could meet him, instead of roaming around accompanied by groups of them. I reproduce below the letter[2] he has sent to me through Shri Manilal.

This letter betrays ignorance about some matters. The British have nothing to do with the issue and the matter ought to have been brought to the notice of the States concerned in a proper manner. Shri Manilal says that in Palanpur, Danta and Shirohi States, he, Manilal, had received full co-operation from the authorities. Shri Motilal and the *Bhils* also listened to him and he was sure that they wished to carry on their work in a wholly peaceful manner. I hope that the *Bhils will* be satisfied if the States listen to their complaints and redress their grievances. Assuming that Shri Motilal has been at fault in some matters, both the Rulers and the subjects are likely to benefit if this is overlooked and the States take advantage of the good effects of his work among the *Bhils* and pay attention to improving their condition.

PICKETING FOREIGN CLOTH

The letter which I received from Jharia, reminding me of my promise to write about civil disobedience, contains an item of sad news also. The correspondent says that the merchants there have not kept their pledge of not importing foreign cloth. It seems that the value of a merchant's pledge is as low now as it was high in ancient times. Reports of the pledge having been broken in this manner have also come in from Calcutta. In these circumstances, one wonders what one should do if not picket the shops. I have no doubt whatsoever that we have a right to resort to peaceful picketing. I have been opposing such picketing because I know that picketing which is supposed to be

[1] A tribe in Gujarat and Central India

[2] Not translated here. It said that Tejavat had introduced satyagraha among the Bhils and this had displeased the authorities in the States Neither they nor the British officials paid attention to his pleas.

peaceful is not always so. Moreover, I feel that picketing is improper till there is a general feeling against the use of foreign cloth. It is also possible that people will not tolerate the picketing of a practice against which public opinion has not been fully aroused. This is one side of the case.

The other side is that, where a pledge has been broken, we must have some effective means of putting to shame those who have done so and warning the people against them. There are two such remedies which can be employed with civility. The first is picketing and the second is breaking off social relations with the guilty party. The idea behind both is the same. Society has a right to sever connections with a merchant who refuses to honoura *hundi*[1] which has matured. Such boycott does not involve putting a person out of the caste or refusing one's services to him; it merely involves severing business connections. But such a step is not always feasible and so picketing remains the only practical and simple way. I am writing this on Tuesday, on the eve of the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee.[2] It is yet to be seen what it decides. I would, however, tell the citizens of Jharia that they have a right to resort to perfectly peaceful picketing if there has been a clear violation of the pledge. Before exercising the right, it is necessary that they should meet those gentlemen who have broken the pledge, plead with them and give them due warning. It should be borne in mind in regard to all restrictions that they are imposed in order to ensure preservation of peace. Where there is not the slightest danger of peace being violated, it is permissible to resort to picketing even though it has been disallowed. Who could stop a respected person like Ramjas Babu from picketing the shop of a merchant who has broken his pledge? Of course, this is on condition that even he may not do picketing with a band of one thousand volunteers. Where picketing is resorted to not with a view to intimidation but in order to make the person feel ashamed of himself, the pickets should be few and not many and should be, moreover, well-known persons of good character.

However, I humbly request all merchants to see that they do not put the people or Congress volunteers to the trouble, or oblige them to take upon themselves the responsibility of picketing. Foreign cloth is rapidly going out of use in the country and this has saved hundreds of

[1] Draft or bill of exchange

[2] The A.I.C.C. met in Delhi on 24-2-1922.

thousands of rupees. Many thousands of these have found their way into the homes of the poor. How can they break their pledge for their selfish interests and obstruct a movement which is profitable both from the economic and religious points of view? How can they themselves be happy that their shops should have to be picketed? A merchant should compare himself to a chaste wife. Both should be ashamed of being guarded. Just as a chaste wife who goes astray inflicts a painful wound on society, similarly a merchant breaking his pledge strikes a violent blow at it. Will merchants not take part in this holy *yajna* even to the extent of carrying out their pledge?

WOMEN VOLUNTEERS IN AHMEDABAD

I have before me a report of the work done by women volunteers who are engaged in promoting trade in khadi in Ratanpole[1]. It contains a conversation which took place between them and merchants dealing in foreign cloth, and another with women customers.

The result of their conversation with women customers was that the latter went away without making any purchases and promised not to buy foreign cloth in future. They reasoned with the merchants, but failed to win them over. The latter tried to put off the volunteers: "We must dispose of what we have in stock; after that, we will not buy any more foreign cloth". Everyone knows that this means nothing. A person who decides that he will give up smoking or drinking after finishing the cigarettes in his pocket or the drink that is still left in the bottle will never succeed in giving it up. One can break oneself free only when one throws away the cigarette or the liquor in one's possession. A person who wants to dispose of his stock will never see that stock exhausted. Then again, one merchant argued: "Who will make good our losses if we stop selling now?" This betrayed lack of sense. What can we expect from anyone who is not prepared to put up with such a small loss for the sake of the country? Who makes good the loss when there is a fall in the demand, when the market is slack or when there has been a robbery? I do not understand what sacrifice is involved in giving up a trade which, we have realized, should be abandoned for the good of the country.

What, however, should the women-volunteers do in such circumstances? They should plead politely, say no harsh words but patiently argue about the advantages and disadvantages of the matter

[1] A business street in Ahmedabad

and, if they do not succeed even then, keep quiet and not provoke unpleasantness by arguing further. It is much better to put faith in the understanding and patriotism of customers who come to purchase small quantities rather than hope for anything from those who have large stocks of foreign goods.

"NAVAJIVAN" IS NOT BANNED

Last week, I published a report from a correspondent to the effect that the authorities in Veraval had banned *Navajivan.* Another correspondent writes to say that this report is without any foundation and that, in fact, he himself distributes *Navajivan* among the people and no one prevents him from doing so.

ACCUMULATED STOCKS OF KHADI

The reader must have seen the "advertisement" which appeared in *Navajivan* about the Khadi Karyalaya of the Congress. It was felt afterwards that there could be no advertisements in *Navajivan* and that any exception to this rule would be improper, and so further insertions were discontinued. The Khadi Karyalaya has protested against this. I must make it clear that the *Navajivan* has charged no money for that insertion. Both parties are right. It is difficult to insert even unpaid advertisements, since we want to use all available space in the *Navajivan* for reading material. How is one to decide which goods to select for advertising? But then, it may also be said that *Navajivan* exists for the sake of khadi, and for this reason I want at the moment to give more importance to it than can be given merely by an advertisement. No stocks of khadi should remain unsold in any part of Gujarat. So long as there are still people in Gujarat who wear foreign cloth, or even millmade cloth, how can we claim that it uses khadi? I, therefore, hope that merchants and consumers will buy up all the stocks of khadi lying with the Khadi Karyalaya and so enable it to get new stocks. Khadi for coats is priced at eight annas a yard and for shirts at seven annas a yard. I advise readers who can reduce this burden to write to the All-India Congress Committee and reduce it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-2-1922

106. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

DELHI,
February 26, 1922

Mahatma Gandhi in the course of a Press interview made the following important statements:

He said that the proceedings of the All-India Congress Committee were a perfect study.

I am not in a position to divulge all that happened in that Committee; not that there is anything to hide or to be ashamed of. One thing was absolutely clear that there was deep disappointment and even strong resentment against the Bardoli resolutions[1].Coming as they did close upon the rejoinder[2] to the Government *communique*[3], it was difficult for the members to understand or appreciate the reason for a departure from the steps contemplated in my letter[4] to the Viceroy. There was even a suspicion, not audible but certainly very visible, that I was labouring under the influence of Pandit Malaviyaji. I was able to show that my own opinion was arrived at totally independently of Malaviyaji and before I met him after-the Chauri Chaura tragedy. Personally nothing would please me better than to be able to confess that I had yielded upon any point to Panditji's persuasions. On this matter of non-co-operation and civil disobedience it has always been a matter of grief to me to differ from Panditji. However, I mention this merely to show the intensity of feeling.

It speaks volumes for the loyalty of the members of the All-India Congress Committee to the Congress and for the discipline observed by them that in spite of their bitter disappointment and resentment they subsequently and after a full debate substantially confirmed the Bardoli resolutions. I must confess that I myself do not like the wording of the covering resolution. It is unnecessarily explanatory; the definitions, the reiteration of Congress policy and civil disobedience seem to me to be out of place; but when it became a matter of soothing ruffled feelings and of avoiding misunderstandings and misinterpretations I felt that it was better to be tautological and

[1] Of February 11 and 12
[2] Of February 7
[3] Of February 6; *Vide* Appendix "Interview to C. Rajagopalachari", 3-4-1922.
[4] Of February 1

verbose as the covering resolution undoubtedly is than to appear to be obscure or ambiguous.

For once I can generally endorse the interpretation put upon the Bardoli resolutions by Sir William Vincent. He is quite correct in saying that the Bardoli resolutions do not in any shape or form mean a reversal of the policy or the modification of the Congress programme of non-co-operation and that it is merely a suspension of mass civil disobedience, and a suspension, till further instructions, of other activities of an aggressive character. It could not be otherwise. The Bardoli resolutions were addressed to the people and were intended to be of a penitential nature and also to prove incontestably to the people who are in symapthy with the movement that the sympathy of those who believe in violence not only not required but is held to be injurious to the cause.

I would however warn my critics and I know, some of them, although very friendly, have become very sensitive of fate. Iwarn such critics against reading into the covering resolution any radical notification of the Bardoli resolutions except in two particulars. One is the restoration of permission to resort to *bona fide* picketing of foreign cloth under direct supervision of local Congress committees, to be carried on by persons of known good character. Complaints were bitter against foreign cloth merchants as to their indifference to the growing popular dislike, even on the part of those who use it, for foreign cloth, as also to the breach of solemn promises made by these merchants that they would not import any more foreign cloth. The people have rightly resented the unpatriotic and selfish attitude of the merchants who in their desire to amass wealth have utterly disregarded the popular feeling against any further importation of foreign cloth into this country. It would be a grave mistake to suppose that this opposition to foreign cloth is based upon any ill will. Dislike of foreign cloth is a proof of national consciousness, of a supreme economic fact and this statement received additional support from the opposition that is growing against the use of cloth manufactured by mills of India. There can be no question of ill will against those who are engaged in the mill industry of India. But till the nation realizes, as I think it will, that the masses can as little afford to buy cloth manufactured in mills as it can afford to buy food cooked in hotels, it is impossible to withstand that unanimous demand for picketing foreign cloth shops. I can only hope that the merchants of India who

have all these long years been engaged in a trade which has brought about the daily growing pauperism of the masses will rise to the occasion and even like the Japanese Samurai recognize the necessity of a little sacrifice. I consider the sacrifice of foreign cloth trade slight for the simple reason that the merchants can find a respectable living if they turn their attention to organizing the khaddar manufacture and the khaddar trade and thus render even peaceful picketing wholly unnecessary. If they would only co-operate I would love to divert the energy of the best men and women in the country from picketing foreign cloth shops to becoming expert spinners, weavers, and carders and manufacturers of khaddar as fast as they can.

The second modification is that the power of reverting to individual civil disobedience whether of a defensive or of offensive type has been again given by the All-India Congress Committee to theprovinces. It does not therefore mean that the provinces are required immediately to resort to individual civil disobedience but it gives each province full powers to do so if circumstances required it and if the necessary non-violent atmosphere is present in that province. Whilst the provinces have thus their autonomy which was granted to them in November last at Delhi[1] restored to them, I would strongly advise them not to exercise those powers without the greatest deliberation or with undue haste. Indeed I would advise them, unless circumstances render civil disobedience absolutely imperative, to take a little rest, and purge their volunteers, register of all the names of those who did not believe in every single detail of the requirements of the Congress pledge.

It would really add to the strength of the movement if the provinces before re-embarking upon individual civil disobedience would put their house in thorough order and ensure perfect non-violence, non-violence not merely in deed but in thought and word. Whilst it is perfectly true that the country as a whole has made remarkable progress in the cultivation of a non-violent spirit it cannot be denied that there is still great room for the improvement and that we are living in a state of perpetual suspense. The ideal atmosphere for civil disobedience, whether individual or mass, is undoubtedly an atmosphere of perfect calm. Civil disobedience must not be demonstrative. Each one who is arrested has to go to prison unattended by demonstrative escort. There is still a desire on the part

[1] *Vide* "The All India Congress Committee", 10-11-1921.

of crowds to flock to courts or to follow civil resisters as they are being taken to jails.

There are many other things which I can mention and which require attention. Whilst therefore each province is free to do as it likes so long as it fulfils the conditions laid down for individual civil disobedience, my own advice is that they should not make haste.

QUESTION: Do you think that within a short interval of suspension of certain activities and their restoration by the All-India Congress Committee the atmosphere had cleared to an extent as would justify the resanctioning of those activities?

ANSWER: I thought the resolution itself was perfectly clear on the point. If you will look at the Bardoli resolutions you will find a stiff-condition laid down for mass civil disobedience. You will see that individual civil disobedience is treated in the resolution in a different way. Its suspension is only till further instructions, meaning clearly that whilst mass civil disobedience was being suspended it was considered necessary by the Working Committee to suspend other activities and to understand the situation thoroughly for itself, [and] for that purpose to refer the matter to the All-India Congress Committee. Now the only change made by the All India Congress Committee is that instead of itself fixing the time for re-embarking upon individual civil disobedience it throws the responsibility on the provincial Congress committees. What these committees will do I do not know. I have myself advised, as you will observe, against immediately re-embarking upon individual civil disobedience but if a province considers that its atmosphere is not in any shape or form affected by the Chauri Chaura tragedy so that there is no danger whatsoever of violence breaking out, and further if a province finds that it can comply with all the conditions whose fulfilment is required by the Congress, that province will certainly have the right of re-embarking upon individual civil disobedience. The All-India Congress Committee therefore has not passed any judgment as to whether the interval is enough or whether there should be a long delay. Each Province is called upon to judge for itself, and seeing that provinces were jealous of their rights and resented even suspicion about their ability to manage their own affairs in the matter of civil disobedience the All India Congress Committee could not possibly resist the demand for the restoration of provincial autonomy.

But how is it that even after receiving the third warning from God you have so soon granted the provincial autonomy which at least in the case of U.P. was not exercised properly?

The third warning now deters me from immediately embarking upon mass civil disobedience, I would think 50 times before em-barking upon mass civil disobedience. The deprivation of provincial autonomy was intended only to be temporary and was resorted to in order to gain control over the organizations and to test the measure of responsiveness, and, the fact that the provinces have responded in the noble manner they have done put the All-India Congress Committee upon its honour. It would have been resented by the provinces if autonomy was not restored, nor is it possible to say that the Chauri Chaura tragedy would not have occurred if there were no provincial autonomy. Whilst from the Congress standpoint condemnation of the acts of the mob can be regarded as too severe, from the public point of view, I can safely say that blame can at least be evenly distributed between the Congress organizations and the Government. What I mean is that the Government by deliberately withdrawing the leaders known for their belief in non-violence and for their ability to manage Congress affairs put undue strain upon the masses, surely, judged by the ordinary standard. It is not a matter for surprise that such an awful tragedy should occur, nor is mob frenzy a speciality in the Gorakhpur district or in India, because such mob frenzy has before taken place in all parts of the world. The Congress condemnation, therefore, is due to the Congress pledge of non-violence.

Considering the progress in respect of the conditions laid down by the Congress, can you say how much time it will take before swaraj is attained?

It is very difficult for me to forecast the time for the simple reason that there are many things which enable me to fix one day and many other things which prevent me from giving any date whatever.

Have you ever used the power of dictatorship?

Never. Nor has the legal occasion arisen for the exercise of these powers, because they can be exercised only when the Congress organization is paralysed through Government repression.

Suppose you are arrested, are you going to nominate a successor dictator?

No. I have absolutely no power to nominate. The power has not yet accrued to me inasmuch as the Congress organization is in a fair working order.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 1-3-1922

107. NOTES

CONGRESS A FETISH

We must avoid the Congress becoming a fetish. I love the idea of everybody becoming a Congressman and everybody yielding willing and intelligent obedience to the Congress resolutions. But I abhor the idea of anybody becoming a Congressman merely because it is an old or a great institution or yielding obedience to its resolutions whether one likes it or not. The rule of majority has a narrow application, i.e., one should yield to the majority in matters of detail. But it is slavery to be amenable to the majority no matter what its decisions are. Thus notwithstanding the Congress resolution, it is wrong, in my opinion, to withdraw from Councils or not to covet election thereto, if one believes that Councils are even a tolerably good institution. It is similarly wrong for a lawyer to suspend practice merely because the Congress says so. Democracy is not a state in which people act like sheep. Under democracy individual liberty of opinion and action is jealously guarded. I therefore believe that the minority has a perfect right to act differently from the majority so long as it does not act in the name of the Congress. A practising lawyer may become a Congressman; he cannot be called a non-co-operator. He cannot and should not, therefore, be on the All-India Congress Committee. Similarly one who does not wear hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar or a title holder or a Councillor may not be called non-co-operator though all these may be Congressmen.

But not only do I think that a Congressman is not bound by the resolutions which he does not approve of, he is also entitled always to go beyond the Congress resolutions, provided that he does not violate the creed and if he does not act in the name of the Congress. Supposing that the restrictions put by the Congress do not suit a particular province, that that province has even voted against them, that that province finds that it can look after itself, it has every right to go forward and justify its rebellion by success. The Congress only finds the highest common factor, but it may conceivably be far short of the requirements of a particular province. That province may, if it has confidence and if it is not likely to jeopardize any Congress interest, certainly go on with its own programme on its own

responsibility and at the risk of a vote of censure from the Congress. This, in my opinion, is what the spirit of democracy requires. What I have stated is an illustration of domestic civil disobedience. Thus and thus only shall we save ourselves from false idolatry.

FOR KHILAFAT COMMITTEES

I continue to receive complaints from many quarters that the Khilafat members do not comply with the conditions of the Congress pledge for volunteers and that they raise religious objections. I venture to point out that all the religious objections were considered by distinguished Ulemas at the Congress and the pledge was framed in consultation with them. I would, therefore, urge Khilafat Committees to give their full co-operation to the Congress. Indeed, every Mussulman who belongs to a Khilafat Committee should deem it his duty to belong also to the Congress. There can be only one national organization. That organization is the Congress, and Mussulmans should make it as much their own as the Hindus. That is the least required to demonstrate Hindu-Muslim unity.

KHADDAR INDISPENSABLE

I regeret to find that Jamiet-ul-Ulema[1] has sent the Working Committee a pledge for the volunteers which is highly unsatisfactory. That pledge does not insist upon khaddar for personal wear. Every condition is an integral part of the Congress pledge and I hold it to be as essential as Hindu-Muslim unity. Break up the unity and you break up swaraj. Give up khaddar and you will find it *impossible* to lift the masses from the economic and moral degradation. Unity between races and the re-enthronement of the spinning-wheel in India's sixty million homes give you the requisite strength to fight the Government, if you are non-violent. I gladly concede that you can easily fight the Government with arms without the unity and without the spinning-wheel. The result will be not swaraj, but one plunderer giving place to his superior and between the two a greater grinding of the masses. I invite both the Hindus and the Mussulmans who love India to fight such a prospect even unto death. I therefore urge the Jamiet to give immediate effect to the request of the Working Committee. The Khilafat Committees have been giving, on the whole, great strength and assistance to Congress organizations. As time goes forward, the co-operation should grow stronger. There is just a danger of the two

[1] A religious organization of Muslims

organizations running in opposite directions. Each must help the other as the one eye requires full co-operation of the other.

There will no doubt be variety of work in the two organizations. But on cardinal matters, i.e., non-violence, khaddar and unity among all the races, there is no room for variety or degrees. I understand that the Jamiet has been told that khaddar is not always available. Of course it is not available in some places where the workers have not carried out their trust. But they should know that in Bombay and Ahmedabad and in many other places khaddar can be had in any quantity required. These are the prices at which the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee, Ahmedabad, supplies khaddar:

Khaddar suitable for suiting 9 as. per yard

Khaddar suitable for shirting 7 as. per yard

NEEDLESS NERVOUSNESS

I am sorry that I find a nervous fear among some Hindus and Mohammedans that I am undermining their faith and that I am even doing irreparable harm to India by my uncompromising preaching of non-violence. They seem almost to imply that violence is their creed. I touch a tender spot if I talk about extreme non-violence in their presence. They confound me with texts from the *Mahabharata* and the Koran eulogizing or permitting violence. Of the *Mahabharata* I can write without restraint, but the most devout Mohammedan will not, I hope, deny me the privilege of understanding the message of the Prophet. I make bold to say that violence is the creed of no religion and that whereas non-violence in most cases is obligatory in all, violence is merely permissible in some cases. But I have not put before India the final form of non-violence. The non-violence that I have preached from Congress platforms is non-violence as a policy. But even policies require honest adherence in thought, word and deed. If I believe that honesty is the best policy, surely whilst I so believe, I must be honest in thought, word and deed; otherwise I become an impostor. Non-violence being a policy means that it can upon due notice be given up when it proves unsuccessful or ineffective. But simple morality demands that whilst a particular policy is pursued, it must be pursued with all one's heart. It is simple policy to march along a certain route, but the soldier who marches with an unsteady step along that route is liable to be summarily dismissed. I become therefore incredulous when people talk to me sceptically about non-violence or are seized with fright at the very

mention of the word non-violence. If they do not believe in the expedient of non-violence, they must denounce it but not claim to believe in the expedient when their heart resists it. How disastrous it would be, if not believing in violence even as an expedient, I joined, say, a violence party and approached a gun with a perturbed heart! The reader will believe me when I say hat I have the capacity for killing a fly. But I do not believe in killing even flies. Now suppose I joined an expedition for fly-killing as an expedient. Will I not be expected before being permitted to join the expedition to use all the available engines of destruction whilst I remained in the army of fly-killers? If those who are in the Congress and the Khilafat Committees will perceive the simple truth, we shall certainly either finish the struggle this year to a successful end or be so sick of non-violence as to give up the pretension and set about devising some other programme.

I hold that Swami Shraddhanandji has been needlessly criticized for the proposition he intended to move. His argument is absolutely honest. He thinks that we as a body do not really believe in non-violence even as a policy. Therefore we shall never fulfil the programme of non-violence. Therefore, he says, let us go to the Councils and get what crumbs we may. He was trying to show the unreality of the position of those who believe in the policy with their lips, whereas they are looking forward to violence for final deliverance. I do say that if Congressmen do not fully believe in the policy, they are doing an injury to the country by pretending to follow it. If violence is to be the basis of future government, the Councillors are undoubtedly the wisest. For it is through the Councils that, by the same devices by which the present administrators rule us, the Councillors hope to seize power from the former's hands. I have little doubt that those who nurse violence in their bosoms will find no benefit from the lip profession of non-violence. I urge, therefore, with all the vehemence at my command that those who do not believe in non-violence should secede from the Congress and from non-co-operation and prepare to seek election or rejoin law-courts or Government colleges as the case may be. Let there be no manner of doubt that swaraj established by non-violent means will be different in kind from the swaraj that can be established by armed rebellion. Police and punishments there will be even under such swaraj. But there would be no room for brutalities such as we witness today both on the part of the people and the Government. And those, whether

they call themselves Hindus or Mussulmans, who do not fully believe in the policy of non-violence should abandon both non-co-operation and non-violence.

For me, I am positive that neither in the Koran nor in the *Mahabharata* there is any sanction for and approval of the triumph of violence. Though there is repulsion enough in Nature, she *lives* by attraction. Mutual love enables Nature to persist. Man does not live by destruction. Self-love compels regard for others. Nations cohere because there is mutual regard among the individuals composing them. Some day we must extend the national law to the universe., even as we have extended the family law to form nations—a larger family. God has ordained that India should be such a nation. For so far as reason can perceive, India cannot become free by armed rebellion for generations. India can become free by refraining from national violence. India has now become tired of rule based upon violence. That to me is the message of the plains. The people of the plains do not know what it is to put up an organized armed fight. And they must become free, for they want freedom. They have realized that power seized by violence will only result in their greater grinding.

Such at any rate is the reasoning that has given birth to the *policy*, not the *dharma*, of non-violence. And even as a Mussulman or a Hindu believing in violence applies the creed of non-violence in his family, so are both called upon without question to apply the policy of non-violence in their mutual relations and in their relation to other races and classes not excluding Englishmen. Those who do not believe in this policy and do not wish to live up to it in full, retard the movement by remaining in it.

ADVICE TO PROVINCIAL COMMITTEES

It is thus clear what I would like the Provincial organizations to do. They must not for the present disobey the Government orders so far as it is at all possible. They must not, before they have searched their hearts, take forward action but bring about an absolutely calm atmosphere. No imprisonment courted in anger has availed us anything. I agree with the Mussulman view which is also the Hindu view that there is no imprisonment for the sake of it. All imprisonment to be useful has to be courted for religion or country and that by men and women clad in khaddar and without anger or violence in their hearts. If the provinces have no such men and women, they should not embark on civil disobedience at all.

Hence it is that the constructive programme has been framed. It will steady and calm us. It will wake our organizing spirit, it will make us industrious, it will render us fit for swaraj, it will cool our blood. We shall be spat upon, laughed at, sworn at, may be even kicked and cursed. We must put up with it all inasmuch as we have harboured anger in our breasts even though we have been under the pledge of non-violence. I must frankly state that unless we can retrieve our steps deliberately, cultivate non-violence and manufacture khaddar, we cannot render effective help to the Khilafat, we cannot get redress of the Punjab wrong, nor can we attain swaraj. My leadership is perfectly useless if I cannot convince co-workers and the public of the absolute and immediate necessity of vigorously prosecuting the constructive programme.

We must know whether we can get a crore men and women in all India Who believe in the attainment of swaraj by peaceful, i.e., non-violent and legitimate, i.e., truthful means.

We must get money for the prosecution of swadeshi and we will know how many people there are in India who are willing honestly to pay one rupee out of every hundred of their past year's income to the Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund. This subscription the Committee expects from Congressmen and sympathizers.

We must spend money like water in introducing the spinning-wheel in every home, in the manufacture and the distribution of khaddar wherever required.

Surely we have long neglected the untouchable brother. He has slaved for us too long. We must now serve him.

Our liquor picketing has done some good but not substantial. Not till we pierce the home of the drunkard shall we make any real advance. We must know why he drinks; what we can substitute for it. We must have a census of all the drunkards of India.

Social service department has been looked at with the utmost contempt. If the non-co-operation movement is not malicious that department is a necessity. We want to render alike to friend and foe service in times of distress. We are thereby able to keep our relations sweet with all in spite of our political aloofness.

LAUGHING AT IT

Social service and temperance reform were laughed at as part of

the struggle for swaraj. It was a painful exhibition of ignorance of the essentials of swaraj. I claim that the human mind or human society is not divided into water-tight compartments called social, political and religious. All act and react upon one another. What is more, the vast majority of Hindus and Mussulmans have joined the struggle believing it to be religious. The masses have come in because they want to save the Khilafat and the cow. Deprive the Mussulman of the hope of helping the Khilafat and he will shun the Congress tell the Hindu he cannot save the cow if he joins the Congress, he will to a man leave it. To laugh at moral reform and social service is to laugh at swaraj, the Khilafat and the Punjab.

Even the organization of schools was laughed at. Let us see what it means. We have demolished the prestige of Government schools. It was perhaps necessary in 1920 to do the picketing and certainly not to mind the boys being neglected, but it would be criminal any longer to picket Government schools or to neglect national institutions. We can now only draw more boys and girls by putting existing national schools on a better footing. They have the advantage of being in institutions where they breathe free air and where they are not shadowed. But the advantage of scientific training in carding, hand-spinning and hand-weaving and of having intellectual training in keeping with the requirements of the country must be added. We shall show by successful experiment the superiority of training in national schools and colleges.

Even the panchayats came in for ridicule. Little did the critics realize that the masses in many parts of India had ceased to resort to law courts. If we do not organize honest panchayats, they will certainly go back to the existing law-courts.

POLITICAL RESULTS

Nor is a single step devoid of vast political results. Adequate manufacture and universal use of khaddar means a permanent boycott of foreign cloth and automatic distribution of sixty crores of rupees annually among the poor people. Permanent disappearance of the drink and the opium evils mean an annual saving of seventeen crores to the people and a diminution of that revenue for the Government. Constructive effort for the untouchables means the addition to the Congress ranks of six crores of men and women who will for ever be bound to the Congress. Social service department, if it becomes a live thing, will restore the strained relations that exist today among co-operators (whether Indian or English) and non-co-operators. To work the full constructive programme therefore is to achieve all we want. To fail in fulfilling the programme is to postpone all possibility

of effective civil disobedience.

WHAT OF THE KHILAFAT

Several Mussulman friends have said, "Your programme is good for swaraj but it is too slow to be good enough for saving the Khilafat. The Khilafat question will be solved in a few months and whatever can be done must be done now." Let us examine the question. The cause of the Khilafat, thank God, is safe in the hands of Gazi Mustafa Kamal Pasha. He has retrieved the prestige of the Khilafat as no Mussulman of modern times has done. India has in my opinion helped not much by her money, though that has meant something, but by Hindu-Muslim unity and by telling the Government in the plainest terms possible that India will have nothing to do with the Government and will declare complete independence if England persists in her anti-Turk policy and exploits India's resources against the Turks. The greater the strength in that declaration the greater becomes the prestige of Islam and the greater the power of Mustafa Kamal Pasha. Some people think that mere temporary embarrassment of the Government by a few thousand men, irrespective of qualification, going to jail will make the Government yield to our wishes. Let us not underrate the power of the Government. I am sure that the Government does possess as yet the power to crush the spirit of violence. And it is nothing but violence to go to jail anyhow. It is the suffering of the pure and God-fearing which will tell, not the bluster of the rabble. The purer India becomes the stronger she becomes. Purity is the only weapon of the weak in body. The strong in body in their insolence often mobilize their "hard fibre" and seek to usurp the very function of the Almighty. But when that "hard fibre,' comes in contact not with its like but with the exact opposite, it has nothing to work against. A solid body can only move on and against another solid body. You cannot build castles in the air. Therefore, the impatient Mussulmans must see the obvious truth that the little disorganized bluster of the rabble, whether it expresses itself by going to jail or by burning buildings or by making noisy demonstrations, will be no match for the organized insolence of the "hard fibre" of the "most determined people in the world". This terrific insolence can only be met by the utter humility of the pure and the meek. God helps the helpless, not those who believe they can do something. Every page of the Koran teaches me, a non-Muslim, this supreme lesson. Every *sura* of the Koran begins in the name of God the Compassionate and the Merciful. Let us therefore be strong in soul though weak in body.

If the Mussulmans believe in the policy of non-violence, they

must give it a fair trial and they will not have given it any trial at all if they harbour anger i.e., violence in their breasts.

As it is, by our bluster, by intimidation, by show of force, by violent picketing we shall estrange more men than intimidate into co-operation with us. And how can we dare seek co-operation by compulsion when we have refused to be coerced into co-operation with the Government? Must we not observe the same law that we expect others to observe towards us?

If the Treaty of Sevres[1] is not revised to our satisfaction, it is not finished. The virtue lies in India's determination not to be satisfied with anything less than her demands. After all, Mustafa Kamal may not insist upon the settlement of the Jazirat-ul-Arab[2]. We must continue the fight so long as it is not returned intact to the Mussulmans. If the Mussulmans consider that they can gain their end by force of arms, let them secede from the non-violent alliance by all means. But if they know that they cannot, let them carry it out in thought, word and deed and they will find that there is no surer or quicker remedy for assuaging their grief and redressing the Khilafat wrong.

NEED OF EXCITEMENT !

Some friends argue that in order to continue the struggle the people need some stimulant. No person or nation can be kept alivemerely upon stimulants. We have had much too much of it latterly. And the antidote now is a depressant. If therefore depression follows the cessation of all aggressive activities and people forsake us, it would not only not hinder our cause but help it. Then we shall not have to shoulder the responsibility for a Chauri Chaura. Then we could go forward with a steady step without any danger of having to look back. If however we can survive the depression and keep the people with us, we shall have positive proof that the people have caught the message of non-violence and that the people are as capable of doing constructive work as they have shown themselves capable of doing destructive work. Whatever the result, the present excitement must be abated at any cost.

"SOMERSAULTS"

I have carefully read Mr. Kelkar's article in *The Mahratta* criticising the Bardoli resolutions. I acknowledge the gentle and

[1] Which provided for the partitioning of the Turkish Empire

[2] Literally, "the island of Arabia", which, as defined by Muslim religious authorities, included Syria, Palestine and Mesopotamia as well as the peninsula of Arabia

considerate manner with which he has handled me. I wish I could persuade him and many who think like Mr. Kelkar that what he calls a somersault was an inevitable operation. Consistency is a desirable quality, but it becomes a "hobgoblin" when it refuses to see facts. I have known dispositions of armies changed from hour to hour. Once during the Zulu revolt we were all asleep. We had definite orders for the morrow. But suddenly at about midnight we were awakened and ordered to retire behind bags of grain which served as protecting walls because the enemy was reported to be creeping up the hill on which we had encamped. In another hour it was understood that it was a false alarm and we were permitted to retire to our tents. All the "somersaults" were necessary changes. Remedies vary with the variation in diagnosis. The same physician one day detects malaria and gives a large dose of quinine, detects typhoid the next and stops all medicine and orders careful nursing and fasting, later detects consumption and orders change and solid food. Is the physician capricious or cautious and honest?

Without being untruthful and indifferent if not stupid, I could not do what Mr. Kelkar suggests I should have done at the time of the Bombay Conference[1]. It would have been untruthful to have yielded to the Moderate friends beyond what was conceded as the Indian sky appeared to me to be clear blue and promised to remain so. My diagnosis may be blamed but not my decision based on the then diagnosis, nor could I possibly conceal the demandsespecially in the teeth of the Viceregal declaration at Calcutta that nothing was to be expected in the matters of the Khilafat and the Punjab and that as the reforms[2] had only just been granted, no advance was to be expected. I would have been unfair to the Viceroy as also to the Moderate friends if I had not said that our demands were emphatic and clear-cut. To have then suspended mass civil disobedience would have been a weakness. But Chauri Chaura darkened the horizon and I discovered a new diagnosis. It would have been idiotic on my part not to have declared in the clearest possible language that the patient required a drastic change of treatment. Not to have suspended after Chauri Chaura would have been unpardonable weakness. I assure the reader that Bardoli's unpreparedness had nothing to do with the decision. For Bardoli in my opinion was quite able to give battle. I have stated several times in the columns of *Young India* and *Navajivan* that I considered Bardoli to be quite ready for the fray.

[1] The Leaders' Conference of January 14 and 15, 1922

[2] The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms

The fact is that the critics do not realize the implications of civil disobedience. They seem unconsciously to ignore the potent adjective "civil',.

The more I think of the Bardoli decision and the more I rehearse the debates and the talks at Delhi, the more convinced I am of the correctness of the decision and of the necessity of provinces stopping all offensive activities for the time being even at the risk of being considered weak and forfeiting popular applause and support.

SINFUL IDOLATRY

I am myself an idolater though I am also an iconoclast as so many of my friends know to their cost. Idolatry is implanted in the human breast, and we worship perhaps nothing so much as our own bodies, but I am not in this note dealing with idolatry that is permissible; I am merely writing this note to draw attention to the sinful practice that seems to have commenced somewhere in the South of putting my portraits in chariots for religious processions. Mr. Andrews draws my attention by telegram to the fact that if such a practice is continued it might even lead to rioting because not everybody will tolerate the idea of putting portraits of historical persons or living persons in chariots drawn in connection with religious festivals, and I hold it to be criminal when ordinary idols are replaced by portraits of me. It can do nogood to these blind worshippers and must do violence to devotees who cannot possibly tolerate the idea of their idols being insulted. There is ample excuse for people worshipping heroes of the remote past in the form of idols, but it offends one's sense of propriety to be called upon to offer incense to living persons in the manner said to have been done somewhere in the Madras Presidency. If we are making for real manifestation of the democratic spirit, there is no room for such blind or excessive hero-worship. I would urge every Congress worker, therefore, whenever he sees such blind worship to discountenance it and by every legitimate means to wean people from it.

AN IDLE THREAT

It seems to be the special good fortune of Shrimati Sarojini Naidu[1] to be threatened with prosecution or at least to have her statements contradicted. It will be remembered that her charges about the official misdeeds during the Martial Law period were repudiated by Mr. Montagu. She took up the challenge and quoted chapter and verse from the Congress inquiry report. If she was wrong it was the

[1]1879-1949; poet, patriot, Congress leader and a close associate of Gandhiji

Congress Commissioners who misled her. She was able to prove that the India Office did not even know the full contents of the report.

This time the Madras Government has actually threatened prosecution. I wish they would make good their threat. India will then have the rare chance of listening to the statement of an undefended poetess of India. Only there will be such a rush for hearing the poetic non-co-operator in the courts that the trial will have to be either in an open *maidan* (not a bad thing) or inside prison walls. There is no hall large enough in all India that would hold the eager crowd that would want to have a glimpse of the bulbul[1] in a British cage.

Well, she has lost no time in repeating her charges. Chivalrous Keshava Menon and many others have come forward to support her statement. Mr. Prakasam has published the portrait of [the] boy whose arms were cruelly cut off. She has invited the Government to prosecute her or to tender an unqualified apology or before so doing to appoint an impartial commission of non-officials to investigate her charges. India awaits the reply of the gallant Madras Government. It surprises me that Lord Willingdon should have omitted the courtesy of privately writing to Mrs. Naidu asking her whether she had made the charges in an unguarded moment and if not, whether she could assist the Government in proving them. Have English noblemen in their rage forgotten their traditional chivalry? Must they insult. one of the most distinguished daughters of India because she has the temerity to take up the popular cause? I do expect Lord Willingdon to make the *amende honorable* and that in a handsome manner. I assure him that he will regain for the Government a little of the lost prestige by such an honourable act. It cannot affect the struggle one way or the other. But an honourable act on the part of the Government will come like a drop of rain on a parched land.

THE "BHILS' OF RAJPUTANA

The *Bhils* of Rajputana are a simple and a brave people. They have certain grievances. They have found in one Motilal Tejavat a friend and helper. He has been, it is said, weaning them from drink, gambling and meat-eating and asking them to live an orderly industrious life. He has been also advising them about their grievances. The only fault I can find is that he has been moving about with a large retinue of his followers. This has undoubtedly caused uneasiness among the States. Hearing all sorts of complaints against Mr. Motilal I asked Mr. Manilal Kothari to inquire. He did so with the permission and the help of the respective States and the *Bhils* have

[1] Sarojini Naidu was popularly kaown as "the Nightingale of India"

assured him that they do not mean any mischief at all. He has met Mr. Motilal also. The latter has assured Mr. Kothari of his peaceful intentions. But unfortunately in the meanwhile the Idar State is reported to have taken action against the *Bhils* and killed four of them. I do not know the full details nor do I know the reason for the action. I can only hope that they will settle the *Bhil* complaints by appointing an arbitration court and promise free pardon to Mr. Motilal if he comes out of the hills and surrenders himself. The *Bhils* have been long neglected by the States and reformers. If they are given a helping hand, they can become the pride of India. All they need is the spinning-wheel in their homes and schools in which their children can receive simple education. In the vast awakening that has taken place no race can be left out of the calculation of the States and reformers.

THE TOLL OF ANDHRA

Here is a letter[1] from a correspondent:

I am not surprised at the reported treatment. The authorities have got the chance of a lifetime. They would fain break the proud Andhra spirit and brutally crush it for ever. I have no Bardoli just now to present them with. But I urge them to be patient, not to be angry nor to be cowed down. Let them bear all the brutalities without harbouring ill will against the wrong doer. He can take our possessions and our bodies. He cannot take away our wills.

AFFLICTED ASSAM

The pages of *Young India* have contained much information about repression in Assam. In my opinion Assam has undergone perhaps the greatest suffering. It has no leader left worthy of the name. Those who are left are working under extraordinary difficulties. The following graphic description[2] needs no embellishment.

The reader should reread with the above p. 105 *Young India* 16th February. My advice to the workers that are left is, stop for the time being all aggressive activities. Do the constructive work with all your energy. If the spirit of violence has crept into our ranks at all, drive it out. Hold your Congress office under the beautiful trees of Assam. The storm will blow over in a moment, if we shall be true to

[1] Not reproduced here; it described the arrest and beating of volunteers in Guntur district despite the stoppage of the "no-tax" campaign

[2] Not reproduced here; it gave an account of the burning and looting of Congress offices and of arbitrary sentences passed on volunteers.

ourselves.

AJMER HIGH-HANDEDNESS

Pandit Gaurishanker Bhargav sends the following wire[1] from Delhi which speaks for itself:

> Ajmer news completely suppressed by local authorities, who have censored all telegrams going and coming in names of local leaders. . . . Ordinary telegrams of Provincial Congress going to districts in usual course of business are censored by the Commissioner. . . . The spirit in the beginning was naturally violent, but thanks to the non-violence movement of Mahatmaji and the good efforts of the local leaders . . . the entire masses of town have shown great forbearance and complete self-control even under greatest provocation. The other day a garden party was given by some *johukams*[2] to the retiring Commissioner Patterson in the name of citizens of Ajmer. The volunteers who went to impress the guests that the party was not on behalf of the citizens were mercilessly caned by the Police Superintendent, but all remained calm and quiet. If there were some stray examples of Chauri Chaura, there are more examples of non-violence throughout the country. The authorities have bent so low that complete absence of peace and justice is shown at every step. The distribution of *fatwa* has brought many brilliant youths of Ajmer in jail; but the distribution of the same *fatwa* to the *sowars* and the police in the Court by twenty organized volunteers kept them unarrested. Some five hundred volunteers were organized for this collective civil disobedience, but the very first unit, who went round the city in procession and distributed the *fatwa* to the very police and mounted *sowars* who were kept in readiness for their arrest, were left untouched though again and again they challenged the Police Superintendent and even the Commissioner in his Court that they were distributing the *fatwa*. Such is the law and justice of the Government. On the trial of Kunwar Chand Karan Sarda, the pleaders wanted the case to be tried in the open court instead of in jail, but the Commissioner wanted the pleaders to take assurance from Pandit Gaurishanker Bhargav that complete peace and order would prevail before he could transfer the case to open court. On approach of the pleaders to Panditji, he refused to give any undertaking to the Commissioner or the co-operating pleaders, but told them that their very creed was non-violence and therefore there cannot be the least doubt of any breach of peace. It was then that the case of Kunwar Chand Karan Sarda was transferred to the open court.
>
> Kindly give space to all these news as these are the brief summary of many important news suppressed by the local authorities. These are therefore sent through Delhi Telegraph Office. The last news is that of the big *urs* fair coming on Ist March, when the All-lndia Ulemas conference is going to meet in Ajmer. The Political Conference would also meet, where all the members of the All-lndia Congress Committee and Moderate friends are cordially invited.

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

[2] Servile people

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu is elected President of the Conference, while Pandit Gaurishanker Bhargav is elected Chairman of the reception committee. P. Shersingh and Maulvi Mohuddin are the General Secretaries of the Committee.

Young India, 2-3-1922

108. THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

The session[1] just past of the All-India Congress Committee was in some respects more memorable than the Congress. There is so much undercurrent of violence, both conscious and unconscious, that I was actually and literally praying for a disastrous defeat. I have always been in a minority. The reader does not know that in South Africa I started with practical unanimity, reached a minority of sixty-four and even sixteen and went up again to a huge majority. The best and the most solid work was done in the wilderness of minority.

I know that the only thing that the Government dread is this huge majority I seem to command. They little know that I dread it even more than they. I have become literally sick of the adoration of the unthinking multitude. I would feel certain of my ground, if I was spat upon by them. Then there would be no need for confession of Himalayan and other miscalculations, no retracing, no rearranging.

But it was not to be.

A friend warned me against exploiting my "dictatorship". He little knew that I had never once used it, if only because the legal occasion had not yet arisen for its use. The "dictatorship" accrues to me only when the ordinary Congress machinery is rendered unworkable by the Government.

Far from my consciously or unconsciously exploiting my "dictatorship" I have begun to wonder if I am not unconsciously allowing myself to be "exploited". I confess that I have a dread of it such as I never had before. The only safety lies in my shamelessness. I have warned my friends of the Committee that I am incorrigible. I shall continue to confess blunders each time the people commit them. The only tyrant I accept in this world is the "still small voice" within. And even though I have to face the prospect of a minority of one, I humbly believe I have the courage to be in such a hopeless minority. That to me is the only truthful position.

But I am a sadder and I hope a wiser man today. I see that our non-violence is skin-deep. We are burning with indignation. The Government is feeding it by its insensate acts. It seems almost

[1] Of February 24 and 25, 1922

as if the Government wants to see this land covered with murder, arson and rapine, in order to be able once more to claim exclusive ability to put them down.

This non-violence therefore seems to be due merely to our helplessness. It almost appears as if we are nursing in our bosoms the desire to take revenge the first time we get the opportunity.

Can true voluntary non-violence come out of this seeming forced non-violence of the weak? Is it not a futile experiment I am conducting? What if, when the fury bursts, not a man, woman or child is safe and every man's hand is raised against his fellow being? Of what avail is it then if I fast myself to death in the event of such a catastrophe coming to pass?

What is the alternative? To lie and say that what I know to be evil, is good? To say that true and voluntary co-operation will come out of false and forced co-operation is to say that light will result from darkness.

Co-operation with the Government is as much a weakness and a sin as alliance with suspended violence.

The difficulty is almost insurmountable. Hence with the growing knowledge of the fact that this non-violence is merely superficial, I must continually make mistakes and retrace, even as a man wading his way through a tractless forest must continually stop, retrace, stumble, be hurt and even bleed.

I was prepared for a certain amount of depression, disappointment and resentment, but I confess I was totally unprepared for the hurricane of opposition. It became clear to me that the workers were in no mood to do any serious work of construction. The constructive programme lent no enchantment. They were not a social reform association. They could not wrest power from the Government by such humdrum reform work. They wanted to deliver "non-violent" blows! All this appeared so thoroughly unreal. They would not stop to think that even if they could defeat the Government by a childish display of rage, they could not conduct the Government of the country for a single day without serious and laborious organization and construction.

We must not go to jail, as Mahomed Ali would say, "in a false issue". It is not *any* imprisonment that will lead to swaraj. It is not *every* disobedience that will fire us with the spirit of obedience and discipline. Jails are no gateway to liberty for the confirmed criminal. They are temples of liberty only for those who are innocence personified. The execution of Socrates made immortality a living reality for us — not so the execution of countless murderers.

There is no warrant for supposing that we can steal swaraj by the imprisonment of thousands of nominally non-violentmen with hatred, ill will and violence raging in their breasts.

It would be otherwise if we were fighting with arms, giving and receiving blow for blow. The imprisonment of those who may be caught intimidating, assaulting and murdering will certainly embarrass the Government and when they are tired, they would as elsewhere yield. But such is not our fight today. Let us be truthful. If it is through "show of force". that we wish to gain swaraj, let us drop non-violence and offer such violence as we may. It would be a manly, honest and sober attitude—an attitude the world has been used to for ages past. No one can then accuse us of the terrible charge of hypocrisy.

But the majority will not listen to me. In spite of all my warnings and passionate plea for rejecting my resolution, if they did not believe in non-violence as indispensable for the attainment of our goals they accepted it without a single material change. I would ask them therefore to realize their responsibility. They are now bound not to rush to civil disobedience but to settle down to the quiet work of construction. I would urge them to be indifferent to the clamour for immediate action. The immediate action is not courting imprisonment, nor even free speech and free association or free pen, but self-purification, introspection, quiet organization. We have lost our foothold. If we do not take care, we are likely to be drowned in the waters whose depth we do not know.

It is no use thinking of the prisoners. When I heard of Chauri Chaura I sacrificed them as the first penitential act. They have gone to jail to be released only by the strength of the people; indeed the hope was the swaraj parliament's first act would be to open the prison gates. God had decreed otherwise. We who are outside have tried and failed. The prisoners can now only gain by serving the full term of their imprisonment. Those who went under false pretences, or under any misapprehension or under a mistaken understanding of the movement, can come out by apologizing and by petitioning. The movement will be all the stronger for the purging. The stoutest hearts will rejoice in the opportunity of unexpectedly greater suffering. Though thousands of Russians have "rotted" in the Russian prisons for years and years, that unhappy people are not yet free. Liberty is a jilt most difficult to woo and please. We have shown the power of

suffering. But we have not suffered enough. If the people in general keep passively non-violent and if only a few are actively, honestly and knowingly non-violent in intent, word and deed, we can reach the goalin quickest time with the least suffering. But we shall indefinitely postpone the attainment if we send to prison men who harbour violence in their breasts.

Therefore the duty of the majority in their respective provinces is to face taunts, insults and if need be depletion in their ranks but determinedly to pursue their goal without swerving an inch. The authorities mistaking our suspension for weakness may resort to still greater oppression. We should submit to it. We should even abandon defensive civil disobedience and concentrate all our energy on the tasteless but health-giving economic and social reform. We should bend down on our knees and assure the Moderates that they need fear no harm from us. We should assure the zemindars that we have no ill will against them.

The average Englishman is haughty, he does not understand us, he considers himself to be a superior being. He thinks that he is born to rule us. He relies upon his forts or his gun to protect himself. He despises us. He wants to compel co-operation, i.e., slavery. Even him we have to conquer, not by bending the knee, but remaining aloof from him, but at the same time not hating him nor hurting him. It is cowardly to molest him. If we simply refuse to regard ourselves as his slaves and pay homage to him, we have done our duty. A mouse can only shun the cat. He cannot treat with her till she has filed the points of her claws and teeth. At the same time we must show every attention to those few Englishmen who are trying to cure themselves and fellow Englishmen of the disease of race superiority.

The minority has different ideals. It does not believe in the programme. Is it not right and patriotic for them to form a new party and a new organization? They will then truly educate the country. Those who do not believe in the creed should surely retire from the Congress. Even a national organization must have a creed. One, for instance, who does not believe in swaraj has no place in the Congress. I submit that even so has one who does not believe in “peaceful and legitimate means” no place in the Congress. A Congressman may not believe in non-co-operation and still remain in it but he cannot believe in violence and untruth and still be a Congressman. I was therefore deeply hurt when I found opposition to the note in the resolution

about the creed and still more when I found opposition to my paraphrase of the two adjectives "peaceful" and "legitimate" into "non-violent" and "truthful" respectively.[1] I had reasons for the paraphrase. I was seriously told that the creed did not insist upon non-violence and truth as the indispensable means for the attainment of swaraj. I agreed to remove the paraphrase in order to avoid a painful discussion but I felt that truth was stabbed.

I am sure that those who raised this opposition are as patriotic as I claim to be, they are as eager for swaraj as every other Congressman. But I do say that the patriotic spirit demands their loyal and strict adherence to non-violence and truth and that if they do not believe in them they should retire from the Congress organization.

Is it not national economy to let all the ideals be sharply defined and to work independently of one another? That then which is most popular will win the day. If we are going to evolve the real spirit of democracy, we shall not do so by obstruction but by abstention.

The session of the All-India Congress Committee was a forcible demonstration of the fact that *we* are retarding the country's progress towards swaraj and not the Government. Every mistake of the Government helps. Every neglect of duty on our part hinders.

Young India, 2-3-1922

109. GOVERNMENT DENIALS

I. "FLOGGING IN PRISONS"

TO

THE EDITOR, *Young India*

DEAR SIR,

In continuation of my letter No. 402/C dated the 17th February, 1922, I invite your attention to an article in the form of a letter from Mr. Mahadev Desai, which you headed "Flogging in Prisons', and which you published in your issue of the 19th January last. In the course of that letter no less than six cases of flogging are mentioned and the implication is that political prisoners were involved. In two instances the names of certain persons are mentioned. They are Kailash Nath and Lachhmi Narayan Sharma. Enquiries have been made from the Superintendent of the Central Prison, Naini . . . I am able to affirm categorically that neither Kailash Nath nor Lachhmi

[1] *Vide* footnote 3 to "Working Committee's Resolutions at Bardoli", 12-2-1922.

Narayan, whose names were mentioned by the writer of the letter which you published, have ever been flogged in the Naini Jail, nor were they given any punishment whatsoever, with the exception of No. 1488, Kailash Nath, who was "warned" for refusing to work when undergoing a sentence for rigorous imprisonment. . . . I beg that you will give a prominent place to this denial in an early issue.

Yours faithfully,

LUCKNOW — J. E. GONDGE

18-2- 1922 — PUBLICITY COMMISSIONER

The categorical denial[1] is wholly unacceptable. Not till a full impartial investigation is made, can any contradiction of statements made by a public man of unimpeachable character be accepted, especially when the contradiction comes from interested quarters. I draw attention to the fact that the *Independent* of Allahabad publishes the statement that a prison official admitted to a Congressman the fact of the flogging of Mr. Lachhmi Narayan. There is just a chance that the prison authorities are quibbling when they deny "flogging". The letter published in *Young India* is a translation. The Gujarati word is the same for whipping, flogging and caning. I have known the habit of officials denying unofficial corporal punishments. I hope the Government do not wish the public to infer that if there is no record of corporal punishments in the jail register, it has not been administered. The contradiction I am publishing certainly makes me more uneasy than before, for it betrays an intention to persist in the inhumanity and to hush it by denials. The Publicity Commissioner ill-performs his duty by sending unsupported contradictions by accused parties.

II. DEHRA DUN INCIDENT

TO

THE EDITOR, *Young India*

DEAR SIR,

. . . I beg to draw your further attention to the fact that you quoted as the 7th item of "lawless repression" in your rejoinder to the Government of India *communique,* "the shooting of a boy at Dehra Dun and the forcible dispersal of a public meeting at that place". . . . the obvious innuendo is that Government officials shot the boy. It is presumed that you are referring to the shooting incident on the 24th December 1921, when a certain young European named Madden shot a Mohammedan youth. Madden is not a

[1] Only excerpts reproduced above

Government servant.... The incident arose out of a personal quarrel and the promptest measures were taken to arrest Madden . . . The Civil Surgeon at the Magistrate's request came down in the night to see the injured boy. Madden was tried after the Xmas holidays and committed to sessions on charges under sections 307, 326 I.P.C. . . . Secondly, you have been undoubtedly misinformed as to the alleged cruel forcible dispersal of a public meeting. The facts are as follows:

1. Volunteer processions had become an extreme nuisance in Dehra Dun and their behaviour on several occasions had been highly provocative.

2. They were prohibited within certain areas by the Superintendent of Police with the Magistrate's assent, in the interests of non-co-operators themselves as the temper of interests members of the public was being sorely tried.

3. The local extremist organ *The Garhwali* had commented upon the unwisdom and folly of these demonstrators.

4. The volunteers decided to defy the orders of the Superintendent of police . . .

5. The meeting was dispersed with very little force. No one was hurt . .. .

LUCKNOW, *Yours faithfully*,

15th February J. E. GONDGE

The Publicity Commissioner has certainly "caught" me regarding the shooting incident.[1] I should have been more precise and stated that the shooting was not by a Government servant. I now see that the mention itself was irrelevant and unjust to the Government. The shooting in question cannot in any way be as part of lawless repression. I tender my apology for the error which I assure the authorities was wholly unintentional.

The other contradiction however does not appeal to me at all. I deny the necessity in the first instance of the use of force. In the second instance the force used was out of all proportion to the requirements if my correspondent's description is to be relied upon. The public will not trust the interested official denial. I hope that the mistake about the shooting will [not] be used to discredit or underrate the account of the forcible dispersal. The mistake about the shooting was a thoughtless confusion of facts and their consequent misapplication.

III. A PEEP OF A BOMBAY JAIL

With the compliments of the Director of Information, Bombay.

[1] Only excerpts from his letter reproduced above

In the issue of *Young India* for January 19 an extract was printed from *The Hindu* dealing with the alleged ill treatment of a certain "Rahmat Rasool, a Punjabi Martial Law prisoner", in the Hyderabad Central Prison.[1] Enquiries show that the allegations made are unfounded. The article appears to refer to a Gujarati prisoner named Himat Rasool, who was sentenced by the Ahmedabad Special Tribunal to transportation for life for cutting telegraph wires, setting fire to the telegraph office and rioting at Ahmedabad on 11th April 1919. The charges made and the actual facts relating thereto are as follows:

"On their arrival in this jail from the Andamans in November last no meals were given them for three days until the medical officer saw them and got them meals."

The prisoners (who arrived on December 6th) were seen daily both by the medical officer and the Superintendent but they refused to take *jowari* diet as they wanted wheat diet. This was given them on December 8th.

"Whenever the Superintendent approached them they were required to raise their hands as a Muslim does in prayer with the greeting 'Sarkar is one'. This immoral rule, interfering with the fundamental principles of Islam, Rahmat Rasool refused to obey, telling the Superintendent that for him God alone is one and that he can raise his hand in prayer before God alone, when the Superintendent proudly replied that he, as representative of Government, was his god in jail."

This is a pure invention. When the Superintendent or any official visits the prisoners, the latter stand with their hands open, the arms being at right angles to the elbows and the elbows in at the sides. The object of this is to show that there is nothing concealed in the hands with which an assault can be attempted. This attitude is obviously not that of a Muslim raising his hands in prayer and the procedure to which no objection has ever been raised is common to all jails. It is absolutely untrue that the Superintendent used the words attributed to him.

"The prisoner refused to be led away from the path of religion with the result that his religiousness was rewarded with the five-fold punishment of 30 stripes, 6 months' solitary confinement, six months' gunny clothing, 6 months' cross fetters and 6 months' bar fetters."

The facts are that on December 13th the prisoner refused to stand up when ordered, became very excited and was grossly impertinent to the Superintendent. He was awarded, not the punishment alleged but gunny clothing for one month and bar fetters for three months. Since the arrival of this prisoner in jail he has been eleven times awarded punishments, including 30 stripes and cross bar fetters for ten days for gross insubordination and persistently refusing to work. He is at present undergoing a punishment of three months' separate confinement awarded him in the Andamans for refusing to work and refusing to obey orders. His history sheet describes him as "a man of violent temper".

20th February, 1922

I venture to call this a brazen defence of a brutal punishment. It

[1] *Vide* "Worse than Martial Law", 19-1-1922.

tells the public in so many words, "We have done it and we pro- pose to continue." As I did not publish the incident for the edificationof the Government, I remain unperturbed by the shameless admission. The reader will please note that in all this *communique* there is no denial of a single material in particular. It makes no difference whether the name or description of the prisoner is correctly given. The facts that the prisoner had to starve for three days, that he had to stretch forth his hands in a humiliating fashion, that he had gunny clothing for one month, bar fetters for three, and thirty stripes and that he is now undergoing *separate* confinement for three months is sufficient corroboration of the allegations of *The Hindu*. I am prepared to assume that every prisoner who receives punishment is, in official parlance "a man of violent temper".

Young India, 2-3-1922

110. A LYING PLACARD

The following was handed to me in Delhi:

MAHATMA GANDHI'S MESSAGE TO NON-CO-OPERATORS

Stop Hartals

Suspend All N.C.O. Activities

O ye people of Delhi!

Come in your hundreds!!

Come in your thousands!!!

Welcome H.R.H. the Prince of Wales

I can only conclude that it was issued by or on behalf of the Government. I wish indeed I could have sent such a message. As it was, my misfortune was to send quite the opposite. Hartals were specifically retained in the Bardoli resolutions. Non-co-operation activities were not suspended. Aggressive civil disobedience and aggressive activities preparatory thereto were suspended. Apart from the untruthfulness of the placard the organizers did not even see that such lies could only strengthen the movement. But as a non-co-operator I do not want even co-operators to resort to lies. I need not be told that non-co-orerators too have been found lying. It is known by this time that I spare neither friend nor foe when it is a question of departing from the code of honour.

Young India, 2-3-1922

111. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

[*March 2, 1922*][1]

I was so sorry you became suddenly ill and had to get down at Palghar.

I would like you carefully to read every line of *Young India*. I write to you to tell you that the meeting of the All-India Congress has simply confirmed the views with which I left Bardoli. So far as my influence counts I am going to dissuade people in the different provinces from embarking upon even defensive civil disobedience. For the time being, I have persuaded them to concentrate their attention upon the constructive programme, but all this does not mean any change in my attitude towards the Government. Its fraud, its hypocrisy, its unblushing worship of violence repel me more than ever and the time may come when I would want to shun the multitude as much as I shun the Government, though for a different reason. I am anxious to enlist your full co-operation.

Will you not give your whole-hearted co-operation in the prosecution of this constructive programme? I would like you not to be engrossed in the effort to bring about a round table conference, which is a futile effort at the present time ; nor to be thinking of the prisoners. They will be quite all right taking their rest-cure in the prisons. I would so much like you to give your undivided attention to some part or other of the constructive programme. If you are well, as I hope you are, I would even trouble you to come over here and pass a quiet day with me. We could then discuss the possibilities of working along the lines indicated by me. I am in Ahmedabad till Wednesday. Next Monday, as you know, is my silent day. This will be in your hands on Friday. You can come on Saturday, Sunday, Tuesday or Wednesday, the earlier is better.

The Story of My Life, Vol. I, pp. 581-2

[1] From the source

112. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 4, 1922

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have kept your letter of the 19th February in order to be able to write to you at length.

Your first question is whether the requisite non-violent atmosphere can at all be attained and if so when. This is really a question as old as non-co-operation. It puzzles me to find some of the closest and most esteemed of co-workers putting the question as if the requirement was a new thing. I have not the shadow of a doubt that, if we can secure workers with an abiding faith in non-violence and in themselves, we can ensure the non-violent atmosphere required for the working of civil disobedience. The discovery I have made during these few days is that very few understand the nature of non-violence. The meaning of the adjective "civil" before "disobedience" is of course "non-violent". Why should the people not be trained to refrain from participating in activites which are likely to throw them off their balance? I agree that it will be difficult to get 30 crores of people to be non-violent, but I refuse to belive that it is diffcult, if we can get intelligent and honest workers, to make people who are not actively participating in the movement remain indoors. Now, at Chauri Chaura[2] the procession was deliberately formed by volunteers. It was wickedly taken in the direction of the Thana. In my opinion, the forming of the procession itself was easily avoidable. Having been formed, it was the easiest thing to avoid passing the Thana. Two or three hundred volunteers are reported to have been in the procession. I hold that it was equally easy for this large number of volunteers to have effectively prevented the atrocious murder of the constables or at least for every one of them to have perished in the flames lit by the mob which they were leading. I must not also omit to tell you that these men knew that trouble was brewing, knew that the Sub-Inspector was there, knew that there was collision between him and the people on two former occasions. Was not the Chauri Chaura tragedy

[1] President, Andhra Provincial Congress Committee

[2] A village in Gorakhpur district of Uttar Pradesh where on February 5, 1922, the mob set fire to the police station and 22 constables were burnt alive. Gandhiji was profoundly shocked by this and imposed on himself a five days' fast on February 12; *Vide* "The Crime of Chauri Chaura", 16-2-1922.

absolutely capable of being avoided? I admit that nobody plotted the murder, but the volunteers should have foreseen the consequence of what they were doing. Of the Bombay tragedy I was myself a witness. The workers neglected the duty of telling the people, whilst they were preparing them about boycott, to remain tolerant, as also of posting volunteers in areas visited by the labouring population. I myself neglected the duty of putting down every insolent laying of hands upon other people's turbans and caps. Finally take Madras. Not one single incident which happened in Madras was unavoidable. I hold the Congress Committee responsible for all that happened in Madras. With the experience of Bombay fresh in their minds they could, even if they were not fully confident, have avoided hartal. The fact is in every case all the workers did not understand the full purpose of non-violence nor its implications. They liked and loved excitement, and underneath these vast demonstrations was an idea unconsciously lurking in the breast that it was a kind of demonstration of force, the very negation of non-violence. To follow out non-violence as a policy surely does not require saints for its working, but it does require honest workers who understand what is expected of them.

You say that the people work under the spell of one year's limit. There is much truth in what you say, but there again, if the people worked slowly under that spell, they were certainly not working for swaraj. I can understand some temporary excitement, but excitement must not be the whole thing, nor the main part of a great national activity. Swaraj after all is not a mango trick; it is a steady evolution, steady growing into strength such that a period must arrive when our strength has assumed such proportions as to tell upon the usurpers, but every moment of our activity we are gaining swaraj.

Certainly a peaceful Tehsil at the foot of the Himalayas will be affected by a violent hamlet situated near the Cape Comorin if there is a vital connection between the two, as there must be if they are both integral parts of India and your swaraj flag is to dominate both. At the same time, for mass civil disobedience in Bardoli, I would certainly have thought nothing of anything happening in an out-of-the-way Tehsil which had not come under the influence of the Congress and which had not resorted to violence in connection with any Congress activity. You cannot predicate any such want of connection about Gorakhpur, Bombay or Madras. Violence broke out in connection with a national activity. You have the forcible illustration of Malabar.[1] There it was organized and sustained violence offered by the Moplahs, and yet I did not allow Malabar to affect any of our plans, nor have I

[1] *Vide* "Moplah Outbreak", 4-9-1921.

altered my views during all these months. I can still distinguish between Malabar and Gorakhpur. The Moplahs themselves had not been touched by the non-co-operation spirit. They are not like the other Indians nor even like the other Mussulmans. I am prepared to admit that the movement had an indirect effect upon them. The Moplah revolt was so different in kind that it did not affect the other parts of India, whereas Gorakhpur was typical, and therefore, if we had not taken energetic steps, the infection might easily have spread to the other parts of India.

You say that, individual civil disobedience being withdrawn, there will be no opportunity to test the temper of the people. We do not want to test the temper. On the contrary we want the people to become immersed in industries and constructive activities so that their temper is not exposed to the constant danger of being ruffled. A man wishing to gain self-control instead of exposing himself to temptations avoids them, though, at the same time, he is ready for them if they come to him unsought and in spite of his wanting to avoid them.

We certainly have not suspended any item of non-co-operation. This you will see clearly brought out in *Young India*. I am satisfied that our success depends upon our cultivating exemplary self-restraint and not disobeying even unseen orders of prohibition of meetings. We must learn to conduct our campaign in spite of prohibitions and without civil disobedience. If the people want excitement, we must refuse to give it to them even though we have to risk unpopularity and find ourselves in a hopeless minority. Even a few hundred chosen workers, scattered throughout the length and breadth of the country, stolidly following the programme will create a far more lasting impression than a haphazard mass movement undertaken in order to truckle to the multitude. I would like you therefore to become introspective and to find out for yourself the truth. If you still consider that there is a flaw in the reasoning I have put before you, I would like you to combat the position I have taken. I want us all to think originally and to arrive at independent conclusions. A drastic overhauling of ourselves and of the movement is absolutely necessary.

I do not mind having finally to find out that non-violence is an impracticable dream. If such is our belief, it will be at least an honest belief. For me there is but one thing. I would love to contemplate the dreamland of non-violence in preference to the practicable reality of violence. I have burnt my boats, but that has nothing to do with any of my co-workers. The majority of them have come into the movement as a purely political movement. They do not share my religious

beliefs, and I do not seek to thrust them upon them.

You must get better soon and, if necessary, you should come here to further discuss the matter.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA
GUNTUR

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 7977

113. MY DISAPPOINTMENT

I am not a quick despairer. I see rays of hope even in clouds of despair and I live on that food. But I must say the meeting[1] of the All-India Congress Committee this time disappointed me. If, as an optimist, I see light even where there is pitch darkness, it is because I force myself to do so.

If my view had not received a majority, I would certainly have seen signs of success. However, I feel crushed under the weight of majority opinion. I do not like shouts of victory; many times I have actually to plug my ears. With such shouts in their mouths, frenzied mobs killed people and burned down houses in Ahmedabad, Viramgam, Amritsar[2] , Chauri Chaura and other places.

The All-India Congress Committee gave me a majority, but I could see that very few really like the Bardoli resolutions.[3] I got the votes becasue I was Gandhi and not because people were convinced. How can we put any value on them? When we are struggling to establish the rule of the people, of what avail is the victory of one individual? Truth and principle alone should triumph in such a case. A duel was going on between the heart and the head of the majority. The heart would incline towards me, while the head would run miles away from me. I felt, and still feel, unhappy at this.

How far will the wagon go, having thus to be pushed all the time? My soul testifies that, even if we do not accept non-violence in thought, word and deed, that is, even if we regard non-violence only as

[1] Held at Delhi on February 24-25, 1922; at this meeting the resolution suspending mass civil disobdience but allowing individual satyagraha was adopted.

[2] In April 1919, during demonstrations against the Rowlatt Act, mobs had resorted to violence at Ahmedabad, Viramgam and Amritsar.

[3] The Working Committee of the Congress met at Bardoli on February 11 and 12. At Gandhiji's instance, it decided to cancel the programme of mass civil disobedience and to substitute a constructive programme of spinning, temperance, social reform and educational activites.

a matter of expediency, we should see, as clearly as we do the full moon, that after Chauri Chaura there can be nothing but the Bardoli resolutions.[1] And yet, if the Bardoli resolution has been confirmed [by the A.I.C.C.], it was not on its merits but for my sake. The sailors, who without knowing the directions continue to pilot their ship relying solely on their pilot, will see their ship sink if the latter happens to die or they lose faith in him. It would be dangerous to sail in a ship piloted by such men. Similarly, those who pass Congress resolutions without understanding them will see the ship of the Congress go down.

To me at any rate it is clear that, if we believe that we can win only through non-violence but combine the methods of non-violence and violence, the mixture will go sour and do us harm instead of good. Just as Bardoli's performance would have had an effect on the whole of India, Chauri Chaura, too will have a similar effect. If we are in our right mind, we must see this. We can not see both the sun and moon in the sky at the same time. It cannot be so very cold while the sun shines. How long will a deliberate representing of sunlight as shade succeed? How long can we succeed in the game of making a traveller proceeding to the north believe that he is going southwards? How long can one hide the fact that, in the name of non-violence, violence is going on?

Even a policy adopted for practical reasons should be faithfully adhered to as long at least as the need for it remains. A policy adopted out of expediency, while it is being followed, should be followed whole-heartedly. Any person who promises to devote himself to work for five days should do so completely on those five days. He may love idleness, but he cannot say, after promising to work, that he has no faith in work and, therefore, will not work even on those five days. We would all say that, if he does not believe in working even for five days, he should certainly stay out of a team of people who are ready to work.

Indians have decided that, without non-violence, their country's salvation is impossible as, without it, India cannot unite and the spinning-wheel programme will not succeed. Without Hindu-Muslim unity and without the spinning-wheel, India cannot advance even one step. The former is India's life-breath, the latter its body. Both grow in the soil of non-violence.

Though the matter is so plain, and though we keep uttering the

[1] *Vide* "The All India Congress Committee", 10-11-1921. and "Speech at Congress Session, Ahmedabad-1 - Speech at Congress Session, Ahmedabad-1I, 28-12-1921 & "Bardoli's Decision", 30-1-1922.

word “non-violence”, we harbour violence in our minds and are full of anger. Can a pseudo-saint who has “the name of Rama on his lips and a dagger under his arm” ascend to heaven?

Despite many warnings by me, the Bardoli resolutions were passed by a large majority. This has put me in a predicament. If all those votes have been cast with proper thought, the outcome can be good. If all the delegates who cast those votes believe that we should remain peaceful henceforth, that it is necessary for us to work on silently, then we shall acquire more strength than we have at present.

It is as necessary now to postpone going to jail as it once was to go to jail. Under tyrannical rule, the jail will always remain a gateway to freedom. But one needs to be an artist even for going to jail. Thieves and impostors go to jail, no doubt, but they do not secure freedom by doing so. They merely suffer their punishment there. Nor can those who go to jail with an agitated mind and full of anger be happy there. To them, the jail will not seem a home for service, whereas one who goes to jail with a calm mind will certainly believe that, even while in jail, he does the highest service, or better service [than he did outside]. While there, he should think with a quiet mind, increase his self-control and follow rules more strictly. Socrates made his best speech holding a cup of poison in his hand and, by his death, won immortality for himself and his words. Tilak Maharaj wrote his two greatest books in jail. No one can say that he wasted a single moment in jail or that the years he spent in jail were wasted. Even now, those[1] who have been doing their work in jails are in fact doing service.

At the present time, to court imprisonment will mean encouraging violence. Hence, staying out has become our duty for the time being.

We may fear that, if we do not go to jail, the enemy will look on us as cowards and we shall be dishonoured. When the enemy believes that we are cowards but actually we are not, the hour of our victory draws near because what seems to be our cowardliness is our strength and the enemy’s illusion misleads him. How can he who prays only for God’s help be ever dishonoured? One can be dishonoured only if one does anything even slightly unworthy. We do not wish to avoid imprisonment through fear of jail. But we should avoid it through fear of acting thoughtlessly or out of pride or through fear of encouraging violence. We may desist from courting imprisonment, not in order to please the enemy, but to please ourselves. Having abandoned the idea of going to jail, should we not get ready for hanging?

[1] Imprisoned during the Non-co-operation campaign of 1920-21

We should not do what the enemy wishes us to do. Just now, he wants us to get more angry still. He is trying to provoke us. He is shaking his fist defiantly at us, he looks angrily at us, growling and shaking his mane. If we allow ourselves to be provoked, we shall fall. His weapons are pride, hypocrisy, disregard for all restraint, and intimidation. Ours are peace and humility. We shall not mind if the enemy regards or describes us as frightened, but we cannot afford to see it proved that we have broken our pledge.

This is why I have decided that our first atonement is to leave the prisoners out of account for the time being. Having committed mistakes, we have lost our power to secure the release of the prisoners through our own efforts, and they do not want to be released through the Government's favour. If they are released by the Government on its own, they will be unhappy and we shall feel humiliated.

It is not as if we can get them released only by going to jail. We can secure their release through the power of truth and by remaining faithful to the pledge. Just as we can show our strength by going to jail, so can we also by doing constructive work. Our strength consists not in actually doing a particular thing but in the spirit in which it is done. One who goes to jail out of shame is not a man of strength but, when the occasion for going to jail arises, one who declines to do so even at the risk of being regarded as a coward may be a strong man. Strength lies in being true to ourselves in action.

If India or Gujarat carries out the constructive work in a month's time, it can secure the release of prisoners within that period. It is not at all difficult to do this if we have the services of many honest, thoughtful and well-known men as workers.

1. Every man and woman should take the Congress pledge and get his or her name enrolled at a Congress office, paying four annas.

2. Contributions should be collected for the Tilak Swaraj Fund[1].

3. National schools should be started and run.

4. The homes of liquor-addicts should be visited.

5. People who wear foreign cloth should be persuaded to wear khadi and the spinning-wheel should be introduced into every home.

6. *Antyajas* should be helped.

7. Panchayats should be set up.

8. Any person who suffers from a disease or injury should be nursed, irrespective of whether he be white or black.

There is not a single item among these which will require ages

[1] Instituted as a memorial to Bal Gangadhar Tilak who died in 1920

for implementation, unless public opinion is against our activities. But at present we claim that public opinion is with us. If it is so, and if we have honest workers with us, is there any item among those listed above in which we may not get immediate success?

To my mind, this programme is a test for the people. If they really desire victory through non-violence, they will carry it out enthusiastically. If they want only violence, they will most certainly oppose our constructive programme and, when we start civil disobedience, they will get ready to resort to their uncivil disobedience disguised as civil disobedience. This is the greatest danger facing us. Hence, those who wish to engage themselves in peaceful activities should resolutely go ahead along their chosen path. It will matter little if they are reduced to a mere handful in number, are humiliated or lose respect among the people. When this happens, they will be able to carry on their work fearlessly and take every step with firmness. At present, whenever they wish to resort to a strong measure like civil disobedience, they find themselves beset with difficulties.

My path is clear. I see that people exploit my name. Murders were committed in my name in Chauri Chaura. When I talk of civil disobedience, my listeners ignore "civil" and accept only "disobedience". The term "civil disobedience" should be taken as an indissoluble compound. There are two kinds of mixtures in chemistry. One is a simple mixture in which the elements which form the mixture retain their properties. The other is a compound in which the result is a third substance whose properties differ from those of either of the constituent elements. Civil disobedience is such a chemical compound. It entails not a single evil result of disobedience and we never find in it the effects produced by mere civility. We often see weakness with civility and arrogance, untruth, etc. with disobedience. In civil disobedience, everything should be above reproach and there should be complete fearlessness. As long as there are persons who break up the inseparable elements of this expression and accept only "disobedience" from it, it is well-nigh impossible to conduct civil disobedience. If, however, the people would boycott those who offer civil disobedience, the latter could demonstrate their strength. If they do not adopt that course, I shall have to non-co-operate with the party advocating violence, as I do with the Government.

I do not believe that the country is prepared for violence or that the weak "rice-eaters" can in any way profit from swaraj won through violence. They will remain victims of the votaries of violence, much as they are today. What the devotees of violence desire is not swaraj for the millions of India but power for themselves. Of course, they will not admit this charge. They do not even know that their

activities are bound to have this result. I have not written this article in order to blame them. I am merely pointing at the consequences of their activities.

It is only by following the path of non-violence that India can win freedom in a few months. I believe that it cannot do so even in a hundred years by following the path of violence; if, moreover, the swaraj for which we are struggling is the swaraj of the poor and of the weak "rice-eaters", then the latter will not be able to shake off their weakness for a century [along the path of violence]. By our experiment in non-violence, we show even to the poor that, if they choose, they can display the same strength of their soul as an emperor can through his.

If this is not so, if this belief is unfounded, then this non-violent non-co-operation is also wrong and we can speak simply of non-co-operation. We should stop using terms like civility, peace, truth, etc., and calling the Government Satanic. One who fights with Satanic means has no right to regard or describe the opponent as Satanic.

I have, thus, more than enough reasons to be filled with despair, but I will certainly not give up hope. I shall hope that India will understand the full propriety of the Bardoli resolutions, that at least some provinces, if not all, in any event Gujarat, will thoroughly understand the absolute necessity of peace or that, if I cannot make even Gujarat understand it, there will be at least some individuals in the country who will understand this great step. My last hope is that, if I have always shown to India the path of truth, God will grant me the good sense and strength to stick steadfastly to my pledge through every trial and ordeal. Hence, though enveloped in despair, I shall not abandon optimism. For, God means Truth and Truth means peace. God is, without doubt, the supporter of Truth. Truth always triumphs. Though knowing this, if through fear I doubt it, who would be a greater coward than I?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan 5-3-1922

114. SWADESHI v. *KHADI*

"Swadeshi" is a very widely known word. It is a comprehensive word. Such a word can have both a good and a bad effect. The sea is vast. But for it, we would not get oxygen. However, the sea, like fire, is all-devouring. Immeasurable dross is washed into it and yet in itself it is pure. The moment one leaves the shore behind, one finds that its water is as transparent as glass. Under the sun's rays, its spray

shines like pearls and diamonds; the radiance of these is nothing compared to that of the sea. The sea lets ships sail across its waters, and yet , if anyone were to drink the water, he would feel sick. We get sweet potable water from wells, rivulets and small streams. Swadeshi, then, is a sea, an ocean. Nations can prosper by following it even to a small extent. When its meaning is explained, the word impresses. But, at present, if we take a headlong plunge into the sea of swadeshi, we are likely to be drowned. Just now, swadeshi is no more than an aspiration which it is beyond our capacity to realize.

Some say in the name of swadeshi that they will make or buy swadeshi padlocks and not buy Chubb padlocks. In preference to the Rogers brand of knives, some buy a knife with an edge none too fine, and even one which would not so much as cut a nose, and some others try to manufacture such knives. Some ask for swadeshi paper, while others want ink, penholders and pins. Thus, everyone demands a swadeshi product of his choice to gratify his sentiment for swadeshi. But this can be of no benefit to our country. It only brings the word "swadeshi" into disrepute and harms the cause.

A house-builder does not, at the very start, put up balconies, porticos, doors and windows and arrange furniture. First, he lays the foundation, then he builds the walls and when they are ready, he begins plastering and painting them. The same is true about the edifice of swadeshi.

By now we have understood the significance of swadeshi and have known its practical uses well enough to grasp its true meaning and import. Till now we have cheated ourselves in the name of swadeshi and effected a few changes. We took swadeshi to mean cloth produced in our country. That was the first stage. Then we realized that foreign yarn woven into cloth in India was not swadeshi and would benefit the country in but an insignificant measure. Thus came the second stage when we persuaded ourselves that cloth woven in the mills in our country from yarn produced by them would do. But we learnt through further experience that even this did not serve our purpose. One of its evil effects was that the price of mill-cloth went up considerably and scarcity of cloth seemed imminent.

The third stage was reached when we preferred cloth woven by hand though the yarn was spun in mills. Even in this, we did not show that we had grasped the real significance of swadeshi.

Now, arriving at the fourth stage we seem to have learnt that swadeshi means khadi woven by hand from hand-spun yarn. Everything else is false and useless.

Khadi means the spinning-wheel. How can we ever have khadi

without it? Like swaraj, khadi is our birth-right, and it is our life-long duty to use that only. Anyone who does not fulfil that duty is totally ignorant of what swaraj is.

The aim of swadeshi or swaraj can be and is simply this, that the starving people of India may be fed, famine may be banished from the country, the chastity of Indian women may be safeguarded and Indian children in the country may get a little milk.

As long as the spinning-wheel does not become universal, like the oven, I believe it is impossible that India will be prosperous again .

Suppose India were free to act as she desired and imported the cheapest cloth, that, regardless of the difference in the conditions obtaining in England and here, she introduced "free trade", that is, trade without protective tariff, her plight would then become worse than it is today.

Just as our people cannot afford to do away with the ovens in their homes even if someone offered to cook their food for them free of charge, so also they cannot afford to do away with the spinning-wheel. "What a bother is the oven! In every home an oven, and fire to be lighted in every home. What a nuisance this is! As the day dawns, every housewife must swallow smoke. How oppressive this is!" What would happen if, misled by such deceptive arguments, we should choose to take our meals at a common dining-club in every village, having thrown away our ovens? Can anyone doubt that the children in the country will then go uncared for? The destruction of the oven is not economics, it is the science of doom. It does not deserve the honour of being called economics.

By abolishing the spinning-wheel, we have invited upon ourselves starvation and immorality. If we banish the oven, we would invite death. By reinstating the spinning-wheel, we would brighten our homes which have become desolate.

Hence, in the present circumstances, our special and highest duty is khadi. Khadi should be in demand like ghee. Hand-spun yarn should be regarded as valuable as milk. The spinning-wheel is also as venerable as the cow. Just as a home without a cow is no home, so too a home without a spinning-wheel is no home. Just as neither the rich nor the poor consider milking a cow a degrading thing, so too the rich and the poor—everyone—should regard spinning not as a degrading thing but as something becoming a householder. A cow sometimes kicks and she demands fodder. The spinning-wheel is so benevolent that it does not kick and needs no food at all. You can draw from it yarn, white as milk, at your will. A cow yields milk according to her capacity. The spinning-wheel gives yarn according to our capacity.

Preserving the spinning-wheel means protecting the cow. Anyone who would preserve the spinning-wheel ought to use only such khadi in which both the warp and the woof are hand-spun.

I feel and everyone should feel ashamed that the Provincial Congress Committee has to advertise khadi. That foreign cloth or mill cloth is sold and khadi remains unsold is certainly no sign of India's prosperity. It is like eating the bran in preference to the grain.

Protection of the cow has become almost impossible except through the revival of the spinning-wheel. Because Indian farmers do not have money, they sell off their cattle or starve them. As Indians are weak, so are all their cattle, for the country's state is that of a bankrupt. India uses up its capital resources in order to live. The capital is getting exhausted day by day. India does not get enough of oxygen and feels suffocated. The people of India are forced to remain idle at least for four months in a year. People who are thus forced to remain idle cannot but be ruined. For crores of people, the spinning-wheel is the only occupation which can supplement their income from the fields; most emphatically, they have no other one.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-3-1922

115. MY NOTES

CONGRESS LEVY

Those who command people's obedience have their taxes willingly paid. There are big temples in India and they are maintained by their devotees without any effort having to be made for the purpose. Surely, no volunteers had gone round collecting funds for the golden dome that crowns the Vishwanath temple at Kashi. The pious made donations on their own. The Sikh temple at Amritsar has plastering of marble, doors of silver and gold-plate on the dome, for which reason it is known as the Golden Temple. Its wealth was willingly contributed by the pious Sikhs. The money for the huge mosques that we see at so many places was received without a collection drive. It should be so about the Congress too. If the people regard the Congress as means which enables them to follow their dharma and their worldly pursuits, if the Muslims believe that Congress rule means the protection of the Khilafat and freedom for themselves, if the Hindus see in it protection of the cow, and their own freedom, the Parsis the protection of their fire-temples and their own freedom and if the Christians and Jews also feel likewise, all of them should support the Congress in their own interests or as a matter of

duty. Supporting the Congress means, among other things, paying its levy. If it is a body enjoying popular support, it should never be in want of funds. We shall know before long whether or not it is a popular organization.

This time, the Congress has really levied a tax. There already was one levy—the sum of four annas required to be paid by those enrolling themselves as members and wishing to be voters. The new levy should be paid by all whether they are members or not—even the salaried class who like the Congress.

Those who revere Tilak Maharaj, who believe that the greatest memorial to him is the attainment of swaraj, should pay the levy.

The new levy is equivalent to one per cent of one's income during the last year. That is to say, the Congress wants one rupee from a person whose income for the year was Rs. 100. This levy is the lightest. The Government scrutinizes books of account, the Congress will examine the heart. Everyone should send to the Congress office his contribution in proportion to his income.

But my aim in writing this article is rather personal. Nearly 35,000 copies of *Navajivan* sell every week. Taking it that a copy is read by at least three persons, there are 1,05,000 readers. I wish to test them. If they approve of the work being done by the Congress, they should pay their levy through *Navajivan*. Every reader of *Navajivan* may send his own levy or readers in every town should collect the levy from their friends—never from strangers—and remit the collection to the *Navajivan* office. Its receipt will be acknowledged in *Navajivan* every week and the amount will be sent to the Secretary of the Provincial Congress Committee.

I hope everyone will honestly pay one per cent of his income. People may pay more if they like, but none should pay less. Those paying less may send any amount they like as a gift but, as levy to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, they should pay no less than one per cent. They may pay more according to their inclinations. Those who can pay more should certainly do so, so as to make good to the Congress the loss on account of those who do not pay. Those paying more may be regarded as paying on behalf of others.

At present, this money can be used mainly for three purposes. The donor may earmark his contribution for any one of them as he may desire. They are: popularizing khadi or the spinning-wheel, education and work among the *Antyajas*. We must put education on a sound basis during this year. I would regard it as a matter of shame for us if there was even one pupil in a Government school. We can attract every child to our schools by improving them. It will also be a

shame for us if there is even one child who does not attend a school.

Both these activities are such that, if they are organized honestly, those who pay the levy and the people as a whole will get a tenfold return. The fifteen lakhs which Gujarat gave last year have been mainly used for these two activities. This year we shall need for them even more funds, not less. Moreover, we shall undoubtedly have to spend this year more money on work among the *Antyajas*. Hence, if the work of the Congress has satisfied the Gujaratis, they will pay more but not less [than they did last year] and make the collection less troublesome. This will be the first test of the measure of willing obedience which the Congress commands. I hope that people will start paying this levy, each one of his own accord without waiting to see what others do.

Let everyone note that the accounts of the Provincial Congress Committee are perfectly in order. They have even been examined by two auditors, one appointed by the local Congress Committee and the other by the All-India Congress Committee, and have been published from time to time.

AHMEDABAD MUNICIPALITY

A municipality is under the general control of the people, while a Committee [appointed by the Government] has administrative authority in its own hands. When the Government set up such a committee, the Municipality became national, because the relations of the people's representatives with the Government came to an end.

This event can be viewed from two angles. If we regard the suspension of the Municipality by the Government as an unexpected and unwelcome development, we cannot say that the Municipality has become national; we should say, rather, that people have been deprived of the power they enjoyed. If we hold—and that of course is the right thing to do—that it was our aim that the Government should either surrender to the Municipality or suspend it, then we can say that the Municipality has become independent or national.

It is for the citizens to show whether or not it has really become national. If they trust their representative and get the city's work done through them, then the Municipality has become national. If on the contrary they submit to the Committee even in matters in which they can easily exercise their freedom, it will be plain that the Municipality has been taken over by the Government.

The honour of the citizens and of their representatives rests in the hands of the citizens themselves. No one can command the obedience of another against his wishes. This is an immutable law. It is true that, in thousands of instances, we feel that people are made to do

things under force. If someone makes me do anything under threat of death, we call it coercion. However, if I have no fear of death, who can force me to do anything? I cannot, therefore, say that I have done anything against my wish. When a person does something, submitting to physical force, it is certainly customary to say that he did what he did against his will. Actually, it is not so. The soul binds as well as releases itself.

The dispute was only about education. As regards lighting, sanitation, water supply, etc., the Municipality certainly wanted to co-operate with the Government. We had nothing much to lose if the Government lighted the street lamps. What we could not tolerate was that the Government should kindle the flame of knowledge in the temples of our children's hearts or that it should whitewash their brains. That flame and that whitewashing were not natural. Therefore, we made our education national. On this subject, our views and those of the Government could not be reconciled. The citizens can assert their supremacy in this matter. Let the Government clean the roads if it so chooses. We do not have to pass them on to the Government to get them swept, but children can be taught in schools only if we send them there willingly. Hence, if the citizens would only give some thought to the subject of education, they would be able to maintain complete freedom in this field.

I was pleased to hear, while returning from Delhi,[1] that about 35 national schools had already been started for nearly 7,000 children and that arrangements were afoot to start more. I hope there will not be a single boy or girl left in the schools managed by the Committee, that is, by the Government.

If the citizens so desire, not a single boy or girl will ever attend a Government school. Sometimes our affairs suffer because of our own lassitude or indifference. Let us hope that the citizens will not remain indifferent in regard to their children at any rate. We have merely to find money and provide good education. It is possible to impart the best education to children at minimum cost if we retain control of education in our hands.

I congratulate those parents who have withdrawn their children from Government schools and those who have made over their buildings, as also the teachers who have given up Government service. I hope that they will complete what they have started and go even further.

"The Committee will have the citizens' money—people will pay

[1] Gandhiji returned to Ahmedabad from Delhi on March 1.

taxes." I would advise that we do not discuss this matter at this stage. I shall consider it a complete victory of the citizens if they carry out the programme in regard to education. It will be proper to raise other issues only after completing this job. If we start another struggle now, this most important task is likely to suffer. Besides, starting another struggle is likely to add to the prevailing bitterness. There will be grace in it if we can carry out even the programme of education with mutual understanding and without fuss. If the citizens succeed in organizing the work of education independently and if there is no use or show of force, direct or indirect, that will set no ordinary example for others to follow.

MERCHANTS' ANXIETY

We see that the merchant class feels apprehensive at present. The merchants fear that the present struggle will ruin business. This is not a correct view. The struggle is not directed against trade or traders; it is for the benefit of trade. Today, out of every hundred rupees, the traders themselves earn only five and send the rest out of the country. If the present struggle succeeds, they will retain all the hundred or keep five for themselves and let ninety five reach the homes of the poor.

Businessmen need only to be fearless, to have confidence and take a little risk. It is not that the Government encourages trade; it encourages slavery and, at most, brokerage. For every Indian whom it allows to be a millionaire, it helps a hundred others in Europe to be so. I hope businessmen who understand this plain reasoning will plunge headlong into the struggle; if the trading class plays its part well, there will be an early end to this struggle and the traders themselves, as also the rest of the country, will be able to carry on their normal work in peace.

The cloth merchants will have to show more courage than others. They should give up trade in foreign and mill cloth and should sell pure khadi only. Honest trade in khadi also can flourish; it will provide livelihood to hundreds and thus promote the welfare of the people. One need not assume that businessmen can never remain honest. They will see from experience that, if they set a limit to their profits, they will never have to resort to untruth.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan 5-3-1922

116. FOREWORD

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 5, 1922

Typed copies of Mr. Badrul Hassan's chapters on the Drink and Drug Evil have lain on my desk for over three months. I had hoped to be able to go through them and write a fairly long foreword, and in that hope I have been postponing writing the foreword. I must no longer do so.

Mr. Badrul Hassan was for many months assisting me in bringing out *Young India* from week to week. The readers of *Young India* will recall his chapters on the Alcohol and Opium habits. They discover a close study of blue-books and statistical abstracts. The chapters now presented to the reader are a reprint of Mr. Badrul Hassan's writings in *Young India* with enlargements and additions. They will repay perusal, and they cannot but help the reformer who is bent upon ridding India of the double evil. Mr. Badrul Hassan's study shows also how the policy of the Government has tended to increase the habit. The facts and figures presented in these chapters to the reader demonstrate in the clearest possible manner that the Government has trafficked in these two vices of the people of India. It will be no defense to urge that the vice has existed in India from time immemorial. No one organized the vice as the present Government has for purposes of revenue. But I must not anticipate. Let the young writer prove his own case.

M. K. GANDHI

The Drink and Drug Evil in India, pp. V-VI

117. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Sunday [*March 5, 1922*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,[2]

What you write about Vasumatiben is correct. I regard Krishnadas to be a yogi. His calmness, patience, intelligence, and

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru's release, to which this letter refers, took place on Friday, March 3, 1922.

[2] Devdas Gandhi (1900-1957); youngest son of Gandhiji; worked in Champaran villages in 1917 and went to jail during the Salt Satyagraha, 1930; managing editor, *The Hindustan Times*, 1940-57

single-mindedness are all worthy of emulation.

You did well in asking me the questions you did in your letter. I am an *anekantavadi*[1] . I can see many sides of a question. The guard cannot demand from a passenger, whom he might find without a ticket, fare from a place beyond the last checking station. This is the general practice. That is why I told him that the fare from Abu Road could not be paid. Besides, it was none of your duty to pay it. Those boys had boarded the train quite innocently. I had accepted as reasonable the argument that they must pay the fare from Palanpur. I had thought that they were unwilling to pay it.

This is the position about the Modern School. Because boys were forced to join in honouring the Prince, picketing was no answer. You could have publicly protested against it. Moreover, I thought that your case was that you resorted to picketing because the boys were punished. That was still worse.

If you wish to ask any more question, you may.

Now that Jawaharlal has come out, you will get plenty of help.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Keep to the rule as regards time.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original; S.N. 7979

118. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Silence Day [*March 6, 1922*][2]

CHI. DEVDAS,

These are the wire and letter received here.[3] The letter is from Satish Babu. Reply to him immediately.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I replied to you yesterday. Do go and see Mr. Joseph, the Headmaster, when you get time.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S.N. 7980

[1] One who believes in looking at things from more than one point of view

[2] The postscript evidently refers to the Modern School incident mentioned in the preceding item.

[3] These are not available.

119. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[1]

Silence Day, March 6, 1922

You must have calmed down by now. There is, therefore, not much to write. I have not yet written to Mahadev. I intend to do so today. If I write, I shall send the letter to you and you may forward it to him, so that your curiosity may be satisfied.

You do not have to apologize for anything you write to me. I may learn something from it.

I am an *anekantavadi*. This is the most important thing that I have learnt from Jain philosophy. It is implicit in Vedanta philosophy, while in Jain philosophy it is explicitly stated. I do not see any contradiction between what I did in Delhi[2] and what I am doing in suspending the movement. Had I been rigid in Delhi, it would have been violence on my part. When friends put their difficulties before me with an open mind, how could I brush them aside? When, however I decided to give freedom to the Provinces, I made up my own plans and thus accommodated both the parties. So far as the Government was concerned, I had nothing to consider. It was for this reason that Gokhale[3] bestowed two adjectives upon me.

He told the members of the Society[4] that I was as yielding as I was rigid and advised them to admit me. But they could see only my rigidity. I shall spend Sunday and Monday in Surat and go to Bardoli on Tuesday.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp.46-7

[1] Son of Gandhiji's sister

[2] At a meeting of the Congress Working Committee in Delhi on February 24-25, Gandhiji tried to bring about a compromise between conflicting views on the suspension of civil disobedience; *Vide* "Interview to the Press", 26-2-1922.

[3] Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915); patriot and statesman; presided over the Banaras session of the Indian National Congress in 1905; founder of the Servants of India Society; visited South Africa in 1912 at Gandhiji's suggestion.

[4] The Servants of India Society, Poona

120. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 7, 1922

MY DEAR PRAKASAM [1],

You ask me for my future programme. I have just sent you a telegram as follows:

"In Ahmedabad till Saturday Surat Sunday Monday Bardoli Tuesday."

But that is Government willing, for I have persistent rumours being thrust upon me that my leave is now more than over-due, and I am also told that I shall be relieved of my burdens inside of 7 days. Subject, therefore, to that happy contingency you have the foregoing programme. If I am arrested, I look to you and all who are out to keep absolute peace. It will be the best honour that the country can do me. Nothing would pain me more, in whatever jail I may find myself, than to be informed by my custodians that a single head has been broken by or on behalf of non-co-operators, a single man had been insulted or a single building damaged. If the people or the workers have at all understood my message, they will keep exemplary peace. I would certainly be delighted if on the night following my arrest there was throughout the length and breadth of India a bonfire of all foreign cloth voluntarily surrendered by the people without the slightest compulsion having been exercised and a fixed determination to use nothing but khaddar and, till then, in the glorious weather of India, to wear nothing but a piece of loin-cloth, and in the case of Mussalmans the minimum required by religious obligation. I would certainly love to be told that there was a phenomenal demand for spinning-wheels and that all workers who did not know hand-spinning had commenced it in right earnest. The more I think over our future programme and the more news I get about the spirit of violence that has silently but surely crept into our ranks, the more convinced I am that even individual civil disobedience would be wrong. It would be much better to be forsaken by everybody and to be doing the right thing than to be doing the wrong thing for the sake of boasting a

[1] 1876-1957; editor, *Swarajya*; was known as "Andhra Kesari"¾the lion of Andhra; Chief Minister of Madras and later, of Andhra Pradesh.

large following. Whether we are few or whether we are many, so long as we believe in the programme of non-violence, there is no absolution from the full constructive programme. Enforce it today, and the whole country is ready for mass civil disobedience tomorrow. Fail in the effort, and you are not ready even for individual civil disobedience. Nor is the matter difficult. If all the members of the All-India Congress Committee and Provincial Congress Committees are convinced of the correctness of the premises I have laid down, the same can be done. The pity of it is that they are not so convinced. A policy is a temporary creed liable to be changed, but while it holds good, it has got to be pursued with apostolic zeal.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 7973

121. TELEGRAM TO T. PRAKASAM

[*March 8, 1922*]

GLAD TO LEARN VENKATAPPAYYA'S ARREST.[1] HOPE THERE WILL BE NO HARTAL, NO DEMONSTRATION, NO CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE, NOT EVEN MENTAL ANGUISH, BUT A GRIM DETERMINATION TO PURSUE THE CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME. MOST EFFECTIVE DEMONSTRATION WOULD BE FOR EVERY ANDHRA WHO LOVES VENKATAPPAYYA TO DISCARD ALL FOREIGN CLOTH, TAKE TO SPINNING AND REMOVE UNTOUCHABILITY. ATTENDING YOUR REQUIREMENTS.

GANDHI

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 257

[1] *Vide* "Deshbhakta's Arrest", 9-3-1922.

122. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Wednesday [*March 8, 1922*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL[2] ,

Dr Mehta[3] has asked for a man for Ratu. I can think of no one except Surendra[4]. The work requires patience, love and forbearance. Speak to Surendra. See that he does not give his consent merely out of regard for us. Let him move about with Ratu. If he can win him over, he may bring Ratu here. But if he is unwilling, he should be free to decline. If you can think of any other alternative, let me know. If Surendra is agreeable to go, he should see me at Bardoli and then start. If he decides to go, wire Dr. [Mehta] and ask him whether wecould send Surendra. I am writing this on way to Ajmer. I shall return from there on Friday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5987. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

123. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON[5]

AJMER,
March 8, 1922

MY DEAR CHILD,

It is only here where I have come for a day, that I get the time to write to you. The loss of your Bohemian independence is more than made up by your sharing your life with another. If marriage has any meaning at all, it must point to the greater selfsurrender which is in store for everyone of us. The surrender by two dissimilar (in form)

[1] Gandhiji reached Ajmer on this date.

[2] Maganlal Khushalchand Gandhi (1883-1928); Gandhiji's nephew; sometime manager of the Phoenix Settlement, Natal; manager, Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, 1915-28

[3] Dr. Pranjivan Jagjivan Mehta, Gandhiji's friend since his student days in London

[4] Presumably Surendra Medh of Ahmedabad who had participated in Gandhiji's satyagraha movement in South Africa

[5] Esther Faering, who was like a daughter to Gandhiji, had married E. K. Menon. She had come to India as a Danish missionary and later joined Sabarmati Ashram; *Vide* "Letter to Esther Faering", 12-12-1917.

persons one to the other is greater independence because it is a realization of greater responsibility. The discharge of the greatest responsibility is the greatest independence. This is secured only by the fullest surrender to God.

I know you will come whenever you can. I am not moving from Gujarat for some time, if I am still left free. There are all sorts of rumours about my arrest.

Miss Petersen[1] owes me a letter.

With my love to you all,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N. A. I.; also *My Dear Child* p .75

124. NON-VIOLENCE

When a person claims to be non-violent, he is expected not to be angry with one who has injured him. He will not wish him harm ; he will wish him well ; he will not swear at him ; he will not cause him any physical hurt. He will put up with all the injury to which he is subjected by the wrongdoer. Thus non-violence is complete innocence. Complete non-violence is complete absence of ill will against all that lives. It therefore embraces even sub-human life not excluding noxious insects or beasts. They have not been created to feed our destructive propensities. If we only knew the mind of the Creator, we should find their proper place in His creation. Non-violence is therefore, in its active form, goodwill towards all life. It is pure Love. I read it in the Hindu scriptures, in the Bible, in the Koran.

Non-violence is a perfect state. It is a goal towards which all mankind moves naturally though unconsciously. Man does not become divine when he personifies innocence in himself. Only then does he become truly man. In our present state, we are partly men and partly beasts and, in our ignorance and even arrogance, say that we truly fulfil the purpose of our species when we deliver blow for blow and develop the measure of anger required for the purpose. We pretend to believe that retaliation is the law of our being, whereas in every scripture we find that retaliation is nowhere obligatory but only permissible. It is restraint that is obligatory. Retaliation is indulgence requiring elaborate regulating. Restraint is the law of our being. For, highest perfection is unattainable without highest restraint. Suffering is thus the badge of the human tribe.

[1] Anne Marie Petersen, a Danish missionary

The goal ever recedes from us. The greater the progress, the greater the recognition of our unworthiness. Satisfaction lies in the effort, not in the attainment. Full effort is full victory.

Therefore, though I realize more than ever how far I am from that goal, for me the Law of complete Love is the law of my being. Each time I fail, my effort shall be all the more determined for my failure.

But I am *not* preaching this final law through the Congress or the Khilafat organization. I know my own limitations only too well. I know that any such attempt is foredoomed to failure. To expect a whole mass of men and women to obey that law all at once is not to know its working. But I do preach from the Congress platform the deductions of the law. What the Congress and the Khilafat organizations have accepted is but a fragment of the implications of that law. Given true workers, the limited measure of its application can be realized in respect of vast masses of people within a short time. But the little measure of it to be true must satisfy the same test as the whole. A drop of water must yield to the analyst the same results as a lakeful. The nature of my non-violence towards my brother cannot be different from that of my non-violence to the universe. When I extend the love for my brother to the whole universe, it must still satisfy the same test.

A particular practice is a policy when its application is limited to time or space. Highest policy is therefore fullest practice. But honesty as policy while it lasts is not anything different from honesty as a creed. A merchant believing in honesty as a policy will sell the same measure and quality of cloth to the yard as a merchant with honesty as a creed. The difference between the two is that the political merchant will leave his honesty when it does not pay, the believing one will continue it even though he should lose his all.

The political non-violence of the non-co-operator does not stand this test in the vast majority of cases. Hence the prolongation of the struggle. Let no one blame the unbending English nature. The hardest "fibre" must melt in the fire of love. I cannot be dislodged from the position because I know it. When British or other nature does not respond, the fire is not strong enough, if it is there at all.

Our non-violence need not be of the strong, but it *has* to be of the truthful. We must not intend harm to the English or to our co-operating countrymen if and whilst we claim to be non-violent. But the majority of us *have* intended harm and we have refrained from doing it because of our weakness or under the ignorant belief that mere refraining from physical hurt amounted to due fulfilment of our

pledge. Our pledge of non-violence excludes the possibility of future retaliation. Some of us seem, unfortunately, to have merely postponed the date of revenge.

Let me not be misunderstood. I do not say that the policy of non-violence excludes the possibility of revenge when the policy is abandoned. But it does most emphatically exclude the possibility of future revenge after a successful termination of the struggle. Therefore, whilst we are pursuing the policy of non-violence, we are bound to be actively friendly to English administrators and their co-operators. I felt ashamed when I was told that in some parts of India it was not safe for Englishmen or wellknown co-operators to move about safely. The disgraceful scenes that took place at a recent Madras meeting were a complete denial of non-violence. Those who howled down the Chairman, because he was supposed to have insulted me, disgraced themselves and their policy. They wounded the heart of their friend and helper, Mr Andrews[1]. They injured their own cause. If the Chairman believed that I was a scoundrel, he had a perfect right to say so. Ignorance is no provocation. But a non-co-operator is pledged to put up with the gravest provocation. Provocation there would be, when I act scoundrel-like. I grant that it will be enough to absolve every non-co-operator from the pledge of non-violence and that any non-co-operator will be fully justified in taking my life for misleading him.

It may be that even cultivation of such limited non-violence is impossible in the majority of cases. It may be that we must not expect people even out of self-interest not to *intend* harm to the opponent whilst they are *doing* none. We must then, to be honest, clearly give up the use of the word "non-violence" in connection with our struggle. The alternative need not be immediate resort to violence. But the people will not then be called upon to subject themselves to any discipline in non-violence. A person like me will not then feel called upon to shoulder the responsibility for Chauri Chaura. The school of limited non-violence will then still flourish in its obscurity, but without the terrible burden of responsibility it carries today.

But if non-violence is to remain the policy of the nation, for its fair name and that of humanity, we are bound to carry it out to the letter and in the spirit.

And if we intend to follow out the policy, if we believe in it, We must then quickly make up with the Englishmen and the co-operators. We must get their certificate that they feel absolutely safe in our midst

[1] Charles Freer Andrews (1871-1940); English missionary, author, educationist and a close associate of Gandhiji

and that they may regard us as friends although we belong to a radically different school of thought and politics. We must welcome them to our political platforms as honoured guests. We must meet them on neutral platforms as comrades. We must devise methods of such meeting. Our non-violence must not breed violence, hatred and ill will. We stand like the rest of fellow-mortals to be judged by our works. A programme of non-violence for the attainment of swaraj necessarily means ability to conduct our affairs on non-violent lines. That means inculcation of a spirit of obedience. Mr Churchill[1], who understands only the gospel of force, is quite right in saying that the Irish problem is different in character from the Indian. He means in effect that the Irish, having fought their way to their swaraj through violence, will be well able to maintain it by violence, if need be. India on the other hand, if she wins swaraj in reality by non-violence, must be able to maintain it chiefly by non-violent means. This Mr. Churchill can hardly believe to be possible unless India proves her ability by an ocular demonstration of the principle. Such a demonstration is impossible unless non-violence has permeated society so that people in their *corporate*, i.e., political, life respond to non-violence, in other words, civil instead of military authority, as at present, gains predominance.

Swaraj by non-violent means can therefore never mean an interval of chaos and anarchy. Swaraj by non-violence must be a progressively peaceful revolution such that the transference of power from a close corporation to the people's representatives will be as natural as the dropping of a fully ripe fruit from a well-nurtured tree. I say again that such a thing may be quite impossible of attainment. But I know that nothing less is the implication of non-violence. And if the present workers do not believe in the probability of achieving such comparatively non-violent atmosphere, they should drop the non-violent programme and frame another which is wholly different in character. If we approach our programme with the mental reservation that, after all, we shall wrest the power from the British by force of arms, then we are untrue to our profession of non-violence. If we believe in our programme, we are bound to believe that the British people are not unamenable to the force of affection as they are undoubtedly amenable to force of arms. For the unbelievers, the Councils are undoubtedly the school of learning with their heavy programme of humiliations spread over a few generations or a rapid but bloody

[1] Sir Winston Churchill (1874-1965); British statesman and writer, Secretary of State for War, 1918-21; Prime Minister, 1940-45,1951-55; was awarded Nobel Prize for literature in 1953.

revolution probably never witnessed before in the world. I have no desire to take part in such a revolution. I will not be a willing instrument for promoting it. The choice, in my opinion, lies between honest non-violence with non-co-operation as its necessary corollary or reversion to responsive co-operation, i.e., co-operation *cum* obstruction.

Young India, 9-3-1922

125. AFTER CHAURI CHAURA

TO THE EDITOR, *Young India*

SIR,

I was one of the six deputed at Hata Tehsil by the District Congress Committee, Gorakhpur, to help the villages in resuming their normal aspect. Hata Tehsil is in the vicinity of Chauri Chaura. During my short stay there, I was flooded with the reports of the unbridled tyranny of the police from various quarters. News came from Dhanavti (and I had no reasons to dismiss them as untrue) that the police had exacted bribes from the people on pain of implicating them in the Chauri Chaura affair. While I was touring through the villages, I was authentically informed at Usri that three persons of Deogaon, Chattar Dhari, Ram Khagid and Amlu were made to pay Rs. 10, 2 and 1 respectively by the *sowars* at the point of the spear. Reports of brutal assaults were not lacking. I myself saw with my own naked eyes the cuts inflicted by the merciless shower of lashes (or cane) to which one Bhagelua Koeri of Ubhaon village was subjected. One rupee was subsequently snatched away from him which belonged to the Congress Fund. I have known the people who have been actually looted. If the Government cares to contradict the reports, I will take it upon myself to prove the substance of the allegations I have made.

I assure you many a crime of the police would not see the light of the day. If you come to know of the splendid patience with which the Khalabadis (the people of Basti Teshsil) are bearing the untold miseries that have fallen to their lot, you will bless them abundantly.

Sudarshan Bhawan *Yours, etc.,*

ALLAHABAD, JANG BAHADUR SINGH

28-2-'22

Whatever the guilt of the crowd at Chauri Chaura, the police outrages reported by numerous correspondents are wholly unjustified. The remedy with the people is to love the police in spite of their atrocities and to wean them from their error.

Young India, 9-3-1922

126. NOTES

PERPLEXED

A correspondent from Lahore writes under date 3rd March:

> So far as the facts about "Bardoli decision" have come to light, it appears the decision was arrived at either under the influence of Pundit Malaviya[1] or under some far-fetched notions of non-violence. In the former case the act is most unworthy, and in the latter it is most unwise. Is not the ideal of the Congress swaraj and not non-violence? People have imbibed non-violence generally, which surely must do for the Congress purpose. How the breaches like those at Bombay and Gorakhpur can make the engine come to a standstill, I cannot understand. And if M. Paul Richard is true as to your aspirations of World Leader through non-violence even at the cost of Indian interest, it is surely unbecoming and, excuse me to say, dishonest.
>
> And have you realized the effects of this sudden standstill? Mr. Montagu's[2] threat comes for that. Lord Reading[3] and his Government are harder to us than ever before. It had almost yielded. As to the public, there is a general distrust prevailing among the classes and the masses. Surely it is difficult to make men play things of the hour and their disgust and disappointment show how the fight was carried on in right earnest. Don't you perceive that it is a shock and that two such shocks must enervate the combatants altogether?
>
> Besides, I have heard the responsible Mussalmans talk of withdrawing co-operation even from the Hindus. The fight is religious with them. It is the Jihad, I should say. God's Command and the Prophet's is no joke to start and to stop the Jehad at will. If the Hindus should retire, they say they must devise their own course. Will you take care to ease one heart that feels uneasy on this account?

It is impossible to withhold sympathy from the writer. His letter is typical of the attitude I saw reflected in Delhi. I have already given the assurance that Pundit Malaviyaji had nothing to do with Bardoli decision. Nor have any"far-fetched notions of non-violence" anything to do with it. The correspondent's letter is the best justification for it. To me the Bardoli decision is the logical outcome of

[1] Madan Mohan Malaviya (1861-1946); founder of the Banaras Hindu University; member, Imperial Legislative Council; twice President of the Indian National Congress, 1909 and 1919

[2] Secretary of State for India, 1917-22

[3] Lord Reading (1860-1935); Viceroy and Governor-General of India, 1921-26; Foreign Secretary in the first National Goverment of England, 1931

the national pledge of limited non-violence. I entirely endorse the opinion that swaraj is the nation's goal, not non-violence. It is true that my goal is as much swaraj as non-violence, because I hold swaraj for the masses to be unattainable save through non-violence. But have I not repeatedly said in these columns that I would have India become free even by violence rather than that she should remain in bondage? In slavery she is a helpless partner in the violence of the slave-holder. It is however true that I could not take part in a violent attempt at deliverance if only because I do not believe in the possibility of success by violence. I cannot pull the trigger against my worst enemy. If I succeed in convincing the world of the supremacy of the law of non-violence and the futility of violence for the progress of mankind, the corespondent will find that India will have automatically gained her end. But I freely confess my utter inability to do so without first convincing India that she can be free only by non-violent and truthful means and no other.

I must further confess that what Mr. Montagu or Lord Reading would think of the decision did not concern me and therefore their threats do not perturb or affect me. Nor should they affect any non-co-operator. He burnt his boats when he embarked upon his mission. But this I know that, if India becomes non-violent in intent, word and deed, even the hearts of Mr. Montagu and Lord Reading will be changed. As it is, marvellous though our progress has been in non-violent action, our hearts and our speech have not become non-violent. Mr. Montagu and Lord Reading do not believe in the sincerity of our profession nor in the possibility of sincere workers succeeding in creating a truly non-violent atmosphere. What is therefore required is more and yet more non-violence "in intent, word and deed".

As for the people, I have little doubt that they will survive the purifying shock. I regard the present depression as a prelude to steady progress. But should it prove otherwise, the truth of the Bardoli decision cannot be denied. It stands independent of public approval. God *is,* even though the whole world deny Him. Truth *stands*, even if there be no public support. It is self-sustained.

I should be sorry, indeed, if responsible Mussalmans will not see the obvious corollaries of non-violence. In my opinion the fight is as religious with Hindus as with Mussalmans. I agree that ours is a spiritual jehad. But a jehad has, like all other wars, its strict restrictions and limitations. The Hindus and Mussalmans sail in the same boat. The dissatisfaction is common to both and it is open to both to dissolve partnership with each other. Either or both may also depose me from generalship. It is purely a partnership at will. Finally I assure

the correspondent that, when I find that I cannot carry conviction home to the people, I shall withdraw from the command myself.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

I invite the reader to study the leading article of the week on non-violence.[1] The article became fairly long even with a discussion of the main principles. I did not therefore discuss the important side issues in it but reserved them for the Notes.

Such for instance are the questions:

(1) When can even individual civil disobedience be resumed?

(2) What kind of violence will stop civil disobedience?

(3) Is there room for self-defense in the limited conception of non-violence?

(4) Supposing the Mussalmans or the Hindus secede, can a non-violent campaign be carried on by one community alone?

(5) Supposing Hindus and Mussalmans both reject me, what would become of my preaching?

I shall take the question seriatim. Civil disobedience, even individual civil disobedience, requires a tranquil atmosphere. It must not be commenced till the workers have assimilated the spirit of non-violence and have procured a certificate of merit from the co-operators whether English or Indian, i.e., till they have really ceased to think ill of them. The surest test will be when our meetings are purged of intolerance and our writings of bitterness. Another necessary test will be our serious handling of the constructive programme. If we cannot settle down to it, to me it will be proof positive of our disbelief in the capacity of non-violence to achieve the purpose.

NON-VIOLENT ATMOSPHERE

It is not every kind of violence that will stop civil disobedience. I should not be dismayed by family feuds even though they may be sanguinary. Nor will the violence of robbers baffle me though they would be to me an indication of the absence of general purification. It is political violence which *must* stop civil disobedience. Chauri Chaura was an instance of political violence. It arose from a political demonstration which we should have avoided if we were not capable of conducting it absolutely peacefully. I did not allow Malabar and Malegaon[2] to interrupt our course, because the Moplahs were a special people and they had not come under the influence of non-violence to any appreciable extent. Malegaon is more difficult, but there is clear

[1] *Vide* "Non-violence", 9-3-1922.

[2] *Vide* "Malegaon's Crime", 8-5-1921.

evidence that the chief non-co-operators had tried their best to prevent the murders. Nor was mass civil disobedience imminent at the time. It could not interrupt individual civil disobedience elsewhere.

SELF-DEFENSE

The non-co-operator's pledge does not exclude the right of private self-defence. Non-co-operators are under prohibition as to political violence. Those, therefore, with whom non-co-operation is not their final creed, are certainly free to defend themselves or their dependents and wards against their assailants. But they may not defend themselves against the police acting in discharge of their duties, whether assumed or authorized. Thus, there was no right of self-defence under the pledge against Collectors who have, I hold, illegally belaboured volunteers.

IF MUSSALMANS OR HINDUS SECEDE

If one of the big communities secede from the compact of non-violence, I admit that it is most difficult, though certainly not impossible, for one party only to carry on the struggle. That party will need to have an invulnerable faith in the policy of non-violence. But if one community does realize that India cannot gain swaraj for generations through violent means, it can by its consistently non-violent, i.e., loving conduct, bring round all the opposing parties to its side.

IF BOTH REJECT ME

If both the parties reject me, I should keep my peace just as ever and most decidedly carry on my propaganda of non-violence. I should then not be restricted as I am now. Then I should be enforcing my creed, as today I seem to be enforcing only the policy.

MANUFACTURE OF CRIME

A correspondent sends the translation of the following notice issued by the Cantonment Magistrate at Pindi[1] on certain volunteers:

> It is brought to my notice that you took part (or were present) in the anti-Government propaganda being carried out in the R. Pindi Cantt. and because only such persons can reside in the Cantts. who are loyal to (*Khairkhah* of) the Government, you are hereby warned that if you are found being present in any such meeting in future, you will be recommended for being turned out of the Cantt. limits.

Thus, this Magistrate has made even attendance at meetings where anti-Government propaganda may be carried on a crime. Even co-operators sometimes carry on an anti-Government campaign.

[1] Rawalpindi

Multiplication of such orders will bring down the Government with the weight of its own enormity, even as a person suffering from obesity becomes at last incapable of walking.

RIGHT OF RESIDENCE FORBIDDEN

A friend has sent the following notice issued by the District Magistrate of Noakhali on the 16th February:

> Whereas I am credibly informed that a certain building in the town of Noakhali called the "Swaraj Ashram" is being used for the harbouring of so-called volunteers who belong to an organization which has been declared unlawful by Government under the Criminal Law Amendment Act,
>
> And whereas I am credibly informed that the owner of the land on which this building stands is Babu Nalini Kanta Mukherjee and that the building was by his permission first of all occupied by Babu Promotha Nath Sen Gupta and thereafter turned into a home for the so-called volunteers,
>
> Now, therefore, I, O. M. Narain, District Magistrate of Noakhali, do call upon Babu Nalini Kanta Mukherjee, Babu Promotha Nath [Sen] Gupta, and the volunteers and other people, who are at present using or occupying this building or the land on which it stands, to show cause on the 18th February 1922 at 12 noon in the Court of the District Magistrate of Noakhali why an order should not issue under Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure forbidding the use of the said building or land for any purpose by the said volunteers on the following grounds:
>
> Firstly, that the said volunteers belong to an unlawful association and that the building is therefore being used for an unlawful purpose and
>
> Secondly, that the conduct of the volunteers using the building is a source of annoyance to the neighbourhood and a danger to the public tranquillity.

I do not know what happened on the day of the hearing of the notice, but it is worthy of note that the building in question could not be used by the volunteers "for any purpose", presumably, therefore, even for mere residence apart from the volunteers' activities as such. The grounds upon which the notice was issued are also as strange as the notice itself. The Magistrate argues that as the volunteers belong to an unlawful association, the building occupied by them is used for an unlawful purpose. It follows from this that no landlord is safe in letting his property to any person whatsoever. How should he know if he is a potential thief or an actual sedition-monger?

The second reason is even more ludicrous than the first. How can the conduct of volunteers, whose only crime is open defiance of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, be a source of annoyance to the neighbourhood in which they reside and why should such volunteers not be imprisoned if they are a source of annoyance? The action of the Magistrate is almost like letting a thief alone and then charging the

public with the task of punishing him by depriving him of shelter. It really amounts to teaching people Lynch Law.

INCITING TO ASSAULT

The retiring President of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce[1] has come out with the boldest declaration in favour of Lynch Law. He has found it necessary to throw off the mask of hypocrisy, laid down the law of racial superiority, dictated to the Moderates what they are expected to do and asked the Englishmen "to hit back hard when attacked". We cannot afford to answer this impudence in our chosen manner. That can only be done when we have become proof against provocation. For the time being, I must ask the Bengali friends voluntarily, deliberately and out of their strength to remain calm, unperturbed and non-resistant. To resort to civil disobedience out of anger will not only be contradictory conduct, but will be playing into the hands of the opponent. Let the District Magistrate of Noakhali and the Englishman who allows himself to be influenced by the incitements of the retiring President of the Bengal Chamber do their worst. The programme before us is to exhaust alike the District Magistrate and the Chamber President by receiving the blows in a dignified manner and without retaliation. The fury is bound then to return to itself for want of response.

GWALIOR'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST GANDHI CAP

A correspondent has sent me a copy of a notification by the Gwalior State signed by the Peshi Officer. It occupies nearly five printed columns of a newspaper. It is a dissertation on khaddar. It goes on to say that there is no harm about the inhabitants of the Gwalior State using khaddar, that they always used to wear it and that, in view of the high prices of cloth, there was nothing strange in the people taking to khaddar wear, but the notification warns the people against attending lectures on khaddar, and finally prohibits in the following terms the use of the "Gandhi cap" The original is in Hindi.

> But it is necessary here to state that nowadays a particular type of khaddar cap has come into vogue which is in the form of a boat and whose two sides are capable of being folded. The fact is that such caps are not being used for economizing cloth, but it has become an emblem of a particular party and it has become so intimately connected with one class of views that it is believed that those who use it entertain those views. For these reasons, the use of such caps is improper. In this (prohibition) are not included caps of any other pattern whether they are

[1] Sir Robert Watson-Smythe

made of khaddar or any other cloth.

I am sorry for this unnecessary prejudice against a harmless and cheap cap. I venture to inform the Gwalior authorities that, whilst it is true that many non-co-operators wear what are known as "Gandhi caps", there are thousands who wear them simply for convenience and cheapness, but who are no more non-co-operators than the Peshi Officer himself.

MORE WRITTEN NEWSPAPERS

Assam bids fair to beat every other province in the number of its written newspapers. Golaghat has now come out with a written weekly in Assamese. It gives the general news and smart editorial columns. I have been favoured with a translation of the third number of the issue which is called *Bande Mataram*. In the editorial notes, commenting upon an Anglo-Indian twitting us for desiring liberty by saying that even tigers and burglars desire liberty, the editor says:

> We do not want the meaning of liberty taught us by others. India insists upon becoming mistress in her own house. She does not want to become a mere student receiving lessons in liberty. She has under the bureaucratic system long enough remained under deception. She has now regained her consciousness and her eyes are opened.

I can only repeat to the editor and manager of this weekly the hope expressed in respect of other written newspapers, that there will be the strictest adherence to truth and there will be no violent or provocative language used in connection with the new venture.

"OBJECTIONABLE" WIRES

It has evidently become the fashion nowadays to reject wires containing news of repression as objectionable. Here is one despatched by the Secretary, Sind Provincial Congress Committee, on the 22nd February, from Hyderabad:

> Repression in Sind is going on apace. In Sahiti District, where Section 108 has been freely applied, Mr. Gobindram has been sentenced to one year's rigorous and Mr. Khemchand, President, District Congress Committee and Editor, *Shakti*, is awaiting his trial. Mr. Dhaloomal, Sind provincial propagandist, has been arrested under same section. Latter's work in Nagarparker side of Tharparker District where evil system of Rasai, Begar and Lape prevailed, resulted in stoppage of evil, which proved too much for the local officials. Notices under Section 144 prohibiting addressing meetings within five miles of Mughulbin have been served on seven workers on the eve of a fair to prevent propaganda. Messrs Sobharaj and Wadhumal, Joint Secretaries, Shikarpur District Congress Committee, with seven others have been sentenced to rupees hundred fine or in default 3 months, simple for obstruction of road. The nine workers organized *Nagar-Keertan* with no

intention of procession and as usual expecting no police interference, but sudden attention was paid to them by Shikarpur police. One paid fine, remaining preferred jail. City Magistrate, Karachi, has been invested with additional powers to require security for good conduct in case of Sedition Section 108, which means that the officials want to clear the ground by sweeping off workers before Prince comes to Karachi.

The following is a wire addressed to Hakimji[1] and sent from Raghunathpur by the President of the Sub-Divisional Congress Committee, Buxar:

Inform Mahatmaji Congress camps pitched in Brahmapur fair for last two days forcibly pulled down yesterday night by Collector, Superintendent, Arrah, Armed Gurkhas and Rameshwarsingh Deputy Collector, Resident Brahmapur. Volunteers brutally assaulted, forcibly removed with elephant help. Tents, flags, other articles taken away. Liquor, ganja volunteers cruelly beaten with *lathis*. Complete peace prevails.

The third has been received from Belsand. The Secretary, Thana Congress Committee, says:

The local Sub-Inspector of Police, Mr. Nath Sahay Roy, is nowadays bent upon provoking people to violence. On the 23rd February' 22 he went to Pachra and Ath Koni villages, where the constables by his orders forcibly entered the Zenana houses of Babu Musafir Sinha, Bhubneshwar Sinha and Ram Briksh Mahto, volunteers, and took away utensils and water pots worth Rs. 15 from the houses of the former two, and one cage with a *pahari* parrot worth Rs. 10, one quilt worth Rs 6, one dhoti worth Rs. 2-8, $4^1/_2$ mds. of paddy seeds worth Rs. 18, 7 mds. of maize seeds worth Rs. 20 one *batook* (cooking pot) worth Rs.11 and one she-goat with three kids worth Rs. 10, total amounting to Rs. 67-8-0, from the house of the latter. On the 25th February 1922, he went to Bhataulia to realize the fine from Mohammad Jan already in jail and forcibly entered the house of Shaikh Shabu Jan, his brother, whose household affairs are quite separate from Mohammad's for more than a year, and kicked the earthen granary (kothi) and took away 10 mds. of paddy seed worth Rs. 40, 1 md. and $5^1/_2$ *paseris* of rice worth Rs. 9 and 1 *bedhua* (water pot) worth Rs. 5, total amounting to Rs.54.

The three telegrams are important and contain details of repression. When Congress offices are burnt and looted, workers are sent to jail on one pretext or another, the temptation to civil resistance is irresistible, but I must warn workers against it. If they want a completely non-violent atmosphere, they must stop all aggressive activity for the time being. Let every person be his own Congress office and Khilafat office and let him confine himself to spreading the

[1] Hakim Ajmal Khan (1865-1927); physician and politician who took a leading part in the Khilafat Movement; President, Indian National Congress, 1921

gospel of spinning and khaddar and, if nobody listens to him, I assure him that he will have done a good day's work if he will devote all his time to any of the cotton processes¾carding, hand-spinning, hand-weaving. It is the one most useful and enduring thing about which there is no retracing and there is no possibility of mistake.

MISLEADING

Readers have besieged me with leaflets which the Propaganda Committee of W.I.N. Liberal Association has been distributing broadcast. I like its enthusiasm and activity. It does good and keeps non-co-operators up to the mark and shows them their bad side. I would only suggest to the Propaganda Committee that exaggeration would do it no good. I am sure it will not indulge in conscious exaggeration. I would therefore venture to correct some of the mis-statements.

Leaflets No. 6 contains the following:

> What would India be like when Gandhi-Raj comes? . . .
>
> No Railways. No Hospitals. No Machinery. No army and navy will be wanted, because Gandhi will assure other nations that India would not interfere with them, and so they will not interfere with India!
>
> No laws necessary, no courts necessary, because everyone will be law unto himself. Everybody will be free to do what he likes. It will be a very easy life, because everybody will have to go about in a khaddar *langoti*[1] and sleep in the open.

I cannot say that this is an exaggeration. It is a clever caricature permissible in Western warfare. It is only suggestively false. Let me say what I mean. In the first instance, India is not striving to establish "Gandhi-Raj". It is in dead earnest to establish swaraj and would gladly and legitimately sacrifice Gandhi for the sake of winning swaraj. "Gandhi-Raj" is an ideal condition, and in that condition all the five negatives will represent a true picture, but under swaraj nobody ever dreams, certainly I do not dream, of no railways, no hospitals, no machinery, no army and navy, no laws and no law-courts. On the contrary, there will be railways: only they will not be intended for military or the economic exploitation of India, but they will be used for promoting internal trade and will make the lives of third-class passengers fairly comfortable. There will be some return made for the fares the third-class public pay. Nobody anticipates complete absence of diseases during swaraj: there will therefore certainly be hospitals, but one hopes that the hospitals will then be intended more for those who suffer from accidents than from self-

[1] Lion cloth

indulgence. Machinery there certainly will be in the shape of spinning-wheel, which is after all a delicate piece of machinery, but I have no doubt that several factories will grow up in India under swaraj intended for the benefit of the people, not as now for draining the masses dry. I do not know of the navy, but I do know that the army of India of the future will not consist of hirelings to be utilized for keeping India under subjection and for depriving other nations of their liberty, but it would be largely cut down, will consist largely of volunteers and will be utilized for policing India. There will be law and law-courts also under swaraj, but they will be custodians of the people's liberty, not¾ as they now are¾ instruments in the hands of a bureaucracy which has emasculated and is intent upon further emasculating a whole nation. Lastly, whilst it will be optional for everybody who chooses to go about in *langoti* and sleep in the open, let me hope that it will not be necessary, as it is today, for millions to go about with a dirty rag which serves for a *langoti* for want of the means to buy sufficient clothing and to rest their weary and starved bodies in the open for want of a roof. It is not right therefore to tear some ideas expressed in *Indian Home Rule*[1] from their proper setting, caricature them and put them before the people as if I was preaching these ideas for anybody's acceptance.

In another pamphlet isolated acts of hooliganism, no doubt done by non-co-operators or their sympathizers, have been repeated as if they were the ordinary vocation of non-co-operators, and then follows the amazing summing-up:

> Non-co-operation is destruction, a falling back to the bad old days of bloody civil strife and confusion.

Non-co-operation is certainly partly destruction in so far as it is necessary, but not of the type of Bombay as suggested in the leaflet, but destruction of a vicious system by peaceful means, and I should very much like to know the bad old days of bloody civil strife and confusion. Is there any warrant in history for such a belief? I have known people sing of good old days. I have seen some verses in the vernacular text-books singing the praises of British rule at the expense of pre-British rule, but I do not know that there ever was a time when there was "bloody civil strife and confusion" throughout the length and breadth of India.

PROGRESS OF KHADDAR IN BIHAR

The *Bihar Herald* is responsible for the following news:

> In the Land Revenue Administration Report of the Bihar and Orissa

[1] For the text of this book, *Vide* "Hind Swaraj , 22-11-1909.

Government, it is recorded that in Patna, Bhagalpur and Tirhut, the levying of *abwabs*[1] has materially decreased with the growing knowledge among the tenantry of their rights, and that at Bhagalpur, the opposition to such extractions has been stiffened by the non-co-operation movement.

The contribution of non-co-operation to the revival of the charkha and the weaving industry is noteworthy. In Bihar, according to official figures, three-eighths of the cloth worn is woven on the handloom. The charkha gave a further impetus to the weaving trade. In Patna, Tirhut, Orissa and Chota-Nagpur divisions, "Motia" cloth is being spun and woven with success . . . . An extended use of coarse cloth manufactured in country looms is evident . . . the weaving industry of Tasar in Navadah and "Daris", etc., in Aurangabad, continued to thrive.

The extract shows the steady progress made by constructive work in Bihar, a place where 3 years ago it would have been difficult to see a spinning-wheel anywhere or a yard of homespun khaddar. Only the poor people of Bihar know what a blessing the charkha has been to them.

AN M.L.C. RESIGNS

Sjt. Sita Ram, a pleader of Kheri, sends me a copy of his resignation as a member of the Legislative Council of the United Provinces. The following is the text:

It is with feelings of great regret that I beg to announce the resignation of my seat in the U.P. Legislative Council. It was after the announcement of the Reforms that I sought my election to the Council for the first time, and I had faith that the Reformed Government would be different from what it was in pre-Reform days and that the reign of terror and Dyerism would be a thing of the past and that there would be no more undue and undeserved repression in the country and that only guilty persons would be punished and that people would be able to do real service to the country by being returned to the Councils. The experience of one year has, however, belied all my hopes. I have seen that arrogance and haughtiness are much more in evidence in Council than respect and goodwill for others. Class and communal interests are still there. The experience of my own district has convinced me that there is still a place for Dyerism in the machinery of the Government. Mr, Young, special Manager of the . . . Estate, committed acts tending to lead to breach of peace and tyrannized the entire population of . . . and the Government has not seen its way of doing any justice in the matter. Pundit Harkaran Nath Misra who preached non-violence to the people and directed the tenants to pay up their rents to their landlords and asked them not to resort to civil disobedience under the present circumstances, has been sentenced to three years' impri-

[1] Irrigation tax

sonment. The recent arrests throughout the whole of India and particularly in these Provinces have led me to believe that the Government is determined on the policy of shutting up every person who believes in the real self-government of India. Unfortunately, my temperament is not such that I can remain a part and parcel of such a Government and hence I beg to tender the resignation of my seat.

He informs me that there are five candidates for the post. I do not envy the five candidates. Both Sjt. Sita Ram and they are right. Sjt. Sita Ram needed personal experience to show him the true nature of the reforms. The elected candidate, let me hope, will also learn by experience; but, even at the end of the chapter, there certainly will be some men who will honestly hold the opinion that, whether good or bad, it is only through the Councils that the British administrators give us that we shall make any progress. For non-co-operators, the proceedings of the Councils and the Assembly ought to be a standing proof of the wisdom of their abstention.

PLEA FOR COOL-HEADEDNESS

Angry correspondence regarding Sir Robert Watson-Smythe's speech is streaming in. One correspondent advises me to give a full reply to that unfortunate speech. Another sends me a cutting with a covering letter in which he asks:

> Does it not represent the mentality of the average Englishman towards India, and if it does, should we not boldly ask them to clear out of India and leave the country exclusively to the children of the soil? Shall we be very much in the wrong to proclaim that our immediate object is to drive Englishmen out of India?

The correspondent says that he is an humble camp-follower in the movement. I must respectfully point out to him and those who may think like him that the mood represented in the foregoing paragraph ill-becomes a non-co-operator. Non-co-operation is a process of conversion and we have to convert by our model conduct even Britishers like Sir Robert Watson-Smythe. Whilst I am prepared to admit that the President of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce represents the mentality of the majority of Englishmen, there is a very respectable minority, that certainly does not share the Smythian mentality. And so long as we have an Andrews, a Stokes[1], a Pearson[2] in our midst, so long will it be ungentlemanly on our part to wish every Englishmen out of India. Nor is it otherwise necessary for us to take up the exclusive attitude suggested by the correspondent. I do not

[1] Samuel Stokes, social worker and associate of C. F. Andrews

[2] William Winstanley Pearson, a missionary who collaborated with C. F. Andrews in Y.M.C.A. work; taught at Santiniketan for some time in 1914.

despair of Englishmen taking a sane view of things. After all, they are a practical people. They know how to make a virtue of necessity. What they will not yield to reason, they have been known to yield to force of circumstances, but I suggest to the correspondent that we should have some faith also in ourselves. Can we escape our share of blame for being treated like "dirt"? If we have hitherto been too weak to assert ourselves, too disunited to command attention to our wishes, and too selfish to sacrifice and too ignorant to understand the true interest of the country, is it any wonder if English traders, taking advantage of our weaknesses, have lorded it over us and have begun to think that they have a prescriptive right not merely to remain in India but to command our labour as "hewers of wood and drawers of water"[?] The attitude taken up by the correspondent not only betrays anger, but it also betrays want of faith in ourselves. I venture, therefore, to think that the position that the Congress has taken up is the only dignified and feasible position. There is room enough for Englishmen and others in our country if they will live as friends and servants of the nation. There is no room for anyone, be he English or any other, if he wants to remain in India as lord and master. We must fight the demon of race superiority even though we might have to give a million lives. Let us also be humble enough to know that we are reaping the fruit of our own sinfulness. Have we not acted towards the untouchables of India as Englishmen of the Smythian type are behaving towards us?

RELEASED

Pandit Jawaharlal, Moulvi Gulamatulla, Shaikh Shaukat Ali, Sjt. Mohanlal Saxena, Pandit Balmukund Bajpeyi, Dr Sivraj Narain and Dr. L. Sahai have been prematurely released from the Lucknow Jail[1]. It is evident that the revising judge appointed by the U.P. Government has come to the conclusion that the connections were wrong. God only knows how many of these convictions are totally wrong. But the plain fact today is that prisoners rather than feeling glad over their discharges are really grieved. Pandit Jawaharlal and his companions have my sympathy. The unregistered *Independent*[2] publishes the following message from him:

> What message can I give? I have been released, I don't know why. My father, a victim of asthma, and hundreds of my co-workers lie still in jail. I

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru, along with other leaders, had been arrested on November 22, 1921.

[2] This was started in February 1919; *Vide* "Letter to Syed Hussain", 30-1-1919. The Government forfeited its security during the Non-co-operation Movement.

feel I have no right to be out of it. All I can say is: Fight on, work on for a free India. Let there be no respite, no forsaking of principles, for a false compromise. Follow our great leader Mahatma Gandhi and be true to the Congress. Be efficient, organized and, above all, remember the charkha and non-violence.

NOT EXTREMIST

The publicity Commissioner, U.P., writes from Lucknow saying that in his letter of the 15th February, the *Garhwali* of Dehra Dun was mentioned as an extremist journal by an oversight, and now writes to say that it is a moderate journal.

PETTY PERSECUTION

Babu Bimalanand Das Gupta, Dacca, who was arrested in connection with a public meeting held in Dacca on the 23rd January last and which was dispersed by force, was tried and discharged for want of evidence against him. That, however, was not enough for the authorities. He has now therefore received the following notice under Section 40 of the Legal Practitioners' Act:

> Whereas it has been reported to me by the Dist. Magistrate, Dacca, that Babu Bimalanand Das Gupta, M.A., B.L, a pleader of this Court, suspended his practice in July 1921 and engaged himself as a professor of Economics in the Dacca National College so-called; and whereas it appears further that the said Bimalanand Das Gupta took such service without the permission of the High Court; and whereas further it appears from the report of the Dist. Magistrate that the said Bimalanand Das Gupta was present and took part in a meeting held at Dacca on the 29th January 1922, in contravention of orders made by the Dist. Magistrate, Dacca, under Sec. 144 Cr. P. C.;
>
> And whereas it appears further that the said Bimalanand Das Gupta, when he was tried for an offence under Section 188 I.P.C., stated to the Court that he owed no allegiance to the British and had no regard for the post held by the trying Magistrate; and whereas it appears that the said Bimalanand Das Gupta has thereby been guilty of gross professional misconduct;
>
> It is hereby ordered that the said Bimalanand Das Gupta do show cause on or before the 7th March, why he should not be reported to the High Court for dismissal or suspension from practice.

Thus the farce that was begun with Mr. Sherwani[1] is being repeated at Dacca. The Judge who has issued the notice does not seem to have appreciated the humour of the situation. Those who have

[1] T. A. K. Sherwani, who was in charge of the National Muslim University, had given up legal practice. He was arrested soon after the disturbances in Aligarh and lodged in Naini Jail near Allahabad; *Vide* also "Notes", 5-1-1922, under the sub-title"Notice to a Barrister" & "Notes", 9-2-1922, under the sub-title"Sherwani Disabled".

suspended practice are not likely to go back to the courts till swaraj is attained. That after the attainment of swaraj all the legal practitioners who have suspended will revert to their practice if they choose follows as matter of course. What then can be the effect of the notice save that it exposes the Court to further ridicule and furnishes the public with an additional reason for boycotting courts which are used for punishing (I use the word "punishing" as the issuing Judge flatters himself with the belief that he awarded a punishment by disbarring a lawyer who has suspended practice) lawyers not for any unprofessional conduct but for holding certain political opinions no matter how strong or extreme. I should not be surprised if this notice served upon Babu Bimalanand results in stiffening his brother-practitioners of Dacca and making some of them at least leave the law-courts, even if it is by way of protest against courts being turned into engines of political oppression.

A BLESSING

Borodada (Dwijendranath Tagore)[1] sends me a beautiful little letter covering the following lines:

> My views concerning the speeding and slackening motion of the Great Vessel which is just now bearing in its bosom the earnest prayers of the sons and daughters of India for the advent of a new era of peace and good-will to mankind in this travailing earth of ours.
>
> A wise captain slackens the speed of his vessel whilst moving in the right direction, whenever it arrives at a spot abounding in dangerous rocks, and speeds his vessel as soon as he enters into the open sea which is free from all sorts of such impediments. But a foolish captain steers his vessel in a wrong direction for fear of rocks, where there is no such thing whatever under the sea, and proceeds towards an unknown region where hidden rocks are lying in wait to shatter his vessel into fragments the moment it approaches their dwelling place.
>
> Mahatma Gandhi is guiding his vessel in the former way, while his advisers want him to take the latter course.

I hope that at the end of the chapter it will be possible to say that I was "a wise captain". I can truthfully say that I have never in my life been so storm-tossed as I am at the present moment. I have hitherto flattered myself with the belief that I have a fair measure of my capacity as also my limitations, but just now I seem to be in deeper waters than I should care to find myself in. The prayers, therefore, and blessings of one so pure and so good as Borodada are most welcome to me at this juncture.

[1] Elder brother of Rabindranath Tagore

TERRIBLE IF TRUE

A correspondent, who sends in his name for my information but signs himself as "Punjab Nationalist", writes as follows:

In your issue of the 16th instant you write as follows:[1]

"The Sikh awakening seems to be truly wonderful. Not only has the Akali party become a party of effective non-violence, but it is evolving a fine code of honour. The Gurudwara Committee is now insisting on the release of Pandit Dina Nath, a non-Sikh, who was arrested in connection with the keys affair."

It seems you are not aware of the facts, or you will probably pause before labelling the warlike Akali party as one of "effective non-violence". The overbearing and disorderly conduct of Akali bands in Hoshiarpur District has necessitated sending military posse down there. At a meeting held at Bilaspur the other day within two miles of Hoshiarpur, about 2,000 Akalis were present. Rows of men with drawn swords formed themselves round a centre where the speakers were. The orators declared valiantly there was no government and that an Akali according to a prophecy would come from Kabul and, overpowering all opposition, establish himself on the throne of Delhi, and at a given signal expressed readiness to start revolutionary opera-tions. The Akalis in Hoshiarpur have a commissariat and an intelligence service of their own; they employ camel *sawars* to watch what is going on. A large crowd gathered together outside the Court of a Magistrate engaged in political cases at Gaurishanker and demanded the surrender of prisoners at their own terms.

The pledge of non-violence has now been omitted from the vow of the Akalis; and the service they undertook was not exclusively confined to the Gurudwara Reform. The meetings are the order of the day, and the substitution of the Sikh rule for the present Government is frankly put forward. Advises from Ludhiana declare that bands of Sikh enthusiasts march to the Diwans with much pomp and parade, carrying swords and axes and hammers. They march through the bazars in regular formation, and, when travelling in large numbers by railway, they refuse to pay for their tickets, sometimes even claiming the privilege of free travel, as they foolishly imagine that the country is theirs. At Samnala the Akali speakers declared: "King George V is not our king. Sardar Kharak Singh is our uncrowned king." Some men of the 23rd Pioneers returning from leave in the Kusur Tehsil have complained that they were threatened by the Akalis with the molestation of their women if they did not forthwith desert the Army and join the ranks of the Khalsa. These are, in short, some of the terrible facts which should persuade you to revise your opinion regarding the non-violent character of the awakening of the Sikhs in the

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 16-2-1922, under the sub-title "Sikh Honour".

central parts of the Punjab.

The letter has startled me. The report seems to me to be unbelievable, but as my correspondent claims accuracy for his report and as I have paid a glowing tribute to Sikh non-violence, I have not hesitated to publish the report, but I refrain from making any comments till I have heard from the Sikh friends to whom I have already written about the matter.

CASE FOR SEARCHING INQUIRY

After having dealt with the "Punjab Nationalist's" charges against the Akalis, I came upon a letter from a well-known resident of Feni in Noakhali district. He has given his full name and address. He has not asked me to keep his name back from publication, but I purposely refrain from giving the name as, if the facts set forth in his letter are true, he is likely to be subjected to ill treatment for having dared to tell the truth. The letter which is dated the 16th February reads as follows:

> I beg to bring to your notice the present condition of the Feni Subdivision in the district of Noakhali. Although I am not a non-co-operator, I have regard for you. Your movement was proclaimed as non-violent. But the violence of the followers has far exceeded the bearable limit. There is no peace and order and no respect for the elders. Bad characters of the villages have a golden opportunity to carry on their professions and have joined the Volunteer Corps. There is none to check them. The country is now in the hands of these men. Money is squeezed from the poor sellers and stall-keepers on every *hut*[1] day. The poor who can ill-afford to have two meals a day have to give one handful of rice every morning and evening; otherwise they are molested. The unfortunate men who are not non-co-operators are subjected to social boycott, attacked with night-soil, house burning, criminal intimidation, assault, pelting of stones, and the like. There is no freedom of speech for them. I give below instances of violence for your information:
>
> 1. Moulvi Nural Huq, Vakil, High Court, Mr. Ali Haider Chaudhry, and Babu Jasnada Kumar Ghosh were attacked with night-soil, because they stood as candidates for the Council.
>
> 2. Munshi Mahommed Wasil, and Munshi Reazuddin Ahmed, clerk, civil Court, were brutally assaulted and insulted in bazar because they refused to hand over their caps to the volunteers.
>
> 3. Reazuddin Munshi's Bazar, Peer Buksh Munshi's Bazar, Daroga Mahommed Ama's Bazar, and many other bazars were forcibly closed and buyers and sellers were not allowed to meet on the bazar because the proprietors of these bazars are not non-co-operators.

[1] *Hat*, Weekly market in rural areas

4. Local Sub-Divisional Officer and other leading gentlemen were molested and their motor cars were forcibly stopped in several places; stones and dust were thrown at them on many occasions.

5. House of a village gentleman was set on fire and he was intimidated in other ways because he helped the S.D.O. and his companion when his motor car was forcibly stopped.

6. Repeated attempts were made to burn Khan Saheb's house and at last his house was burnt down to ashes and then the labourers were prevented by intimidation from working in his *busha* and constructing the house.

7. Intimidation to the co-operators by means of anonymous letters, posters and publicly exciting people against them.

8. Khan Saheb was not allowed to cross a *khal* (stream) even over bamboo bridge and he was publicly insulted. There are numerous other instances. These are plain truths and I challenge anybody to disprove these facts. Local Congress and Khilafat workers do not take any action, but rather seem to take pride because they have authority to do anything they wish. I appeal to you in the name of humanity to kindly hold an enquiry, sincerely believing that you will not allow this state of things to go unchecked and will allow those who do not follow your creed, a place under the sun to live peacefully.

I have removed from the letter only one or two passages which seemed to me to be unnecessary. Hitherto, I have at times received complaints against non-co-operators and have not hesitated to publish them or otherwise deal with them, to ascertain the truth of the charges contained therein. In many cases they have proved to be exaggerated. In some they have proved to be unjustified, but strangely enough, I am receiving specific charges which the author offers to prove. Under the heading "In Cold Blood"[1], I have had the misfortune to publish from week to week tales of terrible repression in Bengal, Assam, U P., Punjab, Andhra and elsewhere. Reports continue to arrive, from one or other of these places, of studied repression, but I have flattered myself with the belief that, *on the whole*, non-co-operators could show a clean slate. The Noakhali news therefore is a rude shock. I am prepared for receiving contradictions, but there is so much wealth of detail in the correspondent's letter that the substance of the charges is likely to be well-founded. The writer asks me to hold an inquiry. I wish I had the time and the authority to do so, but I invite all the non-co-operation workers, both in the Congress and in the Khilafat Committees, to meet these charges. I would like them to send me a letter for publication, brief and to the point, not hesitating to make a clean, emphatic confession where the charges can be sustained. I invite also the Provincial Congress Committee to take up

[1] This featured in *Yound India*, in January-February 1920.

the matter immediately, to depute one or two Commissioners and to make a full and exhaustive inquiry. They do not need the name of the correspondent who has frankly given the names of those who, he holds, have been persecuted. An inquiry therefore is a simple matter. Meanwhile, as I know that publication is also half the remedy, I gladly place the columns of *Young India* at the disposal of those who can send authentic instances of intimidation, coercion, assaults, social boycott by or on behalf of non-co-operators whether Congressmen or Khilafatists. Indeed, every Congressman is a Khilafatist, and every Khilafatist is a Congressman, but since we have two organizations in the country, I appeal to both to be merciless in exposing our own wrongdoing. I could find a thousand excuses for the wrongdoing of the administrators if only because we impute to them nothing better, whereas we claim to be immaculate so far as non-violence and honesty are concerned. We shall bring the struggle to a successful issue far more quickly by being strict with ourselves. There is no excuse whatsoever for intimidation, coercion, assault or social boycott on our part. I would urge the correspondents, who may send me letters of complaints, to be brief, strictly accurate and to write in a clear hand on one side of the paper only. It is not an easy matter to go through the heavy correspondence pouring in from day to day. Compliance with this simple request will ensure quicker attention. Correspondents will take care to avoid vague generalizations. Specific details as in the Noakhali letter are absolutely necessary to inspire belief and to assist inquiry.

THE VALUE OF WORD OF HONOUR

Mr. Subramanya Siva has sent the following explanation in response to my invitation[1] published in *Young India* about his reported apology:

> The Government *communique* relating to my release is likely to make many of my countrymen misunderstand me and my present position. Mahatmaji himself writing in *Young India* wants me to clear myself by making a full statement. I have already explained myself in *The Hindu* of the 20th January last. The following is my explanation:
>
> The *communique* is so worded as to mean that the Government released me because of my undertaking. But the order to the Superintendent of the Central Jail at Trichinopoly ran thus:
>
> "Under Section (some Section) of the Criminal Procedure Code, the Governor-in-Council is pleased to remit the unexpired portion of the sentence of convict Subramanya Siva unconditionally."

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 9-2-1922, under the sub-title "A Well-Deserved Snub".

It is plain from the word "unconditionally" in the order that nothing about the undertaking or any condition is mentioned and that the recommendations of the Surgeon-General and the District Medical officer ought to have been the chief cause of my release. No condition has been imposed upon me; and I am as free as before to work in any way I like, I wish to inform my countrymen.

A word as to my undertaking. Soon after my conviction I fell so seriously ill in the jail that I, in addition to suffering from high fever, was passing endless diarrhoea motions every day, so much so that at times I fell into delirium and my life was despaired of. It was at that time I wrote an undertaking to the Government that if I were to be released, I shall refrain from politics in future. This may be considered a weak act on my part by certain people. But if the circumstances and the time in which I wrote were taken into consideration, I believe I am surely entitled to be excused. "Even Homer nods", man is liable to err; and I am no God. I have every right to expect my countrymen who have been watching my life ever since 1905 to slight this small past weakness of mine.

Though one would wish that people even suffering tortures would not tender apologies, it is not open to outsiders to criticize the conduct of those who weaken under physical suffering. Mr. Siva therefore rightly appeals to the public not to judge him harshly for having tendered the apology. But the point is that the apology having once been tendered and a promise given, it should have been faithfully carried out. Mr. Subramanya Siva is not entitled to take advantage of the word "unconditionally" occurring in the order of remission. It is a mark of confidence in the probity of a non-co-operator. Surely the Government were quite justified in believing that Mr. Siva would abide by his written word. I wish non-co-operators to earn the credit for being above reproach so far as truth and non-violence are concerned. This struggle depends for its success solely upon the acquisition of a moral prestige which can only be built up by scrupulous regard for honesty under all circumstances. Instead of taking the advantage that Mr. Siva wishes to take of the unconditional pardon, he should really recognize in this act at least the generosity of the Government in not having humiliated him by referring to the apology. I cannot close this painful subject without appealing to Mr. Subramanya Siva even now to make a public declaration that he will strictly refrain from taking part in politics and apologizing that he ever departed from the undertaking he gave. I am sure that neither he nor the public will lose by his strict adherence to his promise. There is a vast scope for him to do social and economic work. He can do a great deal of khaddar work in its purely economic and moral aspects.

A WIFE'S CONGRATULATIONS

Mr. Abdur Rahman Ghazi of Lyallpur wrote as follows whilst his case was being heard:

> Before I select a cosy corner in the Swaraj Mandir, I leave these few lines with a friend of mine to send them on to you. The case as usual is a huge farce. I have been run in under Section 108. The witnesses are all interested parties. The utter demoralization of the present Government is made clear to me by this case. The Press telegrams pertaining to it have been held up. You will be glad to know what my wife writes about the case:
>
> "Congratulations on your arrest. Thank God, the much-longed-for day is come, and God has accepted your sacrifice. We are all very happy. May you cheerfully suffer for your country and your religion, and may the Almighty arm us with sufficient strength to bear hardships for our cause".
>
> Now I gladly await the orders of the National Parliament for my release.

The foregoing was written on the 26th January. It makes somewhat sad reading on the 4th of March when the National Parliament seems to be not quite so near as it certainly appeared to be on the 26th of January. To a soldier, however, it matters not when the battle is won. To him it only matters that he should stand to his post. In my opinion, the only dignified release must be by the first Act of the Swaraj Parliament or by efflux of time and I certainly do not lose hope of the prisoners being released by national strength if the revised Bardoli programme of construction can be successfully carried out.

CALCUTTA'S UNREADINESS

A correspondent in the course of letter from Calcutta writes:

> My mind compels me to say that Bengal is doing nothing about swadeshi in comparison to the neighbouring province of Bihar. It is lagging far behind. Even those who boast themselves of being volunteers are not clad in khaddar. I have travelled through almost all the important quarters of this great town, but have not found a single person clad in khaddar. In Bihar, on the other hand, you will rarely find a man wearing foreign cloth. In the villages they have not yet begun to wear khaddar dhoties, but the attempt is being made to replace mill-made dhoties with khaddar ones.

I have merely given a few extracts from the correspondent's letter. He goes on to say that, if Calcutta's unpreparedness is reflected in the villages of Bengal also, the battle of satyagraha cannot be won. This letter is supported by several others, but I am not prepared to admit that, even in Calcutta, no progress has been done in khaddar movement. At the same time, I fear that the charge against Calcutta is mainly true. Khaddar wear in Calcutta is rather an exception than the rule, and there is no denying the fact that full

satyagraha is impossible without full compliance with the conditions precedent. If we are to usher in peaceful swaraj—and swaraj attained by peaceful means must be peaceful swaraj—we must be as ready for construction as we seem to be for destruction. Boycott and manufacture, evacuation and occupation, disobedience and obedience must go hand in hand, if we are to avoid an interval of confusion, anarchy and civil strife. The khaddar movement is the largest part of construction. We dare not neglect it if the struggle is to remain non-violent to the end.

INTERESTING INFORMATION

Though now stale, the report issued by Messrs Prakasam, Nageshwara Row and Narayan Rao about the preparedness for mass civil disobedience of the areas selected by the Guntur District Congress Committee makes interesting reading. The Commissioners divide the area into two parts: Peddanandipadu Firka and all the neighbouring villages forming one contiguous whole, and the second the rest of the Firkas consisting of Palnad, Vinukonda, Settanapalle and portions of Ongole, Narasaraopet, Tennali and Repalle. The Commissioners found that the second part of the selected area fully satisfied the conditions about khaddar but not so about untouchability, although there was a great advance in the mentality of people. As to non-violence, whilst the Commissioners admit that the people are non-violent by temperament, they say: "Still we doubt whether they could withstand a provocation or insult if it is of an extreme nature." They found that the condition about Hindu-Muslim unity was largely fulfilled.

Of the first part of the area, the Commissioners are much more enthusiastic. They estimate the total number of volunteers at about 4,000.

> They are clad in khaddar uniform with badges. Men of all ages have enlisted themselves. We found even men of 60 to 65 years doing active work. In some villages there were *Panchama* volunteers doing active work and freely mixing with others. The excellence of the organization among these ryots consists in their devotion to duty and observance of non-violence as part of their religion.

As to khaddar, the Commissioners remark:

> Most of the villages are self-contained. In some almost every house has one or more charkhas actually working. The yarn made in each village is woven generally by the village *Panchamas*. Even orthodox Brahmins have been getting their clothes made by their *Panchama* brethren. In most of the villages more than 50 per cent wear khaddar made by themselves. In some the percentage is as high as 95.

Remarking upon untouchability, they say:

> We were surprised at the extraordinary progress made by some of the villages in this area in their attempt to remove untouchability within so short a time. We could not believe that it was humanly possible to effect such a revolution in the minds of these countrymen of ours. We found the so-called untouchables admitted into the Panchayat Board. In some places orthodox Brahmins took the *Panchamas* by hand and seated them in their midst, and in some places they are admitted into the premises of Brahmins to do the same services which other castes have been doing. One rich Brahmin gentleman told us that he and some of his friends in the neighbouring villages would spend all their income to make provision for their needy *Panchama* brethren.

Their final opinion, however, is:

> In some villages untouchability has ceased to exist and in several it is likely to disappear soon. We consider the progress not uniform and not sufficient.

Their final summing-up is:

> No doubt all this is a good record, but it is difficult to see how far the masses can remain absolutely peaceful if more drastic and inhuman measures are employed. The time at their disposal for discipline has been too short. They have been just at the beginning of the fight. We consider it more advisable to postpone the campaign until the people have sufficient time to steel their hearts against all engines of oppression.

I have given relevant extracts from this valuable report to show: (1) the utter impartiality with which the Commissioners approach their mission, (2) the marvellous progress made in the selected area in fulfilling the conditions laid down by the Congress, (3) the necessity for much greater work before the idea of civil disobedience could be approached with any confidence. I am aware that extraordinary efforts were being put forth in many parts of India for due fulfilment of the Congress conditions in order that the people might be able to exercise the privilege of civil disobedience. That in itself is certainly a matter for congratulation, but work of construction ought not to have to depend upon stimulation. It must go on irrespective of the excitement of civil disobedience. Removal of untouchability, manufacture of khaddar, Hindu-Muslim unity, cultivation of non-violence are not measures of a temporary character. They are the four pillars on which the structure of swaraj must for ever rest. Take away any one of them and it must topple down. The greater, therefore, the progress in these four matters, the nearer we are to swaraj, and the nearer also to capacity for civil disobedience. Indeed, even disobedience, if it is truly civil, excludes the idea of excitement. When Daniel threw open his doors in defiance of the laws of Medes and Persians, when John Bunyan became a non-conformist, when Latimer thrust his hand into

the fire, when Prahlad embraced the red-hot iron pillar, not one of these civil resisters of old resisted under excitement. On the contrary they were, if possible, more collected and deliberate than on ordinary occasions. Absence of excitement is an infallible test of civil disobedience. I therefore hope that the good people of the selected area will not go to sleep now that mass civil disobedience has been suspended, but that they will go on with the programme of construction with greater zeal and devotion.

A WIFE'S FAITH

Mrs. Stokes in writing to Mr. Andrews says:

> I know it well that when my husband is in jail with many other sons of India, suffering for the sake of righteousness, he is sure to be happy. I am quite confident that the Almighty God will hear the cry of the oppressed and deliver His judgement.

The reader will be glad to hear that Mr. Stokes is happy and well in his prison. He is occasionally seen by friends in Lahore.

Young India, 9-3-1922

127. ILLUSTRATION OF LAXITY

TO THE EDITOR, *Young India*

SIR ,

If I can be allowed to say a word or two in connection with your article "Our Laxity"[1] in the last issue, I beg to state as follows:

> I believe, at least from my personal experience in the C. P., that the vast majority of the volunteers do not conform to the Congress conditions because the recruiting officers themselves are careless in observing the principles laid down by the Ahmedabad Congress. It is highly regrettable, while revered persons like Deshbandhu Das Lalaji, Panditji Nehru and others (now in gaols) are shouting out at the top of their voice that it is sinful for Indians to wear anything but khaddar, the Congress workers at several places are yet ashamed of wearing short khaddar dhotis instead of their mill or *videshi* dhotis. Even many of the leaders who appear on platforms to deliver speeches, I am pained to say, are seen in their old *videshi* or mill clothes.

So under the circumstances, I think the public is entitled to have your advice over this vital question of dealing with the elected representatives and office-bearers who do not abide (as stated above) by the Congress mandate.

HANSAPURI
NAGPUR
28-2-'22

Yours, etc.,
MANCHERSHAW RUSTOMJI AVARI

[1] *Vide* "Our Laxity", 23-2-1922.

The Delhi resolution is quite clear on the subject and expects all office-bearers to wear nothing but hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar.

Young India, 9-3-1922

128. THE DEATH DANCE

Why is there this chorus of condemnation of the doubling of the salt tax and other taxes on the necessaries of life? Wonder is expressed that now there is no apology even offered for the terrific military charges of sixty-two crores. The fact is, it is impossible to offer apology for the inevitable. The military charges must grow with the growing consciousness of the nation. The military is *not* required for the defence of India. But it *is* required for the forcible imposition of the English exploiters upon India. That is naked truth. Mr Mon-tagu has bluntly but honestly stated it. The retiring President of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce has said it and so has the Governor of Bombay. They want to trade with us not upon our terms, but upon their terms.

It is the same thing whether it is done with the kid glove on or without it. The Councils are the kid glove. We must pay for the glove. The reforms hang upon us like an incubus. They cover a multitude of defects including the blood-sucking salt tax.

They say to us: "We propose to hold India whether you wish it or not." We believe that all this is for our good. We think we cannot keep from fighting one another without the protecting power of the British arms. And so, being afraid to die at the hands of our brothers, we are content to live as bondmen.

It would be a thousand times better for us to be ruled by a military dictator than to have the dictatorship concealed under sham councils and assemblies. They prolong the agony and increase the expenditure. If we are so anxious to live, it would be more honourable to face the truth and submit to unabashed dictation than to pretend that we are slowly becoming free. There is no such thing as slow freedom. Freedom is like a birth. Till we are fully free, we are slaves. All birth takes place in moment.

What is this dread of the Congress but the dread of the coming freedom? The Congress has become a grim reality. And therefore it has to be destroyed, law or no law. If only sufficient terror can be struck into the hearts of the people, the exploitation can last another century. It is another question whether India itself can last that time under the growing strain or whether the people must during that time

die like flies. When a man begins to eat a coconut, he is not called upon to be tender to the kernel. When he has carved out the last bit, he throws away the shell. We do not consider it a heartless performance. No more does the trader consider what he takes from the helpless buyer. A heartless performance—there never is any heart about it. The trader takes all he can and goes his way. It is all a matter of bargain.

The councillors want their fares and extras, the ministers their salaries, the lawyers their fees, the suitors their decrees, the parents such education for their boys as would give them status in the present life, the millionaires want facilities for multiplying their millions and the rest their unmanly peace. The whole revolves beautifully round the central corporation. It is a giddy dance from which no one cares to free himself and so, as the speed increases, the exhilaration is the greater. But it is a death dance and the exhilaration is induced by the rapid heartbeat of a patient who is about to expire.

The expenditure is bound to grow so long as the dance continues. I should not be surprised if the increase is also laid upon the broad shoulders of non-co-operators. For them there is only one lesson. They may look upon the increase with philosophic calmness if they will be but true to their creed. The only way they can prevent it, the only way it will ever be prevented is the way of non-violence. For the greatest part of non-co-operation is withdrawal from the organized violence on which the Government is based. If we want to organize violence to match that of the Government, we must be prepared to incur greater expenditure even than the latter. We may not convince all the dancers of the fatal doom awaiting them, but we must be able to convince the masses who take part in it and sell their freedom to buy so-called peace. This we can only do by showing them that non-violence is the way to freedom—not the forced non-violence of the slave, but the willing non-violence of the brave and the free.

Young India, 9-3-1922

129. IF I AM ARRESTED

The rumour has been revived that my arrest is imminent.[1] It is said to be regarded as a mistake by some officials that I was not arrested when I was to be, i.e., on the 11th or 12th of February and that the Bardoli decision ought not to have been allowed to affect the Government's programme. It is said, too, that it is now no longer

[1] Gandhiji was arrested at Ahmedabad after 10 p.m. on March 10, under Section 124, Indian Penal Code.

possible for the Government to withstand the ever-rising agitation in London for my arrest and deportation. I myself cannot see how the Government can avoid arresting me if they want a permanent abandonment of civil disobedience, whether individual or mass.

I advised the Working Committee to suspend mass civil disobedience at Bardoli becasue that disobedience would not have been civil, and if I am now advising all provincial workers to suspend even individual civil disobedience, it is because I know that any disobedience at the present stage will be not civil but criminal. A tranquil atmosphere is an indispensable condition of civil disobedience. It is humiliating for me to discover that there is a spirit of violence abroad and that the Government of the United Provinces has been obliged to enlist additional police for avoiding a repetition of Chauri Chaura . I do not say that all that is claimed to have happened has happened, but it is impossible to ignore all the testimony that is given in proof of the growing spirit of violence in some parts of those provinces. In spite of my political differences with Pandit Hridayanath Kunzru[1], I regard him to be above wilful perversion of truth. I consider him to be one of the most capable among public workers. He is not a man to be easily carried away. When, therefore, he gives an opinion upon anything, it immediately arrests my attention. Making due allowance for the colouring of his judgement by reason of his pro-Government attitude, I am unable to dismiss his report of the Chauri Chaura tragedy as unworthy of consideration. Nor is it possible to ignore letters received from zemindars and others informing me of the violent temperament and ignorant lawlessness in the United Provinces. I have before me the Bareilly report signed by the Congress Secretary. Whilst the authorities behaved like madmen and forgot themselves in their fit of anger, we are not, if that report is to be believed, without fault. The volunteer procession was not a civil demonstration. It was insisted upon in spite of sharp division of opinion in our own ranks. Though the crowds that gathered were not violent, the spirit of the demonstration was undoubtedly violent. It was an impotent show of force wholly unnecessary for our purpose and hardly a prelude to civil disobedience. That the authorities could have handled the procession in a better spirit, that they ought not to have interfered with swaraj flag, that they ought not to have objected to the use of the Town Hall, which was town property, as Congress offices in view of the fact that it had been so used for some months with the permission of the Town Council, is all very true. But we have ceased to

[1] Dr. Hriday Nath Kunzru (b.1887); President of the Servants of India Society since 1936 and of the Indian Council of World Affairs since 1948.

give credit to the authorities for common or reasonable sense. On the contrary, we have set ourselves against them because we expect nothing but unreason and violence from them, and knowing that the authorities would act on better than they did, we should have refrained from all the previous irritating demonstrations. That the U.P. Government are making a mountain out of mole-hill, that they are discounting their own provocation and the provocation given by the murdered men at Chauri Chaura is nothing new. All that I am concerned with is that it is not possible for us to claim that we have given them no handle whatsoever. It is therefore as a penance that civil disobedience has been suspended. But if the atmosphere clears up, the people realize the full value of the adjective "civil" and become in reality non-violent both in spirit and in deed, and if I find that the Government still do not yield to the people's will, I shall certainly be the first person to advocate individual or mass civil disobedience as the case may be. There is no escape from that duty without the people wishing to surrender their birthright.

I doubt the sincerity of Englishmen who are born fighters when they declaim against civil disobedience as if it was a diabolical crime to be punished with exemplary severity. If they have glorified armed rebellions and resorted to them on due occasions. why are many of them up in arms against the very idea of civil resistance? I can understand their saying that the attainment of a non-violent atmosphere is a virtual impossiblity in India. I do not believe it, but I can appreciate such an objection. What, however is beyond my comprehension is the deadset made against the very theory of civil disobedience as if it was something immoral. To expect me to give up the preaching of civil disobedience is to ask me to give up preaching peace, which would be tantamount to asking me to commit suicide.

I have now been told that Government are compassing the destruction of the three weeklies which I am conducting, viz., *Young India*, Gujarati *Navajivan* and *Hindi Navajivan*. I hope that the rumour has no foundation. I claim that these three journals are insistently preaching nothing but peace and goodwill. Extraordinary care is taken to give nothing but truth, as I find it, to the readers. Every inadvertent inaccuracy is admitted and corrected. The circulation of all the weeklies is daily growing. The conductors are voluntary workers, in some cases, taking no salary whatsoever and in the others receiving mere maintenance money. Profits are all returned to the subscribers in some shape or other, or are utilized for some constructive public activity or other. I cannot say that I shall not feel a pang if these journals cease to exist. But it is the easiest thing for the Government to put them out. The publishers and printers are all

friends and co-workers. My compact with them is that the moment Government ask for security, that moment the newspapers must stop. I am conducting them upon the assumption that, whatever view the Government may take of my activities, they at least give me credit for preaching through these newspapers nothing but the purest non-violence and truth according to my lights.

I hope, however, that whether the Government arrest me or whether they stop by direct or indirect means the publication of the three journals, the public will remain unmoved. It is a matter of no pride or pleasure to me but one of humiliation that the Government refrain from arresting me for fear of an outbreak of universal violence and awful slaughter that any such outbreak must involve. It would be a sad commentary upon my preaching of, and upon the Congress and Khilafat pledge of, non-violence, if my incarceration was to be a signal for a storm all over the country. Surely, it would be a demonstration of India's unreadiness for a peaceful rebellion. It would be a triumph for the bureaucracy, and it would be almost a final proof of the correctness of the positon taken up by the Moderate friends, viz., that India can never be prepared for non-violent disobedience. I hope, therefore, that the Congress and Khilafat workers will strain every nerve and show that all the fears entertained by the Government and their supporters were totally wrong. I promise that such act of self-restraint will take us many a mile towards our triple goal.

There should therefore be no hartals, no noisy demonstrations, no processions. I would regard the observance of perfect peace on my arrest as a mark of high honour paid to me by my countrymen. What I would love to see, however, is the constructive work of the Congress going on with clockwork regularity and the speed of the Punjab Express. I would love to see people who have hitherto kept back, voluntarily discarding all their foreign cloth and making a bonfire of it. Let them fulfil the whole of the constructive programme framed at Bardoli, and they will not only release me and other prisoners, but they will also inagurate swaraj and secure redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs. Let them remember the four pillars of swaraj: non-violence, Hindu-Muslim-Sikh-Parsi-Christian-Jew unity, total removal of untouchability and manufacture of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar completely displacing foreign cloth.

I do not know that my removal from their midst will not be a benefit to the people. In the first instance, the superstition about the possession of supernatural powers by me will be demolished. Secondly, the belief that people have accepted the non-co-operation programme only under my influence and that they have no independent

faith in it will be disproved. Thirdly, our capacity for swaraj will be proved by our ability to conduct our activities in spite of the withdrawal even of the orginator of the current programme. Fourthly and selfishly, it will give me a quiet and physical rest, which perhaps I deserve.

Young India, 9-3-1922

130. DESHBHAKTA'S ARREST

Just at the time of going to the press, I received the telegraphic news that Deshbhakta Konda Venkatappayya has been arrested. He is the greatest and the best among the Andhras. His fault was that he loved India better than his ease. I congratulate the Deshbhakta and the Andhra friends. This great servant of the nation will have well-earned rest and the cause will prosper in spite of his withdrawal from our midst. For though his body can be imprisoned by the Government, they cannot take away his spirit from our midst.

Young India, 9-3-1922

131. FOREIGN PROPAGANDA

I see that there is great deal of misunderstanding about the scope of foreign propaganda undertaken by the Working Committee. I see that it was a mistake not to have published the report that was adopted by the Working Committee. Here it is:

TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE WORKING COMMITTEE OF
THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITEE, DELHI

SIR,

At the meeting of the Working Committee held at Surat on 31st January last, the following Resolution was passed:

"The Working Committee records its firm conviction that dissemination of correct news about Indian political situation in foreign countries is absolutely essential and refers to Mahatma Gandhi all the correspondence on the subject of foreign propaganda now with the Working Secretary with a request that he should prepare a definite scheme in that behalf at an early date so as to enable the next meeting of the Working Committee to consider it."

Having considered the resolution and papers forwarded to me by the Secretary, I beg to report as Follows:

In my opinion it is not only undesirable but it may prove even harmful to establish at the present stage any Agency in any foreign country for the dissemination of correct news in such country about the political situation in India, for the following reasons:

First, because it would distract public attention and instead of making the people feel that they have to rely purely on their own strength, it will make them think of the effect of their actions on foreign countries and the support the latter can render to the national cause. This does not mean that we do not care for the world's support, but the way to gain that support is to insist upon the correctness of every one of our actions and rely upon the automatic capacity of Truth to spread itself.

Secondly, it is my experience that when an Agency is established for any special purpose, independent interest ceases to a certain extent and what is distributed by the Agency is previousely discounted as coming from interested quarters.

Thirdly, the Congress will not be able to exercise effective check over such Agencies, and there is great danger of authoritative distribution of wrong information and wrong ideas about the struggle.

Fourthly, it is not possible at the present moment to send out of India any person of importance for the sole purpose of disseminating news in foreign countries, for such men are too few for the internal work.

I am therefore of opinion that the work of publishing the *Congress Bulletin* should be better organized, if necessary, by engaging a special editor for the purpose and by sending the *Congress Bulletin* regularly to the chief news agencies of the world. The editor should be instructed to enter into correspondence with these newspapers or news agencies which may be found to interest themselves in Indian questions.

It is my firm opinion based upon experience gained through the conduct of the journals I have edited in South Africa and here that the more solid the Congress work and the sufferings of the Congress men and women, the greater the publicity the cause will attain without special effort. From the exchanges of letters and correspondence that I receive day by day from all parts of the world in connection with the conduct of *Young India*, I observe that never was so much interest taken in Indian affairs throughout the world as it is today. It follows that the interest will increase in the same proportion as the volume of our sufferings. The very best method of disseminating correct information about the political situation, therefore, is to make the Congress work purer, better organized and to evoke a greater spirit of suffering. Not only is curiosity thereby intensified, but people become more eager to

understand the inwardness and the exact truth about the situation.

I remain,

BARDOLI, *yours faithfully,*

22nd Feb. 1922 M. K.GANDHI

After having gone through all the papers that were given to me and after having heard all the arguments for and against, I remain convinced that, at least for the present, we want no news agency outside India. We want the whole world with us, but we shall not get it by carrying on foreign agency. We can only send correct information to those who care for it. If a foreign country does not keep its own agency for gathering information from a particular country or about a particular movement, it is proof to me that that country is not interested in it. We have been without our agency in London now for nearly 15 months. I venture to think that we are no worse off today than we were 15 months ago. We are certainly better off because and to the extent that we have done substantial work in India itself. There are more people in the world interested today in India than there ever were. We, therefore, owe it to them that we place at their disposal correct information, but our duty must end there. I have before me a letter from Italy from an Italian editor telling me how deeply interested people in Italy are in the Indian movement, and the Italian newspapers are therefore busy instructing the Italian public in Indian affairs. This is what I call a natural and organic movement, but if, on the strength of this information, we were to establish an Indian agency in Italy to awaken further interest, we would not mend matters but would spoil them by overdoing. We shall therefore better consult our own interest by relying upon our own strength to speak for itself.

Moreover, the non-co-operation movement is one of self-help. Its formula is:"We shall succeed only to the extent of our strength and no further." No certificate of merit from the world will give us success, if we have not earned it by the sweat of the brow. No condemnation of the movement will kill it, unless we are ourselves so fickle-hearted as to give it up by reason of the condemnation. Let us not therefore turn our attention from our own work. Let us simply mind our work and let us be sure that the world will mind us without any further effort. I am really jealous of even talking away from their work some of the young men who necessarily have to be engaged in the preparation and distribution of the *Congress Bulletin*. But we have really no authentic record of the progress of our work from week to

week. The *Congress Bulletin* will therefore be useful as well for workers in India as it undoubtedly will be for our friends in foreign countries.

Being almost impatient to see the work inaugurated, the Working Committee has given me a free hand in organizing the *Bulletin*. I hope to issue the first *Bulletin* next week and thenceforth it would be issued from week to week. The *Bulletin* will be sent to all the readers of *Young India* at a nominal charge to cover a part or the whole of the cost of paper and printing. *Young India* has a registered circulation of over 25,000 and it goes to almost all parts of the world. It has a comprehensive exchange list. The price for the subscribers to the *Bulletin* only will be announced later. The method I have sketched is intended to save the Congress as much expense as possible and to give the widest publicity to the *Bulletin*. Whereas *Young India* represents my own views and those of my associates in the conduct of the journal, the *Bulletin* will contain nothing in the shape of individual views. It will be mainly a record of Congress activities all over India in all its multifarious departments, and an epitome of newspaper opinions both pro-Congress and anti-Congress. It will contain a Khilafat section registering all Khilafat activities during the preceding week. Such a *Bulletin* cannot become a success unless there is co-operation from all Congress and Khilafat workers. I invite therefore all who are interested in the *Bulletin* to send their suggestions and news addressed to the Editor, *Congress Bulletin*, C/o *Young India*. Correspondents will please take care to mark all such correspondence for the *Congress Bulletin* in order to save the *Young India* staff from having to handle correspondence intended for the *Bulletin*. To start with, I would ask every Provincial Congress Committee to send the number of members on its provincial register, the number of village and district organizations, the names and addresses of nationalist newspapers, the number of national educational institutions with the average attendance during the past 6 months, the number of Panchayats and all other information regarding non-co-operation activities.

Young India, 9-3-1922

132. GOVERNMENT DENIALS

I

ALIGARH INCIDENT

TO THE EDITOR,

Young India

DEAR SIR,

In the course of a communication addressed to the Government of India, you have stated as one of the seven instances of "lawless repression" the treatment of volunteers who "had given no offence or cause whatever" by the police in Aligarh. I have enquired into this on behalf of the Government from the Collector of Aligarh. He replies that the charge is absolutely untrue and I beg that you will give publicity to what he writes:

That knocks have been given and bruises endured is true enough but they have been inflicted solely in the course of dispersing unlawful assemblies and they have been extraordinarily few in number. No injured person has approached me, and even the non-co-operators of Aligarh are quite ready to do so if they have had any real grievance.

"The unruly spirit of a riotous crowd cannot be conjured away by the polite infinitive. As a matter of fact the kid gloves have never yet been taken off in Aligarh and the trouble here has been handled with the greatest moderation. Since the early attempt of the volunteers to behave in disorderly and intimidating manner when a certain amout of force had to be used, I am not aware that there has been any kind of physical collision in the town. So far as good feeling can be said to exist anywhere, I should say that it exists here, and both the police and Europeans can now go freely about the city without interference. To describe Aligarh as suffering, or as having suffered, from repression is a travesty of language and of fact."

LUCKNOW, *Yours faithfully*,

16TH FEBRUARY 1922 J. E. GONDGE

This is no denial. It is an attempt to justify the use of force which is admitted. Every tyrant justifies the use he makes of his lawlessness. Naturally the non-co-operators did not report their bruises to the Collector. If the kid-gloves demonstration consisted of "knocks given and bruises endured", I am curious to know what it will be like when the kid gloves are off in Aligarh. If the arrest of Mr. Sherwani was great moderation and that of Mr. Khwaja was greater, then the "Knocks and bruises" were, indeed, the greatest moderation.

II

IN BENARES JAIL

TO THE EDITOR, *Young India*

DEAR SIR,

In continuation of my d.o. letter No. 404/C, dated the 18th February 1922, I beg to draw your attention to a telegram from a certain Vishnudatiya of Benares to Mahatma Gandhi dated the 5th of Febuary, which was duly published in your paper on the 9th *idem*. Inquiry has been made into the statements made therein and I must apologize for the length of the report which I must ask you to publish in explanation and contradiction of the telegram aforesaid. The telegram was somewhat incoherent, but it has caused much concern in the mind of the public and its allegations can only be answered at considerable length. I therefore reproduce the report which has been sent to me by Major N. S. Harvey, the Superintendent of the Benares Central Prison:

The facts about this case are as follows. Eight youths were sentenced by the Joint Magistrate on the 21st January 1922, to rigorous imprisonment under section 143 I. P. C. and classed as non-politicals. As there was such an unruly and unwieldy mob of political prisoners in the jail at the time, the jailor was not able to keep these eight prisoners separate, and they got mixed up with their friends, the other political prisoners, and we were not able to get hold of them and put them to hard labour.

On the 3rd February the Joint Magistrate and myself decided that we would separate these 'non-political' prisoners from the others, and after some trouble we were able to get hold of four of them—Ram Nath, Kamla Pati, Bhagwan Das and Satya Narayan, who were taken away to the regular juvenile prisoners' enclosure. This District Jail has had a juvenile jail in it for many years, so that the removal of these youths to this place was nothing out of the way. I have had 50 juveniles confined in this place for seven years to my knowledge. The juvenile barrack is a cellular one for obvious reasons, and youths are always locked up separately at night. So that the locking up of these four youths in separate cells was not a punishment, but was just the ordinary jail practice. They evidently did not like the idea of being separated from their political friends, so Bhagwan Das on the evening of the 4th February worked himself into a so-called state of 'unconsciousness'. This was about 7.30 p.m. I happened to be in the jail at the time and went at once and saw this youth. I most carefully examined him and came to the conclusion that there was nothing the matter with him and that he had worked himself into a 'hysterical state' purposely. Of course, his self-imposed hunger strike of two

days' duration may have had something to do with his condition. He probably thought that, if he got into a state of feigned unconsciousness, he would be taken away to hospital and given nourishment. This actually happened, some milk was given him and he was quite well by the morning.

The hunger strike of the other political prisoners from the 3rd to the 5th had nothing to do with this business. This was started because they were not allowed to get sweets and food from outside, and also as a sort of advertisement.

On the night of the 2nd February, Kripalani[1] and his youths gave a lot of trouble in being locked up. They behaved like a lot of hooligans in their barracks and the jail people were not able to count or lock them up till 11.30 p.m. The next morning they went on 'hunger strike' and refused to speak to or answer any jail officials. It is all nonsense to say that the cells in which these youths were locked up are insanitary; they are undoubtedly the cleanest and most sanitary living rooms in the jail. To prove this, the special treatment prisoners, who have recently been transferred from the Central Jail, have elected to live in these cells. As for being waterless, this is absolutely untrue. These youths were kept together in the enclosure during the day where there is a perpetual tap of good municipal water and if they had required water at night, there was a regular warder and two convict overseers to give it to them.

On the 5th February (Sunday) the political prisoners refused to have an interview with their friends as they said they were on hunger strike. The mob of two or three hundred city people were told that their friends refused to see them and were asked to go away. They refused to do so and collected a few yards in front of the main gate and started yelling, shouting and singing, and as there was a possibility of the gate being rushed into, the jailor telephoned to me. I telephoned and asked the Superintendent of Police to remove this noisy and unruly mob from the jail precincts.

LUCKNOW *Yours faithfully,*

20th February J.E.GONDGE

I have re-read the telegram referred to and appearing in *Young India*, of 9-2-22.[2] The most damaging facts seem to be admitted. The difference consists in the different gloss the Superintendent put upon the admitted facts. Without an impartial inquiry, who can judge bet-

[1] Acharya J. B. Kripalani (b.1888); principal of Gujarat Mahavidyalaya; President of the Indian National Congress, 1946 left Congress in 1951; Member of Parliament

[2] *Vide* "Notes", 9-2-1922, undere the sub-title " In Holy Banaras".

ween the rival interpretations? Those who know Prof. Kripalani will reject the charge of hooliganism brought against him and his pupils. As for insanitation and want of water, I am glad the Superintendent is able to deny the charge.

A REGRETTABLE MISREPRESENTATION

TO THE EDITOR, *Young India*

SIR,

The attention of the Central Province Govenment has been drawn to the editorial note on "Interference with religious liberty" which appeared in your paper of the 2nd February 1922. Enquiries have been made from the Superintendent, Saugor Jail, with the result that the information on which your comments are based proves to contain a series of glaring mis-statements. As these mis-statements are causing considerable uneasiness in the public mind, I beg that you will give a prominent place to the following denial in an early issue:

1. Pandit Arjun Lal Shetti was admitted into the Saugor Jail on the 19th May 1921. He was put on twine making from the 13th June till he came to be admitted into the Jail Hospital for malaria (not for pneumonia) on the 24th September 1921. He remained in the Hospital for about a month and in consequence of the illness lost 11 lbs. in weight, of which he has regained 7 lbs. Ever since his discharge from the Hospital, he has been third-class work in twine making. I am thus able to affirm that he was never made to grind or prepare cords during his illness. The allegation that "it was when he was thus pressed that he had tendered an apology which he withdrew immediately he came to his senses" is a wicked lie and has absolutely no foundation in fact. The truth is that, in view of the assurance given by the Government in the Provincial Legislative Council on the 2nd August 1921, to consider sympa-thetically any apology tendered by persons undergoing prosecution or imprisonment for seditious speeches or offences of similar nature, Superintendents of Jails were addressed to communicate the Government attitude to the political prisoners in their charge. This was accordingly communicated by the Superintendent, Saugor Jail to Pundit Arjun Lal Shetti on or about the middle of September 1921. On the 2nd November 1921 he verbally expressed to the Superintendent his desire to apologize. A week after, he said the same thing to the Deputy Commissioner of the District when he paid a visit to the prisoner in Jail. The Deputy Commissioner asked him to apply in writing if he really wished to do so. The prisoner gave a written apology the next day, i.e, on the 10th November 1921, which was forwarded to the Local Government in the usual official manner. The fact of his having tendered an apology was well known and the interest taken by the public in this prisoner's health

became very great. On the 21st November 1921 his son interviewed him and pressed him to withdraw his apology. The prisoner showed his willingness to do so in presence of his son and was told by the Superintendent to apply in writing, if he was really serious to withdraw it. The prisoner gave the petition to withdraw his apology two days after, i.e., on the 23rd November 1921, and [it] was forwarded by the Superintendent to the Local Government. I would pointedly draw your attention to the fact that the prisoner was discharged from the Hospital on the 17th October 1921, and he submitted his apology on the 10 November 1921, that is, nearly a month after the date of the discharge from the Hospital. It will thus appear that the prisoner was neither drugged nor tricked into making an apology. On the contrary it required the moral influence of his friends to make him withdraw it.

2. The allegation that "he is being forced to take eggs and wine" is a perversion of the truth. The fact is that neither of these articles is given to the prisoner. The prisoner petitioned the Superintendent to give him eggs and also wrote to his relatives about it, asking them to keep the matter secret and not to out-caste him. He even mentioned this to his friends Laxmi Narayan and Panna Lal of Saugor who interviewed him on the 16th January 1922. The Superintendent could not grant the prisoner's petition for eggs, as it is an article prohibited to good caste Hindus.

Yours faithfully,

N. R. CHANDORKAR

PUBLICITY OFFICER TO GOVERNMENT,

CENTRAL PROVINCES

This misrepresentation was discovered by me before the receipt of the letter from the Publicity Officer and duly noted in last week's *Young India*.[1] The misrepresentations about Pundit Sethi's treatment are about the worst I have yet noticed. I hope they are the last. I am sorry for being instrumental in giving currency to the sensational news about the treatment of Pundit Arjunlal.

Young India, 9-3-1922

[1] This was published in the issue dated February 23, *vide* "Notes", 23-2-1922, under the sub-title "A Correction".

133 MESSAGE TO THE PUBLIC[1]

[AJMER,
March 9, 1922]

(1) That there should be no demonstration or hartal on his arrest.

(2) That mass civil disobedience should not be taken up and non-violence should strictly be adhered to.

(3) That full attention should be paid to the removal of untouchability and drunkenness and the use of khaddar should be encouraged.

(4) That, after his arrest, people should centre their hopes in Hakim Ajmal Khan.

The Searchlight, 19-3-1922

134. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

AJMER,
Thursday [*March 9, 1922*]

CHI. MAHADEV,[2]

I have come here for a day on Chhotani Mian's[3] invitation. I shall return tonight. Shuaib and Parasram are with me.

I got your letter. I do not know how Durga[4] came to think that I was offended. You did well in writing the letters. I would certainly be hurt if you do not express your thoughts. If you do not let me know them, I cannot correct them, nor can I, even if I wish to, correct my own thoughts in the light of what you think. Durga or Mathuradas or whoever else told you has made a mistake. Remember, however, that a prisoner[5] has no right to indulge in such speculation. In any case, he should not feel hurt. I wish to see you all as you actually are and not as you would be, for I, too, wish to appear to you all as I am. I may

[1] Gandhiji saw Abdul Bari at Ajmer on March 9 and gave him this message to be released to the public. It was issued to the Press from Lucknow on March 15. Gandhiji was arrested on March 10.

[2] Mahadev Desai (1892-1942); Gandhiji's secretary for 25 years.

[3] Mian Mahomed Haji Jan Mahomed Chhotani; nationalist Muslim leader of Bombay. He had invited Gandhiji to attend the Muslim Ulemas' Conference.

[4] Wife of the addressee

[5] Mahadev Desai was then serving a term of imprisonment in Naini Jail, near Allahabad, for his articles in the *Independent*.

very much wish to be better than what I am; but if I did not appear as I am, I cannot be what I wish to be.

There was, therefore, no need for you to apologize.

After getting and considering all the papers, I have become confirmed in my views. By making a change in my language, I have proved my spirit of compromise. By expressing my personal views in *Young India*, I am proclaiming my firmness and independence. Take it from me that Chauri Chaura has saved us from a conflagration and has brought swaraj miles nearer. That other swaraj [we were trying to attain] was like a mirage. There is such a close connection between the means and the end that it is difficult to say which of the two is more important. Or we may say that the means is the body and the end is the soul. The end is invisible, the means is visible. Now we shall have the pleasure of demonstrating this great truth.

Just as Sudhanva[1] kept dancing with joy in the cauldron of boiling oil, so do I feel intense joy in the blazing fire around me. Now is the time when the real nature of non-violence will be revealed.

You should always write whatever you wish to without any hesitation. Keep on purifying the atmosphere around you. I wish you become a powerful writer in Urdu. Your presence outside is no doubt useful. I, however, wish that you finish your term of imprisonment.

You should not at all be worried about what is happening outside. Many people in America are unhappy. What can we do about them? Similarly, what can you do about what happens outside?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S. N. 7981

[1] Son of King Hansdhwaj of Champavati in the *Mahabharta*, who defied his parents and, adhering to truth and God, smilingly threw himself into a cauldron of boiling oil.

135. *IN HAZARIBAG JAIL*

[On or before *March 10, 1922*][1]

TO THE EDITOR, *Young India*

SIR,

On 7-2-22, the Jail Superintendent, Major Cook and Mr. Meck, the Jailor of the local Central Jail, went to see Shah Abutorab Wazi Ahmed B. A., B. L., Vakil of the High Court, who is a political (non-co-operator) prisoner and who has been transferred here from the Buxar Central Jail. At that time the said Maulvi Saheb who was engaged in reading his Quran was asked by the Superintendent to stand up; but as he was busy in reading his Quran he could not do so and hinted by raising his hand to wait, whereon the Jailor shouted out something in English and kicked the Quran and forcibly lifted up the aforesaid Maulvi Saheb and shook him physically and took away the Quran. This created a great deal of sensation and unrest among the other political prisoners in the jail who made some sort of protest. The public of this town has been greatly alarmed and shocked to hear all these incidents. So much so that, on Friday last the Mussalmans of this place held a meeting in the mosque protesting against this sacrilegious act of the Jailor in kicking the Quran and brutally treating the Maulvi Saheb during his religious devotion.

On 18-2-22 Mr. A. W. Jones, Deputy Magistrate of Hazaribag, went to the jail hospital along with the Superintendent and the Jailor and there examined the aforesaid Maulvi Saheb, Babu Ram Narain Singh, B.L., a non-co-operator political prisoner, Babu Chitaranjan Guha Thakurta and Maulvi Md. Fasiuddin, prisoners, and they all corroborated the fact of kicking the Quran by the Jailor. After that, Doctor, Babu and Headwarder were examined and they denied all knowledge of the fact. After this the Superintendent ordered that the aforesaid Maulvi Saheb Abutorab B. L., Babu Chitaranjan Guha Thakurta and Md. Fasiuddin be given 15 stripes each and they were taken to the place for being flogged and the aforesaid Maulvi Saheb Abutorab B. L. was fastened to the triangular post whereon Mr. Wardi Jones, D. M., asked to wait as he had not examined the orderly. Then orderly warder, Ramsagar Ram, was examined who fully corroborated the fact that the Jailor kicked the Quran whereon the Deputy Magistrate stopped the flogging.

On 23-2-22 the Deputy Commissioner of Hazaribag went to the Central Jail and dismissed the aforesaid warder.

I am etc.,
RAMESHWAR PRASAD
SECRETARY,
DISTRICT CONGRESS COMMITTEE

HAZARIBAG
27-2-22

[1] This and the following item must have been sent to the Press by Gandhiji before his arrest on March 10.

If the statement made by the correspondent is correct, it betrays a lamentable lack of regard even for the most precious religious sentiments of the people.

Young India, 16-3-1922

136. MY NOTES

[On or before *March 10, 1922*]

DISAPPOINTMENT

There is keen disappointment in the air following the suspension of civil disobedience. There may be two explanations for this: one, that the people's hope of immediate swaraj has been shat-tered and, two, that people did not realize the paramount importance of preserving peace.

If the first explanation is correct, then the meaning of swaraj has not been understood at all. Swaraj is a state of mind to be experienced by us. We have to win it by our own strength. If this is true, there is no reason at all for disappointment. Swaraj consists in our efforts to win it. If it is not won at the first attempt, we may make a second, a third, as many more as necessary. With every attempt, we shall advance. Has our labour of the last fifteen months been wasted?

He who does not know which direction to take may feel disappointed. If we know that swaraj can be won only by following the path of non-violence and we discover that, in place of the spirit of non-violence which we thought prevailed, people harboured violence, we should clearly see that our progress lies in suspending civil disobedience. If an army which has been advancing in the belief that the road ahead is clear comes upon a moat, does its progress lie in jumping into it? Does it not lie rather in abandoning the wrong path and seeking the right one or in stopping to build a bridge over the moat? What would history say of an army which, standing in despair beside the moat, fills it with its tears?

NON-CO-OPERATION NOT UNDERSTOOD

Such disappointment only shows that one has not understood the meaning of non-co-operation. The foundation stone of swaraj was laid when non-co-operation was started. The slave who stops saluting his master, is he not freed from that very day? Let the master kick him, abuse him, hang him. The slave has stopped saluting. He has realized that he was a slave. What does he care if the master does not

acknowledge him a free man? His strength increases with the latter's resistance, because it is a challenge to him.

So long as we are firm in our determination to secure justice about the Punjab, to heal the Khilafat wound, to win swaraj and also to stick to non-co-operation till we have succeeded in these aims, what reason do we have to feel disappointed?

When the War with Germany started, the British had expected that it would end in two months. Lord Curzon thought that he would have his Christmas dinner in Berlin. December 1914 passed and the War continued till December 1920; did this mean that the British were defeated? Liege was lost, so was Namur. France was run over by Germans right up to Paris. Did France admit defeat? So long as a warrior continues to fight, how can he be regarded as having been defeated? While the fight continues, strategy after strategy is planned, schemes of encirclement are tried out, tunnels are made through hills and bridges built over moats. It is thus that men and even nations are moulded. To Arjuna's question, "Does not that soul perish which, though struggling, fails in its efforts?"[1] Shri Krishna replied, with the utmost affection: "No one who keeps striving ever meets with an unhappy end."[2] "It is only the soul which doubts that perishes."[3] If we do not have faith in our non-co-operation, we lose the struggle the very hour we embark on it.

NOT PLAY-ACTING

The struggle on which we embarked in Calcutta in 1920 was no mere play-acting[4]. The decision was an expression of the nation's firm resolve. It was a pledge, like the one taken by the mill-hands in Ahmedabad[5]. Whether the struggle takes thirteen days or twenty-three, do those who stake their honour make any terms with God?

TIME-LIMIT OF ONE YEAR MISUNDERSTOOD

Some say: "Why should we send our children to national schools now? We had withdrawn them [from government schools] in the hope that everything would be over in a year" If there are many people who think in this way, it is indeed good that our goal was not

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, VI. 38

[2] *ibid*

[3] *ibid*

[4] At the special session of the congress held in Calcutta in September 1920, the Non-co-operation resolution was passed.

[5] In February 1918.

won in one year. Otherwise, what would have been the condition of such people and the country?

If we have been unable to win power in one year, by what logic have schools which earlier appeared sinful to us become now fit for our children to attend? Or, were the parents merely led away by my arguments when they withdrew their children from schools? If so, I ask their forgiveness and would certainly advise such parents to send their children to Government schools. I and those who have understood the meaning of non-co-operation will ever look upon these schools, even if guineas were to be distributed there, as fit to be boycotted so long as the Government does not repent and bow to public opinion, whether this takes one year or many many years.

WRONG COURSE

Some say that the Vidyapith should pay the expenses of schools. If the Vidyapith is to pay, where will it get the money from? Surely, it will not bring money from outside to educate children in Gujarat? Instead of contributing money to the Vidyapith and then getting it back from it, why should we not raise enough in each town or village to run good private schools.?

SAHARA DESERT

I am convinced that it is all to the good that our way has been blocked by this Sahara Desert. We shall profit by the experience of being scorched by the heat and get hardened. We shall now be able to distinguish right from wrong, make out the brave from the coward, differentiate between those who joined us with proper understanding and those who did so without such understanding. We shall now know who are the actors and who the spectators. It was indeed necessary that we should learn this.

Schools are an acid test for us, Wherever national schools are functioning, it is proper that the local people should regard it as a point of honour to run them on their own. If no buildings are available, classes should be held under trees; if teachers cannot be paid, they may go round begging for provisions, live a life of privation and teach children. Only in this way can the nation rise.

ROWDYISM WILL NOT SUCCEED

Defiance of law for its own sake is uncivil behaviour and rowdyism. If swaraj is won through rowdyism will the rowdies then run the Government? We are planning to win it with our own efforts

and hope to run it ourselves. The worth of the swaraj-builder will not be tested by his ability to destroy, but by his ability to construct. One who can construct certainly knows how to destroy. But all those who can destroy cannot construct. We call the person who is engaged for breaking stones and gravel a mere wage-earner, while the one who builds is called mason. Without having learnt how to construct, we wanted to start destroying in Bardoli[1] and so God, in His kindness, held us back and saved us from danger.

SWARAJ-BUILDERS

We should heed the warning. We should now make an effort to become masons. If we cannot give a good account of ourselves in the building department, we have no right to offer civil disobedience.

INDIFFERENCE ABOUT PRESERVING PEACE

I have said that the second reason for disappointment may be that people failed to realize the importance of preserving peace. This is more dangerous than even the failure to understand the meaning of swaraj, for in that failure we are merely guilty of faulty diagnosis. If the *vaid*[2] is not sure of the correctness of his diagnosis, he can prescribe mild remedies. In the second instance, however, the *vaid* is guilty of carelessness in prescribing a remedy. A *vaid* gave a friend of mine zinc oxide in place of magnesium sulphate. Instead of having motions, the latter started vomiting and it was with the greatest effort, with proper treatment and after he had suffered much, that the patient was saved. Arsenic powder and powdered sugar look very much alike; what would be the condition of a person who takes arsenic instead of sugar? A friend mistook salt for sugar and put three teaspoonfuls in a cup of tea. When he took a sip, the expression on his face was worth reproducing in some comic journal.

The examples I have given are of ignorant, inexperienced *vaids*. But what shall we say about one who, though knowing the difference between arsenic and powdered sugar, does not care whether he gives the one or the other? We may understand the point of view of those who believe that swaraj cannot be won by peaceful means, but it is impossible to tolerate one who is so thoughtless as to incite violence

[1] The Bardoli Taluka Conference held on January 29, 1922 accepted Gandhiji's proposal to launch civil disobedience and he informed the Viceroy about it in his letter of February 1. But the Chauri Chaura tragedy led Gandhji to decide that the movement should be suspended.

[2] A physician practising Ayurveda

when an experiment in a peaceful method is in progress. Anyone who is so thoughtless knows neither the meaning of swaraj nor the best means of securing it. To such a person, concern for means seems to be fetters on his freedom. My view is that, by suspending civil disobedience in Bardoli, we have saved ourselves from a great calamity. If we are certain that we shall not on the whole succeed in influencing people to adopt peaceful methods and that the professional trouble-makers, too, in the country will not yield to our persuasion, it would be wise to give up all talk of winning swaraj by peaceful means. If we cannot gain control over them by such means, we should conclude that we shall never be able to bring round this Government also by peaceful means. If they cannot be won over by our love, they will assuredly be over-awed by the Government's guns and help it, or they themselves will become the rulers. Both these situations are undesirable.

I believe that, though it may be difficult, it is not impossible to win over the lawless elements. We need to have faith in ourselves, as also patience. Our lives should be governed by dharma.

If we earnestly start working on the various items in the non-co-operation programme and make progress in them all, we shall automatically learn the lesson of peace, for they include three important constructive activities¾khadi, removal of untouchability and the unity of all communities. Can anyone even dream that Hindus and Muslims can be truly united until they have fully realized the importance of peace? If the two can maintain peaceful relations so that they may help each other, they together can, with love, win over the unsocial elements and other mischief-makers. Those who believe that this cannot be done cannot possibly believe in true friendship between Hindus and Muslims. If these two major communities are not bound to each other by ties of mutual regard, I venture a prophecy and say that one day they will fight it out to their heart's content. If the pride of both is humbled after this, the two together will be able to overcome the third party; if, on the other hand, one of the two is defeated in fighting, it will be doomed to slavery. This way of looking at the matter will furnish us the key to an understanding of all our problems.

That Hindus and Muslims should find themselves together in such large numbers in India, that they should have been enslaved by third power and that subsequently both should be awakened¾the

significance of these facts is plain for all to see. For myself. I see every moment the providence of God in it. Through peace lies victory, and through violence the destruction of both.

PROPAGATION OF KHADI

Shri Ramji Hansraj writes from Amreli to say that there was a time when hand-spun khadi was not available. Now that there is a large stock of khadi, he says, there are no people to wear it, and the saddest part of the story is that the women who spin, the carders who make the slivers and those who weave cloth from hand-spun yarn do not themselves wear khadi.

How can we hope to win swaraj under such circumstances? What is one to make of the fact that, even in a part of the country like Kathiawar, people do not wear khadi? Can anything be more perverse than that, instead of eating the bread I have made, I sell it in the market and then buy other bread for myself? Should I not value my own handiwork?

What are the workers of Kathiawar doing about this? Is not this one task enough to engage their energies¾to produce khadi and see that people wear it? If they give up busying themselves with other activities, things will soon get right. If population of twenty-six lakhs spins, cards and weaves to the value of no more than Rs. 10 per head every year, even then its work would produce goods worth two crore and sixty lakh rupees. This would come to less than two pice per head daily. But drop by drop the lake is filled, as they say; in like manner, the result which can be brought about by an increase of two pice in everyone's earnings should be seen to be believed. A postcard costing a pice, a tax of two pies on a rupee-worth of salt, railway fares at the rate of three or four pies a mile¾this is how Government's Postal Department makes a profit and the Post Master General gets an annual salary of thousands, the salt tax yields crores and the railway company earns lakhs from railway fares calculated at the rate of a few pies a mile.

The same kind of calculation applies to khadi. The only difference is that, while taxes at rates of a few pies make it possible for the Government to rule over us and the Viceroy to be paid a salary of Rs. 20,000 a month, while the earnings of railways yield large dividends to foreigners, the income from khadi will remain in the homes of the poor and brighten their lives. Practising this simple dharma even in a little measure can end much suffering.

I request everyone to help in clearing khadi stocks immediately wherever they have accumulated and in producing it wherever it is not being produced. I believe that all the khadi in Amreli will be disposed off if every person there buys from the store khadi just enough for one shirt.

Are there not enough uses for khadi? It can be used for making towels, loose covers, coverlets, double-sheets, satchels, bags, hammocks and carpets. When I hear of khadi stocks not being sold, I am reminded of persons who buy animal fat in place of ghee. In our country people may refuse to buy khadi when they refuse to buy ghee. We cannot claim to have understood the meaning of swaraj till khadi becomes as universal as currency.

COTTON SEASON

This is the cotton season. A reader, therefore reminds us that everyone, especially the cultivator, should store enough cotton for his own use. Others may buy for their needs. We should count no less than four seers of cotton per head. The best way to store it is for each one of us either to spin the quantity into yarn or to get it spun by someone else. The rich can employ skilled women and have fine, well-twisted yarn spun according to their liking. In this way, we can revive the old custom of employing one's own spinner and weaver.

ARBITRATION BOARDS

In Gujarat, the practice of appointing arbitration boards has not yet been introduced. We have completely forgotten the advantages of having our disputes settled by a *panch* or an arbitrator, as if we thought that justice could only be got through unknown persons and by spending money. Justice is not to be bought for money in this way; what can be sold is injustice. Fraud or false witnesses will be of no avail before a *panch* or an arbitrator. A *panch* settles the dispute and so brings the two parties together. Courts increase enmity, *panchas* lessen it. It is true that in these days people are tempted to go to courts because of absence of honest *panchas*. Moreover, are those who are fond of litigation likely to go to a *panch* at all? Nevertheless, if in every town or village, people make an effort, the practice of settling disputes through *panchas* or arbitrators can be revived.

POLLUTION OF SAFFRON

Till this day I was not aware that the saffron which is used for ritual worship and making sweets is imported from abroad and that it

is smeared with animal fat. Shri Mulchand Uttamchand Parekh writes:[1]

In view of these painful facts, the use of saffron in ritual worship or for making sweetmeats is courting sin while seeking to do good.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-3-1922

137. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

SABARMAT,

[On or before *March 10, 1922*]

CHI. DEVDAS,

You are making separation from you more and more unbearable to me every day. I feel it, however much I wish that I did not. However, at a time like this, separation is the proper thing. I have already given you whatever advice I wanted to. The best thing for you now is to go to jail in an innocent manner, that is, without thinking of your safety, you may plunge yourself in any danger that comes your way. And if riots break out anywhere, I wish you will have the courage to sacrifice your life without a moment's thought in order to extinguish them. My blessings are with you.

Ramdas[2] has not yet come. Today Prabhudas[3] has arrived unexpectedly in response to Vinoba's[4] letter. Chhaganlal[5] too has come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S. N. 7848

[1] The table does not tally with the figures given above and the totals also are not all correct.

[2] Gandhiji's third son

[3] Son of Chhaganlal Gandhi

[4] Vinoba Bhave, Bhoodan leader; *vide* "Letter to Vonoba Bhave", After 10-2-1918.

[5] Chhaganlal Gandhi Gandhiji's nephew and co-worker; Editor of the Gujarati section of *Indian opinion* after 1908

138. TELEGRAM TO CONGRESS OFFICE, BOMBAY

AHMEDABAD,
March 10, 1922

WEATHER PERMITTING[1] GOING BARDOLI SUNDAY.

GANDHI

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 259

139. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

AHMEDABAD,
March 10, 1922

THICK RUMOUR ARREST. YOU RAMDAS SHOULD COME IF NOT REQUIRED THERE.

GANDHI

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi , p.258

140. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Friday [*March 10, 1922*][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Have just arrived from Ajmer. I am likely to be arrested this very day. Jagannath has now become free. I am thinking of sending him to Jalgaon. Dastane has come here for the same purpose. The work there can be carried on if we send one man. Please send me a wire if you see no difficulty in this [arrangement]. I shall reach there on Sunday morning if I am free. I have a letter from Surendra, but I am not writing to him separately.

SHRI MAGANLAL GANDHI

SWARAJ ASHRAM

BARDOLI *Via* SURAT

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5988. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] Gandhiji was probably referring to the 'political weather'.
[2] On this date Gandhiji arrived at Ahmedabad from Ajmer.

141. LETTER TO PAUL RICHARD [1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 10, 1922

DEAR FRIEND

I have your letter.

If I am free I expect to be in Surat on my way to Bardoli on Sunday morning. Do please come to Bardoli that day. I would like to have a long chat with you.

I am publishing your statement[2].

Yours sincerely,

M. PAUL RICHARD
BHARATIYA BUNGALOW
ATHVA LINES
SURAT

From a photostat: S. N. 7982; also G.N. 869

142. LETTER TO N. C. KELKAR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 10, 1922

DEAR MR. KELKAR

I have your letter.

As you know, the rumours are thick about my arrest, but if I am free, I shall certainly come over to Bombay as soon as you are ready. If I get my well-deserved rest, I know that you will do all you can to further the movement. I have really very little to say in addition to what I have said in my article "If I am arrested" in *Young India*. I

[1] This letter also, like the preceding one, did not bear Gandhiji's signature and was dictated by him to Krishnadas before his arrest on the night of March 10. It was forwarded to the addressee on March 12.

[2] This was published in *Young India*, 16-3-1922, under the title "His Sorrow Is My Sorrow". It was a rejoinder to an article by Gandhiji on Paul Richard's interview with Lokamanya Tilak published in *Young India*, 23-2-1922.

was in Ajmer yesterday, and I have given some advice about the Khilafat which I may note down, otherwise you will hear it from Mr. Chhotani and others.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. C. KELKAR
POONA

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 7984

143. LETTER TO GOPALA MENON

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 10, 1922

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

I certainly do remember your conviction.

I wish your venture all success. The only message[1] that I can send in the midst of overwhelming work is for both Hindus and Moplahs to realize their future responsibility not to brood over the past. How to reach the Moplahs as also the class of Hindus whom you would want to reach through your newspaper is more than I can say, but I know that Hindus should cease to be cowardly. The Moplahs should cease to be cruel. In other words, each party should become truly religious. According to the Shastras, Hinduism is certainly not the creed of cowards. Equally certainly, Islam is not the creed of the cruel. The only way the terrible problem before you can be solved is by a few picked Hindus and Mussalmans working away in perfect unison and with faith in their mission. They ought not to be baffled by absence of results in the initial stages, and if you can get together from among your readers a number of such men and women, your paper will have served a noble purpose.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. GOPALA MENON
EDITOR, "NAVEENA KERALAM"
6, VELLALA STREET, VEPERY
MADRAS

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 260

[1] This was a message to Menon's newly started Calicut paper *Naveena Keralam*, and was published in the Press.

144. LETTER TO DR. BHAGWANDAS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 10, 1922

DEAR BABU BHAGWANDAS[1],

I was delighted to receive your letter from Vizagapatnam.

I was sorry to hear about your brother.

It is said that my arrest is imminent. It is at night that I am dictating this letter, but if I am not arrested, I promise you I propose to deal with your pamphlet[2]. Not a week has passed but I have thought of it, only you will see that, in spite of my having doubled the size of *Young India*, I have not put in a line that need not have gone in that particular issue. So many things are happening which require immediate attention that I have been obliged to defer consideration of your scheme. That does not mean an indefinite postponement. You have generously given me a fairly long time, but I shall not abuse your generosity. If I get my well-deserved rest, I would like you then to open the discussion yourself in the columns of *Young India* if it is allowed to survive my arrest.

Yours sincerely,

BABU BHAGWANDAS
SEVASHRAM
SIGRA
[BANARAS]

From a microfilm: S. N. 7986

[1] 1869-1959; author, theosophist and colleague of Annie Besant; principal of the Kashi Vidyapith, Banaras.

[2] This was on the definition and content of swaraj, a subject on which Dr. Bhagwandas appears to have been frequently in correspondence with Gandhiji. He took up the matter again after the latter's release in 1924; "Note on Bhagwandas's Letter", 8-5-1924, and the appendix thereto.

145. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 10, 1922

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR[2],

I do wish you [will soon][3] get well and strong.

I thank you for your long letter[4], but I won't weary you with my counter-argument. As you know, my arrest is reported to be imminent, but if I am not arrested, I shall look forward to our meeting. Just one thing I would like to say in order to correct what seems to me to be a misapprehension. I should be sorry if anything I have written has led you to infer that I have in any shape or form altered my view about the efficacy of imprisonment for our salvation.

I have not lost faith in the responsiveness to sacrifice by those who compose the Government. Only those who have courted imprisonment have not all been of the right sort. I certainly expect no response whatsoever to the imprisonment of those who are full of violence in their hearts, and my reason for suspending even civil disobedience for the time being is to see if it is at all possible to produce an atmosphere of real non-violence. Thus my present view is not due to my discovery of greater hardness in the administrators, but to the painful discovery of much less non-violence now in our midst

[1] Though dictated on the night of March 10, this letter was typed and dispatched the next day with the following covering note by Krishnadas, Gandhiji's personal secretary: "The accompanying letter was dictated to me by Mahatma Gandhi last night about an hour and a half prior to his arrest. The letter was actually typed by me early this morning and is being posted to you without Mahatmaji's signature but in accordance with his instructions."

[2] 1873-1959; lawyer and Liberal leader from Maharashtra

[3] These two words occur in the version given in M. R. Jayakar's *The story of My Life*,

[4] *ibid*. Dated March 7, this was in reply to Gandhiji's letter of March 2; It dealt with, in some detail, the Congress programme of non-co-operation and the question of Council-entry. Jayakar had wanted to meet Gandhiji.

than I had expected.[1]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. R. JAYAKAR
399, THAKURDWAR
BOMBAY

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 259

146. MESSAGE TO ASHRAM PEOPLE

AHMEDABAD,
March 10, 1922

His parting words to the Ashram people were that all who bore patriotism and love for India should strain every nerve to propagate peace and goodwill all over India, among all communities.

The Hindu, 13-3-1922

147. AN EXHORTATION [2]

AHMEDABAD,
March 10, 1922

I have also[3] full hope in you and wish you to pursue in the work as energetically and courageously as I am hitherto doing.

The Hindu, 17-3-1922

148. TRIAL AND STATEMENT IN COURT

[AHMEDABAD,
March 11, 1922]

At Saturday noon Messrs Gandhi and Banker[4] were placed before Mr. Brown, Additional District Magistrate, the Court being held in the Divisional Commissioner's Office at Shahibag. The prosecution was conducted by Rao Bahadur Girdharilal, Public Prosecutor.

[1] Jayakar replied to this on March 17; indisposition prevented him from seeing Gandhiji, as he had expected, the next day, the day of the trial; *vide The story of My Life*.

[2] Gandhiji addressed these words, just before being escorted to the Sabarmati Jail, to "an eye witness" to the arrest whose report was published in *The Hindu.*

[3] Earlier, Gandhiji had expressed full trust in Hasrat Mohani.

[4] Shankerlal Banker, printer and publisher of *Young India*. He was arrested and convicted along with Gandhiji.

The Superintendent of Police, Ahmedabad, first witness, produced the Bombay Government's authority to lodge a complaint for four articles published in *Young India* dated 15th June 1921 entitled "Disaffection a Virtue", dated 29th September, "Tampering with Loyalty". dated 15th December, "The Puzzle and its Solution" and dated 23rd February 1922, "Shaking the Manes".[1] He stated that the warrant was issued on the 6th instant by the District Magistrate, Ahmedabad, and the case was transferred to the file of Mr. Brown. Meanwhile warrants were also issued to the Superintendents of Police of Surat and Ajmer as Mr. Gandhi was expected to be at those places. The original signed articles and issues of the paper in which these appeared were also produced as evidence.

Mr. Gharda, Registrar, Appellate side, Bombay High Court, second witness, produced correspondence between Mr. Gandhi, the Editor of *Young India* and Mr. Kennedy, District Judge, Bombay High Court. Mr. Chatfield, Collector and Magistrate of Ahmedabad, was the next witness. He testified that security had been dispensed with on the understanding that he should be informed if Mr. Gandhi started his Satyagraha Campaign.

Two formal police witnesses were then produced.

Accused declined to cross-examine the witnesses.

Mr. M. K. Gandhi, 53, farmer and weaver by profession, residing at Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, said:

I only want to state that, when the proper time comes, I shall plead "guilty"so far as disaffection towards Government is concerned. It is true that I am the Editor of *Young India*, that the articles read in my presence were written by me and that the proprietors and publishers permitted me to control the whole of policy of the paper. That is all.[2]

Mr. Shankerlal Banker, landed proprietor, Bombay second accused, stated that at the proper time he would plead guilty to the charge of having published the articles complained of.

Charges were framed on three counts under Section 124-A; accused were committed to the Sessions and trial comes off on the 18th instant.

Mr. Gandhi asked his associates present in the Court to carry on the publication of his papers.

The Hindu, 13-3-1922

[1] For the text of the first article, *vide* "Notes", 15-6-1921, under the sub-title "Disaffection A Virtue"; for those of the second and the third, Vol. XXI and for that of the fourth Vol. XXII.

[2] This paragraph is extracted from the "Statement of the Accused" as recorded in the Court and reproduced in *Trial of Gandhiji*, pp. 136-7. *The Hindu* report had verbal variations.

149. INTERVIEW TO INDULAL YAGNIK [1]

SABARMATI JAIL,
March 11, 1922

A big job has been accomplished in Ajmer[2]. Maulana Abdul Bari[3] made a scathing speech which deeply agitated the thousands of Muslims who had gathered there. He had bragged a little. Many believe when I went there that there would be fireworks between us two and Hindu-Muslim unity would be wrecked. But the Maulana is an extremely pure man. I said to him: "Whatever you do today will be done in anger only. That may, perhaps, incense a few other Muslims also, but that will not benefit us at all. I, too, wish that both of us should go to the gallows, but only while we remain utterly pure." "The Maulana understood my point fully and now I do not worry on his account at all. Maulana Hasrat Mohani[4] also was there and he has come here with me. He has promised me that he would not place obstacles in the straightforward work of the Congress by upholding violence even in the least. Therefore, I am free from anxiety.[5]

I have only one message to give and that concerns khadi, Place khadi in my hands and I shall place swaraj in yours. The uplift of the *Antyajas* is also covered by khadi and even Hindu-Muslim unity will live through it. It is also a great instrument of peace. This does not mean that I do not favour boycott of Councils and law-courts, but in order that people may not have a grievance against those who go to them, I desire that the people should carry on work concerning khadi even with the help of lawyers and members of legislatures. Keep the Moderates highly pleased, cultivate love and friendship for them. Once they become fearless, that very moment they will become one with us. The same holds good also for Englishmen.

[1] Political leader of Gujarat; associate of Gandhiji for a number of years; editor of *Navajivan* during the period of Gandhiji's imprisonment, 1922-24; was elected to Lok Sabha in 1957.

[2] Gandhiji attended the Muslim Ulemas' Conference at Ajmer on March 9. 1922.

[3] 1838-1926; nationalist Muslim divine of Lucknow who took active part in the Khilafat movement and urged the Muslim to refrain from cow-slaughter.

[4] 1875-1951; nationalist Muslim leader who was active in the Khilafat movement.

[5] What follows is the message asked for by Yagnik.

He[1] will now do great things. He has asked me to observe what he would do when I am in jail.[2]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-3-1922

150. MESSAGE TO BOMBAY[3]

SABARMATI JAIL,
March 11, 1922

I do not want Bombay to mourn over the arrest of one of its mute Secretaries and myself, but to rejoice over our rest. Whilst I would like an automatic response to all the items of non-co-operation, I would like Bombay to concentrate upon the charkha and khaddar. The moneyed men of Bombay can buy all the hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar that could be manufactured throughout India. The women of Bombay, if they really mean to do their share of work, should religiously spin for a certain time every day for the sake of the country. I wish that no one will think of following us to jail. It would be criminal to court imprisonment till a complete non-violent atmosphere is attained. One test of such atmosphere will be for us to put the Englishmen and Moderates at ease. This can be done only if we have goodwill towards them in spite of our differences.

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 14-3-1922; also from a photostat: S. N. 8059

151.LETTER TO HAKIM AJMAL KHAN

SABARMATI JAIL,
March 12, 1922

MY DEAR HAKIMJI,

Since my arrest, this is the first letter I have commenced to write after having ascertained that under the jail rules I am entitled to write

[1] Referring to Madan Mohan Malaviya

[2] When Yagnik remarked, while taking leave of Gandhiji, that the latter had found in the jail a good nursing home, Gandhiji burst out into a great laugh and said, "Of course, of course, that is so".

[3] The message was sent through Sarojini Naidu who met Gandhiji in Sabarmati Jail.

as many letters as I like as an under-trial prisoner. Of course, you know that Mr. Shankerlal Banker is with me. I am happy that he is with me. Everyone knows how near he has come to me¾naturally, therefore, both of us are glad that we have been arrested together.

I write this to you in your capacity as Chairman of the Working Committee and, therefore, leader of both Hindus and Mussalmans or, better still, of all India.

I write to you also as one of the foremost leaders of Mussalmans, but, above all, I write this to you as an esteemed friend. I have had the privilege of knowing you since 1915. Our daily growing association has enabled me to prize your friendship as a treasure. A staunch Mussalman, you have shown in your own life what Hindu-Muslim unity means.

We all now realize as we have never before realized that without that unity, we cannot attain our freedom and I make bold to say that, without that unity, the Mussalmans of India cannot render the Khilafat all the aid they wish. Divided, we must ever remain slaves. This unity, therefore, cannot be a mere policy to be discarded when it does not suit us. We can discard it only when we are tired of swaraj. Hindu-Muslim unity must be our creed to last for all time and under all circumstances. Nor must that unity be a menace to the minorities, the Parsis, the Christians, the Jews or the powerful Sikhs. If we seek to crush any of them, we shall some day want to fight each other.

I have been drawn so close to you chiefly because I know that you believe in Hindu-Muslim unity in the full sense of the term.

This unity, in my opinion, is unattainable without our adopting non-violence as a firm policy. I call it a policy because it is limited to the preservation of that unity. But it follows that thirty crores of Hindus and Mussalmans united not for a time but for all time can defy all the powers of the world and should consider it a cowardly act to resort to violence in their dealings with the English administrators. We have hitherto feared them and their guns in our simplicity. The moment we realize our combined strength, we shall consider it unmanly to fear them and therefore, ever to think of striking them. Hence, am I anxious and impatient to persuade my countrymen to feel non-violent not out of our weakness but out of our strength. But you and I know that we have not yet evolved the non-violence of the strong and we have not done so because the Hindu-Muslim union has not gone much beyond the stage of policy. There is still too much mutual distrust and consequent fear. I am not disappointed. The

progress we have made in that direction is indeed phenomenal. We seem to have covered in eighteen months' time the work of a generation. But infinitely more is necessary. Neither the classes nor the masses feel instinctively that our union is necessary as the breath of our nostrils.

For this consummation, we must, it seems to me, rely more upon quality than quantity. Given a sufficient number of Hindus and Mussalmans with almost a fanatical faith in everlasting friendship between the Hindus and the Mussalmans of India, we shall not be long before the unity permeates the masses. A few of us must first clearly understand that we can make no headway without accepting non-violence in thought, word and deed for the full realization of our political ambition. I would, therefore, beseech you and the members of the Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. to see that our ranks contain no workers who do not fully realize the essential truth I have endeavoured to place before you. A living faith cannot be manufactured by the rule of majority.

To me the visible symbol of all-India unity and, therefore, of the acceptance of non-violence as an indispensable means for the realization of our political ambition is undoubtedly the charkha, i.e., khaddar. Only those who believe in cultivating a non-violent spirit and eternal friendship between Hindus and Mussalmans will daily and religiously spin. Universal hand-spinning and the universal manufacture and use of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar will be a substantial, if not absolute, proof of the real unity and non-violence, and it will be a recognition of a living kinship with the dumb masses. Nothing can possibly unify and revivify India as the acceptance by all India of the spinning-wheel as a daily sacrament and the khaddar wear as a privilege and a duty.

Whilst, therefore, I am anxious that more title-holders should give up their titles; lawyers, law-courts; scholars, the Government schools or colleges; the Councillors, the Councils and the soldiers and the civilians, their posts, I would urge the nation to restrict its activity in this direction only to the consolidation of the results already achieved and to trust its strength to command further abstentions from association with a system we are seeking to mend or end.

Moreover, the workers are too few. I would not waste a single worker today on destructive work when we have such an enormous amount of constructive work. But perhaps the most conclusive argument against devoting further time to destructive propaganda is the fact that the spirit of intolerance, which is a form of violence, has never been so rampant as now. Co-operators are estranged from us.

They fear us. They say that we are establishing a worse bureaucracy than the existing one. We must remove every cause for such anxiety. We must go out of our way to win them to our side. We must make Englishmen safe from all harm from our side. I should not have to labour the point if it was clear to everyone, as it is to you and to me, that our pledge of non-violence implies utter humility and goodwill even towards our bitterest opponent. This necessary spirit will be automatically realized if only India will devote her sole attention to the work of construction suggested by me.

I flatter myself with the belief that my imprisonment is quite enough for a long time to come. I believe in all humility that I have no ill will against anyone. Some of my friends would not have to be as non-violent as I am. But we contemplated the imprisonment of the most innocent. If I may be allowed that claim, it is clear that I should not be followed to prison by anybody at all. We do want to paralyse the Government considered as a system¾not however by intimidation, but by the irresistible pressure of our innocence. In my opinion, it would be intimidation to fill the gaols anyhow, and why should more innocent men seek imprisonment till one considered to be the most innocent has been found inadequate for the purpose?

My caution against further courting of imprisonment does not mean that we are now to shirk imprisonment. If the Government will take away every non-violent non-co-operator, I should welcome it. Only, it should not be because of our civil disobedience, defensive or aggressive. Nor, I hope, will the country fret over those who are in jail. It will do them and the country good to serve the full term of their imprisonment. They can be fitly discharged before their time only by an act of the Swaraj Parliament. And I entertain an absolute conviction that universal adoption of khaddar is swaraj.

I have refrained from mentioning untouchability. I am sure every good Hindu believes that it has got to go. Its removal is as necessary as the realization of Hindu-Muslim unity.

I have placed before you a programme which is, in my opinion, the quickest and the best. No impatient Khilafatist can devise a better. May God give you health and wisdom to guide the country to her destined goal.[1]

I am
Yours sincerely
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S. N. 7991

[1] To this Hakim Ajmal Khan replied or March 17; *vide* Appendix "Letter from Hakim Ajmal Khan",17-3-1922.

152. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

[SABARMATI JAIL,]
Sunday, March 12, 1922

MY DEAR KRISTODAS[1],

The correspondence, reports, etc. should come to you for disposal.

Unless it is too much for you, all articles must finally pass through your hands.

I have several names as Editor (Satis Babu[2], Rajagopalachari[3] you, Shuaib[4], Kaka[5], Devdas[6].

It would be better now if Satis Babu gave you the permission to sign articles.

The room should be entirely at your disposal. You should lock the verandah door from inside. Fix up the whole office there. Hardikar[7] and the *Bulletin* staff should be there for work but under your permission.

Of course you have my blessings. God will give you all the strength and wisdom you need.

BAPU

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 260

[1] As Gandhiji used to call Krishnadas, his secretary

[2] Satishchandra Mukerji, formerly Principal, Bengal National College, and editor Dawn Magazine, Calcutta.

[3] Chakravarti Rajagopalachari (b. 1879); lawyer, journalist, author and statesman; Governor-General of India, 1948-50

[4] Shuaib Qureshi, editor of *New Era*

[5] Dattatreya Balkrishna Kalelkar (b. 1885); popularly known as Kaka Saheb; a colleague of Gandhiji since 1915.

[6] Devdas Gandhi, Gandhiji's youngest son

[7] Dr. N.S. Hardikar, Congress leader from Karnatak, head of the Hindustani seva Dal.

153. LETTER TO ABDUL BARI

SABARMATI JAIL,
[After *March 12, 1922*]

DEAR MAULANA SAHIB,

Just now I am enjoying myself in my house of freedom. Hakimji and other friends are here. I feel your absence, but that does not much worry me since we had ample discussion at Ajmer. I know that you will certainly steadily stick to those principles that formed the subject of our talk. I will earnestly request you to avoid making any speeches in public. Personally, after deep thought, I have come to the conclusion that, if there is anything that can serve an effective and visible symbol of the Hindu-Muslim unity, it is the adoption of charkha and pure khaddar dress prepared from hand-spun yarn by the rank and file of both the communities. Only universal acceptance of this cult can supply us with a common idea and afford a common basis of action.

The use of khaddar cannot become universal until both the communities take to it. The universal adoption of charkha and khaddar, therefore, would awaken India. It will also be a proof of our capacity to satisfy all our needs. Ever since the commencement of our present struggle, we have been feeling the necessity of boycotting foreign cloth. I venture to suggest that, when khaddar comes universally in use, the boycott of foreign cloth will automatically follow. Speaking for myself, charkha and khaddar have a special religious significance to me because they are a symbol of kinship between the members of both the communities and the hunger and disease-stricken poor. It is by virtue of the fact that our movement can today be described as moral and economic as well as political. So long as we cannot achieve this little thing, I feel certain success is impossible. Again, the khaddar movement can succeed only when we recognize non-violence as an essential condition for the attainment of swaraj and Khilafat both. Therefore, the khaddar programme is the only effective and successful programme that I can place before the country at present. I was so glad when you told me that you would begin to spin regularly when I be arrested. I can only say that every man, woman and child ought to spin as a religious duty till a complete and permanent boycott of foreign cloth is effected, the Khilafat and

Punjab wrongs satisfactorily redressed and swaraj attained. May I entreat you to use all your influence for popularizing charkha among your Muslim brethren?

Speeches and Writings of M. K. Gandhi, pp. 745-6

154. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SABARMATI JAIL,
March 13 [*1922*]

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

At last I am having a quiet time. It was bound to come. The calm that prevails in India today is surely a mighty triumph of non-violence.

I would like you to keep *Young India* up to the mark. At first I thought of wiring to you to take editorial charge. But I recalled our conversation and thought the nominal head should be an Indian. But will you regularly write and, when time permits, go over to Sabarmati occasionally? You must know Kristodas and Shuaib. You will fall in love with both at once.

I hope the case you have lost did not contain much that could not be recalled.

With love,

Yours,
MOHAN

C. F. ANDREWS
SANTINIKETAN
BOLPUR

From a photostat: G. N. 2610

155. LETTER TO URMILA DEVI [1]

SABARMATI JAIL,
March 13 1922

MY DEAR SISTER,

You have neglected me entirely. But I know that you have done so to save my time.

I want you to devote the whole of your time to nothing but

[1] Sister of C. R. Das

charkha and khaddar. It is the only visible symbol of peace, all-India unity and our oneness with the masses including the so-called untouchables.

Please show this to Basanti Devi[1] and Deshbandhu. I hope he is well and strong. Prisoners cannot afford to be ill.

You know, of course, that Shankerlal Banker is with me.

With love to you all.

SRIMATI URMILA DEVI

NARI KARMA MANDIR

CALCUTTA

Speeches and Writings of M. K. Gandhi, p. 742

156. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[SABARMATI JAIL,]

Silence Day, March 13, 1922

You have now to take on the burden of Shankerlal's work. You are capable of carrying it. But on one condition: you must take exercise and spend two days in a week at Matheran. You ought not to remain ill or weak.

I enjoy boundless peace. Here it is as good as home. Till this moment I have not felt that I am in jail. But, believe me, I shall enjoy even greater peace than at present when visitors stop coming and there are some jail restrictions also. There should, therefore, be no grief on my account.

Those who are outside [the prison] will find that their peace lies in their work. And that work is nothing but popularizing and producing khadi. The production in Bombay proper may not be much, but it is desirable that plenty of it is collected there from all sides.

If we have our headquarters in Ahmedabad instead of in Bombay and collected all the khadi there, it may possibly be less expensive.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 47-8

[1] Wife of C. R. Das

157. LETTER TO REVASHANKER JHAVERI [1]

JAIL,
Silence day, March 13, 1922

I enjoy perfect peace. I was arrested only after I had eradicated my anger, had undergone atonement and purified myself. What better lot can there be for India or for me? Please do not worry about me at all. . . [2]

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 48

158. INTERVIEW IN JAIL[3]

SABARMATI JAIL,
March 14, 1922

A long discussion took place regarding the contribution of funds by some Ahmedabad mills towards the Tilak Swaraj Fund of about three lacs of rupees. Mr. Gandhi insisted on the giving over the whole amount to the Gujarat Provincial Committee, in a manner so as to use any sum wholly or partly in the national education. . . . At the end of a long argumentative discussion, ultimately the parties came to a unanimous decision that the Fund Committee should pay every year such amount as may be voted by the Provincial Committee to the labour unions of Ahmedabad in the interest of labour schools. The Unions were to submit their accounts to the Fund Committee of the mill-owners and keep drawing amounts from them.

This matter being settled, Mr. Gordhandas Patel, who is the Honorary Joint Secretary of the Mill Owners' Association, asked Gandhiji:

In case you are convicted, will the non-co-operation movement be adversely affected?

A. The words "in case" are inappropriate. The more harsh the punishment, the more strong will the non-co-operation movement be. This is my firm conviction.

[1] Revashanker Jagjivan Jhaveri, a friend of Gandhiji and brother of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta.

[2] Omission in the source

[3] Gandhiji was interviewed by leading public men of Ahmedabad along with Gordhandas I. Patel, member of the Ahmedabad Mills Tilak Swaraj Fund who, in his private capacity, put a few questions to Gandhiji. This extract was released by the Associated Press.

Q. After your conviction, if Government resort to rigorous repressive measures can any district or tahsil embark upon mass civil disobedience?

A. Certainly not. It is my emphatic advice that, whatever repressive measures Government may adopt, the people should in no circumstances indulge in any movement of mass civil disobedience.

Q. What should be the next move of the nation now?

A. The first and foremost duty of the nation is to keep perfect non-violence. Mutual ill will and feelings of hatred among the different sections of people have taken such a strong root that constant effort to eradicate them is absolutely essential and the non-co-operators should take the lead, because their number is considerable. There is a considerable lack of toleration, courtesy and forbearance amongst non-co-operators and it is my firm belief that that is the sole reason why our victory is delayed, and I regard the charkha as the most potent weapon to secure the required peace, courtesy, etc. Hence I would only advise that the people should become immediately occupied with the charkha and khaddar prepared therefrom. No sooner could we effect a complete boycott of foreign cloth and the use of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar than swaraj is in hand and in consequence whereof the doors of the jail would be automatically laid open and my companions and myself would be able to be out. I anxiously await such an auspicious occasion.

Q. What is your opinion in regard to the remarks made by Sir William Vincent[1] against the Ali Brothers?

A There is nothing new in it. The Brothers have given out in the clearest terms what they believed to be true. This is considered to be their greatest fault and I too am committing similar faults. For the same reason I regard them both as my real brothers.

Q. Will India suffer any harm in consequence of Mr. Montagu's resignation?

A. I certainly do not believe that there will be any harm. But Mr. Montagu certainly deserves credit for what he has done.

Q. Is there any logical connection between the political conditions of England and India at present?

A. There certainly is such a connection. If the programme which I have laid down for India is carried through, it will produce a very salutary effect not only on the political situation of England but on

[1] Member, Viceroy's Executive Council

that of the whole world.

Q. What do you think of the coming Paris Conference?

A. At present, I have no high expectations from that, as it is my firm belief that, as long as India does not show completely the miracle of the charkha, the problem of Khilafat will not be properly solved.

Q. What are your instructions regarding the harmonious relations between the mill-hands and the capitalists of the place, in your absence?

A. Repose full confidence in Anasuyabehn[1].

Q. What message do you send to the people of Ahmedabad?

A. The people of Ahmedabad should take to khaddar, preserve perfect unity and support the current movement.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-3-1922

159. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[SABARMATI JAIL,]
Thursday Night [*March 16, 1922*][2]

CHI. JAMNALAL[3],

As I proceed in my quest for Truth, it grows upon me that Truth comprehends everything. I often feel that ahimsa is in Truth, not *vice versa*. What is perceived by a pure heart at a particular moment is Truth to it for that moment. By clinging to it, one can attain pure Truth. And I do not imagine that this will lead us into any moral dilemma. But often enough, it is difficult to decide what is ahimsa. Even the use of disinfectants is *himsa*. Still we have to live a life of ahimsa in the midst of a world full of *himsa*, and we can do so only if we cling to Truth. That is why I can derive ahimsa from truth. Out of Truth emerge love and tenderness. A votary of Truth, one who would scrupulously cling to Truth, must be utterly humble. His humility should increase with his observance of Truth. I see the truth of this every moment of my life. I have now a more vivid sense of Truth and of my own littleness than I had a year ago.

[1] Anasuyabehn Sarabhai, a social worker and labour leader of Ahmedabad

[2] The letter, bears the signature of the jail officer indicating that it was seen and passed by him on March 17, 1922. It was written by Gandhiji the previous night while he was an under-trial prisoner.

[3] 1889-1942: merchant and banker of Wardha; close associate of Gandhiji; social worker and philanthropist; treasurer of the Congress for a number of years.

The wonderful implication of the great truth *Brahma satyam jaganmithya*[1] grows on me from day to day. We should therefore be always patient. This will purge us of harshness and make us more tolerant. Our lapses will then appear as mountains and those of others as small as mole-hills. The body exists because of our ego. The utter extinction of the body is *moksha*. He who has achieved such extinction of the ego becomes the very image of Truth; he may well be called the *Brahman*. Hence it is that a loving name of God is *Dasanudasa*[2].

Wife, children, friends, possessions—all should be held subject to that Truth. We can be satyagrahis only if we are ready to sacrifice each one of these in our search for Truth. It is with a view to making the observance of this Truth comparatively easy that I have thrown myself into this movement and so not hesitate to sacrifice men like you in it. Its outward form is Indian swaraj. Its real [inner] form is the swaraj of particular individuals. This swaraj is being delayed because we have not found even one satyagrahi of that pure type. This, however, need not dismay us. It should spur us on to greater effort.

You have indeed, made yourself my fifth son. But I am striving to be a worthy father to you. it is no ordinary responsibility which a man who adopts a son undertakes. May God help me, and may I be worthy of the responsibility in this very life.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: G. N. 2843

[1] "Brahma is real, this world is unreal."

[2] Servant of servants

160. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS [1]

SABARMATI JAIL,
March 17, 1922

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have just got your letter. You were quite right in not leaving your work. You should certainly go to Gurudev[2], and be with him as long [as] he needs you. I would certainly like your going to the Ashram (Sabarmati) and staying there a while, when you are free. But I would not expect you to see me in jail; I am as happy as a bird! My ideal of a jail life, especially that of a civil resister, is to be cut off entirely from all connection with the outside world. To be allowed a visitor is a privilege. The religious value of jail discipline is enhanced by renouncing privileges. The forthcoming imprisonment will be to me more a religious than a political advantage. If it is a sacrifice, I want it to be the purest.

With love,

Yours,
MOHAN

From a photostat: G. N. 1307

161. LETTER TO A YOUNG FRIEND [3]

SABARMATI JAIL,
March 17, 1922

MY DEAR CHILD,

Well, I hope you were all happy over the news of my arrest. It has given me great joy, because it came just when I had purified myself by the Bardoli penance and was merely concentrating upon no experiment but the proud work of khaddar manufacture, i.e., hand-spinning. I would like you to see the truth of the spinning-wheel. It and it alone is the visible outward expression of the inner feeling for

[1] This was in reply to C. F. Andrews's letter expressing deep regret that, on account of the railway strike, he was not able to leave his work and come to Gandhiji before the trial was over.

[2] Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941); poet and author; was awarded Nobel Prize for literature in 1913; founder of Visva Bharti, now a university, at Santiniketan

[3] The source does not carry the name of the addressee. It is, however, likely that it was written to Esther Menon whom Gandhiji used to address as "My dear child".

humanity. If we feel for the starving masses of India, we must introduce the spinning-wheel into their homes. We must, therefore, become experts and, in order to make them realize the necessity of it, we must spin daily as a sacrament. If you have understood the secret of the spinning-wheel, if you realize that it is a symbol of love of mankind, you well engage in no other outward activity. If many people do not follow you, you have more leisure for spinning, carding or weaving.

With love to you all,

BAPU

Speeches and Writings of M. K. Gandhi, p. 747

162. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SABARMATI JAIL,
Silence Day [*March 17, 1922*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Maybe this will be my last letter to you for a long time to come. Rest assured that you are rendering service by being there. My real service begins here. I shall exert myself to the utmost to observe the jail rules with my whole being, to shake off likes and dislikes, and if I really become purer every day in jail, that will have its effect outside also. Today there is no limit to my peace of mind, but when I am sentenced and visits from people stop, I shall have still greater peace of mind.

It may be asked, if we can render greater service in this manner, why not go and live in a jungle. The answer is simple. To go and live in a jungle suggests *moha*[2] for it implies desire on our part. To a Kshatriya whatever comes unsought is dharma. The peace of jail life which one gets without seeking may do one good. How wonderful is God! I purified myself thoroughly in Bardoli, did not allow any impurity to enter into me in Delhi, but on the contrary, purified myself still further by putting before the people the same thing in a language which would appeal to them, for I showed thereby my tenderness together with my firmness. Even afterwards, through *Young India* and *Navajivan*, I carried on self-purification. I wrote an article on ahimsa and another entitled "Death Dance" Thus when the process of self-purification had reached the highest point, I offered

[1] The date is given in the addressee's hand.
[2] Attachment to false values

myself for arrest, singing the song of *Vaishnavajana*[1]. If this does not constitute the good, what else can?

It is my desire that no one should now deliberately seek imprisonment.

Translate this letter to your teacher Khwaja Saheb[2], to your comrade Joseph[3] and others.

Could it be even dreamt of that Shankarlal should be arrested with me? But God may do anything.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S.N. 7997

163. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

SABARMATI JAIL,
March 17, 1922

CHI. MANILAL,[4]

Tomorrow I shall be sentenced. I shall hardly wish to write letters thereafter.

I shall be content if you take care of your health, and occupy yourself in some good work anywhere. While I am in jail, it is not necessary that you must come here. Now that you have made *I.O.*[5] your own, I think you can come here only after you have placed it on a sound footing. I see no one whom I can send to you from here. Every good worker is needed here.

It seems you have not yet sent the account from there. If you have not, please do so.

Imam Sahib's wife, Haji Sahiba, died suddenly of heart failure on reaching the port of Porbandar. Imam Saheb is filled with grief. He had been to see me yesterday.

[1] A devotional song attributed to Narasinh Mehta, a poet-saint of Gujarat. *Vide* "To Vaishnavas", 5-12-1920.

[2] Khwaja Abdul Majid who taught the addressee Urdu in the Naini Jail

[3] George Joseph, a barrister of Madura, was on the staff of the *Independent*, and in jail with Mahadev Desai as a result of Government's action against that paper. He also edited *Young India* for some time.

[4] Gandhiji's second son, who was in South Africa

[5] *Indian opinion*, Gandhiji's weekly

Now about your personal problem. Both Naidu and Ramdas tell me that I should write to you about your marriage. They believe that deep down in your heart there is the desire to marry, but that you would marry only if I absolve you from your promise. I do not consider you to be under any promise to me. It would be proper for every man to be under binding to himself. One is one's own enemy or friend.

You have bound yourself and you alone can free yourself from it.

It is my opinion that whatever peace you get is because of your self-imposed binding. You can be sure about this. As long as you do not think of marriage, you stand absolved from your past sins. This atonement of yours keeps you pure. You can stand up as a man before the world. The day you marry you will lose your lustre. Take it from me that there is no happiness in marriage. To the extent Ba is my friend, I derive happiness from her, no doubt. But I derive the same happiness from all of you and from the many men and women who love and serve me. I derive more [happiness] from the man or woman who understands me. If, at this moment, I get enamored of Ba and indulge in sexual gratification, I would fall the very instant. My work would go to the dogs and I would lose in a twinkling all that power which would enable one to achieve swaraj. My relation with Ba today is that of brother and sister, and the fame I have is due to it.

Please do not think that I got this wisdom after I had my fill of pleasure. I am simply painting before you the world as I find it from experience. I cannot imagine a thing as ugly as the intercourse of man and woman. That it leads to the birth of children is due to God's inscrutable way. But I do not at all believe that procreation is a duty or that the world will come to grief without it. Suppose for a moment that all procreation stops, it will only mean that all destruction will cease. *Moksha* is nothing but release from the cycle of births and deaths. This alone is believed to be the highest bliss, and rightly.

I see every day that all our physical enjoyments, without exception, are unclean. We take this very uncleanliness to be happiness. Such is the mysterious way of God. However, our *purushartha*[1] lies in getting out of this delusion.

Having said all this, I regard you as quite free [to act as you please]. I have written this merely as a friend. I have not given any command as a father. "Be you good" this is my only injunction. However, do what you wish, but not what I wish. If you simply cannot

[1] Goal of human life

do without marrying, do think of marriage by all means.

Please write to me in detail what your innermost thoughts are.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Please send here all my manuscript papers, correspondence files, books of newspaper-clippings, etc., which are lying there. Also, all the books which you think are not needed there.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1116. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

164. LETTER TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

SABARMATI JAIL,
Friday [*March 17, 1922*][1]

BHAI SHREE KISHORELAL,

I have always longed to see you. It would have been enough to have met you. Well, now your letter will do. You did the right thing in giving up the idea of coming over to see me. Your coming would not have served any special purpose; besides, the interruption in your practice[2] on account of it would have been an obvious loss.

Since your effort is sincere, it will certainly bear fruit. No honest endeavour ever goes in vain.

Sentence has not yet been passed on me. Possibly it will be known only tomorrow. At present I am an under-trail prisoner, and perfectly at peace. Shankerlal Banker, too is with me.

My blessings are ever with you. Do not be in a hurry to leave the place. But you may certainly leave it when your inner voice tells you to do so

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Shreyarthini Sadhana, pp. 139-40

[1] Gandhiji was sentenced on Saturday, March 18, 1922. This letter was writ-ten the previous day

[2] The addressee had retired to a hut for contemplation under the guidance of Kedarnath *alias* Nathji.

165. LETTER TO B. F. BHARUCHA

[SABARMATI JAIL,
Before *March 18, 1922*][1]

How can I forget to write to you? Please tell my Parsi sisters and brothers never to lose faith in this movement. It is impossible for me to give up my confidence in them. There is no other programme before me than that of khadi and charkha, charkha and khadi. Hand spun yarn must be as current among us as are small coins. To attain this object we can put on no other cloth than hand-spun and hand-woven khadi. So long as India is not able to do this much, civil disobedience will be futile, swaraj cannot be attained, and Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs are impossible to be righted. If this conviction is driven home to you, keep on turning out yarn and using khaddar. Be expert spinners.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

Young India, 30-3-1922

166. INTERVIEW TO "MANCHESTER GUARDIAN"

SABARMATI JAIL,
[Before *March 18, 1922*][2]

. . . We came to the subject of non-co-operation. I asked him if¾in view of the answer Christ gave in the incident of the tribute money¾he did not think the policy of non-co-operation was contrary to Christ's teaching. He replied:

Not being a Christian, I am not bound to justify my action by Christian principles. But, as a matter of fact, in this case I do not think there is any indication that Christ was against the principle of non-co-operation. I think His words show that He was for it.

" I do not understand," I protested. "Surely the meaning is quite clear. 'Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's' means that it is our duty to pay to the civil authorities what is their due. If it doesn't mean that, what does it mean?"

Christ never answered a question in a simple and literal manner. He always gave in His replies more than was expected, something deeper¾some general principle. It was so in this case. Here He does not mean at all whether you must or must not pay taxes. He means

[1] This letter appears to have been written before Gandhiji's trial on March 18.

[2] The interview must have taken place before Gandhiji was tried and sentenced on March 18; *vide* "The Great Trial" 18-3-1922.

something far more than this. When He says "Give back to Caesar the things which are Caesar's", He is stating a law. It means[1] 'give back to Caesar what is his, i.e., I will have nothing to do with it.' In this incident Christ enunciated the great law¾which He exemplified all his life¾of refusing to cooperate with evil. When Satan said to Him, "Bow and worship me" ¾i.e., co-operate with me, ¾then He said, "Get thee behind me, Satan." When the crowds round Him wanted to take Him by force and make Him a military king, He refused to co-operate with them as their method was evil; they wanted Him to rely on force. Christ's attitude against the authorities was defiant. When Pilate asked Him if He were king, He answered, "Thou sayest it." Is not that treating authority with defiance? He called Herod "that fox". Was that like co-operation with authorities? And before Herod He would not answer a word. In short, He refused to co-operate with him; and so I refuse to co-operate with the British Government.

"But" I said, " Surely it is our duty in this imperfect world to co-operate with what is good in individuals and institutions." The Mahatma said:

As a man. I would gladly co-operate and be friends with Lord Reading; but I could not co-operate with him as the Viceroy, being a part of corrupt Government.

Protesting further, I said "Granted the Government has made mistakes, yet you cannot surely say it is wholly bad; if there is miscarriage of justice here and there, the broad fact remains that the 300 millions of India are kept in a condition of law and order. Are you against governments in general? Can you point out to me any government on earth that is faultless and would satisfy you?" He replied at once:

Yes, look at the Government of Denmark. I should be satisfied with such a Government. It represents the people; it does not exploit a conquered nation; it is efficient; the people under it are cultured, intellectual, manly, contented and happy; it supports no large army and navy to keep others in imperial subjection.

"But," I asked, "do you think empires are inherently bad? Surely the Roman Empire was a benefit to civilization. Christ never said a word against it as far as we know"

Quite so, but it was not His business to inveigh against imperialism. Every great reformer has to struggle against the special evil of his age. Jesus, Mohammed, Buddha and, in a lesser way, Luther had their own evils and difficulties to contend with, peculiar to their age. So have we. Now it is imperialism that is the great Satan of our times.

"So you are out to destroy the Empire?" I asked.

I would not put it that way. I only wish to destroy the Empire

[1] Here Gandhiji waved his hand as though putting something away from him.

by creating a commonwealth. I do not wish for complete separation from England; we have no right to wish for it.

"What is your definition of this commonwealth to which India shall belong, what is to be its structure?"

It is to be a fellowship of free nations joined together by the "silver cords of love". (I think it is Lord Salisbury's phrase.) Such a fellowship already exists for many parts of the Empire. Look at South Africa, what fine fellows they are there! Australia¾fine fellows! And New Zealand¾splendid land and a fine people! I would have India enter freely into such a fellowship and with the same rights of equality for Indians as for other members of the commonwealth.

" But surely that is just the very aim that the Government has for India: to become a self-governing unit in the Empire as soon as she is ready for the responsibility. Is not this the whole meaning of the Montagu reforms?"

The Mahatma shook his head.

Ah, I am afraid I do not believe in those reforms. When they were first introduced, I rejoiced and said to myself, "Here at last is a small ray of light in the darkness, just a small chink¾but I will go forward to meet it." I welcomed it; I fought against my own people to give it a fair chance. I said this was a sign of true repentance on the part of the Government. When the War broke out, I went about speaking at recruiting meetings because I thought the Government did really mean to give us what it promised. It is only a small beginning, I thought, but I will wait and see. I will humble myself, make myself small to go through this narrow opening. But events have changed me. Then came the Punjab atrocities, then the Khilafat question, and finally, all the repressive actions of the Government, and now I can believe in the reforms no longer. They were a mere blind, a camouflage to prolong the agony. That is why I call the Government Satanic and why I refuse to co-operate with it in any way.

From the subject of non-co-operation, the conversation passed naturally enough to the question of the boycott of foreign goods and the great khadi (homespun) campaign. Here the Mahatma's face lit up, his eyes shone with enthusiasm.

Of all my plans and foibles, of all my weaknesses and fanaticisms, or whatever you like to call them, khadi is my pet one.

Touching the rough homespun shawl over his shoulder, he said:

This is sacred cloth. Think what it means. Imagine the thousands and hundreds of thousands of home in the famine areas. When the famine comes they are stricken down; they are helpless. They do nothing in their homes¾can do nothing¾they wait and die. If I can introduce the spinning-wheel into these homes, their lives are assured;

they can earn enough money with the sale of their homespun to tide them over the famine.

This coarse stuff is dearer and finer to me than the softest silks of Japan. Through it I am bound nearer to millions of my humble and starving countrymen. Look at the cloth you are wearing. When you buy that, you put one or two annas into the hands of the workman and six or seven into the pocket of the capitalist. Now look at mine. All the money I spend on this goes straight into the hands of the poor¾to the weaver, the spinner, and the carder, and not a pice into the hands of the rich man. To know this fills me with a heavenly joy. If I can act thus, if I can introduce the spinning-wheel into every cottage in India, then I shall be satisfied for this life; I could go on with my other schemes in my next if it pleased God.

"What do you mean?" I asked, not quite sure of the drift of his last remarks. "You think we come back again to this earth?" He replied:

Yes. I think we all come back here again if we are not pure enough to go to heaven. You see, it is the same principle we were talking about before. "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's¾the body must give back to the earth the things that are of the earth before the soul can give itself absolutely to God; or, rather, the soul must refuse to co-operate with the things of this earth; it must become quite free from any earthly desires and entanglements.

"And do you believe animals have soul too?"

Of course. It is the same with them; they, too, must learn to give back to Caesar the things which are Caesar's. That is why as Hindus we do not kill animals; we leave them free to work out their own destinies.

"Then you think it is wrong to kill even such things as snakes, scorpions, and centipedes?"

Yes, we never kill them at our Ashram. It is a high stage in the development of the soul to feel a love for all humanity, but it is a higher stage still to have a heart of love for every living thing. I confess that I have not reached this stage. I still feel afraid when I actually see these creatures come near me. If we have no fear at all, I do not think they will harm us.

(I might mention here an incident related to me by one of Gandhiji's followers. At evening prayer one day at his Ashram, a cobra came through the dusk and crawled right on to Mr. Gandhi, raising its head in front of him. His followers were going to catch it, but he signed to them to be still. He remained motionless himself and the reptile slid over his knees and went back into the garden.) The Mahatma, still on the subject of our relation to the animal world, continued:

I met an Englishman once. He was a veterinary surgeon and had

a wonderful way with animals. We were visiting a house together, and suddenly a gigantic brute of a dog rushed towards us, fierce as a lion, and raised himself up almost to the height of a man as he flung himself at us. I was petrified with fear, but this Englishman went forward to meet it as it charged, and embraced it without a trace of fear. Its anger evaporated at once and it began wagging its tail. It impressed me very much. That is the true way of meeting animals by non-resistance.

"But do you not think a man's life is worth more than an animal's? Take yourself now. You are the leader of a great movement which you believe to be for the good of your country. Supposing you were confronted by a crocodile and you could only escape by injuring it, would you not think your duty and responsibility as a leader were more important than the life of that reptile?"

No, I should say¾or at least I ought to say¾to this crocodile, "Your need is greater than mine", and let it devour me. You see, our life does not finish with the death of the body. God knows all about it. We none of us know what will happen next. If I escaped the crocodile, I could not escape the flash of lightning that might come next minute.

"But surely," I urged, " a man's soul is different from that of a crocodile¾ if it has one at all. You remember what Chesterton says about it, 'when a man is taking his sixth whiskey and soda, and is beginning to lose control over himself, you come up to him and give him a friendly tap on the shoulder and say, 'Be a man'. But when the crocodile is finishing his sixth missionary, you do not step up to it and tap it on the back and say. 'Be a crocodile'. Doesn't this show a man has an ideal in him to strive after in a way no animal has?"

The Mahatma laughed and said:

True, there is a difference between the souls of men and of animals. Animals live in a sort of perpetual trance; but man can wake up and become conscious of God. God says, as it were, to man, "Look up and worship Me; you are made in My image."

"And the souls of animals, where do they come from?" I queried. "Do you think the soul of a man can become the soul of an animal?"

Yes, I think all these horrible and evil creatures are inhabited by the souls of men who have gone wrong¾snakish men, greedy, unmerciful crocodile men, and so on.

"But look at the infinite number of animals, the countless millions upon millions of insects, to mention only one group of the animal kingdom; are they all souls¾the mosquitos, the sandflies, the microbe?"

Who are we, to set a limit to God's sphere of action? Are there not countless other suns and planets in this universe?

It was time for me to go, for I had another appointment, so at this point I rose to take my leave. I went to the edge of the little carpet on the verandah where we had

been sitting and began to put on my shoes (for I had removed them, eastern fashion, being in a manner his guest).

As I lifted one shoe, I saw a spider in it. "See," I said to him, laughing, as I shook out the loathsome thing, and resisting the impulse to crush it, let it run away. "Look; it has been sent to me as a temptation, to try if I have profited by your sermon."

He laughed—he has an infectious and hearty laugh—and said:

Yes, a spider may be a great matter. Don't you remember the story of Mohammed and the spider?

I confessed my ignorance, wondering vaguely if he had got the story muddled up with Robert Bruce.

Yes, one day Mohammed was fleeing from his enemies in great danger. In desperation he turned into a sort of cave in the rock. A few hours afterwards the pursuers came along. "Ah," said one,"let's look in here; this is a likely place." "No" replied the other, "he couldn't be in here, for, see, there is a spider's web across the entrance." Not realizing how recently it had been spun, they passed on, and so Mohammed escaped by the help of the spider and the will of Allah.[1]

The Hindu, 15-8-1922

167. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Sabarmati Jail,
March 18, 1922

DEAR JAMNALAL,

From the purely economic point of view, I can say that unless merchants dealing in foreign yarn and foreign cloth give up their trade and unless the public give up their fondness for foreign cloth, starvation—the chief malady of our country—will not be ended. I

[1] The following are the concluding remarks of the reporter:

While he had been telling this, his friend and fellow-prisoner, Mr. Banker, had brought him his charkha or spinning-wheel. As I bade good-bye to the Mahatma, he was just settling down to the daily duty, shared by all his followers (in theory if not in practice), of spinning or weaving a certain amount each day.

As I reached the end of the verandah, I turned for a last look. There was this unassuming-looking little man, dressed with less ceremony than the meanest coollie, squatting cross-legged in front of his charkha, spinning away as contentedly as Mohammed's spider. Was he, I wondered, spinning a web that was to save the Indian peasant from the menace of an industrial system, untinged with even a veneer of Christian ethics; or was he himself caught in the centre of a vast web of illusions, spun from his own extraordinary brain, into which he had drawn hundreds and thousands of his ignorant and emotional countrymen?

hope all businessmen will participate fully in the propagation of khaddar and the spinning-wheel.

Yours,

MOHAN GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi original: G N 2198; also 2844

168. THE GREAT TRIAL[1]

AHMEDABAD,
March 18, 1922

At the Circuit House at Shahi Bag, the trial of Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Banker commenced on Saturday noon.

Sir J. T. Strangman[2] with Rao Bahadur Girdharlal conducted the prosecution while the accused were undefended. The Judge[3] took his seat at 12 noon and said there was a slight mistake in the charges framed, which he corrected. The charges were then read out by the Registrar, the offence being in three articles published in the *Young India* of September 29, December 15, of 1921 and February 23, 1922. The offending articles were then read out; first of them was,"Tampering with Loyalty"; the second, "The Puzzle and its Solution" and the last was "Shaking the Manes".

The Judge said the law required that the charge should not only be read out, but explained. In this case, it would not be necessary for him to say much by way of explanation. The charge in each case was that of bringing or attempting to bring in to hatred or contempt or exciting or attempting to excite disaffection towards His Majesty's Government established by law in British India. Both the accused were charged with the three offenses under Section 124 A, contained in the articles read out, written by Mr. Gandhi and printed by Mr. Banker. The words "hatred and contempt" were words the meaning of which was sufficiently obvious. The word "disaffection" was defined under the Section where they were told that disaffection included disloyalty and feelings of enmity and the word used in the Section had also been interpreted by the High Court of Bombay in a reported case as meaning political

[1] A verbatim report consisting of a shorthand transcript of the entire Sessions Court proceedings is available in *Trial of Gandhiji*, pp. 197-212. This report from *Young India* has minor verbal modifications or additions made in it wherever necessary to bring it in line with the Court records.

A contemporary report of the trial was published by the Sadaqat Ashram Press, Patna, in 1922, with an 'introduction,' by Mazharul Haque, and reprinted in 1965 by Navajivan Publishing house, Ahmedabad. Also relevant is the book *Two Memorable Trials of Mahatma Gandhi*, edited by R. K. Prabhu, published by Navajivan in 1962. Sarojini Naidu has given a classic description of the memorable trial; *vide Mahatma*, Vol, II, "The Great Trial"

[2] Advocate-General, and Special Public Prosecutor

[3] Justice R. S. Broomfield

alienation or discontent, a spirit of disloyalty to Government of existing authority[1]. The charges having been read out, the Judge called upon the accused to plead to the charges. He asked Mr. Gandhi whether he pleaded guilty or claimed to be tried.

MR. GANDHI: I plead guilty on each count of the charge. I merely observe that the King's name is omitted from the charge-sheet and, in my opinion, very properly

THE JUDGE: Mr. Banker, do you plead guilty, or do you claim to be tried?

MR. BANKER: I plead guilty.

Sir J. Strangman then wanted the Judge to proceed with the trial fully;[2] but the Judge said he did not agree with what had been said by the Counsel. The Judge said that from the time he knew he was going to try the case, he had thought over the question of sentence and he was prepared to hear anything that the Counsel might have to say, or Mr. Gandhi wished to say, on the sentence. He honestly did not believe that the mere recording of evidence in the trial which Counsel had called for would make any difference to them, one way or the other. He, therefore, proposed to accept the pleas.[3]

Mr. Gandhi smiled at this decision.

The Judge said nothing further remained but to pass sentence and before doing so, he liked to hear Sir J. T. Strangman. He was entitled to base his general remarks on the charges against the accused and on their pleas.

SIR J. T. STRANGMAN: It will be difficult to do so. I ask the Court that the whole matter may be properly considered. If I stated what has happened before the Committing Magistrate, then I can show that there are many things which are material to the question of the sentence.

The first point, he said, he wanted to make out, was that the matter which formed the subject of the present charges formed a part of the campaign to spread disaffection openly and systematically to render Government impossible and to overthrow it. The earliest article that was put in from *Young India* was dated 25th May 1921, which said that it was the duty of a non-co-operator to create disaffection towards the Government[4]. The counsel then read out portions of articles written by

[1] The interpretation of the Judge was: "An attempt to excite disaffection towards Government is equivalent to excite political hatred of Government as established by Law, to excite political discontent and alienate the people from their allegiance."

[2] He urged that "the charges should be investigated as fully as possible and also that the Court will be in a better position to pass sentence if it has the whole of the facts"

[3] For a fuller version of the judge's observations, *vide Trial of Gandhiji*.

[4] Commenting that the Government's charge on Sunderlal, student leader of Central Provinces, was not for violence but purely spreading disaffection, Gandhiji had written in *Young India* that "it may be stated to be the creed of the non-co-operator to give voice to the popular disaffection towards the Government and to spread it. Disaffection is the very essence of non-co-operation." *Vide* "Repression in the G.P", 25-5-1921.

Mr. Gandhi in the *Young India*.

Court said nevertheless it seemed to it that the Court could accept plea on the materials of which the sentence had to be based.

Sir J. Strangman said the question of sentence was entirely for the Court to decide. The Court was always entitled to deal in a more general manner in regard to the question of the sentence than the particular matter resulting in the conviction. He asked leave to refer to articles before the Court and what result might have been produced if the trial had proceeded in order to ascertain what the facts were. He was not going into any matter which involved dispute.

The Judge said there was not the least objection. Sir J Strangman said he wanted to show that these articles were not isolated. They formed part of an organized campaign, but so far as *Young India* was concerned, they would show that from the year 1921. The Counsel then read out extracts from the paper, dated June 8, on the duty of a non-co-operator, which was to preach disaffection towards the existing government and preparing the country for civil disobedience. Then in the same number there was an article on disobedience. Then in the same number there was an article on Disaffection—a virtue or something to that effect.[1] Then there was an article on the 28th of July 1921,[2] in which it stated that "we have to destroy the system". Again on September 30[3], 1921, there was an article headed, "Punjab Prosecutions", where it was stated that a non-co-operator worth his name should preach disaffection. That was all so far as *Young India* was concerned. They were earlier in date than the article, "Tampering with Loyalty" and it was referred to the Governor of Bombay. Continuing, he said, the accused was a man of high educational qualifications and evidently, from his writings, a recognized leader. The harm that was likely to be caused was considerable. They were the writings of an educated man, and not the writings of an obscure man and the Court must consider to what the results of a campaign of the nature disclosed in the writings must inevitably lead. They had examples before them in the last few months. He referred to the occurrences in Bombay last November and Chauri Chaura, leading to murder and destruction of property, involving many people in misery and misfortune. It was true that, in the course of those articles, they would find non-violence was insisted upon as an item of the campaign and as an item of the creed. But what was the use of preaching non-violence when he preached disaffection towards Government or openly instigated others to overthrow it? The answer to that question appeared to him to come from Chauri Chaura, Madras and Bombay. These were circumstances which he asked the Court to make into account in sentencing the accused and it would be for the Court to consider those circumstances which involve sentences of severity.

As regards the second accused, his offence was lesser. He did the publication

[1] *Vide* ""Notes", 15-6-1921, under the sub-title "Disaffection A Virtue".

[2] *ibid.*

[3] This appears to be a slip for September 1; *vide* "Notes", 1-9-1921, under the sub-title "Punjab Prosecutions"

and he did not write. His offence nevertheless was a serious one. His instructions were that he was a man of means and he asked the Court to impose a substantial fine in addition to such term of imprisonment as might be inflicted upon. He quoted Section 10 of the Press Act as bearing on the question of fine. When making a fresh declaration, he said a deposit of Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 10,000 was asked in many cases.

COURT: Mr. Gandhi, do you wish to make a statement to the Court on question of sentence?

MR. GANDHI: I would like, with the Court's permission, to read a written statement.

COURT: Could you give me the writing to put it on record?

MR. GANDHI: I shall give it as soon as I finish reading it.

Before reading his written statement, Mr. Gandhi spoke a few words as introductory remarks to the whole statement. He said:

Before I read this statement I would like to state that I entirely endorse the learned Advocate-General's remarks in connection with my humble self. I think that he was entirely fair to me in all the statements that he has made, because it is very true and I have no desire whatsoever to conceal from this Court the fact that to preach disaffection towards the existing system of Government has become almost a passion with me, and the learned Advocate-General is also entirely in the right when he says that my preaching of disaffection did not commence with my connection with *Young India*, but that it commenced much earlier and in the statement that I am about to read, it will be my painful duty to admit before this Court that it commenced much earlier than the period stated by the Advocate-General. It is the most painful duty with me, but I have discharge that duty knowing the responsibility that rests upon me, and I wish to endorse all the blame that the learned Advocate-General has thrown on my shoulders in connection with the Bombay, the Madras and the Chauri Chaura occurrences. Thinking over these deeply and sleeping over them night after night, it is impossible to dissociate myself from the diabolical crimes of Chauri Chaura or the mad outrages in Bombay and Madras. He is quite right when he says that, as a man of responsibility, a man having received a fair share of education, having had a fair share of experience of this world, I should know the consequences of every one of my acts. I knew that I was playing with fire. I ran the risk and, if I was set free, I would still do the same[1]. I know that I was feeling it so every day and I have felt it also this morning that I would have failed in my duty if I did not say what I said here just now.

[1] These sentences do not occur in the official transcript.

I wanted to avoid violence. I want to avoid violence. Non-violence is the first article of my faith. It is also the last article of my creed. But I had to make my choice. I had either to submit to a system which I considered had done an irreparable harm to my country, or incur the risk of the mad fury of my people bursting forth when they understood the truth from my lips. I know that my people have sometimes gone mad; I am deeply sorry for it. I am, therefore, here to submit not to a light penalty but to the highest penalty. I do not ask for mercy. I do not ask for any extenuating act of clemency. I am here to invite and cheerfully[1] submit to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what in law is a deliberate crime and what appears to me to be the highest duty of a citizen. The only course open to you, the Judge, is as I am just going to say in my statement, either to resign your post, or inflict on me the severest penalty, if you believe that the system and the law you are assisting to administer are good for the people of this country and that my activity is therefore injurious to the public weal. I do not expect that kind of conversion, but[2] by the time I have finished with my statement, you will, perhaps, have a glimpse of what is raging within my breast to run this maddest risk[3] that a sane man can run.

The statement was then read out.

STATEMENT

I owe it perhaps to the Indian public and to the public in England, to placate which this prosecution is mainly taken up, that I should explain why, from a staunch loyalist and co-operator, I have become an uncompromising disaffectionist and non-co-operator, To the Court, too, I should say why I plead guilty to the charge of promoting disaffection towards the Government established by law in India.

My public life began in 1893 in South Africa in troubled weather. My first contact with British authority in that country was not of a happy character. I discovered that as a man and an Indian I had no rights. More correctly, I discovered that I had no rights as a man because I was an Indian.

But I was not baffled. I thought that this treatment of Indians was an excrescence upon a system that was intrinsically and mainly good. I gave the Government my voluntary and hearty co-operation, criticizing it freely where I felt it was faulty, but never wishing its

[1] *Young India* has this word here.

[2] This Part of the sentence does not occur in the official report.

[3] The official report has “the maddest risks”

destruction. Consequently, when the existence of the Empire was threatened in 1899 by the Boer challenge, I offered my services to it[1], raised a volunteer ambulance corps and served at several actions that took place for the relief of Ladysmith.[2] Similarly in 1906, at the time of the Zulu revolt, I raised a stretcher-bearer party and served till the end of the rebellion.[3] On both these occasions I received medals and was even mentioned in despatches. For my work in South Africa I was given by Lord Hardinge a Kaiser-i-Hind Gold Medal.[4] When the war broke out in 1914 between England and Germany, I raised a volunteer ambulance corps in London consisting of the then resident Indians in London, chiefly students.[5] Its work was acknowledged by the authorities to be valuable. Lastly, in India, when a special appeal was made at the War conference in Delhi in 1918 by Lord Chelmsford for recruits, I struggled at the cost of my health to raise a corps in Kheda[6] and the response was being made when the hostilities ceased and orders were received that no more recruits were wanted. In all these efforts at service, I was actuated by the belief that it was possible by such services to gain a status of full equality in the Empire for my countrymen.

The first shock came in the shape of the Rowlatt Act, a law designed to rob the people of all real freedom. I felt called upon to lead an intensive agitation against it. Then followed the Punjab horrors beginning with the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh and culminating in crawling orders, public floggings and other indescribable humiliations. I discovered, too, that the plighted word of the Prime Minister to the Mussalmans of India regarding the integrity of Turkey and the holy places of Islam was not likely to be fulfilled. But, in spite of the forebodings and the grave warnings of friends, at the Amritsar Congress in 1919,[7] I fought for co-operation and working the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, hoping that the Prime Minister would redeem his promise to the Indian Mussalmans, that the Punjab wound would be healed and that the reforms, inadequate and unsatisfactory though they were, marked a new era of hope in the life of India.

But all that hope was shattered. The Khilafat promise was not to be redeemed. The Punjab crime was white-washed and most culprits went not only unpunished, but remained in service and some

[1] *Vide* "The Great Trial".
[2] *ibid*
[3] *Vide* "Indian Strectcher-Bearer Corps", 19-7-1906
[4] *Vide* "Natal Indians", 4-4-1908 & "Story of a Soldier of Truth", 4-4-1908.
[5] *Vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting", 25-1-1914.
[6] *Vide* "Apppeal for Enlistment",22-6-1918.
[7] *Vide* "Speech on Reforms Resolution at Amritsar Congress", 1-1-1920.

continued to draw pensions from the Indian revenue, and in some cases were even rewarded. I saw, too, that not only did the reforms not mark a change of heart, but they were only a method of further draining India of her wealth and of prolonging her servitude.

I came reluctantly to the conclusion that the British connection had made India more helpless than she ever was before, politically and economically. A disarmed India has no power of resistance against any aggressor if she wanted to engage in an armed conflict with him. So much is this the case that some of our best men consider that India must take generations before she can achieve the Dominion status. She has become so poor that she has little power of resisting famines. Before the British advent, India spun and wove in her millions of cottages just the supplement she needed for adding to her meagre agricultural resources. This cottage industry, so vital for India's existence, has been ruined by incredibly heartless and inhuman processes as described by English witnesses. Little do town-dwellers know how the semi-starved masses of India are slowly sinking to lifelessness. Little do they know that their miserable comfort represents the brokerage they get for the work they do for the foreign exploiter, that the profits and the brokerage are sucked from the masses. Little do they realize that the Government established by law in British India is carried on for this exploitation of the masses. No sophistry, no jugglery in figures can explain away the evidence that the skeletons in many villages present to the naked eye. I have no doubt whatsoever that both England and the town-dwellers of India will have to answer, if there is a God above, for this crime against humanity which is perhaps unequalled in history. The law itself in this country has been used to serve the foreign exploiter. My unbiassed examination of the Punjab Martial Law cases has led me to believe that at least ninety-five per cent of convictions were wholly bad[1]. My experience of political cases in India leads one to the conclusion that in nine out of every ten cases the condemned men were totally innocent. Their crime consisted in the love of their country. In ninety-nine cases out of hundred, justice has been denied to Indians as against Europeans in the Courts of India. This is not an exaggerated picture. It is the experience of almost every Indian who has had anything to do with such cases. In my opinion, the administration of the law is thus prostituted consciously or unconsciously for the benefit of the exploiter.

The greatest misfortune is that Englishmen and their Indian associates in the administration of the country do not know that they

[1] The original draft has "thing"

are engaged in the crime I have attempted to describe. I am satisfied that many English and Indian officials honestly believe that they are administering one of the best systems devised in the world and that India is making steady though slow progress. They do not know that a subtle but effective system of terrorism and an organized display of force on the one hand, and the deprivation of all powers of retaliation or self-defence on the other, have emasculated the people and induced in them the habit of simulation. This awful habit has added to the ignorance and the self-deception of the administrators. Section 124 A under which I am happily charged is perhaps the prince among the political sections of the Indian Penal Code designed to suppress the liberty of the citizen. Affection cannot be manufactured or regulated by law. If one has no affection for a person or system[1], one should be free to give the fullest expression to his disaffection, so long as he does not contemplate, promote or incite to violence. But the section under which Mr. Banker and I are charged is one under which mere promotion of disaffection is a crime. I have studied some of the cases tried under it, and I know that some of the most loved of India's patriots have been convicted under it. I consider it a privilege, therefore, to be charged under it. I have endeavoured to give in their briefest outline the reasons for my disaffection. I have no personal ill will against any single administrator, much less can I have any disaffection towards the King's person. But I hold it to be a virtue to be disaffected towards a Government which in its totality has done more harm to India than any previous system. India is less manly under the British rule than she ever was before. Holding such a belief, I consider it to be a sin to have affection for the system. And it has been a precious privilege for me to be able to write what I have in the various articles tendered in evidence against me.

In fact, I believe that I have rendered a service to India and England by showing in non-co-operation the way out of the unnatural state in which both are living. In my humble opinion, non-co-operation with evil is as much a duty as is co-operation with good. But, in the past, non-co-operation has been deliberately expressed in violence to the evil-doer. I am endeavouring to show to my countrymen that violent non-co-operation only multiplies evil and that, as evil can only be sustained by violence, withdrawal of support of evil requires complete abstention from violence. Non-violence implies voluntary submission to the penalty for non-co-operation with evil. I am here, therefore, to invite and submit cheerfully to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what in law is a

[1] The original draft has "thing"

deliberate crime and what appears to me to be the highest duty of a citizen. The only course open to you, the Judge, is either to resign your post and thus dissociate yourself from evil, if you feel that the law you are called upon to administer is an evil and that in reality I am innocent; or to inflict on me the severest penalty if you believe that the system and the law you are assisting to administer are good for the people of this country and that my activity is, therefore, injurious to the public weal.[1]

COURT: Mr. Banker, do you wish to say anything to the Court as regards the sentences?

MR. BANKER: I only want to say that I had the privilege of printing these articles and I plead guilty to the charge. I have got nothing to say as regards the sentence.

The following is the full text of the judgment:

Mr. Gandhi, you have made my task easy in one way by pleading guilty to the charge. Nevertheless what remains, namely, the determination of a just sentence, is perhaps as difficult a proposition as a judge in this country could have to face. The law is no respecter of persons. Nevertheless, it will be impossible to ignore the fact that you are in a different category from any person I have ever tried or am likely to have to try. It would be impossible to ignore the fact that, in the eyes of millions of your countrymen, you are a great patriot and a great leader. Even those who differ from you in politics look upon you as a man of high ideals and of noble and of even saintly life. I have to deal with you in one character only. It is not my duty and I do not presume to judge or criticize you in any other character. It is my duty to judge you as a man subject to the law, who has by his own admission broken the law and committed what to an ordinary man must appear to be grave offences against the State. I do not forget that you have constantly preached against violence and that you have on many occasions, as I am willing to believe, done much to prevent violence, but having regard to the nature of your political teaching and the nature of many of those to whom it is addressed, how you could have continued to believe that violence would not be the inevitable consequence it passes my capacity to understand.

There are probably few people in India who do not sincerely regret that you should have made it impossible for any Government to leave you at liberty. But it is so. I am trying to balance what is due to you against what appears to me to be necessary in the interests of the public, and I propose, in passing sentence, to follow the precedent of a case, in many respects similar to this case, that was decided some 12 years ago, I mean the case against Mr. Bal Gangadhar Tilak under this same section. The sentence that was passed upon him as it finally stood was a sentence of simple imprisonment for six years. You will not consider it unreasonable, I think, that you should be classed with Mr. Tilak, and that is the sentence, two years' simple

[1] The signed, handwritten statement is available in photostat in *Trial of Gandhiji*.

imprisonment on each count of the charge, i.e., six years in all, which I feel it my duty to pass upon you and I should like to say in doing so that, if the course of events in India should make it possible for the Government to reduce the period and release you, no one will be better pleased than I.

THE JUDGE (to Mr. Banker): I assume that you have been to a large extent under the influence of your chief. The sentence that I propose to pass upon you is simple imprisonment for six months on each of the first two counts, that is, simple imprisonment for one year and a fine of a thousand rupees on the third count, with six months' simple imprisonment in default.

Mr. Gandhi said:

I would say one word. Since you have done me the honour of recalling the trial of the late Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, I just want to say that I consider it to be the proudest privilege and honour to be associated with his name. So far as the sentence itself is concerned, I certainly consider that it is as light as any judge would inflict on me, and so far as the whole proceedings are concerned, I must say that I could not have expected greater courtesy.

Then the friends of Mr. Gandhi crowded round him as the Judge left the court, and fell at his feet. There was much sobbing on the part of both men and women. But all the while Mr. Gandhi was smiling and cool and giving encouragement to everybody who came to him. Mr. Banker also was smiling and taking this in a light-hearted way. After all his friends had taken leave of him, Mr. Gandhi was taken out of the Court to the Sabarmati jail. And thus the great trial finished.

Young India, 23-3-1922

169. MESSAGE TO THE COUNTRY [1]

[AHMEDABAD,
March 18, 1922]

I am delighted that heavenly peace reigned supreme throughout the country during the last six days. If it continues to the end of the chapter, it is bound to be brief and illuminating.

Speeches and Writings of M. K. Gandhi, p. 758

[1] After the sentence and before he left the Court, Gandhiji asked the General Secretary of the Congress who was near him to convey this message to the country.

170. REMARK ON REMOVAL FROM SABARMATI JAIL

SABARMATI JAIL,
[*March 20, 1922*][1]

M. K. Gandhi remarked that the one thing which had kept his spirits up since his arrest was the fact that the country had paid heed to his message and no outbreak of violence had occurred.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, p. 454

171. INTERVIEW TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI [2]

YERAVDA JAIL,
POONA,
April 1, 1922

In answer to questions about his food Mahatmaji said he was given goat's milk and bread, milk being given all at a time. He had cut down his three meals to two. Asked what he did for fruits, he said he was given two oranges a day. Raisins which he had mentioned as a part of his usual diet had not yet been ordered to be given. . . .

. . . Mahatmaji told me that he did not want any complaints to be made about his life in jail.

The Hindu, 3-4-1922

172. A PRIMER [3]

Friday, Chaitra Vad 3[*April 14, 1922*]

TO THE TEACHERS

This primer should be regarded as an experiment.

Shri Narahari[4], Kaka and other teachers should go through it

[1] Gandhiji and Shankerlal G. Banker were removed by Special train from Sabarmati Jail to Yeravda Jail on te Midnight of March 20

[2] The interview, during which Devdas Gandhi was present, took place in Yeravda Jail, Poona. For the full report, *Vide* Appendix II

[3] The letter to Hakim Ajmal Khan, April 14, 1922, mwnrions the completion of the primer of the Gujarati languae. The Note to the Teachers and Foreword carry the date *Chaitra Vad* 3, which corresponds to april 14, 1922. The primer was published in 1951 under the title *Balpothi* by the Navajivan Publishing House.

[4] Narahari Dwarkadas Parikh, a member of Gandhiji's team of constructive workers in Sabarmati Ashram since 1917

and show it to Professor Gidwani[1], Ballubhai[2] and Shri Diwan[3], but only if they approve of it. If it is passed by these gentlemen, it should finally be sent to Anandshankarbhai[4] and should be published if he, too, approves of it.

Anandanand,[5] Valji Desai[6], Chhaganlal, Maganlal, Devdas, Jamnadas,[7] and others may also go through it. If possible, a copy should be sent to Mahadev too. Let no one think even in his dream that it should be published because I have prepared it. The labour I have put in should also be no consideration, for I have enjoyed writing it.

I have followed, in writing this, exactly the same method by which I used to teach children at Tolstoy Farm and other places. I used to act as "mother" there.

My original idea was to write thirty lessons. But, on second thoughts, I felt that it would be better to limit the size of the primer. Let children read two or three primers in a year.

There should be no objection to Narahari and Kaka making such changes as they may wish to.

Any letter informing [me] whether it is proposed to publish this primer or any correspondence about it should be in English. I believe that the [Jail] Superintendent will let it come through in that case.

If it is decided to publish the primer, it would be better to add pictures of the spinning-wheel, etc. Good paper should be used and the type must be large.

[1] A. T. Gidwani, Professor, Muir Central College, Allahabad; later, Principal, Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad

[2] Ballubhai Thakore and Jivanlal Diwan, educationists and Congress workers of Ahmedabad

[3] *ibid*.

[4] Anandshankar B. Dhruva (1869-1942); Sanskrit scholar and man of letters; Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Benares Hindu University, 1920-37

[5] Swami Anandanand, Manager of Navajivan Press during the decade following *Navajivan's* first publication in 1919; edited *Navajivan* for some time during 1922-24 when Gandhiji was in jail.

[6] Valji Govindji Desai, sometime lecturer in English, Gujarat College, Ahmedabad; resigned from service and joined Gandhiji; translated *Satyagraha in South Africa* and other works of Gandhiji; worked on the editorial staff of *Young India.*

[7] Jamnadas Gandhi, son of Khushalchand Gandhi, Gandhiji's cousin, and younger brother of Chhaganlal and Maganlal Gandhi

I certainly intend to write about Hinduism.[1]

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[PS.]

I think it would be better not to give my name as the author of this primer.[2]

FOREWORD

This primer presupposes that the pupil has already spent a year or less in spinning, learning the letters of the alphabet, both Devanagari and Prakrit, and simple tables.

I have used in the primer the words *laghushanka*[3] and *apaman*[4] because I could not avoid them. I have used the word *laghushanka* in place of *peshab*, thinking that it would be good if children learnt this fine word. *Apaman* has been kept, as milder word could not be found.

The difficult words in Lesson 12 have been deliberately introduced.

The aim which has been kept in view in preparing this primer is that the pupil should be able to put into practice whatever he learns. Nothing has been included which is not within the range of his daily experience.

The presentation of the lessons in this primer in the form of dialogue between a mother and her child has a touch of artificiality about it, as most Indian mothers today do not perform their duty of instructing children, nor are they equipped for the task.

This artificiality has been introduced to set forth an ideal, in the hope that now some mothers at any rate will do their duty towards their children. I believe that the primer can be completed in three to six months.

Teachers should make the child write out every lesson in an attractive hand.

The lessons have been planned to serve as a basis for the teacher, who may elaborate them further as his zeal and enthusiasm may inspire him to do.

AUTHOR

LESSON 1: MORNING

"Get up, my child, it is morning."

[1] When Gandhiji was sentenced, Kaka Kalekar had requested him to write in jail a primer on Hinduism..

[2] *Vide* " Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 12-8-1922.

[3] Passing urine

[4] Insult

"I still feel sleepy."

"Look, your sister is up; you, too, should get up and brush your teeth; and then say your prayers. It is past four. Don't you hear the birds singing? Your sister Shanta has started singing a *bhajan*[1]."

LESSON 2: BRUSHING THE TEETH

"Have you cleaned your teeth? Let me see your teeth. They look yellow. You have not brushed them properly. The tongue, too, is not clean. You have not taken enough care to remove the coating. What stick did you use?"

"It was from the *babul* tree."

"Why did you not use one from the *neem* tree?"

"It is rather bitter."

"What if it is? The mouth feels fresh afterwards. You will come to like the bitterness when you get used to it."

LESSON 3: PREPARING FOR THE "BHAJAN"

We should not go to the *bhajan* without cleaning ourselves first. Rheum in the eyes marks one as dirty. Our bodies and minds should be clean when singing *bhajans* to God. During prayers, one should sit erect with crossed legs and folded hands. We should not talk with anyone, nor look at anyone. We do not see God, but He sees us.

I see you even when you are asleep, being awake myself, but you do not see me. Likewise, may it not be that God sees us, even if we do not see Him?

LESSON 4: THE "BHAJAN"

Dear, very dear to me is the name of *Dada*[2] Rama,
Little use have I for all learning else;
Dear, very dear to me is the name of *Dada* Rama.
Father dear, show your love for me,
Have sweet songs about Govind written on my slate;
For dear, dear to me is the name of *Dada* Rama.
All I wish to hear is stories and songs about Shri Rama,
Of Him do I constantly think, and on Him meditate;
For dear, dear to me is the name of *Dada* Rama.

¾KALIDAS VASAVADA

LESSON 5: EXERCISE

"What exercise did you take after the *bhajan* today?"

[1] Devotional song
[2] Grandfather

"I did some *dand*[1] exercise, and we also ran, all of us together."

"Do you keep your mouth closed while running? We should always breathe through the nostrils. Do you take any other exercise?"

"Sometimes we practice *oothbes*[2] and occasionally we do wrestling. We look upon exercise also as part of games. Among the games we play are *aatapaata, saat-tali, hututu, mag-matali, moi-dandia* and so on, as we feel inclined from day to day. As we take some exercise in the morning after the *bhajan*, so there is always something in the evening too."

LESSON 6: THE SPINNING-WHEEL

"Madhu, how much did you spin today"

"Mother, I spun only six coils today."

"Why so little? Generally you spin not less than eight."

"Yes, mother, I felt a little lazy today and the sliver, too, must have been rather bad; so the thread kept snapping."

"For how many hours were you at the spinning-wheel?"

"I worked at it for three hours. You will of course say that it is too little. I admit it is. I told you I felt lazy today. If possible, I shall work an hour extra tomorrow. I do want to spin at least for four hours daily."

"You will discover that in the extra hour put in, you will not be able to do as much as you could have in the hour that you lost. Time lost is never recovered. Laziness is our enemy."

LESSON 7: THE FUN OF SPINNING

"Do you enjoy spinning?"

"Spinning is as much fun as playing when the spindle is not bent and the strap fits properly, when the wheel turns noiselessly and the thread does not snap. When I turn the spinning-wheel fast enough, it produces a sweet sound, like that of a *bhambhutia*[3] and it gives pleasure. Moreover, I feel happy thinking that the yarn spun by me will be used to make clothes for me."

LESSON 8: CLEANLINESS

"I find dirt in your nails today. There is dirt in your ears too. Did you have a bath today?"

"I never omit to have a bath."

"Do you think that all you have to do to take a bath is to pour

[1] Kinds of physical exercise

[2] *ibid*.

[3] May mean 'spinning top' or 'beetle' or both

water on your body or take a dip in the river? Having a bath means cleaning all parts of the body carefully. The body should be rubbed as water is poured over it. Dirt should be removed from the ears, armpits and other parts. The nails should be examined. When the nails are dirty, how can anyone eat with the hand? Like the body, our clothes, bedding, etc., should also be clean. Cleanliness is a sign of one's diligence. Dirt is a sign of idleness."

LESSON 9: BAD HABITS

"There is a very strong smell in our village. What can be the reason mother?"

"Well, son, some of our old bad habits are responsible for it. People, instead of taking the children far out of the village, let them sit for stools in the lanes, and themselves do not go farther than the outskirts of the village. How is it possible, then, to pass by a village in the morning? People do not hesitate to pass urine at any spot. We insult mother earth by acting in this way. Stools should be immediately covered over with earth. A cat digs up earth and, after relieving itself, covers the stools with it. Human beings should do the same."

LESSON 10: THE FIELD AND THE "VADI[1]"

"Do you know what crops grow in our village?"

"Yes, mother; wheat, gram, *bajra*, *tuvar*, *jowar*, etc., according to the season. The absence of a *vadi* near the village is felt very badly. There are plenty of trees round the neighbouring village; one enjoys roaming around them. There are *neem* trees, and tamarind trees as well. There are a few mango trees too. Some jujube plants also grow here and there. Quite a few vegetables are also grown in that *vadi*, beans, brinjals, fenugreek, java radish, lady's fingers, radishes and so on. Would it not be nice if the people of our village too grew such trees?"

"Ours is a poor village. There is no unity among the residents, so the people rest content with the crops that grow in our fields."

"I shall certainly plant some fruit trees, at any rate, when I grow up."

"May God fulfil your wish."

LESSON 11: HOUSEWORK

"Look here, son you should help with the housework, just as your sister Shanta does."

[1] Farm growing fruits and vegetables

"But Shanta is a girl; a boy plays and studies."

Shanta cried out: "Do we not also wish to play and study?"

"Do I prevent you? Perhaps you like working in the home, too."

Mother said: "Shouldn't boys work, then?"

Madhu replied: "A boy must pay more attention to his studies, as he will have to earn a living when he grows up."

Mother said: "That is a wrong idea altogether. There is much to learn in housework. You do not know what you can learn if you sweep the house, help with the cooking, wash clothes and clean utensils. You do not know how much you have to use your eyes, hands and brain in housework, But, then, we use them without effort and so do not know. True education consists in gradually acquiring experience in this way. Then again, by doing housework, you will acquire greater skill, become stronger in body and, when you have grown up, will not be dependent on anyone. I would say, you need to learn and do housework as much as your sister Shanta does."

LESSON 12: THE GLORY OF GOD

"Shanta and Madhu, do you, sister and brother, ever look up at the sky?"

Shanta said: "You yourself taught us to have *darshan*[1] of the sun. How can one do this without looking up at the sky?"

Madhu said: "And have you forgotten that you show us the moon waxing and waning? The small crescent moon two days old and the large moon on full-moon day¾how can one fail to observe this change?"

Mother said: "Well, then, what else do you see in the sky?"

Shanta: "What a great many stars! What fun it would be, I feel, if I could have some of them!"

Madhu: "Then again, both during day and night clouds often cover up the sun, the moon and the stars for a while and then go away. We often enjoy seeing this."

Mother: "Who created all this and the earth on which we walk?"

Madhu: "You yourself told us that God created all this."

Shanta: "And it is you who time and again make us sing that Hindi song. Come, let us sing it:

"Thou hast created this whole universe, my God !

[1] Sight of person, object or place considered holy

Dearer to me than my very soul, Thou art without compare, we know,
Thou art brother and Thou friend, Thou art father and Thou mother,
All this universe is filled with Thee."

[From Gujarati]

Balpothi; also S.N. 8081

173. LETTER TO HAKIM AJMAL KHAN [1]

YERAVDA JAIL,
April 14, 1922

DEAR HAKIMJI,

Prisoners are allowed one visit every three months and to write and receive one letter during the same period. I have had a visit from Devdas and Rajagopalachari. And I am now writing the permitted letter.

You will remember that Mr. Banker and I were convicted on the 18th March on a Saturday. On Monday night about 10 p.m. we received notice that we were to be removed to an unknown destination. At 11.30 p.m. the Superintendent of Police took us to the special that was awaiting us at Sabarmati. We were given a basket of fruit for the journey and we were well looked after during the whole journey. The doctor of the Sabarmati Jail had allowed me, for health and religious reasons, the food to which I am used, and to Mr. Banker bread and milk and fruit for medical reasons. Cow's milk for Mr. Banker and goat's for me were, therefore, ordered on the way by Deputy Superintendent who was escorting us.

We were taken off at Khirki where a prison van was waiting to take us to the jail from where I am writing this.

I had heard bad accounts of this Jail from ex-prisoners and was therefore prepared to face difficulties in my path. I had told Mr. Banker that if my hand-spinning was stopped, I would have to refuse food as I had taken a vow on the Hindu New Year's Day to spin every day at least for half an hour except when I was ill or traveling. He should not, therefore, I told him, be shocked if I had to refuse food and that he should on no account join me out of false sympathy. He had seen my view-point.

We were not, therefore, surprised when, on reaching the Jail about 5.30 p.m., I was told by the Superintendent that he could not allow the spinning-wheel which was with us nor could we be allowed to take the fruit that was with us. I pointed out that hand-spinning was

[1] This was withheld by the Jail authorities; *vide* the following item.

a matter of vow with me and that, as a matter of fact, both of us were permitted to do it everyday at the Sabarmati jail. Thereupon we were told, Yeroda was not Sabarmati.

I told the Superintendent too that both of us were permitted at the Sabarmati jail for health reasons to sleep outside, but that was not to be expected at this Jail.

Thus the first impression was rather unhappy. I felt however totally undisturbed. The semi-fast of Tuesday following that of Monday did me no harm. I know that Mr. Banker felt it. He has night terrors and requires someone near him. And this was his first rough experience in life perhaps. I am a seasoned jail-bird.

The superintendent came the next morning to question us. I saw that the first impression did not do justice to the Superintendent. The previous evening he was evidently in a hurry. We were received after the regular time and he was totally unprepared for what was undoubtedly to him a strange request. He discovered, however, that my request for the spinning-wheel was not a matter of cussedness, but rightly or wrongly a real religious necessity. He saw too that it was no question of hunger-striking. He gave orders that the spinning-wheels should be restored to both of us. He realized too that both of us would need the diet we had mentioned.

And so far as I have been able to observe, the animal comforts are well looked after in this Jail. Both the Superintendent and the Jailor appear to me to be tactful and have pleasant manners. The first day's experience I count as of no consequence. The relations between the Superintendent and the Jailor and myself are as cordial as they can be between a prisoner and his keepers.

But it is evident to me that the human element is largely, if not entirely, absent in the jail system. The Superintendent informs me that all prisoners are treated as I am treated. If that is so, as animals prisoners could hardly be better cared for. But, for the human sentiment, there is no accommodation in the Jail Regulations.

This is what the Jail Committee consisting of the Collector, a clergyman and some others did the next morning. This Committee met quite by coincidence the very next day after our admission. The members came to find our needs. I mentioned that Mr. Banker suffered from nervousness and that he should be kept with me and that his cell should be kept open. I cannot describe to you the contemptuous and callous indifference with which the request was treated. As the members turned their backs upon us, one of them remarked, 'nonsensical'. They knew nothing of Mr. Banker's past or his position in life or of his upbringing. It was none of their business

to find all this out and to discover the cause for what appeared to me to be the most natural request. It was certainly of greater importance for him than his food that he should be able to have undisturbed rest at night.

Within one hour after the interview, a warder came ordering Mr. Banker to be removed to another quarter. I felt like a mother suddenly deprived of her only child. It was by a stroke of good fortune that Mr. Banker was arrested with me and that we were tried together. At Sabarmati I had written to the District Magistrate that I would deem it a courtesy if the authorities did not separate Mr. Banker from me and had told him that we could be mutually helpful if he was kept with me. I was reading the *Gita* with him and he was nursing my weak body. Mr. Banker lost his mother only a few months ago. When I met her a few days before her death, she said she would die in peace as her son should be quite safe under my care. Little did the noble lady know how utterly powerless I would prove to protect her son in the hour of his need. As Mr. Banker left me, I entrusted him to God‘s care and assured him that God would take care of him and protect him.

He has been since permitted to come to me for about half an hour to teach me carding, which he knows. This he does in the presence of a warder in order to see that we so not talk about anything else than the purpose for which he is brought to me.

I am trying to coax the Inspector-General and the Superintendent to let me read the *Gita* with Mr. Banker during the few minutes he is allowed to come. This request is under consideration.

In fairness to the authorities, I must mention that Mr. Banker’s animal comforts are well looked after and that he is looking not bad at all. He is gradually losing his nervousness.

It has required the use of all my tact to retain possession of seven books, five of which are purely religious and the other two are an old dictionary I prize and an Urdu manual presented to me by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad[1]. Strict orders given to the Superintendent were that prisoners were not to be allowed any books save the Jail library books. I was given the option of presenting the said seven books to the Jail library and then using them. Whilst I was prepared to do so with my other books, I gently told the Superintendent that to ask me to present religious books which I was using or gifts with a history was like asking me to give up my right arm. I do not know

[1] 1888-1958; Congress leader and scholar of Koranic theology; President of the Indian National Congress, 1923, 1940-45; Education Minister, Government of India, 1947-58

how much tact the Superintendent had to use in persuading his superiors to let me retain those books.

I am now told that I could import at my own expense periodicals. I had said a newspaper was a periodical. He seemed to agree, but he had his doubts about a newspaper being allowed. I had not the courage to mention the *Chronicle* weekly. But I mentioned *The Times of India* weekly. That seemed to the Superintendent to be too political. I could name the *Police News*, *Tit-bits* or *Blackwoods*. This matter is, however, quite beyond the Superintendent's province. What is to be considered a periodical will probably be finally decided by His Excellency the Governor-in-Council.

Then, there was the question of the use of a knife. If I was to toast my bread (I could not digest it without). I must cut it up in slices and, if I was to squeeze my lemons, I must cut them also. But a knife was a 'lethal weapon' and most dangerous in the hands of a prisoner. I gave the Superintendent the option of withdrawing bread and lemons or giving me the use of a knife. At last the use of my own pen-knife has been restored to me. It has to remain in the custody of my convict warder to be given to me whenever I may require it. It goes back to the Jailor every evening and comes back every morning to the convict warder.

You may not know the species. Convict warders are those long-term prisoners who by their good behaviour may be given a warder's dress and may be, under supervision, entrusted with light responsibilities. One such warder who has been convicted for a murder is in charge of me during the day and another reminding me of Shaukat Ali's size is added for night duty. This addition was made when the Inspector-General at last decided to leave my cell open. Both the warders are quite inoffensive. They never interfere with me. And I never engage in any conversation with them. I have to speak to the day warder for some of my wants. But beyond that I have no intercourse with them.

I am in a triangular block. One side (the longest) of the triangle which falls west has eleven cells. I have as my companion in the yard an Arabian State prisoner (I suppose). He does not speak Hindustani. I unfortunately do not know Arabic; therefore, our intercourse is restricted to morning greetings. The base of this triangle is a solid wall and the shortest side is a barbed-wire fence with a gate opening on to a spacious open ground. The triangle is divided by a lime line beyond which I was not to go. This I had about seventy feet length for exercise. As an illustration of the want of human touch, I mentioned the white line to Mr. Khambata, the Cantonment Magistrate, who is

one of the visiting Magistrates. He did not like the restriction and reported likewise. The whole length of the triangle is now open for exercise to me giving me probably 140 feet length. My eyes are set upon the open space just mentioned. But that is perhaps too human to be permissible. Anyway, seeing that the white line is gone, the barbed-wire fence may, I have suggested, be disregarded so far as my exercise is concerned. It is rather a ticklish problem for the Superintendent and he is taking to consider it.

The fact is I am an isolation prisoner. I must not talk with anybody. Some of the Dharwar prisoners are in this jail, so is the great Gangadharrao of Belgaum. Verumal Begraj, the reformer of Sukker, is also in this jail and so is Lalit, one of the Bombay editors. I cannot see any of them. What harm I can do to them if I live in their midst, I do not know. They can certainly do me no harm. We cannot plot our escape. It will be just the thing the authorities would relish if we did plot. If it is a question of infecting with my views, they are all inoculated. Here in the Jail I could only make them more enthusiastic about the spinning-wheel.

But if I have mentioned my isolation to you, it is not by way of complaint. I am happy in it. By nature I like solitude. Silence pleases me. And I am able to indulge in studies which I prize, but which I was bound to neglect outside.

But not all prisoners can enjoy isolation. It is unnecessary and unhuman. The fault lies in the false classification. All prisoners are practically grouped together and no Superintendent, however humane he may be, can possibly do justice to the variety of men and women that come under his custody and care, unless he has a fee hand. Therefore, the only thing he does is to study their bodies to the entire neglect of the man within.

Add to this the fact that the jails are being prostituted for political ends so that political persecution follows a political prisoner even inside the prison wall.

I must finish the picture of my jail life by giving you the routine. The cell itself is nice¾ quite clean and airy. The permission to sleep outside is a blessing to me, being used to sleeping in the open, I rise at 4 a.m. for prayers. The Ashram people will be interested to know that I recite the morning verses unfailingly and sing some of those hymns I have by heart. At 6.30 a.m., I commence my studies. No light is allowed. As soon therefore as one can read, I commence work. It stops at 7 p.m., after which it is impossible to read or write without artificial light. I retire at 8 p.m. after the usual Ashram prayer. My studies include reading the Koran, *Ramayana* by Tulsidas, books

on Christianity given by Mr. Standing, study of Urdu. These literary studies receive six hours. Four hours are given to hand-spinning and carding. At first, I gave only 30 minutes to spinning when I had only a limited supply of slivers. The authorities have kindly given me some cotton. It is exceptionally dirty. It is perhaps good training for a beginner in carding. I give one hour to carding and three to spinning. Anasuyabai and now, Maganlal Gandhi, have sent slivers. I would like them to stop sending slivers, but one of them may send good clean cotton, not more than two pounds at a time. I am anxious to make my own slivers. I think that every spinner should learn carding. I was able to card after one lesson. It is harder to practice but much easier to learn then spinning.

This spinning is growing on me. I seem daily to be coming nearer to the poorest of the poor and to that extent to God. I regard the four hours to be the most profitable part of the day. The fruit of my labour is visible before me. Not an impure thought enters my mind during the four hours. The mind wanders whilst I read the *Gita*, the Koran, the *Ramayana*. But the mind is fixed whilst I am turning the wheel, or working the bow. I know that it may not and cannot mean all this to everyone. I have so identified the spinning-wheel with the economic salvation of pauper India that it has for me a fascination all its own. There is a serious competition going on in my mind between spinning and carding on the one hand and literary pursuits on the other. And I should not be surprised if, in my next letter, I report to you an increase in the hours of spinning and carding.

Please tell Maulana Abdul Bari Saheb that I expect him to compete with me in spinning which, he informed me, he had just taken up. His example will lead many to take up this great occupation as a duty.

The Ashram people may be informed that I have finished the primer I promised to, which I presume that I shall be permitted to send to them[1]. I hope to be able to overtake the religious primer I promised to write, as also the history of the struggle in South Africa.

Instead of three, for the sake of convenience, I am taking two meals only here. But I am taking quite enough. The Superintendent is offering every convenience in the shape of food. For the last three days he has procured for me goat's milk, butter, and I expect in a day or two to be baking my own chapatis.

I am allowed two perfectly new warm, heavy blankets, a coir mat

[1] Gandhiji was not allowed by the authorities to forward the manuscript of the Gujarati Primer to the Ashram; *vide* "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 12-8-1922.

and two sheets. A pillow has been added since. It was hardly necessary. I used books or my extra clothing as a pillow. The latter has been added as a result of the conversation with Rajagopalachari. There is privacy for bathing which is allowed daily. A separate cell is allowed as a work-room whilst it is not otherwise required. Sanitary arrangements have been made perfect.

Friends, therefore, need not worry about me in any way whatsoever. I am as happy as a bird. Nor do I think I am doing less useful service here than outside. To be here is good discipline for me, and separation from co-workers was just the thing required to know whether we were an organic whole or whether our activity was one man's show-a nine days' wonder. I have no misgivings. I have, therefore, no curiosity to know what is happening outside. And if my prayers are true and from a humble heart, they, I know, are infinitely more efficacious than any amount of meddlesome activity.

I am anxious about Das's health. I shall always have cause for complaint against his good partner that she did not keep me informed of his health. Motilalji's asthma, I hope, has left him.

Do please persuade Mrs. Gandhi not to think of visiting me. Devdas created a scene when he visited me. He could not brook the idea of my standing in the Superintendent's office when he was brought in. The proud and sensitive boy burst out weeping aloud and it was with difficulty I could restrain him. He should have realized that I was a prisoner and as such I had no right to sit in the presence of the Superintendent. Seats might and should have been offered to Rajagopalachari and Devdas. But I am sure there was no discourtesy intended. I do not suppose it is usual for the Superintendent to supervise such interviews. But in my case evidently he wanted to run no risks. I would not like the scene to be repeated by Mrs. Gandhi, nor do I want a special favour to be done in my case by a seat being offered. Dignity, I am sure, consists in my standing. And we must yet wait for a while before the British people naturally and heartily extend the delicate courtesies to us in every walk of life. I am not at all anxious to have visitors and I would like friends and relations to restrain themselves[1]. Business visits may always be paid under circumstances adverse or otherwise.

I hope Chhotani Mian has distributed the spinning-wheels donated by him among poor Mussalman women in Panchmahals, East Khandesh and Agra. I forget the name of the Missionary lady who

[1] Gandhiji, however, had occasional visits from them; for an account of Maganlal Gandhi's interview, *vide* Appendix "Interview with Maganlal Gandhi", 20-7-1922.

wrote to me from Agra. Kristodas may remember.

I shall soon finish the Urdu manual. I would prize a good Urdu dictionary (and) any book you or Dr. Ansari may choose.

Please tell Shuaib I am at ease about him.

I do hope you are keeping well. To hope that you are not overworking yourself is to hope for the impossible. I can, therefore, only pray that God will keep you in health in spite of the strain.

With love to every one of the workers,

Yours sincerely,

M. K.GANDHI

HAKIMJI AJMAL KHAN
DELHI

From a handwritten copy: S. N. 8011; also *Young India*, 28-2-1924

174. LETTER TO GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

YERAVDA JAIL,
May 12, 1922

FROM PRISONER NO. 8677

TO

THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

With reference to the Government orders passed on Prisoner's letter to Hakimji Ajmal Khan, a friend of Prisoner's, and returning said letter to Prisoner with certain remarks in the said orders read out to Prisoner by the Superintendent of Yeroda Jail, Prisoner No. 8677 begs to say that on application to the Superintendent for a copy of the said orders, he says he has no authority to give Prisoner a copy thereof.

Prisoner would like to possess a copy of the said orders and send one to friends so that they may know under what circumstances Prisoner has been unable to send to friends a letter of welfare. Prisoner hereby applies for instructions to the Superintendent to give him a copy of the said orders.

Regarding the orders, so far as Prisoner recollects and understands them, the Government base their refusal to send Prisoner's letter to its destination on the ground that (i) the letter contains reference to prisoners other than Prisoner himself, and (ii) the letter is likely to give rise to political controversy.

With regard to the first ground, Prisoner submits that the letter contains no references that are not strictly relevant to Prisoner's own

personal condition and welfare.

With regard to the second ground, Prisoner respectfully contends that the possibility of a public controversy cannot be a valid ground to deprive a prisoner of the right of sending a quarterly letter of welfare to friends and relatives. The implication of the ground is, in Prisoner's opinion, dangerous in the extreme, it being that an Indian prison is a secret department. Prisoner contends that Indian prisons are an open public department subject to criticism by the public in the same manner as any other department.

Prisoner contends that his said letter is strictly one containing information regarding his personal welfare. References to other prisoners were necessary to complete the information. Prisoner would gladly correct mis-statements or exaggeration if any be discovered to him. But to send the letter in the mutilated manner suggested by the Government would be to give an erroneous idea of his condition to his friends.

Unless, therefore, the Government will forward Prisoner's letter subject to such correction that may be found necessary, Prisoner has no desire to exercise the right of sending to friends a letter of welfare, which right becomes of doubtful value under the restrictions imposed by the Government under the said orders.

M. K. GANDHI
PRISONER NO. 8677

From a handwritten copy: S. N. 8013; also *Young India*, 28-2-1924

175. LETTER TO HAKIM AJMAL KHAN [1]

YERAVDA JAIL,
May 12, 1922

DEAR HAKIMJI,

I wrote to you on 14th April a long letter giving you full information about myself. It contained messages among others to Mrs. Gandhi and Devdas. The Government have just passed orders refusing to send the letter unless I would remove material parts of it. They have given grounds for their decision, but as a copy of the order has been refused to me, I cannot send them to you nor can I give you the grounds so far as I recollect.

I have written to the Government questioning the validity of their grounds and offering to correct mis-statement of exaggeration in my letter if any is discovered to me. I have told them too that, if I

[1] This letter also was withheld by the Jail authorities.

cannot send my letter without mutilation, I have no desire to write even regulation letters to friends, which then become of doubtful value. Unless, therefore, the Government revise their decision, this intimation must be my first and last from the jail to you or other friends.

Hoping you are keeping well,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI
PRISONER NO. 8677

HAKIM AJMAL KHAN
DELHI

From a handwritten copy S. N. 8012; also *Young India*, 28-2-1924

176. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA JAIL,
August 12, 1922

TO
THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL

SIR,

There are regarding myself three matters pending for some time.

(1) In May last, I wrote to my friend Hakimji Ajmal Khan of Delhi the usual quarterly letter. The Government declined to forward it unless I cut out portions objected to by them. As I considered the portions strictly relevant to my condition in the Jail, I could not see my way to remove them and I respectfully notified to the Government that I did not propose to avail myself of the privilege or the right of sending to my friend the usual letter unless I could give him a full description of my condition. At the same time, I wrote a brief letter to my friend saying that the letter I had written to him was disallowed and that I did not propose to write any letter regarding my welfare unless the Government removed the restrictions imposed by them. This second letter, too, the Government have declined to send. It is this second letter which I have asked should be returned to me as the first has been.

(2) After having received permission from Col. Dalziel to write a

vernacular primer[1] and the assurance that there would be no objection to my sending it to my friends for publication, I wrote the primer and gave it to Col. Dalziel for dispatch to the address mentioned in the covering letter. The Government have declined to send the primer to the address given, on the ground that prisoners cannot be permitted to publish books whilst they are serving their term. I have no wish to see my name on the primer as publisher or author. If the primer may not be published even without my name being connected with it in any way, I would like it returned to me.

(3) The Government were pleased to notify that I could be allowed periodicals. I therefore asked for permission to send for *The Times of India* weekly, the *Modern Review*¾a high-class Calcutta monthly, and the *Saraswati*¾a Hindi magazine. The last named has been kindly allowed. No decision has yet been received regarding the other two. I am anxiously awaiting the Government decision about them.

I remain,
Yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI

From a handwritten copy: S.N. 8014

177. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[YERAVDA JAIL,]
October 5, 1922

I have obtained Superintendent's permission to send this to you.

In expressing my opinion about Ramdas's intended marriage, I was hasty and yielded to blind affection¾I repented after we parted and saw how one who considered himself to be a careful man could become thoughtless and blinded by affection.

I failed yesterday in my duty as father.

I feel that Ramdas would sin if he married before he knew his ideal and had not found an occupation to his liking. He wishes, and we all respect his wish, that he should marry not on the strength of my position but on that of his own merits. Hence he must now choose his own calling. That would help the parents of the intended bride to come to a decision and girl would know where she has to go. Therefore, our first business¾and now the first business of all of you

[1] *Vide* "A Primer, 14-4-1922.

who are outside¾is to help Ramdas to come to a decision about his future.

If Ramdas wishes to continue his studies, he may do so. If his father who is now old can study like a boy, Ramdas who is only just entering upon his youth easily can. Or he may take up the commercial life or find himself a place in the Ashram or the Ashram Seminary or he may wish to join his brother Harilal. My strong advice is that he should not think of marrying until he has tried himself for one year in the calling of his choice.

For Ramdas to marry a girl belonging to rich parents, even though she may have an excellent character, is to court unhappiness for himself and his wife and her parents. The safest course appears to me to find a virtuous girl in one of the poorest families. He should not mind the time that may have to be devoted to the search.

I was blindly affectionate to Mrs. Gandhi too. I feel that I should do my duty by her if I continue to be 'butcher' to her. Parents ought not for their own selves impede the progress or thwart the wishes of their children. For the moment yesterday I encouraged Mrs. G[andhi] in her contrary intention. My advice to her now is that she should swallow the bitter pill of separation from Ramdas and that she should do with contentment. She should bless Ramdas if he places himself under the care of so good a soul as Rajagopalachari. I know that she will consult her own good too by adopting my advice. She must feel happy in the thought of having children who have a character to lose. It is not proper to crave for their company for ever.

You have taken upon yourself the role of Devdas. You will now realize what it means. You have to take the place of all the children. May God help you. For me, I am trying to deserve your wonderful affection.

Now for your religious difficulty. He who is altogether free from impure thoughts has attained salvation. Their total destruction can be achieved only after severe austerity. There is only one remedy for attaining the end: To match pure against impure thoughts. This is possible only through God's grace. That is attainable only by contemplating God the whole of our time and by realizing that He is in us. I should not be baffled even if the mind wanders and God's name is only on our lips. By unwearied insistence what is on the lips will soon be enthroned in the heart. Again, we must not allow any of our organs to be acted upon by a vicious thought. He who allows

them to be so acted upon perishes. We must force our organs out of the control of a wicked thought. I know that even at my age, if I were to allow all my thoughts to rule my actions, I should be undone. At the same time, we must not fret about these evil thoughts. Ours is but to persevere. The result is in the hands of God and He will worry about it. Moreover, when an impure thought haunts you, you will know that it is disloyalty to your wife. You are an ideal husband. The thought of her must help you. Ordinary remedies you know. Moderate eating and a single eye. When the eye is inclined to go astray, you must be angry to the point of plucking it out. Good books are the best company.

May God protect you from all harm.

SHETH JAMNALALJI BAJAJ
GHELABHAI MANSION
CHOWPATI
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8010

178. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA[1]

YERAVDA JAIL,
October 14, 1922

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL

SIR,

With reference to Government refusal to let me have the *Modern Review*, I beg to state that the friends who accompanied my wife last week at the quarterly interview told me that the Government had announced that magazines were allowed to the prisoners. If the information is correct, I renew my request and ask for the *Indian Review*, a monthly magazine edited by Mr. Natesan of Madras.

I remain,
Yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI

(The *Indian Review* was refused,¾ M.K.G)

From a photostat: S. N. 8015; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

[1] This was published in the second instalment of Gandhiji's jail correspondence, with notes added.

179. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA JAIL,
December 20, 1922

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL

SIR,

You were good enough to tell me that of those who had recently applied for permission to see me, Pandit Motilal Nehru and Hakim Ajmal Khan and Mr. Maganlal Gandhi were refused permis-sion to see me.

Mr. Maganlal Gandhi is a very near relative of mine, holds my power of attorney and is in charge of my agricultural and hand-weaving and hand-spinning experiments and is in close touch with my work among the depressed classes.

Panditji and Hakimji are, besides being political co-workers, personal friends interested in my well-being.

I shall be obliged if you will kindly ascertain from the Government the reasons for the refusal to Pandit Motilal Nehru, Hakimji Ajmal Khan and Mr. Maganlal Gandhi.

I observe that under the prison regulations governing interviews with prisoners, all the three gentlemen named above appear to be eligible as visitors to their prisoner friends.

I would like, too to know, if I may, what the Government's wishes are regarding interviews with me; whom I may and may not see and whether I may receive information from the permitted visitors on non-political topics or activities with which I am connected.

I remain,
Yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S. N. 8016; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

180. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA JAIL,
December 20, 1922

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL

SIR,

You have been good enough to tell me that the Inspector-General has without reasons refused to sanction the use by me of two Gujarati monthlies, namely, *Vasant* and *Samalochak*.

In view of the orders of the Government about the use of periodicals by prisoners, the foregoing decision is a surprise to me. The Government orders, as I have understood them, are that prisoners may have periodicals which do not contain current political news. I am not very conversant with the *Samalochak*, but I am with the *Vasant*. It is the standard Gujarati literary monthly edited by Rao Bahadur Ramanbhai, well known as a social reformer, and contributed to mainly by those who are in some way or other connected with the Government. I have not known it to treat political questions as such, nor have I ever known it to contain political news. But it may be that the Inspector-General has other reasons for disallowing the periodicals or that both the *Vasant* and the *Samalochak* have now become political magazines. Will you kindly, therefore, ascertain from the Inspector-General the reasons for his decision? I may add that if the decision is not altered, it will deprive me of the opportunity of keeping myself in touch with Gujarati literature.

I remain,
Yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8017; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

181. JAIL DIARY, 1922[1]

APRIL 21[2], FRIDAY

Upto today, I have read the following books:[3]

1.*Master and His Teaching*
2.*Arm of God*
3.*Christianity in Practice*
4.*By an Unknown Disciple*
5.*Satyagraha aur Asahayoga*
6.The Koran
7.*The way to Begin Life*
8.*Trips to the Moon*
9.*Indian Administration (*Thakore*)*
10.*The Ramayana-Tulsidas*

I have started baking chapatis since yesterday.

APRIL 22, SATURDAY

I finished reading *Natural History of Birds*.

Today the Superintendent[4] called all political prisoners to meet him.

[1] In Gandhiji's own hand, in Gujarati, the Diary is for the most part a factual record of his life as an inmate of the Yeravda Central Jail during the period March 1922- January 1924. The original is a note-book, half-foolscap in size, with the dates, days, etc, written by Gandhiji in pencil or ink. It does not give all the days in a consecutive order, there being frequent omissions. The titles of books read by Gandhiji, given by him in Gujarati script, have been generally checked with information available in *Young India* and elsewhere. The original carried a list, in Gandhiji's hand, of titles of books in English and in Indian languages evidently read by him in jail, and this is furnished as an appendix to the "Jail Diary, 1923," which is given in this volume, as the last item for that year.

[2] Some of the entries in the Diary contain, besides the dates to the Gregorian calendar, the corresponding dates of the Vikram era. Only the former are reproduced here.

[3] Gandhiji was taken to the Yeravda Central Jail on March 21, 1922. During the period of his imprisonment there he read, in all, about 150 books on religion, literature, social and natural sciences. In the series, *My Jail Experiences*, which appeared in *Young India* from April 1924, Gandhiji offered detailed comments on some of these books.

[4] Col. Dalziel

I had a talk with Deshpande[1].

APRIL 23, SUNDAY

Finished reading *The Young Crusader*.

Gave up lemons and sugar from today.

APRIL 26, WEDNESDAY

Yesterday I finished reading *A History of Scotland-Book* I.

The Rev. Lawrence has sent me *Bible* View of the World.

APRIL 29, SATURDAY

Finished reading the book sent by the Rev. Lawrence.

Glanced through a book on martyrs.[2]

MAY 1, MONDAY

Finished reading *A History of Scotland*¾ Book II. Today they passed on to me ten lbs. of flour in one lot.

MAY 5, FRIDAY

Finished reading Farrar's *Seekers after God*. Stopped taking oranges since yesterday.

MAY 6, SATURDAY

Finished reading *A History of Scotland*. Today received a letter from the Government saying that my letter[3] to Hakimji could not be forwarded to him.

Finished reading *Misar Kumari*.

MAY 12, FRIDAY

Finished reading *Stories from the History of Rome*. Today the Superintendent declined to give me a copy of the Government's order requiring him to keep back my letter to Hakimji. Consequently, I wrote one letter[4] to the Government and one[5] to Hakimji. I wrote to Hakimji only to inform him that, since the Government have refused to forward to him my letter uncensored, I have give up the intention of writing a quarterly letter.

MAY 15, MONDAY

Banker was today transferred to this ward. Wrote to the Superintendent, not officially but in a personal way, that I did not like his increasing again the supply of oranges to me. He should stop the

[1] Gangadharrao Balkrishna Deshpande, journalist and Congress leader of Karnatak.

[2] Presumably, *Lives of Fathers and Martyrs*, mentioned in the list reproduced in the appendix to "Jail Diary, 1923".

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Hakim Ajmal Khan", 14-4-1922.

[4] *Vid*e "Letter to the Government of Bombay", 12-5-1922.

[5] *Vide* "Letter to Hakim Ajmal Khan", 12-5-1922

supply of oranges and chapatis and the additional supply of milk to me.

MAY 16, TUESDAY

Mr. Jacob, head clerk to Mr. Griffiths[1], came to see me and talked to me on his behalf. The Superintendent declined to reduce the supply of oranges and told me, on the contrary, that he had orders to supply nine oranges to me.

They are slaves who will not choose
Hatred, scoffing and abuse,
Rather than in silence shrink
From the Truth they needs must think:
They are slaves who dare not be
In the right with two or three.
¾ LOWELL

(From *Tom Brown's school Days*)

MAY 17, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *Tom Brown's Schooldays*. Some portions of it are beautiful.

The Holy Supper is kept indeed
In whatso we share with another's need¾
Not that which we give, but what we share,
For the gift without the giver is bare:
Who bestows himself with his alms feeds three,
Himself, his hungering neighbour, and Me.
¾ LOWELL

¾ from the same book as above.

MAY 20, SATURDAY

Finished reading Bacon's *The Wisdom of the Ancients*. Have given up chapatis since Wednesday. I am living, as an experiment, on four seers of milk, two ounces of raisins, four oranges and two lemons. Haji was taken to a dark cell yesterday.

MAY 28, SUNDAY

Read the history of India up to the Moghul dynasty. Went through Morris's grammar.

MAY 29, MONDAY

Finished reading *Chandrakant*, Part II, as also Patanjali's *Yogadarshan*.

[1] Superintendent of police

Nearly four weeks have passed.

Started reading the Gujarati translation of Valmiki's *Ramayana*.

MAY 31, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading Kipling's *The Five Nations*

JUNE 4, SUNDAY

Finished reading Edward Bellamy's *Equality*.

JUNE 6, TUESDAY

The superintendent called and informed me that the Government has refused permission[1] for the printing of the *Balpothi*[2]. It has permitted me to send for books mentioned in the list.

JUNE 7, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *St. Paul in Greece* (by Davis).

JUNE 9, FRIDAY

Finished reading *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

JUNE 14, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *Pitt* by Lord Rosebery.

Truth is	Untruth is
gold	brass
silver	tin
light	darkness
heaven	hell
sky	the nether world
day	night
diamond	a pebble
a virtuous wife	a prostitute
celibacy	adultery
God	Satan
Ormuzd	Ahriman
Brahman	A soul in delusion
living	lifeless
virility	impotence
valour	cowardice
Rama	Ravana
deliverance	bondage
ambrosia	poison

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 12-8-1922

[2] The Gujarati Primer; for its English translation, *vide* "A Primer", 14-4-1922.

life	death
goodness	evil
existence	non-existence
Truth is one	Untruth has many forms
Truth is a straight line	Untruth is a curved line
a right angle	. . .[1]
an ocean	the Sahara Desert
restraint self-indulgence	
love	hatred

JUNE 17, SATURDAY

Finished reading Kipling's *Second Jungle Book*.

JUNE 21, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *Faust*.

JUNE 24, SATURDAY

Finished reading John Howard's life.

Received yesterday a parcel of five lbs of raisins.

JUNE 25, SUNDAY

Finished reading Valmiki's *Ramayana*. Started reading *Shantiparva*[2], Part I.

JUNE 28, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading Jules Verne's *Dropped from the Clouds*.

JULY 1, SATURDAY

Finished reading the life of Columbus by Irving. Anasuyabehn, Kanji and Dhirajlal came to see Shankerlal. Ba, Harilal[3], Ramdas Maganlal, Mathuradas, and Manu came to see me.

JULY 5, WEDNESDAY

Warner came yesterday and gave me a box and some books. Commenced reading Girdhar's *Ramayana* and *The Crusades*. Finished reading Wilberforce's *Five Empires*.

JULY 10, MONDAY

Finished reading *Lays of Ancient Rome*.

JULY 12, WEDNESDAY

Received another parcel of five and a half seers of raisins.

JULY 13, THURSDAY

Finished reading *The Crusades*. Started reading Gibbon's *Rome*.

[1] The original is blank here.

[2] A *Parva* is one of the eighteen books into which the *Mahabharata* is divided.

[3] Harilal Gandhi

JULY 16, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Shantiparva*, Part I. Started reading Part II.

JULY 18, TUESDAY

Finished reading First Urdu Book.

JULY 22, SATURDAY

Finished reading Girdhar's *Ramayana*. Started reading *Shrimad Bhagavat*.

JULY 23, SUNDAY

Started reading *Krishnacharitra* (by Jhaveri).

JULY 29, SATURDAY

Finished reading Krishnalal Jhaveri's *Krishnacharitra*.

AUGUST 4, FRIDAY

Finished reading Vaidya's *Krishnacharitra*.

AUGUST 7, MONDAY

Finished reading Gibbon, Vol. I. Started reading Vol II.

AUGUST 10, THURSDAY

Finished reading the *Gita* by Tilak, *Shantiparva*-Part II, and *Bhagavat*-Part I. Started reading *Bhagavat*-Part II.

AUGUST 22, TUESDAY

Political prisoners were removed yesterday to the European ward. Today they were brought back to their original ward.

AUGUST 24, THURSDAY

Finished reading *Adiparva*.

AUGUST 27, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Bhagavat*-Part II. Started reading *Sabhaparva* on Friday. Started reading *Sarasvatichandra*.

AUGUST 28, MONDAY

Finished reading *Manusmriti*. Started reading *Ishopanishad*.

AUGUST 30, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *Sabhaparva*. Started reading *Vanaparva*.

SEPTEMBER 1, FRIDAY

Finished reading Gibbon, Vol. II. Finished reading *Ishopanishad*.

SEPTEMBER 2, SATURDAY

Started reading Gibbon, Vol. III.

SEPTEMBER 3, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Sarasvatichandra*-Part I. Started reading Part II.

SEPTEMBER 6, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *Sarasvatichandra*-Part II. Started reading Part-III

SEPTEMBER 9, SATURDAY

Finished reading *Sarasvatichandra*¾ Part III. Started reading Part IV.

SEPTEMBER 13, WEDNESDAY

I have decided to observe silence from 3 p.m. today up to 3 p.m. on Tuesday, with Major Jones's[1] consent. The following exceptions will be made:

1. When others or I suffer.

2. When friends from outside come to see me.

3. If, in the meanwhile, I am removed to the ward of my Dharwar friends.

4. If an official like Mr. Hayward[2] happens to visit us.

5. If Major Jones wishes to have a talk with me.

Bedsteads were received today for. . .

SEPTEMBER 20, WEDNESDAY

Observance of silence ended yesterday. Experienced supreme joy during the period of silence. Finished reading *Sarasvatichandra*¾ Part IV today. Finished reading Kabir's poems. Started reading Jacob Boehmen. Wrote a letter of apology to Shankerlal. Have again started observing silence. It will end at 3 p.m. on Tuesday.

SEPTEMBER 23, SATURDAY

Finished reading Boehmen's *Supersensual Life*.

'It is naught indeed but thine own hearing and willing that do hinder thee so that thou dost not see and hear God.' p. 14

'If thou rulest over the creatures externally only and not from the right internal ground of thy inward nature, then by will and ruling is in a bestial kind or matter.' p. 18

'Thou art like all things and nothing is unlike thee.' p. 19

'If thou wilt be like all things, thou must forsake all things.' p. 20

'Let the hands or the head be at labour, thy heart ought nevertheless to rest in God.' p.65

'Heaven is the turning in of the will to the love of God.' p. 83

'Hell is the turning in of the will into the wrath of God.' p. 83

[1] Who worked as Superintendent of Yeravda Central Jail in the place of Col. Dalziel during the period the latter acted as Inspector-General of Prisons.

[2] Sir Maurice Hayward, the then Home Member of the Government of 'Bombay

¾ BOEHMEN, *Supersensual Life*.

Started reading *Pro Christo et Ecclesia*

SEPTEMBER 24, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Kathavalli Upanishad*

SEPTEMBER 25, MONDAY

Finished reading *Pro Christo et Ecclesia*. Started reading Satyartha Prakasha. Finished reading *Vanaparva*..

SEPTEMBER 26, TUESDAY

Started reading *Viratparva* and *Galilean*.

SEPTEMBER 27, WEDNESDAY

Started reading *Jnaneshwari*

SEPTEMBER 30, SATURDAY

Finished reading *Virataparva* and Gibbon Vol. III.

OCTOBER 1, SUNDAY

Started Gibbon, Vol. IV, and *Udyogaparva*.

OCTOBER 3, TUESDAY

Finished reading *Galilean*.

OCTOBER 6, FRIDAY

Ba, Jamnalalji, Ramdas, Punjabhai and Kishorelal came to see me on Wednesday. Wrote a letter[1] to Jamnalalji yesterday about Ramdas. Wrote a letter[2] to the Superintendent today about Gani[3] and newspapers[4]. Started reading *Philo Christus* and Fourth[5] Urdu Book.

OCTOBER 15, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Udyogaparva*.

OCTOBER 16, MONDAY

Started reading *Bhishmaparva*.

OCTOBER 18, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *Satyartha Prakasha*.

OCTOBER 22, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Bhishmaparva* and Philo *Christus.*

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 5-10-1922.

[2] Not available

[3] Abdul Gani, a fellow-prisoner

[4] Political prisoners were denied newspapers and magazines Gandhiji's request was for any of these: *The Times of India Weekly, The Indian Social Reformer, The Servant of India, Modern Review, Indian Review*.

[5] This should be "Second", *vide* entry for November 27.

OCTOBER 23, MONDAY

Finished reading Gibbon. Started reading *Dronaparva* and *Prem Mitra*. Finished reading *Jnaneshwari*.

OCTOBER 24, TUESDAY

Finished reading *Prem Mitra*.

OCTOBER 25, WEDNESDAY

Started reading *Shad-darshan-samuchchaya* and *The Gospel and the Plough*. Started reading Nathuram Sharma's commentary on the *Gita*.

OCTOBER 28, SATURDAY

Finished reading *The Gospel and the Plough.*

NOVEMBER 6, MONDAY

Finished reading *Dronaparva*.

NOVEMBER 7, TUESDAY

Started reading *Karnaparva*. Shankerlal was taken ill yesterday: he vomited, etc.

NOVEMBER 11, SATURDAY

Finished reading *Karnaparva*.

NOVEMBER 12, SUNDAY

Started reading *Shalyaparva*.

NOVEMBER 17, FRIDAY

Finished reading *Shalyaparva*. Left off oranges from today as an experiment. Started reading *Anushasanparva*.

NOVEMBER 22, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *Shad-darshan-samuchchaya*.

NOVEMBER 27, MONDAY

Finished reading *Urdu Reader* No 3. Started reading Urdu Reader No 4.

NOVEMBER 28, TUESDAY

Finished reading *Anushasanparva*. Started reading *Ashvamedhikaparva*.

DECEMBER 2, SATURDAY

Finished reading *Ashvamedhikaparva*. Started reading *Ashramvasik*.

DECEMBER 4, MONDAY

Finished reading the *Mahabharata*. Started reading the writings of poet Rajchandra. Had started reading the *Mahabharata* on June 25.

DECEMBER 5, TUESDAY

Had severe stomach-ache yesterday, so took castor oil today and started taking oranges. Also started taking raisins after an interval of nearly one month.

DECEMBER 6, WEDNESDAY

Commenced J. Brierly's *Ourselves and the Universe*.

DECEMBER 9, SATURDAY

To wish ill, to do ill, to speak ill or to think ill of anyone, we are equally forbidden without exception.

¾ TERTULLIAN.

J. BRIERLY in *Ourselves and the Universe*

Gave up raisins and oranges from Friday.

DECEMBER 15, FRIDAY

Completed J. Brierly's *Ourselves and the Universe*.

DECEMBER 16, SATURDAY

Started reading *What Christianity Means to Me* by Lyman Abbott. Ba was to come today, but did not.

DECEMBER 21

Wrote a letter[1] yesterday to the Major about refusal of permission to Maganlal and others. Handed it today to Warner.

DECEMBER 25

Finished reading *What Christianity Means to Me*. Took raisins and figs sent by Anasuyabehn.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 8039M

182. INTERVIEW IN JAIL

[*January 27, 1923*][2]

. . . Mahatma Gandhi is keeping very good health. While in prison we heard that there were stories abroad of his ill-health and melancholia. He was hurt to hear about this.

He said he would feel ashamed if he suffered from melancholia[3]. He further said that a civil resister, who would feel moody if he has to go to prison, has no business to court imprisonment or do anything that would bring it on to him. He must be prepared to treat prison as his home, if he values his country's liberty above everything else. He added that if he ever fell ill, it would not be because of any lack of

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 20-12-1922.

[2] Kasturba Gandhi visited Gandhiji in jail on January 27, 1923.

[3] A brief report in *Young India*, 1-2-1923, has this here: ". . . he replied that no one who knew him could imagine that he would ever suffer from melancholia, and expressed surprise that such rumours could find any credence".

attention on the part of the prison authorities, but because of his own carelessness or some inherent weakness in his constitution, or because of climatic conditions. He is taking all reasonable care of his health.

Young India, 19-4-1923

183. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
February 4, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,

SIR,

You were good enough to tell me yesterday that the Inspector-General had replied to my letter of the 20th December last to the effect that you had full discretion regarding interviews by relatives and friends with me in terms of the prison regulations governing such interviews.

This reply has come upon me as a surprise and is at variance with the information given me by my wife, who, together with Mrs. Vasumati Dhimatram, was permitted to see me on the 27th ultimo.

My wife told me that she had to wait for over twenty days before receiving reply to her application for interview. On hearing rumours of my illness she came to Poona in the hope of being admitted to see me. Consequently, early last week, accompanied by Mrs. Vasumati Dhimatram, Mr. Maganlal Gandhi, Radha¾his daughter about fourteen years old, and Prabhudas, a lad about eighteen years, old, Mr. Chhaganlal Gandhi's son, who had come in the place of his father who was ailing and who was one of the applicants, my wife applied at the prison gate for admission. You told the party that you could not admit them as you had no authority to grant permission and that you were awaiting reply from the Government to whom the original application was sent by you. On Mr. Maganlal Gandhi's pressing, you undertook to telephone to the Inspector-General who, too, it seems could not grant the proposed interview and my wife and party had to go away disappointed.

On the 27th ultimo, my wife told me you telephoned to her saying that you had heard from the Government that she and three others who were named in her original application could see me. This therefore excluded youngsters Radha and Prabhudas.

If you had the discretion retained to you, the whole of the circumstances narrated above need revision. I feel sure that I have not misunderstood my wife.

Moreover, if your discretion had been retained, Radha and Prabhudas could not have been excluded.

I shall therefore be obliged if you will enlighten me on the discrepancy between the Government reply and my wife's version, and inform me further:

(1) On what grounds Pandit Motilal Nehru, and Hakim Ajmal Khan and Mr. Maganlal Gandhi were excluded last year.

(2) Who will and who will not be allowed to see me in future.

(3) Whether, at these interviews, I may receive information on non-political matters and activities initiated and now being conducted by my various representatives.

Though I will not permit myself to believe that any humiliation was intended, I venture to think that the treatment received by them was in fact humiliating. I should not like a repetition of the unfortunate occurrence

I remain,
Yours obediently,

From a photostat: S. N. 8018; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

184. LETTER TO MAJOR W. JONES

February 10 [*1923*]

DEAR MAJOR JONES,

This is a personal letter because it embraces sentiment and travels beyond my province as a prisoner. At the same time, if your official position demands that you cannot help taking official notice of it, of course you are at liberty to do so.

Yesterday morning I heard screaming and some of the men about shouted out: "There goes flogging."[1] I wondered. A short while after, I saw four or five young men in gunny clothing being marched. One had a bare back. They were all walking very slowly and with bent backs. I observed that they were in pain. They bowed to me. I returned the bow. I concluded that they must have been flogged. During the day I saw a respectable man in irons and gunny clothing pass by. He too bowed. Contrary to my custom, I asked him who he was. He told me he was a Mulshi Peta man. I asked him whether he knew the flogged men. He said he knew them all, as they were also Mulshi Peta men.

[1] Shankerlal Banker's detailed statement on prison treatment, which was published in *Young India*, 19-4-1923, refers to this incident.

The object in writing this is to know whether I could be permitted to see these men who are refusing to work[1]. If I find them to be acting foolishly or thoughtlessly, I might be able to persuade them to reconsider their position. Satyagraha requires a prisoner to obey all reasonable prison regulations, and certainly to do the work given. In fact, his resistance ceases once a satyagrahi is in prison. It can be revived for extraordinary reasons, e.g., studied humiliation. If these men claim to be satyagrahis, I should like to explain all this to them.

I know that a prisoner cannot ordinarily be permitted to assist or intervene in prison administration. My only ground for expecting response to my suggestion is that of common humanity. You, I am sure, will want to leave no stone unturned to avoid flogging, if it is at all possible. I have suggested a possibility in all humility. I wish you would and could be permitted to avail yourself of my offer.[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S. N. 8019; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

185. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA JAIL,
February 12, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL
SIR

I have just learnt that Mr. Jeramdas[3] has been awarded some punishment for having talked to some Mulshi Peta men.[4] I do not write this to complain of the punishment, but to ask for the same or greater for myself. I make this request not in a querulous but, if I may so put it, in a religious spirit. For the breach is more mine than Mr. Jeramdas's. I asked him to tell any Mulshi Peta man he could see that,

[1] They had been assigned grinding of corn, but had considered the work unfit for political prisoners.

[2] Major Jones thanked Gandhiji, but regretted the offer could not be accepted.

[3] Jairamdas Doulatram (b. 1892); General Secretary, Indian National Congress, 1931-34; Governor of Bihar, 1947-48 of Assam, 1950-56; Union Minister for food and Agriculture, 1948-50; member of Parliament since 1959.

[4] He had crossed over from his barrack to that of the Mulshi Peta prisoners and tried to persuade them to carry out the work assigned to them as a measure of jail discipline. On the warder reporting this to higher authorities, he was confined in his own cell for a few days, being let out for a few minutes only for his bath.

if he claimed to be a satyagrahi, he should not refuse to work. Mr. Jeramdas would not reject such a request from me. I told him too to tell you all that happened if you visited him today, and I was to have told you tomorrow what happened between us tomorrow, because you do not visit me on Mondays, as it is my day of silence. I assure you that I would not misunderstand the infliction of punishment on me. I should feel sorry if I escape when the one who is less guilty¾if there be guilt in the act¾is punished[1].

I remain
Yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S. N. 8020, also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

186. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA:

YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL,
February 12, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL

SIR,

I observe that some Mulshi Peta prisoners have been flogged, as they are said to have refused to work and to have wilfully done short task.

If these prisoners claim to be satyagrahis, they are bound to obey all prison regulations so long as they are not humiliating or unreasonable, and certainly to the best of their capacity do the tasks allotted to them. If, therefore, they have refused to work or do not work according to their physical capacity, they are committing a

[1] While reproducing the letter in *Young India*, 6-3-1924, Gandhiji added the following note: "The Superintendent, in reply to the foregoing, came to my cell and said that he harboured no anger against Mr. Jeramdas. Whatever he (Mr. Jeramdas) did was done openly, but he was bound to take some notice of the breach of regulations. He could not punish me for instigation. I had not left the boundary of my yard to talk to the satyagrahis and therefore he could not punish me. Owing to Mr. Jeramdas's talk to the satyagrahis, an ugly situation was prevented." About this episode, Jairamdas Doulatram says: "As a result of Gandhiji's intervention through me, the Mulshi Peta prisoners respounded and carried out the task imposed on them. The authorities had intended to give them the punishment of whipping in case they persisted in their refusal. . . . This would have led to other developments and, I believe, might have led to Gandhiji's intervention in a much more active manner, leading to other consequences."

breach of their own canon of good conduct in addition to that of prison regulations.

I am sure that the authorities do not desire to flog them, if they can be otherwise persuaded to work, and that they would wish prisoners to yield to reason rather than to fear of punishment. I fancy that the men will listen to me. I therefore, request that I may be permitted to meet in your presence all the Mulshi Peta men who wilfully break prison regulations, so that I may explain to them their duty as satyagrahis if they claim to be such.

I am aware that it is not usual to permit prisoners to assist or intervene in matters of prison administration. But I imagine that considerations of humanity such as in the case mentioned will be allowed to supersede those of administrative custom.[1]

I remain,
Yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8021; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

187. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
February 23, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT,
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL

[SIR,]

You were kind enough to tell me today that you had heard from the Government in reply to my letter of the 4th instant,[2] and that the Government was sorry for the inconvenience that was caused to my wife and that, with reference to the other parts of my letter, the Government could not discuss with a prisoner the prison regulations in general. I appreciate the expression of sorrow about the inconvenience caused to my wife.

Regarding the other part of the Government reply, I beg to state that I am well aware of the fact that, as a prisoner, I may not discuss the prison regulations in general. If the government will reread my letter of the 4th instant, they will discover that I have not invited a general discussion of the regulations. On the contrary, I have merely

[1] Gandhiji appended the following note later, while publishing the letter in *Young India*: "In reply, the Superintendent told me that whilst the Government thanked me for the offer, they could not avail themselves of it."

[2] *Vide* " Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 4-2-1923.

ventured to seek information on the particular application of certain regulations in so far only as they bear on my future conduct and welfare. I presume that a prisoner is entitled to seek and receive such information. If I am to see my friends and wife in future, I ought to know whom I may or may not see, so as to avoid disappointment or even possible humiliation.

I venture to make my position clear. I have the good fortune to have numerous friends who are as dear to me as relatives. I have children being brought up under me who are like my own children. I have associates living under the same roof with me, and helping me in my various non-political activities and experiments. I could not, without doing violence to my most cherished sentiments, see my wife, if I may not from time to time also see these friends, associates and children. I see my wife not merely because she is my wife, but chiefly because she is my associate in my activities.

Nor should I have any interest in seeing those I wish to, if I may not talk to them about my non-political activities.

Again, I am naturally interested in knowing why Pandit Motilal Nehru, Hakimji Ajmal Khan and Mr. Maganlal Gandhi were excluded. I should understand their exclusion if they were guilty of ungentlemanly conduct, or if they wanted to see me for any political discussion. But if they have been excluded for any unnamable political reasons, the least I could do is to waive the pleasure of seeing my wife. I entertain ideas of honour and self-respect which I would like the Government, if they can, to understand and appreciate.

I have no desire to hold political discussion with anybody, much less to send out political messages. The Government may post anyone they wish to be present at these interviews and their representative may take shorthand notes thereon if the Government deem it necessary. But I may be excused if I wish to guard against friends and relatives being refused permission for reasons outside the prison regulations. I have now stated my position frankly and fully. This correspondence commenced on the 20th December last. I would urge the Government to let me have an early, straight and undip-lomatic reply.

I remain
Yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI
No. 827

From a photostat: S.N. 8022, also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

188. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
February 23, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL

SIR,

You have kindly informed me that in reply to my letter of the 4th ultimo, the Inspector-General says that the use of the two periodicals *Vasant* and *Samalochak* cannot be granted. I beg to state that I knew that decision before writing the letter in question. If the Inspector-General will please have the letter read to him again, he will notice that I knew the decision and he will notice further that what I have sought in my letter is the reason for the refusal. I have ventured to ask in my letter whether the use of the periodicals was refused on the ground that they contained currently political news, or whether the decision was based on any other ground. I venture to repeat my request and hope to be favoured with an early reply.

I remain
Yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8023, also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

189. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
March 25, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL

SIR,

You have kindly informed me that the Inspector-General has replied to my letter of the 23rd ultimo saying that the decision about the *Vasant* and *Samalochak* was given by competent authority and that I was to be referred to the last paragraph of the Government's letter regarding my inquiry about certain applications for interviews with me.

I beg to tender my congratulations to the I.G. for the promptness of his reply, but greatly deplore the position adopted by

him. I.G.'s[1] competency to decide as to the periodicals was never questioned by me. And the paragraph of the Government's letter referred to by him does not help me in the least. It says that you may not discuss with prisoners the prison regulations in general. I have asked the I.G. to do no such thing with me. I have merely asked for the reasons of his decision. I may remind him that when he was Superintendent, and applied on my behalf for the *Modern Review*, the Government did give reasons for their refusal. I venture to suggest that the present case in no way differs from the previous one.

Moreover, the Inspector-General knows from his conversations with me that I regard these refusals to let me have the use of periodicals a punishment in addition to that awarded by the convicting judge. I feel sure that, in every case, a person is entitled to reasons for punishments inflicted on him by competent authorities.

With due respect to the Inspector-General, I venture to submit that he cannot take up the lofty attitude of indifference towards prisoners that the Government may permit itself to take. Whilst he was Superintendent, he taught me to think that as Superintendent of a prison, although he undoubtedly carried out the descipline of a prison, his appointment required him equally to protect the rights, such as they were, of prisoners. He led me to think that a Superintendent of a prison was, in fact, guardian of the prisoners under his charge. If this is true, the Inspector-General is, I take it, the super-guardian of prisoners who, therefore, expect him to press their just claims even before the Government, when it happens to overlook or disregard them. A prisoner also expects him not to evade his just inquiries, but to satisfy him in every possible and reasonable way.

I am sorry for carrying on this correspondence. But, rightly or wrongly, I believe that even as a prisoner I have certain rights, for example, the right to have pure air, water, food and clothing. Similarly, I have the right to have such mental nourishment given to me as I am used to. I ask for no favours, and if the Inspector-General thinks that any single thing or convenience has been given to me as a favours, let it be withdrawn. But this matter of receiving periodicals I consider as important a right as that of receiving suitable food. I do, therefore, respectfully ask him not to treat my application for reasons

[1] *Young India* has "Government's".

for his decision with the indifference that his letters have unfortunately hitherto betrayed.[1]

I remain,
Yours obediently,
M. K GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8024; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

190. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
April 16, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA C.P.

SIR,

As my youngest son[2] has come to see me today, I should like if possible to see the Government reply to my letter of the 23rd February last regarding the regulation of interviews with me. The reply will enable me to find out whether consistently with my said letter I should see my son or not, as you know today is my silent day. The silence breaks at 2 p.m. today.[3]

I remain,
Yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8025, also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

191. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

April 16, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL

SIR,

Over six months ago there was received for me a book called *Life and Teachings of Buddha*. About the end of last January, my wife brought for me a religious magazine which was handed at your office. For the past four months, a Hindi fortnightly containing Hindi and Tamil and Telugu lessons has been received and four numbers have

[1] The letter was published with the following note by Gandhiji: "The Inspector-General, Col. Dalzeil, at last condescended and replied that the decision was arrived at by higher authority."

[2] Devdas Gandhiji

[3] For Gandhiji's comments, in connection with this letter, on Government's policy regarding interviews, *vide* "Note on Correspondence", 6-3-1924.

been handed to me.

A Hindi monthly known as *Saraswati* has been sanctioned by the Government, but beyond the first three numbers, after my admission here, that magazine has not been given to me. I asked my wife during her last visit to let me have some books. This parcel is now overdue.

Will you please let me now:

(a) What has happened to the *Life and Teachings of Buddha*.

(b) What has become of the religious magazine brought by my wife.

(c) Whether the remaining issues of the Hindi, Tamil, Telugu fortnightly have been received and, if so. whether I may have them.

(d) Whether the *Saraswati* has been received and, if not, whether a letter may be written to the Manager, Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, telling him the remaining issues of the magazine, since last June, have not been received and asking him to send them.

(e) Whether the expected parcel from my wife has been received.

(f) Whether any other books or periodicals have been received and not given to me.

I am anxious not to lose any of the books or magazines that may be received for me. Therefore, even when any are not given to me, I should like to have the names of such prohibited books or magazines and be assured that they are preserved at your office on my behalf.

I remain,

From a photostat: S.N. 8026

192. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

April 26, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL

SIR,

Last Monday week, my youngest son Devdas Gandhi who was permitted to see me told me that he had applied for permission on behalf of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Mr. Mahadeo Desai and himself, but he alone received the permission to see me. You have kindly informed me of the reply of the Government to my letter to you of

23rd February last. Putting the two together, I am in a position to understand somewhat the Government attitude regarding those who may wish to see me. In order to avoid disappointment, as much as possible, I told my son that, for a while at any rate, I shall try to apply for the necessary permission instead of friends having to apply from outside. Consistently, therefore, with the said reply of the Government, I beg to apply for permission to any five of the following who may be free to see me together with Lakshmi Dudabhai Gandhi, a young suppressed-classes girl, seven years old, who has been brought up and adopted by me. The other names are:

(1) Mr. Chhaganlal Gandhi, a cousin of mine who was to have seen me last January but could not owing to illness.

(2) Mr. Jamnadas Gandhi No. (1)'s brother.

(3) Mr. Narandas Gandhi, No. (1)'s brother.

(3A) Ramdas Gandhi, my son.

(4) Radha Maganlal Gandhi, No (1)'s brother's daughter, a girl 14 years old.

(4A) Rukhi M. Gandhi, No (4)'s younger sister.

(5) Moti Lakshmidas, a girl about 15 years old.

(6) Laxmi Lakshmidas, No. [5's sister]- a girl 13 years old.

(7) Amina Bawazeer, a girl 15 years old.

(8) Krishnadas Chhaganlal Gandhi, No. (1)'s son, about 12 years old.

(9) Mrs. Gandhi.

All these are living with me at the Satyagraha Ashram. Those who are relatives and those, Nos. 5, 6 and 7, who are not. I am giving more than five names in order to insure the coming of five along with Laxmi. I respectfully ask for an early reply as I am anxious to meet Mr. Chhaganlal Gandhi, his wife and the girl Moti who are ailing for some time.

I remain,
Yours obediently,

From a photostat: S.N. 8027

193. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
May 1, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON
SIR,

You have kindly shown me the regulation classifying certain simple-imprisonment prisoners in a special division and told me that I am so classified. In my opinion there are hard-labour prisoners like Messrs Kaujalgi, Jeramdas and Bhansali[1], who are no more criminals than I am, and who have enjoyed outside a status probably superior to mine, and who certainly have been used to a softer life than I have for years. Whilst, therefore, such prisoners remain outside the special classification, much as I should like to avail myself of some of the regulations above-named, I am unable so to avail myself, and I should be glad if my name is removed from the special division.

I remain,
Yours,
M. K. GANDHI
No. 827

From a photostat: S.N. 8028; also *Young India* 6-3-1924

194. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
June 28, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON
SIR,

I heard this morning that six Mulshi Peta prisoners were flogged today for short task. A few days ago, I heard that one such prisoner was also flogged for the same 'offence'. Today's news has considerably agitated me and seems almost to compel some action on my part. But I want to take no hasty step. And I owe it to you that I should, before doing anything whatsoever, seek accurate information from you regarding the punishment, which I do hereby.

[1] Jaikrishna Bhansali; was printer of *Young India* after Gandhiji's arrest in March 1922. He was also arrested soon after and lodged in Yeravda jail.

I am aware that as a prisoner I have no right to ask you for such information, but I venture to do so as a man and in my capacity as a public worker.

I remain,
Yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI
NO 827

From a photostat: S.N. 8029; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

195. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
June 29, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON
SIR,

With reference to my letter of yesterday regarding the flogging of certain Mulshi Peta prisoners, I beg to thank you and the Inspector-General for giving me full information about the cause of the punishment.

You will recall that, when some months ago similar punishment was awarded to some other Mulshi Peta prisoners, I requested the Government to let me interview all such prisoners with a view to inducing them to conform to jail discipline. The Government were good enough to thank me for the offer, but declined to accept it. I did not press my request further, if only for the reason that I had hoped that occasion would not again arise for flogging such prisoners. But the hope has not been fulfilled and flogging has been resorted to more than once since the one referred to by me.

I believe that, if I could see the prisoners, I could induce them to look at their imprisonment in the proper light and not to shirk work or resort to insubordination, as they are said to have done. To enable me to do so from time to time, I request that I may be accommodated with them. If this cannot be done, I request permission to see the prisoners as often as the occasion may require.

I am aware that as a prisoner I may not ask or receive such permission, but I respectfully ask it as a human being to serve a humane purpose. The Government, I am sure, cannot wish to see the punishment of flogging inflicted if it can be at all avoided on any prisoner, much less on one who rightly or wrongly regards himself as imprisoned for conscience' sake. They will appreciate my position when I state that these floggings are most distressing to me, specially

as I believe that they can be avoided if I am permitted to live with the prisoners.

I venture to trust that the Government will reciprocate the spirit of my letter and not put me, by rejecting my offer of service, in the most awkward position of being compelled to take action, which may, without any such wish on my part, prove embarrassing to them.[1] It is not my purpose whilst undergoing imprisonment to embarrass the Government by any conduct that I can possibly avoid.

In view of the fact that some of the prisoners are hunger-striking in connection with the matter, I request as early a reply as possible.

I remain,
Yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI
No. 827

From a photostat: S.N. 8030; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

196. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON
July 9, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL
SIR,

You will recall the fact that I wrote to you on the 29th ultimo on the recent flogging of certain Mulshi Peta prisoners. By way of protest against this punishment some of the Mulshi Peta prisoners have been fasting ever since. Of these a few have weakened and given up the fast.

In view of the fast, if not for my request, I had expected that the Government would send an early reply to the proposal contained in my letter. It is now ten days and there is no reply as yet received from the Government.

As time passes, the agitation of my soul increases. I have attempted again and again to regard myself as a mere prisoner and therefore not to think about what happens to the other prisoners. But I must confess that I have failed. I cannot forget that I am a human being, or public worker and reformer. Rightly or wrongly I feel that, if I could but meet the hunger-strikers, their fast, if it is unreasonable,

[1] Gandhiji was contemplating a fast; *vide* the following item.

as you say and I believe it is, will end. If it was my brother who was fasting in this prison instead of a stranger, I wonder if I would be expected to look upon his fast with the indifference which prisoners are supposed to adopt regarding their fellows. I feel about these fasting prisoners exactly as I would about a blood brother. Though the fact is irrelevant, I may mention that two of these prisoners are well known to me and have considerable status in society in their respective provinces.

The situation has become well-nigh intolerable for me. Unless, therefore, in the meantime some satisfactory reply to my offer is received by the end of the day, purely as a solace for my own soul, and for no other reason, I propose to fast from tomorrow (not denying myself water or salt) till a satisfactory solution is reached, i.e., till the hunger-strike ends and the situation sought to be covered by my proposal contained in my letter of the 29th ultimo is fully met.

I know that my decision will cause you pain. You have been so extraordinarily kind and went to the Government. But I hope both you and the Government will appreciate my moral difficulty.

The Government can at any moment end the unfortunate situation by accepting my offer.

I shall fast not because these Mulshi Peta prisoners are fasting, but because I am debarred from helping, though I feel confident that I can help, to end the prevailing hunger-strike and prevent a recurrence of the events that have ended in the hunger-strike.

I have no desire to interfere with the prison administration. But where a question of humanity arises, that of administrative prestige, in my humble opinion, recedes into the back-ground. And any civilized Government will, I imagine, gladly accept the willing co-operation of even a prisoner if thereby the[1] interests of humanity are served.

I remain,
Yours obediently,

From a photostat: S.N. 8031

197. LETTER TO F. C. GRIFFITHS

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON
July 17, 1923

DEAR MR. GRIFFITHS,

The Superintendent told me yesterday your reply to my message. Here then is my letter.

You told me at the last interview last week that whilst His Excellency was willing to permit me to see the Mulshi Peta Satyagrahi hunger-strikers and to issue suitable instructions for preventing the flogging of satyagrahi prisoners except in the case of assaults upon officials, and then, too, after previous sanction by the Government, he did not wish even to seem to consider my proposals under threat of my fasting which my letter of the 9th instant appeared to His Excellency to convey. I repeat here what I told you in the course of our conversation on Thursday last. Nothing was farther from my wish than to issue any threat to the Government. The contemplated fast, as already stated in my said letter, was for me a purely ethical step. As a prisoner, I was bound to inform the Superintendent of my wish to fast in the event of my failing to obtain an interview with the hunger-strikers. My fast, I knew, was likely to embarrass the Government which had custody of my body, but I felt that I could not, without doing violence to my inner being, refrain from a clear duty because it might, without any such desire on my part, embarrass the Government if it would not take the course that humanity plainly dictated. To emphasize the meaning I put upon my said letter and the whole of my action since and before in connection with the hunger-strike, I told you I was prepared to regard my letter as withdrawn, without in any way admitting that I had intended to issue any threat to the Government, and to believe His Excellency's assurance that he would have granted my request on merits even if he had not known that I contemplated fasting. And I was thankful that you were authorized to accept my explanation of my letter and to let me see the two of the hunger-strikers whose names I mentioned to you.

I hope that the instructions regarding flogging have already been issued.

If there is any omission or error, you will please not hesitate to tell me.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 8032

198. LETTER TO F. C. GRIFFITHS

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON
July 24, 1923

DEAR MR. G[RIFFITHS],

I was astonished to learn from you, when you saw me on the 12th inst., that H.E. the Governor had read a threat into my letter of the 9th inst. I would now repeat what I told you then, namely, that no threat of any kind whatsoever was intended to be conveyed to the Government in that letter and that, if in spite of that assurance, H.E. still read a threat into that letter, it might be regarded as entirely cancelled or withdrawn.

It is, indeed, all the more pleasing to me to be able to feel that H.E. could accede to my requests on their merits. Will you please, therefore, convey my thanks to H.E. for the orders which, as you now tell me, were issued almost immediately after our conversation regarding further floggings, which orders, I am glad to see, really cover a wider ground than I had intended.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

F. C. GRIFFITHS, C.S.K.,O.B.E

From a photostat of a draft: S.N. 8033

199. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
August 14, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON

SIR,

With reference to the conversation yesterday between His Excellency[2] and myself, I would like to submit the following:

I must confess that behind the special division regulations I have always read not a sincere recognition of the necessity of some such

[1] A note at the end of the above draft says that, on July 25, this paragraph was replaced by the following sentence: "I need hardly add that I am sorry that H.E. should have read any threat in my letters."

[2] The Governor, Sir George Lloyd visited Yeravda Prison on August 13.

provision, but a reluctant and, therefore, a mere paper concession to some public pressure. But for H.E.'s kind invitation to say anything I might have in my mind, I would not have taken advantage of yesterday's visit of kindly inquiry to raise or discuss any conten-tious matter. But when I mentioned the question of the special division, I was totally unprepared for what H.E. said. I want, if possible, to disabuse my mind of the suspicion I have of the Govern-ment's motive, the more so after knowing the H.E. is himself respon-sible for drawing up the regulations.

Notwithstanding the confidence with which H.E. spoke yes-terday, I feel that there is no legal bar to the inclusion of selected rigo-rous-imprisonment prisoners in the special division. If there is a statutory bar, I should like to see the provision.

I would also like respectfully to point out that H.E. was sorely labouring under some mistake that sentences could be altered only by courts of law. Even during my short experience of this jail, I have noticed so many prisoners having been prematurely discharged under administrative orders. The point I raised was merely that of reducing rigorous imprisonment to simple, if there was any technical and legal difficulty about specially classifying rigorous-imprisonment prisoners as such.

In referring to these points, I do not want to be understood to complain of the rigorous imprisonment of any of the prisoners or to desire the inclusion of any rigorous-imprisonment prisoners for their own sakes in the special division.

What, however, I do respectfully desire is (1) to be enlightened on the points I have raised so as to rid myself of the suspicion I have referred to and (2) either, logically, the inclusion in the special division of also the rigorous-imprisonment prisoners who are brought up to habits of life, for meeting which the special division regulations have been framed, or to have my name and the names of my two colleagues removed from the special division.

I trust that H.E. will appreciate our anxiety not to be favoured to the exclusion of those whom we consider to be just as much entitled to extra conveniences as ourselves. In this connection, I would request H.E. to send for and read my letter[1] of 1st May last on the same subject.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 1-5-1923

I need hardly say that this letter is in no way written in my capacity as a prisoner, but is in continuation of the friendly, kindly conversation in which His Excellency was pleased to engage me yesterday.

I am,
Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8034

200. LETTER TO GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON
August 15, 1923[1]

TO
H. E. THE GOVERNOR OF BOMABY
SIR,

Your Excellency will, I trust, forgive me for referring to our conversation of Monday last. The more I think of what you said about the powers of the Government about framing regulations, and reducing sentences, the more I feel that you are mistaken. I must confess that behind the special division regulations, I have always read not a sincere recognition of the necessity of some such provision, but a reluctant and, therefore, a mere paper concession to some public pressure. But if you are right in thinking that the law gives you no authority to specially classify rigorous-imprisonment prisoners or to reduce sentences, I must revise my view of the Government action and rid myself of the suspicion about its motives. I should like to be able to do so all the more as its you tell me you have personally framed the regulations in question. I have always considered you to be the last person to do things weakly or to appear to conciliate public sentiment when you did not wish to. I would be glad, therefore to find that you excluded rigorous-imprisonment prisoners from the benefit of the regulations only because the law rendered you helpless.

But if your law officers advise you that the law does not prevent you, as you imagine it does, I hope you will do one of the two things:

(1) Either remove me and my colleagues mentioned to you by me from the special division or (2) logically include in the special division those rigorous-imprisonment prisoners who are accustomed to the same mode of life as we are.

[1] *Young India* has "15th July 1923", which is a slip.

I would ask your Excellency to send for and read my letter of 1st May last addressed to the Superintendent together with this.[1]

I remain,
Your faithful servant,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8035; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

201. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON
September 6, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON

SIR,

With reference to the names sent to the Government of certain visitors intending to see me,[2] you have today informed me that the Government have now decided to restrict the number of visitors to be permitted to see me to two, and that of the names sent, only Messrs. Narandas and Devdas Gandhi may be permitted to see me for this quarter's interview.

As the Government have hitherto permitted me to receive five visitors, I must confess that the present decision has come upon me as a surprise. But I welcome the decision inasmuch as they have refused to grant similar permission to my colleague Mr. Yagnik who is kept in the same block with me. Had it not appeared graceless, I would myself have waived the facility which I then saw was exclusively allowed to me.

The case, however, of restricting the permission only to Messrs. Narandas and Devdas Gandhi stands on a different footing. If it means that henceforth I am not to see any but such blood relations only as may be allowed, I must deny myself the usual privilege of receiving visitors twice every quarter. I had thought the question of the qualifications of persons who were to be permitted to see me was decided once for all. I have no desire to weary the Government by reiterating the argument contained in the previous correspondence on this subject. I can only state that the three friends whose name have been sent to the Government fall under the category of those who

[1] For Gandhiji's observations made later, while releasing the correspondence in *Young India*, *vide* "Comment on Prison Regulations", 6-3-1924.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 26-4-1923.

have been permitted to see me since the correspondence referred to by me. And if I may not see these friends, whom I regard in the same light as my blood relations, I must simply not receive any visitors at all.

I observe that the Government have taken over a fortnight to give the decision you have conveyed to me. May I ask now for an early decision on this letter, so as to avoid unnecessary suspense both o those who are eager to see me and to myself.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,
M. K GANDHI
No. 827

From photostat: S.N. 8036; also *Young India,* 6-3-1924

202. MESSAGE TO MAHOMED ALI [1]

[YERAVDA PRISON,
September 10, 1923]

I can send you no message because I am in prison. I have always disapproved of people sending messages from prison. But I may say that I am deeply touched by your loyalty to me. I would, however, ask you not to allow your loyalty to me to weigh with you so much as your loyalty to the country. My views are very well known. I expressed them before I went to jail, and there has been no change in

[1] This message seems to have been given to Devdas Gandhi personally when he interviewed Gandhiji in Yeravda Prison, and was conveyed by him to Mahadev Desai, who later quoted it in his article, "Delhi Congress", in *Young India,* 4-10-1923. On September 13, according to Mahadev Desai, Mahomed Ali "asked Devdas if Bapu had anything to say to him, and the 'wireless' message he jocularly referred to in his speech was then given to him." This is however worded differently from the message which Mahomed Ali quoted in his speech, in support of the resolution advocating Council-entry, at the special Congress session in Bombay on September 12, over which he presided. According to a report in *The Hindu,* 17-9-1923, the gist of the message from Gandhiji, which Mahomed Ali interpreted to mean as permitting a change in the non-co-operation programme of the Congress, was as follows: "I do not want you to stick to my programme. I am for the entire programme. But, if looking at the state of the country, you think that one or two items of the boycott programme should be discarded or modified or added to, then in the name of love of country, I command you to give up those parts of my programme of alter them accordingly." There is, however, no evidence that this message was actually sent by Gandhiji. *Vide* Mahadev Desai's, article "Delhi Congress" *Young India,* 4-10-1923, C. Rajagopalachari's "Notes", *Young India,* 20-9-1923, Pandit Sunderlal's "Our Immediate Duty", *Young India,* 1-11-1923 and finally, V.S. Srinivasa Sastri's statement to the Press reproduced in *Young India,* 17-1-1924.

them since. I may assure you that if you choose to differ from me, it will not affect by one jot the sweetness of relations between you and me.

Young India, 4-10-1923

203. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
November 12, 1923

TO
THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON
SIR,

At the time you told my companion, Mr. Abdul Gani, that the prison rules did not permit you to let him have diet that cost more than the authorized scale, I informed you that your predecessor had allowed all my companions and me to regulate out diet. I further submitted to you that it was awkward for me to enjoy a facility Mr. Abdul Gani could not enjoy and that, therefore, my diet too should be so reduced as to be brought in harmony with the regulations, and the scale allowed to Mr. Abdul Gani. You were good enough to suggest that, for the time being, I should continue the present rations and that I might discuss the matter with the Inspector-General, who would shortly visit the prison. I have waited now for over ten days. I feel that if I am to keep the peace of mind, I should wait no longer and, in any case, I have nothing to discuss with the Inspector-General. I have no complaint whatsoever to make against your decision regarding. Mr. Abdul Gani. I recognize that you are powerless even if you were minded to help my companion. Nor is it my intention to seek any revision of the prison regulations regarding diet. All I am desirous of doing is to avoid my favoured treatment. You have kindly suggested that my diet scale might have been considered by your predecessor a medical necessity. I know, however, as a matter of fact, that such should not be the case, for my diet has been the same more or less from the time of my admission to this jail; and what is more to the point, my companions and I have, as has been already mentioned, been hitherto permitted to regulate our diet without regard to cost. I propose, therefore, to discontinue oranges and raisins as from Wednesday next. My diet will still exceed the authorized rate. I am not sure that I need 4 lbs. of goat's milk, but unless you will kindly assist me to further change my diet so as to reduce the cost to the

authorized rate, I shall reluctantly continue to take the 4 lbs. of milk and sour limes not exceeding two.

I need hardly assure you that I contemplate the reduction in no querulous spirit. I fully sympathize with your decision regarding Mr. Abdul Gani. I propose to make the change purely for my inner peace, and in this I ask for your sympathy and approval.

I remain
Yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI
No. 827

From a photostat: S.N. 8038; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

204. LETTER TO INDULAL YAGNIK

November 12, 1923

BHAISHRI INDULAL,

Read this[1] carefully and show it to Abdul Gani. Make any suggestions you would like regarding language, etc. I see no alternative but to give up oranges and raisins. I am not at all convinced that it is necessary to take them. Even if I were to lose a few pounds in weight, that would be nothing compared to the satisfaction I would derive. I see that if I am to be true to my nature, I can do nothing else. I have waited long for J.

MOHANDAS

From a handwritten draft of the Gujarati: S.N. 8038

205. JAIL DIARY, 1923

JANUARY 3, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *Steps* to *Christianity* yesterday. Started reading Trine's *My philosophy and Religion*. Today the Major[2] gave me a copy of the notification that the Inner Temple had removed my name from its Roll.

JANUARY 7, SUNDAY

Finished reading *My Philosophy and Religion* yesterday. Star-

[1] Presumably, this was the draft of the preceding item.

[2] Major Whitworth Jones; for the notification, *vide* Appendix "Inner Temple Order", 21-12-1922.

ted reading Rabindranath's *Sadhana* and *Upanishad* [-*Prakash*].

JANUARY 14, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Sadhana* yesterday.

FEBRUARY 4, SUNDAY

Finished reading Rajchandra's writings and *Ishopanishad* with a commentary. Reading *Kena*[1]. Completed the second reading of Urdu Book III. Finished reading *Auto-suggestion*. Ba came and saw me on January 27. Released Shankerlal from his vow on the 28th.

FEBRUARY 5, MONDAY

Finished reading *Helps to Bible study*. Started reading Max Muller's translation of the *Upanishads* as also Well's History.

FEBRUARY 22, THURSDAY

Finished reading Max-Muller's translation to the *Upanishads* as also *Upanishad-Prakash*, Part III. Reading Part IV and Well's History.

FEBRUARY 25, SUNDAY

Finished reading the *Upanishad* [-*Prakash*,] Part IV. Started reading Part V, *Kathavalli Upanishad*.

MARCH 2, FRIDAY

Finished reading Wells's History, Part II, on February 28. Started reading the Bible yesterday. Finished reading the leaflet on the worship of Vishnu. Started reading Wells's History, Part I.

MARCH 11, SUNDAY

Applied, on Wednesday, caustic soda to the eye for conjunctivitis.

Finished reading the *Upanishad* [-*Prakash*], Part V, on Thursday. Started reading Part VI. I could not spin on that day. Completed Urdu Book IV. Started reading Book V.

MARCH 16, FRIDAY

Finished reading Wells's History, Part I, yesterday. Today glanced through *Science of Peace* by Bhagwandas.

MARCH 19, MONDAY

Finished reading Kipling's *Barrack-room Ballads*. Reading

[1] *Kena Upanishad*

Geddes's Evolution of cities. Finished reading the pamphlet on Vedic religion.

MARCH 21, WEDNESDAY

Yesterday finished reading Geddes' *Evolution of Cities*. Today started reading a biography of Ramanuja. Received ten seers of raisins.

MARCH 22, THURSDAY

Finished reading the biography of Ramanujacharya. Started reading Sikh history.

MARCH 26, MONDAY

Started reading Mirza's *Ethics of Islam* yesterday.

MARCH 31, SATURDAY

Finished reading Sikh history and Mirza's *Ethics of Islam* yesterday and started reading Benjamin Kidd's *Social Evolution*. Started reading Buhler's translation of *Manusmriti* today.

APRIL 4, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading Kidd's *Social Evolution* yesterday. Finished reading Buhler's preface to *Manusmriti* today. Started reading *Rise of the Sikh Power* by Gokulchand.

APRIL 9, MONDAY

Yesterday finished reading Gokulchand's *Rise of the Sikh Power* as also *Kabir's Songs* by the Poet[1]. Started reading *Our Hellenic Heritage* by James today. Started reading Dadachandji's *Avesta* and Purani's translation of Aurobindo's[2] *Gitanishkarsha.*

APRIL 17, TUESDAY

Finished reading James's *Our Hellenic Heritage*. Devdas came and saw me yesterday. Shankerlal was released today.

APRIL 19, THURSDAY

Sufishah Mullah Shah, when he was advised to flee from the wrath of Shah Jehan, is reported to have said:

I am not an impostor that I should seek safety in flight. I am an utterer of truth. Death and life are to me alike. Let my blood in another life also redden the impaling

[1] Rabindranath Tagore

[2] Aurobindo Ghosh (1872-1950); mystic, poet and philosopher; since 1910 lived at Pondicherry where he established an Ashram.

stake. I am living and eternal; death recoils from me, for my knowledge has vanquished death. The sphere where all colours are effaced has become my abode.

Mansuri Hallaj said:

To cut off the hands of a fettered man is easy, but to sever the links that bind me to the Divinity would be a task indeed.

¾ CLAUDE FIELD in *Mystics and Saints of Islam*.

Received today five seers of raisins.

APRIL 26, THURSDAY

Finished reading *Upanishad-Prakash*, Parts VII-X (*Katho-panishad*). Today started reading Part XI commencing with *Prashno-panishad*. Completed on Saturday the second reading of Urdu Reader No. I. Severe pain in stomach on Saturday. Subsided on Monday. The Major looked after me very well. I suffered very much. On Saturday, could continue work and studies according to schedule, despite the pain. They remained suspended from Sunday to Tuesday. Did not observe silence on account of pain. I believe the pain was due to my taking milk and bread as usual at 7 a.m. before the castor oil taken by me early on Saturday morning could act. Once before I had done precisely this. It had done no harm then, but this time it did. I draw two conclusions from this. First, the disease must be digging itself in slowly. Second, this body of mine will not stand the experiment of taking food before the purgative has had its effect. This result is both welcome and painful. God has been testing me on all sides. He does not permit me to see what He has been recording in His book. His wisdom is boundless.

APRIL 28, SATURDAY

Yesterday I finished reading Dadachandji's *Avesta* and started reading Spencer's *Elements of Sociology*. Today I started reading *History of Sikhism* by Macauliff.

MAY 9, WEDNESDAY

Col. Maddock[1] examined me last Saturday and informed me that most probably I was suffering from incipient dysentery. The Major started giving me injection of emetine since Sunday. It is about a week since Manzar Ali arrived. News was received today that Indulal also would be coming here. The Major delivered Andrews's letter to

[1] Surgeon-General at Sassoon Hospital, Poona, who was to operate upon Gandhiji for appendicitis on January 12, 1924.

me today. Finished reading *Gitanishkarsha* yesterday.

MAY 16, WEDNESDAY

Indulal came yesterday. Col. Maddock examined me once again. Finished reading Herbert Spencer's *Elements of Sociology* today. Also glanced through Shivram Pherwani's *Social Efficiency*.

MAY 19, SATURDAY

I was taken to the European ward yesterday. Ba, Radha, Mani, Laxmi (Junior) and Jamnadas saw me yesterday. Yesterday I finished reading Wadia's *Message of Mahomed* and started reading *Message of Christ.* Finished reading *Prashnopanishad*.

MAY 20, SUNDAY

Started reading *Mandukopanishad.*

MAY 21, MONDAY

Finished reading Hasan's *Saints of Islam*. Started reading Moulton's *Early Zoroastrianism*.

MAY 27, SUNDAY

Finished reading Kaka's *Himalayno Pravas* and *History of Sikhism*. Part III. commenced reading Part IV and also Chandrashankar's *Sitaharan.* Read Rolf Evelyn's *Bars and Shadows*.

MAY 31, THURSDAY

On Tuesday, took up again the spinning-wheel which had been abandoned for thirteen days. Finished reading Chandrashanker's *Sitaharan* yesterday. Today finished reading Moulton's *Early Zoroastrianism*.

JUNE 1, FRIDAY

Finished reading Kishorelal's book, *Buddha and Mahavira,* as also *History of Sikhism*, Part V.

JUNE 3, SUNDAY

Finished reading Kishorelal's *Rama and Krishna*, and also *History of Sikhism*, Part VI.

JUNE 6, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading the story of Aurobindo's imprisonment and *Mandukopanishad.*

JUNE 16, SATURDAY

Finished reading *Man and Superman* yesterday. Finished reading *Bhagyano Varas* today. Started reading English translation of *Markandeya Purana*.

JUNE 30, SATURDAY

At the beginning of this week, finished reading *Poorva Rang* by Kaka and Narahari and started reading the lectures given in the Puratatvamandir. Yesterday finished reading a book on an episode in the life of the Prophet in Urdu and started reading the account of the companions of the Prophet [*Usva-e-Sahaba*].

There was a discussion yesterday with Dalziel and the Major about the flogging of the Mulshi Peta prisoners.

JULY 2, MONDAY

Yesterday finished reading *Markandeya Purana* and started reading Chapters XV and XVI of *Mandukyopanishad* and Chapter XVII of Gaudapadacharya's *Karika.*

Started reading today Buckle's *History of Civilization*, Part I

JULY 7, SATURDAY

Finished reading the lecture series[1] given at the Puratatvamandir. Started reading *Jaya-jayant*. Suffered great pain on Monday night. The fault was entirely mine. I ate more than I should have of the figs sent by Anasuyabehn. Boundless indeed is God's kindness. What else can be more conducive to welfare than immediate punishment for a sin?

JULY 10, TUESDAY

Yesterday finished reading the lecture series given at the Puratatvamandir and started reading Rabindranath's book on ancient literature.

Wrote a letter yesterday[2] to the Superintendent about my commencing a fast from today. He, therefore, came and appealed to me to postpone the fast. He again called on me this morning and asked me to postpone it for 48 hours for his sake. I have agreed to do so. Mr. Griffiths came today at 2 p.m. and left after talking to me for two hours.

[1] The following entry says that this was done on July 9.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 9-7-1923.

JULY 12, THURSDAY

Yesterday again Griffiths came with a message from the Governor. Finished reading the book on ancient literature yesterday. Started reading *Yugadharma*. I met Dastane and Dev[1] in the presence of the Superintendent and Mr. Griffiths. After discussing the moral issues involved, they announced their decision to give up their fast.

JULY 13, FRIDAY

Chhaganlal, Kashi[2] and others were to come to see me but did not.

JULY 22, SUNDAY

Ba, Chhaganlal, Amina, Ramdas and Manu saw me last Monday. Finished reading, during the week, the autobiography of Countess Tolstoy and Buckle's *History*, Part I. Reading Part II and *Kalapani-ni-katha*. Wrote a letter[3] to Mr. Griffiths about Dastane and others on Tuesday.

JULY 30, MONDAY

Finished reading *Kalapani-ni-katha* last week. Finished reading *Sampattishastra*, Part I. Reading Part II. Finished reading *Juno Karar*[4] yester-day. Started reading *Navo Karar*[5] today.

AUGUST 8, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading Buckle's *History*, Part II, and *Gitagovind*.

AUGUST 12, SUNDAY

Finished reading the last part of the *Upanishad* [-*Prakash*], covering *Aitareya Brahmana* and *Taittiriya Brahmana*. Started reading *Chhandogya Upanishad*. On Thursday, started reading Prof. James's *Varieties* of *Religious Experience*. Finished reading *Sampattishastra*.

AUGUST 15, WEDNESDAY

The Governor paid a visit on Monday. Wrote a letter[6] today about the special division. Finished reading [*Usva-e-*]*Sahaba* today. Reading *Stories from the History of Rome*.

[1] Two leaders of Mulshi Peta satyagrahi-prisoners who had been on fast since June 30, in protest against the flogging of the satyagrahis.

[2] Wife of Chhaganlal Gandhi

[3] *Vide* "Letter to F. C. Griffiths" 17-7-1923

[4] Gujarati translations of the Old Testament and the New Testament

[5] *ibid*.

[6] *Vide* "Letter to Governor of Bombay". 15-8-1923.

AUGUST 19, SUNDAY

Finished reading Buckle's *History*, Part III. Started reading Hopkins' *Origin and Evolution of Religion*.

AUGUST 23, THURSDAY

Finished reading Hopkins' book. Started reading Lecky's *European Morals*

AUGUST 26, SUNDAY

Finished reading James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*. Four days ago finished reading Vinoba's *Maharashtra-Dharma*, Part I. Part II. is about to be finished.

The Superintendent said yesterday that those who took raw milk did not need fruits and hence he refused to give fruits to Manzar Ali. Even for me, he said, they were not really necessary; so I stopped asking for oranges, lemons, etc. Today ate bananas from Manzar Ali's ration. Took milk raw.

AUGUST 28, TUESDAY

Today finished writing *Gitakosh*[1]. Started reading Holmes' *Freedom and Growth* yesterday.

Started living exclusively on raw milk from today. May God help me !

AUGUST 31, FRIDAY

Finished reading Holmes' *Freedom and Growth*. Started reading Haeckel's *Evolution of Man*.

Today the Major applied caustic soda to the eye for conjunctivitis.

SEPTEMBER 2, SUNDAY

Finished reading the Bible yesterday. Started reading an illustrated account of Jesus today.

Lost in weight by three lbs. during the last week.

SEPTEMBER 9, SUNDAY

Finished reading the illustrated account of Jesus and also Kavi's *Muktadhara* and *Dubtoon Vahan*.[2] Weight went up by one lb.; it is

[1] Glossary to the *Gita;* it was later revised to incorporate meanings given to words and phrases in Gandhiji's *Anasaktiyoga* (1929), a Gujarati translation of the *Gita*, and was published under the title *Gitapadarthakosh*, in 1936, by Navajivan Publishing House.

[2] Plays by Rabindranath Tagore

now 101 lbs.

SEPTEMBER 16, SUNDAY

Devdas, Narandas, Keshu[1] and Kacho[2] saw me on Monday[3]. Finished reading the first part of Maulana Shibli's life of the Prophet, and also the preface to the Koran by Dr. Mahomed Ali.

SEPTEMBER 28, FRIDAY

This week finished reading Vivekanand's *Rajayoga* and Champakrai Jain's *Dharmani Ekata*. Finished reading life of the Prophet (by Maulana Shibli) today.

SEPTEMBER 30, SUNDAY

Started reading Nicholson's *Mystics of Islam* yesterday and finished it today. Started making the fair copy of *Gitakosh* today. Yesterday started reading *Sahaba Ekram*, Part II, and the unread portion of Urdu Reader No. V. Started reading Paul Carus's *Gospel of Buddha*. Today Major Jones came to bid me farewell.

OCTOBER 7, SUNDAY

Finished reading Paul Carus's *Gospel of Buddha* during the week. Reading Rhys Davids' Hibbert Lectures on Buddhism. Started reading Ameer Ali's *Spirit of Islam* today. Work on the fair copy of *Gitakosh* continues. Received a basket of fruits from Jamnalalji today.

Finished reading *Chhandogyopanishad* today and started reading *Brihadaranyak.*

OCTOBER 14, SUNDAY

Ba, Avantikabai, Jamnalalji and Savatibai came and saw me on Wednesday.

Finished reading Davids' *Hibbert Lectures on Buddhism*. Reading Sir Oliver Lodge's *Modern Problems*.

OCTOBER 21, SUNDAY

Finished reading Sir Oliver Lodge's *Modern Problems* and started the current issue of *Puratatva*.

OCTOBER 25, THURSDAY

Manzar Ali was taken to Prayag today.

[1] Keshavlal, son of Maganlal Gandhi

[2] Krishnadas

[3] *Young India* published a brief report; *vide* Appendix "Interview in jail", 13-9-1923.

Finished reading Ameer Ali's book on Tuesday.

Started reading Washington Irving's *Mahomed* Yesterday.

Started reading *Syadvada Manjari* today.

OCTOBER 26, FRIDAY

Abdul Gani was brought to this ward today.

NOVEMBER 4, SUNDAY

Abdul Gani started spinning on Wednesday.

Finished reading Irving's *Mahomed.*

STARTED READING *HISTORY OF THE SARACENS* BY AMEER ALI.

NOVEMBER 11, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Brihadaranyak Upanishad* on Tuesday. Started reading *History of Civilization in Europe* by Guizot on Thursday. Finished reading *Sahaba*, Part II, today. Will commence tomorrow Maulana Shibli's biography of Hasrat Omar.

NOVEMBER 12, MONDAY

Wrote a letter[1] today to the Superintendent saying that I would have to give up oranges and raisins from Wednesday because he could not provide Abdul Gani the diet of the latter's choice.

NOVEMBER 18, SUNDAY

Have given up oranges and raisins since Wednesday last. Found today that I have lost three pounds in weight, but my physical strength remains unaffected.

NOVEMBER 24, SATURDAY

Today finished reading Ameer Ali's *History of the Saracens* and also making the fair copy of the *Gitakosh.* Yesterday finished reading Guizot's *History of Civilization in Europe*. Today started reading *Guizot's History of Civilization in France*, Part II.

NOVEMBER 26, MONDAY

Yesterday started reading Motley's *Rise of the Dutch Republic*. Today commenced writing the history of Satyagraha in South Africa[2]. Finished reading Reese's autobiography and started reading Rajam

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda" 12-11-1923.

[2] Originally in Gujarati, this book was published in two parts in 1924 and 1925 by the Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, and the English translation in 1928, by S. Ganesan, Madras.

Iyer's *Vedantabhraman*.

DECEMBER 9, SUNDAY

Today finished reading the first part of Motley's book and started the second part. Finished reading Rajam Iyer's *Vedanta-bhraman*.

On Wednesday finished reading Guizot's *History of Civilization in France*, Part II, and started Part III.

Finished reading *Syadvada Manjari* today. Started reading *Uttaradhyayan Sutra*. The experiment of doing without fruits is going on. Have been taking some bread with milk since Tuesday. Found that my weight had increased by two pounds; now it is 99.

DECEMBER 15, SATURDAY

Finished reading Guizot and started *Rosicrucian Mysteries*.

DECEMBER 16, SUNDAY

Finished reading the second part of Motley's book and started the third.

DECEMBER 23, SUNDAY

Ba, Mathuradas and Ramdas came to see me on Tuesday.

Ramabai Ranade[1] came on Wednesday. At the instance of the Superintendent, wrote a letter[2] to Harilal asking him to come and see me.

Have started taking fruits again since Tuesday evening. Last Sunday my weight stood as low as 96 and even the Superintendent got alarmed. Since Thursday started taking honey and increased the intake of bread to eight ounces.

I weighed 99 lbs. today. On Wednesday, finished reading *Rosicrucian Mysteries* and started Plato's *Dialogues*. Today finished reading the biography of Hasrat Omar and started reading Maulana Shibli's *Al Kalam* and also Woodroffe's *Shakta and Shakti*. Finished reading Motley's book.

DECEMBER 30, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Uttaradhyayan Sutra* and started *Bhagavati Sutra*. Finished reading Woodroffe's *Shakta and Shakti*. On

[1] Ramabai Ranade; widow of Justice Mahadeo Govind Ranade; was associated with the Seva Sadan of Bombay and Poona in social welfare work for women and children.

[2] This is not available

Thursday, finished reading the first part of Plato's *Dialogues* and started the second.

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 8039

APPENDIX: LIST OF BOOKS

* 157[1] *Natural History*
* 158 *The Wisdom of the Ancients*
* 159 *Natural Features of India*
* 178 *Stories from the History of Rome*
See Diary of 23-4-1922
* 205 *The Young Crusader*
* 212 *Lives of Fathers and Martyrs*
* 215 *Dropped from the Clouds*
264 *Ivanhoe*
282 *The Old Curiosity Shop*
* 295 *The Five Empires*
305 *Westward Ho*
* 356 *Seekers after God*
Equality Bellamy
* 41 The Five Nations: Kipling
* 49 Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde
* 10 The Second *Jungle Book*
* 107 *J. Howard*
109 *Satires and Epistles of Horace*
* 111 Goethe's Faust
116 *Tropical Agriculture*
* 125 *Lays of Ancient Rome*
129 Primer of Marathi Language
* 132 *Natural History of Birds*
144 *Enoch Arden*
148 *Historical English Grammar*
149-50 Scott's Poetical Works
* 152 *Life and Voyages of Columbus*
Muktivivek[2] ¾ Translation of Vidyaranyaswami's book
Kanta ¾ *Do*

[1] The significance of the asterisks is not known, but the numerals apparently stand far catalogue numbers.

[2] The originals of this and the following book were in Sanskrit.

Malati Madhava[1]
Siddhantasara
Panchasati
Gulabsinh
Shrivritiprabhakar
Chatuh Sutri
Bhojprabandh
Vikramcharitra
Anubhavapradipika
Vastupalcharitra
Yogabindu
Kumarpalcharitra
Vivadtandav

From a copy: S.N. 8039

[1] This and the following are titles of books in Gujarati

APPENDICES

APPENDIX-I

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA "COMMUNIQUE" ON GANDHIJI'S LETTER TO VICEROY

DELHI,
February 6, 1922

The Manifesto issued by Mr. Gandhi on the 4th February justifying his determination to resort to mass civil disobedience contains a series of misstatements. Some of these are so important that the Government of India cannot allow them to pass unchallenged. In the first place, they emphatically repudiate the statement that they have embarked on a policy of lawless repression and also the suggestion that the present campaign of civil disobedience has been forced on the non-co-operation party in order to secure the elementary rights of free association, free speech and of free Press.

In limine, the Government of India desire to draw attention to the fact that the decision to adopt a programme of civil disobedience was finally accepted on the 4th November before the recent notifications relating either to the Seditious Meetings Act or the Criminal Law Amendment Act to which Mr. Gandhi unmistakably refers, were issued. It was in consequence of the serious acts of lawlessness committed by persons who professed to be followers of Mr. Gandhi and the non-co-operation movement that the Government were forced to take measures whichare in strict accordance with the law for protection of peaceful citizens in the pursuit of their lawful avocations. Since the inauguration of the non-co-operation movement the Government of India, actuated by a desire to avoid anything in the nature of recrudescence of political activity even though it was of an extreme character, have restricted their actions in relation thereto to such measures as were necessary for the maintenance of law and order and the preservation of public tranquillity.

Upto November no steps, save in Delhi last year, were taken against the Volunteer Associations. In November, however, the Government were confronted with a new and dangerous situation. In the course of the past year there had been systematic attempts to tamper with the loyalty of the soldiers and the police and there had occurred numerous outbreaks of serious disorder directly attributable to the propaganda of the non-co-operation party amongst the ignorant and excitable masses. These outbreaks had resulted in grave loss of life, the growth of a dangerous spirit of lawlessness and an increasing disregard for lawful authority. In November they culminated in the grave riots in Bombay in which 53 persons lost their lives and approximately 400 were wounded. On the same date, dangerous manifestations of

lawlessness occurred in many other places and at this period it became clear that many of the Volunteer Associations had embarked on a systematic campaign of violence, intimidation and obstruction to combat which proceedings under the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure had proved ineffective.

In these circumstances the Government were reluctantly compelled to resort to measures of a more comprehensive and drastic character.

Nevertheless the operation of the Seditious Meetings Act was strictly limited to a few districts in which the risk of grave disturbances of the peace was specially great and the application of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908 was confined to associations, the majority of the members of which had habitually indulged in violence and intimidation. It is impossible here to set out in details the evidence which justified the adoption of these measures in the different provinces. Abundant proof is, however, to be found in the published proceedings of the various legislative bodies, in the *communiques* of different local Governments, and in the pronouncements of the heads of provinces. While resolute in their determination to enforce respect for law and order and to protect loyal and peaceful subjects of the Crown, the Government have at the same time taken every precaution possible to mitigate where desirable the conditions of imprisonment and to avoid any action which might have the appearance of vindictive severity. Ample proof of this will be found in the orders issued by local Governments. Numerous offenders have been released, sentences have been reduced and special consideration has been shown in the case of persons convicted of offences under the Seditious Meetings Act or the Criminal Law Amendment Act. There is then no shadow of justification for the charge that their policy has been one of indiscriminate and lawless repression.

A further charge which has been brought by Mr. Gandhi is that the recent measures of Government have involved a departure from the civilized policy laid down by His Excellency at the time of the apology of the Ali Brothers, namely, that the Government of India should not interfere with the activities of non-co-operation so long as they remained non-violent in word and deed. The following citation from the *communique* of the Government of India issued on the 30th May conclusively disproves the statement. After explaining that in view of the solemn undertaking contained in the statement over their signatures, it had been decided to refrain from instituting criminal proceeding against Messrs Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali, the Government of India observed: "It must not be inferred from the original determination of the Government to prosecute for speeches inciting to violence that promoting disaffection of a less violent character is not an offence against the law. The Government of India desire to make it plain that they will enforce the law relating to offences against the State as and when they may think fit against any persons who have committed breaches of it."

It remains with the Government of India to deal with the allegation that His Excellency summarily rejected the proposal for a conference although the terms put forward by the Conference at Bombay and accepted by the Working Committee of the Congress were "quite in keeping with His Excellency's own requirement as indicated in his speech at Calcutta". How far this is far from being the case will be manifested from a comparison of His Excellency's speech with the terms proposed by the Conference. His Excellency in that speech insisted on the imperative necessity as a fundamental condition precedent to the discussion of any question by a conference, of the discontinuance of the unlawful activities of the non-co-operation party. No assurance on this point was, however, contained in the proposals advanced by the Conference. On the contrary whilst the Government were asked to make concessions which not only included the withdrawal of the notifications under the Criminal Law Amendment, and Seditious Meetings Acts and the release of persons convicted thereunder, but also the release of the persons convicted of offences designed to affect the loyalty of the army and the submission to an arbitration committee of the cases of other persons convicted under the ordinary law of the land, there was no suggestion that any of the illegal activities of the non-co-operators other than hartals, picketing and civil disobedience should cease. Moreover, it was evident from the statements made by Mr. Gandhi at the Conference that he intended to continue the enrolment of volunteers in prohibited associations and the preparations for civil disobedience. Further Mr. Gandhi also made it apparent that the proposed Round Table Conference would be called merely to register his decrees. It is idle to suggest that terms of this character fulfilled in any way the essentials laid down by His Excellency or can reasonably be described as having been made in response to the sentiments expressed by him.

Finally, the Government of India desire to draw attention to the demands put forward in the concluding paragraph of Mr. Gandhi's present manifesto which exceeded even the demands made by the Working Committee of the Congress. Mr. Gandhi's demands now include, (1) the release of all prisoners convicted or under trial for non-violent activities (2) a guarantee that the Government will refrain from interference with all non-violent activities of the non-co-operation party, even though they fall within the purview of the Indian Penal Code or in other words an undertaking that Government will indefinitely hold in abeyance in regard to the non-co-operators the ordinary and the long established laws of the land. In return for these concessions he indicates that he intends to continue the illegal and seditious propaganda and operations of the non-co-operation party and merely offers to postpone civil disobedience of an aggressive character until the offenders now in jail have had an opportunity of reviewing the whole situation. In the same paragraph he reaffirms the unalterable character of the demands of his party.

The Government of India are confident that all right thinking citizens will

recognize that this manifesto constitutes no response whatever to the speech of His Excellency at Calcutta and the demands made are such as no Government could discuss much Iess accept. The alternatives that now confront the people of India are such as sophistry can no longer obscure or disguise. The issue is no longer between this or that programme of political advance but between lawlessness with all its dangerous consequences on the one hand, and on the other, the maintenance of those principles which lie at the root of all civilized governments. Mass civil disobedience is fraught with such dangers to the State that it must be met with sternness and severity. The Government entertain no doubt that in any measures which they have to take for its suppression they can count on the support and assistance of all law-abiding and loyal citizens of His Majesty.

India in 1921-22, pp. 329-31

APPENDIX - II

LETTER FROM HAKIM AJMAL KHAN

AHMEDABAD,
March 17, 1922

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I have received the letter which you wrote to me from Sabarmati Jail and thank you very sincerely for the kind sentiments that you have expressed towards me. Whether I really deserve them is another question into which I do not propose to enter.

I am glad that Mr. Shankerlal Banker is with you in the jail. He has great affection for you and possesses qualities which have endeared him to you. I feel sure that his company in jail will be source of extra pleasure and satisfaction to you.

I can, however, feel happy at your arrest only when I find that, as a mark of the profound respect that it has for you, the country takes still greater interest in the national movement than it did when you, were free. But it gives me infinite pleasure to see that the country observed perfect peace on your arrest. This is a clear sign of the spread of the spirit of non-violence in the country, which is as essential for our success as pure air is for life.

I have no doubt that the secret of the progress of our country lies in the unity of the Hindus, the Mussulmans and other races of India. Such a unity should not be based on policy, for that, in my opinion, will only be a kind of armistice which might with difficulty be sufficient for the present requirements. But I clearly see that the two great communities are coming closer to each other every day. And although the number of men whose hearts are absolutely free from any sectarian prejudices may

not be very great in the two communities, I feel convinced that the country has found the road to real unity and will advance on it with steady steps towards its goal. So highly do I prize the unity of races inhabiting our country that, if the country gave up all other activities and achieved that alone, I would consider the Khilafat and the swaraj questions automatically solved to our satisfaction. For the achievement of our objects is so intimately connected with this unity that to me the two appear identical.

The question naturally arises, how are we to achieve this living and lasting unity? I can find only one answer to that. We can only achieve it by the sincerity and purity of our hearts. Not until every one of us has driven selfishness out of his mind will our country succeed in achieving its object. I know that the differences which have been created by a century of this system of Government cannot very soon be eradicated and, therefore, we cannot expect our efforts to bear fruit immediately. But there can be no doubt that we have accomplished the work of generations in months and have actually achieved what the pessimists among us considered impossible of achievement.

I do not consider the question of the Khilafat, in other words, the question of the evolution of Islamic policy, a passing phase. Just as in centuries past, it presented itself in one form or another, so will it in centuries to come. God alone knows how and when it will finally be solved. Therefore, even those who do not believe in Hindu-Muslim unity in the true sense of the term must understand that even as a policy it carries centuries under its arms. It is an admitted fact that looking to the present condition of India, next to Hindu-Muslim unity in importance is the question of non-violence. How far have our efforts, or rather your efforts, been successful in that direction is shown by the progress of events. But the most striking proof of all of our success in that direction is afforded by our North-West Frontier Province where non-violence had the least chance of success. When we find our brethren in that corner of India generally opposing the shield of non-violence to the violent attacks of their opponents, we feel convinced that the spirit of non-violence has spread and is spreading satisfactorily in the country.

Doubts are entertained with regard to the United Provinces in this matter; but my own opinion is that in consequence of the dearth of national workers, the Congress creed has not been sufficiently explained to the people. I feel sure, however, the United Provinces will very soon come up to the level of other Provinces.

If some extraordinary or special causes have occasionally led to violence in some parts of the country, they should afford no ground for despair. We should not be unprepared for such stray cases, when we remember that we have been working with a limited number of workers in the midst of a population of 33 crores and working for eighteen months only. At the same time we should not minimize the significance of such occurrences and concentrate all our efforts on preventing their recurrence. Unity

of the races inhabiting India and non-violence are the two essential conditions for the success of the present movement.

Khaddar, too, no doubt is of invaluable help to us in the achievement of our objects. It will demonstrate our unity and show us how far we have advanced towards swaraj. I do not think that picketing is so necessary for popularizing khaddar as the country considers it to be. The country considers it a short cut and spends its limited time over it, although as you yourself have observed, the real work lies in creating in the minds of our people love for home-made things. But so far as I think our Congress Committees have not sufficiently devoted their time and attention to it. This is the reason why they want to make up for this neglect by adopting the comparatively easier method of picketing. I, however, hope that in future the various Congress Committees would adopt it as their ideal to persuade people to use hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar and prefer it to picketing.

You have also touched upon the question of untouchability in your letter. On the face of it, it might appear to be a communal question. It is really a national question, for, the country as a whole cannot progress until and unless its component parts progress too. It is the duty of every person who has the interest of the country at heart to interest himself in all such questions as affect our national growth. Consequently, everything which comes in the way of the material or moral progress of the country must engage our attention. It is, therefore, as much a Muslim question as Hindu. Similarly, if the Mussulmans are backward in education, every good Hindu should think of their educational advancement, for every step in that direction is a step towards the educational advancement of the country as a whole, even though it may superficially appear to be to the advantage of one community only. I hope, therefore, the country will pay to the question of untouchability the attention that it deserves.

Bardoli and Delhi resolutions invite the country to concentrate its efforts on the constructive programme laid down by you. I hold that if we were to start civil disobedience, we would not have the necessary atmosphere required for the success of the constructive programme. It is very difficult to find a *via media*. I trust the Working Committee will fully consider the question and adopt a proper and suitable course.

Now that we are starting constructive work, we should reorganize the Congress office to suit to our requirements. We should divide the work and create separate departments for different works, each under a member of the Working Committee selected for the purpose.

In the end, I join you in your prayers and wish to assure you that though my failing health will not enable me to be of very great service to my country, it will be my earnest endeavour to discharge my duties until Mr. C. R. Das is once more

amongst us. May God help us in the sacred work which you and the country have undertaken for truth and justice, and may your going to jail lead to the achievement of our triple goal.

Young India, 23-3-1922

APPENDIX- III

INTERVIEW TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[1]

Mr. Devdas Gandhi and myself went to Poona on Friday last to see Mahatmaji who, we learnt, was in Yeravda Jail. We were informed by Mr. Thakkar of the Servants of India Society that the Jail Superintendent had orders to allow only one interview in three months. Mahatmaji's son Devdas accompanied by Mr. Thakkar and myself went to the Jail and requested the Superintendent to allow us to see Mahatmaji. We were told that only one of us two. Mr. Thakkar or myself, could accompany Devdas.

The prisoner then was brought down by a warder to the Superintendent's room and we were called in. The Superintendent was in his chair and Mahatmaji standing in front of his table. He had to continue standing throughout the interview.

In answer to questions about his food, Mahatmaji said he was given goat's milk and bread, milk being given all at a time. He had cut down his three meals to two. Asked what he did for fruits, he said he was given 2 oranges a day. Raisins which he had mentioned as a part of his usual diet had not yet been ordered to be given. The Superintendent, however, promised to allow this. Mahatmaji's milk is heated for him on a stove in the yard which some Arab prisoners are using.

Mahatmaji is not allowed to see Mr. Shankerlal who is in the same prison or any other persons or prisoners. Mahatmaji is kept in one of the cells intended for solitary confinement and locked in during nights. The cell has two ventilators, one near the roof and another at the floor. It has a verandah besides which, in day-time an area marked out for him in the yard is allowed for walking. The nightpot has to be in the same little cell during nights. At our interview the Superintendent promised to replace the crude pot by a commode.

No articles are allowed from outside. Mahatmaji is not allowed even his own bed. He is given as usual 2 jail blankets. I was curious to ask if he had any pillow. He said he had none. When I expressed surprise, the superintendent interposed that a pillow was luxury. For utensils the Mahatmaji has the usual jail mug and dish. He is, however, allowed his own spoon, having strongly remonstrated on this subject. The Superintendent said during our interview that, if Mahatmaji applied, he would forward his petition to the Government. He has not been deprived of his writing paper and

[1] This took place on Saturday, April 1, 1922

pen which he is just now using only to learn Urdu by himself. Mahatmaji was in his usual single loin-cloth. He did not seem to us be in good health though the Jailor told us that he had gained in weight.

It is clear that, except in the matter of food to the limited extent mentioned by me, Mahatmaji is treated strictly as a common prisoner under the Bombay Jail Code which in many respects is a worse code than others. Mahatmaji told me that he did not want any complaints to be made about his life in Jail. The fine words uttered by the Judge at the famous trial at Ahmedabad had led us all to hope that the Government of Bombay would treat the great prisoner, if not exactly as he deserved, or as we would want, at least as civilized Government would treat their more important prisoners of war. Our interview, however, rudely awakened us to the realities of the British Indian administration.

The Hindu, 3-4-1922

APPENDIX -IV

INTERVIEW WITH MAGANLAL GANDHI[1]

I was one of the party that visited Mahatmaji in jail, on the first of this month. . . .

We asked Mahatmaji what his daily routine was. He replied with evident satisfaction that he always got up 4 a.m. and devoted the morning hours to prayer and meditation. . . . Mahatmaji has no work to do till it is broad daylight, probably because he is given no lamp. Finishing his morning ablutions. he commences his favourite work-spinning and carding. . . .

While relating to us his daily routine, he looked at his feet for fine cotton fibers sticking to his legs. “I am just coming from my carding work”, he said.

He took delight in standing all the time we were talking, in spite of our repeated appeals to take one of the chairs that were placed this time for all present, visitors as well as the prisoner. At every appeal, he said he was all right. One could see that the discipline to which he had voluntarily surrendered himself was a luxury for him. . . .

When Mahatmaji heard the warning that was given at the close of the interview that nothing that had transpired should be published, he inquired of the Superintendent with his vanquishing smile, “Not even the fact that letters were stopped by the Governor for reasons best known to him ?”

“No.”

“Or even that I am well?”

[1] Extracts from Maganlal Gandhi’s article: “Mahatmaji’s Luxuries in Jail”. The interview took place on July 1, 1992.

"No, nothing whatsoever," was the reply.

The prisoner, retracing his steps towards the door, said that he left it to the visitors to decide whether he should lose the privilege of future interviews. . . .

Young India, 20-7-1922

APPENDIX V

INNER TEMPLE ORDER

The official order of the Inner Temple Bench disbarring Mr. Gandhi runs as follows:

"Inner Temple: At a Parliament holden on Friday, the 10th day of November, 1992.

"Whereas at a Bench Table holden on the 9th day of November 1922 the treasurer having reported that he had received a certified copy of the conviction and sentence to six years' imprisonment of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, a barrister of this Inn, at the court of the Sessions Judge, Ahmedabad, India, on the 18th March, 1922, for sedition."

"It was ordered that the said Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, having been convicted by a competent tribunal of an offence which, in the opinion of the Bench, disqualifies him from continuing a member of the Inn, should have his name removed from the books."

"And at the same Bench Table it was further ordered that at the Parliament to be holden on Friday 10th November, 1922, the said Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi should be disbarred and his name removed from the books of the Society and that this order be communicated to the judges of the Supreme Court of Judicature, to the other Inns of Court, to the General Council of the Bar and by registered letter to the said Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, and be screened in the Hall."

This was confirmed at the Parliament of the Inner Temple held on November 10.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 21-12-1922

APPENDIX VI

INTERVIEW IN JAIL

[*September 10, 1923*]

Gandhiji was interviewed in Yeravda Jail on Monday. He has been keeping fairly good health since his last illness three months ago. He is still given milk, bread and fruit, and the diet has been quite agreeable to him so far. Though he looks perfectly bright and healthy, time and deep religious study have not failed to tell upon his general appearance. His weight now is 101 Ibs., i.e., 13 Ibs. less than his original weight when he was arrested. He spends his time, besides spinning, mainly in a study of the Vedas and Upanishads and Urdu in which he gets the assistance of Mr. Manzarali Sokhta.

Mahatmaji was perfectly amused when told of the speculation in the country about the rumours of his release, and said laughing he would deplore his early release, for it would interrupt his studies.

Young India, 13-9-1923

APPENDIX VII

DREW PEARSON'S INTERVIEW WITH SIR GEORGE LLOYD

On Gandhi Day¾just a year and a half after the Mahatma's imprisonment¾I visited the gaol near this city where he is confined, and talked with the man who more than anyone else in India was responsible for his arrest. The latter official, whose name I cannot divulge, is one of the highest in India. In words so graphic that I could almost picture the slender figure of Gandhi sitting before him, he described his talks with the Mahatma and the events leading up to the arrest. It was a story which probably few people had heard.

At the height of his campaign of Non-co-operation, my informant had called Gandhi to his office. Gandhi had been staging great bonfires, burning English cloth, had begun a most successful boycott of the schools and courts, and had organized such an effective campaign against the Prince of Wales that the streets down which his procession passed were almost empty.

Then, to use the words of my informant, "Gandhi pattered in here on his little bare feet and sat where you're sitting. And I warned him. You don't know what you're doing,' I said, 'but you insist on going ahead with this devilish programme, I'll hold you responsible for every man, woman and child that is killed.'

'There won't be any, Your Excellency,' he said.

'Yes, there will,' I replied. 'You're preaching non-violence, but that's all theory. In practice it won't work out. There's no such thing as non-violence in such a campaign as you are waging. You can't control men's passions. Remember, I hold you responsible.'"

His Excellency shook his finger at me as if I were Gandhi sitting opposite him.

"Gandhi came in again after it was all over¾after the riots and murders at Chauri Chaura. And I said:

'I told you what would happen. You are responsible.' He covered his face with his hands and said, 'I know it.'

'You Know it! Well, can your knowing it bring back to life the men and women whose heads were ground into dust by the heels of your Indian mob ?'

'Put me in gaol, Your Excellency,' he moaned.

‘Yes. I will put you in gaol, but not until I get good and ready. Do you think I want to put a crown of thorns on your head?’ He said he was going to fast for a week.”

A COLOSSAL EXPERIMENT

His Excellency paused and leaned back. In a less animated tone, he added:

“Just a thin, spindly shrimp of a fellow he was, but he swayed 319,000,000 people and held them at his beck and call. He didn’t care for material things, and preached nothing but the ideals and morals of India. You can’t govern a country with ideals. Still that was where he got his grip upon the people. He was their god. India must always have its god. First it was Tilak, then Gandhi now, someone else tomorrow. He gave us a scare. His programme filled our gaols. You can’t go on arresting people for ever, you know¾not when there are 319,000,000 of them. And if they had taken his next step and refused to pay taxes, God knows where we should have been! Gandhi’s was the most colossal experiment in world’s history, and it came within an inch of succeeding. But he couldn’t control men’s passions. They became violent, and he called off his programme. You know the rest. We gaoled him. I saw him three days ago¾in prison. Life seemed a little dull. I think he would like to get out. He complained that I wouldn’t let him have any newspapers. ‘Why, I don’t even know who is Prime minister,’ he said. ‘The best way to keep posted in politics is to keep out of gaol,’ I told him. ‘You’ll be glad to know that I’m leaving in a few months. You and I were never the best friends, but at least we were candid with each other.’”

Here I interrupted to put the question I had come to ask¾permission to visit Gandhi in prison.

“Absolutely impossible,” His Excellency cut me short. “The only way to gaol Gandhi is to bury him alive. If we allowed people to come here and make a fuss over him, he would become a martyr, and the gaol would be a Mecca for the world. We didn’t gaol Gandhi to put a crown of thorns on his head.”

When I asked if there was any likelihood of Gandhi being released before his six years’ term expires, he replied, emphatically:

“Not while I’m here. Of course, my term expires in December. They can do whatever they like with him after I go back to England.”

After describing Mr. Gandhi’s life in gaol, Mr. Pearson proceeds:

Mr. Gandhi’s religious creed, as explained to me by his son, is based upon two things: truth and non-violence. He is willing to dispense with all forms and ceremonies which the world calls religion, and retain these two basic principles.

According to his son, Mr. Gandhi does not wish to be released from prison by the pressure of a popular demand but only by the Government itself, when it has suffered a change of heart towards the Indian people. He will win his release by no promise to abstain from politics, but promises to devote the rest of his life to the liberation of his country.

Young India, 22-11-1923

1. *INTERVIEW TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI*

[SASSOON HOSPITAL,
POONA,
January 12, 1924]

. . . Dr. V. B. Gokhale came to me about 8-45 p.m. just as I was finishing my dinner; he told me how the Yeravda authorities had removed Mr. Gandhi to the Sassoon Hospital, where he was in charge. He was about to be operated for appendicitis.

. . . On my entering the room, we greeted each other and I enquired how he felt as to the operation. He answered firmly that the doctors had come to a definite conclusion and he was content to abide by it, and in reply to further inquiry, he said that he had full confidence in the medical men about him and that they had been very kind and very careful. Should there arise any public agitation, he added that it should be made known that he had no complaint whatever to make against the authorities and that so far as the care of his body went, their treatment left nothing to be desired. Then I enquired if Mrs. Gandhi had been informed of his condition. He said that she did not know the latest development, but she knew that for sometime he had not been well and he expected to hear from her. He then made inquiries of my wife and of my colleagues in the Servants of India Society, viz., Messrs Devadhar, Joshi, Patwardhan and Kunzru. He asked:

Have your frequent journeys out of India benefited your health?

Doctor Phatak then read a draft statement to be signed by Mr. Gandhi conveying his consent to the operation. After hearing it once, Mr. Gandhi put on his spectacles and read it himself. Then he said he would like the wording to be changed and asked Col. Maddock who was in the room what he thought. The Colonel said Mr. Gandhi knew best how to put it in appropriate language. His own suggestion would [not] be of much value.

Then he dictated a lengthy statement[1] which I took down in pencil.

When it was finished, I read it out to him once. Then he called Col. Maddock to his side and I read it again at his desire. Col. Maddock was quite satisfied and remarked: "Of course you know best how to put in proper language." He then drew up his proper posture for signing the paper, which he did in pencil. His hand shook very much and I noticed that he did not dot the "i". At the end he remarked to the doctor:

See how my hand trembles. You will have to put this right.

Col. Maddock answered: "Oh ! We will put tons and tons of strength into you."

As the operation room was being got ready, the doctors went out and I found myself nearly alone with the Mahatma. After a remark or two of a purely personal nature, I asked him whether he had anything particular to say. I noticed a touch of eagerness as he replied as though he was waiting for an opportunity to say something.

[1] The following item

If there is an agitation for my release after the operation, which I do not wish, let it be on proper lines. My quarrel with the Govern-ment is there and will continue so long as the originating causes exist. Of course, there cannot be any conditions. If the Government think they have kept me long enough, they may let me go, that would be honorable if they think I am an innocent man and that my motives have been good. While I have a deep quarrel with the Government, I love the Englishmen and have many friends amongst them. They may release me. But it must not be on false issues. Any agitation must be kept on proper, non-violent lines. Perhaps, I have not expressed myself quite well, but you had better put it in your own inimitable style.

I then pressed him again for a message to his people, his followers or the country. He was surprisingly firm on this subject. *He said he was a prisoner of Government and he must observe the prisoner's code of honour scrupulously*. He was supposed to be civilly dead. He had no knowledge of outside events and he could not have anything to do with the public. He had no message.

"How is it then that Mr. Mahomed Ali communicated a message as from you the other day?" The words were scarcely out of my mouth when I regretted them, but recall was impossible.

He was obviously astonished at my question, and exclaimed.:

Mr. Mahomed Ali ! A message from me ![1]

Briskly, at this point, the nurse came in with some articles of apparel for him, and signalled to me to depart. In a few minutes, he was shifted to the operation room. I sat outside marvelling at the exhibition I had witnessed of high-mindedness, forgiveness, chivalry and love transcending ordinary human nature, and what a mercy it was that the non-co-operation movement should have had a leader of such serene vision and sensitiveness to honour. . .

. . . I have read out this statement to Dr. Phatak who approves of it and adds that his inquiry as to a message elicited the same sort of answers.

The Hindu, 14-1-1924

[1] *Vide* however, "Message to Mahomed Ali", 10-9-1923.

2. LETTER TO COL. MADDOCK [1]

SASSOON HOSPITAL,
Poona,
9.45 p. m., January 12,1924[2]

DEAR COL. MADDOCK,

I know that you know the history of my illness during the past 6 months. You have been extraordinarily kind to me. You, the Surgeon-General and other medical gentlemen have come to the conclusion that any delay in performing the operation described by you to me involves considerable risk. You were kind enough to tell me that Government had authorized you to send for any of my special medical friends. I therefore suggested the names of Dr. Dalal and Dr. Jivraj Mehta. You have tried your utmost to secure their presence. But then you have not been able to get at either of them. I have the fullest confidence in you and regard being had to the serious nature of the case I would ask you please to go on with the operation without delay.

I am,

Yours sincerely

From a photostat: S.N. 8121

3 . MESSAGE TO THE COUNTRY[3]

January 14, 1924

I am deeply touched by manifestation of deep affection shown to me by my countrymen during the critical period of my health. They need have no anxiety because every possible attention is being given me by medical authorities here.

Young India, 17-1-1924

[1] This was also published in *The Hindu,* 20-1-1924 and *The Searchlight,* 25-1-1924.

[2] The message, given to Dr. Phatak in response to anxious inquiries from all over the country, was first published in *The Bombay Chronicle,* 15-1-1924. *Young India* reproduced it with a short editorial note under the caption, "The Nation in Agony".

[3] The source gives the date as January 19, obviously a slip. Gandhiji was operated upon for appendicitis on January 12.

4. INTERVIEW TO " THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

POONA,
January 19, 1924

The jail authorities cannot be blamed. Our fight must be clean. Appendicitis is a difficult disease to diagnose. Col. Murray is one of the best men I have met. He has been very kind to me. He is conscientious, considerate and kind. I hold the highest opinion about him.

The Searchlight, 27-1-1924

5. INTERVIEW TO DILIP KUMAR ROY[1]

February 2, 1924

Our conversation having that morning centered round music, Mahatmaji told me in passing how fond he really was of music even though he could not boast of the power of any expert for analytic appreciation. He had said:

I am so found of music that once, while I was in a South African Hospital and ailing from a bruise on my upper lip, I felt greatly soothed as the daughter of a friend of mine sang the song 'Lead, Kindly Light' at my request.

On my asking him if he knew any of the beautiful songs of Mirabai, he said:

Yes, I have heard a good many of them. They are so beautiful. It's because they come from the heart and not from any desire to compose or to please a public.

I called the same evening at his request. After the music, I saw that it had affected him visibly. For I thought I saw his eyes glisten even in that none-too-bright light of the hospital.

"I feel" said I after a short pause, "that our beautiful music has been sadly neglected in the schools and colleges." Mahatmaji replied:

Yes, it has, I have always said so.

Srijut Mahadeo Desai who was present throughout our conversation

[1] The interview between Gandhiji and Roy, an exponent of Indian music and inmate of the Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, took place at the Sassoon Hosptial. The extract given here is from a report which was also reproduced in *The Hindu*, 7-2-1924, and later, featured in Roy's book *Among the Great*, Jaico Publishing House, Bombay. According to the author, Gandhiji had revised the reports of the talks and authorized him to publish them in the book.

corroborated this. “I am glad to hear you say so. Because I have been all along under the impression that you would be against all arts such as music.”

I ! Against music! Well, I know, I know. . . There are so many superstitions rife about me that it has become now almost impossible for me to overtake those who have set them afloat. As a result, my friends only smile at me when I try to lay any claim to being an artist myself.

“I am glad to hear this; because I have been given to understand that in your philosophy of life, which is one of unqualified asceticism, arts like music can hardly aspire to any place.” Mahatmaji emphatically said:

But I maintain that asceticism is the greatest art in life.

“What I however meant by art just now is a somewhat different activity such as music or painting or sculpture for the matter of that. And I had thought that you would be rather opposed to them than otherwise.” Mahatma said:

I, opposed to arts like music! Why, I cannot even conceive of an evolution of the religious life of India without music. I do say I am a lover of music as well as the other arts. Only, my values may be different from the accepted ones, that’s all. I am doubtless against much that passes for art in these days. I do not for instance call that art which demands an intimate knowledge of its technique for its appreciation. If you go to the Satyagraha Ashram, you will find the walls bare. And my friends object to this. I admit I don’t have paintings on the walls of my Ashram. But that is because I think that the walls are meant for sheltering us, and not because I am opposed to art as such. For have I not gazed and gazed at the wonderful vault of the starry sky—hardly ever tiring of the same? And I do say that I can never conceive of any painting superior to the star-studded sky in its satisfying effect on the mind. It has bewildered me, mystified me —sent me into the most wonderful ecstatic thrills imaginable. Side by side with this wondrous mystery of God’s artistic handiwork, does not that of man appear to be the merest tinsel?

I said: “ I agree with you when you say that Nature is a great artist, as also when you inveigh against the regrettable prostitution of art, which unhappily so often passes for art. I differ also from those artists who have acquired the habit of saying that art is even greater than life.”

Exactly. Life is and must always be greater than all the arts put together. I go still further. For I say that he is the greatest artist who leads the best life. For what is art without the background and setting of a worthy life? An art is to be valued only when it ennobles life. I object emphatically only when people say that art is everything, that it does

not matter even if life has to be held subservient to its (i.e., art's) fulfilment. I have then to say that my values are different, that is all. But fancy people saying that I am opposed to all arts on that account !

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-2-1924

6. INTERVIEW TO " YUGA DHARMA"[1]

[Before *February 5, 1924*]

Dr. Sumant enquired of Mahatmaji how it was that such a disease could attack a man like him who was self-restricted *sanyams*. Mahatmaji replied that though he was moderate in food for many year, he had not yet been abstemious as he ought to have been. Mahatmaji said:

I am sure that my body does not need much food. In fact, very little food is required when one has to undergo mental work and a good deal of concentration. Perhaps my weight might have been decreased by being abstemious. But my body would have been surely improved.

Mahatmaji was of opinion that there was no necessity of pulse as food for those who were used to brain work. As regards the amelioration of the depressed classes, Mahatmaji expressed the necessity of working in the villages by encamping there. He did not at all believe the rumour that there was a depression in the workers of Gujarat.

In a further conversation Mahatmaji said:

I have plunged into politics simply in search of Truth. When I went to jail, I had fixed my programme for full six years. I have dictated a little about South Africa to Indulal, but my thoughts about the *Gita* are still to be dictated and I want to show how to epitomize the *Mahabharata*. I also think of writing my autobiography. Still I have to do much.

On Dr. Sumant commenting on the new Labour Government in England by saying that there were still people who hoped to get sweets from the Labour Government, Mahatmaji answered with a rather grave voice:

People do not leave off the hope of getting help from outside. Who can give swaraj? We have to take it. What about the depressed classes and what about solving the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity? What help can the Labour Government give you as regards these questions? Your future lies in your own hands. If you get sweet-balls, they will be made of stones.

The Hindu, 18-2-1924

[1] Dr. Sumant Mehta, editor of the Gujarati magazine published from Ahmedabad, called on Gandhiji at the Sassoon Hospital before release.

7. ANSWERS TO DREW PEARSON'S QUESTIONS[1]

[After *February 5, 1924*][2]

Mr. Gandhi is recuperating in the mountain air of Poona, just a few miles from Yeravda prison in which two years of confinement so broke his health that unconditional release by the British Government was necessary.

His first statement, when interviewed, was:

I shall resume my activities for the attainment of swaraj just as soon as I am restored to complete health.

What course would he take? He answered quietly:

I still believe it possible for India to remain within the British Empire. I still put implicit faith in non-violence, which, if strictly followed by India, will invoke the best in the British people. My hope for the attainment of swaraj by non-violence is based upon an immutable belief in the goodness which exists deep down in all human nature.

I have always maintained that India had no quarrel with the

[1] In a letter of March 26, 1924 from New York, to Devdas Gandhi, Drew Pearson threw light on the manner in which the script of the "interview" was prepared for release. Enclosing "the copy of the interview with father which you so kindly cabled me recently," Pearson went on to write, "You will note that the editor has taken certain privileges with the interview by dating it as cabled from India. My original article explains that the interview was cabled by you. The interview appeared in about 50 papers in the United States, the list of which I enclose, together with 8 papers in Australia and New Zealand, 3 in Japan and China, 4 in Canada and was sent to other papers in Brazil, Argentine, Chile, Mexico, Cuba, South Africa and Hawaii. You will note that I have enlarged a little bit on your skeletonized cable. In such places where you referred to the fact that your father's views do not change, I looked up his views as recorded in speeches and clippings from *Young India* and used such as a basis for enlarging the interview. I did this rather in a hurry and there was not time for your approval, but I trust it will be satisfactory for you." Acknowledging Devdas Gandhi's letter of March 7, Pearson wrote again on April 15, thanking him for his "trouble and thoughtfulness in telegraphing the message from your father. As I told you in an earlier letter, it was published widely all over the United States. I trust your father did not object to my quoting from his past speeches and writings. . . The telegram arrived in its original form without censorship."

Earlier, Drew Pearson had sought Sir George Lloyd's permission to visit Gandhiji in jail, which was refused. For an account of his interview with the Gover-nor, *vide* Appendix "Drew Pearson's Interview with Sir George Lloyd", 22-11-1923.

[2] The answers were obviously given after Gandhiji's release on this date.

English. Jesus denounced the wickedness of the Scribes and Pharisees, but he did not hate them. So we need not hate Englishmen, though we hate the system they have established. They have given India a system based upon force, by which they can feel secure only in the shadow of their forts and guns. We Indians, in turn, hope by our conduct to demonstrate to every Englishman that he is as safe in the remotest corner of India as he professes to feel behind the machine gun.

What do yon mean by swaraj?

A full partnership for India with other parts of the Empire, just the same as Canada, South Africa and Australia enjoy. Nor shall we be satisfied until we obtain full citizens' rights throughout the British Dominions for all the King's subjects, irrespective of caste, colour or creed.

I asked Mr. Gandhi if he still believed in boycotting the Councils.

Yes, I still believe that we should not participate in the Councils until Britain suffers a change of heart and acts squarely with us. However, I do not wish to express any opinion on the action of the Nationalist party in participating in the Councils, until I have talked with the leaders. This I have already started to do.

When asked if imprisonment had changed his views on politics and religion, Mr. Gandhi replied:

They have undergone no change, but have been confirmed by two years of solitude and introspection. I have been experimenting with myself and friends by introducing religion into politics, and now I believe they cannot be divorced. Let me explain what I mean by religion. It is not Hinduism, which I prize most highly, but the religion which transcends Hinduism—the basic truth which underlies all the religions of the world. It is the struggle for truth—for self-expression. I call it the truth—force the permanent element in human nature, constantly struggling to find itself, to know its Maker. This is religion.

I believe that politics cannot be divorced from religion. My politics can be summed up in two words—non-violent non-co-operation. And the roots of non-co-operation are buried in the religions of the world. Christ refused to co-operate with the Scribes and Pharisees. Buddha fearlessly refused to co-operate with the arrogant priesthood of his day. Mahomed, Confucius, most of our great prophets have been non-co-operators. I simply and humbly follow in their footsteps.

Non-co-operation means nothing less than training in self

sacrifice. And this again was practiced by the great teachers of the world. Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from indomitable will. I have ventured to place before India the ancient law of self-sacrifice-the obedience to the strength of the spirit.

By non-violence I do not mean cowardice. I do believe that, where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence. But I believe that forgiveness adorns a soldier. And so I am not pleading for India to practise non-violence because she is weak, but because she is conscious of her power and strength. The *rishis,* who discovered the law of non-violence, were greater geniuses than Newton. Having themselves known the use of arms, they realized their uselessness and taught a weary world that its salvation lay not through violence, but through non-violence.

Therefore, I respectfully invite Americans to study carefully the Indian National Movement and they will therein find an effective substitute for war.

Before his imprisonment Mr. Gandhi was a most severe critic of modern civilization and I asked if his views had suffered any change.

They remain unchanged. My opinion of modern civilization is that it is a worship of materialism, resulting in the exploitation of the weak by the strong. American wealth has become the standard. The United States is the envy of all other nations. Meanwhile, moral growth has become stunted and progress measured in pounds, shillings and pence.

This land of ours, we are told, was once the abode of the gods. But it is not possible to conceive of gods inhabiting a land which is made hideous by the smoke and din of mill chimneys and factories, and whose roadways are traversed by rushing engines, dragging cars crowded with men who know not for the most part what they are after, do not care, and whose tempers do not improve by being uncomfortably packed together like sardines in boxes. Factories have risen on the corpses of men, women and children to create what we call civilization.

When asked for his opinion on the action of the Supreme Court in barring Indians from United States citizenship, Mr. Gandhi replied that he deplored the decision, and considered it due to American ignorance of India's civilization and its possibilities.

Finally, when reminded of the fact that all India worshipped him as a "saint", that thousands of children were being named "Gandhidas", that wreaths were daily

freshened over his pictures in millions of homes throughout India, Mr. Gandhi replied simply:

I think that word "saint" should be ruled out of present life. It is too sacred a word to be lightly applied to anybody, much less to one like myself, who claims only to be a humble searcher after Truth.[1]

From a newspaper cutting: S.N. 8956

8. MESSAGE TO GUJARAT VIDYAPITH

[On or before *February 6, 1924*][2]

The message was to the effect that the release from imprisonment was no cause for rejoicing but rather for greater humility. The burden of responsibility would be now heavier than ever to bear, and they must prepare themselves and get ready to be strong enough to bear it when the time came.

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-2-1924

9. TELEGRAM TO LAJPAT RAI[3]

POONA,
[On or before *February 6, 1924*]

THANKS I WILL NOT TROUBLE YOU WHILE YOU ARE ILL. WRITING.[4]

From a photostat: S.N. 8264

10. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

POONA,
[Before *February 7, 1924*]

Interviewed by Mr. S. A. Brelvi, joint editor of *The Bombay Chronicle*, Mahatma Gandhi said that he had been preparing in his mind a message to his countrymen on his release. The message would take the form of a letter addressed to the

[1] *Vide* "Neither a Saint nor a Politician", 12-5-1920.

[2] This was in reply to Lajpat Rai's telegram of February 6, 1924, which read: "Returned Lahore this morning. Not quite well. Prakasam wires you want me Poona. Wire your wishes."

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Lajpat Rai", 8-2-1924.

[4] This was conveyed by C. F. Andrews to the members of the Sabarmati Ashram and the Gujarat Vidyapith on February 6. For Andrew's statement on Gandhiji's release, *vide* Appendix "Andrews' Statement on Gandhiji's Release", 7-2-1924.

President of the Congress, Maulana Mahohmed Ali, just as, soon after his conviction, he had wished to speak to his countrymen through a letter addressed to the then President, Hakim Ajmal Khan Saheb. The letter to the Hakim Saheb, however, never reached him, because the Government, of Bombay asked the Mahatma to alter and amend certain passages which he refused to do. The Mahatma intended to take the earliest opportunity of publishing that letter.

He was grieved to find, he said, that the decision of the Government to release him was based on considerations of his health. He would be very glad to believe that his release indicated a change in the attitude of Government towards him and his activities and a realization on their part that his preaching of non-violence was not a cover for violence as was represented by his misguided critics. He would heartily welcome any indication that the Government had grasped the fact that non-violence was the essence of the non-co-operation movement.

The Hindu, 8-2-1924

11. LETTER TO MAHOMED ALI[1]

SASSOON HOSPITAL,
POONA,
February 7, 1924

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

I send you as President of the Congress a few words which I know our countrymen expect from me on my sudden release. I am sorry that the Government have prematurely released me on account of my illness. Such a release can bring me no joy, for I hold that the illness of a prisoner affords no ground for his release.

I would be guilty of ungratefulness if I did not tell you, and through you the whole public, that both the jail and the hospital authorities have been all attention during my illness. Col. Murray, the Superintendent of the Yeravda Prison, as soon as he suspected that my illness was at all serious, invited Col. Maddock to assist him and I am sure that the promptest measures were taken by him to secure for me the best treatment possible. I could not have been removed to the David and Sassoon Hospitals a moment earlier. Col. Maddock and his staff have treated me with the utmost attention and kindness. I may not omit the nurses who have surrounded me with sisterly care. Though it is now open to me to leave this hospital, knowing that I can get no better treatment anywhere else, with Col. Maddock's kind permission I have decided to remain under his care till the wound is healed and no

[1] This was also published in *The Bombay Chronicle* and *The Hindu*. 8-2-1924.

further medical treatment is necessary.

The public will easily understand that for some time to come I shall be quite unfit for active work, and those who are interested in my speedy return to active life will hasten it by postponing their natural desire to see me. I am unfit and shall be so for some weeks perhaps to see a number of visitors. I shall better appreciate the affection of friends if they will devote greater time and attention to such national work as they may be engaged in and especially to hand-spinning.

My release has brought me no relief. Whereas before release I was free from responsibility save that of conforming to jail discipline and trying to qualify myself for more efficient service, I am now overwhelmed with a sense of responsibility I am ill-fitted to discharge. Telegrams of congratulations have been pouring in upon me. They have but added to the many proofs I have received of the affection of our countrymen for me. It naturally pleases and comforts me. Many telegrams, however, betray hopes of results from my service which stagger me. The thought of my utter incapacity to cope with the work before me humbles my pride.

Though I know very little of the present situation in the country, I know sufficient to enable me to see that, perplexing as the national problems were at the time of the Bardoli resolutions, they are far more perplexing today. It is clear that, without unity between Hindus, Mahomadans, Sikhs, Parsis and Christians and other Indians, all talk of swaraj is idle. This unity which I fondly believed, in 1922, had been nearly achieved has, so far as Hindus and Mussalmans are concerned, I observe, suffered a severe check. Mutual trust has given place to distrust. An indissoluble bond between the various com-munities must be established if we are to win freedom. Will the thanks giving of the nation over my release be turned into a solid unity between the communities? That will restore me to health far quicker than any medical treatment or rest-cure. When I heard in the jail of the tension between Hindus and Mussalmans in certain places, my heart sank within me. The rest I am advised to have will be no rest with the burden of disunion preying upon me. I ask all those who cherish love towards me to utilize it in furtherance of the union we all desire. I know that the task is difficult. But nothing is difficult if we have a living faith in God. Let us realize out own weakness and approach Him and He will surely help. It is weakness which breeds fear and fear breeds distrust Let us both shed our fear, but I know that, even if *one* of us will cease

to fear, we shall cease to quarrel. Nay, I say that your tenure of office will be judged solely by what you can do in the cause of union. I know that we love each other as brothers. I ask you, therefore, to share my anxiety and help me to go through the period of illness with a lighter heart.

If we could but visualize the growing pauperism of the land and realize that the spinning-wheel is the only remedy for the disease, the wheel will leave us little leisure for fighting. I had during the last two years ample time and solitude for hard thinking. It made me a firmer believer than ever in the efficacy of the Bardoli programme and, therefore, in the unity between the races, the charkha, the removal of untouchability and the application of non-violence in thought, word and deed to out methods as indispensable for swaraj. If we faithfully and fully carry out this programme, we need never resort to civil disobedience and I should hope that it will never be necessary. But I must state that my thinking prayerfully and in solitude has not weakened my belief in the efficiency and righteousness of civil disobedience. I hold it, as never before, to be a man's or a nation's right and duty when its vital being is in jeopardy. I am convinced that it is attended with less danger than war and, whilst the former, when successful, benefits both the resister and the wrongdoer, the latter harms both the victor and the vanquished.

You will not expect me to express any opinion on the vexed question of return by Congressmen to the Legislative Councils and Assembly. Though I have not in any way altered my opinion about the boycott of Councils, Law Courts and Government Schools, I have no data for coming to a judgment upon the alterations made at Delhi, and I do not propose to express any opinion until I have had the opportunity of discussing the question with our illustrious country-men who have felt called upon, in the interest of the country, to advise removal of the boycott of legislative bodies.

In conclusion, may I, through you thank all the very numerous senders of congratulatory messages. It is not possible for me personally to acknowledge each message. It has gladdened my heart to see among the messages many from our Moderate friends. I have, and non-co-operators can have, no quarrel with them. They too are well-wishers of their country and serve to the best of their lights. If we consider them to be in the wrong, we can hope to win them over only by friendliness and patient reasoning, never by abusing. Indeed, we want to regard

Englishmen too as our friends and not misunderstand them by treating them as our enemies. And if we are today engaged in a struggle against the British Government, it is against the system for which it stands and not against Englishmen who are administering the system. I know that many of us have failed to understand and always bear in mind the distinction and, in so far as we have failed, we have harmed our cause.

I am,
Your sincere friend and brother,

Young India, 14-2-1924

12. LETTER TO PRANJIVAN MEHTA

SASSOON HOSPITAL
POONA,
Maha Sud 2 [*February 7, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI PRANJIVAN,

I thought of you constantly. Hardly a day passed in the jail when I did not remember you. Having protested to the Government on the issue of my correspondence and stopped writing letters altogether, how could I make an exception in your case and write to you? Today is the third day since my release. There is some strength in my hand and the very first letter I am writing is to you.

As we are now both unwell, who should enquire about whom? My health is improving. The wound has not healed completely. The doctor thinks at present that it will take about a week to heal. it seems I shall have to pass this whole month here. What to do after that I shall decide only then.

Revashankarbhai and the others who had been to see you tell me that you are much better now. Write to me yourself only if you can write letters with your own hand, otherwise dictate to someone. I shall certainly like seeing you when I am well. Do you think your health will permit your coming?

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From photostat of the gujarati: G. N. 131

[1] The letter was written on the third day after Gandhiji's release on February 5.

13. *LETTER TO LAJPAT RAI*[1]

SASSOON HOSPITAL,
February 8 [*1924*]

DEAR LALAJI,

I had promised to write to you, but could not until now. My hand is still weak. I wanted to dictate the letter, but when I was ready to do so, none of my assistants was available.

I do not remember having told Shri Prakasam that you should come down to Poona and see me. But then I do much want to see you at the earliest opportunity and have a long chat with you about Hindu-Muslim unity, Hindu-Sikh unity, the Councils, the untouch-ables, and other problems. But this is possible only when you are perfectly well and I am able to bear the strain of a fairly long conver-sation. But how can I ask you to take the trouble of coming over here if your health is not quite all right or if it cannot stand the long journey? Moreover, I want you to have at your disposal full three days when you come here. Maybe, we may have to carry on our talks in separate instalments. So far as I am concerned, I should, I think, be fit enough by next Wednesday unless the wound is hiding treacherous stitches or any other foreign matter.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 17-2-1924

[1] Part of this letter, which is likely to have been written in English, was published in *The Hindu,* 12-2-1924. It was in reply to a telegram of February 7 from Lajpat Rai, reading: "Will be fit to travel few days. Will come immediately. Meantime awaiting your letter. Your health greatest importance."

14. TELEGRAM TO LAJPAT RAI[1]

POONA,
February 12, 1924

THANK YOU EIGHTEENTH WILL SUIT ME ADMIRABLY.

GANDHI

From photostat: S. N. 8325

15. LETTER TO MAHOMED YAKUB

[*February 12, 1924*][2]

Mahatma Gandhi has written to Mr. Mahomed Yakub requesting him to desist from moving in the Assembly[3] to recommend the Nobel Peace Prize to him, his efforts in the cause of world peace being their own prize. Any recognition by Europe of the doctrine of non-violence would be welcome to Mahatmaji, but the value of such recognition would be lost if the prize is not spontaneously offered, but is to be awarded through extraneous recommendation. Moreover, the idea of his name being put forward in competition with that of a countryman of his is extremely distasteful to Mahatmaji.[4]

The Hindu, 14-2-1924

[1] Lajpat Rai had telegraphed Gandhiji on February 12, 1924,: "Thanks. Can start fourteenth reaching eighteenth. Wire wishes." Lajpat Rai replied to this stating that he would reach Poona on February 17 and see Gandhiji the following day. S.N. 8326.

[2] As given in Mahomed Yakub's reply dated February 17.

[3] Central Legislative Assembly of which he was a member

[4] Mahomed Yakub in his reply agreed to respect Gandhiji's wish, and added: "The contents of your letter are so noble that I would like to have them placed on the record of the Assembly." S.N. 8334

16. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

Wednesday [*February 13, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI NARAHARI,

Mahadev told me today about your mind being at peace. I often feel tempted to wire, but I control myself. I do not want to be impatient. You and I, all of us, are in the hands of God. We should always obey the dictates of our conscience and think no more. Why should we then worry about the result? I only want to be assured that Manibehn[2] is not at all worried and that she understands the significance of your penance.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9044

17. ANTI-INDIAN CAMPAIGN IN SOUTH AFRICA[3]

February 14, 1924]

As one expected to understand the situation created in South Africa by the anti-Asiatic movement now going on there, and especially the Class Areas Bill now under consideration by the Union Parliament, I deem it my duty to place my opinion on the situation before the public.

The anti-Asiatic agitation on the part of Europeans in South Africa is no new thing. It is almost as old as the first settlement of unindentured Indians in South Africa, and is principally due to trade jealousy on the part of white retail traders. As in other parts of the world so in South Africa, interested men, if they sufficiently persist, find no difficulty in gathering the support round them of those who are not so interested, but who do not think for themselves. The present agitation, I remember, was begun as early as 1921[4], and the Class

[1] The Wednesday following the commencement of addressee's fast to which the letter alludes fell on this date.

[2] Addressee's wife

[3] This statement was published generally in the Press.

[4] *Vide* "Notes", 6-4-1921.

Areas Bill is, no doubt, one result of that agitation.

Before dealing with the nature and effect of the Bill, It is necessary to point out that it is in breach of the compromise of 1914 arrived at between the Union Government and the Indian community of South Africa.[1] But it was a compromise to which both the Indian Government and the Imperial Government were as much party as the Union Government and the Indian community, because the compromise was arrived at with the knowledge and concurrence of the Imperial the and Indian Governments. The latter had even sent Sir Benjamin Robertson as a representative, technically to watch the course of the Commission that was appointed by the Union Government to inquire into the Indian position, but in reality to negotiate a settlement. The main terms of the compromise were settled before Sir Benjamin Robertson, who represented the Indian Government, returned to India.

In accordance with that compromise, no further anti-Asiatic legislation was to be passed by the Union Government. The understannding at the time was that the legal position of the Indian would be gradually improved and that the then existing anti-Asiatic legislation would, in time to come, be repealed. The contrary has, however, happened. The public may remember that the first attempt to break the spirit of the compromise was made when, in the Transvaal, an attempt was made to enforce the existing legislation adversely to the Indians and contrary to the practice that prevailed at the time of the compromise. The Class Areas bill, however, goes much further in restricting Indian liberty.

Whatever may be the other implications of the compromise, this much cannot be disputed by any party, that the settlement of 1914 pledged the Union Government not to put further restrictions upon the Indian liberty, and apart from the general powers of disallowance vested in His Majesty under the Letter of Instructions addressed to the Governor-General of South Africa, the Imperial Government if they would be true to their trust are bound, at any cost, to insist upon the observance of the terms of the compromise referred to by me.

We in India may not ignore the difficulties of the Union Government which is dependent for its existence solely upon the will of the Europeans of South Africa expressed through their elected representatives to the exclusion of Indians and the natives of the soil.

[1] *Vide* "The End of the Struggle", 8-7-1914.

This unwarranted exclusion is the original flaw in the South African constitution, as it is to be found in the constitution of most of the self-governing Colonies which have their native populations and Indian populations. As the Imperial Government permitted the flaw, it is in honour bound to prevent untoward results arising from it. South Africa and Kenya will presently show what moral worth there is in the Imperial system. Pressure of public opinion may, and probably will, bring about temporary relief in both the places; but it will be only temporary. It can merely postpone the final act in the tragedy unless some unforeseen radical change, either in England or in India, takes place.

And now for the Bill itself. Unlike the Natal Municipal Franchise Bill, which happily the Union Governor-General has in effect vetoed and which applied only to Natal, the Class Areas Bill is designed to apply to all the four[1] provinces. It enables the Government to segregate all the domiciled Indians and other Asiatics alike for residence and trade. It is, therefore, an extension, in a modified manner, of the location system[2] devised as early as 1885 by the late Transvaal Government.

Let me say in a few words what the segregation may mean. The Indian Location in Pretoria, where, in spit of the Law of 1885, not a single Indian has been as yet compelled to remove, is situated far away from the town itself and entirely outside the beat of the buyer, whether English, Dutch or native. The only trade possible in such Locations is trade among themselves. Segregation, therefore, carried out to the full means nothing less than compulsory repatriation without any compensation. It is true that the Bill appears to preserve to a certain extent the existing rights. But that reservation is of little consequence to the Indian settlers. I do not wish to burden this note by citing illustrations from my South African experience to show how such reservations have, in practice, proved almost useless.

Finally, let it be remembered that, when Indian emigration to South Africa was unrestricted, the fear of the Europeans was expressed to be that South Africa might be swamped by India's millions. All the South African statesmen then used to say that South Africa could easily digest a small Indian population and could even give it a liberal

[1] The source has "poor", evidently a misprint.

[2] Indians and natives in South Africa were forced to reside in certain areas which were known as "Locations".

treatment, but that the European settlers could never rest content so long as the possibility of swamping remained. Now that the so-calledmessage to gujarat vidyapith message to gujarat vidyapith fear of swamping has been removed, practically since 1897, the cry is raised for segregation; and, if that is accomplished, the next step will be compulsory repartiation. If the segregated Indians do not voluntarily retire, the fact is that the more accommodating the European settlers of South Africa find the Imperial trustees to be, the more grasping they become in their anti-Asiatic demands.

Young India, 21-2-1924

18. TELEGRAM TO LAJPAT RAI[1]

[POONA,
On or after *February 15, 1924*]

SORRY YOU HAVE FEVER AGAIN. HOPE YOU WILL BE SOON FREE. NO HURRY ABOUT COMING SUGGEST YOUR COMING POONA FOR REST.

From a photostat: S. N. 8333

19. TELEGRAM TO C. R. DAS[2]

[POONA,
On or after *February 19, 1924*]

WILL BE DELIGHTED MEET FRIENDS NAMED. WILL HOLD SILENCE PACT TILL MEETING.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S. N. 8353

[1] This was in reply to Lajpat Rai's telegram of February 15, 1924, which read: "Had fever yesterday. Could not start. Will wire again."

[2] This was in reply to C. R. Das's telegram of February 19, 1924, which read: "Motilal and I coming together. Have wired him to fix date. Want you hear me before you advise Hindu-Muslim pact. Suggest meeting of Motilal myself Lajpat and Malaviya in your presence."

20. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

Thursday [*February 21, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI NARAHARI,

I am glad to know that your fast is over. Bhai Lakshmidas, Ramji and Gangabehn are sitting here as I write this letter. The excitement of the fast while it is in progress keeps up our spirit, but the period following its end is a difficult time. Be careful in your food. For the present take liquid food only. Start taking chapatis and other things gradually. I am sure you will be patient in your attitude towards others. However, I caution you again since you have had difficulties in the past. After the fast is over, the mind becomes restless and it is difficult to control it. More when you come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9045.

21. TELEGRAM TO DR. SATYAPAL[2]

[On or after *February 23, 1924*]

DR. SATYAPAL[3]

DISTRESSED OVER NEWS MORE BECAUSE HELPLESS AND UNABLE ADVISE . WITHOUT FULL STUDY OF WHICH SICKNESS RENDERS ME INCAPABLE.

From a photostat: S. N. 9916

[1] Thursday' here is evidently of the week following February 13, the date of Gandhiji's previous letter, written when the fast was on.

[2] This was in reply to Dr. Satyapal's telegram received on February 23, 1924, which read: "Situation Jaiton serious. Jatha fired at. Kitchlew and Gidwani arrested. Several died many wounded. Exact number unknown. Reporters not allowed. Congress Committee sent ambulance corps already. They not permitted to work. Working Committee passed resolutions to sent another corps. Administrator-General Nabha wired for permission corps to relieve suffering. Shiromani Committee assured all possible help. Wire further instructions." The telegram was followed by a letter of the same date. written earlier; *vide* Appendix "Letter from Dr. Satyapal", 23-2-1924.

[3] Congress leader of the Punjab.

22. TELEGRAM TO MAHOMED ALI [1]

POONA,
[On or after *February 24, 1924*]

NOT INFORMED OR FIT ENOUGH GUIDE DELIBERATIONS COMMITTEE.

From a photostat: S. N. 8371

23. OPEN LETTER TO AKALIS [2]

February 25, 1924

DEAR COUNTRYMEN,

It was with great distress that I heard about the shooting of an Akali Jatha on the orders of the Adminstrator of the Nabha State, resulting in several members being killed and many more wounded.[3] In reply to telegrams, beyond sending a message of sympathy, I had no wish to say or do anything more. It is contrary to the wish of Col. Maddock, who has covered me with every form of kindness during my illness, that I am undertaking a moderate amount of activity in the shape of informing myself of the prevailing situation in the country. The following telegram just received from Zira, "Come unminding health condition soon— Akali Jatha"'compels me to say something in connection with the tragedy just mentioned. I do not happen to know the sender of the telegram, but had it been at all possible for me, I would certainly have gone down in reply to the message. The wound being yet unhealed, any such journey is a physical impossibility. I am, therefore, doing the next best thing. I need hardly assure the Akali Sikhs of my sympathy in the loss of so many brave men and many more being wounded. Without full facts before me, I am unable to say whether the march of a large number of men in order to pay devotion to the shrine of Gangsar at Jaiton was or was not justified. But I would

[1] This was in reply to Mahomed Ali's telegram of February 24, 1924: "If you consider necessary please send messages with instructions regarding situation recently created to Delhi. Working Committee meeting 26th." S.N. 8371.

[2] This was published generally in the Press

ask the Akali Sikhs not to send any more Jathas without further deliberation and consultation with those leaders outside the Sikh community who have hitherto been giving them advice. It would be well to stop and watch developments arising out of the tragedy. One of the telegrams received by me tells me that the Jatha was and remained throughout strictly non-violent. You have, from the very commencement, claimed that your movement is perfectly non-violent and religious. I would like every one of us to understand all the implications of non-violence.

I am not unaware of the fact that non-violence is not your final creed. It is, therefore, doubly incumbent upon you to guard against any violence in thought or word creeping in the movement. Over 25 years of the practice of non-violence in the political field has shown me as clearly as daylight that, in every act of ours, we have to watch our thoughts and words in connection with the movement in which we may be engaged. Non-violence is impossible without deep humility and the strictest regard for truth and, if such non-violence has been possible in connection with movements not termed religious, how much easier it should be with those like you who are conducting a strictly religious movement?

I have deemed it necessary to reiterate what I used to say about non-violence before my imprisonment, because I have observed, during my brief study of the events of the past years, that we who claim to be engaged in a non-violent movement have not fully in thought and speech conformed to out creed during the past two years, as we certainly did not during the previous years. I am sorry to have to say that what I wrote about ourselves in the pages of *Young India* during the three months prior to my arrest holds truer today than it did then.

I have not the slightest doubt in my mind that. had we practiced non-violence in the sense I mean during all these five years, we would not only have achieved our common goal, but there would be today no differences and quarrels between Hindus and Mussal-mans. In drawing your attention, therefore, to the necessity of non-violence in your special struggle about your Gurdwaras, I do not wish to be understood to mean that there has been greater disregard of the essentials of non-violence amongst you than amongst the other communities.

But a word of caution is more necessary in your case, because

you have never flagged. You have been incessantly active in the pursuit of your special goal. I would, therefore, have you to search yourselves and, if you find that you have not been true to the standard you set before yourselves, to cease further demonstration for the time being and perform the necessary cleansing process before beginning anew; and I doubt not that your effort will be crowned with success.

I remain,

Yours friend and servant,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10055; also *Young India*, 28-2-1924

24. TELEGRAM TO DAS[1]

[On or after *February 25, 1924*]

PHYSICALLY IMPOSSIBLE WOUND UNHEALED. PRAY WIRE SITUATION.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8376

25. MY JAIL EXPERIENCES [2]

February 26, 1924

It was my intention to publish all the important correspondence I had with the authorities during my incarceration as part of my jail experiences, which I intend to write out if health and time permit. But it is not possible for me to do so for some time to come. Meanwhile, friends have urged me to publish the correspondence without delay. I appreciate the force of their reasoning, and, therefore, present the readers of *Young India* with a portion of it this week. The main part of the contention raised in the letter[3] to Hakimji stands good even in

[1] This was in reply to addressee's telegram of February 25, 1924, from Zira which read: "Come unminding health condition soon.—Akali Jatha" The identity of Das is not known. *Vide* also "Statement on Open Letter to Akalis", 28-2-1924.

[2] This was Gandhiji's prefatory note to the correspondence which, as a prisoner, he had carried on with the Yeravda Jail authorities from April 1922 onwards.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Hakim Ajmal Khan", 14-4-1922.

the light of subsequent experience. But, in justice to the Jail officials, I must add that, so far as my physical comfort was concerned, progressively better facilities were given to me. Mr. Banker, much to my joy, was restored to me. The marking line referred to in the first letter to Hakimji was done away with, and both of us had a run of the whole yard. On Mr. Banker's discharge, without any request on my part, the then Superintendent, Major Jones, obtained the Govern-ment's permission to send Mr. Manser Ali Sokta to me as a companion, a consideration which I very greatly esteemed. For, Mr., Manser Ali Sokta was not only a valuable companion, but was also an ideal Urdu teacher for me. Soon after, Mr. Indulal Yagnik came and added to our pleasure. Major Jones the transferred us three to the European ward where we had superior accommodation and not a bad garden in front of us. On Mr. Manser Ali Sokta's discharge, Major Jones's successor, Col. Murray, obtained the Government's permission to put Mr. Abdul Gani with me as a companion who, in addition to giving Mr. Yagnik and myself joy, replaced Mr, Manser Ali Sokta as my Urdu teacher and took great pains in order to improve my Urdu Calligraphy. Had my sickness not interrupted the course, he would have made of me a passable Urdu scholar. so far, therefore, as my physical comforts were concerned, both the Government and the Jail officials did all that could possibly be expected to make me happy. And if I suffered from illness now and then, it is my firm belief that neither the Government nor the Jail authorities could in any way be blamed. I was allowed to choose my own diet and both Major Jones and Col. Murray, as also in this respect Col. Dalziel, who preceded Major Jones, strictly respected all my scruples about diet. The European jailers too were most attentive and courteous. I cannot recall a single occasion when they can be said to have unduly interfered with me. And even whilst I was subjected to ordinary jail inspection, to which I cheerfully submitted, they carried it out considerately and even apologetically I. I entertain high regard for both Major Jones and Col. Murray as men. They never let me feel that I was a prisoner.

Subject to what I have said about the kindness of officials, I am unable to revise the estimate I gave in Hakimji's letter about the soulless policy of the Government regarding political prisoners. All I have said in that letter was confirmed by later experience. For proof of this statement the reader must wait till I am able to write out my experiences. My purpose just now is to avoid any the least possibility of the correspondence being so interpreted as to cast any reflection

upon the Jail officials or, for that matter, even upon the Government, so far as my physical well-being was concerned.

I must not close this note without expressing my deep gratitude to the convict warders who were placed in charge of us. Instead of acting as supervisors, they rendered me and all my companions every assistance. They would not allow us to do any labour in the shape of cleaning the cells, etc. I shall have to say more about them in my experiences, but I cannot restrain myself against mentioning the name of Gangappa. He became a most efficient nurse to me. His scrupulous regard to every detail, his always anticipating every want of mine, his readiness to serve me at all hours of the night, his loving nature, his strict honesty and his general observance of the Jail rules and the Jail discipline commanded my admiration. I wonder how society can punish a man capable of showing such lofty character and how a Government can keep such a man in prison. Gangappa is unlettered. He is not a political prisoner. He was convicted of murder, or some such crime. But I must not pursue this subject any further. I must postpone its consideration to a future date. I have mentioned Gangappa merely to pay my humble tribute to fellow-prisoners like him.

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 28-2-1924

26. STATEMENT ON OPEN LETTER TO AKALIS[1]

February 28, 1924

I have just read a paragraph in the news column of *The Bombay Chronicle* of the 28th February about the Jaiton tragedy in which it is suggested that my open letter to the Akali Sikhs is based on wrong information supplied to me and that "in this respect people mostly suspect Lala Lajpat Rai". In justice to Lalaji, I wish to state that, before he saw me, I had read all I could about the tragedy and that, when the telegram inviting me to go to the Punjab was received, I had made up my mind, before Lalaji had seen that telegram, that I should make some such statement as ultimately I did make. As the telegram asking me to come down and stop Akali Jathas was received from Zira and I did not know anybody there and as was anxious that the advice I

[1] *Vide* "Open Letter to Akalis", 25-2-1924.

tendered should reach the Akali Sikhs as early as possible, I adopted the method of the open letter. My letter was based purely on the information gleaned by me from the papers and the knowledge acquired by me after my release about the state of the spirit of non-violence in thought, word and deed in the country. Lalaji did see the letter and under his pressure I struck out a large number of passages which otherwise I would have retained and which were stronger than the final letter. Lalaji further pressed me to end the letter at the clause advising the Akali Sikhs not to send another Jatha before deliberation with non-Sikhs advisers, but as I felt that a general reference to the implications of non-violence at this moment was of vital importance, I was obliged respectfully to differ from Lalaji's advice and retained the passages regarding non-violence.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5212; also *The Hindu*, 29-2-1924

27. INTERVIEW TO SIND DEPUTATION

POONA,
February 28, 1924

A deputation consisting of Mr. Jairamdas Doulatram, Khazi Abdul Rehman, Seth Isserdas and Mr. R. K. Sidhwa waited upon Mahatma Gandhi this morning requesting him to come to Karachi to restore his health. Mahatmaji was lying in bed and received the deputation cheerfully.

Mr. Sidhwa acted as spokesman and said: "Your health will be immensely improved on the sea beach of Karachi where the weather is excellent." Mahatmaji replying said:

I would wish I could come to Karachi to gain health because I know Clifton is an excellent place, but I wish to remain in a central place so that friends would not find it inconvenient to see me from places far off. Hence I have decided to stay in Andheri[1] near the sea.

MR. SIDHWA: We look to your health first and those intending to see you could come even from thousands of miles. So you should come to Karachi. People are more anxious about you health.

It is true, friends could come to see me from any distance, but I don't want to trouble them. I had an invitation from Ceylon also and, although I have not seen Ceylon— I am told that it is a beautiful and

[1] A suburb of Bombay

lovely place for the convenience of visitors with whom I have to consult often, I have decided to remain near Bombay. I had once decided to live at Dadabhoy Naoroji's house and I was glad that I would be staying in the house of persons under whom I had learnt politics.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 4-3-1924

28. LETTER TO G. N. KANITKAR

POONA,
February 29, 1924

MY DEAR KANITKAR,

You are hatching before the hen has come to the roost. I have no idea when the autobiography will be commenced. If, however, it ever sees the light of day, as far as I am concerned, you shall have the right of translation. But I am afraid Kaka or Anandaswami will have the final say in the matter.[1] If you, therefore, want to take premature precaution, please write to one of them, or both.

Yours sincerely,
M. K GANDHI

GAJANAN N. KANITKAR
MANAGING TRUSTEE, S. R. PATHSHALA
CHINCHWAD

From the original: C. W. 956. Courtesy: G N. Kanitkar

29. LETTER TO D. V. GOKHALE

SASSOON HOSPITAL,

POONA,
February 29, 1924

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

I was pained to see a paragraph in the *Kesari* referring to what little I am doing to understand the dispute between the Moslem trustees and the Hindus concerned. I would like you, if you could,

[1] Kaka Kalelkar and Swami Anand were connected with *Navajivan* and *Young India*.

toprevent further reference to my work in connection with it. Any such publicity, in my opinion, lessens my usefulness for truce.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SH. D. V. GOKHALE
POONA

From a photostat: G. N. 5213

30. MESSAGE TO POONA MEETING[1]

POONA,
March 1, 1924

I wish the meeting every success. Had we developed enough strength, we could have secured Mr. Horniman's return long ago. The Government have sinned doubly, first in deporting him and secondly in not permitting him to return, but they have sinned because we were weak.

The Hindu, 3-3-1924

31. STATEMENT ON AKALI MOVEMENT

[POONA,]
March 4, 1924

If I am entirely satisfied as to the nature and implications of the present Akali movement and the methods adopted to gain the end, I should have no hesitation in throwing myself heart and soul into it and even in burying myself in the Punjab, if it became necessary in order to guide the movement. The satisfaction that I require is on the following:

(1) The strength of the Akalis.

(2) (a) A clear manifesto publicly stating the minimum, which I understand to be the performance of the *Akhand Path* ceremony in Gangsar Gurdwara, the Sikhs openly and sincerely declaring that it has no political end and that they do not desire,

[1] This was a meeting of citizens held under the presidentship of prof. R.P. Paranjpye to protest against the refusal of the British Government to issue B. G. Horniman a passport. Horniman had been deported in 1919. Gandhiji's message was read out by C. F. Andrews at the meeting which adopted a resolution holding Horniman's deportation illegal and demanding facilities for his return.

through the *Akhand Path* movemnet, in any shape or form, to carry on an agitation, directly or indirectly, for the restoration of the Nabha Maharaj[1]. The agitation which the Akalis intend to carry on in connection with such restoration will be on an independent footing and will be purely a separate movement.

(b) In connection with the movement for control of gurdwaras in every case of disputed control or possession, the matter should be referred to arbitration. In the case of historical gurdwaras, it will be assumed that all such gurdwaras must remain in the control of the S.G.P. Committee. But the question of fact whether a particular gurdwara is or is not historical will be a subject matter of arbitration, and the burden of proving that it is so will lie on the shoulders of the S.G.P. Committee.

With reference to all other gurdwaras, all the facts in dispute should be a subject matter of arbitration.

In the event of the party in possession of such gurdwaras declining to surrender control to the S.G.P. Committee or to refer the matter in dispute to arbitration., the Akalis would be free to take such direct action as is consistent with non-violence in the strictest sense of the term.

(3) Full assurance and, therefore, a document intended for publication signed by all the principal leaders or on behalf of the S.G.P.C., giving a description of the methods which will clearly set forth all the implications of non-violence. By the term I do not wish to convey that non-violence is to be regarded in the document referred to above as the final creed of the Sikhs, which I know it is not. but I do understand that their methods, so far as this Gurdwara movement is concerned, will be absolutely non-violent, that is to say, the Akalis will be non-violent in thought, word and deed in connection with all persons, whether Government officials, English and otherwise, or whether members of the public belonging to any denomination whatsoever, who may be regarded as opponents of the

[1] The Maharaj of Nabha abdicated in early 1923 and the Government of India took over the administration of the State. The reason apparently was the friction which had lately developed between Nabha and the neighbouring State of Patiala. The Shiromani Gurdwara Prabhandhak Committee, a body in charge of Sikh religious affairs, contended that the abdication was not voluntary and demanded that the Maharaja be restored to his throne. *Vide India in 1923-24*.

objects of the Akali movement. Absolute adherence to truth I regard as an integral part of any scheme of non-violence, whether it is temporary or permanent and whether it is restricted to persons or places. It, therefore, admits of no diplomacy, as we understand the term, and it rejects altogether the prevailing normal idea that it is legitimate to have surreptitious methods with regard to opponents. It follows that there is to be no secrecy.

(4) That the movement is neither anti-Hindu nor anti any other race or creed.

(5) That the S.G.P.C. has no desire for the establishment of Sikh Raj and, as a matter of fact, the Committee is purely a religious body and, therefore, as such can have no secular object or intention.

As to the restoration of Nabha Maharaja:

In my opinion, whatever the true facts may be, the Maharaj has by his writings made it practically impossible for his well-wishers to carry on an effective agitation for his restoration. If, however, he makes a public statement that all the writings were practically extorted from him and that he is quite willing and anxious that all the facts against him should be published and if he is prepared to face all the consequences of the agitation, viz., deprivation of titles, annuity, etc., and if all his allegations regarding duress can be proved, it is possible to carry on an effective and even successful agitation.

In any event, when the declaration of the kind mentioned is made by the Maharaja, the agitation should be an all-India agitation. The Akalis should merely assist in the observation of faith.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 3766 and 3767

32. LETTER TO SIKH FRIENDS

[POONA,]
March 4, 1924

DEAR FRIENDS,

I learnt through Punditji Motilal after you had gone that the S.G.P.C. was actually defending the accused in the matter of the prosecution of Akalis. I learnt, too, that a Hindu temple within the

precincts of the Golden Temple had been destroyed by the Akalis and that the latter took their stand upon religion. In your letter, which you have promised, I would like you please to deal with all these questions.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 3767

33. LETTER TO MAHOMED ALI

SASSOON HOSPITAL,
POONA,
March 5, 1924

DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

My whole heart goes out to you in your distress. Hayat has given me a painful account of Amina's illness.[1] I read in the paper, too, that you could not attend the Khilafat Conference in Sind --that fact by itself shows how serious the illness must be. God testes us in many ways. He wants to know how His creature acquits himself in the presence of calamities he would gladly avoid. I know how you will come out of the fire, whatever the result. Please comfort Amina on my behalf and tell her it is well with those who have their trust in God whether they remain on earth or whether they are taken away. I know that your brave wife is passing through the ordeal in a manner worthy of her.

I have read Reuter's account of the Khilafat resolution in the Turkish Assembly.[2] I know that the decision must cause deep grief and anxiety to you, the more so as domestic sorrow must have, for the time being, taken up most of your time, but I have always held that, whilst the future of everything rests in the hands of God, the future of Islam rests in the hands of the Mussalmans of India.

Yours ever,

M. K. GANDHI

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 11-3-1924

[1] H. M. Hayat, of Aligarh National University, wrote to Gandhiji on February 28. Amina, Mahomed Ali's daughter, passed away a month later.

[2] This supported the deposition of the Khalifa and abolition of the Khilafat. The Indian Muslim delegation to Angora and the Khalifat had been denied passports.

34. *LETTER TO THE NIZAM OF HYDERABAD*[1]

POONA,
March *5, 1924*

YOUR EXALTED HIGHNESS,

I am in receipt of Your Exalted Highness's letter of the 1st instant with reference to your letter to His Excellency the Viceroy in the matter of the Province of Berar[2]. Sir Ali Imam was good enough to send me a copy of his circular letter[3] enclosing a copy of Your Highness's letter. But my illness has prevented me from reading the important document. I am just now attending only to those matters in which I have always been specially interested and in which our people look to me for guidance. I ask your Highness, therefore, to forgive me for my inability to attend to the question of Berar for the time being.

I remain,

Your Exalted Highness's Faithful friend,

M. K.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S. N. 8428

[1] This letter seems to have miscarried; *vide* "Letter to the Nizam of Hyderabad", 5-4-1924.

[2] In this the Nizam had written, *inter alia*:"I have sent an official letter to His Excellency the Viceroy asking the Government of India to restore to me the province of Berar. . . I have promised to grant autonomy to the inhabitants of Berar in case they come under the aegis of my Government as an integral part of the Hyderabad State. . . I am writing to ask whether, on the broad principle of sympathy for the aspirations of mankind in general, and a desire for the amelioration of their condition, you will be able to lend me such support as you can in my present endeavour." S.N. 8424.

[3] In this the Nizam had written, *inter alia*:"I have sent an official letter to His Excellency the Viceroy asking the Government of India to restore to me the province of Berar. . . I have promised to grant autonomy to the inhabitants of Berar in case they come under the aegis of my Government as an integral part of the Hyderabad State. . . I am writing to ask whether, on the broad principle of sympathy for the aspirations of mankind in general, and a desire for the amelioration of their condition, you will be able to lend me such support as you can in my present endeavour." S.N. 8424.

35. NOTE ON CORRESPONDENCE[1]

The result of the correspondence was that the Government at last gave their reason for prohibiting the visits referred to, viz, it was in the public interest that the said visits were prohibited, but that, if in future I wanted to see anybody in particular, the Superintendent was to send the name or names to the Government. I may add that to the last moment the names of all who wanted to see me had to be submitted to the Government. In spite of the Government statement, in my case and [in the case of] those who were in the same block with me, the Superintendent had no discretion to grant permission to visitors, which he had in the case of all the other prisoners.

Young India, 6-3-1924

36. COMMENT ON PRISON CONDITIONS [2]

For reason I do not wish to enter into at this stage, I am unable to publish further correspondence in this matter. But I may state that I was permitted to see two of the leading hunger-strikers in the presence of the Superintendent of the Jail and the Inspector-General of Prisons. The result was that Messrs Dastane and Dev, the two prisoners, appreciated the moral argument I advanced, and at once broke their long fast. The Government, after investigating the cause of flogging and surrounding circumstances, issued instructions that no flogging was to be administered by the Jail Superintendent without previous sanction from the Government except in the case of assault by prisoners upon Jail officials, or like conduct. I have observed that exaggerated reports were published about the conduct of Major Whitworth Jones, then Superintendent, and that he was described as an inhumane Superintendent, and his conduct as inhuman. Whilst, in my opinion, the flogging in question was a grave error of judgment on the part of the Superintendent, it was nothing more. Major Jones was often hasty but so far as I am aware never heartless. On the contrary, [in] all I saw of him and heard about him from those prisoners with

[1] This was published under "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda" 16-4-1923. The other letters sent by Gandhiji to the Jail authorities are placed in their chronological order.

[2] This was published under "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda" 29-6-1923.

whom I came in contact, he was a most sympathetic Superintendent, ever willing to listen to the prisoners and to take severe notice of the subordinates who in any way ill-treated them. He was ever willing to admit his mistakes—a rare quality in an official. At the same time he was a disciplinarian, and a hasty disciplinarian is often likely to make mistakes. The two floggings of satyagrahis were such mistakes. They were of the head, not of the heart. The fact is that the powers of indiscriminate flogging should never have been vested in the hands of Superintendents of Jails. They were taken away none too soon. A detailed examination of the prison administration and of these floggings must be reserved for a further occasion.

Young India, 6-3-1924

37. COMMENT ON PRISON REGULATIONS[1]

This letter was written as a result of His Excellency's visit at which I discussed with him, when he pressed me as to whether I had anything to say, the question of Special Division. I told him in effect that, in my opinion, the Special Division Regulations were an eyewash and were designed merely to deceive the public into thinking that something was done to accord to the political prisoners a treatment that their general upbringing rendered necessary. But the Governor told me with the greatest assurance that he had no authority whatsoever in law to bring rigorous-imprisonment prisoners within the Special Division. And when I ventured to question the accuracy of his legal knowledge, he told me he ought to know inasmuch as he had framed the regulations himself. I was amazed at the industry of a Governor who went so much into details as even to draw up regulations—a work that is generally left to legal officers. Although my knowledge of law has become rusty for lack of use, in spite of the authoritative manner in which the Governor spoke, I could not reconcile myself to the fact that the law had given the Government powers to specially classify only simple-imprisonment—and not hard-labour—prisoners, and that it gave no discretion to the Government to reduce sentences. Hence the foregoing letter. The reply received was that H.E. was mistaken about the law and that the Government had the necessary powers, but that in spite of that

[1] These observations were made by Gandhiji while publishing in *Young India* his "Letter to Governor of Bombay", 15-8-1923.

discovery he could not see his way to revise the regulations so as to include all political prisoners, whether undergoing simple or rigorous imprisonment. My suspicion, therefore, that the Special Division Regulations were a mere eyewash became, I am sorry to say, confirmed.

Young India, 6-3-1924

38. COMMENT ON LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA[1]

The reader is warned not to read a meaning into the letter which it was never intended to bear. The letter is only published in order to explain the incident referred to in the letter, as it has been the subject matter of much talk and speculation. And as the renunciation of fruit is said to have hastened my collapse, it is necessary to make it clear that it was in no way a protest against the Superintendent's refusal to grant Mr. Abdul Gani's request. Moreover, Mr. Abdul Gani had the right under the Special Division regulations to send for fruit and any other food that he wanted. But he, Mr. Yagnik and I had come to the conclusion that it would not be proper for us to send for food from outside. The authorities could, therefore, be in no way blamed for the consequence of my abstention. The Superintendent as well as the Inspector-General of Prisons pleaded with me to desist from enforcing my decision. They warned me of the possible serious consequences of abstention, but for the peace of my mind, I had to take the risk. And after all the serious illness I have gone through, I do not feel sorry that I took the step I did. Nor should the reader in any way blame Mr. Abdul Gani for having asked for a change of his diet. He asked for it after full consultation with me, and I approved of the change not knowing that the regulations would not allow the Superintendent to grant the changed diet. I was misled into thinking so because, as stated in the letter, Mr. Yagnik and other fellow-prisoners were allowed by the previous Superintendent to change their diet from time to time. When I decided to renounce fruit after the refusal to Mr. Abdul Gani, he tried his utmost to dissuade me from the course, but it was not possible for me to forgo the experiment until it was absolutely clear to me that fruit was necessary for my constitution.

Young India, 6-3-1924

[1] This was published along with "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 12-11-1923.

39. MESSAGE TO DELHI PROVINCIAL POLITICAL CONFERENCE[1]

POONA,
[On or before *March 7, 1924*]

Your Conference has no more important work before it than the promotion of Hindu-Moslem unity. It will be like balm to my troubled heart to know that Hindu and Moslem members of the Conference have resolved with God as witness never to distrust each other, but are prepared to die for one another. May God guide you all right.

From a microfilm: S.N. 10366

40. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[Before *March 8, 1924*][2]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I cannot restrain myself from writing to you after reading your letter to Krishnadas. Your complaint is literally true. The questions you have raised did occur to me. But, being an invalid, I could not do more. Having got ready at the last moment, I naturally could not leave instructions. I ought to have given you instructions about the red and green lines. So also about numbers. The numbers were changed twice. You must have, therefore, read two figures, 8622 as 827. I don't remember if it was 8622 or some other number.

Devdas is industrious, but lazy in writing letters. I think one who writes a bad hand is slow to write letters. Pyarelal is a day-dreamer and lacks energy. Krishnadas is still a newcomer and nervous; you cannot take from him any urgent work. In these circumstances, you have to put up with the discontent prevailing there.

Let me give you the gist of my talk with Motilalji. He remained firm in his view favouring Council-entry, but could not convert me. I too could not convert him. He, Hakimji and the others will come to

[1] The Fourth Delhi Provincial Political Conference was held on March 7 and 8, 1924, at Meerut under the presidentship of Asaf Ali.

[2] This was written before March 8, i.e., Saturday preceding March 11, when Gandhiji reached Bombay.

meet me again in the last week of this month[1]. At present some Sikh leaders are here for consultation. I am having discussions with them. I shall let you know the result after the discussions are over. Andrews, of course, is here. Jairamdas, Rajagopalachari and Shankerlal are also here. In fact, Jairamdas has been here nearly for ten days. I shall probably go to Juhu next Saturday, though it is not definite. My going will depend on the condition of the wound. I do hope you will not publish anything from my letters in the papers. Most probably I shall write to you at least once a week.

Now there are no more Jail letter to be given in *Young India*, I cannot say when I shall be able to write down my experiences [in Jail].

How is Mani? Tell her, that, if she keeps on being ill, I shall have to put myself to the trouble of writing to her. She ought to get well even to save me from this labour.

Blessing from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 8443

41. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHIN

Saturday [*March 8, 1924*][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

One statement in your letter worries me. You said that, owing to fear of thieves, you have to keep half awake. How long can you carry on like this? If we cannot get a good watchman, we should arrange among ourselves to keep watch by turns. The more essential thing, however, is that we should give up all our jewellery altogether. No one in the Ashram or in the school should have with him even a grain of gold or silver. I was shocked to read Hanumantrao's[3] letter received a couple of days ago. Do you know what happened to his wife? Read the letter I am enclosing. No wonder if a similar thing occurs in the Ashram. One needs no ornament for the ear. For the wrists on may have very pretty shell-bangles. We should reduce, as much as possible, our other possessions too and live without fear, and not worry if these

[1] They met Gandhiji again on March 29. The discussions with Motilal Nehru and other swarajist leaders lasted several days.

[2] Gandhiji arrived at Juhu on Tuesday, March 11. The preceding Saturday fell on March 8.

[3] Member, Servants of India Society.

things are stolen. we should also approach people in the neighboring villages. You have already done this. You may speak to them again if you think that necessary. All the three courses—watch, reducing of possessions and appeals to the villages—should be adopted simultaneously.

Please let me know in Juhu about Radha's[1] health. I intend sending for her there if circumstances permit and if she can undertake the journey.

Ramdas is much unsettled in mind. He is very unhappy. Take him under your care. Let him have your sympathy without talking about the cause of his suffering. Ask Surendra or someone else who has the time to keep him company. If he does not go there on some work, please invite him to do so. This is only a suggestion. Do what you can in the circumstances there.

I shall most probably reach Juhu on Tuesday. The wound is still bleeding a little.

Blxessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6042 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

42. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[After *March 8, 1924*][2]

CHI, MAGANLAL,

1. Please write to the *Mahajan* about the dogs if you have not yet done so.
2. Consult the watchman about the thefts.
3. Think over the suggestion about someone going to the neighboring villages.
4. Just as attending prayers is compulsory, so too is coming to the dining-room at 10.45.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6043. courtesy "Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] Addressee's daughter

[2] Presumably, this was written as a reminder to the preceding item dated March 8, 1924.

43. ADVICE TO AKALIS[1]

[*March 9, 1924*][2]

1. In my opinion, in order to bring the whole of the Akali movement to successful issue, it is absolutely necessary that their minimum should be unmistakably stated. This alone can evoke universal approval and sympathy, provided that the minimum is just and reasonable in the sense that it appeals to the reason of a common-sense, godfearing man. It will not, therefore, do to say that a particular claim is a religious claim. All religious claims must necessarily appeal to reason.

In a movement of non-violence, the minimum is also the maximum, just as the minimum is not capable of reduction even though the difficulties may be insurmountable, similarly under favourable weather, there can be no addition to the minimum.

This folows from the fact that non-violence incccludes truth and truth admits of no expedients

2. It is, therefore, necessary for the S.G.P.C. to state the implications of the Gurdwara movement, i.e which gurdwaras are claimed by the Akalis to be historical or otherwise falling within the movement and without which an Akali, to be true to his faith, may not rest. Second, what are the implications with reference to the present *Akhand Path* affair in the Gangsar Gurdwara.[3]

Third, what is the movement in connection with the forced abdication or deposition of the Maharaja of Nabha.

3. In my opinion, with reference to the gurdwaras, the mode of procedure should be, in the case of disputed possession, (i) through private impartial arbitration without reference to or intervention of the present courts of law; (ii) where the opposite party refuses to submit to reason or arbitration, by satyagraha, i.e., non-violent mode of asserting S.G.P.C.'s right to possession. In order that the method is and

[1] Recitation from the Granth Saheb had been going on at Gangsar Gurdwara near Jaiton since October 1923. Every day a batch of 25 Sikhs was sent to the Gurdwara for the reading of Granth Saheb and was promptly arrested.

[2] The source carried, at the end, a paragraph which forms a part of the following item bearing this date. It appears that both the items are of the same date.

[3] Recitation from the Granth Saheb had been going on at Gangsar Gurdwara near Jaiton since October 1923. Every day a batch of 25 Sikhs was sent to the Gurdwara for the reading of Granth Saheb and was promptly arrested.

remains strictly non-violent throughout, it is not enough that there is absence of active violence, but it is necessary that there is not the slightest show of force.

It follows, therefore, that a large body of men cannot be deputed to assert the right of S.G.P.C.'s possession, but one or at the most two men of undoubted integrity, spiritual force and humility may be deputed to assert the right. The result of this is likely to be the martyrdom of these pioneers. My conviction is that from that moment the possession of the Committee is assured, but it may so happen that martyrdom is postponed and intermediate stages such as pinpricks, serious assault or imprisonment might have to be suffered. In that case and in every case till actual control is secured, there must be ceaseless stream of devotees in single or double file visiting the gurdwara in assertion of the right of the Committee. It is hardly necessary for me to point out that, if the possessor for the time being may consent to submit to arbitration, the Committee should be ever ready to accept the offer when the asserting of the right by means of satyagraha ceases. In such a case, it goes without saying that if there are any of the devotees who have been imprisoned in prosecution of the object of the Committee, they should be discharged simultaneously with the acceptance of the arbitration.

NABHA

I understand the position regarding the Nabha State to be as follows-and as explained by the Akali friends who have been kindly sent by the S.G.P.C. for the purpose:

1 The S.G.P.C. contends that the Maharaja has been forced to abdicate, that there is no sufficient warrant for the step and that the Committee is in a position to prove that the Maharaja has been forced to abdicate not because of the charges vaguely referred to by the Viceroy or of any other charges such as would justify the extreme punishment, but for his public-spritedness exhibited on several occasions and for his known active sympathy for the Akali cause. The Committee invites an open and impartial enquiry by a competent authority into the whole case before which the S.G.P.C. should have the right to give evidence and the Committee would be satisfied with the findings of such an enquiry. It has been suggested that the Nabha Maharaja has voluntarily abdicated in consideration for the Government suppressing certain charges which they hold are of an extremely damnatory character. If the Maharaja's own writing can be produced

in proof of the statement, the Committee will naturally have nothing further to say. Such a writing should be given by the Maharaja without any veiled pressure from the Government and should be a fresh document. The Committee have no desire at present for any direct action. At the same time, it is but fair to say that if all the efforts at impartial enquiry for obtaining strict justice fail and when the public have been put in possession of all the facts known to the Committee and public opinion has been fully matured and cultivated, the Committee may be reluctantly compelled as a matter of honour and chivalry to resort to direct action. No mention, however, of direct action will be made in any manifesto stating the Committee's position regarding Nabha that may be issued by the Committee.

The above position appears to me to be unexceptionable and I heartily endorse it.

SHAHIDI JATHA

Had it been possible for me to have met the Akali friends before the Jatha which is now on its way to Jaiton had started, I would, even after having heard all that the friends had to say, have adhered to my advice that it should not be sent before perfect stock-taking and a review of the whole situation, but I wish to cast no blame on anyone for the delay in the friends meeting me or, if there is any blame to be attached to anybody, I must take it upon my own shoulders because I omitted to take the precaution of wiring the full text of my message to S.G.P.C. at the same time that I handed it to the representative of the Associated Press. I was under the mistaken belief that Press messages having precedence of private messages the A.P. message would be earlier in the hands of the Committee. I foolishly wanted to save public money. Could I be present in the Punjab and see things face to face, I would not hesitate, even though the Jatha is nearing its destination, to tender my advice for its recall in order to enable us to review the situation, to take certain steps which I hold are necessary before taking further direct action, but I cannot undertake the responsibility, lying on a sick-bed, of advising the recall. I dare not place such as burden on the friends who have come to discuss the Gurdwara affair with me. In the circumstances, therefore, I fear that Jatha must be allowed to proceed to its destination. I understand that elaborate precautions have been taken to prevent admiring crowds or others from following or accompanying the Jatha. I understand too that strictest instructions have been issued to the Jatha to adopt and con-

tinue a perfectly non-violent attitude in spite of the gravest provocation. This is all to the good.

But I understand further that the Jatha has also been instructed, in the event of its receiving orders, to leave the State boundary to disobey and, arm in arm, the Jatha has been instructed to present a solid living wall to the State soldiery and to draw upon their devoted heads with unflinching courage the fire that can be poured upon them. The idea is no longer to submit to pinpricks and prolongation of the agony by way of forcible deportation, but to end it by every member of the Jatha sitting at his post and dying there with calm resignation without any retaliation. This plan is conceived in a most lofty and daring spirit. The bravery of who conceived it and still greater bravery of those who are expected to carry it out in its entirety cannot be questioned and, if the Nabha authorities are so foolish as to fire upon the Jatha till everyone lies dead at his post, it will certainly stagger humanity, thrill the world and command universal applause for matchless heroism, but I am sorry to say it could not be recorded as an at of non-violence. This proposed action can be described as civil disobedience, but in reality it would not be civil disobedience, for civil disobedience [is] perfect submission to orders which are given as punishments for the breach of primary orders which a civil resister holds against conscience to obey. But such disobedience to be civil requires perfect obedience to be sanctions small or great, and disobedience of smaller sanctions in order to invite larger sanctions is not civil but is rowdy and therefore violent. The faith of the civil resister must be a living faith in the ultimate success of the spirit of suffering and forbearance. Infinite patience must, therefore, be our badge.

Let us now apply this principle to the proposed action: to sit tight in the face of an order of deportation or an imprisonment in order to invite shooting is to avoid the intermediate sanctions and the possibilities of prolongation of slow suffering and also the struggle. Such avoidance is not permissible in civil disobedience; it is calculated to give an excuse to the opponent that they are not non-violent. The natural course would be to obey the order of deportation when it is accompanied by physical force, be it ever so slight. Therefore, even if a youngster duly authorized came to enforce the order of deportation, 500 strong men would in honour be bound meekly and joyously to march out with a young deporting officer whom by the heroic forbearance the 500 are likely to convert into a friend. Once put across the border, the right of marching back and be treated similarly

or worse accrues to the 500. The idea underlying meek suffering is that ultimately it is bound to melt the stoniest heart. It further deprives disobedience of the slightest trace of violence either active or passive.

I wish to analyse the proposed action still further. What is the locking up of arms of the whole Jatha, if it is not passive violence? It is clear that such a solid wall cannot be broken by one man, whereas the creed of non-violence presupposes that a move of violence by the opponent is enough for him to push back a crowd of 20,000 non-violent men.

If, therefore, the Committee accept all the implication of non-violence, I am firmly of opinion, instructions already given as to the action to be taken by the Jahta when it comes in conflict with authority should be revised in terms of what I have sketched above. In that event, only one or the other thing can happen, either the 500 will be deported or imprisoned. But, in both the cases, the act will have been performed with complete meekness on our side. I know the difficulties of following the procedure. The authorities may endlessly continue the seesaw business in order to tire us out. But this difficulty vanishes if we, as a body, claim to be incapable of being tired out. Non-violence, depending as it does on an unquenchable faith in God and in the persistence only of that which is good, does not know what it is to be defeated or to be tired out. If the plan suggested by me is adopted, any number of men may march in and at any time of the day. It will be found in practice that no authority can possibly afford to play the game of seesaw with a people so determined. So much regarding the Jatha now on the march. When the present manoeuvre is finished, I would suggest a review of the whole situation. So far as I know, the aim of the *Akhand Path* movement is to assert the right of the community to have *Akhand Path* in the place [of] that which was interrupted on the. . . [1] and to vindicate the right to have the *Akhand Path* as often as the community considrs it necessary. The authorities state that they do not wish to prvent the *Akhand Path* ceremony, but they will not allow under its cover the massing of a large number of Sikhs from outside who may carry on open or secret propaganda regarding the Nabha Maharaja and thus create and keep up the ferment in the State. In order to meet this objection, I would advise the Committee to make a declaration in the clearest possible terms that the

[1] The date is not given in the source. It is, however, likely that this is February 21, 1924; *vide* "Open Letter to Akalis", 25-2-1924.

object of the Jatha is purely to assert the aforementioned right, that it has no desire to carry on, under cover of the *Akhand Path* ceremony, any political propaganda in the Nabha State, whilst the Committee in no way binds itself to refrain from pressing forward the claims of the Nabha Maharaja and agitating for the Nabha question. But that agitation will stand on its merits and will have no connection with the *Akhand Path* affair. The Committee will also in that case be satisfied with sending a Jatha of 25 without in any way admitting the right of the State to limit the number. It would be purely a voluntary act with a view to disarming suspicion.

But If my advice is accepted, for the time being no Jatha will be dispatched, but negotiations should be a third party with the State authorities with a view to clearing away misunderstanding and removing the deadlock.

If, then, the sending of a Jatha of 500 is suspended for the time being and the declaration sketched above is made, it opens the way for a third party to negotiate with the authorities with a view to removing the deadlock.

GURDWARA REFORM MOVEMENT

In connection with the Gurdwara movement I am asked to state the procedure that, in my opinion, should be adopted prior to the direct action sketched in the foregoing notes. The first thing is to state the case fully and publicly as to the conditions of the Gurdwara's mismanagement, e.g. character of the occupant, etc., or notices should also be served on the occupant stating the position of the Committee and asking him to submit to its jurisdiction and control, and informing him that, in the event of his wishing to contest the Committee's possession, the latter would be willing to submit the case to arbitration. The names of the arbitrator or arbitrators on behalf of the Committee should be given in the notice and, in the event of the occupant ignoring the notice or decclining to submit to arbitration, the Committee would be free to take direct action[1].

With reference to the Gurdwaras already possessed by the S.G.P.C., as a matter of truth and justice, I am convinced that, if the party dispossessed disputes this right of the S.G.P.C. to the possession, the Committee should be ready [to] have the matter reopened and settled by arbitration. But I recognize that it would be dangerous and

[1] In the source, the following footnotes are given to this paragraph: 1. "Truth and non-violence," and 2. "A word to Pandit Malaviya."

detrimental to the best interest of the Committee to make any such public announcement at the present moment and whilst the Government is trying its best to injure the Committee and in every way interfere with its activity. With reference to the Gurdwaras claimed to be historical, the only thing, so far as I can see, the Committee can be reasonably expected to do is to prove the historical nature and, If it satisfies the arbitration regarding it its possession must rest with or rest in the Committee without any further proof being necessary regarding any other matter.[1]

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 3769

44. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS[2]

[*March 9, 1924*]

I had long and cordial conversations with the Akali friends. In the course of the conversations, I tendered to them my opinion on the several matters under discussion. The public will not expect me to divulge the matters discussed between us or the opinion given by me, but I am free to state this, that the Akali friends told me that my letter was not received by the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee with apathy, and they satisfied me that, under the circumstances, it gave it all the consideration. Unfortunately, my letter was seen by them in the Press so late that they were unable to do more than they did in the matter.[3] My friends informed me to my surprise that there was a general misapprehension in the Punjab that, after the Nankana tragedy I had expressed an opinion that the Gurdwara movement should have been postponed till after the attainment of swarajya and that my recent letter was intended to renew that opinion. I never once expressed the opinion attributed to me, as can be amply verified from my writings and speeches of the time. My recent letter[4] was merely an

[1] In the source here follows a paragraph which forms part of G. N. 3768; *vide* the following item..

[2] Gandhiji made this statement to the representative of the Associated Press who called on him to ascertain the result of the week-long discussions between him and the Akali deputation led by Sardar Mangal Singh in regard to Akali activities.

[3] The text that follows is also available from a handwritten, signed draft, dated March 9. G.N. 3768

[4] *Vide* "Open Letter to Akalis", 25-2-1924.

advice to suspend and not necessarily to stop altogether the sending of the then impending Shahidi Jatha till after deliberation with a Committee of non-Sikh friends, and full introspection and searching of the heart.

From a photostat: G.N. 3768 and 3769; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 11-3-1924

45. TELEGRAM TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

[Before *March 10, 1924*][1]

SRIRAMULU[2] FASTING AT NELLORE UNDER MY ADVICE FOR OPENING A TEMPLE TO HARIJANS. PLEASE GO IF PHYSICALLY ABLE OR SEND SOMEONE AND DO WHAT IS PROPER. I HAVE CONFLICTING WIRES.[3] WIRE POONA.

From a photostat: 117A

46. MESSAGE TO KHADI EXHIBITION, BOMBAY [4]

March 10, 1924

It is beyond doubt that exhibitions of pure khadi are very useful in propagating khadi. But how strange it is that we still have to hold khadi exhibitions! If anyone talks of holding an exhibition to propagate our country's wheat and *bajra*, we consider him an idiot. Is khadi, then, less useful than wheat and *bajra*? If we do not wish to eat oats imported from Scotland in place of our wheat and *bajra*, why do we then insult khadi by importing and wearing cloth from Manchester or Japan? Every patriot and everyone who loves his or her religion must consider this point. We shall surely remain under foreign rule as long as we cannot do without foreign cloth. It is strange that compli-

[1] This telegram was evidently sent from Poona before March 10 when Gandhiji left for Bombay.

[2] Potti Sriramulu Naidu, once an inmate of Sabarmati Ashram, started his fast on March 7 for securing Harijans' entry to the Venugopalaswami Temple at Mulapet. In 1952, he fasted unto death in connection with the formation of an Andhra State.

[3] Earlier, a Press report had described Sriramulu's condition as weak, and stated that the managing trustee of the temple had tried to persuade him to break the fast on the assurance that he would try and induce this co-trustees to throw the temple open to Harijans.

[4] Read out by Kasturba Gandhi after declaring open the exhibition at Mandvi, Bombay.

cated arguments appeal to us rather than this simple one. and until we all learn to take to the royal road of khadi, hand-woven from hand-spun yarn, we have to continue holding khadi exhibitions. Hence I wish all success to the exhibition at Mandvi.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 16-3-1924

47 FAREWELL SPEECH, POONA[1]

March 10, 1924

In making a speech, I am respectfully disregarding Col. Maddock's instructions. But if did not speak, I would be doing him an injustice. Ever since he was sent by Government to examine me in Yeravda Jail, Col. Maddock has become my friend. I was reluctant to have an operation, but was so impressed by him that I had to trust him completely. I have full faith in his skill. Of course, it is not for me to give him a testimonial, but the fact of his skill remains. I hope Col. Maddock will devote his leisure hours to the cause of humanity wherever he goes.

Non-violent non-co-operation means goodwill and sympathy towards everyone. I would feel pained if I heard it said that I had ill will towards any person. The pain would persist even after my death. I thank all those who have helped me. You have assured me that you will wear swadeshi clothes. This assurance gives me great pleasure. Swadeshi does not mean ill will towards anybody. May God grant long life and prosperity to Col. and Mrs. Maddock wherever they may be.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 16-3-1924

[1] Delivered before the students of the B. J. Medical School, Col. Maddock and other members of the Hospital staff who had met to bid farewell to Gandhiji.

48. TELEGRAM TO GHANSHYAM JETHANAND[1]

[On or after *March 10, 1924*]

PLEASE CONVEY LATE MR. BHURGRI'S FAMILY RESPECTFUL CONDOLENCES. INDIA HAS LOST IN HIM SINCERE PATRIOT.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S. N. 8466

49. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA[2]

[After *March 11, 1924*][3]

Keep your body fit. Then only can I take sufficient work from you and give you some more still.

Take milk at least for fifteen days, if you think you need it. Eat fruit, *roti* will do you harm. Take curds without fail.

Your pronunciation is no doubt bad, but do not worry much over that. English is not our language. The way the French pronounce [it] is very bad, but no Englishman ever complains about it.

From the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5999. Courtesy: G. D. Birla.

50. INTERVIEW TO "STEAD'S REVIEW"

[After *March 11, 1924*][4]

I begged Gandhi to continue his simple meal, tended by an Indian nurse, and he munched an orange while he talked. People came and went silently all the time. Admiring countrymen who flocked to Andheri—often at great inconvenience and

[1] This was in reply to Ghanshyam Jethanand's telegram to Jairamdas Doulatram, dated March 10, 1924, which read: "Bhurgri expired last night."

[2] Ghanshyam Das Birla; industrialist and philanthropist who gave financial assistance for Gandhiji's schemes of social welfare; member, Second Round Table Conference, 1931.

[3] This is the earliest available letter to G. D. Birla. Its exact date is not ascertainable. It is, however, likely that it was written from Bombay. Gandhiji arrived at Juhu, a sea-side suburb of Bombay, on March 11 and stayed there till may 28 to recoup his health. This and the several letters that follow were written from Juhu during this period, though some of them carry the postal address: Andheri, another neighbouring suburb.

[4] The exact date of this interview is not available. It took place at Juhu, Bombay: some time after March 11, 1924.

expense—to behold their revered leader, made obeisance and withdrew. Others who listened at respectful distance drank in every word that fell from his lips, fervent approval shining in their dark eyes. Yet though the audience gradually swelled to quite fifty, our conversation was never interrupted by so much as a cough. Thus was the naturally loquacious Indian overawed by the presence of his venerated Mahatma.

"Mr. Gandhi." I said, "I am going to ask you ten questions. You will, of course, reply or decline to answer at your will. Now, why do you make such a feature of preaching home-spinning to Indians? Is it because you hold that India's economic dependence contributes to its political dependence?" Gandhi declared without hesitation:

Absolutely, when Indians were spinning and weaving their own cotton, they were well off and happy. From the day on which they attempted to sell their cotton to Lancashire, and buy their cloth from Lancashire, they have become increasingly lazy and poor, 85 per cent of India's population loafs now for 4 months in the year. Foreign cloth has made a nation of idlers and beggars. The charkha (spinning-wheel) will restore to the villager not only prosperity, but also self-respect and hope. For the last fifty years Indians have been losing hope. The charkha is a symbol of a new life which will save them from despair.

Then you put home-spinning even above the crying need of elementary education of your masses?

Why should I wait for my country to be educated in the European sense, before saving it from starvation? Do you know that at least one-third of our 350,000,000 are chronically underfed? They want bread and butter before education. Besides, it is open to question whether Western education would benefit Indians any way. We were happy and prosperous in the old days, without education. We are wretched and poor today, amidst all the vaunted blessings of English civilization. No, I find no difficulty in spreading my gospel of the charkha through lack of understanding. The illiterate villagers welcome the spinning-wheel like a ray of heavenly hope. It is the shortage of trained instructors which hampers our propaganda.

I asked Mr. Gandhi whether he considered the Indian masses ripe for Home Rule.

Certainly, for that kind of Home Rule which I understand under swaraj. But nobody, not even the English people, can "give" us swaraj. We can only give it to ourselves. Home Rule, on the pattern of the Australian or Canadian constitutions, is not swaraj. Still, it will be

infinitely superior to our present state of servitude. If Britain is unwilling to give to us complete independence, I would welcome and accept Home Rule. And I say India is certainly able to enter the British community of nations on that footing.

What is your answer to the generally accepted theory of the advocates of the present political system that India could not rule herself because of the irreconcilable differences of her castes, religions and tribes? Mr. Gandhi smiled.

Of course, there are differences. No nation is without them. The United Kingdom was born amidst the Wars of the Roses. Probably we, too, shall fight. But, when we are tired of breaking each other's heads, we shall discover that, despite the disparities of our races and religions, we can live together, just as the Scotch and Welsh manage to live together. The gravest of India's admitted abuses and prejudices, such as that fatal theory of untouchability of certain Hindu castes, will disappear when the people are emancipated.

Would Indian Home Rule give universal suffrage to the masses?

Practically. I mean that every citizen desirous of vote would get a vote. I do not see the use of compulsory enrolment without compulsory voting. Votes of people who must be driven to the poll are of questionable value. My idea is to open enrolling depots all over the country where those desiring to vote can register their names on payment of a small fee—just enough to make the voting machinery self-supporting. I am convinced that we shall obtain in this way popular mandates as intelligent as in any other country.

Is there not this danger, in a country like India, that released from British restraint, the small intelligentsia of Bengalis, Brahmins, etc., might seize the reins of Government to their own aggrandizement, and the utter enslavement of their ignorant countrymen? Such things, as you are aware, were not unknown in the history of India.

But what makes you anticipate them in these days? What power could such usurpers command today to enslave the people? They would have no army, none of the impregnable entrenchment of the English in this country. Why, if any Indians tried to enslave the people, they would tear them to pieces.

Next to homespinning, Mr. Gandhi, what do you counsel your countrymen to do to attain swaraj?

We must get rid of the unsympathetic domination by a foreign people who only come here to drain our wealth. I have nothing against the English individually. They probably treat us as well as any

other foreign nation would. Of course, there are many minor irritations, inseparable from foreign rule. But our greatest grievance against the English is that they have steadily impoverished India. If Englishmen living in India became loyal, useful citizens of this country, as they became in Australia or South Africa, I should welcome them as my brothers. But they only come here to exploit my people, and to draw the substance from the land. After a century of this steady drain, we are nearing exhaustion. We must either stop this drain, or lose the last traces of our one-time greatness and culture. That is why I ask the English to go away. I am certain we can force them to go, by non-co-operation, without violence. The English may pass laws, but they cannot force us to obey them. They may prescribe taxes, but they can compel only comparatively few to pay them. non-co-operation and non-violence are more potent weapons than guns.

Still, guns have their uses. Mr. Gandhi, you may deprecate them because they are not at your disposal. If you had arms, would you consider yourself justifie in using them to drive out the English?

Heaven forbid! Contemplate the carnage and misery wrought by the small nations of Europe during the late War, and then, imagine the terrible consequences of 30 crores of Indians seizing arms! Besides, force never settles one single problem. Behold the present plight of Europe after such a "settlement" by force! We have no right to use force even against our oppressors; but it is our duty to refuse to help them to oppress us further. That is why we must not co-operate with the English till they co-operate with us.

You have studied and travelled much, Mr. Gandhi, and must admit that India would have fared worse under any but British rule, that England has shown much patience and forbearance under many provocations. What more would you have the English do?

The whole of our demands can be compressed into one word, Retire! And if you are not yet willing to retire completely, give us at least the autonomy of your self-governing dominions. We have enough common sense to prefer the half loaf to no bread at all. But if we are to join the family of British nations, we demand a say, not only in our own affairs, but in those of the whole Empire, in proportion to our population. In other words, we shall expect the centre of Imperial interests to be shifted to India, as its most populous component. Any member of the Empire objecting to this change would have the remedy of leaving the Commonwealth of British nations.

As a man of the world you realize that the English are not likely to relinquish, at your mere bidding, their enormous interest, material and political, which they have built up in India by so much labour and sacrifice. How do you picture to yourself the practical fulfilment of your aims? Do you believe that your own efforts, or outside pressure, will eventually bring about your liberation?

Our own efforts can and will end any foreign rule. If all my people understood and practised the true doctrine of non-co-operation and non-violence, we should have swaraj tomorrow. It would descend to us as from Heaven. Indians being frail, like other mortals, we shall have to wait. But our lesson is going home to the remotest villages, and every spinning-wheel that hums in a mud cottage is bringing us nearer our inevitable liberation.

One question more. How do you view Australia's virtual embargo against Asiatics?

I cannot understand this short-sighted policy of a nation which I otherwise admire. It is bad on economic, ethical and political grounds. But I admit that I have not given much attention to Australia's problems. I am too much engrossed in Indian affairs. Therefore, I would not like to express more than my personal, unauthoritative opinion on a question which I have not studied.[1]

The Searchlight, 27-6-1924

51. LETTER TO MRS. MADDOCK

POST ANDHERI,
March 14, 1924

DEAR MRS. MADDOCK[2],

Here is a brief statement of my activities as per my promise:

(1) Removal of the curse of untouchability among the Hindus.

(2) The spread of hand-spinning and hand-weaving and the advocacy of the use of hand-spun and hand-woven cloth to the exclusion of all foreign cloth and even cloth woven in Indian mills.

(3) Advocacy of simple life and, therefore, of the avoidance of intoxicating drinks and drugs.

[1] The report of the interview concludes "This subtle defence precluded any discussion on a controversial subject. . . Gandhi was visibly tired. . . So I wished my courteous informant speedy recovery to complete health, shook hands, and went to ponder over this old new message of non-violence. . . "

[2] Wife of Col. C. Maddock

(4) The establishment of unaided national schools both for the purpose of weaning students from Government institutions as a part of the Non-co-operation struggle, and of introducing education, including industrial training, in keeping with the national problems.

(5) The promotion of unity amongst Hindus, Mussulmans, Christians, Parsees, Jews etc.

I carry on these activities through two institutions. The first is an Ashram near Ahmedabad established in 1916[1] where all those who desire to work out these ideals are invited to join. Its expenses are defrayed out of private contributions made by monied friends who are interested in the activities named. It has at the present moment nearly 100 inmates, both male and female, who include several families from the so-called untouchable class. There is a carding, spinning and weaving school and an ordinary literary school attached to the Ashram. Simple agricultural work also is done there, and an attempt is being made to grow our own cotton.

The second institution is the National Congress which is a vast political organization with a very simple but, in my opinion, perfect constitution. This has adopted practically the whole of the foregoing programme. It has branches in every part of India and has thousands of members who elect representatives annually. Payment of 4 annas and acceptance of the Congress creed entitle an adult male or female to the membership of the Congress and to vote for the election of delegates. The Congress naturally has a larger programme of work than the activities abovenamed, and being a representative body, has no permanent programme, but can change it from year to year. Its aim is the attainment of swarajya, that is, self-government, by peaceful and legitimate means. For the last four years it has sought to attain its end by non-violent non-co-operation with the Government.

My own motive is to put forth all my energy in an attempt to save Indian, that is, ancient culture, from impending destruction by modern, that is, Western culture being imposed upon India. The essence of ancient culture is based upon the practice of the utmost non-violence. Its motto is the good of all including every living thing, whereas Western culture is frankly based upon violence. it therefore, does not respect all life and, in its progress onward, it has not hesitated

[1] This is a slip. The reference is to the Satyagraha Ashram founded at Kochrab, near Ahmedabad, on May 20, 1915, and shifted, on the outbreak of plague in 1917, to Sabarmati.

to resort to wholesale destruction of even human life. Its motto is: Might is Right, and it is essentially individualistic. This does not mean that there is nothing for India to learn from the West, for in spite of the acceptance by the West of the Doctrine of Might is Right, the human touch has not altogether disappeared in the West. The relentless pursuit of a false ideal conceived as truth has opened the eyes of numerous men in the West to the falsity of that ideal. I would like India to copy that spirit of search for the truth in the place of being satisfied with tradition without question, but India can safely copy nothing before she has come to her own and realized that her culture has a very important place in universe and it must be defended at all costs. The importation of Western culture by the British in Indian has meant exploitation of her resources for the supposed benefit of Great Britain. It has brought millions of people to the verge of starvation, and it has almost emasculated whole nation.

The foregoing programme is an attempt to prevent the impending ruin not by Western methods but by Indian methods, namely, by internal reform and self-purification from the very bottom. To remove the curse of untouchability is to do penance for the sin committed by the Hindus of degrading a fifth of their own religionists. To remove the curse of intoxicating drinks and drugs not only purifies the nation, but it also deprives an immoral system of Government of an immoral source of revenue to the extent of nearly 25 crores of rupees. To revive hand-spinning and hand-weaving brings back to millions of cottages of India their supplementary industry, revives the old Indian art, removes the degrading pauperism and provides an automatic insurance against famine. At the same time, it deprives Great Britain of the strongest incentive for Indian exploitation, for if India can clothe herself without importing foreign cloth and foreign machinery, the relations between Great Britain and India become natural and almost idealistic. They take the form then of a voluntary partnership resulting in mutual benefit and, probably, benefit to mankind in general. Unity between the different religionists of India prevents Great Britain from pursuing the immoral policy of Divide and Rule, and the practice of non-violence in resisting exploitation and degradation, if it becomes successful, is likely to serve as an example for the whole world to copy.

In following out the programme, mistakes and miscalculations have undoubtedly been made. Regrettable incidents have also taken place, but I make bold to say that no movement in which millions of

people have taken part has yet taken place with so little bloodshed or interruption of the ordinary activities of the people.[1]

I do not know whether I have succeeded in giving you what you wanted. I have endeavoured to be as brief as it was possible.

Please tell Col. Maddock that it was not without grief that I left the hospital. I shall always remember the tender care and attention bestowed by him upon me. I appreciate the gift of his portrait. My very best wishes will accompany you during your voyage and stay at home. I shall prize a line from you or him whenever you think of me and have the time for writing. The place in which I am housed is most delightful. The sea is in front of me. The bungalow is surrounded with the cocoanut palm. The nights are very cool, and generally there is a gentle breeze all the day long. Mr. Andrews and I take a walk along the beautiful sandy beach in Juhu for about half an hour. I fancy that I shall gain strength day by day.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

[PS.]

My permanent address is Sabarmati, near Ahmedabad.

MRS. MADDOCK

POONA

From a photostat: S.N. 8488

[1] C. F. Andrews released this part of the letter as a statement in the *Manchester Guardian*, 24-4-1924, with the following observations, *inter alia*: "... This is, I believe, the first concise statement of his aims made by Mahatma Gandhi himself that will have appeared in the English Press. . . . It will come with a surprise to most people because of its economic rather than political character. The truth is not yet realized in England that what is being aimed at by Mr. Gandhi is a revolution far more radical than any mere refusal to enter the Reformed Councils. . . . It appears to have hidden from view the far deeper and more penetrating change of social and economic life which is making India a new country, a country that will not merely be a dreary repetition of the dullness and drabness of the West." *The Searchlight*, 18-5-1924

52. STATEMENT ON POTTI SRIRAMULU'S FAST

BOMBAY,
March 15, 1924

Shri Sriramulu is an unknown poor Congressman and servant of humanity working in Nellore. He has been labouring singlehanded for the cause to the Harijans of that place. There was a time when high hope was entertained about removal of untouchability and other social work in Nellore. An ashram was built near Nellore, but for variety of causes the activity received a set-back. Desabhakta Konda Venkatappayya was, and still is, though very old, the moving spirit in connection with these activities. It is in this place that shri Sriramulu has been quietly and persistently working for the removal, root and branch, of untouchability.

He has been trying to have a temple opened to Harijans. He asked me the other day whether, in order to awaken public conscience in favour of such opening, he could, if all others efforts failed, undertake a fast. I sent him my approval.

Now the place is astir. But some persons have asked me to advise Shri Sriramulu to suspend his fast for removing legal difficulties of which I have no knowledge. I have been unable to give such advice.

As I am anxious that an unobtrusive servant of humanity my not die for want of public knowledge and support, I bespeak the interest of the journalists of the South, if not of all India, to find out for themselves the truth of the matter and, if what I say is borne out by facts, shame by public exposure the opposing parties into doing the right and save a precious life.

From a photostat: 117 A

53. LETTER TO ERVIN BAKTAY

POST ANDHERI,
March 15, 1924

DEAR FRIEND.

I was very glad indeed to receive your letter[1] of the 8th February.It pleases me to think that the humble work I am doing in my own country is being understood and appreciated in Europe and more so by those who, like my own people, are laouring under oppression. Though my activity is confined to India, I do share with you the belief that the means being adopted in India with non-violence as the corner-stone are of universal application in like circumstances, and if we achieve our true freedom demonstrably by non-violent means, the rest of the world will have no difficulty in putting faith in the invincibility of non-violence in every walk of life.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

ERVIN BAKTAY, ESQ.
11 MESR. UTEA 12
BUDAPEST
(HUNGARY)

From the photostat: G.N. 2831 and S.N 8493

[1] In the course of his letter Ervin Baktay had written: ". . . there are men very far away from India who have faith in your person and your work. I believe that the work which is done by you has a great importance for the whole humanity; the West does not understand it clearly today what your work represents in human history, yet it can be observed that there are many in the West who have a clear or a less distinct feeling about it. . . Even in England and France or America there are men who understood that the Western way of solving great problems by everlasting wars cannot lead but to a general ruin. And the whole world begins to listen more and more to India's message for mankind and this message is yours. Since several years I study Indian religion. Philosophy and literature, and I have the conviction that India's thought has a very great importance for humanity. I believe that Rabindranath Tagore was right in saying: 'the greatest event of our age was the meeting of East and West in India.' Yes, India will pour fresh water into our dried-out wells, for our wells which were once filled to the brim by another holy water (Christ's message) were abandoned by us. Truth is but *one* and the truth in the message of the Upanishads, of Buddha, or

54. LETTER TO A. A.VOYSEY

POST ANDHERI,
March 15, 1924

DEAR MR. VOYSEY,

I thank you for your letter of the 14th February.

You will be glad to know that the wound has healed completely and that I am now having my convalescence at a seaside retreat. I shall look forward to the further letter[1] which you promise. If you are writing after receipt of this, it will be better to send your letter to my permanent address, namely, Sabaramati, near Ahmedabad.

Thanking you for your kind thoughts,

Yours sincerely

A. A. VOYSEY, ESQ.
ST. ISIDORE
PRESS NICE (FRANCE)

From a photostat: S. N. 8494

55. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

POST ANDHERI
March 15, 1924

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have your letter[2] enclosing your Note on Kenya and a newspaper cutting[3]. I shall read the Note as soon as I have energy enough for taking up my normal activities. For the time being what I have of it I devote to only those matters on which I must express an

---

Christ cannot be different. The words and the forms can differ, but the living essence is the same. And there is nobody in this world today whose words and deeds could better express this truth than yours. In you I see the personification fo all truth which was ever given to mankind." S.N. 8303

[1] In this Voysey wrote of "a special aspect of human progress which engages my thoughts and which you may feel has some bearing on your work in India, though your work is truly a world work and for all humanity. Blessed and happy are you." S. N. 8329

[2] Not available

[3] *Ibid.*

opinion without delay. I hope you have received my letter[1] posted at Poona. At present I am in Mr. Narottam's[2] bungalow near Andheri. It is delightfully situated, faces the sea, and the waves wash its boundary.

Mr. Andrews is staying with me. He has been sent by the Poet specially to keep me company and to look after me. I am permitted to walk about 30 minutes which I do in the evening.

My love to you all.

Yours sincerely,

HY. S. L. POLAK, ESQ.
47-48, DANES INN HOUSE
205, STRAND
LONDON, W. C. 2

From a photostat: s. N. 8495

56. LETTER TO ALFRED C. MEYER

POST ANDHERI,
March 15, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 2-2-1924.

There is at present firm of booksellers in Madras known as S. Ganesan who sell a collection[5] of most of my articles in a weekly called *Young India* and edited by me. It will give you all the information that you are likely to desire.

Yours sincerely,

ALFRED C. MEYER, ESQ.
181, VINE AVENUE
HIGHLAND PARK
ILLINOIS, U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N. 8496

[1] Not available
[2] Narottam Morarji, Agent of Scindia Steam Navigation Company
[5] This refers to the two volumes for 1919-22 and 1922-24.

57. LETTER TO V. K. SALVEKAR

POST ANDHERI
March 15, 1924

DEAR MR. SALVEKAR[1],

I thank you for your letter offering me the use of your bungalow in Nasik. I know that the climate of Nasik is very salubrious, but at the present moment I am having my convalescence at a pleasant seaside retreat near Andheri. If this place does not suit me and I am advised to go to a dry place, I shall bear in mind your kind offer.

Yours sincerely,

V. K. SALVEKAR, ESQ.
HATTIKHANA ROAD
NASIK CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 8501

58. LETTER TO S. E. STOKES

POST ANDHERI,
March 15, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 7th instant.[2]

An unknown friend wrote to me that you had asked him to send me some hill honey, and he kindly sent me 5 lbs. It was very good indeed. I understood subsequently that Mohanlal Pandya[3] had written to you for hill honey for me. I know that you have I wa then getting good honey from Mahabaleshwar. During my illness I have been so overwhelmed with kindness from those whom I knew and those whom I had never the pleasure of knowing that I feel it was almost worth

[1] Vishwanath Keshav Salvekar, proprietor of Sardar Griha, a hotel in Bombay, had been introduced to Gandhiji by Tilak, who used to stay there occasionally.

[2] Stokes had urged upon Gandhiji that it was in the interests of the country that he should relax. Gandhiji appears to have written earlier to him: "It is my duty before coming to a final decision to understand thoroughly the viewpoint of those who advocated Council-entry." This letter is not available.

[3] A worker of Kheda district

having that illness.

With love from both of us to both of you.

Yours ever,

[PS.]

The memoranda have not yet reached me.

S. E. STOKES, ESQ.
HARMONY HALL
KOTGARH
SIMLA HILLS

From a photostat: S. N. 8497

59. LETTER TO FRASER ULSINS

POST ANDHERI,
March 15, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 10th February.[1]

I send my autograph on a separate piece of paper. I am sorry I cannot send you one in ink as my hand is yet too shaky for me to write a firm hand with an ink-pen.

Yours sincerely,

FRASER ULSINS, ESQ.
THE HILL SCHOOL
POTTSTOWN
PENNSYLVANIA, U.S.A.

From a photostat: S. N. 8498

[1] Ulsins had written that he was collecting autographs of famous men and would consider it a great honour to add Gandhiji's signature to his collection.

60. LETTER TO S. A. BRELVI

POST ANDHERI,
March 15, 1924

DEAR MR. BRELVI,

I have your letter enclosing a synopsis of a novel written by Professor K. T. Shah[1]. I shall go through it as soon as I get the time for it and let you know whether I shall want the whole manuscript.

Yours sincerely,

S. A. BRELVI, ESQ.
" BOMBAY CHRONICLE" OFFICE
FORT
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8504

61. LETTER TO M. PRATAP

POST ANDHERI,
March 15, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I was glad to receive your letter. When I went to Prem Vidyalaya, I believe Bhai Kotwal talked to me about you. Whilst it is true that we seem to see in Nature both the benignant and the malignant forces in full activity, I am convinced that it is the prerogative of man to rise superior to the eternal duel and to attain equanimity, and the only way we can do so is by practising to the fullest extent the truth-force, otherwise described as love-force or soul-force. You will not expect me to argue out the point. I can only place before you my conviction based upon prolonged experience during which I cannot recall a single occasion when this force has not completely answered. No doubt it requires the cultivation of patience, humility and the like.

Yours sincerely,

M. PRATAP, ESQ.
BAGH BABER
KABUL

From a photostat: S.N. 8499

[1] Economist and author; secretary, National Planning Committee, set up by the Indian National Congress. He had written a historical novel in English deling with the Non-co-operation movement with Gandhiji as the central figure.

62. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI[1]

POST ANDHERI,
March 15, 1924

MY DEAR FRIEND,

"Cheer, boys, cheer, no more of idle sorrow." Why worry about anything? There is an under-note[2] of sorrowful despair about your letter[3]. Better that, however, than nothing. You want me to whip you into cheerfulness and for my encouragement you cite the noble example of your cousin in Zanzibar. Only, he had a black boy who was really a boy to deal with, whereas I have the very difficult task of correcting a grown-up old boy with a hoary beard and a fair face. It was a comparatively easy task to brave the operation for appendicitis. But how shall I, a mere youngster compared to you, perform the task you expect me to handle? However, when we meet, I shall endeavour to prepare myself for it. You[4] do not know that at the present moment I am sporting a proper Afghan stick. Therefore better beware. Permission to lodge with me is only granted to fellow-patients. You are suffering from melancholia and are hereby permitted to come whenever you choose and can. Only the upper floor rooms are all practically taken up. If, therefore, you want privacy, I shall have to condemn you to a first-floor room, but I have just received a letter from Devchand Parekh of Kathiawar that that tyrant-king of Gujarat, Vallabhbhai, is packing you off to Kathiawar.

I am making steady progress. I am putting through a fair amount of work every day. I am not yet capable of much physical exertion.

How is Mrs. Abbas? Where are the girls? What are they doing? Devdas told me that Fatima had at last been married. To whom was she married? Are the couple happy? Where are they staying? What is the hasband doing? You see I am interested in all the members of the family because for so many years now it has made me one of the

[1] Abbas Tyabji (1853-1936); former judge of Baroda High Court; nationalist Muslim leader of Gujarat. He was one of the Commissioners appointed by the Punjab sub-committee of the Congress to report on the Punjab disorders.

[2] Perhaps a slip for "undertone"

[3] This was dated March 13.

[4] The source has "we" which is a slip.

[5] This was a form of greeting used by Gandhiji and the addressee for each other.

members! You must excuse a dictated domestic letter. My hand is too shaky to write as much as I should like to, and as I wanted to give you a fairly long letter, I had to choose between not writing such a letter or[1] dictating. I have chosen the latter course.

With love to you all and *bhurr*[4] to you in addition.

Yours,

M. K. G.

ABBAS TYABJI ESQ.
BARODA CAMP

From a photostat: S.N. 9595

63. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

POST ANDHERI,
March 15, 1924

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter, and I had your and Mahomed Ali's telegrams regarding Panikkar.[2] Your letter embarrasses me a little. I have not intended, nor do I intend now to form any decided opinion about making appointments, fixing salaries, etc. As I shared Joseph's opinion that he should be by his wife's side when she was so much troubled, and as the Sikh friends who came to see me seemed to be very anxious to have a substitute for Gidwani, a substitute who could also edit their paper *Onward*, I was on the look-out for one. They wanted Sundaram who used to be on the *Independent* and suggested

[1] Perhaps a slip for "and"

[2] Gandhiji appears to have wired Jawaharlal Nehru on March 12. The telegram is not available. Nehru replied to it on March 13. He had written: "I have known Panikkar by repute for several years and met him for a short time in Cocanada. I am sure his presence will be very useful in Amritsar. His ignorance of Hindustani will be a drawback, but this will be more than compensated by his other attainments. He will be an excellent man for publicity work. Perhaps, owing to his language difficulty, he might not be very helpful in bringing the Sikhs and Hindus nearer to each other. But on the whole Panikkar will be an acquisition in Amritsar. As regards terms, anything that you consider reasonable will surely be agreed to by all others. Technically, the Working Committee will not meet till the 21st April. The terms suggested in your telegram are rather complicated, but that is for you to decide. I am glad that Panikkar contemplates a lengthy stay at Amritsar. Personally, I doubt if it will be necessary for him to stay for many months. There is just a possibility of Gidwani coming out sooner and an equal possibility of Gidwani's successor going in. Of course, Panikkar will not unnecessarily invite jail, but neither did Gidwani."

that he could do both the things—publicity and editing. On my arrival at the retreat near Andheri, I saw Panikkar who had come to see Mr. Andrews in order to discuss the advisability of an offer that was made to him by the *Indian Daily Mail*. He had hesitation in accepting the offer because the *Mail* politics were not his. I then thought of the publicity work and asked Panikkar whether he would shoulder the burden, and as I did not know him well, I consulted Mr. Andrews too, and when Panikkar was prepared to go to Amritsar if you wanted him and as Mr. Andrews thought that he would make a very good substitute for Gidwani, I wired. But I had no desire that you should be influenced in any way by the wire because it was from me. If I was well and could acquaint myself with all the details, I should certainly have given my advice and opinion as to the selection, but for the present beyond interesting myself in the few things in which I must, I really do not want to tax my energy.

With reference to the salary the position was this. Panikkar was in the *Swarajya* office at Rs. 700/- per month, but as the paper is not, self-supporting, it has not been able to pay him a few months' salary. He left it because he could not hit it off with Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar. He has to discharge a debt of Rs. 900 in Madras. He needs Rs. 300 per month. I therefore thought that if he was paid Rs. 900 in advance, he could discharge the debt and proceed to Amritsar. He would still want his expenses [to be met] at Amritsar. For this Rs. 100 monthly should be paid to him by way of loan. At the end of 3 months' service, therefore, he will be owing to the Congress Rs. 300. This may again be deducted from his salary at the rate of Rs. 100 per month. That means that he has to serve for 6 months in order to discharge the loan he would be receiving. I am now perturbed because I gather from your letter that he may not be wanted for that length of time. I would not like to be the instrument of useless expense to the Congress. I propose, therefore, to place the whole situation before Panikkar, and he will probably agree that if his services are dispensed with before 6 months, he should be liable for the unpaid balance of the loan. He is not here at the present moment, or I should have sent you a more decisive letter.

I do not feel that you would want me, if it was possible, to cancel the engagement with Panikkar and am therefore letting it stand and sending him to Amritsar tomorrow. In accordance with your latest telegram, he will be going direct to Amritsar. Please authorize the

Treasurer to reimburse to me the amount that I shall be paying Panikkar.

Indeed, if I was minded to influence you, I should ask you to reconsider the question of each appointment for two reasons:

(1) Should the Congress spend money on non-Congress work?

(2) What should be the maximum the Congress should pay its servants?

So much for business. My wound is completely healed, but the affected part is yet tender and requires care and attention. The seaside convalescence is likely to suit me. I propose, if all goes well, to stop here for 3 months. During the time I shall be doing as much writing work as I can and conferring with the leaders upon the Council-entry, etc. Father, Hakimji and others are expected here by the end of the month. You need not hesitate to come down for consultation whenever you wish. I expect in any event to see you on the 20th prox. as I understand the Working Committee meets on that date. I do hope you are keeping well and taking care of yourself.

Panikkar has seen this letter and he will hold himself ready to be relieved whenever you think it necessary and would be liable for repayment of the loan.

Yours sincerely,

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

From a photostat: S.N. 8503

64. LETTER TO A. A. PAUL

POST ANDHERI,
March 15, 1924

DEAR MR. PAUL,

I have your letter of the 8th inst. enclosing a copy of Mr. Aitken's letter. I believe he and I know each other. If he is the Mr. Aitken I know, he knows my views very well. However, I shall jot them down here for what they are worth.

The Indian community of South Africa includes people from all provinces and represents Hinduism, Islam, Christianity and Zoroastrianism. There are many South Africa-born Indians who are Christians and are highly educated and therefore naturally very sensitive about self-respect. The restrictive legislation of South Africa applies to them although South Africa is their home and although the majority of them never expect to see India at all. It is not known here that rightly

or wrongly these young men and women have adopted European customs, manners, dress, etc., but neither their Christianity nor their education nor their Europeanization has saved them from the bar sinister. I mention this fact not to show that they should have a special or separate treatment (they would themselves object to any such distinction), but to emphasize the fact that the restrictive legislation in South Africa is predominantly racial in character. The economic aspect occupies a subordinate position. The Indian claim is exceedingly simple and reasonable. They have voluntarily accepted administrative restriction of Indian immigration and, as a matter of fact, hardly any Indian who has not previously resided in South Africa and practically made it his home is admitted. In exchange for this voluntary self-denial, the domiciled community claims equality of treatment. This position has been always regarded by the thoughtful Europeans of South Africa as eminently reasonable, and in 1914, an agreement was arrived at between the South African Government and the Indian community to which both the Imperial and the Indian Governments were party, whereby it was understood that no further restrictive legislation should be passed and that the position of the domiciled Indians would be steadily and progressively ameliorated.[1] The local Indian community, therefore, has a double grievance in respect of the present anti-Indian agitation in South Africa. The vast majority of Europeans in South Africa are nominally Christian. I have the privilege of claiming many of them, especially the missionaries, as my life-long friends. What is wanted is for the real Christians to dare to stand for truth and justice. There is unfortunately too much of expedience even amongst some of the best of them. They think that standing for truth in the face of prejudice will impair their usefulness for service. I have always dissented from this view, and my humble opinion based upon extensive experience is that such an attitude is a concession, although totally unconscious, to Satan.

I need hardly assure you that Mr. Aitken's letter will be regarded as strictly confidential and, on that account, I shall make no use of my letter to you either.

Yours truly,

A. A. PAUL, ESQ.
GENERAL SECRETARY
THE STUDENT CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION OF INDIA, BURMA & CEYLON
6, MILLER ROAD, KILPAUK
MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 8500 and 9927

[1] *Vide* "Cable to G. K. Gokhale", 22-1-1914.

65. CABLE TO EAST AFRICAN INDIAN CONGRESS[1]

[On or after *March 15, 1924*]

CONGRESS
MOMBASA

DELIGHTED COMMUNITY GOING FORWARD WITH PROGRAMME SUFFERING SUCCESS YOURS IF YOU CONTINUE. REGRET UNABLE SEND ANYONE. ANDREWS JOINS.[2]

From a photostat: S.N. 9926

66. CABLE TO SAROJINI NAIDU[3]

[Before *March 16, 1924*][4]

PRAY TELL GENERAL SMUTS AND RESPONSIBLE EUROPEANS THAT THE CLASS AREAS BILL[5] IS A POOR RECOMPENSE FOR THE LOCAL INDIANS' EXEMPLARY SELF-RESTRAINT THROUGHOUT THE INTERESTED CAMPAIGN AGAINST THEM. EUROPEANS SHOULD REMEMBER THAT THE LOCAL INDIANS VOLUNTARILY SUBMITTED TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE RESTRICTION OF FURTHER INDIAN IMMIGRATION. REMIND THE UNION GOVERNMENT OF THE ASSURANCE GIVEN TO GOKHALE.[6] THAT NO FURTHER DISABLING LEGISLATION WILL BE

[1] This was in reply to a cable from the East African Indian Congress dated March 15, which read: "Non-payment going ahead. Government callous imprisoning attaching property. Request send four workers preferably Andrews, Vallabhbhai, Mahadevbhai, Devdas. You visit Kenya recovery health."

[2] At the end of the draft telegram Gandhiji wrote: "Let Mr. Andrews see this and forward tomorrow if the approves."

[3] Sarojini Naidu (1879-1949); poetess, social reformer; lectured widely in India and the U.S.A. in 1928-29; first woman President of the Congress, 1925. She was in South Africa at this time.

[4] *Gujarati*, 16-3-1924, carried a translation of this cable.

[5] This, though not specifically directed against Indians, contained provisions which could be used in urban areas for the compulsory segregation of Asiatics", and "might well have led to the utter ruin of many Indian traders. . . . " The bill lapsed for the year 1924 as a consequence of the unexpected dissolution of the South African House of Assembly.

[6] On his visit to South Africa in 1921.

PASSED. ALSO THE COMPACT OF 1914[1] NOTHING SINCE DONE BY THE LOCAL INDIANS DESERVES THE PROPOSED TREATMENT . ACCEPTANCE OF THE CLASS AREAS BILL IS TANTAMOUNT TO POLITICAL AND CIVIL SUICIDE. I TRUST YOUR WINSOME ELOQUENCE WILL DISARM OPPOSITION AND MAKE THE LOT OF YOUR COUNTRY-MEN EASIER FOR YOUR PRESENCE.

From a microfilm of a newspaper cutting: S.N. 8535

67. LETTER TO J. P BHANSALI

POST ANDHERI,
March 16, 1924

MY DEAR BHANSALI,

How glad I was to receive your letter! I have gone through the greater part of it. I have not yet read the cuttings you have attached to it. I want to write out my jail experiences. Your notes[2] will be valuable. I propose to send them to Jairamdas for him to add, amend or merely corroborate. Having remained in perfect isolation from you all, my statement must in some respects be one-sided. Your notes will, therefore, as I have said, be of value.

I confess that I had not thought of referring to you or Jairamdas at the time of writing my experiences. Nothing had matured in my mind as I am just now occupied with the things on which I must give my opinion. Your letter, however, has come at a most opportune moment. You have said nothing about yourself. Do please let me have a line. Hardly a day has passed but I have thought of you. I had inquired of you of everyone who had come from the Ashram.

Yours,

SJT. J. P. BHANSALI
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a photostat: S.N. 8506

[1] Made between Gandhiji and General Smuts, on January 22, 1914, it bound the Government to the principle of consultation with Indians before any legislation affecting them was passed. *Vide* "Cable to G. K. Gokhale", 22-1-1914, "Interview ti *Rand Daily Mail*", 23-1-1914, "Letter to Bhavani Dayal", 23-1-1914, "Cable to G. K. Gokhale", on or before 25-1-1914, "Speech at Mass Meeting", 25-1-1914, "Cable to G. K. Gokhale", 26-1-1914, "Letter to Indian Grievances Commission", 26-1-1914 and "Smuts-Gandhi Correspondence", 28-1-1914.

[2] These are not available. It is however likely that these related to Bhansali's own experiences of jail life; *vide* also the following item.

68. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

POST ANDHERI,
March 16, 1924

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

Bhansali has sent me the accompanying notes. I would like you to go through them and add, amend or corroborate. It will help me to supplement my own jail experiences so that I may not give a mere rosy picture. Do also tell me when you write as to how you are getting on and tell me all about Dr. Choithram's health. He must get well very quickly.

SJT. JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat: S.N. 8507

69. LETTER TO A. D. SKENE CATLING

POST ANDHERI,
March 16, 1924

DEAR MR. CATLING,

I thank you for your note sent through Mr. Panikkar.

I shall be delighted to see you and Mr. Iyer or Wednesday at the time stated by you.

Yours sincerely,

A. D. SKENE CATLING, ESQ.
MESSRS REUTERS LIMITED
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8509

70. LETTER TO D. HANUMANTRAO

POST ANDHERI,
March 16, 1924

MY DEAR HANUMANTRAO,

I have your long but welcome letter. You need not apologize henceforth for the length of your letter because you never write idly.

The only way for those of us who, living in isolated, unprotected places, rely for protection upon God's grace and not upon force of arms, is to have as few valuables as possible whether in the shape of money or otherwise, and to cultivate fellowship even with the roughest element surrounding us. That is what is being attempted at Sabarmati.

I appreciate your suggestion regarding the founding of an Ashram like the Sabarmati one in the different Provinces of India. I would like to do so, but they cannot be founded for the mere wish. We need the proper stamp of men and I have no knowledge of them. You have established one and you realize the difficulty of carrying it on. There is another at Wardha, as you know, conducted by Vinoba, whom you know. It came into being because a Vinoba was found. There is another near Andheri, because a Keshavrao Deshpande has been found. All the four are struggling. Such Ashrams are an organic growth and they will come into being in their own time, but I like the centre of your suggestion, namely that I should remain at the Sabarmati Ashram and endeavor to make it perfect. I would love to do it. The external political activity is not of my seeking. I therefore cannot give it up of my will. If God desires that I should develop the Ashram by being in it, He will make my way clear. If it is a real organic growth, I know that it will continue to make progress whether I am in it our outside. After all, if any such institution has to depend merely upon one man's existence on earth, it has to perish with him, but if it is to be of a permanent character, it must depend for its existence upon its own independence and internal vitality. Nor need we be impatient about their progress or success. It is sufficient if we do the best according to our lights and leave the rest to Him who disposes of everything. I think you have done well in not taking upon your shoulders the grave responsibility of taking young women in the Ashram so long as you have no woman worker who can stand on her own and who can become a wall of protection to such girls. I shall hope that your own wife will be such in time.

Now about the Nature-cure. Every change at Sabarmati, so far as diet and medicinal aid are concerned, is, I know, a fall. It commenced with my first serious illness. It shook me and I lost confidence in myself, whereas at Kochrab I handled fearlessly and with confidence in Nature's healing power two cases of confluent small-pox in the face of medical opposition and serious enteric fever at the same time. At Sabarmati, after my illness, I have not been able to handle even trivial cases. My theory is that a man who himself becomes a prey to

illness is unfit to guide others. I tried almost to the point of obstinacy to do without milk and ghee, but I failed. Had the illness not overcome me, I would have continued my experiments, but I was nonplussed, and I must make the same sad confession about medicine. A man who advises abstention from such things must be prepared with an effective substitute. Having myself become a broken reed, I have allowed things to take their own course. This breakdown in the application of Nature-cure is a tragedy of my life. Not that I have lost faith in it, but I have lost confidence in myself. Help me to recover it. You can see how Maganlal understands me through and through. He has sent Shivabhai to you without any reference to me, because he realizes our tragic fate just as much as I do. We shall all, therefore, be watching your progress with greatest sympathy and attention. You will therefore not hesitate to write to me about this whenever you have anything new to tell me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. D. HANUMANTRAO
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
PALLEPADU (NELLORE DIST.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 8508; also C.W. 5113

71. LETTER TO MANGAL SINGH

POST ANDHERI,
March 16, 1924

DEAR SARDAR MANGAL SINGH,

This will introduce to you Mr. Panikkar who is coming there to replace Professor Gidwani. You may know that Mr. Panikkar is an M.A. of Oxford with First Class Honours. He was a Professor in the Aligarh Muslim University and non-co-operated on my imprisonment. He was in the *Swarajya* office with Mr. Prakasam for some time. If you want him, he will edit the *Onward* also. I have given him the purport of our conversations. I believe that Mr. Panikkar has assimilated the essentials of the doctrine of non-violence. I have told him that he is to give the public an unvarnished and impartial statement about all the happenings in connection with the movement of the S.G.P.C. Whilst he must necessarily be sympathetic in his consideration of the situation as it presents itself to him from time to time, he must not hide short-comings if he notices any, and I have told

him too that not to hide them would be the best service he can render to the cause. He will, of course, show the head of the S.G.P.C. all the reports that he makes to the Congress Committee from time to time previous to their despatch to the Secretary.

Will you kindly make arrangements for Mr. Panikkar's lodgings and ordinary comforts and also take him to Mrs. Gidwani and Mrs. Kitchlew.

I hope the work is going on smoothly. Please remember me to the friends who accompanied you. I hope to hear from you in due course. I need hardly say how glad I was to find that the Jatha allowed itself to be arrested without a murmur and in a dignified manner.[1]

M. K. GANDHI

SARDAR MANGAL SINGH
AMRITSAR

From a photostat: S.N. 9929

72. TELEGRAM TO SHUKLA[2]

[On or after *March 16, 1924*]

CONGRATULATIONS COMMUNITY FOR JATHA'S DIGNIFIED PEACEFUL SURRENDER. ANDREWS JOINS. PANIKKAR REACHING THERE TUESDAY. PLEASE MEET.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S. N. 9928

[1] On March 17, Mangal Singh replied, saying that the earlier instructions to the Jatha to "sit tight" and "not willingly give themselves up for arrest" were later revised and they were asked to "gladly surrender". 500 of the Jatha accordingly surrendered. He spoke of the "splendid behaviour, cool courage and remarkable restraint displayed by the Jatha" and requested Gandhiji to address them a few lines on this point.

[2] This was in reply to a telegram from Shukla of Akali Sahayak Bureau dated March 15 received on March 16, 1924, which read: "Second Shahidi Jatha on receiving order of arrest surrendered itself in exemplary manner. Official poster at Amritsar admits their peaceful behaviour."

73. THE ROOT OBJECTION

ANDHERI,
March 17, 1924

A document dated the 1st of February 1920 and signed by me at Lahore and handed to Dr. (now sir) Joseph Nunan[1] has been reproduced in an elaborate paper (dated 22nd November, 1923) on the status of Indians abroad. As it has been used in support of a scheme of Indian colonization in British Guiana and as it is stated in that paper— "so far as is known, it still expresses Mahatma Gandhi's attitude towards British Guiana," it is necessary to make my position clear. The statement made by me in the February of 1920 is as follows:

Lahore, 1st February, 1920

From the outset Mr. Gandhi made it perfectly clear that he was not prepared to take any step that could be construed as a personal encouragement by him to Indians to leave India. He was not in favour of the emigration of Indians. At the same time he realized that many held different views on this point and he was equally not in favour of using compulsion. by legislative or

executive action to compel Indians to stay at home. They should be treated as free citizens at home and abroad. They should certainly, however, be protected from misrepresentation. He knew nothing to prevent people emigrating now except a Defence of the Realm Regulation which would expire six months after the War. (This is the regulation preventing the emigration of unskilled labourers for work abroad, until six months after the War, unless under special or general licence.)

Once assured that equal rights for Indians existed in regard to political, municipal, legal, commercial and industrial matters in British Guiana, and that they were not alone receiving fair treatment from the administration and the general community, but would be guaranteed the continuance of such fair treatment, he would not oppose any scheme of free colonization by Indian agricultural families.

He was satisfied that the Colony had liberal constitution, and that Indians could be and were elected to membership of the Legislature and to municipal office. He was satisfied that they had equality of rights with other races, and that there were opportunities of acquiring land for settlement. He was in favour of allowing a test of the scheme subject to a report at the end of six months on its working by Mr. C. F. Andrews or some other representative

[1] Attorney-General of British Guiana. In 1920 he led a deputation to India to recruit emigrants for colonization in British Guiana.

of the Indian popular leaders. The deputation accepted this proposal of a report by a popular representative independently of any supervising officer nominated by the Indian Government, and offered to pay all expenses.

Mr. Gandhi agreed that all necessary guarantees for the continuance of equal treatment could be furnished by the Colonial Office and British Guiana Government through the Government of India to the Indian people and its popular leaders.[1]

It was hardly fair to use this statement in support of any scheme. It could only be used for supporting a trial shipment under the supervision of Mr. C. F. Andrews or someone having the same status and having the same intimate knowledge of the position of British Indians abroad. But I admit that if such a trial proved successful from the Indian standpoint, I should be bound, under the foregoing statement, not to oppose a scheme of colonization under proper safeguards. My views, however, since the February of 1920, about the British system of Government have, as is well known, undergone a revolutionary change. At the time I gave the statement, my faith in that system, in spite of bitter, hostile experiences, had not altogether disappeared. But now I am able no longer to rely upon verbal or written promises made by persons working under that system and in their capacity as officials or supporters. The history of Indian emigrants to South Africa, East Africa and Fiji is a history of broken promises and of ignominious surrender of their trust by the Imperial Government and the Indian Government, whenever it has been a question of conflicting interests of Europeans against Indians. The handful of Europeans have almost succeeded in East Africa in bullying the Imperial Government into sacrificing the prior rights of Indian settlers there. In South Africa, the Indian settlers' fate is trembling in the balance. In Fiji, the Indian is still the underdog. There is no reason to suppose that British Guiana, if the test came, will be an exception. The moment Indians become successful rivals of Europeans in that colony, that very moment all guarantees, written or verbal, will disappear. Filled as I am with utter distrust of the British Imperial system, I am unable to countenance any scheme of emigration to British Guiana, no matter how promising it may appear on paper and no matter what guarantees may be given for due fulfillment of the pledges given. The benefit that must accrue to the Indian emigrants under any such scheme will be illusory. I am,

[1] For Gandhiji's views on the question expressed in 1920, *vide* "Punjab Letter", 2-2-1920 & "British Guiana and Fiji Deputation", 4-2-1920.

therefore, unable to countenance the proposed scheme of Indian colonization in British Guiana. I do not hesitate to give my opinion without consultation with the British Guiana deputations because of the root objection stated above. If I had to express an opinion upon the merits of the scheme, the ordinary rule of courtesy would have bound me, before saying anything hostile to it, to meet the British Guiana deputation's and understand their view-points. Not till India has come to her own and has a government fully responsible to her people and able effectively to protect Indian settlers abroad from injustice can any advantage accrue to Indian emigrants even under an ideal scheme.

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 20-3-1924

74. LETTER TO A. W. BAKER[1]

POST ANDHERI,
March 18, 1924

DEAR MR. BAKER,

I was delighted to receive your letter with *The Key to Happiness. Be Careful for Nothing* has ever been with me, and did I not place all my worries at the feet of God, I should have gone mad by this time. All I can say at present about the other part of your letter is that I am endeavouring to follow where God leads me. Nothing can possibly keep me away from that light except my ignorance. I have no axes to grind, no worldly ambition to serve. The only purpose of life is to see God face to face, and the more I see of life and its experiences, the more I feel that everyone does not receive the light in the same way even as, though the sun is the same, we see it differently from the equatorial regions, from the temperate zone and from the frigid zone. But I do not wish to argue with you. I have simply stated what has become a deep conviction with me.

[1] Attorney for Dada Abdulla Sheth, whom Gandhiji met in Pretoria in 1893; introduced the latter to Christian friends. Gandhiji wrote of him: "He still corresponds with me. In his letters he always dwells on the same theme. He upholds the excellence of Christianity.

Do please remember me to the friends I had the privilege of knowing there.

Yours sincerely,

A. W. BAKER, ESQ.
HILLCREST
P. O. NORTH RAND
TRANSVAAL

From a copy: S.N. 8528; also C.W. 5128

75. LETTER TO HARDAYAL NAG

POST ANDHERI,
March 18, 1924

DEAR MR. NAG[1],

I have your letter of the 9th instant.

Thanks for your inquiry about my health. I am making steady progress and am able to attend to my correspondence. Do please therefore write whatever you wish to.

Yours sincerely,

BABU HARDAYAL NAG
CHANDPUR
DIST. TIPPERAH (BENGAL)

From a photostat: S.N. 8519; also C.W. 5122

76. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI[2]

POST ANDHERI,
March 18, 1924

DEAR DR. ANSARI[3],

How relived I was to receive your comforting wire. Many thanks for it. The Big Brother cannot afford to be laid up in bed. The work before [us] is appalling and we are so few to do it. Please keep me informed of the patient's progress from day to day.

[1] President, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee

[2] This was in reply to Dr. Ansari's telegram of March 18, concerning Shaukat Ali's illness, which read: "Blood examination proved mild typhoid infection. Temperature varies 101 to 104. No complications, no anxiety." S.N. 8517. Gandhiji also wrote to Shaukat Ali; *vide* the following item.

[3] Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari (1880-1936); nationalist Muslim leader; President, Muslim League, 1920; President, Indian National Congress, 1927.

Pray remember me to Begum Ansari, Dr. Abdur Rahman and other friends.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8521

77. LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI

March 18, 1924

DEAR FRIEND AND BIG BROTHER,

It will becomes you to have typhoid fever or any fever. Let illness be only my lot in our circle. But I do not want to inflict a long letter on you. May God soon restore you.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8520

78. LETTER TO N. K. BEHARE

POST ANDHERI,
March 18, 1924

DEAR MR. BEHARE,

I have the text of the resolutions passed by the Depressed Classes Conference held at Koteshwar. You may depend upon my doing all that is possible for me to do in the common cause.

Yours sincerely,

N. K. BEHARE, ESQ.
NORMAL SCHOOL
WARDHA

From a photostat: S.N. 8522; also C.W. 5121

79. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

ANDHERI,
March 18, 1924

DEAR MOTILALJI[1],

I have your telegram about rejection of the Finance Bill.[2] I rejoice because the victory gives you joy, but I cannot enthuse over it, nor am I amazed at the victory. With proper discipline and tact it was not an impossible feat, and I never doubted your very great tactfulness and persuasive eloquence and your patience with threats, and I entirely agree with you that, if you had more time for organization and a larger backing from the country, you would have carried everything before you in the Provincial as well as the Central Legislature. What, however, I cannot get over I explained somewhat to Lalaji[3]. Since then my views have developed further along the same line, and at one time I thought of dictating a fairly long letter setting forth my views, but I held back for three reasons. I doubted the wisdom of the course. Knowing how busy you are, I felt I ought not to inflict a long letter on you, and thirdly, I wanted to conserve my energy for the things I must do from day to day. If you are able to carry out the original programme, we shall meet before long.

I hope in the midst of your very wonderful activities you are keeping good health.

Yours sincerely,

[PS.]

I have just received your second wire. How I wish I could see eye to eye with you and thus share your joy to the full.

PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU
25, WESTERN HOSTEL
DELHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 8525; also C.W. 5118

[1] Motilal Nehru (1861-1931); lawyer and politician; co-founder of Swaraj Party; elected to Central Legislative Assembly in 1923 and 1926; presided over Committee which drafted Nehru Report, 1928; President of the Indian National Congress, 1919 and 1928

[2] Lala Lajpat Rai

[3] On March 17, on a motion by Madan Mohan Malaviya, the Central Legislative Assembly had withheld leave to introduce the Finance Bill by 60 votes against 57. Motilal Nehru's telegram, dated March 18, said: 'Finance Bill again introduced today with Viceroy's recommendation. Assembly refused leave without division."

80. LETTER TO FRANCIS LOW

POST ANDHERI,
March 18, 1924

DEAR MR. LOW,

I have your note of the 17th instant.[1]

I shall be glad to see your representative on Thursday next at 9 a.m.

Yours sincerely,

FRANCIS LOW, ESQ.
"EVENING NEWS OF INDIA"
TIMES BUILDING
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8524; also C.W. 5123

81. LETTER TO FRANK P. SMITH

POST ANDHERI,
March 18, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I must thank you for your letter of 5th February and for [your] appreciation.[2]

Yours sincerely,

FRANK P. SMITH, ESQ.
MESSRS THOMPSON & SMITH
LAWYERS
SAPULPA, OKLA.
U.S.A.

From a copy: C.W. 5119

[1] Francis Low, then Assistant Editor, had proposed that, in view of Gandhiji's health, the interview should not be long or of an exhaustive character, but should deal with the representative's impressions of his visit. For the report, *vide* "Interview to *Evening News of India*", 20-3-1924.

[2] Frank P. Smith, of a firm of lawyers, Oklahoma, U.S.A., had written: "With all of the world figures of statesmanship in mind, I greet you as the foremost one from a real Christian standpoint. The great principle of all wisdom, progressing materially with all power that works anywhere to its infinite ends, will vindicate my esteem of you. Your policy is the first one which practically concedes the supremacy of the spiritual over the material, the superiority of the power of love over that of physical force. We could well follow. . . your example to a peace that will be universal and lasting. . . . " S.N. 8234

82. LETTER TO HOWARD S. ROSS

POST ANDHERI,
March 18, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter[1] of the 15th February.

In the present state of my health, I am able only to give my attention to things I know and which I dare not avoid.

Yours sincerely,

HOWARD S. ROSS, ESQ.
MESSRS. MONTY, DURANLEAU, ROSS AND ANGERS
BARRISTERS AND SOLICITORS
VERSAILLES BUILDING
90, ST. JAMES STREET
MONTREAL (CANADA)

From a photostat: S.N. 8523; also C.W. 5120

83. LETTER TO K. P. KESAVA MENON

POST ANDHERI,
March 19, 1924

MY DEAR KESAVA MENON,

I have your letter.[2]

I know that the condition of the suppressed classes is the worst in your part of India. As you say, they are not merely untouchable, but they may not walk through certain streets. Their condition is truly deplorable. I do not wonder that we have not yet attained swaraj. To vindicate the right of these countrymen of ours to the use of public streets, the Provincial Committee is organizing a procession containing

[1] This referred to a scheme for the substitution of a 'work-unit' for a 'result-unit', which, it claimed, was the 'cause of all trouble' in labour relations. Ross also sent Gandhiji a copy of *Equitist*, organ of the 'Equitist' movement. S.N. 8336

[2] Kesava Menon, Secretary, District Congress Committee, had informed Gandhiji in his letter of March 12 that a procession of the *Ezhavas*, the *Tiyyas* and the *Pulayas*—the 'unapproachables'—would be taken on a 'prohibited' public road round the temple, "to be conducted in the most orderly way possible". *Vide* Appendix "Extract from K. P. Kesava Menon's Letter", 25-3-1924.

them that shall pass through the forbidden streets.[1] This is a species of satyagraha. At this stage I do not need to draw attention to its conditions. There should be no show of force if any of our people oppose their progress. You should meekly submit and take all the beating, if any. Everyone taking part in the procession should be acquainted with the conditions and be prepared to fulfill them. There should be only a limited number. There should be no defiance, and if you find that the processionists are not likely to comply with the conditions, there should be no hesitation in postponing the procession. I fear that we have not canvassed enough the opponents of the reform. Caution, therefore, is all the more necessary. The problem, I know, is very difficult. To advise from my sick-bed is easy enough. The best thing, therefore, that I can do is, after uttering the caution, to wish you every success in the proposed enterprise.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. P. KESAVA MENON
CALICUT

From a photostat: S.N. 10262; C.W. 5124

84. LETTER TO D. R. MAJLI

March 19, 1924

MY DEAR MAJLI,

My hand is a little steady now. How delightful to have your postcard! Do write whenever you can. You will soon be calm, I have no doubt. Do not fail to come here whenever you are permitted and able.

M. K. GANDHI

D. R. MAJLI
BELGAUM

From a copy: S.N. 8530

[1] A newspaper report said: "Arrangements are briskly going on in Vykom to start satyagraha in case the authorities prohibit the unapproachables from passing along the Temple Road." The Untouchability Committee was to meet at Vykom on March 28 to decide the line of action.

85. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR[1]

POST ANDHERI,
March 19, 1924

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I was able today to read your interview[2] from first to last.

You have touched upon topics on some of which I am pledged to silence till I have met the leaders who have warmly advocated Council-entry.

Whether the last Congress[3] was a success or not is a question upon which I can say nothing because I was not an eye-witness. Your remarks on the question are most interesting.

You seem to think that the Congress has done very little in the matter of untouchability and general national education. I venture to dissent from the view. The removal of untouchability has been brought within the range of possibility in the near future because of the incessant propaganda by Congress Hindus. No doubt a great deal still remains to be done. It is not an easy feat to root out prejudices which have acquired an undeserved sanctity because of their age. But the barrier is breaking down.

I heartily endorse your remark that it is the duty of the Hindus to move and win over all the minorities to the service of the country.

I wish that your pronouncement against untouchability was more precise and uncompromising. I am not concerned with its origin. I have no manner of doubt that the higher orders are entirely responsible for perpetuating the sin. It is unfortunate, too, that you have likened the untouchability of women and others on certain occasions with the permanent untouchability under every circumstance of the suppressed classes and their descendants. Nor am I enamoured of the method you have suggested for the amelioration of the condition of these classes.

You say that the boycott of law-courts and Government schools should be removed. I venture to doubt the soundness of the

[1] C. Vijayaraghavachariar (1852-1943); lawyer and Congressman; presided over the Nagpur session of the Indian National Congress, 1920

[2] This had appeared in *The Hindu* and *Voice of India*. Vijayaraghavachariar had sent a copy to Gandhiji which, however, is not available.

[3] The Cocanada session of 1923 over which Mahomed Ali presided

proposition. Its value is at the present moment negative, but none the less great on that account. Both these institutions have lost prestige. What is wanted is removal of the slightest trace of bitterness against those who do not comply with the boycott, that is, lawyers who still practise law and boys who still make use of Government schools. We shall win both over if we are not bitterly hostile, but concede to them the right of free judgment or sympathize with them for their weakness. I am convinced that, whenever we have not succeeded well or at all, the primary reason has been our inability or unwillingness to enforce non-violence with all its implications in our personal conduct.

I do not wish to say anything about your suggestions as to the position after swaraj, if only because methods that ultimately bring about swaraj will largely decide our programme after swaraj.

You seem to think that "for years to come, perhaps for a century or for ever" we are bound to be partners with England not from choice, but because we must. Therefore, for you evidently swaraj without the British connection is unthinkable. In my opinion, if British connection is a necessity of our existence, whatever the measure of freedom we may enjoy under that connection, it cannot be described as full swaraj, for full swaraj means, in my humble opinion, our ability at any moment to sever the connection. Partnership for me has no meaning if one party is too weak to dissolve it. It will also follow from your reasoning that swaraj will only have to be a grant from the British Parliament. You know my view. The very definition that I give to swaraj is that we have to take it and, therefore, we have to grow to it. It is an eternal condition, whether with an individual or with a nation. Moreover, if swaraj has only to be received as a grant from the British Parliament, the whole of the argument against Council-entry, in my humble opinion, falls to pieces.

I hope you are keeping well. I am making slow but steady progress.[1]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR
THE ARAMA
SALEM

From a photostat: S.N. 8526; also C.W. 5125

[1] Vijayaraghavachariar replied to this letter on March 23; *vide* "Letter to C. Vijayaraghavachariar", 28-3-1924; also *vide* Appendix "Letter from C. Vijayaraghavachariar", 23-3-1924.

86. LETTER TO S. E. STOKES

POST ANDHERI,
March 19, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I got the registered packet[1] on Sunday, and yesterday being my first Monday of silence after admission to the Sassoon Hospital, I was able to read both the papers. The written memorandum I am sending up as desired by you. I found both to be useful and instructive as giving me the mentality of one of whose impartiality I am certain and whose opinions I value. If I could but accept your premises and your view of non-co-operation, there is not much with which I should disagree. I entirely endorse your opinion that, if there is any Council-entry at all, it should not be for mere obstruction. On the contrary, we should take advantage of everything good that may be offered by the Government measures and endeavour to do our best to correct the evil in them. Accepting your reasoning, I would also endorse your view that the embargo upon lawyers and law-courts should also be lifted. But I think that, perhaps, there is a fundamental difference between us as to the interpretation and implications of non-violent non-co-operation and, therefore, what appeared to you to be a dismal outlook on your coming out of prison would not have set me thinking of other means of getting rid of the paralysis which you felt and saw had overcome all Congress activities. I would have regarded it as a necessary stage in the evolution of the public life of the country. It would have been for me a rare opportunity and still rarer privilege for redoubling my efforts and testing my faith in the programme. You have cited your own personal experiences and naturally concluded that there was something wrong about the programme in that the work that was patiently built by you and your co-workers had been almost undone in a moment. But there is a saying among lawyers that hard cases make bad law. Properly applied, it is a sound truth. Paraphrased in religious terms, it means that because, under some exceptional circumstances, departure from religious truth may appear to be advantageous, it furnishes no ground for losing faith in the truth. In your own case I would have reasoned to myself: This

[1] This contained "memorandums which put the case for Council-entry more completely".

undoing of the work must be regarded as the people's sacrifice in order to get the real thing. And what is that real thing? For the common masses to rid themselves of the fetish of power. For ages they have been taught to look to a Government to do everything for them, to protect them. The Government, instead of being regarded as an instrument in their hands for their advantage, is looked up to as something beyond and apart from them which, like a deity, whether benignant or malignant, has got to be propitiated. Non-co-operation as conceived by me is ceasing to co-operate with that idea of Government and teaching the people to feel that the Government is their creation and not they creatures of the Government. I should not therefore wonder that many of the so-called advantages that we have hitherto enjoyed through the instrumentality of such a Government have to be sacrificed. If the non-co-operation was not non-violent, we would seek, as all nations in history have sought, to beat Governments with their own weapons, that is, force of arms. In such a fight it would be folly not to make use of the whole of the Government machinery. People in a violent struggle do not expect to sacrifice though they are prepared for it and, if they have at their disposal arms superior to those possessed by the Government, beat it down without any sacrifice. But in a non-violent struggle resort to arms is eschewed, and sacrifice for the moment is a necessity of the case. In practice, too, in our own struggle, ever since the September of 1920, we have been sacrificing. Lawyers, school-masters, schoolboys, merchants, every class of people who have realized the implications of non-violent non-co-operation, have sacrificed to the measure of their ability and understanding. I know men who have lost money because they would not go to a court of law. I know cases in which the Government officials have chuckled with pride and pleasure that men who before used to gain advantages through their instrumentality were losing, but those who lost with a full knowledge of the struggle counted their loss as gain. It is my firm conviction that you cannot enter the Councils at the present moment with the present system and the administrators with their present mentality without participating in violence of an extremely bad type which is the basis of the Government of India. Take again the history of the other Governments of the world. By way of illustration I cite the Egyptian Government. They are in a fair way to attaining to what they want. They have resorted to ordinary means hitherto adopted. The Egyptians are trained for the use of arms. It was open to them to take part in the Councils and all administrative

machinery because they were able and willing to vindicate their position by force of arms. In India we have a state of things, so far as I am aware, without a parallel in the world. The people as a mass are neither willing nor able to take up arms. If you go to the Councils and are defeated in your purpose by the Government, you must be prepared for raising a rebellion. It cannot be successfully raised in India. Nor are the present Councillors men who can give that training to the people. My endeavour was and is to find a substitute for ordinary rebellion, and that is civil disobedience. The Councils are no training-ground even for the Councillors for civil disobedience. They believe in the "tooth for tooth" law. The sophistry, evasion and even fraud of the Government benches are returned in [their] coin. Their manifest purpose is to embarrass the Government. Their appeal is to fear. The non-co-operator's manifest purpose is never to embarrass, and his appeal must always be to the heart, therefore, to love and trust.

You evidently seem to think that mystical and religious non-co-operation can run side by side with the purely political non-co-operation of the Councils. I hold that the two are mutually destructive, and my faith in religious non-co-operation is so immutable that, if I find that it would not answer the needs of India and that the masses would not respond to it, I should be content to be alone and rely upon its ultimate invincibility to convert even the masses. Indeed, I see no escape for this world except through the acceptance of non-violence as the predominant and ordinary rule of life. The present society is ultimately based upon force. That is violence. My endeavour is no less than to get ride of this worship of force, and my conviction is that, if any country is ready, for assimilating the doctrine in its entirety in a large and workable measure, it is India. And having that conviction, I have no other remedy for the needs of our country.

I think I have already said more than I wished to. It is possible to amplify what I have said, but I have no doubt that you will yourself dot the i's and cross the t's. I am almost impatient to express my opinion upon the Council-entry and kindred matters, the more so after reading your memorandum, but I am under promise to Motilalji, Hakimji and other friends not to give public expression to my views till I have met them again and discussed the whole thing. When I am free to say all that I have in view on this question and If you have time to spare from your writings, you will see the development of the

outline I have sketched above.[1]

With love,

Yours sincerely,

S.E. STOKES, ESQ.
KOTGARH
SIMLA HILLS

From a photostat: S.N. 8527

87. STATEMENT ON OPIUM POLICY

Mr. C. F. Andrews has shown me a paragraph in his writings in *Young India* regarding the opium policy of the Government of India. In that paragraph he quotes Mr. Campbell, the Government representative at the Geneva Conference held in May 1923.[2] Mr. Campbell is reported to have stated that "from the beginning India had handled the opium question with perfect honesty of purpose, and not even its most ardent opponents including Mr. Gandhi had ever made any reproach in that respect". The statement Mr. Andrews has shown me was written whilst I was a prisoner in the Yeravda Jail. Mr. Andrews tells me that, knowing my views in the matter of opium, he did not hesitate to contradict Mr. Campbell's charge against me, but in view of the importance of the matter, he wants me to state my position clearly regarding the opium policy of the Government of India. I do so gladly. I confess that my study of the opium question is very cursory, but the campaign against drink, that was taken up in 1921 with such great enthusiasm and even fierceness, was a campaign not merely against the drink curse but against all intoxicating drugs. It is true that opium was not specifically mentioned, nor were opium dens picketed, except perhaps in Assam; but those who know anything of the history of the anti-drink campaign, know that sustained agitation

[1] To this Stokes sent a lengthy rejoinder on March 25, "trying to show that, to me, it is not the actual form of the expression of our non-co-operation which would determine whether it is non-violent or not; but the spirit in which the people learn to carry it out. . . In whatever I do not agree with you, I believe you will be patient with me, and I trust that you know how profoundly I am convinced of the greatness of the work you have to do. . . " S.N. 8581. Gandhiji's reply to this, if any, is not available.

[2] The Indian delegate at the Conference opposed the setting up of a board of inquiry by the League of Nations which would investigate and report on the quantity of opium required for strictly medicinal purposes.

was led against all manner of intoxicants not excluding even tea. During my travels in Assam, Mr. Phookan, the Assam non-co-operation leader, told me that the campaign had come to the Assamese as a blessing, because more than any other part of India Assam had a very large number of its population addicted to opium in a variety of ways. The campaign, however, Mr. Phookan said, had brought about a wholesale reform, and thousands had vowed never to touch opium. I should have thought that the severe condemnation that I have repeatedly expressed of the liquor policy of the Government would include condemnation of the whole of its policy regarding intoxicating drinks and drugs and that no separate condemnation was needed regarding opium, *ganja*, etc. If there was no ruinous and growing expenditure on an army kept not for the sake of preventing encroachments from without, but for suppressing Indian discontent due to the exploitation of India for the sake of Great Britain, there would be no revenue needed from immoral sources. In saying that India (meaning the Government of India) has handled the opium question with perfect honesty of purpose, Mr. Campbell evidently forgets that, in the interest of revenue, opium was imposed upon China by force of arms.

Young India, 20-3-1924

88. LETTER TO R. N. MANDLIK

POST ANDHERI,
March 20, 1924

DEAR MR. MANDLIK,

I have your letter.[1]

I have not seen the *Nava Kal*. I must not therefore express any opinion whatsoever. I have too great regard for Mr. Khadilkar to venture any opinion on what he might have written without knowing it and without seeing him personally about it, if I was not satisfied with it. You will therefore please excuse me for not giving any opinion on

[1] On March 19, Mandlik had reported Khadilkar as suggesting in *Nava Kal* that if the Viceroy issued the Finance Bill, which had been rejected by the Assembly, Motilal Nehru and other Swarajist leaders should be ready for a non-co-operation movement under the leadership of Gandhiji, by March end. He asked Gandhiji if such really was the case, whether he approved of the suggestion and believed such a campaign would be successful.

the question raised by you at the present moment. Will you please send me a marked copy of the *Nava Kal* referred to by you.[1]

Yours sincerely,

R. N. MANDLIK, ESQ,
"LOKAMANYA" OFFICE
207, RASTIBAI BUILDING, GIRGAUM
BOMBAY, NO. 4

From a photostat: S. N. 8544: also C. W. 5129

89. LETTER TO MANGAL SINGH

POST ANDHERI,
March 20, 1924

DEAR SARDAR MANGAL SINGH,

I was delighted to receive your letter.

I hope my telegram[2] of congratulations was duly received. I have hitherto refrained from saying anything publicly because I do not know what our friends there would wish me to do in the matter, and on receipt of your letter, I was inclined to make use of it in order to enable me to make appropriate reference to the splendid behaviour of the Jatha.[3] But doubting whether you would approve of such a step, I have framed an independent message[4] of which I enclose a copy herewith. Please keep me informed of further developments.

Please remember me to the other friends.

Yours sincerely,

SARDAR MANGAL SINGH
"AKALI-TE-PARDESI"
AMRITSAR

From a photostat: S.N. 8541; also C.W. 5127

[1] A copy of the paper appears to have been sent to Gandhiji. *Vide* "Letter to R. N. Mandlik", 28-3-1924.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Shukla", on or after 16-3-1924.

[3] The reference is to the second Shahidi Jatha of the Akalis which reached Gangsar Gurdwara, near Jaiton, towards the middle of March and peacefully allowed itself to be arrested.

[4] Not available

90. LETTER TO RAJ BAHADUR

POST ANDHERI,
March 20, 1924

DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,

I have your letter.

It was certainly naughty of you not to obey your father when he asked you to do a thing which was in itself pure and certainly not impure, even if your conscience would not allow you to call it pure. Bur after your admission that it was a mistake, father awarded punishment out of all proportion to the measure of your disobedience. When a parent denies himself something for the misdeeds of a child, it is a kind of punishment. You have not done me wrong, and there is nothing for me to pardon. Still, in order to induce father to relent and to recall his vow, you have a thousand pardons from me. Show this letter to him and let me know that he has commenced to take food offered or touched by you.

SJT. RAJ BAHADUR
CLASS VIII, SECTION B
SANATAN DHARMA HIGH SCHOOL
ETAWAH CITY

From a photostat S.N. 8546; also C.W. 5131

91. LETTER TO K. G. REKHADE

POST ANDHERI,
March 20, 1924

DEAR MR. REKHADE,

I have your letter of the 18th instant.[1]

I would suggest that you see Vinoba who is conducting the Satyagraha Ashram in Wardha. You would have seen him already. I know of no one more fitted to help you in the direction you wish than Vinoba. He is a disciplinarian, and discipline may be very hard, but I know that it is necessary and beneficial.

With reference to the pecuniary difficulties you are labouring

[1] This letter is not available.

under, my sympathies are with you, but they are of little value. I am helpless to guide you.

Yours sincerely,

K. G. REKHADE, ESQ.
PLEADER
WARDHA

From a photostat: S.N. 8547; also C.W. 5128

92. LETTER TO SHERIF DEOJI KANJI

JUHU,
March 20, 1924

DEAR SHERIF DEOJI KANJI,

You have read to me an extract from an article in the *Kesari* to the effect that, with reference to the proposed Madrassa near Poona, you went to the Government in disregard of the fact that I was mediating between the Madrassa Trustees and the Hindus concerned in the matter. I was grieved to note that reference, and I have no hesitation in saying that so far as I am aware, you have done nothing to injure the mediation and certainly you have not gone to the Government in disregard of such mediation. I remember too that, in the course of one of our conversations, I told you that my ability for effective intervention was very slender, and that, if for nothing else, for reasons of health I could not possibly become an arbitrator. All I am doing and should still, if it was possible, like to do is to offer friendly offices. I told you therefore that you should not stop any methods that were open to you for conserving the interests of the Trust in the hope that I should ultimately be able to effect a final settlement. I told you, too, that I was hampered in my negotiation for a settlement because of the fact that I did not know the parties concerned well enough to be able to say anything with confidence. You are at liberty to make any use you like of this letter.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHERIF DEOJI KANJI, ESQ.

From a photostat: S.N. 8548

93. LETTER TO N. S. PHADKE

POST ANDHERI,
March 20, 1924

MY DEAR MR. PHADKE,

I have your letter.

The article on Continence[1] referred to by you was written by me not because I believed that India was over-populated, but because I believed that self-restrain was good in every case and much more so at a time when we were ourselves in a state of slavery. I am totally opposed to artificial means of controlling the birth-rate, and it is not possible for me to congratulate you or your co-workers on having brought into being a League whose activities, if successful, can only do great moral injury to the people. I wish I could convince you and your co-workers to disband the League and devote your energy to a better purpose. You will please pardon me for giving my opinion in such a decisive manner. I have not hesitated to do so because I know something of such activities in England and France.

Yours sincerely,

N. S. PHADKE, ESq.
HON. SECRETARY
BOMBAY BIRTH-CONTROL LEAGUE
GIRGAUM
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8538; also C.W. 5130

94. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

POST ANDHERI,
March 20, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I hope you have received my letter written in reply to yours.[2] I have now another letter from you more difficult to deal with than the

[1] Presumably, the reference is to the article "In Confidence" published in *Young India*, 13-10-1920.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Abbas Tyabji", 15-3-1924.

first because the second is a business letter.[1]

I must not make any engagements in anticipation of the completion of my convalescence. Much will depend upon how I feel then and what the position is in the country. At the end of the convalescence, I must be totally untrammelled with any previous engagements, and this in the interest of the common cause. Do you not agree? Nor must I seek to influence Sir Prabhashanker Pattani.[2] That would be going out of my beat and, after all, what is the worth of a Parishad for the holding of which the permission is obtained through the intervention of a stranger, and for purposes of the Parishad I must be considered a stranger. The proposition that no permission is required from the head of a State for holding conferences is really untenable. That ordinarily conferences are held without permission does not mean that the right of interference is waived by the head of the State concerned or that an absolute right of holding a conference accrues to the conveners. I would therefore strongly advise the conveners of the proposed conference that they should formally and courteously ask for permission. If it is refused, it may be a proper ground for leading an agitation against such decision. Why would you not write to Sir Prabhashanker? He knows you well enough to secure a favourable reply.

I hope that you will be successful in your begging mission.

I quite agree that Kathiawar educational institutions should receive aid from the Provincial Committee wherever, in its opinion, such aid is necessary.

Your are quite right in stopping Devchandbhai from coming to me. The message I sent to him was that he would be welcome when he came, and if he does come, I shall enlarge upon the reasons for not pressing upon me the invitation for Presidentship.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9596

[1] This largely dealt with collection of donations from the public for a political conference.

[2] Diwan of Bhavnagar. Abbas Tyabji had suggested that Gandhiji should write to Pattani for securing permission to hold the Conference at Bhavnagar.

95. INTERVIEW TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"

JUHU,
March 20, 1924

In answer to questions, Mr. Gandhi very willingly gave a few details of his daily routine. He gets up at four o' clock, a practice which he invariably follows. After family prayers in which the household join, he reads religious literature for a time and then goes off again in a short-sleep. At six he has his breakfast of milk—Mr. Gandhi confessed with a twinkle in his eye that he was following scrupulously Colonel Maddock's instructions regarding food—and afterwards still following his old medical advisers' advice, he takes a walk on the verandah and treats his wound to a sun-bath. Immediately after this, he attends to his correspondence, both English and Gujarati. In order to deal with the former he has been provided with shorthand typists who greatly facilitate his work. His time until midday is occupied by correspondence, the study of political problems and the seeing of important political and other friends by appointment. Early in the afternoon he has his bath and at four o'clock is ready to see the very large number of visitors who call on him.

In the evening, about six, Mr. Andrews takes him for a walk along the sea-shore, and this walk has now been prolonged to about forty minutes. The day's work is over by about eight, at which hour Mr. Gandhi usually retires for the night. He explained:

Later on, I hope to take up spinning, once I am able to sit up without fatigue.

"What do you think of new Labour Government?" was one of the first political questions which our representative put to Mr. Gandhi. Mr. Gandhi evidently did not think much of it.

It has a precarious existence. It has to depend on the good-will of the other parties, and if it isn't to break in pieces, it has to conciliate its very exacting constituents and follow out its special domestic programme. I have no doubt that in trying to acquire the support of the majority of the House in pushing through its domestic programme, it will not hesitate to sacrifice its principles regarding Imperial policy affecting India, or Indians in South Africa and Kenya. In fact, I should not be surprised, seeing it is so weak, if the Labour Government does worse even than its predecessors so far as Indian policy is concerned.

Mr. Gandhi concluded by admitting that he was not much perturbed over the Labour Government, because India had to rely upon her own strength and resources.

When she becomes irresistible, I have no manner of doubt that

any Government, whether Labour, Conservative or Liberal, will fall in with India's demands.

On the subject of Council-entry and recent events in the Central Provinces and in the Assembly, Mr. Gandhi frankly confessed he could say nothing. The Swarajist leaders are coming down from Delhi to see him at the end of the month, and he cannot give any opinion on their actions until he has discussed the whole position with them. After having done this, he will be in a position to formulate his policy.

Interrogated regarding the Colonies Committee, which has just sailed in connection with the Kenya question, Mr. Gandhi thought that the Committee could do a great deal if it was not fettered by too many restrictions. He added:

Whether the personality of the Committee is strong enough to assert itself is very difficult to say. Speaking apart from my views as a non-co-operator, I cannot help noticing the absence of Mr. Sastri, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Andrews from the Committee. They are the men who had studied the question and know it in all its bearing, while Mr. Andrews is an expert. I cannot help saying that these omissions are glaring and inspire me with distrust as to the Committee's findings.

Mr. Gandhi gave an interesting explanation of the South African Government's decision to omit the Cape Province from the operation of the Class Areas Bill. He said:

This is merely an instance of selfishness on the part, principally, of the Dutch population. Nearly all the house-work in the Cape is done by Malay women, and if the Segregation Act came into force, these Malay women would be affected by it. This would mean depriving a major part of the white population of its domestic help, which would give no end of inconvenience. Consequently, as the Indian population of the Cape is small—about 10,000 in all—the Cape people decided that they are not worth worrying about as far as segregation is concerned in view of the difficulties which segregation would bring in its train.

In the course of the conversation, Mr. Gandhi paid a tribute to Col. Maddock—"Who was more than my doctor; he is my friend" —and to Mr. Andrews—or "Charlie Bhai" as he is familiarly known—who is his right-hand man at Juhu and who writes articles incessantly from morning till night.

"I hope when India gets swaraj, you will not pack us poor but honest European journalists back home," laughingly remarked our representative. Gandhiji replied with a bright smile as he shook hands:

Nothing is farther from my mind.

The Times of India, 21-3-1924

96. LETTER TO D. V. GOKHALE

POST ANDHERI,
March 21, 1924

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

Mr. Sherif Deoji Kanji showed me an extract from the *Kesari* in which he is charged with having gone to Government in disregard of my mediation. I was greived to see the extract. I have given him a note[1] which probably he would publish and you would see. I observe, too that a proper campaign has been started in the Press in connection with the matter. I wonder if all this was necessary. Is all hope of arbitration gone? Mr. Sherif Deoji Kanji told me that he and his co-trustees were ready to arbitrate. If it is at all within your power, I would like you to stop this agitation and induce the parties to consent to arbitration. I thought that you were waiting for Mr. Kelkar's return. I presume he will be back at the end of the month. I plead for patience.

Yours sincerely,

D. V. GOKHALE, ESQ.
EDITOR, "THE MAHRATTA"
POONA

From a photostat: S.N. 8553; also C.W. 5134

97. LETTER TO SHEVAKRAM KARAMCHAND

POST ANDHERI,
March 21, 1924

DEAR MR. SHEVAKRAM,

I have your letter.[1]

In my opinion, God's name and God's work go hand in hand. There is no question of preference because the two are indivisible. A parrot-like repetition of the name is worse than useless, and service or action without the consciousness that it is done in God's name and for God's sake is also valueless, and if we sometimes pass our time in

[1] Shevakram, in his letter of March 17, had stated that according to Guru Nanak two things were essential for *Mukti*, namely, prayer and a guru. He wanted to know what views Gandhiji had on the matter and also whether he had any guru.

merely repeating the name of the deity as we have to, it is simply a course of preparation for self-dedication, that is, service for the sake of and in the name of God, and when we are thoroughly attuned, continued service in that spirit is itself equal to the repetition of the name of the deity. In the vast majority of cases, however, the setting apart a part of our time for prayer is a vital necessity. So far as I am aware, all scriptures and, certainly, the Indian scriptures, hold a guru to be absolutely indispensable, but if we cannot get a real guru, a sham substitute is not only useless but injurious. That is one of the reasons why I suppose the tenth guru established the Granth Sahib as the last Guru.

I have no spiritual guru, but believing in the institution, I have been in search of one for the last thirty years. The very search is the greatest consolation to me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SHEVAKRAM KARAMCHAND
GURU SANGAT
HIRABAD
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a copy: S.N. 8554; also C.W. 5135

98. LETTER TO M. REINER

POST ANDHERI,
March 21, 1924

DEAR MR. REINER,

I have your letter of the 20th instant.[1]

I shall be pleased to see you on 26th instant at 5 p.m.

Yours sincerely,

M. REINER, ESQ.
ROOM 23, GRAND HOTEL
BALLARD ESTATE
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8551; also C.W. 5133

[1] Reiner had introduced himself as a visitor from Australia much interested in Gandhiji's work and personality, and wanting to have a clear impression of his doctrines of which he had heard a great deal.

99. LETTER TO GEORGE JOSEPH

POST ANDHERI,
March 21, 1924

MY DEAR JOSEPH,

I read your letter to Devdas. I hope that Mrs. Joseph is much better. I write this, however, to tell you that I hope to take charge of the editing of *Young India* from next month.[1] I am doing so not without some hesitation, but I feel I may no longer shirk the duty. I would like to know what your plans would be in the near future. I need hardly tell you that the assurance I gave you in Poona stands. If you have leisure for it, I would like you to give me a weekly article well thought out, packed with facts and written in your best style. It must not, therefore, be hurriedly written, but you should put yourself to pains for collecting information. Nothing would please me better than to have figures regarding the khaddar work, untouchability, national education, etc., in your district. You need not send such an article to the Sabarmati address, but send it directly to me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GEORGE JOSEPH
CHENGANUR (TRAVANCORE)

From a photostat: S.N. 8552; also C.W. 5136

100. LETTER TO LAJPAT RAI

POST ANDHERI,
March 21, 1924

DEAR LALAJI,

Andrews has shown me your letter to him. I have seen also Gourishanker Misra's letter to you. As you are due here on the 27th instant, I need not say anything at the present moment. When we meet, we shall discuss the special case of Gourishanker Misra and the cases of lawyers similarly placed. So far as I am concerned, I have no doubt whatsoever about the propriety of your going to Switzerland for regaining health and strength. What is the use of your remaining here with a lingering sickness and unable to make collections or to do

[1] Gandhiji resumed editorship with the issue of April 3, 1924.

other strenuous work for which you are specially fitted? Your are going not for enjoyment but for the purpose, on your return, of doing work in your own old effective manner. You would be running away from trouble if you projected a trip round the world or went like a millionaire to see exhibitions and shows. I wish, therefore, that you would get rid of the mood of dejection and take your trip to Switzerland as part of national service.

Yours sincerely,

LALA LAJPAT RAI
LAHORE

From a photostat: S.N. 8555; also C.W. 5137

101. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

POST ANDHERI,
March 21, 1924

MY DEAR RAJAGOPALACHARI,

I hope you are still putting on weight, avoiding fever and making steady progress.

From next month, I am taking charge of *Young India* and *Navajivan*. I feel I may no longer postpone, but I do not think I shall be able myself to provide all the matter as I practically used to. Please, therefore, regard yourself as bound to send something every week. You are specializing in khaddar. Therefore, I do not mind your articles being always on that subject, but treat it from week to week in a new way, giving new facts. But, of course, I do not want you to be tied down to that alone and you may write on any other subject which you think will be of interest to the readers. I thought that I would be able by this time to write down my views on Council-entry and the Hindu-Muslim problem, but I am sorry I have not been able to do so as yet. Please do not blame me if you do find these views expressed in the columns of *Young India*. I wish you were here during the first month so that you may see everything previous to its being published, but we must do the best in the circumstances facing us. After all, it is not of much moment if I cannot avoid mistakes. I know I have the courage and wisdom to admit and correct them. There is the other side no doubt. People may be misled and it may be too late to set them right. Is not that also a part of the training?

Someone must have told you that Golikere[1] is already with me and his assistance is a great thing. He is to help me for the next three months at the most. Meanwhile Kristodas and Pearilal[2] will try to pick up enough shorthand writing for my purpose. In any case the pressure after I go to Sabarmati or after I begin to travel will not be so great. The bulk of the steady writing I want to finish during convalescence.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
THE EXTENSION
SALEM

From a photostat: S.N. 8556; also C.W. 5132

102. INTERVIEW TO "LIVERPOOL POST" AND "MERCURY"

[*March 21, 1924*]

Today I talked for over an hour with Gandhi. Somewhere outside the verandah hovered his son, and C. F. Andrews, an Englishman who espoused the cause of the African Indian and whose long beard and native garments and bare feet proclaimed one voluntarily quitting his own caste. Despite the countless visits which the Swarajist inflict upon Gandhi, I gained the impression that his gentle spirit is chastened through long imprisonment and illness. Gandhi admitted repeatedly the breakdown of that strange creed of his by which he hoped to make India a nation such as this materialistic world never saw—simple and non-violent, maintaining independence amidst opportunist Asia by the quality which he called "soul-force".

Now that they in the Legislative Assembly have voted down the Government's demand for money grants, they want Gandhi's consent to a campaign of civil disobedience throughout India which means an agitation against the payment of all taxes. It is known that Gandhi originally opposed participation in these Government Assemblies and cast no favorable eye on the Swarajist game of obstruction. But the Swarajist success has taken the country by storm, and the leader who made the swaraj movement before other politicians were heard of must bow to the reputation formed while he was in prison.

Civil disobedience is always an advisable weapon when governments are not based on the will of the people, but it is

[1] Gandhiji's stenographer
[2] Pyarelal Nayyar, Gandhiji's secretary, since 1920, and biographer

practicable only when the masses are imbued with a spirit of non-violence.

Gandhi remarked:

India is now ready for swaraj if granted, but India is unable to seize swaraj, either by force, which I oppose, or by disciplined non-violence.

Gandhi then defined swaraj:

It means Parliamentary Government, but I hope not in the sense of Western nations where selfish interest reigns supreme. It means also the return to India's ancient life. Despite years of sneering, I still believe that the home spinning-wheel can oust the British factory. If so, how can British capital, which is the sole reason for British dominion, expect compensation? Myself, I do not believe in a tariff wall against foreign imports.

Concerning the famous triple boycott against British courts, schools and Councils, Gandhi was pessimistic. He said he would now organize panchayats or courts of arbitration, resembling Sinn Fein tribunals, by which suits would be settled outside the King's writ. Concerning the schools, Gandhi hoped only to make the non-Government institutions more attractive. Asked what advantages the curriculum of swaraj schools had over Government schools, Gandhi said they teach freedom of thought, whereas the British schools inculcate only fixed rules which fit the natives for service under the present regime. Gandhi declared that such schools as on the Western plan make of the natives automatons. He added that complete boycott of British goods would drive the British from India; but he admitted that the time was not yet ripe.

Asked to state what hopes he had of early attainment of swaraj, Gandhi answered only in the negative. From experience in England, when he was a student. . . he declared that Labour would think first of British constituencies, last of all, [of] India. But on hopes from the present Swarajist obstruction in the Assembly, Gandhi was ominously silent. He thought the British, whom he did not regard as a bad people, would eventually hit upon an honourable agreement, and declared that he had good reason for this hope.

Passing to the matter of the army, he announced that he would reduce this to a fourth of its present establishment, and would change the whole railway system, which he thought followed too closely upon strategic lines.

"You have no enemies to fear?" Gandhi was asked. He replied:

We fear the Afghans. Once the Hindu-Muslim unity [is] established, the Amir of Afghanistan would not attack fellow-Muslims.

If Russia attacks us, we expect the militaristic nations of Europe to come to our aid to prevent Russia becoming too strong, and we should welcome help. What do I think of the present rulers of Russia? I take them at their face value. What builds on force ends by force.

Do the Indian masses understand your preachings on non-violence when at the same time they are told the British have done wrong?" I asked him. Gandhi replied:

Yes, but nowhere outside India would this be possible. You Westerners are unable to understand this, but it is the spirit of the Indian people.

Asked if his attitude was unchanged regarding the "evils" of Western civilization, Gandhi replied that he would not abolish the railways since they were already established; he approved of modern farm implements since Indian agriculturists needed help. Concerning the British factories, he hoped the spinning-wheel would prove their doom.

I asked Gandhi concerning Kemal Pasha's deposition of the Khalif. Gandhi replied that it did not effect Hindu-Muslim unity which, however, he confessed was not so strong as formerly. On this unity all resistance to the British depended.

The King of the Hedjaz won't do. All Islam feels he is a British representative.

Gandhi declared that India is suffering a grave disadvantage as the natives have been "emasculated" as soldiers since the British came to India.

What I want to end is the Indian's mortal fear of the white skin which was more prevalent when I was a boy than now.

The Hindu, 14-4-1924

103. ADDRESS TO STUDENTS AND TEACHERS, BOMBAY[1]

[*March 21, 1924*]

I need not say that I am pleased to see you all today. I am thankful to you for the little presents offered to me by you. Two at least of your presents convey a special meaning to me at present. The mat for carding and the slivers prepared by you remind me that I must immediately take up the work of spinning and carding. I assure you that when I am engaged in doing that work, I feel swaraj approaching nearer and nearer. Therefore, I request you all to pray for my

[1] A party of students and teachers of the Bombay Rashtriya Shala met Gandhiji at Juhu. They presented him with an address and some articles of handicraft prepared by them.

complete and immediate recovery in order that I may be able to take up that work as early as possible. I desire that you also should devote yourselves to the spinning-wheel and I am sure you will also feel that it brings Swaraj nearer and nearer. If we concentrate upon the constructive programme, we are sure to get all we want. You must have heard the beautiful song of Poet Narasinh Mehta sung by Lalitji. I wish you understand the meaning of such religious songs, and I appeal to you that you will make all efforts to translate the noble ideals of such poems into your actions. But I warn you that even for teachers it is a very difficult thing to act according to the ideals inculcated in these beautiful songs.

I remember that when I first visited your school, I told you that you had to learn much in the art of music. Today I again have heard some of the students singing, but I am sorry to remark that you have not as yet made sufficient progress to earn my certificate. Still, however, I do hope that when I next visit your school after my complete recovery, you will make yourself fit for passing—though complete mastery over that art may not be possible for you even then.

The Hindu, 26-3-1924

104. MESSAGE TO SOUTH AFRICAN EUROPEANS

[Before *March 22, 1924*][1]

If you continue to oppress us, we shall leave your Empire and, if we do, where will your Empire be then?

The Hindu, 26-3-1924

105. LETTER TO DWIJENDRANATH TAGORE

ANDHERI,
March 22, 1924

DEAR BORODADA,

It was good of you to send me two copies of your essays on the *Bhagavad Gita*. I note with gratitude your affectionate inscription in one copy. I shall prize it and endeavour at the earliest opportunity to understand your interpretation of the message of the *Gita*.

Mr. Andrews always gives me your kind messages. His presence

[1] Sarojini Naidu quoted this in the course of a speech at a gathering at Cape Town on March 22.

is a great comfort to me. It was so good of you to have let him come to me.

With much respect,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8564

106. LETTER TO R. PIGGOTT AND A. M. WARD

POST ANDHERI
March 22, 1924

DEAR MISSES PIGGOTT AND WARD,

I have your letter of the 16th instant.

I am ashamed to say that I have entirely forgotten the interview mentioned by you. However, I am sending your letter to a friend in Sindh who, if he can see his way, I am sure, will assist you. You will please excuse me if I have not addressed you correctly. I showed your letter to Mr. Andrews. He distinctly remembers having met you, but cannot give me any information about you.

Yours sincerely,

MISS R. PIGGOTT AND MISS A. M. WARD
HYDERABAD (SINDH)

From a photostat: S.N. 8562; also C.W. 5140

107. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

POST ANDHERI,
March 22, 1924

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

I enclose herewith a letter received from Sindh. Probably you know the ladies. As you will note, they ask me to bring their activity to the notice of those who have much to give. I do not put you under that category, but I thought I should pass the letter on to you so that, if it is a deserving activity, at least it does not remain without any notice by us. You will, therefore, please write to me and let me know what exactly this activity is and what you think of it. I do not want you to go out of your way to make inquiries. There is no hurry about the matter. I know that every moment of true workers is too precious to be spent in anything but the task immediately before them.

Lalaji is coming to Andheri on the 27th instant.

I am sorry I have not yet been able to frame the draft statement regarding Council-entry and Hindu-Muslim unity. I am afraid, therefore, that you will not see it before publication as I had hoped you would, but you will see it only after it is published.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure

JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM, ESQ.
HYDERABAD (SINDH)

From a photostat: S.N. 8560; also C.W. 5139

108. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

ANDHERI,
Saturday, March 22, 1924

DEAR RAJAGOPALACHARI,

This is hand-made paper. I understand it was specially got and printed for me. I am using it for the first time today. It is now after 3.30 a.m. I have hardly slept during the night after 12. You are one of the reasons. I had a chat with your son last night. Incidentally, I asked him whether he wrote to you and you to him in English or Tamil. When he told me it was English, the information cut me to pieces. We had then a discourse upon the possibilities of Tamil. Young Ramaswamy thought that it was not capable of being used for high and scientific thought. My brain then began to work and it is still working. You are my greatest hope. Why this, as it seems to me, grave defect? If the salt loses its savour, etc. What are the Tamil masses to do, if her best sons neglect her? What is the future before poor Ramaswamy as a worker among the masses? Do enlighten me or promise henceforth to write to the young man in your best Tamil. It was good of the *Hindu* people to offer to lend services of the shorthand-writer.

With deepest love,

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 8566

109. LETTER TO MRS. EMMA HARKER

POST ANDHERI,
March 22, 1924

DEAR MRS. HARKER,

I have your letter.[1] The sad note about it grieves me. The progress continues. Could you come on Tuesday next at 5 p.m.?

Yours sincerely,

MRS. E. HARKER
C 3, DATUBHOY MANSIONS
MAYO ROAD
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8563; also C.W. 5138

110. LETTER TO ROMAIN ROLLAND[2]

ANDHERI,
March 22, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I appreciate your loving card. What does it matter that you have in places made mistakes in your essay? The wonder to me is that you have made so few and that you have succeeded, though living in a different and distant atmosphere, in so truly interpreting my message. It demonstrates once more the essential oneness of human nature though flourishing under different skies.

With much regard,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[1] This read: "I am going through rather a critical and sad time and ask you to pray for me. I know I shall find comfort in seeing you." S.N. 8549.

[2] Romain Rolland had written to Mahadev Desai on February 24: "If I have unconsciously committed a few mistakes in the little book that I have dedicated to him, let Mahatma excuse me—for the sake of the great love and veneration that his life and philosophy have inspired in me. A European may often be deceived in his judgment about an individual or a nation of Asia. But his heart cannot be deceived, when he finds in them the common God and universal love. As our European Mahatma—Beethoven—sings in his 'Ode to Joy'; let us millions of human beings embrace each other." S.N. 8573

[PS.]

Pray excuse the pencil hand. My hand is yet too shaky to manage the ink-pen.

M. K. G

M. ROMAIN ROLLAND

From a photostat: S.N. 8565

111. STATEMENT TO PRESS[1]

BOMBAY,
March 23, 1924

The following cablegram has been received from Cape Town signed by Mr. Pather, General Secretary, South African Indian Congress:

> South African Indian community submits notwithstanding strongest protests Union Government determined carrying through Class Areas Bill violating pledges given. Bill indefensible. Foreigners, also Euro-Africans, Malays and Natives being exempted. Bill will apply only to Indians. Euro-Africans, Malays and Natives assembled in thousands Cape Town assured Mrs. Sarojini Naidu of support to Indians in opposition to Bill. Indians will never submit segregation. Inform India. Please take such action as you think best. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu has made deep impression and won many hearts. Mrs. Naidu deferred leaving South Africa until 30th April owing great demand on her in interest of the cause.

This is startling news, almost too bad even for South Africa to be believed. I have already endeavoured to show why the Cape was to be excluded from the operation of the measure. If the information cabled by Reuter as to the exclusion of the Cape is correct, there is something wrong in the foregoing cable, or the information contained in it is applicable to the other three Provinces only, namely, Orangia, Transvaal and Natal. The position will be that, so far as the Cape is concerned, the Cape Indians will still remain exempted from the operation of the measure, whereas, in the other provinces the meassure will apply only to Indians. There is no difficulty about understanding the exemptions, because the idea of segregation of Natives and Malays in the extreme sense is new. Every European

[1] This was published generally in the Press. *Young India* reproduced it under the title "The Class Areas Bill".

household has Natives of South Africa as domestic servants. Malays, as I have shown in a previous communication[1], are negligible quantity except in the Cape. We have, therefore, the naked truth before us that the Bill in question is aimed merely at Indians and that it connotes not only segregation but indirect expulsion. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu's visit to South Africa and her inspiring presence there will undoubtedly steel the hearts of the Indian settlers for further effort. Her presence is also bringing Europeans and Indians on the same platform. Let India, however, not be lulled into a sense of false security because of the commanding presence of Mrs. Naidu in the midst of the sorely-tried Indian settlers. After all, the cultured Europeans of South Africa are gentlemen, and I have little doubt that Mrs. Naidu is receiving all the attention that is due to her for her many and matchless gifts, but the South African Europeans have also a fixed and determined anti-Indian policy. General Smuts is a finished diplomat. On due occasions he can speak honeyed words, but he knows his mind, and let there be no mistake that unless India can make an effort adequate to the situation, the Bill will be carried through the Union Parliament in spite of Mrs. Naidu's resource-fulness.

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 27-3-1924

112. LETTER TO S. A. BRELVI

POST ANDHERI,
March 23, 1924

DEAR MR. BRELVI,

I thank you for your note.

That, in spite of the unanimous public opinion so emphatically expressed demanding the removal of the ban against Mr. Horniman, the Government should remain adamant is to me an index at once of our weakness and the Government's studied defiance of public opinion so strongly and unanimously expressed as in Mr. Horniman's case. Assuming for the sake of argument that we are in error in demanding the removal of the ban, it is evident that the Government will not leave us room even for making mistakes. The only use, therefore, of our public meetings is to show Mr. Horniman that his services are not forgotten and that, if he has not received the passport

[1] *Vide* "Anti-Indian Campaign in South Africa", 14-2-1924

to return, it is not for want of will on our part but for sheer want of ability. Even that is no small use. I therefore wish your meeting every success.[1]

Yours sincerely,

S. A. BRELVI, ESQ.
"BOMBAY CHRONICLE"
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8567; also C.W. 5142

113. LETTER TO D. R. MAJLI

POST ANDHERI,
March 23, 1924

MY DEAR MAJLI,

Early in the morning m[2] first thought went out to you, and I asked myself how I could help you to be yourself again. Belgaum is to have the honour of holding the next Congress Session.[3] I know you want to take your part in the preparations. I know also that you are one of the best of workers. All that you need do is to become perfectly calm and get rid of excitement. I fear that you have been thinking too much, in the jail, of our country's troubles; but it would not do for us merely to be thinking of the troubles. What are we? We should leave all the cares to God. Ours is to do our level best in lightening the burdens of India. Have you ever read Tulsidas's *Ramayana*? If you do not know Hindi fairly well, probably you have not read it. The great saint wrote his *Ramayana* in my opinion, to glorify Rama's name. For me it has been a talisman. My nurse, whom I used to love as my mother, and in whose company much more of my time was passed in childhood than in my mother's, used to tell me that if I thought of evil spirits at night and dreaded them, I could ward them off by repeating the name of Rama. Having faith in the nurse, I followed her prescription, and whenever at night vague fears seized hold of me, I used to recite the sacred name, and it answered the purpose. As I grew old, the faith weakened. My mentor, the nurse, was

[1] This paragraph constitutes the message which was read at a meeting of the Journalists' Association at the *Voice of India* Office, Bombay, on March 25; K. Natarajan, editor of *The Indian Social Reformer*, presided.

[2] This was held in December 1924 under Gandhiji's presidentship.

[3] Shankerlal Banker, who was his co-prisoner in Yeravda

dead. I ceased to take the name of Rama, and my fears revived. In the jail I read the *Ramayana* with greater attention and still greater devotion than ever before, and whenever I felt lonely or felt the pride in me rising and telling me that I could do something for India, to give me due humility and to make me experience the presence of the Almighty, and thus to remove my loneliness, I used calmly to recite the name Rama with all the halo that Tulsidas has surrounded it with. I cannot put in words the indescribable peace that then came on me. As you know, Mr. Banker[1] was torn away from me for some time. When he rejoined me, he related his own experiences to me. He used to experience all kinds of dreadful things after the cell-door was cruelly locked upon him. But he related to me graphically how the recitation of the name calmed him and gave him strength also to shed all those unbecoming fears. I, therefore, send you the much-tried prescription. Think, whenever you feel you are excited, of Rama and the peace-giving nature of the recitation. Continue to recite the name slowly, forgetting everything, and considering yourself as one of the tiniest atoms in the mighty universe, and God willing the excitement will subside, and you will experience a blissful peace. The sages of old knew from experience what they were saying when they prescribed for troubled souls *Ramanama*, *Dwadash Mantra*[2] and such other things. The more I think of them, the more true all those *mantras* appear to me today. I wish you could have faith enough to repeat *Ramanama* or such *mantra* which memory might have hallowed for you, and I know that you will soon be yourself again.

Yours sincerely,

[PS.]

You know that you owe me a letter. I wrote immediately in reply to your postcard. I await your acknowledgment of my letter.[3]

SJT. D. R. MAJLI

BELGAUM

From a copy: C.W. 5141. Courtesy: Krishnadas

[1] Majli wrote a postcard in reply, which was published in *Young India*; *vide* "Notes", 3-4-1924.

[1] A sacred formula of 12 syllables: *Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya*

[2] Majli wrote a postcard in reply, which was published in *Young India*; *vide* "Notes", 3-4-1924.

114. LETTER TO GANGADHARRAO B. DESHPANDE

POST ANDHERI,
March 23, 1924

MY DEAR GANGADHARRAO,

I was thinking this morning very early what I could do to help Majli. The result was a letter of which I send you a copy.[1]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GANGADHARRAO B. DESHPANDE
BELGAUM

From a photostat: S.N. 8568: also C.W. 5143

115. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Monday [On or before *March 24, 1924*][2]

CHI. MANI,

Bhai Manilal told me today that you are now free from fever, but still very weak and are living at Dr. Kanuga's. I should like you to come over here, if father and the doctor permit. Here you will have both rest and peace of mind, and will soon recover your strength. And then, I shall be able to take work from you. Neither you nor your father need fear that you will be a burden to me. For you will be a burden only to the floor, and the floor is pretty strong and capable of bearing the weight of a hundred girls like you! Another [person] on whom the burden will fall is the cook. But Revashankerbhai has given us a stalwart cook as strong as the floor itself! If you come here, I shall be free from anxiety on your account. For every man or woman engaged in the service of the nation and falling ill away from me adds to my worry. If they are under my observation, I would be free from worry to that extent.

I am sure Dahyabhai is giving more time to spinning to make up for your not spinning.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro —Manibehn Patelne, p. 12

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The letter appears to have been written on a Monday prior to March 25, the date on which Gandhiji wrote to Mahomed Ali referring to the ailment of Manibehn Patel.

116. APPEAL TO THE PUBLIC[1]

JUHU,
March 24, 1924

DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I address this appeal to such of you as come to see me daily, or intend doing so.

I appealed to you sometime ago through the Press that those of you who must see me may do so between the hours of 4 and 5 in the evening. You are either not aware of this or come before or after these hours just because you cannot help coming. The result is sad for me. The little service that it is given to me to render is disturbed.

The capital of energy at my disposal is very small, and I want to utilize it only in service. I wish to resume editorship of *Navajivan* and *Young India* from next week. And I need absolute quiet for that work. If all my time and energy are taken up in seeing and entertaining you, it will not be possible from me to edit the weeklies in the way I desire.

Moreover, seeing me is not likely to be of any benefit to you. It is an indication of your love for me, but it is an exaggerated indication. The love itself is a great force, and I should have you apply that force not to seeing me, but to the service of the people. I would have you send me on all the money that you have to expend on a visit to me for being spent on the production and propagation of khaddar. I would have you devote all the time a visit to me would take up to all or any of the following objects:

(1) Spinning or carding and making slivers;

(2) Khaddar propaganda;

(3) Teaching spinning or carding to your friends and neighbours.

To such of those as are not prepared to do any of these things and still cannot restrain themselves from seeing me I would appeal to restrict their visits to the time between 5 and 6 on all evenings *except Monday*, my day of silence—when I cannot possibly see any visitor. It is evident that I cannot see them individually. I shall have to ask them to be satisfied with seeing me all at a time.

[1] This open letter, the original of which was in Gujarati, was published generally in the Press.

I may also request intending visitors to bring with them yarn spun by them or money for khaddar work. The yarn will be turned into khaddar and the money used for khaddar production.

I shall feel grateful if you will kindly accept my request and all the time thus saved will be saved for the service of the country.

I am,

Your faithful servant,

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 27-3-1924

117. LETTER TO D. V. GOKHALE

ANDHERI,
March 24, 1924

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

I thank you for your letter. I understand your position. But I do think that the trustees' approach to the Government is consistent with their readiness to go to arbitration. I promise not to misunderstand you. I may be grieved over certain actions and yet respect honest differences of opinion.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

As you had marked your letter private and confidential, I have destroyed it.

M. K. G

From a photostat: S.N. 8576

118. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

Monday, March 24, 1924

MY DEAR RAJAGOPALACHARI,

The son has begun before the father. That is as it should be. You can see how the discovery has preyed on my mind.

I had a long chat with Natarajan[1] and Jayakar. They are coming

[1] K. Natarajan

again tomorrow. I wish I could write out the statement[1] and let you see it before it goes to the Press. I shall make an effort but may fail. The uninvited visitors take away much of my time. I am trying to cope with the evil.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8577

119. LETTER TO K. G. REKHADE

POST ANDHERI,
March 25, 1924

DEAR MR. REKHADE,

I have your letter. I do not think you will be satisfied with the Ashram life in Sabarmati. All attention there is today concentrated upon the development of hand-spinning and hand-weaving. The literary side of the Ashram takes the background. Though, therefore, there is a very good library attached to the Ashram, I cannot say that the atmosphere is favorable for philosophical studies. One cannot be reading and thinking whilst all around one are away working for all that they are worth. The Ashram has been given that turn because I am convinced that we have had an overdose of philosophical and political studies. The faculty of working with our hands and feet is all but atrophied. An attempt is being made at the Ashram to revive the taste for hand labour. Nor is it possible at the Ashram to provide for your financial wants. Have you met. Jamnalalji? He might be able to guide you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. G. REKHADE
WARDHA (C. P.)

From photostat: S.N. 8582; also C.W. 5144

[1] This was presumably one on Council-entry and Hindu-Muslim unity which Gandhiji was contemplating at the time.

120. LETTER TO MAHOMED ALI

POST ANDHERI,
March 25, 1924

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

I have your letter[1]. I am following your movement through the papers, and I see that you have borne the domestic affliction[2] with the courage and resignation worthy of you. I had myself expected nothing less. I regard it as a privilege of friendship to receive the account you have given me of Amina's last moments. She was a dear good soul. It would be exceedingly good if you could pass a week with me. I would love to have you, Begum Saheba and the whole of your suite, but the accommodation in this big bungalow is now limited. I could easily take care of you, that is to say, you will be left to take care of yourself and make yourself as comfortable as it is possible in a place that has been turned into an hospital. I am lying in the midst of patients. Maganlal's daughter Radha and Vallabhbhai's daughter Manibai are both here and they are much weaker than I am myself. Prabhudas though not bed-ridden is also an invalid, and I have invited mad Majli too to come here. And how I would love to nurse the Big Brother also. But that can only be after convalescence. Let there be no mistake about the motive in having all these patients here. You may know that I am a better nurse than a politician, if I am one at all, and what is more, I felt ashamed to be occupying a big bungalow like this all alone when there were patients, some of whom, brought up under me from infancy, requiring far greater care, attention and change than I did. They are all here, therefore, not for my consolation but for their own good; but having turned the bungalow into an hospital, I have disabled myself for looking after guests, whom I would not have if I could not give them the attention they deserve. And while I should be quite glad to leave you to yourself, and feel that I have done enough, I could not feel likewise regarding Begum Saheba.

Now you know all about me. Tell me when you are coming. I wish you were here to join the discussions with the leaders who are coming over in the course of the week. Please tell Shaukat he had no

[1] This is not available.

[2] The reference is to the death of Amina, Mahomed Ali's daughter.

right to be bed-ridden. The next best thing for him to do is to get well quickly.

How is Hayat? He owes me a letter.

With love to you all,

Yours affectionately,

MAULANA MAHOMED ALI
ALIGARH

From a photostat: S.N. 8584 C.W. 5345

121. LETTER TO CHILDREN OF FREEDOM SOCIETY

POST ANDHERI,
March 25, 1924

DEAR BOYS,

I was so delighted to receive the parcel containing yarn spun by you continuously for seven days and nights. It was a very happy idea. I am sure that, if boys of all the National Schools were to put forth the same zeal that you have, we should be much nearer swaraj than we are today.

Hoping you will religiously set apart a certain time for spinning every day.[1]

Your well-wisher,

THE MEMBERS OF THE CHILDREN OF FREEDOM SOCIETY
NATIONAL SCHOOL
DHARWAR

From a photostat: S.N. 8585; also C.W. 5149

122. LETTER TO RAGINI DEVI

POST ANDHERI,
March 25, 1924

DEAR SRIMATI RAGINI DEVI,

I thank you for your kind letter[2] of the 11th February and the interesting cutting containing your article on Indian music.

[1] *Vide* also "Notes", 3-4-1924.

[2] Ragini Devi had written on February 11, emphasizing constant American interest in Gandhiji and his interpretation, and seeking his blessings for her work of popularizing Indian music in the United States.

I thank you for your kind inquiry about my health, and I am glad to be able to tell you and other friends who are interested in it that I am making steady progress towards complete recovery.

Yours sincerely,

SRIMATI RAGINI DEVI
1240, UNION STREET
BROOKLYN
NEW YORK

From a photostat: S.N. 8586; also C.W. 5148

123. LETTER TO S. A. BRELVI

POST ANDHERI,
March 25, 1924

DEAR MR. BRELVI,

I have now glanced through the synopsis of Professor Shah's novel. I wish I had time for going through the whole work in manuscript which he has kindly offered to lend me. In view of the fact that I am resuming editorship of *Navajivan* and *Young India*, I feel I must deny myself the pleasure. Every available moment must remain mortgaged for that purpose until I regain my won energy, I ever do. Do you want me to return the synopsis?

Devdas has written to you about your letter. I need not confirm what he has said—that you will be welcome whenever you come. Do please pass a whole day here. The place is certainly delightful and you will like it.

Yours sincerely,

S. A. BRELVI, ESQ,
"BOMBAY CHRONICLE"
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8587; also C.W. 5147

124. LETTER TO DR. SATYAPAL

POST ANDHERI,
March 25, 1924

DEAR DR. SATYAPAL,

I was glad to receive your letter giving me so much information about tension between Hindus and Muslims. I await the second instal-

ment regarding Sikhs and Hindus with interest. I know that the problem before the country is very serious and very complex, and in our ability to solve it satisfactorily and permanently lies the road to swaraj. I have been thinking over it day and night ever since my release, and as soon as I have seen the leaders, I shall begin to write upon it.

I thank you for your inquiry about my health. I am making steady progress. I observe you are not now in Amritsar, but in Lahore. Why the change?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. SATYAPAL
LAHORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 10460; also C.W. 5146

125. TELEGRAM TO BALIBEHN VORA

[After *March 26, 1924*][1]

BALIBEHN
CARE HARIDAS VORA
RAJKOT

SEND KANTI AHSRAM TODAY.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 8588

126. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

JUHU,
March 27, 1924

He said he was satisfied with the progress and, though he needed much rest, he had resumed his practice of getting up at four o' clock in the morning. To a further question he replied that he had already begun the indispensable work of spinning. As for the books he had written in the Jail, he gave our representative to understand that the History of Satyagraha in South Africa would be soon published by the Navajivan Publishing House, while the text books for children were made over to the Gujarat Vidyapith authorities for publication.

[1] This was written on the reverse of the telegram received from Kitchlew, dated March 26, 1924.

Pointing out *The Times of India's* leaderette on Mrs. Naidu entitled "Mrs. Naidu's Poetics", our representative asked Mahatmaji what he thought of Mrs. Naidu's mission.

I am sorry to see *The Times of India's* leaderette. All the charges levelled against Mrs. Naidu in the leaderette are really answered in the special cable to *The Times of India* published in the same issue. All cable messages, being a summary of speeches or writings, have to be taken with the greatest caution.

Illustrating this from his own life, as rich in varied experiences as in suffering, he said:

I was myself lynched in Durban because Reuter had cabled in 1896 a summary in a few sentences of pamphlet[1] I wrote in India describing the position of Indians in Natal. It was not a conscious misrepresentation; nevertheless the intensive condensation of a 30-page octavo-size pamphlet gave a very inaccurate account of what I had written. The Europeans of Natal, when they understood what I had already stated in India, repented of the wrong they had done me.

Referring to the "Message from Mr. Gandhi" facetiously alluded to by the *Times*, Mahatmaji observed:

My message to Mrs. Naidu was published in the *Times* and other newspapers. I am inclined to believe that Mrs. Naidu has undoubtedly made a forcible, but in no sense irritating, speech. She is too shrewd not to understand the gravity of the situation in South Africa. the special cable to the *Times* would almost go to show that, if anything, she is too conciliatory. For instance, she is said to have admitted that there is some economic menace owing to the low standard of certain classes of Indians. It can be proved that their mode of life is no worse than that of the retail traders of the same standing. I am not giving my own testimony but that of Europeans. Nor can it be a grievance against Indians that they sent money to India. It can be proved from statistics that Europeans sent out of South Africa ever so much more than Indians. I should not be at all surprised if the full statement made by Mrs. Naidu to the *Times* correspondent has clauses qualifying the statements. Anyway, according to the *Times* view of things, if she has erred, she has erred on the right side. I have no fear whatsoever of her presence in South Africa doing any harm to India by her unguarded language.

[1] This was written on the reverse of the telegram received from Kitchlew, dated March 26, 1924.

The interview which was gradually drifting to grave political problems was at this stage enlivened by the appearance of Mr. Andrews in khadi shirt and dhoti with a copy of the latest London *Punch* in his hand. "You are now immortalized, Mahatmaji, if you are not already so," humorously remarked Mr. Andrews with a broad smile.

"Here is 'Charivaria' in *Punch* about you," said he, handing over the number of *Punch* to Mahatmaji.

Gandhiji replied as he briskly noted the contents:

I am indeed immortalized, all the more so for the reasons that the reference to me occurs on the very first page and just after the picture of Pussy.

And then followed a loud burst of laughter ringing in the gallery, attracting the attention of two patients resting at a small distance.

Asked as to what he thought of the non-payment of the Poll-tax organized by the Kenya Indians, Mahatmaji replied:

As the Poll-tax affected only 4, 000 Indians, its non-payment is not calculated to develop into a sharp struggle. It is, however, bound to result in securing discipline and order amongst the Indians, though it does not involve intense suffering. Europeans must feel that Indians are determined and would no longer submit to injustice.

Pointing to Mr. Sastri's attitude, he said that Indians here must continue to give their moral support even as Indians in Kenya must persevere in the struggle.

Further asked as to what he thought of the Congress proceedings of the past two years, Mahatmaji frankly confessed that he had not been able to study the Congress proceedings of the past years.

Current events so much occupy such time as my feeble health allows me to spare. But even if I had leisure to study the Congress literature during the past two years, I should hesitate to judge or criticize the action of my co-workers. It is so easy to be wise after the event. But it is not equally easy to come to a just decision. But I have faith enough in the probity, single-mindedness and devotion of the principal Congress workers whether they were for entering the Councils or against. It was an honest difference of opinion. Such honest differences will remain so long as we are what we are. In my opinion, it is a healthy sign when people refuse to surrender their opinions for the sake of achieving a superficial unity.

Our representative further asked, "I have noticed your remarks about the Labour Government's Indian policy in the *Times*. Would you give the same opinion even if the Labour Government were in power with an over-whelming majority?"

I do not think I should much alter my view because, even with an overwhelming majority, unless a Labour Government places

principles before popularity, it will be difficult for it to shoulder a really liberal measure for India without risking its domestic policy.

As the talk drifted to the political events of the past two years, Mahatmaji expressed his profound satisfaction at the result of the Borsad satyagraha and remarked:

The lesson that Borsad satyagraha teaches is of inestimable importance. Whilst it is true that the Government of Bombay deserved to be complimented upon its reasonableness and sagacity in truly sizing up the situation, the Borsad satyagrahis by their utter non-violence, determination and the justice of their cause, made themselves invincible. And if it was possible to organize whole taluka for successful satyagraha in respect of a small and particular evil, it must be possible to organize satyagraha on a larger scale in respect of a general and deep-seated evil. The only thing required is sufficient workers with an unquenchable faith in their cause and their means. Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel himself had that faith and he had workers who were infected with the same faith.

Asked as to what he thought of doing after he fully gained his health, Mahatmaji said that would depend upon the situation that might face the country at that time.

I have no settled programme of the work after the completion of my convalescence. As I want to hold myself free for any emergencies that may arise, I am accepting no appointments in advance.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-3-1924

127. LETTER TO GANGADHARRAO B. DESHPANDE

POST ANDHERI,
March 27, 1924

MY DEAR GANGADHARRAO,

I read a paragraph in *The Mahratta* saying that Mangalore people are still disputing the resolution of the Karnatak Provincial Congress Committee fixing the Congress venue at Belgaum. Is it a fact and, if it is, please give me some details and tell me also whether I can help in any way. You may also give me the names of parties who are agitating for a reversal of the Committee's decision.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GANGADHARRAO B. DESHPANDE
BELGAUM

From a photostat: S.N. 8590; also C.W. 5158

128. LETTER TO T. A. SUBRAMANIA ACHARY

POST ANDHERI,
March 27, 1924

MY DEAR SUBRAMANIA,

I was delighted to hear from you from Durban.

I thank you for your good wishes and inquiry. I am making slow but steady progress towards complete recovery. You need not feel sorry about your inability to serve your country. I cannot ask you to be spinning there, but you can certainly make use of khaddar so far as it is possible even there, and out of your spare earnings you can contribute to the public funds required for carrying on the struggle at home.

Yours sincerely,

T. A. SUBRAMANIA ACHARY, ESQ.
175, UMGENI ROAD
DURBAN

From a photostat: S.N. 8591

129. LETTER TO OMEO K. DAS

POST ANDHERI,
March 27, 1924

DEAR MR. DAS,

I have your letter. I do not know whether it is to be published in Assamese or Hindi. In order not to delay the matter, I send you the following in English:

The only thing I can think of at the present moment as a remedy for our ills is for every one of us to take up the spinning-wheel or some activity directly connected with it such as carding, making slivers, hawking of khaddar, collecting cotton, distributing it, etc. I know that the universal spread of the charkha is indispensable for swaraj.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. OMEO K. DAS
EDITOR
"THE ASSAMIYA"
DIBRUGRAH (UPPER ASSAM)

From a photostat: S.N. 8593; also C.W. 5151

130. LETTER TO GEORGE JOSEPH

POST ANDHERI,
March 27, 1924

MY DEAR JOSEPH,

Here is a letter which speaks for itself. Will you kindly let me know what the facts are, and if it is a fact that you have threatened civil disobedience, the grounds for it.

I am sorry that you have not yet been able to get any conclusive report about Mrs. Joseph's illness. Patients are indeed kings, as you say in your letter to Devdas, but they form a huge confederacy, and decent ones live under one rule without their kingly glory in any way being diminished. But I have so filled this place that even if Mrs. Joseph could be persuaded to come here, I am afraid she would not feel comfortable. I have already Radha, Mani Ben, Kiki Ben, Prabhudas, and I make the fifth. I invited mad Majli to join me here even whilst I was in Poona, and he may come if he is at all capable of being moved. Will you care to put her under Dr. Jivraj Mehta's treatment in the State Hospital at Baroda? I would like you to consider the proposal seriously in consultation with Mrs. Joseph. Dr. Mehta is a specialist in tuberculosis. Of course, I know nothing of the arrangements at the Baroda State Hospital, but if Mrs. Joseph is at all prepared to be under Dr. Mehta's care, I would immediately inquire.

With love to both of you,

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GEORGE JOSEPH
CHENGANUR
TRAVANCORE

From a photostat: S.N. 8594 also C.W. 5155

131. LETTER TO E. R. MENON

POST ANDHERI,
March 27, 1924

DEAR MR. MENON,

Mr. Andrews has given me your letter for reply. I have forwarded it to Mr. George Joseph.[1] I know nothing of the threatened

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

civil disobedience. It is very difficult for me to give any opinion until I know the actual facts. Generally speaking, it is quite true that I have been averse to civil disobedience being started in the Indian States.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. E. R. MENON
C/O "THE INDIAN SOCIAL REFORMER"
EMPIRE BUILDING, HORNBY ROAD
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8592; also C.W. 5152

132. LETTER TO P. SIVASAMBA IYER

POST ANDHERI,
March 27, 1924

DEAR MR. SIVASAMBA IYER,

I have your letter of the 14th instant.

I appreciate your difficulty, but I do not know how to advise you or help you. I can only say if you have not received a letter from Deshabhakta Konda Venkatappayya, you should go and see him and explain to him your position. If it is any comfort to you to know, I may mention that the difficulty you find yourself in is not an exceptional case. It is the common lot of many a non-co-operator. And what is equally true is that many co-operators also labour under similar difficulties without the solace which is open to non-co-operators that their difficulty is due to obeying the dictates in their conscience.

Regarding the thieves of your cocoanuts, there are two ways open to you: either you continue to labour on their account and let them steal the fruit till they have had enough. I admit that this is a counsel of perfection. The other is suggested by yourself, namely, you cease to water the tree and let it die unless you can find some way of protecting it by means of a fence or some such contrivance.

Yours truly,

SJT. P. SIVASAMBA IYER
KIL PUDUPAKKAM VILLAGE
CHEYZAR TALUQ

TIRUVETIPURAM POST

From a photostat: S.N. 8595

133. CABLE TO H. S. L. POLAK[1]

POST ANDHERI,
March 27, 1924

KALOPH[2]
LONDON

NOT READY GIVE OPINION COUNCIL ENTRY TILL LEADERS SEEN. IF ARTICLE WANTED NOTWITHSTANDING CAN POST NEXT WEEK. ANDREWS MUST NOT LEAVE.[3]

From a photostat: S.N. 8596; also C.W. 5159

134. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

POST ANDHERI,
March 27, 1924

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have your cable. In the absence of precise instructions in the cable, I have taken it to mean that the *Spectator* wants my article by post, not by cable. The following was the reply sent to you today:

> Not ready give opinion Council entry till leaders seen. If articles wanted notwithstanding can post next week. Andrews must not leave—Gandhi.

I feel that it is useless to send any article till I can give my views definitely on Council-entry. This I am unable to do till I have conferred with the leaders who are responsible for the change in the Congress programme. They are expected here next week.

I expect to be at the above address till the end of May at the longest, but I may remove to Sabarmati about the middle of May.

With love to you all,

Yours sincerely,

HY. S. L. POLAK, ESQ.
LONDON

From a photostat: S.N. 8597; also C.W. 5156

[1] This was in reply to Polak's cable of March 22: "London *Spectator* wants from you article of fourteen hundred words giving summarily your present programme. Reply." S.N. 8566

[2] Polak's cable address

[3] Gandhiji also wrote to Polak; *vide* the following item.

135. LETTER TO SIR DINSHAW MANECKJEE PETIT

POST ANDHERI,
March 27, 1924

DEAR SIR DINSHAW,

Perhaps you have heard of the late Sorabji[1] of Adajan. As you know, he was in South Africa for a long time. He was one of the satyagrahis who suffered the longest term of imprisonment. After he qualified as a barrister, he went to South Africa to do public work there. His expenses were paid by a friend. He has left a widow and a daughter. Mr. Pallonjee is a near relative of the Sorabjee family. The widow and her daughter are at present living in Bombay for the sake of the daughter's education. The mother has to pay a very high rent. she tells me you have some decent houses for poor Parsees at a very cheap rent. I do not know the terms under which these tenements are let. There was very little left by Mr. Sorabjee. I think it was under Rs. 1, 000. This was all paid to the widow before I went to prison. If you can, consistently with the terms under which the tenements referred to are let to poor people, give a lease of one of them to Mrs. Sorabji, you will confer a personal favour on me. The late Sorabji was one of the dearest among my comrades. Among my many Parsee friends he was one of the most selfless. Mr. Gokhale himself was so much struck by the beauty of his character that he implored him to become a member of his Society, and had he lived and come back to India and had Mr. Gokhale also lived, it is highly likely that he would have joined the Society. I relate this not to influence your decision, because that would have to be arrived at in terms of the conditions guiding the lease of these tenements, but I mention the fact to show why I am interested in everything connected with the deceased. And, could I have persuaded the widow to throw in her lot with me at Sabarmati, I would not have troubled you; but I can well appreciate her desire to give her daughter a training such as is given to the general body of Parsee girls. For this I have no provision in the Ashram where we only turn out spinners and weavers and endeavour

[1] *Vide* "The Late Sorabji Shapurji Adajania", 27-7-1918.

to find the inmates as good a surrounding as is humanly possible for the formation of character. The literary training occupies but a subordinate position.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

SIR DINSHAW MANECKJEE PETIT

From a photostat: S.N. 8598; also C.W. 5157

136. LETTER TO R. B. SAPRE

POST ANDHERI,
March 27, 1924

DEAR MR. SAPRE,

I have your letter of the 11th February, for which I thank you.

I did receive the cable referred to by you, for which please accept my thanks for yourself and the other members of the Club. If you could give me some details of the Indian population in Germany, their occupation and the relations between Germans and the Indian residents, I shall be obliged.

Yours sincerely,

R. B. SAPRE, ESQ.
SECRETARY, INDIAN MERCHANTS' CLUB
GLOCKENGIESERWALL 2
HAMBURG (GERMANY)

From a photostat: S.N. 8599; also C.W. 5153

137. LETTER TO R. N. MANDLIK

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

DEAR MR. MANDLIK,

I thank you for sending me a marked copy of *Nava Kal*[1] referred to by you in your letter of the 19th instant.

In my opinion, the context gives a somewhat different meaning to the one put upon the sentences in question by you. I had those sentences and previous ones translated by a friend. The meaning that I gather is that Mr. Khadilkar puts the logical position to which our

[1] Gandhiji had asked for this earlier; *vide* "Letter to R.N. Mandlik", 20-3-1924

leaders are driven. You will see that the concluding sentence is interrogative. So far as I am myself concerned, there is no question of my leading a programme of preparations for civil disobedience. Whether the country is in a fit state for starting a campaign of civil disobedience is a question on which I dare not pronounce an opinion when I have hardly studied the condition of the different provinces. But of this I am sure that we shall gain nothing worth having until the country is ready for civil disobedience, and therefore, whether I am well or ill, the course is, in my opinion, quite clear. Enforcement of the Bardoli programme will make the country ready for civil disobedience in the quickest time possible.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. N. MANDLIK
EDITOR, THE "LOKAMANYA"
207, RASTIBAI BUILDING,
GIRGAUM, BOMBAY NO. 4

From a photostat: S.N. 8612; also C.W. 5170

138. LETTER TO A. W. MCMILLAN

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

DEAR MR. MCMILLAN,

I thank you very much for your letter.

I wish you every success in your efforts in Fiji on behalf of Indian residents there. My message to them is that they must so prepare themselves as to be able to help themselves under every form of difficulty.

I thoroughly endorse your sentiments that you do not want to live in constant antagonism with your own fellow-countrymen in Fiji. I am sure that you cannot serve Indians if you become antagonistic to your own fellow-countrymen. What is needed, I suppose, is a plain statement of truth and insistence upon justice at all cost. Neither can ever necessitate antagonism to anybody.

Yours sincerely,

A. W. MCMILLAN, ESQ.
BENARES CANTT.

From a copy: S.N. 8622

139. LETTER TO K. SRINIVASA IYENGAR[1]

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

DEAR MR. SRINIVASA IYENGAR,

Mr. Rajagopalachari writes to my son[2] saying that, on his mentioning to you the need of shorthand assistance, you immediately offered to send me your shorthand reporter without any charge whatsoever. I need hardly say how deeply grateful I am to you for the offer. I would have gladly availed myself of it had it not been for Mr. Golikere having, before my son received Mr. Rajagopalachari's letter, offered his services to me as soon as he came to know that I needed him. He had assisted me just before I went to prison.

Yours sincerely,

K. SRINIVASA IYENGAR, ESQ.
"THE HINDU" OFFICE
MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 8615; also C.W. 5169

140. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

MY DEAR RAJAGOPALACHARI,

I have written to Mr. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar's son thanking him for the free offer of the services of a shorthand reporter.

Mahadev has shown me the extract from Maulana Mahomed Ali's speech. It does not make good reading. I expect to see him shortly in any case.

Motilalji and Lalaji are coming tomorrow, and Hakimji the day after. I shall be, therefore, in the thick of the fight, and hope to be free to air my views on Council entry next week. How did you manage to get the recent attack of asthma? Was there no contributory cause?

[1] Son of Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, editor, *The Hindu*
[2] Devdas Gandhi

When do you propose to return here? Is it not possible to come here a few days before the Working Committee's meeting?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
SALEM

From a photostat: S.N. 8613; also C.W. 5161

141. LETTER TO A. M. JOSHI

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

DEAR MR. JOSHI,

You have written[1] to Mrs. Gandhi kindly inviting her to open the Khadi Exhibition to be held in connection with the forthcoming Maharashtra Provincial Conference. Mr. Dastane however told me that he was inviting Mr. C. Rajagopalachari to perform the function. I am positive that it is much better to have him. Mrs. Gandhi can only become a figure-head, and what we need at present is a combination of heart and head in connection with this, the only real constructive movement of a universal character before the people.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. A. M. JOSHI
SECRETARY, EXHIBITION COMMITTEE
MAHARASHTRA PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE
JALGAON, EAST KHANDESH

From photostat: S.N. 5614; also C.W. 5171

142. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[2], for which I thank you.

Of course, I considered your statement[3] without thinking of

[1] This was on March 24. S.N. 8575

[2] For Vijayaraghavachariar's reply of March 23 to Gandhiji's letter of March 19, *vide* Appendix "Letter from C. Vijayaraghavachariar", 23-3-1924.

[3] This refers to Vijayaraghavachariar's interview, the text of which is not available.

your other declarations. I quote the sentences from the very last answer at pages 34 and 35:

> The most vital interests of the country demand the continuance of the organic relations between India and England for many a long year to come. . . Several politicians maintain that the alternative to the free grant of swaraj by the people of England is the sword. But the preachers of this gospel, whether Indians or Englishmen, forget that the employment of the sword and the establishment of Home Rule within the Empire are wholly inconsistent with, if not entirely antagonistic to, each other. . . Independence outside the British Empire now is fraught with most disastrous results for us and would practically be the enthronement of King Stork in the seat of King Log.
>
> . . . We must not . . . rush into the abyss of total estrangement from England. That way madness lies. For years to come-it may be for centuries or for ever, I do not know, and cannot tell-our destiny is self-rule within the ambit of Great Britain.

I understand what you say about untouchability, and I agree with much of what you say therein. I think I gave you my impression gathered from your statement. Of course, I have not said anything with reference to your remarks on what is gone by. I have purposely refrained because it will serve no useful purpose.

I hope you will soon be better.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR
THE ARAMA
SALEM

From photostat: S.N. 8616; also C.W. 5166

143. LETTER TO SHIVDASANI

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

DEAR MR. SHIVDASANI,

I have your interesting letter.[1]

With the views I hold you will not, I trust, expect me to do anything in connection with your scheme. All the energy I have I must devote to the immediate work before me. Your argument about machinery is not at all convincing. There is a tremendous fallacy lying underneath your broad statement: "Machinery can only supplant machinery." If you will visualize the whole process in detail, you will find that it is totally unnecessary to import machinery in order to supplant machine-made cloth we receive from outside. Do you not see that the whole of the energy and cost of sending cotton say from a village in the centre of India to Manchester, to have it converted into cloth there and re-import it, is saved by the villages themselves converting their own cotton into cloth? It should surely strike you that no machinery in the world can compete with these villagers who need no other machine than their own willing hands and feet, and a few simple wooden instruments which they can devise themselves. I would like you again to consider it from your own standpoint. Multiply the cost of installation in one village by 700,000 and then ask yourself who is to find the capital and to what end? Would you impose all these complications on villagers who are well able, during their leisure hours, to turn their cotton into cloth? I hope not.

Yours sincerely,

MR. SHIVDASANI, L.C.E., BAR-AT-LAW
HIRABAD
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat: S.N. 8617; also C.W. 5167

[1] Writing on March 22, Shivdasani had expressed veneration for Gandhiji, out feared he could not follow Gandhiji's logic in his advocacy of hand-woven khadi. Detailing a sugar factory scheme he had formulated, he sought Gandhiji's assistance to raise the necessary capital.

144. LETTER TO JAGDISH CHANDRA BOSE

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

DEAR SIR JAGDISH CHANDRA BOSE[1],

I thank you very much for your letter[2] of the 5th instant.

I would be delighted indeed to see you and Lady Bose on your return if you could find time to motor down to Juhu. It is a pleasant retreat near Andheri.

Yours sincerely,

SIR JAGDISH CHANDRA BOSE
C/O V. N. CHANDAVARKAR, ESQ.
PEDDER RD., CUMBALLA HILL
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8619; also C.W. 5162

145. LETTER TO RAMANAND SANYASI

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

DEAR RAMANAND SANYASI,

I have your letter of the 23rd instant, for which I thank you. It is difficult for me to give you advice without knowing full particulars:

(1) Has the recruiting started only now and, if it has, from what date?

(2) Was there no recruiting prior to that?

(3) If there was none, when did the stoppage begin?

(4) What inquiry is to be made in the plantations?

[1] 1858-1937; eminent Physicist, Botanist and author; founded Bose Research Institute, Calcutta.

[2] In this Bose had written from London: "It was with great anxiety that we learnt of your serious illness; we are somewhat relieved by the news of your slow recovery. May you live long to serve the cause of righteousness all over the world. We shall return to Bombay about the 16th April and will proceed to Calcutta in 3 or 4 days. I should have liked to have seen you if you were near Bombay at the time. My address will be C/o Mr. Chandavarkar (Son of the late Justice Chandavarkar). With all best wishes."

The condition cannot now be better than before unless the terms offered by the planters are different. If they are different, you should be able to get a copy of those terms in the villages where recruiting is going on. I therefore do not know what purpose can be served just now by going to the tea plantations and making inquiries. Moreover, the Provincial Congress Committee in Assam should be corresponded with before any steps are taken. I would therefore sug-gest your writing a letter[1] giving full particulars of the recruiting going on in the districts mentioned by you. If you adopt my sug-gestion, when sending your reply, please send me a copy of your letter to the Assam Committee also.

Yours sincerely,

RAMANAND SANYASI
BALDEV ASHRAM
KHURJA, U. P.

From a photostat: S.N. 8620; also C.W. 5172

146. LETTER TO P. K. NAIDU

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

MY DEAR NAIDU[2],

I was delighted to see your writing after such a long time. I am watching the course of events in South Africa with the greatest attention and anxiety. If any one person can possibly influence the course of events in our favour, it is certainly Mrs. Naidu[3]. She has a wonderful charm of manner and is tireless in her duty. She is staying up to the end of this month and probably longer still. I only hope that if, in spite of all the efforts, the Class Areas Bill does become law, you will be able to persuade our people to get up satyagraha if it becomes necessary. At the same time, I would say, do not launch it unless you are absolutely certain that you will be able to carry the thing through.

[1] Ramanand Sanyasi wrote again on April 1, furnishing the particulars asked for by Gandhiji and enclosing a copy of his letter to the Assam Congress Committee. *Vide* Appendix "Letter from ramanand Sanyasi", 1-4-1924.

[2] A passive resister and associate of Gandhiji in South Africa

[3] Sarojini Naidu

Do please keep me posted with all the particulars. sending me cuttings.

Yours sincerely,

P. K. NAIDU, ESQ.
P. O. BOX NO. 6522
JOHANNESBURG

From a copy: S.N. 8623, also C.W. 5164

147. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

I have your telegram which I shall bear in mind. In no case would I have made any specific mention of Sindh if I could not have shown the statement previously to you. Of course it is not yet ready. I shall therefore not be able to send you a copy before publication. Therefore there will be no reference to Sindh in it.

I am looking forward to receipt of your letter which I hope will contain full information, as also good news about Dr. Choithram's health.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
HYDERABAD (SINDH)

From a photostat: S.N. 8621; also C.W. 5163

148. LETTER TO D. R. MAJLI

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

MY DEAR MAJLI,

I was extremely delighted to receive your postcard. I am glad you are now comparatively at peace with yourself. The fever was probably a good outlet. By careful nursing you will soon get rid of your fever. I am certainly going to make use of the information you give me regarding your treatment. I like your thought: "I am not worth anything." How nice it would be if everyone of us would think so? Then nobody would want to be leader, but all would be servants

and fellow-workers. It would be the nicest thing to achieve and run swaraj if everyone sincerely felt that he was nothing and that the cause was everything. I propose to use this letter of yours for the first issue of *Young India*[1] under my editorship, which I resume next week.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. D. R. MAJLI

BELGAUM

From a copy: S.N. 8610; also C.W. 5160

149. LETTER TO A. CHRISTOPHER

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

MY DEAR CHRISTOPHER,[2]

I was so glad to see your familiar writing after so many years. I am anxiously and closely watching the events in South Africa and will do all that is possible for an ailing man to do. I know that the presence of Mrs. Naidu is a source of great joy and strength to you. Do please keep me well informed of the progress of events, sending me all the cuttings and other documents that you may think I should see. You have asked me to send a cable-gram about unity amongst our people. I think it will serve no useful purpose. Your letter is dated 11th February. It is now 28th of March. All that I infer from the cable-grams being received about Mrs. Naidu's progress in South Africa goes to show that you are presenting a united front. Why should I therefore assume disunion when everything points to the contrary?

I received a cablegram from Pather.[3] You will have seen that I have made full use of that cable also. In view of my long message to Mrs. Naidu[4] which I cabled in reply to your cable, I have not sent any further cables.

I am making fair progress. Mr. Andrews is with me and looking after me and helping me.

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 3-4-1924

[2] Gandhiji's co-worker who actively participated in the Great March of 1913.

[3] *Vide* "Statement to Press", 23-3-24

[4] *Vide* "Cable to Sarojini Naidu", before 16-3-1924.

With regards to you all from Mr. Andrews and myself.

Yours sincerely,

A. CHRISTOPHER, ESQ
156, VICTORIA STREET
DURBAN

From a microfilm: S.N. 8624; also C.W. 5165

150. LETTER TO MAHADEV PANDAY AND CARAMAT ALLI MACDOOM

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

DEAR FRIENDS,

I have your letter of the 25th inst.

As my difficulty is fundamental, I fear I can do nothing to help you. You state that the Negroes are clamouring for the conditions offered to our Indian colonists. Personally I do not mind it, nor need our countrymen in British Guiana fear the proposed influx of the Negroes. If the 1, 30,000 Indians give a good account of themselves, they will bless themselves and bless the Negroes and everyone else who goes there. Surely out of that population you should be able to raise enough doctors, Pundits, Maulvis and all other professionals. I cannot help observing, too, that even at the present moment there is nothing to prevent a single Indian from freely emigrating to British Guiana if he chose to. What I dread and what I do not want in the present helpless condition of India is a stimulated or assisted emigration. You may know that hundreds of free Indians go to the Straits, Mauritius, Madagascar, Zanzibar and several other parts of the world without let or hindrance. What baffles me is this feverish agitation and great waste of money in connection with a scheme of colonization. If you do not mind my telling you that, on that very account, apart from the fundamental difficulty, I thoroughly distrust it.

Yours sincerely,

MESSRS MAHADEO PANDAY AND CARMAT ALLI MACDOOM
MAIDEN'S HOTEL
[DELHI]

From a copy: S.N. 8625; also C.W. 5168

151. LETTER TO A. G. ADVANI

POST ANDHERI,
March 29, 1924

DEAR MR. ADVANI[1],

I have your letter.[2]

I knew nothing of what you referred to, but I am immediately doing all I can to ascertain the truth. I would like you to send me all the proof you have in support of your statement. I take it that you do not want me to regard your letter as confidential, because I must use it if I am to know the truth. I do not wish to publish it in the Press without it being absolutely necessary, and certainly not before I hear from you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. A. G. ADVANI
S. J. CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY
ELPHINSTONE STREET
CAMP KARACHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8626

152. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

POST ANDHERI,
March 29, 1924

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

Here is a copy of a letter[2] received by me, which speaks for itself. Please let me know what truth there is in the charges, and if you do not know anything, please inquire and advise me as to what should be done.

Yours sincerely,

ENCL.

SJT. JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
HYDERABAD (SINDH)

From a photostat: S.N. 8627

[1] Sindhi leader who suffered imprisonment in national cause.

[2] Dated March 24, this drew Gandhiji's attention to the non-publication of the report of the Karachi Congress Committee for the period July 1921 to March 1922 with a view to covering up an alleged misappropriation of funds. Advani had asked for an inquiry into the matter.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

153. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Saturday [*March 29, 1924*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

It was good that you gave up the idea of going to Kanpur. Is there any complaint still, besides weakness?

You know about the institution[2] at Chinchwad. It is facing a good deal of opposition and is always short of funds. I think it is necessary to help the workers. I am considering how this can be done. In all, they need Rs. 15, 000. If they get this help, they will want no more and they are prepared to take a vow that they will not ask for more. If you feel with me that they deserve this help and if you are in a position to give it, then I should like you to do so.

Rajagopalachari is again suffering from asthma. I think the climate of Nasik would suit him. If you can accommodate him, write to him at his Salem address and ask him to stay with you for some time. He is already under the treatment of the Poona *vaidya*, and the latter will be able to examine him. I have indeed written to him suggesting that it would be better if he went to stay at Nasik while you are there.

You must have learnt that the Poona *vaidya* has started treatment of Vallabhbhai's Manibehn, Maganlal's Radha and Prof. Kripalani's [sister] Kikibehn. This was done at the suggestion of Devdas.

Let me know what your experience of this *vaidya* is.

Malaviyaji left for Kashi yesterday. We had some discussion about the Hindu-Muslim problem. Hakimji had also been here. With him also I discussed the same subject. Motilalji who has been here will stay on. He has been discussing the issue of Council-entry.

I have been thinking about all these things.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 2845

[1] The discussions with Madan Mohan Malaviya, Hakim Ajmal Khan and Motilal Nehru referred to in the letter took place during the last week of March 1924 at Juhu. The last Saturday of the month fell on March 29.

[2] Svavalamban Pathshala, a national school then run by Shri Kanitkar at Chinchwad, village near Poona

154. LETTER TO K. T. PAUL[1]

[On or after *March 29, 1924*][2]

Do come on Tuesday. If, in the midst of other friends, I can spare the time, I shall do so. Otherwise you should come again on Thursday. You should take your meal here.[3]

From a photostat: S.N. 8628

155. SPEECH AT JUHU[4]

[Before *March 30, 1924*]

How can you account for cases of pneumonia and other diseases in this beautiful spot where there is no shortage of houses, where light and air are unlimited and where you seek escape from the squalor and congestion of Bombay? I simply cannot understand this. Rather than that I, an invalid myself, should reproach you for this, I think I should try to explain to you that it is we ourselves who are responsible for these conditions. I look upon mosquitoes, fleas, flies and other agents which spread disease, as correctives provided for us by Nature. Were it not for them, would we ever wake up? Living here, I can add to the filth to any extent I choose to. I can also generate any number of files, fleas and mosquitoes. But, as you see, I do nothing of the kind. On the day I arrived I said that we required no sweeper. True, there is a sweeper here now, but half of the refuse is removed by the children, Devdas, Pyarelal and Krishnadas. If you see anything left undone, it is due to some negligence on the part of these children. If, however, I

[1] K. T. Paul, a friend of C. F. Andrews, was connected with the Federation of National Youth Associations at Calcutta. In a letter of February 11, he had wished to meet Gandhiji for "a quiet and unhurried conference". Gandhiji appears to have written to Paul on March 1 saying that he had forestalled him in regard to a method of dealing with the intercommunal problem, This letter, however, is not available.

[2] On March 23, Paul wrote back, stating at length his faith in Christ's rich, human personality. In his letter dated March 29 to Devdas Gandhi, on the back of which this reply was scribbled, Paul had expressed a desire to see Gandhiji on April 1.

[3] The letter has, in the end, the following note in Gandhiji's hand: "Dr. Kitchlew can take and have the letter delivered."

[4] This speech, reported by Mahadev Desai in *Navajivan*, 31-3-1924, was made before a small gathering of teachers, members of the Managing Committee and guardians of the pupils of the National School at Vile Parle, near Juhu. Orthodox guardians did not like the teachers' idea of admitting children of Harijans.

allow dirt to accumulate, you can easily see that all the pleasure of natural scenery will be lost. You should also understand the close connection between sweeping out dirt and swaraj. Imagine that we have already won swaraj. If, now, we still remain careless and indifferent to the rules of hygiene, there is little doubt that the British will again kick us out of power. The question of *Dheds* and *Bhangis* is intimately connected with this matter. If we continue to harass them and regard them as untouchables, with what face can we demand equality with the British? It is necessary that we understand this before talking of equality.

THE SHASTRAS

What shall I say about the attitude of religion in this matter? In my opinion, not everything in our religious books or all the various unrelated sayings of Yajnyavalkya[1] and other sages can be regarded as eternal verities. Conditions are different now from what they were in those days. If they were the same, since we look upon Draupadi[2] as a superhuman being, take her name every morning and regard the five Pandavas with reverence, would we not regard as a saint any women who took to herself five husbands? It is for their deeds that we revere the Pandavas and Draupadi. We should appreciate others' virtues and be eager to acquire them. It is, then, because of their extraordinary qualities that we cherish their memory. This about the *Mahabharata*. There is no work I love more than the *Ramayana*. Yet, do I for that reason accept everything which Tulsidas attributes to Shastras in his work[3]? The *Manusmriti* is an authoritative book. It is categorical in permitting flesh-eating. Will you, therefore, eat meat? When I say these things to you, you are taken aback. If any people eat meat on the sly, that is another matter, but according to the *Manusmriti*, eating meat is nothing to be ashamed of; it may be done openly. And yet we regard meat-eating as forbidden. What is prohibited in *kaliyuga*[4] was freely permitted in *satyayuga*[5]. Does it not seem strange that, during that golden age, meat-eating should have been permitted, but in this Age of Kali? But the truth is that much depends on the way we look at religion. And here there are two points to be kept in mind. The first is that matters of religion should be decided not by the intellect but by

[1] Vedic sage, reputed author of a Smriti (code of laws)
[2] Wife of the five Pandava princes, in the Mahabharata
[3] Ramacharitmanas or the Ramayana
[4] Age of strife
[5] Age of truth

the heart, and the second that we should not follow, in the name of dharma, the opposite of dharma. You should know that the *Gita* can be interpreted so as to justify crimes. Bhima[1] used his club against Duryodhana[2]. If someone says that cousins are, therefore, free to regard each other as enemies and kill each other, I would say that such a person does not know how to read the *Gita* aright. This whole matter falls within the province of the heart. My religion does not trust reason; it trusts only the heart. I, therefore, pray that you look into your hearts.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-3-1924

156. MESSAGE TO "BHARATI"

[End of *March 1924*][3]

The only message that I have for men and women of India, but more especially for the latter, is that of the spinning-wheel. The non-violent movement is one to enable the weakest of human beings to vindicate their dignity without an earthly protector. Woman has been regarded as weakness personified. She may be weak in body, but she can be as strong in soul as the strongest. The spinning-wheel, with all its implication, is the weapon, in India at least, of the strong in soul. The universal adoption of that wonderful wheel robs Great Britain of her purely selfish interest in India. It is only then possible for the connection between India and England to become pure and predominantly unselfish, and therefore, for the good of the world. May the women of India adopt hand-spinning as a part of their daily duty, and take their full share in the struggle for the freedom of the weakest in body of our country.

From a photostat: S.N. 8618

[1] The second and the strongest of the Pandava brothers

[2] The eldest of the Kaurava princes, in the Mahabharata

[3] The exact date of this message which Gandhiji sent to Saraladevi Choudhrani is not ascertainable. She proposed to start a journal at Lahore in the third week of March 1924. The photostat source is also located among S.N. records and papers relating to that month.

157. LETTER TO K. P. KESAVA MENON

ANDHERI,
April 1, [*1924*]

MY DEAR KESHAV MENON,

Messrs Shivram Iyer and Vancheswara Iyer have come here in connection with your satyagraha[1]. They tell me that the roads in dispute are private property belonging to the temple to which they lead and that it is in exclusive possession of Brahmin trustees who, these gentlemen claim, have perfect right to regulate entry. I then asked them if these roads were private property, exclusively belonging to the Brahmins, whether any non-Brahmins had the use of them, and they admitted that they had. I then told them that, so long as a single non-Brahmin was allowed the use of the roads, the so-called untouchables and unapproachable must have the same right as other non-Brahmins. They agree, but they say that it will take some time before they can bring round to their view of thinking the trustees and other Brahmins who are interested in temple and roads.

I understand, too, that Malaviyaji is going to the South in two months' time. If the trustees of the temple agree, in the event of any dispute between you as representing untouchables and unapproachables and themselves, to refer all such disputes to the sole arbitration of Malaviyaji, his award to be delivered within a fixed time, I would advise you to suspend satyagraha, publicly announcing the cause of suspension, namely, its reference to arbitration.

Naturally, this advice is tendered in the belief that the main facts stated by the Iyer brothers are correct. They tell me that they are as anxious as we are to carry out this reform in its thoroughness and, if they are sincere in their professions, we should reciprocate and accommodate them in so far as it is consistent with our principles.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm of a newspaper cutting: S.N. 10273; also *The Hindu*, 4-3-1924

[1] Vykom Satyagraha for access to temple and public roads to Harijans; *vide* "Letter to K. P. Kesava Menon", 19-3-1924

158. TELEGRAM TO AGRAWAL CONFERENCE, KANPUR[1]

[On or after *April 1, 1924*]

AGRAWAL CONFERENCE
CAWNPORE

WISH CONFERENCE SUCCESS. HOPE CONFERENCE WILL HELP KHADDAR WHICH ALONE CAN REMOVE STARVATION MILLIONS COUNTRYMEN AND HINDI PRACHAR SOUTHERN INDIA WHICH AGRAWALS HAVE HITHERTO SO GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED. SETH JAMNALALJI TOO WEAK TO UNDERGO FATIGUE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8642

159. TELEGRAM TO K. P. KESAVA MENON

[On or before *April 1, 1924*][2]

MY CONGRATULATIONS SATYAGRAHIS. HOPE STREAM WILL CONTINUE TILL SUCCESS ACHIEVED. WE HAVE TO CONQUER OPPONENTS BY PERFECT LOVE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10265

[1] This was in reply to a telegraphic communication received by Gandhiji: "All India Marwari Agrawal Conference on 5th, 6th 7th April. Seth Anandilalji Podar Bombay president-elect reaching here 4th. Seth Jamnalalji also expected. Your blessings and spiritual message earnestly solicited. Swagath". S. N. 8641

Jamnalal Bajaj had also sent on April 1 a telegram to Devdas Gandhi, which read: "Cawnpore Agrawal Conference forcing attendance. Please request Poona *vaidya* to personally advise. Must start third if allowed, Bapu's advice also solicited." S.N. 8642.

[2] This was in reply to telegram from K. P. Kesava Menon received on April 1, 1924, which read: "Vaikom satyagraha started yesterday. Three volunteers peacefully entering prohibited area were arrested. Their dignified behaviour greatly impressed public. Conduct of police praiseworthy. Another batch three proceeded today also arrested. Orderly crowds witnessing satyagraha every day. First batch sentenced six months." S.N. 10265

160. FOR THE READERS PAST AND PRESENT OF "YOUNG INDIA"[1]

It is not without much hesitation that I resume the editorship of *Young India*. I do not know whether my health can yet sustain the energy required for conducting the paper. But I cannot foresee. I can only dimly understand God's purpose in bringing me out of my retirement in Yeravda. In taking up the editorial control of *Navajivan* and *Young India* I am following the Light as far as I see it.

Nor have I any new message to deliver to the reader. I had hoped for release by an act of a Swaraj Parliament and to be able to take my humble share in serving Free India. That was not to be.

We have yet to attain freedom. I have no new programme. My faith in the old is just as bright as ever, if not brighter. Indeed, one's faith in one's plans and methods is truly tested when the horizon before one is the blackest.

Though, therefore, so far as my mind can perceive, there will be no new method or policy developed in the pages of *Young India*, I hope they will not be stale. *Young India* will be stale when Truth becomes stale. I want to see God face to face. God I *know* is Truth. For me the only certain means of knowing God is non-violence-ahimsa-love. I live for India's freedom and would die for it, because it is part of Truth. Only a free India can worship the true God. I work for India's freedom because my swadeshi teaches me that, being born in it having inherited her culture, I am fittest to serve *her* and *she* has a prior claim to my service. But my patriotism is not exclusive; it is calculated not only not to hurt any other nation, but to benefit all in the true sense of the word. India's freedom as conceived by me can never be a menace to the world.

But if it is not to be such a menace, the means adopted for gaining it must be strictly non-violent. My interest in India's freedom will cease if she adopts violent means, for their fruit will be not freedom but slavery in disguise. And if we have not yet attained our

[1] On April 2, 1924, about the same time as this article, Gandhiji prepared, at Juhu, Bombay, the preface to the "History of the satyagraha in South Africa", which he had commenced writing in Gujarati on November 26, 1923 and thirty chapters of which he had completed in Yeravda Jail. The preface, not reproduced here in its chronological order, is given along with the text in Volume XXIX.

freedom, it is because we have not been non-violent in thought, word and deed. It is true that non-violence has been adopted as a policy, i.e., because we are convinced that by no other means can *India* achieve her freedom. Our policy is not, must not be, a camouflage. We may not harbour violence under cover of non-violence. Whilst we claim to be non-violent for a particular purpose and a particular period, our thought and word must accord with our practice for that purpose and that period. Even so does an honest jailer act towards a condemned man. He protects his life at the peril of his own till the date of the extreme penalty. He thinks and speaks of his safety. He is, for the time and the person, non-violent in thought, word and deed.

We pledged ourselves to be non-violent towards each other and our opponents, whether administrators or co-operators. We were to appeal to their hearts and evoke the best in them, not play upon their fear to gain our end. Consciously or unconsciously the majority of us-the articulate portion-have not been true to our pledge. We have been intolerant towards our opponents. Our own countrymen are filled with distrust of us. They simply do not believe in our non-violence. Hindus and Mussalmans in many places have provided an object lesson, not in non-violence, but in violence. Even the 'changers' and the 'no-changers' have flung mud against one another. Each has claimed the monopoly of truth and, with an ignorant certainty of conviction, sworn at the other for his helpless stupidity.

The pages of *Young India* can only, therefore, illustrate the utility and the necessity of non-violence in dealing with the questions that engage public attention. So much for the central policy of *Young India*.

A word as to the business side. Some of the readers will recollect that I announced that, when at the instance of Mr. Shankerlal Banker and other friends, I took up the editing of *Young India*, I told the public that it was run at a loss and that I would be obliged to give it up if the loss continued. I do not believe in publishing newspapers indefinitely at a loss or by means of advertisements. If a paper supplies a felt want, it must pay its way. The subscription list, however, ran up steadily week by week and it began to yield profits. But, during the last two years, as the reader is aware, the list has fallen from 21, 500 to 3,000 and it is now being run at a loss. Happily, *Navajivan* has made up for it. But even that method is wrong. *Young India* must

stand on its own bottom or fall. It is likely that, if I still retain the personal affection of the old readers, *Young India* will soon pay its way. But I have mentioned the loss not only to acquaint the public with the true state of affairs, but also as an introduction to an important announcement.

When Messrs Banker and Yagnik suggested that the Gujarati *Navajivan*, which was then a monthly, should be turned into a weekly and edited by me and when I undertook the responsibility, I announced that it would be given up if it proved a loss and that if there were profits, they would be utilized for some public purpose[1]. *Navajivan* soon became profitable, but at the instance of Sheth Jamnalalji, *Hindi Navajivan* was commenced.[2] It too had just begun to pay its way when my arrest took place and the circulation steadily fell. It is now again being issued at a loss. But, in spite of these losses, the large circulation of *Navajivan* and other publications enables the management to devote Rs. 50,000 to public work. Swami Anandanand who is managing the *Navajivan* press has left it entirely to me to allocate the money and, as I know no other and better method of utilizing it, I propose to devote the sum through the agency of the Provincial Congress Committee to the spread of the spinning-wheel and khadi in Gujarat, including Kathiawar. Preference will be given to their spread among poor women and the suppressed classes. It is due to my co-workers that I should inform the public that with some of them the work is a labour of love. Where they receive payment, it is just enough for their wants. The result of such work is before the public, I know that, if from the sweeper upward I could secure selfless workers, with the efficient management I have the good fortune to have today, it would be possible to show a better surplus.

I should also like to add that, if *Young India* again shows profits, as it did before my imprisonment, they will be distributed for all-India work. If any profits are derived from *Hindi Navajivan*, they will be devoted to the spread of Hindi.

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 3-4-1924

[1] *Vide* "To Readers", 25-4-1920.

[2] On August 19, 1921

161. NOTES

THANKS

It would be ungrateful for me if I did not publicly tender my thanks to the editors who one after another took charge of *Young India* at a most critical period in its career. Shuaib Qureshi, with his sledge-hammer style, proved too strong for the Government and they hardly allowed him breathing time. Then followed Rajagopalachari with his scholarly contribution, exhibiting a wonderful grasp of the deep truths of satyagraha. George Joseph's trenchant style is still fresh to the reader. To all these friends my deepest thanks are due for coming to the rescue. The management staff was no less industrious in its zeal for the national cause.

THE KHLAFAT

I have been asked to give my opinion on the Khilafat trouble. I have none to give. It were impertinence for me, an outsider, to thrust my views on my Muslim brethren. It is a question which the Mussalmans must settle for themselves. All that non-Muslims can do is to assure them of their deep sympathy in their affliction. The existence of the Khilafat is an essential part of their faith. Everyone who holds his own religion to be dear to himself is bound to express genuine sympathy with those of a different faith. The heart of every Hindu who values Muslim friendship must go out to the Mussalmans in their great sorrow. They have a more anxious time now than when the Khilafat was attacked from without. But now that the danger comes from within and several sections are contending for their own views, it must tax the utmost resources of those who are engaged in solving the problem in a manner that is consistent with the deep truths of their own faith and acceptable to all sections. This much is quiet clear to me that the future of the Khilafat, indeed of Islam itself in so far as it can rest with man, lies in the hands of Indian Mussalmans. Theirs is the burden, theirs the privilege. May God grant them the power to see the right path and the strength to follow it.

'COMMERCIALIZING VICE'

This is the expression that Mr. Andrews has used in connection with opium traffic on which the reader will find in another place an

informing contribution from his pen.[1] As he handed it to me, he said he had improved upon my description of the traffic. I have described it as 'organizing vice'. Mr. Andrews calls it 'commercializing vice'. I dare not dispute with a scholar of Mr. Andrews' stamp the superiority for choice phrase-making. But I would commend to the reader's careful attention Mr. Andrews' essay. And when he has digested the gruesome facts with which Mr. Andrews has fortified his impeachment of the opium traffic let the reader recall the fact that it is British India that grows and supplies opium to British Singapore, and then recall the further fact that our children are educated in Government schools from the proceeds of this organized and commercialized vice.

SPARE HOURS

Mr. C. Rajagopalachari's appeal[2] to the students printed elsewhere deserves the careful attention of all students not merely of national schools but also of Government schools. Scholastic non-co-operation like every other had a touch of violence about it. Hence the gulf between the boys and girls belonging to national and Government schools. As a matter of fact, there should be no such gulf. Mr. Rajagopalachari's suggestion, if adopted, will serve a double purpose. The adoption will bridge the gulf and provide a means beneficial to the nation of utilizing the spare hours that students get during vacations. The advance must be made by non-co-operation students. They will not only thereby not surrender an iota of their principle but they will actually emphasize its non-violent and, therefore, vital part. There need be no despair if the advance is rejected. This suitor may feel sure of success, if it is fellowship that prompts the advance.

AN EXAMPLE TO COPY

The boys of the National School at Dharwar have sent me a parcel of yarn spun by them and written to me that it was spun continuously for seven days and nights. I learnt in the Sassoon Hospital that the boys of the Chinchwad institution kept several wheels going continuously for a month and a half. If all who can spin were to follow the example of these good boys, we should solve the khadi problem in no time, and as I believe in the capacity of the spinning-wheel, if it was universally adopted, to give us swaraj, I have no doubt

[1] This was published in *Young India*, 3-4-1924.

[2] In his article "Vacation Thoughts", he had suggested to the students that they utilize their leisure for khadi work.

that the devotion of the boys of the Dharwar National School and the boys of the Chinchwad institution will take us many a step in the direction of swaraj. And a such spinning can only be a labour of love, it enables us either to reduce the price of khadi or to give better wages to those who spin for their livelihood or for supplementing it.

MR. MAJLI AND THE JAIL TREATMENT

As a fellow-patient, I wrote a brief note[1] to Mr. Majli of Belgaum by way of consolation. Mr. Majli, as the reader is aware, was discharged from prison because he was ailing rather seriously. In reply to my note, he writes:

> Your letter in your own hand-writing could not but make me feel at first highly pleased, but soon after highly obliged. Yesterday I had as usual high fever lasting for full sixteen hours—I am getting fever every alternate day —but your advice remained stamped on my brain throughout and I succeeded at last in observing silence throughout the period of fever. I am now perfectly at peace in mind, but my body is again showing signs of diminishing vitality as a result of the new development of this fever of alternate days.
>
> I read in the papers an interpellation and a reply thereto regarding the treatment I received. Out of the three facts stated, two are misstatements. I was not given spinning as stated on behalf of Government, but twisting yarn (1 lb. a day). Secondly, I was kept in utter seclusion under lock for all the 24 hours of the day except 15 minutes' walking. Though Government says I was ill when I was [sent] to jail, I was refused even the rice diet, but given the *jowari* bread which I could not digest. I leave it to you to give publicity or not, because I am not worth anything.

Mr. Majli is a great worker. The readers will share the hope with me that he may be soon free of all ailments and find himself in harness. Regarding the contradiction, the uninitiated reader may not be able to notice much distinction between twisting of yarn and spinning, as a mere piece of work. The distinction for Mr. Majli was vital. Thousands of Indians today regard spinning as a sacred duty and, therefore, a pleasure, whereas twisting has no such value for them. Whilst, therefore, in his weak state Mr. Majli would regard twisting as an insufferable task, he would regard spinning as balm for his afflicted soul and a diversion to take the thoughts of his ailment away from him. Moreover, whilst a practised worker can twist one pound of yarn without much difficulty, an ailing person like Mr. Majli can

[1] *Vide* "Letter to D. R. Majli", 23-3-1924.

hardly twist a quarter of a pound. Let the reader understand that I know what twisting yarn means, and as I like physical work, I assure him that I do not exaggerate when I say that Mr. Majli can hardly twist a quarter of a pound a day without undue strain on his frail body. The seclusion under lock for 24 hours of the day, with 15 minutes' walk in the open, was a torture and if Mr. Majli was given *jowari* bread and refused the rice diet, it was the surest method of making him worse. I do not, however, print the foregoing letter by way of complaint against the Jail authorities, because very often these things happen without any deliberate intention of inflicting hardship on prisoners. What is at fault is the whole system of Jail administration which I have already described as soul-less, and much worse is an attempt made by the Government to deny or twist facts. Mr Majli has apologized for sending the contradiction. There was no occasion for it. He is, after all, a prominent worker in Karnatak. How nice, however, it would be if everyone of us could sincerely say to himself: "I am not worth anything"! Then we would all be fellow-servants and fellow-workers among whom the only competition would be to do the maximum of work without the slightest desire for gaining prominence or publicity. Swaraj could then be won and run without any difficulty. Innumerable difficulties arise when everyone wants to lead and advise and nobody wants to work.

Young India, 3-4-1924

162. MY MISSION

Pundit Ghasita Ram, "President, All-India Sub-Assistant Surgeons Association, Punjab Province, Amritsar" sent to the Editor some days ago an "open letter" addressed to me. After omitting from it laudatory phrases and sentences of good wishes and after correcting obvious grammatical errors, the letter reads:

> I am a Brahman, a doctor and an old man like you. It will not be out of courtesy if I in this triple capacity offer you a piece of counsel. If you see wisdom and truth in it and if it appeals to your common sense and sentiments, kindly take it to heart.
>
> You have seen much of the world; you have read much of it. Consequently you possess a wonderful experience of it, but in this world of mortals none till now has been able to accomplish the task he has undertaken in his lifetime. Buddha in spite of his high morality could not convert the

whole of India to Buddhism.

Shankaracharya in spite of his high intellectuality could not make all India Vedantist. Christ in spite of his high spirituality could not bring into the fold of Christianity the whole Jewish nation. I do not think, and I am not prepared to believe for a single moment about the accomplishment of your task. Still in face of these historical facts, if you believe in its accomplishment in your lifetime, then Sir, I venture to say that it is nothing but a dream.

This world is a place of trials, troubles and turmoils. The more a man sinks into it the more he is restless and, eventually, he loses his spiritual calmness and peace of mind. Consequently, the Mahatmas of olden time kept themselves aloof from worldly worries, anxieties and cares and strove to gain perfect peace and true quality of mind and enjoyed an everlasting happiness and bliss thereby.

The Jail life has brought a great change in your life and vigour and the disease has reduced you much. Therefore, in the fitness of things, you may live a calm life and spin the thread of your remaining days in a certain solitary cave in the meditation of God, and in realization of your own self in perfect spiritual tranquillity and calmness, because your health will not allow you to bear the burden of the worldly cares any more. It shall not be out of place to mention that you are absolutely convinced of the goodwill, mercy and sympathy of good officers. That very system of European medicines and surgery, which you condemned more than once, has saved you from the jaws of monstrous death. The English officers helped you in time of your troubles and needs.

"A friend in need is a friend indeed". Now it remains for you to show your true friendship and to become the true ally of the British Raj in gratitude for the safety of your life and your release from the jail. If anyhow you cannot do so by your words and deeds, then pray do not come into the arena of political activity, but still if your restless soul does not allow you to sit in rest, then in this *Bhumi*, the motherland of great sages and saints, *Rishi* and *Munis*, take up the task of spiritualizing your brother Indians, teach them a lesson of true realization of the self. By doing so, instead of gaining this Kingdom of Earth, you will gain the Kingdom of Heaven.

In my opinion, the writer is desperately in earnest and merits an answer on that account if for nothing else. But it enables me too, to clear up certain misapprehensions about my mission in life.

Let me first, however, dispose of the advice about my views on

medicine. I have not *Indian Home Rule*[1] before me, but I recollect sufficient to be able to say that I have nothing to revise about the views set forth there. If I had written it for English readers and in English, I would have put the same thought in a manner that would have been more acceptable to the English ear. The original is in Gujarati and was written for the Gujarati readers of *Indian Opinion* of Natal. Moreover, what is written there has reference to an ideal state. It is a common error to think that condemnation of measures involves that of men. Medicine does often benumb the soul of the patient. It may, therefore, be considered evil, but not, therefore, necessarily medicine-men. I had precious medical friends when I wrote the book and did not hesitate to seek their advice in times of need. That was, as the writer implies, inconsistent with my belief regarding the use of medicine. Several friends have said to me the same thing in so many words. I plead guilty. But that is to admit that I am not a perfect man. Unfortunately for me, I am far from being perfect. I am an humble aspirant for perfection. I know my way to it also. But knowing the way is not reaching its end. If I was perfect, if I had acquired full control over all my passions even in thought, I should be perfect in body. I am free to confess that daily I am obliged to expend a great amount of mental energy in acquiring control over my thoughts. When I have succeeded, if I ever do think what a store house of energy would be set free for service. As I hold that appendicitis was a result of infirmity of thought or mind, so do I concede that my submission to the surgical operation was an additional infirmity of mind. If I was absolutely free of egoism, I would have resigned myself to the inevitable; but I wanted to live in the present body. Complete detachment is not a mechanical process. One has to grow to it by patient toil and prayer. As for gratitude, I have more than once publicly expressed my gratitude to Col. Maddock and his staff for the kindness with which they overwhelmed me. But there is no connection between the kind treatment I received from Col. Maddock and the system of Government I condemn. Col. Maddock himself would think little of me, if I revised my views about Dyerism because he, Col. Maddock, was a competent surgeon and did his duty as such, Nor have I any cause to be thankful to the Government for providing me with best surgical assistance or for prematurely releasing me. The former they were bound to provide for every prisoner. The latter has

[1] This was translation of *Hindi Swaraj*; *vide* "Hind Swaraj", 22-11-1909.

embarrassed me. I knew my course in prison whether well or ill. Outside the prison-walls, although I am slowly regaining my health, I do not know with certainty how to shape my course.

Now for the central point of the letter. The confusion in the writer's mind has arisen because of his misconception of the work of the prophets he names and of an awkward (for me) comparison between them and me. I do not know that Buddha did not accomplish his task which was to reach *Nirvana*. Tradition has it that he did. Conversion of others was a by-product, if one may so describe a sacred function. The Gospels record it of Jesus that he testified on the Cross of his own work, 'It is finished."[1] Nor has their work of love died after them. The truest part of it will live for ever. The two or three thousand years that have gone by since their ministry are but a speck in the vast time circle.

I do not consider myself worthy to be mentioned in the same breath with the race of prophets. I am an humble seeker after truth. I am impatient to realize myself, to attain *moksha* in this very existence. My national service is part of my training for freeing my soul from the bondage of flesh. Thus considered, my service may be regarded as purely selfish. I have no desire for the perishable kingdom of earth. I am striving for the Kingdom of Heaven which is *moksha*. To attain my end it is not necessary for me to seek the shelter of a cave. I carry one about me, if I would but know it. A cave-dweller can build castles in the air, whereas a dweller in a palace like Janak has no castles to build. The cave-dweller in who hovers round the world on the wings of thought has no peace A Janak, though living in the midst of 'pomp and circumstance', may have peace that passeth understanding. For me the road to salvation lies through incessant toil in the service of my country and there through of humanity. I want to identify myself with everything that lives. In the language of the *Gita* I want to live at peace with both friend and foe. Though, therefore, A Mussalman or a Christian or a Hindu may despise me and hate me, I want to love him and serve him even as I would love my wife or son though they hate me. So my patriotism is for me a stage in my journey to the land of eternal freedom and peace. Thus it will be seen that for me there are no politics devoid of religion. They subserve religion. Politics bereft of religion are a death-trap because they kill the soul.

Young India, 3-4-1924

[1] John, 19-30

163. PLEA FOR PATIENCE

Some correspondents are anxious for my views on Council-entry[1] and Hindu-Muslim questions. Others are equally insistent that I make no hasty pronouncement. I am myself most eager to express my opinion on both these questions, but I want to avoid all avoidable mistakes. I owe a duty to those who differ from me. They are valued co-workers. They love their country just as much as I claim to do. Some of them have recent sacrifices to their credit to which I can lay no claim. They have a longer first-hand experience of the country than I have. Their opinions, therefore, deserve all the respect and consideration that are due to their position and ability. Above all, I must not embarrass them by any ill-considered opinion. Theirs is a thankless task. The Government have rejected every advance made by them. The former have stood defiant behind their armed entrenchmens even in such trifles (to them) as the removal of the prohibition against Mr. Horniman[2] and the release of Maulana Hasrat Mohani[3]. In these circumstances, it would be improper on my part without the utmost consideration to say anything that may in any way disturb the plans the Swarajists may develop for meeting the emergency. I am trying to grasp the situation and understand their view-point. Nothing can possibly be lost by patience. Haste may cause unnecessary mischief.

The same may be said of the Hindu-Muslim question with greater emphasis. It is a problem that requires the most delicate handling. Every thought has to be examined. Every word weighed. A hasty adjective may cause an explosion. Though, therefore, I hold decided views on the question and am most anxious to express them, I must forbear. Both Hindus and Mussalmans occupying front positions in the community are asking me not to say a word without fully studying the situation. I have a letter which goes so far as to say that I shall know little until I have travelled and seen things for myself.

[1] *Vide* "Thoughts on Council-entry", before 11-4-1924, and the item following it.

[2] B. G. Horniman (1873-1948); journalist and politician; editor of *The Bombay Chronicle*. He was deported from India in April 1919 and could return only in 1926.

[3] 1875-1951; nationalist Muslim leader, took active part in the Khilafat movement.

Without going so far with my correspondents, I give my assurance to them and all who think with them that I shall not write or say a word without a careful and prayerful study of the question. For me the attainment of swaraj depends not upon what the English Cabinet thinks or says but entirely upon a proper, satisfactory and lasting solution of the thorny problem. Without it all before us is dark. With it swaraj is within immediate reach.

Whilst, therefore, these conferences are going on, I respectfully urge those who are interested in my opinion on these important questions to go on with the constructive programme. Every yard of yarn spun or khaddar woven is a step towards swaraj. Everyone who refrains from harbouring an evil thought of his Hindu or Mussalman brother as the case may be contributes to the solution. Every writer in the Press who economizes his adjectives and ceases to impute motives or inflame public opinion makes easy the path to a proper solution. The other day *The Times of India* published illuminating extracts from the vernacular Press showing the present mentality of some writers. They tell us how not to do the thing. Granting that a Hindu or a Mussalman utters a hasty word, it is no business of a Pressman who wishes well to his country immediately to advertise it. It would be criminal to exaggerate such blunders. I am not sure that the statements advertised in those extracts were even made by the parties concerned. No expression of opinion from anybody is needed to demonstrate the necessity of being accurate, of curbing our tongues and checking our pens.

Young India, 3-4-1924

164. TO READERS OF "HINDI NAVAJIVAN"

Thursday, Phalgun Krishna 14 [*April 3, 1924*]

It has always been a matter of regret to me that, although I am the editor of *Hindi Navajivan*, I do not write anything for it. For this reason I do not consider myself fit to be its editor.

I accepted the post of editor out of my affection for Shri Jamnalal Bajaj. I cannot be satisfied so long as the paper carries only translations from Gujarati and English. I shall now try, when I have time, to write something for *Hindi Navajivan*.

But there is some other reason for my writing this article. I see that *Hindi Navajivan* runs at a loss. At one time it had 12,000

subscribers, but now their number is 1,400. For *Hindi Navajivan* to be self-supporting, it needs 4,000 subscribers. If this number of subscribers is not forthcoming soon, it is my intention to close down the paper. I have always held the view-which became strengthened while I was in jail-that newspapers that are not self-supporting and have to depend on advertisements should be closed down. In keeping with this principle, it is desirable that *Hindi Navajivan*, if it cannot pay its way, should be discontinued. If you feel the need for this paper, a very good way to increase the circulation is for you to try and enroll your friends as subscribers. I may as well let you know that I have expressed a similar intention with regard to *Young India*. It is only on moral or spiritual grounds that I base this decision of mine.

The Gujarati *Navajivan*—although it has had to bear the brunt of the losses incurred by *Young India* and *Hindi Navajivan*-has shown profits. In the five years of its life it has saved Rs. 50,000. This amount will be spent on public work-on the propagation of the charkha and khadi. You shall find details of it in translations from the Gujarati. If *Hindi Navajivan* shows a profit, the money will be used for spreading Hindi in the South. I feel that there is a great need to propagate in the South a form of Hindi which is simple and easily understood by Hindus and Muslims alike. If you approve of the idea, please do your best to push the sale of *Hindi Navajivan*.

Your servant,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 6-4-1924

165. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Thursday [*April 3, 1924*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letters. I follow what you say about Kashi. I had Chi. Prabhudas examined by Dr. Dalal, also by a famous Poona *vaidya* who had been here yesterday. Both approve of his living on a milk diet. At present he takes four and a half pounds of milk and is stronger than he was before. Dr. Deshmukh also examined him and gave the same opinion. I have made full inquiries about the sea here.

[1] The postmark carries this date.

Thousands of people bathe in it. what you have heard relates to the sea at Versova[1]. Here everyone bathes without any fear.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 8658

166. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Thursday [*April 3, 1924*][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have your letters. I shall by and by write in *Navajivan* and *Young India* about the things you have mentioned and give what explanations I can. Dr. Dalal thoroughly examined Radha and other patients. Besides, an eminent *vaidya* from Poona is also here. She is getting stronger under his treatment. She sleeps by my side. I shall not give more details. I shall not now send away Ramdas from me. I will gladly give him some time myself. I have already talked about this to Surendra. I cannot say when they will come. I hope to reach there . . . ,[3] and do not propose afterwards to go out for at least a month and a half.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MAGANLAL GANDHI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM

SABARMATI

From the Gujarati original: C.W, 6041 Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

167.INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

[*April 3, 1924*]

In spite of the heavy burden of work Mahatma Gandhi has begun to shoulder even in his days of convalescence, he was pleased to accord an interview to our representative who called at his abode at Juhu yesterday morning. The callers yesterday morning included Messrs Shuaib Qureshi, D. Chamanlal and Dr. Kitchlew.

"It is not my purpose to trouble you again so soon after last week's long talk we had", said our representative apologizing for trespassing on his quiet and rest, and

[1] A village near Andheri, suburb of Bombay

as he was reminded of Mahatmaji's appeal in Gujarati in the course of which it was stated:

"The capital of energy at my disposal is very small, and I want to utilize it only in service. I wish to resume editorship of *Navajivan* and *Young India* from next week. And I need absolute quiet for that work. If all my time and energy are taken up in seeing and entertaining you, it will not be possible for me to edit the weeklies in the way I desire.."[1]

"Will you not, however , make just a short statement to me on the result of the conference you are holding these days with the Swarajist leaders and others?" our representative inquired.

Mahatmaji was in an exceedingly humorous disposition. He remarked that he was still a patient and little could be expected of him on the present situation till he finished his study of the current events and had had a full talk with the leaders who were there. However, he light-heartedly suggested, as he laughed heartily, our representative could "pad" his interview with the descriptions of shady palm groves and the gently rolling ocean.

Hindu-Muslim unity and untouchability both were questions of paramount importance and it was not decided whether one of them would be tackled first or both of them would be dealt with simultaneously, replied Gandhiji to the question whether he had definitely arrived at a decision, as a result of consultations, to handle one or both of these vital problems.

The Bombay Chronicle, 4-4-1924

168. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[After *April 3, 1924*][2]

BHAI MAHADEV,

This much should of course be taken. It will certainly do for Gujarati *Navajivan*. If, therefore, you can drop some other times and include these, please do so or take out a supplement. Do what you think is proper.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 8571

[1] *Vide* "Appeal to the Public", 24-3-1924

[2] The letter seems to have been written after Gandhiji resumed the editorship of his weeklies, which he did on April 3.

169. TELEGRAM TO VYKOM SATYAGRAHIS

[*April 4, 1924*]

BEING OVERWHELMED WITH WORK UNABLE WRITE. YOU ARE DOING SPLENDIDLY. CONTINUE AS YOU HAVE BEGUN.

From a cutting from *The Hindu*: S.N. 10300

170. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

POST ANDHERI,
April 4, 1924

MY DEAR RAJAGOPALACHARI,

I have your most touching letter. I was at peace with myself immediately after that morning note. Ramu's unhesitating acceptance of my suggestion added pleasure to that peace. What is going on today with Motilalji and others can hardly be described as a conference, though I have used that word myself in the columns of *Young India*.[1] We are having desultory talks. Hakimji merely discussed the Hindu-Moslem problem. He is gone already. Malaviyaji is still here. He too talks only about Hindu-Moslem unity. Motilalji alone is naturally interested in the Council-entry because he has to shape his policy. We have, however, come to no conclusions, and I am not going to be in a hurry. I see that I cannot even draw up a tentative statement. So much for the conference or the talks.

A suggestion has been made that I should make no declaration of my views without a conference of young workers. The idea has appealed to me, and I am thinking seriously of issuing a general invitation[2] through *Young India* for some day this month for all workers who are interested in the Congress programme and who would give me the benefit of their advice. Please wire your opinion on this matter and send me also a convenient date. I should like you to be present. Is it not possible for you to pass a month with Jamnalalji? He is at Nasik where the climate is dry and salubrious. He gets the Poona physician also now and then. I would very much like you to give him

[1] *Vide* "Plea for Patience", 3-4-1924.
[2] *Vide* "Notes", 17-4-1924

a full trial. He has been here at Devdas's instance to see my fellow-patients. He insisted that you should not take any food but papaw and raisins.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
EXTENSION
SALEM

From a photostat: S.N. 8652

171. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

POST ANDHERI,
April 4, 1924

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

You will have read in the papers of the visit to Bombay of Malaviyaji, Motilalji, Hakimji and other leaders. What is going on today at Andheri can hardly be described as a conference, though I have used that word myself in the columns of *Young India*. We are having desultory talks. Hakimji merely discussed the Hindu-Moslem problem. He is gone already. Malaviyaji is still here. He too talks only about Hindu-Moslem unity. Motilalji alone is naturally interested in the Council-entry because he has to shape his policy. We have, however, come to no conclusions, and I am not going to be in a hurry. I see that I cannot even draw up a tentative statement. So much for the "conference" or the talks.

A suggestion has been made that I should make no declaration of my views without a conference of young workers. The idea has appealed to me. and I am thinking seriously of issuing a general invitation through *Young India* for some day this month for all workers who are interested in the Congress programme and who would give me the benefit of their advice. Please wire your opinion on this matter and send me also a convenient date.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat : S.N. 8653

172. LETTER TO R. B. PALKAR

POST ANDHERI,
April 4, 1924

MY DEAR PALKAR,

You will forgive me for not writing to you earlier. I wanted to say how good and kind you were all the time I was in the Sassoon Hospital. Yours was a most trying work, and though I rarely came in direct touch with you, I kept myself informed of the devotion and application with which you performed the service voluntarily undertaken by you. At best it was a thankless task turning away or keeping waiting anxious and impatient visitors. Pray accept my thanks for your services. I shall always recalll the pleasant memories of kind services done to me by so many friends whilst I was lying on a sick-bed in the hospital. Yours will not be among the least of them.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. B. PALKAR
BHARAT SWARAJYA SEWAK
NEAR BALAJI VYAPARI SANGH
BUDHWAR [PETH], POONA CITY

From a copy : S.N. 8654

173. LETTER TO C. A. PEREIRA

POST ANDHERI,
April 4, 1924

DEAR DR. PEREIRA,

I have your letter of the 26th ultimo.

I am sure that your visit to the leaders of Hindu thought can only advance the cause you have at heart. I do not know that any particular season is better than any other for the purpose of a mission, but for the sake of comfort, the cold season is decidedly preferable.

I must confess my gross ignorance of the subject you refer to. I do not know who is at present in possession, nor do I know on what title the present possessor bases his claim, how and when were the Buddhists ousted from possession. I have visited the shrine myself.

Probably you know that there is no restriction upon visitors, nor is any fee demanded for admission.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. C. A. PEREIRA
"TAMUND"
BAMBELA PITIYA ROAD
COLOMBO

From a photostat : S.N. 8655

174. LETTER TO H. R. SCOTT

POST ANDHERI,
April 4, 1924

DEAR MR. SCOTT,

I was delighted to receive your note.

I thank you for your good wishes. I did receive the translation of Fosdick's *Manhood of the Master*, for which I thank you. You will also please convey my thanks to Mr. Manilal Parekh for asking you to send me a copy. I confess my ignorance of the original.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

THE REV. H. R. SCOTT
MISSION HOUSE
SURAT

From a photostat : S.N. 8656

175. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

POST ANDHERI,
April 4, 1924

MY DEAR MAHADEV,

Please send at the earliest opportunity with someone coming here the file of *Indian Opinion* and Solomon Report[1] if available.

Yours sincesrely,

BAPU

[1] This was the report of a Commission appointed to inquire, among other things, into the Indian marriages question and repeal of the £3 tax in South Africa; *vide* "The Commission's Report and Recommendations", 25-3-1914, "Extracts from Solomon Commission Report", 25-3-1914.

3 o' clock morning[1]

[PS.]

Kingdom of Heaven—*Moksha*

Paradise—*Swarga*

About the rest, some other time.

This is what is called bungling. I had asked him to write on his own, but the poor man did not understand. Whose fault was this? Mine, of course. Both the changes you have made in *Y.I.* were correct. Keep up this practice.

From a photostat: S.N. 8657

176. LETTER TO PAUL RICHARDS

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter[2] of the 3rd March. I received also, some time before your long letter, a brief signed by you and Mons. Romain Rolland.[3]

Ever since my release, I have been trying to feel my way. The situation has altered so much. Of one thing, however, I am certain. My faith in non-violence is unquenchable. All you can do there is to spread the truth of non-violence wherever you go.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

MONS. PAUL RICHARDS
138, ROUTE DE CHENE
GENEVA
SWITZERLAND

From a photostat: G.N. 871

[1] Golikere, who was at this time working as Gandhiji's typist, typed the postcard and left it for Gandhiji to sign . Gandhiji signed it in Gujarati early morning the next day and added the remarks which follow. These had to be clarified in a letter a week later; *vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 11-4-1924.

[2] Paul Richards wrote of his travels in the Middle east and Southern Europe and of his taking khadi "from East to West on his person" Richards had met Romain Rolland, whom he called the 'Rishi of the West' in Switzerland.

[3] Dated February 17, this letter read: "We join together to send you our message of love and admiration. There you are free again, after the glorious shade of the jail, in the sunshine of the battlefield. May India be ready this time. And may Europe also hear your voice in her wilderness. Yours is the love of India and the service of humanity."

177. LETTER TO THE NIZAM OF HYDERABAD

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

TO

HIS EXALTED HIGHNESS THE NIZAM OF HYDERABAD
HYDERABAD
(DECCAN)

YOUR EXALTED HIGHNESS

I beg to acknowledge Your Exalted Highness's letter of the 1st April.[1] I received also the letter of the 1st ultimo to which I replied on the 5th ultimo.[2] I am surprised that the reply did not reach Your Exalted Highness. I now enclose a copy thereof.

I remain,

Your Exalted Highness's faithful friend.

Encl.

From a photostat: S.N. 8428

178. LETTER TO H. WALTER HEEGSTRA

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

DEAR MR. HEEGSTRA,

I thank you for your letter.

This is my reply to the first question: My platform is India. My goal is to attain self-government for India. The means adopted to attain the end are Non-violence and Truth. Therefore, Indian self-government not only means no menace to the world, but will be of the greatest benefit to humanity if she attains her end through those means and those means alone. The spinning-wheel is the external symbol of internal reform, and its universal re-adoption in India

[1] It read: ". . . if the Beraris decline to avail themselves of this . . . autonomy now within their grasp, (which the Nizam has spontaneously offered to them on condition [that] they express to the British Government their desire to come back under the Hyderabad State), then the logical conclusion to be drawn from this would be that they must give up all calims to self-government for which so much noise and agitation is now going on all over India. . ."

[2] *Vide* "Letter to the Nizam of Hyderabad", 5-3-1924.

ensures her economic salvation and frees millions of Indian peasants from growing pauperism.

My message to the businessmen of America is: Understand the inner meaning of the message of the spinning-wheel and you will probably find the solution for the World Peace which I know so many Americans sincerely desire.

I am sorry I have to disappoint you about my portrait because, as I told you, I do not possess a single portrait or print.

I thank you for the book you have sent me, and in accordance with your suggestion, I am keeping it.

Pray give my regards to Mrs. Heegstra and accept same for yourself.

Yours sincerely,

H. WALTER HEEGSTRA, ESQ.
SHEPHERD'S HOTEL
CAIRO (EGYPT)

From a photostat: S.N. 8662

179. LETTER TO V. V. DASTANE

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

MY DEAR DASTANE,

I have seen the Mulshi Peta papers. I have not been able to go through the whole literature. It appears to me that the movement[1] has got to be dropped for two reasons or rather for three:

(1) I understand that the vast majority of the men affected have accepted compensation and that the few who have not cannot perhaps even be traced.

(2) The dam is nearly half-finished and its progress cannot be permanently stopped. There seems to me to be no ideal behind the movement.

(3) The leader of the movement is not a believer out and out in non-violence. This defect is fatal to success. I see the illuminating

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Maharashtra Provincial Conference, Bassein", 7-5-1921.

verses at the end of one of the pamphlets giving a definition of true dharma.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. V. V. DASTANE
C/O CONGRESS COMMITTEE
JALGAON (KHANDESH)

From a photostat: S.N. 8663

180. LETTER TO BADRUL HUSSAIN

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

MY DEAR BADRUL HUSSAIN[1],

I rejoiced to receive your letter and that too on swadeshi paper. You have certainly neglected me though I have enquired about you of everyone who has come from Hyderabad and who, I thought, was likely to know you. What have you been doing with your health? Young men cannot afford to adopt the pace of old men. I expect you, therefore, to be up and doing long before I can. Do come as soon as you are healthy and can undertake a long journey.

Yours sincerely,

BADRUL HUSSAIN, ESQ.
ABID MANZIL
HYDERABAD (DECCAN)

From a copy: S.N. 8664

181. LETTER TO H. M. PEREIRA

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

MY DEAR PERIRA,

I thank you for your letter of the 25th February last.

I have received the interesting cutting you have sent me. Please continue to send cuttings that you may come across in connection with the national movement.

[1] It is likely that 'Badrul Hussain', is a slip for "Badrul Hassan', author of *The Drink and Evil in India*, to which Gandhiji contributed a foreword; *vide* "Foreword" 5-3-1922.

I remember your father well. What are you doing there?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. M. PEREIRA, ESQ.
MERRICK
LONG ISLAND
NEW YORK, U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N. 8666

182 LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

I am deeply thankful to you for the attention you are giving Ramdas. I think that the regular training he is having at present is likely to do him good and steady him.

I hope your mother is making satisfactory progress. Please give her my very kind regards.

Yours sincerely

M. R. JAYAKAR, ESQ.
391, THAKURDWAR
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8667

183. LETTER TO MULK RAJ

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

DEAR LALA MULK RAJ,

I have your letter of the 1st instant, for which I thank you.

Deshbandu Das has not yet come here. Pandit Malaviyaji had to leave for Benares before finishing the conversations. He returns again at the end of the month. Pandit Motilalji is here, and I hope to discuss the Jallianwala Bagh Memorial as soon as the present deliberations are

finished. I shall take care of the original plans and return them after use.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

LALA MULK RAJ
AMRITSAR

From a photostat: S.N. 8668

184. LETTER TO J. M. GOKARN

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

DEAR MR. GOKARN,

I have had your letter regarding the venue of the Congress in Karnatak. I am already in correspondence with Mr. Gangadharrao.[1] I want to do all I can to prevent a prolongation of the dispute referred to by you.

Please note that even if I was dictator in 1922, I am no longer that now.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

J. M. GOKARN, ESQ.
AMBEWADI, "D" BLOCK
GIRGAUM
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8669

185. LETTER TO GANGADHARRAO DESHPANDE

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

MY DEAR GANGADHARRAO,

I have your letter of the 31st March. I have seen it only today. As I do not know the latest development, I am not writing anything in

[1] *Vide* the following item.

Young India, but I am sending a letter to Sadashivrao[1]. Herewith a copy of that letter.[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Encl.
SJT. GANGADHARRAO B. DESHPANDE
BELGAUM

From a photostat: S.N. 8670

186. LETTER TO D. HANUMANTRAO

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

MY DEAR HANUMANTRAO,

I have your letter. You need not apologize for its length. It is all very interesting and shows the deep interest you are taking in the Ashram and Nature Cure. My difficulty is to digest milk made out of nuts. I tried it during my convalescence after that violent attack of dysentery. I should love to give it a re-trial, but I do not want just now to make any risky experiment in dietetics. The earth bandage you suggest is not now required because the wound is already healed.

With love to you all,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S. N. 8671

[1] Karnad Sadashiv Rao (1881-1937) ; lawyer, social worker and Congress leader from South Kanara, Mysore ; four times president, Karnatak Provincial Congress Committee.

[2] Not available

187. LETTER TO EDWARD MURPHY[1]

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of good wishes.

You ask for a word from me. Here it is: There is no search greater than that of Truth. The only means of finding it out is through non-violence in its extreme form. It is because we have ignored it that we seek to impose by force what we consider is truth upon others,

Your sincere friend,

EDWARD MURPHY, ESQ.
SECRETARY, THE GANDHI CLUB
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
NEWBURGH
NEW YORK, U.S.A.

From a photostat : S.N. 8673

188. LETTER TO GORDON LAW

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

DEAR MR. GORDON LAW,

I thank you for your letter of the 27th February.

I remember our meeting[2] and also your having given me Moffatt's Translation of the New Testament.[3]

I have sent a reply to the Gandhi Club also.

I am sending you a copy of Young India, the first number after resumption of my editorship, and I am asking the Management to

[1] This was in reply to Edward Murphy's letter of February 27, in the course of which he had said: "Since the club bears your name, its object is to study, discuss and read of your life and works. We find the study of your life very interesting." S.N. 8381

[2] In 1920, at Lahore

[3] Law had also presented Gandhiji a book on children by an American author.

send a copy regularly to you.

Yours Sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

GODRON LOW, ESQ., M. B. E.
THE GANDHI CLUB
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
NEWBURGH
NEW YORK, U. S. A.

189. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

I have read your pathetic letter to Devdas.

I have already sent my assurance to Mahomed Ali that I am going to issue no statement till I have met him. You will see how I have met the growing demand for some statement from me. I am myself eager to make my views known on the Hindu-Moslem question, and I am now held back only by Mahomed Ali's desire for postponement, as also Pandit Malaviyaji's, with whom I had a fairly long chat yesterday on this very question. But you do not want me to keep silent about the Tibbia College incident, for instance. I want to deal with that as also the charge against Mahomed Ali. I have not got his reply to Swami Shraddhanand. Though I am trying to overtake the vernacular Press, it is very difficult to do the thing single-handed. If you could send me all the choice cuttings from both Hindu and Moslem newspapers, I would like to deal with them with all the firmness I can command. So much for the general question.

Not a day passes when I do not think of the Brothers and their sorrows. The Khilafat is dear to every Mussulman, but the Ali Brothers have made its prestige and honour their life-work. I can therefore understand how the decision of the Turkish Assembly must have shaken them. Amina's death and Shaukat Ali's serious illness filled the cup of sorrows. How I wish I was by your side to nurse Shaukat Ali back to his former health and vigour! It is so difficult to think of him lying prostrate on a sick-bed. May God soon restore him to health! I wish I could go to Bombay to meet him when you arrive. But I must not make the attempt. One such journey may mean nothing,

but you know my method. If I break the self-imposed restriction once, I shall have to do it many a time, and I should be nowhere. Even in this retreat I have no rest. Crowds of visitors would not leave me alone, and from today I am commencing some hours' silence practically ever day so that I might have some quiet and I might also be able to overtake the correspondence which is daily growing in volume. I have already added Wednesday as a day of silence to Monday so that I may be able to cope with the editing of *Young India* and *Navajivan*.

I should not dream of Shaukat Ali coming to Juhu in his present state of health. You must therefore, take him to Matheran, and when you can spare a day yourself, I certainly want to see you. Mahomed Ali will bring me all the messages from Shaukat Ali and that would be quite sufficient to go on with. As far as I am concerned, there is not much really that I now want to know except the views of yourself and the Brothers and of a few others whose opinions I value. My mind is practically made up, and I am becoming impatient to deliver my soul.

My love to you, the Brothers and all other friends, and please remember me to Begum Saheba.

Yours sincerely,

DR. M. A. ANSARI
1, DARYAGANJ
DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8674

190. LETTER TO P. A. NARIELWALA

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

DEAR MR. P. A. NARIELWALA,

I thank you for your letter enclosing a ten-rupee note.

I am glad you did not believe that statement that I would love less those who did not wear khaddar. I am sure that not one of my co-workers would make such a statement to anyone, but there was a self-appointed volunteer in Poona who must have spoken to you in these offensive terms.

As for the wearing of khaddar, why do you associate all the

noble qualities with it? Surely, in that event no one is fit to wear khaddar garments. The wearing of khaddar should be considered on its own merits, whether from the economic aspect or from the political. As a matter of fact, the political is a corollary to the economic. I would not hesitate to urge the most viciously-minded person to use khaddar in preference to foreign cloth or even Indian mill-made cloth, because thereby we put the money paid for carding, spinning and weaving into the pockets of our poor brothers and sisters. Whilst, therefore, I would very much like you to separate the wearing of khaddar from acquisition of noble qualities, and I doubt not that the adoption of khaddar will enable you all the more to cultivate those qualities.

Yours sincerely,

P. A. NARIELWALA, ESQ.
ROSE LEA, ALTAMONT ROAD
CUMBALA HILL
BOMBAY

From a copy: S.N. 8675

191.LETTER TO SIR DINSHAW MANECKJI PETIT

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

DEAR SIR DINSHAW PETIT

I thank you for your letter of the 31st ultimo and appreciate the reasons you give for your decisions against Mrs. Sorabjee.[1]

I thank you too for your kind inquiry. I am making slow but steady progress.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR DINSHAW MANECKJI PETIT
41, NICOL ROAD
BALLARD ESTATE
Bombay

From a photostat: S.N. 8676

[1] Gandhiji had appealed to Petit for help to her; *vide* "Letter to Sir Dinshaw Maneckjee Petit", 27-3-1924.

192. LETTER TO DR. G. B. TALWALKAR

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

DEAR DR. TALWALKAR,

I thank you for your letter.

After I wrote to you, Dr. Dalal paid his weekly visit to examine my progress. I had all the three patients examined by him also, and he suggested cod-liver oil injection for both Kikiben and Radhaben , and prescribed some pills and mixture for Maniben. The Poona physician came after him and he also examined the three patients. He felt very confident of success, and all the three are at the present moment under his treatment. They appear to me to be better than they were, but I ascribe all the little improvement there is to more cheerful surroundings and the bracing sea air. It is too early yet to say anything about the physician's treatment. When Dr. Dalal comes again, I propose to discuss the Poona physician's treatment of the patients. My unfortunate position is that I have faith in the Ayurvedic drugs, but very little in the diagnosis of the physicians. I therefore never feel sure about a patient under an Ayurvedic physician if his diagnosis is not checked by a trustworthy practitioner under the Western system. I am keeping a chart of the temperatures of all the three patients, and I feel fairly safe so long as the temperature is not high and the patients keep cheerful. Do please give me further guidance if you consider it necessary.

Yours sincerely,

DR. G. B. TALWALKAR
AHMEDABAD

From a copy: S.N. 8677

193. LETTER TO MANGAL SINGH AND RAJA SINGH

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

DEAR FRIENDS,

I have received a copy of the *Onward Special* dated 17th March. I was deeply hurt on reading it. Don't you think that it reeks

with gross exaggeration and falsehood? Those of you who believe in the religious nature of the struggle should wash your hands clean of these tactics. If *Onward* is to be run as the official organ, you should have a sober and truthful editor.

Yours sincerely,

SARDAR MANGAL SINGH AND SARDAR RAJA SINGH
AMRITSAR

From a photostat: S.N. 9953

194. LETTER TO K. M. PANIKKAR

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

MY DEAR PANIKKAR,

I have your letter of the 1st instant.[1] What you say does not surprise me. The friends who were here will tell you what I had to say to them. It is so difficult for me to say anything till I hear from the friends with reference to the memorandum I have given them. Do you get all your letters regularly and without any tampering? How is it possible to issue any statement after reading the *Onward Special*? There is not a trace of the religious spirit about the writer, and it is so highly colored and untruthful. It is impossible for me to throw myself heart and soul into a struggle which, claiming to be religious, requires to be supported by inflammatory and untruthful writings. You may read this to our friends. Yours is a very delicate position. I hope you will have the strength and the courage to live up to the creed we profess.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. M. PANIKKAR
AKALI SAHAYAK BUREAU
AMRITSAR

From a photostat: S.N. 9954

[1] Panikkar had written earlier on March 29 forwarding to Gandhiji a report of an informal inquiry he had conducted into the jail occurrences.

195. TELEGRAM TO ALMORA CONGRESS COMMITTEE[1]

[On or after *April 5, 1924*]

THANKS. UNABLE ACCEPT KIND HOSPITALITY .

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8679

196. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

Saturday [After *April 5, 1924*][2]

BHAISHRI VALJI,

Indeed, there was dearth of matter last time too. One must not keep awake out of obstinacy.

We have no need to employ more men. You may, therefore, carry out the last of your suggestions right now. I shall see it that adequate stamps are affixed. I hope the mistake will not be repeated. You did well in changing 'Imposture'. The title you have given brings out the sense more clearly. There will be no difficulty in changing the order of the items under "Notes", so long as they are not interrelated.

Introduce one change. The practice of reserving the fourth page for the leader may be discontinued. Let the leading article commence from wherever the "Notes" end. Only it should start with a fresh column so that we can dispense with the practice of giving the name of *Young India* and date-line inside.

I have not received a single copy of the current issue of *Y. I.* I see that more than five columns of matter are already lying ready with you and I send a little today. More I shall be able to send only on Monday. I hope to send some tomorrow also. I shall try not to send anything on Tuesday. I may send at the most two columns.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: C.W. 6201. Courtesy : V. G. Desai.

[1] This was in reply to the telegram from secretary, Almora Congress Committee, dated April 5, 1924, which read: "Congratulations. Happy new year Almora climate excellent for recuperation. Bungalow arranged. Kindly do come."

[2] It is presumed that the letter was written by Gandhiji from Juhu after he resumed the editorial responsibility of *Young India*, on April 3, 1924. The Saturday following fell on April 5.

197. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[Before *April 6, 1924*]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I send you herewith eight chapters of the history of satyagraha.[1] See that not a single correction in it is left out. You will see that they are all essential. I have cancelled the last paragraph.

Why are you still sore about that translation? A '*ja*' may be placed at the wrong place. There is nothing whatever to be said against [your translation of] 'Kingdom of Heaven'.

There are two remedies for you. One, that you should forget your malady. It may be a sort of mental hypochondria, in the same way that some imagine a physical malady where there is none. We should know our faults, but at the same time should not exaggerate them. There is always a middle path in all things, which is really not the middle but the true path. The other remedy is to throw off your cowardice. Being a coward, you make Durga suffer, and for the same reason you beat that coachman. Why did you get frightened because he beat you? Cowards also lose patience sometimes. You are not lacking in love, but you do not examine yourself carefully. You have no self-confidence. Why don't you always say to yourself,"I will never give way to fear"," I will always correct myself whenever I make a mistake"? As a last resort, you have the *mantra* of Rama [nama]. Did you read the letter I wrote to Majli on the subject?[2] you must have got a copy.

Do write a letter about Mahomed Ali. Such questions may arise in the minds of others also. If you write, I shall get an opportunity to give an explanation. In any case, I shall write something [about it] tomorrow. Write after my article reaches you. We shall put Durga under the treatment of the Poona *vaidya*. Will she come here on Thursday? The *vaidya* comes on Thursday. Let her come to stay here for a few days. Do expect some fresh crowding here. In a dharmsala

[1] These were the first in a series which started appearing in *Navajivan* from April 6; the English version of the chapters started appearing in *young India* from April 17. The latter was published in book form, as *Satyagraha in South Africa*, in 1928. The Gujarati edition was released in two parts during 1924-25.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to D. R. Majli", 23-3-1924.

everyone can come and find room. Is it truly a place of dharma? If it is, there should be no need for hesitation.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S.N. 8762

198. INTERVIEW TO THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BOMBAY

[On or before *April 6, 1924*]

I have carefully read Mr. Duncan's[1] speech delivered by him at the second reading of the Class Areas Bill in the Union Assembly. I have not before me the letters exchanged between General Smuts and myself. I have sent for the file of the *Indian Opinion* which I have at Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati. It contains the text of the two letters, but for my purpose I do not really need them. I am surprised at Mr. Duncan's assertion. The two letters do not form the whole of the agreement. It is necessary to remember that the Indian struggle commenced with the Asiatic Registration Act of 1907, which was vetoed as an ordinance and passed, almost word for word, by the first responsible legislature of the Transvaal. Finally, in 1914, the struggle reached its climax and embraced all the four provinces of the union. 'Vested rights' has been a phrase requiring interpretation from time to time. My contention is that the whole tenor of the agreement pledged the Union Government not only not to curtail vested rights, but gradually to remove the restrictions that existed in 1914.

I have already cited Sir Benjamin Robertson and Mr. Andrews as my witnesses in support of my contention. I have asked Mr. Andrews, who was present at the negotiations that were going on between General Smuts and myself, and he completely supports me.[2] The Indian struggle extending over a long period of eight years could not have been undertaken so that, after a full and honourable settlement, it was open to the Union Government to take away the rights already possessed by the Indians.

The whole of Mr. Duncan's speech is a curious exhibition of

[1] Patrick Duncan, member of the South African Cabinet, Governor-General in 1927

[2] For Andrews's statement substantiating the position taken by Gandhiji, *vide* Appendix "C. F. Andrews' Interview to Associated Press", 7-4-1924.

inconsistency and refusal to do the right thing. As the speech itself shows, the Class Areas Bill is introduced not because it is necessary for the conservation of European predominance, but because interested Europeans are clamouring for it. Mr. Duncan himself admits that the Indian population is gradually decreasing, because immigration has ceased. His distinction between segregation and separation is, to say the least, hypocritical. And in spite of his statement to the contrary, I venture to state that, whatever the idea underlying the Bill may be, its effect must be to ruin the Indian settlers.

The Hindu, 7-4-1924

199. TO READERS OF "NAVAJIVAN"

After a separation of two years, I meet you through this letter. I look upon *Navajivan* as my weekly letter to my Gujarati brothers and sisters. Through it I have come closer to you. As for myself, I can say that separation has strengthened rather than weakened the ties that bind us together. Ever since my release, I have been longing to get in touch with you again. I used to be overwhelmed with joy whenever I thought in jail of your affection for me. I used to wonder when I would be able to place before you my reflections while in jail. I thank God that today I can do so.

I beg you not to feel bored with me if I am not able to present new ideas to you. I have not discovered any new means for our country's progress. The conviction has grown stronger in me that we can gain our objective only by the means we were employing two years ago-and by no other means. How much faith I have in these means you will see in the pages of *Navajivan*. But will the continuous discussion of the same means in *Navajivan* be of any use? Will that not weary you? You alone can answer the question. If you get bored, you will stop reading *Navajivan*.

I insist that *Navajivan* should not be run at a loss. I would regard it as being run successfully only if it could pay its way through subscriptions.

Truth is as old as creation. Yet we have not got tired of it truth is not out of our mind even when we indulge in untruth. Truth is our yard-stick. We relish as ever new the lesson we draw from our experience of it. *Navajivan*, which serves and will continue to serve you, has placed and will continue to place before you chiefly lessons

of experience; hence I have no misgiving about its future. When Shankerlal Banker and Indulal Yagnik entrusted the editorship of *Navajivan* to me[1], I had told them that neither my co-workers nor I wanted for ourselves the profits out of the paper, even if there were any. They would be utilized for some sort of public work.

You have exceeded all expectations. You have not only borne the expenses of *Navajivan*, but also made good the loss incurred in running *Hindi Navajivan* and the English *Young India*. This is not the place to record the labours which my comrades put in during my absence. They have given a new impetus to the activities of the Navajivan Press. The latter has published many books. I know that so many books would not have been published if I had not gone to jail. In the first place, they would not have had so much enthusiasm. By publishing new books they have made a contribution to the task of winning swaraj early. Moreover, had I not gone to jail, I would not at all have been able to publish so many books. They did not sell the books at cost, but included profit in the sale price. They had no self-interest to serve in doing so, but they knew that, if there was any profit, it would be used only for some public purpose. If an anna is added to the price of a book, probably it will not put a strain on the buyer; but if there are many buyers, there will certainly be a good profit. I must tell the reader that, just as there was a profit in that enterprise, there was a loss, too, in it. The sales of all books have not been uniform. The result is a big stock of unsold books.

Despite these ups and downs, despite the two other weeklies running at a loss, *Navajivan* has, during the five years of its existence, done so well that we are now in a position to appropriate Rs. 50,000 for public benefit. We intend to use this sum for popularizing the spinning-wheel and khadi through the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee. In this way, it will be utilized for giving encouragement to poor sisters, the *Antyajas* and other classes of people.

This amount represents a saving. You alone have been mainly instrumental in making it possible. But if I do not acknowledge that my comrades too have contributed to this, I shall be failing in my duty towards them. Swami Anandanand, whose energy, untiring like that of the elements, and matchless devotion to *Navajivan* have enabled this enterprise to expand so much, does not accept even a pie for his labours. Many of those who are engaged in carrying on the

[1] In September 1919

routine work content themselves with accepting no more than what is necessary for their bare subsistence. Should I mention the names of those who have been writing for *Navajivan*? They receive absolutely nothing. if we calculate the salaries of all of them at market rates. they will surely amount to at least Rs. 1,000 a month. That works out to Rs, 60,000 for five years. Now you will see that a saving of Rs. 50,000 is no very big achievement. If the number of subscribers to *Navajivan* were not as small as it is, if there were no loss in the publication of books as at present, if *Young India* and *Hindi Navajivan* were to pay their way, a sum larger than Rs. 50,000 could easily have been saved. If any profits should accrue hereafter, we intend to distribute them every year. Swami Anandanand does not like to deposit even a pie in the bank. He believes, and I agree with him, that public insti-tutions should accumulate no surpluses with them. He tries to act in obedience to God's law, as far as possible. God always provides daily food for all created beings. If many people had not hoarded food in excess of their needs, no one would have died of hunger in this world. Moreover, public institutions have no right to subsist on reserves. A public institution ought to exist only as long as it is popular. When the people stop supporting it, it must close down.

In the case of *Navajivan*, by now five years have passed in this manner and you can easily understand the reasons. Even before I went to jail, we had discussed the question of utilizing profits for a public purpose. Almost all my co-workers too went to prison and that is why the surplus remained unspent.

Let me say one thing more. We do not intend to run *Young India* and *Hindi Navajivan* at a loss much longer. I am sure you will not mind it if those papers are run on profits from *Navajivan*. Perhaps you may wish them run that way. But I believe that it is certainly wrong to run periodicals in that manner. Hence I have been warning the readers of both that, if the loss continues for long, they should be closed down.

Readers, you do not read *Navajivan* for mere pleasure. You read it in order to understand your post of duty in the great *yajna* which is in progress in our country. If the readers of *Navajivan* realize their duty, you may rest assured that swaraj is as good as in your hands.

Only truthful and non-violent soldiers are required in order to win swaraj. A true cause never suffers from dearth of funds. Our

weapon is the spinning-wheel; our ammunition hanks of yarn. A friend has made and left with me a spinning-wheel shaped like a gun ; he has fixed to it a belt containing cartridges which are nothing but cotton slivers. This friend's labours prove his faith in the spinning-wheel. Up till now we have not been able to win swaraj. This is so not because of any defect in the means, but because of our lack of faith in them, want of effort and skill, and so on. *Navajivan* will strive to bring these defects to your notice again and again with a view to making you render more and more service to the country. I want you to help in the effort.

Your servant,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 6-4-1924

200. MY NOTES

PATIENCE BEARS SWEET FRUIT

I am aware that readers of *Navajivan* are eager to know my views about Council-entry. It is not easy for me, however, to give my views. If it was the first time the problem had been raised, I could have immediately replied that we should not enter the Councils. My opposition to Council-entry stands. The Congress, however, has allowed the advocates of Council-entry to seek elections[1] and some of them have already entered the Councils. Under these circumstances, it is as difficult to answer the question what should be done as it is easy to ask it. Moreover, the advocates of Council-entry are eminent leaders of the nation. I should first understand from them their reasons for this decision. Several of them have made big sacrifices and served the country long. Their patriotism is inferior to nobody else's. I do not, therefore, wish, and leaders too would not expect me, to express any views before studying the question carefully. The value of my views depends on their being the result of careful deliberation. I have also to take care lest I thoughtlessly enable the Government to

[1] The special session of the Congress held at Delhi in September 1923 permitted the Swaraj Party to contest the elections which were to be held by the end of the year. Later, in December when the annual session of the Congress was held at Cocanada, the elected members of the Swaraj Party were granted permission to enter the Councils.

use my views for its own purposes. Hence I request readers to be patient for the present.

In my humble opinion, the most important task before us today is to repair the breach in Hindu-Muslim unity which has occurred at many places. Till there is genuine love uniting the followers of the different faiths, we should not hope for swaraj or prosperity. I am fully convinced that, without such love, all our efforts will be in vain. I am eager to give my views about how the breach may be repaired, but I request readers to have patience in this matter also. I must discuss this problem, too, with the leaders.

MEETING LEADERS

I am being acquainted with the situation by Bharat Bhushan Pandit Malaviya, Hakim Ajmal Khan Saheb, Pandit Motilal and others. I am trying to understand their points of view. Maulana Mahomed Ali has wired to say that he will be coming in a few days. Deshbandhu Chitta Ranjan Das[1] is also likely to arrive after the 4th. I am looking forward to meeting them.

MEANWHILE

No one should stop working and wait for my views. Whatever views I may express about Council-entry, they will make no difference in regard to the spinning programme or national education. These two tasks cannot be completed or organized well in a short period even if we devote all our time to them and, till then, we shall not be ready for civil disobedience.

Similarly, whatever the remedy I prescribe for bringing about Hindu-Muslim unity, there is no question that the two communities need to cultivate sincere friendship for each other. No one should doubt, either, that they must help each other. If we reflect thus, we shall realize that, after I have expressed my views, we shall have to carry on with greater determination and efficiency the tasks which engage our attention today. Those persons, therefore, who put their faith in my views should, if they have been neglecting their work, bestir themselves and start working .

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-4-1924

[1] 1870-1925; lawyer, orator and founder of the Swaraj Party; President-elect of the Ahmedabad Congress, 1921 but arrested and imprisoned; presided over the Gaya Congress in 1922

201. GUJARAT'S EFFORTS

Gujarat's record during the last two years does honour to Gujaratis. Anything which brings honour to Gujarat brings honour also to India. Our movement is such that anything which benefits one province benefits the country as a whole. Hence the entire country has advanced in the measure that Gujarat has advanced. Vallabhbhai's[1] ability is seen in every field. His co-workers are as capable as he is. The satyagraha in Borsad[2] is a shining example of conscientious effort on their part.

This satyagaraha is in many ways superior to the Kheda satyagraha[3]. The victory in Kheda satyagraha was one which merely saved our face. The victory in the workers' satyagraha[2] in Ahmedabad was tainted by my fast, since that fast had brought undue pressure on the mill-owners.

In Borsad, satyagraha by itself has completely succeeded. It upheld our honour and also protected our material interests, and no other means, legitimate or otherwise, was employed along with it for securing victory.

Let no one think, either, that the victory was made possible by favourable circumstances, since the Governor proved to be a good man. We may thank him for doing justice, but would it have been possible even for a hard-hearted Governor to suppress the pure struggle of Borsad? One who believes in God will also trust that circumstances will favour good men conducting a movement in a good cause. Satyagraha aims at converting an opponent into a friend, that is, at creating circumstances favourable to a good cause.

If Gujarat had rested on its oars after Borsad satyagraha no one would have blamed it. But how can a satyagrahi rest? A holiday means for him a fresh task. Satyagraha can also be interpreted to mean self-

[1] Vallabhbhai Patel (1875-1950); Congress leader of Gujarat; Deputy Prime Minister of India after independence.

[2] This was started in Borsad taluka of the Kheda district in 1923, under the leadership of Vallabhhai Patel, against the punitive cess imposed on the taluka because the local Government was not convinced that the inhabitants of the area were doing their duty by the State in connection with the dacoities of Babar Deva, an outlaw. The satyagraha was successful and the punitive cess was withdrawn in early 1924.

[3] Of 1918.

examination. The people of Borsad did this and saw that they were responsible, partly at any rate, for the imposition of punitive police on their taluka. One error having been understood, others are understood as a matter of course. Hence internal reform is now being carried out there. This work is more valuable, and more difficult, than fighting the Government. Fighting the Government and winning against it was like a weeding operation. Now we have to raise and harvest the crop, and this is a more difficult job and takes more time. I hear that this work is also proceeding very well. The strength and fitness of the people and volunteers of Borsad taluka will be measured by their success in it.

Gujarat is not likely to fail in regard to other aspects of non-co-operation too. No other province has as many non-co-operation schools as Gujarat has. The province has done fairly good work in regard to khadi, removal of untouchability and other items. It need not fear comparison with other provinces. There has been no breach in Hindu-Muslim unity, though I notice some effects of the prevailing atmosphere. I congratulate Gujarat on all these efforts. I wish to add, however, that very much more yet remains to be done. The education imparted in national schools has still to be infused with a national spirit. The number of these schools is much too small yet. Efforts need to be made to popularize khadi on a large scale. The spinning-wheel has yet to find a place in every home. A great deal remains to be done in the way of service to untouchables. A large number of hard-working, able and honest volunteers are needed to undertake these activities. As long as we have not made sufficient progress in all these fields, we cannot afford the luxury of resting.

When I think of all these tasks, I remember the quiet of prison life. I know, however, that this is a sign of cowardice. When I was in jail, people carried on a great agitation for my release. But can I enjoy peace outside till we have won swaraj? On coming out of jail, I have realized that being in jail can also be a form of self-indulgence. When I think of what I can contribute to these activities, now that I am out of prison, my weakness pains me and makes me feel ashamed; I am afraid, moreover, that the enthusiasm produced by the demand for my release may now subside and this increases the pain. I, therefore, wish to remind Gujaratis of the warning which I gave two years ago. All our work must aim at swaraj. As long as the entire country remains imprisoned, we can have no rest or peace. I request my Gujarati

brothers and sisters to let whatever love they have for me inspire them to take up the tasks connected with the struggle for swaraj.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-4-1924

202. SHRIMATI SAROJINI AND KHADI

I received a letter from East Africa when I was in the hospital in Poona. It purported to give Shrimati Sarojini Naidu's views on whether Indians in East Africa should wear khadi. The letter has been lost, but the following is a summary of the views attributed to Shrimati Naidu in that letter :

"It is Gandhi's view that the vow of khadi applies only within India. Not only is there no need to wear khadi outside India, but actually it should be avoided and one should dress like an Englishman. If Gandhi himself went to East Africa, he would not wear a khadi loin-cloth but, like Mr. Verma, put on English dress, and you also should do the same."

I doubt if Shrimati Naidu spoke in this vein. The correspondent from East Africa has asked for my comments on these views. He says that a number of Indians in East Africa dress in khadi and also wear khadi caps. They have been confused by Shrimati Naidu's speech.

I do believe that the vow of khadi is intended to be observed in foreign countries. In some cases, it may be altogether impossible to keep it. Moreover, the object of this vow is to secure economic freedom for India; it is, therefore, not necessary to observe it outside India. But it has never been my view, nor is it today, that khadi should not be used outside India even if it can be used conveniently. I feel, too, that Shrimati Naidu would never express such a view. In countries like East Africa or a place like Aden, khadi can be used without any inconvenience. In South Africa, too, it can be used in summer. That is, there will be no difficulty in wearing it in hot countries. Further, most of the articles for use in the home should be of khadi.

I would, however, take the view that, if we go to a country which grows cotton and which weaves its own khadi, we should wear the cloth produced locally. We should follow in other countries the rule which we apply in our own. When foreigners come to India, it is desirable that they should use goods produced here. We should, therefore, act on the same principle in foreign countries. In countries

like East Africa, all cloth is imported from outside. I have never heard that they produce their own cloth. Not only, therefore, do we have every right to wear khadi in those countries, but actually it is our duty, I believe, to do so to the greatest extent possible. As my views developed with the progress of the satyagraha struggle [in South Africa] and the more I felt the need to embrace poverty, I increasingly adopted simplicity in my life. Ultimately, I adopted a dress resembling the Indian labourer's and made of cloth imported from India, the *lungi*[1] and shirt in the Madras style, and kept it up afterwards. In winter, I wore two shirts which I would get stitched from coarse cloth. I had discarded the cap there. I used to meet all Government officials in this very dress. I did not notice that my English friends or the officials took offence at it. Many of my English friends even congratulated me when they saw that I was adopting the mode of life and dress of the labourers whose fight I was leading. My only aim in telling this story here is to explain that it will suffice if we wear in foreign countries a dress which will cover our limbs adequately.

In that passage from Shrimati Naidu's speech, there was one point which deserves notice. Her speech dealt with our undesirable habits. It described many of our shabby and untidy ways. To some extent, this criticism is justified. If a khadi dress, or for that matter any other dress, is soiled or shapeless, it does not please the eye. Tidiness is necessary, not as adornment, but for the sake of cleanliness and decorum. One person may wear a dress made from a particular material carelessly and appear untidy and another person may wear a dress made from the same material properly and appear tidy. A proper dress keeps up decorum and shows our regard for others. We should not fail in these. The border line between a becoming tidiness and adornment is very thin, but it is essential that the distinction should be maintained. It is not at all my intention to suggest that men and women must every now and then look into a mirror and arrange their dress. I have, of course, no such fear about friends in East Africa. The clothes we wear must not be the least dirty. White khadi clothes should be regularly washed. In India, it is considered decent enough to wear a short dhoti. Indian civilization is so liberal that it is not considered the least indecent if anyone wears, as I do, a very short loin-cloth. In our country, we do not judge a man by his dress. The loin-cloth would not, however, be looked on with favour in other

[1] Dhoti stitched but plaitless

countries. If I had to go to a foreign land, I would by all means put away my loin-cloth in a trunk. In foreign countries, it is necessary to cover the legs up to the knee. 'Do in Rome as the Romans do' is no idle saying. Everyone would consider us guilty of lack of consideration if we unnecessarily do something that offends the susceptibility of people in foreign lands. I would regard such conduct as a form of violence. There is certainly violence in showing no consideration for others.

While discussing the letter from East Africa, I may also say how khadi could be popularized there. Ready-made dresses are imported in East and South Africa in large quantities. We may have dresses stitched here which will suit the native inhabitants of these countries and the Indians there, and carry them with us. Resourceful traders there can, with patience, sell khadi worth lakhs of rupees. India does not, however, produce enough khadi to meet her own requirements. I am not unaware of the fact that the quantity of khadi produced and sold is no more than a drop in the ocean. The use of khadi is spreading at such a slow pace still that stocks of khadi have accumulated at many places. How strange and how sad! I made the suggestion above with this fact in mind. A single Gujarati trader in South Africa can easily lift the entire stock of khadi which has accumulated in Gujarat.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-4-1924

203. UNTOUCHABILITY AND UNAPPROACHABILITY

The accumulated burden of Hindus' sins is big enough. We have used Shastras, which teach selflessness, as instruments of selfishness. By casting aside the immutable principles enunciated in the Shastras and treating as of permanent application verses which prescribed rules of conduct of temporary utility, we have elevated wickedness to the place of dharma. My conscience tells me ever more emphatically every day that one such wickedness is the practice of untouchability. As if the sin of untouchability was not enough, we started another sinful practice, that of unapproachability, to add to the burden. In the South, that is, in Madras Presidency, the people are familiar with this sinful practice. But with a view to serving these people kept at a distance and atoning for their own sins, Hindu

members of the Congress in Travancore have started satyagraha.[1] Travancore is a Hindu State. There this practice of forcibly keeping people at a distance exists in a cruel form. Many Gujaratis may not be even aware of the meaning of *doorata*[2]. The word is not found in the dictionary. How can it ever be found in the Shastras? *Doorata* means the untouchables keeping at a certain distance from other Hindus. Owing to the belief that the other Hindus, and mainly Brahmins, are polluted even by the shadow cast by these untouchables, the latter are obliged to walk at some yards' distance from the Brahmins and other Hindus. When passing along the same road, if they fail to do so, abuses and even blows are showered on them. There are some streets in Travancore which these poor brethren are forbidden even to enter. Pained by this unbearable evil, Hindu members of the congress have started satyagraha, as I mentioned above. In order to establish his right to walk along a particular street, an untouchable Hindu takes with him another Hindu and enters that street. Three untouchables offer this kind of satyagraha every day and court arrest. Three of them, arrested in this way, are serving a six-month term of imprisonment. There is not the slightest doubt that, if this satyagraha continues peacefully and steadily, people will win.

The Hindus working to eradicate the evil of untouchability in North India have gone much further than this with the help and under the leadership of Bharat Bhushan Malaviya: the *Antyajas* draw water from wells used by other Hindus. The notion of being defiled by their touch seems to have died out in many places. Now the classes regarded as untouchables are able to make use of common wells. The Secretary of the Dohad Taluka Congress Committee reports to this effect.[3] He writes to say that the Hindus did not permit the *Antyajas* to draw water from a well belonging to the local board. A weaver who had passed the vernacular final examination made bold to use the well and persuaded other members of his community to follow him. They agreed and went to fetch water from that well. Other Hindus attempted to stop them from doing so, but the police sub-inspector refused to help them and explained to them that, when a movement was going on in the country against such restrictions, they should not try to stop the *Antyajas*. This calmed the caste Hindus. This was a happy conclusion.

[1] In Vykom

[2] Literally, 'remoteness'

[3] This information was later found to be misleading; *vide* "A correction", 27-4-1924.

The incident, however, shows that, even in Gujarat, the *Antyajas* are still prevented from drawing water from public wells. I congratulate the Hindus of Dohad, but at the same time suggest to the Dohad Congress Committee members that they should visit the *Antyaja* locality and instruct the residents in sanitation and persuade them to keep their pitchers, etc., clean. If such an effort to reform them is not undertaken simultaneously, it is likely that, while things are just beginning to change for the better, opposition to *Antyajas* drawing water from public wells may be renewed. I have heard of such a development at many places in the north.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-4-1924

204. LETTER TO ELIZABETH SHARPE

POST ANDHERI,
April 6, 1924

DEAR MISS SHARPE

I thank you for your sincere and frank letter.[1]

I know you do not want me to discuss the various questions you raise in it. You have raised them for me to ponder over which I shall certainly do. I must not, however, conceal from you the fact that there is a radical difference between your view-point and mine. What does it

[1] In her letter of April 3, Elizabeth Sharpe had posed Gandhiji a string of questions:
" . . . Do you think you have done any good to India by raising in her heart the rankling sense of injustice, true or untrue? Do you think the impassioned speeches of Mrs. Naidu, rousing 'hate' are 'good' karma? Do you think two wrongs can ever make a right? Or that Temporal Power in India will not be the end of her spirituality? Don't you feel that it was just because of India's worldly poverty that she was spirituality rich? That man cannot serve two masters, God and Mammon? Alas! Alas! The mad energy thrown about in India today was once devoted to *Brahma-Darshan*. Even now India is the only spot in the world where in peace and quietness we may renounce the world-good God, Mr. Gandhi, there is more freedom in India today than anywhere else; freedom to wander, beg and love, and have God in our own ways. Isn't that the highest freedom? You with your true life, your immense possibilities for good, please, please care not at all for man's condition on this earth, that is past bad karma-care only for the saving of his soul-cutting off worldly bonds. I write this because you, an Indian, will understand thoroughly. The West which only believes in this one birth will not see my point at all. . . " S.N. 8646

matter, however, so long as we all remain searchers after truth ?

Yours sincerely,

MISS E. SHARPE
SHRI KRISHNA NIVAS
LIMBDI
KATHIAWAR

From a copy: S.N. 8684

205. LETTER TO JOSEPH BAPTISTA

POST ANDHERI,
April 6, 1924

DEAR MR. BAPTISTA[1].

I thank you for your letter of the 5th inst.[2]

I wrote to you immediately on receiving your letter. Wednesday, like Monday, is my day of silence. You are quite correct in saying that my views are practically what they were before. At the same time, if you could find time after next Sunday, I should be delighted to give you any day between 5 and 6. p.m., expect Mondays and Wednesdays.

Yours sincerely,

JOSEPH BAPTISTA, ESQ.
MATHARPACADY
MAZAGAON, BOMBAY

From a copy: S.N. 8685

206. LETTER TO GURBAKSH SINGH GULATI

POST ANDHERI,
April 6, 1924

DEAR SARDAR GURBAKSH SINGH[3],

I was glad to receive your letter of the 3rd instant and to hear about all the friends whom you left behind in the jail. I remember them all and I remember my talks with the Kaveeshar.

[1] Nationalist leader, associated with the Home Rule Movement

[2] This is not available. In an earlier letter dated February 8, Baptista had written that he wanted to meet Gandhiji to discuss certain political matters in view especially of the former's impending visit to England.

[3] The original has 'Gushaksha Singh', evidently a typing error.

I thank you for your inquiry about my health. I am making very fair progress. I am able to take a little exercise daily and am gaining strength day by day.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SARDAR GURBAKSH SINGH GULATI
C/O L. AMRIT LAJ. SETHI
GUJRANWALA

From a photostat: S.N. 8686

207. LETTER TO MRS. M. G. POLAK

POST ANDHERI,
April 6, 1924

MY DEAR MRS. POLAK[1],

I was so delighted to have from you after so many years your handwriting, your language, your thoughts just the same as they were before. Your description of Waldo makes me think that I would not recognize him if I meet him without notice. I hope he will be successful in the examination and find a naval job to suit him.

I am so sorry to hear about Mater[2] and Maud[3]. Let me hope that this will find them all in good health. I forgot to ask you about Amy, nor have you given any news about her. You may know that Andrews is still with me at this delightful retreat and that he is looking after me like a mother. Ramdas and Devdas are also here. This place has been turned into a cottage hospital. Radha, Maganlal's daughter, is here recovering from a severe attack of pleurisy. Another inmate is Vallabhbhai Patel's daughter whom you do not know. There is also Professor Kripalani's sister whom too you do not know. The fourth, though not laid up in bed, is Prabhudas, Chhaganlal's son. Radha's mother and sister are also here. So you see we are a fairly big family.

Andrews tells me that Henry has grown fairly stout. I wonder if I can recognize him if he comes to me unawares. I am looking forward to his . . .

I am getting on as well as it is possible. Andrews takes me for a

[1] Millie Graham Polak, wife of H. S. L. Polak
[2] Polak's mother
[3] Polak's sister

walk in the evening by the seaside.

With love to you all,

Yours,

MRS. M. G. POLAK
33, MOWBRAY ROAD
BURNSBURY
LONDON, N. W.

From a photostat: S.N. 8687

208. LETTER TO GEORGE JOSEPH

POST ANDHERI,
April 6, 1924

MY DEAR JOSEPH,

I am delighted you have decided to put Mrs. Joseph under Dr. Rajan's[1] care. He is a skilled physician and I am sure that she will be well looked after under his care.

It would be a splendid thing if you succeed in growing cotton in your district, and if you do not wish to import cotton from the nearest district where it is grown, I would suggest your commencing weaving and importing hand-spun yarn from wherever it is found.

As to Vykom, I think that you should let the Hindus do the work. It is they who have to purify themselves. You can help by your sympathy and by your pen, but not by organizing the movement and certainly not by offering satyagraha. If you refer to the Congress resolution of Nagpur, it calls upon the Hindu members to remove the curse of untouchablility. I was surprised to learn from Mr. Andrews that the disease had infected even the Syrian Christians.

With love to yourself and Mrs. Joseph,

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GEORGE JOSEPH
KUZHUVAPPURAM
CHENGANNUR (TRAVANCORE)

From a copy S.N. 8688

[1] Dr. T. S. S. Rajan

209. LETTER TO HARIBHAU PATHAK

POST ANDHERI,
April 6, 1924

DEAR HARIBHAU,

Here is a reminiscence from Lokamanya's conversation with me.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. HARIBHAU PATHAK
SECRETARY
CITY CONGRESS COMMITTEE
POONA

[ENCLOSURE]

I had the privilege of meeting the Lokamanya scores of times. The first time I had the honour of making his acquaintance was in 1896, when I went to Poona to pay my respects to the leaders there, and to canvass their assistance in the cause of Indian settlers in South Africa, and the last was in Bombay when with Maulana Shaukat Ali I went to him at Sardar Griha before leaving Bombay with the Maulana for an Upper India tour. When we returned from the tour, it was only to hear that the Lokamanya was lying dangerously ill. I went in to pay my respects, but that was all. We had no talk. I propose to give only the last reminiscence as it is appropriate to the season. About Hindus and Mussalmans he said, turning to the Maulana: "I will sign anything that Gandhi suggests, because I have full faith in him on the question." About Non-co-operation, he significantly repeated to me what he had said to me before, "I like the programme well enough, but I have my doubts as to the country being with us in the self-denying ordinance which Non-co-operation presents to the people. I will do nothing to hinder the progress of the movement. I wish you every success, and if you gain the popular ear, you will find in me an enthusiastic supporter."

From a photostat: S.N. 8689

210. LETTER TO SIR IBRAHIM RAHIMTULLA

POST ANDHERI,
April 6, 1924

DEAR SIR IBRAHIM RAHIMTULLA,

I was looking forward to meeting you today. I am sorry that you are not able to come, and more so to find that the cause is your indisposition. I hope that you will soon be well. Tomorrow is a blank day, as I keep silence till late at night. Wednesday is another day of silence and all the other free days are filled during the week. May I tentatively fix next Sunday at 6 p.m. ?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR IBRAHIM RAHIMTULLA
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 11402

211. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Sunday, 3.30 a.m. [On or after *April 6, 1924*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

You will know something about Radha and Kikibehn[2] from the accompanying letter. Radha has enough of mental troubles. I have talked with her a little. I shall have more talks when I get more time. All the three patients' beds are beside me in the open.

I intend to write *Young India* about what you have written in *The Mahratta*. The position will be clearer after we meet and discuss things. On a little reflection, I feel that our real field of work is to support weavers of hand-spun yarn only.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: C.W. 5786. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Gandhiji resumed writing for his weeklies regularly after April 3, 1924. The first Sunday following this date was April 6.

[2] Sister of J. B Kripalani.

212. TELEGRAM TO GOPALA KURUP

BOMBAY,
[On or After *April 6, 1924*][1]

[PANDIT GOPALA KURUP
TIRUVALA
TRAVANCORE]

RARELY ANYBODY ASKS PERMISSION DEDICATION.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S. N. 8680

213. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Monday, April 7, 1924

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I am sending you the material as per list. Correct any errors in language, grammar, etc., which you may notice. I have had sufficient inquiries made. If you think it necessary to omit something, omit "Jail Experiences".

Do not include Andrews' interview and mine to A. P. about South Africa. I do not think this a proper way of preserving things which have already appeared [elsewhere]. A separate file of such items may be maintained, or they should be put in the relevant weekly file of *Y. I*.

Since my "Jail Experiences" have been started, I must continue them. More later on. I had said I would, if possible, write a Gujarati article on the Satyagraha Week. But now you may give in the *Navajivan* Supplement a translation of the English note [in *Young India]*.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

If, after dropping "Jail Experiences", you have still more than

[1] This was in reply to Gopala Kurup's telegram of April 5, 1924, from Travancore received on April 6, which read: Humbly beg to dedicate my Malayalam book *Swarajya Geetha* pray blessings permission."

enough [this week], you may give the article[1] from *Unity* next week . Make the article on Mahomed Ali the leading article. Try and keep the Notes in the order in which they are placed. You may, however, change the order if necessary

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S.N. 8696

214. CABLE TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

[*April 8, 1924*][2]

PRANJIVAN
RANGOON

MANILAL LEAVING AHMEDABAD TODAY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8692

215. LETTER TO J. P. TRIVEDI

ANDHERI,
Chaitra Sud 4 [*April 8, 1924*][3]

BHAISHRI JAYSHANKAR TRIVEDI[4],

As I was all the time thinking of writing to you, I got your letter. I feel ashamed that I did not write to you first. I only wished to tell you that I have not forgotten your love. I have seen few people in the world who do good to others in a spirit of humility, and you are one of them. I have observed this for years and felt happy.

It is good that you have been able to buy a motor-car.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: G. N. 998

[1] For extracts from and Gandhiji's comments on this article, in the Chicago periodical, *vide* "What It Is Not", 10-4-1924.

[2] This was in pursuance of Manilal's telegram, dated April 7, 1924, from Bombay, which read: "Starting tomorrow Rangoon *via* Delhi. Please send some message for Indians particularly Gujaratis in Burma and Burmans care Seth Jamnalalji 128 Canning Street, Calcutta."

[3] In 1924 , *Chaitra Sud* 4 fell on April 8.

[4] Professor of Agricultural Engineering at the Agricultural College, Poona

216. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

Chaitra Shukla 4 [*April 8, 1924*][1]

CHI. PARASRAM,

Your letter. I had sent a telegram[2] to the Conference[3]. Any results ?

I hope your work will now be regular.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6202. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

217. TELEGRAM TO K. NAMBOODRIPAD

ANDHERI,
[On or After *April 8, 1924*][4]

CONGRATULATE MENON MADHAVAN ON ARREST. HOPE FIGHT WILL BE KEPT UP TO FINISH.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10270

218. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

ANDHERI,
Chaitra Sud 5 [*April 9, 1924*]

BHAISHRI FULCHAND[5],

Bhai Chunilal has written to me a long letter about the school there. Therein he has made several allegations against you. I trust I can ask you to see him personally, know from him his complaints and

[1] As given by the addressee
[2] Not available
[3] U.P. Political Conference
[4] This was in reply to the telegram from Namboodripad received on April 8, 1924, which read: "Iyer Brothers fact not correct. Campaign resumed today. Kesava Menon Madhavan offered satyagraha and were arrested. Other batches to follow daily."
[5] A constructive and political worker of Wadhwan, Kathiawar

write to me after satisfying him. I want you to do this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 2875. Courtesy: Shardabehn F. Shah

219. TELEGRAM TO K. M. PANIKKAR

[On or after *April 9, 1924*][1]

MY CONGRATULATIONS ON JATHA'S PEACEFUL SURRENDER

From a photostat: S.N. 9957

220. NOTES

THE SATYAGRAHA WEEK

The reader does not need the reminder that this is the sacred Satyagraha Week. It was on Sunday the 6th April, 1919, that the first all-India hartal took place as a protest against the passing of the Rowlatt Act. It was on that day that thousands of men and women all over India kept a twenty-four-hour fast. It was on that sacred day that the nation recognized, with the strength it has never done before, the necessity of Hindu-Muslim unity and that Hindus, Mussalmans, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians and others met in hearty co-operation, and it was on that day that an all-India swadeshi spirit, not in vengeance but as a vital necessity in the life of the nation, was born. It was on the 13th that the Jallianwala massacre took place. We have been observing both these days and the intervening days from year to year as special days for purification, searching of hearts, for cultivating better relations among all the different sections and for promoting swadeshi which has centered gradually round the spinning-wheel. I was grieved to learn from a friend that in Amritsar, the scene of the black tragedy, the Week was least observed last year. I wonder how Amritsar and the rest of India will have observed the Week this year.

AM I UNFAIR ?

I have the good fortune to possess friends who keep me on the right path when I am inclined or likely to stray away from it. One

[1] This was in reply to Panikkar's telegram of April 8, received on April 9, stating: "Third Jatha surrendered peacefully."

such friend thought that, in my letter[1] last week to the readers of *Young India*, I was less than fair to the Government of Bombay inasmuch as I declined to render thanks to them for having given me best medical assistance and made the path to recovery easy by freely permitting friends to visit me. In my friend's opinion, the treatment was a sign of change of heart due to the advent of the new Governor. I have deeply thought over my friend's argument and I am reluctantly obliged to adhere to the conclusion that I owe no thanks for the best medical assistance and the facilities given to friends to visit me, unless thanks are due to a Government every time it does its duty. I have made ample acknowledgment of the fact that the Government did for me during my illness all that it could reasonably be expected to do in respect of a prisoner. But I am unable to render thanks to the Government as such in the same sense that I have rendered them to Col. Maddock, Col. Murray and Major Jones. They need not have been as kind as they were and I would still have acknowledged that they had done all they could be expected to do in their respective spheres. The personal element was a factor in these gentlemen's conduct towards me, and I was bound to give them my thanks. To finish this part of the argument, if I may state it without indelicacy, I may say that my scrupulously correct conduct as a prisoner had not a little to do with the happy relations that subsisted between the officials and, indeed, also the Government and myself. I state this merely to emphasize the truth tested by me on scores of trying occasions that uniformly correct conduct will disarm the fiercest opposition, prejudice and suspicion.

Now for the supposed change of heart. I wish I could see it. I am longing for it. The reader may know that the slightest real change of heart will make me capitulate without delay. But it will have to be very real. The Government have failed even in so simple a test as the release of Maulana Hasrat Mohani, and the removal of the ban against Mr. Horniman. I own that from a strong believer I have become an equally strong unbeliever in this Government. I am, however, sane enough to be able to perceive a sincere change of heart. It has been suggested that Sir George Lloyd would not have treated me during my illness as His Excellency Sir Leslie Wilson has done. I do not believe it. In spite of Sir George Lloyd's utter dislike of me, he would have given me the same medical assistance and facility that were given

[1] *Vid*e "For the Readers Past and Present of *Young India*" 3-4-1924

to me by the present Governor. Indeed, it was he who sent Col. Maddock to examine me when I first became at all seriously ill in the Yeravda Jail about eight months ago. Col. Maddock was asked to visit me weekly during convalescence and send the Governor weekly reports. I have a higher opinion of the British officials than most people imagine. They have a high sense of duty. Only the honesty of an ordinary official does not travel beyond the line of policy. It is no fault of his. He is heir to a system handed down for generations-a system which is based on exploitation of the weak by the strong. The official breaks down when the system which sustains him is in jeopardy. But it is my belief that no other human being will do better under that system. The sooner, therefore, it is destroyed or radically altered the better for us all.

DECK PASSENGERS

I invite the reader's attention to Mr. Chaturvedi's interesting and instructive experiences in East Africa.[1] His bitter experiences as a deck passenger revive painful memories. The picture he has given is not overdrawn. Three parties can change the disgraceful state of things:

(1) The British India Steam Navigation Company

(2) The Government

(3) The passengers.

The British India S.N. Company will not worry because its concern is to secure the largest profits. We may expect nothing from the Government till we have the power to move it. The passengers are the real parties affected. Unfortunately, the majority of them are injured even to avoidable hardship. The others secure relief by bribes. It is only when a sensitive passenger travels as a deck passenger that he causes a stir. He does not make reform in the treatment of deck passengers his life-work and so nothing is achieved. Only when self-respecting persons like Mr. Banarasidas insist on proper sanitation and accommodation, not merely for themselves, but for all, may substantial change be expected.

CHARKHA ABROAD

Mr. Chaturvedi's remarks on the spinning-wheel are the most instructive. If Indians of East Africa can popularize the bow, the wheel and the loom among the natives of the soil, they will have rendered

[1] Published in *Young India*, 10-4-1924

them a signal service. The possibilities of the wheel are as wide as the world itself because its spread requires little capital. It merely needs fellow-feeling, ordinary organizing ability and technical skill which can be easily acquired.

KHADDAR IN EAST AFRICA

Should the Indians of East Africa wear khaddar? Shrimati Sarojini Naidu is reported to have replied in the negative. I can hardly believe it. Be that as it may, East Africa should use khaddar as far as possible. It is not necessary for them to take or be under the vow of khaddar, as we at home must be. What the Shrimati must have laid stress upon is cleanliness and neatness. Khaddar clothing must be kept spotlessly clean and worn neatly. One often notices a tendency towards neglect of these necessary qualities. If khaddar is to become popular with the upper classes, the wearers must be clean and neat. The roughness and thickness of well-washed khaddar are a recommendation rather than otherwise. The absorbent property of rough khadar makes it hygienically sound. Its loose texture gives it a softness that is pleasant to the wearer.

AS WE HAVE SOWN

Mr. Andrews's pathetic remarks[1] on untouchability deserve to be pondered over by every Hindu. I knew nothing till Mr. Andrews told me that untouchability was practiced even by Syrian Christians of Malabar. As a Hindu I hung my head in shame when I heard the news. For I realized that the evil was copied by them from the Hindus. The retort of his fellow-passengers which Mr. Andrews received when he broached the subject of the disabilities of Indians in South Africa was well deserved. Whilst it is true that the Europeans in South Africa need not treat us as we treat our own people at home, our mouths are shut when our own sins are flung in our faces. We are reaping fruits of what we have sown.

MY OFFER

Shrimati Sarojini's splendid work in South Africa has told. Letters received by me from South Africa show that her presence has brought fresh courage to the Indian settlers. Mr. Duncan's fruitless efforts to justify an unjustifiable measure show also that the Europeans of South Africa have felt the force of her wonderful work.

[1] Andrews's article, "Untouchability", was published in the same issue of *Young India*.

Mr. Duncan's assertion that the agreement of 1914 did not bind the Union Government to take away vested rights, as the Class Areas Bill admittedly does, ought to carry with it the understanding that, if such an agreement can be proved, the Bill will not be proceeded with. Even though a non-co-operator, I beg to make the proposal that, if the Government of India receive an undertaking from the union Government that, if the agreement can be proved to the satisfaction of an impartial tribunal, they will suspend the Bill pending such enquiry, I shall be prepared to appear before such a tribunal to prove the agreement. Nor is precedent wanting for such a course. When the interpretation of the Transvaal Law 3 of 1885 and the propriety of its enactment in spite of the London Convention[1] were in dispute, the matter was referred to arbitration by the Imperial and the Transvaal Governments.

TO CORRESPONDENTS

I have before me a heap of correspondence and other documents for publication. It is impossible for me to find space for it if *Young India* is to retain its present size. The correspondents will please, therefore, forgive me if they miss their contributions in these columns. The fact is that, as an esteemed friend remarked to me, *Young India* is not a newspaper. It is a veiwspaper. And then, too, it is being used today predominantly for distributing my views and in my own way. Its scope being, therefore, circumscribed, correspondents will do well not to send contributions which have no special feature about them and which have no bearing on the message for which *Young India* stands.

Young India, 10-4-1924

221. CAMPAIGN OF MISREPRESENTATION

At the present moment there seems to be a wilful attempt being made to widen the gulf between Hindus and Mussalmans. Some newspapers, both Hindu and Muslim are leaving no stone unturned to inflame passions and, unfortunately, they do not hesitate to resort to exaggeration and even misrepresentation. Where they are not themselves consciously guilty of such methods, they recklessly copy without verification everything in the nature of a sensation that appears in any other newspaper.

[1] This was signed in 1884.

One such statement was made with reference to Maulana Mahomed Ali. He was reported to have said that an adulterous Mussalman was better than myself. That there should have been found any person willing to believe such a thing of Maulana Mahomed Ali shows the degree of tension that exists between Hindus and Mussalmans. The reader will find in another column a translation of the two letters written by the Maulana, one to Swami Shri Shraddhanandji[1] and the other to *Tej*[2]. In my opinion, the letters dispose of, once for all, the calumny against the Maulana that has been going the round of the Press. Enemies of India's freedom have not hesitated to distort the Maulana's statement and use it for the purpose of setting the Hindus against the Maulana Saheb. I venture to commend his letters to the attention of every thoughtful Hindu. The letters, in my humble opinion, demonstrate the transparent honesty of the Maulana.

What is the original statement which has been so cruelly distorted by some newspapers? He says in effect that the creed of Islam is better than my creed. Is there anything offensive in the statement? So long as there are different religions, is not the Maulana's position the only logical and honest one? I have very dear Christian friends in South Africa and in India. They pray for light for me. One of them, a retired solicitor of standing in South Africa, urges me to accept the Jesus Christ and his salvation. He says that without that all my effort will be useless. Thousands of Christians certainly hold that a righteous man without belief in Jesus Christ is less than an adulterous Christian. Does an orthodox Hindu fare better? If he does, why is there all this feverish agitation regarding *Shuddhi*? In making the choice of a husband for his daughter, will he choose the best character irrespective of religion or the best man in his own sect? And if he will restrict the choice to his own circle, does it not show that he, too, like the Maulana, believes that his creed is the best of all?

The Maulana has stated the religious law in picturesque language and feeling safe, as he had a right to do, that I could not be offended, he chose me as one of his best Hindu friends for his illustration and showed that his creed he held superior to persons, no matter how dear they might be to him. I hold that he deserves to be

[1] Munshiram Nanakchand (1856-1926); later known as Shraddhanand; nationalist leader of Arya Samaj who took a prominent part in public activities in Delhi and the Punjab.

[2] For the text of these letters, *vide* Appendix "Mahomed Ali's Letter to Swami Shraddanand", 10-4-1924 and "Mahomed Ali's Letter to the Editor, *Tej*", 10-4-1924.

honoured for the staunchness of his faith rather than be accused of coldness for a friend or disrespect for the latter's creed.

Nor need his prayers for me that I should find it in my heart to accept Islam, cause any alarm or surprise. He would not be a true friend if he did not wish the best (according to his belief) for me. My creed is truth and non-violence in their extreme form. I may be wrong. But if I wish well to my friends, I cannot but wish that they may have the same creed so long as I continue to believe it to be the best. I remain within the Hindu fold because it stands best the test laid down by my creed.

The Swamiji in his note, whilst heartily and unreservedly accepting the Maulana's letter, remarked that his creed made no deference between practice and profession as the Maulana's appeared to him to do. The second letter of the Maulana clears up the point and clinches the whole argument when he says that his creed, too, does not divorce practice from profession. He adds that in his letter he merely compared the world's creeds and gave his opinion that his was the best. Could he do otherwise and still be a Mussalman? If he thought otherwise, would he not then, as an honest man, be bound to profess the creed he considered better than that of Islam?

I hope that the heart of every true Hindu will go out to Mahomed Ali when, in the midst of his domestic bereavement and the sickness of his great brother, he is trying his utmost to heal the breach between the Hindus and the Mussalmans. Surely Hindus who strive for unity have enough fanaticism within to recognize that Mussalman co-workers fare no better.

The other incident is reported to have occurred in the Tibbia College. I asked my son to write to Dr. Ansari to let me know what actually did happen. I quote his reply in full except six words which give the name of the newspaper which has been offending against the law of self-restraint and verification. I omit the name because the purpose is not to select newspapers for criticism, but to find a remedy for the disease that has become rampant in the Press. Dr. Ansari writes:

> The incident in the Tibbia College is a very petty one. On the day of the celebration of Mahatmaji's birthday in the Tibbia College, one of the speakers compared him to Jesus Christ to which a Muslim student took exception and observed that no living person, however eminent in all respects, should be compared to prophets. Some of the students protested against the Muslim student's remark upon which the latter tried to explain

what he had meant and regretted that he was misunderstood. This is the whole story and it is evidently absurd to suggest that members of the staff were involved in it or that there was the slightest likelihood of a breach of peace.

The papers which you mention are extremely partisan ones whose characteristic feature it is to purvey news calculated to set one community against the other and to present trifling incidents in a very highly exaggerated form. It would not have been so very sad if these papers alone were to blame. because they are neither important nor well known. But the misfortune is that the spirit of animosity is swaying almost all the vernacular papers—Hindu and Muslim—in Northern India.

Nor are the incidents referred to by you the only ones reporting which these papers have betrayed such a deplorable and narrow-minded bigotry. Blind fanaticism and a reprehensible desire to run the other community down by every means has today become an essential part of the life of a vernacular paper of Northern India.

The newspaper readers know the exaggerated manner in which the incident has been described. The Muslim student who took exception to the comparison was, after all, justified in so doing. It is not necessary for the purpose of honouring a man to compare him with any other honoured man, much less with revered prophets. The information Dr. Ansari gives about the vernacular Press in Northern India is calculated to cause alarm and anxiety. It is to be hoped that the papers which make a living out of sensations will put patriotism and truth before their pockets. I have heard it suggested that Muslim editors say they will cease to revile Hindus and Hinduism when the Hindu editors leave off reviling Islam and Mussalmans. Hindu editors want to reverse the process. I suggest that both make the desired improvement simultaneously.

I do not wish to suggest that truth should be hushed. There has been that kind of indelicate delicacy before now. What is necessary, however, is that whilst truth may be fearlessly told, exaggeration and innuendos should be scrupulously avoided.

Young India, 10-4-1924

222. MAULANA MAHOMED ALI ON HIS CRITICS

The following are the letters addressed by Maulana Mahomed Ali, the one to Swami Shri Shraddanandji and the other to the Editor,

Tej, Delhi.[1] The letters are referred to in the leading article.[2]

Young India, 10-4-1924

223. WHAT IT IS NOT

The situation in India illustrates another curious basis of difference between us. I hold to the "Non-resistance" idea. Gandhi as I understand him proclaims the Way of Love. And yet he does not see that "Non-co-operation is a way of violence". Suppose the milk drivers of New York had a real and just and even terrible grievance. Suppose that they should strike and cut off the milk supply from the babies of New York. They might never raise a hand in violent attack on anyone and yet their way would be the way of violence. Over the dead bodies of little children, they would by "non-co-operation" win their victory. As Bertrand Russell said of the Bolsheviki, "such suffering makes us question the means used to arrive at a desired end" Non-co-operation means suffering in Lancashire and is an appeal, in the end, to violence rather than reason.

This is not quite to the point and yet it does illustrate in a way what I have in mind. The advocates of Home Rule in India are now in the legislative bodies and there they propose to block progress by non-co-operative methods. In England, the country in which by historical accident civil institutions got a chance to develop, as John Fiske pointed out, through absence of war, the process of growth has been by the method of co-operation.

The above is an extract from an article in *Unity* (14th February, 1924) sent by an unknown American friend.

The article is a letter addressed to Mr. Holmes[3] Mr. Arthur L. Weatherly. The letter is an endeavour to show that an idealist, if he will be practical, has to water his ideal down to suit given circumstances. The writer has packed his letter with illustrations in support of his argument. As I am not for the moment concerned with his main argument, I hope I am doing no violence to him by merely giving an extract from his letter. My purpose is to show that Mr. Weatherly's view of Indian non-co-operation cannot fail to be of general interest

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Mahomed Ali's Letter to Swami Shraddanand", 10-4-1924 and "Mahomed Ali's Letter to the Editor, *Tej*", 10-4-1924.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] Presumably, John Haynes Holmes, author of *My Gandhi*

to the reader.[1]

Mr. Weatherly has laid down a universal proposition that "non-co-operation is a way of violence". A moment's thought would have shown the falsity of the proposition. I non-co-operate when I refuse to sell liquor in a liquor-shop, or help a murderer in his plans. My non-co-operation, I hold, is not only not a way of violence, but may be an act of love, if love is the motive that has prompted my refusal. The fact is that all non-co-operation is not violent and non-violent non-co-operation can never be an act of violence. It may not be always an act of love. For love is an active quality which cannot always be inferred from the act itself. A surgeon may perform a most successful operation and yet he may have no love for his patient.

Mr. Weatherly's illustration is most unhappy and incomplete for the purpose of examination. If the milk drivers of New York have a grievance against its Municipality for criminal mismanagement of its trust and if, in order to bend it, they decided to cut off the milk supply of the babies of New York, they would be guilty of a crime against humanity. But suppose that the milk drivers were underpaid by their employers, that they were consequently starving, they would be justified, if they have tried every other available and proper method of securing better wages, in refusing to drive the milk carts even though their action resulted in the death of the babies of New York. Their refusal will certainly not be an act of violence, though it will not be an act of love. They were not philanthropists. They were driving milk carts for the sake of their maintenance. It was no part of their duty as employees under every circumstance to supply milk to babies. There is no violence when there is no infraction of duty. Suppose further that the milk drivers in question knew that their employers supplied cheap but adulterated milk and another dairy company supplied better but dearer milk and they felt for the welfare of the babies of New York, their refusal to drive the milk carts will be an act of love, even though some short-sighted mother of New York might be deprived of the adulterated milk and may not have bought better but dearer milk from the more honest dairy company whose existence has been assumed for the purpose of our argument.

[1] There is an error here. Gandhiji later corrected this to read: "My purpose is to show that Mr. Weatherly's view is altogether wrong. His view, wrong though it is, cannot fail to be of general interest." *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", after 10-4-1924.

From the imaginary heartless milk drivers and the heaps of dead bodies of New York babies, the writer in *Unity* takes us to Lancashire and pictures its ruin when Indian non-co-operation has succeeded. In his haste to prove his main argument, the writer has hardly taken the trouble to study even simple facts. Indian non-co-operation is not designed to injure Lancashire or any other part of the British Isles. It has been undertaken to vindicate India's right to administer her own affairs. Lancashire's trade with India was established at the point of the bayonet and it is sustained by similar means. It has ruined the one vital cottage industry which supple-mented the resources of millions of India's peasants and kept starvation from their doors. If India now strives to revive her cottage industry and hand-spinning and refuses to buy any foreign cloth or even cloth manufactured by Indian mills, and Lancashire of Indian mills suffer thereby, non-co-operation cannot by any law of morals be held to be an act of violence. India never bound herself to maintain Lancashire. Visitors to taverns or houses of ill fame would be congra-tulated on their self-restraint and would be held even as benefactors of keepers of taverns or questionable houses, if they ceased to visit those places even without notice and even if their abstention resulted in the starvation of the keepers of those houses. Similarly, if customers of money-lenders ceased to borrow and the latter starved, the former cannot be regarded as violent by reason of their withdrawal. But they might be so considered if they transferred their custom from one money-lender to another through ill will or spite and without just cause.

Thus, it is clear that non-co-operation is not violence when the refusal of the restraint is a right and a duty, even though by reason of its performance some people may have to suffer. It will be an act of love when non-co-operation is resorted to solely for the good of the wrongdoer. Indian non-co-operation is a right and a duty, but cannot be regarded as an act of love because it has been undertaken by a weak people in self-defence.

Mr. Weatherly's reference to the obstructive programme of the Swarajist cannot for reasons stated last week be examined for the time being.

Young India, 10-4-1924

224. SAROJINI'S MAGNETISM

Just at the time of sending the last post for *Young India*, I received a letter from my son[1] who is in charge of *Indian Opinion*, Natal, giving a graphic account o52..366=f Mrs. Naidu's visit. I know that the reader will like to have it at the earliest opportunity. I give below a translation of the letter which is dated 15th March 1924:

> This is a hurried note. I have barely two hours to catch the mail.
>
> Mrs. Sarojini Naidu has been in our midst for the past twenty days. Her work by now has produced a very good effect on the people of this country, particularly the Europeans. Johanseburg was hostile when she came, but her eloquence has disarmed much of the opposition and the mischief-makers have been shamed into silence. Towards the end of her tour in the Transvaal, Europeans attended her lectures in their thousands. I was not at Johannesburg myself. But I managed to meet her at Volksrust, half-way between Johannesburg and here. She was received at every station by large and eager crowds, composed of both Europeans and Indians and her compartment presented the constant appearance of a flower garden. She stopped for two days in Maritzburg. The anti-Asiatic spirit there is acute and the reactionary element holds full sway. There had been a strong movement to disallow the use of the Town Hall to the Indians for Mrs. Naidu's reception and serious consequences were threatened if it was allowed. But the situation was saved at the last moment by the *Maritzburg Times* which, in a leading article, wisely dissuaded the Europeans from any precipitate action. In spite of the indications of trouble, every rich of the Town Hall was packed with Indians and quite a number of Europeans occupied the gallery. The Mayour having refused to preside on the occasion, a European friend was proposed in the chair. He was howled down by the occupants of the gallery as soon as he attempted to speak. Mr. Bhagat, who tried to reason, too, was obliged to sit down. Mrs Naidu at this stage took charge of the meeting She had hardly uttered three sentences when the gallery-leaders were seen quitting the hall one after another and, in about twenty minutes' time, the main element of rowdies had retired from the field. When the meeting was over, a number of Europeans, unknown before, showed great eagerness to shake hands with Mrs. Naidu.
>
> The next day, crowds of Indians and Europeans could be seen in front of Mrs. Naidu's residence struggling to have a glimpse of her, the space outside being hardly sufficient to contain them. The European and Coloured women

[1] Manilal Gandhi

felt astounded at her courage. There were missionaries who called on Mrs. Naidu, wanting to make her acquaintance, and the whole dramatic change was quickly followed by a cordial interview between the Bishop of Natal and Mrs. Naidu.

Durban probably excelled all the other places in the reception it gave to the great guest. A special train received her at Maritzburg. The station platform at Durban was packed to overflowing and the road outside, too, was blocked by the mass of spectators. Mrs. Naidu was conveyed to the Albert Park in a carriage drawn by the people themselves. The attendance at the meeting here was easily five thousand men and women of all classes and as many schoolchildren. The women's meeting was unique in the history of South Africa. Mrs. Naidu also delivered two lectures in the Town Hall which was filled to the full on both occasions, some of the people actually having to return disappointed for want of accommodation. The European women had arranged a special meeting of their own to receive Mrs. Naidu. The tour here has now extended up to Zululand. Tongaat and Phoenix yet remain to be done. Mrs. Naidu has for the present left for Cape Town after spending three days here. She intends being present at the debate on the Class Areas Bill. She then tours through some of the towns in the Cape, goes back to Johannesburg on a brief visit, comes back here to spend with us a week and takes the first available boat in April for the Motherland.

Mrs. Naidu's energy is wonderful. She has slight fever and headache at times, but her ailments never come in the way of her heavy programme of journeys and lectures.

The authorities have accorded her excellent treatment. She is invariably given a special saloon on trains and the railway officials are courteous. Mrs. Naidu was anxious to write to you, but it has been quite impossible for her to do so. She has asked me specially to write to you.

Young India, 10-4-1924

225. LETTER TO ISMAIL AHMED

POST ANDHERI,
April 10, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter, for which I thank you. I hope to make such use of it as I can in the columns of *Young India*.

I should hope that God will show me the light and the strength to follow it. I am afraid I am beyond redemption if you think that the Bardoli decision was a blunder. I am quite likely to repeat such

blunders if I am to retain my loyalty to truth undiminished.

Yours sincerely,

ISMAIL AHMED, ESQ
KHOLVAD
SURAT

From a copy : S.N. 8701

226. LETTER TO K. M. PANIKKAR

POST ANDHERI,
April 10, 1924

MY DEAR PANIKKAR,

You are keeping me well posted with all the news. I want to go slowly. I have your telegram saying that the Jatha peacefully surrendered. I know that victory lies in that direction and no other.

I understand what you say about the Vykom temple. You will have seen that my letter[1] was totally non-committal, but since then things have moved fast, and I have kept pace with them. I agree with you that it is a most important movement that has been launched in Travancore. I can only hope that there are enough volunteers to fight the struggle to the finish.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. M. PANIKKAR
AKALI SAHAYAK BUREAU
AMRITSAR

From a copy : S.N. 8703

227. LETTER TO MAHOMED ALI

POST ANDHERI,
April 10, 1924

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

I have your two letters, one written by your secretary enclosing a letter received by you, the other personal.

I am dealing with the enclosure in my own way. You may come

[1] The reference apparently is to "Letter to K. P. Kesava Menon", 1-4-1924, which was published in *The Hindu*, 3-4-1924.

when you think that you can leave safely the bedside of the big patient.[1]

I have sent you my assurance and give it to you again that I am not going to publish anything of my views on the two questions till I have met you. You may take your own time. You will see how I have dealt with your letter to Swamiji in the columns of *Young India*.[2]

I do not need the slightest persuasion in favour of the proposition that both the parties are to blame for the present tension, and when the time comes, I am hoping and praying that God will give me the strength and courage to say the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth as I know it.

I do not know what Devdas wrote to Dr. Ansari, but the poor boy tells me that there was not a word that could have disconcerted either you or Dr. Ansari. I thought you wanted him to post the extracts so that I could know the real state of affairs in order to enable me to deal with those extracts.

I have just received a reassuring wire from Dr. Ansari saying that Shaukat Ali's temperature is again normal.

Yours sincerely,

MAULANA MAHOMED ALI
C/O DR. M. A. ANSARI
1, DARYAGANJ
DELHI

From a photostat : S.N. 8704

228. TO THE READER

JUHU,
Chaitra Shukla 6 [*April 10, 1924*]

DEAR READER,

Attempts are being made in many newspapers in North India to create feelings of disaffection between Hindus and Muslims. One notices manifestations of jealousy, exaggeration and lies in these

[1] Shaukat Ali was ailing and had suffered a relapse. Gandhiji had a letter dated, April 6 from Zahir Ali, Shaukat Ali's son, stating that Mahomed Ali was unable to leave for Bombay to meet Gandhiji till his brother was better.

[2] *Vide* "Campaign of Misrepresentation" and "Maulana Mahomed Ali on His Critics", 10-4-1924

newspaper. At such a time your duty and mine is to try our best to put out this fire. It is my firm conviction that there is no cause for disunity and cleavage between us. Each adhering to his own religion, we can maintain mutual brotherliness. I therefore hope that you will try to promote friendship between our two communities. Never accept without examination and scrutiny all that my be written against either Hindus or Muslims.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 13-4-1924

229. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[After *April 10, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I send herewith matter for *Young India*. Some is already lying with you. Do not hesitate to correct mistakes wherever you notice any.

The following sentences in the current issue is incorrect: "My purpose is to show that Mr. Weatherly's view of Indian non-co-operation cannot fail to be of general interest." This sentence makes no sense. It should be. 'My purpose . . . Mr. W's view is altogether wrong. His view, wrong though it is, cannot fail to be general interest." The second sentence, indeed, may well be omitted. It is quite unnecessary. But since you have spoken of "general interest", I have retained the phrase to show how you can revise such sentences which seem to make no sense. Though, indeed, care has been taken here, I see that mistakes remain. I would even suggest that you should keep a corrected file of *Young India* so that, if Ganesan[2] or some one else reprints the articles, the correct text may be printed.

We need not at all feel concerned if the sales of *N. J.* and *Y. I.* do not increase. Nobody has taken note of Rs. 50,000/-[3] as everyone has become nervous. Should not something be said about the example

[1] The sentence quoted in the second paragraph appeared in *Young India*, 10-4-1924; *vide* "What It Is Not", 10-4-1924.

[2] S. Ganesan published two volumes of Gandhiji's articles from *Young India*, 1919-22 and 1922-24.

[3] The amount represented savings in the course of five years of the existence of *Navajivan*; *vide* "To Readers of *Navajivan*", 6-4-1924.

being followed ? How is this to be done? We have never heard of any newspapers having been run on the same lines as ours. You may not therefore be sorry for the absence of the note.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Ramdas is doing well.

"The Maulana's resignation from the Presidentship' and 'Was I Partial?' are not to my liking. If you too do not approve of them, you may destroy the articles. There is enough material even without these.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 11420

230. THOUGHTS ON COUNCIL-ENTRY[1]

[Before *April 11, 1924*]

Pandit Motilalji and I have had prolonged discussions about propriety of non-co-operators entering the Legislative bodies. I had too the privilege of discussion with other Swarajist friends. But in spite of all my effort I have not been able to discover a common meeting ground in terms of non-co-opertion. I retain the opinion that Council-entry is inconsistent with non-co-operation. There is an honest and fundamental difference between the Swarajists and myself. I have failed to convince them that to be out of the Legislative bodies is, to say the least, far more advantageous to the country than to be in them. But I recognize that so long as they think otherwise, their place is undoubtedly in the Councils. It is the best for us all. If their work prospers and the country benefits, such an ocular demonstration cannot but convince honest sceptics like me of our error and I know the Swarajists to be patriotic enough to retrace their steps when experience disillusioned them. I would therefore be no party to putting any obstacle in their way. I cannot actively help in a project in which I do not believe.

[1] The document is in Gandhiji's handwriting, with several corrections by him. It carries what are evidently his first thoughts on the "vexed question of entry by Congressmen into the Legislative Councils and Assembly" After week-long discussions, from March 29 to April 5, in Bombay, with Motilal Nehru, Lajpat Rai and other Swarajist leaders, Gandhiji formulated his stand on the question. It is likely that Gandhiji put down these thoughts sometime prior to his "Draft Statement on Council-entry", dated April 11; *vide* the following item.

I differ too as to the method of work in the Councils. I do not believe in obstruction within the Councils. I should only enter a Legislative body, if I found I could at all use it to advantage. If therefore I entered the Councils, I should endeavor to give strength to the constructive programme of the Congress. I should therefore move resolutions requiring the Central and the Provincial Governments (1) to make all their cloth purchases in hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar, (2) to impose a prohibitive duty on foreign cloth, (3) abolish the drink and drug reserve and correspondingly reduce the army expenditure. If the Government refuse to enforce resolutions carried in the legislature, I should invite them to dissolve them and take the vote of the electors on the specific points. If the Government will not dissolove, I should resign and prepare the country for civil disobedience. When that stage is reached, the Swarajists will find me ready to work with and under them. My test of fitness for civil disobedience remains the same as before.

During the state of probation I should advise the No-changers to prove their faith without thinking of what the Swarajists are doing or saying, prosecute their programme with undivided energy and concentration. The khaddar and the national schools are enough to occupy a large army of workers who believe in quiet, honest undemonstrative work. The Hindu and Muslim problem too will tax the best energy and faith of the workers. As Vaikom is showing, the Hindus have in untouchability a huge problem before them. In all such work outside the Councils, No-changers and pro-changers can work in unison.

From a photostat : S.N. 8718

231. DRAFT STATEMENT ON COUNCIL-ENTRY[1]

April 11, 1924

After having discussed with the Swarajist friends the vexed question of entry into the Legislative Assembly and the Councils by Congressmen, I am sorry to have to say that I have not been able to see eye to eye with the Swarajist Friends. I assure the reader there has been no lack of willingness or effort on my part to accept the Swarajists' position. My task would be much simpler if I would identify myself with the Swarajists' programme. It can be no pleasure to me to oppose even in thought the most valued and tried leaders, some of whom have made great sacrifices in the cause of the country and who yield to no one in their love for the freedom of the Motherland. But, in spite of my effort and willingness, I have failed to be convinced by their argument, nor is the difference between them and myself one of mere detail. Unfortunately, it goes to the rock-bottom of the principle. Had it been one of detail only, I would immediately have sacrificed my conviction, however strong it might be, and, for the sake of agreement, would have joined the Swaraj Party and advised the No-changers to heartily co-operate with the Swaraj Party and make theirs the national programme. such an attitude is, however, impossible, the difference being, as I have said, fundamental. It is my conviction-and further thought and observation are making it daily stronger-that the entry into the Legislative bodies has retarded the progress towards Swaraj for the following reasons. In my humble opinion.

(a) The entry into the Legislative bodies is tantamount to taking part, directly or indirectly, in the present system of government, for the Legislative bodies are a chief part of the machinery designed to sustain that system.

(b) The programme of obstruction has a strong smell of

[1] This typewritten document is evidently an elaboration of his "Thoughts on Council-entry " It carried the title "First Draft of Statement on the Councils Question' and the words: "Very rough incomplete draft, unrevised. Confidential-not for publication." Gandhiji forwarded this draft to Motilal Nehru on April 13; *vide* "Letter to Motilal Nehru", 13-4-1924. The latter sent Gandhiji an elaborate note; *vide* Appendix "Motilal Nehru's Note on Council Entry", before 18-4-1924. In this, he critically analysed the contents of Gandhiji's draft and offered his own suggestions. Gandhiji then prepared a final draft which, with a few minor verbal changes, was issued as a statement to the Press on May 22.

violence about it and cannot generate an atmosphere of calmness which is so necessary for preparing the ground for civil disobedience, which the Congress has found to be the only sanction for which the people of India can be made ready and which is regarded as an effective substitute for armed rebellion.

(c) It has retarded the progress of the constructive programme, namely, the charkha, unity between the different communities, removal of untouchability, development of the Panchayat system, National Schools and the collection of subscriptions necessary for carrying on the programme.

(d) Assuming that the entry was desirable, it was premature. It will be admitted that the discipline that the Swaraj Party has shown in the Legislative bodies is due to the intensive and methodical work that the Congress has carried on since 1920. But neither discipline nor methodical work in the face of disappointments has become a habit with Congress workers. The experience of the past four years shows that the habit of discipline and application is likely to vanish under prolonged strain. The present Legislative bodies do not contain an atmosphere disposing one to truthfulness and non-violence. On the contrary, there is in that atmosphere a constant, almost irresistible, temptation to depart from them.

(e) The entry is tantamount to abandoning the Khilafat and the Punjab causes.

I do not wish to enter into detailed argument in support of the objections above set forth. I would say a word only on the fundamental objection, namely that the entry is tantamount to participation in violence. It has been suggested that nobody takes the extreme view of non-violence that I do and that most Congressmen confine the definition of non-violence to mere abstention from causing physical hurt to the opponent. I venture to doubt the accuracy of the statement, but if it is so, it is an argument, not against the fundamental difference I have started, but for revising the Congress creed and removing the adjective "non-violent" wherever it occurs in the Congress resolutions, for it must be plain to everybody that, if a non-co-operator, whilst he refrains from causing physical hurt to his opponent, may wound him with his tongue and in his thought wish him ill, the struggle must break down. Non-violence is a mere camouflage and the atmosphere for civil disobedience can never be created, for we will always be giving tacit approval to every violent demonstration against

the administrators and and co-operators. It was in vindication of the view that I have set forth that civil disobedience was suspended during the Rowlatt Act agitation after the incendiarism and murders in Amritsar, Viramgam and Ahmedabad, and during the non-co-operation campaign after the mob violence in Bombay and again in Chauri Chaura. Each time the advice I tendered for suspension of civil disobedience was accepted by the nation and, if it was an honest acceptance, I was justified in thinking that non-violence in its full sense, but restricted as to the cause for which it was taken, was understood and accepted by the nation.[1]

Such being my view of the Council-entry, it follows that, if I could persuade the Swarajists, I would have them retrace their steps and give up the Assembly and the Councils. But if they have failed to convince me of the soundness of the step they have taken, I have fared no better with them. On the contrary, they can show, and with justice, brilliant victories: my release, an ocular demonstration of khaddar in the highest places, almost complete success of obstruction, namely, forcing the Government to resort to certification, which success would have been complete if the Congress had given unstinted support to the Council-entry at Gaya, thus enabling the Swaraj Party to organize so effectively as to prevent a single election from going in favour of non-Swarajists. Naturally, it is vain for me to argue that all such things could have been done even before non-co-operation. If our aim was to get releases of prisoners, we could have got not merely a Gandhi released but many Hasrat Mohanis and all Punjab prisoners. It is idle for me to argue that there is not much in the khaddar demonstration or in keeping so many Moderates out. The machinery of the Government goes unchecked with or without the Moderates and in spite of obstruction. Nor is it much use arguing that all that the entry into the Councils is likely to achieve could have been achieved by fairly-directed agitation even in 1920. It is highly likely that, whilst the Government may not make the admission, some pleasant[2] advance upon the Reforms will be made, but I have no doubt that everything that is likely to be granted will be far short of what the Congress programme was and is designed for.[3]

[1] In the final draft of the statement, this examination of the issne of non-violence dose not find a place.

[2] Perhaps a slip for 'present'.

[3] This comparison of the relative impacts of the Non-co-operation and Swarajists' programmes is omitted in the final draft.

It was not to be expected that the Swarajists could be convinced by any argument. They are many of them amongst the ablest, most experienced and honest patriots. They have not entered the Legislative bodies in the teeth of opposition without full deliberation, and they must not be expected to retire from the position until experience has convinced them of the futility of their programme. The question, therefore, before the country is not an examination and distribution[1] of merits of the Swarajists' views and mine. The question is: regarding the Council-entry as a settled fact, what is to be done now. Are the No-changers to keep up if only mental hostility against the Swarajists' programme, or are they to remain neutral and even help wherever it is possible and consistent with their principles? The Delhi and Cocanada resolutions have permitted those Congressmen who have no conscientious scruples to enter the Councils and the Assembly if they wish to. In my opinion, the Swarajists are, therefore, justified in entering the Legislative bodies and expecting perfect neutrality on the part of the No-changers. They were also justified in resorting to obstruction, because such was their policy and the Congress had laid down no conditions as to their entry.

So far as I am concerned, being an out-and-out believer in non-violence, my position remains the same as at Amritsar in 1919. I do not believe in obstruction in any shape or form within the Councils. It appears to me to be an utter waste of time. I would enter the Councils only if I believed that I could make use of them for the advancement of the country. I must, therefore, have faith of the machinery and those in charge of it. I cannot be part of the machinery and till want to destroy it.

Taking the Council-entry, therefore, as a necessary evil, if I were a member of any to these bodies, is should carry out the constructive programme of the Congress. Two things can be immediately done: a resolution requiring the Central Government and the Provincial Governments in future to buy only hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar for all the departments under them, and another resolution abolishing the whole of the revenue from drinks and drugs, the deficit to be covered by a corresponding reduction in the army expenditure. The Government is likely even to disregard these resolutions. I am unable to say what should be done if the Government refuses to give effect to

[1] Perhaps a slip for 'discussion'.

such resolutions. The fact is, not possessing the Council mentality, it is difficult for me to say anything further.

From a photostat: S.N. 8713

232. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Friday [*April 11, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

Golikere bungled first. I bungled next and, if you will have it so, after me-you. It seems you always think that in every matter I see your fault. I had asked Golikere to write the postcard in his own name. He thought that he was to write in mine and I was to sign it. When I saw that he thought that I would write to you in English without any particular reason and so typed a postcard and went home and when I saw the letter for signature, I did sign it, no doubt, but remarked, 'This is bungling'. I thought that you would catch the humour underlying the remark. I then remembered your letter referring to the 'Kingdom of Heaven' There was space enough in the card for giving its meaning and so I wrote it down. It had nothing to do with the contents of the card. I had not read your Gujarati translation at all. I wrote with only your letter in mind. I have still not read your translation. Does this explain everything? The first bungling was on the part of Golikere; then, on my part; then, since what I wrote was misunderstood by you, if you care to believe it, on your part, for you did not catch my meaning and misinterpreted my remark. Your interpretation of the 'Kingdom of Heaven' as distinguished from the 'Kingdom' of Earth' was, I think, quite correct. However, as I have not gone through the thing carefully, I cannot say definitely. I cannot enter into a discussion about *moksha*, etc., just now.

I have put down my views up to date about Council-entry; a copy of it is sent herewith.[2] Please share it with Vallabhbhai also. Let Kaka and others also read it. You may then express your views if you feel like doing so.

Blessings from,

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 8725

[1] *Vide* footnote 2 to "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 4-4-1924.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

233. TELEGRAM TO GEORGE JOSEPH

[ANDHERI,
April 11, 1924][1]

GEORGE JOSEPH
COCHIN

OMIT FASTING BUT STAND OR SQUAT IN RELAYS WITH QUIET SUBMISSION TILL ARRESTED.

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 5174. Courtesy: Krishnadas

234. LETTER TO GEORGE JOSEPH

4-30 a.m., Saturday, April 12, 1924

MY DEAR JOSEPH,

The above is the wire[2] sent to you in reply to yours. Fasting in satyagraha has well-defined limits. You cannot fast against a tyrant, for it will be as a piece of violence done to him. You invite penalty from him for disobedience of his orders, but you cannot inflict on yourself penalties when he refuses to punish and renders it impossible for you to disobey his orders so as to compel infliction of penalty. Fasting can only be resorted to against a lover, not to extort rights but to reform him, as when a son fasts for a parent who drinks. My fast at Bombay, and then at Bardoli, was of that character. I fasted to reform those who loved me. But I will not fast to reform, say General Dyer who not only does not love me, but who regards himself as my enemy. Am I quite clear?

How is Mrs. Joseph?

You must be patient. You are in an Indian State. Therefore, you may wait in deputation on the Dewan and the Maharaja. Get up a

[1] This was in reply to a telegram from George Jospeh dated April 11, reading as follows: Vaikom Satyagraha assumed new phase. Police preventing access. Refuses to arrest. Satyagrahis have got down front road fasting. More satyagrahis intend following daily. Advise if change procedure necessary. Urgent.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item. The telegram and this letter were released to the Associated Press of India the following day.

monster petition by the orthodox Hindus who may be well-disposed towards the movement. See also those who are opposing. You can support the gentle, direct action in a variety of ways. You have already drawn public attention to the matter by preliminary satyagraha. Above all, see to it that it neither dies nor by impatience becomes violent.

Yours,

BAPU

From a copy ; C.W. 5174 Courtesy: Krishnadas

235. LETTER TO DR. CHOITHRAM GIDWANI

POST ANDHERI,

April 12, 1924

DEAR DR. CHOITHRAM

I have your long telegram. I have not sent you a telegraphic reply. Your wire makes me sad, but not despondent, along my own lines. Every one of us has to be proved to the uttermost. I hope that you will be able to stand the test. Please keep me informed of the events there. Does your telegram mean that you have now regained your health? I am anxiously awaiting reply to my letter to Jairamdas.[1]

Yours sincerely,

DR. CHOITHRAM GIDWANI
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a copy : S.N. 8720

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jairamdas Doulatram", 4-4-1924.

236. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

POST ANDHERI,
April 12, 1924

MY DEAR RAJAGOPALACHARI,

Here is a copy of my letter[1] to the Secretaries of the Kerala Provincial Conference.

In sent you yesterday a copy of the draft[2] about Council-entry which I have prepared. I have not revised it, nor is it the final, even so far as the matter is concerned. It is prepared in order to enable the swarajist friends to understand where I stand today.

Do try to attend the Working Committee and therefore come earlier if it is at all possible.

Yours sincerely,

Encl.

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
EXTENSION
SALEM

From a photostat: S.N. 8721

237. LETTER TO ELIZABETH SHARPE

POST ANDHERI,
April 12, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

It was good of you to have taken the trouble to write that long letter[3]. I wish the problem was so simple as you state it. It is terribly concrete for me. If I have a duty at all towards fellow-creatures, I must think what it is in the face of those who are simply skin and bone. Is there such a thing as the quality of mercy and pity and love, and if there is, am I to say these men and women who are dying of slow starvation and who are almost naked, are, after all, reaping the fruit of their past karma and I have no duty by them? Each for his own is the

[1] This is not available
[2] *Vide* "Draft Statement on Council-entry", 11-4-1924.
[3] This is not available.

message for man. As I write these words in cold blood, I feel staggered, and if such was the implication of the law of karma, I should become a rebel against it. Fortunately it teaches me a different lesson. On the one hand it insists on patience, and on the other it peremptorily commands me to undo the past by rearranging the present. Believe me, those politicians whom you are pleased to call vile are not so vile as you think. You are young, as you say. I admire your enthusiasm in this cause of spirituality. May I then, as an old man, tell you that spirituality rejects the doctrine of acquiescence in evil? The spirituality of India is made of much sterner stuff than you imagine it is. I would ask you to pause and think.

Your sincere friend,

MISS ELIZABETH SHARPE
SHRI KRISHNA NIVAS
LIMBDI (KATHIAWAR)

From a photostat : S.N. 8722

238. MY NOTES

ANOTHER MISUNDERSTANDING

I have cleared in an editorial the misunderstanding about Maulana Mahomed Ali. Another misunderstanding of the same type has occurred in Hakim Ajmal Khan's Tibbia College. When my release was being celebrated there, a Hindu student compared me with Jesus Christ. When another student hinted that it was not proper to compare an ordinary man with great prophets, the former felt hurt as he took the hint to be an insult to me. Thereupon, the student who had spoken against the comparison explained his standpoint and apologized. Some journalist made a mountain out of this molehill.

I happened to read a news paragraph just when I started writing these notes. Two persons were taking tea in Calcutta. One of them praised me, the other criticized me. My admirer did not like the criticism, so he fell out with the critic. The two heroes then faced each other pugnaciously. Finally, the police had to intervene and separate the violent contestants.

To whom shall I offer the bouquet? To the admirer, to the detractor, to both or to neither of them? It is easy to answer this. The admirer really blackened me by hitting the critic. It is me that he has

hit. Had the critic given me two lashes of the whip, I would have immediately forgiven him in accordance with my religion of non-violence. Possibly, I would have even kissed his whip had I the strength to do so. One who has read *Chaurasi Vaishnavoni Varta*[1] should not see anything surprising in this. By striking the critic my admirer has dealt me a severer lash than that of the whip. The non-violence which I practice now cannot go, at least today, to the length of forgiving him. If my admirer meets me, he will certainly have to bear my displeasure and anger. The critic said what he believed. But my admirer did not act up to his belief. In the language of swamiji and the Maulana, my admirer can be said to have only censured the tenets of his won religion and, howsoever good may be the principle of his religion, his conduct was worse than his critic's.

My bouquet will surely stay with me. I shall certainly not hand it over to my admirer. And since my critic belongs to the opposite camp, how can there be any bouquet for him in the present atmosphere? But if the atmosphere changes and if I must offer the bouquet to one of them, I shall offer it to my critic and go off to the Himalayas.

Tolerance is the prime quality of a Swarajist. As long as this world endures, views are bound to differ from individual to individual. Swaraj will be shared, in common, by men holding different views. If we start cutting off the heads of all people who have necks too long or too short, not even two persons will be left with necks of equal length. Hence we must respect the freedom of others as much as we value our own. What is our quarrel with the Government about? Is it not about freedom of thought? The Government arrested me because it considered my ideas to be wrong. That gentleman in the Tibbia College and the critic in Calcutta also followed the same path as the Government and so they co-operated with it. If the Hindus and the Muslims want unitedly to secure swaraj, they should learn this lesson by heart and act accordingly.

They should tolerate each other's ideas and practices and each should refrain from interfering in the practices of the other.

Those who are the first to implement this principle will score a victory. If one waits for another to give a lead, in the end both will remain where they are. If everyone says "After you", all will miss the bus.

[1] A Gujarati book containing stories of eighty-four devotees of Vishnu

NEW SUPPLEMENT TO "NAVAJIVAN"

An ordinary supplement to *Navajivan* continues to appear from time to time. The reader will find elsewhere in this number an announcement about a special supplement on education which is to be issued henceforward. This special education supplement will appear on the third Saturday of every month, so that the first such issue will be out on the 19th instant. From the announcement the reader will find that it was I who advised them that, instead of being issued independently, the education number should come out as a supplement to some journal. Many newspapers are published in Gujarat, even books appear in very large numbers. The growth of readership may be considered to be a good thing. Where a thousand subscribers were regarded as satisfactory, even three or four thousand, are now looked upon as ordinary. Thus we must welcome this increase in the love of reading among the Gujaratis. But the responsibility of writers and those running newspapers has increased. The two big problems are: the type of material to be published and the style in which it is to be presented. The habits which the readers will contract today are likely to endure permanently. What is true of children is also true of grown-ups. Even the grown-ups are as good as children where new experiences are concerned. If old people like some new thing and if they get used to it, they will take delight in it even like children. And, if by chance, it turns out to be undesirable, even then they will find it hard to give it up. Thus the increased love of reading among the Gujaratis may in the end prove to be harmful if it is not given a healthy turn. Therefore, the knowledge that a writer has to exercise control over his pen is one of the reasons for my hesitation. It may be doubted whether such a blemish will creep into an education supplement. But is there a limit to methods of education? I for one do not believe that all methods are good enough. There are likely to be many drawbacks in a system devised without regard to time, place and class of students. It cannot be laid down that one working in the education field should have unrestricted freedom.

The other cause of my hesitation is about the reader's pocket. Even the burden of a voluntary tax falling on the reader must not exceed a certain limit. The circulation of all newspapers, books etc., will only be among the class of readers that has now come into being. I am afraid if such a burden becomes heavy, it may kill the desire to read.

I had requested the Vidyapith[1] to consider both these reasons for my hesitation. As a result, it has decided not to issue an independent monthly but to have a special supplement to *Navajivan* every month. Those in charge of the Vidyapith have found it necessary to have a special mouthpiece which will record the activities of the Vidyapith, express its ideas on education, and be of assistance to teachers, parents and students too. Whether they are right in this view experience alone will show. This much is clear that there is a lot for teachers, parents and even students to learn about the important activities of the Vidyapith. Let us all hope that this need will be met by the proposed enterprise. There is no doubt that, if the educated class lends a hand, this venture will succeed brilliantly.

SAVED

For the present at least the Indians [in South Africa] appear to have been saved from the sword, hitherto hanging over their heads, in the form of confining their residence to the scavengers' Location. Smt. Sarojini's efforts appear to have succeeded in an unexpected manner. General Smuts[2] has announced his decision to dissolve Parliament and to hold fresh elections as he felt that public opinion did not back the Union Government of South Africa. Hence the new bills which were to be passed by the present Parliament have been postponed, at least for the present. But it is not at all likely that members of the now Parliament will be inclined to do justice to Indians. It will not at all be suprising if their attitude towards the Indians in South Africa is harder even than that of the present members. Still, we should rest satisfied, for the time being at least, as "he who survives a crisis may live up to the age of a hundred years."

VALUE OF ALERT PUBLIC OPINION

We have a lot to learn from what is happening in South Africa. General Smuts has suspended the administrative work of the entire country because one representative of his party was defeated in only one city. While dissolving Parliament, he declared:

We cannot introduce new policies contemplated by us if the public opinion does not back us. It is enough for us that the voters of one main city only gave their votes to the opposition party.

[1] Gujarat Vidyapith, a national university founded at Ahmedabad by Gandhiji in 1920.

[2] J. C. Smuts (1870-1950); South African general and statesman; Prime Minister, 1919-24, 1939-48

In this we see both General Smuts's adroitness and his submission to public opinion. Do we find such a thing in our country?

The Government at least believes generally in flouting public opinion. Look where you will, you find disregard of public opinion. The Government must be considering the case of Hasrat Mohani or Mr. Horniman as of little importance. But even there, it does not wish to act in conformity with public opinion; it is as if it enjoys opposing it!

THIS PICTURE AND THAT

While preparations were being made for the visit of the Prince of Wales to South Africa, General Smuts sent a message to the effect that, since the whites would be busy with the new elections, the royal visit should for the present be postponed. Hence it has been put off. This is one picture, that of South Africa .

Now let us look at the picture here in 1921. On one occasion the whole population urged the Government not to invite the Prince here, but the Government did not budge from its position ; it stuck to its guns. The result was so bitter that it has not yet been forgotten. He was insulted, without their wanting it, by the people. The people in Bombay reduced their pledge of non-violence to nothing and, for a time, the game appeared to have been lost.[1]

How long can such disregard of the people continue? The reply to this question given by the Congress at Calcutta and Nagpur[2] in the year 1920 holds good even today. To put it in one phrase: until the people are ready and fit. That is to say-

1. When the people fully wear khadi and discard foreign cloth and cloth made by mills here.

2 . Or when the hearts of Hindus and Muslims unite.

3. Or when the Hindus purify themselves by welcoming into their fold untouchables and other excluded classes.

4. Or when the people learn to run the Congress properly.

5. Or when the people accept practical non-violence *in toto*—in thought, word and deed.

[1] Gandhiji refers to the riot in Bombay in November 1921 when the Prince of Wales landed there.

[2] The special session was held at Calcutta in September and the annual session at Nagpur in December, 1920.

On pondering over the matter, we shall find that if we carry out fully even one item out of these five, the rest will follow of their own accord.

The blame the Government or to hurl abuses at it is not only useless, it is a sign of our cowardice. As we are, so is our Government. The yardstick for measuring the people's awareness is their Government

MY "DARSHAN"

A friend has written to me about seeing me. I reproduce from it the following:[1]

What *darshan* of mine will this noble family have? But I for one will be blessed by its *darshan* and it will add to my strength. I shall be meeting them on Sunday and I am looking forward to the day. If all families thus implement the constructive programme of the Congress, their *darshan* will be an unfailing tonic for me and India will easily secure swaraj.

APOLOGY TO LATE MOTILAL

Among many gifts, God has given me also the gift of well-meaning friends. They keep a watch over me always and save me from errors, and when I make any, they make me correct them. Three friends have written to me brief, thoughtful postcards and informed me that, while writing in the *Navajivan* issue of last week[2] about the customs cordon at Viramgam, I have referred to the late tailor-friend of Wadhwan as Popatlal. But his correct name is Motilal.[3] These friends' correction is right. Knowing that my memory for names and faces is very weak, the relatives and friends of Motilal will, I hope, forgive me. Though I count myself as well among his relatives and friends, I proved myself to be such a distant relative that I could not even remember his name! But Motilal's soul will certainly pardon me

[1] Not translated here. The writer stated in his letter that he, his mother and sister were able to fulfil the constructive programme by spinning; weaving and wearing khadi. They, therefore, desired to have Gandhiji's *darshan* on the following Sunday.

[2] In the preface to *Satyagraha in South Africa*.

[3] Enthusiastic public worker of Wadhwan, in Saurashtra; he used to visit the Sabarmati Ashram every month for a few days and teach tailoring to students without taking any remuneration.

because I am not so thoughtless as to forget his soul. I thank all the three friends who have drawn my attention to this slip.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-4-1924

239. CHARGE AGAINST MAHOMED ALI

A gentleman writes to say that the Gujarati papers report Maulana Mahomed Ali as having said in a speech that Gandhi was lower than the most wretched Muslim. The correspondent suggests that, though the Maulana would never have said such a thing, the true fact should be made known through *Navajivan* so that the misunderstanding might be removed. I must admit regretfully that this report has appeared in English as well as Gujarati newspapers. There has been a lot of discussion on this matter.

God knows what has happened, but at present there is misunderstanding between Hindus and Muslims all around. They do not trust each other. I know there are various reasons for this state of affairs, but I do not consider it necessary in regard to this episode to go into them. The Hindi and Urdu newspapers in northern India have overdone the thing. Dr. Ansari writes to say that those papers regard it as their duty to make allegations against each other, to spread false rumours, to calumniate each other's religion and thereby to vilify each other. It seems this has become a means of increasing the circulation of their papers. How to stop this infection from spreading has become a big problem. To solve it is, in my opinion, much more important than Council-entry. I am sure that our ability to run the administration will be seen in the course of solving it. If we can solve some of the problems confronting the people, we shall have swaraj in our hands right today. There can be no swaraj as long as we are not able to untie these knots. The Councils will not be able to solve these difficulties.

But in this article I do not propose to examine these difficulties. I wish to assess only the allegations against the Maulana.

The Maulana, who was asked in a meeting at Lucknow a question on his first speech, gave this reply: "I consider the religious principles of an adulterous Muslim to be better than Mahatma Gandhi's religious principles." Here the Maulana has not instituted a comparison between "Mahatma" Gandhi and an adulterous Muslim,

but only between their religious principles. Let us also consider for a while why this comparison was made. The Muslims have charged the Maulana with having become a flatterer or worshipper of Gandhi. To worship Gandhi is to deify Gandhi, that is, to believe that there is nothing higher than Gandhi in this world. This amounts to professing Gandhi's religion, and that was the charge against the Maulana. The Maulana gave the reply quoted above to meet this allegation of some Muslims. While trying to please the Muslims, did he annoy the Hindus? If the Maulana had uttered the above-quoted sentence on some other occasion, he would not have been criticized at all. Hindu newspapers gave a distorted report of his speech. They represented that the Maulana considered an adulterous Muslim better than "Mahatma" Gandhi. We have seen that he did not say so. Moreover, in his letter to Swami Sharddhanand, he has expressed his belief that "Mahatma" Gandhi is the best man in the whole world. But he has assessed the religious principles of that "Mahatma" as lower than those of an adulterous Muslim. There is no contradiction at all in this. Moreover, almost the whole world recognizes the difference between persons and their principles.

Christian friends close to me regard me as a very good man and yet, because they consider their religion better than mine, pray to God that I may become a Christian. I received a letter two or three weeks ago from one such friend in South Africa, in which he writes:

> I was glad to hear that you were released. I always pray for you that God may give you good sense, so that you may start believing in Jesus Christ and His power to effect deliverance. if you do so, your work would soon bear fruit.

Thus, many Christian friends desire me to become a Christian.

What do many Hindus do? Do they not consider the principles of their own religion to be far superior to those of the noblest Christian on Muslim? If they do not, will they give their daughter in marriage to the best Muslim or Christian? Again, they would not give her even to the best among Hindus if he does not belong to their own denomination or sub-caste. What does that suggest? They believe their own religion to be better than any other.

In my humble opinion, the Maulana has proved the purity of his heart and his faith in his own religion by expressing his view. He has, in fact, honoured me in two ways-first, as a friend, secondly as a man. He has honoured me as a friend because he has taken it for granted

that I shall not take it ill at all if he says anything about me, that I shall never put a wrong construction on his words. He has honoured me as a man because, despite the difference in our religions and despite his belief that his religion is better then mine, he regards me as the best among men. What an implicit confidence in me! I can understand people's superstition which leads them to regard me as a good man, but how strange it is that a friend who has been in close association with me regards me as the best despite seeing the many defects in me!

I consider it very risky to regard any man as the best. Who can know his heart except God? How dirtier must they be who can hide their evil than those whose evil comes out in the open? The latter has scope for deliverance because, when the evil comes out in the open, the path to get out of it is clear. But in the other case, the evil within, kept concealed as in a box, will eat one up like poisonous germs. Deliverance is impossible for such a one in this birth. And, therefore, the Shastras have placed Truth above everything; for the same reason, they have forbidden us to hide our sins. Even if it is possible to assess any man as the best among men, it can only be after his death.

I for one cannot be confident about myself. I find it easier to be so about others. In doing so if I get cheated, I may suffer some financial loss or the world may consider me gullible. If I place too much confidence in myself and remain complacent, I shall be doomed. Since I have this opportunity, let me tell my reader that, on one occasion, when I was about to be lost through placing too much confidence in my own self, I was saved only through God's grace. On another occasion, and adulterous friend of mine had saved me. It was of course not possible for him to save himself; but because he regarded me as pure-minded and wished that I should not allow myself to be defiled by evil, he shook me out of infatuation. Instead of keeping a watch on others and sitting in judgment over them, we should keep a watch on our own selves. If we become our own judges we shall save ourselves and save the world from our tyranny. Therefore, the true definition of swaraj is this: swaraj is control over one's own self. He who gains such control has gained everything. The saying, "The world is good, if we are ourselves good" is very meaningful.

I have not strayed from the subject and started discussion of any profound problem, but have only discussed issues arising from the subject. I tremble because my friends regard me as the best man. If I

come to believe it, it will bring about my downfall, because I have yet far to climb. My aspiration has no bounds. Many are the inner enemies whom I have to conquer. The deeper I ponder, the better I come to realize my drawbacks. As I do so, I wonder what the truly best men will be like. As I ponder over this, I get some idea of *moksha* and its bliss. Then I get a faint glimpse of Divine Reality.

Now perhaps the reader will realize that the Maulana has done me great honour by regarding me as the best among men. The reader will understand the meaning of his statement better after reading his letter. I give a translation of it in this very issue.[1]

Swamiji has welcomed the Maulana's letter; he has thanked him for his frankness; he regards the Maulana as a friend of the Hindus and has appealed to those who had sent a notice of a resolution making allegations against him and asking him to submit his resignation from the Congress to withdraw that notice. But at the same time, he has also made it clear that in the case of his own religion mere principles did not count and that a man was judged by his character. By giving a reply to this, the Maulana has removed even the doubt arising from the Swamiji's writing. The Maulana does not think that a person who believes in principles need not act upon them. He merely compared two sets of religious principles and gave his opinion as to which was better. He has pointed out in another letter[2] of his that, even if the principles in which a man believes are of the best, they will avail him nothing if he does not act upon them.

Hence what Maulana Mahomed Ali has said only comes to this, that to everyone his own religion appears good. Which Hindu can controvert that statement? We shall consider on another occasion how this molehill was made into a mountain and how we can stop recurrence of such misunderstandings.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-4-1924

[1] Not translated here; *vide*, however, Appendix "Mahomed Ali's Letter to Swami Shraddhanand", 10-4-1924 for the original in English.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Mahomed Ali's Letter to the Editor, *Tej*", 10-4-1924.

240. SATYAGRAHA AND CASTE REFORM

As the principle of satyagraha comes to be better understood, it is being put to ever new applications. It is used not merely in fighting the Government, but we find it being applied within the family and the caste as well. In a certain community there prevails the inhuman practice of offering girls in marriage for a consideration and a youth has felt the urge to end it. It has been asked what he should do. An easy form of satyagraha is non-cooperation. The young man wishes to banish this custom from his community. His intention is good. But should he start non-co-operation and, if so, how and against whom?

It is difficult to give a definite opinion in this particular case. But one can suggest some general rules for all situations of this type.

In the first place, one should never embark upon non-co-operation all of a sudden. Evil customs which have prevailed for ages cannot be eradicated in a moment. Reform is one-legged, and so proceeds haltingly. Anyone who loses patience can never become a pure satyagrahi. The first step for a reformer is to educate public opinion. He should meet the wise elders of the community and listen to their points of view. Maybe the reformer is a poor man, no one knows him and the elders will not listen to him. What should he do then? A poor person like this should know that he is not destined to be an instrument of reform. We may all wish that untruth may disappear from the world, but who will bring round the liars? Here is an essential reform, and yet how patiently we mark time!

The thing is that a reformer should be free from egotism. Why should we assume responsibility for ending all evils? We should be content with speaking the truth ourselves and acting truthfully. Likewise, in regard to the evil practices in the community, we should see that our own attitude and conduct are blameless and maintain a neutral attitude towards others.

To think “I do this, I do that” is ignorance, like that of the dog who thought that the cart was being drawn by him.

We should learn these lines by heart and, as they suggest, remain free from pride.

If, even then, we feel that the responsibility is ours, an especial duty devolves upon us. For example, the elders of the community cannot, professing to be humble, condone the prevailing evils, for , by

accepting the position of elders, they have made themselves the guardians of its moral conduct. Even if only one girl is given away in marriage for money, the curse of that innocent girl will fall upon them.

If, however, the leaders of the community do nothing to stop evil practices and themselves follow this one of accepting money for a daughter given in marriage, what should this poor member of the community do? He has made his own life above reproach, and has met all the leading men of the community. All of them have treated him insultingly and driven him away as they might a dog. Abuse has been showered on him. Dispirited, tired and sad, he has returned home. He sees no shelter save the sky above and no support save the earth below. Now, will God hear his prayer for help? But this is only the first step. He has been tested, as he had to be, before he could be fit for *tapascharya*[1]. Now he can hear his inner voice. He asks the God within him: "Though insulted, do I yet love my brethren? Am I ready to serve them? Shall I be able to submit even to blows and kicks with their shoes?" If the in-dwelling God answers all these questions in the affirmative, then he is fit to take the second step.

Now he may start non-co-operation in the spirit of love. Such non-co-operation means giving up all rights-but not duties. What are the rights of this poor servant as a member of his community? To be invited to community dinners and to be eligible for marriage within its circle. He should, with humility, give up both these rights, and then he will have done his duty. If the elders of the community cast him off like a thorn saying in the arrogance of their authority, "One invitee less at dinners, one prospective bridegroom less," strike his name off the register, the poor servant, instead of despairing, should have confidence that from the pure seed sown by him will grow a huge tree. After fulfilling his duty—not before—may he sing: To work I have the right, never to the fruit thereof.[2]

This poor man of God is now a dweller in a forest. If an unmarried man, he takes a stern pledge that he would remain so until the evil had disappeared from the community and, if married, that he would live with his wife as her friend and not as a husband. If he has children, he would teach them also to observe *brahmacharya*. That he may not have to seek the help of the community or others, he would

[1] Self-suffering as moral discipline
[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 47

have the fewest possessions. To live thus like a sannyasi is what living in a forest means for him. In non-co-operation imbued with love there is no room at all for licence. Self-restraint alone can give it beauty. The seed which has been sown needs to be watered with self-restraint. One who thinks, "If my children do not get partners in my community, I shall find partners for them in another and will enjoy the pleasures of feasting elsewhere", is neither a man of restraint nor a non-co-operator, but a hypocrite. A non-co-operator who is a man of restraint will do *tapascharya*, living in the village of his community. It is said that in the presence of love, hatred vanishes. Living in the Himalayas, this man of God cannot claim to practise non-violence towards the community's leaders and hope to melt their hearts thereby. If the leaders of the community have disregarded him, one reason may be that they have taken him to be a thoughtless, unmannerly young man. He has yet to prove that, though poor and young, he is neither devoid of thought nor unmannerly, but is humble and thoughtful.

Working in such a spirit and serving the members of his community on occasions demanding his service and yet not hoping for a return, he will find others joining the movement for reform. Even though they may not be offering non-co-operation [against the community], their sympathy will be with him. As proud of our sacrifices and in the arrogance of our views, we abuse our friends who co-operate with the Government; this self-controlled young man will not abuse his caste-fellows because they are not with him, or express agreement with his ideas but do not go beyond that and join him in non-co-operation. He will show nothing but love for them and win their hearts. It will be his experience every day that love is the philosopher's stone. But even if he does not have this experience immediately, he will not be impatient, but will keep up his faith that the seed of love can produce nothing but the abundant fruit of love.

In the letter that I have received, I have been asked whether, when our non-co-operating man of God lets go the privilege of attending community dinners, he should also refrain from attending such dinners arranged by his friends in the community. In fact, what is likely to happen is that, on receiving his notice of non-participation in the community dinners, headmen of the caste will excommunicate him and pronounce a punishment on any member of the community who may drink water or eat in his company or enter into marriage tie

with him. That is to say, the question of his refraining from dinners given by particular individuals will not arise at all. If he is thus declared to be an outcaste, it will be the special duty of our man of self-restraint not to attend dinners given by his friends even if they invite him, openly or secretly. If, however, some caste-fellow joins him purposely in his non-co-operation, he may by all means accept an invitation by such a person. Such a thing may very well happen.

But, in general, one can say that he will have no occasion at all to decline invitations to dinners given by his friends. If, however, such an occasion does arise, he need not decline the invitation. Of course, he will never agree to accept an invitation from anyone who approves of the custom of accepting money for offering a girl in marriage.

We have noted from this that:

1. Many steps will have to be taken for educating public opinion before starting non-co-operation.
2. A non co-operator should have the strength to put up with abuse, etc., without losing his temper.
3. There should be nothing but love in non-co-operation.
4. After starting non-co-operation, one should not leave one's town or village.
5. A non-co-operator should observe rigid self-restraint.
6. A non-co-operator should have full faith in the means which he adopts.
7. A non-co-operator should remain indifferent towards the fruits of his labours.
8. There should be judgment, thoughtfulness and humility in every step that a non-co-operator takes.
9. Everyone does not have the right or the obligation to start non-co-operation. Non-co-operation started by those who have no right to do so will fail in its aim.

If some or most people feel that the observance of these rules is almost impossible, they will be right. Pure non-co-operation is impossible without rigid self-restraint. Moreover, in the case which we have considered, that man of God is himself the doer and the beneficiary, the commander and the soldier. If there is anything wanting in him, we may take it that he has only disappointment in store for him. For anyone, therefore, who intends starting non-co-operation in such independent fashion, the first sign of wisdom is to refrain from taking

any such step. But once he has taken it, he cannot give up his ideal even if that means laying down his life.

The other question that arises is, with all this self-restraint, what reform do we hope to bring about in an exclusive institution like caste? Others, moreover, may say that when we want to abolish the caste system itself, why should we fix our attention on particular evils such as the offering of girls in marriage for money? This question is out of place here. Our reformer's question concerns his community alone. If non-co-operation within the family is regarded as proper, we must consider non-co-operation towards caste also as justified as long as castes exist.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-4-1924

241. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

JUHU,

Sunday [*April 13, 1924*][1]

DEAR MOTILALJI,

Here is the draft as corrected by me. If you and other friends pass it, I can issue it as soon as you desire.[2] I feel that I must remove the clause fixing the period of probation. But I can say to the friends definitely that I have no intention of moving the repeal of the Cocanada resolution. Only I do not know the implications of the clause as it stands. The rest of the corrections don't call for any remark. But I draw your attention to the last two sentences added by me. Their meaning is plain. They are intended to embody somewhat the conversation of yesterday.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8715

[1] Sunday following April 11, when the 'Draft' forwarded with this letter was prepared, fell on April 13.

[2] Motilal Nehru embodied his reactions in a lengthy note; *vide* Appendix "Motilal Nehru's Note on Council Entry", before 18-4-1924. He also sent C.R. Das a copy of Gtandhiji's first draft. The latter acknowledging this on April 18, expressed his anxiety to discuss it with Gandhiji and requested him to postpone its publication till then. *Vide* Appendix "Extract from C. R. Das's Letter", 18-4-1924.

242. LETTER TO N. C. KELKAR

POST ANDHERI,
April 13, 1924

DEAR MR. KELKAR,

I have your letter. I have written to Mr. sheriff Devji Kanji.[1] He has written to me in reply raising difficulties as to the terms of reference. I see Mr. Potdar does likewise. I can only suggest that, if you send me the terms of reference, I shall submit them to him and if he suggests any, I shall submit them to you. I have asked Mr. Sheriff Devji Kanji to meet me on Thursday next.

Yours sincerely,

N. C. KELKAR, ESQ.
THE "KESARI" AND THE "MAHRATTA" OFFICE
POONA CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 8727

243. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

[ANDHERI,
April 13, 1924]

Vaikom satyagrahis undoubtedly arrived at a delicate state, so many leaders having been picked up by the Travancore authorities. Appeal has been made to all-India leaders to lead the movement. It is a question how far a local movement, on reaching a critical stage, can be turned into an all-India movement. All-India sympathy I can understand and that Vaikom satyagrahis are having in abundance, but to concentrate active energies of leaders from different provinces on a single local movement seems to be a difficult, if not an impossible, task. I am hoping, however, that leaders in the Madras Presidency will not allow the movement to die for want of proper lead. A telegram[2] was sent to Mr. George Joseph before his arrest advising dropping of fast. As he is not likely to have received my letter which followed the telegram, I hand it for publication, which sums up my position. It is not affected by recent developments.

The Hindu, 14-4-1924

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sherif Devji Kanji", 20-3-1924.
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to George Joseph", 11-4-1924.

244. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[1]

ANDHERI,
[On or after *April 13, 1924*]

RECEIVED WIRE. IF HEALTH PERMITS YOU MAY GO NOT NECESSARILY COURT ARREST BUT REGULATE MOVEMENT. YOU SHOULD NEGOTIATE WITH DIWAN AND INVITE IF THEY WILL COME OTHER LEADERS PARTICIPATE AFTER ALL YOU ARE BEST JUDGE SITUATION. DEVDAS AT YOUR SERVICE IF REQUIRED.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10279

245 TELEGRAM TO T. R. KRISHNASWAMY IYER [2]

ANDHERI,
April 14, 1924

KRISHNASWAMIER
CARE NEWS
COCHIN

CONGRATULATION OVER SO MANY ARRESTS. DO NOT COURT ARREST WITHOUT PROPER ARRANGEMENTS. WILL WIRE AGAIN. REPORT SITUATION . WRITING[3].

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10277

[1] This was in reply to the telegram from C. Rajagopalachari received on April 13, 1924, which read: "Joseph arrested. Telegram asks me take his place. Wire your advice." George Joseph had also wired Gandhiji on April 12: "Am arrested. Satyagraha must continue. Overwhelming public support and numerous volunteers. Leadership only needed. Send Devadas or Mahadeo Wife remains in Chengamer. Asking for blessings."

[2] This was sent in response to the following telegram from Iyer: "All leaders arrested. Volunteers remain seated from tenth morning on prevention. No volunteers arrested. Myself waiting Cochin since Vaikom means arrest. Pray send somebody to lead."

[3] To this Krishnaswamy Iyer replied: "Your message thanks. Arrangements being made. Satyagrahis cheerfully holding on. Instructions given discontinue fasting. Satyagraha headquarter arranged here. Myself charge."

246. LETTER TO H. G. PERRY[1]

BOMBAY
[On or after *April 14, 1924*]

DEAR MR. PERRY,

If you could come on Sunday next at 2 p.m., I shall be glad to see you. I do not know that I shall have much to say, as my talks with the Swarajist leaders are not yet finished.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 8728

247. LETTER TO GANGABEHN MEGHJI [2]

Chaitra Sud 11[*April 15, 1924*]

DEAR SISTER,

Every day I think of writing to you, but what with one thing and another, I forget to do so. Today I am writing this immediately after the morning prayers. I was to have sent Ramdas to you for learning music, but did not, for I did not think it proper to disregard Mr. Jayakar, who has taken great pains for him.[3] It would have been too much of a burden even for Ramdas to be sent to two places on the same day, and so I have dropped the idea for the time being.

Nevertheless, we should thank the music teacher for readily agreeing to teach Ramdas.

Please see me as soon as you get some time.

Vandemataram from,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7775 . Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] This was in reply to Perry's inquiry of April 14 whether Gandhiji could give him brief interview for the *Daily Express*, London, on the subject of "present demands and revised advice for the attainment of swaraj".

[2] Later known as Gangabehn Vaidya

[3] Ramdas used to go to Jayakar for taking lessons in music during the time Gandhiji was staying at Juhu.

248. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

BOMBAY,
[*April 15, 1924*]

. . At four in the evening yesterday, when our representative was taken into his presence, Mahatmaji was engaged in reading an Urdu book. There was Mr. Andrews writing in a front room.

Questioned by our representative: "What is your opinion on the untouchability satyagraha organized in Travancore? How can the country as a whole help it and what is the best form of rendering help?" Mahatmaji, replying at length, said:

From what I know of the leaders of the movement I have no doubt that they have acted with great caution and deliberation and that they have embarked upon it after having taken preliminary steps. From the reports I have been receiving, I believe that the Madras Presidency will supply the lead that will be required. I do not think that the leaders from all the parts of India can spare themselves and concentrate their energy directly on the movement. But the whole of the Indian Press can give due prominence to the movement and I am glad to notice that it is receiving such prominence. Beyond this moral support, I hardly think all-India efforts can go further and, if the movement retains its continuous purity and non-violence, public support it must win in the end.

Q. "How would you solve the problem of the lack of leaders even after the few who will have gone there are arrested?" Mahatmaji replied:

A letter that I have received shows that the movement has gone so far that volunteers will continue to offer satyagraha, even when all the leaders are arrested. I would also advise that at least one leader keeps himself in reserve and directs the movement without courting arrest.

To a further question: "Supposing that even the leader who wants to reserve himself is also arrested or finds that he must offer himself for arrest, do you think it possible to conduct such a movement without leadership?" Mahatmaji answered:

In my opinion, satyagraha is one such movement, in which after a certain stage it is the easiest to continue without leadership. This is its inherent quality and strength. In satyagraha there is no such thing as diplomacy and manoeuvering, as we understand the terms. The road is narrow, I admit; but it is straight and, therefore, simple. Only the will is required, but no cunning after all. What have the volunteers to do but

simply to offer satyagraha till the right, for which it is offered, is vindicated? If those who are opposing offer any settlement, they will secure the release of the leaders who are arrested. That was exactly what happened in South Africa. It was when almost all the leaders were arrested that Mr. Gokhale was frightened and sent Mr. Andrews and Mr. Pearson. Whilst their help was invaluable, it was not necessary to keep the sacrificial fire going. They were useful for conducting negotiations. But the real suffering was the privilege of the rank and file.

"Does not the campaign location in an Indian State detract from its value as a part of the great Non-co-operation movement?" inquired our representative.

I do not regard this campaign as a part of the Non-co-operation movement, as such. It is certainly a part of satyagraha. But it has no direct connection with the Non-co-operation movement. Satyagraha is an eternal principle. I am sure that it has come to stay and we shall find, as time marches on, that it is applied in a variety of ways. I have dealt with one such instance in the columns of the *Navajivan*.[1] An enthusiastic reformer wishes to apply satyagraha to the solution of a corrupt practice in his caste, viz., the sale of daughters to the highest bidder. He wants to stop this inhuman practice by courting suffering for the sake of his caste sisters. If he does offer satyagraha in this case, we would not call it a part of the Non-co-operation movement. I know that there is much difference between this instance and the Vaikom movement. The latter is being conducted by congressmen and has reference to one plank in the Non-co-operation movement, that is, untouchability. Nevertheless, it is clear to me that it cannot be called a part of the Non-co-operation movement. Whether such a movement at the present stage should be initiated in an Indian State is a question which should be considered on its merits. If the Vaikom movement was a part of the political movement, which is being conducted in British India, it is absolutely clear to me that it should be dropped. I am personally averse to Congressmen creating directly or indirectly any complications in Indian States, who are themselves no better circumstanced than British Indian subjects. A mere Resident or Political Agent is enough to frighten Rajas and Maharajas out of their wits. They simply cannot resist any the slightest pressure from the British authorities. This Vaikom movement is a socio-religious movement. It has no immediate or ulterior political motive behind it. In its inception

[1] *Vide* " Satyagraha and Caste Reform", 13-4-1924.

it was not directed against the Travancore Durbar. It was directed purely against an age-long, intolerable sacerdotal prejudice. So far as I know, the Durbar has intervened purely in the interests of peace, fearing, rightly or wrongly, that the presence of satyagrahis on these prohibited roads would result in a breach of peace. If the Maharaja himself was a reformer and held strong views against untouchability, he might have thrown in his might in favour of the satyagrahis and protected them from molestation. But I am informed he is no reformer in this direction. That being so, his advisers concern themselves merely in taking steps to preserve peace. The leaders on the spot can however still keep the movement within proper bounds and prevent it from becoming anti-Durbar.

" How has the presence of Mrs. Naidu affected the anti-Asiatic legislation in South Africa? How has it benefited the Indian community?" questioned our representative. Paying a most glowing tribute to Mrs. Naidu, Mahatmaji said:

From all the accounts I have received from Mrs. Naidu herself and from my old South African friends, I am convinced that her presence in South Africa has done much good to our countrymen there. She has undoubtedly given them courage and hope and she has by her matchless gifts won over to our side many Europeans. In any case, the bitter feelings have undoubtedly softened down. In one of her letters[1] to me she says that her words moved her European audience to tears. If that letter was not an exceptionally personal letter, I would have shared it with you. I think that the *Cape Time's* severe judgment on Mrs. Naidu's activity was totally one-sided. It did not reflect cultured European opinion. In my opinion, she has acted with great tact and judgment. It was not to be expected that she would produce any permanent effect upon the European opinion. That can only be produced by the exemplary conduct of the resident Indians and their capacity for united action and suffering.

Asked as to what he thought was the best solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem, Mahatmaji said:

I would prefer not to make any statement in connection with this question, until I have seen the leaders who have made this question

[1] The reference is to Sarojini Naidu's letter dated February 29, in the course of which she wrote: ". . . I have been able to move thousands of men and women in these 2 days to tears under the influence and stimulus of your inspiration. Something has come to me since I entered the Transvaal, and the heart of the enemy even as it dissents melts, . . . as I speak. . . .' S.N. 9918.

their primary consideration. I hold very strong views on it and so far as I can see they are not likely to be affected by further argument. But I do not want to be hasty, and so far as it is possible for a man to do so, I want to keep my mind open till the very last moment.

To the question on *Shuddhi* and *Sanghatan*, Mahatmaji answered:

My views on the question will be expressed when I am ready to make my pronouncement on the whole question.

Till the Council question was fully discussed with the Swarajist leaders and Mr. Das's presence is awaited, Mahatmaji declined to make a statement. Conversations are no doubt proceeding with Pandit Motilal Nehru, who is staying in Juhu at a short distance from Mahatmaji's residence. Mahatmaji, however, was fully alive to the work done by the Swarajists in Council.

To the question put by our representative, "Do you give credit to the Swarajists for your release?" Mahatmaji promptly replied with a smile:

In so far as I may be bound to apportion credit for my release I certainly think that the stand taken up by the Swarajists on the question was one of the chief contributory causes.

The Hindu, 17-4-1924

249. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

ANDHERI,
[On or after *April 15, 1924*][1]

MY REPLY[2] REGARDING FAST PUBLISHED PRESS HUNGER-STRIKE UNLAWFUL. THINK VYKOM STRUGGLE SHOULD BE KEPT UP UNDER RESERVATIONS SUGGESTED.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10280

[1] This was in reply to the telegram from C. Rajagopalachari received on April 15, 1924 , which read: "Kerala itself unable without outside help in leaders men money. Myself physically unequal strain of campaign. Tamilnadu can send workers dislocating khaddar work if you consider campaign as conceived worth it. Regarding general question read letters already addressed Devdas, Pyarelal. Volunteers not arrested now but road physically blocked. No alternative but hunger strike. Do you approve this. Wire advice." S.N. 10280

[2] This refers to Gandhiji's telegram and letter of April 12 to George Joseph; *vide* also "Interview to Associated Press of India," 13-4-1924.

250. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

[After *April 15, 1924*][1]

I am deeply thankful to you for the attention you are giving Ramdas. I think that the regular training he is having at present from you is likely to do him good and steady him.

I hope your mother is making satisfactory progress after her operation. Give her my very kind regards.

The Story of My Life, Vol. II, p. 265

251. LETTER TO SWAMI ANAND

Wednesday [*April 9, 1924*][2]

BHAISHRI ANANDANAND,

Three letters of yours have remained unanswered. But what could I do? For me too, as for the poor ascetic, the only shelter is the heavens above and the earth below. You will read about this gentleman in today's article. Why did you, even for a moment, think that I praise you because you are at a distance from me? If I have praised you, it must have been necessary at that time. I praise myself, too on occasion. I have praised Ba, and have frequently praised Devdas also. Now tell me who is near and who is at a distance? Do you understand that nothing but a mere hint would have been proper in regard to Mahadev and Kaka? I cherish some pride that, in such matters, I possess a pretty good sense of proportion and, do what I will, I cannot get over it.

I have done exactly according to your suggestion in regard to the History of Satyagraha. I liked it. To make it too long would not have been advisable either.

I cannot say whether it is desirable or not to print the matter for the book, too, right now. In the book, a few changes may have to be made, and it would be better to compose the matter afresh. But you

[1] From the reference to Ramdas' taking lessons in music it appears this letter was written after the "Letter to Gangabehn Meghji", 15-4-1924.

[2] The letter appears to have been written on Wednesday preceeding the date of publication of "Satyagraha a Caste Reform " pp 432-6. Therefore the item should be read after serial number 312.

know what is best in this matter. I would not blow your trumpet if I did not know this.

Print the Kelavani issue in such a way that it will bring us credit. Do use good quality paper. It must be such that it can be preserved. Let Mahadev or Swami make the necessary corrections in the sentences in that issue as well as in this. They should also let me know whether I should send every time as much as I am sending with this, or more. As for the English material, I shall post all of it tomorrow. I shall send a little on Tuesday, if that becomes necessary.

From time to time give me information about the number of subscribers and sales of *Navajivan* and *Young India*.

Send me immediately the figures of subscribers to *Navajivan* from Kathiawar, from the rest of Gujarat, from Bombay— I include these in the second—and from Ahmedabad too, as also the figures of sales by hawkers and sales in other parts of the country. I shall know then how to distribute the sum of Rs. 50,000.

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 7756

252. TELEGRAM TO DR. M. A. ANSARI[1]

[On or after *April 16, 1924*]

THANK GOD HOPE IMPROVEMENT WILL CONTINUE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 873

[1] This was in reply to Dr. Ansari's telegram of April 15, 1924, received by Gandhiji on April 16, which read: "Shaukat's temperature normal for greater part yesterday also today. Don't trouble Doctor Mehta. Mahomedali started last night for Bombay."

253. TELEGRAM TO KALICHARAN[1]

[On or after *April 16, 1924*]

SORRY

From a photostat: S.N.8733

254. MY JAIL EXPERIENCES - I

The reader knows that I am a hardened criminal. It was not for the first time that I found myself a prisoner in the March of 1922. I had three previous South African convictions to my credit, and as I was regarded at the time by the South African Government as a dangerous criminal, I was moved from jail to jail and was able, therefore, to gather much experience of jail life.[2] I had, before the Indian conviction, passed through six prisons and had come in touch with as many Superintendents and many more jailors. When, therefore, during the beautiful night of the 10th of March I was taken to the Sabarmati Jail together with Mr. Banker, I did not feel any awkwardness which always attends upon a strange and new experience. I almost felt I was going from one home to another in order to make more conquests of love. The preliminaries were more like being taken to a pleasure-trip than to jail. The courteous Superintendent of Police, Mr. Healy, would not even enter the Ashram, but sent Anasuyabai with a message that he had a warrant for my arrest and that a car awaited me at the Ashram Gate. I was to take whatever time I needed for getting ready. Mr. Banker, who was on his way back to Ahmedabad, was met by Mr. Healy on the way and already arrested. I was not at all unprepared for the news that Anasuyabai brought. As a matter of fact, after having waited long enough for the coming of the warrant which everybody thought was imminent, I had given instructions that all should retire and I was myself about to lay myself to bed. I had

[1] This was in reply to Kalicharan's telegram of April 16, 1924 which read: "Resolved to call All-India Depressed Classes Round Table Conference on 31st May 1st June at Gondia through C.P. and Berar Depressed Classes Association's and earnestly request you alone to preside and decide all questions concerning us once for all."

[2] For Gandhiji's earlier jail experiences; a condensed version appeared in *Young India*, 29-6-1922, 20-7-1922 and 10-8-1922.

returned that evening from Ajmer after a fatiguing journey where most reliable information was given to me that a warrant had been sent to Ajmer, for my arrest, but the authorities would not execute the warrant, as the very day that the warrant reached Ajmer, I was going back to Ahmedabad. The real news of the warrant, therefore, came as a welcome relief. I took with me an extra *kuchh* (lion-cloth), two blankets, and five books: *Bhagavad Gita*, *Ashram Hymn Book*, *Ramayana*, Rodwell's translation of the Koran, a presentation copy of the *Sermon on the Mount* sent by schoolboys of a high school in California with the hope that I would always carry it with me. The Superintendent, Khan Bahadur N.R. Wacha, received us kindly, and we were taken to a separate block of cells situated in a spacious, clean compound. We were permitted to sleep on the verandah of the cells, a rare privilege for prisoners. I enjoyed the quiet and the utter silence of the place. The next morning we were taken to the Court for preliminary examination. Both Mr. Banker and I had decided not only not to offer any defense but in no way to hamper the prosecution, but rather to help it. The preliminary examination was, therefore, quickly over. The case was committed to the Sessions, and as we were prepared to accept short service, the trial was to take place on the 18th of March. The people of Ahmedabad had risen to the occasion. Mr. Vallabhhai Patel had issued strict instructions that there should be no crowds gathering near the Court-house and that there should be no demonstration of any kind whatsoever. There were, therefore, in the Court-house only a select body of visitors, and the police had an easy time of it, which I could see was duly appreciated by the authorities.

The week before the trial was passed in receiving visitors who were generally permitted to see us without restriction. We were allowed to carry on correspondence so long as it was harmless and submitted to the Superintendent. As we willingly carried out all the Jail regulations, our relations with the Jail officials were smooth and even cordial during the week that we were in Sabarmati. Khan Bahadur Wacha was all attention and politeness, but it was impossible not to notice his timidity in everything he did. He seemed to apologize for his Indian birth and unconsciously to convey that he would have done more for us had he been a European. Being an Indian, even in allowing facilities which the regulations permitted, he was afraid of the Collector and the Inspector-General of Prisons and every official who was at all superior to him. He knew that, if it came to a struggle between himself and the Collector or the Inspector-General of Prisons,

he had nobody to back him up at the Secretariat. The notion of inferiority haunted him at every step. What was true outside was equally true, if not truer, inside the Jail. An Indian official would not assert himself, not because he could not, but because he lived in mortal fear of degradation, if not dismissal. If he was to retain his post and obtain promotion, he must please his superiors even to the point of ringer and even at the sacrifice of principles. The contrast became terrible when we were transferred to Yeravda. The European Superintendent had no fear of the Inspector-General of Prisons. He could claim just as much influence at the Secretariat as the latter. The Collector for him was almost an interloper. His Indian superiors he held cheap and, therefore, he was not afraid to do his duty when he wished and was equally unafraid to neglect it, when discharge of duty was an onerous task. He knew that, as a rule, he was always safe. This sense of safety enables young European officers often to do the right thing in spite of opposition either from the public or from the Government, and he has also often driven coach and six through all regulations, all instructions and defied public opinion.

Of the trial and the sentence I need say nothing as the reader knows all about it, except to acknowledge the courtesy which was extended to us by all the officials including the Judge and the Advocate-General. The wonderful[1] restraint that was observed by the small crowd of people that was seen in and about the Court, and the great affection showed by them can never be effaced from memory. The sentence of six years' simple imprisonment I regarded as light. For, if Section 124 A of the Penal Code did Really constitute [my action] a crime and the Judge administering the laws of the land could not but hold it as a crime. he would be perfectly justified in imposing the highest penalty. The crime was repeatedly and willfully committed, and I can only account for the lightness of the sentence by supposing not that the Judge took pity on me, for I asked for none, but that he could not have approved of Section 124 A. There are many instances of judges having signified their disapproval of particular laws by imposing the minimum sentence, even though the crime denoted by them might have been fully and deliberately committed. He could not very well impose a lighter sentence seeing that the late Lokamanya was sentenced to six years' imprisonment for a similar offense.

The sentence over, we were both taken back to the prison, this

time as fully convicted prisoners, but there was no change in the treatment accorded to us. Some friends were even permitted to accompany us. Leave-taking in the Jail was quite jovial. Mrs. Gandhi and Anasuyabai bore themselves bravely as they parted. Mr. Banker was laughing all the time and I heaved a sigh of relief, thanking God that all was over so peacefully and that I would be able to have some rest and still feel that I was serving the country, if possible more than when I was traveling up and down addressing huge audiences. I wish I could convince the workers that imprisonment of a comrade does not mean so much loss of work for a common cause. If we believe, as we have so often proclaimed we do, that unprovoked suffering is the surest way of remedying a wrong in regard to which the suffering is gone through, surely it follows as a matter of course that imprisonment of a comrade is no loss. Silent suffering undergone with dignity and humility speaks with an unrivalled eloquence. It is solid work because there is no ostentation about it. It is always true because there is no danger of miscalculation. Moreover, if we are true workers, the loss of a fellow-worker increases our zest and, therefore, capacity for work. And so long as we regard anybody as irreplaceable, we have not fitted ourselves for organized work. For organized work means capacity for carrying it on in spite of depletion in the ranks. Therefore, we must rejoice in the unmerited suffering of friends or ourselves and trust that the cause , if it is just, will prosper through such suffering.

Young India, 17-4-1924

255. 'THE WHISPER OF THE WHEEL'

The following enthusiastic description of the possibilities of the spinning-wheel cannot fail to be of general interest. The writer is a U.P. graduate and is himself a practised spinner. He does not wish his name to be advertised.

> I am a simple thing and anybody can understand my mechanism. I can be bought for a rupee or two. I am portable and easily accessible to all. I am much lighter than the grinding-stone, therefore, I am most popular with the fair sex. I am in demand at the time of marriages. My production satisfies the religious want of the Pundits because I am always sacred. I can give bread to the millions of starving villagers of India, can clothe the farmers, can give a livelihood to beggars, can give a dignified profession to the fallen sisters and those whose modesty is otherwise exposed to the assaults of lustful persons. I

am in the habit of demolishing "devils' workshops" by keeping busy all idle men's minds, if they care to turn me. I feed the weavers, the carders, the ironsmiths and the carpenters. I can save the heavy drainage of India that has been sapping her very life-blood— I can effect real unity between the different communities of India by making them independent, I can ameliorate the conditions of the untouchables by making it easy to find a market for the yarn produced by them, I can establish real peace in India by teaching is inhabitants self-respect and self-reliance and thus render it absolutely impossible for other nations to come to India with the idea of exploiting her. I can introduce simplicity in life and make the opulent condescend to talk with the mill-hands. I can destroy the pride of the capitalists by abolishing the factory system and thus putting an end to the ever-multiplying miseries of the labourers, and by being a menace to ambition and love of aggrandisement. I am thus a harbinger of peace and restorer of financial health to India and impartial distributor of wealth.

But to school students I am something more: I am an examiner of their abilities, I am a barometer to their nature. Give me to a rash boy and I will tell all at once that he is such, because his yarn will be untwisted and irregular. Place me in the hands of serious boy: I will at once know that he is promising, because his yarn will be regular, and indicative of a balanced hand. I am not merely an examiner ; I am an instructor too. I can train the mind of a boy (if he turns me daily) so well that he will be a good surgeon if he goes to the George Hospital, Lucknow, with a certificate from me. His operations will mostly be successful and his judgment most accurate. I warrant a regular spinner can be a good mathematician because the law governs both the sciences. It would be no exaggeration to say that spinning is practical mathematics. If you, err, your mistakes will at once be detected.

Just as bluntness in the edge of a razor spoils a shave, just as caustic acid [sic] spoils a picture and just as adoration without faith is meaningless, in the same way no amount of coaching is of any avail without concentration which the youths of these days so utterly lack. I am a specialist in training the boys in concentration and I claim to do immense good in this direction to the boy who befriends me.

Young India, 17-4-1924

256. SCHOOLMASTERS AND LAWYERS

I hope you have by this time been able to consult friends who were led to modify, at Delhi, the Congress resolution regarding the Triple Boycott. What final decision have you come to? Are you going to preach them over again in the same form?

As to the boycott of Councils, I may not say anything; the leaders of

the Swaraj Party might have clearly laid before you facts and arguments. The work they are doing and are likely to do is before you. As to the boycott of schools and colleges, it has, if I may say from my own experience, completely failed. I may refer to my own case. Here there are two full-fledged high schools, attended by more than 500 pupils each, while the National High School has barely 30 boys on the roll. We have tried all possible ways and means for canvassing boys, but have failed. I have been convinced that people are not prepared for this boycott.

As to the third boycott, there were only a very few lawyers who gave up their practice. Now almost all have rejoined. The number of court-going people never diminished. The *Lavad*[1] Courts established by national workers never thrived and have since died. These courts, having had no power to enforce their decisions, and the people being not trained to submit, cannot be expected to attain any palpable success.

Under these circumstances what are we-who boycotted our further education and prospects at the clarion call of the Congress to sacrifice for the sake of the country only one year—to do? We have sacrificed not only one year but three. We established national schools for the people and the people heed them not. The sacrifice of the workers is not appreciated. Are not the national schools with such poor attendance a useless waste of the public money, energy and life? Does it not mean that our efforts and plans are premature? Our sacrifice gives no satisfaction to ourselves too. It is often a hindrance to patriotism or national enthusiasm. Khaddar is dearer than mill-cloth and our means are poor. Though elected delegates to the Congress, we cannot attend or have to refuse the seat, for want of the necessary money required for travelling and other expenses. we have to earn money not for luxury but as a necessity. But our ways are blocked by the Congress.

I have a family to support and a delicate constitution, and hence cannot bear the hardship of village propaganda. The Congress has practically no work at present. What I think is that the Congress should arrange for the maintenance of workers and admit only those whom it can support. It should give permission to all others to follow their own pursuits patriotically and be soldiers of the Militia (irregular army), ready at the country's call whenever required. Such people will enter Government and semi-Government schools and teach their prescribed books and lessons with a patriotic angle of vision. They will join the Bar and show to the people at every step what a waste of time and money the Courts are. They will enter the military and refuse to fire on their own brethren. And so on. I know not what you intend to do after your recovery. In the meanwhile I seek your advice. I think that I am doing no

[1] Arbitration

better service to the people and to the country by remaining the headmaster of the national school here, which is not appreciated and supported by the public. May I complete my law education and join the Bar and do what humble services I can to the Motherland? Will you advise the Congress to remove these boycotts and devise some other ways and means for attaining freedom?

Or are you going to take up these boycotts in right earnest again? May we wait?

PS. It is no question of conscience and religion. I took at Non-co-operation only as a means.

The foregoing letter sums up succinctly the argument advanced by my correspondents and visitors against the boycott of schools and law-courts. As usual the sting is in the tail. The Postscript yields the secret of unbelief in the boycott. One need not regard everything as a matter of conscience or religion to be able to stick to it through thick and thin. Even one's means may be so vital that giving them up may mean death. Lungs are the means whereby we breathe and sustain life. They are not life. But their destruction is destruction of life itself. No one questions that non-co-operation is a means. The question is: Is non-co-operation as conceived in 1920 the only means of reaching our goal? The Congress decided that it was. But the Congress merely represents the opinion of the delegates for the time being. Some of us evidently consider that it was a mistake to think that it was the only means. Some others think that it was one of the means and many more should have been adopted at the same time. Yet others, through they disbelieved in it. adopted it out of regard for the decision of the majority and because they think that the decisions of the Congress have a mandatory character and bind the minority whether in matters of principle or detail. Yet others adhere to the opinion formed by them 1920 that non-co-operation as then conceived is the only means for achieving our goal. I belong to the last category and it will be my humble duty from time to time to show why it is the only means. My correspondent evidently belongs to the opposite school.

I have repeatedly observed that no school of thought can claim a monopoly of right judgment. We are all liable to err and are often obliged to revise our judgments. In a vast country like this, there must be room for all schools of honest thought. And the least, therefore, that we owe to ourselves as to others is to try to understand the opponent's view-points and, if we cannot accept it, respect it as fully as we would expect him to respect ours. It is one of the indispensable tests

of a healthy public life and, therefore, fitness for swaraj. If we have no charity and no tolerance, we shall never settle our differences amicably and must therefore always submit to the arbitrament of a third party, i.e, to foreign domination. I invite the reader, then, to share with me the respect that is due to the view set forth by my correspondent and, if he belongs to the correspondent's school of thought, bear with me even though I cannot see eye to eye with him.

In my opinion, the boycott of schools and law-courts has been both a failure and a success. It has been largely, not wholly, a failure in that schools and law-courts have not been effectively or even appreciably deserted. But it has been a success in that the halo surrounding Government schools and law-courts has disappeared. People believe, much more now than they did before, in the necessity of independent national schools and settlement of disputes by panchayats. Lawyers and Government schoolmasters have lost much of the artificial prestige they enjoyed five years ago. I count these as no small gains. Let me not be misunderstood. I do not undervalue the sacrifices and devotion to the country of schoolmasters and lawyers. Dadabhai and Gokhale were school-masters. Pherozeshah Mehta and Badruddin Tyabji were lawyers. But I would not have even these distinguished countrymen of ours to claim the exclusive monopoly of wisdom or ability to guide. The spinner, the weaver, the farmer, the artisan, the trader have just as much right to shape the destiny of the country as the members of the so-called liberal professions. As the latter have represented the arm of authority, we have been awed by them and to that extent they have accustomed us to think that we can satisfy our wants only through the Government instead of teaching us that the Government is a creation of the people and merely an instrument for giving effect to their will. This false prestige of privileged classes has suffered a shock from which I hope it will never recover.

That national schools and panchayats have not flourished, as they might have, is due to a variety of causes, some avoidable and others unavoidable. We have been new to the work and therefore we have not know how to go about it. For me, therefore, the poverty of results is not a cause for disappointment but for greater and more enlightened effort. Our failures we can convert into so many steps to success.

The village work frightens us. We who are town-bred find it

trying to take to the village life. Our bodies in many cases do not respond to the hard life. But it is a difficulty which we have to face boldly, even heroically, if our desire is to establish swaraj for the people, not substitute one class rule by another, which may be even worse.[1] Hitherto the villagers have died in their thousands so that we might live. Now we might have to die so that they may live. The difference will be fundamental. The former have died unknowingly and involuntarily. Their enforced sacrifice has degraded us. If now we die knowingly and willingly, our sacrifice will ennoble us and the whole nation. Let us not flinch from the necessary sacrifice, if we will live as an independent, self-respecting nation.

The difficulty with the non-co-operating lawyers is greater still. They have unfortunately been used to a highly artificial life totally out of harmony with their national surroundings. I regard it as a crime that any lawyer or doctor should charge or get, say Rs. 1,000 per day or for that matter even Rs. 100 per day. It is no answer to the indictment that it is the monied men who pay and there can be no harm, but it may be all to the good if lawyers take money from the rich people and use a part for the public good. If the profession was disinterested and charged only enough for maintenance, the monied men would also have to revise their budget. As it is, we seem to be moving in a vicious circle.

If under swaraj we shall have to make the town life correspond to the village life, we shall be bound to simplify the town mode of life. The beginning has to be made now. Why should lawyers feel so utterly helpless as they seem to do now? Is starvation the only alternative if they cannot resume practice? Is it impossible for a resourceful lawyer to turn his attention to weaving or any other honourable toil?

It is difficult for me to advise non-co-operating lawyers and schoolmasters. If they believe in the boycott, they should face all difficulties and continue the boycott. If they do not believe in it, they can, without any disgrace attaching to their action, rejoin the profession. As I do not believe in the mandate theory, I do not consider it to be obligatory on any schoolmaster or lawyer to refrain from rejoining Government schools or law-courts because of the continuance of the boycott resolution. I would still advocate the

[1] For Gandhiji's reply to Bhagwandas's criticism of these views, "Note on Bhagwandas' Letter", 8-5-1924.

retention of the boycott, to be worked out not by propaganda for emptying Government schools and courts (that was done and had to be done during 1920 and 1921), but by the constructive method of establishing and popularizing national schools and panchayats.

Young India, 17-4-1924

257. NOTES

MAULANA SHAUKAT ALI'S ILLNESS

The readers of *Young India* will be sorry to learn that Maulana Shaukat Ali. who has been ailing for some time and is being treated by Dr. Ansari under his own roof, is not making such progress as was at one time expected. Both Maulana Mahomed Ali and Dr. Ansari say in their letters just received that the patient is feeling very weak and requires most careful nursing. I invite the readers to join me in the prayer that our distinguished countryman may soon be restored to complete health.

TALKS WITH LEADERS

Statements have appeared in the Press about the talks between the Swarajist leaders and myself. I ask the readers to discount them as altogether premature. No final conclusions have been reached. Mr. C. R. Das has not even been able to attend these talks and, as he has been asked by his medical advisers to take prolonged rest, he may not be able to come at all. In no case is it possible to make any statement before the views of Mr. Das and other friends are known.

I understand that the workers are vegetating because of the suspense caused by the talks and the confusion caused by unauthorized journalistic ventures. I would ask the workers not to worry over the result of the talks. I can give them my assurance that there is not the slightest likelihood of any change being advocated by me in the constructive programme. Anyone, therefore, suspending his activity in that direction will make a grievous blunder and retard the progress of the constructive work which needs all the time of all the workers that can be got together for the work.

FOR WORKERS

A friend has suggested that I should convene a meeting of workers so as to confer with them even as I am conferring with the leaders. At one time I thought it was a good plan, but I see that it is

not feasible. But what has finally decided me against such a conference is my own physical condition. I can hardly bear the strain of a prolonged sitting at an early date. Any such conference to be useful must be called as soon as possible and not later than the end of this month. But I see that I shall not be equal to the task by that time. And, after all, what will such a conference do? I am gathering all the information I can. I shall soon reach conclusions on the vexed questions of the day. Whatever weight may attach to my opinion, it must remain the opinion of an individual and therefore have no authority. The only authoritative opinion for Congressmen can be that of the Working Committee and the All-India Congress Committee in the absence of the whole Congress. My tentative opinions may form a fit subject for discussion when the All-India Congress Committee meets. The Working Committee meets too early for me and in no case can it lay down any new policy or programme without reference to the A.I.C.C.

Whilst, therefore, there need be no conference of workers, if they will give me as briefly as possible their opinion on all the questions that may be agitating them, it will be of the greatest assistance to me in forming my own judgment. Any such communications should reach me before the end of this month and addressed Post Andheri, Bombay.

THE GURDWARA MOVEMENT

Another Jatha of 500 has surrendered peacefully when it was intercepted in its progress to the Gangsar Gurdwara and placed under arrest by the Nabha authorities. If we had not become used to such arrests and the like, they would create a sensation in the country. Now they have become ordinary occurrences and excite little curiosity and less surprise or pain. Their moral value increases in the same ratio as popular interest in them seems to have died. These arrests, when they cease to be sensational, also cease to afford intoxication. People who court arrest in the absence of excitement allow themselves to be arrested because of their unquenchable faith in silent but certain efficacy of suffering undergone without resentment and in a just cause. the Sikhs have been conducting the Gurdwara movement by the satyagraha method now for the last four years. Their zeal is apparently undiminished in spite of the fact that most of their leaders are in jail. Their suffering has been intense. They have put up with beating, they have stood without retaliation shower of bullets and

hundreds have been imprisoned. Victory therefore is a matter only of time. An offensive has been threatened on behalf of the Government. They are imprisoning innocent men who are marching in pursuit of a religious duty. They have declared their associations illegal. One wonders what further steps they can take to frighten the brave Sikhs. The latter's answer to any offensive on the part of the Government is not difficult to guess. They will meet each progressive step in repression with equally progressive determination to do or die.

VYKOM SATYAGRAHA

Vykom, of which till lately no one outside Travancore, at most the Madras Presidency, knew anything, has suddenly leapt to fame because it has become the seat of satyagraha. The Press contains bulletins of the daily progress of the movement from day to day. It has been undertaken in behalf of the untouchables of Travancore. The movement has given us another word to describe the condition of the suppressed classes. It is unapproachability. These poor countrymen of ours may not only not touch any other caste Hindus, but they may not even approach them within a stated distance. The leaders of the movement, with a view to remedying the evil, have taken up only a fragment of the evil, hoping no doubt that, if they deal with it successfully, they will have dealt it a death-blow at least in that part of India in which direct action is now going on. In the prosecution of the campaign some of the staunchest workers of Malabar have been imprisoned, including my predecessor, George Joseph.

As most of the leaders have been imprisoned, an appeal has been made to the leaders all over India to come to the rescue. Whether such an appeal can or should be met or not need not be considered for the moment, as Madras seems to be responding whole-heatedly. There can now be no receding. The struggle may last long if orthodox Hindu opinion is actively hostile to the movement. The satyagrahis are certain to break down the wall of prejudice no matter how strong and solid it may be if they continue firm but humble, truthful and non-violent. They must have faith enough in these qualities to know that they will melt the stoniest hearts.

HOW TO DO IT

Mr. Andrews has endeavoured to answer the query of the secretary of a Bengal Sevak Sangh as to how to combat the drink

evil[1]. His answer is to follow in the footsteps of Pussyfoot Johnson. Whilst he was trying to convert certain English students, he was stoned. The throw resulted ultimately in the loss of one eye. He pardoned the offenders, would not prosecute them and would not take compensation offered by the British Government. That was an instance of non-violence in thought, word and deed. If such non-violence can be insured here, I would not hesitate to revive the idea of picketing liquor shops again. But we stand discredited. In many places, our picketing in 1921 was far from non-violent. The political idea of embarrassing the Government was predominant with us, that of reforming the drunkard was a very secondary consideration. In the struggle of non-co-operation politics are made to subserve the moral end. If we can reform the drunkard, we reform also the administration and the administrators. Whereas, if we suppress the drunkard by force, we may deprive the Government of the liquor or the drug revenue for a time, but in the end the suppressed drinker or smoker will raise his head and the Government will raise an increased revenue. Not until we have men and women enough who would carry on picketing for the love of the drunkard even at the risk of their lives, can we dream of reviving picketing. I am afraid we ill deserve the praise given to us by Dr. Johnson. I was about to expunge the passage in question from Mr. Andrews's article before posting it. But I have retained it to remind us of our duty and spur us to effort enough to deserve such praise.

KHADDAR AND PURITY

A friend, in a letter enclosing a Rs. 10 note, writes:

The donning of khaddar without the qualities of sincerity, purity, self- conquest, etc., amounts to a sacrilege, and he adds that as he does not possess these qualities in their fullness, he has not the courage to wear khaddar garments. I wish it were possible to associate all these qualities with khaddar garments. But in that case very few of us will be able to use khaddar at all. The writer has needlessly exaggerated the merits of khaddar. Its one great merit is that it solves, as nothing else can, the economic problem of India and removes starvation. That alone must be all-sufficing to induce high and low to wear and use hand-spun khaddar to the exclusion of every other cloth. We want all, irrespective of their character, to wear khaddar. Scoundrels, drunkards, the very scum of the land, must clothe and feed themselves. I would not hesitate to urge them to wear khadar

[1] In an article under the title "The Struggle against Alcohol".

even though I cannot induce them to change their mode of inner life. We must cease to attribute to khaddar virtues which it cannot carry.

UNREPENTENT

A correspondent has written a furiously earnest letter for publication if I thought it necessary. With due respect to the correspondent, I think it unnecessary to publish the letter. But I am prepared to let the reader guess what it is all likely to be from the following extract:

> If you will not condemn the past and present actions of the Swaraj Party in the strongest terms, then you shall fail in your duty towards Truth and thus towards God. If you will not condemn them . . . then it will mean a death-blow to your movement itself . . . Pray do not create a second Bardoli.

I am giving the above extract in order that I may prepare the ground for my fall and thus break its force somewhat. Whatever may be the nature of the statement. I may make regarding the Council-entry, I know this much that I am not going to condemn the Swarjists in any manner whatsoever. I may express my differences in the strongest language, but I cannot condemn them, because they may hold different views from mine. They and their views are at least as much entitled to a respectful hearing as mine or those of the tallest among us. There is no such thing as my movement. But in so far as any movement may be called mine, there is no danger of its failure, so long as I do not fail. Whilst, therefore, I appreciate my correspondent's anxiety for me, I would like him to feel at ease on my score. For, so far as I can foresee, there is not much danger of proving a traitor to myself. Whilst there is yet time, I had better make another confession. I am so proud of my performance at Bardoli that there is every prospect of my repeating it. That clean confession made at a most critical moment did me a world of good. It purified me and I verily believe that it did as much good to the cause. That confession and retracing of our steps gave an object-lesson in non-violence as nothing else could have. I am, therefore, likely to repeat Bardoli as often as the occasion arises and that I shall do even at the risk of finding myself in a minority of one. I should be an unfit servant of nation if I hesitate to tell the truth and do it for fear of losing popularity. What will it be worth when I have lost the only thing for which I live?

Young India, 17-4-1924

258. MESSAGE TO SUBURBAN DISTRICT CONFERENCE[1]

BOMBAY,
[*April 18, 1924*]

Mahatma Gandhi had sent a message that owing to his illness he was unable to take any part in their Conference, but he fully realized their great love for him. He was sure God would make their Conference a success. But what next? Most important of all their resolutions was the one about khadi, because in it women, men, children, old men, the educated and uneducated, co-operators and non-co-operators could equally take whatever part they liked. They had money and sense. Numerically they were few. Did they not think they could make them all lovers of khadi? If they could not achieve this much in their small community, where all circumstances were favorable to them, then a doubt would arise whether they were fitted to undertake even bigger tasks. He was sure that they would all come to a united resolve to see this work to a successful end.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 23-4-1924

259. LETTER TO COL. F. MELL

POST ANDHERI,
April 18, 1924

DEAR COL. MELL,

There is a prisoner in the Sabarmati Central Jail undergoing two years' rigorous imprisonment. For want of a better term he may be described as a political prisoner. His name is Mr. Kalyanji Vithalbhai Mehta. He is a co-worker of mine and I know him exceedingly well. I understand that whereas on admission his weight was 102, it is now 92, that at one time milk formed an item in his dietary, but for some cause not known to my informant, he has been deprived of milk. My informant tells me that the prisoner has been deprived also of writing materials, and that although he is able to weave only 12 yards of strapping, the authorities insist upon his finishing 20 yards. I am loath to publish this information before bringing it to your notice. At first I thought I would write to the Superintendent directly, but finding that he would himself have to refer to you before replying to my letter, I have ventured to send this directly to you, and I shall be obliged if

[1] The Conference, held at Santa Cruz on Friday afternoon, was presided over by Darbar Gopaldas of Duassa.

you will kindly let me know whether the information given to me is correct, and if it is not, what the true facts are.[1]

I am,

Yours truly,

COL. F. MELL, C .I. E., ETC.
INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF PRISONS
POONA

From a photostat: S.N. 8742

260. TELEGRAM TO VAIKOM SATYAGRAHIS[2]

[ANDHERI,
April 19, 1924]

BEING OVERWHELMED WITH WORK UNABLE WRITE. YOU ARE DOING SPLENDIDLY. CONTINUE AS YOU HAVE BEGUN.

The Hindu, 24-4-1924

261. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA [3]

[BOMBAY,
On or after *April 19, 1924*]

HOPE YOU ARE IMPROVING. PLEASE WIRE CONDITION. DO PLEASE TAKE FULL REST BEFORE MOVING.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8744

[1] Col. Mell replied to this letter on April 21 and again on May 1, furnishing details about Kalyanji's health and diet, denying that he was deprived of writing materials or made to do hard labour.

[2] K. N. Namboodripad, in a letter of April 23, furnishing Gandhiji with details of developments at Vaikom and forwarding a plan of the temple and its prohibited approach roads—"a mere glance of which will reveal the inhumanity of this evil custom" —acknowledged a telegram from Gandhiji dated April 19.

[3] This was in reply to Malaviya's telegram of April 19, 1924, which read: "Sorry health does not permit going Bombay another week."

262. MY NOTES

NON-VIOLENCE IN SILK

A friend points out that, in the process of silk-production, innumerable silk-worms are destroyed, and asks how men and women who believe in non-violence can use it. If they cannot, he adds, the Gujarat Khadi Pracharak Mandal certainly should not undertake to popularize silk.

Here it is necessary to understand what is meant by having faith in non-violence. If a person's acceptance of non-violence is restricted to the sphere of Congress work, there can be no objection to his wearing silk, since his pledge of non-violence has reference only to the Non-co-operation movement. But those whose acceptance of non-violence is absolute cannot be too careful in their efforts to refrain from all violence. Since the world in which we live is full of violence and we see violence at every step, the believer in absolute non-violence has necessarily to live with the utmost restraints. Such a person should give up everything he can and also keep in mind that what we need to get rid of first are desire and anger. There may be greater violence in making a caustic remark than in wearing silk. Only he who has vowed to subdue his senses and has achieved some measure of success in his effort may concern himself with such subtle points. Austerity in dress and food is of value only if it is a sign of inner discipline, otherwise it is likely to be insincere. If my view is correct, there is no taint of violence in the sale of silk by the Gujarat Khadi Pracharak Mandal.

Considering the matter from the point of view of non-co-operation, we have no business to concern ourselves with selling silk. If any organization connected with the Congress sells silk, its activity can perhaps be defended on the ground that it does so in order to popularize khadi. I personally see no necessity for selling silk to make khadi popular. One can, however, understand and condone the use of silk borders to beautify khadi.

SWADESHI SILK

Besides, there is very little silk made in the country. Silk thread is mostly imported. It is true that some silk thread is produced in Bangalore and a few other places, but the quantity is so small as to be negligible. Moreover, the purpose for which khadi should be

popularized is not served by popularizing silk. The spread of khadi is a moral duty because people in the country depend upon spinning for eking out a livelihood. So long as we are unable to solve the problem of our daily bread, we cannot hope to follow dharma nor to win swaraj. Where only a few thousand can earn their living by producing silk, crores can do so by spinning cotton and crores starve for want of opportunity to spin. If the silk industry went out of existence, these crores or thousands would not starve.

MEANING OF KHADI

A friend wants to know the meaning of khadi. His question is whether hand-woven *atlas*[1] made from hand-spun silk thread can be regarded as khadi. Khadi can and should have only one meaning, viz., hand-woven cloth made from hand-spun thread. Silk-thread, jute fibre and wool woven in this manner may be called, if we like, silk, jute and woollen khadi, respectively. But it would be ridiculous for anyone dressed in khadi silk to claim that he was encouraging khadi. Of course, it must be admitted that Indian silk is preferable to foreign silk. But its use cannot serve the purpose which khadi does and may even harm its cause.

ABOUT "ANTYAJAS"

Hindu society is still not free from the sin of untouchability; on the contrary, we find that all over the country people are clinging to narrow ideas. In Vykom people have gone to the extreme in this matter. But one need not go so far away from Gujarat. Ventured to do what I could to resolve the crisis which had arisen in the National School at Vile Parle. The teachers of that school want *Antyaja* children to be admitted and many members of the School committee are also in favour of the idea. There has been considerable progress in Vile Parle in this matter. *Antyaja* friends have now asked for a separate school. In these circumstances, I offered the advice that, if the admission of *Antyaja* children just now endangered the very existence of the school, a separate school for them should be established.

Misunderstanding the purpose of this suggestion, which was made in the context of, and to meet, a particular situation, managers of certain schools in Gujarat interpret it to mean that, wherever there are national schools, separate institutions should be opened for *Antyajas*. If their suggestion is acted upon, I believe both types of schools will

[1] A kind of silken cloth

be doomed, mainly because we cannot afford the necessary expenditure. Moreover, once we relax a principle, it will be undermined altogether and the bolt of untouchability will remain. The advice given in special circumstances in Vile Parle cannot be followed elsewhere. As a matter of fact, it is on account of its failing in this matter that the Vile Parle school has not been affiliated to the Vidyapith.[1] The teachers and the members of the Committee are striving hard to make it fit for affiliation. The step of establishing a separate school is a part of these efforts. It is thus clear that this instance cannot be a precedent for schools which are already affiliated to the Vidyapith.

CONTRIBUTION BY "ANTYAJA" FRIENDS

Some *Antyaja* friends in Botad have sent me a sum of Rs. 36. Those who have sent this money are illiterate people. They do not read *Navajivan*, but hear it read out to them. I am being pressed to publish the names of these donors and I could not bring myself to refuse. The argument is that, unless the names are published in *Navajivan*, these illiterate friends will not know whether I have received their contribution. Accepting this argument as having some substance in it, I promised to publish the names. I hope, however, that I shall not be put under pressure to publish names of any others who may wish to send me contributions. Rather than take up the space in *Navajivan* with acknowledgments of donations, it would be better to close down the paper altogether. The right thing to do is not to hand over a contribution to a person whom one does not trust. Nor should it be given to anyone who happens to come along. We should give our contribution only to persons who are known to us and whom we can trust. We would not then care whether or not our names were published. To save space, I am leaving out the fathers' names from the list sent to me. When more than one donor has the same name, the father's name has been inserted. The following have contributed one rupee each.[2]

The following have paid 8 annas each:[3]

The following have paid 4 annas each:[4]

Vagha Ramjibhai has contributed Rs. 2 and Dudhabhai Malji

[1] The Senate of this University had passed a resolution on October 31, 1920, to the effect that untouchables could not be excluded from any school approved by the University.

[2] The names of contributors which follow are not reproduced here.

[3] *ibid.*

[4] *ibid.*

Rs. 10. I prize these gifts from poor men. The amount will be used exclusively for the benefit of *Antyajas*.

MEANING OF ERADICATING UNTOUCHABILITY

I observe that questions are still asked about issues which I thought had been made sufficiently plain. According to the Congress resolution and my personal opinion as well, removal of untouchability can have only one meaning. That is that, we Hindus, must rid ourselves of the sin of untouchability. The four *Varnas*[1] do not regard one another's touch as defiling or sinful. We should treat *Antyajas* in the same way. It has been repeatedly stressed that the resolution has no other implication. As there is no inter-dining or intermarriage among other communities, so also we are not required by the Resolution to have such relations with *Antyajas*. There can be no compulsion in these matters. But the conduct of the person who objects to physical contact as such with another person or looks upon someone as untouchable merely because he is born in a certain community, violates Nature's law, is repugnant to he spirit of compassion and to shastra in the true sense of the word. To mix up the efforts being made to end this sinful practice with inter-dining and intermarriage is to obstruct the progress of the atonement which it is essential for us to go through. The evil of untouchability has struck such deep roots among us that we do not recognize it as evil. One would actually think that it was being carefully preserved as an ornament to the Hindu community. When well-wishers of the community find it difficult to end this evil, practical men would not introduce further difficulties and obstruct the progress of the reform.

Inter-dining and intermarriage are issues relating to reform of the cast system. Those who believe that caste should be abolished are working to bring about these reforms. But it should be clearly realized that their efforts are entirely distinct from, and have nothing whatever to do with, the eradication of untouchability. Those who wish to abolish caste also help in eradicating untouchability, and that is only right. If they understand, however, that the reforms of inter-dining and intermarriage are distinct from efforts to abolish untouchabliity, they will be able to judge their relative importance on merit.

What, then, is meant by the eradication of untouchability? I thought this was already clear. It means that the so-called untou-

[1] Traditional divisions of Hindu society according to occupations.

chables should be as free as members of other communities to move about as they please, should be allowed to join schools and enter temples are open to others and to draw water from the wells from which the rest draw it.

The argument that the untouchables are dirty in their ways and follow some unclean occupation is, to my mind, the result of ignorance. There are others dirtier than the untouchables, yet they draw water from the public wells. A nursing mother does unclean work, and so does a doctor, but we honour both. If it is said that they wash themselves after they have done their work, so do many untouchables before they go to a well to fetch water. If, however, they do not keep themselves clean, the fault is ours. To despise them, to compel them to live at a distance from the village, to make it impossible or difficult for them to gain access to the means of keeping themselves clean and then to reproach them for being unclean is the height of injustice. It is our sacred duty to help them to shake off the defects which have grown upon them owing to our negligence and our tyranny. To refuse to do this and yet to hope for India's freedom is like turning one's back towards the sun and yet hoping to get a glimpse of it.

BREACH OF PROMISE IN JHARIA

When I went to Jharia[1], accompanied by Maulana Mahomed Ali, many persons offered big sums as contribution to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. We were greatly pleased to see that Marwaris and Gujaratis living in Bihar had promised handsome contributions for the benefit of that province. They had promised that the contributions would be paid soon. Three years have passed since the promise was made. A letter has now been received from Jharia to say that many Kutchi mine-owners have not yet paid the amounts promised. I am sure everyone will be pained by this. The importance of keeping a promise is universally acclaimed in the Shastras. Progress is impossible if promises are broken every time. Families, and even entire nations, have perished as a consequence of not keeping a promise. From the ethical point of view, a one-sided promise is superior to a reciprocal one and an oral promise to a written undertaking. The promises given by these friends were voluntary and their keeping them depends solely on their own integrity. I appeal to them to honour their word. If

[1] On February 5, 1921

they understand the value of a promise, they will offer twice the normal interest on the sums in question.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-4-1924

263. KABULIS' TERROR

Every day in the newspapers we come across reports of the Kabulis[1] terrorizing people. We seem to have made up our minds that we have only one remedy against this harassment. If the Government does not protect us, we feel helpless.

Non-co-operators have voluntarily forsaken this avenue of redress. If a non-co-operator asks for the Government's help, his non-co-operation will be compromised, and moreover he will feel ashamed to ask for such help. But, even for those who co-operate, it is not right to beg for help from the Government. It they depend all the time on the Government to help them, there would be no Government or it would become a total dictatorship. In no other part of the world do people rely exclusively on their Government; they act on their own, as if they themselves were the authorities, to defend themselves and their honour.

What methods, then, are open to both co-operators and non-co-operators for protecting themselves from the terror of the Kabulis without appealing to the Government ?

One is the commonly accepted method of fighting.

The other is the method of satyagraha.

People certainly have the right to resort to the first method. This is also their duty. If they cannot defend themselves, they will prove themselves unmanly. Even under swaraj, the Government will not be there all the time to protect the people. A Government is equipped to face serious emergencies, but can any government look after all people living in isolated spots? The very policy adopted by the present Government is such as to make it incapable of protecting the people against dangers like this terror of the Kabulis. In following that policy, it goes almost to the length of not permitting us to fight among ourselves lest we should cease to be its petty agents. It considers internal and external security of the country necessary for

[1] Tribesmen, hailing from the borderland between India and Afghanistan, living as petty traders or usurers.

the protection of British commercial interests and is always ready to ensure it to the extent required by these. I do not suggest, or want people to believe, that the Government is not interested in doing anything more than this to protect the people. But its primary concern is not this and, therefore, it is not always equipped for this task. If it decides to equip itself so, it will spend, will indeed be obliged to spend, more than it does at present in the name of defence and security. As it is, we find the expenses on the gate-keeper heavier than on domestic requirements. If, now, the Government were to equip itself fully to rid the country of dangers like the Kabulis' terror, the gate-keeper would certainly have a happy time of it, but the householder would simply shiver in terror inside the house. It is, therefore, preferable that we on our own take measures to protect ourselves against such dangers. True, we are handicapped for want of arms, but more than arms what is needed is courage. What is the use of a gun in the hand of a coward? It will in all probability be used against him. A brave man unarmed will overcome an armed coward and snatch away the latter's gun before he can use it. If stout-hearted men in every town or village come forward to protect the people at any cost to themselves, the harassment by the Kabulis will soon be curbed. It needs to be mentioned here that the pledge of non-violent non-co-operation does not forbid self-defence in this manner.

Would I, then, help such an effort? If asked this question, I would have to reply in the negative. I think I have courage enough. Without it one cannot be a satyagrahi. A coward cannot adopt satyagraha as his dharma. That he may do so out of fear is another matter. But I cannot ride two horses at a time. Ever advancing on the path of satyagraha, I wish to become an image of Truth, wish my whole being to be filled with Truth. I have, therefore, deliberately renounced the path of living by killing others. I wish to learn and act upon, the *mantra* of dying to live. I should like to live only through the world's love. Anyone who regards me as his enemy may kill my body this very moment. It is ever my prayer that, even at such a moment, there should be nothing but love in my heart. Following this path that I do, I cannot help, do not wish to help, any effort of self-defence through using force.

Thus, for me and for others like me, only the second method remains. This method does not require large numbers. It does not permit mass satyagraha. The Shastras promise that, if there is even one

self-controlled person among us, he can touch even a Kabuli's heart. A true Muslim fakir can do this with ease, but it is not impossible for a Hindu sannyasi, either, to succeed. The principle of satyagraha recognizes no distinctions of community or creed. In the ultimate perfection of satyagraha, even speech is superfluous. The heart goes on doing its work then.

What was accomplished in Gujarat by one person, Sahajanand[1], could not be accomplished by the power of the State. What was achieved by Chaitanya[2] in Bengal has not been possible till now, and will never be possible, for the Government to achieve. The very presence of Chaitanya had a power under the effect of which dacoits and robbers changed their ways. There have been many such examples of Muslim fakirs and Hindu sannyasis in our country. The power of Abdul Kadar Jillani's truthfulness made dacoits return what they had seized from him and give up their criminal ways. If there are any fearless and self-controlled men among the mendicants and ascetics of Gujarat, they can easily save the people from this terror of the Kabulis. The Age of Sahajanand has not come to an end. It is only devotion and self-control like his that are wanted . In these days, even a little less of devotion and self-control will pay, for a patient responds to even a small dose of a medicine which he has never had before.

Of course, some people are bound to comment: "Why not yourself be what you advise others to be? The purpose will be served if you become an ascetic yourself." This, too, is right. If people do not understand my excuse, I cannot explain it by putting it in words. Nor is this article addressed to those who are likely to ask this question. May it not be that I do not have the strength of heart to act upon what my intellect tells me is entirely possible? I claim no monopoly of such strength. There are likely to be many in Gujarat with much greater strength of heart than I possess. My appeal is addressed to them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-4-1924

[1] Swami Sahajanand (1781-1830); founder of the Swaminaryana sect

[2] Sixteenth-century Hindu religious reformer who taught that caste was subordinate to faith in Lord Krishna

[3] Sixteenth-century Hindu religious reformer who taught that caste was subordinate to faith in Lord Krishna

264. MY FOLLOWERS

A friend has sent me a report of a meeting in which he says :[1]

Neither the person who writes about this incident nor the gentleman who made the speech realizes that I have only one follower and that is myself. It is difficult enough to control one; why, then, think of having more? This follower of mine sometimes plays such antics that I am quite unnerved. But my principles are so liberal that, taking compassion on him, I let him off every time and coax him to go forward. My efforts are even rewarded with some measure of success. But until I achieve complete success, what is the use of collecting more followers? I do not expect perfection from the addition of one imperfection to another. When I have made myself a perfect disciple, I shall not be ashamed or afraid to invite the whole world to follow me and the world too will willingly do so. At present, I am only in search of co-workers in my experiments. They and I are known as satyagrahis. I am a conscientious follower of Truth, and I have hope and faith that God will give me the strength to pass Truth's ultimate test. I am no paragon of Truth. For the present, that is a state as unapproachable for me as the top of the Dhavalgiri. To reach it is by no means easy. Any success which can be set down to my credit should be regarded as success on the way. Such success sustains a satyagrahi and inspires him with hope. When he has attained to perfection in Truth, he will be enthroned in the hearts of crores. I have no doubt of this.

If, therefore, the Chairman of the meeting (referred to in the report) joins me as a co-worker, I shall be completely satisfied. This gentleman has taken a great responsibility upon himself. I have briefly suggested in an article[2] on caste reform, last week the qualifications required of one who would offer satyagraha. I would suggest that the Chairman and others ponder on what I have said.

Satyagraha is an immutable law. We are now applying it to a new field. Till now, its application has been confined to individual family relationships. We have enlarged the scope of its application and have also moved from the individual to the mass. I have realized from numerous experiments that its extension in both respects is possible.

[1] Not given here. The report mentions a statement made by the Chairman that a certain respectable gentleman almost compelled him to become Gandhiji's fol-lower.

[2] *Vide* "Satyagraha and Caste Reform", 13-4-1924.

But, on each occasion, the leader more or less possessed the qualifications described in the last issue and the soldiers were sincere, and thus the conditions relating to them were fulfilled. Our experience in Bardoli taught us that, even with an able leader, only failure could result if the soldiers were not sincere. At Borsad, we witnessed a combination of able leadership and sincere following.[1] The mistaken notion that, on every occasion satyagraha, I must either lead or at least be present in person to give my advice, was effectively dispelled. It must never be forgotten that there has to be a combination of three factors for a successful satyagraha campaign—an able and gifted leader, sincere followers and a pure aim.

The observations of the Chairman on this occasion referred to the proposed satyagraha in an Indian State. It is, therefore, necessary to discuss the necessity of resorting to satyagraha in the States. Rajput agriculturists of Bijolia in Udaipur State started satyagraha and won complete victory. A satyagraha campaign is in progress at present at Vykom in Travancore State. In neither instance does the Congress come into the picture, and rightly so. It is, I believe, an accepted principle that the Congress should not conduct or advise a satyagraha campaign in Indian States. This is only correct. The aim of the Congress is swaraj for British India. If, therefore, it associates itself with satyagraha in other areas, it would be transgressing its self-imposed limits. When the Congress has won its goal, the problem of the States will have been automatically solved. On the other hand, if people win swaraj in any Indian State, this will have little effect on British India. Hence, every person working in Indian States should be clear in his mind that no help can be expected from the Congress in the satyagraha campaigns in Indian States.

This restriction does not, however, prevent individual members of the Congress from taking part in such campaigns. Various activities are being carried on at present outside the Congress, and its members give their services to them. The other rule that applies to all voluntary workers also applies to members of the Congress. It is that a Congress worker must not take up any new task to the detriment of the work he is doing for it. It has become a tradition in our country for one person to take upon himself more tasks than he can manage, with the result that all the tasks suffer more or less.

There is, in movements like this, a serious danger that leaders, in

[1] During the satyagraha campaign of 1923-24

their zeal and enthusiasm, may throw themselves into them without due reflection, and then lose heart and give up the struggle when they do not get enough workers. Before starting any movement, it is essential to assess the extent of the support likely to be extended by the people. The enthusiasm of a handful of youths is not sufficient to sustain a big campaign. Where the people are not ready, it is harmful from every point of view to start any movement on their behalf. Anyone who is so moved may light a fire and purify himself by sacrificing himself in it. He must feel neither anger nor hatred. He will immolate himself in this manner for the joy of doing so and not with any philanthropic motives. He would be miserable if he did not throw himself into such a fire. Such sacrifices also are needed, and every person has a right to sacrifice himself. Many great achievements in this world have been the result of such individual sacrifices.

But where mass satyagraha is concerned, individual zeal must be effectively restrained. On such occasions, people need enthusiasm, patience and the strength to suffer. They will fail if they are enthusiastic but lose heart when success is not easily forthcoming. If they do not have the strength to suffer, they will get exhausted when the authorities employ more repression than they had expected. Leaders, therefore, should consider all these points before planning a struggle.

There is one other matter that must also be kept in mind. There is a common tendency to assume that the authorities will surely not go beyond a certain limit. But there is no basis for such an assumption. For the authorities it is simply their duty to suppress opposition. When they cannot concede the people's demands, they regard it as their job to put down the people by every possible means. It is sheer naivete to imagine that they will refrain, out of kindness, from harassing the people too much. It was because of such naivete that the satyagrahis in Vykom believed that the Raja of Travancore would not arrest their leader. Why should the Raja not arrest him? Does the Raja want to assist satyagraha? If a movement can be suppressed by arresting its leader and if it is right to suppress it, it is perfectly rightly to arrest the leader at the very start. Then the poor followers will be spared suffering. If they are strong enough to take the place of the leader, they will welcome his imprisonment. If the authorities do not arrest the leader, it is in the belief that doing so would only strengthen the movement. One should, therefore, start a movement with a clear realization that the Raja will resort to the severest measures to suppress the movement.

If all these points are carefully considered and we can be confident of the foregoing conditions being fulfilled, satyagraha can be employed in any circumstances and the result will always be good.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-4-1924

265. COW-PROTECTION

The issue of cow-protection is intimately connected with the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity. But we will not consider it today from this point of view. There is much that I want to write about Hindu-Muslim unity and its bearing on the issue of cow-protection. But that can wait. Nor will we consider the question from the religious point of view. We shall discuss it exclusively from the economic standpoint.

I wish only to place before my readers some of my experiences during my stay here in the quiet of Juhu and the old ideas of mine that they revived. I have invited some persons who live with me or have been brought up by me or have been close to me, persons who have been ill for some time, to share with me the benefits of change of air. Their diet is mainly cow's milk. We found it rather difficult to obtain it here. There are in the vicinity three suburbs of Bombay, viz., Vile Parle, Andheri and Santa Cruz. Cow's milk was very difficult to obtain from any of these places. Buffalo's milk was plentiful. But even that could be had without adulteration only because of friends in the neighbourhood who are solicitous about my needs. Otherwise, pure milk of even buffaloes would be hard to come by. Ultimately, through God's grace and the kindness of friends, I could even get cow's milk. My friends tell me that they send me what they can spare, but I fear that I am, in fact, depriving them of what they need. Not everyone, however, may be as fortunate as I am. Though I persuade myself that I live like a beggar, there is no convenience that I do not enjoy. How far I deserve the unbounded love of my friends will only be known if some person, in his kindness, makes up an honest account after my death.

But this non-availability of cow's milk has again set me thinking. In India, a country in which live countless people whose religion enjoins love for all living creatures, where there are crores of zealous Hindus who venerate the cow as mother, how is it that it is

only here in India that cows are in a wretched condition, that their milk is scarce, that such milk as is available is adulterated, and that milk of any sort is beyond the reach of the poor? For this, neither the Muslims nor British Rule can be blamed. If anyone is at fault, it is the Hindus, and even their indifference is not deliberate but the result of ignorance.

There are *goshalas* in every part of the country and they are all in a pitiable state. Here, too, the cause is simple inefficiency. Enormous sums are spent on these goshalas or *pinjrapoles*[1]. Some people say that this stream is also drying up. Be it so. I am convinced nonetheless that, if these institutions are established on a sound footing, devoted Hindus will pour out money to help them. I am sure that the task is not impossible.

Pinjrapoles should be located on extensive grounds outside the city. They should house not only aged animals but milch cattle as well, so that pure milk needed by the city could be supplied from them. Many people who do not know me have often misrepresented me, and amused me too, by saying that I am against machines. I promise not to raise my "Mahatma's" voice against any machines that may be required for these milk centres. I will be, on the contrary, ready to lend them my humble support. If no Indian can be found to administer such a centre, I shall be entirely willing to have an Englishman appointed to that post. If in this way we can convert a *pinjrapole* into a milk centre, breed the best cattle and sell milk and butter at low prices, thousands of animals will be made happy and poor people and children will get pure ghee cheap. Eventually, every such *goshala* will become self-supporting or nearly so. If this experiment is tried in even one *goshala*, it will be possible to test the practicability of my scheme.

I hope that no one will raise the question: "But how does religion come into this? Is it not trade?" If there is any such sceptical reader, I would tell him that religion and affairs of practical life need not be mutually exclusive. When a certain practice is found to be contrary to religion, it should be abandoned. Religion, too, is truly tested only when it is followed in daily life. It demands more than ordinary efficiency, for without discrimination, thoughtfulness and other like qualities, religion cannot be followed in practice at all. At the present day, many rich people who are totally engrossed in the

[1] Institutions for care of old and infirm cattle

pursuit of wealth contribute, in their simple-mindedness, to all manner of funds without giving any thought to the matter. Those in charge of the management of the institutions which become the victims of such contributions run them in an unimaginative way and we then proceed to give them our support. Thus, all the three parties deceive themselves and believe that they are doing good. The truth is that what is thus done in the name of dharma is often the very opposite of dharma. If these three parties use their discretion and understand dhrama properly and follow it, or even if one party does so, every institution will breathe the true spirit of dharma.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-4-1924

266. TELEGRAM TO K. M. PANIKKAR

[On or after *April 21, 1924*][1]

DOUBT ADVISABILITY FREE KITCHENS. WRITING.

From a photostat : S.N. 10288

267. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Wednesday [*April 23, 1924*][2]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

Herewith some Gujarati material. Vallabhbhai has passed on to me the bundle you sent through him. However, I am not taking anything from it this time. Your description of [the incident in] Visnagar is beautiful from the point of view of language. From the point of view of the contents, it is enough to bring tears to one's eyes. But I have made my heart as hard as stone. As physical objects, we are more insignificant on this earth than even the ant. To us the latter seems as of no account. And what are we in the eyes of the Lord of the Universe? How, then, can we, mere insects, rejoice or weep at anything?

A Muslim gentleman has addressed an open letter to me

[1] This was in reply to a telegram from K. M. Panikkar received on *April* 21, which read: Shiromani Committee has decided open free kitchen. Vaikom Jatha leaving early. Hope approve.

[2] The article "Mari Bhasha" mentioned in the letter appeared in *Navajivan*, 27-4-1924. The Wednesday preceding this date fell on April 23.

through the *Prajamitra*. It is, of course, full of venom, but contains a fine piece of advice: "if you cannot promote harmony between the two communities, please keep quiet and watch the game like an onlooker." Please go through my article, "Mari Bhasha", first[1]. You know, I am sure, who the dweller on the peak is. With what laborious care has Valji read *Navajivan*! Many of his corrections put us all to shame. I would certainly hold you responsible for those mistakes if you regularly went through *Navajivan* articles before they were printed. However, I have an impression that you had not read them. You saw them only after they were printed. Who, then had read them? If it was not Swami Anand either, whom should I hold responsible? The children? If, indeed, we cannot correct I glaring mistakes of language, have we any right to run *Navajivan*? I myself am not yet in a position to go carefully through everything I write, and that, too, from the point of view of language. And if you or Swami do not take the responsibility of going through the matter carefully, I would not hesitate even to stop publishing *Navajivan*. A person who cannot do his work to his own satisfaction had better leave it alone. It is his duty to do so.

I would very much like to write on other subjects, but for the present, I must content myself with what little will serve our purpose. One of you two should carefully go through the material sent this time.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have used the word *vicharmanyata* for "creed". Please replace it by a better word if you can think of one.

Why should anyone there feel worried about Radha? She is all right now. Show this to Swami.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 8760

[1] Presumably, before it was printed in *Navajivan*.

268. SOME REMARKS

[On or after *April 23, 1924*][1]

How dare they elect the President ?

I can give my opinion only after I have discussed the matter with Vallabhbhai.

Let them postpone the meeting.

How can even a wire reach them now?

Knowing this, we need not send any and let them do what they think best.

If they have nothing in particular to do and if they do not like to remain idle, they have the spinning-wheel to keep them busy.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5730

269. NOTES

VYKOM SATYAGRAHA

The anti-untouchability campaign at Vykom is providing an interesting study in satyagraha and, as it is being conducted in a calm spirit, it must prove of great use for future workers along similar lines. The Travancore authorities, whilst they still remain unbending regarding the prohibition order, are carrying out their purpose in a courteous manner. The public already know how quickly the authorities tried to check violence against satyagrahis. The treatment in the jails too is in keeping with their conduct in the open. Here is what Mr. Menon[2] writes from Trivandrum Jail:

> The expected has happened. I am now within the walls of the Trivandrum Central Jail along with my friend Mr. Madhavan. We are treated as State prisoners. A separate block is set apart for our use. We are allowed our own clothes. A convict cooks for us. I am having the same food as I take at home. so is my friend Mr. Madhavan. Books and newspapers are also allowed. Of course, in writing letters we are not allowed to say anything about the Vykom affair. Friends can see us between 8 a. m. and 4 p.m. every day except Sunday.

[1] The remarks were scribbled by Gandhiji on a telegram dated April 23, 1924, received by Vallabhbhai Patel from Balwantrai Mehta, reading : "Devchandbhai wires postponement Committee. Wire final instructions."

[2] Presumably, K.P. Kesava Menon, Secretary of the Kerala Congress Committee

I am sure that you would be glad to hear that the Superintendent and other authorities of the Jail are doing everything to make us comfortable. we receive from them the same polite treatment as we received from the Police officers at Vykom.

The Travancore Jail authorities deserve to be congratulated upon their considerate treatment of the satyagrahi prisoners. Let us hope on either side the present self-restraint and courteous conduct will be continued to the end.

WHY PETITION?

Surprise has been expressed over the advice I have tendered to the satyagrahis that, whilst satyagraha continues, the organizers should leave no stone unturned by way of petitions, public meetings, deputations, etc., in order to engage the support of the State and public opinion on their side. The critics argue that I am partial to the State authorities because they represent Indian rule, whereas I am hostile to the British authorities because they represent an alien rule. For me every ruler is alien that defies public opinion. In South Africa, Indians continued to negotiate with the authorities up to the last moment event though satyagraha was going on. In British India, we are non-co-operating and we are doing so because we are bent on mending or ending the whole system of Government and, therefore, the method of petition is a hopeless effort.

In Travancore, the satyagrahis are not attacking a whole system. They are not attacking it at any point at all. They are fighting sacerdotal prejudice. The Travancore State comes in by a side door as it were. Satyagrahis would, therefore, be deviating from their path if they did not try to court junction with the authorities and cultivate public support by means of deputations, meetings, etc. Direct action does not always preclude other consistent methods. Nor is petitioning, etc., in every case a sign of weakness on the part of a satyagrahi. Indeed, he is no satyagrahi who is not humble.

SOME IMPLICATIONS

I have been also asked to develop the argument against sending aid apart from public sympathy from outside Travancore. I have already stated the utilitarian argument in an interview.[1] But there is a root objection too to getting, indeed even accepting, such support. Satyagraha is either offered by a few self-sacrificing persons in the

[1] *Vide* "Interview to *The Hindu*", 15-4-1924

name of the many weak, or by very few in the face of enormous odds. In the former case, which is the case in Vykom, many are willing but weak, and a few are willing and capable of sacrificing their all for the cause of the untouchables. In such a case, it is obvious they need no aid whatsoever. But suppose that they took outside aid, how would it serve the untouchable countrymen? The weak Hindus, in the absence of strong ones rising in their midst, will not prevail against the strong opponents. The sacrifice of helpers from other parts of India will not convert the opponents and it is highly likely that the last state of the untouchables will be worse than the first. Let it be remembered that satyagraha is a most powerful process of conversion. It is an appeal to the heart. Such an appeal cannot be successfully made by people from other parts of India flocking to Vykom.

Nor should a campaign conducted from within need outside monetary support. All the weak but sympathetic Hindus of Travancore may not court arrest and other suffering, but they can and should render such pecuniary assistance as may be needed. I could not understand their sympathy without such support.

In the case, too of a very few offering satyagraha against heavy odds, outside support is not permissible. Public satyagraha is an extension of private or domestic satyagraha. Every instance of public satyagraha should be tested by imagining a parallel domestic case. Thus, suppose in my family I wish to remove the curse of untouchability. Suppose further that my parents oppose the view, that I have the fire of the conviction of Prahlad, that my father threatens penalties, calls in even the assistance of the State to punish me. What should I do? May I invite my friends to suffer with me the penalties my father has devised for me? Or is it not up to me meekly to bear all the penalties my father inflicts on me and absolutely rely on the law of suffering and love to melt his heart and open his eyes to the evil of untouchability? It is open to me to bring in the assistance of learned men, the friends of the family, to explain to my father what he may not understand from me, his child. But I may allow no one to share with me the privilege and the duty of suffering. What is true of this supposed case of domestic satyagraha is equally true and no less of the case we have imagined of public satyagraha. Whether, therefore, the Vykom satyagrahis represent a hopeless minority or, as I have been informed, a majority of the Hindus concerned, it is clear that they should avoid aid from outside save that of public sympathy.

That, in every such case, we may not be able to conform to the law, that in the present case too, we may not be able to do so may be true . Let us not , however, forget the law and let us conform to it as far as ever we can.

CASE OF CHIRALA PERALA

Let me quote one case in which I had the honour of advising. I refer to the case of Chirala Perala.[1] The citizens' claim was that they were a united body and prepared to suffer. What I witnessed was a wonderful exhibition of cohesion, courage and extremely able and daring leadership. I said that I could not advise the Congress or the public to give pecuniary support. I could not advise the Congress even to encourage them by passing resolutions. If they won, the Congress would claim credit for the success of the means adopted by it. If they failed, the Congress will share no discredit. The people understood and accepted the advice. Even after three years' careful consideration, I have no reason to revise the advice then tendered. On the contrary, I feel sure that, if we are to grow to our full height, we shall do so only by punctiliously observing the laws of the game.

THE WORK

The Karnatak Provincial Congress Committee has met and amicably settled its differences about the venue. The resolution admits defective election procedure and then confirms the former decision to hold the Congress at Belgaum. I tender my congratulations to the Committee on having performed a purificatory act. To err is human only when we are ready to admit errors. Persistence in error after discovery is very much less than human. Karnatak has a great task before her. Will she be able to show the highest record in the constructive programme? I have little doubt that she will. The question however should be, will she show the volume of constructive work such as to enable her to offer civil disobedience? She has the Brahmin and non-Brahmin problem. If Karnatak was India, can she shoulder the burden of full self-government with the Brahmins and non-Brahmin distrusting each other? I know that one party at least must surrender all to win all. If each wants to bargain with the other, it becomes a miniature edition of the Hindu-Muslim problem. The only way to solve these knotty problems is for each party to regard the interest of the other as its own. Then the knot is unloosed without effort. The unresisting will solve the knot even as in undoing a material knot we

[1] *Vide* "Chirala-Perala", 25-8-1921.

take the most unresisting thread first. If the volunteers and workers vie with one another in serving, if the Brahmin bends to the non-Brahmin and *vice versa*, they will clothe the whole of Karnatak in khadi, they will show national schools teaching under one roof Brahmin, non-Brahmin, untouchable, Mussalman and all other creeds, boys and girls. They will provide the way to Hindu-Muslim unity and thus show the real way to swaraj. Thus, for Karnatak sincerely and lastingly to solve the Brahmin-non-Brahmin problem is to solve all her other problems and thereby largely India's also.

A STUDY IN PHILANTHROPY

We have been accustomed so much to the charge against the Indian settlers in Kenya that, as they do not care for the native interest, their immigration should be restricted in the interest of the natives. Up to now I have not heard a single statement to the effect that the Indian settlers have done any harm to them. They do not pretend to go as philanthropists and, therefore, they do not establish schools for the natives nor do they do any missionary work among them. But, as the Indian trade is not imposed upon the natives, their very presence, I make bold to say, has a certain civilizing influence upon the natives.

But the question naturally arises: is the presence of the European detractors of Indians beneficial to the natives? Mr. Andrews in his terrible indictment of the British policy in Kenya gives a conclusive answer[1]. It is a study in modern philanthropy. Mr. Andrews' indictment shows the meaning of the'White Man's Burden'. *The Times of India* has sever a strictures upon Mr. Andrews' article on the liquor question and has challenged the accuracy of his statements. His White Man's Trust' is more full of facts and figures than his previous article. Mr. Andrews knows what he writes. He is a student of history. He is the readiest man I know to admit mistakes if he finds he has made any. And I know from close experience how few have been his mistakes in spite of his voluminous writings. I am surprised that *The Times of India* writer has without sufficient knowledge challenged the accuracy of Mr. Andrews' figures. Anyway, I present another set of figures from Mr. Andrews' pen for challenge if that is possible, otherwise, for serious and humble reflection in the interest of humanity. The late Cecil Rhodes[2] years ago tore the mask of

[1] The article "The White Man's Burden", was published in *Young India*, 24-4-1924.

[2] 1853-1902; Premier of the Cape Colony, 1890-96

hypocrisy when he described certain policies by the phrase, unctuous rectitude. But it is a vice that has persisted in spite of the great man. He sinned often enough, but he was great and good enough not to hide his sins. The British policy in Kenya is a continuous attempt to hide the sin of the fearful exploitation of the innocent Africans.

MR. PENNINGTON ON THE WAR-PATH

Mr. Pennington sent the following letter to my predecessor from France:

> As a very old official of the Indian Government, I read *Young India* very carefully to see how you propose to govern the country when you have succeeded in making British Rule impossible. You will perhaps admit that we British think we have a duty to perform in India, by way of keeping the peace both internally and externally, and that we should not be justified in handing it over, except to something like a possible Government. I have the greatest respect for Mr. Gandhi and many other "Swarajists", but do you honestly think that any Government he could form could govern that enormous country without a backing of British bayonets?
>
> If the Swarajists could have shown that they could manage affairs even tolerably under. Mr. Montagu's scheme for the short period of 10 years, it might have been possible to frame some sort of Colonial scheme that would work; but, so far, they have only shown how to make anything like representative Government quite impossible, and so proved the greater fitness of the old system in the present state of the country. It may be necessary therefore to try some other plan perhaps by further Indianization of the old system, as suggested many years ago by Mr. Donald Smeaton. The King's Government must be carried on even if Diarchy has to be scrapped.

I am glad to be able to renew acquaintance with Mr. J. B. Pennington. The answer to his query is incredibly simple. If India succeeds in making British *Rule* impossible without matching the British bayonet with another bayonet, she will rule herself too with the same means. But if it is an unalterable law that the rule of one bayonet can only be displaced by another of equal or greater strength, then I see no present prospect of making British Rule impossible. I must admit, as my correspondent will have me to, that British people think that they have a duty to perform in India, but I may be permitted to add that we Indians think that their duty is not to *impose* peace upon us when we are longing to war against one another, but to lift their oppressive weight from over our heads. We think that we are sinking beneath that weight.

Young India, 24-4-1924

270. FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

TO THE EDITOR, *Young India*

SIR,

While commenting on the Tibbya College incident in the *Young India* on the 10th April you write[1]: "The Muslim student who took exception to the comparison was after all justified in so doing." I do not know what exactly happened in the Tibbya College on the day of the celebration of Mr. Gandhi's birthday, but accepting what Dr. Ansari writes as the true version of the incident, I feel it is difficult to agree with you in your comment. No harm seems to have been meant or done to anyone when. Mr. Gandhi was compared to Jesus Christ. It may not be necessary for the purpose of honouring a man, as you write, to compare him with revered prophets, but at times to bring home to the audience or the public the greatness of an individual, comparison with other honoured men or revered prophets is neither unnatural nor unbecoming. Mr. Andrews has on many occasions declared Mr. Gandhi to be a true picture of Jesus Christ. It is quite possible that the person compared may not be worthy of a place of equality with revered prophets. That is quite a different matter. But how can one justifiably take exception to the principle of comparison itself? The Muslim student in the Tibbya College might be considering Mr. Gandhi to be unworthy of comparison with Jesus Christ; if so, he was quiet welcome to hold his view and to declare it before the audience, as the Hindu student should have been welcome to hold his. We can understand such a difference of opinion. No one has a quarrel with it. But here the case was quite different. It was not that the Muslim student disagreed with the Hindu student in the latter's estimate of Mr. Gandhi's worth when he compared him with Jesus Christ, but that be objected to such a comparison itself, observing that no living person, *however eminent in all respects*, should be compared to prophets. One fails to understand how such an objection can be held to be justifiable. Previous prophets were human beings and the like of them may now be amongst us and are sure to come hereafter. What harm is there if comparisons are made of living saints or great men whom some may consider to be prophets with those that have gone before? Intellectually, ethically or spiritually, there is nothing wrong in doing so.

A person compared to previous prophets may out of modesty disclaim such a comparison, but that is beside the issue. I think, therefore, that to hold the Muslim student's objection as justifiable is to curtail the freedom of expression and to indirectly encourage the prevailing spirit of intolerance

[1] *Vide* "Campaign of Misrepresentation", 10-4-1924.

which, I am sure, is very far from what you desire.

I am, etc.,

GHANASHYAM JETHANAND

HIRABAD,

HYDERABAD (SIND)

I fear I must adhere to the opinion I have expressed to which Mr. Ghanashyam takes exception. It was not out of false modesty that I gave it. If I felt shy or awkward, I might not have noticed the incident, but I would not even out of modesty, false or otherwise, mislead the reader and thus deviate from the ethics of journalism which requires a fearless expression of true opinion. It will not be denied that to say what offends another is against ethics and certainly against spirituality if the saying is not required in the interest of truth. I hardly think it can be argued that it was in the interest of truth to make the comparison referred to. Whilst I think that such comparisons are undesirable, I admit that to object to them when they are actually made may be a mark of intolerance. But the Muslim student, knowing how it wounded many Mussalmans, rightly objected. He showed his good sense by apologizing when his objection offended the Hindu student. We would but feed the fire of intolerance if we insist, in the name of freedom of opinion, on expressing those opinions which are likely to wound some. I may inform Mr. Ghanashyam that, shortly before I was in prison, a devout Hindu wrote a letter strongly protesting against my being compared to Krishna and Rama. I certainly agreed with my correspondent that such comparisons should not be made. I can fully sympathize with orthodox Vaishnavas feeling offended at comparisons which outrage their religious sense. what I plead for is extreme and delicate consideration for the feelings and susceptibilities of others. If, in the name of tolerance, we began to swear at one another's deities, we would be copying the fabled economist who killed the goose that laid the golden eggs.

Young India, 24-4-1924

271. WHAT IS HINDUISM?

A dear friend send me a letter[1] (published elsewhere) gently criticizing the manner of my defence of Maulana Mahomed Ali's now famous speech regarding his comparison of creeds. The friend

[1] This was published under the title "The Ambiguous Middle".

says that I have not been fair to Hindusim in that I have said a Hindu will fare no better than the Maulana. He quarrels with my illustration about marriage and then goes on it show the beauties of Hinduism. Another friend, too, has made a similar remonstrance and added that many others share his opinion.

These friends have, in my opinion, mixed up the question of propriety of comparing creeds with that of the allocation of their respective merits. Indeed, in arguing that Hinduism is not like Islam and that a Hindu could not think like the Maulana, the friends themselves have subscribed to the Maulana's argument that it is not only perfectly correct, but it is the logical outcome of one's preferring a particular belief to every other, that for oneself that particular belief, though held by a bad man, is superior to that of another howsoever saintly. I adhere to the marriage illustration chosen by me, though I now see that it would have been better for me to have avoided it. It is not a conclusive illustration. There are, I admit with my critics, many reasons for confining the choice of a husband to a particular class. But I do claim that the predominant reason for excluding the best man if he happens to belong, as he often does, to another class or caste is his creed. A Brahmin parent chooses a Brahmin as a husband for his daughter because he prefers the general body of opinion, which may be called creed, held by his clan. Underlying the preference is no doubt the belief that acceptance of a creed ultimately involves practice in accordance with it. A narrow creed, if it is honestly believed, has necessarily a limited field for practice. A creed, for instance, that makes it obligatory to offer human sacrifice will never free the believer from the taint of religious murder unless he gives up the creed. Thus it is that we find people otherwise most moral disappointing us when they fall short of the highest because of their narrow creed. Many sincere and otherwise noble-minded Hindus consider untouchability as a part of the Hindu creed and would, therefore, regard the reformers as outcastes. If untouchability was a part of the Hindu creed, I should decline to call myself a Hindu and most decidedly embrace some other faith if it satisfied my highest aspirations. Fortunately for me, I hold that untouchability is no part of Hinduism. On the contrary, it is a serious blot upon it, which every lover of it must sacrifice himself to remove. Suppose, however, I discover that untouchability was really an integral part of Hinduism, I should have to wander in the wilderness because the other creeds, as I know them through their accepted interpreters, would not

satisfy my highest aspirations.

My correspondent accuses me of the crime of using the ambiguous middle in that I have confused Truth and non-violence with the Hindu creed. The crime is deliberate. It is the good fortune or the misfortune of Hinduism that it has no official creed. In order, therefore, to protect myself against any misunderstanding, I have said Truth and non-violence is my creed. If I were asked do define the Hindu creed, I should simply say: search after Truth through non-violent means. A man may not believe even in God and still call himself a Hindu. Hinduism is a relentless pursuit after truth and, if today it has become moribund, inactive, irresponsive to growth, it is because we are fatigued, and as soon as the fatigue is over, Hinduism will burst forth upon the world with a brilliance perhaps unknown before. Of course, therefore, Hinduism is the most tolerant of all religions. Its creed is all-embracing. But to claim that is to claim superiority for the Hindu creed over all the other creeds of the world.

As I write these lines, I feel a crowd of sectarians whispering to me. "That is no Hinduism you are defining come to us and we will show you the Truth." I am confounding all these whisperers by saying,'नेति नेति,' 'not that, my friends, not that, and they make confusion worse confounded by retorting with redoubled fury, 'not that, not that.' But still another voice whispers to me, "Why all this duelling-this war of words? I can show you a way out of it. It lies through silent prayer." For the moment I propose to listen to that voice and observe silence and ask my friends to do likewise. Possibly I have failed to convince them and their co-sharers in their opinion. If I have failed to convince, it is because I have not seen the light. I can give my assurance that I have not indulged in special pleading in order to defend Maulana Mahomed Ali. If I discover my error, I hope I shall have the courage to own it. The Maulana needs no defence form me. And I should be a false friend if, in order to defend him, I sacrificed an iota of truth. It is the special privilege of a friend to own the other's faults and redeclare his affection in spite of faults.

Young India, 24-4-1924

272. MY JAIL EXPERIENCES-II

SOME OFFICIALS

It was on Saturday the 18th March that the trial was finished. We were looking forward to a quiet time in the Sabarmati Jail at least for some weeks. We had expected that the Government would not let us remain in that jail for any length of time. We were, however, not prepared for the very sudden removal that actually did take place. For, the reader may recall that we were removed on Monday the 20th March to a special train which was to take us to the Yeravda Central Jail. We were made aware of the proposed removal only about an hour before departure. The officer-in-charge was all politeness and we were enabled to feel perfectly comfortable on the journey. But, immediately on alighting at Kirkee, we observed the difference and were made to feel that we were prisoners after all. The Collector and two others were awaiting the train. We were put in a motor prison-van which had perforations for ventilators. But for its hideous appearance, it could well be a pardah motor. Certainly, we could see nothing of the outside world. For the story of our reception at the Jail, the tearing away of Mr. Banker from me, his restoration, the first interview, and kindred interesting details, I must refer the reader to my letter[1] to

Hakimji Ajmal Khan Saheb, already published in these columns. After the first unpleasantness, the relations between the then Superintendent, col. Dalziel, and ourselves rapidly improved. He was most considerate regarding our creature comforts. But there was a certain something about him which always jarred. He would never forget that he was Superintendent and we were prisoners. He would not let it be granted that we were fully aware that we were prisoners and he was Superin-tendent. I made bold to say that we never once forgot that we were prisoners. We showed him all the deference due to his rank. The reminders were so unnecessary. But he had the needlessly haughty demeanour which one often regretfully notices about so many British officials. This weakness of his made him distrustful of the prisoners. Let me give a pleasant illustration of what I mean. He was most anxious that I should eat more than I was taking. He wanted me to take butter. I told him I could take only goat's milk butter. He gave special orders that it should be procured at once. Well, it came. The difficulty was what to mix it with. I suggested that some

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Hakim Ajmal Khan", 14-4-1922.

flour might be issued to me. It was given. But it was too coarse for my very delicate digestive apparatus. Refined mill flour was ordered and 20 lbs. was issued to me. What was I to do with all this? I cooked or Mr. Banker cooked for me chapatis. After some trial, I felt I needed neither flour nor butter. I asked that the flour may be removed from me and the issue of butter stopped. Col. Dalziel would not listen. What was issued was issued. I might feel tempted later. I pleaded that it was all waste of public money. I gently suggested that, I was as solicitous about the use of public money as I would be about my own. there was an incredulous smile. I then I said, "Surely, it is my money." "How much have you contributed to the public treasury?" was the quick retort. I humbly replied, "You contribute only a percentage out of the salary you get from the State, whereas I give the whole of myself, labour, intelligence and all." There was a loud burst of suggestive laughter. But I did not collapse for I believed what I said. A labourer like me who labours for the State for mere maintenance contributes more to the State than a Viceroy who receives Rs. 20,000 together with royal residencies and contributes to the State, if his salary be not income-tax-free, a certain percentage of his salary. It becomes possible for him and those who belong to the system of which he is the chief to receive what he does out of the labour of millions. And yet many Englishmen and some Indians honestly believe that they serve the State (whatever the word may mean to them) more than the labourers and, in addition, contribute from their very salaries a percentage towards the upkeep of the State. There never was a grosser fallacy or a more absurd presumption than this modern belief in self-righteousness.

But I must return to the gallant Colonel. I have given the pleasantest sample of Col. Dalziel's haughty distrust. Will the reader believe that I had to carefully preserve the flour till the advent of Major Jones who took Col. Dalziel's place when the latter acted for the Inspector-General of Prison?

Major Jones was the very reverse of Col. Dalziel. From the very first day of his arrival, he became friends with the prisoners. I have a vivid recollection of our first meeting. Although he came with Co. Dalziel with becoming ceremonial, there was a refreshing absence of officialdom about him. He greeted me familiarly and talked about my fellow-prisoners in Sabarmati and conveyed their regards too, which he said they had sent. Though a strict disciplinarian, he never stood on his dignity. I have rarely met an official, whether European or Indian,

so free from humbug or false notions of prestige and dignity. He was ready to confess errors—a dangerous and rare practice with Government officials. He once awarded punishment not to a 'political' prisoner, but to a helpless *bona-fide* criminal. He subsequently came to learn that the punishment was not deserved. He straightway and without any pressure from outside cancelled it and made the following remarkable entry: 'I repent for my decision' in the prisoner's history ticket. the accurate manner in which the prisoners sum up superintendents is truly amazing. Major Jones was *bahot bhala*[1]. They had nicknames for every one of the officials.

To finish, however, the story of my attempt to save the flour and other superfluous articles of diet. At Major Jones's very first visit of inspection I requested that what I did not need should be cut off. He immediately gave orders that my request should be complied with. Col. Dalziel distrusted my motives; his successor took me at my word and he allowed me to make all the changes I wanted in the interest of economy, never once suspecting that I could be guilty of mental reservations. Another official with whom we early came in contact was, of course, the Inspector-General of Prisons. He was stiff, monosyllabic and gave one the impression that he was severe. His reserve was peculiarly his own and most uncomfortable for poor prisoners. Most officials being deficient in imagination often do unintentional injustices. They refuse to see the other side. They will not have patience to listen to prisoners and expecting from them prompt, coherent replies, and failing to get them, succeed in giving wrong decisions. Visits of inspection are often, therefore, a farce and almost invariably result in the wrong men-bullies or sycophants-being favored. The right man, the silent humble prisoner will not be heard. Indeed, most of the officials frankly admit that their duty is confined to keeping the prisoners sanitarily clean, preventing prisoners from fighting one another or from absconding and keeping them healthy.

I must consider in the next chapter one of the sad results of this mentality.

Young India, 24-4-1924

[1] Very good

273. INTERESTING

Mr. Hardikar[1] sends me the following interesting information :

Twelve-and-a-half pounds of yarn is being sent to you by Railway Parcel today. This yarn was spun during the last National Week extending from the 6th to the 13th April, by:

1 The boys of the National High School,

2 The girls of Tilak Kanya Shala,

3 The Gandhi Pathak of Karnatak Bala Sena (Karnatak Boy Scouts),

4 The members of Shevade's family.

Two charkhas were spinning day and night continuously and five were being worked for twelve hours every day for a week. Thus the seven wheels were busy for a total of seven hundred fifty-sex hours.

The total production is about 500 tolas. That means 3/4ths of a tola (approximately) for an hour. The production is poor for the reasons enumerated below. The yarn also is no doubt inferior in quality owing to the same reasons.

1. Carding was defective.

2. Slivers were not prepared well.

3. Beginners too were at work on the charkhas.

The work of enrolment of members and collection of Tilak Swaraj Fund was also done during this week. The experience gained while working shows:

1. That unless men of influence take an active part and themselves labour for the betterment of the masses, no success can be achieved.

2. That organized efforts bring desired results.

3. That young folk do respond if properly approached, guided and helped by the leaders.

4. That unless the question of workers' maintenance is solved by the Congress no substantial amount of work can be accomplished, howsoever sincere the handful of workers may be.

But the dearth of the men of ability and organizing capacity has made the work suffer immensely. The indifference of the leaders towards the movement has disappointed the young workers who are one by one forsaking them.

The parcel containing yarn has also been received. It shows solid though uncouth work. True spinning like true everything involves labour, thought, method and concentration. An accomplished

[1] N.S. Hardikar, Congress leader from Karnatak: associated with the Hindustani Seva Dal, a volunteer crops; elected to Rajya Sabha in 1952 and re-elected in 1956

spinner must know carding, must be able to make his or her own slivers. The processes are not difficult ,but they do require application, and unless the spinners take a lively interest in their work and refuse to call yarn that will not weave, just as we refuse to call a rupee a rupee if it does not fetch sixteen annas proper spinning is impossible. I hope that the boys and girls who did all that continuous spinning for a period will spin daily for a short period, even if it be half an hour. They will be amazed at the result of such methodical and sustained effort.

Mr. Hardikar's remarks on the drawbacks about general work do not require any comment. I can only say , no matter who deserts, no matter what discouragements face us, those of us who have faith in the progarmme must march forward without flinching and without stopping. The making of nations is no magic trick. It is hard toil and harder suffering. The Congress may or may not devise a scheme of payment of workers. Is it not open to provincial bodies to devise their own means? The most organized province can just as well set the tone to the Congress as the Congress can to the whole of India. Truthful suggestions always come from units that have achieved success.

Young India, 24-4-1924

274. INTERVIEW TO "THE DAILY EXPRESS"

BOMBAY,
April 24, 1924

India must have the right to err, and err grievously. We must have the right as a nation to commit suicide if we want to. Only then can we appreciate what freedom and responsibility are.

Gandhi, the leader of the "Non-co-operation with England" movement, made this statement to me when I saw him at the seaside bungalow near Bombay where he has been staying since his release from prison six weeks ago.

I pointed out that even individuals have not the right, moral or legal, to commit suicide.

They have the power if not the right, and India cannot be wholly free until she possess that power also.

Asked about the position of the British in India under such a scheme of swaraj (Home Rule) as he desires, Gandhi replied:

Most emphatically, there will always be room in India for the right kind of Britons. I can conceive of no scheme of swaraj in which

driving the Britons from the country is one of the goals.

Personally, I have many, many warm English friends, whose friendship I value very highly indeed, but there certainly would be a clearing of the atmosphere if a real demonstration were given of the desire to abandon the British policy of exploitation.

Although Gandhi declines to give his personal views regarding the latest developments in Indian politics until the conclusion of negotiations now going on with the Swarajist leaders, the impression he gave me is that dose not wholly approve the obstructionist policy pursued in the Councils.

He is still the same vague idealist. He insists on India's right to achieve economic and moral independence but still seems to regard the use of the spinning-wheel —which would make India independence of British supplies of cotton goods —as the means of the salvation of the country.

The Hindu, 19-5-1924

275. TELEGRAM TO K. N. NAMBOODRIPAD[1]

ANDHERI,
[On or after *April 24, 1924*]

YOU SHOULD NOT FAST NOR BREAK NOR SCALE FENCE. QUESTION FOR SATYAGRAHIS IS NOT WHAT APPEARS EFFECTIVE BUT WHAT IS PROPER. AWAITING LETTER.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S. N. 10290

276. MESSAGE TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"[2]

Mr. Horniman must be permitted to return if we will it. How is that will to be expressed? Certainly not by words. Bombay's more

[1] This was in reply to a telegram from Namboodripad received on April 24, 1924. This read: "Your telegram 19th today. Satyagraha steadily continues. Batch strength increased to six. Today Government fenced all roads. Yesterday Dewan conferred with us. Says intends proclaiming said roads temple property prohibiting Christians Mahommedans. Also occasional violence from opposition anticipate more. Committee discussed blocking roads scaling or removing fencing or begin fasting complete or partial being from experience more effective. Detailed letter follows advise immediate step."

[2] This was sent on the anniversary of the deportation of Benjamin Guy Horniman, Editor, *The Bombay Chronicles* ; *vide* "Mr. Horniman", 7-6-1919 & "Tribute to B. G. Horniman", 19-6-1919.

than India's honour depends upon a proper answer to the question.

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-4-1924

277. ACTIONS AS AGAINST BELIEFS

The discussion on Maulana Mahomed Ali's speech on Islam still goes on in the newspapers. I see that many persons who are otherwise intelligent and can understand things have also not understood the distinction drawn by him or, if they have, they lose sight of it while speaking and writing about the matter. This means that the distinction has not penetrated deep enough in their minds. It is, therefore, necessary to refresh, time and again, our understanding of the distinction drawn by the Maulana. He believes that—

1. There is a distinction between a man's actions and his ideas.

2 A man whose ideas are of the best may yet be unworthy in his conduct.

3. The ideas of a man excellent conduct may be inferior to the ideas of others.

Here ideas mean belief, religious creed, religion; for instance, the Christian belief in Jesus' unique divinity and the Islamic belief that there is only one God and that Mahomed is His Prophet. Hinduism, according to me, acknowledges the supremacy of truth and non-violence.

There is no dharma greater than truth. Ahimsa is the supreme dharma.

In conformity with these principles, the Maulana said:

"As a Muslim, I regard the beliefs of an adulterous Muslim as superior to the beliefs of Gandhi whose conduct is the noblest."

The reader will see that here the Maulana has not instituted a comparison between me and an adulterous Muslim; he has just compared my beliefs with those of an adulterous Muslim. Moreover, out of his liberality and his regard for me the Maulana says that, if one man may at all be compared with another, I would stand higher in point of virtue or conduct than even his revered mother or spiritual teacher.

This is an insult neither to me nor to the Hindu religion. The truth is that the whole world accepts the three principles mentioned

above. Suppose a European who is the greatest of saints believes that there is nothing wrong in experimenting on animals even by torturing them or by killing them for saving human life, nay, that it is wrong not to do so. Now, as against this, suppose that I am a person of wicked conduct and yet believe that it is degrading to man to kill any animal even to save human life. Then, without the slightest disrespect to that saint, can I not say that, notwithstanding my being a wicked man, in so far as our creed is concerned mine is far superior to his? If there is nothing wrong in my saying this, then there is nothing wrong either in what the Maulana said.

One thing shines out in the current discussion like a ray of hope in darkness. All seem to assert that belief unrelated to action is unavailing and that one can never attain heaven merely through right belief. In the views which the Maulana has expressed, he has nowhere contradicted this idea. I see rays of hope in this attitude, since those who act on their beliefs and those who are indifferent to the matter, both these classes of people admire virtuous conduct.

But, while extolling right conduct, one must not lose sight of the need for right belief. When one's beliefs are full of errors, one's conduct cannot be of the best. What was wanting in the penance practiced by Ravana[1] and Indrajit[2]? By showing that self-control such as Lakshmana's[3] was needed to match the self-control of Indrajit' the *Adi-kavi*[4] proved the importance of conduct. In Indrajit's creed, the highest importance attached to material prosperity, while in Lakshmana's that honour belonged to spiritual good, and so the poet awarded victory to Lakshmana. "Where there is dharma, there is victory", means the same thing. Here dharma can only mean the noblest belief and equally noble conduct.

There is a third class of persons who have no place at all in this discussion .This is the class of hypocrites who merely profess faith in religion, but whose conduct is nothing but outward show; such persons have no real faith in religion. Just because a parrot repeats the name of Rama, will it be regarded as his devotee? Though, of course, comparing the sounds uttered by two parrots or those by a parrot and a martlet, we can judge the relative value of those sounds.

[1] Demon-King of Lanka, in the *Ramayana*

[2] son of Ravana

[3] Brother of Rama

[4] Valmiki, the author of the *Ramayana*; literally, "the first of poets"

But a friend writes to say :

> It was all right for the Maulana to have shown fearlessness . . . What has our country gained by it ? The tension between the Hindus and the Muslims has increased. The Maulana's statement that a wicked Muslim was better than a self-controlled Gandhi pierced the Hindus' hearts like an arrow. The Maulana has thrown bomb over our country.

The person who wrote this is an admirer of the Maulana and not a fanatical Hindu. He can see the shortcomings of the Hindus objectively. Even so the current atmosphere of suspicion has prejudiced even him. I have already stated that the Maulana never said that wicked Muslim was superior to a self-controlled Gandhi. He had only said that the religious beliefs of such a Muslim were superior to those of a man of self-restraint like me. Between the Maulana's own view and the view attributed to him by the correspondent, there is as much difference as there is between an elephant and a horse. In the former, two individuals have been compared, while, in the latter, two sets of religious beliefs. The phrases "a man of self-restraint like Gandhi" and "a wicked Muslim" are not necessary to prove the point. The really important issue is that of religious belief. It is immaterial whether this is A's as compared with B's or C's as compared with D's. The comparison is not between persons: it is between their religious beliefs. It has no bearing at all on their conduct and nothing to do with their virtues or defects.

Now let us consider whether it was really necessary for the Maulana to have expressed his view about religious beliefs. There is a brotherly relation between him and me. Prompted by that, he praises me in season and out of season. At present the number of those who create discord between the Hindus and the Muslims has increased. Some of them have described him as a "worshipper of Gandhi". Their object in doing so was to lessen his influence among the Muslims. Hence the Maulana said that, though he admired me, he had not accepted me as his religious mentor, that his religion was different from mine, that his religious belief was the same as that of any adulterous Muslim and he placed it higher than my religious belief. This is the substance of the Maulana's speech. If he does not say something like this, how else can he defend his own position and mine, the relationship which exists between us and his religious orthodoxy at the same time ? How else could he have answered his critics ?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-4-1924

278. MY LANGUAGE

Prompted by his love for me as well as for the Gujarati language, a learned friend writes to me with utmost frankness, as follows:[1]

In this interesting letter, there are some English sentences and words in Gujarati script, and two English words are in Roman script. This will shock many Gujarati brothers and sisters who do not know English. I tender my apology to them. Had I made any alterations, the sweetness and the subtle humour in that letter would have disappeared. Even those not knowing English will not find it difficult to understand the substance of the letter.

The reader will readily understand that this letter was not meant for publication. I think the portion I have quoted above came to be written by chance as part of the letter dealing with some private matter. But since the comments therein are reasonable and since my associates as well as I have something to learn from them, I have published an extract.

About five years ago, a learned well-wisher had commented that my Gujarati was "weaker even than a raw matriculate's". A friend who had heard the comment did not like it. When he reported it to me, I said that the comment was correct and was prompted by no hatred towards me but by love of language. What I had said then about that criticism holds good even today.

I know that my knowledge of Gujarati is not profound. I have not been as mindful of grammar as I should like to be I have not become a writer to serve the cause of the language, but I have had to carry on my work as a journalist with the sort of language I know. I do not say this to have my errors of language condoned. To commit errors knowingly and to ask to be pardoned for them is not only inexcusable, but adding one fault to another. I wise to share with the world a very valuable thing which I have discovered. Maybe there is *moha*[2], ignorance or vanity in my desire, but this is what it is. Language is a great instrument in my work. A skilful artisan makes do with whatever tool he has. I have had to do the same. We labour under a false notion. A person who is supreme in one respect is often considered to

[1] In this letter, not translated here, the correspondent refers to some words and phrases wrongly used by Gandhiji in the *History of Satyagraha in South Africa*, serially published in *Navajivan* during 1924-25.

[2] Infatuation

be the same in other respects also. To add to this, if the person is looked upon as a mahatma, is there anything which the people will not credit him with? He is accepted as the greatest of all. In order that no one may be deceived about my language on account of such a superstition, I admit my mistakes by publishing the criticism contained in the letter above. I certainly regard myself as competent in respect of satyagraha, the economic policies needed in India from the point of view of the poor and some other kindred matters. But I consider my language to be plainly rustic and one that violates the rules of spelling and grammar. Therefore, it is not my wish at all that others should imitate it.

The several mistakes pointed out by the friend sitting on the top of the Himalayas ought to have been corrected. The imperfections of my language pain me, but they do not put me to shame. There are some mistakes which could have been easily avoided. I feel ashamed of such mistakes. I consider it better to close down a newspaper than to continue to run it inspite of such mistakes. If a newspaper editor remains indifferent to language, he becomes an offender. The use of the words *murshid* and *amanush*[1] is inexcusable. I cannot guess how those words happened to creep in. I went on dictating, another person took it down and a third transcribed it. My poor knowledge of Urdu and Sanskrit or the copyist's may have been responsible for the mistakes. The real fault is mine first and, then, that of my colleague. Swami Anand cannot pay attention to *Navajivan's* language, being busy with the work of promoting the circulation of the paper in Gujarat. Mahadev Desai can see no fault in me, just as a lover can see none in his beloved. If he has his way, he would have justified the use even of *murshid* and *amanush*. The learned one has taken his seat on the peak of the Himalayas. None among the three thinks of the injustice likely to be done to the readers. The poor language is an innocent cow and we four have become ready to put her to the knife. The remedy lies in the hands of readers who are lovers of the language. I advise them to serve notices on Swami Anand, Mahadev Desai and others to the effect that if Himalayan blunders of language appear in *Navajivan* hereafter, they will not only stop buying the paper without further intimation, but also set up, if necessary, a " *Navajivan* Boycott Association". If such an association starts a non-

[1] Incorrectly used for *murid*-meaning admirer, adorer or idolator—and *atimanush*—ameaning superhuman

violent satyagraha, I shall certainly join it and have a dispute in my own house. I also suggest to the language lovers that they should write an open letter to "Summit-dweller" that he should take up every week the maximum of half a page in *Navajivan* to list the errors in the use of Gujarati found in the previous issue. Thus, if the readers of *Navajivan* would take effective steps, they would serve the cause of the language and prove that *Navajivan* enjoys their patronage.

Now, a few words by way of criticism of the critic himself. Since we have learnt English, we consciously or unconsciously reproduce in our Gujarati writing the style and idioms of English despite our efforts to avoid them. I have been regarded as an enemy of the English language. As a matter of fact, I have respect for that language and for the Englishmen who speak it. But I am not prepared to accept the domination of either. I am willing to do without both. I firmly believe that a Gujarati with command over all the resources of his mother-tongue can bring into his writing all the beauties of English, without knowing a single word of English. As I have no prejudice against the English language or Englishman, I can assimilate the best from both and this leads to some imitation without any conscious effort on my part. "The bowels of the earth"[1] is an expression used unwittingly. "The womb of the earth"[2] is a very sweet collocation of words. Had I remembered it at the time of dictating, I would have used it by preference. But I do not consider "bowels of the earth" to be an expression which should be avoided. We do have in Gujarati the expression "twisting the mouth"; then can we not allow the English usage of "twisting the nose"? I have doubts about it though; while trying to twist the nose, I could not do it , but my mouth got twisted in the process. The Gujarati in me felt happy at this. But can all usage be thus tested? I leave the doubts there for the moment. After we attain swaraj, I shall certainly invite Narasinharaobhai[3] as well as Khabardar[4], who is quite a match for the former, to a duel before me and try to place some samples of their art before the readers of *Navajivan*. At present, we have no time even to enjoy that innocent fun. I do not believe that the indirect construction is banned in Gujarati. By saying this, I do not intend to belittle the comments of my critic. I have given

[1] *Prithvina antardan*

[2] Prithvinu udar

[3] Narasinharao B. Divetia (1859-1937) Gujarati poet and professor of Gujarati, Elphinstone College, Bombay

[4] Ardeshar Framji Khabardar (1881-1954); Parsi poet of Gujarat

the extract from the letter in order to ask my linguist friends to keep watch over my language and to oblige me, even as some other friends have been keeping watch over my moral conduct.

Whether the construction of the last sentence is permissible or not, I, on behalf of the readers, openly invite "Summit-dweller" to say.

[From Gujarati]
Navjivan, 27-4-1

279. A CORRECTION

I had written a note[1] in the *Navajivan* of *Chaitra sud 2* on the basis of a letter signed, as I had taken it for granted, by the Secretary of the Dohad Taluka congress Committee. Now the real Secretary, Shri Sukhdev, writes to inform me that the said letter was written, as from the Secretary, in his absence and without his knowledge. Shri Sukhdev's correction points out what had actually happened. A *Bhangi*[2] was permitted to draw water from *Dhed's*[3] well. The sub-inspector of police not only drove away the *Antyajas* who had gone to draw water from the pucca well belonging to the Local Board, but also compelled them to throw away the water they had actually drawn. The same state of affairs obtains among the *Antyajas* even today. This incident occurred not in Dohad town but in a village called Garbala which is under Dohad's jurisdiction.

That is to say, the condition of the *Antyajas* remains unchanged. Shri Shkhdev should institute an inquiry to find out why a letter giving incorrect information was written as from the secretary. The condition of the *Antyajas* will not improve, our sins will not be washed away and swaraj will not be attained by giving incorrect information. Sincere expiation will bear fruit even if news about it does not appear in newspapers. Crores of good deeds are done in this world without any publicity in newspapers; even then they continue to shed their influence for ever.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 27-4-1924

[1] *Vide* "Untouchability and Unapproachability", 6-4-1924.

[2] Both *Bhangis* and *Dheds* are *Antyajas*, but *Dheds* considered *Bhangis* to be a lower sub-caste and did not allow the latter to draw water from the wells used by them.

[3] *ibid.*

280. MY NOTES

MILL SLIVERS

We still find mill silvers being used in many places. The use of such slivers did not matter when the spinning-wheel was just coming into use and no one knew how to make slivers. But today their use ought to be considered intolerable. Only a person who does not understand the real principle behind the spinning-wheel will use mill slivers. We desire to see the spinning-wheel installed in every home and in every village in the country. There are seven lakh villages in India. Many of them are very far from the railway line. It is impossible to supply mill-slivers to those villages. Cotton which grows in one village is ginned at another place and then it is sent to a mill for being carded and ultimately it goes back to the same village in the form of slivers for being spun into yarn! This is like getting flour kneaded in Bombay bread therefrom baked in Pethapur[1]. Cotton should be carded where it is spun and it should be ginned where it grown. The present unnatural system should be totally abolished. The programme of the spinning-wheel basically includes all the processes preliminary to spinning.

SISTERS OF KARNATAK

Last week , about 50 Karnatak sisters living in Bombay came to see me. They had brought with them yarn spun by them. Along with it, they had brought Rs. 500. One of them had written a play called *Samaj Seva*. The others staged it. Admission was by tickets. The sum of Rs. 500 was saved out of the money received from the sale of tickets for the performance. They spent only Rs. 50 on staging the play.

Would not other sisters follow their example?

Not many sisters can write plays which are readable and fit for the stage and not many can stage plays either, but all can surely spin. One sister told me that Maharashtrian women were active and industrious, but Gujarati women were easy-going. How can Gujarati sisters tolerate such a charge? Of course, I must admit that I do not know of Gujarati sisters having spun as much yarn as Smt. Avantikabehn[2] succeeded getting Maharashtrian sisters in her circle to spin. We shall certainly find other proofs of the superiority of Maharashtrian sisters

[1] A village in North Gujarat

[2] Avantikabai Gokhale, a leading Congress worker of Maharashtra

if we look for them objectively. Yet, being myself a Gujarati, how can I, writing about Gujarati sisters, be objective? I accept the principle of being objective. Still I must be partial to Gujarati sisters and request them in this article to prove themselves as active and industrious as their sisters in Maharashtra. If they do not heed my humble entreaty, I shall have to believe that the change levelled by that Gujarati sister against them is true.

Both men and women may spin, but it is the special duty of the latter to do so. Wealthy sisters may spin either for their own clothes or to help others. Poor women may spin either for earning their livelihood or to supplement their income so as to earn the expenses on food. In cities, hand-spinning will be mainly of this type. Poor women living in cities can earn more by working as labourers than by spinning. It is useless to ask them take to spinning. It would be harmful to ask them to do more spinning than they actually need to do and, moreover, the purpose underlying the spinning programme will not be served by doing so.

SOCIETY FOR PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

I had received an open letter containing allegations against the work of the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Bombay. I then felt that, if they were all true, the Society had done the work not of showing kindness to animals but of killing them. Before I decided to write about these allegations, I had been inquiring into them; in the meantime, Shri Chhaganlal Nanavati, along with other friends, happened to call on me. I had known him as Secretary of the SPCA and so, jocularly, according to my wont, I came out with those charges against him. He said , “I am no longer the Secretary; may I convey to the Society what you have said ?” I told him that he should certainly do so and that I wished also to see the Secretary. I believe I had not permitted Shri Chhaganlal to pass on anything about the matter to the Press. Shri Chhaganlal either supplied to the newspaper a summary of the conversation between us as understood by him or related it at a place whence it could not but reach them. The members of the Society felt hurt at this. They were also surprised that I had formed an adverse opinion without giving a chance to the Society to present the facts on its side. It is certainly against my usual practice to form an opinion in this way. In fact, I had not formed any opinion. The criticism which I had made before Shri Chhaganlal was hypothetical. Its purport was that, if the Society had acted as alleged in that open

letter, then it had been guilty of killing animals. Shri Chhaganlal has seen me again and expressed his deep regret over the report which appeared in the papers. I believe there is no truth in the allegations against the SPCA made in the open letter. I have discussed the matter at great length with the Secretary, Shri Lallubhai, and other members.

MAJORITY OPINION

But there is in that open letter one point which merits consideration:

Can questions relating to religion be decided by majority opinion in a municipality of any other public body? Suppose Hindu, Muslim and Parsi members together pass a resolution by a majority vote that *Antyaja* children be admitted to Hindu schools. suppose, further, that the resolution would have been rejected if the votes of only the Hindu members had been taken. In such circumstances, can the resolution passed in the manner stated above be considered proper? I do not think so. Moreover, the passing of such a resolution would arrest the progress of the reform itself. Can social reform among the Hindus be brought about by the votes of men following other faiths? A large number among the Hindus should themselves realize that the practice of untouchability is a sin. The opinion of others does not count in this matter. This should be accepted as self-evident.

Likewise, a public body whose members follow different faiths cannot take a decision by a majority vote on the question whether or not the Muslims should spare the cow. Only the Muslims can decide the issue by a majority vote. As the hearts of Hindus and Muslims are embittered, even a question that has nothing to do with religion has come to be regarded as a religious issue. It should not require the authority of holy books to ensure that calves are not slaughtered. No religion can oppose or opposes, such an economic proposition. But sensitive and suspicious Muslim minds fear that, if they yield to the extent of a finger, they may have to yield up to the elbow.[1] Hence, if I were a member of a municipality' though I regard myself as a pure Hindu, look for the minutest injunctions of Hinduism and wish to follow them scrupulously, and though I worship the mother cow and stand ever ready to lay down my life in her service, I should not like to vote in favour of saving the calf in disregard of the views of our Muslim brethren until I got the support of a majority of them for the

[1] A Gujarti saying

proposition. I can succeed in my aim of saving the cow not by opposing the Muslims, but only by winning their hearts. In order to convince them that I do not wish to coerce them in this matter, I would certainly let go even the economic benefits of saving the calf, if I cannot carry them with me.

KHADI IN KATHIAWAR

A khadi-using couple from Kutch came to see me. They were dressed in clothes of khadi made from yarn spun by themselves. They were disappointed when they went from Kutch to Kathiawar. When they visited Rajkot and other cities, they hardly found any people wearing khadi clothes or khadi caps and they felt very sad. As far as their experience goes, khadi is used more in Kutch than in Kathiawar. I have received from another source a similar complaint about Kathiawar's indifference in this matter; it is to the effect that the Kathiawaris are very voluble and scheming that they are brave in speech, but slack in action. Hearing this I hung my head in shame. Now I hear people saying that Kathiawaris will defeat the Kathiawari Pattani Saheb, fulfil their pledge and positively hold the Conference[1]. Some say, "How can Pattani Saheb prevent us from holding the conference in a jail?" These brave friends of the brave *Kathis* of the past have thus been using brave words, but a Kathiawari like me, watching the scene from a distance, would like to ask the brave satyagrahis, if he can take the liberty of doing so: Do you know the conditions of satyagraha? Do you wear khadi and perform with faith the duty of spinning? Have you conquered your anger? Do you observe non-violence in thought, word and deed in so far as satyagraha requires you to do so? I have not yet completed the list of questions. I am not trying to decide whether or not they should start satyagraha. Vallabhbhai Patel is the man who will decide it. I am only trying to stress the importance of the spinning-wheel. In my view, the spinning-wheel is far more important than the Conference. Unable to find means of livelihood in Kathiawar, many Kathiawaris migrate to far-off places. For their belly's sake they forgo the life-giving air of Kathiawar and choose to live in the life-killing air of Bombay. How many Kathiawaris, in spite of realizing that the spinning-wheel can make this exodus for economic reasons unnecessary, pause to think way less khadi is being used in Kathiawar? If they do think about the

[1] The Kathiawar Political Conference; it was held at Bhavnagar in January 1925.

matter, to what extent do they act on their conclusions? It is very easy to popularize khadi in Kathiawar. And yet if the use of khadi is much less there, what dose the fact indicate? I do not wish to say that the report given by the Kutchi couple is well-founded. It is possible that their power of observation is weak or that they visited places where they could find no people wearing khadi. I have quoted the Kutchi couple's criticism for the benefit of the public workers of Kathiawar to make them more vigilant. I have indicated the questions which arise if the criticism is well founded.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-4-1924

281. AN APPRECIATION

[End of *April, 1924*][1]

Nearly three years ago Mr. Bharucha introduced Mr. Belgaumwala to me and said: "Here is a monied man who will be a tower of strength to the khaddar movement." Everybody by this time knows my unquenchable faith in Parsis. But in spite of that faith, as I looked at Mr. Belgaumwala I doubted the assurance given by Mr. Bharucha. But I had soon cause for repentance, for Mr. Belgaumwala has more than proved the truth of Mr. Bharucha's prophetic words. Has he not spent thousands in khaddar propaganda? Has he not become a staunch believer in the message of the spinning-wheel? Mr. Banker, when he dragged Mr. Belgaumwala to Karnatak, little knew what the Karnatak tour would make of the Parsi friend. Anyway he has returned with such zeal for the charkha that he tells me to my delight that early in the morning he sits at the spinning-wheel as a daily sacred duty. The spinning gives him joy, peace and consolation that at least for half an hour he identifies himself with the poorest in the land. May his example prove infectious for all monied men and women!

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S. N. 8702

[1] The exact date of this item is not ascertainable. The source is located among April 1924 documents in the S. N. Photostats.

282. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

[End of *April 1924*][1]

BHAI HARIBHAU[2],

It was not your articles in the *Malava Mayur* which made me feel unhappy. I had only a cursory glance at them. I felt unhappy because of a difference of principle. I am of opinion that very little good is done by everyone who can write starting a paper. I could have appreciated your doing this if you had a special message to give to the people of Malwa. All these are rather subtle issues. You need not think about them. We will talk further about them when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall certainly try to write for *Hindi Navajivan*. When must the articles for it reach you?

I think it necessary that the spirit of service should be accompanied by understanding of the problems. please do not be in a hurry to stop publication of the *Mayur*. I hope to be in the Ashram in about a month. The maxim enunciated in the verse, "Not to embark upon a venture [in the first instance, is a sign of wisdom]", applies to this activity.

From the Hindi original: C. W. 6051. Courtesy: Martand Upadhyaya

283. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

[After *April 30, 1924*][3]

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I have your letter. I felt unhappy when I saw *Malava Mayur*. Unless one has a special message to give, one ought not to start a new magazine. I think you will do well to free yourself from it if you can discontinue it. If, however, it has begun to pay its expenses, let it continue.

[1] In the postscript Gandhiji says, "I hope to be in the Ashram in about a month." He was there on May 29, 1924.

[2] Then Editor, *Hindi Navajivan*

[3] The letter appears to have been written after the preceding. one, in which Gandhiji had promised to try and send an article for publication.

I am sending with this letter an article for *Hindi Navajivan*. Please send *Hindi Navajivan* regularly to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C. W. 6052. Courtesy: Martand Upadhyaya

284. LETTER TO OTANE JAKATA

[After *April 30, 1924*]

DEAR SIR,

Thank you for your letter[1] as well as the book.

I have absolutely no time to give you the details you need, even if I was minded to do so.[2] I do not keep any portraits of me nor do I give sittings. The recent photographs are all snapshots. The best books of reference are collections of my writings in *Y. I.* by Mr. Ganesan of Madras (give address)[3] and my speeches by Mr. G. A. Natesan also of Madras (address). The latter contains rules of the Satyagraha Ashram.[4]

Yours truly,

OTANE JAKATA
45, KODA MACHO, 4 CHOME
TAIHOKU, FORMUSA, JAPAN

From a photostat: S. N. 8759

[1] Dated April 30, the letter accompanied a copy of the writer's book *Saint-Hero Gandhi*, and sought information about papers or publications throwing light on Gandhiji's career, the stories of his childhood, the history of the Satyagraha Ashram, men and women around Gandhiji, the Indian nationalist movement, and Gandhiji's "reproaches against so-called factors of civilization". Jakata proposed to make use of the data for a revised edition of his book.

[2] It appears, however, that Mahadev Desai did, in fact, prepare a detailed statement furnishing replies point by point to the various questions put by Jakata in his letter. A Photostat of this (S. N. 8837) is available.

[3] Words in brackets were evidently instructions to the secretary.

[4] On the top of the letter Gandhiji had written: "Copy and get it signed by me."

285. MY JAIL EXPERIENCES-III

SOME TERRIBLE RESULTS

In this chapter, I propose to discuss the results of the officials thinking that their duty ends with caring for the health of the prisoners, preventing fights among them or absconding. I do not think I am exaggerating when I say that jails may be described as well- or ill-managed cattle-farms. A superintendent who ensures good food for the prisoners and does not punish without cause is considered both by the Government and the prisoners as a model superintendent. Neither party expects more. If a superintendent were to introduce the real human touch in his relations with the prisoners, he is highly likely to be misunderstood by the prisoners and will very probably be distrusted by the Government as being unpractical, if not worse.

The jails have, therefore, become hot beds of vice and degradation. The prisoners do not become better for their life in them. In most cases they become worse than before. Perhaps all the world over, the jails are an institution the most neglected by the public. The result is that there is little or no public check on their administration. It is only when a political prisoner of some fame finds himself within the walls of a prison that there is any public curiosity about the happenings therein.

What classification there is of prisoners is regulated more in the interest of the administration than those of the prisoners. Thus, for instance, one would find habitual criminals and persons who have committed not a moral but a merely statutory offence are put together in the same yard, in the same block and even in the same cell. Fancy forty or fifty persons of varying types being locked in the same cell for night after night! An educated man, who had been convicted under the Stamp Act for having used an officially-defaced stamp, was put in the same block as habitual offenders regarded as dangerous characters. It is no unusual thing to see murderers, abductors, thieves and mere statutory offenders huddled together. There are some tasks which can only be done jointly by several men, such as working the pump. Able-bodied men alone can be put onto such tasks. Some highly sensitive men were included in one such gang. Now the ordinary prisoners in such a gang will use language which no decent

man would care to hear. The men who use indecent language have no sense of indecency in the language they use. But a sensitive man will feel most uncomfortable when such language is used in his presence. Convict-warders are in immediate charge of such gangs. In the discharge of their duty, it is customary for them to swear at prisoners in the choicest billingsgate. And when they are sufficiently worked up, they do not spare the rod either. Needles to say, both the punishments are not only unauthorised, but they are unlawful. I could however, present quite a decent catalogue of things unlawful that happen in jails to the knowledge of, and sometimes even with the connivance of, officials. In the case mentioned by me, the sensitive prisoner could not put up with the foul language. He, therefore, refused to work in the gang unless it was stopped. It was due to the prompt intervention of Major Jones that a most awkward situation was averted. But the relief was momentary. He had no power to stop a recurrence of the trouble; for it must continue to recur so long as prisoners are not classified in accordance with a moral standard and with regard to their human requirements rather than administrative convenience.

One would have thought that, in a jail where every prisoner is under surveillance night and day and can never be out of the sight of a warder, crimes will not be possible. But, unfortunately, every conceivable crime against morality is not only possible, but is committed almost with impunity. I need not mention small pilferings, deceptions, petty and even serious assaults, but I wish to refer to unnatural crimes. I will not shock the reader with any details. In spite of my many jail experiences, I did not think that such crimes were possible in jails. But the Yeravda experience gave me more than one painful shock. The discovery of the existence of unnatural crimes produced one of the greatest of the shocks. All the officials who spoke to me about them said that, under the existing system, it was impossible to prevent them. Let the reader understand that, in a majority of cases, the consent of the victim is lacking. It is my deliberate opinion that it is possible to prevent such crimes if the administration of jails is humanized and can be made a matter of public concern. The number of prisoners in the jails of India must be several hundred thousand. It should be the concern of public workers to know what happens to them. After all, the motive behind punishment is reformation. The legislature, the judge and the jailor are believed to expect that the punishments would act as deterrents, not merely for the physical and mental hurt they cause, but for the

repentance that prolonged isolation must bring about. But the fact is that punishments only brutalize the prisoners. In the jails they are never given an opportunity for repentance and reform. The human touch is lacking. True, there is a weekly visit from religious preachers. I was not permitted to attend any of these meetings, but I know that they are mostly shams. I do not wish to suggest that the preachers are shams. But a religious service once a week for a few minutes can produce no impression on those who ordinarily see nothing wrong in crimes. It is necessary to provide a responsive atmosphere in which a prisoner unconsciously sheds bad and cultivates good habits.

But such atmosphere is impossible so long as the system of entrusting convicts with most responsible work is continued. By far the worst part of the system is the appointment of convict-officers. These men are necessarily long-term prisoners. They are, therefore, men who have committed the most serious crimes. Generally the bullies are chosen as warders. They are the most forward. They succeed in pushing themselves to the front. They are the instruments for the commission of almost all the crimes that take place in the jails. A free fight resulting in one death once took place because two such warders were concerned in the same prisoner who was a victim of their unnatural lust. Everyone knew what was happening in the jail. But the authorities intervened only to prevent further fighting and further bloodshed. These convict-officers recommend tasks for the other prisoners. They supervise the tasks. They are responsible for the good behaviour of the prisoners under their charge. In fact, the will of the permanent officers is expressed and carried out through these convicts who are dignified as “officers”. The marvel to me was that under such a system, things were not much worse than they actually were. It once more demonstrated to me how superior men were to a wicked system as they were inferior to a good one. Human beings seem naturally to seek the middle path.

The whole of the cooking, too, is entrusted to prisoners. The result is indifferent cooking and organized favouritism. It is the prisoners who grind corn, shred vegetables, cook food and serve. When complaints as to short and badly cooked rations were recurringly made, the invariable answer was that the remedy was in their own hands as they cooked their own food, as if they were related to one another and understood mutual responsibility! Once when I pushed the argument to its logical extent, I was told that no administration could afford the cost. I differed from the view at the time of

argument. Further observation has confirmed me in my contention that, under a well-devised system, jail administration can be made self-supporting. I hope to devote a chapter to an examination of jail economics. For the present, I must satisfy myself with saying that no question of cost can possibly be admitted as relevant in a consideration of moral abuses.

Young India, 1-5-1924

286. NOTES

A CATALOGUE OF CRIMES

1. Contributing to Tilak Swaraj Fund;
2. Association with Non-co-operators;
3. Subscribing to N.C.O. papers;
4. Standing for Non-co-operation;
5. Wearing khaddar.

These were actually regarded as crimes by the Post Master-General of Madras in April 1922 and were the only grounds for dismissal of Mr. Subba Rao, a servant in the Postal Department, after 17 years' service. Let not the reader imagine that now Mr. Subba Rao has been reinstated. Nothing of the kind has happened. The poor dismissed servant of the Government petitioned the Viceroy and on the 3rd October 1923 he received a reply saying that His Excellency had 'decided to reject your (his) memorial.' The order of dismissal contains the counts as I have given them. The recital of each count is followed by a description. The contribution to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, for instance, is stated to have been given in the name of the minor daughter and amounted to Rs. 5. Venom could not go any further. The logical result of such dismissals should be a regulation making it penal for a member of the legislature to wear khaddar. By a stroke of the pen we should then have domestic peace. The Government would be happy and so will the pro-Council men and the no-Council men. As it is, there can be no peace so long as men like Mr. Subba Rao have a real grievance against everybody—against the Government for manufacturing crimes, against the pro-Council men who, because of their eminence, wear khaddar with impunity and yet afford no relief to Mr. Subba Rao and such others, and against the no-Council men for failing to make khaddar universal and thus making the demand for swaraj irresistible.

WHAT IS VIOLENCE?

Apropos of my article in *Young India* (April 10, 1924) entitled, 'What It Is Not', a correspondent examining the ingredients of violence says:

> The real issue is not about just or unjust grounds. Whether an act is an act of violence or not can be determined, not by reference to the grounds on which it is undertaken, but by reference to the manner in which it affects the party against whom it is directed and the effects which it produces generally. Both—acts of violence and acts that are not acts of violence—may have a just or an unjust cause. If a just cause can vindicate the adoption of a remedy, why should it justify a passive remedy only and not an active remedy? If it can vindicate N.C.O., it can equally justify the use of a sword. What moral delicacy should induce us to adopt N.C.O. and discard the sword? We are answered that the use of the sword is a way of violence. Way is that so? The reason is clear that it causes pain and suffering to our adversary. Does not N.C.O. do the same? Is there any difference between the two? The only difference is this. Whilst a thrust from the sword would cause a feeling of pain and suffering due to a disturbance caused thereby to the natural processes *inside the body*, which result in and preserve life, the practising of N.C.O. would cause pain and suffering by a disturbance to the processes working *outside the body* in the economic, social and political spheres—processes which are as much responsible for the preservation of life as those working inside the body.

The argument is clever, but it does not take us very far. The writer confuses two words, pain and violence, and regards them as synonymous. A physician who administers a bitter drug or cuts open an artery causes pain, but does no violence. The patient thanks him for it. If I do not serve my employer because he ill-treats me, my resignation, i.e., non-co-operation, may cause pain, but I have used no violence. But if I hammer him so as to make him do justice, I have extorted justice by violence.

HINDU-MUSLIM TENSION IN SIND

Dr. Choithram has sent me newspaper cuttings which give a fair idea of the trouble that seems to be brewing in Sind. I have no desire to go into the facts of the case. There was an attempt to settle the Hindu-Muslim dispute by arbitration. Dr. Choithram and Seth Haji Abdulla Haroon have had their say in the Press. Seth Haji Abdulla Haroon says that there could be no arbitration before change of hearts. Whatever the cause, the failure of arbitration is unfortunate.

But the painful part of the whole affair is that the Hindus do not feel that they are safe and that the police guard the route in the affected area. If this is true, there is something radically wrong. Whoever is to blame, there should be an understanding between the parties that no one can take the law into his own hands. The parties may go to court if they cannot arbitrate, but overawing of one party by another can only end in bloodshed eventually. That is hardly the way of religion.

I assure my Hindu and Mussalman friends that I am feverishly anxious to disburden my soul of my views on Hindu-Muslim unity. I am simply waiting for friends who have asked me not to say anything till they and I have discussed the question. The accounts I receive daily of the tension show that the greatest question before the country is that of Hindu-Muslim unity and no other. I hope that a way will be found out of the present most unsatisfactory state of things.

Young India, 1-5-1924

287. THE STARVING MOPLAH

I gladly print the following from Mr. Yakub Hasan :

> I enclose a copy of the statement I have lately issued to the Press about Moplah Relief. You will no doubt be grieved to learn that thousands of women and children belonging to the Moplahs, who were killed in the rebellion or were shot or hanged afterwards or are undergoing long imprisonment, are almost starving.
>
> Moplahs as a class have always been poor. Most of them cultivating lands under the petty landlords called Jenmies, who are almost all Hindus. The oppression of the Jenmies is a matter of notoriety and a long-standing grievance of the Moplahs that has never been redressed though unsuccessful attempts were made several times to ease the situation by means of legislation. The rebellion has reduced the poverty-stricken Moplah community to still lower depth of destitution. The forcible conversions have placed the community in bad odour with the Hindus in general and the Jenmies in particular, and the Government has also no love for the people who have not long ago fought pitched battles with it. Hindus have had their vengeance through the military who burnt the Moplah houses and their mosques wholesale. Thousands of Moplahs have been killed, shot, hanged or imprisoned for life and thousands are now languishing in jail. Of those who are left behind, several thousand are paying fines in monthly instalments in lieu of imprisonment for two years. These people are always under the thumb

of the police. The few who have escaped death, jail or fine are not in any happier condition. They are frightened out of their wits and are constantly living in terror. Some of the people I talked to in the out-of-way places were trembling with fear in spite of the assurance given to them that I was their friend and the object of my visit was only to help them if I can.

This is the general condition of the Moplahs in South Malabar. The condition of the women who have lost husbands and fathers by death or imprisonment is still worse. Unlike their sisters in other parts of India, Moplah women do not observe *purdah*. They are intelligent and industrious and always work with their male relations in fields and elsewhere. They are now very much handicapped; for just when the burden of supporting the family is thrown on their shoulders and they are called upon by the untoward circumstances to be the sole bread-earners for their families, they find no work that would give them a living wage. Though Moplahs have always been poor, still there were no beggars among them. But now it is a common sight to see Moplah women and children in tatters begging in the streets. Among the poor Muslim women who beg in this alms-giving month of Ramzan, I find almost half are Moplah women in Madras, and I am told this is the case in all large cities in this Presidency.

As for children, their neglected condition can be more imagined than described.

Something has to be done and done immediately if the Moplah community is to be saved from moral, even physical, destruction. In spite of all his faults and shortcomings, the Moplah is a fine man. He has the bravery, the pluck and the grit of his Arab father, and the gentleness and the industry of his Nair mother. His religious zeal is more misunderstood than appreciated. He is as a rule peaceful, but he brooks no affront to his honour or religion.

Unfortunate circumstances, the causes of which I need not enter into on this occasion, forced him into the position of a rebel. He has done what anyone, Hindu, Muslim or Christian, under the same circumstances and in the same emergency, would have done in self-defence and self-interest. He has suffered the consequence of his deeds. Should the society also visit his sins on his wife and children?

I place this matter before you Mahatmaji, because you are the head of the Indian nation, and both Hindus and Mussalmans jointly and severally look upon you as their leader. It is not for me to say how this great problem should be tackled. In your wisdom and goodness of heart, you will, God willing, find ways and means to carry life giving succour to the suffering Moplah women and children. Your appeal will make the Hindus forgive and forget and show that magnanimity of the heart without which no nation can aspire to be great, and your appeal will make Mussalmans realize more fully their duty to themselves. I am sure all the leading men

irrespective of cast or creed or political thoughts, will join hands with you in bringing this humanitarian cause home to the people at large.

My appeal must necessarily be to the Hindus. I do not know how far it will be successful in the present tension between the two communities. But I must not think of the result. I should be guilty of cowardice if did not publish Mr. Yakub Hasan's letter which commands my sympathy. I know that the Hindus feel sore over what the Moplahs in 1921 did to their Hindu neighbours in Malabar. I know that thousands of Hindus think that the Moplah atrocities were not as strongly condemned by the general body of the Mussalmans as they might have been. I know that many will (as I do) take exception to

Mr. Yakub Hasan's sweeping assertion that 'he (Moplah) has done what anyone, Hindu, Muslim or Christian, under the same circums-tances and in the same emergency would have done in self-defence or self-interest'. No circumstance and no provocation however grave could possibly justify forcible conversions. I should hope that Mr. Yakub Hasan has not meant to include these among the pardo-nable acts of the Moplahs.

But even assuming the truth of the worst that the Hindus may have to say against the Moplahs and the contemporaneous or subsequent conduct of the rest of the Indian Mussalmans, I have no doubt that, if the Hindus allowed their prejudices to interfere with their charity towards their countrymen and countrywomen, the starving Moplahs, it would be counted as a sin before the Judgment Seat. We may not remember against posterity the sins of its forefathers. The Moplahs sinned against God and have suffered grievously for it. Let the Hindus also remember that they have not allowed the opportunity of revenge to pass by. Many have done all they could to take reprisals when they got the opportunity.

My point is simple. In face of the awful fact of starvation and homelessness, all argument and all opposition must be hushed. Generations hence, when all our evil acts will have been forgotten, posterity will cherish the treasured memory of every simple act of love shown by the one to the other. I therefore ask every Hindu reader who will extend the hand of love and fellowship to his starving Moplah brother and sister and their children, to send his or her mite, and I shall endeavour to see that it is properly distributed among the most deserving among the Moplahs.

Young India 1-5-1924

288. VAIKOM SATYAGRAHA

Vaikom Satyagraha has attracted such wide public attention and, though restricted to a small area, presents so many problems for solution that I offer no apology to the reader for constantly engaging his attention for it.

I have received several important and well-thought-out letters protesting against my countenancing it in any way whatsoever. One such letter even urges me to use whatever influence I may have for stopping it altogether. I am sorry that I am unable to publish all these letters. But I hope to cover all the points raised in these letters or otherwise brought to my notice.

The first may be cleared at once. Exception has been taken to Mr. George Joseph—a Christian—having been allowed to replace Mr. Menon as leader and organiser. In my humble opinion the exception is perfectly valid. As soon as I heard that Mr. Joseph was 'invited to take the lead' and he contemplated taking it, I wrote to him as follows on 6th April:

> As to Vaikom, I think that you shall let the Hindus do the work. It is they who have to purify themselves. You can help by your sympathy and by your pen, but not by organizing the movement and certainly not by offering satyagraha. If you refer to the Congress resolution of Nagpur, it calls upon the Hindu members to remove the curse of untouchability. I was surprised to learn from Mr. Andrews that the disease had infected even the Syrian Christians.[1]

Unfortunately, before the letter could reach him, Mr. Menon was arrested and Mr. George Joseph had taken his place. But he had nothing to expiate, as every Hindu has in the matter of untouchability as countenanced by the Hindus. His sacrifice cannot be appropriated by the Hindus in general as expiation made, say, by Malaviyaji would be. Untouchability is the sin of the Hindus. They must suffer for it, they must purify themselves, they must pay the debt they owe their suppressed brothers and sisters. Theirs is the shame and theirs must be the glory when they have purged themselves of the black sin. The silent, loving suffering of one single pure Hindu as such will be enough to melt the hearts of millions of Hindus; but the sufferings of thousands of non-Hindus in behalf of the untouchables will leave the Hindus unmoved. Their blind eyes will not be opened by outside

[1] *Vide* "Letter to George Joseph", 6-4-1924.

interference, however well-intentioned and generous it may be; for it will not bring home to them the sense of guilt. On the contrary, they would probably hug the sin all the more for such interference. All reform to be sincere and lasting must come from within.

But why may the Vaikom satyagrahis not receive monetary aid from outside, especially if it be from Hindus? So far as non-Hindu assistance is concerned, I am as clear about such pecuniary help as I am about such personal help. I may not build my Hindu temple with non-Hindu money. If I desire a place of worship I must pay for it. This removal of untouchability is much more than building a temple of brick and mortar. Hindus must bleed for it, must pay for it. *They* must be prepared to forsake wife, children and all for the sake of removing the curse. As for accepting assistance from Hindus from outside, such acceptance would betray unreadiness on the part of the local Hindus for the reform. If the satyagrahis have the sympathy of the local Hindus they must get locally all the money they may need. If they have not, the very few who may offer satyagraha must be content to starve. If they are not, it is clear that they will evoke no sympathy among the local Hindus whom they want to convert. Satyagraha is a process of conversion. The reformers, I am sure, do not seek to force their views upon the community; they strive to touch its heart. Outside pecuniary help must interfere with the love process if I may so describe the method of satyagraha. Thus viewed, the proposed Sikh free kitchen I can only regard as a menace to the frightened Hindus of Vaikom.

There is no doubt in my mind about it that the orthodox Hindus, who still think that worship of God is inconsistent with touching a portion of their own co-religionists and that a religious life is summed up in ablutions and avoidance of physical pollutions merely, are alarmed at the development of the movement at Vaikom. They believe that their religion is in danger. It behoves the organizers, therefore, to set even the most orthodox and the most bigoted at ease and to assure them that they do not seek to bring about the reform by compulsion. The Vaikom satyagrahis must stoop to conquer. They must submit to insults and worse at the hands of the bigoted and yet love them, if they will change their hearts.

But a telegram says in effect, ‘the authorities are barricading the roads; may we not break or scale the fences? May we not fast? For we find that fasting is effective.’

My answer is, if we are satyagrahis we dare not scale or break fences. Breaking or scaling fences will certainly bring about the imprisonment, but the breaking will not be civil disobedience. It will be essentially incivil and criminal. Nor may we fast. I observe that my letter to Mr. Joseph with references of fasting has been misunderstood. For the sake of ready reference, I reproduce below the relevant part:

> 'Omit fasting but stand or squat in relays with quiet submission till arrested.'
>
> The above is the wire sent to you in reply to yours. Fasting in Satyagraha has well-defined limits. You cannot fast against a tyrant, for it will be a species of violence done to him. You invite penalty from him for disobedience of his orders, but you cannot inflict on yourselves penalties when he refuses to punish and renders it impossible for you to disobey his orders so as to compel infliction of penalty. Fasting can only be resorted to against a lover, not to extort rights but to reform him, as when a son fasts for a father who drinks. My fast at Bombay and then at Bardoli was of that character. I fasted to reform those who loved me. But I will not fast to reform, say General Dyer, who not only does not love me but who regards himself as my enemy. Am I quite clear?[1]

It need not be pointed out that the above remarks are of a general character. The words 'tyrant' and 'lover' have also a general application. The one who does an injustice is styled 'tyrant'. The one who is in sympathy with you is the 'lover'. In my opinion, in the Vaikom movement, opponents of the reform are the 'tyrant'. The state may or may not be that. In this connection, I have considered the State as merely the police striving to keep the peace. In no case is the State or the opponents in the position of 'lover'. The supporters of Vaikom satyagrahis enjoy that status. There are two conditions attached to a satyagrahi fast. It should be against the lover and for his reform, not for extorting rights from him. The only possible case in the Vaikom movement when a fast will be justified would be when the local supporters go back upon their promise to suffer. I can fast against my father to cure him of a vice, but I may not in order to get from him an inheritance. The beggars of India who sometimes fast against those who do not satisfy them are no more satyagrahis than children who fast against a parent for a fine dress. The former are impudent, the latter are childish. My Bardoli fast was against fellow

[1] *Vide* "Letter to George Joseph", 12-4-1924

workers who ignited the Chauri Chaura spark and for the sake of reforming them. If the Vaikom satyagrahis fast because the authorities will not arrest them, it will be, I must say in all humility, the beggar's fast described above. If it proves effective, it shows the goodness of the authorities, not that of the cause or of the actors. A satyagrahi's first concern is not the effect of his action. It must always be its propriety. He must have faith enough in his cause and his means, and know that success will be achieved in the end.

Some of my correspondents object altogether to satyagraha in an Indian State. In this matter, too, let me quote the remaining portion of my foregoing letter to Mr. Joseph:

> You may be patient. You are in an Indian State. Therefore, you may wait in deputation on the Diwan and the Maharaja. Get up a monster petiton by the orthodox Hindus who may be well-disposed towards the movement. See also those who are opposing. You can support the gentle direct action in a variety of ways. You have already drawn public attention to the matter by preliminary satyagraha. Above all, see to it that it neither dies nor by impatience becomes violent.

Satyagraha in an Indian State by the Congress for the attainment of its object is, I think, clearly forbidden. But satyagraha in an Indian State in connection with local abuses may be legitimately taken up at any time provided the other necessary conditions are fulfilled. As, in an Indian State, there can be no question of non-co-operation, the way of petitions and deputations is not only always open, but it is obligatory. But, say some of my correspondents, the conditions for lawful satyagraha do not exist in Vaikom. They ask:

1. Is unapproachability exclusively observed at Vaikom or is it general throughout Kerala ?

2. If it is general, then what is the special reason for selecting Vaikom in preference to places within the British territory in Kerala?

3. Did the satyagrahis petition the Maharaja, the local Assembly, etc.?

4. Did they consult the orthodox sections ?

5. Is not the use of the road the thin end of the wedge, is it not a step towards the abolition of caste altogether?

6. Is not the road a private road?

The first two questions are irrelevant. Unapproachability and untouchability have to be tackled wherever they exist. Wherever the workers consider a place or time suitable, it is their duty to start work,

whether by satyagraha or other legitimate means.

My information goes to show that the method of petition, etc. was tried not once but often.

They did consult the orthodox people and thought that they had the latter's support.

I am assured that the use of the road is the final goal of the satyagrahis. It is, however, not to be denied that the present movement throughout India is to throw open to the suppressed classes all the *public* roads, *public* schools, *public* wells and *public* temples which are accessible to non-Brahmins.

It is, in fact, a movement to purify caste by ridding it of its most pernicious result. I personally believe in *Varnashrama*, though it is true that I have my own meaning for it. Anyway, anti-untouchability movement does not aim at inter-dining or inter-marrying. Those who mix up the touch and the last two things together are doing harm to the cause of the suppressed classes as also to that of inter-dining and intermarriage.

I have letters which protest that the road in question is a public road. In fact, my informants tell me, it was some years ago even accessible to the unapproachables as to other non-Brahmins.

In my opinion, therefore, there is a just cause for the Vaikom satyagraha and so far as it is kept within proper limits and conducted with the strictest regard to non-violence and truth, it deserves full public sympathy.

Young India, 1-5-1924

289. CHARKHA IN SOUTH KANARA

Writing about the work of the volunteers in relieving distress caused by the floods in South Kanara, Mr. Sadashiv Rao[1] writes :

> About Rs. 50,000 were collected by the Floods Relief Committee of which I happen to be the Joint-Secretary; and most of this money has been distributed among the poor, first for affording food and c lothing and latterly by way of money doles for building huts or small dwelling places for the poor. In accordance with the undertaking given by the Committee to the public, the whole amount thus collected has practically been spent. But the amount of Rs. 5,000 timely sanctioned by the All-India Working Committee of the Indian National Congress and earmarked for advancing the constru-

[1] Karnad Sadashiv Rao, Karnatak Congress leader

ctive programme in the flood-stricken areas has proved, like the flood itself, to be a blessing in disguise. Under the auspices of the Rashtriya Jilla Khadi Board working under our District Congress Committee, we have opened twelve model depots in the affected parts wherein weaving and carpentry have been arranged to be taught according to the aptitudes of the people; and a great impetus has been given to the progress of spinning in the affected parts among all classes of people. A convenient central village has been singled out for working the depot; and every morning our workers go into the neighbouring villages with cotton and charkhas to teach carding and spinning to the people in their homes. Nurseries of cotton plants have also been made on the plots attached to these depots and arrangements have been made to distribute the plants gratis or at nominal prices among the people for being planted in their own places. Last year the Congress Committee made a humble attempt to popularize cotton-growing by a free distribution of seeds suited to the soil at this time of the year. But barring a handful of them, most of the people did not take kindly to it. It is for this reason that a departure has been made this year. Already more than five hundred families have taken enthusiastically to spinning and we expect a thousand pounds of yarn in this month. Last month we received through these twelve depots 735 Ibs. of yarn of counts ranging from 8 to 20. We are obliged to give charkhas on the instalment system as the people are poor. It is a most encouraging feature that the majority of these families who have begun to spin are Mahomedans and Christians. The monsoon is almost upon us as it is expected to break out earlier this year, and already we have had showers with thunder and lightning. It is well-known that within a few weeks after the rains set in, most of the people in village parts are without occupation. The money in hand set apart for the constructive programme has been exhausted. And, if the charitable public do not come to our rescue at this juncture, the humble work begun by our struggling volunteers for relieving the distress of the poor by supplying supplementary occupations at their very doors will come to grief. Having regard to the fact that 90 p.c. of the people that have thus taken to spinning are women, I feel that I can confidently look up to all who love nation-building work to contribute their mite for helping us to continue this glorious work of serving the poor. There are thousands of women who are hankering to have the charkhas; but, for want of funds, the work cannot progress.

We have also made another departure in accordance with your advice. There are twenty national schools in our district with a thousand pupils. Two of these are high schools. Boys coming out of these schools are taken as apprentices in these depots; and they are asked to go back to their respective villages for starting national elementary schools or panchayat courts or any other handicrafts like weaving, carpentry, iron smithy, dyeing, printing, etc., arrangements for teaching all of which are being made in these depots.

Will the appeal of our self-sacrificing, struggling volunteers on behalf of our voiceless poor go in vain ?

This is solid work deserving support.

I had the honour of receiving about fifty Kanarese sisters a few days ago[1]. They had organized among themselves a dramatic performance. The play is written by one of them. The performance fetched Rs. 550. The expenses amounted to Rs. 50. These sisters brought me the Rs. 500 and yarn spun by them. I know that these sisters will appreciate the use I propose to make of their precious gift. I feel that I cannot do better than send the amount for distributing the charkha among their distressed Mussalman and Christian sisters. The amount will be sent forthwith to Mr. Sadashiv Rao.

Young India, 1-5-1924

290 "SHANTAM, SHIVAM, ADVAITAM"[2]

I have hitherto taken liberties with Mr. Andrews' writings for *Young India*. But in spite of personal allusions, I have not the courage to remove a single word from the beautiful prose poem he has given us.

Young India, 1-5-1924

291. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI [3]

[BOMBAY,
On or after *May 1, 1924*]

WIRE RECEIVED. ONLY COMFORT I CAN OFFER IS SEND DEVDAS. WIRE CONDITION AND REPLY[4]

GANDHI

From a photostat: S. N. 8777

[1] *Vide* "My Notes" 27-4-1924.

[2] This was Gandhiji's comment at the end of an article by C. F. Andrews under this title.

[3] This was in reply to Rajagopalachari's telegram to Devdas Gandhi of May 1, 1924, stating: "Son-in-law's pneumonia and mental derangement continuing distressing."

[4] Rajagopalachari later wired: "Son-in-law moved to hospital yesterday. Myself strangely free asthma. Ask Bapu forgive."

292. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

ANDHERI,
Friday [On or before *May 2, 1924*][1]

BHAI JAMNALALJI,

Mahatma Bhagwandinji and Pandit Sunderlalji have come here. They wish to talk about the Asahayoga Ashram and other matters. But I told them that I could do nothing without meeting you. I advised them to meet you and they have decided to do so. If, after hearing them, you want to tell or ask me anything, please do so.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: G. N. 2846

293. STATEMENT ON KATHIAWAR POLITICAL CONFERENCE[2]

[BOMBAY
Before *May 4, 1924*]

I understand that the Reception Committee of the Kathiawar Political Conference is prepared to give assurance to the State that all decency will be maintained by the Parishad, and that no personal remarks will be passed over the chiefs. I also understand that the Working Committee, which met at Porbandar, had got to consult Pattani Saheb before it made recommendation to the Reception Committee to hold the Conference in Bhavnagar, and in failing to do this it has acted indiscriminately.

Pattani Saheb desires that the Parishad should not be held in Bhavnagar this Year. I also understand that he will have many difficulties in allowing it to meet. He says he is prepared to give all help if the Parishad be held at Songad. He is prepared to encourage the people of Bhavnagar to attend it and, above all these, he is prepared to give all necessary help for making it possible for the

[1] According to a noting on this letter, the addressee replied to it on May 3. The preceding Friday fell on May 2.

[2] The statement was issued as a result of talks which the Conference workers had with Gandhiji and Vallabhbhai Patel in Bombay. The text reproduced here is from a correspondent's despatch of May 4 entitled "Bhavnagar Notes".

Conference to meet in the boundary of any State next year. He only requires one condition, that all decency be observed in the lectures, etc., of this year. He does not desire to have any binding or condition for the next year. He believes the Parishad itself will observe its own decorum.

Looking to the situation on the whole, I believe the Reception Committee should not insist upon holding the Conference in Bhavnagar this year. They should agree with Pattani Saheb, and prove their full worth as satyagrahis by observing complete decency in the Parishad. There is not the least disgrace for the people in so doing. Satyagraha does not lose its lustre, and the path becomes clear for the future. But supposing everything goes against our expectations, Pattani Saheb breaks his promise or he be away from Kathiawar then, or he fails to get the Conference held in a State after all possible attempts, the satyagrahi has nothing to lose. A true satyagrahi is never weary of observing proper manners. He has never to repent of lost opportunities. When time comes, he is ever ready.

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-5-1924

294. RENUNCIATION PERSONIFIED[1]

God created nothing finer than the Hindu widow. Whenever I hear men recounting their misfortunes, the picture of the widow comes vividly before my eyes and I laugh at the man who bewails his misfortunes.

Self-control has been carried by Hinduism to the greatest height and, in a widow's life, it reaches perfection. Man can find a remedy for his misfortunes, which are usually the consequence of his own folly. Much of his misery is due merely to greed. But what of the widow? She, poor woman, is in no way responsible for her misfortune. Nor is the remedy for it open to her, for custom has barred that door. A great many widows do not even look on their suffering as suffering. Renunciation has become second nature to them, and to renounce it would be painful to them. They find happiness in their self-denial.

This is not an undesirable state. On the contrary, it is good. It is Hinduism at its best. I regard the widow's life as an ornament to Hinduism. When I see a widow, I instinctively bow my head in

[1] *Vide* also "Curse of Widowhood", 9-5-1920 & "More thoughts about Widows", 16-5-1920.

reverence. I never regard the sight of a widow as an ill omen. I feel blessed if I see the face of one in the morning. A widow's blessing is to me a gift which I prize. Seeing her, I forget all my sorrows. Man is but a clod before her. A widow's patient suffering is impossible to rival. Compared to her inheritance of ages, of what worth is a man's self-acquired wealth of brief renunciation ?

If a widow suffers, before whom can she pour out her grief? If there is anyone in this world before whom she can do so, it is her mother. But what is the use ? What help can the mother give ? All she can do is to ask her to be patient and go and attend to her work. For a widow, her mother's house is no longer her home. She must live with her father-in-law's family. Only a daughter-in-law knows what it is to be harassed by a mother-in-law. A widow's duty is to serve others. The brother-in-law, the mother-in-law, the father-in-law and every chance visitor—she must serve them all. She is never weary. She only prays for strength to enable her to serve better.

If this holy life lived by widows becomes a thing of the past, if this living image of service is destroyed through ignorance or pride, incalculable harm will be done to Hinduism.

How can this way of life for widows be kept alive? What share of the virtues of following it can be claimed by parents who marry off a daughter only ten years old? Can the girl who becomes a widow on the very day she is married be regarded as a widow? Are we not committing an unforgivable sin by regarding as dharma the extreme length to which the rules about a widow's life are carried? If this way of life is to be kept alive, is it not essential that the men give thought to their own duty? Can a woman, who is innocent of what widowhood means, possess a body that can follow the widow's life? Who can imagine how a girl married today feels? What is her father's duty towards her? Or, was it over when he put a knife to her throat?

It is my humble opinion that the following rules are necessary for preserving the sanctity of the widow's life, for preserving Hinduism and for order in Hindu society.

1. No father should get a daughter under the age of 15 married.

2. If a girl below this age has already been married and has become a widow, it is the father's duty to get her married again.

3. If a fifteen-year-old girl becomes a widow within a year of her marriage, her parents should encourage her to marry again.

4. Every member of the family should look upon the widow with

the utmost respect. Parents or parents-in-law must provide her with the means of improving her knowledge.

I have not suggested these rules to be generally followed. They are to serve only as a guide. I am convinced that our duty towards widows is along the lines indicated in them.

Who should ensure that these rules are followed? In Hindu society, castes are the natural agencies for this purpose. But till such time as they are reformed, what should those parents do who are ready to follow these rules? They should make efforts to persuade their community to introduce reforms and, if they do not succeed, free themselves from the shackles of the caste and search for a suitable bridegroom for the widow. Both the parties should be ready to live outside the cast and appeal to its members from outside. They should do nothing which would shock the leaders, nor should they think of resorting to satyagraha; if at all they want to offer satyagraha; they should understand that staying humbly outside the caste is in itself satyagraha. If the marriage had been thought of as the only possible course in the circumstances, if the motive behind it was to live a life of self-control and if the ostracized family's life is blameless in every way, then the elders will not only take them back into the caste, but will also accept this reform and other poor widows will be spared the torture which would have been theirs otherwise.

Such reforms cannot be brought about immediately, but it is enough if their seeds are sown. In time, the seeds will surely grow into trees.

I have suggested only a minor reform. I have done this because a really big reform may seem impossible. This reform would be that, man too, like woman, should not remarry after the death of his partner. If we understand the true meaning of Hinduism, we would not reduce the rigour of a restraint which is difficult to practise, but would on the contrary introduce in our lives other similar restraints and thus practise the former more rigidly. If widowers do not marry again, widows would not feel life to be a burden, and marriages of ill-matched pairs and of children which are so common today would stop.

There is in all this one danger which we should guard against. I have heard the following argument: "The widow's customary life is a great ideal in every way. Why, then, to get a few child-widows remarried? We want even widowers to refrain from marrying again.

Besides, we want the custom of child-marriage also to end. It is not necessary, therefore, to encourage widows to remarry under any circumstances." This is a dangerous argument, for it is mere sophistry. It resembles an argument put forward by some British friends: "You believe in non-violence and want us also to practise non-violence. Hence, no matter what force we use, you ought not to ask your people to resist us with force." This is what some of them tell me. The fallacy in this reasoning is plain enough. All of us commit similar fallacies knowingly or unknowingly. The British friends who argue in this way forget that I wish to teach non-violence to both parties. But how can I advocate non-violence to those who are incapable of the understanding it, who are, in other words, cowardly? I could not convince my son of the duty of remaining non-violent. Nor could I get it accepted by the poor and harassed villagers of Bettiah.[1] I had to tell them: "If your choice lies between running away and leaving a woman to her fate or defending her by force against a miscreant, if you cannot, resolutely, remain where you are and, looking upon him as your brother and using no force against him, oppose him with satyagraha unto death, then by all means attack him with force and defend the woman." The path of satyagraha is not for cowards. It is only when a person has shed his cowardice and become a that he is fit for the method of non-violence.

If we now examine the sophistic argument in regard to widows, we shall see that only widowers who are ready to remain unmarried have a right to advance it. Others who do not appreciate the idea of a widower remaining unmarried or who, though they appreciate the idea itself, are not ready to act upon it, have no right to use that as an argument for defending the custom of compelling widows to remain unmarried. Imagine a sixty-year-old man, who had remarried, cheerfully contemplating the possibility of his nine-year-old wife, so-called, becoming a widow, writing admiringly in his will about her state, saluting his poor child-wife doomed to be a widow and saying: "If, through misfortune, I die before my most virtuous wife, my partner in dharma, I know that she will remain a widow and shed glory on me, on my and her parents' families and on the Hindu way of life. Having married this girl, I have realized that a widower should remain unmarried. I would have done better if I had done so. I admit my weakness. But a man's weakness adds to the lustre of a widow's life.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Bettiah", 8-12-1920.

Concerning my child-wife, therefore, I desire that, after my death, she should remain a widow and illustrate the glory of self-control." What effect will this argument have on that child-widow or on those who read the will?

It was necessary to examine this argument, since, under cover or in the name of loyalty to a noble ideal, many unholy practices which have the appearance of being holy are defended. The definition of a widow can have no reference to child marriages. A widow means a woman who, at the proper age, married a person of her choice or was married to him with her consent, who has had relations with her husband, and who has then lost her husband. A wife who has not known consummation of marriage or a girl of tender age sacrificed by her parents cannot and must not be included in this definition. It is, therefore, perversity to defend the custom forcing girls to submit to their so-called widowhood. But, when men advocate enforced widowhood for girls by admitting the necessity of widowers, too, remaining unmarried, they add either impudence or profound ignorance to their perversity.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-5-1924

295 WHO WILL SAVE ?

I got this letter[1] after I had written the article "Renunciation Personified". Such instances are of frequent occurrence in the country. It is difficult to make an elderly man, who is a slave to his passions and has come forward to destroy the life of a girl, to agree to abandon this idea. As for the girl's father, who probably expects to get some money, how can one bring him to see his daughter's good? Where lust and selfishness blind men's eyes, who can open them?

However, if the leaders of the caste wish, they can save this helpless girl. If they are not ready to do anything in the matter, someone inclined to do this act of charity should persuade them to intervene. If even this is not possible, then those who wish to prevent this horrible deed should courteously plead with the girl's father and also with the man who wishes to marry her. In any case, they must break off relations with them. They should refuse to join dinners and

[1] Not translated here; the correspondent had described in the letter his unsuccessful efforts to prevent the marriage of a young girl to a man of about 50.

other functions and thus save themselves from being partners in their sin. The whole society in which such crimes occur must share the blame for them, because no one would dare to do anything against which there is a strong public opinion. And when any person has the arrogance to disregard the limits laid down by society, the latter has the splendid weapon of satyagraha ready at hand. It can employ it and be free of its responsibility.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-5-1924

296. HINDUS AND MUSLIMS

I was not, and still am not, inclined to express my ideas about the bitterness between Hindus and Muslims. My views have of course been formed, but I have not stated them in public as yet out of consideration for friends. The delay on my part is due to the fact that they are still thinking over the matter. But now that this distressing incident has occurred in Visnagar, I cannot remain altogether silent. If I want to continue as the editor of a journal, I must, when the occasion demands, express my views.

Shri Mahadev Desai has given me a heart-rending account of how Abbas Saheb and he failed in their attempt to bring about a reconciliation. It seems that on *Ramnavami* day the Hindus took out a procession of Rama and, of course, there was music on the occasion. As the procession approached a mosque, they saw Muslims with drawn swords ready to meet them. The procession could pass the spot only under police protection twenty-four hours later.

I leave out other incidents. Hindus would not give up their right to play music and Muslims would not permit it. Somehow, a riot was prevented. But neither party deserves credit for this. It goes to the police.

And now we hear that someone has secretly inflicted wounds with a sword on some cattle. One animal was found to have died of the wounds. Hindus have broken off their relations with Muslims.

After the affair of the procession, Shri Mahasukhlal Chunilal, a well-known gentleman of Visnagar, delivered a speech in which he used strong language. In the course of it, he referred to white-capped men and said that, however much they might try, they would not succeed in bringing about Hindu-Muslim unity. Shri Mahasukhlal has

advised Hindus to resort to non-co-operation.

In Visnagar, Hindus are more numerous than Muslims, and yet they fear the latter very much. The Muslims, on their part, do not wish to sheathe their swords.

To my knowledge, there is no religious injunction that requires the continuous play of music in a procession. I also think that it is the duty of Hindus to cease playing at certain times in order to avoid hurting Muslims. But I am equally convinced that to stop playing music out of fear of Muslim swords is wrong. Just as the Hindus should not use force to stop the Muslims from killing cows, so the latter should not use it to stop the former from playing music. If both parties value unity, they will on their own stop killing cows or playing music. I am also of the view that, even if one party does not do its duty, the other party should not fail to do its own. Neither side, however, will submit, ought to submit to force, even if it is totally destroyed in consequence.

Everyone has a right, if the occasion demands, to resort to peaceful non-co-operation. There is no reason why this method should be used only against the Government and not among ourselves. Nor is there any reason why it may be employed by Hindus against Muslims or *vice versa*, but not by Hindus against Hindus and Muslims against Muslims. On a matter of principle, non-co-operation may become necessary even between father and son.

The question is whether such an occasion has in fact arisen for the Hindus of Visnagar. In my humble opinion, it has not. Hindus and Muslims cannot solve complicated problems in their towns by taking the law into their own hands. Even if the immediate result seems satisfactory to the winning side, the permanent consequences are bound to be disastrous. Moreover, if in a town one party happens to win, it does not mean that all members of the community will gain from this victory. Hindus, being in a majority in Visnagar, may succeed, with the help of the Government or through non-co-operation, in having the upper hand over Muslims, but what will be the gain? Will the Hindus of Visnagar like it if in other places Muslims take similar advantage of favourable circumstances to suppress the Hindus? If this will not be to their taste, is it likely that Muslims in other places will be pleased with the discomfiture of Muslims in Visnagar? Though the policy adopted by Hindus in Visnagar may be pleasant in the beginning, it is certain to be harmful in the long run

and, therefore, ought to be rejected as advised by the *Gita*.

I need not remind the Hindus of Visnagar that I am not asking them to submit to force and give up their right to play music. Nor am I telling them that they should never resort to non-co-operation. But I certainly state my view, in all humility, that, if the report I was given is correct, the Hindus' plan to start non-co-operation is much too hasty. They have not exhausted other means which they should have tried before deciding on this step. If they are wise, they will have as little recourse as possible to the authorities. I hear that the latter in Visnagar have handled the situation with patience and tact and without taking sides. I write this on the basis of what I have heard from an impartial Hindu. I do not know yet what the effect on the mind of an impartial Muslim is likely to have been.

In any case, we want to have as little recourse to authority as possible. We have cherished this principle for the last four years. We must, therefore, consider what step we can take other than inviting intervention by the authorities. The Hindus of Visnagar have no reason now to fear the swords of the Muslims. The authorities have protected them against that threat and continue to do so. They must now look for some means of reconciliation. Have they consulted Hindus and Muslims outside Visnagar? Have they written to the Ali Brothers? Have they written to Hakimji? Perhaps these two may not do anything, but it is the duty of Hindus to seek their help. Have the Hindus obtained the permission of Vallabhbhai, who is the leader of Gujarat? They refused to listen to Abbas Saheb and insulted him. Have they apologized to him and sought his advice?

But Shri Mahasukhlal says that Hindus and Muslims can never live in amity, that the Hindus must look after themselves. If they listen to the white-capped gentry, he says, they [the Hindus] will by and by become Muslims. I would humbly say to this gentleman that his ideas, if correctly reported, are mistaken. Among people wearing white caps are both Hindus and Muslims. I assure him that Hindus who wear white caps will not cease to be Hindus. But our dispute is not over white or black caps. Maybe people who wear white caps are a bad lot. Who am I to defend them? One's conduct alone can be one's defence. But the idea that there can never be unity between Hindus and Muslims seems to me a terrible one. It is wrong from the religious point of view. It is opposed to the Hindu cultural tradition; according to Hinduism, no one is destined to perish, which means that there is

the same *atman* in all beings. The Hindu does not insist that only those who believe in the same ideas as he does will go to heaven. I do not know if Muslims believe that. But even if Muslims believe that Hindus being Kaffirs, are not fit to go to heaven, the Hindu religion teaches them to bear love for Muslims and bind them to themselves with that chain. For Hinduism looks down upon no religion. On the contrary, it tells every man: "Your good lies in following your own religion."

From the practical point of view also, to believe that Hindu-Muslim unity is impossible is to accept slavery for all time. If any Hindu imagines that the seven crores of Muslims in India can be wiped out I have no hesitation in asserting that he slumbers in profound ignorance.

Moreover, merely because Hindus and Muslims of Visnagar are fighting, why should we believe that they are doing the same thing in all the seven hundred thousand villages of India in which the two communities live side by side? There are many villages in every part of the country in which Hindus and Muslims live like brothers and are even oblivious of the fact that, in certain towns and villages in their neighbourhood, the two communities are at loggerheads.

Examining in this way both the moral and the practical aspects, the wiser among the Hindus of Visnagar should see that unity between Hindus and Muslims is both possible and indispensable. I would also beg leave to inform the gentleman who is advising non-co-operation [with Muslims] that the ultimate aim of non-co-operation is co-operation. Non-co-operation is a process of self-purification. In this world, the creation of one God, permanent non-co-operation with any human being is unthinkable. The idea is not to be entertained, for it is opposed to the conception of God as the Lord of all. I, therefore, appeal to the Hindus of Visnagar to invite Vallabhbhai and Abbas Saheb and ask them to settle the dispute. If they have no confidence in these two non-co-operators, let them invite any persons belonging to the party of co-operators. There are many such persons among Hindus and Muslims in Gujarat who will help them. As long as the Hindus of Visnagar have not exhausted all other reasonable means of settling the dispute, they have no right to resort to non-co-operation.

So much for the Hindus.

The Muslims have committed a serious error; Muslim history tells us that Islam's glory has not been maintained by the sword. The

sword may have defended Islam, but Islam has never decided issues of justice and injustice by the sword. There has been no instance in the world till now of a religion which flourished merely on the strength of the sword. Though not a Muslim, I would certainly tell the Muslims of Visnagar that it is a bad habit to draw the sword on the slightest provocation and that it destroys religion. It is the fakirs, sufis and philosophers who won glory for Islam. It is proved by Muslim writing that they defended themselves or their religion not with the sword but by their soul-force.

The Muslims of Visnagar should sheathe their swords forthwith. They cannot prevent Hindus from playing music before mosques by the threat of the sword. Hindus have been playing music for the last 30 or 40 years and it will not be easy to stop them all at once. In any case, it is certain that they cannot be stopped by the sword. Others feel just as we feel—this is a universal law. If Hindus try to secure their rights from Muslims by force, the latter will not yield. Similarly, nothing can be forcibly wrested from the Hindus either. The Muslims of Visnagar should calmly think over this.

I would not say that, since Hindus have been playing music for 40 years, they should not now be prevented from doing so even if they have been in the wrong. A wrong does not become right because it has been going on for a long time. But matters can be set right not by means of the sword but by persuasion. If the Hindus of Visnagar are in the wrong, they must be shown their mistake. They should be won over by persuasion. If they do not understand and continue to play music, the Muslims' prayers will not go in vain for that reason. Whether prayers will have their fruit or go in vain depends on the worshipper's sincerity. I have read that the Prophet could pray undisturbed even in the midst of battle, in the din of clashing swords, the neighing of horses and the hiss of arrows. It was with love that he won the hearts of the idol-worshippers of Mecca.

Why do the Muslims of Visnagar forget this heritage, the illustrious example of the Prophet? I have read in the Koran that it is obligatory upon Muslims to say prayers, but I have neither read nor heard that it is their right or their duty to prevent others forcibly from playing music nearby. They can appeal to the Hindus with love. If the latter will not listen, they can ask Hindus and Muslims outside Visnagar to help. The Muslims have no other course, nor have the Hindus, but reconciliation.

Do not the Muslims of Visnagar desire the country's freedom? Do they prefer slavery? Have Indian Muslims completely discharged their duty in the matter of the Khilafat? Can Muslims living in slavery really serve the cause of the Khilafat? Can they bring lustre to the Khilafat unless they cultivate sincere friendship with Hindus? Granting that the Khilafat problem is no more with them, do they want to live in India, their homeland, always as enemies of their fellow-countrymen, the Hindus? We will discuss in *Navajivan* many other questions concerning Hindus and Muslims. But about one thing we must immediately make up our minds, that any dispute between the two must be resolved only with the help of a *panch* or in a court. Drawing of swords against each other in the name of religion or under any other pretext must be ruled out. Just as it does not become the Hindus to be always afraid of the Muslims, so also it does not become the Muslims, to try to intimidate the Hindus. Both those who intimidate others and those who are afraid do wrong. I cannot say which of the two is better, but, if obliged to choose, I would certainly join the side which is afraid and resort to total non-co-operation against the other side. God will look with mercy on a man who is afraid, but I am certain that He will show the door to the other for his pride.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-5-1924

297. MY NOTES

THE MEANING OF "BHAIYA"

Like men, words too cannot but suffer from association. The word *Lala* in its original sense indicates respect. We use it to show respect to a Punjabi. If a Gujarati, however, is addressed as "Surati Lala", he will be offended. The term *Babu* also is used for respect, but because the British called their Bengali servants "Babus" (I do not know if they still do so), it came to imply contempt. The same thing is now happening to the beautiful word *Bhaiya*. *Bhaiya* means brother. Only one who has lived in the U. P. or Bihar can appreciate its sweetness. But we in Bombay started using it for servants hailing from Northern India and then came to address all Hindus coming from the North by that word. In consequence, as a friend from that side informs me, the word is disliked by Hindus and there have been some disagreeable results. They are even trying to prevent the use of the word *Bhaiya* in this context, and I think they are right. There is no

community named *Bhaiya* in North India or anywhere else. It is not known how the term came to be used in this sense. But we can realize that it is disliked by business people and others from the North who have settled in Bombay and elsewhere. We should, therefore, give up using the word. My correspondent also informs me that the word has been used in *Navajivan* too. The writer had referred to Jabar as a *Bhaiya* while praising his skill, singleness of mind and sincerity. In the Ashram, everyone holds Jabar in great respect. But I see now that the use of *Bhaiya*, even as a term of endearment, should henceforth be avoided.

MILL CLOTH

There is, in the national movement, an insidious attempt to give mill cloth the place of khadi. This shows that the significance and importance of khadi have not yet been sufficiently understood. The khadi movement did not spring from hostility to mills, it has been inspired by compassion for the poor. It has been conceived as a means of securing swaraj, and to me it is the very breath of swaraj. India cannot live without it. How can a dead country be free? Imagine India in the form of an enormous body. How will the brain in the head of this body know the growing heaviness of the feet? We, who are relatively healthy, do not realize the steady ruin of the villages. But economists and those who frequently go to the villages can see that the feet of this huge body of India are becoming enfeebled. This enfeeblement continues apace. And the means by which to check it is khadi, not mill cloth. Indian mills may make the boycott of foreign cloth possible, but they can never, never indeed, remove the hunger of crores of famished men and women. This only khadi can do. In India there is scarcity of money because there is lack of work. It is not enough that employment is available in cities. The seven lakh villages have to be freed. Villagers need employment in their own villages. This only the spinning-wheel can provide. That is why I describe it as *Annapurna*[1]. This spinning-wheel, then, is what we should popularize. By the spinning-wheel I mean all the processes connected with it, those which precede and those which follow spinning. We can succeed in popularizing it only if thousands take up the work. Our task is simply to organise the khadi movement properly.

Mills are already well organized. They do not need voluntary workers. The diamond merchant will find his way. There is no need to

[1] Goddess of plenty, a beneficent form of Durga

organize bands of volunteers to assist him. The same is true about mills. Indian mills can, if they choose, end the import of foreign cloth. If they would give less importance to enriching themselves and give the first place to the country's welfare, introduce honesty into their business, pay greater attention to improving their product than to their profits, there is no doubt that their sales would be far greater than at present. Khadi does not at this stage compete with them. It may have had some indirect effect but, so long as we have not produced khadi worth even a crore of rupees, where is the question of competition? Khadi has not yet won a stable position for itself. Unless Herculean efforts are made, it cannot recover its ancient dignity. In these circumstances, it passes my understanding how it can be so much as mentioned in the same breath with mill cloth.

The Congress is or, at any rate, should be, the voice of the inarticulate. Its proper sphere of work is among the poorest classes, but it does not and cannot reach them. Hence it tries to wake up those who without knowing it are riding on the back of these; it exerts itself to produce khadi for these [better-off] people to wear. I have, therefore, no doubt that, for the members of the Congress and for those whom the voice of the Congress can reach, the use of mill cloth is forbidden.

I have always sought the help of mill-owners in this task. They should sincerely accept khadi, encourage it and personally use it in place of mill cloth, thus identifying themselves with the poor. There is no contradiction in this. For the present at least, mill cloth has a place in the country. Even if, by the grace of God, the whole country becomes a land of khadi, what have the mill-owners to fear ? They will have their export trade. Suppose foreign countries also become self-sufficient in cloth, what even then? The mill-owners' ability for earning wealth will not have been lost. There will always be need in the country for producing wealth, and the rich will certainly continue to have a place in it . It will be enough if there is a change of heart in them. Their love of money will then go with more of compassion than at present. Today, concern with morality is subordinate to wealth, instead of which wealth will become subordinate to such concern. This will be for the good of the rich too, as it assuredly will be for the good of the masses.

As long as khadi has not been adopted universally, this happy state of affairs will not be achieved and, if khadi is to be so adopted, it

should be recognized beyond dispute that those who are working in this movement can have no use for cloth other than khadi. It is because this is not plain to all that the spread of khadi is slow, people take up the spinning-wheel for a time and stop, start again and stop. This is also why people do not stock cotton, why carding has not become popular, why most people wear khadi merely for show and, in the home, use mill cloth or foreign cloth. As long as this uncertainty prevails, it will be necessary to insist that mill cloth should not be used.

THE LATE RAMABAI RANADE

The name of Ramabai Ranade is not as well known in Gujarat as it is in Maharashtra. This lady brought lustre to the name of the late Justice Ranade. Her death is a great loss to the country.

Few women have lived their lives as widows as worthily as Ramabai did. Search where we will in the country, we shall not find an institution the equal of the Seva Sadan of poona. Here a thousand women and girls receive education in various fields. The Seva Sadan could never have acquired such prestige but for the single-minded devotion of Ramabai. She gave her whole life to this one task.

A widow's life in itself means a life of single-minded devotion. The wife's constancy connotes the purest loyalty. Ordinary loyalty relates to the body and dies with it. The loyalty of the woman living as a widow is to the husband's spirit. By giving a religious significance to the state of widowhood, Hinduism has shown that marriage is not a physical but a spiritual union. Ramabai had married Ranade's soul and she kept this union of souls unbroken. For this reason she took up from among the causes which were dear to him (her husband) a task which was within her capacity. Dedicating herself wholly to it, she taught people the full meaning of widowhood. In this way, Ramabai, through her work, rendered priceless service to women. When I was in the Sassoon Hospital, Col. Maddock told me that good Indian nurses were trained in that hospital, that the trainees came from the Seva Sadan and were in great demand all over the country. If widows wish to take up work, there are many fields open to them. Spinning alone can fill the leisure of hundreds of rich widows. Is there any widow who does not know from experience that the spinning-wheel is the support of the poor? I have here suggested one beneficent activity which can be universally adopted. There are many others like it to which rich widows can give their time, with a view to helping to train

poor widows and other needy women.

CULTIVATORS OF SUPA[1]

A gentleman from Kaliawari[2] writes as follows.[3]

This letter is worth reading and pondering over. It shows that the country is a land of gold. That the agriculturists should not understand the value of an activity which is of profit to themselves is a painful, but not surprising, state of affairs. They have followed their methods for a long time and so cannot grasp elementary economic facts. The higher the price for cotton which they get, the more will they have to spend for their cloth. This is simple and straightforward arithmetic, but how can we expect them to understand it? If a child has been taught by some teacher a wrong method of doing a sum, he will always get wrong answer. If, now another teacher tries to correct the error, he will be laughed at. Such is our pitiful condition today. We have been taught a wrong method, with the result that to us the right method seems wrong and the wrong seems right. It was such phenomena that Shankaracharya described as *maya*.

In these circumstances, the only thing for voluntary workers is to have patience. They must never be angry with cultivators. What their condition is today, ours was yesterday. They will certainly understand their interest. Just as they keep back enough grain for their own use, why should they not store cotton too? If they are too well-off to spin or weave, they may get others to do the work for them. Even the wealthy do not follow such an absurd rule where grain is concerned. They get it cooked in their own homes and do not buy food from the bazaar. In fact, buying food from the bazaar is considered improper for a respectable man. This used to be the feeling in regard to cloth also. Why should it not be so again?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-5-1924

[1] Village in the Surat district of Gujarat

[2] *ibid.*

[3] The letter is not translated here, it describes the reluctance on the part of the farmers of Supa and other villages to spin yarn in their own village from the good cotton grown there.

298. NEGLECT OF THE CHARKHA

A gentleman writes from Kashi that our going into the local boards, etc., has done us no good whatever; in fact, it has put a stop to constructive work. He also says that these people are apathetic towards the charkha. Many people do not also have faith in the charkha. When one says anything to these people, they answer: "We have got on the board on Gandhiji's advice."

First I do not want that anyone should do anything on my advice. Whatever people do, they should do according to their own judgement. We wish to be free. We do not wish to be slaves of anyone, however influential he may be. My own opinion is that it is not so very necessary to go to the local boards, etc. If we do go there, we should do so solely with the intention of furthering constructive work. If, however, it is not possible to carry on constructive work properly there, we should keep away from these institutions.

I know that many non-co-operators have no faith in the power of the charkha. There is only one way of convincing them: that those who have faith in the charkha should ply it with the greatest zest and encourage others. It is my firm belief that without the charkha it is impossible to secure or retain swaraj. True, it may be that all of us do not mean the same thing by swaraj. To me it has but one meaning : *the eradication of the poverty of India and freedom for every man and woman*. Ask the starving men and women of India. They say that their swaraj is their bread. Agriculture alone cannot feed the tens of millions of Indian peasants. They need additional help from some industry or other. The charkha alone can provide such a universal industry. "A starving man cannot think of God."

Another gentleman writes to say that something should be done to provide livelihood to those who have given up their trades on account of the non-co-operation movement. It is and it is not a difficult question to solve at once. If everyone comes to understand the secret of constructive work, the question of starving does not arise at all. But if faith in constructive work is lacking, starvation will remain a perpetual problem. It is my firm belief that he who has faith in the charkha and the handloom can easily find a livelihood. The difficulties of the middle classes in the country can only be solved through industry. We have a number of bad customs. We shall have to

give them up. If only one man labours and there are ten who do nothing, we cannot get a living out of weaving. Also, we should not keep looking up to the Congress all the time. Swaraj should mean this, too, that we become self-supporting. This is what one may call faith in oneself. Lord Krishna, the lover of his devotes, has laid down in the *Bhagavad Gita* one condition for the livelihood of every man. He who wants to appease his hunger should fulfil this condition. *Yajna* means a number of things. One important thing it means is labour. He who eats but performs no labour is a thief, in the words of the Lord.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 4-5-1924

299. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Sunday night, Vaisakha Sud 1 [*May 4, 1924*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

You need not stop writing to me. On the contrary, if there is no letter from you, I would feel perplexed. It will be enough if I have the freedom to reply at my convenience. I am getting better.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the original Gujarati: C.W. 614. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

300. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

PALM BUN, JUHU,
P.O. ANDHERI,
Sunday [On or after *May 4, 1924*][2]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Your being unhappy has made me also unhappy. I avoided the use of *Chi*. in the letter[3] to you, because I sent it unsealed, and because I could not decide just then as to the propriety or otherwise of the prefix *Chi*. as applied to you being read by all those who happened to see the letter. I therefore used *Bhai*. How are we to decide whether

[1] *Vaisakha Sud* 1 in 1924 fell on May 4.

[2] The letter under reply was dated May 3; the Sunday following it fell on May 4, 1924.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", on or before 2-5-1924

you are fit to be a *Chi*. or whether I deserve to take the place of father to you? As you have doubts about yourself, so do I have about myself. If you are imperfect, so am I. I had to take thought about my own fitness before agreeing to be a father to you. In agreeing to be that, I yielded to your love. May God make me worthy of that position. If any deficiencies remain in you, they will be evidence of the failure of my touch. I am confident that, if we try, both of us will succeed. Even if we fail, God who is hungry only for our devotion and can look into the innermost recesses of our heart, will deal with us according to our deserts. I will, therefore, continue to look upon you as *Chi*. as long as I do not consciously harbour impurity in myself.

I shall observe silence today till one o'clock. I have asked Pandit Sunderlal to come at six in the evening. I shall wire to you if, after seeing him, it seems necessary to call you here.

The climate there, I hope, is agreeable. Manibehn has gone to Hajira. Radha, it can be said, is much better. Kikibehn too is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: G.N. 2847

301. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Sunday [On or after *May 4, 1924*][1]

CHI. MANI

I have your letter. This is my fourth letter to You. Before this, I have written one letter and two postcards. But you have acknowledged only one card.

Self-confidence remains unshaken even when things look hopeless. If I have faith in truth and non-violence, I would stick to them even in the hour of crisis. Even if you get fever, you must not give up hope. We may not ignore it, but we must not worry either. I am eager to see your comments on 'Tyagamurti". Don't forget to write to me regularly.

Can you accommodate any person there? If you can, I would like to send Vasumatibehn.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p.16

[1] "Tyagamurti", that is "Renunciation Personified", referred to in the letter, was published in *Navajivan*, 4-5-1924.

302. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Monday, May 5, 1924

CHI. MANI,

I eagerly waited yesterday for a letter from you, as the *chataka* bird waits for rain, and the first letter I read after the morning prayer today was yours. Devdas told me that your letter had been received last evening.

Bhai . . . writes to say that, though you feel tired, your health is better there than it used to be here. If this improvement continues, we shall all leave this place and seek resort there. How I wish, that Durgabehn too should regain her health there! Ask her to write to me. Mahadev's visit to Madras has been cancelled. He has already returned to Sabarmati.

Write to me if you want anything from here. Even a mother will not serve [food to her child] unless asked for. As a matter of fact, it is the mother who will not serve. Others must observe ceremony. A mother has no time for doing this. She is, actually, a living embodiment of ceremony. As you know, I am trying to be such a mother [to you].

Radha and Kikibehn are pretty well. Their temperature does not go above 99^0.

Shaukat Ali was here for a couple of days.

Blessings from

BAPU

MANIBEHN VALLABHBHAI PATEL
KHIMJI ASAR VIRJI SANATORIUM
HAJIRA, *via* SURAT

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 14

303. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

[After *May 5, 1924*][1]

CHI. MANI,

It is a great relief to me that your letters now come regularly. Have patience and self-confidence. Self-confidence will do more good than medicines. Prabhudas has dropped the idea of going to Panchgani. Chi. Radha is all right. She attends the evening prayer. Kikibehn does not show any improvement. Chi. Girdhari left for Ahmedabad yesterday.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MANIBEHN VALLABHBHAI PATEL
HAJIRA, *Via* SURAT

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 15

304. LETTER TO M.R. JAYAKAR

ANDHERI,
Tuesday, May 6, 1924

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

Mr. Bhonsle of the Depressed Classes Mission writes to me saying that you would tell me all about their proposed temple and boarding house. If you are interested in the matter, I would be thankful to be guided by you. They want me to finance the project partly or wholly. I do not know what to do. I hope Mrs. Jayakar is improving.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Story of My Life, Vol. II, p. 269

[1] From the reference to Radha's health, this letter appears to have been written after the letter to Manibehn Patel dated May 5; *vide* the preceding item.

305. LETTER TO QUMAR AHMED

POST ANDHERI,
May 6, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter undated, but I know it was received some time ago. I am sorry I have not been able to read it earlier.

I am not indifferent towards lawyers and schoolmasters. It is because my whole heart is with them that I find it difficult to advise them. No disgrace can possibly be attached to a man who changes his attitude regarding a particular thing from conviction. A lawyer or a schoolmaster who gave [up] his calling at my bidding would be still less blameworthy if, finding me a broken reed, [he] has gone back to his profession. I should be extremely sorry to discover, however, that lawyers and schoolmasters, instead of thinking for themselves, simply did what I said, although I vehemently argued that no one should non-co-operate unless he was convinced of the necessity and the propriety of it. How shall I say to a man, who conscientiously feels that it is wrong to practise before the British Law Courts or serve in British schools, that he should rejoin his profession; and how and why should I prevent those who have no conscientious scruple from rejoining it ? I am quite aware that many pleaders were doing useful public work whilst they were practising. The work that we are now called upon to do is, in my opinion, far superior to what we were doing before, and requires much greater sacrifice. A mofussil pleader, who was just earning his maintenance whilst in practice, can do so now if he will qualify himself as a good weaver, and he can at the same time do public work. I wonder if I have now made myself clear.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Q. AHMED, ESQ.
"THE KHILAFAT DAILY"
JACOB CIRCLE
BOMBAY, POST NO. 11

From a photostat: S.N. 8786; also G.N. 5110

306. LETTER TO K. MADHAVAN NAIR

POST ANDHERI,
May 6, 1924

MY DEAR MADHAVAN NAIR,

I have your letter[1] enclosing your thoughts on the Vaikom struggle. There cannot be any question for displeasure over an honest difference of opinion. In the midst of blind assent, which is being given to all, I say your difference of opinion comes to me as a ray of sunshine. I congratulate you upon it, and I would ask you to adhere to your view until you are convinced to the contrary.

Now for your manuscript. You will be surprised to learn that I have not yet read the *Social Reformer*[2] to which you have referred. I always love to read Mr. Natarajan's writings. I have kept even a copy of that number in my file, but I have not been able to read it. It is my misfortune that I read newspapers the least when I am editing the most. Now let us consider the merits. Do you know that, when Kesav Menon started the movement, he told me that the general body of the Hindus was with the movement? Letters received by me after, from other workers, gave me the same impression. Satyagraha is taken up by one who feels that truth is being trampled under foot. He fights against error with only God as his support. He is never in search for any other support. It comes in time, and if it is legitimate, he accepts it. A satyagrahi is pledged to fight single-handed in the face of starvation and worse. Pray read my article again, and you will probably understand my meaning more clearly than you have done. There is no such thing as a settled fact in satyagraha. If you find that you have erred at any stage, it is never too late to retrace your step. If, in Travancore, public opinion is not in favour, you may not overawe the public by a demonstration from outside. You must patiently wait and suffer. Reduce yourselves to the position of the suppressed classes. Live with them and suffer their humiliation. You are the first

[1] Nair had sent Gandhiji on May 2 a long note on his views on Gandhiji's article in *Young India*, 1-5-1924, on the Vaikom Satyagraha. He had written in the letter forwarding it: "I hope, in the generosity of your heart, you will pardon me for this difference of opinion. I earnestly entreat you to bestow your consideration on the Vaikom question and advise us as to how the fight is to be proceeded with." He had sent copies of his note to *The Hindu* and *Swarajya*, Madras.

[2] *The Indian Social Reformer*, then edited by S. Natarajan

person to tell me that the public in Travancore are not with you.

If you are fighting as an enlightened Hindu against the bigoted Hindu, it is your bounded duty not only not to seek but respectfully to reject all support from non-Hindus. Surely, I do not need to prove the truth of such a simple proposition. I think I have traversed all the points raised by you in your manuscript. I have placed before you, in all humility, the view of satyagraha as I know it, and since I am the author of the word, you must let me give its meaning, and if you do not accept the meaning, the proper thing is to find another word that will bear your own meaning. But, of course, this is a technical point. Even the author cannot claim any exclusive control over words he may coin or the meanings he may give to them. Once they escape his lips or pen, they are no longer his property.

Do please ask me any questions that may arise out of my letter. I purposely refrain from discussing the future programme in view of the barricading of the roads and the Government's refusal to make any arrest. The preliminary thing now is to understand the meaning of satyagraha and its implications. When that is done, and not before, it is easy to settle the future course of action in the light of the interpretation that may be accepted.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. MADHAVAN NAIR
VAKIL
CALICUT

From a photostat: S. N. 10304; also G. N. 5674

307. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

ANDHERI,
Tuesday [*May 6, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I have your letter. I am writing[2], asking them to send you the proofs. I am also asking them to retain your spelling. I do not have a blue pencil at all. What should the uneducated do if every man of letters insists on following his own spelling? Please let me know the reasons why you think your spellings to be the right ones.

[1] The postmark carries the date "7 May' 24".
[2] For the letter to the Navajivan Press, *vide* the following item.

Kindly let me have your brother's name and address. I wish to write to him.

I hope you are not under a vow not to purchase new clothes if you do not have enough there. I have seen people sitting in the sun and suffering even when there is the shade of a tree nearby. Are you also like them?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

PS.

I do not wish that you should undertake any work beyond your strength. When anybody consults me, I just give him names of competent persons. My responsibility ends there.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C. W. 6001. courtesy: V. G. Desai

308. LETTER TO SWAMI ANANDANAND

Tuesday [*May 6, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI ANANDANAND,

Here is Valji's salute. He wants to see the proofs. He insists on his spelling being retained. According to the saying, "even a kick from a milch cow is welcome", we have to accept all his conditions. His pamphlet can be published only next week. I am sending it to you immediately on receiving it, so that you may be able to send the proofs to him.

What is the name of Valji's brother ? And his address?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand : G. N. 7754

[1] This letter was evidently written the same day as the preceding one.

309. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

Tuesday [After *May 6, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I had your letter. You must have noticed that one half of it has been dealt with in *Navajivan*. Your suggestion therein to reserve one Column of *Navajivan* deserves serious consideration. You may take it this time. It will give you an opportunity to read all the issues of *Navajivan*.

Let me know your brother's qualifications and what pay he expects.

Herewith a typed copy of your article with sufficient space for corrections and additions so that you may not have to call for the proofs. Go through it and return it immediately so that it may be included in next week's issue.

I do hope you will improve there.

I hope to reach the Ashram towards the end of May.[2]

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand : C. W. 6203. Courtesy : V. G. Desai

310. LETTER TO GANGABEHN MEGHJI

ANDHERI,

Wednesday [*May 7, 1924*][3]

PU.[4] GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. I was glad to know that you would be going to the Ashram shortly.

Kaka should certainly visit your place when he goes to Bombay next time. Tell him this when you go to the Ashram.

[1] In the letter dated 6-5-1924, Gandhiji had inquired about the name and address of the addressee's brother who wanted some employment.

[2] Gandhiji arrived at the Ashram on May 29, 1924.

[3] The Postmark carries this date.

[4] Abbreviation for *pujya*, revered

I hope you have reduced your self-imposed burden of dispensing medicines.

I am writing to Ba about your intending to go to the Ashram. I, too, will go there at the end of this month.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Gangaswarup Gangabehnne, p. 4

311. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Wednesday [*May 7, 1924*][1]

CHI. MANI,

I got two of your letters at the same time yesterday. It is not clear whether you get my letters. Instead of writing once a week, I have written a letter to you almost every alternate day. Your fever is bound to go. I think there is nothing to worry about, since you are able to eat and your bowels move. The complaint is old and, therefore, will take time to be cured.

I am waiting for your comments on "Tyagamurti".

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro— Manibehn Patelne, p. 17

[1] From the reference in the letter to the article "Tyagamurti", the letter appears to have been written subsequent to "Letter to Manibehn Patel", on or after 4-5-1924.

312. MESSAGE TO THE COUNTRY[1]

[*March 18, 1922*]

There is no need now for me to give a message. People know what my message is. Tell them that each and every Indian must remain peaceful and make every possible effort to maintain the peace. They must wear only khadi and spin. If they want to secure my release, they should do so only through peace and non-violence. Please remember that if you resort to violence, I would much rather stay in the prison.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 19-3-1922

313. MY JAIL EXPERIENCES - IV[2]

'POLITICAL' PRISONERS

"We do not make any distinction between political and other prisoners. Surely you do not want any such distinction to be made in your favour?" Thus said Sir George Lloyd[3] when he visited the Yeravda Jail about the end of the last year. He said that in reply to an inadvertent use made by me of the adjective 'political'. I ought to have known better. For I was fully aware of the Governor's distaste for that word. And yet, strange to say, the history tickets of most of us were marked 'political'. When I remarked upon the anomaly, I was told by the then Superintendent that the distinction was private and was intended only for the guidance of the authorities. We, the prisoners, were to ignore it, for we could not base any claim upon it.

I have reproduced Sir George Lloyd's language word for word so far as I can remember. There is a sting about what Sir George

[1] The message, given by Gandhiji before leaving the Sessions Court, Ahmedabad, on being sentenced, should be read with "Message to the Country"; *vide* 18-3-1922.

[2] For the first three articles of this series.

[3] Governor of Bombay; for Gandhiji's letter to him regarding prisoner classification, *vide* "Letter to Governor of Bombay", 15-8-1923.

Lloyd said. And it was so gratuitous. For he knew that I was asking for no favours and no distinction. Circumstances had[1] brought about a general discussion. But the idea was to tell me, "You are no better than the rest in the eye of the law and the administration." And yet the painful inconsistency was that the very time that the distinction was, without any occasion for it, combated in theory, it was made in practice. Only, in the majority of Gases, it was made against the political prisoners.

As a matter of fact, it is impossible to avoid making distinctions. If the human factor were not ignored, it would be necessary to understand a prisoner's habits of life, and model his life accordingly in the prisons. It is not a question of distinguishing between rich men and poor men or educated and uneducated, but between modes of life these antecedents have developed in them. As against the inevitable recognition of the existing fact, it has been urged that the men who commit crimes should know that the law is no respecter of persons, and that it is the same to the law whether a rich man or a graduate or a labourer commits theft. This is a perversion of a sound law. If it is really the same to the law as it should be,each will get the treatment according to his capacity for suffering. To give thirty stripes to a delicately-built thief and as many to an able-bodied one would be not impartiality but vindictiveness towards the delicate one and probably indulgence to the able-bodied. Similarly to expect, say, Pandit Motilalji[2] to sleep on a rough coirmat spread on hard floor is additional punishment, not equality of treatment.

If the human factor was introduced into the administration of the jails, the ceremony on admission would be different from what it is today. Finger-impressions would undoubtedly be taken, a record of past offences would find its place in the register. But there will be, in addition, particulars about the prisoner's habits and mode of life. Not distinction but classification is perhaps the word that better describes the necessary method which the authorities, if they would treat prisoners as human beings, must recognize. Some kind of classification there already is. For instance, there are circles wherein prisoners are

[1] The source has "has".

[2] Motilal Nehru (1861-1331), prominent lawyer and Swarajist leader; President, Indian National Congress, 1919 and 1928

housed in batches in long cells. Then there are the separate single cells intended for dangerous criminals. There are solitary cells where prisoners undergoing solitary confinement are locked. There are, again, the condemned cells in which are locked prisoners awaiting the gallows. Lastly, there are cells for under-trial prisoners. The reader will be surprised to find that political prisoners were mostly confined in the separate division or the solitary. In some cases, they were confined in condemned cells. Let me not do an injustice to the authorities. Those who do not know these divisions and cells may form the impression that the condemned cells, for instance, must be specially bad. Such, however, is not the case. The cells are all well-constructed and airy so far as Yeravda Jail is concerned. What is, however, open to strong objection is the association about these cells.

The classification being, as I have shown, inevitable and in existence, there is no reason why it should not be scientific and human. I know that revision of classification according to my suggestion means a revolution in the whole system. It undoubtedly means more expense and a different type of men to work the new system. But additional expense will mean economy in the long run. The greatest advantage of the proposed revolution would no doubt be a reduction in the crimes and reformation of the prisoners. The jails would then be reformatories representing to society sinners as its reformed and respectable members. This may be a far-off event. If we were not under the spell of a long-lived custom, we should not find it a difficult task to turn our prisons into reformatories.

Let me quote here a pregnant remark made by one of the jailors. He once said:

> When I admit search or report prisoners, I often ask myself whether I am a better man than most of them. God knows I have been guilty of worse crimes than what some have come here for. The difference is that these poor men have been detected whereas I am not.

Is not what the good jailor confessed true of many of us? Is it not true that there are more undetected than detected crimes? Society does not point the finger of scorn at them. But habit has made us look askance at those who are not smart enough to escape detection. Imprisonment often makes them hardened criminals.

The animal treatment commences on arrest. The accused are in theory assumed to be innocent unless they are found guilty. In practice the demeanour of those in charge of them is one of haughtiness and contempt. A convicted man is lost to society. The atmosphere in the prison inures him to the position of inferiority.

The political prisoners do not as a rule succumb to this debilitating atmosphere, because they, instead of responding to the depressing atmosphere, act against it and, therefore, even refine it to a certain extent. Society, too, refuses to regard them as criminals. On the contrary, they become heroes and martyrs. Their sufferings in the jail are exaggerated by the public. And such indulgence in many cases even demoralizes the political prisoners. But unfortunately, exactly in proportion to the indulgence of the public, is the strictness, mostly unwarranted, of the officials. The Government regard the political prisoners as more dangerous to society than the ordinary prisoner. An official seriously contended that a political prisoner's crime placed the whole society in danger whereas an ordinary crime harmed only the criminal.

Another official told me that the reason why the political prisoners were isolated and denied newspapers, magazines, etc., was to bring the guilt home to them. Political prisoners, he said, seemed to glory in 'imprisonment'. The deprivation of the liberty, while it afflicted the ordinary criminal, left the political prisoner unmoved. It was, therefore, he added, but natural that the Government should devise some other method of punishment. hence, he said, the denial of facilities which otherwise such prisoners should undoubtedly have.

The remarks were made in connectiuo with my request for *The Times of India* weekly, or the *Indian Social Reformer,* or the *Servant India* or *Modern Review* or *Indian Review.* Let the reader not regard this deprivation as a light penalty for those who regard the newspaper as a necessity in no way inferior to breakfast. I dare say that Mr. Majli would not have suffered mental derangement If he had been allowed the use of newspapers[1] It is equally depressing for one who is not, like me, a reformer for all occasions, to be put up together with dangerous criminals as almost all the political prisoners were put in Yeravda. It is

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 3-4-1924.

no light thing to be in the company of those who never speak but to utter foul language or whose conversation is as a rule indecent. I could understand political prisoners being put in such surroundings, if the Government sanely took them in their confidence and used them to exercise a wholesome influence on the ordinary criminal. This however is, I admit, not a practical proposition. My contention is that placing of political prisoners in unwholesome surroundings is an additional and an unwarranted punishment. They ought to be put in a separate division and given a treatment in keeping with their antecedents.

I hope civil resisters will not misunderstand this or any other chapter in which I have advocated reforms of prisons. it would ill become a civil resister to resent whatever inconvenience he may be subjected to. He is out to put up with the roughest treatment. If the treatment is humane, it is well; but it is also well if it be otherwise.

Young India, 8-5-1924

314. NOTES

THE LATE MRS. RAMABAI RANADE

The death of Ramabai Ranade[1] is a great national loss. She was the embodiment of all that a Hindu widow could be. She was a true friend and helpmate to her illustrious husband in his lifetime. After his death she chose as her life-work one of her husband's activities. Mr. Ranade[2] was a reformer and deeply interested in the uplift of Indian womanhood. Ramabai therefore threw herself heart and soul into the Sevasadan. She concentrated her whole energy upon it. The result is that the Sevasadan has become an institutionwithout a second of its kind throughout all India. It educates nearly one thousand girls and women. Col. Maddock[3] told me that it was his hospital that turned out the best and the largest number of Indian nurses. All these sisters

[1] 1862-1924; wife of Mahadev Govind Ranade

[2] 1842-1901; eminent judge, and a founder of Indian National Congress

[3] Surgeon-General at Sassoon Hospital, Poona, who operated upon Gandhiji for appendicitis in January 1924

belong to the Sevasadan. No doubt, Ramabai had in Mr. Devdhar[1] a worker of tireless energy and great capacity for detail. But it only enhances Ramabai's merit that she had capable and devoted co-workers. The Sevasadan will always remain a living monument to her sacred memory. I tender my humble sympathy to the deceased sister's family and her many children of the Sevasadan.

PRINCIPAL GIDWANI[2]

Mrs. Gidwani in the course of a letter in reply to my inquiry, writes:

> When I went to see him some time ago, I noticed that the authorities were behaving roughly towards my husband. He was locked. His clothes were dirty. He looked much reduced, as he had fasted for seven days. Formerly, when at the time of Chauri Chaura he fasted, he was not so much reduced. He receives the same food as the other prisoners. All kinds of difficulties are placed in the way of visitors. His brother has written twice about visiting, but has had no satisfaction. But I do not worry. Man climbs only through difficulties.

This is a pathetic letter from a woman passionately devoted to her husband. Mrs. Gidwani's letter is not intended for publication. The letter is a domestic letter written to a common friend whom I had asked to inquire of Mrs. Gidwani as to the condition of her husband. If the facts are as stated by Mrs. Gidwani, they do no credit to the present administration in Nabha. Principal Gidwani is evidently being treated as a common felon although he has not been tried. He entered the State boundary, as Mr. Zimand has stated, purely in the cause of humanity. I invite the Nabha administration to deny or explain the foregoing statement and I promise to give the same publicity to their explanation as I have given to Mrs. Gidwani's statement.

JOURNALISTIC LANGUAGE

A friend writes:

> Have you read the *Chronicle* leader "Address to Mahatma"? The writer says therein: "The opposition, if we may take the report or the speeches made by two or three opposers as an indication, was for opposition's sake and was

[1] G. K. Devdhar; member, later president, of the Servants of India Society
[2] A. T. Gidwani; Principal, Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad.

confined to the professionally cantankerous and those whose blood has turned to venom in their veins through jealousy of the success of the Mahatma's movement." When the *Times* writes about Mr. Mohamed Ali, you lecture to it. Have you nothing to say to the *Chronicle* which claims to be your follower and which uses unrestrained and untruthful language towards political opponents?

I am unaware of having 'lectured' to the *Times*. I would not have the courage, even if I was so minded. The writer evidently refers to my remarks about the campaign of calumny that is at present going on in certain vernacular journals. As it so happened, I read the translated extracts in *The Times of India* columns and was obliged to refer to it. But advice I tendered was, as the writer may verify for himself, not to *The Times of India* but to the vernacular journals in question. But though I disclaim the charge of having 'lectured' to the *Times*, I am prepared to say that the writer in the *Chronicle* should have, consistently with his profession of non-violent non-co-operation, avoided the imputations against the opposers of the address. I must confess to my correspondent that I have not read the article he refers to. As a rule, I do not read writings in the Indian Press about me, whether they are laudatory or condemnatory. Praise I do not need, as I am sufficiently proud of myself without outside help. Condemnation I refrain from reading, lest the Hyde in me get the better of the Jekyll and do violence to my non-violence. My remarks about the *Chronicle* writing are subject to such correction as may be provided by a reading of the whole article. I presume, however, that the remarks refer to Messrs J. B. Petit[1] and Kanji Dwarkadas[2]. I have the honour to know both of them well. The relations between us are as friendly as they were before the birth of non-co-operation. I cannot conceive it possible for either of them to have venom against me. They frankly dislike my ways. They at least will not oppose for opposition's sake. What I have heard from those who voted for the address is that Mr. Petit spoke with, for him, amazing restraint. I know he can let himself go when he wishes to. But he realized that he had a painful duty to perform as it was in connection with a friend. As an old member of

[1] Parsi philanthropist of Bombay
[2] Leading member of the Home Rule League and Gandhiji's friend

the Corporation, he felt that the Corporation was departing from its traditions in voting an address to a person whose amiable virtues could not be isolated from his (to Mr. Petit) abominable politics. In my humble opinion Messrs Petit and Kanji were justified in registering their opposition against what they honestly held was a wrong step being taken by the Bombay Municipal Corporation. There is undoubtedly too much imputing of motives in our public life at the present moment. No Swarajist (let alone the co-operators) is safe from imputations by No-changers. The latter are equally roughly handled by the Swarajists. And the Liberals by both. Why should men who were supposed to be honest before suddenly become dishonest on changing their political colour? Non-co-operators have special reason for caution because they have changed, not their opponents. It cannot be the latter's fault if they do not see eye to eye with us. I would therefore transfer all my wrath against the views rather than against their holders.

VAIKOM SATYAGRAHA

The Vaikom satyagraha is, I fear crossing the limits. I do hope that the Sikh free kitchen will be withdrawn and that the movement will be confined to Hindus only. Its inclusion in the Congress programme no more makes it a movement of Hindus and non-Hindus than the Khilafat became a Muslim and non-Muslim movement by reason of its inclusion in the Congress programme. Moreover, the opponents of the Khilafat movement were non-Muslims represented by the British Government. It would be an intrusion, which Mussalmans would rightly regard as impertinent, if Hindus or other non-Muslims interfered in an intra-communal[1] religious dispute among themselves. Similarly would orthodox Hindus resent interference by others in what is purely Hindu reform. The Hindu reformers of Malabar will estrange the entire Hindu sympathy if they accept or encourage non-Hindu interference or assistance beyond sympathy. I am sure that the Hindu reformers who are leading the movement in Vaikom do not want to convert their orthodox brethren by compulsion. In any case, let them recognize the boundary line which a satyagrahi must not cross. I respectfully urge the reformers not to overawe

[1] The source has "inter-communal."

the orthodox. I dissent from the view that once the disputed road to Vaikom is free, the problem of untouchability is solved even in Malabar. Victory in Vaikom, if non violent, will no doubt shake the citadel of sacerdotal superstition in general, but the problem will have to be everywhere locally tackled wherever it arises. Because a well in one place in Gujarat is thrown open for the use of the untouchables, it does not follow that all the wells in Gujarat will be opened for their use. And how would it fare with Hinduism if the Christian, the Muslim, the Akali, and other non-Hindu friends of the Hindu reformers made a demonstration against the orthodox Hindus, financed the reformers and finally overawed the orthodox into subjection? Will that be satyagraha, will submission then be voluntary, will it be reform in Hinduism?

Young India, 8-5-1924

315. TO CORRESPONDENTS[1]

My correspondents are daily increasing in number. I mean both those who write to me as editor and those who write and seek advice on public matters. I assure them that I read the correspondence as much as I can, and deal with it in these columns to the extent of my ability. But I confess my inability to deal exhaustively with all the important matters discussed by my correspondents. Nor is it possible for me to answer them all separately. *Young India* they will kindly regard as a personal letter to them. Correspondence, if it is to command attention, must be brief, legible and impersonal.

Young India, 8-5-1924

[1] This notice, set up in italics, was repeated in the subsequent issues of *Young India*.

316. A HEART SEARCHER

It is with pleasure mingled with pain that I give the following letter from an esteemed correspondent:

> The recent article in *Young India* has removed most of my doubts, but there are still a few questions which I would like to be further cleared up. I would also like that these should be published in *Young India* at an early date. Your views on Council-entry are now quite clear and they do not now trouble me. But I would like that you should express your views as to the capturing of seats in the Municipalities and the District Boards. In 1921 I sent you one telegram inviting your opinion on these points. It received the following reply:
>
> "May capture Municipalities, doubtful about District Boards."[1] Towards the end of 1923, new elections have taken place in all the Municipalities and the N.C.O.'s have captured most of them. We have contested the District Board elections as well. Our experiences of these elections are very sad and instead of strengthening the Congress cause, they have materially weakened it. They gave rise to bitter controversies, mutual jealousies and hatred amongst our N.C.O. co-workers.
>
> On the other hand, we have practically alienated the sympathies of our Moderate supporters, land-holders, and other interested persons. They have now assumed threatening attitude and are trying their best to obstruct and discredit us. What is more serious is that we have to keep up connection with the Government. We receive grants from the Government, and have to communicate everything to the Government officials. It is undoubtedly true that we get opportunities of serving the people, but the labour, time and energy we bestow do not produce adequate result, nor do they materially advance our cause of early attainment of swaraj. In the District Board, Primary, Secondary and Middle Vernacular Schools are under our control, but we have to run these on Government prescribed lines. I, therefore, request you to let me have your views. The election of Chairman and Vice-chairman is shortly to take place in our district and we want a clear reply whether we should contest for these seats. One thing appears to be clear and this is that it is useless to enter these bodies unless we get our own men as Chairman and Vice-chairman.

[1] This telegram is not traceable.

My last query is what we should do with our Congress organizations. Under the rules we have to elect members from villages to Circles, from Circles to Thanas, from Thanas to Sub-divisions or District, from District to the Province and from the Province to the A.I.C.C. It is a huge unwieldy affair. We have got neither workers nor funds and so we are unable to carry on this huge organization. Some of us suggest that we should concentrate all our activities on the District Boards and Municipalities, and leave the Congress organizations to its fate. The running of Congress organizations is very expensive and practically all have died out.

As regards constructive work, it appeals neither to our workers nor to the villagers nor the public. It takes a very long time and it passes my comprehension to understand how it can lead us to speedy attainment of swaraj. I do admit that constructive work is quite necessary, but the question is how to accomplish it speedily.

All our workers have lost faith and have become quite disheartened for want of adequate public response and want of wherewithal to support themselves and their families. Almost all have practically deserted the Congress organizations, as they cannot be supported. Unless our workers be provided with at least subsistence allowance and they are infused with new life and fresh faith, no work is possible. By this time you must have come to know everything and it is needless to add anything. People have lost all faith in our Congress organizations and are quite unwilling to give us anything or to support us. It is quite true that we have not acted up to the high ideal of non-violence in thought, word and deed. We have practically non-co-operated amongst ourselves and one N.C.O. feels or takes another N.C.O. to be his antagonist. Mutual jealousies, rivalries, want of brotherliness and truthfulness have brought discredit to the whole Congress organization; so we get no response. It is water is a few truthful, honest and non-violent workers rather than a large army of workers fighting amongst themselves. A thorough cleansing of hearts and a complete overhauling of the entire Congress organization is necessary before we can achieve anything substantial. We have been caught up with a vain desire for name fame and leadership. This has given rise to want of discipline in our ranks and stirred up feelings of jealousy and rivalries.

We must purify ourselves— this is the first requisite. The second requisite is that our workers should be free from the mental worry of earning

something for themselves and their families. Well-to-do men neither give us financial support nor do they themselves take to national service. Therefore, the entire burden fans on the poorer classes.

PS.

1. Arrangement of financial support to our workers should be done at once, otherwise even the few who are with us will leave the work that they are doing.

2. Should you decide that we should stick to the District Board sad Municipalities, you should give us a clear-cut programme for our work in these bodies. Should you decide otherwise, we should vacate all the seats in a body. It appears that the people are not ready for non-payment of cess or rents should that eventually arise. There is great confusion as to our ideals in these bodies. Some say that we should make the e bodies as battle-grounds for our fight with the Government, others urge obstruction and yet others advise us to work out these bodies and use them for public good. Capturing of these bodies has a weakening effect on our Congress organizations.

The writer has wide experience of public life and is a staunch worker. His letter, therefore, deserves careful perusal. For me it is a heart searcher.

I do not like, have never liked, this reliance on me for every thing. It is the very worst way of managing national affairs. The Congress must not become, as it has threatened to become, one man's show, no matter how good or great that one man be. I often think that it would have been better for the country and for me if I had served the full term of my imprisonment. The country would by that time have settled down to a programme which could be called its own. Today it is difficult to say whose the Congress programme is. It cannot be the country's if workers have every time to refer to me for guidance. It cannot be mine, for alone I can work no programme. The writer's reliance is not peculiar but typical. Another friend, after objecting to almost everything in the programme, says: "But in spite of all this, my reverence and affection for you are sufficiently deep to make me do anything you may want me to do. whether I agree with you or not." This friend goes further than the first. The latter at least agrees with the programme and wants advice. The former opposes and still wants to submit. All such devotion may flatter my vanity, but most

certainly retards our progress towards our goal. We must dare to act according to our honest conviction even though there may be danger of our making terrible mistakes. Swaraj is a way of government by tests, trials and mistakes. It is a thousand times better that we are undone through our mistakes than that we avoid them through the perpetual guidance of a man be he ever so wise. It has become a serious question with me whether it would not be in the best interests of the country for me to retire altogether from all public activity and simply devote myself to my own chosen profession of spinning and weaving and playing with the children at the Satyagraha Ashram so long as personal friends care to support the Ashram. Anyway, my strong advice to friends and fellow-workers is never to accept my word as law. My advice is always at their disposal. But even that should be most sparingly sought.

A careful perusal of the foregoing letter shows that the writer has himself suggested the best remedy for the ills he so graphically describes. If insincerity, hypocrisy and jealousy have crept into. our ranks, one must weed the vices out and we can do so only by withdrawing within ourselves. Five good, honest, self-sacrificing workers with faith are any day better than fifty thousand insincere, indolent workers without faith. They but hinder work even of the five.

Now for the concrete cases.

As for the district boards and even municipalities, entry into them by non-co-operators can only be justified if they further the Congress aims and help its organization. If one cannot work the khaddar programme or Hindu-Muslim unity or help untouchables or national schools through these institutions, we must certainly vacate and shun them; much more so if the entry gives rise to wranglings between non-co-operators and raises bad blood generally.

As to workers' maintenance, I have no doubt that it must come from provincial organizations. The central organizations will never be able to control, regulate and pay provincial services. When a provincial organization fails to find local support, it deserves to die; for want of support shows that it never was popular in the province in question. And what is a local Congress organization if it is not popular? The fee of four annas per head by itself should make a

Congress organization self-supporting if it has a large membership. If it has not, it shows again that it is not *popular*. It is my certain conviction that, wherever good khaddar work is done by the Congress, its organization is popular and is on a fair way to becoming self-supporting, if it has not done that already. But "my faith in the charkha," says the second writer already quoted by me:

> Is at its low water-mark today. It is impossible for a whole middle-class family to subsist on the charkha only, especially when it is more than obvious that any such concentration would mean the elimination of all other activity. And it seems terrible waste and perverse economy to 'put racehorses to the plough' as the phrase has it.

This statement betrays ignorance of the fact that the claims of the charkha are much humbler than the writer attributes to it. No one has ever even suggested that the charkha, i.e., hand-spinning, can support a whole middle-class family. It is not claimed that it alone can support even the poorest family. But it is claimed that it can and is today entirely supporting many starving men and women who have been hitherto satisfied even with two pice per day. It is claimed for it that it can materially supplement the earning of millions of peasants. To the middle class it is recommended as a daily practice for the sake of training, for the sake of producing a charkha atmosphere and for the sake of making it possible to give higher wages to those who spin for hire. Lastly, the middle class people *can* live on weaving as thousands of weavers are today doing. Surely it is not a small thing if a middle-class family can earn from two to three rupees per day. What is meant by 'all other activity', I do not know. If it means all other public activity, I wish it could be eliminated for the time being. It is just the thing wanted to bring into being an organization that would be irresistible in its demand for swaraj. It will not then be 'putting racehorses to the plough' but it will be bringing up the other horses to the level of the race-horses. When a ship is on fire, the captain is the first one to stand at the pump and he brings up the rest to the same life-saving apparatus. Imagine the fate of a ship in which, when it is burning, the captain is playing fiddle and expects the sailors and the rest to take up buckets and put out the fire in the best way they can.

Young India, 8-5-1924

317. IS IT NON-CO-OPERATION?

The argument has been advanced that with the failure (in my opinion wrongly assumed) of the boycott of titles, schools, law-courts, and Councils, Non-co-operation is dead. The critics see nothing of Non-co-operation in the slow and unexciting khaddar programme. They forget that the fourfold boycott is like a scaffolding which is absolutely necessary till the whole structure is ready. It does not matter that the institutions, which are the symbols of the authority we seek to destroy, continue to exist so long as we do not make use of them. The fact is that we cannot erect our structure without the scaffolding of the fourfold boycott. And we must succeed if we can work the Congress organization without the aid of these institutions and even in spite of them. Moreover, let us not forget that our boycott is not fourfold, but fivefold. The fifth is by far the most important, i.e., boycott of foreign (not merely British) cloth.

The boycott is the negative, though on that account none the less useful, part of our programme. Khaddar, national schools, panchayats, Hindu-Muslim unity, and uplift of the untouchable, the drunkard and the opium-eater, are the positive part of our programme. The greater our progress in it, the greater will be the progress towards the boycott and, therefore, towards swaraj. Nature abhors a vacuum. Therefore, construction must keep pace with destruction. Even if all the titled friends gave up their titles, and if schools, courts and Councils were entirely deserted, and being thus embarrassed the Government abdicated in our favour, and if we had no constructive work to our credit, we could not conduct swaraj. We should be entirely helpless. I often wonder whether it is sufficiently realized that our movement is not one for mere change of personnel but for change of the system and the methods. Full khaddar programme is, therefore, to me full swaraj. The English interest in India is selfish and in conflict with the national interest. It is anti-national, because of the illegitimate cotton interest. To boycott, therefore, foreign cloth is to sterilize the English and all other foreign interests. Boycott merely of British cloth may harm the British, but can lead to no construction in India. Boycott of British cloth will be a

jump out of frying pan into fire. Not before the foreign piece-goods trade is entirely replaced by homespun will the bleeding process cease. Boycott of foreign cloth, therefore, is the centre of our boycott programme. The central boycott cannot succeed until we universalize khaddar. In order to achieve the desirable end, we will need to employ all our resources to the fullest extent. We shall need men, money and machinery, i.e., organization. We cannot universalize khaddar without Hindu-Muslim unity, without removing untouchability. To make khaddar successful is to *demonstrate* our capacity forself-government. Khaddar is a people's programme, for success in which all, high and low, rich and poor, Hindu and non-Hindu must take part.

But say the sceptics, 'How can khaddar bring swaraj? Will Englishmen then retire in our favour?' My answer is—yes and no. Yes, because Englishmen will then find that their interest must be coincident with that of India. They will then be content to remain in India as her servants, for they will have then found that they cannot *impose* their custom upon us. When, therefore, khaddar becomes successful, Englishmen's hearts will have been changed. They will regard it, then, as an honour to be our allies instead of regarding it, as they do now, their right to be our masters. My answer is no, if we intend to drive out Englishmen and ruin *every* English interest, legitimate or otherwise. Such is not the goal of the non-violent movement. Non-violence has its limits. It refuses to hate or generate hatred. Indeed, by its very nature, it is incapable of so doing. 'But' the sceptics further argue, 'suppose the English refuse to revise their system and insist upon holding India by the sword, what can universal use of khaddar do?' In thus doubting the efficacy of khaddar, they forget that khaddar is an indispensable preparation for civil diso-bedience. And this, everyone admits, is an irresistible force. Without the universal adoption of khaddar, I see no chance whatsoever of universal civil, i.e., non-violent, disobedience. Any single district that can be fully organized for khaddar is, if it is also trained for suffering, ready for civil disobedience. And I have not a shadow of doubt that even one district thus organized can make itself irresistible even though the whole might of the Government may be matched against it.

'Who shall bell the cat?' is the last question. That question is, however, irrelevant to the present inquiry. The question I set out to

answer was whether constructive programme, i.e., khaddar, could be considered part of Non-co-operation. I have attempted to prove that it is an integral part of Non-co-operation in its positive aspect.

Young India, 8-5-1924

318. NOTE ON BHAGWANDAS'S LETTER

I gladly publish Babu Bhagwandas's[1] letter[2]. The Congress scheme of swaraj can only be formulated when the Congress is ready to take swaraj. What it will do *then*, one can say *now*. But I have promised Babu Bhagwandas that I would certainly publish my own scheme. I am aware that all sorts of ideas are entertained about my conception of swaraj. I simply ask for breathing time. Meanwhile, I assure our respected countrymen that I have absolutely no design on capitalists. I can have none as I don't believe in violence. But I do want cleanliness in capitalism as well as in labour. And I would certainly resist capitalism being used to exploit the resources of the country for the use of the few, be they foreigners or home-born. But let me not anticipate my scheme.

Young India, 8-5-1924

319. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

POST ANDHERI,
May 8, 1924

DEAR MR. NATESAN[3],

Refreshing to see your writing again. Do please come either on your way or return. Somebody has evidently played a hoax. I am not coming to Madras for months to come. If and when I come, I would

[1] Scholar and public worker of Banaras; took leading part in establishing Kashi Vidyapith, a national university, at Banaras.

[2] This was an elaborate appeal to Gandhiji to indicate in the columns of *Young India* 'the kind of swaraj that India needs'; for the text of the letter, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Bhagwan Das", 8-5-1924.

[3] G. A. Natesan; author, journalist ant publisher; for some time member of the Council of State and Tariff Board; editor, *The Indian Review*

love to stay with you, if it is at all possible, I am sorry I did not read your speech nor did I know of your resolution.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

G. A. NATESAN, ESQ.
"INDIAN REVIEW"
MADRAS

From a photostat: C.N. 2234

320. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

Thursday [*May 8, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI DAHYABHAI,

I have your letter. In spite of your bitter experiences, the only course is for you to go on doing your work. There is an error in your views about *goshalas*. Who can keep cows in cities, and who will maintain infirm cattle? People in the villages may certainly keep cows and buffaloes. The *goshala* activity does not come in the way of their keeping these.

Here is the message for the Conference[2].

"The aim of the Conference ought to be to take stock of the work done so far and to lay down the programme of work for the future.

Much remains to be done for promoting carding, spinning, weaving, etc. If the Conference does it, it will, I believe, have brought credit to the fair name of Dholka and India.

I take it that there is none in Dholka who is regarded as an untouchable and that Hindus and Muslims there live like brothers."

I am not going even to Borsad; how, then, could I go there?

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

DAHYABHAI PATEL
TALUKA SAMITI
DHOLKA

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's band: C.W. 2688. Courtesy: D. M. Patel

[1] The postmark carries this date.
[2] Dholka Taluka Conference

321. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH[1]

ANDHERI,
Thursday [*May 8, 1924*][2]

BHAISHRI,

I have your letter. I emphatically told you *not to attach any weight* to *my opinion*. Only a resolution which suits all should be passed. I have sent an article to *Navajivan*, which will perhaps throw more light on the matter. I can think further about this only after I have met all the workers and understood their points of view. It is not at all proper to be guided solely by what I think in the matter. Why don't you yourself think over every aspect and advise the people to do what you consider proper?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

DEVCHANDBHAI PAREKH
VARTEJ

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S.N. 5690

322. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

ANDHERI,
Thursday [*May 8, 1924*][3]

BHAISHRI VALJI[4],

I have received the other material sent by you. The proofs will certainly be sent to you. We, not you, are at the feet of the Himalayas. You could describe only yourself as being "half way to the Himalayas". You should know better than I about the articleyou wrote at that time of my trial. Was I permitted to carry anything with me to the prison?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: C.W. 6002. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

[1] A public worker of Kathiawar, then associated with Kathiawar Political Conference

[2] The postmark bears this date.

[3] The postmark carries this date.

[4] Valji Govindji Desai; inmate of Satyagraha Ashram; worked on the editorial staff of *Young India*

323. DRAFT OF CABLE TO LAJPAT RAI[1]

[BOMBAY,
On or after *May 8, 1924*]

NEVER DREAMT SUCH THING. SEE NO CHANGE HEART WARRANTING CO-OPERATION.

GANDHI

The cable of proposed reply to be shown to Motilalji. If he approves its reply, it should be sent.[2]

From a photostat: S.N. 8790A

324. LETTER TO NARASINHRAO BHOLANATH DIVETIA[3]

ANDHERI,
Vaisakha Sud 6 [*May 10, 1924*][4]

DEAR FRIEND,

I have the letter which you sent for publication in *Navajivan*. It seems from it that you did not like the way I used your name in my

[1] 1865-1928; nationalist leader; was deported by the British Government in 1907 and lived for some years in the U.S.A.; President of the Indian National Congress, 1920, Calcutta session

This was in reply to Lajpat Rai's cable from Hampstead, England dated May 7, 1924, received by Gandhiji on May 8. It read: "Great stir caused by telegrams reporting you propose co-operation with Government through Councils next Congress please wire if untrue read *Chronicle* wire today." A report had also appeared in the *Daily Telegraph*, London, in a despatch from its Calcutta correspondent which said: "Mahatma Gandhi has decided to take the lead at the next Congress on a platform for securing a majority in the Assembly and Provincial Councils replacing the futile rejection of budget by a programme combining co-operation in carrying on the essential services with persistent demands backed up by consistent and substantial majorities for the speedy extension and recasting of the Reforms and speeding up Indianization including the Army."

[2] The draft carried this note by Gandhiji.

[3] 1859-l937; man of letters and educationist

[4] The addressee's letter referred to was published in *Navajivan*, 18-5-1924 *Vaisakha Sud* 6 fell on May 10.

article[1] I wrote that sentence merely out of love. I have great regard for Bhai Khabardar's[2] learning and services to literature and for yours. Will you, however, forgive me if you still think that I have given any cause for offence? I will certainly publish your letter.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Narasinhraoni Rojnishi

325. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI[3]

[Before *May 11, 1924*][4]

"Adhiru Kathiawar"

"Agami Parishad"

"Antyaja Parishad"

"Satyagraha Chhavanima Mel"

"Namra Sevakne"

"Vorano Dar"

"Id Mubarak"

"Jnati Sudhar"

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I send the items listed above. I do not propose to send any more tomorrow. The note "Satyagraha Chhavanima Mel[5] should be shown to Vallabhbhai[6] and, if he disapproves of it or if you yourself consider it improper, you may not print it. Even if you decide not to print it, do make an inquiry about the matter. The charge is very serious.

Please tell Swami that I read nine galleys of proofs of the

[1] *Vide* "My Language", 27-4-1924.

[2] Ardeshar Faramji Khabardar, Parsi poet

[3] Mahadev Desai (1892-1942); Gandhiji's secretary for 25 years

[4] Seven of the items sent along with this letter were published in *Navajivan*, 11-5-1924.

[5] Corruption in Satyagraha camp

[6] Vallabhbhai Patel (1875-1950); President, Indian National Congress, 1931; Deputy Prime Minister of India, 1947-50.

History of Satyagraha and despatched them by post on Sunday noon, and these ought to have reached there on Monday. Whether the person who posted them failed to do so in time I cannot say. If you have not received them, please wire. If, however, you have, and if the envelope is preserved, please find out the date in the postmark.

Was that Anavil cow saved given over to the butcher?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS]

Please tell Swami that he should not worry on my account as I do not on his. I shall ask for any help or facility I need. I shall grumble a little though. Grumbling is bound to increase as one grows older.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S.N. 8797

326. IMPATIENT KATHIAWAR

Friends tell me that the views which I expressed about the Kathiawar Political Conference[1] have caused some resentment. Since I took up the editorship of the three journals[2], I have almost stopped reading newspapers. But friends look after me and keep me informed about what I ought to know.

I have also heard it said: "That self-exiled Gandhi succumbed to the wiles of Pattani Saheb[3] and brought to nothing the awakening in Kathiawar. It is not surprising that Pattani Saheb who has risenthrough scheming and diplomacy, should have tricked a half-naked tramp mixing with *Bhangis* and weavers." As I have given elsewhere in this issue the substance of a letter from Abbas Saheb[4], so this also is the substance of what people say. No one has reported these actual words to me. But readers may trust that I have given correctly the substance of what has come to my ears. Kathiawaris living in Bombay say,

[1] This was to be held at Bhavnagar in January 1925.

[2] *Navajivan* in Gujarati and Hindi, and *Young India*

[3] Prabhashankar Pattani (1862-1935); member, Imperial Legislative Council and India Council, 1917-19; later, Dewan of the former Bhavnagar State in Saurashtra

[4] Abbas Tyabji

“Gandhi has brought us ruin.”

The truth is this: Pattani Saheb is not so full of knavery as is imagined. To defeat a satyagrahi by trickery, even a shrewd Kathiawari like Pattani Saheb will have to wait till he is born again as a satyagrahi. There is no word like “defeat” in the vocabulary of a satyagrahi. One satyagrahi, it can be stated, may defeat another, but this is doing violence to the meaning of the word “defeat”. A satyagrahi gives in when he sees his mistake and rises higher as a result. This cannot be called defeat.

I am convinced that the part played by Pattani Saheb in my presence regarding the decision about the Conference was such as enhances his own and Kathiawar’s prestige. There was no need for him to employ diplomacy. I stated the reasons which weighed with me and I am aware of no other reason besides these.

I know that I would be of no further service when, yielding to somebody’s influence or my love for him, I deviate from the path of truth. I dislike suicide and am not likely, therefore, to commit the folly of deviating from that path.

A satyagrahi’s objective must be absolutely pure. There was certainly some impropriety in recommending that the Bhavnagar Conference should be held in Porbandar. I am using the mildest term to describe what happened. It is an unalterable rule for a satyagrahi that his case must be unsullied—like milk in its whiteness. Just as even a speck of dirt renders milk unfit for use, so even a slight flaw in a case makes it unworthy of a satyagrahi. I, therefore, do not need to use a stronger term than “impropriety”.

The second reason is equally sound. I did not know that the organizers had decided to hold the Conference even subject to conditions. I have often made it clear that I am against agreeing to conditions. That in certain circumstances it may be necessary to accept conditions is beside the point. Once the principle of conditions has been accepted, the matter no longer remains within the scope of satyagraha. If the Conference is to be held on certain conditions, then why not agree as well to hold it in Songadh? The reason for accepting conditions was that in the present circumstances there was no other way of creating an awakening among the people. This

motive is not irrelevant or unworthy. The purpose would have been the same even if it had been decided to hold the Conference at some other place. It is by no means as certain that, if we resorted to satyagraha, we would be able to hold the Conference. A satyagrahi fights unto death. If he dies fighting, then, according to the philosophy of satyagraha, he will have won. The satyagrahis did their duty when they went to jail. But the Conference has not yet been held. The aim just now is to hold the Conference somehow. "We wish to hold the Conference if we can do so on our terms, not otherwise"—this is the satyagrahi's attitude. "We wish to hold the Conference somehow"—this cannot be the satyagrahi's way. The people are not preparing themselves for satyagraha to accept whatever kind of swaraj the Government may offer. They are cultivating this irresistible strength in order to win the kind of swaraj they want. It is only when Kathiawar decides to hold the Conference without agreeing to any conditions that it will be faced with the duty of offering satyagraha. It is not the duty of a satyagrahi to insist on holding a Conference which is subject to conditions. To do so would be to exchange a copper-piece for a cowrie.

This does not mean that, if there are no conditions, the satyagrahi is free to indulge in abuse. How can anyone who forsakes humility and civility be called a satyagrahi? It is because he can restrain himself that he declines to let another restrain him. But his self-imposed limits are the strictest possible.

If the Conference does its work this year with perfect civility and compels admiration even from its opponents, but is even then required next year to submit to conditions or has to face similar obstacles, then the satyagrahis' case will be clear and strong and no one will have any ground to criticize them. If any satyagrahis come forward then, they will find a ready field for battle.

One comes across some good and simple Kathiawaris, however, who say: "Once the present enthusiasm has subsided, from where shall we get the satyagrahis?" These persons ought to know that satyagraha is not intoxication produced by *bhang*. It is not a passing fancy. Satyagraha is an urge from within. As time passes, it does not slow down but grows more compelling. If it can be suppressed, then it

was not an urge from within but only an illusion worth no more than a mirage. Only those who will be found ready next year will deserve to be called satyagrahis. Kathiawar is a land where Rajputs and Kathis have fought all their lives for their lands. Two Vaghers of Barda, Mulu Manek and Jodha Manek, shook the entire Agency[1]. Their zeal did not rise one moment and subside the next. More[2], an outlaw, fought single-handed for years. All these men fought for trivial and selfish ends. What strength of determination in the pursuit of their aim, in a peaceful and straightforward manner, should be displayed by satyagrahis who would take upon themselves the burden of the grievances of all the people of Kathiawar, let them estimate for themselves and then answer the critics.

"But look at Pattani Saheb's order. With a stroke of the pen, he has added another ten or twenty crimes to his autocratic code of law and, for these invented crimes, the punishment is six months' imprisonment! Even the British Government in India cannot in this way act like the magic mango tree and produce laws as its fancy takes it. That, despite such naked tyranny, we should refrain from satyagraha and hold the Conference in Songadh, what logic is this?" This argument too is being put forward. The fallacy in it is obvious. If our aim had been to offer satyagraha against the law the latter is certainly a worthy target. But our plan is to start satyagraha about the Conference. Even if a sentence of hanging was laid down for holding the Conference, a satyagrahi would not turn a hair. The person who issued such an order would of course invite disgrace upon himself. If, because of the order mentioned above, an association for denouncing Pattani Saheb was started, with rules permitting only satyagrahi terms of criticism, I would myself join it. I certainly think that this order is absurd. If holding a conference is not a crime according to the criminal law of Bhavnagar, then he should have allowed it to be held even at the sacrifice of his job. Promulgating arbitrary laws is not Pattani Saheb's speciality. It is part of the Kathiawar atmosphere. We would be happy if Pattani Saheb rose above it. But we have not yet

[1] The Western India State Agency with headquarters at Rajkot headed by the Political Agent

[2] Mowar; *vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 12-5-1924.

become watchdogs of Pattani Saheb's policy. When Kathiawar has a crop of true satyagrahis, then Pattani Saheb will no longer have an atmosphere of tyranny around him. And I shall not be surprised if he himself becomes a satyagrahi then.

If Pattani Saheb and the Princes had not been living in this degenerate atmosphere, they would not have been capable of passing such an order. Holding conferences should he one of the rights of the subjects. Without them the rulers would not know the mind of the people. It is the subjects, right to criticize and denounce their ruler. The latter has the right to punish anyone who maligns him. A King like Rama would not even punish a man who had abused him. He did not punish a lowly washerman. On the contrary, he felt no shame in deciding in an instant to abandon the jewel-like Sita[1] and today countless Hindus like myself worship this shameless Rama. The flattery of subjects has brought about the downfall of their rulers. If the latter can bear the abuses of subjects, they will certainly prosper.

Refraining from denunciation, even after securing the right to denounce, is the way of the satyagrahi. I should like to see this rule faithfully observed at the Songadh Conference.

Next week we shall consider what steps the Kathiawaris can decide on at the Conference.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-5-1924

[1] In the *Uttarakanda* of the *Ramayana*, Rama sends his innocent wife, Sita, into the forest, because a washerman, one of his subjects, made some insinuations concerning her long stay in Lanka in the custody of Ravana.

327. THE FORTHCOMING CONFERENCE

The Conference[1] to be held in Borsad is extremely important. In 1920, the Gujarat Provincial Conference had made the task of the Congress easy[2] A similar opportunity for Gujarat has now arisen.

I am very unhappy that I shall not be able to be physically present on this auspicious occasion. I had hoped to offer in person my congratulations to the people of Borsad on their great victory[3] But, knowing my physical condition, I hope that my brothers and sisters will forgive me. I plan to go to the Ashram at the end of this month.[4] But I realize that it will be some time before I have enough strength to move about. My body cannot as yet stand the strain of journeys, gatherings and shouts. I feel it is necessary that I should go to the Ashram. But let no one think that I have returned to Gujarat. I shall not be able to attend any function at present even in Ahmedabad. Just as I am resting in Juhu for change of air and go nowhere, so I wish to rest for three months in the Ashram, that is, till the end of August.

Abbas Saheb is becoming younger every day and his enthusiasm rises. He cannot tolerate humiliation for Vallabhbhai or for Gujarat. He is very proud of his able and devoted workers and simply orders me: "you must not go to Gujarat just now. Your purse is huge and we have got to fill it: If it is your pride that you alone can collect money, we are going to humble it. Let others think that you are indispensable, that only you can conduct satyagraha and that you must be consulted in every matter, great or small. We Gujaratis think nothing of that sort. You yourself admit that without you we have been able to conduct a satyagraha campaign better than any of yours.

[1] The seventh Gujarat Political Conference which was to be held on May 13, under the presidentship of Kaka Kalelkar

[2] The fourth Gujarat Political Conference, held at Ahmedabad in August 1920, passed the non-co-operation resolution, even though it was contended by the opposition that a provincial conference was not competent to adopt the resolution in advance of the Congress, the parent institution. The non-co-operation resolution was adopted by the Congress at its special session held at Calcutta in September 1920.

[3] *Vide* "Gujarat's Efforts", 6-4-1924.

[4] Gandhiji returned to Sabarmati Ashram on May 29, 1924.

And now you will be compelled to admit that we can also collect money and popularize the spinning-wheel without your help." And so on. I do not mean to tell my readers that these are the actual words in his letter. That is in English. He calls himself a Gujarati but even I can say that his Gujarati is worse than mine. However, Abbas Saheb is a milch cow; so who would criticize his Gujarati? Besides, why criticize the Gujarati of one who writes ill English? I have given my readers the gist of what he has written in English. If my version is incorrect, he may let me have the correct one and I shall be ready to publish it in *Navajivan* together with an apology.

In any case, out of my respect for Abbas Saheb, if not for the sake of my health, I should confine myself to the Ashram till my purse is full and every Gujarati must imagine that 1 am not in Gujarat. Borsad should not need my presence. If I manage to go at all, it will be for selfish reasons. Henceforth, our conferences must be entirely business-like. There is no room for public shows and the like in business. The days are past when it was the practice to collect big people at every conference. Their time is wasted, money is spent needlessly on railway fares and the local workers have to neglect their work and see to their reception, to say nothing about large crowds of idle spectators collecting. There was some justification at one time for all this in the belief that the presence of big people would attract the attention and interest of those portions of the public which would not otherwise attend; there is no such justification today. We should now try to draw that section of the public by our service to them in respect of their individual problems. If all the leaders of India had been present at a meeting, they could not have attracted as many people as did the satyagraha in Borsad.

To tell the truth, we have not so far been able to serve fully even those whom we have drawn into our fold. Such people have not started working on their own. When they have wholeheartedly adopted the Congress path of non-violence and truth and thoroughly understood the idea of non-co-operation, then they themselves will spread the message to others.

We needed strength of numbers and have got it. Now we require improvement in quality. We have to watch and see how many out of

this vast number turn out to be sincere workers. This can be discovered only by ourselves working and getting others to work.

There was no discomfiture for us in Bardoli. When we discovered weakness at one spot[1], like true soldiers we prudently stopped our march in order to remove it. But the task we had set ourselves in Bardoli still remains to be accomplished. Moreover, now we need to secure more marks to pass the test than we did at that time, because we have had longer time in which to prepare. The work is more difficult than we thought, and we face obstacles of a kind we had never imagined. There is now a split in our party. The bond between Hindus and Muslims has weakened. Hence, we need much greater strength now.

At Borsad, we have to find answers to these problems. Whether or not a resolution should be moved about them Vallabhbhai knows best. He is the director of the show. I only watch from a distance and criticize. I know that this task has to be done sooner or later and, therefore, draw people's attention to it.

Yes, if one condition is fulfilled, civil disobedience may not become necessary for winning swaraj. It may not, if a large part of the country takes up the constructive programme of the Congress and successfully implements all the items. Satyagraha is a sort of tonic. It arouses those who slumber and gives strength to the feeble. If only a few among the people are ready for sacrifices, while some others understand and approve of the national objectives. But are not ready for sacrifices, the satyagrahi starts a *yajna* on behalf of the whole country and offers himself as an oblation. I even consider that, should only the whole of Gujarat become perfect in every respect, civil disobedience may not be necessary. Being perfect in every respect means making itself fit for civil disobedience. No one would choose to measure his strength against such people. This too Borsad has demonstrated. It had made itself so completely fit for the task it had set before itself that the Government did not think it necessary to oppose it. Moreover, satyagraha aims at change of heart. Once our opponent has realized that our means are worthy, he will have no desire to use his strength against us. At present, the Government not

[1] Here Gandhiji presumably refers to the Chauri Chaura tragedy.

only doubts our professions of truth and non-violence, it positively disbelieves them. Should the British disarm today, would they be safe from us? The first test which a person must pass to become a satyagrahi is assuring personal safety to the opponent. How many of us would pass this test? We cannot, therefore, go beyond the position we had taken up two years ago and should concentrate on preparing only one taluka or district of Gujarat. I believe even Borsad is not such a taluka as yet. Bardoli should have been, but is it? The modest degree of preparedness which sufficed Borsad for satyagraha in regard to its local grievances will not enable us to undertake the task of winning swaraj.

I state one by one the conditions for being so prepared:

1. In such a taluka, every man and woman should be wearing khadi woven in the taluka itself from yarn spun locally.

2. People should have given up liquor and opium so completely that there is not a single booth for them.

3. There should be sincere love between Hindus and Muslims.

4. Not only should the *Antyajas*[1] not be regarded as untouchables, but their children should be free to attend national schools and they themselves to draw water from public wells and enter public temples for *darshan*[2].

5. There should be a national school in every village and town.

6. Very few cases should be taken to courts and all disputes among the people should be settled with the help of the *panchas*[3].

The Anand taluka had resolved at the same time. as Bardoli, that is, in 1921, to prepare itself in this manner and had asked for permission to join Bardoli. This same Anand may not actually be ready now, but is it even willing to prepare itself? I hope that not a shred of foreign or mill cloth will meet our eyes in Borsad, or, if one sees any such cloth, it will be only on the persons of Government servants and others like them. I had heard that there was some difficulty about the *pandal*. There was some talk, I heard, that mill

[1] Lowest caste among Hindus traditionally charged with sanitary duties
[2] Sight of person, place or thing considered holy
[3] Literally “the five”, here a board of arbitrators

cloth should be used for the *pandal* as khadi would be too expensive. Until we realize that khadi, even if expensive, is in reality cheap and other cloth, even if offered free, is expensive, we shall never become completely khadi-minded. If we wish to identify ourselves with the poorest in the country, we must never consider whether khadi is coarse or fine, costly or cheap. If we cannot afford it, we should be ready to go naked rather than let any other cloth touch our limbs. Similarly, if we cannot find the money, we should do without a *pandal*. Our *pandal* is the star-studded sky. In a country in which the rains come in the proper season, there is no great need for a *pandal*. We can have a fencing of bamboo poles and carry on our work. Those who are artistically inclined can show their art even in this. Meetings should take place in the mornings and evenings so that other necessary work can also be attended to during the day. We simply cannot afford to have *pandals* which will accommodate thousands.

It is expected that our distinguished leaders like Pandit Motilal Nehru will attend the Conference in Borsad. There are likely to be differences of opinion between them and us. Probably a majority of us are not in favour of entering the Councils. In these circumstances, we should show all the greater respect for those who advocate it. A satyagrahi never shows contempt for those who hold opinions different from his. He may win them over with arguments and love. His reason will teach him to have patience and his love will teach him to show respect. If difference of opinion always leads to personal estrangement, the movement for swaraj simply cannot go on. As with a guest like Motilal, so with the Swarajists of Gujarat also, our behaviour must be such as will not hurt anyone in the slightest measure. Vithalbhai[1] has entered the Assembly, and so have some other Gujaratis. We must not on that account show them less respect. We may follow our own counsel, but should show respect to everyone. How can a satyagrahi have an enemy? My information is that, even in Gujarat, the issue of Council-entry has embittered people against one another. Some blame the Swarajists for this and others blame the

[1] Vithalbhai Patel (1873-1933); member of the Bombay Legislative Council and later of the Imperial Legislative Council; first elected President of the Indian Legislative Assembly, Delhi

non-co-operators. If there is truth in the general belief that there can be no bitterness unless both the parties are at fault, then both Swarajists and non-co-operators must share the blame more or less. Non-co-operators are of the view that Swarajists have weakened their movement. Those of them who assert this are under special obligation to maintain sweetness or civility in their relations with the Swarajists. Moreover, it is plain that the non-co-operators are in a majority. The duty of maintaining civility lies primarily with the stronger party. I hope that the Borsad Conference will provide an object-lesson in civility.

However, maintaining civility does not mean that in its name or in the name of unity one has to give up one's views. At present, the most important issue before the country is that of Council-entry. In whatever way it is decided, the workers' duty is to go on with their tasks with singleness of purpose and unshakable faith. There is a rich crop waiting for harvesters to gather.

l. We need men and women workers of integrity and character who should be proficient in weaving.

2. We need energetic teachers who should be men of spotless character and possess intellectual curiosity.

3. We need workers who will devote themselves to the service of *Antyajas*.

There is a dearth of such men in Gujarat as in the rest of the country. What is the way to meet this need? There is only one. We should have complete faith in the cause for which we work and be willing to carry out orders. Freedom does not mean everyone behaving as an officer. In a free system, the employees work not for gain but because it is their duty to work. When they are not free, they serve for their livelihood for want of other employment. When we are free, there is virtue in serving tile system; there is honour in it. Service in conditions of subjection is morally degrading, it is humiliating. If everyone wants to be an officer and no one is willing to obey, the whole system will become autocratic and will be life-destroying rather than life-giving. If the Conference to be held in Borsad provides a band of sincere workers for Gujarat, it will have done much.

Kaka Kalelkar[1] is the President of the Conference and Mama Phadke[2] is the President of the *Antyaja* Conference. Both are Maharashtrians by birth but have become Gujaratis by choice. They are, according to me, the better Maharashtrians and Gujaratis for this. They have been giving to Gujarat what is good in Maharashtra and are assimilating what is good in Gujarat. Maharashtra, Gujarat, etc., are but limbs of India which support one another. Only if they do so can they function as organs of the same body. I hope, therefore, that Gujarat will fully recognize the work of Kaka Saheb and Mama and accept them as their very own. Gujaratis must not feel that those who are not ours by a natural bond can never be ours. This idea has its source in hatred. We should rather wish that Maharashtra may send more workers to us, if it can spare them. For a worker, there is place everywhere. Considerations of designation weigh only with leaders. By conferring a unique honour on Kaka and Mama, Gujarat has publicly recognized that they live here as dedicated servants, and by honouring them it has honoured itself.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-5-l924

328. MY NOTES

BOHRAS' FEAR

A Bohra gentleman writes:[3]

I have omitted from this letter certain details which he has cited to prove the fact of oppression. It will profit no one to revive memories of past conflicts. The problem raised by this Bohra friend is a complicated one, which cannot be solved by giving publicity to it in *Navajivan* or by my commenting upon it. Nor will the mention of the Bohra community along with Hindus, Muslims and Christians do

[1] Dattatreya Balkrishna Kalelkar (b. 1885), teacher and author, a co-worker of Gandhiji

[2] Vithal Laxman Phadke, a teacher of Ganganath Vidyalaya of Baroda, who became Gandhiji's follower and devoted himself to the uplift of traditionally untouchable communities in Gujarat

[3] The letter is not translated here.

much good. People have been shouting about Hindu-Muslim unity for many years, yet where is it? This unity will not be brought about through speeches. Nor will my feeble pen or tongue be able to do anything. Each community should realize that in unity lie the interests of all and the safety of the religion of each, and should bear sincere love towards others. Fanaticism should give place to tolerance and, most important of all, we should learn the truth that no party can use force against another for the sake, or in the name, of religion. If Hindus and Muslims observe this in their relations with each other, that will be enough to make the other communities feel secure. It should be quite unnecessary to mention the Bohras specifically. They, too, are Muslims. If the latter give up fighting with the Hindus, they will stop fighting among themselves also. In other words, if there is a genuine understanding, that is, understanding of the heart, between Hindus and Muslims, there will be such understanding between the different sects of the same religion. If we fail in this and the various parties take every occasion to fight against one another and amongst themselves, we shall have to resign ourselves to permanent slavery. "Long live the Government and may it prevent us from flying at each other's throat"—this will be the new prayer and the new religion for all of us. Let us see whether Hindus and Muslims or either of them show any sense. There is one advantage in the present situation, viz., that it cannot last long. From what the two communities decide within the next four or six months, we shall know whether India is destined to remain in slavery for another 50 years or will have swaraj in a short time.

"ANTYAJA" CONFERENCE

After the *Antyaja* Conference at Godhra,[1] we have been holding such conferences every year. This year's Conference is of special importance. One reason is that Mama Phadke is the President and another that I am free. I had appealed to Bardoli and Gujarat that at any rate the problem of untouchability should be solved immediately. That this has not been possible yet, we may only blame our fate. The evil of untouchability seems to be in the blood of Hindus and, therefore, we look upon what is sin as virtue. We cannot see the

[1] Held for the first time in 1918

blemish in us which the whole world regards as sin and for which the Hindus stand condemned before all the nations. A painful incident took place near Petlad[1], about which a friend writes as follows:[2]

Such a thing can happen even today, and that too near the Petlad station! This is not an isolated incident; we hear of such cruelty everywhere. To rescue the *Antyajas* from this pitiable for, Congress Hindus should constitute themselves their protectors and, whenever they see an *Antyaja* in a train, they should be ready to go to his help. The easiest way is to take upon oneself the blows aimed at the *Antyajas*. This, however, is no remedy for the disease itself. For that, we should see that the movement against untouchability becomes widespread. This can happen only if Congress members are sincere. At present, they themselves suffer from this disease. Some of them even refuse to have *Antyaja* pupils in the national schools. Their attitude is lukewarm. The *Antyaja* Conference should request such half-hearted members to leave the Congress and should intensify its work among the *Antyajas*. It should inquire into their hardships regarding travelling and then try to find a remedy. It should tell them how to defend themselves.

Apart from this, it has before it the other tasks of starting more schools in their localities, promoting spinning and weaving among them and persuading them to give up drinking soon. There are, of course, difficulties in regard to every one of these items, but much more can be accomplished than has been done so far if we get devoted volunteers for this work. If the *Antyaja* Conference can do something to increase the number of sincere workers, that itself will be a valuable contribution.

TO "AN HUMBLE SERVANT"

Some gentleman has written to me a letter signing himself as above. He has not given his name. A similar letter was received some time ago and I tore it up. This second letter is by way of reminder. The correspondent does not repeat the question he had asked in the first letter. The rule is that anonymous letters should be ignored. It is,

[1] A station on Anand-Cambay railway, in Gujarat

[2] Not translated here. The letter described how an *Antyaja* passenger was mercilessly belaboured by some Bania passengers in a railway carriage.

therefore, my humble request to this "humble servant", if his question is important, that he should repeat it and sign his name.

"ID" GREETINGS

I have received a number of letters from Muslim friends sending me good wishes for *Id*. thank them for their love for me. I am sure they do not wish me to write to them individually to convey my thanks. I also wish them all a happy *Id*. At a time like this, when there is widespread distrust between the two communities, even a little evidence of sincere love is as pleasant as a small patch of greenery in an otherwise barren scene. The only way to prove that the letters of greetings are prompted by genuine love is to take up activities which strengthen the bond between Hindus and Muslims. I hope that the friends who have sent me the messages will take every opportunity to plant seeds of amity in the country.

CASTE REFORM

I have already written in *Navajivan* concerning the use of satyagraha for caste reform[1]. This has prompted some lovers of *Navajivan* to express the desire that I should now use *Navajivan* to promote this cause. Some others fear that the political in my life is over or that I wish to convert politics into social reform. I cannot agree to give the first place to caste reform. *Navajivan* is run to help the cause of swaraj. It exists entirely for this purpose. The cause of social reform is dear to me, but it has no connection whatever with my present activities in the field of journalism. Much can beaccomplished in the field of caste reform by individuals through their conduct and example. However, I do not regard social reform as distinct from politics. Just as the latter should conform to moral principles and dharma, so should social reform. Swaraj is not possible for a society with a corrupt order. Hence, questions of social reform can also be occasionally discussed in *Navajivan.* Really speaking, eradication of untouchability is a task of social reform, but we have realized now that this evil is so widespread and its eradication so urgent a task that, unless we succeed in it, swaraj will be impossible.

But those reformers who are concerned only with the issue of

[1] *Vide* "Satyagraha and Caste Reform", 13-4-1924.

caste reform should understand the limitations of *Navajivan*, and the others who fear that *Navajivan* will give up its interest in the swaraj movement should reassure themselves, having regard to my views expressed here.

COMMUNITY DINNERS

This is a month of marriages. Much money is spent on community dinners and similar functions connected with marriages. It may be too much to request the well-to-do to refrain from spending money for such purposes. But such dinners have become obligatory and they impose an intolerable burden on many families. Not only should such feasts be optional but rich families should set an example by exercising some restraint in this matter. If the money thus saved is spent on education or on other activities of social welfare, the community itself and through it the whole society would be benefited. Abandoning the custom of community dinners at the time of marriages is a desirable reform indeed, but giving up the practice of such dinners after death is an absolutely essential reform. In my view, giving community dinners after death is a sin. I see no meaning in them. A feast is regarded as an occasion for rejoicing. Death, on the contrary, is a time of grief. It is difficult to understand how dinners can be arranged at such a time. Because of my respect for Sir Chinubhai[1], I attended the dinner given after his death. The scene on that occasion, the squabbles among the various communities invited to the dinner and the irresponsible behaviour of the guests are still fresh in my memory. I saw there no reverence for the dead man. What place, then, can mourning have on such an occasion? That reform even in such a matter will require time is proof of the strength of custom and of our indifference. Even if the *mahajans* do not effect this reform, individuals can certainly act. The present condition of *mahajans* is pathetic. They often wish to introduce reforms, but are afraid to do so. If some bold persons take the lead in this matter, they will give courage to the *mahajans* who wish to introduce this reform and pave the way for it.

[1] Sir Chinubhai Madhavlal, Baronet, a civic leader of Ahmedabad

INTERDINING AND INTERMARRIAGES

Perhaps, even more important than stopping community dinners is the problem of encouraging intercaste marriages. *Varnashrama*[1] is useful, but a plethora of sub-castes can only do harm. It can safely be said that intermarriage should be permitted in all cases in which interdining is permitted. In fact, we find that many such marriages have taken place. This is a reform which cannot now be held up. Wise elders, therefore, would do well to encourage it. If they try to impose more restraint than is acceptable to people in this age, they will run the risk of being ignored. If it becomes necessary to start a reform in such matters against the wishes of the *mahajan*, it will be proper for the reformers to do so with civility. I have even known reformers who held the *mahajans* in contempt and invited them to do their worst. Such aggressiveness comes in the way of the reform and, where the *mahajan* is too weak to take punitive action, the reformers cease to be reformers and follow the way of licence. Licence is not reform; it does not raise society but brings about its downfall.

NATIONAL EDUCATION THROUGH LOTTERIES

A friend has sent me copy of a notice announcing a lottery for raising money for national education, and asks my opinion about it. I am certainly against lotteries. They are a form of gambling. Where money required for education cannot be collected in a straightforward manner, there must be some weakness in the workers, be it no more than inefficiency. Such persons are not qualified to undertake educational work. I would advise those who intend to subscribe to the lottery to save their money. They will deserve compliments if they hand over the amount to some trustworthy person, to be used for education or a similar purpose. Speculation in shares is also a kind of lottery. I hear that hundreds in Bombay have lost money through it. Is not this enough?

I have before me this distressing letter[2]. I compliment this friend

[1] The division of society into four *varnas* or castes and of the individual life into four *ashramas* or stages

[2] Not translated here. It stated that a caste Hindu working among the *Antyajas* was, on pain of excommunication, told to undergo ceremonial purification whenever he touched an *Antyaja*.

for refusing to submit to sprinkling. Those of us who believe that untouchability is a sin, how can they betray their principle by agreeing to ceremonial purification? The Rajput friend should plead with the other members of his Community and, in ease they remain obdurate, my considered opinion is that he should humbly accept the punishment of being put out of the community, but on no account agree to sprinkling

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-5-1924

329. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Monday [*May 12, 1924*][1]

A Full Stop
Learning Urdu and Spinning
A Plea for Punctuality
Living on Spinning and Weaving
Letter from Lalaji
From Sarojini, and a Tribute
Not Inconsistent
Treatment of Mr. Majli
Young India and Navajivan
Andrews' Notes (sent last week)
Jail Experiences
Empire Goods
Moplah Relief

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

Please correct the errors when reading.

I have your two letters. I am sending today material as listed above. You have already received Andrews' Notes. I do not propose to send anything more.

[1] Some of the items mentioned in the lilt appeared in *Young India*, 15-5-1924, and the preceding Monday fell on May 12.

I do not know how the Note entitled *Gay Bachi* [The Cow Saved] got lost. If it cannot be traced, I will write another. We are very careful in this matter here, but we shall be more careful henceforward.

Give the reports of Borsad Parishad and other conferences in *Navajivan* and *Young India* yourself. Some local news of our activities should also appear.

The translation of the article on Visnagar appearing in *Swaraj* is very faulty. Your translation of it also did not appeal to me. There are even some misinterpretations. I have revised half of it. I did not have time to revise the rest. Now, perhaps, we may not print it at all. Sending it to other papers is out of the question. Even if we print it, we can do so only in *Young India*. If I get time to revise the remaining portion, we shall consider printing it next week. I used the word *siskarvu* for "challenge". If you find a better word, let me have it. *Ritusam* means *rituvar* [seasonal] and *murchhai* means *badai* [vanity, boasting]. In an article about Kathiawar, Kathiawari words came readily to the pen.

The name of the outlaw is not More, but Mowar. I even met him once.

I had a telegram from Mrs. Joseph[1] too. I wired back to her saying that it was not necessary to send you, as the deputation from that place was coming here. Besides, I only wished to explain general principles. There is no scope whatever for any misunderstanding. I still think that they are spoiling their case in Vaikom.[2] We shall discuss this when they come.

Surely, you do know Valji's nature. If, by placating him, we can get him to do some work in which he takes pleasure, that will be all to the good. My effort is to erase his idiosyncrasies by giving him scope for expression. Certainly, we are not going to do this for others. Despite his many angularities, Valji has a straightforwardness which I myself, certainly, value and put to good use, and I want you also to do likewise.

Radha's[3] health is quite good, but she is not regaining her

[1] Wife of George Joseph, barrister of Madurai who edited *Young India* and *The Independent* for a while.

[2] *Vide* "Interview to *The Hindu*", 15-4-1924.

[3] Daughter of Maganlal Gandhi

strength as speedily as I would wish. She is cheerful now. Kikibehn[1] is brave, but, poor girl, she is suffering very much. The fever does not leave her. She eats regularly. The air, it must be said, is very fresh and pure. Doctors Dalal and Jivraj have examined her thoroughly, but we do not know what to do.

I have been feeling that Kanti[2], Rasik[3], and Manu[4] Daughter of Harilal Gandhi Daughter of Harilal Gandhi Daughter of Harilal Gandhi Daughter of Harilal Gandhi Daughter of Harilal Gandhi Daughter of Harilal Gandhi should not be brought here. If Ba[5] suffers on this account, let her "*Bhakti*, or devotion to God, has to be paid for with the head; difficult indeed is the way in front." —this is knowledge born of experience. I have always thought that pure devotion is impossible unless one hardens the heart.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 8785

330. MESSAGE TO GUJARAT POLITICAL CONFERENCE, BORSAD

May 13, 1924

Borsad has won glory for Gujarat. By offering satyagraha and making sacrifices, it has served both itself and the country. It has cleared the ground; the job of construction remains and this is difficult work. I know that it is in progress. It will have been completed when the Borsad taluka does not use or buy any cloth other than hand-spun khadi, when there is not a single shop within its limits selling foreign or mill-made cloth, when no one in the taluka drinks liquor or consumes hemp or opium and no tone is guilty of theft or immorality, when children, girls as well as boys—whether of

[1] Sister of J. B. Kripalani
[2] Grand-children of Gandhiji; sons of Harilal Gandhi
[3] *ibid*
[4] Daughter of harilal Gandhi
[5] Kasturba Gandhi

Antyaja or other families—attend national schools, when there are no disputes or quarrels among the people and, even if there be any, these are settled by a *pancha*, when Hindus and Muslims live amicably like blood-brothers and no one looks down upon *Antyajas*. If we make up our minds, all this is quite easy. I am sure that, if Borsad succeeds in bringing it about, it will secure swaraj for India. Let the people pledge themselves that they will work to this end; I pray that they will have the strength to take such a pledge. They should, however, take it only if they are determined to fulfil it. Unless they are as determined as Harishchandra[1] was to keep his word, it will be wiser for them not to take any pledge.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-5-1924

331. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

May 13, 1924

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR[2],

Our friends of the Depressed Classes Mission had been to me. You probably know that Mr. Birla[3] denies having made any promise to build them a temple. I have told them that, if they raise a decent sum among themselves, I shall endeavour to beg some subscriptions for them. They wish me to tell you the purport of my conversation with them. Hence this letter.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Story of My Life, Vol. II. P. 297

[1] Legendary king of Ayodhya who gave up his wealth, kingdom, wife and son, for the sake of truth

[2] M. R. Jayakar (1873-1959); lawyer, author and Liberal leader; noted for his role as mediator and negotiator

[3] Ghanshyamdas Birla; industrialist and philanthropist who gave financial assistance to Gandhiji's schemes of social welfare; member. Second Round Table Conference, 1931

332. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

JUHU,
Vaisakha Sud 9 [*May 13, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter.

I am quite sure an attitude of tolerance towards opposition by members of your community will bear fruit in the end. All of us have both divine and dark forces working within us. Some amount of agitation is, therefore, bound to persist. But we need not be afraid of it. The dark forces can be overcome by sustained effort to control them, but we must be fully convinced in our heart that it is our duty to help the forces of light. I am anxious about your father and brother. If they are thinking of organizing those in your favour and fighting it out and if you cannot persuade them to keep to the path of peace, there will he the danger of people in your own family adopting two opposite courses. At such a time, one is in a fix what to do. I would beg your father and brother, too, not to be responsible for creating two hostile camps in your community.

I would certainly not consider it proper for you to apologize for what you did because you thought it right to do and about the worthiness of which even today you have no doubt.

I have received Rs. 5,000 sent on your behalf. You can send whatever amount you consider proper for *Young India* and *Navajivan*.

About fifty copies are to be given free.

Yours sincerely,
MOHANDAS GANDHI
14-5-1924

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6004. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] *Vaisakha Sud* 9 fell on this date. The date below Gandhiji's signature in the source suggests that he signed the letter the next day.

333. TELEGRAM TO HAKIM AJMAL KHAN[1]

[On or after *May 13, 1924*]

HAKIM AJMAL KHAN SAHIB[2]

WEAKER OWING STRAIN OTHERWISE EXCELLENT HOPE DAUGHTER PROFITING BY CHANGE

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8801

334. MESSAGE TO "ANTYAJA" CONFERENCE, BORSAD[3]

May 14, 1924

The problem of untouchability is becoming more and more important day by day, and this is but right. You and I both know that we have not taken up work among *Antyajas* in order to make political capital out of it. The eradication of untouchability is primarily a religious problem, though it is also true that it holds the key to swaraj. I am getting more and more convinced every day that Hinduism cannot survive if it clings to the practice of untouchability. By trying to abolish it, we purify ourselves and not the untouchables. In doing our duty in this matter, I would leave out the consideration of self-interest, namely, its importance for swaraj. True, I have had a hand in getting it included in the Congress programme; I did so, however, with no political motive but from a purely religious point of view. It was included in the Congress programme in order to impress on the minds of the people the simple truth that, without its abolition, swaraj cannot be won. Even if, however, we could get swaraj today, we would still have this problem with us. If anyone promised to give us swaraj on condition that I gave up working for the abolition of untouchability, I would reply without a moment's hesitation that I did not want such swaraj. To let the people cling to this practice means, for me, renouncing my Hinduism. Though physically I shall be at Juhu at the time of the Conference, you may rest assured that in spirit

[1] This was in reply to Hakim Ajmal Khan's telegram of May 13, 1924, which read: "Please wire your health progress after my visit."

[2] 1865-1927; Muslim physician and politician; President, Indian National Congress, 1921

[3] This was sent to Vithal Laxman Phadke, who presided over the Conference.

I shall be with you.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-5-1924

335. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Wednesday [*May 14, 1924*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS[2],

There is a heart-rending letter from Ba. I do not know what my duty is. If the children are there and if you think that they ought to be brought here, do bring them. I hope you have completely recovered.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S.N. 8814

336. LETTER TO SIR PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

ANDHERI POST

Vaisakha Sud 10 [*May 14, 1924*][3]

SUJNA[4] BHAISHRI,

I have your letter. I cannot act in regard to the Akalis in the way you think. The rule that even a mother does not serve food to her child unless it asks for it applies to all my activities. If it is the will of God, He will use me as an instrument. He holds the threads in His hands. I am but one of the threads.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 3178. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

[1] The letter was presumably written from Juhu. The exact date is not ascertainable. May 14 was a Wednesday.

[2] Devdas Gandhi (1900-57); Gandhiji's youngest son, was associated with Gandhiji in most of his public activities and suffered imprisonment; editor, *The Hindustan Times*, 1940-57

[3] *Vaisakha Sud* 10 fell on this date.

[4] Literally, learned

337. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

Vaisakha Sud 10 [*May 14, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I got your article. I shall see that your suggestions are carried out. In one place I have added the word "Indian". I am omitting the paragraph on vegetarian food. It is futile to think that under the swaraj of the immediate future everyone will become a vegetarian. Since you have given an English rendering of Tagore's poem, I shall not give in *Y.I.* the meaning of its Gujarati rendering If I get your article translated into Gujarati, I shall include it there. I am not at all surprised by the wonderful things which take place between you two, since both of you are wonderful. I could go as far as Delhi, but how could I go further?[2] I have written to Abhechandbhai.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[PS]

I destroyed the letter about Anandshankar immediately after reading it.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6005. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

338. NOTES

FREE TRADE *V.* PROTECTION

Apropos of the contemplated protection for Tata Steel Works, I have been asked to state my own views on protection. Of what use they can possibly be, at the present moment, I do not know; nor do I know the merits of the proposal regarding the Steel Works. But I take the opportunity of dispelling the illusion that I am inimical to capital and that I would destroy machinery and its products if I had the power. The fact is that I am a confirmed protectionist. Free trade may be good for England which dumps down her manufactures among

[1] The postmark carries this date.
[2] In a figurative sense

helpless people and wishes her wants to be supplied from outside at the cheapest rate. But free trade has ruined India's peasantry in that it has all but destroyed her cottage industry. Moreover, no new trade can compete with foreign trade without protection. Natal nursed her sugar industry by both bounty and import duty. Germany developed beet sugar by a system of bounties. I would any day welcome protection for mill industry, although I give and would always give preference to hand-spun khaddar. Indeed, I would give protection to all useful industries. Much of my opposition to the Government would abate if I found that it was truly solicitous for India's economic and moral welfare. Let the Government protect the cloth industry to the point of prohibition of all foreign cloth, let it popularize the charkha by making all its purchases of cloth in khaddar, let it abolish without regard to revenue the drink and the drug traffic, and cut down the army expenditure to the extent of the loss of that revenue. When such a happy event takes place, my opposition will lose its point. It will pave the way for a real discussion of Reforms. To me the two steps will be a striking sign of change of heart which must precede any honourable settlement.

A FULL STOP

I have received several ably-argued letters on Maulana Mohamed Ali's[1] comparison between the creed of a Mussalman and that of a Hindu. For[2], in spite of my correspondents, I must adhere to the proposition that the Maulana has done nothing more than comparing the two creeds and preferring his own to mine. Able, instructive and interesting though some of the letters before me are, I must resist the temptation of publishing them. The country has much more important work before it than following a clever theological or even philosophical discussion. The only reason for my devoting the space of *Young India* to a defence of the Maulana Sahib's position was, if possible, to avoid an unnecessary increase in the prevailing bitterness between Hindus and Mussalman.[3] I would not have cared,

[1] 1871-1931; journalist and politician; led the Khilafat delegation to England in 1920; President, Indian National Congress, at Cocanada, 1923

[2] Presumbly, a slip for 'But'.

[3] *Vide* "What is Hinduism?", 24-4-1924.

merely out of regard for a friend, to devote the space of a public journal to a defence of the Maulana. After having gone through the letters before me, I see no cause to revise my opinion. And I do not share the opinion expressed by one of the correspondents that the Maulana has betrayed ill will against Hindus and that there is no chance now of Hindu-Muslim union. That union is coming in spite of the present ferment and in spite of us all. Even if the Maulana was not a lover of the union but its enemy in disguise, the position will not be altered. We are but straws in the hands of God. He can blow us where He pleases. We cannot oppose His will. He has made us all to unite, not to remain apart for ever. I wish I could infect my correspondents with my hope and faith. Then they will find no cause for distrusting the Maulana. Anyway, my correspondents will forgive me for not publishing or [having] any further dealing with correspondence on the Maulana Sahib's theological views.

LEARNING URDU AND SPINNING

Mr. George Joseph writes from Trivandrum Central Jail:

> We are a pretty happy family and are getting on cordially enough with the authorities. Generally speaking, the conditions are nearly the same as those for "politicals" in the United Provinces jails in the early part of 1922.
>
> I have got the spinning-wheel in, and am doing three hours at it every day. The cotton now in my possession came from a friend in Madura, all carded and done in slivers. When the stock is exhausted, I intend getting in a Travancore variety of cotton in the crude state and getting it into shape myself. That should make me fairly competent in the auxiliary processes. As for Hindi, the position is this: When I was imprisoned in 1922, I did a good deal of work in Urdu, and I flatter myself that I know as much of the language as is likely to be useful. I can read and understand Urdu up to a reasonable standard (newspapers, current prose literature, easy poetry, etc.). Hindi I don't propose doing separately. I have sent for my Urdu books and shall devote a certain amount of time increasing my knowledge of the tongue.

A PLEA FOR PUNCTUALITY

A correspondent, writing on beautiful swadeshi paper manufactured in the Nizam Dominions, writes:

> May I bring to your notice that some of the leaders are not punctual at the notified time of their lecture. This gives a bad lesson to the public who is

already suffering from unpunctuality. Besides, it creates an unpleasantness among the audience towards the lecturer and consequently the lecturer does not command respect in the meeting as he would otherwise. It also gives a bad impression to those who do not believe in our being fit for swaraj. This is my repeated experience of certain meetings in Bombay and what I have said above is what I felt myself and heard others talking.

Organizers of public meetings please take note.

LIVING ON SPINNING AND WEAVING

In sending an account of his tour in Chittagong Acharya Roy says:

> I am enclosing an account of a tour in Chittagong where I went recently. You will be glad to learn that the field is very good there in the interior and it only requires an organization to develop it.
>
> While on tour I met with a gentleman who, I was given to understand, was an engineer. He has become a cultivator now ploughing his own field, sowing and reaping. His household needs are met by the manual labour of the members of his family who spin and weave for themselves.
>
> You need not reply to this letter. I know you are busy with important correspondence. I only let you know something about Chittagong which will please you. You are having plenty of worry—a little good news may act as a dose of medicine during your convalescence.

What the engineer family is reported to be doing can be done by every Congress worker, whether lawyer, school-master or other. He need not then worry about other Congress work. The engineer is, I am sure, doing far more successful propaganda than many an orator without a living faith in khaddar, thundering to the people on its virtue.

The report sent by Dr. Roy is equally instructive. It shows that hundreds of Mussalman women have been doing spinning for generations. They gin and card their own cotton. They weave their own yarn. The cotton is all brought from the neighbouring hills. The report states that the cotton is all bought up by merchants for export. Is it not tragic to think that, whilst there are thousands of spinners who can make use of cotton, they should be left idle and cotton should be sent abroad to be spun and woven there and then brought back to us as cloth? Fortunately, Dr. Roy and his workers are making strenuous

effort to have sufficient cotton stored for the requirements of local spinners.

The report also describes the carding bow used in those parts and says that it came out victorious in a competition with the Bardoli bow. The gut of the Suchia bow (the local bow is named after a Chittagong village named Suchia) is made of fibres of pineapple leaves and is supposed to last a week. It is surprising with what simple and cheap materials the finest processes can be gone through

TREATMENT OF MR. MAJLI

THE EDITOR, *Young India*,

DEAR SIR,

In your issue of the 3rd April, you published a letter from Mr. Majli of Belgaum which states that while he was in prison he was not given spinning as stated on behalf of the Government but twisting yarn (I 1b. a day)," that he was "kept in utter seclusion under lock for all the 24 hours of the day except for 15 minutes walking;" and that although he was ill he was given food which he could not digest.[1]

You will no doubt be glad to learn, and I hope you will see your way to publish, the real facts of the case.

The real facts are that Mr. Majli was employed in twisting and spinning, i.e., spinning thread or yarn by means of a wheel; that he was confined in a large room adjoining his cell along with two associates, one of whom was an ex-Congressman; and that he was given an hour's exercise daily—half an hour in the morning and half an hour in the evening, and that he was given food as below:

(a) Admitted into jail on 23-10-23 and was given ordinary diet from that date onwards up to 2-12-23.

(b) In-patient for malaria from 3-12-23 to 13-12-23. During this period he was given milk diet.

(c) Convalescent from 14-12-23 to 28-12-23. Ordinary diet and one pound milk in lieu of dhal.

(d) From 28-12-23 to 4-1-24 ordinary diet.

(e) From 5-1-24 to 17-1-24 rice diet in lieu of ordinary diet, on account

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 3-4-1924.

of some dyspepsia.

(f) From 18-1-24 to 29-1-24 ordinary diet.

(g) From 30-1-24 to 17-2-24, on which date he was released, he was on milk diet plus a loaf of bread and one ounce butter.

Yours faithfully,

(SD) ILLEGIBLE

AG. DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION

7th May 1924

BOMBAY

I gladly publish the foregoing. I do not propose to worry Mr. Majli in his present state of health. Nor, as I said in my note, did I wish to make the treatment a matter of complaint. But I must say that on two points at least Mr. Majli is substantially correct. Mr. Majli does not deny that he was given 'twist-spinning'. But 'twist-spinning' means 'twisting yarn'. Perhaps the acting Director of Information does not know that there is no process known as 'twist-spinning'. You spin or twist yarn on the wheel. Mr. Majli wanted spinning which was a matter of duty and pleasure with him. But he was given twisting which was no matter of pleasure and which was much harder than spinning. That he was locked up is also evidently true. That there were two companions with him does not alter the fact of the lock-up. Only a prisoner knows what lock-up, especially in the day time, means, whether with or without company.

FROM SAROJINI DEVI

The reader will be glad to share with me the following from Mrs. Sarojini Naidu[1]:

> The Indian Ocean is chanting immemorial hymns to the morning sun and the mountains bear witness to the covenant that great dreamers have made from their sunlit peaks with God to make the land of South Africa a goodly heritage of noble ideals and high traditions for unborn generations. But today the facts are otherwise. In the shadow of these very mountains and within

[1] 1879-1949; poetess, orator and social reformer; President, Indian National Congress, 1925

sound of this very sea, the men who have in their keeping the destiny of South Africa are betraying their trust and making of their House of Assembly, that should be a temple of justice and freedom, a market-place to barter away the birthright of posterity for a brief period of power built on prejudice and authority based on oppression. Still my heart is not dismayed and my faith in the balance of ultimate issues remains unshaken. And I have not been afraid to proclaim that faith or that vision. It has made the protagonists of an impossible white South Africa angry and alarmed. But to the coloured people of South Africa it has brought an awakening and a new hope.

You have been kept in touch, I know, with the course of my mission here in laconic Press cables. I have according to my capacity and opportunity done my best and in spite of a prejudiced Press and ignorant legislators, I have been able to win not hundreds but thousands of friends for the Indian cause from all sections and ranks of South African communities. The African races and even the difficult 'Colonial' people have been moved to enthusiasm and indignation, and a sense of kinship and community of suffering and destiny. How the white races have resented my expression "a University of oppression" as applied to South Africa. Yet it is a "University of oppression" to discipline and perfect the spirit of the non-European people.

My interview with the Strong Man[1] of the Empire was very interesting. He was full of his famous charm and magnetism and withal apparently simple and sweet; but what depth of subtlety and diplomacy are hidden behind that suavity and simplicity! My impression of him is that he was designed by nature to be among the world's greatest, but he has dwarfed himself to be a small man in robe of authority in South Africa; it is the tragedy of a man who does not or cannot rise to the full height of his pre-destined spiritual stature. Before I leave South Africa on the 27th of this month, we are holding an emergency conference to consolidate the political work and outline a scheme of action—may be of sacrifice. I shall spend a fortnight in East Africa en *route* for India to finish my work there before I return home.

A TRIBUTE FROM AN ENGLISHMAN

Rev. Charles Phillips[2] is one of the most respected among Christian missionaries in South Africa. The following is his tribute to

[1] The reference evidently is to General Smuts.
[2] Congregational minister in the Transvaal.

her work which I take from his letter recently received:

> It is a very long time since any communication has passed between you and me. I have felt every moment of your time was too sacred to be spent on replying to any letter such as I could write. But Mrs. Sarojini Naidu has been here and I have seen much of her and she has laid upon me the solemn charge that I should write to you at once. She left yesterday and today is at Maritzburg. After "circuiting" to Cape Town she is coming back here and then I shall see her again. I could not however sea her again with a clear conscience unless I could tell her that I had fulfilled her request. This is my apology for troubling you with a letter from me. I could write all day and still leave much unsaid. Therefore I must try to write *multum in parvo* as far as I can. I need not say very much about the wonderful success which has attended her mission to Johannesburg. Others will write to you full and detailed accounts but they will give you no adequate account. She has been your alter ego, *Gandhi Redivivus*, bringing back to us something of the idealism and lofty spiritual purpose which we perceived so long ago. We thank God for her visit, for her burning words, for the divine truths and the Christ-like thoughts she has impressed upon us. The whole of the Indian community has risen to her call and a large part of the white community as well.

NOT INCONSISTENT

A correspondent draws my attention to what he regards is an inconsistency between my statement to the Press issued after my release regarding the Gurdwara movement and the advice given by me just after Nankana Sahib tragedy. This is the statement[1] I made after my release:

> My friends (Akalis) informed me to my surprise that there was a general misapprehension in the Punjab that after the Nankana tragedy, I had expressed an opinion that the Gurdwara movement should have been postponed till after the attainment of swaraj. I never expressed the opinion attributed to me as can be amply verified from my writings and speeches at the time.

The correspondent quotes the following statement[2] from my letter to the Sikhs after the tragedy and regards it as inconsistent with the first:

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Associated Press", 9-3-1924.

[2] *Vide* "Message to Lahore Sikhs on Lahore Tragedy", 4-3-1921.

> No one can be more eager for real reform in our temples and removal of all abuse than I. But let us not be party to measures that may be worse than the reform sought to be brought about. There are two ways open to you (Khalsa): either to establish arbitration boards for settlement of possession of all Gurdwaras or *postponement of the question till the attainment of swaraj.*

The italics are the correspondent's. I can see nothing inconsistent between the two statements. The first refers to the general movement and says that I never advised postponement till after the attainment of swaraj. The second advised postponement of the question of *possession* of Gurdwaras till the attainment of swaraj, if it could not be settled by arbitration. In this letter I have discussed the propriety of taking possession by show of force. And my advice was that if arbitration did not succeed, and the choice lay between possession by show of force or postponement, my advice was for postponement. The curious may refer to the letter itself which he will see in his file of *Young India* for 1921, and he will find that I have discussed in it the question of show of force. Nothing that has happened since has altered the view taken by me in that letter. I am convinced that no reform can be achieved by show of force. I know that there must be two parties to arbitration. If the other party does not agree, a non-co-operator will not seek the protection of a British court of law. But if he must choose between show of force and resort to court of law, i.e., if he is not prepared to sacrifice for the time being what he considers his right, I have no hesitation in saying that he must go to law even though it be British rather than seek to gain his purpose by show of force

RELIGIOUSLY SPINNING

Mr. P. W. Sebastian, a Vaikom satyagrahi prisoner, writes from Trivandrum Central Jail:

> It is now some months since I heard from you. I had hardly time to write to you about my jail experience in Cochin before I was clapped in Travancore Jail. You know I was imprisoned for six months by the Cochin Government on a security proceeding. It was hardly two months: since I came out when I was arrested along with Sjt. George Joseph and others in connection with Vaikom Satyagraha and sentenced to six months' simple imprisonment. Some of my friends and myself are treated as political prisoners and the authorities

see to all our wants and comforts. We are accommodated in spacious rooms and provided with cots, bedding, tables, chairs, writing materials, books and newspapers. We arc allowed to use our own clothes and we are using khaddar. We have our spinning-wheels inside the Jail and some of us spin with a religious zeal. The authorities are very obliging and solicitous about our comforts.

I tender my congratulations to the Travancore State for their handsome treatment of the prisoners who have gone to jail for conscience' sake. Let me hope that not some but all the satyagrahis will religiously use the spinning-wheel. I would advise them, too, to learn carding and, if permitted, weaving also. They can learn all these things, if they will give every spare moment of the precious time they have to carding, spinning and weaving.

THE MOPLAH RELIEF

I am glad to be able to inform the reader that the first response to my appeal was from a Bohra gentleman who sent me a cheque for Rs. 500. I have already sent the amount to Mr. Yakoob Hasan. The next amount is from a widow friend. It is Rs. 10. Her friend has given RS. 2. Another Hindu has forwarded Rs. 10 from Madras. The, *Young India* office has received another RS. 5 from a Hindu gentleman of Bareilly.

LETTER FROM LALAJI

Lala Lajpat Rai says in the course of a letter written during the voyage:

> The symbol of non-violence that I was wearing at the time of embarkation met with violence the very first day of my voyage. There are about a score of Indians on board this ship. Only two of us had the Gandhi caps on at the time of going aboard. All eyes were on us and one could see signs of anger on some faces. At dinner time I left my cap on the hat-rack outside. After dinner I searched for it in vain. It had disappeared. It was not worth stealing. So the only conclusion one could come to was that it was stored[1] into the sea. I am not sorry for it as the act must have given satisfaction to the doer. But I was determined to keep on. Yesterday again I left my cap (another) outside the dining-saloon at the same place. This time it was not touched and so the

[1] Presumably a slip for 'shoved'

episode is over.

I am already feeling better. The sea breeze and the rest are doing me good. I wish you also could tear yourself from your responsibilities and take a complete rest outside India.

It is evident the khaddar cap has still many a stiff battle in front of it.

"YOUNG INDIA" AND "NAVAJIVAN"

A correspondent writes to me about the donation for khaddar production of the profits of Rs. 50,000 of the Navajivan Press, and says that the profits show that the prices of the weeklies could have been considerably reduced so as to make them available to a larger public. I give below extracts from the letter.

Recently an announcement was made in the Press that the Navajivan Press had made a profit of about Rs. 50,000 and as that sum was to be spent on some charitable purposes. This shows that by the grace of God the Press is not in loss and the management is to be congratulated on that account.

But I and many others in this line fail to understand why the price of the paper of 8 pages with such rough paper is so very exorbitant in spite of the low cost of paper prevalent at present. Two annas for a copy of Young India is too much for the general reading public of India, and Navajivan for as. 1_ is also too much. India is a very poor country and that is an acknowledged fact. If they are making profits, is it not fair that prices should be decreased and thus make them available for the big masses?

In this connection I may say that the noteworthy English weeklies such as Saturday Review, The Nation and Athenaeum, The American Nation, The Spectator, etc., are far cheaper even at the rate of 6d., since they contain more than three times the number of pages. If it is not possible to decrease the prices of the weeklies under your control, can you not conveniently manage to increase the number of pages?

Some of us would believe that, even if Young India and Navajivan are sold at 2 to 3 pice, they will not be under loss so long as they are edited by your good self. If you think that you owe an explanation to the public in this connection, you may explain this through your paper.

Now suppose that the papers are not making profits nor are likely to make any even at the prevailing prices of as. 2/- and as 1_, can you not

manage to put some amount of the profit of the Press in these papers and thus make them cheap?

I have consulted the manager about the subject matter of the letter and both he and I have come to the conclusion that the prices could not be safely reduced for the following reasons:

1. Profits are a precarious item.

2. Reduction of the prices will make no difference in the number of subscribers.

3. The masses do not count as readers because they cannot read.

4. My editing, though it has somewhat increased the number of subscribers, has not made any material increase. The papers are by no means as popular as they were before, because, perhaps, of the subsidence of excitement. Young India and Hindi Navajivan have not yet begun to pay their way, and unless English readers of Young India and Hindi readers of *Hindi Navajivan* interest themselves in the upkeep of these weeklies and secure more subscribers, the question of stopping them may soon arise.

5. It is a bad policy to print a cheap newspaper by making profits from other work. I want the readers to be just as much interested in the upkeep of the papers as the manager and the editor are.

6. It is better that the readers become direct participators in the donation of profits than that they get their paper cheap.

7. If there is a public that does not buy the papers by reason of the prices, it is open to well-to-do subscribers, interested in the circulation of the views and policies advocated in the papers, to order as many copies as they choose and, if there is a large demand lower prices will certainly be quoted for them.

8. In view of the suggestion in clause 7, the question of the high prices is not a matter of moment since the public benefit by every single pie of the profits.

9. The size of the papers cannot very well be increased, if only because I have but limited capacity and the papers have only a limited ambition. The public do not want from me a larger weekly letter than they are getting at present.

Young India, 15-5-1924

339. EMPIRE GOODS BOYCOTT

It is curious how the question of the Empire goods boycott continues to challenge public attention from time to time. From the standpoint of non-violent non-co-operation, it seems to me to be wholly indefensible. It is retaliation pure and simple and, as such, punitive. So long, therefore, as the Congress holds to *non-violent* non-co-operation, so long must boycott of British, as distinguished from other foreign goods, be ruled out. And if I am the only Congressman holding the view, I must move a resolution at the next Congress repealing the resolution in the matter carried at the last Special Session.

But, for the moment, I propose to discuss not the ethics but the utility of the retaliatory boycott. The knowledge that even the Liberals joined the Boycott campaign cannot make one shrink from the inquiry. On the contrary, if they come to believe with me that the retaliatory boycott that they and the Congress took up was not only ineffective, but was one more demonstration of our impotent rage and waste of precious energy, I would appeal to them to take up with zeal and determination the boycott of all foreign cloth and replacing same not with Indian mill-cloth but with hand spun khaddar.

I have had the pleasure of reading the report of the Boycott Committee. It must be, has remained, the last word on the utmost that can be done in the shape of boycott of British or Empire goods. The Report, in my opinion, presents a formidable case, not for but against such boycott. It frankly states that the bulk of the Empire goods, such, for instance, as railway material, is imported by the Government or English firms; that the trifles such as scents, soaps, boots imported are mostly consumed by those easy-going, luxury loving Indians who are never likely to take to the boycott. It will be found on a calm consideration of the figures that even if the boycott of the trifles was scrupulously carried out by every Congress man and every Liberal, the amount would not be, at the outside, more than one crore of rupees per year. He must be a brave optimist who could believe that the Kenya Englishman or English men in general, would be made to change their policy by reason of such boycott.

‘But,’ says the critic, ‘see what a flutter was created in Cheap side when the Empire goods boycott resolution of the Bombay Municipal Corporation was cabled free of charge by Reuter.’ Surely we know enough of the British trade methods not to be unduly elated by such flutters. They are often put on in order to inflame the gullible public against ‘the unscrupulous Indian agitators who are bent upon injuring England’. When the excitement is not put on, it is a symptom of the British mercantile sensitiveness to every commercial fluctuation or movement. It is by such sensitiveness that it ever remains prepared for emergencies of every conceivable type. I would ask the public, therefore, never to rely upon the excitements or approbations from England, or, for that matter, from any foreign State. Their fear or praise of our action can never secure us in our position if our action which is either feared or praised is not, in itself, substantially effective.

If our rage did not blind us, we should be ashamed of the boycott resolution when we realized that we depended upon British goods for some of our national requirements. When we may not do without English books and English medicines, should we boycott English watches because we can procure Geneva watches? And if we will not do without English books because we need them, how shall we expect the importer of British watches or perfumes to sacrifice his trade? My very efficient English nurse, whom I loved to call ‘tyrant’ because she insisted in all loving ways on my taking more food and more sleep than I did, with a smile curling round her lips and insidious twinkle in her eyes, gently remarked after I was safely removed to a private ward, escorted by the house-surgeon and herself: “As I was shading you with my umbrella I could not help smiling that you, a fierce boycotter of everything British, probably owed your life to the skill of a British surgeon, handling British surgical instruments, administering British drugs, at d to the ministrations of a British nurse. Do you know that as we brought you here, the umbrella that shaded you was of British make?” The gentle nurse, as she finished the last triumphant sentence, evidently expected my complete collapse under her loving sermon. But, happily, I was able to confound her self-assurance by saying: “When will you people begin to know things as they are? Do you know that I do not boycott anything merely because it is British? I simply boycott all foreign cloth because

the dumping down of foreign cloth in India has reduced millions of mypeople to pauperism." I was even able to interest her in the khaddar movement. Probably she became a convert to it. Anyway, she understood the propriety, the necessity and the utility of khaddar, but she could only laugh (and rightly) against the wholly ineffective and meaningless boycott of British goods.

If the champions of this retaliatory boycott will look at their homes and their own belongings, they will, I have no doubt, discover the ludicrousness of their position even as my nurse friend did, under the supposition that I belonged to that boycott school.

I yield to no one in my desire to see justice done to our countrymen in Kenya or to win swaraj at the earliest possible moment. But I know that angry impatience can only frustrate the very end we have in view. What is it then in which all parties—Liberals, pro-Councilwallas, No-changers and others—can successfully combine to enable us to achieve our end? I have already given the answer. But I must examine it fully in the next issue and show why it furnishes the only feasible solution.

Young India, 15-5-1924

340. MY JAIL EXPERIENCES- V

POSSIBILITIES OF REFORM

It has been my invariable experience that good evokes good, evil—evil; and that therefore, if the evil does not receive the corresponding response, it ceases to act, dies of want of nutrition. Evil can only live upon itself. Sages of old, knowing this law, instead of returning evil for evil, deliberately returned good for evil and killed it. Evil lives nevertheless, because many have not taken advantage of the discovery, though the law underlying it acts with scientific precision. We arc too lazy to work out in terms of the law the problems that face us and, therefore, fancy that we are too weak to act up to it. The fact is, that the moment the truth of the law is realized, nothing is so easy as to return good for evil. It is the one quality that distinguishes man from the brute. It is man's natural law not to retaliate. Though we have the human form, we are not truly human till we have fully

realized the truth of the law and acted up to it. The law admits of no escape.

I cannot recall a single instance in which it has not answered. Utter strangers have within my experience irresistibly responded to it. In all the South African jails through which I passed, the officials who were at first most unfriendly to me became uniformly friendly because I did not retaliate. I answered their bitterness with sweetness. This does not mean that I did not fight injustice. On the contrary, my South African jail experiences were a continuous fight against it, and in most cases it was successful. The longer Indian experience has but emphasized the truth and the beauty of non-violent conduct. It was the easiest thing for me to acerbate the authorities at Yeravda. For instance, I could have answered the Superintendent in his own coin when he made the insulting remarks described in my letter to Hakim Saheb.[1] I would have in that case lowered myself in my own estimation and confirmed the Superintendent in his suspicion that I was a cantankerous and mischievous politician. But the experiences related in that letter were trivialities compared to what was to follow. Let me recall a few of them.

A European warder I knew suspected me. He thought it was his business to suspect every prisoner. As I did not want to do any the slightest thing without the knowledge of the Superintendent, I had told him that, if a prisoner passing by salaamed, I would return the salaam and that I was giving to the convict-warder in charge of me all the food that I could not eat. The European warder knew nothing of the conversation with the Superintendent. He once saw a prisoner salaam me. I returned the salaam. He saw us both in the act, but only took from the prisoner his ticket. It meant that the poor man would be reported. I at once told the warder to report me too, as I was equally guilty with the poor man. He simply told me he had to do his duty. Instead of reporting the warder for his officiousness, but in order to protect a fellow-prisoner, I merely mentioned to the Superintendent the incident of salaaming without the conversation I had with the warder. The latter recognized that I meant no ill whatsoever to him, and from that time forward ceased to suspect me. On the contrary, he

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Hakim Ajmal Khan", 14-4-1922.

became very friendly.

I was subject to search like the other prisoners. I never objected. And so, daily before the lock-up, a regular search took place for many months. Occasionally, a jailor used to come who was exceptionally rude. I had nothing but my loin-cloth on. There was, therefore, no occasion for him to touch my person. But he did touch the groins. Then he began overhauling the blankets and other things. He touched my pot with his boots. All this was proving too much for me and my anger was about to get the better of me. Fortunately, I regained self-possession and said nothing to the young jailor. The question, however, still remained whether I should or should not report him. This happened a fairly long time after my admission to Yeravda. The Superintendent was, therefore, likely to take severe notice of the jailor's conduct if I reported him. I decided to the contrary. I felt that I must pocket these personal rudenesses. If I reported him, the jailor was likely to lose his job. Instead, therefore, of reporting him, I had a talk with him. I told him how I had felt his rudeness, how I had at first thought of reporting him and how in the end I decided merely to talk to him. He took my conversation in good part and felt grateful. He admitted, too, that his conduct was wrong, though he said he did not act with the intention of wounding my susceptibilities. He certainly never molested me again. Whether he improved his general conduct in regard to other prisoners I do not know.

But what was most striking was perhaps the result of my intervention in connection with the floggings and the hunger-strikes. The first hunger-strike was that of the Sikh life-sentence prisoners.. They would not eat food without the restoration of their sacred loin-cloth and without the permission to them to cook their own food. As soon as I came to know of these strikes, I asked to be allowed to meet them. But the permission could not be granted. It was a question of prestige and jail discipline. As a matter of fact, there was no question of either, if the prisoners could be regarded as human beings Just as susceptible to finer forces as their species outside. My seeing them, I feel sure, would have saved the authorities a great deal of trouble worry and public expense, and would also have saved the Sikh

prisoners the painful, prolonged fast But, I was told, if I could not see them, I could send them 'wireless messages'! I must explain this special expression. Wireless messages in prison parlance means unauthorized messages sent by one prisoner to another with or without the knowledge of the officials. Every official knows and must connive at such interchange of messages. Experience has shown them that it is impossible to guard against or to detect such breaches of prison regulations. I may say that I was scrupulously exact about such messages. I cannot recall a single occasion when I sent a 'wireless' for my own purpose. In every case it was in the interest of prison discipline. The result was, I think, that the officials had ceased to distrust me and, if they had it in their power, they would have availed themselves of my offer of intervention in such cases. But the superior authority, so jealous of its prestige, would not hear of it.

In the above instance, I did set in motion the wireless apparatus, but it was hardly effective. The fast was broken after many days, but I am unable to say whether it was at all due to my messages.

This was the first occasion when I felt that I should intervene in the interest of humanity.

The next occasion was when certain Mulshi Peta prisoners were flogged for short task.[1] I need not go into the painful story at length. Some of these prisoners were youngsters. It is likely that they had wilfully done much less task than they could have. They were put on grinding. Somehow or other these prisoners were not classed political as the swaraj prisoners were. Whatever the cause, they were mostly given grinding as their task. Grinding has an unnecessary bad odour about it. I am aware that all labour is irksome when it has to be done as a task and under supervision not always gentle. But a prisoner who courts imprisonment for conscience sake should look upon his task as a matter of pride and pleasure. He should put his whole soul into the labour that may be allotted to him. The Mulshi Peta prisoners, or for that matter the others, as a body were certainly not of this type. It was a new experience for them all and they did not know what was their duty as Satyagrahis—whether to do the most or the least or not at all.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Major W. Jones", 10-2-1923.

The majority of the Mulshi Peta prisoners were perhaps indifferent. They had perhaps not given a thought to the thing. But they were mostly high-spirited men and youths. They would brook no *jo hukum* and, therefore, there was constant friction between them and the officials.

The crisis came at last. Major Jones became angry. He thought they were wilfully not doing their task. He wanted to make an example of them and ordered six of them to receive stripes. The flogging created a sensation in the prison. Everybody knew what was happening and why. I noticed the prisoners as they were passing by. I was deeply touched. One of them recognized me and bowed. In the 'separate', the 'political' prisoners intended to strike as a protest. I have paid my tribute to Major Jones. Here it is my painful duty to criticize his action. In spite of his sterling good nature, love of justice and even partiality for prisoners as against officials, he was hasty in action. His decisions were sometimes, therefore, erroneous. It would not matter, as he is equally ready to repent, if it was not for sentences like flogging which once administered are beyond recall. I discussed the matter gently with him, but I know that I could not persuade him that he was wrong in punishing prisoners for short task. I could not persuade him to think that every short task was not proof of wilfulness. He did indeed admit that there always was a margin fear error, but his experience was that it was negligible. Unfortunately, like so many officers, he believed in the efficacy of flogging.

The political prisoners, having taken a serious view of the case, were on the point of hunger-striking. I came to know of it. 1 felt that it was wrong to hunger-strike without an overwhelming case being made out. The prisoners could not take the law into their own hands and claim to judge every case for themselves. I asked Major Jones again for permission to see them. But that was not to be allowed. I have already published the correspondence[1] on the subject which I invite the studious reader to consult at the time of reading these notes. I had, therefore, again to fall back upon the 'wireless'. The hunger

[1] The reference is to the letters addressed by Gandhiji to the Superintendent, Yeravda Jail, and the Governor Of Bombay. For these letters along with Gandhiji's notes thereon. published in *Young India,* 6-3-1924.

strike and a crisis were averted as a direct result of the 'wireless'. But there was an unpleasant incident arising from the matter. Mr. Jeramdas[1] had delivered my message contrary to the regulations. Mr. Jeramdas saw, as he had to see, the political prisoners concerned. They were purposely kept in separate blocks. He therefore 'wandered' from his own to the other blocks with the knowledge of the convict officers and one of the European jailors. He told them that he knew that he was breaking the regulations and that they were free to report him. He was reported in due course. Major Jones thought that he could not but take notice of the breach although he knew that it Was for a good cause, and although he even appreciated Mr. Jeramdas's work. The punishment awarded was seven days' solitary confinement. On my coming to know of this, I invited Major Jones to award at least the same penalty to me as to Mr. Jeramdas. For he (Mr. Jeramdas) had broken the regula-tions at my instance. Major Jones said that in the interest of discipline he was bound to take notice of an open defiance brought officially to his notice. But he was not only not displeased with what Mr. Jeramdas had done, but he was glad that, even at the risk of being punished, he saw the prisoners who were about to hunger-strike and thus saved an ugly situation. There was no occasion, he saw, to punish me as I had not left my boundary and as my instigation of Mr. Jeramdas was not officially brought to hisnotice. I recognized the force of Major Jones's argument and attitude and did not further press for punishment.

I must consider in the next chapter another incident still more telling and important from the satyagrahi standpoint and then consider the moral results of non-violent action and the ethics of fasting.

Young India, 15-5-1924

[1] Jairamdas Doulatram (b. 1892); Secretary, Sind Provincial Congress Committee; later became Minister of Food and Agriculture, Government of India; Governor of Bihar and Assam

341. MESSAGE TO RAVISHANKAR VYAS[1]

May 15, 1924

I have still not forgotten what you told me about your first fruitful meeting with the robbers. Today, you have advanced far beyond that. You have bound the Dharala brothers and sisters to you with bonds of love. I pray that your bond with them may become stronger and that you may be the instrument of all-round improvement in the conditions of these brothers and sisters of ours.

I am certain that a community which throws up robbers and wicked men has only itself to blame. It is not as if robbers like being what they are. They take to robbing under pressure of circumstances. A robber becomes confirmed in his ways when the community punishes him and in this way the disease spreads. If we cultivate friendly relations with robbers and others like them, they realize their error and reform themselves.

You are engaged in this invaluable work. I know that all Dharalas are not robbers. Many of them are upright men, but, in our ignorance, we have kept them away from us. I regard your work as of supreme importance. One may say that it holds the key to India's regeneration.

Let your love not become blind. Persuade the Dharala brothers and sisters to take up some [honest] work. I am sure you are exerting yourself to see that they wear khadi woven by themselves from yarn which they themselves have spun, that they give up drinking and addiction to opium and other vices, that their children get education and the grown-ups learn *bhajans*[2] and *kirtans*[3]; even so, you should work harder still. May God, I pray, make the Conference a success and may He give you more strength for service.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-5-1924

[1] Popularly known as Ravishankar Maharaj, and devoted to social reform among the Dharalas, a backward community in Gujarat, he presided over their meeting at Borsad.

[2] Devotional songs

[3] Devotional songs sung by a group to the accompaniment of music

342. A WEDDING INVITATION

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

May 15, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

The marriage of Amina Bibi—daughter of my friend and brother Imam Saheb Abdul Kadir Bawazeer, for many years my companion in South Africa and at present residing with me at the Ashram with Rasoolmian Qureshi of Dhanduka, will take place on May 31, 1924, corresponding to *H. 26 Shaaban*, 1342, Saturday, at 7.30 p.m.

I shall be obliged if you will grace the occasion by your presence and bless the couple.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

343. LETTER TO EMIL RONIGER[1]

POST ANDHERI,

May 15, 1924

DEAR SIR,

I have your letter. I have no copyright in connection with any of the works you mention. They are not even published by me. Strictly speaking, you should ask the various publishers for permission. I do

[1] Writing from Germany on April 2, Roniger had introduced himself as the author of a book on India in which he had written on Gandhiji. With the purpose of cultivating "the spirit of brotherhood, of self-restraint and of service" in Europe, he had established a 'Home of Friendship'. Roniger's proposal to Gandhiji was to publish in German language volumes containing a selection of *Young India* articles, *A Guide to Health, Ethical Religion, J. J.* Doke's M. *K. Gandhi: An Indian Patriot in South Africa,* and Gandhiji's speeches during the South African and Indian periods. In these Roniger sought exclusive German rights. He also wanted to publish a *Review* of *Ahimsa* which would carry translations of articles from Young India. S.N. 8644

not think there will be any objection to the proposed publication by you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

EMIL RONIGER, ESQ.
RHEIN FELDEN
(SWITZERLAND)

From a photostat: S.N. 880

344. LETTER TO N. C. KELKAR

POST ANDHERI,
May 15, 1924

DEAR MR. KELKAR[1],

Here is the reminiscence for Mr. Bapat. I wish I could give more because there are many. I ask you and Mr. Bapat, however, to have pity on me. I have really not a moment to spare. 1 must choose some other occasion and another medium when I have opportunity for reducing all the reminiscences that I have of the Lokamanya[2].

I am not writing separately to Mr. Bapat, as yours was the last letter in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. C. KELKAR
POONA

[ENCLOSURE]

REMINISCENCES OF LOKAMANYA TILAK

I have the most vivid recollection of my very first meeting with the Lokamanya. This was in 1896[3] when I was almost totally unknown

[1] Narasinh Chintaman Kelkar (1872-1947); journalist, politician and a close associate of Tilak; sometime Secretary of the Indian National Congress; helped Gandhiji in revising the constitution of the Congress in 1920; a leader of the Swarajist Party

[2] Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920); political leader, scholar and writer, popularly known as 'Lokamanya'; one of the founders of the Deccan Education Society, Poona, and of the newspapers the *Kesari* and *The Mahratta*

[3] The source has 1894, but the correct date is 1896.

in India. It was in connection with the cause of Indians in South Africa that I went to Poona to organize a public meeting. I was an utter stranger in Poona. I knew the public men only by names. Mr. Sohoni whom I knew as my brother's friend and who had given me shelter took me to the Lokamanya. After putting me at ease, he asked me the cause of my visit. I at once told him what my mission was. The Lokamanya said: "I see, you are a stranger in Poona. You do not know the public men. Nor do you know anything of local differences. I must, however, tell you that there are two political bodies here. One is the Deccan Sabha, and the other is the Sarvajanik Sabha. Unfortunately, the two bodies do not meet on a common platform. If the meeting is organized by any one body, everybody must sympa-thize with your cause. Therefore, it must not be identified with any one political body. It is well that you have seen me. You must also see Mr. Gokhale[1] who belongs to the Deccan Sabha. I am sure he will give you the same advice that I am giving you. You must have a public meeting which is attended by all sections. You may tell Mr. Gokhale that no difficulty will be raised from my side. For such a meeting we must have a neutral chairman, who is also well known and carries weight. Dr. Bhandarkar is such a man in Poona. If you, therefore, see him too, and invite him to become president, telling him what I have told you and what Mr. Gokhale tells you. He has almost retired from public life. You must press him even if he hesitates. Your cause is very just. It is sure to commend itself to him. If you secure him as chairman, the rest will be easy. Do tell me in good time what happens. You may rely upon full assistance from me. I wish you every success."

I could not conceive any greater encouragement from men occupying the position that the Lokamanya did to a young man he had never met. It was a memorable meeting in my life, and the first impression that the Lokamanya gave me of himself persisted throughout the many meetings which I was privileged to have with him.

From a photostat: S.N. 8803

[1] Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915); statesman and educationist; was associated with the Indian National Congress since its inception and presided over its Banaras session in 1905; founded the Servants of India Society at Poona; visited South Africa in 1912 at Gandhiji's invitation.

345. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

Thursday [*May 15, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your letter.

I have done my duty. Now let things take their own course.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

DEVCHANDBHAI PAREKH
TAKHTESHWAR PLOT
BHAVNAGAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 6006. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

346. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Vaisakha Sud 12 [*May 16, 1924*][2]

CHI. MANI[3],

I have your letter. It would not at all be advisable for you to leave the sanatorium[4] by the 20th. You ought to stay there till at least the end of the month. How can I manage to go there? I must reach Sabarmati on the 29th.

If Vasumatibehn intends to go there, I shall let you know. There is very little chance, however.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne

[1] The postmark carries this date.

[2] Gandhiji returned to the Ashram on May 29, 1924, as indicated in the letter. *Vaisakha Sud 12* fell on May 16.

[3] Daughter of Vallabhbhai Patel

[4] At Hajira in the Surat district of Gujarat

347. LETTER TO VITHALBHAI J. PATEL[1]

JUHU,
May 17, 1924

DEAR SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of [May 15]. In reply, I beg to state that the present state of my health will not permit me to bear the strain of a public appearance and ceremony at an early date. I hope, however, to be able to receive the address of the Corporation at the Cowasji Jehangir Hall some time in August. If you do not mind, I would fix the date later in consultation with you.[2]

I remain,
Yours truly,

THE HON'BLE VITHALBHAI J. PATEL
PRESIDENT
MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8811

[1] This was in reply to V. J. Patel's letter of May 15, informing Gandhiji of the Bombay Municipal Corporation's resolution to present him an address of welcome.

[2] In his reply of July 19, Patel requested Gandhiji to fix a date prior to August 15. Gandhiji suggested August 9.

348. LETTER TO NARASINHRAO BHOLANATH DIVETIA

Vaisakha Sud 13 [*May 17, 1924*][1]

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I have your letter. 1 am relieved to hear that you are not offended. But I have already offered an apology in *Navajivan;* it must have been printed by now.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Narasinhraoni Rojnishi, p. 43

349. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

[*May 17, 1924*][2]

CHI. MANI,

After we meet in Ahmedabad, we shall see whether or not it is necessary for you to take any medicine. You should not leave the place until you are quite fit. Vasumatibehn may leave the place on Monday and go there. Bhai . . . knows her house at Surat. He may go there and see if she has arrived. If she has, he may take her to Hajira. Are there any private houses available there on rent? I shall most probably have a wire sent to you. Vasumatibehn is at present taking injections. How is Durgabehn[3] doing? Won't she write to me? Yes, my hand does shake a little.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MANIBEHN VALLABHBHAI PATEL
ASAR SHETH'S SANATORIUM
HAJIRA, VIA SURAT

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne

[1] The apology mentioned in the letter was published in *Navajivan,* 18-5-1924, along with the addressee's letter dated May 7, 1924. In 1924, *Vaisakha Sud 13* fell on May 17.

[2] As in the printed source

[3] Wife of Mahadev Desai

350. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

BOMBAY,
Saturday, May 17, 1924

Our representative asked: Are you in a position to make any statement about your discussions with the deputation that has come to you from Vykom?

Mahatmaji replied in slow accents:

I think that our discussions are now practically closed and I am satisfied that the movement has been carried on by the organizers in an orderly and non-violent manner. The steadiness with which they have conducted it has drawn the attention of the whole of the Indian public. All this is certainly to the good, but after having fully discussed with the friends from Vykom the position, I still entertain the opinion that Satyagraha should be confined to the Hindus only and that, too, as far as possible to the volunteers drawn from Kerala, and, at the most, from the Madras Presidency. Satyagraha in its intensest form goes deeper and therefore necessarily covers a very small surface. Let me make my meaning clear. The purer the organizers, the stronger and more effective is their Satyagraha and, therefore, when the organizers of Satyagraha extend the boundary line, it is really an admission of one's weakness, not of the cause, but of the persons organized. I think I have said sufficiently in the pages of *Young India* to show why non-Hindus cannot possibly offer Satyagraha in respect of a religious question which is exclusively Hindu. I believe that my friends have seen the force of my argument. If I could possibly persuade the Christian and Mohammedan sympathizers who had gone to jail as Satyagrahis, I will ask them to tell the authorities that they offered Satyagraha in error and that, therefore, if the authorities intended to discharge them they might do so because they would not court arrest in the cause of the untouchable Hindus. I am deliberately using the term untouchable Hindus, because I understand that among the Syrian Christians of Malabar there are untouchable Christians also. But as the present satyagraha is not being offered on behalf of the untouchable Christians, the sacrifice of Messrs Joseph, Sebastian and Abdul Rahim carries no merit with it.

So far as the Sikh kitchen is concerned, it is not only out of place but it is harmful to the cause and to the self-respect of the

people of Kerala. Harmful to the cause because it weakens the strength of the sacrifice of the volunteers and it must unnecessarily irritate that portion of the orthodox Hindus who are hostile to the reform. It is harmful to the self-respect of the Kerala people because unthinkingly they partake of the food distributed by the Sikh friends. It can only be regarded as charity. I cannot but regard it as charity that a large number of people, who are well able to feed themselves, should feed themselves at the kitchen and unwillingly be partakers of charity of which they do not stand in needs and this I say irrespective of the fact whether Sikhs be regarded as a part of the Hindu society or not. I would expect the Kerala friends to have self-respect and courage enough courteously to decline such assistance even if *Sanatani* Hindus offered to establish a kitchen. I can conceive the possibility and necessity of such a kitchen in a famine-stricken area where people are starving.

As to the pecuniary help from outside, I do retain the opinion that the Kerala friends should neither seek nor receive, even if it is offered unsought, pecuniary assistance from Hindus or others outside the Madras Presidency. They may, if they so need it, seek the pecuniary assistance only of the Hindus of the Madras Presidency. Of course, the Kerala people distributed all over India are bound, if they approve of the struggle, to send all the financial assistance that they can to the organizers of the movement.

My friends asked me whether I had expressed an opinion to the effect that the Kerala Congress Committee should not have taken up the question. My answer to them was that, if the question should have been taken up at all, the Congress Committee should have been the first body to take it up because it is pledged to bring about the removal of untouchability by all peaceful and legitimate means. But the Congress taking it up cannot and does not mean that non-Hindus can or ought to participate in satyagraha. They can only give their moral support.

I have no doubt whatsoever that, if the organizers continue the struggle in the same peaceful manner as they have done, accept the restrictions which I have suggested, and if they are thinking of sustaining the struggle for an indefinite period, their efforts must be

crowned with success. I cannot, however, lay too much stress upon the fact that satyagraha is a process of conversion and, therefore, the organizers must ever aim at changing the heart of their opponents.

Q. Have you seen a cable sent by the *Daily Telegraph's* correspondent in India to the effect that you have decided to take the lead at the next Congress, on the platform for securing a majority in the Assembly and Councils, replacing futile rejection of the budget by a programme combining co-operation in carrying on essential services with persistent demands backed by consistent and substantial majorities for speedy extension and recasting of reforms and speeding up of Indianization including the Army? In view of such deliberate misrepresentation, prompted by a desire to discredit the Swarajists in particular and the Indian National movement in general and in view of the thick ignorance which prevails in England regarding the real aims of the movement, don't you think that an Indian Bureau should be established in England for the dissemination of the truth regarding India? Have you revised your views since Nagpur? If the expense of maintaining such a bureau will be too heavy, should not a small subsidy be paid from Congress funds to some individual who is willing to undertake the work?

A. I did see the cablegram, but I thought that nobody would attach the slightest importance to it or credit me with the views about co-operation such as are imputed to me in the cable. As I have said so often, I am personally eager and anxious to offer co-operation, but I am more eager and more anxious to strengthen the forces of non-co-operation till there is the slightest possible indication of a change of heart, of which hitherto I have seen no sign whatsoever. I retain the same views about a publicity bureau to be maintained or subsidized in London for the purpose of contradicting mis-statements that may appear in the British Press. I am still of opinion that no misrepresentation or mis-statement can possibly do us any harm if we are ourselves strong and sound. Conversely no patronizing or favourable notice of our demands in the British or the foreign Press can be of any avail to us if we are ourselves weak, disorganized and not prepared to give battle to the Government. Therefore, every rupee that we can spare I would utilize for the khaddar propaganda, for national schools and for other parts of the constructive programme.

Q. You must have seen that resort to so-called Satyagraha is becoming frequent in the country not only in connection with political grievances but purely

religious or social. Don't you think that there is danger of the abuse of this weapon and *duragaha* instead of Satyagraha being practised for illegitimate ends? Can you lay down any rules for Satyagrahis—at least those who follow the Congress lead?

Yes, I agree that there is some danger of Satyagraha degenerating into an evil force and therefore becoming harmful. Abuse of a good thing is always possible, especially of a force so powerful and subtle as Satyagraha. I think, in my discussion of Satyagraha at Vykom, I have discussed in a cursory manner its fundamentals, but I accept your suggestion and, as soon as I have a little leisure, I hope to draw the rules which in my opinion are binding upon every satyagrahi.

In the course of a conversation with Messrs K. Madhavan Nair and Kurur Neelakantan Nambudripad, who constitute the Vykom Deputation, they gave me to understand that they had three to four long interviews with Mahatmaji and had discussed the question threadbare. They represented the whole case as well as they could, which Mahatmaji listened to with his characteristic patience and politeness. They said to me that they were satisfied with Mahatmaji's statement and were confident that it would satisfy workers and sympathizers in Kerala and the Madras Presidency. Mahatmaji emphasized self-reliance and self-sufficiency involved in a movement. They were afraid, they said, that Mahatmaji might find objection to the Congress Committee undertaking the [anti-]untouchability movement as it was represented in some quarters. They were, however, satisfied that there was nothing of the kind. Mahatmaji's very emphatic assertion raises no apprehensions in that direction. The Deputation is returning to Vykom in a day or two.

With regard to the Council question, Mahatmaji gave our representative to understand that a full statement would be issued to the Press in the course of this week. Our representative understands that Mahatmaji and Swarajist leaders had had long and repeated conferences and the decision is practically arrived at.

The Hindu, 19-5-1924

351. MY NOTES

SHASTRAS ON CHILD-MARRIAGE

A friend, commenting on the article on "Renunciation Personified"[1], has written to me to the following effect: "You are against the marriage of girls under fifteen, but the Shastras enjoin us to get girls married before they attain puberty. Even those who are against child-marriage follow this injunction of the Shastras. How does one solve this dilemma?" I see no dilemma here. Anyone who claims or believes that whatever is found in the books known as the Shastras is true and that no departure from it is permissible will find himself in such dilemmas at every step. A given verse may be interpreted in many ways, and these meanings may even be mutually contradictory. Moreover, the Shastras lay down some principles which are immutable, while some others related to conditions at a particular time and place and applied only to those circumstances. If anyone could live in the Arctic region where the sun does not set for six months, at what time should he perform *sandhya*[2]*? What* would he do about bathing, etc.? The *Manusmriti*[3] lays down many rules about what should and what should not be eaten, not one of which is observed today. Nor were all the verses written by the same person or at the same time. Hence, anyone who lives in fear of God and does not wish to violate moral laws has no choice but to reject everything which seems to be immoral. Self-indulgence cannot possibly be dharma. Hinduism places no restrictions on a life of self-control. What about the girl who has come to feel aversion to worldly pleasures? What does attaining puberty signify? Why should we insist that a girl should necessarily be married immediately after or before she arrives at a state which is normal for women. One can well understand a restriction to the effect that a girl can marry only after she has arrived at this state. Quarrelling over the meaning of the Shastras, we should never perpetrate cruelties. A Shastra is what leads us towards *moksha*[4]

[1] *Vide* "Renunciation Personified", 4-5-1924.
[2] Worship, especially morning and evening
[3] Manu's code of laws
[4] Deliverance from phenomenal existence as the supreme end of life

and dharma what teaches us self-restraint. Anyone who jumps into a well and drowns himself merely because it is his ancestral well is a misguided fool. Akha Bhagat[1] described the Shastras as a dark well. Jhaneshwar[2] regarded even the Vedas as much too narrow in scope. Narasinh Mehta[3] regarded experience alone as true knowledge. If we turn our eyes to the world, we can see that what this gentleman regards as dharma is in truth *adharma*[4] and should be completely rejected. It is because of this *adharma* that today we sacrifice innumerable young girls. History will condemn Hindu men for this custom. We need not, however, worry over what history will say. We ourselves are tasting the bitter fruit of the custom of child-marriage. It cannot be denied that this custom is one main reason why many Hindu young men have no spirit in them, behave like cripples and are all fear. It should not be forgotten that children of parents who are not fully grown men and women cannot develop a strong physique, do what you will. Fortunately, all Hindus do not follow the rule mentioned by the gentleman and the race has not totally lost its physical vitality. If, however, it were literally followed in practice, Hindu society would have no men at all.

A LEGITIMATE COMPLAINT

Perhaps most readers of *Navajivan* have not heard of Shri Harihar Sharma. He may be described as a relative of Kaka's. Let me introduce the reader to that family. When Barrister Shri Keshavrao Deshpande founded the Ganganath Vidyalaya in Baroda, he gathered round him a group of teachers and, with the idea of creating a family-feeling among them, gave them titles indicative of family relationships. The school as an institution housed in a particular building has ceased to exist, but as a sentiment it survives even today. This family circle still maintains its old ties. Like blood relationship, spiritual relationship too cannot cease. Inspired by this idea, those who were given these titles of family relationships regard them as sacred and have retained them. Keshavrao Deshpande's followers still know

[1] Gujarati saint-poet of the 17th century
[2] Maharashtrian saint of the 13th century
[3] 1414-1479; saint-poet of Gujarat
[4] The opposite of dharma

and respect him by the name of "Saheb". Our Kalelkar likes always to be addressed as "Kaka". Very few Gujaratis know Phadke by that name. We know him as "Mama". Similarly, Harihar Sharma is "Anna". This is one of the titles in use in Maharashtrian families. In Tamil, too, it is used in much the same sense. "Anna" means brother. Another person is known as "Bhai". Though he is still alive, he is as good as lost. I do not know the names of all the members of this well-known family. I have given these few facts while introducing Shri Harihar Sharma, hoping that Kaka himself will tell us in detail about the family when he has an occasion to do so.

Through this preface, I have also removed one misconception. Some persons, or rather quite a few, believe that Kaka and other workers like him are my gift to Gujarat; in fact, they are gifts by Saheb. He has given them on loan to me and, thereby, has put a responsibility on me as well. My only duty towards the members of this family is to help them in the work and increase their devotion to Saheb as much as possible. Other birds, too, have come for shelter into the nest which I have built. If we examine the reasons for this, we shall see that they have all come because people find comfort for their spirit in this nest. The birds feel their wings strengthened here, not clipped, so that they can fly as they wish. I am their debtor so long as they stay. As I am not responsible for collecting them, I cannot keep them either. Everyone is free to follow his own way. Since, however, they believe in self-restraint, I cannot describe them as men who accept no law.

This Anna has taken up the work of propagating Hindi in the Dravida region and, for that purpose, he and his wife studied Hindi in Prayag. Both of them passed the Hindi examination there and they started the work of spreading Hindi in Madras. Anyone who wants to get more information about this can do so by writing to him.

Shri Anna also brings out a fortnightly magazine called *Hindi Prachar*. The chairman of the Reception Committee of the Provincial Conference[1] at Borsad sent him an invitation which was wholly in English ! How could Anna tolerate this? He has written me a strongly-

[1] The Seventh Gujarat Political Conference held on May 1.3, 1924

worded letter. It should have been addressed to MohanlaI Pandya[1]. He is the guilty party, and I get the slap. Anna knows Pandya. But, perhaps, he was afraid of writing to him. I being the meek cow, all ticks come and settle on me. That is what Anna has done. He says:[2]

It is not necessary for me to comment on this. There is only one way of satisfying Anna and it is that those Gujaratis who have not so far learnt Hindi-Urdu, that is Hindustani, should do so and, in future, use their mother tongue among themselves and with others generally, the national language.

LETTER FROM NARASINHRAO

I have reproduced the letter[3] as I have received it, in obedience to Shri Narasinhrao's wishes. I see that he has been pained by the manner in which I referred[4] to his name. I feel unhappy and beg his forgiveness for having given him offence, even unintentionally. I do not play with anyone's name; how, then, can I take such liberty with the names of such literary figures as Shri Narasinhraobhai and Shri Khabardar? What I wrote was inspired by my regard for both of them. If I could not express this regard, I wish to assure them that it was not because I did not feel it, but because I lacked power of expression.

KALYANJI'S CONDITION

Having heard that Shri Kalyanji Vithalji[5] is not well and that he experiences some difficulty about diet, etc., I wrote and inquired of the Inspector-General of Prisons before writing any thing on this subject in *Navajivan.* I give below a translation of his reply to me :[6]

Shri Kalyanji's weight cannot be regarded as satisfactory. If he weighed only 92 Ib. before his imprisonment, this was much below normal. While in prison, he should put on weight so that it may be in proportion to his height.

[1] Mohanlal Kameshwar Pandya, a Congress worker of Kheda district in Gujarat who participated in several Satyagraha campaigns since the Kheda Satyagraha of 1918

[2] The letter is not translated here.

[3] The letter is not translated here.

[4] *Vide* "My Language", 27-4-1924.

[5] Congress leader and educationist of Gujarat

[6] Not reproduced here

A volunteer writes to say that there are *kirtans* on the subject of swadeshi, i.e., khadi, propaganda against drinks and so on, and that they have proved very useful for propaganda in the villages. There are no such *kirtans* about *Antyajas.* There are many poets in Gujarat—both among the non-co-operators and those who co-operate with the Government. Untouchability is a subject on which there is not much difference of opinion between the former and the latter. The difference between the two becomes relevant only when there is a question of asking for Government help for starting schools and providing other facilities for *Antya*jas, Will not, therefore, our Gujarati poets compose poems on the idea that untouchability is a sin and that it is the duty of every Hindu to help the *Antyajas* and thereby serve Gujarat?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-5-1924

352. FAMILY QUARREL

An *Anavil*[1] gentleman, who has supplied his name and address, has this complaint to make:[2]

I can understand that the condition of many men must be as pitiable as this gentleman's. The relation between a man and his wife is so delicate that a stranger's intervention can do little good. Satyagraha signifies pure love. When love between husband and wife becomes wholly pure, it reaches its perfection. There is no place in it then for sensual pleasures nor for any touch of selfishness. That is why the poets have conceived and expressed the longing of the individual self for the Supreme Self in terms of conjugal love. Such pure love is rarely to be found anywhere. Desire for marriage springs from attachment, from intense attachment. When that attachment has

[1] A community in Gujarat

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had asked whether he should not start Satyagraha against his wife, who would not give up wearing foreign clothes while attending marriages, cinemas, etc., though she had stopped buying foreign cloth.

developed into an unselfish bond and one has no desire for physical contact—does not even think of it—when one *atman*[1] completely merges itself in another, we then see that one gets a glimpse of the love of the Supreme Atman. This is a rather crude way of expressing the idea. The love I want the reader to conceive is completely free from desire. I have not become so free myself as to be able to describe it aright and I know, therefore, that I cannot command the language which can describe it. But a pure reader will be able to imagine for himself what that language ought to be. Since I believe in the possibility of such love between husband and wife, what can Satyagraha not do? The Satyagraha I mean is not what is nowadays known by that name. Parvati[2] resorted to Satyagraha against Shankar by doing penance for thousands of years. Rama did not do what Bharata[3] wished and so the latter retired to Nandigram. Rama was in the right and so was Bharata. Either kept his pledge. Bharata took away Rama's wooden sandals and, worshipping them, attained to the perfection of yoga. Rama's *tapascharya*[4] did not exclude external happiness; Bharata's was unparalleled. For Rama it was possible to forget Bharata, but Bharata had Rama's name on his lips continually. God, therefore, made himself the servant of his servant.

This is an example of purest satyagraha. Truly speaking, neither won, or, if anyone can at all be said to have won, it was Bharata. Tulsidas said that, if Bharata had not been born, Rama's name would not have been invested with the holiness it possesses, and in that way presented to us the supreme truth of love.

If my correspondent would forget for a while the physical aspect of love and cultivate the spiritual feeling which lies behind the love of husband and wife—I know that it cannot be cultivated by conscious effort, that it reveals itself, if at all, spontaneously—I can say with confidence that his wife will burn her foreign clothes that very day. Let no one ask why I advise such a big effort for a trivial thing or say that I have no sense of proportion. Small events bring about

[1] Self

[2] Consort of Shiva

[3] Step-brother of Rama; during the period of Rama's exile, Bharata did not enjoy kingly privileges, but ruled the kingdom in Rama's name.

[4] Self-suffering as moral discipline

changes in our life which deliberately planned occasions or so-called important events do not.

I can quote from my experience no end of examples of satyagraha between husband and wife, but they, too, I know, may be misused. I think the present atmosphere is poisonous. In view of this, I would not commit the sin of confusing the judgment of this correspondent, who has put to me a frank question, by citing my experiences. I have, therefore, merely explained the highest state. I leave it to him to choose a suitable remedy conforming to it for meeting his difficulty.

The position of women is delicate. Whatever one does about them smacks of the use of force. Life in Hindu society is hard, and that is why it has remained comparatively pure. I think a husband has the right to exercise only such influence as he can through pure love. If one of them at any rate overcomes carnal desire altogether, the task will become easy. It is my firm opinion that mainly, if not wholly, the man himself is responsible for the defects which he sees in woman. It is he who teaches her love of finery, who decks her out in what is regarded as attractive apparel. Then the woman gets used to these things and, later, if she is not able to follow her husband the moment he chances to change his way of life, the fault lies with him, not with her. Hence the man will have to have patience.

If India is to win swaraj by peaceful means, women will have to contribute their full share in the effort. Swaraj will certainly stay far off as long as women hanker after foreign cloth or mill made cloth or silk.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-5-1924

353. WHAT SHOULD KATHIAWAR DO?

Last week, I stated in detail my views about holding a political conference. I do not know whether the conference will take place and, if so, where. But this I know, that even some of the friends who came to see me were disappointed. They claim to be staunch satyagrahis. I

should like to tell them that, in the dictionary of satyagrahis, there is no word or synonym for disappointment. I do not even understand why they were disappointed. In fact, they were of the same opinion as I. But we may grant that they were hypnotized by my presence. If so, when they were out of that presence, they could have pulled themselves up and thought again. If they felt then that the workers had committed no error and that, in case the Durbar[1] refused permission for tasks and work on them will yield quick results. Both the rulers and the subjects should feel ashamed if even a single person is forced by hunger to leave Kathiawar. What does Kathiawar lack? The land is fertile, the men and women are intelligent and able-bodied. It grows sufficient cotton. Weavers themselves have told me that many of them have to leave Kathiawar for want of employment. Two years ago they got work; one would expect them to get more now. Why do they get less, instead? Are not the workers in Kathiawar responsible for this falling off? If they stop making too many speeches and learn all the stages in the processing of cotton, they could improve the economic condition of Kathiawar in one year. They should see that foreign cloth and mill-made cloth are boycotted throughout Kathiawar. Mill-cloth transfers the wealth of the many into the hands of the few. When a person's blood accumulates in his brain, he is said to have an attack of tetanus. The victim has very little chance of surviving; if at all, an opening in the vein may help him. When the wealth of many is concentrated in the hands of one person, we can describe him as suffering from economic tetanus. Just as, in a healthy person, the blood circulates continuously through the arteries holding the conference despite their agreeing to the conditions, it became a duty to offer Satyagraha; all of them, or any one of them could offer it. It is the beauty of Satyagraha that it can be offered even by a lone individual. I can well understand that because of my opinion against the holding of the conference the public may feel confused. But anyone who is convinced that my view is right can remove this confusion by employing the tremendous power of satyagraha. A

[1] The ruler of Bhavnagar which was then a princely State in Kathiawar

satyagrahi need not be discouraged even by opposition from me. I may be vain enough to believe that I alone know the science of Satyagraha, but I certainly have no monopoly in under-standing it. A friend has published a book on this subject, in which he has tried to prove that my Satyagraha is relatively imperfect, while his is of the most perfect kind. I hope to acquaint the reader with this book some time or other. New discoveries will continue to be made about the uses of Satyagraha and the methods of organizing it. Anyone who has confidence in himself ought to take the plunge and proceed with his plan. There is only one rule that cannot be violated, for it is part of the very definition of satyagraha. It is that a satyagrahi demonstrates his faith in what he regards as truth not by making others suffer, but by suffering himself. This being so, the satyagrahis alone will have to pay for his errors.

After these introductory remarks by way of encouragement to those who are real satyagrahis, I come to the last week's pledge.

The time has now come for the whole of the country and, especially for Kathiawar, to keep silent. The latter has always been accused of being brave in words and timid in deeds.[1] So far as the gift of the gab is concerned, the choice of the Goddess of Speech would certainly light on Kathiawaris. I often had this experience in South Africa also. The Kathiawaris there will testify to this. It need not be supposed that there were no exceptions to this, and that not even a few came forward to work, as I did. But God has especially blessed Kathiawar with public speakers.

It is, therefore, necessary that Kathiawaris keep mum now. Let them not lift their pens from the inkstands. If a conference is held, let it be not for the purpose of drawing up a schedule of speeches next year, but for chalking out a programme of work. We have discovered through experience that there is a great awakening among the people and that, when the occasion requires, we can get together thousands of people. This knowledge needed to be acquired. But it is no longer necessary to collect such vast numbers. To do so would only result in waste of time and money.

[1] *Vide* also "Injustice to Kathiawaris", 1-6-1924.

It is easy to work in Kathiawar with its population of twenty six lakhs. Spreading the use of khadi, running schools and carrying on propaganda against liquor and opium—these are all urgent and veins and does not accumulate in any part of the body, each part receiving the amount it needs, similarly, in a healthy economy, wealth should circulate regularly through every part in amounts proportionate to the needs of each. The spinning-wheel is one powerful means by which such a healthy economic condition can be brought about. Owing to its disappearance, the wealth of the entire world is being drained away to Lancashire. This circumstance is the symptom of a deadly disease, which can be cured only by reinstating the spinning-wheel.

If the workers in Kathiawar have understood this simple yet wonder-working idea, they will learn every step in the processing of cotton and introduce this skill among the entire population. This is the first political task.

How many national schools are there in Kathiawar? How many illiterate girls and boys are there? Are there enough schools to meet their needs? If not, schools should be started for them and in these schools, along with instruction in letters, training in the use of the spinning-wheel can also be given. This is the second political task.

The third political task is cleansing ourselves of the filth of untouchability. Propaganda for the spinning-wheel can be easily carried on along with this work. I cannot say from this distance what need there is in Kathiawar for propaganda against liquor and opium. Contact with the outside world cannot but have its effect. This is the fourth political task.

I have mentioned these tasks merely as illustrations. Local workers familiar with the conditions there can think of many other similar activities.

Some critics will cry out impatiently that this is social reform, not political work. But that is a misconception. By ‘political’ is meant that which deals with the ruler, with the State. A ruler means one who administers the affairs of society. Any person who does this must pay attention to all the matters I have mentioned. If he fails to do so, he is no administrator, no ruler; an organization in which these are ignored or given a subordinate place is not a political organization. The aim of

a body like a political conference should be to help the ruler or, if he has strayed from the right path, to act as a check on him. Such assistance can be given or such control can be exercised only by those who have the same influence over the people as the ruler has He alone from among the subjects can wield such influence on the people who serves them selflessly, and it is only through the activities outlined above that he can render such service. If, therefore, political conferences wish to do sound political work, engaging themselves in this service is the first step in their training and, as such, absolutely necessary.

This service, therefore, is the best training, and an essential one, for satyagraha. One who has not done such work has no right to offer satyagraha on behalf of the people. And the people, too, will not appreciate his effort. without such service to our credit, we would be regarded as mere adventurers in the guise of workers or satyagrahis.

"But how long will it be before we can complete the work which remains to be done and when will the rulers mend their ways? Look at your Jam Saheb[1]. You used to say with pride that you came to know Jam Saheb when he was known as Ranjitsinhji, that you two were fellow-students and had occasionally met, and also that he had very simple ways at that time and bore great love for the people of the State. All this is gone now. Perhaps, the subjects of no other ruler are as oppressed as the Jam Saheb's. What relation is there between trying to bring about a change in his policy and inducing the people to take up spinning? We feel, rather, that you arc tired of jail, do not wish to be imprisoned again, and so, to shield your weakness, you want to lead us on to a wrong path and make us weak besides." This is not said by just one person. A friend spoke jokingly of my 'weakness'. I have made up this charge-sheet by putting together remarks by several persons.

I have heard much against the Jam Saheb. Two years ago, some friends had sent me. documentary proof. However, as I was busy with some other work and reforming the administrations in Kathiawar was outside my sphere, I did nothing in the matter and wrote nothing on

[1] Ranjitsinhji Vibhaji (1872-1933), the ruler of Nawanagar, then a princely State in Kathiawar; educated in England where he won renown as a cricketer

the subject. I do not wish even now to take up this problem. I believe that, if people succeed in the peaceful activities of the swaraj programme, the shortcomings, wherever they exist, in the administrations of the Indian States will come to be automatically remedied. If, however, I decide to interfere in any way in the affairs of Kathiawar States, I will not form my opinions on the basis of the story of only one side. Besides, my acquaintance with the Jam Saheb, such as it is, would make it obligatory for me to meet him first and put all the complaints before him. Only if, after this, I felt that injustice was being done and that the Jam Saheb was not inclined to stop it, would I raise the matter in public. I followed this method when dealing with the indigo planters in Champaran,[1] and I cannot possibly do less when dealing with rulers in Kathiawar. I would, therefore, request the Jam Saheb, if he happens to see this article, not to conclude from this discussion that I am making any allegations against the administration in his State. I have mentioned the matter merely by way of illustration. There is no doubt, of course, that his subjects have complained in the manner I have described.

Let us return to the subject. In my opinion, the service of the people which I have mentioned above has a close bearing on the problem of the alleged misrule by the Jam Saheb. Both the ruler and his subjects will listen to those who have rendered such service. A satyagrahi ought to be a strong person; he should not have a trace of cowardice in him. He should have,: however, all the greater humility for his fearlessness. Without courtesy, fearlessness makes one proud and arrogant. A whole world separates satyagraha from pride. Even a very arrogant ruler will be obliged to give a patient hearing to one who is humble. Humility and courtesy cannot be cultivated except through service. A satyagrahi, again, should have experience of local conditions, and this, too, cannot be gained except through service. Criticizing the rulers is not experience. Many of the workers in Kathiawar are what are known as shrewd politicians. Political shrewdness has little connection with service. Politicians constitute the ruling class. I observed, when I was a child, that the people did not even provide a living for this class. If workers in Kathiawar wish to

[1] In 1917.

serve people, they should no longer regard themselves as politicians, but should become sweepers, farmers, weavers, potters, carpenters, and so on. To gain proficiency in such work, they may add their education and political experience. If truth and non-violence also added, no government can match the strength arising from the combination of these three factors.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-5-1924

354. HOW MUCH A WEAVER CAN EARN

A friend writes in his misery:[1]

It is necessary to reassure this correspondent and others who share his doubts. What I wrote was meant for intellectuals like lawyers. I do not wish to alter my statement despite this criticism. I know that many weavers in the Punjab earn more than two rupees a day. The highly skilled weavers of Madanpura in Bombay easily earn three rupees a day. It is true, of course, that they use foreign yarn or mill-made yarn. If, shaking off their laziness, they were to agree to use hand-spun yarn as woof, their income would surely not grow less. Why cannot others earn as much as these weavers do? One explanation which may be offered is that these weavers have plenty of experience. That is indeed a fact, but it is not necessary to have years of experience for a family to earn two rupees a day. I believe that anyone who works on the loom eight hours a day for one year, excepting Sundays, will gain the necessary experience; in any case, it is certain that, if one acquires skill in weaving, it requires little time to work designs and the earnings rise by half as much again or even more. Weaving coloured borders by itself fetches more money. Many weavers get higher wages only by virtue of their skill. Moreover, the income which I have visualized is not for one person, but for a family.

Ordinarily, much more work is done when other members of the family also help. Let us suppose that a skilled weaver, his wife and his ten-year-old son are engaged in weaving. The weaver has a stock of

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had questioned the accuracy *of* Gandhiji's statement that one could earn two to three rupees a day through weaving. He had asked Gandhiji to correct his statement, if it was not correct.

cotton stored. He makes slivers and gives them for spinning to women in the neighbourhood. He weaves that same yarn and himself sells the cloth to consumers. Both man and wife are engaged in weaving and, between the two, they work twelve hours a day. The child spools the yarn and helps in other ways. A family working in this manner will, in most cases, easily earn two rupees a day. Where it does not, it will be found that the cost or living too is relatively low. My correspondent is afraid that some inexperienced person may be misled by my article and take up weaving. I hope that some skilled weaver will choose a place and make the experiment I have suggested. It is possible that his experience may not bear me out. In any case he will lose nothing. I do not invite persons who earn one or two hundred rupees a month to make this experiment, but I certainly wish to tempt those who are unemployed or those who are working as clerks in at uncongenial atmosphere and on a salary of thirty rupees. The only condition is that the worker should have a fairly strong physique. He should not be averse to work and should be always ready to work for eight hours. If he has a family, so much the better. If however, he is single, but is a good weaver, he will certainly earn thirty rupees a month. Suppose, however, that it takes him some time to reach that figure; even then, what does it matter? He may be sure that he will not feel as if caught in a hole.

I shall be obliged if those who have had some experience in this matter write to me, even though it goes against my estimate. I may even use it in Navajivan when occasion arises.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-5-1924

355. SOME DIFFICULTIES

A volunteer has written a most serious letter in which he has discussed many issues. I quote from it those paragraphs on which I think I can express my views now.[1]

Fortunately for me, I do not regard anyone as my follower and so I shall not share in anyone's sins. But this is not enough to allay

[1] Not translated here

the fears of the correspondent or to absolve me from responsibility. I have been receiving complaints from all quarters against my so called followers. I am looking for a way out of this situation. With my faith in God as the Friend of those who suffer, I trust that He will show me the way to put an end to the activities of these so-called followers. Fraud cannot prosper for ever. Some men may be deceived for some time, but history has no example of all men having been deceived for all time.

It is also true that the working of the Congress constitution has become loose. There is much truth in the view that even a perfect constitution falls into discredit when worked by the wrong type of people and that the right type can make good use of even an imperfect constitution. It is obvious that volunteers should not receive four annas[1] from anyone without first explaining to him what it is for. It is also obvious that, having obtained the amount, they should not forget the persons who paid. The very idea behind establishing village [Congress] committees was to maintain constant contact between the villagers and the Congress.

No one who, like this correspondent, has seen the poverty of the villages will think of anything except the spinning-wheel as the means of ending it, for there is no such means. That is why the progress we make in popularizing the spinning-wheel will be our progress towards swaraj. The idea that one should not accept remuneration from the Congress is a kind of pride. It is not possible to get a large number of honorary workers and, therefore, swaraj work cannot go on if no one offers to join as a paid worker. It is a false notion that people do not look with respect upon those who accept a salary. Of course they will have no respect for people who do not work tirelessly in their service, regardless of whether or not the persons concerned receive a salary. I have sufficient experience to know that the people will not mind paying anyone who does indeed work thus tirelessly. It is true that the Congress cannot give large salaries, but I have no doubt that it can afford some small payment to workers. We should look upon it as an honour to accept remuneration from the Congress and serve the nation rather than accept a paid job elsewhere. What fascination do

[1] This was the fee for ordinary membership of the Congress.

people find in the Civil Service! Why is this so? One should feel even greater attraction for service in the Congress. If a person who enters the Civil Service may rise to a high post, one who serves the Congress may become its President. But anyone who is tempted simply by this prospect to take up service in it will also sink to a low level. Gokhale served the Fergusson College for twenty years. Although he had some income from the Royal Commission and such other sources, he continued to accept a salary from the College and regarded it as an honour to do so. Readers will remember that the salary started at Rs. 40 and did not exceed Rs. 75. Congress will not have its work done well so long as it does not get paid workers who will be indefatigable in its service. We shall not get many workers till people feel that it is an honour to work and receive payment. The best way to raise paid work in people's esteem is for Vallabhbhai himself to accept a salary. When I start serving, I will certainly enrol myself as a paid worker..

What the salary should be and how it should be fixed, whether everyone should be paid the same salary and whether the candidates would have to sit for a test are problems that do arise, but solving them is the test of our capacity to run an organization.

I shall not comment on the criticism against the Press, since I have little knowledge about Gujarati papers. This great activity started while I was in jail.[1] There is no doubt, however, that it is the duty of newspapers to educate the people to turn their attention to action; it is no longer necessary to rouse them. The people know now that the present system of government needs to be changed, that swaraj has to be secured, and they also know the means to be employed for the purpose. Only, we have not yet gathered speed in our progress in this direction. Newspapers should concentrate on imparting that. There can be no two opinions on this matter.

Of course, it is our duty to teach our *Antyaja* brethren to keep themselves clean. If we mix with them, we shall, in our own interest, teach them to be clean. We should be patient, knowing that their uncleanliness is the result of our sin. Till now, we have not treated *Antyajas* as our brothers, not even as human beings. We should not be surprised if we have to suffer the consequences of our own misdeeds.

[1] At Yeravda in 1922-24

Even so, we should certainly help them to rid themselves of their vices. They are by nature straightforward people. They know that they have to bring about these reforms. If they get the help they need, I believe they will surpass us.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-5-1924

356. LETTER TO ABDUL KADIR BAWAZEER

May 18, 1924

BHAI IMAM SAHEB,

I have sent invitation cards[1] according to the enclosed list. You may send cards anywhere else you wish. Send one to the Persian professor of the college. As I write this Kaka[2] is not present here and I do not remember the name. I do not think anybody else is left out. I personally wish to send as few invitations as possible. I do not like pomp and show any more. I am now above such things. Therefore you may treat my ideas as of no value. The Ashram belongs as much to you as to me. So, exercise your full right. About the wedding consider your wish as mine.

Blessings and salaam from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10787. Courtesy: Ghulam Rasool Qureshi

357. SPEECH AT BUDDHA JAYANTI MEETING, BOMBAY[3]

BOMBAY,
May 18, 1924

The only reason for inviting me to preside at this meeting is, I

[1] *Vide* the preceding item

[2] D. B. Kalelkar

[3] Presiding over the Buddha Jayanti celebrations under the auspices of the Buddha Society of Bombay, Gandhiji spoke on the "Ideals and Teachings of Buddha". This was his first public appearance after release. Gandhiji spoke from a prepared text, the draft of which is available. Newspapers carried a report with slight verbal variations.

presume, that I am more than most people endeavouring to popularize the truth for which Gautama Buddha lived and died. For, my book-knowledge of Buddhism, I am sorry to have to confess, is of the poorest type. It is confined to the fascinating book of Sir Edwin Arnold, which I read for the first time now nearly thirty-five years ago, and one or two books during my brief incarceration in the Yeravda Jail. But that great Buddhist scholar, Professor Kausambi, tells me that *The Light of Asia* gives but a faint idea of Buddha's life, and that at least one incident in the beautiful poem is not to be found in any authoritative original Buddhist work. Perhaps some day the learned Professor will give us the results of his ripe scholarship in the shape of a reliable story of Buddha's life for the ordinary Indian reader.

For the moment, however, I would like to tell the meeting what I believe about Buddhism. To me it is a part of Hinduism. Buddha did not give the world a new religion; he gave it a new interpretation. He taught Hinduism not to take but to give life. True sacrifice was not of others but of self. Hinduism resents any attack upon the Vedas. It regarded the new interpretation as such attack. Whilst, therefore, it accepted the central truth of Buddha's teachings, it fought against Buddhism regarded as a new and anti-Vedic cult.

It has become the fashion nowadays in some quarters to say that India's downfall dates from her acceptance of Buddha's teachings. It is tantamount to saying that love and piety, if sufficiently practised, will degrade the world. In other words, according to the critics, evil should triumph in the end. It is my unalterable belief that India has fallen not because it accepted Gautama's teaching, but because it failed to live up to it. The priest has ever sacrificed the prophet. Vedas to be divine must be a living word, ever growing, ever expanding and ever responding to new forces. The priest clung to the letter and missed the spirit.

But we need not despair. The reformation that Buddha attempted has not yet had a fair trial. Twenty-five hundred years are nothing in the life of the world. If the evolution of form takes aeons, why should we expect wonders in the evolution of thought and conduct? And yet the age of miracles is not gone. As with individuals,

so with nations. I hold it to be perfectly possible for masses to be suddenly converted and uplifted. Suddenness is only seeming. No one can say how far the leaven has been working. The most potent forces are unseen, even unfelt, for long. But they are working none the less surely. Religion to me is a living faith in the Supreme Unseen Force. That Force has confounded mankind before, and it is bound to confound us again. Buddha taught us to defy appearances and trust in the final triumph of Truth and Love. This was his matchless gift to Hinduism and to the world.

He taught us also how to do it, because he lived what he taught. The. best propaganda is not pamphleteering, but for each one of us to try to live the life we would have the world to live.

From a photostat of the draft: S.N. 8813; also C.W. 5176

358. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*May 19, 1924*][1]

You have not written the letter as a Mr. Hyde, but as Shekhchalli.[2] Dr. Jekyll too has the right to build castles in the air; particularly when he happens to live in the Ashram castle. What is wrong is the desire to live away from me. Whatever that may be, I am not a stupid bania to sell my precious wares cheap by getting you a lucrative post and taking money from you for the Ashram. That much money you can get for the Ashram even by begging. I want to conduct the Ashram either by begging or by doing manual labour. There are many more things I would like to say, but you may spellthem out from what I have said already. The body of a self-controlled man must be healthy. There is a contradiction between physical education and spiritual education. There is a direct relation between health and spiritual strength.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MAHADEV DESAI
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SABARMATI[3]

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S.N. 8785

[1] The postmark bears this date.
[2] A day-dreamer
[3] The letter was redirected c/o Dr. Champaklal Ghiya, Haripura, Surat.

359. TELEGRAM TO BACKERGUNGE DISTRICT CONFERENCE[1]

[*May 20, 1924*]

SORRY TOO LATE. YOUR MESSAGE RECEIVED ONLY TODAY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8816

360. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Vaisakha Krishna 2 [*May 20,* 1924][2]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have been getting your letters. Do keep writing to me. If I do not reply every time, you may take it that I haven't the time to do so.

Arrogance and firmness are generally found together. The former will gradually take a secondary place, if we go on promoting the *sattvik*[3] tendencies in us. The best way of overcoming arrogance is to try and refrain from reacting to opposition.

Mr. Das[4] is already here and having talks with me. He is emphatically denying that he has acted improperly.

For the attacks that are taking place on Hindu women, I think we alone are to blame. The Hindus have become so cowardly that they

[1] This was in reply to a telegram from the Secretary, Backergunge District Conference, received on May 20, 1924, Stating: "Backergunge district conference Pirojpor 24th May. Deshbandhu Maulana Azad attendance widely announced with their consent pray send both immediately failing false position."

On the top of the telegram Gandhiji had scribbled: "Inquire when was it received?"

[2] From the reference to the apology, the letter appears to have been written after the previous one to the addressee dated May 13. In 1924, *Vaisakha Krishna* 2 fell on May 20.

[3] Virtuous

[4] Chitta Ranjan Das (1870-1925); eminent lawyer, Congress leader, orator and author; President of the Indian National Congress in 1922, at Gaya; leader of the Swarajist Party

cannot even protect their sisters. I am going to write a good deal on this subject. I do not see any easy remedy for this. There may be some exaggeration in the reports you have heard. After making allowance for that, what remains is enough to put us to shame.

I asked the manager to send you Y.I. and *Hindi N.J.* I hope you have got them by now.

You must have got the letter I wrote to you last week.

Yours sincerely,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[PS.]

Even if your brother tenders an apology, you would better not apologize, if you can remain firm. We may not find fault with one who apologizes. One's morality is limited to one's strength.

MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: C W. 6007. Courtesy: G D. Birla

361. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

Vaisakha Vad 2 [*May 20, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your letter. If any persons come for the Parishad[2], they will certainly stay with you. But isn't it quite far off yet?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original C W 6008 Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] The postmark bears this date

[2] Presumably, the Kathiawar Political Conference which was to be held in January 1925

362. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL AND DURGA DESAI

[*May 20, 1924*][1]

CHI. MANI,

I got your letter and postcard. I was very pleased to read what you say about "Tyagamurti"[2]. Purity and restraint are virtues to be treasured. We shall discuss them when we meet. You should now by God's grace get rid of the vestiges of the fewer still troubling you. Vasumatibehn is going to Deolali and not to Hajira. You must give up all idea of leaving Hajira soon.

Blessing from
BAPU

CHI. DURGA.

After all you have not written to me. How do you do there?

BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne

363. LETTER TO ADA WEST

May 20, 1924

MY DEAR DEVI[3],

I have just got your welcome letter. I am slowly gaining strength. I am at a sea-side place. hope to go to the Ashram next week. How long are you staying there? How are you keeping? I must not write more. But I am asking Ramdas to give you all the news.

My love to you all.

Your brother,
M. K. GANDHI

MISS ADA WEST
23, GEORGE STREET
SOUTH LINCOLNSHIRE

From a photostat: G.N. 7618; also C.W. 4433. Courtesy: A.H. West

[1] As in the source
[2] *Vide* "Renunciation Personified", 4-5-1924.
[3] Sister of A.H. West, an associate of Gandhiji in South Africa. She has assumed the Indian name `Devi'.

364. INTERVIEW TO VAIKOM DEPUTATION[1]

[*May 20, 1924*]

Q. Mahatmaji, you have stated that fasting as a weapon cannot be resorted to by a satyagrahi except against friends. The Travancore Government is either a friend or a foe that opposes the wishes of its subjects. If it is a friend, the sufferings undergone by the Satyagrahis evidencing the intensity of their feelings in this matter are sure ultimately to melt the heart of the Government and induce it to grant the demands of the satyagrahis. The Maharaja of Travancore, though orthodox to the core, is a kind ruler and loves his subjects and he will not be able to look with equanimity on the sufferings undergone by the Satyagrahis. He is not a tyrant who does not feel for his people. Under these circumstances, why cannot the satyagrahis adopt fasting to melt the Maharaja's heart and to conquer him through their sufferings?

A. Satyagraha implies absolute love and non-violence. Fasting as a weapon can only be used against a lover, a friend, a follower or co-worker who, on account of his love for you and the sufferings you undergo actually, realizes his mistake and corrects himself. He purifies himself of an evil which he knows and acknowledges to be an evil. You recall him from his evil ways to the correct path. A son can fast against a father addicted to drink to cure him of his evil. The father knows it to be an evil and realizes the enormity of it by the sufferings of the son and he corrects himself. My followers and co-workers who resorted to violence in Bombay knew that violence was against the principle of non-co-operation. Only they deviated from that fundamental principle. My fasting brought home to them their mistake and they corrected it.

But you cannot fast even against a friend when other considerations than actual realization of his evil ways are likely to make him yield. For example, when I proposed to introduce an untouchable as a member of my household, my wife objected. My fasting against her under such circumstances might have obliged her to give in, but it would be the fear that my fasting would lead to my death and the loss of her husband that would influence her to surrender her opinion and

[1] This consisted of K. Madhavan Nair and Kurur Nilakantan Nambudripad.

not the consciousness that she was committing a wrong in regarding a human being as untouchable. I succeeded in the case not by converting her to my opinion but by tyrannizing over her and doing violence to her feelings. In the same way, the Maharaja of Travancore may be a kind man who may not bear to witness with equanimity the death of a satyagrahi. Your fasting may compel him to yield, but he yields not because he sees the error of his ways and believes untouchability to be evil, but because he cannot bear to see the death of a person who, in his opinion, perversely chooses to die: This is the worst form of compulsion which militates against the fundamental principles of satyagraha.

Q. Supposing the Maharaja is not a friend, but a foe and a tyrant, it is impossible to win him over by the sufferings of the Satyagrahis. In such a case, will it not be right to force the hands of the Government by the creation of a strong public opinion and by putting the Government in a false position? This implies the use of pressure. To quote an example in Kaira,[1] the Government that opposed the people was not conquered by love but by pressure. A sustained fight is necessary to bring about this pressure to bear fruit and a weak people cannot hope to put up such a sustained fight against an organized Government with immense resources without outside help. If satyagraha excludes even this pressure, you may call the fight at Vaikom by any other name—say, passive resistance, civil disobedience or non-violent assertion. In such a case, what objection is there in receiving outside help? By preventing us from adopting fasting or accepting outside help, don't you deprive us of the method available to us in a fight both against friend and against foe?

A. I do not admit that in Kaira or Borsad it was the pressure of public opinion that made the Government yield. Moreover, no outward pressure was brought to bear on the Government. I refused all outside help (in the case of Kaira), though many offered to pay me money. The intensity of the feeling manifested by the preparedness of the people to undergo any amount of suffering opened the eyes of the Government and they yielded. It was conviction that made the Gover-nment concede the demands of the people of Kaira. Such conviction can come only by the purity and strength of your sacrifice. Outside help weakens the strength of your sacrifice. The opponent sees no sacrifice in you and his heart is not touched and as a result his

[1] The reference is to the Kheda Satyagraha.

eyes are not opened. The volunteers, fed and financed with outside help, appear to the opponent more as mercenaries than like satya-grahis who are prepared to sacrifice their all for their principles. Such a fight is the trial of material and not spiritual strength. It is not true satya-graha. Almost the same question was raised at Chirala-Perala. I stron-gly advised Mr. Gopalakrishnayya to continue the fight unaided and the fight was carried on successfully. Non-violent assertion of your rights with outside help may be passive resistance but no satyagraha.

There is a world of difference between passive resistance and satyagraha. The passive resister does not and need not love his opponent, while a satyagrahi ought to. Passive resistance is a weak weapon adopted by a weak people, while satyagraha is a strong weapon wielded by a weak people. Passive resistance can be resorted to by the suppressed classes of Kerala, but I will not advise anyone to resort to it, nor do I wish that any Congress worker should counten-ance it. The ideal satyagraha is the satyagraha offered by the indivi-dual or individuals who suffer wrong without any help from outside. In the case of Vaikom, the ideal satyagraha is the satyagraha offered by the non-caste Hindus of Vaikom and their caste-Hindu sympa-thizers alone. If that is impossible they may descend from the ideal a little and receive help from people of such area that can visualize the situation and feel with them.

Q. Is not the removal of untouchability and unapproachability an all-India question, and Vaikom being the first pitched battle in the war against these two evils, will not a defeat there speak a disaster to the movement in general, and if it will, is it not the duty Of all Indians to help in the fight? What is the significance of the word, 'local' as applied to Vaikom? If help from outside is pressure and overawing repugnant to the principles of satyagraha, can Vaikom non-caste Hindus seek aid in the form of money or volunteers from any place outside Vaikom? Cart even Travancorians belonging to places other than Vaikom participate in the struggle? If they can seek and receive such help from people of Travancore and even from the people of the Madras Presidency, why can't they receive help from Hindus throughout India? Why should satyagrahis refuse help from the Hindu Sabha and similar bodies?

A. The question is partly answered in the answer given before. In the sense that the prohibition of the use of every well, tank, roads,

etc., in every part of the country is the result of a common evil affecting the Hindus, the Vaikom struggle may also be regarded as an all-India question, but every such matter arising locally must be fought out locally and it is neither desirable nor practicable that the whole[of] India or the central organization should fight out such questions. It will lead to chaos and confusion. The consequence can better be understood if there are a number of such fights going on at the same time. The central organization will be considerably weakened by the frittering of its energies in such a way. The local area will not develop the necessary strength to tackle such questions unaided. Self-reliance and self-sufficiency of each local area will make the whole of India strong and enable i. to undertake the great fight that is in store. The solution of the problems at Vaikom will not solve the question of untouchability for the whole of India. India may share the victory it gains, but will not be responsible for the defeat it sustains.

Q. We do not understand your injunction against the participation of non-Hindus in the Vaikom struggle. You called upon the Hindus to help the Muslims in the matter of the Khilafat, a purely religious question. Hindus and Muslims, forming component parts of the Indian nation, it was then considered the duty of the Hindus to help the Muslims and thereby facilitate the early attainment of swaraj. The removal of untouchability being necessary for solidifying Indians into a nation, is it not the duty of every Indian, Hindu or non-Hindu, to have the evil removed?

A. In the case of the Khilafat, the fight was between the Muslim community and a non-Muslim power. If, on the other hand, it was a fight between two sections of the Moslem community, I would not have asked the Hindus to participate in the fight. It is the duty of the Hindus to free the society of the evil rampant in it. They cannot and ought not to call in the aid of outsiders in the reform work it carries on. It demoralizes you and unnecessarily offends the orthodox section whom you have to convert and conquer through your love and who will surely and legitimately feel insulted by such non-Hindu interference.

Q. In view of the fact that the struggle at Vaikom is directed to the establishment of a civic right, that is, the right of way along public roads, is it not the duty of every citizen irrespective of religion to assist in the struggle?

A. The Congress Committee has no business to interfere in the

inter-nal administration of a Native State. The Kerala Congress Committee has launched the campaign only because the Congress has called upon the Hindus to remove untouchability rampant in the Hindu society. The fight at Vaikom hinges on the disability of a certain class of people to use a road because they arc unapproachable. This is a purely Hindu question and, therefore, the non-Hindus have no place in the struggle.

Q. Why is it, Mahatmaji, you are so strongly against the free kitchen opened by the Akalis? The Akalis are prepared to feed and are actually feeding all classes of people to whatever community or faction they may belong. They do not take sides in the fight.

A. No man of self-respect will partake of food from such a kitchen. You are not starving for want of food and you have not been reduced to the stage of depending on charity for your livelihood. The arguments already advanced against outside help apply equally to this free kitchen at Vaikom.

Q. What is the advice that you have to give us, Mahatmaji, with regard to the method of the fight in future?

A. You may continue in the same way you arc doing. You may increase the number of volunteers that offer satyagraha. If you are strong enough, you can choose[1] other places where the suppressed classes labour under the same disability and offer satyagraha in those places. But, as a demonstration of the feelings of caste Hindus in the matter, you will do well to arrange an absolutely peaceful and non-violent procession from Vaikom to Trivandrum and back consisting of caste Hindus alone to meet the Maharaja and represent to him the necessity for the removal of the disability of the non-caste Hindus. The caste Hindus comprising the procession must be prepared to suffer the inconveniences incidental to a slow march on foot. They must camp in places away from villages and towns and make their own arrangements for food. The procession can be arranged only if the organizers are thoroughly satisfied of a non-violent atmosphere. The satyagraha at Vaikom may be suspended during the time that this procession is on the march. This is all the suggestion that I have to

[1] The source has ‘offer’.

make at present.

The above is only a meagre summary of our discussions with Mahatmaji. Mahatmaji had a convincing answer ready to every question we put to him. The above summary may be treated as supplementing the statement Mahatmaji issued to the Press. He is very positive that the Kerala Congress Committee should continue the fight. Though he is, on principle, not in favour of outside help in a satyagraha campaign, he is clearly of opinion that Kerala is entitled to claim help even from outside Madras Presidency for general propaganda in connection with the untouchability campaign. Mahatmaji has further expressed the opinion that orders under Section 144 need not be disobeyed now because the number of workers is limited and the resources of the Committee have to be conserved as much as possible.

The Hindu, 26-5-1924

365. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

Early Morning, Wednesday, May 21, 1924

MY DEAREST CHARLIE[1],

Why do you say the Bhil boys should not wear the khaddar caps and shirts? What should they wear? Is not your analogy false? The missionary dressing like the collector and sitting with him identified himself with the authority that is evil. If the khaddar cap may be regarded as an emblem of purity, why may it not be worn by all? Such identification will be good surely. But I want the wicked as well as the good to wear khaddar as all must clothe themselves. Therefore I am trying to prevent khaddar. from being associated with anything either good or evil. The shape in which it is worn is of no moment.

You expect not a line in reply to your letters. But when you put posers that need action, what is one to do?

With deepest love,

MOHAN

6, DWARKA NATH TAGORE LANE

From a photostat of the original: G.N. 2611.

[1] Charles Freer Andrews (1871-1940); English missionary, author, educationist and a close associate of Gandhiji

APPENDIX

APPENDIX I

ANDREW'S STATEMENT ON GANDHIJI'S RELEASE

Mr. C. F. Andrews has communicated the following statement to the Associated Press concerning Mr. Gandhi :

I was present at the Sassoon Hospital this morning at about 7.30 a.m. and found Mahatma Gandhi very bright and cheerful after a good night's rest. While we were talking, Col. Maddock who has been in charge of the patient in hospital came in and announced to Mahatmaji news of his unconditional release and congratulated him upon it most heartily. He then read out to him words of the official message and said that it had come on Monday night by a special messenger. Therefore he had taken earliest opportunity of coming to him as he wished [him] to be the first man to hear news that he was now free. Mahatma Gandhi remained quiet for a few moments and then said to Col. Maddock with a smile, "I hope you will allow me to remain your patient and also your guest a little longer." Doctor laughed and told him that he trusted that his patient would go on obeying his orders as a doctor and that he himself might have very great pleasure and satisfaction of seeing him thoroughly restored to health. Later on in the morning, after dressing the wound, Col. Maddock gave warning that recovery of the patient which was going on so well might be seriously thrown back if any unnecessary excitement or tiredness was caused in the next few days by visits of those who wished to see him. Kindest thing in the world would be for everyone, except those who were nursing him, to give him all the rest possible at this critical time in his recovery. It had to be remembered that the wound which had to be made while performing the operation was not fully healed and a little over-taxing of strength of the patient might throw recovery back. Next fortnight would be the time when every reserve of strength would be needed in order that the wound might be fully healed. Everything had gone well up to the present, but it was imperative that no unnecessary risks shall be incurred.

Mahatma Gandhi was removed by doctor's orders into another room with an outside verandah where he would be able to get the full benefit of the sunshine and open air. Telegrams began to pour in upon him from an early hour. The first telegram reached hospital very soon after Col. Maddock had left.

I would wish, if I may be permitted to do so, after all I have seen in the hospital concerning Mahatma Gandhi's health, to add my own urgent request to the warning given by the doctor, for while undoubtedly Mahatma Gandhi has recovered wonderfully hitherto, he is still in a very weak condition and it must be remembered that healing of the wound has still to go on and anything that in the slightest degree might bring about a relapse must be avoided. Every day of complete rest which he can

now obtain, especially during the next fortnight, will mean an immense difference for the future. It would be the greatest kindness possible if those to whom his health is most precious would strictly observe doctor's instructions until the recovery has been fulfilled. It will also be quite impossible for Mahatmaji to grant interviews to Press correspondents. After writing out this statement, I read it over to Mahatma Gandhi himself at his own request, and he has passed it for the Press.

Young India, 7-2-1924

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM DR. SATYAPAL

BHARAT BUILDINGS,
LAHORE,
February 23, 1924

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI

Bande Mataram.

I beg to offer my sincere congratulations to you on your recovery. It is a matter of genuine delight for all of us that you have been restored to us for our guidance. May you enjoy a long lease of life is our fervent prayer.

You would have learned by this time that the Sikh Jatha which had gone to Jaiton for *Akhand Path* has been fired upon. There have been some casualties (the exact number of the killed and wounded is not yet known). The Working Committee of the P.P.C.C. has arrived at the following decisions in this connection:

a. It has organized an Ambulance Corps and placed it at the disposal of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabhandhak Committee.

b. It has written to the President, S.G.P. Committee, inquiring from him as to in what ways can our Committee help them. It has assured them that anything that we can do for them will be readily done.

May I request you to kindly favour me with your detailed views as to what we should do in this connection.

I trust that this letter finds you in good health.

Yours sincerely,

SATYAPAL

GENERAL SECRETARY

PS.

I have just now sent a telegram which I hope will have reached you before this.

From a photostat: S.N. 9915

APPENDIX III

EXTRACT FROM K. P. KESAVA MENON'S LETTER

Kerala Provincial Congress Committee at its last meeting chalked out a definite programme of work with regard to untouchability this year. As you know, the conditions in Kerala are peculiar. Here the question is not only untouchability but unapproachability. We are now taking steps to see that public roads are also open to the unapproachables. There are ever so many roads in Kerala now used by Mahomedans, Christians and high-caste Hindus but are not allowed to be used by the unapproachables such as *Ezuvas*, *Thiyyas* and *Pulayas*. Two weeks ago when I went to Vykom, a place of some importance in north Travancore, I appealed to the caste Hindus to allow members of the *Ezuva* and *Pulaya* communities to use the public road round the temple. I may mention that this road is maintained by public funds and is now being freely used by Christians, Mahomedans and caste Hindus. Though we arranged a procession consisting of *Pulayas* to pass this road on the morning of the 1st instant, we had to postpone it at the request of several local friends who wanted some time more to educate public opinion on the question. You may remember Mr. T. K. Madhavan, a leading member of *Thiyya* community who interviewed you some three years ago while you were at Tinnevelly.[1] He has now joined the Congress and is whole-heartedly working with us for the removal of untouchability. We have fixed the 30th instant to take the procession along these roads. I need not assure you that it would be our endeavour to conduct it in the most orderly way possible. In the meanwhile, attempts are being made by lectures, distribution of leaflets, and personal interviews to bring the orthodox people to our side. A message from you would instil fresh courage in us.

The Hindu, 25-3-1924

APPENDIX IV

LETTER FROM C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

THE "ARAMA",
SALEM,
(SOUTHERN INDIA),
March 23, 1924

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I am so glad to receive your letter[2] today and I tender you my special thanks for reading the long statement during your present state of health. I fear that I have not

[1] *Vide* "Interview to *Deshabhimani*", 23-9-1921.

[2] This was dated March 19, 1924.

expressed myself crisply and clearly in my statement. With your refreshing frankness, you must permit me to say that you have misunderstood it in vital parts. To show this clearly to you would require more space and time than I can well command now —I am not quite well and mostly in bed and on fluid diet under medical advice—or desirable to trouble you with, during your rest so necessary; but I shall take one or two instances.

You say, "It will also follow from your reasoning that swaraj will only have to be a grant from the British Parliament." This sentence has taken me by surprise. The whole tone and drift of my argument in this statement, as it had been previously throughout my life, is quit the contrary. I never was a party and could never be a party to the debasing view that we could secure our freedom only as a gift from any nation. In this very statement, I have clearly emphasized my strong difference from this view. I am sorry I did not number the paragraphs; but you can easily locate in it what I have said on this subject. You will note that I distinguish both our Moderates and Nationalists from those who have adopted your gospel of swaraj. I say there that the former have no 'sanction' for winning our freedom. You know what this word means in legal and political language. I also allude to the only two methods proclaimed authoritatively as means to gain our freedom, namely, a gift from England or by the employment of the sword and I afterwards said that we have invented a third method in the place of these two and that I call a sanction; namely moral coercion of such a kind that England will not and dare not resist. Surely, in the face of this, it pains me to see you attribute to me the idea of a spontaneous grant of swaraj from England. I can expand this argument, but I think it unnecessary. I shall console myself with an earnest appeal to you to read my statement again and also the cuttings which have been sent to Rev. Mr. C. F. Andrews a few days ago. You must ever remember that I am not a scholar and you must kindly gather my full meaning from scattered ideas not very logically arranged. As regards your statement that my swaraj is not consistent with our freedom to quit the British Empire when we choose, I can only refer you to the general tone and drift of these arguments as well as to my address at Nagpore, from all of which you can easily gather that my idea of swaraj implies freedom and ability to say England "Get thee gone". You know well that the late French Prime Minister, Sir Wilfred Laurier, the leader of the Canadian Liberals, said that if Canada declared herself independent, England dared not fire a single gun. This view that the dominions of the British Empire are free to detach themselves at any time they liked is no longer a controversial policy but an accepted one.

On the subject of untouchablity, you don't thoroughly understand me either. I merely wish to correct the erroneous and mischievous impression generally prevailing, especially abroad, that the doctrine of untouchability of Hindu outcastes and low castes was invented by the higher castes. I should like to know authority to the contrary if you disagree with me. On the other hand, this doctrine of untouchability,

applied again to those unfortunate classes, is clearly and logically an expansion and even an exaggeration in a most uncharitable form of the doctrine of untouchability within caste and within family. In either case, the doctrine is based upon the idea that touch meant pollution and impurity. That's all I meant. I meant that both the ideas are the same in kind but different in degree. You perhaps are not aware that, in Southern India, we cannot go near a woman when she is unwell (periodically) be that woman our mother, sister, or daughter and , if inadvertently we did, we have to bathe and even change the sacred thread, exactly as the most orthodox do when they touch or go too near a Pariah. This aspect was not thoroughly endorsed by Sri Shankaracharya. He said that bathing and changing thread would do if there was actual touch of the woman in such condition, but there was no pollution if one goes near her. You will thus see from all these that I never meant more than that a grievance, which really exists and which it is our sacred duty to, remove should not be exaggerated in nature or needlessly even in scope so that unnecessary bitterness of feeling is caused to the sufferers from a delusion that the doctrine was specially invented by the higher order of the Hindu society to degrade them on purpose. I hope you will agree with me that reform in this vital particular in our national corporate life is the more easy if there are no misconceptions on the part of either side and no exhibition of unseemly gesture on the part of the sufferers due to bitterness of feeling rising from erroneous diagnosis of the cause and exaggerated view of the grievance. When we meet again and when I shall have the good fortune to make you the more clearly and exactly see me as I am and as I have been, I hope to convince you that my views touching our duties no less than of our rights in order that we might take our proper place among the great families in this world are saner and sounder and more charitable than you appear to think, judging from your present letter.

My respects to Mrs. Gandhi, as well as my regards to Rev. Mr. C. F. Andrews and my kind remembrances to your children. Trusting that you are every day making good progress towards complete recovery of your health and with very kind regards,

I am,

Yours sincerely,

C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

PS.

As regards the melancholy meanness of the business of the Congress at Cocanada in treating the so-called Compromise Resolution as a Non-co-operation Resolution, I would call your attention to the attitude of "Janmabhumi" of Masulipatam edited by Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya. This paper attacks it more than I do, and Sitaramayya is a genuine Congressman. You have not a purer and more loyal follower than he.

From a photostat: S.N. 8570

APPENDIX V

(A) LETTER FROM RAMANAND SANYASI

BALDEV ASHRAM,
KHURJA (U. P.),
April 1, 1924

SHRIMAN MAHATMAJI,

I am in receipt of your letter dated the 28th instant. I regret I did not give you any particulars in my first letter.

(1) After 1921 episode the recruiting absolutely stopped. The trade was dull and there were huge stocks of Indian tea. both in England and in India. With the present rise in the market and clearance of stocks, the planters began to feel need of more labour to recultivate the plantations which had been abandoned since 1921. The present recruiting started in last November. The information which I received was from a friend who is the District Engineer of Gurgaon District (Punjab). Then later on I received information from nearly six districts in U. P. and two districts of Punjab. It was in January that I issued a statement to the Press warning the people against consequences. The Anglo-Indian agents who were in charge carefully avoided the districts from which they used to draw their labour before 1921 episode.

(2) The above covers your questions No. 2 and 3 also.

(3) The enquiry I want to make in the plantations is what are actual conditions prevailing there at present. Has their moral or otherwise their economic position increased than hitherto, and whether it will not be in the general interest of the country to check the flow of the labour to those districts if no improvement in any direction has taken place so that the morals and characters of further number may not become lax.

(4) No written conditions were offered to the would-be recruit as far as I have ascertained, but mainly they were as follows:

(i) Rs. thirty per mensem as wages both to the husband and wife, (ii) free quarters, wood for fuel and medical attendance. (iii) Free railway passage in case the recruit does not like the place. But you can yourself guess how difficult it is to return from tea garden districts if you are once there as a labourer. I quite accept your suggestion that enquiries should be made first through Assam Congress Committee before proceeding there. Accordingly I am writing a letter to the Committee the copy of which I am enclosing herewith. I am also enclosing herewith a letter in original which I only few days ago received from the Congress committee, Biswan.

Sincerely yours,
RAMANAND SANYASI

From a photostat : S. N. 8643

(B) RAMANAND SANYASI'S LETTER TO CONGRESS COMMITTEE

BALDEV ASHRAM,
KHURJA (U. P.),
April 1, 1924

TO
THE SECRETARY
ASSAM PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE
GAUHATI

DEAR SIR,

In last November I received news from the Gurgaon District of Punjab that a certain Anglo-Indian gentleman was employing retired militarymen for recruiting labour for tea gardens, and that he was offering (i) Free railway passage to the gardens (ii) Rs. thirty monthly as wages both for husband and wife, (iii) together with free quarters and fuel wood. He was also willing to provide passage back and journey expenses should the recruit when at reaching there does not like to stay. Immediately after that I received news to the same effect from Karnal, Ambala, Rohtak and Hissar districts of Punjab and from nearly every district of U. P. except Fezabad, Bellia, Gorakhpore and some other two or three districts which they perhaps avoided because these contained their ex-labourers. As I am quit familiar with the conditions prevailing in tea gardens and episode of 1921 came vividly before my eyes, I issued a statement to the Bengal, Punjab and U.P. Press in January last which you must have noticed and also I wrote to Bengal, U.P. and Punjab committees to take such action as conditions permit. At that time I did not write to you not because it was not necessary but because Assam had slipped from my memory. Now I wrote to Mahatma Gandhiji telling him of the thing and consulting him regarding the advisability or otherwise of proceeding to the tea gardens and looking at the thing. He has written to me to first make enquiries through you and then to consider what action should be taken in light of the same. Therefore I shall be obliged if you will kindly supply me the following information: (1) What are the actual conditions prevailing in plantations at present and has any improvement taken place regarding wages or morals since 1921 happenings. (2) Is fresh labour coming there, if so, from which districts mainly, and how they are being treated. (3) Do you think in the light of enquiries which you will make it is advisable to take measures against recruiting or should any body be deputed there to look after them.

Kindly forward a copy of reply to my this letter to Mahatmaji at Andheri, Bombay.

Sincerely yours,
RAMANAND SANYASI

(Note) I am forwarding a copy of this letter to Mahatmaji as per his orders.

RS

From a photostat: S. N. 8643

APPENDIX VI

C. F. ANDREWS' INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mr. C. F. Andrews interviewed on the same subject stated that he had been present with Mr. Gandhi through the preliminary negotiations with General Smuts, which had led up to the Smuts-Gandhi Settlement of July 1914. He had himself actually witnessed the signing of the original draft agreement. Every word had been carefully discussed and fully explained on both sides. General Smuts had said, "This time let there be no misunderstanding or mental reservation. Let all the cards be laid on the table." Mr. Gandhi had acted exactly in accordance with that spirit. He had made three points as plain as possible :

(1) That the Settlement should contain no racial taint.

(2) That all existing rights vested in the community, small as they were, should be secured.

(3) That any remaining disabilities might be brought forward for settlement in the future.

This third point was established in a letter to the Secretary of the Minister of the Interior, dated June 16, 1914. The first point was emphasized again and again in Mr. Gandhi's farewell speeches which were cabled all over the world. He said, for instance, at Johannesburg: "The Settlement reached establishes the principle that the legislation can never contain a racial taint. It is a vindication of this principle of the British constitution. I do not think there is any room left for misunderstanding. While the Settlement is final in the sense that it close the great struggle, it is not final in the sense that it gives the Indians all they are entitled to. These further restrictions will have to be removed."[1]

The most important statement which may be regarded the final word on the subject from Mr. Gandhi was his message to Reuter on the eve of his departure from South Africa. It contained the following significant passage: "The promise made by General Smuts to administer the existing law justly with due regard to vested rights gives the Indian community breathing time. But these laws are in themselves defective, and can be, as they have been, turned into engines of oppression and instruments by indirect means to drive the Indian population out of South Africa. The concession to popular prejudice, by which we have reconciled ourselves to the almost

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Farewell Banquet", 14-7-1914.

[2] *ibid*

total prohibition of fresh Indian Immigration and the deprivation of all political power, is the utmost that could be expected from us. These two things being assured, I submit we are entitled to full rights of trade, inter-provincial migration and ownership of landed property being restored to us in the not distant future."[2]

These passages, Mr. Andrews stated, made perfectly evident that Mr. Gandhi went away from South Africa with a Settlement that was precisely defined. On the understanding that immigration would be prohibited, General Smuts had agreed that no racial bar should be raised and that all existing vested rights should be secured. He also agreed that the Indian community would be free in the future to seek to remove further disabilities such as the restriction of inter-provincial migration.

Mr. Andrews concluded by stating that he could not at all understand Mr. Duncan's interpretation, and that Mr. Gandhi's prophetic words appeared to be coming true; for the Union Government appeared to be now engaged in turning its laws into "engines of oppression and instruments by indirect means to drive the Indian population out of South Africa."

The Hindu, 7-4-1924

APPENDIX VII

(A) MAHOMED ALI'S LETTER TO SWAMI SHRADDHANAND

RESPECTED SWAMI MAHARAJ,

I am sorry I could not write to you yesterday regarding the matter referred to by you, as per promise, as I had gone out to pay a visit to H.H. the Nawab Sahib of Rampur and had to remain there from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. I have just now seen in the *Tej* a requisition by four of your Arya friends that I should resign from the Congress. I could not help feeling amused at it, although I confess it grieved me also. I am aware that some persons of this type have been engaged in this sort of activity for some time past, but I was led to think that, after the reply that I had given to a question addressed to me at a public meeting in Lucknow, which appealed so much to a Hindu gentleman present that he shouted out in his enthusiasm that 22 crores of Hindus were ready to stand or fall by me, these gentlemen would not venture to pursue their line of activity any further. I now realize how vain this expectation was. Although the manner in which the controversy is conducted at present is such as to render it absolutely unnecessary on my part to give a single word in reply, still as I have already promised to explain the matter fully, I beg to make the following statement as desired by you:

The fact is as I had stated verbally to you. Even then, some Mussalman friends have been constantly flinging at me the charge of being a worshipper of Hindus and a Gandhi-worshipper. The real object of these gentlemen was to alienate from me the Mussalman community, the Khilafat Committee and the Congress, by representing

that I had become a follower of Mahatma Gandhi in my religious principles. I had, therefore, on several occasions plainly declared that in the matter of religion, I professed the same belief as any other true Mussalman, and as such I claimed to be a follower of the Prophet Mahomed (on him be peace) and not of Gandhiji. And further that since I hold Islam to be the highest gift of God, therefore, I was impelled by the love I bear towards Mahatmaji to pray to God that He might illumine his soul with the true light of Islam. I wish, however, to emphatically declare that I hold that today neither the representatives of Islam nor of the Hindu, Jewish, Nazarene or Parsi faith can present another instance of such high character and moral worth as Gandhiji and that is the reason why I hold him in such high reverence and affection. I deeply revere my own mother, and if contentment and gratefulness under all circumstances be the true meaning of Islam, I claim there is no person, howsoever well-versed in religion, who has understood it better than she. Similarly, I regard Maulana Abdul Bari as my religious guide. His loving kindness holds me in bondage. I deeply admire his sincerity of heart. But in spite of all this I make bold to say that I have not yet found any person who in actual character is entitled to a higher place than Mahatma Gandhi.

But between belief and actual character there is a wide difference. As a follower of Islam I am bound to regard the creed of Islam as superior to that professed by the followers of any non-Islamic religion. And in this sense the creed of even a fallen and degraded Mussalman is entitled to a higher place than that of any other non-Muslim irrespective of his high character, even though the person in question be Mahatma Gandhi himself.

At Lucknow, when just before the commencement of my speech, some one placed a printed copy of the question in reference in my hand for reply (copies of which had also been freely distributed among the audience) I had stated that I did not want to answer any such questions, as I did not consider that anyone, unless he could prove that he bore a greater affection towards Mahatmaji than I did, was entitled to charge me with having reviled him. It was only when I was told that the point at issue was not that I had reviled Mahatmaji, but that I had reviled the Hindu religion, that I gave the above stated reply. A report of my speech had appeared in the *Hamdam* at that time, i.e., about one month back. I had said further therein that every Christian believed that a Christian, however degraded or fallen, was entitled to a higher place in regard to the matter of belief as contra-distinguished from actual character than any Mussalman or Jew, irrespective of his high character and the same was the case with Hindus or followers of any other religion. My reply proved so satisfactory that, as I have already mentioned, a Hindu friend shouted out that 22 crores of Hindus were prepared to stand by me and several Hindu members of the audience acclaimed it with cries of *Bande Mataram, Allah-o-Akbar*, while the persons who had brought the printed copies of the question were completely silenced. The beauty is that one of the friends who have now come forward with a requisition demanding my resignation had

quite recently sent a warm invitation to attend a public meeting at Dehra Dun.

I cannot under these circumstances possibly retire from any of my activities as a result of what these gentlemen might say or think. Besides, the matter is well within the jurisdiction of the Congress. I wish, however, to state here, and I hope you will bear me out in my statement, that if I, although I am the meanest and the most insignificant among the followers of Islam, am to be regarded by these gentlemen as an enemy of Hindu-Muslim unity and a reviler of Mahatmaji and the religious principles which he professes, then I am afraid they will not find a single Mussalman who will completely satisfy them.

I beg to state once more that were I not bound by my promise to you, this letter might not have been written at all as I am most unwilling to add one more to the numberless controversies that are raging in the country at present. As for the friends who have thought fit to raise such an unpleasant controversy at a time when the death of my daughter and the dangerous illness of a brother and mother have rendered me physically unfit to engage in any such controversy, I think it best to leave them to be judged by their own conscience. I again beg to record my thanks to you for your condolence and with these words take my leave. If you write anything to the Press in this connection, you may publish this letter as it is.

Yours, etc.,

MAHOMED ALI

Young India, 10-4-1924

(B) MAHOMED ALI'S LETTER TO THE EDITOR, "TEJ"

DEAR SIR,

There was one sentence in Swamiji Maharaj's letter which is liable to give the impression that I do not consider right action as essential for salvation. That is not at all my belief nor that of any other Mussalman. The essential conditions for salvation are faith, purity of action, persuading others to do good and to warn them against evil and to submit to all consequences of your actions with patience. I hold that a non-Moslem is perfectly entitled to reward for his good actions even as a Mussalman is liable to be punished for his evil deeds. The point at issue was not at all as to the essential conditions for salvation, but only regarding the distinction between Belief and Conduct. That is the reason why I gave to Mahatmaji the highest place among all the Mussalmans that I know of so far as actual character was concerned. But to consider one's creed as superior to that of every non-Muslim is the duty of a Mussalman. By stating this I refuted the charge of Gandhi-worship levelled against me and that was precisely my object and not to hurt the feelings of my Hindu brethren or to revile Mahatma Gandhi. If any one can have reason to complain, it is my own co-religionists, none of whom I considered to be worthy of being ranked with Mahatma Gandhi in excellence of character.

MAHOMED ALI

Young India, 10-4-1924

APPENDIX VIII

(A) MOTILAL NEHRU'S NOTE ON COUNCIL-ENTRY

I have read and re-read Mahatmaji's draft with all the attention I am capable of and have allowed a whole week to elapse since it was handed to me. I have also had the advantage in this interval of discussing the draft with Mahatmaji for which he was good enough to give me a long sitting of over three hours. I have considered the observations made by Mahatmaji in the course of that discussion with anxious care. This long deliberation has, I am sorry to say, resulted only in confirming the opinion I formed 18 months ago.

I agree that the difference between Mahatmaji and me is in some respects one of principle and not of mere detail. Indeed, on closer examination, I have come to think that it goes deeper and lies more in the theory on which the principle is based than in the principle itself. But with all that I am persuaded to believe that it does not and ought not to be allowed to affect the application of the principle in practice. Let us take "non-violence" and "non-co-operation" separately.

(1) "Non-violence" —Mahatmaji's "non-violence" is conceived on a very much higher plane than what I have agreed to adopt owing to the compelling necessity of the case. The doctrine of ahimsa with all its implications and logical deductions has not been and cannot be adopted by the Congress which professes to include men of all religions and creeds in the world within its fold. Islam does not recognize it as an invariable and inflexible rule of life and there are many Hindu castes and sects with which the judicious use of violence is an accepted article of faith. Whilst Mahatmaji would not resort to violence under any circumstances whatever in thought, word or deed, many true Congressmen would, under certain conditions, consider it their highest duty to resort to actual physical violence. In fact, I hold that it would be doing violence to the highest and noblest feelings implanted in man if we ruled out violence in any shape or form under all conceivable circumstances. If I see a bully ill-treating or assaulting a person weaker than himself, I would not merely interpose my body between the assailant and the victim and thus enable him to have two victims instead of one, but try to knock him down and thus save both his victim and myself. Again if I were assaulted, I would defend myself, if necessary, by inflicting violence on my assailant and that violence may under certain circumstances extend even to the causing of the assailants's death. I need not give other illustrations of a similar nature which can easily be conceived. As for non-violence in thought, it is obvious that one who is prepared to resort to actual violence on certain occasions cannot be entirely free from the thought of it. By joining the movement of non-violent non-co-operation all I have undertaken to do is, to refrain from inflicting or even contemplating violence of any kind in carrying out the programme of non-

co-operation against the Government. This is what I take Mahatmaji to mean, when he speaks of "non-violence in its full sense, but restricted as the cause for which it was taken". If a government official chooses to behave to me like the bully of my illustration in matters wholly unconnected with the Congress programme, he shall receive exactly the same treatment as I would give to the bully. The doctrine of non-violence has, so far as I am concerned, a limited application for the very special purpose for which I have adopted it.

Mahatmaji says entry into the Councils is "tantamount to participation in violence". I understand this to refer to the fact that the Councils are established by a Government which is based on violence. I maintain that no one living under such a Government can help participating in violence in that sense. The very act of living and adopting the most essential means of sustaining life under such a government would be "tantamount to participation in violence". Whether or not going into the Councils is a more direct participation in violence than merely living under a Government based on violence is only a question of degree and depends on the object with which one goes into the Councils.

Mahatmaji has been pleased to doubt the accuracy of the statement that "nobody takes the extreme view of non-violence that I do and that most Congressmen confine the definition of non-violence to mere abstention from causing physical hurt to the opponent". There may be some who take the extreme view in theory, but I do not know a single follower of Mahatmaji who acts upon it. It is true that non-violence even in the limited sense that I give to it must relate both to word and deed and cannot be confined to abstention from causing physical hurt only. But non-violence in thought must be ruled out entirely as impracticable. Otherwise, we shall be weaving a cobweb of casuistry around us from which it would be impossible to extricate ourselves.

(2) Non-co-operation —I confess my inability to see any trace of non-co-operation in the present-day activities of the Congress. They may possibly lead to non-co-operation at some future date, but can by no stretch of imagination be taken to constitute non-co-operation. We have only the Bardoli programme before us, but there is nothing in it which can in any sense amount to actual non-co-operation with the Government. Mahatmaji says that the triple boycott has not failed because the lawyers have lost their prestige, the parents have lost faith in Government school education, and the Councils have lost their glamour. I admit all that and more for, in my opinion, the number of things lost can easily be multiplied. But the question is whether this has been due to the practice of the boycott or is the result of Mahatmaji's teachings. And does it not show a far sadder state of things than that which existed before these boycotts were conceived? The number of lawyers and of the school-going population has considerably increased and that of the Councillors remains the

same. The only difference is that, while before 1920 people took to the profession of law, sent their children to Government schools and entered the Councils honestly believing that they were doing the right thing, they did the same in 1921-23 with the knowledge and belief that they were doing a great wrong not only to themselves but to the whole nation. Has this improved the standard of public morality? The triple boycott has in my humble judgment only shown that the preaching of high ideals which the people are not ready to follow can only result in positive harm. The honest thing to do is to admit failure and frankly give up the triple boycott. The Swarajists would have done it had it not been for their belief that they had no chance of success with the masses against Mahatmaji's teachings. The next best thing they could do was to introduce a real element of non-co-operation in the Councils. In this there can be no question that they have eminently succeeded.

I shall now take the liberty to examine the case made out by Mahatmaji against Council-entry. He makes a grave and serious charge against Swarajists by saying that "the entry into the Legislative bodies has retarded the progress towards swaraj". I respectfully but emphatically join issue and maintain that exactly the contrary has been the case. What has actually happened is that the Assembly has laid a foundation for the people's swaraj broad-based on their free will and choice. Whether the demand made by the Assembly will be conceded or not is immaterial. Whether any actual progress towards swaraj through the Councils is possible or not is equally beside the point. But how any action taken in the Assembly or the Provincial Councils has actually "retarded the progress towards swaraj" simply beats my comprehension. I should have thought that the Swarajists have at least shown to a doubting world that they are a determined set of men who will have nothing short of swaraj. The positive value of this demonstration may perhaps be doubted, but it is hardly fair to attribute a negative value to it.

I will now deal with the reasons given by Mahatmaji categorically.

(a) Council-entry is "*tantamount to taking part directly or indirectly in the present system of Government*". There are innumerable things we do every day of our lives by which we take part directly or indirectly in the present system of Government. The objection, however, seems to be based on the assumption that the Legislative bodies are "*a chief part* of the machinery designed to *sustain* that system." It would be more accurate to say that the Legislative bodies are merely an *ornamental* part of the machinery designed *to justify* the existing system. The truth is that the Government is absolutely independent of the Legislative bodies, which do not really sustain the system but are designed to conceal the fraud which the Government is practising on the world. The Swarajists have entered the Councils to expose this fraud not by taking part in it, but by refusing to take such part. I am at a

loss to reconcile this dictum of Mahatmaji with his acquiescence in Congressmen taking part in the Municipal Councils. A cursory perusal of the various Municipal Acts in force in this country will show that these bodies are a most essential part of the administration and can only be carried on by complete co-operation with the Government in all important matters. They nullify the boycott of schools, for almost every Municipality applies for and obtains handsome grants from the public revenues to run the schools. They bring about the anomaly of Congressmen having to carry out policy of the Ministry appointed under the Government of India Act and submitting the former to the control the latter. There are many other things which do not merely smell of co-operation but amount to direct participation in the system of Government.

(b) "Obstruction" This is a very much misused and misapplied word, but I admit that our Swarajist nostrils are not trained enough to smell violence in it, and fail to see how the Swarajist programme can possibly have a stronger smell of violence than the breaking of the Criminal Law Amendment Act and the various forms of picketing and hartals authorized by the Congress. I take Civil Disobedience itself to be the highest form of obstruction. But let us not lay undue stress on words and consider what the Swarajists have actually done. They have carried out the programme to the full in C.P. Let us see what has been done there. The first step taken was to pass a vote of "No confidence" in the Ministers. That really meant no confidence in the system which brought Ministers into existence and that was made perfectly clear in the speeches made in support of the motion. The Government did not dismiss the Ministers as it should have done after this vote. The next step taken was to refuse the salaries of the Ministers, but they continued to stick to their offices and introduce measures relating to their departments. These measures were all rejected, because the Council refused to recognize the Ministers after the vote of "No Confidence" and the refusal of their salaries. Then came the budget on which the Council had no effective control. It was thrown out on the express ground that the Council would be no party to the expenditure of public revenues in the raising of which it had no voice and in the spending of which it had no control. Some other Bills were thrown out on similar grounds. This is all that has happened. I invite an examination of each of these acts of the Swarajists on its own merit and ask if any objection can be taken to any one of them on the highest moral and ethical grounds. The same acts can be and have been described as acts of obstruction, acts of destruction, and acts of wrecking from various points of view. But nothing turns upon mere phrases. What you have to look to is the substance and I claim that what was done in the C.P. in substance was non-co-operation with a Government which paid no heed to the popular will. The same applies to the acts of the Swarajists in the Assembly and the Bengal Council.

(c) "Constructive Programme." I could not understand what this objection

meant; but Mahatmaji has since explained to me that all that it meant was that the time and energy given to the question of Council-entry was so much time and energy taken away from the constructive programme. So far as that goes it applies only to the No-changers, for the Swarajists were practically expelled from the Congress Executive and had no control on the organizations of the various department of the constructive programme. The only alternatives to Council-entry open to them were either to go into retirement or start independent organizations to carry on the constructive programme, neither of which would have helped the cause.

(d) "Entry is premature" I am afraid I do not quite grasp this objection. If it means that we should have waited till we got swaraj it begs the whole question. As for a "constant, almost irresistible temptation to depart from truthfulness and non-violence in the atmosphere of the Councils", all I can say is that I have perceived no difference in the Council atmosphere from that outside the Councils. The "strain" on discipline will certainly not be more prolonged in the Councils than it is sure to be in the long expectation of Civil Disobedience.

(e) "Khilafat and Punjab causes" Apart from the fact that these causes are practically dead, I do not see what special connection there is between them and the question of entry into the Councils.

The above are the principal reasons given by Mahatmaji against the entry of Congressmen into the Councils. A few other points are mentioned in the passing in the course of the general remarks that follow the main reasons. After acknowledging the "brilliant victories of the Swarajists", Mahatmaji proceeds to point out that all that the Swarajists have done could be achieved "before non-co-operation", that we could, "not merely get a Gandhi released, but many Hasrat Mohanis and all Punjab prisoners" by "fairly directed agitation" and that there is not "much in the khaddar demonstration, or in keeping so many Moderates out". "The machinery of the Government goes on unchecked with or without the Moderates and in spite of obstruction." In adopting this line of argument, Mahatmaji has done less than justice to himself. The Swarajists have never taken any credit for the release of Mahatmaji or the demonstration of khaddar, but they have certainly succeeded in keeping the Moderates out which the boycott of Councils under Mahatmaji's programme could not achieve. I agree that the real machinery of the Government goes on unchecked, but we claim that we have taken out the false and ornamental parts of the machinery and exposed its true character to the world. If it was right to send thirty thousand of our workers to gaol simply to establish the fact that the visit of the Prince of Wales was forced upon a discontented people, it was certainly worth something to expose the continuing fraud practised day to day in the name of the representatives of the people.

The unkindest cut of all is contained in the sentence: "It was not to be expected that the Swarajists could be convinced by any argument." All I can say is that the

Swarajists in all humility claim to exercise their own judgment and have not yet heard anything that could carry conviction to them.

After this Mahatmaji makes one or two more observations which must be noticed. He says, "I would enter the Councils only if I could believe that I could make use of them for the advanceement of the country. I must therefore have faith in the machinery and those in charge of it. I cannot be part of the machinery and still want to destroy it." I venture to submit that this argument suffers from the weakness of all arguments based on analogies and metaphors. I do not see why one must have faith in those whom one finds in charge of machinery, if it can be worked better by others. I should have thought that the most perfect machinery could be so hopelessly mismanaged by those in charge as to require their immediate removal. There can be no harm in taking over a rickety old machine from the hands of mechanics bent on evil, and try to run it after proper repairs for the benefit of those in whose interest it ought to be worked. We have not become parts of the machinery in order to destroy it. There are certain imported parts of the machine which destroy the goods in the process of manufacture. We are for the present taking out those parts and substituting ourselves for them, hoping eventually to have an entirely new machine of pure swadeshi make to be run by the people for the people.

I now come to that part of the draft note where Mahatmaji, looking upon Council-entry as a settled fact, answers the question: "What is to be done now ?" As was to be expected, he has given the only answer which the resolutions of the Delhi and Cocanda Congress could admit of. But I venture to think that something more than a mere interpretation of those resolution is necessary. The most important point to be considered is what is to be the position of the Swarajists in the general Congress movement. Is it to be somewhat similar to that assigned by Mahatmaji to practising lawyers who were compared to cobblers and declared debarred from taking an active part in the Counsels of the Congress and from being appointed on its Executive? If that is the idea, Swarajists must deprive themselves of the honour of remaining under the distinguished leadership of Mahatmaji and, either retire from public life or look for "fresh fields and pastures new". But if that is not the idea, I believe it is yet possible to work together for the common cause. Certain proposals have occurred to me in this connection and I put them in the order in which they appeal to me.

1. A new programme of work in the Councils may be framed by the Congress with the object of helping the outside activities of the Congress in the direction of "construction" and "non-co-operation". The programme so framed will then stand in place of a mandate from the country which every Swarajist would be bound to carry out and all Congressmen bound to support. In this case, all distinction between Swarajists and Non-Swarajists or Pro-changers and No-changers will disappear, but while all will act together, generally such Congressmen will only go into the Councils as have no objection to do so. Funds required for Council propaganda will be granted by the vote of the Working Committee subject to the control of the All-India

Committee exactly in the same manner as for other Congress purposes, and with due regard to the relative importance of the various heads of Congress expenditure. It will be permissible to donors to the Tilak Swaraj Fund to earmark their contribution for Councils if they choose.

2. A separate section or department of the Congress called the Councils Section or department may be opened and placed in sole charge and direction of the Swarajists. The latter will take part in the general activities of the Congress outside the Councils and help those activities in the Councils as desired by the Congress. In this case also, there will be some Swarajists on the General Executive but no financial help will be given from Tilak Swaraj Fund *not* earmarked for the Councils. The difference between the first proposal and this is that, while in the former case the Congress will lay down the whole programme for the Councils in the latter case it will only call upon the Swarajists to take particular steps such as those referred to by Mahatmaji at the end of his draft, viz., the propagation of khaddar and the abolition of drink revenue.

3. To carry on as now under the Delhi and Cocanada resolutions without any disqualification attaching to Swarajists as such. In this case Swarajists will frame and carry out their own policy without reference to the Congres and will collect their own funds and the Congress will not in any way interfere with them. The Swarajya Party will do all it can to carry out the constructive programme of the Congress and the Congress will help and support that action.

From a typed photostat: S.N. 8716

(B) EXTRACT FROM C. R. DAS'S LETTER

CALCUTTA,
April 18, 1924

Motilal has sent me a draft containing your views in the Council-entry question. I am very anxious to discuss one or two points raised in it by you. You may be right in your view on the question of non-co-operation if non-co-operation is construed very strictly. But as it is I do not see eye to eye with you on the question of non-violence. I believe in non-violence as a principle and it is very unfortunate that doctors will not allow me to go and discuss the whole matter with you. I am dictating this letter under very great difficulty. Will it be very inconvenient if you postpone the publication of your views till I am well enough to see you? It may sound presumptuous but I feel that, if the Delhi compromise is suddenly upset, the whole country will be engaged again in philosophical discussions which will materially interfere with the larger work. I have to be here till the 23rd for medical treatment and after that the proposal is that I should go to Darjeeling and remain there at least a month.

From a photostat: S.N. 8740

APPENDIX IX

LETTER FROM BHAGWAN DAS

TO,
THE EDITOR,
YOUNG INDIA

SIR,

In *Young India* for 17-4-1924, in the course of your article headed "Schoolmasters and Lawyers", the following sentences occur at p. 130:

"But it is a difficulty which we have to face boldly, even heroically, if our desire is to establish swaraj for the people, not substitute one class rule by another, which may be even worse." And again: "If under swaraj we shall have to make the town life correspond to the village life, we shall be bound to simplify the town mode of life."

I most earnestly invite your attention and the attention of all readers of *Young India* to the implication of these two ifs, and to their vitally important bearing on the whole N.C.O. movement and the struggles for swaraj, along various tines, by various methods of the various parties which accept the new creed of the Congress wherein 'swaraj' is used without any definition or specification of any kind.

Some of us are convinced that it is just these unsolved and unsettled *ifs* which are the root cause of all the many defects which are hampering and marring the N.C.O. movement. So long as these *ifs* remain unsettled, there will never be mutual trust between any two classes, any two creeds, any two castes, it might almost be said, any two workers, oat of all those who all want swaraj and who all disagree as to what it should be.

Because the unity secured by a mere word, an understood, ill-understood, mis-understood word, is a very false unity, therefore is it breaking down perpetually—into violence of thought and language in political controversies and of deed also in Hindu-Muslim riots; therefore is the movement failing in so many respects—in respect of even-minded perseverance, Of discipline, of organization, of systematic work, whether destructive or constructive.

Shortly after the first sentence quoted above, you say, "Hitherto the villagers have died in their thousands so that we might live, now we might have to die so that they may live." But "we" (i.e., townsfolk) are also included in "the people" for whom swaraj is to be established; are "we" not? and a large proportion of the townsfolk are as ill-off as the country-folk, are they not?

Because townsmen have been vaguely feeling that the swaraj of the N.C.O. movement, unknown as it is, is yet likely to destroy towns (witness the cries of

"Bolshevism" raised against it), therefore, they are naturally not enthusiastic about it in their hearts. For, the larger bulk of Tilak Swaraj Fund has come from towns; Bombay first and foremost. It has come from the people whose trade and means of livelihood the constructive and destructive programme of the N.C O. movement tends to undermine, directly or indirectly. That it has so come is due partly to the affectionate respect in which your personality is held by Indians of ail classes, and partly to the hope that, after all, the wished-for swaraj will not run utterly amuck against the towns, but will only try to mend the evils in them.

The disappearance of towns will mean the disappearance of Lakshmi and of Saraswati. And Gauri Annapurna, disporting by herself in the corn-fields, however 'full of grain', will fail to make human life richly artistic, scientifically intelligent, and. therefore interesting. What is needed is a *balancing* of the three great goddesses, universally worshipped by human beings of all creeds, all times, all climes; and not a sacrificing of any one of them. Ayodhya flourished in *Ramarajya,* though Lanka was partly destroyed.

You, fortunately for our peace of mind, yourself say in a later para, "We shall be bound to simplify the town mode of life." This is likely to relieve somewhat the terrors caused by the earlier sentences, though it may not bring complete reassurance.

"Moderation", "the golden mean", "the middle course", temperance" —this is what the bulk of humanity instinctively craves for and strives after. Unless you, as the leader of our leaders, place before India, some outline scheme of swaraj which will bring to all sections of the people the hope that none of them will be destroyed entirely, though the excesses of all or any will be duly curtailed—unless and until this is done, no section of the people will be able to give its whole heart to the struggle, and true unity in the striving for swaraj will never be achieved and therefore swaraj, true swaraj will never never be achieved.

The space in *Young India* is limited and precious, and I must not ask for too much of it—though I sincerely believe that no topic that has ever yet been written about in its columns is of deeper importance or farther-reaching consequences than this, viz., of the kind of swaraj that India needs.

I have been pressing the matter on the attention of the general public, on that of the Congress Committees of all grades (from the Banaras local to the all-lndia) and on that of the individual leaders, for the last three wears, in season and out of season. I have been pursuing you with letters and printed papers on the subject practically up to the moment of your arrest, and, again since you came out. I must not repeat here what 1 have said over and over again elsewhere. My hopes were greatly aroused, for a brief while, in the beginning of 1923, that the subject would meet with the consideration it deserved, when a leader of

such note as Deshbandhu Das interested himself in it, for some time. But that 'brief while' was over, very soon. And I have been gradually settling down to the belief that "the time is not ripe" for the discussion of the subject.

But my eyes happened to light upon the two very significant *ifs* in your article, and I was galvanized into this present further effort.

Some of us will feel profoundly grateful if you will very kindly say something, in *Young India*, on this subject—so near to the heart of these "some of us"—something which may shoot a gleam of light through the gloom of our despair.

I am, etc.,

BHAGWAN DAS

Young India, 8-5-1924

1. MY JAIL EXPERIENCE-VI

ETHICS OF FASTING

When the incidents related in the Last chapter took place, my cell was situated in a triangular block containing eleven tells. They were also part of the separate division, but the block was separated from the other separate blocks by a high massive wall. The base of the triangle lay alongside the road leading to the other separate blocks. Hence, I was able to watch and see the prisoners that passed to and fro. In fact, there was constant traffic along the road. Communication with the prisoners was therefore easy. Some time after the flogging incident, we were removed to the European yard. The cells were better ventilated and more roomy. There was a pleasant garden in front. But we were more secluded and cut off from all contact with the prisoners whom we used to see whilst we were in the 'separate'. I did not mind it. On the contrary, the greater seclusion gave me more time for contemplation and study. And the 'wireless' remained intact. It was impossible to prevent it so long as it was necessary for a single other prisoner or official to see us. In spite of effort to the contrary, someone of them would drop a remark resulting in our knowing the happenings in the jail. So one fine morning we heard that several Mulshi Peta prisoners were flogged for short task and that, as a protest against the punishment, many other Mulshi Peta prisoners had commenced a hunger strike. Two of these were well known to me. One was Devi and the other Dastane. Mr. Dev had worked with me in Champaran, and had proved one of the most conscientious, sober and honest among the co-workers whom I had the privilege of having in Champaran. Mr.. Dastane of Bhusaval is known to everybody. The reader may therefore imagine my pain when I heard that Dev was among the party flogged and that he was also one of the hunger-strikers. Messrs Indulal Yagnik[1] and Manzar Ali Sokta were at this time my fellow-prisoners. They were agitated equally with me. Their first thought was to declare a sympathetic hunger-strike. We discussed the propriety of such a strike and came to the conclusion that it would be wrong to do so. We were neither morally nor in any other way responsible for the floggings or the subsequent hunger-strike. As

[1] Then secretary, Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee

satyagrahis we were to be prepared for and to suffer cheerfully the rigours of jail life and even injustices including flogging. Such hunger-strike, therefore, with a view to preventing future punishment would be a species of violence done to the jail officials. Moreover, we had no right to sit in judgment upon the action of the authorities. That would be an end to all prison discipline. And even if we wished to judge the authorities, we had not and could not get sufficient data to warrant an impartial judgment. If the fast was to be out of sympathy with the hunger-strikers, we had no data to enable us to judge whether their action was justified or not. Any one of these grounds was sufficient to show that the proposed fast would be wholly premature. But I suggested to my friends that I should try to find out the true facts through the Superintendent, and endeavour as before to get into touch with the hunger-strikers. I felt that we as human beings could not possibly remain uninterested in such matters although we were prisoners, and that under certain circumstances even a prisoner was entitled to claim a hearing in the matter of general jail administration when it was likely to result in the perpetration of gross injustice bordering on inhumanity. So we all decided that I should approach the authorities in the matter. The letter of 29th June, 1923[1], published in *Young India of* March 6, 1924, will give the reader further details about the matter. There was a great deal of correspondence and negotiation which, being of a confidential nature, I do not wish to publish. I can however say that the Government recognized that I had no desire to interfere with the prison administration and that my proposal to be permitted to see the two leaders among the hunger-strikers was dictated by purely humanitarian motives. They, therefore, permitted me to see Messrs Dastane and Dev in the presence of the Superintendent and Mr. Griffiths, the Inspector-General of Police. It was to me a rare pleasure and a matter of pride to see these two friends walking unaided and with a steady step after full thirteen days' unbroken fast. They were as cheerful as they were brave. I could see that they were terribly reduced in body, but their spirit had waxed strong in exact proportion to the reduction of the body. As I hugged them and greeted them with the question, "Are you nearly dead?" they rang out, "Certainly not," and Dastane added, "We are able to prolong the fast indefinitely, if need be, for we are in the right.""But if you are in the wrong?" I asked. "We shall then like men admit our

[1] *Vide* "Letter To Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 29-6-1923.

mistake and abandon the fast," was the reply. By their brightness they made me forget that they were suffering from pangs of hunger. I wish I had leisure to reproduce the whole of the ethical discourse we held. Their ground for fasting was that the punishment inflicted by the Superintendent was unjust and that, therefore, unless the Superintendent admitted his mistake and apologized, they must go on with the fast. I pleaded that this was not a correct attitude. Whilst I was discussing the moral basis of their action, the Superintendent voluntarily and out of his usual good nature intervened and said, "I tell you, if I felt that I had done wrong, I should surely apologize. I know that I do make mistakes. We all do. I may have erred even in this case, but I am not conscious of it." I continued my pleading. I told my friends that it was improper to expect an apology from the Superintendent unless he could be convinced that he was wrong. Their fast could carry no conviction to him of the wrongness of the punishment. Such conviction could be brought about only by reasoning. And, in any case, as satyagrahis who were out for suffering, how could they fast against injustices whether done to them or their co-prisoners? My friends appreciated the force of my argument and Major Jones's generous statement did the rest. They agreed to break the fast and to persuade the others to do likewise. I asked for the Major's permission to give them a portion of my milk which he readily granted. They accepted the milk but said they would first take their bath and then take the milk in the company of the other hunger-strikers. The Major ordered milk and fruit diet for the strikers during the period of recuperation. A hearty handshake between us all terminated the meeting. For the moment the officials were not officials and we were not prisoners. We were all friends engaged in solving a knotty problem and glad that it was solved. Thus ended this eventful hunger-strike. The Major admitted that this was the cleanest hunger strike he had witnessed. He had taken extraordinary pre-cautions to see that no food was passed to the prisoners surreptitiously and he was satisfied that none was passed. Had he known the stuff of which these strikers were made, he need not have taken any precautions at all.

One permanent result of the incident was that the Government passed orders that, except in cases of the gravest provocation and insult offered to the officials, flogging should not be administered without the previous sanction of the superior authority.The precaution was undoubtedly necessary. Whilst, in some matters, widest discretion must be given to the Superintendents of Jails, in matters such as

punishments which cannot be recalled, the wisest of Superintendents must be subject to salutary checks.

There can be no doubt that the hunger-strike of Messrs Dastane and Dev and the other satyagrahis produced startling results of a beneficial character. For the motive, though mistaken, was excellent and the action itself purely innocent. But though the result attained was good, the fast must be condemned. The good result was not a direct result of the fast but of repentance and admission of mistaken motive and consequent abandonment of the fast. Fasting by a satyagrahi can only be justified when it is a shame to eat and live. Thus, still confining my attention to a prisoner's conduct, it would be a shame to eat and live if I was deprived of religious liberty or degraded as a human being, as when food is thrown at me instead of being given to me in a courteous manner. It should be unnecessary to say that religious objection should be really so and discourtesy should be such as would be felt by an ordinary prisoner. The caution is necessary because a religious necessity is often pretended merely in order to embarrass, and discourtesy is often felt where none is meant. I may not insist on keeping or bringing the Bhagavad Gita for the purpose of stealing in prohibited correspondence. I may not resent as discourtesy the ordinary search which every prisoner must undergo. In satyagraha there is no room for shams. But I would have been bound to fast, say, if the Government had not given me the opportunity of seeing the hunger strikers merely with a view to understand their view-point and dissuade them from their error, if I found them to be erring. I could not afford to eat to live, when I knew that it was possible to prevent starvation if my keepers recognized the ordinary rules of humanity.

"But," say some friends,"why should you draw these fine distinctions? Why should we not embarrass the jail officials as we embarrass officials outside? Why should we co-operate as you co-operated with the jail authorities? Why should we not non-violently resist them? Why should we obey any regulations at all, save for our own convenience? Have we not a perfect right, is it not our duty, to paralyse the prison administration? If we make the officials' position uncomfortable without using any violence, the Government will find it difficult to arrest a large number and will thus be obliged to sue for

peace." This argument has been seriously advanced. I must therefore devote the next chapter to its consideration.

Young India, 22-5-1924

2. BOYCOTT FOREIGN CLOTH

Last week I endeavoured to show the futility of the boycott of Empire goods campaign. I submit that it is even harmful in that it distracts the country's attention from the only effective and indispensable boycott. I have admitted more than once that, if we eliminate non-violence from our consideration, those who do not believe with me that non-violence in politics is the only remedy for achieving our goal and are satisfied that non-violent methods have failed, are not only justified in applying other remedies if they find them more effective, but are bound to do so. My point, however, is that boycott of Empire goods is not at all feasible so long as the present system is in existence. So far as I can sec. the only alternative to non-violence and all it implies is an armed rebellion. If we wish to make preparations for it, boycott of Empire goods has not only a legitimate but it has a necessary place in the national programme. Its retention and a fierce propaganda in its favour must increasingly heat our blood as we realize our impotence. The natural consequence of such propaganda must there fore result in [sic] undisciplined violence all round. It would not then matter that it is crushed. It will still be considered a training in armed rebellion. Each crushing will certainly bring demoralization among many but will bring increased determination among a few. And out of that small determined band may arise an army of soldiers such as William the Silent[1] surrounded himself with. If the national workers have come to the conclusion that India cannot write new history, but must do as the European countries have done, I would understand and appreciate their campaign of boycott of Empire goods. Even though it may never succeed, it must be kept up as an ideal, because it would be regarded as one of the factories for generating the necessary steam. India has a right to adopt the time-worn method if she chooses to, and no power on earth can deprive her of that right.

[1] William I (1533-84); founder of the Dutch Republic; opposed Philip II in his persecution of Protestants and led a "War of Liberation" against Spanish armies and succeeded in gaining independence for a number of provinces of Holland.

But I venture to say, with confidence, that the way of the sword is not open to India. I dare to prophesy that if India chooses that way, she must be prepared:

(1) either to submit to foreign rule for generations to come;

(2) or to submit to exclusively Hindu or exclusively Mussalman rule almost in perpetuity.

I know that there are Hindus who, if they cannot have a purely Hindu India, are prepared to make the best terms with the Englishmen, and I know, too, that there arc Mussalmans who, till they arc able to impose a purely Mussalman rule on India, are prepared to resign themselves to the English domination. To this minority I have no argument to address. They must continue to plough the sands. But I know that there is a very large majority that is impatient of foreign domination and is anxious to find an effective method of ridding India of it. I do not despair of convincing them that swaraj in which Hindus, Mussalmans and all others professing different creeds can participate on equal terms is attainable in a much shorter time than they can imagine possible if the thinking portion adopts means that are strictly non-violent, and of further convincing them that attainment of such swaraj is impossible through any other means.

For the time being, however, I propose to assume that the Congress creed being what it is, Congressmen are precluded from creating an atmosphere predisposed to violence. Ineffective boycott of Empire goods must create such an atmosphere and, therefore, I go so far as to say that the boycott resolution was *ultra vires* of the Congress creed. But this point can only be decided by the Congress.

Let me, therefore, confine the reader's attention to the alternative boycott of foreign cloth. I suggest to the Liberals, Nationalists and Congressmen that, if they will all adopt the hand-spun khaddar for their own personal use to the exclusion of all foreign or Indian mill-cloth and if they will themselves religiously spin for a definite period every day and persuade every member of their family to do likewise, and if they will to the extent of their ability introduce the wheel and the use of khaddar among their neighbours, the nation can bring about the boycott of foreign cloth even in a year's time. Even as they may not, on any pretext whatsoever, use foreign cloth, they may not use cloth manufactured in our mills. I must distinguish between the two prohibitions. Boycott of foreign cloth is a vital necessity for all time. There is no question of a permanent national boycott of

mill-cloth. But Indian mills alone can never supply the present demand for cloth, whereas the charkha and the hand-loom can. But the khaddar, the product of the charkha, has yet to become popular and universal. It can only be so if the thinking portion of India will make the commencement. They must, therefore, restrict their use of cloth to khaddar only. Our mills need no patronage from us. Their goods are popular enough. Moreover, the nation has no control over the mills. They are not philanthropic institutions. They are frankly selfish. They have their own propaganda. If they recognize the signs of the times, they will help the foreign cloth boycott movement by cheapening their cloth and taking to areas not served at present by khaddar. They can, if they will, avoid competition with khaddar and be satisfied with supplementing it. *Boycott of foreign cloth cannot be immediately accomplished unless every national worker religiously avoids the use of mill-made cloth.* Surely, the proposition is too simple to need any argument. Khaddar, which has to find a market, must command preference among enlightened men.

I have hitherto examined the use of khaddar as the only effective and speedy means of bringing about a successful boycott of foreign cloth as distinguished from and as an alternative to that of Empire goods. But when to this potency of khaddar is added its power to feed the starving millions, the case becomes irresistible.

It is perhaps now easy to understand why a charkha atmosphere has to be created and why every man and woman and child who understands the necessity of the charkha for the national well-being must religiously spin for some time every day. The peasantry of India is among the most industrious in the world as it is perhaps also the idlest. Both its industry and idleness are imposed upon it. It must work to make its fields yield their harvest. The East India Company by killing hand-spinning made it idle when it had no full labour to do. The peasantry will now return to the charkha only when we set the example. Mere precept will produce little impression upon it. And when thousands spin for love, it is possible to give higher wages for spinning if we would keep the same price for khaddar. I have myself been able to sell khaddar manufactured at the Satyagraha Ashram cheaper because I had maunds of yarn lovingly thrown to me by the Punjabi sisters during my tour in the Punjab in 1919. It was possible for me, if I had liked, to pay their wages to professional spinners, and not reduce the price of khaddar. I (lid not do so because, at that early

stage of the khaddar movement, I was paying so high a price as 4 annas for one pound of yarn indifferently spun.

If the Liberals and the Congressmen, stung by the Kenya decision, hurled the ineffective boycott of Empire goods at the heads of the white Colonists of Kenya, why will they not, in their cooler moments, concentrate their effort upon the complete success of the khaddar movement and thereby ensure the boycott of all foreign cloth? Need I prove that the boycott of foreign cloth will not only bring relief to the Kenya Indians, but it will also bring swaraj?

Young India, 22-5-1924

3. NOTES

TO 'A MOHAMMEDAN, A HINDU'

A correspondent or correspondents sent some time ago a question of importance for answer in these columns. As the letter was unsigned and as I do not wish to encourage anonymous correspondence, I consigned it to the waste-paper basket. If the correspondent (for I suspect one writer has assumed two names) is serious about his question, he must disclose his identity not for publication but as an earnest of his own *bona fides*.

PANDIT MALAVIYAJI ON MOPLAH RELIEF

The reader will be glad to learn what Pandit Malaviyaji[1] has to say about Moplah relief. The following is the translation of what he says in a letter written to me in Hindi:

I agree with every word of what you have written about helping Moplah women and children.

"Where is the merit in a man who returns good for good?

The wise call him only good who does good to the evil-doer. They alone arc good who do good to those that do harm to them and these good souls adorn the earth; for it is the better for their birth."

Please do not infer from the verse quoted by me that in my opinion all Moplahs have injured Hindus. But even assuming that all the Moplahs have done us an injury, even then must we serve them in

[1] Madan Mohan Malaviya (1861-1946); founder of the Banaras Hindu University; member, Imperial Legislative Council; President of the Indian National Congress, 1909, 1918

the hour of their need. In such conduct lies the beauty of our religion.

"Let Love conquer hate,

Let the good conquer the evil-doers.

Let a generous heart conquer avarice, Let Truth conquer falsehood."

PRINCIPAL GIDWANI

In reply to my inquiry, the Administrator of Nabha State has favoured me with the following reply which is dated 12th May 1 924.

DEAR SIR,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 5th of May. I instituted enquiries with regard to Principal Gidwani's condition in jail, with the following results:

Mr. Gidwani is wearing jail clothes, but these are clean, and he is allowed soap to wash them when he desires. He has never fasted since 2 21st March, 1924. He is in a good state of health, and his wright is I maund 38 seers. Up to the present he has received the same food as other convicts in the jail but has been allowed milk on certain occasions on medical grounds. I understand that no difficulties are presented to his receiving visitors, and that only recently he was allowed to receive his wife and brother, and that every facility was provided on that occasion. Under the Jail Rules, visitors can only be received once in six months.

I have personally visited the jail and satisfied myself as to the above facts. Mr. Gidwani asked me for certain facilities, such as the cooking of his own food, provision of vegetables and some ghee, and permission to take exercise. These requests were granted by me. He made no complaints to me as to any rough treatment by the jail authorities or anybody else, although he had an opportunity of doing so as I interviewed him alone.

You seem to be under some misapprehension as to the conditions under which Principal Gidwani is imprisoned. He was sentenced under Sections 188 and 145 of the Indian Penal Code in October last together with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Mr. Santanam. I, as Administrator, suspended the sentences passed in those cases on condition that these gentlemen left the State and did not return thereto without permission. Mr. Gidwani broke the conditions of the suspension of the sentences when he returned to Nabha State on February the 21st. He is now in jail undergoing the sentences that were passed upon him in the first instance. There is no intention of trying Mr. Gidwani upon any further charge.

Thus Principal Gidwani is to suffer the original into years' imprisonment for having crossed to the Nabha State border, in Mr. Zimand's opinion, in the interest of humanity. Principal Gidwani does

not complain because he never asked for his release in the first instance. Rut what is the public to think of an administration under which a man is imprisoned for doing what he considered was an act of humanity, and which, as a matter of fact, too, resulted in no injury to anybody? If Mr. Zimand is to believed, Principal Gidwani had no intention of entering the State in the company of the Jatha. I do not suppose it is contended that Principal Gidwani insists upon remaining in the State limits if he is left free. It would, therefore, seem that he is being made to serve the sentence without any just cause whatsoever.

ARE SIKHS HINDUS?

A friend from the Punjab writes:

> The Akalis here are more or less enraged at your note about Vaikom in which you class them with Mussalmans and Christians as non-Hindus. I have had many people complaining to me that the Sikhs never formally dissociated themselves from Hinduism. And as for some people refusing to be called Hindus, it is pointed out that Swami Shraddhanand[1] himself some time ago look strong exception to be called a Hindu. Several prominent members of the S.G.P.C. are members of the Hindu Sabha; and though, undoubtedly, there is a feeling among one section of Akalis that it is better to disclaim all connection with Hinduism, there is an equally strong section which is conservative on this matter. Of course, they want their temples separated from general Hindu temples and to be under their own control. But this is the case with all Hindu sects. The Jains, so far as I am told, have the same right; and it is pointed out to me that the Sikhs are claiming no more than the Aryas, Brahmos and others not belonging to the orthodox Hindu traditions claim. After close acquaintance with the Sikh leaders here and with some study of the Sikh movement, I myself feel that to class Akalis as non-Hindus is not entirely fair to them.

I am very glad to find that Sikh friends resent my classing them with non-Hindus. I assure them that I had no such intention whatsoever. During my first tour in the Punjab I happened to say in speaking of the Sikhs that, in my opinion, they were a part of the Hindu community. I did so because I knew that millions of Hindus believed in Guru Nanak and that the Granth Saheb was filled with the Hindu spirit and Hindu legends. But a Sikh friend who was present at the meeting took me aside and said with the gravest concern that my inclusion of the Sikhs in the Hindu community had given offence, and the friend advised me in future never to speak of the Sikhs in the same breath as Hindus. During my tour in the Punjab, I found that the

[1] 1856-1926; nationalist leader of the Arya Samaj

caution given by the friend was well-given. For I noticed that many Sikhs regarded themselves as belonging to a religion distinct from Hinduism. I promised the friend never again to refer to the Sikhs as Hindus. Nothing would, therefore, please me better than to find that the separatist tendency is confined only to a very few Sikhs and that the general body regard themselves as Hindus. I have met with the same fate from Arya Samajists. An innocent reference to them as being part of Hindus was also resented. One gentleman felt insulted when, without the slightest intention of hurting his feelings, I referred to him as a Hindu. I soothed him by immediate apology. I have not fared much better with some Jains. During my tour in Maharashtra I found many Jains telling me that they were a community apart from Hindus. I have never understood the Jain objection, because there is so much in common between Jainism, Buddhism and Hinduism. I could somewhat understand the Arya Samaj objection, because the Samajists are, if one may say so without giving offence, fanatically hostile to idol-worship and Pauranic literature and everything outside the Vedas and the Upanishads. But Jainism and Buddhism have, so far as I know, no such quarrels with Hinduism. Indeed, Buddhism and Jainism are mighty reforms in Hinduism. Buddhism rightly insisted on internal purity. Its appeal-went straight to the heart. It broke down arrogant assumption of superiority. Jainism represents the highest flight of logic. It has taken nothing for granted and has endeavoured to prove metaphysical truth by challenging the intellect. In my opinion, we have hardly touched the vast literature that these two reform movements have produced.

Holding the views I do, I hope my Sikh friends will appreciate the fact that, if I have classed them as non-Hindus, it is out of delicate regard for their feelings and against my own inclination. So far as the Sikh kitchen is concerned, it is a menace whether the Sikhs may be regarded as Hindus or non-Hindus. All this outside intrusion—for I cannot call it anything else—takes no note of the orthodox sensitiveness or the difficulty of the Durbar And now that I have learnt the facts more fully about the Sikh kitchen, I cannot help saying that it compromises the self-respect of the Kerala people. They are not living in starvation. If I was a volunteer, I would rather starve than be fed by outside charity, whether Hindu or non-Hindu Surely, the Kerala people must be trusted to see to the feeding of their volunteers.

VIRTUE PENALIZED

> The renter's explanation for not working the shop and for not tapping and drawing toddy from the trees for the shop unsatisfactory. He is fined Rs. 50.

Such is the entry in the proceedings of the Revenue Divisional Officer of Namakal in the Madras Presidency. The reader knows that the shop is a drink shop. The renter's explanation was that the drinkers had decided not to drink and, therefore, he saw no use in keeping the shop open. He was, however, willing to pay the rent. This explanation was not satisfactory. Nor was it enough that the abstaining villagers were ready to pay the Government the whole year's stipulated profits from the drink traffic for the luxury of indulging in their newly acquired virtue of abstinence. That was not to be, for the law was against them. If the whole of the proceedings were legally examined, it would probably be found that the officials concerned could give no other decision. They arc not at fault. It is the system that is bad, for in that system revenue is the primary consideration, not the health of the soul or the body. Had it been otherwise, the drink and the opium traffic would have gone long ago. One blessing conferred upon the people by the reforms is that the drink and the drug revenue is earmarked for the education of our children. I do hope that the villagers and the poor renter will have the strength to withstand all fines and other penalties for the reform they have inaugurated.

KHADI UMBRELLAS

A correspondent who is a thorough believer in khaddar asks what one should do for umbrellas. I do not regard umbrellas as clothing and personally I should not hesitate to use a foreign umbrella. But I have seen umbrellas covered with khaddar. I know too that it is possible by smearing khaddar with water-proof composition to make it water-proof. It may be an expensive process but a determined man will not count the cost. I know also a poor man's umbrella. Prisoners arc not allowed the use of umbrellas except convict-warders on out-door duty. We had in Yeravda Very useful and more effective protection against rain by lucking one corner into another of a gunny-bag and hanging it loosely on the head.

The correspondent is also puzzled over the use of silk dhotis for sacred wear. For me khadi is more sacred than silk, foreign or homespun, for the simple reason that silk manufacture is confined to a

few thousands; yarn manufacture extends to millions But the movement does permit one to use homespun khaddar. Here again coarse woollen dhotis are suggested as a perfect substitute for silk. It is not without difficulty that one can procure hand-spun silk and then there is always doubt whether the silk yarn is foreign or home-spun.

PARODY OF RELIGION

A Delhi correspondent writes:

> There are about sixty houses of Chamars in Rohed in the district of Rohtak. These are all labourers and have no property rights in the village land. They used to take water from the village pond so long as it was available. But after that supply failed they were at the mercy of the zemindars for the well water. The latter would keep them waiting for hours before condescending to issue it to the poor untouchables. Latterly in order to avoid this delay a committee was appointed with a view to devise a remedy. This committee contained one Chamar. It decided that the Chamars should appoint a member of the Mali (gardener) caste to draw water for them and pay him Rs. 15 per month. Ale Chamars were disposed to agree but now they feel that they ought not to pay what is after all a heavy and iniquitous monthly tax upon them. What is one to do? Should the Chamars approach the Government officials for a piece Of land to dig their own well? Will it not be in conflict with Non-co-operation?

The answer to the question asked is exceedingly simple. The Chamars are non-co-operators. They have no polities. But the staunchest non-co-operator is not precluded from buying or getting land from the Government for necessary purposes. The less he does so undoubtedly the better. But there is no bar against it in the Congress resolution. A non-co-operator who understands the spirit of the resolution will certainly not buy land from the Government for profit. In the case in point the land is required for the necessaries that nature has imposed upon us. And if the Chamars can get land from the Government for digging a well, the staunchest non-co-operator, in my opinion, need not hesitate to assist them to get it.

But the answer to the question is the least difficult part of my task. What is to be said of the Hindu zemindars who would not have the decency and the ordinary humanity to issue water in due time to men who belong to their own religion and who serve them in hundreds of ways? And all this callousness in the name of religion? If their well is likely to be polluted by the Chamars using them, why will *they* not pay the gardener for the luxury of enjoying their exclusiveness? Why will they not give them a plot of land for digging a well in

it? Does my correspondent know whether the zemindars have been approached for a plot of land? If a deputation waits on them, they will perhaps not only grant a plot, but have a well dug at their expense. If the attempt has not been made, it should be made. Immediate relief may be obtained by securing a piece of land from the Government. But the campaign against untouchability is an attempt to blot it out from Hinduism. No numbers of separate wells will do it. Hindu reformers have, therefore, a double task before them to secure relief for the suffering brethren, and to change, by a proper appeal to them, the hearts of those who believe in the evil and savage custom of regarding our own kith and kin as untouchables.

Young India, 22-5-1924

4. SAR0JINI'S SPEECH TO CHILDREN

The following speech[1] reported by the *Natal Mercury* of Durban cannot fail to be of interest to the readers of *Y.I*. I give it with the *Mercury's* appreciatory note.

Young India, 22-5-1924

5. STATEMENT TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

[BOMBAY,]
May 22, 1924

After having discussed with the Swarajist friends the vexed question of entry into the Legislative Assembly and the Councils by the Congressmen,[2] I am sorry to have to say that I have not been able to see eye to eye with the Swarajists. I assure the public that there has been no lack of willingness or effort on my part to accept the Swarajist position. My task would be much simpler if I could identify myself with it. It can be no pleasure to me to oppose even in thought

[1] In her speech, Sarojini Naidu had advised the children to be good to each other irrespective of the race they might belong to. Her concluding words were: "You are going to say: 'We will not live in a country where there is division between race and race, where there is hatred and selfishness.' When you love the whole world, the whole world will he full of peace and joy."

[2] The week-long consultations between Gandhiji, Motilal Nehru and C. R. Das had proved inconclusive. For the Swarajists' statement, *vide* Appendix "Swarajists' Statement on Council Entry", 22-5-1924.

the most valued and respected leaders, some of whom have made great sacrifices in the cause of the country and who yield to no one in their love of freedom of the motherland, but, in spite of my effort and willingness, I have failed to be convinced by their argument.

Nor is the difference between them and myself one of mere detail. There is an honest and fundamental difference. I retain the opinion that Council-entry is inconsistent with non-co-operation as I conceive it. Nor is this difference a mere matter of interpretation of the word "non-co-operation", but relates to the essential mental attitude resulting in different treatment of vital problems. It is with reference to such mental attitude that the success or the failure of the triple boycott is to be judged and not merely by a reference to the actual results attained. It is from that point of view that I say that to be out of the legislative bodies is far more advantageous to the country than to be in them.

I have, however, failed to convince my Swarajist friends. But I recognize that, so long as they think otherwise, their place is undoubtedly in the Councils. It is the best for us all. It was hardly to be expected that the Swarajists could be convinced by the arguments I advanced in the course of the conversations. They are many of them amongst the ablest, most experienced and honest patriots. They have not entered the legislative bodies without full deliberation and they must not be expected to retire from the position until experience has convinced them of the futility of their methods.

The question, therefore, before the country is not an examination and determination of the merits of the Swarajist view and mine. The question is: what is to be done now regarding Council-entry as a settled fact? Are the Non-co-operators to keep up their hostility against the Swarajists' method or are they to remain neutral and even help, whenever it is possible or consistent with their principles?

The Delhi and Cocanada resolutions have permitted those Congressmen who have no conscientious scruples to enter the Councils and the Assembly, if they want to do so . In my opinion, the Swarajists are therefore justified in entering the legislative bodies and expecting perfect neutrality on the part of the "No-changers". They are also justified in resorting to obstruction, because such was their policy and the Congress laid down no conditions as to their entry. If the work of the Swarajists prospers and the country benefits, such an ocular demonstration cannot but convince honest sceptics like me of our

error, and I know the Swarajists to be patriotic enough to retrace their steps when experience has disillusioned them.

I would, therefore, be no party to putting any obstacles in their way or to carrying on any propaganda against the Swarajists' entry into the Legislatures, though I cannot actively help them in a project in which I do not believe. The purpose of the Delhi and Cocanada resolutions was to allow the Swarajists a Chance of trying the method of Council-entry and that purpose can be served only if the "No-changers", with scrupulous honesty, allow the Swarajists full liberty to pursue their programme in the Councils, unfettered by any obstruction from them.

With regard to the method of work in the Councils, I will say that I would enter a legislative body if only I found that I could at all use it to advantage. If, therefore, I enter the Councils, I should, without following a general policy of obstruction, endeavour to give strength to the Constructive Programme of the Congress. I should, therefore, move resolutions requiring the Central or the Provincial Government, as the case may be,

(1) To make all their cloth purchases in hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar;

(2) To impose a prohibitive duty on foreign cloth,

(3) To abolish the drink and drug revenue, and

(4) At least correspondingly reduce the army expenditure.

If the Government refuses to enforce such resolutions when carried in the Legislatures, I should invite them to dissolve them and take the vote of the electors on the specific points. If the Government would not dissolve, I should resign my seat and prepare the country for civil disobedience. When that stage is reached, the Swarajists will find me ready to work with and under them.

My test of fitness for civil disobedience remains the same as before. During the state of probation, I should advise the "No-changers" not to worry about what the Swarajists are doing or saying and to prove their own faith by prosecuting the Constructive Programme with undivided energy and concentration.The khaddar and the national schools are enough to occupy every available worker who believes in quiet, honest and undemonstrative work. Tile Hindu-Muslim problem too will tax the best energy and faith or the workers. The "No-changers" can justify their opposition to Council-entry only by

showing the results of their application though the Constructive Programme even as the "Pro-changers" must justify their entry by results.

The"No-changers" are in one respect in an advantageous position; for they can secure the co-operation of the "Pro-changers". The latter have declared their faith in the Constructive Programme, but their contention is that by itself, the Constructive Programme cannot enable the country to reach the goal. In the prosecution, however, of the Constructive Programme outside the Legislatures, all "No-changers", "Pro-changers" and others can, if they will, work in unison through their respective organizations if necessary.

The statement is incomplete without an examination of the working of the Congress organization. I hold drastic and definite views in the matter, but I must reserve their expression for a future, though early, occasion.

The Hindu, 23-5-1924

6. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

JUHU, SANTA-CRUZ,
BOMBAY,
Friday, [*On or before* May *23, 1924*][1]

CHI . RAM DAS,

I have your letter. Before I received it I had already sent a bottle of grape juice for you and another for Kashi through Radharaman. It need not be taken just once a day. It can be taken twice or thrice a day. If you want to take it with cold water you may do so. Bhai Mahadev writes that you do not have sound sleep at night. My advice to you is to go to sleep reciting Ramanama. Remove other thoughts if they come. This was taught to me by my nurse when I was young. Now I can see its value. We must have the faith that in reciting that sacred name lies our good. Do not be despondent if other thoughts distract you while reciting Ramanama. Remove the thoughts from the mind, but if you cannot do so, do not be disheartened. You will feel strong by pronouncing the name. The efficacy of Ramanama is

[1] The contents indicate this period, when Gandhiji was convalescing at Juhu. May 23 was the last Friday he spent at Juhu. Further, Gandhiji expresses his disinclination to have Kanti, Rasik and Manu brought to Bombay (*vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 12-5-1924), even as he does in the postscript to this letter.

described in *Ramayana*. Understand it from Mahadevbhai if you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

There is no need to send the children. Ba says that she had inquired from you because Rasik has been writing again to say that he wants to come. I am trying to persuade Ba to go there.

[From Gujarati]

Motana Man, p. 27

7. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Vaisakha Vad 5 [*May 23, 1924*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. Since you have stayed on, do come. But you need not come if you are leaving immediately. Think of returning from Deolali only after you have completely regained your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. BEN VASUMATI
DAULATRAI KASIRAM & CO.
RAVAL BUILDING
LAMINGTON ROAD
BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 442. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

[1] The postmark bears 'the date 24-5-1924. The letter was, however written on *Vaisakha Vad* 5, i.e., 23-5-1924.

8. INSTRUCTIONS TO SECRETARY

[On or after *May 23, 1924*][1]

Wire "Certainly Not".

From a photostat of the draft: S.N. 10328

9. TELEGRAM TO DR. CHOITHRAM GIDWANI

BOMBAY,
May 24, 1924

DR. CHOITHRAM
CONGRESS OFFICE
HYDERABAD (SD)

NO TRACE WIRE ABOUT FORCIBLE CONVERSION.[1] TAKING ALL POSSIBLE STEPS. KEEP ME INFORMED.[2]

GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 11035. Courtesy : Arjun Jairamdas

10. LETTER TO G. V. SUBBA RAO

May 24, 1924

DEA R MR. SUB BA RAO ,

[I have known] Sjt. Aurobindo Ghosh's[3] views throu[gh] my son, who specially saw him, and then throu[gh] Mr. Das. I agree that our basis should be spiritual. And I am trying in my own humble way to conduct every activity from a spiritual point of view.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original G.N. 3625

[1] The instructions were written on a telegram received from Dipak Chowdhari on May 23, 1924, which read: "lf mother approves do you sanction my a minor's joining Tarkeshwar Satyagraha."

[2] The addressee, a Sind Congress leader, had given Gandhiji news of an attempted forcible conversion of a Hindu in Sind. For details, *vide* "Hindu-Muslim tension: Its Cause and Cure", 29-5-1924.

[3] 1872-1950; mystic, poet and philosopher; settled at Pondicherry in 1910

11. LETTER TO ALI HASSAN[1]

ANDHERI,
May 24, 1924

DEA R MR. HAS SAN,

I thank you for your letter. I do not share your opinion that Mussalmans have lost by Non-co-operation work. I share[the] view that Mussalmans are [not][2] superior to Hindus in administrative ability. On the general question you will find my views developed from time to time in my writings.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm of a newspaper cutting: S.N. 10469

12. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Vaisakha Vad 6 [*May 24, 1924*][3]

BHA ISHRI GHA NSHYA MDAS,

The Mahars[4] living in this place tell me that you have promised to pay them Rs. 30,000/- for constructing a temple and a hostel, provided I approve of the proposal. Have you really told them any such thing? The name of their leader is Bhosle.

Yours sincerely,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[PS.]

Please send your reply to Sabarmati. I shall reach there on Thursday.

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6046. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] This was in reply to an open letter dated May 15, 1924, from Ali Hassan, Bar-at-Law, Patna, who wrote that the Non-co-operation movement had completely ruined the Muslims and their institutions like the Aligarh University, etc. He requested Gandhiji to give up the movement and ask Hindus to treat Muslim better and accept their general superiority. Ali Hassan had sent the correspondence to *New India* for publication.

[2] *Vide* "Notes", 10-7-1924.

[3] The letter was written from Juhu, where Gandhiji was convalescing. He reached Sabarmati, as stated in the postscript, on Thursday, May 29, 1924. In 1924, *Vaisakha Vad* 6 fell on May 24.

[4] People belonging to the Depressed Class in Maharashtra

13. MY REQUEST

I shall have reached Satyagraha Ashram some time next week.[1] I have to say regretfully that I have not yet recovered sufficient strength to be able to tolerate noise, attend meetings or make speeches. Even moving about is only possible to a certain extent. In my present state, the hope that I shall be able to see many men and women should be given up both by them and me. I know that many are anxious to meet me. I am as eager for such meeting as they are. For the time being, however, we both must restrain our desire. Everyone, therefore, should for the present assume that I have not yet entered Gujarat at all. Let everyone take it that I have gone to the Ashram for change of air as I had gone to Juhu.[2] If all brothers and sisters oblige me to this extent, I shall have some peace and be ableto carry the burden of work I have to. Almost all the energy I have is spent in running *Navajivan* and *Young India*.[3] With what is left I can just cope with my correspondence. I am, of course, continuing to observe silence on Mondays and Wednesdays.[4] I utilize those days for writing for my papers. On those days, therefore, I would not desire to see anyone. On the other days, I intend to see visitors from 4 to 6 in the evening, as I do in Juhu. On these days, too, I intend to observe silence in the morning. If I do not observe this rule, I cannot avoid meeting people who turn up unexpectedly to see me and, if I see them, I cannot cope with my work.

I desire to observe this rule scrupulously till the end of July at any rate. What I shall do thereafter will depend on the state of my health and the volume of work.

This, then, is my request for the sake of my physical well-being.

The second request concerns our national work. There is a lot to be done, about which I have been giving my views through the pages of *Navajivan.* But may I ask for one favour? Am I fated to see

[1] Gandhiji was arrested on March 10, 1922. He returned to the Ashram on May 29, 1924, after a lapse of 26 months.

[2] After his release on February 5, 1924, from the Yeravda prison, Gandhiji stayed at Juhu, a suburb of Bombay, from March l 1 to May 28.

[3] Gandhiji resumed editorship of these two weeklies in the first week of April 1924.

[4] On March 17, 1924, Gandhiji resumed the practice of observing silence every Monday. On April 5, 1924, he also started the practice of observing silence on Wednesdays.

Gujaratis still wearing foreign cloth? Will the time never come when I-shall see Gujarat clothed exclusively in khadi? Vallabhbhai has planned to raise a purse of Rs. 10 lakhs. Will he not plan to make Gujarat completely khadi-minded? If anyone asked me whether I would have from Gujarat a crore of rupees or that it should become completely khadi-minded, I would say at once, without the slightest hesitation, that I would rather see Gujarat become khadi-minded than give me a crore of rupees.

I do not wish to announce the day of my departure from Bombay. Let no one be curious to find out. I desire that even those who come to know it do not crowd at the station. How much yarn could those people produce if they spent the time in spinning instead of coming to the station? If we devote half of our spare time to spinning, we can easily produce all. the yarn needed by the country.

SIMPLE CALCULATION

The average annual per capita requirement of cloth comes to 13 yards. Let us assume that this quantity of cloth weighs three seers. So much can be easily produced by one person if he spins no more than half an hour daily. That is to say, if half the population spins only for one hour a day it can supply the yarn needs of the entire country. May I hope that, instead of taking the trouble to come to the station, my brothers and sisters will restrain their eagerness and give that time to spinning?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-5-1924

14. "BRAHMACHARYA"

It is not easy to write on this subject. But my own experience is so wide that I always wish to give some of it to the reader. Many letters which I have received have strengthened that wish.

A friend asks: ''What is *brahmacharya?* Is perfect observance of *brahmacharya* possible? If it is, do you observe it so?

The full and correct meaning of *brahmacharya* is search for the *brahman*. As the *brahman* is immanent in everyone, it can be known through contemplation and the inner illumination resulting from it. This illumination is not possible without complete control over the senses. Hence, *brahmacharya* means control in thought,

speech and action of all senses, at all places and at all times.

The man or woman who observes such perfect *brahmacharya* is totally free from disease and, therefore, he or she lives ever in the presence of God, is like God.

I have no doubt that complete observance of such *brahmacharya* in thought, speech and action is possible. I regret to say that I have not attained to the state of such perfect *brahmacharya.* I am striving every moment to reach it. I have not given up the hope of attaining that state in this very life. I have acquired control over my body. I can guard myself during the waking state. I have acquired fairly good control over speech. I have yet to gain good enough control over my thoughts. When I begin to think about a certain matter, I may have thoughts about other matters too, resulting in a constant clashing of thoughts.

Even so, in my waking moments I am able to stop such clash of thoughts. I have attained a state, it can be claimed, in which ugly thoughts at any rate do not trouble me. But I have less control over my thoughts during sleep. In that state, all manner of thoughts come to me, even strange dreams, and sometimes desire for indulgences familiar to the body also wakes up in me. When the thoughts are unclean, there may be involuntary discharge too. This condition is possible only in a life troubled by desire.

The disturbances in my thoughts are becoming weaker, but I have not ceased altogether. Had I acquired complete mastery over my thoughts, I would not have been, during the last ten years, afflicted with the three diseases of pleurisy, dysentery and appendicitis.[1] I believe that the body encasing a healthy *atman* is bound to be healthy Hence, as the *atman* becomes healthier—is less and less troubled by desire—the body too becomes healthier. This does not mean that a healthy body is necessarily a strong body. It is only in a lean body that a strong *atman* lives. As the *atman* grows in strength, the body becomes leaner. A perfectly healthy body can be very lean. A strong body usually suffers from some disease. Even if it has no disease, it is quick to catch infection or contract a disease, whereas a perfectly healthy body will never catch an infection. Pure blood has the property of keeping off destructive germs of infection.

[1] Gandhiji had an attack of pleurisy in October 1914, of dysentery in August 1918 and of appendicitis in January 1924.

Such a wonderful state is certainly difficult to attain. Else I would have reached it, for, as my *atman* testifies, I would not be remiss in taking all measures necessary for attaining it. There is nothing in this world which can keep me from striving for it. But it is not easy for everyone to undo the accumulated effects of his past. Despite this delay, however, I have not been in the least disheartened, for I am able to visualize the desireless state, am able to glimpse it faintly, and the progress I have made makes me hopeful rather than otherwise. Moreover, even if I should die without realizing my hope, I do not believe that I would have failed in my striving. I am as certain of rebirth as that this body exists. I am sure, therefore, that even a modest effort does not go in vain.

I have given this account of my experiences only in order that my correspondents and others in the same position may have patience and self-confidence. All have the same *atman*. The power of the *atman* is the same in all. Only, it has been manifested in some and in others it is still to be manifested. They too, if they try, will have like experience.

So far I have discussed *brahmacharya* in its comprehensive meaning. The conventional and commonly accepted meaning of *brahmacharya* is, simply, control of the sex impulse in thought, speech and action. This view of it is realistic, for observance of *brahmacharya* in this sense is believed to be very difficult. Control over the palate has not been equally emphasized, and that has made control of the sex impulse more difficult. It has become almost impossible. Again, the experience of doctors tells us that a person whose body is weakened by disease is more troubled by sex desire and this is an additional reason why observance of *brahmacharya* seems difficult to our disease-ridden people.

I have referred above to a body being lean but healthy. No one should take me to mean that one need not develop physical strength. I have merely expressed, in my imperfect language, my idea about *brahmacharya* in its finest aspect. What I have said may possibly be misunderstood. Anyone who wishes to acquire complete control over all the senses has no choice, ultimately, but to welcome his body becoming lean. When blind love of the body and attachment for it decline, no desire for physical strength will be left.

But the body of a *brahmachari* who has conquered sex desire ought to be strong and glowing with vigour. Even the observance of

this *brahmacharya* raises one above the common level. He who does not feel physical urge even in a dream deserves to be honoured by the world. There is little doubt that it is easy for such a one to exercise self-control in other matters.

About *brahmacharya* in this sense, another friend writes:

> My condition is pitiable. Whether I am chanting the name of God, whether I am in the office or walking in the street, whether I am reading at night or working, I get those very thoughts. What should I do to control my thoughts? How can one develop the same regard for every woman as one has for one's mother? What should be done so that the eyes will shine with nothing but pure affection? What is the way to be free from evil thoughts? I have preserved with me your article[1] on *brahmacharya*, but in this place it is of no help to me at all.

This is a touching plight. Many find themselves in such a condition. But there is no cause for apprehension as long as one's mind wrestles with thoughts of that kind. If the eyes offend, they should be closed. If the ears offend, they should be plugged with cottonwool. It is a good habit to walk with one's eyes always on the ground. They will, then, get no opportunity at all to see anything else; One should run away from a place where people are talking obscene things or singing obscene songs. One must acquire control over the palate.

It is my experience that anyone who has not conquered the palate cannot conquer the sex impulse. It is very difficult to conquer the palate. But victory over it is essential for the other victory. One way to conquer the palace is to give up condiments wholly or as far as possible, and another effective way is to keep thinking that we eat merely to keep the body and soul together, and that we would never indulge the palate. We breathe not for the pleasure of breathing, but for taking in air. We drink water to slake thirst and, likewise, we should eat only to satisfy hunger. Right from childhood, our parents develop in us the opposite habit. They spoil us by teaching us to enjoy all manner of delicacies, which they do, not for our nourishment, but to show their love for us. We have to fight such tendencies.

But the golden rule for conquering the sex impulse is to keep repeating the magic name of Rama or some such holy word. Even the *Dwadash-mantra*[2] serves the same purpose. One may choose the

[1] Presumably, "How Celibacy Can Be Observed", 10-11-1921; *vide* "How Celibacy can be Observed?", 10-11-1921.

[2] *Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya:* "Salutation to Lord Vasudeva"; this

mantra to be chanted as prompted by one's faith. I have suggested the name of Rama because I was initiated into it from my childhood and have always found support in it. Whichever *mantra* we choose, we must become one with it. Even if other thoughts distract us while we repeat the *mantra,* I have no doubt at all that anyone who keeps repeating it with faith will succeed ultimately. The *mantra* will come to be the support of one's life and save one from all dangers. No one should have recourse to such a holy *mantra* for material gain. The miracle of the *mantra* lies in preserving our moral purity and everyone who tries will have that experience in a short while. Of course, we should remember that this *mantra* is not to be repeated parrot-wise; it should be repeated with one's whole being. The parrot repeats such *mantras* mechanically; we should do so intelligently, with purpose to keep away unwanted thoughts and with faith in the efficacy of the *mantra.*

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-5-1924

15. MILL-HANDS AND KHADI

The sixth issue of the *Khadi Patrika*[1] gives a detailed account of the khadi propaganda which is being carried on among the mill-hands of Ahmedabad. One learns from it that some workers have resolved to wear khadi exclusively and some others to have the spinning-wheel and the loom in their homes. The workers are running twenty schools and eight hundred children study: in them. ALL of them wear khadi. To supply their needs, the organizers have got stitched long shirts, caps, etc., and as these were mass-produced, the stitching costs of the long shirt and the cap came to no more than two annas and nine pies for the former and six pies for the latter.

Majoor Sandesh[2] contains the following interesting details:

If you buy a pound of khadi:
Ten annas will go to one of our peasants.
One-and-a-half to two annas will go to one of our poor carders.
Four to six annas will go to some poor woman who spun the yarn.

---

mantra or formula has twelve syllables; hence *dwadash*.

[1] *Khadi Samachar Patrika,* edited by Maganlal Gandhi, Sabarmati Ashram

[2] Periodical published by the Majoor Mahajan, the textile workers' union, Ahmedabad

Eight to nine annas will go to some weaver who wove the yarn spun by those sisters.

Three-quarters of an anna will go to one of our washermen.

If you wear khadi, all this money will remain in our country and will go to some of our poor brothers and sisters.

These facts deserve to be noted not only by the workers but by every man and woman.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-5-1924

16. SATYAGRAHI REPROACHES

The mention of satyagrahi terms of reproach in the article "Impatient Kathiawar" has prompted a correspondent to ask for a list of such terms, so that he may learn them and start using them! The first condition is that a non-satyagrahi or a *duragrahi*[1] should never use such terms. If any such person uses them, they will be altogether offensive in his mouth. If one understands this rule, one will not need a list.

Satyagrahi abuses are without number. As love has no limit, so these terms have none. If I want to reproach Vallabhbhai in satyagrahi fashion, I would say: "That rogue of a Patel has shed everything of his and has now started looting others. That is why he does not think much of ten lakhs of rupees." If we wish to heap satyagrahi abuses on Abbas Saheb[2], we would say: "Why should the old man care? He has abandoned his family and wanders about, minding neither cold nor heat, and is ever bothering people! Since he is an old man, who can discourage him?" If a similar reproach is to be hurled at Pattani Saheb, we may say: "He makes the rulers of Kathiawar dance; he sends up the stock of Bhavnagar by flattering Governors and now he has started fooling the Kathiawaris! But, if we are true Kathiawaris, and especially true citizens of Bhavnagar, we shall teach him a lesson. We certainly are not gullible like the rulers and the white sahebs! We believe in 'tit for tat' !"

I have here illustrated harmless uses of satyagrahi reproach. Even I do not know all possible uses of such terms. I am only an aspirant towards love; were I completely filled with love, I could even

[1] One who is obstinate in a wrong cause, or in a right cause but in a wrong manner

[2] Abbas Tyabji (1853-1936); nationalist Muslim leader of Gujarat

give a list of reproaches such as were used by the *gopis*[1]. Only they could apply to Lord Krishna epithets like "butter-thief ", "robber", etc. A man like Narasinh Mehta called a life-long celibate like Krishna "adulterous" and the latter bore this reproach and helped him to give ceremonial presents to his daughters-in-law when the occasion required.[2]

Only persons like Shukdevji[3] who are completely innocent in thought all their lives can know how all this happens. The epithet "onion-thief", which I used for Mohanlal Pandya, is an instance in the recent history of Gujarat similar to the description used by the *gopis.* I may further inform readers that it is a resident of Bhavnagar who has asked for a list of satyagrahi terms of reproach. I hope he will think out others from the illustrations I have given. I am sure that, if the residents of Bhavnagar learn this lesson, they can still hold the Kathiawar Political Conference in Bhavnagar unconditionally. But

"The path of truth is for the brave,
Never for the cowardly."[4]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-5-1924

17. "A MUSLIM"

A correspondent signing himself "A Muslim" has sent me a letter about the current tension between the Hindus and Muslims in Visnagar[5]. Some of the facts mentioned in it possibly deserve publicity but, since I do not wish to encourage anonymous letters and the statements made in such letters always lack credibility, I am unable to publish the particulars given in this letter. If the correspondent desires that the facts as stated by him should be published, he should write to me another letter giving particulars which can be verified, as his anonymous letter has been destroyed.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-5-1924

[1] The cowherd girls who gave their love to the boy Krishna

[2] Narasinh Mehta was too poor to be able to fulfil the customary obligations when his daughter was to have her first child, and legend has it that Krishna appeared on the scene as a devout merchant and distributed generous gifts among the in-laws.

[3] A youthful sage who was as pure in his thoughts as a child

[4] Adapted from the opening line of a Gujarati poem by Pritamdas, a Vedantic poet of the eighteenth century

[5] Town in North Gujarat

18. KATHIAWAR RAJPUT CONFERENCE[1]

I wish very much to attend this Conference which is about to meet, but that seems quite impossible.

Kathiawar was a land of warriors. The valour of the Rajputs is world-renowned. But the Rajputs of today are not likely to become brave by singing praises of their valour in the past. When the Brahmin gave up pursuit of higher knowledge, the Rajput became commerce-minded, forsaking his traditional duty of defending people, and the *Vania*[2] took to paid service, who can blame the Sudra if he ceased to be a servant? When the four castes fell, they gave rise, against the spirit of religion, to a fifth one and this came to be looked upon as a class of untouchables. Having created this fifth class, the four castes kept it in suppression and, in consequence, they themselves came to be suppressed and fell.

Who will rescue the Hindus from this plight? If the Hindus are not saved, the Muslims also cannot escape the same fate. If twenty-two crores fall, surely the other seven crores cannot survive. When a train is in motion, we cannot stand close to it because its velocity is likely to drag us along.

India's freedom thus lies in the regeneration of the Hindus. The country can be saved only if this regeneration is religious in character. If the Hindus try to imitate the West in order to acquire its physical strength, they will themselves fall and bring down others as well.

Who will save this fallen Hindu society? Who will inspire courage in the timid? Surely, this duty belongs to the Kshatriya. If, therefore, the Rajput Conference wants to understand its duty and discharge it, the Rajputs will have to consider what their dharma is.

For protecting others, it is not necessary to possess the strength of the sword. The age of such strength has passed, or is passing. The world has had plenty of experience of the sword and has had enough of it. Even the West seems to have tired of it. He who protects others by killing the enemy is no Kshatriya; he is a true Kshatriya who protects others by laying down his own life. He is no brave man who runs away from danger; one who stands firm, chest forward, and bears blows without striking back is a Kshatriya.

[1] Held, presumably, in June 1924; *vide* "The Purdah and the Pledge", 22-6-1924.

[2] Member of mercantile community

But let us suppose for a moment that the sword is necessary. What then? If Rama used it, it was after he had purified himself through *tapascharya* by living in the forest for fourteen years. The Pandavas, too, lived in the forest. Arjuna[1] went to god Indra[2] himself and obtained divine weapons. One must get the power which comes through *tapas*[3] before acquiring the strength of arms. If this is not done, the result would be senseless fighting as among the Yadavas[4] and, just as the latter destroyed themselves with their own arms, our weapons would kill us.

Hence the first task before the Rajput Conference is to raise the Rajputs. A Rajput may talk of his rights, but he should first talk of his duty. He should give up addictions, adopt simplicity, befriend the poorest among Kathiawaris, share his sufferings and serve him. No one can deprive him of this right to serve. If anyone in Kathiawar is forced to leave it, a Raiput should feel ashamed of it. There's the wherewithal of life where there are the spinning-wheel, the carding-bow and the loom. Why do Kathiawaris leave the heavenly climate of the region for the foul air of Bombay? It is for the Rajputs, more than for others, to answer this question. The discredit for this should certainly go to the rulers. If the rulers of Kathiawar concern themselves only with the well-being of their subjects, why should the latter have to leave their land? The rulers will not, of course, be present at the Rajput Conference but, if the Rajputs mean it, even they will understand. This is an age of democracy and so the rulers will become what the subjects are and remain so. The Rajputs are in a position to make a worthy contribution to the national awakening.

If the members of the Conference spend more time examining their own shortcomings than spotting out those of others, they will be showing the way on the royal road. Nowadays we blame others for our sufferings; we forget or wish to forget that we ourselves are responsible for them. If there is none to tolerate tyranny, what can the tyrant do? So long as we remain weak enough to be enslaved, there will be people who will seek to enslave us. It is an easy, though useless,

[1] The most valiant of the five Pandavas in the *Mahabharata*

[2] King of the gods

[3] Austerities

[4] Shri Krishna's kinsmen; with the advent of the Age of Strife, they were possessed by the spirit of evil and, after an orgy of drinking, destroyed themselves by fighting against one another.

exercise to abuse such people. It is certainly difficult to understand our own weakness and remove it, but that is the only course which will yield results. And since the means of removing it is in our own hands, no one can deprive us of it.

It is my earnest appeal to the members of the Rajput Conference that they give their most serious attention to this suggestion and do some self-examination.

Finally, let me give them a little advice from experience. Let them beware of speeches and speech-makers. They would do well to keep away from these. Work will be done better if it is done in silence. One who goes on shouting about his hunger will not satisfy the hunger of the hungry, but a good man, dumb from birth, taking a handful of *bajra*[1] to them, will bring light to their eyes, colour to their cheeks and a smile to their lips. They will bless the dumb man from the depth of their hearts. God does not teach us through speeches, but He ever remains active. He is awake even when we are asleep. He can spare no time from His work to make speeches. I request the Rajputs to devote themselves exclusively to work, and thus set an example to other workers of Kathiawar who are all too ready with the tongue, but in action are clever diplomats.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-5-1924

[1] Coarse millet

19. HELP TO MOPLAHS

Bharatabhushan Pandit Malaviya writes as follows concerning my appeal for help to Moplahs:

I have so far received Rs. 600 only for Moplah relief,—Rs. 500 having been contributed by a Bohra gentleman. I hope others also will contribute, each according to his or her capacity.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-5-1924

20. TRIUMPH OF SPRING

May 25, 1924

The poet[1] killed Pandu and burnt Madri and thus celebrated the triumph of spring. In the *Chaitra* issue of *Vasant*, Shri Anandshankarbhai[2] has tried to celebrate a somewhat similar triumph of a violent nature. He has attempted to do so by attributing to me certain views about mill cloth. If he succeeds in his attempt, the cause of poor khadi would be completely ruined. Hence, we deem it our duty to prevent the success of this violent attack.

The reader is well aware that I seldom interest myself in criticizing any newspaper or individual. Such criticism seems pointless to me; it gives rise to unnecessary controversy and sometimes even ill feeling. I have no cause for fear in regard to Shri Anandshankar's articles. Between us there may be differences of opinion, but there can be no misunderstanding. As I write this, a co-worker puts in my hand the note in *Vasant* which I have referred to. I do not, therefore, wish to check the desire to reply to it. However, readers should not hope that I shall always be ready to enter into such friendly controversies even with *Vasant*. My duty is to place my ideas before the public and, if

[1] Manishankar Bhatt, who wrote a poem entitled *Vasant-Vijaya*, "Triumph of Spring", on the *Mahabharata* story of how Panda, father of the Pandava heroes, met his death. Yielding to the influence of spring, Pandu disregarded the curse on him and sought union with his wife, Madri, and died in consequence. Madri, too, immolated herself on the funeral pyre.

[2] Anandshankar Bapubhai Dhruva (1869-1942); Sanskrit scholar and Gujarati writer, Pro-Vice Chancellor of the Banaras Hindu University, 1920-37; founded and edited *Vasant*, a Gujarati journal

any issues arise, to solve them from a distance. I always regard myself as vanquished by everyone. I am never keen to convince people through arguments, and I have often found that the imperfect language in which the imperfect thoughts of an imperfect man are expressed cannot explain his meaning fully. Moreover, if the reader's impatience and opposition to the author's views are added to the threefold imperfection, they would further diminish his capacity to understand the argument. It is because I believe that, in such circumstances, the proper thing is to say little and let work speak for itself, that I do not enter into argument and, in consequence, do not need to read many newspapers.

The note in *Vasant* is itself a good instance of what I have said. Had Anandshankarbhai fully understood my views, he would have found nothing to say against them, or, if he had thought it necessary to write anything, it would have been to welcome the movement to popularize the exclusive use of khadi and this would have made my task and that of Gujarat, as also the path of swaraj, easy. But how can I expect that he would understand them? Why should he or anyone else read what I have written elsewhere in this connection? They naturally form their opinions on the basis of what they happen to read or see. I am certainly to blame for going on writing on the subject though aware of this difficulty. If one must write, one should use such language as will admit of no misconstruction. But, then, if one can command such language, need one write? Only an imperfect person resorts to writing. Hence, we have no choice but to tolerate each other's failings. If we keep trying to overcome our failings and in the meantime maintain cordial relations with others, we may not reach perfection, but we shall certainly make some progress towards our goal.

It would be simpler for me and the reader if I re-state my ideas rather than try to reply to Anandshankarbhai's criticism:

1. I have no particular love or dislike for the textile industry.

2. Even if there were no textile mills, India could meet its requirement of cloth by means of the spinning-wheel and the handloom. There is enough evidence to prove this.

3. Mill-made cloth requires no encouragement, as that industry faces no risks.

4. There is, for the seven lakh villages of India, only one possible cottage industry to supplement agriculture, and that is spinning and weaving.

5. The use of khadi is still new. It has not yet gained a permanent place and has to make its way against foreign and mill-made cloth.

6. Only a small section of the public is within the reach of the present movement; if even this section is permitted to wear mill-made cloth, who will be left to use khadi and when will the come to use it? If it is possible to popularize khadi even in some measure, that can be done only when this small section of society learns to regard the use of khadi as a religious duty and insists on wearing it.

7. It is essential to boycott foreign cloth. It is a threat to the interests of the textile mills in India. I see no happy signs of Indians taking to the use of khadi immediately; hence, Indian mill-made cloth has ample scope. It has reason to fear not khadi but foreign cloth. Hence, I should certainly like to see sufficient import duties levied to save the textile industry from this danger.

8. I believe that even the spinning-wheel and the hammer are machines. I have always accepted, and still accept, the principle that external machinery is unnecessary. I believe likewise in the need for self-control in regard to outward possessions. The West believes in just the opposite. In other words, from its point of view, progress consists in increasing use of machines. Believers in both these principles give importance to machinery. Ancient civilization regards it as a necessary evil and assigns it a secondary place; modern civilization welcomes it as something desirable.

9. History does not tell us that khadi went out of use because foreign cloth was better and cheaper. Even today, foreign cloth cannot compete with the better sort of khadi. Cloth like the *shabnam*[1] muslin of Dacca has disappeared for ever. When foreign cloth was first introduced, it was not even cheap. History tells us, on the contrary, that the East India Company deliberately destroyed the spinning and weaving industries and, by securing various forms of protection, made us accept foreign cloth. I have not invented this history out of my ignorance. I have gathered it from Shri Romesh Chandra Dutt's[2] vast storehouse of knowledge. I am not aware of these assertions having been disputed to this day; if this belief of mine is erroneous, I shall certainly be ready to revise it.

[1] Literally, dew; hence exquisitely delicate

[2] 1848-1909; member of Indian Civil Service, author of *The Economic History of India since the Advent of the East India Company;* President of the Indian National Congress, 1899; later Chief Minister of Baroda State

10. The power of khadi is immeasurable. It need not compete with mill-made cloth in order to increase it. It is always increasing. Whoever wishes to examine this can compare the fine khadi that is being produced today with what little was produced four years ago. I was surprised even by the change that I saw when I came out after two years of imprisonment. Today, khadi is produced in every home. By and by, it will not even require heavy implements, and so long as art and taste survive in the world, the quality and design of khadi will continue to improve. It is only the craze for mill-made cloth which impedes its progress. To rid themselves of this craze is the duty of all—Non-co-operators and those who believe in co-operation, the Swarajists and those who are not Swarajists, of men and women, the learned and the ignorant.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-5-1924

21. MY NOTES

DIRTY HABITS OF PASSENGERS

A gentleman who usually travels third on railways, writes to say that travelling by this class becomes intolerable because of the dirty habits of passengers and that, to save oneself the suffering on the journey, one should carry a small broom and a spittoon with a lid. The compartment should be periodically swept with the broom and, whenever anyone wishes to spit, the spittle should be collected in the spittoon. In this way, one would be spared some suffering at any rate.

There is no doubt that such filth is intolerable to anyone who cares for cleanliness. Nevertheless, we cannot choose but travel third class. When I used to travel only third class, I had leaflets printed[1] and had even started distributing them among the travelling public. When the nature of my work changed, I left off this propaganda through leaflets. Later on, I suffered in health, and had to give up both the privilege and the hardships of third-class travel. But its sweet memories are still fresh in my mind and I hope to describe them again some time.

Every volunteer should read out the leaflet as he distributes

[1] During 1916-17, these were distributed in Gujarat; *vide* also "Railway Passengers", before 26-7-1916.

copies of it. Simultaneously, the experiment of using a broom should also be tried. The suggestion about the spittoon is difficult to carry out. In acting upon it, there is a risk of one's being beaten up and, even so, the passengers may refuse to spit into it. But the use of the broom is very necessary. We may politely request passengers not to throw rubbish in the compartment and, at the same time, ungrudgingly sweep away the dirt which may be thrown despite our pleas. In trying to use the spittoon, there is the danger, while trying to avoid one kind of uncleanliness, of inviting another. It should be properly cleaned after use every time. The spittoon, too, should have no joints, should not corrode and should be large enough in size. On such occasions I used large quantities of paper. By using paper to clean the spot where anyone has spat, one does not soil one's hands and can yet clean the place properly. Later, one can wash the hands, if one feels like doing so. If we do all this, others who are inclined to spit will feel ashamed and restrain themselves. What really makes one sad is that volunteers do not themselves always observe the rules of tidiness and cleanliness. Generally, we seem to have little consideration for others. This is the reason for the excessive filthiness one finds on trains and ships, in fact, wherever one goes. Improvement in this matter can be brought about only if teaching habits of cleanliness and tidiness is part of children's education and if we realize that the rules taught are meant to be followed. Perhaps, the reader does not know that to make railway compartments dirty in the manner described above is an offence under the Railways Act. But no one is prosecuted since the majority of people are guilty of this offence and only a few are innocent. It is a maxim that only a law which the majority obeys can be enforced against a few. In other words, the atmosphere must be favourable if such laws are to be enforced. This further means that, in practice, many laws serve no useful purpose. Once the necessary atmosphere has been created, the minority conforms of its own accord to the general practice.

MEANING OF POPULAR

A teacher writes to say:[1]

I have used the word "popular" in my article[2] with the same meaning which this correspondent gives to it. I have expressed my

[1] The letter is not translated here.

[2] *Vide* "To Readers of *Navajivan*", 6-4-1924.

views in keeping with my principles and, consistently with them, we should not have schools in villages which do not favour them. If at all we have them, we should not call them "popular". However, we may rightly feel in our enthusiasm for a new movement that we are justified in starting schools at numerous places and that since society gives us the required money, there is no reason why we should not run them. I would not, however, look upon such activity as altogether unexceptionable. If, having regard to their aims, many of the missionary schools seem to serve no useful purpose, the reason is this. It has also been our experience that funds are misused when collected at one place and spent at another distant place. Moreover, as a result of this, the section of the population on whom we spend the money in this way be comes incapable of helping itself. This is why I would think that we were on the right track to the extent that we proceeded in accordance with the principle I have mentioned. From this point of view, it would seem to be futile to spend money in a village where the parents would neither send their children [to the school] nor contribute funds for it.

But, then, according to this rule, not a single school for untouchables could be started, for our work among them is yet to be considered as "popular" ! Moreover, in many villages all the Hindus are opposed to such an activity or, if not actually opposed to it, are indifferent in the matter. This doubt will soon arise. It only shows that no principle is absolute. Very often, many principles have to be followed at the same time, some of which may be contradictory. One may, therefore, say that work which takes into account all the relevant principles yields the best results.

So far as the untouchables are concerned, we have really clipped their wings. We have crushed better sentiments out of them, so that much of our work among them has to be done by way of atonement. It is for us to build schools and temples and dig wells for them. All this is a debt we owe them. Moreover, this obligation may not become "popular". Those to whom it appeals may spend their money on it and work without hoping for reward. In this context, ''popularity" must be understood in a different sense. It is only in such perplexing situations that moral dilemmas arise. On such occasions, the test of our good sense consists in reconciling diverse principles and working accordingly.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-5-1924

22. DAILY PLYING OF THE SPINNING-WHEEL

A Jain friend writes to me to say that the women in his family have stopped spinning because some monks have told them that the Jain religion forbids the plying of the spinning-wheel as it kills the invisible germs living in the air! If the song below[1] dates back to 300 years, that itself will answer those monks. Moreover, common sense will not at all accept their argument. There is violence in every deed and in every bodily function. There is violence certainly in eating, drinking and dressing How, then, can we help taking up those activities which are necessary for producing clothing for us? If others draw water, cook, spin and weave and we utilize the fruits of their labour, we naturally share their sin. If, therefore, we ourselves do the three things with our own hands, we can limit their extent and reduce our burden of sins. He who draws water with his own hands will use it economically. But does anyone using tap water exercise any restraint on himself? The same is true of all activities. Personally, I consider spinning to be an activity which serves the cause of non-violence in every respect.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-5-1924

23. MISCELLANEOUS

A Parsi gentleman from Calcutta writes as follows:[2]

Fortunately, it is not a crore of Gujaratis who use the word *bhaiya;* it is used chiefly by Gujaratis living or settled in Bombay. Hence, it should not be difficult to bring this abuse of the word *bhaiya* to the notice of this small number in order to avoid hurting the feelings of our brothers from the North.

SALE OF KHADI

Some facts mentioned by the 'Khadi News Centre' in the sixth

[1] Not translated here. It told the story of a woman who, on her husband's failure to earn enough to maintain his family, brought prosperity to the family with the help of the spinning-wheel.

[2] The correspondent had referred to Gandhiji's earlier note on the misuse of the word *bhaiya,* literally, brother; *vide* "My Notes",4-5-1924.

number of its leaflet for the second year are worth noting. It appears from these figures that, during the 'Gandhi Month'[1], the sales of khadi in Orissa, by the Bombay Khadi Samiti, in Kerala and in the Marathi region of the Central Provinces have amounted to not less than Rs. 2,60,789. Obviously, this cannot include all private sales. The total sales figures, therefore, would certainly exceed that given above. Moreover, the figures of sales in several other provinces had not been received at the time of the printing of the leaflet. The total sales in the country, therefore, must be much greater. Even so, when the aim is to produce annually khadi of the value of at least sixty crore rupees, of what significance is a total output of four to five lakhs?

EXPORT OF COTTON

The same leaflet informs us that 29,81,361 bales of cotton were exported in 1921-22, and 33,62,601 bales in 1922-23. The larger portion of the sale proceeds of these bales was received by the Indian peasants; even then, not only did they lose the money they could have earned for working on the other processes up to and including the weaving of cloth, though they had time and the necessary skill, but they also sent that amount abroad. In other words, if they earned a rupee for a seer of cotton, perhaps, they paid: back fourteen annas when they bought cloth made of the same amount of cotton. Only Indians would do such foolish business.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-5-l924

[1] Commencing from Gandhiji's birthday which, according to the Indian Calendar, usually falls in the last week of September

24. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

JUHU,
Monday [*May 26, 1924*][1]

CHI . MAN I,

So you have reached Ahmedabad earlier than expected. I am keen that you and your brother should live in a separate room in the Ashram. You may have your meals in the mess, or you may cook your food yourself, or with Ba if that suits you. Do as suits you both. You can go to the college from there.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MANIBEHN

C/O VALLABHBHAI, BAR-AT-LAW

AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Maniben Patelne

25. NOTE TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI[2]

[Before *May 28, 1924*][3]

Very well done, indeed! May you live long, may your virtues grow from day to day, may you always do good deeds, and may you render ever greater service to the country.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: C.W. 4694. Courtesy: Shanti-kumar Morarji

[1] As in the printed source

[2] Shantikumar Narottam Morarji, a Gujarati businessman of Bombay connected with the Scindia Steam Navigation Company

[3] The letter bears the addressee's remark that it was written from Juhu. Gandhiji left Juhu for Ahmedabad on May 28, 1924.

26. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

Vaisakha Vad 10 [*May 28, 1924*][1]

BHA ISHRI VAL JI,

I have a letter from Abhechandbhai saying that he will most probably get the job he wants. I see that your preface has been dropped from "Rentianu Sangeet" [The Music of the Spinning-wheel]. Now I realize how right you are to insist on proofs. At the same time, I am sorry for poor Swami[2], who is over-burdened math work. At present, even Mahadev is not by his side to help him. But all the same, you should continue to point out the mistakes. In fact, I would like you to send me a list of mistakes every week so that I can print it. If that does not appeal to you, please send it for my personal use. Owing to excitement[3] I had a temperature. What is the Gujarati word for 'excitement' here?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

V. G. DESAI
STERLING CASTLE
SIMLA

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: C.W. 6009. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

27. A SILENCE-DAY NOTE [4]

[Between *March 11 and May 28, 1924*][5]

I have been observing for some days that you are not single-mindedly attentive at the time of prayer. If this judgement of mine is correct, try to overcome your absent-mindedness. The fact that I can observe your absent-mindedness itself proves that I myself am unable to keep my attention steady. This is true indeed. But because one

[1] *Rentianu Sangeet,* mentioned in the letter, was published in the *Navajivan,* 25-5-24. The correct title of the article is "*Rentiyano Swadhyaya*". In 1924, *Vaisakha Vad* 10 fell on May 28.

[2] Swami Anandanand

[3] The original has this English word.

[4] A person to whom this silence-day note is addressed is not identified in the source. It is, however, noted at the top that Gandhiji said this to him when he (Gandhiji) was living in a bungalow at Juhu from March 11 to May 28, 1924.

[5] *Ibid*

person is guilty of a lapse, does it follow that another person also may be so guilty? Moreover, what comparison can there be between an old man who commits a lapse and an innocent child? May it be natural for you all what I have not been able to achieve to this day! And moreover, you were feeling sleepy and that was an additional lapse. We, who are looked upon as elders, may go to bed at any hour but you children ought to go to bed by eight. If you take less interest in talking, you will find thinking more pleasurable and will be able to observe all the rules.

Why need you then ask? What comparison can there be between Prabhudas's age and yours? I wish that I, too, were a child. But how can that be? We will think more about this in the Ashram.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33013

28. TELEGRAM TO SARALADEVI CHOWDHARANI[1]

[Before *May 29, 1924*]

MINORS SHOULD CERTAINLY NOT TAKE PART IN SATYAGRAHA.

The Leader, 31-5-1924

29. LETTER TO N. M. KHARE

Saturday [Before *May 29, 1924*][2]

BHA ISHRI PAN DITJI[3],

I have your letter.

Let Rambhau have a change of climate and recover his health.

It is neither obligatory nor necessary for a woman to remain in isolation during her monthly period. It is quite unnecessary for unmarried girls. It does help to some extent in protecting a woman's health. A married woman especially resorts to isolation in order to

[1] This was with reference to her reported statement regarding her minor son offering himself as a volunteer in the Tarkeshwar Satyagraha. *Vide* also ''Instructions to Secretary", on or after May 23, 1924.

[2] The addressee had taken the snake-charm from Nathji, who was staying in the Ashram in 1924. It is presumed that the letter was written by Gandhiji before he returned to the Ashram from Bombay on May 29, 1924.

[3] Narayan Moreshwar Khare, a music teacher at Sabarmati Ashram; compiled the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, a book of prayers in various languages, for the Ashram.

save herself from her husband's passion. As to how far it [touching a woman in menses] will affect the [snake-] charm, I am not competent to say. You should observe the rule prescribed by Nathji[1] in this connection. Here, too, harm is likely to result if one has the knowledge that the woman is in menses. I gathered from Kishorelal[2] that the touch of a woman in menses, when you are unaware of her condition does not affect the charm.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 255. Courtesy: Lakshmibai Khare

30. HINDU-MUSLIM TENSION: ITS CAUSE AND CURE[3]

HINDU INDICTMENT

Pandit Banarsidas Chaturvedi brought a message from a Hindu residing in Tanganyika to the following effect: "Tell Gandhi he is responsible for the Muslim atrocities in Multan."[4] I did not print the message before, as I was not ready to write then upon the question of questions. But many letters have since been received by me, some from well-known friends telling one that I was responsible even for the alleged Moplah atrocities, in fact for all the riots in which Hindus have or are said to have suffered since the Khilafat agitation. The argument is somewhat this: 'You asked the Hindus to make common cause with the Mussalmans in the Khilafat question. Your being identified with it gave it an importance it would never have otherwise received. It unified and awakened the Mussalmans. It gave a prestige to the Maulvis which they never had before. And now that the Khilafat question is over, the awakened Mussalmans have proclaimed a kind of jehad against us Hindus.' I have given the purport of the charge in readable language. Some letters contain unprintable abuse.

So much for the Hindu part of the indictment against me.

[1] Kedarnath Kulkarni, spiritual seeker and frequent visitor to the Ashram
[2] Kishorelal Mashruwala
[3] A reprint of this article was later issued in the form of a pamphlet.
[4] In March-April 1923

MUSSALMAN INDICTMENT

A Mussalman friend says:

> The Muslim community being a very simple and religious community were led to believe that the Khilafat was in danger and that it could be saved by the united voice of Hindus and Mohammedans; these innocent people, believing your very eloquent words, showed great enthusiasm, with the result that they were the first to boycott schools, law-courts, Councils, etc. The most famous institution of Aligarh, which Sir Syed had built by the labour of his lifetime and which was justly the first institution of its kind, was utterly spoilt. I shall be very much obliged if you will kindly point out that the Hindu community had a similar institution, and it met with the same fate. I know of scores of boys who could have taken the University degree with credit to themselves and the community to which they belonged, but they were induced to leave studies on religious grounds, with the result that they were utterly ruined. On the contrary very few Hindu boys left, and those who did so for the time beinginstantly joined, as soon as they found that the movement was tottering to pieces. Similar was the case with lawyers. In those days, you brought about a sort of unity between the two communities and advertised it far and near that it was a solid one. The simple-minded Mohammedans again believed it, with the result that they were brutally treated at Ajmer, Lucknow, Meerut, Agra, Saharanpur, Lahore and other places. Mr. Mahomed Ali, who was a born journalist of a very high type, and whose wonderful paper *The Comrade* was doing such solid work for the Muslim community, was won over to your side, and he is now a loss to the community. Your Hindu leaders-in the guise of *shuddhi* and *sangathan* are trying to weaken the Muslim community. Your short-sighted decision to prevent people from entering the Councils has acted most unfairly on this community as the majority of able men refrain from entering the Councils because of the so-called *fatwa.* Under the circumstances, do you not honestly think that you are doing a great harm to this community by keeping the Mohammedans, a few of them of course, still in your camp.

I have not given the whole of the letter. But the extract represents the gist of the Muslim indictment against me.

NOT GUILTY

I must plead not guilty to both the charges, and add that I am totally unrepentant. Had I been a prophet and foreseen all that has happened, I should have still thrown myself into the Khilafat agitation. In spite of the present strained relations between the two communities, both have gained. The awakening among the masses was a necessary part of the training. It is itself a tremendous gain. I would do nothing

to put the people to sleep again. Our wisdom consists now in directing the awakening in the proper channel. What we see before us is sad but not disheartening, if we have faith in ourselves. The storm is but the forerunner of the coming calm that comes from a consciousness of strength, not from the stupor of exhaustion and disappointment.

The public will not expect me to give judgment upon the riots in the different places. I have no desire for giving judgment. And even if I had, I have not the facts before me.

MOPLAHS

I will say a word as to the causes.

The Malabar happenings undoubtedly disquieted the Hindu mind. What the truth is no one knows. The Hindus say that the Moplah atrocities were indescribable. Dr. Mahmud tells me that these have been grossly exaggerated, that the Moplahs too had a grievance aga-inst the Hindus, and that he could find no cases of forcible conver-sions. The one case that was reported to him was at least 'non-proven'. In his findings, Dr. Mahmud says, he is supported by Hindu testimony. I merely mention the two versions to ask the public to con-clude with me that it is impossible to arrive at the exact truth, and that it is unnecessary for the purpose of regulating Our future conduct.

MULTAN, ETC.

In Multan, Saharanpur, Agra, Ajmer etc., it is agreed that the Hindus suffered most. In Palwal it is stated that Hindus have prevented Mussalmans from turning a *kachcha* mosque into a *pukka* one. They are said to have pulled down part of the *pukka* wall, driven the Muslims out of the village, and stated that the Muslims could not live in the village unless they promised not to build any mosque and say *azan.* This state of things is said to have continued for over a year. The driven Mussalmans are said to be living in temporary huts near Rohtak.

In Byade in Dharwar district, my informant tells me, on Muslims objecting to music being played before their mosque, the Hindu desecrated the mosque, beat the Mussalmans, and then got them persecuted. Here again I cite these two instances, not as proved facts, but to show that the Mussalmans too claim to have much to complain of against Hindus.

And it can certainly be fairly added that where they were manifestly weak and Hindus strong, as in Katarpur and Arrah years

ago, they were mercilessly treated by their Hindu neighbours. The fact is that when blood boils, prejudice reigns supreme; man, whether he labels himself Hindu, Mussalman, Christian or what not, becomes a beast and acts as such.

THE SEAT OF THE TROUBLE

The seat of the trouble, however, is in the Punjab. The Mussalmans complain that the Hindus have raised a storm of protest on Mr. Fazal Hussain trying very timidly to give a fair proportion of Government employment to Mussalmans. The letter from which I have already quoted complains bitterly that, wherever a Hindu has been the head of a department, he has carefully excluded Mussalmans from Government posts.

The causes for the tension are thus more than merely religious. The charges I have quoted are individual. But the mass mind is a reflection of individual opinion.

TIRED OF NON-VIOLENCE

The immediate cause is the most dangerous. The thinking portion seems to be tired of non-violence. It has not as yet understood my suspension of Satyagraha after Ahmedabad and Viramgam tragedies, then after the Bombay rowdyism, and, Lastly, after the Chauri Chaura outrage. The last was the last straw. The thinking men imagined that all hope of Satyagraha, and therefore of swaraj too in the near future, was at an end. Their faith in non-violence was skin-deep. Two years ago, a Mussalman friend said to me in all sincerity, "I do not believe [in] your non-violence. At least, I would not have my Mussalmans to learn it. Violence is the law of life. I would not have swaraj by non-violence as you define the latter. I must hate my enemy." This friend is an honest man. I entertain great regard for him. Much the same has been reported of another very great Mussalman friend of mine. The report may be untrue, but the reporter himself is not an untrue man.

HINDU REPUGNANCE

Nor is this repugnance to non-violence confined to Mussalmans. Hindu friends have said the same thing, if possible, with greater vehemence. My claim to Hinduism has been rejected by some, because I believe [in] and advocate non-violence in its extreme form. They say that I am a Christian in disguise. I have been even seriously

told that I am distorting the meaning of the *Gita* when I ascribe to that great poem the teaching of unadulterated non-violence. Some of my Hindu friends tell me that killing is a duty enjoined by the *Gita* under certain circumstances. A very learned Shastri only the other day scornfully rejected my interpretation of the *Gita* and said that there was no warrant for the opinion held by some commentators that the *Gita* represented the eternal duel between forces of evil and good, and inculcated the duty of eradicating evil within us without hesitation, without tenderness.

I state these opinions against non-violence in detail, because it is necessary to understand them if we would understand the solution I have to offer. What I see around me today is, therefore, a reaction against the spread of non-violence. I feel the wave of violence coming. The Hindu-Muslim tension is an acute phase of this tiredness.

I must be dismissed out of consideration. My religion is a matter solely between my Maker and myself. If I am a Hindu, I cannot cease to be one even though I may be disowned by the whole of the Hindu population. I do, however, suggest that non-violence is the end of all religions.

LIMITED NON-VIOLENCE

But I have never presented to India that extreme form of non-violence, if only because I do not regard myself fit enough to re-deliver that ancient message. Though my intellect has fully understood and grasped it, it has not as yet become part of my whole being. My strength lies in my asking people to do nothing that I have not tried repeatedly in my own life. I am then asking my countrymen today to adopt non-violence as their final creed, only for the purpose of regulating the relations between the different races, and for the purpose of attaining swaraj. Hindus and Mussalmans, Christians, Sikhs and Parsis must not settle their differences by resort to violence, and the means for the attainment of swaraj must be non-violent. This I venture to place before India, not as a weapon of the weak, but of the strong. Hindus and Mussalmans prate about no compulsion in religion. What is it but compulsion if Hindus will kill a Mussalman for saving a cow? It is like wanting to convert a Mussalman to Hinduism by force. And similarly, what is it but compulsion if Mussalmans seek to prevent by force Hindus from playing music before mosques? Virtue lies in being absorbed in one's prayers in the presence of din and noise. We shall both be voted irreligious savages by posterity if we

continue to make a futile attempt to compel one another to respect our religious wishes. Again, a nation of three hundred million people should be ashamed to have to resort to force to bring to book one hundred thousand Englishmen. To convert them or, if you will, even to drive them out of the country, we need, not force of arms, but force of will. If we have not the latter, we shall never get the former. If we develop the force of will, we shall find that we do not need the force of arms.

Acceptance of non-violence, therefore, for the purposes mentioned by me, is the most natural and the most necessary condition of our national existence. It will teach us to husband our corporate physical strength for a better purpose, instead of dissipating it, as now, in a useless fratricidal strife, in which each party is exhausted after the effort. And every armed rebellion must be an insane act unless it is backed by the nation. But almost any item of non-co-operation fully backed by the nation can achieve the aim without shedding a single drop of blood.

I do not say 'eschew violence in your dealing with robbers or thieves or with nations that may invade India.' But in order that we are better able to do so, we must learn to restrain ourselves. It is a sign not of strength but of weakness to take up the pistol on the slightest pretext. Mutual fisticuffs are a training, not in violence, but in emasculation. My method of non-violence can never lead to loss of strength, but it alone will make it possible, if the nation wills it, to offer disciplined and concerted violence in time of danger.

NOT TRULY NON-VIOLENT

If those who believe that we were becoming supine and inert because of the training in non-violence, will but reflect a little, they will discover that we have never been non-violent in the only sense in which the word must be understood. Whilst we have refrained from causing actual physical hurt, we have harboured violence in our breast. If we had honestly regulated our thought and speech in the strictest harmony with our outward act, we would never have experienced the fatigue we are doing. Had we been true to ourselves, we would have by this time evolved matchless strength of purpose and will.

I have dwelt at length upon the mistaken view of non-violence, because I am sure that, if we can but revert to our faith, if we ever had any, in non-violence limited only to the two purposes above referred to, the present tension between the two communities will largely

subside. For, in my opinion, an attitude of non-violence in our mutual relations is an indispensable condition prior to a discussion of the remedies for the removal of the tension. It must be common cause between the two communities that neither party shall take the law into its own hands, but that all points in dispute, where-ever and whenever they arise, shall be decided by reference either to private arbitration, or to the law-courts if they wish. This is the whole meaning of non-violence, so far as communal matters are concerned. To put it another way, just as we do not break one another's heads in respect of civil matters, so may we not do even in respect of religious matters. This is the only pact that is immediately necessary between the parties, and I am sure that everything else will follow.

THE BULLY AND THE COWARD

Unless this elementary condition is recognized, we have no atmosphere for considering the ways and means of removing misunderstanding and arriving at an honourable, lasting settlement. But assuming that the acceptance of the elementary condition will be common cause between the two communities, let us consider the constant disturbing factors. There is no doubt in my mind that in the majority of quarrels the Hindus come out second best. My own experience but confirms the opinion that the Mussalman as a rule is a bully, and the Hindu as a rule is a coward. I have noticed this in railway trains, on public roads, and in the quarrels which I had the privilege of settling. Need the Hindu blame the Mussalman for his cowardice? Where there are cowards, there will always be bullies. They say that in Saharanpur the Mussalmans looted houses, broke open safes and, in one case, a Hindu woman's modesty was outraged. Whose fault was this? Mussalmans can offer no defence for the execrable conduct, it is true. But I as a Hindu am more ashamed of Hindu cowardice than I am angry at the Mussalman bullying. Why did not the owners of the houses looted die in the attempt to defend their possessions? Where were the relatives of the outraged sister at the time of the outrage? Have they no account to render of themselves? My non-violence does not admit of running away from danger and leaving dear ones unprotected. Between violence and cowardly flight, I can only prefer violence to cowardice. I can no more preach non-violence to a coward than I can tempt a blind man to enjoy healthy scenes. Non-violence is the summit of bravery. And in my own experience, I have had no difficulty in demonstrating to men trained in

the school of violence the superiority of non-violence. As a coward, which I was for years, I harboured violence. I began to prize non-violence only when I began to shed cowardice. Those Hindus who ran away from the post of duty when it was attended with danger did so not because they were non-violent, or because they were afraid to strike, but because they were unwilling to die or even suffer any injury. A rabbit that runs away from the bull-terrier is not particularly non-violent. The poor thing trembles at the sight of the terrier and runs for very life. Those Hindus who ran away to save their lives would have been truly non-violent and would have covered themselves with glory and added lustre to their faith and won the friendship of their Mussalman assailants, if they had stood bare breast with smiles on their lips, and died at their post. They would have done less well, though still well, if they had stood at their post and returned blow for blow. If the Hindus wish to convert the Mussalman bully into a respecting friend, they have to learn to die in the face of the heaviest odds.

THE WAY

The way however does not lie through *akhadas*[1]—not that I mind them. On the contrary, I want them for physical culture. Then they should be for all. But, if they are meant as a preparation forself-defence in the Hindu-Mussalman conflicts, they are fore-doomed to failure. Mussalmans can play the same game and such preparations secret or open do but cause suspicion and irritation. They can provide no present remedy. It is for the thoughtful few to make quarrels impossible by making arbitration popular and obligatory.

The remedy against cowardice is not physical culture but the braving of dangers. So long as parents of the middle-class Hindus, themselves timid, continue to transmit their timidity by keeping their grown-up children in cotton wool, so long will there be the desire to shun danger and run no risks. They will have to dare to leave their children alone, let them run risks and even, at times, get killed in so doing. The puniest individual may have a stout heart. The most muscular Zulus cower before English lads. Each village has to find out its stout hearts.

[1] Gymnasia

It is a mistake to blame the *goondas*[1]. They never do mischief unless we create an atmosphere for them. I was eye witness to what happened in Bombay on the Prince's day in 1921.[2] We sowed the seed and the *goondas* reaped the harvest. Our men were at their back. I have no hesitation in holding the respectable Mussalmans (not all in any single case) responsible for the misdeeds in Multan, Saharanpur and elsewhere, as I have none in holding respectable Hindus responsible for the misdeeds in Katarpur and Arrah. If it is true that at Palwal we have prevented the erection of a *pukka* mosque in the place of a *kachcha* one, it is not the *goondas* who arc doing it, it is the respectable Hindus who must be held accountable. We must resolutely discountenance the practice of absolving the respectable class from blame.

Therefore, I hold that Hindus will commit a grave blunder if they organize Hindu *goondas* for defence. From the frying pan they will jump into the fire. The Bania and the Brahmin must learn to defend himself even violently, if not non-violently, or surrender his womenfolk and possessions to the *goondas*. They are a class apart, whether they are labelled Mussalman or Hindu. It was said with gusto that, protected by untouchables (for they feared not death) a Hindu procession (playing triumphant music) quite recently passed a mosque unhurt.

It is a very mundane use to make of a sacred cause. Such exploitation of our untouchable brothers can serve neither Hinduism in general nor the suppressed classes in particular. A fewprocessions so doubtfully protected may pass a few mosques safely. But it can only aggravate the growing tension, and degrade Hinduism. The middle-class people must be prepared for a beating if they wish to play music in the teeth of opposition, or they must befriend Mussalmans in a self-respecting manner.

The Hindus have to do penance for the past and still continuing disabilities imposed by them upon the suppressed brothers. There can be no question of expecting any return from them for a debt we owe them. If we use them to cover our cowardice, we shall raise in them false hopes we shall never be able to fulfil, and if the retribution comes, it will be a just punishment for our inhuman treatment of

[1] Hooligans or rowdies

[2] *Vide* "A Deep Stain", 18-11-1921.

them. If I have any influence with Hindus, I would beseech them not to use them as a shield against anticipated Mussalman attack.

GROWING DISTRUST

Another potent cause of the tension is the growing distrust even among the best of us. I have been warned against Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji. He is suspected of secret motives. It is said that he is no friend of the Mussalmans. He is even credited with being jealous of my influence. I have the privilege of knowing him intimately ever since my return to India in 1915. I have had the privilege of closest communion with him. I regard him as one of the best among Hindus who, though orthodox, holds most liberal views. He is no enemy of Mussalmans. He is incapable of jealousy of anyone. He has a heart large enough to accommodate even his enemies. He has never aimed at power. And what he has is due to a long period of unbroken service of the motherland, such as very few of us can boast. He and I are temperamentally different, but-love each other like brothers. There never has been even so much as a jar between us. Our ways being different, there can be no question of rivalry, therefore, of jealousy either.

Another one distrusted is Lala Lajpat Rai. I have found him to be frank as a child. His record of sacrifice is almost unequalled. I have had not one but many a chat on the Hindu-Muslim question with him. He is no enemy of the Mussalmans. But I confess that he has his doubts about the immediate attainment of unity. He is seeking light from on High. He believes in that unity in spite of himself because, as he told me, he believes in swaraj. He recognizes that without that unity there can be no swaraj. He only does not know how and when it can be attained. He likes my solution, but he doubts if the Hindus will understand and appreciate its nobility (as he calls it). Let me say in passing I do not call my solution noble. I hold it to be strictly just and the only feasible solution.

Swami Shraddhanandji is also distrusted. His speeches, I know, are often irritating. But even he wants Hindu-Muslim unity. Unfortunately, he believes in the possibility of bringing every Muslim into the Aryan fold, just as perhaps most Mussalmans think that every non-Muslim will some day become a convert to. Islam. Shraddhanandji is intrepid and brave. Single-handed he turned a wilderness into a magnificent boarding college on the banks of the sacred Ganges. He has faith in himself and his mission. But he is hasty and easily ruffled.

He inherits the traditions of the Arya Samaj. I have profound respect for Dayanand Saraswati[1]. I think that he has rendered great service to Hinduism. His bravery was unquestioned. But he made his Hinduism narrow. I have read *Satyarth Prakash,* the Arya Samaj Bible. Friends sent me three copies of it whilst I was resting in the Yeravda Jail. I have not read a more disappointing book from a reformer so great. He has claimed to stand for truth and nothing else. But he has unconsciously misrepresented Jainism, Islam, Christianity and Hinduism itself. One having even a cursory acquaintance with these faiths could easily discover the errors into which the great reformer was betrayed. He has tried to make narrow one of the most tolerant and liberal of the faiths on the face of the earth. And an iconoclast though he was, he has succeeded in enthroning idolatry in the subtlest form. For he has idolized the letter of the Vedas and tried to prove the existence in the Vedas of everything known to science. The Arya Samaj flourishes, in my humble opinion, not because of the inherent merit of the teachings of *Satyarth Prakash,* but because of the grand and lofty character of the founder. Wherever you find Arya Samajists, there is life and energy. But, having the narrow outlook and a pugnacious habit, they either quarrel with people of other denominations or failing that, with one another. Shraddhanandji has a fair share of that spirit. But, in spite of all these drawbacks, I do not regard him as past praying for. It is possible that this sketch of the Arya Samaj and the Swamiji will anger them. Needless to say, I mean no offence. I love the Samajists, for I have many co-workers from among them. And I learnt to love the Swamiji, even while I was in South Africa. And though I know him better now, I love him no less. It is my love that has spoken.

The last among the Hindus against whom I have been warned are Jeramdas and Dr. Choithram. I swear by Jeramdas. Truer men I have not had the honour of meeting. His conduct in the jail was the envy of us all. He was true to a fault. He is not anti-Mussalman. Dr. Choithram, though I began to know him earlier, I do not know so well. But from what I do know of him, I decline to think of him as anything but a promoter of Hindu-Muslim unity. I have by no means exhausted the list. All I feel is that, if all these Hindus and Samajists have still to be won over to the side of unity, the word unity has no

[1] 1824-83; founder of the Arya Samaj

meaning for me. And I should despair of achieving unity in my lifetime.

BARI SAHEB

But the suspicion against these friends is not its worst part. I have been warned against Mussalmans just as much as I have been warned against Hindus. Let me take only three names. Maulana Abdul Bari Saheb[1] has been represented to me as an anti-Hindu fanatic. I have been shown some writings of his which I do not understand. I have not even worried him about them. For, he is a simple child of God. I have discovered no guile in him. He often speaks without thinking and often embarrasses his best friends. But he is as quick to apologize as he is ready to say things offensive. He means all he says for the time being. He is as sincere in his anger as he is in his apology. He once flared up at Maulana Mahomed Ali without just cause. I was then his guest. He thought he had said something offensive to me also. Maulana Mahomed Ali and I were just then leaving his place to entrain for Cawnpore. After our departure, he felt he had wronged us. He had certainly wronged Maulana Mahomed Ali, not me. But he sent a deputation to us at Cawnpore asking us to forgive him. He rose in my estimation by this act. I admit, however, that the Maulana Saheb can become a dangerous friend. But my point is that he is a friend. He does not say one thing and mean another. There are no mental reservations with him. I would trust such a friend with my life, because I know that he will never stab me in the dark.

THE ALI BROTHERS

A similar warning has been given to me about the Ali Brothers, Maulana Shaukat Ali[2] is one of the bravest of men, capable of immense sacrifice and equally capable of loving the meanest of God's creatures. He is passionately fond of Islam, but he is no hater of other religions. Mahomed Ali is his brother's *alter ego.* I have not seen such implicit faithfulness to an elder brother as in Maulana Mahomed Ali. He has reasoned out for himself that there is no salvation for India without Hindu-Muslim unity. Their pan-Islam ism is not anti-Hindu. Who shall quarrel with their intense desire to see Islam united against attack from without and purified from within? One passage in Maulana Mahomed Ali's Cocanada address was pointed

[1] 1838-1926; nationalist Muslim leader of Lucknow who played an active role in the Khilafat movement

[2] 1873-1938; nationalist Muslim politician; took a leading part in the Khilafat movement

out to me as highly objectionable. I drew his attention to it. He immediately acknowledged that it was an error. Friends have told me there is something to object to even in Maulana Shaukat Ali's address to the Khilafat Conference. I have the address by me, but I have not had time to study it. I know that, if there is anything offensive in it, he is the man the readiest to make amends. The Brothers are not faultless. Being full of faults myself, I have not hesitated to seek and cherish their friendship. If they have some faults, they have many virtues. And I love them in spite of their faults. Just as I cannot forsake the Hindu friends I have mentioned above and effectively work among Hindus for Hindu-Muslim unity, neither can I work to that end among the Mussalmans without the Mussalman friends, such as I have mentioned. If so many of us were perfect beings, there would be no quarrels. Imperfect as we are, we have to discover points of contact and, with faith in God, work away for the common end.

In order to purify the atmosphere of distrust of even the best of us, I had to deal with some of the principal characters. I may not have convinced the reader of the correctness of my estimate. Anyway, it was necessary that he knew mine even if his was different from it.

ILLUSTRATION FROM SIND

This intense distrust makes it almost impossible to know the truth. I have received from Dr. Choithram the alleged facts of an attempted forcible conversion of a Hindu in Sind. The man is said to have been done to death by his Mussalman companions because he will not accept Islam. The facts are ghastly if they are true. I straightway wired to Sheth Haji Abdulla Harun inquiring about the matter. He very kindly and promptly wired to say that it was reported to be a case of suicide, but that he was making further inquiries. I hope that we shall succeed in knowing the truth about it. I simply point out the difficulty of work in the midst of suspicion. There is one other Sind incident which I hesitate to report till I have fuller and more authentic particulars. I simply beseech those who hear about any such incidents, whether against Hindus or Mussalmans, to keep themselves cool and pass on simply facts which can be sustained. I promise on my part to inquire into the most trifling of cases and do whatever is possible for a single individual to do. Before long, I hope, we shall have an army of workers whose one business will be to investigate all such complaints and do whatever is necessary to see that justice is satisfied and cases for future trouble are avoided.

FROM BENGAL

The tales that are reported from Bengal of outrages upon Hindu women are the most disquieting if they are even half true. It is difficult to understand the cause of the eruption of such crimes at the present moment. It is equally difficult to speak with restraint of the cowardice of Hindu protectors of these outraged sisters. Nor is it easy to characterise the lust of those who become so mad with it as to take liberties with innocent women. It is up to the local Mussalmans and the leading Mussalmans in general of Bengal to find out the miscreants, not necessarily with a view to getting them punished, but with a view to preventing a recurrence of such crimes. It is easy enough to dig out a few criminals from their hiding places and hand them over to the police, but it does not protect society against the repetition of them. It is necessary to remove the causes by under-taking a thorough process of reform. There must arise in Islam as well as in Hinduism men who, being comparatively pure in character, would work among such men. Much the same may be said of the Kabuli terror.[1] This has no bearing on the Hindu-Muslim tension. But we have to deal with such cases, too, if we are not to be helplessly relying purely upon the police.

"SHUDDHI" AND "TABLIGH"

That, however, which is keeping up the tension is the manner in which the *shuddhi* or conversion movement is being conducted. In my opinion, there is no such thing as proselytism in Hinduism as it is understood in Christianity or to a lesser extent in Islam. The Arya Samaj has, I think, copied the Christians in planning its propaganda. The modern method does not appeal to me. It has done more harm than good. Though regarded as a matter of the heart purely and one between the Maker and oneself, it has degenerated into an appeal to the selfish instinct. The Arya Samaj preacher is never so happy as when he is reviling other religions. My Hindu instinct tells me that all religions are more or less true. All proceed from the same God, but all are imperfect because they have come down to us through imperfect human instrumentality. The real *shuddhi* movement should consist in each one trying to arrive at perfection in his or her own faith. In such a plan character would be the only test. What is the use of crossing from one compartment to another, if it does not mean a moral rise? What is the meaning of my trying to convert to the service of God (for that must be the implication of *shuddhi* or *tablish*, when those who are

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 1-6-1921.

in my fold are every day denying God by their actions? “Physician, heal thyself” is more true in matters religious than mundane. But these are my views. If the Arya Samajists think that they have a call from the conscience, they have a perfect right to conduct the movement. Such a burning call recognizes no time limit, no checks of experience. If Hindu-Muslim unity is endangered because an Arya Samaj preacher or Mussalman preacher preaches his faith in obedience to a call from within, that unity is only skin-deep. Why should we be ruffled by such movements? Only they must be genuine. If the Malkanas wanted to return to the Hindu fold, they had a perfect right to do so whenever they liked. But no propaganda can be allowed which reviles other religions. For that would be negation of toleration. The best way of dealing with such propaganda is to publicly condemn it. Every movement attempts to put on the cloak of respectability. As soon as the public tear that cloak down, it dies for want of respectability. I am told that both Arya Samajists and Mussalmans virtually kidnap women and try to convert them. I have before me volumes of Aga-Khani literature which I have not yet had the time to study carefully, but I am assured that it is a distortion of Hinduism. I have seen enough of it to know that it describes H.H. the Aga Khan as a Hindu avatar. It would be interesting to learn what the Aga Khan himself thinks of all this literature. I have many Khoja friends. I commend this literature to their attention. A gentleman told me that some agents of the Aga-Khani movement lend money to poor illiterate Hindus and then tell them that the debt would be wiped out if the debtor would accept Islam. I would regard this as conversion by unlawful inducements. But the worst form is that preached by a gentleman of Delhi. I have read his pamphlet from cover to cover. It gives detailed instructions to preachers how to carry on propaganda. It starts with a lofty proposition that Islam is merely preaching of the unity of God. This grand truth is to be preached, according to the writer, by every Mussalman irrespective of character. A secret department of spies is advocated whose one business is to be to pry into the privacy of non-Muslim households. Prostitutes, professional singers, mendicants, Government servants, lawyers, doctors, artisans are pressed into the service. If this kind of propaganda becomes popular, no Hindu household would be safe from the secret attention of disguised misinterpreters (I cannot call them missionaries) of the great message of the Prophet of Islam. I am told by respectable Hindus that this pamphlet is widely read in the Nizam’s dominions and that the

methods advocated in it are extensively practised in the Nizam's dominions.

As a Hindu I feel sorry that methods of such doubtful morality should have been seriously advocated by a gentleman who is a well-known Urdu author and has a large circle of I readers. My Mussalman friends tell me that no respectable Mussalman approves of the methods advocated. The point, however, is not what the respectable Mussalmans think. The point is whether a considerable number of Mussalman masses accept and follow them. A portion of the Punjab Press is simply scurrilous. It is at times even filthy. I have gone through the torture of reading many extracts. These sheets are conducted by Arya Samajists or Hindu and Mussalman writers. Each vies with the other in using abusive language and reviling the religion of the opponent. These papers have, I understand, a fairly large circulation. They find place even in respectable reading-rooms.

I have heard it said that the Government emissaries are at the back of this campaign of calumny. I hesitate to believe it. But even assuming the truth of it, the public of the Punjab should be able to cope with the growing disgrace.

I think I have now examined all the causes, both original and continuing, of the tension between the two communities. It is now time to examine the treatment of two constant causes of friction.

COW-SLAUGHTER

The first is cow-slaughter. Though I regard cow-protection as the central fact of Hinduism, central because it is common to classes as well as masses, I have never been able to understand the antipathy towards the Mussalmans on that score. We say nothing about the slaughter that daily takes place on behalf of Englishmen. Our anger becomes red-hot when a Mussalman slaughters a cow. All the riots that have taken place in the name of the cow have been department an insane waste of effort. They have not saved a single cow, department but they have on the contrary stiffened the backs of the Mussalmans and resulted in more slaughter. I am satisfied that, during 1921 more cows were saved through the voluntary and generous effort of the Mussalmans than through the Hindu effort during all the previous twenty years (say). Cow-protection should commence with ourselves.

In no part of the world, perhaps, are cattle worse treated than in India. I have wept to see Hindu drivers goading their jaded oxen with the iron point of their cruel sticks. The half-starved condition of the majority of our cattle is a disgrace to us. The cows find their neck under the butcher's knife because Hindus sell them. The only effective and honourable way is to befriend the Mussalmans and leave it to their honour to save the cow. Cow-protection societies must turn their attention to the feeding of cattle, prevention of cruelty, preservation of the fast disappearing pasture land, improving the breed of cattle, buying from poor shepherds and turning *pinjrapoles* into model self-supporting dairies. Hindus do sin against God and man when they omit to do any of the things I have described above. They commit no sin, if they cannot prevent cow-slaughter at the hands of Mussalmans, and they do sin grievously when, in order to save the cow, they quarrel with the Mussalmans.

MUSIC

The question of music before mosques and, now, even *arati* in Hindu temples, has occupied my prayerful attention. This is a sore point with the Mussalmans as cow-slaughter is with the Hindus. And just as Hindus cannot compel Mussalmans to refrain from killing cows, so can Mussalmans not compel Hindus to stop music or *arati* at the point of the sword. They must trust to the good sense of the Hindus. As a Hindu, I would certainly advise Hindus, without any bargaining spirit, to consult the sentiment of their Mussalman neighbour, and wherever they can, accommodate him. I have heard that, in some places, Hindus purposely, and with the deliberate intention of irritating Mussalmans, perform *arati* just when the Mussalman prayers commence. This is an insensate and unfriendly act. Friendship presupposes the utmost attention to the feelings of a friend. It never requires consideration. But Mussalmans should never expect to stop Hindu music by force. To yield to the threat or actual use of violence is a surrender of one's self-respect and religious conviction. But a person, who never will yield to threat, would always minimise and, if possible, even avoid occasions for causing irritation.

PACT

In view of what I have said above, it is clear that we have not even arrived at the stage when a pact is even a possibility. There can be, it is clear to me, no question of bargain about cow-slaughter and

music. On either side it must be a voluntary effort and, therefore, can never be the basis of a pact.

For political matters, a pact or an understanding is certainly necessary. But, in my opinion, the restoration of friendly feeling is a condition precedent to any effectual pact. Are both parties sincerely willing to accept the proposition that no disputes, religious or otherwise, between the communities should ever be decided by an appeal to force, i.e., violence ? I am convinced that the masses do not want to fight, if the leaders do not. If, therefore, the leaders agree that mutual rows should be as in all advanced countries, erased out of our public life as being barbarous and irreligious, I have no doubt that the masses will quickly follow them.

So far as the political matters are concerned, as a non-co. operator I am quite uninterested in them; but, for the future understanding, I hold that it is up to the Hindus as the major party not to bargain, but leave the pen in the hands of, say, Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan and abide by his decision. I would similarly deal with the Sikhs, the Christians and the Parsis and be satisfied with the residue. It is, in my opinion, the only just, equitable, honourable and dignified solution. Hindus, if they want unity among different races, must have the courage to trust the minorities. Any other adjustment must have a nasty taste in the mouth. Surely the millions do not want to become legislators and municipal councillors. And if we have understood the proper use of satyagraha, we should know that it can be and should be used against an unjust administrator whether he be a Hindu, Mussalman or of any other race or denomination, whereas a just administrator or representative is always and equally good, whether he be a Hindu or a Mussalman. We want to do away with the communal spirit. The majority must, therefore, snake the beginning and thus inspire the minorities with confidence in their *bona fides*. Adjustment is possible only when the more powerful take the initiative without waiting for response from the weaker.

So far as employment in the Government departments is concerned, I think it will be fatal to good governments if we introduce there the communal spirit. For administration to be efficient, it must always be in the hands of the fittest. There should be certainly no favouritism. But, if we want five engineers, we must not take one from each community, but we must take the fittest five even if they were all Mussalmans or all Parsis. The lowest posts must, if need be, be filled

by examination by an impartial board consisting of men belonging to different communities. But, distribution of posts should never be according to the proportion of the numbers of each community. The educationally backward communities will have a right to receive favoured treatment in the matter of education at the hands of the national government. This can be secured in an effective manner. But those who aspire to occupy responsible posts in the Government of the country can only do so if they pass the required test.

TRUST BEGETS TRUST

For me the only question for immediate solution before the country is the Hindu-Mussalman question. I agree with Mr. Jinnah that Hindu-Muslim unity means swaraj. I see no way of achieving anything in this afflicted country without a lasting heart unity between Hindus and Mussalmans of India. I believe in the immediate possibility of achieving it, because it is so natural, so necessary for both, and because I believe in human nature. Mussalmans may have much to answer for. I have come in closest touch with even what may be considered a "bad lot". I cannot recall a single occasion when I had to regret it. The Mussalmans are brave, they are generous and trusting the moment their suspicion is disarmed. Hindus, living as they do in glass houses, have no right to throw stones at their Mussalman neighbours. See what we have done, are still doing, to the suppressed classes! If 'Kaffir' is a term of opprobrium, how much more so is *Chandal*? In the history of the world religions there is perhaps nothing like our treatment of the suppressed classes. The pity of it is that the treatment still continues. What a fight in Vaikom for a most elementary human right![1] God does not punish directly; His ways are inscrutable. Who knows that all our woes are not due to that one black sin? The history of Islam, if it betrays aberrations from the moral height, has many a brilliant page. In its glorious days it was not intolerant. It commanded the admiration of the world. When the West was sunk in darkness, a bright star rose in the Eastern firmament and gave light and comfort to a groaning world. Islam is not a false religion. Let Hindus study it reverently and they will love it even as I do. If it has become gross and fanatical here, let us admit that we have had no small share in making it so. If Hindus set their house in order, I have not a shadow of doubt that Islam will respond in a manner

[1] *Vide* "Letter to K. P. Kesava Menon", 19-3-1924.

worthy of its liberal traditions. The key to the situation lies with the Hindus. We must shed timidity or cowardice. We must be brave enough to trust, all will be well.

The readers of *Young India* will pardon me for devoting practically the whole of *Young India* to the question of Hindu-Muslim unity. He will readily do so if he holds with me that there is no question more important and more pressing than this. In my opinion, it blocks all progress. I therefore invite the reader to peruse the statement most carefully and favour me with views or information (not necessarily for publication) that may throw additional light on the question or correct any errors of fact or opinion.

Young India, 29-5-1924

31. CONGRESS ORGANIZATION

As I have said in my statement to the Press[1] on the question of Council-entry, it is not complete without an examination, in the light of my views, of the working of the Congress organization. The difference between the Swarajists and myself is honest and vital. I believe that the frank recognition of honest differences will accelerate the country's progress, as a patched-up compromise designed to hide differences would have retarded it. Each party is now free to give the fullest play to its views unhampered by any consideration save that of common cause.

It is, therefore, necessary to consider the way the Congress organization is to be worked. It is clear to me that it cannot be jointly worked just as a government cannot be jointly and efficiently carried on by two parties with opposite views. I hold the boycott of titles, etc., to be an absolutely integral part of the Congress programme. The boycott has two objects: first, to persuade those who hold titles etc., to give them up; secondly, to keep the Congress pure from the influence of the institutions boycotted. If the first had been immediately successful, we should have attained our goal at once. But the second is equally necessary, if we are ever to reach our goal through the programme of non-violent non-co-operation. For me the boycott is national so long as the National Congress enforces it in its own organization. It cannot undermine the influence, the glamour and the prestige of Government institutions, if it cannot be run without the

[1] *Vide* "Statement to Associated Press of India", 22-5-1924.

presence in it, as administrators, of title-holders, lawyers, schoolmasters and councillors who represent, as it were, the voluntary branch of the Government administration. The idea running behind the programme of non-co-operation was that if we could honestly, non-violently and successfully work the Congress organization without such influence, and, nay, even in spite of it, that fact by itself would be enough to give us swaraj Our numerical superiority is so great that an effective boycott carried out by the national organization must make the Congress an irresistible power. It follows, therefore, that the executive organization of the Congress must not contain titled persons, Government schoolmasters, practising lawyers and members of legislative bodies and persons who use foreign cloth or cloth manufactured even in our mills, and those who deal in such cloth. Such persons can become Congressmen, but cannot and should not become members of executive organizations. They can become delegates and influence the Congress resolutions, but once the Congress policy is fixed, those who do no. believe in that policy, in my opinion, should stand out of the executive bodies. The All-India Congress Committee and all the local executive committees are such bodies; and they should contain only those members who whole-heartedly believe in and are prepared to carry out the policy. I am The author of the introduction into the Congress organization of the system of single transferable votes. But experience has shown that, so far as the executive organizations are concerned, it cannot work. The idea that all opinions should be represented on these bodies must be abandoned if the executive committees are to become bodies for the purpose of carrying out the Congress policy for the time being.

One of the most important reasons why we have not been wholly successful is that the members of these executive bodies have not believed even in the Congress creed. I stand where I did when I wrote my impressions of the All-India Congress Committee, which met at Delhi soon after the Bardoli resolutions were passed by the Working Committee.[1] I saw then as clearly as possible that many members, if not indeed the majority, did not believe in non-violence and truth as an integral part of the Congress creed. They would not allow that 'peaceful' meant 'non-violent' and that 'legitimate' meant

[1] For the Bardoli resolutions of February 12, the A. I. C. C. resolution of February 25, and Gandhiji's comments, *vide* "Telegram to Devdas Gandhi", 9-2-1922, "Speech to Congress Workers, Bardoli", 10-2-1922, "Working Committee's Resolutions at Bardoli", 12-2-1922, "Resolution at A. I. C. C. Meeting, Delhi", 25-2-1922 & "The All-India Congress Committee", 2-3-1922.

truthful'. I know that today there is more of the violent and the untruthful spirit in us than we had in February 1922. I would, therefore, urge that those who do not believe in the five boycotts and non-violence and truthfulness should resign from the Congress executive bodies. This is why I have said in my statement on the Council-entry that the cons-tructive programme should be worked by different parties through their respective organizations. The thorough believers, if there are any, in the five boycotts and non-violence and truth, have no organization other than the Congress. The most natural thing, in my opinion, there-fore, is for the Swarajists to work the constructive Programme through their own organizations. So far as I can see,. their method of working must be different from that of the boycotters. If they are to make the Council-entry successful, they must devote the whole of their energy to that purpose, and, therefore, they can kelp the constru-ctive progr-amme by working it mainly through the Councils and the Assembly.

I for one can be no party to a tug of war in which each party tries to capture the Congress executive. That war may be fought out if at all necessary without heat and bitterness at the forthcoming session in December. The Congress is the debating and legislative body. The permanent organizations are purely executive bodies to give effect to the resolutions of the Congress. I am in a desperate hurry. I believe implicitly in the full and undiluted non-violent non-co-operation programme as passed by the Congress and no other. If I can get really non-violent and truthful workers who share my belief in the boycotts, in the potency of khaddar, in Hindu-Muslim unity and in removal of untouchability, I would again feel swaraj coming to us much quicker than most of us think possible. But if we wrangle on in the All-India Congress Committee, we can only discredit and obstruct one another. Each party honourably and without jealousy and ill will working separately (because they cannot do otherwise) can help one another.

I trust that all the members of the All-India Congress Committee will attend the forthcoming meeting. If we can discuss the plan of action in a calm manner without imputing motives and make the composition of the All-India Congress Committee homogeneous, we can do a tremendous amount of work during the forthcoming six months. I would respectfully invite each member to consider for himself or herself where he or she is in respect of the programme. If they do not believe in the programme as it is and in its capacity

unaided to secure swaraj, and if they really voice the feelings of their electors, I would not hesitate to advise the Committee even to take the risk of revising and radically altering the programme in anticipation of endorsement next year. No doubt for such a drastic change there must be a clearly made-out case, there must be real public opinion behind it. Granted these two conditions, I have no doubt that, in spite of anything to the contrary in the constitution, it is the duty of the All-India Congress Committee to reverse the Congress policy at the risk of incurring condemnation and show useful and substantial work at the end of the year. Stagnation must be avoided at all cost.

After I had finished the foregoing, it was pointed out to me that it was possible that my views might tend to make Swarajists appear weaker than or infer or to the No-changers in the estimation of the masses. Nothing can be further from my thought than any such idea. There is no question of quality. It is purely a question of temperamental differences. I have written simply with an eye to effective working of the Congress executives. That working is possible only if the executives arc run only by one party. If the Swarajists' view is more popular, the executive bodies should be solely in their hands. The Congress must always represent the popular view whatever it may be, whether good or bad. And it is the duty of those who hold contrary views, not necessarily weak or inferior, to stand out and work on the popular mind from outside. The No-changers will be belying their trust if they regard Pro-changers as in any way inferior to them by reason of their holding different views.

It has been further pointed out to me that, in arguing for exclusive control of the executives, I am departing from the spirit, if not the letter, of the Delhi resolution reaffirmed at Cocanada. I have read both the resolutions carefully. In my opinion, the Delhi resolution and, more specially the Cocanada resolution, does not contemplate joint control of the executives. The Cocanada resolution is not a mere reaffirmation, but it emphasizes the principle of non-violent non-co-operation. But even if my reading of the resolutions is incorrect, my argument remains unimpaired. Mine is only an opinion to be accepted or rejected by the members of the A.I.C.C. And it is actuated by the sole consideration of expeditious working. I feel that both the parties can effectively help each other only if they work separately.

Young India, 29-5-1924

32. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

[After *May 29, 1924*][1]

CHI. MANI,

Wasn't it nice of you to have come yesterday and gone away?[2] And now you send me a message! A patient has the right to change her mind as often as she pleases; she cannot be bound by any promises. So you are free not to come. And you are also free to come if you feel like it. I only want you to get well somehow or other.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MANLBEHN PATEL
KHAMASA CHOWKI
AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-Manibehn Patelne, p. 20

33. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

ASHRAM,
Friday [*May 30, 1924*][3]

MY DEAR OLD YOUNG MAN,

It is a wonderful thing you are doing. I receive letters from you. Whenever anyone from your family meets me, my eyes are filled with tears of joy. Whatever expectations I have of you you fulfil. When I have no expectation, you do something which, you think, would please me. I only made a joke ; but you presented me with a beautiful Gujarati letter. How can I desist from sharing it with the readers of *Navajivan*? Get somebody to read *Navajivan* to you.

The invitations for Amina's[4] marriage have been despatched by

[1] The letter seems to have been written from Sabarmati Ashram which Gandhiji reached on May 29, 1924.

[2] The addressee had come and gone away without seeing Gandhiji as he was asleep at the time.

[3] The article on the addressee was published in *Navajivan*, under the subheading 'Old Young Man' in "My Notes", 1-6-1924. The Friday preceding that date fell on May 30.

[4] Daughter of Imam Saheb Bawazeer, who was married on May 31, 1924

many hands. I first put your name on the list and then struck it off. If the invitation were sent to you, it would only mean that some money was expected from you. I did send invitations to a few Gujarati [Hindus] just to show how the daughter of a Mussalman was also my own. But I do not expect even their presence at the marriage ceremony. Certainly, no money can be accepted from them. I have incurred some expenditure because. I have to give with my own hand Amina, the daughter of a Mussalman, in marriage and because Imam Saheb would also wish it. I would not incur any expenditure if a Hindu girl was to be given in marriage by me. I sent you the invitation for you to see.

Mrs. Abbas, Rehana and others see me quite often.

If you find it difficult to read my handwriting or to write Gujarati, you may write, and ask me also to write, in English.

I wouldn't destroy the very roots of a tree which bears sweet fruit.

Your bother,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[PS.]

I shall tell Imam Saheb about your letter. As for sending money, please don't.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original. S.N. 9546

34. INTERVIEW TO " SWATANTRYA" [1]

[SABARMATI,
May 30, 1924]

Q. Mahatmaji, did you agree with Dr. Mahmud's statement which you have published in the *Young India* article to the effect that not a single case has been proved wherein Hindus have been forcibly converted by Moplahs, as can be conclusively seen from Hindu evidence itself?

A. I wish you had read my article rather carefully. I have simply given Dr. Mahmud's view and not my own.

Q. That is why I am asking your opinion. When you have thought it fit to

[1] The special correspondent of *Swatantrya*, a Hindi daily of Nagpur, had an interview with Gandhiji at Sabarmati Ashram on May 30 and June 3 to ascertain his views on the Hindu-Muslim question and the general political situation. The composite report has been split up and presented here in chronological sequence.

publish Dr. Mahmud's view, why did you not publish the views of Dr. Moonje and Deodhar of the Servants of India Society at the same time?

A. I don't know what Dr. Moonje has written about Malabar. Dr. Mahmud personally assured me that his view has been supported by Hindus in Malabar. How is it that you found only this remarkable omission in my article? My comments that every Mohammedan is by nature a vagabond and that sometimes Maulana Bari Saheb may become a dreadful friend are bound to create a sensation among the people. The same is the case with the Arya Samaj. I have read the *Satyarth Prakash* thrice but was sorely disappointed.

Q. I am afraid I have to talk to you, Mahatmaji, on other topics as well. But I shall do that some other time.[1]

A. Certainly, I want you to speak out plainly whatever is troubling your heart without reservation. I must write what I consider right. You are anxiously waiting for the grant of provincial autonomy. But I want more than that. The Government will give up its attitude of indifference towards me and become terrified if I were to undertake an all-India tour for six months in connection with this Hindu-Muslim question.

The Hindu, 12-6-1924

35. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*May 31, 1924*][2]

I have your letter. I hope your sister is now all right. I revised the translation of ''*Brahmacharya*'' [3] in the train itself. There was not a single mistake. However, I have made changes in some places. I have decided to print it. The article about Visnagar is still there. I intend revising that also. Did I have any difficulty in waking up?[4] Here I am enjoying pretty good quiet. I observe silence till 1 p.m. and so can dispose of a good deal of work. have yet to write for *Navajivan*. I

[1] *Vide* ''Interview to *Swatantrya*'', 3-6-1924.

[2] The postmark carries this date.

[3] For the text of the article, *vide* "Brahmacharya", 25-5-1924.

[4] It seems the addressee went to the railway station to see Gandhiji when the latter travelled from Bombay to Ahmedabad on the night of May 28.

have not even touched it. I begin my silence between six and seven in the morning.

Narahari came here yesterday.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Saturday

I got your second letter just now. Bachu may be saved if she is bathed in water with potassium permanganate. Smallpox is curable no doubt. But about your thoughts after you left. . . .[1]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV DESAI
C/O STATION MASTER, BULSAR

From a photostat or Gujarati original: S.N. 8844

36. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD,
May 31, 1924

Questioned if, in view of his article in the *Young India* on the Congress organization,[2] a split in the Congress was not a certainty, Mr. Gandhi replied:

It all depends on what you mean by split. If you mean parties, yes. Both parties came into being at the Gaya Congress. The House of Commons contains many parties, but you do not call their existence a split in the English nation. Congress will now contain two parties, but will have no split, I hope. Just as the popular party in the House of Commons is always in power, so should the most popular Congress party be in power in the national organization. Just as Liberals do not and dare not regard Conservatives or Labourites as their inferiors, so may the No-changers and vice versa. My suggestion attempts at least to avoid a split and provides the most favourable atmosphere for efficiency, even if it does not ensure it. I do not believe in coalition government at any time, but certainly not when there are vital differences of opinion or, if you will, different mentalities, making for different and diametrically opposite courses of action.

Asked what he thought would be its effect upon the Government and whether it

[1] The sentence abruptly ends here.
[2] *Vide* "Congress Organization", 29-5-1924.

was likely to destroy all chances of expected advance in Reforms, Mr. Gandhi said:

I do not think it will. I know it has been suggested that the Government would have trembled if I had made common cause with the Pro-changers. I hold a totally opposite view. Those who are responsible for the conduct of the Government of India are not fools. They are clever and wide awake. They know that all real pressure that is exerted upon them is from No-changers, because they dread civil disobedience. The organization for civil disobedience is possible only by those who devote their whole time and attention to it. The Government will certainly chuckle if the No-changers and Pro-changers obstruct one another. I shall be no party to any such thing and I do not think the two parties will [be] either. They both want swaraj and that at the earliest possible moment. Each will, therefore, ill its own way work for it. The Non-co-operators gave Liberals, whether they admit the fact or not, prestige with the Government. The pressure in the country, outside the Councils, of a forward party must always help reformers. I make bold to say that, if the complete-boycotters died out, the Councilwallahs will have a bad time in the Council, always assuming that violence will never be popular in the country. All autocratic governments must dread the rise of popular power, especially when it is disciplined and peaceful. The present Government dreads the incoming Hindu-Muslim unity, and if the khaddar programme ever becomes successful, as it must, it will confound them the most. It will convert the Government to the popular view and bring about the most peaceful revolution the world has: ever seen.

The Hindu, 2-6-1924

37. HINDUS AND MUSLIMS OF VISNAGAR

I have received a whole heap of letters on this subject. The fact that the correspondents themselves do not expect these letters to be published proves their generosity, and also their approval of the policy I have adopted in running *Navajivan*. I would certainly not publish letters attacking anyone. I would also not publish anything which would create bitterness between the two communities. I could not set down even a single word in hatred. If I wrote about the communal disharmony in Visnagar, it was only to try and pacify the two communities and to point out to them what their dharma towards each other should be.

If we look at the matter from this point of view, it is not at all necessary to publish any of the letters which I have received. I had one from Shri Mahasukhbhai many days ago and did not publish it, as I did not like to do so. However, I had agreed to publish it if there was the slightest feeling that I had been unjust intentionally or otherwise. Meanwhile, I find from other letters and from replies to Shri Mahasukhbhai's letter which I have received that the letter in question has been published in other newspapers. This being so, it is not necessary to publish it here even in order to be fair to him.

To do justice to the correspondent who had informed me, I should mention that it was I who used the word "beast" instead of "cows and bulls". The correspondent himself had used these words. Thinking that there might be some exaggeration, I used the more general term instead of a more specific word. The latter was not necessary for my argument.

From other letters which I have received, I find that Shri Mahasukhbhai is on good terms with the Muslims. Let us all hope that utilizing that friendly relation, he will bring about harmony between the two communities and end the discord in Visnagar I have, before me, letters by"white-capped gentry" in which they defend themselves. I also have letters accusing them. The ''white-capped gentry" or others who have done nothing wrong have no need to defend themselves. One's actions are one's defence. Any. one whose actions are blameless puts up with accusations, as he has faith in the truth that the light shed by good actions cannot be hidden for long by-the cloud of accusations. Hence the "white-capped gentry" should have no fear if they have indeed done nothing unworthy; if, however, they have done some wrong thing, they should frankly admit the fact and, by way of atonement, refrain from acting in such manner in future. I have never believed that all who wear white caps are good men. Moreover, people have not yet come to love khadi well enough. When the use of khadi becomes universal and people using mill-made cloth are a rare sight, both the millionaire and the thief will be in white caps. Eating, drinking and wearing clothes are common to both the saint and the sinner. It is desirable, therefore, that those who wear white caps and society in general stop believing that the former have a monopoly of virtue.

A translation of my article in *Young India*[1] about Hindus and Muslims has already been published in *Navajivan*. I request every Hindu and Muslim who desires harmony to read it carefully. Among the letters referred to above, there is one from a Muslim friend. It is possible that he too wrote it with the intention of getting it published in all papers. Whether it is published or not, I confess that I find no evidence of objectivity in it. I do not believe that the letters I have received from Hindus contain perfect truth. This Muslim brother, however, claims to be objective and says that he has investigated the matter and presented only what he thought was the truth. But either he is very credulous or the Muslims of Visnagar have been able to hide the truth completely from him. So long as it remains our nature to try to pass ourselves off as innocent even when we are guilty, the evil in us will never leave. The attempt to conceal our guilt suggests a desire to cling to our evil. There can be no true understanding in such circumstances. Anyone, whether Hindu or Muslim, who tries to shield his guilt, brings shame upon his religion. A religious person very frankly admits his fault and this is what pleases God, by whatever name you know Him. It should be our general way to make much of our own faults and overlook those of others. This is nobility. But these days we behave in the opposite way. We magnify to the size of an elephant another's fault which is as tiny as a speck of dust, while our own fault, as big as an elephant, seems so tiny that we need a magnifying glass to see it.

I do not wish to say anything here just now to the Hindus and Muslims of Visnagar, but they must know that I have not for a moment stopped thinking about the disputes between them. At present, I am not in a position to undertake a Journey. I shall, however, certainly try to send over someone else. Maulana Mahomed

Ali has told me that the Hindus and Muslims of Baroda State know him well and that he is confident he can settle the dispute by himself. If, therefore, I find it necessary, I shall most certainly request him to go. But I hope that the Hindus and Muslims of Visnagar will make a sincere attempt and settle their disputes, that by making it unnecessary for any outsider to go there, they will set an example to other places where there are similar disputes. Such perfect conditions

[1] *Vide* "Hindus and Muslims", 4-5-1924.

should prevail in the country—and they will prevail—that a weak Hindu will be protected by Muslims and a weak Muslim by Hindus.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-6-1924

38. MY NOTES

YOUNG OLD MAN

The reader will be glad to know that Abbas Saheb is not the person to remain unmoved by my pleasant digs at him. All Gujaratis know that he knows Gujarati. He has now started writing letters to me in Gujarati. I give below a specimen of his writing.[1]

I have put his Gujarati before readers without any corrections. The reader knows that I myself commit many mistakes. "Summit-dweller" points out that I commit them still. I feel ashamed when I see some of them. However, as I myself commit plenty of mistakes, Abbas Saheb's Gujarati, full of mistakes as it is, is very much dearer to me than his faultless English. Just as I do not intend to give up writing in Gujarati because of my mistakes, similarly, Abbas Saheb may, if he wishes, learn to avoid the mistakes which he makes, but should continue to write in Gujarati and so awaken in other Gujaratis pride in their own language. The word *pustak*[2] used by him sounds very sweet to me. However, even if he does not read other Gujarati books, we hope that henceforth he will certainly read *Navajivan*. I intend to publish in *Navajivan* in a few days the list of my mistakes prepared by that "Summit dweller", mistakes which make me feel ashamed of myself, and then Abbas Saheb will have no reason to feel ashamed of his mistakes. He will, moreover, read *Navajivan*, correcting my mistakes as he reads on, and so will learn to write relatively correct Gujarati. The persons who attend on Abbas Saheb should persuade him to let them read out *Navajivan* to him.

He has also mentioned another thing which should be a source of inspiration to Gujaratis and to all Indians. "Dear Sir, you have spread my fame throughout India as an 'old man'. I look upon myself as a 'young man'." This old man will not concede that he is old even if he is given a mirror to look into, for he is young at heart.

[1] The passage is not translated here.

[2] Book

Those who accompany him in his wanderings have told me that, though they get tired, old. Abbas Saheb does not! A person who can work harder than a young man is young indeed, though he may be advanced in years. If a young man who does not have a single grey hair nor one loose tooth keeps idle and does not serve the country, he is certainly an old man. We should hope that India will have many young old men like Abbas Saheb.

"THERE IS NO ENTHUSIASM"

Under this heading, Shri Mohanlal Pandya has written the following letter[1] to admit his error[2]:

Anna's heart will certainly be gladdened on reading this letter, and we should also hope that people will start using the national language, as far as possible, when conducting the affairs of the nation. Let me point out an easy method for the student of Hindi. If possible, he should go through a simple book on grammar. I think a "Hindi-Gujarati Teacher" is now available If this is so, a copy should be bought. He should also read *Hindi Navajivan*. If anyone sees in this recommendation of mine the partiality of an editor, let him read some other Hindi paper. Thirdly, he should read an annotated edition of Tulsi *Ramayana*. Anyone would be a gainer by reading the *Ramayana* even for the hundredth time. The commentary is mostly in simple Hindi. There will be no difficulty whatsoever if one reads nothing besides this. One need not worry if one makes mistakes while speaking Hindi. Making them, one learns to correct them. The advice not to worry about mistakes is not intended for the idle but for workers like me, who are diligent in learning the language. In speaking Hindi, one should use very few Sanskrit words; one should, instead, use a mixture of simple Hindi words and simple Urdu ones so that the language would be understood by both Hindus and Muslims. I describe the language resulting from such impartial mixing of words as Hindustani.

Shri Mohanlal Pandya, while atoning for his error, has taken upon himself to atone for other things too. Sometimes, my articles may be found to contain expressions of despair. These, however, are intended to create hope for better things. A labourer or worker ("a servant of India" is too big an expression; while commenting on Shri

[1] The letter is not translated here.

[2] In sending Harihar Sharma, who was known as Anna, an invitation in English.

Mohanlal's letter, the pen automatically writes the words "labourer" and "worker") should not worry about others. We need not be judges of the whole world. We should not even think of others around us doing nothing. To become enthusiastic means to be filled with steam. Just as, by filling an engine with steam and then letting it off or stopping it as one may desire, we can control the speed of a train, similarly, if we can preserve this steam generated in this bodily machine of ours and then use it when occasion requires, we can speed fast with the burden that may have fallen' to our share. If we but go on working to the best of our own capacity, without shirking or delaying the smallest task, we would follow the example of Janaka[1], who said about Mithila[2] that he cared little whether it was consumed by fire or remained safe. If every worker of Gujarat goes on with the tasks in his chosen field, with his eyes closed, swaraj will be at our doorstep. No Mama, Anna, Kaka or any such other "relations", old or young, will then be able to criticize him. Likewise, Shri Laxmidas[3] will have nothing to say against the man or woman who spends all his or her spare time in-working on the spinning-wheel and producing uniform—neither too thick nor too thin—well-twisted yarn; he will actually-bow to him or her. Yarn is the life-thread of the country. "God holds me with a slender thread and I turn in whichever direction He pulls me." Mira[4] knew this thread because she was filled with love. If she had not been a skilled spinner, how could she have given the beautiful simile of a thread to the bond of love uniting her with Lord Krishna! The Goddess, Mother India, wishes to tie us with that same thread and free us from slavery.

MILL-MADE KHADI

A large number of men and children came to see me on Thursday. As usual, I jokingly asked those whom I saw dressed in mill-made cloth, why they did not wear khadi. The reply was, "Aren't we dressed in khadi?" I felt abashed. I looked more closely. My doubt increased. I then felt the garment with my hands and said that the cloth was not khadi. Their reply was, that it certainly was khadi, mill-made khadi. I became serious. I realized the difficulties which

[1] Philosopher king of Videha
[2] Capital of Videha
[3] Laxmidas Asar, a follower of Gandhiji
[4] Mirabai, medieval saint-poetess of Rajasthan

still stand in the way of popularizing khadi. I told these friends that by khadi was meant handspun and hand-woven cloth, and that there could be no such thing as mill-made khadi. These gentlemen confessed their ignorance and vowed that thenceforth they would exclusively use khadi, i.e., cloth woven by hand from hand-spun yarn.

On the same day, some Punjabi friends came to see me. I saw that they had a length of jean cloth with them. I asked them what it was. They handed over the cloth to me. I saw on it the words "Swadeshi Cloth Mark" stamped in sky blue. On further inquiry, I was told that large quantities of such material were being sold as khadi. How are we to deal with such fraudulent practices? This is a difficult problem and cannot be discussed just now. Here it may only be suggested that leaflets explaining what is meant by khadi should be brought out and distributed everywhere. Volunteers should very politely put this leaflet into the hands of all persons who are not clad in khadi. Description of khadi should be written out on large wooden boards and big leaders, not hired men, should parade the streets wearing these. When I am in a position to undertake tours, I shall be ready to enlist my name among such workers. While I remain in Ahmedabad, I am ready to move every day for one hour in the city market carrying such boards. It will be two months before I can do this. Meanwhile, the practice can be started right now. I give here a draft of the legend. Anyone with more experience in propaganda work is welcome to make improvements in it.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS, BEWARE!

> By khadi is meant cloth woven by hand from hand-spun yarn. Some merchants pass off as mill-khadi or swadeshi khadi cloth made from mill-spun yarn. Such cloth does not serve our purpose. Those who really wish to see that the poor do not starve should wear nothing but genuine khadi.

Such or similar posters can also be stuck on walls. What the Municipality here can do in this matter, it is for Vallabhbhai to decide.

SATYAGRAHA IN KENYA

A correspondent from Mombasa writes as follows:[1]

This last statement cannot be correct. If everyone is imprisoned, the authorities are bound to feed them. However, persons in police

[1] The letter is not translated here.

custody are free to get food from outside. The statement above can only mean that the Satyagrahis in Kenya have been getting food from outside under this rule.

When we read about these persons who have been imprisoned, we realize how far we have progressed. Ten years ago, we used to get excited when we received news of our countrymen having been imprisoned in this manner; today we do not think about these prisoners as we have become accustomed to jail hardships. We have realized that there can be no happiness without voluntary suffering. So far as the Satyagrahis of Kenya are concerned, I regard their im-prisonment as a training in suffering. There is little possibility of their hardships ending merely through their imprisonment. They will have to undergo more suffering than this, or wait till India has won swaraj. There is no need to despair so long as they have spirit enough to offer satyagraha. Should it take long for them to reach the goal, they should conclude that their Satyagraha is half-hearted. If they are strong enough, there are many other laws, besides that imposing the poll-tax, which they can decide to break in a peaceful manner. Is there any man-made law which a person is bound to obey when he is denied the right to own land, to live with self-respect and to vote? Where the aim of the government is to hold down the whole society or a section of it, is that society or that section bound to obey any law promulgated by it? When the purpose behind a law is to stop the progress of society, it becomes the latter's duty to violate man-made law. Hence, no external power can restrain the Indians of Kenya. They can free themselves from their bonds any time they wish to do so. I assume that no Indian in Kenya who happens to read this article will take any hasty step. Not everyone gets the right to offer civil disobedience. He alone who has always obeyed the laws of his own free will can deliberately violate a law when the occasion demands that. This weapon, when employed by one who does not know how to use it, can harm that very person.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-6-1924

39. INJUSTICE TO KATHIAWARIS

Rebuking me gently, a friend has remarked that these days I have been doing an injustice to Kathiawaris: I always describe them as men given to too much talking. This friend believes that my articles suggest that there is none among them who really works. He goes on to say that others, following me, form the same opinion about Kathia--waris and malign them with similar epithets. The result will be, he says, that Kathiawaris themselves will come to believe that they are what they are described to be and then even those few among them who now work will stop working.

My criticism was not directed against all Kathiawaris. It was aimed only at politicians. I did not mean to suggest,either, that all of them are men of too many words.

I myself was born in a family of politicians, but I certainly do not regard myself as given to talking too much. Hence, first of all, I myself am excluded from my criticism. Moreover, some of my co-workers are Kathiawaris and they go on working silently all the time. My description does not apply to them either. It was, thus, aimed only at those to whom it could be applied.

It is true, nevertheless, that my criticism would be unjust if the talkers had been so few as to be mere exceptions. It is really my complaint that, by and large, the politicians are given to talking too much and to intrigues. Silent workers are the exception. I grew up in a family of politicians and I have had plenty of experience of this class. I worshipped my father and my devotion to my parents equalled that of Shravana[1]. If this is an exaggeration, at any rate I have no doubt in my mind that Shravana was my ideal. But I never lost my better judgment. Hence, I knew then, and know better now, that much of my father's time was taken up in mere intrigues. Discussions started early in the morning and went on till it was time to leave for the office. Everyone talked in whispers. The discussions centred on how to rise to a job of higher status and authority than the present one and how to increase the influence of the Banias as against that of the party of *Nagars*[2] and Brahmins; even amongst the Banias, my father's aim was

[1] A youth, in the *Ramayana*, who was devoted to his aged parents and carried them on his shoulders to various places of pilgrimage

[2] A Hindu community

to see our A Hindu community own family rise above others. This, then, is one side of the picture. I do not wish to suggest that service of others was never a motive. It was, however, always a subsidiary motive, helping others as well as one may while pursuing one's own interests. My father was not the lowest of the low among politicians; he was, on the contrary, considered to be the very best among them. He was noted for his honesty. Bribes were accepted then too, but he was free from this evil. He was large-hearted and his generosity had no limits. Even such a good person had not remained unaffected by the poisonous atmosphere of politics.

The knowledge of these facts often prompts me to say that, by being on terms of purest friendship with *Nagars* and others, I am doing atonement for the favouritism practised by my family, that, brought up among politicians and diplomats, I am atoning for their sin of clever talking by having chosen not to follow their practice and accepted the philosophy of action.

What was true of politicians forty or fifty years ago is true even today. Their sole occupation is seheming. My dislike of this was one of the reasons for my leaving the country. To go on working silently in an atmosphere of politics would mean stagnating for ever as a clerk. Every clerk, however, aspires to a position of authority, but such a position is the reward of successful scheming and not of work. And so on the very day a person enters the service of an Indian State his training in scheming begins.

A new atmosphere is now growing among us. Thanks to our desire to give up clever talking and the methods of scheming, we now get some active Kathiawari workers even in the prevailing unfavourable atmosphere. The ordinary politicians, however, are still slaves of the atmosphere in which they live.

My aim in writing about this was, and is today, to help the politicians in Kathiawar to understand the situation and change it immediately.

Such criticism of Kathiawaris. that is, of that section of the politicians to which it applies—is a part of satyagrahi abuses. Hence, only one like me can offer it. Those who dislike Kathiawaris are not entitled to offer it. What does it matter, however, if any such persons follow my example and make this criticism? One who does not scheme will remain unaffected and smile at the criticism. A person who schemes and is clever of tongue, why should he get angry whan

told the truth ? A friend does not observe as many shortcomings in us as an enemy does. To be able to see the defects of a friend and yet love him with one's whole heart is a particular virtue in satyagraha and one which is extremely difficult to acquire. We can, therefore, say in a general way that we cannot learn about our shortcomings through our friends to the same extent that we can through our enemies. I would, therefore, request Kathiawaris to listen courteously and respectfully to the criticism made by enemies, to reflect upon it and accept whatever element of truth it contains.

I am sure no one wishes that I should stop criticizing lest others follow my example. Moreover, in criticizing Kathiawaris I ask all Gujaratis to give up talking and start working. If the former regard me as one of them, they would pay attention to my criticism, consider what substance there was in it and act accordingly. I am certainly vain enough to believe that Kathiawaris would listen to me, though they might not listen to others. However, I make no distinction between Gujarat and Kathiawar. The people in both regions are Gujaratis. Kathiawar is "little" Gujarat. Add Kathiawar and Kutch to Gujarat and, you get Maha Gujarat. The latter is a small part of India. I happen to have better knowledge of the language of that part. Since it knows me better, I have a greater right to offer bitter pills to it than to others; if Maha Gujarat does not swallow them, to which other Province can I offer them, which Province can I call upon to test the efficacy of my medicine?

In conclusion, I hope that the politicians in Kathiawar will hold their love of facile talking in complete check, give up scheming and start working silently and so prove my criticism to be unfounded. I am not interested in criticizing people; by doing so, I hope merely to get the utmost work out of Kathiawar.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-6-1924

40. FORGIVE ME PLEASE!

On Thursday morning,[1] many brothers and sisters of Ahmedabad had gathered on the railway station in the hope that I would alight there and they could meet me, but they were disappointed. For this, I apologize to them. Vallabhbhai felt that the people would not restrain their eagerness despite my appeal and his own efforts, and, making me alight from the train which he got stopped midway[2], took me quietly to the Ashram.

It is only when al! those who were thus disappointed take to spinning that I shall be convinced that they have forgiven me. Really speaking, they owe me an apology. Why did they go to the station at all ? It was their fault that they went to the station disregarding my entreaty.[3] It was the country's loss that it thereby received so much less of hand-spun yarn. Therefore, if it was a fact that these disappointed brothers and sisters went to the station, not out of curiosity, but out of love, I would request them to make good the loss of yarn.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-6-1924

41. VIDYAPITH AND ANANDSHANKARBHAI

A student of Gujarat Vidyapith, who loses the institution, wrote to me as follows:[4]

The subject of this letter, its language and its thoughts, the overflowing patriotism in it and its boundless love for the Vidyapith appealed to me so much that I felt it would be good to put the whole of it before the reader, long as it is. However, I am on such terms with Anandshankarbhai that I felt that the extract from his speech which the correspondent had quoted did not do justice to him I felt that, rather than publish the letter firs. and then get a reply from Anandshankarbhai, I would be doing greater justice to the subject, the

[1] May 29

[2] At Kankaria railway yard

[3] *Vide* "My Request", 25-5-1924, wherein Gandhiji had appealed to the people of Ahmedabad not to take the trouble to come to the station, but to give that time to spinning.

[4] The letter is not translated here.

student and Anandshankarbhai by sending the letter to him first and getting his reply, and then publishing both together. My friendship and affection for him also led me to the same conclusion. The reader will also see from the result that I did well to get Anandshankarbhai's letter and publish it along with the other one. Our reporters—especially when the speeches are in Gujarati—fail, though perhaps not intentionally, to take them down in full, and even when they take a full report, the editor cannot spare the necessary space for every speech. The result is that the reports are often mutilated and, sometimes, distort the speaker's meaning. In such a state of affairs, it is often difficult so decide which report to trust and which not to trust. It is for this reason that Sir Pherozeshah Mehta[1] wrote out. all his important speeches. Gokhale was keen on correcting the reports of his speeches himself as far as possible. None of us whose services were at his disposal were allowed to correct his speeches in South Africa, all of which were reported verbatim in the papers. In spite of his delicate health, he took it upon himself to correct. every report. I have myself had bitter experience of what is done to my speeches. The reporters are not to blame for this. The very conditions are such that only a few reporters are able to give correct reports.

With these experiences in mind, I sent the foregoing letter to Anandshankarbhai and requested him for a reply. His reply is as follows:[2]

There is little that I have to add to this reply. I too would welcome another institution of the kind which Anandshankarbhai would like to see established. But the time and circumstances are perhaps not ripe yet. I believe that the sentiments expressed by the student-corres-pondent are most admirable. My ideas about education go much further even than his. In my humble opinion, knowledge should never be used for acquiring wealth. Business should be the only means of doing so. The means of livelihood should be labour, i.e., weaving, carpentry, tailoring and such other occupations essential for maintaining human life. I believe that one of the chief reasons for our moral fall is that doctors, lawyers, teachers and others acquire their knowledge mainly for getting money and, in fact, use it for that

[1] Sir Pherozeshah Merwanji Mehta (1845-1915); member of the Bombay Corporation, 1872-1915; member of Bombay Legislature for 30 years; member, Imperial Legislative Council; President of the Congress, 1890

[2] Not translated here

purpose. What I have set out is, of course, an ideal, which we cannot attain. I have no doubt, however, that the nearer we get to it, the better for us. The Vidyapith has not set this ideal before itself, but it has given primary importance to cultivating the spirit of patriotism. The idea of a "career" has no place in an institution which is inspired by the ideal that know ledge should be used in the service of the country and that earning of wealth should come second. Only a person who has renounced the idea of a career for himself should seek admission to the Vidyapith. Since this ideal has not yet taken hold of the minds of people either in Gujarat or in the rest of the country, it is not surprising that Vidyapiths dedicated to this ideal should have only a few students in the first few years. In fact, it is a pleasant surprise that thousands of students are having their literary education under the inspiring guidance of the Vidyapith and, at the same time, are acquiring the spirit of patriotic service.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-6-1924

42. GURUKUL KANGRI

I had sent a letter to the pupils of this Gurukul on their annual day. In answer to it I received a letter from them many days ago. I place before the readers a part of this letter to show what faith the Gurukul children have in the charkha:

> Although we were conscious that this reply to your message is wholly inadequate, we nevertheless wish to place at your revered feet this offering of a little yarn spun by us. We have prepared this yarn from round-the-clock non-stop plying of the charkha during the seven days of the National Week (April 7 to 13) in the hope that our humble offering will be accepted. This includes separately the yarn spun by the younger children among us (those of class IV). Although this yarn has not been secured from a non-stop plying of the charkha, we do think that these little children who love you deserve your love. Therefore this yarn, spun with devotion during the National Week, deserves to be offered at your feet.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 1-6-1924

43. A HINT TO ORGANIZERS OF CONFERENCES

People say that the days of big public meetings, processions and speeches are past, that the time has come to work while keeping the mouth shut. But the organizers of conferences and public meetings are always anxious to make great shows of them. In their zeal, many times they forget the truth and practise deception on the innocent public while making preparations for conferences. A notice about some conference says:

> It is a matter of great pleasure that the conference is going to take place in a big way. Important leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, the Ali Brothers, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr. Kitchlew[1], Maulana Abul Kalam Azad[2], Devdas Gandhi, Shankerlal Banker[3], Rajagopalachari[4], Seth Jamnalal Bajaj[5], Maulana A. Jafar Khan, Shrimati Gandhi, Bi Amma Sahiba, Tapasvi Sunderlal, Makhanlal Chaturvedi[6], Shrimati Subhadra Kumari, etc., are expected to come.

It is possible that the reception committee has sent invitations to these leaders. But till replies have been received from them saying that they will try to come, it is not true to say that they are expected to come. However commendable the intention may be, it is improper to mislead people. Once or twice people may be deceived, but very soon the workers lose their prestige as well as the I trust of the people. Abraham Lincoln has rightly said: 'You can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time."

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 1-6-1924

[1] A Congress leader of the Punjab

[2] 1889-1958; Congress leader and scholar of Koranic theology; President of the Indian National Congress, 1923, 1940-5; Education Minister, Government of India

[3] Political worker and labour leader of Ahmedabad; printer and publisher of *Young India*

[4] C. Rajagopalachari (b. 1879); lawyer, journalist, author and statesman; Governor-General of India, 1948-50

[5] 1889-1942; businessman, social worker and philanthropist; treasurer of the Congress for a number of years and a close associate of Gandhiji

[6] Well-known Hindi poet and patriot, editor of *Karmavir*

44. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[*June 2, 1924*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have the cheques. I am aware some expenses are yet to be covered. It should have been 'row'[2]. I never knew that the price of *Young India* had been revised to three annas. I promise to kick up a row over it. I have written to Godrej.

I do not at all find Ahmedabad warm. The late evenings and the early mornings are very pleasant. I sleep in the open, so the nights are very cool.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

45. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SABARMATI,
Jyeshtha Sud 1 [*June 3, 1924*][3]

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. I have written to the leader of the Antyaja Mandal that you made no promise to give them Rs. 30,000.

It is no doubt bad that the community[4] is divided into two factions If, however, your group behaves courteously with the other, it will stop the venom from spreading. It is of course true that peace and strife cannot go on together. If you choose one or the other and stick to it, then only can you get its fruit. The result of strife we see in the condition of Europe. True love is altogether absent there. The way of peace has so far never been practised by communities.

Yours sincerely,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6047. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] From the postal cancellation mark

[2] This word is in English.

[3] The reference in the letter to factions in the addressee's community suggests that it was written in 1924, as were the letters to him dated May 13 and 20. In 1924, *Jyeshtha Sud* I fell on June 3.

[4] The Marwari community

46. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

Jyeshtha Sud 1 [*June 3, 1924*][1]

CHI. PARASRAM,

I have your postcard. Study the *Ramayana* very carefully. It won't do to read it only once. I am sure the *Ramayana* will give you peace of mind. Are all the patients improving?

Blessings from

BAPU

PARASRAM MEHROTRA
U. P. KHADDAR BOARD
CAWNPORE

From the Hindi original. C.W. 4960. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

47. INTERVIEW TO " SWATANTRYA"

[SABARMATI,
June 3, 1924][2]

Q. Since your release from Yeravda Jail, do you think that there is some change in your writing?

A. Yes, there is.

Q. Because of your too much stress on non-violence as a religion, the Congress had to pass a resolution of self-defence as regards Congress volunteers.

A. It was not right for the Congress to pass such a resolution. The same meaning was already included in my definition of non-violence.

Q. Do you not think, Mahatmaji, that Congress leaders at least found your definition rather vague?

A. Yes, you are right. Every religionist should try to find out authorities on non-violence in his own religious books. I am preaching non-violence so that people may be induced to find out the real meaning of non-violence according to their religious texts.

The correspondent then asked Mahatmaji to explain the limits of non-violence against a thief, dacoit or foreign invasion. He [Gandhiji] narrated the story of a great saint, Eknath Maharaj [who] having found his house attacked by thieves, prayed to God lest the robbers might go away without finding any booty.

[1] The postmark bears this date.
[2] *Vide* 1st footnote to "Interview to *Swatantrya*", 30-5-1924.

Q. This is possible for a mahatma, but not for ordinary people. What do you advise people to do under such circumstances?

A. We must protect ourselves from thieves, etc. The difference you have shown is quite correct.

Q. Don't you think that Englishmen also fall under this category?

A. No, the present-day Englishmen are not so. The East India Company may be regarded as such. But are you going to call robbers' sons also as robbers?

Q. If such sons are also following their fathers' vocation, we must call them thieves.

A. No, no. The English people of the present day are not such, hence we must remain non-violent. To dispossess the English of their power, we need the will and not the arms and, moreover, so long as the Congress has adopted non-violence as its policy, we must be non-violent. I have illustrated my meaning in my article headed "My Mission",[1] by taking the illustration of a prisoner at the gallows and a jailor. This whole question I shall have to get settled finally in the coming Congress.

Q. Mahatmaji, have you read the evidence which Mohammedans gave before the Government enquiry committee regarding the Hindu-Muslim disputes at Nagpur? The Mohammedan witnesses said that Lokamanya Tilak was responsible for fostering such quarrels among the Hindus and Mohammedans, and that every Mohammedan has a right to convert, at any time, his house into a masjid.

A. No, I have not read that.[2] I shall certainly read that. It is simply ungratefulness to accuse the Lokamanya of having given rise to such communal feuds. It was Lokamanya Tilak himself who personally told me that, if by giving cent per cent representation to Mohammedans, swaraj would be attained, he (Lokamanya Tilak) was willing to sign such a pact. Dr. Moonje has specially requested me not to write anything about Nagpur.

Mahatmaji further said that the people must find out their own way for their liberation, and expressed regret that the leaders Of the country have not very seriously considered the utility of his own method Of non-violent non-co-operation.

The Hindu, 12-6-1924

[1] *Vide* "My Mission", 3-4-1924.

[2] Here the correspondent handed to Gandhiji copies of *Swatantrya* requesting him to go through them.

48. NOTES

TARKESHWAR SATYAGRAHA

I have received various telegrams on the situation in Tarkeshwar. Two of them invite me to go there and advise. My going is out of the question, if only because I am too weak yet to undertake fatiguing journeys. But what I have said generally about Vaikom applies to Tarkeshwar. There should be no force nor show of it for the purpose of taking possession. The rush of railwaymen and their blocking the progress of the train (if the facts reported are true) was not only not Satyagraha, but the blocking was, to say the least, discreditable. Not even a *mahant* reported to be immoral may be summarily and forcibly dismissed from his possession.

DIGGING MY OWN GRAVE

This is the expression that has been used about my article on Congress organization.[1] I like it. For nothing will please me more than to dig my own grave [rather] than that I should dig that of Truth for which and which alone I want to live. An esteemed English friend who helped me in South Africa once told me: "Do you know that I have thrown myself heart and soul into your movement because you represent a minority? For I believe that truth always lies with minorities. You should not therefore be surprised at my opposing you, friends though we are, if I ever find you representing a majority." I have often wondered, and never more so than now, whether the friend was not right and whether he would not have come to the conclusion that I must be in the wrong as I am at present supposed to be representing a majority. But whether the friend was right or wrong, I hope that the A.I.C.C. will not hesitate to put me in a minority and I shall also hope that I shall not be found untrue to my faith. I assure them that I shall work as zealously under defeat as, perhaps, I have worked with the tide flowing with me. If we want to serve India, we must put measures before men. The latter come and go, but causes must survive even the greatest of them.

AN ARYA SAMAJ PROTEST

I have received the following wire from Agra Arya Samaj:

[1] *Vide* "Congress Organization", 29-5-1924.

Agra enters emphatic protest against strictures made by you regarding Arya Samaj, Rishi Dayanand, Swami Shraddhanandji, *Satyarth Prakash* and *shuddhi* movement, which it trusts have been made unconsciously because of lack of full acquaintance with Arya Samaj teachings.[1] Respectfully prays you to reconsider your views and remove misgivings likely to be produced. I publish the telegram, as I am sure the Agra Samaj represents a considerable body of Arya Samaj opinion. All I can say in reply is that I have not written a single word in the reference to the Samaj or Rishi Dayanand or Swami Shraddhanandji without deep considera-tion. It was easy enough for me to suppress my opinion. But, consis-tently with truth, I could not do so when it became relevant. Hindu-Muslim tension is a grim reality. Removal of it is a stern national nec-essity. It cannot be brought about by ignoring or suppressing facts. Truth on such occasions must be told, no matter how unpalatable it may be. But I claim no infallibility. As yet I have seen nothing to revise my views. I cannot plead ignorance. I claim to have read *Saty-arth Prakash*. I have the privilege of knowing Shraddhanandji intima-tely. My writing therefore is deliberate. But if any Arya Samajist can convince me that I have erred in any single particular, I shall gladly confess my error, apologize and withdraw the erroneous statement.

PUNISHMENT OR REWARD

Thoreau has said that, under a despotic government, plenty is a crime and poverty a merit. In other words, the frowns of such a government are any day welcome. One has to be cautious about its smiles. Taken in this light, the punishment of the *Swarajya* of Madras may be treated as a reward for public services rendered. I can therefore only congratulate Mr. Prakasam[2] upon his paper being the first to be on the black list of the Madras Government. That the Indian members of that Government are responsible for this reward does not surprise me. They-could do no better. They must either sustain that Government or resign. They believe in that Government being for the good of the country. Non-violent non-co-operation is intended to quicken the process of disillusionment. That process has been slow

[1] The reference is to Gandhiji's observations in the article "Hindu-Muslim Tension: Its Cause and Cure", 29-5-1924.

[2] T.Prakasam (1872-1957); editor, Swarajya; was called "Andhra Kesari"-the lion of Andhra; Premier (Chief Minister) of composite Madras State 1946-47 and later the first Chief Minister of Andhra, 1953-54.

because we have believed only somewhat in non-co-operation and still less in non-violence.

LUXURY NOT POWER

Borodada writes thus from Shantiniketan:

> The reason why you exhort us to concentrate all our energy on the constructive programme is simply this. You want us to produce by our own hands the necessaries of life, arid thereby gain power. If we once get the initial power simply to live, we can gradually gain more power to live comfortably afterwards. But if we take only that which Government pleases to give us, we will get something no doubt but will not gain power, and thus will become weaker and weaker every day. For, as long as power remains with the Government, we will be at its mercy. It is natural that the Government will look after its own interest and we will look after our own. It is foolish to expect that the Government will give us power to nullify its own power of doing anything it likes It is ready to give us the materials of luxury when the great masses are suffering from want of food and clothing It will not part with the least of its power, unless forced by circumstances That power is exerted mainly for its own interest and by no means for the real well-being of the Indian masses

Is it not only too true that the towns buy their luxuries at the expense of the poor, whilst all the power resides in the hands of a Government totally irresponsible and irresponsive to the people?

THE WHEEL TO THE RESCUE

The following letter from Babu Bhupendra Narayan Sen cannot fail to interest the reader:

> Duadonda is a village in the sub-division of Arambagh, district Hooghly and is about 7 miles west of Raja Ram Mohun Roy's[1] birthplace, Radhanagar. In June 1922, there occurred a severe flood in the river Darakeshwar and my friend Sj. Prafulla Chandra Sen was deputed by the Hooghly District Congress Committee for relief work in the flooded area. When Prafulla proposed to distribute the charkha to insure againt famine which generally attends such flood, he was ridiculed by the Flood Relief Committee. Undaunted, my friend promised that he would make the charkha a success even in such a backward N.C.O. district as Hooghly. With only three co-workers, he began to tramp from villager's door to door with a bag of cotton, with some charkhas and

[1] 1774-1833; scholar, social reformer and founder of Brahmo Samaj; worked for the abolition of sati

other implements The younger generation laughed to his face, the older people wisely shook their heads and remarked that there was a time when the charkha's musical hum was a feature of village life At last, they succeeded in introducing a dozen charkhas and began to feed the spinners regularly with cotton and wagas. In order that the spinners might store sufficient yarn for weaving their own clothes, Prafulla used to give them cotton instead of wagas, i.e., for 5 *tolas* of yarn given by a spinner, he gave 10 *tolas* of cotton in return and to the needy he gave spinning wagas @ 3 pies per *tola* of yarn spun, carding being done by the spinners themselves The earnest and steady spinning by the aid twelve spinners drew the attention of young and old alike. The people who scoffed at charkha now wondered at the beautiful khaddar saris which the spinners had woven out of their own hand-spun yarn and began to envy the spinners who earned such wages They now began to request my friend for charkhas, promising that they would ply them regularly The number increased and in 3 or 4 months the number of spinners was a hundred, and my friend's abilities were put to severe test to keep them all going and the nucleus of our organization was thus established. The Mohammedan ladies were the first to revive this charkha culture and their Hindu sisters are also following in their wake. The present number of spinners is more than two hundred.

My own conversion to this khadi programme, i.e., village-work, may interest you a little. I was working as secretary, Jorabagan Congress Committee, Calcutta. At the invitation of my friend Prafulla, I came to this place to see him working and it is here and here alone I became convinced of the potentialities of the charkha in the building up of our national life. From daybreak to sunset, people old and young came with yarn to get double quantity of slivers or to sell it for meeting the weaver' demand. Old spinners were all clad in khaddar saris woven out of their own yarn. Their hunger-stricken faces had now sparks' of joy. I began to chat with them and learnt that my friend's work had kept the wolf from their doors; that women, who used to beg for their sustenance, were now well-off; that they no longer quarrelled among themselves because they had now no idle time left after carding and spinning; that their husbands could not now ill treat them as they were contributing considerably to the family fund; and lastly, but not the least, their izzat was saved. I could learn all these things because I was introduced to them as a khadi worker; otherwise, nothing on earth could have moved these *purdahnashin* ladies to talk so intimately with a stranger. Near about sunset, the male population of the village began to arrive at our centre and they came daily to hear my friend's conversation on various topics. They all expressed their deepest sympathy for our work and anxiously prayed that it might continue for ever. This evening's gathering made me at once remember one of your

beautiful sayings: 'Non-co-operation with the Government for more co-operation with the people', and I thought that this was the rightest way to do it. In short, I could not resist myself the temptation of serving these poor innocent people; I gave up my town Congress work and came down here. The more we are becoming familiar with the village life, the more convinced we become of the truth of the Bardoli programme and we now believe that we shall want nothing more if we can only work out this programme for the rest of our lives.

Along with khadi work there has begun national education, arbitration, and social service. We have now a separate propaganda department which publishes a litho weekly, namely, *Congress Sambad*, containing exposition on non-violent non-co-operation, khaddar, untouchability etc. We have named this organization as Satyagraha Sangh, and it has under its control:

1. One spinning centre at Duadonda.
2. One weaving centre at Baradongal, 7 miles north of Duadonda.
3. One national school at Bandar, 4 miles south of Duadonda. We received help from the following sources mainly:

Flood Relief Committee, Hooghly—Rs. 300/

Benga1 Provincial Congress Swadeshi Board—Rs. 500/

Jorabagan Congress Flood Trust fund—Rs. 1,500/

Our assets are:—

(a) Stock of yarn, khadi cotton, cotton seeds	Rs. 1,200/-
(b) Looms with weavers	Rs. 200/-
(c) Spinning-wheels distributed	Rs. 350/-

The other day Sj. Harakhchand Motichand, brother of Sj. Jivanlal, aluminium merchant, came to see our national school and spinning-centre. He expressed satisfaction at our work and has helped us with Rs. 200/for buying the land on which the national school at Bandar was situated and with Rs. 100/- for building our 'ashram'. For the present we are housed in the bungalow of Mr. J. C. Hazra, a practising barrister of the Calcutta High Court. Mr. Hazra came here during the last Easter holidays. He agreed that the Bardoli programme was the only programme for our country.

The letter shows what a little organization can do and how easily the people take to the wheel when it is presented to them in a workable form. The charkha will turn those who are forced to beg for food into self-respecting artisans and will knit together the literate and the illiterate, the poor and the rich, as nothing else will.

"BRAHMACHARYA" OR SELF-CONTROL

The following is Mahadev Desai's translation of an article[1] I wrote on this delicate subject in *Navajivan* of 25th May 1924. I gladly publish it in *Young India* as I have before me many letters from the other parts of India on the same subject. The stray thoughts collected together in the article might be of some help to those who are earnestly striving for a pure life. My inquirers have been all Hindus and naturally the article is addressed to them. The last paragraph is the most important and operative part. The names Allah or God carry with them the same potency. The idea is to realize the presence of God in us. All sins are committed in secrecy. The moment we realize that God witnesses even our thoughts, we shall be free.

ABOUT PRINCIPAL GIDWANI

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has sent a letter in the following terms to the Administrator of Nabha:

> I have just read in *Young India* of the 92nd a letter dated 12th May written by you to Mr. M. K. Gandhi in regard to Mr. Gidwani's imprisonment.[2] It is stated in this letter that you suspended the sentences passed against Principal Gidwani, Mr. K. Santanam and me on condition that we left the State and did not return thereto without permission. My recollection of this episode is entirely at variance with this. I was and still am under the impression that our sentences were suspended unconditionally. There wag no reference, so far as I can remember, in the order of suspension urder sec. 407 C.P.C. or even on the piece of paper containing this order, to any condition, or to our returning to Nabha with or without permission. This point was further-cleared up by our conversation with the Superintendent of the Jail and the Chief of Police who were present. Subsequently, we were informed of another order—styled an executive order—on another piece of paper, wherein we were asked to leave the State and not to return without permission. In this second paper there was no mention of our sentences or suspensions. My request for copies of the orders was not granted nor was I allowed to copy them myself. I was told that you had expressly forbidden copies. I shall be glad if you will kindly let me know if the facts I have stated above about the suspension order are correct. I shall also be obliged if you will also send me copies of the suspension order and the 'executive order'. You will admit, I hope, that it is only fair to me to supply me with these copies so that I may know where I stand.

[1] Not reproduced here. For the text *vide* "Brahmacharya", 25-5-1924.
[2] *Vide* "Notes", 22-5-1924.

Pandit Jawaharlal's letter would go to show that the revival of Principal Gidwani's old sentence and his consequent incarceration are totally unjustified even if they are not illegal. Surely the three patriots were entitled to see the conditions of their release. As I have already shown, Principal Gidwani entered in no spirit of defiance. He entered only in the interest of humanity. The public will be interested to know the Administrator's reply to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

LUXURY AND LAZINESS

A gentleman has sent me a long letter on the difficulties surrounding khaddar propaganda. I copy the relevant parts of that letter.

> These is much spinning in our province. It is no exaggeration when I say that every lady in our villages is a spinner. Even little girls know and practise the art. Weavers are in abundance in this province. A large quantity of khaddar can be produced in this province. When I see the vast field of work for khaddar production, I feel that I should work and work hard. But when I come to the Khaddar Depot of our Congress Committee, I find very few people buying our cloth. People who had begun weaving khaddar have begun to use mill yarn cloth or some even foreign cloth.
>
> The Congress appealed to the sentiments of the people. They discarded foreign cloth and some even burnt it. They adopted khaddar. But its inherent defects became apparent. The result is that they do not like to wear it now. The defects are:
>
> 1. The stuff is very heavy; the ladies do not tolerate it.
> 2. On account of its weight, it is not easy to wash.
> 3. It is not a children's cloth, for their clothing requires constant washing and it is very difficult to do so in case of khaddar.
> 4. It has got no variety and we cannot give fast colours to it.
> 5. It catches dust.
> 6. It is dearer than the mill-cloth. We purchase hand-spun yarn one pound in a rupee, while Indian mill-cloth is sold at Amritsar at the same rate, that is one pound per rupee.
>
> The rich people do not like to wear this cloth as it does not satisfy their tastes, while the poor cannot afford to wear it, considering its price, washing charges, and other expenses.
>
> Only the agricultural class in the villages uses it. They get cotton from their fields. Their ladies do the ginning and the spinning. They have to pay for the carding and weaving which is not much as the labour it very cheap in the

villages. It is a bye-product for them. By using it they save money which they do not get so easily as the people in the towns do.

The writer is connected with the khaddar movement and believes in it. It is clear, however, that his argument is an argument of luxury and laziness. Khadi propaganda certainly cannot succeed where they reign supreme. If we desire swaraj, we must be prepared to work and give up luxurious tastes, at least for the time being. A soldier who is unwilling to give up conveniences cannot fight. India, if it cannot part with the soft and cheap calico in favour of rough khadi, will certainly not get swaraj. The Punjab is the best province immediately to displace all mill-cloth. But that the difficulties come from the Punjabis shows how we have fallen. If the Punjabis want fine cloth, the remedy is not to buy mill-cloth but for the Punjabi sisters to spin even as fine yarn as the Andhra sisters. The Andhra spinning gives one all the fineness one can expect. Nor is it a difficult thing to accomplish. Just as, if we want fine *chapatis*, we must roll them fine and not go elsewhere in search of fine ones, so should we spin fine yarn, if we want fine cloth. The ladies have no right to grumble at the heaviness of their khaddar if they are too lazy to spin fine. Khaddar is eminently children's cloth, if we would clothe them for protection and not for show. Khaddar is capable of giving as much variety as mill-cloth. But it requires revival of the original skill of our forefathers. Khaddar is today dearer than mill-cloth because we have not yet put this national cottage industry on a sound basis. But surely we cannot count the cost if we will be free. Experience of hundreds of khaddar-wearers is that it having simplified their taste, though it is dearer yard for yard, the quantity required being much less than before, khaddar wear is undoubtedly cheaper. For the poor people khaddar need not be dearer, because they can grow their own cotton and gin, card, spin and weave it themselves. Closely examined, the argument is answered by carrying on a ceaseless propaganda among the Punjabi sisters asking them to spin not below 20 counts. An expert spinner can readjust their spindles so as to enable them to Spill higher counts without much extra energy or time being required.

WHAT IS A SPINNER ?

People often say that they can spin only because they are able to draw the thread. This is, however, a false notion A baker is one who bakes bread that can be eaten and digested. And it is not enough if he only knows how to bake. He must know, as he does know, all the

processes that flour has to go through and know also its different varieties. Similarly, a spinner is one who draws an even and well-twisted thread that can be woven without difficulty. If the thread is under-twisted or over-twisted, it is of no use for weaving purposes. And since it is not possible to spin well without good slivers, a spinner ought to know carding and sliver making. He ought also to tell the staples of different varieties of cotton and be able to spin a given count, to, say, 30 counts. And just as a carpenter who cannot sharpen or mend his tools is worthless, so is a spinner worthless who cannot mend his bow or the wheel or who cannot tell a crooked from a straight spindle and who cannot straighten a crooked one. Many leave off spinning because their wheel has got out of order. A spinning examination, therefore, should, in my opinion, cover all the points I have raised. The course need not frighten the reader. It is easy enough for those who would apply themselves to the work. The thing is to treat it seriously.[1]

One who has faith can secure everything and everything appears easy to him. One who is without faith finds everything difficult. To learn spinning is to cease to be indolent and become industrious. One should practise rather than preach. Swaraj can never be won by speeches; it will be secured only through action. Spinning is the only activity which all people can undertake. India became dependent and impoverished when the spinning-wheel came to be discarded. Her prosperity lies in its revival.

Young India, 5-6-1924

49. HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

Let me summarize the long statement[2] issued last week on this the greatest of all questions for the Indian patriot. The posterity will judge both the faiths by the manner in which the followers of each acquit themselves in the matter. However good Hinduism or Islam may be in the abstract, the only way each can be judged is by the effect produced by each on its votaries considered as a whole.

The following then is the summary of the statement.

[1] The paragraph that follows is from *Navajivan*, 8-6-1924, where Gandhiji covered, in an article under the same title, much the Same ground. The paragraph added here, however, does not occur in *Young India*.

[2] *Vide* "Hindu-Muslim Tension: Its Cause and Cure", 29-5-l924.

CAUSES

l. The remote cause of the tension is the Moplah rebellion.

2. The attempt of Mr. Fazl Hussain to rearrange the distribution of posts in the education department consistently with the number of Mussalmans in the Punjab and consequent Hindu opposition.

3. The *shuddhi* movement.

4. The most potent being tiredness of non-violence and the fear that the communities might, by a long course of training in non-violence, forget the law of retaliation and self-defence.

5. Mussalman cow-slaughter and Hindu music.

6. Hindu cowardice and consequent Hindu distrust of Mussalmans.

7. Mussalman bullying.

8. Mussalman distrust of Hindu fair play.

CURE

1. The master-key to the solution is the replacement of the rule of the sword by that of arbitration.

Honest public opinion should make it impossible for aggrieved parties to take the law into their own hands and every case must be referred to private arbitration or to law-courts if the parties do not believe in non-co-operation.

2. Ignorant fear of cowardly non-violence, falsely so called, taking the place of violence should be dispelled.

3. Growing mutual distrust among the leaders must, if they believe in unity, give place to trust.

4. Hindus must cease to fear the Mussalman bully and the Mussalmans should consider it beneath their dignity to bully their Hindu brothers.

5. Hindus must not imagine they can force Mussalmans to give up cow-sacrifice. They must trust, by befriending Mussalmans, that the latter will, of their own accord, give up cow-sacrifice out of regard for their Hindu neighbours.

6. Nor must Mussalmans imagine they can force Hindus to stop music or *arati* before mosques. They must befriend the Hindus and trust them to pay heed to reasonable Mussalman sentiment.

7. Hindus must leave to the Mussalmans and the other minor-

ities the question of representation on elected bodies, and gracefully and whole-heartedly give effect to the findings of such referee. If I had my way I should appoint Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan as the sole referee leaving him free to consult Mussalmans, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis, etc. as he considers best.

8. Employment under national government must be according to merit to be decided by a board of examiners representing different communities.

9. *Shuddhi* or *tabligh* as such cannot be disturbed, but either must be conducted honestly and by men of proved character. It should avoid all attack on other religions. There should be no secret propaganda and no offer of material rewards.

10. Public opinion should be so cultivated as to put under the ban all the scurrilous writings, principally in a section of the Punjab Press.

11. Nothing is possible without the Hindus shedding their timidity. Theirs is the largest stake and they must be prepared to sacrifice the most.

But how is the cure to be effected? Who will convince the Hindu maniac that the best way to save. the cow is for him to do his duty by her and not goad his Mussalman brother? Who will convince the Mussalman fanatic that it is not religion but irreligion to break the head of his Hindu brother when he plays music in front of his mosque? Or, again, who will make the Hindu see that he will lose nothing by the minorities being even over-represented on the elective public secular bodies? These are fair questions and show the difficulty of working out the solution.

But if the solution is the only true solution, all difficulties must be overcome. In reality the difficulty is only apparent. If there are even a few Hindus and a few Mussalmans who have a living faith in the solution, the rest is easy. Indeed, even if there are a few Hindus only, or a few Mussalmans only with that faith, the solution would be still easy. They have but to work away single-heartedly and the others will follow them. And the conversion of only one party is enough because the solution requires no bargains. For instance, Hindus should cease to worry Mussalmans about the cow without expecting any consideration from the latter. They should yield to the Mussalman demand, whatever it may be, regarding representation, again without requiring any return. And if the Mussalmans insist on stopping Hindu

music or arati by force, the Hindus will continue playing it although every single Hindu should die at his post, but without retaliation. The Mussalmans will then be shamed into doing the right thing in an incredibly short space of time. Mussalmans can do likewise, if they choose, and shame the Hindus into doing the right thing. One has to dare to believe.

But in practice it will not be thus; on the contrary, both will act simultaneously as soon as the workers become true to themselves. Unfortunately they are not. They are mostly ruled by passion and prejudice. Each tries to hide the shortcomings of his co-religionists and so the circle of distrust and. suspicion ever widens.

I hope that at the forthcoming meeting of the All-India Congress Committee, it will be possible to find out a method of work which will bring a speedy end to the tension.

It has been suggested to me that the Government are fomenting these dissensions. I should hope not. But assuming that they are, surely it is up to us to neutralize such efforts by ourselves acting truly and faithfully.

Young India, 5-6-1924

50. ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

The forthcoming session of the All-India Congress Committee will decide the future work of the Congress for the ensuing six months. Six months for a nation which is in a hurry to get her own is a long time to lose. Every moment is precious. The members of the All-India Congress Committee are representatives of representatives. They are or should be the real executive of the nation. They can, if they will, hasten swaraj. They must be men and women with an unquenchable faith in the national programme for the time being. They must enforce it in their own lives and induce others to do likewise. Three hundred and fifty representatives working with one mind cannot but produce an instantaneous impression upon the country.

Let each one of us ask himself or herself:

1. Do I believe in non-violence and truth for the purpose of gaining swaraj?
2. Do I sincerely believe in Hindu-Muslim unity?
3. Do I believe in the capacity of the charkha to solve the

problem of the economic distress of the starving millions of India and, in order to make hand-spun khaddar universal, am I prepared to spin religiously for half an hour at least per day, except when actually travelling continuously for twenty-four hours? And am I prepared to use nothing but hand-spun khaddar?

4. Do I believe in the boycott of government titles, government schools, law-courts and Councils?

5. If a Hindu, do I believe that untouchability is a blot upon Hinduism ?

6. Do I believe in the complete abolition of the drink and drug evil in spite of the fact that the whole of the revenue will be wiped out at a single stroke?

In my opinion, no one who does not believe in the foregoing articles of the Congress programme should remain in the All-India Congress committee. It is necessary to draw attention to all the articles because I know that many members do not believe in non-violence and truth. I hear, too, that there are practising lawyers in the Congress executives, that there are members who do not exclusively and always wear khaddar garments, that there are non-co-operators who are actually on the managing committees of national schools and who send their own children to Government schools and that, lastly, merchants who trade in foreign or mill-made cloth are still on Congress executives. I can only say that it is impossible to carry on the Congress programme to a successful issue if we who have to work it do not carry it out in our own persons. How can a practising lawyer ask or expect his brother to give up his practice, or one who does not himself spin demonstrate the necessity of others' spinning ?

I shall plead before the Committee for an honest programme. If the majority have another programme, I would advise the minority to resign and attend to the Congress programme from outside the A.I.C.C. There has been too much disregard of Congress resolutions and demands from the Working Committee. I world therefore also suggest that the members should, at the end of every month, send yarn of their own spinning, at least ten *tolas* of at least ten counts of even and well-twisted yarn. This quantity can be easily spun in thirty days at the rate of half an hour per day. The yarn should reach the secretary, Khadi Board, not later than the 15th of each month. He who fails to send the requisite quantity should be deemed to have resigned. Likewise, those who do not send returns of hand-carding, hand-spin-

ning, hand-weaving and hand-spun yarn from month to month in their own areas should be deemed to have resigned. The returns should reach the secretary every month, not later than the 15th of every month.

I know that these are hard conditions for those who do not wish to work and easy for those who do. There is no way of working the programme unless the chosen representatives of the people work.

There has been too much laxity about our method of work. It is time that we become a little less unbusiness-like. The charge that the programme is uninspiring or that a nation of spinners cannot achieve swaraj does not frighten me, because I know nothing so inspiring as a programme of solid work and I am convinced that we have to become once again a nation of carders, spinners and weavers if we are ever to banish starvation from the land and become economically independent.

Young India, 5-6-1924

51. MY JAIL EXPERIENCES-VII

SATYAGRAHI PRISONERS' CONDUCT

The argument advanced by some friends and put by me at the end of the last chapter[1] deserves consideration if only because so many honestly believe in it and so many followed it out consistently in their conduct in 1921 and 1922, when thousands went to jail.

In the first instance, even outside the jails, embarrassment of the Government is not our goal. We are indifferent if the Government is embarrassed so long as our conduct is right. Our non-co-operation embarrasses the Government as nothing else can. But we non-co-operate as lawyers or Councillors because it is our duty. That is to say, we will not cease to non-co-operate if we discovered that our non-co-operation pleased the rulers. And we are so indifferent because we believe that, by non-co-operation, we must ultimately benefit ourselves. But there cannot be any such non-co-operation in the jails. We do not enter them to serve a selfish end. We are taken there by the Government as criminals according so their estimation. Our business, therefore, is to disillusion them by acting in an exemplary (and by them

[1] *Vide* "My Jail Experiences - VI", 22-5-1924.

expected) manner, just as our business outside is to disillusion them by avoiding, say, their law-courts, schools or Councils or titles and by showing that we are prepared to do without their doubtful benefits.

Whether all of us realize it or not the method of non-co-operation is a process of touching the heart and appealing to reason, not one of frightening by rowdyism. Rowdyism has no place in a non-violent movement.

I have often likened satyagrahi prisoners to prisoners of war. Once caught by the enemy, prisoners of war act towards the enemy as friends. It will be considered dishonourable on the part of a soldier as a prisoner of war to deceive the enemy. It does not affect my argument that the Government does not regard satyagrahi prisoners as prisoners of war. If we act as such, we shall soon command respect. We must make the prisons a neutral institution in which we may, nay, must co-operate to a certain extent.

We would be highly inconsistent and hardly self-respecting if, on the one hand, we deliberately break prison rules and, in the same breath, complain of punishment and strictness. We may not, for instance, resist and complain of search and, at the same time, conceal prohibited things in our blankets or our clothes. There is nothing in satyagraha that I know whereby we may, under certain circumstances, tell untruths or practise other deception.

When we say that, if we make the lives of prison officials uncomfortable, the Government will he obliged to sue for peace, we either pay them a subtle compliment or regard them as simpletons. We pay a subtle compliment when we consider that, even though we may make prison officials' lives uncomfortable, the Government will look on in silence and hesitate to award us condign punishment so as utterly to break our spirit. That is to say, we regard the administrators to be so considerate and humane that they will not severely punish us even though we give them sufficient cause. As a matter of fact, they will not and do not hesitate to throw overboard all idea of decency and award not only authotized but even unauthorized punishments on given occasions.

But it is my deliberate conviction that, had we but acted with uniform honesty and dignity behoving satyagrahis, we should have disarmed all opposition on the part of the Government, and such strictly honourable behaviour on the part of so many prisoners would have at least shamed the Government into confessing their error in

imprisoning so many honourable and innocent men. For, is it not their case that our non-violence is but a cloak for our violence? Do we not, therefore, play into their hands every time we are rowdy?

In my opinion, therefore, as satyagrahis we are bound, when we become prisoners:

1. to act with the most scrupulous honesty;
2. to co-operate with the prison officials in their administration;
3. to set, by our obedience to all reasonable discipline, an example to co-prisoners;
4. to ask for no favours and claim no privileges which the meanest of prisoners do not get and which we do not need strictly for reasons of health;
5. not to fail to ask what we do so need and not to get irritated if we do not obtain it;
6. to do all the tasks allotted, to the utmost of our ability.

It is such conduct which will make the Government position uncomfortable and untenable. It is difficult for them to meet honesty with honesty for their want of faith and unpreparedness for such a rare eventuality. Rowdyism they expect and meet with a double dose of it. They were able to deal with anarchical crime, but they havenot yet found out any way of dealing with non-violence save by yielding to it.

The idea behind the imprisonment of a satyagrahi is that he expects relief through humble submission to suffering. He believes that meek suffering for a just cause has a virtue all its own and infinitely greater than the virtue of the sword. This does not mean that we may not resist when the treatment touches our self-respect. Thus, for instance, we must resist to the point of death the use of abusive language by officials or if they were to throw our food at us which is often done. Insult and abuse are no part of an official's duty. Therefore, we must resist them. But we may not resist search because it is part of prison regulations.

Nor are my remarks about mute suffering to be construed to mean that there should be no agitation against putting innocent prisoners like satyagrahis in the same class as confirmed criminals. Only as prisoners we may not ask for favours. We must be content to live with the confirmed criminals and even welcome the opportunity of working moral reform in them. It is however expected of a Government

that calls itself civilized to recognize the most natural divisions.

Young India, 5-6-1924

52. REMARKS ON MANILAL GANDHI'S LETTER

The reader will appreciate the following translation of a letter from my son Manilal Gandhi describing Mrs. Naidu's sterling work in South Africa.[1]

Young India, 5-6-1924

53. COMMENTS ON C. F. ANDREW'S LETTER

In a private letter, Mr. Andrews has rated me for the khaddar vests and caps he noticed on the beautiful persons of these simple Bhil children. He asks: "Why not be satisfied with khaddar *lungoti*[2] for them ?" Amritlal Thakkar[3] can best answer the question. Personally, I have developed a partiality for *lungotis*, more so after having seen so many prisoners in *lungotis* only. But the problem before Mr. Thakkar is not quite simple. He is superintendent not of a jail but a school in which he has to cultivate free manhood and free womanhood. These delightful urchins are great reasoners. Why is our superintendent in a multiplicity of clothes however uncomfortable they appear to be, and we only in *lungotis*? The teachers must, if they will answer such posers satisfactorily, wear and eat what they expect their pupils to wear and eat. In the Indian climate, a khaddar vest is certainly a poor exchange for the comfortable *kuchcha*, which is [an] enlarged *lungoti*.

Young India, 5-6-1924

[1] The letter, not reproduced here, spoke of the good effects of Sarojini Naidu's visit to South Africa, which included the dropping of the Class Areas Bill. It read: ". . . On the suggestion of Mrs. Naidu, the South African Indian Congress was held in Durban and considerable work was done, under the presidentship of Mrs. Naidu, with a solemnity never known before . . . The condition of the Indians here has been like that of destitute children, ever since your departure. Mrs. Naidu has however turned a most disappointing situation into one of the highest hope."

[2] Covering fastened at the back, like a codpiece

[3] 1869-1951; popularly known as Thakkar Bapa; devoted his life to the uplift of Harijans and aboriginals

54. LACK OR EXCESS OF LOVE ?

A *Vaishnava* gentleman has lovingly chided me for having used the singular number while referring to Rama, Shankar[1], Bharat and other incarnations of God. He has been grieved that I have not referred to Rama as "Shri Ramachandra Prabhu"[2] and to Bharat as "Shri Bharatsuri", and has mildly suggested my treating these sacred names with due respect. I could have replied to that friend in a private letter but, in case some other *Vaishnavas* have been similarly pained, I discuss the matter here for all readers. Perhaps, the friend who has written to me does not know that I myself am a *Vaishnava* and that Shri Ramachandra Prabhu is the *ishtadevata*[3] worshipped in my family. Still, to me the name Rama is dearer, though I have written "Shri Ramachandra Prabhu" for once here to satisfy this friend.

"Shri Ramachandra Prabhu" gives me the feeling that He is far away from me, whereas Rama is enthroned in my heart. Wherever I have made use of the sacred names, Rama, Bharat and so on, it seems to me that they express my overflowing love. If this *Vaishnava* friend claims that his love for Rama is greater than mine, I would contest his claim in Rama's court and I am sure to win.

I would be pleased to have my love tested in the same way as Hanuman[4] had wanted his to be. The dearest is ever closest to one's heart. Such a one must needs be addressed as "thou". The use of "you" implies distance. I never addressed my mother as "you"; if I had, by chance, spoken to her any time as "you" she would have broken into tears, for she would have felt that her child was no longer close to her.

There was a time in my life when I knew Rama as Shri Ramachandra. But that time has now passed. Rama has now come into my home. I know that He would frown on me if I spoke to Him as "you". To me, an orphan without mother-, father, brother, Rama is all in all. My mother, my father, my brother—He is everything to me. My life is His. In Him I live. I see Him in all women, and so regard every one of them as mother or sister. I see Him in all men and,

[1] One of the names of Siva
[2] Lord
[3] Chosen deity
[4] Devotee and messenger Of Shri Rama, in the *Ramayana*

therefore, look on everyone as father, brother or son according to his age. In the *Bhangi* and the Brahmin I see the same Rama and to them both I bow.

Even now, although Rama is near, He is not near enough to me; hence the need to address Him at all. When He is with me all the twenty-four hours, there will be no need to address Him even in the singular. No one else addressed my mother as "thou". Others spoke to her in the most respectful terms of address. So, too, if Rama were not my own, I would have maintained a respectful distance from Him. But, then, He is mine now and I His slave. Hence, I beg *Vaishnavas* not to force me to stay at some distance from Him. The love that must be supported by formal courtesy, does it deserve the name of love ? In al] languages, in all religions, man speaks to God as "Thou".

In Tamil land, there lived a woman saint named Mother Avvai, filled, like Mirabai, with intense love of God. All day long she sat in the temple of Vishnu. Sometimes her back was turned towards the image, at other times she sat facing it, her legs stretched out. Once a pious but youthful worshipper happened to go there, for *darshan*. He did not know of Mother Avvai's closeness to God and, with blood-shot eyes, he rebuked her in words none too polite.[1] Mother Avvai laughed out loud, filling the temple with her ringing laughter. Ignoring his rudeness, she spoke to him and said: "Come, my son, sit here. Where do you come from, my dear boy? You spoke harshly to me. But tell me one thing. In all my long life, I have not found a single spot whence God is absent. Wherever I stretch out my legs, there is He in front of me. If, now, you show me a place where He is not, I shall stretch out my legs in that direction."

The young worshipper was modest. It was because of his ignorance that he had not recognized Mother Avvai. He was scared and his eyes brimmed with tears as large as pearls and they fell on Mother Avvai's toes. She tried to draw back her feet, but he held them in his hands and said: "Mother, I have done you wrong; forgive me, save me!" Avvai freed her legs and clasped him in her arms. She kissed him, laughed aloud, and said: "Tuttut, what is there to forgive? You arc a son to me, and do you know, I have many more sons like you. You are a good son, for you spoke out your doubt as soon as you felt it. Go, Lord Shrirang[2] will protect you. But, my son, think

[1] Only tradition attributes this incident to Avvai.

[2] An image of Rama worshipped in South India; the shrine is at Shrirangam

sometimes of this mother of yours."

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-6-1924

55. MY NOTES

A MISTAKE

I stated in a previous issue that all pupils in the schools for workers' children exclusively wore khadi. *Majoor Sandesh* does not say so; it merely says that many of them have started wearing khadi clothes. The mistake was mine. I hope the reader will forgive this mistake as the sort of thing that happens when one is working under pressure for time. The editor of the *Majoor Sandesh* expects nothing by making exaggerated statements. Exaggeration does not advance a cause, but actually obstructs it. When the desired state of affairs does not in fact exist, it cannot be brought into being by trying to prove that it does exist. The starvation in India is a real fact, and not merely a tragedy on the stage. The hundreds of thousands of skeletons we see in India are the very images of pity. We cannot put flesh into them by play-acting. The struggle for swaraj, too, is a serious affair. We shall, therefore, get only as much as our efforts deserve. Only a genuine piece of khadi sold will put eight or ten annas into the pocket of some poor person in the country.

"YOUNG INDIA" IN URDU

A Muslim friend from Karachi writes to say that I bring out *Navajivan* in Gujarati for the Gujaratis, in Hindi for Hindi-speaking readers and *Young India* in English, but that most of the Muslims, who number seven crores, know only Urdu. Should I not, he asks, oblige them and bring out a *Nai Zindagi* or Urdu *Navajivan* for them? If I do this, he says, the quarrels between Hindus and Muslims will decrease and a strong bond will grow between them. Ever since the Gujarati *Navajivan* was started, I have cherished such a hope. But I have doubts whether such a step would serve any useful purpose. I should not like, knowingly, to bring our a paper which would become a liability. An Urdu *Navajivan* can be brought out only if we secure

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near Trichinopoly. The image is in a recumbent posture and the tradition is that it was worshipped by Vibhishana, brother of Ravana, in the' *Ramayana*.

for it a good number of Muslim readers. I have talked this matter over with Muslim friends and their opinion is against the idea of an Urdu *Navajivan*. That is why I have done nothing. They tell me that most of *Young India* is reproduced in the principal Urdu newspapers.

AN INVITATION CARD

A friend from Akola writes about a gentleman who lives about 20 miles from that city. After the Nagpur Congress[1], the latter always wears khadi. He eats food cooked and served only by a person who has worn nothing but khadi for two years. Now his daughters wedding is to take place. He looked for a son-in-law who always wore khadi and got her engaged only after he had found such a person. He has now sent invitation cards in which he has requested people to attend the wedding dressed in khadi and explained that, if anyone could not do this and, therefore, did not attend, he would not be offended. We should congratulate this gentleman on his patience and strength of mind and emulate his example if we,too, have his strength.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-6-1924

56. INTERVIEW TO " THE TIMES OF INDIA"

[SABARMATI ASHRAM,
June 5, 1924]

Mr. Gandhi was good enough to give an interview to the special correspondent of *The Times of India* this afternoon at the Sabarmati Ashram, with reference to the amazing resolution passed at the Bengal Provincial Conference paying homage to the "patriotism" of Gopinath Saha, the murderer of Mr. Ernest Day[2]. Mr. Gandhi had no hesitation in condemning in the severest terms the purport of the resolution to which Mr. Das and his followers are reported to have given their support, but he was not prepared to pass any opinion on Mr. Das's action unless he knew from him personally what his views were.

My first question to Mr. Gandhi was: "I suppose you have read the Calcutta telegram regarding the attitude of Mr. Das at the Bengal Provincial Conference with reference to the murder of Mr. Ernest Day. There it is stated that Mr. Das and his party,

[1] Held in December 1920

[2] An Englishman who had connections with the Government and, being mistaken for a high police official, was murdered

while condemning the action of Gopinath Saha in murdering Mr. Day, paid homage to his patriotism and admired his object which they considered noble and praiseworthy. May I ask if you take the same view of the matter as Mr. Das's?"

Mr. Gandhi replied:

I don't know what view Mr. Das takes. I have seen nothing beyond the Associated Press telegram which you have shown me. I can, therefore, give you my own opinion upon the hypothetical question whether I would approve of the murder by one person of another, no matter how laudable the object of the murderer may be. My answer would be emphatically, no. I purposely refrain from giving you a direct reply to the question put, because I distrust telegraphic summaries of the proceedings of big conferences, even when they are sent by parties who are not prejudiced one way or the other. Unless, therefore, I know what the Bengal Conference has done and what Mr. Das has said, I must decline to give any opinion whatever upon his action. Indeed, when I met him at Juhu he warned me against believing anything that might be said against him, because he said there was a conspiracy against him designed to undermine his influence.

Do you think the Bengal resolution could be justified morally or politically, or by your non-violen®t creed?

MR. GANDHI: In my opinion, no murder can be consistent with my own personal creed of non-violence. Whether political murder can be justified morally or politically is a question which everybody must answer for himself. I know many persons, Indian as well as European, who consider that taking the life of a person from political motives is justified on the highest principle of morality. Needless to say, I totally dissent from that view.

What do you think would be the effect of the resolution on the popular mind, particularly on the mind of the illiterate and ignorant classes?

Mr. Gandhi could say nothing about Mr. Das's view unless he knew personally from him what his view was, but if the text of the resolution was as the one shown to him, Mr. Gandhi certainly considered it to be unfortunate and inconsistent with the Congress creed. He agreed also that such a resolution could not but mislead ignorant people.

Do you think the moral underlying the resolution of the Bengal Provincial Conference, if accepted by any political party in India, would be conducive to the interests of the country?

MR. GANDHI: I am totally in the dark as to what the resolution is. The telegram that you have shown me does not give the text of the resolution, but, if the purport given in the telegram is correct, I find it difficult to understand its meaning, because if the action of Gopinath Saha was worthy of condemnation, as in my humble opinion it was, what was the patriotism apart from the action for which the homage was deserved? I cannot, therefore, conceive the possibility of any political party subscribing to the moral underlying the homage paid to Gopinath Saha.

Do you think that the Congress as at present constituted would sanction such a doctrine?

MR. GANDHI: No.

Would you call murderers like Gopinath Saha patriots?

MR. GANDHI: I would call murderers like Gopinath Saha patriots, but not without an indispensable adjective, namely, 'misleading". Their selflessness, defiance of death and love of the country I think must be held to be unquestionable, but on that very account, whilst I would call them misleading patriots, I would condemn their actions in the severest terms possible and I would be no party to resolutions praising their motives. We can only judge people's actions and, if they are bad and harmful to society, we cannot afford to pay them homage for their motives. In my humble opinion, the largest amount of harm done in this world is by people who have good motives, but who do not hesitate to resort to acts that are bad. It is the age-long superstition that the end justifies the means and it is because I see as clear as daylight that there can be no dividing line between the end and the means and that the end is, always the direct consequence of the means, that I am resisting with my whole soul the present system of Government as well as activities designed to beat the system with its own weapons, namely, by means fair or foul.

May I take you back to the days when the political crimes commenced in Bengal? There is an impression abroad that the activities of the Bengal anarchists would have continued but for the inauguration of your non-violent Non-co-operation movement. Those activities, it is said, were suspended on account of this movement, but that since your imprisonment the influence of the N.C.O. movement had diminished to such an extent that the Bengal revolutionaries had recommenced their activities. May I ask if that is, in your opinion, a correct view of the situation?

MR. GANDHI: I do believe that anarchism in Bengal became dormant because of the advent of non-violent Non-co-operation which required just as much sacrifice as any anarchist was capable of offering. I also believe that the signs that we see of a revival of violent revolutionary activities are due to the belief that non-violence has

failed.

Have you in contemplation, Mr. Gandhi, any practical measures for checking political crimes in Bengal and converting the youth of the province to your doctrine of non-violence in thought and in action?

MR. GANDHI: I do, indeed, contemplate measures for checking the activities of these misguided friends of mine. I use the word friends purposely, because I yield to no one in my admiration for the spirit of self-sacrifice that actuates them, but I know that their activity does immense harm to the country. It can never give swaraj to India even if it succeeds in making English rule impossible. I am convinced that the spirit of India is essentially non-violent and gentle. Violence has, therefore, no atmosphere to thrive in and if God grants me health, I hope to be able to overtake the anarchical activities and show to the anarchists that there is more than ample scope for pure and exacting sacrifice in my scheme for achieving swaraj and that, if they will only give me their enthusiastic support, they will deserve homage not merely for their motives, but also for their acts which can be emulated by the least of their countrymen without the slightest hesitation and without any danger to anybody else.

The interviewer then passed on to another subject, namely, the revolt of the C. P. Swarajists as evidenced in the statement of Dr. Moonje that the Swarajists would now concentrate their energies on breaking Mr. Gandhi's hold on the Congress and that a fratricidal struggle in the Congress was now inevitable. "Do you think," asked the pressman of Mr. Gandhi, "that Dr. Moonje's views are more or less shared by the Swarajists outside the C. P. and do you anticipate a general revolt of the Swarajists against your creed and your programme of work? Will you, in that event, give up your policy of neutrality towards the Swarajists and start propaganda against them?"

MR. GANDHI: I am unable to say whether Dr. Moonje's views are shared by many other Swarajists, but whether they are or not, I remain unperturbed, because there will be no loss of prestige of either of the parties if only because I do not propose to take part in any "fratricidal struggle". After all, it requires two parties to carry on a struggle of that character, and my scheme of carrying on political work always avoids such friction. I literally mean what I have said, namely, that I have advocated exclusive control of the Congress executives in the interests of both parties and, if I see the slightest desire on the part of the Swarajists to take over the Congress executives, I for one shall not resist the attempt, but let them take charge of the Congress executives. I would then form an organization outside the Congress and invite those who believe in the Congress programme to work it outside the

Congress. Thus, in any event I shall avoid a brush with the Swarajists. I shall not need to carry on any propaganda against the Swarajists.

The Times of India, 6-6-1924

57. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[1]

[*June 6, 1924*][2]

I read your letter to Krishnadas[3]. You will see the article in *Young India*. If the members of the All-India Congress Committee have any faith in the power of the spinning-wheel they ought to spin. I will not allow any discussion on this at the meeting[4]. If my suggestions are not acceptable to all the members, I am not going to argue there.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi

58. LETTER TO PARAMANAND K. KAPADIA

Chaitra Sud 5 [*June 6, 1924*][5]

BHAI PARAMANAND,

I have your letter. I have sent the message[6]. To send Devdas and others there is to steal people's time. But since it is necessary for people to be sent for the Rajput Parishad, I am sending them. Do what you can unitedly and without fuss. I am acquainted with all the corrupt things you mention. The key lies in my message. The answer to another part of your letter you will see in *Navajivan*.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

PARAMANAND ANANDJI

BHAVNAGAR

From the Gujara ti origin al: G.N. 11587

[1] 1894-1951; grandson of Gandhiji's step-sister; secretary, Bombay Provincial Congress Committee, 1922-23; member, Bombay Municipal Corporation, 1923-25, and later Mayor

[2] As in the printed sources

[3] Gandhiji's Secretary

[4] Of the All-India Congress Committee, which was held at Ahmedabad from June 27 to June 30, 1924

[5] From the postmark

[6] To the Saurashtra Rajput Conference; *vide* "Message to Saurashtra Rajput Conference", 11-6-1924.

59. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

SABARMATI,
Jeth Sud 5 [*June 7, 1924*][1]

CHI , VAS UMATI ,

I had been expecting your letter all along. I hope you are well now. I do not feel the heat at all. The nights are pleasant and cool. Keep up the practice of writing in ink, and write a good hand. Write to me if you want a book or anything else. Regain your health fully. Mani[2] is well. Radha continues to be the same as before. Kikibehn, one may say, is fairly well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Ramdas and Prabhudas[3] have gone to Abu. They will return after five or six days.

GANGASWARUP BEHN VASUMATI
LEELAVATI AROGYABHUVAN
DEOLALI

From the Gujara ti origin al: C.W. 443. Courte sy: Vasumat i Pandit

60. AIM OF KATHIAWAR POLITICAL CONFERENCE

I quote the following[4] from a long letter which a friend has written about the Kathiawar Political Conference:

In my opinion, the aim of the Kathiawar Political Conference should be as follows:

1. To take steps in every State to make the relationship between the Ruler and the ruled beneficial to the latter.

2. To take steps which would lead to a closer and mutually beneficial relationship among the States as also among their subjects.

[1] The reference in the letter to the health of Mani, Radha and Kikibehn suggests that the letter was written in 1924. Similar references are found in some of the letters written during March-April, 1924. That year *Jeth Sud* 5 fell on June 7.

[2] Manibehn Patel

[3] Son of Chhanganlal Gandhi

[4] Not translated here

3. To take steps for the economic, political and moral progress of the entire population of Kathiawar. In all its activities, the Conference should follow the path of peace.

The Conference cannot undertake the burden of freeing the Princes from the control of British Government; if it aims at doing so, the interests of both the Rulers and the subjects will suffer.

The Rulers are subservient to the British and cannot permit the holding of a Conference with such an aim, even if they approved of the movement for their freedom, they would have to oppose it. I, therefore, think that all efforts by the people to that end will prove both futile and harmful so long as the Rulers themselves do not desire their freedom and [are not ready to] work publicly for it.

It should certainly be one of the functions of the Conference to create public opinion against the tyranny of the Rulers, and this is included in the first clause.

Let the people of each State solve their own local problems. But Kathiawaris are all one people and as such have a right to hold a Conference on behalf of the entire population; in fact, they have a duty to do so. Not only can such a Conference discuss problems common to all, it can also interest itself in local issues, form a collective public opinion on them and bring it to bear on the solution of local problems.

I have explained in earlier issues the wider meaning of the word "political", and that, I believe, is the true meaning. The task of making the Conference popular has yet to be taken up. Making it popular does not mean only that people start attending its meetings; it means that they should work for redress of their grievances through the Conference and follow its advice. Before this could happen, the workers of the Conference should serve the people, go into the villages and make themselves as poor and simple as the masses.

We should not be hostile to Indian States. We are not offering non-co-operation against the Rulers. We have not given up the latter as hopeless; I, at any rate, have not done so. I am not ignorant of the tyranny of some of the Rulers. I am disgusted by their uncontrolled and excessive spending. It is shocking that they prefer to live in Europe rather than in their own country. However, I do not blame them for this. This state of affairs is one of the results of the British system. From their childhood, the Rulers grow up dependent on others. They are watched over by British tutors and others, who have

orders to train the Princes to behave like the British, create in them admiration for British rule and educate them to like all things British. We see this preference for European ways among the well-to-do also, and find the same thing on a greater scale among the Rulers. The reason for this love of foreign ways in both is the same. I am sure that if public opinion in Kathiawar, i.e., Indian States, is properly educated, if it becomes strong and fearless, the Rulers will immediately bow to it.

In spite of their many failings, I believe the Princes to be simple-hearted men. They are godfearing, and are much afraid, indeed, of public opinion. I know both these things from personal experience. However, what can the poor Rulers do where there is no public opinion or there arc only flatterers among their subjects? As there is no one to point out their failings and criticize them, they give up all self-restraint; they arc, moreover, encouraged by the British] Government in this. Thus, the circumstances conspire against them and bring about their degradation. True, their oppression is sometimes crude and we feel it to be unbearably cruel. On the other hand, the Government's oppression is civilized and is not felt to be unbearable in the same measure. Moreover, in the part of the country directly ruled by the British, one feels secure in the support of public opinion and numerous co-workers, whereas in the Indian States only a few brave men come forward as yet for public work and so it is easy for the Rulers to suppress them. Nevertheless, if a few polite, humble, well-behaved and discriminating men come forward as public workers, the Rulers will yield to them, and they will do this not so much through fear of them as because of their own virtues.

If we start by being suspicious of the Rulers, are determined to speak ill of them and refuse to see any good in them, we will, from the outset, be set down in the debit column of their books. It would then be very hard to get oneself brought over to the credit side.

Let no one conclude from this that I am encouraging cowardice. I am pointing out the difference between arrogance and fearlessness which is at the same time humble. The mango tree as it grows and spreads bends lower. Similarly, as the strength of the strong increases, he should become progressively more humble; he should become more and more godfearing.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-6-1924

61. MY VIEWS

A gentleman has sent me the opinions of a Jain *muni*[1] on my views, and wishes me to comment on them. I give below the *muni's* opinions and my comments on each:

I. If Gandhi's ideas are fully carried out, they will do harm to Jainism.

I am certain that, if my ideas are carried out, they will do only good to the world, and what benefits the world as a whole cannot possibly harm Jainism or any other religion. Non-violence is love. How can a method of bringing about reform through love do any harm?

2. Khadi will benefit the *Antyajas*, but will harm the interests of the Jains very much.

This opinion is difficult to understand. Can there be no *Antyaja* who is a *shravak*[2]? Moreover, the only sense in which the interest of the Jains can suffer is that the business of those of them who deal in foreign cloth may be ruined. If that happens, however, Jains can start some other business. Why cannot they deal in khadi? There are others besides Jains who also trade in foreign cloth. In the last analysis, it is desirable, from a religious standpoint, that a business which is morally tainted should come to a stop.

3. A businessman commits no sin, whatever he does.

This cannot be Jainism. I have not come across such ideas in any religion.

4. There is much exaggeration in the praises showered on Gandhi. It is not proper to attribute to him the virtues of one like Mahavira[3].

I entirely agree. Those who sing my praises would show their admiration for me better if they stopped praising me and got absorbed in doing their own duty. Such praise will not suffer from exaggeration or any other fault.

5. An *Antyaja* remains an *Antyaja*, however much he purifies himself.

[1] Monk
[2] Follower of the Jain religion
[3] Founder of the Jain religion

This idea has neither religion nor reason in it.

6. Gandhi describes himself as a staunch *Vaishnava* for a reason of his own. All the religions would perish if every one of Gandhi's ideas was carried out. He is a hypocrite.

Personally, I believe that if all my ideas were fully carried out, every religion would prosper and quarrels about religion would cease for ever. Who would accept my own certificate to the effect that I am not a hypocrite? The real answer, therefore, will be found only after my death.

Besides these, I have also been accused of much else. I have given above only the most important counts. I would advise the gentleman who has sent me this list, as also others who approve of my activities, not to enter into argument for defending my ideas. In refraining from doing so, they would be putting those ideas into action. Those who accept my ideas and carry them out should keep in mind our rustic saying: "Our interest is in the oil, not in the sound which the drops make as they fall." Moreover, by replying to accusations, we generate ill-feeling, waste our time and arouse passions. We should also understand that we have no reason to believe that the accusations are inspired merely by malice. A good number of those who criticize me believe in all sincerity that many of my actions only harm the country. The right way is to think carefully over the charges made against a friend of ours and tell him what truth we find in them. Generally, a person does not attend to what is said by his opponents but, when his friends point out his failings, he will, if there is any measure of sincerity in him, take prompt note and examine himself.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-6-1924

62. MAHA GUJARAT'S DUTY

This is the hour of trial for everybody. I believe we shall have won half the battle if we could see ourselves, and show to the world, what we actually are. We can advance only if we know and let others know our real worth.

But the individual or society that puts on false appearances deceives not only himself or itself but also the world. There is, at any rate, no progress. The water seen in a mirage can never quench thirst; running after it is only futile labour. Similarly, it is sheer waste of time

to try to look different from what we are.

At the time of my imprisonment[1], I saw hypocrisy all round me and I still see the same thing. In order that' we may all get out of this, I want a few things to be clarified at the ensuing meeting[2] of the All-India Congress Committee. I know that the members of the A.I.C.C. are elected by democratic methods, and I have not suggested any change in this. I have only advised a course by following which we may, without changing the rule, ensure that appearance corresponds to reality. This is my reason for advising that so long as the Congress resolution calling upon the people to renounce titles, to leave Government schools and law-courts and to boycott Councils and foreign cloth stands, those who have no faith in it should resign membership of the Committee.

What the Congress decides, we shall know by and by; what Gujarat intends to do we can know today. Every province can, and it is its duty to, make its position clear.

In my opinion, the most important constructive activity is hand-spinning. Those who have no faith in its power to bring freedom, what service can they do by remaining in the Congress? They can, of course, get or try to get, the resolution of the Congress revised. But so long as it stands, they should keep away from the executive bodies of the Congress.

If, however, they have faith in the power of the spinning-wheel, they should study its science thoroughly and see that they acquire the skill to spin the finest yarn. In fact, they should regularly make a gift of some yarn to the Congress. My demand is for no more than four ounces of yarn every month. This quantity can be easily produced by spinning half an hour daily.

The work will not bring the desired result if it becomes mere drudgery. It will be well done only if we have interest in it. If we take interest in it, we shall come to love it all the more. Those who can spare more time need not be content with half an hour of spinning. This is suggested as the minimum, not the maximum, time to be given to it. All permanent committees are executive bodies. Consider what it would mean if all their members spin in this manner. If every town in Gujarat has an executive body, we shall have good spinners in every town. The result will be that in a short time we shall see everybody in

[1] In March 1922

[2] This was to be held at Ahmedabad on June 27.

the town clothed in khadi. There are weavers in sufficient number; the only difficulty is that we do not get a regular supply of good yarn. If every village in the country starts spinning and weaves its own cloth, think what a gain this would mean. The quantity of yarn spun by one person may not be worth much, but the total quantity spun by the whole community will be worth a lot. Drop by drop fills the lake. If the income of every Indian were to go up by one rupee a year, we can understand that its effect on every person individually would be insignificant, but the sum total of such increase has a great potential. What can an ant do? But is there anything impossible for a swarm of ants? The swarm derives its strength from the individual ants. Similarly, the power which results from a whole community taking up spinning derives from the individual spinner. Such is the importance of the spinner. But someone may object: "One person's spinning is of some worth when the whole community takes it up; what good, however, can a few persons spinning in isolation do?" Such a question will be raised only by the ignorant. If individuals do not make a beginning, what would the community do? All the reforms in the world to this date have been initiated by individuals and not by society as a whole. Everything begins with the figure I. Without it, the rest has no significance. Obviously, the isolated individual will have to labour by himself for a long time. His labours will produce an effect on the community only when it sees his unshakable faith. And the more valuable a reform, the longer the time it takes to be accepted by society. A Herculean task like winning freedom cannot be accomplished with an effort involving no great suffering.

One who understands this will not give way to despair. On the contrary, delay in society's response to his effort will only serve to increase his zeal and his readiness for suffering. How long can society remain indifferent to such deep faith?

At this juncture, I demand from Gujarat persons with such unshakable faith in the power of the spinning-wheel. I hope that, by the end of this month, every active worker will have got hold of a fine wheel and started spinning.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-6-1924

63. MY NOTES

THE AGA KHANI BROTHERS

My article[1] on Hindu-Muslim unity has called forth an endless stream of comment. Some have liked it, while others have been incensed by it. From time to time, I shall publish in *Navajivan* extracts from these comments, whenever necessary. The Khoja friends have been hurt and perhaps enraged by what I said about their activities. They preferred to come and see me instead of writing to me. This, of course, pleased me very much. I could thus get to know their point of view also. They feel that I should have made no comment without having first met them. I explained to them that, in my statement taken as a whole, I had presented both the sides, as was but proper, and, concerning matter about which I had no positive knowledge, I had said that certain allegations were made in regard to some activities. I told them that I would certainly go through the books which I had received and give my opinion on them. If I feel that my informants had misled me, I would admit the fact and also apologize. If, however, I form from these writings the same impression as my informants and I agree with their views, the Khoja friends should not feel hurt. I also told them that I could not accept the view that the Hon. Aga Khan is an incarnation in the sense recognized in Hinduism. Moreover, the way in which they use the word *Om* and the shape they have given to it is, in my opinion, taking liberties with concepts which belong to Hinduism.

They asked me, however, what they should do if they felt about the matter as they said they did. I told them that in that case they should adhere to their views and accept my right to express my views in oral discussions and in my writings.

Moreover, they assured me that no one is ever offered material inducement to become a Khoja. I was very glad to hear this and assured them that I would repeat this to my informants and, if they failed to prove their charge, I would state that, too, in *Navajivan*. Finally, they also said that readers of *Navajivan* were likely to get the impression that the Khojas' belief in a perfect incarnation was of recent origin. The truth of the matter according to them is that this

[1] *Vide* "Hindu-Muslim Tension: Its Cause and Cure", 29-5-1924.

belief of theirs, as also their belief about *Om*, dates back to very ancient times and that they have proof in support of this.[1]

SELFISHNESS

After reading the note[2] in *Navajivan* on the dirty habits of many third-class passengers, a gentleman writes to say:[3]

I congratulate him on refusing to accept the seat belatedly offered to him as a favour and, not minding the inconvenience, remaining where he was in the narrow passage. If those who offered him the seat wished to display the smallest measure of courtesy, they could have offered him a seat as soon as he entered the compartment. Courtesy demands that, even if there is no room, we should offer a seat to a passenger who boards the train. The fact is that we have not yet gone much beyond regard for family relationships. We know the duty of sacrifice for the sake of kinsfolk. We may also do something for acquaintances. There is nothing at all in either of these. We also suffer inconvenience for a third category, that of the strong and the powerful. This is unworthy, of course. As for passengers who may be poor, we would even go to the length of pushing them away from the seats already occupied by them. If we wish to cultivate the feeling of being one people, it is our duty to be ready to make room especially for the poor. If our neighbour (particularly if he is a stranger) is hungry, we should give him food to eat and water to drink before we attend to ourselves and we should suffer discomfort ourselves to make him comfortable. Such an attitude, if adopted towards our own people, means patriotic unity and, if towards the whole of mankind, means a religious spirit. Even if we do not wish to cultivate the religious spirit, we should cultivate patriotic unity.

TOLL BARRIER

Two of the resolutions passed by the Dholka Taluka Conference[4] are worth noting:

From one of these we come to know that a toll barrier is imposed near the villages of Shiyal, Bagodara, etc. This barrier is not to be crossed between sunset and sunrise. The officer who has notified

[1] A literal translation of this part of the article was given in *Young India* under "Notes", 12-6-1924.

[2] *Vide* "My Notes", 25-5-1924.

[3] The letter is not translated here.

[4] Held in May 1924 in North Gujarat

this rule must be either totally unfamiliar with the life of the farmer or indifferent to their feelings and their convenience. In these parts, farmers' movements take place mostly at night. They do not sleep at all after two in the morning. As soon as it is dawn, they yoke the bullocks to the cart or take up some other task. To put up barriers and prevent people with such habits from doing their work is as good as starving them. The hardship must be immediately removed. The Taluka Conference has sought the advice of the Provincial Committee. Before the latter passes any resolution, it should write to the Commissioner to ascertain the position and find out how long it is proposed to retain the restriction. If the farmers have any courage, Shri Vallabhbhai has pointed out the remedy in his speech. But these measures should be adopted only as a last resort. Before any such step is taken, much has to be done.

We shall discuss the other resolution next week.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-6-1924

64. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

Jeth Sud 6 [*June 8, 1924*][1]

BHA ISHRI DEV CHAND BHAI,

Someone has sent me the enclosed extract. Please see the portion underlined by me. Is the statement true? If true, who did the thing?

Vallabhbhai, Devdas, Ba—all will leave together, on the 10th evening most probably.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photos tat of the Gujara ti origin al: G.N. 5732

[1] Devdas and Kasturba left for Bhavnagar on June 11, 1924; *vide* "Letter to Vasumati Pandit", 11-6-1924. In that year *Jeth Sud* 6 fell on June 8.

65. INTERVIEW TO " THE HINDU"

AHMEDABAD,
June 8, 1924

. . . Mahatmaji asked me to sit near to him and asked me the purpose of my visit. I joined my hands as I went near him with reverence to which he replied with his characteristic bowing and smiling. Then I told him that I had come for his *darshan* and also for an interview. He gladly consented to give me an interview. The following are the questions put by me and answered by Mahatmaji:

At the outset I enquired of his health, to which he replied that he was getting better. After talking a while on other matters, the conversation turned to the interview itself.

"You did not give your rigid interpretation to the 'peaceful and legitimate, to be 'non-violent and truthful', as you did after the Delhi A.I.C.C.?" I asked.

I may not have made my meaning clear at the Calcutta Congress, as there could not be any interpretation but that, and as I thought everybody understood that meaning.

But then, why do you force that interpretation on others now? He answered:

I do not want to force on others my interpretation of the words 'peaceful and legitimate'as 'non-violent and truthful'. To do so would be inconsistent with my dharma. I had to make my meaning subsequently clear, as I thought it was misunderstood.

In your recent statement, you lay greater stress on the mental attitude and not on the actual results attained, but at the Calcutta Congress you started N.C.O. to achieve definite ends, viz., Khilafat and Punjab wrongs, and at that time, you never laid more stress on the mental attitude. Is this consistent?

I do not attach much importance to mental attitude, except in so far as it would affect the treatment of the different problems.

As regards the Congress machinery, you know that it lays down its policy and chooses its own executives to carry and supervise the carrying out of its policy. If in the discretion vested in the Congress, it chooses Swarajists to carry out its policy, will you still think that the Swarajist position is not consistent with its policy, especially when the Congress knows better than anybody else?

This also is a misunderstanding of the position I have taken. I know it is open to Congress voters to elect whom they choose, but as a humble worker in the Congress and a voter myself, I am exercising right of free opinion and trying to guide the voters consistently with their programme to choose only such representatives as have pledged themselves to fulfil the programme in its entirety. My appeal is

similarly addressed to the present representatives of the voters that, whilst they abide by the N.C.O. resolution, it is their duty either to carry out that programme in its entirety or to resign and ask the electors to choose those who believe in that programme.

If the Swarajist programme is altogether inconsistent with the mental attitude essential to N.C.O., how do you approve of its programme by its success, as measured by its results? Mahatmaji laughed and said:

If the Swarajist programme is successful, I wish to be the first to join the party and congratulate them, and then, I shall pocket all my pride and my mental attitude.

The conversation next turned to Hindu-Muslim questions. I asked: In your recent article[1] on Hindu-Muslim tension, many Hindus think that injustice is being done to them at your hands as you demand more sacrifices from them than their Muslim brothers.

In the first instance, I have not demanded sufficient sacrifices from Hindus. But if they will only sacrifice to their utmost, I would promise not only swaraj within a day, but promise that Hindus will always be in the ascendent and hold the Muslims in the palm of their hands.

But what have you to say to those Arya Samajists who say that injustice is also being done them in your article? They think you have petted and defended Maulana Abdul Bari and Maulana Mahomed Ali and you could have done the same to Dayanand Saraswati and Shraddhanandji. Any special motive in condemning the Arya Samaj deliberately, will you clear your position?

Surely. But I have not defended either of the Maulanas at all; I have said plainly that the reference in Mahomed Ali's Congress speech to division of untouchables was wrong, and it is to his credit that he has made the admission. I have also said that Abdul Bari is betrayed into making statements which cannot be explained, and I have therefore called him a dangerous friend. I am unable to say anything more against either of these friends, because I know nothing more. Similarly, I know about the Arya Samajists' illustrious founder and Shraddhanandji and I have also not hesitated to draw their attention to what I have considered to be their weaknesses. The motive is obvious. I would be untrue to myself and to the cause if I did not say all that I have felt regarding the principal actors, and regarding the principal religions which came into conflict with one another. I am anxious that the Arya Samaj and Shraddhanandji should do much

[1] *Vide* "Hindu-Muslim Tension: Its Cause and Cure", 29-5-1924.

more good than they have already done and, therefore, I have drawn attention to their limitations a friend and a well-wisher and by no means as a critic. But in spite of this, there is a good deal of perturbation in the Arya Samaj circles throughout India over my remarks. I can quite understand we have all, at the present moment, become very touchy and, therefore, impatient of criticism as intolerance. We have become intolerant of any criticism that might be levelled against us, even though it may be of very friendly character. I have, however, no doubt whatsoever that the storm will subside if I keep myself cool and, as there is no danger of my losing my head yet for a while, I am not affected by all the furious criticism that is directed against me.

One more question about khaddar and I have done (I told Mahatmaji as it was getting late): Is your khaddar programme meant to bring about economic salvation of India, or is it meant to change the mental attitude of the people towards nationalism? If it is the former, then how do you expect swarajya without concerted action for creating nationalism among the people, and, if it is the latter, will the present khaddar programme be sufficient to rouse that feeling among the masses?

The khaddar programme undoubtedly will bring about the economic salvation of India, if it succeeds. In my opinion, no concerted action is possible for the masses without their realizing their economic salvation. Moreover, the khaddar programme is impossible without concerted action. Thirdly, a successful khaddar programme necessarily means the conversion of Englishmen themselves into nationalists, or, at least, impartial spectators of the Indian movement. They will no longer succeed in holding India under subjection for the purpose of her exploitation.

. . . Do you expect, Mahatmaji, that the A.I.C.C. that will meet here shortly would endorse your views as embodied in your two statements and the drastic tests for office-bearers?

It is very difficult for me to say what the members of the A.I.C.C. will do at its forthcoming session. But it will not surprise me in the least if all the drastic tests I have suggested are rejected by an overwhelming majority. I either want a clear-cut majority, which implicitly believes in the programme and is determined to carry it out at any cost, or a microscopic minority. What is intolerable to me is the extreme indefiniteness that overwhelms us at the present moment and makes all real progress utterly impossible.

But in case the opinions of the people's representatives are nicely balanced, for and against your programme, what do you intend doing?

In the first instance, I do not consider it possible that there

would be a balance of voting on either side. As a matter of fact, we shall come to a clear understanding without the necessity of voting. But if it does come to voting, and the parties are nicely balanced, I dare say God will give us something or other which will enable us to divide the parties sharply. . . .

The Hindu, 9-6-1924

66. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Jeth Sud 7 [*June 9, 1924*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Bhai Nagindas[2] has just arrived here. He says that no justice can be done to the book till it is fully studied.[3] What he wants to know is: does the exposition of subjects in the collection accurately reflect my views? I think this is the right yardstick. Whatever the sources from which my ideas have been taken, they should be so woven together by someone familiar with my views that there is no misinterpretation. Hence it is necessary to see what impression is created by reading it. Read it from this point of view and then let me know.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: Pyarel al Papers . Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y. Courte sy: Belade vi Nayyar and Dr. Sushil a Nayyar

[1] As noted by the addressee

[2] Nagindas Amulakharai

[3] The reference is to one of a series of 13 books entitled *Gandhi Shikshan*; *vide* "What may Hindus Do?", 19-6-1924 and "Letter to nagindas Amulakhrai", 13-8-1924.

67. INAUGURAL ADDRESS AT GUJARAT VIDYAPITH[1]

June 10, 1924

SHRI KRIPALANI[2], STUDENTS, FRIENDS, SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

This morning, I saw three letters addressed to me.[3] One of them advised me to burn the Vidyapith, if possible. The Vidyapith, the letter said, had done no good in all these years. The correspondent himself had been once its student. The second letter tells me that the students are pleasure-loving and indulge their palate in all manner of ways. The correspondent had sent his sons to the Vidyapith in the belief that the students there led simple lives and developed strength of character. What should he do, he asks. The third letter, from a friend in Madras, suggests that in my speech today I ought to give a lead to the whole nation.

Well, what should I do? Which of the three suggestions should I follow? I wish to act upon none of them. Why should I burn the Vidyapith, in the establishment of which I have had some share, however small? There is a story told by an English painter. Once, by way of joke, he hung up one of his paintings in the market-place and wrote below it that anyone who saw any fault in it should mark it with a dot. The next day there was not an inch on the surface of the painting which was without a mark. But the artist said that he would not burn the painting so long as he was himself satisfied with it.

I remembered the painter this morning and felt that he was right. There would be no end to criticisms if we paid attention to all of them. God has made man a creature of attachment. We carry on our work driven by our attachments. On your part, however, you should draw your lesson from all three of these suggestions. The correspondent who has been bitter in his remarks says that neither the students nor the teachers have anything in them. He desires that I should publish his letter in *Navajivan* and also comment on it. I

[1] Delivered as Chancellor of the Gujarat Vidyapith, National University, Ahmedabad, at the commencement of the new academic year

[2] J. B. Kripalani, then Principal of Gujarat Mahavidyalaya, a constituent college of the Gujarat Vidyapith

[3] Here a report in *The Hindu*, 10-6-1924, has: "Since this morning I was thinking of you students, but I could not concentrate on you alone. I was also thinking how best to solve the Hindu-Muslim problem. In the meantime Devdas brought me three letters which he said must be read before I addressed the students."

intend to do no such thing. Concerning the charge that there is no simplicity in the lives of students, it is for you to consider what truth there is in it. As for the South Indian friend, I shall deal with him. If no one here takes down my speech, he may indeed believe that I did make an important speech.

This much by way of introduction. I have, of course, thought out what I should tell you. I won't say I have not, for it is not my wont to indulge in hypocritical disparagement of oneself. Two years of reflection in the quiet of the Yeravda Ashram[1] have strengthened my former convictions. I do not at all repent what I have put before the country. We established in Gujarat a Vidyapith and a Mahavidyalaya, filled them with Sindhis and Maharashtrians and kept no place for Gujaratis. For this also I am not in the least sorry. It is Gujarat's duty to accept everything good that it may get from Maharashtra or Sind. If Shri Kripalani thinks of himself as a Bihari, let us take him in as a Bihari. He will discover something useful to learn from Gujarat too. If he was a weaver in Bihar, he will become a spinner and carder here and then say that he is as much a Gujarati as he is a Bihari. But it is in your hands to bring this about. Since he comes from Sind, he is our guest. With a Gujarati we can be free in our criticism. But we have given Shri Kripalani a place here for our own benefit and we will, therefore, gratefully accept whatever he has to offer. If I had my way, I would not have any Gujarati, but fill the whole Mahavidyalaya with Sindhis and Maharashtrians. I would ask them all to be like Kaka and Mama. If we could get all persons of this type, what more would we require?

Why did we establish the Vidyapith? We did so to help the Non-co-operation movement. Non-co-operation with whom? With students and professors of Government colleges? Certainly not. Our Non-co-operation is aimed against the system. What is the nature of this Non-co-operation? And what do we expect to gain from it? As I thought about this, two stories came to my mind. One was about a goat and a tiger. A goat and a tiger were once kept together. The tiger was in a cage. The goat was free. It was given good food, it had fine grass to eat. But it became thinner and thinner. A thoughtful man, someone like me, saw that the goat did not grow fat because it was in the company of the tiger. Once it was removed from the sight of the tiger, it danced with joy, even with plain grass to eat, and began to grow fat

[1] Central Jail where Gandhiji was imprisoned in 1922-24

The other story which I remembered was one written by Sir Narayan Chandavarkar[1], and which I read while in jail. He had once gone out for a walk in Poona. He saw an old woman going home with a lamb. It had been in the household of a big officer and, therefore, had lacked nothing by way of food. But it was not happy there. As the old woman led it away, it was dancing and gamboling and ran ahead of her, for it was going to its home. From confinement it was going to freedom. In freedom alone can any creature grow, never in slavery. This idea is expressed by Tulsidas in his inimitable manner: "For the slave there is no happiness even in his dreams."[2]

Educational institutions of the Government may provide us the best of facilities, may have good professors and big buildings. But the stigma on us will remain. We can aspire to nothing better than service, than clerkship. At the most we can think of becoming pleaders. Or not even that. After graduation, we can only think of a job with an initial salary of thirty rupees. If we rise to become a professor in Gujarat College, that is the farthest limit of our aspiration. In the Mahavidyalaya, on the other hand, the student is knocked about a good deal and learns what he can. One cannot be sure, either, what formal education one will receive. The building may or may not have a roof. The owner may any time send you packing at short notice. Vallabh-bhai has to go begging for funds for the Vidyapith. It is doubtful even whether there will be a Vidyapith tomorrow. This is its plight. The sun never sets, indeed, on Gujarat College, but on the Vidyapith he sets everyday and rises the next day. That he should rise and set is the law of Nature in the universe. We want to submit to it and yet survive.

We will assuredly keep our ideal high. That we are not always able to live up to it. that we make mistakes is certainly true. It is also true that we do many wrong things. But, then, we do not try to prove that sin is virtue.

Our ideal is the text: *Sa vidya ya vimuktaye*.[3] Bhai Kishorelal[4] asked me whether we were not misusing this great text by interpreting

[1] Narayan Ganesh Chandavarkar (1855-1923); High Court Judge, writer and Liberal leader of Bombay

[2] पराधीन सपनेहु सुख नाहीं ।

[3] Knowledge is that which leads to freedom.

[4] Kishorelal Mashruwala; constructive worker and associate of Gandhiji; thinker, and author of the book, *Gandhi and Marx;* for some time Registrar, Gujarat Vidyapith; editor, *Harijanbandhu* and *Harijan* for some years

it in a narrow sense. I must give serious consideration to anything Kishorelal says. His criticism would distress me. I felt, however, that we were not misusing it. He alone who wins freedom in the narrower sense can win it in the other. If we do not win this smaller freedom, how can we attain the larger one? Thus, our ideal is freedom, both in the popular sense and in the real sense of the word.

I do not at all feel unhappy today, do not repent having founded this Vidyapith. If all the students of the Mahavidyalaya were to leave it and join Government colleges, even then I would simply say what fools they were and what a wise man 1 was. There is no other way for the country to save itself. We do not realize this because all of us are under the power of a terrible spell. For my part, I will go on shouting from the house-tops to the end of my life that there is no way except Non-co-operation for me. When I see that the time for full co-operation has arrived, I will change my tune. But, till then, even if the whole country deserts me, I will cling to Non-co-operation. I say this because I have had some experience. I have spent years thinking before I formed my views. I might even say I have done some *tapascharya* for the purpose. I cannot but argue as I do. How can a man who knows that five times twenty makes a hundred ever say that it requires four times or six times twenty? My stay in the Yeravda Ashram has only strengthened my convictions.

The problem is, what are you to do after your education is over? Shri Kripalani has left nothing for me to say on the problem of a career for you. The main thing, however, is that we wish to learn to shed all fear. If you would have a job, would utilize your education for worldly gain, all right, I say, do it. I shall merely tell you here what a young Englishman does. I do not hate the English. Many people do not know, perhaps, that I love Englishmen. I am not against following their example in some matters. All I want is my own land to stand upon. I may then beautify that land with colours obtained from any source. None of my English friends ever worried what would happen to him if circumstances did not permit him any longer to live with me. These friends gave up their jobs to come and live with me. I had made a mistake about their habits and daily needs, but none of them ever blamed me for that. They knew that I had been perfectly sincere in thinking as I did. Besides, everyone of them was well aware that it was God, not I, who gave them the wherewithal to live. Both the Muslims and the Hindus know that He, the Being who gave us life, will provide

us our daily bread. But today the Muslims have forgotten their Koran and the Hindus have forgotten their *Gita*. They have taken up, instead, this worthless science of economics. They are ever so busy struggling to save themselves from starvation. They do not know that even persons who did not struggle thus did not die of starvation. Moreover, why all this struggling? How to be firm in the pursuit of our ideal is the only thing worth learning in school. In English schools, too, they do not let their pupils worry about their livelihood. The teachers advise them to use their abilities after completing their education and earn their living. And so it is that we see the inhabitants of this small island in all parts of the world. I have many English friends who travel today all over the world. Someone will remark: "But, then, they enjoy the protection of the Union Jack." The Union Jack does protect them no doubt, but it does not help them to win their daily bread. If someone threatens to kill them, then, of course, the flag will go up and the guns will roar. We do not want that protection. But that is not what we are discussing at the moment. Our point is only that you should not worry how you will earn your livelihood in future. You should resolve in your mind that, if it came to that, you would earn your livelihood by doing the work of a scavenger or a weaver, but would do nothing unworthy in your life, would never stand at anyone's door begging. If you have this faith, why should you worry what will happen to your parents, your brothers and sisters? To have light in the dark, it is enough to keep one lamp burning. Similarly, it will be enough if you act like a worthy son, though you stand alone in your family. No matter if you have to provide for your parents and brothers and sisters. Tell your sister that you will eat only after she has had something to eat, but that she cannot have delicacies, that a dry crust of bread is all she will get. When she sees you working hard for her sake, she will not sit idle. She will start working in order to add her share to your income. In this way, if you have courage, everything will turn out well in the end.

And now about those who stand midway between these extreme positions. What should we do, what should we expect, you will ask. Well, you should expect nothing. I advise you to leave the professors when you lose faith in them, when you feel that theyhave come here to make money or to show off their learning and gain a reputation as big men. Someone told me that I might have no love for money, but I was certainly likely to make a show, for I wished to be counted a mahatma. There is some truth in this. If you find that the professors

are here to gain a name as great men, you should leave them. Not only leave them, but speak out against them afterwards to your hearts' content. You are not bound by any contract with them. If, however, the professors are men of noble character, you should not throw all your burden on them. Knowledge is not to be had as a gift from someone. No person can give knowledge as we give alms. The professors' duty lies in recognizing the hidden worth within you and bringing it out. It is for you to display it to full advantage and cultivate it further. The word "education" also means bringing out what lies hidden. You should not, therefore, worry what you will learn. You should have faith in your teachers and receive trustfully what they give.[1]

It is for you to preserve the purity of your character. The professors cannot do that for you. Always bear this in mind: You do not live in the Vidyapith to enjoy pleasures of luxuries. Your pleasures lie in your studies, in your physical strength and in your striving. You should learn to make use of your hands and feet. Students forget the use of their limbs and then want to build robust bodies by going to the gymnasium. Going to the gymnasium will not make you robust and strong. You should first cultivate a good heart. You will be able to develop physical strength afterwards.

My prayer is addressed to you. What can I pray for from God? I live in His presence all the time. And so my prayer is only to you. You should be worthy of yourselves and your teachers. Our Vidyapith is a model for the whole of the country. Gujarat seems to have made Non-co-operation in education a success. The future alone will show whether, and how far, it has really done so.

I do not want to make any appeal to the professors, as I am one of them. At the moment, the only idea which I want to put before you and which I want you to take home with you is this: whether or not this experiment in Non-co-operation in the sphere of education will succeed depends on you.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-6-1924

[1] The report in *The Hindu* here has: "Trust them, I repeat, have faith in them and do your duty and let your hearts be instilled with the spirit of freedom and nationalism. Thus, illumine the Vidyapith in which you study."

68. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Jeth Sud 10 [*June 11, 1924*][1]

CHI . VAS UMATI ,

I have your second letter. Please expect only as many letters as you write to me. It has worked out only thus so far. I replied to you the very day I received your letter. I hope it has reached you. Ramdas and others have returned from Abu. I see that the stay at Abu has done them much good. How nice it would have been if you could have gone with them! Now do stay there long enough and recover your health completely. I am quite well. Prabhudas has not yet returned from Abu. Devdas and Ba have left for Bhavnagar today.

Blessings from

BAPU

SISTER VASUMATI
LEELAVATI AROGYABHUVAN
DEOLALI

From the Gujara ti original: C.W. 444. Courte sy: Vasuma ti Pandit

69. MESSAGE TO SAURASHTRA RAJPUT CONFERENCE

VARTEJ,
June 11, 1924

On the eve of the first Parishad of Rajputs, I wish to say only this much: Begin the Parishad by observing the fundamental truths of religion. You will pass many resolutions as regards your rights, but it is my request that you should not forget your duty. God always gives rights to those who perform their duties with religious zeal. Try to be the protectors of the poor, and in doing this, you will come to know that charkha is their very life. Make the charkhas circulate among them by yourselves taking to spinning. I hope you will today take a *vrata*[2] to put on hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar only and this will bring the blessings of the poor on you. I can add nothing to the above.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-6-1924

[1] The postmark bears this date. The date *Jeth Sud* 10, which corresponds to June 12, 1924, seems to be a slip.

[2] Vow, sacred undertaking

70. MY JAIL EXPERIENCES-VIII

JAIL ECONOMICS

Everyone who has any experience of jails knowbs that they are the most starved of all departments. The hospitals are comparatively the most expensive of public institutions. In the jails everything is of the simplest and the crudest type. In them there is extravagance in the spending of human labour, there is miserliness in the spending of money and materials. In hospitals it is just the reverse. And yet both are institutions designed to deal with human diseases—jails for mental and hospitals for physical. Mental diseases are regarded as a crime and therefore punishable; physical diseases are regarded as unforeseen visitations of nature to be indulgently treated. As a matter of fact, there is no reason for any such distinction. Mental as well as physical diseases are traceable to the same causes. If I steal, I commit a breach of laws governing healthy society. If I suffer from stomach-ache, I still commit a breach of laws governing a healthy society. One reason why physical diseases are treated lightly is because the so-called higher classes break the laws of physical health—perhaps more frequently than the lower classes. The higher classes have no occasion for committing crude thefts and, as their lives would be disturbed if thefts continued, they being generally law-givers, polish gross stealing, knowing all the while that their swindles which pass muster are far more harmful to society than the crude thefts. It is curious, too, that both institutions flourish because of wrong treatment. Hospitals flourish because patients are indulged and humoured, jails flourish because the prisoners are punished as if they were beyond recall. If every disease, mental or physical, were regarded as a lapse, but every patient or prisoner were to be treated kindly and sympathetically, not severely or indulgently, both jails and hospitals would show a tendency to decrease. A hospital no more than a jail is a necessity for a healthy society. Every patient and every prisoner should come out of his hospital or jail as a missionary to preach the gospel of mental and physical health.

But I must stop the comparison at this stage. The reader will be surprised to learn that the parsimony in prisons is exercised on the ground of economy. Although all labour is taken from prisoners, e.g., drawing water, grinding flour, cleaning roads and closets, cooking

food, the prisoners are not only not self-supporting, but they do not even pay for their own food. And in spite of all their labour, the prisoners do not get the food they would like nor the manner of cooking they would appreciate; this for the simple reason that the prisoners who do the cooking, etc., are not as a rule interested in their work. It is for them a task to be performed under unsympathetic supervision. It is easy enough to see that, if the prisoners were philanthropists and, therefore, felt interested in the welfare of their fellow-prisoners, they would not find themselves in prisons. If, therefore, a more rational and more moral system of administration was adopted, the prisons would easily become self-supporting reformatories instead of, as they are now, expensive penal settlements. I would save the terrible waste of labour in drawing water, grinding flour, etc. If I was in charge, I would buy flour from outside, I would draw water by machinery and, instead of having all kinds of odd jobs, I would devote the prisons to agriculture, hand-spinning and hand-weaving. In the small jails only spinning and weaving may be kept. Even now weaving there is in most of the central prisons. All that is necessary is to add carding and hand-spinning. All the cotton needed can be easily grown in connection with many jails.[*sic*] This will popularize the national cottage industry and make the prisons self-supporting. The labour of all the prisoners will be utilized for remunerative and yet not for competitive purposes, as is now the case in some respects. There is a printing press attached to the Yeravda Jail. Now this press is largely worked by convict labour. I regard this as unfair competition with the general printing presses. If the prisons were to run competitive industries, they would easily be made even profitable. But my purpose is to show that they can be made self-supporting without entering into such competition and, at the same time, teach the inmates a home industry which on their discharge would give them an independent calling, thus providing for them every incentive to live as respectable citizens.

I would moreover provide for the prisoners as homely an atmosphere as is consistent with public safety. I would thus give them all facility for seeing their relatives, getting books and even tuition. I would replace distrust by reasonable trust. I would credit them with every bit of work they might do and let them buy their own food, cooked or raw.

I would make most of the sentences indeterminate, so that a prisoner will not be detained a moment longer than is necessary for

the protection of society and for his own reform.

I know that this requires a thorough reorganization and the employing of a different kind of warders from the ex-military men that most of them are now. But I know, too, that the reform can be initiated without much extra cost.

At the present moment, the prisons are rest-houses for rogues and torture-houses for ordinary simple prisoners which the majority are. The rogues manage to get all they want, the simple untutored prisoners do not get even what they need. Under the scheme which I have endeavoured to sketch in its barest outline, the rogues will have to be straight before they feel comfortable, and the simple innocent prisoners will have as favourable an atmosphere as is possible to give them in the circumstances. Honesty will be remunerative and dishonesty at a discount.

By making the prisoners pay for their food in work, there will be little idleness. And by having only agriculture and cotton manufacture, including what handicrafts may be required for these two industries, the expensive supervision will be considerably lessened.

Young India, 12-6-1924

71. UNTOUCHABILITY AND SWARAJ

A correspondent gravely writes:

> The very term 'untouchability' seems to my mind to be an anomaly, because there generally does not exist any particular class of people called 'touchables'. It is very rarely that one actually and physically touches another, unless necessity demands it. What is usually obtaining in case of those other than the so called 'untouchables' is that one does not mind the approach of another, one does not mind another passing by his side. That is all and the one does not literally and voluntarily 'touch' another. In the same way, if one minds his own business, allowing the 'untouchable' to mind his own, is not the vexed problem solved?
>
> I am sure you do not want me to go and actually 'touch' the 'untouchable' in order to remove the sin and, if you concede that actual touching is not necessary, what is the purpose in characterizing the evil as 'untouchability'? Your use of the term 'untouchability' does imply that its removal consists in physical touching and I am afraid that orthodox objection to the movement is partly due to this. I do not think that I often touch my own brother and as such it is neither necessary nor expedient that I should touch another man, even if I want to solve the problem; and hence, I think,

‘unapproachability’ better connotes the state of things relating tothat community. No amount of external embracing will case the situation, unless the spirit of toleration exists within.

Next, I am unable to understand the relation between the existence of this evil and the establishment of swaraj. After all, 'unapproachability' is only one of the many evils of the Hindu society—perhaps a greater evil—and as long as society exists similar evils do exist, as no society is free from evils. How is this an impediment to the obtaining of swaraj and why do you make its removal a condition precedent to our fitness for swaraj? Is it not possible for this to be set right when swaraj is obtained, if not voluntarily, at least by legislation?

I can very well understand the imperative necessity for permanent Hindu-Muslim unity, as dissensions between these two large communities may be taken advantage of by the Government, who may therefore indefinitely put off granting our demands. I can also understand the social, religious and the humanitarian aspects of the evil Of ‘untouchability’ but I cannot imagine how this can be construed as a political problem, without solving which swaraj is impossible.

I have no quarrel about the word. I abhor with my whole soul the system which has reduced a large number of Hindus to a level less than that of beasts. The vexed problem would be solved if the poor *Panchama,* not to use the word ‘untouchable’, was allowed to mind his own business. Unfortunately, he has no mind or business he can call his own. Has a beast any mind or business but that of his master’s? Has a *Panchama* a place he can call his own ? He may not walk on the very roads he cleans and pays for by the sweat of his brow. He may not even dress as the others do. The correspondent talks of toleration. It is an abuse of language to say that we Hindus extend any toleration towards our *Panchama* brothers. We have degraded them and then have the audacity to use their very degradation against their rise.

Swaraj for me means freedom for the meanest of our countrymen. If the lot of the *Panchama is* not improved when we are all suffering, it is not likely to be better under the intoxication of swaraj. If it is necessary for us to buy peace with the Mussalmans as a condition of swaraj, it is equally necessary for us to give peace to the *Panchama* before we can, with any show of justice or self-respect, talk of swaraj. I am not interested in freeing India merely from the English yoke. I am bent upon freeing India from any yoke whatsoever. I have

no desire to exchange King Log for King Stork. Hence for me the movement of swaraj is a movement of self-purification.

Young India, 12-6-1924

72. THE ARYA SAMAJISTS

A storm of indignation on the part of Arya Samajists is blowing against me. I have letters and telegrams of energetic protest against my references to the Samaj, its illustrious founder, Swami Shraddhanandji and the *shuddhi* movement. They are from Ghaziabad, Mutan, Delhi, Sukkur, Karachi, Jagraon, Secunderabad, Lahore, Sialkot, Allahabad, etc. I omit mention of individual letters. Probably all of them expect me to publish their protests; some have specially insisted upon my doing so. They will forgive me for not complying with their desire. The majority are worded after the fashion of the telegram I reproduced last week.[1] All resent what they regard as an attack upon the Arya Samaj, the *Satyarth Prakash*, Rishi Dayanand, Swami Shraddhanandji and the *shuddhi* movement. I am sorry to have to say that my position still remains unaltered. I have read with careful attention the argumentative correspondence received by me. Those who have attributed my statement to my ignorance have done so probably to leave me an open door for a safe retreat. Unfortunately for me, I have left no such chance for myself. I cannot plead ignorance of the *Satyarth Prakash* or the general teachings of the Arya Samaj. I cannot even say that I might have been prejudiced against the Arya Samaj. On the contrary, I approached it with the greatest veneration. I had, as I still have, profound regard for the personal character of Rishi Dayanand. His *brahmacharya* was an object of emulation for me. His fearlessness commanded my admiration. And my provincialism, if I have any in me, was flattered by the fact of the Rishi being of the same little Kathiawar as myself. But I could not help myself. The conclusion I came to was in spite of myself, and I published it only when its publication became relevant. Its suppression would have been a cowardly omission on my part. Instead of becoming enraged against me for an honest expression of opinion, I appeal to them to take my criticism in good part, examine it, try to convince me and pray for me if I cannot be convinced. Two letters have challenged me to substantiate my conclusion. It is a fair challenge and I hope before long

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 5-6-1924.

to produce from the *Satyarth Prakash* passages in its support. My friends will not engage me in a religious discussion with them. I shall content myself with giving them the grounds of my opinion, So far as Swami Shraddhanandji is concerned, there is no question Of substantiating my opinion. My critics will oblige me by leaving him and me to ourselves. In spite of my opinion, I shall not quarrel with the Swamiji. Mine is the criticism of a friend. As for *shuddhi*, the critics in their blind fury have forgotten the qualification 'as it is understood in Christianity or to a lesser extent in Islam'. This is quite different from saying that there is no proselytism in Hinduism. Hinduism has a way all its own of *shuddhi*. But if the Arya Samajists differ from me, they may still allow me to retain my opinion. If they will re-read the statement, they will discover that I have said that they have a perfect right to carry on their movement if they like. Toleration is not a coinciding of views. There should be toleration of one another's views though they may be as poles asunder. Lastly I have not said that Arya Samajists or Mussalmans do kidnap women. I have said 'I am told'. By repeating what I was told, I have given both the parties an opportunity of repudiating the charge. Was it not better that I should publish what was being said, so that the atmosphere might be cleared?

Let me point out to my Arya Samaj friends that their protests betray want of toleration. Public men and public institutions cannot afford to be thin-skinned. They must stand criticism with good grace.

And now for an appeal to them. They have almost all entered their protests. I do not mind them. I assure them that I share their sorrow. It pained me when I wrote my criticism. It pains me now to know that it has hurt them. But I am not their enemy. I claim to be their friend. Time will prove my friendship. They do not want to quarrel with anybody or any faith. That is what almost all have said in their letters. Let them take to heart the tribute I have paid to the Samaj, its founder and to Swami Shraddhanandji. I know the purifying work that the Arya Samaj has done. I know that it has laid its finger on many abuses that have soiled Hinduism. But no one can live on his capital. I want them to outlive the latter and extend the spirit of their reform. In spite of their denial, I repeat that their *shuddhi* propaganda savours of the Christian propaganda. I would like them to rise higher. If they will insist upon reform from within, it will tax all their energy and take up all their time. Let them Hinduize the Hindu if they believe

with me that Arya Samaj is a part of Hinduism. If they consider it as distinct from Hinduism, I fear it will be a hard task for them to convert the Hindus. Let them ascertain where they stand. I have criticized because I want them to help the great national and religious movement that is now going on. The Samaj has a great future if it can outgrow what has appeared to me its narrowness. If the Samajists think there is no room for expansion, I shall feel sorry. I ask them, in that case, not to be irritated because I cannot see their liberalism. They should charitably overlook my blindness and patiently endeavour to remove it.

Young India, 12-6-1924

73. NOTES

'RABBI MAY'

A most intimate Jewish friend often used the expression 'Rabbi may', to signify that the highest in the land may commit most atrocious crimes, not only with impunity, but may even carry with them popular congratulations for those crimes. The expression may be fittingly used in connection with the O'Dwyer-Nair case. The judge showed bias from the very commencement. Day after day, the report of the case was painful reading for the public. And though the judgment was a foregone conclusion, the public had hoped against hope that the judge would do some measure of justice in his summing up and judgment. It was not to be. The worst has happened. But a British judge may do with impunity what an Indian may have to lose his head for.

By accepting Sir Michael O'Dwyer's challenge, Sir Sankaran Nair[1] had put the British constitution and the British people on trial. They have been tried and found wanting. Even in a simple matter, a man of Sir Sankaran Nair's proved loyalty could not get justice. If Sir Michael O'Dwyer had lost, the British Empire would not have gone to pieces. But its false prestige would have suffered a bit. And were not the British people pledged to stand by their faithful servants, even though they might at times make mistakes, so long as they were in favour of the Empire which enriched them? I know that Sir Sankaran

[1] 1857-1934; judge of the Madras High Court, 1908; President, Indian National Congress, 1897; Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, 1915-19

Nair has the sympathy of every Indian in his defeat. For me it was a foregone conclusion. As the case dragged along its weary length, I admired Sir Sankaran Nair's pluck in fighting a forlorn cause. He has provided one more powerful count in the indictment against the present rule which must be ended at any cost.

THE WRONG WAY

But let us not lose patience because we fancy we are helpless. The Serajganj Conference has given us the wrong lead. I have not got before me the text of its resolution regarding Gopinath Saha. It reads, I am sorry to say, much worse than the wording shown by *The Times of India* reporter. Here is the text. I copy from the *Forward* (4th June).

> While adhering to the policy of non-violence, this conference pays its respectful homage to patriotism of Gopinath Saha who suffered capital punishment in connection with Mr. Day's murder.

I cannot but regard the resolution as a travesty of non-violence. It would have been less undignified if non-violence had not been dragged in at all. The patriotism of Gopinath Saha could only consist in the murder and not in the capital punishment which was the consequence of the murder. He was not out to die, but to murder one who was odious to him. The knowledge that he ran the risk of being hanged made him brave, but not necessarily patriotic. For every murderer knows that he runs such risk and may, therefore, be called brave. The patriotism, if any, therefore, consisted in the act of murder. Now murder is inconsistent with non-violence even when regarded purely as a policy. Non-violent suffering in one's person and violent injury to another cannot both be patriotic at the same time. The patriotism of every lover of his country demands that, whilst the country pursues a policy of non-violence, he does not disturb it by committing murder. And if anybody does, those who are pledged to the policy of non-violence are in duty bound not only to dissociate themselves from such acts, but to condemn them in unmeasured terms, if only because they must, by thus cultivating public opinion against them, discourage such murder. And this condemnation is necessary even though the motive is the purest imaginable. In practical politics, actions count and not mere motives or 'mental attitudes' bereft of acts or results. Had the belief in the policy of non-violence not been reiterated, much of my argument would no doubt lose its force. But I do submit that, so long as the Congress creed stands as it is, every

Congressman to be true to his creed is pledged to oppose and condemn in thought, word and deed every act of political violence. I would, therefore, humbly advise the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee to dissociate itself entirely from the resolution of the Conference or explain its position to the public, if there is any explanation for the resolution, which appears to have been carried with an overwhelming majority.

AM TIRED OF ‘ MAHATMA ’

The scene in Serajganj Conference over attaching ‘Mahatma’ to my name has caused deep pain to me. Those who, out of their infatuation for the application of the title ‘Mahatma’ to me, either howled down the gentleman who would not use the name or who implored him to do so, rendered no service to the cause or to me. They harmed the cause of non-violence and pained me. What relish could they have in a person using a title from compulsion? I congratulate the gentleman upon his courage in having withdrawn from the Conference rather than use a title under compulsion. He showed, in my opinion, a truer appreciation of what I stand for than my blind admirers. I assure all my admirers and friends that they will please me better if they will forget the Mahatma and remember Gandhiji, as the gentleman in question quite courteously did, or think of me simply as Gandhi. The highest honour that my friends can do me is to enforce in their own lives the programme that I stand for, or to resist me to their utmost if they do not believe in it. Blind adoration, in the age of action, is perfectly valueless, is often embarrassing and equally often painful.

AN APPROPRIATE QUERY

A correspondent writes:

> You have practically called on the Swarajists to resign immediately from Congress executives. The presumption is that they are in a minority in the country and that the majority of Congressmen, if not Indians, are No-changers. While it is true that at Gaya there was a clear verdict by the country, there was quite a deal of doubt regarding the composition of the Delhi and Cocanada sessions. The atmosphere in the country has been decidedly on the side of the No-changers, but was it not due to a feeling of loyalty to your personality when you were at Yeravda? Should we not ascertain indisputably that as a free nation (free from the obsession of sticking to your views simply because you could not expound your case yourself) we vote for the No-changers or rather against the Pro-changers? Whilst such a referendum is inadvisable till

the Congress meeting in December, should it not also be accepted that the strengthening of Congress executives in actually carrying out the constructive programme should be done voluntarily by workers serving under what may be called a mixed jury?

I must confess that there is considerable force in the objection raised by the writer. I fear it is highly likely that the No-changers voted for the original programme out of loyalty to me. If that is the case, they should now be absolved from the awkward predicament. Happily for me, I have anticipated my correspondent by suggesting that, if the present members of the All-India Congress Committee do not believe in the Congress programme, they should not hesitate to throw me overboard. The cause is everything. Those even who are dearest to us must be shunned for the sake of the cause. Loyalty to it is paramount to every other consideration. All I plead for is common honesty and that in the interest of efficiency. Those who do not believe in the whole programme should give place to those who do. If all or the majority do not believe in it, they should frame a new one, and carry that out. I would not make a fetish even of Congress resolutions. The goal of the Congress is swaraj. And if last six months' experience has shown us a better method, let us by all means adopt it. We shall be truer to the Congress by acting up to our convictions than by pretending to follow the Congress resolutions in which we never had faith or in which our faith has now suffered a shock. If the six months' experience inclined us to the Swarajist view, we should candidly and courageously confess it and unhesitatingly join the Swarajists. All I am pleading against is camouflage and make-believe. It will ruin our cause. If we cannot run Congress organizations without practising lawyers, let us by all means remove the lawyers' boycott. And if we do not believe in the spinning-wheel, let us ignore it. No mere lip-loyalty to the wheel will give us the yarn we want for the thirty crores. In other words, let us do what all successful organisations have done hitherto; that is, to be entrusted to those who must thoroughly believe in them. Orators cannot run an organization whose chief business is to teach and popularize spinning nor can spinners run a debating assembly where oratory: counts for everything.

Another appropriate objection has been raised by another friend. He says my position would be correct if the A.I.C.C. was a purely executive body. But he says it is also a debating and practically legislative body in that it frames resolutions for the following Congress. How can an executive be elected before it knows the laws it is to

carry out? The objection is, in my opinion, thoroughly sound. But here again I am safe; for I have simply given my opinion as to how the Congress resolutions can and should be carried out during the ensuing six months. No technical difficulty can be allowed to stand in the way of the Congress work. And if my view of Congress executives commends itself to the Congressmen, the difficulty suggested by the friend can be easily overcome for the next year by providing for re-election of executives after the Congress sessions. My opinion. in so far as it has any weight, should be treated purely as a guide for members as well as electors. I have been obliged to give it because I shall be held largely responsible for carrying out the programme. In giving my opinion, I have therefore also stated the terms on which my services can be effectively employed.

THE AGA KHANI KHOJAS[1]

The foregoing is a literal translation of what appears in the current issue of *Navajivan*. I now invite the correspondents to support what they have written to me about worldly inducements said to have been offered by Khoja preachers to those who would be converted to their faith.

PARTIAL TO MUSSALMANS

The charge against me of partiality to Mussalmans is being renewed with redoubled vigour. My critics say in effect, 'You exaggerate the Hindu blemishes and underrate the Mussalman's!' I gladly subscribe to the charge in a way. If we are to give a correct judgment, we should follow the excellent natural rule of seeing things in their proper perspective. Habit has made us reverse the natural process. We belittle our own faults and exaggerate the opponent's. That develops the attitude of intolerance. If we would be charitable and tolerant, we would endeavour to see our opponents as they see themselves. We shall never completely succeed in the endeavour, but it will give us the true perspective. What, therefore, appear to be my exaggerations of Hindu blemishes are only seemingly so. 'But,' says a critic, 'you do not want us to believe that Maulana Abdul Bari is such a simple child of God as you make him out to be. We in the U.P. find him to be vain, untruthful and unreliable.' I can only assure them that, if I had found Maulana Saheb as they said he is, I would not have hesitated to say so.

[1] What followed this was a translation of part of the article in *Navajivan*; *vide* "My Views", 8-6-1924.

I have said the utmost. I know against him when I say that he is a dangerous friend. I have not found him to be untruthful. The critics must not think, as some of them do, that I am flattering the Mussalmans for gaining a political end. Such a thing is impossible for me, because I know that unity cannot be achieved by flattery. Courteousness must not be mistaken for flattery, nor impudence for fearlessness.

A MUSSALMAN OUTBURST

Here are some extracts from a Mussalman letter on the Hindu-Muslim statement.

> 'Am more ashamed of Hindu cowardice. Why did not the owners of the houses looted die in their attempt to defend their possessions etc.' These sentences are likely to excite the Hindus. I regret very much that you should have written such things. . . . What your writing will do is dangerous to think.

I fail to see anything dangerous in my writing. I should be glad indeed if my statement energizes the Hindus to *defend* themselves in the face of danger. We may not expect unity before we cease to fear one another. The writer has not suggested an alternative. What am I to say to a Hindu who lives in the fear of a neighbour, if I am not to tell him that he should know how to die in the attempt to defend himself against his neighbour either non-violently, by simply standing at his post, or violently, by returning blow for blow? This friend says again:

> No wise man, Hindu or Mussalman, will accept your judgment that Pandit Malaviyaji is 'no enemy of Mussalmans'. He is an open enemy, as open as daylight. I am sure even Hindus will not believe you in this. Lala Lajpat Rai stands in the [same] category with Pandit Malaviyaji. Re. Jeramdas and Choithram you are doing only injustice to yourself. Their conduct towards the Mussalmans is as clear as daylight to every reader of newspapers. Let me assure you that you will not advance the Hindu-Muslim problem by all inch by praising these Hindu leaders and condemning the Muslim leaders.

The Hindu friends tell me that unity is impossible so long as I trust the Ali Brothers and Maulana Bari Saheb. All these friends should know that, if neither the present Hindu nor the present Mussalman leaders are to be trusted, unity can be achieved, if at all, only after their death. The friend proceeds:

> Why do you refer to the Aga Khan literature and *tabligh*? No harm, not a bit, is done by them to the national movement. They are carrying on their *tabligh* in the most peaceful manner. You are referring to the worst form of Moslems' preaching. What about the *shuddhi* movement? You have run a great risk by mentioning that the methods advocated in the pamphlet are exten-sively practised in the Nizam's deminions. By this you have

unconsciously attacked a Muslim State. . . .

This writer's is an attitude typical of a growing class of workers, namely, that we should not speak as we think, but hush up everything. I can understand the necessity of not washing every rag of dirty linen in the open, but we cannot afford to slur over things that stare us in the face and of which everybody thinks. In the heat of his passion, the writer has forgotten to note that I have delivered no attack upon a Muslim State. I have said 'I am told' that the questionable *tabligh* referred to in my statement is extensively practised in the Nizam's dominions.

The writer says further:

> I cannot understand how cow-slaughter and music stand on the same platform. Mussalmans are enjoined by the Quran to sacrifice cows whereas Hindus are not enjoined to play music before a mosque. Hindus have to stop their music before Government hospitals and offices, but their obduracy does not allow them to do the same before a mosque.

The writer should know that Mussalmans are not enjoined by the Quran to sacrifice a cow. They *are* said to be enjoined to sacrifice certain animals including the cow on stated occasions. The sacrifice of a cow is not therefore obligatory. But seeing that it is permissible, it becomes obligatory when a third party claims to force a Mussalman to refrain from cow-slaughter. Similarly, while there is no obligation upon a Hindu to play music before a mosque it does become an obligation immediately Mussalmans claim to stop Hindu music before mosques by force of arms. Both these things must, therefore, be left to voluntary adjustment.

THE BHOPAL APOSTACY CIRCULAR

Friends sent me a copy of the apostacy law of the Bhopal State now over a month ago. I purposely refrained from dealing with it, because I was not then ready to publish my views on Hindu-Muslim tension and because I wanted to make further inquiries into the matter. Meanwhile, I have seen Dr. Ansari's note upon it.

Here is a translation of the circular:

> Copy of *Jaridah*, dated, 7th July 1920, Resolution No. 17, dated 5th July 1920.
>
> Her Highness the Ruler of Bhopal has been pleased to order that, in pursuance of section 300 of the Shahjehani Penal Code, Rule No. 1, 1912, that is in the Compiled Penal Code of Bhopal, section 393, after section 393 A, the following be added, which after the date of publication will be in force and enforced:

APOSTACY AFTER EMBRACING ISLAM

> Section 393A. Any person renouncing his faith after once embracing Islam shall be liable to be sentenced to punishment of either description extending to three years' imprisonment or to fine, or both.
>
> This order is published for general information and observance.

I do not know whether the dates are accurately given. But assuming the correctness, the law is of a fairly recent date. But whether it is recent or ancient does not much matter. The question is whether it is good law or whether it is bad law according to pure Islam. The ideal before us is that the two, and for that matter, all religions should live in peace and that there may be free interchange among them if the people so desire; in other words, there should be no compulsion in religion. Some of us Hindus and Mussalmans are endeavouring to bring up the practice to the level of that ideal. If, therefore, Islam does not make it penal for one who has embraced it to go back to one's own faith, the law in question must be considered to be against the spirit of Islam and, therefore, it should be abrogated at the earliest moment. I hope that, if the position is as I have stated, the Mussalman leaders will request Her Highness the Begum Saheba of Bhopal to repeal the law.

LIBERALS AND KHADDAR

A friend belonging to the Liberal Party writes:

> I have been thinking and discussing the question of khaddar with my colleagues. I find that there is no difference Of opinion as regards the merit of khaddar, but the hitch arises the moment they associate the movement for the spread of khaddar with your declaration that it is a preparation for civil disobedience. If it stood apart and did not form an item of the Non-co-operation movement, I think that the support to this propaganda will become wider and more universal.

The prejudice referred to by the writer is as old as non-co-operation. I have tried to show times without number that no one save civil resisters need think of civil disobedience in connection with khaddar. Civil disobedience has no direct connection with khaddar. I have led many a battle of civil disobedience before khaddar was reborn. The civil resisters (say) in the Kaira campaign knew nothing of khaddar. Even Vallabhbhai's band at Borsad were not pledged to khaddar. Apart from the Congress volunteers, nobody in Borsad was obliged to wear it before he could be enlisted as a civil resister. The reason was obvious. It was not a campaign to establish swaraj. I have

suggested khaddar as indispensable for civil disobedience or swaraj for two reasons. The first is that swaraj I hold to be an impossibility without khaddar becoming universal in our country. Secondly, it is the most efficient aid to mass discipline without which mass civil disobedience is impossible. Liberals and others should realize that the best way to avert civil disobedience is for everybody to take up the constructive programme of the Congress; especially three items. If all of us worked with one mind to achieve Hindu-Muslim unity and universalize hand-spun khaddar and if all Hindus united to remove the curse of untouchability, swaraj will be within sight. There are some Englishmen who use khaddar but they will naturally repudiate even a suggestion of sympathy with civil disobedience or non-co-operation.

NARAYANAVARAM AND UNTOUCHABILITY

The following touching account shows the need for a vigorous campaign against the curse of untouchability:

> With the exception of three streets, *Panchamas* (the depressed classes) were allowed to pass by the pubic streets. The three streets are the north and the south Mada streets and the eastern street in front of the Kalyana Venkateswara temple. Most of the inhabitants in these streets are Brahmins. The temple lands were cultivated mostly by the *Panchamas*. As the temple authorities could not remove the paddy brought by the *Panchamas* and left at a distant place, they allowed the *Panchamas* to carry the paddy through the above streets and place in front of the main gate of the temple. Then came the informal Panchayat into the village. The Brahmin Chairman cannot but engage *Panchama* sweepers. He even allowed them to remain in the village to cook their food and sleep during nights. One Brahmin gentleman engaged *Panchama* servants to protect him against his enemies, day and night. They were allowed to take their meals and sleep in the Brahmin street during nights. This innovation is highly objectionable from an orthodox point of view. Still no one objected.
>
> Then Mr. C. V. Rangam Chetty opened a Weaving School for *Panchamas* on 9-4-1924 on the main street near Taluq Board school in Sjt. M. Rangaswamy Iyengar's house who very kindly and boldly gave permission. Mr. C. Doraiswamy Iyengar, M.L.A., did the opening ceremony. Two Brahmins who are the personal enemies of Mr. Rangam Chetty started the opposition, engaged touts and organized the meeting of the villagers. In one of their public meetings, they demanded Mr. Rangam Chetty to remove the *Panchama* Weaving School from the village as it is against Shastras for *Panchamas* to live in the village. When questioned why the *Panchamas* were allowed on three previous occasions, they replied they did not see Shastras then. As Mr. Rangam Chetty refused to remove the School, most of the

Brahmins boycotted him, and the Hunuman Library and Reading Room. They requested the leaders of other communities to boycott him. None complied with their requests. The Brahmins then refused to take the god round the streets.

One Brahmin gentleman who collects large sums of money for the Annual Brahma Utsavam festival wanted to see [that] at least the school is dosed for the festival. Mr. Rangam Chetty agreed to dose the school if the boycott is withdrawn by the Brahmins. The temple Amina as the spokesman of the Brahmins said in the public meeting that there is no boycott. Mr. Rangam Chetty then closed the school for 7 days.

Panchamas freely come even on festival days to make their purchase, to speak and to sundry work if any to their landlords including Brahmins. One *Panchama* student of the Weaving School came one morning into the village and attended the garden work attached to the Library. In the afternoon he seems to have taken some rest in the Weaving School which has no back door. The temple Amina took with him some persons and maltreated him severely and then went to the Library and abused Mr. Rangam Chetty for still running the School. Mr. Rangam Chetty took the party to the Weaving School and proved that the School was actually closed. Some badmashes were then engaged who approached Mr. Rangam Chetty fully drunk. Mr. Rangam Chetty escaped from falling into their clutches. The temple Amina then organized a public meeting, misrepresented facts, terrorized the leaders through the drunkards and made them all boycott Mr. Rangam Chetty. The *Panchmas* were summoned, threatened and asked not to send their boys to the Weaving School. After the meeting was over, stones were thrown on the house of Mr. Rangam Chetty. I hear from reliable sources that there is a plot to murder Rangam Chetty. The Puthur Sub-Inspector of Police came to Narayanavaram and found the true state of affairs. I hear he is contemplating to book some of the ring-leaders. Mr. Rangam Chetty was compelled to leave the station by his friends to avoid murder by the assassins. He is at present in his brother's house, No. 23 Narayana Mudali Street, G. T., Madras. If any protection is forthcoming, he is prepared to go back to Narayanavaram and resume his humble work at his own cost.

It is to be hoped that Mr. C. V. Rangam Chetty will have the courage to return to the post of duty without waiting for protection. God is one protection in a good cause.. If assassination came his way, he should gladly face it. It will remove the curse at once, the only condition being that he remains spotless.

HANDLOOM AND HEIRLOOM

In sending me some beautiful hand-spun yarn from Assam Mr. Andrews writes:

> This is given to you by the little children of an ashram that I have just been visiting; it is being conducted by Mr. Phookan and his workers, near his own beautiful house. His sister is in charge, and little children are the handi-workers. I wish you could have seen with your own eyes how happy they all were!
>
> There is one striking factor here in Assam, which you most probably know. Every girl who is married is expected to be able to weave with her own hands. That is why you called this land beautiful Assam. In every house there is a household loom. These looms are frequently heirlooms, using the old English word in its literal sense, which reminds one of the days when in England also spinning and weaving were fine arts. Now they have been banished to the Hebrides, where still the cottage looms produce the strongest and most durable cloth known in the West, called the Lewis Tweeds. The spinning-wheel there is worked by the foot, as both hands are needed for the wool; and the spinner sits on a three-legged stool. On my last visit to England, I found one of these old spinning-wheels in a house at Sally Oak, in my own city of Birmingham, still being used by the spinster,—only in this case the: spinster was not unmarried, as the old English word usually implied, but a housewife. I believe the days are coming when these forgotten arts will again be renewed in the West, wherever objects of beauty and durability are demanded, just as the hand-press can still produce the most beautiful printing that no machine can rival.

OPIUM

Of opium in Assam Mr. Andrews writes:

> The curse of opium is very deep on this fair land, and l trust that a full Congress enquiry will now be made into its ravages, so that the facts about the Government of India's opium revenue policy may be placed before the Geneva Convention. Here, when I spoke last night at the meeting, and told the audience that the Government of India declared that the Indian opium consumption was legitimate, there rose a laugh of derision from the audience which I wish the Opium Convention at Geneva could have heard. It alone would have convinced them concerning Indian public opinion on this subject. I am quite certain now that we shall have some thorough work done here in Assam towards opium prohibition.

Young India, 12-6-1924

74. "CHHOP" OR SPINNING COMPETITION

A Punjabi friend writes thus about spinning competitions that once were universal in the Punjab and which, let us hope, will not be allowed to die out. The gentleman sends with it a drawing, made by himself, of sisters at their wheels taking part in one such competition.

> About twenty or twenty-five years ago, it was a very common practice in the Punjab among women, in villages as well as in towns, to hold spinning competitions called *chhops*. Women of all ages participated in the general competition. Even small girls with their little charkhas joined as auxiliary forces. The competitors would get up so early as 2 o'clock in the morning and, taking an equal weight of carded cotton done into *punish*, they all sat to work in right earnest, the competition generally coming to an end at seven or eight to enable them to attend to duties personal and domestic. While working the machines with their hands, they sung happy and sacred songs such as the exile of Rama, *virag*[1] of Gopi Chand, virtuous life of Puran Bhagat, the melodious hum of the charkha supplying the music. The healthy and pure atmosphere surrounding the *chhops* can be better imagined than described. Alas, such happy scenes have become now very rare and it is very seldom that one witnesses them.

Young India, 12-6-1924

75. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

[*June 12, 1924*]

. . . It was kind of you to have written to me about Ramdas. I agree with you that he has a modulated voice and can make good progress in spite of his age. But the poor boy has not still found his peace. Had he remained in Bombay in the natural course, he would have continued his lessons, but he will not go to Bombay particularly for music. Will you please accept his and my thanks for yourself.

The Story of My Life, Vol. II, p. 265

[1] Renunciation

76. LETTER TO K. MADHAVAN NAIR

June 12, 1924

DEA R MAD HAVAN NAI R,

I am glad you have written.[1] I have sent it to Dr. Mahmud for reply. I am glad my views were liked by the committee.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photos tat: G.N. 5673

77. LETTER TO DR. YUDHVIR SINGH

Jyeshtha Shukla 10 [*June 12, 1924*][2]

BHAI YUDHVIR SINGHJI,

I have your letter. I do not deny that the teachings of Rishi Dayanand have benefited many. I have only pointed out the shortcomings—and that as a friend—so that the activity of the Arya Samaj should become even more beneficent and it should be purged of whatever harmful things it contains.

I have called *Satyarth Prakash* the bible of the Arya Samajists because of the great esteem in which they hold it. I do not write more because what I have written for the forthcoming issue of *Young India*[3] will clarify a great deal. If even then doubts remain do write to me again and if difference of opinion persists please put up with it and forgive me.

Yours sincerely,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photos tat of the Hindi: C. W. 9309. Courte sy: Dr. Yudhvi r Singh

[1] This letter is not available.

[2] The year is inferred from the reference to Gandhiji's writing on Swami Dayanand in *Young India*. In 1924, *Jyeshtha Shukla 10* corresponded to June 12.

[3] *Vide* "Hindu-Muslim Tension: Its Cause and Cure", 29-5-1924

78. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Thursday, [June12, 1924][1]

RESPECTED ANASUYABEHN,

Received both your letters. I tore up your second letter soon after reading it. Do not hesitate to write anything you want to. No one reads personal letters written by you. They are passed on to me intact as they come. If I put them in a file either by mistake or intentionally, they may be read by others as access to files is not restricted. But I shall tear up the letters marked "personal" after reading them and as for my letters to you, I shall write them myself. I do not like it at all that Bhai Shankerlal has some new ailment now. He appears to be brooding over something. I can't even ask him to come and stay with me because my entire life is led in the open. There is no such thing as privacy for me. What else can I do when persons who are more ill than I am, expect my help? Even as I try to help them, I become unhappy. So in spite of having an intense desire to help delicate flowers that you and Shankerlal are, I have become unfit for the task. What can I do? I do keep thinking about you both and I do wish Bhai Shankerlal gets well soon. I believe that on such occasions the spinning-wheel and Ramanama are effective medicines. I believe, therefore, it augurs well that Shankerlal can concentrate on the spinning-wheel.

I have not had any letter from sister-in-law. Write and tell her that I am happy to learn that she is all right.

The issue of *Majoor Sandesh* is good. Send me all the issues from the beginning and keep sending them henceforth.

Ba was here and left yesterday after two days' stay. I am doing well. These days I begin writing regularly from almost 4.30 in the morning. I cannot cope with the work otherwise. I keep worrying if I cannot finish it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photos tat of the Gujara ti : S. N. 32776

[1] From the references to *Majoor Sandesh*, a periodical published by the *Majoor Mahajan*, Ahmedabad, and to Kasturba's stay with Gandhiji; June 12 in 1924 was a Thursday; "Letter to Devchand Parekh", 8-6-1924 and "Letter to Vasumati Pandit", 11-6-1924.

79. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Jeth Sud 11 [*June 13, 1924*][1]

CHI . VAS UMATI ,

Your letter received today is beautiful. Your handwriting is clear and neat. I would certainly give you 4 out of 10 marks. Prabhudas has returned from Abu. Now none is left there. Today Radha came here on foot. Let us hope she will recover where she is staying.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: C.W. 445. Courte sy: Vasuma ti Pandit

80. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

Jeth Sud 12 [*June 14, 1924*][2]

BHA ISHRI VAL JI,

I got both your letters. I did not know that you had wanted the proof; a second time. Your first article has already been printed. *Khedata* has been printed instead of *Medata*. Your mother has arrived here. It appears there has been some difficulty in your brother getting the job.

Vandematram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: C. W. 6010. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

81. SURAT DISTRICT

Two years ago, Surat was the leading district in Gujarat. It stood first in raising funds, first in respect of the spinning-wheel, first in respect of national schools. But today one does not see there as much progress as one would have expected. Collection of funds is slow. Even the spinning-wheel plies indifferently. The foundation of national schools has not been strengthened.

The reasons are not far to seek. The differences of opinion

[1] The postmark bears this date.

[2] In a poem about the spinning-wheel published in *Navajivan*, 25-5-1924, "Khedata" was printed for "Medata", a village in Rajasthan. In 1924, *Jeth Sud* 12 corresponded to June 14. *Vide* also "*Khedata* for *Medata*", 15-6-1924.

which prevailed all over the country affected Surat also. There is no need to think of the past. The sole question is, what should be done now?

The first task is to take action in regard to the decree for Rs. 40,000 passed against 22 ex-Municipal Councillors of Surat. This decree has been passed, not against the 22 members but against the former Municipal Council as a whole. Nay, one can say that this decree was passed not even against the latter, but against the citizens who backed it and those voters who elected the members. Therefore, the responsibility for collecting that amount rests on the non-co-operating citizens of Surat.

The responsibility of non-co-operators does not end with contributing money. They will surely see to it that the 22 representatives do not have to pay the money themselves. But it is their responsibility to so manage things as to make it impossible for the Government to execute the decree. This can be done simply through local satyagraha directed against the decree alone. That is to say, the citizens should write respectfully to the Government that, if it gets this decree executed, they will resort to total non-payment of other taxes to register their protest. The sum of forty thousand rupees has surely not been utilized by anyone for personal use. The Government may well have the amount realized, but in that case it will have to bear the responsibility of collecting municipal taxes. If there is any difficulty in refusing payment of all taxes, the people should refuse payment only of those taxes which can be justly withheld. There was a time when we regarded this step as easy. Now that the people's enthusiasm has waned, it appears difficult. But, in view of the recent example of Borsad[1] in Gujarat, it should not appear difficult.

Now a word to the Swarajists. Those of them who have entered the Councils can write to the Government that, if it intends to realize the amount in this way, they cannot continue their membership. It may be said that this is precisely what the Government wants. Perhaps it is. We have only to consider the question of our own duty. If members of the Councils find themselves helpless even in regard to this very small matter, what will they be able to accomplish by staying on in the Councils?

[1] In the Borsad taluka of Kheda district, satyagraha was started in December 1923 against a punitive cess and Government had to withdraw the cess in January 1924.

I firmly believe that, if both the Swarajists and the true non-co-operators are reunited, Surat will be its former self again and recover its foremost position. Of course, self-confidence is needed to do so. If those who have entered the Councils do not discreetly get out of it even when they have got tired of them, the old lustre will not return. It is only if we have intelligent, not blind, faith in all the aspects of non-co-operation that our work will shine forth. We should have faith in non-violence, truth and the fivefold boycott. If that is not there, those who wish to work in accordance with public opinion or my personal opinion will only court failure.

Non-co-operation and non-violence have passed the (limited) experimental stage. Now for those who have understood them, they have proved successful in the experiments, and have become principles. Swaraj may be won today or tomorrow, but in their opinion peaceful non-co-operation is the only means to win it.

I have written this much about the calamity that has befallen Surat today.

But what reply will Bardoli give? We thought it was prepared [for civil disobedience] two years ago.[1] Has it become more prepared today? How many workers have been working there? I have heard a lot about Bardoli, but on this occasion I shall say no more.

The report I have so far received from there is not hopeful. Untouchability still prevails there. *Kaliparaj*[2] has not yet secured the status of *Dholiparaj*[3]. The *Dublas*[4] have not yet become *Sabalas*[5]. Schools[6] have all but closed down. Even khadi work is being carried on perfunctorily. I long to go to Bardoli and ask the people. there to satisfy me in regard to all these complaints. My heart holds firmly even now the promise which the representatives of Bardoli gave me, with God as witness. They took a pledge to eradicate untouchability, to uplift the *Kaliparaj* community, to put an end to the sufferings of the *Dublas* and to spread khadi throughout Bardoli. Today I expect

[1] The Bardoli Taluka Conference, held on January 29, 1922, had accepted Gandhiji's proposal to launch civil disobedience.

[2] The dark-skinned, backward community in South Gujarat

[3] Literally, fair-skinned community; here, economically and culturally advanced community

[4] Literally, the weak ones; here, farm-labourers who had then to work like slaves in the Surat district of Gujarat

[5] Literally, the strong ones; here, persons having authority and money

[6] National schools established in 1920-21

Bardoli to say to me: "We had got prepared within only six months of your going to jai!. We are prepared to launch civil disobedience whenever you ask us to." I know Bardoli is not quite prepared for this. The question of course is, will it ever be prepared? When will it be? What have the workers to say?

As I was writing this, I received a telegram to say that Pragji[1] has been arrested. There is significance in his being arrested. He has, of course discharged his duty, but have the people done so? What will Surat district do?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-6-1924

82 "KHEDATA" FOR "MEDATA"

"Shikharnivasi", who had sent me *Rentiyano Swadhyaya*[2] writes to say that a "terrible mistake" has crept into the article, "Daily Plying of the Spinning-Wheel". This in fact was a spelling error. Still another was committed through oversight. What I wrote as a footnote to be printed at the bottom [of the song] got printed as an introduction and "Shikharnivasi's" fine introduction was left out. But the error to which "Shikharnivasi" has drawn my attention is quite a different one. In the song *Medata* has been printed as *Khedata*. There is a village called Medata in Rajasthan. I agree with "Shikharnivasi" that this error may be termed "terrible". The other errors are of course being noted down. Some day "Shikharnivasi" will surely present them to the reader. He informs me that I often use the word *talleen*[3] in the sense of *leen*[4]. Since the meaning of *talleen* is *teman*[5] leen, it is wrong to say *gavaman*[6] *talleen* instead of *gavaman leen*. The reader may easily correct this error.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-6-1924

[1] Pragji Khandubhai Desai, Gandhiji's associate in South Africa and later a Congress worker in Gujarat for many years

[2] Published in *Navajivan*; *vide* "Daily Plying of the Spinning Wheel", 25-5-1924.

[3] Engrossed in it

[4] Engrossed

[5] In it

[6] In singing

83. SATYAGRAHA IN PRINCELY STATES

A correspondent writes:[1]

I am sorry if my articles have given such an impression. Satyagraha can be circumscribed only by truth and non-violence. Wherever the two are to be found, satyagraha can always be launched. Considered thus, I believe no contradiction will be found in my writings.

There can be no satyagraha in the princely States in order to win swaraj for India. It can be in respect of local problems. But if there exists even the slightest element of untruth, satyagraha cannot be offered there or in any other place. Even though a cause may be truthful, a person who cannot observe non-violence, who is irascible, who hesitates to tell the truth and who is not ready to suffer, is not qualified to launch satyagraha.

By and large I see that the present atmosphere in the entire country is unfavourable to satyagraha. Jealousy, untruth, violence, etc., have grown rife. Satyagraha has been misconstrued as harassment of opponents. One sees *duragraha* masquerading as satyagraha. In this situation, even when a matter calls for satyagraha, a satyagrahi should act with caution. But in spite of being cautious, if he finds that things have reached a state when satyagraha becomes inevitable, nothing and no one can hold back a satyagrahi.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-6-1924

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had observed that recent articles in *Navajivan* tended to give the average reader an impression that Gandhiji was opposed to satyagraha in the Princely States.

84. *TODAY* v. *YESTERDAY*

The same correspondent who has asked a question about satyagraha in the Indian States also writes:[1]

While thinking over this letter, let the reader forget the Bhavnagar Conference. The reference to that Conference here is merely by way of example. I have already stated my views about it. The reason for not holding the Conference in Bhavnagar is what I gave and nothing else. If we do not remember this, there is a danger, while one issue is being clarified, of our getting confused about another.

I for one do not believe that there is any contradiction or discrepancy between my earlier writings on satyagraha and what I say now. It is true that, as the situation changes, one will find new conditions being laid down, but a thoughtful person will immediately see that these are inherent in the basic principle itself. For example, the Ahmedabad session of the Congress[2] laid down that non-violence should be observed in thought, word and deed. That certainly was not a new condition. When it was found that people harboured violence in their hearts and merely refrained from overt acts of violence, then it became necessary to make it clear that a person could be regarded as non-violent only if he was so in thought, speech and action. In other words, if people were told that non-violence for show was not non-violence, this cannot be regarded as something new. The conditions concerning character, etc., are meant for leaders of satyagraha and were always there. We see the importance of character even in ordinary matters, and it should not be surprising, therefore, that in satyagraha, I have never expected the observance of difficult conditions by large masses of people. If this had been expected of them, there could have been no satyagraha even in Borsad.[3] There were only two conditions to be observed by the general public, that they should never use violence in the movement and should obey the leaders.

I have of course taken it for granted that the satyagrahis of Bhavnagar and Vaikom are members of Congress Committees. How can Congress workers be considered fit to launch satyagraha if, knowing the generally accepted conditions prescribed by the Con-gress,

[1] The letter is not translated here.

[2] Held in December 1921

[3] It was undertaken in 1923-24 and was led by Vallabhbhai Patel.

they do not observe even those? If they do not keep a pledge taken in respect of one activity, how will they keep any other? Satyagraha for swaraj has a direct connection with khadi. It is necessary for a Swarajist to demonstrate that he is one even when starting satyagraha for some other cause. The masses in Borsad did not need to wear khadi or give up drinking before launching satyagraha, but the workers certainly did have to do so. If, now, the Dharala sisters and brothers of Borsad wish to launch satyagraha for swaraj, they must necessarily wear khadi, give up drinking and free themselves from the sin of untouchability. To me this appears to be a self-evident proposition. If we get power without having first persuaded all people to wear khadi, we shall not be able to spread it among the people afterwards without the use of force. In that case, our swaraj will certainly not be true swaraj. Moreover, if a majority of people do not adopt khadi with love, we shall not be able to pass a law for the universal adoption of khadi. From these examples, it will be seen that what seems new is not new but old. It must be clear to everyone by now that there is not a single condition for mass civil disobedience which is too hard to fulfil. But, for those who start and conduct satyagraha, such difficult conditions are necessary and have always been so. An expert musician needs a preliminary practice of years. He should have control over the most delicate notes, and should have the ability to judge whether a note is too loud or too low. But, for society at large, the ability to take up the tune given by a music expert is considered sufficient. A leader of satyagraha ought to be like an expert musician.

Let me explain one thing here. I see it being said against me in the papers that I raise subtle issues on every occasion when satyagraha is started; and that the logical conclusion of my attitude would be that I myself should be there to lead every such movement.

This is a purely fanciful idea. I was not there in Borsad, Nagpur and Chirala Perala.[1] I may say that no one even bothered to consult me. How did those satyagraha movements go on even then? If, however, the person who leads a satyagraha movement without consulting me lacks experience and self-control, he will certainly get confused. But we have now reached such a stage that anyone wishing to do so can start satyagraha on his own responsibility. If I am at all

[1] The Borsad satyagraha took place in 1923-24, the Nagpur Flag satyagraha in 1923 and the Chirala Perala satyagraha, in Andhra Pradesh, in 1921.

consulted, I would certainly offer advice according to my lights, but it does not mean that satyagraha should never be started without prior consultation with me. Otherwise, satyagraha would be a useless weapon. How many problems can I attend to? And how long am I going to live? If satyagraha is a weapon which can be used at any time, there must be, and in fact there are, many men and women capable of wielding it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-6-1924

85. TO GUJARATI ARYA SAMAJISTS

I have received telegrams and letters from the Arya Samaj from all over India. I have already replied to them in *Young India*.[1] Even the Arya Samajists of Gujarat are angry with me. I had hoped that they at any rate would not misconstrue my meaning for, I thought, they understood me better. I have already read five letters by Gujarati Arya Samajists, and there may be more. They too have been much hurt. They should forgive me. I cannot understand why they should take it ill if I say honestly what I feel to be true. If we feel hurt every time someone says something unpalatable, how and when shall we learn to be tolerant?

There is little attempt in all these five letters to argue with me. One correspondent has become so angry that he has advised me to commit suicide. He writes:

> Even if, now, the country may gain something through you, it can do without it. Hence, I would request you to devote yourself to Rama's name and win heaven.

Others say that I have always given too much importance to Muslims. Another correspondent has sent me an account of the sufferings of Hindus based on information collected from newspaper reports.

The reply to all this is more or less included in the reply I have already given in *Young India*. Here I need merely add that all this anger proves our intolerance. We still lack the capacity to bear one another's criticism. This is a very important quality in public life. I am certainly willing to make an inquiry into the grievances of the

[1] *Vide* "The Arya Samajists", 12-6-1924.

Hindus. I am not ready to believe everything which appears in newspapers, and I advise all readers to discount much of what they read. If my correspondents see Muslim papers, they will find in them a big list of accusations against the Hindus. What reply will the Hindus give to them? Like Hindu newspapers, these too contain a lot that is concocted. If the Hindus are likely to shed their fear by organizing themselves, I would join the movement. But I understand that it means nothing more than attending a gymnasium. I do not join it because I know that this will not help people protect themselves right now. For that purpose, we must cultivate fearlessness. If that can be developed by attending gymnasiums, let the Hindus start them by all means. I have never said that they should not. I have never run down those started by the Purani brothers in Gujarat. On the contrary, in Gujarat, I have also expressed my approval of them. I have merely suggested that organizing ourselves is not an effective way of protecting ourselves against the attacks of Muslims. Doing that only aggravates the quarrels, does not decrease them.

This issue can be decided by asking these questions: Do we want Hindu-Muslim unity? Is it necessary? If it is essential and if it is desired, the Hindus will have to abandon all preparations for fighting back or would have to pit equal strength against the Muslims, as they would have to against the Government if they fought it, and let rivers of blood flow for securing peace. Even that is improbable in regard to Hindu-Muslim differences, for, as regards Government, the desire is to hate the English and drive them out of the country. This may be possible, since the English do not look upon this country as theirs. If they get tired of remaining here, they may quit. But this country belongs as much to the Muslims as to the Hindus. I believe it to be wholly impossible to drive them out of the country. And so the sole way is to live with them in peace. The only other alternative is trusting ourselves to the mercy of the British Government.

Let us consider what we wish to do. We want to prevent the Muslims from kidnapping our women. Hindus can ensure this only by everyone risking his own life. All Muslims certainly do not kidnap women. Let us suppose some do so in the name of religion. Do not some Hindus kidnap Hindu women? The only difference is that the Hindus who do this are prompted by lust. If we do not have the strength to protect our women against them, who will give it to us? I have already indicated a remedy, effective in the present and at all

times, against such molestation. It is satyagraha. That is, to lay down one's life, without killing others in defending ourselves. Even a woman child can do this. Why do all Hindus not take such training?

In acquiring the power to kill one has to cultivate physical strength, while in acquiring the strength to lay down one's life, one has to cultivate spiritual strength. If only one sees the way, it is comparatively easy to cultivate this. Is it possible for anyone physically maimed to acquire physical strength? Nobody's soul is ever maimed. I can, by calm reflection, acquire the strength to lay down my life if someone attacks my dear ones. But I certainly must cultivate a peace-loving temper in order to prepare myself to do this. I must control my anger and convert it into strength. If I wish to develop such strength, I should not get agitated by newspaper reports. I must go wherever I desire to give protection to people, and be ready to die.

As there can be an army of soldiers, there can be an organization of satyagrahis too. One Ravishankar suffices for dealing with thousands of *Dharalas*. He is still living. If hundreds of men be come Ravishankars, they save the weak Hindus from attacks and, in the process, also make the weak strong.

So much against physical attacks. For saving cows, Hindus should never use force against Muslims. They should try to save them only by winning over their heart.

They should not play music near mosques, as far as possible. In any case, they should discuss the matter with the Muslims and, if the Muslims do not listen to them or apply improper pressure, they should not submit to the coercion, but play music and die while doing so.

Apart from these, the other matters mentioned are trivial. For instance, how many Muslims should have seats in Councils, and so on. I for one would agree to as many of them being elected as may desire to be elected. In my opinion, the question does not at all arise at present. One who has embraced non-coo operation should not think about Councils or Government service.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-6-1924

86. VALLABHBHAI'S DIFFICULTY

Vallabhbhai is up against a serious difficulty ever since I took charge of *Navajivan.* In order to serve Gujarat, he wishes to collect from it Rs. 10 lakhs in my name. He used to take the help of *Navajivan* in this selfless work. Now that I have become its editor, how can I be so brazen as to print in my own paper anything about raising funds for myself? Because of this scruple of mine, Vallabhbhai's appeals have ceased appearing in *Navajivan.*

The problem, now, is this: If Vallabhbhai does not get his Rs. 10 lakhs, he will drive me out and snatch the editorship. If, on the other hand, I publish his appeals out of such fear, I shall prove not only shameless but also cowardly. I cannot afford to give up the editorship, nor to be brazenly shameless. And so I have thought of a middle way. This is that I should clear Vallabhbhai's confusion.

The simple thing is that, if Gujarat wants constructive work, Vallabhbhai must certainly have the money. Some will be ready to pay, if not for the sake of the constructive programme, at least for my name. With that expectation, my name was attached to the appeal for funds. Vallabhbhai needs money, and he does not mind in whose name he gets it. If Gujarat believes that Vallabhbhai has served it well, if it believes that he has embraced poverty for the sake of Gujarat and made others also follow suit, if it moreover believes that funds are not being misused, that accounts are maintained and published, if it believes that, however difficult the task which the Gujarat Vidyapith has undertaken, the work it is doing is valuable and also that, through it, thousands of children are being trained for swaraj, that khadi is being popularized and the cause of the *Antyajas is* being served—if the Gujaratis believe all this, they will put Rs. 10 lakhs into the Gandhi purse, that is, the Swaraj purse or the purse for the poor. According to the saying, "A dancer who does not wish to dance finds fault with the floor", anyone can trot out the excuse of trade being bad, etc., etc. Despite poor business, we do eat and drink, celebrate weddings, and so on; let us, then, help this essential national work as well. If every Gujarati understands that it is his job to steer the Congress ship in Gujarat, he should donate "a petal if not a flower" to the purse and help Vallabhbhai out of his difficulty.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-6-1924

87. "A BUFFALO FOR A THONG"[1]

A friend has sent me a pamphlet entitled *Lakshmino Vinash*[2]. It bears the name neither of the publisher nor of the printer. It is being distributed gratis. The writer's object is to get people to buy his books. But, for such a paltry object, he has attacked Muslims. I quote a few samples: "The Muslims are barbarians.""What sort of men are these whom we help and support? They sever the necks of cocks, goats and cows.""Why do you show consideration for those from whose hands you cannot even accept water to drink?" Why do you buy your books from Muslims?" "Yours is a religion of compassion, that of the barbarians is steeped in sin." There are more such intolerant statements. My name, too, has been misused. I hope that no Hindu will touch this pamphlet. I hope further that the writer will himself atone for having violated the religion of compassion which he claims to follow and throw his pamphlet into the fire.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-6-1924

88. TO WORKERS

I have quoted these passages[3] from a correspondent's letter, omitting some adjectives for the sake of brevity. I simply do not have the time to meet every worker in private. But I invite all those who have any special information in their possession to communicate to me in private their facts and suggestions. Many who write to me have a handwriting worse even than mine. I request them to write legibly, out of kindness to me if for no other reason. Some write long prefaces. One sees their point only after going half way through their letters. I suggest that they drop the prefaces. Some put it as you like—adorn or ruin their letters with adjectives. I advise them to omit them. I should like to receive letters of this type:

[1] Gujarati saying implying that one does not kill a buffalo for the sake of a little strip of leather

[2] Destruction of wealth

[3] Not translated here. The correspondent had suggested that, before resuming his work in Gujarat, Gandhiji should fully acquaint himself with the real state of affairs.

"With reference to your request in the *Navajivan* of 15-6-1924, I have given up Congress work since A, B, or C, with whom I used to work, did this wrong thing at such and such a time, or, since I could not at all agree with the views of A, B, or C, or, since they treated me in this manner, or, since my views have changed. I have lost faith in non-violence or truth or the spinning-wheel. Personally, I suggest that work will proceed well only if the Committee carries out these reforms, gives up these activities or removes these workers."

It would help if I receive letters giving such straightforward facts. It is against public interest, in my opinion, to keep back anything in public life. However, those who know me know that I never publish names, nor preserve letters. I have destroyed even very important letters. I try to preserve only letters of public interest. However, I do not wish to receive a single letter with the proviso that I should not make any use of the communicated facts, for I have no desire to know anything which cannot be used. Let no one write anonymous letters either. I still receive such letters. The letter from which I have quoted suggests that our public life has not yet become clean. From that point of view, our movement of non-co-operation should be considered to have failed; in any case, its success should be measured only by the degree of purity it has brought about in our public life. We are opposing the present system of Government because we are convinced that it is evil. That necessarily means that, comparatively speaking, we are pure and wish to establish a pure administration. Our public life, therefore, should be pure, so pure indeed that even our opponents should see and acknowledge it. The very movement of non-co-operation means turning our enemy into a friend. One who has no faith in this principle can never become a peaceful non-co-operator.

It is also necessary to think about one drawback of ours. We are much too eager to see faults in others, especially in our co-workers, and never see the good in them. Consequently, we are always finding fault with people. A worker may be doing much work; but, if he gets a little angry or speaks rudely, we begin to think low of him. If he does not receive us well or does not understand our point of view, we ignore all his services. I have had much experience of persons with such temper and so wish to caution people also against the habit of always criticizing others.

In placing both the sides before the reader, my purpose is to

ensure that those who see only good observe things carefully and admit any evil which may be present, and those who see only evil try to observe the good as well, if, afterwards, such persons write to me objectively, the information in their letters may prove useful.

Finally, I must also state that I have no desire to be captain of the ship. In Vallabhbhai we have the captain. All I can do is to advise and guide. I already have the work of editing Young *India* and *Navajivan*. That job is quite enough for me. If people oblige me to give it up, I shall have the work of Ashram. At present, I am not fit even for that, as these two journals leave me no time for anything else at all. It is only as an adviser that I can be of service to Gujarat and the country. Letters giving detailed information help me very much in forming my opinion.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-6-1924

89. A NOTE

FALSE NOTION

"You and I have had our pleasure of wearing fine clothes and now wear khadi; if, however, we clothe these delicate children in khadi, the poor things will never know the pleasure of wearing other clothes."

This is what many elderly persons, looking at their grandsons, say to the latter's father and this is their way of showing their love for the little ones. Writing in this strain, a gentleman asks what he should do in this predicament. I for one see no great difficulty here at all. By surrendering ourselves to such inordinate love of our elders, why should we compromise the future of our children or harm the great fight to banish starvation from India? How can we, succumbing to such sentiment, give up what we consider to be our duty? Moreover, it is merely a false notion that mill-cloth, whether foreign or Indian, is better than other cloth because it is fine! Today there are many children who will not touch fine cloth and will wear only khadi. Children form such habits as we let them form. It is difficult to understand what pleasure there is in wearing mill-cloth. After some years, when everyone will be wearing khadi and nothing else, we shall come to believe that there is pleasure in khadi. On the little bodies of innocent children dyed clothes which stick to the body and which are often

dirty never look so well as milk-white khadi. Moreover, in the climatic conditions of our country, the fewest clothes are best for us. For our children, shoes, socks, and too many clothes are a source of disease. To make them wear these things is the surest way of making them delicate and is needless expenditure besides. How strange it is that we shower the wrong kind of love on our children and, right from the beginning, give them wrong education!

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-6-1924

90. LETTER TO NAVINCHANDRA

Jyeshtha S. 14, 1980 [*June 16, 1924*]

What should I do to put into practice the highest ideal of life? This is the question. Think a little and you will find the answer implicit in the question itself. If someone asks you what he should do if he wanted to eat something that he relished, you will answer, "Eat it." Similarly putting the idea into practice teaches us what we should do. The real difficulty is in regard to our loving the ideal. We often believe that we like a certain thing, but in reality we do not. If truth is our ideal, we should practise truth. *If brahmacharya is* our ideal, we must find pleasure in its observance. If body labour is the ideal, we should find pleasure in spinning, carding, weaving. If service be your ideal, never be tired of rendering service. If we want to serve through teaching, we must each to the best of our ability.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujara ti origin al: G.N. 2170

91. NOTE ON J. B. PETIT'S LETTER

[After *June 17, 1924*][1]

Show this to Benarasidas and let him say who told him that Mr. Petit had promised a part of the money asked.

From a photos tat: S.N. 9978

92. TELEGRAM TO GANGADIN CHAVNIVALA[2]

[On or before *June 18, 1924*]

THEY MAY. IF THEY TRY THEY CAN MORE EFFECTIVELY PUSH KHADDAR.

The Hindu, 19-6-1924

93. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Jeth Vad 1 [*June 18, 1924*][3]

CHI . VAS UMATI ,

I cannot give 4 marks for your handwriting today. You ought to improve your handwriting every day. You should keep the printed alphabet always before you. If you have not taken a copy book with you, I shall send you one. Ba and Devdas have returned. Today they will go to Surat to give a send-off to Pragji who is going to jail. I believe you have read about his having been arrested. We had a drizzle here also. We shall have some relief if there is a shower.

[1] This was scribbled on the following letter dated August 17, 1924, from J. B. Petit: "I do not remember ever having undertaken to pay even a part of Pandit Banarasi Dass's salary and expenses. A letter from Pandit Banarasi Dass asking for such help was placed before the Committee of the I.l.C.A., I believe, more than a year ago and was turned down. The Committee wanted Mr. Banarasi Dass to be a whole-time Officer of the Association, but on the latter expressing his inability to do so, his application for help was rejected. I do not think the Committee will therefore sanction anything towards his expenses; but if you wish me to place the letter before it again for its consideration, I shall be glad to do so, hearing from you." *Vide* also "Letter to K. Natarajan", 15-8-1924:

[2] This was in reply to a telegram asking whether Non-co-operators should enter the Cantonment Boards.

[3] The postmark bears this date.

Your English handwriting is fairly good. But you can improve here too. I write this not to shame but to encourage you.

Blessings from

BAPU

SISTER VASUMATI
LEELAVATI SANATORIUM
DEOLALI

From the Gujara ti origin al: C.W. 446. Courte sy: Vasuma ti Pandit

94. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

Jeth Vad 1 [*June 18, 1924*][1]

DEA R FRI END,

I am writing this to you about the suit that is going on between Babusaheb (Yashavantprasad), Veerubhai and Dinkarrao. I knew about the case only after Veerubhai and Markandarai came to me. Veerubhai and Babusaheb are ready to refer the case to arbitration but do one knows about Dinkarrao's attitude. Can you not get all the parties together and persuade them to settle their differences through arbitration and stop the family quarrel from going to the court? There is one suit due for hearing on the 25th at Bhavnagar. Please do whatever you can before that date. You are much closer to this family than I. Hence it is not for me to recommend anything to you. Since you are a Government official, someone has to approach you. You may take it that I have approached you on behalf of all the three.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujara ti origin al: C.W. 3180. Courte sy: Mahesh Pattan i

95. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

June 18, 1924

MY DEA R FRI END,

Really, you are wonderful. Your Gujarati letters far surpass your English letters. It is you I meet in your Gujarati letters; in your English letters I used to be captivated by your English language.

[1] In his letter to the addressee dated July 3, 1924, Gandhiji refers to Dinkarrao mentioned in this letter. It is liekly that this letter was also written in 1924, in which year Jeth Vad I fell on June 18.

Today you see the thread of yarn from the charkha coming between you and God; but on this very thread you will see Him dancing. Wherever faith is He is.

If despite your age the rains did not bring you cold, it is, first, because you are growing young and, second, because you labour in service. He would be no God if He does not protect from harm those who go out to do His work in His name.

Please pass on to Mrs. Abbas, Rehana and other members of the family your zeal for the charkha.

I grant you pardon in advance for any number and any kind of letters you may write.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photos tat of the Gujara ti: S.N. 9547

96. NOTES

VAIKOM SATYAGRAHA

His Holiness Sri Narayan Guru, spiritual leader of the Tiyas[1], is reported to have disapproved of the present methods of satyagraha at Vaikom. He suggests that volunteers should advance along barricaded roads and scale the barricades. They should enter temples and sit with others to dine. Though I have compressed the interview. I have reproduced almost the exact words.

Now the action proposed is not satyagraha. For scaling barricades is open violence. If you may scale barricades, why not break open temple doors and even pierce through temple walls? How are volunteers to pierce through a row of policemen except by using physical force? I. do not for one moment suggest that by the methods proposed the Tiyas, if they are strong and are willing to die in sufficient numbers, cannot gain their point. All I submit is that they will have gained it by something the reverse of satyagraha; and then, too, they would not have converted the orthodox to their view, but would have imposed it on them by force. A friend who has sent me the press cutting recording the interview suggests that, by reason of the violent advice of the guru, I should ask the local Congress committee to call off satyagraha. I feel that would mean want of faith

[1] Community in Kerala

in one's means and surrender to violence. So long as the organizers strictly keep within the limits which they have prescribed for themselves, there is no cause for calling off satyagraha. The friend cites Chauri Chaura as an illustration. In doing so, he has betrayed confusion of thought or ignorance of facts. The Bardoli satyagraha was suspended because Congress and Khilafat men were implicated in the Chauri Chaura outrage. If Congressmen connected with the Vaikom movement entertain the suggestions said to be favoured by the Tiya spiritual leader, there would be a case for penance and, therefore, suspension, but not otherwise. I would, therefore, urge the organizers at Vaikom to make redoubled efforts and, at the same time, keep stricter watch on the conduct of those who take part in the movement. Whether it takes long or short to reach the goal, the way is the way of peaceful conversion of the orthodox by self-suffering and self-purification and no other.

MEANING OF 'UNTRUTHFUL'

A Swarajist friend writing from Simla about the use of the adjectives 'violent' and 'untruthful' in my recent writings says:

> You mean those who are 'untrue' to the triple boycott. May I suggest most respectfully to explain that observation, by the way, in one of your notes? As it has pained some prominent friends here, so must it have pained others elsewhere. I have understood it in the light in which I have interpreted it above. But I believe, especially when you will be the last man in the world to be misunderstood, a reference in one of your notes will not be futile

Had not the friend kindly drawn my attention to the misunderstanding, I should never have known its existence. The whole of my recent writings have been directed to the untruthful atmosphere that surrounds us. My criticism is all-inclusive. I know No-changers who do not enforce in their own persons the khaddar resolution. Their action is, in my opinion, decidedly untruthful. When we do not believe in the boycott of law-courts and still pretend as if we did, our attitude is untruthful. Many of us do not believe in non-violence in thought, word, and deed, and still profess to subscribe to the policy of non-violence. We are untruthful whether we are Pro-changers or No-changers.

SPECIAL SESSION?

I note that Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya[1] has given notice of intention to move at the forthcoming meeting of the A.I.C.C. a resolution for a special session of the Congress. There is hardly any case for a special session. The Congress resolutions are there. There should be no difference of opinion as to their meaning. Even if there is, parties may agree to differ and set to work. All that is required is for the members to decide upon the method of work during the next six months. Policies may be determined at the Congress session. The special session will not help us to remove our indecision, indifference or inertia. I feel sure that these would persist so long as each party continues to accuse the other of retarding the progress of the country. In my opinion, nobody retards it who acts to the best of his lights. But he does retard it who is too lazy to think and act for himself, or too timid to do so lest he may give offence. We must dare to say 'no' even if it wounds.

INFLAMMATORY LITERATURE

A friend has sent me a pamphlet called *Rangila Rasul*, written in Urdu. The author's name is not given. It is published by the manager, Arya Pustakalaya, Lahore. The very title is highly offensive. The contents are in keeping with the title. I cannot without giving offence to the reader's sense of the fine give the translation of some of the extracts. I have asked myself what the motive possibly could be in writing or printing such a book except to inflame passions. Abuse and caricature of the Prophet cannot wean a Mussalman from his faith and it can do no good to a Hindu who may have doubts about his own belief. As a contribution, therefore, to the religious propaganda work, it has no value whatsoever. The harm it can do is obvious.

Another friend sends me a sheet called *Shaitan* printed at Public Printing Press, Lahore. It contains untranslatable abuse of Mussalmans. I am aware of similar abuse by Mussalman sheets. But that is no answer to or justification for the Hindu or the Arya Samaj abuse. I would not have even noticed these prints but for the information given to me that such writings command a fair patronage. The local leaders must find a way of stopping these publications or, at least, discrediting

[1] 1880-1959; physician and public worker; President of the Indian National Congress, 1948; author of *History of the Indian National Congress*

them and distributing clean literature instead, showing tolerance for each other's faiths.

THREE AGAINST ONE

A Mussalman friend writes to say that, whilst the Bhopal State apostasy law is undoubtedly bad, the agitation against it is not genuine. He says the law is old and has never been enforced. He contends that the Hindus m that State have been most justly treated and have often occupied posts of the highest responsibility. 'But,' says the friend, 'do you know what is happening in the Hindu States or Palol, Rewa and Bharatpur? Palol you mentioned yourself. In Bharatpur already three mosques have been demolished. The order of Rewa is said to be that, it a Hindu becomes a Mussalman, he will be awarded one year's imprisonment and the man who convert him to Islam will get two years'. I, the facts are as set forth, Hindus have little reason to complain of a law that is a dead letter. Personally, I think that on the principle that two wrongs do not make one right, the wrong must be condemned wherever it exists. Wherever conversion is punishable by law, it is a token of intolerance which must be rooted out. But the first appeal of Hindus must be to the Hindu States.

KENYA INDIANS

The Kenya Indians are continuing their brave fight in the face of heavy odds. Messrs Goolam Hoosen Aladina, Ahmedbhai Karim, Valibhai Ismail, and Kasim Noor Mahomed, together with many others, are already in jail. And now comes the news that Mr. Desai too shares the same honours. The Kenya Indians deserve congratulations for sustaining the fight. But the law chosen for civil disobedience affects only a limited number of Indians. The penalty imposed is slight. If, therefore, our countrymen in Kenya are intent upon carrying on the struggle till justice is done to them, they will have to find other State-made unmoral laws for civil disobedience, such as will enable a larger number, if they are willing, to offer battle and to undergo a stronger course of suffering. The Kenya Committee that is now sitting in London may give them temporary relief. Public agitation here may encourage them. But the real remedy lies with them. They should remove every cause of legitimate complaint against them and, at the same time, by offering civil disobedience prove their courage for prolonged suffering in a common cause. Then success is a certainty.

VALUE OF SILENT WORK

Borodada (Dwijendranath Tagore) sends the following hopeful note:

> The following has come to my mind like a flash of lightning. How great a value a simple good work has when done silently before the all-seeing eye of God seems to me to be unknown to the generality of men of our present generation. Most people, who are worthy in other respects, place an undue value on the high-sounding names of things and persons, disregarding altogether their real import. Are the *rishis* of ancient India less of *rishis* because their names are unknown to the superficial histories of modern times? When will the eyes of our understanding be opened to this simple and soul-satisfying truth that mere names are words echoed from mouth to mouth signifying nothing? How many people pay homage to the name of Shakespeare without ever having opened a single book of Shakespeare? How many people bow to the name of Christ with the appearance of sincere reverence, whose daily life throws to the dogs every word of Christ spoken in love to all humanity irrespective of caste and creed? I am perfectly sure that each good work, however insignificant in appearance, will bear tenfold fruit in comparison to the grandiloquent and pompous works performed mostly with a view to acquire names in history. It is obvious that if we want to gain success in this great movement which Providence has placed in our hands without our asking, we must concentrate all our efforts on the real work we have to do, and totally cut off all connection with those names of things and persons which exert undue influence over our untutored minds and which 'hover through the midnight air' of our ignorance (of *avidya*) like the witches of Macbeth. The name of non-co-operation may shock the prejudiced ear of a student of the abstract ethics of the schools, while the *thug* non-co-operation is the best medicine for the cure of our mad endeavour after the attainment of all the nourishment that bread can give from the stones thrown at us in mockery by the well-fed and well-clothed house holder at whose door we stand begging, in out present half-starved and ragged condition, to be allowed the privilege of co-operating with him, on equal teams, with regard to the right distribution of food and clothing amongst us for our mutual benefit.

I wish every worker will treasure the beautiful thought contained in Borodada's note and believe with him that all true work will abide when names will have been forgotten.

1814 AND 1914

Babu Kshitish Chandra Dasgupta of the Khadi Pratishthan says that in 1814 two crores (now equal to twelve crores) of rupees worth of khadi was exported from Calcutta alone. In 1914 India *imported* sixty-six crores of rupees worth of piece-goods. No wonder that we

have become a nation of paupers. We would not be so badly off if we had given up the spinning and the weaving industry in exchange for another. That we could not do because the national industry was deliberately killed and no other was substituted by its murderers.

CHARKHA IN TRIVANDRUM JAIL

Mr. K. Kumar, a satyagrahi prisoner in the Central Jai! at Trivandrum, says:

> This is one of the happiest days in my life being the day of my arrest and imprisonment (after one month) . . . I send you the product of the hours of silent spinning. We have the charkha working here almost from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily. . . . I spin not less than three hours daily. . . . Some of us are learning Hindi or Urdu, we read the Gita. and the *puranas* . . . we have prayers at 6 p.m. which are attended by all without distinction of caste or creed. . . . The officials show us every consideration.

Young India, 19-6-1924

97. ARYA SAMAJISTS AGAIN

So many Arya Samajists have written such long dissertations on my (in their opinion) ignorance of Arya Samaj teachings and their excellence that I was anxious to publish at least one of them so that the reader might have the Arya Samajists' view of my comments. At last I have a letter which it gives me pleasure to publish. It is from Principal Ramdeva of Kangri Gurukul. I have taken the liberty of removing only one passage which, in my opinion, must have been written in haste and does not do him justice. It does not affect his argument and certainly takes nothing away from his passionate exaltation of the founder of the Samaj. Here is Principal Ramdeva's letter:

> I was deeply pained to read your article on Hindu-Muslim Unity in *Young India*. I have never in my life read an article so disappointing from the pen of one so great. The article has caused deep resentment and heart-burning in the Punjab and the U.P. Instead of easing the situation, it has inflamed the Hindu mind and led many thinking people among the Aryas to the conclusion that you are so much biased in favour of Islam and against the Arya Samaj that you cannot help rendering—though quite unconsciously—a grave injustice to the latter. Your attacks upon the metaphysical beliefs of the Arya Samaj were quite irrelevant and had no bearing on the Hindu-Muslim question. They were not well reasoned out and you are in no mood for a metaphysical discussion. The

Arya Samajists' belief in the plenary inspiration of the Veda has as little connection with Hindu-Muslim tension as your belief in metempsychosis has with the split in the Congress. . . . Besides, if belief in verbal inspiration makes for narrowness, Islam is just as narrow as the religion of the Vedas. For this belief formed an essential part of the Muslim creed even in the palmy days of the Mohammedan faith on which you dwell with such fervent enthusiasm. Your implication that Maharshi Dayanand was the first sage to proclaim the doctrine of Vedic infallibility is absolutely without any foundation in fact and only reveals the dangers of dealing with subjects which a man—however great he may be—has not studied. May I respectfully point out that the Upanishads, the *Manusmriti*, the six systems of philosophy, the *puranas* and the works on Shankaracharya, Ramanuja, Madhvacharya, Chaitanya and other mediaeval saints and scholars all preach this doctrine? Again, the view that the Vedas contain the germs of all true knowledge including physical science is by no means new, all ancient scientists—like Arya Bhatta, Bhaskaracharya—held it. Besides, modern Vedic scholars like Pavgee, Paramashiva Iyer, Dwijdass Datta—none of whom is an Arya Samajist—have independently arrived at the same conclusion. I wonder if you know that Aravind Ghosh has publicly declared that Swami Dayanand alone had discovered the right axioms of Vedic exegesis. The testimony of such eminent authorities—who devoted their lifetime to the study of the Vedas—cannot be discredited by the mere *ipse dixit* of a Mahatma—however lofty his character and however great and overflowing his love for his kind—who has not devoted even five consecutive years to the study of the Vedas and the Vedangas in the original. I am afraid you were ill-advised in venturing into the field of theological polemics while writing as the supreme political leader of men of all faiths and creeds. Your characterization of the *Satyarth Prakash is* most unfair. It seems you have not read the first ten chapters which deal with prayer, *brahmachaya,* pedagogics, marriage reform, sannyas, politics, salvation, knowledge and nescience, Vedas and vegetarianism and form the main book—these chapters do not, as a rule, touch upon other religions—and have only skipped over the four supplementary chapters. In fact, you had by means of the mysterious stirrings of your subliminal consciousness, arrived at the queer conclusion that Swami Dayanand was intolerant, long before you had glanced at the *Satyarth Prakash* and your hurried reading was vitiated by your preconceptions. You were in the position of a judge who pronounced his sentence after hearing the prosecution and then addressed himself to defence evidence in order to be able to write out a judgment in support of the sentence. Men who have read Dayanand's works carefully—your friend Andrews is one of them—or had the privilege of sitting at his feet—men like A. O. Hume, Revd. Scott, Sir Syed Ahmed, Ranade,

Telang, Malabari, Raghunath Rao and Bishan Narayan Dhar—had never any difficulty in declaring that, whatever the merits of individual comments based upon data supplied to him, he was the most tolerant religious reformer of the age and his love for his kind transcended the bounds of race, country, colour and ever cultural unities. I must finish now. What I have written may sound presumptuous if solely regarded as the comments of a very small man upon the conduct of one justly regarded as the greatest man of the world. My only defence is that my reverence for you is equalled only by my love and devotion. Love and devotion have between themselves, the miraculous power to raise the humble to the level of the mighty.

With love and reverence,

Yours affectionately,

RAMA DEVA

I have always said that my politics are subservient to my religion. I have found myself in them, as I could not live my religious life, i.e., a life of service, without being affected by them I should discard them today if they hindered it. I cannot therefore subscribe to the doctrine that I may not, being a political leader, deal with matters religious. I have dealt with the Arya Samaj because I felt that it was losing its usefulness and its present activity was doing harm to the country itself. As a friend and a Hindu, I claimed to speak pointedly to those who derived their belief from a common source. Had I been dealing with the relative merits of religions, I should certainly have given my views on Islam too.

I confess that I have no first-hand knowledge of the Vedas. But I know enough to be able to judge for myself. Principal Ramdeva is wrong in thinking that I was prejudiced against Maharshi Dayanand's teachings. I do not know the exact terms of the tribute paid to the great reformer by the great men whom Principal Ramdeva mentions. I should have joined them in their tribute and still retained the opinion I hold. I do not love my wife the less because I know her limitations. My critics have made the mistake of thinking that, because I have criticized the founder, I have no affection or regard for him. Let me also assure Principal Ramdeva that I have read all the chapters of *Satyarth Prakash.* Will he forget that a man's moral teaching may be of a high order and yet his vision may be narrow? I know that many of my-friends, who believe me to be a highly moral man and my moral teaching of a high order, consider that my outlook upon life is narrow and even fanatical. I do not take their criticism as an offence,

though I consider myself to have a broad outlook upon life and also entitled to be classed among the most tolerant among mankind. I assure my Arya Samaj friends that I have only judged, if I have judged, as I should be judged by them. Let us therefore cry quits. Let them consider me to be the most intolerant and ignorant among their countrymen and leave me the liberty to retain the opinion I have expressed.

Young India, 19-6-1924

98. THE ACID TEST

I propose to move at the forthcoming meeting of the All-India Congress Committee the following four resolutions:

l. In view of the fact that the members of Congress organizations throughout the country have themselves hitherto neglected hand-spinning, in spite of the fact that the spinning-wheel and its product, hand-spun khaddar, have been regarded as indispensable for the establishment of swaraj and although their acceptance has been regarded by the Congress as a necessary preliminary to civil disobedience, the A.I.C.C. resolves that all the members of the various representative Congress organizations shall, except when disabled by sickness or prevented by continuous travelling, regularly spin for at least half an hour every day and shall send to the secretary of the All-India Khadi Board at least ten *tolas* each[1] of even and well-twisted yarn of a count not below ten,[2] so as to reach him not later than the 15th day of each month, the first consignment to reach the secretary[3] not later than the 15th day of August 1924, and thereafter in regular monthly succession. Any member failing to send the prescribed quantity by the prescribed date shall[4] be deemed to have vacated his office and such vacancy shall be filled in the usual manner; provided that the member vacating in the manner aforesaid shall not be eligible for re-election before the next general election for the members of the

[1] The resolution was moved by Gandhiji at the A.l.C.C. meeting, with certain verbal changes, on June 27. The words "ten *tolas* each" were replaced by "two thousand yards".

[2] The words "of a count not below ten" were omitted.

[3] The words "not later than the 15th day of each month, the first consignment to reach the secretary" were omitted.

[4] Here the words "unless unavoidably prevented" were added.

several organizations.[1]

2. Inasmuch as complaints have been received that provincial secretaries and other members of Congress organizations do not carry out the instructions issued to them from time to time by officers duly authorized thereto, the A.I.C.C. hereby resolves that those in charge of matters referred to them failing to comply with the instructions of officers thereto appointed shall be deemed to have vacated their offices and the vacancy shall be filled in the usual manner, provided that the member thus vacating shall not be eligible for re-election till the next general election.[2]

3. In the opinion of the A.I.C.C., it is desirable that the Congress electors elect to various offices in the Congress organizations, only those who in their persons carry out to the full the Congress creed and the various non-co-operation resolutions of the Congress including the five boycotts, namely, of all mill-spun cloth, Government law-courts, schools, titles and legislative bodies; and the A.I.C.C. hereby resolves that the members who do not believe in and do not in their own persons carry out the said boycotts shall vacate their seats and that there should be fresh elections in respect of such seats; provided that, if the members vacating so choose, they may offer themselves for re-election.[3]

4. The A.I.C.C. regrets the murder of the late Mr. Day by the late Gopinath Saha and offers its condolences to the deceased's family; and though deeply sensible of the love, however misguided, of the country prompting the murder, the A.I.C.C. strongly condemns this and all such political murders and is emphatically of opinion that all such acts are inconsistent with the Congress creed and its resolution of non-violent non-co-operation; and is of opinion that such acts retard the progress towards swaraj, and interfere with the preparations for civil disobedience which, in the opinion of the A.I.C.C., is capable of evoking the purest sacrifice, but which can only be offered in a

[1] Though this penalty clause was included in the resolution moved by Gandhiji, it was later rescinded by him in view of the Swarajist opposition; *vide* "Speech and Resolution on Penal Clause", 28-6-1924.

[2] This was moved and passed without any change; *vide* "Resolutions at A.I.C.C. Meeting", 29-6-1924.

[3] This resolution was revised twice—first in the Working Committee and again before Gandhiji moved it at the A.I.C.C. meeting on June 29.

perfectly peaceful atmosphere.[1]

At the present moment, I seem to be doing the very thing I claim to wish to avoid, viz., dividing the Congressmen and plunging the country into a controversy. I however assure the reader that it will not last long at least so far as I am concerned. Everyone will share my anxiety and eagerness to clear the air of uncertainty. Some discussion is inevitable if we are to know where we are. I am supposed to work wonders, lead the nation to its predestined goal. Fortunately for me, I entertain no such hallucinations But I do claim to be a humble soldier. If the reader will not laugh at me, I do not mind telling him that I can become also an efficient general on usual terms. I must have soldiers who would obey and who have faith in themselves and in their general and who will willingly carry out instructions. My plan of action is always open and very definite. Certain well-defined conditions being fulfilled, it guarantees success. But what is a poor general to do when he finds soldiers who subscribe to his conditions and yet do not carry them out in their own persons and, maybe, do not even believe in them? The resolutions are designed to test the qualifications of the soldiers.

But let me put it another way. The soldiers are in the happy position of being electors of their own general. The would-be general must know the conditions of employment. I remain where I stood in 1920. Only my faith has increased with the years that have gone by. If such is also the case with my employers, I am theirs body and soul. I have no faith in any other plan. I am, therefore, not available on any other terms, not because I am unwilling, but because I am unfit. How would it do if, in answer to an advertisement for a red-haired young man of thirty-five measuring six feet six inches, a grey-haired, old, toothless man of fifty-five, broken down in health, offered his services?

All the four resolutions then constitute my application for employment as general and lay down my qualifications and limitations. Here there is no imposition of autocracy, no impossible demand. The members, if they are true to the country and themselves, will not spare me if they find me to be in the wrong. I hold no man to be indispensable for the welfare of the country. Every one of us is debtor to the land of our birth and there through to humanity. Every debtor must be dismissed the moment he has ceased to pay. No past services

[1] This was later revised and moved by Gandhiji on June 29; *vide* "Resolutions at A.I.C.C. Meeting", 29-6-1924.

however brilliant should be counted in distributing present employments. The country's good may not be sacrificed to one man or one hundred men. Rather should he or they be sacrificed to the welfare of the country. I invite the members of the A.I.C.C. to approach their task with a determined purpose, without bias, without false emotion or sentiment. I adjure them not to take me on trust. Nothing need be right because I say so. They must decide for themselves. They must know their own minds and their capacity. They should know by this time that I am a difficult companion and a hard task-master. They will now find me harder than before.

I have seen the argument advanced that khadi cannot bring swaraj. This is an old argument. If India wants the fineries of Europe, whether made in the mills of Manchester or Bombay, she must cease to think of swaraj in the terms of the millions of her sons and daughters. If we believe in the message of the wheel, we must spin it ourselves and I promise that it will be an inspiring occupation. If we want swaraj through non-violent means, and, therefore, through non-violent disobedience, we must produce a non-violent atmosphere. If, instead of haranguing crowds, we would give spinning demonstrations in their midst, we would have a peaceful atmosphere. If I could help it, I would gag every member of the Congress organizations except myself and, perhaps, Shaukat Ali, till swaraj is attained, and put him to the spinning-wheel or in charge of a spinning-centre. If the silent wheel does not inspire faith and courage and hope, let the members say so boldly.

The second and the third resolutions are complementary of the first.

The fourth resolution tests our belief in member non violent policy. I have read Deshbandhu Das's statement on the Gopinath Saha resolution. It does not-affect what I said last week. So long as the Congress retains and believes in its present creed, there is no half-way house to the resolution drafted by me.

Young India, 19-6-1924

99. WHAT MAY HINDUS DO?

I have received many communications on the Hindu-Muslim statement, but there being nothing new or striking in them, I have not

published them. But I gladly print Babu Bhagwandas's letter[1] and answer his questions.

Regarding the first two questions, the writer has answered them himself. In my opinion, they are only partly true. Though the majority of the Mussalmans of India and the Hindus belong to the same 'stock', the religious environment has made them different. I believe and I have noticed too that thought transforms man's features as well as character. The Sikhs are the most recent illustration of the fact. The Mussalman, being generally in a minority, has as a class developed into a bully. Moreover, being heir to fresh traditions, he exhibits the virility of a comparatively new system of life. Though, in my opinion, non-violence has a predominant place in the Koran, the thirteen hundred years of imperialistic expansion has made the Mussalmans fighters as a body. They are therefore aggressive. Bullying is the natural excrescence of an aggressive spirit. The Hindu has an ages-old civilization. He is essentially non-violent. His civili-zation has passed through the experiences that the two recent ones are still passing through. If Hinduism was ever imperialistic in the modern sense of the term, it has outlived its imperialism and has, either deliberately or as a matter of course, given it up. Predominance of the non-violent spirit has restricted the use of arms to a small minority which must always be subordinate to a civil power highly spiritual, learned and selfless. The Hindus as a *body* are, therefore, not equipped for fighting. But not having retained their spiritual training, they have forgotten the use of an effective substitute for arms and, not knowing their use nor having an aptitude for them, they have become docile to the point of timidity or cowardice. This vice is, therefore, a natural excrescence of gentleness. Holding this view, I do not think that the Hindu exclusiveness, bad as it undoubtedly is, has much to do with the Hindu timidity. Hence, also, my disbelief in *akhadas* as a means of self-defence. I prize them for physical culture but, for self-defence, I would restore the spiritual culture. The-best and most lasting self-defence is self-purification. I refuse to be lifted off my feet because of the scares that haunt us today. If Hindus would but believe in themselves and work in accordance with their traditions, they will have no reason to fear bullying. The moment they recommence the real spiritual training the Mussalman will respond. He cannot help it. If I can get together a band of young Hindus with faith

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Bhagwan Das", 5-6-1924.

in themselves and, therefore, faith in the Mussalmans, the band will become a shield for the weaker ones. They (the young Hindus) will teach how to die without killing. I know no other way. When our ancestors saw affliction surrounding them, they went in for *tapasya*—purification. They realized the helplessness of the flesh and in their helplessness they prayed till they compelled the Maker to obey their call. 'Oh yes,' says my Hindu friend, 'but then God sent someone to wield arms.' I am not concerned with denying the truth of the retort. All I say to the friend is that as a Hindu he may not ignore the cause and secure the result. It will be time to fight when we have done enough *tapasya.* Are we purified enough, I ask? Have we even done willing penance for the sin of untouchability, let alone the personal purity of individuals? Are our religious preceptors all that they should be? We are beating the air whilst we simply concentrate our attention upon picking holes in the Mussalman conduct. As with the Englishmen, so with the Mussalman. If our professions are true, we should find it infinitely less difficult to conquer the Mussalman than the English. But Hindus whisper to me that they have hope of the Englishman but none of the Mussalman. I say to them, 'If you have no hope of the Mussalman, your hope of the Englishman is foredoomed to failure.'

The other questions can be briefly answered. The *goondas* came on the scene because the leaders wanted them. The leaders distrusted one another. Distrust never comes from well-defined causes. A variety of causes, more felt than realized, breeds distrust. We have not yet visualized the fact that our interests are identical Each party seems vaguely to believe that it can displace the other by some kind of manoeuvring. But I freely confess, as suggested by Babu Bhagwandas, that our not knowing the kind of swaraj we want has also a great deal to do with the distrust. I used not to think so, but he had almost converted me before I became Sir George Lloyd's guest at the Yeravda Central Prison. I am now a confirmed convert.

The 'points of contact' referred to by me is a phrase intended to cover all social, religious and political relations alike as between individuals and masses. Thus, for instance, instead of accentuating the differences in religion, I should set about discovering the good points common to both. I would bridge the social distance wherever I can do so consistently with my religious belief. I would go out of my way to seek common ground on the political field.

As for the referee, I have named Hakim Saheb's name undoubtedly for the universal respect that it carried with it. But I would not hesitate to put the pen even in the hands of a Mussalman who may be known for his prejudices and fanaticism. For, as a Hindu, I should know that I have nothing to lose even if the referee gave the Mussalmans a majority of seats in every province. There is no principle at stake in giving or having seats in elective bodies. Moreover, experience has taught me to know that undivided responsibility immediately puts a man on his mettle and his pride or godfearingness sobers him.

Lastly, no proclamation or any such thing will avail unless some of us begin to act up to the proclamation even though we may be the fewest possible.

Young India, 19-6-1924

100. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

[*June 20, 1924*][1]

CHI . VAS UMATI ,

I have your letter. Your hand should attain the perfection of print. You have not said anything about the copy-book. Ramdas and Ba returned from Surat yesterday. Pragji's case has been postponed. Stay on there without worrying and recover your health. Radha is pulling on as well as she might, Mani is progressing rapidly. There has been no rain yet, only some advance showers.

Blessings from

BAPU

SISTER VASUMATI & C.

From the Gujara ti origin al: C.W. 447. Courte sy: Vasuma ti Pandit

[1] The postmark bears this date.

101. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Jyeshtha Krishna 5 [*June 21, 1924*][1]

BHA I GHA NSHYA MDASJ I,

I have your letter.

We should remain non-violent, unmindful of whether we succeed or fail in our undertaking. This is the only natural way of demonstrating the principle of non-violence. It would be more correct to say that the result of ahimsa is always good. Such being our firm faith, we are not concerned whether our efforts are crowned with success today or years later Those who were forcibly converted to Islam two hundred years ago cannot be a source of strength to it in so far as the policy of compulsion was resorted to in converting them. Similarly, if anyone is converted to Hinduism through force or fraud, that would be sowing the seeds of its destruction. We are as a rule misled by immediate results. In the history of a great community, two hundred years are a mere nothing.

Making people give up their habits with the help of law does not by itself constitute brute force or violence—to stop the sale of liquor by law and thereby force the addicts to give up the habit of drinking is not violence. If it were suggested that those given to drinking should be whipped, that would certainly be brute force. Selling liquor is no duty of the State.

Yours sincerely,

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

As regards *Y.I.*, Swami Anand tells me that the bill has been sent to you.

From the Hindi origin al: C.W. 6011. Courte sy: G. D. Birla

102. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

[*June 21, 1924*]

DEA R MR. JAY AKAR,

Thank you for your letter. You may let our friends use my letter to you. In this connection I do not want to lose touch with you. My

[1] This letter was written to the addressee in reply to his of June 11, 1924. *Jyeshtha Krishna* 5 fell on June 21.

sole reliance for the cleanness of their work is on you. What I am anxious about is that they should collect funds on the strength of their character. We may come in to supplement. Thank you for your concern about my health. I am giving me as much rest as possible under the circumstances.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Story of My Life, Vol. II, p. 298

103. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Jeth Vad 5 [*June 21, 1924*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have both your letters. I understand about *Gan. Shi.*[2] So, there was really no need to write.

If Jinnabhai comes again, please pacify him. As he has not written to me, I do not intend to do anything. If in spite of our modest efforts, he forsakes his duty, we are helpless. But we cannot let ourselves waver from fear of it. We must examine the question purely from a religious point of view.

There is no difficulty at all in your coming here when the A.I.C.C meets[3]. But you must give up the idea of attending the meeting. I think the passes will be issued by Maulana Mohammed Ali. But the fewer the persons seeking them, the better it will be.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

It seems you have sent the original application of Jinnabhai. Hence, I am returning it.

From the Gujara ti origin al: Pyarela l Papers . Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y. Courte sy: Belade vi Nayyar and Dr. Sushil a Nayyar

[1] For an extract from the letter, supplied under this date, *ibid*.

[2] Presumably the reference is to *Gandhi Shikshan*; *vide* "The Acid Test", 19-6-1924.

[3] From June 27 to 30

104. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

June 21, 1924

DEA R BRO THER,

Please return this letter[1] after reading it. My conjecture has proved true.

Khuda Hafiz from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

ABBAS TYABJI
CAMP BAWDA

From a microf ilm of the Gujara ti origin al: S. N. 10468

105. MY NOTES

SPINNING-WHEEL MADNESS

An old man, who is a friend, noting the mistakes of young people, fell to examining himself. He writes:[2]

This friend has started spinning only recently. It is, therefore, not a small thing that he forgets the world while spinning. I am sure that when the yarn comes out uniformly, he will catch a glimpse of God in his heart and he will even see God dancing on the thread. Is there a single thing or place without Him? Though we can see, we are in fact blind and, therefore, do not see Him. When we come to associate with the spinning-wheel the sacred idea that it will end the sufferings of the country, will feed the hungry, will protect the honour of women, will end the indolence of the idle, will win swaraj for the Swarajist and help a person in his effort for self-control, then surely God will dance on the yarn and the writer of this letter will see Him as he plies the spinning-wheel. "As the faith, so the achievement."[3]

Spinning-wheel in Somaliland !

A Khoja merchant of Somaliland, Mr. Mahomed Hassam Chaman, informs us that there are many women in the country who weave. So far they used to weave cloth from mill-yarn, but now even

[1] Not available

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had said that, while spinning, he forgot the world but could not think of God.

[3] Gujarati saying

the spinning-wheel has come into use. No great effort has been made to spread its use, but some effort is being made now. The movement in India has had a good effect on the Arabs of Somaliland. Mr. Chaman feels that the spinning-wheel will be taken up fast in Somaliland. He further tells us that schools are run there almost free, so to say. The children receive only religious instruction to start with. Every child has to learn to recite passages from *Koran-e-sharif.* The school houses are put up with strips of bamboo and cost little. Every child takes to school daily a handful of *jowar*[1] and that is accepted as the teacher's Finally, Mr. Chaman reports that though the population of Somaliland consists principally of Arabs, with a few Hindu merchants in their midst, the latter live happily there and the Arabs treat them as friends. Why should Hindus and Muslims quarrel in their own land?

KHADI WEAR FOR WEDDINGS

A correspondent from Wadhwan writes to say that three hundred families have, for some reason or other, broken away from the Jhalawad Visha Shrimali Sthanakvasi circle and have reduced customary expenses on several heads. Among other things, they have passed a resolution to the effect that at the time of wedding the bride should be dressed in khadi and wear bangles of sandalwood. If others also adopt such a rule, it will save people from many difficulties and go a long way to help the poor. The correspondent adds, however, that on other occasions these families use foreign cloth and that the practice is likely to continue. If this small group of three hundred families wants to, it can take the vow of using khadi on all occasions. The stock of khadi produced in Wadhwan itself is still lying unsold. That, despite all this khadi propaganda, only a little of it has been produced and that too has not been sold immediately suggests, not only that its use has not become universal yet, but that it has not even come to stay. How is it that the twenty-six lakhs of people of Kathiawar do not purchase annually even ten lakhs worth of khadi?

IN A SCHOOL

A lady teacher writes:[2]

Here is a fine example of how much can be accomplished by the faith even of one sister. If only all daughters of cultivators'

[1] Coarse millet

[2] The letter is not translated here. She had written that she was sending to Gandhiji a handkerchief woven in her school out of yarn spun there from cotton grown in her father's field.

families asked for cotton from their parents' homes, got it carded, spun, woven and made into garments by the children! Every reader can work out for himself what gain this would mean.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-6-1924

106 THE "PURDAH" AND THE PLEDGE

I have not given this caption because these two words have anything in common. Writing about the Rajput Conference[1], I wish to write separately on these two topics only and have, therefore, put the words together here. A visitor at the Conference informs me that there was unbounded enthusiasm there. About fifteen thousand Rajputs must have gathered on the occasion. Even the number of women present exceeded anyone's expectations. There must have been a thousand of them. The number was indeed very large. But the curtains were so effectively disposed that a stranger could not know that somewhere in the Conference *pandal* there were women too present. Even the arrangements for carrying them from where they were lodged to the Conference site were so skilful that no one could judge that women were passing along.

The organizers of the Conference certainly deserve congratulations on making such perfect arrangements. But one can only express sorrow for the fact of curtains having been put up. The time, one may say, when curtains were necessary is past. There seem to have been no curtains during Rama's rule. It is of course true that we still do not have *Ramarajya*[2], but, if we so desire, we may act right from now as if we had it. We have yet to show that, even in the absence of curtains, we can conduct ourselves with decorum. None can say that the communities which do not observe *purdah* show any the less decorum. When women were regarded as chattels and were often kidnapped, the *purdah* might well have been necessary. If men were kidnapped, they too might have to remain under *purdah*. In places

[1] The Kathiawar Rajput Conference

[2] Rule of Rama, traditionally regarded as the ideal social and political order

where a man, when seen, is made to do forced labour, the men observe purdah even today, that is, they hide themselves. The *purdah,* however, is not the means of saving women from men's evil eye; the only means is men's own purity of character.

A woman can take a big hand in teaching men such purity. But how can a woman who remains in *purdah,* suppressed, teach a man purity? If she is taught to live in fear of men right from the beginning, how can she reform them? Moreover, the very fact of keeping a woman behind *purdah* has the effect of creating moral weakness in her. I believe that *purdah* helps not the maintenance but the destruction of morality. What is necessary for promoting it is education in morality, a moral environment and moral conduct among the elders. I do not write at this length about *purdah* with a view to finding fault with the Conference. It would have been difficult to abolish *purdah* right at the start. But a few Rajputs must start working for the future.

Now about the pledge. I hear that a good many people took it. I also hear that it was taken with deliberation. The procedure adopted for the taking of the pledge was also good. Let us hope, therefore, that the pledge will be kept scrupulously. It has been my experience, however, that a good many pledges taken in big gatherings are not acted upon. This, of course, does not mean that we should not take pledges. It is, certainly my opinion, confirmed by experience, that one never progresses without taking pledges. A pledge means a resolution to be kept up unto death. No task can ever be accomplished without such resolutions. "According to my capacity" is of no help at all. A pledge confers on man inexhaustible strength. A person who would do a thing only to the best of his capacity is sure to weaken some time of other. He will have, then, no support. A pledge, however, will save him in such a contingency. He had taken the pledge with God as witness. When he loses his own strength, the Helper of the helpless will be there by his side.

Unfortunately, we put little value on pledges. As people do not think much before taking one, they are unable to keep it. Having got into the habit of not keeping pledges, they have almost come to believe that it is not necessary to keep them. We should all wish that the Rajput brothers and sisters who have taken the pledge will keep it.

The simplicity of the Conference was worthy of emulation by the Congress. There was nothing more than chapatis and dal by way of meals for this huge concourse. Nothing else is possible in a big gathering and nothing else would be appropriate either. The Sikh brethren, too, observe like simplicity in their gatherings. The members of the Congress should learn the lesson of simplicity. It saves expense, time and labour and, in addition, makes the body strong and preserves health.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-6-1924

107. TO THOSE WHO GET THEIR CLOTH WOVEN

We often hear the complaint that those who spin have no facilities for getting the yarn woven. The Vijapur (*via* Kalol)[1] office, which is run by Mrs. Gangabehn Majumdar, undertakes weaving of khadi at the following rates:

Breadth in inches	Length	Yarn thick	Yarn fine	Specific patterns
	Rate in rupees			
24	Per 15-yd. length	2-4 as.	2-8 as.	2-12 as.
28	,, ,, 2-12 as.	3-00	3-8 as.	
42	Per 8-yd. length	2-l2 as.	3-00	
48	„ „ „	3-00	3-4 as.	

The yarn to be woven should be sent to the above address. Anyone who wants further details may also write to them. The same production centre has started a store called Shri Shuddha Khadi Bhandar on Richey Road (Chudgar Pole, Ahmedabad). At this store, one can get even slivers at Re. I a seer.

Anyone wishing to get yarn woven should remember that he may even be disappointed if he sends any sort or any quantity of yarn there. Yarn enough to make one *tani*[2] at least should be sent. Moreover, if the yarn is not good and well-twisted, the cloth woven

[1] In North Gujarat

[2] Same as *tano,* which represents a length of 20 yards. A whole piece of cloth generally has this length.

will be poor. It is certainly a help that one can go and buy slivers, but it is very necessary that each one should card his own cotton. The process is very easy and, for anyone who spins only a little every day, carding the required cotton is but child's play. The cotton carded in half an hour would certainly take not less than four hours to spin into good yarn.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-6-1924

108. PROFITS IN WEAVING

I have received several replies in response to my request that people should write to me about the profits actually made in weaving. I present this time some of them which are worthy of note. Bhavsar Chandulal Chhaganlal from Cambay writes:[1]

It is to be regretted that Shri Chandulal uses foreign yarn as warp and woof. We hope that, even if it means working hard, he will start using hand-spun yarn. From the account given by him, one can see that, if hand-spun yarn is available and khadi produced sells regularly, a weaver family will certainly earn enough. Weavers and others should take a lesson from the fact that Shri Chandulal and other members of the Bhavsar community in Cambay use only khadi. Even those who have to deal in foreign cloth can certainly use khadi themselves.

Upadhyay Vijeshanker Kashiram reports his experience as follows:[2]

This relates to the exclusive use of hand-spun yarn and is from a man who has just learnt weaving. It should, therefore, be regarded as more useful to us. It is clear that, if the hand-spun yarn is uniform and well-twisted and, if the weaver has more experience, his earnings will be higher.

Shri Jivanlal Champaneria sends us the third report, which is as

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that, having lost his job for taking part in the Non-co-operation movement, he learned in a few months his family craft of weaving and was then able to earn Rs. 50 every month.

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had reported that, if a man worked for 10 to 12 hours a day, he could turn out 6 to 7 yards of khadi from hand-spun yarn. Besides attending to other processes, a weaver could turn out 16 yards in four days, his monthly income working out at Rs. 15. That was better than Rs. 8 to Rs. 10 which a village teacher or a clerk earned.

follows:[1]

I had stated that the earnings, not of one weaver as reported by Shri Jivanlal, but of a weaver-family amounted to Rs. 2 to Rs. 3 a day.

From the three examples cited above, we see that the weavers' product reaches the consumer not directly, but through the dealer. Normally, it should of course be so. It is clear that, if the weaver functions as a dealer as well and has control over the quality of spinning, his earnings will be higher. If yarn of the quality spun in Andhra can be produced everywhere, saleable saris can be manufactured out of it and one will certainly earn a higher profit on them.

The complaint that the average weaver gets no time at all for his moral progress is quite justified. It is part of the excessive rigidity of the caste system that its artisan families following their profession for generations remain without literary and moral education. The educated, these days, seem to form a separate class, as it were; they have paid no attention at all to the rest, that is, the artisans, farmers and others. We, the educated people, have got on the backs of the artisans and other classes of people. Personally, I am convinced that if the educated class gets off the back of the uneducated classes, the latter will have few problems. This is the main idea behind our present activity. Many among the educated have come to understand the value of physical labour, and also to see the sin in riding on the back of the uneducated. Meanwhile, sensible weavers can save some time by being more regular in work and by better organizing their industry. As the khadi movement progresses, weaving and other related work will come to be better organized and will be placed on a sound basis.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-6-1924

[1] The letter is not translated here. Saying that he could not understand how Gandhiji had calculated that a weaver could earn on an average Rs. 2 to Rs. 3 a day, the correspondent had reported that, among the members of the *Bhavsar* community in Borsad, the daily earnings of the husband, the wife and a boy or girl amounted to no more than Rs. 1.37. He had also complained that, owing to the necessity for the whole family to work for their livelihood, they knew little of India's immemorial civilization, the women did not understand the importance of cleanliness and personal hygiene and, as a consequence, their lives were dull and drab and lacked culture.

109. THREE QUESTIONS

(1) Does not spinning and weaving make a man a Sudra?

(2) Is it not contrary to principles of economics that even one who can earn much more through his brains should make a living by spinning and weaving?

(3) Does not spinning and weaving by all destroy the principle of division of labour?

In my view a Sudra is one who earns his living by doing service or wage labour for others. Thus considered all who do service are Sudras. How can one who pursues an independent occupation be treated as a Sudra? I do not see this does any harm to *varnashrama.*

Now the second question. My conviction tells me that God gave us the intellect for knowing ourselves. A living should be got out of agriculture, etc. The chief cause of all the wickedness that there is in the world is the misuse of the intellect. It is through the. misuse of the intellect that there is so much inequality in the world. Tens of millions go about begging while a hundred or two become millionaires. The true economics is that by which every man and woman gets a living by physical labour.

Now as to the third question. There is no harm done to the principle of division of labour. For the masons, the goldsmiths, etc., are not being asked to take to spinning. Yes, those who do service, or practise law, or have no occupation at all are advised to earn their livelihood by spinning and weaving. Spinning, at the present time and in this field, I consider a *yajna*. Spinning is a necessary *yajna* for all—young and old, men and women, rich and poor. Honest men have to go hungry. They should feed themselves through spinning. But the others should, for their sake, pray to God and spin.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 22-6-1924

110. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Jeth Vad 6 [*June 22, 1924*][1]

PU. GAN GABEH N,

I have your letter. I am glad to know that you will be able to come within a month.[2] When we are unhappy, it is certainly better to find fault with ourselves rather than with others.

You cannot abandon your daughter-in-law. If you persuade your son and with his consent stay away for a fairly long period, she will, I believe, come round. If, however, such separation even for a short period is not possible, you must consider the unhappiness as inevitable and suffer it. There is nothing unusual if a mother lives away from her eldest son. Your son is obedient; you will therefore have no difficulty even in separation. If he provides you with the necessary money, his wife need not know it or have anything to lay against it. If this is done with perfect sweetness, reconciliation is bound to take place in the end. This is what is called domestic non-co-operation. The non-co-operation which aims at ultimate co-operation is moral.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujara ti origin al: C.W. 6012. Courte sy: Gangab ehn Vaidya

111. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Jeth Vad 7 [*June 23, 1924*][3]

CHI . VAS UMATI ,

I got your letter written in a beautiful hand. Now I believe you can be given five marks [out of ten]. I shall send you a copy-book.

If there arc many reforms that have to be brought about, we should find out the principal ones and concentrate on them. The

[1] The addressee went to the Ashram in 1924 with her daughter's two children. In that year *Jeth Vad* 6 fell on June 22.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Gandhiji's letters to the addressee dated June 13, 16 and 20, 1924, suggest that this letter too was written in the same year. In 1924 *Jeth Vad 7* fell on June 23.

others will follow automatically.

You are definitely debarred from cherishing mental worries. The mind itself is our enemy as well as our friend. It is our duty to keep it under control. No medicine from a doctor is required for this. Please let me share your mental worries without any reservation. You caught my eye the very day we first met. I have looked upon you as a well-behaved daughter ever since. I know that I have not been able to share your grief to the extent I would have wished to, for I could not give you sufficient time. This only shows my inadequacy. Do shake of mental worry. This is the true and perhaps the only reform worth the name.

I shall give your letter to Ramdas. I shall not stop him if he wishes to go.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I do not remember to have written *Jeth Vad*. If, however, it was written, it was done quite inadvertently.

From the Gujara ti origin al: C.W. 547. Courte sy: Vasuma ti Pandit

112. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[1]

[AHMEDABAD,
June 24, 1924]

Asked whether from all he had seen he was still certain that he would be able to avoid a fratricidal war, Mr. Gandhi replied:

Certainly. There seems nothing to make me despair of being able to avoid internal dissensions. Opinions may differ as to the interpretation of the phrase, but I have very little doubt that there would be no unseemly dissensions. I regard members of the All-India Congress Committee, whether Swarajists or No-changers, to be patriotic enough to consider the welfare of the country in preference to every other question. It is perfectly true that the Swarajists feel keenly about their own position as I do about mine. But I give them the same credit for love of country as I claim for myself. That being so, there is not the slightest reason why it should be impossible to come to an understanding whereby both can work along their own lines.

[1] Gandhiji was interviewed in the afternoon at the Sabarmati Ashram by a special representative of the Associated Press of India.

To the next question, if he did not think that the spinning-wheel was too tame for young workers, Mr. Gandhi said:

It appears to be too tame only to those who have not worked at it and who have been too lazy to think out its economy and unifying value. Those who are nurtured on theories of political economy deduced by Western writers from Western conditions have taken no note of the special conditions of India. It presents a problem all its own, as I have repeatedly said. Whatever judgment may be pronounced upon many things I have advocated, history will pronounce only one judgment on the spinning-wheel, namely, that it was the only thing that could put India on her feet. I know that the difficulties are enormous, but they are not insurmountable and certainly not nearly as great as the difficulty of reaching the top of Mount Everest; and when a few brave Englishmen have succeeded in the enterprise, I must leave to the experts to say what the gain will be to the world. But it requires no expert to say what the. success of the spinning-wheel must mean. I am convinced that, as soon as the Congress workers realize for themselves the possibilities of this simple invention, in an incredibly short space of time the charkha will occupy a place in the Indian home next only to the simple village stove.

The Hindu, 25-6-1924

113. OPEN LETTER TO A.I.C.C. MEMBERS

[Before *June 26, 1924*]

DEA R FRI ENDS,

We rightly regard the Congress to be the most representative of the nation whether for better or for worse. In my opinion, the Congress has an almost perfect constitution designed to represent the nation to the fullest possible extent. But being ourselves imperfect, we have worked it very indifferently. Our voters' roll has been reduced practically to nil in many parts of India. But, in spite of it all, an organization that has persisted for forty years and weathered many a storm must remain the most powerful in the land. We regard ourselves as its chosen representatives.

The Congress took a resolution in 1920 that was designed to attain swaraj in one year.[1] At the end of that year we were within an ace of getting it. But because we failed to get it then, we may not now regard

[1] *Vide* "Extracts from Sir Sankaran Nair's Letter", 17-1-1922.

it as indefinitely postponed. On the contrary, we must retain the same attitude of hopefulness as before. Above all, we must be determined to get swaraj soon, sooner than the chilly atmosphere around us will warrant.

It is in that spirit that I have framed the resolutions for submission to you. They have been before the country now for a week. I have read some of the criticism directed against them. I believe I am open to conviction. But the criticism has not altered it. I have no axes to grind, or the only axe I have to grind is that which will enable us to strike at the root of every impediment in our way.

I believe in khaddar, I believe in the spinning-wheel. It has two aspects—terrible and benign.

In its terrible aspect it is calculated to bring about the only boycott we need for independent national existence, viz., that of foreign cloth. It alone can kill the demoralizing British self-interest. Then and then only, when that interest is killed, shall we be in a position to talk to British statesmen on equal terms. Today they are, as we would be in their place, blinded by self interest.

In its benign aspect, it gives a new life and hope to the villager. It can fill millions of hungry mouths. It alone can bring us in touch and in tune with the villagers. It is the very best popular education that is needed for the millions. It is life-giving. I would not, therefore, hesitate to turn the Congress into an exclusively khaddar-producing and khaddar-propaganda organization till the attainment of swaraj, just as I would not hesitate, if I believed in the use of arms and giving violent battle to England, to make the Congress an organization exclusively devoted to training the nation in the use of arms. To be truly national the Congress must devote itself exclusively to that which will bring the nation most quickly within reach of swaraj.

Because I believe in the potency of khaddar to give swaraj, I have given it the foremost place in our programme. You will not hesitate summarily to reject it, if you do not share my belief. But if you believe in khaddar you will regard the requirements I have sub-mitted as a mild minimum. I assure you, if I was not afraid of putting an undue strain on you, I would not have hesitated to implore you to give four hours per day to spinning instead of a paltry half hour.

In this connection, let me confess my distrust of Swarajists. I understand that the khaddar among them is on the wane more than among the others. It distressed me to find that several Swarajists hat

said final good-bye to khaddar and that the material of which their dress was made was foreign. A few have threatened that, if I persecute them in the manner I am doing, they would give up khaddar and the charkha altogether. I am told that many No-changers are not much better. Khaddar with them still remains a ceremonial dress, but for household wear they do not hesitate to wear *videshi*[1] or mill-cloth. The wearing of khaddar to patronize me is worse than useless and the wearing of it on ceremonial occasions only is hypocritical. Do you not agree with me that both patronage and hypocrisy should be banished from our midst? If you believe in the potency of khaddar, you will take it up, not because I advocate it, but because it has become part of your life. I note that a certain fashion of dress has been prescribed for the Viceregal social function. Prohibition-of khaddar is but a short step from de last. Yet another stage, and there will be prohibition in the Assembly and Councils.

Another vexed question is about the practising lawyers. It is clear to me that, if we cannot run the Congress without them, we must make the frank confession and remove the boycott. I am free to confess that removal of that boycott is a natural corollary to that of the Councils. If entry into the legislative bodies can give, as they do, some relief, so does practice in the law-courts. We are all aware of the signal services that the late Manomohan Ghosh rendered to the poor by the voluntary assistance rendered by him to them. The Government institutions could not have existed if they had nothing attractive about them. Only, this is no new discovery. Ours is a struggle consisting of self-sacrifice pure and simple. We sacrificed the doubtful, temporary and partial good done by these institutions for the lasting good of the whole country. Moreover, if there is such a thing as honour among us, does it not behove us to retain the boycott apart from any other reason, for the sake of those lawyers who have been disbarred in Tamilnad, Andhra, Karnatak, Maharashtra, and elsewhere? We shall be building traditions of honour only if we cherish it even for the least among us. Let the practising lawyers beware. No family considerations can he allowed to override those of honour. Don't make the mistake. Ire of supposing that we can gain swaraj within a short time, eyen though we may be dead to all sense of honour. Unless the Congress can at the present moment produce proud, defiant, self-respecting, sensitive, selfless and self-sacrificing

[1] Foreign

patriots who would count no cost too great, there is, for this poor country of ours, for a long time to come, no swaraj in which the poorest can participate. You and I may get a larger share in the spoils of exploitation, but I am sure you will refuse to call that swaraj.

Need I say anything about the schools? If we cannot resist the temptation of sending our children to the Government schools, really, I cannot understand the opposition to the *system.* If the Government schools and law-courts and legislatures are good enough to attract us, our opposition is clearly to the *personnel* and not to the *system.* Non-co-operation was conceived for a much nobler purpose. If the wish is merely that toe rather than *Englishmen* man the system, I grant that the boycotts are not only useless but harmful. The logical outcome of the Government policy is to Europeanize India and, immediately we have become Europeanized, our English masters will gladly hand over the reins of Government to us. We would be welcomed as their willing agents. I can have no interest in that deadly process save to put the whole of my humble weight against it. My swaraj is to keep intact the genius of our civilization. I want to write many new things, but they must be all written on the Indian slate. I would gladly borrow from the West when I can return the amount with decent interest.

Viewed in the light I have put before you, the five boycotts are vital for the Congress. They are vital for swaraj for the masses.

Such a big question cannot be decided merely by a show of hands, it cannot be decided even by argument. It must be decided by each one of us by ringing for the still small voice within. Each one of us must retire to his closet and ask God to give a definite guidance.

This battle for freedom is no play for you and me. It is the most serious thing in our lives. If, therefore, the programme sketched by me does not commend itself to you, you must summarily reject it, cost what it may.

Your fellow-worker
in the service the
of the Motherland,

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 26-6-1924

114. MY JAIL EXPERIENCES-IX

SOME CONVICT-WARDERS

I have already dealt with the system of appointing convicts as officers or warders. I hold the system to be thoroughly bad and demoralizing. The prison officials know it. They say it is due to economy. They think that the jails cannot be efficiently administered with the present paid staff without supplementing it with convict-officers. There is no doubt that, unless the reform suggested by me in the last chapter is inaugurated, it is not possible to do away with the system of entrusting convicts with responsible duties without a very large increase in the prison expenditure.

However, it is not my purpose in this chapter to deal any further with prison reform. I simply wish to relate my happy experiences of the convict officers who were appointed to watch over and look after us.

When Mr. Banker and I were transferred to the Yeravda Central Prison, there was one warder and one *bardasi.* The latter is what the name implies, a mere servant. The convict warder whose acquaintance we first made was a Hindu from the Punjab side. His name was Harkaran. He was convicted of murder. The murder according to him was not premeditated but due to a fit of anger. By occupation he was a petty merchant. His sentence was fourteen years, of which he had almost served nine years. He was fairly old. The prison life had told on him. He was always brooding and most anxious to be discharged. He was therefore morose and peevish. He was conscious of his high dignity. He was patronizing to those who obeyed and served him. He bullied those who crossed his path. To look at him, no one would think he could be guilty of murder. He could read Urdu fluently. He was religiously minded and was fond of reading *bhajans* in Urdu. The Yeravda library has a few books for prisoners in several Indian languages, e.g., Hindi, Urdu, Marathi, Gujarati, Sindhi, Canarese, Tamil. Harkaran was not above keeping and hiding trifles in defiance of jail regulations. He was in the majority. It would be regarded snobbish and foolish not to steal trifles. A prisoner who did not follow this unwritten law would have a bad time of it from his fellows. Ostracism would be the least punishment. If the whole of the jail yard were to be dug up twelve inches deep, it would yield up many a secret

in the shape of spoons, knives, pots, cigarettes, soap and such like. Harkaran, being one of the oldest inmates of Yeravda, was a sort of purveyor-general to the prisoners. If a prisoner wanted anything Harkaran was the supplier. I wanted a knife for cutting my bread and lemons. Harkaran could procure it if I would have it through him. If I wanted to go through the elaborate process of asking the superintendent, that was my business. I must be prepared for a snubbing. When we became friends, he related all his wonderful exploits; how he dodged officials, how he procured for himself and others dainties, what skilful tricks were employed by prisoners to obtain what they wanted and how it was almost impossible (in his opinion) not to resort to these tricks, was described in minute detail and with much gusto. He was horrified to discover that I was neither interested in the exploits nor was I minded to join the trade. He endeavoured subsequently somewhat to repair the indiscretion he had let himself into, and to assure me that he had seen my point and that he would thenceforth refrain from the irregularities. But I have a suspicion that the repentance was put on. The reader, however, must not run away with the idea that the jail officials do not know these irregularities. They are all an open secret. They not only know them, but often sympathize with the prisoners who do these tricks to make themselves happy and comfortable. They (the officials) believe in the doctrine of 'live and let live'. A prisoner, who behaves correctly in the presence of his superiors, obeys their orders, does not quarrel with his fellows and does not inconvenience officials, is practically free to break any regulation for the sake of procuring greater comfort.

Well, the first acquaintance with Harkaran was not particularly happy. He knew that we were 'important' prisoners. But so was he in a way. After all, he was an officer with a long and honourable record of service behind him. He was no respecter of persons Mr. Banker was torn away from me the very next morning. Harkaran allowed the full force of his authority to descend upon me. I was not to do this or that. I was not to cross the white line referred to in my letter to Hakimji. But I had not the faintest idea of retaliating or resenting what he said or did. I was too engrossed in my own work and studies even to think of Harkaran's simple and childish instructions. It gave me momentary amusement. Harkaran discovered his error. When he saw that I did not resent his officiousness, nor did I pay any attention to it, he felt nonplussed. He was unprepared for such an emergency. He therefore took the only course that was left open to him and that was to recog-

nize my dissimilarity and respond to me when I refused to respond to him. My non-violent non-co-operation led to his co-operation. All non-violent non-co-operation, whether among individuals or societies, or whether between governments and the governed, must lead ultimately to hearty co-operation. Anyway Harkaran and I became perfect friends. When Mr. Banker was returned to me, he put the finishing touch. One of his many businesses in the jail was to boom me for all I was worth. He thought that Harkaran and others had not sufficiently realized my greatness. In two or three days time I found myself elevated to the position of a baby in woollens. I was too great to be allowed to sweep my own cell or to put out my own blankets for drying. Harkaran was all attention before, but now he became embarrassingly attentive. I could not do anything myself, not even wash a handkerchief. If Harkaran heard me washing it, he would enter the open bath-room and tear the kerchief away from me. Whether it was that the authorities suspected that Harkaran was doing anything unlawful for us or whether it was a mere accident, Harkaran was, to our sorrow, taken away from us. He felt the separation more perhaps than we did. He had a royal time with us. He had plenty of eatables and that openly from our rations, supplemented as they were with fruit that friends sent from outside. And as our fame was 'noised abroad', Harkaran's association with us had given him an added status with the other prisoners.

When I was given the permission to sleep on the cell verandah, the authorities thought that it was too risky to leave me with one warder only. Probably, the regulations required that a prisoner whose cell was kept open should have two warders to watch over him. It might even be that the addition was made for my protection. Whatever the cause, another warder was posted for night duty. His name was Shabaskhan. I never inquired about the cause, but I thought that a Mohammedan was chosen to balance the Hindu Harkaran. Shabaskhan was a powerful Baloochi. He was Harkaran's contemporary. Both knew each other well. Shabaskhan too was convicted of murder. It resulted from an affray in the clan to which he belonged. Shabaskhan was as broad as he was tall. His build always reminded me of Shaukat Ali. Shabaskhan put me at ease the very first day. He said, 'I am not going to watch you at all. Treat me as your friend and do exactly as you like. You will never find me interfering with you. If you want anything done, I shall be only too happy if I can do it for you., Shabaskhan was. as good as his word. He was always Polite. He

often tempted me with prison delicacies and always felt genuinely sorry that I would not partake of them. 'You know,' he would say, 'if we do not help ourselves to these few things, life would be intolerable, eating the same things day in and day out. With your people, it is different. You come for religion. That fact sustains you, whereas we know that we have committed crimes. We would like to get away as soon as ever we can.' Shabaskhan was the jailor's favourite. Growing enthusiastic over him, he once said, 'Look at him. I consider him to be a perfect gentleman. In a fit of temper he has committed murder for which he truly repents. I assure you there are not many men outside who are better than Shabaskhan. It is a mistake to suppose that all prisoners are criminals. Shabaskhan I have found to be most trustworthy and courteous. If I had the power, I would discharge him today., The jailor was not wrong. Shabaskhan was a good man, and he was by no means the only good prisoner in that jail. Let me note in passing that it was not the jail that had made him good. He was good outside.

It is customary in the jails never to keep a convict officer on the same duty for any length of time. Transfers constantly take place. It is a necessary precaution Prisoners cannot be allowed, under the existing system, to develop intimate relations. We had, therefore, a most varied experience of convict officers. After about two months, Shabaskhan was replaced by Adan. But I must introduce this warder to the reader in the next chapter.

Young India, 26-6-1924

115. 'ET TU BRUTE!'

An esteemed friend says:

> If we do not take effective measures in time, the United Provinces may experience tomorrow what the Punjab is experiencing today. Hindu-Muslim tension in Oudh is growing. To give you an idea, I give below some facts about Barabanki. Serious allegations are made against the Municipal Board of that city which, now that all its Muslim members who were and are still staunch non-co-operators have resigned, consists of Hindu gentlemen only. I had no time to make any detailed enquiry with regard to these allegations, but one fact is pretty well established and is creating bitterness in the minds of Mussalmans. These Hindu gentlemen have passed a law that all applications to the Board be written in Hindi script. Applications in any other script will not be accepted.

I was painfully surprised to receive the above news. For, Barabanki, if I remember rightly, used to be Maulana Shaukat Ali's pride. He used to speak in glowing terms of both the Hindus and the Muslims of Barabanki. I still hope that my informant is incorrectly informed. I cannot credit the Hindu councillors with having taken any such thoughtless step as is attributed to them. They will ill-serve the cause of Hindi script by compelling Mussalmans to adopt it. It should be optional throughout India, wherever Hindustani is the provincial language, for people to write petitions either in Devnagari or Urdu script. Which script will be ultimately accepted depends largely upon the intrinsic merits of the two scripts.

It is also difficult to understand why the Mussalman councillors have resigned. I hope someone in Barabanki will give full facts.

Young India, 26-6-1924

116. THE AKALI STRUGGLE

The public were hoping that the negotiations going on between the Akali leaders and the Punjab Government would bear fruit and that the Gurdwara question would be satisfactorily settled and the sufferings of the Akalis would end. But if-the S.G.P.C.[1] is to be relied upon, the Government had willed otherwise. The Akali leaders, it is stated, were all that could be wished, but the Government would not even promise to release those prisoners who are now undergoing imprisonment, not for violence actually committed or contemplated, but practically for having taken part in the Gurdwara agitation.

The Akali struggle will, therefore, in all probability be prosecuted with greater vigour. The Government will also probably adopt more repressive measures. Fortunately, we have now become inured to repression. It has ceased to terrify us. The Akalis have shown the stuff of which they are made.

Let us see what they have already suffered for what to them is a deeply religious question. I will say nothing of the Nankana tragedy[2], the Keys affair[3], the Guru-ka-Bagh brutality or the Jaito firing[4]. I will not also say anything about S.G.P.C. being declared an unlawful

[1] Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee

[2] *Vide* "Message to Lahore Sikhs on Nankana Tragedy", 4-3-1921.

[3] *Vide* "Notes", 12-1-1922.

[4] *Vide* "Open Letter to Akalis", 25-2-1924.

association. The Congress has regarded it as a challenge to all public bodies that may be against the Government. Since the Jaito firing the Akalis, recognizing that their passive resistance to arrest was capable of being misunderstood for violence, have been regularly sending to Jaito Shahidi Jathas of 500 men generally every fortnight for quiet and submissive arrest. These allow themselves to be arrested without any opposition whatsoever. They, on their arrest, are sent by special train to what is said to be a jungle and there detained without any trial, without any charge. Dry rations are provided which they have to cook for themselves. The jungle which is supposed to be malarial and overgrown with grass passes muster for a prison. I understand that a few have died of fevers due to exposure and malarial climate. Over 3,000 prisoners are suffering in this fashion. Besides the Shahidi Jathas, smaller ones of 25 each have been crossing over to Jaito daily for the past nine months. They are taken to a station called Bawal and left there to shift for themselves. These Akalis often undergo severe hardships before reaching their destination. And so the awful routine goes on with clock-work regularity without apparently producing any impression on the authorities.

Why do these Jathas suffer thus? Simply for the sake of performing the *Akhand Path* ceremony which was rudely interrupted by the Nabha authorities and whose performance is even now being prevented. The Akalis have repeatedly stated that, whilst they claim the right to demand and secure for the Maharaja of Nabha an impartial and open inquiry, they do not want to we *Akhand Path* as a cloak to carry on any agitation in his favour. Why the *Akhand Path is* prevented no one can tell except that it is sought to crush the indomitable spirit of the Akalis which has organized and is carrying on the reform movement.

The demands of the Akalis seem to be absolutely simple. So far as I am aware, they are.

1. Possession of historical Gurdwaras by a central body elected by the Sikhs.
2. Right of every Sikh to possess a *kirpan* of any size.
3. Right of performing the *Akhand Path* in Jaito.

On the. face of it, every one of these demands is unexceptionable and should be recognized for the asking. No community has shown so much bravery, sacrifice and skill in the prosecution of its object as the

Akalis. No community has maintained the passive spirit so admirably as they. Any other government but the Indian would long ago have recognized the demands and the sacrifice of the Akalis and turned them from opponents into its voluntary supporters. But the Indian Government would not evoke the spirit of universal opposition which it has if it had cared for and respected public opinion.

The duty of the Hindu, Mussalman, and other sister communities is clear. They must help the reformers with their moral support and let the Government know unequivocally that, in the matters above named, the Akalis have the moral support of the whole of India. I know that the distrust that pervades the Indian atmosphere has not left the Akalis free from the contagion. The Hindus, and possibly the Mussalmans, distrust their intentions. They regard their activity with suspicion. Ulterior motives and ambition for the establishment of Sikh Raj are imputed to them. The Akalis have disclaimed any such intention. As a matter of fact, no disclaimer is necessary, and none can prevent such an attempt being made in the future. A solemn declaration made by all the Sikhs can easily be thrown on the scrap heap if ever their successors entertain any such unworthy ambition. The safety lies only in the determination of us all to work for the freedom of all. From a practical standpoint too, moral support of the reform movement, it is clear, reduces the chances of unworthy ambition being harboured in the Sikh breast. As a matter of fact, any such mutual suspicion necessarily hinders the swaraj movement for it prevents hearty co-operation between the communities and thus consolidates the forces of exploitation of this fair land and perhaps even makes possible an ambition which is at present clearly impossible. We must therefore judge each communal movement on its merits and give it ungrudging support, when it is in itself sound, and the means employed for its conduct are honourable, open and peaceful.

Young India, 26-6-1924

117. NOTES

JA-MEN *v.* AMEN

A friend writes:

I thank you for having given a clear-cut programme for the future. I know it is the old programme you reaffirm. But it seems new and startling, because we

> have erred from the right path. In Danish we have a saying *Ja-men* which means 'yes—but'—as against *Amen* which means simply 'yes'. Most of us seem to believe in *Ja-men*. 'Yes, we promised to boycott Government institutions and not serve our oppressors; but how can we do without them?' we seem to say. These 'buts' are an invention of the devil.

Unfortunately, the last-named gentleman is always with us. He panders to our weaknesses, works upon us through them and charms us into his delusive snares. National workers will have to get out of his clutches and burn all the 'buts'. They may say 'yes' to the boycotts if they mean 'yes' without any reservation. Even if, believing in the boycotts, they cannot say 'yes' through their weakness, they should make the confession openly. It would do them and the country a world of good.

DR. MAHMUD AND FORCIBLE CONVERSIONS

Numerous letters, some angry and some even abusive, have been received by me regarding my reference to forcible conversions in the statement on Hindu-Muslim tension. One of them was a dispassionate and reasoned letter from Mr. Madhavan Nair protesting against the statement attributed by me to Dr. Mahmud. I forwarded the letter to Dr. Mahmud for reply so that I could give the reader his version. But before my letter could reach Dr. Mahmud, he had already posted one to me on the very thing, he having received many protests himself. I now give from Dr. Mahmud's letter, which is in Urdu, a translation of the relevant part as follows:

> Quite a number of Hindu friends have written to me letters accusing me of having given you inaccurate information with regard to the affairs in Malabar. Some of them have even treated me with round, mouth-filling abuse. I feel that their resentment is just. There seems to have been some misunderstanding. What I said was that no instances of conversion by circumcision could be found. Only one such case had been reported, the one which Mr. Andrews had witnessed, and even that could not be properly investigated into. As for instances of conversion by being made to wear fez cap, or shirt in case of women, or by clipping off the *choti*, they could be cited in any number. l had mentioned this point in my statement to Shwaib also. Please do publish the necessary correction in *Young India* or it might give rise to a fresh controversy in the Press.

I see that I have done an injustice to Dr. Mahmud. I was thinking of forcible conversions only by circumcision. It was that which had most shocked the Hindu sentiment. Anyway, it was that which had affected me more than anything else.

The following is the statement referred to by Dr. Mahmud:

> Forced conversion.
>
> (a) By circumcision. No eye-witness. No direct evidence available. No case pointed out. Reliable persons amongst Hindus allege that three or four cases occurred. The only direct evidence of a case of this nature is that Mr. Andrews is reported to have seen one person who was circumcised. Have not got it confirmed.
>
> (b) Repetition of *kalma.* (1) Forced; (2) Through fear without actual use of force.
>
> (c) Cutting of *choti*
>
> (d) Making Hindu (men) wear caps.
>
> (e) Making Hindu women wear bodices or blouses.
>
> The total number of conversions under (b) to (e) are estimated between 1,800 to 2,000 (Hindu version). Muslims put it at a few hundred.

I had thought that my statement was clear. Though I had not mentioned Mr. Andrews' name, it was common knowledge that the had referred to a case of forcible circumcision which had come under his own personal observation. Bearing that in mind, there could be no mistaking my meaning. But I now see that I compromised Dr. Mahmud by exposing him to the charge of partiality by an apparent understatement of forcible conversions. I assure the reader that in every case I have kept closest to facts and shorn them of all colouring. The papers in my possession make out a much more terrible case against all parties. But I have in each case toned down the charges and, where I had no opinion of my own, merely stated on behalf of the parties concerned the harges thus toned down.

NOT IN NIZAM'S DOMINIONS

I my statement on Hindu-Muslim tension, I said I was told that the pernicious propaganda pamphlet referred to was taken up in the Nizam's Dominions.[1] Khwaja saheb Hassan Nizami, on reading the statement, forwarded the following telegram to me:

> For the sake of Islam, Hindu-Muslim Unity, and your beloved personality, I am ready to accept your advice regarding the contents of my pamphlet *Dai ye Islam* about which you have complained in you Press reforming and organizing the Mussalmans and counteracting the open and secret efforts of Arya Samaj, which work I am religiously bound to carry on. I had already taken off much of the so-called objectionable matter from the later editions of the pamphlet and am willing now to still more improve the future editions in

[1] *Vide* "Hindu Muslim Tension : Its Cause and Cure", 29-5-1924.

reverence to you wishes. Kindly let me know you suggestions after reading the latest Urdu edition of the pamphlet carefully and not its Hindi translations which have been published only to create misapprehension and to secure sympathies.

He followed up the wire with a letter couched in similar terms; and last week he paid me the honour of visiting me and tendering a personal explanation. He told me that all the charges levelled against him as to kidnapping of children, etc., were totally without foundation and that his motive in publishing the pamphlet was not as I has interpreted it. unfortunately, the visit happened to be when I was observing silence. I was, therefore, unable to give him my opinion on his pamphlet. The Khwaja Saheb was most anxious that I should publish his assurance about the propaganda in His Exalted higness's Dominions. I have, therefore, gladly published the telegram and the purport of the interview. I must, however, state that the information about the alleged propaganda was given to me by reliable men. I have received also letters confirming the same information. And my assistants tell me that allegations of the same nature constantly appear in the vernacular Press. In the absence, therefore, of any direct knowledge of the state of affairs in the Nizam's Dominions, I can but given both the versions without committing myself to any opinion. I shall certainly publish with pleasure anything the authorities in H.E.H's Dominions my have to say in the matter.

So far as the Khwaja Saheb's pamphlet is concerned, while it is admirable that he is ready to make such revision as may be consistent with his faith, what is wanted is something more and something different. In spite of the Khwaja Saheb's repudiation of bad motives, the pamphlet which I have read in the original does lend itself to the construction I have placed upon it. the Mussalman friends to whom I have shown the pamphlet agree with my interpretation. it is, therefore, not enought that, even if I was so minded, the Khwaja Saheb should amend his pamphlet as I may suggest. What is required is for him to see the error of his thought and to recognize that he has really done an ill-service to Islam by suggesting questionable methods of propaganda. he should, therefore, revise the pamphlet radically in the light of what is permissible and praiseworthy in Islamic propaganda. Needless to say that I appreciate the readiness with which the Khwaja Saheb has come forward with his explanation and vowed his solicitude for Hindu-Muslim unity.

NEWS TO ME

A correspondent says that I am reported to have said that: 'It is better that one cow be sacrificed rather than seven goats.' He then asks me to disown or endorse the statement and, in the latter case, to justify it. I do not recollect having made any such statement as the correspondent refers to. And whoever has heard me make such a statement will oblige me by reminding me of the occasion. According to my correspondent I am supposed to have made the statement as editor of *Young India*. If so, there should be no difficulty about confronting me with it. But what I am likely to have said or written is that, if I could non-violently persuade people, I would have them to save the goat just as well as I would have people to save the cow. As I have said before in these pages, for me the cow is the purest type of sub-human life. She pleads before us on behalf of the whole of the sub-human species for justice to it at the hands of man, the first among all that lives. She seems to speak to us through her eyes (let the reader look at them with my faith), 'You are not appointed over us to kill us and eat our flesh or otherwise ill-treat us, but to be our friend and guardian.'

WELL DONE, DELHI

So Delhi has taken the lead in forming an arbitration board in the matter of Hindu-Muslim tension. Only two years ago, one felt absolutely secure of Hindu-Muslim unity in Delhi where Hakim Saheb was the uncrowned king and where Swami Shraddhanandji was privileged to address Mussalmans in the Jumma Masjid. Surely it should not be beyond the joint ability of Hindus and Mussalmans to establish a lasting peace in Delhi. If a central place like Delhi can secure such peace, the other places will, I have no doubt, follow suit. I have not the heart to reproduce for the edification of the reader all the pestilential literature that I have received from Delhi, each party painting the other in the most lurid colours. The reader may be assured, however, that all that I have adumbrated in my statement is to be found in that literature. It would be a great blessing if the parties concerned will but bring their charges to the notice of the board and get from it an authoritative pronouncement.

SIKH SELF-RESTRAINT

The Sikhs of Calcutta deserve the warmest congratulations of the public for the wonderful self restraint exhibited by them under the

gravest provocation. Some of them were cruelly murdered by the howling, suspicious crowd in Calcutta on utterly groundless suspicion. The Sikhs everywhere are quite capable of taking care of themselves and well able to take reprisals if they wish to. But, on the occasion in question, they kept themselves perfectly cool. Being brave, they realized that the mischief had no racial taint in it. The crowd in its superstitious credulity would have murdered with equal indifference members of any other community if they had suspected them. The Sikhs of Calcutta have set us an example of correct conduct on occasions of trial and provocation.

OFFICIAL DELAY

The reader will remember that, on seeing the Nabha State Administrator's reply to me, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru wrote to the Administrator repudiating the suggestion that his release and that of his companions, of whom Acharya Gidwani was one, was conditional.[1] Not having heard from the Administrator, the Pandit sent by way of reminder on the 19th June (his first letter was sent on the 24th May last) the following letter:

> I sent you a letter under registered cover on the 24th May and requested you to supply me with copies of the order suspending Principal Gidwani's, Mr. K. Santanam's and my sentences and any other order relating to us issued at the time. I have not yet received a reply to my letter, nor have I received the copies asked for.
>
> I have no doubt whatever that the statement you made in your letter to the Editor, *Young India*, that Principal Gidwani, Mr. Santanam and I were discharged conditionally is wholly incorrect and a reference to the orders ant other papers must have convinced you of this. I trust that, being convinced of this, you will take early steps to correct your previous statement and make it clear that Principal Gidwani, Mr. Santanam and I were unconditionally released. There can thus be no question of Principal Gidwani being sent to jail without trial or sentence because he is said to have broken a condition which was never made.
>
> I would again request you to let me have a copy of the suspension order. I should also like to know definitely if Nabha State is supposed to be out of bounds for me and if so, under what order. I have no immediate with to go to Nabha, but I should like to know what kind of a welcome awaits me there in case I am moved by a desire to visit the State.

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 5-6-5924.

Let us hope that there will be no further delay in answering the straight question put by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. There is as a rule undue delay on the part of officials in answering public inquiries, especially when such inquiries are likely to be embarrassing. If no reply is forthcoming or, if an unsatisfactory reply is sent, Pandit Nehru (Jun.) and Mr. Santanam may have to ask the Working Committee to let them challenge arrest. Such a step may become necessary even as a matter of duty towards a comrade. The last paragraph of the Pandit's letter evidently fore shadows a challenge on his part. It is preposterous that Acharya Gidwani should be kept in prison, even though with him there was no question of civil disobedience when he entered the Nabha territory at the time of Jaito shooting. He did so, as we know from the impartial testimony of Mr. Zimand, in obedience to a call of humanity.

MUNICIPALITIES

A local Congress secretary writes:

> Among the persons you have urged to stand out of these (Government) institutions, you have not mentioned anything about those who have captured boards and municipalities. I know there are many among the No-changers who still maintain that the principle of N.C.O. is by no means compromised by their entering into district boards and municipalities. But in my opinion these boards are semi-Government institutions. Have they not to work under Government control? Can they bring about any effective change in the system of education or sanitation?

So far as the Congress resolutions are concerned, it is open to Congress members to enter these bodies and even become office-bearers. Indeed, a later resolution requires Congressmen to capture these bodies. In theory these bodies being under Government control fall under the category of Government institutions. But ours is specific non-co-operation directed against certain institutions only which are calculated to demoralize the most and which most sustain Government prestige. The best plan, therefore, regarding Government institutions not specifically tabooed by the Congress is to test them by the measure of service they render to the constructive programme. If they hinder it, Congressmen, it is clear to me, must leave them alone. I have had letters from several places complaining that all constructive work was stopped by reason of Congressmen having entered munici-palities and district boards, and that, in-some places, Congressmen had offered themselves as rival candidates. In every such case, there is no doubt

that Congressmen should abstain. I cannot understand Con-gressmen being rivals. Congressmen are subject to discipline, and only those can offer themselves for election who are chosen for the pur-pose by the Congress Committee concerned. So far as the ability to control education (primary) and sanitation is concerned, generally speaking it may be said that the municipalities have substantial control over them. In any case, municipalities being largely elective bodies, there is ample scope for civil disobedience whenever the proper occasion for it arises.

A DANGEROUS PRACTICE

I have just read in the columns of *The Hindu* (of 12th June) what purports to be an interview with me. I do recollect a long chat with a gentleman whom I never suspected to be an interviewer. I thought that he wanted honest doubts to be solved and, therefore, bestowed considerable attention upon him and patiently answered all his questions. As I could ill-afford the time, I should certainly have declined the honour of being interviewed at the time and at that length. I have no secrets. People who find out anything about or from me are free to report it if they like. But I do mind being mis-reported. If they did me the honour of showing me what they reported, I should have no objection. The so-called interview is a caricature of what I said. For instance, I am made to refer to 'every Mussalman as a vagabond'. Well, I never dreamt that every Mussalman was a vagabond. I do not consider Hakim Saheb a vagabond; nor for that matter any of my numerous Mussalman friends. I know many Mussalman bullies, but 1 cannot recall having met any vagabonds in the accepted sense of the term. I do not regard every Mussalman even to be a bully. I am accused of having said that 'the Government was indifferent to me and that it would be terrified if I were to undertake an all-India tour for six months.' Well, I am proud enough to think that the Government is never indifferent to what I say or do and I am humble enough not to think that it would be terrified by any tour on my part It would, however, be terrified if a real Hindu-Muslim unity can be brought about, no matter by whom. The interviewer talks of fraud practised by a khaddar worker. The statement is an abuse of the privilege of being allowed to listen to a conversation I was having with fellow-workers. There was talk of fraud alleged to have been practised. I do not even now know whether any was practised. I have simply picked samples of glaring inaccuracies. The 'interviewer' has, no doubt, meant well. But

well-meaning friends who act irresponsibly are more harmful than ill-meaning opponents. I would urge those who visit me to spare me whilst I occupy a responsible position. When I become irresponsible, they may-take any liberty they like with my doings and sayings. To those who see any 'interviews' with me, I ask them to reject them as unworthy of belief unless they are authorized by me.

MACHINE SPINNING V. HAND-SPINNING

A friend, who at one time swore by the spinning-wheel, says in effect:

> Your activity is useless. Why are you wasting your body and mind in dishing up old stuff in the pages of *Young India* and *Navajivan*? I can no longer read them with profit. I have found by experience that the spinning-wheel is no use. Do you know that the charkhas which people bought in the first wave of enthusiasm are rotting? They will not pay.
>
> I suggest turning your attention to something better. Substitute hand-spinning with machine-spinning. Erect a spinning-mill in every Taluka. Nationalize the profits. Only patriots should work the mills not for gain, but for love of the country. Distribute the yam to the local weavers only. The cloth woven should be confined to the respective Talukas. You thus save waste of time and freight. To start with, organize one Taluka in this manner and you will render great service.

As the argument is specious and comes from one who has in his own way tried the charkha, I propose to examine it for the sake of those who may hold the views that the friend does. The reader does not need to be told that the scheme is as old as the khadi movement. Like the proverbial bad penny, it turns up again and again.

The friend has forgotten the central truth that the wheel furnishes occupation and a small income to the millions who must have an additional income if they are not to starve. It is not possible to put up a handloom in every home. A loom in every village, a charkha in every home is the formula. If a spinning-mill is put up in every Taluka, it will result in nationalizing the exploitation of the many by the few. All cannot be employed in a Taluka mill. Moreover, we must import the machinery needed for over 2,000 Talukas. And the experts for managing and working the mills will have to be trained. Mills cannot grow up like mushrooms, as charkhas can. The failure of a charkha is felt by nobody; the failure of a Taluka mill will mean consternation among the people of the Taluka concerned. In my

opinion, the proposition advanced by the friend is utterly unsound, I have, however, suggested that, if he has faith in his scheme, he should try it. I must continue to paddle my own canoe, because nothing else attracts me. The charkha for me has a charm all its own.

I may be too dense to see its failure. I am not unwilling to be convinced of my error.

The same day that I received the friend's letter, I received another from another friend who says that he has ten years, experience of the mill industry. He has tested power-spinning and hand-weaving and is now engaged in the trade of hand-spinning and hand-weaving. He gives the palm to the last as a solution for the economic distress. I give this experience for what it is worth. The whole experiment is in too nebulous a state for giving a firm opinion on it. But this much is clear that the spinning-wheel is today the only comforter in many a poor home to which no substitute can be taken. Of the spinning-wheel it can be truly said, as of no other:

'In this there is no waste of effort, there is no disappointment.
Even a little of it saves one from great distress.'

Young India, 26-6-1924

118. LETTER TO C. RAMALINGA REDDY

July 26, 1924

DEAR MR. REDDY,

I thank you for your letter. I do want to help the Swarajists. 'How' is the only question. I cannot possibly wish more.

They are just as good patriots as I claim to be myself. My swaraj is the same as before. I have never excluded it from my conception. I do mean political swaraj. You will see it clearly as soon as my scheme is ready.[1]

Only I want [it] through the power of the people.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

C. R. REDDY, ESQ.
CHITTOOR

From a copy : C. W. 11332. Courtesy : Dr. N. Rama Murthy and C. A. Reddi

[1] *Vide* "Letter To Motilal Nehru", 30-8-1924 and "The Realities", 11-9-1924.

119. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING[1]

AHMEDABAD,
June 27, 1924

Mr. Gandhi, who was called upon by the President to explain his position on the point of order raised by Pandit Motilal Nehru, spoke in Hindi. Mr. Gandhi said that he was not going beyond the Congress constitution in bringing forward his resolution. Articles 21 and 31 relied on by Mr. Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru laid down certain conditions and those conditions, in his opinion, were not transgressed. His view was that the A.I.C.C. had full powers of the Congress, when the latter body was not in session. His resolutions did not restrict the right of the electors, but only advised the electors to do the needful.

He said that only the All-India Committee had full powers to make rules to see if members were efficiently carrying out the programme of the Congress or not. The electors had certainly the right of free and unfettered choice, but once the elections were over they could exercise no sort of control over the conduct of their representatives. Only the All-India Committee could do that. Surely it is the duty of the committee to remove every obstacle to progress in the direction of carrying out the resolutions of the Congress passed at Cocanada, which fully endorsed the Non-co-operation programme and ensure efficiency in the manner of work. If it was argued that the provincial committees had theright to frame its own rules, imposing conditions of membership, *ipso facto* it follows the All-India Committee, which is the fountain-head of all authority, has the like powers to condition its own membership.[2]Continuing, Mr. Gandhi said that a new situation had arisen. The Congress passed certain resolutions and the All-India Congress Committee had to see that they were carried out. As to ex-Presidents, the speaker observed that even to them some advice could be tendered. If Provincial Congress Committee would frame their

[1] At the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee held from June 27 to 30, Gandhiji moved four resolutions. After he had moved the first resolution, Motilal Nehru and C. R. Das raised a point of order on its admissibility. The latter said that "under article 21 only new matter could be considered. Unless new matter had arisen, all the rule-making powers of the Congress could be pressed into service. Under Article 31, this resolution making spinning obligatory could not be valid; for it infringed the fundamental right of electors to choose their own representatives. Further ex-officio members, like ex-presidents, were unfairly hit under this resolution and their constitutional right to be present sought to be deprived." Gandhiji's speech was reported by A.P.I. and a Special correspondent of *The Hindu*. Here both these reports have been collated. For the text of the resolution, *vide* "The Acid Test", 19-6-1924.

[2] This paragraph has been extracted from the report by a special correspondent of *The Hindu*.

own rules, the A.I.C.C. had a better and a larger right to do so. He therefore pointed tout] that his resolutions were not at all *ultra vires*.

The Hindu, 28-6-1924

120. LETTER TO A BEREAVED FATHER

June 28, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I understand from George Joseph's letter to my son that, whilst your brave son Krishnasamy is in jail, you have lost your daughter. I understand, too, that one of your sons is insane. Being father of four sons myself, I can understand your condition in your bereavement. Our trust in God is proved only when we are able to bear such grief and greater with resignation. May He give you the strength you need. When I was learning Tamil in the South African jails, I came across this beautiful Tamil saying, "God is the sole help of those who are helpless".[1] I have forgotten much of my Tamil, but the music of the above saying still rings in my ears. It often assists me. May it do likewise to you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6833

121. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING

AHMEDABAD,
June 28, 1924

FRIENDS,

It was with a full sense of responsibility that I took it upon myself to draft these resolutions and submit them before you. Fortunately or unfortunately, I have been able to obtain the opinion of a majority of the Working Committee[2] in favour of accepting these resolutions. Practically everything I had to say about them I have already said in *Young India*. I have, therefore, nothing in particular to say while moving them. I am not unmindful of the fact that the resolutions which I propose to move have created a serious difference

[1] Gandhiji writes here in Tamil script: *dikkatravarku deivame tunai*.

[2] Which met on June 26

of opinion and led to much bitterness, and I am also aware that, because of these differences of opinion, a time may come when we may have to part company with co-workers. I have used the word ‘‘co-workers” on purpose because “friendship” is a cord that never snaps, no matter what the strain upon it. That is its nature. And I may tell you that though you may see Deshbandhu, Pandit Motilal, Maulana Azad and many others ranged against me today, that is not likely to affect the bond of friendship between us. Anyone who wants to take up public work has no choice but humbly though firmly to face situations when he may have to part company with the closest of his friends and to seek new co-workers as occasion may require. Malaviyaji and I are in opposite camps and yet no one can say that this has ever affected our friendship in the least.

It is a grave error to hold that, when a difference of opinion arises between two friends, their friendship too must break off. Of course, such difference u ill mean an end of their working together. However, no matter what may be said about our being able to work together, history will surely record that our friendship remained unaffected.

I request you to consider my resolutions in this spirit. Yesterday I got some idea of the situation which prevails in the country. I have practised law for many years and I know from experience that, when people have once made up their minds on any subject, they do not find it very difficult to discover legal niceties either in favour of or against a proposition. For this same reason, I even admit that it would not be surprising if the argument I have advanced to show that my resolutions are in order was coloured by my views on the subject. I am also prepared to admit that those who differ from me and believe that my resolutions violate the rules of the Congress constitution and are, therefore, out of order, do so quite honestly.

Shri Srinivasa lyengar[1] are on intimate terms with each other. I can say that the closest friendship exists between us. He came to me this morning and asked me:“Did you not say somewhere that, if there are equal votes on either side, you will leave the Congress?” I did say this and yet I insist on moving this resolution, for I am eager to know where you, the whole country and I stand. If I feel that this will lead to

[1] S. Srinivasa Iyengar (1874-1941); lawyer and Congress leader of Madras; presided over the Gauhati session of the Congress, 1926; elected to Central Assembly, 1926

nothing but bitterness and that even those who are with me have voted in my favour out of their loyalty to me, I may even break off my connection with the Congress.

I find myself in a difficult situation. Today the country expects me to lead it. I must admit that, under certain conditions, I may even be able to take up the leadership. But, then, I must look for the means and the instruments which I require. That is the reason for my moving these resolutions even at the risk of creating a split in the country today and of parting company with the dearest of friends.

But, in the situation prevailing in the country today, I feel myself altogether at sea. And so you must either choose another leader or accept my conditions. I am convinced that there is no other way out than this. No one is impelled without reason deliberately to violate a constitution, as I am doing in the third resolution[1]. I have stated that a constitution should be held sacred only as long as it helps us to progress. When it becomes instrumental in holding us back and emasculating us, we certainly cannot allow it to go on doing it. It is true that, if the Congress is a living organization, it will punish you for violating the constitution thus. I say that, if it does that and expels us, we should have the courage to leave and make room for better servants. If, however, we believe that we shall not be able to bring swaraj nearer unless we march ahead, even trampling underfoot the present constitution, then it becomes our sacred duty to lay it aside and to violate it. At the same time, when I saw that the Working Committee was ready to place my resolutions before the Congress as its own recommendations, I made some changes in my third resolution.

I have been asking myself since 3 o'clock this morning what my duty is at the present juncture. I considered the matter from all points of view, and saw that it was evident from the votes cast on Panditji's[2] resolution opposing me on constitutional grounds that, except Bengal, most of the other provinces were in favour of adopting this realistic programme. The voting yesterday was in fact a true index of the position. If it gives a correct picture of how the A.I.C.C. feels in the matter, I have rightly drawn the conclusion that a majority of the provinces want this resolution. I, therefore, asked myself if it was possible to unite the provinces. Khadi is a thing of no ordinary power. Not because we have started using khadi, but because it has been

[1] Relating to election of delegates

[2] Motilal Nehru

revived among us as a symbol of something which we cannot have through any other means; it is only khadi which can unite us completely at the present hour. It is only through it that we can forge a close bond with the masses in the country. You will not succeed in uniting the country by entering the Councils or practising in the courts.

Only yesterday, an Indian magistrate sent a young non-co-operator to prison. I want to see a thousand young men come forward and face with contempt the repression by this Government which is out to crush us. I am ready to sacrifice ten thousand Pragjis[1] in the country's struggle, because I see that it is necessary for us thus to bring into contempt the courts of this Government. I want to say unhesitatingly that, if we can do so, it will be impossible for the bureaucracy so arrogantly to trample upon public sentiment. I think it is necessary for us to show to the Government that it will not be able to crush us—then it will not dare even to make the attempt.

Panditji also knows that the Councils will not suffice to win swaraj. In his opinion, they are not everything. He too wants the whole country to stand behind him. He wants the entire people fired with the spirit of civil disobedience standing behind him in order to make his work in the Councils effective. I tell you that, in this matter, his work there cannot do much. Maybe the Councils play an important part in the lives of some of us but, from the point of view of the life of thirty crores of people, they do not count at all. And I have been entreating you to consider this resolution from the point of view of these crores. Are you eager to infuse life into the lives of these millions of our brothers and sisters? These poor people living in the villages, do you not wish to go into their midst and organize them properly? Just imagine 5,000 persons, instead of haranguing crowds at big meetings, going into villages as spinners and carders and spinning and carding themselves, asking the people to spin for the sake of the country. You cannot visualize this condition unless you have faith and sharpness of intellect. The spinning-wheel is a *kamadhenu*[2] which will unite you with the thirty crores of the country. And if you want to establish such a close bond with them, you must pass this test.

Just think of it, it is only the spinning-wheel which brings us into contact with the lowest of our countrymen. I do not wish to make a

[1] Pragji Desai was sentenced to imprisonment for two years and three months in June 1924.

[2] A mythical cow which yielded whatever was asked of her

fetish of the spinning-wheel. If I come to see that it is an impediment in the winning of swaraj, I shall immediately set fire to it. That way I am an iconolast, and in that sense a Muslim. And yet, I am an idolator too. If I feel that even a stone from the bed of the Narmada river helps me to concentrate my attention on my chosen god, I would certainly keep it and worship it. In that sense I am a Hindu.

Another friend of mine tells me that I should not thus treat the spinning-wheel as a sort of rosary with which to say one's prayers. I do admit that for me the spinning-wheel certainly serves as a prayer-wheel. And I am eager to see you all infected with the same faith in the spinning-wheel which I have. If the object of your faith is only Gandhi and not the spinning-wheel, you may be sure that you have been trying to embrace pure smoke. What will it mean if you merely throw 2,000 yards of yarn at me? I shall not be satisfied with that. That way, yarn sent even by one person will only serve for a rope to hang me by. But I certainly do not wish to die that way. Only for the country I want to live and to die, die as the country's purest man—that is my aspiration. I wish to see you filled with such faith and only if you have it, should you vote in my favour. Remember that you have to examine your faith, not mine. What is needed is your faith.

Let me now address a few words to those who wish to vote against me. Some have alleged that in presenting this resolution I have followed the ways of the British bureaucracy. We are angry with the bureaucracy because it has not been set up by us, its members are not appointed by us. If, however, we purposely lay down some rules for our conduct so that we may proceed systematically, and regard such rules as binding on us, why should we be angry about that? Moreover, what I am placing before you today is a principle that has held good from time immemorial, and it is that we should act as we speak and do as we say. If we want to build up a strong and indomitable nation, capable of firm determination, we must impose upon ourselves the strictest rules of discipline. Let anyone go to a military camp and look at the position there. I have been to such a camp and have also worked there. In these camps, you may have to starve for days, you may be given dirty water which you cannot easily bring yourself to drink, you may sometimes have to bear even being kicked by officials, and do it all with a smiling face! And this is true of military camps where mercenary soldiers fight. We, on the other hand, have come forward as volunteers to serve the country; we are the elected representatives of

the people. In our case, then, how much more strictly applicable should these military rules be considered? How can we ever resent imposition of rules of discipline? If as a matter of conscience you are opposed to this type of discipline, you had better leave the organization of your own accord and try to win over the public opinion in the country to your side. But you must know that, once a resolution is passed, it is your sacred duty to act whole-heartedly upon it. Even the tallest among us must bow before that duty.

If we are not well prepared, if we are divided, then, even assuming that the British are inclined to grant us swaraj right now, there will be no end to quarrels and disagreements among us. I want to tell you that, when the British have left, if the Afghans or the Japanese are to come in their place, all our talk of our fitness for swaraj and all our efforts would be worthless. I want you to wrest swaraj with your own efforts, and not get it as a gift from the British. I do not care in the least what the British Parliament says about us, nor do I care what European public opinion thinks about our activities. But I am very much interested indeed to know what the man in the street here says about us.

I assure you that, if we but reflect a little, we shall see that this programme is the quickest that can be imagined. Take it that you will have swaraj the moment this programme is imple-mented. You had carried it out to some extent in the historic year, 1920-21. Everyone knows what impact it had. All this, to be sure, was not the result entirely of Gandhi's effort. In fact, Gandhi has a number of fads and, had he placed them all before the people, the latter would have simply laughed him out. Gandhi has merely felt the pulse of the nation. He is ready to lay down his life for his programme. If you reject me today, you will see me walk out cheerfully, with no complaint, no bitterness. Staying outside, I shall try and raise an independent organization or body, I will not place obstacles in your way. I do not believe in obstructive tactics. I believe only in the purest, cleanest non-co-operation, and will non-co-operate with you.

If you wish to pass this resolution by a majority, calculate very carefully the price you have to pay. You will have to give to the Khadi Association[1] minimum of 2,000 yards of yarn every month. That means that you, too, will have to be crazy over the spinning-wheel, as I

[1] The reference is to the All-India Spinners' Association.

am. If your faith is not so intense, you should certainly throw out this resolution. If any of you feel that by taking this step we shall be committing suicide, they should dissociate themselves from it and try to win over the Congress to their view at the next session. Surely, the Congress does not belong to any one person. It will be in the hands of anyone who serves the country best. It has been said that I am trying to impose my will in the manner of a dictator by getting this resolution passed. As long as I have not lost my balance, I do not mind others calling me even a dictator. Personally I regard myself but as an humble servant of the country. But, then, there are servants who undertake to serve only on certain terms and their terms may sometimes seem dictatorial to others.

In God's name and with Him as witness, I submit my terms before you and assure you that in doing so I have no aim in view except your service.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 17-7-1924

122. SPEECH AND RESOLUTION ON PENAL CLAUSE[1]

AHMEDABAD,
June 28, 1924

The President said that the motion proposed by him was carried only by 67 against 37. The Swarajists who left the meeting had not voted. If their votes were also added, at the most it gave him only a narrow majority. He therefore advised the meeting to rescind the penal clause. It was suggested by one of those present that it would not be in the spirit of the constitution.[2]

Mr. Gandhi, replying, reminded the House of a precedent at the Amritsar Congress whose Subjects Committee had passed a motion on the subject of disorders by the Punjab mob during the Rowlatt Act agitation days, but later on, on his plea, rescinded the original motion almost immediately.[3]

[1] After Gandhiji had spoken (*vide* the preceding item), an amendment to delete the penal clause was defeated and the original resolution was carried. The Committee formally adjourned, but immediately met informally under Gandhiji's presidentship.

[2] Shuaib Qureshi then said that it would not add to the dignity of the House to rescind its own motion passed but a few minutes earlier. The House, in his opinion, would be creating a bad precedent by accepting Gandhiji's advice.

[3] Gandhiji was supported by Pattabhi Sitaramayya. The meeting then resolved itself into a formal meeting which was presided over by Mahomed Ali as ex-officio president. Gandhiji then moved the resolution which follows.

In view of the fact that certain members, whilst proceedings of the All-India Congress Committee were going on, deemed it necessary to withdraw from the Committee by reason of their resentment to the penalty clause in the obligatory spinning resolution; and in view of the fact that the said penalty clause of the resolution was carried only by 67 against 37 votes, and further, in view of the fact that the said clause would have been defeated if the votes of withdrawal had been given against it, this Committee considers it proper and advisable to remove the penalty clause of the resolution with the introductory clause.[1]

The Hindu, 29-6-1924

123. SOME QUESTIONS

l. What should we do if our co-workers of set purpose behave badly towards us, dislike us without cause and burn with envy?

I quote this and such other questions from letters which I have been receiving. We should behave correctly towards one who behaves badly towards us, should like one who dislikes us and love one who envies us. I do not know any-other way in which one can live in peace in this world. If one decides to live thus, such behaviour becomes easy and natural by and by. When we cannot behave in this straight forward manner, we should keep aloof from others.

2. What should we do if, in an ordinary matter, there is a difference of opinion and each one wants to have his way?

That this should happen suggests lack of experience of community life. If everyone follows his own way, we should join him whose way we consider best, so that there will be two co-workers at any rate. If they are truthful, firm and humble, others will come and join them of their own accord. He who does not yield to persuasion will submit when he has no choice left.

3. If a worker feels convinced that a certain other worker really harms the institution, what should he do?

He should humbly point out to that worker his mistake. If the latter does not see it, he should leave that institution and save himself from being a party to the mischief. If one acts frankly in this manner, all the three—the institution, the one who harms it and the one who

[1] The motion was seconded by Vallabhbhai Patel and the A.I.C.C. was adjourned till 8.30 a.m. the next day.

notices it—will benefit.

4. What should one do when one finds the chief worker in a locality to be immoral?

This is a delicate and serious question. A leader has the eyes of all fixed on him. Some among these may have even jaundiced eyes. An idler has no interest except to observe the faults of others. We should, therefore, never credit such rumours. If we believed everything alleged against all leaders, not one person whose company we would welcome would be left to work with us. All human beings have their weaknesses. As Tulsidas says, all physical objects and all living creatures partake of evil. The saint, discriminating like the swan, leaves aside the water, the evil, the impurity, and drinks in the milk, the virtue. But we cannot shut our eyes to what is there before us. What should we do when we have not been looking for something ourselves but, without our searching for it, we are confronted with irrefutable evidence, with ocular proof? If we have courage and humility, we should certainly speak to the leader about the matter and ask him to give up his leadership. If he refuses, we should state the fact as our reason and leave him.

This raises an important issue. How can we even think of looking into a leader's private life until he commits a mistake in his public life? If we start doing that, we become watchmen of every leader's moral character. In these circumstances, a leader would find his life bitter as poison. May we not, therefore, regard a leader's private life as quite distinct from his public life and remain indifferent to it? Ordinarily, such an argument would perhaps be correct, but it does not at all apply to our struggle. We have come to look upon it as a movement of self-purification. Through it we hope to destroy a wicked political system. Hence both our means and our workers must be pure. In our struggle we cannot make a distinction between one's private life and public life. On the contrary, we know that one's private life has great effect on one's public work. We are reformers, and it is an ancient and correct belief that a reformer's private life ought to be pure. Let us take an example. We move among simple-minded villagers. Some village communities are not aware of the difference between morality and immorality. They welcome us with confidence. Their wives, daughters and sisters go to the workers with complete freedom. If even one worker of ours casts a lustful eye on them, what would happen? It is quite evident that the most important

asset in this work of reform is the purity of every worker's private life. If impurity enters the life of our workers, our cause will itself sink like a frail paper boat, drown us too and frighten off the people. I have received some letters about such evil having affected certain workers of ours. I do not know how much of it is true and how much false.

A worker in Kutch who had been doing khadi propaganda work was guilty of a serious error. Everyone came to know of his immoral conduct. The cause received a great blow. The worker had to leave the place. I have heard that now he is living in solitude to atone for his error! If he has really repented, he can still resume service some day. But the harm wrought by his immoral conduct cannot be undone.

I, therefore, make this humble request to every worker. Be on your guard. If you have no self-restraint, if there is wickedness in your eyes, your ears and your hands, if your legs take you to places you should not visit—run away, do penance and give up the work of service. Rest assured that you will render true service by purifying yourself. Do not add one more sin to your former one by continuing public work. Remember always that you are in the midst of a fire. If you let your armour develop even the smallest chink, the fire will enter through it and burn you up. Why should he who has no control over his own mind think at all of controlling others?

5. Workers have developed love of comforts. They want a conveyance on every occasion and have no use for a bullock-cart if they get a horse-drawn carriage, and no use for either if they get a motor-car.

Being an invalid myself, my pen is without its old vigour in criticizing people wanting conveyances. Even so, I recall to mind, and desire readers to recall, the sacred days of the Kheda agitation and would say that the rule should be just the other way round. As long as our legs can serve, we should not think of a vehicle at all. Man has no better horses than his two legs. If a bullockcart is available, we should not think of a horse-carriage, and if a horse-carriage is available, we should avoid using a motor-car. When the occasion is urgent enough to require the use of a car, the person in charge of us will tell us. Then we may certainly use a car. But, left to ourselves we should always prefer the use of our legs. We want thousands of workers. If all of them demand horse-carriages, our pilgrim-band will never reach Dwarka!

6. What if the workers expect feasts wherever they go?

If they do, they should give up their jobs. I hear that some

villages actually take fright at the very mention of the word volunteer or worker. As the workers demanded luxuries such as rich meals, cold water and soft beds, the poor villagers had to serve the workers instead of being served by them.

A worker should so behave that he would never be a burden to the village. He should carry with him food which would not become stale. He should expect only clean water, always carrying his own drinking-pot, so that, when he comes to a lake, river or well, he would himself go and fill it. He should lie down at any spot where he finds the ground clean. A bed would be too much for him. He should not ask to be served, as he is out himself to serve. He should not, therefore, feel disappointed when he is not properly served, that is, feasted. He goes among people, not to order them, but to obey their orders. He should, accordingly, talk to everyone most humbly. He likes to serve; service has become his life's bread. He should, therefore, continue to serve even if he receives abuses in return."He has right knowledge who returns good for evil," says an experienced and practical-minded poet. Every worker should have right knowledge in this sense. We have moved about in Gujarat and other parts, but have not achieved any great success because, though we regard ourselves as servants, we have made others look upon us as leaders. Though we enlisted ourselves as workers, we have become persons who take work from others.

I have been saying that we should not become a burden to the villages. No one should understand this to mean that we should put up with insanitary conditions. I know a number of indolent workers whoare themselves very dirty and who foul the clean places which they visit. In the same way, he who is a servant must preserve inner purity right to the moment of death; he must also preserve outward cleanli-ness. His clothes may have fifty patches on them, but they must be clean. His drinking-pot should be clean as a looking-glass. If he stops at a place which is dirty, he will clean it and so teach a lesson in cleanliness to the people. If the latrine is dirty, he will clean it himself. If he goes to the outskirts of the village to answer the call of nature, he should carry with him a small pick-axe and use it before and after defecation. If only we cover excreta with earth., the nuisance of flies and other insects will be less and public health will improve. A worker ought to make himself familiar with the rules of hygiene.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-6-1924

124. IN CASE OF DACOITY

When incidents of dacoity in Ghatkopar[1] increased, the inhabitants of the place got frightened. In such an atmosphere people everywhere get frightened. Now the Municipality has taken necessary steps and, with the beginning of the rainy season, escape has become less easy for the dacoits, and so the fear of dacoity has also lessened. Hence there is no need to consider what immediate steps the people of Ghatkopar should devise.

But an increase in the police force is not the right remedy. Such measures have always been taken in the past and yet dacoities have not ceased. In America, which is considered very advanced, robbery is committed on running trains and daring thieves manage sometimes to waylay and rob people on the highway in broad daylight. Thefts, of course, are a common occurrence. Many expert observers believe that crime has increased along with the advance of civilization. All that has happened is that the nature of crimes has changed. Along with the people, crimes too become more refined. Along with greater skill in the detection of crimes, the capacity to conceal them also grows. In the result, therefore, we remain where we were.

Let us see where and how people become dacoits. No one robs sadhus who live in forests and have no possessions. And what would anyone rob them of? Robbers look for money. If people set a limit to their love of money, the number of robberies will also decrease. If all people possess more or less equal wealth, robberies will cease. But we may take it that we shall see no such happy consummation in this age.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to bear this principle in mind. We may not set a limit to our love of money, but we must make an effort to understand the condition of dacoits. If they are without means of living, we should offer them work; if they have made dacoity their profession, we should explain its immorality to them. This is the work of reformers and, therefore, the sadhus should be the fittest to undertake it. I do not mean sadhus who wear ochre robes and go about begging, but those whose hearts are dyed in ochre and who have dedicated themselves to service of others.

The work of reform cannot be taken up when dacoits visit us. It must commence from today. Such work requires little money, or rather none at all and few men. Once the movement has started, it will

[1] A suburb of Bombay

go on. There are instances of reformers in modern time shaving effectedsuchre forms.

Sahajanand[1],Chaitanya[2],Ramakrishna[3], and others have done so on a big scale. Let no one ridicule the reform they brought about by thinking or saying that it did not endure or that the reformers did not succeed in putting an end to dacoities. Such refor-ms are not extensive because they are for the most part limited in scope.

We think that there is no need to introduce such reforms among the wealthy. Really speaking, the depredations of dacoits are a reflection of the theft committed by the rich. The subtle theft of the latter becomes, with the dacoits, physical robbery. The reformer, therefore, will have to take in hand both the rich and the poor, the subtle dacoit and the one who commits physical robbery. Only then can the desired results be achieved. This is the work of *acharyas*[4], fakirs, sannyasis and the like. They have it in them to become the true protectors and guardians of the morality of society, and it is their Job, therefore, to end the evil of dacoity.

While such reforms are going on, dacoities will of course continue. In trying to effect such reforms, one should not expect quick results. They come about slowly. Meanwhile, what should the rich do to protect their property?

With police help, they do succeed in getting a measure of protection. It has become a practice to hold the Government responsible for all shortcomings and evils. It is a laudable attitude and on the whole right. Since we are under foreign rule today, we find it easy to blame the Government. When there is swaraj tomorrow, even then we shall be imperfect and we shall abuse the swaraj Government. But we ourselves shall be the swaraj Government and, therefore, to cultivate the habit of not blaming the present-day Government should be regarded as a training for swaraj. To blame the Government alone for the dacoities which take place is a confession of our weakness. How many policemen can the Government maintain to protect people living in forests? How can a people who can never protect themselves

[1] 1781-1830; founder of the Swaminarayan sect

[2] 16th-century Hindu religious reformer of Bengal who taught that caste was subordinate to faith in Lord Krishna

[3] 19th-century religious reformer who preached equality of men and service to the poor and the outcaste

[4] Spiritual preceptors

ever enjoy swaraj? A weak people will always be doomed to slavery. Hence people everywhere must make their own arrangements for their protection. From this point of view, people of suburbs like Ghatkopar, in fact people all over the country, should train themselves for self-defence. It is necessary for young people from every house to take training in self-defence. We can have protection through hired men, but that method is extremely dangerous. If middle-class people, instead of protecting themselves, engage others for the job, they will only be spending money to create masters. Those who work for wealth and possessions must be ready to defend themselves.

My criticism so far applies both to Hindus and to Muslims. The Hindus have difficulties on account of the caste system, but their attitude is mistaken. Every man must have all the four qualities—knowledge, valour, the commercial instinct and readiness for service. *Varnashrama* can only mean that each caste should have in outstanding measure its special quality and that it should earn its livelihood through that quality. That is to say, a Brahmin earns his right to a handful of *bajra* by imparting knowledge, a Kshatriya by defending, a Vaisya by engaging in trade, etc., and a Sudra by rendering service. But a man who is unable to protect himself at a time of crisis is an incomplete man. He is a burden to society. One can defend oneself by soul-force or physical force. Anyone who has not cultivated soul-force is in duty bound to defend himself and his people by means of physical force. Both those who rely on soul-force and those who rely on physical force will have to learn to face death. The man of soul-force will treat his body as of no worth and lay down his life without using force against the dacoits, whereas the other will die killing. Everyone may not be ready to cultivate soul-force. Moreover, "seeker of wealth" and "seeker of the *atman*" mean quite opposite things. The former can never become a seeker of the *atman* till he has given up his love of money. But either of them will be a coward if he runs away in the face of danger. Hence, one should cultivate the strength for self-defence to the best of one's ability. It is the clear duty of those living in suburbs like Ghatkopar that they themselves, that is, some members of their families, take training in personally fighting the dacoits.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-6-1924

125. I ACCEPT DEFEAT

Sometimes people want to meet me and discuss the Shastras with me. "Others may say or do what they like with regard to untouchability, but you should not so much as even mention the subject, for you appeal to people in the name of religion and so people get misled by you. If the Shastras look upon untouchability as a sin, prove that by citing texts. Else I can show by a reference to the Vedas that they fully support untouchability. If untouchability disappears, the *Sanatana Dharma*[1] will die out." This is what a swami called on me to tell me.

I was taken aback. I merely replied: "I always consider myself worsted in argument. I cannot argue about the Shastras with you, I admit immediately that I would be defeated in any such argu-ment with you. All the same, I will go on saying that untouchability is a great sin in Hinduism." I could not, of course, satisfy the swami by this reply. I felt quite satisfied. I felt that I had saved myself by this brief reply. When the swami called, I was engaged in my daily work of writing for the pleasure of readers of *Young India* and *Navajivan* and was not ready to waste even a single moment in talk. In the circumstances, I thought a simple refusal would be the best way out. The practical wisdom taught by our forefathers sufficed for me. I have often acted on the saying, "A determined refusal will save one from thirty-six diseases"[2] and felt that it can save us not from thirty-six but thirty-six hundred diseases.

The art of interpreting the Shastras is like a lawyer's calling. Who has not observed that people who argue about the Shastras can prove that black is white? Many experts in the Vedas find authority in them for all sorts of things. And others prove exactly the opposite about things known by the very same names.

To other ordinary people like me I wish to show a simple way which I have followed. After studying all religions, I have discovered their highest common factor. Some principles seem to be immutable which have not been contradicted by experience. A devotee like Tulsidas declared in just half a couplet."Compassion is the life of

[1] Literally, the eternal dharma, a name applied to orthodox Hinduism
[2] Gujarati saying

dharma.”“There is no dharma other than truth” is another immutable saying. No religion has repudiated these texts. Every religious principle claiming authority from the Shastras should be tested on the anvil of truth with the hammer of compassion. If it is found hard enough and does not break, it should be accepted as correct, else we should say “Not this, not this” to a thousand experts in the Shastras. In the words of Akha, which proceed from experience, discussion about the Shastras is a “dark well”. Anyone who falls into it will never be able to swim and get out of it, try as hard as he might. There is but one *atman*. It inhabits every body. Can anyone, then, be an untouchable?

Let us also understand the meaning of untouchability. A woman in menses, a man back from the cremation ground, a man who has not cleaned himself after removing stools, these are persons with whom contact is avoided. We practise untouchability in this sense even in regard to our parents. If, however, a son does not attend on his ailing mother who happens to be in her menses, though by doing so he will become untouchable for the time being, he will go to hell. All who carry night-soil are *Antyajas*. If they do not bathe after doing their work, we may, if we like, bathe on touching them, but to create on the basis of this practical idea an *Antyaja* community, to confine it to a locality reserved for it, to shun contact with its members more than we do with animals, not to bother even whether they live or die, to throw at them left-overs or rotten eatables, to refuse to teach their children, not to help them to get treatment when they fall ill, not to permit them to enter temples or draw water from a well, this simply cannot be dharma, it can only be the opposite. By looking upon these practices as an essential part of Hinduism, we are only destroying the Hindu religion.

Untouchability of this kind will mean suicide. It is the extreme limit of intolerance. I have not the ghost of a doubt that it is the primary dharma of every Hindu to try to eradicate it and die in the attempt.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-6-1924

126. PRAGJI AND SURAT

O Surat, fallen on unhappy days, you are wailing now.

The Magistrate of Surat has invited Pragji Khandubhai Desai to be a Government guest for two years and three months. He has now become my neighbour[1]. Only the Government knows how long he will enjoy the feasts of Sabarmati Jail.

If Pragji is a pure satyagrahi he has lost nothing. In fact, he has been saved from trouble. Even then, I am certain he can render the country the highest service. All I can do is to congratulate him.

Since I do not have with me the article for which he has been sentenced, I can say nothing definite. True congratulations are due only to one who is imprisoned though he is pure as crystal. There is no room, in such a case, for delusion.

I know, however, that the Government which has sent Pragji to jail is not impartial. I am vain enough to believe that the Government would not have sent me to jail if I had written the article which Pragji did, but I can also say, without being guilty of vanity, that it will not send Shastriar to jail for writing such an article. An Englishman who might write even more strongly would receive congratulations from the Government. Hence, from a general point of view, Pragji is quite innocent. I know that he had no intention at all of inciting people to wrong courses. On the whole. therefore, he is bound to profit from what has happened. Pragji is a seasoned jail-bird. He has had sufficient experience of jail life in South Africa. He is not likely to be daunted by hardships. His patriotism is of a high order.

That being so, why have I quoted at the top the line about Surat by poet Narmadashankar[2]? It is because Surat seems to have lost its light. Pragji is a well-known worker of Surat. It is not as if he was not known there. One of two results should have followed the imprisonment of a person like Pragji: either a large number of people would have followed him to jail—they could have if they had wanted to—or they would have taken up constructive work. Actually, however, Surat

[1] The jail was near Gandhiji's Ashram at Sabarmati.

[2] 19th-century Gujarati poet famed for his patriotic compositions

seems to have gone to sleep. She still takes no notice of the demand for Rs. 40,000 which has been presented to her.[1] The national school there is in the condition of Trishanku[2]. The treasury of the Surat [District] Congress Committee is empty.

It is my prayer that the workers of Surat should be awake and rouse the people there. I cannot bear to think that Surat has lost its light.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 29-6-1924

127. GOD OR NATURE TO BLAME?

A correspondent writes:[3]

If we accept the meaning which this correspondent gives to the term "Nature", I shall have to retain the word "God" in my reply to Maulana Mahomed Ali on the occasion in question. In case of a motor-car accident, everyone would rush to the help of the wounded, checking the urge to answer even a call of nature. It does not require a poor "mahatma" like me to do that. I believe, moreover, that controlling the call of nature at such a time will not have an adverse effect, because the changes which take place in the body in virtue of thefeeling of compassion counteract the harmful effects of inhibition. Besides, one who knows the laws of Nature can also, by fasting, prevent the harmful consequences of his action.

My meaning, therefore, would not have been conveyed merely by the word "Nature" in the sense in which it has been employed by the correspondent.

I cannot, for the sake of my "importance" at any rate, conceal my drawbacks. I believe myself to be a very ordinary person. If there is any exceptional power in me, it proceeds from my aspiration to

[1] *Vide* "Surat District", 15-6-1924.

[2] Mythological hero who, being unsuccessful in his attempt to reach heaven, had to remain helplessly hanging in space.

[3] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had said that, in reply to Mahomed Ali's question, "Why such illness to a man like you?", Gandhiji should have said, "I must have committed an offence against Nature" and not, "I must have committed a sin against God."

serve truth and non-violence with single-minded devotion. It is incorrect to state, "If one like me can commit so grave an offence against God as to deserve such a serious illness, ordinary people simply cannot hope to be able to save themselves from offences against Him." Since I am myself an ordinary man, none need lose heart. The fever within is the only serious illness. An appendix means a superfluous part. Its inflammation is appendicitis. The inflammation of this superfluous part is not, in my view, a serious illness. To talk evil or to do evil is, I believe, the only serious illness. God's laws are so subtle and their observance so difficult that in saving ourselves from even unwitting transgressions lies the health and well-being of the self. If, in thus trying to save oneself, one falls a prey to bodily illness, one need not lament over it.

Now I shall explain a particular kind of "offence against God" which I know of. First we shall take up the subject of food. I know very well the need for moderation in eating. I have tried my very best to follow the rule. A person who spends much of his time thinking, one who wants to make fresh discoveries by delving into the depths of his heart, should be a frugal eater. He should not be afraid of growing thin. I have never been a frugal eater in this sense, and am not that even today. I have not learnt to be unconcerned about leanness of the body. I wish to maintain my constitution and also reflect and ponder. I am torn by this conflict. My experiments go on, but so far I have not discovered the measure of how little I should eat. This cannot be done by magic. Only changes brought about in a natural way can be kept up. Even for a frugal eater it is necessary to strive to be indifferent to pleasure in food. I have been trying hard to keep the vow of restraining the palate, but I am still very far from the goal. I have taken only goat's milk for sustenance, but I have caught myself enjoying even that. As long as there is this pleasure in food, so long will there be danger of illness. Failure in conquering the palate is the "offence against God".

But, then, have I succeeded in subduing unworthy feelings and desires? Anyone who has read my jail experiences will know that even in jail conflicts were my lot. I have certainly not described all my experiences. I have not even referred to struggles with our people. Those who wage these struggles from the religious point of view alone know what suffering they involve. If we can fight these battles without attachment and aversion, we shall never suffer bodily illness. But I get

angry. The good pleases me and the bad hurts. What difference does it make if I do not show this? I alone know what effort is needed for these struggles. The effort needed to make some great discovery in electricity is one-hundredth part of what is needed to conquer attachment and aversion. And the joy which fills one on winning that victory is much greater than Newton's joy when he discovered the principle of the earth's gravitational force. There were many occasions in jail when I was angry. It was very difficult at such times to control the mind. Strenuous effort is needed to work against the environment of a jail. The passions of anger, etc., excited on those occasions cannot but have their effect on the body. In the end, I could not help mentioning the disturbance through dreams. As long as one has not conquered disturbing thoughts, the danger of bodily illness will remain.

The fact is that in the study of psychology we have so far scratched only the surface. *Vaids*, *hakims* and doctors have merely busied themselves with the body, and have not analysed the mind at all; being themselves men troubled by desires, they have spent their time finding out remedies merely by observing the changes in the body.

They have not examined with care the terrible effects of mental disorders on the body. It is yet to be discovered how, without the use of external remedies, diseases can be prevented through control of the senses. It would be more correct to say that such discoveries had been made but were forgotten later. If the modern *Vaids* and *hakims* kept in mind the *atman* while examining physical ailments, they would, I am sure, revive the method of treating the mind rather than apply external remedies. Instead of polluting the body by injecting all sorts of serums, which are in fact forms of infection, they would be ready to explain natural laws—God's laws—for preserving health. I wrote my book[1] health with some such idea in mind. I wished to make a great many experiments in this direction, and I fell ill while making them. As a result of this, I lost self-confidence; the responsibility for conducting satyagraha campaigns became another obstacle in my way. If I become free from it, I will resume my experiments.

Meanwhile, I should like the reader to know that I am convinced that I myself was the chief cause of every illness from which I have suffered. Even now, if only I can free my thoughts from the taint of

[1] Chapters of this book in Gujarati first appeared serially in *Indian Opinion,* in 1913.

desire, my body would become healthy in this very life of mine, would become strong as steel though thin and would be immune against any infection, etc.

The lesson which the reader should draw from this article is that one can become healthy by conquering troublesome desires of the mind. If, in the attempt, he falls ill, he should not lose heart but should persevere in his efforts. He should not despair if he does not succeed in his aim, but should go on trying, keeping up his faith. Pamper his body as he may, it is bound to perish. He does not at all know when it will perish, and he should not have excessive love for a thing more delicate than a glass bangle. Instead of deceiving himself, he should know that the cause of most of the diseases from which he suffers is violation of the simple laws of God.

We have wrongly come to believe that those rules are very difficult to observe. In our indolence we assume that, since everyone says they are, they must be so. If we strive with energy enough, we shall discover that it is natural for man not to submit to improper desires, but to conquer them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-6-1924

128. MY NOTES

KHADI V. CALICO

A correspondent from Dharwar district writes:[1]

I receive such letters often. The lesson to be drawn from them is that, though khadi may not be durable, and though it may be more expensive yard for yard than calico and wear out too soon if the yarn is not strong, still one should not forget that the use of khadi naturally brings with it simplicity in other matters and is in its own way far from expensive. No one would want to use four or five garments of khadi at a time, but one would not be satisfied with wearing only a muslin shirt. This is not to say that the use of khadi will have the same effect on everyone which it has had on this gentleman, or that there is something in khadi itself which produces this

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that he had found khadi much cheaper than foreign cloth and, since he started wearing it, he had ceased to feel it below his dignity to do simple jobs.

effect. It is the result of the associations which go with khadi and the sentiments which lie behind it. Anyone can see, with a little observation, that the use of khadi has brought about great changes in the lives of hundreds of men.

COMMUNITY DINNERS FOLLOWING DEATH

The same correspondent describes a great difficulty which he is facing. His caste-fellows have been pressing him to give a community dinner on the death of his mother. He himself does not believe in this practice. He believes, rather, that such dinners do us harm. But then, his caste-fellows will feel hurt if he does not observe the practice and give the dinner. The problem is what one should do in this dilemma. If age-old evils are to be banished from society, one who takes the lead always has to face difficulties like this. Courtesy and firmness—display of these two qualities helps at such times. One should face the opposition to one's own decision with civility and firmness. We should not do something wrong even to please our caste-fellows. Giving community dinners on death cannot possibly earn religious merit. There seems to be a common practice of giving gifts following a death though not as charity, at least in order that no one may consider us miserly or indifferent to the good opinion of the community. If we spend on the education of the boys and girls in our community the amount which is likely to be required for 3 community dinner after death, or something more, the purpose would be fully served. If we learn to save all the money, or a large part of it, which we spend out of a false sense of pride or fear on dinners following death and on other customs, we would not be faced, as we always are, with shortage of funds. But God knows what spell this custom has cast and even men of wisdom forget their wisdom and, acting like ignorant people, raise a loan and give the customary dinner. But, in this age of simplicity of khadi, we can all spare ourselves such expenditure.

WORTHY OF IMITATION

There had been bitterness between Hindus and Muslims in Karad[1]. Some Muslims had broken Hindu idols. Some Muslims were, therefore, arrested and were being prosecuted in a court of law. Now I have received a telegram from the Secretary of the All-India Congress Committee saying that, at a public meeting of Hindus and Muslims,

[1] A town in Maharashtra

the Muslims had apologized, expressed their regret and undertaken to find out the idol-breakers. Moreover, they even agreed to give a guarantee against the breaking of idols hereafter. Both Hindus and Muslims would meet to draw up a code of conduct for the future. The Muslims would pay compensation for the loss caused by idol-breaking.

Consequent upon this settlement, they applied to the Collector to have the case withdrawn and, after satisfying himself about the above settlement, the Collector permitted the withdrawal. The settlement appears to be a genuine thing. The practice of appointing *panchas* was initiated in Delhi, and now it has been admirably followed in Karad. Let us hope that, wherever there is bitterness between Hindus and Muslims, both will meet together and arrive at an understanding; seeing that mutual interest lies therein, they should live amicably and help one another. If both the communities come to an agreement and mix with open minds, no misunderstanding will ever arise again. I am told that an incident like the one in Karad has taken place in Burhanpur[1]. Won't the local Hindus and Muslims themselves arrive at an understanding?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-6-1924

129. A WELCOME CORRECTION

A correspondent writes to tell me that in the article entitled "Lack or Excess of Love"[2] my explanation of the use of "thou" isvery good. But there is one sentence in it which suggests the "you" relationship. He thinks that if, instead of writing "Rama is mine and I am his slave", I had written "Rama is mine and I am Rama's", my explanation about "thou" would have sounded more beautiful. This view appears to be quite true. "His slave" shows distance. "I am Rama's" suggests perfect union. But how will the expression occur to one when the feeling is not there in one's heart? It seems slavery is still dear to me. Perhaps even now I feel happy being at a distance, and so regard myself as a slave. I realize every moment that it is not easy to become a Mother Avvai. When we use language simply to

[1] A town in Maharashtra

[2] *Vide* "Lack or Excess of Love?", 5-6-1924.

express our thoughts, we naturally say what is in our mind. Not having seen God face to face, how was I to find the language of such experience? But I shall certainly try. And so, too, should the reader.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-6-1924

130. RESOLUTIONS AT A.I.C.C. MEETING[1]

AHMEDABAD,
June 29, 1924

Mr. Gandhi then spoke. He called upon the Swarajists to work the charkha programme. He further expressed the hope that they would do so in a good spirit. Mr. Gandhi then proceeded to move his second resolution:

RESOLUTION 2: In as much as it has been brought to the notice of the All-India Congress Committee that instructions issued from time to time by officers and organizations duly authorized thereto have sometimes not been carried out properly, it is resolved that the executive committees of the Provincial Congress Committees shall have power to take such disciplinary action, including dismissal, as deemed advisable and, in cases where the default is by provincial authorities, the Working Committee of the All-India Congress Committee shall have the power to take such disciplinary action, inclu-ding dismissal, as may be deemed advisable by the respective Committees of the Provincial Committees.

In moving the resolution, Mr. Gandhi referred to the visit paid him last night by Pandit Motilal Nehru, C. R. Das and Moulana Abul Kalam Azad. He was asked by them why it was that he advised the committee to expunge the penalty clause from the first resolution passed yesterday. He was also asked as to the trend of his mind at that time. Mr. Gandhi told them what he told the meeting yesterday: there was no real majority in favour of that clause. It was therefore the dignified course for the All-India Congress Committee to expunge the clause. After detailing the objections to the clause providing penalty made by Mr. Das, Mr. Gandhi said that Mr. Das had agreed to the compromise placed before them and had further agreed to work the constructive programme to the best of his ability and join the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress. While drafting it, Mr. Gandhi did not consult anybody.

[1] After his discussions with Motilal Nehru, C. R. Das and Abul Kalam Azad at the Ashram the previous night, Gandhiji moved the second resolution as revised by him. For the draft of this and other resolutions, *vide* "The Acid Test", 13-6-1924.

He had tried to satisfy the Swarajists to the best of his ability. He had thus placed his compromise before the meeting. He would ask them to dismiss him for a moment from their minds in disposing of the resolution. Mr. Gandhi said:

If you want to reject the resolution, reject it, but, if you want to pass it, shoulder the responsibilities.[1]

RESOLUTION 3: The A.I.C.C. draws the attention of the Congress voters to the fact that the five boycotts, namely of all mill-spun cloth, Government law-courts, educational institutions, titles and legislative bodies, except in so far as they may have been affected by the Cocanada resolution, are still part of the Congress programme and therefore considers it desirable that those Congress voters who believe in the Congress programme do not elect to the various Congress organizations those who do not believe in carrying out in their own person the said five boycotts except where affected by the said Cocanada resolution and the A.I.C.C. therefore requests such persons, who are now members of Congress elective organizations, to resign their places.[2]

Mr. Gandhi then made a brief reply.[3] He discouraged strongly the idea of confusing issues with loyalty to him. What would they do if he died tomorrow? What did they mean doing if he had a sudden accident? Mr. Gandhi deprecated the tendency to centralize everything round him. He called on the Committee to pass his resolution if they were convinced it was the right course to follow or to reject it and adopt Mr. Varadachariar's amendment if they thought it was good.

The amendments were defeated and original resolution was passed by an overwhelming majority.[4]

[1] Vallabhbhai Patel seconded the resolution which was carried unanimously without any discussion.

[2] Gandhiji did not make any speech on the motion, which was seconded by Vallabhbhai Patel. The resolution, as originally proposed before and accepted by the Working Committee, ran as follows: "In the opinion of the All-India Congress Committee, it is desirable that Congress electors do not elect to the various Congress organizations practising lawyers, those who deal in or wear mill-spun cloth, parents and guardians sending their minor children to educational institutions under Government control, holders of Government titles and members of Legislative bodies and the A.I.C.C. therefore requests such persons who are now members of the various Congress elective organizations to resign their places."

[3] in regard to certain amendments which were moved

[4] The Committee then adjourned till 9 p.m., when it was to discuss the resolution on Gopinath Saha.

Mr. Gandhi then moved the following resolution:[1]

Mr. Gandhi refused to make any reply[2] the ground that, if the country did not know its mind, at this stage of the struggle, there was no meaning in his saying anything.

The Hindu, 30-6-1924

131. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING[3]

June 30, 1924

What I saw after the Gopinath Saha resolution caused me amusement as well as pain. I wondered what I could say to you. I shall say something later through the columns of *Young India*. Why was I pained so much? Only because we all who had taken a pledge to win swaraj had gathered there; we had agreed to employ only non-violent non-co-operation; and yet we spoke exclusively about violence. How can we talk about violence at all in the All-India Congress Committee? If we share the ideal and the resolve of the Congress, we would utter not a word of violence. I won by eight votes on the last resolution[4] I have not known a thing like victory in this world. . . .[5] Dr Paranjpye has not said a new thing; on the contrary, he has presented my principle in a diluted form. What I had said was: "Truthful means should be employed even against scoundrels." I had also spoken of kissing the feet of the enemy who violates the modesty of your sister, who inflicts a wound on you. I would not abandon this faith even if I were offered the kingdom of the world. But I do admit that there is also the way of violence. That is precisely why I had said in Delhi that we must speak out our true belief. But today we have put up a pretence. If you want to draw the sword, do so; and if you wield it truthfully, I shall repair to the Himalayas and send you my compliments from there. But I am tired of make-believe. Why should I have to talk about the Gopinath resolution? About other resolutions I would certainly speak, argue and explain. But if I have to make a speech today about a thing which is

[1] Not reproduced here. For the text of the fourth resolution, which was passed without any change, *vide* "The Acid Test", 19-6-1924.

[2] In regard to an amendment which was proposed

[3] After the formal session was over, the A.I.C.C. met informally.

[4] Gandhiji's Resolution No. 4, which condemned the murder of Ernest Day by Gopinath Saha

[5] As in the source

the mainstay of the Congress, then we must give up our fight.

And after doing an act of violence[1], we started fooling about. Gangadharrao[2] asked me what he should do. I replied that he should resign. I for one would ask him to burn all his possessions. Asaf Ali came and asked the same question. He asked, "What wrong have the lawyers done?" I drafted my resolution[3] under those circumstances. I even saw how you treated that draft resolution. I liked your opposing me, because my resolution would have reflected discredit on me—it would have been like taking a cup of poison. But I drank it, because I could realize the condition of the people, whom I have made it my business to study for the last thirty years. I assessed the capacity of all of us and I felt that I needs must draft such a resolution. But a point of law was raised against me. Then I was taken aback. I asked myself: "O poor creature! Do you serve God or Satan? Why do you trouble yourself in this way?"[4]

I for one wish to deal only with straightforward men. All of you are not that. What is the All-India Congress Committee? It will be what you would make of it. If you wish to be true to yourself, leave the Congress and work in the villages. You can take a donkey's work from me, lout that in a straightforward way, not in a cunning way. True, you can hoodwink me, but when I see that you are betraying me, I shall seek refuge in God and will stand aloof from you.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-7-1924

[1] A reference presumably to the speeches of some A.I.C.C. members on Gandhiji's Resolution No. 4. Their "violence" consisted in their defence of Gopinath Saha's action.

[2] Gangadharrao Balkrishna Deshpande; Journalist and Congress leader of Karnatak

[3] Gandhiji's Resolution No. 5, which was not accepted by the A.I.C.C.; the resolution was meant to protect litigants from the operation of Gandhiji's Resolution No. 3 passed by the A.I.C.C., suggesting resignation of members who did not believe in the principle of the five boycotts, including that of law-courts, and did not carry them out themselves.

[4] At this point Gandhiji paused a little as tears began to flow from his eyes. He soon regained his composure and continued his speech.

132. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[1]

AHMEDABAD,
July 1, 1924

It is most difficult to give my impressions now, not because there is none to give, but because there are too many. Just as a man who eats too much does no good to himself except to impair his digestion, so these impressions, not being digested and, therefore, not arranged in the brain, do not lend themselves to a readable description. For the time being, therefore, I must invite the curious to be satisfied with the honest impressions of spectators or with the imaginary pictures of reporters. It is highly probable that, on the principle that spectators see more of the play than the actors, the honest impressions of the former, supplemented by the enterprising imagination of reporters will give the public an idea of the very important proceedings of the Committee.

One definite impression, however, I can give. Though on all of the four resolutions that I had the honour of moving I had a majority in their favour, I must own that, according to my conception, I was defeated. The proceedings have been an eye-opener to me and I am now occupied in a diligent search from within. As yet, I am with-out an answer.

After having seen the newspaper reports yesterday and a private telegram describing them, I am not sure that I was wise in discouraging the Kerala members from pressing for a resolution of the All-India Congress Committee on the Vykom Satyagraha. My general opinion is that all such local struggles should depend for success on their own inherent strength and not upon support borrowed from the central body. But the new development probably justifies an emphatic declaration by the A.I.C.C. I shall certainly recommend some resolution for the Working Committee for adoption. If the reports are to be relied upon, the Travancore State authorities have abandoned the innocent satyagrahis to the *goondas* said to have been employed by the orthodox opponents reform for which the satyagrahis have been fighting. Travancore is said to be one of the most enlightened States of India and I hope that, for its very fame, if not for the sake of

[1] Gandhiji was asked to give his impressions of the A.I.C.C. session which had just concluded.

humanity, the reports are without foundation. It is a serious thing if satyagrahis are cruelly beaten by the *goondas*. Limes are thrown into their eyes and their khaddar shirts torn from them and burnt. Why the authorities can possibly take away inoffensive charkhas from the volunteers passes my understanding. I hope the Travancore Durbar will immediately set the matter right and revert to its original admirable policy of merely preserving the peace between the reformers and the orthodox section.

I hope, too, that the satyagrahis will remain calm, unperturbed and withal particularly non-violent. It is a time of great trial for them. If they can brave all the sufferings that may be heaped upon them with dignity and without retaliation, success is assured. Their silent suffering will melt the hearts of even the *goondas* and the orthodox opposition will realize that they have nothing but disgrace in return for their inhumanity.

The Hindu, 2-7-1924

133. MESSAGE TO VYKOM SATYAGRAHIS

SABARMATI,
July 2, 1924]

The unexpected development in Vykom puts a severe strain on the satyagrahis. But, two things are needful for success— unlimited patience and unconquerable courage. Patience means non-violence. Let orthodoxy do its worst. Reformers will take the severest blows without retaliation. Courage means ability to suffer. There must be satyagrahis enough ready to suffer the most refined tortures. It is my experience that those who fight in a just cause and in the name of God receive just enough capacity for suffering.

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 2-7-1924

134. DEFEATED AND HUMBLED

Reporters are rarely able to interest me, but one of them did succeed the other day in interesting me in him. I therefore gave him, towards the end of the interview more than he had expected. He asked me what I would do if the house was evenly divided. I told him in effect that God would send something to prevent such a catastrophe. I had no idea that my innocent and half-humorous remark was prophetic.

The proceedings of the A.I.C.C. reminded me of those at Delhi just before I was imprisoned. The disillusionment of Delhi awaited me at Ahmedabad.

I had a bare majority always for the four resolutions.[1] But it must be regarded by me as a minority. The house was fairly evenly divided. The Gopinath Saha resolution clinched the issue. The speeches, the result and the scenes I witnessed after, was a perfect eye-opener. I undoubtedly regard the voting as a triumph for Mr. Das although he was apparently defeated by eight votes. That he could find 70 supporters out of 148 who voted had a deep significance for me. It lighted the darkness though very dimly as yet.

Up to the point of the declaration of the poll, I was enjoying the whole thing as a huge joke, though I knew all the while that it was as serious as it was huge. I now see that my enjoyment was superficial. It concealed the laceration that was going on within.

After the declaration, the chief actors retired from the scene. And the house abandoned itself to levity. Most important resolutions were passed with the greatest unconcern. There were flashes of humour sandwiched in between these resolutions. Everybody rose on points of order and information. The ordeal was enough to try the patience of any chairman. Maulana Mahomed Ali came through it all unscathed. He kept his temper fairly. He rightly refused to recognize 'points of information'. I must confess that the suitors for fame most cheerfully obeyed his summary rulings. Let not the reader conclude that there was, at any stage of the proceedings, the slightest insubordination. I have not known many meetings where there was so little acrimony or personalities in the debate as in this, even though feelings

[1] *Vide* "The Acid Test", 19-6-1924.

ran high and the differences were sharp and serious. I have known meetings where, under similar circumstances, the chairmen have found it most difficult to keep order. The president of the A.I.C.C. commanded willing obedience.

All the same, dignity vanished after the Gopinath resolution. It was before this House that I had to put my last resolution. As the proceedings went on, I must have become more and more serious. Often I felt like running away from the oppressive scene. I dreaded having to move a resolution in my charge. I would have asked for postponement of the resolution but for the promise I had made the meeting that I would suggest a remedy, or failing that, move a resolution for protecting litigants from the operation of the third resolution which requests resignation from members who do not believe in the principle of the five boycotts, including that of law-courts, and do not carry them out in their own persons. Protection was intended for those who might be *driven* to the courts either as plaintiffs or defendants. The resolution that was adopted by the Working Committee and previously circulated among the members did protect them It was substituted by the one actually passed by the A.I.C.C. As the reader knows, it exempts from its operation those who might be covered by the Cocanada resolution. In drafting that amendment I had not protected litigants. I had wished to do so by a separate resolution. I had announced the fact at the time of introducing the resolution. And it was this promised resolution that opened for me a way out of 'darkness invisible'. I moved it with the preface that it was in redemption of the morning promise. I mentioned, too, Mr. Gangadharrao Deshpande was an instance in point. I do not believe in exemptions and as-far-as-possibles. But I know that some of the strongest non-co-operators have found it difficult to avoid law-courts. Unscrupulous debtors have refused payment to non-co-operators because of their knowledge that the latter could not sue them. Similarly, I know men who have brought suits against non-co-operators because they would not defend themselves. The curious will be agreeably surprised to discover, if theysearched among the rank and file, the numerous cases in which non-co-operators have preferred to suffer losses to defending themselves or suing. Nevertheless, it is perfectly true that representatives have not always been able to keep to the prohibition. The practice, therefore, has been to wink at filing suits and more often at defending them. The Committee has from time to time also passed rules legalizing the practice to a certain extent. I thought that now

when the A.I.C.C. was adopting a rigid attitude regarding the observance of the boycotts, the position of litigants should be clearly defined. Nothing would please me better than for the Congress to have only those representatives on its executive who would carry out all the boycotts to the full. But the exact fulfilment at the present stage of the boycott of law-courts on the part of many is almost an impossibility. Voluntary acceptance of poverty is essential for the purpose. It must take some time before we can hope to man the Congress organizations with such men and women, and run them efficiently. Recognizing the hard fact, I was prepared to incur the odium of having to move the said resolution of exemption. Hardly had I finished reading it, up sprang the brave Harisarvottama Rao to his feet and, in a vigorous and cogent speech, opposed it. He said it was his painful duty to oppose me. I told him the pain was mine in that I had to move a resolution I could not defend. His must be the pleasure of opposing an indefensible resolution and of keeping the Congress organization pure at any cost. I liked this opposition and was looking forward to the voting. But the opposer was followed by Swami Govindanand who raised the technical objection that no resolution designed to affect one previously passed could be moved at the same session of the Committee. The chairman properly rejected the objec-tion, if only because the previous day the very first resolution was amended after it was passed by a majority. But the last straw was unwittingly supplied by Dr. Choithram. I have known him to be a responsible man. A long period of unbroken service lies to his credit. He has embraced poverty for the sake of his country. I was not prepared for a constitutional objection from him in a matter in which the Committee had on previous occasions softened the effect of the boycott resolution. But he thoughtlessly asked whether my resolution was not in breach of the Congress resolution on boycotts. Maulana Mahomed Ali asked me whether the objection was not just. I said of course it was. He therefore felt bound to hold my resolution uncons-titutional. Then I sank within me. There was nothing, absolutely nothing, wrong about anybody's speech or behaviour. Allwere brief in their remarks. They were equally courteous. And, what is more, they were seemingly in the right. And yet it was all hopelessly unreal. The objections were like reading a sermon on the virtue of self-res-traint to a hungry man reduced to a skeleton. Each of the actors acted involuntarily, unconsciously. I felt that God was speaking to me through them and seemed to say, 'Thou fool, knowest not thou that thou art impossible? Thy

time is up.' Gangadharrao asked me whether he should not resign. I agreed with him that he should do so at once. And he promptly tendered his resignation. The President read it to the meeting. It was accepted almost unanimously. Ganga-dharrao was the gainer.

Shaukat Ali was sitting right opposite at a distance of perhaps six yards. His presence restrained me from fleeing. I kept asking myself, 'Could right ever come out of wrong? Was I not co-operating with evil?' Shaukat Ali seemed to say to me through his big eyes, 'There is nothing wrong, for all will be right.' I was struggling to free myself from the enchantment. I could not.

The President asked, 'Shall I now dissolve the meeting?' I said, 'Certainly.' But Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, who was evidently watching whatever changes my face was undergoing, was all eyes. He quickly came up and said, 'We cannot disperse without the message you have promised.' I replied, 'Maulana Saheb, it is true I wanted to say something about the future plans. But what I have been witnessing for the last hour, after the Gopinath resolution, has grieved me. I do not know where I stand now and what I should do.' 'Then,' he said, 'say even if it is only that.' I complied and in a short speech in Hindustani laid bare my heart and let them see the blood oozing out of it. It takes much to make me weep. I try to suppress tears even when there is occasion for them. But, in spite of all my efforts to he brave, I broke down utterly. The audience was visibly affected. I took them through the various stages I had passed and told them that it was Shaukat Ali who stood in the way of my flight. For I regarded him as trustee for Hindu honour, as I was proud enough to regard myself as such for Mussalman honour. And then I told them that I was unable to say how I would shape my future course. I would consult him and other workers who were closely associated with me. It was the saddest speech I had ever made. I finished and turned round to look for Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. He had stolen away from me and was standing at the farthest end opposite to me. I told him I would now like to go. He said, 'Not yet, for a while. For we must speak too.' And he invited the audience to speak. Those who spoke did so with a sob. The sight of the hoary-headed Sikh friend who was choked as he was speaking touched me deep. Of course Shaukat Ali spoke and others. All begged pardon and assured me of their unwavering support. Mahomed Ali broke down twice. I tried to soothe him.

I had nothing to forgive for none had done any wrong to me.

On the contrary, they had all been personally kind to me. I was sad because we were weighed in the scales of our own making—the Congress creed—and found wanting; we were such poor representatives of the nation! I seemed to be hopelessly out of place. My grief consisted in the doubt about my own ability to lead those who would not follow.

I saw that I was utterly defeated and humbled. But defeat cannot dishearten me. It can only chasten me. My faith in my creed stands immovable. I know that God will guide me. Truth is superior to man's wisdom.

M. K. GANDHI

The foregoing was written on Monday the 30th June. I wrote it, but I was not satisfied nor am I satisfied now with the performance. On reading it I feel I have not done justice to the meeting or myself. Great as the informal meeting was, the one that preceded it, and that stung me to the quick, was not less great. I do not know that I have made it clear that no speaker had any malice in him. What preyed upon my mind was the fact of unconscious irresponsibility and disregard of the Congress creed or policy of non-violence.

The informal meeting was a heart-searcher. It purified the atmosphere. The whole of Tuesday I passed in discussing with co-workers my position. My innermost wish was and still is to retire from the Congress and confine my activity merely to Hindu-Muslim unity, khaddar and untouchability. They would not listen. I had no right, they said, to retire at a critical period in the history of the nation. My withdrawal would not smooth matters. It would cause depression and remove from Congress meetings an active restraining influence. I must actively work the programme of which I was the author, so long as the majority favoured it. The programme had a far greater majority than the voting at the A.I.C.C. would indicate. I must travel in the country and see things for myself. My second proposal was for all who fully accepted the Congress creed to retire in favour of the Swarajists. As the argument against it developed, I rejected it myself as thoughtless. It was the last thing the Swarajists wanted. I felt that it would be doing violence to them to expect them to do the impossible. I know that they would not entertain even the first proposal. I offer edit to them at Juhu and renewed it in Ahmedabad. I have therefore reluctantly decided to drink the bitter cup and continue to be in the Congress organization and shoulder the responsibility for working it until the Congress puts me in an actual numerical minority.

1 may not choose short cuts. I must plod. I must pocket my pride and wait till I am driven out.

I must seemingly become a party-man and show that I can still work as a no-party man. I must strive for a majority at the next Congress and endeavour, so far as it is possible, to act impartially. It is not beyond the capacity of a satyagrahi.

The conditions are incredibly simple. The striving to be in a majority consists in solid work.

1. Over and above the spinning for half an hour, every spare minute should be given to it.

2. Extra spinning can be dispensed with in order to do khaddar propaganda.

3. We may swell the electoral roll by getting as many Congress members as possible.

4. There should be no manipulation of papers.

5. There should be no manoeuvring for securing votes.

6. There should be no criticism of the opposite party, as distinguished from policy.

7. There should be no undue pressure exercised on the voters.

Both the parties are said to have resorted in the past to unscrupulous practices in the matter of election of delegates and members of the subordinate organizations. The best way of avoiding corruption is to be indifferent to the result after having adopted all honest measures for influencing voters.

The No-change programme must be what it means. The proceedings of the Committee have but confirmed the view that the two methods cannot be worked in the same organization. The Swarajist method cultivates British opinion and looks to the British Parliament for swaraj. The No-change method looks to the people for it. The two methods represent two opposite mentalities. This is not to say that one is wrong if the other is right. Each may be right in its own place. But for one organization to work both is to weaken both and therefore to damage the national cause. Whilst one school claims to give political education through the Councils, the other claims to give it exclusively by working among the people and evoking its organizing and administrative capacity. One teaches to look up to a Government for popular progress, the other tries to show that even the most ideal

government plays among a self-governing people the least important part in national growth. One teaches the people that the constructive programme alone cannot achieve swaraj, the other teaches the people that it and it alone can achieve it.

Unfortunately, I was unable to convince the Swarajists of this obvious truth. And I saw constitutional difficulty in the way of securing a homogeneous organization. We must now, therefore, do the next best thing. We must silently work up the constructive programme without regard to what will happen in December, in the full belief that whether the Congress rejects or accepts the programme, for us there is no other. I would ask those newspapers that call themselves No-change papers not to criticize the Swarajists in any shape or form. I am convinced that newspapers play a very small part in shaping the policy or programme of the masses. They do not know newspapers. The No-changers have to reach and represent those who have had no political education whatsoever.

Young India, 3-7-1924

135. BOMBAY, REMEMBER SAROJINI

Shrimati Sarojini Naidu returns to Bombay on the 12th instant. I have no doubt that Bombay will give her a rousing reception. The Congress could not have sent a better messenger to East Africa and South Africa to plead the cause of her sons and daughters in those distant lands. Sarojini has been a real mother to those sons and daughters. She has not spared herself in their service. I present Bombay with the latest letter received from her to remind it of its duty when India's nightingale returns to delight the Indian ear with her sweet music. Here is the letter:

> At long last I have, I confess with great sadness, disentangled the tendrils of my heart from all the clinging hands in your South Africa that is so full of your children.
>
> After three months of ceaseless work and travelling when I got aboard the *Kargola*, felt I could sleep and sleep and sleep—every fibre of my body was charged with weariness and for the first few days I lay in my chair like a lump of indolence, but now inspite of my fever (a faithful companion), I am quite ready to start another month's work in East Africa. Tomorrow I land at Dar-es-salaam and, after finishing my tour in Tanganyika, I go on to Kenya and sail from there on 2nd July and reach

Bombay on the 12th. I know there will be a struggle to keep me longer in Kenya, but I shall be obdurate because of a selfish reason. My small daughter is returning home for the long vacation from Oxford. I have not seen her for three years. Have you not accused me of being a good mother?

You would laugh if you saw my luggage. I have arrived at a stage In my life and mind when I am dismayed by too many possessions, but Africa has added to them with both hands. I am devising means whereby to dispossess myself of most of them to advantage. Fortunately I have a large family clan! Seven silver jewel boxes and not enough jewels to put into one! Seven silver purses and not enough money to fill one! Fine gorgeous sets of hair-brush and not enough hair left to brush, and O! such beautiful foreign silks which I cannot wear! Caskets of gold, silver, ivory, tortoise-shell with scrolls full of praises of some imaginary lady whom I don't recognize, and so on and so forth,—about 175 presents and presentations and I a wandering singer! How you would laugh at the joyous one thing I was really in need of I could not get in the whole of the African continent—a pair of Indian shoes.

This is quite a frivolous letter, but it is a wholesome temporary, from the many South African politicians and the many addresses of high praise. I am taking refuge in light magazines and playing with blue-eyed babies on board.

My fellow-travellers are friendly. It is my good fortune that I always find friendliness everywhere, even while some of the more rabid anti-Asiatics were bitterly attacking me politically, they were most friendly personally! Some people ask such funny questions like a young American in a train who quite seriously asked me in the course of conversation if after all, Gandhi was not verily a patriot at heart. I nearly collapsed on my seat.

Young India, 3-7-1924

136. THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

All the resolutions of the All-India Congress Committee will be found printed at another page. The first resolution is bereft of the penalty clause. It was my first defeat in a series. Majorities cannot deceive me. It was impossible for me to be satisfied with a bare majority when I knew that, if the, Swarajist withdrawals were to be taken into account, the defeat was a certainty. I therefore urged the meeting to take into account the withdrawals and remove the penalty clause from the resolution.

The second resolution is not the same as the original draft, but in substance it is the same. The principle of disciplinary action is retained.

The third resolution constitutes real failure. I still feel that the elective organizations of the Congress are executive and that, therefore, they should contain only those who heartily support the Congress Programme for the time being and who are prepared not to obstruct or tone it down, but to carry it out in its entirety. But it was not possible to get over the constitutional difficulty. Any restriction upon the Cocanada programme must be considered a breach of the Congress constitution. Putting the interpretation that I do even now, the original resolution was not a breach. But it was pointed out to me that I have no right to put my own interpretation upon it and that the Swarajists had the right to contend that those who entered the Councils were not debarred from being on the executives. They said that, as a matter of fact, there were Swarajists on the Working Committee already. The argument had great weight with me and, in view of the knowledge that the original resolution disqualifying the Swarajists from being on the executives could only be passed by a narrow majority, was decisive in reconciling me to the resolution as finally adopted. It does not please me. But it was the only possible course left save that of dropping the whole proposition. That was required for the sake of keeping before the country the idea of having a homogeneous organization and of insisting on purity of political conduct. Representatives must be expected to conform to the standards they lay down for others. It must be pointed out in a variety of ways that the Congress is no longer a begging association, but that it is primarily a self-purification association designed to achieve its goal by developing internal strength. Public opinion must, therefore, be created in favour of the things needed for the national life. The best way of creating it is to frame propositions and enlisting support therefor. Whilst, therefore, I have reconciled myself to the possibility of temporary heterogeneity, I would strongly plead with both the parties not to obstruct each other's path.

The fourth resolution however completed my defeat. It is true that the Gopinath resolution was carried by a bare majority. A clear minority would have pleased me more than a narrow majority. I do not forget the fact that many who voted for Mr. Das's amendment did so because of the rumour of impending arrests. Many naturally felt it

a point of honour to protect a valued chief and comrade who had rendered signal services to the country and who had performed great self-sacrifice. Sentiment often outweighs moral considerations and I have no doubt that the Bengal Government will make a serious blunder if they arrest Mr. Das and his supporters. It is too late in the day to punish opinions. If there was no moral consideration against supporting Mr. Das's amendment, I would have had no hesitation whatsoever in myself tendering my support. But I could not, no Congressman could. Mr. Das sees no difference between my resolution and his. I can only call it self-deception. Those who spoke in support of his proposition did not mince matters. They had room for political murder in their philosophy and, after all, is it not the common philosophy? The majority of the so-called civilized peoples believe in and act upon it on due occasions. They hold that for a disorganized and oppressed people political assassination is the only remedy. That it is a false philosophy, that it has failed to make the world better to live in, is only too true. I merely state that, if Mr. Das and his supporters have erred, they have the bulk of civilized opinion on their side. The foreign masters of India have no better record to show. If the Congress was a political organization with no limitation as to means, it would be impossible to object to Mr. Das's amendment on merits. It would then be reduced to a question of expedience.

But that there were seventy Congress representatives to support the resolution was a staggering revelation. They have proved untrue to their creed. In my opinion the amendment was in breach of the Congress creed or policy of non-violence. But I purposely refrained from raising such an objection. If the members wanted the resolution, it was well for them to have it. It is always best in my opinion to let constitutional questions be decided as a rule by members.

The other resolutions do not require any discussion.

The resolution extolling the Sikh sacrifice and bravery was in continuation of the traditional policy of the Congress.

The opium resolution became necessary for two reasons. Miss La Motte, who has been doing most valuable work in trying to reduce the world's growth of opium to its bare medical necessity, has pointed out in tragic terms the immoral opium policy of the Government of India. Mr. Andrews has shown how the Government of India made itself responsible for changing at the Opium Convention the word "medical" to "legitimate" in describing people's requirements. It,

therefore, became necessary, in view of the approaching convention at Geneva for the A.I.C.C., to say what the nation thinks of the Government of India policy. It had become equally necessary to investigate the condition of the Assamese under the opium habit. A fine body of men and women are undergoing a process of decay under the cursed opium habit. The Assam Provincial Congress Committee is ready to inquire into the matter. The A.I.C.C. has, therefore, thought it desirable to appoint Mr. Andrews to conduct the inquiry in co-operation with the Provincial Committee.

The seventh resolution authorizes the Working Committee to appoint, if necessary, a deputation to inquire into the condition of Indian labourers of the Malay Peninsula and Ceylon. We know nothing of the condition of the labourers who emigrate to Ceylon and the Malay Peninsula except from the stray reports that appear in the Press. It is our duty to study their condition and do whatever we can to ameliorate it.

Young India, 3-7-1924

137. NOTES

QUICK RESPONSE

Immediately on the resolution requesting members who did not carry out the boycotts in their own persons to resign being carried at the A.I.C.C. meeting, Mr. Kalidas Jhaveri, who is a practising lawyer, handed in his resignation as member of various committees. He was elected with the full knowledge of the voters that he had resumed practice. I congratulate Mr. Kalidas Jhaveri on the quick response to the Committee's invitation. He is a good worker. Let us hope that his services will not be lost to the Congress because he had resigned office. Everyone who either may not see eye to eye with the Congress in all its programme, or because of weakness or circumstances over which he may have no control and, therefore, cannot have a place in the executive organization, can still work as effectively as if he was in the executive. There is, for instance, nothing to prevent Mr. Jhaveri from enlisting members, spinning, carrying on khaddar propaganda, collecting subscriptions, etc. Indeed, a sincere worker prefers work to responsibility of office and, by not being on the executive, escapes the terrible wranglings that take place therein.

When the A.I.C.C. rejected the resolution exempting litigants,

Mr. Gangadharrao Deshpande immediately tendered his resignation which was accepted as soon as tendered. Mr. Deshpande happened to be the General Secretary of the Congress. He is also the chairman of the Karnatak Provincial Congress Committee. It will be interesting to learn how the difficulty in Karnatak is to overcome, seeing that Mr. Deshpande is the moving spirit. He is organizing the Congress work. Mr. Gangadharrao's case is a very big experiment. If he is able to guide the people under his influence without occupying any office, he will have set an example for all of us to copy. It is necessary for us to bring into being workers who would want no office and yet would render as effective service as the strongest official. Such men and women are the pride of a nation. They are its reserve force.

There is yet another reflection that arises from the interesting situation. Why should all of us possess property? Why should not we, after a certain time, dispossess ourselves of all property? Unscrupulous merchants do this for dishonest purposes. Why may we not do it for a moral and a great purpose? For a Hindu it was the usual thing at a certain stage. Every good Hindu is expected, after having lived the household life for a certain period, to enter upon a life of non-possession of property. Why may we not revive the noble tradition? In effect it merely amounts to this that, for maintenance, we place ourselves at the mercy of those to whom we transfer our property. To me the idea is attractive. In the innumerable cases of such honourable trust, there is hardly one case in a million of abuse of trust. Of course, there are moral considerations arising out of such transactions. Take the instance of father and son. If the son is as good a non-co-operator as the father, why should the father tempt his son by burdening him with ownership of property? Such considerations will always arise and the moral worth of a person is tested by his ability in delicately balancing cross problems of ethics. How such a practice can be worked without giving a handle to dishonest persons can only be determined after long experimenting. No one, however, need be deterred from trying the experiment for fear of the example being abused. The divine author of the *Gita* was not deterred from delivering the message of the 'Song Celestial', although he probably knew that it would be tortured to justify every variety of vice including murder.

The Vaikom Satyagraha has entered upon probably the last stage.[1] The newspapers report and the report is confirmed by private advice—that the Travancore authorities have now practically abandoned the satyagrahis to the tender mercies of *goondas*. This is euphemistically called the organized opposition of the orthodox section. Everyone knows that orthodoxy is often unscrupulous. It has as a rule prestige and public opinion behind it in comparison with the reformer. It, therefore, does things with impunity which the poor reformer dare not. But what baffles one is the attitude of the Travancore authorities. Are they conniving at this open violence against the innocent satyagrahis? Has such an advanced state like Travancore abdicated its elementary function of protection of life and property? The violence of the *goondas* is said to be of a particularly barbarous type. They blind the eyes of volunteers by throwing lime into them.

The representatives from Kerala asked me if they should not have a resolution of the Congress supporting the movement. I told them that I did not like the idea. What they wanted was moral support. It would have been given by the Committee for the asking, if they had sent a resolution to the President. My responsibility in dissuading them was, therefore, serious. But I am convinced that all local movements must be self-reliant and that the A.I.C.C. should give its moral support only in exceptional cases. The talk with the members was followed by the resolution regarding the Sikhs. The members when they found me settling the draft of that resolution asked me again whether, in view of the Sikh resolution, I should not relent. I told them that the Congress had already taken up the Sikh cause and that, therefore, it could not very well now refrain without giving rise to the suspicion it had given up the Sikh cause. The members did not perhaps appreciate my reasoning. But they cheerfully submitted to it. The Travancore authorities may, however, be respectfully told that the Congress cannot watch barbarity with philosophic indifference. So long as satyagraha is met by ordinary State processes, the movement must remain local. But the letting loose of the *goondas* on the devoted heads of the satyagrahis is bound to gather round the satyagrahis the full weight of all-India public opinion.

A word now to the organizers of Vaikom Satyagraha. The

[1] *Vide*, "Interview to Associated Press of India", 1-7-1924.

challenge of the *goondas* must be taken up. But the satyagrahis must not lose their heads. The khaddar dress of the volunteers is said to have been torn from them and burnt. This is all most provoking. They must remain cool under every provocation and courageous under the hottest fire. Loss even of a few hundred lives will not be too great a price to pay for the freedom of the unapproachables. Only the martyrs must die clean. Satyagrahis, like Caesar's wife, must be above suspicion.

AN APOLOGY

I have much pleasure in printing the following letter. In my note on Barabanki, I did not give the name of my informant. But I cannot withhold the name any longer. I wish all will be as ready as Mr. Shuaib to admit mistakes and slow to believe stories about Hindu and Mussalman misdeeds. The reader will share my gladness that the charge against the Hindu Municipal Commissioners of Barabanki was baseless. I apologize to them for having been the unconscious instrument of doing an injustice to them.

To the Editor, *Young India*

SIR,

Since I wrote to you about conditions at Barabanki, I am informed by a Mussalman member of the District Congress Committee, Barabanki, who is also a member of the Provincial Congress Committee, U.P., that the facts are not as they were reported to me. All that took place was that, in place of the old rule of Barabanki Municipal Board, by virtue of which applications to the Board could only be given in Urdu script, the Board passed a law that they could be given either in Devanagri or Urdu characters—a law which I personally consider to be just and fair. I am very sorry that I supplied you with facts which have turned out to be are incorrect. My only excuse is that my informants were very reliable persons. I do not intend to name them, but should like to say that they are both of them office-bearers of the Congress and recognized by all to be absolutely free from communal prejudices. It was because of this that I readily believed what they said. I, however, do not wish to blame these gentlemen who, I may in passing say, fully believed those facts themselves. The mistake is all mine. I should have thoroughly ascertained the facts before writing about them to you even though they were reported to me by persons whom I considered perfectly reliable. I shall know how to act in future. But for the present I can only express my sincere and profound regrets for having been an unconscious instrument in giving

publicity to facts likely to affect adversely Hindu-Muslim relations which are strained enough already.

Yours, etc.,

SHUAIB QURESHI

CORDIAL RELATIONS

Mr. K. Rajagopalachari of Tirupati sends the following by way of a variety in the unbroken series of unpleasantnesses between Hindus and Mussalmans:

As you seem to have been presented with the dark side only of Hindu-Muslim tension, I wish to present you with the bright site of it also.

Tirupati is a small place with a population of 18,000 people of whom about 500 are Mussalmans, the rest being Hindus. You know it is one of the sacred places of Hindus and men from all parts of India visit this place in thousands daily. Naturally the Hindus are very influential, the head of the temple being a northern Indian Bairagi and extremely influential with Government. The Mussalmans are all traders and some of them are leading merchants in the place. The Mussalmans are new-comers, but the relationship between them and the Hindus is as cordial as possible. In September last, one of the leading Mussalmans of the place, in celebrating the birth-month of the Prophet, had put paper festoons right across the street (the only main street in the town) and a red cloth in which was written 'Mahomed's birth-month celebration' on one side and 'Prophet of all prophets' on the other side. Hindus were silently murmuring protests against the latter writing on the cloth. But no trouble arose in any of the previous years. However, the temple authorities stopped a number of processions of the Hindu Deity through that street lest they should create some trouble between Hindus and Mussalmans; more with a view it appears to respect the sentiments of Muslims. One day, however, the procession of the Deity through the street could not be prevented. The temple authorities took the precaution of speaking to the Muslim friends beforehand and had arranged to get the cloth alone removed when the Deity had to pass that street. The Muslim friend seems to have consented, but, when the Deity actually came near his shop, the Hindus wanted even the paper festoons to be removed, while the Muslim friend refused to remove even the cloth. I happened to pass that way then and found a large number of Hindus assembled in front of the shop and about a hundred Muslims had also gathered to have a fight if necessary. I could not convince the Hindus that there was nothing wrong in the Deity passing through the festoons nor the Mussalmans that they would not lose their prestige by removing them at

once. The Hindus were in no mood to listen to me, for a large number of them were drunk and no respectable Hindu was present there. When I argued with such of the Hindus as were sober that it was not derogatory to Hinduism to take our Deity underneath the festoons, they said I was pro-Muslim and even conspired to beat me. Meanwhile, two or three responsible temple officials appeared on the scene and dramatically announced that the Deity should be taken underneath the festoons and no police help was needed so far as they were concerned. The attitude of Muslims at once changed. They suggested that their own men should go up and raise the paper festoons so that they might not touch any portion of the sacred Deity and its ornamentations and that the cloth should be removed at once. The matter ended smoothly that night. The next morning, a hakim friend, a good Mussalman, as soon as he came to know of the trouble the previous evening, ordered the festoons all to be removed or he would come and remove them himself. The festoons were at once removed. The temple authorities, even a few days after, declined to take the Deity through the street, because, one of them told me subsequently, they did not want to create the impression in the minds of the Muslims that the Hindus, being larger in number and more powerful, were coercing them into doing things which otherwise they would not do. Many of the prominent Hindus agreed with us that what we did was commendable and we had their sympathies.

The Hakim Sahib, two or three days later, sent for me and told me that he was ashamed to look up in the face of any Hindu of their magnanimity, in the face of comparative unreasonableness on the part of Muslims. A few days after that, both Hindus and Muslims closed their shops, the Hindus showing their sympathy towards Mussalmans during Ramzan. Next time, the Muslims closed their shops along with the Hindus on the new moon day to please the Hindus and the mutual friendly relationship still continues and I am sure will continue for ever. For a long time, there was only one mosque in this town and recently another mosque has been erected. The Hindus refrain from music even in front of the new mosque today. The Hindus are so powerful that, if they only care, they can ignore the Mussalmans and have their own way, but they are conducting themselves very considerately towards the Mussalmans and even yield when necessary. By such behaviour, we have created in the minds of Mussalmans a certain amount of confidence in us, and many sensitive Mussalmans are ashamed even to talk of the incident of September last. By our yielding to their demands, even though unreasonable, we disarm them of all opposition. Our educated people can do and undo things. The masses follow us, and if we lead them aright, there will be no Hindu-Muslim trouble and we could reach our goal quickly.

Let us hope that the cordial relations between the two sections will continue for ever.

Young India, 3-7-1924

138. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

July 3, 1924

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have today read a letter which has upset me,[1] was wondering whether, if I wrote to you about it, I would be abusing the privilege of friendship. The voice within me tells me I must not decide that question but must leave it to you. If you regard it as an abuse, you will forgive the offence and dismiss the letter from your consideration.[2] The writer has sent me the enclosed cutting (from *The Leader*).[3] I had not read it before. He says that at another dinner you are reported to have said: "Water has been called pure. But wine is made after being thrice distilled. It is, therefore, purer than water."[4] You will not misunderstand me. I have nothing to say to your return to wine-drinking, if you have. But, if the report is to be relied upon, I cannot but be grieved that you, who lead the anti-liquor campaign, should publicly drink it and, what is worse, chaff at teetotalism.

I must not say more. Needless to say I shall await your reply with considerable anxiety.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[1] The letter is not available. It evidently referred to the drinking of wine by Motilal Nehru at a dinner in Simla at which he was the chief guest. *Vide* M. R. Jayakar, *The Story of My Life*, Vol. II, pp. 331-6.

[2] Motilal Nehru, in a lengthy reply of July 10, wrote with reference to this: "Let me at the outset assure you that so far from regarding your request for information as an abuse of the privilege of friendship, I look upon it as your right as well as your duty to know where you stand with those who, in spite of your public declaration of distrust in them, are trying, for all they are worth, to be able to work with and under you."

[3] The report in *The Leader* quoted by Jayakar had made sarcastic comments on the incident.

[4] These remarks, Motilal Nehru pointed out, were only an allusion to a description of wine in Persian poetry.

[PS.]

I know that if a man drinks privately, he may drink publicly too. A public man, how ever, may not drink publicly, if he is likely to offend. I distinguish between private drinking and secret drinking[1].

M. K. G.

The Story of My Life, *Vol. II, P. 332*

139. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

Thursday, Jeth Vad Amas [*July 3, 1924*][2]

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Sardar Mangalsingh[3] was here for about a fortnight. I got your letter after he left the day before yesterday. Otherwise he would have certainly come there.

The real cause of the breakdown this time was Lord Reading[4] himself. Almost everything was decided. I still hope that the movement[5] will be free from bloodshed. But who can foretell?

Dinkarrao, it appears, has again gone away somewhere.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 3179. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

[1] Motilal Nehru's rejoinder to this was: "To me, it is clear that deceiving men by keeping up false appearances is worse than offending them, and I must express my utter inability to understand how you can possibly reconcile yourself to the suggestion that I might drink privately if at all. I must also raspectfully differ from the distinction you draw between private drinking and secret drinking. In my humble opinion, it is a distinction without a difference.

[2] In 1924, the *Amavasya* in the Vikram calendar month of *Jyestha* fell on July 1 and 2. Thursday, however, fell on July 3.

[3] One of the leaders of the Akali movement

[4] The then Viceroy and Governor-General of India

[5] The Akali movement

140. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

[After *July* 3, 1924][1]

DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I got both your letters. I shall wire to you when I leave for Delhi.

I do not think any praise of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu is overdone. I do not consider her an ideal Indian woman, but she was an ideal ambassador for the work in East Africa. I must admit, nevertheless, that I see in people only their virtues and I try not to notice their shortcomings. This has done no harm to me, or to the persons I have praised. Unless Maulana Mahomed Ali wants me to go earlier[2], I shall not go to Delhi before September.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

BIRLA HOUSE
HARDWAR

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6028. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

141. LETTER TO LAJPAT RAI [3]

July 4, 1924

DEAR LALAJI,

I am glad that you have ultimately reached where you ought to be. I do hope you will not leave the place before you have completely recovered.

I hope you are not perturbed by what is happening here. I cannot co-operate with the Swarajists on the same platform. Co-operation will be possible, no doubt, if both of us work independently. The Congress should devote itself to one sphere at a time. How can it give its attention to the Government and the people at the same time?

Yours sincerely,

GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Lala Lajpat Rai : Jivani, p. 418

[1] Presumably, the letter was written after the publication of the article "Bombay, Remember Sarojini", 3-7-1924.

[2] In response to Mahomed Ali's invitation, Gandhiji left for Delhi on August 16, 1924.

[3] The original letter, which must have been in English, is not available.

142. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Ashadh Sud 2 [*July 4, 1924*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your letter and postcard at the same time.

It was good that you stayed there for a month more. The more our trust in God grows and we realize our littleness, the more we become free from worry. Can worry lighten our grief?

Blessings from

BAPU

SISTER VASUMATI

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 448. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

143. MESSAGE TO NO-CHANGERS[2]

July 4, 1924

To the No-changers I have but one word. No one can prevent us from working but ourselves. There is no active programme but that of hand-spinning and production and distribution of khaddar. To this, therefore, all young and old men and women should apply themselves. If our neighbours do not listen, we get all the more time for spinning. No true worker can, therefore, complain of having no work to do. I regard national schools as aids to the khaddar programme.

M. K. GANDHI

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 8-7-1924

[1] The postmark bears this date.

[2] This was addressed to the No-changers in Bengal through Hardayal Nag, a prominent Congressman.

144. TELEGRAM TO G. NALGOLA

[SABARMATI,
On or after *July 5, 1924*][1]

COLLEGE MUST NOT BE CLOSED.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8988

145. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Ashadh Sud 5 [*July 7, 1924*][2]

PU. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. We have no control over the future, we do not know the future. Even in the smallest things we are mere instruments; why then should we grieve? We must keep looking at what happens, go on doing what appears to us as our duty and be cheerful. This covers the whole of religion. Why not regard as happiness what you consider misery ? Through misery you have learnt to endure. There is happiness in contentment. If we go in search of happiness, misery comes to our lot, and by enduring misery we attain to happiness. We are born to labour and if our life comes to an end while we are yet working and doing service, it will have been fulfilled.

Please let me know when you decide to come here.[3] I hope both the mother and the new-born child are happy.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6013. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] This was in reply to a telegram from G. Nalgola of July 5, 1924, which read: "You have heard about Dacca National College from Prafulla Ghose. Wire what we to do. Students." *Vide* "Telegram to Students, Dacca National College", on or after 9-7-1924.

[2] From the reference p the addressee's proposed visit to the Ashram, the letter appears to have been written before July 22, 1924; *vide* "Letter to Gangabehn Vaidya", 22-7-1924. In 1924, *Ashadh Sud* 5 fell on July 7.

[3] *Ibid*

146. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[On or after *July 7, 1924*]

NOTHING WRONG ONLY WEAK.[1]

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8990

147 TELEGRAM TO STUDENTS, DACCA NATIONAL COLLEGE

[On or after *July 9, 1924*][2]

IF NO HELP FORTHCOMING STUDENTS MUST ORGANIZE STUDY AND WORK AMONG THEMSELVES.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8993

148. NOTES

COUNCIL-ENTRY

After the closing of the session of the A.I.C.C., Pandit Motilalji went to Rajkot for a domestic visit and halted at Ahmedabad on his way to Bombay. We met during the halt. In the course of our discussion, I happened to say that it would be disastrous if the Swarajists retired from the Councils at this stage. He immediately reminded me of my previous writing[3] that, if I could convince the Swarajists, I would ask them to withdraw. I said I saw no contradiction between the two. The one statement is permanent and based upon principle, the other is applicable to the immediate present only and is based on expedience. There is no doubt that the Swarajists have created a stir in the Government circles. There is no doubt, too, that any withdrawal at the present moment will be misunderstood as a rout

[1] This was in reply to Mathuradas's telegram to Krishnadas, inquiring about Gandhiji's health, which was received on July 7, 1924.

[2] This was in reply to a telegram from the students of National College, Dacca, dated July 9, 1924, which read: "Telegram suppressed by college authority. Principal and professors faithless in school boycott. How to read under them. Wire clearly to Jilani thirty Jindabahar Dacca." *Vide* "Telegram to G. Nalgola", on or after 5-7-1924.

[3] *Vide* "Statement to Associated Press of India", 22-5-1924.

and weakness. As a matter of fact, so far as the A.I.C.C. is concerned, the Swarajist position has been never so strong as it is now. They are entitled to claim a moral victory. Believing as they do in giving battle to the Government in the Assembly and the Councils, they have no reason whatsoever for withdrawing from the Legislative bodies at the present moment. Their withdrawal at this juncture can only add to the present depression in the country and strengthen the hands of a Government which wants to give nothing to justice and which yields gracelessly and reluctantly to pressure.

The only opportune time for the Swarajists to come out will be when we the whole-hoggers have become active workers of our own programme, which we consider to be the only one that can bring us swaraj, and shown progressive success, or when the Swarajists are by bitter experience convinced that the Councils can only give condiments but no bread, and that, therefore, they should give their whole time and attention to the constructive programme.

The key to the situation lies in the hands of us whole-hoggers, We claim that the masses are behind us. I at least feel so. If they are, we must show it by results—not by merely securing a majority at the Congress, but by showing substantial work. All the No-changers in all the provinces cannot show adequate results. The fault is probably not theirs. We like the programme, but we have not evolved the capacity for working it. But if that be the true diagnosis, we must now work, for work not words—will give us the capacity. Then and not till then, when we have shown substantial results, will the Swarajists of their own accord come away from the Councils.

There is, in my opinion, no room for a centre party. A centre party is a party of vacillation. It floats with the tide, whereas the time has come for us all to decide one way or the other. Those who believe in the Councils must remain in or, being out, enter them or organize work for them. It will be disastrous for them and for the country if, in spite of their belief in the Councils, they retired from them for fear of public opinion. No one who wants swaraj can dare idle away his or her time.

MY POSITION

I would like to retain my hold on the Congress not by a fictitious or manufactured majority—not merely because my withdrawal is likely to create disorganization and depression. Even that must be faced it I cannot make my programme acceptable. Enervation

is bound to be followed by rejuvenation. The Congress had become a reality in 1920-21. There is fear of its becoming an unreality worse than before 1920. In 1920 there was no organized dishonesty. Then there was no limitation of delegates, no obligation upon Congressmen to do any continuous work and no purse. Now we have a limitation to the number of delegates, resolutions are almost all addressed to them and we have even now a purse such as the Congress never possessed at any time before 1920.

The natural result must, therefore, be dishonesty if we are not incessantly watchful. Swarajists tell me that the No-changers have dishonestly worked the constitution and the latter pay the same compliment to the former. I do not know the truth. But I do know that it bodes ill for swaraj if we cannot or do not work the Congress constitution with the utmost honesty.

I would like the Congress to become progressively popular. I would, therefore, man it with mercantile, artisan and agricultural classes. I would, therefore, also keep all the boycotts intact and have on the executive only those who fully carry them out in their own persons. Those who cannot but still believe in them can help those who do carry them out, but who are inexperienced in the management of institutions or who are not known to the public as workers. It should be the privilege of educated classes to be behind and push into public life those who have hitherto kept aloof.

In an organization thus conceived, privileged classes have no place on the executive. They can all be in the annual deliberative assembly. Pandit Motilalji suggests a small standing deliberative assembly. I should not mind it. It would perhaps be an advantage to have such a body with all the powers of the Congress. There is no doubt that the constitution requires some drastic changes. We must secure efficiency and swiftness. And these cannot be secured even under a perfect constitution, if we who have to work it are not honest or do not want efficiency and swiftness.

A DESERVED REBUKE

The Punjab Government have administered the public *a* deserved rebuke in its *communique* intimating its intention of prosecuting those Hindu and Mussalman sheets which ply their calling of abusing rival religions. Here is the *communique:*

> The Punjab Government has for some time had under notice the fact that certain newspapers, both Hindu and Mohammedan, published in the province,

> have been issuing abusive and inflammatory matter regarding each other and the religions which their rivals represent. The Government has anxiously watched the course of this campaign in the hope that the scurrility and, in some cases unfortunately, the obscenity with which it has been conducted would disgust all respectable members of both communities and that the papers in question would find that their articles held no appeal for any section of the public. This hope has, however, unfortunately not been realized, and Government has now been compelled to start criminal proceedings against two of the offending newspapers. Government relies on the good sense of the leaders of both communities to assist it by all means in their power in suppressing these most objectionable expressions of religious animosity, which constitute a grave menace to the existence of good relations between the two great communities.

It must be regretfully confessed that the public could have stopped these sheets if they had actively worked against them. It is to be even now hoped that the publishers of these sheets will apologize for their irreligious behaviour and stop their publications.

POSTS UNDER SWARAJ

Mr. Ali Hassan of Patna takes exception to my suggestion that swaraj service should be filled on the sole ground of merit and not according to communal proportion. He cites the general statement that most of the best posts are today monopolized by the Hindus. I have not the statistics before me so as to enable me to test the proposition. But my opinion would remain unaffected even if the proposition was proved. The existing Government, whose chief concern is about its own stability, ensures its safety by conciliating the most clamant party. We can deduce nothing from the state of affairs found under it. The only way of doing justice is to grant special facilities to educationally backward communities for receiving edu-cation. It is the duty of the State to level up those of its citizens who may be backward and it is equally its duty to make efficiency and character the only test in the matter of making appointments. The greatest impartiality should certainly be ensured in making them, but there can be no hard and fast rule as to of percentages in the matter.

WHO ARE HINDUS?

In this connection Mr. Ali Hassan makes this curious statement. He says:

> The Hindus of today practically mean Brahmins and *Kayasthas*. They have no right whatever to secure advantages by the inclusion of untouch-

> ables amongst them while they are not prepared to treat them equally. The lower-caste people and untouchables are quite distinct bodies altogether and they ought to be treated better. The Hindus and Muslims both should be considerate to them as well as to other minorities.

I would not have noticed this statement but for my knowledge that such belief is held by many Mussalmans. The writer, of course, goes a step further than most and would regard all lower-class Hindus as distinct from Hindus. This is a dangerous belief for a Mussalman to hold because it seeks to decide who are Hindus and who are not. Now 'Brahmins and *Kayasthas*'—not Kshatriyas—are, according to the writer, the only Hindus. Then, the Hindus are in a another minority. As a matter of fact, nobody can decide for another what he is. The untouchables have decided for themselves what they are. I have not yet met an untouchable who has not claimed to be a Hindu. Naturally, I exclude converts.

WHO IS SUPERIOR AS ADMINISTRATOR ?

The writer further says that since I have admitted that Mussalmans are better than Hindus as administrators, there should be no difficulty in my agreeing to an equal proportion of Mussalmans receiving administrative posts. I have not made any such admission. He has a postcard[1] from me in which a 'not' has been inadvertently omitted. I informed him of the omission as soon as I saw the postcard printed in a newspaper. Mussalmans are superior to Hindus in several matters, but I have never considered them to be superior as administrators. I would like to be able to give the palm to them in everything. Then there would be no cause for quarrels and jealousies. Jealousies arise as a rule between equals in the same game. Lawyers have been known to be jealous of one another,. but I have not known them to be jealous, say, of doctors in their profession. But supposing that Mussalmans make, as a matter of fact, superior administrators, they should have no difficulty in an impartial and open competition in securing not merely fifty per cent but cent per cent of posts and I should rot shed a single tear over the discomfiture of the Hindus. I have already informed Maulana Shaukat Ali that, when I become the first President of the Indian Republic or some such thing, I propose to appoint him as the first Commander-in-Chief and his brother as the Minister of Education. That bribery probably accounts for our friendship, but let

[1] This postcard is not available.

the Mussalmans beware lest they draw the inference that I regard Mussalmans as a rule superior to the others as soldiers and educationists. My own opinion is that, on the whole, we are all about equal and, under fair auspices, we can, if we make the effort, beat one another in open competition.

A CORRECTION

With reference to my note in *Young India*,[1] giving the information that the Rewa State had a law similar to that of Bhopal, a correspondent writes:

> No order is in force in the Rewa State prohibiting the conversion of a Hindu to Mohammedanism nor is there any punishment prescribed for convert or for the agent bringing about the conversion.
>
> It is, however, true that before a Hindu can be converted to Islam, he must obtain the Durbar's sanction. Any person infringing the order renders himself liable to prosecution and punishment in the ordinary course for disobeying the order. This order is meant to exercise a salutary check on conversion where the main end in view is some pecuniary gain, prostitution or other illegal object.
>
> The order also enables the State to keep figures regarding conversion up to date. This order cannot be taken to prohibit or otherwise affect *bona-fide* conversion from Hinduism to Islam.

I am glad to be able to publish the correction which my correspondent assures me is authentic. It does seem to me, however, that the condition of prior consent of the Durbar is more than a salutary check. Why should an adult of full understanding be obliged to obtain consent? Who will determine the *bona fides* of such conversion? To a Hindu all conversion to another faith must appear a fall and, therefore, he must approach every case of conversion with a bias against it. I would, therefore, respectfully suggest to the Durbar to remove the clause about consent. Registration of conversions will be sufficient insurance against bogus conversions. It would be interesting to know how the law as it is has worked in the State. All Hindu States will best guard Hinduism by becoming themselves model States and removing abuses that have crept into Hinduism. What I would like to see in the Rewa State is a law against untouchability. No external safeguards can possibly keep alive a system that is dying of internal corruption.

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 19-6-1924.

FALSE PRIDE?

I understand that the Khadi Board which is employing a large number of young men for the khadi work is finding it difficult to get the right kind of men to give their whole time to the work. They want to earn their livelihood by other means. In my opinion, this disinclination to accept payment for work is not a healthy sign. We want an army of whole-time workers. In a poor country like India, it is not possible to get such workers without pay. I see not only no shame, but I see credit in accepting pay for national work honestly and well done. We shall have to engage many paid whole-time workers when swaraj is established. Shall we then feel pride in belonging to the swaraj service than Englishmen do in belonging to the Indian Civil Service? How much more justification is there now when no one can be guaranteed absolute permanence, much less pension ? Is it not also a grim irony that, when lawyers are said to have gone back to practice for want of maintenance, the Khadi Board is hard put to it to find suitable paid workers?

There is another matter also that needs attention. When a person volunteers his service for national work, whether with or without pay, he undertakes to come under all the discipline of an ordinary employee. If anything, the discipline is stricter in the case of a volunteer. He may not, therefore, absent himself without leave. He may not even invite imprisonment except under permission. Civil disobedience has to be civil in more senses than one. There can be no bravado, no impetuousness about it. It has to be an ordered, well-thought-out, humble offering.

LADIES TO THE RESCUE

Shrimati Hemprobha Mazumdar, a member of the A.I.C.C., has left this note for me:

> I think unless the ladies of our country take special charge of spinning, the movement cannot be successful. So I pray that special appeal to all the members of A.I.C.C be made to take special care for the training of women for spinning.

I heartily endorse the remark and would like to add that many more things are impossible without the help of the women of India. The only question is: ‘who shall do it and how?’ Many sisters are doing the work, but many more are necessary. There should be whole-time women workers as there are men. Some I know there are

in the field, but they are all too few. I invite the fair writer to make the commencement herself. She can do so by setting apart a time specially for spinning herself and mastering the science by carding, testing cottons, understanding the counts, testing their strength, etc. She can begin, too, with her neighbours by interesting them in the national occupation and she will find that the circle will widen. I would certainly appeal to husbands to let their wives organize the work. The case of Bengal is, perhaps, the most difficult because the ladies, whether Hindu or Mussalman, observe the *purdah*. I promise that whoever commences the work with faith and earnestness will find it most interesting and, from a national stand-point, most profitable.

BAKR-ID

This festival is at all times a time of anxiety for both Hindus and Mussalmans. It should not be if we have toleration and respect for one another. Why should Hindus interfere with Mussalmans who believe in animal sacrifice and who, therefore, offer even cows in sacrifice? Similarly, why should Mussalmans sacrifice the cow or perform the sacrifice in a manner purposely to offend Hindu susceptibility? Why should not Mussalmans repeat the noble performance of 1921 when they, for the sake of respecting their Hindu neighbours' sentiments, took it upon their heads to save the cow and actually succeeded in saving hundreds as Hindus themselves acknowledged? Surely, on that festival day, Mussalmans should specially exert themselves to cultivate affectionate feelings towards Hindus and the latter should respect the former's rites and ceremonies even though they may be repugnant to them, the Hindus, just as they expect the Mussalmans to respect their idol worship even though it is repugnant to their feelings. God will hold each one of us responsible for his own actions, not for his neighbour's.

BARABANKI AGAIN

I have received two illuminating letters about my note on Barabanki, one from a Mussalman and the other from a Hindu. Though they are written independently of one another, they agree on facts which they both deal with. There are a few new facts in each. Both seem to give an impartial version. I suppress the letters because their publication can do no good. The facts disclosed do no credit to anybody except the writers. One thing, however, is quite clear that the capture of the municipality has been an apple of discord between the

Hindus and the Mussalmans of the place. Apart even from non-co-operation, it seems to me to be absolutely clear that, where there is no heart-unity between the two communities, non-co-operators—whether Hindu or Mussalman—should refrain from entering municipal or district boards. Even where one party is eager to enter, the other should refrain. Before the unseemly squabble in the municipality, both the communities were, it is stated, living in perfect harmony. Now because of municipal contest, there is tension not only among the rivals in the municipality, but it has permeated the whole town. I do hope that Barabanki will retrieve its once fair name by reverting to the old cordiality.

A REPUDIATION

With reference to the reported interview with the *Tiya* priest, Shri Narayana Guru Swami, I gladly publish the following letter from Mr. Narayanan:

> I was very much pained to see your note in *Young India* regarding the views of His Holiness Shri Narayana Guru Swami on the present methods of satyagraha at Vaikom. A few days before that, I happened to see the Swamiji with whom I had a fairly long conversation over the Vaikom struggle. The Swamiji himself told me at the outset that one Mr. Kesavan, who had a talk with him some time back in a railway train, has misrepresented him to the public by publishing an unauthorized account of the so-called interview in the vernacular Press. First of all, Swamiji is not in the habit of granting interviews to Press representatives. But he freely expresses his opinions to whomsoever he talks with on any subject. Very recently, Sjt. C. Rajagopalachari also had a free talk with the Swamiji on the Vaikom affairs; and it is said that the Swamiji expressed himself in unmistakable terms his approval of the present methods of satyagraha at Vaikom.
>
> What the Swamiji says is this. It is true that he spoke in favour of entering temples and sitting with others to dine, because he has always been an advocate of temple-entry and interdining. But he lays great stress on non-violence. He says that even advancing into the prohibited area in the absence of barricades is an act of violence, because the prohibitory board at the boundary line carrying the Government order itself is equivalent to a barricade of policemen who simply repeat the same order as the volunteers advance. He is of opinion that, so long as the prohibitory board is there, the volunteers should remain at the boundary line, praying God to give courage to the oppositionists to change their mind and cause the removal of the board. He might have told Mr. Kesavan that, if the volunteers may

advance into the prohibitory area disobeying the Government order put up in the prohibitory board, they may as well scale the barricades and advance. This, the Swamiji says, might have been misunderstood by Mr. Kesavan. He drew my special attention to the fact that the volunteers must be of exemplary character, and that they must not even show signs of distemper at the greatest provocation. The Swamiji also expressed the view that the proposed procession on foot of 500 caste Hindus from Vaikom to Trivandrum will produce a great moral effect on all concerned. Lastly, he wished all success to the movement saying that, if carried on in the same strain as at present, success is not far off.

After the foregoing was prepared, I received the following authoritative letter:

> The report of the interview K. M. Kesavan had with me in the railway train, published in the *Desabhimani,* seems to have been prepared without correctly understanding my meaning. That report was not shown to me before publication, nor did I see it soon after it was published. The removal of untouchability is quite essential for the attainment of social harmony. I have no objection whatsoever to the satyagraha movement started by Mahatma Gandhi to fight this evil nor to the co-operationof people in that movement. Any method of work that may be adopted for eradicating the evil of untouchability must be strictly non-violent.

NARAYANA GURU

MUTTAKKADU,

27-6-1924

HALF A DOZEN AND SIX

My remarks on the unreadable pamphlet on the Prophet and on the scurrilous sheet *Shaitan* have brought me a sheaf-ful of letters from Arya Samajists who, whilst admitting the force and truth of my remarks, say that some Mussalman sheets are no better and that they began the abuse and the Arya Samajists followed by way of retaliation. The writers have sent me some of these sheets. I have suffered the pain of going through a few of the extracts. The language in some parts is simply revolting. I cannot disfigure these pages by reproducing it. I have also been favoured with a life, by a Mussalman, of Swami Dayanand. I am sorry to say it is largely a distortion of the great reformer. Nothing that he did has escaped the author's venom. One of my correspondents complains bitterly that my remarks have emboldened the Musslaman speakers and writers to become more abusive than before towards the Arya Samaj and the Samajists. One of

them sends me an account of a recently-held Lahore meeting where unmentionable abuse was heaped upon the Samaj. Needless to say, such writings and speeches can have no sympathy from me. In spite of the opinion I have expressed, I claim to be one of the many humble admirers of the founder of the Samaj. He pointed out the many abuses that were corrupting Hindu society. He inculcated a taste for Sanskrit learning. He challenged superstitious beliefs. By the chastity of his own life he raised the tone of the society in which he lived. He taught fearlessness and gave a new hope to many a despairing youth. Nor am I oblivious of his many services to the national cause. The Samaj has supplied it with many true and self-sacrificing workers. It has encouraged female education among Hindu girls as perhaps no other Hindu institution save the Brahmo Samaj has done. Ignorant critics have not hesitated to insinuate that my remarks about Shraddhanandji were due to his criticism of me. But the insinuation does not prevent me from re-acknowledging the pioneer work done by him in Gurukul. Whilst, therefore, I am unable to withdraw a single word of my criticism of the Samaj, the *Satyarth Prakash,* Rishi Dayanand and Swami Shraddhanandji, I repeat that my criticism was that of a friend with the desire that the Samaj may render greater service by ridding itself of the shortcomings to which I drew attention. I want it to march with the times, give up the polemical spirit and, whilst adhering to its own opinions, extend that toleration to other faiths which it claims for itself. I want it to keep a watch on its workers and stop all discreditable writings. It is no answer in justification that Mussalmans commenced the campaign of calumny. I do not know whether they did or not. But I do know that they would have been tired. of repetition if there had been no retaliation. I have not even urged the Samajsits to give up their *shuddhi.* But I do urge them, as I would urge Mussalm ans, to revise the present idea of *shuddhi.*

To the Mussalman writers and speakers, of whose conduct I have received the letters referred, I venture to point out that they neither enhance their own reputation nor that of the religion they profess by unrestrained abuse of the opponent. They can gain nothing, they cannot serve Islam, by swearing at the Samaj and the Samajists.

Young India, 10-7-1924

149. MY JAIL EXPERIENCES-X

SOME CONVICT-WARDERS

(2)

Adan was a young Somali soldier who was sentenced to ten years' hard labour for desertion from the British Army, which he had joined during the War. He was transferred by the Aden Jail authorities. Adan had served four years when we were admitted. He was practically illiterate. He could read the Koran with difficulty, but could not copy it correctly, if at all. He was able to speak Urdu fairly fluently and was anxious to learn Urdu. With the permission of the Superintendent, I tried to teach him, but the learning of the alphabet proved too great a strain upon him and he left it. With all that he was quick-witted and sharp as a needle. He took the greatest interest in religious matters. He was a devout Mussalman, offered his prayers regularly including the midnight one, and never missed the *Ramzan* fast. The rosary was his constant companion. When he was free, he used to recite selections from the Koran. He would often engage me in a discussion on complete fasts according to the Hindu custom as also on ahimsa. He was a brave man. He was very courteous, but never cringing. He was of an excitable nature and, therefore, often quarrelled with the *bardasi* or his fellow-warder. We had, therefore. sometimes to arbitrate between them. Being a soldier and amenable to reason, he would accept the award, but he would put his case boldly and cogently. Adan was the longest with us. I treasure Adan's affection. He was most attentive to me. He would see to it that I got my food at the appointed time. He was sad if I ever became ill and anticipated all my wants. He would not let me exert myself for anything. He was anxious to be discharged or at least to be transferred to Aden. I tried hard. I drew up petitions[1] for him. The Superintendent too, tried his best. But the decision rested with the Aden authorities. Hope was held out to him that he would be discharged before the end of last year. I do hope he is already discharged. The little service I rendered gave rise to deep personal attachment. It was a sad parting when Adan was transferred to another part of the prison. I must not omit to mention that, when I was organizing spinning and

[1] These are not available.

carding in the jail, Adan, though one of his hands was disabled, helped most industriously at making slivers. He became very proficient in the art which he had come to like.

As Shabaskhan was replaced by Adan, Harkaran was replaced by Bhiwa. Much to our agreeable surprise, Bhiwa was a Mahar from Maharashtra and, therefore, an untouchable. Of all the warders we met he was perhaps the most industrious. The reader will be surprised to find that the canker of untouchability has not left even the jails untouched. Poor Bhiwa! He would not enter our cells without considerable hesitation. He would not touch our pots. We quickly set him at rest by telling him that we had not only no prejudices against untouchables, but that we were trying our best to do away with the curse. Shankerlal Banker specially befriended him and made him feel perfectly at home with us. He permitted Bhiwa to be so familiar with him that the former would resent an angry word from Mr. Banker and the latter would even apologize. He induced Bhiwa to apply himself to studies and taught him also spinning. The result was that Bhiwa became, in an incredibly short space of time, an accomplished spinner and began so to like it that he thought of learning weaving, and earning his living through that occupation when he went out. I cultivated in the jail the habit of drinking hot water and lemon at 4.15 a. m. When I protested against Mr. Banker doing it for me, he initiated Bhiwa into the mystery. Prisoners, though they get up early enough, do not like to leave their matting (which is their bed) at that early hour. Bhiwa, however, immediately responded to his friend's suggestion. But it was Mr. Banker's business always to wake up Bhiwa at 4 o'clock. When Bhiwa went (he was discharged under special remission), Adan undertook the duty. He will not listen to my doing it myself. And the tradition was kept up even after Mr. tanker's discharge, each outgoing warder initiating the incoming one into all the mysteries. Needless to say, this morning duty was no part of the prison task. Indeed, convicts when they became warders were not expected to do any labour at all. Theirs is but to order.

Even as the best of friends must part some day, Bhiwa bade good-bye. He was permitted to receive from Mr. Banker khaddar caps, khaddar dhotis, khaddar vests and a khaddar blanket. He promised to wear nothing but khaddar outside. Let me hope good Bhiwa, wherever he may be, is keeping the promise.

Bhiwa was followed by Thamu. He too belonged to Mahara-

shtra. Thamu was a mild-mannered warder. He had not much 'go' in him. He would do what he was asked, but did not believe in specially exerting himself. He and Adan, therefore, did not get on quite well together. But Thamu, being timid, always yielded to Adan in the end. He had such a royal time (all had) with us that Thamu did not want to be separated from us. He, therefore, preferred to bear Adan's hard yoke to being transferred. Thamu having come to us a considerable time after Adan, the latter was Thamu's senior with us. It is remarkable how these fictitious seniorities spring up in little places like jails. Yeravda was to us a whole world or, better still, the whole world. Every squabble, every little jar, was a mighty event commanding sustained interest for the day and sometimes even for days. If the jail authorities permitted a jail newspaper to be conducted by the prisoners and for them, it would have a cent per cent circulation, and such toothsome news as properly-cooked dhal, well-dressed vegetables, and sensational items as war of words between prisoners, sometimes even resulting in blows and consequent *khatla* (trial) before the Superintendent, would be as eagerly devoured by the prisoners as the news of big dinner parties and great wars are devoured by the public outside. I make the present of a suggestion to enterprising members of the Assembly that, if they desire fame, they cannot do better than introduce a bill requiring Superintendents of jails to permit the publishing and editing of newspapers by prisoners exclusively for their own use and under strict censorship by the authorities.

To return to Thamu, though he was flabby, as a man he was otherwise as good as any of his predecessors. He took to the charkha like fish to water. In a week's time, he pulled a more even thread than I did. And after a month, the pupil out-distanced the teacher by a long way. So much so that I grew jealous of Thamu's superiority. I saw too from Thamu's rapid progress that my slow progress was a peculiar defect of. mine and that an ordinary person could pull a perfect thread in a month at the outside. Everyone of those who were taught by me excited me in no time. To Thamu as to Bhiwa, the spinning-wheel had become a welcome companion. They were able to drown the sorrows of separation from their nearest in the soft and gentle music of the wheel. Later on, spinning became Thamu's first work in the morning. He span at the rate of four hours per day.

When we were shifted to the European yard, there were several changes. Among them was a change of warders. Adan was the first to

be transferred. Though neither he nor we liked it, we took his transfer bravely. Then came Thamu's turn. Poor fellow, he broke down. He wanted me to try to keep him. I would not do that. I thought it was beyond my province. The authorities had a perfect right to shift whom and where they would. Adan and Thamu were followed by Kunti, a Gurkha, and a Canarese by name Gangappa. The Gurkha was called Goorkha by everybody. He was reserved, but grew 'chummy' later on. For the first few days, he did not know where he was. Probably he thought we would report and involve him on the slightest pretext. But when he saw that we meant no mischief, he came closer to us. But he was soon transferred. Gangappa I have partly described in the introduction to the jail correspondence. He was an elderly man. His almost punctilious observance of rules and his great devotion to duty commanded my admiration. He put his whole soul into whatever he was ordered by the authorities to do. He took up duties which he need not have. He rarely remained idle. He learnt to make and cook chapatis for my companions. His devotion to me personally I shall never forget. No wife or sister could be more unsparing than Gangappa in his attention. He was awake at all times. He took delight in anticipating my wants. He saw to it that all my things were kept spotlessly clean. During my illness, he was my most efficient nurse, because he was the most attentive. When we were transferred to the European yard, Messrs Mansar Ali and Yagnik used to join me at prayer time. Mr. Mansar Ali was transferred to Allahabad for his discharge in due course. Mr. Yagnik, because he needed more intensive and philosophical rather than devotional meditation, dropped out. Gangappa felt that without these friends I would feel lonely at prayer. The very first time that he saw that I was alone at prayer, he quietly took his seat in front of me. Needless to say, I appreciated the delicate courtesy underlying the action. It was so spontaneous, unofficious, and natural for Gangappa I do not call it religious in the accepted sense of the term, though, according to my conception, it was truly religious. I always hesitate to invite anybody to these prayer meetings of mine. I did not want them to come for my sake. I did not feel lonely. I realized most at that time the companionship of God. If any one came, I wanted him not for keeping company but for sharing the divine companionship. I, therefore, particularly hesitated to invite the warders. I felt they might join merely out of form, whereas I wanted them to join only if they naturally felt like joining. With Gangappa it was a mixture of pity for me in my loneliness and desire

to share with me the sacred half-hour, though he could understand not a word of what I sang save, of course, *Ramanam.* Gangappa drew to the prayer meeting another warder, Annappa, also a Canarese, and later, Ms Abdul Gani felt impelled to join. I imagine that Mr. Abdul Gani was unconsciously influenced by Gangappa's unobtrusive act of joining me.

The reader will see that I had a uniformly happy experience of these convict-warders. I could not have wished for more devoted companions or more faithful attendants. Paid service would but be a patch upon this and that of friends could only equal it. And yet the pity of it is that society treats such men as criminals and outcastes because they had the misfortune to be convicted. I entirely endorse the remark of the Head Jailor, already quoted by me in a previous chapter[1], that there are in our jails many men who are better than those outside. The reader will now understand why I felt a pang when I heard that I was discharged, and most of the companions who had covered me with so much kindness and whom there was, in my opinion, no occasion to detain any longer in the jails were left behind.

One word more and I must regretfully part with Gangappa. Gangappa always knew his limitations. He would not spin. He said he could not do it. His fingers had not the cunning for it. But he kept the work-room in order, cleaned my wheel and devoted all his spare time to sunning and cleaning the cotton for carding.

Of all the many happy memories of my prison life, I know that those of the company of the convict-warders will perhaps linger the longest.

Young India, 10-7-1924

150. SPINNING RESOLUTION

The spinning resolution[2] of the A.I.C.C. is, in my opinion, the most important of all the resolutions of the A.I.C.C. There is an inclination to laugh at it. The members of Congress organizations can demonstrate in a month's time the impropriety of the laugh. Even if the economic value of khaddar be admitted, it will be found on experience that the resolution was necessary to bring about an econo-

[1] *Vide* "My Jail Experiences - IX", 26-6-1924.

[2] *Vide* "The Acid Test", 19-6-1924.

mic revolution. It is not too much to expect Congress workers to give half an hour's labour to its most popular programme.

Those who voted for the resolution are in honour bound to carry it out. In my opinion, the penalty clause had a proper place in the resolution. An organization has every right to prescribe penalties for a breach by its members of self-imposed conditions. But now that the penalty clause is out, I hope that even the objectors will comply with the resolution.

Its possibilities are immense. Spinning is obligatory on all representative Congressmen. There are, or should be, in every one of the twenty provinces, provincial, district, taluka and village organiza-tion They have each at least five hundred such representatives. I understand that some provinces have several thousand representatives. But, taking the lowest figure, we get over ten thousand members. Two thousand yards of 10 counts means nearly ten tolas. Therefore, ten thousand members would be sending 2,500 pounds of yarn. That is to say, the representatives would have spun enough yarn to supply five thousand poor men with one vest-length of cloth. Apart from every other consideration, is this labour not worth taking for the sake of the poor? Imagine the effect of such work on the poor people! The knowledge of Congressmen working for them must fill them with a new hope.

Take another consideration. Ten thousand representatives cannot be satisfied with just spinning themselves. They must infect with their zeal those they represent. And thus, khaddar which is supposed to be on the wane will wax again with redoubled force.

The workers being intelligent men and women will learn the science of spinning and will be, therefore, in a position to organize their neighbourhoods for hand-spinning.

Moreover, half an hour and ten tolas is the minimum required. As a matter of fact, one spins 100 yards in half an hour with the greatest ease. The minimum, therefore, one can send should be three thousand yards. And half an hour is suggested for the busy worker. Many should be able to spin for one hour. I know some who are now spinning at the rate of two hours per day. The average receipts should, therefore, be at least double the minimum counted by me, i.e., 5,000 yards.

I do not suppose anyone has yet realized what this hand-spinning means. It is nothing less than making national work self-

supporting. Here are some figures. I have taken low average rates and low average work.

		Rs. a. p.
Ginning one maund	12 hs.	0 - 8 - 0
Carding 13 pounds seed-free cotton out of 1 md. seed cotton	40 hs.	2 - 8 - 0
Spinning 12_ Ibs. 10 counts at the rate of 275 yards per hour	400 hs.	2 - 6 - 0
	Rs.	5 - 6 - 0

Thus, one man working 452 hours (say 450) would earn Rs. 5-6-0 (say Rs. 5). ... 450 men working one hour would earn Rs. 5. ... 450 men working for thirty days at the rate of I hour per day would earn Rs. 150. ... 450 men giving one hour daily can support with ease 5 volunteers at the rate of Rs. 30 per month.

And five volunteers can easily organize the whole Congress work among 450 men and women. The united labour for a single item of a large number of persons has illimitable possibilities, though the labour of one person for it may mean practically nothing.

An ardent worker may work out many startling figures. I make a present of three propositions to be so worked:

1. If hand-spinning in a poor district is chiefly paid, it can remove its poverty.

2. If spinning in a well-to-do district is mainly voluntary, it can support all the volunteers that may be needed.

3. Every village school can defray Sat least half its expenses if the school children are made to work at all the processes up to spinning for at least 3 hours per school-day.

I need not point out that no such results are possible if khaddar does not become as saleable as a postage stamp. It would be criminal if it does not become so in a country which grows more than enough cotton for its wants, whose population is used to spinning, which has all the accessories necessary for i. and which has a very large, starving population waiting to be organized for such work.

If this work is to be done efficiently and economically, the Provincial Secretaries and others will have to carry out to the full the instructions they may receive from the Khadi Board. The head-quarters must have a duplicate register containing the names of all the members (serially numbered) who are expected to spin. All yarn must be labelled containing the number of yards, weight and the name and

the serial number of the spinner. The Provincial organizations will have to collect sufficient cotton for distribution. Carding will have to be organized. Thus there is no time to be lost, if the returns are to be complete, as they should be, the very first month.

Lastly, those who do not know spinning at all will make no headway if they commence by spinning only half an hour daily. For the first few days, before the fingers respond, the beginner will have to work several hours per day.

Young India, 10-7-1924

151. ONE PROGRAMME

Friends have asked me to suggest one universal programme in which rajas, maharajas, No-changers, Pro-changers, Liberals, Independents, practising lawyers, Anglo-Indians and all others could join without reserve. I am asked to suggest such a programme with the condition that it must be effective and swift enough for the attainment of swaraj. The most effective and the swiftest programme I can suggest is the adoption and organization of khaddar, promotion of Hindu-Muslim unity, and removal by the Hindus of untouchability. It is my unalterable belief that, if these three things are achieved, we can establish swaraj without the slightest difficulty. I further believe that, if all the parties whole-heartedly work the programme, it can succeed within one year. Success of khaddar will mean boycott of foreign cloth. It is India's right and duty to manufacture all the cloth she needs. She has the means of doing it. And boycott of foreign cloth will automatically purify the English mind and remove the one insuperable obstacle in the way of Englishmen looking at things Indian from the Indian stand-point.

If, therefore, the country as a whole adopts this threefold programme, I would be prepared to advise suspension of the non-co-operation programme and civil disobedience for a period of one year. I say one year, because an honest working of the programme must bring about a virtual boycott of foreign cloth within that period.

I need hardly say that the co-operation of Swarajists alone in the above programme is not enough to suspend Non-co-operation or preparations for civil disobedience. Their assent is already there. They are pledged like all other Congressmen to the full constructive programme. Non-co-operation is necessary so long as there is no change

of heart in the Government. And without that change those who keep themselves outside the Congress pale will not actively and openly participate in the programme.

I fear that the time has not yet arrived for such sincere co-operation with the people on the part of the Government or those whose position and prestige depend upon its patronage.

I know too that a very large number of people are not yet converted to the programme of unadulterated khaddar. They disbelieve in the mighty potency of the charkha. They even suspect me of evil designs upon the Indian mills. Few take the trouble of drawing a mental picture of the meaning of the message of the charkha.

I have no doubt that the country will soon come round to the charkha if its votaries are true to their faith. But some of my friends tell me that I am wrong in my diagnosis. They tell me that, if I would but drop non-co-operation and civil disobedience, everyone will gather round the charkha and that it is preposterous for me to suspect the Government of a desire to divide Hindus and Mussalmans. I hope I am wrong.

Let me make the position clear regarding our mills. I am not their enemy. I believe they have a place in our economy for some time to come. Boycott of foreign cloth cannot perhaps be brought about speedily without the assistance of mills. But if they are to help, they must become national in spirit. They must not be worked merely for the agents and shareholders but for the nation at large. In our programme, however, we must erase the mills, for khaddar has to carve out a position for itself. The message of khaddar has not even been delivered to one out of seven lakhs of villages. The mills have, therefore, more than six-sevenths of India yet at their disposal. If khaddar is to establish a permanent footing, Congressmen can only use and popularize it to the exclusion of mill-cloth. Patriotic mill-owners must see at a glance the utility, the necessity and the reasonableness of my proposition. Indeed, they can help khaddar without hurting themselves. If the time comes when the whole of India adopts khaddar, they must rejoice with the nation and they will, even as the Lancashire mill-owners will and must some day, find other uses for their capital and machinery. I have sketched the universal programme for the satisfaction of insistent friends. But I would warn the workers against turning their attention away from the immediate task before them which is to attend to their own and their neighbours' spinning.

If universal acceptance does not come now, their spinning and theirfaith will precipitate it. That it must come some day is a certainty. The precise date can be determined only by those who have already a living faith in it and who have proved it by acting up to it in the face of heaviest odds.

Young India, 10-7-1924

152. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

July 10, 1924

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

I have neglected you altogether. I am ashamed of myself. But my utter helplesseness is my only excuse. I shall be free only tonight after prayer. We therefore meet then.

Yours,

M. K GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 11036. Courtesy: Arjun Jairamdas

153. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

Ashadh Sud 8 [*July 10, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI VALJI,

The time passed off even as I was wondering what I could write about Abhechandbhai. The job that could be found for him would, I think, have something to do with keeping accounts or getting yarn produced. You know all about my activities; it is for you to suggest [the job for him]. What would you do if you were appointed manager for my activities (outside the Congress)? Of the articles you mention, I have received the one entitled "Simla under Swaraj". I shall inquire of Swami[2] if he has got the other.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6014. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

[1] The article "Simla under Swaraj" mentioned in the letter was published in *Young India*, 11-9-1924. In 1924, *Ashadh Sud* 8 fell on July 10.

[2] Swami Anandanand

154. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Ashadh Sud 9 [*July 11, 1924*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter as well as Bhai Shanker's. I was free from anxiety about your health. What advice can I give you now? If I were near you, I could think of some remedy; but the climate here is quite different from what it is over there. For my part I wish that you stay on at Hajira for a sufficiently long time even after the monsoon. Change of climate is the best remedy.

Meanwhile do the following: reduce pulses; leave off chutney; eat boiled vegetables; take as much as you can of oranges or fresh grapes; and drink one or two bottles of Apollinaris—a kind of [mineral] water. Whenever you are thirsty, drink only this water. Leave off medicines and, if your bowels do not move, you should take an enema even when it may not be necessary. The water should be slightly warm and half a spoon of boric acid should be added to it. If this does not give relief, one spoon of castor oil and ten drops of turpentine should be added. A little pure soap also should be dissolved in the water.

I do see that your health is deteriorating with medicines. Change of climate and enema—with these two things, however, everything will be all right.

I replied to your previous letter and postcard the very day they were received. You must have received [the reply] by now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 548. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

[1] Earlier letters in this volume to the addressee and the instructions regarding diet, etc., in this letter suggest that it was written in 1924. In that year *Ashadh Sud* 9 fell on July 11.

155. SPEECH AT GUJARAT CONGRESS COMMITTEE MEETING[1]

AHMEDABAD,
July 11, 1924

. . . Mahatmaji, with his loin-cloth and characteristic smile on his lips, arrived at 3.15. All stood up. In addressing the meeting, Mahatmaji reminded the audience of the Fourth Gujarat Political Conference held at Ahmedabad in 1920,[2] when Non-co-operation was first proclaimed by Gujarat, before the special session of the Calcutta Congress. Mahatmaji emphasized that he was still conscious and retained the old, optimistic faith of those days, despite signs. Of depression, which was evinced in the country. Gujarat should always be ahead of the Congress. Mahatmaji continued:

Our representatives should undertake to spin not only half an hour as ordered by the A.I.C.C. and produce 2,000 yards, but they must spin for one hour and produce 5,000 yards instead, in order to encourage other provinces and also to set a precedent for other provinces. Let there be no harangue now, but let your spinning transmit its message of the charkha to those who are our neighbours and friends. I know there are friends who are pessimistic about the capacity of Gujarat to fulfil this programme. But let Gujarat, in whom lies my only hope—except, of course, my hope in the Almighty, which never leaves me—rise to the occasion and give the lie direct to the pessimism and distrust of these friends. If we are not concentrating on spinning even for half an hour every day, I have not the shadow of a doubt that we will not be able to attain swaraj by non-violent means. Rest assured that Councils shall not bring us swaraj. Without constructive work outside, Councils can achieve nothing. The death of constructive work would be the death-knell of swaraj.

Coming to the presidentship of the ensuing Belgaum Congress, Mahatmaji said that, fortunately or unfortunately, there had been a split in the Congress camp and people rather superstitiously believed that he was the man who would remove the split. He informed members that Mrs. Sarojini Naidu would be landing in Bombay within a day or two and he concurred with *The Bombay Chronicle,* which had proposed Srimati Naidu's name as the President of this year's Congress.

[1] A meeting of the Gujarat Congress Committee was held on July 11 at 3 p.m. The agenda included, among other things, the future programme of Gujarat, action to be taken on the A.I.C.C. resolutions and the appointment of the President of the forthcoming Congress.

[2] *Vide* "The Gujarat Political Conference", 1-9-1919.

I desire, . . . that the country should give her a befitting reception in token of the noble services she rendered in South Africa.[1] I know she is not able to satisfy everybody and, still, I propose Sarojini Devi for the highest honour in the power of the country to bestow on her, for, though a woman, she has achieved in Africa what no man could have ever achieved and also because she is an ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity. Dr. Ansari is another who deserves that honour, if you want a Mohammedan as your President.

But let my name stand last, if at all you necessarily want it. I am burdened with so many responsibilities that I would be glad to get rid of some of them, if I could. The weight of responsibility lies so heavy on my brow that I am afraid to invite any more of my own accord.

Opinion all round should not influence Provincial Committees in the election of the President. Although at the present moment I have [not] decided regarding this matter, I hope to do so before the final choice is made.

After the address was over, Mahatmaji asked members to put him any questions if they liked.

In reply to a question put to him, Mahatmaji replied that khaddar woven out of yarn spun by Congress representatives would strike the imagination of the pubic in such a way as nothing else can.

In reply to another question, he said that those who wanted to work the one programme outlined in yesterday's *Young India* should first ensure the spread of a unanimous opinion about it and, failing that, they must work it out outside the Congress organization.

The Hindu, 12-7-1924

156. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Ashadh Sud 11 [*July 12, 1924*][2]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your postcard. Rain is tantalizing us by not arriving. Signs of its coming are always visible, but it does not come. From the water flowing in the river, it is evident that there has been rain higher up. Radha is still weak; Perinbehn and Nargisbehn had been here; they returned [to Bombay] with Jamnabehn. Only the lady who was

[1] *Vide* "Sarojini's Magnetism", 10-4-1924.

[2] The postmark bears the date 13 July, 1924.

superintendent at the Seva Sadan is now here. Try to stay on there as long as you can. I hope you have received my letter giving instructions.

Blessings from

BAPU

SISTER VASUMATI

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 449. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

157. FORCE OR RESTRAINT?

A friend has raised a very difficult question. He says:

> If it is against the principle of non-violence to bring about any reforms by force, it is violence to compel anyone to give up drink by legislation.

Here is some confusion of thought. The friend seems to believe that law always connotes coercion. But this is not so. It is violence to cause suffering to others out of our selfishness or just for the sake of doing so. If, however, it becomes necessary to cause suffering to anyone in order to make someone else happy, to do so dispassionately and unselfishly can be non-violence. When I injure a thief to save myself from him (that is, for my benefit), that is violence. When a surgeon uses a knife on a patient and makes him suffer in order to bring him reliefs that is non-violence. From this point of view, if a thief is arrested and put into a reformatory, not in order to harass him but to reform him, if kindness is shown to him and he is placed in a good environment so that he may become a good man—in this there is neither force nor violence but restraint exercised by society or the ruler. The ruler who does this saves the thief from the risk of a prosecution, which is a further kindness done to him. Similarly, there is mere violence in a law that provides for the whipping of drunkards, but to close down every liquorbooth by law and thereby to remove the temptation from the drunkard is a form of restraint and is non-violence. There is in this nothing but pure love. Likewise, if I intimidate someone to give up foreign cloth, that is force. But passing a law to stop the import of foreign cloth is restraint. There is nothing but pure love in this. However, a law to punish anyone for wearing foreign cloth would be coercion. It signifies anger on the part of society.

We thus see that all laws do not connote force. Modern laws do have an element of force in them because their makert' object is to produce fear in order to protect society from criminals, it is not to

reform the criminals.

The only question which remains is this. We see reforms effected even through force. A person can be made to give up stealing by beating him. Quite a few people say and believe that many children have been reformed through beating. It is this belief which is respon-sible for the increasing burden of sin in the world at present. The use of force is soul-destroying and it affects not only the person who uses it but also his descendants and the environment as a whole. We should examine the total effect of the use of force, and that over a long period of time. The use of force has continued over a long period of time, but we do not find that those things against which force has been employed have been destroyed. Formerly there used to be heavy punishments for theft. It is the opinion of all expert observers that heavy punishments have not stopped thefts. As the punishments began to be tempered with mercy, the number of thefts declined.

But the strongest proof of the damage that is being done by the use of force is to be found in the fact that once the custom of effecting reforms by force gets established, the people tend to become dull and lifeless and, as the indolent and savage remedy of using force is resorted to in respect of every matter, the people lose two of their precious qualities: patience and perseverance. We may perhaps be deluded into believing that we can secure peace through the use of force, but there are innumerable instances to prove that, on the whole, only evil consequences flow from the use of force.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-7-1924

158. INFANTICIDE OF GIRLS

I have kept the following letter[1] with me for a number of days. I have not reproduced some part of the letter which contains details. How far the evils mentioned in the letter are real—*Patidars* alone know. I am supposed to have stayed among them for a time and yet, my task being to know the good qualities, made no attempt to acquaint myself with their defects, nor did anyone draw my attention to them.

[1] Not translated here

But if the account given in the letter is true, that should put us to shame. The sinful superstition that the birth of a baby girl is in auspicious is common among us. This superstition has as its basis mere selfishness. It might well have originated in the dark ages. That people should have detested the birth of a female child in the age when virgins were being kidnapped is in some measure understandable. Today that fear is practically non-existent. Even if it were there, we are in a position to take remedial measures. If there is any reason to rejoice at a birth, we should rejoice whether it is the birth of a boy or a girl; both should be equally dear to us. The world certainly needs both. One is a complement to the other. That being so, to rejoice at the birth of one and to feel depressed at the birth of the other benefits neither. In a well-balanced society, the proportion of men and women ought to be equal.

It is common in Hindu society that the father of a girl has to bear heavy expenses on the occasion of her wedding. Perhaps this custom assumed grave proportions among the *Patidars.* There cannot be two opinions on the absolute need to do away with this expenditure. A very expensive custom only ruins poor parents and it becomes almost impossible for them to get their daughters married and consequently there arises the practice of administering poison to girls.

The example[1] the teacher of Sunav has set is worth following. In this age of khadi, weddings can certainly be celebrated with only khadi garlands.

The writer has thrown the entire blame on the old folk. There must be some exaggeration in this. But if the old should remain still obstinate owing to their proud temper, youth organizations should take control. If the young would firmly decline to participate in expensive weddings, the extravagance would at once stop. For this neither discourtesy nor great effort is called for. The deplorable thing is that till today the youths have regarded such matters as outside their sphere of activity. They have never used their educational attainments for securing social reform.

But the order of things has changed now. The young have begun to think for themselves. Hence this reform can be effected

[1] In the marriage ceremony of a teacher of the national school at Sunav, there were only ten persons in the bridegroom's party, both the bride and the bridegroom put on khaddar garments made from yarns spun by themselves, and the wedding expenditure amounted to a hundred rupees only.

without great effort. Only unshakable determination is called for.

I for one do not like even the association of twelve villages.[1] I believe in the four castes only. It is necessary to merge the sub-castes. But that will take time. Yet, to divide *Patidars* into groups of villages is the climax of caste division. Why should those who can interdine with the *Patidars* of the whole of Gujarat not intermarry with them? Mere pride, and not restraint, is responsible for the creation of this twelve-village association. Where there is false pride, there is sin. Hence wise and experienced *Patidars* should join hands to bring about the desired reform ant immediately put an end to the infanticide of girls and the above-mentioned wicked practices responsible for it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-7-1924

159. LETTER TO INDRA VIDYAVACHASPATI

Ashadh Sud 14 [*July 15, 1924*]

BHAI INDRA,

I have your letter. It reached me after I had already written something [on the subject]. But I wrote nothing to hurt anybody. I hope none will go to court and the matter has now calmed down.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

SHRI INDRA VIDYAVACHASPATI

"ARJUN" OFFICE

DELHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4857. *Courtesy:* Chandragupta Vidyalankar

[1] Endogamy prevailed among the Patidars of only these villages.

160. LETTER TO KUNVERJI KHETSHI PAREKH

Ashadh Sud 14 [*July 15, 1924*][1]

CHI. KUNVERJI,

I was sorry to read about the demise of your revered maternal uncle. I know he was a great support to you. But knowing that birth and death are our inescapable companions, we should neither rejoice at the one nor mourn for the other.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

CHI. KUNVERJI KHETSHI
C/O PAREKH GOKULDAS TRIBHUVAN
MORVI

From a copy of the Gujarati original: C.W. 676. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

161. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Ashadh Sud 15 [*July 16, 1924*][2]

Do not worry about my health. I have increased the quantity of my food again. Who can understand my mind today? I myself do not know where it will land me. The struggle is of course going on. I do not insist on anything. I only try to make and keep myself as pure as I can. I consider that to be my only duty. God may then pour into it anything He likes. *Young India* and *Navajivan* mirror it for the most part.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 73

[1] The postmark bears the date 16 July, 1924.
[2] As in the source

162. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Ashadh Sud 15 [*July 16, 1924*][1]

It is impossible just now for Ba to go there[2] . . . What will she do even if she goes? I therefore do not wish to press her to go. Tell Anand[3] to excuse me.

[From Gujarati]
Bapuni Prasadi, p. 74

163. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Ashadh Sud 15 [*July 16, 1924*][4]

PU. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. Whenever you get angry, you should ask yourself, "Against whom do I have all this [wrath]? The *atman is* free from passion; with whom can it be angry?" The external remedy to control anger is to keep silent. One should speak only after one is calm again.

You should forget past things. Just as we do not eat food left by others after a meal, so also we should not remember past happenings and derive pleasure or pain from them. We are entitled to take care of the present only; we should not think about the future either.

Since you are not going to leave Borivli out of anger or malice, you may pay a visit to them if your son is very importunate. After all, you are not going to forsake either your son or daughter-in-law. You are going to make room for her, so that she may not be embarrassed and you despondent.

I shall be here till, at any rate, the end of this month. Even during the first week of August, I shall be here.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6015. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] As in the source

[2] The addressee had, at the instance of his mother, written to Gandhiji to send Kasturba Gandhi to Bombay to attend some ceremony in connection with his wife's first pregnancy.

[3] Addressee's mother

[4] From the reference to the addressee's leaving her home at Borivli for the Ashram, it is evident that the letter was written in 1924. In that year *Ashadh* Sud 15 fell on July 16.

164. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Ashadh Sud 15 [*July 16, 1924*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. Keep me informed about the effects of the new treatment. I may have to stay here the whole of August. I shall very much like your going to Hajira. Shall I make arrangements for you there? It will be better to go to the Punjab after October. What fruits do you get and do you eat them?

Blessings from

BAPU

SISTER VASUMATI

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 450. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

165. NOTE TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[2]

[About *July 16, 1924*][3]

Even if the Congress dismisses me, I must humbly bear with it; but I cannot attack either party.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 74

166. NOTES

SAROJINI THE SINGER

The readers of *Young India* have shared with me several letters received by me[4] from South Africa regarding the wonderful work of India's gifted daughter. Here is one sentence for them to share from a letter from Mr. P. K. Naidu:

> Her work here was wonderful. Her charming personality and winsome eloquence won us not hundreds but thousands of European friends and also shook up the Smuts Government.

[1] The postmark is dated, Sabarmati, July 17, 1924.

[2] This was written on a 'silence day' in reply to Mathuradas's letter, in which he had appealed to Gandhiji to leave the Congress because there were internal squabbles in it.

[3] As in the source

[4] *Vide* "Sarojini's Magnetism", 10-4-1924.

India is therefore honouring herself by honouring her. For myself I must confess that her presence is a great relief to me. For, though I believe that I can contribute my humble share in the promotion of Hindu-Muslim unity, in many respects she can do much better. She intimately knows more Mussalmans than I do. She has access to their hearts, which I cannot pretend to. Add to these qualifications her sex, which is her strongest qualification in which no man can approach her. For peace-making is woman's special prerogative. Sarojini Devi has deliberately cultivated that special quality of her sex. She showed it to perfection at the time of the disgraceful rioting in Bombay in 1921. Her personal bravery and her tireless energy had become infectious. Wherever she went, the rioters laid down their arms. She has been a veritable angel of peace in East Africa and South Africa. The best welcome India can extend to her is to pray that God may give her the strength to continue her mission of peace and that she may become an indissoluble cement between the two communities. May the so-called weaker sex succeed where we, the so-called stronger sex, have failed.

God presses not pride but humility in His service. Man knows how to destroy, it is woman's prerogative to construct. May Sarojini be the instrument in God's hands for constructing real unity between Hindus and Mussalmans.

DELHI AND NAGPUR

Delhi has disgraced itself. The riots in Delhi would show that there is no non-co-operation left there, for non-co-operation with the Government means co-operation among the people. But in Delhi last week there was more non-co-operation with one another than with the Government. The Congress and the Khilafat men could not produce peace among the people. It was reserved for the police and the military to do so. Theirs is the glory and ours the disgrace. The letters before me tell me that our volunteers, being baffled in their attempt to bring about peace, chose the next best thing, viz., that of nursing those who were hurt, not by the police, but in an affray among themselves.

The whole affair is said to have been due to an assault alleged to have been committed by some Hindus on a Mussalman youth. What though the youth had died? The aggrieved Mussalmans could have had their remedy either through the recently appointed arbitration board or through the Government courts.

Granted that some Hindus assaulted a Muslim boy, that

thereupon some Mussalmans assaulted the Hindus, why did the other Hindus, whoever they might be, retaliate? For according to the letters received by me, the fighting had spread to the whole of the Indian area. The same letters tell me that, though it had so spread, the main population was unaffected by the disturbance and that there were instances of Hindus having sheltered Mussalmans and the latter having done likewise to Hindus. All this is no doubt creditable. But the fact remains that the main population was powerless to restrain the mob. We have not yet gained control over the turbulent element.

Nagpur has fared no better. As yet only meagre details have come to hand. It is evident that the Hindus and the Mussalmans of Nagpur consider a free fight among themselves to be more profitable than a joint fight (non-violent though it must be) against the Government.

Thus, if Delhi and Nagpur are any indication of the temper of the people at large, we must say good-bye to Hindu-Muslim unity for a long while and must, therefore, be content to live as slaves rather than strive to be free.

But I do not despair. I believe with Maulana Shaukat Ali that these quarrels are a short-lived distemper and that both the communities are bound, in the near future, to settle down to a peaceful programme.

And if we are to settle down to such a programme, I would like to suggest both to the Delhi and the Nagpur Congressmen and Khilafatists that neither party goes to court on any account whatsoever, but that the disputes be settled by arbitration. The lawyers, whether practising or otherwise, can help a great deal in this direction. They can simply refuse to take cases to court, but point out to the parties that they have nothing to gain thereby and probably much to lose. They can assure them, too, that if it is real peace they want they will not get it through courts.

BARA BAZAAR CONGRESSMEN

When I read the account of disturbances ending in assault between Congressmen in Bara Bazaar, Calcutta, I was disinclined to believe it. But three letters received by me from Congressmen who were most of them eye-witnesses show that there was a free fight at the meeting and all this for the sake, not of attaining the object of the Congress, but for the sake of capturing the committee. All the three

letters are from professed No-changers. The letters do not enable one to fix the guilt on any one party. I have no doubt that a Swarajist account would entirely blame the No-changers. What puzzles me is that any party should resort to violence for the sake of capturing an organization which is claimed to be non-violent. The writers of the letters say that they are 'my followers'. If, by calling themselves 'my followers', they claim to be votaries of non-violence, they must avoid every occasion for conflict. They must, therefore, cease to take part in an armed fight for capturing the Congress or any of its committees. My correspondents tell me that, although No-changers are in a decided majority in Bara Bazaar, the Swarajists are likely to pack their meetings or break up No-changers' meetings and thus control the Congress organization. Supposing that all these charges are true, surely the No-changers have a non-violent remedy open to them. They must simply cease to attend Swarajist meetings and form their own organization for working their programme, if it is the programme they want to work and not the Congress they want to capture. I promise that the No-changers will, if they work, make themselves indispensable to the Swarajists. There is but one God, one goal, one means. There is unity in disease, therefore, there is unity in remedy. Whether it is the Government or the Swarajists, there is only one sovereign remedy, namely, non-violent non-co-operation. 'My followers' will, therefore, do well to set up their own organization of work and no talk. They must cut their way to the nation's heart through service. I have addressed my argument to the No-changers because they are the protesting party and they write as 'my followers'. I neither believe nor disbelieve their charges against Swarajists. I claim the latter too to be 'my followers' since they claim equally with the No-changers to be the votaries of the Congress creed. If they assert, as I have no doubt they will assert, that they were not in the wrong, I would suggest to them the same remedy as I have to the 'No-change followers' of mine. 'My followers' wait for no response from the opposite party, for they do not retaliate. Those that do not, expect no return. They are, therefore, never hurt. To put it in the most concrete manner possible, no one who wants to spin, or do what lies in him to promote Hindu-Muslim unity, or, if a Hindu, to remove untouchability, requires any organization. Organizations may want him and he will gladly give his service wherever he is wanted. A Swarajist friend tells me that in Maharashtra No-changers have and retain their majority purely through brute force and that in Berar it

was they who resorted to blows. If that be so, I would ask the No-changers to apologize and, wherever they are holding office through brute force or unclean methods, to vacate office and yet do their task. It is a gross superstition to believe that one cannot serve effectively without the Congress prestige at one's back.

A STEP IN ADVANCE

The Gujarat P.C.C., while endorsing the A.I.C.C. resolution on spinning, has advanced upon the original and has made 3,000 yards of yarn obligatory for the first month and contemplates making 5,000 yards obligatory in the near future. It has also prescribed the penalty clause that was dropped by the A.I.C.C. I have always held that it is open to every provincial committee to advance upon the A.I.C.C. requirements. Every province having the capacity should regard it as its duty to do so. 2,000 yards is in the nature of subscription payable by every representative. It is meritorious to give more. And there is nothing wrong in disqualifying a member who does not pay his subscription. I hope, therefore, that the other provinces which can will follow the example of Gujarat. The 15th of August will give the country a clear indication of where Congress representatives stand regarding their faith in spinning. Let them remember that 'faith without works' is like a body without soul—a corpse fit only to be burnt or buried.

The burden of organizing spinning in every province rests with the provincial committees. They should lose no time in ascertaining the names of representatives and seeing that they do not neglect their duty for want of material or knowledge. Our helplessness is pitiable; we can be saved from impending ruin only if we become what we were, a nation of spinners and weavers. The Congress has, on paper at least, accepted the truth of the proposition. Its representatives throughout the country are now expected to become skilled carders and spinners, learn all about the science of spinning and organize their respective districts.

Half-hour's labour is the preliminary. But the preliminary process requires attention to details, stocking and supplying cotton, carding and turning it into slivers and spinning it. The yarn collected would have to be examined at the provincial centre. The wheels would need attention. A proper wheel with a proper spindle will naturally cause a great saving of time and would give pleasure to the spinner.

The duty of spinning by a Congress representative arises from

the A.I.C.C. resolution. But as a matter of fact, it is a duty incumbent upon everyone, whether Congressman or other. Every enthusiastic worker may form a spinning club whose business will be to get as much yarn as possible spun by every one of its members for presentation to the Secretary, Khadi Board. The reader will be glad to know that the Registrar of the Gujarat Vidyapith has already set the ball rolling by getting the staff of office to promise to spin five thousand yards per month, of which two thousand yards are to be presented to the Vidyapith and the rest to be preserved.

A DANGER

Gujarat has been in the habit of absorbing khadi to a very large extent from Andhra, Punjab and Bihar. Whilst it was perhaps necessary to do so in the initial stages when Gujarat could produce practically no khadi for her requirements and the provinces named needed encouragement, as a system it is vicious. The central fact of khaddar is to make every village self-supporting for its food and clothing. Therefore, every province must become self-supporting. It cannot become so if it has to import khadi from another. For one thing such a province has no staying power against famine. The exporting province must suffer too. Abuse must creep in both production and sale and there will be the greatest temptation to use mill-spun instead of hand-spun yarn. I have a letter before me from Masulipatam in which the writer says that habit is growing up among dealers of stocking hand-spun yarn and getting it woven for export. The writer further adds that the spinners, instead of themselves wearing hand-spun, almost invariably wear mill-spun. It is, therefore, highly necessary for workers to guard against such trafficking in khaddar. The way to induce those spinners to wear homespun is to weave for them free of charge. Yard for yard mill-spun is likely, for some time, to sell cheaper than handspun. The poor spinners who spin merely for their living will not listen to patriotic argument or that of national economy. The only argument they will listen to would be that of their pockets. And if they can have their own yarn woven for them free of charge, they will gladly wear khaddar. For such work to be done thoroughly and cheaply, it is necessary for many young men not merely to learn spinning but also weaving so that they may weave for the sake of their poor sisters. All these things cannot happen unless the Congress becomes chiefly a khaddar-propaganda organization.

But the foregoing argument does not mean that there will be no

export of khadi. The special talent of Andhra will always be in demand. But this interchange must be left to private enterprise. The Congress can concern itself only with the things that need tender nursing.

ADD THE 'GAG'

An English friend writes:

> Only a week ago I wrote to a friend and said 'Gandhi forgot when he recommended *rentia* to add *bookani* or gag.' You may remember my lecture when I said the abuse of leisure or spare time was the curse of India and recommended hobbies, i.e. gardening, carpentry, photography, reading history, philosophy, etc. It is foolish, vapid talk which engrosses all the spare time of the people of this country. They have not learnt to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest. The remedy is continual essay writing in schools and colleges on every kind of subject which will necessitate the study of books and the mastery of their contents, the formulation of ideas and their logical arrangement.

I have no hesitation in endorsing the friend's suggestion as to gagging. There is no doubt that we are suffering from a surfeit of talking and writing. Much of both is inane when it does not contain abuse or the Government or one's opponent. I have suggested that talking may well be left to Maulana Shaukat Ali and me. As for writing, I am doing it already. We need not discount the friend's criticism because he is an Englishman. He also happens to be a 'criminal'. He takes part in running the machinery which we are seeking to destroy. But as I have no ill-will against these English 'criminals' who find themselves running the machinery, some of them retain their friendship with me in spite of my opposition (mad as it appears to some of them to be) to the system they are administering. I would, therefore, ask the reader to give due weight to the friend's criticism. Essay-writing is good only to a certain extent. It does not make a writer necessarily brief unless he practises the art of condensation. Everyone who wishes may try to boil down all his thoughts and compress them so as to take up no more than one side of half a sheet of note paper.

Gokhale was once asked by Morley to perform a similar feat. He did it. It took him more time than if he had to write 50 sheets which nobody would read. Shankara delivered the whole of his celebrated message in half a verse: 'God alone is; all else is not.' The real discipline, however, lies in curbing the desire to speak or write. One

would then speak or write only when one must.

But, as a matter of fact, spinning carries its own gag. When spinning grows on a man or woman he or she has little leisure for anything else. And whilst the English friend, not feeling as we do, not knowing the condition of the masses as we do, can only speak of spinning as one of the many hobbies for occupying idle hours, we think of spinning as a sacred duty for the age and the country we are living in. It, therefore, derives from that fact a value all its own and cannot be spoken of in the same breath as the other occupations. When Englishmen have realized this fact, they will no longer be strangers in a strange land for its exploitation. They, too, will then spin not for amusement or curiosity, but as a duty they owe to the country whose salt they eat. But before we can expect them to do so, we must prove our faith by our work.

A POPULAR BAZAAR

The people of Champaran are amongst the most timid in India. They have only lately been trying to stand erect. It is not an uncommon thing even now to see respectable people insulted or assaulted in Champaran by petty officials. Babu Rajendra Prasad has sent me a brief note relating the incidents that have led to the establishment of a people's bazaar in Bettiah and the desertion of the one established by the Raj. I do not propose to go into the persecution the people have suffered in the matter. There is, however, one incident which I dare not ignore. It is reported that some people, instigated by the authorities, are spreading rumours to the effect that I am averse to the establishment of popular markets. I have no hesitation in repudiating the suggestion. Indeed, I knew nothing about the existence of the market till now. But I would any day welcome such popular enterprises. I hope, therefore, that the people of Bettiah will persist in their enterprise in the teeth of all opposition and inconvenience. They must not succumb to temptations or threats.

PAUPER ORISSA

Whenever I think of the pauperism of India, the living skeletons I saw under the very shadow of Jagannath rise before my eye and seem to rebuke me for the life of comparative ease I am leading in spite of my vaunted vow of poverty. The striking address of Acharya

Ray[1] before the Utkal Conference has renewed the uncomfortable memories of the pictures I witnessed in Orissa during my visit there. Dr. Ray had cited some terrible figures to demonstrate the poverty of the people. He says that the death-rate in Bihar and Orissa is 35 and birth-rate is 19.4. The net deficit in both is, therefore, 15.6 per thousand. *For Orissa alone* the figures are worse, being 31 per thousand. Let the reader imagine what these figures mean. The people of Orissa are dying away at the rate of 31 per thousand every year. If the things remain as they are, the net loss must progressively increase every year. Orissa is a land of chronic famines. The people have no other occupation save agriculture. It is facts such as these that have converted Dr. Ray to the message of the charkha.

RESIGNATIONS

One hears of resignations from Congress representatives in virtue of the third resolution of the A.I.C.C. I regard it a healthy sign if the resigning members have done so in a sporting spirit and if it does not mean their ceasing to do Congress work. The country can ill-afford to lose any the least service of any worker. Only, it must be in accordance with its terms and requirements. The workers in every province will, therefore, have to keep their heads cool and work without any friction. Reconstruction of committees will tax the best effort of workers wherever there are many resignations. Provincial committees are unwieldy in many provinces. There is almost complete self-government in the provinces. They may, therefore, frame rules and make the committees much smaller than they are. They must be useful rather than ornamental and efficient rather than bulky.

Young India, 17-7-1924

167. 'AN APPEAL TO THE NATION'

Under the above heading Mr. Srish Chandra Chatterji and eighteen other signatories have issued a document which I copy below:

> We are passing through a series of national crises the gravity of which can hardly be exaggerated. There are moments in the history of nations when a decisive move in the right direction often leads a nation to a triumphant goal and, when that supreme moment is lost in vague magination or false and

[1] Prafulla Chandra Ray (1861-1944); professor of chemistry at Presidency College, Calcutta; author of *History of Hindu Chemistry;* educationist and patriot

indecisive steps, it takes long centuries to retrieve the loss. India is passing through some such crisis and we are extremely fortunate that the crisis is not yet over. The whole world is shivering from the pains of labour, the indications of a new life are manifest everywhere, and a regenerated India must find a place among the new-born nations of the world. This rejuvenated India cannot accept any overlord, she must be a free and independent nation.

At a time when all the nations of the world are fighting for independence and liberty, at a time when our Indian heroes are championing the cause of India's independence abroad, it is simply ridiculous and shameful that we Indians should hesitate to accept independence as our only legitimate and logical goal; we therefore appeal to our nation to declare in the open Congress in unmistakable terms that independence and complete independence is our destined goal; let there be no ambiguous phrases to qualify it, let it be preached in all its nakedness. It is the moral force of this ideal that creates nations.

We must educate the country from this very moment in a way so that the people may realize the significance of a republic and a federation. We may postpone it for the future only at the risk of a great national calamity. We therefore appeal to the Congress delegates to define swaraj as a Federated Republic of the United States of India.

We also appeal to the delegates of this Congress to delete the words 'by peaceful and legitimate means' from the Congress creed, so that men holding every shade of opinion may have no difficulty in joining the only national organization in the country, though for the present it may be retained as a part of the actual programme of Congress work. Our time is short and we cannot dilate upon this point at any length, but we only say that means are after all means and our object and means should not be confounded with each other.

We are further of opinion that mere changing of the creed and passing of resolutions would not bring us independence. We thereforerequest the representative of our nation to engage the whole strength and the whole resources of the Congress in organizing a band of national workers who will devote all their time and all their energy in the service of their motherland and who must be ready to suffer and even be ready to sacrifice their lives for the national cause. When the Congress is backed by an organization of this kind then and then alone will the Congress have any strength and only then can we expect the voice of the Congress to be respected.

The other items in our programme should be:

(1) Boycott of British goods

(2) Establishment or helping in the establishment of factories and cottage industries on a strictly co-operative basis.

(3) Helping the labourers and peasants of our land in obtaining their grievances redressed and organizing them for their own economic good and moral prosperity.

(4) And finally to organize a federation of all the Asiatic races in the immediate future.

I know that this 'appeal to the nation' has been before the public for some time. It contains nothing new. Nevertheless it represents the views not merely of the signatories but of a large number of educated Indians. It will not, therefore, be a waste of energy to examine the contents.

Whereas the Congress leaves swaraj undefined, the signatories would have complete independence and, therefore, define swaraj as a Federated Republic of the United States of India. There is nothing in the Congress creed to prevent India aspiring' after independence. In fact, swaraj that does not enable India to declare her independence if necessary is no swaraj. What, however, the independence of the signatories means is severance at any cost and in every case with England. I hold that such severance is not indispensable for India's growth and freedom. The burden of severance should lie with the English people. It is more dignified for us to declare our readiness to be partners on equal terms and at will with the English in a Federation of Free States. Acceptance of such a position on the part of Englishmen may be impossible, but we have no right to assume the impossibility of a thing which, in its nature, is not impossible. Isolated independence is not the goal of the world States. It is voluntary interdependence. England is by no means so independent as to absorb any European State she chooses. Her independence depends partly upon the goodwill of her neighbours and partly upon her armament. In so far as she relies upon her armament, she is a menace to the world, as in fact she became during the late War. She stood, as we now learn, not for righteousness but for plunder. Her statesmen, equally with France and other States, were guilty of secret treaties, diplomatic fraud and barbarities hardly inferior to Germany's. It must be clear to everyone that it cannot be such armed independence that the signatories want and, if they do, I am certain that they represent only themselves. Independence is a word hallowed by centuries of usage and, therefore, it is possible to raise round it a large body of opinion, but no one would hazard a definition of it that would suit the whole of that body. I

suggest, therefore, that there is no substitute for swaraj, and the only universal definition to give it is 'that status of India which her people desire at a given moment.'

If I were asked what India desires at the present moment, I should say I do not know. I could only say I would have her to desire truthful relations between Hindus and Mussalmans, bread for the masses and removal of untouchability. That is how I would define swaraj at the present moment. I give that definition because I claim to be a practical man. I know that we want political independence of England. It will not be attained without the three things mentioned by me, not even if we had arms and we knew how to use them.

The second thing the signatories desire is the removal of the clause restricting the means to what is 'peaceful and legitimate'. I share the signatories' opinion, not for the reasons they give, but for the very reverse of them. They say 'means are after all means'. I would say 'means are after all everything'. As the means so the end. Violent means will give violent swaraj. That would be a menace to the world and to India herself. France obtained her freedom by violent means. She is still paying dearly for her violence. She will presently be at the mercy of her savage African army. I am a staunch believer in absolute equality between man and man, but my belief does not take me to the length that the French have gone. Their training of levies of Africans is not proof of her acceptance of the doctrine of equality but of her greed for absolute power. There is no wall of separation between means and end. Indeed, the Creator has given us control (and that too very limited) over means, none over the end. Realization of the goal is in exact proportion to that of the means. This is a proposition that admits of no exception. Holding such a belief, I have been endeavouring to keep the country to means that are purely 'peaceful and legitimate'.

But experience has taught me that the purpose has not perhaps been served by the restriction of the means. For I see that those who do not believe in the necessity of non-violence and truth for the attainment of swaraj have also joined the Congress, for they regard it to be quite the proper thing to sign the Congress creed, although they do not themselves believe in it. Perhaps, they do not interpret 'peaceful' and 'legitimate' as respectively to mean 'non-violent' and 'truthful'. I would myself, therefore, probably propose the deletion of the clause 'by peaceful and legitimate means'. It would be a faithful

representation of the present state of things. We would then not be open to the charge of camouflage. Everyone will be free to follow the policy he likes best.

The last paragraph of the 'appeal' reads extremely well, but it shows the utter inexperience of the signatories about practical work. It does not appear to have occurred to them that, if we have not yet got a "band of national workers who will devote all their time and energy', it is not because the Congress has not tried, but because the Congress has failed to get a large number of such workers. Surely it is open to the signatories themselves to raise such a band if it exists. They will find funds enough for the proper stamp of workers. If the signatories will examine the different institutions of India, they will find that not one languishes for want of funds. Is it not clear that a nation always pays for organizations it needs? Only last week I drew attention to the fact that the Khadi Board cannot get the workers it wants.

The other items of the programme suggested by the signatories do not call for any lengthy notice.

I hope I have shown in a previous article[1] that boycott of British goods is a totally impracticable proposition.

The proposal for the establishment of factories has a strong Western flavour about it and ignores Indian conditions.

The one cottage industry that is possible finds no mention in the programme.

The proposal to help the labourers and peasants is a counsel of perfection.

And the final proposal to organize a federation of all the Asiatic races in the immediate future demonstrates the present impossibility of the programme.

I, therefore, respectfully suggest to the nineteen signatories to divide all the items suggested by them among themselves, each batch to specialize in connection with the item taken up by it and, when success is shown in any one of the departments, to come to the Con-gress for national adoption. But if they have made the proposals without any idea of carrying them out themselves, I ask them to accept the opinion I have tendered and apply themselves to the working of

[1] *Vide* "Empire Goods Boycott", 15-5-1924.

khaddar—a programme that can harness the energy of all who will work.

Young India, 17-7-1924

168. WHO SHALL BE PRESIDENT?

Ever since my name has been put forward as one of the candidates for the presidential honour at the forthcoming Congress at Belgaum, I have been torn between two opinions. My first thought was immediately to discountenance the idea of my nomination. But I did allow myself also to think that, in the face of the stormy weather that the national barque is experiencing, probably I was the best person to direct it safely to its haven. But I now see quite clearly that my second thought was wrong. As I picture for myself the whole of the forthcoming proceedings, I quail. The thought of officially conducting the executive for the ensuing year baffles me. Being uncertain as to the direction in which the country is going, I feel I am unfit to be at the helm. I have no other programme but that of the charkha, Hindu-Muslim unity and untouchability. I should be utterly unfit to carry out any other programme, that, for instance, of boycott of British goods or energizing the masses on the proceedings in the Councils. These are but samples of many possibilities. And if I cannot help, I must not hinder from within. It is contrary to my nature to be responsible for a programme in which I cannot or do not believe. Moreover, I must hold myself free for emergencies. If the Congress representatives do not carry out the simple duty of spinning for half an hour daily and taking the trouble of sending 2,000 yards of good yarn of their own spinning from month to month, I should not know where my usefulness to the Congress could be. My presidential address must be a thesis on hand-spinning, complete surrender by Hindus of their material ambition to the Mussalmans and other minorities, and on further asking Hindus to regard untouchability as a sin. If these things cannot enthuse the nation, I should be a useless President. How would it do for the Congress to have as President a man who sketched a programme of putting the whole nation in pantaloons? We would at once vote against him however sincere he might be in his professions and however able in the execution of his design. We would not have him because he would not suit us. So may the case be with me.

I must not, therefore, allow myself to be elected. I appreciate the

affection of those who have put forth my name. But I ask them to appreciate my position, sympathize with me and withdraw my name.

There are two possible names, Sarojini Naidu and Dr. Ansari. When I mentioned Dr. Ansari's name, a friend said he would be the fourth Mussalman President within four years. That for me is no bar. Let the Hindus demonstrate their intense desire for Hindu-Muslim unity by having a Mussalman as President. Dr. Ansari is one of the few impartial leaders we have in both the communities. From the Hindu-Muslim stand-point alone, therefore, Dr. Ansari may be the best selection.

But I must confess that, at the present juncture, I would give my vote to Sarojini. She stands for solid Hindu-Muslim unity. Mussalmans do not distrust her. We have not yet had an Indian woman as our President. This is the fittest opportunity for paying our Indian sisters the compliment that is long overdue. Her services in East and South Africa are still fresh in our memory. We cannot reward them better than by selecting her as our President for the coming session. It will strengthen the cause of our countrymen overseas. They will realize in a special manner that we are not unmindful of their interests. Her election will be a graceful acknowledgment of the courtesy and sympathy extended to our fair ambassador by hundreds of Europeans in both the sub-continents and to the opponents among them. It would be an indication of our determination to make our own the cause of our countrymen abroad. Lastly,we want an impartialPresident this year. I am frankly a partisan in the sense that I am an out-and-out advocate of the old programme. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu has, fortunately for her and the nation, no such unalterable views and, what is more, no one will identify her with any programme as I rightly must be with the programme I may advocate. I, therefore, respectfully ask the Provincial Committees to withdraw my name and elect Sarojini Devi as President, unless for the reason mentioned, they would rather have a Mussalman to preside and would, therefore, elect Dr. Ansari.

Young India, 17-7-1924

169. " VARNASHRAMA" OR " VARNASANKARA" ?

A fair friend writes:

> A fellow traveller drew my attention to the message[1] of yours to the

[1] *Vide* "Message to Saurashtra Rajput Conference", 11-6-1924.

Rajput Parishad of Vartej. By reading it a protest which was lying suppressed in the subconscious level of the mind made its way to the surface and claimed a hearing. Man is one who does *manan* or thinking. So I hope you will be tolerant to a fellow thinker and give an attentive hearing to thoughts that may run counter to your habitual ones. These thoughts had occurred at the first sight of the Sabarmati Ashram with its weaving shed in 1920, had disappeared and reappeared off and on, till of late they have been busy building a permanent abode in my mind for which your message to the Rajputs has supplied the straw for the last brick.

In a place where the whole station was lined from one end to the other with volunteers dressed in military style with swords hanging at their sides, where the whole air was redolent with reminiscences of bravery and chivalry of men of the military caste of India, was not your message urging them in a way to substitute the music of your wheel for the music of their sword a preaching of the dharma of your caste to all castes *ad absurdum*, like the Christian missionary? Should you not rather, like the sages of ancient India, exhort a Brahmin to be a true Brahmin, a Kshatriya to be an ideal Kshatriya and a Vaisya to be a model Vaisya? The insignia of the Brahmin is the book or pen, of the Kshatriya the sword, and of the Vaisya the wheel or the plough. You may well pride yourself in being called a weaver or an agriculturist as thereby you are true to the natural tendencies of your *jati* or to Vaisya dharma. But why would you a Hindu, a believer in *varnashrama* principles, help in the degradation of a Brahmin or a Kshatriya by insisting on their accepting Vaisya dharma and rejecting or neglecting their respective *jati* dharmas? Can a Kshatriya not serve and protect the poor even in these days but in the Vaisya way?

The great men of India have always upheld *swadharma* for each individual temperament. You are the first of them to preach the throwing in of the dharmas of all people into the same melting pot and thereby Vaisyaising the whole nation. Uplift the Vaisya by all means, but pray do not pull the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas by their legs. Spiritualize your caste people, but do not materialize the men of other castes by turning them into spinners and weavers with the spell of your personality. To my thinking a Vinoba and a Balkoba would have rendered more potent service to the nation as pure Brahmins with their intellects fully developed rather than as spiritual weavers which you have turned them into.

I have not reproduced the whole of the letter but I have given the cream of it. The rest is a commentary on the extract quoted by me. The friend is born and claims to be a Hindu even as I claim to be one. As I have regarded spinning to be superior to sectional religions, I had hoped that I would not be misunderstood by cultured friends. But it was not to be. The friend tells me she is not the only one to oppose the charkha. I must, therefore, endeavour patiently to examine the

argument. I have noted in the course of my journalistic experience dating from 1904 that most of the criticism received by editors is based upon an imperfect under-standing of an opponent's statement. In the case in point, if only the friend had borne in mind that I had presented the message of the wheel, not to the Hindus alone, but to all Indians without exception, to men and women, to Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians, Jews, Sikhs and all others who claimed to be Indians, she would have written differently. She would then have inferred that I had placed before the people of India something which not only did not come in conflict with the several religions but which, in so far as it was taken up, added lustre to one's own religion and, in Hinduism, to one's own *varna* or caste. Mine, therefore, I claim to be a method not of confusion but cleansing. I ask no one to forsake his own hereditary dharma or occupation, but I ask everyone to add spinning to his natural occupation. The Rajputs of Kathiawar knew this. They asked me whether I wanted them to give up their swords. I told them I wanted them to do no such thing. On the contrary, I added, I wanted each one of them to possess a trusty sword so long as they believed in it. But I certainly told them that my ideal Rajput was he who defended without the sword and who died at his post without killing. A sword may be snatchedfrom one, not so the bravery to die without striking. But this is by the way. For my purpose, it is enough to show that the Rajputs were not to give up their calling of protecting the weak. Nor do I want the Brahmins to give up their vocation as teachers. I have suggested to them that they become better teachers for sacrificial spinning. Vinoba and Balkoba are better Brahmins for having become spinners and wea-vers and scavengers. Their knowledge is more digested. A Brahmin is one who knows God. Both these fellow-workers are nearer God today by reason of their having felt for and identified themselves through spinning with the starving millions of India. Divine knowledge is not borrowed from books. It has to be realized in oneself. Books are at best an aid, often even a hindrance. A learned Brahmin had to learn divine wisdom from a godfearing butcher.

What is this *varanashrama?* It is not a system of water-tight compartments. It is a recognition to me of a scientific fact whether we know it or not. A Brahmin is not only a teacher. He is only predo-

minantly that. But a Brahmin who refuses to labour will be voted down as an idiot. The *rishis* of old who lived in the forests cut and fetched wood, tended cattle and even fought. But their pursuit in life was pre-eminently search after Truth. Similarly, a Rajput without learning was good for nothing, no matter how well he wielded the sword. And a Vaisya without divine knowledge suffi-cient for his own growth will be a veritable monster eating into the vitals of society, as many modern Vaisyas, whether of the East or the West, have become. They are, according to the *Gita* 'incarnations of sin who live only for themselves'. The spinning-wheel is designed to wake up everyone to a sense of his duty. It enables every-one better to fulfil his dharma or duty. When a vessel is running on smooth waters, work on board is exquisitely divided. But when it is caught in the grip of a violent storm and is about to sink, everyone has to give a helping hand to the necessary work of life-saving.

Let us also bear in mind that, with the rest of the world, India finds herself in the deadly coil of the mercantile cobra. It is a nation of shop-keeping soldiers that claims to rule her. It will tax all the resources of all her best Brahmins to unwind India from that coil. Her learned men and her soldiers will, therefore, have to bring their learning and their prowess to bear upon the mercantile require-ments of India. They must, therefore, in order to be able faithfully to carry out their dharma, learn and practise spinning.

Nor have I the least hesitation in recommending hand-wea-ving as a bread-winning occupation to all who are in need of an honest occupation. To the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas and others, who are at the present moment not following their hereditary occu-pation, but are engaged in the mad rush for riches, I present the honest and (for them) selfless toil of the weaver and invite them, with a view to return-ing to their respective dharmas, to be satisfied with what little the handloom yields to them. Just as eating, drink-ing, sleeping, etc., are common to all castes and all religions, so must spinning be common to all without exception whilst the confusion, selfish greed and resul-ting pauperism persist. Mine, therefore, is a method not of making *varnasankara*—confusion worse confounded—but it is one of making *varnashrama*—cleansing more secure.

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170. WHAT KHADDAR CAN DO

A correspondent from the Andhra district writes:

When I discontinued my studies from the Presidency College, Madras, in January 1921, I did so because I could not resist the appeal made by you. Then I knew nothing about the greatness of khaddar. After I had come from Madras to my village, I had to work hard for four months to get me two khaddar dhotis and khaddar cloth enough for three shirts. Such was the situation then, and having left the College, I did not know what to do. Fortunately, in May 1921, my uncle gave me wood for twenty charkhas, some cotton and twenty rupees to do khaddar business. With the help of a carpenter, I made charkhas out of the wood and distributed about four of them to the *Panchamas.* With these five charkhas I began the work, and now the spinning-wheels working under my supervision are about four hundred. Till two months ago, the process of my khaddar business was buying cotton, getting it done into slivers by *pinjarees,* distributing the slivers to spinners and, after they spin the yarn, getting the yarn done into cloth by weavers. To the spinners and the weavers I was giving wages for their work. I had to do thus all these days and whenever I did not or could not get cotton, the spinners and weavers had to suffer and so they had always to depend upon me or someone like me. After struggling these three years in khaddar business, I along with Mr. Ponniah, who is doing the same business at Nagalapuram in Kurnool District, had to think out some other scheme of doing khaddar business by which the spinners and weavers would not suffer for want of helpers (khaddar workers) like us. We, after three years' experience, found from the village people how thirty or forty years ago the spinners used to preserve their own cotton, make it into yarn, sell yarn made into warps of 15 cubits and 5 *panjams* (each *punjam* consists of sixty threads) at the rate of eight warps per rupee, and how the weavers used to buy yarn from them, make it into cloth and sell the cloth to buyers. This done, the spinners do not suffer for want of mediators like us and, if there could be people to buy all the cloth that the weavers make, there would be no difficulty at all. For two months Mr. Ponniah at Nagalapuram and myself here are trying to bring this process into working order and to the great relief of us and the people, we have almost succeeded.

The writer gives further details of his interesting work into which I need not go. There is sufficient in the foregoing to show what a silent revolution khaddar is working in the economic life of the nation.

Here are a few extracts from a report from the Bijapur district.

From Bilgi we went to Badgi. We had come to this village in Febru-ary 1923. Then there were only 10 or 15 charkhas working and no looms. The villagers have been quick in seeing the benefits of khadi. Now there are nearly 90 charkhas working. Being tired of the inconveniences of getting khadi woven by outside weavers, they have got a weaver from Nagral. He has started 2 looms at Badgi and will start 2 more within the next fortnight. One or two of the villagers are learning weaving at the Nagral weaver's. The villagers are not in a mood to sell their yarn. They have *determined to get it woven for their own use and will sell only the surplus.* We arranged a spinning competition among the village spinners. Twenty charkhas were merrily running for more than an hour. The yarn spun was uniform and ranged from 15 to 20 counts. We gave prizes to some 10 ladies as a token of our happiness. So long there were no spinners among the *Mahars* there. At our exhortation a *Mahar* woman showed her readiness to spin. She brought her broken wheel to the Congress Committee which will forthwith repair the charkha and supply slivers and a spindle to the enthusiastic spinner. I hope Badgi will be a model village in respect of khadi. Much depends on the local workers. . . .

From Gani I proceeded to Bidri. This village has been foremost in spinning work ever since the beginning. The yarn is fine and also spun in great quantities. I visited nearly 50 houses and every house had got 2 to 4 charkhas, i.e., as many as there are adult ladies in the house. One old woman said that she had been maintaining herself on spinning for the last two years. There *are nearly 250 charkhas working.* They store their own cotton and sell the yarn. Khadi producers from Bijapur, Jamakhandi, etc., purchase the yarn from this place. The local khadi worker supported by the Congress committee has been asked to prepare dhotis for the Congress Committee. There is great promise of work in the village and also in three or four villages round this place. . . .

From Bidri I went to Devargannur on the 19th. We had visited this place in February 1923. There were only 10 charkhas working then. Now at least 100 charkhas are working and the families are getting their yarn woven into cloth for themselves. The surplus yarn, if any, will be sold to the local Congress khadi workers. We arranged a spinning competition here. It was a happy sight to see 25 village ladies, young and old, rich and poor, spinning their hardest for one whole hour. We gave prizes to the ladies. A khadi worker disheartened by the lull in the cities should go to such villages to see such competitions to get hope and strength for his work.

These are examples of paid labour. When, in terms of the

A.I.C.C. resolution, the chosen representatives of the Congress and others begin to spin as part of national duty, there will be no lull in the cities either. The latter will be, as they ought to be, an extension of the village life, and not as they now are—almost foreign growths blighting and sapping the healthy life of the villagers.

Young India, 17-7-1924

171. A PLEA FOR MILLS

A correspondent writes:

> According to you charkha and spinning-wheel are the best means of winning swaraj. It is impossible to dispute your noble intentions or self-sacrifice, but it is not understood why you fail to realize that, by insisting on the wholesale adoption of khaddar, you will be putting a large number of mill-owners and a considerably larger number of shareholders to terrible loss and distress, for, whereas the former have expended huge sums of money on mills, the latter—of whom there are very many of even below passable competence—have sunk their all in mill shares in the earnest hope of eking out a comfortable living with the decent dividends would realize, having been emboldened by the prosperity of the mills. Thus, while you hope to bring prosperity to a very large number of lower orders who know no respectability and can in any way make both ends meet, you will doubtless be bringing ruin to an equally large or at least a very considerable number of high- and middle-class men.
>
> 2. As a great mahatma imbued with the most disinterested and sympathetic feelings towards mankind at large, it behoves you to hold the scales even and to exercise your best intellect in striking a middle course so as, on the one hand, to encourage charkha and spinning-wheel to a reasonable extent and, on the other, to help the mill-owners and the huge body of shareholders.
>
> 3. By all means boycott foreign cloth, but allow the optional use of mill-cloth and khaddar. You will thereby be helping many a high- and middle-class man.

This is a pathetic letter. I wish the correspondent's fears were realized. Then he will discover that the impending ruin of mills and shareholders of mills would be the time of their own and India's salvation. He will discover then that India will be pulsating with a new life and the middle class will be drawing their sustenance—not as now from a starving peasantry, but from prosperous farmers who would gladly exchange their produce for things they need but cannot themselves manufacture. A little reflection will enable the corres-

pondent to realize that he and the rest of the shareholders as well as directors of mills will have to co-operate with the people before the spinning-wheel is so well established as to oust the mills. Let the correspondent derive consolation from the fact that the spinning-wheel has to displace nearly sixty crores worth of foreign cloth before it can touch the Indian mill-cloth. But for reasons I have stated in these pages, every one of us must simply think of khaddar to the exclusion of even Indian mill-cloth. Our mills need no patronage from anyone else. They have their own agencies and peculiar methods of advertising their wares. For those who are within the Congress beat to have the option of using mill-spun is to kill the khaddar industry. Khaddar needs all the protection that can be given to it before it can produce an impression upon the market.

So much for the consolation of the correspondent or those who think like him. May I, however, remind him that, if the letter were not written in ignorant fear of consequences to the mills and the middle class, it would be considered a heartless performance? What does the correspondent mean when he refers to "lower orders who know no respectability and can in any way make both ends meet?" Is he sure that "lower orders know no respectability?" Have they no feelings, are they not injured by an angry word? In what sense are they lower except in their poverty, for which we, the middle class, are responsible? And may I inform the correspondent that the "lower orders" not only do not "make the two ends meet", but the majority of them are living in a state of semistar-vation? If the middle-class people voluntarily suffer losses for the sake of the "lower classes", it would be but tardy reparation for their participation in their exploitation. It is this arrogation of superiority and consequent callousness to the sufferings of the so-called lower classes that keeps us from swaraj and that retards the progress of the life-giving charkha. I invite the correspondent to think in terms of the masses and, by taking to the charkha, identify himself with his less fortunate countrymen.

Lastly, let the correspondent remember that, if I may be advised on the ground of my broad humanity to be tender to our mills at the expense of the "lower classes", I must also be urged, as I have been by other friends to be tender to foreign mills for the same reasons. But if it is true, as it is true, that foreign mills have destroyed the prosperity of the masses, the consideration of humanity demands that the masses should be taught to revert to the charkha even though

foreign mill-owners may suffer. Even so must indigenous mills suffer, if need be, for the sake of those on whose poverty their fortunes are built. If an enterprising baker puts up cheap bakeries in our villages so as to replace household kitchens, the whole nation, I hope, will rise against such an enterprise. The reason for the opposition would be the same as the reason for my opposition to the mills *when they come in conflict with the interest of the masses.*

Young India, 17-7-1924

172. DEPRIVED OF HIS RIGHT

Mr. Jamaluddin Mukhmoor writes:

> At the last municipal election held in the month of November 1923, the Extra Assistant Commissioner, Merwara, who acted as the Polling Officer, most autocratically rejected my name from the Beawar municipal electoral roll on the ground of my conviction under section 108 Criminal Procedure Code for the period of 6 months. He passed the order in the month of October 1923 and, since it was appealable, I appealed to the Commissioner on the 10th October. For one month complete silence was assumed. In the meantime, 26th of November was fixed for recording the votes. Consequently, on the 20th November, I sent a reminder to the Commissioner and a registered notice to the Extra Assistant Commis-sioner, Merwara, to stop the further proceedings till the final decision of my appeal. No heed was paid and the election carried on the same day. Since then I had been waiting for the reply from the Commissioner's office and only today, 10th July, the following *communique* has been received by me:
>
> With reference to his letter No. 117/J dated the 22nd June 1924, Mr. Jamaluddin is informed that the order by which his name was omitted from the Beawar municipal electoral roll was revised by the Commis-sioner, who directed that his name might be entered, but as this order was only passed on the 26th November 1923, it could not be communicated in time to enable the applicant to exercise the privilege of voting.

This is like sending a reprieve after hanging. The right of voting at the present moment may not be of much consequence. But when people become alive to their rights, one vote is enough to turn the scales on momentous occasions. Mr. Jamaluddin is entitled to an explanation of the extraordinary delay in a matter that required no prolonged investigation and when the Commissioner must have known that the elections were pending. For me the incident furnishes

an additional cause for non-co-operation. I look upon all such official acts with considerable suspicion. They betray contempt of popular opinion and rights. That people may not have an immediate remedy against the abuse is to me no reason for associating directly or indirectly with the authorities in conducting Indian administration in utter defiance of public opinion.

Young India, 17-7-1924

173. LETTER TO NANABHAI ICHHARAM MASHRUWALA

SABARMATI,
Ashadh Vad 3 [*July 19, 1924*][1]

BHAI NANABHAI,

I have your letter. I went through the translation. There is no reason why you should be unhappy. It is when the world worships us that we have to be apprehensive. Maybe, God is nearer to us when it condemns us. Mirabai used to laugh when she heard the eulogy of the world. Do tender your resignation by all means. It is not at all desirable to stay on at the cost of your health. However, to be cautious, you may consult Jamnalalji[2]. The test of one's religion lies in suffer-ing with equanimity heat and cold, misery and happiness.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

NANABHAI ICHHARAM, ESQ.
AKOLA
BERAR

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 4316. Courtesy: Kanubhai Mashruwala

174. ENLIGHTENED OR HALF-BAKED?

A student named Ganpat wrote this letter[3] to the members of his family and left his home on July 7.

There is as much ignorance as patriotism in this letter. There can be no comparison between Dyerism and the act of an Englishman who abused a woman. Those who move about in cities always see such

[1] The postmark bears this date.
[2] Jamnalal Bajaj
[3] Not translated here

ugly scenes. It is not that the whites alone abuse Indian women. Indians, too, do so and even beat them. Who has not seen impudent Indian station-masters and policemen harass women? Can these acts of wickedness be prevented by running away from them?

Why did student look on silently when he found the white man abusing the woman? If he felt hurt, he had two or three alternatives before him: Employing non-violence and willing to bear beating if he got it while courteously dissuading the white man, he could have saved the woman from the abuses. Or, if he was a believer in "tit for tat", he would have made the quarrel his own and fought with him. If he was a co-operator, he would have employed the third alternative of taking the woman to a police station and registering a complaint. If he failed to get justice that way, he would have become a satyagrahi. Considered from any point of view, running away was by no means a remedy. Such a remedy is likely to prove a further bondage. Student Ganpat writes to say that he has now understood the significance of life. God alone knows what he has understood. What will he achieve by running away? He could have done what was expected of him by staying at home. By becoming a coward and running away, one acquires no wisdom and no courage either. All cannot become Buddhas. Sarasvatichandra[1] lived, of course, in the imagination of Govardhanbhai. Student Ganpat aspires to surpass even Sarasvatichandra. Govardhanbhai made Sarasvatichandra go round and round the same place like an oilman's bullock. He did not at all become "new". Even after having new experiences, he abandoned Kumud[2] and accepted Kusum[3]and in the end made her worship him. What we have to learn from Sarasvatichandra is that we must never swerve from our duty. We should face a hardship which we cannot remove and try to find out remedies for it. Remedies will be found by studying hardship; they will not be had by running away from them.

If student Ganpat has not yet become a forest-dweller and reads *Navajivan* even in hiding, and if he happens to read this issue, he should return home in response to the request of an experienced person like me. He should continue his studies; if he has no sound physique, he should acquire it; he should certainly remain a celibate; he should, of course, be a devotee of God; he should learn that the

[1] The hero of the Gujarati novel *Sarasvatichandra* by Govardhanbhai Tripathi

[2] Sisters, characters in *Sarasvatichandra*

[3] *Ibid*

essence of life is service and understand that one cannot serve by running away.

I do not want to say that retreat to the forest yields no solution. One can learn a lot by going there, but one must become qualified for it. All of us should not set out to become Buddhas. We should remain Sudamas.[1] Lord Krishna who stopped Arjuna from fleeing[2] knew his business. Rama honoured his father's promise but kept Bharat pinned to Ayodhya and himself went to the forest where he lived a life of service. Even in the forest he shaped himself and became an ideal man. Fortunately, there are not many students who run away; hence I need not dilate further on the episode of student Ganpat. But students who have not run away from home have a lot to learn from Ganpat. When we see suffering, we should not feel unconcerned or apathetic. We should try and cultivate a feeling exactly like Ganpat's. We should not sell our education for a cowrie. We should receive education for the benefit of our country and use it in her service. Cultivating as much feeling as Ganpat, we should add to it a sense of discrimination and proportion. With the sense of proportion, we should cultivate patience. Having analysed a situation and found remedies, let us be firm in applying them. Let us think a lot before taking a decision, but once it is taken, let us be adamant in implementing it. Ganpat certainly does not deserve contempt. He is not to be pitied even. He merits praise. Only, we should not take the step he took hastily; we should create the solitude of a forest just where we are. Peace, renunciation, and so on, are states of mind. It is true that some attain peace by wandering about, but some others get it while shaping themselves in the midst of ordinary, daily drudgery. We may follow the path trodden by many. This is the royal road.

Live as you may,
Find God any how.

So wrote Akha. He was truly learned.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-7-1924

[1] Sudama was a poor Brahmin friend of Lord Krishna.

[2] In the *Mahabharata*, Arjuna, the third of the Pandava brothers, had wished to flee the battlefield as he did not like to fight his cousins, the Kauravas.

175. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

A friend who is a student of non-co-operation has asked me some questions which I reproduce here as they are of interest to many:

Q. Our opposition is directed not against individuals but against a "system". Then what does "system" mean—mobilization, tradition or culture?

A. Certainly, it is not mobilization. Tradition, yes; also culture to the extent that it is responsible for tradition.

Q. In the article entitled "Rabbi May" in *Young India*,[1] you write that, through the injustice meted out to Sir Sankaran Nair, the wickedness of this regime has been further exposed. You write to the members of the Indian national Congress: "If the Government courts and schools attract us and yet we oppose them, then our opposition is not against a system but against individuals . . . My swaraj consists in maintaining intact the spirit of our culture ."

Considering these two extracts, we find it suggested in the first that the government is under the control of the whites, while the second one contains a dig at our culture.

A. That is not so at all. Even if there had been an Indian judge in the Sankaran Nair case, he would have dealt him similar injustice. Since the judge was a supporter of the present policy of the British Government, he could give no other judgment. We in India know from experience that, at critical junctures, we cannot expect justice from Indian judges working under the current administration. The fault is not theirs but that of the system. An ordinary man cannot transcend his environment. He who can transcend it will not work a moment under such an unacceptable system. Non-co-operation teaches us this very principle. I have often said that, if the administration is to continue according to the current system, it would be unacceptable to me even if every official is an Indian.

Q. It is my impression that the scheme of non-co-operation was devised not to protect our culture—protection of culture may well be its indirect though, in a sense, very important result—but to maintain our self-respect.

A. Since the attack on our self-respect was obvious, it was more effective to give prominence to it. But our self-respect was the basis of our culture. Now, when we see the danger of fascination exercised by

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 12-6-1924.

courts, schools, etc., despite the fact that the respect due to us has not been restored as yet, we expose the veiled attack on our culture. Such successive arguments, of course, are not deliberately advanced. Circumstances give rise to them. If we go deep into the subject, we are able to see that words like honour, culture, system, etc., have a close relationship to one another and that all of them have a common origin.

Q. I am not sure whether there is anything really harmful in Government courts and yet I would not lodge there a complaint against my neighbour because they are the courts of an alien Government which oppresses us. Likewise, he who does not see any defect in the present educational system should also boycott it. Even if the medicines to be had at a Government hospital are very good or even if the police arrangements are praiseworthy, the non-co-operator should not take the benefit of these.

A. Those who see nothing wrong in the courts and schools except that they are run by an alien Government find it difficult to non-co-operate. What is wrong in these institutions is not their being run by an alien Government, but their being a part of a faulty system. But here a definition of system is called for because the questioner has used the word "educational system". I see defects even in the educational system of the Government. But that is not the reason for my opposition. My opposition is to the system of Government administration. It is the system in which the financial interest of the rulers is dominant and in which religion or morality, call it what you will, has a minor place. It is the system in which the rulers do not hesitate to employ Dyerism in order to protect their economic interests and are not afraid of committing any sin. If the system were not so selfish, there would have been no reason to call the British Government alien. The truth of this argument may be tested thus: Suppose this Government feels sorry for the Punjab massacre, stops the import of foreign cloth, encourages khadi, forgoes the income from opium and liquor, reduces its military expenditure by 75 per cent, regards the promotion of Hindu-Muslim unity as its duty and respects public opinion in other ways; then who will oppose it? And if anyone does so, who will listen to him? Even if they are defective in other respects, we shall not boycott the existing courts and schools. This kind of selfishness in Government administration or system is at the very basis of modern or Western culture. But the Government's Dyerism, etc., which are the manifest results of that culture, are sufficient to rouse opposition even in those who do not wish to think thus deeply over the matter.

Q. You write: "The aim of the Government's policy is to Anglicize us. The moment we get Anglicized, our English rulers will hand over the reins of Government to us and accept us as their agents." Have the Englishmen been here with such an unselfish motive? They loudly proclaim as a virtue what you regard as a fault in them. Will the Englishmen quit if we adopt the European system? Even then, how can we become their voluntary agents? Do not conflicts arise between England and Germany even though they have a common culture? I should say that conflicts arise precisely because their culture is common.

A. Many issues are involved in this question. If we become Anglicized we shall certainly cease to be wearers of khadi. Modern culture is, in effect, materialistic and opposed to the claims of *atman*. By becoming Anglicized, we shall be adopting a system of exploiting all others in the world. Then we shall be indifferent to the condition of farmers and make brute force the basis of our existence. In that case, military expenditure, etc., will remain unchanged. If that happens, they will have nothing to say against us.

When our wants considerably multiply, we shall be England's biggest customers and, consequently, its willing retailers, that is, agents. That England and Germany fought with each other is also a result of that same culture brought about in a different way. Both wanted to exploit weak nations and both wanted the largest share; hence the conflict. But there is a big difference between that fight and our fight. Theirs was a confrontation of equals, so there was no question of self-respect. We, of course, are conscious of our self-res-pect every moment. Once we adopt the culture of Europe, there will be no possibility of a conflict between Englishmen and us as long as we remain the customers of England. Englishmen repeatedly tell us that we are not yet fit to manage our own affairs; this is far from being absolute hypocrisy. Many believe and say that as long as our culture remains distinct, we shall not be qualified to carry on Government in accordance with the European system. How is it that South Africa, etc., have complete autonomy? Observers may see for themselves that since the whites there swear by the same culture, they have become England's agents. England sells its goods through those whites, hence it has no need to post its own men there. No one should believe that the same blood flows in their veins. If the whites of South Africa would now turn selfless and give first priority to the interests of the Negroes, England would feel embarrassed and worried despite the fact that the former are whites. Our experience tells us that, when some

Englishmen adopt such a selfless attitude, English society boycotts them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-7-1924

176. MY NOTES

SHRI INDULAL'S LETTER

I believe everyone has read Shri Indulal Yagnik's open letter to me. One sees clearly the spirit of patriotism in every line of this letter. Nowhere can one notice even a shadow of discourtesy. One does not like to point out blemishes, if at all there are any, in an article written with such a good intention. A feeling persists in my heart that it would be a sin to offer any reply to this letter. Is not refraining from reply the perfect answer to it? Shri Indulal's curiosity is endless. He wishes to find out the logical conclusion of every question. He is a born soldier and hence out for adventure. Just as he wishes to know everything, he wishes to do everything. Because of his excessive attachment to a cause, he does not feel even for a moment that there are things beyond his capacity. Can attachment recognize any limit? What can attachment not do? Hence, instead of setting a limit himself, he has left it to God to do it. This is as much a virtue as a weakness. In this letter I find him under the influence of both.

I for one welcome from him such a letter written out of love. I take this and similar articles as warnings to me. I learn patience from them and I come to understand my limitations.

It is not that I have given no thought to any of the drawbacks or arguments that Shri Indulal has brought to my notice. I have politely placed before the people the decision I have reached after full deliberation. In this weekly I have already cleared most of the doubts arising therefrom and shall give further clarification as occasion demands. Nevertheless, in regard to what I cannot explain, I shall merely say: "please find the rest of my explanation in my conduct."

HUMOUR

A correspondent writes:[1]

Let the gentleman[2] from Dharwar submit if he likes an account

[1] The letter is not translated here.

[2] Who wrote to Gandhiji in June 1924, saying that his annual expense on all

of his clothes expense. But I should like myself to solve to some extent the correspondent's problem. Innocent replies should be given to innocent queries. Since this correspondent has indulged in an innocent joke, I wish to share with him the pleasure of the joke. Instead of that gentleman from Dharwar, I intend to undertake myself the contract of supplying clothes to this correspondent. Only this much change will have to be made. No one can enter into a contract to supply for Rs. 15 clothes worth Rs. l,000. We can know from the Dharwar gentleman how many clothes he will need. He has been spending on his clothes Rs. 15 a year. I probably spend not even Rs. 3. The cost of my loin-cloth does not appreciably exceed this amount. Of course, I could do with only one towel while in jail. It served my need for over a year. Again, since I am used to having a separate handkerchief for the nose, I could improvise it from the superfluous parts of my loin-cloth. I have not exhausted the stock of this surplus material even now. But I do not ask this correspondent to feel satisfied with a loin-cloth. Nevertheless he will not need waistcoats, coats or costly dhotis. As a bedsheet cannot be included in clothes, according to his own calculation a long shirt will cost Rs. 4, a short dhoti Rs. 3, a towel Re. 1, caps Re. l, that is a total expense of Rs. 9. If this correspondent does not mind imitating one who has Gujarat's helm in his hands,[1] he can do without a cap and may thus save a rupee. Satisfied with the above clothes as his dress, if he sends me what is saved out of Rs. 34,[2] I shall utilize it for the relief of people reduced to skeletons in Orissa or elsewhere. Clothes are meant to conceal the body as well as to protect it from cold and heat. Considering the question from this point of view, we do not need more clothes than a short dhoti reaching up to the knee, a long shirt and a cap. In the climatic conditions of our country, coats and waist-coats are a mere burden. Motilalji does not feel ashamed to attend the Central Legislative Assembly dressed in a long shirt, a short dhoti and a cap. The Deshbandhu's[3] dress does not consist of any more items. The only difference in the Ali Brothers' dress is that they wear trousers instead of dhotis. This correspondent has suggested one wrong thing. One need never wear dirty clothes for the sake of the country. He who himself washes with due care his dhoti and long shirt needs no soap at all or very little of it. Dirtiness is a sign of idleness. It

his clothes, which were made from khaddar, came to Rs. 15 as against Rs. 50 when he used foreign cloth

[1] Gandhiji has in mind Vallabhbhai Patel.

[2] The correspondent had stated in his letter that one had to spend, in spite of economy, Rs. 34 a year on one's clothes, all of khaddar.

[3] C. R. Das

has nothing to do with patriotism. It is the special duty of a khadi-wearer to keep his clothes white as milk. Yes, it is true that in that case there will be no room for superfluous clothes. And even if one wants to have them, the expense on soap or a washerman is bound to go up.

"SPIN, SPIN, SPIN'

A Maharashtrian gentleman writes:[1]

I place this correspondent's example before every Gujarati brother and sister. Those who firmly hold the faith that India can win true swaraj only through peaceful means have no need at all to employ other means. Swaraj through peaceful means is possible only when the people have single-minded devotion to a common mission. Violence becomes unavoidable when some people become impatient and coerce others who do not co-operate with them. This, of course, is not swaraj. It is nothing but falling out of the frying pan into the fire. It is not likely to benefit the millions of our people reduced to skeletons. On the contrary, they will be unwilling victims at a sacrifice. The custom of offering human beings as a sacrifice, which is considered a thing of the past, will be revived. This custom undoubtedly persists in Europe. What else are the recent terrible wars there if not human sacrifice? If they take place in India, they will involve millions, because they are not courageous enough to resist them.

At the present juncture, when there are many people with wavering minds, when there is mutual hatred, when there is intolerance of criticism, when allegations know no bounds, silence is the golden path. But work should be there along with silence, and that work is the plying of spinning-wheels.

To think that others will not spin at all is mere illusion. Like the question of others eating, this question also must not arise. If I have faith in myself, why should I bother about others? If others do not spin, we should make it a point to spin all the moreourselves on their behalf. If this happens, it will easily infect others.

EXAGGERATION

A correspondent writes:[2]

[1] The letter is not translated here.

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that Gandhiji wished that all should cook and spin for themselves, but had wanted to know whether Gandhiji wanted everyone to be self-dependent in respect of all work.

This is a very illusive argument and hence deserves to be rejected. A man is born dependent. If he were not born that way, his pride would have no limit. Leading an ascetic's life is the highest state of dependence, because an ascetic has to live on what others give him. This state enables him to secure the freedom of the *atman* and to realize its identity with the Supreme. We may do everything ourselves to avoid giving trouble to others, we may do without a thing which we cannot make, but a man who attempts to do all his work himself merely to prove his claim of self-dependence finally ends up as a self-willed individual. We wish to see the whole of society self-sufficient in the matter of food and clothing. People have become dependent on others in regard to cloth and hence they doubt whether they can again become self-dependent in that respect. So I advise every man and woman to become self-dependent in respect of cloth. It is likely that society can become self-sufficient only after individuals become self-dependent. The attempt to become self-dependent in matters other than this will halt the great, universal and essential endeavour in respect of cloth. Suppose that we can make for ourselves our own soap, pencils, pens, inkstand, etc., in addition to making cloth, we shall find that only one or two of us can do so; but that will not remove India's poverty.

To eradicate India's poverty, just the opposite course must be adopted. That is to say, people must give up all other unnecessary activities and try to make India self-sufficient in regard to cloth by spinning with their own hands. We have for years been doing wrong in our activities. Some say they will deliver India from bondage by starting soap mills, others say they will do so by starting lock factories, or leather works or bamboo-mat factories. This indicates the misdirected activities of society. It is only when we concentrate our minds firmly on one objective and become engrossed in the task of implementing it that we can achieve swaraj. I have found that such an objective is only the spinning-wheel activity, and hence I keep on harping on the theme. Hitherto no one has been able to point out to me any other activity comparable to it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-7-1924

177. PROFITS IN WEAVING

A correspondent writes to me in detail about his experience as a weaver. Omitting the details, I reproduce the substance here:[1]

It is clear that others cannot have such good opportunities or experiences. But this account and the others that I have already published show that, given perseverance and skill, weaving provides a means of livelihood.

He writes further:[2]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-7-1924

178. NEW TYPE OF SPINNING-WHEEL

We find a note on a new type of spinning-wheel in the newspapers of Bombay. The Khadi Board has been asked to examine this wheel. So far no one has to our knowledge been able to make a spinning-wheel capable of turning out yarn with greater ease or of better quality. We see several types of spinning-wheels with negligible points of difference, but one need not give them any importance.

I urge every lover of khadi not to buy any "new type of spinning-wheel" which has not been approved by the Khadi Board. Many spinning-wheels of a new type have proved utterly useless and belied the claims advanced in their behalf. As things stand now, we are in a position to say that no one can supersede the old spinning-wheel once a few changes are introduced in it. It would be, therefore, good if no one goes in for any "new type of spinning-wheel". If someone comes across a miraculous spinning-wheel, he should send it to the Khadi Board for inspection. He may propagate it or buy it only if the Board has approved of it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-7-1924

[1] This is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that two people knowing all about weaving and working for 8 or 9 hours a day could easily earn Rs. 2 to Rs. 3, on an average. He himself had found spinning and weaving very good leisure-time work.

[2] This is not translated here. He had added that he bought 3 or 4 maunds of cotton which provided cloth for 8 or 9 members of his family. His annual expense on clothes in 1922 exceeded Rs. 300, whereas now that he and his family had started spinning and weaving, it totalled only Rs. 40 or Rs. 50.

179. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

Ashadh Vad 4 [*July 20, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I have your postcard. Mahadev told me yesterday that your article on Simla had been sent to you by Swami, who added that it was twenty days since it was sent. Have you not received it? I shall inquire about the passage you have mentioned. I can't say anything about my going to Simla. Even the date for my visit to the Punjab is not yet decided. And you are asking me to go to Simla. But you are neither a lord, nor a Governor, nor [Lord] Reading. Your invitation, therefore, stands no chance of acceptance.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat *of* the Gujarati original: C.W. 6016. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

180. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Ashadh Vad 6 [*July 22, 1924*][2]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. You may come whenever you wish. God will do only what is good. I would advise you not to bring your son's daughter with you. Let the husband and wife do whatever they deem proper. The father is welcome to bring the daughter and leave her

[1] The article on Simla referred to in the letter was published in *Young India* in September 1924. In that year *Ashadh Vad* 4 fell on July 20.

[2] Earlier letters in this volume to the addressee suggest that this letter also was written in 1924. In that year *Ashadh Vad* 6 fell on July 22.

here. If you bring her now there is a possibility of the estrangement widening.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6017. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

181. LETTER TO INDRA VIDYAVACHASPATI

Ashadh Krishna 6 [*July 22, 1924*][1]

CHI. INDRA,

I have your second letter. I hope you have got my reply to your earlier letter. I have received the file too. I am very impatient to reach Delhi.[2] Because of the doctors' warning I have postponed my journey. I will reach there as soon as possible.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

PROF. INDRA
"ARJUN" OFFICE
DELHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4858. Courtesy: Chandragupta Vidyalankar

182. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

[*July 23, 1924*][3]

BHAI FULCHAND,

I have your letter. There is only one way for you. The management are pledged to take the untouchables into that school[4]. That pledge cannot be broken. You must welcome the untouchables, and if, in consequence, all the students leave the school you should put up with it. If the management hand over the building to you and want to establish another school, they may do so. How can the

[1] In response to a call from Mahomed Ali, Gandhiji left for Delhi on August 16, 1924. In that year *Ashadh Krishna 6* fell on July 22.

[2] *Ibid*

[3] The postmark bears this date

[4] The national school of Wadhwan in Kathiawar

principles proclaimed when the foundation was laid be now set aside? I shall certainly write a note on this in *Navajivan*[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Do not give up your peace, patience and humility

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2821. Courtesy: Shardabehn Shah

183. THE PLIGHT OF TEACHERS

After describing the declining condition of national schools in a district, where out of fourteen seven have died out and the rest are sinking, and where attendance is reduced from 2,000 to 500, the headmaster of one of them writes:

> To be frank, the hearts of many of us, teachers of the national schools, sink when they think of their half-starved families and their crushing debts, and misgivings arise as to whether it is wise or foolish for a man embarrassed with debts to undergo so much suffering and whether it is advisable or not to serve the country in other ways than as starving schoolmasters, I should mention here that some of these teachers gave up at the call of their country much more lucrative situation.

This tale of woe need not frighten us. Nations are made after much travail. Either we must die like flies in an armed rebellion, then submit to military autocracy and, in the distant and dim future, hope to have democratic rule; or by patient, natural, unperceived suffering evolve as a self-ruling, self-respecting nation. It is by sufferings such as the correspondent describes that we shall find a remedy for the difficulties that face us. These constitute the real training in swaraj. The fault is not wholly the parents'. It is in our surroundings. We have not yet learnt the virtue of sustained work in defiance of all odds. Teachers are the centre round whom the whole of the national education system must revolve. If they lose their balance, the system must topple. But the teachers have been inexperienced. They have not all had the unquenchable fire for keeping alive the taste for national education. They have not the organizing ability, nor the power of concentration and consecration. Everywhere the workers, instead of specializing in one branch of service, have dabbled in everything with

[1] *Vide* "Religion on Trial", 27-7-1924.

the result that they have been able to do nothing thoroughly. But this was inevitable. We are new to the game. Our rulers have trained us as clerks and put us to work requiring little thinking and less initiative. But the old order is changing. In the first flush of enthusiasm we seemed to be doing well, if not very well. No v that the enthusiasm has died out and the moisture of public support has dried up, only the hardiest plants will survive. Let me hope the schools and the schoolmasters that still remain are of the right stuff. They must beg from door to door for maintenance and not feel ashamed if they are honest workers. The headmaster has asked also specific questions, which being of general utility, I copy and answer below.

Q. How long can the poor teachers, embarrassed with increasing debts, continue to have connection with these schools working on starvation allowance?

A. Till death, even as a soldier fights till he is Victorious or, which is the same thing, drops down dead.

Q. How long will the authorities continue these schools at a great at loss of money, if even I per cent of the people do not want them?

A. No school has a right to exist if the people do not want it. But I would blame the authorities if the people who brought a school into being afterwards do not want it.

Q. Education can be suspended and workers can suffer for one year or two years or three years, but what will be the case if the fight for swaraj continues for an indefinite period?

A. Those who can suffer for one to three years will find themselves inured to suffering for thirty years.

Q. How can the few boys that really want national education read where no national school exists?

A. If the parents or the boys or girls, for that matter, are resourceful, they will find out a way. It is a superstition to think that education can only be had at schools or only through English or in a particular, orthodox style. To learn spinning and weaving is an education of first-class importance at the present moment. Let us also remember that the majority of Indian villages have no schools at all.

Q. How long should our countrymen be allowed to vote for a resolution which they will never carry out in practice? All will vote for boycott of Government schools but very few of these voters will send their boys to national schools.

A. Not one minute longer than I can help. All my fight in the A.I.C.C. was directed towards our being true to our resolutions.

I know that the replies I have given will be considered unsatisfactory by many. But I dare say that they are the only correct and practical answers. We must do away with camouflage. If the nation as a whole does not want national schools in answer to the boycott of (not supplementary to) Government schools, it must be altered. The minority that may still want the boycott must make good their desire by running their own national schools, but not under the Congress *aegis*. These schools will be run only where they are wanted. If there be only one such school, it will continue without being disheartened. Faith knows no disappointment.

Young India, 24-7-1924

184. NOTE ON C. F. ANDREWS'S ARTICLE[1]

For a fuller account of the effects of the poet's humanitarian and peace-giving mission, I cannot do better than refer the reader to the excellent Viswa-Bharati bulletins on the visit issued by the editors of the *Viswa-Bharati* Magazine.

Young India, 24-7-1924

185. WHAT TO DO WITH THE YARN?

The Khadi Board continues to receive queries as to the use to be made of the yarn that is to be delivered to it by Congress representatives. In accordance with the Congress resolution, every representative has to send at least 2,000 yards of well-twisted, even yarn per month. It is in the nature of a subscription. But all kinds of questions are being raised. Some members want to keep the yarn themselves and have it woven for personal wear. It is an excellent idea but, at the present moment, I would suggest suppression of that desire. The efficacy of any programme depends upon uniformity and punctuality and the magnitude of execution. It is the volume that counts. But the volume is impossible if each member wants to act according to his own wish. Whilst. there is much to be said in favour of each member spinning for his own clothing, at the present moment much more is to be said in favour of co-operative spinning. The cost of sending the yarn is of no consequence when it is remembered that parcels are to

[1] This followed Andrews's article "India in the Far East" which, among other things, gave an account of Rabindranath Tagore's visit to Japan.

be made up in each province and despatched to the Central Board. But look at the advantages:

(1) Monthly return of yarn.

(2) Check from month to month on the quality of spinning and consequent possibility of improvement.

(3) Check upon danger of slackness on the part of spinners.

(4) A healthy rivalry between spinners and provinces as to the quantity and quality.

(5) The certainty of cheapening the price of khaddar if the response of the Congressmen is at all in accordance with the resolution.

My advice to the Khaddar Board will be to have all the yarn woven where it can be done cheapest unless each province would prefer to have it locally woven. The khaddar should be sold at very low rates to the poor in famine areas at the discretion of the Board. It can be sold to the spinners at concession rates if they so desire. But it is really too early at this stage to decide finally as to the disposal of the khaddar manufactured from the yarn. Much must depend upon the quantity received. I suggest to those who are anxious to wear khaddar woven from yarn of their own spinning that it is much more meritorious to pool the whole yarn and for individuals to receive khaddar equal in weight to their own yarn. Under the circumstances created by the A.I.C.C. resolution, the desire to wear khaddar of self-spun yarn will be regarded selfish in comparison to its gift to the common fund. Lastly, no member is bound to send more than 2,000 yards of yarn if he does not wish to. He may give half an hour to the nation and keep another half hour's labour for his own use. Let me say to novices that many have already finished their quota of 2,000 yards. And those who are giving all their spare time to spinning hope to go beyond 10,000 yards. Some members of the staff of the Gujarat Vidyapith, though not Congress representatives, are spinning 5,000 yards each per month of which they will give 3,000 to the nation and collect the remaining 2,000 for their personal use. I would urge the Congress men and women, whether representatives or others, for the time being willingly and whole-heartedly to fall in with the national project, imperfect though it may appear to them to be. They will find that it will become perfect by reason of hearty co-operation. No scheme has yet been produced by the human brain which has not contained flaws or which has not been criticised. But practical wisdom

consists in helping the execution of a scheme which has commended itself to the majority. Every objection must not be raised to the dignity of conscience. Fundamentals are very few indeed In any case, there can be no question of conscience in deciding whether it is better to pool 2,000 yards of yarn or reserve it for one's own use.

Young India, 24-7-1924

186. A GLOOMY PICTURE

A Mussalman correspondent writes thus feelingly from Amritsar:

> The free fights between Hindus and Mussalmans in Upper India which have become almost a daily occurrence indicate the complete inability of the two slave nations to find a solution of their domestic problems, more so their inability to assume responsibility of governing a vast country composed of many heterogeneous elements.
>
> Your efforts at bridging the gulf were no doubt successful, but the warring elements reappeared soon after your incarceration. Where before your incarceration there existed fellow-feeling and sympathy between the two for their having been long neighbours, today there is disunion and discord. All the big towns of the Punjab are cockpits for both the nations and there appears to be no prospect of the old relations ever being restored.
>
> Will you please think out a remedy before the disease becomes incurable? Please do come to the Punjab and see things for yourself Your zest for khaddar is useless unless and until you have restored the old conditions. Amritsar which saw the glorious days of 1919 is today a picture of gloom. Out of nearly two hundred thousand people hardly 50 would be found wearing khadi, and even these do so because they must, holding as they do Congress offices. All this is due to the Hindu-Muslim tension. Remove tile curse and everything will be all right. Alas, the foundation of *sangthan* was laid at a most inauspicious moment.

There is no doubt that the picture given by the correspondent is exaggerated. If there are free fights between Hindus and Mussalmans daily in the Punjab, it must be a most difficult place to live in today. But I have no doubt that at least outwardly the Punjab is as peaceful as any other province in India. Nor is the correspondent correct when he lays everything at the door of the *sangathan*. It has no doubt aggravated the disease which was already there. Both the communities have lost their balance.

If the Punjabis have given up khaddar because of the tension, their love of khaddar or of the country could only be skin-deep. But as I do not think that they have less love of the country than the others, the cause of the decline of khaddar must be sought elsewhere. The obvious cause lies in the want of faith in the necessity of khaddar for swaraj and the desire for the soft life which the muslin and the calico denote. Of all the provinces, the Punjab is today able to carry out the boycott of foreign cloth if it wishes. But it does not. I have heard it said that many Hindus decline to wear khaddar because it is woven by the Mussalman weavers and the Mussalmans refuse to wear it because they say they are not interested in swaraj; they want to drive away the English but they want to revive the old Mussalman rule. And it is contended the old Mussalman rule cannot be revived if the charkha binds both Hindus and Mussalmans to a common ideal. These I regard as vapourings of heated brains. The poor Hindus and the poor Mussalmans have no time to think of the things mentioned above. They will gladly add a few rupees to their annual income which spinning does.

Apart, however, from the decline of the khaddar and from the exaggerations of the correspondent, the seriousness of the tension cannot be denied, The break-down at Delhi of the authority of the leaders is too glaring to be slurred over.

Fortunately, there are already indications of reviving sanity. The Jats and the butchers are reported to have realized the folly of breaking one another's heads and to have made peace. But the most hopeful news comes from correspondents who tell me that, if there were frenzied men bent on slaughter, there were also sane men and women bent on saving. These instances are not isolated but sufficiently numerous to show that love of peace was at least as keen between the two communities as the love of war. The latter is not natural. It is like a carbuncle. But peace persists. The two sections have simply to make up their minds to respect each others' religious customs and the rest will be easy. So far as asking me to go to the Punjab is concerned, it is an open secret that I am pining to go there as well as the other places where tension exists. The spirit is willing, the flesh alone is weak. As soon as I can undertake travels with any degree of safety, I propose in the company of Maulana Shaukat Ali to visit Sand and the Punjab.

Young India, 24-7-1924

187. AFFLICTED SOUTH

The monsoons are playing an exasperating trick. The South is submerged and the North is pining for the rains. There is a heart-rending wire from South Canara which says: 'Devastating floods again. Forty feet above normal. River level only four feet below last year's.' Then follows a detailed account of families rendered homeless; people fleeing terror-struck in all directions. The volunteers were hoping that the relief work done by them after last year's floods would put the starving families on their feet again. Now the hope is perhaps blasted. It will be remembered that the volunteers were organising families by giving them spinning and carding work. Nature however has more misery in store for the poor homeless families. No wonder Mr. Sadashiv Rao[1] appeals for help. Let us hope that the effect of the floods is not so serious as the account before me suggests. Detailed and accurate information is eagerly awaited.

Young India, 24-7-1924

188. WAR AGAINST OPIUM

The White Cross is an international anti-narcotic society whose headquarters are in Washington. It appears to have branches all over the world. Its letter-head contains distinguished names as trustees or standing council. Its executive secretary, Mr. McKibben, writes a long letter urging me to secure India's co-operation in the White Cross crusade against opium. I cull the following passages from the letter:

> The people of China resisted its invasion in two wars and in 1906 took the first opportunity in a century and a half to gain deliverance by pulling up or ploughing under the poppy on millions of acres. So long and so binding had been their enslavement that it was predicted that at any attempt to take opium away the Chinese people would rise in insurrection. Spence, an English writer, said in 1882 that "revolution would result if the Chinese Government would undertake suppression of the growth of the poppy, the quiet seaports would be turned into hell, streets would run with blood." So far were these dire forecasts from coming true that no action of the Chinese Government was ever so popular as its determined and successful campaign for poppy destruction. It

[1] Karnad Sadashiv Rao (188l-1937); lawyer, social worker and Congress loader of South Kanara; four times President, Karnatak Provincial Congress Committee

became a fervent, sweeping, religious movement. In a thousand cities and villages old smokers stacked up their pipes in piles as high as the houses as a burnt offering to Heaven. Jubilant processions, music and banners, voiced the general thanksgiving, while women wept tears of joy that the century-old curse was lifted.

Their rejoicings were short-lived. The British Government kept its promise to cease importing opium but, as has happened before and since, as you too well know, the Western world kept the word of promise to the ear but broke it to the heart. In place of opium there was poured upon devoted China a flood of morphine, heroin and cocaine, ten times worse. In this atrocity, I blush to say, the United States was a participant until a recent day. In consequence of chaotic conditions, military chieftains have now forced upon unwilling Chinese farmers, a renewal of poppy planting, excusing themselves because native opium is better than foreign morphine. Those who know China best believe that her fundamentally sound conscience will again respond when the nations give them support and will again rid their land of opium.

It is universally recognized that no one nation can save itself. Opium products are so compact, so easily concealed and the wages of the traffic so enormous that, as long as the drugs are produced, they will find their consumers. The American Congress has accordingly appealed to all nations to unite in suppressing the opium poppy and the cocaine shrub, reserving only such amounts as are considered necessary in medicine and science. A Conference has been agreed on to meet in Geneva in November 1924, to put into effect this proposal. This Conference will be vested with authority whereby it may, if it will, inaugurate measures that will deliver the world from the menace.

The question is now before the world, how may this Narcotic Conference be brought to act in the spirit as well in the letter of this mandate? Shall they meet the world's hopes or blast them? To you, Sir, I need not name one all-powerful agency that may be invoked, namely, the power of public opinion, the focussing of the world's conscience and conviction upon the meetings of that Conference.

The organization of which I have the honour to be a representative, the White Cross International Anti-narcotic Society, is seeking a voicing of public opinion and conscience, focussing it upon the November Conference in a way to move them irresistibly to use the opportunity providentially in their hands and rid the world of its greatest physical menace.

The experience of China should convince India that fears which have sometimes been expressed of "Oriental revolt" against "deprivation of opium"

will prove groundless in India as they did in China It is perhaps not strange that some representatives of the British Government in India fear that India is so wedded to opium that "serious consequences would follow any attempt to take it away". There is far less danger of this in India than in China India has never become enslaved to the extent of China, even though its victims have largely been those on whom the whole future depends, namely the babies doped by their mothers day after day while the mother are at work in the factories Indian ladies, who are devoted social workers, say this practice is well-nigh universal. If "revolt" is apprehended, it would seem to a friendly observer most likely to be a revolt of the people against a Governmental policy which poisons to death the babies in their mothers' alms, or leaves them alive as if born old, pallid, emaciated, stunted, blasted in body and hopeless of future, the motive being that the Government might get the revenues "which it needs".

The world can never be delivered until India saves herself by ceasing to poison her own oncoming generations and by ceasing to pour her opium into the veins of other nations. For the sake of India and of the world, we lay before Mr. Gandhi and the people of India this our request for expressions of their mind such as will convince the coming Opium Conference that India both seeks deliverance from her own opium enslavement and joins hands for the redemption of the world . . .

Furthermore, may we ask what is lie wish of the people of India as to who shall be their representatives ant spokesmen at the Opium Conference? In previous meetings, have the convictions of India been accurately voiced? Whether sent unofficially or, as would be more fitting, clothed with full powers of representation, we would suggest that India send some of her bat sons to speak for her that the world may know her mind. If in any way our organization can assist in bringing before the Conference the expressions of Indian conviction, we shall be at your service.

The White Cross may rely upon India's co-operation in its noble work. The A.I.C.C. has only recently unanimously passed a resolution which places on record its emphatic condemnation of the opium policy of the Government of India. If every poppy plant were rooted out, there would be no protest in the land against the act. The people will certainly rejoice when the whole of the revenue from intoxicating drinks and drugs is stopped, their sale absolutely prohibited except strictly as medicines to be sold by certificated chemists or druggists.

But unfortunately for us and the world, India's opinion is today represented by a Government that does not represent its people. At the

forthcoming convention, therefore, it will not be the people of India that will be represented, but it would be the foreign rule over India that will be represented, in the interests not so much of humanity as chiefly of its revenue. Whether it would serve any useful purpose to send an unofficial representative, such as Mr. Andrews, truly representing the people, is a matter to be considered by the A.I.C.C.

Let us, however, see what the goal of the humanitarian crusade is. Miss La Motte has shown by unchallengeable figures that the world's production of opium is far in excess of its medical requirements and that so long as it continues, so long will the immoral and soul-destroying traffic in it continue in spite of efforts to the contrary. She has shown, too, that the Government of India is the greatest culprit in the matter. The goal cannot be reached till the Government of India honestly carries out the wish of the best mind of the world, immediately to reduce the cultivation of opium in its jurisdiction to the lowest term possible and without counting the cost. The Government of India alone has blocked the way and it is feared that it will do so again. And it will do so not because India wishes, but because she is helpless.

Young India, 24-7-1924

189. IN FULFILMENT OF PROMISE

When Mr. M. K. Acharya wrote his open letter to me, I promised to attempt a reply to it in these pages. I am sorry that I was not able to do so earlier. Having very carefully read the letter, there is not much room for difference. My fortunate position is that I am able to look at things from my opponent's standpoint and share his views to that extent. It is, however, my unfortunate position that I do not always succeed in inducing them to look at things from my stand-point. If I could, we should have? delightful agreement even in our differences.

With the presentation of causes and the origin of non-co-operation, there is tolerable agreement between Mr. Acharya and me. But on the construction of Congress resolutions we differ. But I should agree with him from his standpoint that the preamble to my resolution before the A.I.C.C. goes beyond the letter of some Congress resolutions. But much water has since flown under the Kaveri bridge (shall I say?) I invite him to study the previous A.I.C.C. resolutions

and he will find the preamble adumbrated there. I thought the adoption of the charkha was held to be an indespensable prelimi-nary to civil disobedience. The conditions have been repeatedly laid down in resolutions. There was enough opposition at the last A.I.C.C. to many things, but not a voice was raised against the preamble, for the simple reason that almost every one had previously acknowledged the necessity of the charkha for the purpose of civil disobedience. I hold that I was, therefore, justified in introducing the preamble.

On merits, I must reiterate my belief that, without hand-spinning becoming universal, there will be no swaraj *in terms of the masses.* It is true that we were hand-spinning before we came under foreign rule. But we did not then know the national necessity of it. Do we not often neglect our lungs by inhaling impure air? When, however, they become bad, we realize their necessity as well as that of pure air. Return to the spinning-wheel means so much organization, so much co-operation, so much saving of money and so much distribution of it among the masses and so much removal of temptation from the way of the Englishmen, that it surprises me to find anyone question the possibility of establishing swaraj through the spinning-wheel. I need hardly point out that I have not suggested the spinning-wheel under every circumstance to every nation for the attainment of swaraj. Mr. Acharya will see that he argued against the charkha from premises I have not advanced.

Then take the Councils. I do not deny the use, to some extent of Councils. All I contend is that they are of no consequence to the masses. And since the Congress to remain national must mainly represent the masses and present a programme in which masses car freely participate, I submit that wisdom lies in keeping the boycott intact. The soundness of my proposition will be realized in the same proportion as we descend to and identify ourselves with the masses. The lawyers and the Councillors, if they will appreciate the truth of what I am saying, can serve the masses and belong to the Congress without aspiring to executive offices.

The evil is not in the programme. The evil lies in our mutual distrust, intolerance, want of imagination and hankering after office. If both the parties will cease to want power and learn merely to serve, the programme of non-co-operation will be found to be the only true national programme. Is it difficult to realize that the majority of villages that are outside the influence of the rail-roads know nothing

of law-courts, schools or Councils and are boycotters of necessity? If we who want to serve them will discard the Government influence, there is hope for these millions of villagers. If we do not do so, the truth of a remark seriously made by an able patriot will be realized. He said:

> I do not believe your programme because I do not feel as you do for the masses. Rather than that they should die of starvation and plague, I would sacrifice them on the battle-field by simply driving them to it. It will be a reluctant sacrifice, it is true, but it is necessary. When these millions who are merely a burden to society are made to die on the battle-field, India will be a land worth living in. It will be a free India containing only free men, not starvelings and helots.

I told the friend that his argument was irresistible if I could accept . his premises. But, as we could not accept each other's premises, we agreed to differ, respected each other's conclusions and parted the best of friends. For me I must sink or swim with the lowest of my countrymen. If Mr. Acharya can be induced to realize this position, he will find that I am the same person he knew me in 1920.

Young India, 24-7-1924

190. NOTES

TO P. B.

I must apologize for having delayed my reply to your questions. Here it is:

(1) I do advocate a prohibitive import duty on foreign cloth even though it may only benefit home mills and not khaddar. I am impatient to bring about a total boycott of foreign cloth. I do not dread the home mill competition with khaddar, for I know that our mills are today not in a position to supply India's requirements. But supposing they do, I should not hesitate for the sake of protecting the masses, to protect khaddar against our mills as I would now protect them against foreign competition. My study of the figures goes to show that boycott of foreign cloth will equally benefit both our mills and hand-spun khaddar.

(2) Protection of khaddar I do not regard as compulsion just as I would not regard prohibition of drink as compulsion. It is no part of the duty of the State to countenance for the sake of a minority what

public opinion regards as detrimental to the moral or the material well-being of the people as a whole.

(3) I do not dread foreign capital or foreigners coming to India if they do not, as now, receive favoured treatment in a variety of ways. We are well able to hold our own in fair and equal competition.

(4) I am personally opposed to great trusts and concentration of industries by means of elaborate machinery. But at the present moment I am concerned with destroying the huge system of exploitation which is ruining India. If India takes to khaddar and all it means, I do not lose the hope of India taking only as much of the modern machinery system as may be considered necessary for the amenities of life and for life-saving purposes.

ACHARYA GIDWANI

Shrimati Gangabai Gidwani has received the following from her husband:

> The Superintendent has been good enough to allow me to write a two-page letter to you. My privilege letter will be due at the end of the next month. I have ready nothing much to communicate that will be allowed to go. My health is perfectly good. Do not believe any rumours to the contrary. I have got wed to my room and I get quite good food, I am given a seer of milk and a chatak of ghee from the jail and I sendfor pumpkin and potatoes from the bazaar. Sometimes I send for mangoes also. Nothing else is available here. I was given a charpai but I refused it because, you know, I always prefer to sleep on the even hard floor in the embrace of Mother Earth. I was also offered the privilege of half an hour morning and evening outside my room; but I declined the offer as I think it will only make me feel the confinement of the remaining 23 hours the more. I am spending eight hours a day in reading, six in sleep, three in spinning, four in walking and exercise and the rest in cooking, eating and whiling away. I have been given a prisoner to help me in cooking and cleaning. I used to be given all letters and parcels received for me. But owing to some misunderstanding, they were stopped three weeks ago. I am glad to inform you, however, that the Superintendent has been good enough to restore this, the sweetest of all my privileges, I trust that you will now send me daily accounts of the progress you are making in your studies, the children's health and all about relations and friends. Please thank Bapu, Jivat, Kodu, Champaneria, Karamchand, Valecha, for their letters. I hope you are spinning regularly and that you have not neglected your Hindi. Two pages art finished.

Under the above heading, the indefatigable Mr. B. F. Bharucha has issued a report of his tour in Bengal. It is a business-like and instructive document. I pass by the paragraph bemoaning the fact that, had the Ahmedabad mills not played false during the Partition days, Bengal would today be wholly swadeshi; also the fact that, at Serajganj Swadeshi Exhibition, the khadi was bastard khadi except at Dr. P. C. Ray's stall. I pass by Mr. Bharucha's appeal to Deshbandhu Das asking him to insist upon his Satyagrahis wearing khaddar and to set apart a number of workers for pure khaddar organization. But I must let Mr. Bharucha speak in his own enthusiastic manner of the splendid work being done by Dr. Ray and his able lieutenant, Babu Satis Chandra Dasgupta:

> Dr. P. C. Ray is the Apostle of charkha in Bengal. Despite a weak frame and poor health, this old Professor of Chemistry is crossing fields and flooded areas to save the Bengal farmer from the ravages of famine and flood. And his panacea today is rot any Western mechanism, nor Western preparation. It is *the ancient and universal cottage wheel, the charkha.* In the flooded areas of Rajshahi, etc., Dr. Ray has saved the starving people by reviving the charkha, and by popularizing khaddar. Besides that, he started the Khaddar Board, the Khadi Pratishthan and the Deshi Rang. Fund to carry on the khaddar propaganda in Bengal. Every week he needs three thousand rupees to keep his charkhas and looms going. He has been having a fairly large stock of khaddar, and unless this is sold off regularly, it will be very difficult for old Dr. Ray to keep all the charkhas going. The revered Acharya went on his knees at the Serajganj Khaddar Exhibition, and begged of the audience to buy khadi. Will not Bengal—patriotic, sensitive, swadeshi Bengal—respond to the clarion call of her devoted son: 'Buy khadi and keep the charkhas going?' Dr. Ray has given away even his savings (Rs. 40,000/-), for khadi work. Verily he is the Apostle of khaddar in Bengal.
>
> I shall now give some glimpses of the spinning and weaving centres visited by me. They are Atrai, Raninagar, Talora and Sukhia (Chittagong). At Atrai they (Dr. Ray and Satish Babu) run a school for ginning, carding, spinning, dyeing and weaving. They also have a dispensary and a small hospital which is a real boon to villagers. Atrai is the base where they stock *kapas* and distribute it in surrounding villages for ginning, carding spinning and weaving. Atrai had an old silk industry, which was practically killed by the East India Company. Here we saw the charkhas plying again; and the yarn was good. A boy that had appeared at the Matriculation Examination could ply the

charkha very well. At Raninagar we saw the handlooms working. Whilst it was pleasant to see them running, it was painful to see the weavers clad in foreign cloth, and worse still, making their own clothes from mill or foreign yarn! They promised to discontinue this. At Talora, we saw the spinning and weaving centres. At all these places, there was much enthusiasm for the charkha and the loom. Even girls of seven and eight could spin so well. We had a sort of spinning competition, and nearly a dozen girls came forward spontaneously. Even old women joined them. The males were silent spectators and we obtained from them a pledge not to buy foreign cloth anymore. And what a splendid organization has been got up by Babu Satish Chandra Dasgupta, the able, unassuming, and indefatigable lieutenant of Dr. Ray! He has standardized the gin, the carding-bow, and the charkha. He holds stocks of these and the spare parts at the base. He is running the school where ginning, carding, spinning, and weaving are taught. Here he prepares his volunteers, workers and inspectors. He has written three booklets in Bengali for instructions to workers. He has introduced a complete system of records. There are altogether eighteen different kinds of printed books to keep a complete record of *Kapas* purchased, issued and stocked; of cotton purchased, issued, and carded; of cotton spun and of yarn woven. There are ledgers of carders, spinners and weavers. There are the weekly reports, and classified records of gins, carding-bows, charkhas and looms. There are the usual account books. The records are complete, and are very well kept. Then Satish Babu has prepared a contingent of willing and diligent workers. They leave the base early morning with two sacks across their shoulders. They carry cotton, spare parts, scales and account sheets. They look like the village postmen and are greeted as such! Nay, they are welcomed even by the purdah women. They give the cotton, take yarn, pay charges, and write up the spinners' a/c card. They repair the charkhas, give some help or instruction to that need it, and thus are means of supplementing the family's income. The weavers usually call at the centre for yarn, deliver khadi, get the charges and take away further quantity of yarn. They have their cards also, and these are regularly written up. The workers return in the evening after their village rounds, and it is a sight to see them toiling in scorching sun or heavy rain, and yet all cheerful! Satish Babu has not only put his heart and soul into the khadi work; he has even given away [rupees] three thousand at the start and rupees six thousand in June last for khadi work, and he is not a rich man. Satish Babu has prepared slides for khadi propaganda. He has written a book, with telling illustrations. May God bless pioneers and workers like Dr. P. C. Ray and his able lieutenant, Babu Satish Chandra Dasgupta! Amen!

I join mine with Mr. Bharucha's 'Amen'.

Mr. Bharucha is equally enthusiastic about the ability of the charkha to bring the Hindus and the Muslims together. Here is his paragraph:

> In Bengal all the volunteers and the workers of the Bengal Relief Committee khadi work, of the Khadi Board, the Khadi Prathishthan, and Deshi Rang Fund are almost all Hindus. And the largest numbers of those who take the benefit of these institutions are Muslims. These Hindu workers walk miles from their centres, and carry *kapas* or cotton to Muslim hamlets. They weigh the spun yarn, and pay for it; they repair the charkhas, supply parts, prepare the spinners' a/c, and give *kapas* or cotton as required. They (the Hindus) thus render such splendid brotherly service to their Muslim sisters. There is such regard and respect between the Hindu workers and Muslim spinners, weavers, and their families, that none can ever perceive or feel that they are divided by their religions. They talk and act as though they are of one race—Bengali—and of one brotherhood—of humanity. Verily, if the charkha is pushed on in other parts of the country as assiduously and amiably as is done by Satish Babu's 'boys', much of the present tension amongst Hindus and Muslims will diminish, and Heaven helping, will vanish.

OVER-PRODUCTION?

The reader will have noticed in Mr. Bharucha's report Dr. Ray's difficulty in finding purchasers for his khadi. The same complaint is lodged by Dr. Hardikar from Karnatak. I have already referred in an early issue to the stock lying idle in the Punjab. As Gujarat must stop buying much from Andhra, even Andhra may complain of over-production. The same thing applies to almost every khadi-producing province. And yet the whole stock of khadi throughout India will not be more than twenty lakhs at the outside. Compare this with crores of rupees worth of foreign stock. Is it not a sad commentary on our work and the patriotism of monied men? One millionaire can buy out the whole of the present stock of khadi and sell at cheap rates to the poor. Yes, even a patriotic mill-owner can do so without hurting himself. Tens of thousands of men and women flock to our meetings. They can buy up all the khadi in one single day without having to pauperize themselves. Public institutions can make their cloth purchases in khadi without losing anything or much. Bombay has always been to the fore in such matters. If Bombay willed it, its immense population can buy out the present surplus without much hurt to her two million pockets. But I do not wish to grumble. The fault is not the people's. In any event, it is not yet proved. It lies

at the workers' doors. We must organize sales as we organize production. The formula being each province to sell what it produces. At the same time each province must produce to its fullest capacity and send the surplus, if any, to the chief towns such as Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, etc., which will not themselves be effective producing centres. All this means organizing and thinking out. Each province must fix its own minimum sales. It would not do for spinners and workers of a province themselves to be clad in foreign or mill cloth and send their manufactures for sales. *The first step towards such organization is undoubtedly the full working of* the spinning *resolution of the A.I.C.C.*

NON-REPRESENTATIVES

It is, therefore, a matter of joy that the various provinces are endorsing the spinning resolution and organizing spinning in their own provinces. Let me hope that no province will be found wanting. But I hope no one thinks that, because the spinning resolution does not apply to him or her, he or she need not spin or send yarn to the All-India Khadi Board. The resolution is mandatory and the A.I.C.C. cannot issue mandates to the whole nation. But if it is obligatory on Congress representatives, it follows that all the other Congress members, i.e., the electors who have paid 4 as. and even others should impose the obligation on themselves and make it a point of honour to send as much hand-spun yarn as possible to the All-India Khadi Board Secretary or to the provincial representative for despatch to the central organization. If the whole nation, irrespective of parties, co-operates, it will be found that we can banish foreign cloth and with it pauperism from our midst in an incredibly short space of time. Nothing is so easy as the organization of this khadi work and if we cannot as a nation organize this simple thing, we shall organize nothing else that is constructive on any large national scale.

CLOTH OR STEEL

Acharya Ray has issued a pathetic appeal to the nation. He says in effect that, if it is good to pay one crore and a half annually for protecting steel, surely it is infinitely better to protect khadi cloth by paying a much larger bounty.

Dr. Ray says:

> But of the two industries, cloth and steel, which is of greater importance? Our cloth industry died on account of unfair foreign competition. If protection is

to be given, which industry has the strongest claim for receiving State protection? Our people are in dire want of the primary necessities of life, food and clothes. Could not our hand-spinning industry be protected by duties, from competition with imported cotton goods? But the Government would not do it. India cannot do it until she has swaraj. What the Government would not do the popular will can accomplish. It is for to say that we refuse to wear imported cotton goods. It is for we to say that we shall use only hand-spun and hand-woven khadi and thereby stop a drain of sixty crores of rupees annually. It is for us to protect our cloth industry against foreign competition.

From my experience I can say that hand-spinning has come to stay— if our countrymen will out of their patriotism bear with coarse product and costlier stuff for only a few years. I would ask you who are unconsciously paying one and a half crores to Tata steel, to consciously pay something for revival of an industry in comparison with which even Tata's steel industry is a pigmy. Our patriotism must carry us through to success during the earlier days of our struggle—till only the infant industry is established on a sure footing.

OPIUM IN ASSAM

The opium inquiry committee appointed by the Assam P.C.C. has already commenced work and examined several witnesses at Sibsagar. Many witnesses were leading men of the district and chosen from all parties. They unanimously advocated total prohibition. An experienced witness said that it was "a preposterous suggestion that opium has any prophylactic action against kala-azar or malaria". The largest number of deaths, the witness added, were among opium-eaters at Angera Khowa, a village in Sibsagar. Some witnesses gave the interesting information that temperance workers were harassed and prosecuted for "the offence of asking people not to smoke or eat opium". I hope that the committee will not be satisfied with general statements, but will collect comparative statistics about opium cultivation, opium shops, opium dens. There should also be medical evidence as to the effect of opium on the population of Assam. There should be evidence showing the effect likely to be produced by complete prohibition of opium. The report to be of use must be a veritable mine of information.

A.I.K.B.'S COMPLAINT

For the past six months the All-India Khadi Board has been asking for certain monthly returns about khadi from the provinces in order to ascertain the progress of khadi. Publicity is of the greatest

importance for stimulating production as well as sale. The Board, however, says that the only provinces that send at all regular reports are Tamil Nadu, Utkal, Punjab, Bihar and Maharashtra. Kerala has just commenced. Maharashtra figures are incomplete. From some provinces the reports received are irregular. Delhi and Burma have not even formed Khadi Boards. This is truly deplorable. The headquarters should have full figures as to all Congress activities in all its departments. Khadi is the most important of all. The provinces are, therefore, naturally expected to be up to date and accurate in the information they give. It is for instance necessary to know the quantity of khadi production in each province and in each district both under the Congress auspices and outside. Similarly, it is necessary to know the sales both local and outside the provinces, also their imports of khadi. Such work should be done with clock-work regularity. The central office should not have to send reminders. The word organization has no meaning apart from attention to every necessary detail from top to bottom and the harmonious working of all its parts.

Young India, 24-7-1924

191. LETTER TO A FRIEND

SABARMATI

July 24, 1924

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I understand the difficulty raised by you. But I still retain the opinion that my not being President will serve the cause better. Why should khadi suffer because I do not preside? There was no difficulty at Calcutta, Nagpur or Ahmedabad. My have any fear about Belgaum? Think of the effect on the country of my withdrawal after rejection of my programme. As you must have noticed, Maulana Shaukat Ali has sent me a wire. What is at the back of his mind I do not know. Probably he will be here to discuss the point. I simply want to do what is right.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: S.N. 9000

192. LETTER TO VITHALBHAI J. PATEL

SABARMATI,
July 24, 1924

SIR,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th instant. I understand that it will be equally convenient for the Corporation if r fix the date at the end of August for the receipt of the Corpo-ration address. Subject, however, to your convenience, I suggest 30th August for receiving the address. Will you please let me know the time when and the place at which I must present myself for the ceremony?

I am,

Yours faithfully,

V. J. PATEL, ESQ., BAR-AT-LAW
PRESIDENT, MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8811

193. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Ashadh Krishna 8 [*July 24, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter.

I have not yet been able to visualize how the spirit of non-violence can lead to the commission of violence. I have thought about this deeply. I also believe that, so long as we do not ourselves transcend the [three] *gunas*[2], we cannot think about this thing to our full satisfaction in all its bearings.

Swami Anand has sent you the bill for *Young India*, etc.

[1] From the reference to the bill for Young India it is evident that this was written after the letter to the addressee dated June 26, 1924. In 1924, *Ashadh Krishna* 8 fell on July 24.

[2] The three *gunas* (mental states) are *sattva* (purity), *rajas* (restlessness) and *tamas* (torpidity).

I intend to go to Delhi, but it will take some time yet. I very much wish I could go right now, but I am not yet ready to undertake physical exertion.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6018. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

194. TELEGRAM TO MAHOMED ALI[1]

[*July 26, 1924*][2]

YOUR WIRE. ANANDAN AND WANDERING BETWEEN BOMBAY AND AHMEDABAD. EXPEDITE DESPATCH MACHINERY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9003

195. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

July 26, 1924

DEAR MOTILALJI,

Here are my answers to your questions:[3]

(1) In my opinion it is open to No-changers to carry on active propaganda against C[ouncil-] entry, but I consider it to be highly inadvisable in the interest of the national cause.

(2) It is equally open to the other party, if one commences. But I would advise restraint to both.

(5) I am not now[4], and am not likely at any time, to 'work' for a majority unless work includes also spinning and[5] such like.

(6) Whatever the No-changers may or may not do, I certainly think that it is open to the Swarajists to consolidate their power by

[1] This was in reply to Mahomed Ali's telegram *of* July 25, which read: "Arrived this morning. Await your suggestions. Shall post my impressions and information soon. When may I expect my press. Waiting."

[2] In his letter to Mahomed Ali dated July 27, Gandhiji says, "You must have got both my wires yesterday." Evidently this one of them.

[3] These questions were initially put to Mahomed Ali and later sent to Gandhiji with the letter dated July 25; vide Appendix "Motilal Nehru's Letters", 25-7-1924. A draft of Gandhiji's replies on the *questionnaire* itself is available in S.N. 9002.

[4] The draft here has 'working'.

[5] The draft has 'or'.

every honourable means.

(7a) They should be all executive bodies. I do not know[1] what they are today. As I have told you, I would like to suggest amendment of the constitution to make the Congress machinery more effective.

(7b) I am certain that if the Congress is to do effective work, its executives should be in the hands of those who fully believe in and carry out the Congress programme for the time being.

I certainly think that M. M. Ali[2] should answer your questions. I am to be in Bombay 30th August. I hope you received my card[3] in reply to your last letter.[4]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

196. LETTER TO J. B. PETIT

SABARMATI,
July 26, 1924

DEAR MR. PETIT,

I have purposely delayed sending reply to your letter of the 17th ultimo which you kindly sent in reply to mine. I was hoping to find out some details of a letter I wrote to you before I was imprisoned. But I cannot trace it. Mr. Chaturvedi recollects the letter, but no trace can be found. The reference in your letter is to a letterMr. Benarasidas wrote. Mr. Benarasidas has a distinct recollection of your having promised in reply to my letter half the amount that was being paid here. I venture to suggest that Mr. Benarasidas does not need to be a whole-time officer. There is not work enough for him. As it is, he being an expert, he does more than most of us. He has literary obligations which bring him no fees and which he cannot do in Bombay without much cost. As you know, he is a simple-living man. He is, therefore, able to do here four times as much work in value as he can do in Bombay. Three-fourths of his time is devoted to overseas work. It is therefore in my opinion fit that funds specially earmarked

[1] This was missing in the draft, obviously a slip.

[2] Maulana Mahomed Ali

[3] This is not available.

[4] For Motilal Nehru's reply to this, vide Appendix "Motilal Nehru's Letters", 28-7-1924

for the purpose are utilized for his work. It is cheaper for the Association to pay for his work done from here than to have him in Bombay and pay a heavy salary. Of course, he can be sent for whenever his services are required there.

Before I ask you to place my letter before the committee, I would like, if I can, to convince you that the position suggested by me is the correct one. At the time of sending your reply will you please mind sending me names of the members of the committee so as to enable me to place my view before them too.

Yours sincerely,

M.K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9978

197. LETTER TO W. POTON

July 26, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. The current issue of *Y.I.* gives my considered opinion on opium.[1] If the whole of the opium traffic was stopped today and sale restricted to medicinal use only, I know there will be no agitation against it worth the name. From the moral standpoint, there is no defence of the Indian opium policy.

I am keeping fairly good health. Thanks.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MR. W. POTON
111A, RUSSA ROAD
CALCUTTA

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 24-7-1924.

198. LETTER TO C. F. WELLER

SABARMATI,
July 26, 1924

DEAR MR. WELLER,

I have been unable before today to overtake your kind letter of 22nd May. I thank you for it and the offer of your home. I must however resist the temptation. I must make no other experiment till the one I am now making can be demonstrated to have succeeded. Today I can make no such claim for it. On the contrary my method seems to have dissatisfied many of my co-workers. I dare not transfer my activity at the present moment to any other place. If the plant I am tending here grows into a hardy tree, all else is easy. I would, therefore, ask you and other friends, instead of tempting me away from the present field of labour, to help me to success by studying the problem and, in so far as it may commend itself to them, by cultivating world opinion in its favour.

With my kind regards to you and yours,

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

CHARLES F. WELLER, ESQ.
LEAGUE OF NEIGHBOURS
BROAD AND WEST GRAND STREET
ELIZABETH, NEW JERSEY, U.S.A.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

199. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Ashadh Vad 10 [*July 26, 1924*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. Cast aside all your mental worries, take proper treatment and improve your health thoroughly while you are there. I am making arrangements for [your stay at] Hajira. Gangabehn writes

[1] The postmark bears this date.

to say that she will come here on Monday. Radha is not able to take enough food.

Blessings from

BAPU

SISTER VASUMATI

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 451. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

200. MY NOTES

ACHARYA RAY SPINS DAILY

Acharya Ray is now over sixty years old. But he has started spinning. He writes:

> As a matter of fact, the music of the spinning-wheel has proved a solace to my mind. My faith in khadi grows day by day, and as my khadi work increases, the spinning-wheel has come to be a perennial fountain sustaining my enthusiasm.

Thus if very busy veterans like Acharya Ray have begun to spin, why should not young men and women with lots of leisure do so too? It is easy to understand the source of Acharya Ray's enthusiasm. For many years he has been at the job of bringing relief to famine-stricken people of Bengal. He has realized in the course of it that mere charity saps the character of the famine-stricken and hence does more harm than good to them. What sort of work can be given to thousands of men and Women to enable them to earn their livelihood? What else but the spinning-wheel can be so all-embracing? It was not difficult for his keen and well-meaning intellect to discover this.

RESIGNATIONS

A number of office-bearers of the Congress Committee at Hubli have tendered their resignations on account of the A.I.C.C. resolution. This situation has frightened some of us, but I regard it as a good omen, because these resignations imply respect for A.I.C.C. resolutions. Those organizations which have no sanctions like the Government depend for their functioning on the respect they command from their members. I did know that there were many office-bearers who did not believe in the fivefold boycott or who did not practise it. Hence, I had suggested a resolution calling on them to quit office. If those office-bearers have thought it fit to quit and that, too, without any resentment, it will benefit them and the community. By taking this

needed step of handing in their resignations, they have proved their own worth and have purified the Committee. And yet the public will not be deprived of their services. If they have resigned out of anger, they stand to lose, because they are likely to forfeit the love of the people which they have earned. But from what I hear, all of them have resigned with goodwill. The public will continue to be served by them. The good example that Shri Gangadharrao [Deshpande] has set not only to Karnatak but also to the whole of India makes us hope that it will be followed by all those who have resigned and yet continue to serve the public. Gujarat, of course, has before it the example of Shri Kalidas Zaveri. His resignation does not mean that he will cease to serve the public. Those who continue as office-bearers in the Congress even though they cannot comply with its resolutions deceive the public and themselves too. No organization can ever be run that way. How can they who themselves wear foreign cloth get others to boycott it? How can those who continue their own legal practice make others give it up? How can those who get their own children educated in Government schools conduct national schools? If those who believe in the triple boycott and practise it have no capacity to run the Congress organization, of what use will swaraj be? And if there is none who can practise the boycott, how can the programme of boycott be allowed to continue even as a sentiment? A thing can continue to exist even as a sentiment only if it is practised by a few at any rate. Something comes to be fixed as a symbol of sentiment in the hope that some day it will be a reality. If no one translates it into action, it will be regarded not as a sentiment but as hypocrisy. It is not a small thing that the clearing up that is being done at present rules out hypocrisy; hence, viewing the matter from whatever angle we like, we shall reach only one conclusion—that the A.I.C.C. resolution and the resultant resignations are both to be welcomed.

WHAT ABOUT TEACHERS?

But one headmaster of a primary school puts this question to me: "What should teachers do when the people in a village do not care for a national school and teachers starve without pay?" A very similar question was asked by a Bengali teacher and I have replied to it in *Young India*[1]. Let us consider the question a little further here. Abbas Saheb has asked me to consider the question in another way.

[1] *Vide* "The Plight of Teachers", 24-7-l924.

He says: There are no schools at all in a number of villages; what should be done in their case? The reply to the first difficulty is simple. If there is dynamism in the teacher, he will somehow accomplish his work. A teacher works like a magnet. Children surround him and do not leave him alone even for a moment. Separation from the teacher becomes unbearable to the pupils. Parents would never forsake such a teacher. If a teacher becomes rich, he is looked upon as a dishonest person, and if he starves, he is taken to be "dull". I advise the teacher correspondent to live by begging from door to door, but not to abandon his duty of teaching. Kaka[1] has written somewhere that teaching should not be regarded as a profession. That is certainly correct.

Moreover, education should cost less today. Children may study and also earn for their education. In olden times it used to be exactly so. A pupil used to go to a teacher with sacrificial fuel in his hand. This had two meanings. One, that it amounted to taking a vow that he would not be a burden on his preceptor, but would work to maintain his guru and himself. The second implication was that a pupil would ever be courteous. There is need of both these things even today. There are elements of both labour and courtesy in the spinning-wheel activity. The teacher concerned should teach his pupils all the processes in respect of cotton and make them spin beautiful yarn. While getting them to spin, he should sit in front of them and himself spin. Alongside this he should make them learn multiplication tables, make them memorize Sanskrit declensions, explain the meaning of verses, and narrate good historical stories. He should make the pupils' spinning activity interesting and instructive. When this is done, the children will not feel bored. I have proposed the use of *takli*[2]. Its use can ensure rapid performance.

Now let us consider Abbas Saheb's question. The readers of *Navajivan* may hardly be aware of the fact that, although knowledge of English may have increased in India, knowledge of the three R's has on the whole diminished. The number of village schools in India has dwindled in the last fifty years. That is to say, to the extent we middle-class people believe ourselves to have advanced, the children living in villages have lagged behind. As we in cities have prospered economically, the villages have suffered a decline. Likewise, while we

[1] D. B. Kalelkar, popularly known as Kaka or Kaka Saheb

[2] Spinning device

have advanced educationally, the villages have had a set-back. Any statistician can prove that this is a true fact, terrible though it is. It has been found that, in Burma, almost all the children were literate before the advent of British rule there, because there was not a single village then without a rural school. Today the picture is being changed. Rural schools are being destroyed and hence illiteracy has been growing.

Since our movement is chiefly concerned with the poor, to the extent that it spreads among them, their material condition and literacy will be promoted. The remedy is to seek out the teacher in every village and get him to run a school. He should teach, sitting under a tree. Hindu children should study in the premises of a temple; Muslim children in, those of a mosque. Once such a beginning is made, a full-fledged school for both can be set up in course of time. No doubt, there are many difficulties in this, but our ability will be tested precisely in removing them. We must create that much consciousness and that much interest in education among the villages. All these things are implicit in the spinning-wheel movement. The district and taluka committees have to become alert and undertake this task.

KHEDA DISTRICT

The competition that is going on in Gujarat in respect of the spinning programme deserves to be welcomed. The Kheda District Congress Committee has resolved to turn out 5,000 yards of yarn a month, and having decided to get the above yarn spun by not less than 500 men and women, it has accordingly apportioned the quota among the units of talukas[1] and mahals

[2]. I hope the people of Kheda district will not rest satisfied with doing only this much. Our ultimate demand is for half an hour's labour on the part of each one among lakhs of people. Hence, while congratulating the Kheda District Con-gress Committee, I give this warning too that I regard their promise to procure 500 spinners as an earnest of securing many more, which is certainly not beyond Kheda's capacity. I hope that, like the Kheda District Congress Committee, other committees also will take the necessary steps in this regard.

[1] Divisions and sub-divisions of a district

[2] *Ibid*

MUSLIM KHADI COMMITTEE

Shri Sayyad Hussain Urezi sends the following list[1] for publication:

I congratulate Maulana Azad Subani and the Muslim brethren of Ahmedabad on setting up this [khadi] committee. Khadi propaganda in India has certainly slackened, but the Muslims appear generally to have given up khadi altogether. I have heard that there was hardly any Muslim to be seen wearing khadi on the last Id Day. The khadi committee referred to here can, if it so wishes, do a lot of work. Spinning is such an activity that both Hindus and Muslims can take equal part in it. In respect of some crafts, Muslims lead the world and weaving is one of them. The Dacca muslin used to be woven by Muslims alone. That is exactly why the weavers bore the sweet and dignified name—*noorbaf*[2]. No one can compete with them in *jari* work. Gold or silver embroidery thread made by the famed weavers of Patna is known throughout the world. Even today artisans who do fine embroidery work are Muslims only. Nowadays they weave foreign yarn. They alone used formerly to weave fine handspun yarn of one hundred count. They also used to weave Dacca *shuhnum* or khadi which was fine and bright like dew. The revival of the same embroidery work is implied in this khadi movement. There are thousands of *noorbafs* who have abandoned their vocation; they can now start earning their livelihood by doing this khadi work. Even today the Muslim sisters of Vijapur spin fine yarn. If they so decide, they can spin the finest yarn. This committee can do a lot of work if it strives hard. I take it for granted that every member of the committee wears pure khadi; also that every member will spin at least 2,000 yards of yarn every month. If the committee desires success, some of its members ought to devote all their time to this work. I wish success to the committee.

STUDENT GANPAT

The reader will be pleased to know that student Ganpat has returned home.[3] I hope he will never give up his efforts to seek a remedy for the injustice which he has noticed. If he continues his search for it, he will come to realize that swaraj alone is the remedy.

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] Luminous ones among weavers

[3] *Vide* "Enlightened or Half-baked?", 20-7-1924.

Now, the means of winning swaraj is the spinning-wheel. Hence, while prosecuting his studies, Ganpat should acquire complete knowledge about the spinning-wheel activity, spin regularly every day and send the yarn to the Provincial Congress Committee. He will come to discover other means also in the course of spinning activity.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-7-1924

201. RELIGION ON TRIAL

A cloud is hanging over the national school of Wadhwan. Whether it disappears or grows in size and bursts over the school, this is a moment of trial for the latter.

I think the question of admitting *Antyaja* children to the school was raised even at the time of its establishment and that the Governing Board had then decided that they too could be admitted. The money which was donated towards a building for that school was also given on the understanding that *Antyajas* would be admitted to it.

Now that the time has come for admitting *Antyaja* children to it, all sorts of difficulties seem to have arisen. Even if, on *Antyaja* children being admitted to the school, some members of the Board leave it, parents withdraw their children from the school and some teachers resign, even if all this happens, the teacher and the parent to whom their religion is dear should not swerve an inch from the path of duty.

In my humble view, there can be no two opinions on what dharma requires in this situation. It requires that the original pledge must be kept. Not a single new factor has arisen which may put us in doubt as to what our dharma is on this occasion. *Antyajas* have as much claim on the school as the others. If we were among those who would appeal to a court, there is only one decision the latter could give, and it is that the teachers and the Governing Board were bound to admit *Antyaja* children to the school. Members of the management or teachers who objected to this would be committing a breach of trust with the donors.

For followers or sympathizers of the Congress, abolition of untouchability has become a basic national principle. The issue has been before the people since 1920, and no one has had the courage to propose a change in the principle we have adopted. The Vidyapith[1] risked its very existence in order to uphold it. Workers who were collecting funds for the Tilak Swaraj Fund let go, for the same reason, donations which had been actually promised. I should like the religious-minded members of the Governing Board, the teachers and other citizens of Wadhwan to be ready to follow this principle and uphold dharma.

The citizens of Wadhwan are wise. They are generous. They are not bigots, but are true lovers of religion—this is the impression they have always produced on me. In that town, *Antyajas* should not be despised. Let its national school welcome *Antyaja* pupils, encourage them, and let the other parents look upon it as dharma to send their children to a school attended by *Antyajas*. I request them to consider this matter with a mature judgment and exclusively from a moral point of view and see that the pledge once taken is kept.

The general rules of the school can be changed, but no one can alter the principle on which the school has been founded. That school has been dedicated to a certain cause, and the dedication is as unalterable as the scroll of Destiny. The utmost that can be done is this. Those parents who have a religious objection can withdraw their children. But the members of the Governing Board or the teachers have no justification at all to leave. They should be determined to run the school even if it has only one pupil, an *Antyaja.* in that lies the prestige of the school, the teachers, the members of the Governing Board and of Wadhwan.

Indeed, there will be many such difficulties in the fight for swaraj, for dharma ! We have decided to use only two means in this struggle: truth and non-violence. If the principle on which the school was founded is altered, it will mean abandoning truth and non-violence. It is the essential teaching of all religions that one may sacrifice one's wealth, honour, family or life, but never truth, which on this occasion means our pledge, and non-violence, which here means love for *Antyajas.* On the measure we fail in this, we fail in dharma. Religion will not be in danger if all children leave the school, nor will

[1]Gujarat Vidyapith, National University at Ahmedabad founded by Gandhiji in 1920

the cause of swaraj suffer nor Wadhwan be disgraced. All the three, however, will be disgraced if *Antyaja* children are turned away out of fear that other children may leave.

I believe that it should be quite unnecessary now to prove that the practice of untouchability is a great sin. Members of the Congress and lovers of swaraj can have no doubt about it at all

It is my humble prayer to the citizens, to the members of the Governing Board and the teachers of Wadhwan that they keep their pledge. May God grant them the necessary strength.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-7-1924

202. NEED FOR CLOSED ATTENTION TO DETAIL

In order to observe the spinning vow thoroughly, it is necessary to pay attention to the smallest details. There is a saying in English, "Take care of the pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves." One who is not careful about a pie will never save a rupee. This is true about all big undertakings. If small details are neglected, big tasks suffer. If, in a big machine, a small nail is not in its place or has become loose, or when a very small particle is sticking somewhere, it very often comes to a halt.

Our capacity to manage our affairs under swaraj will be measured by our ability to pay attention to details. Our vow of spinning will give us that ability. That spinning should be done regularly, the yarn produced should be collected and registered with the Provincial Congress Committee, that from there the record should go to the All-India Congress Committee and the figure noted, that the yarn should be collected into a central pool and then woven into khadi and that, finally, the khadi should be sold—this is easily said, but to do it all we shall need many kinds of capacity and great many workers.

The village should manage its own work; the taluka should look after the villages, the district after the talukas and the province after the districts and above them all should be the Khadi Board. Where everyone understands his duty and is competent enough in doing it, things will run smoothly. But where people do not understand their responsibility, the Provincial Congress Committees will have to look after everything.

A good stock of spinning-wheels should be maintained, they should be repaired and kept in working condition.

It should be seen that spindles are serviceable and straight.

The leather supporting the spindles should be maintained in such a condition that it easily fits in.

Mals[1] should be provided for.

Cotton should be stocked.

Cotton should be ginned, carded and turned into slivers and supplied where required, and, thereafter, the yarn produced should be collected.

One who takes interest in this work will have time neither for speeches nor for criticism, nor for ill will towards others. Such a one will remain occupied in his own work.

The ideal is that everyone should provide himself with his own spinning-wheel, procure the cotton he will require, card it, make slivers from it, blow water on the yarn spun, take it off, wind it properly and, together with his name and information about the count of the yarn, its weight and its length in yards neatly set down, have it packed and forwarded every month to the Provincial Congress Committee.

But till all spinners have become trained for this work, the Provincial Congress Committee will have to take the responsibility for most of it and for that purpose one or more spinning experts will also have to be engaged for some time.

If we get men and women spinners in large numbers, we do not have enough spinning-wheels for them, and it will take some time to get them in sufficient number. To get them, moreover, will require adequate funds. When we took up spinning, Shri Laxmidas[2] introduced the *takli.* I had a good laugh when I first saw it in his hands. But I showed no curiosity about it. Next I saw it in the hands of Shri Mathuradas in Juhu. I felt inclined to learn that art, and I did learn it a little. But ever since the thing has remained in my mind. It costs at the most two annas. Not much time is required to make it and it can produce yarn half as fast as an ordinary spinning-wheel. It is infinitely easy to handle. It can be carried everywhere. One can spin uniform and well-twisted yarn on it. Even today we see Brahmins using this small wheel to turn out yarn for their holy thread. Many

[1] Cotton-cord passing round wheels moving together

[2] Laxmidas Asar, who had dedicated himself to the cause of Khadi

schoolboys call on me. In reply to my questions, some of them say that they have no spinning-wheel and others that there is no one to teach them spinning. Some school buildings are so small that they do not even have room for spinning-wheels. In such circumstances, the little *takli* is a very useful article. Any-one who learns to spin on it will find it easy to produce yarn on a spinning-wheel. Hence spinning can be learnt on the *takli* itself and it is easy to turn out daily a hundred yards of yarn on that beautiful but simple contrivance. I hope that persons or institutions that do not have spinning-wheels will use this portable wheel and spin.

There if a profound significance in the proverb, "A dam is built pebble by pebble and drop by drop fills the lake." Asingle drop is of little consequence. One pebble cannot become a dam to stop water. But we know the miracle worked by many pebbles and many drops of water. A like miracle will result from many people spinning regularly, though only for a little while. Just as a building is erected not by dumping bricks at one place, but only by arranging them properly, so also durable khadi can be made from yarn properly spun and properly arranged through weaving.

Ordinarily, a small number of farmers produce a large quantity of food. At the time of the Great War in Europe, England's food supply had run short. What was produced in the fields was not sufficient. Potato was the easiest of crops to raise. Hence every citizen was required to sow potatoes in the 20-or 25-yard courtyard of his. On the potatoes produced in one courtyard, even one family could hardly subsist; but the help rendered through potatoes raised in thousands of courtyards proved invaluable. Likewise, a very large number of Red Cross badges and shirts were required. The tailors alone could not produce them. Hence even people who had never handled a needle were pressed into service for this work. Models were made available for the novices. Even instructors were provided for them. In this way, lakes of Red Cross badges and shirts were got prepared free through thousands of volunteers who could not join active service and who had some time to spare. The value of one man's labour is nothing, but labour of the same kind undertaken by large numbers proved of the utmost value then. Lawyers, students, commission agents, men and women-all joined in that work and were proud of doing so. Readers probably do not know that Sarojini Devi[1], and I too,

[1] Sarojini Naidu

had joined in this work. We did not feel that it was tailor's work. The nobles, too, did not consider it below their status. When I see today any educated person ridiculing the work of spinning, I recall my experience during the War. Comparing the present with that time, I see that it is more necessary for everyone to spin in order to extinguish the great fire that is raging in the country than it was then for people to prepare Red Cross badges or shirts during that terrible War.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-7-1924

203. MY LOIN-CLOTH

A Muslim brother writes:[1]

I have reproduced this letter as it is. Believing that other Muslim brethren, as also some Hindus, may have felt the same doubt as this friend, I venture to give a reply to the letter. I receive many letters about myself, but I do not discuss them in *Navajivan,* thinking that doing so will serve no useful purpose. But I feel it necessary to point out the many errors which this letter contains. The critic has correctly understood the reason for my wearing the loin-cloth. It cannot be laid aside except by securing swaraj. It will go when men and women of India secure swaraj and help me to discard it, or God may make me such an invalid that I could not do without more clothes. When I started wearing the loin-cloth, I did fear that it would be labelled as indecent. But having regard to the direction which my life had taken, I thought it right to run the risk of being considered indecent in dress. I am always ready to do the utmost for my Muslim friends. My need of them is very great. I had even discussed the matter with a Muslim friend before effecting the change in my dress. He approved of my idea, and that gave me more courage. After an experience of three years, I do not at all regret the change I effected, but on the contrary feel daily happier with it.

I wish to be in tune with the life of the poorest of the poor among Indians. I know that I can have a *darshan* of God in no other way. I want to see Him face to face. I have become impatient for the experience. I shall not be blessed with the vision until I have made myself the poorest of the poor. It is painful to me to eat or to dress as

[1] The letter is not translated here.

long as the poor do not have enough to eat or enough to cover their bodies with. Had God not created me weak I would have introduced more drastic changes in my life. My critic can have no idea of the skeletons who stalk the country. To have it, he should repair to the remotest villages and live among the people there.

The correspondent will not get, even in three or four hundred years, the dress which he desires for the people of the country. He should know that crores of people in India do not get even a loin-cloth to wear. They move about only with a *langoti.* There are crores who have not had even a look at a pair of sandals. They do not even feel the need for them. How can these poor people afford a long shirt with a collar? Who will give them a cap? If we would wear so many garments, we cannot clothe the poor. But it is our duty to dress them first and then dress ourselves, to feed them first and then feed ourselves. This critic thinks about clothes. Let me ask him, in all humility, when the poverty-stricken people of this country do not get enough even to eat, how can we talk of dress reform?

Now about decency. The term decency has more than one meaning. It does not mean the same thing everywhere. What is decent in the West may be indecent in the East. Some of the styles of dressing prevalent in the West have been considered indecent in the East. In America, I would certainly be jailed. Narayan Hemchandra[1] was locked up in a prison for wearing a dhoti. My mother felt unhappy to see us brothers wearing trousers. She thought we were not fully dressed in them. Innumerable Hindus do not look upon the loin-cloth as an indecent dress at all. The sadhus wear only a *langoti,* but are not, for that reason, looked upon as uncivilized.

In my view, there is no indecency at all in being scantily dressed. Clothes are necessary only for the protection of the body. From the point of view of this critic, the shame which is there in wearing too many clothes is not to be found in the loin-cloth of a mendicant like me. If we but think of man's body as it is, we shall see no reason at all to be attached to it. This bag of bones can bear being looked at only when dressed in all sorts and styles of clothing. I cite only one example to show that this view is correct. We have never heard of anyone having fallen in love with a corpse. The object of attachment is the indwelling soul. Why, then, give so much thought to the body? Why all this adornment?

[1] A linguist and scholar from Gujarat whom Gandhiji met in England.

Sisters come to bless me with their *darshan*, love me and give their blessings. There are both Hindus and Muslims among them. I am sure they do not come to look at my body at all. I have never felt that they ever watched it. This is but right. A man or a woman should never look at the body of his or her friend. If one happens to do so unwittingly, one should immediately take one's eyes off it. One is free to look at another's face only. A man ofself-restraint like Lakshman[1] had seen only Sita's toes, for he used to salute her feet. Hence, when sisters come to bless me, I never feel embarrassed in their presence because of my loin-cloth. I only pray for their goodwill. I need much help from them. I get some, but it is still too little. When Hindu and Muslim sisters have adopted the spinning-wheel and come to look upon khadi as their adornment, I shall feel that I have got all I wanted. I shall then certainly please my correspondent by wearing a dhoti and a long shirt with a collar, for I believe that, when the women have fallen in love with khadi, swaraj will have been won. Meanwhile, the correspondent should be kind to me and to those like me who wear a loin-cloth and, even if he regards the loin-cloth as indecent, should look upon people who wear it as his brethren, overlooking their indecency.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan 27-7-1924

204. INVIOLABLE PLEDGE

These words were used for the first time at the time of the mill-hands' strike of 1917[2]. The workers used to parade the streets with a flag bearing these words; they got exhausted and were on the point of giving in. But God saved their honour. A compromise was reached. I have not, however, taken up the pen to write a history of that strike.

I only wish to remind Gujarat of its pledge, and cite the mill workers' pledge merely as an example. So far, the steps we planned to take for securing swaraj were of the nature of collective action and, therefore, no one was fully conscious of his own responsibility. One could say that one had done one's duty towards the Congress by paying one's subscription of four annas. Now the circumstances have

[1] Younger brother of Rama, the hero of *Ramayana*

[2] The Ahmedabad mill-hands' strike took place in 1918.

changed, and everyone is required to give half an hour every day for the sake of swaraj. Let no one think that the Congress resolution applies only to elected office-bearers. For them, of course, it is in the nature of an injunction, but every thoughtful person who has the good of the country at heart should follow it. It is the duty of every man, woman and child to give half an hour to spinning for the sake of the country. This is the earnest appeal of the Congress and everyone should take a firm Pledge to respond to it.

Any sort of yarn will not do; it must be good, well-twisted and uniform. Its quality should improve day by day.

It was a simple matter when one paid some money and had to do nothing else. It was even easier to make speeches. To enrol others was also, comparatively speaking, easy. But to put in regularly, daily without fail, half an hour's honest labour for the sake of the people may seem difficult. If we but think about the matter, however, this is the easiest thing to do, for there is no waste of time in it and no cause whatever for disappointment. There is no need to flatter anyone. Everyone who loves the country should feel that giving half an hour for the country is no sacrifice at all.

But a friend feels that some will, for the first one or two months, give yarn spun by themselves, as required by the rule, but will by and by tire of doing so. I hope this fear will prove groundless. I do hope that everyone who has taken the pledge will keep it.

I am told that there is keen competition in Gujarat. There is no one who thinks of giving a mere three thousand yards. All are keen on spinning more. This is commendable spirit if only it will last.

If this pledge is honoured, those who at present ridicule spinning will themselves take to it.

If the Pledge is fully acted upon, I have no doubt that such expressions of despair as "It will not be possible to produce fine yarn in Gujarat" and "Spinning will not pay in Gujarat" will be heard no more and we shall start spinning fine yarn in Gujarat. Not only that, but khadi will cease being dear and become cheap. The people who have, at present, no confidence in their power will come to have it.

Gujarat took the lead in non-co-operation. It can lead in the final step to success. We have to save ourselves from one danger. Among the charges against non-co-operation, one is that of arrogance. It is assumed that non-co-operators have got a licence to use harsh language about co-operationists; the latter have got the im-

pression that non-co-operators believe that being non-co-operators has placed them above the others. We should prove that this charge is unjustified. Those who spin should not criticize others who do not spin, but should win them over through humility. They should not invite only those who are connected with the Congress, but should appeal even to co-operationists to spin. If one appeals to lawyers in the right manner, they will probably give half an hour of their time to spinning. Others also would do as much. Even those who do not believe in khadi will not be obstinate and refuse to spin for half an hour. Everyone, probably, will believe that at any rate spinning will not harm the country.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-7-1924

205. A DENIAL

A report about some *Vania* having attacked an *Antyaja* on Petlad Railway Station had appeared in the *Navajivan* some time ago. *A Vaishnava* gentleman writes to say that it was found on inquiry that the report was without foundation. I publish this refutation not because I believe that the incident may not have occurred. Personally I do not accept the denial. So long as we do not get the name and other particulars of the victim and have not seen him, how can anyone decide that the attack never took place? Even though all the people in Petlad may assert, and truthfully, that they did not see the attack, it may have taken place all the same. In my humble view, it is our duty to build up public opinion against such attacks; we should do this instead of denying that the incident occurred, for we know that similar incidents do occur and we should, therefore, believe that this one also is likely to have occurred.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-7-1924

206. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SABARMATI,
July 27, 1924

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

In my opinion, you should enter into correspondence with the Government and ascertain the reason for the prohibition and say that, if anything can be pointed out to the committee as really objectionable, your committee would be prepared to delete the passages. If the Government return an unsatisfactory reply, you should intimate to them that the words will not be withdrawn from circulation.

The Government are not likely to bother the children and, even if they do, the only thing they can do is to remove the books from the children. The latter may be advised then not to mind and hand over the books to the police. I do not think there is any other penalty. Please look up the law and let me know. I feel that no matter how much we may have become demoralized, we may not shirk a battle that may be given to us. We need not take up aggressive civil disobedience, we may not take up mass civil disobedience; but we must face that which comes our way and tests us. Don't you think so? How to give battle will be a question for you to decide as the situation develops.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Pray do not worry about my health. It is all right and answers my purpose. You must be resourceful enough to mend the charkha. For the handle all you need is an iron inset. Wood always non-co-operates with iron and gives in. Immediately you fix in an iron ring, you will find it will work all right. Please note that mere nails will not do. No part of the handle should have friction with the iron axle.

Yours,

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

207. LETTER TO MAHOMED ALI

SABARMATI,
July 27, 1924

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Yours is a hard task. I often think of risking my health and running to Delhi. If you think I should do so, you have only to say the word. You must have got both my wires[1] yesterday. I would like you to make, if you will shoulder the burden, an exhaustive inquiry and publish your finding. I know you can act boldly. Spare neither the Hindus nor the Mussalmans whenever they may be in the wrong. Hear patiently all the sides, publicly invite them. Take their written evidence.

I am trying to hasten Anandanand. He is wandering between Ahmedabad and Bombay. He has to get machines to replace yours. It takes time to move these big things from place to place. He is now in Bombay negotiating a purchase. I shall see him probably tomorrow. Is told him, immediately you mentioned the matter, to write to you from time to time and tell you what he was doing.

Pandit Motilalji sent me copy of the questions put by him to you and complained that you had not yet answered them. I got the letter yesterday. He asked me too to reply to his general questions, which I have done. If you have not yet replied, I would suggest your replying. Our strength must be in our work and only that.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

MAULANA MAHOMED ALI
DELHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

208. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS

July 27, 1924

DEAR BABU BHAGWANDAS,

I thank you for your letter. I assure you I am continually taxing myself as to how to end this wrangling. I know that there is room for

[1] Only one of these is available; *vide* "Telegram to Mahomed Ali", 26-7-1924.

both the *policies.* But, as you very properly say, they can only work like submarines and aeroplanes. Fields of action must be different. They will not then clash but help. I am seeking means of exit from the Congress without a fireworks display. In Mr. Tilak's own time, I had no difficulties in working along my own lines. And I know that I venerated him and that he did not dislike me and helped me whenever he could.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

BABU BHAGWANDASJI
SEVASHRAM, SIGRA
BENARES CANTT.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

209. LETTER TO DR. SATYAPAL

July 27, 1924

DEAR DR. SATYAPAL,

I have your letter. I am doing all I can about Delhi. My weak body stands in the way of my going to Delhi. If members resign because they will not spin, it is as well that they resign. If Congressmen believe in spinning, they must spin, if they do not let us drop khaddar from the Congress programme. About the peasants, if they are willing to go through the fire, much can be done for them.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. SATYAPAL

BRADLAUGH HALL

LAHORE

From the manuscript Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

210. LETTER TO DR. CHIMANDAS J. JAGTIANI

July 27, 1924

MY DEAR CHIMANDAS,

I have your letter. You must have seen my argument in *Young India* showing why it is necessary to send half an hour's output to the Congress for the nation. You may spin for yourself. But you must spin for the nation too.

Pray do not worry about my health.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. CHIMANDAS
NIHARJUNGO PIR
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. *Courtesy:* Narayan Desai

211. LETTER TO EMILY HOBHOUSE

SABARMATI,
July 27, 1924

DEAR MISS HOBHOUSE[1],

Friends had preserved your Letter of 8th December, '22. It was like meeting you to receive that letter. I never met Miss Adams.

I was quite happy in the Prison. I had as many books as I wanted so long as they were non-political.

I wonder it you ever read *Young India*. It would be a privilege to send it to you, if you would care to read it. How are you keeping body?

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

MISS EMILY HOBHOUSE
THE WARREN HOUSE ST. INES
CORNWALL

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] An Englishwoman of liberal views.

212. LETTER TO KHUSHI RAM DARYANOMAL

July 27, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I endeavour to uphold the cause of truth only. As for the *Mussalman*, I should advise the Hindus to ignore the thing entirely.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SETH KHUSHI RAM DARYANOMAL
''ZAMINDAR''
JACO [BA] BAD (SIND)

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

213. LETTER TO DHARNIDHAR PRASAD

July 27, 1924

DEAR DHARNIDHAR BABU,

I was glad to hear from you. I agree with you about working with separate organization. But am staying in just now for a separate organization or a practically unanimous Congress. I hope your domestic troubles will be soon over.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

BABU DHARNIDHAR PRASAD
P.O. SIRI (DHARBHANGA)

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

214. LETTER TO PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

July 27, 1924

DEAR DR. PATTABHI,

I did think of the Kalashala and expected to hear from you. I am now moving in the matter, but I may not be able to help you as early as you would like me to be. Of course, I may fail altogether. Do you contemplate help through the Congress? Is this Rs. 10,000 the last that you will need or would you have continually to rely upon help from outside the province? Give me all [information] you can to

influence donors. Yes, spinning is infectious. One friend is trying to do 50,000 yards here all by himself.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DR, PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA
MACHLIPATNAM

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

215. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

ASHRAM,
July 27, 1924

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I thank you for your affectionate letter[1]. I would certainly have listened to you if you had not been the party to tell me that a certain very intimate friend of yours had, with high fever on, held on to his post in the Assembly and would not forsake his post in spite of medical advice. Even after the debate, he would not give himself rest. If you could not prevail with such an intimate friend, how should you with me? Example is better than precept, say so many copy-books. But really there is no cause for anxiety about me. It is true that I have lost weight to an alarming extent, but I cannot eat under great pressure of work. The strain of sitting itself during those meetings was great. If there were not so many calls on my time, I would certainly have jumped at your offer of the Ganges retreat, but the Delhi people are worrying me. I have many delicate problems in the Ashram. I would love to write to you about them, if I had the time to disburden myself and you the time to give a friendly ear. But I must desist. I wanted to write an important letter to you today, but I must not as I have some friends waiting for me. I shall try tomorrow. I would like you not to hesitate to write on business matters whenever you feel you have anything to say to me. I have written to Mahomed Ali asking him to send you a reply.[2] I have sent him copy of my answers to you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Motilal Nehru's Letters", 28-7-1924
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Mahomed Ali", 27-7-1924.

216. LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI

SABARMATI,
July 27, 1924

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I had your wire from Itarsi. I am glad Mahomed Ali is in Delhi. I have wired[1] to him asking him as Congress President to investigate and publish a preliminary report. Hakimji wires saying accounts are most exaggerated. Anyway, if we can tackle the Delhi business in a business-like way, much trouble can be saved. I am myself eager to go early. My weak body prevents. But I do often think I should go in any event and be by Mahomed Ali's side. However, I restrain myself unless there is a clear call.

Why do you want me to be President of the Congress at Belgaum? Surely I shall influence people and proceedings whether I am President or not. My usefulness is gone if I cannot get the country to adopt H. M. Unity and the charkha as articles of national faith. If we don't get the expected response during the ensuing months regarding spinning and if we do not get Hindus and Mussalmans to come nearer, what should I do at Belgaum as President? As representing a stubborn minority, it is possible to do a lot. A superficial make-believe majority must hinder the movement.

Yours sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

MAULANA SHAUKAT ALI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. courtesy: Narayan Desai

217. LETTER TO NANABHAI ICHCHHARAM MASHRUWALA

Ashadh Vad 11 [*July 27, 1924*][2]

BHAISHRI NANABHAI,

I have your letter. It was Jamnadas Mehta[3] who told me. I will write to him and ask him. We need not worry about what people say. It is enough if we have done nothing wrong.

[1] This wire is not available.

[2] The postal delivery stamp is dated July 29, 1924. *Ashadh Vad* 11 fell on July

[3] Jamnadas Madhavji Mehta, barrister-at-law, and politician

I hope you have stopped worrying. You must have received my previous letter.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

NANABHAI ICHCHHARAM, ESQ.
AKOLA
BERAR

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 4317. Courtesy: Kanubhai Mashruwala

218. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

Ashadh Vad 11 [*July 27, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI VALJI,

My Magazine was received here. I shall write some other time about the extracts you have sent. It is an 'evergreen'[2] (find out and send me a Gujarati equivalent for it.). My health is good enough for my work. It is only when I know what work Abhechandbhai can do and what pay he expects that I can put him on to some job if I can think of any. I have already told them to put an errata list in *Y. I.* How nice it would have been if you had prepared one and sent it? You have once again left off doing that. Send me as many Gujarati words as you can for 'charity' [3] and 'colourless'[4]. What word can we use [for colour-less] in "I have written a 'colourless' letter."?

Vandemataram From

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Do you go to enquire about Malaviyaji's health? Do go on my behalf and let me know how it is.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: C.W. 6019. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

[1] The reference to Abhechandbhai in the letter to the addressee, dated July 10, 1924, suggests that this was also written in the same year.

[2,] English words have been used in the original.

[3] *Ibid*

[4] *Ibid*

219. TELEGRAM TO TRIVANDRUM RELIEF COMMITTEE[1]

[On or after *July 30, 1924*]

PRESIDENT CONGRESS RELIEF COMMITTEE
TRIVANDRUM

DAMAGE BEYOND CONGRESS CAPACITY COPE SUGGEST AIDING GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS WHERE POSSIBLE. OTHERWISE INDIVIDUAL SILENT PERSONAL AID MOST VALUABLE AND SHOULD BE RENDERED.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9005

220. MORE ABOUT "VARNASHRAMA"

The fair friend whose letter I reproduced in part in the issue of the 17th[2] with comments complains that I have not done justice to her by giving only part of her letter and omitting that which was inconvenient for my argument and challenges me to reproduce the whole of the letter. As I had no intention whatever of suppressing any part of her letter for the cause she mentions, I gladly place before the reader the whole of her letter and her comments on my remarks. As I have no desire to enter into any further discussion on the matter I have told her that hers shall be the last say.

Young India, 31-7-1924

221. THE LOKAMANYA ANNIVERSARY

This fourth anniversary of the withdrawal of the physical presence of the Lokamanya from our midst has a special significance for me and the movement I represent. Both friends and critics inform me that a section of the Maharashtra Press is delivering a series of attacks on the movement and me which I should read and answer. I

[1] This was in reply to a telegram from the Secretary, Trivandrum Congress Committee, received on July 30, 1924, which read: "Tremendous floods in Kerala especially Travancore. Terrible ruin famine. Congress organizing relief work. Substantial help needed. Pray do needful. Direct funds Changanacherry Parameshwaran Pillay, president Congress Relief Committee Trivandrum,"

[2] *Vide* "*Varnashrama* or *Varnasankara*?" 17-7-1924.

have resisted the temptation to do so. But from what they write and the extracts they send, I know enough to understand their meaning.

I am anxious to pay my quota of tribute to the memory of the deceased on this occasion of the fourth anniversary. But, in the midst of distrust of me by some of the best of the followers of the Lokamanya, how shall I pay my quota?

The task is difficult. Just as, on that memorable night in 1920, I returned from Sardar Griha after having had a last look at the remains as they lay in the death chamber, I felt an oppressive loneliness. I was secure in the Lokamanya's presence. But by his departure I felt hopelessly insecure. I could differ from him and express my difference in respectful terms, but we could never misunderstand each other. I could not feel so with his followers, not because they would want to distrust me but because, being without a guide whose word was law to them, they would always feel insecure and hesitant about my views and not in perfect agreement among themselves. Division in their ranks was the last thing in the world I desired. I have more than once expressed my admiration for the Maharashtra party. It has a determined policy. It is well-drilled. It is able. It has a record of great sacrifice behind it. I wanted and want still to capture, not to divide the party. I wanted and still want to convert it to my view of the means for the attainment of swaraj. With Lokamanya alive, I had only him to convert or to be converted by him. He had an instinctive perception of things and situations. As he said to me, 'If the people follow your method, I am yours.'

But today there is a divided Maharashtra. If, however, my faith in satyagraha is immutable, I must conquer Maharashtra as I hope to conquer Englishmen. But I must have the help of Maharashtra No-changers. If they have understood the secret of non-violence and truth, they must actively love the Pro-changers even whilst they differ from them. They must not criticize them.

Each party has enough work to do without flying at each other's throats.

Two distinguished friends have appealed to me to bring the two parties together and lead them. One of them, in the course of a long letter, says:

> To my mind there is no more necessary or radical contradiction but only a difference between the Tilak policy and the Gandhi policy than between submarine blockade and aeroplane attack. Indeed, the two can work together, (but along separate

lines—the Tilak policy within the Councils, the Gandhi policy in the country outside, at large) in open, express and, therefore, rightous alliance against the common enemy for the common good.

These sentences put forth the position clearly up to a point. I say 'up to a point' because my conception of non-co-operation is exclusive of participation in the Councils. That may be and is my limitation. One man cannot control both the movements—those of the submarine and the aeroplane; Nor can the two directors change places though both may have a common aim. I can strengthen the work in the Councils only by working outside and even by decrying the Councils and thus turning the attention of the people away from them. The better analogy for my purpose is that of anti-septic and aseptic treatment. The two cannot be applied at the same time and on the same patient. But the surgeons belonging to the two schools may try their methods on different patients likely to submit to them and can do so without hampering each other. The same friend says further:

> While Tilakji and Gandhiji remain unreconciled, the heart of India will continue to be torn between the two and will not be able to settle down to steady work.

If such a catastrophe happens, if the country does not 'settle down', I would prove, indeed an unskilful surgeon and an indifferent representative of my own method. I assure the friend and the reader that I am all attention. It is a matter of no pleasure to me that the strain continues. It will not, however, continue a day longer than is inevitable.

I invite assistance of the No-changers in hastening the process of settling down. The No-changers' faith consists in workings from within and in that only. They can, therefore, religiously gag them-selves. They will turn out better work. They must not retaliate. In every case where a fight in the shape of canvassing or wire-pulling is required, they may relinquish the Congress control.

The Pro-changers cannot afford to do without outside activity and agitation. They may therefore control the Press and the Congress organization if they choose. I would liken by their consent, to keep the Congress a mass organization which it can only be, if the workers concentrate their attention upon that: toe the exclusion of everything else. But it cannot be so kept if there has to be a pitched and bitter fight between two parties. In that case the No-changers must, even if it is possible by manoeuvring to secure a majority, surrender control

with the greatest good grace to the Pro-changers. Let us recognize this one fact. The masses do not yet actively participate in or understand our method of works. Only workers in their midst can gain influence over them. I could quote a dozen illustrations of silent workers who have more influence with the masses than any of our notable orators. We must not, therefore, use the masses as pawns in the game. Nor should control of the Congress be surrendered in a manner to embarrass the Pro-changers. The passage to their hands must be decorous and frank, without mental reservations. Such delivery can only be made by those who have a living faith in the charkha and who will grudge to take away a single minute from it and its organization.

But whether the No-changers appreciate and follow my advice or not, I hope, God willing, to prove my faith by completest surrender at a time and in a manner that cannot embarrass the Pro-changers and cannot compromise the national cause. When I have succeeded in so doing, not before, I shall have paid my humble tribute to the memory of the Lokamanya. I can deserve the heritage left by him only by being true to myself.

Young India, 31-7-1924

222. NOTES

UNHAPPY MALABAR

Last week I referred to the floods in South Kanara. This week the public has the painful news that Malabar is practically under water. I have also a wire from Mr. Nambudripad giving details of the havoc played by the floods and asking me for help. The matter, however, seems to me to be beyond the capacity of private agency. The Congress neither possesses funds nor influence nor an organization that can cope with a calamity of the magnitude such as Malabar has to face. It is best in all humility to admit our limitations. I would even not hesitate to help the distressed people, if necessary, through any committee that the authorities may appoint, provided, of course, that they would accept our help. If we find that our service is unwelcome or the organization of official help is make-believe, I should refrain from joining the committee and should render such personal and individual help as I may be capable of rendering. God will not punish me for want of capacity. But He will for want of will. I would therefore, advise local workers to do whatever lies in their power and

neglect no opportunity of alleviating distress. After all, money plays the least part in such times. It is the personal touch, the readiness to suffer for the sake of the sufferers, readiness to share the last morsel with the neighbour in distress that counts for much more than millions. The sacrifice of the Brahmin who shared his scanty meal with the man in distress was infinitely more meritorious than the rich sacrifice of king Yudhishthira who showered gold mohurs as donations.

TO S. V. K.

I must apologize for having delayed my reply to your questions. Here it is:

(1) My fast in Ahmedabad in connection with the mill-strike of 1917[1] was against 'lovers'—the mill-hands, and not against the owners—'the tyrants'. I announced at the time that my fast was not flawless, because it was bound to influence the mill-owners who were personal friends. But it was not possible for me unconcerned to see the mill-hands, my associates, committing a breach of a vow, solemnly repeated by them in my presence for twenty-one days. The effect of the fast was electrical. The wavering labourers became at once strong in their determination.

(2) My philosophy does teach me to love alike friend and foe. But that does not do away with the distinction till the foe has become friend. The letter to Mr. Joseph was cryptic. It was not written for publication. Mr. Joseph could easily dot the i's and cross the t's. The fuller enunciation of the proposition put before Mr. Joseph would be:

One may fast to reform a comrade in work and thought, but not one however friendly if he is hostile. Thus, I may not fast against Pandit Motilalji Nehru, although he is a dear friend, in order to convert him to my view on Councils, but I fasted against the Bombay rioters because they were, though not personal friends, comrades in the same mission. We have no right by fasts to convert people to our ideals. That would be a species of violence. But it is our duty to strengthen by our fasting those who hold the same ideals, but are likely to weaken under pressure.

(3) I happened to preside at a meeting of condolence on the death of the great Irish patriot MacSwiney and humbly expressed my opinion that I could not ethically justify the fast on the facts that the

[1] This should be 1918; *vide* "Speech to Ahmedabad Mill-Hands", 15-3-1918.

public had then before them. I have since seen no new facts to alter my opinion. I am not here concerned with the political value of that celebrated fast, if it had any. Nor must I be understood to cast any reflection upon the memory of the deceased patriot. I am simply giving my view as a satyagrahi on the ethics of the fast.

INDIA'S SHARE

An American friend sends me a long letter on the opium policy of the Government of India. She quotes the following from a bulletin issued by the British Society for the suppression of the opium trade:

> The nations are face to face with a growing evil which, unless it is dealt with speedily, internationally and drastically, may become the gravest curse from which the world has ever suffered. Plague, war and famine could not combine to present a more terrifying prospect than is presented by drug addiction. . . . What is the crux of the whole position? It is, undoubtedly, the over-production of opium in India. If that were arrested, other sources of production could be dealt with with comparative ease. The Indian Government maintains just this one trade. Condemned by a unanimous vote of the House of Commons as morally indefensible when carried on with China, India is still permitted to supply five Eastern Governments with as much opium as they officially ask for. Boasting that she does not sell the drug to private persons in those five countries, by agreement she drenches them with narcotics which find their way by smugglers into China. Passing a Dangerous Drug Act for our own country, which forbids the unlicensed possession of opium and its derivatives, the British Indian Government yet maintains this scandalous and nefarious traffic.

IGNORANCE

A friend sends me for answer a *Guardian* cutting wherein a retired Indian police officer has succeeded in airing his general ignorance of things Indian. It is so difficult to overtake newspaper paragraphs and correct them. A movement to succeed has to pass through the stage of ridicule and ignorance. But I may say categorically that the Non-co-operation movement is nothing if it is not constructive. Its khaddar work, its efforts (it does not matter that they appear to be unsuccessful at present), its work among and for the untouchables, its national schools, its attempt to found panchayats, its propaganda against drink and opium, its relief of distress due to famines and floods are all examples of constructive work. The movement does not seek to establish Hindu Raj by the 'grace of British

Raj', but it seeks to establish swaraj, meaning the government by the chosen representatives of the people in the place of the British Raj i.e., government by British or Indian administrators utterly irres-ponsible to the people and appointed in the interest of the exploitation of India and her people. Full and frank expiation has always been made for every mistake made in the course of the struggle. No movement on such a large scale has been so free from violence as the Non-co-operation movement. Compare the Indian to every other contemporary national movement and the list of murders and other violence committed in the name of patriotism. The writer brings up for commendation the Christian work among the untouchables; I must not enter into the merits of Chrisitian work in India. The indirect influence of Chrisitianity has been to quicken Hinduism into life. The cultured Hindu society has admitted its grevious sin against the untouchables. But the effect of Christianity upon India in general must be judged by the life lived in our midst by the average Christian and its effect upon us. I am sorry to have to record my opinion that it has been disastrous. It pains me to have to say that the Christian missionaries as a body, with honourable exceptions, have actively supported a system which has impoverished, enervated and demoralized a people considered to he among the gentlest and the most civilized on earth. Lastly, I do not share the belief that there can or will be on earth one religion. I am striving, therefore, to find a common factor and to induce mutual tolerance.

CHANGE OF HEART

Here is a reverse instance to the foregoing. An English correspondent writes:

> I was in an Indian regiment during the events of 1919 and I know only too well how easy it is to be blind to truth, how difficult it is for Englishmen to extend their very limited outlooks. I left the army for a university. While there I was appointed to the Indian Civil Service. Fortunately as I see it now, I was impelled to resign it. Lately, away from the seclusion of a university, I have seen for myself the horrors of industrialism, materialism and machinery.
>
> I have followed your great work for India as a rare example of spiritual truth applied to the world. It has stirred me the more as I saw the more clearly that there were two Englands. I hope and trust that, in delivering India from the menace of a materialistic civilisation, you will also free the great mass of English people from its evil results.

This aspect of the Indian movement is, of course, well-known to you.

But I thought that in a life which must entail its own disappointments and sufferings, a tribute of recognition from one who was an ''Anglo-Indian'' in 1919 would not be unacceptable.

SCHOOL-BOOKS PROSCRIBED

The U.P. Government issued on the I5th instant the following notice:

> In exercise of the powers conferred by section 99A (V of 1898), the Governor-in-Council hereby declares to be forfeited to His Majesty all copies, wherever found, of Pandit Ramdas Gour's Hindi readers Nos. III, IV, V and VI published by Baij Nath Kedia, Hindi Pustak Agency, 126, Harrison Road, Calcutta, and printed at the Banik Press, Calcutta, and also all other copies of or extracts from the same readers wherever printed inasmuch as the said readers, in the opinion of the Local Government, contain seditious matter, the publication of which is publishable under Section 124A, Indian Penal Code.

Now these readers have been before the public for nearly three years. They are widely used in national schools. They have been adopted in municipal schools also. The Provincial Congress Committee has, therefore, rightly congratulated Professor Ramdas Gour, declared the books to be inoffensive and recommended their continuance notwithstanding the Government order. One would have thought that the Government had now abandoned the policy of utilizing arbitrary procedure against non-co-operators. The Government contend that the books are in breach of Section 124A of the Penal Code. It was then open to them to prosecute the author and secure a conviction against him. It might then have been Justified in proscribing the books. I have taken the trouble of going through the contents of all the volumes. They appear to me to be perfectly harmless, i.e., from the Government standpoint. The least that the Government owed the public was to inform it of the objectionable matter in the several books so as to enable the public to judge for itself as to the propriety or otherwise of the Government order, assuming, of course, that it is proper to exercise arbitrary powers in cases such as this. As it is, the conclusion is irresistible that the Government do not like the growing popularity of the readers and are seeking by questionable methods to favour its proteges whose readers may have suffered a check in competition with Professor Ramdas Gour's. The Government must have had the readers brought to its notice by its elaborate detective agency if they were seditious. The long delay in proscribing adds to

the strength of my inference. I invite the Government of the United Provinces to tender to the public full reason for its decision. I would be glad to feel that the inference I have drawn is not justified. I advise too the president of the committee to ask the Government to state its reasons and offer to advise Professor Ramdas Gour to amend his books or withdraw them from circulation if the committee is satisfied of the justness of the Government decision.

HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

No reader of the statement issued by Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan on the recent events in Delhi can fail to notice the deep grief underlying it. I must copy from it at least one paragraph:

> Of all the incidents which form part of the recent disturbance in Delhi, to me the most humiliating and heart-rending are the atrocious and cowardly assaults committed on women. So far I know one Mussalman woman was molested by the Hindus, but what is much worse is the fact that, during the rioting of the 15th, some of those who claim to be the votaries of Islamic faith, not content with attacking a Hindu temple and breaking the idols, perpetrated cowardly assaults on women and children. I tremble with the deepest indignation at the very idea of my co-religionists exhibiting such wanton and callous disregard for the honour and sanctity of womanhood. No word of condemnation is strong enough for the perpetrators of this crime and I appeal to all true Muslims to condemn this depravity in unfaltering and absolutely unqualified terms. I am inviting Jamit-ul-Ulema and the Khilafat Committee to stand up and exercise all that is best in Islam in order to condemn and to prevent the repetition of such acts of savage lawlessness. It is our moral duty as true Mussalmans, to make these acts absolutely impossible and, if we don't succeed in this, we deserve to be defeated in our efforts for national freedom and swaraj.

A correspondent upbraids me for saying nothing in my statement on the assaults referred to by Hakimji. My note was based on the very first news of the trouble. These had no reference to the assaults. Events then took an uglier turn. The news was too serious to base public criticism on the alarming telegrams. I, therefore, entered into correspondence with friends in Delhi but I am not able to criticize anything with effect now. Fortunately, Maulana Mahomed Ali is now in Delhi. He is making inquiries and I have suggested that, if it is at allpossible, he should, as President of the Congress, publish the results of his preliminary inquiry. I am fully aware of my duty in the matter. My place is just now by the side of the Maulana Saheb. I am deterred

from so doing by the advice of medical friends. All the medical precaution that has been insisted on may not be necessary, for whilst I am not moving about, I am able to go through a great amount of work. But I want to avoid risks so far as it is possible. I may assure the friends who are rightly reminding me of my duty at this juncture that I have placed myself unreservedly at Maulana Mahomed Ali's disposal and I have asked him not to think of my health if he needs me in Delhi immediately. And, in any event, I am trying to hurry forward to Delhi. But if Maulana Mahomed Ali does not require me to go to Delhi earlier, I do not want to commence travelling till the end of August. It was because my health had suffered some deterioration in Ahmedabad that Mr. Vithalbhai Patel was requested to extend the time for the presentation of the Corporation address to the end of August. But I shall have no hesitation, if need be, to go to Delhi before going to Bombay for the address.

FAVOURITISM OR JUSTICE

I note that the chief executive officer of the Calcutta Corporation has come in for a good deal of hostile criticism because of his having given 25 out of 33 appointments to Mussalmans. I have not read the comments themselves. But I have read the statement made by the chief executive officer. In my humble opinion, it is a creditable performance. I have no doubt that appointments have not till now been made with impartiality, whether by Europeans or Indians. There is no doubt, too, that in many cases Hindus have influenced decisions in their favour. It ill-becomes them to quarrel against many posts having now gone to Mussalmans. If the charge be true that the appointments have a party purpose behind them, there is nothing immoral or reprehensible in the fact itself if they are otherwise justifiable. In England, such appointments are certainly made in party interests, though, as a rule, care is exercised not to sacrifice efficiency. Personally, I would like appointments to go to the best men irrespective of parties, and should, therefore, be made by a permanent non-party board. But if Hindus wish to see India free, they must be ready and willing to sacrifice in favour of their Mussalman and other brethren. I can heartily endorse the remark of the chief executive officer when he says:

> With thousands of educated young men out of employment and on the verge of starvation and, with a very limited number of vacancies, it is not possible for any human being to do anything which will please all. Whatever I

may do, I am sure to leave the major portion of the unemployed as discontented as before. The only solution of this problem is the provision of technical education and in this matter, the Corporation can, in my opinion, do much.

We must learn to do without these appointments. Only a microscopic minority can get them. Education must cease to be merely clerical. Why may not a graduate be an artisan or a hawker of vegetables or khaddar?

A MUSLIM KHADI COMMITTEE

Mr. S. H. Uraizee, secretary of Muslim Khadi Committee recently established in Ahmedabad, sends me the following for publication:

> Hazrat Maulana Azad Subhani Saheb of Cawnpore with the help of some enthusiastic Muslims has been successfully able to organize the Muslim Khadi Committee in Ahmedabad on the 15th instant, with an express view for the wide spread of khaddar among the Mussalmans. The following gentlemen have formed the Committee.
>
> *President*—Hakim Syed Ahmed Saheb Dehlavi; *Vice-President*—Hakim Samir Saheb Siddiqui; *Secretary*—Syed Hussain Uraizee; Treasurer—Seth Mohamedbhai Rajahbhai Shaikh; *Members*—Maulvi Syed Sajjad Hussain Saheb; Hakim Rahimullah Saheb Ajmeri; Munshi Manzar Ali Saheb, Seth Noor Mohamad Mohamadbhai Mansuri Saheb; Seth Peerbhai Adamji Modi Saheb; Seth Abdur Rahim Abdul Karim Saheb; Maulana Sharaf Saheb Dehlavi.

I have gone out of my way to advertise this committee. For, as a rule, I have been loath to publish such details. Bitter experience has shown that such committees grow up like mushrooms and have an equally transient existence. They often exist only on paper. But I am making an exception in favour of this committee in the hope that it will do credit to the founder, Maulana Azad Subhani. I have not known many Muslim organizations devoted specially to khadi work. Nor are many Muslims found to take a lively interest in this much-needed national work. Indeed, during the Bakr-Id in Ahmedabad, a friend tells me, Mussalmans could be counted on the fingers of one hand who were dressed in khadi. They were not even dressed in Indian mill-cloth. It was all foreign. Let me hope this committee will change this state of things. I hope too, that the members are all spinners and khadi weavers.

TO SPINNERS

The manager of the Satyagraha Ashram tells me that he is inundated with applications for slivers, spindles, holders, wheels, carding-bows and ginning instruments. This is a healthy sign of response

to the A.I.C.C. resolution. But a word of warning is necessary. Those who are new to the task would naturally require gui-dance and assistance. But organizers and spinners must understand that it is not possible to organize national spinning if every spinner has to be supplied with slivers from a distant central place. Slivers being very soft things get damaged in transit. It is possible to prevent crushing if they were packed in metal jars. But that means more cost than that of the slivers themselves. The ideal thing is to learn both carding and spinning. But where that is not possible, spinning clubs may be formed of thirty or less. One member of the club may be a whole-time worker merely carding and making slivers except for the half-hour he must devote to spinning. Nor is it possible to work spinning successfully if wheels, spindles, etc., have to be received from one place. There must be depots connected with every provincial committee for the supply of all accessories and repairs. The spinning-wheels are difficult to pack and cost much railage. An ordi-nary carpenter should be able to make a good spinning-wheel if he has a decent pattern to go by. It is because thousands of details have to be worked out for an effective organization that I would if I could make the Congress exclusively a workshop for the supply of all the material and a warehouse for the sale of khaddar. It must require hard thinking and harder toil to bring about a complete boycott of foreign cloth by effort from within. One man or one taluka becoming entirely khaddar-clad may not bring swaraj, but the whole country doing so must bring it for all that a successful boycott means. Oh ! for a little imagination that would work out the implications of the khaddar movement and all doubt will vanish. That khaddar may not appeal to the nation is another matter. But that cannot be said until there is honest effort that comes only from inward faith.

TO AN INQUIRER

No, it is not true that I reduced my meals because the country was not spinning. I reduced them for the conservation of mental energy and health. I have now reverted to three meals and *bhakri.* But when the 'Siamese twins' lovingly pressed me before their departure from Ahmedabad to return to three meals and increase the quantity I was then taking, I said humourously that I would do so if they re-established Hindu-Muslim unity and popularized khaddar. Either, therefore, the reference by them to the reduction of my meals was a friendly licence or their taking my joke seriously. In either case, I

agree with the inquirer that the reference to my personal habits or restraints should have been avoided. Both the Hindu-Muslim and the khadi questions must be decided on merits. Both are a vital necessity for the national existence and we shall succeed only when we have converted the nation to our view.

"FOR GANDHIJI OR COUNTRY"

A friend says in effect the fashion nowadays has become to goad students into spinning 'for the sake of Gandhiji'. He asks whether the appeal is justified. To a certain extent an appeal of that character under certain circumstances is not inappropriate so long as I stand for the country and that alone. An appeal to spin for my sake may go home more directly than one 'for the country'. The proper thing no doubt is for everybody to spin for the country, better still for himself in the higher sense of the term. For everyone who works for the country works for himself also. He who works only for himself works to his own undoing. Our interest must be identical with and must merge in the country's. Those, however, who spin on occasion only and for show and afterwards stop, practise deceipt.

FIRST IN THE FIELD

A.I.K.B. has already begun to get response to the spinning resolution. The reason for the prompt response from some is obvious. Practised spinners can easily spin 150 yards per half hour. 300 yards per hour is the average speed. There are many already who have finished their quota. The highest speed attained is over 500 yards per hour.

Shrimati Avantika Bai and her friends are the first to send their yarn. Most of them do not belong to the Congress. They are certainly not on any Congress executive. But as I have said in these pages, it is the duty of every Indian, no matter to what party he or she belongs, to send his or her quota to the A.I.K. Board. I, therefore, congratulate these ladies upon their gift. They would naturally like to know the report of the experts on the quality of their yarn. So far as the quality is concerned, it is good. But the manner of doing the hanks, etc." is naturally not as it should be. Over an hour had to be given to examining and classifying the yarn. As a result of the examination of this lot, the Secretary sends me the following specific instructions for the attention of spinners:

(l) Each spinner should attach a label on each of his or her

hanks and it should contain:

(a) The length and number of strands in it.

(b) The weight in *tolas*.

(c) The count which may result on calculation.

These labels are in addition to the main label referred to, containing name, etc., of the spinners.

(2) All hanks should be of uniform size and bulk.

(3) Every hank should contain two or more leases in it, which is done by passing a piece of strong string round each skein of 80 or 100 or more strands and crossing the string after each successive skein in the hank.

(4) It would be better to write down on the card attached to the bundle the kind of cotton used. It will give an opportunity to the collector of the yarn of knowing the varieties used in the different provinces and of instructing as to the counts to be drawn from a given variety.

It has been customary in Bombay, and elsewhere, too, for that matter, to use mill slivers. Yarn drawn from mill slivers is perfectly useless for the purpose intended. The purpose is to popularize all the hand-processes in connection with raw cotton. Between mill slivers and mill cotton there is only a shade of difference. If we may use mill slivers, we may as well use mill-spun yarn.

The central idea behind hand-spinning is to put money into the pockets of millions by finding them an easy uniform cottage industry. Slivers must, therefore, be hand-made. The question of the circumference of the reel should also be decided. That the reels should be uniform goes without saying. If they are not, it is tedious to find the count of a given quantity of yarn. Experience has shown that the circumference of the reel should be four feet. Then 375 lengths or strands would make a hank of 500 yards. Four such hanks would make 2,000 yards. It is incredibly simple to find the count of such hanks if we know the weight. Convert the *tolas* weight into *anies* and divide the number of strands by the *anies,* the answer is the count. Thus, if a hank of 375 strands weighs, say, 15 *anies,* the count is 375/15 = 25. Many suggestions have been made as to the size of the reel. Experience seems to favour four feet circumference. These reels are attached to the Ashram wheels. It is a convenience no doubt to have them so. But reels can be easily improvised with slit bamboo.

Four to six pieces of slit bamboos of required length, pierced in the middle and supported on an upright [*sic*] whose ends pass through three bamboo pieces on either side and held in position by means of strings, make a serviceable reel. The appliances accompanying the wheel are as simple as the wheel itself. Lastly, it would be well to remember that the yarn should be sprayed and kept on the reel for an hour for saturation and drying. The spraying settles the twist.

Young India, 31-7-1924

223. LETTER TO F. K. VILASINI

SABARMATI,
July 31, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

This is the answer to your question.

Love Truth at all cost. This can be done only by loving all that lives, and feeling for them.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRIMATI V. K. VILASINI
HILLS PALACE
TRIPPOONITARA, COCHIN STATE

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

224. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[1]

[On or after *July 31, 1924*]

MY OPINION DAMAGE BEYOND OUR CAPACITY WE MUST ASSIST LARGER AGENCIES WITH PERSONAL SERVICE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9007

[1] This was in reply to C. Rajagopalachari's telegram of July 29, received on July 31, which read: "Flood ravages terrible magnitude. Advise whether we should attempt relief from Congress Funds." A similar telegram was sent to Srinivasa Iyengar in reply to a telegram of July 30, received on July 31, reading: "Large funds immediately required for relief. Appalling distress caused by floods. Kindly advise Working Committee grant fifty thousand immediately."

225. MESSAGE TO "BANDE MATARAM"

[*August 1, 1924*][1]

I wish the readers *of Bande Mataram* will contemplate the life of the Lokamanya on his anniversary. They will then realize that he required of us selfless devotion to the cause of the country. Will they give a paltry half hour's labour in the shape of spinning with religious punctuality till India becomes free?

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-8-1924

226. LETTER TO ASAF ALI[2]

SABARMATI,

August 1, 1924

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. In one of your letters, I do not know whether I should say, you were impatient or unreasonable. In any case, whatever it was it was perfectly natural, as you were working in most trying circumstances and at a time when you never knew what the next moment had in store for you. If I were similarly placed I would have done probably the same thing and thought of blaming everything and everybody. The statements which are now being issued will, I think, do some good, but I would like all such statements to be stopped now pending something definite and final from the President of the Congress.

Can anything be done to stop these prosecutions? What does it matter whether a particular offence is cognizable or not? After all, if the parties concerned do not want any prosecutions, the police would be hard put to it to bring such prosecutions to a successful issue. I cannot help feeling with you that, if these prosecutions continue, we shall not be able to find true facts because, as youvery properly say, those who know will be afraid to come near us.

[1] The message was sent on the Lokamanya Day, i.e., August 1, 1924.

[2] Asaf Ali (1888-1953); barrister and nationalist Muslim politician; took a leading part in the Khilafat movement

I return the papers you wanted.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

ASAF ALI, ESQ.
KUCHA-I-CHELAN
DELHI

From the original: C.W. 5995. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

227. SPEECH AT NATIONAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE[1]

AHMEDABAD,
August 1,1924

SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

I am extremely sorry to say that I have not been able to prepare my speech as well as I would have liked to. Honestly speaking, I should not have embarked on this venture. I have neither the physical energy nor the time for it. But so much pressure was brought to bear on me that I had to agree to attend the Conference if it was held early in August. Thinking about the matter, I saw that, besides attending it, I would also have to do some work. I tried my best to find some time to put my ideas on paper, but I could not manage to do even that; nor could I think over the matter as carefully as I wanted to. I hope you will forgive me for this.

Shri Kishorelal's request is beyond my power to grant. If teachers behave as brothers towards one another, it will mean swaraj, and that is not within my power to give. Such a prayer can be addressed only to God. If he grant it, we shall have received everything. A request like this will probably seem no difficult matter to you, but it is beyond me to grant it. I only wish to make some suggestions to you and to place before you some figures which will be an encouragement to you and me.

The country is today passing through a period of despair and one of the reasons for this is myself. I placed before it a time limit of one year within which, I said, we ought to win swaraj. Not one but several years have passed and still it seems that swaraj is far away. To

[1] The Conference of the teachers of national schools in Gujarat, over which Gandhiji presided, was called "to organize the educational work in Gujarat and to find means and ways of producing a better type of teachers and creating a brotherly feeling and co-ordination of efforts among those engaged in the work of education"

some it may appear to be even farther away now than it was in the year 1921. But I do not believe it to be so. To me it seems to be nearer. To realize this one must have unshakable faith like mine. Such faith is not to be had as a gift from anyone It only comes from experience. If I had not set a time-limit and if we had not been required to work on that basis, even the little progress we have achieved would have been impossible.

You are not unfamiliar with the figures which I am going to place before you. They are good enough to keep up our spirit. There is no reason to be ashamed of Gujarat's achievement in regard to any item of the Non-co-operation programme, no reason not only for Gujarat but for the whole country. It is true that we could not do what fell to our share on the basis of numbers; if, however, everyone had exerted himself to his best—and to my knowledge there is no reason not to believe that it has been so—then we have nothing to be ashamed of. Let me explain to you why I say this.

I have censured my co-workers and asked them why they could do only as much as they did, because that was my duty. Anyone who wants to serve and who, in consequence, has had to take up leadership has no choice but to demand more and more of his co-workers and it is his duty to censure them. When, however, I think over the matter objectively, I do not feel that anyone has been dishonest about his work.

I have said this in order to present the bright side. I have obtained figures in support of it. You know them. They have been recorded by the Registrar and have been compiled by you, teachers. I want, with the help of these figures, to fill both you and myself with hope. We have 10,000 pupils in the national schools, not taking into account the number in the schools of three municipalities. We have spent Rs. 3_ lakhs on them. There are 500 girls among the pupils. That is a rather small number, but we have been educating these. The Municipalities of Ahmedabad, Nadiad and Surat adopted the principle of non-co-operation and turned their schools into national schools. With the number of pupils in these schools added, the figure comes to 20,000. Of these, 10,000 are from Ahmedabad. We have 800 teachers. The salaries paid to them are included in the sum of Rs. 3,50,000 I have mentioned. We nave two colleges, and also *a Puratatva Mandir*[1]. I have heard in this connection that such work is

[1] School of archaeology

being done nowhere else in the country. There are three living institutions which support us and are being supported by us. These are the Dakshinamurti Vidyarti Bhavan[1], the Charotar Kelavani Mandal[2] and the Broach Kelavani Mandal[3]. Their founders and managers will grant that, if those institutions have, by joining the Non-co-operation movement, added to its prestige, they have also gained vitality from it.

Further, we have prepared a number of text-books. I went through many of them while in jail. I have seen and examined carefully the books prepared by the Dakshinamurti and the Charotar Mandal. I do not say I have read them, but, having gone through many books, I have developed the ability to discover by merely turning over the pages of a book what it contains, in what style it is written and what the author wishes to say. The authors of these books and the institutions deserve compliments. The books published by the Vidyapith are in addition to these. If we examine recent history, that is, the past 50 years, we shall discover that throughout it no such work has been done. All the work till now used to be done by the Government. We cannot take credit for it. Our people were engaged in it no doubt, but the scheme was drawn up by the Government and the men appointed by it. It strengthened the present system and was conceived with the aim of imparting education which would do so. If we compare the number of books that they produced in the first year of their having started the work with what we have done, even then we shall see that our performance is better than theirs. But we do not wish to make comparisons with others.

Gujarat was, and is even today, the most backward province. The Gujaratis are unlettered, they only know money as possible through business. The idea of creating a literature for the general public was not widespread before the Non-co-operation movement. The first to start work in that direction was the Sastu Sahitya-vardhak Karyalaya, which means Swami Akhandanand. He put into people's hands a large number of low-priced books in Gujarat. However, the Non-co-operation movement has done much more, so that we may perhaps forget the excellent work done by Akhandanand, though, of course, it is such as ought not to be forgotten.

I have said more about text-books than I had intended. I shall

[1] In Kathiawar
[2] At Anand, in Gujarat
[3] In South Gujarat

also sound a note of warning now. If there was a flow of such text-books in Gujarat, I would not be particularly delighted with that. I became alarmed when I was flooded with them while I was in the Yeravda Prison.

The printing and get-up of all of them was beautiful. One I liked in particular. But all this is not in keeping with Gujarat's condition. Gujarat of course, is no beggar. Comparatively speaking, it has enough money, but I feel that it cannot bear such a burden; it cannot digest such a mass of books, nor can its pockets afford them. If such books are brought out for cities like Ahmedabad, Surat, Nadiad and Broach, I have nothing to say. No doubt, the brains of their residents cannot bear such heavy reading, though their pockets can afford them. Parents in villages, however, most certainly cannot afford them. The books we print and place before the people must be such as the children of even the poorest can buy. If I could, I would publish books costing at the most four pice each.

I have been informed that the Navajivan Prakashan Mandir has brought out a number of books. People do not know that I am not its proprietor. It belongs to Swami Anandanand. He informs me only after everything has been printed off. I have received complaints that Anandanand has deceived Gujarat, that he has persuaded *Navajivan* to donate Rs. 50,000, but do I know, they ask me, how much he has swallowed? To that I shall reply that I have no such swindlers staying with me and that, if there are any, I do not know them. In this institution, some draw no salaries and some take as much as they need; if, however, I allow a reasonable rate of payment, I estimate that the figure would exceed Rs. 50,000.

WANTED ONLY TEXT BOOKS

It is true that, had I been there, I would not have allowed so many books to be published by Navajivan Prakashan Mandir. I would think a thousand times before I presented a book to the people. I have written a book called *Balpothi*[1], not much worth talking about. If I sit down to read it, I can finish it in five minutes. If I read it a little carefully, I would finish it in ten minutes. I have not read the comments on it which have been received. I know that many of these are not likely to please me much. There is no measure in the praise or censure generally showered on me and, therefore, either has little

[1] *Vide* "A Primer", 14-4-1922.

effect on me. However that be, the idea behind that book is great. It is that a teacher should impart education only by word of mouth; that he cannot do so with the help of books and text-books. Who knows what stuff gets into the brains of children in countries where there are heaps of text-books! The devil takes possession of them, the children's thinking power is reduced to nil. This conclusion of mine is based on my experience of countless children and on discussions with many teachers. I used to move about with wide-open eyes in South Africa. There was a conflagration in the country, and moving even in the midst of that I observed this thing. Let us compare two schools: one in which teachers are supplied with text-books and another in which they have to teach without the use of a single text-book. The teachers in both are equally gifted. The one, then, which has no text-books to use will be able to give more to the pupil; than the one which has them. I do not want children to have any text-books. The teachers may, if they wish, read them. We may write as much for them as we choose. If you write for children, you will make the teachers mechanical and destroy their originality and initiative. I do not, of course, wish to arrest the progress of teachers. I merely want that you should also know this point of view of mine. The authors of text-books are experienced writers. Where the people need their books, by all means let them buy them, but please understand what lies behind my attitude.

You may ask me if I have worked as a teacher. My view is based on considerable experience and I have thought a great deal about education. Kindly think about the matter from the point of view indicated by me and go a little slow. The point of what I am saying is that, if you wish to bring out books for lakhs of children, well, Gujarat does not have the money for that and it will lose interest in this business; secondly, we should not burden the children's brains with these books.

If a person who has got some new idea sacrifices himself for it and puts it before the world immediately he gets it, that will be a loss both to him and the world. If, however, he keeps it back, experiments with it, tries it on himself and on children and verifies it, and waits even thereafter, the world will lose nothing. I have some examples of great men in support of this. They kept back their ideas and neither they nor the world lost anything in consequence. Such persons have later on even revised their ideas or, in face of new experience, have abandoned the original ideas. One example of this is our impatient

Andrews, a great friend of mine who is on the most intimate terms with me. Ten years ago he was in the habit of immediately giving expression in writing to any ideas which occurred to him. Those ideas of ten years ago are not his today He is of course a religious man—and so are we. If we die without expressing our ideas, the soul will carry them forward and the world will certainly have them some time.

GENESIS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION

If we think over the circumstances in which the Vidyapith and its subsidiary bodies came into being, many of our problems will disappear. Today we are thinking about education as educationists. If we think that the teachers' business is merely to teach, we must do that in the best possible manner; but our problem is not so easy. We have not set up the Vidyapith and the schools merely for the purpose of imprating education. We established it as part of the Non-co-operation movement. That means that the teachers, pupils and parents have joined the army of swaraj, are volunteers dedicated to the cause of swaraj are Non-co-operators. But I am not here to tell you of the wonders of non-co-operation. I wish to explain the duty of a patriotic teacher. When you joined the movement for swaraj, you accepted at that very moment that the principle of non-co-operation was right.

If there is any error in that principle, the Congress will revise its policy; till then, we must go ahead, assuming that we are on the right track. We are not here to decide whether non-co-operation is right in principle. This is common ground between us, that the Vidyapith and the schools exist to help the cause of swaraj. We shall think about education as education after we have secured swaraj. Today we have to look at it from the limited point of view which I have explained.

We should keep this point of view before us in running our primary schools, *Vinay Mandirs*[1] and colleges, as also the *Puratatva Mandir*. We must on no account depart from the principle of non-co-operation and of swaraj. We wish to get swaraj and we have accepted truth and non-violence as the means. No matter what the words "peaceful" and "legitimate" in the Congress resolution mean, to me they only mean truth and non-violence, and I believethat Gujarat too interprets them to mean the same. Besides this, we have adopted the programme of fivefold boycott. If we abandon it, we cannot keep our pledge. If it is true that we are the guardians of children's moral

[1] Secondary schools

character, we shall teach them a wrong lesson by abandoning the boycott. Those who do not believe in those items should leave these institutions. Everyone has to earn his living, but that cannot be our principal aim. Anyone, then, who does not accept the conditions of non-co-operation should leave. To join a national school merely for a living does honour neither to the teacher nor to the taught.

Of the two aspects of our struggle, we have achieved our aim in respect of one, the destructive. If we persist in that work even now we shall be imitating a senseless farmer. When a farmer wants to sow, he removes the weeds and pebbles from the field, ploughs it and makes the soil even. If, even after he has done all this, he goes on turning things this way and that in the field, he will be simply wasting his time. Nor will it be proper for him to make the same experiments in another field without first watching their effects in the first one. Similarly, it does not help if one person leaves and another takes his place. The first one should remain in his place and work on. And as he does so, he should have patience and the faith that by and by the field will have its crop. Our destructive work has been completed, and now we have to take up constructive work, which will produce lasting results. That constructive work will supplement the programme of boycott. If the work which we have been doing wins people's admiration, if its value is recognized, the other schools will automatically disappear. Everyone admits that those schools have no soul in them and asks us to give them something else in their place. If we have unshakable faith in our work, we would continue it whether it takes us one year or twenty to complete it.

Our main task is to establish schools. The teachers should forget all about panchayats and law-courts. It is not for us to think about them. If we think about our own duty, we shall have conquered the world. Our second responsibility is to win a good name for our schools. We have enlarged the area a great deal, now we have to pick and choose from it. Those of you who are farmers will understand the point. From among the plants which grow from the seeds sown by him, a farmer will pluck out those which are of indifferent quality, sallow, or lifeless. Even from the crop of wheat which he has harvested, he will stock the best portion as seed and will reap a better harvest every year. We have succeeded in enlarging the area; now we should address ourselves to improving the strength and quality.

The second item of work relates to the spinning-wheel and

untouchability, and the third concerns Hindu-Muslim unity. The Hindu-Muslim problem is not so acute in Gujarat, but it certainly exists. If we spread among children the idea that Hindus and Muslims must live as blood-brothers, the mutual bitterness to be found even in Gujarat will disappear. It is true no heads have been broken in Gujarat, but our relations are not brotherly. The schools are responsible for this, though not much. All the schools, of courses have the obligation to admit *Antyaja* children The Vidyapith adopted the rule of admitting *Antyaja* children at the risk of its own existence. What have the teachers done? What have the parents done? The latter are afraid. They are ready to run the schools without *Antyaja* pupils. They would be happy if the latter could be kept out. Hence the schools do not have many *Antyaja* children. It is our good fortune to have workers like Indulal, Mama and others, through whose efforts we have 15 *Antyaja* schools. Those *Antyaja* schools are a matter of shame for us, they are no evidence of our capacity for work or generosity. Special schools for *Antyajas* become necessary only in places where the latter are despised. If they are not despised, their children would be attending the common schools. We should employ the Force of our love and bring in the *Antyaja* children. We should first, train them, then help them and others to look neat and tidy, bathe them, feed them, and, if they speak clumsily, correct their pronunciation of words. But we have not done this, and that has been a great crime, not a minor one.

If we hold, as we must, the removal of untouchability to be an essential part of the work to be done by the Congress it will be impossible to win swaraj for the country as long as we continue to keep the *Antyajas* at a distance and are not ready to treat them as our equals. English newspapers and spokesmen of the British Government may exploit this statement of mine, but I am not worried on that score. We wish to win swaraj only through self-purification. Hence, I will keep on repeating this statement.

I am often told that the teachers will resign, that the pupils will leave. But will it matter if they do? Workers in Belgaum and Shri Jamnalalji have informed me that resignations have been coming in at several places. In some places, not enough members are left even to run committees. I was happy to hear this If I have a crore of rupees and, on testing them on the anvil, find that they are counterfeit, what would I do with them? I would certainly throw them into the Sabar-

mati. If, however, there should be one genuine coin among that crore and if I were asked to find it out, taking my own time about it, when would I succeed? If I want to buy flour for my son, how will that coin help me? I for one would search out that genuine coin right today and throw away the rest. I am thus not worried about the resignations. Those counterfeit coins may as well leave us. Let us teachers become fearless, let us stand fearlessly on truth and maintain that the school which the *Antyaja* children cannot attend is not a national school, not a school for swaraj, not a non-co-operation school. I am a connoisseur of precious stones, testing everything by the criterion of swaraj. I would value only a school which served our aim. We should go and join a school with a firm resolve that we would leave it if it refused admission to *Antyaja* children and if the parents wanted to keep them out indirectly. We should stay in an *Antyaja* locality and teach *Antyaja* children there. If city children come there, well and good else so much the less burden, so much the less financial risk. Why not admit that we have no funds, that the people do not give us money, that they do not approve of this *Antyaja* work, that they refuse to give money because this work is at present unpopular? We must, all the same, carry it on. We should think that the people are on a wrong path, that they must come to the right path, and that, when they do so, we shall be ready to help as signallers. If we describe as a national school one which does not support an item of the Non-co-operation programme which is of lasting importance, we shall be committing a sin.

Have I become mad? If we really believe that we can win swaraj by spinning, we must act accordingly. I have received two letters which say: You have become a fool. Earlier, you showed some moderation when talking about the spinning-wheel. But now you have discarded that too. The world may call me a fool, a madman or give me any other bad name; still I shall keep repeating the same thing. What shall I do it I can think of nothing else? I for one would not pass even a college graduate and would not give him a certificate till he has passed the test of the spinning-wheel. People object to this, saying that it is coercion. What does coercion mean? Is there no coercion in laying down the rule that everyone must study English, Gujarati and Sanskrit? In the same way, we can say spinning will have to be learnt compulsorily. If we do not believe in the idea, then, it would be a different matter. What is wrong in telling the pupils that they cannot remain in the school if they do not spin? Just because a man will shout

when we touch a boil on him, should we refrain from touching it? He will feel relieved after we have opened it. There is no coercion in this, but only good order. We should feel no qualms in presenting to children what we believe to be essential for them. Those children and parents who do not like the thing should not join. If the primary school, the *Vinay Mandir* and the college are schools for swaraj, they ought to have this rule [about spinning]. Other considerations are irrelevant for us. Those who have changed their ideas may resign. As long as the Congress resolution stands, such men cannot stay on.

We should certainly not keep people in the dark about these two conditions. Why fear parents? If they do not like the conditions, let them send their children to Government schools. What is the difference between Government schools and national schools? I myself used to say that the only difference was the atmosphere of freedom in our schools. Some will ask if that was not enough. Of course, it is. But there was no time when the spinning-wheel and the *Antyajas* were out of my mind. I have never believed even in my dreams that freedom means licence. Let the children climb, if they will, over the teachers' shoulders, abuse them, address them without proper respect, but they must certainly obey them. What does the child who ill-treats an *Antyaja* know about freedom? And what love will he have for freedom? The members of the advanced communities in Bardoli who exploit the *Dublas* may know how to oppress, but what do they know of swaraj? The teachers are pledged to banish oppression in every form. I would certainly introduce a rule that a pupil should submit a certain quantity of yarn at the time of every examination. I would then be able to show in a short time that every national school could become self-supporting.

I can show that the principles which I am placing before the country are sound. If we wish to keep our schools "national", we must do both these things. Every teacher, who does not know spinning, carding, ginning and cotton-testing, should learn them. He should devote all his spare time to learning these things. If he himself does, not know them, how will he teach them to his pupils? Some teachers may say that they will impart only knowledge of letters and that others should be employed to teach spinning and weaving. Just as all of us know how to eat and how to wear clothes, so also must we know spinning and other processes. Then alone can we set an example to a child.

So far all the money has been spent on colleges, *Vinay Mandirs* and schools for *Antyajas.* The Vidyapith has given no importance to primary schools. If we wish to give life to the principles which I have stated, the Vidyapith should be turned into a school for khadi. Non-co-operation is a movement of the people. It is not meant for a few people. We want to bring life to crores of skeletons and cover them with flesh. We get food to eat, so there is flesh on us. We feel that we look all right. The skeletons in this country have no other covering except the skin. I have wept to see them. If you saw them, you also would weep and ask: "Is that the people's condition?"

How can a Bombay man know what a skeleton is? Our task is to bring awakening among the people. What matters it even if the newspapers are closed down? The common class of people do not read newspapers. They certainly read you and me. Place a pair of eyes before them, they will look at these alone. Take this to be gospel truth. If there is something in your eyes, the people will understand you and will dismiss the papers with a laugh.

If we wish to educate the masses, we may well give Importance to the colleges but ultimately we must make them like *Gangotri*[1]. The pupils trained in them should, at the end of their training, take themselves to the villages. Train them with this idea in mind. Even if only a few come forward, it makes no difference.

It is the primary schools to which I attach importance. I want the Vidyapith to pay more attention to them and assume more responsibility for them. We should think how these schools should be run. I give my own idea. It is folly to imitate Government schools. Two years ago I had published some figures in *Young India.*[2] I had shown with their help that there were fewer schools in the Punjab now than 50 years ago. In Burma, too, there were schools everywhere and all children were given knowledge of the three R's. That condition does not obtain today, because the Government closed down what it considered to be primitive schools and started its own. How can it reach all the seven lakhs of villages? There are no schools in three lakhs out of those seven lakhs. In this sorry state of affairs, what is the point of starting schools on the Government pattern? We should manage without school buildings; we need only teachers of character.

[1] The source of the Ganges

[2] These figures occurred in the articles by Daulat Ram Gupta in the various issues between December 8, 1920, and January 26, 1921.

The teachers of old days were such men. They used to teach children and lived by begging. They would beg for flour, and would accept ghee if they got it. Where these teachers were not good, the education was not good; and where they were good the education was good. All that is no more today. Education cannot be imparted by means of imposing buildings. If we are ready to go to the villages and live a simple life, doing the work of spinning, etc., then we may reach our goal. We may ask the Vidyapith to think about this, but it is not a body distinct from you or me. If some men draw up a scheme and place it before the Vidyapith and if a few self-sacrificing men are ready to live in the villages, subsisting on what little they get, then only will this be possible.

In a letter received by me and published in *Navajivan,* a teacher informs me that he started his work with three children. Today there are 96 children, 73 boys and 23 girls. He teaches them under a tree. They are not the children of Brahmins *or Vanias.* it *is* a school exclusively of *Antyajas;* can you and I not do what an *Antyaja* teacher could? Can we not find even *Antyaja* children? If we do not, we might experiment elsewhere. What I want to say is that we must pay serious attention to primary education.

I have been told that parents have tired of our educational programme. They are unhappy that the children are being educated through The mother tongue! I laughed on hearing this. The pain followed; when there is extreme suffering, one cannot cry, one laughs. What degeneration was this, I felt. The parents fear that their children will not be able to speak good English. They do not mind if they speak bad Gujarati. Has it ever occurred to them that, if they learn through Gujarati, they will bring a little of the education into their homes too? I myself do not know equivalents of technical terms in geometry, algebra and arithmetic. If I am asked to give a Gujarati word for "circle", I would have to pause and think. I know the English names of the different kinds of triangles, but do not know the Gujarati name of any one of them. What a situation! Personally, I would gladly have these parents look after their own children. Should I teach them through English and ask others for Gujarati equivalents? Should I establish a national school and collect funds to do this? I would, instead, start working myself and learn up all the equivalents, and then go ahead smoothly. We have not known of a single English scholar having experienced difficulties in regard to words in his own

language. An Englishman named Spurgeon was not a great scholar, but, whenever he opened his mouth, it was simply a flow of words; he would amaze everybody by his fluent use of the most obscure technical words relating to the navy. If I were to approach our biggest scholars, Narasinhrao[1] and Anandshankar[2] with such problems, wanting maliciously to test them, I could easily show that they had failed. If, in this pitiable situation, I am asked to teach through English, I would decline. I should of course admit that education through the mother tongue is not a necessary part of non-co-operation. If some parents ask me to teach their children good English, permitting me at the same time to teach them spinning, music, etc., I would certainly accept the bargain. I would teach English for four hours and make the children spin for a like duration. Even while teaching English, I would teach as much Gujarati as I can manage. To that extent I would be cheating the parents, and this because there could not but be some reservation in my mind about the arrangement. Even those who have passed M.A. write incorrect English and spell incorrectly.

I had wanted to speak at length about women's education. But this is a serious subject. In a sense, it has no bearing on our struggle. Of course, we do not want our women to remain uneducated. But what should be the method of education for them, at what point education for a girl should end and that for a woman should begin—this is a separate, a purely educational problem. At present, our approach to the problem is a limited one. For the time being I would get girls to attend primary schools and only make them turn the spinning-wheel. I have not thought about other complicated issues, though few others are likely to have made as many experiments in girls' education as I have. I have kept young boys and girls together while teaching them, and I do not regret having done so. True, I have burnt my fingers, but not too much, for I stood guard over them like a roaring lion. Please do not think, since I do not speak about the problem, that I make light of it.

I have drafted these resolutions[3] as reflecting the sum and substance of my thinking on this subject. Think them over. Do not accept them just because I have moved them. I attended the All-India Congress Committee, determined to have my resolutions accepted;

[1] Narasinhrao Divetia
[2] Anandshankar Dhruva
[3] *Vide* the following item.

here, on the other hand, I have placed these before you merely as so many recommendations. If you oppose these resolutions fearlessly, I shall not be hurt; but I shall be if there is hypocrisy, if a pledge is taken and then violated. Just now, there is no question of hypocrisy, for there has been no pledge.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-8-1924

228. NATIONAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS[1]

AHMEDABAD,
August 1, 1924

Resolution No. 1:—This Conference is of opinion that, since the object of establishing national schools is that they may help in winning swaraj and promote the Non-co-operation movement, the principles of non-co-operation should not at all be compromised in conducting these schools.

Resolution No. 2:—This Conference is of opinion that in running these schools importance should be attached not to the number of pupils but to their quality. Hence those boys and girls should be admitted whose parents subscribe to the principles which have been accepted as essential from the point of view of swaraj and non-co-operation, which means that:

1. those among them who are Hindus look upon the practice of untouchability as a sin and have no objection to their children sitting and studying with *Antyaja* children,
2. they welcome their children acquiring a knowledge of the craft of spinning, and
3. they have faith in the need and possibility of unity among Hindus, Muslims and Indians following other faiths.

Resolution No. 3:—This Conference is of opinion that the national schools should have teachers who believe in non-violence and truth and all items in the Non-co-operation programme as indispensable means for winning swaraj.

Resolution No. 4:—This Conference is of opinion that every teacher, whether man or woman, who does not already know it, should

[1] As president of the Conference, Gandhiji proposed these resolutions and initiated discussion on them.

immediately learn to recognize the variety of cotton, to gin and card it, make slivers, spin and judge the count and the quality of yarn.

Resolution No. 5:—With a view to improving the teaching ability of primary school teachers, it is desirable that the Vidyapith should make the following provisions for their benefit:

1. to draw up a curriculum for them;
2. to hold a common test for them;
3. to hold a test every six months for newly-recruited teachers;
4. to start correspondence classes for teachers;
5. to make other similar provisions for improving their teaching ability.

Resolution No. 6:—Since non-co-operation is essentially a process of self-purification and since the Congress is striving to spread the principles of non-co-operation among villages and since it is the belief of this Conference that the process of self-purification in villages must necessarily begin with children, this Conference is of opinion that the Vidyapith should accord greater importance to primary education vis-a-vis higher and secondary education and should, therefore, spread it among villages, making such modifications in it as may appear necessary.

Resolution No. 7:—This Conference is of opinion that, in establishing national schools in rural areas, not the present-day Government schools but the old-time schools should be taken as the model and the national schools should be run on that pattern.

Resolution No. 8:—While complimenting the Vidyapith and other independent national bodies for their effort in publishing text-books with the praiseworthy object of giving impetus to national education, this Conference expresses its opinion that the Vidyapith and the other bodies concerned should pay more attention to the quality of text-books than to their number, and also that it is necessary in this connection to bear the country's poverty in mind.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-8-1924

229. LETTER TO SUMER SINGH

SABARMATI,

August 2, 1924

DEAR FRIEND[1],

I have your letter. I am in constant touch with the A. S. Bureau[2] and Sardar Mangal Singh. I do publish or comment on whatever seems to me to be important. I shall however thank you to draw prompt attention to any omission you may notice.[3]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SIKH LANE

SINDH

From a copy: Mohammed Ali Papers. Courtesy: Jamia Millia Islamia Library

[1] Secretary of the Akali Jatha

[2] Akali Sahayak Bureau

[3] The addressee in his letter dated July 12, 1924 had requested Gandhiji to take up publicity about the persecution of the Sikhs.

230. SPEECH AT NATIONAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE[1]

August 2, 1924

We have had a good discussion on this resolution. I wish to pour cold water on the optimistic words uttered by Kaka Saheb. It is no use if you accept this resolution carried away by excitement. If we do not have the ability to implement this resolution, we should admit it. It is a sign of strength, not of weakness, to make such admission. If you wish to see a sample of weakness, then I am one. You can throw at me as many stones as you like. There is egotism and self-attachment in pretending to have what one does not have in oneself. Those who are not able to do as much as has been set down in this resolution should halt right here. The rest should offer cent per cent. I am here to accept only cent per cent compliance. If we advance without taking a measure of our strength, our condition will be like that of the textile mill which collapsed.[2] Since other buildings stood and this mill alone collapsed, there must have been some weak spot in it. We do not wish to be reduced to that state. Hence we wish to assess by means of this resolution how many soldiers of non-co-operation we have and how many of us believe in the principle of non-co-operation.

Truly speaking, the issue of principle is only indirectly involved, but the important things are only two: *Antyajas* and the spinning-wheel. Are we ready to accept them or not? One calls for a change of heart and risking one's means of livelihood. The other requires giving up sloth and being active. One who does not desire this, one who has no strength to do this, should have nothing to do with it.

The practice of untouchability in Hinduism is a great sin. With the passage of time it is being tested. There is no doubt at all in my mind that if Hinduism fails in this test, it will disappear from the world. The question before us is whether we should purify ourselves or become untouchables by keeping others as such. We have become untouchables in South Africa.

East Africa and even here in India. Here we are prohibited from entering places reserved for the Britishers. The Britishers have learnt this only after coming here. They saw that here people followed a

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of the Conference. The speech was made when Gandhiji moved resolution No. 5.

[2] *Vide* "Accident in Mill", 3-8-1924.

queer religion, that one man touching another got polluted and so avoided even standing in the shadow of that person. They thought they too should behave in the same way, else they would expose themselves to danger. In this belief they established their own exclu-sive quarters. I do not at all feel that they are to blame for it. It is we ourselves who have taught them untouchability.

If you have strength of heart, you will even adopt the spinning-wheel and also choose children whom you can teach both these things. You will make them engrossed in these two things. If you can do these two things, it will be a great achievement. You should not worry about other things. Leave everything else to God. If you have strength in you, your way is clear.

What if your livelihood is endangered while doing so? We have been conducting the movement for swaraj precisely to create conditions in which our livelihood will not be jeopardized. We can consider that movement to have succeeded only when hundreds, thousands, lakhs of boys and girls will cease to worry and become unconcerned about their livelihood. In a country which enjoys freedom, boys and girls do not at all think of their livelihood while doing their duty. Nowhere else do we find such difficulty about earning one's livelihood as we do here. It is India's claim that it gives first place to activities concerning the *atman*. The fear of death and livelihood, which is found in this country making such a claim, is found nowhere else. I speak thus because I am a Hindu through and through. Why should we have any fear about our livelihood? We certainly have weaving as a means of livelihood. If that is not possible, we shall split wood, break and carry stones. If we go a step further and do the sacred work of cleaning latrines, we shall certainly get the Rs. 15 or Rs. 20 that we want, nay we shall be even wooed. Hence, truly speaking, we have no problem of livelihood. Those who want swaraj and yearn for it, those who feel that they should immolate themselves in this struggle, should certainly forget all about earning their livelihood. Then, what does it matter that one has to die of starvation, if one's parents, wife, and others remain hungry? It is a noble dharma for us to eat only after feeding others. Hence we should do our best and follow our dharma. The author of the *Mahabharata* has discussed, but could not decide, whether individual effort or destiny is more important. But we do see that everywhere our luck is always a pace or two ahead of us. It is our dharma to put forth our best

endeavour. What egotism on our part to say, "I shall get my sister married"! Who am I to provide food and clothing to my sister? If I die, what then? A man like me would leave a will saying "I leave behind me as a legacy to my sister not money but a spinning-wheel."

My intention was not to say words of encouragement, but only to pour cold water. But this I spoke unwittingly. If you are not prepared to do these two things, throw out this resolution. It you are ready, if you have the requisite strength, adopt it. If you do not adopt it, our work will not go on. Then we cannot tell the country that we in Gujarat have so many national schools and so many pupils.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-8-1924

231. SPEECH AT NATIONAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE[1]

August 2, 1924

Shri Chandulal has not understood what I said. This question is grave, important; it is too grave for this Conference to discuss. I was startled to hear the words of Padmabehn.[2] To me dancing girls are like sisters. Wherever I went, I have seen them and in future, too, I shall see them and place before them the spinning-wheel. My ideas have not grown weaker after I went to jail. I am too full of thoughts about women's education to he able to present them here. It is my contention that I have thought more about this matter than anyone else. I also maintain that this movement has brought about greater awakening among women than among others.

The spinning-wheel cannot but touch the hearts of women. That alone is their true education, the education of the heart. And what is the use of moving resolutions here about something which they are already doing? These resolutions are empty words. We do not see what grows in our own garden. Are we able to give better education over many years than that whichmakes a woman, who had been looked upon as uncultured and uneducated, discard her veil and come

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of the Conference. The speech was made in connection with Chandulal Dave's resolution urging the National University at Ahmedabad to make some definite arrangements for the education of women.

[2] While seconding Chandulal Dave's resolution, she had said, "What will be our plight if Gandhiji who shows great sympathy for dancing girls would thus remain unmindful of us?"

out in the open? Women's education is being carried on only because of this movement; nay, if women were not being educated, this movement would not have been possible.

The task of women's education is beyond the capacity of you, me and the entire community. To think about it is like pushing back the sea, it is like trying to grasp with one's hand the water of a mirage. To woman, the better half of man, who can impart education? What does it avail us if a few women become graduates of Karve University[1]? Education will not be imparted thereby. To know that a woman is more than a man is in itself true education.

We should sit down at leisure and think about it, we should discuss it with groups of persons. If you think that as Chancellor of the Vidyapith I must do something, then I should say that the burden which Shri Chandulal and others propose to impose on us is too heavy. We have neither the resources nor the number of women required therefor. The Chancellor entertains many expectations. But what can the poor man do? One cannot educate women by spending a few rupees and opening a few girls' schools. Hence I sit quiet. Our schools and colleges are of course willing to admit girls. The Vidyapith is willing to consider a plan if someone places it before it, but it will not draw up one itself. Those who are 'experts'[2] should take up the responsibility, present their ideas, cause a stir and join the managing committee. The Vidyapith does not want to shirk that work. But if someone presents any big plan of education connected with swaraj, the Vidyapith will certainly decline to consider it. The Vidyapith does not want to disregard this subject, does not want to forget it—I am only referring to the Vidyapith's inability. I myself am unable to give a thought to this resolution in a quarter of an hour. As a leader and soldier, I humbly request you, in order that we may not be objects of ridicule, to remove the suspicion that I have no interest in women's education and to withdraw this resolution.[3]

The credit for the work accomplished here is yours alone. You have crushed me under the weight of obligation; crush me more by implementing the resolutions. My only request to you is: do not leave the resolutions here, but take them with you. Reap sweet fruits by

[1] S.N.D.T. Women's University, Poona, founded by D. K. Karve

[2] The English word is used in the original.

[3] At this point Chandulal Dave withdrew his resolution. Thereafter, winding up the proceedings of the Conference, Gandhiji made the remarks which follow.

implementing them and feed Gujarat too with them. May God grant you the strength to do so.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-8-1924

232. INSTRUCTIONS ON LETTER FROM ERVINE BAKTAY[1]

[After *August 2, 1924*]

Ganesan's publications, *Y*[*oung*] *I*[*ndia*] may be sent including *Indian Home Rule. Y. I.* should be [sent] regularly and debited to Mr. Birla. The writer should be told not to worry about payment. He may either give free lectures or add to his earnings or do whatever use he wishes to make of it.

From a photostat of the original: S.N. 10091

233. ACCIDENT IN MILL

As the accident in Manasukhbhai's mill occurred in Ahmedabad itself, it touches our hearts. But we do not think at all, or think only for a fleeting instant, about the tragedy that has befallen Malabar.[2] If greater destruction of life and property than even that in Malabar took place outside India, it would have little impact on us. These accidents, however, tell us that there is no distinction at all between king and pauper, Brahmin and *Bhangi* and man and the lower creation. The acts of God affect all equally. Animals and men sailing in the same boat sink together. But man differentiates and saves one's relations and then, if possible, rescues the animals too. Some ofthose saved may die the next day, and even those who survive pass away after a few days. Death spares no one. Why should we not

[1] Acknowledging Gandhiji's earlier letter of March 15, 1924 (ride Vol. XXIII, p. 246), Ervine Baktay wrote to Gandhiji on August 2 that he had been asked by people deeply interested in Gandhiji's work to deliver some lectures on Indian questions pertaining to religion, history, literature, etc. He also wrote: "I sorely need some books written by you. I have only *Ethical Religion.* Yet I would like to get your other books too, which I would order directly from the Editor-—if I had the sufficient sum to pay for them. But I earn my living with my literary work and this brings rather small material results."

[2] *Vide* "Floods in Malabar"10-8-1924.

embrace it gladly then? May not death be our greatest friend, a saviour who sets us free from much suffering? God is certainly not cruel, and He would not, like Nero, torture creatures for His pleasure or send them into the world and then kill them. There is a design in all His works.

But should we, philosophizing thus, sit quiet? Not at all. We should ever be ready for death, and it is only by shedding the fear of death that we can discover the means of saving others from the pain they suffer. We are in the same boat as all others. We have no right to think that, because death is a friend, a person may die today rather than tomorrow. Strange are the ways of Yamaraj[1]. If we knew the exact moment of our death, we would not suffer at all [through fear of it]. There would be no question of helping anyone. We suffer, however, because we do not know that moment. We are not men of knowledge; if, nevertheless, we act as if we were, we would fall into degradation. Thinking philosophically, we may remain calm, but should never forget to help one another. In not forgetting that consists true preparation for meeting death.

As for the accident in Ahmedabad, we may assume that the mill-owners will send help to the relations of the dead. It is their duty to do so, more than that of others. But how did this accident take place? We see that modern buildings are comparatively weak. Contractors, workmen and others cheat a lot. Sand is used in place of cement and often bricks are so brittle that they crumble into powder. They use weak timber and, for mortar, employ a mixture of earth and cowdung in place of lime. Engineers, too, are satisfied with the minimum degree of strength in order to please owners. On account of such practices, many houses have collapsed in Bombay, burying people to death. I hope the mill-owners will institute full inquiries into the construction of the building and publish an authoritative statement explaining the reasons for the accident and thus satisfy the citizens. We should also hope that owners of other big buildings will get them inspected and have them repaired wherever they notice weak points.

The havoc in Malabar is like a fire in the sea and it is beyond the means of any private organization to relieve the people'ssuffering. If, at such a time, Congressmen offer their services to relief committees seeking to help the people, one need not think that they will be violating the principles of non-co-operation. If we had inexhaustible

[1] God of death

funds, we could set up a separate body and help people. But in a situation in which even lakhs of rupees are far too little, what can the poor Congress do? If, therefore, the Government gives some help and accepts our services in its effort, we should certainly offer them.

Every worker, however, should remember that true service does not require money. It consists in work sincerely done. The service done by the expression of love in one's eyes or the right word uttered at the proper time cannot be rendered with money. The help rendered by meeting homeless men and women, by serving them and helping them in small things in a variety of ways, by comforting them through our mere presence, is incomparable. We cannot have too many silent workers giving such help. Everyone can compete in this field and no one will obstruct another. It is desirable, therefore, that Congress bodies should not in this situation lose heart for want of funds. This is the reply I have given to Congressmen from Malabar who asked me for help. When I received the first telegram, I thought that we might collect some money and send it. I even sought a friend's help. He sent me Rs. 250. But later, when I read the news about the vastness of the tragedy, my heart sank. I saw that this work was beyond the capacity of a man like me, that it was beyond the capacity of the Congress either. All the same, if anyone sends me money, I shall certainly pass it on to office-bearers of Congress committees. I was against sending financial help from outside for the Vaikom Satyagraha. On this occasion, I consider it our duty to send help if we can. The obstacle lies in our inability, not want of will. Thinking it wise to keep quiet in a situation in which we may wish to do what only an emperor can, but are as helpless as a pauper, I have advised, in my second telegram, the office-holders of the local Congress committees to be content with giving physical services and helping, if possible, through Government agencies as well.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-8-1924

234. MY NOTES

SATYAGRAHA IN EAST AFRICA

A correspondent living in East Africa writes:[1]

A similar picture has been painted by another person also. There must be, therefore, some truth in what he says. A struggle in which even a few went to jail with pure hearts cannot fail altogether. But, to the people, it will seem to have. failed as long as discriminatory laws remain unrepealed. The correspondent has pointed out good reasons for the failure. The community must remove them. But those who believe that satyagraha is a means merely of harassing the Government commit a serious error. The aim of satyagraha is self-purification. The harassment which naturally follows our doing our duty cannot be helped. But our aim should not be harassment. If drink addicts give up drinking, the owners of liquor-booths will-indeed suffer, but the aim of those who give up drinking is not to make them suffer. Their aim can be to reform the owners as well. But, undoubtedly, it is wrong to boycott those who do not join satyagraha. That will harm the movement, not help it. A satyagrahi should rely only on his own truth and on his capacity to bear suffering, that is, for *tapascharya*. He need not be concerned if others do not follow him. People do not join him for lack of faith or of strength. Experience alone removes lack of faith. Strength comes from example. In neither case is coercion justified.

TO NON-CO-OPERATORS OF GUJARAT

I have often admitted that it is the fault of the non-co-operators that they have not been able to win the love of the co-operationists. But that does not give either the right to harm the country. At the beginning of 1922, many co-operationists were willing to do khadi work. Quite a few among them had come to believe that the economic condition of the country could certainly be improved through khadi. The matter rested there. Now, when an attempt is being made to revive the spinning-wheel movement vigorously, I ventured to seek once again the help of the co-operationists. What should a beggar be ashamed of? Co-operationists and non-co-operators maycertainly have different ideas of duty to the country. The Hindu strives in one

[1] The letter is not translated here.

way to attain *moksha*, the Muslim in another. That is no reason why they should fight. Both are right from their own points of view. But we believe that our political emancipation consists in their practising mutual tolerance.

Similarly, non-co-operators and co-operationists should tolerate each other, both parties working according to their own lights. Where, moreover, both agree in their ideas, why should they not work together? I have heard it said that as long as I regard the spinning-wheel as an instrument of non-co-operation, co-operationists will not help in that programme. Why should it be so? Just because I see Rama, that is dharma, in the spinning-wheel, should others who may look upon it as a means of producing yarn, i.e., wealth, keep away from it? The spinning-wheel as such suggests neither Rama nor yarn. The person who works it produces yarn and, therefore, sees that in it. A person like me may invest it with significance as symbolizing the spirit of non-co-operation. But I myself have said that once the spinning-wheel has become universal, the need for non-co-operation will disappear. Why should not the co-operationists help in bringing this about.?

But the responsibility lies wholly with the non-co-operators. The gulf between co-operationists and non-co-operators is the result of the latter's mistakes. It is for us, then, to bridge that gulf. It is with that aim that I am addressing this request to co-operationists, suggesting to other non-co-operators by what I am doing that they should appeal to co-operationists with whom they come into contact to take up spinning. They should teach them spinning if they do not know it. It is not as if only those who joined the Congress had the duty of spinning. It is the duty of every Indian. We should, therefore, entreat co-operationists with all love to start spinning. We should not feel hurt if they do not listen to us. We should renew the request when we get another opportunity, and have confidence that, if the spinning-wheel possesses the power we think it does and if there is no anger in us, the co-operationists are sure to take up the spinning-wheel.

A PERSEVERING TEACHER

This letter[1] is from a teacher of *an Antyaja* school in Botad. How good it would be if all schools could run as this one does!

[1] Not translated here

CORRECTION

A correspondent from Rangoon writes:

> In your "Satyagraha in South Africa"[1] you have described the late Seth Ahmed Mahomed Cachalia as a Memon from Surat. This is not correct. You should have described him as a Sunni Bohra gentleman of Surat district.

I knew that Mr. Ahmed Cachalia belonged to the Sunni sect but, as Sunni Bohras from the Surat side were known in South Africa as Memons from Surat, I described him in that way.

EARNING THROUGH WEAVING

A correspondent writes:[2]

I agree with what he suggests I should state. I still believe that one can certainly earn more than Rs. 10 a month if the hand-spun yarn is of uniform quality. I believe that if a clever, that is, educated and hard-working, weaver gets yarn spun on order, buys it up and weaves it, he will certainly earn more. But it is true that one who wants to make money should not take up weaving of hand-spun yarn. This work is a great experiment for the country. Only the brave will undertake it. I am sure of this, that those who engage in it will certainly not starve.

A CONVERSATION WITH ME

A correspondent has sent me a printed report of a conversation I had with a swami about untouchability, and asks me if there is any truth in it. I read that report and was pained by it. I see merely a half-truth in almost every line of it. My statements have been altogether distorted. My views about untouchability have received such wide publicity that it is not necessary to discuss them here again. But it is my request to all those who come to see me not to publish any report of the conversations they have with me, or, if they do want to publish a report, they should read out the draft to me first and then publish it. To readers my request is that any views attributed to me in a report should not be regarded as mine unless the report is authorized by me.

So many men and women come and see me. If I were to read all that they write about me or my views or take upon myself the responsibility of correcting the inaccuracies in their reports, I would

[1] Which appeared serially in *Navajivan* from April 1924 to November 1925

[2] The letter is not translated here.

have to spend much of my time in that work only. I am sure no one wants my time to be wasted in this manner. I myself am not at all prepared so to waste it. Hence! for all those whohave some pity for me, the best way is not to publish any report of a conversation with me. Even those who have none should not publish their conversation with me, for, in their unkindness, they will not understand me. Should, however, some unkind friend not pay attention to my request, wise readers should not credit what they write.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-8-1924

235. TELEGRAM TO SAROJINI NAIDU[1]

August 4, 1924

DEVI SAROJINI
TAJMAHAL
BOMBAY

HEALTH ALL RIGHT. FRIDAY EARLY ENOUGH. HOW ARE YOU PADMAJA.

GANDHI

From a. photostat: S.N. 10094

236. TELEGRAM TO HAKIM AJMAL KHAN[2]

August 4, 1924

HAKIM SAHEB
AJMALKHAN
SHRINAGAR

HEALTH ALL RIGHT. AM CLOSE TOUCH MAHOMED ALI. HE SAYS PRESENCE UNNECESSARY YET. HOW ARE YOUR DAUGHTER. DO NOT WANT COMMENCE TRAVEL TILL END MONTH UNLESS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10096

[1] This was in reply to Sarojini Naidu's telegram of August 4, which read: "Wire health. Shall spend Friday, Saturday Ahmedabad unless required earlier."

[2] This was in reply to Hakim Ajmal Khan's telegram of August 4, which read: "Wire health. When visiting Delhi where your presence badly wanted."

237. LETTER TO INDRA VIDYAVACHASPATI

Sravana Sud 4 [*August 4, 1924*][1]

CHI. INDRA,

Received your letter. Do you wish to drag me out of my sphere of work? What can I write about Shivaji Maharaj? I feel ashamed to say that I know nothing more than what I read about him in my student days.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI INDRA VIDYAVACHASPATI
"ARJUN"
DELHI

From the Hindi original C.W. 4859. Courtesy: Chandragupta Vidya-lankar

238. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Sravana Sud 4 [*August 4, 1924*][2]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. Your health will improve to the extent you stop worrying. You should take black raisins or big-size red currants after soaking them overnight in water. Clean and soak them. You should heat and drink the surplus water left after absorption by the raisins. It would be good to heat it even with the currants. I am making arrangements for Hajira.

Blessings from

BAPU
SISTER VASUMATI

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 452. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

239. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

Sravana Sud 4 [*August 4, 1924*][2]

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I have your letters. Mahadev tells me that Swami immediately returned to you your article on Simla. I wonder why it has not

[1] The postmarks bear the date August 5, 1924.
[2] *Ibid*

reached you. I shall ask Swami. If I could possibly go to Simla I would do so, merely to meet Panditji[1] and you, if for nothing else. I would very much wish to go to Srinagar, but as the saying goes, "nobody would be unhappy if everybody could have his way" and so on. Did I not write to you that, after my apologizing for the use of the word *talleen* [absorbed], Anandshankarbhai wrote to me a sweet letter to say that my use of the word was correct. Words with a repetitive meaning are thus used. However, I shall make the necessary correction in regard to the word *aavkardayak* [welcome]. I shall also make use of the passage from *Ayurveda*[2]. I have no fever at all.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

V. G. DESAI
STERLING CASTLE
SIMLA

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: C.W. 6020. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

240. TELEGRAM TO GENERAL SECRETARY, A.I.C.C., ALLAHABAD[3]

August 5, 1924

WIRED BOTH LAST WEEK FLOODS TOO VAST FOR CONGRESS CAPACITY. WE SHOULD CO-OPERATE WITH NEUTRAL AGENCY EVEN GOVERNMENT IF THEY ACCEPT SERVICE. PERSONAL SERVICE CAN AND MUST ALWAYS BE GIVEN. IF CONGRESS CAN IT MAY RAISE SPECIAL SUBSCRIPTION.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10097

[1] Madan Mohan Malaviya

[2] Hindu system of medicine

[3] This was in reply to a telegram from the General Secretary of the Congress, Allahabad, dated August 4, which read: "Srinivas Iyengar proposes immediate grant fifty thousand for flood relief. Rajagopalachari requests conversion Tamil loan fifteen thousand to grant to enable give help floods. All-lndia funds now one lakh twenty-five thousand fixed deposit, twenty-two thousand current account, twelve thousand liabilities. Wire opinion both request."

241. TRIBUTE TO ANNIE BESANT[1]

SABARMATI,
August 6, 1924

As everyone knows, it is my misfortune to hold certain views as to policies and principles fundamentally different from Dr. Annie Besant's. But that fact does not in any way detract from my regard for her as a woman of high character, noble purpose, ceaseless energy and indomitable courage. She loves India with the devotion of a daughter. Her industry and application are the envy of us all. Her courage never shone so brilliant as when, at the risk of losing popularity, she opposed Non-co-operation. May she be long spared to serve India and humanity.

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

242. LETTER TO K. NATARAJAN

August 6, 1924

DEAR MR. NATARAJAN[2],

I thank you for your letter. I did see the cutting you have kindly sent me. I felt like shooting the reporter when I saw the wire. But as it is against my creed to do so, I subsided and believed that no sane man or woman could credit me with any such absurd remark.[3] There is no mention of the wheel in any of my wires. How can there be? The wheel may assist when the people have settled down on dry land and have recovered from the nervous prostration that must have overtaken thousands of our countrymen.[4] What I did say to the people of Ahmedabad was that the work was beyond the capacity of any private agency, but that, if they would send me money, I would see that it went to the proper quarters. I added that all of the hearers, rich and poor, could spin for their naked countrymen and women, and send me the yarn and I would undertake to see that it was utilized for the

[1] This was sent on the occasion of the completion of fifty years of her public service.

[2] Editor, *The Indian Social Reformer*, Bombay

[3] *Vide* "Interview to Associated Press of India", 7-8 1924.

[4] The reference is to the floods in Malabar in July 1924.

relief of the sufferers. The fact is the news has stunned me. I am fretting with myself for our utter incapacity when nature delivers her stunning blows. It is my unquenchable belief in the utter goodness of the Deity that makes me hope for good even out of this seeming calamity and prevents me from becoming a raving maniac.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

243. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

Sravana Sud 6 [*August 6, 1924*][2]

BHAISHRI VALJI,

Swami says that your article, "Swaraj in Simla",[3] has already been sent to you. It seems it has been lost; you had better write it again. The servant of a foreign-cloth merchant cannot forsake the relatives of those who wear foreign cloth. It would have been better if you had kept up your practice of correcting errors. It would be desirable that you do it even now. Why can't you decide which articles in *Navajivan* should be translated into English?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

V. G. DESAI
STERLING CASTLE
SIMLA

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: C.W. 6021. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

244. BELOW THE BELT

What has been said about the Government so often is being proved again and again, viz., that, no matter what it grants to popular clamour, it always insists on having its way by hook or by crooks The Press Law is gone only to be replaced by new activities under the laws

[1] On August 8, this letter was read out by the addressee at a public meeting presided over by G. K. Parekh.

[2] From the reference to the article on Simla, it is evident that the letter was written in 1924. In that year *Sravana Sud* 6 fell on *August 6. Vide* also ``Letter to V. G. Desai", 4-8-1924.

[3] The title of the article was "Simla under Swaraj".

of sedition and libel. Everything the Government were able to do under the Press Law is now being done without it and without difficulty. The extraordinary judgment given against the *Chronicle* does but confirm this view. It is difficult to believe that a public servant can possibly bring an action for damages for comment upon his acts as such made by a journalist in the discharge of his profession. I understand that the case against the *Chronicle is* not the first of its kind. The *Bande Mataram* and the *Zamindar* of Lahore had to pay damages under similar circumstances. Which is worse? Forfeiture under the defunct law or damages under a libel suit? After the result of the *Chronicle* case, who can dare criticize frankly and freely the acts of Government servants? The editor of a daily newspaper, when he begins writing his leading article, does not weigh his words in golden scales. He may be betrayed into a hasty word. Must he pay for it even though it did it obviously in good faith, without malice and in the public interest? The writer in the *Chronicle* certainly did not know Mr. Painter and had no more interest in maligning him than the learned judge himself who has awarded what I venture to regard as vindictive damages.

The public will refuse to believe that Mr. Painter had suffered anything because of the *Chronicle* comments. But I make bold to think that he has lost more in public estimation by his victory than by the *Chronicle* comment. He has cleared nothing by getting a verdict against the *Chronicle.* But he has shown that he is not capable, in a sportsman-like manner, of standing strong public criticism. I feel sorry for him.

What, however, I am concerned about is the position of journalists in view of this case. One is not always able to prove one's convictions and, if one is to criticize public acts and their doers, it is necessary to set forth one's convictions without being called upon always to prove them. For instance, I feel morally certain that the judgment of the judge in Sir Sankaran Nair's case was warped.[1] I am morally certain that the judge was politically biased in favour of Sir Michael O'Dwyer. And yet, if what I have said be regarded libellous and if the judge sent me notice of action, I should have to tender a humble, abject and unconditional apology for having expressed my candid opinion in the interest of public good. I should have to tender the apology because I could not prove what I have stated.

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 12-6-1924.

Mr. Painter is but an unconscious pawn in the big game. This Government is making hay while the sun shines upon it. We seem to be disorgannized—a house divided against itself. Hindus and Mussalmans would gladly continue to indulge in the pleasant pastime of breaking one another's heads. Civil disobedience is a far-off cry. Whilst we are fighting among ourselves, the Government is consolidating its power in every possible manner. We may not blame it. It is perfectly natural for it. These libel actions are calculated to demoralize Indian journalism and make public criticism over-cautious and timid. I am no lover of irresponsible or unjustifiably strong criticism. But the caution to be beneficial must come from within, not [be] superimposed from without.

One thing is clear to me. If we have lost ground by our dissensions, political or religious, the Government have lost more by its taking advantage of our misfortunes and by seeking to punish innocent criticism of public officers for their public conduct, by inducing or permitting the latter to embark upon libel actions. We may feel too paralysed for immediate effort, but every act *of* the Government which is meant to take a mean advantage of our weakness and every hit below the belt does but intensify our opposition to it. The paralysis will be short-lived, the opposition must be co-terminous with the existence of the system which makes our unfortunate position possible.

Young India, 7-8-1924

245. TEACHERS IN CONFERENCE

The Gujarat Vidyapith has at the present moment nearly 30,000 children in its national schools who are being taught by over 800 teachers in nearly 140 institutions, of which two are colleges and one devoted to ancient research. The figures include also 13 high schools, 15 middle schools, 15 special schools for untouchables teaching over 300 boys and girls. The number of girls studying in these institutions are *[sic]* not more than 500. The Vidyapith has acquired a plot of land and has already erected a fine boarding house which is to serve the purpose also of lecture rooms till a separate building is erected. These figures do not include the national schools not affiliated to the Vidyapith. Nor do they represent the highest watermark. That was reached in 1921. Several schools have since closed, some others are

likely to close in course of time. The attendance, too, is not on the increase. Gujarat like every other province has suffered from the general depression in the Congress ranks.

Notwithstanding the depression, however, the record is highly creditable to Gujarat which was, and probably still is, educationally, one of the most backward of our provinces. Measured by the swaraj standard, the experiment may not be regarded as an achievement; but, judged by itself, the experiment is an amazing record of progress for its four years' existence. It shows considerable organizing power, financial ability and faith in non-co-operation regarding education. I can say all this with complete detachment as, though resident in Gujarat, I have lived least in it whilst the experiment was in progress and had no hand in working it. The credit belongs solely to Vallabhbhai and his very able lieutenants. During the stormiest and the longest period, I was resting in Yeravda and, therefore, was not available even as an adviser.

No wonder, then, that the teachers met in conference last week and, whilst taking stock of their position and shaping their future policy, wanted me to guide their deliberations. I wish that I could have done better justice to the task entrusted to me. My indifferent health and my heavy preoccupations rendered previous study and preparation (adequate for the purpose) impossible.

Whilst I was able heartily to congratulate the numerous teachers who attended the conference on the success that the figures I have quoted signified, I had to point out the serious and obvious flaws and weaknesses of the several institutions they were conducting. National schools, to be worth the name in terms of swaraj, for the attainment of which they were brought into existence, must be conducted with a view to advancing the national programme in so far as it was applicable to educational in institutions. Thus, for instance, national schools must he the most potent means of propagating the message of the charkha, of bringing Hindus, Mussalmans and others closer together and of educating the untouchables and abolishing the curse of untouchability from the schools. Judged by this standard, the experiment must be pronounced, if not a failure, certainly a very dismal success. Out of 30,000 boys and girls, hardly one thousand are spinning on 100 charkhas at the rate of _ hour per day. Hundreds of charkhas are lying idle and neglected. Whilst in theory the schools are open to the untouchables, very few, as a matter of fact, have

untouchable children in them. The Mussalman attendance at the schools is poor. I had, therefore, no hesitation in advising that now we were to strive nor after quantity but quality. The test for admission must be progressively stiffer. Parents who did not like their children to learn spinning or to mix with untouchable children might, if they chose, withdraw them. I had no hesitation in advising that teachers should run the risk of closing down their schools if the condition of running them required the exclusion of untouchables and the charkha. It was not enough to tolerate untouchable childre if they stole in, but it was necessary to draw them into our schools by loving care and attention. The teachers were not to wait for Mussalman and Parsi parents to send their children, but it was necessary to invite such parents to send their children. A national teacher must become a swaraj missionary within his own sphere. He should know the history of every child under his care and know the children not in his schools. He should know their parents and understand why they did not send their children to his school. He would do all this work not in an intolerant spirit but lovingly. Thus and thus only would national schools be truly national in terms of the Congress resolution.

The difficulty of the task is unmistakable. This Government has made everything mercenary. Character is no test for anything. Mechanical ability to go through a superficial syllabus is the sole test. Every profession has been degraded to mean a career. We become lawyers, doctors and schoolmasters not to serve our countrymen, but to bring us money. The Vidyapith, therefore, had to recruit for teachers in such a soul-killing atmosphere. The majority of the teachers have had to rise superior to themselves and their surroundings. The wonder is that they have at all responded to the call of the country.

But, now, after nearly four years' experience, we must turn over a new leaf. We cannot afford to remain at a standstill and not sink. We must, therefore, insist upon the boys and girls plying the charkha for at least half an hour daily. It is an education of no mean sort for thirty thousand boys and girls and eight hundred teachers to be spinning, i.e., labouring for the country for half an hour every day. It is a daily practical lesson in patriotism, useful toil and giving. That a boy should begin giving even during his education without expectation of return is an object-lesson in sacrifice he will not forget in after-life. And to the nation it means a gift of 1,875 maunds of yarn per month. It will supply at least one dhoti each to 5,000 men. Apart from every other

consideration, let every teacher work out the value of the lesson learnt by each child in thinking that he or she with five others may be spinning in one month yarn enough for supplying one dhoti to each of his countrymen rendered naked during the recent floods in Madras.

The reason, however, for the ill success of the constructive part of the Congress programme in the national schools must be told. Painful discovery is being made that we who are the chosen of the people have not even learnt spinning. The schoolmasters as a class have hitherto taken no steps to qualify themselves as carders and spinners. No wonder if they are not then able to enthuse their pupils and if the charkhas are everywhere conspicuous by their absence.

It is, however, most gratifying that resolutions suggested for remedying the defect were all adopted by an overwhelming majority. Industrial occupation for teachers and pupils is a new thing for us. The want of response is, therefore, perhaps natural. But now that the teachers have adopted the resolutions, it would be a serious reflection upon them if they fail to live up to them. If the teachers will it, I do not doubt that the majority of the parents will not grumble about their children learning the noble art of spinning and giving half an hour each daily to the nation and sitting side by side with untouchable children. And what Gujarat teachers have resolved to do will, I hope, be adopted by the national teachers throughout the country.

Young India, 7-8-1924

246. NOTES

A DIFFICULTY

A Hubli correspondent writes:

> There used to be eleven members on the Managing Body of the Hubbi Taluka Congress Committee. The complete Managing Committee should according to the rules of the constitution of the Karnatak Provincial Congress Committee, consist of 10 members at the least.
>
> As soon as the Ahmedabad resolutions were passed 9 out of these eleven members resigned as they could not conform to the recommendations of the resolutions.
>
> The General Body of the Hubli Taluka Congress Committee consists of only 1,000 members out of a total population of 1,50,000 in the Taluka. A

meeting of this body was held on the 9th instant. Only 24 persons attended. The meeting accepted the resignations as there was no possibility of inducing the members to withdraw the same on any grounds. The meeting then authorized the remaining two members of the Managing Body, i.e., the Vice-President, Mr. Visanji Shet, and the Secretary, Dr. Hardikar, to carry on its work till such time as the vacancies may be filled up. The meeting resolved that the next meeting of the General Body should be called in the last week of July, 1924, for the purpose of electing members to the vacancies on the Managing Body.

This meeting came off yesterday, July 27, 1924. Full publicity was given to this meeting by handbills and even by approaching individually many families in the town and explaining the Ahmedabad Resolutions. In spite of all this, only 30 persons attended the meeting from out of 1,000 members. Though given to understand that another matter they had to consider was the election of 10 members to the Dharwar District Congress Committee before the 10th of August, as the meeting of that body was to be held on that date, the meeting adjourned the consideration of the item of electing its Managing Body members; neither did it elect representatives to the District Committee. The members that were present did not think that It would be proper to take the responsibility of electing the representatives for 1,000 persons to the District Committee. Nor did the nominations of persons fulfilling the Ahmedabad recommendations come up. The meeting therefore adjourned the consideration of these items *sine die.*

The conditions here are:

1. The General Body members never assemble more than 25 or 30 strong nowadays.
2. They are not yet decided as to shouldering the responsibility of acting for 1,000 members.
3. If they want to elect representatives satisfying the Ahmedabad recommendations, there are no such persons coming up for working on the representative organizations.
4. If any election to these bodies is to take place, it can only be of those persons who will not be able to conform to the Ahmedabad recommendations *in toto.*
5. Hence the General Body will have to elect only such persons as can come up to do Congress work and will conform to the recommendations as far as possible.

   (The boycotts can be carried out by many of the representatives here if litigation in Government courts and boycott of Government educational institutions is excluded.)
6. Therefore, the Congress Committee will have either to suspend its

> work till such time as the All-India Congress Committee withdraws its drastic recommendations or continue in a state of inaction and lifelessness till some future date which is not in sight. And it appears that the General Body is bent upon doing the latter as was demonstrated in yesterday's meeting.

In my opinion, the whole of the difficulty arises from inability to understand the implications of the A.I.C.C. resolutions. The nine gentlemen have certainly done well in resigning. If they have not retired in disgust but in a sportsman-like spirit, they can assist without being officials and help to conduct even the new elections so as to get properly-qualified persons elected. If, however, they do not believe in the boycotts, they should offer themselves for re-election, boldly try to convert the electors to their views and invite them to elect them. The whole situation rests with the electors if the committee at Hubli is a living organization. The A.I.C.C. resolution in question was passed in order to give the electors guidance but not to fetter their choice. They have a perfect right to elect those who do not believe either wholly or partially in the present Congress policy. In properly conducted elections, it is the only honest method of sounding the country's opinion. We shall never know the real mind of the country or make any real headway unless we conduct election in the proper spirit. Let the Hubli committee register the names of those who subscribe to the Congress creed and *pay* 4 annas and let them elect whom they choose. These will be the proper representatives whether they believe in the Congress programme or whether they do not. I have been asked whether one man can pay for hundred men and get their names registered. I would call this buying votes and, therefore, dishonest. The idea is to get those men and women who themselves *pay* 4 annas for membership. If these real electors, after having had the pros and cons of the programme placed before them, decline to elect any but those who believe in the programme and if only a few can be found ready to serve on those terms, I should have no hesitation in working the programme with those few representatives. There is no other way of working out results of policies and principles in a scientific and true spirit.

FOR FAMINE RELIEF

In support of my proposition that the spinning-wheel is the most potent instrument of famine relief, the secretary, Tamil Nad Khadi Board, writes:

It may not perhaps be accurate to describe the Coimbatore District as 'poor'. But it is mostly a 'dry district and a failure of the monsoons, as happened last year, necessarily involves a famine. At the end of the last year there was intense famine. Cattle were available gratis. Spinning was the easiest and most natural occupation the women could turn to and thousands of women besieged the khadi producers for cotton. The latter gave to as many as possible and, as a consequence, in the months of November and December, all the invested capital had been locked up in khadi to nearly 75,000 rupees worth. The producers had to stop production in February when the members of the Khadi Board were on tour in these parts. I have been a personal witness to the great misery of the village folk, when they heard that merchants had stopped issuing cotton. I am glad to report that we have turned the corner and the production is again in full swing.

Even at this early stage, the price of Tiruppur khaddar is not prohibitive. It is from 8 to 9 annas per square yard. This is chiefly due to the fact that only the best cotton is used and, as you are aware, good cotton has been selling at fancy prices for the last one year. With the fall of cotton prices, the price per square yard may be lowered to 7 or even 6 annas. Its texture, I can confidently assert, compares favourably with the mill-cloth.

WHAT A BRAHMIN SAYS

A friend sends the following which will be read with interest:

I am a Brahmin born and bred in Konkan. During the first thirteen years of my life, I may be said to have exclusively lived in villages and, for seven years after that, divided my time between villages and cities. My great-grandfather died an ascetic; my grandfather was so strict in his Brahmin observances that he bathed even on the day of his death. My father used to recite two chapters of *Gita* every day besides the whole of Rudri, the lengthy scriptural prayer to God Shankara. On Mondays and especially *Sravana* Mondays, he would be reciting it for eight to ten hours in the presence of our village Shankara. I did not know the scripture in the beginning when I was drenching the 'Linga' with at least five hundred *ghadas* of water during those hours. I am narrating these facts only to prove that I was not born or bred in Anglicized or civilized atmosphere but in a *dharmik* one.

In that atmosphere I was taught that it brought spiritual welfare to be able to spin sufficient yarn for my sacred threads. My grandfather, my father and my uncles all used to spin. My spiritual preceptor used to spin all the while that he was teaching me *sandhya or Rudri.* We had a cotton tree of our own. We made slivers in the crudest fashion. I had a great hankering for spinning. The spindle was a most inefficient variety. A thin sticklet passed

through a hole bored in the centre of a pice that had got too smooth to be current was my spindle. We called it *chatee.*

I nave *to* say much the same thing of our women. Women, and especially widows, who in those days had no aim except to get spiritual benefit, went to listen to *kathas* and *Puranas.* While they listened, they spun yarn with their fingers alone which they collected round the neck of a small earthen pot. That yarn was then twisted into wicks which were soaked in ghee and burnt as an oblation to earn merit *(punya)* in the eyes of God. The spinning not only did not lower those women, but gave those ladies a higher Brahminic and religious position.

My only object in saying these things is to prove that spinning does not at all convert the Brahmin into a Vaisya. I am a Chitpavan Brahmin belonging to the Ratnagiri District.

'FAULTY PRODUCTION'?

A sober friend writes:

In the last issue of *Young India* you have referred to over-production of khadi and to the necessity of organizing sales. You have also expressed a desire that cities like Bombay may take over surplus stock. But, if there is lack of organization for sales, is not the system of production faulty? Khadi even today is much dearer than mill-cloth and it is doubtful if it lasts sufficiently long to balance its costlines. At present only those who are swayed by strong sentiment and who have spare money with them can indulge in the luxury of khadi. Your note suggests a sort of bounty. But what can bounty by itself achieve? It will fail in its object if the system of production is defective. If one rightly interprets your utterances, the charkha movement aims at making villages self-sufficient so far as cloth is concerned; that is to say every cottage should spin for itself. But can it be said that the production is increasingly carried on in this direction? How many villages have become self-sufficient or are about to be sot

If, as you suggest, interprovincial khadi trade is not desirable, equally it is undesirable to collect and stock khadi in towns for the simple reason that its comparative dearness makes its disposal uneconomical. Disposal is made possible by appeals to feelings which is not always the right way.

Khadi is only seemingly dear. I have pointed out in these pages that it is wrong to compare khadi with other cloth by comparing the prices of given lengths. The cheapness of khadi consists in the revolution of one's taste. The wearing of khadi replaces the conventional idea of wearing clothes for ornament by that of wearing them

for use. Opinion is divided as to the want of durability of khadi. Division of opinion is based probably on difference of experience. Different experience is inevitable so long as we have not arrived at uniformity in spinning. Four years' spasmodic effort is surely not enough to standardize the quality of hand-spun yarn. Every infant industry must struggle in the beginning. The sobriety of the friend disregards sentiment. But sentiment is a most powerful factor in the world. We cook our meals in our homes not because home-cooking is cheap according to the modern science of economy, but because there is an age-long sentiment behind it. Even school-boy economists could show that, when you count the cost, labour, fuel and wear and tear of utensils and rent, hotel food is cheaper than home-cooked. It is necessary to provide bounty for the khadi at the present moment. As Acharya Ray has very properly pointed out in his recent manifesto, what the State will not do must be done by the patriotic sentiment of the people. The object of the khadi movement is correctly stated by the writer. And that object can be fully achieved if we who desire to serve the masses realize the need of the spinning-wheel and cultivate a taste for it and its production. If I throw the wheel at skeletons of Orissa, they will not look at it. But if I begin spinning in their midst, they will take to it like fish to water. The masses do as the great ones do, not as they preach. Hence the necessity for the spinning resolution. It gives us a real sense of responsibility towards the villages, it fills the air with the spinning taste and cheapens khadi. If the spinning resolution is faithfully carried out by the country, it has a potency of which we have as yet no conception.

A HOMILY

> You are already in a mood to flatter the Mohammedans and it seems as though you think, by exonerating them from their high-handedness, you can keep them in close touch with the Hindus. You must now learn to distribute blame among the parties involved, as justice requires it, as this policy of seeking to blame the weak and meek members of the nation and flattering the strong and high-handed element is by no means a wise policy.

This is but an extract from a long homily addressed to me by a Hindu friend. I know that many other Hindus think like this friend. The truth, however, is that, in an atmosphere surcharged with suspicion and passion, my impartiality is bound to be mistaken for partiality. Those Hindus who refuse to see anything good in Islam or Mussalmans are naturally shocked to find any defence of Islam or its

votaries. I remain unmoved and unperturbed. For I know that some day my Hindu critics will admit the correctness of my estimate. They will perhaps admit that there will be no unity unless each party is prepared to understand, appreciate and make allowances for the other's view-point and even weaknesses. This requires a large heart, otherwise called charity. Let us do unto others as we would that they should do unto us.

DOINGS IN DELHI

A letter received from Maulana Mahomed Ali shows that he is making every effort to secure perfect reconciliation between the various parties in Delhi, and is hopeful of success. He is also trying to fix up an inquiry. It requires very delicate handling. There is so much mutual distrust that the Maulana Saheb says there are some people who do not want any inquiry at all. He is carrying on all these negotiations although he is so ill that he has to lie on his back practically through the whole of his time and has to be carried about in a *doli*[1] from place to place. Let us hope and pray that the Maulana Saheb will soon regain his health so as to be able to do justice to the very heavy task before him.

ADDRESSES TO ORDER

Mr. B. F. Bharucha, who is doing khadi propaganda in the Punjab just now, writes:

> During the last few days, there have sprung up in Amritsar three publicity committees:—Hindu, Muslim and Sikh! It is these committees, that are going to present addresses to the Governor, Sir Malcolm Hailey, on his visit to Amritsar. At a public meeting held at the Jallianwala Bagh on the 28th instant, they have been disowned. But that won't stop their propaganda. Besides the Congress Committee, the Khilafat Committee, and the Sikh League, there are three other communal bodies in Amritsar —the Hindu Sabha, the Muslim Sangathan of Dr. Kitchlew and the Shiromani Committee of the Sikhs.

The questions he asks are: who are these publicity committees and whether they have any other object for their existence save that of presenting the new Governor with addresses. How nice it would be if the Governors and other officials will recognize the inevitable and simply refuse to receive addresses. I would not even mind co-

[1] Palanquin

operating with them to found a society for stopping all addresses by anybody whatsoever to anybody, whether official, non-official and whether Moderate, Liberal, Swarajist or No-changer. The addresses do no good to anybody and they have now ceased to be instruments of propaganda. The public will no longer be deceived by these shows which more often than not mean nothing but cheap advertisements for those who present them. Why should not honest work be its own certificate of merit?

THE MALABAR FLOODS

The floods in the Southern Presidency are so vast in their magnitude that imagination refuses to picture them. They demonstrate man's helplessness. Fruits of years of patient toil have been swept away in a moment. Help seems almost a mockery. Whilst, therefore, I have given my opinion that effective relief is beyond the capacity of the Congress, I have not desired it to mean that Congressmen should do nothing. Personal service is always of course there. But even monetary assistance must be given where-ever it is possible for individuals to render. If, therefore, readers of Young India would care to send me subscriptions for relief, I would gladly receive them and utilize them in the best manner I should know. I am certain that the damage is too vast for sporadic or isolated effort. Some agency that would command universal confidence should handle the work of relief. I repeat that Congressmen should not hesitate to help Government agency in the face of this awful calamity. Adversity makes strange bed-fellows.

MAULANA HASRAT MOHANI

So the great Hasrat Mohani[1] is to be released on the 12th instant. He is to be in Ahmedabad on his way to Cawnpore. A great reception is in store for him wherever he goes. I do not know what views he holds today. As everybody knows, I differ from him in many ways. His views of conduct even in jail are so hopelessly different from mine. His views on swadeshi are in my opinion even dangerous. But our differences notwithstanding, my respect for him, his patriotism, his learning, is very great. He has a tenacity of purpose which is the envy of friends and despair of foes. He has suffered for his religion and his

[1] 1875-1951; nationalist Muslim leader; took active part in the Khilafat movement and was Gandhiji,s chief opponent at the Khilafat Conference of November 1920.

country as very few of us have done. I hope, therefore, that he will have a rousing reception wherever he goes.

VIRAR, NOT BERAR

In a recent issue of *Young India* I stated that a Swarajist friend had complained of No-changers having retained their position by forcible means. A friend from Berar wrote saying it could not be Berar. I asked the Swarajist friend and he tells me the repudiation was correct. The complaint was against Virar, not Berar. I apologize to the Berar No-changers for the misunderstanding which they will appreciate was pardonable. Virar No-changers beware! If I was an autocrat, I should immediately require these militant No-changers to resign their membership of the Congress unless they apologize publicly to the Swarajists and to the Congress. Of course, I assume that this time I am correctly reporting my informant, and that my informant himself was correctly informed.

A REMEDY?

A correspondent suggests a solution of the Hindu-Muslim question in the course of a letter from which I take the following:

> The Mohammedans will respect the Hindus when the former find that the latter are equal to them in strength of body, and then and then only will union be possible. You will, therefore, concentrate all your energies on the uplifting of the Hindu race in body. Let the Hindus set up *akharas* in every village and town for exercise and let them eat nourishing food. You should preach to them not to spend much on the marriage of their sons and daughters, but keep *brahamacharya* up to the age of say 21. You will thus be doing a great service to the Hindu race and the attainment of swaraj will follow as a matter of course. Please publish this letter in *Young India.*

The correspondent will level down both Hindus and Mussalmans to the position of brutes continually measuring brute strength for the purpose of existence. Only he forgets that between brutes there is no love lost. I want the Hindus to be physically strong. I want them to fear no man. These are necessary not merely for Hindu-Muslim unity, but even for national existence apart from unity. But I know that possession of mere physical strength will not bring about unity. We should still be fighting like 'cats and dogs' so long as we have no love in us for one another. I for one do not consider it worth while to devote my life to procuring an armed neutrality. I want lasting peace that springs from toleration of each other's religion. It is the old

story; whether as between ourselves and English or between Hindus and Mussalmans, we want change of heart. Everything else will follow as a matter of course. The correspondent prescribes *brahmacharya* for developing physical strength. It is a base use to make of a priceless possession to think of self-restraint for acquiring physical prowess. Do Tommies observe self-restraint for becoming Sandows? Let the correspondent quietly work out the implications of his prescription. I wish we had an army of 10,000 real *brahmacharis.* We should then conquer Mussalmans, Englishmen and everybody. Does not the correspondent realize that his *brahmacharis* will not fight as he suggests? It is true that they will not need to do so either.

RETURN OF REGISTERS

The following committees have already sent registers containing names of representatives who are registered to spin from month to month.

Bengal	1,066
C.P.Hindustani	1,055
Bihar	790
Gujarat	381
Bombay	237
U.P.	242
Burma	36

The other provinces except Assam, Delhi, Berar, Utkal, Punjab Sind and Kerala have notified that they will send their registers before the 10th instant. I do hope that these remaining provinces will not fail to send their registers and, what is more, their quota of yarn. I take it for granted that those who have sent the registers will also see to it that the members spin their yarn also. It is interesting to note that Bengal has the largest number of representatives. C.P. Hindustani comes next. If all these representatives send and continue to send their quota regularly, we should be able easily to put khadi on a stable basis.

Young India, 7-8-1924

247. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[1]

[AHMEDABAD,
August 7,1924]

I have just seen the letter referred to. I never said any such thing at the Lokamanya Anniversary meeting or anywhere else. I have sent several telegrams to the afflicted presidency, but in no one of them have I even mentioned the word 'spinning' or 'khaddar'. It surprises me that any one should have believed the report. I must however adhere to the opinion I have given that the relief is beyond the capacity of any private agency, nor can such relief come out of the Congress funds. The All-India Congress Committee has very little money left now. The calamity is such that everybody, co-operators, Non-co-operators, Liberals, officials should give their very best. I am taxing myself as to how I can help. On the receipt of the very first telegram, I made an appeal in *Young India*. I approached a friend privately also and received a donation from him. I am still moving in the matter. I have already made a similar appeal to the readers of, *Navajivan* but, in my opinion, no one man's efforts to collect funds can possibly be adequate to the amount of the relief required. The State alone can do it efficiently and it is for that reason that I have not hesitated to advise Congressmen to place their services at the disposal of any State agency. Private aid will come in fitly to supplement the work done by the State agency. It will not be for the first time in my life that I shall have identified myself with such relief work. I know enough of it to understand that relief will be necessary for many months to come.

The Hindu, 8-8-1924

[1] At the interview, Gandhiji's attention was drawn to a letter in *The Times of India* criticizing him for the advice to spin which he was said to have given to the flood-stricken people in Malabar.

248. SPEECH AT GUJARAT MAHAVIDYALYA[1]

AHMEDABAD,
August 8, 1924

MEMBERS OF THE STAFF AND STUDENT FRIENDS,

Shri Kripalani sang for you a song about a king.[2] If that king returned after two years, though he had said that he would come back after six,. the fault was his, not the people's. He should have understood that the people had had no time for preparations.

You have given what you could. Before I say anything about it, however, I have to give a decision. It is not necessary to give the names of the parties. They will, of course, be well known among you. A teacher has asked in a letter whether he should spin for Gandhi's sake or the country's. This is an easy question to answer. Being students in the Vidyalaya, you probably know that every question can be looked at from two points of view— black and white or extreme and moderate, and both may be correct if we consider the question from the standpoint of the parties concerned. The man who spins for Gandhi's sake is right from his point of view. He who spins for the sake of the country is also right, because he knows that Gandhi will pass away tomorrow. His attitude may be said to be more correct because, while the first one loves a perishable being, the second loves his country, and a country is certainly not a perishable object. If we secure swaraj with the help of the sword, we shall have to depend entirely on the sword to preserve it. This is a universal law. As long, therefore, as the country exists, so long will there be need for the spinning-wheel. This view is inspired by pure love, notblind attachment. A third thing. Why should we not ply the spinning-wheel entirely for our own sakes? By our talk about self-sacrifice, renunciation, etc., we are deceiving the world. Our renunciation is not self-sacrifice; it is our pleasure, nothing else. There is in it the

[1] At a meeting held to welcome Gandhiji, on his first visit to the Gujarat Mahavidyalaya since his release, the students presented him with a purse of Rs. 1,229 and a considerable quantity of hand-spun yarn, the sale proceeds of which were also to be devoted to Malabar flood-relief. J. B. Kripalani, Principal of the Vidyalaya, presided.

[2] Welcoming Gandhiji, Kripalani had quoted in his speech a poem from Rabindranath Tagore's *Gitanjali*, the theme of which was that the king could not be welcomed in as befitting a manner as one would have liked.

selfishness of satisfying our own longing. Moreover, for the sake of the country means for our sakes. If we get ready to ply the spinning-wheel for our own sakes, we would never give it up afterwards—just as we cannot give up our bodily functions like eating, drinking, and so on. However, all the three points of view are true, each for the person who holds it.

Live as you like,

Realize Hari anyhow.

In these lines, Akha Bhagat has expressed one's whole duty in life. One should ply the spinning-wheel not to deceive oneself, not to deceive the country or other people, but for one's own satisfaction. All work will shine out as long as we do not do it for show. The more we have of right knowledge, the less subject shall we be to attachment. Even so, if we do a good thing, whether out of attachment or love, it is bound to profit us. There is attachment in a son's love for his father. Some credit for my having learnt to speak the truth goes to my father. I did not know at that time that truth is the highest thing. But I certainly had attachment enough for my father to feel that I should do a certain thing to please him. Restrained by my love for my mother, I stopped eating meat and saved myself from sin. Had this not happened, I would have been today among the most wicked men in the world. I was thus forced by my attachment to rise; *though,* indeed, who can say that I have risen? I merely escaped falling. And this because I was ruled by my attachment to my father and mother, by keeping to my vow. Vows have been the support of my life. The point is that one may do a good thing from any one or more out of a variety of motives. The issue you have raised need not have been raised at all. It is true, of course, that the idea was that we should spin. But it would not be right that, having given me five *toles* of yarn, you should set aside the spinning-wheel. You will only fall by doing so. The spinning-wheel must simply go on working. Whether the idea will remain permanently or disappear depends only on the spirit in which you work.

The students of the Mahavidyalaya ought to try and understand certain principles on which the institution has been founded. Everyone joining this institution as a student should know them, for without that this national college will not remain national. We should understand what we have thought to be the means of winning swaraj; if, having understood them, we do not act accordingly, we shall be

deceiving the world. One may acquire much knowledge in the Vidyalaya, be very proficient in English, may be able to pronounce difficult Sanskrit words with such flourish that the learned men of Kashi hold us in respect —but all this will signify nothing. You are-not here to learn these things, you are here to learn what you will not learn elsewhere. They count for more than all the rest. These things are the spinning-wheel, mixing with the *Antyajas* and bringing about unity among Hindus, Muslims and Parsis. Have you come into contact with any *Antyaja* children? Do you meet any Muslim or Parsi children? And do you tell them that there is room for them in the Mahavidyalaya? Do you urge them to join the Mahavidyalaya? If, even then, they do not join, the fault will not be yours. Fate alone will be to blame.

If any person from outside comes to test you, he will not be impressed by your answers which may show your proficiency in English, Gujarati or Sanskrit. He will have observed from a distance whether you ply the spinning-wheel and whether you have abolished untouchability. The spinning-wheel, freedom from untouchability and Hindu-Muslim unity—any observer should be able to notice these things carried to perfection. If you pass the test in respect of other things, that will mean nothing. You will have wasted the years spent in the Mahavidyalaya.

I thank you for what you have been doing. If now you do not take one step forward, you and the country will be put to shame. Be such servants of the country that the people are filled with admiration for you. I for one entertain the greatest expectations of the Gujarat Mahavidyalaya. Just think how much money we have spent on it. We have spent as much as 90 per cent [of the available funds]. Work out the figure of this expenditure and calculate what we have spent on each student. People will shudder over it, just as I do. You should impatiently question yourself what you have given to the country in return for the money spent on you. If the future generations are not likely to be pleased with your work, it will be good for you to leave this institution. Think over the matter and resolve in your mind that you will have adopted whole-heartedly all those items of the Non-co-operation programme which should be permanent features of swaraj. You will be worthy workers only if you understand this thing; you will then derive incalculable benefit from what has been spent on you. Just as the seeds in the field sprout and grow into corn, so will the

money spent on you yield fruit. I wish to tell you as your friend, fellow-student and Chancellor, that you have only two courses open to you. You must accept one or the other. It is one thing to give yarn for the sake of the Chancellor and another to do so to please me. If you have faith in me and do something out of love or attachment for me, there is something in it, but it will be a different matter if you do anything merely to please me. If you have faith in the spinning-wheel and yet you do not spin, and then you shake off your lethargy on my persuasion and for my sake, that will be good of you. If, however, you do a thing in which you have no faith at all, merely to please me, that would be very bad. It would be hypocrisy, it would be fraud and deception. The teacher who said that one must spin for the sake of the country must have meant this.

If you do not have faith that the Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians and Jews are your brethren and if you are not ready to act accordingly, you should by all means leave the Mahavidyalaya. You should go your way and the Vidyapith will plan its own programme of work.

While speaking of this, I remembered the Mahavidyalya building. Many *Antyaja* workmen work there and they experience difficulty about water. If you can do so, you yourselves should join the *Antyajas* in the work and let the other workmen leave. But I see that you do not have the necessary physical strength and love of labour to do that. In such circumstances, you should make arrangements to supply water to the *Antyajas* and to the others separately. You will tell me that you will get exhausted with physical labour and ask, moreover, how you can find time for studies. I tell you that you can manage even that with Shri Kripalani's help. You can ask the workmen belonging to the higher castes to fetch water and serve it to the *Antyajas*, tell them that, if they do not have compassion for members of lower castes, you yourselves will serve water to the latter. In doing so, you will be giving them an object-lesson in compassion and satyagraha. Do at least this, sit down for your meal only after bathing and feeding the *Antyajas.* We may live in the open or in an unfinished building, but should never forsake the *Antyajas.* By acting in this way, we shall end the oppression by the higher castes. The teachers cannot give you this education, nor will you get it from books. If the teachers succeed in giving it, it will be by setting an example to you by their own conduct. At the time when this

Vidyapith was established[1], I had said that, if this institution was meant only to impart education in the three Rs, I was not qualified to be its Chancellor. The Vidyapith and other institutions were founded with the idea that they would be devoted to developing strength of character. It is my duty to remind you of this and you should accept this essential feature and live in keeping with it.

Take it that you are committing a sin if your spinning-wheels lie unprotected against sun and rain. Just as you keep the apparatus in the laboratory clean and tidy, so should your spinning-wheel also be found. I certainly expect to find with you spindles, leather-holders, cotton, slivers, etc., of the best quality. It is not right that you should look to the Ashram for that, because you are known as "Visharads"[2]. If I cannot expect this of you, of whom else can I? You should surely have enough self-respect to secure these things on your own.[3]

Eat less but donate money. Reduce the amount of milk you take so that you can save money. If you have been spending any time doing nothing, spin and pay something. Pay money yourselves and go out collecting funds and collect as much as you can on your responsibility. Let us learn to die for the country. Let us cultivate burning love for the country, for that is the meaning of national education. We can offer shelter to people on dry ground if they have to sleep in the wet, and take their places ourselves; we can serve the country in this way only if we have in us the motherly love about which we learnt in our childhood from Dalpatram[4]. There is no meaning in your giving anything from what you do not need. Give other things as well, putting yourselves to some positive inconvenience. There will be pure love in doing so, and you will not want to boast about it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-8-1924

[1] In 1920

[2] Literally, those who are proficient

[3] Gandhiji then appealed for funds for the relief of flood victims in Malabar.

[4] A 19th-century poet of Gujarat

249. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

SABARMATI,
August 9, 1924

Very confidential

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I promised to write to you an important letter, but I have not been able up to now. I was ready four days ago when I received Mrs. Naidu's letter informing me she was coming here. I, therefore, stopped the letter pending her arrival. I wanted to say that I was prepared to facilitate your securing the Congress machinery, actually assisting you to do so. In no case will I be party to vote-catching in the sense it is being understood at the present moment. I would be prepared to work outside the Congress but not in opposition to it. I have no interest in anything but promoting a peaceful atmosphere, khaddar, and Hindu-Muslim unity and removal of untouchability. In all this I know I should get your assistance. I would naturally have an organization for that work, but not with any desire whatsoever to capture the Congress ultimately. I would not like to waste the nation's time in wrangling over getting a majority in an atmosphere such as is prevalent today.

If you are not prepared to take over the whole of the Congress machinery, I am quite prepared to facilitate your taking over those Provinces where you think you have no difficulty in running it.

Short of my coming into your programme, I would like to place myself at your disposal.

Then there is the question of the Congress President. Rajagopalachary, Gangadharrao and Rajendra Babu insist on my accepting the office. Vallabhbhai and Shankarlal approve of my idea of not accepting. Jamnalal is neutral and so is perhaps Mrs. Naidu. I forget to say that Shaukat Ali too is insistent that I should accept the office. The only condition that will make me reconsider my position would be your desire that I should accept. Will you please consult Messrs Das, Kelkar and others and let me know what you would advise me to do in both the matters referred to by me?

I have read this letter to Mrs. Naidu.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 5177. Courtesy: Krishnadas

250. LETTER TO BADRUL HUSSAIN

SABARMATI,
August 9, 1924

MR DEAR BADRUL,

I was pained to learn from Mrs. Naidu that you thought I had asked you to sit down in a village and work there to the exclusion of every other activity and although you could do more work. I do not remember having said any such thing at all. But I do remember having told you that, if you could not organize on a large scale without extraneous help, you should certainly go to the villages and begin there. It is wrong to produce on a large scale if there is no local market. But if you have confidence in yourself and can organize the whole of Hyderabad, nothing would please me better. Only, you must become self-supporting. Nor do I wish to prevent you from manufacturing the finest khaddar you can and from making it as 'artistic' as you can. I must have been in an idiotic state when I spoke to you, if you carried the impression that I wanted you only to manufacture the coarsest khaddar when you were capable of producing the finest. And it would be the last thing in the world for me to ask anyone to do anything that may not be to his or her taste.

Do please write if I am not clear. And share this letter with Padmaja[1] so that she may know my views.

Yours,
BAPU

BADRUL HUSSAIN, ESQ.
ABID MANZIL
HYDERABAD (DECCAN)

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

251. LETTER TO HANSESHWAR RAY

SABARMATI,
August 9, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. When a wife does not agree with her husband's views but is otherwise pure, the husband can win her over by

[1] Daughter of Sarojini Naidu

affection free from animal passion. During the process, the husband must follow that which he regards as best, leaving the wife free to do as she thinks best. But she must not expect the husband to pay for her expensive tastes. The husband is bound to support her so far as food and clothing are concerned. She is entitled to divide his income, but she cannot expect him to incur debts for her. I am satisfied that where pure affection alone rules, all differences vanish or, in spite of differences, an honourable way out is found.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

HANSESHWAR RAY,
7/I . . . . .
CALCUTTA.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

252. LETTER TO TIRATH RAM JANEJA

SABARMATI,
August 9, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

You have my sympathy in your distress. Suicide is a sin and, as all sin means separation, the distance between you and your wife must widen with suicide. Nor will death solve the problem. For you will go to your destined place and she to hers. But whilst you are yet in the present body, you can correct yourself. Was it the body you loved or the soul within? If it was the body, you could have embalmed it and kept it chained in your room. If it was the latter, sulely her soul is still with you. Is not the memory of all that was good in her enough for you? Or was your love merely selfish? Loved ones should be nearer to us for their deaths.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

TIRATH RAM JANEJA, ESQ.
CAWNPORE

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

253. LETTER TO ALI BROTHERS

Sabarmati,
August 9, 1924

MY DEAR BROTHERS,

I have wires from both of you. I do not know where you are. If Bi-Amma is within reach, please give my warmest respects to her. Tell her I shall not be sorry if God takes her away. No mother can depart this world with more pride and satisfaction than she. The sorrow will be felt for those who may be left behind. We do not like to part with the oldest of our relations. Mother we want with us for all time. God has however willed otherwise. But though the body dissolves, the spirit ever abides. May it then be well with you whether she is permitted to remain with us yet a while or whether she is taken away.

Yours,
M. K. G.

MAULANAS SHAUKAT ALI
AND MAHOMED ALI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

254. ADVICE TO LABOUR UNION[1]

AHMEDABAD,
August 9, 1924

The Labour Union can place evidence before the Inquiry Committee if it likes to do so. But I have intentionally advised the Labour Union that it is not necessary to tender evidence on its behalf. As the organizers of the Labour Union are non-co-operators, they cannot take direct part in the inquiry, but they can take some part as advisers and protectors of the workmen. The inquiry is so much restricted that the workmen will derive no benefit from it. Another, stronger, reason for the Labour Union to take no part in the inquiry is its methods of work. It has chosen to deal with mill-owners, as far as possible, with sweet reasonableness. The Labour Union cannot, therefore, take part in such an inquiry without very strong reasons. The Labour Union has to look to two things—to ensure greater safety o

[1] This was published in *Majoor Sandesh,* the organ of the Ahmedabad Labour Union, with reference to an accident in the Gujarat Ginning Mill.

the buildings in the future and to get compensation for the dead and the injured. This inquiry has no direct connection with the question of compensation. For the future safety of the buildings, the Labour Union is fully alive and negotiations are going on with proper autho-rities.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-8-1924

255. FLOODS IN MALABAR

I have been receiving telegrams asking for help in connection with the floods in Malabar. Who can help where thousands of houses have been destroyed, crops washed away and fertile soil turned into sandy waste! At this juncture, one way out is to rest content with whatever help the Government extends. Such aid as it wishes us to provide, we should offer, if we can. Even when all this is done, there is certainly room for private donations and voluntary service.

Relief measures in respect of this calamity cannot be completed in a day or even in a month. They will go on for a year or more. The relief work in connection with the floods in South Kanara last year has continued till today. Meanwhile, there have been floods there once again, so they have now to start relief work afresh. But when relief measures taken for one whole year could not cope with the damage caused by a minor flood, how much more time is likely to be taken when a whole province is as good as submerged in water? Hence I certainly wish to rouse the generosity of the people of Gujarat.

The Gujaratis had very liberally helped famine-stricken Orissa.[1] They have contributed to many other funds. Appeal for help can be made only to those who have been accustomed to give help. Therefore, I appeal to every reader of *Navajivan* on behalf of the helpless people of Malabar. One may send whatever one likes and however much one likes. We can get some help through children even by teaching them the geography of Malabar, by telling them of the calamity and thereby rousing their sentiment of love.

Every reader

[1] In 1920-21

1. can donate a day's earning;
2. can get his neighbour to do similar sacrifice;
3. can contribute an amount equal to the price of his day's food;
4. can spin more on this account and send the yarn;
5. can curtail to some extent his requirements of cloth and donate the cloth saved;
6. can give up his addictions, if any, and donate the money thus saved.
7. One who cannot give up his addiction altogether should give up part of it and donate whatever money is thus saved.
8. One who is accustomed to comforts or luxuries can, because of this calamity, give up a few and thus spare something for help. He who does so himself can inspire his friends and relatives to do likewise.

In regard to this work there can be no distinction between co-operators and non-co-operators.

The reader should rest assured that every possible step will be taken to ensure that the money and the articles received will be duly utilized for the purpose.

None should ask how much money would be needed. 'The more the merrier' is the rule which applies here. Even when we give or do whatever we can, it will be found inadequate. Whatever is offered with a good intention is worth a million. I urge all to contribute generously according to their capacity. I intend to acknowledge in *Navajivan* whatever contributions are received. I had received Rs. 250 from a gentleman when the news of the first floods in South Kanara were published, and I take this opportunity to acknowledge it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-8-1924

256. EDUCATION CONFERENCE

This conference was held and is now over. It should be regarded as an important conference from the point of view of teachers and the general public too. But these are not days when either of them would attach importance to it. The value of teachers is recognized neither by the public nor by the teachers themselves. They are valued according

to their salary. A teacher is paid less than an ordinary clerk. Hence, in practice, a teacher is valued less than a clerk. Is it for this reason that we refer to a teacher as *mehtaji*[1]?

If it is so, how can we expect that the teachers' worth will ever rise? Can anyone raise the salaries of seven lakh teachers in seven lakh villages? If the salaries of so many teachers do not rise and if it is considered necessary to raise them, we should rest content with employing high-paid teachers in a few villages and allowing the rest to go without education. We have been doing this since the establishment of British rule. We realize that this practice is wrong. Hence let us find out a scheme which can cover all villages. Under this scheme, teachers will not be valued according to their salaries and work. Teachers themselves will place more value on their teaching work than on their salaries. In short, teaching should be regarded as the teachers' dharma. The teacher who takes his food without performing that sacrifice should be looked upon as a thief. If that is done, there will be no shortage of teachers and yet they will be valued a million times higher than millionaires. By changing his outlook, every teacher can enjoy that position even today.

It is up to the teachers to make a success or failure of this conference. The key to success lies in the teachers' pledge. If the teachers learn all the processes in regard to spinning as a matter ofduty and present not less than 3,000 yards [of yarn] to the Congress every month, the conference may be considered to have been largely successful. Every teacher can do at least this much. The immediate task before national teachers is to help in winning swaraj. The first and the least help which they can offer is to spin and wear khadi. He who does this will have done everything else. He who does everything else except this does nothing.

Lastly, in accordance with the dictum of the *Gita,* ''Lesser ones follow the example set by great ones", the pupils will follow their teachers. Thus, the people will easily gain a lot from the work of the teachers and pupils.

The other test concerns the practice of untouchability. If the teachers have soul-force, they will surely attract the *Antyajas* to their schools. If thereby the school breaks up, what does it matter? A school should support religion; religion does not exist for the sake of the

[1] Literally, one doing a clerical job

school. If we cannot teach the object-lesson of eradicating untouchability to children, what else shall we teach them? Some parents may say, "Do not teach too much truthfulness to our children, because by following the path of truth they will become unfit to engage in business." What will the teacher say then? Will he not do without those children? How will it profit anyone to study history, geography and arithmetic divorced from truth? Similarly, the teachers should request the Muslims, Parsis and members of other communities to send their children to national schools.

If the teachers would forget the question of their livelihood and think only of their duty, the schools will come to have new vitality and become truly national, and then alone will they be of use to the national movement. It is the first lesson for the young and the old, for men and women, that they should remain loyal to a pledge once they have accepted it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-8-1924

257. MY NOTES

GREATNESS OF THE HIMALAYAS

It is not as if only Englishmen knew or discovered that one's health improves by staying in the Himalayas. The reader will like to read the translation[1] that-a friend has sent me of the verses in praise of the Himalayas to be found in Ayurveda, in order to show that their greatness has also been recorded in our ancient books.

While reading this who would not feel that such ancient statements go to show that the lives of our ancestors must have been full of poetry? A very simple thing has been adorned with figures of speech and rendered sweet. They could do that because the people then were contented. India was, comparatively speaking, happy. Even the poorest did not starve. The land of Bharat was independent. Will not such an age come again? The *vaids*[2] proved to be true; that age will return only when we prove ourselves to be true. The vaids should themselves go to the Himalayas and get refreshed, acquire honesty of purpose, discover medicines and give their benefit to us so that they

[1] Not translated here

[2] Physicians practising Ayurvedic system of medicine

may earn spiritual merit. Today the *vaids* are intent on demanding a rupee for service worth a pie; they have nothing of the research spirit of the West, but imitate the West's greed for money, learn by rote old verses and dispense medicines and add to the number of diseases instead of reducing it. They tempt the disease-stricken by their various advertisements in newspapers and make us perpetual slaves to them and their medicines. If, however, they would stay in the Himalayas and make researches, and also attempt to make us self-controlled they would promote their own welfare as well as ours. We may learn from them of one medicine which can do what a hundred may not. Today the mountains are fit resorts only for the rich or the ascetics. The middle classes have to lead their lives somehow by imbibing endless medicines.

ACCIDENT IN A MILL

A Government committee is investigating at the moment the causes of the accident which occurred when a mill collapsed. The terms of reference are very limited in scope. The duty ofthe owner of the mill is much larger than this; that of the Mill-owners' Association is larger still and that of the Mill-workers' Union is in a way the largest of all.

The Government committee may do what it likes, but it is the clear duty of the owner of the mill to support to the full the families rendered helpless. Whatever may have been the cause of the accident, the-poor workers had no hand in it at all. In such circumstances, whether law enjoins it or not, the mill-owners are in duty bound to support the helpless families, to provide medical treatment to the wounded and hereafter to take greater precautions in regard to the sound condition of the building.

It is the duty of the Mill-owners' Association to maintain the good name of every mill-owner. It is bound to maintain and be answerable for the condition of the buildings of all mills. It should call some impartial building expert, get him to inspect mill buildings and obtain his certificate in respect of every building of the mills, get removed whatever defects may have been pointed out by him and should ascertain whether or not the mill-owners concerned have made proper provision for the medical treatment of injured mill-workers and for the maintenance of helpless families.

The responsibility devolving on the workers' union is both heavy and delicate. It is its especial duty to safeguard the interests of

workers. There is constant apprehension that the mill-owners may regard this as a breach of the union's obligations. Nevertheless, the union ought to take such steps as are necessary to protect the life of workers. It is the natural and first step to get this ensured through the mill-owners. If no help is forthcoming from the mill-owners, adequate steps ought surely to be taken independently of them. I wish, however, to give my detailed idea about this through the *Majoor Sandesh* only; hence I do not take up space for it in *Navajivan.* But I shall merely say that the mill-owners should not put the labour union into an awkward position and they should realize that the union leaders do not wish ill to them, but wish them well. Moreover, keeping this in mind, they should assist the labour union in its work as the workers' guardian and take from it the help they require.

"AAVKAR-LAYAK KE -DAYAK?"

"Simlanivasi" asks me whether just as I accepted a correction concerning the word *talleen,* I would not correct the phrase *aavkar-dayak.* I have already introduced that correction in the article itself. *Dayak* means that which gives, *layak* means fit. In thissense, we should consider Government's tyranny as *aavkarlayak,* not *aavka-rdayak.* Who knows how many such mistakes are being committed? Hence I should like to make the pleasant suggestion that every educated reader of *Navajivan* should correct such errors himself when he reads the paper.

TEACHING FACILITIES

It is reported that many men, women and children in Ahmedabad are keen to learn spinning. If facilities in the way of spinning-wheels, etc., are available many of them intend to do spinning. In order to obviate any possible inconveniences in this regard, brother Laxmidas has released the following information.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-8-1924

[1] Not translated here

258. SOME OBJECTIONS ANSWERED[1]

(A correspondent to *Navajivan* sends a formidable letter where-in he objects to most of my propositions and generally my way of life. A friend has translated my reply to it for the benefit of the readers of *Young India*. Translation of the letter is not given as the reply itself enables the reader to know the objections.)[2]

Right conduct is not like Euclid's right line. It is like a beautiful tree, not one of whose millions of leaves is like any other. Though, therefore, they are from one seed and belong to the same tree, there is none of the uniformity of a geometrical figure about any part of a tree. And yet we know that the seed, the branches and the leaves are one and the same. We know, too, that no geometrical figure can bear comparison with a full-blossomed tree in point of beauty and grandeur.

Therefore, where the correspondent sees inconsistency, I see neither contradiction nor insanity in my life. It is true that, as a man cannot see his back, so can he not see his errors or insanity But the sages have often likened a man of religion to a lunatic. I, therefore, hug the belief that I may not be insane and may be truly religious. Which of the two I am in truth can only be decided after my death.

I never asked my audience to substitute the spinning-wheel for the rosary. I only suggested that they could go on spinning taking the name of 'Narayana' simultaneously. And whilst today the whole country is on fire, I think it behoves us all to fill the buckets of the spinning-wheel with the water of yarn, and extinguish the fire with the name of 'Narayana' on our lips.

I want to see the spinning-wheel everywhere, because I see pauperism everywhere. Not until and unless we have fed and clothed the skeletons of India will religion have any meaning for them. They are living the cattle-life today and we are responsible for it. The spinning-wheel is, therefore, a penance for us. Religion is service of the helpless. God manifests Himself to us in the form of the helpless and the stricken. But we, in spite of our forehead marks, take no notice of them, i.e., of God. God is and is not in the Vedas. He who

[1] The original of this article was written in Gujarati and published in Navajivan, 10-8-1924, under the title ''Rosary or the Spinning-Wheel".

[2] This prefatory paragraph was published, along with the translation, in Young India, 14-8-1924.

reads the spirit of the Vedas sees God therein. He who clings to the letter of the Vedas is *a Vedia*—a literalist. Narasinha Mehta does indeed sing the praise of the rosary, and the praise is well-merited where it is given. But the same Narasinha has sung:

> Of what avail is the *tilaka* and the *tulsi*, of what avail is the rosary and the muttering of the Name, what avail is the grammatical interpretation of the Veda, what avail is the mastery of the letters? All these are devices to fill the belly and nothing worth without their helping to a realization of the *Para-Brahma.*

The Mussalman does count the beads of his *tasbih* and the Christian of the rosary. But both would think themselves fallen from religion if their *tasbih* and rosary prevented them from running to the succour of one who, for instance, was lying stricken with a snake-bite. Mere knowledge of the Vedas cannot make our Brahmins spiritual preceptors. If it did, Max Muller would have become one. The Brahmin who has understood the religion of today will certainly give Vedic learning a secondary place and propagate the religion of the spinning-wheel, relieve the hunger of the millions of his starving countrymen and only then, and not until then, lose himself in Vedic studies.

I have certainly regarded spinning superior to the practice of denominational religions. But that does not mean that the latter should be given up. I only mean that a dharma which has to be observed by the followers of all religions transcends them, and hence I say that a Brahmin is a better Brahmin, a Mussalman a better Mussalman, a *Vaishnava* a better *Vaishnava*, if he turns the wheel in the spirit of service.

I certainly did not repeat the divine word 'Rama', nor count the beads on account of a feeling that my end was near. But I was too weak then to turn the wheel. I do count the rosary whenever it helps me in concentrating on Rama. When, however, I rise to a pitch of concentration where the rosary is more a hindrance than a help, I drop it. If it was possible for me to turn the wheel in my bed, and if I felt that it would help me in concentrating my mind on God, I would certainly leave the rosary aside and turn the wheel. If I am strong enough to turn the wheel, and I have to make a choice between coun-ting beads or turning the wheel, I would certainly decide in favour of the wheel, making it my rosary so long as I found poverty and starvation stalking the land. I do look forward to a time when even repeating the

name of Rama will become a hindrance. When I have realized that Rama transcends even speech, I shall have no need to repeat the name. The spinning-wheel, the rosary and the *Ramanam* are all the same to me. They subserve the same end, they teach me the religion of service. I cannot practise ahimsa without practising the religion of service, and I cannot find the truth without practising the religion of ahimsa. And there is no religion other than Truth. Truth is Rama, Narayana, Ishwara, Khuda, Allah, God. As Narasinha says, 'The different shapes into which gold is beaten gives rise to different names and forms; but ultimately it is all gold.'

I have nothing to withdraw from what I have said about machines in the *Indian Home Rule*, and a reference will show that I have included the printing press in the machines. It must be remembered that it is not Indian Home Rule depicted in that book that I am placing before India. I am placing before the nation parliamentary, i.e., democratic swaraj. I do not suggest today a destruction of all the machines, but I am making the spinning-wheel the master-machine. The *Indian Home Rule* depicts an ideal State. The fact that I cannot come up to the ideal condition of things laid down therein is to be attributed to my weakness. I believe that there is no religion greater than ahimsa, and yet I cannot escape the *himsa* which is inevitably involved in the processes of eating and drinking. The ideal of ahimsa is, however, ever before me; therefore, even in these processes, I do endeavour to restrain myself: I am striving every moment to reduce even those functions to a minimum.

What I have said about hospitals is also true. And yet I suppose I shall resort to the few medicines I hold lawful, so long as I retain the least attachment for my body. I went to the hospital as a prisoner. I did not run away from it immediately on my release, because I thought it my duty to remain under the care of those who had treated me with courtesy and kindness.

I am, however, ashamed at the very fact of my illness, inasmuch as I believe that a man should never fall ill. It is humiliating for me to take any medicine, and the more so that it was at all necessary to take me to the hospital.

I have never preferred killing a dacoit to winning him over with love. But he who is not equal to that love, who cannot master all the love that the act demands, has the right to protect his proteges and his property even by killing the dacoit.

It is a gross error to liken the Englishmen to dacoits. The dacoits loot you by sheer violence, the Englishmen do so chiefly by seducing us. There is thus a great difference of method in the two. A liquor-vendor also robs me of my soul by selling his liquor. Should I suggest killing him, or non-co-operating with him? But if an Englishman brutally assaults you, or a liquorvendor forcibly tries to pour liquor down your throat, and if you will not win both over by love, then it is open to you to engage them in an armed combat. It would make no difference if the aggressors in the case were one or many, weak or strong.[1]

I have ventured to give a reply to the above letter, but I have a doubt whether it was proper to do so. I have assumed the correspondent's object to be pure; hence only I took the trouble to reply to him. But I think it can be seen from my reply that usually a great deal of erroneous thinking is found in such correspondence.

It seems the life of many educated people has become devoid of thought. As long as one cannot deduce a corollary from a principle, one can be held to have no knowledge of the principle at all. If the correspondent had gone deep into the subject and thought profoundly over it, he himself could have deduced all the answers that I have given. Truly speaking, all these replies are already there in my earlier writings. But I find from the letters I receive that correspondents' lazy thinking is a common fault and hence I have to give this reply. But I advise every reader and correspondent that they should think deeply on every subject, because by doing so they will save themselves from many misconceptions .

"Reading without reflection is fruitless."

Navajivan, 10-8-1924 and *Young India*, 14-8-1924

259. APPEAL TO DONORS

About the Malabar catastrophe, I have written in the Gujarati *Navajivan*.[2] But I know there are a good many generous-minded

[1] The two paragraphs that follow are not found in *Young India* and have been translated from *Navajivan*.

[2] *Vide* "Floods in Malabar", 10-8-1924.

people among the readers of *Hindi Navajivan. I* appeal to them to give as much as they can.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 10-8-1924

260. LETTER TO A. W. BAKER

SABARMATI,

August 10, 1924

DEAR MR. BAKER,[1]

I have received two letters from you. The first I acknowledged. I have the book too. Do write always please. But I feel that I must go my way. We are all searchers. It is well with us so long as we do not interpose the 'I' between God and ourselves.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

A. W. BAKER, ESQ.

P.O. PORT SHIPSTONE

NATAL

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] An advocate of Natal

261. LETTER TO PAUL F. CRESSEY

SABARMATI,
August 10, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

We are taught from childhood discipline in self-denial. Though, therefore, in the East, we ever fail to live up to it, we know that life is not for indulgence but essentially for self-denial. Would that the students of America could imbibe that one lesson.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

PAUL F. CRESSEY, ESQ.
GRANVILLE, OHIO
U.S.A.

From the manu7script of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

262. LETTER TO LALA BULAKIRAM

SABARMATI,
August 10, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I would not like to send any message to the Amir[1]. I would like my work to speak for itself. Nor would I care to send any present. My yarn has not been separately converted into cloth.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

PS.

I have just received your second letter. I rather like their resignations. We are responding to Truth. Satyagraha is not excitement. It follows calm determination. I shall wait indefinitely.

M. K. G.

LALA BULAKIRAM
BHASKER PRESS
5 KUTCHERY ROAD
DEHRA DUN

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Of Afghanistan

263. LETTER TO R. KANE

SABARMATI,
August 10, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter.

(1) I am against compulsory education. Compulsion may be unjust. It is certainly unnecessary.

(2) If we get swarajya today, I should resist any attempt to make primary or any education compulsory. We have not yet tried the voluntary system.

(3) The Yeotmal Municipality will be within the terms of the Congress resolution if it availed itself of the compulsory education measure. But, if I had any say in the matter, I would plead with the Councillors to try all voluntary effort before trying compulsion. I know the evil effects of the latter wherever it has been tried.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

R. KANE, ESQ., M.L.C.
YEOTMAL

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

264. LETTER TO MANGALSINGH

August 10, 1924

DEAR SARDAR MANGALSINGHJI,

This will introduce to you Mr. Valji Desai who has been a co-worker for a long time. He went to jail soon after me on the same charge. Please help Mr. Desai in any manner that may enable him to stay in the Punjab and study things.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 5996. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

265. LETTER TO ALI HASAN

SABARMATI,
August 10, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I did have your letter. A Hindu is one who believes in the Vedas, Upanishads, *Puranas,* & c., and *Varnashrama* dharma. I am unable to agree with you that we may reject the claim of those who say they belong to particular religions. I claim to be the best judge of what I believes Don't you?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

MR. ALI HASAN, BAR-AT-LAW
PATNA

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

266. LETTER TO C. R. DAS

SABARMATI,
August 10, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

A friend of Mr. Khopkar has handed the enclosed to me. He says Mr. Khopkar thinks you could not have signed the paper. But if you have, Mr. Khopkar is prepared, he says, to prove his innocence to your satisfaction. Will you please tell me what I should say to Mr. Khopkar's friend?

I hope you and Mrs. Das are keeping well.

Yours sincerely,
M. K GANDHI

MR. C. R. DAS
CALCUTTA

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

267. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Sravana Sud 10 [*August 10, 1924*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Please see the letter I have written to Motilalji. I have asked Krishnadas to send a copy of it to you. Govind Babu is working in Orissa. You may inspect his work and, if you approve of it, give him monetary assistance from the Gandhi Seva Sangh funds. His ability is very limited, though his demand is great, viz., Rs. 200/- a month. Of course, this much is not to be given. If he passes your test, you may give him Rs. 50/- a month. Examine his case carefully.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: G.N. 2848

268. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Sravana Sud 10 [*August 10, 1924*][2]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. My weight has no doubt gone down, but in other ways my health is definitely good. Do whatever you can after reading about Malabar in *Navajivan.*

I hope you go out for walks regularly. You need not worry if any letters or words in your writing are scratched.

Today Haribhai has come here.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Make it a habit to take black French plums soaked in water. Your second postcard has come just. Most probably I shall be here. Do come soon.

BAPU

SISTER VASUMATI,

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 453. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

[1] The date is given according to *Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad,* a collection of Gandhiji's letters to Jamnalal Bajaj.

[2] The postmark bears this date.

269. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

Sravana Sud 10 [*August 10, 1924*][1]

BHAI VALJI,

Since I had sent your article on Simla to the press for printing, it was none of my job to send it to you. But you and Swami being close friends, the latter would naturally take as much liberty as he likes. You had written the article in such a small hand and so close that it was difficult for me to read it and the Swami seems to have, therefore, returned it to you. Now write it again.

Running the journals is not the only difficulty in my going there.

I was just going to send Anandshankarbhai's letter to you, but something crossed my mind and I gave up the idea. I had accepted your correction and it is in there. But I remember I gave up the idea of sending Anandshankarbhai's letter to you as I thought that to do so would be a sort of vanity on my part. I had no time to write a humorous letter.

I have already explained the distinction between *layak* and *dayak*.

I am sending a letter for Mangalsingh. All Sikhs are simple and humble. If Mangalsingh is not there: give it to any Akali Sikh you may meet.

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: C.W. 6024. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

[1] From the reference to the article on Simla, published in September 1924, it is evident that the letter was written in 1924. In that year, *Sravana Sud 10* fell on August 10.

270. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Sravana Sud 10 [*August 10, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I got all your letters. I get a lot of help from them.

It is also hard for me not to write what I believe to be true about Sarojini. The people must make up their minds what work they should take from whom. If I praise someone for one of his activities, why should anybody conclude that he is in all respects perfect. Though I say all this, I do wish that you should continue to write to me whatever thoughts come to your mind.

I know that Malaviyaji does not approve of my views in regard to the Hindu-Muslim problem. I, however, strongly believe that we have no other remedy for the purpose. True, we can create a sort of artificial unity for a while, but that won't help us to make any headway.

I cannot give you any advice in regard to Sunderlalji. Yes, I know this much in this matter that Jamnalalji did not give him the help he wanted on his own condition. Jamnalalji knows him far better than I. Whatever you may do in this matter, take Jamnalalji's advice.

I thank you for the two months' donations which you tell me you have sent to Jamnalalji. It was on the strength of these donations that I asked Jamnalaiji to make some provision for the Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha and two other institutions.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6023. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] The letter appears to have been written after the article "Bombay, Remember Sarojini", 3-7-1974. In 1924, *Sravana Sud* 10 fell on August 10. *Vide* also "Letter to G. D. Birla", after 3-7-1924.

271. LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI

SABARMATI,
August 11, 1924

I have your two letters. I am sorry about Bi-Amma. I hope you will get the permission you have sought. That we should be exiles in our own country! And yet play about swaraj! The pity of it all!

The health having suffered, I got Vithalbhai to put down the Corporation address for 30th August.[1] So, ordinarily, I should like us to start touring in the beginning of September. But I have written to Mahomed Ali and have told him I could now go to Delhi if he wants me. I must try and see whether I can stand the strain. Even if he does not need me, I think we should begin work through Delhi. I observe that Moharram Day is 12th August. It is another anxious date for us. I do not know where we should find ourselves that day. Consider all these things and think out where we should be.

I know your own difficulties about the Khilafat work. As for the swaraj movement so for the Khilafat, I think we shall find we shall have to rely upon the quality of a few workers rather than the quantity of many.

I have said my say about the choice of the President. There is so much passion about that it seems almost impossible to do clean work if one has to fight for a majority. The latter must come easily if it is to be at all useful. I intensely dislike the Western method of attaining majorities.

I will try to read the Khilafat news.

With love,

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

MAULANA SHAUKAT ALI
BOMBAY

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vithalbhai Patel", 17-5-1924.

272. LETTER TO ANANDANAND

Monday [*August 11, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI ANANDANAND,

I have your letter. Keep on issuing supplements. I shall give you eight galleys regularly. I have found a way for it yesterday. We shall have to see what to do after what has been written is finished. We shall see about it when the time comes. I shall send you a wire about how many columns are ready for *Navajivan.* Perhaps I may miscalculate, but I shall be careful.

I quite see that we must pay attention to the 'business' side also. It is for you to stick to it. I may say something hasty while thinking of other aspects, but ultimately I shall come round, because I am after all a satyagrahi and will ever remain that.

I do not think Valji is right in his view of the English of the History of Satyagraha. We want to improve Gujarati only. Since the English version has been taken up by Madras, we may not interfere with it. Ganesan is a straightforward man. Money is not his God. His is a big venture. Let us encourage him and promote the Gujarati work ourselves. Do let me know if there is any flaw in this.

We should be prepared to give on occasion more pages in *Young India*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 7753

[1] The reference to Ganesan suggests that this letter was written on the same day as the one addressed to V. G. Desai, the following item.

273. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

Sravana Sud 11 [*August 11, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I have not been able to follow clearly what Ganesan has to say and your question. But, in a general way, I would advise you to leave the matter to Ganesan's discretion.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

The replies to other matters have been given yesterday.

V. G. DESAI

STERLING CASTLE

SIMLA

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: C.W. 6026. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

274. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Sravana Sud 11 [*August 11, 1924*][2]

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. Mr. Aiyar's letter had no effect on me, for my way of saving the Hindu religion is quite different. I do not believe that starting a journal will do any good. In the Punjab we have not given any chance to the Muslims. Mr. Das could not possibly do anything else. Having himself framed the pact, how could he break it at the crucial time? Nobody is stopping me from going to Delhi. In any case, I hope to go there in September.

Do keep writing to me about everything and send me any literature that may be worth reading.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[1] The addressee was at Simla during 1924.

[2] The reference to Gandhiji's visit to Delhi in September suggests that the letter was written in 1924. Gandhiji went to Delhi in August and again in September 1924. In that year *Sravana Sud 11* fell on August 11.

[PS.]

I return Aiyar's letter herewith. I have received Rs. 10,000/- today. I wrote a letter to you yesterday to your Hardwar address.

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6025. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

275. TELEGRAM TO SAROJINI NAIDU[1]

[On or after *August 12, 1924*]

SAROJINI NAIDU
TAJ
BOMBAY

UNNECESSARY ATTEND MEETING. IDEA IS NON CO-OPERATORS SHOULD ASSIST GOVERNMENT AGENCY FOR RELIEF.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10107

276. TELEGRAM TO K. MADHAVAN NAIR[2]

[On or after *August 12, 1924*]

MADHAVAN NAIR
VAKIL
CALICUT

RAISING FUNDS CLOTHES. INCESSANTLY THINKING OF FOODLESS CLOTHLESS HOMELESS COUNTRYMEN. .

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10108

[1] This was in reply to Sarojini Naidu's telegram of August I 1, received by Gandhiji on August 12, 1924, which read: "Sherif proposes inviting Governor preside. Requesting flood meeting. Wire if Non-co-operators can join."

[2] This was in reply to Madhavan Nair's telegram of August 12, 1924, which read: "Toured through flooded area. Opened relief centres with aid of Marwari relief fund in greatly distressed area. Your article may dishearten contributors. Any contribution is welcome either large or small if Congress without funds. Kindly appeal general public people. Starting one month's food relief essential. Housing grant may be left to Government. A lac of rupees will save a lac of people."

277. TELEGRAM TO BOMBAY MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

[On or after *August 12, 1924*][1]

PRESIDENT
MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
BOMBAY

YOUR WIRE. WILL GLADLY REACH BOMBAY 29TH.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8811

278. LETTER TO NAGINDAS AMULAKHRAI[2]

SABARMATI,
August 13, 1924

I have gone through your first book[3] and was impressed by the hard work you have put into it. The arrangement is on the whole quite good. I have noticed nothing in it which could be considered inconsistent with the author's object. I see no improperity in its being translated.

[From Gujarati]
Gujarati, 2-11-1924

279. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[*August 13, 1924*][4]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

If I possibly can I want to resume the habit of writing in ink.

I have been planning to write to you for the last three days.

[1] This was in reply to a telegram from the President, Bombay Municipal Corporation, dated August 11, 1924, received by Gandhiji on August 12, which read: "Sir Cowasjee Jehangir Hall not available on thirtieth for presentation of Corporation's address to you. Do kindly make it convenient to accept the address on Friday twenty ninth afternoon."

[2] The letter was written to the addressee in connection with the series entitled '*Gandhi Shikshan*' edited and published by him in 1923.

[3] Entitled *Satyagraha*, the series ran into thirteen books.

[4] From *Bapuni Prasadi*

Today you have stolen a march over me. Your letter has arrived. You have made a good collection. It will be of great help to Raja[1]. It was also necessary.

I have sent a telegram to Debji saying that it is not necessary to attend the Sheriff's meeting. Whatever the composition of the committee we have only to help.

I am fully convinced that it is a mistake and a terrible one, to expect me to pronounce on every matter. My reply to any question would be determined by the way the question is put. I can even make a mistake in replying that way. Everyone should draw corollaries from the basic postulates.

You have not read what Nagindas has written.[2] I have. I bow my head to his zeal. He has written to me in great pain. I read the first book. I have liked the arrangement. There is no violence done to the meaning. He has taken a lot of trouble.

Finally, the main point which impelled me to write the letter. A boy has to be found for Radha[3]. Let me know if there is any young man you know in the Modh or some other Bania community. He should be a simple man. He should not be greedy. He should be healthy and should have respect for khadi. He should be of good character. I am not worried if he has no money.

Collect the clothes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] C. Rajagopalachari was doing relief work for the flood victims in Malabar.

[2] *Vide* "The Acid Test", 19-6-1924.

[3] Daughter of Maganlal Gandhi

280. LETTER TO EDITOR, "TEJ"

Sravana Sud 13 [*August 13, 1924*]

BHAI GUPTA,

I daily bow, times without number, to that Krishna alone who is the author of the *Gita,* who is the master of 16,000 senses, who is an *akhand brahmachari*[1], who is free from passion and who is the Lord of our hearts, and to none else.

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

281. LETTER TO INDRA VIDYAVACHASPATI

Sravana Sud 13 [*August 13, 1924*][2]

CHI. INDRA,

At the present time, on every ceremonial occasion, I offer this one prayer to God: "O God, change the hearts of Hindus and Muslims alike, cleanse them of poison; fill them with love. Let them all realize that they should spin for the sake of their poor countrymen. Cleanse the hearts of the Hindus of all impurity and remove untouchability."What else can I send? I am sure your efforts will be crowned with success.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

PROF. INDRA
"ARJUN" OFFICE
DELHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4860. Courtesy: Chandragupta Vidyalankar

282. PERTINENT QUESTIONS

A correspondent asks:

Are you in favour of the introduction of *compulsory* primary education system in India? Is it unjust or unnecessary to make this education *compulsory?* If we get swarajya, in the present condition of our country, will you

[1] One whose celibacy is inviolate
[2] The postmark bears this date.

make primary education *compulsory* throughout the whole of India?

I fear I must answer the main question in the negative. I am not quite sure that I would not oppose compulsory education at all times. All compulsion is hateful to me. I would no more have the nation become educated by compulsion than I would have it become sober by such questionable means. But just as I would discourage drink by refusing to open drink shops and closing existing ones, so would I discourage illiteracy by removing obstacles in the path and opening free schools and making them responsive to the people's needs. But, at the present moment, we have not even tried on any large scale the experiment of free education. We have offered the parents no inducements. We have not even sufficiently or at all advertised the value of literacy. We have not the proper schoolmasters for the training. In my opinion therefore, it is altogether too early to think of compulsion. I am not even sure that the experiment in compulsory education. has been uniformly successful wherever it has been tried. If the majority wants education, compulsion is wholly unnecessary. If it does not, compulsion would be most harmful. Only a despotic Government passes laws in the teeth of the opposition of a majority. Has the Government afforded full facilities for education to the children of the majority? We have been compulsion-ridden for the past hundred years or more. The State rules our life in its manifold details without our previous sanction. It is time to use the nation to voluntary methods even though, for the time being, there may be no response to prayers, petitions and advice addressed to the nation. It has had little response to its prayers. Nothing is more detrimental to the true growth of society than for it to be habituated to the belief that no reform can be achieved by voluntary effort. A people so trained become wholly unfit for swaraj.

It follows from what I have said above that, if we got swaraj today, I should resist compulsory education at least till every effort at voluntary primary education has been honestly made and failed. Let the reader not forget that there is more illiteracy in India today than there was fifty years ago, not because the parents are less willing, but because the facilities they had before have disappeared under a system so foreign and unnatural for the country. The same thing is happening today in Burma.

The writer's other question is:

Are you in favour of primary education being *compulsory* by the

municipal and local bodies, by taking advantage of the present Compulsory Primary Education Act, specially when it is possible to do so by the hearty support of members of all shades of opinion?

This question has reference to Non-co-operators. I am of opinion that it is not inconsistent with the Congress resolution to take advantage of the Act if the councillors wish to do so. But for the reasons mentioned, I should hesitate straightway to adopt compulsion. Before giving a decided opinion on merits and apart from the fundamental objection to compulsion, I should like to know (l) whether attempt has been made to make primary education free and with what result; (2) whether every parent has been canvassed and his objection noted and met wherever it was reasonable. It is slovenly and impatient to rush to compulsion without trying all available mild means. It is not reasonable to assume that the majority of parents are so foolish or heartless as to neglect the education of their children even when it is brought to their doors free of charge.

Young India, 14-8-1924

283. WANTED EXCITEMENT

I present the readers with extracts from a letter received from a lawyer who has made considerable sacrifice in the national cause. When he non-co-operated, he sold out his books. He is now despondent. He ends his letter by saying, 'I have written this letter only to relieve my surcharged mind. If it is ignored, I shall not feel disappointed.' I cannot ignore any genuine article. I have therefore adopted the middle course. I have boiled down the letter by expunging sorrowful and admonitory portions. Here then are the extracts that call for comment:

> The charkha, Hindu-Muslim unity and removal of untouchability have not appealed to the masses for the last two years. There is no sign of coming change.
>
> The No-changers should form their programme in conformity with human nature. They should take into consideration that there must be excitement to call forth mass enthusiasm. Satyagraha is the best form of excitement But it should be a direct and open fight with the Government. Intercommunal satyagraha is harmful. It only gives advantage to the Government to fight in the darkness and behind the trenches at safe distance It

leaves plenty of way for intrigues and mischievous propaganda. To enter into open fight with the Government strong issues should be selected on which wider public sympathy can be enlisted. Any of the following issues will fulfil these conditions, one of which may be selected.

1. Boycott of courts and establishment of arbitration in villages, towns and cities with offices for registration of documents.

2. Boycott of currency by replacing it with hundis.

3. Suppression of drinks and intoxicating drugs.

I do not believe that we have worked enough among the masses to entitle us to know that the three things do not appeal to them. What experience we have of the masses, i.e., the villages, goes to show that the charkha has appealed to them. They simply need organising But we who claim to be their leaders refuse to go to the villages and live in their midst and deliver the life-sustaining message of the charkha. The writer simply does not know the masses. Or he should know that the Hindu-Mussulman masses do not quarrel. Delhi is not a village. And there, too, it would be a libel to say that the poor people quarrelled. We incited them to the fratricidal fight. The untouchability is undoubtedly a difficult point among the masses. It does, however, appeal to them, only it appeals in a way we do not like. They hug the exclusiveness which they have inherited for ages. But if we cannot, by our purity, unselfishness and patience, cure them of the disease, we must perish as a nation. The sooner every political reformer realizes the fact the better it is for him and the country. We must refuse to give up the struggle or postpone it till after swaraj. Postponement of it means postponement of swaraj. fit is like wanting to live without lungs. Those who believe that Hindu-Muslim tension and untouchability can be removed after swaraj are living in the dreamland. They are too fatigued to grasp the significance of their proposition. The three things must be an integral part of any programme of swaraj. But though the task is difficult, it is not impossible. I claim therefore that this threefold programme of construction is in strict conformity with human nature as it exists in India. It is in keeping with the daily requirements of a people that is bent on making progress.

But the friend says, there must be ‘excitement’. I do not know what the word means. For workers there is enough excitement in the three things. Go to any village, put up a wheel and call the villagers to embrace their untouchable brethren. The children will dance round the forgotten wheel and the villagers will be inclined to pelt you out of

their midst for asking them to embrace the untouchables unless you ask them in a reasonable and sweet way. This is 'excitement' that giveth life. But there is another variety of it which 'kills'. It is momentary excitement that blinds people and makes them create a splash for a moment. That kind of excitement cannot bring swaraj. I can conceive its use for a fighting people prepared to wrest power from other hands. The problem in India is not quite so simple. We are not prepared and we are not fighters with arms. The Englishmen do not rule merely by force. They have seductive ways also. They can carefully conceal their fist in soft-looking gloves. The moment we show intelligent organization, honest but unbendable purpose and perfect and disciplined cohesion, they will hand over the whole administration to us without a blow and serve India on our terms, as we today unwittingly or unwillingly slave for them on their terms.

Satyagraha is not excitement of the second variety. It dies in such atmosphere. It needs the development of calm courage that knows no defeat and despises revenge. Even intercommunal satyagraha (if it is satyagraha) strengthens the nation for fighting the Government. The unseemly fight between No-changers and Pro-changers is not satyagraha in any sense of the term. The disgraceful events of Delhi are clearly not satyagraha. The only instances of inter communal satyagraha are the Vaikom and Tarkes-hwar. I know something of Vaikom because I am supposed to be directing it. It must succeed if the satyagrahis are patient, absolutely truthful, absolutely non-violent, yes, in thought, word and deed, and if they are gentle towards their opponents and remain fixed to their minimum. If they fulfil the conditions, the orthodox Hindus will bless them and they will strengthen and not weaken the national cause. Of Tarkeshwar I know next to nothing. But the result can only be good if it is true satyagraha.

The correspondent's method of bringing about a state of 'excitement' is in keeping with his misunderstanding of satyagraha. He does not realize that arbitration courts and registration of documents, if they have the element of compulsion in them, must defeat the very end the writer has in view. And if they are devoid of compulsion, they will offer less excitement than the wheel if only because no one will care to register documents in private courts. Boycott of currency without the stick behind will be still less exciting. I would give much to be able to revive liquor shops picketing if a calm atmosphere can

be established and 'peaceful' picketing can be found. Experience shows that our picketing in 192I was not all peaceful.

True solution is to he found from within. It is not the masses but we that have lost faith. For the correspondent, who is in charge of a Congress committee, says that resignations arc pouring in upon him. Why? Because those who are resigning have no faith in the programme. Whereas hitherto they were playing, now they are taking themselves and the nation seriously. They are responding to truth. I regard these resignations a distinct gain to the cause. If all play the game and either carry out the resolutions or resign, we should know where we are. To the secretary in charge I would suggest that he should invite the electors, if there are any at all on his register, to elect their representatives. If the members were practically self-appointed, as I fear is the case in many places, the secretary may safely remain the sole true representative of the Congress, if he has faith in himself and the programme. He is then free to devote his whole time and attention to spinning. I promise that he will not find himself the only one so devoted to spinning. There is no cause for despondency for a man who has faith and resolution.

Young India, 14-8-1924

284. THE MORAL OF IT

I have seen the letter addressed to the A.I.K.B. by the Punjab local secretary in which he speaks in glowing terms of Mr. Bharucha's efforts during his all-too-brief stay there. He has been able to infuse vigour into the khadi movement and to assist in disposing of the surplus khadi by hawking. Over six thousand rupees worth was sold in Amritsar and Lahore. The secretary says that this is the slack season in the Punjab. Could Mr. Bharucha go again in September, when all who have gone out will have returned, there will be much more work done. I congratulate Mr. Bharucha on his success and hope that he will be able to revisit the Punjab. The moral, however, of the visit is that every province, if it wills, can dispose of its own khadi. The people are willing if the workers are ready.

Young India, 14-8-1924

285. NOTES

MR. KELKAR'S CONTEMPT

I do not think Mr. Kelkar or tie *Kesari* will lose by the punishment awarded by the learned judges of the Bombay High Court. Both will survive the fine. Mr. Kelkar has earned the congratulations of journalists and public men on the brave stand he took up. The judgment has only enhanced the status of the *Kesari,* great as it already is. But why this extreme sensitiveness on the part of the judges? They will surely not lose by fearless public criticism. It may not be always justified or defensible. I have not seen the articles which constituted the contempt. But what is the public gain from the punishment? Will Mr. Kelkar or the public think more kindly of the judges? If the articles merely impute bias to the judges, they have but echoed public opinion. The bias need not be conscious. Bat popular belief is that it is there in cases between Europeans and Indians. My own experience, wide in South Africa and comparatively limited here, confirms the popular belief. The analysis which I published in these columns of the judgments in 1919 of the special tribunals in the Punjab undoubtedly established the charge of bias against the judges of these tribunals in the Punjab.[1] Justice as between Europeans and Indians is a rare commodity. I would like to think otherwise. But it has not been possible. I am prepared to admit that, under similar circumstances, anybody else would have done likewise. That is another way of saying that human nature is the same in all climes. And judges are but human beings having the same frailties and are guided by the same feelings as the average man. I would, therefore, respectfully point out to the judges that, if they resent public criticism in the manner they appear to have done in the *Kesari* case, they shut themselves against healthy influence. Surely it must serve as a tonic for judges when a journalist of Mr. Kelkar's status and experience finds it necessary to criticize a judgment. European judges, if they will struggle against natural bias and one sided influences that operate upon them, should, in my humble opinion, encourage and welcome the criticism of Indian journalists. The pity of it is that they rarely, if at all, read such criticism except when it comes up before them for punishment. The

[1] *Vide* "Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.

judgment against Mr. Kelkar may make editors conceal their opinion or gild it. It will then seek a subterranean passage. We have already more than our ordinary share of it. I cannot help saying that the punishment awarded against Mr. Kelkar is calculated to increase the falsity of the life that surrounds us and still further to embitter the relations between Europeans and Indians. It was so unnecessary.

'KING CAN DO NO WRONG'

Mr. Kelkar, if he criticizes a judge, must pay Rs. 5,000, the *Chronicle* must pay Rs. 15,000 for criticizing a Collector. But Lord Lytton, because he is the King's representative in Bengal, may libel the womanhood of India with impunity and may probably receive applause from his admirers for his 'frank' talk. His Excellency is reported to have said in a serious speech that 'mere hatred of authority can drive Indian men to induce Indian women to invent offences against their own honour merely to bring discredit upon Indian policemen.' If it was not in a report of his speech, but if it was merely a reporter's summary, I would have refused to believe that a responsible Englishman could be capable of such a 'blazing indiscretion'. Lord Lytton evidently does not know or does not care to know how deeply Indian sentiment can be stirred by such charges against Indian women. Has Lord Lytton incontestable proof for the assertion he has made? If it is merely the testimony of the police he has relied upon, he has relied upon, a broken reed. His advisers should have warned him against putting faith in any such interested testimony. But why has he been able to utter such calumny with impunity? If public opinion in Bengal, and for that matter in India, was effective, he would not have dared to utter such a charge even if it could be established in an isolated case? But there is no public opinion in the country that can assert itself today. Let not even the mightiest in the land, however, consider that they can flout Indian sentiment for ever. Hindu-Muslim feud and the differences between Pro-changers and and No-changers are temporary aberrations in the national movement. But the insults of Englishmen in high places sink deep in the hearts of all Indians. It is so humiliating to contemplate a closing up of all ranks among us on the strength of indiscreet acts of irresponsible representatives of the King.

A BUSINESS-LIKE REPORT

The Tamil Nadu Khadi Board has sent to the A.I.K.B. an

excellent resume of its work. If I had space at my command, I should give the whole report. As it is, I must be content with giving a summary. It deals with production and sales in the centres under its control. The secretary expects soon to be able to manufacture Rs. 50,000 worth of khadi per month. The Tirpur depot now produces between 15 to 20 thousand rupees worth per month. Local sales keep pace with the production. And thus sales and production react upon each other. They are steadily improving the quality of khadi and are now trying to introduce coloured khadi saris. For production they begin, as is only proper, with storing cotton. They have purchased Rs. 50,000 worth of cotton which is all insured. Training depots too have been established where young workers are trained to gill, card and spin. The disbursements appear to me to be modest and they have full check over their departments. At their model training school at Kovur, they have over a dozen youths at present under training. These are under severe discipline. They rise early in the morning at 4-30 and attend to all the labour themselves. They become used to all the variety of carding-bows and wheels. An interesting table is attached to the report giving the quantity of cotton ginned, carded and spun by every scholar under training. The special feature of their propaganda consists in organizing *bhajan* parties resulting in much interest being taken in their work. At Kovur about 50 homes possess cloths of yarn of their own spinning. Let the reader imagine what concentration, method, business habits, honesty, organizing ability and co-operation must be required for such work. Let him next imagine one such district fully organized for khadi and self-contained. It is then easy for him to know that for that district at least there is swaraj. Let him be certain that, steady as the progress is, the district will not be fully equipped for khadi unless the curse of untouchability is removed from it. For voluntary production and distribution, there must be voluntary co-operation. That call only come when the least of the inhabitants feels a pride in being a free citizen of that little common-wealth.

PROMPT ACTION

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has sent the following to the U.P. Government regarding the proscription of Prof. Ramdas Gaur's Hindi readers:

> The attention of the United Provinces Provincial Congress Committee has been drawn to the notice issued by the U.P. Government declaring, under

Section 99 A of Act V of 1898, all copies of Prof. Ram Das Gaur's Hindi readers Nos. III, IV, V and VI as well as extracts therefrom, 'forfeited to His Majesty'. These readers have been in used forsome years past in a large number of schools. Their principal contents are extracts from classical Hindi writers and it is difficult to understand what passages or extracts in the books are supposed to offend against section 124A of the Indian Penal Code. I shall be obliged if you will kindly point out the particular passages which in the opinion of Government are objectionable and have led to the proscription of the books. My committee will carefully consider these passages and, if they are satisfied of their impropriety, will certainly advise Prof. Gaur to remove them from his books. I shall be glad if you will kindly send me an early answer as the books are being used in many schools connected with my committee.

The Pandit has sent a similar letter to the U.P. Minister of Education. The public will watch the developments with curiosity. Meanwhile, the publishers are said to have filed legal proceedings for setting aside the order. The books have been sold in thousands. The Government will, therefore, be hard put to it to confiscate all the books unless the boys and girls voluntarily destroy theme As yet there is no movement in that direction. On the contrary, the books are still in use as before. But, of course, the Government may have many cards up its sleeve and may be able in its own time to confound those who are harbouring these tainted books. The public will be glad to learn that the learned author has kept no copyright in the books.

A WELCOME CORRECTION

The convenor of U.P. Khadi Board wires to say 'figures published last week for U.P.. do not show total number registered to spin. Registers are being sent in as we receive lists from subordinate committees.' I welcome the correction and look forward to a list that will eclipse Bengal. For next to Bengal, U.P. is the most thickly populated of our provinces.

ORTHODOX PROTEST

The President of Savarna Mahajan Sabha at Vaikom sends me letter enclosing resolutions protesting against my countenancing satyagraha at Vaikom and urging me to stop it. The writer tells me that I have been misled by my informants. I have endeavoured to study both the sides impartially and I have come to the conclusion that the satyagrahis have, on the whole, been scrupulously correct in their conduct and that they have been sustaining the struggle under

trying Circumstances. I am sorry to say that I am, therefore, unable to satisfy the orthodox friends and advise withdrawal of satyagraha.

A GOD-SEND

Even the Roods, though they have been merciless to Malabar in general, seem to have favoured the suppressed countrymen. For I read the following in a letter to Mr. Rajagopalachari from the Satyagraha Camp at Vaikom:

> The question of temple-entry and social equality has been solved m more than a dozen places by the floods by the collecting of all people of all castes and creeds in the temples and houses which are otherwise forbidden. Even interdining between Nambudri and Pulaya has been effected by the fury of the gods. The floods in the State have completely isolated Vaikom.

Common misery is the most adhesive cement yet known to the world. It is so cruel that it is no respecter of persons. It puts the prince and the peasant in the same watery grave.

QUIET WORK

Again, how is it possible to advise stoppage of a movement which shows so much grit as is described in the following from the same letter?

> In spite of the bad weather conditions, no effort is spared in the charkha work in the Ashram. Almost all the volunteers know to spin well and the charkhas are being sent to the barricades except during heavy showers. Half the number have learnt to card and I am making it compulsory that the spinners must use their own carded cotton. Tape-making is also going on. Ere long we will set up a loom.

I must respectfully refuse to believe that cultured young men doing such honest work in the faith that it purifies them and helps them in their struggle against passion and prejudice can possibly deceive the public or me. They have no interest in so doing. For their faith is in their work.

IT MELTS STONES

But the president of the meeting in his letter says, “You seem to think that satyagraha, when offered to a brother will gradually melt away the opposition of the latter and win him over to the side of the satyagrahi. This is not our experience here.” I do not wonder that the hearts of the orthodox have not yet been touched by the sufferings of the satyagrahis. They have not suffered long enough yet nor intensely

enough. Even suffering cannot be manufactured. They must take whatever God may have in store for them. If He wants them to have to linger away in suffering, they must Submit to it cheerfully. They dare not shirk the severest trial nor may they dare stage-play suffering. That was one of my reasons against the Sikh friends resis-ting arrests and inviting fire. My uniform experience is that true suffering melts the stoniest hearts. With my own eldest brother, it took fully thirteen years. I do not reproduce all the letters I received from English friends. But some of them are humble recognitions of the evil done (true enough in ignorance) by the English rulers. What are these recognitions if they are not in conscious response to suffering? Nothing can shake me from the conviction that given a good cause, suffering for its sake advances it as nothing else has ever done. To the orthodox Hindus I need net point out the sovereign efficacy of tapasya. And satyagraha is nothing but *tapasya* for Truth.

A DISTURBING ITEM

There is however in the president's letter a disturbing item. I must give it in his own words as follows:

> I bring to your notice an incident that took place at Chenganur under the auspices of the adherents of the Congress party on 6th July, 1924. This was a *savarna* meeting announced to be held at the place. A representative of our committee was also invited to attend. By the machinations of a mischie-vous clique, the meeting was subjected to a set of resolutions which were quite contrary to the propositions adopted for presentation at the meeting. Our representative and several other *savarna* members immediately left the hall and called up another meeting composed of very respectable caste Hindus at the residence of the Vanjipozhey chief, the premier landlord of Chenganur. Leave this alone, however gruesome and treacherous the tactics be. What we painfully deplore is that an organized attempt was made to vilify and hoot him and to lay hands on him if possible. He had to come away from the place without giving scent of his departure. This incident I refer to you just to bring to your notice the manner in which Congress propagandism is pursued in Travancore now.

I ask conductors of the campaign to send me an explanation which I shall gladly print. They will not, I trust, hesitate to admit the error if any has been committed.

REPORTERS BEWARE !

The A.P. reporter in Ahmedabad lost me (temporarily I hope)

all the reputation for humanity that I had built up through painful toil. For he reported me as saying that the only message I could send to afflicted Malabar was that those who were rendered naked and hungry and homeless should spin of Mr. Painter may receive Rs. I5,000 for damage to his reputation, I think I should receive at least Rs. 1,50,000 for damage done to mine. And if I could receive that sum, I should retrieve somewhat my lost reputation and make over the sum without deduction to the Malabar sufferers. But unlike Mr. Painter, I acquit both the reporter and the agency from all blame. The local reporter tells me he was not present at the meeting. The people who attended the meeting heard little, but the listeners thought I had said something about spinning. What would be more natural for me than that I should ask the Malabar suffers to Spill for food, clothing and lodging? Was not the great Acharya Ray doing the same thing? The poor reporter forgot that Dr. Ray was doing it after the people had settled down. However, the awful slip is a lesson for the reporters and the public. The reporters hold the reputation of public men in the hollow of their hands. It is not a light thing to misreport public men's speeches and acts. The public have to be equally careful about believing every report. a., gospel truth. So far as I am concerned, I must continue to warn the public and all concerned against believing what may be reported of me unless it . is certified by me as correct. I am in no hurry to have every word oft mine reported The reporters would, therefore, dome a favour, if they would not report me at all when they cannot get their notes confirmed by me.

I am obliged to say all this because I have many painful memories of misreporting. In I896 I published in India a pamphlet covering 30 pages or more on British Indians in South Africa[1]. A five-line summary was cabled by Reuter to Natal[2]. It was wholly contrary to the gist of my pamphlet. This very incorrect report inflamed the Natal colonists. I was nearly lynched to death by an infuriated crowd on my return to Natal. Lawyer friends pressed me to bring a suit for damages. But I was a non-resister even then. I refused to sue.[3] I lost nothing by not suing. When the colonist perceived that I was not a 'bad sort'. and that they had cruelly misjudged me, they

[1] *Vide* "The credentials", 14-8-1896 to "Notes on the Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa", 22-09-1896

[2] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of States for the Colonies", 15-03-1897

[3] *ibid*.

regretted the error. I therefore, in the end lost nothing by self-restraint. But I have no desire to court another such experience even though it may bring me added glory. I want to put in more work, if God so wills it. I must, therefore, ask the reporters to spare me yet a while.

HELP TO MALABAR

I have not written the foregoing lines merely be put reporters and the public on their guard. Under the best of circumstances suchmistakes will occur. I am satisfied that there was no wilful neglect either in Ahmedabad or at the headquarters. But I wish to utilize the occasion for getting more money for the sufferers. I invite all those who were indignant over my supposed callousness to send me as much as they can towards helping the sufferers. I have invited the readers of Navajivan not merely to give me out of their savings, but even out of their necessaries, to share their clothes and food With the sufferers. The response has been quick and generous. The students of the Mahavidyalaya have, after the style of Shraddhhanandji's Pupils of the Gurukul during the South African campaign, been doing manual work at labourers' wages on the very premises that are being built for them. The possibilities of such effort are immense. Boys and girls even under 12 have given up milk for a number of days, the savings to be devoted to the relief fund. This means in some cases 3 annas per day. Adults are denying themselves one meal per day.

Boys and girls are giving up their clothes, retaining for themselves the veriest minimum. A girl has given up her silver anklets. A boy has given up his valued gold ear-rings. 4 sister has sent in her four heavy gold bangles, another her heavy gold necklace. These are not exhaustive but typical instances. A little girl brought out all the coppers she had stolen. The National College students and others have given me heaps of yarn they have already spun. Others propose to spin for a certain period daily on behalf of the sufferers.

These to me are more precious than the donations in the next column, generous as they are in several cases.

May these offerings, but especially the little offerings and self denials of the little ones, give comfort to the homeless, hungry and naked men, women and children of the afflicted areas. I invite the readers of *Young India* who have not paid elsewhere to the fund to send their quota. Telegrams before me tell me that clothing will be just as welcome as money. The poorest must identify themselves with their countrymen in Malabar by some act of self-denial.

CLOTHING

With reference to clothing being received in abundance, I wish to inform readers that no distinction is being made as to handspun or other clothing. Those who haste still got mill or foreign clothes may send these. Inquiry has been made in Bombay as to where clothing should be delivered. I suggest arrangements being made with the Provincial Congress Committee. Pending such arrangements, delivery may be made at the *Navajivan* depot in the Princess Street, Bombay. Donors will however please note the following instructions:

1. Dirty clothes should be washed and folded.

2. Torn clothes should be mended and folded.

3. All clothing should be well packed and tied in parcels with list of clothing and name of donor attached.

These will not be acknowledged separately in these columns. But donors will do well not to deliver anything without a receipt being obtained at the office of delivery. I would warn donors from paying or giving any article to anyone without taking a full receipt and knowing the collectors.

Whilst it flatters my pride to receive monies and jewellery and clothing at the *Navajivan* and *Young India* offices, I would ask the readers not to worry where they make their donations. They may pay wherever they like. It is enough 50 long as they pay. In a calamity of such magnitude as that through which the South is passings there should be no distinction between co-operators and non-co-operators. As for the funds being sent to me, I am conferring with Mr. Vallabhbhai as to the best method of distribution. I am in correspondence with Mr. Rajagopalachari regarding the disposal, but if those who have been sending me wires will kindly send their suggestions I shall be grateful for them.

Young India, 14-8-1924

286. TELEGRAM TO MAHOMED ALI

[SABARMATI,
August 15, 1924][1]

PROPOSE MEET SHAUKATALI TONIGHT AND START TOMORROW MORNING METRE GAUGE. MACHINERY NOT YET DISPATCHED. ASKING SWAMI SEND LIST. HOPE BIAMMA ALL RIGHT.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10115

287. TELEGRAM TO C. F. ANDREWS[2]

[*August 15, 1924*][3]

CHARLIE ANDREWS
DWARKANATH TAGORE LANE
CALCUTTA

WELCOME. HOPE YOU ARE STRONG. LOVE FROM ALL. GOING DELHI TOMORROW.

MOHAN

From a photostat: S.N. 10116

[1] This was in reply to a telegram from Mahomed Ali received on August 15, 1924, which read: "Please start immediately if possible catching fifteen morning mail. Failing that broad gauge mail via Baroda. Reconciliation probably if you come. Wire departure."

[2] This was in reply to a telegram from C. F. Andrews dated August 14, 1924, which read: "Arrived safely. My dearest love. Sending articles."

[3] Gandhiji left for Delhi on August 16, 1924. This telegram was sent a day before.

288. TELEGRAM TO HAKIM AJMAL KHAN[1]

[AHMEDABAD,
August 15, 1924]

LEAVING FOR DELHI TOMORROW MORNING. HEALTH TOLERABLE. HOPE YOU AND DAUGHTER WELL. ARE YOU COMING DELHI.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10114

289. LETTER TO DR. SAIFUDDIN KITCHLEW

SABARMATI,
August 15, 1924

DEAR DR. KITCHLEW,

An unknown correspondent has sent me a cutting from Arjun. I had it translated in Urdu. Will you please go through it and let me know what truth, if any, there is in it?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

290. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

SABARMATI,
August 15, 1924

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I thank you for your letter.

I am sharing with you my whole soul.

The more I think of it the more my soul rises against a battle for power at Belgaum. But I do not want to be mixed up with the Councils programme. This can only happen by Swarajists' manning the Congress or their not acting upon the Congress. I am quite willing to follow whichever course commend itself to you and our friends. With

[1] This was in reply to a telegram from Hakim Ajmal Khan dated August 14, 1924, and received on the 15th, which read: "Wire health and when do you go Delhi."

me in the Congress, the Councils, etc., should remain out of it. Then l can assist you. Or with them In the Congress, I must be practically out of it. I would then gladly occupy the place I did from 1915 to 1918. My purpose is not to weaken the power of the Swarajists, certainly not to embarrass them. Show me the way and I shall try my best to suit you. If there is anything not quite clear in this, please ask.

I am off to Delhi tomorrow in reply to Mahomed Ali's wire.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai; also S.N. 10117

291. LETTER TO RAJA OF KANIKA

SABARMATI
August 15, 1924

DEAR RAJA SAHEB,

I must apologize for not having acknowledged your two letters earlier. I wanted to study the papers on my file before replying. I am so pressed for time[1] that I have not yet been able to study them. I hope to do so soon and write to you further. Thanking you for promise of prompt attention,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

RAJA OF KANIKA
ORISSA

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

292. LETTER TO SONJA SCHLESIN

SABARMATI ,
August 15, l 924

MY DEAR MISS SCHLESIN,

Though late in the day, your letter was most welcome. If you wanted to make it a model of neatness, you have failed badly. The same slovenliness, the same smudging. I can almost see your inky

[1] The source has: "I am so pressed for work".

fingers in your letter. Here is the certificate[1] you want. You will be entitled to accuse me of untruthfulness in that I have not certified to your slovenliness. Let me hope the new 'master' will fare better. I must refuse to plead guilty to all the charges you have noted against me. Why should I care about giving you a 'business certificate'? But how are the mighty fallen ! Regarding the £24, I thought the draft of 150 included the amount. However, I am writing to Parsee Rustomji to write off the whole of the balance, whatever it might be, of the £150.

My health is fair. Now that you have commenced to write, will you continue?

The rest I must leave to[2] Ramdas to deal with.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

ENCLOSURE

SATYAGRAHASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 15, 1924[3]

Miss Sonja Schlesin served me as confidential secretary in South Africa for nearly seven years and during a most important part of my public life. She was entrusted with heavy responsibilities including account-keeping, involving transactions extending to four figures at a time. She came in touch with hundreds of people belonging to different races and nationalities. During my last incarceration in South Africa, she was in sole charge of my affairs. I never once had reason to doubt her integrity or ability. Indeed, she did not work for the sake of pay but for the sake of the work itself which she loved. Her services were available to me at all times of the day. Her knowledge of shorthand and literary talents were of great assistance to me. I could not wish for a better secretary. I should like to hear that she was entrusted with a post requiring close attention, strictest honesty and ability.

The letter is from the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary and the enclosure from a photostat: S.N. 10118

[1] *Vide* the enclosure.

[2] The source has 'ideal with".

[3] The source has "1914", a slip of the pen.

293. LETTER TO K. NATARAJAN

SABARMATI,
August, 15, 1924

DEAR MR. NATRAJAN,

Before I went to jail I wrote to Mr. Petit asking if Pandit Benarasidas could be paid out of the I. C. A.[1] funds in connection with his work regarding Indians overseas. I was given to understand in the jail that Mr. Petit was prepared to recommend half the amount asked. Mr. Petit however has no recollection of this. Pandit Benarasidas gives to the Gujarat National College during College months about two hours per day for teaching Hindi. The rest of his time including the long vacations of four months he devotes wholly to the work for Indians overseas. He has made this cause his own and has become an expert in these matters. Mr. Petit admits the value of the Pandit's services, but says he should be in Bombay. Pandit Benarasidas is a quiet man of a retiring disposition. He is essentially a student. I have placed at his disposal rooms at the Ashram where he is staying. I do not think that his work will be more valuable for his stay in Bombay. Of course, he can go to Bombay whenever his presence is required. The Pandit is at present being paid Rs. 130 per month, on my recommendation, by the Gujarat Vidyapith. His co-worker, Totaramji of Fiji, who is also living at the Ashram is being paid Rs. 50 out of Ashram funds. Rs. 50 are paid for the expenses on postage, wires, etc., incurred by the Pandit. But I feel that it is not right to saddle the College or the Ashram with the expenses when the largest part of his time is given to the overseas work. I therefore feel that the Association should pay at least of the past expenses, and in future _ of the Rs. 230 disbursed monthly by the College and Ashram. Will you please let me know if my proposal appeals to you?[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 9989

[1] Imperial Citizenship Association

[2] Acknowledging this letter, Natarajan replied, *Inter alia:* "... I think it may be possible to meet your wishes as regards the payment of a proportion of the expenses incurred by you out of the Ashram Funds for the work on behalf of Pandit Benarasidas and Totaramji. . . I do not think that there will be any objection to Panditji and Totaramji submitting a monthly account either in the form of a diary or otherwise, as you may suggest ..."

294. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

Sravana Vad 1 [*August 15, 1924*][1]

CHI. JAMNADAS[2],

Take Revashankerbhai's advice. I see no harm in utilizing Doctor Saheb's money[3] for the building.

I am leaving for Delhi tomorrow. The agitation will subside by itself.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. JAMNADAS K. GANDHI

OPP. MIDDLE SCHOOL

NAVA PARA, RAJKOT

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6027. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Gandhiji left for Delhi on August 16, 1924. The letter was written a day earlier. In 1924, *Sravana Vad* I fell on August 15.

[2] Jamnadas Khushalchand Gandhi; Gandhiji's nephew; joined Phoenix in 1911; principal, National School, Rajkot, from 1929 to 1937

[3] Money donated by Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

SWARAJISTS' STATEMENT ON COUNCIL-ENTRY[1]

May 22, 1924

We are obliged to Mahatma Gandhi for the trouble he has taken to discuss with us the various points involved in the question of Council-entry and are indebted to his courtesy for the opportunity we have had of seeing an advance copy of the statement he has issued to the Press. The views expressed by him in the course of conversation and those embodied in the Press statement have all been considered by us with care and attention due to his great personality, but with all the reverence we entertain for him and his opinions, we remain unconvinced by his reasoning.

We regret we have not been able to convince Mahatma Gandhi of the soundness of the Swarajist position regarding Council-entry. We fail to understand how such entry can be regarded as inconsistent with the doctrine of the Non-co-operation resolution of the Nagpur Congress.

But if non-co-operation is more a matter of mental attitude than of the application of a living principle to the existing facts of our national life with special reference to the varying attitudes of the bureaucratic Government which rules that life, we conceive it to be our duty to sacrifice even non-co-operation to serve the real interests of the country.

In our view this principle includes self-reliance in all activities which make for the healthy growth of the nation and resistance to the bureaucracy as it impedes our pro-gress towards swaraj. We are, however, anxious to end this fruitless verbal discussion making it clear, however, that Council-entry is and can be thoroughly consistent with the principle of non-co-operation as we understand that principle to be.

We desire further to make it clear that we have not used in our programme the word 'obstruction' in the technical sense of English Parliamentary history. Obstruction in that sense is impossible in subordinate and limited Legislative bodies, such as the Legislative Assembly and Provincial Legislatures under the Reforms Act undoubtedly are. Possibly another word should have been found to convey our rneaning. We may state, however, that our position is really not so much of obstruction in the Parliamentary sense as that of resistance to the obstruction placed in our path to

[1] This was issued jointly by C. R. Das and Motilal Nehru on behalf of the Swaraj Party.

swaraj by the bureaucratic Government. It is this resistance which we meant to imply when we used the word obstruction. This was clearly indicated in the way we defined and described non-co-operation in the preamble to the constitution of the Swaraj Party. It is the removal of such bureaucratic obstruction which we feel we must emphasize. This is the policy which we have hitherto followed in the Legis-lative bodies and it is this policy which must in future be more and more effectively directed to the varying needs and problems of our national life.

Here again we are anxious to end all verbal discussion as to whether this can be aptly described as a policy of "uniform, continuous and consistent obstruction". We are content to detail our policy and then leave it to our friends to give it a more appropriate name, should they so desire.

In the light of this principle and policy, we would here state our future programme of action within and outside the Legislative bodies.

Within the Legislative bodies we must continue:

(1) To threw out budgets unless and until the system of Government is altered in recognition of our rights or as a matter of settlement between the Parliament and the people of this country. In justification of this step, all that we need point out are a few salient facts connected with the budget in the Central Government, which are more or less true of Provincial budgets also. Out of a total of 131 crores (excluding Railways), only 16 crores are votable. Further, out of the non-votable amount, as much as 67 crores, i.e., more than half the amount of the budget, is for military expenditure. It is thus clear that the people of this country have a right to vote only on less than one eighth of the total amount of the budget, and even the exercise of this limited right is subject to the power of restoration *in* the Governor-General.[1] It is, therefore, clear that the people have neither any voice in the framing of the budget nor any control over those who frame it. They have no power either over the raising of the revenue or its expenditure. On what principle then, may we ask, is it our duty to pass such a budget and take the responsibility of being a party to it? We have no doubt the support of many self respecting men in the country in holding, as we do, that it is, our clear duty to throw out such budget in all Legislative bodies, unless and until this vicious system is changed.

(2) To throw out all proposals for legislative enactments by which the burearcracy proposes to consolidate its power. It is conceivable that some good may incidentally result from a few of such measures but we are clearly of opinion that in the larger interests of the country it is better to temporarily sacrifice such little benefit rather than add an iota to the powers of the bureaucracy which already irresistible.

[1] Section 67-A of the Government of India Act empowered the Governor-General in-Council to restore cuts if that course was considered necessary.

(3) To introduce all resolutions, measures and bills which are necessary for the healthy growth of our national life and the consequent displacement of the bureaucracy. We heartily accept the suggestion made by Mahatma Gandhi in his statement and we think that the resolution mentioned by him in support of the cons-tructive programme of the Congress should certainly be accepted by the Swaraj Party. The principle of self-reliance and resistance to the bureaucratic obstructions upon which we have hitherto acted, calls for their adoption, and if the constructive work of the Congress comes within the principle of non-co-operation, no less do these resolutions although they represent constructive activity within the Legislative bodies

(4) To follow a definite effective policy based on the same principle to prevent the drain of public wealth from India by checking all activities leading to exploitation.

To make this policy effective we should take and occupy every place which is open to the members of the Central and Provincial Legislatures by election. In our opinion we should not only fill elective posts, but serve on every committee when it is possible to invite the attention of the members of our party to this important question and we call upon them to decide this matter as soon as possible.

Our policy outside the Legislative bodies should be as follows:

In the first place, we should give our whole-hearted support to the cinstructive programme of Mahatma Gandhi and work that programme unitedly through the Congress organizations. We are decidedly of opinion that our Council work must necessarily lose much of its strength without the backing of the outside constructive work; for it is not inside but outside The legislatures that we must look her the sanction without which the effective carding out of our Council policy is impossible. Indeed in the matter of constructive work the mutual support of both inside and outside activity must, in our opinion, give strength to the very sanction upon which we rely. In this connections we un-hestiatingly accept the suggestion of Mahatma Gandhi regarding civil disobedience. We can assure him that the moment we find that it is impossible to meet the selfish obstinancy of the bureaucracy without civil disobedience, we will retire from the Legislative bodies and help him to prepare the country for such civil disobedience, if by that time the country has not already become prepared, and we will then unreservedly place ourselves under his guidance and work through the Congress organization under his banner in order that we may unitedly work out a substantial programme of civil disobedience.

In the second place, we must supplement the work of the Congress by helping labour and peasant organizations throughout the country. The problem of labour is always a difficult problem to solve in every country, but in India the difficulties are greater. On the one hand we must find out a way of organization by which we can

prevent exploitation of labour by capitalists or by landlords, but on the other hand we must be on our guard to see that those very organizations may not themselves be the source of oppression by nursing extravagant and unreasonable demands. Labour undoubtedly requires protection, but so do industrial enterprises. Our organization must protect both from exploitation and the Trade Union Congress must be so organized as to be able to serve this useful purpose. We bold that in the long run the real interests of both and the country at large are identical.

We feel happy that we have had this opportunity of putting our views before the country side by side with Mahatma Gandhi's opinion, for we feel certain that the perusal will make it obvious that, notwithstanding some differences of view, there is an abiding and fundamental unity amongst both parties of the Indian National Congress. Both parties feel the necessity of working the constructive programme whether within or outside the Legislative bodies. In this direction, we feel confident, lies the germ of a fruitful alliance between Mahatma Gandhi and the Swaraj Party. Our joint effort in the same or different directions will furnish a fitting answer to the bureaucracy unwilling to recognize the rights and liberty of the Indian people, and we emphatically assert that, in our determination to work with the same object in the same or different spheres is expressed the determination of the Indian nation to bring the struggle for swaraj to a successful issue.

The Voice of Freedom, pp. 519-23

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM BHAGWAN DAS

BANARAS,
June 5, 1924

TO THE EDITOR, YOUNG INDIA

DEAR SIR,

I have read, as many thousands of others must have read, with anxious care and deep attention, your weighty pronouncement on "Hindu-Muslim Tension: Its Cause and Cure", in Young *India* for 29-5-1924. The many fairly well-known (but not equally *well-realized)* truths which it puts plainly, frankly, freely, in admirable language, will now be brought home to millions (through translations), by the authority of your profoundly trusted sincerity, as they were not before. Yet it seems to me that a deeper diagnosis of the Cause and a more radical prescription for the Cure are needed. I, therefore, in compliance with your own footnote, submit a few questions with respect to some of your statements, in the hope of further elucidation.

(I) You say, at p. 176[1]: "My own experience but confirms the opinion that the

[1] The page numbers cited are those of *Young India*.

Mussalman as a rule is a bully, and the Hindu as a rule is a coward." Is it really always and everywhere so, as a rule? If always so, or only sometimes so, why is it so?

Without the full answer to these questions, the mere advice to the Hindus to be brave, either non-violently, or violently, will remain ineffectual.

Are the Mussalmans and the Hindus of India two different races, two different ethnic stocks? Most patently not. Ninety-nine per cent of the Mussalmans are descended from Hindu ancestors or are recent converts in their own persons.

Is the record of the Hindu soldiers, Sikhs, Gurkhas, Dogras, Rajputs, Jats, Baiswaras, Mahrattas, Ahirs, Nayars, Telingas, of even the non-combatant stretcher-bearer Kahars, worse than that of any Mussalman soldiers, or any Christian soldiers, European or any other? Undisputedly not, again.

How then are we to interpret your statement that "in the majority of quarrels, the Hindus come out second best"? If by quarrels we understand the 'religious' Hindu-Muslim riots and individual fights in India, then, and then only, your statement becomes entirely correct, is it not? Your subsequent sentence makes this perfectly plain: "I have noticed this in railway trains, on public roads, and in the quarrels which I had the privilege of settling." Now why *is* it that, when there is no difference of race or ancestry between them, when there is no inherent bravery (or bullyness, which is a very different thing) in the one or inherent cowardice in the other—why is it that the Hindu behaves as a coward in these petty quarrels and rowdinesses, and tempts and evokes the bravery or the bullyness in the Mussalman?

Is it something in take present condition of the two religions as such which makes the Hindu such a coward and the Mussalman such a "brave"? Can it be this miserable "touch-me-not" business, this awful hypocrisy of self-centred selfishness and conceited and sanctimonious self-righteousness born of the notion of hereditary superior and inferior castes—which, killing all mutual sympathy, prevents Hindu from helping Hindu in such quarrels, and therefore makes each one a coward, because of the sense of helplessness, while the Mussalman's democractic religion ensures him help and makes him "brave"

It is not only the so-called depressed classes that are untouchables; all the castes and sub-castes and sub-sub-castes of Hindus are all mutually untouchables, more or less, in this, that or the other respect! A religion which has come to this pass of mutual touch-me-not and therefore antipathy and distrust must necessarily breed cowards who must necessarily be eaten up by the "braves" whom they must necessarily bring into being by providing the temptation. Islam, also degenerate as it is today, is yet distinctly better in some respects than the degenerate Hinduism of today. If it had only less slaughter and more philosophy, it would be as good as any of the higher forms of Hinduism, and far better than most of the lower ones.

(2) At p. 183 you say, "If Hindus set their house in order, I have not a shadow

of doubt that Islam will respond in a manner worthy. ... The Hindus. . . must shed timidity or cowardice." Please tell the Hindus more plainly *how* they should set their house in order, *how* shed their cowardice. Is not the canker at the heart of Hindusim-in-practice today the *root cause* of its degeneration, this very same mutual 'touch-me-not" business? Several Banaras pundits *refused* to sign a *vyarashtha (fatwa)* sanction-ing the reconversion to Hinduism of the Malabar Hindus alleged to have been forcibly converted to Islam! They had been touched by Islam and been irretrivably lost forever!

If my neighbour has a servant whom I very much want for myself, and if my simply touching him makes him wholly unfit for further service to my neighbour, and to available to me for my service, why should I not touch him? There is every inducement on earth for me to touch him! Why are there no such conflicts between Christians and Muslims, as between Hindus and Muslims? Indeed, the Christians make converts from among Mussalmans as well as Hindus, and yet they arouse no such ire among Mussalmans as the Hindu *shuddhi* and *sangathan* affair has done. Why is it so? As you have justly pointed out, at p.180, it is the *manner* of the *shuddhi* and the *sangathan* which is the cause of the trouble—the self-display and the drumming and trumpeting. If the Hindus, and especially the Hindu priests, had only a little more sense, more honest common sense, and a little less sanc-timonious hypocrisy and suicidal cunning, they would simply declare that anybody who chose to call himself a Hindu might do so, and might inter-dine with any other Hindu whose personal habits, in respect of food, and taste and temperament and ways of living were similar, the whole trouble would cease at once. With the provoking abandonment of this *arrogance* of untouchable purity (which yet is so feeble and cowardly that, instead of purifying the less pure by its touch, itself dies under any other's mere touch) no incentive, no *provocation,* would be left to Mussalmans to *make* converts from Hinduism, willy-nilly. Hindus and Mussalmans would begin to behave as free and friendly human beings to each other. Knowing, or at least feeling, that they were all equally men, *human beings* first, and Hindus or Mussalmans afterwards,—equal *men,* equally free to put on or put off at will the *label* of Hindu or Muslim or Christian, etc., like clothes, though *bound* to be good and *honest* in their dealings with each other, as brothers, because of the common "Father in Heaven",—they could no longer think of breaking each other's heads over the most trumpery causes.

And the Hindus have no sufficient reason for not making such a declaration. Eating and drinking and marrying are supposed to be main factors in "purity"—as indeed they are, together with clean thinking. In respect of drink, Islam is "purer" than Hinduism, since, in theory, it prohibits intoxicateing liquor, which Hinduism does not, strictly, though condemning them. In respect of food, both eat flesh and

fish and fowl; only Islam eats the cow and eschews the pig, and Hinduism eats the pig and eschews the cow; while Christianity impartially eats both and drinks liquor also. In respect of marriage, both Hinduism and Islam are, theoretically, and to some extent practically, polygamous. Why then this excessive non-co-operation of "touch-me-not or I die, or at least have to bathe"?

A plain and periodically repeated pronouncement from you, dear sir, seems to be very greatly needed by the Hindus, on these matters.

(3) At p. 1.77 you say, "We sowed the seed and the *goondas* reaped the harvest." *How, in what* way and *why* did we sow the seed? *Why* do the respectables of the two communities continue to behave hypocritically? *Why* do they not try *sincerely* for peace? Inherent, pure, 'sheer cussedness', or because no sufficient endea-vour has been made to induce them to *understand each other and the common object of both?*

(4) At p. 177 you say, "Another potent cause of the tension is *the growing distrust* even among the best of us." Why is there any distrust, and why is it grow. ink? Can it possibly be due to the fact that the meaning of the words swaraj and religion is not clearly understood; that there is no agreement about the meaning of these two very important and interconnected words; that no effort has been made to secure an agreement between all the workers on this essential matter, though there is a lip-profession by all that they all want swaraj and all want God?

(5) At p. 179, you say, "We have to discover points of contact". Do you mean between individuals, as such, in respect of temperament, taste, habits, etc., for establis hing individual friendships, or between communities, for social amenities; or between political parties, for political colligation; or between religions, for really deep-seated ant lasting unions and federations?

(6) At p. 182, you speak of leaving "the pen in the hands of, say, Hakim Ajmal Khan" to settle various political matters. Why to you mention his name and no other? Is it not because you know or, at least feel, (as some others of us have felt, that he is a man *fast* and a Mussalman *afterwards;* that he is a good ant just and philanthro-pic man and (or rather because he is) not 'religion'-ridden man. Supposing he is incapacitated—which God forbid—could you suggest many other names in place of his? And is there no other, and safer and sounder, way of settling these political matters than this very risky process of entrusting the whole work to one human being, of delicate and frail health, even though he is trusted by both communities in a degree next only to yourself? Is there no way of creating a body of such men and women, and of maintaining its numbers at a reasonable figure, by constant recruit-ment—the People's Parliament, their Legislative Assembly, their Court of Arbitra-tion, their Supreme All-India Panchayat?

(7) At p. 182, you say, "Hindu-Muslim Unity mean swaraj. I see no way of achieving anything in this afflicted country without a lasting heart unity between

Hindus and Mussalmans of India." And *everybody else says it too.* But how may we bring about this unity? By simply telling the two communities: unite; unite; don't quarrel; don't quarrel; don't object, the one to cow-slaughter, the other to music? Why is it that, despite endless at monitions to this effect, they decline to unite, and continue to quarrel ant to object—indeed, worse now than before? Do you not think it would be much more effectual to proclaim the "points of contact", or rather the "point common between all religions", more specifically, and deligently, and repeatedly?

I remain, dear sir,
Yours sincerely,
BHAGWAN DAS

Young India, 19-6-1924

APPENDIX III

MOTILAL NEHRU'S LETTERS

(A)

"SOONITA",
RIDGE ROAD,
MALABAR HILL,
July 25,1924

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I enclose a copy of the questions I handed to Maulana Mahomed Ali on his recent visit to Allahabad for favour of written replies. He was putting up with us and was in Allahabad for a whole day after the questions were handed to him. When. he was leaving I reminded him of them, but he only said that there was some misapprehension and referred me to Maulvi Rafi Ahmad for further information. This gentleman was standing by and he at once protested his ignorance, but the Maulana made some humorous remark and left immediately after. I then asked Jawaharlal if he knew whether the Maulana Saheb intended to answer the questions at all—he said he could not say. There is, of course, no objection of the Maulana Saheb to answer these or any other questions, but in the absence of clear replies, I am left to draw my own inferences which may or may not be correct.

I may mention that the facts referred to in Qs. 3 & 4 have been established to my satisfaction by reliable evidence. I should like very much to know what you think of them. If I could have your views on the remaining questions also, it would greatly help me in shaping my own course of action.

I shall be in Bombay for four or five days Will you kindly let me know when you are arriving here?

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

MOTILAL NEHRU

Questions submitted by Pandit Motilal Nehru to Maulana Mahomed Ali, President of the Indian National Congress, for favour of answers.[1]

Questions:

1. Is it your interpretation of the resolution passed by the All-India Congress Committee at it last meeting held at Ahmedabad, read with the relevant resolutions pas ed by the Congress at Delhi and Cocanada, that it is open to No-changer to carry on active propaganda in the country against Council-entry?
2. If so, do you agree that it is equally open to Swarajists to carry on counter propaganda?
3. Is it true that you and Maulana Shaukat Ali have already begun active propaganda against Council entry and have actually tried at Lucknow to use your influence to persuade Swarajist members of Legislative Councils to come out?
4. Is it true that either you or Maulana Shaukat Ali or both have put it to the Swarajists and other Congressmen that the issue was whether they would accept Mahatma Gandhi or Pandit Motilal Nehru as their leaders?
5. Are you working to secure a majority to obtain a verdict Of the forthcoming Congress

   (i) generally in favour of any resolutions which Mahatma Gandhi may wish to submit to the Congress?

   (ii) specially

   (a) to rescind the compromise resolutions passed at the Delhi and Cocanada Sessions relating to Council-entry

   (b) to re-introduce the penalty clause in the resolution relating to hand-spinning passed by the All-lndia Congress Committee at Ahmedabad, and

   (c) to exclude all Swarajists from membership of the All-lndia Congress Committee and the various Provincial, District and Tahsil Congress Committees
6. If your answer to any part of the preceding question is in the affirmative, do you agree that it is open to Swarajists to carry on counter-propaganda?
7. (a) Do you agree that the All-lndia Congress Committee and the various Provincial, District and Tahsil Committees though loosely described as the

[1] In the *questionnaire* supplied to him, Gandhiji put down his answers to Questions 1,2,5,6 and 7.

executive of the Congress are really deliberative bodies consisting of hundreds of members and that each has a small council of its own to transact purely executive business?

(b) If so, is it the intention to exclude Swarajists from the pure executive only in the Central and Provincial Organizations or also from the larger deliberative bodies mentioned above?

Handed to Maulana Mahomed Ali at Allahabad on 18-7-1924.

M. L. N.

From a photostat of a typewritten copy: S.N. 9002

(B)

"SOONITA",
RIDGE ROAD,
MALABAR HILL,
July 28, 1924

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

Thanks for your letter answering some of the questions I put to Maulana Mahomed Ali.

After I sent you my last letter enclosing a copy of the questions, I read in the papers that you had lost considerable weight and were suffering from headache and occasional fever. Please pardon me for troubling you with the questions in your present state of health. I would not have done so had I seen the papers before writing.

I am now getting very anxious about your health. The most obvious thing to do is to stop all work at once and take complete rest. But the misfortune is that you will not do this. All great men have their weaknesses and sometimes they are more than those of ordinary men. Specially in matters concerning the care of their own persons. You recognize the fact that you are not physically fit for the work you have undertaken and yet will not do the one thing which everybody including yourself knows has to be done to restore you to your normal state of health ! I do not know any name for that other than national misfortune.

I shall be perfectly frank with you even at the risk of offending you. Let me tell you plainly that the kind of work you are doing at present can very well wait and that the nation will not be in the least poorer if it is not done at all and if in its place we have our Gandhi restored to health and vigour at the end of say a month or even two months. I should cut you off from all communication with India for a time and send you out in the open sea for a fairly long cruise without any land being in sight for six weeks. The least that you can do is to take a trip to see Ceylon where you will have an entire change of surroundings. Your dak should await you at the Ashram

during your absence. But it is useless to go on writing in this strain. I am afraid I can make no impression on you and there is nothing for us but to resign ourselves to whatever the future has in store for us. I have however made up my mind about one thing and that is that I will not be a *particeps criminis* in the suicide you are committing by troubling you with any further correspondence or talk about any work however urgent it may be until you have very considerably improved your health.

Your postcard[1] must be awaiting my return to Allahabad. I am going back day after tomorrow night. I should have run up to Sabarmati for a day if 1 thought I could be of any use whatever. But I expect no good to come out of my visit and have therefore given up the idea. Let me however ask you a question. Would you put me down as mad if I were to ask you to spend a few weeks on the bank of the Ganges some five miles out of Allahabad at a garden house belonging to a friend of mine which is at my entire disposal? This is the only alternative to your going out to sea that I can think of for the benefit of your health.

Yours sincerely,

MOTILAL NEHRU

From a photostat of a hand-written copy: S.N. 9004

[1] This is not available,

1. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI,
Sravana Vad 2 [*August 16, 1924*]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. I write this in the train on my way to Delhi. Devdas[1], Pyarelal[2], Mahadev[3] and Manzar Ali are with me. I shall return in a couple of days. Take care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. VASUMATI
C/O DOLATRAI KASHIRAM & CO.
[SURAT]

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 454. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

2. LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI

Saturday, Sravana Vad 2 [*August 16,1924*][4]

CHI. RADHA,

I got your postcard as well as the papers sent with Kesu. I write this letter on the train. I am glad that you find the place congenial. Ahmedabad water causes constipation. Both of you sisters move about freely as much as you like. I hope to return from Delhi on Friday. Devdas, Pyarelal and Mahadev, all three, are with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. RADHA
C/O VORA SHIVLAL KARSANJI
RAJKOT CITY

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6029. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] Youngest son of Gandhiji
[2] Pyarelal Nayyar; Gandhi's secretary since 1920; biographer of Gandhiji
[3] Mahadev Desai (1892-1942); Gandhiji's secretary for 25 years
[4] From the postmark

3. RELIEF WORK IN MALABAR[1]

I have to confess that the response to this appeal has been more prompt than I had expected. It has been proved not once but many times that, by God's grace, compassion does exist in the hearts of the people. Many funds have been launched for this work. People may pay their contribution to Whichever fund they choose; I would only urge that pay, they must. Malabar's misery is unimaginable. If a man expecting death survives, he dances with joy. He forgets hunger, thrist, heat or cold in the excitement of having survived. Our brothers and sisters in Malabar are in this predicament. Those who are dead are gone. The survivors are simply happy because they are alive. As days pass, their misery will increase, not diminish. We are humble creatures before God. We have the power to crush an ant and that makes us arrogant; Whereas God has a thousand times more power to crush us like ants and He does exercise that power on occasion. This action of His is, however, not "violence", because He is omniscient and an ocean of compassion. Since we cannot pierce His mystery, we call Him the creator, preserver and destroyer of the world. He, in fact, neither creates nor preserves nor destroys. We know not what law governs our birth, life and death.

Whatever it is, as long as we desire to live, it is our natural and inescapable duty to help others to live.

Readers will be glad to know that some brothers and sisters are missing a meal every day, some have given up milk or other things and they are contributing to the Fund. What is thus saved. Even children have joined this work spontaneously. A handsome amount is likely to be collected in this way. A small girl had stolen three pice which too she paid to the Fund. A sister has donated her four bracelets and a chain of pure gold. Another sister has given her heavy necklace. A child has parted with his gold trinket and a sister With her silver anklets. One person has given two toe-rings. An *Antyaja*[2] girl has offered voluntarily the ornaments worn on her feet. A young man has handed over his gold cufflinks.

Rs. 6994-13-3 have been collected in cash up to date. (Pleasesee

[1] A similar appeal in regard to flood relief was made in *Young India; vide* "Notes (subtopic - Help to Malabar)", 14-8-1924.

[2] Literally "the last born", the castes traditionally regarded as untouchables.

the last page[1]). The following amounts were deposited with the Bombay branch:

A gentleman—Rs. 5; Dahyalal Harivallabh Joshi—Rs. I0; Vishveshwar Manilal—Rs. 101; a gentleman—Re.1.

I trust that the collection will continue at the same rate at which it has started.

CLOTHES

Clothes are coming in large numbers. It is difficult to estimate their value. These clothes are most welcome on this occasion. When there is a cloud-burst, it is not possible to think of swadeshi and *paradeshi*[2]. Therefore I intend to accept any clothes that may be offered. I do not have the nerve to say that I will not clothe a naked man in foreign garments. If India had been overflowing with khadi by now, I would, indeed, have said this. As long as I have not acquired this power, how can we, who are ourselves loaded with garments, be fastidious while clothing the naked? I have lost sight of the distinction between co-operation and non-co-operation on this occasion of distress relief. I am prepared to serve under Government officials in the work of feeding the hungry; and I advise the non-co-operators to do the same. It does not mean that we should also attend meetings convened by the Government. We are not interested in these things. We should only perform the soldier's job. If we collect funds, we should modestly extend relief without coming in the way of the Government to quarters where the Government has not reached or does not wish to reach. If the Government wills, it can extend abundant help. The entire work is so enormous that there is enough scope for private enterprise and private charity. Private enterprise alone will not be able to meet the challenge; but whatever is left undone by Government aid can be undertaken by private relief alone. I am considering in consultation with Vallabhbhai[3] how best to utilize the funds. Much depends upon the amount of money collected.

If anyone's contribution is not acknowledged in *Navajivan*, he should write to me. The intention to acknowledge all amounts is still there. In case of very small amounts, I intend to publish only the

[1] Of *Navajivan*, 17-8-1924

[2] Foreign

[3] Vallabhbhai Patel (1875-1950); Congress leader of Gujarat; first Deputy Prime Minister of India

totals. Those who wish to remain anonymous, may kindly let me know their wish.

If the donors of clothes remember the following instructions, it will be convenient to accept and forward the gifts:

1. Used clothes may be washed before they are offered.
2. Torn garments may first be stitched.
3. All clothes may be properly folded, bundled and labelled with the name of the donor and the number of garments.

We are not giving away these clothes to beggars. These, people, like ourselves, belong to clean and tidy middle-class families. I do hope that the same love, care and courtesy will be shown to them, as we do while giving something to our own brother or sister. Indeed we should show consideration and care while we give even to a beggar. It does not take much time to wash unclean clothes, stitch torn garments or to fold them all properly. It merely tests one's fellow-feeling.

STUDENT OF MAHAVIDYALAYA

Readers are aware that students of the Mahavidyalaya have offered yarn; but, like the pupils of Shraddhanandji[1] during the South African campaign, they have also donated manual work. About 75 students put in Work as labourers at the college building which is being constructed for them and they paid to this fund the wages they earned. I congratulate the students and hope that they will often undertake such manual labour which is the true way of utilizing the education acquired by them.

WHERE TO GIVE?

At Ahmedabad, the donations can be forwarded to the offices of the Provincial Committee and the *Navajivan or* to the Ashram. In Bombay, arrangements may be made with the Provincial Committee or the donations may be forwarded to the branch office of the *Navajivan* on Princess Street. Wherever money, yarn or clothes are forwarded, I Would advise the donors to take a regular receipt.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-8-1924

[1] 1856-1926; nationalist leader of Arya Samaj who was known as Mahatma Munshiram; founder of the Gurukul at Kangri near Hardwar

4. TEACHERS AND TRAINING IN SPINNING

Bhai Harishankar Trivedi has written the following thought-provoking letter on this subject:[1]

There is not the least doubt in my mind that students Would certainly learn to spin if teachers take an interest in and masterspinning and its related arts. Experience shows that students' interest in a subject is sustained not by the subject-matter but by the teacher. My own experience has been that one teacher used to bore me to sleep while teaching chemistry, whereas another teacher kept me wide awake and interested in the same subject. The former, who talked and talked without clarifying the topic, was not liked while, as the other teacher elucidated the theme, one wished that his period should never end. The topic was the same as well as the students. Instruction by one, however, was absorbing and by the other insipid. The spinning-wheel holds a jar of nectar. In the Dakshinamurti Bhavan, it appears, there are teachers who can reveal this.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-8-1924

5. MY NOTES

MAULANA SHAUKAT ALI IN KATHIAWAR

Maulana Shaukat Ali[2] wired from Delhi that he, along with his companions, will start on a tour of Kathiawar and reach Rajkot on the 18th. the Khilafat Committees and other societies or associations who wish to invite him should write to him in time to the Rajkot address to enable him to fix engagements. I am confident that Maulana Shaukat Ali and his companions will be welcomed by Hindus as well as Muslims everywhere during their tour of Kathiawar.

UTILITY OF "TAKLI"[3]

This[4] is only one Of many experiences. This is just the beginning for *takli.* It has already been reported that the *takli* can spin

[1] Not translated here

[2] Along with his brother, Mahomed Ali took a leading part in the Khilafat Movement.

[3] Spindle

[4] Reference is to a letter in praise of *takli*; not translated here

up to 70 yards of yarn in an hour. The spinning-wheel can of course spin much more. But it is not proper to compare the *takli* with the wheel. A *takli* can be plied if you are unoccupied even for five minutes. The Congress has exempted members from spinning during travel because the spinning-wheel cannot be plied in trains. If I had been aware of the utility of the *takli* then, the exemption during travel would not have been made. Onthe whole, the *takli* may be more useful than the wheel to one on a journey or otherwise busy, wanting to spin. The *takli is* an inexpensive spinning tool which can supplement if not replace the wheel. Moreover, if a *takli is* made out of a bit of tile, it would cost nothing at all.

PUNISHMENT IN NATIONAL SCHOOLS

A gentleman writes that I have got many resolutions passed in the teachers' conference; that the teachers assented to all those resolutions half-heartedly in order to humour me; that it would be lucky if even one of them were implemented; and that I forgot to pass a resolution about punishment of students in national schools.

I hope the resolutions in the teachers' conference were adopted not merely to humour me but with the idea of implementing them. I have no doubts like those expressed by this brother. I have presumed that national schools shun physical punishments. If this were not so, some teachers would have raised a discussion. The other possibility is that punishment is too common to surprise anyone. I am not prepared to imagine this possibility. I hope that the correspondent will have noticed only a few instances. Those teachers who punish their students are not teachers but jailors. The function of the teacher is to stimulate and attract the student and thus to help his advancement. I take it that faith in the power of the rod in training a child has been discarded by now. Thousands of teachers all over the world have seen that a child can be brought up better by patience than by punishment; the latter in fact only shows the teacher's ignorance. It is the job of the teacher to make every subject interesting. A good teacher can make even a dry subject like Arithmetic interesting.

WERE THEY DEMONS?

A gentleman has condemned Ramachandra, Yudhishthira[1] and

[1] Eldest of the five Pandava brothers in the *Mahabhrata*

Nala[1] and wants me to defend them. "Ramachandra made Sita go through the ordeal of fire and yet later abandoned her; Yudhishthira indulged in gambling and forfeited the right even to protect Draupadi; Nala cast aspersions on his wife and forsook her half naked in a dense forest. Should we call these three persons men or demons.?"

This charge can only be answered by the poets or the virtuous heroines themselves. I judged as a layman and to me all the three men appear worthy of reverence. Rama's story is extraordinary; but let us, for a moment, put the legendary Rama in line with the other two. If the three women had not been the wives of such heroes, history would not have remembered them as virtuous heroines. Damayanti never left chanting the name of Nala, Sita could not think of anyone in the world except Rama, and Draupadi, although indignant with Yudhishthira, would never move away from him. If we could enter the innermost hearts of these three men when they wronged their virtuous wives, we would be consumed by the fire of anguish seething there. Bhavabhuti[2] has given us a moving account of the misery experienced by Rama. The five brothers, who tended Draupadi like a fresh flower, used to listen patiently to her angry words. Nala was not himself when he did what he did. Even the gods watched from the heavens Nala's devotion to his wife when he sped away with Rituparna[3]. For me at any rate the testimony of these three noble wives is enough evidence. It is, however, true that the poets have depicted these three wives as more virtuous than their husbands. Rama, Nala, Dharmaraj[4] would become insignificant without Sita, Damayanti, Draupadi. The men are impulsive, their conscience is wayward and their devotion too is not undeviating; whereas the devotion of these heroines was steady like the lustre of a gem. The patience of women far surpasses that of men. Since forbearance is a mark of strength, these virtuous women were not weak but strong. What is man's courage before woman's? This weakness, however, is endemic to man as such, not particularly to Nala and the rest. The poets have depicted these women as embodiments of endurance. I do regard them as the pinnacle of virtue; but I cannot

[1] King of Nishadha and husband of Damayanti in the *Mahabharata*

[2] Eighth-century Sanskrit poet and playwright

[3] King of Ayodhya, whom Nala served as a trainer of horses and as an accomplished cook

[4] Yudhishthira

look upon their noble husbands as demons. Would not the fame of these women be sullied if we look on their husbands as demons? A demonic spirit cannot stay by the side of a virtuous woman. The husbands may well be considered inferior to their noble wives. But the men and women belong to the same category—both are worthy of reverence. I think it is equally wrong to regard everything old as despicable or as venerable. We should not give up the ideal of woman's duty while espousing the cause of her rights. I see no need for criticizing our ancient heroes in order to champion women's rights.

CONTEMPT FOR "ANTYAJAS"

Contempt for *Antyajas* is in evidence more in Kathiawar than in the rest of Gujarat. *Antyaja* brothers hailing from Kathiawar bring such news and others confirm it. A gentleman write that even now the *Antyajas* have to suffer the same humiliation in railway trains as before. They are not allowed to be seated. If they sit down, the other passengers keep at a distance, insult and abuse them. Such contempt is taken as a part of religion since many who perpetrate it flaunt a *tilak*[1] on their fore-heads. This contempt is not due to any uncleanness because the *Antyaja* brother can help himself and enjoy respect if he resorts to a small white lie. He has only to give out his caste as *Thakore* or *Rathod*. Only those who speak the truth have to suffer indignities. The *Antyaja* brothers who would not resort to untruth for the sake of momentary comfort are entitled to high praise. They thus prove that they are more virtuous than their revilers. If the railway officials are sympathetic, they can protect the poor *Antyajas*. Not all the passengers have this contempt for the *Antyajas*. Those who do not despise them should come forward as their protectors. The *Antyajas* should gain the confidence that the presence of a person with a khadi cap is a sure guarantee of their protection.

SHORTAGE OF SCHOOLS FOR "ANTYAJAS"

A gentleman writes:

Towns like Gadhada, Umrala. Mahuwa, Talaja and Sihor in Bhavnagar have enough children to sustain *Antyaja* schools even today. A gentleman from Bombay has even offered to bear the expenses for a school in Mahuwa; but no local citizen is willing to undertake the management and hence the opening of

[1] Vermilion mark

a school has been postponed.

Is no one in Mahuwa and other towns prepared to undertake mere management of schools? If local citizens are not prepared, will not volunteers from other parts of Kathiawar undertake the work?

DISTRESSING

A perusal of the following description[1] of Dholka tahsil will distress the reader.

To sell out all cotton and all food-grains because they fetch a good price, is only buying trouble. A man cannot keep the money raised in this way and he is left in the end with the dust with which he had started. A man should retain at least his own requirements of cotton and food-grains.

LACK OF FELLOW-FEELING

Another picture of the same tahsil is given below[2]

The whole tragedy lies in *walking away*. We have not progressed beyond the family circle; that is why we cannot see our own good in what is good for our town. We were not very much concerned with the distress of Malabar. Mere preaching is the least effective in creating family ties among citizens. The effort may well start with preaching; but that is not enough. A tree does not take shape merely by our sowing a seed. It needs water and nurture and when it is just a sapling, it needs a fence. Without this, the whole effort may go waste. So with preaching too. We shall succeed only if we strive to strike root in one town and, through it, spread enlightenment to all other towns. If our objective is merely to collect funds, then it would be another matter. If, however, we wish to penetrate the hearts of people or to collect yarn from them, that can be achieved only by staying in the village. We shall progress faster if, instead of complaining against the people, we look critically at the shortcomings in our own work.

FOREIGN *V.* SWADESHI SUGAR

A gentleman writes that I have not discussed in detail "which sugar may be considered pure and which foreign". It is not certain

[1] Not translated here. The letter narrated the disastrous rush among villagers to cash the crops.

[2] Not translated here. The correspondent described the indifference of villagers towards the digging of a well for their own benefit. The correspondent walked away in disgust.

that bones, etc., are not used in refining swadeshi sugar. India imports sugar worth Rs. 180 million from other countries every year. I do not think that India can produce all this quantity in a short time. I myself use no sugar at all on most occasions. Its nutrient value is very small. Whatever sugar is necessary is available in sweet fruits. Chewing sugarcane is the best way of taking in sugar. When the season for sugarcane is at an end, one should use jaggery. Nevertheless, if one cannot do without sugar, one should try to get swadeshi sugar and should risk the possibility of shopkeepers making spurious mixtures.

KHADI-WORK IN KATHIAWAR

I have recently read the distressing report published by Mr. Amhurst in *Vishwa Bharati* about conditions in Kathiawar. Therein he says that there is progressive erosion of land and consequent danger of famine in Kathiawar on account of the destruction of forests. Since the area under pasture lands is decreasing, the once-famous cattle are decaying. The opening of factories in cities drains away the population from villages, and ultimately, the extinction of villages leads to the ruin of cities also. These Changes will sap the artistic qualities of Kathiawar.

This is almost a prophecy. It applies to India as much as to Kathiawar. The latter being a very small peninsula, it can even now be protected; that is why Mr. Amhurst could grasp the past and the future during the present transition. I have often stated that modern industrialism can prosper only in those countries which import raw materials from outside, or in other words, an industrial country can only prosper at the expense of another country. India does not feed on any other country. She herself is the prey of other countries, namely, England, etc. If our cities too start preying like these countries, then the poor villager will have to suffer double exploitation.

Kathiawar can save itself to some extent from this awful situation. Trees should be planted and grown in every compound, the area under pasture should be increased and the craze for mills and ginning factories should be reduced. It does not need much mathematics to see that too many mills and ginning factories in a very small region are an unbearable burden on the people. If the princes and their ministers think calmly and unselfishly, they will realize that their sustenance depends upon the welfare of the villagers which requires the fulfilment of two conditions. Their farms should be prosperous and they should have some employment for their idle

hours. This industry, being based entirely on cotton, is operated in the villagers' cottage. The spinning-wheel is its centre. One who sustains the wheel, sustains the people. The spread of foreign or mill-made cloth should not be tolerated in Kathiawar.

KHADI ASSOCIATION AT AMRELI

I wish as well as hope that Kathiawar will participate in the current efforts to popularize spinning. I therefore welcome the journal issued by the Khadi Association at Amreli; whoever wants to learn the processes or whoever wants to pay his contribution to the Congress in yarn, will find in the journal information regarding many facilities available to him. Training is also available to those who want to learn the processes. I hope many brothers and sisters from Kathiawar will benefit from these facilities. It is necessary to remember that the object of the Congress resolution was to make the middle-classes spin religiously. If this effort succeeds, the cult of spinning will be revived and the hungry stomachs of the poor will be filled. Before the spinning-wheel finds a place in every home, faith in its power has to be inspired. This can be done if the middle-classes accept the spinning-wheel as a sacrament; popularization of khadi is as imperative as the spread of the spinning-wheel. The day when khadi sells as easily as ghee, we may presume that there will be no more starvation deaths in India. I wish that Kathiawar will play its full part in this divine sacrifice. The wonderful thing about this sacrifice is that one who performs it reaps his fruit immediately. If 2.6 million Kathiawaris put in labour worth one rupee on an average, they can save 2.6 million rupees every year.

I would advise the workers of the Khadi Association not to be the least disheartened about their work. Doubt and despondency seem to be taking root in the land these days. At the slightest sign of determination, the clouds of despondency will disperse.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-8-1924

6. FOR GANDHIJI OR FOR THE COUNTRY

A friend says that currently it has become a vogue insistently to ask the students, in the name of Gandhiji, to take up spinning. He wants to know if this is right.

So long as I work for the country and for the country alone, this sort of appeal, under certain circumstances and to a certain extent, is justifiable. The appeal to spin for me has more effect than the appeal to spin for the country. Still, it is of course right that everyone should spin for the country. It is even better to spin for oneself in the ideal sense of the word spinning. For every worker who works for the country works for himself also. He who works for himself alone does harm to himself. Our good should conform with the country's good. It should not be separated from the latter. Those who occasionally make a show of spinning and then stop it only throw dust into people's eyes.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 17-8-1924

7. APOLOGY

Hindi Navajivan completes its third year today. I regret to say I have not been able to do much writing exclusively for *Hindi Navajivan.* I want the readers to understand that the reason for this is not so much my unwillingness as the lack of time and to forgive me.

Hindi Navajivan has not yet become self-supporting. I have once said that it is not desirable from the public point of view to run a newspaper on loss. *Hindi Navajivan is* dedicated to the service of the people. Every reader should therefore consider it his own paper and try to make it self-supporting. At present 2,700 copies of it are sold. For it to be self-supporting, at least 3,000 copies should be sold. I do hope the readers will try to make good this deficiency.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 17-8-1924

8. LETTER T0 THE TRAFFIC SUPERINTENDENT, AJMER

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 18, 1924

TO
THE TRAFFIC SUPERINTENDENT
AJMER
SIR,

I travelled 2nd class on Saturday last the I6th instant from Ahmedabad to Delhi. I had three third class attendants with me, of whom one, by permission of the Deputy Station Master, Ahmedabad, and under medical certificate, remained with me in the compartment. Two years ago before I was imprisoned I used to travel similarly on your as well as other Indian lines. Objection was once raised by a G.I.P.[1] Ticket Examiner. Till then I did not carry a medical certificate, as my delicate health I showed on my person. But on the G.I.P. Traffic Superintendent drawing my attention to the rule under which attendants with lower class tickets were allowed to travel with higher class invalid, I began to carry a medical certificate. This time too, therefore, I produced to the Station authorities at Ahmedabad a medical certificate, copy of which is enclosed herewith.

On alighting at Delhi Station on the 17th instant, the Ticket Collector, having been advised that an attendant with a third class ticket had travelled with me demanded excess fare and penalty. One of my attendants explained to the Deputy Superintendent the circumstances under which he travelled second class with me, offered to produce the medical certificate and to read him the rule (copy of which he had taken from the Coaching Tariff, Part I, para 69) permitting passengers to carry an attendant with a lower class ticket. I am told he would not even look at these, and the Station Superintendent, who was sought to be approached through the Deputy Superintendent, would not even see my attendant. I regard these acts as highly impolite. The attendant in order to avoid any dispute paid Rs. 23 under protest. I enclose receipt therefor, and now beg to apply

[1] Great Indian Peninsular Railway

for refund of same for the reasons above mentioned.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

Enclosures: 1. Medical Certificate
2. Excess fare ticket No. A 90257

From a photostat: S.N. 10120

9. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

DELHI,
August 18, 1924[1]

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have been constantly thinking of you on the way and here. I have been pondering how your mind may be set at rest. But no one can bring peace to another. One can only help to a certain degree. For the rest, one can find satisfaction only within oneself.[2] Further, "The mind alone is the cause of bondage or freedom for man" and "the mind is its own place. It can make a hell of heaven and a heaven of hell."[3]

Thus have sung various seers and it is true. You too must find solace by following this rule. You will. Be patient in the meantime, "Make merry today, who knows of the morrow" sang Mirabai when confronted by sorrows. An atheist would take it in its gross meaning and would be tempted to indulge in physical pleasures. A devotee like Mira would find merriment only in devotion to God, in the path of service and in innocent joy. If there is God, worrying about Time is His concern. Why should we worry about it? Let us do what we have got to do with devotion to God.

I shall reach there by the metre-gauge train by Saturday afternoon if not earlier. Be happy in the meantime.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] From the postmark

[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, II, 55

[3] Gandhiji is quoting John Milton in *Paradise Lost*, I, 253: "The mind is its own place, and in itself. Can make a heav'n of hell, a hell of heav'n."

[PS.]

We are staying with Maulana Mohammed Ali. I see little hope of Hindu-Muslim unity.

From the Gujarati original: Ramdas Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

10. TELEGRAM T0 N. H. BELGAUMWALA[1]

[On or after *August 19, 1924*]

NO COMPROMISE[2] SENDING YOU CORRESPONDENCE MOTILAL.[3] ARRIVING AHMEDABAD TWENTY-THIRD.

The Hindu, 23-8-1924

11. NOTES

THE FIRST RETURNS

How I wish the reader could share my delight, as I analyse the first returns of yarn in terms of the A.I.C.C.[4] resolution[5] on spinning. As yet I have before me only the Gujarat returns, Ahmedabad being the headquarters of the A.I.K.B.[6] The representatives bound to send their quota number 408. Of these only 169 have sent in their quota, i.e., only 42 per cent against 58 per cent defaulters. It is said that the others have not been able to send their quota owing to their being novices. The excuse is not valid, because Messrs Abbas Tyabji[7] and Vallabhbhai were novices but have been able to send over 5000 yards by reason of determined application I hope, therefore, that the next month will see a full response. But the number of non-representatives more than makes up for the defaulters. For in all 672 persons have

[1] In reply to his telegram of August 19 to Gandhiji at Delhi, which read: "Much agitated statements in Press. Mrs. Naidu being authorized compromise. Anglo-Indian papers infer your separation from Congress. Wire attitude."

[2] With the Swarajists

[3] Nehru (1861-1931); lawyer and politician, twice president of the Indian National Congress

[4] All-India Congress Committee

[5] *Vide* "First Test", 24-8-1924.

[6] All-India Khadi Board

[7] 1853-1936; nationalist Muslim leader of Gujarat; former judge of Baroda High Court

sent in their returns in Gujarat, i.e., 503 non-representatives have responded. This is truly encouraging. A little more organizing should show much better results. In fact if this sacrificial spinning movement spreads, it will show startling results from month to month. Of these nobody has sent less than 3000 yards. Many have sent in 5000 yards. One has sent 43,000 yards. This means a lot of work. The yarn is also perfectly even and well-twisted. Let not the reader imagine that he is a professional spinner. His practice does not extend to a long period. Another has sent in I2,000 yards. He has spun 24,000, but has retained I2,000 for his own use. A third has also sent in 11,000, though he has spun in all 27,000 yards. Both these are busy Congress representatives occupying very responsible positions. They could not send in such large amounts without putting in at least three hours' labour every day. They do not believe that the other work entrusted to them has suffered. They have put in this labour, because they are early risers and render an account of every minute at their disposal. One young man has spun 46,000 yards though he has sent in only the required minimum. He cannot afford to send more. Let me add also that there are many who have spun much more than 3000 yards, but who are spinning for their own personal use and hence cannot afford to send in more than the minimum. Taking the districts, Kheda tops the list and Panchmahals comes last.

THE ALI BROTHERS' QUOTA

The Big Brother made a mighty effort but succeeded in sending only one tola of indifferently-spun yarn. If there was no fear of the reader accusing me of partiality towards the Brothers, I would say that this is not a bad record for one who is constitutionally ill-fitted for continuous spinning and who is always on the move. Maulana Shaukat Ali has however given me the assurance that he is going to send the full quantity for the next month. Maulana Mahomed Ali has done better. I must let him speak for himself:

> I send with Shaukat the poor attempt of the President of the Congress at spinning. The history of my spinning is this. Never had I spun a yard of yarn in all my life, but after Ahmedabad I was determined to commence it the moment I settled down at Delhi. Continuous travelling was followed by illness, but on the 2nd August I sat down at long last to spin. Two skeins of thick, uneven, horrible yarn are the result of the work done on the 2nd and 3rd. But some of it was spun by my wife who acted as my tutor and afterwards also by Arif Hasvi who also taught me a little. On the 4th I spun the third skein but

forgot to count the yards spun. I think it was about 110 yards. On the 5th, 6th and 7th I did about 300 yards and then had to go to Rampur to see mother, and I greatly regret that the charkha was left behind in my hurried and worried departure. On my return I did another 150 yards or so, but have been kept busy by the Hindu-Muslim negotiations, mother's illness and my own foot on which one carbuncle has not yet healed and another has made its appearance. The last (4th skein) is 462 yards and represents about 4 days' work. I promise you that God willing I will not only spin 2000 yards by the 15th September but will also make up the deficiency for August. Will you, in the meantime, accept the will for the deed?

This is remarkable for one who is ailing and also travelling. But I know that a President has to be exact and scrupulous about his own work before he can expect any from his followers. The Ali Brothers, however, represent not only the Congress but the Mussalmans also. The cry everywhere is that the Mussalmans are practically not responding to the call at all. It will require a tremendous effort to awaken them to a sense of their duty. And if the Mussulmans come up to the Hindu level in spinning, their work will react upon the Hindus. Boycott of foreign cloth will then become an accomplished fact and with it will be achieved the economic salvation of the masses. With that salvation will come self-confidence. Self-confidence must lead to swaraj.

PRINCIPAL GIDWANI[1]

It is reported that Principal Gidwani has lost 30 lb. in weight in the Nabha Jail and that Mrs. Gidwani inspite of repeated requests has not received any reply as to when she can visit her husband. This is callous indifference. The administrator may at least issue regular bulletins regarding Principal Gidwani's health and let the public know the real state of his health. Why Mrs. Gidwani should be prevented from seeing her husband as often as she likes is also difficult to understand. My sympathies go out to her. I know however that she is the brave wife of a brave husband. The only advice I can tender to the lady is to be "careful for nothing" and feel that God will take better care of her husband than any human agency. She and we should realize that as satyagrahis and non-co-operators we must expect treatment such as is being meted out to her and her husband. If Acharya Gidwani will change his "creed" he can now procure his

[1] Asudomal Tekchand Gidwani of the Gujarati Vidyapith

discharge. He has but to apologize for his brave and human conduct in crossing the Nabha border and he will be set free. But he will do no such thing. It is the article of a satyagrahi's faith to prefer imprisonment to degrading liberty.

WANTON DESECRATION

If the *communique* of the District Magistrate of Moradabad is to be relied upon, the news contained in it is serious and disquieting. Two temples are reported to have been desecrated and the Hindus assembled seriously assaulted. No cause for this wanton desecration has been assigned. A similar incident is reported to have taken place at Amethi in the Lucknow district. Here the Hindus are supposed to have blown conches in defiance, it is said, of a magisterial order. If they did, it was for the magistrate to punish the offenders, not for the Mussulmans to enter the temple in a large body and commit assaults and desecrate temples. There is no doubt that these cases have an organization at their back. It represents a deliberate attempt to create dissensions and prevent Hindu-Muslim unity. What the organization can hope to gain by such acts is difficult to understand. It cannot enhance the dignity of Islam, it cannot popularize it. If it is material gain that is sought, it is not possible to achieve it. And if the organizers seek to gain Government's favour by these methods, they will soon find themselves undeceived.

NATAL INDIANS

It is a pathetic cable from the Natal Indians protesting against the passing of the ordinance disenfranchising Natal Indians from voting at municipal elections. This fight commenced in 1894. It was finally decided in favour of the Indian settlers. The then Natal Government admitted that it would be most unjust to deprive the Indian tax-payer of the municipal franchise. The Indian settler submitted to the virtual deprivation of the political franchise. But no past promises or undertakings bind governments when they wish to change policies or principles. We have seen this illustrated often enough in the history of Indians in South Africa. Almost every assurance given to them has been violated on due occasion. Our bewildered countrymen make a pathetic appeal to the nation for help. Little do they know that we are powerless to give them real assistance. Sympathy they have. Newspaper articles they will have, but I fear that beyond that they are likely to get very little. If the Government of

India move, for very shame, to protect them against impending spoliation, it can do so with effect. I say "impending", for the ordinance requires the sanction of the Governor-General of the Union of South Africa. He has once refused to sanction such an ordinance. If he exercises his prerogative, he can save the Indians the insult that the ordinance implies. Every letter received by me from South Africa during Mrs. Naidu's[1] stay there showed the high hopes our people built on the brilliant mission of Mrs. Naidu. But the South African Europeans can be courteous and yet carry out their determination, though it may be, as this is, totally unjust. They have learnt under General Smuts[2] the art of being sweetly unjust. The ultimate remedy lies with our countrymen themselves.

KENYA DECISION

The Colonial Secretary's announcement about the Kenya Indians is an artful performance. It reads perfectly innocent. But it has practically taken away everything that our countrymen of Kenya were fighting for. Mr. Thomas has shelved the immigration measure. It means very little. There was no urgency about it. And with the unfavourable decision on the other points, the immigration will be automatically checked. The Indians claimed to retain the right to own land in the Highlands. They claimed equal general franchise. They Wanted fair fight and no favour. The announcement takes away the right of owning land in the healthiest part of Kenya. It seeks to give communal franchise which in effect means no effective political power for our countrymen. The struggle has been going on for several years. All Indians, Moderates and others united last year. They proclaimed even a boycott of British goods. But the import of British goods remained unaffected and the Kenya Indians have gained little for the agitation. We have not the power, or more accurately we do not know how to use the power we have. Let the reader understand the distinction between Kenya and Natal. Natal has dominion status. Kenya has not. The decision in Natal is an act of the local legislature. There is therefore still hope of relief. In Kenya the decision now is that of the Imperial Government. Therefore it is practically final.

Young India, 21-8-1924

[1] Sarojini Naidu (1879-1949); poet, patriot, Congress leader and a close associate of Gandhiji

[2] 1870-1950; South African soldier and statesman; Prime Minister of South African Union, 1919-24 and 1939-48

12. BOLSHEVISM OR DISCIPLINE?[1]

Two American friends have written to me a passionately-worded letter saying that in the name of religion I am probably introducing in India Bolshevism which knows no God or morality and is frankly atheistic. They say that the alliance between Mussulmans and myself is an unholy alliance and a menace to the world, for, they argue, Mussalmans are today aiming at supremacy in the East with the help of Bolshevic Russia. I have heard this charge hurled against me before now, but I have hitherto taken no notice of it. But it seems to me it is time for me to consider it when it is brought by responsible foreign friends in all good faith. In the first placeI must confess that I do not know the meaning of Bolshevism. I know that there are two opposite parties, one painting it in the blackest colours, the other hailing it as deliverance for the down-trodden masses all the world over. I do not know what to believe. All I can say is that my movement is not atheistic. It is not a denial of God. It has been undertaken in His name and is being continued with constant prayer. It is undoubtedly a mass movement but it seeks to touch the masses through their hearts, their better nature. It is a process of discipline and hence it is that it has filled even some of the best of my co-workers with despair.

I am proud of the alliance between the Mussalmans and myself. Islam is not a denial of God. It is a passionate avowal of one supreme deity. Not even its worst detractors have accused Islam of atheism. If therefore Bolshevism is atheism, there can be no common ground between it and Islam. They must in that case come to death-grip. It will be an embrace of opponents, not of friends. I have retained the American letter phraseology. But let me inform my American readers and others that I am under no delusion. My pretension is very humble. The alliance there is between the Ali Brothers and myself, i.e., between a few valued Mussualman friends and myself. I would love to call it an alliance between Mussalmans and Hindus—not myself. But that seems to have been a day-dream. In truth therefore one may say, there is an alliance between some Mussalmans including the Ali

[1] For M.N. Roy's reply to this article, *vide* Appendix "M. N. Roy on Bolshevism", 1-1-1925; for Gandhiji's comments on the reply, *vide* "Meaning of Bolshevism", 1-1-1925.

Brothers and some Hindus including myself. How far it carries us, the future will show. There is no vagueness about the alliance. It is the most natural thing in the world. It is tragic that it excites wonder and even apprehension. What can be more natural than that Hindus and Mussalmans, born and bred in India, having the same adversities, the same hopes, should be permanent friends, brothers born of the same mother-India? The surprise is that we should fight, not that we should unite. And why should the combination be a menace to the world? The greatest menace to the world today is the growing, exploiting, irresponsible imperialism which through the enslavement of India is threatening the independent existence and expansion of the weaker races of the world. That Imperialism is a negation of God. It does ungodly acts in the name of God. It covers its inhumanities, Dyerisms and O'Dwyerisms under cover of humanity, justice and righteousness. And the pity of it is that the majority of Englishmen do not know that their name is being exploited. The great pity of it is that sober, godfearing Englishmen are beguiled into the belief that all is well when all is ill with India, that all is well with the African races when they are being exploited and degraded in their name. If the defeat of Germany and the central powers ended the German peril, the victory of the Allies has brought into being a peril no less deadly for the peace of the world. I wish therefore that the so-called alliance between Mussalmans and Hindus will become a permanent reality based on a frank recognition of enlightened self-interest. It will then transmute the iron of sordid imperialism into the gold of humanitarianism. The Hindu-Muslim alliance is intended to be a blessing to India and to the world for it is conceived in a spirit of peace and goodwill to all. It has adopted non-violence and truth as the indispensable means for achieving swaraj in India. Its symbol—the charkha, the spinning-wheel— is a symbol of simplicity, self-reliance, self-control, voluntary cooperation among millions. If such an alliance proves a menace to the world, then there is no God or God is asleep.

Young India, 21-8-1924

13. WASTE OF ENERGY?

A friend has invited my attention to an article in the *Welfare* of May last which is an examination by Mr. M. N. Roy[1] of Acharya Ray's[2] address at the opening of the khaddar exhibition at Cocanada. The copy has been lying among my papers for fully two months. I am sorry that I have not been able to read the article before now. Having read it I feel that Mr. Roy's refutation of Dr. Ray's contentions has been often refuted in these pages. But as readers have short memories, it is perhaps as well for me to re-state the arguments in a connected form. Dr. Ray's critic considers that all the effort made on behalf of the charkha is "a waste of energy". The central point in Dr. Ray's argument is that the charkha has a message specially for the peasant in that it enables him to utilize his idle hours. The critic contends that the peasant has not any idle hours to utilize. What leisure he has, he needs. If he is idle for four months, it is because he has over-worked himself for eight months and that if he is made to work the four months at the wheel, his efficiency for eight months' work will deteriorate from year to year. In other words, according to the critic, the nation has no leisure for the charkha.

It appears to me that the critic has little if any experience of the peasantry of India. Nor has he been able to picture to himself the way the charkha would work, and indeed is working today. The peasantry does not need to slave at the charkha. It affords a pleasant variety and recreation after hard toil. As a permanent institution, it is presented to the women of India. They will spin during odd moments. If the majority of the toilers were to give on an average half an hour per day they would spin enough yarn for themselves and to spare for the rest. Such worker would add to his or her income at least Rs. 1-11-0 per year—not a bad addition to the income of a starving person. It is admitted that there are enough handlooms and weavers today in India to weave all the cloth we may require. The only question is therefore that of hand-spinning. If the peasantry would take to it, the problem could be solved without any great outlay of capital, of India becoming self-supporting for her cloth. This would mean at least sixty million

[1] Thinker and writer; founder of the Radical Democratic Party

[2] P. C. Ray (1861-1944); scientist and patriot

rupees circulating among the millions of spinners and thousands of carders and weavers of India working in their own cottages and to that extent raising the earning capacity of the peasantry.

It is the experience all the world over that peasants need a subsidiary occupation to supplement their earnings or occupy their leisure hours. It must not be forgotten that not very long ago India's women spun during spare hours all the yarn it required. Revival of spinning has demonstrated the truth of the statement in a most striking manner. It is an error to suppose that the movement has failed. The workers have indeed partly failed. But wherever they have done their work well, it has continued. It is true that it has not yet acquired stability. This is because of incomplete organization and also because the spinners are not yet sure of being steadily employed. I invite Mr. Roy to study the conditions in the Punjab, Karnatak, Andhra, parts of Tamilnad and he will find out for himself what possibilities spinning has.

India is a land of famines. Is it better that men and women should break stones, or card and spin? Through chronic famine conditions, the people of Orissa have been reduced to beggary. It is the most difficult thing now even to make them work. They are slowly dying out. Revival of spinning is their only hope.

Mr. Roy lays stress upon improved agriculture. This is necessary. But spinning is not to replace the contemplated improvement. On the contrary it will herald it. This improvement has tremendous difficulties in its way. We have to surmount the unwillingness of the Government, the want of capital and the obstinate refusal of the peasant to take to new methods. What is claimed for spinning is that

1. it supplies the readiest occupation to those who have leisure and are in want of a few coppers;
2. it is known to the thousands;
3. it is easily learnt;
4. it requires practically no outlay of capital;
5. the wheel can be easily and cheaply made. Most of us do not yet know that spinning can be done even with a piece of tile and a splinter;
6. the people have no repugnance to it;
7. it affords immediate relief in times of famine and scarcity;
8. it alone can stop the drain of wealth which goes outside

India in the purchase of foreign cloth;

9. it automatically distributes the millions thus saved among the deserving poor;

10. even the smallest success means so much immediate gain to the people;

11. it is the most potent instrument of securing co-operation among the people.

The difficulties in the way are want of faith among the middle-classes which alone can supply the required number of workers. The greater difficulty still is the disinclination of the people to take to khaddar in the place of the fine-looking mill-made cloth. The dearness of khaddar during the transition stage is an additional difficulty. If the people respond to the spinning resolution in sufficient numbers, khaddar can be made to compete with mill-made cloth . There is no doubt that the movement does require for its success a little sacrifice on the part of the people. Even this direct sacrifice will not be necessary if we had our own Government mindful of the wants of the peasants and determined to protect them against foreign competition. Voluntary sacrifice for a time by the middle-class can do that the Government would do if it was national.

There is no question of waste of energy. Have the thousands of our sisters, to whom Dr. Ray was previously giving doles of charity and is now giving honourable employment and making them partly or wholly self-supporting, wasted their energy? They have no other occupation save that of begging or starving. Is it waste of energy for young men to be going to the villages, studying their wants, feeling for them and helping them onward? Is it waste of energy for thousands of well-to-do young men and women to think of the poor half-fed millions and for their sakes to set apart half an hour religiously to spinning on their behalf? If one man or woman spins for a few pice, when he or she has no other occupation, it is so much gain; if one man or woman spins as a sacrifice, it is also so much gain. If there is one activity in which it is all gain and no loss, it is hand-spinning.

Young India, 21-8-1924

14. UNDER CONSCIENCE'S COVER

A correspondent says in effect :

> Do you know what you have done by continually harping on conscience. I find youngsters and grown-up people talking utter nonsense under cover of conscience. What is more, youngsters have become impudent and grown-up people unscrupulous; can you not prevent this mischief? If you cannot, please withdraw the word from use and stop the drivel that is being said in the name of that sacred but much abused word. Pray tell us who has a conscience? Do all have it? Do cats have a conscience when they hunt to death poor mice?

I have not given the correspondent's question in his own words. I have endeavoured to paraphrase it. In doing so I hope I have done no injustice to him.

I must confess that the charge is not without substance. But he has presented only the dark side. Every virtue has been known to be abused by the wicked. But we do not on that account do away with virtue. We can but erect safeguards against abuse. When people cease to think for themselves and have everything regulated for them, it becomes necessary at times to assert the right of individuals to act in defiance of public opinion or law which is another name for public opinion. When individuals so act, they claim to have acted in obedience to their conscience. I entirely agree with the correspondent that youngsters as a rule must not pretend to have conscience. It is a quality or state acquired by laborious training. Wilfulness is not conscience. A child has no conscience. The correspondent's cat does not go for the mouse in obedience to the call of conscience. It does so in obedience to its nature. Conscience is the ripe fruit of strictest discipline. Irresponsible youngsters therefore who have never obeyed anything or anybody save their animal instinct have no conscience, nor therefore have all grown-up people. The savages for instance have to all intents and purposes no conscience. Conscience can reside only in a delicately tuned breast. There is no such thing therefore as mass conscience as distinguished from the consciences of individuals. It is safe therefore to say that when a man makes everything a matter of conscience, he is a stranger to it. It is a truthful saying that "conscience makes cowards of us all". A conscientious man hesitates

to assert himself, he is always humble, never boisterous, always compromising, always ready to listen, ever willing, even anxious to admit mistakes.

The correspondent is needlessly agitated. What does it matter that fifty thousand people say they act or refrain for conscience's s ake? The world has no difficulty in distinguishing between conscience and an arrogant or ignorant assumption of it. Such men would have acted in similar circumstances exactly as they would under cover of conscience. The introduction of conscience into our public life is welcome even if it has taught a few of us to stand up for human dignity and rights in the face of the heaviest odds. These acts will live for ever, whereas those done under shams are like soap-bubbles enjoying a momentary existence.

Young India, 21-8-1924

15. DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY

Here is what a worker in the South writes about the *Panchamas*[1].

> I am just returning from a *Panchama* gathering. It was all very nice and encouraging. But as we returned from the *Panchama* quarter, we passed through the main village. There was an ominous-looking party of villagers, all ryots, non-Brahmin peasants, gathered under the village banyan tree. They stood up when we stopped to greet them. A conversation ensued which dispelled my fond visions. It was a khaddar producing village. It was obvious khaddar-work, was going to stop, for they don't like this untouchability business. We could not get a bullock cart to negotiate the country road. We somehow reached our car on the main road late in the night and after a few tyre-punctures and halts reached home at midnight, sad and not very sleepy. This is nothing. Only in the south this untouchability business is too big and all of us with all our resources can be at it for years. We run it now as a subordinate part of Congress work. It won't do !

Of course it won't do. untouchability is a terrible reality. If they had a tongue, we should not be able to sleep for the noise the untouchables would make about the treatment meted out to them in the name of religion.

We have only played at it. We have neither sacrificed ease nor time, much less money at all commensurate with the work required,

[1] Regarded as untouchables

Whereas we Hindus will have to pour our blood like water in order to achieve the end. Let us, reformers, at once admit that we are on this question in a hopeless minority. I verily believe that the adoption of the reform by the Congress has given it a tremendous momentum. But it has only touched the fringe of the problem. We have not seriously tackled it. We wanted excitement of a sort. The work of untouchability can bring no such excitement. It requires silent, self-effacing work. On the one hand we have to break down the wall of prejudice, not by violence but by patient effort that only love can evoke. The moment we lose temper with the orthodox, we lose ground and make our own and the *Panchamas*' position worse than before. We have to reason with them, we must put up with their taunts, their insults, yes, even their kicks without retaliation. We will then have produced an atmosphere that will enable truth to reveal itself to the orthodox people.

We must know our own mind. We must not have many minds on this question. Let us understand that this is not a question of inter-dining nor of inter-marrying. Nor is it a question of abolition of *varna-dharma* mistranslated caste. It is a question purely and simply of removing untouchability, of abolishing the unwarranted fifth division. We have a school of reform that aims at a total abolition of the *varna-dharma*. This is not the place to examine the merits of the reform. The movement against untouchability restricts itself to removing the sinful superstition that mere touch of a person, because he is born in a particular group, is a pollution to be atoned for. The more the movement progresses in extent and intensity, the more urgent it becomes to understand and scrupulously to abide by its limitations. Thus whilst we challenge orthodoxy, we must assure it at the same time that we mean no more than we say. It must be enabled to understand the full scope of the movement. Letters I receive weekly show that the minimum has not always been kept steadily in view. The orthodox people have become naturally alarmed. It makes the reformer's task far more difficult than it need be.

On the other hand are must be equally patient with the *Panchama* brother. He does not always appreciate our effort. He often distrusts us. I know untouchable parents who resent their children being taught the degradation and unhealthiness of eating the remains of cooked food from the dishes of the touchables. Some resent even cleanliness itself. They cling to their habits with almost as much tenacity as the orthodox to their belief in pollution.

Are former of the average type, therefore, when he realizes the immensity of the work before him, is likely to despair, it not actually to begin to think that the untouchables deserve the treatment they receive, as if they are to blame for the circumstances in which they find themselves.

It is perhaps now clear why I say that we might have to pour out our blood like water before the curse is removed and Hinduism becomes purified.

Young India, 21-8-1924

16. NEGROES' SYMPATHY

I gladly publish and gratefully acknowledge the following cable from New York:

> The Negroes of the world through us send you greetings for fight for the freedom of your people and country. We are with you. Fourth Annual international Convention Negro Peoples of the World. Marius Garney, Chairman.

Theirs is perhaps a task more difficult than ours. But they have some very fine workers among them. Many students of history consider that the future is with them. They have fine physique. They have a glorious imagination. They are as simple as they are brave. M. Finot has shown by his scientific researches that there is in them no inherent inferiority as is commonly supposed to be the case. All they need is opportunity. I know that if they have caught the spirit of the Indian movement, their progress must be rapid.

Young India, 21-8-1924

17. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Sravana Krishna 7 [*August 21, 1924*[1]]

DEAR SHRI GHANSHYAMDAS[2],

God has provided me with conscience-keepers. You, I think, are one of them. Some of my own children, some ladies and a few grown-ups like Jamnalalji[3] and yourself want to make me a perfect man. Regarding you thus, how could I be offended by your letter? In fact, I want you always to caution me in this manner.

You complain against three things: One, my absolving the Swaraj Party of the charge of corruption; two, my giving a testimonial to Suhrawardy; and, three, my trying to get Sarojini Devi elected as [Congress] President.

In the first place, it is one's duty to say only that which, after a pains-taking inquiry, one has come to regard as the truth, even if the world considers it to be an error. In no other way can one become fearless. I cannot consider anything dearer to me than *moksha*[4]. Yet even that *moksha* I would renounce if it were to conflict with truth and non-violence. In all these three things I only followed truth. When I said that, I had in mind what you had told me at Juhu. In the absence of any definite proof, it becomes my duty to treat the Swaraj Party as free from the guilt imputed to it. If there is any evidence that you can furnish I shall certainly examine it. I shall even make it public if you will allow me to do so; if not I shall know and keep it to myself and remain silent.

As for Suhrawardy, I only testified to his sagacity and I am having practical experience of it even now.

About Sarojini Devi your fears are, I think, uncalled for. I hold strongly that she has served India well and is still doing so. While I have done nothing so far for her presidentship, I do believe that if the others who have so far occupied that office were fit for it, she too is fit. Everybody is charmed with her enthusiasm. I can bear witness to her courage. I have noticed nothing blame-worthy in her character.

[1] The year is taken from the addressee's book, *In the Shadow of the Mahatma.*

[2] b.1894; industrialist and mill-owner; chairman, Harijan Sevak Sangh

[3] Bajaj (1889-1942); social worker and philanthropist; close associate of Gandhiji; treasurer of Indian National Congress for many years

[4] Deliverance.

Please do not conclude from this that I approve of everything done by her or anyone else.

> God has filled this world with objects, animate and inanimate, good and bad. The wise man considers only the good and ignores the bad, even as the swan leaves the water and takes only the milk from a mixture of milk and water.[1]

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6030. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

18. LETTER T0 G. D. BIRLA

Sravana Krishna 8 [*August 22, 1924*][2]

DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Pandit Sunderlal saw me here and asked me if I had received your letter. I told him I had and that I had also sent you a reply. Sunderlal says that you had not received my letter till you left for Hardwar and wants me to write another. I do not wish to write to you anything concerning the financial help asked of you. If you want any advice as to whether or not you should give Sunderlal any financial help, you had better consult Jamnalalji. Sunderlal says he wants your help independently of me and wants me only to write to you about his work. I can certainly say that Sunderlalji is a patriot, a non-co-operator, full of enthusiasm, has great capacity for work and commands influence over youth. He is very independent-minded.

I had wired to you when I left Ahmedabad. I am leaving for the Ashram today. So far nothing has been achieved here. Both the parties are thinking over my advice.

Yours,

MOHNANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6031. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Tulsidas's *Ramacharitamanasa,* "Balakanda"

[2] From the reference to "leaving for the Ashram today"; Gandhiji left Delhi for Ahmedabad on 22-8-1924.

19. INTERVIEW TO A.P.I. ON HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

DELHI,
August 22, 1924

Mr. Gandhi left for Ahmedabad this morning *enroute* to Bombay. Interviewed, he said that negotiations were still going on between Hindus and Mussalmans for a compromise and the situation was as hopeful as ever.[1] This is all, he said, he could say at present.

Asked when he would return to Delhi, Mr. Gandhi said he would come to Delhi if his presence was required by Mr. Mahomed Ali.

Further asked whether he could not say something more hopeful, Mr. Gandhi cross-questioned saying, "Is this not hopeful enough?''

Before parting, he told Mr. Mahomed Ali to work hard. Since he does not regard the situation in Delhi as a mere local affair and since he is said to be averse to a patched-up peace, it is stated that these negotiations had taken a longer time and might take a little more time.

The Hindu, 22-8-1924

20. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Sravana Vad 9 [*August 23, 1924*]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I am just now in the train. I am going back from Delhi to the Ashram. Talks of compromise are going on in Delhi. I have not received Motilalji's letter. Let things be done in your province so far as they do not violate principles of morality. It is enough if we go on doing our duty with a detached mind.

Ghanshyamdas was not in Delhi. I had already received the money from him. I had asked Chhaganlal[2] to write to you and finds out how the money could be sent to you without incurring any expense. Mahadev, Devdas and Pyarelal are with me.

Blessings from,

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2849

[1] Gandhiji had personally visited the scene of the riots.
[2] Gandhiji's nephew

21. LETTER TO BHAVANI DAYAL

ON THE TRAIN,
Sravana Krishna 9 [*August 23, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI BHAVANI DAYAL,

It is only today that I am able to reply to your letter. There is no need to apologize. I am glad you now understand the South African struggle better. I do not have one moment to spare. I send you only this article. I see that for progress there is nothing else but to practise austerity.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SJT. BHAVANI DAYAL
P.O. JACOBS
NATAL
SOUTH AFRICA

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6032. Courtesy: Vishnu Dayal

22. LETTER T0 ABBAS TYABJI

August 23, 1924

BHAI SAHIB,

Bhur-r-r-r[2]

I am glad to have your letter. You will not find it so troublesome after you get used to the spinning-wheel. Try to avoid looking that side.

You have made a good collection for the Muslim Boarding.

Convey my *Vandemataram,* or salaam—whatever they wish— to Mrs. Abbas and the girls.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9548

[1] From the postmark
[2] This was a form of greeting used by Gandhiji and the addressee for each other.

23. SPEECH AT LABOURERS' MEETING, AHMEDABAD

August 23, 1924

About 5,000 labourers assembled on the river-bed outside Shahpur Gate, Ahmedabad City, on August 23 to present a purse of Rs. 3,000 to M. K. Gandhi. The Secretary of the Union, Gulzarilal Nanda, described the help that the Mahatma had so often given to the labourers of Ahmedabad.

Gandhi asked the labourers if they had any complaints to make to him. Various questions regarding the internal economy of the Union were brought up. Gandhi urged them to be self-reliant and to control their own institutions. They were the masters of the Union. They should appoint such officials as would serve their ends honestly, be they Hindus or Mohammedans. He also urged them to use khaddar.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1924, p. 557, para 1246

24. FIRST TEST

The delegates from Gujarat have failed in the first test. Out of 408 delegates, 169 have delivered their quota of yarn. 239 could not do so. What is the sense of 42 per cent giving and 58 per cent not giving? If swaraj hangs by a thread, why should a majority of delegates fail in the test itself? If a majority of the partners of a firm do not abide by its rules, what will be the fate of the firm?

If the ocean catches fire, who can put it out? If sugar ceases to be sweet, who can sweeten it? If delegates do not fulfil their pledge, what hope should be entertained from the general public?

Gujarat's resolve is uncompromising. Whoever has not delivered yarn, vacates his seat. If any delegate has a special excuse for not spinning, he can escape by paying a fine fixed by himself. I think the best way for a delegate who has no honest excuse for not spinning is to resign. A resignation devoid of bitterness or hatred is a welcome act. I think it is right for a man to resign if he has no faith in the spinning-wheel. Those who have not spun because of indolence should tender their resignation, overcome their indolence, practise regular spinning and then enrol themselves as delegates. Day by day the Congress should become a purer and a stronger organization.

The non-delegates have, however, surpassed the delegates. Those who have delivered yarn upto the I5th of August numbered 672. That means, leaving out the delegates, 503 brothers and sisters have

delivered yarn. I think this is a hopeful situation. This figure does not surprise me. The essence of the resolution adopted by the A.I.C.C. was that, inspired by the example of delegates, lakhs of brothers and sisters would contribute their body-labour for half an hour every day as a matter of sacrifice. It is therefore my hope that during the coming month more than 503 brothers and sisters will deliver the yarn spun by themselves.

The break-up of delegates who have delivered yarn is as follows:

	No. of delegates	No. who have delivered yarn	No. who have not
A.I.C.C.	11	10	1
Provincial Committee	68	46	22
Ahmedabad	52	23	29
Kheda	117	38	79
Broach	82	26	56
Surat	78	26	52
Panchmahal	-	-	-
	408	169	239

The proportion of miscellaneous contributors of yarn is as follows:

Ahmedabad	53
Ashram	84
Kheda—	
Borsad	99
Petlad	26
Kapadwanj	23
Nadiad	65
Bhadran	15
Baroda	5
Anand	18
Mehmadabad	3
Cambay	2
Surat—	
Bardoli	61
Others	21
Broach	12
Khadimandai	16
Total	503

We can learn a good deal from the above figures. Wherever greater work was put in, more yarn has been collected. It is not as if Kheda has delivered more yarn because the Kheda people know spinning better. It is because more work has been put in there that more brothers and sisters from Kheda have delivered yarn. Panchmahals should have produced a heap. It is not a matter of small regret that name after name of delegates from that area has drawn a blank. What is the meaning of only 12 persons spinning in Broach? There is almost no name from Kathiawar in the miscellany. What does it show?

It is easy to give money. It appears, however, that it is difficult to contribute half an hour's labour.

Some people say that they should be free to labour in the manner they choose. If anyone says so, he does not recognize the value of organization. A drop of rain has no value in the rainy season, but drops of rain can change a famine into plenty. If the drops, however numerous, become self-willed and do not run together, they will all perish. Similarly, if many men and women render service at their own sweetwill, it will be wasted. If many men and women undertake some work under rules and regulations, that work becomes effective. Therefore, it is in their interest as well as in the interest of the nation that those who wish to serve should do so in a disciplined manner.

The number of persons in Gujarat who have delivered yarn in odd quantities is thus hopeful but not surprising. It is hopeful in this that the number of persons delivering yarn is increasing every month. I hope that the 672 persons who have started spinning will comply with the rule and deliver yarn every month.

A gratifying aspect has yet to be reported, namely, many persons have spun very large quantities of yarn. Abbas Saheb and Vallabhbhai have each delivered 5000 yards of yarn. A brother has spun and delivered 43,000 yards. Another has spun 27,000 yards and delivered 11,000 yards out of them. A third has spun 24,000 yards and delivered 12,000. The last two persons have been able to spin so much in spite of being occupied with heavy work. A young man has spun 46,000 yards but donated only 3000 because it is beyond his means to donate the entire yarn. I myself know many persons who spin so much, but since they insist on making their cloth from the yarn spun by themselves, they cannot donate much yarn. These

figures prove that spinning 3000 yards every month is the easiest form of labour and it is as urgent as it is easy.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-8-1924

25. MY NOTES

BARREN PARLIAMENT

A journalist has made these remarks:[1]

Parliament is indeed barren. I do not imagine that its nature can change in India. I live, however, in the hope that our Parliament will only remain barren and not give birth to a wicked son. I cannot abandon practical considerations. The ideal is one only, namely, *Ramarajya*. But where can we find Rama? The journalist says, "whom the people approve." People means Parliament and, in our view, whomsoever the Parliament approves is a virtuous man or woman. I am suggesting many ways to ensure that the voice of Parliament is really the voice of the people and not that of hired voters. With this end in view I am searching for a device which will enable us to listen to the voice of the entire people. All systems are bound to be defective. We are looking for a system which will yield maximum benefit to India. Good men can transform a bad system into a good one—like the wise housewife who transforms dust into grains. Wicked men can misuse the best of systems and make it defective, like a foolish housewife who allows bright food grains to decay into dust. I am therefore on the look-out for good men in India and employing devices to sort out such men. But what can a man do? He can only make an honest effort. The fruit lies in the hands of God. The efforts of many, and not one, are required for securing the desired fruit. Many other factors determine the fruit. Therefore "one step is enough" for us.

INNER VOICE

The same journalist says:[2]

All this criticism is true; but these errors are unavoidable. Should we abandon truth because falsehood parades under the garb of truth? Man has to cultivate the inner sense. It does not belong to

[1] Not translated here. They were critical of the British parliamentary system.

[2] Not translated here

every man as a natural gift. Its cultivation needs spiritual surroundings and constant effort. It is a delicate plant. Children do not have anything like an inner voice. Those who are considered barbarous have no inner voice. The inner sense reflects the impact produced by a cultivated intellect on the heart. It would therefore be ridiculous if every man claimed to possess an inner voice.

Even then, there is not the least cause for apprehension if many people claim it. Injustice cannot he justified in the name of conscience. Moreover, those who work under the false pretext of an inner voice are not prepared to undergo suffering. Their activities will come to a halt after a little while. It would, therefore, not harm the world if any number of people made this claim. Those who have played pranks with this delicate device are likely to ruin themselves, not others. Newspapers provide many instances of this truth. Many newspapers are at present engaged in spreading poison in the name of public service. This business will not, however, last long. One day or other, people are bound to get sick of it. The Punjab is the greatest culprit in this respect. It is surprising that such dirty journals can manage to pay their way. Why do people encourage them? As long as moneyed men are there, thieves would not starve. Similarly, when a section of the people are prepared to read poisonous writings, such journals are bound to prosper. The only cure consists in the cultivation of a clean public opinion.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-8-1924

26. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SABARMATI,

August 24, 1924

MY DEAR RAJAGOPALACHARI[1],

Mahadev has shown me your letter to him. You must not despond. For Mrs. Naidu to say that I am despondent is a libel. It is true that I am groping. There are things about which I give no clear-cut decisions. But that is to admit that we are voyaging in uncertain waters.

Remember we are satyagrahis. Let me apply to the situation the law of the family. Assume that two brothers are quarrelling over the inheritance. Both want to use it for the good of the family. One at

[1] b. 1879; lawyer, journalist, author and statesman; Governor-General of India, 1948-50

least knows he does not need it to serve the family. The majority of the clan would have him to cling to the inheritance. But is it not the duty of the satyagrahi brother to forgo the inheritance and avoid a quarrel and consequent waste of time and energy? Is the case any different here? However, I am acting cautiously. All I am trying to do is to avoid an unseemly wrangle. I will take up the Presidentship[1], if I find that it will serve the country. There is plenty of time to decide. The returns of spinning are proving most instructive. Is it much use my presiding if the returns remain as poor as they are?[2] Will it not then be better to retire from the Congress and have a rigid programme and a membership that is honest and willing? Is it any use having a vote for the wheel from persons clad in foreign stuff? And think of the exploitation of the simple folk for capturing the Congress! Will the so-called No-changers remain strictly honest? Picture to yourself the whole working. If we cannot retain the Congress without this tug of war, we must willingly surrender it. I have thought deeply over your letters but feel sure that I must retire from any such contest. But for the present I am simply watching. Am waiting for Motilalji's answer.

Now for Malabar. I have applications from many sources. What would you have me to do? I was thinking of sending some one to make special report in collaboration with you. But as nothing has yet been done I would like your suggestions. Plenty of clothing has been collected. Please guide me about its disposal too.

I have not been able to make much headway in Delhi. There is still some prospect of a settlement. But the thing is very delicate.

Yes, your guess is correct. The fair friend is Sarladevi[3]. She wants to bombard me with more stuff but I have refused to give further accommodation. There are some beautiful letters from Brahmins in repudiation. I have published one.

Yours,

M. K. G.

[PS.]

My Programme:

29th to 3rd September Bombay, 4th Poona, 5th Bombay. Then uncertain, probably leave Bombay for Delhi on 5th.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Of Belgaum Congress

[2] *Vide* "First Test'', 24-8-1924.

[3] Niece of Rabindranath Tagore; married to Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari

27. LETTER T0 C. F. ANDREWS

[Before *August 25, 1924*][1]

MY DEAREST CHARLIE[2],

I have your wire[3] from Rangoon. I have received all the articles you have sent.

About opium I have done all, I think, you would have wished. Somehow or other I seem, in this matter, to be acting more for you than for the thing itself.

You will have to consider whether Benarsidas[4] and Vaze[5] should go to Malay States even though you have been.

I hope you have benefited by the change.

You need not worry about me. Things are topsy-turvy but I am quite happy and keeping fairly well.

With love,

Yours,

MOHAN

[PS.]

Please remember me to Gurudev. I hope he is quite well.

Boro Dada[6] continues to send me messages.

From a photostat: G.N. 2638

[1] From the reference to the articles sent by the addressee having been received; *vide* the succeeding item.

[2] 1871-1940; British missionary; co-worker of Gandhiji and Tagore; honoured as "Deenabandhu", brother of the poor

[3] Of August 14; it read: "Arrived safely. My dearest love. Sending articles."

[4] Chaturvedi; resigned from Chiefs' College, Indore, in July 1920; co-worker of Andrews at Shantiniketan and later, co-author of his biography

[5] S. A. Vaze, Secretary of the Imperial Citizenship Association

[6] Dwijendranath Tagore, elder brother of Rabindranath Tagore

28. LETTER TO C.F. ANDREWS

August 25, 1924

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

What is this book by Mr. Oldham, *Christianity and the Race Problem?* K. T. Paul insists upon my securing a copy and reading it. If you recommend it, you should secure it for me.

I have read your article[1] on Burma. The thing is shocking but you have written it in a hurry. I observe that you have seen too much to enable you to analyse properly and trace causes. Moreover you have done what we accuse the globe-trotters of doing. Will you not "rest and be thankful" for a while? Work is prayer but it can also be madness. You were in fever when you wrote your Burmese article. I am printing it nevertheless because it comes from the utmost purity of your heart.

Only I lodge my protest against your doing things by the way.

With love deeper than even you can fathom,

Yours,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 2612

[1] "Indian Labour in Burma" in *Young India,* 28-8-1924; it described the Exploitation and criminal prosecution of Indian labourers by the recruiting contractors, the pitiable condition of women and overcrowding in ships.

29. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Sravana Krishna 11 [*August 25, 1924*]

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. I hope Father is better now. About Pandit Sunderlalji I have written[1] to you all that I could.

The solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem is becoming more difficult each day. My suggestion is the very basis of what you want. I think that if a thorough investigation into the Delhi riots could be made, it would help us to proceed further. I am convinced that ultimately some of the leaders will have to sacrifice their lives.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

137, CANNING STREET
CALCUTTA

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6034. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

30. SPEECH IN REPLY T0 MUNICIPAL ADDRESS, AHMEDABAD[2]

[*August 26, 1924*][3]

The following rendering of Mr. Gandhi's speech in reply to the address of the Ahmedabad Municipality is given here as being of general interest:

Whilst I thank you for the beautiful address you have presented to me, I am painfully conscious of the fact that as a citizen of Ahmedabad I am utterly undeserving of it. In saying so I am not using the language of false or undue modesty. A citizen to deserve an address from the Municipality of his city shouldhave special citizen-service to his credit. And I have none. I do not think it was at all necessary for you to vote this address for the services you have had in mind. But I know that I owe the address to the fact of many of you

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 22-8-1924.

[2] At the Municipal Hall; Vallabhbhai Patel read out the address.

[3] From the Bombay Secret Abstracts

being my co-workers in another field and to the proverbial generosity of the nation to which you and I are proud to belong.

When in response to the invitation of some friends I fixed my abode in this city some years ago I thought I should contribute my share in the service of this city, and be worthy of calling myself its citizen. I had not then the privilege of knowing many of you, but I shared my dreams and visions with Dr. Hariprasad whom I often met. I used to tell him of the citizen-service I had done in South Africa—service which I am thankful was true service inasmuch as it was silent and of which most of you know nothing—and I concerted measures for improving the sanitation and health of the city. We had intended to form a committee of servants who would visit every nook and corner of the city in order to give the citizens object lessons in cleaning closets and streets and in general conservancy by doing the work ourselves. We had also intended to plan and suggest measures for the expansion of the city by opening suburbs and inviting citizens to go and settle there rather than live in congested areas. Such things we know could not be satisfactorily done by fresh taxation. We therefore thought of going with the beggar's bowl to the rich citizens and ask them to donate land in the heart of the city for opening little gardens for the children to play in. We had intended too to think out schemes so as to afford the fullest facility for the education of every child of Ahmedabad. It was also our intention to ensure a supply of pure and cheap milk by municipalizing all the city dairies. Mr. Jivanlal Desai[1] even suggested that I should enter the Municipality myself and endeavour to carry out the plans above adumbrated. But the fates willed it otherwise. A huge hurricane blew over the country in the shape of the Rowlatt Bills taking us all within its sweep. It took some lives both innocent and guilty. I had to do penance for my Himalayan miscalculation.[2] The hurricane still persists though in another shape. We are all trying, however inadequately, to stop it. And I at least feel I have not the leisure to Work out my schemes. But why should Ipretend that I would have succeeded in carrying them out, had I entered the Municipality? Why may I assume that none of your previous presidents or none of you thought or are thinkings the same

[1] Barrister; public worker of Ahmedabad; helped Gandhiji in establishing the Satyagraha Ashram in 1915

[2] On April 14, 1919, Gandhiji decided to undergo a fast for three days; *vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting, Ahmedabad", April 14, 1919.

things as I? How dare I say that no efforts have been made in this direction? I may only say that my heart weeps to see the misery, the squalour, and the dirt in the streets of Ahmedabad as I pass through them. How can starvation and dirt be allowed to exist in a city of such riches and rich traditions?

But I may not pretend that I should have been able to remove all this, had I entered the Municipality. Possibly humilation would have been in store for me in that field as it has been in others. It was perhaps well that Providence ordered things otherwise. As it is, however, even today I stand in the humiliating position of having no citizen-service to my credit, and yet stealing an address I do not deserve. I pray that the Almighty may have consideration for my good intention and forgive my failings. I ask you also to forgive me, and request you to have in mind the dream of an ideal city I have revealed to you. I thank you once again.

Young India, 28-8-1924

31. LETTER TO ABDUL MAJID

August 27, 1924

BHAI ABDUL MAJID[1],

I have your letter. Thanks. I have not forgotten you.

Yours,

GANDHI

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 6213

[1] Vice-chancellor of the National University at Aligarh

32. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Shravan Vad 12 [*August 27, 1924*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I shall reach there on Friday morning by the Mail. I shall be accompanied by three or four persons. I shall stay there till Wednesday and leave for Poona on Wednesday night.

The rest when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Iibrary. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

33. NOTES

LORDS LYTTON'S EXPLANATION

Lord Lytton's letter to the Poet in my opinion aggravates the insult, His Excellency seeks to explain away. I hardly think that the fine grammatical distinction made by him in any way mends matters. No one, I am sure, thought that His Excellency had the women of India in general in his mind when he uttered the indiscreet words. The complaint is that he uttered the charge at all. When a responsible person makes any charge, there is always a double presumption. The one is that he has entirely satisfied himself about it and that he can prove it to the world. The other is that the evil which is the subject matter of the charge is fairly general. Apart from the police testimony, is His Excellency in a position to prove the charge to the satisfaction of the public, say to the satisfaction of the Poet? Does he not know that the police are thoroughly distrusted by the public? Does he not know that they are, so far as the public is concerned, as a rule in the defendant's box? Again assuming that the charge is true of some women and some men, is he in a position to prove that the evil is so general as to call for a public condemnation. Will a responsible Indian be justified in saying that some English civilians are guilty, say, of

[1] The postmark bears the date August 28, 1924, in which year *Shravan Vad 12* corresponded to August 27.

corruption and immorality, because to his knowledge a few rare cases have been so found? Will he not be indignantly called upon to name the parties and take them to a court of law and also to apologize to the civilians for turning what was a charge against particular individuals into a charge against a body? Will he be permitted to take shelter under the adjective, "some"? If Lord Lytton never intended to say more than that Indians contain among them degraded specimens of humanity as every other nation, where was the occasion for his complaint in a serious speech when he knew that every word of his speech would be scanned here and have due weight abroad. I cannot therefore help respectfully suggesting that if he did not mean to cast any aspersion on Indian womanhood and Indian manhood, he should unreservedly withdraw and apologize for the charge. He will thereby add to his dignity and even prestige. If on the other hand he has proofs of the kind I have suggested, he should bravely sustain the charge and place the proofs before the public. A lame explanation is no explanation. It adds injury to insult.

A BADGE OF SUBSERVIENCE

Every Indian publicist knows that when a duty was placed on cotton goods imported, an excise cotton duty was placed on Indian production solely in the interest of Lancashire and it still remains in spite of protests and in spite even of promise that it would be reconsidered. This duty is a continuing reminder to us of the subordination of India's interest to England's. Some friends who only know my strong, indeed passionate, preference for hand-spun to the exclusion of mill-spun cannot understand my advocacy of preference for Indian mill-spun. A little reflection must however show the consistency between the two policies. Foreign cloth must be totally banished from the Indian market, if India is to become an economically free nation, if her peasantry is to be freed from chronic pauperism, if that peasantry is to find honourable employment during times of famine and such other visitations. Protection of her staple industry is her birthright. I would therefore protect the Indian mills against foreign competition even though for the time being it may result in mulcting the poor people. Such mulcting can take place only if the mill-owners be so unpatriotic as to raise prices owing to the monopoly they may secure. I have therefore no hesitation in advocating the repeal of cotton excise duties and imposition of a prohibitive import duty.

Similarly and consistently I would protect hand-spun khaddar against the home mills. And I know that if only foreign competition is avoided, khaddar will be protected without difficulty. Foreign cloth will be banished when public opinion becomes effectively powerful. The same power will insure the protection of khaddar against mills. But my strong belief is that khaddar will come to its own without any unseemly war with the mills. But, whilst khaddar has only a limited number of votaries, they, the votaries, must necessarily preach khaddar in preference to and to the exclusion of yarn and cloth manufactured even in our mills. To give the option is to kill khaddar.

MILL KHADI

But says the impatient patriot, "Surely you can have no corner for the mills in your heart when the mill-owners do not hesitate even to palm off fraudulent imitations of khadi on the gullible public." I know this imitation khadi. I have purposely kept the precious samples in front of me in order to warn me of my duty not to be angry against the mill-owners in question in spite of their unpatriotic conduct. I know that they could have conducted their trade without entering into competition with khadi. They could at least have refrained from miscalling their coarse cloth "khadi" when they well knew that "khadi" was a word used to signify hand-spun cotton cloth. But two Wrongs cannot make one right. My satyagrahi spirit tells me that I may not retaliate. I may not imitate their unpatriotic conduct. I know that, if lovers of khadi remain true to their faith, hand-spun khadi will thrive against all odds. Non-co-operators must, therefore, irrespective of what some mills are wittingly or unwittingly doing to injure khadi, continue to advocate not only the repeal of cotton excise duty but advocate also full protection of that great industry.

INDIANS OVERSEAS

I offer no apology for printing several contributions at a time from Mr. Andrews. They have all been received during the week. They give an indication of his burning love for India and his impatience of every wrong. These contributions give at a glance an idea of the uphill work that lies in front of us in connection with these countrymen of ours scattered in various parts of the world. The Natal ordinance that was forcing up its career even whilst Mrs. Naidu was in South Africa shows that we have to follow up her valuable work. The betrayal both of the Africans and the Indians in Kenya makes the

wrong almost too prodigious for poor India to deal with. The hideous immorality of the system under which our countrymen emigrate to Burma shows the necessity of eternal vigilance. In the palmy days of my third class travelling, I was an eyewitness of what was then possible in the deck passenger traffic between Calcutta and Burma. I then described the conditions of deck passengers as inhuman. I understood then that it was much worse between Madras and Rangoon. The cause was the insatiable greed of the steamship company that permitted the filth and the degradation that went on with its knowledge and connivance. It is difficult to distribute the blame, whether the Government that permits the company to conduct its service in utter neglect of the health and moral well-being of deck passengers or the company that perpetrates the wrong or the passengers who for the sake of earning a living abroad are content to wallow in dirt both physical and moral are the greatest sinners. Mr. Andrews says in a private letter that he hopes to see before long a decided improvement in the condition of the deck passenger traffic. Let us hope that this good Englishman's hope will be fulfilled.[1]

PLEASE NOTE

The secretary, A.I.K.B., sends the following for the benefit of all concerned:

1. Most of the members who sent in their yarn have not given their register numbers. This may probably be due to the fact that the Provincial Khadi Boards have not been able to intimate each member of his register number.

2. Added to the above is the difficulty of finding out the members' names in registers where no alphabetical index is provided. Few provinces have carried out the instruction in the matter of the index asked for. Where members give no register numbers, the absence of an alphabetical index makes it well-nigh impossible to proceed with the sorting.

3. Members and non-members have directly sent their yarn to this office contrary to instructions. They should be told in future to send their contributions to the provinces whether members or non-members.

4. The length of the yarn in most cases is unmeasured. The provincial secretary before despatching the parcel should see that every yarn contribution is properly labelled and described.

[1] For a gist of Andrews' article, *vide* footnote to "Letter to C. F. Andews", 25-8-1924.

Implicit obedience to instructions alone can make the organization of spinning effective and successful. I hope therefore that next month there will be complete adherence to the instructions issued by the A.I.K.B. from time to time.

Young India, 28-8-1924

34. GULBARGA GONE MAD

I hinted last week[1] that there was evidently an organization to the back of the mania for desecrating Hindu temples. Gulbarga is the latest instance in point. Whatever the Hindu provocation, if there was any, the Mussalman outburst has an ominus look about it. The desecration of temples cannot be justified to any circumstance whatsoever. Maulana Shaukat Ali when he heard of Shambhar and Amethi desecrations exclaimed in at of temper that the Mussalmans should not be surprised if the Hindus retaliate and some day find that their mosques have been desecrated. The Hindus may feel flattered or pleased over the Maulana's indignant exclamation. But I do not and I advise the Hindus not to be. Let them understand that I feel, perhaps more keenly than most of them, every fanatic outburst on the part of Mussulmans. I am fully aware of my responsibility in the matter. I know that many Hindus feel that I am responsible for many of these outbursts. For, they argue, I contributed the largest share to the awakening of the Mussalman masses. I appreciate the charge. Though I do not repent of my contribution, I feel the force of the objection. Therefore, if for no other reason, for this at least of greater responsibility, I must feel, more keenly than most Hindus can, these desecrations. I am both an idolater and an iconoclast in what I conceive to be the true sense of the terms. I value the spirit behind idol worship. It plays a most important part in the uplift of the human race. And I would like to possess the ability to defend with my life the thousands of holy temples which sanctify this land of ours. My alliance with the Mussalmans presupposes their perfect tolerance for my idols and my temples. I am an iconoclast in the sense that I break down the subtle form of idolatry in the shape of fanaticism that refuses to see any virtue in any other form of worshipping the Deity save one's own. This form of idolatry is more deadly for being more fine and evasive than the tangible and gross form of worship that

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 21-8-1924, under the sub-title, "Wanton Desecration".

identifies the Deity with a little bit of a stone or a golden image.

True Hindu-Muslim unity requires Mussalmans to tolerate not as a virtue of necessity, not as a policy, but as part of their religion, the religion of others so long as they, the latter, believe it to be true. Even so is it expected of Hindus to extend the same to balance as a matter of faith and religion to the religions of others, no matter how repugnant they may appear to their, the Hindus', sense of religion. The Hindus must therefore reject the idea of retaliation. The law of retaliation we have been trying since the day of Adam and we know from experience that it has hopelessly failed. We are groaning under its poisonous effect. Above all, the Hindus may not break mosques against temples. That way lies slavery and worse. Even though a thousand temples may be reduced to bits, I would not touch a single mosque and expect thus to prove the superiority of my faith to the so-called faith of fanatics. I would love to hear of priests dying at their posts in defence of their temples and their idols. Let them learn to suffer and to die in the defence of their temples even as God allows Himself to be insulted and broken up in the insult and damage done to the idols in which being omnipresent He undoubtedly resides. Hindus will not defend their religion or their temples by seeking to destroy mosques and thus proving themselves as fanatical as the fanatics who have been desecrating temples.

To the unknown Mussalmans who are undoubtedly behind these desecrations I submit :

Remember that Islam is being judged by your conduct. I have not found a single Mussalman defending these outbursts not even under provocation. There seems to me to have been little if any provocation offered by the Hindus. But let us assume that it was otherwise, that Hindus played music near mosques to exasperate Mussalmans, that they even removed a stone from a minaret. Yet I venture to say that Mussalmans ought not to have desecrated Hindu temples. Even retaliation has its limits. Hindus prize their temples above their lives. It is possible to contemplate with some degree of equanimity injury to life but not to temples. Religion is more than life. Remember that his own religion is the truest to every man even if it stands low in the scales of philosophic comparison. But presumption

is against such Hindu provocation. The desecration in Multan was an unprovoked act. I have been trying to find proof for the allegations about Hindu desecration in the places referred to in my article[1] on Hindu-Muslim tension. I have failed to receive any proof in support of them. You will not enhance the reputation of Islam by the acts reported about Amethi, Shambhar, and Gulbarga. If you will permit me to say so, I feel about the honour of Islam as much as I feel about my own religion. This I do because I desire to live in perfect, open and hearty friendship with Mussalmans. I cannot help saying that these desecrations are cutting a deep wound in my heart.

To the Hindus and Mussalmans of Delhi, I say:

Yours is a golden opportunity, if you desire amity between the two communities. In the light of what seems to have happened at Amethi, Shambhar, and Gulbarga, it is doubly your duty to solve the question. You have had the rare good fortune of having amongst you two Mussalmans, Hakim Sahib Ajmal Khan[2] and Dr. Ansari[3], who have hitherto enjoyed the confidence of both the communities. You have therefore noble traditions behind you. You can turn your quarrels to good account by closing the ranks and establishing a heart-friendship that will not break under any strain whatsoever. I have placed my services at your disposal. If you will have me to act as a mediator between you, I am prepared to bury myself in Delhi and, in collaboration with any others whom you may appoint, endeavour to find out the true facts. An authentic story of the events of July last and the circumstances that led to them is a necessary preliminary to a lasting solution. I ask you to come to a decision quickly. The Hindu-Muslim question is the question on a proper solution of which hangs the destiny of India in the immediate future. Delhi can solve the question, for the others are likely to follow what Delhi might do.

Young India, 28-8-1924

[1] *Vide* "Hindu-Muslim Tension : Its cause and Cure", 29-5-1924.

[2] 1865-1927; Muslim physician and politician; took a leading part in the Khilafat movement; president, Indian National Congress, 1921-22

[3] Dr. M. A. Ansari (1880-1936); nationalist Muslim leader; President of the Indian Muslim League, 1920, and of the Indian National Congress, 1927

35. A STUDY IN FIGURES

Here is what may be regarded as the final list of yarn returns for the month ending 15th instant. The list is made up from returns up to 25th instant. All the yarn hereafter received must be carried to the second month's account.

Name of province	Number of representatives	Member spinners	Non-member spinners	Total spinners
Andhra	1653	302	127	429
Assam	250	34	2	36
Ajmer	57	9	6	15
Bombay	242	64	21	85
Burma	36	1	1	2
Bihar	1074	174	34	208
Bengal	1549	401	43	444
Berar	255	1	—	1
C. P. Marathi	942	44	23	67
C.P. Hindi	1324	66	5	71
Delhi	185	6	6	12
Gujarat	408	177	668	845
*Karnatak	163	23	18	41
Kerala	53	2	—	2
Maharashtra	674	I37	25	162
*Punjab	255	23	—	23
*Sindh	262	36	12	48
*Tamilnad	826	79	11	90
United Provinces	1581	135	27	162
Utkal	413	32	5	37
Grand Total	12202[1]	I746	I034	2780

*Registers are incomplete.

The percentage of members complying with the resolution is only 14 per cent of the names on the register. The non-members to send their yarn are over 67 per cent of the spinning members. Apologies for poor returns have been received from almost all the provinces. They expect to show much better results next month. It is

[1] The source has "11302".

no wonder that Gujarat stands easily first on the list. It has the best organization and facilities for learning and practising the art of spinning. Berar stands lowest on the list. I was hoping to be able to congratulate Berar and its spirit of obedience in spite of its disbelief in the efficacy of spinning. I invite the Berar Congress Committee to play the game. And are there no non-members in Berar who believe in spinning? It is worthy of note that Bengal stands next to Gujarat and bids fair to outdo the latter as it ought. Bengal was the home of the finest spinners, the world has ever produced. Bengal felt the full force of the cruel hand of the East India Company. Nothing therefore can be more appropriate than that Bengal should lead the way in giving India the largest number of volunteer spinners. The secret of Bengal being next to Gujarat is again its organization created by Dr. Ray. The workers are willing if the leaders will lead. I hope next week to give an analysis of the quality of yarn received. Suffice it to say for the present that if the response continues we are likely to solve the problem of getting fine counts capable of being woven without difficulty. This has been one of the greatest difficulties in the way of khaddar propaganda.

Young India, 28-8-1924

36. TWO SIDES

The spinning resolution is proving a remarkable study in the mentality of Congressmen. It required a resolution of the A.I.C.C. to make Congressmen understand that for hand-spinning to be universal, it was the duty of at least Congress representatives not only to learn but to practise spinning. They have now begun to see the force of it. Till now, in spite of an earlier resolution of the A.I.C.C. that all such Congressmen should at least learn the art, the majority had not even touched the wheel.

No wonders that spinning has not made enough progress for bringing about an effective boycott of foreign cloth. Now however men who had thought they would never be able to spin have not only begun to do so but have also begun to like it. Here is an extract from a letter:

> I was late in sitting to work. Some more days were taken up in collecting material. Then for a few days more I kept quarrelling with my tools, thus showing the kind of workman that I am. When the wheel became

amenable to reason, the slivers revolted. The silly things refused to yield thread but seemed to have no objection to let out the whole of themselves at a bound. It appeared to me that it was much easier to spin fine speculative thread from a chair of philosophy than to turn out real live yarn from a spinning-wheel. If I had realised that the mischievous Mahatma had this trouble in store for us, I would have thought a hundred times before non-co-operating with my comfortable chair at the college at his call in 1921. I had thought then that as a leader I would have the privilege of descanting upon spinning from a hundred platforms and not have to practise it. It have been rudely disillusioned. Well, I accept the inevitable as retreat now is out of the question. I send you the result of my labours, poor as it is. The conditions laid down have not in a single point been fulfilled. But I can assure you my heart has not failed and I yet hope to show very creditable results.

I can multiply such instances of late, though zealous, response.

But the reader should know the other side also. Here is a free translation of the only letter of its kind received from the president of a subordinate Congress Committee. He says:

> I regard as improper this resolution of the A.I.C.C. Today it is the spinning-wheel or the resignation. Tomorrow it may be "cook your own meal or resign", or it may be "shave your heads clean or resign".
>
> I distrust the philosophy of the charkha. I distrust its advantages. In short I distrust it just as much as Mahatma Gandhi trusts it. It is his hobby. I am not going to submit to the resolution nor am I going to resign. Let the committee expel me.

To belong to an institution is no joke. To be its president is a serious thing. This gentleman has been probably giving his vote in favour of the wheel every time, votes have been taken. But now that it has reached the testing stage, he proclaims his disbelief from the housetop. Better late than never. I therefore congratulate him on the courage of his convictions, but I am afraid I cannot put up his disobedience as an example worthy of imitation. No organization can be run with success if its members, especially its officers, refuse to carry out its policy and hold on to it in spite of opposition to it. For winning swaraj, one requires iron discipline. Let this friend and those who think with him realize that we are engaged in the very difficult and delicate task of wresting authority from an organization whose members are able, industrious, intelligent, brave and above all, trained in habits of exact discipline. Assuming that we desire a bloodless

victory, I respectfully suggest to the friend that even though the charkha may be useless for the purpose intended, its value is inestimable as a measure of discipline. I suggest to him that as a measure of discipline it would not be a worthless idea, even that of requiring everyone to cook for himself, or to shave himself clean. Such tests, ridiculous though they may otherwise appear to be have a value all their own for they give the measure of obedience evoked. All protest before the passing of such measures is legitimate and sometimes obligatory. After the passing there can be no room for reasoning. Willing and complete obedience or resignation is an absolute duty on the part of members.

Young India, 28-8-1924

37. SOUTH INDIA FLOOD RELIEF

The response to the appeal on behalf of the afflicted people of the South continues to be satisfactory both in cash and in cloth which is daily accumulating. But the most satisfactory feature of the response is the way in which the poor people are coming forward to help. Untouchables have come forward with their liberal help. I have before me a touching letter in which a whole family of them have sent monies saved out of their special self-denial. The teachers and the boys of the Proprietary High School have sent Rs. 720. The Mahavidyalaya has collected Rs. 500 of which Rs. 200 they have spent in buying khaddar for the naked. I am sure that the knowledge of such donations will bring true comfort to our distressed countrymen. I hope the workers will remember that nature has made no distinction between Mussalman and Hindu, Christian and Jew and that they too will make no such distinction. We may not mind all the denominations giving relief through their respective organizations, but it will be unbearable if they confine relief only to their own flock.

Young India, 28-8-1924

38. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Shravan Vad 13 [*August 28, 1924*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. It seems our letters have crossed. You will have received my letter today. This time I shall not run. I think it will be best to get down at Grant Road only. How long can one keep running?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

39. SPEECH IN REPLY TO CORPORATION ADDRESS, BOMBAY[2]

August 29, 1924

MR. PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION AND LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I need offer no apology for my having addressed you first in my mother tongue. But as Bombay is an essentially cosmopolitan city, it is but meet that I should give you the substance of my reply in English also.

I thank you for this address and the sentiments expressed therein. You have emphasized what may be called my humanitarian services. For me humanitarian service, or rather service of all that lives, is religion. And I draw no distinction between such religion and politics. Indeed I cannot conceive a life of full service without its touching politics. I am endeavouring to prove by my experiment that politics without a religious backing is a dangerous pastime resulting in nothing but harm to individuals and nations indulging in them.

But I see that my attempt to introduce religion, as here defined, into our political life, has frightened some of my best friends and co-

[1] The postmark bears the date August 28, 1924. *Shravan Vad 13* in 1924 corresponded to August 28.

[2] At Sir Cowasji Jehangir Hall. The address expressed satisfaction at Gandhiji's recovery from illness and referred to his invaluable services.

workers. I am between Scylla and Charybdis. Whilst these friends fear my attempt to treat politics in terms of religion, another group would have me to restrict myself to what they imagine is social service. But if I have faith in my mission I must stand unmoved. I believe that the time is fast coming when politicians will cease to fear the religion of humanity and humanitarians will find entrance into political life indispensable for full service. Hence it is that I am inviting all India to respond to the message of the spinning-wheel and khaddar and to promote the establishment of heart-unity between Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians, Jews and others who vainly consider that the God of each is different from the God of the rest. Hence also do I feel that for Hindus it is irreligion to treat any body of men and women as untouchables by reason of birth. These things I hold to be as much politics as they are undoubtedly humanitarian service of the highest type. The best manner then in which I can return my thanks for your address is to invite you to join me and help me in that work and justify your title to be called the premier Corporation in India.

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-8-1924

40. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

BOMBAY,

August 30, 1924

DEAR MOTILALJI,

Mrs. Naidu handed me yesterday, your letter[1] to me. The original must have reached Sabarmati by now. I made a full surrender, i.e., as full as I am capable of making, in my two letters[2] to you . . . .[3]

You will have me therefore almost on your terms. The "almost" is necessary because there are some few things I hold dearer than life and all the ties of the world. But if you will letme have something willingly and whole-heartedly, i.e., knowing that it is right to give, then I want this:

Our resolution should

1. reiterate the Congress belief in the principle and policy of full non-co-operation including the boycott of legislative bodies;

[1] Of August 25, 1924
[2] Of August 9 and 15, 1924
[3] As in the source

2. but suspend them [boycotts] all save that of foreign cloth up to the end of 1925;

3. should invite everybody to join the Congress;

4. should exclude the boycott of Empire goods;

5. and should confine Congress activity solely to the spread of hand-spinning and hand-spun khaddar, Hindu-Muslim unity, and for Hindus the removal of untouchability.

This means that Congress as such should have nothing to do either with Councils or boycotts but they may form their own organizations independently of the Congress to go on with Councils and other activities not inconsistent with the Congress activity. Therefore there can be no organization to prosecute the Council or other boycotts suspended under the resolution. Support of the existing national schools should continue and where possible new ones may be opened but they may not have any connection with the Government

The four-anna franchise should be abolished and instead each person becoming a member of a Congress organization should be a khaddar-wearer, should contribute per month as a condition of membership at least two thousand yards of yarn of his own spinning, it being open to everyone to contribute the full quota for the whole year at a time.

I see no other way of making the Congress organization a real and living thing, nor can I see any hope for the poor of India without the spinning-wheel and we shall never fire their imagination unless we spin ourselves.

There are other alterations I should suggest in the Constitution but they need not be mentioned now. They are meant purely for effective and expeditious working. We should have a declaration that the Working Committees should be regarded as executive bodies and the A.I.C.C. a deliberative body and that should contain only those who are committed to the full programme of the Congress. But under my proposal, you would be as eligible for election to the Working Committee as I. What I mean is that if the four boycotts are suspended, Council-entry or practice in a law-court should by itself be no bar. As a matter of fact it may be inadvisable for a busy lawyer or a busy Councillor to come into Working Committee whose members would be expected to give their whole time and attention to the three things of the Congress programme.

Under my plan again there should be no exception in favour of Bengal.[1] As a matter of fact Swarajists may organize themselves fully in every province without let or hindrance from the Congress. But the Congress organization everywhere should have only one programme. Thus Das[2] may convert the Congress organization into a Swaraj organization and form himself and permit others to form a Congress organization pledged only to the three things. The idea is this: The Congress will neither help nor hinder other organizations but the latter should *all*, if their members are Congressmen, help the Congress programme. Conversely, Congressmen who believe in many other things not prohibited by the Congress may join other organizations for their other activities. . . .

Of the business part as far as I can see only the qualifications of membership may prove an obstacle but I hope you will see that if *we all* believe in khaddar even as an economic necessity, the acceptance of my proposition is a necessity.

You will observe that I have written the letter as the thoughts have come to me. I do not mind for my sake, as I wish, to live upon your sufferance. No more of domestic wrangling for me.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 10140

41. STATEMENT ON NATIONAL UNITY

August 31, 1924

New India writes: "Mr. Gandhi made a statement on August 31, published on September l, which ran as follows:"

I have resolved that there should be no opposition from me either at the Belgaum Congress or before that, so as to divide the country. I have already told Pandit Motilal Nehru that my attitude was that of perfect surrender, because we have become a house completely divided. Without anger or hatred, we must make Herculean efforts to get out of that condition, and the country could work, not for her own good only, but for the good of humanity.

With the exception of some details as to the "surrender", to be

[1] As proposed by Motilal Nehru in his letter

[2] C. R. Das (1870-1925); President, Indian National Congress, 1922; founded the Swaraj Party in 1923

published when a few people who have the right to be consulted have been invited to concur, the nature of the main agreement at which we arrived is indicated in what is said above. The spirit of us both is that we love India more than our own methods, and that we believe that India's freedom is necessary for human progress.

The Bombay Chronicle, 6-9-1924

42. SPEECH AT EXCELSIOR THEATRE, BOMBAY[1]

August 31, 1924

We have spoken so much today that it would not, I feel, be wrong if in deference to Sarojini Devi's advice I hold my tongue. There is, however, one difficulty in doing so. I have left my weapon at home. If I had brought it, I would have given you an object lesson and asked you to take a wheel and start spinning along with me.

I had no idea that I would receive this advice today from Sarojini Devi, or that it would be my lot to listen to so much praise. I am tired of listening to praise. Believe me when I say that I do not like this praise. But I shall not say more on this subject just now. I shall only say that I feel bound to those who have praised me and I request them all, as did Shri Jayakar, to help me by their silence. I shall be able to take up heavy responsibilities if I have your silent support.

Before I say something, I wish to elicit atonement from one or two persons. Before we attend any meeting, we must learn good manners. We should know and respect the disposition of our guest. If you cannot do this, it is better that you do not attend the meeting. Two or three persons have violated this etiquette of a meeting. What Bhai Jamnadas[2] said was literally true. Much dirty work has been done in the shadow of 'Mahatma'. The word 'Mahatma' stinks in my nostrils; and, in addition to that, when somebody insists that everyone must call me 'Mahatma' I get nausea, I do not wish to live. Had I not known that the more I insist on the word 'Mahatma, not being used, the more does it come into vogue, I would most certainly have insisted. In the Ashram where I live, every child, brother and sister has orders not to use the word 'Mahatma'. None should refer to me as 'Mahatma'

[1] Under the auspices of the Parsi Rajakiya Mandal to honour Gandhiji and to raise money for Malabar Flood Relief Fund; M. R. Jayakar presided.

[2] Jamnadas Dwarakadas, a leading member of the Home Rule Leagues

even in writings. I should be referred to as Gandhi or Gandhiji. Those who heckled Bhai Jamnadas have insulted me, have violated peace. Ours is a peaceful struggle. There can be no peace without modesty. Peaceful devoid of modesty is lifeless. We are worshippers of the life-force; and living peace consists of modesty and discretion. I would therefore advise those who heckled Jamnadas to apologize. Jamnadas paid me high tributes, but even if he had said that there is no man as pernicious as Gandhi—and anyone who thinks it has a right to say it—nobody has a right to obstruct him, he should be listened to with respect.

On hearing this, a gentleman from the first gallery opposite rose and bowed down with folded hands. Gandhiji said:

That is enough. But there are yet one or two persons in the upper gallery. Will they not apologize? Those who do not apologize, I would say, are unfit for swaraj.

Voices were raised: "Stand up and apologize." Two persons stood up and apologized. Gandhiji was pleased; and as he started speaking, the last remaining person stood up and apologized.

I would now ask everyone to avoid this error. There are as many minds as there are men. How will things proceed if we do not tolerate one another? Hindus cannot tolerate one another? Hindus cannot tolerate Muslims and Muslims reciprocate the feeling and temples are destroyed. If both learn tolerance, all disputes will end. All should practise tolerance throughout their lives. Once this attitude spreads, Hindus, Muslims, Parsis will all tolerate opposition. The greatest obstacle in the way of our progress is intolerance. I am trying to overcome it. I am a small man; I am no superman. Had I been a superman, I would have eliminated intolerance. I have yet to acquire purity, love, humility and discrimination; otherwise you would have noted a spark in my eyes, a fire in my words, which would have instantly convinced you that such is not the way of peaceful non-co-operation. I have said before, "Dyer is not our enemy, nor O'Dwyer; you must not look upon them as enemies. Be kind to those who have been hostile to you." If then we are expected not to insult them, how can we insult Jamnadas? If a guest comes to us, we honour him by offering him a seat next to us, asking our kith and kin to make room for him. If Jamnadas is our opponent, he is a guest, and therefore he should not be insulted. If he is our brother, there can be no question of insulting him.

I was very sorry when you showed disrespect to Jamnadas; but that sorrow has been turned into happiness because you have very humbly apologized for it. This has pleased me very much. It will, of course, do good to those who apologized; but it will also do good to us who witnessed the sight. I do not want to raise the issue of Councils here, but, with due apologies to Bhai Jayakar[1], I would submit that such a sight could not be witnessed in the Councils. In this atonement I see the roots of true freedom.

It would not have mattered if Shri Devdhar[2] had not mentioned Malabar; because we have gathered today to honour none else than the brothers and sisters from Malabar. You have made up the Fund through your donations—small or large. Shri Devdhar's speech had a double purpose. He demanded from you further acts of selflessness, and I need not say that I am one with him there. The readers of *Young India* and *Navajivan* know that I ask even children that what they would do when their own brothers or sisters are starving. Would you not give them a share of your food and clothes? You should eat less, wear fewer clothes and give a share for Malabar. I seek such charity from you. I am often asked whether or not such charity is well directed. This criticism is both proper and improper. There can be no irregularity where Shri Devdhar is concerned. On many matters his opinions and mine differ very widely. I do not at all like many of his views; but there is absolutely no doubt about his purity. Whenever I went to his austere home I felt that it was the tabernacle of the spirit. This brother of ours goes to wild forests, faces extreme heat and cold, puts up with unwholesome climate or surroundings —all for the sake of selfless service. How can we fail to help such a man?

Well, when such a one speaks against the spinning-wheel, I say, "Do not listen to him."

India expects many things from me. I am expected to chalk out a path at Belgaum, which will unite all people or make them tolerant of the opposite views. I cannot deceive myself. I do not believe that I am worthy of all the praise that was showered on me. The praise only indicates that people expect great things of me. Great love, great sacrifice and great service are expected of me. How can I fulfil these

[1] M. R. Jayakar (1873-1959); Liberal leader, Judge, Federal Court of India, 1937

[2] G.K. Devdhar (1879-1935); member and later President, Servants of India Society

expectations? My body has become weak on account of my sins. A man does not become ill without sin. God has given a body for us to keep in good trim. Sin consists in conscious or unconscious breach of divine or natural law. One is punished for an unconscious violation of a king's command. How, then, can the breach of natural law escape punishment? A thief is not pardoned. If a crime is committed in ignorance, the punishment may be reduced; that is the only difference. I have become ill on account of the sins that I have committed. As long as I commit such sins, consciously or unconsciously, I am an imperfect man. How should an imperfect man advise others? I am therefore in a great fix. Moreover, I do not have any other weapon. Satyagraha is my only weapon. Till now I have placed before the country the aggressive aspect of satyagraha Henceforth I intend to present only its peaceful, winsome and profound aspect. If this can be accepted, our victory is certain. I think I have mastered the technique of satyagraha. I have a fear that India, in the present circumstances, cannot wield the aggressive form of satyagraha. We can do a lot of work before the Belgaum session by a deliberate adoption of the peaceful path. Co-operators, Non-co-operators, staunch No-changers, Pro-changers, Swarajists, Liberals, Conventionists, Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians, Jews, all can join together in this work. Satyagraha does not mean mere civil disobedience.

I have offered many suggestions to Pandit Motilalji; I did so only yesterday. All people know how close I am to Panditji. I have opened out my heart in a letter that I wrote to him yesterday; because if I can persuade him I shall be able to persuade others. The scholarly Mrs. Besant[1] had come to see me yesterday. I explained the same thing to her also. In view of her hoary age and mature experience, I placed my views before her like a son pleading before his mother. I am going to explain my views to Shri Shastriar[2] with the same humility. I would make them equally clear to English people. We would stand to gain directly, if all these people understand the position. I would not discuss it here in detail. You should presume that it includes the spinning-wheel. In all my plans, the wheel must find a place some-

[1] Annie Besant (1847-1933); President of the Theosophical Society; President, Indian National Congress, 1917

[2] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri (1869-1946); scholar and statesman; was President of the Servants of India society

where or other. I cannot survive without it, nor can India. I believe the moment has arrived when even you cannot dispense with it.

You regard me as a Mahatma, not because of my Truth, nor for my Non-violence, but on account of my deep attachment for the poorest of the poor. Whatever happens, I can never desert the poor in their rags. That is why you feel that Gandhi counts for something. I would, therefore, tell Ratansi, Jamnadas, Pickthall, Jayakar and all others that if they love me they should strive and ensure food and raiment for the villagers whom I love—you must devote yourself to the service of these poor people. How would you serve them? I shall tell you that. Not by a cold-hearted counting of beads. Such counting does not lead to liberation but to degradation, because one who is turning the rosary outwardly is sharpening a dagger inside his heart. I do concede that my heart may be impure even while plying the spinning-wheel, but the product of spinning is not lost even if the heart is impure. I may tell you that I chant the name of God when I spin for the sake of the children of the poor in India. I ask you to do the same. This may prove wrong. Economists may tell us in the future that we were mistaken, but they will have to accept that there was some gain even in this error; because it yielded some yarn at least and increased the quantity of cloth in the country. I consider myself a disciple of Sir Dinshaw Wachha[1]. He has said that Indians need 13.5 yards of cloth per head; and they get 9.5 yards. It is therefore necessary to produce 4 yards per head more. If everyone of you spins 100 yards of yarn every day, what will it amount to? The proverb, "The more the strands, the stronger the rope", is significant. If all of you start spinning, your yarn will cover and bind the whole of India. I have an unwavering faith that once you start spinning you will say that Gandhi had spoken the truth.

I am convinced that the sole cause for your love for me is that I have identified myself with the poor. I can become a *Bhangi* in the company of a *Bhangi* and I can do the work of a *Dhed* along with a *Dhed.* If untouchability is not eradicated during my lifetime and if I am to take another birth, I wish to be born a *Bhangi*. If untouchability persists and if I have the strength to abandon the Hindu religion, I shall read *Kalma* or become a Christian. I have, however, such great faith in my religion that I must live and die in it. For this reason also, I would wish to be born a *Bhangi*. Were I to be re-born. If you have

[1] 1844-1936; Parsis statesman; President, Indian National Congress, 1901

any sympathy for *Bhangis* or *Dheds* or the poor in Orissa, you should forget foreign and mill-made cloth and wear cloth woven by the *Dheds* from yarn spun by the poor. How can they provide us the cloth of our choice? They are a humble, frightened folk. Many a sister in Kathiawar does not earn even an Anna or two at the end of a day's labour. They were given the spinning-wheel and a little money started trickling in. Today their spinning-wheels have ceased plying. They have, therefore, to groan for a few coins. There are many sisters like these. If I can tell them that even men and women like Jayakar, Sarojini, Mrs. Besant, the grand-daughter of Dadabhai[1], Shastriar, and so on spin, I shall not be ashamed of going back to them and making them spin again.

I do not wish to open free kitchens in India; on the contrary, I want to close them. I look upon free kitchens as black blots on our face. Hence I wish to make everyone self-reliant. I would not give a few coins to these women as charity, but would make them self-reliant. You should perform a sacrifice if you wish to make these sisters, other poor people and *Dheds* and *Bhangis* self-reliant. Let everyone contribute 2,000 yards of self-spun yarn. Then I shall deliver swaraj within one year.

But please understand me. I am not talking of a time limit. I am not saying that swaraj will be secured if you alone spin. I am positively asserting that swaraj will be secured if everyone spins. It is certain that if you start spinning, you will thereby make others spin. The *Bhagavad Gita* says that masses follow the elite. It is said that the Prince of Wales sets the fashion in dress. You are considered or wish to be considered the elite of India. Would the others not follow if you set the pace?

I shall, however, not pursue this argument. Whether swaraj is attainable through your spinning or not, if you have a fellow-feeling for the beggar, I shall request you to spin out of sympathy for him. You should identify yourself with the beggar and develop a bond of sympathy for him. Mirabai[2] has chanted:

God has bound me with a string of yarn,

I am a puppet in His hands,

[1] Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917); President, Indian National Congress, 1886, 1893 and 1906

[2] Medieval saint-poetess of Rajasthan; queen of Mewar; she spent her days in devotion to Shri Krishna, incurring her husband's displeasure

I have been stabbed with the dagger of love.

If you have such love for millions of your brothers and sisters, you should all tie yourselves up with a string of yarn. I know only this economics and nothing else.

I would refer to another matter. You must have heard news of the riots at Nagpur. The minds of Hindus as well as Muslims are rankling. How can I offer them anything else than my three-fold programme? You must observe these three items during the current peaceful experiment with satyagraha. If all of you remember this, I am confident, we can all stand together on a single platform. Let us put aside the issues of boycotting courts, Councils, etc. We cannot all agree on them, but let us stand together on such issues as we agree on.

Then Gandhiji briefly repeated the same ideas for the sake of that section of the audience which did not know Gujarati. The ideas were the same; but there was something new too.

I have given vent to all that was seething in my heart. I am now too tired to say anything more. I have said many things. The gist of it is that my nature has two sides—a severe and a mild side. The severe or the fierce phase has estranged many of my friends. My wife, my son, my departed brother were alienated from me. In the other phase, love appears on the surface itself; but in the former phase of the mind, the love has to be looked for. There are other people as sternly self-critical as myself. I am convinced that when I am severe, there is not a trace of hatred within me and yet that severe phase is capable of leading to a fearful Himalayan blunder. However, students of psychology say that both the phases of the mind arise out of the same cause. Excessive love can assume a fierce face. If I torture my wife, it hurts me more. If I caused pain to any Englishman with whom I was working day and night in South Africa, I suffered greater pain during the process. If Englishmen have been hurt by my present activities, my sorrow is the greater.

It is not as if I love Englishmen the less; I love them as much as my kith and kin. That is why I say to them: “You have exploited us for long and continue to do so. You are, however, not aware of your sin. You are terrorizing us. You will repent.” I had to assume a fierce attitude in order to awaken England. But now that fierce phase is over. I have told Motilalji that there is no fight left in me. I have laid down my arms. How can a divided house, where hatred and bitterness are rife, do anything else? I have to make Herculean

efforts to improve the situation. At the Belgaum session or before it, I shall oppose nothing and no one in a manner that will create divisions in the country. I shall confess that I am defeated, I shall be humble and hope to unite all through my humility. If India abandons her stupor and secures her freedom in this manner, humanity will learn a lesson from it. What more should I say? I pray to God that He may lead me on the right path, remove any trace of hostility, hatred or anger that may be left in me and give me a message which will inspire and rouse everybody to action.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-9-1924

43. SPEECH AT PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

August 31, 1924

In the circumstances, those who doubt the power of the spinning-wheel to gain freedom must argue against it when there is a resolution in its favour; but if they fail to win a majority, they should respect the verdict of the majority. If, however, someone is opposed to spinning on principle, he should leave the Congress— that is the path of justice, modesty and discretion.

I shall not answer today the many other doubts. I am engaged in consultations and you will get the answers before long. My watch runs fast, yours crawls. But I must take you with me as I run, and I am a lover of work whether you call me a Swarajist or a No-changer. I shall, therefore, find some way out. Till then I would advise you to bend your neck and spin.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-9-1924

[1] In reply to criticism of the Ahmedabad Resolution on spinning

44. LETTER TO SECRETARY, SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, VYKOM[1]

[*September 1, 1924*][2]

DEAR FRIENDS.

I thank you and all the friends for the gift of precious yarn. May God bless your efforts. You must strive unto death.[3]

The Hindu, 4-9-1924

45. LETTER TO SHWAIB QURESHI

September 1, 1924

MY DEAR SHWAIB[4],

I had hoped to have a long chat with you yesterday but that was not to be.

Take care of Kristodas. God take care of both of you.

You must not pay the railway fare. Please let the account at my disposal pay for it.

Of course you will not resist Hyderabad authorities in any way. Ours is not a public inquiry. Indeed not an inquiry at all in the proper sense of the term. It is merely gathering information for my sake.

You will see all parties who will permit themselves to be seen by you including officials and *vakeels* for both parties. If you can bring photographs, please bring.

After you have seen everything, I suggest each of you writing out your own impressions and then comparing them and evolving an agreed report or statement.

Kristodas tells me, you are sad and despondent. How can that be? You have abundant faith in God. He cares for the least of His creatures. Why then should they care at all? Is it not enough that we do His will, as we know it, and be cheerful?

Yours,

M. K. G.

From a photostat: G.N. 5600

[1] Acknowledging receipt of the quota of yarn sent by the inmates

[2] Released by the Associated Press of India on this dates

[3] In the Vykom satyagraha

[4] Editor, *New Era*; also of *Young India* during Gandhiji's imprisonment in 1922

46. LETTER. TO GENERAL TRAFFIC MANAGER, BOMBAY

[On or after *September 1, 1924*]

SIR,

The T.M., Ajmer, informs me[1] that my letter of 18th ultimo was transferred to your office. I shall thank you to favour me with an early reply.

From a photostat: S.N. 10120

47. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

BOMBAY,
September 2 [*1924*]

DEAR MOTILALJI,

This is again early morning after prayer. I hope you received my long letter. I expect a wire[2] from you. I was unable to revise it. I cannot now recall the exact wordings of the personal part. After all, Mrs. Naidu did not read it as the letter was posted before she could read it. But the business part, of which I have a copy, she and many others have read.

This letter like the former is meant to be a plea for Jawaharlal. He is one of the loneliest young men of my acquaintance in India. The idea of your mental desertion of him hurts me. Physical desertion I hold to be impossible. Needless to say Manzar Ali and I often talked of the Nehrus whilst we were together at Yeravda. He said once that if there was one thing for which you lived more than any other, it was for Jawahar. His remark seemed to be so true. I don't want to be the cause direct or indirect of the slightest breach in that wonderful affection.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10146

[1] In his letter of August 23, 1924

[2] *Vide* footnote to "Telegram to Motilal Nehru", on or after 2-9-1924.

48. LETTER TO A FRIEND

[*September 2, 1924*][1]

DEAREST FRIEND,

Though we rarely write to each other and rarely meet, you are what I have described you.

I am sick of the domestic fight that is raging in the country. I have therefore entirely capitulated. I do not want to be in the Congress if I must be without all old friends. I have talked to Mrs. Besant. I am in correspondence with Pandit Motilalji and now I am putting myself in touch with you. Shall the spinning-wheel be the only bar? Will you not wear khaddar and take the spinning-wheel yourself for the sake of the poor and the downtrodden of India? unless you are opposed to it as a matter of principle, I want you to consider my proposition seriously enough !

I hope you are keeping well. Please reply at Sabarmati.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10146 A

[1] This letter appears to have been written at the same time as the proceding letter. They are typed on the same sheet. The addressee's name, however, is not available.

49. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

Bhadarva Sud 3 [*September 2, 1924*][1]

CHI. KANTI[2],

I have not asked you to write to me. You have become very wise. I had therefore nothing to say to you. But you should certainly write to me in a clear and good hand and let me know your ideas. Take care of Rasik[3] and ask him to write to me. We have had good rains here. Nothing has been decided yet about Delhi.

Blessing from

BAPU

CHI. KANTI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM

SABARMATI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 10149

50. SPEECH AT NATIONAL MEDICAL COLLEGE, BOMBAY

September 2, 1924

Mahatmaji in his short address expressed his great joy at seeing the National Medical College progressing so satisfactorily. He said that when Dr. Sathaye first asked his advice about starting the institution he was rather diffident, as the task was so huge and beset with many difficulties. But now he was pleased to see for himself that his fears were unfounded and that the institution had achieved such amarvellous success. He expected that the leading men in the Medical profession would continue to give their support, and he also hoped that the rich men of Bombay would remove the housing difficulty of the College and also give money to support it. In the end, he exhorted the students to wear khaddar and spin for half an hour as a national duty.

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-9-1924

[1] From the postmarks

[2] Sons of Harilal Gandhi, Gandhiji's eldest son

[3] *ibid*

51. SPEECH AT CONGRESS COMMITTEE MEETING, BOMBAY

[*September 2, 1924*][1]

Speaking at the Congress Committee at Mandvi, Mr. Gandhi urged that the two parties in the Congress should not fight amongst themselves, but must unite. He himself did not want to fight and admitted his defeat. It was India's misfortune that they had differences which were retarding progress. He had written to Pandit Motilal Nehru that he (Gandhi) was not going to fight, but had laid down his arms. The speaker appealed to all for spinning, Hindu-Muslim unity and removal of untouchability on which their independence rested. Swaraj without khaddar would be for educated men of Bombay, but for agriculturists there could be no swaraj without khaddar. Export of cotton meant their ruin. Fight between Hindus and Mohammedans over mosques and temples was cowardice, not bravery. He exhorted them in the name of God to spin and serve the country.

The Hindu, 4-9-1924

52. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU[2]

[On or after *September 2, 1924*]

THANKS YOUR WIRE GREAT RELIEF.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10147

[1] From the Bombay Secret Abstracts

[2] In reply to his telegram received on September 2; it read: "Your letter. Story about Jawahar is a tissue of lies from beginning to end. Did not insist on Indu going to school but merely expressed wish which Jawahar dutifully obeyed. School wholly unconnected with Government. Jawahar's objection being based on unsuitability of instruction imparted. I was solely prompted by desire give Indu companionship of children of her age regardless of instruction and Jawahar eventually agreed. . . ."

53. LETTER TO SANTOK GANDHI

Wednesday, Bhadarva Sud 4 [*September 3, 1924*][1]

CHI. SANTOK[2],

What a sad occasion on which to write to you! You must have received my telegram sent to your Rajkot address and you must all have returned to the Ashram. Remember what you have learnt at the Ashram. I hope you have not let a single tear flow from your eyes. The world feel's the grief of bereavement, but you should curb it, and realize the meaning of death. He who has understood the second chapter of the *Gita* will not grieve over what is inevitable. It is on such occasions that we should be guided by the teachings of the scriptures.

My relations with Shivlalbhai were intimate. I respected him as my elder and on many matters I consulted him alone. Our relations subsisted till the end. They did not always find outward expression as the occasions for consultation were rare, but whenever we met we could read each other's feelings in our eyes. I have always known him as an honest banker. Let us remember his good qualities and try to emulate them.

What news has Jamnadas brought in regard to Rukhi[3]? I am always thinking about her. But I do not think of anything else so long as I do not hear from Jamnadas. Rukhi has sent word that she cannot write letters. This is not true. She ought to write to me and tell me freely whatever she has on her mind.

I have not written a separate letter to anyone in Rajkot, as I know nobody there. If anyone is still there, you may send a copy of this letter to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 6199. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] The letter refers to the death of the addressee's father which occurred in 1924.
[2] Wife of Maganlal Gandhi
[3] Addressee's daughter

54. NEVER TO BE FORGOTTEN

Whilst I was listening to praises of me at the Excelsior Theatre in Bombay on Sunday last,[1] I felt that Mr. Bharucha had staged a play for the benefit of the distressed people in the South. But an incident changed it into a serious business for me. Mr. Bharucha had endeavoured to bring on the platform people belonging to different political parties. He had therefore put up Mr. Jamnadas Dwarakadas as one of the speakers. Mr. Jamnadas spoke of me as Gandhiji instead of 'Mahatma'. Two or three in the audience who could not brook the insult of my being called 'Gandhiji' required the speaker to call me 'Mahatma'. Mr. Jamnadas bravely but courteously persisted in calling me Gandhiji though, he said, he loved me no less than any in the audience. He protested that his manner of addressing me was more pleasing to me. The interruptions, however, continued almost to the end. It was nevertheless most creditable to the meeting that the cry against Mr. Jamnadas was not taken up by the audience. Mr. Jamnadas was able to finish his speech without difficulty. All the same the interruption jarred on me. I saw that those admirers of me dishonoured and misinterpreted their idol where as Mr. Jamnadas honoured and interpreted me properly by courteously but firmly reiterating his dissent from some of my political views and by refusing to call me 'Mahatma' at the dictation of any person. I therefore asked the friends who had been so discourteous to publicly apologize. I drew their attention to the fact that the rules of public meetings demanded a respectful behaviour even towards opponents. The code of courtesy was still more exacting for non-violent non-co-operators. The non-violence of non-co-operators obliged them to respect their opponents even as they respected their friends. Moreover, the audience must respect the sentiments of those in whose honour they might meet. The interrupters should have known that I had often said that the name 'Mahatma' stank in my nostrils. It did, for instance, at the time of the Bombay riots of 1921. The use of the adjective was prohibited at the Ashram. Mr. Jamnadas had therefore done what was after my heart. After saying this I paused for the apology. The audience helped me by murmuring approval and adviceto the interrupters to apologize. And the latter bravely stood up and apologized with

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Excelsior Theatre, Bombay", 31-8-1924.

folded hands. It was a sight that I cannot easily forget. In resuming my speech and in thanking the interrupters for their apology, I could not help remarking that the seed of swaraj lay more in such true and gentlemanly conduct than in any number of eloquent speeches or debates and votes in the Councils. The penitent members of the audience had brought swaraj nearer by their frank and fearless repentance.[1]

This prelude which was both unhappy and happy at the same time emphasized the note underlying my speech and gave it an expectedly dignified turn.

It enabled me in dealing with Malabar to pay a tardy tribute to the inexhaustible capacity for social service of Mr. Devdhar and to show that though in politics we seemed to differ as poles asunder my regard for his personal character, devotion to duty and self-sacrifice remained undiminished. I then presented the spinning-wheel as a symbol of our identification with the poorest of the soil. Mere lip profession was not enough. Even a genuine sensation of pity was not enough. We wanted the poor to feel that, if they toiled for us, we spin for their sakes. The halffed millions were in a state of blank despair. They had lost faith in themselves and in us. They had resigned themselves to death by slow and painful starvation. They had become so accustomed to livings on charity doles that they almost refused to work. They had become less than animals, they were living sepulchres. If we wanted these millions to earn a few pice by doing honest and honourable toil, the only possible instrument to present them with was the gentle and graceful spinning-wheel which could be turned even by the most delicate. The only effective way of inducing the millions to exchange a listless, inane life of beggary for that of dignified and easy labour was for us to invite them to take up the spinning-wheel by turning it ourselves. In the words of the *Gita* what the great ones did, the simple folk copied.

From the spinning-wheel I came to the hope that was expressed by so many friends that I would show a way out of the present awful impasse in national life. I told the audience that I was aware of my responsibility and was trying to devise a way out. I was in correspondence with Pandit Motilalji. But I had nothing else to suggest but satyagraha. The people had hitherto known it in its

[1] The source has “their”.

terrible aspect of civil disobedience and non-co-operation. But it had a benign aspect which was its permanent part. Whatever shape it took, it must now be the benign aspect of satyagraha which must be presented to the public. We had quarrelled too long and often on trivials. We were heedlessly divided. There was no reason why we could not find a common denominator of action. There must be some things on which we could all unite and for the prosecution of which we could all meet under the same roof. The spinning-wheel, unity between the different communities and removal by Hindus of untouchability were the items on which perhaps all could unite. I had already seen Mrs. Besant and ventured in a humble spirit to place my view before her. I would likewise canvass the other leaders. I would on no account divide the Congress and if I found a desire to quarrel, I would certainly not only take no part in any division but would take a back seat and retire from any such unseemly contest. Any programme must therefore be a programme arrived at not by the majority of votes but by mutual informal discussion and agreement. The vote may come in, if necessary, after agreement on all sides. If I found that there was no programme that I could work, I should gladly retire altogether but not lead obstruction. The most benign spirit of satyagraha was a spirit of perfect self-surrender in which resistance, if any, was on matters of obvious principle which one might have practised and woven into one's life. I told the audience that the whole science of satyagraha if it might be so-called was evolved out of prolonged experience in the domestic field. In its terrible aspect I had to practise it in connection with my own wife, son and brother long deceased. It had cost me their estrangement. But it was all out of deepest love. I believe myself to be capable of boundless love as well towards other creatures of God as towards my own dearest relatives. Sometimes love's anguish left deep scars on the loved ones but it left much deeper ones on the lover's bosom. I owed no ill-will to Englishmen. I had in them some of my best friends but there came a time when I had to say, "You shall not exploit my country. The explotation has done incalculable harm. Some of you are indifferent to its welfare and would squeeze it as much as you can. Some others among you believe in your ignorance that the English rule in India is for her own good and that you are her trustees. This thing must end and that soon." For me to say this was to put my whole soul into doing it. The attempt had resulted in bringing into prominence the terrible aspect of satyagraha. It had not ended the system of

exploitation but it had resulted in dividing us. I must therefore put forth my whole energy in exposing to view the benignant aspect of satyagraha. That could only be exhibited not by insistence but surrender. If I did not succeed I knew that it would not be due to the weakness in the science but the weakness of the scientist who did not enforce in his own person the doctrines he knew to be true. I knew that I was not a 'Mahatma", I did know that I was an *alpatma*[1]. Love knew no bounds and conquered all without exception. It melted the stoniest heart. It knew no self. Who knows that unconsciously even to myself, there was no anger or ill- will lurking in me. But I must not flinch. I must try to conquer self and in the process heal the breaches I saw in our midst. "Pray", I concluded, "that I may have the strength to do so."

Young India, 4-9-1924

55. KHADI BHANDAR IN BOMBAY

The All-India Khadi Board has practically taken over under proper securities the Khadi Bhandar hitherto managed by Mr. Vithaldas Jerajani. The idea is to regulate the distribution of surplus khadi from the different provinces and to supply the needs of cities like Bombay. This could not as yet be done through private agency. It must necessarily be an All-India concern. The prices are to be controlled and regulated by the A.I.K.B., so that khadi may be supplied to the buyers at as cheap a rate as possible. All the accounts of the store are necessarily subject to audit and inspection by the A.I.K.B.

Young India, 4-9-1924

56. SPINNING IN BANARAS

Professor Ramdas Gour has sent an interesting report of how he introduced spinning among the children of the municipal schools of Banaras. He bought 40 second-hand wheels, cardingbows etc. He next taught thirteen teachers the art of spinning. The latter in their turn taught their fellow-teachers. Thus in a little over a month 175 teachers became competent spinning masters. The professor was helped by his wife and daughter. Thus the professor proudly says:

[1] Small soul

> If each school had been supplied with an extra spinning expert it would have cost at least Rs. 10,000 a year. . . . This problem was solved by mygiving only four hours daily for five or six weeks in training the existing staff.

He adds:

> Now there is no teacher who cannot spin or card and henceforward no man or woman is to be employed as a teacher who does not know carding and spinning.

His future plans the professor describes as follows:

> As this difficulty was obviated, I approached the Board with a detailed scheme for introducing 350 spinning-wheels in 26 upper primary schools to teach carding and spinning to about 700 boys at least, with provision for half a dozen pit-looms for a weaving section for khadi, a weaving teacher, a supervisor, a carpenter, and sufficient cotton to give work to each student for half an hour daily. The scheme demanded Rs. 6,000/- per annum. The Board, however, felt very diffident and postponed the question from meeting to meeting for 2 months. On the 26th of July last, they saw their way to grant Rs. 3,000/- only, for the year. I have, therefore resolved to cut off the item of cotton almost entirely and to reduce several other items to a workable minimum, so that the work may be carried on [on] a smaller scale. I am now getting only 300 spinning-wheels made with 600 removable spindle-holders, of the pattern I purchased at the Sabarmati Ashram. With the little improvements I have in view (the result of a study at the Ashram), I hope to make it possible for more than a thousand boys and girls to learn and practise spinning every day and produce yarn of tolerably good quality. I am now waiting only for the wheels to be made, and this must take its time. In the meantime, I am appealing to the parents and guardians to allow a daily supply of cotton from their pockets. I am to give the children the instruments and the necessary instruction and the parents to give them cotton. The yarn will be theirs and if they so choose, they will collect their yarn and give it over to us to be woven into khadi and we will supply them khadi on reasonable weaving charges. I am going to open also a tailoring class and will make tailoring cheaper for khadi.

The public will watch this experiment with sympathetic interest. Let me hope that the other teachers will follow the example set by Professor Ramdas Gour.

Young India, 4-9-1924

57. FOR FALLEN HUMANITY

It was at Barisal that I had the privilege of meeting our fallen sisters, victims of our lust, now nearly three years ago.[1] Some of them said, "We earn from two to three rupees per day. You must give us some occupation that would give us as much." For a moment I sank within me but immediately came to myself and said, "No, my dear sisters, I cannot suggest anything that would give you two or three rupees per day but I must ask you to give up your calling even though you have to starve. There is the spinning-wheel however. If you take it, it will be your salvation."

The fallen sisters are only a small part of the fallen humanity of India. The skin and bone of Orissa are also in a sense part of that humanity. They are the victims of our ignorance as the first are of our lust. In their case it is not our animal lust but the lust for wealth that reduces them to skin and bone. They bleed so that we may become rich.

But now, thank God, we the educated middle class are hungering to identify ourselves with our fallen sisters and our starving brothers. We desire swaraj so that they may live. We cannot all go to the villages and help the villagers. The fallen sister is a perpetual reminder to us to become pure. How then can we think of and feel for them from day to day? What may we all do for them every day? We are so weak that we want to do as little as possible. What is that little? I can think of nothing else but the spinning-wheel. The work must be easy, capable of being done by all, the learned and the ignorant, the good and the bad, young and old, men and women, boys and girls, the strong and the weak, no matter to what religion they belong. The work to be effective must be the same for all. The spinning-wheel satisfies all these conditions. Therefore he or she who spins for half an hour every day serves the masses in the most efficient manner possible. And he renders whole-hearted conscious service to the fallen humanity of India and thus brings swaraj nearer for that service.

The spinning-wheel for us is the foundation for all public corporate life. It is impossible to build any permanent public life without it. It is the one visible link that indissolubly binds us to the

[1] *Vide* "Fallen Sisters", 11-9-1921.

lowest in the land and thus gives them a hope. We may or must add many things to it, but let us first make sure of it, even as a wise mason makes sure of his foundation before he begins to build the superstructure, and the bigger the structure the deeper and stronger the foundation. For the result to be obtained therefore spinning should become universal in India.

But spinning will be not only the connecting link between the masses and the classes, it will be the link between the different political parties. It will become common to all the parties. They may disagree on all other things if they like, but they can agree on this at the least.

I ask therefore every one who loves the country, loves the poorest and the fallen, to give half an hour's labour daily to spinning even and well-twisted yarn for their sake and in the name of God. As this must be a gift to the nation, it must be delivered to the All-India Khadi Board with religious regularity.

Young India, 4-9-1924

58. NOTES

LOWEST COMMON MEASURE

The readers of *Young India* will find in the summary of my speech at the Excelsior Theatre, Bombay, an idea developed for the purpose of bringing together all the various elements in the country that are at present working against one another often without knowing that they are doing so. Everybody is asking me to bring these together. I am therefore trying to see what can bring these elements together. In other words what are the things in which the majority of those who have at all taken part in moulding public life can or do agree or which are indispensable for our internal growth. Though the external may have its use constituted as I am, I have all my life thought of growth from within. External appliances are perfectly useless if there is no internal reaction. When a body is perfect within, it becomes impervious to external adverse influences and is independent of external help. Moreover when the internal organs are sound they automatically attract external help. Hence the proverb, God helps those who help themselves. If therefore we would all work to bring about internal perfection, we need not take up any other activity at all. But whether we do so or not, at least the Congress may restrict itself to internal development alone.

What then is this lowest common measure necessary for such growth? I have always suggested the spinning-wheel and khaddar, unity among all the religions, and removal by Hindus of untouchability. I hardly think that there is any difference of opinion about the last two items. I know there is still a difference of opinion as to the national necessity of the spinning-wheel and khaddar and the method of working it. it have endeavoured to show elsewhere why khaddar is a necessity of national existence and universal spinning is the only method.

WHEN WILL IT END?

People are however asking, "When will this suspense all end?" So far as I am concerned, it is all ended. I have no fight left in me. I do not propose to fight the Swarajists at the forthcoming Congress. Nor do I wish to fight the Moderates. I have no terms or my only terms are the beggar's bowl. I ask the Swarajist, the Moderate, the Liberal, the Conventionist to throw into it yarn of their own spinning. Such being my mental condition I can but advise all the national workers simply to concentrate their effort on spinning, on promoting unity and, if Hindus, on removing untouchability.

But the No-changers further ask, "How about Congress Committee?" My own opinion is that the constitution has broken down. We have no electorate worth the name. Where there is a respectable number on the roll, it is not of those who take a lively interest in the Congress proceedings. We are therefore almost a self-appointed electorate and self-appointed representatives. With such an electorate, bitterness is inevitable when there are rival candidates. Impartiality is possible only when the electorate is large, intelligent and independent. My advice therefore is that there is the slightest possibility of friction and opinion is known to be evenly balanced, the No-changers should withdraw from the contest. They may keep office or keep their majority where there is no possibility of friction and where opinion is overwhelmingly in their favour. There should be no manipulation, no manoeuvring. It is a terrible responsibility workers take upon the shoulders when they exploit electorates. Corruption is the bane of governments by majority. Let those at least, who know better, be no party to it.

WHAT ABOUT THE PRESIDENT?

The uncertainty as to the Presidentship too is a cause of

suspense to many. I am sorry that I should have become the cause of uncertainty and suspense ever since my return to public life. I am sorry for it. But what cannot be cured must be endured. I still do not know where I stand. I am not going to preside for the purpose of division. I will accept the honour if my acceptance serves the nation in any way. The fact is I am tired of these divisions. I read *Faust* in the Yeravda Jail for the second time. My first reading of it years ago left no impression on me. I could not catch Goethe's message. I do not know that I have even now, but I may claim to have understood it somewhat. Margaret is sore at heart and troubled. She finds no relief from her misery save by going to the spinning-wheel and to the music of the wheel giving vent to her grief. I was much struck by the whole conception. Margaret is alone in her room torn within with doubt and despair. The poet sends her to her wheel lying in a corner in the room. The reader may be sure she had a well-chosen library of books, a few paintings and a copy of handwritten and illustrated Bible. She finds no solace either in the paintings or the books or, for Margaret, the Book of books. She involuntarily goes to the wheel and finds peace in refusing to find it. Here are the noble lines

> My peace is gone, and my heart is sore:
>
> I have lost him, and lost him, for evermore!
>
> The place, where he is not, to me is the tomb.
>
> The world is sadness and sorrow and gloom!
>
> My poor sick brain is crazed with pain;
>
> And my poor sick heart is torn in twain!
>
> My peace is gone and my heart is sore,
>
> For lost is my love for evermore!

You may paraphrase them a little and the verses almost represent my condition. I seem to have lost my Love too and feel distracted. I feel the abiding presence of my Lover and yet he seems to be away from me. For he refuses to guide me and give clear-cut injunctions. On the contrary, like Krishna, the arch mischief-maker to the Gopis, he exasperates me by appearing, disappearing and reappearing. When I see the light steadily before my eyes, I shall see my way clear and ask the reader to follow me.

Meanwhile I can only take up the wheel or speak or write about it and commend it to the reader. In my loneliness, it is my only infallible friend and comforter. May it be so to the reader. One friend

at least equally tossed like Margaret and me says: "Fortunately you have left the spinning-wheel for us. I am therefore consoling myself as much as I can by spinning."

NAGPUR AGAIN

Dr. Moonje[1] has warned me against saying anything about the Hindu-Muslim tension in Nagpur. This is however for the third time that they have quarrelled and come to blows. Have they decided to try their brute strength before settling down to peaceful life? Can nothing be done to heal the breach? The parties appear in Nagpur to be equally matched. Even so, they will soon find that perpetual boxing is not a profitable performance. Surely there are sane Hindus and sane Mussalmans enough in Nagpur to adjust their differences and forget past wrongs. Attacks on isolated individuals is a new development like the desecration of temples. Most quarrels are of a momentary nature and are due to excitement over some trifles. But attacks on individuals who have done no wrong are evidence of calculation and pre-arranged plans on either side. But I must forbear till we have an authorized version from both parties. I can only hope that the saner members will leave no stone unturned to come to amicable and lasting terms.

PROGRESS IN ANDHRA

I have read the report of khaddar work done in the East Krishna District which includes four taluks. The local Khadi Board began operations, as was quite proper, with storing cotton. It undertook the work of carding and slivers-making and distributing the latter among spinners and then collecting yarn. It organized also the sale of khadi in the district[2] itself. It has opened several khadi depots for the purpose. The spinners include Brahmins, Mussalmans, Kapus and toddy-drawers. They spin about 180 lb. per month. The price of their yarn is on an average over Rs. 2 per lb. of counts varying from 15 to 30. They had a capital of Rs. 7,250. The total sales including cotton and slivers came to about Rs. 30,400. This is good so far as it goes, but not enough for the period covered by the report. The movement of voluntary spinning revolutionizes the method of working. Production through paid spinners must of course continue.

[1] Leader of the Hindu Mahasabha; attended the Round Table Conference in 1930

[2] The source has: "khadi depots in the district".

But now we may not be satisfied with a few hundred wheels going. It must however take a little time before the movement percolates down to the masses. When Congressmen have become seasoned spinners, they will not be satisfied with merely giving half an hour to the nation, but some of them will go down to the villages as experts to organize them to become self-supporting units.

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59. UNDER THE TEST

The following results of the examination, by the A.I.K.B., of the yarn received from various provinces, last month, will be of much interest and instruction.

ANDHRA

The province has not come up to the expectations raised of it as the home of the finest spinning in India.

There were 429 packets received. 50 contain overtwisted and indifferently spun yarn. The hanks are very various in length, one being no less than 6 feet, and some being as short as 9 to 10 inches. These last, especially because they are not leased, will entail a lot of waste of time and yarn in the unwinding. Attempt seems to have been made in many cases of obtaining higher count of yarn from cotton of less calibre, and in no case does the yarn seem to have been sprayed. Here is a list of those who may be said to have passed "with honours".

		Yds.	Count	Quality
1.	Sj. M. Paparao	666	55	Very good
2.	" K. Suryanarayana	2660	49	,, ,,
3.	" M. Laxmi Narasimha	5700	47	Fair
4.	" P. Kanakamma	2000	48	Good
5.	" K. Ashwanathacharyulu	2000	41	Fair

The registers and labels are all right.

ASSAM

The quality would almost make up for the quantity, if it was not very little. Spraying would have added to the excellence. Honours:

1. Sj. Shivprasad Barna	2940	40	Good

AJMER

Better than the yarn received from other parts of Rajputana.

BOMBAY

The redeeming feature is that there are more women spinners than men, no less than four being Parsis. Some of the yarn is indifferent, whilst there are some specimen of properly spun, properly hanked and sprayed yarn too.

BIHAR

Bihar has failed to reach even tolerably near the mark, both in point of quantity and quality, Babu Rajendra Prasad[1] tops the list, having sent 10,148 yards of 8 counts well-spun and well-hanked. But there is hardly a single good second to him.

BENGAL

Bengal has come out most creditably. 107 members of Khadi Pratishthan have sent yarn which uniformly shows the hand of the practised spinner. The hanks should be more uniform, leased, and the yarn sprayed.

A little lady of eighteen has won an easy first class first in all India. Her name is Shrimati Aparnadevi. She has sent 7,000 yards of beautifully twisted and even yarn of 76 counts.

The labels are perfect.

CENTRAL PROVINCES—HINDI

Not creditable on the whole. There are a few good specimens though:

1. Devi Subhadra Kumari	2000	30	Good
2. Umrao Singh Chauhan	2048	22	Fair

CENTRAL PROVINCES—MARATHI

Most of the yarn does not show a higher count than 20 but bears the mark of practised spinning. There is some yarn of lower count, but very well and evenly spun. The labels are indifferently done, so much so that it was impossible in case of some very good yarn, to find out the name of the spinner.

[1] 1884-1963; statesman and scholar; chairman, Constituent Assembly of India, 1946-49; first President of India, 1950-62

GUJARAT

First in point of quantity and shows uniformly practised spinning. Even Cutch and Kathiawar, proverbial for coarse spinning, have sent fine yarn. The palm has been carried away by Darbar Sahib Gopaldas Desai, Dhasa, who has sent 5,074 yards of good yarn of 45 counts (on an average). One of his hanks has yarn of 72 counts, another of 55 and the rest 40 and thereabouts. Some members of the Khadi Mandal have sent very good yarn ranging to 30 counts.

The registers and labels are perfect.

DELHI

Only 12 packets were received, only one of which contains well-spun yarn, but bears a label with illegible superscription.

KARNATAKA

Quantity small, quality good. All yarn unsprayed. The best spinners:

1. Sj. Shanker G. Golatgi	2040	38	Very good
2. " Dr. D. R. Hulialkar	2000	40	Fair
3. " Bhimrao Nagavi	2040	38	Good

MAHARASHTRA

Very indifferent on the whole. One or two places like Ratnagiri and Bhusawal show practised spinning. Mr. Dastane's yarn of 14 counts is good. The registers do not tally with the labels.

PUNJAB

Very little quantity, quality too except in three or four instances does no credit to the Punjab.

SIND

A sorry affair.

Little trace of practised spinning.

TAMILNAD

Yarn is of uniformly good quality. But for the quantity it easily competes with Bengal. Especially noteworthy is the yarn in fairly large quantity sent by the Vykom volunteers. fit is all uniformly good. Honours winners:

1. Sj. Minakshi Sundaram	2040	97	Good
2. " Shanmuga Sundaram Pillay	2520	80	"

The register is the best prepared in all India.

UNITED PROVINCES

Very little spun yarn, but there are some very good exceptions:

1. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru	4051	23to40	Very good
2. Srimati Kamala Nehru	2548	17 to 22	Good
3. Sj. Shambhunath	2265	15	"
4. " Purushottamdas Tandon	2800	14	Fair

UTKAL

Indifferent on the whole, but as in U.P., there are some very good exceptions.

1. Sj. Vishwanath Parida	2000	30	Good
2. " Bikancharan Hota	2000	28	"
3. " Gopabandhu Chaudhri	2000	21	"
4. " Niranjan Patnayak	2223	19	"
5. " Mahomed Hanif	2000	16	"

BURMA, BERAR, KERALA

There was hardly any yarn to speak of.

Thus there is room for improvement everywhere. Uniformity of length of hanks should be secured at least for each province. It saves considerable after-expense. Under the sacrificial voluntary system in which everyone spins for love, we should be able to reach perfection, if the spinners bear in mind the detailed instructions issued by the A.I.K.B. from time to time. I tender my congratulations to the young lady (Aparna Devi) who stands first in the all-India list.

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60. MY JAIL EXPERIENCES—XI[1]

WHAT I READ [-I]

As a boy I had not much taste for reading anything outside my school books. They alone gave me enough food for thought; for it was natural for me to reduce to practice what I learnt at School. For home reading I had an intense dislike. I used to labour through home lessons because I had to. During my student days in England too, the same habit persisted of not reading outside the books for examinations. When however I began life, I felt I ought to read for the sake of gaining general knowledge. But at the earliest period of my life it became one of storm and stress. It commenced with a fight with the then political agent of Kathiawar. I had therefore not much time for literary pursuits. In South Africa for one year I had fair leisure in spite of the battle for freedom that faced me. The year 1893 I devoted to religious striving. The reading was therefore wholly religious. After 1894 all the time for sustained reading I got was in the jailsof South Africa. I had developed not only a taste for reading but for completing my knowledge of Sanskrit and studying Tamil, Hindi and Urdu. Tamil because I was in touch with so many Tamilians in South Africa and Urdu because I had dealings with so many Mussalmans. The South African jails had whetted my appetite and I was grieved when during my last incarceration in South Africa I was prematurely discharged.

When therefore the opportunity came to me in India, I hailed it with joy. I mapped out a rigid programme of studies at Yeravda to finish which six years were not enough. During the first three months I had a vague hope that India would rise to the occasion, complete the boycott of foreign cloth and unlock the prison gates. But I soon learnt that such was not to be the case. I saw at once that it meant laborious quiet organizing which could not take the nation anything less than five years. I had no desire whatsoever for being discharged before my time except by the peaceful constructive act of the nation even if it was not actually swaraj. I therefore settled down to studies with the zest of a youth of twenty-four instead of an old man of fifty-four with a broken constitution. I accounted for every minute of my time and

[1] The first instalment of this series appeared in *Young India*, 17-4-1924; *vide* "My Jail Experiences - I".

would have been discharged a fair Urdu and Tamil scholar and well versed in Sanskrit. I would have satisfied my desire for reading original Sanskrit texts. But such was not to be the case. My studies were rudely interrupted by my unfortunate illness and consequent discharge. However the following list[1] gives the reader an idea of my studies:

The Cambridge History of Scotland; The Master and His Teaching; Arm of God; Christianiy in Practice; Tulsidas's *Ramayana* (Hindi); *Satyagraha and Asahayoga* (Hindi); the Koran; *The Way to Begin Life; Trips to the Moon* (Lucian); *Indian Administration* (Thakore); *Natural History of Birds; The Young Crusader; Bible View of the World Martyrs; Farrar's Seekers after God; Misra Kumari* (Gujarati); *Stories from the History of Rome; Tom Brown's School Days; Wisdom of the Ancients* (Bacon); *History of India* (Gujarati)— Chandrakant; Patanjali's *Yogadarshana* (Kania's translation); Valmiki's *Ramayana* (Gujarati translation); *Five Nations* (Kipling); *Equality* (Edward Bellamy); *St. Paul in Greece; The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde;* Rosebery's *Pitt; Jungle Book* (Kipling); *Faust; Life of John Howard; Mahabharata*— all the books (Gujarati translation); *Dropped from the Clouds* (Jules Verne); Irving's *Life of Columbus; Ramayana* by Girdhar (Gujarati); *Five Empires* (Wilberforce); *Lays of Ancient Rome; The Crusades;* Gibbon's *Rome; Urdu Readers; Bhagavata* (Gujarati translation*); Bankim's Krishnacharitra* (Jhaveri's translation); Vaidya's *Krishna* (Gujarati translation); Tilak's *Gita* (Gujarati translation); *Saraswatichandra (Gujarati); Manusmriti (Gujarati translation); Ishopanishad (Aurobindo's commentary);* Kabir's Songs: Jacob Boehmen's *Supersensual Life; Pro Christo et Ecclesia; Kathavali Upanishad* (Hindi Commentary); *Galilean; Jnaneshwari* (Gujarati translation); *Philo Christus; Satyartha Prakasha* (Hindi); *Prem Mitra* (English) *The Six Systems* (Gujarati translations); *The Gospel and the Plough;* Nathuram's *Commentary on the Gita;* Shankara's *Commentary on the Gita;* Rajchandra's Letters and Writing; *Ourselves and the Universe* (J.Brierly); *What Christianity Means to Me* (Abbott); *Steps to Christianity; My Philosophy and Religion* (Trine); *Sadhana* (Rabindranath); Bhanu's *Commentaries on Upanishads;* Max Muller's *Upanishads;* Well's *History;* The Bible; *Science of Peace* (Bhagwandas); *Barrack-room Ballads* (Kipling); *Evolution of Cities*

[1] *Vide* also "Jail Diary, 1922" and "Jail Diary, 1923.

(Geddes); *Life of Ramanuja;* Cunningham's *Sikhs;* Gokulchand's *Sikhs;* Macauliff's *Sikhs; Ethics of Islam; Social Evolution* (Kidd); *Manusmrity* (Buhler); *Our Hellenic Heritage* (James); *Avesta* (Dadachandji); *Gita* (Aurobindo); *Elements of Sociology* (Spencer) *Social Efficiency* (Pherwani); *Message of Mahomed* (Wadia); *Message of Christ* (Wadia); *Saints of Islam* (Hassan); *Early Zoroastrianism* (Moulton); *Travels in the Himalayas* (Gujarati); *Sita-haran* (Gujarati); *Buddha and Mahwira* (Gujarati); *Rama and Krishna* (Gujarati); *Man and Superman; Markandeya Purna* (Gujarati); *Poorva Rang* (Gujarati); *Life of Hasarat Umar*[1] (Urdu); *Confessions of the Prophet* (Urdu); *History of Civilization* (Buckle); *Jaya and Jayant (Gujarati); Rabindranath's Essays* (Gujarati); *Economics* (Gujarati); *Gita* Govinda; *Verieties of Religious Experience* (James); *Origin and Evolution of Religion* (Hopkins); *Lecky's European Morals; Mharashtra-dharma* (Marathi); *Freedom and Growth* (Holmes); *Evolution of Man (Haeckel); Muktadhara* (Gujarati)—*Rabindranath; Sinking Ship* (Gujarati)— *Rabindranath; Life of the Prophet* (Urdu)—*Maulana Shibli; Dr. Mahomed Ali's Koran; Rajayoga* (Vivekananda); *Confluence of Religions* (Champakrai Jain); *Mystics of Islam* (Nicholson); *Gospel of Buddha (Paul Carus); Rhys Davids' Lectures on Buddhism; Spirit of Islam* (Ameer Ali); *Modern problems* (Lodge*); Mahomed* (Washington Irving*) Syadvada Manjari; History of the Saracens* (Ameer Ali); *European Civilization* (Guizot); *Al Faruq* (Shibli); *Rise of theDutch Republic* (Motley); *Musings of Saint Theresa; Vedanta* (Rajam Iyer); *Uttaradhyayan Sutra; Rosicrucian Mysteries; Dialogues of Plato; Al Kalam* (Urdu) Shibli; *Woodroffe's Shakta and Shakti; Bhagavati Sutra* (incomplete).

Let the reader, however, not imagine that I read all these books by choice. Some of them were useless and outside the jail I would not have read them. Some of them were sent by friends known and unknown and I felt 1 was bound for their sakes at least to go through them. The Yeravda Jail has what may be called not a bad collection of English books. Some of them were really good books, such for instance as *Farrar's Seekers after God,* Lucian's *Trips to the Moon* or Jules Verne's *Dropped from the Clouds,* all of them excellent in their own way. Farrar's is an inspiring book giving the best side of the lives of Marcus Aurelius, Seneca and Epictetus. Lucian's book is a fine and instructive satire. Jules Verne teaches science in the guise of a story.

[1] The source has *Hasrat Mohani.*

His method is inimitable.

Many Christian friends were most attentive to me. I received books from them from America, England and India. I must confess that whilst I recognized their kind motive, I could not appreciate the majority of the books, they sent. I wish I could say something of their gifts that would please them. But that would not be fair or truthful if I could not mean it The orthodox books on Christianity do not give me any satisfaction. My regard for the life of Jesus is indeed very great. His ethical teaching, his common sense, his sacrifice command my reverence. But I do not accept the orthodox teaching that Jesus was or is God incarnate in the accepted sense or that he was or is the only son of God. I do not believe in the doctrine of appropriation of another's merit. His sacrifice is a type and an example for us. Every one of us has to be "crucified" for salvation. I do not take the words "Son" "Father" and "the Holy Ghost" literally. They are all figurative expressions. Nor do I accept the limitations are sought to be put upon the teaching of *The Sermon on the Mount*. I can discover no justification in the New Testament for wars. I regard Jesus as one among the most illustrious teachers and prophets, the world has seen. Needless to say I do not regard the Bible as an infallible record of the life and teachings of Jesus. Nor do I consider every word in the New Testament as God's own word. Between the Old and the New there is a fundamental difference. Whilst the Old contains some very deep truths, I am unable to pay it the same honours I pay the New Testament. I regard the latter as an extension of the teaching of the Old and in some matters rejection of the Old. Nor do I regard the New as the last word of God. Religious ideas like everything else are subject to the same law of evolution that governs everything else in this universe. Only God is changeless and as His message is received through the imperfect human medium, it is always liable to suffer distortion in proportion as the medium is pure or otherwise. I would therefore respectfully urge my Christian friends and well-wishers to take me as I am. I respect and appreciate their wish that I should think and be as they are even as I respect and appreciate a similar wish on the part of my Mussalman friends. I regard both the religions as equally true with my own. But my own gives me full satisfaction. It contains all that I need for my growth. It teaches me to pray not that others may believe as I believe but that they may grow to their full height in their own religion. My constant prayer therefore is for a Christian or a Mussalman to be a better Christian and a better

Mahomedan. I am convinced, I know, that God will ask, asks us now, not what we label ourselves but what we are, i.e., what we do. With Him *deed* is everything, *belief* without deed is nothing. With Him doing is believing. The reader will pardon me for this digression. But it was necessary for me to deliver my soul over the Christian literature with which the Christian friends flooded me in the jail, if only to show my appreciation of their interest in my spiritual welfare.

That which I would not have missed was the *Mahabharata* and the Upanishads, the *Ramayana* and the *Bhagavata*. The Upanishads whetted my appetite for exploring the Vedic religion at its source. Its bold speculations afforded the keenest delight. And their spirituality satisfied the soul. At the same time I must confess that there was much in some of them that I was unable to understand or appreciate in spite of the help of the copious notes of Professor Bhanu who has incorporated in them the whole of Shankara's commentaries and the substance of the others. The *Mahabharata* I had never read before except in scraps. I was even prejudiced against it, believing (falsely as it has now turned out) that it was nothing but a record of bloodshed and impossible long descriptions which would send me to sleep. I dreaded to approach the bulky volumes covering over closely printed six thousand pages. But having once commenced the reading, I was impatient to finish it, so entrancing it proved to be except in parts. I compared it, as I finished it in four months, not to a treasure chest in which you find nothing but polished gems limited as to quantity and quality but to an inexhaustible mine which the deeper one digs the more precious are the finds. The *Mahabharata* is not to me a historical record. it is hopeless as a history. But it deals witheternal verities in an allegorical fashion. It takes up historical personages and events and transforms them into angels or devils as it suits the purpose of the poet whose theme is the eternal duel between good and evil, spirit and matter, God and Satan. It is like a mighty river which in its progress absorbs many streams, some even muddy. It is the conception of one brain. But it has undergone ravages and received accretions in process of time till it has become difficult always to say which is the original and which is apocryphal. The ending of it is magnificent. It demonstrates the utter nothingness of earthly power. The great sacrifice at the end is proved inefficacious in comparison with the sacrifice of the heart by a Brahmin who gave his little all, the last morsel, to a needy beggar. What is left to the virtuous Pandavas is poignant grief. The mighty Krishna dies helplessly. The numerous

and powerful Yadavas because of their corruption die an inglorious death fighting amongst one another. Arjuna the unconquerable is conquered by a band of robbers, his Gandiv notwithstanding. The Pandavas retire leaving the throne to an infant. All but one die on the journey to heaven. And even Yudhishthira, the very embodiment of dharma, has to taste the foetid smell of hell for the lie he permitted himself to utter under stress. The inexorable law of cause and effect is allowed without exception to run its even course. The claim put forth in its behalf that it omits nothing that is useful or interesting and that is to be found in any other book is well sustained by this marvellous poem.

Young India, 4-9-1924

61. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, POONA[1]

September 4, 1924

You have asked me why wearing of Indian mill cloth does not amount to boycott of foreign cloth. This is colossal ignorance. For fulfilling the boycott it is not enough if we wear mill cloth. The Bengalis even today complain of the exploitation of Bengal by the mill-owners at the time of the Partition. Their experience should teach us that boycott cannot be achieved with the help of only mill cloth. The propaganda should, therefore, be in favour of khadi only. It is obvious that mill cloth has no place in the house of the Congress. *Shraddha*[2] means self-confidence and self-confidence means faith in God. When dark clouds gather all around, when the shore is not in sight, and when one feels one is sinking, one who says even then that he will not drown is a man of faith. Draupadi was being stripped of her garments. Yudhishthira, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula, Sahadeva, none of them was able to protect her front disgrace. Even then, she did not lose faith. She uttered the name of Krishna. She had the faith that as long as Shri Krishna was there, nobody could strip her naked.[3] Do

[1] Held in the Reay Market under the presidentship of S. M. Paranjpe; nearly ten thousand people attended.

[2] Here Gandhiji explains the meaning of his statement (made earlier while unveiling a statue of Chiplunkar) that "Maharashtra has *tyaga* (renunciation) but lacks *shraddha* (faith)."

[3] The story is narrated in the *Mahabharata*.

you have this faith? If you have it, you can win swaraj with Poona's strength alone. A man of faith does not bargain or stipulate with God. Harischandra did not bargain with God. He was prepared to slay his wife.

Answering those who characterised khadi as madness, he said:

I asked Colonel Maddock[1] whether he would not allow his students to wear khadi. He did not call me a mad man. On the contrary, he said, if the students wished to wear khadi why should he say no? And Mrs. Maddock took some khadi with her when she went to England. Those who do not want to work find many excuses. It is only our weak heart that stands in our way, no one else does. Let us assume that Gandhi is a mad man. Am I mad because I say that you should wear what our village folk wear? You may call me mad in respect of many other matters; but if you call me mad on account of khadi I shall retort that the accuser himself is off his head. I am speaking from experience. I repeat that you should take pity on the poor and wear khadi if you do not do anything else. In Champaran and Orissa, where it is difficult to earn even four annas a day, where one has to hold body and soul together by eating uncooked rice, where men have been reduced to mere skeletons, you should take pity on those people, recognize the God within them and contribute 2,000 yards of yarn—that is my request to you.

Tilak's message, "Swaraj is my birthright", was incomplete. Lokamanya had omitted to add, "the way to achieve it is through khaddar".[2]

I am beaten. If Motilalji and Shri Kelkar[3] ask me to leave the Congress, I have vowed that I would leave it. I am not going to seek a vote at Belgaum. Our "Pro-changers" and "No-changers" are misleading the common people by asking for their votes. I now feel that I committed a crime by seeking a vote at the [Ahmedabad] Congress. It was madness on my part to seek a vote. I am only a soldier. I should fight only as long as the fight did not give rise to bitterness or hatred. If the dispute with Motilalji or Shri Kelkar gives rise to bitterness, I would prefer to bow before them and touch their

[1] Surgeon who operated on Gandhiji for acute appendicitis on January 12, 1924 at Sassoon Hospital, Poona

[2] This paragraph is from the Bombay secret Abstracts.

[3] N. C. Kelkar (1872-1947); political leader of Maharashtra, author and journalist

feet. I would rather drown myself in the waters of the Sabarmati than harbour hate or animosity in my heart. I am eager to fight on an issue of principles, but how can I fight at all when it is tinged with animosity? What is the use of a fight which strengthens the third party? Therefore I have vowed that I will stop fighting. I seek leave to say only one thing to the citizens of Poona. This mad Bania would say before going, "Citizens of Poona, hold fast to *shraddha* and win swaraj."

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-9-1924

62 . SPEECH AT TILAK MAHAVIDYALAYA CONVOCATION, POONA

September 4, 1924

The education that you are receiving is intended for swaraj. I have taken up the responsibilities of a chancellor in Gujarat. That too I have done in my capacity as a fighter for freedom and with the intention of training students to be fighters for freedom. I landed in England on 4th[1] of August, 1914. What did I see there? As the War spread, the Inns of Courts went on closing. Many faculties in Oxford and Cambridge were also closed. During the War, they allotted a minor role to education. And why should they not? The outcome of education is that the student becomes an ideal citizen, an ideal patriot and an ornament to his family, his community and his nation.

I had witnessed the same scene twenty-four years earlier in South Africa. College students were enrolling themselves in the army and the Red Cross; girls and boys had all left their colleges and taken up this work. I was a black man; but I saw white pleaders and barristers joining the War. I was ashamed, on entering the court, to find it deserted. I thought that I should also undertake this work. When the nation is in danger, only work to meet it needs to be done. If you recognize this point of view, then an unscholarly man like myself standing before you makes some sense; otherwise inviting me as a chief guest here would amount to pulling my leg.

What should an English visitor hope to find in your institution,

[1] The source has 6th, evidently a slip; *vide* footnote 1 to "Speech at London", August 8, 1914.

if he came here after visiting Government institutions? Would he see your buildings or your scholars and expect to hear them speaking English? No, he will expect to discover a new spectacle here. In the other schools, he would not have seen spinning; here he would expect to see spinning and weaving. He would want to see cotton growing in your lawns. He would like to see your yarn. If he found the yarn fine, he would say to himself that Manchester was in danger. If he found the yarn rough, he would say Manchester had no cause to be anxious. He would not expect to find you dressed like sahibs; he would expect to find you dressed like the poor. He would expect to find you speaking your own language. When General Botha[1] went to England and there had occasion to meet the king, he refused to speak in English. He insisted on speaking in Tal, a dialect of Dutch. He conversed with the king through a Tal interpreter. It was not as though he did not know English; he could speak better English than I; but he considered it an honour to speak his own tongue. President Kruger[2] also used to refuse to converse in any language except Tal. That was the way they asserted their power. I therefore expect you to speak to me in Hindi, Urdu and Marathi. There is nothing unique in your securing a teacher who can speak fluent English. It would be creditable if you have a penniless, religious-minded and self-sacrificing teacher who can impart education through Hindi or Marathi. It would not matter if he is inferior to others in scholarship. I beg from you only one thing, namely, you should recognize the scope of the university and understand precisely what it stands for.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-9-1924

63. DISCUSSION WITH WORKERS AT POONA

September 4, 1924

QUESTION: You have assigned only these three things to the Congress; will this not annul its political character?

GANDHIJI: Yes, for some time; but I am seeking suspension only for a year during which I am undertaking boycott of foreign cloth.

[1] 1862-1919; Boer General and Statesman; first Prime Minister of the Transvaal, 1907, and of South African Union, 1910-19

[2] 1825-1904; Boer leader, President of the Transvaal, 1883-1900

But you are asking for exclusion from the Congress of all those who do not spin. Would only those who do khadi work have a right to remain in the Congress? Why should those who undertake the other two items not have that right?

I am a soldier. I am speaking therefore with a grasp of the strategy of war. Hindu-Muslim unity and removal of untouchability do not involve bodily labour. They need propaganda and education. This work can be done extensively with a devout heart; whereas khadi work requires some exertion of the limbs over and above a devout heart. I wish to bind the workers and the people together with a common bond. The yarn produced by a spinning-wheel can alone be such a bond. If members of the Congress spin, crores of our countrymen will spin.

Does it not mean that those who sympathize with your other work should remain out of the Congress?

They may well help by staying out. Thousands of sympathizers have already been crowding before me. How do I benefit from them? I have to raise an army of workers spinning 2,000 yards of yarn a month. Won't you get time to spin 2,000 yards? Do you carry a greater burden of work than I do?

I shall repeat the question which I asked in the beginning. There is a grave risk of the Congress losing its political character for ever.

No, it will not. I cannot offer you a political programme unless you join the struggle today; but I say that as soon as you do this I shall put forward a political programme. I am not a saint; I am a politician. I am, however, a mild type of politician. Was I not a politician in South Africa? Did I join issue with General Smuts without political sagacity? I do want to fight; but my dear brother, let me whet my weapon.

You ask us to leave the Committees. How is that going to reduce bitterness?

If you leave them in a huff, bitterness would not go; but it will positively vanish if you leave with the intention of ending bitterness.

If someone is bent on opposing khadi and your creed, what will you do with him?

Nobody wants to do so, and if someone does, I shall not worry.

But if someone attacks your creed, what would you gain by abandoning the creed? A creed has to be defended by fighting.

My creed is so dynamic that no one can crush it. We should not

give up the creed, we should leave the Committees, if necessary.

If there are no Committees, we shall be crippled. With what authority shall we then function?

Try to think on a little higher level. You find that the Fergusson College is functioning side by side with your national institution; does it depend on the Congress? To believe that one can work only with the support of the Congress is to display diffidence. You can do only as much work as is within your own power to do. What is the use of maintaining an instrument which consumes all your funds and energy in its mere upkeep? It is better to get rid of such an instrument. If an instrument comes in handy without much effort, we may well keep it. If it takes away all your strength, it is better that it slips out of your hand.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-9-1924

64. LETTER TO K. M. PANIKKAR

[Before *September 5, 1924*][1]

MY DEAR PANIKKAR,

I read your letter after writing out the enclosed message for you. I cannot think of anything more.

Your letter makes sad reading. You will please keep me fully informed. I am not coming unless I hear from Maulana Mohammed Ali that. I am required for the proposed arbitration[2]. The Government will be most careful to avoid bloodshed over their proposed action regarding Sikh detenus. Somehow or other I feel that they will gain their point by circumventing the Sikhs in some other manner. We can but watch and wait.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

If I do not start for Delhi on the 5th or 6th I shall be at the Ashram. I finish my programme at Surat on the 5th instant,

From a photostat: G.N. 11004

[1] From the reference to the visit to "Surat on the 5th instant". Gandhiji spoke at a public meeting at Surat on this date; *vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Surat", September 5, 1924.

[2] Between the Hindus and Muslims of Delhi

65. SPEECH TO CONGRESS WORKERS, SURAT

[*September 5, 1924*][1]

During his short stay of a few hours here, Gandhiji discussed with Congress workers local matters mainly relating to the coming Municipal elections and the state of national primary schools. He advised them to put forth and elect only those candidates who promised to support a national policy, and he asked them all to work unitedly though they might individually belong to different parties. With regard to the national schools Gandhiji stated that if the Congress people could not find sufficient funds to run them, they had better close them; but he was quite against the policy of borrowing loans for their maintenance.

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-9-1924

66. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, SURAT

September 5, 1924

Where are the unity, the vigour and the valour of Surat? Will these qualities revive so that from Surat they may spread to Gujarat and from Gujarat to India? When I see that things are not going the way I wish, that all my moves are proving wrong and that bitterness is mounting, how can I talk of boycott and civil disobedience? There is no problem of conflict between khadi and mill cloth at Surat. It has to think only of ways to increase the production of khadi. Therefore I tell you that public meetings cannot secure swaraj in this world. Swaraj demands hard back-breaking work. We do not carry out our household tasks by speeches, writings or sermons. A family can run smoothly only if every one of its members fulfils his allotted function. If we wish to attain freedom, everyone should undertake back-breaking work.

Hindu-Muslim unity is within our grasp if one of the two parties becomes entirely truthful. If thoughts of revenge are harboured in the heart, then it would be right to give up all hopes of unity in our time. If we want swaraj, one of us must become truthful. It is said that the Hindu is timid and weak. But hatred is no remedy for cowardice. Both the communities are cowardly; and both are slaves on account of this

[1] Gandhiji visited Surat on his way to Ahmedabad from Bombay.

cowardice. The Government looks upon both as slaves. Thus, in truth, not one but both are cowards and it is not possible to remove this cowardice if one is not peaceful. Of course, it should be the peacefulness of the brave. And is it necessary to wield a club in order to be brave? It is enough to learn to die. We hear of destruction of Hindu temples. How can a temple be protected if the priest runs away when it is being destroyed? You will ask me why you should crave before assailants and image-breakers. I would say you should protect the image by allowing yourself to be killed. If the assailant sees that you are prepared to protect the image by getting killed, he will come to his senses.

You cannot protect the image by killing others. Muslims also cannot protect Islam by killing Hindus. There is no doubt that Islam will perish if it seeks to preserve itself by killing others. No religion in the world can be protected by violence. After thirty years of experience and reflection I have come to realize that there is no way but non-violence to protect our religion and our country. One who draws the sword perishes by it. No religion can or will at any time endure on the strength of the sword. Islam has survived on the strength of fakirs and Hinduism on that of the *tapasvis*[1]. the Hindu religion has produced *rishis* and *munis* who have unravelled the mystery of death. You should read your scriptures intelligently. Don't ask me to discuss the actions of Rama. Parvati practised austere devotion in forests; Draupadi saved herself from dishonour through her absolute devotion while Dharmaraj Yudhishthira, mighty Bhima and Gandiva-carrying Arjuna stood as helpless spectators.

I can deliver this message to the Muslims through Maulana Abdul Bari Sahib[2]and the Ali Brothers; but being a Hindu, I have a right to address it to every Hindu. Hindus and Muslims have both lost faith in God today, have lost self-confidence and are aspiring to become brave with the help of gangsters. This will protect neither Hinduism nor Islam. Only austerity and poverty can save them. Throw off your cowardice. Jamnalalji's [3]hand was injured. It made me happy. If he had been killed while stopping the conflict, even then I would have been happy; because it should have been the true saving of the Hindu religion. He was suddenly hit by a stone. But one who

[1] Sages
[2] Nationalist Muslim divine; took active part in the Khilafat movement
[3] Jamnalal Bajaj

goes and stands in the midst of a shower of stones may be not only hit but killed. If Jamnalalji had died, both the feuding groups would have felt ashamed and would have wept for him.

You should win the hearts of Muslims by such display of courage. I am not opposed to *akhadas* [gymnasiums]. You must have *akhadas* if your muscles are weak and you want to develop them; but not for resolving Hindu-Muslim conflicts. This solution must come through truth and penance. The author of the *Mahabharata* has a very significant sentence, namely, "place a thousand sacrifices in one scale of a balance and Truth in the other; the latter will weigh more." After a long experience of forty years I affirm that this is very true. When you win with the weapon of Truth, the Hindu-Muslim conflict will cease.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-9-1924

67. MESSAGE 'TO "SANJ VARTAMAN"[1]

[Before *September 6, 1924*]

In wishing the Parsi readers of the *Sanj* happy new year, I can think of nothing but the ever-growing poverty of the masses of India from whom we, the literate classes, derive the means as well of our sustenance as of our enjoyments. It will be a false happiness if we shut our eyes to the facts that stare us in the face. Will the Parsi readers of the *Sanj* earn true happiness for the ensuing year? They cannot do better than turn their attention to the spinning-wheel and its produce. If they spin in the name of the motherland, they will encourage the poor to do likewise and cheapen khadi. And if they use hand-spun khadi, they will help its sale.

The Bombay Chronicle, 6-9-1924

[1] For its Parsi New Year Number

68. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA[1]

SABARMATI,

[*September 6, 1924*]

PANDIT MALAVIYAJI

SIMLA

THANKS WIRE. SHALL WANT ALL YOUR HELP. COULD YOU ADVISE HINDUS DELHI ACCEPT TERMS SUGGESTED.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10151

69. TELEGRAM TO MAHOMED ALI

September 6, 1924

MAULANA MAHOMED ALI

KUCHA CHELLAN

DELHI

JUST ARRIVED. WIRED MALAVIYAJI HOPE YOU ARE WELL.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10151

70. LETTER TO GOPABANDHU DAS

September 6, 1924

DEAR GOPABANDHU BABU,

I have your letter. If. . . and the others who have misappropriated public funds have means I should unhesitatingly advise law suit. The boycott is not for our hurt. We may lose all private property, but we must defend trust property. I advised Niranjan Babu to take proceedings and resign. He can be re-elected. I hope

[1] In reply to his telegram of September 5 which read: "Has been matter deep pain that in your last two months' discussion was not able be any help to you but rejoice in your decision. Is worthy of you. Hear you coming here. If so you will of course stay with me Shantikutir."

you are quite all right now. Amritlal Thakkar[1] tells me your school is in want. Please write to Jamnalalji.

Yours sincerely,

M.K.G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

71. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

SABARMATI
September 6, 1924

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I received your letter yesterday in Surat. To your telegram I sent a brief reply[2] from Bombay. I sent a brief wire yesterday in reply to your letter. I am sorry my letter gave you offence. Pray forgive me. Was it not better that I told you what I heard than that I should have kept it to myself? Will you please believe me when I tell you that those who surround me hardly ever speak to me? . . .[3]

My offer, however, stands to be considered on its merits. Will you please consider it and oblige me? As you know I have already discussed it with Mrs. Besant and Messrs Jayakar and Natarajan[4]. I have also discussed it with the Swarajists in Poona.

Whether it is accepted or not, my decision is final that I shall not directly or indirectly be the cause of dividing the Congress by a vote. Whatever happens must be by agreement.

M.K.G.

PS.

I have your wire. I need hardly add anything to the foregoing.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Amritlal Vithaldas Thakkar (1896-1951); engineer; life member of the Servants of India Society; devoted himself later to the cause of Harijans

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Motilal Nehru", On or after 2-9-1924.

[3] Some lines have been omitted here in the source.

[4] Editor, *Indian Social Reformer*

72. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

September 6, 1924

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your wire. I had heard from Father already. I am so sorry. I thought I was writing a harmless letter showing the depth of my feeling . . . .[1]

I have therefore implored Father to let me have his views on the merits of the proposal. I have discussed it with many friends among the Swarajists. I can see no other honourable solution of the difficulty. Please tell me what you think about it.

The Nabha answer[2] is from its own standpoint conclusive. The only answer that can be returned is to take up the challenge to be arrested. In the present state of things, it seems to be unwise. The best thing, therefore, is to be silent and wait for better times. . . .[3] I have your very prompt report on Amethi. It makes very painful reading. I do not know what to do. I have sent Shwaib and Kristodas to Gulbarga also privately to ascertain facts. Do please go to Nabha as soon as you can. You may take Hayat and Moazzam. They should know the place. As M. has not been able to make headway, it is difficult to try anything regarding my movement. I am here at least till Monday.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

73. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

September 6, 1924

MY DEAR RAJAGOPALACHARI,

I do not know if your mind keeps pace with the swift changes that have come over me. I see as clearly as daylight that we must not resist the evil that has crept into our ranks. We must abdicate power altogether. If we have faith in our mission and if the mission is intrinsically good, we must succeed. We must risk even present

[1] Some lines have been omitted here in the source.

[2] *Vide* "Notes", 11-9-1924 under the sub-title, "A Lame Reply".

[3] *ibid*

injury to the movement. There should be no decision by majority of votes. We muse continue to surrender up to the very margin of principle. Hence I am putting forward the programme of charkha, untouchability and Hindu-Muslim unity.

What is this row about your attempt to have a penal clause in your spinning resolution? My heart goes out to you in your difficulties. Do let the local control go, if it costs all that energy. Or is the storm all over now?

Have you studied the working of Devdhar's Relief Committee? Can you amalgamate with him? What is the nature of his work? I would advise you to try to have one non-official committee only if possible. Monies are pouring in. Do you want me to send all to you? What about South Canara? What about the different centres? There is a terrific amount of clothing lying here. Pray give me detailed instructions. I am here till Monday at the least. But it is probable that I shall be here for at least a week.

Yours

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

74. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[*September 6, 1924*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have both your telegram and your letter. During my journey to Bombay, Poona and Surat I did not have a moment in which to write. I reached the Ashram this morning.

That you have been hurt does not make me unhappy in the least. I think many of us will have to sacrifice ourselves. The venom [of hatred] is rife and dishonesty has spread so much that many clean people will have to be offered up as sacrifice in order to escape from this calamity. Try to find the root of this quarrel. Are there no sensible Muslims or sensible Hindus who can understand and remove the causes of these conflicts?

You must have known my resolves. I have decided not to settle any important thing in Belgaum through a vote. Vindictiveness has

[1] Gandhiji reached the Ashram on September 6 and awaited a call from Mahomed Ali to go to Delhi.

grown so strong that we must stop at once large scale, active satyagraha. If we don't, I fear, it may be the end of us. No single thing is taken in the right spirit. Everything is misunderstood. There is suspicion all around. At such a time we should remain steadfast and watch in silence what others do. I have done a lot of explaining in *Young India*. I do not know how much of it has been translated in *Navajivan*.

I hope your hand is now completely all right. I shall be here till I get a telegram or letter from Maulana Mahomed Ali.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. G.N. 2850

75. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Bhadrapad Sud 8[*September 6, 1924*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Your prediction about the person on fast came true. But he stuck to his decision. His fast was a result purely of ignorance.

Read the [accompanying] letter. Go to receive Polak. He will be staying only with Petit. Inform him about my programme. How can I be sure right from now? You will know it on the 18th. My visit to Delhi is not yet certain.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

76. MY NOTE

PROPAGATION OF KHADI

The Khadi Bhandar on Princess Street, formerly run as his own by Shri Jerajani has now been taken over by the All-India Khadi Board, which proposes to expand it. Securities required for the take-over have been received. The purpose of the takeover is to store in

[1] The addressee received this letter on September l, 1924, in which year *Bhadrapad Sud 8* corresponded to September 6.

and sell from a central depot the surplus stocks of khadi from the country's output lying unsold in the provinces. This kind of assistance was formerly rendered by Gujarat, but this has since been discontinued in view of the Gujarat Provincial Committee's decision to develop the local trade. Every type of khadi can therefore be had from this Bhandar. Saris worn by the women of the South can be had, as also dhotis of full width which were formerly not available in khadi. The scheme recently launched for the organization of this Bhandar deserves all encouragement. Anyone can become a member by paying an annual subscription of one rupee. It is the responsibility of the Manager to issue a folder detailing the varieties and prices of the khadi and distribute it among the members. Members are entitled to a discount of one pice in a rupee on their purchases. Thus if during one year a member buys khadi worth 64 rupees he saves a rupee. But it is not desirable that members should join with this narrow aim in view; one should join because one wants to encourage khadi. A member should obtain the folder on the progress of the industry and keeping himself informed circulate the information among the public. The fourth issue of the said pamphlet carries two instructions which are useful. During the monsoon season clothes do not dry soon, more particularly khadi clothes. To get over this inconvenience we should put up two clothes-lines, instead of the usual single one, at a distance of [say] two feet, and spread the clothes over both, so that the ends do not cling together, and thus allow sufficient air to pass over the clothes which will now dry sooner. The other instruction pertains to the washing of the khadi cap. A cap loses its shape if wrung in this process, and even stitches may come off at the seams. But if left to dry after being rubbed without wringing and then pressed between the hands after being folded twice or thrice, it will not be creased and retain its shape. It is true in this way all the water cannot be squeezed out; however, a cap can be used for three days, during which time the washed one can dry. If, instead of being crushed between the hands, it is compressed between clean smooth planks and the entire water is wrung out, the cap will on drying stay stiff. Those who go in for white khadi must not wear even slightly soiled clothes. We shall enjoy the very act of washing, once we get used to it. One does not have to spend much time over it and one gets the additional satisfaction of doing ones own laundering. Obviously, white clothes require frequent washing. The poor man who prefers a black jacket cannot afford to depend on a dhobi; he must acquire the habit of doing his own washing.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-9-1924

77. TESTING YARN

The All-India Khadi Board tested the yarn collected by them and I give below[1] the results which are interesting and instructive.

Next month all provinces should kindly send the correct registration numbers of the yarn of members and of other individuals.

Some provinces addressed their parcels to Ahmedabad [railway] station; this caused waste of time and money. All [parcels] are to be addressed to Sabarmati Station. Moreover all the parcels are to be marked"To pay" and no one should fail to remit the amount either in stamps or by money order.

It is a matter of pride for all of us that an eighteen-year-old Bengali girl gets the first prize. This may not interest some and some others may consider it trivial, but for me it has a significance. I would not have dreamt Darbar Saheb Gopaldas topping the list from Gujarat. I congratulate him. Similar is the case with Pandit Jawaharlal and his wife. From the United Provinces the names of these two and Shri Purushottamdas Tandon shine out. It should be noted that Pandit Jawaharlal has sent 4,000 yards of yarn in spite of his heavy burden of work. This should encourage other workers.

It is not surprising that Gujarat ranks first in terms of overall numbers and quality. What is surprising is that in comparison with its population, very few names have been received even from Gujarat. By now thousands of expert spinners, men and women, should have become active in this region where there are many instructors and where much attention is paid to developing the craft of spinning.

This is one side.

The satisfaction that the largest number hails from Gujarat is the other side. More yarn is obtained from places where more work is put in. Gujarat leads in this effort and hence its output of yarn is the highest. Again, the paucity [or spinners] indicates that the country has not yet realized the importance of spinning and that the craft has not yet become as popular as it ought to be.

Results of the next month may throw more light.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-9-1924

[1] Not translated here; *vide*"Under the Test", 4-9-1924.

78. BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF DADABHAI NAOROJI

The birth anniversary of the Grand Old Man of India, Dadabhai Naoroji, fell on 4th September; but the National Women's Council arranged the function on the 30th August to suit my convenience since I had to be present in Poona on the 4th. Dadabhai led the life of a *rishi*. I have many sacred memories of him. This Grand Old Man of India was, and continues to be, one of the great men who have moulded my life. I think the memories that I recounted before the sisters are worth being reported to the readers.

I had the privilege to see Dadabhai in 1888 for the first time. A friend of my father's had given me a letter of introduction to him, and it is worth noting that this friend was not at all acquainted with Dadabhai. He, however, took it for granted that anyone from the public could write to such a saintly person. In England, I found that Dadabhai came in contact with all students. He was their leader and attended their gatherings. Ever since, I have seen his life flowing in the same rhythm till the end. I was in South Africa for twenty years, and exchanged hundreds of letters with Dadabhai during the period. I was astonished at the regularity with which his replies came. My letters used to be typed, but I do not remember any typed reply from him. The replies were all in his own hand, and moreover, as I came to know subsequently, he would himself make copies of his letters on a tissue-paper book. I could find that most of my letters were replied to by the return of post. Whenever I met him I tasted nothing but love and sweetness. Dadabhai would talk to me exactly like a father to a son, and I have heard from others that their experience was the same as mine. The thought uppermost in his mind all the time was how India could rise and attain her freedom. My first acquaintance with the extent of Indian poverty was through Dadabhai's book[1]; I learnt from that book itself that about three crores of men in our country are half-starved. Today this number has increased. His simplicity was without limit. It so happened that someone criticized him in 1908. I found it extremely intolerable and yet I was unable to prove that it was wrong. I was troubled by many doubts. I thought that it was sinful to entertain doubts about a great patriot like Dadabhai. Therefore I sought an appointment and went to see him with the consent of the

[1] *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India*

critic. That was the first time I went to his private office. It was made up of a very small room with only two chairs. I entered. He asked me to sit in a vacant chair but I went and sat near his feet. He saw distress on my face and questioned me, asking me to speak out whatever weighed on my mind. With great hesitation I reported to him the criticisms of his detractors and said,"I was troubled by doubts on hearing these things and, because I worship you, I consider it a sin to keep them back." Smilingly, he asked me,"What reply do I give you? Do you believe this thing?" His manner, his tone and the pain that was so apparent in his words, were enough for me. I said,"I do not now want to hear anything more. I have no trace of a doubt left in me." Even then he told me many things relating to this matter, which it is not necessary to recapitulate here. After this event I realized that Dadabhai was an Indian living in the simple style of a fakir. A fakir's style does not imply that a man should not have even a farthing; but Dadabhai had forsaken the luxuries and standards which other people of his stratum were enjoying during those days.

I myself and many others like me have learnt the lessons of regularity, single-minded patriotism, simplicity, austerity and ceaseless work from this venerable man. At a time when criticism of the Government was considered sedition and hardly anyone dared to speak the truth, Dadabhai criticized the Government in the severest terms and boldly pointed out the shortcomings of the administration. I have absolutely no doubt that the people of India will remember Dadabhai affectionately as long as India endures as an entity in the world.

[From Guiarati]

Navajivan, 7-9-1924

79. BOMBAY'S BENEVOLENCE

I know Bombay has quite a few vices and a lot of filth too. The citizens' greed for money is rife. Nevertheless I have always experienced a certain generosity and guilelessness in Bombay's atmosphere, compared to other places. It is said that since I am better acquainted with Bombay I feel this way, but this may not be correct. Bombay usually leads in its contribution to any fund raised anywhere. Even for Malabar the aid from Bombay has been abundant. More than four thousand rupees could be collected by the mere sale of

tickets for the conference organized by the Parsi Political Association, and contributions at the end of the conference may equal this amount. Contributors have seen to it that the amount may exceed but will certainly not fall short of the expected sum. Bombay's trade, at present, is undergoing a severe depression but the citizens continue to give with their usual generosity.

Why so? It is my belief that this is a consequence of Parsi benevolence. Readers might say that I tend to lose my balance in favour of the side towards which I am inclined. I do not think so. Parsi benevolence is quite well-known. It has also been noticed that Hindus and Muslims from other places are not as free with their purses as those from Bombay. But the Parsis have established a tradition of supporting public causes and, I believe, the other communities emulate them. After comparing figures of donations by the differentcommunities, Shri Donde maintains that the Parsis surpass all other communities of the world.

But in writing about the benevolence of the citizens of Bombay and its causes my one intention is to draw more out of them. I expect from the citizens of Bombay contributions in the form of yarn. It is not enough if the Parsis, Hindus and Muslims give away cash. They might as well contribute half an hour's labour. Might not men and women forget their routine for half an hour and, spinning in the name of God, offer the yarn to the country? The Parsis, in order to take the lead in contributing yarn, may put in manual labour and others who want to help them may come out with cash from their savings; and now whose contribution will be held higher in the Almighty's accounts? Certainly, this spinning is for the sake of the poor in India. This [yarn] can be woven into khadi and sold. But the real purpose behind this manual work is to serve as an example for the poor. This purpose, it would appeal to cosmopolitan Bombay to fulfil.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-9-1924

80. TWO OLD BOOKS

Bhai Karsandas Chitalia has presented me two very good old books which he had secured from a Parsi sister. Both of them were litho-printed in 1828, they are bound in leather and carry on the fly-leaf the following superscription in golden letters:"Presented to Dinshaw Bhikaji by Major-General Sir Malcom." This Englishman was then the head of the Education Board. The book treats of Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry and Book-keeping. Gujarati translations from English books have been done by George Jarvis Engineer with the assistance of Jagannath Shastri Mawant. This book is an evidence of the missionary spirit and liberality of Englishmen of the older generations. The script of the book is *Devanagari*. May be this was done with the express intention of making *Devanagari* the common script. The letters are as beautiful as pearls and there are many lucid tables filled with figures. One might say that we can read the first chapter of our educational history in these books. The terminology used then has remained nearly the same till today, it could not be changed even slightly after all these many years. Since they were written with the help of a Maharashtrian scholar, a few changes like *pujya* for *shunya, jabab* for *jawab* are noticeable.

In this age of printing presses and rotary machines, we can hardly imagine how hard the pioneers had to labour. These books are witnesses to that hard work.

These books will be deposited in the collection of the archaeological museum. If any brothers or sisters possess similar old books which are not in actual use, I would suggest their being deposited in the archaeological museum.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-9-1924

81. LETTER TO RAJA OF KANIKA

SABARMATI,
September 7, 1924

DEAR RAJA SAHIB,

I am now sending you copies of two statements my secretary has prepared for me. You will observe that if the facts are as set forth in the statements which have been prepared from the papers in my possession, they require personal investigation. Will you entertain the idea of my sending to your Raj Mr. Andrews or Rajendrababu or Pandit Jawaharlal? I would love to go there myself, but my hands are just now tied up.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

THE RAJA SAHIB OF KANIKA

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

82. LETTER TO MAHOMED ALI

September 8, 1924

MY DEAR BROTHER,

It is now just after five, Monday morning. I have commenced to use ink but somehow or other the hand has not yet settled down to the ink-pen yet. And I want to talk to you without avoidable impediment.

Only yesterday I realized what you wanted. Remember that though I have been successfully at the head of two Presses, I know next to nothing of the details. I have not yet been to the *Navajivan* office. I never knew what was brought from Delhi and what was not. I thought I was bringing something that was mine. Now I am sending something that is yours. What is mine is yours—Swami[1] included. But where he fails, or you find him wanting, you should fall back upon me. I cannot supply his ability, but I shall find the money somehow, if money can make up for lost time. I believe Swami when he tells me, he could not have managed to send you the machines earlier. Why

[1] Swami Anandananda, manager, Navajivan Press

can you not have both *Comrade*[1] and *Hamdard*[2] printed elsewhere for the time being and ask me to find the deficit?

Swami says, the Press will take time to set up in all its details. He says, he never understood that he was to put up everything. He thought, and I too, that he was wanted for the machines only. He says, he was not willing to cart all the furniture here. Neither he nor his agent had the requisite knowledge at the time. The agent who actually took delivery knew very little of Press things.

But the point is not what A or B understood but what you need, and what I can do. Even whilst I was in Delhi I did not understand that the sole delay was due to the delay caused on my side. I thought that even after the machines had been set up there were many things that had to be done in Delhi by you before we could make a start.

Now please use Swami freely. After all he is among those who are the closest to me. If he fails, I have failed. A man who is no judge of men is a failure even though he may have a heart of gold and may have the best of intentions in the world. He must then cease to deal with men and things. I have therefore always said that I must be judged by the test my closest campanions pass through. You, Swami, Mahadev, Hayat, Ashfaq, Moazzam, Devdas, Krishnadas, Shwaib are among them. It is not enough that I can pull on well with you; Swami, Mahadev, Devdas, etc., also ought. If they cannot, they should disappear from my public life even as Ba has, at any rate, for the present. They are the instruments through which I work, as Hayat, Moazzam are the ones through whom you work.

I am therefore sending Swami so that you and he can come near each other and know each other better. For me a proper regulation of these personal relations means more for swaraj and unity than a thousand public documents.

With deepest love,

Yours,

M. K. G.

TO
MAHOMED ALI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] English and Urdu journals, edited by Mahomed Ali
[2] *ibid*

83. LETTER TO SATISH CHANDRA MUKERJEE

September 8, 1924

DEAR SATISH BABU,

I was deeply touched by your wire. I am sending you a consoling reply.

No one has displaced or wishes to displace Kristodas. I still cannot do without him. Last time Kristodas did not accompany me because he and I came to the conclusion that it was the best for him and the cause. He is the wisest among the four who are rendering personal service and doing secretarial work. Mahadev, Devdas and Pyarelal regard him as more advanced in wisdom and *tapasya* than they. I wonder what led Kristodas to think that any of them could ever think of ousting Kristodas. I do not need four with me in my travels. One at least must remain behind to attend to affairs. Only Mahadev or Devdas can constantly remain behind if only because neither Pyarelal nor Kristodas can attend to *Navajivan* and the Gujarati correspondence. Kristodas must therefore be a constant companion with me. He has gone to Gulbarga because he alone was acceptable to Shwaib. The latter would have taken Mahadevwith him, if I had insisted. But I know him to be very sensitive. I wanted him to go under the best of auspices. And when he asked for Kristodas although Mahadev was suggested, I unhesitatingly agreed. Kristodas was willing. He and Shwaib hit it off well together. Pray therefore do not be anxious about Kristodas. He shall be with me not merely for your sake. He will be with me for my sake. I am more anxious to have him by me than you can be to put him by me. It has been the privilege of my life to have some companions whom I have felt honoured and comforted to have by me. Kristodas is not the least among them.

I have written this with your pen. The first you sent me I prized very much and always kept with me. In the jail, I lent it to Indulal. It got spoiled. He sent it out for repairs. The friend whom he entrusted with the precious charge lost it. Kristodas has therefore given me the one I am using. I have also received two print orders. May I thank you for all these delicate attention? Add one more by wirings a promise, never more to worry about Kristodas.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5597

84. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Bhadarva Sud 10 [*September 8, 1924*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your two letters. I did not reply to the first one as it was not clear where you were staying. You should keep very well there. Recover your health completely. Nothing has been decided yet about my journey. I shall know about it during the course of this week.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRIMATI VASUMATI PANDIT
C/O MR. AMBALAL MATHURADAS
MESSRS STRAUSS & CO.
BATALA
PUNJAB

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 455. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

85. LETTER TO ANANDANANDA

ASHRAM,
September 8, 1924

BHAI ANANDANANDA,

You are going to Delhi not as Angada on behalf of Ramachandra, or as Krishna on behalf of Yudhishthira. You are going on behalf of Nishadaraja to do some service [to Rama] or to get his [Rama's] permission for the former washing his feet. Or just as a servant of Sudama going out into the world would have done credit to him, in a similar way you also are going there to do credit to me. You are not going to seek justice but to render justice. Whatever befell Jadabharat, he suffered it calmly. You are going not as Rudra, but as Vishnu. The question is not what the Maulana should do, but what I, i.e., you should do. It is my firm resolve to put into practice and use here to the letter all the philosophy that I have been propounding in *Navajivan.* You will assist me in this whole-heartedly. Do it believing that such action alone would become us. I needs must do here what I

[1] The date of receipt has been noted as 12-9-1924.

am at present advising people to do. We must do Mahomed Ali's work even if that meant further loss to *Young India* and *Navajivan.* What better thing can there be than that the very first issue of his paper should be published by your hand? Consider the *Comrade,* the *Hamdard* as your own or my own. You are going there, thinking that they come first and *Navajivan* and *Young India* after them. The key to Hindu-Muslim unity, that is to swaraj, lies, it seems to me, in the sincere humility and tact that you will show. Do not even think of returning from Delhi in a hurry.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

86. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Bhadarva Sud 12 [*September 10, 1924*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I hope your hand is now completely all right. You must have got my previous letter[2]. A great many changes are taking place in my thinking. A full picture of these will appear in the coming issue of *Young India.* My feeling at present at any rate is that we should not win a majority through votes. If at Belgaum we do not get, without any special effort, the scope to work from within the Congress, we should leave the Congress and do whatever work we can. I see no other way to remove the poison which is at present pervading the atmosphere. I am sure we sill somehow overcome it. I am awaiting a telegraphic call from Delhi. of I have to go there, it is likely that some solution for the Hindu-Muslim problem will be found.

I have not yet come to know the cause of the riots there.

I have just gone through the speeches of Ghatwai. If he has spoken as reported, my congratulations to him were misplaced. They were far from non-violence.

It is good that Balkrishna[3] has arrived there. He is welcome to

[1] From the reference to the prospective Congress session at Belgaum

[2] *Vide*"Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 6-9-1924.

[3] Balkrishna N. Bhave, an inmate of the Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati

stay there if he wishes to. Please pass on the enclosed letter to him. Will you too come in October?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 2851

87. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Bhadarva Sud 12 [*September 10, 1924*][1]

It is quite natural that Chi. Taramati's[2] illness should make you unhappy, but it should become natural for us not to be unhappy over such matters. Why should we be unhappy knowing that enduring our lot unperturbed is our duty? It does not mean that we are unfeeling if we do not become unhappy over such matters. Those who have a right to expect service from you, why should there be any drawback in serving them? Taramati will surely recover from this illness. But I still wish that her delivery should take place in a good place. Take Dalal's advice, if necessary. Comfort Anand. Inform me daily about her condition.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 74-5

88. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS

Bhadarva Sud 12 [*September 10 1924*][3]

It is only today I got a letter telling me of your illness. Please do not worry at all. Resolve to get well and keep on repeating *Ramanama*. It will lessen the grief on account of your illness and may cure the malady as well. A lot of work has still to be taken from you. Get well and do write to me. May God give you long life.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 75

[1] As in the source
[2] Addressee's wife
[3] As in the source

89. LETTER TO BEGUM KHURSHED ABDUL MAJID

SABARMATI,
September 10, 1924

DEAR SISTER,

Hakim Saheb and Khwaja Saheb came to see me. Khwaja Saheb stayed over for a day. Please write to me about your mother's health. I hope she is better now. If you have stopped plying the charkha, you should start it again and send 2,000 yards of yarn every month.

Yours,

GANDHI

Begum Khwaja Saheb
Solan, Kalka-Simla Rly.

From the Urdu original: A. M. Khwaja Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

90. NOTES

THE COMING FIFTEENTH

The second month of spinning will soon be upon us. The spinners for the first month, representatives and others, were 2,780. Legitimate excuses have been received from many places and persons. Some did not even know that non-representatives had to send yarn at all. The second month therefore should see very considerable improvement in all the provinces. Will all the spinners bear the following in mind?

1. To send uniform yarn. Whenever good cotton and good slivers are procurable, attempt should be made not to spin below 20 counts. The same spinners have sent a variety of counts. Let every spinner bear in mind that counts cannot be mixed for weaving purposes.

2. Each hank should be not more than 500 yards. Each hank should be divided into strands of 100 yards as nearly as may be and properly leased, i.e., tied with a strong string. This is very essential for weavers who have to undo the hanks and wind the yarn on bobbins. If the yarn is all in a tangle, it is almost impossible to unwind it. Leases are intended to enable the bobbin-winder to trace a missing thread

without difficulty. He can do so easily if he has to search only 100 threads at a time.

3. It will advance the durability of yarn if it is sprayed before taking it off the winder.

4. The number of yards and weight and count should be noted on each hank of uniform yarn. The way to find the count easily is to divide the yards by 21 and its weight in *tolas*. Thus if a hank of 840 yards weighs one tola, the yarn is $\frac{840}{21 \times 1} = 40$ counts. If its weight be _ *tola* the yarn is $\frac{840 \times 2}{21 \times 1} = 80$ counts. Needless to say, in finding counts, fractions should be ignored.

5. Members have been found to send unwound yarn pulled off the spindle. It is most difficult to treat it after it is so pulled off. If it is to be of use for weaving it must be hanked and properly leased as advised above.

It may be stated here that one or two spinners have not hesitated to send mill-spun yarn. I hope that these gentlemen have done so not knowing what they had to do. There is no difficulty in detecting mill-spun yarn. The virtue lies not in sending any yarn but in sending good even yarn of one's own spinning.

All parcels should be sent to Sabarmati and not to Ahmedabad and should be sent carriage paid.

SOME MORE FIGURES

Since the publication of the returns of yarn, more parcels have been received from Andhra and Tamilnad which show that the response in both these provinces is much better than appeared from the figures already published. The Andhra total is 487, the Tamilnad total is 195.

The total weight of yarn received was 23 maunds and 23 pounds. Of this Gujarat contributed 13 maunds and the other provinces the rest. The highest count reached was 100—not a bad record. Our mills do not spin with rare exceptions more than 40 counts. The spinners should remember that when labour is voluntary, it means a great saving of money to spin fine counts. Thus if a spinner spins 20 counts instead of 10, he would save almost half the price of cotton. It would be well therefore to attempt finer counts as soon as the fingers and the eyes are sufficiently trained.

According to religion over 40 Mussalmans and as many Parsis

the names. Of the A.I.C.C. members 104 have sent in their quota. Of the Working Committee all but 3 have sent in their quota. Of the most noted ones outside the A.I.C.C. to send are Maulana Abdul Bari Sahib and Acharya P. C. Ray.

NON-REPRESENTATIVES

It is not yet generally realized that, whilst it is obligatory on Congress representatives to spin regularly, the others who believe in the virtue of spinning are not free from that duty. The A.I.C.C. resolution is but an indication of what every patriot should do. If therefore all the provinces would organize themselves for voluntary spinning, they will soon find that the boycott of foreign cloth is a comparatively simple matter. The two obstacles in the way are said to be the dearness and the coarseness of khaddar. Both these can be completely disposed of, immediately spinning becomes a labour of love—not a very great price to pay for achieving a purpose for which we have been striving ever since the days of the late Shastri Chiplunkar and the Bengal partition. Nor need members wait for the provincial committees to organize spinning. Any person with sufficient knowledge and energy may organize a spinning club. It requires very little outlay of money. A little storing of cotton, preparing and distribution of slivers and collecting yarn is all that is required. Not much space is required. The poorest can attempt the work. The wheelless spinning answers where a spinning-wheel is unobtainable. I hope therefore that not only will the second month's returns show a marked rise in the number of representatives spinning, but that there will be a great increase in the returns from non-representatives.

THE RIGHT THING

It was a fortunate thing that Sheth Jamnalalji found himself in the midst of the Hindu-Muslim fighting last week. The injury sustained by him was probably one of the causes if not the cause that arrested the progress of the fight. I understand that Babu Kali Charan, the secretary of the local Congress Committee and Mr. Avari were also trying to prevent the fight at great personal risk. I congratulate these three workers on their courage and sanity. It may be necessary for some of us to lose our lives so that we may gain lasting peace. It is not to be attained within our generation by organizing the worst elements of society against one another. Such mutual strife is a process of

exhaustion. And peace obtained by it is an armed peace requiring prolonged fighting.

VYKOM SATYAGRAHA

I tender my congratulations to the Maharani Regent of Travancore on her generosity in releasing all the satyagrahi prisoners. It is a pretty custom for a State to release a certain number of prisoners on a new head occupying the gadi. What can be more natural than that those prisoners who have no criminal taint in them should be released? I tender too my congratulations to the satyagrahis on suspending satyagraha for the time being. It paves the way for an understanding and enables the State authorities to review their attitude towards the satyagrahis without embarrassment. It has been stated that the late Maharaja, most enlightened though he was in many matters, held very orthodox views on untouchability. Let me hope that H.H. the Maharani Regent will recognize that untouchability is no credit to Hinduism, but that it is a serious blot upon it. The best service that a Hindu State can render to Hinduism is to rid it of the curse and set an example in liberalism to the Hindus of British India. The satyagrahis will, I doubt not, make the way of the authorities smooth by continuing their self-restraint and making it clear that they do not want anything more than a recognition of the most elementary human rights for the unapproachables and the untouchables.

NATIONAL VOLUNTEERS

I have a long letter from Hubli protesting against my alleged indifference to the formation of national volunteers. I hasten to assure my correspondent and others that I am not indifferent. I hold it to be most essential work. I have great administration for Dr. Hardikar's ability in the matter. But my difficulty is that we have not men enough to organize the whole of India. I have therefore suggested that Dr. Hardikar should simply concentrate on one province or a district and make the corps of that area thoroughly efficient. Then there should be no difficulty in organising the other areas. It is work which cannot be done by newspaper propaganda but by silent unremitting toil. The same week that brought me the Hubli letter brought me another from Almora. The writer says:"The boy scout movement is spreading, but very few become national volunteers." Why? Because that movement is efficiently organized. Nothing that the boy scouts do has superior merit to what we are supposed to do. But we have not enough

organizers fitted for the task. The nation wants drilling, discipline, education and takes it from wherever it comes. I know that it is bad, it betrays want of discrimination. But the nation does not mind the enslavement so long as it gets the thing, it thinks it needs. What, we the workers who realize the mischief, have to do is to give the training ourselves. But we cannot do so by writing or speaking. We must first train ourselves. There are many things to do. Let each one of us choose our task and stick to it through thick and thin. Let us not think of the vastness. But let us pick up that portion which we can handle best. Let there be no mistake that though I do not write about volunteering, I am not watching it properly. And whether I am president or not, I am hoping that, of the many attractions that Karnatak has in store for us in December, its volunteer corps will not be the least among them.

A BAD COMPARISON

A Roman Catholic correspondent who occupies the position of the secretary of a Catholic Indian Association has written a long letter from which I take the following extracts:

> Time and again I have noticed letters appearing under flaring captions in the nationalist Press, drawing a comparison between your life and activities, and that of Christ. But writers of these letters not contenting themselves with this achievement of theirs, have gone one step further and have held up"Gandhiji" as"the modern Jesus" (!) to the people of India. I was wondering how far they would go, and these letters which flooded the Press during your incarceration, stopped awhile; but with your release they have revived. Rejoinders have proved ineffective and that is why I am writing this letter to you.
>
> Could you look with complacency on this devotion and loyalty bordering on insanity? Nobody denies that you are a great man in your own way; even your opponents grant you that. But you are not God, at any rate I have not discovered you claiming divinity till now. You are preaching politics and not religion. Besides, you are a married man with wife and children. How then is it possible for these blind admirers to see in your life and work any resemblance to that of Christ? I thought that perhaps the doctrine of non-violence of which you are such a noble champion has led them to draw this comparison. But even here you are an ardent nationalist advocating ahimsa in politics as a means to an end. Christ on the other hand not only refused to plunge into politics, asking all to"render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's" but lived and felt and spoke in terms of humanity, transcending

by His very nature the cramping and narrow limitations of race and nationalism. He showed also in the most unmistakable manner that"physical force" for a righteous cause was not at all incompatible with the sublime doctrines He preached. Here again I fail to see the boasted"likeness and resemblance".

So it is only natural for me to ask you what you think of all that these writers have written about you.

The pain that the writer feels over the comparison is obvious. In answer to his question I may repeat what I have said before that I do not like these comparisons at all. They serve no useful purpose and cause unnecessary hurt to the feelings of the devotees of the masters, with whose life mine is compared. I lay claim to nothing exclusively divine in me. I do not claim prophetship. I am but a humble seeker after Truth and bent upon finding It. I count no sacrifice too great for the sake of seeing God face to face. The whole of my activity, whether it may be called social, political, humanitarian or ethical, is directed to that end. And as I know that God is found more often in the lowliest of His creatures than in the high and mighty, I am struggling to reach the status of these. I cannot do so without their service. Hence my passion for the service of the suppressed classes. And as I cannot render this service without entering politics, I find myself in them. Thus I am no master. I am but a struggling, erring, humble servant of India and therethrough of humanity.

A LAME REPLY

It will be remembered that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru wrote to the Administrator of Nabha on the 25th July telling him that he knew nothing of any conditions being applied to his and Acharya Gidwani's and Pandit Santanam's discharge before the expiry of their sentence. It has taken the Administrator twenty-seven days to send the following reply:

I would refer you to your letter dated the 25th July last. I may mention that you are under a misapprehension with regard to the meaning of the word ''suspension". The suspension of a sentence obviously implies conditions. If this were not the case and if your argument was sound, the suspension of a sentence without the mention of any conditions would be equivalent to remission which is obviously incorrect.

Under these circumstances I see no good purpose in continuing this correspondence.

It is all very well to lecture to Pandit Jawaharlal on the meaning

of the word"suspension". Unfortunately for the Administrator however the Pandit did not ask him to tell him what the word ''suspension" meant but he wanted to know why he was not told of the conditions of his discharge. Is not a prisoner entitled to know the conditions of his discharge upon ''suspension" of his sentence? May the Administrator be also informed that a remission may also carry conditons? Thus Mr. Savarkar's[1] sentence has been remitted subject to conditions. The Administrator's reply therefore carries with it its own condemnation, because it proves by implication that the Pandit was not informed of the conditions of the suspension of his sentence. And to all intents and purposes he is even now ignorant of the conditions. Thus is he liable to be imprisoned under the old sentence if he enters the Nabha territory even after the completion of two years after the date of his sentence? The Administrator may"see no good purpose in continuing this (the) correspondence". But the public is entitled to know not only the conditions of"suspension" but what is more important, whether it is not a fact that Pandit Jawaharlal and his companions were not informed of any conditions being attached to their discharge and whether, if that be so, the imprisonment of Acharya Gidwani can be justified on any ground whatsoever.

A WORTHY EXAMPLE

I take the following from a *communique* of the S.G.P. C.[2] (20-8-24):

> For a long time past there had been going on a dispute between the Sikhs and Mussalmans of village Kachha, Tahsil Kasur, over the question of the Mussalmans' right to call prayers in the local mosque, so much so that the question had been dragged to courts of law who had decided the issue against the Mussalmans. The result was that Mussalman villagers could not say the call to prayers. On 10th and 11th August when the *jatha* of 500 Akalis, bound for Bhai Pheru, sojourned in that village, the Mussalman brothers laid this matter before it and appealed for a favourable consideration. The *jatha* recognizing the principle of freedom of religious worship for all sections of societies decided that Sikhs should not stand in the way of free religious worship of any community, and that the Mussalmans were therefore free to make calls for prayers. The Sikh *sangat* of the village respectfully bowed to

[1] V. D. Savarkar (1883-1966); revolutionary; social reformer; leader of Hindu Mahasabha; Marathi poet, playwright and orator, author of *The War of Independence*

[2] Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee

this decision of the *jatha* and expressed their regret for what had taken place in the past and at the same time contributed Rs. 20/- for the repairs of the mosque. The order of the *jatha* was given effect to forthwith and thus was brought to an amicable settlement a long-standing dispute which the courts of law helped only to aggravate. The Mussalman brethren then thanked the *jatha* for this act of sheer justice and by way of their appreciation of the act sent in a musical band which played in the *jatha's* camp for five long hours at a stretch.

I congratulate both the Sikhs and the Mussalmans concerned on the happy end of their dispute. It is most noteworthy that the Sikhs gave up a right which the courts had decided in their favour. Who, that has experience of courts of law, does not know that through no fault often of their own they often give decisions that are contrary to justice and common sense? They can take no note of sentiment or prejudices. But in religious disputes unfortunately these are the most important factors. Such cases therefore can be justly decided only by arbitrators who will consider it their duty to take note of every factor that can contribute to a just and honourable peace between parties.

FRAUD BY CONGRESSMEN

In poor Orissa some so-called Congressmen are reported to have misappropriated Congress Funds to the extent of several thousand rupees. One man had adopted the role of an ascetic and appeared to be working so zealously that he began to command influence and confidence till at last he was appointed to a position of trust. The question of dealing with the fraud became very serious and still remains so. The matter was referred to me and I had no hesitation in advising proceedings and suggesting that the Congress official who trusted the defaulter should after finishing the case resign office if necessary for breach of the boycott resolution. This boycott of law-courts cannot be allowed to be used by so-called Congressmen to defraud the Congress itself. Private parties if they are non-co-operators may beware of engagements that may involve them in law suits. But as between Congressmen and as regards Congress affairs, in other words in matters of trust, it will defeat the very purpose of the boycott if unscrupulous people under cover of the boycott sought by belonging to the Congress to defraud the institution itself. At the risk therefore of being considered inconsistent I have no hesitation whatsoever in advising the Congress officials in Orissa to take legal proceedings against the culprits for the recovery of trust funds and then tendering resignation, if need be. If I were

president of the Congress Committee, I should not only authorize the official concerned to take legal proceedings but after his resignation endeavour to have the official reinstated for zealous discharge of his duty. The saving of Congress funds is as much a duty as the retention of the boycott of law-courts. As a matter of fact the Congress official who may be the plaintiff or complainant in his representative capacity commits no personal breach of the boycott resolution. It is the Congress that does it. And the Congress has a perfect right to break its own laws in its own favour. In a well ordered State the maxim,"The King can do no wrong", has a legitimate purpose and place.

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91. THE REALITIES

It is possible that the reader is being disturbed by the bewildering changes he may be noticing at present in the *Young India* writings. I can assure him that they are not changes but they are a distinct advance in the direction we are going or should go. They are natural corollaries to the principles we profess.

If we will remember that non-violence is more important than non-co-operation and that the latter without the former is a sin, what I am at present developing in these pages will be as clear as daylight. The difficulty, however, is that the reader does not know much of what is going on behind the scenes. I am restraining myself partly on purpose and partly because I cannot do otherwise. It is difficult to pass on decisions from moment to moment and from day to day to the fellow-workers. I must simply trust that as they are in my opinion the necessary corollary to the main principle, they will be as plain to the reader as they are to me.

The fact is, action must vary with every varying circumstance. It is not inconsistent, if it springs from the same source.

What must be however apparent to everyone is that our differences are increasing. Each group is making of its programme a matter of principle. Each sincerely believes that its programme will bring us nearer to the common goal. So long as there is a body of people in the country—and it is a large if not a growing body—so long will there be parties prosecuting the Councils programme. Our non-co-operation therefore has taken the form of non-co-operation in practice with one another instead of the Government. Without wishing

it we are weakening one another and to that extent helping the system we are all seeking to destroy. Let us recognize its chief characteristic. It is parasitical and derives nutrition from the fungi of national life.

Our non-co-operation was meant to be a living, active, non-violent force matched against the essential violence of the system. Unfortunately the non-co-operation never became actively non-violent. We satisfied ourselves with physical non-violence of the weak and helpless. Having failed to produce the immediate effect of destroying the system, it has recoiled upon us with double strength and now bids fair to destroy us, if we do not take care betimes. I, for one, am therefore determined not to participate in the domestic wrangle but would even invite all concerned to do likewise. If we cannot actively help, we must not hinder. I am just as keen a believer as ever in the five boycotts. But I clearly see, as I did not at the time of the A.l.C.C. meeting, that whilst we maintain them in our own persons, there is no atmosphere for working them. There is too much distrust in the air. Every action is suspected and misinterpreted. And whilst we carry on a war of explanation and counter-explanation, the enemy at the door is rejoicing and consolidating his forces. We must avoid this almost at any cost.

I have therefore suggested that we should find out the lowest common measure among all the political parties and invite them all to co-operate on the Congress platform for achieving that common measure. This is the work of internal development without which there will be no effective external political pressure. The politicians who put the external work before the internal, or who think (which is the same thing) that the internal is too slow for them, should have the greatest freedom to develop their strength, but in my opinion, this should be outside the Congress platform. The Congress must progressively represent the masses. They are as yet untouched by politics. They have no political consciousness of the type our politicians desire. Their politics are confined to bread and salt—I dare not say butter, for millions do not know the taste of ghee or even oil. Their politics are confined to communal adjustments. It is right however to say that we the politicians do represent the masses in opposition to the Government. But if we begin to use them before they are ready, we shall cease to represent them. We must first come in living touch with them by working for them and in their midst. We must share their sorrows, understand their difficulties and anticipate their wants. With

the pariahs we must be pariahs and see how we feel to clean the closets of the upper classes and have the remains of their table thrown at us. We must see how we like being in the boxes, miscalled houses, of the labourers of Bombay. We must identify ourselves with the villagers who toil under the hot sun beating on their bent backs and see how we would like to drink water from the pool in which the villagers bathe, wash their clothes and pots and in which their cattle drink and roll. Then and not till then shall we truly represent the masses and they will, as surely as I am writing this, respond to every call.

"We cannot all do this, and if we are to do this, good-bye to swaraj for a thousand years and more," some will say. I shall sympathize with the objection. But I do claim that some of us at least will have to go through the agony and out of it only will a nation full, vigorous and free be born. I suggest to all that they should give their mental co-operation and that they should mentally identify themselves with the masses, and as a visible and tangible token thereof, they should earnestly spin for at least thirty minutes per day in their name and for their sake. It will be a mighty prayer from the intelligentsia among the Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians and others of India, rising up to heaven for their, that is, India's deliverance.

I see no way of removing the Hindu-Muslim tension, which is becoming daily tenser, save by all the parties coming together on the Congress platform and devising the best method of solving a problem which seems to defy solution and to dash to pieces all the fond hope, we had of securing a national freedom that is broad-based upon mutual trust and mutual help. If for no other reason, let us, at least for the sake of achieving unity, give up the internecine political strife.

Here is my proposal to that end:

1. The Congress should suspend all the boycotts except that of foreign cloth till the session of 1925.

2. The Congress should, subject to (I), remove the boycott of Empire goods.

3. The Congress should confine its activity solely to the propaganda of hand-spinning and hand-spun khaddar, the achievement of Hindu-Muslim unity, and in addition, its Hindu members' activity to the removal of untouchability.

4. The Congress should carry on the existing national educational institutions; and if possible, open more and keep them independent of Government control or influence.

5. The four-anna franchise should be abolished and in its place the qualification for membership should be spinning by every member for half an hour per day and delivery to the Congress from month to month of at least 2,000 yards of self-spun yarn, cotton being supplied where the member is too poor to afford it.

It is necessary to say a word about the proposed radical change in the Congress constitution. I may be pardoned for saying that I am the principal author of the Congress constitution. It was intended to be the most democratic in the world, and if successfully worked, to bring swaraj without more. But it was not so worked. We had not sufficient honest and able workers. It must be confessed that it has broken down in the sense in which it was intended. We never had even one crore of members on the roll. At the present moment probably our nominal roll does not exceed two lakhs for all India. And the vast majority of these too are as a rule not interested in our proceedings save for paying four annas and voting. But what we need is an effective, swift moving, cohesive, responsive organization containing intelligent, industrious national workers. Even if we are a few only, we should give a better account of ourselves than a cumbrous and slow body with no mind of its own. The only boycott proposed to be retained is that of foreign-cloth and if we are to make it successful, we can only do so by making the Congress for a time predominantly a spinners' association. It will be a great triumph and a great demonstration, if we succeed in one constructive item of a striking magnitude. I hold that the only possible thing of the kind is hand-spinning and hand-spun khaddar. If we are to make of khaddar a national success, the spinning-wheel is the only thing. If we are permanently to interest the masses in the national welfare of the country, the spinning-wheel is the only medium. If we are to banish pauperism from the land, the spinning-wheel again is the only remedy.

The implications of my proposals are that

(a) the Swarajists should be free to organize themselves without any opposition from the Congress or No-changers;

(b) the members of other political bodies should be invited and induced to join the Congress;

(c) the No-changers should be precluded from carrying on any propaganda either direct or indirect against Council-entry;

(d) those who do not personally believe in any of the four boycotts will be free, without any disgrace whatsoever, to act as if they

did not exist. Thus non-co-operating lawyers will be free to resume practice if they chose and title-holders, school-masters, etc., will be free to join the Congress and be eligible to the executive.

The scheme enables all the political parties to work unitedly for the internal development. The Congress presents a suitable opportunity for a conference of all political parties and outside the Congress to frame a swaraj scheme acceptable to all and for presentation to the Government. Personally I am of opinion that time has not arrived for any such presentation. I believe that it would increase our internal strength beyond expectation if we could all simply unite to make the foregoing constructive programme a success. But a large number of those who have hitherto led the country think otherwise. In any event a swaraj scheme for the sake of ourselves is a necessity. As the reader will remember, I am in this matter a complete convert to Babu Bhagwandas's[1] view. I would therefore join any such conference, if my presence was required, and assist at framing the scheme. The reason for insisting on this matter being treated as an activity outside the Congress is to keep the Congress purely for internal development for full one year. When we have achieved a measure of success commensurate with the task before us, the Congress may function for outside political activity.

What if the proposal is not accepted and it is found difficult to bring together all parties on the Congress platform and to heal the breach between the Swarajists and ourselves? My answer is simple. If the whole fight is for ''capturing" the Congress, I must refuse to enter upon it. I would advise all who think with me to do likewise. I would advise handing the Congress over to the Swarajists on their terms and leave the Swarajists to work the Councils programme unhampered by any counter-propaganda. I would engage the No-changers purely on the constructive programme and advise them to seek such help from the other parties as they can give.

Those who depend for national regeneration solely on the constructive programme may be expected to lead in the matter of self-sacrifice. Not one of the things we hold dear can be achieved by trying to retain power in the Congress in opposition to the Swarajists. We must hold it on their sufferance. Both parties will be guilty of corrupting the simple people who worship the name"Congress", if

[1] Scholar and public worker; took a leading part in establishing Kashi Vidyapith, a national university at Banaras

they are made at our bidding to engage in a suicidal tug-of-war. Power that comes from service faithfully rendered ennobles. Power that is sought in the name of service and can only be obtained by a majority of votes is a delusion and a snare to be avoided, especially at the present moment.

Whether I have convinced the reader of the soundness of my proposal or not my mind is made up. It hurts me to think that those with whom I have hitherto worked hand in glove should be working in a seemingly opposite direction.

What I have sketched above is not conditions of surrender. Mine is an unconditional surrender. I would guide the Congress next year only if all parties wish me to. I am trying to see daylight out of this impenetrable darkness. I seem to see it dimly. But I may be still wrong. All I know is that there is no fight left in me. This is much for a born fighter to say. I have fought my dearest ones. But I fight out of love. I should fight the Swarajists too out of love. But I must, I see, first prove my love. I thought I had proved it. I see I was wrong. I am therefore retracing my steps. I ask everyone to help me to do so and to reunite the two wings on a common platform. The Congress must, for sometime to come at least, remain largely a homogeneous body.

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92. MY JAIL EXPERIENCES—XI [*Continued*]

WHAT I READ—2

My Urdu studies proved as absorbing as the reading of *Mahabharata*. They grew on me as I proceeded. I approached this study with a light heart foolishly imagining that in two or three months I should be quite an adept in Urdu. But to my sorrow I discovered that it had been made into a language distinct from Hindi and that the tendency was growing in that direction. But that discovery only made me more determined than ever to be able to read and understand Urdu literature. I therefore gave nearly three hours per day to Urdu reading. The Urdu writers have purposely gone out of their way to use Arabic or Persian words even to the rejection of words current among Hindus and Mussalmans. They have rejected even the common grammar and imported Arabic or Persian grammar. The result is that the poor nationalist if he will keep in touch with the Mussalman thought, must study Urdu as a separate, new language.

The Hindi writers I know have done no better or no less. Only I thought that the evil had not gone very deep and the separatist tendency was a mere passing phase. Now I see that if we are to have a common national language being a mixture of Hindi and Urdu, special and prolonged effort will have to be made to effect a juncture between the two streams which seem at present to be diverging more and more one from the other. In spite however of the difficulty I retain the opinion that it is necessary for a Hindu to complete his education to know literary Urdu as it is for a Mussalman to know literary Hindi. It is easy enough if begun early. This study may have no pecuniary value, it may not open up the treasures of Western knowledge. But its national value is beyond compare. I am the richer for my close study of Urdu. I wish I could even now complete it.

I know the Mussalman mind much better than I did two years ago. I was interested in the religious side of Urdu literature and therefore plunged, as soon as I was able, into Urdu religious books. Fates have always favoured me. Maulana Hasrat Mohani[1] had sent to Mr. Mansar Ali *Leaves from the Lives of the Companions of the Prophet.* As he was teaching me Urdu he passed the volumes on to me. And I went through them with the greatest diligence. The volumes, though they contain repetitions and would gain in lucidity for compression, were to me deeply interesting for the insight they gave me into the doings of the Prophet's many companions. How their lives were transformed as if by magic, what devotion they showed to the Prophet, how utterly unmindful they became of worldly wealth, how they used power itself for showing the utter simplicity of their lives, how they were untouched by the lust for gold, how reckless they were of their own lives in a cause they held sacred, is all told with a wealth of detail that carries conviction with it. When one notes their lives and then the lives of the present-day representatives of Islam in India, one is inclined to shed a tear of bitter grief.

I passed from the companions to the Prophet himself. The two bulky volumes written by Maulana Shibli are a creditable performance. But I have the same complaints about them that I have lodged about the diffuseness of the volumes devoted to the companions. But the diffuseness did not interfere with my interest to know how a Mussalman had treated the incidents of the life of one

[1] 1875-1951; nationalist Muslim leader, took active part in the Khilafat movement

who has been almost uniformly maligned and abused in the West. When I closed the second volume, I was sorry there was not more for me to read of that great life. There are incidents in it which I do not understand, there are some I cannot explain. But I did not approach the study as a critic or a scoffer. I wanted to know the best of the life of one who holds today undisputed away over the hearts of millions of mankind. And I found enough in the volumes to account for it. I became more than ever convinced that it was not the sword that won a place for Islam in those days in the scheme of life. It was the rigid simplicity, the utter self-effacement of the Prophet, the scrupulous regard for pledges, his intense devotion to his friends and followers, his intrepidity, his fearlessness, his absolute trust in God and his own mission. These and not the sword carried everything before them and surmounted every obstacle. As I do not regard any human being absolutely perfect, be he a prophet or an avatar, it is unnecessary for me to be able to explain to the censor's satisfaction every detail of the Prophet's life. It is enough for me to know that he was a man among millions who tried to walk in the fear of God died a poor man, wanted no grand mausoleum for his mortal remains and who did not forget even on his death-bed the least of his creditors. The teaching of the Prophet is no more responsible for the degrading intolerance or questionable proselytizing methods that one sees around himself than Hinduism is responsible for the degradation and intolerance of present-day Hindus.

From the Prophet I passed to the two volumes devoted to the life of Umar the unconquerable. As I pictured him before my mental eye walking to Jerusalem upbraiding some of his followers for aping the pomp of their neighbours, refusing to pray in a Christian church lest succeeding generations might claim to convert it into a mosque, granting the most liberal terms to the conquered Christians, and as I picture him declaring that the word of a follower of Islam, though pledged by one not authorized thereto, was as good as the written decree of the great Caliph himself, he commands my humble respect. His was an iron will. He weighed out the same justice to his daughter that he would weigh to an utter stranger. I fancy I understand the breaking of idols and wanton desecration of temples, the thoughtless intolerance of Hindu music now going on in our midst. These acts seem to me to be due to an utter misreading of the events in the life of the greatest of the Caliphs. I fear that the acts of this great and just man are being presented to the Mussalman masses in a most

distorted fashion. I know that if he rose from his grave, he would disown the many acts of the so-called followers of Islam which are a crude caricature of those of the great Umar himself.

From this entrancing study, I went to the philosophical volumes called *Al Kalam.* These are difficult to understand. The language is highly technical. Mr. Abdul Gani however made my study fairly easy. I was only sorry, my illness interrupted my study when I had only half finished the volumes.

Of the English books Gobbon['s][1] takes easily the first place. It was recommended to me years ago by so many English friends. I was determined to read Gibbon in the jail this time. I was glad of it. For me even history has a spiritual significance. As the author proceeds to trace the events in the life of the citizens of a single city who built up a world-empire, one traces the history of the soul. For Gibbon does not deal with trifles, he deals with vast masses of facts and arrays them before you in his own inimitable way. He deals with three civilizations, Pagan, Christian and Islamic, in sufficient detail to enable you to frame your own conclusions. His own compel attention. But he is as a historian jealous of his calling, faithful enough to give you all his data so as to enable you to judge for yourself.

Motley is another type. Gibbon traces the decay of a mighty empire. Motley extracts from a little republic the life of his hero. Gibbon's heroes are subservient to the story of a mighty empire. Motley's story of a State is subservient to that of one single life. The republic merges in William the Silent.

Add to these two Lord Rosebery's *Life of Pitt*. And you are perhaps then prepared to draw with me the conclusion that the dividing line between fact and fiction is very thin indeed and that even facts have at least two sides or as lawyers say facts are after all opinions. However I have no desire to engage the reader's attention upon my speculations on the value of history considered as an aid to the evolution of our race. I believe in the saying that a nation is happy that has no history. It is my pet theory that our Hindu ancestors solved the question for us by ignoring history as it is understood today and by building on slight events their philosophical structure. Such is the *Mahabharata.* And I look upon Gibbon and Motley as inferior editions of the *Mahabharata.* The immortal but unknown author of the

[1] *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*

Mahabharata weaves into his story sufficient of the supernatural to warn you against taking him literally. Gibbon and Motley are unnecessarily at pains to tell you they a*re giving you facts and nothing* but facts. Lord Rosebery comes to the rescue and tells you that even the last words said to have been uttered by Pitt are disputed by his butler. The substance of all these stories is: Names and forms matter little, they come and go. That which is permanent and therefore necessary eludes the historian of events. Truth transcends history.

Young India, 11-9-1924

93. LETTER TO A FRIEND

SABARMATI ,
September 11, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

Mahadev has handed me both your letters for which I thank you. I am under no delusion. The Liberals may or may not join. The Swarajists may or may not join. What I feel is that we are non-co-operating among ourselves. This we must avoid. The rest will take care of itself. So much for the first letter.

As for the second. I have made it clear that the surrender, if it has to be made, must be your own act. You know the situation best. I can only suggest principles that flow from non-violence. Dastane and Devdhar did say many things in Juhu. They have indeed affected me but not in the way you fear. From all their talks I gathered that all the principal members did not believe fully in non-violence or the khaddar work. Take for instance Mr. Bapat. He was the leader of the Mulshi Peta Campaign[1]. I have read his pamphlets on satyagraha. He is no believer in non-violence. Take Mr. Nimbkar. He certainly does not believe in non-violence. I have listened to his speeches and read his writings, too. There have been repeated complaints against him. But these are matters that call for reform within, not surrender. The idea of surrender was evolved long after the A.I.C.C. meeting. It came to me when I saw some poisonous writings. If we were all angels, I would still have us to surrender. To assert our principle is to surrender office, not principle. The latter has to be lived. Though it has a political consequence, the conception of satyagraha is purely spiritual.

[1] *Vide"* Speech at Maharashtra Provincial Conference, Bassein", May 7, 1921.

Humanity is its essence. It is never polemical. It grows on your opponent unperceived, if your conduct is correct. If you surrender, you will do so so as to do more and better work. The way is so totally different from the ordinary. I do not make my language purposely ambiguous. What I think is original, that is, the method. I have not the language to give life to it, hence the ambiguity. But this much is easily understood. Do not hold on to office if it means the breeding of hatred. Do retain if it comes to you unsought, if it comes to you because public opinion is overwhelmingly in your favour. I have no manner of doubt that the people of all the provinces will be with those who are out and against the present Government and who are prepared to sacrifice themselves to the uttermost for the sake of their service. It matters little whether the servants are in the Congress or outside.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

94. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Bhadrapad Sud 13 [*September 11, 1924*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I had good news about Taramati today. Now she must recover. I am worried only about the future. In my view a good, open and clean place is absolutely necessary.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The postmark bears the date September 12, 1924, in which year *Bhadrapad Sud 13* corresponded to September 11.

95. LETTER TO INDRA VIDYAVACHASPATI

SABARMATI,
Bhadarva Sud 13 [*September 11, 1924*][1]

CHI. INDRA,

I have your letter. I wish to have full details about Bhopal. If I get a list of the atrocities, I shall immediately do whatever is possible.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[P.S.]

Received Rai Sahib's letter. I am awaiting Maulana Sahib's letter or telegram.

PROF. INDRA

"ARJUNA" OFFICE
DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 4861. Courtesy: Chandragupta Vidyalankar

96. TELEGRAM TO KRISHNADAS

[*September 12, 1924*][2]

GOING DELHI TOMORROW MORNING. COME DELHI DIRECTLY AFTER FINISHING THERE.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 10164

[1] From the postmark
[2] Gandhiji left Ahmedabad for Delhi on September 13.

97. TELEGRAM TO BALMUKUND VAJPEY[1]

[*September 12 1924*][2]

WIRE FULL PARTICULARS HERE AND DELHI. PROCEEDING DELHI TOMORROW MORNING.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 10492

98. TELEGRAM TO ABDUL BARI

[*September 12, 1924*][3]

MAULANA BARI SAHIB
FIRANGI MAHAL

WHAT IS HINDU MUSLIM TROUBLE IN YOUR DEAR LUCKNOW. I KNOW YOU WILL DO YOUR UTMOST AVOID QUARREL.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 10492

99. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

ON WAY TO DELHI,
September 13, 1924

MY DEAR R.,

I am on my way to Delhi for quarrel. I read your letter to S. I am sad because you are sad. I wish you were by my side. How can you continue when we [are] so hopelessly divided? Read my article[4] in current *Young India* fifty times, if necessary and you will find out my meaning perhaps. It is written most for you. Your letter to S. suggested it. We are not giving up boycotts because they are removed

[1] In reply to the addressee's telegram of September 10 from Lucknow as president of the U.P. Congress, which read:"Great Hindu-Muslim tension. Situation most critical. Muslim leaders indifferent. Help urgent."

[2] Gandhiji left Ahmedabad for Delhi on September 13.

[3] The similarity in contents between this telegram and that of Balmukund Vajpey (*vide* footnote [2]) suggests that this was sent on the same day.

[4] *Vide*"The Realities", 11-9-1924.

from the national programme for a time. Surely, if we have courage of our convictions, we can revive them any moment. Why should suspension mean abandonment if we have trust in ourselves?

Yours,

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

100. LETTER TO FULCHAND SHAH

Bhadarva Sud 15, 1880 [*September 13, 1924*]

BHAISHRI FULCHAND[1],

I have your letter. I will certainly carry out from next month the suggestion about giving names. Yarn has been received from Shyambabu, Rajagopalachari and other No-changers. No yarn has been received from any of the leading Swarajists. I shall see about the land of Shivalalbhai. No one gave me any names from Kathiawar. I have made corrections this time. Bhai Kevalram[2] has not yet made up his mind. Think well before you do anything about the *Antaja* Ashram. I write this letter on my way to Delhi.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAISHRI FULCHAND
KELAVANI MANDAL KARYALAYA
WADHWAN CITY

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2822. Courtesy: Shardabehn Shah

101. LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI

Bhadarva Sud 15 [*September 13, 1924*][3]

CHI. RADHA,

I write this on my way to Delhi. I shall perhaps be there for about fifteen days. Manibehn[4] has pain in the stomach. Her address is:

[1] Fulchand Kasturchand Shah, a political and constructive worker of Saurashtra

[2] Kevalram Joshi, son of Dewan of Wadhwan

[3] From the postmark

[4] Manibehn Patel, daughter of Vallabhbhai Patel

C/o Vallabhbhai Patel, Barrister. My address in Delhi is: C/o Maulana Mahomed Ali, *Comrade* Office, Delhi.

Devdas has stayed on at Ahmedabad. Ramdas[1] going to Bhavnagar. Kristodas, Pyarelal and Mahadev are with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. RADHA
C/O VORA SHIVLAL KARSANJI
NEAR LAL DARWAJA
RAJKOT

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6034. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

102. LETTER TO SANMUKHRAI

September 13, 1924

BHAI SANMUKHRAI,

In order to observe *brahmacharya* the following things are absolutely necessary: (1) Solitude; (2) moderation in eating; (3) good books; (4) regular meditation; (5) plenty of physical and mental labour; (6) abstaining from spicy and intoxicating food or drinks; (7) abstaining from shows and other things having a sex appeal; (8) giving up the desire for sexual intercourse; (9) avoiding being alone with a woman; (10) repeating *Ramanama* or some other *mantra* [formula]

Blessing from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Gandhiji's third son

103. LETTER TO SARAT KUMAR GHOSH[1]

[After *September 13, 1924*]

I was delighted to receive your wire. I am anxiously praying for light. I have written two letters to Motilalji. There is no question of compromise on principle. Your proposal does commend itself to me.

The Hindu, 16-9-1924

104. HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

[*September 14, 1924*]

An important article by Mr. Gandhi on the Hindu-Muslim tension in the last issue of *Navajivan* is translated below for the benefit of the readers of *Young India*.

I had occasion whilst addressing a public meeting at Surat[2] to refer to the question of Hindu-Muslim unity in detail, as some friends there wanted to know my views about *sangathan*. After the meeting I had a letter from a Mussalman friend offering suggestions for the solution of the question. I now see that even Gujarat is not quite free from the dangers of communal disturbances. The Visnagar affair can hardly be said to be yet settled. There is some trouble in Mandal. There was fear of a little disturbance in Ahmedabad. Some trouble is apprehended in Umreth. Other parts (e.g., Bhagalpur in Bihar) are also in the same plight.

The question of Hindu-Muslim unity is getting more and more serious every day. One thing should be made clear at the outset. In the case of many of these disturbances, we hear of Government agents being at the back of them. The allegation, if true, would be painful to

[1] In reply to his telegram of September 13 as correspondent of *Servant* which read:". . . we understand that you are either going to accept the Swarajist programme including their taking up offices and you remaining satisfied with constructive programme, or you are abandoning the Congress altogether. We do not know your plan. . . . So long as you are in the Congress, No-changers have to try to capture office. Hence there is constant friction. When you are out, No-changers are free to come out with a clean conscience.... Under the circumstances, we, your followers, think it would be best for you and your followers to give up the Congress and form an independent association. . ."

[2] *Vide"*Speech at Public Meeting, Surat", 5-9-1924.

me, not surprising. It should not be surprising if the Government fomented the troubles, it being their policy to divide us. It would be painful because of the necessary implication that neither of the communities realizes wherein lies its interest. Only those can be set by the ears by a third party, who are in the habit of quarrelling. Government has never been heard of having fomented a quarrel, say, between the Brahmins and Banias, nor amongst the Sunni Mussalmans. The suspicion or fear of their having set the Hindus and Mussalmans by the ears is always entertained, because both have quarrelled so often. It is this habit of quarrelling that needs to be abandoned if we want to have swaraj and retain it.

Quarrels must break out so long as the Hindus continue to be seized with fear. Bullies are always to be found where there are cowards. The Hindus must understand that no one can afford them protection, if they go on hugging fear. Fear of man argues want of faith in God. Only he trusts to his physical strength who has no faith or very little faith in God's omnipresence. The Hindu must cultivate either of these two—faith in God or faith in one's physical might. If he does neither, it will spell the ruin of the community.

The first, viz., reliance on God and shaking off the fear of man is the way of non-violence and the best way. The second, viz., reliance on one's physical might is the way of violence. Both have a place in the world. It is open to us to choose either. One man cannot try both at the same time. If all the Hindus and Mussalmans both elect the way of violence, we had better cease to talk of winning swaraj in the immediate future. Armed peace means not a little fighting that will end with the breaking of a few heads or of a dozen temples. It must mean prolonged fighting and rivers of blood. I am against *sangathan*, and I am not. If *sangathan* means opening *akhadas* and organizing the Hindu hooligans through them, I would regard it as a pitiable condition. You cannot defend yourself and your religion with the help of hooligans. It is substituting one peril for another, and even adding another. I would have nothing to say against *akhadas*, if they were used by the Brahmins, Banias and others for the development of their physique. *Akhadas* as *akhadas* are un-exceptionable. But I have no doubt that they are no good for giving a training to fight the Mussalmans. It will take years to acquire the physical strength to fight.

The *akhada* is therefore not the way. We will have to go in for *tapasya*, for self-purification, if we want to win the hearts of

Mussalmans. We shall have to cast off all the evil in us. If they attack us, we shall have to learn not to return blow for blow, but bravely to face death—not to die a craven death leaving wife and children behind, but to receive their blows and meet death cheerfully.

I would tender the same advice to the Mussalmans. But it is unnecessary, as the average Mussalman has been assumed to be a bully. The general impression is that the Mussalmans can fight and fight well. I do not, therefore, need to tell them how they should defend themselves from the attacks of the Hindus; on the contrary I have to appeal to them to forbear. I have to appeal to them to get the *goonda* element under control and to behave peaceably. The Mussalmans may regard the Hindus as a menace in other matters. They do regard them as an economic menace. They do dread the Hindus' interference with their religious rites on the *Bakri-i-Id* day. But they are in no fear of being beaten by the Hindus. I will therefore tell them only this:"You cannot protect Islam with the lathi or the sword. The age of the lathi is gone. A religion will be tested by the purity of its adherents. If you leave it to the *goondas* to defend your faith[1], you will do serious harm to Islam. Islam will, in that case, no longer remain the faith of the fakirs and worshipers of Allah."

I have up to now confined myself to giving general advice. Maulana Hasrat Mohani told me that the Mussalmans ought to protect the cow for the sake of the Hindus, and Hindus should cease to regard the Mussalmans as untouchables, as he said they are regarded in North India. I told him:"I will not bargain with you in this matter. If the Mussalmans think it their duty to protect the cow for the sake of Hindus, they may do so, irrespective of how the Hindus behave towards them. I think it is sin for a Hindu to look upon a Mussalman as an untouchable, and the Hindu ought not to do so, irrespective of a Mussalman killing or sparing the cow. The Mussalman ought to be no more untouchable to a Hindu than a Hindu of any of the four castes is to one of the other. I regard these things as axiomatic. If Hinduism teaches hatred of Islam or of non-Hindus, it is doomed to destruction. Each community should then put its house in order without bargaining with the other. To nurse enmity against the Mussalman, for the sake of saving the cow, is a sure way to kill the cow, and doubly sinful. Hinduism will not be destroyed by a non-Hindu killing a cow. The Hindu's religion consists in saving

[1] The source has"youth".

the cow, but it can never be his religion to save the cow by a resort to force towards a non-Hindu. The Hindus want swaraj in India and not a Hindu Raj. Even if there was a Hindu Raj, and toleration one of its features, there would be place in it for Mussalmans as well as Christians; it would redound to the credit of Hinduism, if stopping of cow-slaughter was brought about not by force, but as deliberate voluntary act of self-denial on the part of Mussalmans and others. I would therefore deem it unpatriotic even to nurse a dream of a Hindu Raj."

Then there is the trouble about music. It is fast growing every day. A letter I had in Surat says that, as it is not obligatory on a Hindu to play music, he should stop it before mosques to spare the feelings of the Mussulmans. I wish the question was as simple as the correspondent thinks. But it is the opposite of simple. Not a single Hindu religious ceremony can be performed without the accompaniment of music. Some ceremonies require the accompaniment of continuous music. No doubt, even here due regard ought to be had for the feelings of the Mussalmans. The music may in such cases be less noisy. But all this can be and ought to be done on the basis of"give and take". Having talked with a number of Mussalmans in the matter, I know that Islam does not make it obligatory for a Mussalman to prevent a non-Mussalman from playing music near mosques. Nor is such a thing on the part of a non-Mussalman calculated to injure Islam. Music should never, therefore, be a bone of contention.

In many places, however, the Mussalmans have forcibly sought to stop Hindus from playing music. This is clearly intolerable. What is readily yielded to courtesy is never yielded to force. Submission to a courteous request is religion, submission to force is irreligion. If the Hindus stop music for fear of a beating from the Mussalmans, they cease to be Hindus. The general rule in this respect may be said to be this, that where the Hindus have long been deliberately observing the custom to stop music before mosques, they must not break it. But where they have been playing music without interference, the practice should continue. Where trouble is apprehended and facts are disputed, both communities ought to refer the matter to arbitration.

Where a court of law has prohibited music, the Hindus should not take the law in their own hands. And the Mussalmans should not insist on stopping music by force.

Where the Mussalrnans refuse to yield, or where the Hindus apprehend violence, and where there is no prohibition by a court of law the Hindus must take out their processions with music accompanying, and put up with all the beating inflicted on them. All those who join processions or who form the musical band must thus sacrifice themselves. They will thereby defend their Faith and their self-respect.

Where the Hindus are unequal to this soul-force, it is open to them to resort to force in self-defence. Where death without resistance or death after resistance is the only way, neither party should think of resorting to law-courts or help from Government. Even if one of the parties resorts to such aid, the other should refrain. If resort to law-courts cannot be avoided, there ought to be at least no resort to false evidence.

It is the rule of honourable combat that, after having heartily given and taken blows both the parties quiet down, and seek no reinforcement from outside. There should be no bitterness or feeling of revenge behind.

A quarrel should in no case be carried from one street to another. The fair sex, the aged and the infirm, children and all, non-combatants ought to be free from molestation. Fighting would be regarded as sportsmanlike if these rules are observed.

I hope that the Hindus and Mussalmans in Gujarat will keep their heads cool and keep the peace. I hope also that the fear of a possible trouble in Umreth is unjustified. Let both the communities there hold mutual consultations and settle their differences amicably.

Running away for fear of death leaving one's dear ones, temples or music to take care of themselves. is irreligion, it is cowardice. It is not manly, it is unmanly. Non-violence is the virtue of the manly. The coward is innocent of it.

It will take some time before the average Hindu ceases to be a coward and the average Mussalman ceases to be a bully. In the meantime, the thinking section of both the communities should try their best, on all occasions of trouble, to refer matters to arbitration. Their position is delicate, but they should expend all their energy in keeping the peace.

Young India, 18-9-1924

105. CAUSES OF FAILURE

Swaraj cannot be secured within the time-limit set by us; besides this, the situation which we wished to end seems to be striking deeper roots. Not only have we not secured swaraj! we have developed a fear of swaraj. Hindus say they do not want it, so also Muslims and Non-Brahmins say they do not want it—who then wants swaraj? What sort of people are they if they are afraid of freedom itself? Thus we have been reduced to a peculiar plight.

Let us examine the causes. If you take a potent medicine without circumspection, it leads to a relapse; this is the very thing that has happened with non-co-operation, which is like a potent medicine and cannot be taken casually. If there is any error in employing it, serious harm may result. A son co-operates as a rule with his father, so does a wife with her husband, or a people with their king. There is a bond of love between the two; but there are occasions when there is and ought to be non-co-operation between the two. If that non-co-operation is virulent, it is detestable and sinful. Between father and son there can be no enmity. If it does arise, it is more dreadful than ordinary enmity. The Germans and the English are cousins. When they fought, one had to go down to dust. By refraining from such blood-thirsty non-co-operation and calling our non-co-operation peaceful, we have completely transformed its character. Our peaceful non-co-operation must needs be constructive, not destructive. Poison should not emerge from the throes of love. We wished to end our enmity with Englishmen and make friends but it could not be. The adjective ‘‘peaceful” was under-emphasized in our non-co-operation. Our non-co-operation turned out to be that of the weak. In spite of this, we have been able to achieve good results, our spirits have risen, the people have become aware of their power, we have got a glimpse of an irresistible weapon; but we have not learnt how to make full use of it.

Therefore, we retreated. Our love, which was only skin-deep, vanished. Only non-co-operation was left behind and we did not succeed against the Government; that is why we started to non-co-operate among ourselves. Once we take a weapon out of its sheath, it does not turn back but leads to our own destruction. Hindus and Muslims started non-co-operation with each other, so also did

Swarajists and No-changers. In these two instances of non-co-operation, there is war instead of peace, hate instead of love. There is no mutual confidence, they don't want even to see each other's face. Those who look upon pure love as a potent weapon, what are they to do in such circumstances? What is the duty, in these circumstances, of a man like me who claims to be an advocate of non-violence? I am in the forefront of the struggle against the Swarajists. I do not in the least approve of their programme of entering the Councils. Therefore I fought them hard in the Congress, acknowledged defeat and announced my intention to fight again. I suppose that my good faith will be recognized and both the groups will engage themselves in their respective programmes, thereby helping each other. But my expectations proved wrong. There is disquiet in the minds of both. Preparations are afoot to capture the Congress at Balgaum by majority strength. This is no sign of love. The principle of majority does not work when differences on fundamentals are involved. If both the parties are suspicious, bitterness is intensified. If the voters cast their votes not intelligently but out of blind faith, then such voting does not serve an educative purpose, but only leads to their degradation. If the voters are trustful and cannot see the intricacies of a problem, the principle of majority may even lead to their destruction.

Knowing all this, how can I seek a majority decision in the Congress? The members who will come there are bound to cast their votes not on the merits of an issue but with an eye on the speakers.

In these circumstances I should set forth an object-lesson in love by sticking to my creed of non-violence. I must not desire to retain control of the Congress in my hands. I should bow out of the Congress if I cannot win over the Swarajists through humble arguments. The success of a non-violent person lies in his defeat. An advocate of non-violence never fights for power; he even propagates his creed not on the strength of a majority but through spiritual power. If his non-violence is true, he believes that ultimate victory would be his even when he is alone, that is to say, the creed would win in the end if he sticks to it in the face of death. The creed will have to adopt a human form in order to propagate itself among human beings. It means that someone must prepare himself to die for the sake of the creed. I have, therefore, made up my mind not to join a battle of votes with the Swarajists for the sake of the creed; and I tender the same advice to all peaceful non-co-operators. This alone

will enable us to bridge the gulf that has yawned between us. I wish to see not only the Swarajists but all parties participating in the work of the Congress. It is only when the bulk of the people co-operate heartily among themselves that non-co-operation with the Government can shine forth.

Is there any programme which may unite all parties? That programme should consist of items essential for the general public. In my opinion, there are three items for such a programme: Khadi, Hindu-Muslim unity and removal of untouchability by the Hindus.

Swaraj, I think, is unattainable if we fail to achieve any one of these three things. Therefore I suggest:

1. The Congress should suspend four out of the five boycotts for a year; and should continue only the boycott of foreign-cloth.

2. Besides the above-mentioned threefold programme, the Congress should carry on the existing national schools and, if possible, open more such schools. It should not engage itself in any other activity.

3. The Congress should neither help nor hinder the Swarajists or other parties in their public activities.

4. Members of any other political bodies should be allowed to get elected to executive committees, etc., of the Congress.

5. The four-anna franchise should be abolished and every member should be made to spin for half an hour a day and to deliver 2,000 yards of self-spun yarn. All of them should wear pure khadi.

None of these suggestions, except the fifth, is likely to be opposed. If we wish to accomplish the boycott of foreign-cloth soon, I think the fifth suggestion is essential. The principal causes for shortfall in the spread of khadi are:

1. Idleness;
2. lack of proficiency;
3. apathy for the miseries of the poor.

It cannot be said that even a very busy man cannot spare half an hour for national service. Members of the Congress must get rid of our [national] habit of idling away time. We cannot popularize the spinning-wheel without learning to ply it. We get very few men for this work. Thousands of men and women can surely be proficient in spinning by dint of the fifth suggestion.

If we had the slightest sympathy for the poor, we would not touch foreign-cloth and would wear only hand-spun and hand-woven khadi. We would establish a constant bond with the poor by spinning for half an hour. God ever dwells among the poor. If we seek swaraj as much for the poor as for ourselves, it is the duty of every Congressman to spin. If thousands look upon spinning as a religious duty and perform it, the poor will ply the spinning-wheel to supplement their income. A lot of effort, haphazard and half-hearted, goes waste. Spinning is the only work which does not go waste. Whatever effort is put into it becomes fruitful. Yarn spun in five minutes can also be sold. But cloth woven in five minutes or cotton carded during the same time cannot be marketed. Moreover, if millions of people engage in professions like weaving, etc., their product could not be sold. If millions take to spinning, then alone can the people's demand be met. If thousands of men and women spin with a sense of religious obligation, khadi would become fine and inexpensive. Within six months we can collect large quantities of fine, well-twisted yarn.

It is possible to argue that admitting into the Congress only those who spin would keep out of it a large number of persons. The fact is that even now there are only a few names on our registers. Gujarat perhaps has a larger number than any other province. And here we have less than 20,000 members. There are 50 tahsils in Gujarat. There is not one Congress member in about half of them. I think the conditions in other provinces are worse. Moreover these names become known only on two occasions. Once while collecting four annas and next while seeking their votes. The committee does not assign any other solid work to them. We wish to enrol servants of the people on the registers of the Congress. Such servants alone can convert the Congress into a people's forum. Even if we enrol four crores without any stipulation, what purpose can it serve? Instead, if we enrol four lakhs who spin, the Congress would become a vigorous organ for serving the people, by pooling together half an hour's labour and a little cotton from these four lakhs. The bringing together of these four lakhs by the Congress every month is not a small thing; but contribution of a little cotton and half an hour's labour at home is a small and simple thing. A little labour and a small contribution by many is likely to endow people with strength to produce massive results. That is why I consider my suggestions valuable. *And whether the Congress approves or not, I do wish that Gujarat should start*

acting upon them voluntarily. Any province or any tahsil which acts in this manner will, in a short time, discover the beneficial effects of the activity.

Does it mean that the non-co-operators will halt their non-co-operation? No one should raise this doubt. Those who believe in non-co-operation will enlarge the area of their non-co-operation; but they will be friendly to those who hold the opposite view. This is not a new thing. I have been elaborating this from the very beginning. Since this has not been understood, I wish to practise the creed of love by advising suspension of non-co-operation and of boycott, and unity with co-operators. Non-co-operating lawyers may not resume their practice, but should meet practising lawyers courteously in the Congress. Suspension of boycott implies that the advocates of boycott lose the right to criticize co-operators. On the issue of Council-entry also, both of them will have the same place and the same rights in the Congress. The four things mentioned above will bind them together. It is true that one who wears foreign or mill-made clothes will have no place in the Congress. Even those who trade in foreign-cloth or who own textile mills can join the Congress, but they must recognize the importance of khadi by themselves wearing it, by sympathizing with the poor and by helping in the spread of the spinning-wheel. Boycott of foreign-cloth will be a permanent aspect of popular democracy and hence it would be impossible to win swaraj without emphasizing it. A permanent boycott of our own mills is not sought; but we should reduce our attachment to mill-made cloth. Khadi should get the first place. I have, therefore, no doubt that even mill-made cloth should be disallowed for the purposes of Congress membership as long as khadi and the spinning-wheel do not become widespread.

What would happen, however, if the Swarajists do not approve these ideas of mine? I have a clear answer. I would not, even then, seek to dominate the Congress by wrestling with them.

If I cannot satisfy them even to this extent, I do not mind helping them in such a take-over and persuade others to do so. I do not see any means, except an extensive use of khadi, for remedying the utter poverty of India. It should be painful to me as well as to all Indians if khadi is abandoned. If the Swarajists do not approve of this work also, I shall make way courteously and explore ways for the propagation of khadi, which may not hamper the Congress. I am pledged to expend all my energy in straightening out this domestic

dispute, because this would also resolve the Hindu-Muslim dispute. But why should Gujarat not see to it that no one opposes khadi or argues against the use and spread of khadi as advocated by me? If Gujarat has faith in khadi, may she spread it and may God help her!

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-9-1924

106. MY NOTES

INSTRUCTIONS TO SPINNERS

The following instructions[1] from the examiner of yarn appointed by the All-India Khadi Board deserve the attention of every spinner.

It means spinners should not try to spin fine without knowing the test for yarn. If fine yarn is weak, it is quite useless. Moreover, when the cotton is not of long staple or if the slivers are not properly processed, the temptation to spin fine should be given up. Yarn up to 30 counts is not considered fine. If yarn is uniformly of 20 to 30 counts, we can save a lot of cotton; and saris, dhotis, etc., which are very heavy, can be made lighter and finer.

APOLOGIES TO KATHIAWARIS

I did not see the names of any Kathiawaris when the figures of spinners were brought to me. I was sorry and criticised the Kathiawaris for not sending any yarn. Next week I received the explanation that there were 13 names from Kathiawar; but they there included in the list of the Provincial Committee. I should have issued the correction, but failed to do so on account of my tour. Fortunately I have received fresh figures and they include 63 names from Kathiawar and three from Kutch. With the arrival of these names, I am hopeful of more and I apologize to Kathiawar and Kutch. The population of Kathiawar is said to be 2.6 million and that of Maha Gujarat, 9.2 million. The share of Kathiawar should be at least a fourth. [instead, only 63 from Kathiawar and a mere three from Kutch have sent any yarn, and this I do not consider enough. Moreover, as many as 22 are from the Ashram at Madhada, 17 from Bhavnagar, 15 from Rajkot and five from Amreli. Even if these figures are further revised not many places

[1] Not translated here

are likely to be covered. Kathiawar has the means with which it can achieve the first place in spinning. But the meagre quantity of yarn received suggests that, like other places, Kathiawar too suffers from lack of organization. I do not believe that we cannot finds many people who would spin as a matter of religious duty. Even if those who have sent in some yarn exerted more, the figures are likely to rise appreciably.

HOW TO SPREAD SPINNING

If we want to popularize non-professional spinning we must have diligence and perseverance. Ratanlal Khandwala, a young man from a well-to-do family of Surat, formed an association on the Tilak anniversary. This was only one month ago. The association undertakes to supply spinning-wheels and their accessories, as also slivers, etc. They also do minor repairing jobs, and weave the yarn for the spinners. Those who spin at least three thousand yards a month can become members. The association has enrolled 27 members during the first month, and these have spun 2,27,500 yards of yarn. Two of the members who also know weaving have taken up this work. If such associations are formed at several places, spinning will soon reach every home. The dearth of slivers is felt everywhere. It is not difficult to card a little cotton with a small bow. A non-professional also can spin sufficiently fine if he selects a proper variety of cotton and takes the requisite care. It may be remembered that up to a certain limit, say up to 30 counts, with finer yarn less cotton is required. Less cotton means lower costs and less carding. Thus spinning fine yarn up to 30 counts has a threefold advantage: less cotton, less labour, less time. Just as there is saving on account of cotton, less carding means some saving too.

INCOME FROM WEAVING

A friend from Kathiawar who has taken up the weaver's profession by choice and out of love for the country had previously sent in figures pertaining to his income. He is a very careful worker. improving upon the earlier figures he now writes:[1]

A novice has his own handicaps. But I no more doubt that having improved with experience, he can raise his income without

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had said that with superior yarn income rose by half as much again.

additional efforts. Experience unfolds our latent abilities and intelligent working saves time. Time saved is money earned.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-9-1924

107. LETTER TO ANNIE BESANT

C/O ''COMRADE" OFFICE,
DELHI,
September 14, 1924

DEAR DR. BESANT,

I am eternally grateful for your letter and your note on our conversation. I wired to you on receipt of your letter that *Young India* was already published. I am therefore now handing the note to the Associated Press. I have not yet heard from the Swarajists. It is therefore not possible to say what the A.I.C.C. is likely to say. I shall however keep you informed of any development that may take place.

My son will go to Adyar as soon as you want him to. Indeed he will regard it as a privilege to teach you spinning.

Yours sincerely,

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

108. LETTER TO ANANDANANDA

Sunday [On or after *September 14, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI ANANDANANDA,

I have not yet received your reply to the letter 1 sent you about the criticism made by a gentleman named Shah of the subscriptions of *Young India* and *Navajivan*. Please send it.

Today I am sending you 9 galleys instead of 8. You are printing at full speed, but after the written matter is finished I shall be able to send you very little. It is only after I reach the Ashram that I shall get the time to write. I shall certainly correct the proofs and return them

[1] From the reference to his instruction about the type, etc., it is presumed that the letter was written in 1924, from Delhi; *vide*"Letter to Mahomed Ali" and"Letter to Anandananda", 8-9-1924

to you, but remember I shall be able to give you very little afterwards.

I have already told Mahomed Ali about the type, etc. He does not want to make any change for the present. I think we should say nothing more on this matter.

I am sure all proper care is taken of business correspondence. Let me know if you are short of hands.

It appears the quantum of our business will also increase. Avantikabai says she receives her *Young India* after she reads the articles and its translations in *The* [*Bombay*] *Chronicle* and the *NavaKal*. How is it?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7755

109. TELEGRAM TO ABDUL BARI

[After *September 14, 1924*][1]

MAULANA ABDUL BARI
FIRANGI MAHAL
LUCKNOW

CONSULTED HAKIMJI ABOUT VISITING LUCKNOW. WE HAVE COME CONCLUSION NOT DESIRABLE FOR ME LEAVE DELHI AT PRESENT. THINK THEREFORE REPRESENTATIVE BOTH SIDES SHOULD COME HERE.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S. N. 10492

110. MY NOTE

[*September 15, 1924*]

MIDNIGHT SPINNER

As soon as I reached Delhi I realized the extent to which Maulana Mahomed Ali was mindful of his pledge and his responsibility. By the 14th his 2,000 yards of yarn not been spun. He

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's stay in Delhi where he arrived on September 14, 1924

was short by about 500 yards. Therefore, after finishing other work he was spinning late till midnight. I also saw that he was spinning off and on during the night. He is determined to complete his 2,000 yards today, the 15th. While I am writing this, only a few yards have yet to be spun. It is immaterial whether he completes his quota today; but his keenness to fulfil his task is worth appreciating. Maulana Saheb has learnt from experience that, if he organizes his work more systematically, he certainly can do his spinning with ease. Systematic organization comes out of insistence on spinning. A man can put in more work if he organizes his work better in respect of the jobs he has undertaken; and very often he finds that he has time on his hands. A systematic man can do double the work and yet be ready for more. An unsystematic man never sees the end of his work. I am sure that regular spinning makes one orderly and saves one's time.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-9-1924

111. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

September 15, 1924

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your most touching personal letter. You will stand it all bravely I know. Father is just now in an irritable mood. And I am most anxious that neither you nor I should contribute an iota to the irritation. If it is at all possible you should have a frank chat with him and avoid such action as may offend him. It makes me unhappy to find him unhappy. His irritability is a sure sign of his unhappiness. Hasrat was here today and I find from him that even my proposal about spinning by every Congressman ruffles him. I do so feel like retiring from the Congress and doing the three things quietly. They are enough to occupy more than all the true men and women we can get. But even that ruffles people. I had a long chat with the Poona Swarajists. They will not agree to spin and they will not agree to my leaving the Congress. They do not realize that I shall cease to be useful as soon as I cease to be myself. It is a wretched situation but I do not despair. My faith is in God. I know only the moment's duty. It

[1] Regarding this Jawaharlal Nehru wrote:"I had written to Gandhiji and said that I was rather unhappy to be a financial burden on my father and wanted to stand on my own feet. The difficulty was that I was a whole-time worker of the Congress. My father, when he heard of this, was greatly annoyed."

is given to me to know no more. Why then should I worry?

Shall I try to arrange for some money for you? Why may you not take up remunerative work? After all you must live by thesweat of your brow even though you may be under Father's roof. Will you be correspondent to some newspapers? Or will you take up a professorship?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

A Bunch of Old Letters, pp. 40-1

112. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

C/o M. MAHOMED ALI,
''COMRADE'' OFFICE,
DELHI,
September 15, 1924

DEAR RAJAGOPALACHARI,

I have been constantly thinking of you ever since the reading of your letter. How is it that you do not see the necessity as clearly as I do of the step I have taken? I agree with you that it is better to leave the Congress if we cannot enforce our programme. The difficulty is to know how. I cannot help feeling that we must not embarrass the Swarajists. They are supplying a felt want. They do represent a large section of people who want petty relief. Shall we obstruct them? Ours is predominantly a spiritual activity. Its strength is developed unperceived and not by merely debating and vote-taking. I am still not clearly expressing myself. I have simply set forth one argument out of many for the course I have taken and advised for adoption by us all. Somehow or other I *feel* the absolute correctness of the step even though I cannot demonstrate it to your satisfaction. I know how difficult it must be for you and others suddenly to accommodate yourselves to these sudden changes. But how shall I help myself ! I know I am putting an undue strain upon the loyalty and the faith of co-workers. But is it not better that I should do that rather than that I

should suppress the clear voice within? Of what use should I be if I once stifled that monitor? But this merely by the way.[1]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

113. SPEECH AT OPENING CEREMONY OF "THE HINDUSTAN TIMES", DELHI

September 15, 1924

In declaring the press open Mr. Gandhi said that it was not without hesitation that he accepted the invitation of Sardar Mangal Singh to perform the opening ceremony, holding as he did very strongly that under the present conditions of the country he would, if he could, stop all newspapers except *Young India.* But his intense love for the Sikhs tempted him to accept the invitation. The Sikhs position today was full of difficulty and all that he would ask them to do was to have unflinching faith in God. He trusted that a paper beginning under such good auspices would prove worthy of the responsible profession and be conducted with truth, tact and fearlessness. It was a religious venture and he hoped that nothing would compromise their great watchword *Sat Sri Akal*[2]. Every word and sentence published in the paper should be weighed. There should not only be no untrue statements, but no *suggestio falsi* or *suppressio veri*. Truth and love of sacrifice was what their religion taught and he hoped that the journal would carry this out in its service of the Sikhs and of India under the able and educated editorship of Mr. K. M. Panikkar and the guidance of men like Sardar Mangal Singh.[3]

The Hindu, 17-9-1924

114. TELEGRAM TO JAMNADAS DWARKADAS[4]

[On or after *September 15, 1924*]

LETTER RECEIVED. CONGRESS AIM REMAINS SWARAJ.

[1] The source here adds in brackets:"The rest of the letter deals with S.I. Flood Relief Work."

[2] "True is the Deathless One."

[3] *The Hindustan Times* postponed publication for a week owing to unexpected breakdown of the machinery.

[4] In reply to his letter of September 15, 1924

CONGRESSMEN WILL TAKE PART CONFERENCE. REGARD SPINNING ESSENTIAL. WRITING.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10172

115. MESSAGE TO"HINDU" LAHORE

[On or after *September 15, 1924*][1]

DEAR LALA KARAMCHAND,

Here is my message:

I am averse to the multiplication of newspapers at the present moment. A large number are simply fomenting trouble and increasing the tension between Hindus and Mussalmans. If your paper being a Hindu paper does not pledge itself to the surrender by the Hindus of every material interest to the Mussalmans, I for one cannot welcome the enterprise.

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] In *Mahadevbhaini Diary* (Vol. VI) this message is placed between a letter dated September 15, addressed to C. Rajagopalachari and one dated September 17 to Motilal Nehru.

116. LETTER T0 VALLABHBHAI PATEL

Bhadarva Vad 3 [*September 16, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

My decision will be known to you even before this reaches you. You are a lion, and will not therefore be perturbed. Please go on doing with greater energy all the work we have resolved to do. Let not anyone be nervous. I propose to complete my fast in this very place. I am afraid Manibehn will be very much upset. Please reassure her. I am not writing a separate letter to her.

BAPU

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI PATEL
BARRISTER
AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro 2—Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 10

117. NOTES

[Before *September 17,1924*]

NO CONGRESSMEN INVOLVED

The reader will recollect that the president of the Savarna Mahajan Sabha accused Congressmen of practically disorderly conduct. I have now three letters of categorical denial. One letter is from the conveners of the meeting. I extract the following from that letter:

> We have to make it clear that the meeting was not conducted"under the auspices of the adherents of the congress party". It was a meeting of the savarna Hindus of Central Travancore convened at the instance of the Vanjipuzha Chief, the most prominent Brahmin landlord of Chengannur, by a respresentative body of conveners consisting of four Brahmins and three Nair gentlemen of the place. None of these were adherents of the Congress party.
>
> The propositions adopted for presentation and the resolutions passed at the meeting were identical. . . .

[1] From the reference to the 21-day fast which Gandhiji commenced on the 17th night

We are anxious to inform you of the perfectly non-violent spirit that reigns in Travancore generally in regard to Vykom Satyagraha.

The letter contains a complete and detailed refutation of the charges referred to in *Young India*. But as the meeting in question was evidently not called by Congressmen and as the general public cannot be interested in the detailed refutation, for the sake of brevity I have omitted the major portion of the letter.

NOT BY DEPUTY

A correspondent says his mother is an expert spinner and spins nearly 20 *tolas* per day. On the passing of the spinning resolution he asked his mother to teach him spinning. The poor mother did not know what to say. She thought her spinning was enough for all her family, especially as she spun twice as much in a day as was required per person in a month. If the quantity was the only thing aimed at by the resolution, her argument would be irresistible; but there are some duties which cannot be done by deputy. We cannot bathe or study or pray by deputy, nor may we spin by deputy when, by individual spinning, each one of us has personally to identify himself with the poor, when the idea is to set a personal example and when we want to make a knowledge of the art so universal that by the simple system we can make hand-spun cheap enough to compete with the machine-spun cloth. Underlying the good mother's objection to her boy, spinning is no doubt the idea that spinning is merely a woman's calling. It is true that as a rule women only spin. There are no doubt some light occupations which women are better fitted for than men. But to argue therefore that they are derogatory to man's dignity or that they may make him effeminate is a gross superstition. Cooking is essentially a woman's calling, but every soldier must not only know cooking but he has to do it himself whilst he is on duty. The most accomplished cooks in the world today are men. Woman is, by habit or nature, queen of the household. She is not designed to organize on a large scale. Being conservative and preservative, she is not inventive. Man, being restless and often destructive, is inventive. Whether this statement be universally true or not, the fact stands that all the greatest inventions have been made by men. Our own spinning has been organized by men spinners. All the necessary improvements in the machine have been made by men spinners. Looked at from every point of view, hand-spinning is as essential for man as for woman in India, so long as it has not become universal enough to be reinstated in our villages and to bring about total boycott of foreign cloth.

(The above two notes were written before the fast.)

Young India, 25-9-1924

118. MY JAIL EXPERIENCES-XI [*Continued*]

[Before *September 17, 1924*]

WHAT I READ-3

I must not omit to mention one little but precious book a dear friend sent. It was *Supersensual Life* by Jacob Boehmen. I notice it to enable me to share with the reader some of the striking passages I copied from it. Here they are:

> It is naught indeed but thine own hearing and willing that do hinder them, so that thou dost not see and hear God.
>
> If thou rulest over the creatures externally only and not from the right internal ground of thy inward nature, then thy will and ruling is in a bestial kind or matter.

Thou art like all things and nothing unlike thee. If thou wilt be like all things, thou must forsake all things.

> Let the hands and the head be at labour. Thy heart ought ought nevertheless to rest in God.
>
> Heaven is the turning in of the will to the love of God. Hell is the turning in of the will into the wrath of God.

Whilst I am turning over my scrappy notebook, I come across certain other passages collected in the course of my reading from other books.

Here is one for satyagrahis:

> They are slaves who will not choose
> Hatred, scoffing and abuse,
> Rather than in silence shrink
> From the truth they needs must think.
> They are slaves who dare not be
> In the right with two or three.

—Lowell

(Copied from *Tom Brown's School Days)*

Another bearing on the same subject is from Claude Field's *Mystics and Saints of Islam.*

> Sufi Shah Mullah Shah, when he was advised to flee from the wrath of Shah Jehan, is reported to have said,"I am not an impostor that I should

seek safety in flight. I am an utterer of truth. Death and life are to me alike. Let my blood in another life also redden the impaling stake. I am living and eternal. Death recoils from me, for my knowledge has vanquished death. The sphere where all colours are effaced has become my abode." Mansuri Hallaj said,"To cut off the hands of a fettered man is easy, but to sever the link that binds me to the Divinity would be a task indeed."

Here is another from Lowell. It helps those who would give to the Malabar sufferers to do so in the right spirit and to share their very best.

The Holy Supper is kept indeed
In what we share with another's need.
Not that which we give, but what we share.
For the gift without the giver is bare.
Who bestows himself with his alms feeds three,
Himself, his hungering neighbour and Me.

The following will strengthen those who believe in the gospel of non-violence:

To wish ill, to do ill, to speak ill or to think ill of anyone, we are equally forbidden without exception.

—Tertullian

(Copied from J. Brierley's *Ourselves and the Universe*.)

The last set of books I should like to mention are the histories of the Sikhs by Cunningham, Macauliff and Gokulchand Narang. All those books are good in their own way. It is impossible to appreciate the present Sikh struggle without understanding their previous history and the life of the Gurus. Cunningham's is a sympathetic record of events leading to the Sikh wars. Macauliff's is a life-story of the Gurus giving copious extracts from their compositions. It is a sumptuously printed publication. It loses its value because of its fulsome praise of the English rule and the author's emphasis on Sikhism as a separate religion having nothing in common with Hinduism. Gokulchand Narang's is a monograph supplying information not available in the two works mentioned.

Before concluding this review of my studies in the jail, let me draw the student-readers' attention to the value of doing things regularly and the way of making dry things interesting. It had a mind, for my own instruction and guidance, to prepare a concordance of the *Gita.* It is not a particularly interesting task to note down words and

references and index them twice. I thought I should do it during the incarceration. At the same time I grudged giving much time to the task. My time-table was packed. I determined therefore to do what it could in 20 minutes daily. Doing it for such a short time freed the task from becoming a drudgery. On the contrary, I daily looked forward to it. When it came to re-indexing, it became absorbing. The curious may solve the knotty problem for themselves. The first indexing gave me the alphabetical order of the first letters of the words to be indexed. But how to rearrange the words under each letter in their alphabetical order was a problem to solve. I had never written a dictionary. I had therefore to discover my own method. I was glad when I made the discovery. It was so good that it became deeply interesting. It was neat, quick and infallible. The whole work took me nearly eighteen months to finish. I am now by referring to the concordance able to know where and how often a particular word occurs in the *Gita*. It has also a meaning attached to it. If I ever succeed in reducing to writing my thougts on the *Gita*, I propose to share the concordance and the thoughts with the public.

(Written before the fast)

Young India, 25-9-1924

119. LETTER TO MAHOMED ALI[1]

Wednesday [*September 17, 1924*][2]

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I know you will feel the greatest grief for my decision. I want you, however, not to discuss the possibility of going back upon it. That was a matter between God and myself. But you may discuss the merits to your heart's content. Pray don't weep. You will make me break down. Rather rejoice that God has given me both the direction and the strength. Every little progress in composing our difference will be more than food.

The Hindu, 23-9-1924

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] *ibid*

120. SILENCE DAY NOTE

Wednesday [*September 17, 1924*]

Arriving at my house, I[1] taxed Mahatmaji with breach of faith towards his co-workers like Hakim Sahib, Dr. Ansari, Shaukat, myself and many others and gave free utterance to all the bitterness that I felt Mahatmaji's fast of silence had not ended. So, he only smiled and wrote on a piece of paper

You are entitled to say all you have said and much more. As soon as you have composed yourself, I shall talk to you the whole night. Only remember that there are things in which there is no interposition between God and Man.

Just a little before that, one of his companions had given me a note[2] which was written in his own hand and signed in Urdu. . . .

The Hindu, 23-9-1924

121. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

DELHI,
September 17, 1924

MY DEAREST CHARLIE,

Don't you fret over my decision. It has been taken after deep prayer and clearest possible indication. This fast of 21 days is the least I can do. Oh the agony of it all! Every day has been a day of torture. But I shall soon be at peace. I was longing to see my duty clearly. The light has come like a flash. Can a man do more than give his life?

With dearest love,

Yours,

MOHAN

C. F. ANDREWS, ESQ.
SHANTINIKETAN
Via BOLPUR
E. I. RLY.

From a photostat: G.N. 2613

[1] Mahomed Ali
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

122. LETTER T0 MOTILAL NEHRU

DELHI,
*September 17, 1*924

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have your wire. I am in Delhi for sometime at any rate. I shall therefore be delighted to see you and Mr. Das whenever you come. I have taken what might be the final plunge. My fast of 21 days commences from today. That is how I have learnt to understand religion.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

123. LETTER T0 MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Bhadarva Vad 4 [*September 17, 1924*][1]

About business, Mahadev will write to you. You should be happy about my fast rather than feel sorry. When a man performs his duty even by undergoing trouble, his friends should be happy about it. You need not run up here. Now everybody will be coming. You may certainly come over during the last week, provided Taramati is quite well.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 76

124. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Bhadarva Vad 4 [*September 17, 1924*][2]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. A hip-bath must be taken with cold water only; it has nothing to do with the routine bath. But it must be taken three hours after a meal and nothing should be eaten for one hour after it. During the bath the upper part of the body and the legs are to

[1] As given by the addressee
[2] From the reference to the 21-day fast

be kept out of water. The lower abdomen immersed in water should be rubbed with a wet cloth. You must have read about my fast. You need not at all be nervous because it is for 21 days. Do not even think of running up to me. I believe 21 days will not be too much for me.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRIMATI VASUMATIBEHN
BATALA

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 456. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

125. LETTER TO RUKMINI GANDHI

Wednesday [*September 17, 1924*][1]

CHI. RUKHI,

I had been waiting for your letter all this while. Whatever you may do, take care of your health. You should build up your health nicely while you are there. Do not neglect Sanskrit. I am glad to know that Moti Ba is now quite well. Give her my best respects.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. RUKMINI GANDHI
C/O SHRI KHUSHALBHAI GANDHI
OPPOSITE MIDDLE SCHOOL
NAVU PARU
RAJKOT

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6095. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] From the postmark.

126. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

DELHI,
After starting fast [*September 17, 1924*][1]

CHI. RAMDAS,

You will have heard about my atonement before this reaches you. Do not be scared; concentrate on your studies. If you cannot have patience, do run up here. But it would be best to be patient. I am sure of it. Why should we feel unhappy on account of physical pain? But while there is life in the body, we must take the maximum work out of it. The fast is at least for 21 days. Afterwards we shall see. Read this to Gijubhai and others.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. RAMDAS
DAKSHINAMURTI BHAVAN
BHAVNAGAR
KATHIAWAR

From the Gujarati original: Ramdas Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

127. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

DELHI,
[*September 17, 1924*][2]

REVERED ANASUYABEHN,

Do not be perturbed by the penance I have undertaken.[3] Do not let Shankerlal be perturbed. The path of dharma is not always easy. The agony caused by the desecration of temples[4], was unbearable to me. Now I can bear it somewhat. Maybe my love for Muslims will

[1] From the postmark. Gandhiji began on this day a 21-day fast for Hindu-Muslim unity.

[2] From the postmark

[3] For Gandhiji's statement on the fast, *Vide*"All About the Fast", Sepember 22, 1924.

[4] At Amethi, Shambhar, Gulbarga and Kohat. For details, *Vide*"Notes", 21-8-1924 and"Gulbarga Gone Mad", 28-8-1924.

touch a chord in their hearts. The two brothers[1] and other Muslim friends will be helped. If you wish to come then come after a week. A week is not such a long time.

To you both,

Blessings from

BAPU

ANASUYABEHN
SEVASHRAM
MIRZAPUR
AHMEDABAD

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 11542

128. LETTER T0 C. F. ANDREWS

[Before *September 18, 1924*][2]

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letter and wire. I hope your not accompanying Gurudev is not due to your illness which you must have got over by this time.

So long as you do not feel as I do, you should receive socks, etc., from your sister. My position remains the same. The sister's love offering cannot be allowed to interfere with the clear duty of feeling one with the poorest by using things made by them. The way to arrive at a proper solution is to multiply your case by one million and find out whether one million gifts be they ever so loving will not rob the poor of the land from disposing of their cloth among us. But why should I strive with you? I shall love you none the less for receiving and using cloth sent by your sister. I donot want you to do things the doing of which *you* do not regard as *necessary.*

Nor do I see any difficulty in reconciling myself to your and my engaging in service not pertaining to the neighbour. I have stated the law. I hold it to be sound. When Jesus"forsook" his blood relations, he did not forsake them. Their service was included in the greater service. But conversely Mahabir stopped, as it may appear to

[1] The Ali brothers

[2] From the referenee to"sister's love offering" in this and"Letter to C. F. Andrews", 18-9-1924.

us, higher service for the sake of obeying his mother. Both were right. We cannot judge their actions. But we must recognize the law. You cannot *neglect* the nearer duty for the sake of a remote. You dare not run away from Shantiniketan when it needs you even to *save* the whole of India. Each one to his post.

With deepest love,

Yours,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 2635

129. NOTES

DR. ANNIE BESANT'S DECLARATION

The reader will, I hope, join me in welcoming Dr. Annie Besant's declaration on the situation. It is to me a matter of great importance that she should recognize the necessity of spinning by way of example by every worker in the national cause. Her example must mean much for the spinning movement. That at her age the gifted lady should consent to devote half an hour in the midst of his incessant activity to spinning speaks volumes for her devotion to the national cause.

So far as the constitution of the Congress is concerned, there is evidently some confusion. There is no question of suspending it. It will need amending, if my proposal about spinning is accepted. The non-co-operation programme, including civil disobedience, is not part of the constitution. That programme will, if my proposals are accepted, be certainly suspended for one year. My share in the framing of a swaraj scheme would be this. I would attend, if required, any non-official conference of different parties to frame the scheme. I would be bound by the majority vote in the sense that I would not threaten civil disobedience or non-co-operation, merely because the scheme does not satisfy me—not even after the year of grace is over—provided the majority are satisfied with it. 1 would actively work for the scheme, if it satisfies my minimum. I may here say a word about the Congress constitution. I observe critics ascribing to me the opinion that the constitution has been an absolute failure. It has certainly broken down as measured by its own standard. But in my opinion it cannot be seriously denied that the Congress still remains the most

national and representative of all the organizations of India. It still has the largest number of original members on its books and has the largest number of volunteers and paid workers of any organization. Nor do I wish to be understood to mean that non-co-operation has absolutely failed. On the contrary, it has vitalized the nation as nothing else has. But it has not come up to the expectations formed of it. The response of the people was great, but not great enough for the purpose intended. All this, however, is small comfort to the workers, who have yet much work to do before they can reap the harvest.

SUSPENSION OR REPEAL

A friend writes:"Is not your proposed suspension of boycotts only repeal in disguise?" Not for me. I have no present intention of securing repeal of the boycotts. If I had, I should not have hesitated to say so. I hope that it may not be found necessary to resume them. But I should have not the slightest hesitation in advising resumption if I found them necessary for national growth, just as I find their suspension necessary for national growth."Are you not postponing the internecine feud for a year?" says the friend. My answer again is,"No". We would know at the end of the year where we stand. The boycotts certainly cannot be revived, if at the end of the year there is still a likelihood of sharp divisions. They can only become the national programme if the active workers on the political field can be persuaded of their necessity. Till that happens, they must remain a policy or a creed with a minority. We must not shut our eyes to the fact that whatever the Government yields will be yielded to the demand of the small, vocal and active section of the nation. Nothing will be yielded if this section is divided into many warring sub-sections. I should expect one of two things at the end of the year, either the No-changers will be converted to the purely political, i.e., external activity or the pure politicians will, recognizing the futility of mere external activity, devote themselves to the intensive internal development which would necessarily involve acceptance of boycotts. It may be also that the internal development as well as political activity will command far more general acceptance and, each party helping the other, we shall compel the Government to accede to the minimum joint demands of all the parties.

The central idea underlying my proposal is to unite the nation on a common platform and to hope that each party, honestly acting upon the other, would be voluntarily converted to a common form of

action. Even if this grand purpose fails, we may expect at least to part company with the best grace possible and without imputing motives to one another. Suspension is not an unusual state in a movement. It often brings greater strength to a suspended plan, if it has innate vitality. Those, therefore, who believe in the intrinsic merit of the boycotts need not fear their permanent disappearance because of a brief spell of suspension. They, the believers, ought to be the surest guarantee against any such catastrophe.

"HEART-UNITY"

A correspondent writes:

> In your reply to the Bombay Municipal address[1] you have used an expression—heart-unity. I pondered and meditated on it and saw that in the core of the universe is the secret of heart-unity. One has to go down far into the fathomless depths, grasp and run away with the divine touch-stone and touch with it the sundered and discoloured parts of human associations to bring back colour and happiness. It is in the inner being *of Satya* and *Rita*, of Truth and Law of Nature. It is heart-unity that binds planet to planet and holds planets aloft in space, and it is heart-unity that keeps elemental matter bound each to the other. Chemists had discovered water was a compound of hydrogen and oxygen but by bringing the two together, they could not get water till an electric current passed through them. That electric current is the heart-unity in Nature. It is heart-unity that transforms things—melts ice into water, and freezes water into ice, evolution and involution, the descent of spirit into matter and the return of matter to spirit are all the work of heart-unity.
>
> Parvati's *tapasya* for heart-unity with Siva is a wonderful piece of Hindu imagery. Parvati is God's *Shakti* or the active principle in the universe, incarnate in human form. I feel it was a direct vision from God to some *sadhak* ancestor of the race. The force of activity in the Almighty was revealed in its most beautiful aspect, in the place of matter, as Parvati engaged in *tapasya*—for what? for nothing less, i.e., denser than heart-unity with the Heart of Hearts—çk.kLFk çk.ka, a lesson for humanity to con and master. You have mastered it and applied it in the political field by heart-unity with the Alis and others, with the result that we are well on our way to get the compound of an Indian Nation made out of several distinct elements of various races and creeds. May the country take the cue from you and be firm in her *tapasya* of activity in the direction of heart-unity.

I print the letter not for the compliment it pays me but for the

[1] *Vide*"Speech in Reply to Corporation Address, Bombay", 29-8-1924.

heart-unity the writer emphasizes and truly sees in my association with the Ali Brothers and others not of the same faith or even of the same mode of thought."What is it", the Big Brother said to me last week,"that binds us so indissolubly together, though we are so dissimilar in most things. Is it not after all the allegiance to and the fear of the same God?" What he said was so natural and true. Why should we blaspheme God by fighting one another because we see Him through different media —the Koran, the Bible, the *Talmud,* the *Avesta* or the *Gita?* The same sun beats on the Himalayas as on the plains. Should the men of plains quarrel with the men of the snows because of the different feel of the sun? Why should we make of books and formulas so many fetters to enslave us rather than use them as aids to our deliverance and union of hearts?

VYKOM SATYAGRAHA

The Vykom Satyagraha has perhaps a meaning deeper than is generally realized. The young men who have organized it are stern in discipline and gentle in their dealings with the orthodox section. But this is the least part of their trials. Some of them are suffering too the persecution of social boycott. We, of the western presidency, have no idea of what this persecution can mean. These young men who are taking part in the movement are not only being denied social amenities but are threatened even with the deprivation of their share in the family property. If they would go to law, probably they would get their due. But a satyagrahi cannot go to law for a personal wrong. He sets out with the idea of suffering persecution. In a reform that the Vykom struggle seeks to achieve, the satyagrahi seeks to convert his opponent by sheer force of character and suffering. The purer he is and the more he suffers, the quicker the progress. He must therefore resign himself to being ex-communicated, debarred from the family privileges and deprived of his share in the family property. He must not only bear such hardships cheerfully but he must actively love his persecutors. The latter honestly believe that the reformer is doing something sinful and therefore resort to the only means they know to be effective to wean him from his supposed error. The satyagrahi on the other hand does not seek to carry out his reform by a system of punishments but by penance, self-purification and suffering. Any resentment of the persecution, therefore, would be an interruption of the course of discipline he had imposed upon himself. It may be a prolonged course, it may even seem to be never ending. A little

bullying or even moral persuasion or coercion may appear more expeditious. What, however, I am showing here is not the greater efficacy of satyagraha but the implications of the method the satyagrahi has deliberately chosen for himself. Indeed I have often shown in these pages that satyagraha is, as a matter of fact and in the long run, the most expeditious course. But my purpose here is merely to show what the young satyagrahis of Vykom are doing. The public know much of what they are doing in the shape of picketing but they know nothing of the silent suffering, some of them are undergoing at the hands of their families and caste men. But I know that it is this silent and loving suffering which will finally break the wall of prejudice. I am anxious therefore that the reformers should realize their responsibility to the full and not swerve by a hair's breadth from their self-imposed discipline.

SOUTH INDIA RELIEF

Hardly had Mr. George Joseph been out of jail when he made time to send a friend the following description[1] of the distress in Travancore:

What another friend wrote immediately after the floods was also quite true. He said that what damage the rebellion could not do in months was done by seemingly heartless Nature in a day. The real relief will commence after the preliminary work of immediate relief is finished. The readers of *Young India* and *Navajivan* are making a most liberal response to my appeal. They may be sure that it is none too liberal for the task before the workers. I invite cotton merchants to send cotton when they cannot send cash. Thousands who cannot possibly cultivate their land for another year have nothing but the spinning-wheel to fall back upon. I am asking workers to send plans of finding employment for these distressed countrymen and countrywomen. The wheel is no fetish for me and I assure the donors that if I find another common form of work for the thousands, I will not hesitate to devote their donations to that purpose.

JEALOUS OF HIS PROVINCE

The secretary, A.I.K.B., has handed me for explanation and correction the following legitimate protest from Bihar:

[1] Not reproduced here. It gave details of the flood havoc suggesting spinning and the provision of cotton therefor, among the relief measures.

Our attention has been drawn to Mahatma Gandhi's note in the *Young India* of the 4th instant regarding the yarn sent by the members of the various provinces. Regarding Bihar Mahatmaji says,"There is no second best to Sjt. Rajendra Prasad's." As it might mean discouragement to some of our good spinner members, I would request you *to* kindly re-examine the yarns of the following members and non-members. If they are found even tolerably fair, kindly see that some mention is made of them.

I have omitted 17 names given in the letter. I owe the secretary and the seventeen members an apology. The fact is that I handed the original report which was in Gujarati and which is printed in full in *Navajivan* for a condensed translation to an assistant and published the translation without comparing it with the original which does no injustice to Bihar. This is the translation of the portion of the original referring to Bihar:

"The yarns received are almost all common. Most hanks are unevenly spun. Cotton not good. Yarn not sprayed. Babu Rajendra Prasad has sent 10,148 yards. It is near 8 counts but is even and well-hanked. There is little yarn from this province so good as this."

I am sorry for the injustice done to Bihar by the *Young India* note referred to. I hope that I shall have the good fortune to find the defects mentioned by the examiner removed in the second month's consignment. The examiner draws my attention to the translation of the portion relating to Sind also and says there may be a just protest from Sind. I therefore hasten to give a full translation of the report regarding Sind as follows:

"Except in the case of two or three packets, there seems to be absence of practised spinning. In some packets the hanks vary and the sizes are curious. No yarn seems to have been sprayed. Some have not even taken the trouble of hanking the yarn." Though Sind may resent it, I am inclined to pardon the translator for the following condensation."A sorry affair. Little trace of practised spinning." Neat Sindhis, beware !

Young India, 18-9-1924

130. THE QUESTION OF QUESTIONS

As I am reaching Delhi, I read the following letter which I give almost word for word, save for two or three slight grammatical corrections:

> The Mussalmans of Nagpur have run amuck. Though a Hindu, I have hitherto studiously refrained from taking any part in the Hindu agitation at Nagpur. I am a believer both in non-violence and Hindu-Muslim uniy. Believe me, there is no sectarian spirit in me. But the doings of the Mussalmans in Nagpur, as in many other places, are putting my faith to very severe test indeed. The pity of it is that not a single responsible Mussalman of Nagpur has publicly condemned these acts. Had it not been for the brave Doctor Moonje and the gallant Udaram followed by the *Koshthis*[1] there is no knowing what atrocities the Mussalmans would have committed. I know there is no bargaining in love. I also agree that in love it is all giving. But I cannot forget that the sacrifice and sufferings undergone for the sake of love are voluntary and not forced. But the Hindu yields not out of his strength, not of his own free will, but out of his weakness and in spite of himself. To my mind the Hindus are only trying to shake off the slavery of the British to become serfs of the Mussalmans. Your pathetic article[2] on"Gulbarga Gone Mad" is an index of the depth of your own feelings in this rnatter.
>
> But you have yourself several times declared that you would prefer violence to cowardice. You also wrote in the *Young India* some weeks ago that the average Mussalman was a bully, and that the average Hindu was a coward[3] Alas ! this is only too true! How else could the Mussalmans of Nagpur, who are in a minority, rise so often in the teeth of the overwhelming number of the Hindus? The fact of the case is that the docile Hindu commands neither respect nor fear. Whether or not Darwin was right is not my part to determine. But one thing is clear, the world has no place for the weak. They must become strong or cease to be. If the Hindus want to live, they must organize, they must get strong, they must agitate, and they must learn the divine art of dying for the honour of their women and their gods.
>
> But they are hopeless cowards. For them non-violence has no meaning. It only serves as a mask to cover their abject cowardice. To preach to

[1] A community of weavers.

[2] Of 28-8-1924.

[3] *Vide*"Hindu-Muslim Tension : Its Cause and Cure (subtopic - The Bully and the Coward", 29-5-1924.

them non-violence sounds very much like preaching a sermon on moderation in diet to the famine-stricken before providing them with the means of satisfying their hunger or is like feeding a sick and infirm man with food that even strong men find it difficult to digest. Far from doing him the least good, it does him incalculable harm.

If you follow this line of thought, will you not feel constrained to concede that for a real and lasting Hindu-Muslim unity, the Hindus must develop the spirit of manliness? Must they not learn to vindicate the honour of their women and their temples? The weak are the greatest enemies of society. They corrupt both themselves and the strong, the latter by tempting them to bully. Weakness curseth both him that is weak, and him that bullies him. The Hindus may not retaliate in the sense of taking"a tooth for a tooth" and"an eye for an eye". They may not avenge themselves by violating the sanctity of Mussalman womanhood or by defiling or demolishing mosques. But since non-violence is beyond them, should you not advise them to learn to teach the wrong-doers a salutary lesson? Must they not develop the ability to defend themselves violently, before they could be expected to appreciate non-violence? Do not the good of the Hindus, real Hindu-Muslim friendship, and, for that matter, swaraj lie that way?

These thoughts have been agitating my mind now for a pretty long time. I tried to reason with myself, but I could not find a satisfactory answer to the questions named above. Hence I turn to you for guidance. I hope you will excuse me for encroaching upon your time with such a long letter. I shall be earnestly awaiting your reply to this in the columns of the *Young India* at your earliest convenience.

I would like to have my identity, though not my letter, kept private.

The earnestness of the writer is written in every part of the letter. The reasoning is sound so far as it goes. My difficulty, however, arises when we come to working out in practice the writer's propositions and their corollaries. The reader will find an outline of my scheme of work in the translation given else where,[1] and made for me by Mahadev Desai, of an article I wrote in *Navajivan* last week to meet a difficulty that has arisen in Gujarat and in answer to questions put both by Hindu and Mussalman friends.

Mine is at the present moment a most pitiable position. Thousands, it may be said in truth, look to me for guidance at this time of trial for the nation. I have taken a leading part in the Khilafat

[1] *Vide*"Hindu-Muslim Unity", 14-9-1924.

agitation. I have unhesitatingly and fearlessly propounded the doctrine of giving without the stipulation of receiving anything in return. There is no flaw in my reasoning. But the correspondent's question is,"Is my reasoning relevant to the situation? Have Hindus anything to give? One can give without taking, only out of the fulness of possession."

Let us see.

It is common cause between the correspondent and myself that the average Hindu is a coward. How is he to be turned into a brave man? Is he to become brave by muscular development or by developing the bravery of the soul? My correspondent says,"The world has no place for the weak." He means, I imagine,"physically weak". If so, the proposition is unsound. There are many animals physically stronger than man and yet man lives. Many muscular races have died out and some of them are even now in the process of dying out. The proposition should therefore be, so far as man is concerned,"The world has no place for the weak in spirit."

The die is cast for me. The common factor of all religions is non-violence. Some inculcate more of it than others, all agree that you can never have too much of it. We must be sure, however, that it is non-violence and not a cloak for cowardice.

Now in order to arrive at a solution we must not think of the man in the street. We must think of ourselves who are behind the man in the street and pulling the strings. Let us take care that we do nothing out of fear. I hate duelling, but it has a romantic side to it. I am engaged in bringing that side of it to the fore. I would love to engage in a duel with the Big Brother. When we are both satisfied that there is no chance of unity without bloodshed, and that even we two cannot agree to live in peace, I must then invite the Big Brother to a duel with me. I know that he can twist me round his thick fingers and dash me to pieces. That day Hinduism will be free. Or, if he lets me kill him in spite of the strength of a giant, Islam in India will be free. He will have atoned for all the bullying by the average Mussalman. What I detest is the match between *goondas* of both the parties. Any peace based upon such a trial of strength will turn to bitterness in the end. The way to get rid of the Hindu cowardice is for the educated portion to fight the *goondas*. We may use sticks and other clean weapons. My ahimsa will allow the use of them. We shall be killed in the fight. But that will chasten both the Hindus and the Mussalmans.

That would remove the Hindu cowardice in a moment. As things are going, each party will be the slaves of their own *goondas*. That means dominance of the military power. England fought for the predominance of the civil power and won and lived. Lord Curzon did much harm to us. But he was certainly brave and right when he stood out for the predominance of civil authority. When Rome passed into the hands of the soldiers, it fell. My whole soul rises against the very idea of the custody of my religion passing into the hands of *goondas*. Confining myself, therefore, for the present to the Hindus, I must respectfully but earnestly warn the thinking Hindus against relying upon the assistance of *goondas* for the protection of their temples, themselves and their wives and children. With the weak bodies they have, they must be determined to stand at their post and to die fighting or without fighting. It would have been a glorious death for Jamnalalji and his colleagues, if they had died in the act of securing peace. It will be a glorious death for Dr. Moonje or me, when we defend temples single-handed. That were bravery of the spirit indeed.

But there are many less heroic things to do. We must find out the true facts about Nagpur. I am in correspondence with Dr. Moonje about it. I am wooing the Hindus and Mussalmans of Delhi to let me know the root causes of the trouble there. I have offered to arbitrate singly or in company. They have not yet repelled my advances. There is no authentic story of the unfortunate trouble. I must refuse to lose my head. I am not satisfied that the Mussalmans alone are to blame for everything in every place. I do not know what was the first cause. I do know that an unscrupulous Press on either side is today poisoning the minds of the simple Hindus and the simple Mussalmans. I do know also that more poison is being spread in private conversations, and incidents are exaggerated beyond all recognition. I am going to leave no stone unturned to reach the bottom of this sea of darkness, doubt and despair. A true statement of facts to date is the preliminary indispensable to a correct solution of the tension that threatens to paralyse all healthy public activity. My intense desire to reach a solution of the trouble is not the least among the causes that have impelled me to a complete surrender to the Swarajists and all concerned.

Young India, 18-9-1924

131. AN EXPLANATION

Some Mussalman friends of Delhi have been to me and expressed their surprise at my saying in *Young India* of August 21 that there was a Mussalman organization at the back of the desecration of Hindu temples and that these desecrations were unprovoked. The friends tell me that my statement about organisation has been interpreted to mean an organization on behalf of Mussalmans as a community, and that about provocation to mean provocation of any kind whatsoever. I told my visitors that by an organization I did not mean an organization formed or instigated by the Mussalman community, but an organization of some individuals. I had no data to say how many.

These friends told me, as Hakim Sahib and Maulana Mahomed Ali had told me on my arrival in Delhi, that they knew of no such organization and that, had there been any, they should know it. I told them that, whilst their repudiation shook my confidence in my statement, I was not prepared to dismiss from my mind the idea of an organization of the kind mentioned by me. So many informants, including Mussalmans, had told me about it before the recent desecrations. When they happened, I could not but come to the conclusion that they were not the chance work of frenzy, but that they took that particular shape by reason of organized instigation. I should be glad to find that I was totally mistaken, and as soon as I was convinced of my error of judgement, I should readily make the needed correction. It has been suggested that the organization might well be from a Government agency. I said I was not prepared to deny the Government's share in these disturbances. I should certainly not be surprised to discover that the directing mind was Government agency.

As for provocation, the *Young India* writing, I told my visitors, quite clearly showed that I had referred to provocation in kind. It says,"Presumption is against such provocation. The desecration in Multan was an unprovoked act. I have been trying to find proof for the allegations about Hindu desecration in the places referred to in my article on Hindu-Muslim tension, but I have failed to receive any proof in support of them."

My visitors produced before me a Hyderabad Journal which is

said to hold that there was such Hindu provocation. If it could be proved, whilst I would still hold under every conceivable circumstance desecration of temples and equally of mosques to be unjustified from my point of view, I admitted that my condemnation would lose much of its force. I should be deeply hurt and ashamed, if the alleged Hindu desecration in Gulburga was found to be true.

My Visitors next asked me whether there was not a counter-organisation on the part of Hindus. I told them I know of no Hindu organization instigating desecration of mosques, but I did see that there was an organization of some Hindus, not an inconsiderable number, who were bent on provoking, writing insultingly of Islam and grossly exaggerating Mussalman misdeeds. This was unpardonable. In this respect, however, both parties were equally to blame. The business of every well-wisher of the country was to condemn those parties who promoted mischief and to leave no stone unturned to stop it. I told my visitors that, if I was permitted and assisted whole-heartedly by both the sections, I was prepared, singly if necessary and assisted if possible by colleagues, to conduct an inquiry and find out who started the mischief, how it spread and how it could be remedied.

Young India, 18-9-1924

132. STATEMENT ANNOUNCING 21-DAY FAST[1]

September 18, 1924

The following is the statement which Mr. Gandhi issued on September 18, at Delhi in announcing his fast of 21 days.

The recent events have proved unbearable for me. My helplessness is still more unbearable. My religion teaches me that whenever there is distress which one cannot remove, one must fast and pray. I have done so in connection with my own dearest ones. Nothing evidently that I say or write can bring the two communities together. I am therefore imposing on myself a fast of 21 days commencing from today and ending on Wednesday, October 8. I reserve the liberty to drink water with or without salt. It is both a penance and a prayer.

As penance I need not have taken the public into my

[1] This was communicated to the Associated Press of India by Gandhiji's private secretary at 2 o'clock in the morning.

confidence, but I publish the fast as (let me hope) an effective prayer both to Hindus and Mussalmans, who have hitherto worked in unison, not to commit suicide. I respectfully invite the heads of all the communities, including Englishmen, to meet and end this quarrel which is a disgrace to religion and to humanity. It seems as if God has been dethroned. Let us reinstate Him in our hearts.

Young India, 25-9-1924

133. TELEGRAM TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

DELHI,
September 18, 1924

SHANKERLAL BANKER
MIRZAPUR, AHMEDABAD

FAST DUE GRIEF PRESENT WANTS. NO CAUSE ALARM. GOD WILL SPARE ME IF I AM STILL WANTED.

BAPU

From the original: S.N. 32746

134. LETTER TO ANNIE BESANT

DELHI,
September 18, 1924

DEAR DR. BESANT,

I thank you for your letter. You know of my fast. I shall not therefore have the privilege of presiding at the celebration[1] of 2nd October. Of course, I shall hope to send a message.

Regarding the Congress passing the constitution I see many difficulties. But I am keeping an open mind. We shall discuss it when we can meet. I do not expect any untoward result from the fast.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Annie Besant's 78th birthday and the jubilee of her public life. The function actually took place on October I at Cowasji Jehangir Hall, Bombay. For Gandhiji's message, *Vide*"Message on Annie Besant's Birthday", before 1-10-1924.

135. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

September 18, 1924

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letter. I did not understand your question. Certainly your sister could send socks of her own knitting for the poor of Malabar. I will not go into the whole reasoning about my previous declaration and the present relaxation. I do not discuss it because I can understand your point of view and defend mine as correct from the only best standpoint. In any case there is no enmity or preferential discrimination. It is a matter purely of duty.

With love,

Yours,

MOHAN

[PS.]

You must have received my postcard yesterday. I am quite well.

C. F. ANDREWS, ESQ.

SHANTINIKETAN

Via BOLPUR

E.I. RLY.

From a photostat: G.N. 2616

136. LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI

Bhadarva Vad 5 [*September 18, 1924*][1]

CHI. RADHA,

I got your letter today. You must have heard the news of my 21 days' fast. No one there should worry. It is but proper for one to suffer any hardships that may come to one while discharging one's duty; one's friends should be happy about it. I hope you have now recovered completely. You should let me know what you read, what you eat, how much you walk, whether you can spin or not, etc. Let me knows also what Rukhi is reading, how she is keeping. I have to stay here for the present at any rate. Let everyone there read this.

Blessings from

BAPU

CBI. RADHA
C/O KHUSHAL GANDHI
NAVUN PARUN
RAJKOT
KATHIAWAR

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6035. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

137. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

DELHI,
[*September 18, 1924*][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Yesterday I wrote to you all in a letter addressed to Ba. Today I am writing to all in a letter addressed to you. I want that we should think about what steps to take to save our dharma. This is the time of our trial. What does it matter if I am alive or dead. You should remain engrossed in your work. Do not worry but keep thinking about my work. I am learning as well as teaching the lesson of ahimsa. Love abounds around me. I can therefore put up with . . .[3] by resorting to a

[1] From the postmark
[2] *ibid*
[3] A word here is illegible.

fast.[1] I am very happy to know that Balkrishna has arrived there. My only woe is that I am not there.

I do not know by heart Draupadi's prayer"Krishna Govind" but it is very much in my heart. I have now earned enough merit to be able to say that prayer. At the time of trouble, devotion and worship is prayer. Without devotion, there is no worship and without worship, there is no devotion.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32920

138. DISCUSSION WITH MAHADEV DESAI[2]

[*September 18, 1924*][3]

We, who were privileged to be with Gandhiji, when he took that momentous decision to fast for 21 days, were also privileged to engage him in long discussions during the first week of the fast and my article produces the substance of two important conversations—one with me and one with Maulana Shaukat Ali[4].

[GANDHIJI:] Do you see the meaning of my fast on account of the Bombay and Chauri Chaura incidents[5]

[MAHADEV DESAI:] Yes.

Then why cannot you see the meaning of this fast?

[M.D.] There you fasted by way of penance for what you thought was a crime committed by you. There is no such thing here. There is not the semblance of an offence that may be attributed to you.

What a misconception! In Chauri Chaura the culprits were those who had never seen me, never known me. Today the culprits are those who know me and even profess to love me.

[M.D.] Shaukat Ali and Mahomed Ali are trying their best to quench the

[1] Gandhiji undertook a fast for Hindu-Muslim unity from September 17 to 30, 1924.

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's article,"The Inner Meaning of the Fast".

[3] From Navajivan, 28-9-1924.

[4] *Vide* "Discussion with Shaukat Ali", 19-9-1924.

[5] *Vide* "A Deep Stain", November 18, 1921 and"The Crime of Chauri Chaura", February 16, 1922.

conflagration. But it is beyond them. Some men may be beyond their reach, even your reach. What can they do, what can you do? The situation will take time to improve.

That is another story; Shaukat Ali and Mahomed Ali are pure gold. They are trying their best, I know. But the situation is out of our hands today. It was in our hands six months ago. I know my fast will upset them. Indirectly it might have an effect on their minds, but it was not meant to produce an effect on anyone's mind.

[M.D.] That's all right, but you have yet to tell me where your error lay for which you are doing this penance.

My error! Why, I may be charged with having committed a breach of faith with the Hindus. I asked them to befriend Muslims. I asked them to lay their lives and their property at the disposal of the Mussalmans for the protection of their holy places. Even today I am asking them to practise ahimsa, to settle quarrels by dying but not by killing. And what do I find to be the result? How many temples have been desecrated? How many sisters come to me with complaints? As I was saying to Hakimji yesterday, Hindu women are in mortal terror of Mussalman *goondas*. In many places they fear to go out alone. I had a letter from . . . How can I bear the way in which his little children were molested? How can I now ask the Hindus to put up with everything patiently? I gave them the assurance that the friendship of Mussalmans was bound to bear good fruit. I asked them to befriend them, regardless of the result. It is not in my power today to make good that assurance, neither is it in the power of Mahomed Ali or Shaukat Ali. Who listens to me? And yet I must ask the Hindus even today to die and not to kill. I can only do so by laying down my own life. I can teach them the way to die by my own example. There is no other way. . . I launched no-co-operation. Today I find that people are non-co-operating against one another, without any regard for non-violence. What is the reason? Only this, that I myself am not completely non-violent. If I were practising non-violence to perfection, I should not have seen the violence I see around me today. My fast is therefore a penance. I blame no one. I blame only myself. I have lost the power where-with to appeal to people. Defeated and helpless I must submit my petition in His Court. Only He will listen, no one else.

It was a torrent that I could hardly catch, much less reproduce.

[M.D.] But, Bapu, should the penance take only this shape, and no other? Is fasting prescribed by our religion?

Certainly, what did the *rishis* of old do? It is unthinkable that

they ate anything during their penances—in some cases, gone through in caves, and for hundreds of years. Parvati who did penance to win Siva would not touch even the leaves of trees, much less fruit or food. Hinduism is full of penance and prayer. I have decided on this fast with deeper deliberation than I gave to any of my previous fasts. I had such a fast in my mind, even when I conceived and launched non-co-operation. At that time, I said to myself,"I am placing this terrible weapon in the hands of the people. If it is abused I must pay the price by laying down my life." That moment seems to have arrived today. The object of the previous fasts was limited. The object of this is unlimited, and there is boundless love at the back of it. I am today bathing in that ocean of love.

Young India, 23-10-1924

139. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALCHARI[1]

[On or after *September 18, 1924*]

CANCELLATION FAST CANCELLATION SELF. AM FASTING TO LIVE NOT DIE UNLESS GOD WILLS OTHERWISE. DON'T WORRY.

GANDHI

The Hindu, 29-9-1924

140. TELEGRAM[2]

[After *September 18, 1924*]

TELEGRAM JUST RECEIVED. CERTAINLY EXPECT SURVIVE TWENTY-ONE DAYS GOD WILLING. INTENTION WAS FORTY DAYS' FAST. BUT FIXED TWENTY-ONE DAYS IN HOPE FINISHING IT WITHOUT UNDUE STRAIN. HAVE FULLEST REASON FOR DECISION AND NOT CONSULTING FRIENDS. MUST NOT WORRY OVER PERFORMANCE OBVIOUS DUTY HOWEVER PAINFUL. FAST DIRECT RESULT OF RELIGION AS I CONCEIVE IT.

From a photostat: S.N. 10178

[1] In reply to his telegram of September 18 urging Gandhiji to give up his fast,"which would mean nothing short of death in view of his present health".

[2] This is drafted on the reverse of a letter dated September 18, 1924, from C. F. Andrews to Mahadev Desai.

141. GOD IS ONE

September 19, 1924

Who can name Him, and knowing what he says,
Say,"I believe in Him"? And who can feel,
And, with self-violence, to conscious wrong
Hardening his heart, say,"I believe Him not!"?
The All-embracing, All-sustaining One,
Say, does He not embrace, sustain, include
Thee?—Me—Himself? Bends not the sky above?
And earth, on which we are, is it not firm?
And over us, with constant kindly smile,
The sleepless stars keep everlasting watch!
Am I not here gazing into thine eyes?
And does not All, that is,
—Seen and unseen—mysterious all—
Around thee, and within,
Untiring agency,
Press on thy heart and mind?
—Fill thy whole heart with it—and, when thou art
Lost in the consciousness of happiness,
Then call it what thou wilt
Happiness !—Heart !—Love ! God !
I have no name for it!
Feeling is all in all!
Name is but sound and reek,
A mist around the glow of Heaven.

—Goethe's Faust

Last Thursday night, some Mussalman friends called on me by appointment. They appeared to me to be earnest and sincere. They had much to say against *shuddhi* and *sangathan.* I have said my say about these movements already.[1] So far as possible I do not wish

[1] *Vide*"Hindu-Muslim Unity", 14-9-1924.

during the privileged weeks to say anything on matters of controversy. I wish to engage the attention of the reader on the solution they offered. They said:"We believe in the divinity of the Vedas. We believe in Shri Krishnaji Maharaja and Ramachandraji Maharaj (the adjectives are theirs). Why cannot Hindus believe in the divinity of the Koran and say with us that there is no God but God and Mahomed is His Prophet? Ours is not an exclusive religion, but it is essentially inclusive."

I told them that the solution was not quite so simple as they put it. The formula they suggested might be good enough for the cultured few, but it would prove ineffective for the man in the street. For the Hindus cow-protection and the playing of music even near the mosque was the substance of Hinduism, and for the Mussalmans cow-killing and prohibition of music was the substance of Islam. It was, therefore, necessary that the Hindus abandon the idea of compelling Mussalmans to stop cow-killing, and Mussalmans the idea of compelling the Hindus to stop music. The regulation of cow-slaughter and playing of music must be left to the goodwill of the respective communities. Each practice would assume a becoming proportion with the growth of the tolerant spirit. But I do not propose to elaborate here this ticklish question.

I wish to examine the attractive formula presented by the Mussalman friends and state that is at least acceptable to me; and as my instinct is wholly Hindu, I know that what I am about to say will be acceptable to the vast mass of Hindus.

In fact it is the average Mussalman who will not accept the divinity of the Vedas and the other Hindu scriptures, or Krishna or Rama as prophets or incarnations of the Deity. With the Hindu it is a new-fangled notion to revile the Koran and the Prophet. I have known the Prophet spoken of with reverence in Hindu circles. There are even Hindu songs paying tribute to Islam.

Take the first half of the formula. God is certainly One. He has no second. He is unfathomable, unknowable and unknown to the vast majority of mankind. He is everywhere. He sees without eyes, and hears without ears. He is formless and indivisible. He is uncreated, has no father, mother or child; and yet He allows Himself to be worshipped as father, mother, wife and child. He allows himself even to be worshipped as stock and stone, although He is none of these things. He is the most elusive. He is the nearest to us if we would but

know the fact. But He is farthest from us then we do not want to realize His omnipresence. There are many gods in the Vedas. Other scriptures call them angels. But the Vedas sing of only one God.

I have no hesitation in regarding the Koran as revealed, as I have none in regarding the Bible, the *Zend-Avesta,* the *Granth Saheb* and any other clean scriptures as revealed. Revelation is the exclusive property of no nation, no tribe. If I know Hinduism at all, it is essentially inclusive and ever-growing, ever-responsive. It gives the freest scope to imagination, speculation and reason. I have found not the slightest difficulty in Hindu circles about evoking reverence for the Koran and the Prophet. But I have found difficulty in Mussalman circles about evoking the same reverence for the Vedas or the incarnations. I had a very good Mussalman client in South Africa. He is, alas, dead now. The relation of client and counsel developed into one of close companionship and mutual regard. We often had religious discussions. My friend, though not learned in any sense of the term, had an intellect as sharp as a razor. He knew everything of the Koran. He knew something of other religions also. He was interested in my accepting Islam. I said to him,"I can pay full respect to the Koran and the Prophet, why do you ask me to reject the Vedas and the incarnations? They have helped me to be what I am. I find the greatest consolation from the *Bhagavad Gita* and Tulsidas's *Ramayana.* I frankly confess that the Koran, the Bible and the other scriptures of the world, in spite of my great regard for them, do not move me as do the Gita of Krishna and the *Ramayana* of Tulsidas." The friend despaired of me and had no hesitation in saying that there must be something wrong with me. His, however, is not an exceptional case because I have since met many Mussalman friends who have held the same view. I do, however, believe that this is a passing phase. I share Justice Ameer Ali's view that Islam in the days of Harun-al-Rashid and Maman was the most tolerant amongst the world's religions. But there was a reaction against the liberalism of the teachers of their times. The reactionaries had many learned, able and influential men amongst them and they very nearly overwhelmed the liberal and tolerant teachers and philosophers of Islam. We in India are still suffering from the effect of that reaction. But I have not a shadow of doubt that Islam has sufficient in itself to become purged of illiberalism and intolerance. We are fast reaching the time when the acceptance of the formula suggested by the friends will be a common thing among mankind. The need of the moment is not one religion,

but mutual respect and tolerance of the devotees of the different religions. We want to reach not the dead level, but unity in diversity. Any attempt to root out traditions, effects of heredity, climate and other surroundings is not only bound to fail, but is a sacrilege. The soul of religions is one, but it is encased in a multitude of forms. The latter will persist to the end of time. Wise men will ignore the outward crust and see the same soul living under a variety of crusts. For Hindus to expect Islam, Christianity or Zoroastrianism to be driven out of India is as idle a dream as it would be for Mussalmans to have only Islam of their imagination rule the world. But if belief in One God and the race of His Prophets in a never-ending chain is sufficient for Islam, then we are all Mussalmans, but we are also all Hindus and Christians. Truth is the exclusive property of no single scripture.

Young India, 25-9-1924

142. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

September 19, 1924

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

You must not be stunned. Rather rejoice that God gives strength and direction to do my duty. I could not do otherwise. As the author of non-co-operation, a heavy responsibility lies on my shoulders. Do give me in writing your impressions of Lucknow and Cawnpore. Let me drink the cup to the full. I am quite at peace with myself.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

A Bunch of Old Letters, p. 41

143. LETTER T0 LAKSHMI

[*September 19, 1924*][1]

CHI. LAKSHMI,

This letter too is for all. But should I call Lakshmi a bad girl or a good girl because the boys say so? Will she not keep her promise and write a letter? I am looking forward to a beautifully written letter. I remember all the children during my fast, and Ieven ask myself,

[1] From the postmark

"Do all the children spin regularly? Do they study? Do they speak the truth? Do they obey the rules?" Who will tell me?

I get immense peace from my fast. No one need worry about me.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. LAKSHMI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM

SABARMATI

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5645. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

144. DISCUSSION WITH SHAUKAT ALI[1]

[*September 19 1924*][2]

Maulana Shaukat Ali came the next day. Maulana Mahomed Ali had built much on his coming, for he had fondly hoped that he would probably shake Gandhiji's resolve. Indeed Gandhiji had promised him that he would give up the vow if Shaukat or he convinced him that the fast was morally or in any other way wrong. The long talk with him was however of no avail, as far as the continuance of the fast was concerned, but it threw even more light on the inner meaning.

[SHAUKAT ALI:] What have we done, Mahatmaji, to remedy the situation? Almost nothing! You have been preaching through your paper, but you have yet undertaken no long journey. Pray travel through the affected areas and purify the atmosphere. This fast is hardly the way to fight the wrong.

[GANDHIJI:] It is for me a pure matter of religion. I looked around me, and questioned myself, and found that I was powerless. What could I effect even by means of a long tour? The masses suspect us today. Pray do not believe that the Hindus in Delhi fully trust me. They were not unanimous in asking me to arbitrate. And naturally. There have been murders. How can I hope to be heard by those who have suffered? I would ask them to forgive those who have murdered their dearest ones. Who would listen to me? The Anjuman refuses to listen to Hakimji. When we were in the midst of negotiations about their arbitration I heard of Kohat. I asked myself,"What are you going to do now?" I am an irresponsible optimist, but I always base

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's article,"The Inner Meaning of the Fast"

[2] From Navjivan, 28-9-1924

my optimism on solid facts. You are also an irresponsible optimist, but you at times base yours on sand. No one will listen to you today. In Visnagar in Gujarat they gave a cold shoulder to Mr. Abbas Tyabji and Mahadev. In Ahmedabad a storm was nipped in the bud. Some trouble was brewing in Umreth when I left Gujarat. That I should be a passive witness of all these, shows the depth of my incapacity. There are hundreds of sisters whose love and affection I still possess. They are in mortal fear today. To them I want to show by my own example the way to die.

Fight I do not mind, if it be fair, honourable, brave fighting between the two communities. But today it is all a story of unmitigated cowardice. They would throw stones and run away, murder and run away, go to court, put up false witnesses and cite false evidence. What a woeful record? How am I to make them brave? You are trying your best. But I should also try my best. I must recover the power to react on them.

[S A.] No, you have not failed. They listened to you; they were listening to you. In your absence they had other advisers. They listened to their advice and took to evil ways. They will still see the folly of their ways, I am sure. You have done much to reduce the poison in the popular mind. I would not bother about these disturbances at all. I would simply go and tell them,"Devils, play this game to your hearts' content. God is still there. You may kill one another. You cannot kill Him." Do not, Sir, come in the way of the Lord. You are wrestling with Him. Let Him have His way.

I am wrestling with Him! If there is pride or defiance in me it is all over with me. Dear man, this fast is the result of several days' continued prayers. I have got up from sleep at 3 o'clock in the night and have asked Him what to do. On the 17th of September the answer came like a flash ! If I have erred, He will forgive me. All I have done, all I am doing, is done in a fully godfearing spirit, and in the house of a godfearing Mussalman at that. My religion says that only he who is prepared to suffer can pray to God. Fasting and prayer are common injunctions in my religion. But I know of this sort of penance even in Islam. In the life of the Prophet I have read that the Prophet often fasted and prayed, and forbade others to copy him. Someone asked him why he did not allow others to do the thing he himself was doing."Because I live on food divine," he said. He achieved most of his great things by fasting and prayer. I learnt from him that only he can fast who has inexhaustible faith in God. The Prophet had revelations not in moments of ease and luxurious living. He fasted and

prayed, kept awake for nights together and would be on his feet at all hours of the night as he received the revelations. Even at this moment I see before me the picture of the Prophet thus fasting and praying. My dear Shaukat, I cannot bear the people accusing you and your brother of having broken your promises to me. I cannot bear the thought of such an accusation; I must die for it. This fast is but to purify myself, to strengthen myself. Let me not be misunderstood. I am speaking to you as though I was a Mussalman, because I have cultivated that respect for Islam which you have for it. After I have fasted and prayed I shall be all the stronger, with all my reverence for Islam, to appeal to both the communities. It is my own firm belief that the strength of the soul grows in proportion as you subdue the flesh. We have to fight hooliganism and we are not sufficiently spiritually strong to fight it.

At this point Shaukat Ali changed the line of his argument.

[S.A.] Are you not even bound to consider what a shock it will be to the country, this long fast of yours?

No! For man so often deceives himself ! He often does things to please others, which he should have avoided. Religion therefore teaches him to stand before the world after having taken a particular resolve. What vanity, to think that the world would be shocked at one's own great penance! And whose wishes are we to consider? There would be no limit. Had Rama stopped to consult and argue, he would never have gone on *vanavasa* and rid the earth of its suffering. He awaited for no one's advice. He went forth. For he prized his plighted word more than his life. Only he can take great resolves who has indomitable faith in God and has fear of God.

[S.A.] One more question. Do you need to consult no one before arriving at such a decision? You need not even take into consideration the effect it would have on your health or body?

No. It is a matter between me and my Maker. And if I must consult someone, I had better not to take a vow at all. You talk of the effect on my health and body? Well, if I am too weak to stand it I may die. What is the body worth? Whilst I was in jail I read with rapturous delight the lives of the Companions of the Prophet. There is a story that Hazarat Umar sent a present of 500 dinars to someone. He shrank from it, and began to cry. His wife asked him he was crying. He said,"*Maya*—unreality—has come to me. What will happen to me?" The dinars were a present from such a holy man as Hazrat Umar. But he shrank from it because it was unreal, evanescent. And so is life. Let

God keep this body if He has still to make some use of it. Let it perish if it has fulfilled His purpose. In fact, I had thought of going on a permanent vow of fasting if matters did not improve after the fast terminated. Hakimji asked me not to think of it."How can I cast it out of my mind?" said I. It is in my bones, it is part of my very being. I would ask Mussalmans to befriend the Hindus, if they think it is not contrary to their religion. If they think and tell me it is contrary to their religion, then I am sure I should have no cause to live any more. I should die. I had a plain talk with Khwaja Hassan Nizami Sahib also the other day. I told him,"Why do you try to convert the waifs and strays and the untouchables? Better convert me, so that after I am converted, many more might follow me. If those poor people embrace Islam, they will not do so because they understand the beauty of Islam, but for other reasons. Islam will not be a whit richer for them."

It was an impressive dialogue. I have not even done bare justice to it. Shaukat Ali seemed quite overpowered. As he rose he said,"Three things I pray for every day; the first is Hindu-Muslim unity; the second, that my mother may live to see Islam and India free; the third, that Mahatma Gandhi's mission may be fulfilled."

Young India, 23-10-1924

145. TELEGRAM TO"OUTLOOK"[1]

[On or after *September 19, 1924*]

"OUTLOOK"
LAHORE

THANKS WIRE. TRUCE HARDLY MEETS SITUATION. WHAT IS REQUIRED IS ELIMINATION POISON EXAGGERATION MISREPRESENTATION INCITEMENT FROM PAPERS BOTH HINDU AND MUSSALMAN. I AM INTERESTED IN LIVING FOR HEART UNITY. NOT FOR ARTIFICIAL PATCHWORK. WOULD ASK YOU THEREFORE DIRECT YOUR EFFORT TO SECURE THAT CONSUMMATION.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 10493

[1] In reply to addressee's telegram of September 19 which read:"Muslim papers Zamindar, Siasat agree on Outlook's appeal observe truce from tomorrow. . . . Pkase wire message of encouragement."

146. NOTES

September 20, 1924

SPINNING MONTH BY MONTH

From 2,780 to 4,908 is not a bad rise in one month in the number of spinners. The reader will note that the rise is appreciable in the number of members as well as non-members. Gujarat still holds the first place. But Andhra is evidently running a close race. Karnatak's jump from 41 to 362, and Tamilnad's from 90 to 456 is distinctly encouraging. As a matter of fact Karnatak should come first class, seeing that Karnatak is to have the honour of having the Congress session this year. More returns for the month have still to come, and they should show a distinct rise. If the progress continues at this rate, we should soon have a respectable total. The reader will understand that these totals are by no means exhaustive of all the voluntary spinners. The number of irregular voluntary spinners is at least double the number of regular spinners. And naturally these totals take no note of thousands of paid spinners. If only those who have began regular spinning continue at least till we have attained swaraj (and this is by no means an immoderate expectation), we are bound to hasten its advent.

THE PRESTDENT'S PRIZE

Maulana Mahomed Ali on whom spinning is daily growing and who has been spinning even while conducting public business for hours sometimes, and who insisted, for the sake of finishing 2,000 yards for the past spinning month, on spinning till midnight, has asked me to announce a prize of five substantial charkhas to the province that would beat Gujarat during his term of office. He intends that these charkhas might be presented to the most deserving poor spinners of the winning province. The wheels would be after the latest Sabarmati pattern. It is hard task to beat Gujarat in a spinning competition so far as the number of spinners and the quantity of yarn are concerned. Bengal, Karnatak, Andhra, Tamilnad may beat Gujarat as to fineness of yarn; but Gujarat will not take a beating lightly as to the number of voluntary spinners and even less as to quantity. But as the Maulana's prize is confined to the number of spinners, so far as I can judge, the pressure of competition is likely to be felt from

Andhra, Bengal, Tamilnad and Karnatak. I hope that the Congressmen will not consider the value of the prize, but will appreciate the fact of the President of the Congress awarding it. I would like the competition to be serious and effective. There are only three months for winning the prize. If all the provinces will make an effort, I know that it would give the greatest satisfaction to the Maulana Saheb, for he has realized the national importance of voluntary spinning. He takes the keenest delight in showing the specimens of his yarn and making daily improvement in the evenness and fineness of his production.

Young India, 25-9-1924

147. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

CARE"COMRADE",

DELHI,

September 20, 1924

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I wanted to write to you earlier inquiring about your health. Your wire to Hakimji[1] reminds me of my intention. Do please give yourself perfect rest.

Do not feel distressed. For me the fast was a religious duty. I want friends to rejoice that God has given me strength to go through the fire.

With love,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, p. 139

[1] Hakim Ajmal Khan

148. LETTER TO VASUMATI PAND1T

Bhadarva Vad 7 [*September 20, 1924*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

My fast is for 21 days. It began on Wednesday so today is the third day. It will end on Wednesday, 8th October. I undertook the fast because without it it was impossible to meet the demands of duty. Hence you should not worry. I am enjoying perfect peace. You should not think of running down to me either. You may come during the third week. I too will wish to see you then."Shrimati" has been written in the address. It should be so [on the address]. You will never cease to be a daughter to me. I have forgotten what I used to write to you when you were at Deolali. There is no harm in bathing immediately after taking a hip-bath. Try another experiment. Buy a small yellow bottle. Fill it with clean water and put it in the sun for three hours. Drink two ounces from it before going to sleep at night. Make it a practice to drink this much water after it is heated in the sun. You need not worry if the water has cooled down. The idea is that the water absorbs the rays of the sun passing through the yellow medium. It is said that the water treated in this way helps bowel movement.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRIMATI VASUMATI PANDIT
C/O MESSRS STRAUSS & CO.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 457. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

[1] From the postmark

149. NOTE

September 21, 1924

HELPLESSNESS, NOT HOPELESSNESS

I observe that in my note on fasting I have been made to say[1] — ”My hopelessness is still more unbearable.” My statement mentions”helplessness” and not”hopelessness”. A man with a grain of faith in God never loses hope, because he ever believes in the ultimate triumph of Truth. A man of God never strives after untruth and therefore he can never lose hope. On the contrary, his hope shines the brightest”amid the encircling gloom”. But my helplessness is a very patent fact before me. I may not ignore it. I must ever confess it. There is a beautiful Tamil proverb which says:”God is the sole help of the helpless.” The truth of this never came upon me with so much force as it has come today. Handling large masses of men, dealing with them, speaking and acting for them is no joke for a man whose capacity God has so circumscribed. One has, therefore, to be ever on the watch. And the reader may rest assured that I took the final step after I had realized to the full my utter hopelessness. And I cried out to God even like Draupadi when she seemed to be abandoned by her five brave protectors. And her cry did not ascend to the throne of the Almighty in vain. That cry must not be from the lip. It has to be from the deepest recesses of one’s heart. And, therefore, such a cry is only possible when one is in anguish. Mine has expressed itself in a fast which is by no means adequate for the issues involved. My heart continually says :

Rock of Ages cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.

Young India, 25-9-1924

[1] Evidently some newspaper reproducing the”Statement Announcing Fast”, 18-9-1924, had printed”hopelessness instead of”helplessness”. *Vide*”Letter to Devdas Gandhi”, 21-9-1924.

150. THE HALF-HOUR DRILL

September 21, 1924

As a humble soldier I have no right to resent anything my chief writes[1] or says about me. . . . What did Mahatma Gandhi mean, and what warrant had he, when he made an assertion that I was physically unable to sit down to spin for half an hour? Any clean work that gives me liberty and makes me and my country free must command every ounce of energy in my big body. I can and will spin not only for half an hour, but for the whole day, if it will break—as I know it will—the chains of slavery that bind us so tight. My tutor in Bombay will certify that, during the four days that I was in Bombay, for the first three days I struggled over two hours on the wheel to spin a few feet of bad yarn. On the third day I was better and, thank God, on the fourth I knew how to adjust the movements of my left hand with that of the right. I cannot tell how proud I was to send a *tola* of yarn to the A.I.K.B. as my quota. I see that it has drawn many witty remarks from friends. The *Zamindar* said that a man weighing thousands of tolas sent only a solitary *tola* as the result of his labours. I appreciate the remark. This month I was ordered to go and tour in Kathiawar. To work in Kathiawar for a man of my reputation meant an obstacle race. D.O. letters between the Political Agent and the State authorities were being exchanged profusely. . . . Add to this *fatwas*[2] and pamphlets flying about asking people not to help a man whom they accused of being a Kaffir unbeliever and whom they accused of calling Gandhi his god and thus Blaspheming God Himself ! Under these circumstances, if I gave a *tola* of yarn along with silver twice *my* weight—for which I was deputed—I think I acquitted myself not badly. . . .

I was very happy to see and also to report to my chief lying on his Bed of Sorrow under my brother's roof at Delhi, that just before leaving Bombay I called on Mrs. Naidu and that it did my heart good to see that, while lying on her sofa suffering from a bad heart, she was struggling with her spinning-wheel, with a determination to learn it and do it regularly. Shankerlal Banker would be glad that the whole of the Khilafat office spins, and Dr. Ansari is an expert spinner and does it whenever he can snatch a few minutes from his humanitarian work. Every man and woman and child in India, Hindu or Muslim, Parsi or Christian, Sikh or Jew, rich or poor, who wants to join God's army, must qualify himself or herself by half an hour's drill on the spinning-wheel.

[1] *Vide*"Notes", 21-8-1924, sub-title,"Ali Brothers' Quota".

[2] Decrees of a Muslim divine

SHAUKAT ALI

Khadim-i-Kaba

I rather like the rebuke administered to me by Maulana Shaukat Ali. Although I am in the surrendering mood all along the line, I did not know that I would have to suffer the pangs of surrender even to the Big Brother. I thought that his big and unwieldy body would not respond to the gentle art of spinning. I tender my apology to him for my having underrated his ability for lighter labours. I should be content to be humbled a thousand times on the Maulana's conditions. What is my humiliation if the country thereby gains? And I count it no small gain to have an indignant repudiation from the Maulana that anybody should dare to excuse him for lighter labours because of his bulk. No task is too light or too heavy for him, if thereby the country benefits. I wish that every worker accepted that rigid test for himself. The information given by the Maulana about the staff of the Khilafat office having set to work, Dr. Ansari having begun spinning in the midst of heavy, incessant professional calls upon his time must make Shankerlal Banker's mouth water. If this enthusiasm continues, I expect a splendid response from the Mussalmans. It speaks volumes for the Maulana's popularity that, in spite of the libellous leaflets to which he has referred, his Kathiawar tour brought to the coffers of the Khilafat Committee no less than 25,000 rupees in cash and promises of nearly ten thousand. The writers of the leaflets do not know the basis of our connection. Dissimilar in everything else, as I have already pointed out, there is one common bond between us. We are both impatient of slavery. We resent the curtailment of any human being's legitimate liberty. And therefore we have accepted the slavery of God. In order that we may be able to look the whole of the human kind straight in the face and even oppose it, if necessary, we have become as clay in the Potter's hands. He can mould us as He will, crush us, toss us about, still we are His. That is the only cement between us. I admit that it is adhesive, and therefore binds us indissolubly. To say, then, that the Maulana worships me as his God is not only, as he says, a blasphemy of the Almighty, but it betrays the grossest ignorance of us and our relations.

Young India, 25-9-1924

151. OUR DUTY TO THEM

September, 21 1924

With an artist's pen Mr. Andrews in his article[1] on the"Aboriginal Tribes" has combined three things. He has supported the fervent appeal of Mr. A. V. Thakkar for funds for the Bhil Seva Mandal in the Panchmahals. I heartily echo Mr. Andrews' sentiments. Mr. Thakkar needs no introduction from me. He had dedicated himself to the service of the motherland long before my return to India and becoming a famous man. His services in connection with the administration of famine relief organized by Gujarat for the help of the distressed in Orissa are still fresh in our memory. He has endeared himself to the untouchables of Gujarat by his single-minded devotion to their cause. But his restless nature has found a class of people in Gujarat more submerged and therefore more in need of a lifting hand than the untouchables themselves. He has therefore become the high priest of the simple *Bhils* of the Panchmahals. I hope that Mr. Thakkar's appeal will not fall upon deaf ears.

In speaking about the aboriginal tribes it was impossible for Mr. Andrews to omit the name of his friend, disciple and fellow-worker, Willie Pearson. He loses no opportunity of paying a well-deserved tribute to the memory of one of the noblest of Englishmen who dedicated his all to the service of India. When Mr. Gokhale[2] asked Mr. Andrews at a moment's notice to go to the rescue of the satyagrahis of South Africa, Willie Pearson volunteered his services and accompanied Mr. Andrews to South Africa. For me it was love at first sight between these Englishmen and myself. Pearson's noble features with the frank benign and bewitching expression in his eyes rise before me as I dictate these lines. I saw Pearson at work in South Africa and again at Shantiniketan. More selflessness and more devotion to duty it would be difficult to find. No honest toil was beneath Pearson's dignity. For him the lower the work was, the greater was the dignity. He was the first at Shantiniketan to volunteer his services for cleaning the drains of its kitchen and the scavengers'

[1] In Young India, 2-10-1924

[2] G. K. Gokhale (1866-1915); founder of the Servants of India Society; President, Indian National Congress at Banaras in 1905

quarters. Pearson's work was no less heroic, because it was non-political in the conventional sense of the term. Let it be remembered, however, that whilst in Japan Pearson wrote his furious indictment against British exploitation and dominance which brought him trouble which he never minded. Whilst he was lying on his death-bed, he dictated a will in which he did not forget a boy in Shantiniketan whom he loved as dearly as his own son. On his death the Poet issued an appeal for 25,000 rupees to perpetuate his memory. The money was to be devoted to build a Pearson Hospital in Shantiniketan. When I was taking my convalescence at Juhu, and Andrews had appointed himself as my guardian-angel, with a heart full of love and sorrow, he told me that there was very poor response to the Poet's appeal. I soothed him by saying that after all Pearson was not much known to the Indian public, and that therefore we who knew him so well ought not to fret for want of their support or feel uncharitable towards them. I told him too that, when I found a natural occasion, I would take up the Poet's appeal and try to enlist the support of the public for the memorial. Mr. Andrews has given me the opportunity. I now invite the readers of *Young India* to contribute their mite. Over three thousand rupees have been collected. Twenty-one thousand rupees is nothing for the generous public to find.

The third thing Mr. Andrews has brought in is the spinning wheel, probably for my sake. But I know that a time is coming when that simple wheel will no longer have to depend upon me for its existence. The highest in the land who feel for the poor will be bound to support it. There is only one thing which can be universally adopted in India and be yet paying so as to supplement the slender resources of the peasantry and even find enough to keep body and soul together for the starving millions. The wheel is the one thing which can replace the degrading doles from the rich people for the famine-stricken, and let them feel sure that they need not starve so long as they are prepared to spin.

Young India, 2-10-1924

152. "ADHARMA" FOR DHARMA

A brother asks :

If someone indulges in gambling for the sake of Malabar Relief and offers his takings to the Malabar people, would this gambling be proper or improper? Will you accept or refuse that money?

Gambling is wholly despicable. If relief work cannot be paid for without gambling, let millions die of starvation. *Adharma*[1] can never lead to dharma. I would, therefore, ask everyone to refrain from gambling even for the relief of sufferers in Malabar. The money that is saved by abstaining from gambling may be given to me. This will kill two birds with one stone. You will protect yourself from a vice and the money that might have been wasted over the vice will be utilized for the sake of those who need it. How can a man think of gambling when he is concerned about a calamity? He will rather feed the hungry by starving himself.

The questioner gives a vivid picture of gambling that is going on at Karamala town in Orpad tahsil and says that even boys indulge in it. Occasionally there are altercations. The questioner also seeks a remedy for this evil. The remedy lies in cultivating local public opinion. Public opinion has a miraculous effect on vices. Just as burglars, etc., disappear when it dawns, similarly, when the sun of public opinion rises, vices disappear. If the majority of people at some place are gamblers and only a few are free from the vice, these should warn the townsfolk and if the vice still persists, they should migrate from the town.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-9-1924

[1] The opposite of dharma

153. TO THE READER OF "NAVAJIVAN"

By the time this issue is out, you will have come to know of my atonement. You should not be alarmed on account of my fast. And you must not follow my example. The sinner alone should make atonement. Others should help him. If all Gujarati brothers and sisters assist with body, mind and money in fulfilling the tasks that we have undertaken, we shall see God as well as attain freedom.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-9-1924

154. TEST OF FAITH

I feared that the suggestion to abandon boycott would have the effect of disheartening the weaker sections of the schools. It looks as if I was right. Many teachers have started asking whether the national schools will not now be converted into government schools.

I have reproduced this extract from a letter. In the first place, I have not at all used the word "abandoning". I have suggested suspending the boycott. Secondly, the present national schools which are running without Government affiliation should be continued and, if we have the capacity, new national schools may be opened. Thirdly, suspension does not mean that those who have spontaneous faith in boycott should give it up.

My suggestion simply means that those who have undertaken boycott as a matter of Congress discipline, and not out of spontaneous faith, are absolved from the binding for one year. And those who on account of the boycott have kept out of the Congress may join it at least for a year and engage themselves in essential work universally approved and educate the people.

My suggestion provides a test for the public and for individuals. If after an experience of four years it is clear that the number of those who have spontaneous faith in boycott is negligible, then the Congress cannot authorize boycott. The Congress cannot reflect the wishes of the people, right or wrong, and that alone will entitle it to be called a national organization. That which commands the spontaneous faith of a large section can alone deserve to be called the Congress policy and should be implemented as such. The number of those who abide by a

particular policy because it has been adopted by the Congress should always be small. The Congress cannot be run with the help of such people. The Congress is like a prop for them; they can bring no strength to it. Persons with spontaneous faith can alone be the backbone of the Congress. If the reader undertakes a survey of organizations functioning in the world, he will discover that every living organization fulfils this condition. The reason is obvious. An organisation has no soul. It has no independent existence of its own. The organizers are its soul. From them it derives its strength. The soul of a prohibition council is its crusading members unwaveringly abstaining from liquor. A council cannot be expected to strengthen the abstention of members. Assuming, however, that they do not get enough members for the council and they have to wind it up, would they start drinking? Or would they persevere with their efforts by choosing another region for propagating abstention to the public?

The plain meaning of my suggestion is that we have no desire to implement boycott by compulsion. Compulsion means violence. Although our movement entirely eschews force, our minds and our actions harbour force. The present bitterness between Hindus and Muslims is positive evidence of this fact. The estrangement between Swarajists and No-changers is further evidence of the same thing. A freedom-fighter's first task is to eliminate this force. Just as I define compulsion as violence, freedom is non-violence. We are afraid of the word non-violence. We all claim to be lovers of freedom. But we are indifferent to non-violence or love, which is the source of freedom. I have noted this fault in us, recognized my duty in the matter and am trying to explain the issues to the advocates of boycott. If a majority of members of the Congress do not approve of boycott spontaneously, it would be violence for advocates of boycott to retain control of the Congress.

But whether the advocates of boycott retain control of the Congress or boycott is suspended in the Congress, in either case it can never mean that those who have spontaneous faith in boycott should give it up. In fact, it is by suspending boycott that we have to ascertain the number of real advocates of boycott. If only a few such advocates are left at the end of the year, I shall take it as proof of the advisability of withdrawal of boycott by the Congress. If, at the end of the year, all those who regard themselves as advocates of boycott adhere to theirviews in thought and action, the Congress may reintroduce

boycott next year. This revival of boycott will have one feature, namely, the sting of compulsion will have been removed from it. If it produces no effect by the end of the year and there is no change in the Government's attitude, then the advocates of boycott, instead of attempting to revive it in the Congress, should attract others to it by their patient and persistent practice. Voluntary and peaceful boycott is no joke. It cannot last long if it is practised for fear of being disgraced in public. An impulsive boycott is as momentary as the effervescence of soda-water. Only that boycott which is practised deliberately and purposefully can overcome all obstacles and remain steadfast. Therefore I expect No-changers not only to continue their boycott but to enforce it more rigorously even if the Congress suspends it. I can expect nothing else from Gujarat. While we ourselves persist thus in our boycott, if we take to heart the lesson of not deriding our co-workers it will be a mark of our invaluable progress and a great step forward on our march to freedom.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-9-1924

155. LETTER TO HARNAM SINGH

C/O"COMRADE" OFFICE,
DELHI,
September 21, 1924

DEAR RAJA SAHIB,

Pray accept my respectful condolence on your great sorrow. May Lady Harnam Singh's soul rest in peace.

Yours sincerely,

M.K. GANDHI

RAJA SIR S. HARNAM SINGH
'THE MANOR'
SIMLA

From a copy: C.W. 3711. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur

156. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

C/O MAULANA MAHOMED ALI,
DELHI,
September 21, 1924

BHAI SAHIB,

You all must have been unhappy on account of my fast. But what could I do? I was helpless. I had no other remedy at all except crying before God. What could I do in such circumstances? God will spare me if He wishes. I long just now to hear Rehana's *bhajans.* I hope your Kheda is busy spinning.

Bhur-r-r-r

For ever your brother,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9549

157. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

DELHI,
Bhadarva Vad 8 [*September 21, 1924*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

Ba[2], Ramdas and others have come. Jamnabehn and Yashwant prasad too have come. Looked through *Navajivan*. I liked it very much. The make-up, the use of bold type, etc., is very nice. Your translation of my message[3] is really wonderful. I could find nothing to correct. By reading"hopelessness"[4] as helplessness"[5] you have, as it were, proved your title to be my heir. May God give you long life and may He advance your beautiful character and proficiency. I am quite happy. I do not yet feel the fast.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2133

[1] From the reference to the fast.

[2] Kasturba Gandhi.

[3] *Vide*"Statement Announcing 21-day Fast", 18-9-1924.

[4] The two words are written in English in the source; *Vide* also"Note", 21-9-1924.

[5] *ibid*

158. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Bhadarva Vad 8, [*September 21, 1924*][1]

PUJYA GANGABEHN,

Please do not worry. You are wise. When I am fasting for the sake of dharma, I want you all to rejoice at it. God will spare me if He wants to take some more service from me. You too should have faith in Him.

Keep busy with your study. Be a mother to all the children. This is not beyond your capacity.

May God grant you strength so that your widowhood may prove a blessing to the world.

Blessing from

BAPU

PUJYA GANGABEHN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM

SABARMATI

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6197. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] From the postmark

159. LETTER TO TULSI MEHAR

DELHI,
[*September 21, 1924*][1]

CHI. TULSI MEHAR,

It was only yesterday I had decided to address the Ashram letter to you and I have your letter today. To you and all the other inmates of the Ashram my only appeal is: Follow truth and non-violence; hate no creature in the world; card, spin, and weave for the sake of the starving millions of India and propagate the same. Learn to read and write by all means. Cultivate soul-force. Give the first place to the charkha among village industries.

I am quite happy. Let no one have the slightest worry on my account.

Blessings from

BAPU

TULSI MEHAR
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6520

160. ALL ABOUT THE FAST

September 22, 1924

I wish to assure the reader that the fast has not been undertaken without deliberation. As a matter of fact my life has been a stake ever since the birth of non-co-operation. I did not blindly embark upon it. I had ample warning of the dangers attendant upon it. No act of mine is done without prayer. Man is a fallible being. He can never be sure of his steps. What he may regard as answer to prayer may be an echo of his pride. For infallible guidance man has to have a perfectly innocent heart incapable of evil. I can lay no such claim. Mine is a struggling, striving, erring, imperfect soul. But I can rise only by experimenting upon myself and others. I believe in absolute oneness of God and therefore also of humanity. What though we have many

[1] From the postmark.

bodies? We have but one soul. The rays of the sun are many through refraction. But they have the same source. I cannot therefore detach myself from the wickedest soul (nor may I be denied identity with the most virtuous). Whether therefore I will or no, I must involve in my experiment the whole of my kind. Nor can I do without experiment. Life is but an endless series of experiments.

I knew that non-co-operation was a dangerous experiment. Non-co-operation in itself is unnatural, vicious and sinful. But non-violent non-co-operation, I am convinced, is a sacred duty at times. I have proved it in many cases. But there was every possibility of mistake in its application to large masses. But desperate diseases call for desperate remedies. Non-violent non-co-operation was the only alternative to anarchy and worse. Since it was to be non-violent, I had to put my life in the scales.

The fact that Hindus and Mussalmans, who were only two years ago apparently working together as friends, are now fighting like cats and dogs in some places, shows conclusively that the non-co-operation they offered was not non-violent. I saw the symptoms in Bombay, Chauri Chaura and in a host of minor cases. I did penance then. It had its effect *pro tanto.* But this Hindu-Muslim tension was unthinkable. It became unbearable on hearing of the Kohat tragedy. On the eve of my departure from Sabarmati for Delhi, Sarojini Devi wrote to me that speeches and homilies on peace would not do. I must find out an effective remedy. She was right in saddling the responsibility on me. Had I not been instrumental in bringing into being the vast energy of the people? I must find the remedy if the energy proved self-destructive. I wrote to say that I should find it only by plodding. Empty prayer is"as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal". I little knew then that the remedy was to be this prolonged fast. And yet I know that the fast is not prolonged enough for quenching the agony of my soul. Have I erred, have I been impatient, have I compromised with evil? I may have done all these things or none of them. All I know is what I see before me. If real non-violence and truth had been practised by the people who are now fighting, the gory duelling that is now going on would have been impossible. My responsibility is clearly somewhere.

I was violently shaken by Amethi, Shambhar and Gulbarga. I had read the reports about Amethi and Shambhar prepared by Hindu and Mussalman friends. I had learnt the joint finding of Hindu and

Mussalman friends who went to Gulbarga. I was writhing in deep pain and yet I had no remedy. The news of Kohat set the smouldering mass aflame. Something had got to be done. I passed two nights in restlessness and pain. On Wednesday I knew the remedy. I must do penance. In the Satyagraha Ashram at the time of morning prayer we ask Siva, God of Mercy, to forgive our sins knowingly or unknowingly committed. My penance is the prayer of a bleeding heart for forgiveness for sins unwittingly committed.

It is a warning to the Hindus and Mussalmans who have professed to love me. If they have loved me truly and if I have been deserving of their love, they will do penance with me for the grave sin of denying God in their hearts. To revile one another's religion, to make reckless statements, to utter untruth, to break the heads of innocent men, to desecrate temples or mosques, is a denial of God. The world is watching—some with glee and some with sorrow—the dogfight that is proceeding in our midst. We have listened to Satan. Religion—call it by what you like— is made of sterner stuff. The penance of Hindus and Mussalmans is not fasting but retracing their steps. It is true penance for a Mussalman to harbour no ill for his Hindu brother and an equally true penance for a Hindu to harbour none for his Mussalman brother.

I ask of no Hindu or Mussalman to surrender an iota of his religious principle. Only let him be sure that it is religion. But I do ask of every Hindu and Mussalman not to fight for an earthly gain. I should be deeply hurt if my fast made either community surrender on a matter of principle. My fast is a matter between God and myself.

I did not consult friends—not even Hakim Sahib who was closeted with me for a long time on Wednesday—not Maulana Mahomed Ali under whose roof I am enjoying the privilege of hospitality. When a man wants to make up with his Maker, he does not consult a third party. He ought not to. If he has any doubt about it, he certainly must. But I had no doubt in my mind about the necessity of my step. Friends would deem it their duty to prevent me from undertaking the fast. Such things are not matters for consultation or argument. They are matters of feeling. When Rama decided to fulfil his obligation, he did not swerve from his resolve either by the weepings and wailings of his dear mother or the advice of his preceptors or the entreaty of his people, or even the certainty of his father's death if he carried out his resolve. These things are momentary. Hinduism would not have been

much of a religion, if Rama had not steeled his heart against every temptation. He knew that he had to pass through every travail, if he was to serve humanity and become a model for future generations.

But was it right for me to go through the fast under a Mussalman roof? Yes, it was. The fast is not born out of ill-will against a single soul. My being under a Mussalman roof ensures it against any such interpretation. It is in the fitness of things that this fast should be taken up and completed in a Mussalman house.

And who is Mahomed Ali? Only two days before the fast we had a discussion about a private matter in which I told him, what was mine was his and what was his was mine. Let me gratefully tell the public that I have never received warmer or better treatment than under Mahomed Ali's roof. Every want of mine is anticipated. The dominant thought of every one of his household is to make me and mine happy and comfortable. Doctors Ansari and Abdur Rahman have constituted themselves my medical advisers. They examine me daily. I have had many a happy occasion in my life. This is no less happy than the previous ones. Bread is not everything. I am experiencing here the richest love. It is more than bread for me.

It has been whispered that by being so much with Mussalman friends, I make myself unfit to know the Hindu mind. The Hindu mind is myself. Surely I do not need to live amidst Hindus to know the Hindu mind when every fibre of my being is Hindu. My Hinduism must be a very poor thing, if it cannot flourish under influences the most adverse. I know instinctively what is necessary for Hinduism. But I must labour to discover the Mussalman mind. The closer I come to the best of Mussalmans, the juster I am likely to be in my estimate of the Mussalmans and their doings. I am striving to become the best cement between the two communities. My longing is to be able to cement the two with my blood, if necessary. But, before I can do so, I must prove to the Mussalmans that I love them as well as I love the Hindus. My religion teaches me to love all equally. May God help me to do so. My fast is among other things meant to qualify me for achieving that equal and selfless love.

Young India, 25-9-1924

161. NOTE

September 22, 1924

NOTICE TO READERS

Young India and *Navajivan* are my delight. I love to write weekly to the public through, this medium. But I am sorry to say that for two or three weeks I must suspend the editorial responsibility. My medical tyrants forbid it. Charlie Andrews insists on editing *Young India* himself during the period of purification and convalescence. I gladly accept the offer. We are as blood-brothers. And the reader will be glad to have the same message rendered in a chaster and purer style. English is after all a foreign tongue for me. Charlie Andrews is master of it. It can therefore only give me pleasure to surrender editorial control of *Young India* to him. Mahadev Desai will be responsible for the editorship of *Navajivan*. Among the Gujaratis I have no more faithful interpreter of my message than he. This does not mean that I shall write nothing for the pages of *Young India* or*Navajivan*. If my strength keeps up—and it is highly likely—to the end and if the doctors allow, I hope to contribute a few paragraphs to each.

Young India, 25-9-1924

162. TELEGRAM TO S. SRINIVASA IYENGAR[1]

[*September 22, 1924*][2]

THANKS. CANCELLATION WOULD AMOUNT TO CANCELLATION DEEPEST CONVICTIONS. WOULD YOU HAVE ME DO THAT? PRAY DO NOT WORRY.

The Hindu, 22-9-1924

[1] 1874-1941; lawyer and Congress leader of Madras; presided over the Gauhati session of the Congress, 1926; elected to Central Assembly, 1926

[2] Released on this date by the Associated Press of India from Madras

163. LETTER TO SARALADEVI CHOWDHARANI

DELHI,

September 22, 1924

I have your pathetic appeal. I do want to live. I was imposing on myself 40 days. But on deeper scrutiny I saw I must impose the minimum consistent with the situation. If God wants more service through this body He will surely spare it.

The Tribune, 27-9-1924

164. NO WORK, NO VOTE

September 23, 1924

Maulana Hasrat Mohani brought me the other day the constitution of the Russian Soviet, and told me that I should read it, if only to find a striking resemblance between the Soviet constitution and that of the Congress. I have cursorily read that constitution, and whilst there is undoubtedly a striking resemblance in form between the two constitutions, showing that there is nothing new or original under the sun, there are also vital differences into which I need not go. But the one thing that captivated me was the formula of" no work, no vote". The qualification under the Soviet constitution is not money, not even four annas, not landed property, not even education, but *honest labour*. Thus the Soviet Congress is a worker's Congress. The philosophers, the professors, and all others must do some labour. What form that labour takes, I do not know. As I gave it only a few minutes, even if the information is to be found in the booklet, it has escaped me. The important and relevant fact is that every voter has to show sound work. My proposal therefore that everyone henceforth who desires to belong to the Congress organization should have some labour for the nation to his credit is neither original nor ridiculous. Seeing that a great nation has accepted before us the formula, we need not be ashamed of copying it. Labour given for only a few minutes per day to be fruitful must be of the same kind for the millions. And there is nothing but hand-spinning which can be made universal in a big country like ours.

But it has been urged that my proposal is not a mere labour

proposal; it surreptitiously raises the pecuniary qualification. No matter how fine the yarn may be, the quantity for the year can never be brought down so low as to cost four annas. But the critics forget, that I have said in the article in which I sketched the proposal, that those who cannot afford[1] cotton should have it given to them by the Provincial Congress Committees, so that the free gift of cotton would be under my plan a donation, not a subscription. Experience shows that it is perfectly possible for thousands to find sufficient cotton to spin 24,000 yards per year. The total of those who have sent their yarn to the All India Khaddar Board is nearly five thousand. They have not asked for cotton from the Khaddar Board. It is possible that some provinces have made arrangements for supplying spinners with cotton. If they have done so, there is nothing improper about it. For the chief thing is the labour for half an hour. The nation is not dying for want of raw products, but it *is* dying for want of labour and minimum skill. My proposal seems to jar, because we have not been used to toil with our hands and find it difficult to appreciate the possibilities of a whole nation voluntarily giving half an hour's labour to a single national necessity. Surely there is nothing immoral about my proposal. There is nothing in it that can come to conflict with anybody's conscience. There is nothing Herculean about it. Indeed, half an hour's easy labour is too insignificant to become exacting for the most industrious worker. The most, therefore, that can be urged against the proposal is that the labour will be fruitless. Assume for one moment that it will be fruitless in terms of swaraj or immediate economic solution. But surely it is not fruitless if cheap khaddar can be brought out from the maunds of yarn received by the All India Khaddar Board from month to month. A single yard of cloth added to the national production cannot be called a fruitless effort.

Another objection that has been advanced against the proposal is that it will disfranchise thousands of Congress voters. I make bold to say that the objection is chimerical. A voter is one who actively interests himself in the organization in which he is a voter. Our voters are not of that type. The fault is not theirs, but ours. We have not interested ourselves sufficiently in them. And we are not going to do so without being spurred thereto. The spindle is the spur. From month to month Congress officials will have to keep themselves in direct touch with every single voter. It surprises me that it should be

[1] The source has" give". But *vide*" The Realities", 11-9-1924.

necessary to demonstrate the obvious. Think of the possibilities of an organization of honest workers who must render an account of their work from month to month. Surely, a living organization containing a few earnest workers is infinitely superior to an organization containing many indifferent members whose work is confined merely to registering their votes at the bidding of a few men. The indications, however, are that if only we would have the courage to make the necessary change, we will have a very large number of voters, much larger than many expect. The number of the second month is double the number of the first month. If every worker in every province properly organizes this voluntary spinning, we must have a steady increase in the spinners. We should not be surprised to find the figure of two lakhs being reached in a few months. Two lakhs means ten thousand for each province. It does not need extraordinary organizing ability to register ten thousand voluntary spinners in each province on an average. I hope, therefore, that my proposal will not be rejected.

I have purposely called my proposal the lowest common measure, not the highest. And the lowest does not mean the lowest acceptable to the whole of India, but the lowest necessary for the national achievement. And I hold that, if we are to achieve swaraj by bloodless methods, the three things mentioned by me are absolutely necessary. If the ideal is to have as many voters as we can, irrespective of efficiency, then Hindu-Muslim unity and [anti-]untouchability also must go by the board. For I know that our intense work about untouchability has driven away many men from the Congress. They still hug it as an integral part of Hinduism. The same may be said of Hindu-Muslim unity. For recent experiences have shown that there are many who not only do not want Hindu-Muslim unity, but want to perpetuate our differences. They want to pick quarrels on the slightest pretext. They do not hesitate to manufacture pretexts. If, therefore, we dispense with all conditions conducive to internal growth, we will have a Congress of rabble, not a Congress that would respond as one man to the call of the nation. I for one would absolutely freeze in an organization in which the three things mentioned by me were not living realities. To paraphrase a Biblical verse, if it is no profanation, I would say:" Seek you first Hindu-Muslim unity, removal of untouchability and the spinning-wheel and khaddar, and everything will be added unto you."

Young India, 25-9-1924

165. TELEGRAM TO M. R. JAYAKAR[1]

[*September 23, 1924*][2]

I AM NOT A LITERALIST OF THE SPIRIT OF OUR SHASTRAS. I HOLD THAT PENANCE IS JUSTIFIED. PRAY HAVE. NO ANXIETY ABOUT ME. KEEPING PERFECT HEALTH.

The Story of My Life, Vol. II, pp. 453-4

166. TELEGRAM TO KUMBAKONAM CONGRESS COMMITTEE

[*September 23, 1924*][3]

THANKS WIRE. GOD WILLING SHALL SURVIVE ORDEAL.

GANDHI

The Hindu, 23-9-1924

167. LETTER TO SATISH CHANDRA MUKERJEE

DELHI,
September 23, 1924

DEAR SATISH BABU,

This is just to tell you that I am taking the fast extraordinarily well. I know you are inwardly rejoicing that God has given me the strength to go through the ordeal. If you at all feel like coming, do come during the last week of the fast. You will no more worry about Kristodas.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Kristodas just informs me you are having fever. In that case you must not travel.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: G.N. 5596

[1] In reply to his enquiries about Gandhiji's health
[2] Received by the addressee on this date
[3] From the date of reporting

168. TO THE READER

DELHI,
Wednesday, Bhadarva Vad 11 [*September 24, 1924*]

What should I write to you? The relationship between you and me is, I think, unusual. It is not for money or fame that I have taken up the editorship of *Navajivan*. I have taken it up in order to enter your heart with my words. The editorship came my way unsought; but ever since I have been thinking of you. Every week I endeavour to put my soul into *Navajivan*. I do not write even one word there without God as witness. I have not considered it my duty to place before you only such offerings as would please you. I have often offered bitter doses. Through every dose, whether bitter or sweet, I have sought to define my ideas of plain duty and pure patriotism.

The fast which I am undergoing now is for making me more fit for the editorship. I know that many readers of *Navajivan* are guided by my writings. I may perhaps have done them some harm by wrong guidance. This thought used to torture me.

I had not the least doubt regarding untouchability. There was no room for doubt regarding the spinning-wheel either. The wheel is like crutches to the lame. It is the means of satisfying the hunger of the starving. To a poor woman, it is a fortress for protecting her virtue. I am convinced that it would be impossible to ward off starvation from India without a general acceptance of the spinning-wheel. Therefore there is no chance of error in plying or propagating the spinning-wheel.

There is also no room for doubt about the need for Hindu-Muslim unity. Swaraj is inconceivable without it.

But I had always my doubts whether you were prepared to comprehend absolute non-violence. I have repeatedly and loudly proclaimed that tolerance and non-violence are the qualities of the brave. Those who have the strength to kill can alone refrain from killing. Might not my writings lead you to regard cowardice as non-violence? Might it not be that you abandon the duty of defending yourself? That would stand to my discredit. I have said very often in speech and writing that cowardice can never be considered a virtue. The sword indeed has a place in this world; but not cowardice. It is likely that the coward would perish and that is but

fair. What I am trying to prove is that even he who takes a sword is likely to perish. The man with a sword, whom does he protect and whom does he kill? Physical strength stands no comparison before spiritual strength. Non-violence reveals the strength of spirit, while the sword that of the body. With the use of the sword, spirit degenerates into matter. By resorting to non-violence, the soul recovers its spiritual nature. One who does not understand this truth must protect his wards by using the sword, if necessary.

I cannot explain with words the priceless virtue of non-violence. It can be taught only through practice. That is why I am practising this virtue at the moment. I would not touch with a sword even those Muslims who destroy our temples; I would not hate them; I would win them over only with love.

I have written that even if one true *premi*[1] is born in India, he would be able to protect his religion. I wish to become such a one. I always write to persuade you too to do likewise.

I know that I am filled with overflowing love. But is there any limit to love? I know that my love is not limitless. Can I play with a serpent? I have a firm belief that even a serpent would be at peace in the presence of an incarnation of non-violence.

I am examining myself by fasting; I am gathering more love. While I do my duty, I wish to make you aware of yours. Nothing would be gained by your fasting with me. For fasting too there is a time and a title. Your duty is to fulfil the threefold programme which I have placed before you in various ways. I am confident that you will draw many other corollaries from that programme.

Instead of doubting the propriety of my fast or lamenting over it, you should pray to God that it may proceed smoothly, that I may resume my service to you through *Navajivan* and that my words may acquire a new power.

Your servant,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-9-1924

[1] A loving person

169. LETTER TO SARALADEVI CHOWDHARANI

DELHI,
September 24, 1924

My penance is not vicarious. It is for the possible mistake I might have committed . . . Why do you suppose that I have drawn inspiration from Christian examples? I should not be ashamed, only this has nothing to do with it.

The Tribune, 27-9-1924

170. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS ON UNITY CONFERENCE[1]

DELHI,
September 24, 1924

It is a matter of great regret to me that I shall not be able to attend the coming Conference. I am aware that my fast is itself a disturbing factor. My presence will be still more so, but though I must not be present in body, my spirit will be there.

My fast has brought the Conference together. I should be glad if it tends to induce heart-searching and makes us all frank, fearless and truthful, if it enables us to forgo the non-essentials and confines us strictly to the essentials, but I should be deeply hurt if it makes a single Hindu or Mussalman surrender a tittle of what he may regard as his principle. The Conference will be fruitless if it produces a patched up peace. It will fail in its effect. What is wanted is a heart-unity and that can only come if heart speaks to heart. If Mussalmans consider that desecration of temples is a duty, that a man who honestly gives up Islam or a man who having embraced it changes to another faith deserves punishment at their hands, or if they consider that music before mosques must be forcibly stopped, they should declare it. I shall honour them for it. But I shall know that then there is no peace for this unhappy land. I would far rather face the consequence than have a single Mussalman suppress his religious conviction under outside pressure.

[1] Which began its session at Delhi on September 26, 1924

As a Hindu I know that a Hindu dare not say that his religion compels him to desecrate mosques or force a Mussalman to stop the slaughter of cows. I know that he commits a grievous sin if he does any of these acts. But if there are Hindus who regard the desecration of other peoples' places of worship or the forcible stopping of cow-slaughter a duty, let them say so. I shall know then that again there is no peace in this land of tears and sorrow.

All I wish to emphasize is that there should be no mental reservations because of the fast and that a false truce will only aggravate my agony, and my next state will be worse than the present. The fast should therefore be ruled out of our deliberations but if the members consider that it is impossible to do so I would urge the postponement of the Conference till the weight of the fast is lifted.

The Hindu, 25-9-1924

171. NOTES

LOSS OF A COMRADE

We in India know nothing of our South African heroes. They are unknown to fame like

> Some village Hampden that with dauntless breast
>
> The little tyrant of his fields withstood.

I have just received a cable from Johannesburg announcing the death of P. K. Naidu from pneumonia. He was one of the truest of Indians and the stoutest of hearts. He suffered the hardships of a prison-life many times. His wife followed suit. He was ready for all work. He got ready on an hour's notice to take charge of a party of deportees who were banished by General Smuts to India. He counted no cost too dear for the sake of his country's freedom. His death at the present moment, for our countrymen in South Africa, is a tremendous loss. He was capable single-handed of hurling defiance against the mighty South African Government. Indeed only a few weeks ago I had a letter from him describing his plan of campaign. Alas! cruel Nature had planned otherwise. Naidu is dead; his work will live for ever. Mr. P. K. Naidu was a fair English scholar. He knew Hindi, Telugu, French and Zulu. He was self-taught. He had a powerful build. He was no mean pugilist. But he had learnt the secret of non-violence. He was therefore able to control himself under the

gravest provocation. He was a born toiler. He never refused any work. He was an expert barber and, because he would not become a clerk, he had chosen to be a barber and carried on a hair-cutting saloon. When, at Tolstoy Farm, we took to sandal making, he became a finished sandal-maker. He was a true soldier. He knew how to obey. I tender my humble condolences to Mrs. Naidu and our countrymen in South Africa

INHUMAN TREATMENT

I had the pleasure of seeing Mrs. Gangabai Gidwani[1] and Dr. Choithram[2] after their visit to Acharya Gidwani. They tell me that Acharya Gidwani is kept confined the whole day long and is permitted to receive visitors only once every three months and that he must have lost over thirty pounds in weight. They tell me too that the Acharya has not been weighed by the authorities for a long time and, when they asked the Superintendent why no weight was taken for a long time, he shrugged his shoulders and said," That is not the system here." I know that jails are not palaces, that prisoners must not expect to have all the facilities of home life. But I do know many jails where the treatment meted out to Acharya Gidwani would be impossible. I must say in fairness to the authorities that the Acharya has been offered half an hour's exercise in the open in the morning and in the evening. But he has rejected the offer with scorn. I am not surprised. He is a proud, self-respecting man. He is conscious of no wrong. He did not even wilfully cross the Nabha border. His humanity pushed him in. He has never been known to have done anything that could be considered ungentlemanly. He has not schemed against the Nabha State. He has not been suspected of violent designs. Why then should he not be treated as an ordinary prisoner who is kept out in the open air practically the whole day long? Even murderers have plenty of fresh air and exercise allowed to them. The brutal solitary confinement imposed upon Acharya Gidwani is, so far as I am aware, without any cause. Such confinement is imposed as a punishment for serious prison offences. If Acharya Gidwani has committed any, the public should be informed of it. It may be that the Nabha State has no facility for keeping the Acharya outdoor the whole day long. If so, I would suggest his transfer to another prison. I know that there is an

[1] Wife of A. T. Gidwani

[2] Dr. Choithram Gidwani, Sind Congress leader

exchange system throughout Indian jails. For instance I saw in the Yeravda Central Prison prisoners from the Punjab, from the State of Junagadh, from the Presidency of Madras. When I heard the statement of Mrs. Gidwani and Dr. Choithram the whole of the civil resister rose in me and I felt like giving battle. But I realized my powerlessness and hung my head in shame. With an India cut up into warring parties and torn with Hindu-Muslim squabbles, civil resistance seems to be an impossibility. Pandit Jawaharlal asks me whether in the face of the letter received from the Administrator of Nabha he should not take up the challenge and cross the border and join his mate. I wish I could have said 'yes' to him. One's only comfort is that Acharya Gidwani is a brave man and well able to undergo all the suffering he may be subjected to. May God give him strength to go through the fire! It is the price we must pay for liberty. Liberty is a dearly bought commodity and prisons are factories where it is manufactured.

Young India, 25-9-1924

172. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

DELHI,

September 25, 1924

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA

137, CANNING STREET

CALCUTTA

KNEW YOU WOULD APPROVE RELIGIOUS NECESSITY FAST. HOPE YOU WILL GET WELL SOON. NEED NOT COME JUST NOW. AFTER YOU ARE RESTORED HEALTH WOULD LIKE YOU COME.

GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 5997. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

173. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

[*September 26, 1924*][1]

CHI. MANI,

Do not get nervous on account of my fast. Considering the period of the fast that has passed, I am still maintaining my strength. I believe the twenty-one days will pass without any difficulty. Doctors too hold the same view. Take good care of your health. Keep up the practice of taking long walks. Write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MANIBEHN PATEL
C/O BARRISTER VALLABHBHAI
AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro 4—Manibehn Patelne, p. 20

174. LETTER TO SURENDRA

Bhadarva Vad 13 [*September 26, 1924*][2]

CHI. SURENDRA,

Today is your turn [for a letter]. Knowing your temperament, I realize that you must be very keen to come over here. But the good lies in curbing that desire because that is attachment. Physical separation is an unavoidable rule of the world. You can still have spiritual relation as intense as you want. But for rendering physical service, it is necessary to be in each other's proximity. There is nothing lacking in your service to me. I do feel you can do something more if you are with me and that may be true. Becontent with the realization that everyone cannot have that benefit....[3] I would certainly be happy if I have to observe such fasts in the Ashram. However, I had not expected this fast. It was unexpected and I welcomed it. What we

[1] As in the source

[2] The postal cancellation mark shows the date as 28.9.1924. *Bhadarva Vad* 13, however, corresponded to September 26.

[3] A few words here are illegible in the source.

plan never happens; what He plans happens. Devdas's letter carries the description of this place.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. SURENDRA
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33130

175. DRAFT RESOLUTION ON HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY[1]

[*Before September 27, 1924*]

This Conference deplores the dissensions and quarrels that are now going on between Hindus and Mussalmans in several places in India resulting in loss of life, burning[2] of property, and desecration of temples. The Conference regards them as barbarous and contrary to religion. The Conference[3] tenders its warm sympathy to the sufferers. This Conference is of opinion that it is unlawful and irreligious for any person to take the law into his own hands.[4] The Conference is of opinion that all differences, no matter of what nature so ever[5], should be referred to arbitration or[6] to a court of law. This Conference hereby appoints ... (should be such men as would give their whole time) to work as arbitrators with power to appoint agents to decide all disputes between the two communities, to inquire into past wrongs and to publish their findings.

This Conference is of opinion that Hindus must not expect the stopping of cow-slaughter by force, but must trust to the good sense of Mussalmans and better relations between the two communities to

[1] Presumably drafted by Gandhiji. The resolution, with a few alterations as indicated in footnotes below, is reported in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 29-9-1924, as a resolution moved by Shaukat Ali and passed in the Subjects Committee of the Unity Conference on September 27, 1924.

[2] In the resolution as passed" and plunder" is added here.

[3]" Contrary to religion. The Conference" is omitted.

[4]" By way of retaliation or punishment" is added here.

[5]" So ever" is omitted.

[6]" If that be impossible even" is added here.

respect their feelings and similarly Mussalmans must not expect by force to stop Hindu music near mosques, but must rely upon the good sense of Hindus as far as possible to respect their feeling where it is genuine.

This Conference is of opinion that a section of the Press specially in the North is responsible for increasing the tension by putting wild exaggerations reviling each other's religion and by every means fomenting prejudices and passion. This Conference appeals to the public to stop patronage of such newspapers and pamphlets and advises the Board mentioned in the resolution to scrutinize[1] such writings and from time to time publish correct versions.

This Conference authorizes the Board appointed under the resolution to frame a scheme for the protection of rights of minorities and to that end shall invite representations from all parties and all sections and publish its finding to be binding on all parties for a period of five years ending 1929, and then until revised by a Joint conference representing all interests.

This Conference is of opinion that *tabligh* or *shuddhi* of minors or adults without education and clear understanding is contrary to the moral sense and should be abandoned. This Conference is further of opinion that *tabligh* or *shuddhi* by material inducements is reprehensible and should be abandoned wherever practised. This Conference is further of opinion that *tabligh* or *shuddhi* should never be in secret and every conversion must be open and after notice to the relations of the parties concerned.

From a photostat: S.N. 15870

[1] The source has" supervise".

176. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

September 27, 1924

DEAR MOTILALJI,

Moved by affection and pity the Conference guided by you has passed the resolution[1], you kindly read to me last night. I would ask you to assure the meeting that if I could have complied with its wishes, I would gladly have done so. But I have examined and re-examined myself and I find it is not possible for me to recall the fast. My religion teaches me that a promise once made or a vow once taken for a worthy object may not be broken. And you know my life has been regulated on that basis for now more than 40 years.

The causes of the fast are much deeper than I can explain in this note. For one thing, I am expressing my faith through this fast. Non-co-operation was not conceived in hatred or ill-will towards a single Englishman. Its non-violent character was intended to conquer Englishmen by our love. Not only has it not resulted in that consequence, but the energy generated by it has brought about hatred and ill-will against one another amongst ourselves. It is the knowledge of this fact which has weighed me down and imposed this irrevocable penance upon me.

The fast is therefore a matter between God and myself, and I would therefore not only ask you to forgive me for not breaking it but would ask you even to encourage me and pray for me that it may

[1] This Conference places on record its deep grief and concern at the fast which Mahatma Gandhi has undertaken.

The Conference is emphatically of opinion that the utmost freedom of conscience and religion is essential, and condemns any desecration of places of worship, to whatsoever faith they may belong, and any persecution or punishment of any person for adopting or reverting to any faith; and further condemns any attempts by compulsion to convert people to one's faith or to secure or enforce one's own religious observation at the cost of the rights of others.

The members of the Conference assure Mahatma Gandhi and pledge themselves to use their utmost endeavours to enforce these principles and to condemn any deviation from them even under provocation.

This Conference further authorizes the President to convey personally to Mahatma Gandhi the solemn assurance of this Conference to the above effect as also the united wishes of this Conference that Mahatma Gandhi should immediately break his fast in order to permit the Conference to have the benefit of his co-operation, advice and guidance in deciding upon the speediest means of effectively checking the evil which is fast over-spreading the country.

end successfully.

I have not taken up the fast to die, but I have taken it up to live a better and purer life for the service of the country. If, therefore, I reach a crisis (of which humanly speaking I see no possibility whatsoever) when the choice lies between death and food, I shall certainly break the fast.[1] But Drs. Ansari and Abdul Rahman, who are looking after me with the greatest attention and care, will tell you that I am keeping wonderfully fresh.

I would therefore respectfully urge the meeting to transmute all personal affection of which the resolution is an index into solid, earnest and true work for unity for which the Conference has met.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 2-10-1924

177. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

Bhadrapad Vad 14 [*September 27 1924*][2]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

The letter from the Ashram is being sent through you, that is, through the students. I am the leader of the Ashram, that is, its teacher. I know at least how difficult it is to be a teacher. When I remember my student days, I realize that the life of a student is a thousand times easier. In the life of a student action and worship, that is, devotion, are predominant and they shall be predominant.

Impatience and lack of faith are at the root of the desire to solve too many problems at the same time. My advice to students is that they should engage themselves in action with patience and faith and believe that they will get everything out of it. Consider how devotees manage to get everything they desire from their worship of clay idols.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Ashram Bhajanono Swadhyay, p. 14

[1] In *Bapuni Prasadi* (p. 77) this and the preceding sentence appear as a" Note to Mathuradas Trikumji" in reply to his letter to Mahadev Desai concerning Gandhiji's fast.

[2] The date, corresponding to *Bhadrapad Vad 14*, has been supplied in the source.

178. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

Bhadarva Vad 30 [*September 28, 1924*][1]

BHAI NARAHARI,

I did not write to you as Mahadev does so every day. But I think all the time of you and Jugatram. You will see from my handwriting that the fast has not had much effect on me. I am quite calm and happy. Please do not worry about me. Convey my *Vandemataram* to all brothers and sisters there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9046

179. CHANGE OF HEART

September 29, 1924

Hitherto it has been a struggle and a yearning for a change of heart among Englishmen who compose the Government of India. That change has still to come. But the struggle must for the moment be transferred to a change of heart among the Hindus and the Mussalmans. Before they dare think of freedom they must be brave enough to love one another to tolerate one another's religion, even prejudices and superstitions and to trust one another. This requires faith in oneself. And faith in oneself is faith in God. If we have that faith, we shall cease to fear one another.

Young India, 2-10-1924

180. LETTER TO MRS. HODGKINSON

[*September 30, 1924*][2]

DEAR MRS. HODGKINSON,

I thank you for your letter. I am daily praying to God to guide me. It was after prayer that I began the fast. I have taken it up not to die but to live a better and purer man for service; but if God wills

[1] From the reference to the fast

[2] Received by the addressee on this date

otherwise who can help? I quite agree with you that unity cannot be achieved by human effort in one day, but faith and prayer can work miracles.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Tribune, 3-10-1924

181. MESSAGE TO" GUNASUNDARI" [1]

The cord of swaraj is in the hands of women. At present they have lost hold of it. If they spin strong and beautiful yarn, they would be able with its help to draw swaraj from wherever it may be.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Gunasundari, October 1924

182. MESSAGE ON ANNIE BESANT'S BIRTHDAY[2]

[Before *October 1, 1924*]

It grieves me that I cannot be present at the celebration of Dr. Besant's birthday. I was looking forward to the privilege of presiding at a Bombay meeting; but what are man's resolutions before God's dispositions? I had no notion that I would have to undertake the penance that God has imposed on me. I hope that the meeting will forgive me. But although I shall not be present in body, I shall be present in spirit. Dr. Besant is a world figure. It is no small gain to India that she has adopted Bharat Mata as her mother and dedicated all her matchless gifts to her services. At her time of life, when people should be entitled to complete rest from all toll, she, with amazing energy, is writing, making speeches, moving about, and hatching plans for India's deliverance. Her indomitable courage in the face of all odds, her great organizing power, her literary and oratorical gifts, and

[1] A Gujarati monthly

[2] This was read out at a meeting held at Sir Cowasji Jehangir Hall, Bombay, on October 1, under the auspices of the Bombay Provincial Congress, Swarajya Sabha and other public bodies, to celebrate the 78th birthday and the jubilee of her public life. M. A. Jinnah presided and Annie Besant was present. *Vide* also" Letter to Annie Besant," 18-9-1924.

many other qualities that I could name are all treasures for us to prize and to utilize. It was painful to me, therefore, to differ from her. It is an equal pleasure to me that we seem to be coming closer. May God give her long life and enable her to witness the establishment of swaraj, for which she and we are all striving, and for the achievement of which she is not to be surpassed by any body in perseverance and ceaseless efforts.

New India, 2-10-1924

183. REPLY TO BOMBAY WOMEN'S DEPUTATION

October 1, 1924

A Bombay ladies' deputation consisting of Mrs. Captain, the secretary of the Rashtriya Stri Sabha, Mrs. Mir Ali, Mrs. Gokhale, Mrs. Thakur and Miss Petit waited on Mahatma Gandhi yesterday and requested him to break fast.

Mahatmaji in reply said that he had determined to continue the fast to the end and he was sure that he would finish it without interruption.

The Hindustan Times, 2-10-1924

184. WILL GUJARAT ACCEPT DEFEAT?

Wednesday, Aso Sud 3 [*October 1, 1924*]

Andhradesh and Bengal have threatened to surpass Gujarat in respect of the number of spinners. If either province surpasses Gujarat, I shall, of course, congratulate it; but why should Gujarat be defeated? One achieves success even if one is surpassed after making one's best effort. Gujarat has just now launched upon its endeavour. Do all the teachers spin? Do the students spin? Let all of them spin, let all the numberless brothers and sisters who attend public meetings spin—and then it would not matter if Gujarat is left behind. The challenge is for the organizers; let them get busy.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-10-1924

185. MESSAGE TO INTERNATIONAL OPIUM CONFERENCE, GENEVA[1]

[*Before October 2, 1924*]

The following has been signed by Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore:

The undersigned, viewing the growing addiction to narcotic drugs to be a deadly menace to individuals and to nations, and also an insidious, rapidly spreading poisoning of the human race, which can be overcome only by co-operation among nations, respectfully petition the International Opium Conference assembling in November, 1924 to adopt measures adequate for total extirpation of the plants from which these drugs originate, except as found necessary for medicine and science in the judgment of the best medical opinion of the world.

Young India, 2-10-1924

186. TELEGRAM TO BHAI PARMANAND

[*October 2, 1924*][2]

Mr. Gandhi has sent a telegram in reply to Bhai Parmanand's message saying that God alone knew whether he had sinned in taking up the fast, that he was prepared to lay down his life if that would console Kohat refugees and that if the Kohat deputation intended to urge him to abandon the fast it would be useless for them to come to Delhi, but otherwise he would be very pleased to meet them.

New India, 3-10-1924

[1] *New India,* 22-11-1924, carried the following under the date-line," Geneva, November 20":" Mr. Alexander, representing the Society of Friends of Great Britain . . . said . . . that he had received today a telegram from Mr. Gandhi declaring that all India wanted the suppression of the opium traffic except for medicinal purposes."

[2] Released on this date by the Associated Press of India from Ahmedabad

187. TELEGRAM TO PADMAJA NAIDU

DELHI,
October 3, 1924

PADMAJA NAIDU
GOLDEN THRESHOLD
HYDERABAD (DN.)

AM FIRST CLASS. WISH YOU COULD SAY SAME OF YOURSELF. LOVE.

GANDHI

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

188. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

October 3, 1924

DEAR PADMAJA,

I hope you received my wire[1]. Are poetesses' daughters all silly? You seem to delight in your illness. Do be good and get well.

With much love.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRIMATI PADMAJA NAIDU
HYDERABAD
DECCAN

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

189. LETTER TO KESHAV GANDHI

A[*So*] *Sud 6, Saturday* [*October 4, 1924*][1]

CHI. KESHU,

...[2] as I have observed quite a few deficiencies in you, please do not take it ill if I write publicly about them. Understand that we are learning the lesson of humility. I have noticed an artificiality in you. Be generous and make others happy, share their sorrows, sacrifice your own interests for the sake of others, make such sacrifices cheerfully and find your happiness in self-sacrifice. All these are the qualities of a *brahmachari's* character. You have decided to be a *brahmachari* and are in fact so. You are gifted with many qualities. May God give you all the right abilities and may you get .... May God forgive me if I have done you injustice.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. KESHU
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 34027

190. NOTE

WHY I HAVE NOT EMBRACED ISLAM

A Muslim brother writes :

You claim that you are a lover, a seeker and a follower of truth. You have said besides that Islam is not a false religion. It is the command of *Khuda* that every person should embrace Islam. Why then haven't you embraced Islam? When I drew the attention of a Hindu leader to Supplement No. 14[3], he said that Gandhiji had written it to placate the Muslims and that he had no love for Islam in his heart.

This brother has insistently asked for a reply. It has nowhere

[1] From the Gujarati day and month as also from the postmark; *Aso Sud* 6 in the year 1924 corresponded to October 4 and was a Saturday.

[2] The source is illegible at these places.

[3] Supplement No. 14 to *Navajivan* was published on June 1, 1924, and contained a Gujarati translation of the article," Hindu-Muslim Tension: Its Cause and Cure" published in *Young India*, 29-5-1924.

been enjoined that everyone should do everything that is not false. Just as I do not consider Islam to be a false religion, so also do I not consider Christianity, Zoroastrianism or Judaism to be false religions. Which religion, then, should I embrace? Moreover, I do not consider Hinduism a false religion either. What, then, should one like me, a seeker of truth, do? I studied the mysteries of Islam and hence declared that it is not a false religion. I thought it necessary to declare it since Islam was under attack, and since I wished to be friends with Muslim brothers, I defended their religion. Everyone feels that his religion is nearest to perfection and hence he is devoted to it. Likewise, not only do I feel that Hinduism is not false but I also feel that it is the most perfect. Hence I cling to my religion, as a child to its mother. But I have no dislike for other religions, as a child has none for other mothers. My love of my religion teaches me to appreciate other people's love for their religions. And I always pray to God that every Hindu and Muslims may learn to do likewise.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-10-1924

191. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

Sunday, Aso Sud 7 [*October 5, 1924*][1]

CHI. JAMNADAS,

Today I have completed the I8th day of my fast but it has not had much effect so far. I am quite happy. You must find out the cause why Meva[2] does not recover from her illness. I hope you are more at ease now and your financial worries at any rate are over. Try to increase the number of voluntary spinners. Utilize Jagannath's services for the work for which he is specially fitted. Convey my respects to Khushalbhai[3] and Devbhabhi[4]. I shall continue to be in Delhi for the present; do therefore write to me here at Mahomed Ali's address.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6036. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] From the postmark
[2] Addressee's wife
[3] Addressee's father and mother
[4] *ibid*

192. MY REFUGE

DELHI,
October 6, 1924

Today is the twentieth day of my penance and prayer. Presently from the world of peace I shall enter the world of strife. The more I think of it, the more helpless I feel. So many look to me to finish the work begun by the Unity Conference. So many expect me to bring together the political parties. I know that I can do nothing. God can do everything. Lord! make me Thy fit instrument and use me as Thou wilt.

Man is nothing. Napoleon planned much and found himself a prisoner in St. Helena. The mighty Kaiser aimed at the crown of Europe and is reduced to the status of a private gentleman. God had so willed it. Let us contemplate such examples and be humble.

During these days of grace, privilege and peace, I have hummed to myself a hymn we often sing at the Satyagraha Ashram. It is so good that I cannot resist the pleasure of sharing a free rendering of it with the reader. The words of the hymn better express my state than anything else I can write.

Here they are:

My honour, O! God, is in Thy keeping;
Thou art ever my Refuge,
For Thou art Protector of the weak,
It is Thy promise to listen to the wail of sinners;
I am a sinner of old, help me Thou
To cross this ocean of darkness.
It is Thine to remove the sin
And the misery of mankind.
Be gracious to Tulsidas
And make him Thy devotee.[1]

Young India, 9-10-1924

[1] The original text of the hymn of Tulsidas was reproduced under" Notes" in the same issue of *Young India*.

193. LETTER TO N. M. KHARE

Aso Sud 9/10 [*October 7, 1924*][1]

BHAI PANDITJI[2],

I am writing this to you on the last day of my fast. I have gradually come to look upon music as a means of spiritual development. Please try your best to see that all of us sing our *bhajans* with a correct understanding of the sense. Inmates of the Ashram do not yet become one with the songs they recite. Balkrishna's presence here at this time has been of immense help to me. Why should not everybody be like him? All the *bhaktas* [devotees] have lost themselves in their prayers. Rambhau[3] does not sit erect, let him cultivate the habit of sitting erect.

I cannot describe the joy I feel; I did not have to suffer much. God is merciful.

Blessings from

BAPU

PANDITJI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM

SABARMATI

From a facsimile of the Gujarati original in *Mahatma*, Vol. II

194. STATEMENT BEFORE BREAKING FAST

DELHI,

October 8, 1924

Mr. Gandhi broke his fast at 12 noon today. . . . After the Hindu, Muslim and Christian prayers were over . . . in a low voice, at times almost inaudible . . . he said:

Hindu-Muslim unity is not a new interest with me. It has been my chief concern for 30 years. But I have not succeeded in achieving it. I do not know what is the will of God. You know how originally my vow consisted of two parts. One of them is fulfilled. Another part I held back in response to the wishes of friends who were present at Mr.

[1] From the postmark

[2] Music teacher in the Ashram; a member of the Dandi March group

[3] Addressee's son

Mahomed Ali's house that night. Even if I had retained this second part, my fast would now have been broken in view of the success of the Unity Conference.

Addressing the Mussalmans through Hakim Ajmal Khan and Mr. Mahomed Ali, Mr. Gandhi said:

Today I beseech you to promise that you will, if necessary, lay down your life for the sake of Hindu-Muslim unity. For me, Hinduism would be meaningless if that unity is not achieved, and I make bold to say the same thing about Islam. We ought to be able to live together. The Hindus must be able to offer their worship in perfect freedom in their temples, and so should Mussalmans be able to say their *azan* and prayer with equal freedom in their mosques. If we cannot ensure this elemental freedom of worship, then neither Hinduism nor Islam has any meaning. I want this promise from you, and I know I have it; but as I am about to break my fast, I am so weighed down with the sense of responsibility that I am asking you to renew the pledge.

New India, 9-10-1924

195. IMPORTANCE OF" TAPAS"

October 8, 1924

There are instances of *tapas* [penance] at every step in Hindu mythology. Parvati desired to win Shankara and she took to *tapas*. Siva did something wrong and so he undertook *tapas*. Vishwamitra was the very incarnation of *tapas*. When Rama went into exile, Bharata plunged into yoga discipline, practised austere *tapas* and wore out his body.

God cannot test man in any other manner. If the soul is different from the body, it should remain blissful even when the body is tormented. Food is nourishment for the body, whereas knowledge and meditation are sustenance to the soul. Everyone has to realize this for himself as and when occasion arises.

If, however, the *tapas* is not accompanied by faith, devotion and humility, then all that austerity becomes a futile exercise. It also becomes hypocrisy. A devotee of God who enjoys eating his meal is a thousand times better than such an ascetic.

I have not the strength today to narrate the story of my *tapas*

but I may state this much that I cannot possibly live without *tapas*. Once again I am destined to plunge into the stormy ocean. Please, God, know that I am humble and protect me.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, I2-10-1924

196. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[*October 8, 1924*][1]

GOD'S GRACE FAST OVER. PERFECTLY ALL RIGHT.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni prasadi, p. 78

197. LETTER TO MAHOMED ALI

DELHI,
October 8, 1924

MY DEAR BROTHER,

You are more than a brother to me. I have seen the cow.[2] My bed was lifted to enable me to see her. What love that has prompted the act! May the bond between you twins and me fructify into an indissoluble bond between Hindus and Mussalmans for the good of our respective faiths, for the good of our country and for the good of humanity. Yes, God is great. He can work wonders.

Yours ever,

M. K. GANDHI[3]

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-10-1924

[1] As given in the source

[2] In his article," The Conference and After" in *Young India*, 16-10-1924, Mahomed Ali wrote:" I presented to Mahatma Gandhi, when he broke his fast, a cow which I purchased from a butcher, so that he might send it to a *pinjrapole*."

[3] The letter was signed in Urdu.

198. MESSAGE TO" THE STATESMAN"

[*Before October 9, 1924*]

Unity above everything else.

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindustan Times, 9-10-1924

199. MESSAGE TO THE PRESS ON FAST[1]

DELHI,
October 9, 1924

Mahatma Gandhi has issued the following message to the Press:

God is indeed great and merciful I can feel both His greatness and mercifulness. He has brought me successfully throughthe ordeal. Though I have not been permitted to see all the postal and telegraphic messages received, the few I have seen have overwhelmed me. In the abundance of love of which these messages are typical I also see God's mercy. I thank all those loving friends for their messages. I shall expect them also to help in the work that lies before me. It is God's work. I know my responsibility is far greater today than it was three weeks ago. The fast, I am sane enough to know, does not end my work. It only commences and in this I seek the prayer and co-operation of every son and daughter of India.

New India, 9-10-1924

200. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

Aso Sud 14 [*October 11, 1924*][2]

BHAI SHANTIKUMAR,

I got the letter, the garland of yarn and the dry fruits sent by you. I am very glad that you have resolved to spin daily. May God give you the strength to stick to your resolution.

[1] This was dictated by Gandhiji in response to a request by the Associated Press representative.

[2] From the reference to Juhu and Gandhiji's health

My health is improving.

I always remember the love you showed me at Juhu.

Blessing from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4796. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

201. LETTER TO G.D. BIRLA

Ashvina Krishna 2 [*October 14, 1924*][1]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have been getting your letters. I am not alarmed at the happenings at Jubbulpur and other places. I have done what little atonement I could, and am therefore quite at peace. We have no right to the fruit [of our actions]. It rests with God alone. I do intend as soon as I am well to undertake a tour in company with several prominent leaders. First of all, I wish to visit Kohat. I hope to be ready in eight days.

When the time comes, I shall ask for all the help you can give.

I am getting plenty of help from your people here.

Kindly send the money either to Jamnalalji or to the Sabarmati Ashram.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6038. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] From the reference to the fast and the contemplated visit to Kohat

202. LETTER TO SWAMI SHRADDHANAND

Ashvina Krishna 2 [*October I4, 1924*][1]

BHAI SAHIB,

I have your note. I am trying to make the necessary arrangements for Vykom; I hope help will reach the satyagrahis. I have carefully gone through your statement. I shall keep it with me.

Yours sincerely,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SANNYASI SWAMI SHRI SHRADDHANAND
BURN BASTION ROAD
DELHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2206

203. DUTY OF A NON-CO-OPERATOR

Wednesday, Aso Vad 3 [*October 15, 1924*]

It may be said that non-co-operation will be suspended at the forthcoming Congress session. However, this does not imply that non-co-operators will suspend work. In fact, what was only an illusion of non-co-operation will be suspended. Where there is love, both co-operation and non-co-operation are in fact one and the same thing.

Whether the father and son co-operate or non-co-operate with each other, both the attitudes should be the fruit of love. Co-operation is not worth the name when born out of selfishness; it is rather a kind of bribe. So also non-co-operation born out of hatred is a grave sin. Both these should be eschewed.

The non-co-operation that was introduced in I920 was rooted in love; maybe the people were not aware of this and joined it out of hatred. Nevertheless, if all the leaders had understood its true nature and acted in accordance with it, we could have avoided the bitter results that have followed.

[1] From the postmark

We did not understand peaceful non-co-operation. Hence hatred increased, and we have now to suffer the fruit of our own actions. That hatred which inspired our non-co-operation with the British has now raised its head within our own ranks.

That hatred has appeared not only between Hindus and Muslims but also between co-operators and non-co-operators.

Hence in order to prevent such perverted results of non-co-operation, we have to suspend it. This does not mean merely that lawyers who would like to take up their legal practice or students who would like to return to Government schools could do so without a sense of shame. In fact, those lawyers who have grasped the principle of non-co-operation will not resume practice; nor will such students return to Government schools. The suspension of non-co-operation should result in our being repentant, in the non-co-operator embracing the co-operator, winning the latter over through love and bearing no ill-will towards him. The latter may take assistance from the Government, be he a Government pleader, a Government servant, or a member of the Legislative Assembly; still the former should make friends and associate with them all and help and be helped by them in resolving disputes between Hindus and Muslims, in removing untouchability, in boycotting foreign-cloth, in getting rid of the addiction to liquor and opium and in many such tasks.

It is for the non-co-operator to take the lead in these tasks. In doing so, his tact, discretion, civility, love of peace and humility will be put to the test. It is in winning over the co-operator through love that the quality of the non-co-operator will be tested. False flattery and rudeness should both be avoided. The very first lesson consists in all of us uniting in order to strike the middle path. May God help us.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-10-1924

204. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Aso Vad 3 [*October 15, 1924*]

PUJYA GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. I was glad to read it. I want you to stay there without any anxiety and learn everything. If you have any difficulty, let me know. I shall reply to you on hearing from you. Please let me

know how far you have read. Why did the children go to Bombay?

I am gaining strength every day. I am getting impatient to go there. But I am afraid I shall not be able to go before visiting Kohat.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6097. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

205. DISCUSSION WITH C. F. ANDREWS[1]

DELHI,
[*Wednesday, October 15, 1924*][2]

Early in the morning, after the usual reading of the *Bhagavata* was over, Bapu sent for Mr. Andrews. . . . When he came upstairs, he said to Bapu:" I am going to sing for you this morning a hymn, which I am sure you have never heard before. A military officer, in the Bible, goes to Christ and prays for the recovery of a servant of his, who is lying ill at home. Christ offers to go and see the patient Himself. But the officer, considering himself utterly unworthy of so much special attention from the Lord, asks Him merely to express His wish that the patient should survive and he was sure that this would be enough. Such is the story that lies behind this hymn."

With this introduction, Mr. Andrews sang the hymn given below:

I am not worthy; cold and bare
The lodging of my soul;
How canst thou deign to enter there?
Lord, speak and make me whole.

"How closely it resembles the hymn of Tulsidas you are so fond of!" said Mr. Andrews, when he had finished. Bapu answered, to the agreeable surprise of Mr. Andrews:

I have heard it before, I heard it sung in 1893. I used to meet Christians of all denominations then in South Africa[3] and I distinctly

[1] This appeared under the caption," An Interesting Conversation" with the following introductory note by C. F. Andrews:" I am publishing this translation of Mahadev's article, published in *Navajivan,* which has been made for me by Devdas. As the conversation was a very important one, I felt that it should be reproduced in English. I have not made any substantive correction, except to make clear that the Bishop I referred to was the saintly Bishop of Durham, the Ether of the present Metropolitan."

[2] From *Navajivan,* 19-10-1924

[3] *Vide An Autobiography,* Part II, Ch. XI.

remember having heard the hymn at the Sunday services which I used to attend.

Here he recalled some of his old reminiscences connected with his Christian friends, which I need not give here. This over, Bapu said:

But I called you here for an entirely different reason. I wish you to understand properly the meaning of the Spinning Franchise.

Then there followed a lengthy talk, an account of which I give here as accurately as possible:

BAPU: You did not like my article[1] in the latest issue of *Young India*. But I tell you the argument is irresistible. You disapprove of my article because you omit to take note of the concluding portion, where I make it clear that my appeal is addressed only to those who believe in voluntary spinning as an absolute necessity for the country. They should have no difficulty accepting the condition of having to spin and contribute 2,000 yards of yarn. When you say you will spin voluntarily, you should have no hesitation in readily joining an institution where the condition of membership is to ply the wheel. That is precisely why I said that in a country such as France, where extreme importance is attached to military training, it would be perfectly legitimate to lay down military training as an indispensable condition of membership in its National Assembly. If today in India we accept the importance of spinning, we ought most naturally to agree to it as a condition of membership in the Congress.

ANDREWS: Your point is very weak. That you should make any comparison with French military training is terrible! I would rather go to jail or become an exile than join the army, even as Bertrand Russell did, or Romain Rolland, who left his country because he could not reconcile himself to fighting.

Yes, I too would do the same. That matters little. It is but right that conscientious objectors should stand by their principles and suffer the consequences. But if the whole country in general felt the necessity of military training why should there be any objection to giving it a place in the law of the land?

[A:] I don't think you should take the example about military training. You ought to have chosen a better analogy. You could certainly take the instance of the Prohibition Law of the United States. It was only when about 80 per cent of the population of America showed the readiness to abandon drink that the law was

[1] *Vide"* The Spinning Franchise", 16-10-1924. Gandhiji seems to have shown this to C.F. Andrews before its publication in *Young India*.

enacted. There is nothing to prevent your making about 80 per cent of the Indian population spin through a separate organization of your own and then get spinning adopted as a condition of membership in the National Assembly. As it is, you are placing the cart before the horse.

No. I am perfectly logical. Has an organization got the right to require its members to fulfil certain obligations, or has it not? The thing may or may not appeal to the individual member, but you certainly cannot say that we have not the right to adopt it.

[A:] In America everyone had the right to drink before the Prohibition Law was passed. They have today the right to re-introduce drink by repealing the law. What I want to know is this: Is the Congress the mouthpiece of public opinion, or of the opinion of a small body of men? Will the Congress be a National Assembly, or a small committee?

It will be a National Assembly. You are entitled to say that my experience is wrong. But once you concede that the Congress has the right to impose restrictions on its members, I would be able to convince you easily of the rest.

[A:] You must not make of the Congress a party organization. It should be a voluntary elective body of the nation.

You do not quite realize what Congress is. Today it happens to be an ill-defined and disorganized institution. There is much more in it than is apparent from its constitution. If the Congress is to be a truly democratic organization, its constitution must be more dynamic, more honest. It must more truly fulfil the requirements of the nation. We don't need numbers. When I secured the acceptance of the four-anna-franchise, I had hoped that the Congress would become a mighty assembly, but workers were lacking. Our country today is a country of idlers and dreamers. I refer, not to the dumb millions who are groaning under poverty and slavery, but to ourselves—the so-called intelligentsia, the talkers. How can I engage all these in some kind of national work except through the spinning-wheel? In what other manner could the Congress be made a practical organization? My hope is that this will come about by the 2,000- yards-a-month spinning idea. As matters stand at present, we have nothing like concerted effort at all. One says," I shall wield the axe," another wants to sew, yet another would like to devote himself to something else dear to him. This leads to nowhere. I aim at concentrating all the energy and effort on one thing and obtaining substantial results.

[A:] I am afraid you are going to establish a new kind of religion, with spinning and wearing khaddar as its essential factor. Why should I be specially concerned with whether so and so wears khaddar or foreign-made cloth? All I principally care to know is what the man is morally worth. Christ wanted us in judging a person to be guided by his heart and not by his outward appearance.

There is a difference between Christian and Hindu ideals.

[A:] You might as well say that if I ate a particular diet I would gain spiritually. I simply cannot understand that: Take such a saint as the late Bishop Westcott of Durham. He took meat, but it does not follow therefore that he was unspiritual.

Hard cases make bad law. You cannot preach to the generality of people asking them to eat what they like, and yet continue to believe that they are pure.

[A:] But I will come to the original objection. Are we sincerely making serious attempts to prepare the ground, as they did in America before prohibiting drink by law?

I am ever preparing the ground. We are today what we are because of four years, strenuous work. The Congress long ago accepted the importance of spinning. Moreover, the conditions in the two countries are different. America was a" wet" country. There, the people had to be weaned from drinking. They had to do something they never did before. Here, all that is wanted is that the people should revert to an art, which was theirs for ages, but which has been neglected for some time past. That is all. Furthermore. . .

Here he quoted a *sloka* from the *Gita*[1] which literally translated means:" No sincere effort is wasted and there is no ban against sincere effort. The least performance of this duty saves you from calamities."

[A:] Why do you say so? There is waste in it. We are all fitted for different kinds of work. We may be so preoccupied with other work as not to find even half an hour's time for spinning. I notice Mahadev sitting up even at midnight to do his spinning. I also saw Maulana Mahomed Ali busy spinning even at midnight during the conference and then I wonder to what purpose all this could be.

That these friends have to do their spinning at midnight merely suggests unmethodical habits, and want of the" time sense", that is all.

[A:] Apart from the half an hour imposition, I feel that other things have been thrown into the background since you began to talk of concentration on spinning. So

[1] II. 40

much energy is taken up in khaddar work that the urgent need of checking the drink and drugs evils is practically overlooked.

In recommending spinning my sole idea has been to place before the country a programme, which would easily appeal to the common mind and also be a unifying force. It excludes nothing. Picketing of liquor shops was given up because of the fear of violence, not in order to concentrate on khaddar. It is not necessary to lay so much emphasis on the other items of the programme as on khaddar. All agree that drink should be avoided. There is nothing new in this to tell the people. There will be some who will continue to drink even though swaraj is established. These must be tackled after swaraj.

[A:] Is not a strenuous movement for the abolition of the opium traffic immediately called for? The country is convinced that it is.

I believe it.

[A:] Are you aware that women labourers in the mills drug their babies with opium?

Yes, but don't say that the thing has begun to eat into our vitals. Don't imagine that the country will allow it to gain more ground. As for the babies, you have the question of education of the labourers, the question of medical aid, the question of the number of hours for which women labourers should be made to work and numerous other questions connected with their protection.

[A:] When you settled upon the threefold programme of untouchability, Hindu-Muslim unity and khaddar, and left out the question of drink, it struck me as a sad omission.

No, I never forgot it. There is really nothing new to tell the people about it.

[A:] Rather, it has become impossible to get the people to take interest in the opium question.

For the matter of that if you and I stopped writing about South and East Africa, nobody would worry about the condition of the Indians there either. We are dealing with people who know nothing. But you must remember that work for the prevention of drink is still going on. Wherever khaddar has gained a footing the whole process of purification has begun. You could realize this if you went to Borsad or to Ramesra or Bardoli. Temperance work and the conditions of social life in the villages mainly occupy the attention of our workers wherever a khaddar centre exists.

[A:] But why make the wearing of khaddar and spinning a *religious* duty? Will not the people boycott those that are daring enough not to wear khaddar or to spin?

Well, it must be a religious duty. Are you sure every Indian will occupy himself usefully in the service of the country, simply if I cease to insist on making spinning a religious duty? Yet that does not at all mean that persons not wearing khaddar or not spinning should be boycotted. On the contrary it would be our duty to embrace them and win them ultimately to the side of khaddar by our love, certainly not by talking or thinking ill of them. I have suffered the penance of a twenty-one days' fast simply because we fell from this standard. Will not the people still understand? True boycott can only be of one kind, that of refusal to accept personal service and denying oneself the advantages of association with the person so dealt with, while being ever ready to render him help in case of need. I would welcome that kind of boycott in the case of a person addicted to drink, but not in the case of those who don't wear khaddar. For there is certainly not that sin in wearing foreign cloth as in drink.

[A:] You make me feel more at ease. I am glad you have cleared these points. Only, I don't like the idea of your making khaddar a test of moral fitness. A friend writes to me to say that he has given up wearing khaddar because it has become a cheap method of gaining popularity.

The friend makes a mistake. Am I to cease doing what I think proper because another person makes a pretence of doing that thing? That would be like my giving up speaking the truth because some people feign truth.

[A:] But can't you eliminate the expressions *shuddha* and *ashuddha* from the khaddar terminology?

I should certainly use these terms in connection with cloth. Foreign cloth for an Indian to wear would be impure. I would not apply this to the case of the Indians in England, for instance; yet just as a man is not an impure being simply because he wears impure cloth, so also a person leading an impure life does not purify himself because he wears pure clothes. The economic value of what I call *shuddha* cloth, i.e., khaddar, is always there; that is why even a prostitute may wear pure khaddar and help to that extent to keep out foreign cloth.

[A:] I don't see how you can call foreign-made cloth" impure".

I know that. We must agree to differ there. Air gathered from the plains of Delhi would be an impure commodity to be inhaled in

Simla. It is in this sense that I call foreign-made cloth *ashuddha,* i.e., impure.

[A:] But I don't see that. I am however glad you have explained so many other things.

Before the fast, such talks were quite frequent with Gandhiji, which he engaged in with everybody. But after the fast, barring the discussions with Pandit Motilal Nehru, this was the first long discussion of an important and serious character.

Young India, 31-10-1924

206. NOTE ON BOOKS FOR GANGABEHN VAIDYA

[*After October 15, 1924*][1]

For Pujya Gangabehn

Ramayana of Tulsidas

Vairagya Prakarana of *Yogavasishtha*

Bhagavata Ekadasha Skandha

Maniratnamala

Panchikaran by Jayakrishna Vyas

Raychandbhaina Lekho

(Careful study of the *Gita*)

Kathavalli Upanishad

Patanjali's *Yogasutra* first Quarter

Maniratnamala is most probably available in the Ashram. It is by Tulsidas. There is a Gujarati translation of the work, which is small but very good. This is no doubt available in Bombay. Enquire if it is available here. If not, tell Devdas and he will procure a copy in Bombay and send it to you.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6097-A. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] It is presumed that this was written after Gandhiji received a reply to his letter of October 15.

207. SPINNING FRANCHISE

"Spinning as a voluntary sacrifice is all right, but as a qualification for franchise it is galling." This is the substance of the objection that I hear against my proposal. I must confess I am surprised at the objection, for it is offered not because it is spinning that matters, but because with the critics it is the restriction, the obligation that matters. But why? If a monetary qualification, that is, restriction, may be imposed, why not a working qualification? Is it more honourable to pay than to labour? Is it galling in a temperance association to require every member to be a teetotaller? Is it galling in a naval association to require every member to possess certain naval qualifications? Is it galling, say, in France where military skill is considered a necessity of national existence, to require every member to practise the use of arms? If it is not galling to have the requisite test in any of these cases, why should it be galling in an Indian National Assembly to have spinning and the wearing of khaddar, which is a national necessity, to be the qualification for the franchise, or which is the same thing, the test of membership? Is it not the easiest and readiest method of popularizing it and bringing it home to the people? Of course, my argument is addressed only to those who regard as absolutely necessary that India should be self-contained in so far as her clothing is concerned and that, principally, through the spinning-wheel and the handloom.

Young India, 16-10-1924

208. ALLAHABAD AND JUBBULPUR

My fast and the Unity Conference notwithstanding, riots have taken place in Allahabad and Jubbulpur. No one expected that all riots will end as if by magic because of the Conference or the fast. But I do expect that the Press will write of such riots with restraint and without bias. I do hope, too, that the leaders of both the communities and belonging to all parties will co-operate to find out the causes and deal with them and issue to the public a correct version.

Young India, 16-10-1924

209. GURUKUL KANGRI

The floods have worked havoc everywhere this year. The Gurukul, that monument of Swami Shraddhanandji's patient and self-sacrificing effort has not escaped the ravages of the Gangetic flood. My deepest sympathy goes out to him, to the managers of the great institution and the students. I hope the appeal for funds will meet with a quick response.

Young India, 16-10-1924

210. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

ROSHANARA ROADS,
DELHI,
October 16 [*1924*]

DEAR SIR,

As soon as I have gathered sufficient strength, it is my intention, if permitted, to go to Kohat in the company of some Mussalmans and some Hindu friends. My object in wanting to go to Kohat is to find out from the inhabitants the causes of the Hindu-Muslim dissensions and if possible, with the help of the friends, to bring about peace between the two communities. I shall thank you to let me know as early as possible whether His Excellency the Viceroy will permit me and my friends to proceed to Kohat for the purpose mentioned.

I remain,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15912; also *Young India*, 31-10-1924

211. DISCUSSION WITH HASSAN NIZAMI

[*About October 16, 1924*][1]

Gandhiji said:

I ought to acknowledge that I have read this article of yours. I too did not approve of it. There is a reason for this. You are free to criticize, but you have made fun of the conference as a whole. Your criticism is not in the right spirit. The purport of it appears to be that you do not desire unity at all and that you disapprove of the very fact that the conference was held. Why should we not be critical? We must admit, at any rate, that those who had assembled meant to do some good work and made an honest effort to do so. You, however, have adopted an attitude of fun and ridicule alone. And what a newspaper you chose for this! *Muballig*, a paper which has long been and is still full of hatred. Could you not have chosen any other newspaper? You could have written to *Young India*. You could have admitted the *bona fides* of the conference. However, because your article appears in a newspaper which is given to venomous and acrimonious writing, some persons may perhaps get the impression that Khwaja Sahib is opposed to the very idea of unity. . . .

Are you not talking of Abdul Kadar Jilani?[2] In jail too I had read of him. Once, when he, as a child, set out on a journey, his mother had given him some gold coins. As he was but a child she sewed them up in his coat and, together with these coins, gave him the instruction not to tell a lie under any circumstances, even if heaven and earth crashed but always to tell the truth. The party was waylaid by robbers, who searched everyone and took that they had. It was Abdul Kadar's turn. He was asked what he had on him. He pointed to the gold coins sewed inside the coat. The robbers were astonished and set him free. More than that, his truthfulness resulted in their returning the loot taken from the others as well.

Even though Islam abounds in such instances, it is not proper that you cite them before Hindus. Are there such instances only in Islam? They can be found at every step in Hinduism also. However, just as one need not give up one's own religion and take to Hinduism

[1] Mahadev Desai reports that the discussion took place in the fifth week after commencement of Gandhiji's fast.

[2] During the conversation Khwaja Hassan Nizami narrated how Hazrat Ghaus or Abdul Kadar Jilani won over his rowdy neighbour to Islam by his generous good-neighbourly behaviour.

because of these instances, similarly, one need not embrace Islam because of instances like those of Abdul Kadar. I do not mind if there are many such instances among Muslims and, because of them, the whole of India gets converted to Islam. However, just as there have been the best as well as the worst of men among Hindus, so too there are wicked persons among the Muslims also. I would not like you to cite the example of Abdul Kadar to convert anyone to Islam. You can talk to Hindus on other matters. Why do you ask the Dheds and the *Bhangis* to become Muslims? You could tell the Hindus," There have been very tolerant men amongst you; you treat all creatures alike; how can you regard human beings as untouchables? Are you not ashamed of keeping humans apart?" You can serve Hinduism in this manner. By quoting the example of Abdul Kadar, I could tell Muslims," Your religion is practised by such lovers of truth who advocate tolerance and who would forgive even their enemies. How can you bring disgrace upon them?" Thus would I serve Islam. We would then be purifying our own religion to such an extent that no one would be able to prevent those who wish to embrace it.

It would, however, be an outrage to take advantage of someone's poverty and tell him," Come my friend, I shall give you so many rupees, pay off your debts; because your co-religionists are pestering you, you come over to us." He does this not because of his love for Islam, but because of the sum that is offered to him. What food did the people get who came to Mohammed Sahib? Dates and water, and when even that was not available, a fast. Nevertheless, out of respect for his personality and drawn by his spiritual power, people used to flock to him and embrace Islam. Speaking for myself, if a new Mohammed Sahib comes forward and, drawn by his personal magnetism, the whole world gets converted to Islam, I would not mind this in the least.

I say all this only because I know the appeal of Islam. I do not believe that Islam was spread through the sword; it has been spread by fakirs. It has spread through truth, austerity and courage. Everyone will admit that Islam has been defended by the sword; but for its spread only the fakirs can claim credit. I, therefore, assert that spreading Islam through force or favours or in any such way is not rendering service to it but rather bringing disgrace upon it. I say this only because of my love for Islam.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-10-1924

212. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU

[On or after *October 17, 1924*][1]

MUSSALMANS NAGPUR WIRE SAYING IF YOU DAS OR JAWAHAR GO NAGPUR AND WITH DR. MAHMUD ARBITRATE THEY WOULD ACCEPT SUCH AWARD AS FINAL. CAN YOU PLEASE PROCEED NAGPUR NOW OR IF IMPOSSIBLE SHOW THIS JAWAHARLAL SEND HIM.

From a microfilm: S.N. 10489

213. TELEGRAM TO SHAHJI AHMEDALI

[On or after *October 17, 1924*]

WIRED MOTILALJI PROCEED HIMSELF OR SEND JAWAHAR. DAS CONVALESCENT AT SIMLA.

From a microfilm: S.N. 10489

214. TELEGRAM TO DR. B. S. MUNJE

[On or after *October 17, 1924*]

DR. MUNJE

MUSSALMANS NAGPUR WIRE THEY WOULD ACCEPT ARBITRATION BY MOTILAL DAS OR JAWAHARLAL AND DR. MAHMUD. I TRUST HINDUS WILL AGREE. DAS BEING CONVALESCENT HAVE ASKED MOTILAL OR JAWAHAR PROCEED NAGPUR.

From a microfilm: S. N. 10489

[1] From the reference to the telegram of October 17, 1924, sent to Gandhiji on behalf of the Muslims of Nagpur by Shahji Ahmedali of Khilafat Committee, Nagpur; it read:" Dr. Syed Mahmud just arrived. Mussalmans earnestly request you to send Pandit Jawaharlal or Pandit Motilal or Mr. Das to conduct inquiry and decide jointly with Dr. Mahmud. Nagpur Muslims ready and willing to abide by Delhi resolutions. Any decisions given on those lines are acceptable to them if decided by any of three named gentlemen with Dr. Mahmud. Nagpur Muslims beg to assure you they would do nothing to harm national cause. They are deeply sensible of bad situation in country. Pray do send any of the three leaders named. Wire reply."

215. LETTER TO ANNIE BESANT

October 18, 1924

DEAR DR. BESANT,

Dr. Ansari gave me your letter with the papers today. You may put me down as a convener. I have no choice as to the place. If it is the third week of November, I should make a strenuous effort to attend. I think that you should be the Provisional Secretary.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary: Courtesy: Narayan Desai

216. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Aso Vad 6 [*October 18, 1924*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Mr. Andrews will leave Rajkot[2] tomorrow[3] by the metre-gauge train to reach there. After staying there for three or four days he will go to Bombay and then proceed to Santiniketan. Somebody should go to receive him. I am writing a letter to Vallabhbhai also. Anasuyabehn will be accompanying him. Balakrishna will leave here on the 24th or 25th. I shall also tell Ba to start at the same time. Jamnabehn and Yashwantprasadbhai are still here. I shall most probably start taking milk in the usual quantity from today. I have gained considerably by now (three o'clock). At this rate I should gain adequate strength in a week's time.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have received your postcard.

CHI. CHHAGANLAL

SABARMATI ASHRAM

SABARMATI

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 9230. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] From the postmark

[2] Illegible in the source

[3] *ibid*

217. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU[1]

[On or after *October 19, 1924*]

THANKS YOUR WIRE. SORRY ABOUT JAWAHARLAL. PLEASE URGE HIM MY BEHALF TAKE CARE HIS HEALTH.

From microfilm: S.N. 10489

218. TELEGRAM TO C. R.. DAS[2]

[On or after *October 19, 1924*]

DELIGHTED YOU ARE GETTING BETTER. AGREE POSTPONEMENT WITH PLEASURE.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 10489

219. A WAY

Aso Vad 7, 1980 [*October 20, 1924*]

The Education Conference has passed a resolution that the Vidyapith should accord the first priority to primary education. I intended to place some practical suggestions about this resolution before the Vidyapith; but an age has passed before I could do so, as I was occupied with other matters. I have not, however, forgotten the subject of primary education.

But before offering any practical suggestion to the Vidyapith, I take the liberty of placing before the teachers some of my ideas about education. I have felt for many years that in the curriculum we have been placing a disproportionate emphasis on mere literacy and, in consequence, we find text books multiplying day after day.

We have been misled into the belief that no knowledge can be

[1] In reply to his telegram of October 18, received on October 19, which read:" Your wire. Jawahar suffering from fever. Am leaving for Nagpur tomorrow night arriving there Monday afternoon."

[2] In reply to his telegram of October 19, which read:" Just getting better. Spare me here till 30th. Have wired Motilal. Fix 31st for meeting. Postpone Kohat for a day."

imparted to children until they learn the letters of the alphabet. I have not known a stronger superstition in the field of education. This wrong notion, I am convinced curbs the child's development. This belief is based on experience—that a child's mind can grow before he picks up the alphabet. By insisting on the alphabet, the child's development is arrested. Every teacher can see within a month what great progress a seven-year-old child can make if he imparts oral lessons instead of making him learn the alphabet. Teachers can easily talk history, geography and science to children. A child can learn the essence of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* in the course of a year. Generally the child is taught these things after a schooling of four or five years. How pathetic is it that a child should take one year to say and read" Mother, give me water to drink!" By burdening the child with the alphabet, we arrest his progress, keep him from knowledge, clog his memory and in our zeal to teach him the alphabet, we distort his handwriting; we make him a slave of text-books from his childhood and ultimately we place the unnecessary burden of buying barren books on poor India.

If I could convince the teachers, I would abolish all textbooks in primary education or give them only to teachers. These books have to be planned differently. Instead of teaching the child the letters of the alphabet in the beginning, I would teach him drawing so that the child, from the very beginning, learns to draw beautiful designs. He may well take two or three years to learn the alphabet. We can impart orally to him a lot of practical and religious instruction in those three years. We can develop has memory by making him repeat verses from the *Gita* and other sacred books. Thereby his ears get tuned up, his tongue practises clear pronunciation, and his eyes learn to observe. Thus all the power of the child can be developed simultaneously. Meanwhile the alphabet can be introduced to him as a distinct art. The handwriting of young people today is deplorable and disgusting. I say this from personal experience because my handwriting is so bad that I am ashamed to write to anyone and I always regret my crude, untrained hand. Raw cereals are not eaten; similarly, one writing a raw hand is deemed a savage. I have often felt that there should be a boycott of articles written by such a man.

If we take this first and necessary step in primary education, we shall be saved much expenditure and also add to the life-span of the children by hastening their development.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan (Education Supplement), Vol. I, No 7, 26-10-1924

220. MESSAGE TO TRANSVAAL INDIANS[1]

October 20, 1924

Hope that Indians of Transvaal as other parts of Union will see struggle through for honourable existence in South Africa at the cost of suffering, no matter how great.

From a microfilm: S.N. 9996

221. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

October 20, 1924

MY DEAREST CHARLIE,

I have written to Boro Dada today. I have missed you every moment today. Oh, your love!

The article is being posted today. It is too long to be wired.

The caretaker's son is better today. Sarojini has a relapse. Lilamani's fever persists. Kristodas is quite all right. Poor Manilal[2]! He must return to South Africa as early as possible. It is therefore quite likely he might have to leave without meeting you. He is a picture of health. Kallenbach[3] very nearly came with him.

With deepest love,

Yours,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 2614

[1] In response to a letter from Ismail Ahmed, who was proceeding to the Transvaal from Surat

[2] Gandhiji's second son

[3] Gandhiji's co-worker in South Africa

222. TELEGRAM TO CONGRESS SECRETARY, PILIBHIT[1]

[On or after *October 20, 1924*]

SEND FULL PARTICULARS CASE.

GANDHI

Read the telegram to Mahomed Ali over the phone and tell him to wire to the Mussalmans and then telegraph to the Secretary Mahomed Ali's reply. Our reply to the telegram will depend on what Mahomed Ali says. Did you suggest send a wire to the Mussalmans?[2]

From a microfilm: S.N. 10491

223. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU[3]

[On or after *October 20, 1924*]

IF YOU CAN GO NAGPUR WHILE DR. MAHMUD THERE I THINK IT WOULD DO. HAVE WIRED DAS AGREEING POSTPONEMENT.

Please inquire who received this telegram and why it was not shown to me.[4]

From a microfilm: S.N. 10429

[1] In reply to the addressee's telegram received on October 20, which read:" Hindus compromising Mussalmans wavering cases half finished. Send two leaders immediately."

[2] This is written in Gujarati on the telegram received from the addressee.

[3] In reply to his telegram of October 20, which read:" Detained owing local Hindu-Muslim negotiations. Moonje with Jawahar await your instructions before leaving. Jawahar better but unable travel. I can leave tonight if wanted. Have wired Moonje. Das wires asking 31st for Delhi meeting. Wire instructions."

[4] This is written on the telegram received from Motilal Nehru.

224. TELEGRAM TO DR. B. S. MUNJE[1]

[On or after *October 21, 1924*]

ASKED SANTANAM[2] PROCEED THERE IMMEDIATELY BEFORE DIWALI.

From a microfilm: S.N. 10489a

225. TELEGRAM TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

[On or after *October 21, 1924*]

NAGPUR MUSSALMANS SAY WITHOUT YOUR PRESENCE QUESTION . . .[3] THEY REQUIRE YOUR PRESENCE WITH MOTILAL BEFORE 28TH. WILL YOU PLEASE PROCEED NAGPUR BEFORE 28TH AND INFORM MOTI LALJI ACCORDINGLY.

From a microfilm: S.N. 10489a

226. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU

[On or after *October 21, 1924*]

WIRED YOU ASKING YOU TAKE AZAD WITH YOU AND REACH BEFORE DIWALI. AM WIRING AZAD. WILL YOU ALSO WIRE ASKING HIM ACCOMPANY YOU AND FIXING DATE.

From a microfilm: S.N. 10489a

[1] This and the two succeeding telegrams have been written by Gandhiji on the telegram received from Dr. Munje on October 21, which read:" Yesterday's wire cancelled. Dr. Mahmud staying. Conversing with Mussalmans. They wired you yesterday send Abul Kalam Azad. I wired Motilalji come with him before Diwali music again causes disturbances."

[2] K. Santanam; author, journalist and statesman

[3] The source is illegible here.

227. TELEGRAM TO CONGRESS SECRETARY,, PILIBHIT[1]

[On or after *October 21, 1924*]

HAVE ASKED HINDU MUSSALMAN LEADERS BAREILLY PROCEED THERE.

From a microfilm: S.N. 10491

228. TELEGRAM TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA[2]

[On or after *October 21, 1924*]

KHILAFAT SECRETARY NELLORE FEARS DISTURBANCES NELLORE DURING DIWALI. IF YOU ARE WELL PLEASE PROCEED WITH SOME MOHAMMEDAN OR DEPUTE SOMEONE.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 10491

229. DISCUSSION WITH G. RAMACHANDRAN[3]

[*Tuesday and Wednesday, October 21* and *22, 1924*][4]

Among those who visited Dilkhush, during the weeks of penance and prayer, there was a young student from Shantiniketan named Ramachandran. He is one of the pupils of Mr. Andrews and he had no difficulty in persuading his teacher to permit him to stay at Delhi for some time. On the evening when Mr. Andrews left Delhi, he took Ramachandran upstairs and said to Gandhiji," I have not even introduced

[1] In reply to the addressee's telegram received on October 21 which read:" Brickbat at Tazia excited fight. Four Mohammedans shot injured. Four Hindus shot injured. Several wounded. Few temples and Arya Samaj mandir alleged desecrated. Feelings high. Thirty-six Hindus under trial. Three cases 307/338 Penal Code."

[2] This has been written on the back of the telegram received from the Congress Secretary, Pilibhit; *vide* footnote to preceding item.

[3] This appeared in two instalments in *Young India*, 13-11-1924 and 26-11-1924, under the title," A Morning with Gandhiji", over the signature of Mahadev Desai.

[4] In *Navajivan*, 2-11-1924, Mahadev Desai writing under the date-line" Delhi, Wednesday, October 29, 1924" referred to the departure of Ramachandran" in the last week". The discussion, therefore, appears to have taken place on these dates.

Ramachandran as yet to you. But he has been here all the while with us helping us. He wants to ask you some questions and I shall be so glad if you could have a talk with him before he leaves tomorrow to go back to Shantiniketan." The" tomorrow" was a silent Monday, and so Ramachandran stayed a day more. On Tuesday morning he had to take his train for Calcutta. Exactly at half past five, after the morning prayer, he was summoned. He had set down his questions—the doubts and difficulties that tormented him. Yet he could not altogether trust himself at first to be able to ask all that he wanted to. But ultimately he mustered sufficient courage, and he found to his utter surprise that in a moment Bapu's gentle inquiries about him, his place, his studies, had left no room for hesitation or nervousness. It is impossible to reproduce all the conversation that Ramachandran was privileged to have that morning with Gandhiji. I call but present the barest summary.

[RAMACNANDRAN:] How is it that many intelligent and eminent men, who love and admire you, hold that you consciously or unconsciously have ruled out of the scheme of national regeneration all considerations of Art?

[GANDHIJI:] I am sorry that in this matter I have been generally misunderstood. There are two aspects of things—the outward and the inward. It is purely a matter of emphasis with me. The outward has no meaning except in so far as it helps the inward. All true Art is thus the expression of the soul. The outward forms have value only in so far as they are the expression of the inner spirit of man.

[R:] (Hesitatingly.) The great artists themselves have declared, that Art is the translation of the urge and unrest in the soul of the artist into words, colours, shapes, etc.

Yes, Art of that nature has the greatest possible appeal for me. But I know that many call themselves as artists, and are recognized as such, and yet in their works there is absolutely no trace of the soul's upward urge and unrest.

[R:] Have you any Instance in mind?

Yes, take Oscar Wilde. I can speak of him, as I was in England at the time that he was being much discussed and talked about.

[R:] I have been told that Oscar Wilde was one of the greatest literary artists of modern times.

Yes, that is just my trouble. Wilde sat the highest Art simply in outward forms and therefore succeeded in beautifying immorality. All true Art must help the soul to realize its inner self. In my own case, I find that I can do entirely without external forms in my soul's realization. I can claim, therefore, that there is truly sufficient Art in

my life, though you might not see what you call works of Art about me. My room may have blank walls; and I may even dispense with the roof, so that I may gaze out upon the starry heavens overhead that stretch in an unending expanse of beauty. What conscious Art of man can give me the panoramic scenes that open out before me, when I look up to the sky above with all its shining stars? This, however, does not mean that I refuse to accept the value of productions of Art, generally accepted as such, but only that I personally feel how inadequate these are compared with the eternal symbols of beauty in Nature. These productions of man's Art have their value only so far as they help the soul onward towards self-realization.

[R:] But the artists claim to see and to find Truth through outward beauty. Is it possible to see and find Truth in that way?

I would reverse the order. I see and find Beauty in Truth or through Truth. All Truths, not merely true ideas, but truthful faces, truthful pictures, or songs, are highly beautiful. People generally fail to see Beauty in Truth, the ordinary man runs away from it and becomes blind to the beauty in it. Whenever men begin to see Beauty in Truth, then true Art will arise.

[R:] But cannot Beauty be separated from Truth, and Truth from Beauty?

I should want to know exactly what is Beauty. If it is what people generally understand by that word, then they are wide apart. Is a woman with fair features necessarily beautiful?

[R :] Yes.

Even if she may be of an ugly character?

[R:] But her face in that case cannot be beautiful. It will always be the index of the soul within. The true artist with the genius of perception will produce the right expression.

But here you are begging the whole question. You now admit that mere outward form may not make a thing beautiful. To a true artist only that face is beautiful which, quite apart from exterior, shines with the Truth within the soul. There is then, as I have said, no Beauty apart from Truth. On the other hand, Truth may manifest itself in forms which may not be outwardly beautiful at all. Socrates, we are told, was the most truthful man of his time and yet his features are said to have been the ugliest in Greece. To my mind he was beautiful, because all his life was a striving after Truth, and you may remember that his outward form did not prevent Phidias from appreciating the

beauty of Truth in him, though as an artist he was accustomed to see Beauty in outward forms also!

[R:] But, Bapuji, the most beautiful things have often been created by men whose own lives were not beautiful.

That only means that Truth and untruth often co-exist; good and evil are often found together. In an artist also not seldom the right perception of things and the wrong co-exist. Truly beautiful creations come when right perception is at work. If these moments are rare in life, they are also rare in Art.

[R:] If only truthful or good things can be beautiful, how can things without a moral quality be beautiful? . . . Is there truth, Bapuji, in things that are neither moral nor immoral in themselves? For instance, is there truth in a sunset or a crescent moon that shines amid the stars at night?

Indeed these beauties are truthful, inasmuch as they make me think of the Creator at the back of them. How else could these be beautiful, but for the Truth that is in the centre of creation? When I admire the wonder of a sunset or the beauty of the moon, my soul expands in worship of the Creator. I try to see Him and His mercies in all these creations. But even the sunsets and sunrises would be mere hindrances, if they did not help me to think of Him. Anything which is a hindrance to the flight of the soul, is a delusion and a snare; even, like the body, which often does hinder you in the path of salvation.

[R:] I am grateful to hear your views on Art, and l understand and accept them. Would it not be well for you to set them down for the benefit of the younger generation in order to guide them aright?

That I could never dream of doing, for the simple reason that it would be an impertinence on my part to hold forth on Art. I am not an art student, though these are my fundamental convictions. I do not speak or write about it, because I am conscious of my own limitations. That consciousness is my only strength. Whatever I might have been able to do in my life has proceeded more than anything else out of the realisation of my own limitations. My functions are different from the artist's and I should not go out of my way to assume his position.

[R:] Are you against all machinery, Bapuji?

How can I be when I know that even this body is a most delicate piece of machinery? The spinning-wheel itself is amachine; a little tooth-pick is a machine. What I object to, is the *craze* for machinery, not machinery as such. The craze is for what they call labour-saving

machinery. Men go on" saving labour" till thousands are without work and thrown on the open streets to die of starvation. I want to save time and labour, not for a fraction of mankind, but for all. I want the concentration of wealth, not in the hands of a few, but in the hands of all. Today machinery merely helps a few to ride on the backs of millions. The impetus behind it all is not the philanthropy to save labour, but greed. It is against this constitution of things that I am fighting with all my might.

[R:] Then Bapuji, you are fighting not against machinery as such, but against its abuses which are so much in evidence today?

I would unhesitatingly say" yes"; but I would add that scientific truths and discoveries should first of all cease to be the mere instruments of greed. Then labourers will not be over-worked and machinery instead of becoming a hindrance will be a help. I am aiming, not at eradication of all machinery, but limitations.

[R:] When logically argued out, that would seem to imply that all complicated power-driven machinery should go.

It might have to go, but I must make one thing clear. The supreme consideration is man. The machine should not tend to make atrophied the limbs of man. For instance, I would make intelligent exceptions. Take the case of the Singer Sewing Machine. It is one of the few useful things ever invented, and there is a romance about the device itself. Singer saw his wife labouring over the tedious process of sewing and seaming with her own hands, and simply out of his love for her, he devised the sewing machine, in order to save her from unnecessary labour. He, however, saved not only her labour but also the labour of everyone who could purchase a sewing machine.

[R:] But, in that case, there would have to be a factory for making these Singer Sewing Machines, and it would have to contain power-driven machinery of ordinary type.

Yes. But I am socialist enough to say that such factories should be nationalized, or State-controlled. They ought only to be working under the most attractive and ideal conditions, not for profit, but for the benefit of humanity, love taking the place of greed as the motive. It is an alteration in the conditions of labour that I want. This mad rush for wealth must cease, and the labourer must be assured, not only of a living wage, but a daily task that is not a mere drudgery. The

machine will, under these conditions, be as much a help to the man working it as to the State, or the man who owns it. The present mad rush will cease, and the labourer will work (as I have said) under attractive and ideal conditions. This is but one of the exceptions I have in mind. The sewing machine had love at its back. The individual is the one supreme consideration. The saving of labour of the individual should be the object, and honest humanitarian considerations, and not greed, the motive. Thus, for instance, I would welcome any day a machine to straighten crooked spindles. Not that blacksmiths will cease to make spindles; they will continue to provide the spindles; but when the spindle gets wrong, every spinner will have a machine of his own to get it straight. Therefore, replace greed by love and everything will come right.

Ramachandran was evidently not satisfied with this. He had understood Gandhiji to be against all machinery and he had felt that this was right too. So he wanted to go to the root of the matter. But it was getting late and he had many more questions to ask.

Don't mind losing your train. I am prepared to satisfy you. You may ask any questions you like this morning, and it won't tire me now in the least.

The young friend had by no means exhausted his list of questions. The assurance from Gandhiji that he would give him full liberty that morning put him entirely at ease and gathering courage once more he proceeded with the next question which dealt with the institution of marriage.

[R:] The third question that I would like to ask you is whether you are against the institution of marriage.

I shall have to answer this question at some length. The aim of human life *is moksha.* As a Hindu, I believe that *moksha* is freedom from birth, by breaking the bonds of the flesh, by becoming one with God. Now marriage is a hindrance in the attainment of this supreme object, inasmuch as it only tightens the bonds of flesh. Celibacy is a great help, inasmuch as it enables one to lead a life of full surrender to God. What is the object generally understood of marriage, except a repetition of one's own kind? And why need you advocate marriage? It propagates itself. It requires no agency to promote its growth.

[R:] But must you advocate celibacy and preach it to one and all?

Yes. Then you fear there will be an end of creation? No. The extreme logical result would be, not extinction of the human species,

but the transference of it to a higher plane.

[R:] But may not an artist or a poet or a great genius leave a legacy of his genius to posterity through his own children?

Certainly not. He will have more disciples than he can ever have children; and through those disciples all his gifts to the world will be handed down in a way that nothing else can do it. It will be the soul's marriage with the spirit; the progeny being the disciple—a sort of divine procreation. No! You must leave marriage to take care of itself. Repetition and not growth would be the result; for lust has come to play the most important part in marriage.

[R:] Mr. Andrews does not like your emphasis on celibacy.

Yes, I know that is the legacy of Protestantism. Protestantism did many good things, but one of its few evils was that it ridiculed celibacy.

[R:] That was because it had to fight the deep abuses in which the clergy of the age had sunk.

But all that was not due to any inherent evil of celibacy. It is celibacy that has kept Catholicism green up to the present day.

Ramachandran's last question was about the much discussed"Spinning Franchise". Ramachandran assured Gandhiji, at the outset, that he was a spinner, but had to confess that he, with three friends at Shantiniketan, only began spinning after they had heard of the fast. He also affirmed that he believed in universal spinning. But he could not understand how the Congress could compel its members to spin. Persuasion and not compulsion should be the method.

I see you go even farther than Mr. Andrews. He would not have the Congress to compel its members; but he would fain become a member of a voluntary spinning association, with rules about spinning. You object to any such association whatsoever?

Ramachandran sat silent.

Well, then I ask you, has the Congress any right to say that its members shall not drink? Will that be a restriction of the freedom of the individual too? If the Congress exercised the right of enjoining abstinence from drinking, there would be no objection. Why? Because the evils of drink are obvious. Well, I say that in India today, where millions are on the brink of starvation and plunged in utter misery, it is perhaps a much worse evil to import foreign-cloth. Think of the starving millions of Orissa. When I went there, I saw the famine-stricken. Thanks to a kind superintendent, who was in charge of an

industrial home, I saw also their children, bright, healthy and merry, working away at their carpets, baskets, etc. There was no spinning, because these other things were much in vogue at the time. But on their faces there was the lustre of joyful work. But when I came to the famine-stricken, what did I see? They were merely skin and bone, only waiting to die. They were then in that condition, because they would under no circumstances work. Even though you had threatened to shoot them, if they refused to work, I am sure they would have preferred to be shot, rather than do any honest work. This aversion from work is a greater evil than drink itself. You can take some work out of a drunkard. A drunkard retains something of a heart! He has intelligence. These starved men, refusing to work, were like mere animals. Now, how can we solve the problem of getting work out of people like this? I see no way except that of universalizing spinning. Every yard of foreign-cloth brought into India is one bit of bread snatched out of the mouths of the starving poor. If you could visualise, as I can, the supreme need of the hour which is to give India's starving millions a chance to earn their bread with joy and gladness, you would not object to the Spinning Franchise. I take the Congress to be a body of men and women who accept the paramount necessity of spinning. Why should it not ensure the integrity of membership in the body by making it compulsory for every member to spin? And you talk of persuasion. What can be better persuasion than that every member of the Congress spins regularly a certain quantity of yarn every month? How would it be honest for the Congress members to ask people to spin, when they do not spin themselves?

[R:] But how can you exclude people, who do not spin, from the Congress? They may be doing valuable service to the nation in other ways.

Why not? What is the reason for the property franchise? Why is it necessary for a man to pay four annas to be a member? And why is age considered a necessary qualification? Would the eight-year-old violinist prodigy of Italy have the franchise? John Stuart Mill, however clever he may have been, when he was seven years old, with his knowledge of Greek and Latin, had no franchise at that age. Why were these prodigies excluded? Some men will have to be excluded under any franchise. No; today many will not accept my position, but I have faith that the day will come—it may be after my death—when men will say that after all what Gandhi said was right.

It was now seven o'clock and Ramachandran had missed his train. But he had gained what was infinitely more precious. The next morning, before starting, he was fortunate enough to get another talk—this time a brief one, but one that at last converted him.

[R:] So, Bapuji, Truth is the main thing; Beauty and Truth are not separate aspects of the same thing.

Truth is the first thing to be sought for, and Beauty and Goodness will then be added unto you. Jesus was, to my mind, a supreme artist, because he saw and expressed Truth; and so was Mohammed, the Koran being the most perfect composition in all Arabic literature—at any rate—that is what scholars say. It is because both of them strove first for Truth, that the grace of expression naturally came in; and yet neither Jesus nor Mohammed wrote on Art. That is the Truth and Beauty I crave for, live for, and would die for.

Ramachandran reverted to his difficulties as to Gandhiji's logical position with regard to machinery.

[R:] If you make an exception of the Singer Sewing Machine and your spindle, where would these exceptions end?

Just where they cease to help the individual and encroach upon his individuality. The machine should not be allowed to cripple the limbs of man.

[R:] But I was not thinking just now of the practical side, Bapuji. Ideally would you not rule out all machinery? When you except the sewing machine, you will have to make exceptions of the bicycle, the motor car, etc.?

No, I don't, because they do not satisfy any of the primary wants of man; for it is not the primary need of man to traverse distances with the rapidity of a motor car. The needle, on the contrary, happens to be an essential thing in life—a primary need. Ideally, however, I would rule out all machinery, even as I would reject this very body, which is not helpful to salvation, and seek the absolute liberation of the soul. From that point of view, I would reject all machinery, but machines will remain because, like the body, they are inevitable. The body itself, as I told you, is the purest piece of mechanism; but if it is a hindrance to the highest flights of the soul, it has to be rejected!

[R:] Why is it a necessary evil? May not after all some artists be able to see Truth in and through Beauty?

Some may, but here too, just as elsewhere, I must think in terms of the millions. And to the millions we cannot give that training to acquire a perception of Beauty, in such a way as to see Truth in it. Show them Truth first, and they will see Beauty afterwards. Orissa haunts me in my waking hours and in my dreams. Whatever can be useful to those starving millions is beautiful to my mind. Let us give today first the vital things of life and all the graces and ornaments of life will follow.

Young India, 13-11-1924 and 20-11-1924

230. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

[*October 22, 1924*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have been remiss in writing to you, knowing that Mahadev or Ramdas have been writing. I was thinking of doing so. I am keeping well. I take as much as 3_ seers of milk. But I think I shall have to reduce the quantity. I do a little walking also. I shall have to stay here till the 31st at any rate. I shall then, I think, have to go to Kohat. It depends on permission from the Viceroy. I hope you are keeping quite well. Do your bowels work regularly? Manilal has arrived from South Africa.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 458. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

231. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

Aso Vad 9 [*October 22, 1924*][2]

BHAISHRI DAHYABHAI,

I have your letter. I have forgotten your leaflet. Please send me another copy. This is my message:

Stick to truth alone. We should act non-violently in everything we do. For the sake of the country and for our own sake, we should ply the charkha, wear khadi; Hindus and Muslims should live amicably, Hindus should give up untouchability, considering the

[1] From the postmark
[2] *ibid*

untouchables to be our brothers; drunkards should give up drinking, addicts should give up their bad habits. This is the duty of us all, and if we do it, we will get swaraj very soon. I am aware of what is being published in *Navajivan* and *Young India*. I believe there is nothing wrong in it. Those experiences are not extraordinary, and are useful to all. They teach the lesson of ahimsa and *tapas*, which everyone should learn. It no doubt involves my praise to some extent, but that is inevitable and so long as I have not resumed editorial responsibility, it may be condoned. However, your viewpoint also deserves to be considered and kept in mind. I should not allow myself to be affected by all that praise.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAI DAHYABHAI
TALUKA SAMITI
DHOLKA
Via AHMEDABAD

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2690. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

232. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Aso Vad 9 [*October 22, 1924*][1]

I am sorry to read about Chi. Taramati's bad luck[2]. And I am pained by the thought that she must have felt very miserable, and that Anand must have been deeply affected. I have become so indifferent about birth and death that it hardly affects me. The more I think, the more I see that they are forms of the same thing. Yesterday I came suddenly on a sentence:"Why do you grieve over death, O man? The soul will be in a better state after death. Do you not see that it never dies?" The intellect accepts all this, but many a time the heart does not. And that is the difficulty. True strength is that of the heart. The intellect seems to be insignificant. If the intellect says,"I love you", but the heart refuses to do so, what good is the intellect's saying that it does?

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 79

[1] As given in the source
[2] Delivery of a still-born child

233. LETTER TO N. M. KHARE

Aso Vad 9 [*October 22, 1924*][1]

BHAI PANDITJI,

I have your nice letter. It is not easy to become a *bhakta*. Tulsidas described himself as a rogue; while Surdas called himself a sinner and a sick man. What are we before them? It would he enough if we are alert and careful. Your letter does show that you are so. A man who keeps alert and careful and does not deceive himself, is bound to progress, for he is ever aware of his errors and tries to avoid them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 254. Courtesy: Lakshmibai Khare

234. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[2]

[On or after *October 22, 1924*]

POSTING YOU THOUSAND WITH PARTICULARS.

From a photostat: S.N. 10322

235. THE LAW OF LOVE

A friend tells me that whilst I am wooing the Swarajists, the Liberals and others, I seem to be forsaking the No-changers and that they are bewildered at the change I am undergoing. The friend asks me to state my position from the No-changers' standpoint and to explain the seeming transformation in my attitude. He says I must clearly define the benign aspect of non-co-operation or satyagraha that I adumbrated at the Excelsior Theatre meeting[3] in Bombay.

In the first instance, I would clear the ground by saying that my own views remain unchanged. I swear by non-violent non-co-opera-

[1] From the postmark

[2] In reply to his telegram received on October 22, which read:"Recommend monthly contribution one thousand for Vykom from earmarked satyagraha fund. Urgent necessity."

[3] *Vide*"Speech at Excelsior Theatre, Bombay", 31-8-1924.

tion and all the boycotts that follow from it. But I see as clearly as daylight (this I did not see at Juhu) that the country as a whole has not understood non-violence and therefore has not understood the non-co-operation that was presented to it. I therefore see equally clearly that the keeping up of non-co-operation without its active principle, non-violence, must do harm to the country. It has done much harm already, in that it has divided the country into opposing parties. In such circumstances, non-co-operation as a national programme must for the time being be suspended. The root of non-co-operation is in satyagraha, which is love. The law of love—call it attraction, affinity, cohesion, if you like—governs the world. Life persists in the face of death. The universe continues in spite of destruction incessantly going on. Truth triumphs over untruth. Love conquers hate. God eternally triumphs over Satan.

The non-co-operation that I conceived was to be a binding force. The split in the Congress ranks, and still more clearly the Hindu-Muslim dissensions, show that our non-co-operation has proved a dissolving element. I must therefore endeavour to show its benignant aspect by advising suspension, and by total surrender on my part. In so doing I do not need to woo the No-changers. They claim to know non-violence and its implications. They pin their faith on the constructive programme to the exclusion of everything else. I abate not a jot or tittle from that programme. On the contrary, every step I am taking is calculated to give strength to it. The Hindu-Muslim question is of paramount importance. We want the weight of the whole country's opinion to be brought to bear upon it. We must stoop to conquer. Retaining every bit of non-co-operation in our own persons, we must make the path of those who do not believe in it smooth for helping us and helping the country in the constructive effort. The past four years have shown us the way. We have gained much, but we have lost also much. We must conserve the gains and regain the lost ground. The mass awakening is the greatest gain. We must hold to it. The generating of mutual strife is the greatest loss. We must repair it quickly. One cannot do so unless we suspend the terrible aspect of non-co-operation. The No-changers, duty, if they are anything worth, is self-effacement, silent work. They must not fight for power or office or name. They must work silently, result or no result. They must live on the sufferance of their fellow-workers, the Swarajists and the Liberals, if they will rejoin the Congress.

The best way to show how to do it, is to do it myself. I am therefore engaged in surrendering to the utmost of my capacity to the Swarajists as well as the Liberals. I have nothing to surrender to the No-changers; for I am supposed to have no differences of opinion with them.

I must cease to be a party man and invite No-changers to do likewise.

We must not hinder the Swarajists in their very difficult task. Wherever No-changers cannot have a majority without a bitter struggle, they must gladly and willingly and gracefully yield to the Swarajists. If they have power or office, it must be by virtue of service, not by manipulation of the vote. The vote is there, no doubt. But it must come, if it is to come, without the asking. Is it not easy enough to see that service requires no power, no office, no prestige.? I would like every one of us to be a mere servant of the nation. I would like No-changers so to behave as to be wanted by Swarajists, Liberals and all others. But whether they do so or not, I must act up to my faith. God weighed me at the last All-India Congress Committee and found me wanting. My pride told me that I must yet fight the Swarajists. But the unquenchable spirit of service in me tells me that I must fight neither the Swarajists, nor the Liberals, nor the Englishmen. I must prove to everyone that I am what I profess to be—their friend and servant. My creed is service of God and therefore of humanity. I can neither serve God nor humanity, if as an Indian I do not serve India, and as a Hindu I do not serve the Indian Mussalmans. Voluntary service means pure love. I must strive my utmost, during the coming year of grace, to express in every little act of mine whatever love I am capable of.

Young India, 23-10-1924

236. TELEGRAM TO ABUL KALAM AZAD[1]

[On or after *October 23, 1924*]

M. A. K.
CALCUTTA

MAHOMED UNABLE LEAVE. GET DR. MAHMUD.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 10489

237. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

October 24, 1924

P. S. V.
VICEREGAL CAMP

MAY I HAVE REPLY BY WIRE MY LETTER DATED 16TH.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15912

238. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

October 25, 1924[2]

MY DEAREST CHARLIE,

Your loving messages continue to come daily. Mine you must take for granted. I am quite well. The Youngs are by me as I am writing this. I am to stop in this bungalow up to even the first few days of November if necessary. Rughbir Singh has been very kind.

With love,

Yours,
MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 2620

[1] This was sent on receipt of Sunder Lal's telegram of October 23, from Jubbalpur which read:"Trying settlement. Wire Maulana Abul Kalam come direct immediately else send Maulana Mahomed Ali or some equally prominent Mohammedan. Urgent Wire reply."

[2] From the postmark; the source has"1925".

239. HINDUS AND MUSLIMS

The Conference for unity was only the starting point of unity. Its resolutions were inadequate; those attending it were imperfect; hence the beginning too has been deficient. Nevertheless, the Conference was of great importance. It will strike deep roots; it is our duty to protect and water the tender plant it has set up.

We shall find on deeper reflection that the solution to this difficult question lies in one thing alone. One should never take the law into one's own hands. It is uncivilized to take possession of the house across the street because I believe it is mine. I should prove my claim before the *pancha* or the law-court and respect the verdict given by one or the other. Where this rule is not followed, the people perish. No comment is necessary at all where both parties abide by this golden rule. But even where one party is bent on violence, it is enough if the other party abides by this rule. It is certain that the latter will not come to harm in the end. Let us suppose, a third person takes possession of my house. In a well-organized society, the *pancha* would certainly have it restored to me. In a less organized society, law-courts would do this work. Public opinion is the sanction behind the *pancha,* whereas prisons and guns are the sanctions behind the courts. In either form of organization the person who does not resort to violence can regain his possession.

Disputes between us will undoubtedly continue so long as we do not abide by this inescapable rule; and it is an obvious fact that we shall never be able to win swaraj by peaceful means so long as such disputes continue. It may be that neither Hindus nor Muslims are enamoured of swaraj and both prefer domestic disputes to swaraj. No arguments would appeal to such people. But for those who desire swaraj there is no alternative to the above rule. We, who find it difficult to live without swaraj will not resort to the uncivilized rule of violence.

However, some occasions arise when, despite one's firm resolution to appeal to the *pancha* or the law-court, one has willingly or unwillingly to participate in acts of violence, or to run away or to face death peacefully. What should I do if I am attacked by someone as I am passing before a mosque singing devotional songs? What should I do if someone starts placing a tombstone in my own premises or what should a poor Muslim do if attacked by a Hindu while killing

a cow inside his own house? In all these three instances there is no time to wait for the law to take its course. What then should those individuals do?

If they can peacefully face death, there is no better way out. Even the *pancha is* an inferior alternative. But not many can make such a sacrifice. Should one then run away? That is a sign of cowardice. So, ordinarily, there remains only one way out. Everyone in such a situation finds the means of self-defence by exchanging blows. Under a well-organized government each individual does have, and should have this right.

However, such occasions arise only rarely. The chances of a good person being put to such a test are one in a hundred. The common experience is that God does not put to test the person who remains peaceful. On impartial consideration we shall find that in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, both the parties are to a greater or less extent responsible for the resulting violence. In all such instances, even one party can, if it wishes to, remain free from blame. And here, the one who remains blameless is the victor.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-10-1924

240. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

DELHI,
October 26, 1924

RESPECTED ANASUYABEHN,

I am always thinking about you. At present I am in a mental state where I think constantly of those whom I consider pure. May the New Year be fruitful to you, to Bhai[4], to Saralabehn[5], to the children and to Nimubehn in finding what we all seek through life's journey.

Blessings from

BAPU

ANASUYABEHN
SEVASHRAM
MIRZAPUR
AHMEDABAD

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 11543

241. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY[1]

October 27, 1924

P. S. .V

VICEREGAL CAMP

THANKS WIRE. IT IS MY INTENTION LEAVE DELHI WITH COLLEAGUES FIRST NOVEMBER OR AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE THEREAFTER. STAY RAWALPINDI TWO OR THREE DAYS AND THEN PROCEED KOHAT STAYING THERE THREE OR FOUR DAYS.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15912

242. LETTER TO LAJPAT RAI

October 27/28, 1924[2]

DEAR LALAJI,

You have probably read *Milap* of 24th instant. It contains a statement by a girl implicating the Ali Brothers. I showed it to Maulana Mahomed Ali. Here is a copy of his statement. Could you please see the editor of the paper and ask him if he has any further evidence to prove the allegations in the statement? In my opinion he should have sent a copy of the statement to the Maulana before publishing it. What I think should now be done is for the editor to call upon the parties to substantiate the allegations or withdraw them to the extent that is necessary. If they would let us investigate the statement as arbitrators we should take up the matter. Even if the girl's statement is substantially correct, apart from the allegations against the Ali Brothers and others, it is a case we should probe if we are given the facilities. If you agree with me and if the editor of *Milap* would help us, I would consult the other members of the Board.

[1] In reply to the addressee's telegram of October 26, which read."You do not state in your letter dated October 16, when you propose to visit Kohat. Kindly send your reply by telegram."

[2] *Vide*"Letter to Lajpat Rai", 28-10-1924.

If I get the permission I have asked for self and colleagues to proceed to Kohat, I would like to leave here about the Ist of November. Can you come? If your health will not permit, whom do you recommend? I would not like you to come if it endangers your health at all. My better nature tells me not to ask you [but] seeing that you are at [present] reported to be better, I feel I must put the thing before you. I contemplate two to three days' stay at Rawalpindi and as many in Kohat.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15937

243. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Diwali [*October 27, 1924*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your letter. I have not received Kallenbach's cable. What you say in this letter is the same that you wrote in your previous one. I am not yet ready to send you the notes you want for *Y.I*. A great deal of my time is spent in the care of my body. Taking food five times means 2_ hours, sleeping 1 hour, massage 1 hour, as many as 2 hours for walking, bath _ hour. Thus seven hours of the day are spent on this routine. To this add the taboo that no work should be done at night. This convention I am breaking for the first time today. I stay in bed right up to seven in the morning. Now tell me how many hours remain for work? Remember that, after the 21 days' fast, my condition is like that of a child. I have to let myself be brought up as a child is. However I like fasting. It would have been difficult to live without it.

Blessings from

BAPU

DEVDAS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2127

[1] From the postmark

244. TELEGRAM TO ABDUL BARI[1]

[On or after *October 27, 1924*]

MAULANA ABDUL BARI SAHIB
FIRANGI MAHAL
LUCKNOW

YOUR WIRE. SOME RELIABLE WITNESSES SHOULD BE SENT HERE.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 10492

245. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY[2]

[*October 28, 1924*]

THANKS WIRE. WHILST I BOW TO HIS EXCELLENCY'S DECISION I VENTURE TO STATE THAT IT WAS NOT MY INTENTION TO ENCOURAGE HINDU REFUGEES AT RAWALPINDI TO RETURN KOHAT UNLESS KOHAT MUSSALMANS WERE WILLING AND EAGER TO RECEIVE THEM WITH OPEN ARMS. HAD I BEEN PERMITTED TO PROCEED KOHAT IT WAS MY INTENTION TO USE WITH ASSISTANCE OF MUSSALMAN FRIENDS THE FRIENDLY RELATIONS WHICH I BELIEVE I ENJOY WITH MUSSALMANS TO BRING ABOUT AMICABLE SETTLEMENT. I THOUGHT AND STILL THINK THAT HEART UNITY BETWEEN TWO COMMUNITIES CAN BE BETTER BROUGHT ABOUT BY NON-OFFICIALS THEN BY OFFICIALS. LATTER CAN UNDOUBTEDLY ASSIST IN MANY SILENT UNOFFICIAL WAYS BUT MY INVARIABLE EXPERIENCE SHOWS THAT OFFICIALS AS OFFICIALS CAN ONLY BRING ABOUT ARMED NEUTRALITY BUT CANNOT RESTORE

[1] In reply to his telegram of October 27, which read:"Your letter. Whether *nimaz arthi* simultaneous or one after other as alleged by Hindus and Mussalmans respectively requires evidence. Would you take it if so how."

[2] This was sent in reply to the addressee's telegram of October 28, stating that in Lord Reading's opinion Gandhiji's visit to Kohat would be"most unwise and undesirable"

FRIENDSHIP. AS PUBLIC HAVE BEEN LED BY ME TO BELIEVE THAT MY VISIT TO KOHAT WAS IMPENDING I PROPOSE TO PUBLISH THIS CORRESPONDENCE UNLESS HIS EXCELLENCY DESIRES OTHERWISE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15912; also *Young India,* 31-10-1924

246. LETTER TO LAJPAT RAI

Continuation[1]

October 28, 1924

DEAR LALAJI,

Since writing the first letter, I have heard from the P.S.V. saying that in the present state of things in Kohat my visit cannot be countenanced. I hope soon to publish the whole of the correspondence. Now what am I to do? I suppose, I am of no use in Rawalpindi, I can bring no comfort to the poor refugees. The question now before me is whether I should go to the Punjab now or later regarding the Hindu-Muslim question. This you alone shall decide.

What a situation in Bengal? I wonder whether the Swaraj Council meeting is coming off here on the 30th. I have as yet heard nothing from Motilalji. Mr. Das went to Calcutta yesterday.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15938

247. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Kartik Sud I [*October 29, 1924*][2]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. My blessings are with you for ever. I do not wish you happiness, but I wish you the strength to regard unhappiness as happiness. Who knows what should be regarded as happiness? May

[1] *Vide"*Letter to Lajpat Rai", October 27/28, 1924.

[2] From the postmark. The source, however, has"Kartik Sud 2" which would correspond to October 30.

not seeming unhappiness be happiness in reality? In fact, there is a verse[1] in Sanskrit which says: "What we consider as adversity is not adversity in reality, nor our seeming happiness real happiness; adversity consists in forgetting God and remembering Him is happiness." May this happiness be yours. You must not give up the idea of going to Hajira. Moreover, if, you feel constipated there, you should think of going only to Hajira. I shall make arrangements when you write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

If I write Ramdas's address in English I would write "Esqr." after his name. But you will see that today I have omitted "Shrimati"

Nireekshan is the correct word, not *nirikshan.*

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 459. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

248. MESSAGE TO U.P. POLITICAL CONFERENCE, GORAKHPUR[2]

DELHI,
October 30, 1924

The policy that the Government has lately adopted in Bengal has distressed all. The distress is natural. It is not, however, owing to the lawlessness of policy; it is owing to our inability to give it a prompt reply. I hope and I want that we shall not lose patience at this critical juncture. I firmly hold that by becoming angry or impatient we shall not find the right remedy. Action can only be answered with action. And I dare say that we can answer the Government's policy of violence only by a policy of non-violence; we can answer its violent action only by non-violent action. If this is true we have to consider what non-violent action we can undertake. On a little reflection we see that the biggest obstacle in the way of any practical work that we can do is the schism between Hindus and Muslims. The obstacle to our bringing the common people together is our indifference to the

[1] विपदो नैव विपद: सम्पदो नैव सम्पद:
विपद् विस्मरणं विष्णो: सम्पद् नारायणस्मृति:

[2] Published under the caption "The Cure for Government Lawlessness".

charkha and khadi; and untouchability is a thing that is ruining the Hindu society. So long as we have not rid ourselves of this threefold sin our portion can only be, in my humble opinion, Government lawlessness, slavery and poverty. I can, therefore, offer no other counsel to the nation. If we can achieve these three aims, we can demonstrate a strength even fiercer than what we showed in 1920-21. Then we can remove the misery not only of Bengal but of the whole of India.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 2-11-1924

249. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

DELHI,

October 30, 1924

DEAR MOTILALJI,

Ever since the firing of the Viceregal bomb I have been taxing myself as to what we can do and our helplessness has preyed upon me. This is our conclusion! We must not do anything in haste or anger. We must therefore bow before the storm. For the time being we must revert to the old method of simply expressing our opinion and we should concentrate all-India opinion upon the lawless methods of the Government and therefore attack the principle of the Government adopting extra-ordinary measures and should therefore call upon the Government to repeal even Regulation III of 1818. If extraordinary powers are required by an extraordinary situation, they can be taken only upon a vote of elected representatives. I know that even this is tall talk and it jars on me. But I see no other way out at the present moment.

So much to the all-India work. If I could carry you, that is, you personally and Swarajists, with me, I would ask the Working Committee or the A.I.C.C. to concentrate its efforts upon the three items mentioned. Give me a compact disciplined Congress, and I can see my way again to answering Government action with popular action. But till then, and till Hindus and Mussalmans speak with one mind and till we show substantial work about khaddar and untouchability, I for one see no prospect of any effective direct

action. Since the Bengal arrests, the idea of retiring from the Congress has possessed me, unless I receive the enthusiastic support of Swarajists in my proposals. I simply want to bring into being a compact organization which will respond to every call. I do not care how small that organization is. All other non-violent activities may go on. I can understand their utility up to a point. But I am convinced that they will all be a wasted effort, if nobody concerns himself with bringing into being a disciplined and effective organization. I feel deeply hurt and humiliated that we cannot take up with any degree of effect the Government challenge. I think I have told you all you can want to know from me. I am sending you the following telegram:[1]

I sent a little note to Das as he passed through Delhi. Please tell him it is not want of will which keeps me tied down to Delhi. I hardly looked at the newspapers before. But since the arrests. I have been eagerly scanning everything about them in all the papers that come under my notice.

I was glad you were able to go to Nagpur and more so that you are able to get the parties to agree to your and Maulana's arbitration.

I hope you are well.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

250. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Kartik Sud 2 [*October 30, 1924*][2]

PUJYA GANGABEHN,

I am so much occupied in regaining my strength that, though I have always been thinking of writing to you, I have not been able to. I wish to share fully in your sorrow. I wish to help you as much as I can to acquire all the knowledge and strength you should. Please do not be at all impatient. We do acquire, consciously or unconsciously,

[1] Not given in the source

[2] The letter is evidently written after the fast in 1924.

some knowledge where the atmosphere is healthy. Chi. Devdas and Chi. Maganlal always give me news about you.

May all your wishes be fulfilled during the year.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6039. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

251. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Kartik Sud 2 [*October 30, 1924*]

CHI. DEVDAS,

Swami was complaining that you do not take enough care of your health. I want you to take good care of your body and do your work. Do not worry in the least.

Pass on to Pujya Gangabehn the letter addressed to her. I would like to write a good deal, but so long as I have to pamper the body, I will not be able to write much. Since the Viceroy has refused permission, you need not wonder if I return there immediately.

Now it is time for me to go for my walk.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 2047

252. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Kartik Sud 2 [*October 30, 1924*][1]

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. I wish you write to me more often.

I have written to your father today. I have asked him to stop worrying.

Wouldn't you think of going again to Hajira? Do you want congratulations on your having passed the examination? If you do, take it you have them. It does not matter if Dahyabhai failed in one subject. To fail in a subject only means attaining better proficiency in it. It often happens that students who fail get disheartened, but it is wrong for them to do so; only a lazy person or one who has only a job in mind may get disheartened. For a studious person, failure only provides an opportunity for putting forth greater effort.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MANIBEHN
C/O VALLABHBHAI PATEL
KHAMASA CHOWKI
AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro 4—Manibehn Patelne, p. 21

253. TWO SCENES

During my visit to Puri in 1921, I saw many things that I shall not easily forget. But among them all there were two that I shall never forget. One of them haunts me day and night.

In those days Puri had a philanthropic Superintendent of Police. He managed an orphanage. He showed it to me. It had many happy, well-looking, bright children who were engaged in all kinds of industries—mat-weaving, basket-making, spinning, weaving, etc. The Superintendent told me they were all children of famine-stricken

[1] The source has November 10, 1924; however, *Kartik Sud* 2 fell on this date.

parents, some of whom were picked up as mere skin and bone.

He then took me to an open space in the very shadow of the hoary temple where were arranged in rows the famine-stricken people who were living within twelve miles of Puri. Some of these no doubt owed their lives to the charity of the Gujaratis and the loving service of Amritlal Thakkar who doled out to them the rice he bought with the monies supplied by the Gujaratis. The life was ebbing away in them. They were living pictures of despair. You could count every rib. You could see every artery. There was no muscle, no flesh. Parched, crumpled skin and bone was all you could see. There was no lustre in their eyes. They seemed to want to die. They had no interest in anything save the handful of rice they got. They would not work for money. For love, perhaps! It almost seems as if they would condescend to eat and live if you would give them the handful of rice. It is the greatest tragedy I know of—these men and women, our brothers and sisters, dying a slow torturing death. Theirs is an eternal compulsory fast. And as they break it occasionally with rice they seem to mock us for the life we live.

"Why could they not be kept like the orphans?" I asked the Superintendent."They will not work and will not stay there", was the reply. The Superintendent might also have added that he could not accommodate thousands of starving men and women, even if they were ready to work, in an asylum.

There is on the face of the earth no other country that has the problem that India has, of chronic starvation and slow death —a process of dehumanization. The solution must therefore be original. In trying to find it we must discover the causes of the tremendous tragedy. These people are starving because there is chronic famine in Orissa due to floods or want of rains. They have no other occupation to fall back upon. They are therefore constantly idle. This idleness has persisted for so long that it has become a habit with them. Starvation and idleness are the normal condition of life for thousands of people in Orissa. But what is true of Orissa is to a less extent true of many other parts of India.

We may find remedies to prevent floods. That will take years. We may induce people to adopt better methods of cultivation. That must take still more years. And when we have stopped inundations and have introduced among millions up to date cultivation, there will still be plenty of time left with the peasants if they will only work. But

these improvements will take generations. How are the starving millions to keep the wolf from the door meanwhile? The answer is through the spinning-wheel. But how are the people who will not work at all be made to take up even the spinning-wheel.? The answer is by us the workers, the educated and the well-to-do people taking up spinning. An ocular and sincere demonstration by thousands who need not spin for themselves cannot fail to move these starving men and women to do likewise. Moreover it will be only when *we* take up spinning that we shall be able to get the requisite number of skilled spinners who can give the necessary preliminary tution, choose the right kind of wheel, do the repairs, etc. Lastly voluntary spinning by thousands cannot but cheapen khaddar and enable us to produce finer counts. If, therefore, we will identify ourselves with our famishing countrymen, we will not only not cavil at the spinning franchise but would welcome it as the surest way to the solution of the problem of the ever-deepening and distressful poverty of the masses.

Young India, 31-10-1924

254. CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The expected has come to pass. The English Press had foreshadowed for us the Viceregal bomb. It is the Hindu new year's gift to Bengal and through Bengal to India. The step need not surprise us nor terrify us. The Rowlatt Act is dead but the spirit that prompted it is like an evergreen. So long as the interest of Englishmen is antagonistic to that of Indians, so long must there be anarchical crime or the dread of it and an edition of the Rowlatt Act in answer. Non-violent non-co-operation was the way out. But we had not the patience to try it long enough and far enough. Let us see how the English interest is antagonistic to the Indian. Lancashire mills are the greatest drag on India's economic progress. It is obviously India's interest not to have a yard of Lancashire or other foreign calico or yarn. But the Lancashire mill-owners will not readily and without a struggle give up the immoral traffic. I call it immoral because it has ruined India's peasantry and brought it to the verge of starvation. India supports (for her) a heavily paid English civil service. It is obviously to her interest that this service, no matter how efficient it may be, is replaced by an indigenous service, no matter how inefficient it may be. Man cannot breathe with borrowed lungs. India

supplies the training ground for English soldiers and is therefore taxed to the bleeding point in order to finance a military budget that absorbs more than half her total revenue. It is again clearly India's interest that she should learn to defend herself even though it may be indifferently for the time being. For her to be dependent for her defence, external or internal, upon outsiders, however capable or well meaning they may be, is to lose three quarters of her manliness.

For doing the right thing the English are at an advantage. For they belong to the governing race. Those who are not in the civil service—the large body of lay Englishmen and English women ought to perceive the disastrous results of the British domination. The so-called *Pax Britannica is* no compensation for the deprivation of liberty and the ever-growing pauperism. In spite of the elaborate Viceregal reasoning, I venture to submit that no case has been made out for the arbitrary measures adopted by His Excellency. Let violence be punished by all means. I am no defender of anarchy. I know that it can do no good to the country. But it is one thing to punish crime actually attempted or committed. It is totally another thing to give arbitrary powers to the authority to arrest persons without warrant and that too on mere suspicion. What is happening now is to terrorize suspects. Past experience shows that more innocent people are punished than the guilty, whenever the Government has yielded to panic. Everyone knows that by far the largest number of persons punished in the Punjab in 1919[1] were totally innocent of the crimes imputed to them. Whenever a government resorts to arbitrary powers, it really means that it has not popular opinion behind it.

Deshbandhu Das, by his work in the Bengal Council, has shown that the Bengal Government has not the popular opinion behind it. The theory that he has set up a system of terrorism must be rejected. There is no evidence to support the charge. You cannot win popular elections by terrorism nor can you hold a large party together by it. There is something inherently commendable to the people to make the Deshbandhu the undisputed master of his large party in Bengal. The reason is on the surface. He wants power for the people. He does not bend the knee to the rulers. He is impatient to release Bengal and India from the triple burden. Let him sing another tune, let him say he does not want freedom for the people, and he will lose his influence in spite of the terrorism imputed to him. I have my differences with the

[1] The source has"1918".

Deshbandhu, but they cannot blind me to his burning patriotism or his great sacrifice. He loves the country just as much as the best of us. His right-hand men have been torn away from him. They are all men of status. They enjoy the confidence of the people. Why should they not have an open, fair and ordinary trial? The summary arrest of such men under extraordinary powers is the surest condemnation of the existing system of Government. It is wrong, it is uncivilized for a microscopic minority of men to live in the midst of millions under the protection of the bayonet, gunpowder and arbitrary powers. It is no doubt a demonstration of their ability to impose their authority upon a people more numerous than they, but it is also a demonstration of barbarism that lies beneath a thin coating of civilization.

To the Bengalis who are on their trial, I respectfully say:

If you are innocent, as I believe most of you are, your incarceration can only do good to the country and yourselves, if you will take it in the right spirit. We will not win freedom without suffering.

To those who may be real anarchists and believers in violence I urge:

Your love of the country commands my admiration, but you will permit me to say that your love is blind. In my opinion India's freedom will not be won by violence but only by the purest suffering without retaliation. It is the surest and the most expeditious method. But if you persist in your faith in the method of violence, I ask you to make a bold confession of your faith and dare to suffer even though it be unto death. Thereby you will prove your courage and honesty and save many innocent persons from involuntary suffering.

Young India, 31-10-1924

255. THE KEY TO SUCCESS

[*October 31, 1924*][1]

Some Urdu literature happened to come my way when I was in the Yeravda Jail. Through it I had the great advantage of informing myself about Islam. A copy of *Hindustani Shikshak* that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad had given me, I already had. Having read it I became eager to read more. What books worth-reading were with Mr. Shwaib Qureshi, I had sent for. But I had be come a little impatient. I searched the jail library for books in Indian languages. To my pleasant surprise I found Urdu, Marathi, Tamil, Kanarese and Gujarati books there. To be sure the books were very few, but they were enough for my need at the time. The catalogue that I saw included Urdu text-books on religion for Muslim prisoners. I was delighted. I thought that by reading these text-books I would not only be improving my knowledge of Urdu but would also have an opportunity of finding out what Muslim children were being taught. In the text-book for grade two there are a number of instructive lessons. In one lesson some incidents from Prophet Mohammed's life are described. There are stories in it showing the Prophet's humility, generosity, evenness of feeling for enemy and friend, ability to forgive, punctuality and fear of God. Take, for instance, his behaviour towards the Jew money-lender who had gone to abuse and denounce him. Hazrat Omar felt that great insult was being offered to his preceptor. He could not bear it. But the Prophet took his disciple to task and asked him to pay the money-lender not only the principal but also something more as a token of repentance for the wrong he had done. This extraordinary treatment of the money-lender had a consequence that Hazrat Omar had never hoped for. That Jew, it is said, embraced Islam. In this same lesson there is something about a non-Muslim also. Once the Prophet was sleeping under a tree, alone and unarmed. A man went to him and said,"Speak up, Mohammed, who is there to save you now?" The answer was:"Allah." The man began to tremble like a leaf and the sword fell from his hands. The Prophet took up the sword and asked him,"Now it is your turn, say who can save you now?" The infidel trembled as he answered,"There

[1] The original article in English appeared in the first issue of Mahomed Ali's weekly, *Comrade*, revived on October 31, 1924.

is no one except you." The Prophet did not take his life, but generously forgave him. The infidel became a Mussalman then and there.

These one or two examples are not the only ones concerning humility and generosity towards enemies and antagonists. The life of Prophet Mohammed written by Maulana Shibli contains long stories illustrating these. Ideal behaviour is prescribed as the method of purification or *tabligh. In* my humble view this is the right and proper religious preaching. Preaching through ideal behaviour is the most innocent, flawless, telling and potent preaching.

I do not write this article to suggest how the preaching should be done. My aim is simple: all of us taking a lesson from the life of Prophet Mohammed. If we want the unity of the heart to be established, we must emulate Prophet Mohammed in his forgiveness and tolerance.

If there are readers who are not impressed by the stories from the Prophet's life, they should turn the pages of the *Rama*yana and the *Mahabharata*. They will find in these books a good many examples of generosity and tolerance. We do not need detailed resolutions proclaiming disobedience of laws. If we but follow the basic principles of our respective religions, we will see how many among us have become irreligious and godless. By using violence to subjugate one another we are using violence against our own souls. Instead of the two communities doing their appointed tasks and trying to secure rights by doing their respective duties, they are insisting on the rights alone and have forgotten their duties.[1]

India is like a bird whose wings are the Hindus and the Mussalmans. But the wings have become palsied and therefore disabled the bird from soaring high in the air and breathing the pure bracing air of freedom. Surely to leave us thus paralysed is not the essence of Hinduism nor of Islam. Is it the religion for the Hindus to weaken the Mussalmans and *vice versa*—for the one to refuse to help the other? Should religion be a destructive force destroying freedom and all that is best and noblest in man? The *Comrade* and the *Hamdard* have been resuscitated to tell the Hindus and the Mussalmans that the only condition on which unity and freedom are possible is mutual toleration amongst all who call themselves Indians, be they Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians, Parsis, Jews or what not. In

[1] The succeeding paragraphs are from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 2-11-1924, which reproduced them from the *Comrade*.

reviving his papers, *Comrade* and *Hamdard*, Maulana Mahomed Ali is certainly taking upon his shoulders a great responsibility. But he is a godfearing man, his trust is in God and God makes clear what to us may be impenetrable darkness. I, therefore, add prayer to his own that his mission may be blessed with success, that he may always have the right word for all, friend and foe, that he and his assistants may write nothing in anger or haste and that every word in *Comrade* and *Hamdard* may be a power for the good of our country and through it of humanity and that his papers may be the promoters of peace and goodwill among the people in this land professing different faiths.

I have lost no occasion for advertising friendship of heart that exists between the Ali Brothers and myself. They claim to be, as they are, pucka Mussalmans and I claim to be a pucka Hindu. That fact has proved no bar to the real affection and perfect trust between us and if it is possible for such friendship to exist between some Mussalmans and some Hindus, we may deduce by a simple rule of arithmetic that it must be equally possible for millions of Hindus and millions of Mussalmans if only they will it. This friendship the *Comrade* and the *Hamdard* will, I am confident, seek to promote in every way and chiefly by presenting what is best and noblest in Islam. May God grant them speedy success and grant it in full measure.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 2-11-1924

256. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

SABARMATI,
Monday, [*October 1924*][1]

BHAISHREE SHANTIKUMAR,

I have your letter. I shall be glad to see Miss Moore when she comes. I shall be here on November 30. You are not thinking of October 30, are you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 4695. Courtesy : Shantikumar Morarjee.

[1] As indicated in the source

257. LETTER TO ANTYAJA BROTHERS AND SISTERS

[*October, 1924*][1]

ANTYAJA BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I constantly think of the *antyaja* brothers and sisters who live in the Ashram. I wish you all to live in complete harmony with one another, also always wish your. . .[2] I wish you to be votaries of truth. . .[3] to eschew greed so that additional *antyaja* families can be provided accommodation. The uplift of *antyajas* depends upon your goodness. Ultimately. . .[4], uplift depends upon. . .[5] All of you brothers and sisters should spin as a rule and while spinning, keep repeating *Ramanama*. May it always be well with you.

Blessings from

BAPU

ANTYAJA FAMILIES
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From the Gujarati original S.N. 34026

258. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

[*1924*]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

Now you must get into the habit of writing short letters.

One can make a point in one sentence. Arrange your thoughts and then write them down. Arrange what you have written. Write it out again. Condense it by combining a number of arguments and then reconstruct the sentences in a way that they include all arguments. While doing so, many problems will be resolved on their own.

Work, work, and work means constant activity. Writing accounts, reading books and cleaning toilets can be called work or no work. To a great extent, cleaning toilets is work for us because we dislike doing

[1] From the postmark
[2,] The source is illegible at these places.
[3] *ibid*
[4] *ibid*
[5] *ibid*

it. So, another definition of ‘work’ is engaging in an activity which we dislike. This definition is relevant at the moment.

One must have time for individual as well as social ‘work’. One need not have to look for it. The organisation of the society should be such that everyone gets such work. But it is not so. Primarily, it is my responsibility and then that of Maganlal. I have realized the problem; the cure will be found.

We are not competent enough to take in students. Our experiment is such that there is little possibility of other students joining us.

Do not call those who are teaching there ‘teachers’. They too are students but a little more literate. They should teach the illiterates and in turn gain practical knowledge and learn to discipline their body, mind and speech. All of us are both teachers as well as students. No one has any right here to keep personal money.

I have not made any distinction between the Ashram [inmates] and the teachers. But still the distinction is there and it is intentional. Otherwise we could not have brought together even the teachers who are here and who know English, etc. I find that the trend is to follow in one direction only.

This covers replies to all the issues—either implied or expressed by you. If you feel something is missing, think over what I have written and you will find it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : S.N. 32966

259. MESSAGE TO GUJARATI JOURNALISTS[1]

In our country, I believe, whoever fails to find a better occupation takes to journalism provided he can scribble. I am, at present, obliged to go through a number of Urdu journals from upper India, and this has confirmed my belief. My experience of the Gujarati Press is much the same. In these circumstances, no one will dispute that it is desirable that newspaper editors should confer together and impose some restraints on themselves. Editorship should

[1] Addressed to the Gujarati journalists’ conference which was to meet at Ahmedabad

be accepted only as a medium of social service and not as a means of subsistence. An institution which awakens in us this sense of responsibility is welcome, and I do hope ours will be one such.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-11-1924

260. MY DISSATISFACTION

I am not in the least happy over what I have written[1] in *Young India* regarding the"bomb" thrown by H.E. the Viceroy. Vehement writing, even if it is charged with truth, is no answer to violent action. The Government's policy in Bengal is violent action. It can be answered only with some form of action. Just as we put out a raging fire with water, similarly we could overcome this violent action through peaceful deeds alone.

But how do we cultivate this peaceful attitude? Today,"peaceful non-co-operation" and"civil disobedience" have become mere words. If Hindus and Muslims ceased today from fighting between themselves, if hundreds of thousands of men and women in India took to spinning from today, if today the Hindus cleanse themselves of the blot of untouchability—the Viceregal"bomb" would not have exploded at all.

We have, however, forgotten non-violence, and at the slightest opportunity Hindus and Muslims start fighting between themselves. There has been little increase in the use of the spinning-wheel. We are still fond of foreign-cloth. Only a few Hindus have done atonement for untouchability. In these circumstances, the people have no means of replying to the atrocities of the Government. The latter has attempted to clip the wings of Deshbandhu Das, while Bengal and the other provinces look on helplessly. Basketfuls of articles opposing—or expressing disapproval of—this action have appeared, but beyond that we do not seem to be able to do anything.

Hence my dissatisfaction.

I prefer to remain silent when I find that an action can be set right by action. Perhaps I would have remained silent if I were not an editor. But, as an editor, I must, I felt, express my views. Hence I wrote the article in *Young India*. I may still have to write or speak about it.

[1] *Vide*"Conflict of Interests", 31-10-1924.

But all this is very painful to me. I was not in the least worried when the Government pursued such a policy in 1921, because, at that time, I was under the impression that we had with us an unfailing remedy and that we knew its use. I am unhappy because it has been shown that we do not know its use. I wish the reader would share my dissatisfaction. Who could harass a self-reliant India which is both united and purified? She would have nothing to do thereafter.

How to explain this simple fact to various people? I try to explain this by befriending the Muslims, by regarding the untouchables as touchable, and by spinning. I have no doubt that by doing so, the tragedy of Bengal can be averted, that in this lies India's liberation.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-11-1924

261. MY NOTE

GUJARAT NOT DEFEATED

Gujarat has not been defeated by Andhra Pradesh this time; still, there is nothing for Gujarat to gloat over. As in a barren tract even a castor oil plant stands out, Gujarat too enjoys a like distinction. But Gujarat wishes to cultivate real strength. And for this 1,700 spinners are not enough. Gujarat with a population of nine million, cannot be satisfied with the 1,700 persons who have taken to the *yajna*[1] of spinning. Not even two per cent of the population has taken to it. Not less than 10,000 persons are needed to make up ten per cent. I know the workers are making great efforts. Hence no one is to blame. The fault lies in the circumstances in which we find ourselves. It is our duty to realize what is wrong. If we do, we shall make special efforts. We, who spin regularly should realize that here and here alone—in the spread of khadi and the boycott of foreign-cloth—lies our economic and hence our political salvation. We shall then cling to this priceless thing and be able to infect others with our diligence.

Brothers and sisters who spin should also know that their yarn should be in the hands of the All-India Khadi Board by the 15th of the month, the date fixed for the yarn from all places reaching the

[1] Sacrificial ritual

central office. The spinner, however, should make up his account only on the last day of the month. For this purpose we have accepted the English calendar month. The Indian calendar varies in many provinces and our Muslim brothers count the beginning with the Hejira. Hence using the English calendar is simpler. The yarn from Gujarat should be collected and sent so as to reach the head office by the 5th or 7th of the month. Much time would be saved if each individual is regular in his work. If work done collectively by many lacks regularity, everything gets disorganized and a lot of time is wasted. Hence, I hope that every individual spinner, each sub-committee, and the provincial committee will fix its own date and send the yarn on the date fixed.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-11-1924

262. TELEGRAM TO C. R. DAS

[*November 2, 1924*]

YOUR WIRE LEAVING SUNDAY[1] PUNJAB MAIL. STAYING WITH YOU. I EXPECT YOU TO AVOID ALL RUSH. TOO DELICATE YET BEAR STRAIN NOISE CROWD OTHER DEMONSTRATIONS.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 3-11-1924

[1] November 2

263. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

DELHI,
November 2, 1924

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
CANNING STREET
CALCUTTA

REACHING CALCUTTA TUESDAY MORNING PUNJAB MAIL.

GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 5998. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

264. MESSAGE TO"BENGALEE"[1]

November 2, 1924

I have no message to give. What shall I say? I am thinking. I am trying to see light out of darkness.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 7-11-1924

265. LETTER TO HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN

CALCUTTA,
Kartik Sud 7 [*November 3, 1924*]

I got your telegram. Bhai Manjit Singh tried his best to persuade me. But where is the need to persuade me? All Hindi-loving people in India know of my love for Hindi. It is impossible for me to attend. I have so much work on hand that I cannot cope with it. Please therefore excuse me. I must dispose of it.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 11-11-1924

[1] In reply to a telegram from Bipin Chandra Pal

266. TELEGRAM TO HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN[1]

[After *November 3, 1924*]

NO IMPORTUNITY NEEDED. WOULD HAVE GLADLY COME IF I COULD. BUT THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE. WISH THE SAMMELAN ALL SUCCESS.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 11-11-1924

267. TELEGRAM TO ZAFAR ALI KHAN[2]

[On or after *November 5, 1924*]

MAULANA ZAFAR ALI KHAN

"ZAMINDAR"

LAHORE

WELCOME BACK YOUR POST. HOPE YOU ARE WELL. EXPECT YOU CONTRIBUTE SOLIDLY TOWARDS HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY.

From a photostat: S.N. 11712

268. TIME-SENSE

It is a common charge against us as a nation that we have no sense of the time; we are as a rule behind time. One who is too late is admittedly behind time. But it is equally true to say that one who is four hours before time is also behind time. He has neglected a hundred things to enable him to be four hours before time. The villager when he wants to catch a train reaches the station hours before the scheduled time. He may succeed in catching his train, but he will be behind time for many other things probably more important. We, the educated class are too late for everything. Our meetings need not commence in time. It is a most usual thing not to commence proceedings at the appointed time. One man's absence is often

[1] The English original is not available.

[2] In reply to a telegram from *Zamindar* received on November 5, 1924, which read:"Maulana Zafar Ali Khan released today reaching Lahore tomorrow evening."

regarded as sufficient reason for keeping hundreds, sometimes thousands, waiting. It speaks volumes for the patience and forbearance of a nation that can so wait. But it bodes ill for its progress.

This lack of time-sense is now being noticed in connection with the working of the spinning resolution of the A.I.C.C. To read the resolution is simple and innocent enough. But it is taxing all the resources of the All-India Khadi Board. The collection, transmission and classification of yarn requires a large organization and much organizing ability. The difficulty is increased tenfold when the workers do not work to time. The fifteenth of each month is the last date for the delivery of yarn. That date was fixed not to give more time to spinners but to give enough time to the secretaries of different committees. Only if spinners deliver or workers collect their yarn on stated dates, the whole work can be efficiently organized. Each province may fix its own dates so as to enable it to send packets of yarn in time to the A.I.K.B. Instead of sending packets in instalments, there should be only one complete delivery from month to month provided that suits the arrangement of the A.I.K.B. Unless the whole work is done with clock-work regularity, it is impossible to organize it in a thorough manner. When thousands of details require attention, time is of the utmost importance. Even as the slightest slip in observing times on railways may result in disastrous consequences, so may want of attention to the A.I.K.B. time-table result in consequences just as serious to the prospect of universalizing spinning. In fact no organization is possible without punctilious regard to the observance of agreed time-tables. I trust therefore that all the workers connected with the spinning organization will religiously keep to the times agreed to or appointed by them.

Young India, 6-11-1924

269. NOTE

THE PRESIDENTIAL PRIZE

Andhra and then Bengal are running a close race with Gujarat. There is only one month left for them to win the Presidential prize. I hope that one or the other province will carry off the prize. I must not, however, disguise the hope equally strong that Gujarat will not be easily beaten. But let them all understand the terms. No yarn delivered after time can be included in the prize computation. Nor can any

individual packet count that does not contain the minimum quantity, i.e., at least two thousand yards of evenly spun and properly twisted yarn. Maulana Mahomed Ali is in high hopes that Gujarat will be beaten and that his prize will be taken by Andhra or Bengal. He has no grudge against Gujarat. But he does want his prize to be taken, and he thinks that Gujarat can well afford to be beaten in fair competition. Gujarat's defeat will be victory if the competition results in an appreciably large increase in the total number of spinners. He does not want any province to get an accidental victory. It must be an outcome of honest and strenuous endeavour.

Young India, 6-11-1924

270. COMPLAINT FROM KENYA

A resident of Kenya writes:[1]

This correspondent has not written the above letter for publication, but only for my information. Yet the ideas expressed in it must have occurred to many Indians residing in Colonies. It is but natural to have such ideas. But on deeper reflection it will be clear that it is also natural for beggars to go out from here. There is political suffering at both these ends. Because there is political suffering in India, it is also there for Indians living abroad. Ending it in India would automatically bring about an end to it elsewhere. If Indian leaders do not render greater service to the cause of Indians abroad it is because they are unable to do so, however much they desire to. What can a helpless person do? Of what avail is a patient's longing for food? A cripple can do nothing else than curb his desire to run. India is crippled in two ways—politically and economically. Her sons living abroad cannot certainly say to such a crippled mother:"What sort of justice is this, mother, that you do not help us and yet seek money from us?" The mother would say:"My sons, I know that you suffer; but I am a widow. How can I help you? Moreover, I am poor; you went abroad with the hope of earning some money; I believe that I can claim a share in your meal. Hence I look at you expectantly." India finds herself in such curious circumstances. Having lived abroad for twenty years, I have experienced this. We used to send money from South Africa to India even though we could not get any

[1] The letter is not translated here.

assistance from India. We did undergo political suffering; but we were not hard up for money. Whereas it is difficult in India to give or spend a rupee, in South Africa we were able to give away a guinea. No suppliant who came from India went back empty-handed. The reader should not conclude that in those days greater political assistance was available from India. An agitation similar to the one which is being conducted today over Kenya was on then and is still continuing over South Africa. In other words, India's sympathy is expressed through meetings and speeches in the Legislative Assembly. Moreover, let the reader have no illusions about the funds that came to South Africa from India; the funds from India arrived only when the Indians in South Africa were about to lose their wealth and their belongings and after the local Indians had collected and spent large amounts on the movement. A large portion of the funds that came from India was returned to the country. Moreover, even at that time Indians in South Africa met the expenses of some institutions in India. The all-out satyagraha of the Indians living in South Africa was responsible for their victory there. Thousands including women courted prison; some were killed; others were banished from the country; many were left destitute; a young girl[1] died of a disease contacted in prison; two youths[2] died—one as a result of the sufferings undergone in prison and the other through hardships resulting from being banished; some had to endure whipping—as a result of all this and after eight years of satyagraha the objective of the struggle was achieved and yet the struggle has to be carried on. It is an inevitable law that the weapon which is responsible for victory is the only one which can preserve the fruits of victory and win more. Just as the Kshatriya loses the territory he has conquered in case the enemy gains strength or he himself loses it, similarly the satyagrahi too loses what he has gained if he loses strength or the opponent gains it. For the hardships suffered by Indians living in South Africa or in other foreign countries, the remedy lies in their own hands. They will be able to uphold their self-respect to the extent that they are able to increase their capacity to put up with extreme suffering, to become pure and remain so. Indians

[1] Valliamma; *vide*"Speech on Satyagraha Movement, Trichinopoly", March 25, 1919.

[2] Nagappan and Narayanaswami; *vide*"Speech on Satyagraha Movement, Madura", March 26, 1919 and"Speech on Satyagraha Movement, Tuticorin", March 28,1919.

living abroad must, at any rate, bear this in mind that they go abroad in order to make money. In spite of political sufferings, they earn relatively more there. They would earn still more if the political hardships were reduced. Meanwhile, it is to be hoped that they would not falter in helping their poor country by contributing funds to the best of their ability. They should ascertain the *bona fides* of each person who comes out to seek help. If after examining the merits and demerits of the institution and its organizer they find both fully deserving, Indians living abroad are in duty bound to help the institution from out of their purses.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-11-1924

271. JOINT STATEMENT WITH SWARAJ PARTY LEADERS

CALCUTTA,
November 6, 1924

The following is the text of the statement issued in Calcutta on the 6th instant over the signatures of Mr. Gandhi, Mr. C. R. Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru:

Whereas, although swaraj is the goal of all the parties in India, the country is divided into different groups seemingly working in opposite directions, and whereas such antagonistic activity retards the progress of the nation towards swaraj, and whereas it is desirable to bring, so far as possible, all such parties within the Congress and on a common platform and whereas the Congress itself is divided into two opposing sections, resulting in harm to the country's cause, and whereas it is desirable to reunite these parties for the purpose of furthering the common cause, and whereas a policy of repression has been commenced in Bengal by the local Government with the sanction of the Governor-General, and whereas in the opinion of the undersigned this repression is aimed in reality not at any party of violence but at the Swaraj Party in Bengal and therefore at constitutional and orderly activity, and whereas, therefore, it has become a matter of immediate necessity to invite and secure the co-operation of all parties for putting forth the united strength of the nation against the policy of repression, we, the undersigned, strongly recommend the following for adoption by all parties and eventually by the Congress at Belgaum:

The Congress should suspend the programme of non-co-

operation as the national programme, except in so far as it relates to the refusal to use or wear cloth made out of India.

The Congress should further resolve that different classes of work of the Congress may be done, as may be found necessary, by the different sections within the Congress and should resolve that the spread of hand-spinning, hand-weaving and all the antecedent progress and the spread of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar, and the promotion of unity between different communities, specially between the Hindus and the Mussalmans, and the removal of untouchability by the Hindus from amongst them should be carried on by all sections within the Congress; and the work in connection with the Central and Provincial Legislatures should be carried on by the Swaraj Party on behalf of the Congress and as an integral part of the Congress organization and for such work the Swaraj Party should make its own rules and raise and administer its own funds. Inasmuch as experience has shown that without universal spinning India cannot become self-supporting regarding her clothing requirements and inasmuch as hand-spinning is the best and the most tangible method of establishing a visible and substantial bond between the masses and Congressmen and women and in order to popularize hand-spinning and its products, the Congress should repeal Article VII of the Congress Constitution and should substitute the following therefor:

No one shall be a member of any Congress Committee or organization who is not of the age of 18 and who does not wear hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar at political and Congress functions or while engaged in Congress business, and does not make a contribution of 2,000 yards of evenly spun yarn per month of his or her own spinning or in case of illness, unwillingness or any such cause alike quantity of yarn spun by any other parson.

Young India, 13-11-1924

272. SPEECH IN REPLY TO CORPORATION ADDRESS, CALCUTTA[1]

November 6, 1924

MR. MAYOR, ALDERMEN AND COUNCILLORS OF THE CORPORATION OF CALCUTTA AND LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

You will pardon me for not standing while addressing you. It is not from want of courtesy but from want of strength to face a big audience like this. I tender you my sincere thanks for your address and the very kind and generous sentiments expressed in it. I am not unfamiliar with this great city—the city of palaces. Nor am I unaware of the importance that is attached for the performance of civic duty. And I have often felt that though less ambitious and still less dazzling than the work on the political arena, civic work is not less necessary and not less fruitful. Many a time have I rehearsed to myself what I could do if I was a member of a Corporation and when years ago I used to walk through the slums of Calcutta and compare the palaces with their beautiful and sanitary surroundings with the ugliness and insanitation of the slums, I used to say to myself that the worth and work of the Corporation of Calcutta should he measured not by the number or beauty of its palaces but by the conditions of its slums and I felt then that the Corporation had neglected its duties. Later on I had the opportunity of visiting some of its dairies and I was horrified not merely with the wretched condition in which they were kept but also at the cruelty to which the cattle were subjected by the *gowalas* in drawing by unmentionable methods the last drop of milk not unmixed with blood from the poor cattle. I commend these stray observations to your notice in the hope that during your term of office a great step will have been taken towards ridding Calcutta of insanitation wherever it exists and by municipalizing the dairies ensuring the supply of cheap and pure milk to its many inhabitants. In my humble opinion it is the primary duty of a Corporation to ensure pure air, pure water, cheap and pure milk and fruit and free education for the children of its ratepayers and I wish that this Corporation will take the first step among the cities of India.

[1] C. R. Das, the Mayor, read out the address of welcome which was presented in the Town Hall before a large gathering.

You have drawn attention to the arrest under Regulation III of 1818 of your Chief Executive Officer. I tender you my deep sympathy. It is unthinkable that under a Government supposed to be civilized a man of Mr. Subhash Chandra Basu's[1] position, indeed any man, should be summarily arrested and detained without the prospect of a trial, indeed even the prospect of knowing the reason for which he was so arrested. My views about anarchical activities are well-known. I am opposed to them with my whole soul. I believe that they can do no good whatever to India. But this is not the occasion to air my views in the matter. I may be accused, however, for adding that I detest the extraordinary measures adopted by the Government just as much as I detest the anarchical activities. I can only hope that the Government will retrace its steps and abandon the procedure which can only be described as lawless and that Mr. Subhash Chandra Basu will soon be restored to the Corporation and be able to resume the services which, from all accounts I have heard, he was rendering with great ability, efficiency and integrity.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 7-11-1924

273. SPEECH AT SPINNING DEMONSTRATION[2] CALCUTTA

November 6, 1924

I am pleased: to see you spinning. I hope those of you who are not spinning will begin spinning at once. There is a saying in Sanskrit that it is wise not to begin anything but once you begin it should not be given up till the object is attained.

Those who have taken to spinning and those who will begin spinning should resolve to continue to spin at least till swaraj is attained. I am much pleased at your silent reception today.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 7-11-1924

[1] Subbash Chandra Bose (1887-1945); popularly know as"Netaji"
[2] By the employees of the Bengal Chemical Factory

274. DISCUSSION WITH NO-CHANGERS[1]

November 7, 1924

Explaining his own feelings at the outset, Gandhiji said:

I myself have no doubts as to the rightness of my action. I was caught in a whirlpool of doubt regarding my duty; but now I feel relieved. I am certain that I could not have done otherwise than what I have done. It is the very dharma of an advocate of non-violence that he should renounce till he has nothing farther to renounce. Hence I have arrived at the final decision. I should practise surrender to such an extent that my opponent would see, it is the limit and would be taken aback by it. Moreover, this is not my first experience. The ethics of giving suggests this. Give till the receiver is satisfied. Still, the surrender that I have practised in this case is not of that kind, it is not renunciation in that sense. I have surrendered whatever I did after arguing and higgling. I have retreated inch by inch, gradually, by degrees. Of course, some people believe that I have yielded more than they had expected of me.

Once you realize that non-co-operation cannot be carried on, you will see at once that there is no alternative but to retreat to the point where I have arrived. Wherever I go, I come across nothing but violence. It is so deeply embedded in the hearts of people that it would be a crime to carry on non-co-operation on a national scale. There is, however, a distinction between"national" and"individual" non-co-operation. In other words, individuals should continue to non-co-operate to the same extent that they have done so far; if, on the contrary, they give it up, their initial non-co-operation would be deemed meaningless.

Much discussion has arisen over the spinning franchise. You feel that I have surrendered a great deal, that I have turned khadi into a kind of ritual. However, that is not so at all. If you examine history, you will realize how much we have gone ahead. At the outset, there were merely pledges, pure, mixed, and so on. After that, mill-made

[1] Gandhiji met the No-changers of Bengal in Calcutta and explained to them his reasons for signing the joint statement with the Swarajists.

cloth was discarded and khadi came along. Later, the spinning-wheel was introduced. Khadi was then made compulsory for volunteers. Then again proficiency in spinning was made compulsory. Going still further, everyone was called upon to spin. After this, resolutions were passed making it compulsory for workers to spin and today we have introduced spinning as a condition to enable one to vote.

It is true that every single member may not spin. But those who spin today will not cease to do so. On the contrary, there will be an increase in the number of spinners. How many persons will be able to get yarn spun for payment? Hence the majority of members will contribute their own yarn. Those who have not themselves determined to spin, how can we force them to do so? However, we should be satisfied if they bring in yarn spun for them by others. Moreover, if you consider the matter a little more carefully, it was never accepted as a principle that every member of the Congress must spin. I should also add that many persons did not share this idea; it was mine alone; I could even say that even for me it was an ideal. It is a fact that long ago a gentleman had written to me from Ceylon asking me why every member should not be compelled to spin. However, at that time I had not given any thought to the proposal, regarding it as unfeasible. Later I considered it feasible and placed it before the country. Hence if anything has been given up, it has been taken away from my ideal, from something that I myself had conceived.

Then, again, do you feel that khadi has been reduced to a mere formality? Even that fear is groundless. It is one thing to pass a resolution in favour of khadi, it is another to say that anyone who does not wear khadi cannot become a member of the Congress. The act of voting is a very definite one, the condition for voting should not be very rigid and difficult to fulfil. Mr. Suhrawardy—the deputy mayor of the Corporation—came yesterday dressed from head to foot in khadi. He does not wear khadi regularly; but he felt that yesterday the occasion demanded that he should. Now, how can I say to people like him that even when they stand up in court, they should wear a khadi gown? I can but hope that if on national occasions he wears khadi, he will not start using foreign or mill-made cloth on private occasions through sheer waywardness. Those who are using

khadi will continue to do so: those who never use it will get the opportunity of entering the Congress temple after bang purified by khadi. Today even the delegates who come to the Congress do not wear khadi. Ninety per cent of the people today come to the Congress session clad in dhotis made not of khadi but of mill-made cloth. This would not happen if this condition is laid down.

The question of uniting with the Swarajists came up. Gandhiji has fully discussed that question in his own article[1]. He wound up that argument by saying

I cannot be persuaded to believe that the Government has arrested the Swarajists for the good of the people. My conviction is getting stronger every moment that the Swarajists have been arrested only in order to crush them.

In conclusion he said:

I believe that my sacrifice involves surrendering a part of my ideals as outlined in *Young India;*[2] it does not involve sacrificing anything that is basic nor is it a sacrifice of any principles. However, if you feel that I have sacrificed the essence, if you feel that my sacrifice is unjustified, you should oppose me vigorously. I had informed Shyambabu of my objective. My object today is to end chaos and bring order, to put an end to disputes and bring about harmony, to unite a lifeless people and infuse them with strength and fearlessness. If I have given rise to a party which is nurtured on blind faith alone, it is harmful to the country. I can excuse the ordinary people, but you are writers, orators and debators. You should act only in accordance with the dictates of your reason. I am not infallible. Of course, I may make fewer mistakes as I am more experienced than you. It may well be, though, that one who seldom makes a mistake, makes a terrible one when he actually does make one. It is possible that I am giving unnecessary importance to the work of Swarajists, that I am laying undue stress on Hindu-Muslim unity—in that case you should unhesitatingly choose a new path and follow it. By doing so you will show your self-respect. There are two kinds of sacrifice: that of one's individual opinion and that of basic principles. Shri

[1] *Vide*"The Agreement" and"Notes on the Agreement", 13-11-1924.
[2] *ibid*

Gokhale used to say that the former can be sacrificed in public interest, but the latter cannot. In view of this, you may feel free to act in whichever way you wish.

This was followed by a large number of questions and answers.

Q. The Congress will no longer belong to the poor, it will belong only to the well-to-do class. This will be so as the latter can buy yarn anywhere.

A. No, it will belong wholly to the poor. It is the duty of the Congress to provide cotton to the poor; it is for the latter to contribute their labour. The common people will not buy yarn, they will spin it themselves. Those who have an aversion to spinning or are lazy may get others to spin for them.

Q. You began non-co-operation with this wicked Government and now you are gradually giving it up. In addition to it, you now advocate co-operation with wickedness; the Swarajists have practised such deceit and lies; how; can there be any co-operation with them?

A. I have never said that non-co-operation should be practised everywhere. It should be practised if otherwise we would have to participate in the wicked deeds of the opponent. Even if the allegations you make are true, we do not wish to be partners in their lies. Moreover, you tend to forget that we have resorted to non-co-operation with the Government after having co-operated with it for thirty years. There was no occasion for non-co-operating with the Swarajists or our brothers. We have hardly co-operated with them; so the question of non-co-operation does not arise. Today my only task is to bring about a change of heart among Hindus and Muslims. I seek help from all in that task only. When this has been achieved, my hopes for the immediate attainment of swaraj will multiply.

Q. You want to include even Moderates and also to find a way for those who advocate violence. What is this and how could all these be reconciled?

A. I wish to live and die for truth. I hope that people will become truthful and honest. Making everyone accept the ideal conditions that I desire would not lead to any increase in honesty, but would rather give rise to hypocrisy. The resolution that has been taken up today will promote honesty. I only want that people pledge themselves to the minimum and fully abide by it. I said therefore that the

words”peaceful and legitimate” should be taken out of the Congress resolution. Rather than practise violence after taking the pledge of non-violence, would it not be better not to pledge oneself to non-violence? The country should accept my ideals if it approves of them. I shall have to put them in my pocket if the country disapproves of them. Nevertheless I did not sacrifice those points which could not be sacrificed. Supposing a Hindu comes to me and asks me to give up Hindu-Muslim unity from among the objectives, would I agree to it? Similarly, I could not possibly have accepted the use of mill-made cloth among the conditions to be fulfilled by voters, because by doing so It would certainly have ruined [the cause] of khadi.

Q. At one time you used to say that an honest shoeblack was preferable to a co-operating lawyer. Today, you are prepared to side with the lawyers and the bigwigs.

A. Yes, you are right. What I had said was literally true. There is no non-co-operation today. If it had been widespread, if even shoeblacks had offered non-co-operation, they could keep off the co-operators. However, I am not master of the Congress. Should I wish to become a leader, it would not be by imposing impossible conditions but, rather, by laying down such conditions as can easily be fulfilled. I would have persisted on the same old path, had there been no misunderstanding, no widespread bitterness. However, those conditions no longer prevail and so I felt that I must exercise patience and forget about the struggle.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, I6-11-1924

275. SPEECH IN REPLY TO MUNICIPAL ADDRESS, HOWRAH[1]

November 7, 1924

MR. CHAIRMAN, COUNCILLORS AND FRIENDS,

You will pardon me if I do not make a long reply to the beautiful address that you have presented to me this evening. I am just now working against time. I have got to catch the Mail for Delhi. There is a big crowd awaiting me outside and I do not know how long it will take me to reach the station. You will, therefore, forgive me if I abruptly leave the hall after I have finished my reply. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the address and the sentiments you have been good enough to express there in connection with me. The briefest and the aptest reply that I can make to this address is to repeat the reply[2] that I gave to the address of the Corporation of Calcutta, but if any addition is to be made to that reply, I look to the Deshbandhu to supplement the reply that I made last evening and I shall associate myself in anticipation with every sentence that he may express in connection with the affairs of its Municipality and with the welfare of its inhabitants. I thank you once again for the sentiments that you have expressed and for the address that you have presented to me and I hope we may before long see India in the manner in which we want to see her. I thank you.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 8-11-1924

276. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[3]

CALCUTTA,

November 7, 1924

Asked what would be the effect in the country of the agreement between him and the Swaraj Party, Mr. Gandhi said:

It is too early yet to say, but I hope that No-changers will be able heartily to accept it and that those who felt called upon to retire from the Congress in 1920, will see their way to rejoin the Congress.

[1] At the Howrah Town Hall

[2] *Vide*"Speeeh in Reply to Corporation Address, Calcutta", 6-11-1924.

[3] Before leaving Calcutta

Mr. Gandhi also hoped that the new change would help the production of more khaddar.

Questioned regarding the situation in Bengal and the arrests under Regulation III and the Special Ordinance, he said:

Repression should result in uniting the political parties in India, because, after such a careful study as was open to me, I retain the opinion that repression is an attack upon the Swaraj Party, in other words, upon determined and inconvenient opposition to the Government, no matter how constitutional it may be. If all parties unite in expressing unequivocal disapproval of its policy, the Government will realize that public opinion is entirely against it. Personally, I regret that, at this critical juncture, there is no atmosphere for non-co-operation or, putting it more accurately, civil disobedience, for I consider that the measures adopted by the Bengal Government are such as to call for the strongest direct action that is open to believers in the uttermost non-violence. It would be at once an answer to the Government for its arbitrary action and to the revolutionary party to show the futility of its method. I regard both repression of the type adopted by the Government and the violent methods of the revolutionary party as anarchy. The activity of the Government is possibly more dangerous, because it is more organized and is adopted in the name of law. But, I recognize that, whilst we are warring amongst ourselves and whilst the atmosphere is surcharged with violence, though for the moment turned upon ourselves, civil disobedience is an impossibility, but had the Hindus and Mohammedans not lost their heads and had there been no dissensions within the Congress, I could have shown that civil disobedience was infinitely more effective and expeditious than violent methods. That civil disobedience must always be non-violent, open and strictly truthful, makes it a weapon capable of being handled by scrupulously honourable men.

Asked as to what should be the attitude of non-official Europeans in India at the present time, Mr. Gandhi said:

In my opinion, their way is perfectly clear. So far as I am aware, all India will co-operate with them in discountenancing and putting down anarchical activities, but they are expected to appreciate the Indian standpoint and Indian aspirations and make common cause with Indians in resisting the arbitrary use of authority and co-operate with them in their attempt to vindicate their fight for freedom.

New India, 8-11-1924

277. VALUE OF TIME

It is said of us that we do not realize the value of time. There is much truth in this complaint. I know that even our great leaders do not fully realize the value of time. Hardly any meeting begins at the appointed hour. Thousands of people wait patiently and have their time wasted.

But the English have a saying, a good one,"time is money". It is. For no task—no work—can be accomplished without time; and without work there can be no wealth. Gems which lie buried in mines have no value whatsoever. What has value is the time spent in discovering them or the effort made to get them. If gold were as easily available as iron, it would not for all its glitter have the same value that it has today. The sun's rays are a million times more beautiful than gold, but in this country we hardly value them, as we can have them to our heart's content. But where there is a dearth of sunshine, people are ready to pay a price for them.

We do not realize the loss suffered by society and the time wasted as a result of our meetings not starting punctually. However, universal voluntary spinning is giving us adequate training. So long as every individual spinner or the committee does complete its work in time, the task of collecting and examining the yarn, when there are hundreds and millions of spinners, will become difficult, if not impossible.

We have no cause for elation because Gujarat stands first. Where little is being done, the one who does somewhat more shines out; but so long as the one who so distinguishes himself does not reach the minimum limit, the distinction won by him would be meaningless. There are not even two thousand spinners in Gujarat today. However, even if the number reaches two thousand, it is hardly worth mentioning! Our aim is to make everyone take to khadi, to start sacrificial spinning in every home. Having regard to this objective, the figures in Gujarat have little value or significance.

If we wish to make great strides in this work, we must learn to realize the value of time. It is for this very reason that I have suggested that every spinner should spin regularly for half an hour, regarding it as his dharma. If he wishes to spin without fail for even half an hour, he should appoint in advance the time to do so.

Thereby he will find that he does not miss even a single day. On the appointed day and at the appointed time, he should send his yarn to the prescribed destination.

This will save everyone's time. The sub-committees should collect yarn at the appointed time on the appointed day, so as to enable them to send their lot to the larger committees at the appointed time and the provincial committee should send it to the central committee on the appointed day. What a great deal of time is saved and how much more convenient does it become when this is done!

A fair amount of orderliness has been achieved in Gujarat. Yet, much remains to be done. This task of spinning is not for a day or for a year. It is related to the very existence of India. Without it, swaraj can be neither won nor defended. Anyone who chooses may consider swaraj in this context as meaning economic independence. This restricted meaning is sufficient for our purpose. It is my firm conviction that if we gain economic independence, all else will automatically follow.

Hence, spinning must take firm strides ahead and spread day by day. In this programme of spinning lies the test of our readiness for sacrifice, our patriotism, our ability to value time, our capacity to organize, and of our faith and our determination.

There is not much time left before the Congress session. We have no more than two months. Let us send all our yarn along with proper accounts to the All-India Khadi Association before the 15th of the month. I would like to see a marked increase in the number of spinners. The key to this lies in our carrying out our tasks within the time appointed.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-11-1924

278. LETTER TO SATISH CHANDRA MUKERJEE

November 9, 1924

DEAR SATISH BABU,

It grieved me to find you were gone. I was looking forward to having long chats with you on all sorts of things. I hope you had no serious news to take you away so suddenly. I hope that Kristodas was

not the cause. I would like you to feel at ease about him. I let him go to Chandpur only when I felt that it was the proper thing for him to go and see his people. He has made me a definite promise that he would return to me on or before the 18th instant at the latest. I am at Dr. Ansari's, Dariaganj. I hope you were quite happy at Mr. Garodia's.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. SATISH CHANDRA MUKERJEE
110, HAZRA ROAD
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 5608

279. LETTER TO KRISTODAS

November 9, 1924

MY DEAR KRISTODAS,

You can imagine my grief at finding that Satish Babu had left just two hours before our arrival in Delhi. I was and am still much disturbed—I had hoped to have a long chat with him on several matters including the agreement with the Swarajists. I shall expect you here before the appointed date. We shall have to leave Delhi on the 19th for Bombay. I hope your father is well and that you are having a good time in Chandpur. We are staying at Dr. Ansari's.

Yours,

BAPU

SJT. KRISTODAS
110, HAZRA ROAD
BHAWANIPUR
P.O . KALIGHAT
CALCUTTA
BENGAL

From a photostat: G.N. 5609

280. INTERVIEW TO A. P. I. ON CALCUTTA PACT

DELHI,
November 10, 1924

The following interview on the question of the agreement arrived at between the leaders of the Swaraj Party and Mr. Gandhi at Calcutta which a representative of the Associated Press of India had with Mr. Gandhi on his return to Delhi on the 10th instant is published:

Asked as to why, if the agreement signed by himself and Messrs Das and Nehru was intended to be an invitation to Liberals and others to rejoin the Congress, they had not conferred with them before issuing the appeal, Mr. Gandhi replied:

Such a conference was impossible before the Swarajists and No-changers could agree upon a joint course, because any appeal must be a joint appeal by the two wings of the Congress. As a matter of fact there has been no conference even with the No-changers. It is true that I met the No-changers of Bengal and discussed the situation with them, as also I met, for instance, Mr. Satyanand Bose and discussed matter with him. But I did not even make an endeavour to secure their assent for the simple reason that I had at my disposal no machinery whereby I could ascertain the wishes of the No-changers as a body and bind them formally. I, therefore, thought it best to give my own individual opinion and place it before the country for what it was worth. You will see that the agreement is a recommendation addressed to all parties within and without the Congress. The time for a conference is now. The No-changers will express their opinion through the forthcoming All-India Congress Committee. Maulana Mahomed Ali as President of the Congress has invited to the conference representatives of all parties including the European Association.

The recommendation made by the Swaraj Party and myself will be submitted at the meeting for their sympathetic consideration. There is no finality about the agreement except for the Swaraj Party and for myself personally. Everybody is free to appeal to our reason, and I am sure that neither the Swaraj Party nor I will stand in the way of any other settlement that may bring all the parties together on a common platform and facilitate our progress towards the common goal and supply an effective answer to the Bengal Government's repressive policy on the one hand and satisfy the ambition of the misguided anarchists on the other, and thus wean them from their error. I appeal to

all the leaders to accept Maulana Mahomed Ali's invitation and assist and guide the deliberations of the forthcoming conference at Bombay.

Young India, 13-11-1924

281. LETTER TO MAHOMED ALI

November 11, 1924

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Mahadev would not give me *Navajivan* Manager's letter but I insisted. I have read it. I feel deeply hurt and humiliated. I was not prepared for such a letter to you from the *Navajivan*. I dare not divest myself of responsibility for that letter. But I see that my life must close in that imperfect fashion. An imperfect man is gambling with life and burning his fingers continuously. That is the reason why some of the best men of the world have ever chosen to live alone in the company of their Maker. I have neither the heart nor the courage to part company with Swami. He is a good man. He is brave; he is honest. He has no prejudices of race or religion. But he has something in him which makes him act offensively at times. I must ask you to forgive him for my sake. And if you will forgive him then you must tell me all you think *Navajivan* owes you. This will save me much worry.

I write this because when we meet we are full of politics and philosophy. Domestic matters are trifles for us. But they occupy the principal part of my life. They teach me to know my limitations.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

282. LETTER TO FULCHAND SHAH

Kartik Sud 15 [*November 11, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I do remember your previous letter. I did not ask Mahadev to write to you because I hoped to do so myself. Meanwhile I became

[1] From the postmark

very irregular and later went to Calcutta. Your letter was so urgent that it required an immediate reply. I can now only give you satisfaction by offering an apology. I am writing to Vallabhbhai to give you Rs. 5,000. The sum would be quite enough for you as you say. I am sure I shall reach the Ashram in the last week of this month. Please meet me then, so that I can explain things to you further.

We shall also talk about Shivlalbhai's land, and consider how far it is morally right to run the Wadhwan school with outside help. This question applies to many schools.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2823. Courtesy: Shardabehn Shah

283. LETTER TO LAKSHMI

Kartik Sud 15 [*November 11, 1924*]

[CHI. LA][1] KSHMI[2],

I had received your second letter. You should improve your handwriting still further. You should cultivate the habit of writing regularly to Dudabhai and me.

I hope you are quite happy. I hope to reach there most probably by the end of this (English) month.[3] You must spin regularly and get up [early]. I wish to hear everybody saying,"Lakshmi is now a good girl."

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6100. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] The source is damaged here.

[2] Daughter of Dudabhai and Danibehn who became inmates of Sabarmati Ashram soon after it was founded in May 1915; she was entrusted to the care of Gandhiji in October 1920.

[3] Gandhiji reached Sabarmati on November 26, 1924.

284. TELEGRAM TO B. SUBRAHMANYAM[1]

[After *November 11, 1924*]

RECEIVED LETTER[2]. MY DEEP SYMPATHY WITH YOU. THINK"YOUNG INDIA" ANSWERS MOST QUESTIONS. FORTHCOMING ISSUE ANSWERS MORE.[3] AM PERSONALLY AS FIRM NON-CO-OPERATOR AS EVER.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 11716

285. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI[4]

DARYAGANJ,
DELHI,
November 12, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

You must have read[5] Maulana Mahomed Ali's invitation to the forthcoming conference between the All-India Congress Committee and the representatives of other public associations. I hope that you will be able to attend the conference. The idea is to focus, if it is at all possible, every variety of opinion on the Bengal repression, which so far as I can judge, is directed against constitutional agitation when it becomes inconvenient to the Government, rather than anarchical activity. The idea further is to find out whether it is possible to bring together on the Congress platform all parties for joint work on a common constructive programme conducive to national growth, each party otherwise retaining its own individuality. I am sure that if you can attend, your co-operation and advice will be valuable to the conference in coming to a conclusion satisfactory to all parties.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, p. 145

[1] Secretary, Provincial Khadi Board, Sitanagaram, Godavary District, Andhra

[2] Dated November 11

[3] Regarding the joint statement with Swaraj Party leaders

[4] This appears to be a circular letter addressed also to G. A. Natesan (G.N. 2221) and Dr. Sapru (G.N. 7592).

[5] The G. N. version has"seen" instead of"read".

286. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

DELHI,
November 12, 1924

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

It does appear to me to be necessary to have a flying column of workers, Hindu and Mohammedan, who would on a moment's notice be ready to go to afflicted parts for investigation. We may not wait always for distinguished men to go. Take for instance the case sent to you yesterday. If the statements made are true, the culprits should be exposed. If they are false, newspaper reporters should be brought to book. The investigation should be prompt and thorough. I am preparing Mahadev for the work and am trying to induce Pyarelal. The latter is unnecessarily diffident. Will Manzar Ali do the work? He may be paid for it? He should have no objection to accepting remuneration. His spinning work need not be disturbed. His activity may be confined to U.P. only, though I would prefer not to have any restrictions unless we get an army of workers in the field. For the case sent to you yesterday, I hope you will send some one at once. What about the case that was sent to you some weeks ago?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I take it you will be in Bombay with Father on Thursday morning if not earlier. I reach there that morning. Mrs. Naidu is leaving here tomorrow morning.

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

287. LETTER TO SHWAIB QURESHI

November 12, 1924

MY DEAR SHWAIB,

Mrs. Naidu tells me you are in a most dejected mood and have almost become a misanthrope having lost faith in men and things. If it is so, it is unworthy of you whom I have always known and heard of

as a man of God. That you are oversensitive I have discovered for myself. But that sensitiveness can be got rid of without much difficulty. Dejection is not so easy. Why have you become so? We have a long and weary battle to fight. It may become short if God so wills. But may a soldier grumble if the battle is found to be long and weary? Not surely for him to grumble. If others falter he who has faith becomes correspondingly stronger. I would like you to be stronger and more determined for all the weakness and confusion around us. So please cheer up. Open out your heart.

Kristodas was telling me you had not yet returned the Gulburga report duly completed. Do please send it or keep it ready when I come there on 20th. I hope to leave by the Express on the 18th. Probably Hakim Sahib and Dr. Ansari will be with me.

Kristodas stayed behind for a week. His people wanted to meet him badly. He therefore went to Chandpur. He returns on or before 18th.

Mrs. Naidu leaves tomorrow to prepare for the Conference.

You may not know that I am now housed at Dr. Ansari's.

With love,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

288. LETTER TO LAJPAT RAI

C/O DR. ANSARI,

DARYAGANJ,

November 12, 1924

DEAR LALAJI,

You will please forgive me for not replying to your letter earlier. As you know it had to run away to Calcutta where I had not a minute to spare for writing. I am yet regaining lost strength.

What shall I do in Rawalpindi? I observe that Hindus have even accepted terms from the Commissioner. I can bring them no comfort. I cannot even get at the truth. I cannot add to their creature comforts. That part is being attended to by various bodies. The one thing I can usefully do I am rendered powerless to do. If you still think I should

go to Rawalpindi I would go. But this can now be only after the Bombay meeting.

Then there is our meeting. Dr. Satyapal[1] says that P. P. Conference is to take place during the 1st week of December. Will you be there till then? Shall we meet at that time or earlier? I must leave here on Tuesday next. Are you going to Bombay? Will your health permit? If you are not going to Bombay and if you want me to meet before December, please wire. I must leave here for Bombay on the 18th instant, that is, Tuesday. Monday is *dies non*. The only thing possible is for me to leave here on Friday night, pass Saturday with you and leave on Saturday night returning here on Sunday. If that is not done we can meet only in the beginning of December, i.e., if we don't meet in Bombay. You may now command me as you will.

I would like your views on the statement signed by Das, Motilal and myself. The situation is as complex as it possibly can be. And the worst of it is that though everybody looks to me to find a solution I seem to fit in nowhere. My plan seems to so many of my educated countrymen to be hopelessly impracticable whereas to me it seems to be the only practicable plan before the country.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

After I had written the foregoing, I received yours of the 11th instant. If after you have read the foregoing you think that I should proceed to Rawalpindi before going to Bombay, please wire. I will start at once and if you join me at Lahore we can talk on the way. All this will mean in my present state of health a great strain but it won't be unbearable if I must go through it. Please wire on receipt of this what you would have me do—whether you want me to go to Pindi or to come to you for a day. If you do send me to Pindi, I can be there only for a day. For I must leave on Tuesday night for Bombay.

I have no idea whatsoever of settling the pact at Bombay. I fully agree with you that it cannot be rushed. There must be a thorough investigation before any conclusion is arrived at. Nor is the conference going to function about swaraj. It may be possible to have a small committee to draft a scheme for submission to a similar conference. In the main, however, the conference will confine itself to

[1] Congress leader of the Punjab

the answer to repression and to the question of all parties joining the Congress. The gentleman who came to see me today told me you were better and that at the present moment the Bombay climate might be better for you than the rigorous climate of the Punjab. But you are the best judge as to whether you can move out just now or not. I would not have you to imperil your health for the sake of the conference.

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

289. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

DELHI,

Kartik Vad 1 [*November 12, 1924*][1]

CHI. BHAI SHANTIKUMAR,

I got your invitation for Chi. Madhuri's marriage. May God grant long life to her and her husband and may all their aspirations be fulfilled.

Convey my regards to grandmother and father.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4697. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

290. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANNDIT

C/O DR. ANSARI,

DARYAGANJ,

Kartik Vad 1 [*November 12, 1924*][2]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your letter at Calcutta. I returned thence on Sunday. You need not worry about the mistakes in your letters to me. What if mistakes occur even in letters to persons of whatever status they be? Language is a medium for communication of thought. Everything is all right so long as there is nothing wrong in our thought. A demon sitting in an aeroplane is not worthy of our respect, but a sadhu sitting

[1] Gandhiji was at Delhi on 12-11-1924.

[2] From the postmark

in a bullock cart is. Go to Hajira as soon as you can. I must leave for Bombay on the 18th. I shall have to stay there for about three days. I shall then proceed to the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. VASUMATI

C/O MESSRS STRAUSS & CO.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 460. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

291. TELEGRAM TO ABUL KALAM AZAD[1]

[On or after *November 12, 1924*]

MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD

TRY BE BOMBAY THURSDAY MORNING SELF REACHING THEN.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 11718

292. THE AGREEMENT

I thank God that He gave me strength to surrender to the Swarajists all that it was possible for me to surrender—much more than I or many friends had expected. I must acknowledge my indebtedness to the Swarajists for their accommodation. I know that many do not put the same emphasis that I do on the constructive part of the programme. With many the stiffening of the franchise was the bitterest pill and yet for the sake of unity and for the sake of the country they have yielded. All honour to them for so doing.

The agreement puts Swarajists on a par with the No-changers. It was inevitable if voting and all it means was to be avoided. Non-violence means utmost accommodation compatible with one's

[1] This and five identical telegrams to Konda Venkatappayya, C. Rajagopalachari, Jamnalal Bajaj, Gangadharrao Deshpande and Jairamdas Daulatram were sent after the receipt on November 12 of a telegram, dated November 11, from Motilal Nehru which read:"Mahadev's letter. Too late to post invitations after consulting you and Das. Suggest your wiring associations named by Mahomed Ali inviting representatives also prominent individuals on behalf of yourself, Das and me."

principles. Swarajists claim to be a growing body. That they have made an impression on the Government cannot be gainsaid. Opinions may differ as to its value but it is not possible to question the fact itself. They have shown determination, grit, discipline and cohesion and have not feared to carry their policy to the point of defiance. Once assume the desirability of entering Councils and it must be admitted that they have introduced a new spirit into the Indian Legislatures. That their very brilliance takes the nation's mind away from itself is to one like me regrettable, but so long as our ablest men continue to believe in Council-entry, we must make the best of the Legislatures. Though an uncompromising No-changer, I must not only tolerate their attitude and work with them, but I must even strengthen them wherever I can.

If they will not decide matters of important differences by means of the vote, the No-changers can carry on Congress work only by mutual consent and forbearance unless, not wishing to fight, they will retire from Congress control altogether. It is recognized that neither party can do without the other. Both occupy an important position in the country. The Congress was weakened by the secession of the Liberals and the Besantites. The cleavage was inevitable because they were opposed to non-co-operation on principle. We must avoid further cleavage if it is at all possible. We must not lightly set up as principle mere matters of opinion and engage in pitched battles over them.

If the non-co-operation programme is suspended, as I feel sure it must be, it follows as a natural corollary that the Swaraj Party should have no odium attached to its activity. It is beside the purpose to say or examine what would have happened if the Congressmen had never thought of the Councils. We have to take the situation as it stands today and suit ourselves to it or make it suit us, if that is possible.

Lastly, the Bengal situation demanded that No-changers gave the Swaraj Party the strongest support that it was in their power to give.

"But", said some of the No-changers and others to me,"how can you subscribe to a document which says that the Government have really attacked the Swaraj Party and not the anarchists? Are you not unjust to the Government?" This attitude pleased me and flattered me. It pleased me to notice in my questioners a sincere desire to do justice to a government they do not like. It flattered my pride in that my questioners expected from me exact judgment and fullest justice. I

confessed to them that I had against the Government the greatest prejudice based on past experience, that the writings in the British and British-owned Indian Press had prepared me for an attack on the Swaraj Party, that it was the declared policy of the Government to lop off"tall poppies" and that whilst it was possible that among the arrested there may be some with anarchical tendencies, it was nevertheless a fact that the vast majority of them were Swarajists and that if it was a fact, as the Government contended, that the anarchists were a large party, it was curious that the Government could find in the main only Swarajists to lay their hands upon. I told them further that if there was an extensive and active anarchical organization, the fiercest spirits were likely to be outside the Swaraj Party rather than inside it, that no arms, it is said, were found by the police during their night search. Nothing that my questioners told me in reply shook my belief and I am inclined to think that if I did not bring my questioners round to my belief, I at least convinced them that I had good grounds for my opinion and that the burden lay upon the Government to show that they had no designs upon the Swaraj Party in Bengal.

But the proposed suspension does not affect the individual non-co-operators. They are not only entitled to hold to their views but would be very little worth if they gave up their personal on-co-operation. For instance, suspension of the non-co-operation programme cannot mean for me recall of my medals or resumption of practice or sending my children to Government schools. Thus, whilst suspension will leave a convinced non-co-operator free to retain his non-co-operation, for those who took up non-co-operation only as a policy and in obedience to the Congress call, it makes it open, if they like, to recall their non-co-operation without the slightest stigma attaching to their so doing. Further, if suspension is agreed upon it is not open to any Congressman as such to preach non-co-operation as part of the Congress policy or programme. On the other hand it is open to him if he so chooses to dissuade people from taking up non-co-operation during the period of suspension.

Then there is the spinning franchise. I wanted much more khaddar on all occasions and spinning 2,000 yards per month by all Congressmen except in case of illness or like disability. This has been watered down to wearing khaddar on political occasions and Congress business and spinning by deputy even for unwillingness. But here again it was not possible for me to insist up to the breaking point. In

the first place the Maharashtra party had constitutional difficulty in agreeing to spinning or wearing khaddar being part of the franchise at all, and in the second place the Swaraj Party as a body does not attach the same importance either to the wearing of khaddar or to hand-spinning. It does not consider them to be indispensable as I do either for the attainment of swaraj or for the exclusion of foreign-cloth. It was, therefore, from their standpoint, a tremendous concession to have agreed[1] to make khaddar and hand-spinning part of the franchise even in the modified form. I, therefore, gratefully acknowledge the concession they have made for the sake of unity. Let those who are disposed to grumble at the modification remember that it is a great advance to rise from the nominal four-anna franchise to a tangible and effective franchise that requires every Congressman to testify his belief in the desirability of making India self-supporting so far as her clothing requirements are concerned and that too by reviving the old Indian industry of hand-spinning and thus distributing wealth where it is most needed.

It has been urged that everybody will take advantage of the relaxation and the idea of spinning as sacrifice will break down and that the wearing of khaddar will be confined only to political occasions and Congress business. I should be sorry if such an untoward result were to follow the modification. Those who fear such disaster seem to forget that spinning by every Congressman was as yet a mere idea of one man. He has now resigned himself to a modification of his proposal. Surely, therefore, the embodiment in the franchise of the idea even in a modified form is a distinct gain and must increase the number of wearers of khaddar and voluntary spinners.

Moreover it must be remembered that it is one thing to embody reforms in recommendatory or even obligatory resolutions; it is totally another thing to make them part of franchise. Any test for franchise should have no vagueness about it and should be easily capable of being carried out. For, inability to carry it out means disfranchisement. The wearing of khaddar on all occasions and for all purposes may not be possible even for the best of us.

In practice, however, it will be found that the vast majority of us who can ill-afford a variety of costumes will find it necessary to wear

[1] The source has"to their agreeing".

khaddar on all occasions, if we have to wear it on all Congress occasions. For an ardent Congressman every occasion is a Congress occasion and he or she would be an indifferent Congressman or Congresswoman who has no Congress work during consecutive twenty-four hours. We should have on our roll thousands of voters or original members. They cannot have many uniforms nor can they have money to buy yarn spun by others. They must spin themselves and thus give at least half an hour's labour to the nation. And a Congress volunteer who does not spin himself will be hard put to it to convince the candidates for Congress membership of the necessity of spinning. Everything must, therefore, rest on an honest and loyal working of the proposal.

The agreement is what it professes to be—a strong recommendation. I have signed it in my individual capacity. Deshbandhu Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru have signed it for the Swaraj Party. It, therefore, is a recommendation by the Swaraj Party and myself to all Congressmen and others for consideration and adoption. I want it to be considered on merits. I would urge everyone to eliminate me from consideration. Unless the recommendation is accepted on merits it will be difficult either to achieve the political unity we want and should have or to secure the exclusion of foreign- cloth which we must have and which is possible only by universal spinning and universal use of khaddar. If the proposals to suspend non-co-operation or to give the Swaraj Party adequate hearty recognition in the Congress or to make the wearing of khaddar and hand-spinning, whether personally or by deputy, part of the franchise do not commend themselves to the Congressmen and the others who are invited, they should reject them and unhesitatingly press their own solution in the attention of the nation, Deep cherished convictions cannot and must not be set aside from any consideration whatsoever.

Young India, 13-11-1924

293. NOTES ON THE AGREEMENT

HOW TO WORK

In these notes I propose to take up the agreement between the Swaraj Party and myself where I have left it in the leading article.[1] our

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

recommendation is accepted by the forthcoming meeting, it means revolutionizing the Congress organization and turning the members from being merely vote-registering machines once or twice a year into day-to-day workers and contributing materially to the chief national activity. It will make the Congress a huge manufacturing and receiving and distributing depot. The work cannot he organized without method, industry, punctuality, patriotism, self-sacrifice and strictest honesty and the required skill. Though anybody can become a Congress member by paying four annas till the Congress accepts the proposal, if the forthcoming meeting approves of the proposals every province must begin to organize as if the franchise was accepted by the Congress. That is to say, propaganda must be carried on among the existing members advising them of the proposed change and providing them with the necessary facility for learning spinning and procuring the wheel, etc. The question will have to be considered as to how the yarn is to be collected and how disposed of. Without any Congress resolution, save the one applicable to members of Congress executives, and by simple exhortation through these columns we have today over seven thousand men and women spinning voluntarily. Their number is on the increase. It is, therefore, reasonable to suppose that when and if the Congress accepts the franchise proposal we should be able to reach at least one hundred thousand in a few months. Assuming the average output of yarn to be 5 *tolas* of 20 counts per month per member it would mean 312.5 maunds of yarn per month or 12,500 dhotis or saris, 45 inches in width and 6 yards in length. And when we remember that labour on the material up to spinning is to be free, the dhotis must compete with any similar article on the market. If only the nation could concentrate all effort on this one national work, exclusion of foreign-cloth can be achieved without the slightest difficulty and by means the most honourable and non-violent.

THE FORTHCOMING MEETING

But all depends on the forthcoming meeting. It is to be a meeting not only of the A.I.C.C. but of representatives of all Provincial Committees and Associations. I hope that there will be a generous response on the part of these representatives to Maulana Mahomed Ali's invitation. The joint meeting will have to decide not o nly the question of healing the breach in the Congress itself but also of inducing other distinguished leaders to join the Congress. The

meeting has also to frame an effective policy in answer to the Bengal repression. Whatever our differences as to the method of reaching our goal, there are no two opinions about the desirability of ending the exercise of arbitrary powers.

There is no freedom for India so long as one man, no matter how highly placed he may be, holds in the hollow of his hands the life, property and honour of millions of human beings. It is an artificial, unnatural and uncivilized institution. The end of it is an essential preliminary to swaraj.

OUR HELPLESSNESS

This is apparent. We seem to have lost all power beyond passing resolutions. But if we could all unite on the constructive programme, it will by itself be a step towards regaining self-confidence and power of action. It must be clear to everyone that if Hindus and Mussalmans regain their senses, if Hindus treat untouchables as their brothers and if we have so popularized spinning and khaddar as to be within easy reach of exclusion of foreign-cloth, we should not need to do any more to command attention to our will. What is more, we should need neither secret societies for the promotion of violence nor open non-violent disobedience. Such a desirable consummation can be effected only by united, determined and ceaseless pursuit of the constructive programme. That, therefore, is my method of effective reply to the volcanic eruption of repression or the chronic and helpless subordination of a whole nation.

OTHER THINGS?

Mr. Andrews drew my attention even during my fast to a note in the *Modern Review* expressing surprise at the omission from the constructive programme of the movement for abstinence from intoxicating drinks and drugs. Other friends drew attention much earlier to the omission of reference to national schools. I may inform these friends that the constructive programme that forms part of the agreement contains only those items without which swaraj appears to me to be an impossibility. Unaided and unaffiliated national schools are there and they must be maintained. They help us to carry the programme through. A drink and drugs reform is silently but surely going on. It cannot be given up. One sees no excitement about it because we have done away with picketing as it led to violence. Nor for that matter are we going to give up the idea of

promoting private arbitrations. Only, none of these things is absolutely essential for achieving swaraj in the sense in which the three items included in the agreement are. Nor is there any difference of opinion among national workers on these as there is on the three items. In mentioning national schools and private arbitration in the same breath as the drink and drugs reform, I do not wish to be understood to give the same value to them. The drink and drugs reform is a problem of the highest national importance. If by any honest means we could be wholly free today from the drink and the opium evils, I should adopt and advise them now. But we have no such heroic remedy. Apart from picketing we are powerless to deal with the evil, root and branch, till we have an effective voice in the Government of the country. Happily, bad as the evil is it is not national vice. It is confined to a small though unfortunately growing minority. Hence there would be no opposition to liquor or opium prohibition, if we had the power. It is the Government that comes in the way of the nation becoming free from the drink and the drug curse. Not that we shall ever make drinkers sober by legislation. But we can and ought to penalize the drink and the drug habit and by closing all liquor and opium shops and dens make it as difficult as possible to indulge in it.

IS IT COMPULSION?

The reader must have read Mr. Stokes' passionate protest against hand-spinning being made compulsory for every Congress member. It is evident to me that his excessive regard for liberty of the individual has disabled him from distinguishing between voluntary acceptance and compulsion. Compulsion means submission of protestants to the thing they oppose under pain of being fined or imprisoned. They cannot escape the obligation or the penalty by remaining outside the corporation of which they find themselves members. But when a man joins a voluntary association such as the Congress he does so willingly and tacitly or explicitly undertakes to obey its rules. These rules generally include submission of the minority to the wishes of the majority. The voluntary nature of every act of every member is clear from the fact that he can secede whenever the majority pass a rule which is in conflict with his conscience. Mr. Stokes' reasoning is subversive of all corporate self-government. Every franchise has some condition attached to it. As a rule there is opposition from some to every form of restrictive franchise. May the opposers consider the restriction carried by the

majority compulsion? Obviously not. For if they may, then there can never be any corporate activity.

When the new Congress creed was passed in 1920, there was a minority that opposed it on principle and therefore seceded when it was carried by a majority. Under the old creed many more were kept out because they could not conscientiously subscribe to it. In either case I hold that the majority had a right to pass the rules. Whether in the one case the restriction was wise and in the other relaxation was unwise is a matter of opinion. And so in the matter of the present proposal to make hand-spinning part of the Congress franchise may be bad policy and may kill the very object that I have in view, but I submit that there is nothing inherently wrong in it, that it is not wrong in principle, that it is an unconscious misuse of language to call it compulsion. On merits I have no misgivings. If hand-spinning is an effective method of making India self-supporting, it must be made part of the franchise. It is the best way of expressing national will and determination.

Young India, 13-11-1924

294. NOTES

PUBLIC DEBTS

A correspondent writes:

> You may be aware that a resolution, moved by Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar in the open Congress at Gaya in the year 1922 regarding the repudiation of public debts that might be incurred by the Government Of India after 31-12-22, was passed. It is needless to state that many responsible men in the public life of our country are eager to know your views on the resolution.

I am sorry to have to confess my ignorance of the resolution in question. But now that it has been brought to my notice, Ihave no hesitation in approving of it. I congratulate both Mr. Rajagopalachari and the Congress upon the passage of that resolution. We may be, as we are, powerless today, but the world should know what we think of the wasteful and enormous expenditure of India's money. The late Lord Salisbury called it a process of bleeding. I should imagine that any swaraj scheme would include an impartial inquiry into the commitments of the Government of India or the India Office and an

insistence upon a readjustment of the financial transactions of the outgoing Government. I therefore regard the resolution as both necessary and honourable. It may excite ridicule today. But, then we come to our own, we should be able to point with pride to the fact of our having given due notice. For, in spite of all I have said about the limitations of the Congress, who can deny that it is the most representative of the nation? It is for us to make it so representative as to command respect and attention.

A NATIONAL LOSS

Many readers of *Young India* know Sjt. Dalbahadur Giri by name only. Some may not have even heard his name. Yet he was one of the bravest of national workers. As I am writing for *Young India,* I have a wire from Kalimpong advising me of the death of this comparatively unknown patriot. I tender my condolence to his family. He was a cultured Gurkha and was doing good work among the Gurkhas in and near Darjeeling. During 1921, in common with the thousands, he was also imprisoned for his non-co-operation activities. He became seriously ill during his imprisonment. He was discharged only a few months ago. He leaves I understand a large family destitute of means of livelihood. An appeal was published on his behalf in the Bengali Press. I hope that the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee will find out all the facts about the late Sjt. Dalbahadur Giri's family and render such aid as may be necessary.

Young India, 13-11-1924

295. REMARKS IN SCHOOL VISITORS' BOOK

DELHI,
November 13, 1924

I am happy to visit this"Modern School". Its cleanliness and tidy up-keep is commendable. I have only one apprehension: if this upsurge of modernism destroys our ancient values, it will be a great loss to the young men and women of our country. I venture to voice this fear because I see a sincerity of purpose in the creation of this institution and wish it all progress.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

296. LETTER TO COL. MEL

AS AT SABARMATI,
Novmeber 13, 1924

DEAR COL. MEL,

Mr. Pragji K. Desai[1] whom I know well and who was with me in South Africa is at present a prisoner in the Hyderabad Central Jail. He was convicted some time ago at Surat under section 124 A of the Indian Penal Code.

I am told that

1. Mr. Desai has lost in weight,

2. he is isolated from the rest of the prisoners and has therefore no human contact save that of his keepers,

3. the greens he gets are said to be as a rule grassy and uneatable,

4. he has applied for permission to spin cotton but he is permitted only to twist prepared yarn. If the authorities are not prepared to supply Mr. Desai with slivers, I can arrange for such supply if permitted.

Rather than publish the above information in the Press, I am passing it on to you for kind inquiry. I may state that Mr. Desaiis a vegetarian and did not possess a robust constitution by any means when he was outside. In my opinion therefore he needs a light but nourishing diet such as milk and baker's bread.

I am,
Yours truly,

From a photostat: S.N. 11721

297. LETTER TO ROMAIN ROLLAND[2]

November 13, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I received your kind letter. Miss Slade[3] arrived a little later. What a treasure you have sent me. I shall try to be worthy of such a great

[1] Editor of the *Navayug*, Surat
[2] 1866-1944; French writer and pacifist
[3] Mirabehn

confidence. I shall do everything to help Miss Slade to become a little bridge between West and East. I am too imperfect to have a disciple. She will be my companion in my research (for truth) and as I am older and consequently more advanced in spiritual experience, I propose to share with you the honour of your paternity. Miss Slade shows a marvellous capacity for adaptation and we are already quite at ease with her. I leave Miss Slade to tell you the rest by asking her to speak to you of a French sister who has arrived at the Ashram just a few days before her.

From a copy: C.W. 8849. Courtesy: R.K. Prabhu

298. SPEECH AT RAMJAS COLLEGE, DELHI

November 13, 1924

Mahatmaji then addressed the students, sitting as usual. He excused himself for having come much earlier than the appointed time, the reason for which, he said, was that he had to attend the funeral of Bi-Amma. He advised the students not to follow his example in that respect but to cultivate the habit of time-sense. He referred to the wonderful punctuality of Gokhale. He said that Indians very much lacked the virtue of punctuality which should be specially cultivated.

He then referred to R. S. Kidar Nath's great sacrifice for the college and regretted that he could not visit the college before, when he is invited by Principal Gidwani some time back. He had wondered why Rai Sahib Kidar Nath established the college on a hill away from the city. When it was explained to him by Sukumar Babu on the way that the founder's ideal was *brahmacharya* and that he wanted to keep the students away from the attractions of cinemas and theatres, he was convinced. *Brahmacharya* is inherent in Hindu civilization, and Western civilization lacks it. It might be said the people of the West had prospered, but he would ask what was the age of their civilization. Egypt, Babylon, Greece and other great civilizations had perished, but Indian civilization still lives. The reason for it was, he said, that Indian civilization has what they had not, viz., *brahmacharya*.

He then quoted a verse from the *Bhagavata* about the control of the tongue. By control of the tongue he meant control of diet and speech. This he specially enjoined upon the students.

He next spoke about good company. His advice was that every student should strive to keep company with the best books and the best thoughts of the world. While he was a student, a class-fellow of his recommended to him to read Reynolds' novels, but he never read them in his life."Non-co-operate with all that is bad", said Mahatmaji.

He concluded by referring to the efficacy of prayer. He said that he had felt it specially while he was in jail. When the mind is full of prayerful thoughts, everything in the world seems good and agreeable. Prayer is essential for progress in life. The name of Rama or *Khuda* is sure to banish all evil thoughts and give new strength and energy.

He said he was still very weak and was not in a mood to speak more.

He left the college at about 3.30 p.m. amidst showers of flowers and shouts of *Vandemataram* and *Mahatma Gandhiki jai*.

The Hindustan Times, 15-11-1924

299. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[After *November 13, 1924*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

What about the suit filed by Brahmachari against Dr. Mehta and Avantikabehn?

Can we not have a carding-bow working eight hours [a day]? Would Tulsi Mehar, Navin and others who are good carders join in this? We should be in a position to make a fairly good quantity of slivers by ourselves. This matter was altogether left out of our talk.

Dalbahadur Giri has expired. He has left behind a helpless widow and children, whom he had asked to go to us. I have sent word that the widow may come. We shall have to support them. Yesterday there was a telegram from her saying she was willing to come over if her fare could be arranged for. I have wired back saying that she should get it from Dasbabu. In case she arrives there during my absence, you may have to face some difficulty. If she comes, please accommodate her.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6195. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] From the reference to the death of Dalbahadur Giri; *vide*"Notes, 13-11-1924, sub-title,"A National Loss"

300. MESSAGE TO"WORLD TOMORROW"[1]

DELHI ,
November 14, 1924

TO

THE"WORLD TOMORROW"

396, BROADWAY

NEW YORK

U. S. A.

My study and experience of non-violence have proved to me that it is the greatest force in the world. It is the surest method of discovering the truth and it is the quickest because there is no other. It

works silently, almost imperceptibly, but none the less surely. It is the one constructive process of Nature in the midst of incessant destruction going on about us. I hold it to be a superstition to believe that it can work only in private life. There is no department of life public or private to which that force cannot be applied. But this non-violence is impossible without complete self-effacement.

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

301. LETTER TO R. SHARMA

SABARMATI,
November 14, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

Will you please supply me as early as possible with the figures on the following when non-co-operation was at its height and now?

The number of titles given up.

The number of boys and girls leaving Government schools and colleges.

The number of suspensions of practice.

The number of spinning-wheels at work.

The quantity of hand-spun khaddar produced.

[1] Of December 1924, which was"A Gandhi Number"

The number of handlooms.

The number of national schools and colleges with attendance of boys and girls.

The nature and volume of work done among untouchables.

The nature and quantity of temperance (liquor and opium work) done.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 11723

302. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

Kartik Vad 3 [*November 14, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI KAKA[2],

After writing an article[3] for the *Kelavani* issue I have started thinking more about children's education. Can't we try it on the Ashram children? That is, if the ideas stated there appeal to you. A child calls a pot a pot, but he does not draw a picture of it. Similarly he may read the alphabet but may not draw pictures of the letters. A child hears a new word before he reads it and he pronounces it or rather repeats it as he hears it. Why shouldn't we stop Lakshmi, Rasik and the other children from writing and teach them first to draw? Could we not give them a good many things orally? Just now they should use the hand for drawing only. For this the teacher should know the rudiments of drawing. I am now going deeper into the subject and hence stop here. For the present just think over it. More when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtasy: Narayan Desai

[1] As given in the source

[2] Dattatreya Balakrishna Kalelkar (b. 1885); educationist, writer and constructive worker; a close associate of Tagore and Gandhiji; Padma Vibhushan

[3] *Vide*"A Way", 20-10-1924.

303. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

November 14/15, 1924

MY DEAR RAJAGOPALACHARI,

Swami wires he is sending me your scathing indictment of the agreement. Let this be as balm to your lacerated heart. I must convert or be converted or retire. Bardoli was the boldest experiment in non-violence in one direction. The agreement is the boldest experiment in non-violence in another direction. I do not regret Bardoli because I had the courage to retrace my steps. I hope I shall have less reason to regret this step. Perhaps my article in *Young India* will soothe you a bit. I wish you had come to Bombay. But I will not press.

You will see V. G. Desai's translation of the *History of Satyagraha in South Africa* published in *Current Thought*[1]. Please read and send your criticism of the translation to V. G. Desai, Shahibag, Ahmedabad, or to me. Hope you are well. Cheer, boys, Cheer. No more of idle sorrow.

Yours,

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

304. LETTER TO J. B. KRIPALANI

November 15, 1924

MY DEAR PROFESSOR,

Kishorelal has shot at me the bomb you have fired. I am unaffected by the reasons which he and others thought had really actuated you in firing the bomb. He has now withdrawn that part of the letter and apologized. So that chapter is closed. In any case I know you too well to misunderstand you. Many things act upon us against our wills and unconsciously. It is therefore always unsafe to go behind the written word and try to read men's minds. I therefore take the reason for your resignation partly what you have given, and therefore I want to tell you that you should have written to me before resigning;

[1] A monthly published by S. Ganesan, Madras

you should have talked to Banker[1]. I had forgotten all about Banaras because he had, I imagined, taken over the burden off my shoulders. I have transferred your letter to him and would like you to see him and discuss with him the whole situation. This means of course that it is the financial burden that is preying upon your mind and not the administrative regarding Banaras.

Tell Kikibehn I always think of her. I hope to meet her soon and to find her as cheerful as ever if not stronger and better in body.

Yours,

BAPU

From the manuscript or Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

305. LETTER TO SWAMIJI

Kartik Vad 4, November 15, 1924

SWAMIJI,

I have your three questions.

1. If commercialized, the power of *tapasya* ceases to be.

2. *Yajna* is performed for acquiring strength. Hence external protection is necessary while it is in progress.

3. In the account of Rama's exploits, I have found nothing to show that he gained victory through physical strength.

4. In the story of Krishna, many things are of an allegorical nature. There is evidence only of soul-force, not of physical force.

Even today we see that the power of the intellect surpasses the strength of the body; but both these appear insignificant before soul-force.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Shankarlal Banker; social worker and labour leader; associated with *The Bombay Chronicle* and Satyagraha Sabha, Bombay; printer and publisher of *Young India*

306. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

November 16, 1924

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Just a line to wish you many happy returns of the day for the service of the motherland and for self-realization.

If it is possible, do come with Father.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

A Bunch of Old Letter, p. 41

307. STATEMENT ON KOHAT[1]

DELHI,

November 16, 1924

Mr. Gandhi has issued the following statement regarding the visit to Rawalpindi and the settlement of the Kohat question:

I have seen references in the Press asking me to go to Rawalpindi to meet the refugees from Kohat. I have also had messages to the same effect from them directly. I am extremely sorry that I am unable at the present moment to respond to the call. My health is not such as yet to bear the strain of continuous journies, and I dare not postpone my visit to Bombay to attend the forthcoming conference in connection with Bengal repression. I hope, however, immediately on my return from Bombay, to proceed to Rawalpindi. Meanwhile, I wish to give my assurance to the refugees that they have never been out of my mind. As soon after the fast as I was able to move about a little, I made all preparations to go to Kohat and applied for permission to proceed there. Had I been permitted, it would have been my first duty to go there in the company of some Hindu and Mussalman friends. I felt that I could then have rendered useful service, and in company with the friends, contributed my humble share towards reconciliation between the Hindus and Mussalmans of Kohat. But, my visit to Kohat having been prohibited, I did not feel

[1] *Young India*, 20-11-1924, published this under"Notes" with the subtitle"Kohat Refugees".

that a visit to Rawalpindi would serve any useful purpose. I knew that many friends were assisting the refugees and that Pandit Malaviyaji was giving special attention to them, and even though, in obedience to the call from the refugees, as already stated, I shall go to Rawalpindi, I realize that, beyond giving comfort to the refugees, I might be of little service. This much, however, I shall venture to urge upon the attention of the refugees, that the Kohat question is an all-India question. Both the Hindus and Mussalmans of India are interested in a proper, honourable and correct solution. Any settlement, therefore, that they may agree to, should be viewed from a national as distinguished from a parochial standpoint, and they would be well-advised before accepting any settlement to secure the approval of Hindu and Mussalman leaders. Indeed, I will venture respectfully to tender the same advice to the Government. I am glad to observe that they have repudiated the terms of the settlement said to have been offered by them. The Government have declared themselves in favour of unity. It would be an earnest of good faith if they would take the public into confidence and secure public approval of any terms of settlement that they might propose for the acceptance of the two communities.

New India, 17-11-1924

308. MESSAGE TO TAMILNAD CONFERENCE, TIRUVANNAMALAI

[Before *November 17, 1924*]

I hope the Conference will understand and appreciate the agreement between the Swarajists and myself in my individual capacity. Proper appreciation of non-violence will give the key to understanding the agreement. Non-co-operation is left untouched by the agreement. In any event, I hope the Conference will result in a greater use of Khaddar.[1]

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 19-11-1924

[1] The Conference, held on November 17, endorsed the agreement and stressed the need to wear khaddar.

309. LETTER TO SATISH CHANDRA MUKERJEE

November 17, 1924

DEAR SATISH BABU,

I have replied to your wire. You must be the best judge as to what Kristodas should do. You know my views on promises. Kristodas had definitely decided to come here on or before 18th. If it was humanly possible, he should have fulfilled it. But I recognize that no promise not made by him through you or approved by you can be finally binding on him. I entertain very high notions about the relations between master and disciple. Therefore I had no hesitation in wiring you as I did. I know that Kristodas's welfare depends on his implicit obedience to you. I dare not therefore interpose myself between you and him. He must come to me when you send him—for me I do want him. I feel morally certain that the present mood is due to over-sensitiveness.

I reach Bombay on 20th, stay there probably till 23rd, pass the end of the month at Sabarmati and reach Rawalpindi on 3rd or 4th December.

I use your oil daily and think of you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5606

310. LETTER TO LAJPAT RAI

November 17, 1924

MY DEAR LALAJI,

I have your letter and your messages through Bharucha and Lala Amirchand. You will, I hope, forgive me for not responding to your call. I have now publicly given the reasons for my inability. There are moments when health has not only to be risked but sacrificed. I did not feel that there was such a moment. I eat well, I sleep well, walk a bit, can travel to Bengal, am travelling to Bombay. I know that travelling to Rawalpindi would not have killed me. And death on the battlefield is welcome to a soldier. But was it worth while? I know my limitations. I am a surgeon and not a physician. The

refugees will not submit to the surgical knife. At least that is my fear, and if they will, I know that a few days only will not matter, but probably they will be only then ready for the knife. Meanwhile they need merely watching and musing and probably a little cleansing and a little tonic. So much for Rawalpindi. . . [1]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

311. LETTER TO AMIRCHAND C. BOMBWAL

[Before *November 18, 1924*][2]

DEAR FRIEND,

Though I think we have never met personally I know you through Pandit Malaviyaji. He spoke to me of you in glowing language and told me how brave, honest and self-sacrificing you were. He told me also that you counted your health of no cost in serving the refugees. This is however to tell you, and through you the refugees, how sorry I am that I cannot come to Rawalpindi at the present moment. My objective was Kohat. That having fallen through for the time being, I was in no hurry to go to Rawalpindi. I knew also that Panditji was in close touch with you and I knew also that I could be of little assistance in bringing about reconciliation unless I could go to Kohat and that too in proper company. But I see that my presence is considered necessary even in Rawalpindi, but it has not been possible. I will, however, come at the first opportunity and not later than the first week of December. I dare not delay my departure for Bombay. Meanwhile I would like to give you my own opinion on the situation as I understand it from this distance. The Kohat situation should be treated as an all-India question. For the whole of India is interested in what happens to the refugees. The latter should therefore inform the Government that they would be guided by the advice that they may receive from Hindu and Mohammedan leaders and that therefore the Government should invite them and settle the matter through them. I hope that the refugees will not be frightened by threats of arrests and the like. I am hoping that Panditji and Lalaji will be with you tomorrow or the day after. You may place this letter before them, and

[1] The rest of the letter is not given in the source.

[2] From the reference to Gandhiji's departure for Bombay

if they do not agree with my opinion, it should be dismissed from your minds. If Panditji and Lalaji disagree, you need not place my opinion before the refugees at all.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

312. LETTER TO RAJA OF KANIKA

AS AT SABARMATI,
November 18, 1924

DEAR RAJA SAHIB,

I thank you for your letter[1] of [October 25, 1924] and for your kind wishes. I have read the reply to the note prepared by my secretary from the documents in my possession. The only satisfactory way to deal with the matter is for me or someone on my behalf to go to the Raj territory and make a personal investigation so as to enable one to speak or write with authority on the subject. Whilst I was thinking of writing to you in this strain, I had the following from Mr. Andrews who, as you may be aware, has been helping me in editing *Young India* ever since the fast. The cutting was sent for publication but Mr. Andrews would not publish it without reference to me. On reading it, I decided to send it to you before publishing. Meanwhile I observe that other newspapers have published the news already. If you do not mind I would like to send Mr. Andrews to you so that he can see things for himself. He tells me he knows you very well and has kindly consented to go there. If Mr. Andrews goes he will be able to smooth matters and enable you to deal with such abuse, if any, as may exist and enable me to satisfy those who are constantly complaining to me of oppression of the ryot. Will you please wire your reply at Sabarmati to my proposal to send Mr. Andrews?

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 11733

[1] S. N. 15932

313. N0TES

BI-AMMA

It is difficult to think of Bi-Amma as dead. Who does not know the stately figure of Bi-Amma or her voice at public gatherings? Though old in years, she possessed the energy of youth. She travelled ceaselessly in the cause of the Khilafat and swaraj. A staunch follower of Islam, she realized that the cause of Islam, in so far as it depended on human effort, depended upon the freedom of India. She realized with equal conviction that freedom of India was impossible without Hindu-Muslim unity and khaddar. She therefore ceaselessly preached unity which had become an article of faith with her. She had discarded all her foreign or mill-made clothing and taken to khaddar. Maulana Mahomed Ali tells me she had enjoined upon him that on her death she should have nothing but khaddar. Whenever I had the privilege of going to her bedside, her inquiry was about swaraj and unity. The inquiry was invariably followed by the prayer that God might grant wisdom to Hindus and Mussalmans to understand the necessity of unity and that He may in His mercy let her live to see swaraj established. The best way in which we can treasure the memory of this brave and noble soul is to imitate her in her zeal for the common cause. Hinduism without unity and swaraj is as much in peril as Islam. Would that Hindus and Mussalmans had the common sense of Bi-Amma to appreciate this elementary fact. God grant her soul peace and the Ali Brothers strength to continue the mission bequeathed to them.

I must not omit to mention the impressive and solemn scene that I had the good fortune to witness on the night of Bi-Amma's death. Having heard that life was ebbing away in her, Sarojini Devi and I hurried to her bedside. She was surrounded by many members of the family. Dr. Ansari, the friend and physician of the family, was also in attendance. I heard no sobbing, though I noticed tears trickling down Maulana Mahomed Ali's cheeks. The Big Brother restrained himself with difficulty, though there was an unusual solemnity about his face. They were all chanting the name of Allah. One friend was reciting the last prayers. The *Comrade* Press was situated within earshot of Bi-Amma's bedroom. But the work was not interrupted for a single moment. Nor did the Maulana interrupt his own editorial duties.

Indeed no essential public duty was suspended. Maulan Shaukat Ali would not dream of my postponing my visit to the Ramjas College. And like a good soldier he kept the appointment he had made with the Hindus of Muzaffarnagar although he had to proceed there almost immediately after Bi-Amma's death. All this was as it should have been. Birth and death are not two different states, but they are different aspects of the same state. There is as little reason to deplore the one as there is to be pleased over the other.

LATE PARSI RUSTOMJEE

A cable received from Durban from his son gives me the sad news of the death of Rustomjee Jiwanjee Ghorkhodoo. For me it is a personal loss. He was a valued client, dear friend and faithful co-worker. He was as true a Parsi as he was a true Indian. He was an equally true man. He was an orthodox Parsi, but his Zoroastrianism was as broad as humanity itself. He befriended all without distinction. He could act pleasingly towards officials, but he could be unbending when the occasion demanded it. His word was as good as his bond. He was brave as a lion. He was chary of making promises, but if he made them, he strove his best to keep them. After he declared himself a satyagrahi, he never swerved even during the darkest hours of the movement, not even when the end seemed never to be coming. When he took the pledge, he was by no means a young man. Nor was he untrammelled by business pre-occupations. But he never counted the cost. He suffered losses without a murmur. He gave almost beyond his means and yet never unthinkingly. His charities were most catholic. He gave donations for mosques, madrasas, national schools. Many a young man owed his rise to Parsi Rustomjee, as he was called throughout South Africa. Personally I owe much to him. I have many friends in South Africa. But I have not known a warmer one. He harboured me when I was lynched. His house was a place of refuge for me and mine. People wonder why I am partial to Parsis. I am not partial, but I am thankful that I can bear testimony to their admirable virtues. So long as the memory of Parsi Rustomjee persists with me, so long will that portion of humanity claim my respectful admiration. If we had many Rustomjees in our public life, we should not be long in reaching our cherished goal. May his soul rest in peace, and may God give wisdom and strength to his two sons to follow in the footsteps of their noble father !

SUPERSTITIOUS PRACTICE

The following extract from a letter recently received by me will cause pain to the reader as it has to me:

> I am here in the very heart of the jungle villages where 90 per cent of the Gonds are living. While touring I happened to come to a village named Silagota in Dangargarh Tahsil of the Khairagarh estate of Chattisgarh Division in the Central Provinces. On Sunday last there was a great gathering from the surrounding villages. Many of them had come from a distance perhaps of more than 15 miles. I inquired into the cause of the gathering and came to know that for the past two years they had been enjoying every Sunday as a Gandhi day. On that day they do not work at all. Some men or women in the congregation are supposed to be visited by your spirit and are said to be inspired. They tell fortunes and promise children to barren women. I know this news will pain you. Can you not send one of your workers to stop this practice? If this practice of worshipping you is not stopped now, I think the day is not far off when they will actually place an idol of you in a *mandir* and commence worshipping you.

There is already enough superstition in our country No effort should be spared to resist further addition in the shape of Gandhi worship. Personally I have a horror of all adoration. I believe in adoring virtue apart from the wearer. And that can be done only after the wearer's death. Form is nothing. It is perishable. Virtue persists and incarnates in one person or another. The poor Gonds know nothing of me or my mission. I know I have no power to give any person anything. The very idea of my spirit visiting and possessing any persons is repugnant to me. The practice can only do harm and lead to fraud. I urge co-workers to put down the worship the correspondent describes. It is a sin to let simple folk such as the Gonds to be encouraged in the practice of superstition.

THE FORTHCOMING PUNJAB CONFERENCE

Mr. Bharucha, who is fast becoming a specialist as khadi vendor, after a successful selling tour in the Punjab complained to me that the khadi sales were likely to be interrupted by the excitement and preparations for the conference that is to take place early next month. I should have hoped otherwise. Preparations for conferences should always mean more demand for khadi. It should be specially so in the Punjab. When khadi had practically died out in other parts of India, the Punjab was still manufacturing and using khadi. And today the

Punjab is finding it difficult to use the khadi it manufactures. Let me hope that I shall not have to witness the humiliating spectacle of the conference pandal filled with men and women dressed in foreign or even mill-made cloth. The Punjabis should prove Mr. Bharucha's fears to be unjustified.

Young India, 20-11-1924

314. ON TRIAL

It is not to be wondered at that No-changers are intensely dissatisfied with the agreement arrived at between the Swarajists and myself. I have repeatedly admitted that I am but an humble explorer of the science of non-violence. Its hidden depths sometimes stagger me just as much as they stagger fellow-workers. I observe that the agreement seems just now to satisfy no one but the parties to it. Many Englishmen regard it as an ignominious surrender to the Swarajists on my part. Many No-changers regard it as a lapse, if not a betrayal. A friend says that it has caused consternation among students. Why, they ask, should they remain in national schools if non-co-operation is suspended? They are the greatest sufferers and they have not been considered in the pact at all. I hold a letter from an Andhra friend which arrests attention and calls for a reasoned reply.

Surrender on my part, it undoubtedly is. It is a conscious surrender, but not, as an English paper puts it, to the party of violence. I refuse to believe that the Swaraj Party is a party of violence. Such charges were I know levelled against even the late Dadabhai Naoroji and Justice Ranade. They were suspected and shadowed. Lala Harkishen Lal who had no more to do with any party of violence than Sir Michael O'Dwyer himself was arrested and imprisoned by that satrap. I would have been false to the country if I had not stood by the Swaraj Party in the hour of its need. Let it be unequivocally demonstrated that it has had anything to do with violence, and I shall be prepared to denounce it in as strong language as is open to me to use. On such proof I shall sever all connection with it. But till then, I must stand by it even though I do not believe in the efficacy of Council-entry or even some of the methods of conducting Council-warfare.

But recognition of the party as an integral part of the Congress does not mean surrender by individuals of their non-co-

operation. It means an admission that the Swaraj Party is a strong and growing wing of the Congress. And if it refuses to take a back seat without a fight, and if it is necessary or even expedient to avoid a fight, the claim to a definite official recognition is irresistible. Every Congressman, however, is not, by reason of his being a Congressman, assumed to be a believer in all the items of a Congress programme. My own position, I admit, is somewhat different. I have made myself instrumental in bringing the agreement into being. I am not sorry for it. Rightly or wrongly, the country expects me to give it some guidance. And I have come to the conclusion that it is in the interest of the country to give the Swaraj party the fullest possible chance of working out its programme without let or hindrance from No-changers. The latter are not bound to participate in its activity, if they do not like it. They are free and bound, as the Swarajists are bound, to pursue the constructive programme only. They are free also to retain their individual non-co-operation. But suspension by the Congress means that non-co-operators can derive no support or strength from the Congress. They must derive all their strength from within. And that is their test and trial. If their faith abides, it is well with them and non-co-operation. If it vanishes with suspension, non-co-operation dies as a force in public life. But a friend says:"If you waver, what about lesser men?" I have not wavered. My faith in non-co-operation is as bright as ever. For it has been with me a principle of life for over thirty years. But I cannot impose my personal faith on others, never on a national organization. I can but try to convince the nation of its beauty and usefulness. And if I find in reading the national mind, that the nation in so far as it is represented by the Congress must have breathing time, I must cry halt. I may misread the mind of the Congress. When that happens, I shall cease to be any force in the Congress. That will be no calamity. But it would be a calamity if by my obstinacy I stand in the way of the country's progress by other means, so long as they are not positively mischievous and harmful. I should for instance rise, even if I was alone, against methods of actual violence. But I have recognized that the nation has the right, if it so wills, to vindicate her freedom even by actual violence. Only, then India ceases to be the land of my love even though she be the land of my birth, even as I should take no pride in my mother if she went astray. But the Swaraj Party is a party of orderly progress. It may not swear by non-violence as I do, but it accepts non-violence as a policy and it discountenances violence, because it considers it to be useless if

not even harmful. It occupies a prominent position in the Congress. I do not know that if its strength was tested, it might not be found even to occupy a predominant position. It is easy enough for me to secede from the Congress and let the party run the Congress. That I can and will do when I find that I have nothing in common with the party. But so long as I have the faintest hope of its redemption, I shall cling to it like a child to its mother's breast. I will not weaken it by disowning or denouncing it or by retiring from the Congress.

I have used the word"redemption" in no offensive sense. I have too my method of *shuddhi* and *tabligh*. It is the best the world has yet seen. Conscious of my own ground and strength, I let the party act upon me and influence me as much as it will. It enables me to know it at its best. I make no secret of my intention that by coming under its influence, I hope to influence it in favour of my method. If in the process, it redeems me and converts me, all honour to it. I should then declare my conversion from the house-top. It is *shuddhi* by reason appealing to reason and heart speaking to heart. It is the non-violent method of conversion. Let non-co-operators join forces with me. At the same time let them remain firm in their individual conduct. If their non-co-operation springs from love, I promise that they will convert the Swarajists, and even if they don't succeed, they will have lost nothing, personally. If the country is with them, the Swarajists, if they do not follow, will naturally take a back seat. And if the latter gain ground during the twelve months of grace, they must be undisputed masters of the Congress, and non-co-operators must be content to be in a minority. They may register me in advance as one of that minority.

The problem with the students is the same. Non-co-operation may be suspended, but schools will not be suspended. They are an accomplished fact. They are among the best fruit of non-co-operation. The students are therefore expected to keep the flag flying and show to the country that they can flourish even though the Congress may suspend the non-co-operation programme. It is poor faith that needs fair weather for standing firm. That alone is true faith that stands the foulest weather.

Young India, 20-11-1924

315. MESSAGE TO "THE BOMBAY CHORONICLE"

[*Before November 21, 1924*]

There is no swaraj without the spinning-wheel.

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-11-1921

316. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING, BOMBAY

November 21, 1924

The Working Committee of the Congress met on November 21 at 8.30 a.m. in Gandhiji's house. The following members were present:

Mahomed Ali, M. K. Gandhi, Shaukat Ali, Dr. Ansari, Konda Venkatappayya, G. B. Deshpande, Vallabhbhai J. Patel and S. G. Banker.

After disposing of unimportant items of a routine and administrative character on the agenda, the Working Committee of the Congress resumed discussion on items 2 and 3 of the agenda, viz., (1) to consider present political situation in the country and (2) the programme to be placed before the Congress.

Gandhiji suggested that there being no two opinions on that question, it would be in the fitness of things to place before that conference a resolution which should be acceptable to all the parties in the conference. He argued that if they handled other questions such as the creed of the Congress and the spinning franchise there might arise disagreement which would be prejudicial to the main object of calling the conference. Gandhiji therefore suggested that instead of taking a hazardous step of placing a resolution drafted by the Working Committee they should ask the conference to appoint a representative committee to deal with the repressive policy of the Government of India. The members of the Working Committee unanimously agreed to this suggestion.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1924, p. 753

317. SPEECH AT ALL-PARTY CONFERENCE, BOMBAY

November 21, 1924

Mr. Gandhi, being called upon to move the first resolution on the Bengal Ordinance, moved instead for the appointment of a representative committee to draft the final resolution to be placed before the conference next day:

> It is resolved that a small committee containing the leaders of the several parties represented at the Conference be appointed forthwith to prepare

and draft a resolution for submission to the Conference with reference to the repressive measures adopted by the Government of Bengal, with the concurrence and approval of the Government of India, the Committee to report to the Chairman at or before 10 p.m.[1]

Mr. Gandhi said:

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

In response to the invitation issued by Maulana Mahomed Ali, we have met here in order to consider certain things, one of which, and perhaps the most pressing, is to advise some action which should be taken by this Conference, if it is at all possible, in connection with the repressive policy adopted by the Government of Bengal with the concurrence and approval of the Government of India. It was the desire of those who are associated with Mr. Mahomed Ali and the Working Committee as well as the members of the Swarajya Party that there should be a resolution on the repressive policy arrived at by the different parties represented here, and that the resolution should be passed unanimously.[2] We have gathered here, not to emphasize the points of difference ("Hear, hear!"), but to find points of agreement ("Hear, hear!") and to see whether it is possible for us to come

[1] This paragraph is from *The Bombay Chronicle*, 22-11-1924.

[2] The resolution as finally adopted the next day by the conference read:

(a) While firmly of the opinion that anarchical organizations can never secure swaraj to the people of India, and while disapproving and condemning most emphatically such organizations, if any, this Conference, representing all classes and communities of India and every variety of political opinion, views with the strongest disapproval and condemns the action of the Governor-General in promulgating the Criminal Law Amendment Ordinance of 1924, as such an extraordinary measure, being a direct invasion upon individual liberty, should not have been enacted without the sanction of the Legislature, and as it easily lends itself at the hands of the Executive to grave abuses resulting in implicating innocent persons and interfering with constitutional political activity, as past experience of similar measures has repeatedly demonstrated.

(b) This Conference urges the immediate withdrawal of the Ordinance and the trial, if necessary, and in accordance with the ordinary law, of the persons detained under it

(c) This Conference further urges that Regulation III of 1818, which gives the Government powers of arresting and confining persons suspected of crimes without warrant, without trial, and without statement of reasons for such arrest and confinement, should be forthwith withdrawn.

(d) This Conference records its conviction that the present political situation in India is due to the denial of the just rights, long overdue, of the people, and that the speedy establishment of swaraj is the only effective remedy therefor.

together and work together in connection with these points of agreement. One of these points is with reference to the extraordinary ordinance in Bengal and the action taken under Regulation III of 1818. So far as I am aware, there is a consensus of opinion to arrive at some decision which will be representative of all parties represented in this hall. Unfortunately, I have not been able to consult the heads of the different parties that have arrived here. I had the pleasure and honour of waiting on Mrs. Besant. I have not had the pleasure of waiting on the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, though I had intended to do so.

Then Mr. Gandhi referred to his interview with Mr. Jinnah last night and said that the latter assured him that there would be no difficulty in coming to an agreement on this question. The resolution had not been sprung upon the meeting. He would propose the appointment of a committee consisting of members representing several parties. He further proposed that the committee should forthwith proceed to consider the resolution and arrive at an agreement before 10 o'clock tonight, and that the resolution be presented to the Conference tomorrow.

New India, 22-11-1924

318. SPEECH REPLYING TO DEBATE AT ALL-PARTY CONFERENCE, BOMBAY

November 21, 1924

Mr. Gandhi, in replying to the debate, pointed out that the issue raised by Mr. Ramaswami Mudaliar's amendment[1] was a large question, and the speaker wanted to dispose of the smaller question before taking up the bigger one of the unity of all parties. He characterized the amendment as putting the cart before the horse. If they failed to come to an agreement on this matter, what hope was there, asked Mr. Gandhi, that they would come to an agreement on a larger matter? He assured his hearers that the committee would, if it thought fit, support the Bengal Ordinance, or condemn it, as the case might be. He reminded the audience of its duty to Bengal and even to the Government, who had asked them to help them.

New India, 22-11-1924

[1] The amendment, being put to vote, was lost by an overwhelming majority.

319. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

BOMBAY,
November 21, 1924

Mr. Gandhi stated to an Associated Press representative this evening that there was absolutely no truth in the report of a local newspaper that he offered the Liberals the withdrawal of the spinning franchise and the limitation of the word"swaraj" to Dominion status. What, as a matter of fact, Mr. Gandhi told Mr. Chintamani and other Moderate leaders was that, if they desired those things, they should join the Congress and press for the acceptance of their views.

New India, 22-11-1924

320. SPEECH ON UNITY AT ALL-PARTY CONFERENCE, BOMBAY

November 22, 1924

After ascertaining the sense of the House, the President proceeded with the discussion of the resolution on the unity of all parties. Mr. Gandhi, who was called upon to move the resolution[1], did so in the following terms:

This Conference appoints a committee consisting of Dewan Bahadur T. Rangachariar, Dewan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao, Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas, the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, Sir T. B. Sapru, Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, Mrs. Annie Besant, Pandit Malaviya, Mr. R. P. Paranjpye, Sir P. S. Sivaswami Iyer, Mr. C. R. Das, Mr. Muhammad Yakub, Mr. M. H. Kidwai, Mr. Mahomed Ali, Mr. M. A. Jinnah, Mr. Shinde, Mr. Bhulabhai Desai, Mr. T. V. Parvati, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Mr. Abul Kalam Azad, Mr. J. B. Petit, Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar, Babu Bhagwandas, Mr. N. C. Kelkar, Mr. Joseph Baptista, Sardar Mangal Singh, Lala Lajpat Rai, Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal, Lala Harkishen Lal, the President of the European Association, the President of the Anglo-Indian Association, the President of the Christian Association, the President of the Non-Brahmin Association (and a few others whose names were to be added later) to consider the best way of re-uniting all political parties in the Indian National Congress and to prepare a scheme of swaraj, including the solution of Hindu-Muslim

[1] Which was carried unanimously

and like questions in their political aspects, and to report not later than the 31st of March, 1925; the Conference to meet not later than the 30th April and the report to be published a fortnight before the Conference meets.

Mr. Gandhi observed that after many years, all parties joined together. In point of time and importance that resolution was of the greatest importance and of the utmost necessity. The Government might take today Mr. C. R. Das's head, but Bengal would go on, and India too, but if they did not get political liberty, they should die. Dealing with the resolution, the speaker said that the question would engage the attention of the best minds of the country. He was a born optimist. He felt that they were bound to come right, not for unity, but for swaraj's sake. After reading Dr. Kitchlew's telegram, which wanted unity without sacrifice of principles, Mr. Gandhi proceeded to observe that he found insuperable difficulties in the way. He could not carry conviction about his spinning franchise. He wanted some time to convince others or to be convinced by them. They must put their heads together to find out a workable and substantial unity. The committee proposed by him would frame the report for their consideration. Although it was painful to wait longer for unity, it was inevitable. Nobody could predict if the committee would come to any acceptable conclusion. In spite of all the clouds hanging around them, Mr. Gandhi hoped that the committee would penetrate into the darkness and find out a workable programme.

New India, 24-11-1924

321. CITIZEN'S HONOUR IS COUNTRY'S HONOUR

The honour of Bengal is the honour of the whole of India. Swaraj will not be far off when we come to realize that a single Indian's honour is the country's honour. This feeling is fairly widespread; but it has not yet spread as far as it should. If my brother is in danger, if his honour is at stake for no fault of his, I will not sit content after passing a resolution of sympathy; I will run to his assistance. We have not yet developed such a sentiment with regard to the country. When hundreds of thousands of Indians feel that their own brother has suffered if any Indian anywhere from Kashmir to Kanyakumari and from Assam to Sind endures agony, we shall soon find a way to end the policy of the Bengal Government.

Today, we are groping in the dark because there is no such fervour in our feeling. When pure feelings are aroused, their light will show us our path. Today we are apathetic. We shall gain great momentum when feelings simmer like steam within us. Today we are

disunited, we are fighting amongst ourselves. When we are welded together by ardent feelings, we will embrace one another and cling so close that we shall appear to be one though we are many.

Our brother is starving; we know that he can earn a living by plying the spinning-wheel but he does not do so out of laziness and that he will if we give him an object-lesson by spinning ourselves; in that case, we shall certainly take to the spinning-wheel. In India today, hundreds of thousands are in this predicament. Nevertheless, we find it difficult to ply the spinning-wheel even for half an hour in order to set an example for them, because we do not feel like brothers towards one another.

If all of us give up the use of foreign cloth and meet the country's need for cloth by plying the spinning-wheel, this Government would in large measure become redundant. Despite this knowledge, many of us refuse to spin because we have not developed such fervent feelings. Actually, there is no fellow-feeling between Hindus and Muslims in many cities. In such circumstances, millions of throats cannot chant the words"Our Country". And it is futile to hope for swaraj until such a situation is brought about. We can all see that the path to swaraj is also the path to the repeal of the policy being pursued in Bengal. The terrorism of the anarchists aims at winning swaraj. It is meaningless. However, the absence of swaraj is the root cause of the disease of terrorism. The reason behind the Government's terrorism is also the same. The Government, so far as it is possible, does not wish to give up its own authority. There would be no such terrorism, if there is swaraj. I, therefore, claim that if the spinning-wheel is the weapon for swaraj, if Hindu-Muslim unity is the means of securing swaraj, they are also the means for reversing the Government's policy of repression.

Moreover, as there is no fellow-feeling between Hindus and Muslims, what is the state of affairs between the untouchable Hindus and other Hindus? There can be no untouchability between brothers. It cannot be the case that one brother eats sweet dishes, while the other eats his left-overs. Only those who work for the abolition of untouchability know of the many barriers that stand in the way of its abolition.

Where the situation is so clear, where one is well aware of the disease and the remedy, to refuse to use the ready remedy and impatiently seek alternative remedies is as good as killing the patient.

Some say that the people want agitation. Agitation may have its uses but, to this day, no nation has achieved its independence through agitation alone. India will never be able to do so. It is our clear duty to give up agitation and take to our professions. To the extent we who realize this do not look to others but fulfil our own obligations, we may be considered to have come closer to swaraj. Hence, I have no doubt that whatever others in the country do, if those who have understood this will adhere to their duty, the whole country will follow in their footsteps. This is so, because there is no other way for achieving freedom for this country.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-11-1924

322. GUJARAT'S DHARMA

My advice to the Congress to suspend non-co-operation should not be interpreted to mean that Gujarat should give it up. Just as this advice does not apply to individuals, similarly it does not apply to provinces.

If the Congress suspends non-co-operation for the time being, it means that, taking the circumstances into account, it makes a concession to the people. However, in those places where the people and their leaders have faith in non-co-operation, where there are no disputes, where there is no lack of organization, the resolution for suspension should have no adverse effects. On the contrary, these provinces should consolidate their work and ennoble it.

For instance, the national schools in Gujarat should continue to function and grow, those lawyers who have given up their practice should abide firmly by their decision; besides, goodwill should prevail where there has been a feeling of animosity. No one should condemn or revile those who enter the legislatures or resume practice. Everyone, following the dictates of his own conscience, should continue non-co-operation or resume co-operation. The Congress resolution should result in suspension of that non-co-operation which is being practised because of the compulsion imposed by the [old] resolution—non-co-operation should cease to be a strategy or an experiment but should rather come to stay as a dharma. In other words, the people or individuals should carry on peaceful non-co-operation as a matter of duty wherever the policy of the Government is by and large harmful.

Those who would like to stick to non-co-operation even without the resolution will, therefore, continue to do so.

It could be said that the Congress resolution is like a pair of crutches. We shall now have to see, after all this experience, how many will stand without the crutches—without the prop of the Congress. If some people remain steadfast we shall be able to conclude that these have grasped the principle of friendly non-co-operation. It is my firm belief that there are many such individuals and I am also convinced that among provinces too there are more than one such, Maha Gujarat being one of them.

Maha Gujarat was the first province to offer non-co-operation. I wish that it should keep up this glory. Henceforth, non-co-operation will survive only if it is untainted. It should breathe humility, discrimination, love, peacefulness, intelligence, maturity, determination and truth. Peaceful non-co-operation will emulate nature. In nature there are many imperceptible sustaining processes which we know only through their results, so too in peaceful non-co-operation. Ether is a powerful medium, but who has seen it? We know it through its results. Has anyone seen electricity? But we know of it through wires, bells, engines, which operate because of it. We do not see the seeds lying underground. If we start digging in order to see them, they would not sprout. But springing from these seeds we see plants and trees, which yield grain, fruit and foliage. Friendly non-co-operation is a force subtler and yet mightier than all these invisible objects and forces. The conduct of the non-co-operator should, therefore, be equally subtle and invisible. There is no room in it for arrogance, hypocrisy, pretence or ostentation. Even while practising non-co-operation, by virtue of his love, he would not make the co-operator miserable. He should try and win over the hearts even of the British officials by dint of his love. Far from despising the latter, he should, if possible, render personal service to them. Even when he cannot abide by the latter's wishes, his conduct should be polite and considerate.

Anyone who cannot appreciate such non-co-operation or, cannot practise it, should rather fall back, on the *status quo*, that is, co-operation. That non-co-operation alone is worth the name which can be practised by the father towards the son and *vice versa*. And I attempted to introduce this true non-co-operation in India in the year 1920. I have been well aware of the tremendous magnitude of the task, in the past as well as the present. I had and still have little capital.

Everyone has the right to make an attempt and I have started my effort in pursuance of this right. I request those who have understood it in its pure form to help me. Even my present suggestion for suspension is only a form of friendly non-co-operation. The path of love is like a flame of fire; many have run away on gazing at it. Those who wish to run away, may do so. However, those who will bear with that flame, will triumph.

I know of no non-co-operation which is devoid of love, nor do I even wish to know it. I have no other panacea for India's independence, for the protection of Hinduism or Islam, for Hindu-Muslim unity and for the abolition of untouchability. I believe that it is impossible to end hatred with hatred. And one of the reasons why I always put forward the spinning-wheel is its underlying peacefulness. Maulana Mahomed Ali has collected maxims in praise of the spinning-wheel from the literature of Islam and published them in his *Hamdard*. Readers will find their translations in this *Navajivan* and should reflect upon them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-11-1924

323. WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS DO?

"What will happen to students when non-co-operation is suspended? What will be their position? Why should they not go to Government schools? And if you ask them not to go there, what sort of cruelty is it? They have sacrificed the most and do you wish them to sacrifice more? Will the poor always be sacrificed in this manner? If swaraj is to be won this way, who knows what will be the plight of poor people like us? Students have become almost panicky on hearing of the suspension of non-co-operation."

Some students are making such comments. When it is difficult even for mature non-co-operators to understand the change that is taking place today, it is not surprising that students are scared. There can be no two opinions on their sacrifices. Yet, there certainly is an error in the above reasoning.

What is suggested is not suspension of all non-co-operation but suspension of propaganda in favour of non-co-operation by the Congress. When an important section of the public which once had faith in a thing gives it up, that something cannot be made or

regarded as universal. It cannot also be said that all people should renounce what the Congress renounces. The Congress may have to renounce some thing against its will—not voluntarily. It may, however, hope that the people would not renounce it.

If the Congress is unable, for lack of funds, to start model schools at various places where children belonging to the Hindu, Muslim and other faiths can study together, not only is there nothing to prevent others from doing so, but, on the contrary, the Congress would congratulate anyone who starts such a school. Similarly, if the Congress calls off non-co-operation today, it is not because it lacks faith in the principles of non-co-operation but rather because at present a large section of the public are unable to practise it. Despite this, the Congress would congratulate any section of the public which continues non-co-operation and proves its strength.

The Congress would not wish those lawyers who have given up their practice to take it up again. However, if any lawyer is helpless and starts practising, the Congress will not condemn him. Similarly, the Congress would, under no circumstances, wish those students who have practised non-co-operation to return to Government schools. It will not, however, condemn them if they do so out of exhaustion or for any other reason. Moreover, the Congress will endeavour and continue to run the existing national schools for their convenience and try to retain them in those schools. Non-co-operation has been"suspended"; it has not been abandoned for good. In case it is resumed, will students who have enrolled in Government schools come out again? Whatever the changes that may take place in other spheres of non-co-operation, national schools must continue to function and they will function. For, if they do not do so, the people will be disgraced.

This, again, is not enough; there should be an increase in the number of national schools with the passage of time. On attaining independence, non-co-operating lawyers will start practising in law-courts, but non-co-operation schools will continue to function. Other schools will bring themselves in line with these. The latter will not try to follow the example of the former Government schools. Maybe, this swaraj may not be secured today. Let it take ages to win. However, non-co-operating schools which will be in existence then will serve as models and the people will cherish them as such.

Hence I must say that wherever apprehension has been

expressed at my suggestion for suspending non-co-operation, see only a lack of faith in non-co-operation. How can anyone who has faith in his principles or his work get scared, be afraid or falter in his own determination, because of another person's lack of faith or his repudiation? A man of faith is doubly confirmed in it by the lack of it in others. Just as a well-protected person gives up his apathy and becomes more alert when left unprotected, similarly, the man of faith on seeing his companions flee, holds more firmly to his conviction, fights alone like a lion and remains as steadfast as a rock.

Students have, no doubt, made sacrifices. However, it is necessary to grasp the inner meaning of sacrifice. One who makes a sacrifice does not seek sympathy from others. His condition is not pitiable; it is rather praiseworthy. That sacrifice which is made unwillingly or sorrowfully is not worth the name. Martyrdom is accompanied by cheerfulness, joy and vigour. A martyr is not irritated by renunciation but rather wishes for greater strength to renounce, since therein lies happiness. He is convinced that what appears to be a source of suffering today will finally become a source of happiness. Whoever practises non-co-operation is not a loser but a gainer. One who rids himself of dirt is purified. Giving up something that is despicable is like lightening one's burden. One who plies the spinning-wheel for half an hour makes a sacrifice or, in other words, he rids himself of idleness and selfishness, both of which deserve to be discarded. One who has withdrawn from a Government school has made a sacrifice as he has given up something which should be given up. At the time of sacrifice, he will not be crest-fallen but, on the contrary, his face will glow with happiness. Mirabai danced with joy then she renounced the pleasures of the palace. These had made her weep. To other eyes, this was a great sacrifice. For her the renunciation was bliss. Sudhanva[1] chanted the name of Narayana while dancing in a cauldron of boiling oil. Hence Pritam sang,"Those standing on the bank are shivering, while those who have plunged in it are enjoying bliss". For this very reason Nishkulananda said,"Renunciation cannot last without detachment."

So long as we are attached to something, we cannot abandon it willingly. The poor who are dying of starvation cannot be said to be undergoing an austere fast. They have been compelled to remain hungry. Their desire for food is undiminished. They can be said to be

[1] Son of King Hansadhwaj of Champavati in the *Mahabharata*

eating all the twenty-four hours as their thoughts turn constantly to food. That non-co-operating student whose thoughts constantly turn to a Government school but who, out of a sense of shame or some such reason, is only physically present in a national school, is neither a martyr nor a non-co-operator. His plight is truly pitiable. One can hope to save oneself if one's body is present where one's mind is. One whose body and mind are at variance deceives oneself, the world and God.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-11-1924

324. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

November 23, 1924

I signed the agreement only in my individual capacity, and having regard to my own inward feeling. When I signed the agreement, I had made no mental reservations to the effect that I should be able to carry the No-changers with me. I do ask everyone in this House not to be carried away by what I may say. If I successfully appeal to anybody's reason, then I certainly want him to assent to this agreement, but if I do not appeal to his reason, I have no desire to appeal to his feelings. The success of this agreement depends on the heartiest co-operation of us all. I have not changed my views on non-co-operation or about civil disobedience and if today I seem to be marking time or receding from the position that I have always occupied, it is only seemingly so. As a matter of fact, so far as I am concerned, I am advancing; as a soldier, that I claim to be, of non-violence. As a non-violent soldier, I know quite well where I stand and what I should do. I cannot possibly today pretend to give any emphatic and summary decision which should command universal assent. The agreement lends itself to the construction which I have certainly not intended and which the Swaraj Party has certainly not intended. They do not want to help the Government. On the contrary, according to the best of their abilities and lights, they want to do away with the system under which we have been groaning for all these

[1] Moving a resolution approving of the Calcutta agreement; the resolulion was carried by an overwhelming majority. The source describes this report as the"substance" of the speech.

years—the system which I have not hesitated to describe as corrupt and Satanic. I retract not a single adjective that I have used against that system. It is a system which should be ended, if it cannot possibly be mended, without the slightest hesitation and without a moment's delay. If I have today entered into this agreement, it is in order to further the purpose of destroying this system. I would today give battle to the whole country, if I should find that thereby I could end this injustice. I say I can do it. If I see that I could not do it, I shall immediately and hastily retrace my step.

It is said that the agreement is, on my part, a concession. Yes, it is a concession. There has been a concession on the part of both sides. Both of them want something to give and take. I believe that there is really nothing in the history of the universe or in the history of man which is not based on concessions, which has not something analogous to the step I have adopted to come to this agreement. From the No-changers' standpoint, the first thing to be noticed in the agreement is the equal status of the Swaraj Party that has been gained between the Swaraj Party and the No-changers in this agreement.[*sic*] I venture to say that it is their right to get equal status with the No-changers. In making that concession, I have done nothing more than what was reasonable and just. I could have done something else if I could possibly have to divide the house or if I could possibly make myself believe that it would be in the interest of the country to divide the Congress. I do not believe in the efficacy of the Council programme, and yet, I could not help doing it in the interest of the country. What I have done is in the interest of the country, in the interest of my own creed and in the interest of non-co-operation.

I cannot afford to neglect the Swarajists. I know that they are a growing party. I know that they represent a very strong body of public opinion in favour of Council-entry. I know also that they possess the best intellect in the country. Without the co-operation of such a body, who want to capture the Councils, I feared I would not be able to make any headway. Besides the Swarajists, there are the Liberals, the Independents, the Conventionists. They are all ranged against the No-changers programme. The Swarajists, in their own way, are an advanced party. They have evidently influenced the atmosphere of Councils and of the Legislative Assembly. I could not—nobody can—defy their political sentiment. So far as the

question of khaddar is concerned, they have not resisted my appeal to use khaddar on ceremonial occasions. They have not hurled a complete defiance at my appeal for khaddar. I practically confess that I consider it impossible to lead the battle of non-co-operation or of civil disobedience, unless we have by us the intellect of the country, that is to say, a large measure of the intellect of the country, which should range on our side in sympathy with us and even actively co-operate with us. That we cannot expect unless we yield, to them in some respects. In making this concession about Council-entry, we find that we have got with us the Council programme workers, who are wise men, men whom I claim to be practical men. The Congress is a National Assembly. We have to develop the Congress so as to enable it to represent every variety of opinion. We cannot possibly get the Congress to represent one variety of opinion for all time. It would be unwise to do so. We have to practise toleration, if for nothing else, at least for this purpose that we must have all the parties represented on the Congress, all the parties to educate the people politically. If we have all the parties represented on the Congress, if we do not like to divide the Congress, if we recognize that the Swarajists have a very large following in the Congress camp, then it is clear that, when we have an agreement, we must recognize that they have got the same status in the Congress as we have, that they have got the same right to use the name of the Congress as we have. In no sense and in no way should the political equality of all people of India be affected—that, in my opinion, is the meaning of the Congress as it exists today, as it should exist tomorrow.

The next point is this. As I believe, what we have got from the Swaraj Party is the maximum we could get. So far as the franchise is concerned, it is again my feeling that the common complaint or the grumbling on the part of a number of Swarajists is against khaddar. The No-changers believe in the possibility, in the ability, in the capacity of khaddar. I do believe in the capacity of khaddar. I cannot help myself in so believing. In my dream, in my sleep, while eating, I think of the spinning-wheel. The spinning-wheel is my sword. To me it is the symbol of India's liberty. I cannot help feeling like that. Such is not, however, the idea of the Swarajists. Many of them have sentimental objection. That being so, I had to make a concession. I believe that spinning should be a part of the Swarajists' programme like the Council programme, that we should introduce khaddar and

the spinning-wheel into the franchise. It is absolutely a novel ideal. Ido not believe that the spinning-wheel will give anything substantial to India. But is it a sin to spin? But I think it is wrong that we should divide our ranks on this point. I have affection for the spinning-wheel, but there are other countrymen of ours who have realdisinclination to spin. For them I have given way in regard to the spinning franchise. Therefore, I had no hesitation in subscribing to the spinning franchise in the way I did to meet some of the unwilling Swarajists. I want to make this franchise a living thing in the Congress. I want to make it successful with the help of the Swaraj Party. I have no hesitation in saying so. It requires enthusiasm, it requires studied application. That is my feeling. So far as the No-changers are concerned, I think they would not cavil at what I have done—they would not be unwilling to endorse what I have done—they would not believe that there is a peril of any kind. I would invite you—the No-changers and Swarajists—to accept the spinning franchise as mentioned in the agreement. My appeal is to the No-changers. It is equally to the Swarajists. I would ask you all not to reject the proposal about the spinning franchise. Accept it even for the sake of discipline. Accept it as an article of faith.

I entered into this agreement in this spirit that we want to make every article in that agreement a full success. We want to put our shoulders to the wheel and see whether, during the next 12 months, we do not bring swaraj nearer, if not within our grasp. If all the Congress parties work shoulder to shoulder, I have no hesitation in feeling that swaraj is not far away. It will be very near if we work the agreement with a will in the name of discipline. If you cannot work the agreement out in the name of discipline, if you cannot accept every line of this agreement and act up to it, believe me, it is much better for the country that you reject it before it is drawn up by the trusted leaders of the country. If you think you are fit for swaraj, accept the agreement otherwise reject it. Reject it if it does not appeal to your reason. I do not want to appeal to your heart. I want to appeal to your cold reason.

The Swarajists are not idiotic, the Swarajists are not unpatriotic. Their have got their own duty to perform according to the best of their ability. If they consider that it is necessary to give battle to Government by going to the Councils, let them go and make the Councils workable. They do not go to Councils to spite the No-

changers. They do not go there to make harangues. They have a purpose in view. Suppose you do not allow them to go to the Councils, what are they going to do? Are they to rot? The No-changers should believe that the proper place for the Swarajists is inside the Councils and not outside.

The spinning-wheel has to be worked skilfully. Brothers and sisters, you must work the spinning-wheel with the patience of Job. We may not get swaraj by the methods we adopt; let us make the experiment; we are honest men. Let some of our friends go to Councils; let us make headway by some means. The duty of the No-changers is to prove to the Swarajists the value of the spinning-wheel. That should be the propaganda of the No-changers. I made a compromise with the Swarajists in order that they may make the spinning-wheel a living thing. I appeal to the No-changers and the Swarajists to make this wheel propaganda a success. When I made the agreement, I had my reason; I had not lost it. I am not a lunatic; I am a reasonable man; I am a practical man; if the case requires, I will bend my knees before the country, before the Swarajists, before the Liberals, before Englishmen; because that is my creed. If I do not succeed, then the grave is the only other thing for me.

One thing must be absolutely clear to you, that you will have to accept or reject this agreement *in toto*. Either reject it or accept it as it stands. In an agreement there is no question of an amendment. My friends who suggest amendment forget that there were difficulties in my way. These friends do not appreciate those difficulties. If the agreement is to be rejected, the rejection must be based on sterner grounds—on grounds that are clear, unmistakable, i.e., reject if it is unfair to your conscience. In my humble opinion there is no such thing as ratification by unwilling people. If you start with distrust, reject the agreement. We must get rid of suspicion and distrust.

One word more. I do not look upon Swarajists as my agents. I look upon them as my co-operators. I consulted some of them as regards the legal interpretation of this document. I felt that I could subscribe to this document without impairing the strength of the No-changers. There are difficulties in the way of us all; they are not well appreciated. If there is suspicion, if there is tension, I would advise you to reject the agreement unanimously; otherwise pass it unanimously. I think it will be for the good of the country if you accept it. Nobody should be compelled to accept the agreement. I ask you to

dismiss it out of your consideration if you think it ought to be rejected; summarily reject it. Accept it after considering it on its merits. If you are satisfied in that respect, then do not hesitate to accept it. But do not waste time by postponing its consideration; it would be bad. Accept it if you think you must have some machinery to work with. Do not delay. Utilize every available second you possibly can.

You must put the country on its honour; you must put all parties on their honour. Trust others and let others trust you. Persuade those who are unwilling, to come to your view. I am not sorry for signing the agreement. I think it was the most proper thing for me to do. I have left nothing which could possibly be introduced in the document. I do not want to bind any party or to bind the nation by what I have introduced into the agreement. It is open to you to accept the agreement unanimously, if you believe that it is in the interest of the nation. Accept the agreement as sportsmen. I again say that the agreement should be accepted *in toto*.

The Story of My Life, Vol. 11, pp. 485-9

325. SPEECH AT CONDOLENCE MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

November 23, 1924

Mahatma Gandhi then addressed the meeting in Gujarati. At the outset he offered apology for not addressing them standing as he was not strong enough to do so; besides he regretted that he had not the same voice which he had three years ago and if they found difficulty in hearing him he asked his hearers' indulgence.

Referring to Bi-Amma, he said when some great person in the world died, they generally held meetings like the one they had held that evening and expressed their sorrow. He did not think Bi-Amma's death required that expression of sorrow or the Ali Brothers needed sympathy of anyone. For the death of Bi-Amma was so sacred that he thought everyone should wish that sort of death. Her works were good and acceptable both to God and man. She devoted her life to God and His creatures, and to India she gave her stalwart sons to fight her battle of freedom. Bi-Amma, therefore yet lived, though she was dead, in her works. Fortunately evil done by men was

[1] Held at Chowpatty, to mourn the death of Bi-Amma and Parsi Rustomjee, under the joint auspices of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee, Central Khilafat Committee, Bombay Swarajya Party, Rashtriya Stree Sabha, Parsi Rajakiya Sabha and the National Home Rule League; Sarojini Naidu presided.

forgotten and was not imitated but good works went to generations after generations and lived for ever. Bi-Amma loved God and her country, even up to the last of her life. He was present at her last moments and was much impressed by her love of God. Just as in a Hindu religious home a dying person would take the name of Rama so even she, till she breathed her last, kept up taking the name of Allah. It was her conviction in life that so far as Hindus and Muslims were not united, India would not get freedom. He (Mahatmaji) had a talk that afternoon with Pandit Motilal Nehru who showed him a letter he had received from America in which one of the ex-satraps of Bombay, viz., Lord Sydenham, was reported to have said at a certain place that India was the key of the world, i.e., for economic supremacy and exploitation India was the chief country. Islam was in many parts of the world, like Morocco, China, etc., but in India the case was different. So long as Muslims and Hindus were not united, there would be no freedom for them. Bi-Amma was very far-sighted and whenever he (Mahatmaji) went to see her at Delhi, she used to pray for wisdom for Hindus and Muslims that they might be united, and always asked for swaraj for India. It was not in her luck to see swaraj for India but she had given India her two stalwart sons to unite Hindus and Muslims to attain swaraj. The best way to perpetuate her memory was, he said, by not erecting halls, statues or buildings but by everyone to vow to do his or her best to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity and attain swaraj and thus follow in her footsteps.

Mahatmaji then referred to another great loss, India had sustained in the loss of Parsi Rustomjee in South Africa. He said Rustomjee was a noble soul and the citizens of Bombay should never forget his service to India as he too originally was from Khetwadi in Bombay. Finally, Mahatma once again urged the audience not to pass a formal resolution and depart but to emulate the life of these two great souls of India, viz., Bi-Amma and Parsi Rustomjee.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-11-1924

326. TELEGRAM TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

BOMBAY,
November 24, 1924

DEEPLY GRIEVED YOUR LOSS. HAVE COURAGE AND FAITH.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2347

327. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

Kartik Krishna 13 [*November 24, 1924*]

MY DEAR BRIJKRISHNA,

I heard last night of your bereavement. I have sent a telegram today. May God give you courage. If we realize that birth and death are both the same, we should have no cause for grief. A true friend never dies. One's wife is such a friend. If you constantly cherish the memory of her virtues, death would make no difference. May God give you the strength of character to keep the vow of *ekapatnivrata*[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2348

328. MAY GOD HELP

SABARMATI ,

November 26, 1924

After much prayer, after much heart-searching, and not without fear and trembling, I have decided to accept the honour of presiding at the forthcoming Congress. I am to preside at a time when a gulf seems to be yawning between educated India and myself with some notable exceptions, and, save for a few young educated Indians of little fame, the intellect of the country seems to be ranged against my ways of thought and action and yet as I seem to be popular with the masses, and as many educated countrymen believe me to be as good a lover of the country as themselves, they want me to direct the Congress at this critical juncture in the history of our country.

I feel that I must not resist them. On the contrary, I must let myself be used, as I hope, for the benefit of the country. I was waiting, before coming to a final decision, for the verdict of the All-India Congress Committee. At its meeting the Swarajists were eloquent by their silence. I know that many of them are not enthusiastic about the proposed alteration of the franchise. But for the sake of peace and unity, they gave their vote in silence in favour of the change. The No-changers were despondent, chafing at the surrender, as they felt it to be, of their cherished ideals. They protested, but they did not cast the

[1] The vow of remaining faithful to one wife.

vote against the agreement.

This reflects credit on both the Swarajists and the No-changers, but it is no encouraging atmosphere to work in, especially when much is expected from one. But this is just the occasion for putting my faith in ahimsa to the test. If I have equal love in me for No-changers, Swarajists, Liberals, National Home Rulers, Independents and for that matter Englishmen, I know that it is well for me and well also for the cause.

I must not deceive the country. For me there is no politics without religion—not the religion of the superstitious and the blind, religion that hates and fights, but the universal Religion of Toleration. Politics without morality is a thing to be avoided."Then" says the critic,"I must retire from all public activity." Such however is not my experience. I must try to live in society and yet remain untouched by its pitfalls. Anyway, for me to run away from the Congress at the present moment would be cowardice—for me not to accept the Presidentship would be to run away, especially when everybody is trying to make the path smooth for me.

I have abundant faith in my cause and humanity. Indian humanity is no worse than any other; possibly it is better. Indeed the cause presumes faith in human nature. Dark though the path appears, God will light it and guide my steps, if I have faith in His guidance and humility enough to acknowledge my helplessness without that infallible guidance.

Though I remain a confirmed non-co-operator and civil resister, I recognize that there is no atmosphere for non-co-operation or civil disobedience on a national scale. My attempt will therefore be in the direction of bringing all parties together without distinction of race, or colour or creed on the ground of mutual toleration and thus to demonstrate if possible that the Congress non-co-operation was not conceived in or based on hate or malice. I would throw the burden on all the parties of making non-co-operation and civil disobedience impossible, not by criticism or repression, but by achieving swaraj. I venture therefore to ask representatives of all the parties to respond to Maulana Mahomed Ali's invitation to attend the Congress as visitors, when they cannot attend as delegates, and give the latter the benefit of their advice.

There is a heavy duty resting on the shoulders of Congressmen, whether Swarajists or No-changers, Hindus or Mussalmans, Brahmins or non-Brahmins. They have to show their programme on their persons and in their daily conduct. They will attend the Congress as servants and not as masters demanding service. They will show their

faith in khaddar which they have been preaching for the past four years by wearing it to the exclusion of all other cloth. They will show their faith in unity between different religious sects and denominations by exercising the greatest forbearance against one another and showing respect for one another's religious observances. Hindus will show their faith in the removal of untouchability by going out of their way to be attentive to those of than who may attend the Congress.

Delegates and visitors will no doubt expect me to prescribe remedies for our many ills, for Hindu-Muslim distemper, for the Bengal repression, for the relentless persecution of the Akalis, for the Vykom campaign on behalf of unapproachables and above all for the attainment of swaraj. I have no patent remedy. The remedy is to befound with the delegates and the visitors themselves. Like the finger-post, I can but point the way, it will be for Congressmen to take or reject it. May God help us all!

Young India, 27-11-1924

329. LETTER TO SATISH CHANDRA MUKERJEE

[*November 26, 1924*][1]

DEAR SATISH BABU,

I thank you for your long wire to Kristodas. Every word of it shows your love for me. I will not argue about the contents. But I give you my assurance that I have not consciously erred. Duryodhana[2] knew he was doing wrong. I am not compromising with evil. But I am doing what the Pandavas did. They negotiated with Duryodhana up to the breaking point."You may keep all. Only give five little villages and you are free." The same thing almost occurs in the Bible. Sodom was to be saved even if there was one good man in it. But I have given you enough indication of the working of my mind.

Do please always continue to give me warning.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5607

[1] From the postmark

[2] Son of king Dhritarashtra and eldest of the Kaurava prince in the *Mahabharata;* he tricked Yudhishthira of all his possessions at a game of dice

330. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

November 26, 1924

MY DEAREST CHARLIE,

I have read your letter to Mahadev only today. I note what Rolland says. Will you please thank him for his caution? You certainly did well in not coming to Bombay. Your first care must always be Shantiniketan. You saw the note ab[ou]t Rustomjee.[1] Will you not write something about him? For me he was one of the noblest of men in spite of his many limitations. I have wired you today regarding Burma and Egypt. Both places are faring badly it seems. But I have not enough knowledge.

With love,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 2617

331. LETTER T0 BHAGWANDAS

[On or after *November 26, 1924*][2]

DEAR BABU BHAGWANDAS,

I do not know anyone in Banaras to whom I can entrust the following delicate business. One Mangal Dutt of Sultanpur became a convert to Islam some months ago. He gave his Hindu name as Ram Narayan in order that his identity may not be known. He is said to have kidnapped 10 Mussalman orphans from an orphanage in Delhi. He recanted and became an Arya Samajist under his real name through Dr. Sukhdev. He stayed with Dr. Sukhdev for some time. He is now said to be in the Sultanpur (District). Here is a letter addressed to him by Dr. Sukhdev. Could you please ascertain whether this individual can be found? Will he come and see me in Delhi? You may ask him if you meet him about the charge against him. Hakim Sahib strongly suspects that his embracing of Islam was mere camouflage resorted to in order to kidnap Mussalman children. He fears Arya Samajjist complicity. I feel that we as Hindus are bound to find out

[1] *Vide*"Notes" 20-11-1924, sub-title,"Late Parsi Rustomjee".

[2] From the reference to Gandhiji's stay at Sabarmati where he arrived on November 26

the truth and help the orphanage authorities to trace the children. The matter has been kept in suspense because I am interesting myself in the affair. I am told that Sultanpur is very near Banaras. Will you kindly send some trustworthy person there and make local inquiry there about Mangal Dutt? He is said to be a married man. I am due in the Punjab about 4th December. You may address care Lala Lajpat Rai. Thereafter care Dr. Ansari, Delhi. I am at Sabarmati till Ist December.

Yours sincerly,

[PS.]

You will observe I have not forgotten the swaraj scheme.

From a microfilm: S.N. 10495

332. SHALL WE UNITE?

That the Conference[1] that met in Bombay last week did not result immediately in uniting all parties on a common platform shows the difficulty of the task. The appointment of a committee to consider the ways and means of bringing about a union shows that the Conference does not consider the task to be hopeless or impossible. Indeed Mr. Jesukhlal Mehta who moved that the committee should report on or before 15th December next had a very fair number of supporters. They were quite sanguine of immediate success. The cautious many, by fixing the date of the report at 31st March, if they have realized the difficulty, have also by implication thrown on the committee the burden of finding an acceptable solution. Writers in the Press can considerably help the committee by guiding public opinion in the right channel. The chief bodies to influence the committee are the Liberals, the Independents and the National Home Rulers. The last led by Dr. Besant have practically accepted the position set forth in the agreement between the Swaraj Party and me and now ratified by the A.l.C.C. The difficulties in the way of the Liberals and the Independents are practically the same. They are: the creed, the transfer of all Council work to the Swaraj Party and the franchise. It is said that the creed is equivocal. I venture to deny the charge. It is a recognition of the existing condition. It means swaraj within the Empire if possible, and without if necessary. It is intended to throw the

[1] All-Party Conference

burden on Englishmen of making it possible for us to be and remain equal partners in the Empire. It manfully declares the country's ability to stand on its own legs as an absolutely independent nation, if it became necessary. Swaraj within the Empire is a free State, a voluntary remaining in the Empire, ability to secede if India thought it desirable. Swaraj within the Empire must be a partnership at will between free nations. This is a vital position which cannot be surrendered. Even if those who are guiding the Congress at the present moment desired to alter the creed to mean swaraj within the Empire only and therefore that of a subject State, the vast majority of Congressmen will decline to accept the humiliation. To aim at changing the creed in the direction desired by the Liberals and the Independents is to run counter to the present national temper. The only thing they can do is to join the Congress and attempt to convince Congressmen of the utility or the necessity of the change, even as Maulana Hasrat Mohani has been attempting to change the creed so as to make independence of British connection the only goal of the Congress. I respectfully submit that there is nothing immoral or harmful in the present creed. On the contrary, the admission that, at the present moment at least, we are impotent for independence may be open to the gravest objection from an ethical standpoint. No nation that has the will, need be powerless for independence. In any case, I trust that all parties will recognize that the Congress has an electorate which can become insistent at times and that it is well that it is so.

What status the Swarajists should hold in the Congress is really for them to determine. They and the No-changers today dominate the Congress. If the Congress suspends non-co-operation, the Swarajists perhaps *ipso facto* become predominant. And if both the parties decide in the national interest not to divide the Congress, they must be recognised as joint and equal partners. What I have done is to recognize this simple and natural fact in the Calcutta agreement. If any party desires more, it can be obtained only by joining the Congress and appealing to the reason of the Swarajists or by educating the Congress electorate, *and also by forming new electorates.* The scope for widening the Congress electorate is infinite, and practically anybody can form Congress circles or committees, if he can find men and women of his way of thinking.

The third objection is the franchise. If it were not for its novelty, it would not only excite any surprise, but it would be welcomed as the

best franchise test. Had it been workmen who had been the most influential people and not capitalists or educated men and a property or an education test had been proposed, the powerful workmen would have ridiculed the suggestion and might have even called it immoral. For they would have argued that while capital or education were the possession of a few, bodily labour was common to all. My suggestion to make one form of labour, i.e., hand-spinning the test, may be valueless, may be fantastical, but it is neither immoral nor harmful to the nation. I hold that it is a positive gain to the nation, if thousands of men and women labour for the nation, even if it is for only half an hour every day. Nor need the wearing of khaddar dress cause any hindrance to any party entering the Congress. Khaddar has been given very great importance in the Congress organization for the past three years.

Surely there can be no insurmountable objection on principle to the wearing of khaddar as a franchise test. Unless I am grievously mistaken, some of the best workers will find no zest in remaining in the Congress, if the wearing of khaddar and hand-spinning were not made a qualification for franchise. There are at present two parties in the Congress. One has no faith in the Council programme as a means for attaining swaraj and is satisfied with the khaddar activity, till the country is ready for peaceful disobedience or non-co-operation. The other, while claiming to believe in the economic value of khaddar, believes that, if swaraj cannot be gained through Council-entry, at the very least some steps may be taken towards it and some check might be placed upon bureaucratic extravagance. I can see my way to avoiding a quarrel with the Swarajists by letting them go their way and by securing their co-operation in the khaddar programme to the best of their ability. I would beseech the Liberals and the Independents to appreciate the fact, which one man cannot alter. But this is certainly possible. Let the Swarajists, the Liberals and the Independents confer together and, if they come to the conclusion that khaddar is a spent bullet and that it is a mere mania of mine and if they do not succeed in convincing me of my error, I shall gladly stand out. I will not come in the way of their controlling and using the national organization for what they may consider to be the best interest of the country. I have been told by a prominent Swarajist that the khaddar programme is doomed to fail and that the Swarajists do not believe in it at all. I told him I did not share his disbelief. I told him that the Swarajists had sincerely accepted it and that they would zealously work for it. But

assuming that the friend's prognostication is well founded and that the khaddar cult is a dividing factor in the public life, the sooner the country is disillusioned, the better for it. I must be permitted still to cling to it, so long as I do not lose faith in it. But I may not be allowed to stop all national activities. I, therefore, give my earnest assurance that I shall not wilfully stand in the way of any honourable means that may be desired by the committee for bringing all the parties together. I am deliberately putting myself under the influence of Swarajists, Liberals and Independents. I am humbly trying to learn and understand their viewpoint. I have no axe of my own to grind. I share their anxiety for the freedom of the country. My way is different from theirs. I would gladly go their way, if I could. Let all parties then make an honest and earnest effort to find a way out. Let them approach the deliberations of the committee with faith and determination to find a common platform. Let them approach them with an open mind.

A friend asks whether Congressmen should not postpone the alteration of the franchise, pending the result of the All Parties Committee's investigations. I respectfully submit that a well thought-out programme cannot be lightly postponed. Three months, solid work cannot be thrown away for fear that the Khaddar programme may not be accepted by the Liberals and the Independents. If, however, the Committee finds that the khaddar programme is unworkable and really hinders real unity, the franchise can be easily amended by a special session. In my opinion, the interest of the country demands that each party should work out its own convictions, all the while allowing for possibility of error and consequent repentance and retracing.

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333. THE NO-CHANGERS' PLIGHT

The position of No-changers is truly pathetic. The thought that I am largely if not wholly responsible for it makes me sad. My consolation—let it be theirs also—is that I am probably the most confirmed No-changer of all. But what is a No-changer? It is an ugly word. It explains nothing. But it has been used to denote one who swears by the original Non-co-operation Resolution passed at Calcutta in 1920. Its operative part is non-violence. We were non-co-operating

even before 1920 in that our minds were in revolt against the Government, whilst we seemed to co-operate with it by our conduct. All this was changed in 1920. We endeavoured to establish co-operation between thought, word and deed. We discovered that such co-operation was possible only through non-violence. And we further discovered that, if we withdrew from the Government as much voluntary co-operation as was possible, it must capitulate to the people. A No-changer therefore is one who, not wishing ill to the governors but still seeking to destroy their system, renounced the privileges (so-called) of the system, viz., Councils, courts, schools, titles and tempting foreign cloth. This was its negative part. Its positive and permanent part was establishment of independent schools, voluntary arbitration and manufacture of hand-spun yarn and from the latter of hand-woven khaddar. The Congress took the place of the Central Legislature, and solid work by volunteer workers was itself the highest title. But the five Government institutions not having been destroyed, and the new ones not having shown any effective results, some of us lost heart and sought in the Councils a means of rendering national service. Now the No-changers, if they had truly believed in non-violence, should not have been irritated over the lack of faith on the part of their erstwhile co-workers. They should have given them the same credit for honesty and patriotism that they claimed for themselves. But they violently opposed their co-workers, who now came to be called Swarajists. If they were truly non-violent, they would have been tolerant and have honoured them for their difference and allowed them to go their way. But their intolerance was not their fault. They did not even know that they were intolerant. Instead of being self-reliant and having an unquenchable faith in their own programme, they sought strength from the Swarajists, even as we all, not wishing or being unable to overcome our weaknesses, seek strength from our rulers. That mentality of helplessness still survives, and hence the dissatisfaction with the agreement. Have the No-changers real love for the Swarajists, even though they may not be all that they claim to be and even if they may be as bad as some of us believe them to be? If they have that love, they will not worry about what the Swarajists are doing.

Again, the vast majority of No-changers have no activity to absorb them the whole of their time, save khaddar. They must have a correct attitude about Hindu-Muslim relations and untouchability. But all cannot have any active work to do in regard to these items. The

national schools can but absorb only a few workers and they must have special qualifications. But khaddar is an activity that can absorb all the time of all available men and women and grown up children, if they have faith. If they are truly non-violent, they must also realize that civil disobedience is an impossibility till the preliminary work of construction is done. Civil disobedience means capacity for unlimited suffering, without the intoxicating excitement of killing. That cannot come until we have attained a certain calmness in the atmosphere and until we have a reasonable certainty that Hindus and Mussalmans, Brahmins and non-Brahmins, caste Hindus and untouchables will not quarrel and until we have understood the secret of hand-spinning and hand-weaving to the extent, by their aid, of feeling independent of public support for workers. We may be only a few such or many. If we are many, we have ensured a calm atmosphere. If we are few, we must perish in the attempt to quench the conflagration raging about us. If there are such No-changers, they cannot quarrel with the agreement. For it is but a method of finding out the number of unbending and unbendable No-changers, No-changers whose love will stand the severest test and whose faith in the triple constructive programme will, if necessary, outlast the faithlessness of the rest of India. They stand in no need of sympathy from anyone. On the contrary it is I who need and ask for all the sympathy and support that they can give me. These consist in self-effacing, silent and sustained service without grumbling and without the expectation of reward, save the approbation of one's own conscience. Let the reader be sure that there are such workers. They need no introduction or advertisement through the pages of *Young India*.

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334. NOTES

IF I WERE VICEROY

Two English friends seeking to justify the repressive policy now being pursued in Bengal asked me what I would have done if I had been in Lord Reading's or Lord Lytton's place. The answer came ready to my lips. But I observed that I gave no satisfaction to the friends. The reason for dissatisfaction was that they thought that it was easy enough for me to give the answer so readily, as I was not as a matter of fact in the place of these distinguished Englishmen. But as,

after having thought over my answer from every point of view, I regard it to be sound, and as I have no doubt that many Englishmen, who honestly believe that repression is justified, think like the two friends, I venture to reproduce my answer with some amplification.

The very first thing then that I would have done would have been to summon Indians of position and trust, and I would have shown them all the papers and would have been guided by them. In the case of Subhas Chandra Bose, I would have confronted him with my suspicion and published his statement. In consultation with those Indians of position and trust, I would also have summoned Deshbandhu Das and put the whole burden of responsibility on his shoulders, in so far as the suspected members of his party were concerned. By this procedure I would have quietly ensured public peace or been assured that the information given to me was wrong. This is the least I would have done, and that too if I had no trust in my legislature, or if there was no time to summon it. What is more, I would have realized my own unenviable position. I would have seen at once its hypocrisy. Having therefore dealt with the crisis, I would have tried to discover the true disease, of which the crisis was but a symptom. For that purpose, I would have summoned representative Indians before me and tried to ascertain why there were young, able and otherwise peaceful men, who would mercilessly kill innocent men and recklessly put their own lives in danger. I would have learnt that they had no selfish end and that they wanted liberty for their country. I would therefore have been guided, in dealing with the root cause, by the advice of the summoned representatives, taking care that no legitimate foreign interest was thereby jeopardized, and having done this I would have breathed free in the knowledge that it would be equally the business of my legislature as mine to deal with any such future eruption.

I know that in the foregoing I have made no new suggestion. But its staleness is its merit. The existing system has lived on terrorism and Viceroy after Viceroy as a rule has shut his eyes to the obvious necessity of consulting Indian opinion. The obduracy proves not the uselessness of the advice, it proves the worthlessness of the system under which such systematic defiance of public opinion is possible. No wonder the Viceroy, instead of obtaining the public support which he thought he should have had, is obliged to face severe condemnation from practically the whole Indian opinion.

A MISUNDERSTANDING

My note[1] on the Gaya Congress resolution about the repudiation of public debts has, I observe, given rise to some misunderstanding. It was unfortunate that it was published at a time when we are thinking of unity. The fact is that the note was written three months ago in answer to a correspondent. From week to week my assistants put it by to give place to other things that in their opinion were moreimportant. When it was finally published they did not see any incongruity between that note which was bound to raise useless controversy and other writings which were intended to emphasize matters of agreement. Whilst, therefore, I consider the appearance of the note inopportune at the present moment, I must say that it still represents my view of public debts. Whatever the Gaya resolution may mean, my note is quite clear. I do not seek to repudiate all debts incurred by the present Government but I do submit that when the final transference of power comes, it will be necessary to examine all the transactions of the Government and they will have to stand the light of examination. Suppose for instance the Government were to make a gift of a hundred million to a foreign syndicate for the exploitation of the mineral resources of the country, it would not only be just for, but it will be the duty of, the Swaraj Government to repudiate it. Indeed perhaps I go a step further in one respect than the Gaya resolution. I would claim to bring under scrutiny not merely the transactions since the date of the resolution but every transaction of the Government which may appear to bear an immoral taint. For this Government claims to be and is presumed to act justly, honourably and as trustee for the millions of the people of India. Breach of trust or any other unjust dealing cannot claim the protection that prescription gives to honourable dealings.

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[1] *Vide*"Notes", 13-11-1924, sub-title,"Public Debts".

335. THE TRUTH ABOUT NATIONALISM[1]

It is becoming clearly a matter of first-rate importance for the younger generation of Indians, who are faced with the altered world situation after the Great War, to think out afresh, in the light of that experience, the truth about Western nationalism and its application to the East....

The truth is that during my recent travels in Malaya and Burma I found on all sides this hostility towards Indians, as foreigners, being awakened. . . it meant to me that the whole world was going mad after"nationalism" of a European type, and not Europe only....

These things had disturbed me before Mahatma Gandhi's fast; but during the fast itself the further thought came to me, that just as in Europe the wars of hostile religions had ended in the wars of hostile nations, so in India the Hindu-Muslim tension might easily take the same course, unless we were forewarned about it....

We have, alas ! also today to acknowledge in India a class warfare, equivalent to the class-warfare between Labour and Capital in Europe. There is the cruelly narrow hostility between class and class contained in"untouchability"....

Are we truly representing the universal spirit of India in all our new developments? Or, are we merely copying over again some of the most retrograde features of the West? Is our picture of swadeshi becoming clouded with thoughts of hostility and ill-will to others? . .

The sovereign test is non-violence....

It is because I have felt all along that this spirit of Ahimsa or Love was fundamentally behind the national movement, in spite of its forbiding name of non-co-operation, that I have stuck to it, through thick and thin, and remained its defender, even when"violence was in the very air"....

There is no fear of Indian swadeshi becoming impure or racial so long as it confines itself principally to khaddar and things which can be and should be manufactured in India. It is not exclusive but conservative. It is not anti-British or anti-foreign but pro-Indian by necessity. India must protect her primary industries even as a mother protects her children against the whole world without being hostile to it. Violent nationalism, otherwise known as imperialism, is the curse. Non-violent nationalism is a necessary condition of corporate or civilized life.

Young India, 27-11-1924

[1] From this article by C. F. Andrews on which Gandhiji has commented, only extracts are reproduced here.

336. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI[1]

[After *November 27, 1924*]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Please send a receipt for this to Mathuradas. What is the sum from Dabholkar meant for? We too should deposit these two sums, and such others that might be lying with us, if we are not already doing so, with some bank, so that they may earn interest.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S.N. 11743

337. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SABARMATI,
November 28, 1924

NEHRU
ALLAHABAD

SORRY ABOUT BABY'S DEATH.[2] GOD'S WILLS BE DONE.

GANDHI

A Bunch of Old Letters, p. 41

338. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SABARMATI,
November 28, 1924

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
93 BAZAR GATE
BOMBAY

INFORM MAULANA SHANKERLAL UNWILLING PRESIDE. SUGGEST VINOBA. SELF PROPOSE REACH LAHORE FOURTH. CAN YOU JOIN?

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] In reply to a letter of November 27, 1924, from Mathuradas Trikumji with a cheque for Rs. 153-0-8, being interest on two sums that were lying with him since Gandhiji went to jail

[2] Jawaharlal Nehru's son died about a week after his birth.

339. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SABARMATI,
November 29. 1924

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
93 BAZAR GATE ST.
BOMBAY

TELL MAULANA AM SEEING PAREKH REGARDING MAHARAJA.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 11543,

340. TELEGRAM TO DR. SATYAPAL[1]

[On or after *November 29, 1924*]

WILL PRESIDE IF MOTILALJI OR MAULANA UNABLE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 11744

[1] This was in reply to the telegram from Dr. Satyapal received on November 29, 1924, which read:"Your telegram. Motilalji wires: 'Your telegram about my accepting presidentship not accurate. Regret impossible to attend. Make other arrangements.' Very anxious please accept presidentship otherwise whole conference miserable failure. Punjab situation needs delicate handling. Entirely depending on you. Please wire acceptance. I gave you accurate information Delhi. Have got reaffirmed. Kitchlew accepts present arrangements. Humbly request bring other leaders to decide our problems."

341. TELEGRAM TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

[On or after *November 29, 1924*][1]

MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD
RIPON STREET
CALCUTTA

MOTILALJI SAYS HE CANNOT COME. PLEASE ATTEND. YOUR PRESENCE PUNJAB SPECIALLY REQUIRED.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 11744

342. MY NOTES

BI-AMMA

I have already written about Bi-Amma's death in *Young India*.[2] That lady had unbounded love for religion. Her passion for religion was worth-emulating. Her patriotism was rooted in her love for religion and this very same love was responsible for her desire for Hindu-Muslim unity. She had finally come to such a state that she made no distinction between religion, patriotism and communal unity. She saw that Islam could not be safe if India did not attain independence; the latter was dependent on communal unity. This, in turn, is impossible without Hindu-Muslim unity. In this manner, because she had seen it with her own eyes, this good woman repeatedly talked of these three things till her death. During her days, I had the good fortune of having her *darshan* a number of times. She would ask me: When will Hindus and Muslims unite? When shall we win independence? Shall I live to see it?"

Every soul is immortal; such a pure soul, however, manifests its immortality clearly. Although Bi-Amma is no longer physically with us, her deeds and her words will not die so long as Hindus and Muslims survive. The mother who has left sons like the Ali Brothers cannot possibly perish. My love for these Brothers grows as I recall their love for their mother. That old lady's word was law to them.

[1] *Vide* footnote to the preceding item.

[2] *Vide*"Notes", 20-11.1924, sub-title,"Bi-Amma".

They believe that the credit for whatever they are goes to their mother.

The night of Bi-Amma's death is unforgettable. Maulana Shaukat Ali was present at my prayers that day when a telephone message said that Bi-Amma's illness had taken a serious turn. On hearing this, the Maulana left immediately along with Dr. Ansari. I was informed of this after the prayers. I took Sarojini Devi along with me and went over to their place. The whole family had gathered around Bi-Amma. All were chanting the name of Allah. Pearl-like tears were trickling down Maulana Mahomed Ali's face; but I did not hear him utter any word except the name of Allah. Maulana Shaukat Ali was trying to restrain his tears but his face disclosed his grief. Nevertheless, he retained his presence of mind. He was well aware of what was going on around him. Arrangements were being made for the subsequent ceremonies. He pressed me to leave as he felt that I was weak and should not stay there long. I have many such instances of his attentiveness and his kindness.

I could not but compare the patience and the faith in God that I witnessed in that small room with our custom of crying and screaming. I have seen many deaths among Hindus. I have often seen that even when the person is still alive, instead of chanting the name of Rama for his sake, people start weeping aloud. Al1 religions forbid weeping for the dead. Hinduism regards birth and death as modifications of the very same state; and yet I have not come across the barbarous and godless custom of weeping and wailing among any other people except the Hindus. I have been present at deaths among Parsis, Jews, Christians and Muslims. Nowhere have I seen any weeping and wailing. I was pleased to find only devotion to God on the occasion of Bi-Amma's death. I wish that thoughtful Hindu families will immediately discontinue the harmful, barbarous and futile practice of weeping and wailing as irreligious.

I learned much else by my association with Bi-Amma. That lady used only khadi till the very end, and that too not of fine quality but of a coarse, common variety. Her orders were for the use of pure khadi even for her burial. I saw these being carried out. In the home of the Ali Brothers, I saw everyone, old and young, wearing khadi.

Neither the Brothers nor anyone else in the house suspended their work even for a moment. Maulana Mahomed Ali did not stop writing. He continued to issue instructions regarding *Hamdard* and *Comrade*. Maulana Shaukat Ali did not stop his work even for a single

day. He had to visit Muzaffarnagar the very next day. He punctually fulfilled that appointment. I had to go to Ramjas College that very day. Even though the time coincided with the hour of the funeral, they did not allow me to cancel this engagement. They sent me away after assuring me that they would send for me to act as a pall-bearer before taking her remains to the burial ground. All this suggests devotion to duty, courtesy and faith in God. I have heard all this said of Tilak Maharaj. Whatever the nature of the sad news that he received, it made no difference to his daily routine. I have frequently come across such devotion to duty among Englishmen. It is not an exaggeration to say that without such patience one is not fit to be called a human being.

PARSI RUSTOMJEE

In the death of Bi-Amma, as Maulana Shaukat Ali says, India has lost a true soldier. With the passing away of Parsi Rustomjee also India has lost a true soldier. So far as I am concerned, I have lost a true friend. I have come across few men like Parsi Rustomjee. He had had hardly any education. He knew a little English and his knowledge of Gujarati was not much. He was not too fond of reading. Right from his youth he was in business. Through sheer hard work he had risen from the status of a common clerk to that of a big businessman. Despite this, he had a keen common sense and great generosity and he was so tolerant that, although he was an orthodox Parsi, he had the same affection for Hindus, Muslims and Christians. I have never seen anyone going round for funds return empty-handed from him. His loyalty to his friends was so staunch that many gave him their power of attorney. I have seen many prominent Muslim businessmen name Parsi Rustomjee their representative in preference to their own relations. No poor Parsi was sent away from Rustomjee's shop. It was as sparing towards himself as he was generous towards others. Luxuries had no place in his life. He spent money after great hesitation on himself and his family. He continued to live in great simplicity till the end. Parsi Rustomjee's shop was the only place where Gokhale, Andrews, Sarojini Devi and such others stayed. The minutest detail did not escape his eyes. Who else but he could be given the responsibility of packing Gokhale's forty-five packages consisting of innumerable addresses of welcome and such other things, making a list of these and loading them on the steamer?

By making a trust in the name of his dearly loved wife Jerbai

after her death, he gave away the larger part of his wealth in charity. He has not pampered his children at all but has rather brought them up in simplicity and left them an inheritance sufficient only to prevent them from starving. He has remembered all his relations in making his will.

He took part in public affairs with the same degree of precision and firmness described above. At the time of satyagraha, Parsi Rustomjee was the first among the businessmen of Natal who were prepared to sacrifice their all. It was his way not to give up a task once he had undertaken it, whatever the risks involved. He had to serve a longer sentence in prison than expected, but this did not frighten him. The struggle continued for eight years; many staunch warriors fell. Rustomjee, however, did not waver. He made his son Sorabjee also plunge into the struggle.

I first made the acquaintance of this good Indian in 1893. At first I was not greatly impressed by him. However, as I got more and more involved in public work, I learnt more and more to value the gemlike qualities in Parsi Rustomjee. He was my client, my colleague in public-work and finally he became my friend. He did not hesitate to come to me and describe his faults like a child. He astounded me by his faith in me. When the whites attacked me in 1897, Rustomjee's house sheltered me and my sons. The whites had threatened to burn down his house and property. That threat, however, did not deter him in the least. He continued the relationship thus built up in Africa till the time of his death. He continued to send money here too for public work. He was to have come here in December at the time of the Congress session. God, however, willed otherwise. Sheth Rustomjee's death is a great loss to the Indians in South Africa. Sorabjee Adajania passed away, after that Ahmed Mahomed Kachalia died, some time back P. K. Naidu, and now Parsi Rustomjee has departed. There are hardly any Indian workers of their calibre left in South Africa now. As God is the friend of the helpless, He will look after the Indians in South Africa. But the void created by Parsi Rustomjee's death will never be filled.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-11-1924

343. AN OPPOSITIONIST FRIEND

Very often we learn more from a person who opposes us than from one who shares our views. This depends, however, on our having the tolerance and patience to listen to and understand criticism. I have learnt much from my critics because, I believe, I have these two qualities. I give below a letter from a critic:[1]

I believe this letter has been written sincerely. The writer is angry but he has written what he believes. He has read a causal connection in what was merely a coincidence. He has found all my activities blameworthy because he did not get a reply to a telegram he sent me. I have all along believed that I am very regular in answering communications and the colleagues around me are not only not wicked but are engaged in the pursuit of truth. Nevertheless, even the most regular man cannot answer all the letters and telegrams he receives. It was impossible for me to read all the telegrams I received during the fast. It was also not possible for my colleagues to reply to all of them. It is indeed sad that the correspondent has not understood this obvious fact. His argument runs as follows: Non-co-operation is on and business in India is slack, hence the former is responsible for the latter; and since I am the author of non-co-operation I am the one who is to be held responsible. I wish to present the opposite argument. People did not implement non-co-operation in full, they did not wholly accept the religion of the spinning-wheel, hence India too became a prey to the economic depression that has affected the world. The people did not grasp the significance of non-co-operation because there are, in India, many impatient and impetuous persons like the correspondent. Hence India has to suffer. If they were patient and tried to understand non-co-operation and practise it, India would be free today.

Moreover, the correspondent's denunciation of innocent khadi has often been answered. Nevertheless I repeat the argument for the sake of the correspondent and other sceptics like him. It is not khadi alone that gets dirty, all white clothes get dirty. It is a little troublesome to wash khadi as it is coarse. However, if we had not become delicate by Western pampering, we would not have disliked washing khadi but enjoyed it. Moreover, those who wear khadi use fewer clothes and hence, on the whole, the trouble of washing is less. I would even go further and say that those who are unhappy about coarse khadi should spin fine yarn and have it woven so that khadi

[1] The letter is not translated here.

will be as fine as muslin and it will be less expensive than the latter because all the processes right up to spinning will have been free of cost. Ever since voluntary spinning was introduced the facility to obtain fine khadi for those who wish to wear it has been provided. Those who, through laziness, do not spin fine yarn will no longer have the right to blame khadi for its roughness. If voluntary spinning continues and spreads, it will be possible to obtain from the market as much fine khadi as one wants.

The spinning-wheel is intended to increase one's income. It is an *annapoorna*. The correspondent is a lawyer. He cannot be aware of the condition of the poor. If he were to stroll in a poor village, he would realize that even a single pice is welcome to the destitute. Crores of labourers do not earn even an anna a day. For them the spinning-wheel would be like a *Kamadhenu*[1]. Acharya Ray has testified to this.

The writer's sarcasm about law-breaking is well worth-considering. It is quite true. Just as people failed to understand that"peaceful" was the first concomitant of non-co-operation, similarly, they failed to realize that disobedience of law should necessarily be"civil". There is no doubt that unwelcome results have followed this. Many people have taken it for granted that anyone has the right to disobey any order or any law. This should be regarded not as civil disobedience, but as an impudent, uncivil and rainous breaking of the law; it is, in some respects, even more harmful than an armed revolt. However, this cannot be considered a drawback in civil disobedience. It is a fault which may be attributed to a lack of understanding on the part of the person who resorts to breaking the law. Such lack of understanding does arise in any new movement. Such imperfection is to be expected when an imperfect man works among other imperfect men. However if both the parties—the reformer and society—make *bona fide* mistakes out of ignorance, the divine law is that the error corrects itself. I repent wherever I discover errors. The public too corrects mistakes without any ill feeling. Between the two, there is a section of people which deliberately interferes with and hampers the movement. The only remedy lies in a wider propagation of these principles which appear new and a greater understanding of them by all. However, I welcome the outburst of the correspondent which serves us as a warning.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-11-1924

[1] A mythical cow which yielded whatever was asked of her.

344. WHAT SHOULD BE DONE NOW?

Step by step khadi is gaining ground. The All-India Congress Committee has accepted the suggestion of introducing khadi franchise. We hope that the Congress too will accept this. Whether the Congress accepts it or not, those who believe in the efficacy of spinning will glorify their membership by spinning. The Swarajists have in good faith agreed to include spinning and khadi as conditions for the right to vote. In order to encourage them and confirm their faith, the No-changers should forge ahead and make others do so. There are about 2,000 voluntary spinners in Gujarat today. We find it difficult to keep up this number; this is a measure of our organizing ability and a test of our tact. All our abilities will be on trial in making the progress rapid. We shall succeed only when a large number of workers continuously strive to achieve this. Thousands of persons may contribute their labour. They cannot contribute cotton, nor can they obtain it. Neither can all of them prepare their own slivers. Hence in every Village, in every taluka, we should have good carders. In every town, in every taluka there should be persons who can make good frames for the spinning-wheel and for the carding-bow. The committee or the sub-committee should have a godown for cotton. The province which can do all this well will be regarded as having acquired executive or administrative ability. How shall we acquire the ability to run the government under swaraj, if we cannot do even this much? We shall not automatically acquire such ability on securing swaraj. We shall, however, realize that swaraj is implicit in the acquisition of such ability. The East India Company gained control over us by destroying our spinning industry. Our salvation lies in the revival of this very thing.

So far, it is only those who have been able to get the spinning-wheel, slivers, etc., that have spun yarn. If we now expect half an hour's labour from many more people, the committees must provide all these needs. If there is a true awakening amongst us, thousands should participate in this great sacrifice which requires little effort. Moreover, since swaraj cannot be won without the spinning-wheel, it should not be surprising if thousands take part in it. In my opinion, the spinning-wheel is the easiest means for winning swaraj. It can illumine all other activities, and the latter will be meaningless without it.

We have no other peaceful means of ascertaining whether people are really capable, whether they truly desire swaraj. The ability to win swaraj is not proved by thousands or lakhs of people attending mammoth meetings. It is not acquired by thousands of persons contributing money. Money has no value where there is no one to make use of it. Swaraj cannot be won even by a large number of people studying Hindi or English. On the other hand, I have often and in many ways shown how the power to win swaraj lies in spinning.

I am convinced that if the spinning-wheel does not yield results, the only way open to India for winning swaraj will be bloodshed. True independence can never be won through legislative assemblies alone. Every Indian has understood and learnt by heart this axiom. What remains then is to tread the path of strength. First, there is the path of peaceful strength, where we have to suffer, where we have to do some constructive work.

Secondly, there is the path of violent strength, where we have to punish our adversary. Today, all of us regard this as fit only to be renounced. It is a fact simple enough to be grasped even by a child that today India can achieve nothing by pursuing the path of violence.

The reader should therefore forgive me if I see before my eyes only the spinning-wheel. And I would invite him to take full part in this grand sacrifice, if he too sees what I see.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-11-1924

345. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

KHADI BHANDAR

The Bombay Branch of the Gujarat Provincial Committee's Khadi Bhandar is situated on Kalbadevi Road. Shri Jamnalalji has taken over the Bhandar so as to accommodate the Committee. Shri Jamnalalji did not at first intend to run it for long. Since sudden closure was likely to entail great loss and since it is necessary to have such a Bhandar where it is, it has been retained for the time being. This Bhandar certainly does not aim at making any profit, I therefore recommend to the residents of that locality, who believe in the khadi movement, to visit the Bhandar with a view to encouraging it, if they find the goods and prices reasonable.

Two donations have been received in the name of the deceased, one of Rs. 100/- from Smt. Jerbano Pyarelal, the other of Rs. 80/- sent by a gentleman from Calcutta who collected it from several people. Possibly, the late Giri's family may come to stay at the Ashram. In case they do, this amount will be utilized to support them. If they do not come to the Ashram, the amount will be sent to them wherever they are. They have already received some aid through the Bengal Provincial Committee. Readers will be informed how this family fares; in the meanwhile no one need send me more money. Readers will be informed if more is needed.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-11-1924

346. SPEECH AT GUJARAT NATIONAL COLLEGE, AHMEDABAD

November 30, 1924

Addressing the students of the Gujarat National College, Mr. Gandhi said that the proposed suspension of non-co-operation by the Congress did not mean the closing of national educational institutions, or their affiliation with Government universities. The existence of these institutions was an accomplished fact, and it was up to the Provincial Congress Committee to keep them intact. The speaker would not only suggest a resolution to be passed by the Congress that such institutions should be kept up, but would suggest that whenever they were desired by the people, even new ones should be established. If there were students who did not believe in non-co operation as a national necessity but had given up Government educational institutions merely out of loyalty to the Congress resolution, they were free, without any stigma attaching to them, to rejoin Government colleges. The proposed suspension of non-co-operation would enable the country to know the strength of confirmed non-co-operators. Non-co-operation as a national programme might be suspended, but that did not mean suspension by an individual or even by provinces, if the provinces would retain it without causing bad blood or internal dissensions. The movement, like every other human activity, might have its periods of ebbs and flow, but it had come to stay, and would continue in some shape or form among men and women or groups so long as the existing system of Government lasted.

Replying to a question, Mr. Gandhi said that the national schools and colleges identified themselves with national politics in so far as they had to be a living

advertisement of what Hindu-Muslim unity should be, or what the correct relation between the so-called untouchables and caste Hindus was to be, and what the spinning-wheel meant. The future historian would measure the progress of non-co-operating educational institutions by the progress in them of these three items. These three items were common cause between Swarajists and No-changers. The difference was a difference in emphasis. They should not believe that the Swarajists had accepted the khaddar programme without any belief in it. It would be unjust to believe, unless there was proof to the contrary, that any party said what it did not mean. There was no question whatever of giving a go- by to khaddar. The speaker had no hesitation in saying that those students who did not believe in the khaddar programme were wasting time in remaining in national schools and colleges.

New India, 1-12-1924

347. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Thursday [Before *December 1, 1924*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I hope you have understood the mason's case.

1. If he agrees to arbitration, please consult Mavlankar and request the lawyer to arrange for it.

2. If he refuses to have it, give him the proper replies [to his plaint] in consultation with Mavlankar.

3. If you are required to appear before the court, do appear ; stand up to the plaintiff's cross-examination with patience and stick to the point.

4. The case is likely to be decided in our favour; if not, you should file an appeal.

5. If we win the case, we shall be allowed costs. These we are not going to obtain, for when a decree is in our favour we have to approach the court for realization of the costs. This incident carries for us the lesson that we should reduce to writing the work to be done by the workers. The contracts should be written down in detail. Let me know the lawyer's name.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] The date of receipt as given by the addressee is 1-12-1924.

[PS.]

Anandananda has now become very uneasy and is also tired. Please have a talk with him. If Chhaganlal can attend to the work there, let him do so and let Anandananda be given some respite. Who attends to his work during Chhaganlal's absence? Anandananda needs some rest; he can be given some other work. He has impressed me as a very capable person. He has freed me of all worries regarding *Navajivan*, financially and in other ways also, and has raised the weekly remarkably. I wonder if you have made a study of the man. Whatever that may be, think about this matter in consultation with Mahadev, Narahari and others.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6098. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

348. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[*December 1, 1924*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

We must not lose Khimji's suit against us. You may take all the measures you think proper. We need not sue him for perjury. But you may make an affidavit for your alibi if that is necessary. Vallabhbhai will be able to tell you more.

As for carding, make whatever arrangement you deem proper. Personally, I think that all those who know carding well should spare at least some time and keep one carding-bow working the whole day. This should be done first to keep up the practice; secondly, to show that it is our profession; thirdly, to supply slivers to the best of our capacity. All these three aspects are equally important at the present time.

I told Chhotalal last night all that was necessary. I have already told Chhaganlal too. But I do not possess that power by which my words once uttered would have an immediate and permanent effect. I have to be near the persons all the time. I wish I could stay at the Ashram for a long time and supervise the work there. But God does not allow me to fulfil that wish. Who can prevail against Him?

BAPU

[1] As given by the addressee

[PS.]

Herewith the reply for Shambhushankar.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 6044. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

349. LETTER T0 RAMABEHN PATTANI

SABARMATI,
Magsar Sud 5 [*December 1, 1924*][1]

DEAR SISTER,

I have your affectionate letter. I shall be at the Conference[2] on 8th and 9th January. After that you may take me to some quietplace for a few days. I will have to be back here on the 14th at the latest. Everything will be arranged after I go there. I have been persuaded to visit Kathiawar and preside over the Conference in the hope that women like you may help me in the propagation of khadi. If this wish of mine is fulfilled, that will give me greater peace than the peace I can get in a quite place. I hope you are well.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

LADY RAMABAI PATTANI
BHAVNAGAR

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 3183. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

350. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

Magsar Sud 6 [*December 2, 1924*][3]

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I write this letter on the train going to the Punjab. I got your letter. I shall clarify the Congress policy regarding the Native States. I hope to have some peace under your shelter after the Kathiawar Conference.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 3182. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

[1] This was written in reply to the addressee's letter of November 24, 1924, inviting Gandhi to spend a few quiet days at Trapaj after his return from the Belgaum Congress.

[2] Kathiawar Political Conference

[3] From the postmark

351. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Magh Sud 6, December 2, 1924

DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have written something in *Young India*[1] about the textbooks of Prof. Ramdas Gaur. So I am not replying separately. 1 hope Kamala is well. I am going to the Punjab.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ANAND BHAVAN

ALLAHABAD

From the Hindi original: Jawaharlal Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

352. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

ON THE TRAIN,
December 2, 1924

BHAI SAHIB,

I have your letter. I alone have the privilege to fall ill. Other workers may not. I hope your leg is completely cured. I understand your complaint. I shall not give you the trouble of going to the Council. My *Vandemataram* to all.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9550

353. NOTES

AT PELGAUM

I should like workers to know that I am to preside at the forthcoming Congress only as a businessman presides at business meetings. The demonstrative character of the Congress will be

[1] *Vide* "What is Seditious?", 4-12-1924.

exemplified in its exhibition and other side-shows. And if we are to do any substantial business, workers must frame a programme of work beforehand. If we are to do this, all the workers should attend and give their help. This they cannot do unless they understand, appreciate and whole-heartedly accept the agreement. I would not like their acceptance out of loyalty, whether they are Swarajists or No-changers. The agreement is not for show. It has been arrived at not to impress others but ourselves. Mere outward assent without inward conviction and co-operation would be worse than useless. So far I have not received any criticism from Swarajists except by way of an appeal from some for not changing the franchise as proposed. But I am besieged with angry or sorrowful protests from No-changers. I am endeavouring so far as is possible for me to explain the position and solve doubts through these pages. But I know that there is nothing in the world like a full and free chat. I was hardly able to do justice to the No-changers or myself at the hour's chat with them whilst the A.I.C.C. was sitting. I am therefore setting apart the 20th instant for a conference with No-changers at Belgaum which I hope to reach in the morning on that day. I am asking Sjt. Gangadharrao Deshpande to avoid demonstration and let me enter Belgaum quietly so that no time may be wasted. I request all the No-changers, who wish to take part in the discussion, to attend this informal discussion. At the same time I would warn them against flooding Belgaum so early. The Congress session will not begin before the 26th instant. The Khilafat Conference does not begin before the 24th instant. The National Convention cannot be much earlier. I therefore suggest that the No-changers in each province should select two or three as their spokesmen and representatives who should be fully armed with the views of the rest. The whole of the afternoon of the 20th can be given to interchange of views and there may be further discussion on the 21st if need be. I am corresponding with Deshbandhu Das and Pandit Motilalji Nehru to ask whether they would like me to have a similar discussion with the Swarajists. I would then gladly give a part of the 21st solely to them. So far as the attendance of delegates is concerned, I do hope that there will be full attendance on the part of both the parties. For though so far as I am concerned I wish to carry no proposition of importance by party voting, I am anxious to know the mind of the delegates. It would not be a proper discharge of their trust, if they stay away out of apathy, indifference or disgust. No one should offer himself as a delegate who does not wish to devote his

time and attention to national work. Every delegate is therefore in duty bound to attend, if it is humanly possible, and help to shape the Congress policy for the coming year.

HAND SPINNING AT ADYAR

The reader will be glad to read the following letter received by Dr. Besant from Mme. de Manziarly and her comments thereon which I reproduce from the current number of the *Theosophist:*

> I read in *New India* about your talk with Mr. Gandhi concerning spinning and would like you to know what is going on in that respect in Adyar. In May (when you were absent in London) I learned to spin. I was the first to do it on the compound, because I was so intensely interested in village welfare, home industries and dreaming of active help to the villages round Adyar through spinning, weaving, dyeing with vegetable dyes, embroidery and other rural industries. Later, others learned to spin, and now in our new vocational shed belonging to Miss Barrie's Montessori school, Mrs. Peramma gives lessons to eleven village women, besides several ladies and children of the compound. The charkhas are made by the carpenter belonging to the vocational shed. I am now learning to weave, and we have already two looms in the shed, and soon I will start the dyeing. It may be of use to you to know and to be able to tell about our endeavour.
>
> There must be not so many European women spinning in India, and it is perhaps interesting that a theosophist does it, and not out of a political conviction, but only from the wish to help—which coincides with politics. We even could send yarn through you to Mr. Gandhi for the Congress, if you wish us to do so instead of weaving it into khaddar ourselves. Now at least a dozen people are spinning regularly.
>
> To the spinning and weaving we will add other things—beauty, which will enrich soul and spirit and give creative joy, and in this way not only the economic life of this poor people will be improved, but their spiritual life too—and by it our synthetic theosophical programme fulfilled. We dream too—and being neither old nor young, I combine the two—*see visions and dream of* a wonderful work before us.
>
> It is interesting—and curious to those who live on the surface—that this has been going on in my absence, and that I, knowing nothing of it, just on my return to India, said to Mr. Gandhi in Bombay, I was willing to spin half an hour a day, if it would help unity. Mme. de Manziarly is a very charming woman and"has a way wid her", as the Irish say. So she suggested to the women who began to spin salable yarn, that they should spin for a charkha

that would be their own; they preferred the annas, but she so praised the usefulness of having a charkha with which they could go on spinning annas perennially, that they exchanged yarn for charkhas and then carried them home for their own use. Now yarn is made and woven into cloth in the Craft Shed, and out of the cloth little jackets of the South Indian fashion are made for the children and these are becoming the uniform of the school. Mme. de Manziarly bought various kinds of charkhas, and she and the carpenter between them made one which is very simple and effective. They spin from the seeds directly, without any intermediate processes. Now she has gone off to learn vegetable dyeing, which is still done in Southern India, and which she wishes to add to our villages here. This is a well considered plan, and the idea may spread. Parts of it might be taken up in any village, and the whole in the larger villages. If a panchayat were added to it, the village would be on the right road.

BREACH OF FAITH?

It is a healthy sign of the times that there are people in the country who are jealous of the morals of the nation. A friend, not himself a Liberal, asks,"Was not the ratification of the agreement between the Swarajists and Gandhiji by the A.I.C.C. a breach of faith with the All Parties Conference?" The answer, in my humble opinion, is an emphatic"No." The agreement is the basis of invitation. The two wings of the Congress must first unite. In the absence of the Congress, that unity can be expressed by the A.I.C.C. The agreement is final so far as the two wings of the Congress are concerned. But it is open to attack and even to revision at the instance of any outside party. The attack can succeed only if it appeals to the reason of both the wings. No party is called upon to surrender its principle for the sake of unity. The agreement now ratified by the A.I.C.C. is not an ultimatum— either this or nothing. There are many things outside the agreement which all the parties have to consider. Congressmen are not expected to suspend their principles or policy pending decision of the All Parties Conference. But they are expected to keep an open mind on everything. They must approach the question with a receptive mind. Subject to that one essential condition, it is better that all parties declare their principles, policies and intentions. There should be no mental reservations. Not to proceed with the ratification of the agreement would have meant a mental reservation. What we must aim at is the same spirit of toleration that we need and are strivings after in the relations between Hindus and Mussalmans. We want to unite and

respect one another in spite of the sharpest differences of opinion, that is to say, if we have a common goal to pursue. We may find to our great grief that there is no common goal, that swaraj does not mean the same thing in any of its aspects to all parties, that our interests are not the same. Then I admit there is no uniting of all parties on the Congress platform. But that would be the same thing as saying that there is no swaraj for poor India. For after all when swaraj comes, different parties wills work in the same Swaraj Parliament. The Congress is intended to be a forerunner and prototype of such a Parliament.

AN IMPORTANT OMISSION

Pandit Motilalji says that an important reference in my speech at the recent A.I.C.C. meeting[1] about the propriety of an appeal by the Swaraj Party for support has been omitted in the reports published in the Press. It was undoubtedly important and I wanted it to be reported. I therefore gladly give below the purport:

> The Swarajists have a perfect right to strengthen and organize themselves and to appeal for support to the country, not excluding the No-changers. If non-co-operation is suspended, and the Swaraj Party has the same status as the No-changers in the Congress, the latter may not object to such propaganda. Indeed it would be improper to do so. Such in my opinion is the undoubted implication of the suspension of non-co-operation. This does not mean that whole-hoggers should join the Swaraj Party. As Deshbandhu had a perfect right to do, he invited me to join the Party. I told him I could not, so long as I had no faith in Council-entry. I could only help from outside. Nor could any other true No-changer join. But those who have no such scruples and remain out, only because the Congress programme stands, may certainly join the Swaraj Party without any interference from No-changers. The latter's propaganda against Councils cannot be vocal; their ceaseless work on the charkha must speak for itself. The Swarajists have both the Councils and the charkha. No-changers have nothing but the charkha to swear by.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at A.l.C.C. Meeting, Bombay", 23-11-1924.

On learning that Mr. Pragji Desai who, as the editor of the *Navayug* of Surat, was the other day sentenced to two years' imprisonment with hard labour, was wasting and was not getting proper food, I wrote[1] to the Inspector-General of Prisons inquiring about Mr. Desai's condition. The following was his reply:

> I have enquired into the allegations regarding Mr. P.K. Desai.
>
> 1. It is true that his weight has fallen from 138 lbs. on admission to 128 lbs. now. But as he is unduly obese, this can hardly be regarded as a ground for complaint. He is still 17 lbs. above the normal weight of a man of his height.
>
> 2. He is not isolated from the rest of the prisoners. A convict night watchman is always with him and they work together. He is also within sight of other prisoners.
>
> 3. The Superintendent denies that the vegetables given to any prisoner are as a rule grassy and uneatable. Considering that there is a large and excellent garden at Hyderabad Prison, there is no reason why this should be so.
>
> 4. He was sentenced to rigorous (not simple) imprisonment and therefore cannot be allowed to choose the work on which he shall be employed in jail.
>
> 5. The Medical Officer of the Hyderabad Central Prison is at present an Indian Officer of the I.M.S. who can be entirely trusted suitably to regulate the diet of all prisoners according to the requirements of their health and constitution. He reports that Mr. Desai does not look weak or debilitated.
>
> In conclusion I may say that I inspected Hyderabad Prison three weeks ago and on that occasion saw Mr. Desai. He did not complain to me of any of the matters mentioned by you. His only request was that he should be transferred, as the climate of Hyderabad did not agree with him. As there was no reason for thinking that such was the case, I did not consider it necessary to take any action.

It is quite true that Mr. Desai made no complaint. He did not because he thought he should not complain against officials who were all Indians. He wanted to put up with the inconvenience. I knew that Mr. Desai was a hard-labour prisoner, but even a hard-labour prisoner may ask for the kind of labour for which he is best

[1] *Vide*"Letter to Col. Mel", 13-11-1924.

fitted. I have the pleasure of knowing well the present Inspector-General of Prisons, for he was the Superintendent during the last months of my imprisonment. He is strict, but he is just and patient. I am therefore hoping that Mr. Desai will not be allowed to undergo unnecessary suffering.

INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The Natal Government are still after the Indian settlers. They are determined to harass them out of that Colony by hook or by crook. The latest is a measure that among other things deprives the Indian tax-payer of the municipal franchise. There never has been a charge against him of abuse of the franchise. He is admittedly an orderly citizen. But the idea is simply to subject him to degradation so as to make it impossible for self-respecting Indians to remain in Natal. Let us hope that the Governor-General will as before refuse his assent to the atrocious measure.

SPINNING CLUBS

Sjt. Nambudripad sends me a record of the activity of a spinning club formed at Trichur. It is too early yet to write with confidence about the activity of the club. But the formation of such clubs is very desirable. They can assist the development of voluntary spinning and cannot but be helpful to novices. The Trichur club has about 25 members. They hold competitions. Every member is pledged to spin at least 2,000 yards per month for the A.I.K.B. I hope that similar clubs will be formed all over the country.

BORO DADA ON EDUCATION

Boro Dada has sent me the following note for publication in *Young India:*

A celebrated English poet of eighteenth century said:

"A little learning is a dangerous thing,

Drink deep or taste not the Pierian spring."

To this I add that the education, which is spreading among our people, is worse than a little learning. The right sort of knowledge, which is rooted in the heart of the Indian people, is a gift of God, and of those *rishis* of olden times who devoted their whole lives to the service of God. This is positive knowledge, while the education of the present day, which has not *heart* in it, gives a sort of negative knowledge. The acquisition of negative knowledge is tantamount to a loss of positive knowledge.

Minus a hundred is a hundred times less than minus one. Therefore, the most highly modern educated man in India of the present day is in reality an ignoramus in comparison with a rightly educated son of India, who may never in his life have crossed the threshold of schools and colleges.

Young India, 4-12-1924

354. NOT EVEN HALF-MAST

The perplexity of No-changers continues unabated. Some of the best among them, those whose advice and co-operation I value above everything else, are bewildered. They feel that I have probably given up even lifelong principles for a patchwork. One such communication I quote below:

> You are reported to have said that not having the power to give battle to the Swarajists immediately, you are forbearing, marking time. But why thus? The cause of truth and non-violence demands that you keep the flag flying for us collectively outside the Swaraj Party and the Congress, in no spirit of hostility to anybody, even as Mohammed did. His followers dwindled to three depending upon the holy God's strength. Personally you undoubtedly gain by surrendering and helping opponents, but the cause suffers irretrievably when non-co-operators are neither asked nor allowed to hoist the flag collectively. No spiritually-minded man can take interest in politics which neither promotes nor draws sustenance from truth and non-violence. No strategic unity will attract God, because fight with the Government then becomes immoral. Further, under the Swarajist regime there will be nothing to purify the criminal tendencies of impatient idealists as under your previous regime of high moral idealism and spiritual endeavour. Now utter futility and blank despair will stare them in the face.

The friend represents a large body of non-co-operators. He himself was attracted to the struggle because of its spiritual nature. I have therefore carefully read the message more than once. My hope is that he has formed judgment on garbled, even misleading, reports of my speeches. He was not present at the Conference. He was not in Bombay. It is most difficult to follow any movement merely from newspaper reports. I have not seen the report to which the friend makes reference. The expression"giving batte, to the Swarajists", torn from its context, may bear a meaning opposite to the one intended by me. Let me explain: I cannot give battle to the Swarajists, if they misunderstand me, if No-changers do not understand the spirit in

which a battle of non violence conceived in a humble spirit can be offered, if the Government takes of such a battle advantage not contemplated by me, or if tile atmosphere required for it is wanting. What has happened in fact is that all these things have more or less come about. Let it be further remembered that with me the safety of the cause has not lain in numbers. My so-called popularity has been perhaps the greatest stumbling block in the swift execution of my plans. I should not have done penance either for the Bombay riots or Chauri Chaura if the people who tools part in them had been utter strangers to me and made no profession of non-violence. So long therefore as I continue to attract crowds, I have to walk warily. A general with a large army cannot march as swiftly as he would like to. He has to take note of all the different units in his army. My position is not very unlike such a general's. It is not a happy position, but it is there. If it often means strength, it sometimes means a positive hindrance. It is perhaps now clear what I mean by"not having the power to give battle to the Swarajists".

I have in no way"lowered the flag" of non-co-operation. It is not even brought half mast. For not a single non-co-operator is called upon to deny his faith. It is always risky to bring in the illustrations of the great prophets or religious teachers of the world. I may in the world feeling my way to light"amid the encircling gloom". I often err and miscalculate. But since the great Prophet's name has been mentioned in this connection, I may in all humility say that I am not without hope that I shall not be found wanting if I am left with but two human comrades or without any. My trust is solely in God. And I trust men only because I trust God. If I had no God to rely upon, I should be like Timon, a hater of my species. But if we are to draw a moral from the lives of the great teachers, let us also remember that the Prophet entered into treaty with those with whom he had little in common and who are described in scathing terms in the Koran. Non-co-operation, exodus, resistance and even violence were with the Prophet phases in the same battle of life wherein truth was everything.

I do not believe as the friend seems to do that an individual may gain spiritually and those who surround him suffer. I believe in *advaita*, I believe in the essential unity of man and for that matter of all that lives. Therefore I believe that if one man gains spiritually, the whole world gains with him and, if one man falls, the whole world falls to that extent. I do not help opponents without at the same time

helping myself and my co-workers. I have not asked or advised believing non-co-operators not to"hoist their flag" either collectively or individually. On the contrary I expect them to keep it flying top-most against all odds. But that does not mean that the nation or the Congress non-co-operates. What we must recognize, if we will not ignore facts, is that the nation, i.e., the Congress in so far as it represents the nation, is not carrying out the programme of Non-co-operation. It must therefore be confined to individuals. Non-co-operating ex-lawyers, ex-title-holders, ex-schoolmasters, ex-councillors may remain that to the full and still belong to the Congress. Their special programme is hand-spinning and Khadi. These the Congress has not yet rejected. The Swarajists are gracefully accommodating No-changers in this respect to the fullest extent compatible with their convictions. They do not consider, as No-changers do, that universailzing hand-spinning is necessary for accelerating the exclusion of foreign-cloth. And yet in order to retain the co-operation of No-changers, if you will, my co-operation, they, seeing that they have no objection on principle to hand-spinning, have become party to its introduction in the franchise. It is well to bear in mind that the introduction of hand-spinning as part of the franchise is an extraordinary proposal. A conscientious man like Mr. Stokes opposes it tooth and nail, although he is himself an enthusiastic spinner. Many of our distinguished countrymen laugh at it. It is no small thing then that the Swarajists have accepted. Therefore if they prove true to their word (and I have no reason to doubt it), non-co-operators do not need any separate organization. The No-changers need not, ought not, to take part in the Council activity and therefore the Swarajists have the sole authority and consequently sole responsibility for the Council programme. They will use the name of the Congress as of right but they will not therefore use the name of the No-changers. The Congress is a joint concern in which the liability and responsibility for certain items are joint and for a particular activity given to and taken over by a section.

If unity, removal of untouchability and the charkha are an integral part of the politics of this country, then No-changers have all the truth, all the non-violence and all the spirituality that they may wish for. A No-changer's fight with the Government consists chiefly in purifying himself and developing his own strength. But he must not by any act of his impair the power of the Swarajists whom he is bound to regard as honest as himself. A No-changer should be the

last person to arrogate sanctity for himself to the exclusion of others. And granting that the Swarajist system is bad, let him not act as if the existing system of Government is not much worse. Even a believer in non-violence has to say between two combatants which is less bad or whose cause is just. Between Japan and Russia, Tolstoy gave his verdict for Japan. Between England and Dutch South Africa, W.T Stead[1] sided with the Boers and prayed for England's defeat. Between Swarajists and the Government, I do not take a single second to make my choice. There is danger of our vision being blurred because of the Swarajist revolt against the programme of 1920. Assume for the moment that the Swarajists are as bad as the Government should have us believe, even so their government will be infinitely preferable to a government which has limitless resources for crushing the slightest attempt at independence of conduct or real resistance. I am not aiming at any"strategic" unity. I am simply aiming at representation of all parties in the Congress, so that we may learn to tolerate one another's opinions, we may know one another better, we may react upon one another and, if we cannot find a common method of execution, we may at least frame a common scheme of swaraj.

I agree with the friend in his concluding remarks that it is not the Council programme that will ultimately keep the impatient idealist from mischief, but it is the non-violent non-co-operation which evokes the highest spirit of self-sacrifice that will wean him from the error of his ways. I promise that I have done nothing to weaken the strong non-co-operator. With myself, I have put him on his mettle. Let him sacrifice himself to the utmost on the altar of unadulterated love and the whole Congress will follow him like one man. But such love acts in an unseen manner. The more efficient a force is, the more silent and the more subtle it is. Love is the subtlest force in the world. If the No-changer has it in him, it is well with him and everyone else.

Young India, 4-12-1924

355. SUSPEND OR ABANDON?

The answer to the question whether non-co-operation should be suspended or abandoned depends purely upon the temperamental state of the answerer. He who has never believed in non-co-operation

[1] English journalist; an enthusiastic supporter of the peace movement in Great Britain

naturally wants it abandoned for ever. He who like me has always believed in and practised it, whenever and wherever necessary, and who therefore swears by it can with difficulty only be persuaded to vote for suspension in the hope no doubt that some time or other he will be able to carry the sceptic and the unbeliever with him and make its national working a success. Suspension therefore is the neutral state that can be accepted by all parties. Those who believe in the efficacy and necessity of non-violent non-co-operation may be permitted to cherish the hope that if the occasion necessitated revival, the nation would take it up. Those who disbelieve in it will be free under suspension to preach the evil effects in their opinion of non-co-operation to convert Congressmen to their views. That is the grand opportunity that suspension gives them. And in my opinion a wholly non-co-operating Congress cannot be expected to go further than suspension. I say"wholly non-co-operating Congress" because Swarajists too claim to have faith in non-co-operation. Let me give up a secret, if secret it can be called. The very first draft prepared now more than three months ago began with a preamble reiterating belief in non-co-operation. It was quite acceptable to Swarajists. But it was removed by mutual consent in order to make it easier for Liberals and others to join. It was pointed out by some friends that Liberals and National Home Rulers might object to voting for the preamble. In fact consistently with principles extraordinary care was taken by all who had a hand in drafting the final agreement to anticipate and meet the requirements of those who have remained outside the Congress. I know that even so, the agreement falls short of the full requirements of the various political groups and parties. The reason for the defect is not due to want of effort or will, but it is due to both the Swarajists and myself having to take into account our respective principles, or call them limitations if that word is preferable.

Moreover, I cannot too often repeat the fact that we had the great Congress electorate in mind. It is true that it is as yet not always assertive when it ought to be but I have noticed that on occasions it can assert its will despite the effort of the leaders to the contrary. It is the same electorate that all of us have to affect and be affected by. In findings the ways and means of agreement I venture to think that each party if it is to work in unison has to be satisfied with just sufficient and no more for the requirements of its conscience.

After all, no one wants non-co-operation for the sake of it. No

one prefers imprisonment to freedom. But when freedom is in jeopardy, non-co-operation may be a duty and prison may be a palace. It is for all those who would under every circumstance avoid non-co-operation to make it unnecessary for non-co-operators to resort to it. And one of the best methods of bringing about such a result is for all parties to unite, devise a scheme of swaraj acceptable to all parties and discover at the same time if it is possible a common method of enforcing that scheme.

Young India. 4-12-1924

356. WHAT IS SEDITIOUS?

The Allahabad High Court pronounced Professor Ramdas Gaud's Hindi Readers as seditious, although it was admitted that the Readers contained nothing but selections from books already in circulation. The High Court has also awarded costs against the professor in the sum of Rs. 300. The Readers have been proscribed three years after their publication. I admit that evil does not cease to be such because of lapse of time. But it is fair to ask why the Government allowed the evil to run for such a long time. It is a just presumption that the Government chose a time when non-co-operation was at its ebb. The relevant question however is, what Professor Ramdas Gaud or better still those parents and those institutions that are using the Readers should do? It is not an easy question to answer. We are about to suspend non-co-operation and therefore also civil disobedience. Such acts therefore cannot receive the moral support of the Congress. Every individual and every institution must act on its own responsibility. The extracts quoted in the judgment divide themselves into three parts :

1. Those that are said to excite hatred against the Government.

2. Those that are said to excite hatred against Western civilization and by implication against Europeans.

3. Those that excite hatred against persons belonging to different religious communities.

In the first instance I venture to suggest that almost any book can be held objectionable, if isolated passages from it torn from their context are to be judged. So far as I know the judges had nothing more. Secondly almost every Indian newspaper can be declared seditious, because it does excite disaffection towards the"Government

(i.e., the system, not the men composing it) established by law". For almost every Indian has pronounced against it and is seeking to end or mend it. So far as the Western civilization is concerned, it is possible to find terrible passages from Hindu scriptures holding up the modern system to ridicule and contempt. My booklet, from which passages referring to Western civilization have been quoted, has been placed in the hands of children with impunity. I may have erred in my condemnation. But it was written not to preach hatred against any portion of mankind but love for all that lives. I know of no instance in which a single mind has been corrupted by the reading of that booklet. It has been translated both in India and abroad into several languages. It was once proscribed by the Government of Bombay.[1] But the proscription has been removed in practice if not in theory. It is strange then that Prof. Ramdas Gaudy should be punished, when I am left untouched. In support of the third charge, namely promotion of inter-religious hatred, I see only one passage quoted. I do not know in what context it occurs. But it is clear to me that the books have not been proscribed for the sake of that one passage. I know that the professor has a clear conscience. He has not intended to excite hatred against any individual. I know too that he has made no profits out of the sales. If I were he, I would leave the circulation undisturbed. The books in stock must have been confiscated by the Government already. But where the Readers are already being taught, I would continue to teach them unless the parents or the trustees decide otherwise.

Young India, 4-12-1924

357. THAT FIJI REPORT

To the Editor, *Young India*

SIR,

Nearly three years ago the Government of India sent a Commission to Fiji Islands to enquire into the condition of Indians resident there and to ascertain the causes of discontent among them and to advise whether or not, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, Fiji offers a suitable field for Indian colonization. The Commission visited the Islands in the beginning of the year 1922 and submitted a report of their enquiry to the Indian

[1] The reference is to *Hind Swaraj; vide* "Johannesburg", March 13, 1910.

Government in September, 1922. So the report has been with the Government of India for more than two years. In the last session of the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Gaya Prasad Sinha asked the Government of India some questions about this report. Here are three of his questions:

(c) When do the Government of India intend to publish the report?

(d) Is it a fact that the Colonial Office has taken strong objections to certain views expressed in the report?

(e) Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table communication on the subject which may have passed between the Colonial Office and the Government of India?

Mr. J. W. Bhore replied on behalf of the Government:

(c) The question of publication is still under consideration.

(d) & (e) In view of the answer given to part (c) of the question, I hope that the Hon'ble member will not press for an answer.

The request of Mr. Bhore to Mr. Gaya Prasad Sinha not to press for an answer to his questions (d) and (e) raises suspicion in our minds. Is it really a fact that the Government of India has been withholding the Fiji report simply on account of the objections of the Colonial Office? . . .

A large amount of money was spent from the Indian treasury on this Commission and the Indian public has a right to demand that the report of the Commission should be published without any delay.

I am, etc.,

BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

Let me hope that Mr. Sinha will be more successful at the forthcoming session of the Legislative Assembly.

Young India, 4-12-1924

358. LETTER TO COL. MURRAY

AS AT SABARMATI,

[About *December 4, 1924*][1]

DEAR COL. MURRAY[2],

I thank you for your reply about Mr. P. K. Desai. I knew that he had not complained to you because he was averse to saying anything

[1] Col. Murray's letter to which this was a reply appeared in *Young India. Vide*"Notes", 4-12-1924, sub-title,"Pragji Desai".

[2] Inspector-General of Prisons

about officials who were Indian. I was aware that Mr. Desai was a hard labour prisoner. But as at Yeravda I thought you would not mind letting him work at the spinning-wheel and spinning yarn not twisting thread at it.

I thank you for your inquiry about my health. I seem to have completely recovered after the very successful operation by Col. Maddock.

I did not know that Col. Mel had retired.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 11729

359. CAN UNTOUCHABILITY BE DEFENDED?[1]

[*December 5, 1924*][2]

In my opinion Mr. Andrews is over-considerate to Babu Kalishankar Chakravarti. Whilst the condition of untouchables in the South is no doubt much worse than that of the untouchables in Bengal, it is bad enough in Bengal and admits of no defence. *Namasudras* can better speak of the effect of untouchability than its defenders. Let us learn from the English rulers the simple fact that the oppressors are blind to the enormity of their own misdeeds. The untouchability of Hinduism is probably worse than that of the modern imperialists. We have made it hereditary with a rigidity not yet observable about its imperial edition. Will Babu Kalishankar please remember that the English imperialists offer for their untouchability the same defence that he does for the Hindu untouchability? The safer course therefore is not to find out which is worse but to recognize the evil of our own system and endeavour to root it out.

Young India, 11-12-1924

[1] This article by C. F. Andrews on which Gandhiji has commented, is not reproduced here. In it Andrews had replied to Babu Kalishankar Chakravarti's letter from Bengal defending untouchability. His defence read" . . . The other day Mahatmaji has said that violent non-co-operation is vicious, but non-violent non-co-operation is good. Exactly the same is the case with untouchability. Vicious it is certainly when attended with hatred and oppression, but without them very good. It was designed to keep the people separate whose character, habit and intellect are not similar, and this kept the society in peace and contentment for thousands of years, and saved it from corruption and destruction...."

[2] *Vide*"Letter to C. F. Andrews", 5-12-1924.

360. HARRY THUKU OF KENYA[1]

[*December 5, 1924*][2]

Tyranny is the same all over the world. The essence of tyranny lies in the repression of the individual without any trial by his fellow-men and without any evidence being given in public against him . . .

When I was in East Africa, I met one of the brightest lads I had seen in that country. His name was Harry Thuku and he was a Christian...At a meeting of the Natives of East Africa in Victoria Park at Nairobi, which he had organized for me, I spoke to the Africans themselves about Queen Victoria the Good, and the ideals of liberty and racial equality which she had professed in the Proclamation of 1858. . . .

About a year after this experience, I saw one day in the papers that the Africans had been fired on and many killed and wounded, because of excitement in Nairobi, and that Harry Thuku himself had been deported to a place called Kisumayu, without trial. He sent a message to me, through Mr. Manibhai Desai, asking me for help and claiming the right of a British subject to be tried face to face with his accusers, instead of being secretly taken away to a distant place and interned without any trial whatever. I did my very best at the time to make his voice heard in England, but without effect. Again, quite recently, another appeal from him has come to me. . . .

"In the month of March, 1922, I was arrested under the authority of His Excellency, the Governor, Sir Edward Northey and deported to Kisumayu for detention I was not tried by any tribunal. . . .

"Is it because of my insisting, that the unmarried African girls should not be forced by Government to work on the plantations of white settlers, as it inevitably resulted in immorality and separation of domestic ties, or because I protested that my country people should not be flogged to death, etc., etc., that I have been deported? . .

"I was simply caught hold of by the Government and deported. The rule applied to me is without doubt 'Might is Right'. . . .

"I therefore pray, Sir, that you may be pleased to recommend my release as I have already suffered a great deal. . . ."

Poor Harry Thuku! His appeal to Mr. Andrews and my

[1] From this article by C. F. Andrews on which Gandhiji has commented, only extracts are reproduced here.

[2] *Vide*"Letter to C. F. Andrews", 5-12-1924.

publication of it in these columns will secure no relief for this victim of lust for power. If however he ever sees these lines, he will perhaps find comfort in the thought that even in distant India many will read the story of his deportation and trials with sympathy. He may also find solace in the fact that many perhaps as innocent as Harry Thuku are today locked up in Bengal without any trial or hope of it in the near future.

Young India, 18-12-1924

361. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

December 5, 1924

MY DEAREST CHARLIE,

I asked Mahadev to ask you not to write as you are doing for *Young India*. And I have looked up the manuscript lying with Devdas. It is a big effort, and what a strain it must be for you. And what worries me is that you feel it obligatory. I write more every week although there is so much lying in hand. Please therefore do not worry. You are absolved from the responsibility. But you will write as the spirit moves you. At Sabarmati, I destroyed two or three of your things. I don't now remember what it destroyed. I have just now"passed" (shall I say) Harry Thuku and Untouchability with footnotes to each. I have enough with me for two numbers as yet. I destroyed your note on Egypt. It did not do justice to the subject. The British ultimatum I considered to be atrocious. But I would not write as I know nothing about Egypt. You should read what Mahomed Ali has written; say what you think of it.

I am writing this at Lahore. Hope to reach the Ashram before or on 14th and be there four days. Can you wire to Belgaum? You need not if you do not feel like it.

With love,

Yours,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 2615

362. SPEECH AT GOLDEN TEMPLE, AMRITSAR[1]

December 5, 1924

Mahatma Gandhi who had been presented a saropa from the Akal Takht rose amidst shouts of *Sat Sri Akal*. He spoke while sitting and the feeble voice was distinctly audible owing to the dead silence prevailing at the moment. He said that Sardar Mangal Singh had said that he had been moved to tears by his description, whereas this was not the case; for he did not weep over these troubles as he knew that greater calamities were yet to befall them. No useful purpose would be served by his weeping, for he would not be able to work. He had become stony hearted and wanted others to strengthen their hearts likewise. He Knew that Punjab's new ruler was a man of a different kind and he had properly understood him (Sir Malcolm Hailey). Mahatmaji knew what the Governor wanted to do but he warned the Akalis against being duped by his speeches. He was convinced that if their forces were united they could free India in no time and then the Gurdwara problem would be settled soon. He would like to repeat what he had said when he visited Nankana Sahib immediately after the tragedy and that was that if the Sikhs strove to free the bigger Gurdwara—motherland—they could free their own shrines without much ado. The Hindus, the Mohammedans and the Sikhs should not work in different directions. He had told everything to Sardar Mangal Singh about the Gurdwara question but he wanted to say one thing here. They called their struggle by the name of satyagraha. In fact, satyagraha and non-co-operation were not two things. satyagraha meant the"force of truth" which could not be crushed by any other force, for if this could be undermined, God could as well be crushed and this, he believed to be an impossibility. Only impurity undermined the truth, while in truth there was no place for impurities. Similarly in satyagraha there was nothing impure. They should not conceal anything in this. If they got some money or paper they should not conceal it from the public. The only condition for satyagraha is that every work should be conducted in a truthful manner. He had heard complaints against the Hindus from the Mohammedans and *vice versa* complaints against the Sikhs and *vice verse*. These communities and the sects were warring with one another. In the struggle for satyagraha they should remove all differences, for they should look to the opportunity. He alone was a soldier or a General who would look to the best opportunity. They should even bend their heads before another if time demanded that. Sir Malcolm Hailey wanted to crush them by uniting their other sects while in his utterances he declared he did not want to undermine the Sikhs and favoured Gurdwara Reform as well but they knew what was in his heart.

[1] At a big divan in front of the Akal Takht

Passing on Mahatmaji said that he was a true non-co-operator, so long as he had faith in the Government. His creed of non-co-operation could only go when India obtained freedom. He again impressed upon the Akalis to adhere to truth and carry on their struggle with that ideal.

The Tribune, 7-12-1924

363. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING AMRITSAR[1]

December 5, 1924

Mahatma Gandhi, in replying to both the addresses jointly, said that it was with considerable difficulty that he had accepted them and its reason he had now noticed in that very meeting. When he had visited Amritsar for the first time and had toured in the country he heard people shouting *Mahatma Gandhiji jai.* He was not pleased to hear that, for the people had begun to do improper things in his name. He appealed to the people to forget his name and shout *Hindu-Mussalmanki jai,* which the audience then repeated. He said that the people should better call victory to the charkha, because no useful purpose could be served by calling his *jai*. He prayed to God that if He wanted to keep him alive, He should utilize him for some good and noble purpose and he also prayed that the Hindus and the Mohammedans should give up their differences. Even sticking to their own religion they could give up all bitterness towards the other's religion. They could carry on their *shuddhi* propaganda without saying any words against the Koran. He said that in one of the addresses they had ascribed these frictions to the leaders. This was true. For it were not the *goondas* who fought. He could prove that he was responsible for this trouble and the leaders were responsible for it. But he appealed to the people not to be misled by the leaders, because it were the people who made them their leaders.

Mahatma Gandhi then referred to the request asking him to stay there for some time to make up these differences and said that it were the local people who could very well do it. He could not do it, nor had he the time to stay there. He asked the people if they had forgotten the Jallianwala Bagh and the 13th of April. He said that if there could be any place which should have been immune from all such troubles it was Amritsar. He admitted that he had lost all influence; it was their work now. The Hindus and the Mohammedans did not listen to him. He was accused of showing undue favours

[1] At Jallianwala Bagh under the presidentship of Dr. Sant Ram Seth; a joint address of welcome was presented by the Muslim League, Khilafat Committee, the local Congress Committee, Central Sikh League, Hindu Sabha, Citizens' Association, Maharashtra Samaj and Gujarat Mitra Mandal. Another address was presented by the volunteers and youngmen of Amritsar who had returned from jail.

to the Mohammedans, but the Hindus did not know that he had every right to reprimand the Hindus, while being not so much acquainted with the Mohammedan religion, he could not say anything against it which might be harmful in any way or offend their religious susceptibilities. But being a Hindu himself and a staunch *sanatani* he understood his own religion and could say very well anything against it. He was accused of criticizing the Arya Samaj and not attending the Sanatana Dharma Conference at Rawalpindi while he had come to attend the Khilafat Conference. He admitted that he favoured other religions over his own out of reverence for the other religions though he was true to his own. He appealed to other people to adhere to the truth, and he himself considered falsehood as violence. If he spoke an untruth he deserved to be killed. Hindus asked him what they would do if the Kabulis invaded India. He would advise them not to be afraid of the Kabulis, because they were their brothers. They should honour the Kabulis and bow their heads before them. They should have forbearance.

The Tribune, 7-12-1924s

364. SPEECH AT KHILAFAT CONFERENCE AMRITSAR[1]

December 6, 1924

Mahatmaji rose amid deafening cries of *Hindu-Muslimki jai* and said that he perforce interfered in their deliberations. He had to go to Lahore to confer with other leaders on the Hindu-Muslim problem. Mahatmaji said that it was wrong to say that the *goondas* were responsible for the riots, on the contrary the leaders, viz., Dr. Kitchlew, the Ali Brothers, Hakim Sahib and other leaders were equally responsible. Their brain even partook in them. He desired the change of hearts and the return of the cordial relations between the two communities that prevailed before. The remarks passed by the President (Mr. Zafar Ali) regarding certain Hindu leaders in order to extol the speakers, were like a bomb to him and were not right. He was not great and did not like to hear his praise. The remarks against Pandit Malaviyaji had greatly touched him and had broken his heart. He could never believe that Malaviyaji was the enemy of the Mohammedans and a block in the way of Hindu-Muslim unity. He wanted to change their opinion regarding Malaviyaji who was held in very great esteem and affection by the Hindus, and consequently the reviling of Pandit Malaviya would not bring them nearer the solution. People had greater faith in Malaviyaji than in him whom they had come to regard as a Mohammedan which was only their mistake.

[1] In answer to Zafar Ali's attack on Madan Mohan Malaviya, Lajpat Rai and other Hindu leaders that they did not like Hindu Muslim unity though ostensibly in favour of it.

It was impossible for the Hindus to desert Malaviyaji just in the same way as the Mohammedans were not prepared to give up Hakim Ajmal Khan and the Ali Brothers at his (the Mahatma) bidding. He reminded the audience that the Hindus too felt sorry at the death of Bi-Amma. He appealed to the Mohammedans to remember the teachings of their Prophet in the matter of the cordial treatment of even their enemy, and of reposing confidence in him for the lapse of a year or two would change his heart. His remarks about Pandit Malaviya applied equally to Lala Lajpat Rai whose heart he knew fully well. He always stopped with Lalaji whenever he went to Lahore, and could say that he (Lalaji) was a strong advocate of Hindu-Muslim unity. But he, the speaker, wanted it to be made known to all that he did not want to make an enemy of a Hindu who did not like to remain on friendly terms with a Mohammedan, and the same was his position with regard to a Mohammedan adopting similar attitude towards a Hindu. The Hindus informed him that they were afraid of the Afghan invasion. He on his part was not the least afraid of it, for it could take away his head from him but not his religion. This fear of the Hindus was unfounded. There were a few Urdu papers in this Province which, in the opinion of the Mahatma, spread poison and were taking great part in cutting at the root of the Hindu-Muslim unity. It was really shameful to look at them. If the Mussalmans wanted to safeguard Islam, they should unite with the Hindus. Appealing to the Hindus, Mahatmaji remarked that they could not drive the entire body of Mohammedans out of India. Their very existence demands unity with the Mohammedans. India was responsible for destroying the independence of other free countries, and our freedom will put an end to foreign exploitation of India and will secure Hindu-Muslim unity. The work of the leaders lay in the union of the hearts of the two communities and in the befriending of the weak and the strong. The speaker invoked divine aid for that end and for the change in heart.

The Hindustan Times, 12-12-1924

365. CONVOCATION ADDRESS AT PUNJAB QAUMI VIDYAPITH, LAHORE[1]

December 6, 1924

On rising to speak, Mahatma Gandhi was greeted with deafening shouts of *jais*. As owing to his weak state he had to deliver the speech sitting, a chair was placed on the platform in which he took his seat. He spoke in Hindi in a clear voice which was heard everywhere in the hall.

[1] At its third convocation held at Bradlaugh Hall; Madan Mohan Malaviya and Shaukat Ali also attended.

He began by referring to the vow that the new graduates had taken and prayed to God to grant them Strength to avoid everything calculated to harm their creed or country. He congratulated them on their getting their degrees and asked them always to keep in view the goal of swaraj for their country, whatever line of work they might wish to take up.

The Registrar had asked him to suggest something at Belgaum to infuse greater vigour in the national institutions all over the country. He could not say what suggestion he would make at Belgaum. He had said in Young *India* that between the educated community and himself there was an ever-widening gulf.[1] He, however, did not lose hope. That gulf was inevitable. The Registrar had quoted Lord Macaulay on the one aim of the current system of education. There was no doubt that Lord Macaulay's aim had not been fully achieved. As Lalaji[2] had told them, the one thing that everybody recognized was that theirs was an age-long civilisation. It was, therefore, impossible to enslave them for all time.

Continuing, he said that he had been seeing for 40 years the results of the current system of education. There was a time when he was himself infatuated with this system and had helped several persons in South Africa in being called to the Bar. But he was disillusioned. He had read the opinion of an American writer that the future lay with those nations whose sons and daughters realised the dignity of manual labour and treated it as part of their educational system.

Tolstoy called it" bread Labour". In *Bhagavad Gita* also it is said that whosoever eats his bread without offering the necessary daily sacrifice was verily a thief.[3] This sacrifice *(yajna)* was, Mahatma Gandhi said, body labour for the sake of the race; and he was borne out in this interpretation by a learned pandit. The speaker found the same in the Koran and the Parsi scriptures. The Khilafat of old used to labour to live and spent the rest of their time in religious work. So Mahatma Gandhi was of the opinion that he, who did not do that *tapasya* had no right to live. Mere stuffing the brain with various facts and then distributing them was not education. In the Gujarat Vidyapith they had a motto that" education" (*vidya*) was that which got them freedom". Here the Registrar had stated, some parents of schoolboys objected to their children being taught manual labour, because they would not labour. Hindus and Mohammedans also were fighting for Government appointments. This he called *haram*.

The education they were receiving was merely of the brain and not of the heart, by which latter was meant religious instruction, which, again, was not the mere learning of scriptures, but connoted the true realization of God and the refusal to bow

[1] *Vide*" May God Help", 26-11-1924.
[2] Lajpat Rai, the chancellor of the Vidyapith
[3] III, 12.

in fear except to Him. True education, that is, of the heart, once obtained would remove all fear of one another or of the" mighty" Government, since there would be the realization that God was with one. He asked the students if they had obtained that education, if they were prepared to perform the humblest task, and in case they agreed that charkha was essential for the country's freedom, whether they spun each day and that as a *yajna*. If that was so, then alone they had got true education.

Proceeding, he expressed his belief that if every son and every daughter of India took to spinning for at least half an hour each day and gave the yarn to the Congress to make cloth to be distributed among the poor, they could free their country. But they had not yet got that national consciousness. If they wanted swaraj for the lowest among them, who was ill-fed and ill-clad, they must take to spinning. He did not object to their reading Shakespeare or Milton, or chanting Vedic hymns or studying the Koran; but, as Hazrat Mohammed had said in the Koran, those that were neglectful of the humbler folk were very far away from God. It was this that was essential for their national education. With him this alone was true education.

If at that time he advised the suspension of non-co-operation as a national programme, it was not because he wanted the continuance of the vicious system of education. Poet Tulsidas had taught him that there could be no friendship, love, or union between religion and irreligion. Therefore, so long as he believed that the Government was Satanic and was based on arrogant exploitation of weak races so long it was his duty to non-co-operate and he would stick to that course even if he stood alone. But he would tell anarchists, if any were present there, that he wanted non-violent non-co-operation and not violent, that his non-co-operation was directed against the system and not the men administering the system.

He had no complaint against Lord Reading or Sir Malcolm Hailey as men although he had heard that Sir Malcolm Hailey was at that time fast spreading his net over the whole of the Punjab. He did not say that Sir Malcolm knew that he was doing so. But the speaker, who had studied this Government for a long time, knew this. Besides, how could Sir Malcolm know? Only the wearer knew where the shoe pinched.

But, continued Mahatmaji, the non-co-operation that was itself vicious was not worth having; and such was the feeling of mutual non-co-operation amongst Hindus and Mussalmans which was full of hatred and fear, and devoid of peace and love. They should pray to God to be saved from such non-co-operation.

His agreeing to preside at Lahore or at Belgaum was not to be taken as an indication of any consciousness of self-importance. He, on the contrary, realized that he was, perhaps, a" spent bullet". He knew, a large part of educated India was not with him They might shout *'Mahatma Gandhiki jai'*, but that could not make him happy. If, instead, they even spat at him but did as he asked them, he would feel a happy man.

Concluding, he asked if the Punjabis could take up the charkha. It was sad for

him to hear from Punjab Hindus that khaddar was *haram* for them as Muslim weavers had woven it. Thus far had their mutual non-co-operation gone, he was himself anxious to bring Mohammedan weavers back to their calling, and appealed to all to take to charkha with the burning faith. The Mussalmans, on the other hand, wanted khaddar to be fine like muslin and cheap as the Manchester fabrics. He would warn both such Hindus and Mussalmans that unless they realized the message of khaddar there would be no swaraj.

The Tribune, 9-12-1924

366. THIRTEEN COMMANDMENTS

Christianity lays down ten commandments for observance. For his love of the untouchables I have called Shri Amritlal Thakkar their high priest. His sense of service knows no limits and now he has chosen to work among the Bhils. Whatever he has, by experience, found essential, he has printed in large beautiful letters by way of commandments or teachings. These have been published in the Bhils' own dialect. I need not reproduce all but I would give here some of them; now, for instance, the first commandment says:

> Take not to *haro*[1]*;* if you drink *haro,* the children will die of cold and hunger.
>
> COMMANDMENT 3: Take a daily bath, you will have a light heart, you will not suffer from any skin disease and Babadev's grace still be upon you.
>
> The Bhils seem to refer to God as Babadev.
>
> COMMANDMENT 5: Drink fresh filtered water. Babadev will keep the guinea-worm off from you.
>
> COMMANDMENT 6: You shall not accept money when you give away your daughter in marriage. Money from the sale of daughters shall bring you grief.
>
> COMMANDMENT 9: Steal not, nor practise deceit, lest Babadev send you famine.
>
> The thirteenth and last commandment runs as follows:
>
> Daily when the sun goes down, pray to Babaram. There is no one else like Babaram. So be the guru's command.

Several of these commandments may well be adopted by us. A

[1] An intoxicating drink

noteworthy feature of these commandments is the small, appealing reason appended to each.

May Amritlal Thakkar's services bear fruit and may [our] Bhil brothers grow in goodness!

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-12-1924

367. WITH WHAT EXPECTATION?

The reader must have concluded that if among my other pre-occupations I have accepted the chairmanship of the Kathiawar Political Conference, it could not be without some expectations —whether high or low.

The temptation to pay a flying visit to Kathiawar is of course always there. However, I could have fulfilled that desire some other time, and without taking on the burden of chairmanship. I hope that Kathiawar would clear itself of the charge levelled against it of indifference to khadi. The gentlemen who approached me have assured me that in Sonegarh I will find only a khadi-clad town and thousands will attend the conference dressed in khadi.

I will regard whatever I get as a gain and accept it; but let me repeat here what Tilak Maharaj said in replying to the late Mr. Montagu[1]:" I shall accept what I get and fight for more." Cotton grown in Kathiawar is sent out and Kathiawar wears the clothes made of the same and sent to it from outside—this should be regarded as intolerable. And, just as cotton goes out of the province, the people of Kathiawar go to other parts for want of a living there—how can this be tolerated?

What kind of injustice is it that the weavers of Kathiawar cannot earn a living, the poor women of Kathiawar are in misery in the absence of spinning? In this matter I find both the rulers and the ruled guilty. If the rulers so desire, they could utilize the cotton grown in their own States and revive hand-spinning and many other allied crafts.

Have I not seen the skilled weavers of Kathiawar at Porbandar? Today, their trade has almost been wiped out. In my time, Kathiawar satin competed with and surpassed the satin made in Ahmedabad. I have seen with my own eyes the Khatris of Kathiawar bringing their

[1] E. S. Montagu (1879-1924) , Secretary of State for India, 1917-22

tie and dye work to the *havelis*[1] and making good use of their time. Where are they now? The *zari* saris of Kathiawar were famous. I knew the artisans who wove them. Where are they today? Forty years ago I used to see the dyers of Kathiawar in the suburbs of Rajkot and I still remember my innocent childhood desire, namely," How nice it would be if my father bought me a turban of such colours!" I wonder where those dyers are today.

With the disappearance of hand-spinning, who knows how many allied trades have been ruined? Who can count them? Are we aware that with the disappearance of hand-spinning, the arts also have died out? Do we city-dwellers even consider the fact that with the dying out of arts, the light has gone out of hundreds of thousands of farmers' homes? The prosperity accompanying the spinning-wheel has departed along with it. In the homes where it has been revived, prosperity is trying to return. It has not yet settled down, as there is no firm faith in the spinning-wheel in those homes." What shall be my plight if my yarn does not find a market? How can you trust these Congressmen? These people may do one thing today and another tomorrow. Does the Government support them?" They are afraid of this unstable situation. Our pitiable condition today is like that of a burnt child who dreads the fire.

In these circumstances, I have been filled with the hope that Kathiawar will take up the cause of khadi and give it added prestige.

The second expectation is as innocent and keen and also religious. Perhaps this second hope is more religious. The untouchability in Kathiawar had defeated even Krishna the cowherd who ate the simple food of Vidura[2], who took out herds of cows for grazing, who won the innocent hearts of the *gopis*[3] and who was the lord of their pious souls. Is it possible that he who joyfully embraced Sudama clad in rags would regard outcastes as untouchables?

However, in his very Saurashtra, outcastes are treated with contempt today. Their touch is considered to be polluting and some good Kathiawaris do not desist even from abusing or beating them! Who would be their friend? I shall hope that those who attend the Conference will not only be free from this offence but will pledge themselves to serve the outcastes.

[1] *Vaishnava* places of worship

[2] A son of Vyasa by a Sudra girl; an adviser to both Kauravas and Pandavas

[3] Milk-maids

I must inform the organizers that if the outcastes are kept away from any portion of the *pandal*, the chairman will have to be given a seat where the outcastes would be seated and he will be happy sitting there. There is no untouchability in Hinduism. It is my firm conviction that the religion which permits untouchability is not religion but irreligion. A human being is not polluted by the touch of another being but rather by tickling and nurturing the evil propensities within him.

However, delegates may wonder what has all this to do with a political conference. I have very often pointed out that there are no three distinct things, subjects like political, social and religious. The word 'political' denotes the relationship between the ruler and the ruled; 'social' suggests the internal structure of society; 'religious' indicates the duties of an individual. But on the strength of the law that applies to an individual is also true of the universe, we can say that what is true of an individual is also true of society and what holds good for society also holds good for the ruler and the ruled. Where there is no dharma there can be no victory but only destruction. It may have the appearance of victory but it would turn out to be as illusory as a mirage. The ruler will be what the community makes him and a community will be what individuals make it. The individual is at the root of all and the existence of the individual depends on dharma alone. It is for this very reason that *rishis* and *munis* have chanted:" Wherever there is dharma, there is victory."

We shall certainly consider in the Conference the relations between the rulers and the ruled but, without clearly understanding the duties of the community, I hold it impossible to consider properly the dharma of the rulers and the ruled.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-12-1924

368. SAVE COTTON

The very first step in spinning is the stocking of cotton. Sowing of cotton comes even before that. We shall not, however, consider that because cotton is sown extensively all over India. The sad part of the story is that, despite the sowing of so much cotton, instead, of stocking it, the farmers, who do not know how to put it to proper use, are tempted to sell it for the high price it fetches and do not realize that

ultimately they have to pay back even higher prices.

However, we shall consider this on some other occasion. At the moment it is enough to know that cotton is yet to be harvested. Before it is sold for export, wise farmers should store it and such wise men and women should persuade those who are unenlightened.

Just as we collected funds in 1921, we should now collect cotton and have it spun and woven. I have no doubt that this will be more fruitful than collecting funds. Money multiplies only through interest and the latter is the wealth of the idle. Farm products increase through labour which is the wealth of the industrious. We, men and women of the middle-classes, have not realized the value of manual labour at all. Through labour, we can bring together all people. If we have a stock of cotton and can get persons who wish to serve the country to work on it, we can to that extent raise the value of cotton as much as we choose.

If cotton is got as a gift and labour too is given as a gift, it is easy to see that we can sell khadi at a very low price. This will not actually happen because, in organizing the production, some workers must devote not half an hour but their entire time. It is obvious that they cannot work without payment. If, however, we can get thousands to contribute half an hour's labour, we can achieve much with the help of a few paid workers. But before we can think of all this we must accumulate large stocks of cotton. Hence my advice is that Congress Committees should collect as much cotton as possible. Those who do so ought to keep accounts as is done in the case of money. Not a pad of cotton should be wasted, not a wad of cotton should be allowed to fly away.

We should think of the means of storing it. It will be necessary to know how to pack that cotton. It will thus be seen that these activities are also part of the spinning programme. And when all these things are done with a view to public good, the wise reader will easily realize what power lies in them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-12-1924

369. PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS AT PUNJAB PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE, LAHORE[1]

December 7, 1924

In explaining how he came to accept the presidentship, he read Pandit Motilalji's letter to Lalaji, wherein the former had explained how his pre-occupations prevented him from going to Lahore to preside. Panditji also had said that he was fed up with conferences and that he feared that they were nothing but empty shows. Mahatmaji fully agreed with Panditji and said Hakimji and he had come not to attend the Conference but to find a solution of the burning problem. He was told that the *Tanzeem* had said that the Conference was a purely Hindu show and that Mussalmans should stand aloof. He had not seen the particular paragraph, but he wanted to tell them that Dr. Kitchlew and the President of the Khilafat Conference as also Dr. Ansari and Hakimji and Maulanas Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali had left the Khilafat Conference to come down to Lahore to attend the Leaders, Conference.

In coming to the question of Hindu-Muslim tension, Mahatmaji said that the root cause of the tension lay in the Punjab, that all the disturbances in other parts of the country could be traced to the root cause in the Punjab, and that, therefore, the moment the Hindus and Mussalmans in the Punjab were united, there would be Hindu-Muslim unity all over India. Non-co-operation had not failed—there was no failure in non-co-operation—the Hindu-Muslim disturbances had failed them. He even felt that the question of Council-entry would not have arisen but for differences. In 1921, they felt that they were united, but it was not true unity, it was the momentary result of excitement, and it was best that they were face to face with realities today.

Hakimji and Dr. Ansari and the Ali Brothers had come not to attend the Khilafat Conference, not to attend the Provincial Conference, but to help to find out a solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem. Mahatmaji said, he had no other solution to offer than that of surrender on the part of one of the communities to all the political demands of the others. How, it would be asked, could a minor community, like the Sikhs, surrender all its political rights to Hindus and Mussalmans? He had not the slightest doubt that a community that had given to the world a unique lesson in non-violence, that had given evidence of matchless sacrifice, would not find it difficult to make what really was a trifling sacrifice.

But with what face could he offer that solution to the Sikhs and the Mussalmans, when he had not been able to get it accepted by the Hindus? He claimed that he was a *sanatani* Hindu and it was as a Hindu that he offered the solution to his

[1] At its 11th session held in Bradlaugh Hall

Hindu brethren. It was said that they would be sadly betrayed, that Mussalmans and Sikhs would take an undue advantage of the surrender. He said that they should be prepared for the contingencies. For he wanted them to share his faith, that not the betrayed but the betrayer shall perish. In essentials they may surrender not an iota. In fact he would ask them to fight either with the sword of non-violence or of violence for those essentials. He would cite the example of Pandavas of old who surrendered everything including their kingdom, and asked just enough for their stay and accommodation. They lost nothing by the surrender. He was placing before them the master-key—the key to captivate the world, viz., surrender of non-essentials. He mentioned the essentials where there could be no surrender. If Mussalmans attacked their *mandirs* and attacked their rights to worship there, then they could fight unto death. But they were ill-advised in fighting for more seats in the Councils and the Municipalities or for more posts in the services.

As a practical politician he really pitied the brave Punjabis who had bidden good-bye to their common sense to the extent of sacrificing unity in their fight for these trifles. He was there to ask the Hindus to have more faith in God and to rid themselves of fear. The only way to save their temples and the honour of their women was to die fighting for them, not to leave them to their fates and flying away. If they could not bravely die fighting for the honour of their women, they had better have a dip in the nearest river and commit suicide. But as regards non-essentials, there was no other remedy but that of surrender; that was the only way to conquer the love of the Mussalmans. it was better they accepted being slaves of Mussalmans rather than those of both the Englishmen and the Mussalmans. he wished he could reveal to them the measure of the agony burning within him. Who could quench the fire of that agony, he did not know.

To the Hindus who said that they had uniformly suffered at the hands of the Mussalmans, he would cite a few instances, e.g., from Badaun and some other places in which Hindus had also tried to retaliate. There was a good deal of exaggeration in the reports that he had heard, but he had learnt on fairly full enquiry that something had certainly been done in retaliation. He would tell them no Hindu scripture commanded that in case a temple was broken, a masjid should be broken in turn, or because a Hindu woman was dishonoured, a Mussalman woman should in turn be dishonoured. He cited these cases not as instances of Hindu-Muslim tension, but only with a view to showing that Hindus had not lagged behind in taking retaliatory measures. But they were not evidences of communal tension, they were evidence of the devil in thehuman breast. It could not be eradicated by devilry, it could be eradicated only by godly means.

In conclusion, he said that the only way of peaceful non-co-operation was the charkha to be worked by each and all, as much by M. Shaukat Ali and Sardar Mangal

Singh as by himself. He wanted men to work at it no less than women. There was nothing derogatory in it. The Lancashire spindles were not worked by women, but by men. Only the lazy fought shy of charkha. For him the sole economics and politics of India was the charkha. The spinning franchise, as part of the agreement between No-changers and Swarajists, would also come before them. There was the clause of spinning by proxy for the" unwilling". It was for such men as Mr. Kelkar and Hakimji, and the Moderates. For ordinary men like the speaker and the toiling masses, spinning was a daily duty. He would ask them to support the agreement if they were heartily agreeable to spinning and wearing khaddar and not in deference to the personality of the speaker.

The Tribune, 9-12-1924

370. SPEECH AT PUNJAB PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE, LAHORE

December 7, 1924

In bringing the Conference to a close, Mahatma Gandhi said the national shouts, to which the people attached so much importance, were of no great value. The present was a time for work. If the people fulfilled the three conditions laid down by him—Hindu-Muslim unity, khaddar and spinning and removal of untouchability—India would surely advance towards her goal. The attainment of swaraj required resolve and strength. Resolve they had got; but they were dissipating their strength in their mutual dissensions.

Continuing, Mahatmaji said he was trying to bring about unity between the two communities. He referred to his own informal conference with Hindu and Muslim leaders at Lahore and said that no settlement had been arrived at yet. But many a step towards an amicable settlement had, in fact, been taken. After referring in brief to khaddar and untouchability, Mahatmaji said that he was still convinced that the step he took at Bardoli[1] was a right step and averted a great calamity that would otherwise have befallen the country.

Mahatma Gandhi then referred to the implications of non-violence. He accepted it as dharma; but even if some of them accepted it as a matter of policy—and so long as they do so—they should be true to it.

Concluding, Mahatmaji thanked the conveners of the conference and others for having made him the president.

The Tribune 10-12-1924

[1] Suspension of satyagraha following Chauri Chaura riots

371. SPEECH AT RAWALPINDI

December 9, 1924

At the outset he referred to the address of welcome that had been presented to him and said that as long as he or Shaukat Ali could speak on behalf of the whole of India, it was enough to present an address to one of them; but today:

My own authority to speak on behalf of the Muslims is dwindling. So is Shaukat Ali's to speak on behalf of the Hindus. This is unfortunate. But as long as this unfortunate state of affairs lasts, you have to present addresses to both.

Referring to the Kohat tragedy, he said:

I do not wish to inquire today into the origin of this tragedy, or to apportion blame for it. For one thing, I am not aware of all the facts. This much is, however, obvious that some two to three thousand Hindus have left Kohat and, seeking shelter, have camped at Rawalpindi. The responsibility for their forced exodus from Kohat rests with Hindus as well as Muslims; and both the communities will be disgraced as long as they continue to camp at Rawalpindi. Shaukat Ali, Kitchlew, Zafar Ali and I have come here to remove this disgrace. We have not succeeded yet because the third party is playing its cards. The third party's role is to fan, if not also to kindle, the flames of conflict. I have never yet heard of any conflict being resolved by this third party. The truth is that the tragedy at Kohat would not have occurred and Hindus would not have run away if the Government had done its duty. The officers there either became cowards or acted contrary to their duty. The bandits on the frontier rob anyone and everyone; hence it is difficult to assert that all this storm was raised for looting the Hindus only. I would, however, affirm that the looting and arson was perpetrated not by the people but by the officials of the frontier. I wish that this Government should for ever neglect its duty as it has done on this occasion at Kohat. I would not be sorry if this Government collapses and then Hindus and Muslims fight a civil war and loot each other to their heart's content. As long as there are rancour, weakness and fear in the hearts of both the communities, they will fight each other and cause rivers of blood to flow. In the end theleaders of the two communities will realize that their actions are irreligious and they will calm down. But today we are fighting with the help of the third party. You should understand that we shall be

doomed for ever to remain their slaves if we fight with their help. If you understand the significance of Hindu-Muslim unity, you should let go the third party. I would say only this to you, you should prepare yourself to die with Rama's name on your lips if the Government is furious with you and incites the Muslims. Today the officials of the Government taunt you and tell you," Go to Shaukat Ali" or" Go to Gandhi". I regret, none of us can be of any help today since we have no sword. I have thrown it away and Shaukat Ali has sheathed it. Therefore, we can only advise you to set your minds free if you wish to attain independence. One can be destroyed only by oneself, never by another. You might say that this advice would lead only to ruin; and could help no one. My answer is:" I am recommending the way to ruin; I am talking only of self-sacrifice."

I would ask the frontier Hindus in a locality with 95 per cent of Muslims never to seek the advice of the Government. You should return only if the frontier Muslims request you to do so, if they desire to take you back after assuring the perpetual preservation of your life and honour. You have been staying there for many generations. How can you stay there without their consent? You have earned your livelihood there, you have carried on trade there. How can you stay there in peace and comfort without their co-operation and goodwill? No Government can guarantee safety against a majority community. Even when swaraj is attained, and Shaukat Ali is the Commander-in-Chief and I am the Viceroy, if somebody were to ask me to protect a community, I would say that I could not protect it from a community comprising 95 per cent of the population. Where the Muslims constitute 5 per cent of the population, I would say the same thing to them. That is the only way to stay in the frontier with honour and goodwill.

I wish to say to you one thing before leaving. You should tell the Government that you would not move from here as long as you do not come to terms with the Muslims and they do not invite and conduct you there. If the refugees from Kohat are willing to accept this advice of mine, I would give them a public pledge:" I am prepared to come and stay here with the refugees from Kohat after the Belgaum session and to tour with them throughout India." But if they return to Kohat on the assurance of the Government, it would do serious damage to them and to both the Hindus and the Muslims. Even if the Government returns all property or pays Rs. 3 crores in compensation, returning to Kohat under its protection would harm

both Hindus and Muslims. If you return in spite of my advice, my hands are bound to be weakened in the Congress. May God give you the strength to unite with the Muslims.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan 14-12-1924

372. MY PUNJAB DIARY

NOT BY CHOICE

It was not by choice but by necessity that I undertook to preside at the Punjab Provincial Conference.[1] The Punjabis wanted an outsider to preside and if at all possible Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. The Maulana Sahib however was unwilling. He said, he would gladly attend but thought he would be more useful if he remained free. The Maulana's position was appreciated. Pandit Motilalji was then approached. He was good enough to say he would preside, if he was not prevented by any untoward event, and if Pandit Motilalji was prevented from presiding, I was to fill in his place. Unfortunately the unexpected happened and Pandit Motilalji could not come. As the reasons given by him are of public importance, I set them forth in his own language.

"FED UP"

In his letter to Lalaji he says:

> There has been serious misapprehension about my acceptance of the presidentship of the Punjab Provincial Conference. Mahatmaji and I had agreed in Bombay that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was the most suitable president, but that in case he could not be made to agree I was to take his place. I received news of the serious illness of my daughter-in-law and had to leave abruptly with an expert obstetrician. The Maulana Sahib came out of the meeting hall with me and I told him distinctly that my Punjab and Nagpur engagements were off and that he must preside at the Punjab Conference and fix some other date for Nagpur. I came away under the impression that he would consult Mahatmaji and fix upon someone else to preside if he himself was unwilling to do so. . . .
>
> As soon as Jawahar's wife was pronounced to be out of danger. I

[1] *Vide*" Presidential Address at Punjab Provincial Conference, Lahore", 1-12-1924.

turned my attention to the communal situation in Allahabad and made up my mind to do what I could while wasting in Allahabad under orders from Calcutta. I found the situation to be as bad as it could be and was almost bombarded from all sides with bitter complaints at my continued absence from my own city and province. I assured them that I would give ample compensation by working for them for a whole fortnight.

I set about immediately to make good this assurance. . . I took up my old idea of organizing a Hindu-Muslim *sangathan* and giving it a start from Allahabad. The first step taken was to approach the university professors and students. . . . At the meeting with the professors it was decided *to* take steps to use the Social Service Branch as a nucleus for the Hindu-Muslim *sangathan*. . . . From tomorrow I am to visit the *muhallahs* personally and also speak to batches of students, who have been invited to Anand Bhawan at certain hours. . . .

You will see that the above programme involves solid world and wholly eliminates the showy part, which unfortunately has come to be the only part of our public work in these days. To tell you the honest truth I am completely fed up with conferences which are passing shows of the moment and invariably result in nothing substantial. The Nagpur disputes are ripe for decision and letters received from Nagpur show urgent necessity for the arbitrators (Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and myself) meeting and deciding the dispute before the Belgaum Congress. I have sent two wires to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad at Calcutta proposing the 15th but have received no reply from him.

I have written at this length to you to give you an accurate idea of the work I have laid out for myself and I hope you will agree that a visit to the Punjab at this juncture would not be as profitable.

I share to the fullest extent Panditji's horror of conferences. Not that they are always useless. They were absolutely necessary at a certain stage in our career. But they have in their present form almost outgrown their usefulness. Even when they do no other harm, they mean waste of money and time. The public spirit awakened by them needs to be consolidated into efficient work which can best be done by small committees. These latter to be useful must be harmonious and ever responsive to and by their solidly active work in touch with the general public. Abandonment of conferences should never be due to public apathy, but it should be because the public is more usefully engaged. For instance, it would be folly to call people who are engaged in khaddar production to pass resolutions on subjects on which the public is known to be in agreement. It would be equally

unwise to call away those who are say, engaged in organizing relief in famine-stricken areas. Panditji himself was more usefully employed in organizing peace brigades in Allahabad. And if he succeeds in forming genuine Hindu-Muslim *sangathans,* he will have done service of a first class order to the country. His decision to work from the bottom, instead of through middlemen, must result in nothing but better relations between Hindu and Mussalman masses.

MY REAL BUSINESS

The Conference was an incidental business for me. My real work lay among representative Hindus and Mussalmans. I had therefore no hesitation in appealing to the audience at the Khilafat Conference at Amritsar to suspend its sitting for the morning following till the afternoon of that day to enable the leaders there present to attend the informal meeting of representatives on the morning of the 8th. To my great joy the whole audience adopted my suggestion for the waiting. And Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, the President, Dr. Kitchlew and others with much inconvenience to themselves came to Lahore for the meeting.

THE RESULT

It is hardly necessary for me to inform the reader that the meeting was arranged for the sole purpose of considering the ways and means of easing the tension between Hindus and Mussalmans and of establishing real peace between the two communities. Among Mussalman outsiders, Hakim Sahib Ajmal Khan, the Ali Brothers and Dr. Ansari were present, and among Hindu outsiders Panditji Madan Mohan Malaviya was present. The discussion centred on the political causes of the tension. For they seemed to be the predominant if not the only causes of tension between the educated classes in the Punjab. Lalaji told me with great sorrow that whereas formerly there were cordial social relations between educated Mussalmans and educated Hindus, now there was growing estrangement. The meeting therefore discussed the advisability of revising the Lucknow Pact. The Punjab Mussalmans hold that we have outgrown the Lucknow Pact, if it was not a blunder in the very inception. They claim that whilst the communal feelings run high and mutual distrust exists:

1. There should be communal representation on a population basis at least under a common electorate or separate, if necessary.

There seemed to me to be general agreement among them that

separate electorate should be resorted to only at the instance of minorities.

2. There should be no favoured treatment to any sect, i.e., no sect should be represented above its numerical proportion.

3. The same formula should be applied to local bodies as to the legislative.

4. On all public services the different communities should be proportionately represented with due regard to efficiency. Wherever therefore any community is unrepresented, all future appointments, whether new or to fill up vacancies, should be so made as to regularize the proportionate representation. In other words there should be no class favouritism or class preference.

The Mussalman friends present made it clear that they merely gave their individual opinions. They did not bind anybody but themselves and their opinion was subject to revision if any other community claimed special or favoured treatment.

5. Any solution must be an all-India solution and must be by the consent of all India.

The Sikh friends contended that their special position and importance in the Punjab required special treatment, i.e., excessive representation if there was any communal representation at all in the Punjab. They said that they would be quite satisfied if communal representation was entirely given up and even if not one Sikh found place in the Legislature or elsewhere.

The Hindu position seemed to be that there should be no communal representation at all, but that if there was to be any, it should be under a joint electorate. The Hindu position was not crystallized. The Punjabi Hindus seemed to dread, at the back of the Mussalman demand, a sinister design on the part of the Mussalmans. In fact there is a vague fear in their minds that if the Mussalmans gain a decisive majority in the administration of the Punjab, the proximity of the warlike Mussalman tribes would constitute a most formidable menace to the Punjab in particular and to India in general.

Such is, as briefly and as accurately as is possible for me to put, the real position of the respective communities. In these circumstances, it was not possible to press the advance to an immediate solution. I am hoping that at Belguam there would be a more formal gathering of representatives to consider the whole position and to find

an acceptable and national solution of the thorny problem.

THE CONFERENCE

There was nothing notable about the Conference save the fact that the delegates both at the Subjects Committee and at the Conference gave me the utmost assistance. Even those who disagreed with me extended the greatest for bearance. I single out this fact because obedience to the authority of the chair is such an essential factor in the growth of a healthy public life. The greatest caution should no doubt be exercised in the choice of a chairman, but when one has been selected he must command implicit courtesy and obedience. The only way to deal with a refractory, vascillating or partial chairman is to move, with becoming respect, a vote of no confidence and remove him from the chair. In well-ordered society the honour is not to the person but to the position. The fundamental distinction between personal rule and organized State is that in the latter the honour is rendered to the position which is a creation of the State, i.e., the people; and thus the State goes on, no matter who is called to rule or preside. To put it in other words, every person in a well-ordered State is fully conscious of both his responsibility and of his rights. The stability of a State depends upon the readiness of every citizen to subordinate his rights to those of the rest. He knows that the rights follow, as a matter of course, the performance of duty. The State is the sum total of the sacrifice on its behalf of its members. But whilst I place on record my gratitude to the delegates for their courtesy and attention, I would like to mention that there is still at our meetings an unconscious lack of self-restraint. It is indispensable for meetings, public or private, that those who attend them do not all talk at once nor whisper to one another, but that they listen to what is being said. The whole value of meetings is lost if people are not attentive. The reader will recognize the reasonableness as well as the selfishness of these remarks. I want to prepare the ground for Belgaum. All those who attend the Congress and conferences at Belgaum, please note.

The conference went through its work in seven hours on Sunday the 7th instant, 8 to II in the morning, and 4 to 8 in the evening. The Subjects Committee took six hours. The work was done expeditiously, because no time was lost waiting for anybody. The proceedings were started punctually at the appointed times so far as the Conference was concerned.

THE CONVOCATION

The previous day, i.e., the 6th was devoted to the meeting of the representatives, the inevitable but taxing procession, and the convocation of the National University.[1] Degrees were conferred upon the successful students, who recited the following oath in Hindustani, which was ministered by Lala Lajpat Rai in his capacity as Chancellor:" I solemnly declare that I shall do nothing in my lifetime that would injure my religion or country." Among the students who received their degrees was one girl and one Mussalman. The ceremony was impressive, but I could not help feeling all the while I was awarding the diploma that I was a square man in a round hole. My notions of education are so revolutionary and, as must appear to my critics, so crude. I can only think of national education in terms of swaraj. Hence I would have even the collegiates devote their attention to perfecting themselves in the art of spinning and all it means. I would have them study the economics and implications of khaddar. They should know how long it takes to establish a mill and the capital required. They should know too the limitations on the possibility of an indefinite expansion of mills. They should know too the method of distribution of wealth through mills and that through hand-spinning and hand-weaving. They should know how hand-spinning and the manufacture of Indian fabrics was destroyed. They should understand and be able to demonstrate the effect of the adoption of hand-spinning in the cottages of the millions of India's peasants. They should know how a full revival of this cottage industry will weave into an undivided whole the sundered Hindu and Mussalman hearts. But these ideas are either behind the time or in advance of it. It does not much matter whether they are behind or ahead of the time. This I know that some day or other the whole of educated India will adopt them.

A MARTIAL LAW PRISONER

The reader will recall the names of Messrs Ratanchand and Bugga Chaudhary, the two martial law prisoners who were sentenced to be hanged and on whose behalf Pandit Motilalji took an appeal to the Privy Council. The reader will remember further that though the appeal was dismissed, the death sentences were commuted to life

[1] *Vide*" Convocation Address at Punjab Qaumi Vidyapith, Lahore" 6-12-1924.

sentences. Now Mr. Bugga Chaudhary has been brought back from the Andamans to the Multan Jail whereas Mr. Ratanchand, I understand, is still kept in the Andamans. I had a visit from Mr. Bugga's mother-in-law. She informed me that Mr. Bugga has been long suffering from hernia and piles and for the last three months has been suffering from fever. During the palmy days of non-co-operation, I used to tell the relatives of these prisoners that they would be soon released. I felt sorry this time not to be able to hold out any hope to the mother-in-law of the early release of her son-in-law although he is ailing and has already served five years of imprisonment. In analysing the evidence given at the trial of these two gentlemen, I had expressed my conviction that there was nothing in it warranting conviction for murder. The Privy Council, it will be remembered, did not go into the merits of the cases. Their Lordships threw out the appeal on what may be called technical grounds

Young India, 11-12-1924

373. A WARNING

During the next few months every householder will have his choice. By refusing or neglecting to stock cotton for domestic use, he will indirectly and in many cases directly be a party to sending away most of the cotton grown in India out of the country and selling some of it to the mills. Or by stocking sufficient cotton he can promote hand-spinning and bring swaraj nearer to the extent of each householder's solid work for hand-spinning. This choice comes every year to everyone in India and that during the cotton season. Congressmen can do double work. They may instruct every householder in the performance of the primary duty of stocking enough cotton. And seeing that all the householders are not yet alive to their duty, they may also stock sufficient cotton for the sake of the defaulters. This can be done either by begging or by buying. We have had many *mushti*[1] funds more or less successful. There is no reason why in all cotton-growing areas cotton should not be begged from door to door. Wherever such corporate collection is made, the collection should be treated exactly in the same way as we would treat cash collection. Receipts should be passed to donors and books of account should be kept. Stocking should be thoroughly effective. Special skill will be

[1] Small handful

needed for classifying and conserving cotton. Now is the time for storing cotton or it may be never till the return of the next season.

Young India, 11-12-1924

374. MY PATH

It is my good fortune and misfortune to receive attention in Europe and America at the present moment. It is my good fortune in that my message is being studied and understood in the West. It is my misfortune in that it is also being either unconsciously exaggerated or wilfully distorted. Every truth is self-action and possesses inherent strength. I therefore remain unperturbed even when I find myself grossly misrepresented. A kind European friend has sent me a warning which shows, if the information given to him be true, that I am being either wilfully or accidentally misunderstood in Russia. Here is the message:

> The Russian representative at Berlin, Mr. Krestinsky, would be asked by the Minister for Foreign Affairs to give an official welcome to Gandhi (?) and to" profit by the situation to undertake Bolshevik propagandist activities among his followers". Besides, Krestinsky would be given the task of inviting Gandhi to come to Russia. He is authorized to give a subsidy for the publication of propagandist literature among the oppressed peoples of Asia; and he is to found, for the purposes of the Oriental Club and Secretariat, a purse in the name of Gandhi, for students who are of his ideas (of the ideas of Gandhi or of those of Moscow?). Finally three Hindus would be enlisted in this work All this is published in the Russian newspapers like the *Rul* of Oct. 18th.

The message gives the clue to the reports that I was likely to be invited to visit Germany and Russia. I need not say that I have received no such invitation at all, nor have I the slightest desire to visit these great countries. I am conscious of the fact that the truth for which I stand has not yet been fully accepted by India. It has not yet been fully vindicated. My work in India is still in the experimental stage. In such circumstances any foreign adventure on my part would be altogether premature. I should be fully satisfied if the experiment demonstrably succeeds in India.

My path is clear. Any attempt to use me for violent purposes is bound to fail. I have no secret methods. I know no diplomacy save that of truth. I have no weapon but non-violence. I may be unconsciously led astray for a while but not for all time. I have

therefore well-defined limitations, within which alone I may be used. Attempts have been made before now to use me unlawfully more than once. They have failed each time so far as I am aware.

I am yet ignorant of what exactly Bolshevism is. I have not been able to study it. I do not know whether it is for the good of Russia in the long run. But I do know that in so far as it is based on violence and denial of God, it repels me. I do not believe in short-violent-cuts to success. Those Bolshevik friends who are bestowing their attention on me should realize that however much I may sympathize with and admire worthy motives, I am an uncompromising opponent of violent methods even to serve the noblest of causes. There is, therefore, really no meeting ground between the school of violence and myself. But my creed of non-violence not only does not preclude me but compels me even to associate with anarchists and all those who believe in violence. But that association is always with the sole object of weaning them from what appears to me to be their error. For experience convinces me that permanent good can never be the outcome of untruth and violence. Even if my belief is a fond delusion, it will be admitted that it is a fascinating delusion.

Young India, 11-12-1924

375. ART AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT[1]

One of the most interesting studies in human history is to trace the correspondence between the rise of a great Literature and Art and the dawn of a new national life. Music, which is akin to Literature and Art, has a similar function to perform....

The question remains to be considered, whether the national awakening in India of our own times gives as yet any promise of producing a great Literature and Art. The movement is too young, in many provinces of India. for us to expect to see immediate results. But no one, who has closely studied the modern history of Bengal, can doubt for a moment that a creative period has dawned there. It represents, both in literary and artistic genius, the full impulse of the soul of the people....

In other parts of India, the national movement is chiefly noticeable at present on account of a remarkable renaissance of Literature in the mother languages themselves....

[1] From this article by C. F. Andrews, on which Gandhiji has commented, only extracts are reproduced here

On the other hand there is one thing in the national programme which strangely enough has not been able hitherto to yield itself to different creative forms of beauty, namely khaddar.... An absolute sameness of white, with hardly any variation at all, gives no relief to the artistic sense.... The vegetable dyes of ancient India might be brought back into daily use; this land of bright unclouded skies should not be robbed of those glorious primary colours, the scarlet, the gold and the blue, with all their many variations, which only the sunshine can make harmonious. . . .

There is no danger of the colour sense being lost. That art is being taken care of by Masulipatam and other places. Tawdriness may and should disappear, as the nation develops the sense of proportions

Young India 11-12-1924

376. INTERVIEW TO" THE TRIBUNE"

LAHORE,
December 11, 1924

Mr. Gandhi, who left Rawalpindi this morning, passed through Lahore this evening by the Bombay Mail for Sabarmati. Interviewed by a special representative of *The Tribune* at the Lahore Railway Station on the Government of India Resolution on Kohat affairs, Mr. Gandhi said:

In company of Maulanas Shaukat Ali, Zafar Ali and Dr. Kitchlew, I saw almost every one of the refugees in Rawalpindi; I have also seen Rai Bahadur Sardar Makhan Singh. I have read the resolution of the Government of India and I have not a shadow of doubt that the resolution is a challenge. I have strongly advised them not to accept any terms of settlement without reference to Hindu and Muslim leaders. At this stage, I wish to give no opinion as to the truth or otherwise of the several statements made in the resolution. Unfortunately, the Mohammedans of Kohat were not represented by any responsible person in Rawalpindi, but it is perfectly clear to me that the Government of India have arrived at conclusions upon a departmental enquiry as to the formation of which these refugees or Mussalmans had no say, nor had the refugees any opportunity given to them of establishing their case. From experience one knows how often such enquiries had been misleading and resulted in giving only a one-sided version.

The refugees are deeply grieved over the resolution. They had expected that there would be a full, open and independent enquiry at

which both Hindus and Muslims would be able to have their full say. That, however, has not happened and from the Viceroy's reply to Pandit Malaviyaji it would appear that this resolution is the Government of India's final say and finding in the matter.

In the circumstances, the refugees, if they are to consult their self-respect, could never go to Kohat until there is a real and lasting settlement between themselves and the Mussalmans of Kohat. Such a settlement can never be superimposed from outside, and whatever terms either the Hindus or the Mussalmans concerned may be represented as having accepted, I can only regard as having been accepted under direct or indirect coercion. I am hoping that the Mussalmans of Kohat will see their way to meet the refugees and invite them to return to Kohat under a promise of friendship and full security. I do not wish to pre-judge the case. I am hoping, and in this I voice the sentiment of my Mussalman colleagues, that the Mussalmans of Kohat will give us an opportunity of coming at a correct decision upon the unfortunate happenings in Kohat; but this much is absolutely clear that the Hindus are today refugees at Rawalpindi and are in fear of their very existence in Kohat, should they return without a full guarantee from the Mussalman residents. I count no assurance that might be given by the Government as of consequence, if the Mussalmans are unwilling to receive the Hindus as their friends. They are in an overwhelming majority, with Mussalman tribes within a stone's throw of them, and every Indian, be he Hindu or Mussalman, expects the Mussalmans of Khoat, if they are anxious to have Hindu-Muslim unity, to give full assurance to the refugees and take them back to Kohat. I would repeat here what I have said to the refugees.[1] On their correct conduct depend the future relations between the Hindus and the Mussalmans in the Frontier Province. If they refuse to return until the Kohat Muslims have cordially invited them and assured them of full protection, it will be [well] with them. I have no doubt that all India will stand by them.

I have told them also that there should not be the slightest difficulty in their finding suitable occupation in India, should it be impossible for them to return with self-respect. I have told them, too, as soon as my present engagements are finished, which would be about the 23rd of January, I would be glad to go back to Rawalpindi and remain with them as long as it is necessary, but I have every hope

[1] *Vide*" Speech at Rawalpindi", 9-12-1924.

that long before that time the Mussalmans of Kohat will recognize their obligation towards the refugees and take them back to Kohat. Maulana Shaukat Ali is already moving in the matter and is placing himself in touch with the Frontier Mussalmans.

Asked by the interviewer to state his views about the Hindu-Muslim differences in the Punjab or to suggest any remedy for the present strained feelings, Mr. Gandhi said:

I think the above statement on the Kohat affair is quite enough. There is nothing just now which strikes me [as] of paramount importance. I have fully dwelt on this question in my articles in the current issue of *Young India*[1] and I do not want to add anything more to what I have already written. :

Further questioned as to the meaning and the significance of his announcement at the recent Punjab Provincial Political Conference about his new plan of attaining swaraj, Mr. Gandhi replied:

I have not seen the report of my concluding speech at the conference, but I did say that I was doing a great deal of hard thinking and trying to find out whether at least for some of us it was not possible to end this agony. What that can be, I am unable to say at the present moment, and everything depends upon how the Congress receives any proposal that I might have to make. I am still in a fog and I have grave doubts as to my ability to carry the nation with me. Beyond this, I am unable to go at the present moment, but there is no doubt in my mind that anything that I may conceive now, will have so far I am concerned a finality about it.

Asked about his immediate future programme, Mr. Gandhi said:

I reach Sabarmati on Saturday morning. I leave Sabarmati on the 18th and reach Belgaum on the 20th and hope to meet all the No-changers who come there and all the Pro-changers who would come on the 21st. I am most anxious to have a full, free and informal discussion with all the leaders as well as the rank and file. I am most anxious that anything that is done at the Congress is not accepted mechanically, but that every delegate who assents to the resolutions that will be submitted to the Congress does so with a full conviction and under a full sense of his or her responsibility. The success of any programme will depend upon everyone working at it heart and soul.

The Tribune, 13-12-1924

[1] Dated 18-12-1924

377. FOREWORD TO" LIFE OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA"

SABARMATI.[1]

Margsheersh Krishna 1, 1981 [*December*[2] *12, 1924*]

The story of Ramakrishna Paramahansa's life is a story of religion in practice. His life enables us to see God face to face. No one can read the story of his life without being convinced that God alone is real and that all else is an illusion. Ramakrishna was a living embodiment of godliness. His sayings are not those of a mere learned man but they are pages from the Book of Life. They are revelations of his own experiences. They, therefore, leave on the reader an impression which he cannot resist. In this age of scepticism Ramakrishna presents an example of a bright and living faith which gives solace to thousands of men and women who would otherwise have remained without spiritual light. Ramakrishna's life was an object-lesson in ahimsa. His love knew no limits, geographical or otherwise. May his divine love be as inspiration to all who read the following pages.

M. K. GANDHI

Life of Sri Ramakrishna

378" PATIDARS" AND UNTOUCHABLES

I still receive complaints from our untouchable brothers against *Patidars*. A brother has sent me cuttings wherein the facts are supported by names and addresses. It is alleged that those untouchables who had given up the job of removing carcasses were beaten up and made to do this work.

If this is a fact, it would amount to swadeshi Dyerism, and in some respects, even worse than the foreign variety. The action of the foreigner had at least a slight excuse in the conduct of the people. There is no such excuse here. The foreigners are few in number and hence, ordinarily, they have cause for fear. In this swadeshi Dyerism, however, the *Patidars* are greater in number, while the untouchables

[1] As given in the source; however, Gandhiji reached Sabarmati on December 13; *vide*" Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", 14-12-1924.

[2] The source, however, mentions" November 12, 1924".

are fewer and inferior in strength as well as intelligence. To use force against them is like bringing out an army against ants.

Patidars and the other so-called upper castes should reflect on their duty. No one's Dyerism will be tolerated for much longer now. Truth, justice and non-violence alone will prevail. Untruth, injustice and violence, even if they are swadeshi, will never prevail.

Today, we want justice, we wish to rid ourselves of slavery. Shall we be blind to our own faults and not get rid of them? Reasonable *Patidars* should stop those who have heaped injustice on untouchables. People should realize that we have our obligations towards the untouchable brothers. Just as other castes have given up their occupations, just as Brahmins have forsaken teaching and taken up jobs, etc., just as Kshatriyas have willingly accepted slavery, just as tailors have given up their trade and entered other fields, similarly, untouchables too have a right to give up their old occupations.

Today, the chamar's vocation has been taken up by others also. I see no impurity in carrying carcasses to where they belong. However, how could I force others to do that or any other work? We cannot obstinately insist that certain communities or persons must do certain tasks. As a direct result of this, we should not be ashamed of doing any essential service. Moreover, if no one else is obliged to do it, what sin have the poor untouchables committed [to be forced to do it]? I remember that the *Bhangis* in the South were displeased once. They stopped doing their work. The Brahmins started cleaning their own lavatories, and the *Bhangis* were discomfited. That is the best way of vanquishing others. We should silently suffer inconvenience and remove it through self-reliance, through forbearance. This way lies progress for both classes. The other course would definitely lead to the degradation of one and possibly of both.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-12-1924

379. LETTER TO A. VARADAN

December 14, 1924

DEAR FRIEND

I thank you for the apology accompanying your letter and signed by Mr. Subramaniam. I have never thought of the matter. I do hope he will not be made to retire by reason of letters written by him.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

A. VARADAN, ESQ.
HEADMASTER

From a photostat: G.N. 5676

380. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

Sunday, Magsar Vad 3 [*December 14, 1924*]

SUJNA BHAISHRI

I received today your letter redirected from Lahore. Even if I send you a telegram now, it will reach you only tomorrow. I am therefore replying by letter only. Don't you think it [in-] advisable [hot] to allow the Conference[1], to be held at Sonegarh itself? However, you may do whatever is good for all the parties concerned. As to restraint in the Conference, what assurance can I give you? I do take it for granted that none in Kathiawar will transgress the limits in my presence. From the papers I see that the Municipality has already passed a resolution to present an address. May that be changed now? I believe the presentation of the address will certainly be accomplished without any difficulty. I am here till the 18th. If anyone goes to the city, I shall send you a wire also.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 3184. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

[1] Kathiawar Political Conference; *vide"* Letter to Prabhashanker Pattani", 18-12-1924.

381. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Magsar Vad 3 [*December 14, 1924*][1]

I arrived here yesterday. I was about to write to you when Mahadev showed me your letter. I am unhappy and wonder why Anand is not yet well. Why is it so? Tell Anand not to be in a hurry to take leave of this world. Would she agree to go for a change? I have always observed that a hundred medicines do not work as effectively as one good change. How will you come to Belgaum in this condition? I wanted to write to you to come to Belgaum. Taramati must now be completely all right.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 78

382. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS ON PUNJAB SPEECHES

AHMEDABAD
December 14, 1924

I have seen a report of one of my speeches in the Punjab, and I have heard more about the reports of my speeches. I warned the reporters against reporting me without first showing their reports to me. I made what were to me important statements. The editors of *The Tribune* and the *Zamindar* did me the courtesy of letting me or my secretary revise their reports, but others evidently did not consider it necessary to respond to my request. The result is a travesty of what I did say. All I can therefore say to the public is:" Don't you believe a word of what may be reported of me unless the report is authenticated by me. For the rest, let the public await my address at Belgaum, which will summarize all I have said in the Punjab and elsewhere. I warn them against expecting anything sensational or exciting. What I desire above all else is unity and quiet constructive work for one year. Then, but not till then, I should promise much excitement for the most ardent spirits, but let me not anticipate.

New India, 15-12-1924

[1] As given in the source

383. LETTER TO KUNVERJI VITHALBHAI MEHTA

Monday [*December 15, 1924*][1]

I have your letter. I shall I certainly try to tour Bardoli taluk after the 15th[2]. You may fix the programme in consultation with Vallabhbhai.

1. Is any spinning activity going on there?
2. How is Pragji doing?
3. Where is Kalyanji and how is he doing?
4. Does *Navayug* pay its way?
5. Do they store any cotton?
6. Is Dayalji well now?

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAISHRI KUNVERJI VITHALBHAI
"NAVAYUG" OFFICE
LIMDA CHOWK
SURAT

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2673

384. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

Tuesday [*December 16, 1924*][3]

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

Bhai Fulchand, Amritlal and other workers are here in connection with the holding of the Conference. They tell me that they are prepared to promise that the Conference will be conducted with perfect discretion. They are prepared to undertake to see that none of the Princes are subjected to personal criticism. I feel that there should be no difficulty in granting permission to hold the Conference on such conditions. If the conditions are mentioned in the order giving permission, the prestige of the durbar will be maintained and his duty

[1] From the postmark
[2] Evidently of January, 1925
[3] This letter is acknowledged by the addressee in his letter of 17-12-1924 to Gandhiji.

to the other Princes amply discharged, at the same time the people will be able to hold the Conference. I believe the prohibitory order has been issued under the apprehension that due decorum would not be observed in the Conference; and if conditions are imposed to avert such an eventuality while granting permission, I believe there will be no difficulty.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 3185. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

385. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MODI

Magsar Vad 5 [*December 16, 1924*][1]

BHAI BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. Good, you wrote it. I shall try to follow what I can from it.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

BHAI BHAGWANJI ANUPCHAND MODI
RAJKOT

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 3031. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

386. MESSAGE TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

[After *December 16, 1924*][2]

I understand that the Reception Committee of the Kathiawar Political Conference is ready to give an assurance to the Ruler that due decorum will be observed at the Conference and that none of the Princes will be subjected to personal criticism.

I have also come to the conclusion that before recommending to the Reception Committee that the Conference should be held at Bhavnagar the Working Committee which met at Porbandar ought to have consulted Sir Pattani. By omitting to do this they have been guilty of incivility.

[1] From the postmark

[2] This message seems to have been written after Gandhiji's"Letter to Prabhashanker Pattani", 16-12-1924.

Sir Prabhashanker holds strongly the view that this year the Conference should not be held at Bhavnagar. I can see that he may find it difficult to permit this. He has written to me saying that if the Conference is held at Sonegarh, he will give every kind of help possible. He would even encourage subjects of the Bhavnagar State to attend the Conference. Moreover, he also promises to arrange for the next session of the Conference to be held within the State territory and give any other help required of him. His only condition is that proper restraint in speeches; etc., is maintained at this year's convention. He does not wish to impose conditions for the next year's session. He takes for granted that the Conference will, of its own accord, keep within limits.

In view of all this, the Reception Committee should not, I think, insist on holding the Conference at Bhavnagar. They should respond to Sir Pattani's request and prove themselves to be true satyagrahis by maintaining perfect discipline at the Conference.

If the people take this course of action they will have nothing to be ashamed of. It will not discredit satyagraha and will moreover make things easy for the future. But suppose everything goes away, Sir Pattani goes back on his word, or he is not in Kathiawar then, or in spite of his best efforts he fails to enable the Conference to hold its session within the territory of the State, even then the satyagrahis will have nothing to lose. A true satyagrahi is never weary of showing modesty and courtesy and he never has to repent for a"lost opportunity". He is ever ready to answer the call.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

From a copy: C.W. 6204. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

387. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

December 17, 1924

DEAR MR. NATESAN,

My wishes for a bright future for your *Review* are with you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Indian Review, January, 1925

388. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

Magsar Vad 6 [*December 17, 1924*][1]

BHAI DAHYABHAI,

I have both your letters. I feel like writing, but what can I write without all the necessary information? I do not like to write without the support of solid facts. Now you may come to me after I return from Belgaum and explain the thing to me.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

BHAI DAHYABHAI MANORDAS PATEL
TALUK SAMITI
DHOLKA

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2691. Courtesy: D. M. Patel

389. LETTER TO THE "FORWARD"

[About *December 17, 1924*][2]

DEAR FRIEND,

Here is my article: There is no swaraj without the spinnings-wheel. I do not keep any portrait of mine. So you should be satisfied with the autograph.

M. K. GANDHI

The Story of My Life, Vol. II, p. 499

390. NOTES

IS LALAJI A COWARD?

I suppose I share the misfortune of many a public speaker in being often mis-reported without the reporters ever meaning to mis-report me. I remember the late Sir Pherozeshah Mehta[3], in 1896, telling me on the occasion of my very first public appearance on an Indian platform, that if I wished to be heard and if I wanted to be

[1] From the postmark
[2] As given in the source
[3] 1845-1915; prominent Indian Congress leader

correctly reported, I should write out my speech. I always thanked him for this wise advice. I know that, if I had not followed his instructions for that particular meeting, it would have proved a fiasco. But I have had cause to recall the advice of the uncrowned king of the Presidency whenever I have been mis-reported. Somebody is said to have reported me as having described, at the Khilafat Conference at Amritsar, Lala Lajpat Rai as a coward. Whatever Lalaji may be, he is no coward. The context of my speech would have showed that I was defending Lalaji against the charge of being inimical to the Mussalmans. What I did say at the time was that Lalaji was timid and suspected the motives of Mussalmans but that he was sincerely desirous of Mussalman friendship. Let me not conceal my regard for Lalaji. I hold him to be brave, self-sacrificing, generous, truthful and godfearing. His patriotism is of the purest type. He has few equals in the quantity or the quality of service to the country. And if a man like him may be suspected of base motives, we would have to despair of Hindu-Muslim unity, as we would have to, if we suspected the Ali Brothers of base motives. We have all of us our limitations and prejudices. We, the Hindus and Mussalmans, must be taken as we are and those with whom Hindu-Muslim unity is a creed must seek to achieve it with the material we have. It is a bad carpenter who quarrels with his tools. Colonel Maddock told me that once he performed a very serious operation with an ordinary pocket knife, because he had no other with him at the time. The only sterilizer he had was boiling water. He dared and his patient lived. Let us dare to trust one another and we shall be safe. Trusting one another, however, can never mean trusting with the lip and mistrusting in the heart. That were cowardice indeed. And there can be no friendship between cowards, or cowards and brave men.

WHEN IS KILLING JUSTIFIED?

Lala Shankarlal of Delhi tells me I am reported as having said that I advised Hindus to kill Mussalmans oh certain occasions, e.g., when they were in the act of killing cow. I have not seen the report in question. But as the matter is of the utmost importance, I cannot be too precise or definite. I hold that it is no part of Hinduism to defend the cow against the whole world or against Mussalmans. If the Hindu attempted any such thing, he would be guilty of forcible conversion. His duty ends with his tender care of the cow. This duty, let me incidentally observe, he signally fails to discharge. The only way

Hindus can convert the whole world to cow-protection is by giving an object lesson in cow-protection and all it means. But everyone and therefore every Hindu is bound to defend with his life, the honour of his mother, sister, wife or daughter, in fact all those who are under his exclusive or special protection. My dharma teaches me for the sake of others to give my life without even attempting to kill. But my dharma also enables me to say that where choice lies between running away to the neglect of one's charge and killing the would-be ravisher, it is one's duty to kill and be killed, never to desert the post of duty. I have had the humiliation of meeting tall, well-built fellows coming to me and innocently telling me they had witnessed the rape of Hindu women by dissolute Mussulmans. In a society of brave men, evidence of completed rape should be almost impossible. Not a man should be alive to report such a crime. A simple *pujari* not knowing the meaning of non-violence told me with some glee that when a mob entered his temple to break his idols, he carefully hid himself away. Such a man I hold to be unfit to be a *pujari.* He should have died at his post. He would then have sanctified the idol with his blood. He would have been justified in killing the intruders, if he had not the courage to die at his post with a prayer on his lips that God might have pity on the assailants. But it was unmanly for him to have hidden himself to save his perishable skin. The truth is that cowardice itself is violence of a subtle and therefore dangerous type and far more difficult to eradicate than the habit of physical violence. A coward never risks his life. A man who would kill often risks it. A non-violent person's life is always at the disposal of him who would take it. For he knows that the soul within never dies. The encasing body is ever perishing. The more a man gives his life, the more he saves it. Thus non-violence requires more than the courage of the soldier of war. The *Gita,* definition of a soldier is one who does not know what it is to run away from danger.

NO-CHANGERS AGAIN

Pathetic letters from No-changers continue to pour upon me. The writers frankly believe that I have sold the cause of non-co-operation and yet out of affection for me they will not rise in revolt against me. I recognize that those No-changers who write publicly against my having entered into the agreement with the Swarajists are doing so with the greatest restraint. I feel grateful for all the delicate consideration that is being shown to me. But if the consideration pleases me, it also embarrasses me. Let me assure them that I

shall in no way take it amiss if they resist me when they consider that I am in the wrong. Neither their affection for me nor my past service should stand in the way of their resisting me. Let the resistance be as gentle, as courteous and as non-violent as they can make it. But let it be none the less firm on that account. Indeed with them non-co-operation is as much a principle of conduct as it is with me. I have stated repeatedly that if it is a sound principle, it must be capable of application in connection with one's dearest relatives or friends. I have stated more than once that I discovered the doctrine from a close observation of domestic life and in the course of regulating it as correctly as I knew how. The No-changers who feel convinced of my error would therefore serve me by non-co-operating with me. But if they have any doubt, I certainly claim the benefit of it. For my part I shall not strive with them any more. As an English friend would say, any further striving would amount to exerting undue influence. I have said all I had to in defence of the agreement. As I do not act hastily and without due deliberation, I am slow to retrace my steps. But the No-changers do not need my assurance that the moment I feel that I"sold the cause", I should beat a hasty retreat and make ample amen-ds. But till then they would not want me to act against my convictions.

ALL SHOULD COME

But whilst I do not wish to strive with the No-changers I want them to continue striving with me. I can recall several occasions when by constant striving with me, friends were able to dislodge me from false positions. I would also gladly answer any doubts that they may still have. That being so, I would want all the No-changers who can to attend the Congress. Similarly do I want all the Pro-changers to attend. I want not merely their passive assent to the agreement but their active and enthusiastic co-operation in working the joint programme. I want their guidance and their criticism. Moreover, whilst I do not want to divide the house on matters relating to the agreement, there may be important issues on which a division may be inevitable. I would therefore like a full Congress. A delegate is not worthy of the appointment if he does not attend and represent his constituents at the annual session. But this year it is specially incumbent on every delegate to attend. A revolutionary change is sought to be introduced in the franchise. Regulations have to be drawn for its working, if it is accepted by the Congress. There are

other important changes too which I propose to submit to the Subjects Committee. There will be also new conferences, e.g., National Home Rule and Non-Brahmin. It is thus necessary from every point of view that delegates attend in full force and help the inauguration of momentous changes.

Young India, 18-12-1924

391. THE KOHAT TRAGEDY

The Government of India has rung downs the curtain upon the Kohat tragedy. In the Viceregal reply to Pandit Malaviyaji the Government had prepared the public for some such resolution as is now before the public. The resolution is a demonstration of the Government's unchallengeable supremacy and disregard of public opinion, as it is also a demonstration of national impotence. To me the Kohat tragedy is not so much a result of Hindu-Muslim tension as of the utter worthlessness and incompetence of the local administration. Had they performed their elementary duty of protecting life and property, the wanton destruction begun and continued in broad daylight could have been easily prevented. But like Nero the authority watched and danced while Rome was burning. The authority cannot plead helplessness. It had ample resources at its disposal. It was at no time overwhelmed except by its own criminal indifference and callousness.

And now the Government of India has become partner in the crime by white-washing the local officials and even converting their neglect or worse into"coolness and courage".

One would have expected a full, open and independent inquiry. But nothing beyond a departmental inquiry at which the public was unrepresented took place. Its finding can command no public confidence. The refugees from Rai Bahadur Sardar Makhan Singh downward whom my Mussalman colleagues and I saw, whilst. admitting that a pamphlet containing the highly insulting verses was published by Lala Jiwandas, said that ample amends were made for the publication by the Hindus and that the Hindu firing was in self-defence and after the destruction had been started by the Mussalmans. On behalf of the Kohat Mussalmans it was contended that sufficient amends were not made with regard to the pamphlet and that the Mussalman destruction and firing took place after the Hindus had

opened fire and taken Mussalman life. Unfortunately the Mussalmans of Kohat not having come to Rawalpindi, we were unable to find out the real truth. It is therefore difficult to say that the Government of India's distribution of blame is erroneous. But its finding cannot be accepted as an impartial or acceptable judgment. The Hindus of Kohat cannot be expected to accept and submit to the finding. Nor can such a finding, because it seems to favour the Mussalman contention, be any consolation to the Mussalmans of Kohat. For it would be wrong for the Mussalman public to applaud the Government of India's finding, because it for the moment seems to support the Mussalman contention. Any finding to be satisfactory must be joint and arrived at by Hindus and Mussalmans of proved impartiality. The Government of India resolution is therefore a challenge to both the communities. It tells the Hindu refugees to return to Kohat on pain of submission to humiliating conditions. It bribes the Mussalmans to impose humiliation on their Hindu brethren. I hope that Hindus will prefer a life of penury outside Kohat but without humiliation, to a life of plenty in Kohat with humiliation. I hope that Mussalmans will be manly enough to refuse the bait offered by the Government and decline to be party to imposing humiliation on their Hindu brethren who are in a hopeless minority in Kohat. Whosesoever the initial blunder and provocation, the fact stands that the Hindus were practically forced out of Kohat. It is up to the Mussalmans therefore to go to Rawalpindi and take the refugees back to Kohat with friendliness and with full guarantee for the safety of their lives and property. The Hindus outside Kohat should make it easy for the Mussalmans to make the approach. The Mussalmans outside should insist upon those in Kohat recognizing their primary obligation to the Hindu minority. On a proper and honourable solution of this delicate problem lies in a large measure the success of the efforts to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity.

The sooner we, both co-operators and non-co-operators, cease to rely upon Government protection against one another, the better it will be for us and the quicker and more lasting will be the solution. Viewed in that light, the indifference of the Kohat officials is to be welcomed. History would have been differently and more honourably written if the Hindus had not sought the protection of the officials, had stuck to their homes and without offering any defence, or even in the act of forcibly defending themselves and their property and their dependants had been reduced to cinders. I would welcome a

resolution by the Government that no one need look to them for protection in inter-communal quarrels. If we would leave[1] each party to defend itself against encroachment upon its liberty by the other, we would be well on the road to swaraj. It would be a fine training in self-defence and self-respect or which is the same thing, swaraj. There are two ways of defence. The best and the most effective is not to defend at all, but to remain at one's post risking every danger. The next best but equally honourable method is to strike bravely in self-defence and put one's life in the most dangerous positions. A few pitched battles between the two will soon teach them the uselessness of breaking one another's heads. It will teach them to fight thus is not to serve God but to serve Satan.

I conclude this article by repeating the promise I made to the refugees in Rawalpindi. If they will not return to Kohat till they receive cordial invitation from the Kohat Mussalmans, I shall be prepared as soon as the engagements already taken up are finished to go to Rawalpindi in company with M. Shaukat Ali and attempt to smooth the relations between the two or failing that to help them to find suitable occupation in life.

Young India, 18-12-1924

392. PATRIOTISM RUN MAD

If it is true that certain Mulshi Peta satyagrahis have wrecked a train taking labourers to Tatas works, injured the engine driver and slashed about labourers including women, it is a crime worthy of the highest condemnation. These offenders against law, order and decency are said to have declared themselves at war against Tatas and to have said that by waylaying the poor coolies they expect to stop the works in course of construction. This is terrorism in a cause supposed to be good. But all terrorism is bad whether put up in a good cause or bad. As a matter of fact every cause is good in the estimation of its champion. General Dyer (and he had thousands of English men and women who honestly thought with him) enacted Jallianwala Bagh for a cause which he undoubtedly believed to be good. He thought that by that one act he had saved English lives and the Empire. That it was all a figment of his imagination, cannot affect the valuation of the intensity of his conviction. Lords Lytton and Reading honestly believe that the Swaraj Party of Bengal is steeped in violence. But their

[1] The source has"learn".

terrorism cannot be justified on the score of the honesty of their motives. The cause that these mad Mulshi Peta satyagrahis hold to be just and good, the Tatas and their supporters genuinely believe to be wicked. They are honestly of opinion that their scheme will benefit the surrounding villages, that they have paid full compensation to the parties dispossessed, that the latter have voluntarily vacated their holdings and that their scheme will be a boon to Bombay and that therefore those who seek to thwart the scheme are enemies of progress. They are as much entitled to this belief as I am to mine that the scheme will not benefit the people in the neighbourhood, that it will spoil the natural beauty of the place, that the poor villagers had no mind of their own and could therefore hardly be said to have voluntarily vacated their holdings, that no compensation is an adequate consideration for vacating a possession which sentiment has hallowed and that it is a debatable question if the scheme will be a boon to Bombay. But immediately I arrogate to myself the exclusive title to being in the right, I usurp the function of the Deity. And there being no absolute and universal standard of right, terrorism must be held to be wrong in every case. In other words, pure motives can never justify impure or violent action. I am therefore unable to congratulate the offenders even on their voluntary surrender to the authorities. This surrender is no mitigation of the crime. It may easily be simple bravado. The murderer of a lady the other day in Kirkee could not save himself from the gallows because he surrendered himself after the murder. The assault upon the innocent women who were earning an honest livelihood was an unpardonable wickedness. The self-styled friends of the Mulshi villagers had a perfect right, if they had wished, to go to the labourers and by argument wean them from labouring for the Tatas. But they had no right to take the law into their own hands. They had damaged a good cause by adopting the wrong method of terrorism and, alienated what public sympathy they had. Terrorism set up by reformers may be just as bad as Government terrorism and it is often worse because it draws a certain amount of false sympathy. I heard a lady haranguing upon the self-sacrifice of revolutionaries and visibly moving the audience. A little reflection would however show that self-sacrifice must not be allowed to excuse a crime. Not even self-immolation can be allowed to support a bad or an immoral cause. He would be a weak father who would permit his child to play with fire because the child is hunger-striking for the permission. The youths who the other day very nearly murdered near Calcutta an

innocent taxi-driver deserve no sympathy because they were robing the driver for helping the cause of the country and because they were risking their lives in the attempt. Those who are betrayed into showing sympathy for such misguided youths are harming the country and doing no service to the youths.

Young India, 18-12-1924

393. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

December 18, 1924

MY DEAREST CHARLIE,

Yes all your wires were received. I quite agree with you that you need rest—much more than I do. You are entirely absolved from any care about *Young India*. Write only when the spirit moves you. I ought not to have worried you about Egypt and Burma. My address has taken an extraordinary turn. I have dismissed many subjects with the briefest references. You will read it carefully at your leisure and criticize if you feel up to it. You must give the Europeans at Shantiniketan the hill climate in summer and food always cooked after the European style.

With love,

Yours,
MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 2618

394. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE

Thursday [*December 18, 1924*][1]

BHAI MAMA,

I have your letter. Wednesday is the 31st. I intend leaving this place on that day and reaching Dohad in the morning on Friday by the Express. I shall go to Godhra on Saturday and return the same day or by the first available train on Sunday to Sabarmati. Thus I shall get 5th, 6th and 7th at the Ashram. After that I shall leave again on

[1] It is presumed that Gandhiji wrote this letter before leaving Sabarmati for Belgaum on Thursday, December 18, 1924. He was in Bombay on the 31st and visited Dohad and Godhra on the 2nd. The addressee was conducting an Ashram for *Antyajas* at Godhra.

my wanderings. So give up expecting me on Monday. I shall inform you, if I have to make any change in this programme.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 3810

395. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

Thursday, Magsar Vad 7 [*December 18, 1924*][1]

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I have your letter. It seems a *na* [not] got omitted in my letter to you. What I wanted to convey was,"Now it would not be proper if it is not held at Sonegarh." The reason for writing this was that the organizers may not just for the sake of convenience change a decision once taken. This is of course my personal opinion. It is for you and the Conference people to decide what to do.

I have written a letter to the Chairman of the Corporation. Some of your arguments are quite convincing.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 3186. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

396. NON-CO-OPERATING STUDENTS

I have been hearing of an uproar among non-co-operating students because of some statements of mine. Some are even throwing sharply-worded paper arrows at me.

I am proud of the sacrifices made by students. I know the service they have rendered to the country. However, if students have done much, million fold more remains to be done. There is no limit to sacrifice. Those who say,"We have made this sacrifice, it is more than enough", have become proud and their sacrifice has been in vain. Swaraj will come at the end of complete sacrifice. That is our test. Our sacrifice is incomplete, so long as we have not won swaraj.

Moreover, sacrifice which is painful is not worth the name. That alone is true sacrifice which exalts an individual, gives him peace and

[1] This is in reply to the addressee's letter of December 17, 1924. The omission of"not" referred to in the letter occurred in Gandhiji's letter of December 14.

joy. Pleasures became painful to Lord Buddha and he renounced them. Renunciation pleased him, hence he persisted in it.

Withdrawal. from Government schools is worth-while only if the student feels, at the end, a sense of relief at his freedom The parrot in a golden cage is safe from snakes and other creatures. It gets its food regularly. Despite this, if the master leaves the cage ajar, it would fly away to the branch of a tree and would swing there with joy. It knows that with this independence it would have to worry about its food and that it would be exposed to the danger of snakes and large birds, but this does not trouble it. That parrot's non-co- operation with the cage, with its master, will live for ever because it looks upon renunciation, non-co-operation, as a joy. It regards its master's fondness as selfish. The comforts at the latter's place were like discomforts to it. The parrot knew that freedom is beyond price. It was convinced that a bejewelled cage was still a cage; hence, no sooner was it opened then the parrot flew away.

Those students who left Government schools because they regarded them as delusive snares will not return there even if they appear to be made of gold and there are no independent schools for them. Only students who have made such a sacrifice have the right to stay out of Government schools. Non-co-operation was suspended in order that those who have not realized its value might have an opportunity to abandon it, and the stain or stigma attached to such abandonment might be removed. We do not benefit from a sacrifice which we find onerous and mistaken. The Congress will remove its demand for such a sacrifice and enable such students to freely attend Government schools.

However, those who find Government schools little better than prisons will continue to shun them even until death, as long as we have not won swaraj. Hence the problem for the students and other non-co-operators remains what it was. The only difference now is that those who felt bound by the Congress resolution are now free. Those, however, who felt bound by their own conscience, to their inner voice, will continue to be so bound.

Hence the distinction between Government education and national education is illusory because it is not one of principle. The principle involved that of flags, of authority. *Rotis* made in my house and in another's are of the same material; but since the latter has been cooked in someone else's home, taking it would amount to theft and

therefore it should be shunned. Even though the food in prisons is just like that at home, yet the former must not be touched. However, for a student not does not look upon Government schools as prisons, it is proper to return to them. Others have no right to criticize him. What is prison-house to one, may look like freedom to another.

The true movement consists in revolutionizing ideas. Action always follows ideas. To a thoughtful person, action without ideas is burdensome; to the thoughtless, it is neither beneficial nor harmful. The thoughtless imitate others and most of us are devoid of thought. It is for this very reason that devotees have praised the virtue of keeping good company.

We have now before us the era of only thoughtful non-co-operation. The external sanctions of the Congress, etc., are useful, like small doses of medicine, only for a short period. At the end of an experiment of three or four years we find that many scholars are sceptical about non-co-operation with schools. If we accept their verdict, the majority of them will be against leaving Government schools. In such an unfavourable atmosphere, only a few students can think independently and continue to practise non-co-operation.

It is the duty of national schools to help these few students. I have been made the Chancellor. My eligibility for that post is not at all based on my learning. My special qualifications as a non-co-operator can alone account for my eligibility to the chancellorship. Hence if I have stressed in the curriculum those aspects which further non-co-operation, I deserve not merely pardon, but praise.

However, this position of mine has been construed to show that I am an enemy of literacy, of learning. In fact, the opposite is true. I do not wish that national schools should do away with knowledge of letters and teach the theory and practice of carding and spinning alone. I wish that students should be given ample and proper instruction in reading and writing. I wish that they should be able to compete with the students of Government schools in this respect.

I shall not, however, be satisfied with this alone. In Government schools we are educated for jobs, for clerkships. The objective of national schools being swaraj, independence and self-reliance, along with literary instruction, students should be trained will a view to developing their moral and manual fibre. National schools should teach such things as would further the cause of swaraj. Book-learning should be regarded not as an end but rather as the means to

developing strength of character and furthering the cause of swaraj. For developing strength of character, there must be teachers who possess it. And, since the spinning-wheel is a powerful means of winning swaraj, 1 would not regard any national school which does not give it a place of honour as worth the name. The Congress, in its resolutions, has laid emphasis on the spinning-wheel. It is true that those who adopt such resolutions do not abide by them. Had the resolutions adopted by the Congress been fully implemented by its members alone, we would now be resting on our oars after winning swaraj or we would have been eagerly watching the bright buntings on its gates. However, the idleness and dishonesty on the part of the members cannot be an example before the non-co- operating students. Children would be ruined if they followed in the footsteps of elders. Tulsidas has sung,"the powerful can do no wrong." However, if we common people try to become powerful, we shall destroy ourselves. The national schools, where the teaching of Hindi and Urdu are not compulsory, do not conduce to national interests. The interest of the country will be served by closing down those national schools which boycott untouchables. In a national school, students of all communities— Hindu, Muslim, Parsi and Christian—should study together like brothers. In my opinion, all these are the features of a national school. I have no doubt that much of the advocacy for national schools is thoughtless. A change in text books, a distinctive method of teaching history and such other subject, etc., are matters of little importance. Large sums of money need not be spent nor new institutions be founded for this. Leaving Government schools for want of these changes hardly deserves credit, is hardly possible. I have already examined the reasons for leaving Government schools. I have also dwelt on the distinction that ought to exist between Government schools and national ones. Therein lies the test for the organizers, teachers and students. That distinction is the conspicuous feature of non-co-operation. There may be much else in non-co-operation, but without this distinctive feature it cannot be called non-co-operation.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-12-1924

397. SPEECH TO NO-CHANGERS, BELGAUM

December 21, 1924

On Sunday again, there was a conference at which further discussions took place between Gandhiji and the No-changers. . . . His speech was a very touching and feeling one, and he seemed to have put his whole soul into it. . . . He said, he continued to be as firm a No-changer now as he ever was and that the Councils were not for him. As an alternative to the Councils, he could not think of a more potent programme than that of charkha, Hindu-Muslim unity and removal of untouchability being added to it. He could imagine a number of things which would be very useful to the country, but they were not indispensable for obtaining swaraj and he, therefore, stated that the charkha propaganda was the one thing that every man, high or low, in the city or village, could carry on singly or with others. It, therefore, formed the coping-stone of his programme for the year. He added that vast amount of charkha work was necessary to effect a complete boycott of foreign cloth within the year and it was absolutely necessary for Congress to adopt the spinning franchise. It was also necessary, he said, that all those who accepted the spinning franchise should work out the programme throughout the year in dead earnest and it would break his heart if those who accepted the franchise and voted for it would not carry it throughout the year. He concluded by expressing his hope and confidence that if those who voted for the franchise played their part in a full measure, this nation would not be long in responding to it.

Mahatmaji casually referred to the new plan of giving battle to Government that he had previously referred to in a speech in Punjab. He said it is stated that a complete or substantial boycott of foreign cloth was a condition precedent to the precise formulation of that method or plan. He exhorted the No-changers to concentrate all their energies during the following year on the charkha. He was staking everything on the spinning franchise and if he found himself not properly supported by his followers then it would mean breaking of his heart. His new plan would be different from that of Bardoli, although his faith in that was yet green. He was not going to unfold it to them fully, but if the necessary boycott was effected at the year's end, his programme could put it into effect irrespective of what was happening in the country. But the principal condition precedent to it was boycott of foreign cloth. He was sure if they put forth necessary effort, they would be able to boycott cloth of foreign make completely and if that could be done then the time would be for civil disobedience.

At the end Gandhiji asked that lists should be prepared from among those present, of those who would agree to give the required 24,000 yards of yarn at the year's end without fail and who would be ready to die for the country, if necessary.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-12-1924

398. SPEECH IN REPLY TO WELCOME ADDRESS, BELGAUM[1]

December 21, 1924

Mr. Gandhi, in his joint reply, said that he did not deserve the words of praise heaped upon him, for he had done nothing to their city or district. He repeated the suggestions he made on similar occasions recently at Bombay, Calcutta and Ahmedabad, and asked them to read and understand them. In the present political condition of India, the municipalities of India should take part in the national movement, but not at the sacrifice of their primary duties, cleanliness and sanitation. He was not an admirer of Western civilization, but in matters of sanitation, India had to learn a good deal from the West. India was essentially an agricultural country, and it ought to have been impossible for plague and other epidemics to spread in our cities, which were small compared to cities in Western countries. He felt pained whenever he heard people saying that these epidemics were divine dispensations. He was himself a believer in God, but human efforts had considerable scope for alleviating human miseries. When we ourselves break God's or Nature's laws, it is absurd to attribute these epidemics to God. He was glad to note that the relations between Brahmins and non-Brahmins, and Hindus and Mussalmans, were cordial, and while advising the audience to continue those relations, asked them to extend their love to the untouchables.

New India, 22-12-1924

399. ORMUZD AND AHRIMAN

[*December 22, 1924*][2]

On the eve of the coming session of the Congress, many thoughts come to me. It is the early morn of my day of silence, just four days before the meeting of the Congress. The eternal duel between Ormuzd and Ahriman—God and Satan—is raging in my breast, which is one among their billion battlefields. I have had two very precious days with the No-changers. Sarojini Devi says"No-changer" is a bad word. I have agreed and thrown the burden on her poetic shoulders of giving the public a sweeter word. One voice in me tells me,"All will be well if you will be 'careful for

[1] The addresses were presented by the Municipality and the District Board.

[2] From the reference to"my day of silence", i.e., Monday, December 22

nothing' but merely do your duty as you find it." Another says,"You are a fool. You must not believe the Swarajists, nor must you trust the No-changers. The Swarajists do not mean what they say. The No-changers will leave you in the lurch at the critical moment. Between the two your spinning-wheel will be smashed to atoms. You will therefore do well to listen to me and retire." I am going to obey the first voice. What though the Swarajists are found to deceive me and the No-changers to desert me? They will lose, not I. But if I listen to the word of Mr. Worldly-wise, I am lost already. I do not want to foresee the future. I am concerned with taking care of the present. God has given me no control over the moment following. I must therefore believe the Swarajists, as I would myself be believed by them. I dare not impute weakness to the No-changers, because I would not like them to think that I was weak. I must therefore believe in the honour of the Swarajists and the strength of the No-changers. It is true that I have often been let down. Many have deceived me and many have been found wanting. But I do not repent of my association with them. For I knew how to non-co-operate, as I knew how to co-operate. The most practical, the most dignified way of going on in the world is to take people at their word when you have no positive reason to the contrary.

My difficulty therefore is not whom to trust or not to trust. My difficulty lies in the fact that there are hardly half a dozen No-changers who are entirely or on the whole satisfied with the agreement. They have sincere doubts. I sympathize with them and yet I feel that I am doing the right thing in holding to the agreement. They would leave me if they could, but they cannot. The tie seems to be indissoluble. They want to trust my judgment in spite of themselves. This is a truly embarrassing position. It increases my responsibility a hundredfold. I assure them that I will not consciously betray their trust. I shall do nothing that will damage the country's cause or honour. But the greatest consolation I can give them is by pointing out that all would be well, if they will be true to themselves. Every one of them will have done his or her primary duty, if he or she practises Hindu-Muslim unity, and if he or she devotes all his or her spare time to carding and spinning and mastering the science of khaddar, and himself or herself wears it, and, if a Hindu, loves his or her untouchable brother as himself or herself. This much every one of

us can do without any assistance. Practice is the best speech and the propaganda. And this everyone can do without let or hindrance from anybody else. Not to worry about others is Ormuzd's way. Ahriman leads us into the trap by taking us away from ourselves. God is not in Kaaba or in Kashi. He is within everyone of us. Therefore swaraj too is to be found by searching inward, not by vainly expecting others, even our fellow-workers, to secure it for us.

Young India, 26-12-1924

400. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING BELGAUM[1]

December 23, 1924

Mr. Gandhi then addressed the meeting. He explained his attitude, that he had no desire to divide the House on any matter of vital difference between the Swarajists and non-Swarajists, although, in some matters, division might be inevitable. He referred to the pact he entered into in Calcutta with the Swarajist leaders, Messrs Das and Nehru, and after pointing out that the late All-lndia Congress Committee had accepted it, asked that it be endorsed now. He had watched what followed between the last meeting of the All-India Congress Committee and now. Mr. Vithalbhai Patel had been keeping him informed of the feeling in the country in connection with this agreement. The vital part of this agreement was the new franchise. Mr. Patel told Mr. Gandhi last night as well as today that he (Mr. Gandhi) was taking a fatal step by asking for a spinning franchise, and that 90 per cent of the Congressmen were against the proposed change in the franchise. Mr. Patel further told Mr. Gandhi that, so far as he knew, there was hardly any Swarajist who favoured a change in the franchise, and that there was a large body of opinion even among the No-changers against the change. Mr. Gandhi combated that view although he had seen the resolution passed by the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee, and by the Sind and the C.P. Maharashtra Committees, and also by a conference in Bihar. If the meeting considered it necessary to reject the agreement, they must do so, leaving him out of consideration.

I must warn you against accepting this change simply to please me. You must vote according to your conscience, which is more valuable than any single man's opinion, whatever may be his services, and however highly placed he may be in your estimation.

Mr. Das wrote to me that so far as the Swarajists were concerned,

[1] Presided over by Gandhiji

I could be at ease on this question of the pact, and that Mr. Vithalbhai Patel represented only himself. Mr. Das also wrote that the majority decision of the Swaraj Party was binding on every single member of the Swaraj organization, and would be loyally carried out.

Of course, he felt considerable relief when he heard this, but he would ask Mr. Das to relieve every Swarajist from any such obligation because, if this agreement did not commend itself to anyone, he must reject it summarily. This agreement should not be accepted simply that it might appear on paper. It meant sustained and ceaseless work, and submission to very rigorous discipline. They would each be expected to send two thousand yards per month regularly by their own spinning. The quota could be made by allowing others to spin only in cases of inability or real unwillingness, but even then, they were expected to supervise the spinning. The House must clearly understand the implications of the pact before giving consent to it.

At the meeting he had with the No-changers on this pact, the preliminary objection was raised whether the Swaraj Party could have a different franchise from the Congress franchise, but Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar had told him that it was proposed by the Swaraj Party to alter the constitution, and to bring it in line with that of the Congress. The No-changers, on the assumption that the Swaraj Party franchise and creed would be the same as those of the Congress, accepted the pact by an overwhelming majority.

New India, 24-12-1924

401. STATEMENT ON A.I.C.C. EXTRAVAGANCE, BELGAUM

December 25, 1924

Gandhiji then made a statement that there was too much lavishness in the expenditure of the All-lndia Committee. Too much money was spent in decorations and accommodation and the present delegate's fee of Rs. 10 was too much. He complained that his own hut was also too costly, and ought not to have been constructed like that. Too much money was also spent on printing and he wanted to stop all that. If he had been a member of the Committee, he would cut down the expenditure for accommodation, etc. He accordingly suggested that the delegate's fee should be Re. 1 instead of Rs. 10 as at present as he had received complaints that nearly Rs. 100 had to be spent by delegates for their fare, etc. The Subjects Committee agreed to reduce the fee to Re. 1.

It was next decided to fix the venue of next Congress in that province which on the population basis showed the best results in connection with khaddar and boycott of foreign-cloth.

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-12-1924

402. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING, BELGAUM[1]

December 25, 1924

The following is the full text of the moving speech made by Mahatma Gandhi at the meeting of the Subjects Committee of the All-India Congress on Thursday last:

Tomorrow we meet sharp at 3 o'clock. A few minutes will be spent in musical recitations. The chairman of the Reception Committee will not take more than 15 minutes to deliver his speech. I do not propose to read my address. My speech will be distributed to you this evening. You will kindly study that address, for the address will be taken as read. I shall make a few simple introductory remarks not covering more than 30 minutes. I shall begin in Hindustani and then speak in English. On the whole it would not exceed 30 minutes.

Tomorrow the first resolution that will be moved after the formal reading of the addresses will be that relating to the Calcutta agreement. It will be opposed by Maulana Hasrat Mohani. In this connection, let me make a few observations. You are the representatives in a sense. We have got all the delegates. I would respectfully warn you against accepting the resolution if you want to put the whole burden upon my shoulders. I should say, my shoulders are incapable of carrying that burden. I want to carry that burden only with your assistance. Unless every one of you is prepared to give your assistance whole-heartedly in spirit and to the letter, our purpose cannot be achieved. Our purpose is to bring about boycott of foreign-cloth. That can be done only by the assistance of the poorest of the poor men, women and children. It is an honest attempt and a proper attempt in my humble opinion to make on behalf of the nation. If we can achieve that boycott, which is the only thing we are capable of doing today, it is a way of demonstrating to ourselves and to the world that we can do thousand and other things also side by side, but only after the boycott is achieved.

You will remember there was an amendment today which hurt me. It was moved by Mr. Bhopatkar stating that when adults do not undertake to spin and wear khaddar on all occasions it is unfair on

[1] Mahadev Desai's report of this speech, partly indirect, appeared in *Young India*, 1-1-1925, under the caption'"Implication of Non-violence".

our part to expect children to do so. This really hurt me for the simple reason that he put a construction on the franchise which it is incapable of bearing. I say, the franchise is the minimum that we imposed. Naturally it must be so, because it then becomes punishable in the sense that if that minimum compliance is not shown, you will deprive people of the right of voting. The right of vote is a sacred thing. The minimum requirement had to be put. That was to put on khaddar on all political and ceremonial occasions, but surely that does not mean that you will discard khaddar cloth the moment you finish the Congress business in Belgaum. If that is the meaning, you cannot effectively boycott foreign cloth. I want you to read and understand the spirit of the agreement. This is the minimum expectation from the Congress members. How much more then can we expect from the nation? Not only should we adults but all children must wear khaddar on all occasions. I mean to say that khaddar must be our daily wear. Unless it becomes so, there can be no boycott.

I have been told that the provision exempting unwilling persons from personally spinning is only a loop-hole not to spin, but that is not the sense in which I read the agreement. If that is the sense in which you take it, I would like to throw out the resolution tomorrow, although it will pain me to find that the boycott of foreign- cloth is an impossibility. The clause about unwillingness is only meant for those who are constitutionally disabled or unwilling. Children surely did not come under that clause. You must be prepared to work the agreement so that you make the boycott of foreign-cloth a possibility. We shall see swinging success within a year if we only honestly work it. If delegates spread themselves in villages and expound to the people the message of the charkha, it will occupy the energy of all the best of us. Unless you have faith in it, there is no use passing this resolution. Therefore when you meet tomorrow, I want you to give your vote after intelligently and deliberately knowing the consequences of so doing. Unless you want sincerely to work this programme, it will not succeed. Every one of the delegates when he goes to his province should keep himself in touch with villagers of his province and tell them what they ought to do. Let the delegates vote tomorrow intelligently and deliberately and counting the consequences.

Before you disperse I would put you on your guard and remind you of the sacred trust imposed on you. It is my intention to finish the work on the 27th. We must have one clear day to dispose of business,

to settle the procedure and the details of the work of the All-India Congress Committee and to appoint a Working Committee and so on.

Here Mr. N. C. Kelkar addressing Mahatma Gandhi said:"I have heard your appeal. It has so far been addressed to Swarajists. But I want you to appeal to No-changers also with regard to the other part of the pact, i.e., recognition of Council work on behalf of Congress and assisting Councilwalas in all possible ways. I want to hear your appeal to them."

I entirely agree with Mr. Kelkar. In fact, I have already explained my views in the pages of *Young India*. Before we prepare ourselves for tomorrow's sacred task, I should remind every No-changer of his duty. My appeal was not confined merely to Swarajists. I have always been told that there are among No-changers people who do not believe in the spinning franchise. My appeal to No-changers therefore is that they should take this agreement in the spirit in which it is intended by me and as it should be intended by them. I propose to assist Swarajists to the best of my ability and so far as one human being can do to assist them in their cause and I shall not damage it. I say deliberately their cause, because for some reason or other I do not see eye to eye with them in their methods. It is true that their cause is not only theirs or of Congress merely, but of the nation. I am no judge. They have a perfect right to say, 'What is this charkha?' I have an equally perfect right to say, 'What is this Council?' which, they say, is 'one of the important items in our fight against the bureaucracy' I do not see eye to eye with them in their methods but although I doubt their methods, I can help Swarajists and give them definite recognition for their policy in the Congress.

A MEMBER: In the name of the Congress?

Yes, in the name of the Congress. I cast about around me to see how I was to help them. I hit on the agreement. I saw I conferred no favour. It is their right but I took some time before I saw it was their right and, seeing it is so, I must not even mentally hinder their programme. On the contrary, I must make an attempt to have a conviction in me that what they are doing is right. I shall also ask you to do likewise.

That is why I am going out of my way to put myself in touch with every Swarajist. I tried to keep my mind absolutely open to their arguments and their suggestions. That is the way in which I can give help to the Swarajists. If it is to mean that I will help them by speaking on platforms, on Government measures or conducting meetings and

so on, I am sorry, I will not be able to do that because my heart is not in it. That is not the way in which I understood and entered into the agreement. These are my limitations. It is not that I am unwilling to do this but I want to be convinced. Immediately I am convinced, nothing on this earth will prevent me from declaring myself a full-fledged Swarajist. Then they will have a right to expect from me all the twenty-four hours, the whole of my waking hours. Today I cannot give them that whole-hearted support, but within my sphere I shall certainly give you encouraging and whole-hearted support. For example, when the Government want to damage you and your reputation you will find me side by side with you and eager to assist you. I want to suffer with you and, even if you reject my offer, I will say unto you, 'For Heaven's sake let me help you.' But when it comes to asking me to say in private that this policy is good, I must frankly confess that is not the meaning I should put upon it. But I want you to say, if people ask you in private, that even though they do not believe in this charkha, yet they must spin. You say, you do not disbelieve in the charkha. If you disbelieve, you will be false to your trust if you do not reject the agreement.

MR. KELKAR: But the work will be in proportion to the negative mental condition. You should be prepared to make some allowance for those Swarajists who put some mental reservation as many of them have already done so.

If that mental reservation goes to the length of believing that the charkha will do no good, then you are bound to reject it.

The co-operation in respect of the charkha that I expect from Swarajists is not of the same kind and measure as might be expected from me regarding Council works and that is clearly put forth in the agreement. I do not expect impossible things from you. What I do expect from you is just that amount of support and strictest honesty in giving it to the measure of your ability and conviction and not a whit more. That is the spirit in which I want every member to approach this agreement and, if it is not that spirit, I prophesy that our movement wills be a failure. But I will not have failed even then. Of course, I would be considered an egregious fellow, an egotist as some Europeans say and some Indians too say, that I alone claim to understand human nature and no one else does. I believe I am right. Others may be equally in the right, but if I do not believe in my rightness and in my methods I would be unfit to be at the helm of affairs. What I want to correct is that bad mentality, that mental

reservation, to which Mr. Kelkar refers. There should be no mental reservation. Let no one think that the Swarajists are the enemies of India. Nor do I believe that the poor anarchist is the enemy of India. He acts according to his own lights. How can I judge? I can judge only his action, but there is no analogy here.

I say to No-changers, 'If you do not believe in the charkha, you will find ultimately there is no other alternative method for you, unless you resort to violent methods. If you find that the charkha does not satisfy your patriotic soul, you must go to Councils where at least you make a splash and get the discharge of some prisoners.' If today the Swarajists will sacrifice their dearest principles and say they want the discharge of prisoners in the Andamans, they can get it, but they are true to all the trust they have imposed on themselves and they will make no such bad bargain for the country. They have not gone to the Council in order to get the discharge of Andaman prisoners or even of a miserable ailing man in Yeravda Jail. I have often said and I repeat that, if you do not believe in the charkha, the only alternative is that you must go to the Councils. That is the secret of so many persons going to the Councils to do something. After all, those who have gone to the Councils represent the best intellects in the country. They are seasoned soldiers. Where, for the example, will you find a man who has sacrificed his life like Pandit Malaviya? I knew him since 1901 when I saw him addressing the Congress under the presidentship of Sir Dinshaw Wacha. There is a great deal of work to his credit and he remains in the Council. He still swears by the Council and he is no fool. Every time I see him my head bows to him. Who is Mr. C. R. Das and who is Pandit Motilal Nehru? Why should they dress in this fashion today? Pandit Motilal Nehru once lived like a prince. He came to Lahore in a motor-car followed by an army of servants. Very few princes lived like him and his once beautiful garden with roses and flowers is today growing weeds. Is he a traitor? My head always bows before these and whenever I see them I feel that there is something incomplete in me because I cannot see eye to eye with them and understand their standpoint. Who again, is Mr. Kelkar ? He is the representative of one of the greatest of Indians who will go down to posterity and who will be worshipped as a God in this country which believes in millions of Gods under that one universal God. My appeal to you therefore, is:"Cleanse your hearts, have charity, make your hearts as broad as the ocean. That is the teaching of the Koran and of the *Gita.* Do not judge others lest you be judged. There is that

Supreme Judge who can hang you, but He lets you live. There are so many enemies around you and within you, but He protects and looks upon you with a kindly eye."

Cannot you do so? Why should we say that their politics are corrupt, that they are fraudulent men, that they are dishonest, or that they have not foresighted statesmanship ? Heaven protect us from any such calumny of human nature. So long as the world lasts, so long still there be so many differences of opinion, and the greatest achievement of the No-changers will be when they make their so-called opponents their truest friends and convert them to the creed of the charkha. Believe me, if the No-changers leave the imputation and do their duty and swear by the charkha and die for it, they will make them converts to the creed. If people do not take to the charkha it is because they do not see its utility. It is for you to show it. I sing near the charkha because I have got that unquenchable faith in me that it will bring salvation to the country. The teaching of the Hindu religion is nothing if not having faith. If you believe in the charkha supposing that it is not good for others, it is everything for us. The image of stone in Kashi Visvanath temple may be a stone to Maulana Hasrat Mohani.

MAULANA: I never feel like that.

When I go there, my heart must melt. It is faith that counts. When I see a cow, it is not an animal to eat, it is a poem of pity for me and I worship it and I shall defend its worship against the whole world. God there is only one, but He enables me to see Him in a stone, in an Englishman and even in a traitor. I shall not hate even a traitor. My religion takes me to that length. I say to every No-changer,"If you are worthy of your creed and are non-violent, you will shake hands with Swarajist and say, 'Forgive us for what we have done.'" You have no right to harbour ill-will against anyone or say a single word against him. Just follow that noble prescription, a nobler prescription I cannot give you. May God help you and enable you to follow that prescription and all will be well at the end of the year.

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-12-1924

403. TELEGRAM T0 ANANTRAM

[Before *December 26, 1924*][1]

DIWAN ANANTRAM
REFUGEES CAMP
RAWALPINDI

PLEASE SEND LIST FAMILIES REFUGEES WITH THEIR NEEDS. HOPE SOMEONE COMING BELGAUM.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 10517

404. NOTES

BUSINESS-LIKE

Mr. S. G. Pujari of Bijapur sends the following business-like note on the remark in *Young India* that opinion was divided as to the want of durability of khaddar:

> I am an actual worker in khaddar. One hundred and twenty charkhas with thirteen looms are working under me. I turn out three hundred yards of khaddar every week. My experience dates from 21st August 1921. My method is to purchase cotton locally, issue slivers to spinners, stock the yarn of each spinner separate, and to use the yarn of one hand for the whole of the warp of one whole piece. The same process is repeated as regards woof, the latter being of lower count than the former. That makes the cloth uniform and strong and gives longer durability. I can quote dozens of instances of my customers whose dhotis, shirts and coats generally last for one year.
>
> The durability of khaddar is chiefly affected by using yarn bought in markets, because
>
> l. it is not always of good cotton,
>
> 2. mostly under-twisted,
>
> 3. inadvertently sorted,
>
> 4. loosely woven.
>
> If producers of khaddar would but care to avoid these things, there will be less room for complaints as regards durability.

[1] From the reference to Belgaum where the Congress session was held on December 26 and 27

I publish the note for the guidance of all who are interested in Khaddar manufacture.

TWO ADDRESSES

The Belgaum District Board and the Belgaum Municipality did me the honour of presenting me addresses which recounted my virtues. I felt that any recital of my virtues as an All-India worker was beside the point. A municipal address may be fittingly given only to a person for municipal virtues. But in the special circumstances in which we are placed, the municipalities which are struggling to be free give expression to their freedom by somewhat identifying themselves with public workers, whether they possess municipal merit or not. It is only from that point of view that the presentation of the municipal addresses to public workers may be justified. But the presentation of these addresses gave me an opportunity of paying a tribute to a Western effort in the midst of my opposition to Western civilization in general.[1] The one thing which we can and must learn from the West is the science of municipal sanitation. By instinct and habit we are used to village life, where the need for corporate sanitation is not much felt. But as the Western civilization is materialistic and therefore tends towards the development of the cities to the neglect of villages, the people of the West have evolved a science of corporate sanitation and hygiene from which we have much to learn. Our narrow and tortuous lanes, our congested ill-ventilated houses, our criminal neglect of sources of drinking water require remedying. Every municipality can render the greatest service by insisting on people observing the laws of sanitation. It is a superstition to consider that vast sums of money are required for effecting sanitary reform. We must modify Western methods of sanitation to suit our requirements. And as my patriotism is inclusive and admits of no enmity or ill-will, I do not hesitate, in spite of my horror of Western materialism, to take from the West what is beneficial for me. And as I know Englishman to be resourceful, I gratefully seek their assistance in such matters. For instance, I owe to Poore my knowledge of the cheapest and the most effective method of disposal of human excreta. He has shown how by our ignorance or prejudice we waste this precious manure. Excreta are not dirt in their proper place and when they are properly handled. Dirt, as the English say, is”matter misplaced”.

[1] *Vide”*Speech in Reply to Welcome Address, Belgaum”, 21-12-1924.

The serpentine coil round the Indian settlers of South Africa is daily tightening. Now in Natal they are deprived even of the municipal franchise. This was said to have been protected. When the attempt was made to take away from them the political franchise, the Natal Government declared that they had no design upon the enjoyment by Indians of the municipal franchise. But no promise made to a weak party is sacred in the estimation of modern Governments. Each party must be able to defend its rights by its own inherent strength. The Government of India's vaunted trusteeship fails at the crucial moment. I know that the settlers look to us for help and protection. But they should know that they can have little help from India for the present. She herself is engaged in a life-and-death struggle. Years ago the late Sir Pherozeshah prophesied that India would be of little help to the Indians overseas, so long as she had not acquired the ability to assert herself. The late Pestonji Padsha was even disgusted with me for going to South Africa. He thought, every Indian worker going out of India was so much economic waste. I think his clear brain partially failed Mr. Padsha. My residence in South Africa was not an economic waste of power. But is there not much truth underlying Mr. Padsha's burning desire first to secure India's freedom? Till we have acquired it, we must send our countrymen across the seas such comfort as newspaper and other sympathy can give them.

TYPICAL

I give below Babu Hardayal Nag's letter:

Dear Mahatmaji,

I owe you an explanation for not attending the Belgaum Congress, particularly the informal conference to be held at Belgaum on the 20th. My"horror for conferences" prevents me from attending the conference. I feel that"they have in their present form almost outgrown their usefulness". I cannot persuade myself to leave my engagement in the work of khaddar production, humble though it is, for merely a"heart to heart" talk at Belgaum. I am not attending the Belgaum Congress for the following reasons:

1. I am not in a mood at present to vote against you and as a matter of fact you attach no importance to any voting at Belgaum.

2. I understand that the Calcutta pact is irrevocable.

3. I cannot persuade myself to be a party to the suspension of non-co-operation. I do not believe that non-co-operation requires suspension,

except for killing the orthodox non-co-operators.

4. I hold some strong views about Hindu-Muslim unity which are not in line with the views of many of the Congress leaders.

5. You are strong enough to associate with wickedness for the purpose of conquering it with love, but other non-co-operators by such association are liable to extinction. I believe I am saving myself from extinction as a non-co-operator by not attending the Belgaum Congress.

6. I have very strong feelings in favour of majority rule and there are many who share those feelings. I understand no such rule will be observed in conducting business at Belgaum.

7. The last but not the least ground is that I think my"money and time" can be better utilized in helping"khaddar production" in my own locality than by attending the conference and Congress at Belgaum. The Congress organizations in Bengal being in the hands of the Swarajists are scarcely rendering any help to the spinning and weaving propaganda. I understand most of the contributors, if not all, of quotas of yarn to the All-India Khaddar Board from Bengal according to the Ahmedabad resolution, are non-co-operators and their friends and sympathizers.

In conclusion, I feel bound to request you to visit Bengal in January next and have a heart to heart talk with the orthodox non-co-operators in a certain central place and then visit as many localities as you possibly can. That will materially help their constructive work, specially national education which is now in a moribund condition. I earnestly and fervently hope you will pardon me even if the above grounds do not afford sufficient excuse for not going to Belgaum.

Babu Hardayal Nag is a veteran non-co-operator. His attitude is typical of that of many No-changers. Holding the views he does, I cannot but endorse his decision to abstain from attendance at Belgaum. Indeed I appreciate this resentment against even suspension of non-co-operation. I wish there was more of it. I am not advising national suspension for the love of it. Circumstances have compelled me to do so. It is for individuals to make it national again, if necessary, by demonstrating its efficacy in their own persons and remaining non-violent at the same time. I would ask Babu Hardayal and those who think like him to be most careful about accusing opponents or wickedness."Judge not lest ye be judged" is a golden rule. Those whom we regard as wicked as a rule return the compliment and in their turn accuse us of what we charge them with. But here again I quite grant the proposition that if one regards

another as irrevocably wicked, one is bound ordinarily to non-co-operate with him, for unfortunately many things are regulated purely by one's mental condition. If I mistake a rope for a snake, I am likely to turn pale with fright, much to the amusement of the bystander who knows that it is but a rope. Mind is its own place, it"can make a hell of heaven"[1]. So far as the complaint against Congress organizations in Bengal is concerned, whatever may be the position today, if hand-spinning becomes part of the franchise, no Congress organization can exist that does not encourage and organize hand-spinning.

So far as my visit to Bengal is concerned, I would come to tour through the different districts at the earliest opportunity. But it is difficult to fix the time. Kohat refugees are a first charge on my time after 23rd January. And every day till 23rd January is already mortgaged. It is risky to say where fate would lead me after the Punjab work is over.

Young India, 26-12-1924

405. OPENING SPEECH AT BELGAUM CONGRESS

December 26, 1924

The President, Mahatma Gandhi, walked down from the dais to the rostrum in loin-cloth and with khaddar in his hand amidst enthusiastic cheers. He hung up his bag on the rostrum, sat on a sufficiently high stool and kept his watch open in front of him. He was then presented by the chairman of the Reception Committee a copy of the *Karnatak, a Handbook* enclosed in a sandal-wood box, saying:"For your information, Sir". The President received the present amidst cheers . . . He then proceeded to address in Hindi. For ten minutes he made a speech in Hindi, which is as follows:

MR. GANGADHARRAO[2], BROTHERS AND SISTERS,[3]

I shall not abuse the great honour you have accorded me by giving you a long lecture. What I want to say from this rostrum is known to all of you. My speech, or address or lecture, whatever you call it, has been translated and printed in Hindi, Canarese, Marathi and

[1] Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Bk. II

[2] Chairman of the Reception Committee

[3] From the report in Hindi

English.[1] I had requested Mr. Gangadharrao to see that you all had copies of it by yesterday evening. I hope it has reached all of you and you have read it thoroughly.

I wish merely to say this: that we are today faced with a situation where what we had set out to accomplish in 1920-21, we were not able to accomplish, while among us disunity and ill-feeling have raised their head. Hindus and Muslims consider each other enemies and indulge in physical violence. It is hardly necessary to say that this is not the way to secure swaraj. We, Hindus, look down on the untouchables and consider it sinful to touch them. We thus think that they are impure. But in this we commit a sin before God, a sin of the greatest magnitude. It is true that for three or four years now we have accepted it that everyone, big and small, should ply the charkha; and we have been saying in the Congress, in the All-India Congress Committee, that it is our intention to secure swaraj through the charkha. When I went to Poona in the course of the present campaign I said at a meeting[2] that the Lokamanya had given us the first line of a*sloka*[3],"Swaraj is our birthright", and that it is my mission in life to complete the *sloka*. This is my belief. I repeat the statement here. If we desire swaraj, then the way to it is through the charkha, yarn, and khaddar. I regret to say that while you know it you do not act on it. I neither know nor can think of anything else. I therefore tell you, brothers and sisters, that it is futile for me to appear before you and make speeches, it does not lead anywhere, it is wasting your time and my own time which I consider valuable for I deem myself a servant of God. I know that we cannot get swaraj in this way. Begum Mahomed Ali said to me once that whenever she goes to attend a Congress session, for about a week she has the feeling that we have already got swaraj. It means that we put on an act of swaraj. It is like seeing someone play the part of Harishchandra who is of course not Harishchandra. We do not know whether the player who acts Harishchandra is truthful or not. This celebration of swaraj has similarly become a play-acting. That is why I say to you, brothers, Deshbandhu Das is moving a resolution; accept the resolution only if you agree with it. If you do not agree with it, you should reject it. There is no reference in it to Hindu-Muslim unity, nor is it concerned

[1] *Vide"*Presidential Address at Belgaum Congress"' 26-12-1924.

[2] *Vide"*Speech at Public Meeting, Poona", 4-9-1924.

[3] Sanskrit verse form

with untouchability. All that it says is that we wish to ply the charkha. I ask you all who have come here as delegates—untouchables, Christians or others—if you really represent those that you claim to represent and if you uphold the pledge of Mahomed Ali and Das, to do whatever you want to do with God in your sight. If you feel that it is not right that Gandhi is deceiving you, then by all means reject it, have nothing to do with it. But if you take a pledge, if you accept this resolution—for I consider accepting is taking a pledge—and then do not keep to it, I leave you to yourselves. If the country thinks Gandhi is mad, discard him. Think again. Do you feel India is fit for swaraj ? What does the world have to say about one who violates a pledge? Well, he may read the Bible, or the *Granth Saheb*, or the Koran, in your eyes he will be a leper, a good-for-nothing, a false coin, a counterfeit rupee. If you take a false coin to a shop, the Government will haul you up for it. This is what I wish to tell you. I do not mean to mislead you, I do not mean to play a game with you. I tell you what I think and feel. I am convinced that swaraj cannot come so long as the tens of millions of our brothers and sisters do not take to the charkha, do not spin, do not make khadi and wear it. So long as this does not come about, the utter poverty of India cannot be eradicated. There will be no swaraj so long as the tens of millions of the country's destitutes have not got their bread.

You can have swaraj only on this condition. I have made a compact with Deshbandhu Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru, and I have placed it before the whole country. I believe there is nothing wrong in what I want; I accept their right to what they want. I hold that we can gain nothing through the Councils; but there are big leaders who believe that something or other can be gained through the Councils and that if we do nothing else we can at least go into the Councils. It is true enough. I must say that if they see some advantage in going into the Councils they should do so. They too are leaders of the country. Who am I to say no to them? It is in the compact that those who so wish may go into the Councils. It does not mean that non-co-operators should also follow them. The Congress belongs equally to Prochangers and No-changers. It is a false notion that it belongs exclusively to either. Therefore they will go [into the Councils] on behalf of the Congress.

I said it is a false notion. But it is dangerous to argue that the notion that I am right and others are wrong should also be done away

with. So long as there are different minds in the world, there will also be different opinions. But we wish to embrace all, to promote tolerance—it is part of ahimsa.

But, as I said, it is a small matter. The most important thing in the pledge is the charkha. If you do not believe in the science of charkha, if you do not have faith in khadi and if you believe further that the new franchise will weaken the Congress, you should give up the charkha.

Brothers, I have addressed to you these few words in my lame and broken Hindi. I am sorry to see that a number of our brethren from Karnatak and the South come and say:"Speak in English," It is a matter of pain. Ever since I came to India I have been saying that at least in the Congress, when we speak about swaraj, we should do so in Hindi. But to our misfortune our education has become so faulty and so much lethargy has crept in that we do not make as much effort towards this as is demanded. If even now I could be convinced that those of our brethren who have come from Tamilnad or Karnatak can understand my broken Hindi, I would go from here satisfied. But I know that is not the case. Yes, I am forgetting something. I am forgetting Deshbandhu Das. Bengal is also contributing towards this sin. I wish God had given me the power to learn the language in which Rabindranath Tagore has created such fine literature and I could address my Bengali brethren in that language. But that was not to be.

Now I have only one request to make. Please understand it. All I had to say in Hindi I have said; you have understood the purport of the resolution. He[1] will come and say what he wants to. He will not read the text of the resolution. Please do not press him to. For the convenience of the delegates I had asked Jawaharlal and Gangadharrao to see that they all had copies of the resolution. So you will all have received it. (Voices of"No, no.") How many such are there? (A great many voices are raised.) Well, I have explained it to you. I have told you what it contains (Laughter.). You will all read it. It will be there in the newspapers. It is merely this. It expresses the desire of Swarajists, Pro-changers—and No-changers to live in unity. Our views are different but our hearts beat together. If you are a No-changer you must have the same place in your heart for Deshbandhu Das, Pandit Motilal and Kelkar and others as you have

[1] C. R. Das

for me. If you are a Swarajist you must have the same respect for me as you have for any of them. This is what Hindu-Muslim unity is. The meaning of Hindu-Muslim unity is that if I am a *sanatani*, I will have as much place in my heart for Maulanas Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali or any other Muslim as I have for Malaviyaji, even if the former treats us as enemy. Strange, you will think—Malaviyaji on one side and the Mussulman who treats us as enemy on the other. But if I have learnt anything from my reading of the *Gita*, the *Bhagavata* and the *Ramayana*, it is this.

So you will now read the resolution and hear what he has to say. Do not compel him to read out the resolution. . . .

Continuing his remarks in English, the President said:

FRIENDS,

I do not propose to keep you longer than ten minutes. I had given myself no more than half an hour and I have taken more time than I had intended to in Hindustani. As you have all received copies of my address in the several necessary languages for our purpose, I do not propose to read any part of that address. It will tax your patience, it will waste your time and my time, and so I am avoiding to read that address. We want to go through the work that lies before us as quickly as possible. Deshbandhu Das will presently place before you the central resolution. If you reject that resolution you should go your way and do what you think best for you and for the country and permit me to do that work which I consider best for me, namely, to spin. I urge you, everyone of you, to ponder over what is going to be placed before you.

A revolutionary change is being proposed before the nation, a change, I think, as Lalaji has said, as revolutionary as the change embarked upon by the nation under his Presidency in 1920 at the Special Session at Calcutta. I even admit with him that the change that I have proposed and placed before the nation is possibly more revolutionary still. And, therefore, I make bold to say that it is calculated to bring you within measurable distance of swaraj if you will whole-heartedly accept that resolution and give effect to it; for the days when we could be satisfied with merely passing resolutions and then forgetting all about them are gone. This resolution is not addressed to the nation in a vague manner but to everybody who has a will to work. This resolution is specifically addressed to every man and every woman of understanding who graces this audience by his or

her presence this afternoon. And, though Deshbandhu Das and Maulana Mahomed Ali will not ask you to pass this resolution, keeping God as witness, I ask you to do that. And when you begin to vote upon that resolution, please remember and understand, you will be passing that resolution with God as witness. It would mean that you are undertaking to do something for the nation, for the poorest of the country, for the attainment of swaraj; and if you have no conviction about it in you, then I would urge you to reject that resolution.

It should not matter to you that my personality is behind that resolution. I have said repeatedly that I am not an infallible being. I have admitted repeatedly that I am a fallible being. I have repeatedly admitted that I have sometimes in my life committed Himalayan blunders. I have made penance for them. An infallible being is a perfect person. He does not need to perform penance. He does not need to repent, because he is incapable of folly. He need not argue. I am just as good or as bad a mortal as any one of you. And therefore, I want you to dismiss my personality from the equation and find the true answer to the equation.

The resolution is a momentous one. I know there is a large body of opinion against it. There is one body of opinion which says,"It is not proper to pin our faith entirely on spinning." Another body says that spinning is good but it is a long-drawn-out agony. And a third says,"Although khaddar and hand-spinning are good in themselves, they can have no place in national franchise." I hold views absolutely contrary to them. And my conviction is growing upon me day by day, so much so that if I had all time to myself I would be spinning away every hour and feel that every revolution of the charkha was bringing swaraj nearer and nearer to us. Multiply that revolution by 300 million and you imagine the momentum that is set free for the attainment of swaraj. But that momentum you will set free only if you have the conviction that fires me in its efficacy for the attainment of swaraj.

There are many things that I have said in my address. Srimati Sarojini Devi has asked me to touch upon one thing; and out of regard for her who has rendered such splendid service in South Africa I do so now. That is Hindu-Muslim unity, Maulana Shaukat Ali says,"I am tired of the whole business. Let us simply leave alone Hindu-Muslim riots wherever they happen." There is a good deal of wisdom in that big head; it is not all fat, I tell you (Laughter.). Repeatedly he has said,"These Mussalmans of mine have become

idiots. They have become demented. Similarly your Hindus also have become idiotic. We are trying to decide their disputes and in trying to do so we are allowing swaraj to slip through our hands. So let us leave them alone." But how can I do so? Hindu-Muslim unity, like the charkha, is a madness with me; it is a passion with me. I cannot possibly leave it and forget all about it. So also, you see, I dote on that little girl, Gulnar."Why does this man dote upon her?" you may ask."With a reason," say I. This girl when she grows will think of one Gandhi who though a *sanatani* Hindu that would not share meat with her, would not touch beef himself, used to let others eat it if they liked, although he himself worshipped the cow. I might die by the time that girl reaches the year of maturity. When she grows up, she will transmit my message. She is today pure and innocent. She thinks everything is right. She knows nothing of hatred. She is all love. I find in her love personified. Therefore, I have been treating her as my very flesh and blood in spite of the sea that divides her from me. I am trying to unite myself with the Mussalmans by this means. She thinks that her Koran makes it lawful for her to kill the cow, while my religion enjoins upon me not to kill the cow. Who am I under the circumstances to prevent her from killing the cow? I would be denying my religion if I did so. But I wish to conquer her by preaching love. I will tell her,"The Koran does not pledge you to kill the cow or eat beef; my religion not only does not permit it, my Koran compels me to worship the cow. You may eliminate the worship of the cow but you may tolerate *my* abstention from beef, you may tolerate *my* worship of the cow. Out of friendly regard for me you can abstain from killing the cow." That is the secret of my love for the little girl, Gulnar. That is why I allow myself to be carried in the pocket of Maulana Shaukat Ali. Why do I not think of Malaviyaji? Simply because my worship of Malaviyaji is spontaneous. But I am partial to Mussalmans. How can I do otherwise? When you are partial to the Mussalmans you will reach the proper conclusion, proper answer to this equation. If anybody were to say,"Solve this equation, what the Hindus and the Mussalmans should do?" I would say, it is the duty of every Hindu to be partial to the Mussalmans and of every Mussalman to be partial to the Hindus. I find that there is a seer who wants to see God or to meet God in one way and I in another way and, therefore, everything that he does I look askance. Then I say to myself, I must be partial and when I have done that I shall be just. I like to ask the Mussalmans to do that—to be partial to the Hindus.

One thing more she (Mrs. Naidu) asks me to say. It is about the Liberals."Are you going to say anything about the Liberals ?" I can simply say, I worship the Liberals. I want the Liberals to come in the Congress just as much as I want the Swarajists to do so. My heart is laid bare to them. We want to sit and spin at the charkha."No", they say,"we don't like to sit at the charkha and won't spin." I say,"What shall I do?" If they say,"We won't go to charkha," I simply say to them,"Enter the Congress and drive me out of it."

I have finished. With God as witness I want you to say that whatever you decide to do, you will fulfil it even though you may have to die. (Applause.)

Report of the Thirty-ninth Indian National Congress, 1924, pp. 13-6

406. PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS AT BELGAUM CONGRESS[1]

December 26, 1924

FRIENDS,

It was after much misgiving that I accepted the burden of the honour you have done me today. The unique honour for this year should have been bestowed upon Shrimati Sarojini Naidu, who did such wonderful work both in Kenya and South Africa. But it was not to be. The developments both internal and external have necessitated my acceptance of the burden. I know that I shall have your support in my attempt to do justice to the high office to which you have called me.

At the outset, let me note with respectful feelings the deaths during the year of Bi-Amma, Sir Ashutosh Mukherji, Mr. Bhupendra Nath Basu, Dr. Subramania Iyer and Mr. Dalbahadur Giri at home, and of Messrs Rustomjee and P. K. Naidu in South Africa. I tender in your name my respectful condolences to the bereaved families.

RETROSPECTIVE

From the September of 1920 the Congress has been principally an institution for developing strength from within. It has ceased to function by means of resolutions addressed to the Government for redress of grievances. It did so, because it ceased to believe in the

[1] This printed address appears to have been prepared before December 18; *vide*"Letter to C. F. Andrews", 18-12-1924.

beneficial character of the existing system of government. The breach of faith with the Mussalmans of India was the first rude shock to the people's faith in the Government. The Rowlatt Act and O'Dwyerism culminating in the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, opened the eyes of the people to the true nature of the system. At the same time it was realized that the existence of the system depended upon the co-operation, whether conscious or unconscious and whether voluntary or forced, of the people. With the view therefore of mending or ending the system it was decided to try to begin withdrawing voluntary co-operation from the top. At the Special Session of the Congress at Calcutta in 1920, the boycott of Government titles, law-courts, educational institutions, legislative bodies and foreign-cloth was resolved upon. All the boycotts were more or less taken up by the parties concerned. Those who could not or would not, retired from the Congress. I do not propose to trace the chequered career of the non-co-operation movement. Though not a single boycott was anywhere near completion, every one of them had undoubtedly the effect of diminishing the prestige of the particular institutions boycotted.

The most important boycott was the boycott of violence. Whilst it appeared at one time to be entirely successful, it was soon discovered that the non-violence was only skin-deep. It was the passive non-violence of helplessness, not the enlightened non-violence of resourcefulness. The result was an eruption of intolerance against those who did not non-co-operate. This was violence of a subtler type. In spite, however, of this grave defect I make bold to say that the propaganda of non-violence checked the outbreak of physical violence which would certainly have broken out, had not non-violent non-co-operation come into being. It is my deliberate conviction that non-violent non-co-operation has given to the people a consciousness of their strength. It has brought to the surface the hidden powers in the people of resistance through suffering. It has caused an awakening among the masses which perhaps no other method could have.

Though, therefore, non-violent non-co-operation has not brought us swaraj, though it has brought about certain deplorable results and though the institutions that were sought to be boycotted are still flourishing, in my humble opinion, non-violent non-co-operation as a means of attaining political freedom has come to stay and that even its partial success has brought us nearer swaraj. There is no mistaking the fact that the capacity for suffering for the sake of a

cause must advance it.

A HALT

But we are face to face with a situation that compels us to cry halt. For, whilst individuals hold firmly to their belief in non-co-operation, the majority of those who are immediately concer-ned have practically lost faith in it, with the exception of boycott of foreign-cloth. Scores of lawyers have resumed practice. Some even regret having ever given it up. Many who had given up Councils have returned to them and the number of those who believe in Council-entry is on the increase. Hundreds of boys and girls who gave up Government schools and colleges have repented of their action and have returned to them. I hear that Government schools and colleges can hardly cope with the demand for admission. In these circumstances, these boycotts cannot be worked as part of the national programme, unless the Congress is prepared to do without the classes directly affected. But I hold it to be just as impracticable to keep these classes out of the Congress as it would be now to keep the non-co-operators out. They must both remain in the Congress, without either party interfering with or hostility criticizing the other. What is applicable to Hindu-Muslim unity is, I feel, applicable to the unity among different political groups. We must tolerate each other and trust to time to convert the one or the other to the opposite belief. We must go further. We must plead with the Liberals and others who have seceded to rejoin the Congress. If non-co-operation is suspended, there is no reason why they should keep out. The advance must be from us Congressmen. We must cordially invite them and make it easy for them to come in.

You are perhaps now able to see why I entered into the agreement with the Swarajists.

FOREIGN CLOTH BOYCOTT

You will observe that one boycott has been retained. Out of regard for the sentiment of an English friend the word”boycott” has been changed in the agreement into”refusal to use foreign cloth”. There is no doubt a bad odour about the word”boycott”. It usually implies hatred. So far as I am concerned, I have not intended the word to bear any such meaning. The boycott has reference not to British but to foreign cloth. That boycott is not merely a right but a duty. It is as much a duty as boycott of foreign waters would be if they were

imported to substitute the waters of the Indian rivers. This, however, is a digression.

What I wanted to say was that the agreement saves and emphasizes the boycott of foreign-cloth. For me it is an effective substitute for violent methods. Just as certain acts such as personal abuse, irritating conduct, lying, causing hurt and murder are symbols of violence, similarly courtesy, inoffensive conduct, truthfulness, etc., are symbols of non-violence. And so to me is boycott of foreign-cloth a symbol of non-violence. Revolutionary crime is intended to exert pressure. But it is the insane pressure of anger and ill-will. I contend that non-violent acts exert pressure far more effective than violent acts, for that pressure comes from goodwill and gentleness. Boycott of foreign-cloth exerts such pressure. We import the largest amount of foreign-cloth from Lancashire. It is also by far the largest of all our imports, sugar being next. Britain's chief interest centres round the Lancashire trade with India. It is the one thing more than any other that has ruined the Indian peasant and imposed partial idleness upon him by depriving him of the one supplementary occupation he had. Boycott of foreign-cloth is therefore a necessity if he is to live. The plan, therefore, is not merely to induce the peasant to refuse to buy the cheap and nice-looking foreign fabric but also by teaching him to utilize his spare hours in carding and spinning cotton and getting it woven by the village weavers, to dress himself in khaddar so woven and thus to save him the cost of buying foreign and, for that matter, even Indian mill-made cloth. Thus, boycott of foreign-cloth by means of hand-spinning and hand-weaving, i.e., khaddar, not only saves the peasant's money, but it enables us workers to render social service of a first class order. It brings us into direct touch with the villagers. It enables us to give them real political education and teach them to become self-sustained and self-reliant. Organization of khaddar is thus infinitely better than co-operative societies or any other form of village organization. It is fraught with the highest political consequence, because it removes the greatest immoral temptation from Britain's way. I call the Lancashire trade immoral, because it was raised and is sustained on the ruin of millions of India's peasants. And as one immorality leads to another, the many proved immoral acts of Britain are traceable to this one immoral traffic. If therefore this one great temptation is removed from Britain's path by India's voluntary effort, it would be good for India, good for Britain and, as Britain, is today the predominant world-power, good even for

humanity.

I do not endorse the proposition that supply follows demand. On the contrary, demand is often artificially created by unscrupulous vendors. And if a nation is bound, as I hold it is, like individuals to comply with a code of moral conduct, then it must consider the welfare of those whose wants it seeks to supply. It is wrong and immoral for a nation to supply for instance intoxicating liquor to those who are addicted to drink. What is true of intoxicants is true of grain or cloth, if the discontinuance of their cultivation or manufacture in the country to which foreign grain or cloth are exported results in enforced idleness or penury. These latter hurt a man's soul and body just as much as intoxication. Depression is but excitement upside down and hence equally disastrous in its results and often more so because we have not yet learnt to regard as immoral or sinful the depression of idleness or penury.

BRITAIN'S DUTY

It is then I hold the duty of Great Britain to regulate her exports with due regard to the welfare of India, as it is India's to regulate her imports with due regard to her own welfare. That economics is untrue which ignores or disregards moral values. The extension of the law of non-violence in the domain of economics means nothing less than the introduction of moral values as a factor to be considered in regulating international commerce. And I must confess that my ambition is nothing less than to see international relations placed on a moral basis through India's efforts. I do not despair of cultivation of limited mass non-violence. I refuse to believe that the tendency of human nature is always downward.

The fruition of the boycott of foreign-cloth through hand-spinning and khaddar is calculated not only to bring about a political result of the first magnitude, it is calculated also to make the poorest of India, whether men or women, conscious of their strength and make them partakers in the struggle for India's freedom

FOREIGN *V.* BRITISH

It is hardly necessary now to demonstrate the futility, not to say the violent nature, of boycott of British cloth or better still British goods as so many patriots have suggested. I am considering the boycott purely from the point of view of India's good. All British goods do not harm us. Some goods such as English books we need

for our intellectual or spiritual benefit. As regards cloth, it is not merely British cloth that harms us, but all foreign cloth, and for that matter to a lesser extent even mill-made cloth injures us. Boycott brought about anyhow of British cloth cannot yield the same results as such boycott brought about by hand-spinning and khaddar. This necessitates exclusion at least of all foreign-cloth. The exclusion is not intended as a punishment. It is a necessity of national existence.

OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED

But, say the critics, the spinning-wheel has not taken, it is not exciting enough, it is an occupation only for women, it means a return to the middle ages, it is a vain effort against the majestic march of scientific knowledge for which machinery stands. In my humble opinion India's need is not excitement but solid work. For the millions solid work itself is excitement and tonic at the same time. The fact is that we have not given the spinning-wheel enough trial. I am sorry to have to say that many of us have not given it a serious thought. Even the members of the All-India Congress Committee have failed to carry out the series of resolutions on hand-spinning which they themselves have passed from time to time. The majority of us have simply not believed in it. In the circumstances, it is hardly just to say that spinning has failed for want of excitement about it. To say that it is merely an old woman's occupation is to ignore facts. Spinning-mills are a multiplication of spinning-wheels. They are managed by men. It is time that we got out of this superstition that some occupations are beneath the dignity of men. Under normal conditions no doubt spinning will be the occupation of the gentle sex. But the State of the future will always have go keep some men at the spinning-wheel so as to make improvements in it within the limitations which as a cottage industry it must have. I must inform you that the progress the mechanism of the wheel has made would have been impossible, if some of us men had not worked at it and had not thought about it day and night.

MACHINERY

I wish, too, you would dismiss from your minds the views attributed to me about machinery. In the first instance, I am no more trying to present for national acceptance all my views on machinery than I am presenting the whole of my belief in non-violence. The spinning-wheel is itself an exquisite piece of machinery. My head

daily bows in reverence to its unknown inventor. What I do resent is the wanton and wicked destruction of the one cottage industry of India that kept the wolf from the doors of thousands of homes scattered over a surface 1,900 miles long and 1,500 miles broad.

SPINNING FRANCHISE

You will not now wonder at my passion for the spinning-wheel, nor will you wonder why I have ventured to present it for introduction in the franchise, and why Pandit Motilal Nehru and Deshbandhu Das have accepted it on behalf of the Swaraj Party. If I had my way, there would be no one on the Congress register who is unwilling to spin or who would not wear khaddar on all occasions. I am however thankful for what the Swaraj Party has accepted. The modification is a concession to weakness or want of faith. But it must serve as a spur to greater effort on the part of those who have full faith in the wheel and khaddar.

NO OTHER MESSAGE

I have thus dilated upon the spinning-wheel because I have no better or other message for the nation. I know no other effective method for the attainment of swaraj if it is to be by"peaceful and legitimate means". As I have already remarked it is the only substitute for violence that can be accepted by the whole nation. I swear by civil disobedience. But civil disobedience for the attainment of swaraj is an impossibility unless and until we have attained the power of achieving boycott of foreign cloth. You will now easily perceive why I should be a useless guide for the Congress if my views about the spinning-wheel are not acceptable to you. Indeed you would be justified in regarding me, as some friends do, as a hindrance to national progress, if you consider me to be wrong in my exposition of the doctrine underlying the spinning-wheel. If it does not appeal to your heads as well as your hearts, you will be wanting in your duty in not rejecting my lead. Let it no longer be said, as Lord Willingdon very properly once said of us, that we had not the strength and courage to say"No". Indeed your rejection of my proposal, if you do not believe in it, will be a step towards swaraj.

HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

Hindu-Muslim unity is not less important than the spinning-wheel. It is the breath of our life. I do not need to occupy much of

your time on this question, because the necessity of it for swaraj is almost universally accepted. I say"almost" because I know some Hindus and some Mussalmans who prefer the present condition of dependence on Great Britain if they cannot have either wholly Hindu or wholly Mussalman India. Happily their number is small.

I share Maulana Shaukat's Ali's robust optimism that the present tension is a mere temporary distemper. The Khilafat agitation in which Hindus made common cause with their Mussalman brethren and the non-co-operation that followed it caused an awakening among the hitherto slumbering masses. It has given a new consciousness to the classes as well as the masses. Interested persons who were disappointed during the palmy days of non-co-opration, now that it has lost the charm of novelty, have found their opportunity and are trading upon the religious bigotry or the selfishness of both the communities. The result is written in the history of the feuds of the past two years. Religion has been travestied. Trifles have been dignified by the name of religious tenets which, the fanatics claim, must be observed at any cost. Economic and political causes have been brought into play for the sake of fomenting trouble. The culminating point was reached in Kohat. The tragedy was aggravated by the callous indifference of the local authority. I must not tarry to examine the causes or to distribute the blame. I have not the material for the task even if I was minded for it. Suffice it to say that the Hindu refugees fled for fear of their lives. There is in Kohat an overwhelming Mussalman majority. They have in so far as is possible under a foreign domination effective political control. It is up to them, therefore, to show that the Hindus are as safe in the midst of their majority as they would be if the whole population of Kohat was Hindu. The Mussalmans of Kohat may not rest satisfied till they have brought back to Kohat every one of the refugees. I hope that the Hindus would not fall into the trap laid for them by the Government and would resolutely decline to go back till the Mussalmans of Kohat have given them full assurances as to their lives and property.

The Hindus can live in the midst of an overwhelming Mussalman majority only if the latter are willing to receive and treat them as friends and equals, just as Mussalmans, if in a minority, must depend for honourable existence in the midst of a Hindu majority on the latter's friendliness. A Government can give protection against thieves and robbers, but not even a swaraj government will be able to

protect people against a wholesale boycott by one community of another. Governments can deal with abnormal situations. When quarrels become a normal thing of life, it is called civil war and parties must fight it out themselves. The present Government being foreign, in reality a veiled military rule, has resources at its command for its protection against any combination we can make and has, therefore, the power, if it has the will, to deal with our class feuds. But no swaraj government with any pretension to being a popular government can possibly be organized and maintained on a war footing. A swaraj government means a government established by the free joint-will of Hindus, Mussalmans and others. Hindus and Mussalmans, if they desire swaraj, have perforce to settle their differences amicably.

The Unity Conference at Delhi has paved the way for a settlement of religious differences. The Committee of the All Parties Conference is among other things expected to find a workable and just solution of the political differences not only between Hindu and Mussalmans but between all classes and all castes, sects or denominations. Our goal must be removal, at the earliest-possible moment, of communal or sectional representation. A common electorate must impartially elect its representatives on the sole ground of merit. Our services must be likewise impartially manned by the most qualified men and women. But till that time comes and communal jealousies or preferences become a thing of the past, minorities who suspect the motives of majorities must be allowed their way. The majority must set the example of self-sacrifice.

UNTOUCHABILITY

Untouchability is another hindrance to swaraj. Its removal is just as essential for swaraj as the attainment of Hindu-Muslim unity. This is an essentially Hindu question and Hindus cannot claim or take swaraj till they have restored the liberty of the suppressed classes. They have sunk with the latter's suppression. Historians tell us that the Aryan invaders treated the original inhabitants of Hindustan precisely as the English invaders treat us, if not much worse. If so, our helotry is a just retribution for our having created an untouchable class. The sooner we remove the blot, the better it is for us Hindus. But the priests tell us that untouchability is a divine appointment. I claim to know something of Hinduism. I am certain that the priests are wrong. It is a blasphemy to say that God set apart any portion of humanity as

untouchables. And Hindus who are Congressmen have to see to it that they break down the barrier at the earliest possible moment. The Vykom satyagrahis are showing us the way. They are carrying on their battle with gentleness and firmness. They have patience, courage and faith. Any movement in which these qualities are exhibited becomes irresistible.

I would, however, warn the Hindu brethren against the tendency which one sees nowadays of exploiting the suppressed classes for a political end. To remove untouchability is a penance that caste Hindus owe to Hinduism and to themselves. The purification required is not of untouchables but of the so-called superior castes. There is no vice that is special to the untouchables, not even dirt and insanitation. It is our arrogance which blinds us"superior" Hindus to our own blemishes and which magnifies those of our downtrodden brethren whom we have suppressed and whom we keep under suppression. Religions like nations are being weighed in the balance. God's grace and revelation are the monopoly of no race or nation. They descend equally upon all who wait upon God. The religion and that nation will be blotted out of the face of the earth which pins its faith to injustice, untruth or violence. God is Light, not darkness. God is Love, not hate. God is Truth, not untruth. God alone is Great. We His creatures are but dust. Let us be humble and recognize the place of the lowliest of His creatures. Krishna honoured Sudama in his rags as he honoured no one else. Love is the root of religion or sacrifice and this perishable body is the root of self or irreligion, says Tulsidas. Whether we win swaraj or not, the Hindus have to purify themselves before they can hope to revive the Vedic philosophy and make it a living reality.

SWARAJ SCHEME

But the spinning-wheel, Hindu-Muslim unity and removal of untouchability are only means to an end. The end we do not know. For me it is enough to know the means. Means and end are convertible terms in my philosophy of life. But I have long professed my conversion to the view pressed upon the public by Babu Bhagwandas that the public must know the end, not vaguely but precisely. They must know the full definition of swaraj, i.e., the scheme of swaraj which all India wants and must fight for. Happily the Committee appointed by the All Parties Conference is charged with that mission and let us hope that the Committee will be able to

produce a scheme that will be acceptable to all parties. May I suggest for its consideration the following points ?

1. The qualification for the franchise should be neither property nor position but manual work, such, for example, as suggested for the Congress franchise. Literary or property test has proved to be elusive. Manual work gives an opportunity to all who wish to take part in the Government and the well-being of the State.

2. The ruinous military expenditure should be curtailed to the proportion necessary for protection of life and property in normal times.

3. Administration of justice should be cheapened and with that end in view the final court of appeal should be not in London but in Delhi. Parties to civil suits must be compelled in the majority of cases to refer their disputes to arbitration, the decisions of these panchayats to be final except in cases of corruption or obvious misapplication of law. Multiplicity of intermediate courts should be avoided. Case law should be abolished and the general procedure should be simplified. We have slavishly followed the Cumbrous and work-out English procedure. The tendency in the Colonies is to simplify the procedure so as to make it easy for litigants to plead their own cases.

4. Revenues from intoxicating liquors and drugs should be abolished.

5. Salaries of the civil and military service should be brought down to a level compatible with the general condition of the country.

6. There should be re-distribution of provinces on a linguistic basis with as complete autonomy as possible for every province for its internal administration and growth.

7. Appointment of a commission to examine all the monopolies given to foreigners and, subject to the findings of the commission, full guarantees to be given for all vested rights justly acquired.

8. Full guarantee of their status to the Indian Chiefs without any hindrance from the Central Government subject to the right of asylum to subjects of these States who, not being offenders against the Penal Code, may seek it in self-governing India.

9. Repeal of all arbitrary powers.

10. The highest post to be open to all who may be otherwise fit. Examination for the civil and military service to be in India.

11. Recognition of complete religious freedom to various denominations subject to mutual forbearance.

12. The official language for provincial governments, legislatures and courts, within a definite period, to be the vernacular of the province of the Privy Council, the final court of appeal, to be Hindustani; the script to be either Devanagari or Persian. The language of the Central Government and of the Central Legislature to be also Hindustani. The language of international diplomacy to be English.

I trust you will not laugh at what may appear to you to be extravagance of thought in the foregoing sketch of some of the requirements of swaraj as I would have it. We may not have the power today to take or receive or do the things I have mentioned. Have we the will? Let us at least cultivate the desire. Before I leave this highly attractive, because speculative, theme, let me assure the Committee in charge of the drafting of a swaraj scheme, that I claim for my suggestion no more attention than it should give to any single individual's I have incorporated them in my address only to gain greater currency for them than they would perhaps otherwise receive.

INDEPENDENCE

The above sketch presupposes the retention of the British connection on perfectly honourable and absolutely equal terms. But I knows that there is a section among Congressmen who want under every conceivable circumstance complete independence of Britain. They will not have even an equal partnership. In my opinion if the British Government mean what they say and honestly help us to equality, it would be a greater triumph than a complete severance of the British connection. I would therefore strive for swaraj within the Empire, but would not hesitate to sever all connection, if severance became a necessity through Britain's own fault. I would thus throw the burden of separation on the British people. The better mind of the world desires today not absolutely independent States warring one against another but a federation of friendly inter-dependent States. The consummation of that event may be far off. I want to make no grand claim for our country. But I see nothing grand or impossible about our expressing our readiness for universal inter-dependence rather than independence. It should rest with Britain to say that she will have no real alliance with India. I desire the ability to be totally independent without asserting the independence. Any scheme that I would frame, while Britain declares her goal about India to be complete equality within the Empire, would be that of alliance and not

of independence without alliance. I would urge every Congressman not to be insistent on independence in each and every case, not because there is anything impossible about it, but because it is wholly unnecessary till it has become perfectly manifest that Britain really means subjugation in spite of her declaration to the contrary.

THE SWARAJ PARTY

So far, then, I have considered the contents of the agreement and the general questions arising from it. Not much need be said about the status of equality given to the Swaraj Party. I wish I could have avoided it, not because the party is not worthy, but because I do not share its views about Council-entry. But if I must remain in the Congress and even lead it, I must recognize facts as they are. It was easy enough for me to go out of the Congress or to decline the honour of presiding. But it was not, so I thought and still think, in the interest of the country for me to take that step. The Swaraj Party represents, if not a majority, at least a strong and growing minority in the Congress. If I was not to divide the Congress on the issue of its status, I was bound to agree to its conditions so long as they were not in conflict with my conscience. They are not in my opinion un-reasonable. The Swarajists want to use the name of the Congress for their policy. A formula had to be found for their doing so without their pledging or binding the No-changers to their policy. One of the ways of doing it was to give it the authority and the responsibility both financial and executive with regard to the framing and the prosecution of their policy. The Congress as a whole could not guide that policy without sharing the responsibility. And as I could not take the responsibility, and as I apprehended no No-changer can, I could not be party to shaping the policy, nor could I shape it without my heart in it. And heart can only go where belief is. I know that the sole authority to the Swaraj Party to use the name of the Congress in regard to the Council programme makes somewhat awkward the position of the other parties wishing to join the Congress. But I fear it is inevitable. The Swaraj Party cannot be expected to surrender the advantage it possesses. After all it wants the advantage not for itself but for the service of the country. All parties have or can have that ambition or no other. I hope therefore that the others will join the Congress and work from within to affect the course of the country's politics. Dr. Besant has led the way in that direction. I know that she would have many things done otherwise, but she is content to come in

hoping to bring round the electorate to her view by working within the Congress. The No-changers can, in my humble opinion, vote for the agreement with a clear conscience. The only national programme jointly to be worked by all the parties is khaddar, Hindu-Muslim unity and, for the Hindus, removal of untouchability. Is not this after all what they want?

PURELY SOCIAL REFORM?

It has been suggested that this programme turns the Congress into a purely social reform organization. I beg to differ from that view. Everything that is absolutely essential for swaraj is more than merely social work and must be taken up by the Congress. It is not suggested that the Congress should confine its activity for all time to this work only. But it is suggested that the Congress should for the coming year concentrate the whole of its energy on the work of construction, or as I have otherwise described it, the work of internal growth.

Nor does the agreement exhaust the list of constructive items that the Congress must handle. Those I am about to mention are of the highest importance, but they, being non-contentious and not absolutely essential for swaraj as the foregoing three items, find no mention in the agreement.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS

One such is the maintenance of national educational institutions. Probably the public do not know that next to khaddar the running of national educational institutions has been the most successful. These cannot be given up so long as even a few pupils are left. It must be a point of honour with the respective provinces to keep up their colleges and schools. Suspension of non-co-operation should not have any injurious effect on these institutions. On the contrary, greater effort than ever before should be made to maintain and strengthen them. Most provinces have their national schools and colleges. Gujarat alone has a national university maintained at an annual cost of Rs. 1,00,000 and having control of three colleges and 70 schools with 9,000 pupils. It has acquired its own ground at Ahmedabad and has already spent Rs. 2,05,323 in buildings. Throughout the country, finest and silent work has been done by the non-co-operating students. Theirs is a great and noble sacrifice. From a worldly standpoint they have perhaps lost the prospect of brilliant careers. I suggest to them

however that from the national standpoint they have gained more than they have lost. They left their schools or colleges, because it was through them that the youth of the nation were insulted and humiliated in the Punjab. The first link in the chain of our bondage is forged in these institutions. The conrresponding national institutions, however inefficiently managed they may be, are the factories where the first instruments of our freedom are forged. After all, the hope of the future centres round the boys and girls studying in these national institutions. I therefore regard the upkeep of these institutions as a first charge on provincial funds. But these institutions to be truly national must be clubs for promoting real Hindu-Muslim unity, they must be also nurseries for training Hindu boys and girls to regard untouchability as a blot upon Hinduism and a crime against humanity. They should be training schools for expert spinners and weavers. If the Congress retains its belief in the potency of the spinning wheel and khaddar, one has a right to expect these institutions to supply the science of the spinning-wheel. They should be also factories for khaddar production. This is not to say that the boys and the girls are not to have any literary training. But I do maintain that the training of the hand and the heart must go hand-in-hand with that of the head. The quality and the usefulness of a national school or college will be measured not by the brilliance of the literary attainments of its scholars but by the strength of the national character, and deftness in handling the carding-bow, the spinning-wheel and the loom. Whilst I am most anxious that no national school or college should be closed, I should have not the slightest hesitation in closing down a school or college that is indifferent to the admission of non-Hindu boys or that shuts its door against the entry of untouchables or that has not carding and spinning as an indispensable part of the training. The time is past when we can be satisfied with the word"national" on the signboard of the school and the knowledge that it is not affiliated to any Government university or is not otherwise controlled by the Government. I must also not omit to point out that the tendency in many national institutions still is to neglect the vernaculars and Hindustani. Many teachers have not realized the necessity of imparting instruction through the vernaculars or Hindustani. I rejoice to observe that Sjt. Gangadharrao has arranged a meeting of national educationists to exchange experiences on the several points mentioned by me and to evolve, if possible, a general plan of education and action.

UNEMPLOYED NON-CO-OPERATORS

This is perhaps the proper place to mention those lawyers who have given up practice, and schoolmasters and other Government employees who have given up Government service at the call of the nation. I know that there are many such men who find it hard to make the two ends meet. They deserve national support. The Khadi Board and the national schools and colleges are the two services that can take in almost an unlimited number of honest and industrious men who are willing to learn and labour and are satisfied with a modest allowance. I observe a tendency not to accept any remuneration for national service. This desire to serve without remuneration is praiseworthy, but all cannot satisfy it. Every labourer is worthy of his hire. No country can produce thousands of unpaid whole time workers. We must therefore develop an atmosphere in which a patriot would consider it an honour to serve the country and accept an allowance for such service.

INTOXICANTS

Another item of national importance is the liquor and the opium traffic. Had the wave of enthusiasm that swept across the country in 1921 in the cause of temperance remained non-violent, we would today have witnessed a progressive improvement. But unfortunately our picketing degenerated into violence, veiled when it was not open. Picketing had, therefore, to be abandoned, and the liquor-shops and opium-dens began to flourish as before. But you will be pleased to hear that the temperance work has not died out altogether. Many workers are still continuing their quiet and selfless service in the cause of temperance. We must, however, realize that we would not be able to eradicate the evil till we have swaraj. It is no matter of pride to us that our children are being educated out of the revenue derived from this immoral source. I would almost forgive the Council-entry by Congressmen, if they would boldly sweep out this revenue even through education may have to be starved. Nothing of the kind should happen if they will insist on a corresponding reduction in the military expenditure.

BENGAL REPRESSION

You will observe that in the foregoing paragraphs I have confined myself to the internal developments.

But the external circumstances, and among them chiefly the acts of our rulers, are affecting our destiny no less surely (though it may

be adversely) than the internal development. We may turn them to advantage if we will, or we may succumb to them to our disadvantage. The latest act of the rulers is the repression commenced in Bengal. The All Parties Conference condemned it in no uncertain terms. The Conference had hesitation in saying that the blow was aimed at the Bengal Swaraj Party. But I have none. I have been to Calcutta and had the opportunity of meeting men representing a variety of opinion and I came to the conclusion that the blow was aimed at the Swaraj party. The opinion is confirmed by the speeches since delivered by Lords Lytton and Reading. The defence they have offered is wholly unconvincing. Such a defence is possible only in a place like India where public opinion counts for little or nothing. Lord Lytton's conditions of release are an insult to our intelligence. Their Excelencies beg the question when they tell us that the situation warranted the Ordinance and the action under the Regulation of 1818. The national contention is :

l. that the situation they describe has not been proved to exist;

2. that assuming that the situation does exist, the remedy is worse than the disease;

3. that the ordinary law contains enough powers for dealing with the situation; and lastly

4. that even if extraordinary powers were necessary, they should have been taken from the legislature which is of their own creation.

The speeches of Their Excellencies evade these issues altogether. The nation which has had considerable experience of unsupported statements of the Government will not accept them as gospel truth. Their Excellencies know that we cannot and will not believe their statements not because they are wilfully untruthful, but because the sources of their information have often been discovered to be tainted. Their assurances are therefore a mockery of the people. The speeches are almost a challenge to us to do our worst. But we must not be irritated or be impatient. Repression, if it does not cow us down, if it does not deter us from our purpose, can but hasten the advent of swaraj; for it puts us on our mettle and evokes the spirit of self-sacrifice and courage in the face of danger. Repression does for a true man or a nation what fire does for gold. In 1921, we answered repression with civil disobedience and invited the Government to do its worst. But today we are obliged to eat the humble pie. We are not ready for civil disobedience. We can but prepare for it. Preparation

for civil disobedience means discipline, self-restraint, a non-violent but resisting spirit, cohesion and above all scrupulous and willing obedience to the known laws of God and such laws of man as are in furtherance of God's laws. But unfortunately we have neither discipline nor self-restraint enough for our purpose, we are either violent or our non-violence is unresisting, we have not enough cohesion and the laws that we obey whether of God or man, we obey compulsorily. As between Hindus and Mussalmans we witness a daily defiant breach of laws both of God and man. This is no atmosphere for civil disobedience —the one matchless and invincible weapon at the disposal of the oppressed. The alternative is undoubtedly violence. We seem to have the atmosphere for it. Hindu-Muslim fights are our training for it. And those who believe that India's deliverance lies through violence are entitled to gloat over the free fights that take place between us. But I say to those who believe in the cult of violence:"You are retarding India's progress. If you have any pity or friendly feeling for the starving millions, know that your violence will do them no service. Those whom you seek to depose are better armed and infinitely better organized than you are. You may not care for your own lives, but you dare not disregard those of your countrymen who have no desire to die a martyr's death. You know that this Government believes in Jallianwala Bagh massacres as a legitimate means of self-defence. Whatever may be true of other countries, there is no chance of the cult of violence flourishing in this country. India is admittedly the best repository and exponent of non-violence. Will you not better devote your lives, if you sacrifice them in the cause of non-violence?"

I know, however, that my appeal to the violent revolutionaries will be just as fruitless as any such appeal to the violent and anarchical Government is likely to be.

We must therefore find the remedy and demonstrate to both the violent Government and the violent revolutionaries that there is a force that is more effective than their violence.

REPRESSION A SYMPTOM

I regard this repression as a chronic symptom of a chronic disease. The European dominance and Asiatic subjection is the formulla. Sometimes it is stated still more cryptically as White *v.* Black. Kipling miscalled the white man's yoke as the"white man's burden". In the Malaya peninsula the colour bar that was thought to

be temporary has now or almost become a permanent institution. The Mauritius planter must get Indian labour without let or hindrance. The Kenya Europeans successfully lord it over Indians who have a prior right to be there. The Union of South Africa would today drive out every Indian, if it safely could, in total disregard of past obligations. In all these cases the Government of India and the Imperial Government are not helpless; they are unwilling or not so insistent as they ought to be on the protection of Indian settlers. The Government of India has not shown even the decency to publish the report of its own Commission on Fiji.

The attempt to crush the indomitable spirit of the Akalis is a symptom of the same disease. They have poured their blood like water for the sake of a cause they hold as dear as life itself. They may have erred. If they have, it is they who have 'bled in the process. They have hurt no one else. Nankana Sahib, Guruka-Bagh, and Jaito will bear witness to their courage and their mute sufferings and martyrdom. But the Governor of the Punjab is reported to have vowed that he will crush the Akalis.

One hears that repression is crushing the Burmese spirit.

Egypt fares no better than we do. A mad Egyptian kills a British officer—certainly a detestable crime. The punishment is not only a detestable crime, but it is an outrage upon humanity. Egypt has nearly lost all it got. A whole nation has been mercilessly punished the crime of one man. It may be that the murder had the sympathy of the Egyptians. Would that justify terrorism by a power well able to protect its interests without it?

The repression inBengal is therefore not an extraordinary thing. We must treat its periodic eruption in some shape or other, or in some province or other, as our normal condition till we come to our own.

NEED FOR SANCTION

The Congress, therefore, to be worthy of its trust must devise a sanction to back its demands. Before we can forge the sanction, we Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians, Sikhs, Parsis, etc., must unite and so should Swarajists, No-changers, Liberals, Home Rulers, Muslim Leaguers and others. If we can but speak with a united voice and know our own mind, it would be well. If we can develop the power to keep foreign cloth from our land, it would be better. We are ready then for the sanction.

Let me state my faith; as a Congressman wishing to keep the Congress intact, I advise suspension of non-co-operation for I see that the nation is not ready for it. But as an individual, I cannot—will not—do so as long as the Government remains what it is. It is not merely a policy with me, it is an article of faith. Non-co-operation and civil disobedience are but different branches of the same tree called satyagraha. It is my *kalpadruma—Jam-i-Jam* —the Universal Provider. Satyagraha is search for Truth ; and God is Truth. Ahimsa or non-violence is the light that reveals that Truth to me. Swaraj for me is part of that Truth. This satyagraha did not fail me in South Africa, Kheda or Champaran and in a hosts of other cases I could mention. It excludes all violence or hate. Therefore, I cannot and will not hate Englishmen. Nor will I bear their yoke. I must fight unto death the unholy attempt to impose British methods and British institutions on India. But I combat the attempt with non-violence. I believe in the capacity of India to offer non-violent battle to the English rulers. The experiment has not failed. It has succeeded, but not to the extent we had hoped and desired. I do not despair. On the contrary I believe that India will come to her own in the near future, and that only through satyagraha. The proposed suspension is part of the experiment. Non-co-operation need never be resumed if the programme sketched by me can be fulfilled. Non-violent non-co-operation in some form or other, whether through the Congress or without it, will be resumed if the programme fails. I have repeatedly stated that satyagraha never fails and that one perfect satyagrahi is enough to vindicate Truth. Let us all strive to be perfect satyagrahis. The striving does not . require any quality unattainable by the lowliest among us. For satyagraha is an attribute of the spirit within. It is latent in everyone of us. Like swaraj it is our birthright. Let us know it.

Young India, 26-12-1924

407. SPEECH ON CONDOLENCE RESOLUTION BELGAUM CONGRESS

December 26, 1924

It was 4.05 p.m. when the President moved the first resolution. He said:

I shall now read the first resolution. After I read the resolution, you will kindly stand. It is incredibly simple; our condolence to those who are no longer with us.

This Congress records with sorrow the deaths of Bi-Amma, Sir Ashutosh Chowdhari, Sir Ashutosh Mukherji, Mr. Bhupendra Nath Basu, Dr. Subramania Ayyar, Mr. Dalbahadur Giri, Mr. Govind Venkatesh Yalgi, Mr. Vamana Rao Moharir, Mr. T. V. Gopalswami Mudaliar, Mr. C. V. P. Shivam and Lala Kanhya Lalji and also of Messrs Rustomjee Jeevanji Ghorkhodu and P. K. Naidu in South Africa and tenders its respectful sympathy to the bereaved families.

Then the President explained the resolution in Hindi.[1]

This resolution expresses our sorrow at the passing of Bi-Amma and others and conveys our sympathies to their relatives. I know none amongst us can have anything to say against this. You will therefore all stand up for a few minutes and resume your seats when I sit down. This will indicate our acceptance of the resolution.

All stood up. A murmur was heard somewhere upon which Gandhiji said:

All of you in the centre should stand up. There should be no one sitting. And please maintain silence. No one should speak. If we want to show the respect we feel for the dead, we should stand in silence for a few seconds. . . . Now please take your seats.

C. R. Das mounted the rostrum amid great applause."Deshbandhu Das", Gandhiji announced. Then he added:

Malaviyaji has just sent me a message. I am sorry I forgot about it. Lala Kanhya Lal of Lahore passed away this year. You must all have heard about Lala Kanhya Lal. He was an old man and he served the country well during the Dyer regime.

Report of the Thirty-ninth Indian National Congress, 1924, pp. 9-13

[1] What follows is from a report of the proceedings in Hindi.

408. RESOLUTION ON CALCUTTA AGREEMENT AND SPINNING FRANCHISE, BELGAUM CONGRESS

December 26, 1924

(a) (i) The Congress hereby endorses the following agreement between Mahatma Gandhi on the one hand and Deshbandhu C. R. Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru acting on behalf of the Swaraj Party on the other.

THE AGREEMENT[1]

(ii) The Congress hopes that the agreement will result in true unity between the two wings of the Congress and will also enable persons belonging to other political organizations to join the Congress. The Congress congratulates the Swarajists and others arrested under the New Ordinance or Regulation III of 1818 and is of opinion that such arrests are inevitable so long as the people of India have not the capacity for vindicating their status and liberty, and is further of opinion that such capacity can in the present circumstances of the country be developed by achieving the long-deferred exclusion of foreign-cloth; and therefore as a token of the earnestness and determination of the people to achieve this national purpose, welcomes the introduction of hand-spinning as part of the franchise and appeals to every person to avail himself or herself of it and join the Congress.

(iii) In view of the foregoing, the Congress expects every Indian, man and woman, to discard all foreign-cloth and to use and wear hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar to the exclusion of all other cloth. With a view to accomplish the said purpose without delay, the Congress expects all Congress members to help the spread of hand-spinning and the antecedent processes and the manufacture and sale of khaddar.

(iv). The Congress appeals to the Princes and the wealthy classes of India and the members of political and other organizations not represented on the Congress, and municipalities, local boards, panchayats and such other institutions, to extend their help to the spread of hand-spinning by personal use and otherwise and especially

[1] Not reproduced here; for the text of the Agreement, *vide*"Joint Statement with Swaraj Party Leaders", 6-11-1924.

by giving liberal patronage to the classes of artists, still surviving and capable of working artistic designs in fine khaddar.

(v) The Congress appeals to the merchants engaged in the foreign-cloth and yarn trade to appreciate the interests of the nation and discontinue their importation of foreign-cloth and yarn and help the national cottage industry by dealing in khaddar.

(vi) It having come to the notice of the Congress that varieties of cloth are manufactured in mills and on other looms out of mill yarn and sold in the Indian market as khaddar, the Congress appeals to the mill-owners and other manufacturers concerned, to discontinue this undesirable practice and further appeals to them to encourage the revival of the ancient cottage industry of India by restricting their operations among those parts of the country that have not yet come under the Congress influence and appeals to them to discontinue the importation of foreign yarn.

(vii) The Congress appeals to the heads and leaders of all religious denominations whether Hindu, Muslim or any others to preach to their congregations the message of khaddar and advise them to discontinue the use of foreign-cloth.

(b) The present Article VII[1] of the Constitution to be repealed and the following to be substituted therefore:

(i) Every person not disqualified under article IV[2] shall be entitled to become a member of any primary organizations controlled by the Provincial Congress Committee, provided that no one shall be a member of any Congress Committee or organization who does not wear hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar at political and Congress functions or while engaged in Congress business and does not make a contribution of 20,000 yards of evenly spun yarn per year of his or her own spinning, or in the case of illness or unwillingness or any such cause, the same quantity of yarn spun by any other person; provided also that no person shall be a member of two parallel Congress organizations at one and the same time.

(ii) The year of the membership shall be reckoned from the Ist January to the 31st December. The said subscription shall be payable

[1] Which read:"Every person not disqualified under Article IV and paying a subscription of 4 annas per year shall be entitled to become a member of any organization controlled by the Provincial Congress Committees." *Vide*"Congress Constitution Adopted at Nagpur Session", December 1920.

[2] *Vide*"Congress Constitution Adopted at Nagpur Session", December 1920.

in advance and may be paid in instalments of 2,000 yards per month payable in advance. Members joining in the middle of the year shall contribute the full quantity due from the beginning of the year.

TRANSITORY PROVISION

During 1925, the subscription shall be 20,000 yards only and shall be payable on or before 1st March or in instalments as aforesaid.

(iii) No person shall be entitled to vote at the election of, representatives or delegates or any committee or sub-committee of any Congress organizations whatsoever, or to be elected as such, or to take part in any meetings of the Congress or any Congress organization or any committee or sub-committee thereof, if he has not contributed the yarn subscription or the instalments due. Any member who has made default in the payment of the yarn subscription may have his or her rights restored by paying the subscription in respect of which the default has occurred and the instalment for the month then current.

(iv) Every Provincial Congress Committee shall send to the General Secretary, All-India Congress Committee, from month to month returns of membership and of the yarn received by it in virtue of this Article. The Provincial Congress Committee shall contribute ten per cent of the yarn subscriptions or their value to the All-India Congress Committee.

(v) Omit present Article VI (c)[1] and Article IX (b)[2]

proposed by.

DESHBANDHU C. R. DAS (in English)

Seconded by:

SJT. S. V. KAUJALGI (Both in Kanarese and English)

SJT. N. C. KELKAR (in Marathi)

SJT. S. V. ABHYANKAR (in English)

PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU (in English)

Opposed by:

MAULANA HASRAT MOHANI (in Urdu)

MAULANA AZAD SOBHANI (in Urdu)

SWAMI GOVINDANANDA (in English)

Report of the Thirty-ninth Indian National Congress, 1924, pp. 1-5

[1] *Vide*"Congress Constitution Adopted at Nagpur Session", December 1920.

[2] *ibid*

409. SPEECH ON RESOLUTION OF CALCUTTA AGREEMENT, BELGAUM CONGRESS

December 26, 1924

The resolution was moved by Deshbandhu C. R. Das. There were many speakers on the resolution and when Swami Govindananda finished his speech, the President said:

I shall not try your patience for any length of time. I have got two speakers more. I am endeavouring to give chance, if I can possibly do, to those who oppose this resolution. I may now call upon one more speaker to oppose the resolution and then I shall ask Pandit Motilal Nehru to wind up. I call upon Sardar Ali Sabri from Cawnpore. Is he here?

A reply:"Not here." Then Pandit Motilal Nehru came to speak. . . . It was 7.25 p.m. when the debate on the resolution was closed. The President then rose amidst loud and continued cries of *Mahatma Gandhiki jai* to put the resolution to vote. He spoke in Hindi announcing the timings of the sittings of the Congress and other conferences, and with regard to the voting on the resolution he said:

BROTHERS,

Before I place before you this resolution I would like to read out the notes, some friends have sent to me. One or two friends have said that as there have been so many speeches on behalf of the Swarajists and only one, that of Mahomed Ali, on behalf of the No-changers, Mr. Rajagopalachari should be asked to make a speech. I do not wish to give Mr. Rajagopalachari this trouble, although his name is there on the list because, as Panditji has said, I do not wish that anyone should be influenced to take a position. You may vote as you like. So I do not wish to trouble Mr. Rajagopalachari, much as the No-changers want that he speaks something before the vote is taken.

A brother from Andhra says that he is a follower of Dr. Annie Besant and wants to say something in support of her. He wants to speak on her behalf because Dr. Annie Besant, although she was expected, has not come. Another friend has asked why we are proposing the whole resolution and why we don't move it in parts. Maulana Hasrat Mohani has answered this. This indicates an attitude of inaction. It does not come from the heart. If you want to you may vote, otherwise not. If you have a desire to take up the charkha, it is

possible. There is another No-changer who also wants to speak but I do not wish to trouble him. So many Swarajists have spoken that there is now no time left. Several other friends have misgivings. I have their notes. The only way to remove their misgivings would be to give them some time to speak out their minds.

How much will the people benefit from the candour Deshbandhu Das and other have shown in their speeches? Mr. Abhyankar said his opinion differed from mine, yet he gave his support to the charkha. Panditji says, he will trust the charkha as I do. It has been put down in writing and he will respect the written word. We should have faith that he will have no cause for misgivings. One thing is essential that he should trust the No-changers and the No-changers should trust him. That there should be this mutual trust is put down here in writing and therefore I wish to have your views. it is necessary that both groups should treat one another as brothers. As Deshbandhu Das has said, we believe that one thing is good for the country; we believe also that the other thing will also be good for the country . . .[1] Mr. Kelkar in his speech used an image. I might use another and say that a cart will not run on a single wheel; it will run only when both its wheels are in shape and strong, otherwise it will collapse. I therefore appeal to you to purge your hearts. Maulana Shaukat Ali will come to you and say that you should become brave. Others will say other things. Only a cowardly man distrusts another man. The man who has courage will trust even his enemy. If you would accept this resolution, give up distrusting one another; do away with all misgivings. Having said this much I wonder if it is still necessary to speak in English. I shall do so if some of you desire it, but I do not think it is necessary.

Now I place before you the resolution and ask for your verdict. But before you give your verdict let me remind you of what I have said: please treat it as a pledge—with yourselves, me and God as witnesses. It will be terrible indeed if anyone having taken the pledge should not act on it. You will ply the charkha. If you find it difficult and do not want to take the trouble, borrow the yarn from someone and tender it. If you are not prepared to do even this, do not vote for the resolution. If you wish to work unitedly, it is necessary to adopt this resolution. But if you do not want this, if you do not wish to mix the charkha with the franchise, please do not under any circumstances vote for the resolution. I shall not mind it at all as I

[1] The source is not clear here.

shall if you accept it and then do not go by it. I must therefore ask you that if you have any pity for me act on your word; you should not take it that there is any betrayal in not voting.

I propose this resolution and I hope you will not unanimously deceive God. I have come to know Pandit Motilal Nehru and Deshbandhu Das well. When they once agree to a thing they do not say no afterwards. So you will either accept or reject this resolution. Even if you reject it you should be clear in your mind as to the importance of the charkha. I hold we can secure everything through the charkha. You should accept the resolution if you wish that the No-changers should love the Swarajists and the Swarajists should love the No-changers. Mr. Kelkar has said that there should be"responsive co-operation" from both sides. If you understand this and accept this, please raise your hands; if you do not accept this please do not raise your hands. In that case I shall think of some other method of making India free. Those who are in favour of the resolution may raise their hands.

The President said in English (before putting the resolution to vote):

Those who are in favour of this resolution, please raise your hands understanding the warnings that I have given you that God be witness between you and India; if you accept the resolution and mean to work to the best of your ability, then alone will you raise your hands.

Sjt. Gangadharrao Deshpande said in Kanarese what the President had said.

In asking the House to raise hands, the President said:

Only delegates, please. Those only who have understood the resolution.

After examining the hands raised in favour and against the resolution, he said:

I declare the resolution carried.

The sitting of the Congress was adjourned for the next day at 11 o'clock sharp.

Report of the Thirty-ninth Indian National Congress, 1924, pp. 70-2

1. SPEECH AT ALL-INDIA STUDENTS CONFERENCE, BELGAUM

December 27, 1924

Mahatma Gandhi arrived at the *pandal* and was accorded a warm welcome. In compliance with the request of the president and the audience, the Mahatma spoke most feelingly for about 10 minutes. He exhorted the students to practise swadeshi and wear khaddar. He explained as to how the salvation of India was bound up with the spread of the spinning-wheel. He told the audience that he was not prepared to admit the plea of want of time. They could do the work provided they had the will to do it. Finally he declared that khaddar was not the symbol of hatred of anybody but that it was the symbol of love and self-dependence. The Mahatma was then garlanded amidst loud applause. The president thanked him for blessing the Conference after which the Mahatma left the *pandal.*

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-1-1924

2. SPEECH ON CONDOLENCE RESOLUTION, BELGAUM CONGRESS

December 27, 1924

It was 11.20 a.m. when the President moved the following resolution:

The Congress records with sorrow the death of Mr. G. M. Bhurgari and tenders its respectful sympathy to the bereaved family.

Before putting the resolution to vote the President remarked[1]:

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I am ashamed to have to say that there was an omission when we passed the first resolution. A friend from Sind has brought it to my notice that in the resolution mourning the loss of our departed leaders a name was left out—that of Mr. Bhurgari.

I think you know it and will agree when I say that I could not have deliberately left out this name. But I am in such a pitiable state that I tend to forget things when I am engrossed in work. It was with great difficulty that I wrote down the names that I did—it was in the address I had prepared—and since I myself wrote the address I was not aware of the omission. I would have written Mr. Bhurgari's

[1] In Hindi

name most respectfully. In my heart also I had the greatest respect for him. I have committed an ommission and I apologize for this to his relatives. The fact is I had a great regard for him. He was a Sindi Mussalman and he loved Hindus. When I go to Sind people there say that Mr. Bhurgari was a true son of India. Why should we not mourn his loss? I request you, brothers and sisters, to rise from your seats and stand respectfully for one minute. Let no one keep sitting; all must stand up. . . .

Now all of you should maintain silence. Do not talk. We have to finish our programme, if possible by 5 o'clock. In this I seek the help of all the delegates. Concerning the first resolution that will be moved today, no discussion is necessary and so no lengthy explanation is called for. Therefore I shall simply read it out. I also want to say that no copies have been distributed amongst you of the resolutions that will be moved today. The Reception Committee was not able to do this; there is no press in Belgaum so that all the resolutions that the Reception Committee wanted to print could be printed. The Subjects Committee can continue its sittings for two or three days and the resolutions that it drafts can be printed. But there is no resolution which makes it necessary to distribute its copies amongst you. You will forgive me as well as the Reception Committee for this, and pass the resolutions as they are read out to you.[1]

[From Hindi]

Report of the Thirty-ninth Indian National Congress, 1924, p. 74

3. RESOLUTION ON SAROJINI NAIDU'S SERVICES, BELGAUM CONGRESS

December 27, 1924

The President next moved the following resolution:

The Congress places on record its appreciation of the great services rendered to the cause of the Indians overseas by Shrimati Sarojini Naidu who by her energy and devotion endeared herself to the Indian settlers and by her persuasive eloquence gained a sympathetic hearing from the Europeans there.

The Congress also notes with gratitude the services rendered to the cause of the settlers of Kenya by Mr. Vaze of the Servants of India

[1] The resolution was carried *nem. con.*, all standing for a while in silence.

Society and Pandit Benarsidas Chaturvedi.

The Hindi and Kanarese renderings of the above resolution were then read by Pandit Sunder Lal and Sjt. K. Mudvedkar respectively.

The resolution was carried unanimously all standing except Shrimati Sarojini Devi.

Report of the Thirty-ninth Indian National Congress, 1924 , p. 75

4. SPEECH ON RESOLUTION ON KOHAT AND GULBURGA RIOTS, BELGAUM CONGRESS

December 27, 1924

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You have heard many speeches concerning this resolutions[1]. I have received intimations that some more friends are anxious to take part in the discussion. But I have told them to excuse me I do not feel anything more needs to be known about the resolution.

A friend refers to the Board mentioned in the resolution and wants to know the names of the personnel. There are two things mentioned. If the Board appointed by the Unity Conference does not do its work, it can be replaced by another Board. I forget all the names that comprise the Board of the Unity Committee; you will see them in the newspapers. I am there, Shaukat Ali is there and some other Muslim brethren. I do not want to leave it either. I think the Board that has been appointed will collect testimony in regard to the happenings at Kohat. Only when it arrives in Rawalpindi can it be known as to what it is possible to do and what it is not. Whatever can be done will of course be done. Those of you who support the resolution may duly raise their hands.[2]

[From Hindi]

Report of the Thirty-ninth Indian National Congress, 1924, p. 94

[1] The resolution moved by Motilal Nehru deplored the riots, the exodus of Hindus from Kohat and the failure of the local authority to give them protection. It also advised the people not to accept the finding of the Government of India but to suspend judgment till the Board appointed by the Unity Conference or some other representative body had enquired into the event and come to decision. The resolution expressed sympathy for the sufferers in Gulburga riots.

[2] The resolution was carried.

5. SPEECH ON RESOLUTION ON UNTOUCHABILITY, BELGAUM CONGRESS

December 27, 1924

I call upon Mr. Bhopatkar to move the resolution on untouchability .

Before doing so, let me inform you that some Tamil friends have written to me asking that the resolutions might also be translated into Tamil. I am extremely sorry that I cannot possibly do that. There are 21 provinces to deal with and if we are to render each resolution into so many languages, it would really be not possible to get on. Up to now we have been adopting three languages: One is Hindi which everyone is expected to know ; the second is English; and the third is the vernacular of the province. We have not been able to reach that common medium, Hindustani, through which we can know each other, because we have always the South to obstruct the way. That is why we are using the vernacular of this province as well as English. But I would suggest for such cases that those who know English or Hindustani in the said province should take the trouble of explaining the resolutions passed here to their friends who do not know any of the languages here spoken.. . . [1]

BROTHERS,

I am sorry to say that Panditji is not here at the moment. I had been asked—and I requested him to say something. He said, he did not want to say anything. Then again I was told that he would say a few words. But at this time he is not here.

Before I put this resolution to vote I must answer note that I have received. A friend asks if the resolution on removal of untouchability implies inter-dining and inter-marriage with the untouchables. There is nothing in the resolution suggesting this, but if this friend wants to know what I myself feel in the matter I will say that I have expressed my views in *Navajivan* and *Young India* —namely, that we should behave with those we consider untouchable as we behave with other castes.

[1] After some speakers had supported the resolution, the President called upon Madan Mohan Malaviya to speak. As he was absent, the President put the resolution to vote speaking in Hindi.

There was one hand raised against the resolution. The President declared it carried.

[From Hindi]

Report of the Thirty-ninth Indian National Congress, 1924, pp. 95 & 98

6. SPEECH AT CONGRESS SESSION BELGAUM[1]

December 27, 1924

BROTHERS,

Before I move the next resolution I have an atonement to make. When the resolution on removal of untouchability was being moved, I had it in mind to present an untouchable brother before you. I had received a note saying an untouchable brother who was not a delegate wanted to say a few words. I had felt that even though he was not a delegate it would be good to permit him to speak as he was an untouchable. And so I had wanted to call him. But I forgot. The only way I now can atone for it is to apologize to him. Anyway, it is good that I remembered in time.

[From Hindi]

Report of the Thirty-ninth Indian National Congress, 1924, pp. 104-5

7. SPEECH ON ANNIE BESANT'S STATEMENT, BELGAUM CONGRESS

December 27, 1924

Now, before I proceed to the other resolutions I have to announce to you that Dr. Besant feels that she must make a statement before this House in connection with the resolution[2] we passed yesterday. I do not wish to anticipate what the illustrious lady has got to say. But I think I voice the feelings of this House when I tender my congratulations to her for gracing this *pandal* with her presence. Whether she and her devoted followers are able to remain in the Congress or not, I may hope that we will always have her sympathy and moral support with us. I now request Dr. Besant to make her statement . . . .

[1] Before permitting a *Panchama* boy to speak for two minutes

[2] *Vide* "Resolution on Calcutta Agreement and Spinning Franchise, Belgaum Congress, 26-12-1924.

FRIENDS,

You have heard the statement that Dr. Besant has made. You will not expect me to make any remarks upon that statement. Dr. Besant has not made the statement, as I know, in order that she may have reply just now. She has made that statement from a sense of duty so that her silence might not be construed into meaning that we had her assent to the resolution that we passed yesterday. But I hope I may give her the assurance of this Congress that all that she has said will command our respectful attention and that no stone will be left unturned by this Congress or Congressmen and Congresswomen to open the door wide, as wide as is humanly possible, for the entrance of every party that has the interest of India at heart and every party whose goal is swaraj for India. With these words I close this incident, repeating my request to Dr. Besant that whether she and other parties are able to join the Congress or not, the Congress will always expect her and every party's sympathy and support in anything and everything that may commend itself to their attention.

Report of the Thirty-ninth Indian National Congress, 1924, pp. 105 & 107-8

8. RESOLUTIONS MOVED FROM THE CHAIR, BELGAUM CONGRESS

December 27, 1924

The President next moved the following resolutions one by one and put each to vote and declared each carried. The resolutions were read by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in English, by Sjt. Mudvedkar in Kanarese, and by Pandit Sundar Lal in Hindi.

RESOLUTION X: NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

The Congress is strongly of opinion that the hope of the future of the country lies in its youth and therefore trusts that the Provincial Committees will strive more vigorously than they have done to keep alive all national educational institutions. But whilst the Congress is of opinion that existing national educational institutions should be maintained and new ones opened, the Congress does not regard any such institution to be national which does not employ some Indian language as the medium of instruction, and which does not actively encourage Hindu-Muslim unity, education among untouchables and removal of untouchability; which does not make hand-spinning,

carding and training in physical culture and self-defence obligatory; and in which teachers and students over the age of 12 years do not spin for at least half an hour per working day and in which students and teachers do not habitually wear khaddar.

RESOLUTION XI: PAID NATIONAL SERVICE

Whereas it has been discovered that many otherwise deserving men are unobtainable for national service because of the reluctance to accept remuneration for service, the Congress places on record its opinion that there is not only nothing derogatory to one's dignity in accepting remuneration for national service, but the Congress hopes that patriotic young men and women will regard it as an honour to accept maintenance for service faithfully rendered and that those needing or those willing to service will prefer national to any other service.

RESOLUTION XII: CHANGES IN THE CONSTITUTION

In Article Xl "Rs. 10" to be altered to "Re. 1".

In Article XXIII, add, after the first sentence ending with the word "Congress":

"The treasurers shall be in charge of the funds of the Congress and shall keep proper accounts of them. The general secretaries shall be in charge of the office of the All-India Congress Committee and shall be responsible for the publication of the report of the proceedings of the preceding session of the Congress and of any special session held in the course of the year, in co-operation with the Reception Committee. Such report shall be published as soon as possible and not later than four months after the session, and shall be offered for sale."

Add at the end of article XXIII: "and published along with the next Congress report."

RESOLUTION XIII: DRINK AND OPIUM TRAFFIC

The Congress notes with satisfaction that notwithstanding the set back suffered by the campaign against the use of intoxicating drinks and drugs initiated in 1921, Congress workers in several parts of the country have continued it with vigour and determination. The Congress hopes that the peaceful endeavours of workers to wean those who are addicted to the drink or the opium habit from the curse will receive further and greater strength and encouragement than hitherto.

The Congress is of opinion that the policy of the Government of India in using the drink and drug habit of the people as a source of revenue is detrimental to the moral welfare of the people of India and would therefore welcome its abolition.

The Congress is further of opinion that the regulation by the Government of India of the opium traffic is detrimental not only to the moral welfare of India but of the whole world, and that the cultivation of opium in India which is out of all proportion to medical and scientific requirements should be restricted to such requirements.

Report of the Thirty-ninth Indian National Congress, 1924, pp. 115-6 & 118

9. SPEECH ON RESOLUTION ON OFFICE-BEARERS,[1] *BELGAUM CONGRESS*

December 27, 1924

There are now only two things remaining—things that we always have to do, namely, the election of general secretaries and a treasurer and deciding on the venue for the next Congress. It will he desirable to leave this to the All-India Congress Committee, as was done last year. The treasurer is the same. The general secretaries will be: first, Pandit Jawaharlal; second, Qureshi; and third, Mr. Bharucha. Previously Dr. Kitchlew was there and Babu Rajendra Prasad was approached. Babu Rajendra Prasad has to attend to many kinds of activities and he cannot give all his time to our work. So the question of two new secretaries has come up. There was a great deal of discussion in the Subjects Committee on the matter yesterday and I had talks with the delegates. It was decided in the end that since I shall be the President of the Congress for this year and the next year, secretaries should be appointed from among the people who can help me in my work. A number of Swarajists and No-changers are there. How would it be to take them into the Working Committee? I also liked the idea—and I am willing to take into the Working Committee not one but all of them, but on one condition, namely, that they understand it clearly that there is only one national programme, that removal of untouchability, charkha, prohibition form one single programme. I had said that if there be any Swarajist as staunchly believing in khadi as I do I

[1] The resolution was later put to vote and carried.

should like to take him, for through him I should reform all the Swarajists. The moment they come and work with me we become united, that is if we wish to unite.

Thus the discussion went on. No one came in view.

The two persons suggested are not necessarily No-changers. I know a little bit about them which I should like to tell you. I know Shwaib Qureshi. He is an orthodox Muslim. But I have not taken him because of that. I want to take full-time work from secretaries. I therefore told Maulana Shaukat Ali that if Shwaib Sahib would be willing to give me all his time I would like to have him. He agreed. He is the kind of man who, once he makes a promise, carries out that promise. He has a love for khadi, this also I know.

Bharucha is a crank. I am a crank too. So we shall get on splendidly. I shall have to learn from him to carry bundles of khadi on my shoulder and go hawking. He has become a specialist in this. It is his wish to see khadi reach every part of the country. Not one but hundreds of Bharuchas are required thus to sell khadi. Bharucha went to Lala Harkishen Lal, he went to others, and gave them khadi. Even if people swear at him, he does not mind it. The secretaries we need today should be such that they will sell khadi even if they are abused. They should be able to put up with any kind of insult for the sake of khadi. I have therefore selected these two. But though I have done my selection the final say is yours. The Subjects Committee has of course agreed. But the constitution of the Congress requires that you express your opinion. Those of you who accept these names should come out with their opinion. About the treasurer nothing needs to be said. You say if you like the man.

[From Hindi]

Report of the Thirty-ninth Indian National Congress, 1924, pp. 116-7

10. SPEECH ANNOUNCING RESULTS OF SPINNING COMPETITION, BELGAUM CONGRESS

December 27, 1924

Now there is something I am going to say to you. There is something to be announced. You know there has been a spinning competition. Some friends gave gold medals to be awarded, some silver medals. In all, eleven such medals have been awarded. I am going to explain to you who gave these eleven medals and to whom

they have been awarded. Mr. Satyanarayan Sinha from Bihar has been awarded a first-class medal. Six medals were given by Gangaji who is from Sydney. Mr. Satyanarayan Sinha spun 765 yards of yarn in an hour. It is a matter of great credit.

The second medal went to Andhra. Koru Kandhawekamba got it. The third also went to an Andhra man, Mr. Srinivasachari. The fourth went to Madhu Gulabi Amba of Tamilnad and the sixth[1] to Minakshi Sundaram. The seventh to Mrs. Taramati Arunnisa, the eighth to Ramakrishna Sastri, the ninth to Ramdev Thakur, the tenth to Subhan Ali and the eleventh to Lakshmibai Anta of Andhra.

I am sorry to see that only one Muslim brother has secured a medal. There was a time when Muslim women spun the finest yarn. But we also notice that out of eleven medals, four have gone to our sisters and the rest to our brothers. A friend writes to say that he wants to shake hands with the untouchable brother who spoke here. He is a delegate from Delhi. He may have the meeting he desires. The students meeting Still be at 8 o'clock and the All-India Congress Committee will meet at 11 o'clock. It has been suggested that among the departed leaders Maulana Sir Sahib should also be mentioned. I asked Maulana Mahomed Ali. It seems he did not die so recently. He died on the eve of the Cocanada Congress—just a day earlier. It is the duty of all present to mourn for him. And now we are through.

[From Hindi]

Report of the Thirty-ninth Indian National Congress, 1924, p. 118

11. CONCLUDING SPEECH AT BELGAUM CONGRESS

December 27, 1924

In bringing the proceedings of the session to a close, the President delivered a most impassioned address, first in Hindi and then in English . . . .

BROTHERS,

I now wish to tell you that whatever gratitude I may feel for you will be wholly inadequate. I do not think any president can expect a greater amount of love than you have shown me. You willingly did all the work that I wanted you to do for me. When I bid you observe silence, you observed silence. You listened to any speech I wanted to

[1] The fifth name is missing in the source.

make. You wanted me to deliver a written oration. When I wanted to be excused, you did not press. And just as you expressed your opinions here quietly, without being noisy, in the Subjects Committee also there was no disturbance. In fact there might have been disturbance when the bomb of the charkha was dropped in your midst, but you raised no objection and in the Subjects Committee also behaved with perfect decorum. I feel this kindness of my brethren to me must be the result of some good deed I may have done in an earlier life. It is my wish that the kindness you have shown towards me, you should show towards India, for if I wish to live it is only for India and if I wish to die, it is also only for India. Not a leaf stirs without God's will. But every man has a right to ask of God just as a child asks of his father what he wants. I have seen that He even grants what I ask Him. What God has willed cannot be otherwise.

I therefore appeal to you, brothers, to gird up your loins for the service of India and stick to the pledge you have taken. I know I took the chair here as President and all of you gave me your love. I desire, naturally, that everyone should praise me, but it does not lead to any achievement. The achievement will come when all of you act as you have pledged. I do not believe that all these tasks are beyond our strength—the third task or the fourth or fifth— none of them.

Listening to the speech of Bhopatkar gave me a pleasant surprise. He demanded if we wanted the destruction of Hinduism that we treat men as untouchables. I was very pleased. And three shastris have just told you that there is no sanction in Hinduism for untouchability as it is practised. Is it the same thing as when we say that Hindus and Muslims should not treat one another as enemies but as brothers? Did you not hear what Shaukat Ali said? What did Lajpat Rai say? Zafar Ali Khan raised an objection. I do not see anything to object to, but he is not an enemy of India. You should treat no one as enemy. The urge in your heart should be to make a brother of an enemy.

Lalaji has invoked a principle, namely, that the question is of the human species as a whole. It is not confined to any particular religion. He said if a Hindu became mad, should not a Mussalman swear at him? If Mussalmans abused Ramachandra and Krishna should not Hindus abuse the Prophet? If you cannot decide this matter by forgiving, go to a court or a panchayat. I am a non-co-operator, but if a Mussalman abuses Lord Krishna I will say, "Go to a court, but do not fight. There is nothing in this to fight over." It does not require

much time to accept this principle. There should be a fever in us for swaraj, our hearts should burn for it. When Bhopatkar was speaking I thought of Lokamanya. He was the genius of swaraj. A remarkable thing I heard about him is that when his wife lay dying he was busy in his work for swaraj. If such volcanoes are created in our hearts we can do the third thing, the fourth thing and everything else. That you should wear khadi when you come to Congress is nothing big. That we should give up wearing foreign-cloth is nothing big. Today I do not talk about burning foreign-cloth. I am today not the man who in 1921 had caused foreign cloth to be burnt. But we have left peaceful ways. If even today we can bring about complete peace I can again take up what we did in 1921. Under the pretext of burning foreign-cloth we heaped stones to throw at people.

I know we cannot simultaneously do both: invoke truth and practise untruth. If we invoke truth we must not practise untruth, or our bodies will burn up. It burns my heart certainly. I cannot bear it if someone falsely swears by God or takes false pledges. Abuse me by all means, beat me, kick me with shoes, spit at me, I give you my word that I shall not get angry. But take a pledge and not act on it and anger will burn away my whole body. I should wish to die if a woman who is unchaste should parade her chastity in front of me. I should wish to die, again, if a man who is impure should parade his purity in front of me. I should not wish to witness it. If you want that the love you have shown me, the kindness you have done me in placing the mantle of responsibility on me, should continue, you should understand this well; keep me in this position if you want to. But it will be even better if the Swarajists and No-changers should walk in unison, As Dr. Besant said, one single stick, by itself, easily breaks, but in a bundle it is very strong.

Let us not think that the Swarajists are bad people. To a pure heart all hearts are pure. What are the qualities of the soul? The soul is like marble. Shankaracharya has said that blemishes are not native to it. Blemishes are *maya*[1]. If your heart acquires strength, you will be able to remove blemishes from others without thinking evil of them. If treachery is the reward of trust, will the man who trusts come to harm? Only the one who commits treachery will come to harm. If I say to Jawaharlal that he is more than a son to me and if I say it only to take some work from him, it is deception. Who am I to venerate

[1] Cosmic illusion

Jawaharlal? The world will venerate him, shower flowers on him.

Today I have to say—not to the one alone or the other alone but to both: During this one year work so hard that our strength should be increased and we should be able to feel that swaraj is at last within our reach.

Addressing next in English the President said

I have just poured out my heart to you in my Hindi speech. It is impossible for me to reproduce what I have said in Hindi. One thing however I want to say. I do not think that any chairman, any president, could possibly claim greater courtesy, greater attention and greater affection than you the delegates have extended to me. I assure you that it has been the greatest delight to me to preside over your deliberations here in the Congress and in the Subjects Committee. Every one of you have readily responded to every call that I have made upon you. I know that I have put a heavy strain upon you. I have not walked you. I know I have run you. But what can I do? You are impatient and I am impatient. We want to march towards swaraj and our march for swaraj has got to be, not at a snail's pace, but a double quick march; and if we do want to work and march forward, I cannot afford to waste a single minute of your time and my time. Therefore, I have put on speed to the best of my ability and it has been a wonder to me—it has given to me the greatest satisfaction that you have so readily responded to me, so nobly! And you have not done this thing charity but with a magnificent generosity. No one could have possibly claimed more, asked for more, and got more. You have given me all that I could possibly ask of you.

But what I now want to ask you for, is something more, something better, something richer, and that is this: Transfer all this noble affection, all this generosity that you have shown to me to the thing that you and I hold dear, to the thing that alone binds you and me together and that is swaraj. If we want swaraj, we must know the conditions of swaraj. You have endorsed the conditions in the resolutions. Every one of you known those conditions. Do not leave these conditions here. Take them away with you and fulfil them to the letter and to the spirit and insist upon others to fulfil those conditions, not by force but by love. Exert all the influence and all the pressure which love can exert, upon everyone that surrounds you and upon your neighbours. Go throughout your district and spread this message of khaddar, spread this message of Hindu-Muslim unity and spread this

message against[1] untouchability. Go hand in hand with the youngsters of the country and make them the real soldiers of swaraj.

But you will not do it if the Swarajists and No-changers still bear malice against each other, if they still have jealousies against one another. It will be possible only if you bury hatred, leave all the jealousies and anger, all those bad influences here. I ask you to bury the hatchet. Bury the jealousies underground and cremate them wherever you like. But take away the sacred resolution that you have passed and say, "Let the heavens fall, but the bond that binds us today, the tie that has bound the Swarajists and the No-changers, shall never snap." My work is finished.

Scarcely had the President got down the rostrum when he was reminded of the duty of the Congress to thank the Reception Committee, and he re-entered the rostrum and said:

I would not have forgiven myself if I had not tendered my thanks to the noble volunteers trained by Dr. Hardikar and to the members of the Reception Committee. But in the mad passion for swaraj I forgot all about the volunteers and the members of the Reception Committee.

I know that they have not served in order to receive thanks. The noble service that they have rendered is its own reward. But it was due from me and I would have been guilty of a breach of duty to you if I had not returned thanks to all of you. May God bless all the volunteers and the members of the Reception Committee.

Report of the Thirty-ninth Indian National Congress, 1924, pp. 119-22

12. SPEECH AT UNTOUCHABILITY CONFERENCE, BELGAUM

[*December 27, 1924*]

The following is a free rendering of Mr. Gandhi's speech at the Untouchability Conference held at Belgaum during the Congress week:

FRIENDS,

It was hardly necessary to ask me to express my views on the subject of untouchability. I have declared times without number from various public platforms that it is the prayer of my heart that if I

[1] The source has "of".

should fail to obtain *moksha* in this very birth I might be born a *Bhangi* in my next. I believe in *varnashrama* both according to birth and to karma. But I do not regard *Bhangis* as in any sense a low order. On the contrary I know many *Bhangis* who are worthy of reverence. On the other hand there are Brahmins going about whom it would be very difficult to regard with any reverence. Holding these views, therefore, if there is a rebirth in store for me, I wish to be born a pariah in the midst of pariahs, because thereby I would be able to render more effective service to them and also be in a better position to plead with other communities on their behalf.

But just as I do not want the so-called touchables to despise the untouchables, so also I do not want the latter to entertain any feeling of hatred and ill-will towards the former. I do not want them to wrest their rights by violence as is done in the West. The trend of world opinion is against such violence. I can clearly see a time coming in the world when it will be impossible to secure rights by arbitrament of force, so I tell my untouchable brethren today as I tell the Government, that if they resort to force for the attainment of their purpose, they shall certainly fail.

I want to uplift Hinduism. I regard the untouchables as an integral part of the Hindu community. I am pained when I see a single *Bhangi* driven out of the fold of Hinduism. But do not believe that all class distinctions can be obliterated. I believe in the doctrine of equality as taught by Lord Krishna in the *Gita*. The *Gita* teaches us that members of all the four castes should be treated on an equal basis. It does not prescribe the same dharma for the Brahmin as for the *Bhangi*. But it insists that the latter shall be entitled to the same measure of consideration and esteem as the former with all his superior learning. It is therefore our duty to see that the untouchables do not feel that they are despised or looked down upon. Let them not be offered leavings from our plates for their subsistence. How can I accord differential treatment to any person, be he Brahmin or Bhangi, who worships the same God and keeps his body and soul pure and clean? I for one would regard myself as having sinned if I gave to a *Bhangi* unclean food from the leavings from the kitchen or failed to render him personal assistance when he was in need.

Let me make my position absolutely clear. While I do hold that the institution of untouchability as it stands today has no sanction in Hinduism, Hinduism does recognize “untouchability” in a limited

sense and under certain circumstances. For instance, every time that my mother handled unclean things she became untouchable for the time being and had to cleanse herself by bathing. As a *Vaishnava* I refuse to believe that anyone can be regarded untouchable by reason of his or her birth, and such untouchability as is recognized by religion is by its very nature transitory, easily removable and referable to the deed not the doer. Not only that. Just as we revere our mother for the sanitary service that she renders us when we are infants, and the greater her service the greater is our reverence for her, similarly the *Bhangis* are entitled to our highest reverence for the sanitary service they perform for society.

Now anoter point. I do not regard inter-dining and inter-marriage as essential to the removal of untouchability. I believe in *varnashrama* dharma. But I eat with *Bhangis*. I do not know whether I am a sannyasi, for it seriously doubt whether in this *Kaliyuga* it is at all possible for anyone to fulfil the conditions prescribed for a sannyasi. But I am moving deliberately in the direction of *sannyasa*. It is, therefore, not only not necessary for me to observe these restrictions but their observance may be even harmful for me. As regards the question of inter-marriage, it does not arise in cases like mine. Sufficient for me to say that my scheme does not include inter-marriage. Let me tell you that in my own clan all the members do not inter-dine. In certain cases among our *Vaishnava* families they do not use each other's utensils or even cook food on fire fetched from others' kitchens. You may call this practice superstitious, but I do not regard it as such. It certainly does no harm to Hinduism. In my Ashram, Dudhabhai, one of the untouchable inmates, dines with the rest without any distinction. But I do not recommend anybody outside the Ashram to follow this example. Again, you know the esteem in which I hold Malaviyaji. I would wash his feet. But he would not take food touched by me. Am I to resent it as a mark of contempt? Certainly not, because I know that no contempt is meant.

The religion to which I belong prescribes for our observance *maryada*[1] *dharma*. The *rishis* of old carried on exhaustive researches through meditation, and as a result of the researches they discovered some great truths, such as have no parallel perhaps in any other religion. One of these was that they regarded certain kinds of foods as injurious for the spiritual well-being of man. So they interdicted their

[1] Bounds or limits.

use. Now suppose someone had to travel abroad and live among strange people with different customs and standards as regard their diet. Knowing as they did how compelling sometimes the force of social customs of the people among whom men lived was, they promulgated *maryada dharma* to help one in such emergencies. Though, however, I believe in *maryada dharma*, I do not regard it as an essential part of Hinduism. I can even conceive a time when these restrictions might be abolished with impunity. But the reform contemplated in the untouchability movement does not obliterate the restriction as to inter-dining and inter-marriage. I cannot recommend wholesale abolition of these restrictions to the public, even at the risk of being charged with hypocrisy and inconsistency. For instance, I let my son dine freely in Mussalman households because I believe he can take sufficient care as to what to take and what not to take. I myself have no scruples in taking my food in Mussalman house-holds because I have my own strict rules about my diet. Let me tell you of an incident that happened at Aligarh. Swami Satyadev and I were Khawaja Sahib's guests. Swami Satyadev did not share my views. We argued about them. I told him that holding the views I did, it would be as wrong of me to refuse to partake of the food offered by a Mussalman as it would be on his part to transgress his *maryada*. So Swami Satyadev was provided with separate cooking arrangements. Similarly when I was Bari Sahib's guest he provided us with a Brahmin cook with strict instructions to obtain all the rations for us fresh from the bazaar. When asked why he put himself to such inconvenience he explained that he did so because he wanted to avoid the slightest possibility of suspicion on the part of the public that he entertained any secret designs of proselytization against me or my companions. That single incident raised Bari Sahib in my esteem. He sometimes commits mistakes, but he is as simple and innocent as a child. And although sometimes people complain of him to me bitterly, my first impression of him still remains.

I have dwelt on this point at such great length, because I want to be absolutely plain with you (untouchables). I do not want to employ diplomacy in my dealings with you or for that matter with anyone. I do not want to keep you under any false illusion or win your support by holding out temptations. I want to remove untouchability because its removal is essential for swaraj and I want swaraj. But I would not exploit you for gaining any political ends of mine. The issue with me is bigger even than swaraj. I am anxious to see an end put to

untouchability because for me it is an expiation and a penance. It is not the untouchables whose *shuddhi* I effect—the thing would be absurd—but my own and that of the Hindu religion. Hinduism has committed a great sin in giving sanction to this evil and I am anxious— if such a thing as vicarious penance is possible—to purify it of that sin by expiating for it in my own person.

That being so, it follows that the only means open to me for my purpose are those of ahimsa and truth. I have adopted an untouchable child as my own. I confess I have not been able to convert my wife completely to my view. She cannot bring hereself to love her as I do. But I cannot convert my wife by anger; I can do so only by love. If any of my people have done you any wrong, I ask your forgiveness for it. Some members of the untouchable class said when I was at Poona that they would resort to force if the Hindus did not alter their attitude towards them. Can untouchability be removed by force? Can the amelioration of the untouchables come through these methods? The only way by which you and I can wean orthodox Hindus from their bigotry is by patient argument and correct conduct. So long as they are not converted, I can only ask you to put up with your lot with patience. I am willing to stand by you and share your sufferings with you. You must have the right of worship in any temple in which members of other castes are admitted. You must have admission to schools along with the children of other castes without any distinction. You must be eligible to the highest office in the land not excluding even that of the Viceroy's. That is my definition of the removal of untouchability.

But I can help you in this only by following the way indicated by my religion and not by following Western methods. For that way I cannot save Hinduism. Yours is a sacred cause. Can one serve a sacred cause by adopting Satan's methods? I pray you, therefore, to dismiss from your mind the idea of ameliorating your condition by brute force. The *Gita* tells us that by sincerely meditating on the Lord in one's heart, one can attain *moksha*. Meditation is waiting on God. If waiting on God brings the highest bliss of salvation, how much quicker must it bring removal of untouchability? Waiting on God means increasing purity. Let us by prayer purify ourselves and we shall not only remove untouchability but shall also hasten the advent of swaraj.

Young India, 22-1-1925

13. PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS AT COW-PROTECTION CONFERENCE, BELGAUM

[*December 28, 1924*]

The following is the substance of Mr. Gandhi's presidential speech at the Cow-Protection Conference held during the congress week at Belgaum:

I hold the question of cow-protection to be not less momentous but in certain respects even of far greater moment than that of swaraj. I would even go so far as to say that just as so long as Hindu-Muslim unity is not effected, Hinduism not purged of the taint of untouchability and the wearing of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar does not become universal, swaraj would be impossible of attainment; even so, the term "swaraj" would be devoid of all meaning so long as we have not found out a way of saving the cow, for that is the touchstone on which Hinduism must be tested and proved before there can be any real swaraj in India. I claim to be a *sanatani* Hindu. People may laugh and say that to call myself a *sanatani* Hindu when I eat and drink from the hands of Mussalmans and Christians, keep an untouchable girl in my house as my daughter and do not even hesitate to quote the Bible, is nothing short of doing violence to language. But I would still adhere to my claim, for I have faith in me which tells me that a day would come—may be most probably after I am dead and no longer present in this world in the flesh to bear witness—when my critics would recognize their error and admit the justness of my claim. Pretty long while ago, I once wrote in *Young India* an article on Hinduism,[1] which I consider to be one of my most thoughtful writings on the subject. The definition of Hinduism which I gave in it is probably the clearest that I have ever given. After defining a Hindu as one who believed in the Vedas and Upanishads, recited the *Gayatri* and subscribed to the doctrine of rebirth and transmigration, etc., I added that so far as the popular notion of Hinduism was concerned, its distinguishing feature was belief in cow-protection and reverence for the cow. I do not grant to be told as to what Hindus ten thousand years ago did. I know there are scholars who tell us that cow-sacrifice is mentioned in the Vedas. I remember when I was a high school student we read a sentence in our Sanskrit text-book to the effect that the Brahmins of old used to eat beef. That exercised my mind greatly and I used to wonder and ask myself whether what was written could

[1] *Vide* "Hinduism", October 6, 1921.

be after all true. But as I grew up the conviction slowly forced itself upon me that even if the text on which these statements were based was actually part of the Vedas, the interpretation put upon it could not be correct. I had conceived of another way out of the difficulty. This was purely for personal satisfaction."If the Vedic text under reference was incapable of bearing any other interpretation than the literal", I said to myself, "the Brahmins who there alleged to be eating beef had the power to bring the slaughtered animals back to life again." But that is neither here nor there. The speculation does not concern the general mass of the Hindus. I do not claim to be a Vedic scholar. I have read Sanskrit scriptures largely in translation. A layman like myself, therefore, can hardly have any *locus standi* in a controversy like this. But l have confidence in myself. Therefore I do not hesitate to freely express to others my opinions based on my inner experience. It may be that we may not be all able to agree as to the exact meaning and significance of cow-protection. For Hinduism does not rest on the authority of one book or one prophet; nor does it possess a common creed—like the *Kalma*[1] of Islam—acceptable to all. That renders a common definition of Hinduism a bit difficult, but therein lies its strength also. For, it is this special feature that has given to Hinduism its inclusive and assimilative character and made its gradual, silent evolution possible. Go to any Hindu child and he would tell you that cow-protection is the supreme duty of every Hindu and that anyone who does not believe in it hardly deserves the name of a Hindu.

But while I am a firm believer in the necessity and importance of cow-protection, I do not at all endorse the current methods adopted for that purpose. Some of the practices followed in the name of cow-protection cause me extreme anguish. My heart aches within me. Several year ago I wrote in *Hind Swaraj* that our cow-protection societies were in fact so many cow-killing societies.[2] Since then and after my return to India in 1915, that conviction of mine has grown stronger and firmer every day. Holding the views that I do, therefore, I have naturally fit a great hesitation in accepting the Presidentship of this Conference. Would it be proper for me to preside over this

[1] The creed of Islam as expressed in the verse from The Koran: "There is no God but Allah and Mohammed is His apostle."

[2] *Vide* "Hind Swaraj - Chapter X : The Condition of India (Continued) : The Hindus and the Mahomedans", November 22, 1909.

Conference under these circumstances? Would I at all succeed in convincing you of the soundness of my views—radically different as they are from the commonly accepted notions on this subject? These were the questions that filled my mind. But Mr. Gangadharrao Deshpande wired to me that I might preside over the Conference on my terms, that Sjt. Chikodi was familiar with my views on the matter and was at one with me to a very large extent. So much by way of personal explanation.

Once, while in Champaran, I was asked to expound my views regarding cow-protection. I told my Champaran friends then that if anybody was really anxious to save the cow, he ought once for all to disabuse his mind of the notion that he had to make the Christians and Mussalmans to desist from cow-killing. Unfortunately today we seem to believe that the problem of cow-protection consists merely in preventing non-Hindus, especially Mussalmans from beef-eating and cow-killing. That seems to me to be absurd. Let no one, however, conclude from this that I am indifferent when a non-Hindu kills a cow or that I can bear the practice of cow-killing. On the contrary, no one probably experiences a greater agony of the soul when a cow is killed. But what am I to do? Am I to fulfil my dharma myself or am I to get it fulfilled by proxy? Of what avail would be my preaching *brahmacharya* to others if I am at the same time steeped in vice myself? How can I ask Mussalmans to desist from eating beef when I eat it myself? But supposing even that I myself do not kill the cow, is it any part of my duty to make the Mussalman, against his will, to do likewise? Mussalmans claim that Islam permits them to kill the cow. To make a Mussalman, therefore, to abstain from cow-killing under compulsion would amount in my opinion to converting him to Hinduism by force. Even in India under swaraj, in my opinion, it would be for a Hindu majority unwise and improper to coerce by legislation a Mussalman minority into submission to statutory prohibition of cow-slaughter. When I pledge myself to save the cow, I do not mean merely the Indian cow, but the cow all the world over. My religion teaches me that I should by my personal conduct instill into the minds of those who might hold different views, the conviction that cow-killing is a sin and that therefore it ought to be abandoned. My ambition is no less than to see the principle of cow-protection established throughout the world. But that requires that I should set my own house thoroughly in order first.

Let alone other provinces. Would you believe me if I told you that the Hindus of Gujarat practice cow-killing? You will wonder but let me tell you that in Gujarat the bullocks employed for drawing carts are goaded with spiked rods till blood oozes from their bruised backs. You may say that this is not cow-killing but bullock-killing. But I see no difference between the two, the killing of the cow and killing her male progeny. Again you may say that this practice may be abominable and worthy of condemnation but it hardly amounts to killing. But here, again, I beg to differ. If the bullock in question had a tongue to speak and were asked which fate he prepared—instantaneous death under the butcher's knife or the long-drawn agony to which he is subjected, he would undoubtedly prefer the former. At Calcutta a Sindhi gentleman used to meet me often. He used always to tell me stories about the cruelty that was practised by milk-men on cows in Calcutta. He asked me to see for myself the process of milking the cows as carried on in the dairies. The practice of blowing is loathsome. The people who do this are Hindus. Again, nowhere in the world is the condition of cattle so poor as in India. Nowhere in the world would you find such skeletons of cows and bullocks as you do in our cow-worshipping India. Nowhere are bullocks worked so beyond their capacity as here. I contend that so long as these things continue, we have no right to ask anybody to stop cow-killing. In *Bhagavata*, in one place the illustrious author describes the various things which have been the cause of India's downfall. One of the causes mentioned is that we have given up cow-protection. Today I want to bring home to you if I can the close relation which exists between the present poverty-stricken condition of India and our failure to protect the cow. We, who live in cities, probably can have no idea of the extent of the poverty of our poor folk. Millions upon millions cannot afford to have two full meals per day. Some live on rotten rice only. There are others for whom salt and chillies are the only table luxuries. Is it not a just nemesis for our belying of our religion?

Then in India we have the system of *pinjrapoles*[1]. The way in which most of these are managed is far from satisfactory. And yet, I am sorry to observe that the people who are mostly responsible for them are Jains, who are out and out believers in ahimsa. Well organized, these *pinjrapoles* ought to be flourishing dairies supplying

[1] Shelters for crippled and aged cattle

pure good milk at a cheap rate to the poor. I am told however that even in a rich city like Ahmedabad there are cases of the wives of labourers feeding their babies on flour dissolved in water. There cannot be a sadder commentary on the way in which we protect the cow than that in a country which has such an extensive system of *pinjrapoles*, the poor should experience a famine of pure, good milk. That I hope will serve to explain to you how our failure to protect the cow at one end of the chain results in our skin and bone starvelings at the other.

If, therefore, I am asked how to save the cow, my first advice will be: "Dismiss from your minds the Mussalmans and Christians altogether and mind your duty first." I have been telling Maulana Shaukat Ali all along that I was helping him to save his cow, i.e., the Khilafat, because I hoped to save my cow thereby. I am prepared to place my life in the hands of the Mussalmans, to live merely on their sufferance. Why? Simply that I might be able to protect the cow. I hope to achieve the end not by entering into a bargain with the Mussalmans but by bringing about a change of heart in them. So long as this is not done I hold my soul in patience. For I have not a shadow of doubt in my mind that such a change of heart can be brought about only by our own correct conduct towards them and by our personal example.

Cow-slaughter and man-slaughter are in my opinion the two sides of the same coin. And the remedy for both is identical, i.e., that we develop the ahimsa principle and endeavour to win over our opponents by love. The test of love is *tapasya* and *tapasya* means suffering. I offered to share with the Mussalmans their suffering to the best of my capacity not merely because I wanted their co-operation for winning swaraj but also because I had in mind the object of saving the cow. The Koran, so far as I have been able to understand it, declares it to be a sin to take the life of any living being without cause. I want to develop the capacity to convince the Mussalmans that to kill the cow is practically to kill their fellow-countrymen and friends—the Hindus. The Koran says that there can be no heaven for one who sheds the blood of an innocent neighbour. Therefore I am anxious to establish the best neighbourly relations with the Mussalmans. I scrupulously avoid doing anything that might hurt their feelings. I even try to respect their prejudices. But I do this not in a spirit of bargain, I ask them for no reward. For that I look to God only. My *Gita* tells me that evil can never result from a good action. Therefore I

must help the Mussalmans from a pure sense of duty—without making any terms with them. For more cows are killed today for the sake of Englishmen in India than for the Mussalmans. I want to convert the former also. I would like to convince them that whilst they are in our midst their duty lies in getting rid of their Western culture to the extent that it comes in conflict with ours. You will thus see that even our self-interest requires us to observe ahimsa. By ahimsa we will be able to save the cow and also to win the friendship of the English. I want to purchase the friendship of all by sacrifice. But if I do not approach the English on bent knees, as I do the Mussalmans, that is because the former are intoxicated with power. The Mussalman is a fellow-sufferer in slavery. We can therefore speak to him as a friend and a comrade. The Englishman on the contrary is unable to appreciate our friendly advances. He would spurn them. He does not care for our friendship, he wants to patronize us. We want neither his insults nor his patronage. We therefore let him alone. Our Shastras have laid down that charity should be given only to a deserving person, that knowledge should be imparted only to one who is desirous of having it. So we content ourselves with non-co-operating with our rulers—not out of hatred but in a spirit of love. It was because love was the motive force behind non-co- operation that I advised suspension of civil disobedience when violence broke out in Bombay and Chauri Chaura. I wanted to make it clear to Englishmen that I wanted to win swaraj not by shedding their blood but by making them feel absolutely at ease as regards the safety of their persons. What profit would it be if I succeed in saving a few cows from death by using force against persons who do not regard cow-killing as sinful? Cow-protection then can only be secured by cultivating universal friendliness, i.e., ahimsa. Now you will understand why I regard the question of cow-protection as greater even than that of swaraj. The fact is that the capacity to achieve the former will suffice for the latter purpose as well.

So far I have confined myself to the grosser or material aspect of cow-protection, i.e., the aspect that refers to the animal cow only. In its finer or spiritual sense the term cow-protection means the protection of every living creature. Today the world does not fully realize the force and possibilities that lie hidden in ahimsa. The scriptures of Christians, Mussalmans and Hindus are all replete with the teaching of ahimsa. But we do not know its full import. The *rishis* of old performed terrible penances and austerities to discover the right

meaning of sacred texts. Today we have at least two interpretations of the *Gayatri*. Which one of them is correct, that of the *sanatanis* or that of the Arya Samajists? Who can say? But our *rishis* made the startling discovery (and every day I feel more and more convinced of its truth) that sacred texts and inspired writings yield their truth only in proportion as one has advanced in the practice of ahimsa and truth. The greater the realization of truth and ahimsa, the greater the illumination. These same *rishis* declared that cow-protection was the supreme duty of a Hindu and that its performance brought one *moksha*, i.e., salvation. Now I am not ready to believe that by merely protecting the animal cow, one can attain *moksha*. For *moksha* one must completely get rid of one's lower feelings like attachment, hatred, anger, jealousy, etc. It follows, therefore, that the meaning of cow-protection in terms of *moksha* must be much wider and far more comprehensive than is commonly supposed. The cow-protection which can bring one *moksha* must, from its very nature, include the protection of everything that feels. Therefore in my opinion, every little breach of the ahimsa principle, like causing hurt by harsh speech to anyone, man, woman or child, to cause pain to the weakest and the most insignificant creature on earth would be a breach of the principle of cow-protection, would be tantamount to the sin of beef-eating—differing from it in degree, if at all, rather than in kind. That being so, I hold that with all our passions let loose we cannot today claim to be following the principle of cow-protection.

At Lahore I met Lala Dhanpatrai, somewhat of a crank like myself. He told me that if I wanted to save the cow I should wean the Hindus from their false notions. He said, it was Hindus who sold cows to the Mussalman butcher and but for them the latter would have no cows to kill. The reason for this practice he told me was economical. The village commons that served as grazing grounds for the cattle had been enclosed by the Government and so people could not afford to keep cows. He suggested a way out of the difficulty. It was no longer necessary, he told me to sell cows that had ceased to give milk. He himself, he said, had tried the experiment of buying such cows. He then put them to the plough. After some time, if proper care was taken, they put on flesh and became fit to bear again. I cannot vouch for the truth of this statement. But I see no reason why this practice should not be generally adopted if the facts are as stated by Lala Dhanpatrai. Our Shastras certainly have nowhere said that under no circumstances should the cow not be used for draught purposes. If we

feed the cow properly, tend it carefully and then use her for drawing carts or working the ploughs always taking care not to tax her beyond her capacity, there can be nothing wrong in it. I therefore commend the suggestion for consideration and adoption if it is found to be workable. We may not look down upon a person if he tries to protect the cow in this manner.

Young India, 29-1-1925

14. SPEECH AT ALL-INDIA STATES CONFERENCE, BELGAUM[1]

[*December 30, 1924*]

I am overwhelmed with the affection which is shown to me by all during the past few days. Today the president of your Conference in adjourning the address to give me an opportunity to speak a few words to you has given further proof of it. You may know that I was born in an Indian village. I know Kathiawar States. My relations with them are cordial. Though I say little I am always watching the activities in the Indian States. In my Presidential Address I have made a reference to the Indian States. The All Parties Conference that met recently in Bombay has appointed a committee to draft a scheme of swaraj and in my address I have outlined my ideas of the coming swaraj. I had to condense my ideas in the shortest space possible and so I could give very few sentences to the Indian States. There are some *vakil* friends of mine who have something to say about this reference of mine to the Indian States. They are saying that I have spoken about the status of Indian princes and chiefs and nothing about their obligations towards their subjects. But I need not remind these friends of mine that rights always carry with them corresponding obligations. In my scheme of Indian swaraj there is no idea of destroying the States. I wanted to bring out this view prominently before the public. If, however, subjects from Indian States migrated to British Indian territory owing to the oppression of any Indian Prince, the swaraj government will on no account hand over these people to the mercies of the Prince concerned. This guarantee to the subject and the guarantee to the Princes about their status postulate good government

[1] President over by N. C. Kelkar. As Gandhiji hat to leave immediately, the president requested him to say a few words.

in the Indian States.

In geometry there are certain postulates. So also there are some in the political science. When the Princes are guaranteed their status it is presumed that they will also guarantee progressive and enlightened government to their subjects. I am shortly to preside over the Kathiawar States Conference at Bhavnagar and I have reserved all my detailed say about the Indian States for this occasion. I was invited to preside over this Conference long ago. But before my incarceration I had unfurled the banner of satyagraha and I thought that my acceptance of the presidentship of any of these conferences might jeopardize the position of the Chiefs. I did not wish to put them in an awkward position and thus to mar the harmonious relations which existed between them and me. You know that I am an out-and-out believer in non-violence. To embitter the sweet relations between Princes and their subjects would be contrary to my principles. But I need not assure you that I can never forget the people of these States and their legitimate claims. My desire is to maintain sweet reasonableness in my handling the question of Indian States and I do not wish to prejudice any party. My sole desire is that the status of Princes and the rights of their subjects should be respected. I earnestly wish to enlist the sympathies of the Princes in this propaganda of khadi and the Charkha. I have pinned my faith to the spinning-wheel. On it I believe the salvation of this country depends.

After the Mahatma left, Mr. Kelkar gave a summary of his speech in Marathi . .

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-1-1925

15. LETTER TO MADELEINE SLADE

ON THE TRAIN,
December 31, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I must apologize to you for not writing to you earlier. I have been continuously travelling. I thank you for £20 sent by you. The amount will be used for popularizing the spinning-wheel.

I am glad indeed that instead of obeying your first impulse you decided to fit yourself for the life here and to take time. If a year's

test still impels you to come, you will probably be right in coming to India.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MISS MADELEINE SLADE
63, BEDFORD GARDENS
CAMPDEN HILL
LONDON, W. 8.

From the original: C. W. 5181. Courtesy: Mirabehn

16. SPEECH AT ALL-INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE, BOMBAY[1]

December 31, 1924

Mrs. Naidu has come from Africa and she has told you all about it. Whatever I was to say I said in the Congress. I do not know whether by asking the Government we can get help. I think as long as we have no strength, we will have to bear whatever is going on in Kenya. There was a time when satyagraha was going on in South Africa and the Government was also saying that the Indians had become disloyal. At the same time Lord Hardinge made a pronouncement in Madras and that did considerable good to Indians. The reason of this was that the people in South Africa were offering satyagraha. If you want to help them then you should first help yourselves.

I have painfully heard that Indians in East Africa have decided to go in Councils and have left the outside work. I do [not] know whether it is right or wrong for I cannot form a judgment from so long a distance.

The time for us now is to gather our strength and then Lord Reading, you will see, following the same course as Lord Hardinge. Hindu-Muslim unity is very necessary and at the same time to wear khaddar is also essential, but I do not know whether I should tell it here or not. I wish that all Government appointments should go to Mussalmans, Parsis and Christians because they are small in number; if there remains any, they should be filled by Hindus.

I have come to know about the khadi work in Bengal from a

[1] At its 16th annual session supporting the resolution condemning the Natal Boroughs Ordinance which deprived Indian of municipal franchise in Natal

co-worker, Mr. Roy (Satish Babu). There the work is chiefly carried on by Muslim women. They earn their living by charkha. So if you want to benefit them, wear khadi. If you want to help Egypt and as I also have told Maulana Mahomed Ali, the only course is to get swaraj first. Then and only then you can help in real sense Turkey, Egypt and Arabia. If Hindus and Muslims are united not by paper pacts and resolutions but by heart then and then only you can protect Islam in India and abroad and you please do these for one year and see the results yourselves.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-1-1925

17. BELGAUM IMPRESSIONS [*-I*]

When there are too many impressions all clamouring for expression, the registrar's task becomes unenviable. Such is my position as I take up the pencil to register my impressions of Belgaum. I can but try.

Gangadharrao Deshpande and his band of workers rose to the highest height. His Vijayanagar was a triumph—not yet of swaraj—but certainly of organisation. Every detail was well thought out. Dr. Hardikar's volunteers were smart and attentive. The roads were broad and well kept. They could easily be broader for the convenience of the temporary shops and the easy movement of thousands of sight-seers. The lighting arrangement was perfect. The huge pavilion with a marble fountain in front of it seemed to invite all who would enter it. The capacity of the pavilion could not be less than seventeen thousand. The sanitary arrangements though quite good needed still more scientific treatment than what they had. The method of the disposal of used water was very primitive. I invite the Cawnpore people who are to have the honour of holding the Congress session of 1925 to study the most effective methods of camp sanitation now and not leave this very important part to the eleventh hour.

Whilst I am able to give ungrudging praise for the almost perfect organization that one could see in the Congress camp, I cannot help remarking that Gangadharrao could not escape the temptation of making the outside look lavish and in following the traditional custom of going in for extravagant luxuries for the "people at the top". Take the presidential "hut". I had bargained for a khaddar hut; but I was insulted with a khaddar palace. The floor space reserved for the

President was certainly quite necessary The fence round the "palace" was an absolute necessity for my protection from embarrassingly admiring crowds. But I am sure that, had I been contractor, I would have given the same space and the same comfort to the President at half the expense. This however is only one instance of the many I can quote of lavish expenditure. The refreshments supplied to the members of the Subjects Committee and others were unnecessarily lavish. There was no sense of proportion observed as to the quantities served. I am finding fault with nobody. The extravagance came from a generous heart. It was all well meant. Forty years' tradition cannot be undone in a day, especially if no one likely to gain a hearing will repeatedly criticize it. I know, when I suggested to Vallabhbhai in 1921 that he should make a beginning, he retorted by saying that whilst he would try to attain simplicity and avoid extravagance, he would not allow his pet Gujarat to be considered miserly. I could not persuade him that if he did not have a temporary fountain costing several thousand rupees he would not be considered miserly. I told him too that whatever he did was bound to be copied by his successors. Vallabhbhai would not take the odium of being considered miserly. I advise Cawnpore to lead the way. The miserliness of Cawnpore may be considered the extravagance of tomorrow. There were many things Vallabhbhai did discard. I did not hear any remarks about the disappearance of the things that were really not a felt want.

Let us remember that the Congress is intended to represent the poorest toilers who are the salt of India. Our scale must be so far as possible adjusted to theirs. We must therefore be progressively economical without being inefficient and stingy.

In my opinion the charges for accommodation and food are much too heavy, We may do worse than take a lesson from the book of Swami Shraddhanandji. I remember the sheds he built for his guests who came for the Gurukul anniversary in 1916. He built grass sheds for them at a cost (I think) of about Rs. 2,000. He invited contractors to open restaurants on the ground and made no charge for the accommodation. No one could complain of the arrangement. They knew what they were to expect. Nearly 40,000 people were thus accommodated on the Gurukul ground without the slightest difficulty and with practically no expense. And what is more each visitor received what he wanted and was at liberty to live cheaply or

extravagantly.

I do not say that the Swami's plan should be copied in its entirety. But I do suggest that better and cheaper plans are imperatively necessary. The reduction of the delegate's fees from Rs. 10 to 1 was universally acclaimed.[1] The reduction of lodging and dining charges would be I am sure still more appreciated.

The source of income should be a small entrance fee levied from every spectator. The Congress must be an annual fair where visitors may come and get instruction with amusement. The deliberative part should be an item round which the demonstrative programme should turn. It therefore should take place in decent time, as this year, and the appointments must be religiously observed.

I am not sure that the packing of all other conferences into one week serves any national purpose. In my opinion only those conferences should take place during the Congress week that aid and strengthen the Congress. The President and his " Cabinet" must not be expected to give their attention to anything but Congress work. I know that, if there had been no other call upon my time, I could have better attended to the charge entrusted to me. I had not a moment left to me for contemplation. I was unable to frame the necessary recommendations for making the franchise a success. The fact is that the organizers of various conferences do not take their tasks seriously. They hold them because it has become the fashion to do so. I would urge workers in various directions to avoid the annual dissipation of energy.

The exhibition of indigenous arts and industries is an institution that should grow from year to year. The musical concert was a treat that thousands must have enjoyed. The lantern lectures tracing the tragic history of the ruin of the greatest national industry and the possibilities of its revival were apposite, instructive and amusing. I tender my congratulations to Satish Babu upon the thoughtful and thorough manner in which he organized these lectures. The spinning competition[2] must also be a permanent feature. Its popularity is evinced by the number of competitors, the brilliance of results and the number of donors. This spinning movement is bringing out women from their seclusion as nothing else could have done. Of the 11 prize

[1] *Vide* "Resolutions Moved from the Chair, Belgaum Congress", 27-12-1924.

[2] *Vide* "Speech Announcing Results of Spinning Competition, Belgaum Congress", 27-12-1924.

winners, 4 belonged to the gentle sex. It has given them a dignity and self-confidence which no university degree could give them. They are realizing that their active assistance is just as indispensable as that of men and, what is more, such assistance can be as easily rendered by them as, if not more easily than, by men.

One thing I must not omit before I close these impressions. There were nearly seventy-five volunteers, mostly Brahmins, who were engaged in conservancy work in the Congress camp. The municipal *Bhangis* were indeed taken, but it was thought necessary to have the volunteers also. Kaka Kalelkar who was in charge of this corps tells me that this part of the work would not have been done as satisfactorily as it was, if the corps had not been formed. He tells me too that the volunteers worked most willingly. Not one of them shirked the work which ordinarily very few would be prepared to undertake. And yet it is the noblest of all from one point of view. Indeed sanitary work must be regarded as the foundation of all volunteer training.

Young India, 1-1-1925

18. HOW TO DO IT?

The Congress has taken a tremendous forward step or as some say committed a tremendous folly at the instance of a mad man. Congressmen, whether willing spinners or unwilling, have to justify the step taken by working the spinning franchise That work which some were doing is now transferred to everyone who wishes to belong to the Congress. It is methodical labour that the Congress requires from every Congressman. If he is unwilling to do that labour, he has to hire it.

The task is obviously difficult. If it were easy, it would not be possible to expect the grand result one expects from its successful working. Even when it was a mere matter of collecting four annas per year, the task was found to be difficult. And today we have not, on the Congress register, in all the provinces fifty thousand such members. Now the Congress expects everyone to spin 2,000 yards per month or to get that quantity spun for him by another. Thus the workers have to keep in continuous touch with the spinners. Therein lies in my opinion the strength of the franchise. It gives the people political education of a high type.

The way to ensure success for every province is to fix the minimum of voters it expects to secure and not to rest till that number is secured. Now throughout India at the lowest computation there are at least five million wheels working. These spinners can all easily belong to the Congress. Those who are taking work from them can now invite them to devote half an hour of their time to the nation by spinning at the wheel for that time. This does not require new organizing. Cotton slivers, etc., are there. All that is necessary is for the organization to make a gift to the Congress of the slivers required to be supplied to the spinners for voluntary or franchise spinning. All that is required of spinners is to give the Congress free labour needed to spin 2,000 yards of yarn. Then there is the voluntary spinning by non-professional spinners. Those who are now spinning have to ask their friends and neighbour to do likewise and become Congress members. This can be best done by each worker founding spinning clubs of twenty. To be efficient these clubs must be small and compact. The first member must be a proficient carder and spinner. For on him, in the first instance, will fall the burden of collecting cotton, carding it, slivering it and distributing the slivers among the members of the club. The third class of work is to provide for the unwilling spinners. The honest unwilling spinner will naturally seek out a member of his own family to do the spinning for him. He then ensures the contribution of good and true hand-spun yarn. The next class of unwilling member will himself engage a professional spinner to spin for him. And the last class is that which will buy its yarn from the market and run the risk of having spurious yarn sold for genuine. For the sake of the common cause I would warn the Congressmen who are unwilling against the last method. Registration of membership for the last class is easy and, if many avail themselves of it, the practice will open the floodgates of fraud and may cause an injury to a cottage industry that is struggling to make headway against enormous odds. My hope is that there will be very few men and women who will be unwilling to spin for the sake of the Congress and the country. The word "unwilling" has found place in the franchise for the sake of meeting the difficulties of those who are old Congressmen and whom I would not like to leave the Congress, even if they were willing to do so. But I shall hope that unwillingness will not be encouraged. Mere production of hand-spun yarn will not make the idle and the starving work. It is the atmosphere of manual work, and that too consisting of hand-spinning, that is required to make the millions retake to the wheel. And that atmosphere can best be produced by all Congressmen regarding it as an honour for themselves personally to spin.

Young India, 1-1-1925

19. NOTES

TWO PROMISES

Here is one promise made by a Tamil delegate:

> I promise to introduce ten thousand charkhas in the city of Madura before 30th April 1926.
>
> *Yours ever devoted,*
>
> L. K. TULSIRAM

The note containing the promise was passed to me by Sjt. Tulsiram at a meeting of the Tamil delegates. The introduction of ten thousand charkhas means, of course, as many members. If the city of Madura can give ten thousand members, how many should the whole of the Tamilnad?

Another promise still more important is made by Maulana Zafar Ali Khan. He has solemnly promised that he will have got twenty-five thousand Mussalman spinners as members by the end of my term of office. The Maulana will deserve the highest congratulations, if he succeeds. Not that twenty-five thousand Mussalman members from the Punjab is by any means a large number, if the thing catches. But, when so many are prognosticating a catastrophe, for the Maulana to make the solemn promise is in my opinion a wonderful thing. I have told the Maulana that, if he breaks the promise, I shall have to fast against him. He retorted by saying, he did not want me to commit suicide and that he would not have made the promise, if he had not meant it or its fulfilment was impossible. I invite such promises from every province. But no one need make them in a fit of enthusiasm. Mere promises mean nothing if there is not an unalterable resolution behind them. I know that during the War the authorities used to apportion work for each province, and the provinces had to supply the quota of men or money as the case might be. In that case the supply was fixed for them and default carried penalties of a kind with it. Should the provinces do less because they are called upon to fix their own quota and because breach of promise will carry no penalty with it?

A PRIZE

Sjt. Revashanker Jagjivan Jhaveri has at my request expressed his wish to give a prize of one thousand rupees to the writer of the best

essay on the message of the spinning-wheel and khaddar. The essay should trace the history of the destruction of the industry and discuss the possibility of its revival. Further terms will be announced in the next issue.

Young India, 1-1-1925

20. MEANING OF BOLSHEVISM

The following[1] has been received from Mr. M. N. Roy in reply to my article[2] on Bolshevism. I gladly publish it, but I cannot help saying that, if Mr. Roy's article is a correct representation of Bolshevism, it is a poor thing. I can no more tolerate the yoke of Bolshevism as described by Mr. Roy than of capitalism. I believe in conversion of mankind, not its destruction, and for a very obvious reason. We are all very imperfect and weak things and, if we are to destroy all whose ways we do not like, there will be not a man left alive. Mobocracy is autocracy multiplied million times. But I hope, I am almost sure, that real Bolshevism is much better than Mr. M. N. Roy's.

Young India, 1-1-1925

21. LETTER TO N. C. KELKAR

ON THE WAY TO SABARMATI,
January 2, 1925

DEAR MR. KELKAR,

It has always been my desire and policy never to write anything to wound the feelings of others. But during the current year when I am out for winning you over I would like to be still more cautious. I know that without wishing it, I may write things which may not please you, i.e., the party. Will you please therefore draw my attention to anything that may appear in *Young India* or *Navajivan* and that may not be quite the proper thing? I shall try to mend wherever it is possible for me.

Your sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 3115. Courtesy: Kashinath Kelkar

[1] *Vide* Appendix "M.N. Roy on Bolshevism", 1-1-1925
[2] *Vide* "Bolshevism or Discipline," 21-8-1924.

22. SPEECH A T PUBLIC MEETING, DOHAD

January 2, 1925

I do not want any Gujarati to take advantage of the freedom to unwilling persons given in the resolution on spinning. I see some divine purpose in my release from Yeravda Prison on account of my illness. Providence, it seems, has set me free that I might move through the length and breadth of the country speaking about *Annapoorna*[1], the spinning-wheel, and taking it everywhere. If India would still not respond to the call of spinning, her privations would multiply. It will be no pleasure to me to find Dohad converted into Bombay and half a dozen of its people become millionaires. Everyone has the right to earn food and clothing. But no one has a right to accumulate wealth and be rich. I would not have a handful of you become money-lenders. I would, however, wish that khadi should be sold as easily as ghee and made current everywhere like coins and postal stamps. For those who cannot themselves spin there is a provision to get others to do it for them and thus become eligible for membership But I would urge that no one from Gujarat may take advantage of this provision. Sukhdev tells me he has discontinued spinning. I did not know it. He might be otherwise busy but his discontinuation of spinning is intolerable. It would be a miserable plight if our workers themselves do not spin. It is not as if Sukhdev does not approve of spinning, it is only his laziness. I won't have this excuse from any Gujarati.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-1-1925

23. SPEECH AT ANTYAJA ASHRAM, GODHRA

January 2, 1925

You have heard a number of dialogues and *bhajans*. Who would say that these dialogues were by *Antyaja* children or that it was they who sang the *bhanjans* in devotion to God? Who would have expected this outcome of the conference? While discussing the resolution about the outcastes, I had suggested that all people should visit their colony. I had taken it that delegates of the conference belonged to Godhra.

[1] The giver of plentiful food

But I had forgotten that most of them who had come were not the residents of Godhra. However, most of them were from Gujarat. We opened an *Antyaja* school out of the money we collected at that time. The people of Godhra did not welcome it. What is more, they showed their dislike of it. *Antyaja* brothers also reciprocated these sentiments. It was difficult to get *Antyaja* boys for the *Antyaja* school. There was a time when I was seriously inclined to consider closing down the school. But then we put it off.

Mama[1] belongs to Maharashtra but he knows Gujarati. I had seen in the Ashram that he loves working among the *Antyajas*. I advised him to plant himself firmly in Godhra. Subsequently I went to jail and Vallabhbhai took upon himself the heavy burden of administration. It was then that the house was built. I do not like it. It is not that it is incomplete but it does us no credit. It does not want in elegance but it should be such as to do us credit. Mama is not an architect but his heart is filled with love and piety. He was drawn by his love towards *Antyajas* and spent Rs. 20,000. Vallabhbhai could not collect that amount. But fortunately Parsi Rustomjee had given money for work of this kind. Some of it was appropriated for the house which has been built. But that ought to be suitable for us, the *Antyaja*, the poor. We are all poor people and the *Antyajas* are poorer still. They are a flock without a pastor. In forsaking them Hindus have sinned. You should all take up the attitude that an impressive house has been built but you would not grudge it [to them]. If it were the hostel for *Vanik*[2] students you might do that. I agree that there should be no structure which does not reflect the state of the Indian people. There are more elegant buildings used for the children of other commu-nities. But the thought should never enter your mind that the *Antyajas* have no right to such buildings, even though we may try to convert them also. Here I am merely debating the issue. But it would be a good thing if some wealthy man of Godhra took it over. We should then go to another place more suitable for the poor. But in the meantime Mama should put up with it.

Today I had been to three places in the *Antyaja* colony. There it was animals that I saw, not human beings. Talking to them one finds them different from us, but they also recognize love. If we are not responsible for their pitiful condition, whoelse is? To me the cause of

[1] Viththal Lakshman Phadke

[2] Business community

swaraj is small besides that of serving these people. It was not because I thought it would hasten swaraj that I started working for these people. There was no talk of swaraj then; thirty years ago, when I was in South Africa, I had expressed my views on service to the *Antyajas*. Today we are not conserving the Hindu dharma, but destroying it. I wish that you should take up this service in order to save it from destruction. You who have come here, had better realize that you are not polluted but have been sanctified. I say without hesitation that those places where there is *Antyaja* service, where there is an *Antyaja* school or an *Antyaja* ashram, that is a place of pilgrimage, because holy places are those where we wash off our sins and make ready to swim to the other shore. Why are one's parents holiness incarnate? Why are one's gurus holiness incarnate? If we serve people with all our heart, we become purified. Do not imagine that you have been polluted and that you should bathe. If you had not known that those who treated you to the dialogues were *Antyaja* boys, would you have believed it? If we exert ourselves to the utmost over these children, they may surpass us. Don't suppose that the children of *Bhangis* can't have good thoughts. Let me tell you from experience that they will have them, if we also help. I appeal to you that those of you who have come here should not consider this as their last visit. You should come here from time to time to serve.

The existence of this association for serving *Antyajas* is due to Indulal[1]. He has done solid service. He was thinking about it even while in jail. We should forgive him if in a flush of enthusiasm he has done something which we may not like. His exile over, Amritlal[2] has come here. Now he has become the high priest of *Dheds*, *Bhangis* and Bhils. When Indulal was considering leaving the Antyaja Seva Mandal, I thought of entrusting it to the Vidyapith. Amritlal said, we should not let it go. He took the burden upon himself. But how much burden can a single person carry? You should also help him. There is a great deal of work for the Antyaja Seva Mandal to do. The *Antyaja* map of Gujarat is being drawn. I do not know that Godhra has contributed a single paisa. If the Lord indeed dwells within you, then send the money to Amritlal or Mama. And let your mind go with the money.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. VII, pp. 12-4

[1] Indulal Yagnik; an active political worker from whom Gandhiji took over *Navajivan*.

[2] A. V. Thakkar

24. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, GODHRA

January 2, 1925

It is not religion but rather its very opposite to regard the outcastes as untouchables by birth. I am convinced that those who do not regard me a *sanatani* are ignorant. You will say there are pandits who defend untouchability. But the words of Akha[1] that "learning without thinking is futile" apply to them. There is a kind of untouchability in Hinduism, namely, that of keeping away from the impure, that is, from wicked, fraudulent, lustful or unchaste persons. Look upon them as untouchables and run away from them; but would you run away from the person who serves you, who removes your filth, who tans your leather and forges your farming tools and regard him as an untouchable? This is hypocrisy, not Hinduism. I would ask you to shun them if Hinduism did indeed teach that they were untouchables. This idea that Hinduism teaches untouchability is only an illusion. If you were compassionate, the ignorance among *Bhangis* would make you weep and you would be awakened to your ownresponsibilities. If you abandon me, drive me away cruelly and, as a result, I turn mad, is it my fault or yours? In like manner, is it through their fault or yours that the poor *Bhangis* and *Dheds* are penniless and destitute, their ignorance is abysmal and they are given to addictions? The fault is certainly yours and I wish you to remove it and purify yourselves.

I see a great purpose in God saving me from a serious illness in Yeravada Prison and releasing me for your service. The purpose is that I should come to you and give you self-confidence, put before you the fruit of profound meditation in prison, namely, the key to swaraj lies in fulfilling three conditions alone—in the spinning-wheel, in Hindu-Muslim unity and in the removal of untouchability. The reason that I have mentioned the spinning-wheel first is that amongst these three, we are sceptical about it alone and, secondly because it is the spinning-wheel alone which demands from us honest daily work. If I wish to work half an hour a day for Hindu-Muslim unity or removal of untouchability, I would be hard put to it to imagine what to do. But the plying of the spinning-wheel for half an hour is concrete work. It is an inanimate object, but there is an irresistible power behind it. I ask everyone to get ready to activate it. You find

[1] Akha Bhagat, Gujarati poet of the 17th century

khadi coarse. If you say that khadi irritates your skin, it would amount to saying that this country irritates you. And, how can he, whom his country irritates, win swaraj? Tilak Maharaj used to say that he was pained when he heard anyone talk of going abroad for a change of climate. Since God ordained my birth here, would He not have provided that I should keep healthy in this climate? Although it is bitterly cold in England, do the English run away from their country? They light fires in their homes, put on woollen clothes, and take all precautions. What do the multimillionaires do here? They think of a change of climate. I tell you that this is a grave error on their part. In like manner, our patrio-tism consists in wearing indigenous khadi, whether it is expensive or cheap, good or bad, coarse or fine; otherwise it is meaningless to speak of one's motherland. Would any mother abandon her own ugly child and take into her lap another's comely child? I hope that you would have the same God-given love and affection for India, for the grain that is grown here and for khadi. If every man in Godhra produced khadi worth five rupees, how much money would a population of 25,000 save? If that amount is saved, the people of Godhra would become to that extent prosperous. You will become stronger and your patriotism will shine forth. The spinning-wheel alone is a thing which enables all—men, womenand children, the rich and the poor—to contribute equally and which brings about great good. Remember the saying that drop by drop fills the lake and keep filling the lake of swaraj by contributing two thousand yards of yarn. Do you believe that you will win swaraj by Vamanrao's going to the Legislative Assembly and glaring at the Government? I would then ask you to go and talk of yarn and khadi even there. If, however, you cannot boycott foreign-cloth, swaraj will not be won even by Vallabhbhai or five thousand persons like Vamanrao entering the Legislative Assembly.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-1-1925

25. TO KATHIAWARIS

Circumstances take me to kathiawar. I know and understand the affection of Kathiawaris. However, what I want is work. I find there is a difference between my method and that of the recently trained generation. It is ludicrous to make me the President despite this

difference. In spite of the fact that resolutions drafted by me have been adopted by the Congress, many persons have been telling me that no one will implement them. How am I to believe such a dreadful thing?

As I had nothing new to place before the Congress, so too, I shall have nothing new to say to Kathiawar. The truth is that I have already said what I have to say. Somehow I have to repeat the same things over again. My thoughts dwell only with the poor. I want swaraj for the *Bhangis*, for the labourers. I keep thinking of how to make them happy. When shall we get off their backs? While we ask for our rights, it is for me to speak of their rights and our duties.

How good it would be if I could explain my standpoint to the Kathiawaris? Is it something impossible? Man lives by hope. The same is true of me. Some day India must necessarily listen to what I have to say. Could not Kathiawar make a beginning?

The organizers have undertaken to prepare the atmosphere for me. They will certainly show me that the whole place is full of khadi. They will certainly have an exhibition of the arts and crafts of Kathiawar. What a beautiful exhibition was held in Belgaum! There is no dearth of art in Kathiawar. There is nothing lacking in its flora. What beautiful cattle there are in Kathiawar! Shall I have a glimpse of these? I do not wish to see the glorification of the West. I have seen enough of it there. On the contrary, I am trying to recall Indian things which have been neglected. It is these I wish to see.

Kathiawar is, of course, well-known for its courtesy. I would request the Reception Committee not to be carried away by an excess of it. While time in endless, the human body has its limitations. We have to achieve much with the help of this transient body; every moment has, therefore, to be properly utilized.

I hope that the organizers will see to it that each task is done punctually. If those resolutions which are to be considered by the Conference[1] have been already framed, we shall be able to give more thought to them. It would suggest that enough time be allotted to the Subjects Committee. I hope that while drafting the resolutions it will be borne in mind that we shall succeed if we lay greater stress on our duties.

Let me suggest one way of saving time. Welcome should come from the heart. You will, therefore, realize that there will be no need

[1] Kathiawar Political Conference

for any outward sings of welcome. To spend time in processions, etc., is as good as stealing it from the real task to be accomplished. it should not be forgotten that in the course of two days, a programme has to be chalked out for serving twenty-six lakhs of people. In order to satisfy thousands of men and women who will assemble, some showy items will no doubt be necessary. We have already seen in Belgaum that there is nothing like holding an exhibition in order to meet this need.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 4-1-1925

26. WILLING AND UNWILLING

The Congress session has concluded without a hitch. There was a solitary item on the agenda, it may be said, namely, adoption of spinning as an essential duty of every Indian. if this has been resolved in all sincerity, this session of the Congress may come to be historic. But historians might condemn it if we have taken this step without an honest intention of fulfilling it.

I have no reason to believe that we might have agreed to the step without honest faith or with mental reservations. The resolution, which has now been adopted, itself speaks of two groups—the "willing" and the "unwilling". The latter accept the necessity of spinning as such, though not on their own part. This group, too, have agreed to send 24, 000 yards of yarn a year, but it is now the duty of the willing to persuade the unwilling. If those who are willing go on spinning regularly, the unwilling will also realize the duty of spinning themselves.

Let us hope there is no unwilling group in Gujarat. Let us not bother about the small number of the willing. Let us only mind our own work. If one wishes to become a member of the Congress without spinning oneself, one has every right to do so.

But in Gujarat we have not come across any persons who are reluctant to spin themselves. Initially the number of spinners may be small. But if we have active workers, I am convinced that with their help we shall be able to achieve much.

Gujarat can if it so desires give a lead in this matter. Gujarat has all the resources. Only the people must have the will. And it is the task of the workers to create that will. This will test our capacity to

organize, our patriotism, our strength of character and other qualities.

Spread of spinning is spread of khadi and khadi propagation means complete boycott of foreign-cloth. Thus we should put in much more effort for the propagation of khadi than we have done so far. And the spread of khadi means the spread of Gujarat khadi. Having produced its own cloth if Gujarat itself does not consume the same, it will never witness the miracle of khadi. All the other crafts will follow in the wake of khadi and Gujarat's economy will get a fillip.

Gujarat may not suffer from scarcity but it lacks vigour. Gujarat's children do not get milk. In case of a famine the people of Gujarat go begging. This seldom happens anywhere except in India. It is only when Gujarat completely boycotts foreign-cloth that we shall be saved from this plight.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-1-1925

27. LETTER T0 REHANA TYABJI

January 5, 1925

MY DEAR REHANA,

I am glad you are coming. Do you know that a friend of my father got cured of his malady by constant attendance on God? May you not do likewise? You can be well, if you will be well.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9599

28. LETTER T0 FULCHAND SHAH

Posh Sud 11, 1981 [*January 5, 1925*]

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I shall take up another programme only after I reach Bhavnagar and feel like doing so. Do not bind me from today. I am very tired and I have yet to attend many functions.

Blessings from
BAPU

BHAISHRI FULCHAND KASTURCHAND
KELAVANI MANDAL KARYALAYA
WADHWAN CITY

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2824. Courtesy: Sharadabehn Shah

29. LETTER TO AVANTIKABAI GOKHALE

Posh Sud 11, 1981 [*January 5, 1925*]

DEAR SISTER,

I was deeply pained to hear from Chi. Chhaganlal about your financial condition. Why did you not tell me about it till now? What has happened cannot be undone. Both of you can come and stay here whenever you wish to. Regard this as your home. Dr. Mehta's bungalows, is at present vacant; you can occupy a part of it. We shall think about building a new house later on. I had already made this suggestion for the sake of your health. Here, too, you will be able to do public work. Make up your mind soon. Do not harbour the false idea that you cannot come here.

Write to me about your health. Send your reply to Bhavanagar. I intend to stay there from the 8th to 13th. Write to me at Sir Prabhashanker Pattani's address.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4838. Courtesy: Bombay State Committee for C.W.M.G.

30. LETTER TO KAPIL THAKKAR

ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Posh[1] *Sud 11, 1981* [*January 5, 1925*][2]

BHAISHRI KAPIL

I have your letter. I am sorry I shall not be able to go to Botad this time as I have no time.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

BHAISHRI KAPIL THAKKAR
BHAVANAGAR

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2896. Courtesy: Kapil Thakkar

[1] The source has *Magsar*.
[2] From the postmark

31. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

Posh Sud 11, 1981 [*January 5, 1925*]

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I think it is only fair for me to inform you that Lakshmi, an untouchable girl, will be with me. If my presence may be considered objectionable at any place on that account, please give me a hint and I shall understand and will, of my own accord, insist on not visiting that place so that nobody is put in an awkward situation. I leave all this to you.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 3188. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

32. LETTER T0 LAKSHMINIWAS BIRLA

Posh Sud 11, 1981 [*January 5, 1925*]

CHI. LAKSHMINIWAS,

I was very glad to have your letter.

It is quite true that all should ply the charkha. Like the cycle of the universe, the charkha may never be still in any Indian home. The charkha, I think, is all the more necessary for the rich. I do hope you will all ply the charkha and send the yarn to me.

Blessings from your well-wisher
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6101. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

33. TELEGRAM TO PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

SABARMATI,
January 7, 1925

TO
SIR PRABHASHANKER PATTANI
BHAVNAGAR

BEFORE RECEIVING YOUR WIRE I REPLIED RECEPTION COMMITTEE I WOULD BE IN THEIR HANDS DURING CONFERENCE. FEEL IT IS BOTH PROPER AND NECESSARY I SHOULD BE THEIR GUEST. I MUST AVOID SETTING

EMBARRASSING PRECEDENT FOR SUCCESSORS, DEVCHANDBHAI[1] AGREES AND PROPERLY INSISTS MY BEING GUEST RECEPTION COMMITTEE. PRAY THEREFORE EXCUSE TILL NINTH.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5875

34. THE WORKING COMMITTEE

The selection of the Working Committee was ultimately left by the A.I.C.C. to Deshbandhu Das, Pandit Motilal Nehru and me. I have been charged with having yielded everything to the Swarajists. If I have done so, I pride myself on the fact. Full surrender must be full. The fact however is that no pressure whatsoever was put upon me to withdraw a single No-changer's name. I deliberately withdrew C. Rajagopalachari's, Vallabhbhai's and Shankerlal Banker's names. It was a matter of honour to have Sarojini Devi and Sardar Mangal Singh on the Committee. Mr. Kelkar was anxious to retire in favour of Mr. Aney. I would not listen to it. And I was anxious to have Mr. Aney as soon as his name was mentioned. Let the reader rest assured that the whole selection was made in a spirit of perfect comradeship. Assume honesty (and it must be assumed) on the part of both the groups and the task of either is difficult enough. Although the degree of faith and therefore the emphasis is different, both have to strive to find a common method of working the common programme. In a Working Committee with a decided majority of No-changers strong resolutions can no doubt be carried for khaddar work but they cannot carry much weight with those who have only reluctantly accepted the khaddar franchise. Whereas resolutions of a working Committee in which the predominant voice is that of the Swarajists, though they may be mild are sure to carry far greater weight with the Swarajists. And my business is to carry the latter with me whole-heartely. I want to act upon them and I want them to act upon me. Nothing, therefore, can be better than that the Swarajist leaders and among them the ablest and most uncompromising opponents of the spinning franchise and I should be thrown together in an atmosphere in which we must pull together. I do not need that kind of contact with the enthusiasts. They are expected to work away with all the strength that conviction must

[1] Devchand Parekh; barrister; social worker of Kathiawar

give them. They do not need resolutions or instructions as spur to action. If, therefore, we mean in the course of the year to achieve an unbreakable unity between the two wings, the selection of the Working Committee is, I hold, ideal. Anyway, it must produce an atmosphere the most favourable for the purpose.

I shall leave no stone unturned to achieve the end. Hence I propose during the year to carry no motion or proposal that might be of a party character. Neither the spinning-wheel nor the boycott of foreign-cloth can be expeditiously worked in the teeth of opposition from within the Congress ranks indeed we must strive to gain the support of non-Congressmen for the national constructive programme. They may not like spinning or wearing khaddar as part of the franchise, but I have not met many Liberals who have any objection to hand-spinning as a cottage industry or to the use of khaddar as such and apart from the franchise. It may be constitutionally impossible for all parties to accept the existing Congress creed or the new franchise, and therefore to become Congressmen. But I hope that the existence of the creed or the new franchise will not be a bar against joint work wherever it is possible.

Young India, 8-1-1925

35. BELGAUM IMPRESSIONS [*-II*]

NAMDHARIS

I had a hard time of it meeting all and sundry and trying to give them satisfaction. The Namdhari Sikhs brought me a bundle of papers and expected me to attend to their grievance against the Akalis. Their patience and courtesy disarmed all unwillingness on my part. But my inability to attend to their cause was much greater than my unwillingness. Time would not wait even for their courtesy. They were themselves able to see that I was perfectly helpless. The only comfort I was able to give them was that when I next visited Lahore, I would certainly go through their papers and see to it that the Congress did them no injustice. I told them that although I was partial to the cause of the brave Akalis, I would be no party to any injustice or oppression being committed by them. Sardar Mangal Singh re-echoed my sentiment and said that he was always ready to show that the Akalis wanted nothing but reform of the gurdwaras on a strictly moral basis.

Mr. Pereira of. Ceylon wanted me to interest the Congress in the Buddha Gaya Temple. The reader will remember that a movement has been in progress for some years for the restoration to Buddhists of the great and historic temple at Buddha Gaya. But it seems to have made no tangible headway. At the Cocanada Congress Babu Rajendra Prasad was appointed to inquire into the matter and report. He had not been able to do so up to the time of the meeting. A Buddhist deputation came from Ceylon to Belgaum during the Congress week to plead the Buddhist cause personally before the Congress. Mr. Pereira had seen several leaders and then saw me. He really did not need to plead his cause before me. I was already a convert. But here again what was I to do? I had no time for anything else beyond what I had already undertaken. But Mr. Pereira was irresistible. I told him that I believed in his cause as much as he did, but the Congress might not be able to help him much. He was persistent and took away from me the promise that I should at least let him address the Subjects Committee and let him take the chance of being rejected. Mr. Pereira had confidence in himself. His pleasing manners and his brief but eloquent speech made an impression upon the Committee which decided to consider the question there and then. But alas! Upon discussion the Committee discovered that it could not materially assist Mr. Pereira; it had not the report of its own deputy; it had exhaustively discussed the subject at the previous session and owing to sharp differences was obliged to drop it. The only thing, therefore, the Committee was able to do was to ask Rajendra Babu to hasten his inquiry and let the Working Committee have his report on or before the end of the present month. There is no doubt that the possession of the temple should vest in the Buddhists. There may be legal difficulties. They must be overcome. If the report is true that animal sacrifice is offered in the temple, it is a sacrilege. It is equally a sacrilege if the worship is offered, as it is alleged, in a way calculated to wound the susceptibilities of Buddhists. We should take pride in helping the restoration of the temple to the rightful trustees. I hope Rajendra Babu will secure all the literature on the subject and produce a report which can serve as a guide for all who wish to advance the cause of the Buddhist claimants. Let me hope also that Mr. Pereira has remained in India and is assisting Rajendra Babu.

TEACHERS IN CONFERENCE

The national teachers met in informal conference and came to definite conclusions. The debate was interesting. It centred round the charkha. Learned pandits attended the conference. I hope that the teachers will carry out to the letter and in the spirit the resolutions addressed to themselves. It has been the bane of the national life to pass resolutions and never to enforce them. The teachers should be the last persons in the world to make vain promises. They have in their hands the moulding of the youth of the country. Let them know that the students are sure to copy their bad example of breach of their own word in preference to their lofty sermons on the sacredness of resolutions and promises. This year is a year of trial and test for the nation. The Congress has staked its all practically on a single issue, i.e., the production and sale of khaddar and the boycott of foreign-cloth. The national schools to be national have to assist this national work by the teachers and boys and girls learning the various processes incidental to the production of khaddar, by wearing it themselves and by spinning as much yarn as they can. Their other studies need not be neglected but they dare not omit the things that are required for the vital needs of the nation. The teachers have by an overwhelming majority accepted the position. I hope they will make it good by acting up to their promise.

STUDENTS

The students too met in conference. These were not merely of the national schools and colleges but they were principally from Government schools. Mr. Reddy, the President, had a scheme for utilizing the vacation and other leisure hours of students. His scheme was to commit the students (he would include the *vakils* also) to giving the nation at least 28 evenings every year, each volunteer to take up four villages in his neighbourhood as his field of work. Mr. Reddy proposed a course of lectures on a variety of subjects. For the time being I would occupy the leisure hours of these volunteers for the spread of khaddar. But this service is not the only way the students and practising *vakils* can help. Surely the least they can do is to use khaddar themselves and spin half an hour per day. The *vakils* and students over 21 years should become members of the Congress and those who are under age should send their yarn as donation either to their own committee or to the A.I.K.B.

Young India, 8-1-1925

36. NOTES

FOR PROVINCIAL COMMITTEE

I hope that provincial Congress committees will lose no time in organizing the new franchise. I know that some Congressmen are waiting for instructions from the Working Committee as to the method of work before commencing enrolment. Such waiting is, however, wholly unnecessary. It is not the Working Committee that has to organize the work under the new franchise. The burden rests with every province, and the sooner they commence the better it is for the purpose for which the new franchise has been introduced. Congressmen should remember that at the end of February the existing list of members falls into desuetude. If provincial committees wait till then for enrolment, they will find that they have not even a quorum to go on with. Membership should, therefore, be actively canvassed from now. I had hoped to publish some valuable information supplied to me by Sjt. Satish Chandra Das Gupta as to the method of organization. I have also before me two illuminating volumes on khaddar work written by Satish Babu and published by Khadi Pratisthan. The first volume deals with the manner of organizing spinning and weaving and the second volume collects all the available information about cotton. The volumes are seasonable. I hope to condense some of the information made available to the public by their industrious author. Those who can afford to buy the volumes should possess them. They should write to the Khadi Pratisthan, 15, College Square, Calcutta, for them. The price of the first volume is two rupees and that of the second is one rupee.

TO SPINNERS

Several spinners, who have been sending their yarn either to the A.I.K.B. or to me, inquire what they are to do now. They are to send in their yarn as usual for the month of December. All that the adults may spin from the beginning of the year should naturally be retained and sent in to the respective provincial committees as their monthly subscription for membership. Hitherto spinners have sent in what they have spun and many have sent in even less than 2,000 yards. Now they are bound, to be entitled to a living membership, to send not less than 2,000 yards per month. They may send more if they choose. They should take care to have a receipt for the exact quantity sent. They will get credit for the balance over 2,000 yards for the next

month's quota. Minors may send yarn to the provincial Congress committees as donations. They cannot claim membership. There are however many such who, I am told, would send their yarn only to me. I would advise them to send their yarn to their respective committees; but if they will not do so, I would be glad as usual to receive their yarn and turn it to good account.

PRIZE ESSAY

The terms of the prize essay on the message of the spinning-wheel and khaddar are:

1. The essay should be in English in four parts: the first part to contain the history of hand-spinning and the khaddar (meaning hand-spun, including the celebrated *shubnum*[1] of Dacca), trade of India before the British advent; the second part should trace the history of the ruin of hand-spinning and the khaddar trade; the third part should be an examination of the possibilities of hand-spinning and khaddar and a comparison between the Indian mill industry and hand-spinning and hand-weaving; the fourth part should examine the possibilities of achieving boycott of foreign-cloth through the spinning-wheel. The essay should be supported by authoritative statistics and should have an appendix containing a list of all the reference books and authorities used by the author in support of his argument.

2. The essay may be as brief as the competitors wish to make it, consistently with the giving of a full record of facts and figures.

3. The essay should be sent to the office of *Young India* by registered book post with the author's name on a separate sheet and should reach the office of *Young India* not later than 15th March next. The judges will be Messrs Shankerlal Banker, Maganlal K. Gandhi and myself. The result will be announced not later than 31st March 1925. The judges will reserve to themselves the right of rejecting all the essays if they fall below a certain standard. The prize will be paid to the winner on the announcement thereof. The right of publication will vest in the All-India Khadi Board in accordance with the donor's wishes.

I hope that those scholars who are interested in the great spinning movement and who have studied the subject will consider it worth their while to enter into the competition.

[1] Literally dew; here a name for the fine muslin formerly woven in Dacca

A Bengali friend writing about unity says:

> In Bengal, perhaps in other provinces also, the economic distress of the educated middle-classes hinders the growth of public spirit and patriotism. The young men crowd the meetings and applaud the speeches. When they go out of schools and colleges, they begin to feel the struggle for existence. It damps their youthful vigour and enthusiasm and they cease to take any practical interest in national work.

The evil, as the writer rightly judges, is more or less common to all the provinces. The remedy is clear. No Government can find employment for the increasing number of students year after year. The only way to solve the puzzle is to revise the common idea about education, that it is a means of finding a career in life. Education should be taken for our mental and moral development. Secondly, the army of unemployed young men should realize the dignity of labour and qualify themselves for taking up the organisation of the charkha industry. It can take in an unlimited number of young men if they were willing to take the necessary training and to go to the villages and to be satisfied with a modest income.

Young India, 8-1-1925

37. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING, BHAVNAGAR

January 8, 1925

Today the spinning-wheel is the only way to the people's hearts. Evil reigns everywhere, and dharma can be re-established only through the spinning-wheel. We are at present hanging in mid-air like Trishanku[1], and the wheel is the only device to take us out of this dreadful situation. We can hope to influence the masses only through the wheel and through it alone will the Government learn a sense of duty. A gentleman asks if even men with moustaches should sit at the wheel. I should like to remind him that in the present circumstances, we should be ashamed of our moustaches. Is it men or women that operate the Lancashire machines and thereby run the Empire? It is again only men who write books on this subject. Women may cook in the kitchen at home, but in the case of community feasts they must

[1] The mythological king whom the sage Vishwamitra lifted up to the heavens, but whom the gods refused admission

give over cooking to moustached men. Some Brahamins and others plead their superior caste. I do agree that the caste system stands for division of functions. But function means the primary or chief function, whereas all the other functions can as well be common to all, in fact they ought to be so today. Shri Satish Chandra Das Gupta has evolved a Shastra for the wheel. I have a charming letter from a revenue officer at Palitana, which says: "I spin regularly but neither the Dewan nor the Thakore Sahib[1] objects to this. The more I spin, the more strength I acquire. Indeed I may carry a small wheel even while riding." Is it any wonder if such officers become popular among the subjects? How else would the people be crazy about you? When for the first time King George was posted to a man-of-war as a trainee, he used to partake of the same black coffee, black bread and cheese as the other sailors. There were no special arrangements for his board and lodging. He was also given the same outfit as the ratings. When you know this you will understand why the British people are crazy about King George. The prince and the people, the leader and the masses can be bound together by the thread from the wheel. I had been to Moti Marad. Though the village is quite far from a railway station I found that *malmal*[2] had reached there. We came to know about the existence of seven lakh villages in our country only when we came under the British Empire. No power in the past ever penetrated any of these seven lakh villages, but now calico and *manjli*[3] have done it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-1-1925

38. PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS AT KATHIAWAR POLITICAL CONFERENCE, BHAVANAGAR

January 8, 1925

The following is an English translation[4] of Mr. Gandhi's Presidential Address at the Third Kathiawar Political Conference held at Bhavnagar on the 8th instant:

[1] Ruler
[2] Mull
[3] Mill-clods
[4] For the Gujarati report *vide Navajivan* Supplement, 18-1-1925.

FRIENDS,

The Presidentship of the Kathiawar Political Conference had been offered to me before I went to jail but I had then refused to shoulder the responsibility attaching to that honourable position. As the reasons which then prompted my refusal do not exist any longer, I have accepted the honour now, though not without trepidation—trepidation because there is a wide divergence between my own views and the views held by many on political questions. Again the fact that I am President of the National Congress for the current year makes things rather awkward for me. That single burden is more than I can fairly discharge, and it would be almost too much for me during the year to undertake to guide the activities of this Conference in addition. If therefore presiding over your deliberations today implies any such responsibility, I may say that I am not at all in a position to do it justice. Moreover, it would be unfair if the views which I express as President here are imputed to the Congress simply because 1 happen to lead it also.

It is necessary, therefore, for me to make it clear at the outset that my views about the Indian States have nothing to do with the views of the members of the Congress. My views are personal to me. They do not bear the *imprimatur* of the Congress.

If I have been deemed worthy to be President of this Conference, I think it is because I am a native of Kathiawar and also because I enjoy close relations with the workers in this Conference. It is only an accident that I happen to lead the Congress at present.

It is necessary, therefore, for me to make it clear at the outset that my views about the Indian States have nothing to do with the views of the members of the Congress. My views are personal to me. They do not bear the *imprimatur* of the Congress.

If I have been deemed worthy to be President of this Conference, I think it is because I am a native of Kathiawar and also because I enjoy close relations with the workers in this Conference. It is only an accident that I happen to lead the Congress at present. and to me. I had not the privilege of knowing him intimately. It is no small thing that his assistance is no longer available to us. May God give to the families of both, the patience to bear their loss and may the knowledge that we share their grief lighten their sorrow.

I have often declared that the Congress should generally adopt a policy of non-interference with regard to questions affecting Indian States. At a time when the people of British India are fighting for their own freedom, for them to interfere with the affairs of the Indian States would only be to betray impotence. Just as the Congress clearly cannot have any effective voice in the relations between Indian States and the British Government, even so will its interference be ineffective as to the relations between the Indian States and their subjects.

Still the people in British India as well as in the Indian States are one, for India is one. There is no difference, for example, between the needs and the manners and customs of Indians in Baroda and of Indians in Ahmedabad. The people of Bhavnagar are closely related with the people of Rajkot. Still, thanks to artificial conditions, the policy of Rajkot may be different from that of Bhavnagar. The existence of different policies in connection with one and the same people is a state of things which cannot last for any length of time. Consequently, even without any interference by the Congress, the unseen pressure of circumstances alone must lead to the unification of policies in spite of a multitude of separate jurisdictions. Our ability to reach unity in diversity will be the beauty and the test of our civilization.

But I am firmly of opinion that so long as British India is not free, so long as the people of British India have not attained real power, that is to say, so long as British India has not the power of self-expression, in a word, so long as British India does not obtain swaraj, so long will India, British as well as Native, remain in a distracted condition. The existence of a third power depends upon a continuance of such distraction. We can put our house in order only when British India has attained swaraj.

THE STATUS OF INDIAN STATES UNDER SWARAJ

When swaraj is attained, what will things be like? There will be a relation of mutual aid and co-operation and destructive conflict will be a thing of the past. British India under swaraj will not wish for the destruction of the Indian States, but will be helpful to them. And the Indian States will adopt a corresponding attitude towards British India.

The present condition of Indian States is in my opinion somewhat pitiable. For the Princes have no independence. Real power

does not consist in the ability to inflict capital punishment upon the subjects, but in the will and the ability to protect the subjects against the world. Today Indian States do not have this ability, and consequently by disuse the will also is as good as gone. On the other hand their power to oppress the subjects appears to have increased. As there is anarchy in the Empire, there is anarchy in the States subordinate to the Empire. The anarchy in the States is not so much due to the Princes and the Chiefs as it is very largely to the present condition of India.

The present condition of India being opposed to the laws of Nature, that is of God, we find disorder and unrest all over the country. I definitely hold that all will be well if one of the component parts of India becomes self-governing.

WHO MUST BEGIN?

Who then must take the first step? It is obvious that British India must lead the way. The people there have a consciousness of their horrible condition and a desire to be free from it, and as knowledge follows in the wake of desire, so those people only who wish to be rid of their peril will find out and apply the means of deliverance. I have therefore often said that the liberation of British India spells the liberation of the States as well. When the auspicious day of the freedom of British India arrives, the relation of ruler and ruled in the Indian States will not cease but will be purified. Swaraj as conceived by me does not mean the end of kingship. Nor does it mean the end of capital. Accumulated capital means ruling power. I am for the establishment of right relations between capital and labour, etc. I do not wish for the supremacy of the one over the other. I do not think there is any natural antagonism between them. The rich and the poor will always be with us. But their mutual relations will be subject to Constant change. France is a republic, but there are all classes of men in France.

Let us not be deluded by catchwords. Every single corruption which we notice in India is equally present in the so-called highly civilized nations of the West if under a variety of names. It is distance that lends enchantment to the view; hence things Western become invested with a sort of glamour in our eyes. In fact there are perpetual differences even in the West between the rulers and the ruled. There, too, people seek for happiness and suffer misery in return.

ABOUT THE INDIAN STATES

Many Kathiawaris complain to me against the Princes and Chiefs of this beautiful country and take me to task for what they imagine to be my indifference. These impatient friends will perhaps not understand me when I say that I have not been indifferent, but have been seeking for and applying the remedies for the present disorders. I have staked my all in the movement for swaraj in the hope that swaraj is a certain cure for all our maladies. As darkness vanishes at sunrise, so when the sun of swaraj rises, the dark anarchy of rulers as well as of subjects will disappear in an instant.

VISITS TO EUROPE

The administration of Indian States is the subject of constant criticism from which this small province has not been free. There is one common complaint about the Princes and Chiefs. Their fondness for visits to Europe increases day by day. One can understand their going to Europe on business or for the acquisition of knowledge. But a visit to Europe in the search of mere pleasure would seem to be intolerable. When a Prince passes most of his time outside his State, there is chaos in his State. We have seen that in this age of democracy and dissemination of knowledge, no State or organization which is not popular or beneficial to the people can continue to exist. Indian States are not immune from the operation of this law. Their administration will always be compared with that of the British now, and of the swaraj government when swaraj has been established. King George cannot leave England without the consent of his ministers. And yet his responsibilities are not so great as those of Indian Princes. Indian Princes retain all power in their own hands. They make the appointments even to minor posts. Their permission is needed even for the construction of a bridge. In these circumstances their visits to Europe are very distasteful to their subjects.

The expenditure incurred on these visits is also intolerable. If the institution of kingship has a moral basis, Princes are not independent proprietors but only trustees of their subjects for revenue received from them. It can therefore be spent by them only as trust money. It may be said that this principle has been almost completely carried out in the English Constitution. In my humble opinion the lavish expenditure incurred by our Princes in Europe is absolutely indefensible.

Sometimes this expenditure in Europe is sought to be justified on the plea that Princes go there for the benefit of their health. This plea is perfectly ludicrous. No one need, in the search of health, leave a country where Himalaya, the king of mountain, exercises undisturbed sway, and which is watered by such mighty rivers as the Ganges, the Indus, and the Brahmaputra. A country where millions of men enjoy perfect health should be enough to supply the Princes, needs on that score.

IMITATION OF THE WEST

But perhaps the worst disadvantage of these excursions is the shallow imitation of the West by the Princes. We have much to learn and receive from the West, but there is also much in it which must be rejected. There is no reason to suppose that what suits the climate of Europe will equally suit all climates. Experience teaches us that different things suit different climates. The manners and customs of the West could be but ill-digested by the East, and *vice versa.* Among Western nations men and women dance together, it is said, with restraint and, as report goes, do not overstep the bounds of decency although they indulge in spirituous liquors during the intervals of their dances. I need scarcely say what would be the consequences if we were to imitate this custom. How shameful to us is the case of an Indian Prince which is being discussed in the newspapers just now in all its hideous detail?

UNCHECKED EXPENDITURE

Another complaint is made in connection with the unchecked expenditure of Princes and Chiefs. Much of this is difficult to defend. Princes may have the right to spend money on luxuries and pleasure within limit. But I take it that even they do not wish for unrestricted liberty in this matter.

REVENUE SYSTEM

The revenue system in the States is also not free from blame. I am confident that their imitation of the British system has done a great injury to their subjects. The British revenue system may have a shadows of justification if we grant that it is morally right for a handful of Englishmen to maintain their hold over our country in any and every circumstance. There can be no such plea of compelling necessity in the case of the Indian Princes. They have nothing to fear

from their subjects as their existence is never in danger. They do not need a large military force; no Prince has got this and the British would never permit it. Still they levy a taxation far beyond the capacity of the subjects to pay. I am pained to observe that our ancient tradition that revenue is intended only for popular welfare has been receiving but scant respect.

"ABKARI"

The Princes, imitation of the British *Abkari* Department in order to increase their revenue is particularly distressing. It is said that *abkari is* an ancient curse in India. I do not believe it to be so in the sense in which it is put. Princes in ancient times perhaps derived some revenue from the liquor traffic, but they never made the people the slaves of drink that they are now. Even granting that I am wrong that *abkari* in its present form has not been in existence from times immemorial, still I do not subscribe to the superstition that everything is good because it is ancient. I do not believe either that anything is good because it is Indian. He who runs may see that opium and such other intoxicants and narcotics stupefy a man's soul and reduce him to a level lower than that of beasts. Trade in them is demonstrably sinful. Indian States should close all liquor shops and thus set a good example for the British administrators to follow. I congratulate the Kathiawar States which have tried to introduce this reform and I trust the day is not distant when there will be not a single liquor shop in our peninsula.

SPECIAL CASES

I constantly receive complaints against particular States for publication and criticism in *Young India* and *Navajivan,* but I do not propose to refer to them just now, nor have I referred to them in those journals. I prefer to be silent so long as I am not in possession of all facts and have not heard what the States in question have to say. I hope to be enlightened about these things in the Subjects Committee and if then I find it proper to say or to do anything, I would certainly move in the matter.

KHADI AND THE SPINNING-WHEEL

There are two items in which we can expect full co-operation from the Indian States. At one time our national economics was this that just as we produced our own corn and consumed it so did we

produce our own cotton, spin it in our homes and wear the clothes woven by our weavers from our own yarn. The first part of this description is still true while the latter part has almost ceased to hold good. A man generally spends upon his clothing a tenth of what he spends upon his food; hence instead of distributing ten per cent of our income among ourselves we now send it to England or to our own mills. That means that we lose so much labour, and in the bargain spend money on our clothing and consequently suffer a twofold loss. The result is that we stint ourselves in the matter of food in order to be able to spend on clothing, and sink into greater and greater misery day by day. We are bound to perish if the twin industries of agriculture and spinning as well as weaving disappear from our homes or our villages. I will leave it to the members of the Conference to imagine what would be the consequence if all the villages under Bhavnagar were to order out the food and clothing from Bhavnagar. Still it is this unnatural procedure which we have adopted about our clothing. We either import our clothing from foreign countries or else get it from our mills. In either case it spells decay of our rural population.

Let us not be deluded by the example of the other countries which import their clothing from outside and still do not suffer economically. In other countries if people give up spinning and weaving, they take to some still more remunerative industry instead. We on the other hand gave up spinning and partly weaving and had nothing else to occupy the time thus left vacant.

For Kathiawar it is very easy to escape from the economic catastrophe. Our Princes can encourage the people by personal example, and induce them to reinstate khadi in their homes and thus arrest the progress of the ever-deepening poverty of Kathiawar. In my view the starting of mills and ginning factories in Kathiawar will not make for the people's prosperity, but will be in the nature of a disaster. It is not a healthy sign that the middle-class people are compelled to leave the peninsula in search of a livelihood. There is no harm if a few enterprising men leave Kathiawar in search of fortune; but it is shameful and disgraceful for the States that their subjects being reduced to poverty should feel compelled to leave the country from pure helplessness. Whenever I have returned to Kathiawar after staying outside for sometime I have found that the people have been losing instead of gaining in stamina.

Fortunately the arts of hand-spinning and hand-weaving are being revived day by day and the importance of khadi is being realized. Will not the Princes and Chiefs help this movement? It will reflect no small credit on them if they educate the cultivators to stock cotton sufficient for the requirements of Kathiawar, and spread the use of khadi by wearing it themselves. All khadi need not be coarse. The Princes by encouraging hand-spinning and hand-weaving can revive many arts and crafts connected with weaving. Royal ladies can spin fine yarn on wheels artistically painted and adorned with silver bells, get it woven into fine muslin and deck themselves with it. I have personally seen delicate varieties being woven in Kathiawar. That art has now nearly died out. Is it not the special duty of Princes to encourage such arts?

UNTOUCHABILITY

Another extremely important question is that of untouchability. The suppressed classes perhaps suffer more in Kathiawar than in other parts of Greater Gujarat. They are harassed even in railways. To succour the distressed is the special mission of Princes. They are the natural champions of the weak. Will they not come to the aid of the suppressed classes? Princes live by the blessings of their subjects. Will they not enrich their own lives by earning the distinction of the suppressed? The scriptures proclaim that there is no distinction between a Brahmin and a scavenger. Both have souls; both have five organs of sense. If they wish, the Princes can do much to ameliorate the condition of these classes and can remove untouchability by association with them in a religious spirit. Let them found schools and sink wells for the suppressed and find a throne in their hearts.

WHY I HAVE CRITICIZED

I have not criticized the States for the sake of criticism. I know the Gandhi family has been connected with them for three generations. I have myself been witness to ministership in three States. I remember that the relations of my father and my uncle with their respective States were perfectly cordial. As I believe that I am not devoid of the sense of discrimination, I am anxious to see only the good points of the States. As I have already said I do not desire their destruction. I believe that the States can do much good to the people. And if I have embarked upon criticism, it is in the interest of the Princes as well as of their subjects. My religion is based on truth and

non-violence. Truth is my God. Non-violence is the means of realizing Him. In passing criticisms I have endeavoured to state the truth and have been actuated purely by the spirit of non-violence or love. I pray that the Princes and Chiefs may understand and accept my remarks in the same spirit.

"RAMARAJYA"

My ideal of Indian States is that of *Ramarajya.* Rama taking his cue from a washerman's remark and in order to satisfy his subjects abandoned Sita who was dear to him as life itself and was a very incarnation of Purity[1]. Rama did justice even to a dog. By abandoning his kingdom and living in the forest for the sake of truth Rama gave to all the kings of the world an object lesson in noble conduct. By his strict monogamy he showed that a life of perfect self-restraint could be led by a royal householder. He lent splendour to his throne by his popular administration and proved that *Ramarajya* was the acme of swaraj. Rama did not need the very imperfect modern instrument of ascertaining public opinion by counting votes. He had captivated the hearts of the people. He knew public opinion by intuition as it were. The subjects of Rama were supremely happy.

Such *Ramarajya* is possible even today. The race of Rama is not extinct. In modern times the first Caliphs may be said to have established *Ramarajya.* Abubaker and Hazrat Umar collected revenue running into crores and yet personally they were as good as fakirs. They received not a pie from the Public Treasury. They were ever watchful to see that the people got justice. It was their principle that one may not play false even with the enemy but must deal justly with him.

TO THE PEOPLE

In my humble opinion I have done my duty by the Princes in saying a few words about them. A word now to the people: The popular saying, "As is the king, so are the people", is only a half truth. That is to say, it is not more true than its converse, "As are the people so is the Prince". Where the subjects are watchful, a Prince is entirely dependent upon them for his status. Where the subjects are overtaken by sleepy indifference, there is every possibility that the Prince will cease to function as a protector and become an oppressor

[1] The source has "pity".

instead. Those who are not wide awake have no right to blame their Prince. The Prince as well as the people are mostly creatures of circumstances. Enterprising Princes and peoples mould circumstances for their own benefit. Manliness consists in making circumstances subservient to ourselves. Those who will not heed themselves perish. To understand this principle is not to be impatient, not to reproach Fate, not to blame others. He who understands the doctrine of self-help blames himself for failure. It is on this ground that I object to violence. If we blame others when we should blame ourselves and wish for or bring about the destruction, that does not remove the root cause of the disease which on the contrary sinks all the deeper for the ignorance thereof.

SATYAGRAHA

We then see that the people themselves are as responsible as and even more responsible than the Princes for the defects pointed out by me. If public opinion is opposed to a particular line of action, it should be impossible for the Prince to adopt it. Opposition here does not mean merely inaudible murmur. Public opposition is effective only where there is strength behind it. What does a son do when he objects to some action of his father? He requests the father to desist from the objectionable course, i.e., presents respectful petitions. If the father does not agree in spite of repeated prayers, he non-co-operates with him to the extent even of leaving the paternal roof. This is pure justice. Where father and son are uncivilized, they quarrel, abuse each other and often even come to blows. An obedient son is ever modest, ever peaceful and ever loving. It is only his love which on due occasion compels him to non-co-operate. The father himself understands this loving non-co-operation. He cannot endure abandonment by or separation from the son, is distressed at heart and repents. Not that it always happens thus. But the son's duty of non-co-operation is clear.

Such non-co-operation is possible between a Prince and his people. In particular circumstances it may be the people's duty. Such circumstances can exist only where the latter are by nature fearless and are lovers of liberty. They generally appreciate the laws of the State and obey them voluntarily without the fear of punishment. . Reasoned and willing obedience to the laws of the State is the first lesson in non co-operation.

The second is that of tolerance. We must tolerate many laws of the State, even when they are inconvenient. A son may not approve of

some orders of the father and yet he obeys them. It is only when they are unworthy of tolerance and immoral that he disobeys them. The father will at once understand such respectful disobedience. In the same way it is only when a people have proved their active loyalty by obeying the many laws of the State that they acquire the right of civil disobedience.

The third lesson is that of suffering. He who has not the capacity of suffering cannot non-co-operate. He who has not learnt to sacrifice his property and even his family when necessary can never non-co-operate. It is possible that a Prince enraged by non-co-operation will inflict all manner of punishments. There lies the test of love, patience, and strength. He who is not ready to undergo the fiery ordeal cannot non-co-operate. A whole people cannot be considered fit or ready for non-co-operation when only an individual or two have mastered these three lessons. A large number of the people must be thus prepared before they can non-co-operate. The result of hasty non-co-operation can only lead to harm. Some patriotic young men who do not understand the limitations noted by me grow impatient. Previous preparation is needed for non-co-operation as it is for all important things. A man cannot become a non-co-operator by merely wishing to be one. Discipline is obligatory. I do not know that many have undergone the needful discipline in any part of Kathiawar. And when the requisite discipline has been gone through probably non-co-operation will be found to be unnecessary.

As it is, I observe the necessity for individuals to prepare themselves in Kathiawar as well as in other parts of India. Individuals must cultivate the spirit of service, renunciation, truth, non-violence, self-restraint, patience, etc. They must engage in constructive work in order to develop these qualities. Many reforms would be effected automatically if we put in a good deal of silent work among the people.

THE POLITICALS

Kathiawar is famous for its political class. This class affects an exaggerated politeness and consequently it has developed hypocrisy, timidity and sycophancy. They are an educated body of men and therefore, they must become the pioneers in reforms. They can do much for the people if they wish. We find contentment among the people in places where these political officials are men of character. Needless to say that my remarks apply to the politicals as a class. I do

not wish to suggest that they apply to every member of that class. On the contrary, I know that some of the best of workers are drawn from this class. Hence I have never lost hope about this class. Much good might result if only it served the States not for making money but for pure service.

OTHER CLASSES

Again, constructive service is easy for those who not serving the States have adopted an independent profession. I am anxious to see them develop the qualities mentioned above. We want silent workers and pure fighters who would merge themselves among the people. Workers of this description can be counted on one's fingers. Is there even one such worker for every village in Kathiawar? I know the answer is in the negative. The class of people who will read this will hardly have any idea of rural life. Those who have some idea of it will not like it. Still, India and hence Kathiawar lives in the villages.

THE SPINNING-WHEEL

How is this service to be rendered? Here I give the first place to the spinning-wheel. I have heard much against it. But I know the time is near when the very thing which is being abused today will be worshipped as *sudarshana chakra*. I am confident that if we do not take it up voluntarily, the force of circumstances will compel us. The study of Indian economics is the study of the spinning-wheel. It is the *sine qua non* for the revival of our languishing village industries. I do not look upon hand-spinning as an occupation but as a duty incumbent upon followers of all religious sects and denominations.

An American writer says that the future lies with nations that believe in manual labour. Nations are tired of the worship of lifeless machines multiplied *ad infinitum*. We are destroying the matchless living machines, viz., our own bodies by leaving them to rust and trying to substitute lifeless machinery for them. It is a law of God that the body must be fully worked and utilized. We dare not ignore it. The spinning-wheel is the auspicious symbol of *sharir yajna*—body labour. He who eats his food without offering this sacrifice steals it. By giving up this sacrifice we became traitors to the country and banged the door in the face of the Goddess of Fortune. The numerous men and women in India whose bodies are mere skeletons bear witness to this. My revered friend Mr. Shastriar says I am interfering even in the people's choice of their dress. This is perfectly true. It is

the duty of every servant of the nation to do so whenever it becomes necessary. I would certainly raise my voice against it, if the nation takes, say, to the pantaloon. It is wholly unsuited to our climate. It is the duty of every Indian to raise his voice against the nation using foreign-cloth. The opposition really is not to the cloth being foreign but to the poverty which its importation brings in its train. If the nation gives up its *jawar* and *bajri* and imports oats from Scotland or rye from Russia I would certainly intrude into the nation's kitchen, would scold it to the full and even sit *dharana* and make the agony of my soul heard. Such intrusions have even happened within recent times. During the late diabolical War in Europe people were compelled to raise particular crops, and the States controlled the food and drink of their subjects.

Those who wish to serve in the villages cannot but take up the study of the spinning-wheel. Hundreds and even thousands of young men and women can earn their livelihood by its means and doubly repay the nation for it. This work means organization and familiarity with every villager to whom one could easily impart a rudimentary knowledge of economics and politics. The work might also include the true education of the village children and give one an insight into the many wants and shortcomings of villages.

Not only is there no conflict possible between a Prince and his subjects in this khadi work but on the other hand their relations might be expected to become cordial. The fulfilment of this expectation is conditional on the workers, humility. I am therefore neither ashamed nor do I hesitate in asking this Political Conference to give prominence to the spinning-wheel

THE SUPPRESSED CLASSES

Such also is the work among untouchables. It is the bounden duty of all Hindus to remove untouchability. Here also no interference need be feared from any Prince. I firmly believe that Hindus would regain the strength of soul if by serving the suppressed and receiving their hearts' blessings they carried on a process of self-purification. Untouchability is a great blot on Hinduism. It is necessary to remove that blot. The Hindu who serves the suppressed will be a saviour of Hinduism and will enshrine himself in the hearts of his suppressed brothers and sisters.

Power is of two kinds. One is obtained by the fear of punish-

ment and the other by acts of love. Power based on love is a thousand times more effective and permanent than the one derived from fear of punishment. When the members of this Conference will prepare themselves by loving service, they will acquire the right to speak on behalf of the people and no Prince will be able to resist them. Then only is there an atmosphere for non-co-operation, if it ever becomes necessary.

But I have faith in the Princes. They will at once recognize the force of such enlightened and forceful public opinion. After all the princes, too, are Indians. This country is all in all to them as it is to us. It is possible to touch their hearts. I for one do not think it difficult to make a successful appeal to their sense of justice. We have never made an earnest effort. We are in a hurry. In conscientiously preparing ourselves for service lies our victory, the victory of Princes as well as the people.

HINDU-MUSLIMS UNITY

The third question is that of Hindu-Muslim unity. I have one or two letters from Kathiawar which show that this question is exercising some minds even in Kathiawar. I need scarcely say that there must be unity between Hindus and Muslims. No worker dare ignore any single part of the nation.

MY FIELD OF LABOUR

I know that to many my speech will appear incomplete and even insipid. But I cannot give any practical or useful advice by going outside my province. My field of labour is clearly defined and it pleases me. I am fascinated by the law of love. It is the philosophers' stone for me. I know ahimsa alone can provide a remedy for our ills. In my view the path of non-violence is not the path of the timid or the unmanly. Ahimsa is the height of Kshatriyas dharma as it represents the climax of fearlessness. In it there is no scope for flight or for defeat. Being a quality of the soul it is not difficult of attainment. It comes easily to a person who feels the presence of the soul within. I believe that no other path but that of non-violence will suit India. The symbol of that dharma for India is the spinning-wheel as it alone is the friend of the distressed and the giver of plenty for the poor. The law of love knows no bounds of space or time. My swaraj, therefore,

takes note of *Bhangis, Dheds, Dublas*[1] and the weakest of the weak, and except the spinning-wheel I know no other thing which befriends all these.

I have not discussed your local questions of which I have not sufficient knowledge. I have not dealt with the questions of the ideal constitution for the States as you alone can be its fashioners. My duty lies in discovering and employing means by which the nation may evolve the strength to enforce its will. When once the nation is conscious of its strength, it will find its own way or make it. That Prince is acceptable to me who becomes a Prince among his people's servants. The subjects are the real masters. But what is the servant to do if the master goes to sleep? Everything, therefore, is included in trying for a true national awakening.

Such being my ideal there is room for Indian States in swaraj as conceived by me and there is full protection guaranteed to the subjects for their rights. The true source of rights is duty. I have thorefore spoken only about the duties of Princes as well as the peoples. If we all discharge our duties, rights will not be far to seek. If, leaving duties unperformed we run after rights, they will escape us like a will-o'-the-wisp. The more we pursue them the farther will they fly. The same teaching has been embodied by Krishna in the immortal words: "Action alone is thine. Leave thou the fruit severely alone."[2] Action is duty; fruit is the right.

Young India, 8-1-1925

39. OPENING SPEECH AT KATHIAWAR POLITICAL CONFERENCE, BHAVNAGAR

January 8, 1925

I have expressed in my address the great hesitation that I felt in accepting the chairmanship of this Conference. Man proposes and God disposes. I have felt the weight of this maxim many times in my life, as indeed all thoughtful men and women must have done.

I wanted to dwell in this Conference on only one subject of primary importance, but now fortunately I must dwell on two. The first, is, no doubt, khadi, than which nothing is dearer to me.

[1] A backward community in Gujarat

[2] *Bhagavad Gita,* II. 47

Peoplethink that I have a craze for the spinning-wheel and khadi. This is true. Only a lover can fully understand his beloved. Only he knows what true love means; and I, being the lover, alone know what my love is like and what flames of passion burn in my heart. I do not, however, wish to speak of them now.

This is a political conference; hence you would expect a discussion of political matters only. But my thoughts and feelings are those of a rustic, a peasant, a common man. Although I was born in a trading community—the Bania class—and my father and grandfather were connected with matters of State as well, I am no statesman; there is no trace of statesmanship or diplomacy in me; and if there is any, it is in spite of me. But I have another quality in me, which is not inherited but is entirely self-acquired, and that is the quality of being a peasant, a scavenger, a *Dhed,* the lowliest of the low. I cannot, therefore, define "politics" in your terms—as statesmanship. Being what I am, I cannot think of matters only concerning the State when taking up a "political" Subject, for a farmer cannot look after his fields by making speeches—he can only do so by taking up his plough and not giving it up under the hottest sun. Similarly, a weaver can ply his trade by hard work alone. The common meaning of the word "political" is, however, making speeches, organizing agitations or movements and finding fault with the Government. But to me, the meaning of this word is quite different. Even during the twenty-two years of my stay abroad, I had given it a different definition. Yet, as things look enchanting from a distance, people have been mistaking me for a statesman or a politician. No doubt, I like politics too, but it is of a different kind. There is no place for scheming in it; it is full of love and understanding. In fact, love and affection are a thousand times more effective than political manoeuvring besides, the interests of everybody including those of the peasant, the scavenger and the pariah, can best be looked after through understanding and love. You know, I gave a similar definition of statesmanship before the Congress and I was not ashamed of it. It is from this point of view that I have included khadi among political matters. I claim my view to be wise and enlightened, and hope that some day you will also hail my advocacy of the spinning-wheel and khadi as shrewd, wise and enlightened. When people mock at me today and describe the spinning-wheel as Gandhi's toy, I pity them, and I am not going to give it up however much they laugh at me.

Now, to the next important subject. Ever since I was invited here and I wrote in *Navajivan* that, if a separate enclosure was arranged for seating the untouchables in this conference, then my place would be among them,[1] a big outcry has been raised in Bhavnagar. I have seen with my own eyes how bad is the evil of untouchability in Kathiawar. My own revered mother thought it a sin to touch a *Bhangi.* She is no less dear to me on that account. But I don't want to follow in the footsteps of my parents in this matter.[2] I have inherited from them the spirit of freedom, and I am convinced that, even if I think differently from them on this subject, the soul of my mother will bless me all the same and will approve of my stand, for in none of the solemn vows she made me take was touching someone mentioned as a sin. Before I went to England, she took three promises from me, but she never asked me to adhere to untouchability as religious duty. I can quite see the little— or I should say perhaps, big—commotion in Bhavnagar; and the *Nagars,* the *Vanias* and others are upset. To such people who are present here and who really believe that Gandhi is out to uproot the *sanatana* dharma[3], I would like to say deliberately and emphatically that Gandhi has no such intention whatsoever; on the contrary, *sanatana* dharma is rooted in what Gandhi says. Some of you may be learned men who have learnt every word of the Vedas by heart; I would nevertheless like to point out their mistake and say that the very foundations of *sanatana* dharma are being shaken by people who consider untouchability to be the heart of Hindu religion. With due respect I would submit that such belief lacks foresight, wisdom, discrimination, humility or compassion. Even if I remain alone in my conviction; I must still proclaim to the very end that if we accommodate the present conception of unthouchability in Hindu religion, it will surely lead to decay and bring about eventual death. To Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras I would say that the emancipation of India does not rest so much on the Muslims and the Christians as on how the Hindus themselves uphold their religion; for the Kashivishvanath[4] of the Muslim or the Christian is Mecca or Jerusalem outside India; but the Hindu must seek his salvation in this land alone and nowhere else. This is tile land of Yudhishthira, of

[1] *Vide* "With what Expection?" 7-12-1924

[2] The Gujarati idiom literally means: "I do not wish to drown myself in my ancestral well."

[3] Literally, the eternal dharma

[4] Banaras, the holy place of the Hindus

Ramachandra. Ascetics and sages have lived and practised austere penance here. They have called our country a field of duty and not a garden of pleasure. I tell the people of this land that Hindu religion is on test today, and it is being weighed against all the other religions of the world. If anything inconsistent with compassion, morality or reason is allowed to stay in the Hindu religion, then it will surely perish. I am fully aware of the virtue of compassion, and am therefore able to see what hypocrisy and ignorance is being practised under the cover of Hindu religion. This hypocrisy and ignorance I shall fight, alone if necessary. I shall do penance and may die in this struggle. But if perchance I lose my reason and in my insanity admit my present views on untouchability as wrong and say that I have sinned in describing untouchability as a blot on Hinduism, you may safely conclude then that irresistible fear has overtaken me and being afraid of the consequences I have denied my former belief. You must then regard me as one talking nonsense in a state of stupor.

There is no selfish motive in whatever I am saying today. I do not seek any position or prestige thereby. If at all I seek any position it is that of a *Bhangi*. Cleansing of dirt is sacred work which can be done by a Brahmin as well as a *Bhangi*, the former doing it with and the latter without the knowledge of its holiness. I respect and honour both of them. In the absence of either of the two, Hinduism is bound to face extinction.

I like the path of service; therefore, I like the *Bhangi*. I have personally no objection to sharing my meal with him, but I am not asking you to inter-dine with or inter-marry him. How can I advise you? As far as I am concerned I am a fakir, who has given up the world, a sannyasi who is not bound by social customs, though how much of a true fakir or sannyasi I am, I cannot say. But I do like renouncing the world and its ways. I also like *brahmacharya*, though how much of a true *brahmachari* I am, I cannot also say, for according to me anyone who has unchaste thoughts or dreams cannot be called a *brahmachari*. If I utter one word of anger, do anything out of malice or jealousy, say anything in fury even to someone who considers himself my deadliest enemy, I cannot call myself a *brahmachari*. Therefore I do not know whether I am a true sannyasi or *brahmachari;* but I can assert that my life and my thoughts tend towards that state. With this ingrained trait in my character, I cannot refuse to serve a *Bhangi* girl or a leper when my help is sought or

needed, nor can I refuse to accept a drink or meal proffered by them. God may protect me or kill me, but serve a leper I must. I may even say that, while engaged in such service, I would be entirely unconcerned whether or not God protected me. I regard it my sacred duty to eat only after making the pariah or the leper eat. But I am not asking you to violate any social barriers as regards eating and drinking. I expect only one thing from you, namely, that you should not create a fifth caste. God has cast men in a fourfold structure of society. I can understand that; but please do not create a fifth caste of untouchables. I cannot tolerate untouchability and am much pained to hear that word. I would request those who oppose me to think carefully, to come to me and understand through discussion what I am talking about. If you talk recklessly and thoughtlessly; you are not going to convince anyone thereby. I have received today a telegram signed by two pandits. I do not know these gentlemen; they write to say that the accusations heaped on me in the name of Hinduism and in the name of the Pandits are baseless, that they are going to send me such messages signed by the learned men of their class that shall prove that many shastris support me. They also plead their inability to work as vigorously as I do in this field, for they say that I am fearless whereas they have to weigh many considerations. When Shri Krishna went to Dronacharya and Bhishmacharya and asked them if they were going to fight the Pandavas, the two elders expressed their helplessness since, they said, they had to think of their livelihood. We have many such Dronacharyas and Bhishmacharyas among us who, poor people, have to think of their stomachs first. They are in no position to do anything. The fault lies with Providence or their circumstances. Even so, they bless me in their heart of hearts and know that whatever Gandhi says is true. But here I must also add one more thing. I am a satyagrahi; my creed ordains me not to kill anyone but to lay down my own life. I shall have to go my own way. I have, therefore, a request to make to you. If you sincerely believe that untouchability is the very core of Hinduism, then stick to it; but give me also my right to my belief that it is a disgrace to Hinduism. You may, if you can, rouse the Hindu world in your favour; but give me also an equal opportunity to do likewise. For a Satyagrahi there is only one path to follow: he does not seek alliances or compromises with others. I shall therefore assure you that in my dealings with you, I shall always be guided by love. If I am left alone, I shall segregate myself and ask people to keep away from me.

To those who are assisting me in my work of removing untouchability, and to the so-called untouchables, I would counsel forbearance even against abuse. Tulsidas has said that compassion is the very source of religion. If you forsake love, you shall lose the battle. They who regard untouchability as sin, must not sin themselves by hating their opponents. Turn a smiling face even to those whoabuse you. If you love them from the depth of your heart, and maintain the right attitude and behaviour, the sin of untouchability is bound to be eradicated.

I fail, however, to understand this opposition in Kathiawar. Kathiawar is the land of Sudama, of Shri Krishna and Aniruddha. Where should I go if untouchability finds a place in the land where warriors have shed their blood? However, the *Bhangis* tell me that the conditions here are worse than in any other part of Gujarat. I am pained to hear this.

Who is Narandas Sanghani but a son to me? Once he used to follow me blindly and delighted in serving me. He gave all his library to me. But God has now induced ill-will in him. However, he is still like a son to me. I believe that his mischief will not last long and that his rows will never be fulfilled. Even if God wishes it otherwise, and Sanghani raises his hand to attack me, I shall ask him to please himself and bless him. Prahlad disobeyed his father since, he said, the father was leading him towards the path of sin and he was not bound by the father's orders. If Narandas still believes that he is like the eldest son to me and yet he wishes to do away with me because I have gone astray, he should certainly strike me. I am sure his eyes will open when he has done so, and he will then come to you with downcast head to atone for his sin. He is just a child, he is young, whereas I have grown old. Many people have raised their hand against me, but I have survived. Once I had appendicitis and I was operated upon. During the operation the lamp went off and Col. Maddock was greatly distressed. But God wanted to save me and here I am with no harm done ! There is a story in the Upanishads that Vayu[1] was asked to move a blade of grass, and Agni[2] to burn it; but they had to run away after admitting failure. So, if God does not wish me to die, who can kill me? And if my days are over, I may pass away without anyone's knowledge just as I am talking to you now or sitting comfortably and

[1] God of wind
[2] God of fire

no one could do anything about it too! I have had some experience of the world and acquired some knowledge of things. I am therefore asking you to believe me and have pity on Narandas. I do not seek your pity for myself, for I depend only on God for compassion. I demand a true soldier's pledge from you. Once you take the pledge, I would insist that you fulfil it. If you take a pledge without giving serious thought to it, you will find me a difficult man. I shall see that you honour your pledge. So think carefully before you come here again tomorrow.

I wanted to speak to you for thirty minutes, but have actually taken up thirty-five minutes of your time. I had no right over these additional five minutes, but I know that you have allowed me this indulgence and I have availed myself of it through your goodwill for *Bhangis.*

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan Supplement, 18-1-1925

40. CONCLUDING SPEECH AT. KATHIAWAR POLITICAL CONFERENCE, BHAVNAGAR

[*January 9, 1925*][1]

The following is a substance of Mr. Gandhi's concluding speech at the Kathiawar Political Conference:

Whenever I have come to Kathiawar I have been covered with overflowing love. It is no wonder when I know that everywhere in India I find Kathiawar, i.e., the overwhelming love of Kathiawar. Much as I prize that love, I crave for that "love amazing, love divine", which nourishes the soul, and not the love which, not being backed by the will to perform promises made, withers the soul. It is service of the people that connects you and me, and not circumstances of a private nature. Unless, therefore, you give all your love practical shape, turn it into work of public benefit, it has, for me at least, no meaning. I am an ordinary mortal, as much exposed to affections and passions as anyone of you. But I always try to control them. I therefore demand love which soothes but does not overwhelm. I want the fire of that love to purify and not to burn me. Let all your love therefore be converted

[1] From the *Navajivan* Supplement, 18-1-1925, which carried the report of the Gujarati speech

into work in fulfilment of the national programme.

I am grateful to you for allowing me to exercise the fullest discretion as regards the resolutions you had drafted for consideration before the Subjects Committee. Your draft contained a long list of grievances. I asked you to restrain the desire for passing resolutions regarding grievances and to cultivate self-discipline and the capacity of suffering. You accepted my advice, not out of regard for my personality, but because you know that I am a practical man and havesome experience of public affairs. In advising you however to drop most of your resolutions, I did not mean to muzzle myself too on the matters referred to therein. I have taken up greater responsibility on my shoulders. I do not want to go to sleep, because you have waived all discussion of your grievances. It shall be, for me, a year of intense, unremitting toil.

But I shall work on my condition. The advice I have given you is based on trust, trust in human nature, trust in the Kathiawar Chiefs. Even so at Amritsar I pleaded[1] with my brother-delegates not to distrust Mr. Montagu, not to distrust Lord Sinha's judgment, not to distrust His Majesty the King, and you know that the Congress accepted my advice to a considerable extent. You must remember that against me was ranged that day no less an opponent than the late Lokamanya Tilak. But he and the others saw that I was suggesting the proper thing and accepted my suggestion. I pleaded with them somewhat in this wise: "Accept the Reforms today, as given in good faith. The moment you feel that they are more a burden than a blessing, you may reject them. For Mr. Montagu says that he has tried to secure all that he could for us. Lord Sinha, a man in the know and a distinguished patriot, has also advised the country to accept the Reforms". The King's message too was couched in graceful language. All those considerations led me to suggest acceptance of the Reforms. Out of that state of trust, when it was proved to be misplaced, arose non-co-operation. Today too I am asking you to adopt a policy of trust. But pray do not press the parallel too far. It is meant only to assure you that I do not want to sit silent. I have heard more tales of woe than you have told me. I do not know how much of all I have heard is true. But you may be sure that as soon as I am convinced that the complaints are true, I shall use whatever ability and resource-

[1] *Vide* "Speech on Reforms Resolution at Amritsar Congress", January 1, 1920.

fulness I possess to get them remedied. I shall try to see the Princes concerned. If I succeed in getting a hearing from them, I shall discuss all your grievances with them, and shall, if permitted, acquaint the public with the result. Mussalman friends from Dhoraji had a series of grievances against the Thakore Sahib of Gondal. They asked to be permitted to place them before the Conference. But I dissuaded them, as I was not in possession of the facts. I have the honour to know the Thakore Sahib of Gondal. I have had the pleasure of meeting him. I regard him with respect, and I know that he is a capable ruler. It is therefore unbearable that he should mean or do any harm to his subjects. How can I indict him at the instance of half a dozen or more people? So long as I have not seen him or not spoken to the subordinate officers concerned, it would not be possible for me to give any definite lead. It would be against my nature to do so. I therefore assured the friends from Dhoraji that I would inquire into all their charges, and then do the needful. It was an awkward situation, my having to advise the Mussalman friends who might not trust me and know that I make no distinction between a Hindu and a Mussalman. But Maulana Shaukat Ali's arrival has fortified me. I told them that the Maulana and I would both consider over the matter, and give them our joint advice. I am glad to say that they agreed to this.

Jamnagar is in the same position as Gondal. I have numerous complaints against the ruler of that State also. If a subject may claim friendship with a ruling Prince, I may say that Jamsahib and I were friends in our youth. The late Kevalram Mavji Dave gave me a note of introduction to Jamsahib when I went to England. Very often we used to meet each other there, and the wish was dearest to the hearts of every one of us, his friends, that he should succeed to the gadi of Jamnagar. But today I hear numerous charges against him, none of which I wish may be true. I also wish that Jamsahib should of his own accord remedy all the wrongs (if any) that may have been committed against his subjects by him or in his name. It is not my purpose to embarrass him. I should approach him in all humility and plead with him. I should do the same with my bitterest opponent. Sir Michael O'Dwyer, for instance, thinks I am the wickedest man on earth. If he were to return to India as the King's representative, I would not hesitate to approach him, if need be, in all humility. Why should I do otherwise with Jamsahib? I have a huge pile of material before me aspersing both him and the Thakore Sahib of Gondal. But how can I make use of it, how can I criticize them, without inquiry? But I am not

going to ignore or suppress any of the charges or complaints. I shall, during the current year, try my best to get them investigated and shall submit to you a day-to-day diary of my work at the close of the year.

A word now for your part of the bargain. I ask you not to disturb the task I have undertaken, by private or public criticism of a bitter or rancorous nature. I ask you not to irritate the Princes. They are, after all, rulers and are therefore like all men in authority. Authority blurs the vision. We cannot have Rama in every age, nor Umar. None of the Caliphs who came after the glorious thirty years of the Caliphate could ever approach anyone of the first four Caliphs. Such rulers are rare even as the gems embedded in the most hidden recesses of mines. Wherever, therefore, I find a ruler getting irritated or angry I am patient with him. For anger is natural to them as much as to you or me if we were similarly placed. Kings are no more philosophers or saints than anyone of us. The world knows only one Janaka Videhi. Even under swaraj we shall have to put up with a fair amount of failings of the swaraj officials. Why only an hour ago perhaps I gave you a foretaste of how a man in authority behaves. How can I say that I did not in any instance abuse my authority? A shastri and a *muni* asked for permission to speak; I did not give it, I told the *muni*: "No more this wordy warfare for you. Your business is to go about from place to place introducing charkhas in every home." How do I know that I did not exceed the bounds of propriety in thus disallowing both? But I was clothed in authority, however brief, and so you put up with me. Wherever there is the use of authority, there is scope for anger and injustice and we must need drink many a bitter cup at the hands of rulers.

I have thus presented to you two sides of the case, one for the rulers and the other for the ruled. It is unbearable for me that a Kathiawar prince should do wrong to his subjects. To him I say: "For what earthly use do you behave thus?" To you I say: "You must learn lessons of forbearance and self-suffering." I commend to your attention the last paragraph of my printed Presidential address. I would ask you to read and read that paragraph and to chew and digest it. No people have risen who thought only of rights. Only those did so who thought of duties. Out of the performance of duties flow rights, and those that knew and performed their duties came naturally by the rights. The Shastras inculcate reverence to parents. It means implicit obedience to them, and why do we willingly obey like that? We know

that an angry look from his mother was sufficient to make the giant-like Shaukat Ali cower before her. What is the secret of this willing obedience? It is that the obedience carries with it enjoyment of a right—the right to inheritance. At the back of obedience is a consciousness of a right to be enjoyed, and yet woe to the man who obeys with an eye to the right to inheritance. It is the Shastras again that inculcate obedience without an eye to the fruit thereof. He who thinks not of the right gets it, and he who thinks of it loses it. That is the rule of conduct I would like to place before you. If you follow it I have no doubt that you will create a disciplined army of workers for swaraj. After you have succeeded in raising such an army, no ruler dare ignore you. As it is, the gentleman who invited the next conference to Sorath did so with considerable trepidation, lest a ruler should refuse permission to hold it. You have therefore to clear the atmosphere, and to raise your moral stature to such a degree that no one would want to refuse your request. I hope you will not misunderstand me. I am not asking you to do aught that you should not do, that may be calculated to injure your self-respect. Always insist on truth, and urge it with humility and grace. I am a journalist of long standing. In my own way I claim to know my art well. For I make it a point to write only one thing when there are a hundred things that I might write. Now if I were to open the columns of *Young India* and *Navajivan* to all the controversial topics and complaints that are referred to me, that would be the surest way to lose the little reputation I have gained for these journals. And punctilious though I am in the observance of this rule, I dare say I err on occasions. I would therefore ask such of you as are journalists and publicists to curb your pen and tongue. Exercise the strictest economy of words, but not of truth. Restrain your expression, but not the inner light which should burn brighter with increasing restraint. Nor will you thus fall a prey to weakness. Flattery and anger are the two sides of weakness, one the obverse, other the reverse. The reverse—anger—is worse than the obverse—flattery. Only a weak man either resorts to flattery or tries to disguise his weakness under anger. Let no one flatter himself that his anger is an expression of his strength. Strength lies only in action and action is duty done. Those who have captivated the hearts of men are souls heroic and true, who have burnt their passions to cinders in the fire of restraint. For you also, therefore, who have the salvation of Kathiawar at heart, patience and restraint should be the watchwords. The king carries on his work by means of punitive

sanctions. You will carry on your work with the sanction of sacrifice and love. Drench both the rulers and ruled with the water of your sacrifice and love, so that you may convert Kathiawar into an Eden worthy for men and gods to behold. If I may bless you, that is my blessing. If I am not worthy to give you blessings, that is my prayer to God. Let the spinning-wheel be a symbol of your sacrifice and love for fellowmen.

Young India, 15-1-1925

41. SPEECH AT SAMALDAS COLLEGE, BHAVNAGAR [1]

January 9, 1925

I have to speak today on the dharma or duty of students. That dharma is as easy as it is difficult. According to Hinduism, the student is a *brahmachari,* and *brahmacharyashrama is* the student-state. Celibacy is a narrow interpretation of *brahmacharya.* The original meaning is the life or the state of a student. That means control of the senses, but the whole period of study or acquirement of knowledge by means of control of the senses came to be regarded as *brahmacharyashrarma.* This period of life necessarily means very much taking and very little giving. We are mainly recipients in this state—taking whatever we can get from parents, teachers and from the world. But the taking, if it carries—as it did—no obligation of simultaneous repayment, it necessarily carried an obligation to repay the whole debt, with compound interest, at the proper time. That is why the Hindus maintain *brahmacharyashrama* as a matter of religious duty.

The [lives] of a *brahmachari* and a sannyasi are regarded as spiritually similar. The *brahmachari* must needs be a sannyasi if he is to be a *brahmachari.* For the sannyasi, it is a matter of choice. The four ashramas of Hinduism have nowadays lost their sacred character, and exist, if at all, in name. The life of the student *brahmachari is* poisoned at the very spring. Though there is nothing left of the ashramas today which we may hold up to the present generation as something to learn from and copy, we may still hark back to the ideals that inspired the original ashramas.

[1] Published under the title "The Duty of Students", this is a summary of Gandhiji's speech in Gujarati reported in *Navajivan,* 18-1-1925.

How can we understand the duty of students today? We have fallen so much from the ideal. The parents take the lead in giving the wrong direction. They feel that their children should be educated only in order that they may earn wealth and position. Education and knowledge are thus being prostituted, and we look in vain for the peace, innocence and bliss that the life of a student ought to be. Our students are weighed down with cares and worries when they should really be "careful for nothing". They have simply to receive and to assimilate. They should know only to discriminate between what should be received and what rejected. It is the duty of the teacher to teach his pupils discrimination. If we go on talking in indiscriminately, we would be no better. than machines. We are thinking, knowing beings and we must in this period distinguish truth from untruth, sweet from bitter language, clean from unclean things and so on. But the student's path today is strewn with more difficulties than the one of distinguishing good from bad things. He has to fight the hostile atmosphere around him. Instead of the sacred surroundings of a *rishi* guru's ashram and his paternal care, he has the atmosphere of a broken down home, and the artificial surroundings created by the modern system of education. The *rishis* taught their pupils without books. They only gave them a few *mantras* which the pupils treasured in their memories and translated in practical life. The present day student has to live in the midst of heaps of books, sufficient to choke him. In my own days Reynolds was much in vogue among students and I escaped him only because I was far from being a brilliant student and never cared to peep out of the school text books. When I went to England, however, I saw that the novels were tabooed in decent circles and that I had lost nothing by having never read them. Similarly there are many other things which a student might do worse than reject. One such thing is the craze for earning a career. Only the *grihastha*—householder—has to think of it, it is none of the *brahmachari* student's dharma. He has to acquaint himself with the condition of things in his own country, try to realize the magnitude of the crisis with which it is faced and the work that it requires of him. I dare say many amongst you read newspapers. I do not think I can ask you to eschew them altogether. But I would ask you to eschew everything of ephemeral interest, and I can tell you that newspapers afford nothing of permanent interest. They offer nothing to help the formation of character. And yet I know the craze for newspapers. It is pitiable, terrible. I am talking in this strain as I have myself made

some experiments in education. Out of those experim-ents I learnt the meaning of education, I discovered Satyagraha and non-co-operation and launched on those new experiments. I assure you I have never regretted having tried these last, nor have I undertaken them simply with the object of winning political swaraj. I have ventured to place them even before students. For they are innocent. They are today summed up in the spinning-wheel. First it was hailed with. ridicule, then came scorn, and presently it will be received with joy. The Congress has adopted it, and I would not hesitate to offer it respectfully even to Lord Reading. I would not hesitate to do so, as I know that I would lose nothing in so doing. The loser would be Lord Reading if he chose to reject it. I did not hesitate to deliver the message of the wheel to the Bishop of Calcutta when I had the honour to make his acquaintance in Delhi. I did the same with Col. Maddock, and when Mrs. Maddock sailed for England I presented her with a khaddar towel as a memento, and asked her to carry the message from house to house.

I am not tired of preaching the message of the wheel on all occasions at all hours, because it is such an innocent thing and yet so potent of good. It may not be relishing, but no health-giving food has the relish of spicy foods so detrimental to health, And so the *Gita* in a memorable text asks all thinking people to take things of which the first taste is bitter, but which are ultimately conducive to immortality. Such a thing today is the spinning wheel and its product. There is no *yajna* (Sacrifice) greater than spinning, calculated to bring peace to the troubled spirit, to soothe the distracted student's mind, to spiritualize his life. I have today no better prescription for the country—not even the *Gayatri*—in this practical age which looks for immediate results. *Gayatri* I would fain offer, but I cannot promise immediate result, whilst the thing I offer is such as you can take to, with God's name on your lips, and expect immediate result. An English friend wrote saying his English common sense told him that spinning was an excellent hobby. I said to him, "It may be a hobby for you, for us it is the Tree of Plenty." I do not like many Western ways, but there are certain things in them for which I cannot disguise my liking. Their "hobby" is a thing full of meaning. Col. Maddock, who was an efficient surgeon and took supreme delight in his task, did not devote all his hours to his work. Two hours he had set apart for his hobby which was gardening and it was this gardening that lent zest and savour to his life

I have pleasure therefore in placing the spinning-wheel before you, even as a hobby if you wills in order that your life may have zest and savour, in order that you may find peace and bliss. It will help you to lead a life of *brahmacharya.* Faith is a thing of great moment in the student state. There are so many things which you have to take for granted. You accept them simply because you get them from your teacher. Some propositions in geometry, for instance, were very difficult of comprehension for me. I took them for granted, and today I not only can understand them, but can lose myself in a study of geometry as easily as I can do in my present work. If you have faith and ply the wheel, you take it from me that some day you will admit that what an old man once told you about it Was literally true. No wonder that one learned in the lore applied the following text from the *Gita* to the spinning-wheel:

In this there is no waste of effort; neither is there any obstacle. Even a little practice of this dharma saves a man from dire calamity.[1]

Young India, 29-1-l925

42. TO SALESMEN OF SAWRAJ

It seems that even now the change in voting rights appears terrible to many. This does not surprise me. We are often troubled by a new thing; sometimes it produces fear. I hope that, as time goes by, fear will disappear and people will realize the value of the spinning franchise. In order to help such appreciation, it is necessary that those who have faith in the spinning-wheel should prove it by their persistence in it. Without waiting for orders from the Provincial Committee, those who are already spinning should do it more regularly and those who are not doing should start doing it. As hanks measuring two thousand yards are ready, people should hand them over to the Provincial Committees and get their names registered. This must not wait for a notice from the Provincial Committee.

Those who spin should also start persuading others to do so.

What is true of spinning applies also to khadi which needs a great deal of propaganda. In my journey through Dohad and Godhra I found that very few people have taken to khadi as yet. Of those who

[1] *Bhagavad Gita,* II. 40.

do wear it, one hears that many do so only at public gatherings. This is no way to boycott foreign-cloth. I found very little khadi among women. I would specially request volunteers in Dohad and Godhra to go from door to door and explain the necessity of using khadi and the duty to spin.

We are in the same position as the trader who day and night plans for an increase in his business. We are the salesmen of swaraj. We are aware that the business of swaraj will thrive only if the boycott of foreign-cloth is successful.

Each volunteer should understand his own responsibility. Each one should maintain a diary. At the end of the day one should ask oneself the following questions and note down the answers:

1. How many yards of yarn have I spun today?
2. How many people today did I persuade to adopt spinning?
3. How many people did I persuade today to *adopt khadi?*

He who regularly gives truthful answers in his diary will soon find that his capacity for work grows Constantly. Every individual has some self-respect and no one likes to record failures for ever. Hence, an honest person overcomes his failures and achieves victory. A good businessman keeps a diary and derives invaluable benefit from it. It is obligatory for the captain of a ship to maintain a log-book. Why should not the salesmen of swaraj do likewise? If a despondent people wish to regain hope, the Congress has shown the royal road to it. If we give up idleness and become industrious, we shall get results immediately. This is no time for criticism, no time for doubts. This is the time only to work silently, that is, to spin, to make others spin, to wear khadi and to make others wear it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-1-1925

43. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Paus Vad 2 [January 12, 1925][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

While touring in Kathiawar I thought of you and Anand. I wished for your presence and Anand's well-being. I shall await your

[1] From *Bapuni Prasadi*

letter when I reach the Ashram. Tell Anand that I remember her every day. It is just as well that the Sanatanists have risen in revolt. It will cleanse the atmosphere. Here there has been a great deal of cleansing. The Harijans were able to enter the pandal[1] without any fear.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

44. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

Monday [*January 12, 1925*][2]

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I shall reach there[3] at 3 o'clock tomorrow, Tuesday. I shall directly go to Babusahib Yashwantprasad's He had been to me yesterday and pressed me to put up with him. I hope you will see me there.

Will you be coming to Sojitra? If not, do come as far as Dhola or some such place so that we may be able to talk about the future.

I wish to know what arrangements have been made about [the cotton] that has been collected. We shall have good results if we make careful arrangements about the smallest things. Here also cotton is being collected.

Pattani Sahib has kept up spinning.

I will need my list of a hundred names. This year you are not to do any other work. You must obtain all the help you can from the States for the *Antyajas* from wherever you can.

More when we meet.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5716

[1] Gandhiji presided over the Kathiawar Political Conference held at Bhavnagar on January 8 and 9.

[2] Gandhiji left Trapaj on the 12th for Bhavnagar on his way to Ahmedabad and thence proceeded to Sojitra on the 16th. From the reference to Prabhashanker Pattani's spinning it appears that the letter was written at Trapaj.

[3] Bhavnagar

45. SPEECH AT GUJARAT PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE, AHMEDABAD

January 14, 1925

A meeting of the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee was held this evening to formulate a scheme in accordance with the new constitution of the Congress. Mr. Gandhi, who was present, suggested that they should begin enlisting members to the Congress. They should say who would spin themselves and who would give yarn spun by others. They should also say how many members they would enlist for the Congress. Mr. Gandhi himself promised to spin and enlist 100 members from Kathiawar. A remark was made that he should collect two lakhs of members from India. Mr. Gandhi replied that he would give the surplus to them. On the whole 74 members promised to spin, three promised to give yarn spun by others, and the total number of members promised to be collected was 1,700. Mr. Gandhi then suggested that over and above these members who would spin or give yarn, there might be many more who would spin for half an hour daily if they were given cotton. He wanted that cotton should be collected. Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel promised to collect 500 maunds of cotton and Mr. Abbas Tyabji promised to collect 25 maunds.

The Bombay Chronicle, 15-1-1925

46. CONVOCATION ADDRESS AT GUJARAT VIDYAPITH, AHMEDABAD

January 14, 1925

STUDENTS, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I congratulate you, students, who have received degrees today and hope that you will fulfil the vow that you have taken. Normally, on such an occasion, an institution reports progress in the numbers of students and teachers and in other respects. You must have seen from the report which the registrar read today that during the last four years the number of students has gradually been going down. Ordinarily this would cause disappointment. I am not disappointed, though I would admit that if it had been possible for us to show an increase in the number of students or some other progress by commonly accepted standards, I would have been pleased. I cannot say that the present position of the institution pleases me, but I am also not disappointed. It is true I and many others with me had hoped that we would need to run this institution only for a year and that after the attainment of swaraj at the close of this period you would go back to your schools and colleges which you had left at the call of the

country. But four years instead of one have already passed and it is not yet possible to say how long we must still remain in banishment. I have now come to believe that even after we secure swaraj, many such institutions would continue to work independently of the Government. The only difference then would be that unlike today these institutions would not have to compete with Government schools and colleges and the latter would not be regar-dedas belonging to the opposite camp and therefore fit to be boycotted. But then also such experiments would certainly continue and there would be a place for institutions like ours. I hope, therefore, that the students who are studying here will not give way to disappointment nor think of the period they have been here as wasted.

This morning itself, when I reached the Ashram,[1] there was a postcard waiting for me. It contained accusations against this institution. The communication was anonymous. I have very often commented in *Navajivan* that no one should write an anonymous letter. It is shameful, cowardly in a way. We should give up this tendency. If we do not have the courage to proclaim our ideas to the world, it is better that we forget them, bury them. However, this tendency prevailed in this country for many years and, maybe, exists even now. I did, therefore, read the anonymous communication. It says: "Why don't you close this institution? Why don't you open your eyes? You have misguided the students. Many students are returning to Government schools after deserting this institution. Whatever you think, the students have not the least faith in the charkha. Therefore, you should close the Vidyapith and all affiliated institutions." I do not accept this advice, and I wish that you too should not accept it. No new institution can be judged on the basis of funds spent on it or the number of men working for it. If we calculate on this basis, we may be misled. A process of self-purification is under way in this country—we look upon non-co-operation as self-purifi-cation—and it would be wrong to expect that the number of students with us must increase. It is good if it grows, but we should retain our faith even if it does not grow, and we must continue to serve this institution as long as we have the faith.

I would indeed be sorry if it is a fact that the students have no faith in the charkha. Those who have no faith in the charkha must unhesitatingly leave the institution. You must remember the resolution which the Congress has passed about national institutions. I shall

[1] Gandhiji had returned to Sabarmati from Bhavnagar in the morning.

remind you of it here. No one present on the occasion opposed the definition of a national institution incorporated in the resolution. If the opposition was kept hidden in the mind but not expressed, it would bring-discredit to me, to them, and to the country. How can I believe that the consent given by so many intelligent, free and mature men was not sincere? I would, therefore, say that the definition was acceptable to thousands. Recently the Kathiawar Conference has also accepted the definition. What is that definition?

A national school to be classed as such must fulfil the following conditions: Spinning must have a place in the daily routine. Teachers and students must spin daily for half an hour and should wear only hand-spun and hand-woven khadi. The medium of instruction should be either the mother tongue or Hindustani. *Vyayam*, that is, physical training including the art of self-defence, should be given due importance. The school should endeavour to unite the hearts of Hindus and Muslims. It should in no circumstances close its doors to the untouchables. This definition of a national school has been laid down by the Congress. Therefore, when I say that those who have no faith in the charkha should leave the Vidyapith and other institutions working under it, do not please think that I am excessively harsh. This is the only way in which we can progress. It will show us where we are going and how many men, women and students are with us.

My attention was drawn to certain criticisms of an article in *Sabarmati*[1]. Some of them are baseless because I have never entertained the ideas I am accused of. I have never said that the students should ply the charkha all the day; not that I have never thought of it. If I could persuade students and other countrymen that this would be most helpful to the country, I would indeed ask all people to spin for the whole day. But I cannot persuade the country today nor can I myself do it. If I can spin all the time, I would advise the students and the country to do likewise. My ambition is to be able to proclaim to India that real learning consists in spinning round the clock. In a way, if you select any pure activity and concentrate thereon, it will lead to real learning because it is a way of performing yoga. I won't speak of this here. I would merely ask the students to ply the charkha with faith and joy, spin fine yarn, and learn all the processes of charkha. You should have the same love and keenness

[1] A Gujarati bi-monthly published by the Gujarat Mahavidyalaya, affiliated to the Gujarat Vidyapith

for spinning as you have for other subjects. I would not grudge your giving all other time to the other subjects. But when you spin, do it with all your heart and not in a perfunctory way.

The other charge is about a certain remark of mine that the Vidyapith should make a scheme for a syllabus which would provide you with a livelihood after graduation. I say this even now. But this is not and should not be the principal aim before the Vidyapith or before you. If learning becomes merely a means of earning, it will lead to your degradation. The Vidyapith has defined learning as that which leads to liberation. Therefore, it would be wrong, in this idealistic institution, to learn merely for the sake of earning. There are many ways for earning. Learning is intended to improve the body, mind and soul. He has acquired real learning whose body is well-built and strong, who can endure extreme heat and soul who has a strong will, who is self-restrained and pure, whose soul is so pure that he can claim to listen to the beatings of his own heart, and since the seat of the soul is in the heart, his heart must also be pure. Why should one who has acquired this triple learning worry about earning one's livelihood? One should have the faith that He who has given teeth will provide the crumbs. I am being told that the students have to run a household and feed many mouths. It may be so; a family should be maintained and it needs courage to do so. But while acquiring the learning described above, we also secure the ability to earn our livelihood. Livelihood cannot be secured by searching. One who looks upon learning as a mere means of livelihood does not secure even that. The Vidyapith is making provision for livelihood even now. It would be rendering you an invalid if it secures you a salary of Rs. 300 or Rs. 30 immediately on your graduation and issues such a letter to you. If such provision is made, it will sap your patriotism and your self-confidence. The Vidyapith gives you the strength to face difficulties and find a way out of them. The Vidyapith, in fact, can give you nothing, it can merely bring out that is hidden in you. You should therefore convince yourself that you have lost and are likely to lose nothing by coming to the Vidyapith.

The registrar has asked me to make suggestions about the future development of the Vidyapith. But I am able to make no such suggestions. I do not know what changes may occur in the situation in India this year. I am full of hopes, and will remain so till I die. But I cannot tell you just now what those hopes are; that would not be

advisable. To the students, I would only say this: You should not bother about what happens to the Vidyapith. It is enough for you to know that your being here in this institution is the right thing for you, and going to a Government school or college would have been wrong, seeing that as things stand you would not have received there the kind of education that you should. As long as you believe that India did not get what she should have from Government institutions—and there is no likelihood of her doing so till she shakes off the foreign bondage —the Vidyapith is the right place for you and you must not think of leaving it. But if you feel that you can get all that you want from Government institutions, you had better go there. And in that case there can be no reason whatever for you to worry about the future of the Vidyapith.

You must banish from your mind the thought of Government schools, and no student here should feel any attraction for them. As long as this attraction lasts you will continue to compare the Vidyapith with them. You will say to yourself: "There are so many facilities there while here there are few." That there are few facilities here is the distinguishing mark of the Vidyapith. How shall we learn to overcome difficulties if we create those same facilities here also? Or, to put it in another way, the very lack of these facilities is the facility offered to you at this place. There can be no comparison between the Vidyapith and the Government schools. Once you grasp this truth and have it fixed in your mind, there will be no need for you to worry about the future of the Vidyapith. It should be enough for you to be able to say that you have rendered your best help in the struggle for freedom by doing your duty. You and I have no right to know more than that. I know only this that the Vidyapith will exist only as long as it is helpful in the struggle for freedom; when it ceases to be so it will destroy itself. And what is wrong in its being destroyed in that case? The future of Indian swaraj is the future of the Vidyapith.

Whatever is pleasant is not always beneficial. Even now when I have grown old I know that everything that pleases me does not prove beneficial to me. We do therefore consult elders on many occasions. It is for this reason again that we have the ancient tradition of finding out a guru and seeking his shelter and support. A student used to prostrate himself before the guru and entreat him to guide his steps and stuff his brain with anything that he chose. These days an all-round guru is not available and the question of complete surrender

does not arise. However, you need here the assurance that the teachers are leading you along the right path and not otherwise. Many things are bitter in the beginning but beneficial in the long run. With this faith you should swallow a bitter pill. This is my advice as well as prayer to you.

I wish to come back to the vow that you have taken. You have also listened to the prayer read by our brother, Athavale[1].Both these things looked very common. But we cannot see power latent in common things. When an artist displays a trivial painting in a hall we praise it because it is the fashion. But no one ever cares for the glorious painting right above our head. The limitless sky, its brilliant stars and moon, the splendid hues at the hour of sunrise and sunset—can any artist paint all these? We do not, however, raise our vision but look lower and lower. That is why we are captivated by trivial paintings. This is a pitiable situation. It is very likely that, in the same manner, you may not have realized the significance of the prayer you have heard and the vow that was administered to you by the registrar. You should continuously ponder over them and try to fulfil the pledge. The noble *mantras* of the prayer convey a sustaining message which cannot be imparted by speeches and writings. It is natural sustenance like mother's milk. What will be the result if a mother withholds her milk from a new-born child and another woman offers him a lot of other dainties? The child will not survive. This commonplace food is like nectar. If we ponder over our ancient heritage, if we imprint it on our hearts and act in accordance with it, our life's mission would be fulfilled. You may think no more of my speech and all other things, but do not forget the prayer and the vow. Then your time and mine would not have been wasted.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 18-1-1925

47. TELEGRAM T0 SURENDRANATH BISWAS[2]

[On or before *January 15, 1925*]

AM ANXIOUS TO ATTEND CONFERENCE. PLEASE REMIND ME END FEBRUARY.

GANDHI

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 16-1-1925

[1] R. B. Athavale, professor of Sanskrit in the Gujarat Vidyapith

[2] Chairman, Reception Committee, Bengal Provincial Conference. The Conference was to be held at Faridpur.

48. CONFESSION OF FAITH

It gives me much comfort to be able to have this unsolicited declaration[1] from Rajagopalachari. The reader knows my regard for his sanity and judgment. And I was grieved whilst he was torn with doubts and fears. There is no "playing with truth" in the charkha programme, for Satyagraha is not predominantly civil disobedience but a quiet and irresistible pursuit of Truth. On rarest occasions it becomes civil disobedience. But conscious and willing obedience must, in the case of a large body of workers, precede it. The charkha which is the embodiment of willing obedience and calm persistence must therefore succeed before there is civil disobedience. It is because I am much afraid of playing with truth in even thinking of civil disobedience before the necessary atmosphere has been ensured that I must insist upon the charkha and upon full surrender to the Swarajists, and for that matter to all concerned, even though the workers may be reduced to the number of the digits on the fingers of one hand only. We must not have violent disobedience under cover of civil disobedience. The lesson of Chauri Chaura has sunk too deep in me to be easily obliterated. Not only is there no trace of regret in me for the Bardoli decision but I hold it to be one of the greatest among my services to the country.

Young India, 15-1-1925

49. A NOTICE?

The following notice was delivered to me at Belgaum:

> We, the undersigned, delegates of the Kolaba District Congress Committee in tile Maharashtra Province, beg leave to direct your attention to the special circumstances of our district. The Kolaba district is not a cotton-producing district, nor is it near such a cotton centre. The people of the district, therefore, naturally have no inclination towards spinning. Even in the first year of the non-co-operation movement, it was only with great difficulty that a few charkhas would be introduced which, too, span for only some months.
>
> The Kolaba District Congress Committee has, therefore, after full consideration of these facts, passed a resolution in September last, to the

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Extract from C. Rajagopalachari's comment on Charkha", January 15, 1925.

effect that this spinning franchise cannot work in this district and its introduction in the Congress Constitution would endanger the very existence of almost all the committees in the district. We, therefore, inform you at the earliest opportunity after the spinning franchise is adopted by the Congress, that, though several of us have either voted for the resolution in the Congress or have refrained from voting against it only because the Swarajya party had decided to treat it as a party question, and others because they thought it inevitable to do so for the sake of unity in the Congress, it is difficult for us to carry it out in practice, so that you may not afterwards have any occasion for disappointment.

It is dated 27th December and signed by twelve members including the President and the Secretary. I hope that the signatories do not propose to carry their threat into effect. If these gentlemen have voted for, or refrained from voting against the spinning resolution for the sake of discipline or unity, I beg to point out to them that the mere voting or refraining does not fulfil the conditions of discipline or unity. To be effective, discipline means the carrying into effect of the terms of the resolution in a proper soldierly spirit of obedience although it may not commend itself to reason. Such was the spirit of the Light Brigade whose memorable charge has been made famous by Tennyson. Such was also the spirit of the soldiers who, although they knew they were running into the jaws of death, followed their general during the Boer war and were riddled to death by the Boer bullets on the heights of Spionkop. A mechanical assent by them to their general's proposition that the heights should be carried would have meant nothing, and would have meant even disgrace. It was the action though reluctant yet as daring as that of the staunchest believers that made them heroes. Be it noted that they fought a battle in which defeat was a certainty. But heroes are made in the hour of defeat. Success is, therefore, well described as a series of glorious defeats. What if the franchise is found at the end of the year to have produced a failure? It will be a glorious defeat if the Congressmen irrespective of parties and irrespective of willingness unwillingness will work their best to make it a success.

Nor is it proper to say as the signatories have said that many have voted for the resolution for the sake of unity if they have not intended to work in accordance with the resolution. Unity is made of sterner stuff. It is not "a showy nothing" to be merely named on a paper resolution. Unity to be achieved means solid action in terms of

the resolution. I do not believe the Councils. But because my co-workers believe in it, I have given them the use of the Congress name. Now if my heart does not co-operate with my lip or my pen, I am a hypocrite and not a believer in unity. Having voted for the resolution that authorizes Council-entry, I must wish well to the Swarajists. I must in no way hamper their progress by any act of mine; I must even help them wherever I can to the best of my ability and if they fail, they should not be able to say that they have failed because I refused to help within the limits previously and mutually understood. Assuming that the No-changers do not in any way whatsoever hamper the Swarajists, even the latter's failure, if there is to be failure, will be a success because at the end of it we shall have found another way of compassing our end. Exactly similarly, if all parties have done their best to make the franchise a success and it fails, we shall all realize the fact frankly, accept the defeat and jointly set about cutting another road to success. For out of our defeats, if we are determined, we shall find the way that leads us to our goal.

And what is the difficulty these Kolaba friends find except that of their own creation? If there is no cotton grown in their district, let them buy it. Kolaba is nearer Bombay than Manchester. Will they be surprised to learn that not a pod of cotton grows anywhere near Manchester and the gentlemen there find no difficulty in importing and carding and spinning it? I assure the friends of the Kolaba district that they will not find it half as difficult as the citizens of Manchester to import cotton in their district. Let me further hearten them by telling them that if they have not the will to import cotton and organize carding and spinning, the Congress resolution permits them to buy hand-spun yarn and pay the required quantity to the Congress. Have they the will to buy yarn? It will still be well, provided that the yarn *is* hand-spun and is even and well-twisted.

Young India, 15-1-1925

50. WELL DONE

Deshbandhu's latest score against Lord Lytton is a brilliant stroke. His ailing condition and his being carried to the Council Hall on a stretcher adds a dramatic touch to the great victory. His mere presence in an ailing condition constituted a speech far more effective

than any spoken word. If Lord Lytton has sufficient imagination and enough of the sportsman in him, he should after all these repulses withdraw the ordinance, release the prisoners and throw the responsibility on those who voted with the Deshbandhu of dealing with the conspiracy for murder which His Excellency believes exists in Bengal. He must not complain of the conduct of the majority in the Bengal Council because they have voted against him. The essence of popular legislatures is that the Government that is responsible to them must depend for its existence upon their reasoned support. They may be obstinate, stupid or suspicious on occasions. The Government has then to wait patiently for their conversion and be prepared to run risks of misgovernment or even worse. Why should a popular assembly be expected to be free from the limitations of an autocrat? Lord Lytton does not claim for his measure capacity for securing absolute immunity from political crime. But I very much fear that all the cogent argument that is being advanced by Indian publicists, although it is almost unanimous in its condemnation of Lord Lytton's policy, will be lost upon a Government which has become habituated to treat public opinion with contempt. Hence it is that I say to the public men of India that if they will add force to their argument, they must ply the charkha. It is the only creative energy that is readily available to the nation. The discipline that Deshbandhu Das has brought about in the Bengal Council will act with telling effect as soon as but no sooner than the charkha has obtained a footing in every home and boycott of foreign-cloth has thereby become an accomplished fact. Oh, for one concrete act to the credit of the nation as a whole!

Young India, 15-1-1925

51. KATHIAWAR NOTES

It was no light thing for me to advise the Kathiawar Political Conference not to pass a string of resolutions on grievances of which the delegates had no method of enforcing redress even if they were capable of proof to the satisfaction of the public. I told them that the Conference should first develop a spirit of public service and sacrifice and then organized for redress of grievances. They would then be better able to deal with the various matters about which they felt and complained. This was the method of pacific resistance. The Subjects Committee had no hesitation in accepting this advice. But there was an interesting debate on the spinning franchise on which the organizers

had prepared a resolution. It was, however, carried by an over whelming majority. This resolution differs from the Congress resolution in that it requires the original member habitually to wear khadi and not merely on state occasions. Here there was no disciplinary voting; everyone was free to vote as he chose.

It now remains to be seen how the resolution works. Everyone seemed to admit that the success would depend largely upon the zeal, earnestness and capacity of the principal workers who made themselves responsible for the resolution.

SIR PRABHASHANKER TO SPIN

The most startling event of the session perhaps was the solemn resolution taken by Sir Prabhashanker Pattani to spin daily for at least half an hour before taking his principal meal so long as he was not too ill to turn the wheel. He has made no exception for travels, for he contends, and rightly, that as he travels always first class, he should have no difficulty about carrying the wheel with him and spinning during his travels. It is a tremendous step for Sir Prabhashanker. I hope that he will be able to carry out his resolution. His example must give great encouragement to the hand-spinning movement in Kathiawar. Needless to say that Sir Prabhashanker is not expected to join the Kathiawar Sabha. I was anxious to make it clear that though spinning has its political aspect, every spinner need not concern himself with it. It was enough for me if Princes and their ministers spun to set an example and as a token of their identification with those they ruled. The peasantry of Kathiawar has ample leisure. The people are poor. And if the fashion of spinning is set by the ruling class and their ambassadors, the people will adopt it and make a substantial addition to the national wealth. The effect of the addition on individuals might be imperceptible, but on the people as a whole it must be most marked.

The reader will be interested to know how Sir Prabhashanker came to take the resolution. He attended the Subjects Committee by invitation as a visitor. After the Spinning Resolution was adopted I invited the members to enrol themselves as spinners. I told them that at Belgaum I had undertaken in common with others to enlist before the Ist of March at least 100 members who would undertake to spin 2,000 yards per months. I added, too, that I would have also two spinners from among the “unwilling” class. I told the audience that I had hope of Kathiawar giving me the 100 members and that among

the two unwilling spinners I had Sir Prabhashanker in mind when I gave the undertaking at Belgaum. Up jumped to his feet Sir Prabhashanker and in solemn tones announced the foregoing resolution amid cheers.

I was to be Sir Prabhashanker's teacher. At the time of writing he had only three lessons. On the third day he was able to spin within less than two hours forty-eight yards of even, well-twisted yarn of eight counts. As a matter of fact during the very first lesson lasting half an hour he was able to draw a thread. He then asked to be left alone to battle with the wheel. Let me hope that the other administrators and ministers will copy Sir Prabhashanker's noble resolve to the benefit of themselves and the people under their charge.

COTTON COLLECTION

Bhavnagar being a cotton centre, it was decided also to collect cotton for distribution among those poor spinners who might be disposed to give half [an] hour's labour but may not be able to give or beg cotton. As a result, over 275 maunds of cotton was collected—not a bad result of two days' begging. If the enthusiasm continues, the spinning organization must prosper in Kathiawar.

Young India, 15-1-1925

52. THE REVOLVING WHEEL

Baro Dada Dwijendranath Tagore as the reader knows has a weakness for me. Almost everything I say or do appeals to him with an irresistible force. The reader is therefore entitled to discount his approval of my ideas and schemes. But he cannot but admire Baro Dada's zeal and devotion for his country which make him keep in touch with the current thought in our politics. Here is his latest on the spinning-wheel:

> In practice, though not in theory, most self-important people fondly believe that what seems improbable to them is impossible and what seems probable to them is alone possible. The enemies of Napoleon once thought that it was as impossible for an army to cross the Alps during the winter season as it would be to take a flight to the moon by means of a balloon; but Napoleon thought otherwise. To his penetrating view, crossing the Alps was the only means possible by which he could gain entrance into Italy.
>
> In like manner most of our countrymen think it utterly impossible

that the cause of our economical, if not political, freedom can advance a single step by such a simple thing as plying the charkha; while on the other hand Mahatmaji thinks that that is the only means possible by adopting which we can hope to reach the goal of our endeavour.

Baro Dada adds in a footnote that a charkha is philologically equivalent to a circle and metaphorically to the revolving wheel of the universe—*samsara.* One of Kabir's songs is based on this imagery. But the most important part of Baro Dada's letter is his emphasis on the stern fact that howsoever impossible the charkha may appear to the worldly-wise, it is the only possible thing for the country's real advance. It is the only thing that can give substance to any big political move that the country may make.

Young India, 15-1-1925

53. NON-BRAHMINS

The *Chronicle* invites me to explain my action or inaction in connection with the Non-Brahmin Conference at Belgaum. It surprises me to hear complaints of indifference on the part of the Congress leaders regarding the Conference. Speaking for myself I was trying to attend all the conferences consistently with the work I had gone to Belgaum to do. The Non-Brahmin Conference that was held was not held, so I was told, in response to Maulana Mahomed Ali's invitation. It was not held on the Congress ground. It was not held in consultation with any Congressman so far as I am aware. I knew nothing of the time or the place of the meeting except through the admission card that was delivered to me in common with numerous such cards. Nevertheless I was anxious to attend it and was trying to fit in my visit there with my other appointments. Unfortunately I was attending to business. I could not leave, whilst the Conference was proceeding. When I finished my work and inquired I found that the Conference was already dissolved. I state these facts merely to show that there was neither disinclination nor discourtesy shown regarding the Conference. What applies to me applies to most leaders. In my opinion it was the duty of the organizers to consult me as to the time of the Conference so as to ensure my attendance. And I would then have made it possible for the other Congress leaders, too, to go. Maulana Mahomed Ali's invitation was not meant for a mechanical act of holding others conferences during the Congress week. It was to

bring the parties together in hearty contact. I find no fault with the organizers of the Non-Brahmin Conference; I am simply endeavouring to show that the Congress leaders would have gladly gone if they could have and if they had been given an opportunity. Since writing the foregoing I have seen Sjt. Gangadharrao's explanation which makes the position clearer.

Young India, 15-1-1925

54. DETAILS FOR WORKING THE NEW FRANCHISE

I give below a summary of the instructions for Congress Committees and workers prepared at my request by Sjt. Satis Das Gupta of the Khadi Pratishthan. They may serve as a model for the Congress Committees.

In order to conduct the work of storing and despatching yarn quotas received from the members, the taluka or other enrolling committees shall have to keep a set of books: (1) Member Roll; (2) Receipt Book for yarn; (3) Yarn Register for members.

Member Roll: For a new member, after the creed is signed, and for an old member, on receipt of the first yarn quota, the name of the member should be registered in the Member Roll.

MEMBER ROLL 1925

Taluka		District Yarn Quota Received						Province					
S. No.	Name & Address	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec.
1.	J. F. Iyer	A	A	A									
2.	K. R. Nathan	B	B	B									

In the Member Roll serial number of the member and his name and address should be written. Against his name entry will be made of the class of his yarn quota. It is necessary to classify the members in order to know how the franchise works.

Classification of members: Class 'A'—those who spin personally; Class 'B'—those who obtain the yarn otherwise.

Receipts: The collector who receives yarn shall give a receipt to the member in the following form:

YARN RECEIPTS

Date	Receipt No.	C.C.
Received from		
Roll		
Class		
Cotton supplied *(tolas)*		
Hanks of yarn said to be . . . yds.		
Counts		Signature of Collector

The receipts should be printed in triplicate; the first copy is to be kept by the Collecting Office, the second copy is to be sent to the Taluka Office, third copy is to be given to the member. The same form should be used whether the collector goes to the houses of the members or the members deposit the yarn in the Congress Office. If cotton is given in exchange, the quantity given should be entered in the receipt.

The collector should attach a label to the yarn bearing the roll number and the name of the members and some other details as shown below. The label is to be of strong paper double folded and pasted with a thread passing through or in any other suitable manner and tied to the bundle of yarn.

LABEL

Roll No.	Name		Class
. . . Yds.	Quota for		
. . . C. C.			
		Collector	Date

The collector shall deposit the yarn in the office of the Taluka Congress Committee.

It is assumed that the village or other committee subordinate to the taluka receives the Receipt Book only from the taluka and all the books are kept in the Taluka Office. Such subordinate committees as may be willing to keep other books may do so in order to better manage their affairs.

Receipt Books shall be printed by the Provincial Office and numbered in one series, the number of receipts required being 12 for each member for the year.

The Receipt Books shall be supplied by P.C.Cs. on application. The P.C.C. shall keep a register of all such issues in the following form:

REGISTERS OF RECEIPT BOOKS

Date	Name of C.C. and District	Name of officer to whom sent	Box No.	Receipt Number	
				From	To

Yarn collected should be sent by the receiving committees direct to the P.C.C. or to such other office as the P.C.C. may direct for this purpose.

No yarn once received as franchise quota should be used for the same purpose again. The P.C.Cs. shall have a Day Book for entering yarn received and issued and for showing the balance yarn in hand.

YARN DISPOSAL DAY BOOK

Province Year

Date	Yarn received from	Quantity			Issued to	Quantity			Balance		
		Mds.	Sr.	Lbs.		Mds.	Sr.	Lbs.	Mds.	Sr.	Lbs.
5-2- 15-2-	Haripur T.C.C. for Madhubani V.C.C.	...	10	5	P.K.B. for weaving	...	8	...	...	2	...

VALUATION

The P.C.C. shall valuate the yarn quota received during each month and send 10 per cent thereof to the A.I.C.C.

The P.C.C. shall send a monthly return containing the list of members in the following form to the A.I.C.C.

MONTHLY RETURN OF MEMBERS

Province				Month
District	Congress Committee	No. of members on the roll	No. of member who sent quoto	
			Class A	Class B

The P.C.C. shall keep an account with each Congress Committee sending yarn, so that at any time it may be ascertained how much out of the sale proceeds of yarn may be due as against the liabilities for cotton supplies to the Committee.

The yarn on arrival should be valuated and put wholly to the credit of the C.C. in the first instance. Periodically sums due to the P.C.C. for A.I.C.C., P.C.C. and D.C.C. shares of the yarn values should be ascertained and debited to the account of the Congress Committee concerned.

ACCOUNT FORM FOR P. C. C.

Ac... Taluka Congress Committee							Year		
Date	Cotton supplied	Dr.			Date	Yarn received	Cr.		
10-1-	$^1/_2$ Md @Rs.40/- per B. Md.	20	-	-	5-2-	10 Sr. 5 Tolas @ Rs. 2/- per seer	20	2	2
20-1-	1 Md. @ Rs. 40	40	-	-		20 Seers @ Rs. 2-4 per seer	45	-	-
10-3	25/- of Jan., Feb. and March quota	16	4	6					

If an account as shown above is kept with regard to all Congress Committees and the A.I.C.C. it would be easy to satisfy all parties. The P.C.C. supplies cotton on account and realizes the value of yarn and has to apportion the A.I.C.C. share and the share of the other bodies in the value. It is by itself a complicated work and if proper accounts are not kept, the risks of failure would be great.

In those provinces in which there are a considerable number of self-spinners and the khadi activity is of importance, it will not be difficult to enrol members on yarn franchise at once and work the existing charkhas. But in those provinces where spinning has not made much headway, the P.C.C. will have to make very special arrangements for enrolling members.

Up to now the Congress Committees were handling cash only, but with the introduction of the yarn franchise, yarn and khadi will have to be handled. The Congress office shall have a yarn and khadi section. Scales and weights for weighing and all the necessary items for the storing, packing, despatch and sale of khadi and yarn will have to be attended to. A full set of books shall have to be kept. Every Congress office will necessarily become a sort of khadi production centre.

Arrangements shall have to be made for making charkhas easily available to the members.

Every Congress Committee will require a training section to be attached with it. The worker in charge of spinning section must learn to card and use the carding-bow as an expert and also be a good spinner.

Young India, 15-1-1925

55. SPEECH AT CULTIVATORS' CONFERENCE, PETLAD

January 15, 1925

I would consider this Conference futile if the president[1] cannot be given the alms he is begging for. There need be no reproach if he demanded something excessive and beyond your capacity. It would be a matter of shame for you, as well as for me, if forty volunteers are not recruited from this Conference. This would be so because of my close association with *Patidars*—it does not date from the time I started my work here but from the time when I was in South Africa—and on the strength of that association I expect that forty volunteers should be readily available from such a gathering. Not only men but women volunteers too should be available. If the latter do not have a

[1] Dr. Sumant Mehta

place in this movement, we shall be able to achieve only half of what we wish to. In a way it is true that these volunteers are honorary workers. They accept payment not because they covet it. However, the public which wishes to avail itself of their services is under obligation to make arrangements for their livelihood. Forty workers are not enough for our purposes. In India we may need even four hundred thousand volunteers. We do indeed need five to seven thousand workers for the task that we have undertaken and, in this poor country, it is impossible that so many volunteers can work in an honorary capacity. Even in European countries it is not possible to get such people. God has not created us merely to eat and remain idle. We have violated the universal law of nature—if a man eats without working for his food and spends thousands of rupees, thousands will die of starvation. The British historian Hunter's writing of India says that one hundred million people get barely one meal a day and, that too, of *roti* and salt. The Congress too has passed a resolution that we should not expect all volunteers to be honorary workers. In order to set an example the leaders should make a beginning. I too should, if necessary, accept an allowance. So should Vallabhbhai. Of course, I get many things from friends. Perhaps, today Vallabhbhai and I do not need an allowance; however, if such an occasion arises, both of us will get ourselves recruited as paid volunteers. Take the example of Tilak Maharaj and Gokhaleji. When the Fergusson College was founded, both of them had pledged themselves to serve the cause of education, content with a meagre salary of Rs. 30/- Later on Tilak Maharaj gave this up for certain reasons but, so long as he was there, he considered it an honour to accept this sum. Gokhaleji, on his part, completed twenty years he was a member of the Legislative Assembly, he served on many committees, he received some money from this, but he had not ceased to take the salary that he received from the Fergusson College. Even when he became "great" and when he was in a position to get a salary of Rs. 10,000 he did not regard the large amounts with the same respect that he gave to his original salary of Rs. 75/-. He had also very respectfully accepted a small sum by way of pension.

It is not for volunteers to pay heed to public criticism. Those who have nothing to do can do a lot of harm, hence volunteers should not fear criticism coming from such individuals. Volunteers should regard criticism as the food on which they live. One who cannot stand being criticized by the world cannot become a volunteer. They should

be thick-skinned like buffaloes. A volunteer should be a yogi who would keep on working with bowed head, look neither forward nor backward and attend only to himself and his work. The volunteer who holds that he has placed himself at the disposal of the public would think day and night only of his work; however, he should not hesitate to accept an allowance—not *kheer* and *puri*[1] but *jawar* and *bajara*[2]. Those volunteers who have tried and got used to simple food should get themselves recruited and remove the president's fear. Come forward if you wish to detain the president here. You may never get another president who will be satisfied with so little.

I must necessarily tell you about the mighty and momentous activity in India today—that of khadi, that of the spinning-wheel; as people keep opposing it, my faith in it gets ever stronger. Do not therefore think that I am stupid and stubborn and stick to a thing unintelligently. This object, of which I am speaking, I placed before India only four or five years ago, but I had put forward my arguments in its favour in *Hind Swaraj* before ever having set eyes on the spinning-wheel. Moreover, I find that the opposition to it is not based on experience or thought, whereas my arguments are based on an abundance of both. I regard myself as a straightforward person. I regard it my dharma to admit my own mistakes. I do not approve of filth. To bear filth on the body, in the mind or in the heart is a disease, hence not to admit a mistake is also a disease. He who does not admit his mistakes before God—although He is omniscient, He makes man strive and often deludes him—one who does not admit one's mistakes before God, that is, before the world, will fall a prey to consumption, will invite spiritual decay. This is even more harmful than consumption which is only physical. Only the body is wasted in one, while in the other the spirit seems to be destroyed. The spirit is immortal, indestructible; hence, even though there is an illusion of its destruction it is not really destroyed. In imagining the destruction of the soul which is immortal, one is stricken by a double disease. Hence I would not hesitate in the least to admit a mistake if I made one. It does not matter if, as a result of this, all spinning-wheels stop working and I am branded insane; but, then, I know that such a situation has not arisen. I have such faith in the spinning-wheel that even if my wife, my sons and my colleagues who are even closer to me than my sons gave it up, I would all alone keep singing its praises and plying it. Idleness is the great plague of India. It is not a natural tendency. It

[1] Rich food
[2] Simple food

could not be so for the peasant for, if that was the case, his fields would be ruined. In our country, idleness crept in with the ruin of the spinning-wheel. Crores of people became unemployed and to them employment cannot be merely an amusement. Some say that they will make baskets, others that they will make locks. Some wish to make matches and others soap. These jobs cannot be taken up by the millions and, even if these things were produced by the millions, they would find no market. If we work in this manner, there could be no national unity but rather a crowd of individuals. Such work cannot uplift us. It is for this very reason that I claim that what we need in India is a supplementary occupation. There are hardly any villages in Kheda which I have not visited and very few persons there whom I have not met. Most of these have plenty of spare time. If I proclaim that the spinning-wheel is the means of utilizing that time, it is not met with general approval. The result is, some resort to theft, others incur debts and yet some others starve. People who are in such a pitiable plight, who are forced to remain idle, are bound to be ruined. If they do not rouse themselves and rouse others too, they will certainly be ruined. This is a law of social existence. It is not a law which governs individuals but one which is true of society. Crores of persons cannot make a livelihood by the spinning-wheel nor has it been introduced as a source of livelihood, but it may be described as *annapoorna*, which indicates ghee and milk. Countless numbers of the poor cannot afford ghee or milk, they cannot afford a drop of milk or a particle of ghee for their wheat gruel. This situation is dreadful. The only remedy for it is the spinning-wheel. One person putting in labour worth a rupee makes no difference, but a town with a population of seven thousand earning seven thousand rupees in this manner does make a difference. By working the spinning-wheel, some other virtues are automatically acquired. It is accompanied by simplicity, sincerity and regularity; and regularity in one matter leads to regularity in one's entire life, just as, if one angle of a crooked square is set right, the other angles automatically resume their shape. This is a law of geometry. When one bit of work is done regularly, all others become regular. You will remember me too late if you do not take to the spinning-wheel today. As soon as there has been only a small downpour, you should raise the bunds and hold the water. He who tries to do so when the water pours down in torrents cannot stop it and consequently faces the loss of water as well as the bunds. Now, while there is still time, I would ask you to be on your guard and wake up. Do not like a miserly bania calculate what you can get from the spinning-wheel, but think rather of the gain it will bring the nation. In a small village of the size of Trapaj, people were astonished when the figures were explained to

them. Kathiawar is not a fertile region. Sticks and stones are all that grow there. Moreover, as the land is unproductive, people sit around the village square and chat idly not for six but eight months in the year while some would perhaps even take opium. I explained to the people of Trapaj how they could easily save two thousand rupees. The larger part of the expense on a seer of cotton consists of spinning, not weaving. If you use your own cotton, clean it and spin it at home, the only expense would be that of having it woven. And if this is all the cost that has to be incurred, we could compete with the textile mills of the world. For textile mills have themselves to incur almost the same cost on weaving as do handlooms. The people of India understood this and hence they were as accomplished in the use of the spinning-wheel as in cooking; with the disappearance of the wheel we came to lead unholy and godless lives and ceased to fear God. If you wish to have faith in God, to become pious, to protect your sisters' honour, then adopt the spinning-wheel. In its wake will follow the awakening of the country, the unity of Hindus and Muslims, the end of the country's poverty and the salvation of all the peasants of India. The entire social structure of India is based on the spinning-wheel.

I have heard that you *Patidars* do not treat the untouchables properly. If you look upon yourselves as Kshatriyas, you are not entitled to use force against the untouchables, to browbeat them, to practise the barbaric law of buying much labour for a small payment. The *Gita* asks you to keep the gods pleased: "The gods will give you rain, if you keep them pleased". The gods are not in heaven. For you, they are among the untouchables; they belong to the labouring class. The poverty-stricken people of India are her gods. Religion without compassion is a fraud. Compassion is at the very root of religion and one who forsakes it, forsakes God; one who forsakes the poor forsakes everything. If we do not look after the poor and the untouchables, we are sure to perish.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan 25-1-1925

56. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SOJITRA,
January 16, 1925

MY DEAREST CHARLIE[1],

I do not know what cable you want me to send to Mr. Alexander[2], because the authority sent once is of a general character. If, however, you want me to send another, please send me draft and address.

Am too tired to write more just now.

With love,

Yours,
MOHAN

[PS.]

Do not think of the M. League[3]. The Congress represents all in this matter.

C. F. ANDREWS ESQ.
SHANTINIKETAN
Via BOLPUR
E. I. RY.

From a photostat: G.N. 2619

57. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S CONFERENCE, SOJITRA[4]

January 16, 1925

To women I talk about *Ramarajya*[5]. *Ramarajya* is more than swarajya. Let me therefore talk about what *Ramarajya* will be like—

[1] Charles Freer Andrews (1871-1940); British missionary; co-worker of Tagore and Gandhiji; honoured as "Deenabandhu" (brother of the poor)

[2] Horace Alexander, represented the Society of Friends of Great Britain at the International Opium Conference at Geneva; *vide* "Message to International Opium Conference, Geneva", before October 2, 1924.

[3] Muslim League

[4] In Petlad district, Gujarat

[5] The ideal rule of Rama

not about swaraj. *Ramarajya* can come about only when there is likelihood of a Sita arising. Among the many *shlokas*[1] recited by Hindus, one is on women. It enumerates women who are worthy of being remembered prayerfully early in the morning. Who are these women by taking whose names men and women become sanctified? Among such virtuous women Sita's name is bound to figure. We never say Rama-Sita but Sita-Rama, not Krishna-Radha, but Radha-Krishna. It is thus that we tutor even the parrot. The reason why we think of Sita's name first is that, without virtuous women, there can be no virtuous men. A child will take after the mother, not the father. It is the mother who holds its reins. The father's concerns lie outside the home and that is why I keep saying that, as long as the women of India do not take part in public life, there can be no salvation for the country. Only those can take part in public life who are pure in body and mind. As long as women whose body and mind tend in one direction—i.e., towards the path of virtue—do not come into public life and purify it, we are not likely to attain *Ramarajya* or swaraj. Even if we did, I would have no use for that kind of swaraj to which such women have not made their full contribution. One could well stretch oneself on the ground in obeisance to a woman of purity of mind and heart. I should like such women to take part in public life.

Who shall we say is a woman of this kind? It is said that a virtuous woman can be recognized by the grace of her face. Must we then accept all the prostitutes in India as virtuous? For it is their trade to deck themselves up. Not at all. The thing needed for grace is not beauty of face but purity of heart. A woman who is pure of heart and mind is ever fit to be worshipped. It is a law of nature that our outward appearance reflects what we really are within. If inwardly we are sullied, so shall we appear without.

The eyes and the voice are external signs. The discerning can recognize virtue by voice.

Then what does it mean to be virtuous[2]? What is the sign of virtue? I accept khadi as the symbol of virtue. I do not suggest that anyone who wears khadi has become sanctified for that reason alone.

I ask you to participate in public life. What does it mean to

[1] Verses

[2] The Gujarati word is *pativrata*, which literally means "devoted to her husband".

participate in public life? Public work does not mean attendance at meetings, but wearing khadi—the symbol of purity— and serving the men and women of India. After all, what service can we render to the Rajas and Maharajas? If we try to approach the Maharajas, the sentry at the gate may not even let us in. Likewise, we do not have to wait on millionaires: To serve India therefore is to serve its poor. God we cannot see with our eyes; it would do if we serve those whom we can see. The object of our public life is to serve the visible God, that is, the poor. If you want to serve them, take the name of God, go amidst them and ply the spinning-wheel.

To take part in public life is to serve your poor sisters. Their lot is wretched. I met them on the banks of the Ganga where Janaka[1] lived, where Sitaji lived. They were in a pitiful state. They had scanty clothes, but I could not give them saris because I had not found the charkha then. Indian women remain naked even if they have clothes, because as long as one Indian woman has to go naked it must be said that all are naked. Or even if a woman is adorned in a variety of ways but is of unworthy soul, she would still be naked. We have to think of ways of making them spin, weave and thus covering themselves truly.

At present when people go to the villages to render service, the villagers imagine that they have come to exact *chauth*[2]. Why do they imagine this? You must realize that you go to the villages to give and not to take.

Were our mothers mad that they used to spin? Now when I ask you to spin, I must appear mad to you. But it is not Gandhi who is mad; it is yourself who are so. You do not have any compassion for the poor. Even so you try to convince yourself that India has become prosperous and sing of that prosperity. If you want to enter public life, render public service, then spin on the charkha, wear khadi. If your body and mind are pure you will become truly swadeshi. Spin in the name of God. To spin for your poor sisters is to worship God. Giving in charity to the poor means an offering to God. That alone is charity by which the poor become happy. If you give in charity to whomsoever you please, it would be said that you indulge your whims. If you give in charity to those who have a pair of hands, a pair of legs and good health, it would be said that you were out to impoverish them. Do not give alms to a Brahmin because he is a

[1] The philosopher king of Videha ; father of Sita

[2] One-fourth of the farm-produce formerly collected as land revenue

Brahmin. Make him spin and give him a handful of jowar or rice. The finest sign of purity of mind is to go and work for khadi amidst such people.

The second sign of virtue is service to *Antyajas*[1]. Brahmins and gurus of today regard touching an *Antyaja* as sinful. I say that it is a meritorious act, not a sin. I do not ask you to eat and drink with them, but to mix with them in order to render service. It is meritorious to serve sick *Antyaja* boys who are worthy of service. *Antyajas* eat, drink, stand and sit, and so do we all. It is not that doing this is either sinful or meritorious. My mother used to become *Antyaja* for some time and then she would not allow anyone to touch her. My wife similarly used to become an *Antyaja*. At this time she became an untouchable . Our *Bhangis* also become untouchable when they do their work. As long as they do not bathe, one can understand not touching them. But if you would not touch them even when they have bathed and tidied up, for whose sake do they bathe then? They have no God even. They think others have the same kind of nose and eyes and yet the latter despise them. What then should they do? Think of this: Did Ramachandraji despise the *Antyajas*? He ate berries already savoured by Shabari and he hugged the king of Nishadas, and they were both untouchables. You can see for yourselves that there is no untouchability in the Hindu religion.

The third sign of virtue is furtherance of friendship with the Muslims. If someone tells you that "they are Mias" or "Mia and Mahadev cannot get on" , then tell him that you cannot harbour enmity towards the Muslims.

If you do these three things, you will be said to have taken full part in public life. By doing so you will become worthy of being prayerfully remembered early in the morning; and it would be said that you have worked for India's salvation. I beseech you to become thus worthy.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. VII, pp. 87-90

[1] Hindus traditionally regarded as untouchables, whom Gandhiji later described as Harijans, God's folk

58. SPEECH AT KSHATRIYA CONFERENCE, SOJITRA

January 16, 1925

BROTHERS,

I feel sorry that we have only ten minutes within which to finish the work of this Conference. For I have asked the *Antyaja* brothers to come in at four. You have passed three resolutions. All the three are very useful. You have resolved not to take alcohol; that is good. Temperance is not the concern of your community alone. Members of other communities also drink. You have passed resolutions saying that you will not sell your daughters and abduct women. Those are also good. You are Kshatriyas and you believe that you possess Kshatriya virtues. If we look at our Shastras we find that a true Kshatriya would not retreat after taking a step forward. Moreover, he protects others. You realize without my having to tell you that it is the quality of a Kshatriya to act in that manner and accepting that principle you should not shirk your responsibility. A vow is a pledge, an undertaking to do something, with God as witness. You have vowed not to drink, not to sell girls or to abduct them. But if you do not keep your pledge, it will be said that you have sinned against the whole world. Each of the four *varnas*[1] must adhere to the vows it takes.

To break a pledge is to retreat. So if you once raise your hand to take an oath and then forget about it, you cease to be a Kshatriya. You would feel ashamed and so would I. That would weigh on me. Having promised Ravishankar[2] who is working among you that you would not steal, suppose you did so, what could he do? Government would punish you for it. On the other hand, Ravishanker would suffer by fasting; by doing so he would tell you that you had better kill him than break faith. It is with this Ravishankar as a witness that you have taken an oath; so if you break your pledge you will force him to fast. I am of Ravishankar's fraternity and know how to follow him. I know not how to kill, but how to die. And remember that Ravishankar is not just one person, but a full harvest. Having cautioned you thus, I ask you: Will you keep your promises? This is not a theatre and I can't act myself. No community progresses through imitation. It is we, the educated, who by our play-acting have corrupted you. So think well before you raise your hand. The time has passed when a pledge could

[1] Literally, a colour; the four castes among the Hindus

[2] A silent constructive worker of Gujarat

be fulfilled by merely raising a hand. So much about your vows.

And now two other things. One, you must wear khadi. You must not imagine that your country consists of only what lies between the Narmada and Sabarmati. Yours is a large country. It is 1,900 miles long and 1,500 miles broad. If you want to walk all that distance, it will take 190 days. The people living in this country are your brothers and sisters. It is necessary for you to spin yarn for them and that yarn has to be given to the Congress. There is no other way to make khadi cheaper. Spin for half an hour each day. If crores of people do the same, khadi will cost nothing.

The other is to make the *Antyaja* community your own. A Kshatriya is the protector of the cow and the Brahmins. The cow is not the animal with two horns, but any being in distress. *Antyajas* are an unhappy community. If a Kshatriya forsakes the *Antyaja* community, he ceases to be a Kshatriya. If people who deem themselves to be Kshatriyas forsake the *Antyajas*, no one will count them as Kshatriyas.

I pray to God that He may sustain you in the fulfilment of your pledges. If you mean to keep your pledges, then believe my humble words. Those who wish to keep the vow should take the name of Rama on getting up in the morning and before going to bed and pray, "Oh Rama ! Bless me and help me keep my vow." If you do that, you will not be tempted by liquor, you will feel no lust when you look at a woman. Our poor daughter is a cow. You would hate yourself if you sold her.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. VII, pp. 91-3

59. SPEECH AT ANTYAJA CONFERENCE, SOJITRA

January 16, 1925

We must not conceal nor feel shame at the dirt within us. Women smoking hookahs are insufferable. Their mouths stink. The craving for liquor is also similar. I well know from experience the lot of drink addicts. I also know about people who take bhang. Liquor and bhang are first cousins. I wish you would give up all these bad habits. If you would listen to me, give up meat altogether.

Those who won't touch the untouchables raise many objections. When I remonstrate with them, they say that the *Antyajas* are dirty, they drink toddy and eat meat. I tell them that such people are found

even among Brahmins, *Vanias*[1] and other castes, yet their children go to schools and go to the temple; what perverse reasoning is this? Although I argue with them, I tell you at the same time to rid yourselves of the blot so that they will have nothing to blame you for. You should bathe regularly after your day's work is over. I have done much scavenging, and so have my sons; your Raojibhai, too, has done such work. There is no disgrace in it. This work is sacred and the man who removes filth is doing sacred work. You should also have a bath after cleaning hides. Good men always clean their teeth, wash and bathe and keep their bodies tidy. Do all this and tell the beads taking the name of Rama. If you don't have a rosary, tell the name of Rama on your finger tips. Through the name of Rama all your bad habits are bound to disappear. You will become purified and everyone will respect you. If you repeat the name of Rama on getting up in the morning and before going to bed in the evening, the day will go well for you and the night pass without bad dreams. To remain clean, don't eat what others have left over, do not take stale food. Even if you get sweets others have partaken of, go without them and eat *rot*[2]*i* you yourselves have made. After all you are not born to eat left-overs. You have eyes, nose, a pair of ears. You are a complete man. Learn to preserve your human dignity.

Lots of people will come and tell you that your Hindu religion is all wrong, as you are not allowed to go to school or enter the temple. To such people you should say, "We shall settle accounts with our Hindu brothers; you may not come between us any more than you may intervene in a quarrel between father and son or among relatives"; and you should remain steadfast to your religion. I am myself an outcaste. There are many like myself. Shall I give up my religion because of that? Many Christian friends urge me to turn Christian. I tell them there is nothing wrong with my religion. Why should I give it up? Let me be an outcaste. If I am pure and clean, why should I be unhappy? I have joined the *Antyajas* and if for that reason Hindus persecute me, do I cease to be a Hindu? Hinduism is intended for me and for my soul. Tell this to both the Christians and the Muslims and be firm in your own religion. *Antyajas* are not pawns in a game of chess so that anyone can play with them. It is in my self-interest that I come to you calling you my brothers and sisters. My

[1] Business Community
[2] Unleavened bread

self-interest is my desire to rid myself of the sins my forefathers have committed against you; you are not to be blamed for that. So why should you give up your religion? It is I who have to make atonement. Why should you give up chanting the name of Rama? It is the way of Rama to make his followers and servants suffer and it is thus that he tests their devotion. It is my prayer that you will pass that test.

In conclusion, let me ask you to be compassionate, for we, all of us in this world, thrive on love. Let me ask you in the end to ply the spinning-wheel, weave yarn and wear khadi only.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. VII, pp. 93-5

60. SPEECH AT BARDOLI

January 17, 1925

These gifts of coconut, yarn and money do not make me rejoice. I do accept these; but my search is for true men. I visited a very fine school in Varad. There are many fine teachers there, but many children were withdrawn from the national school after the Vidyapith resolution allow-ing *Antyaja* children to join it. I may make it known that a resolution has also been passed for the merger of the village school with the national school. However, what is the sense in forgetting our responsibilities one moment and remembering them the next? Were we merely staging a play in 1921?[1] We then thought that swaraj without the abolition of untouchability was worthless. Swaraj without khadi would also be futile. Today, however, I find that Bardoli lacks faith, lacks the courage to be independent. The latter implies the courage to carry on with the unfinished job with a handful of men when all others have been beaten back. Bardoli has completed neither the khadi programme nor the abolition of untouchability and has left the *Dublas*[2] in a sorry plight. I would, at any rate, ask Bardoli to correct the errors it has made. I shall not lose faith in Bardoli. I find the same affection and sparkle in the eyes of women as I found there before. I have been informed that they have brought yarn and money along with them voluntarily and that they have not been prompted by

[1] A reference to the Non-co-operation movement

[2] A backward community of Gujarat

anyone to do so. It is the men, however, who have lost the spirit. Shri Raichura[1] instead of singing that Gujarat has saved the honour of the Punjab, Bengal, etc., should say that Gujarat has not saved its own honour. Gujarat still has the opportunity to do so. I do not ask you to go to jail today; today I ask you to practise what is our ordinary dharma which is very easy to practise. I was not very eager to come here but came along as a matter of my dharma. Though I have not lost hope, I am certainly disheartened, as we have lost self-confidence today. The time is not yet gone. Think no more of boycotts which were a temporary affair. I have given up all those things which were only a means for securing swaraj. You must, however, pursue that which helps the attainment of self-purification—khadi, the abolition of untouchability and Hindu-Muslim unity. Practise these as your ordinary dharma regardless of whether swaraj is secured or not, otherwise we shall surely perish. Hinduism will be destroyed is untouchability is not ended and, without khadi, there will be such starvation in the country that our flesh will be eaten up by crows and dogs, leaving only bones behind.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-2-1925

61. REMINISCENCES OF KATHIAWAR

IN AN OCEAN OF LOVE

Whenever I go to Kathiawar, I am overwhelmed by the affection I receive. This has ceased to surprise me. Whenever I go, I see Kathiawar. Yet, being an Kathiawar makes a difference. Can it be that I myself need love from Kathiawar? Or, that I wish Kathiawar to make an exhibition of its love? I cannot fathom the nature of my feeling. Why should there be any exhibition of love in Kathiawar? What kind of love is that which requires formal courtesies to express it?

GREATER EXPECTATIONS

Or else, could it be that I expect more of Kathiawar? I am not satisfied perhaps by its external manifestation of love. Perhaps I am inwardly dissatisfied at this external show alone. If a mother, trying to be polite towards her son forgets to serve him his *roti* and is busy in decorating the dining room in his honour, he will feel that she is

[1] A poet and writer from Saurashtra

keeping him at arm's length. Do I have a similar feeling? Am I not, by my behaviour, suggesting that I shall be entirely satisfied if I am favoured with that one thing for which I have shamelessly come? Yes, I am.

Whether that is true or not, I came and stayed in Bhavnagar,[1] regarding it as the land of my forefathers, and built castles in the air. Not one of my hopes was shattered. The reception committee had drafted so many resolutions, all of which I could be said to have cast aside. My suggestion that those resolutions should be withdrawn did not meet with the approval of all. The committee, however, accepted my advice.

THE SPINNING-WHEEL

I did not go to Bhavnagar in the hope that the spinning-wheel would be made a condition for franchise. Hence I was certainly pleased to find the resolution about the spinning-wheel. Parts of it were overdone. It said that all members were to sell annually khadi worth Rs. 50 and, members of the executive committee, khadi worth Rs.500. I suggested that this condition should be dropped. If members accepted responsibility to that extent, we could boycott foreign cloth without delay. However, by incorporating something in the franchise, which would depend upon co-operation from others, the intrinsic merit of the franchise would be destroyed.

Although this has been dropped from the franchise, those who are able to spread khadi will certainly do so. The discussion in the Subjects Committee pleased me greatly. Everyone expressed his views fearlessly. I found that a considerable section expressed its opinion against spinning. Their argument, however, did not appeal to a vast majority. There were no two sections as Swarajists and No-changers in this case. Hence the discussion centred round the merits and demerits of spinning. There were two opposite standpoints. One was in favour of spinning, while the other was opposed to introducing spinning in the right to vote.

The duty of those who have voted in favour of spinning is absolutely clear. They have to prove their faith by steadfast spinning and by spreading khadi in other ways. They will be regarded as having betrayed Kathiawar and myself if, in spite of having so voted,

[1] For the Kathiawar Political Conference held on January 8 and 9, 1925. Gandhiji presided

they do not spin regularly. On the other hand, if they spin regularly, by the end of the year they will make non-spinners take up spinning.

WEAR KHADI

What is true of spinning is true of wearing khadi. I saw hardly any opposition to wearing khadi. Despite so many votes in favour of khadi it is sad to find so few khadi-wearers in Kathiawar. It is a great pity that khadi is sent out of Kathiawar and that very little is sold locally. However, now that so many votes have been cast in its favour at the Conference, its sale must considerably increase in Kathiawar.

LIFE MEMBERS

There are about thirty-six members of the Kathiawar Political Conference because they have paid a lump-sum contribution of Rs. 5. One of them raised the question of their rights and asked me as the President to give a decision in the matter. As the resolution regarding spinning drops the clauses opposed to it, the question arose whether life members did or did not retain their rights. According to the resolution, clauses which opposed spinning were automatically dropped. The question was a complicated one; however, there was no alternative for me but to give a verdict. I have given the verdict that life members continue to remain members even if they neither spin nor make others do so.

I have not given the decision whether or not the Conference has the legal authority to do away with such rights. It was necessary for me only to decide whether the resolution of the Conference made any difference to the rights of the life members and, as mentioned above, I have given that decision in favour of the life members.

REQUEST TO THEM

I would request them, however, not to take advantage of this right but, instead, write letters to the Secretary of the Conference informing him of having given up this right and having voluntarily accepted the resolution of the Conference. I am aware that many members did not wish to raise the above question. Many are prepared to spin. Hence, when the Conference has adopted an important change, it is not proper for the life members to disregard it by asserting their rights. This is my humble opinion.

SIR PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI[1]

In some respects I regard Sir Prabhashankar Pattani's pledge to spin as a major achievement of the Conference. The words with which he announced his pledge were very solemn. They left a very deep impression on the members. That pledge originated in the following manner. After the final session of the Congress at Belgaum,[2] many persons had come to the decision that they would enrol a certain number of spinning members before the first of March. I had personally undertaken to try and enrol a hundred names in this venture, and I had also said I would try to persuade two additional persons who were thought to be unwilling to spin. As I had to come to Kathiawar in any case, I had hoped to find these persons here. I counted Pattani Saheb among those averse to spinning. When the Subjects Committee accepted the resolution on spinning, I asked for a hundred names and also promised to try and persuade Pattani Saheb to spin. No sooner had these words escaped my lips than pattani Saheb stood up and took the pledge that as long as he was in good health, he would spin regularly for half an hour before his meal. He then laid down the condition that I should teach him how to spin. I got what I wanted. At the close of the Confere-nce I was to be his guest. The very day after the Conference, I taught him for half an hour. Within that very half-hour, he learnt how to take out threads from the sliver. On the second day, within two hours, he spun 48 yards of fine eight-count yarn and on the third day he spun 27 yards within an hour. On both the days he had his meal only after taking a bath and spinning the yarn. In this manner, if other well-known officials and members of princely families set an example in spinning, it would make a good impression on the poorer sections of the people in the country and make them industrious. I hope that Pattani Saheb's pledge will be fulfilled in all respects.

I should inform you that he will not become a member of the Congress or the Kathiawar Political Conference. Nor did I want or wish him to do so. In my opinion, spinning is related to politics. However, spinning can be undertaken even without political motives. Compassion for the poor, the religious sentiment underlying spinning and its economic implications are acceptable to all. I even wish that

[1] (1862-1937) ; Dewan of the former Bhavnagar State; member, India Council, 1917-19

[2] Held in December, 1924

Lord Reading[1] would spin. Without any reference to political matters, if the ruler and the subjects both start spinning and using khadi, I am confident that India would automatically come into its own. This is a matter in which all can participate unhesitatingly and be of some service to the country.

COLLECTION OF COTTON

As soon as the Conference was over, Shri Devchand Parekh[2], Shri Manilal Kothari, Shri Barjorji Bharucha and others set out to collect cotton to be supplied to the poor so that they would be required to give only half an hour's labour daily and before leaving Bhavnagar they collected about 275 maunds of cotton. It is hoped that nearly 2,000 maunds of cotton will be collected as gift from kathiawar alone. I hope that this drive for collecting cotton will be enthusiastically carried out and those who can give will not hesitate to do so.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 18-1-1925

62. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SARBHON,
Paus vad 9 [*Januay 18, 1925*][3]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I received your letter. I am not insisting on *brahmacharya*, But I am indifferent. I am not convinced that it is necessarily a duty of parents to settle their children. I think parents should help their children in getting settled. The case of U.P. was altogether different. In our narrow world it has become a delicate problem. I am keeping myself alert. Anand must have recovered her health. I shall be at Sabarmati on the 20th and 21st. I shall leave for Delhi on the 22nd morning. You will have passed on to Kalidas Paramanand the telegram which I sent through you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] 1860-1935; Viceroy and Governor-General of India, 1921-26
[2] The Secretary of the Conference
[3] From the postmark

63. LETTER TO PREMIBEHN MANCHHARAM PATEL

Paus Vad 9 [*January 18, 1925*][1]

DEAR SISTER,

There are very few in this world who show perfection in their work. Hence, people who are earnest, who do not hide their mistakes but endeavour constantly to correct them should continue to do the work of service assigned to them with total involvement.

MRS. PREMIBEHN MANCHHARAM PATEL
L. R. KANYASHALA
RANDER
DISTT. SURAT

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1106. Courtesy: Premibehn Bhushanlal Shah

64. SPEECH AT BHUVASAN

January 18, 1925

What hopes does a man entertain and what is he required to do? I do not want to think about your unhappiness and mine. We had hoped to do a great deal of service to India through Bardoli.[2] But no one knows how many things man proposes and God disposes. We are puppets in His hands.

Let me say one or two important things. You used to spin a lot and found interest in carding. Shankerlal Banker[2] used to live in your midst. Just now while at my meal I asked him how things stood with you then. He told me that you used to say, "If nothing else, we have learnt the *mantra*[4] of khadi. We sow the best seed for growing cotton. We know the technique and we have the time. Why then should we not make our own clothes?"

That is a good thing. Moreover, I wish that as Bardoli District is self-sufficient in the matter of food, so must it become in cloth; that

[1] From the postmark

[2] In 1921-22, it was decided to make Bardoli the first unit for mass civil disobedience to mark "the national revolt" against Government's policies regarding the Khilafat, Punjab and swaraj.

[3] Social worker and labour leader of Ahmedabad

[4] Sacred formula with magic efficacy

the children, women and men of Bardoli become diligent instead of lazy. It is not that people who, by God's grace, are wealthy need alone become industrious. It will be a good thing if those who are not altogether invalid have some work to do. The saying that an idle man calls down ruin is true. We can improve our condition and banish starvation by carding and spinning. You would not know about starvation but the *Kaliparaj*[1] and the *Dublas* might know. Their lot is more or less that of the animals. The condition of those owning land must be better. Judging from the eyes and teeth of those who work with the upper castes for a mere pittance, I do not think their state is too good. In one village I saw many such *Dublas*.

I do not ask others to court prison; only Dayalji[2], Vallabhbhai,[3] and I have to do so, and that too not just yet. The reason is that according to the policy initiated in 1921, one was to go to jail only according to one's free will. The present is not the time to go to jail. For jail-going a different set of conditions apply. The common people of India have not yet acquired the qualities necessary for jail-going. I think, however, that stray individuals will serve the purpose. It is my ambition to recruit such persons from among you. But that is another matter. My intention just now is different.

You used to do good work. It was everyone's hope that if nothing else we would be able to produce khadi in Bardoli district. You had realized that our glory lay along this path alone. But now you have forgotten all that. Where has all your faith gone? If someone like me comes along and starts one or two new schemes conceived in haste which you may not like, would you for that reason give up your own worthwhile work?

And that is exactly what you have done. You have set up an Ashram for which a Parsi gave you the money. He was a Parsi like Hatimtai. Few could be as generous as he. He was as charitable as Baliraja and that great man of Iran. I am talking of Rustomji[4]. His celebrated name will endure as long as the town of Sarbhon exists. It

[1] Literally, black people; the name of a community in Gujarat; *vide* the following item.

[2] Dayalji Desai; a public worker of Surat

[3] Vallabhbhai Patel (1875-1950); Congress leader from Gujarat; first Deputy Prime Minister of free India

[4] An Indian merchant of Natal who took a prominent part in Gandhiji's satyagraha campaigns in South Africa

was not as if he had anything to do with you. But Parsi Rustomji took no notice whatever of differences of religion. When he got to know that the people of Bardoli were brave and self-denying, he sent the money. And from that money the workers of the two Ashrams you had built are being maintained.

Gujarat's best workers have come to these places—Narahari[1] among them. But it was he who has offended against you. If my son, whom I had appointed my successor, commits an offence, it must be considered my offence—not, of course, if he is a spoilt child. I appointed Narahari my representative. He is a co-worker of mine in the Ashram and I have great faith in him. We brought money from outside and poured it into Bardoli. We made the name of Bardoli famous through the world. The praise of Bardoli was sung all over India. People thought of sending workers there, arguing "If one brought disgrace on the name of Bardoli, it would be a terrible thing." Narahari was one of those who came. You are offended because he started teaching and working for *Dublas.* Let me tell you that if this was his offence, it was an offence worth committing.

Hindu dharma tells us to have our meal only after serving the poorest of the poor. Our dharma also tells us to tend weak animals. Even if their ribs stand out they should not be killed. Even the ant-holes should be filled with flour. We owe kindness to the animals. A meticulous ethics that teaches this would not expect us to treat men as animals. It would teach us to be compassionate to the poor. One should treat all people as one's kinsfolk. In many old-fashioned families a servant is not a servant but himself a master. How can we fail to feed his children who are like our own?

Who am I? Who is Narahari? No one can be imposed upon you. Narahari, Jugatram and others did not come here to lord it over you. But what can they do if they feel unhappy? What can a wife do if the husband turns cruel and beats her? She would weep and not eat. If a man loses his temper, is he to blame for it or God? I speak from experience. I am married and have known the happiness of family life. If there is a quarrel between husband and wife, she would either call him names or weep. Narahari has behaved like a woman and stopped eating. You thought that Narahari has been tyrannizing over you. Nothing of the sort. He has offered satyagraha. One who

[1] Parikh

normally offers satyagraha against the Government has now offered it against you. But there is no place for fasting in the satyagraha against the Government. You have noticed that I myself do not fast [in this manner]. I did fast at Bombay but that was against our own people— the champions of the Congress and the Khilafat.[1] What you have done is to me my death. If we hurt others, if we repeat what the people did at Chauri Chaura[2], it would not be accepted as satyagraha against the Government which is a matter of jail-going. There it was not a matter of awakening sympathy through a fast unto death. The Government's claim over you is that of an enemy. Narahari's was that of service, love and friendship. His heart fluttered; but you were in a rage. It would have been well if you had killed him. But why were you angry with yourselves? Why have you given up khadi? You thought Narahari wanted to pick up a quarrel with you. You could have said that you would do nothing for the *Dublas*. But what is the point of forsaking khadi and carding? How cruel! How absurd!

I want therefore to tell you that you must take him back and make amends. The atonement would consist in your considering boycott of mill cloth as dharma and in spinning. Narahari asked me, "May we leave Sarbhon?" I said, "No. That would be the act of a coward. If you do that people will get angry. You can't run away from them, or desert your post. You will have to stay there and make them see that you do not want to harm them. That you can do only by serving them, no by running away. Plant yourself firmly and do your work. If no one accepts your work, you should keep on carding, spinning and weaving." I do not know if Narahari is soothed by my words. It is another matter if he can't bear all this but it is his duty to teach the *Dublas* and the *Antyajas* if they ask him. To allay your fears let me assure you that he has no quarrel with you.

I seek an assurance from you also. If one of your hands is in a huff, do not let the other lose its temper. There is neither justice nor sense, neither discretion nor foresight, in letting that happen. That will show a backward-looking mind. I was listening the questions put to you. You people—living in and around Sarbhon— have no difficulty

[1] Gandhiji had fasted in November 1921 in Bombay. In September-October, 1924, he fasted in Delhi, for securing Hindu-Muslim unity.

[2] A small town near Gorakhpur in U.P. where, in 1922, a violent mob locked up some policemen and burned them to death. Consequently, Gandhiji withdrew the Non-co-operation movement.

in ginning and spinning. What a shame if in spite of all this they cannot give 2,000 yards [of yarn]. Surely the Bardoli which talked so much of bravery is not afraid of this. At present all the boys of the Varad National School spin—studies are also going on well. Everyone spins in Sunav. A teacher of Varad spun 70,000 yards by working fifteen hours a day for twenty days. That place is also in Bardoli tahsil.

Do you fear that we intend to deceive you? If you have any such fear, get rid of it. Is there any instance of anyone of us having deceived you? What more shall I say to you?

Sisters, I shall not be satisfied with coconut, yarn and money. I expect many things from the women of Bardoli. I want you to give no place to foreign goods. How good would it be if you wore a sari out of hand-spun yarn? It is through you that I seek *Ramarajya*. How nice it would be if everyone of you became a Sita? Your children must learn both dharma and karma. Members of some of your families remit ill-got-ten money from South Africa. But a weaver earns Rs. 40. Your children will be happy if they learn this vocation. Cherish the *Antyajas*. If any woman wishes ill of *Antyajas* she will lapse from the grace of woman-hood. If you have any *Dublas* in your household treat them with love and compassion. Give them *roti* smeared with ghee. Prosperity comes to homes in which the servants are well cared for. See what happens to the man who earns through deceit. Millionaires are left heirless. May God give you such purity of mind and heart that you may understand aright and take to heart the prayer just heard.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. VII, pp. 101-6

65. SPEECH AT "KALIPARAJ" CONFERENCE, VEDCHHI

January 18, 1925

BHAI JIWANBHAI, BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF "KALIPARAJ" AND OTHER COMMUNITIES,

I have seen many conferences in my time. If fifty men gather, it is called a congress and, if five, it is called a conference. I have seen some exclusively of the people we call lower castes. I have seen many as unostentatious as this, not only in India but in Africa and Europe. But it is for the first time that I have seen such a beautiful and pleasing

conference. And for this, the Reception Committee and the volunteers deserve thanks. It is only right that the expenses were kept down to the minimum, for that is proper in our poor country. Alongside of the Conference,you have organized a model exhibition. If after seeing it any Indian leader still has doubts about spinning, I shall look upon him as pitiable. Having once seen it, no one would ever think that spinning and carding are superfluous. If you want to banish poverty, you should realize that these two activities are essential.

Mahomed Ali[1] has wired seeking forgiveness for his inability to attend. You are probably unaware that he held a high post at one time. You know too what happened later. At that time he had tried to share the happiness and sufferings of the *kaliparaj* people. He longed to renew your acquaintance but he fell ill after that. Moreover, he has to run two journals. He has wired me to seek forgiveness for his inability to be present.

This Conference has been meeting annually for the last three years. Each time similar exhibitions have been organized. I have read all the resolutions of the previous years. This time the resolutions have not been drafted. But after a few minutes' talk I find that some resolutions have to be passed.

Kaliparaj or *Kalipraja* does not mean dark-skinned people but those lower communities who have to earn their livelihood through manual labour. These people do not need to call a conference. This is labour's age. One who does not accept labour as noble will cease himself to be noble. In the coming age there won't be any hierarchy.

Today money is looked upon as God. But will it have the same place for ever in the world? Does Satan retain his eminence? Those who fear God have not accepted this. Mammon and Satan are synonyms. Some Shastras say that money has many enemies. I do not say that you need no money at all. You do need some. But everything has its own place. A man who does not produce anything has no place in society. We miss our own role if we exaggerate the role of money in society. When we lose ourselves and make room for money instead, we go astray.

I have said so much about money, but one should not think for that reason that I mean to malign the wealthy; or wish ill to them. The

[1] 1871-1931; editor of *The Comrade* and a prominent politician; took a leading part in the Khilafat agitation along with his brother, Shaukat Ali; President of the Indian National Congress, 1923

wealthy, too, are our brethren. I want to exact work from them also. If they live recognizing their role in society, we consider that a good arrangement. You are labourers and therefore worthy of reverence. A country where labourers are not respected but despised falls into decay. Here, too, they are not respected.

But this is a period of transition. Many have come to realize that labourers should be given their due place [in society]. India cannot do without labourers, so it is not proper to run them down as *Kaliparaj*. On the contrary they should be given a high place. Some have taken up the business of deceiving the labourers and through them serving their self-interest. Such people have done no good to the labourers. But there are some who have taken to labour and enjoy it. They lead a happy life. One comes across such people. I believe that no one stumbles except through one's faults or wrong doings. We exceed the limit when we do not see our own faults and abuse others. I fear that you are doing something like this.You believe that not you but someone else is responsible for your lot, but in fact no one else is. Ever since I came here I have been telling you that our faults bring about our downfall and our good deeds uplift us. The problem is not how to earn bread—a labourer can never face this problem. One who has a pair of legs and a pair of hands is independent. Who can make him unhappy?

You have two causes of unhappiness. You drink liquor and toddy! You are an example of all the misery that addiction to alcohol can bring. Brothers and sisters of *Kaliparaj*, it is the new fashion to think that not to drink alcohol is a sin. They enjoy saying that if people do not drink, the habit will die out and therefore the trade will disappear. Do not get entangled in this net. Let me remind you that two years ago all of you had taken a vow not to drink. Stick to that. If some doctor tells you that you would die if you do not drink, do not listen to him. The body must perish sometime or other. But the vow must not die. I grant the kind of decline that sets in the body if you don't drink. Once having given up drinking don't go back on your vow. Many persons fall into all kinds of temptations and commit sins. If we are to be free of this, we should not allow the slightest exception to what we consider to be the rules of good conduct. If we leave a hole in the wall, insects, reptiles or thieves might creep in; similarly, if there is any gap in the wall of vows raised to protect the soul, torrents of sin may rush in; and we may repent too late. You should, therefore, shun liquor. Better keep away from it.

Your ignorance is not due to illiteracy. It is not a question whether you can or cannot read and write. Many amongst you do not know how to read but have the wisdom gained from experience. You are simple at heart and therefore misled. It is good to be innocent. Innocence and simplicity are divine qualities. Once the truth is told, the simplest of the innocents cannot be shaken from his belief. In your innocence you believe in ghosts. You believe in my divinity also. Let me tell you that it is wrong to do so. You can get nothing out of my divinity. To do puja to me would be of no avail. Someone will deceive you tomorrow to do puja to someone else. Another will tell you to drink alcohol. A third will swear by me and ask you to give up the spinning-wheel. What will then happen to you? You vow to yourself to abstain from liquor. I am told that by appealing to some superstitions I should encourage you to give up drinking. But the country is full of superstitions, and I do not want to add one more to the lot. If your drinking cannot be stopped without starting a new superstition, it does not matter. What I mean to say is that if you don't give up drinking through your own understanding, your abstinence will not be worth while. I wish you should give up liquor, and so should people in the neighbourhood give up both liquor and meat. The whole world should give up these; but not out of superstitious beliefs, for if you do that, your abstinence will not last long. One sin cannot be washed off by another. I hoped to help you to rid yourself of superstition and convince you [to give up drink] not for my sake but because it is good in itself. It is your own ignorance if anyone can deceive you. To set you free from this ignorance, I have asked the volunteers to be patient. I counsel patience again today. Take the next step in full knowledge and make others do the same.

You have complained against your Parsi brethren. I dote upon the Parsi community. It is a small community but has earned wide fame. They have many virtues; but have some vices also. Today many Parsi men and women are giving up liquor. Of course, there are still many who drink. Parsis are engaged in the drink trade. In this business they commit sins and atrocities. But what can I say to them? They tempt you, give you gifts and even bribe you. What can I say to that? If it were my business I would do the same. One has perforce to do all kinds of things for one's stomach. The stomach can make us blow someone else's trumpet. That is why I make this speech. It is being written down and will have to be edited. I wish to put life into you.

I have a complaint against you similar to the one against the Parsis. There is a group amongst you which says that not to drink is a sin. You can survive not by fighting with them but on the strength of your vows and austerities. You tell the Parsis that you have given up drinking, and then they would wind up their business. I have many Parsi friends, including engineers, doctors, lawyers and business men as well. One of them was an intelligent and generous business man. He gave a large sum of money. He had started an Ashram also. Even if I persuade the Parsis, someone else may come along tomorrow—say a Christian, Jew, Muslim or Hindu may come and ask you to drink, how can I go on persuading all of them? The best remedy therefore is that I should talk to you and convince you.

I request the Gaikwar and the Vansada Governments to close down the drink shops in their jurisdiction. But to persuade the Princes is a difficult job. Even so I shall try. But they are like the Parsis; so it is difficult to succeed with them. It is their business too and they earn a large revenue from that. But you are their subjects—their children, so to speak. It is my experience that it is easier to persuade the children than the parents. I therefore have faith only in you.

What are the things that will help you to give up drinking? Spinning-wheel is the chief amongst these. I have put all my faith in the spinning-wheel. If India is to get salvation it will be only through the spinning-wheel. I am delighted to see the young children spinning and this has strengthened my faith in it. And it increases day by day. The means of your livelihood is agriculture but you are poor and find it hard to get food. In these circumstances the spinning-wheel provides the thread of life and also produces peace. When you feel like taking liquor sit at the wheel. As you ply it slowly the craving for liquor will diminish. It will be enough if you do this at my bidding. If the rains fail the crop will wither but the spinning-wheel is ever fruitful. If you serve it well, it will become an *Annapurna*[1].

Along with the resolutions to be passed here, I want you to take a vow. If you concede that abstinence is desirable then take a vow that "we with God as our witness swear that we won't take liquor or toddy and persuade our brethren to do likewise."

And now to the second thing. After explaining to you

[1] A name of Goddess Durga, the mother who is worshipped as the giver of food

everything, I want you to take a vow. If you have understood my views on khadi, you, men and women, vow to wear henceforth only hand-spun and hand-woven clothes. It is dangerous to wear foreign cloth. If many among you after leaving this place wear foreign clothes, then it would amount to a condemnation of your witnesses.

Brothers and sisters, I have made you take these two vows. And for this purpose we have made God our witness. I wish that these two vows may bear fruit. It is not easy to keep these vows, but I will show you a device for keeping them; a secret which is the solace of the poor. Many have swum across with its aid. I have told it to *Antyajas* and *Dharalas* in Sojitra. Get up early in the morning, rinse your mouth, wash your face, clean your teeth, remove the mucus of the eyes and take the name of Rama. Rama means God. Repeating *Ramanama* is a sovereign remedy. We must pray to him "O Rama! let me stay pure and help me keep the vows I have taken at Vedchhi." Even if you are tired and feel sleepy [at night], take the name of Rama for a minute and tell Him, "It is through your help that I have been able to keep my vows. I should not smell of liquor even at night, neither in my dream. And so, too, of forei-gn cloth." Then you need have no fear of ghosts. Rama does not need a coconut from you. His hunger is for your love. He is seated in the hearts of all men. You should know him. This clock is ticking. But Rama does not have to make such noise. May He shower blessings on you all.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. VII, pp. 107-13

66. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[1]

SARBHON,

Posh Vad 9 [*January 19, 1925*]

I do not press anyone to observe *brahmacharya*; in fact, I am indifferent. I cannot accept the position that it is the duty of parents to arrange the marriages of their young ones. I am of the opinion that parents should assist them in thus "settling down."

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 66

[1] 1894-1951; son of Anandbehn, Gandhiji's sister's daughter; co-worker of Gandhiji; Secretary, Bombay Congress Committee, 1922-23

67. NOTES

NOT 25,000

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan[1] wires as follows:

> On my return to Lahore I have seen it announced in local papers on authority of *Young India* that I promised you twenty-five thousand spinning Muslim Congress workers by end of this year. I am afraid there is a misunderstanding somewhere. Perhaps my language was not sufficiently clear. All I promised was that I would strain every nerve to place the services of ten thousand Muslim volunteers at your disposal before your term of office expires and I stick to this offer.

I gladly print this wire. There was no misunderstanding, so far as I am concerned. The offer was so striking that I warned the Maulana against being over sanguine. He stuck to his guns. The promise was too good to be withheld from the public. But the offer was a free gift. And no prudent man will look a gift-horse in the mouth. As things go even ten thousand volunteers is a good and encouraging number. Let me remind Maulana Saheb that one must be a spinner to be a volunteer. That is an old Delhi resolution stiffened at Ahmedabad Congress in 1921. I shall therefore be satisfied with ten thousand Mussalman volunteer spinners spinning every month two thousand yards of good yarn with clock-work regularity. I do not doubt that if the Maulana secures ten thousand spinners, he will have no difficulty about getting even twenty-five thousand. For once the spinning movement catches, it will gather strength like a snowball.

SOME CONFERENCES

Last week, I had the honour of attending several conferences which deserve more than a passing notice. They were Petlad District Farmers' Conference held at Sojitra and presided over by Dr. Sumant Mehta[2] and also *Dharala*, i.e., Baraiya Kshatriya Conference, Ladies Conference and Untouchables' Conference at the same place and a *Kaliparaj* Conference at Vedchhi near Bardoli. At all these conferences khaddar was much in evidence. The special feature of the Farmers' Conference was Dr. Sumant Mehta's offer that he would intern himself in the Petlad District for one year if he got forty whole time workers for the year. He was taken at his word and he has

[1] President of the Punjab Khilafat Committee

[2] A political and social worker of Gujarat

over forty-five earnest volunteers at his disposal for the whole year. This Conference had four classes of visitors, one of which could gain entrance by paying a fixed quantity of hand-spun yarn. The Conference cost the Reception Committee very little money. The pavilion was spacious and unpretentious. Of course there were no chairs, the wood-work and cloth, chiefly old khaddar, were lent. Labour was volunteered. One of the citizens opened a free kitchen for the strangers who required food. The guests were taken over by another citizen and the delegates by a third. The arrangement proved thoroughly satisfactory. Order was admirably kept by volunteers from Professor Manik Rao's pupils from his gymnasium at Baroda. The proceedings were brief and to the point. The Chairman of the Reception Committee took about fifteen minutes during which he read extracts from his printed speech. The President took not more than thirty minutes for his address. Not a superfluous word was spoken at the meeting. The officials looked more like servants than like leaders. The resolutions were chiefly concerned with things to be done by the people themselves.

"DHARALAS"

Dharalas are a fierce military tribe in Gujarat. Their occupation is chiefly farming. But through economic distress they have taken to thieving. Murder is not an uncommon thing among them. The wave of self-purification that passed through India in 1921 could not fail to touch them. The class of workers that has come into being are working in their midst with the sole intention of carrying out internal reform among them. The brilliant satyagraha movement initiated and led so successfully by Vallabhbhai during 1923 brought about great awakening among these people. Their Conference at Sojitra was one of the fruits of the reform. They assembled in their thousands. They listened to the proceedings in perfect silence. The resolutions carried were about abstaining from intoxicating drinks and drugs, from selling their daughters in marriage and from abduction, a habit which seems to be rempant among them.

THE UNTOUCHABLES

The untouchables of Sojitra and surrounding places met, too, in the same pavilion. The leaders occupied the platform. The touchables mixed freely with the untouchables. The resolutions referred to abstention from drink and to wearing khaddar. It was a bold thing on the part of the organizers to have lent the pavilion for the Untouch-

ables' Conference. For the Petlad District, I discovered, is not free from prejudice against untouchables.

WOMEN IN CONFERENCE

This Conference was a stirring sight. *Patidar*[1] women observe modified seclusion. Sojitra has a population of not more than seven thousand. There must have been present nearly ten thousand women. I have hardly known a women's meeting more largely attended even in big cities. These ladies listened to the speeches with attention and without noise. Often I have found it difficult to secure silence at ladies' meetings. This meeting was therefore an agreeable surprise to everybody including the organizers. No resolutions were taken at this Conference. Speeches were chiefly devoted to khaddar and the wheel. The Farmers' Conference lasted five hours spread over two days. The others lasted an hour each.

"KALIPARAJ"

Whilst the arrangements for the Conference at Sojitra were simple and effective, those at Vedchhi surpassed all expectations. The remark immediately escaped my lips that I had not seen a conference so grand as at Vedchhi for its simplicity, naturalness and artistic beauty. He who selected the site and conceived the whole arrangement was undoubtedly an artist child of nature. The spot selected lay on a river bank. The river ran between a row of homely hills shaded with trees and shrubs. The bed of the river was sandy, not muddy. The main platform was erected in the waters of the river. It rose nearly eight feet high. A sandbag was the first step to the platform. The whole meeting lay in front of the platform, the people occupying even the ridge of the hill opposite. The decorations were all bamboo and green leaves. There was not a single portrait arranged anywhere, not a scrap of paper was used for decoration, and not even yarn. Yarn is out of place for such decorations and much too valuable to be wasted. The canopy was split bamboo and green leaves. The effect was soothingly beautiful. On either side of the road that lay in front of the platform, huge masses of men and women, over twelve thousand, sat in perfect silence. There was no entrance fee. All were delegates. There was no distinction between delegates and visitors. (I don't present this fact for imitation. Here it would have been cruel to have made the distinction which in organized bodies is inevitable.) A little distance

[1] A community of cultivators and farmers

from the meeting a long strip of the bank alongside of the line of hills was occupied for the charkha exhibition. Old men and old women and little boys and little girls ranging from five to ten years were plying the wheels. There was method about having only old people and youngsters. The middle-aged spinners were busy rende-ring service as volunteers all drawn from the *kaliparaj*. Near the row of charkhas was a portion allocated for khaddar manufactured in Gujarat. There was therefore no question of having the fine Andhra khaddar. Those of the *Kaliparaj* who wore khaddar used only the coarse stuff. A very small portion contained pictures of the all-India leaders and a selection of literature. The thing cost literally nothing. The bamboo and the leaves belonged to the people. They brought the material and arranged it under supervision and without remuneration. No arrangement had to be made for victualling the thousands who came either on foot or in carts, the nearest railway station being twelve miles off the Conference ground. The people brought their own cooked or uncooked food. They camped in the open wherever they liked. Everything was done without bustle and without noise.

The business done was also natural and simple in the extreme. Nothing was to be put before the people that was not suited to their needs.

THEIR TWO VOWS

This was the third year of their Conference. At all their Conferences only a limited number of resolutions were adopted. There was one about drink which is the curse of these people, another about khaddar and a third about discarding stone ornaments worn by their women. The resolutions about drink and khaddar were in the nature of vows. The audience solemnly undertook themselves not to drink and gently to persuade their neighbours to do likewise. The other vow bound them to ply the wheel and to wear hand-spun to the exclusion of all other cloth and to persuade others to do likewise. I took pains to see that they understood what was being said and what they were asked to commit themselves to. Volunteers were sent to the farthest ends of the meeting to ascertain whether they were following the proceedings. The wind being favourable the voice carried exceptionally well without much effort. They, both men and women, took the vows with God as their witness. Let the reader understand that they had been passing these resolutions for the past two years. Almost all of them had some part of their dress in khaddar. They had taken to

it readily and intelligently. Hundreds had learnt how to spin. Some of the young men were trained at the Ashram at Bardoli to become expert carders, spinners and weavers. A few even earned their livelihood by weaving. The audience was therefore really prepared for the vow regarding khaddar and spinning as it was regarding intoxicating drinks.

I closely examined an old man of sixty to know what actuated him to spin after a hard day's toil on his farm. He spins at the rate of about four to five hours per day. He needs little sleep. He therefore spins at night and gets up early again to be at the wheel. I thought he would tell me that he was spinning for pleasure or for others. I was agreeably surprised to find him give me an economic reason. He said, "I spin for myself. I grow my own cotton. Now I weave my own clothes in my own family and save ten rupees per head per year." The sight of these people organizing all the processes for themselves should convince the hardest unbeliever of the necessity of hand-spinning and khaddar. Here in the midst of the most ignorant villagers village organization of the trust type is quietly going on. It is revolutionizing their lives in every department. They are learning to think for themselves.

AFTER THE MEETING

I held the meeting of the elders after the Conference was finished. Over thirty of them including ladies gave their names as workers. They are themselves pledged to spinning, wearing khaddar and to total abstinence; they are each to try to enlist five such inside of five weeks at the end of which they are to meet again to consider how further to develop the reform movement.

"RAMANAMA"

It is easy enough to take a vow under a stimulating influence. But it is difficult to keep to it especially in the midst of temptation. God is our only Help in such circumstances. I therefore suggested to the meeting *Ramanama*. Rama, Allah and God are to me convertible terms. I had discovered that simple people deluded themselves into the belief that I appeared to them in their distress. I wanted to remove the superstition. I knew that I appeared to nobody. It was pure hallucin-ation for them to rely upon a frail mortal. I therefore presented them with a simple and well tried formula that has never failed, namely to invoke the assistance of God every morning before sunrise and every evening before bedtime for the fulfilment of the

vows. Millions of Hindus know Him under the name of Rama. As a child I was taught to call upon Rama when I was seized with fear. I know many of my companions to whom *Ramanama* has been the greatest solace in the hour of their need. I presented it to the *Dharalas* and to the untouchables. I present it also to the reader whose vision is not blurred and whose faith is not damped by over-much learning. Learning takes us through many stages in life but it fails us utterly in the hour of danger and temptation. Then faith alone saves. *Ramanama* is not for those who tempt God in every way possible and ever expect it to save. It is for those who walk in the fear of God, who want to restrain themselves and cannot in spite of themselves.

THE MODEL SCHOOLS

To hearten those teachers and pupils who are frightened at the Congress definition of a national school or college, I would like to mention two schools whose teachers and pupils I met during these conferences. One is at Sunav, a village in Anand Taluka and the other at Varad in Bardoli Taluka. In both these schools all the boys are zealous spinners. In Varad the boys card their own cotton and make their own slivers. They are regularly giving some yarn to the All-India Khadi Board from month to month. I was able to have a long chat with the Sunav boys whom I found to be exceptionally intelligent. They knew why they were spinning. The contribution they gave for the sake of the poor, and they spun otherwise in order to be self-contained so far as their clothing was concerneded. I would invite the curious to visit these schools and find out for themselves how they are working. Their position was at stake when the Gujarat Vidyapith insisted on their taking untouchable boys. The teachers braved the storm. Some boys have left but the schools are flourishing. At Varad the parents who had withdrawn their boys on the admission of untouchables have now undertaken to send their children back to the national school. There need be no fear of national institutions suffering because of the definition of the Congress, if only the teachers and managers will combine firmness with gentleness, humility and toleration.

Young India, 22-1-1925

68. AN APPEAL

The reader will find something about *Kaliparaj* in my usual weekly notes. Many outside Gujarat may not know the meaning of

Kaliparaj. It literally means black people. The name seems to have been given to a portion of the people of Gujarat by those who regarded themselves as superior to them. So far as colour is concerned the *Kaliparaj* are no blacker than or different from the rest. But today they are down-trodden, helpless, superstitious and timid. Their great vice is drink. By far the largest number of them belong to the Baroda State.

It was among these people that a great awakening came three years ago. Thousands left off drink and even flesh-eating. This proved too much for the liquor dealers.Most of these were parsis. It is said that they tried all the means possible to induce the teetotallers to revert to drink and that they succeeded to a great extent. The officials, too, are said to have conspired against the reformers. And now, whether as a result of these efforts or otherwise, there has sprung up among these people a party who teach them to regard temperance as a sin and by ostracism and other means seek to break the spirit and the zeal of those who are battling against themselves and an evil habit handed down from generation to generation.

One of the resolutions passed at the meeting of which I have taken a fairly long notice elsewhere was to ask the States of Baroda, Dharampur and Vansda and also the British Government to close down all liquor shops. This is a big order, it will be said. The attempt of a whole nation to bring about total prohibition, it will be added, failed miserably. How then can the ineffective appeal of a handful of helpless men and women succeed? There is a great deal of force in the argument. And yet the two attempts stand on a different footing. The attempt of 1921 was directed against the British Government by non-co-operators who were bent on wresting power from the Government. It was moreover directed by those who had not themselves suffered from the existence of liquor shops. Now the appeal comes from those who have been a prey to the evil. It is an appeal from the powerless to the powerful. It is addressed to all the governments concerned and not merely to the British Government. These men are no non-co-operators. They do not know the difference between co-operation and non-co-operation. They slave for others unwillingly, almost unknowingly, and often under fear of oppression. They do not know what swaraj is. To them giving up drink and removal of the temptation in the shape of liquor shops is swaraj. Their appeal therefore is on humanitarian grounds and should prove irresistible.

As President, I am bound to give effect to their resolution addressed to the Governments concerned. The appeal to the British

Government can only be through the Legislators. It is open to the Councillors to forgo the liquor revenue even though they may have to run the risk of starving the education department. I invite them to see the people themselves and have an ocular demonstration of the evil that is corrupting a whole race of men and women. They must dare to do the right thing if they will save their countrymen.

It is different with the States of Baroda, Dharampur and Vansda. They can, if they will shut up the liquor shops and save their people and themselves from destruction. I use the pronoun "themselves" deliberately, because the destruction of a large body of people in small States means their own destruction. Will they not listen to the appeal of those who want to be helped against themselves?

And of the Parsi liquor dealers? I know that it is with them a question of livelihood. But they belong to one of the most enterprizing of races among men. They are resourceful and intelligent. They can easily find other honourable means of liveli-hood. Men and women have been known before now to give up questionable callings and take up work or professions conducive to the moral growth of society. I claim the right to speak to the Parsis, for I know and love them. Some of the best of my associates have been and are Parsis. They have done much for India. They have given Dadabhai[1] and Pherozeshah Mehta[2]. More is expected of those who do much. Let the Parsi liquor dealers commence by abstaining from interference (assuming the truth of the charge) with the reform.

Young India, 22-1-1925

69. LETTER TO FULCHAND SHAH

ON THE WAY TO DELHI,
Posh Vad 13 [*January 22, 1925*][3]

BHAI FULCHAND[4],

I have your letter. This time I shall certainly stay for a few hours

[1] Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917); the first Indian to be elected member of the British Parliament in 1893; President of the Indian National Congress thrice, in 1886, 1893 and 1906; author of *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India*

[2] 1845-1915; one of the founders of the Indian National Congress, its President in 1890

[3] The letter was written soon after Gandhiji's visit to Kathiawar in January 1925.

[4] An inmate of the Satyagraha Ashram; a political and constructive worker of Kathiawar

in Wadhwan City.

If what you write about Pattani Saheb is true, it is a sad thing. I heard such an allegation for the first time at Bhavnagar, but I paid no attention to it. But I cannot brush aside your writing. But I want to know from you if your knowledge is based on direct evidence. If you did not yourself see it, how did you know about it? What kind of adultery is it? I want to know this because I have had very high notions and favourable impressions about Pattaniji.

Your views that one should not stay at the house of such an adulterous officer or at a prince's place are not proper. How can we sit in judgment over others? You know that there are all sorts of allegations against many people at whose houses I put up. Some of these are true, I know. For this reason people go into the solitary forest and stay there. But so long as we want to remain in society, we cannot behave as you would wish.

I am not telling you all this from the practical point of view, but from the spiritual. It is our duty to stay wherever our host puts us up; but we may not stay with those who by putting us up with them seek our countenance for their immoral conduct.

But this is an exception. Suppose you or I have committed adultery in thought, don't we put up at one another's place?

In this world full of sin who is there so sinless that sitting on a high pedestal he can despise others? I do not give anyone testimonials such as you imagine. If a well-known courtesan plies the spinning-wheel, I would certainly praise her for doing so; but that would not mean that I gave her a certificate for chastity.

"God has made this world, both *jada*[1] and *chetana*[2], full of short-comings. Like the proverbial swan which separates milk from water and takes only the former, a good man accepts the good and rejects the evil."

Our duty is to recognize merit and sing its praises. The world is hardly likely to be deceived by testimonials. I certainly have not given any testimonial of purity to Pattaniji. But my mind was led to give it. It was at Trapaj[3], that I was pleasantly surprised to see his simplicity, his deep knowledge, his firmness, etc. In spite of all this, however, he

[1] Material or inconscient

[2] Conscient

[3] A village about 17 or 18 miles from Bhavnagar

may be impure. In that case, I must give up the feeling of respect that I came to have for his purity of character. Your letter will be useful to me for my future conduct. What has happened has been, I believe, quite proper. Even if I come to believe that he is an adulterer, when I go to Bhavnagar for public work, I shall put up at the State Guest House if he puts me up there. I shall stay even in his own house, if he lodges me there. I do believe to a certain extent about the immorality of the Prince of . . . . [1] But if he puts me up at his place, I would certainly stay there and I would not think that I was committing any sin. My non-co-operation is with sin, not the sinner; with Dyerism, not with Dyer.

I am afraid I have not been able to explain everything I wanted to. But try to understand this much. For the rest, you may come here and ask me personally. You may write and ask, if you like. The path of ahimsa is very difficult; it is sharper than the edge of a sword. There must be compassion in ahimsa. Tulsidas[2] considered himself to be the most sinful person. "Who is there so crooked, so wicked and so sensual as I? " sings Bhakta Surdas[3].

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 2826. Courtesy: Shardabehn Shah

70. LETTER TO REVASHANKER ZAVERI

Posh Vad 13 [*January 22, 1925*][4]

RESPECTED REVASHANKERBHAI[5] ,

As I have already told you, instead of writing a letter I sent a telegram to Prabhashanker[6]. After reading his letter I thought it proper to see Nanalal. He was of course to come to Bardoli but did not. Nevertheless, he came and saw me [here] yesterday. I, therefore, wired to Prabhashanker and to Doctor[7] also. I have written saying that

[1] Name omitted

[2] A 16th-century Hindi poet; author of *Ramacharitamanasa*

[3] A 16th-century poet of Krishna *bhakti* cult

[4] From the postmark

[5] A business man of Bombay and brother of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

[6] Father of Champa who was to be married to Dr. Mehta's son

[7] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta, Bar-at-law and jeweller who, from the days of Phoenix Settlement till his death in 1933, rendered financial help to Gandhiji in his activities

a sizable amount will be deposited in Chi. Champa's name. I have also written a letter to Prabhashanker.

Tulsi Maher[1] told me that carding is slightly laborious. Once the hand is accustomed, there is no labour at all. The [carding-] bow may be made smaller. If you card like the women of Andhra, there would be no difficulty.

Respects from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1263

71. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Paus Vad 13 [*January 22, 1925*][2]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter about the Maulana. It would have been as well if he had not delivered the speech he did. But he is a bad craftsman who finds fault with his tools. We have no duty except to see that our character is pure. If we can be sure of that we can be saved as Mirabai was and we can say like Janaka: "What does it matter to me if the city of Mithila burns?" How is Anand? Tell her I always think of her.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

My entourage is off to Delhi. Accompanying me are Shankerlal, Bharucha[3] and Mahadev. Neither Christodas nor Pyarelal will be accompanying me this time.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] An inmate of Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati

[2] From the postmark

[3] Barjorji Bharucha

72. SPEECH AT ALL-PARTY CONFERENCE COMMITTEE MEETING, DELHI

January 23, 1925

The All-Party Conference Committee convened[1] as the result of the discussions held at Bombay in November last met here last evening (Friday) at the Western Hostel, Raisina. Mr. Gandhi presided. A lively discussion took place on the proposal of Mr. Gandhi to appoint a sub-committee to suggest lines of agreement between Hindus and Mussalmans and among all the political parties and also to draw up a scheme of swaraj. Speeches were made by the representatives of the various communities and parties who explained their respective positions and the Conference eventually adjourned till Saturday afternoon.

The Conference was attended by a large number of members and also by several Indian members of the Central Legislature. . . .

Mr. Gandhi explained that the objects of the Conference were to explore the avenues of communal and political unity and formulate a scheme of swaraj. He suggested the appointment of a sub-committee to suggest the lines of an agreement. . . .

Mrs. Besant[2] thought it would be impertinent, nay, anarchical, on the part of the Conference suddenly to make new resolutions which might run counter to those passed by the Belgaum Congress and thereby unseat Mr. Gandhi from his presidentship.

Mr. Gandhi said his suggestion for a Committee did not go so far as Dr. Besant feared and that the suggestion was made to show that Congressmen were not hidebound to anything but the new franchise or the creed of the Congress. Those could not be lightly altered merely because the proposed sub-committee might come to certain conclusions. The Congressmen knew their mind and they would prosecute their programme but if the non-Congressmen joined the Congress and convinced them of the error of their ways and of the propriety of altering the creed or the franchise then they could undertake to call a special session of the Congress. Personally he did not think any alteration was called for. . . .

Mr. Gandhi, at the request of Mr. Dalvi, read the Liberal Federation's resolution that the Liberal Party would rejoin the Congress only, (1) if the object of the Congress, defined as Dominion Self-government, was to be attained by constitutional methods; (2) If non-co-operation and civil disobedience were

[1] *Vide* "Speech at All-Party Conference, Bombay", November 21, 1924.

[2] 1847-1933; Leader of the Theosophical movement; founded the Home Rule League in 1916; President, Indian National Congress, 1917

definitely abandoned as also the yarn franchise; and (3) if the Swaraj Party were not constituted as the only accredited representatives of the Congress in the legislatures.

Mr. Gandhi added that the suggestions from other political bodies were almost along the same lines. . . .

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-1-1925

73. DRAFT CONSTITUTION OF ALL-INDIA COW-PROTECTION SABHA[1]

[*January 24, 1925*][2]

ALL-INDIA COW-PROTECTION SABHA

OBJECT

Whereas the Hindus have failed in cow-protection which is an obligation imposed on them by their religion, and whereas the cows in India and their progeny are deteriorating day by day:

The All-India Cow-protection Sabha is formed for the proper fulfilment of the religious obligation of cow-protection.

The object of the Sabha shall be to protect the cow and her progeny by all moral means.

"Cow-protection" shall mean the protection of the cow and her progeny from cruelty and slaughter.

Note: It will be against the fundamental policy of the Sabha to bring physical force or pressure to bear on those communities whose religion does not prohibit, or regard as obligatory, cow-slaughter.

MEANS

The Sabha shall carry on its work by the following means:

1. By pleading with those who may be ill-treating cows, bullocks, etc., and by carrying on propaganda against such ill-treatment by means of leaflets, lectures, etc.;

2. By taking charge of diseased and disabled cows and oxen from their owners wherever the latter cannot afford to maintain them;

3. By superintending and inspecting the administration of

[1] Prepared by Gandhiji; *vide* Mahadev Desai's :"Delhi Letter" in *Navajivan*, 8-2-1925.

[2] *Vide* "All India Cow-protection Sabha", 15-3-1925 and "Cow-protection", 9-4-1925.

existing *pinjarapoles*[1] and cow-protection institutions, and by helping in their better organization and management, as also by establishing fresh institutions;

4. By breeding model cows and draught cattle by means of cattle farms, etc., and by providing clean and cheap milk through properly kept dairies;

5. By opening tanneries for tanning hides of dead cattle and thereby stopping or reducing the export abroad of disabled cattle;

6. By enlisting men of character and education in the cause, and founding scholarships, etc., for training them in the work;

7. By holding an inquiry into the causes of the disappearance of grazing lands and into the advantages or disadvantages thereof;

8. By investigating into the necessity or otherwise of the practice of castrating bulls, and if found necessary and useful, investigating into the possibilities of discovering a harmless method of castration or a wholesome modification in the present method;

9. By collecting funds; and

10. By taking whatever other steps may be necessary for the work of cow-protection.

MEMBERSHIP

Any person of the age of eighteen years, who subscribes to the object of the Sabha, and

1. who pays to the Sabha an annual subscription of five rupees; or

2. who gives to the Sabha enough time and labour to enable him or her to spin and send 2,000 yards per month of even and well spun yarn to the Sabha; or

3. who devotes one hour daily to any work that may be prescribed by the Sabha

shall be a member of the Sabha.

Note: In respect of (2), slivers, if necessary, will be supplied by the Sabha.

ADMINISTRATION

The members of the Sabha shall annually elect their president by a majority vote and he shall nominate the secretary and the treasurer.

[1] Institutions for the care of disabled and useless cattle

A Working Committee consisting of not less than five members of the Sabha shall be elected annually at a general meeting to be convened by the president.

The treasurer shall be responsible for the accounts of all the receipts and disbursements, all amounts exceeding one thousand rupees to be kept deposited in a bank of his approval.

Young India, 9-4-1925

74. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

DELHI,
Saturday [*January 24, 1925*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter concerning the *Chronicle*. I discussed the matter with Motilalji here yesterday. In my opinion, it would be better if Belgaumwala does not get involved in it. We certainly do not wish to oppose the Swarajists. The spinning-wheel has very little need of the Press. That has always been my experience. The spinning-wheel reaches where the newspapers do not reach. Its reach will extend still farther. I would advise Belgaumwala, Jamnalalji, etc., to use their money and intelligence only for the spinning work. We shall take only as much help from the Swarajists as they can give

Show this letter to Belgaumwala.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
93 BAZAR GATE STREET
FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

75. SPEECH AT ALL-PARTY CONFERENCE COMMITTEE MEETING, DELHI

January 24, 1925

The Committee of All-Party Conference resumed its session last [January 24] evening and after important speeches delivered by representative spokesmen

[1] The postmark bears the date January 26, 1925. The Saturday preceding this date fell on January 24.

including Mr. Jinnah[1], Lala Lajpat Rai[2], and Dr. Annie Besant, a fully representative sub-committee[3] consisting of over forty members was appointed. . . .

Gandhiji, who presided, thought that if the meeting could arrive at a satisfactory, real and honourable solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem and Brahmin and non-Brahmin problem, etc., they would have made a very substantial advance towards swaraj. If the meeting could find a scheme which would commend itself to all parties, they would have taken a very long step towards swaraj. If the representatives present at [that] meeting could see eye to eye on [those] main questions, there would be no difficulty in parties uniting on the Congress platform and making a unanimous demand in the name of the nation. . . .

Mr. Jinnah in urging an early decision gave expression to his surmise that Government would let the Assembly discuss the Reforms Enquiry Committee's Report in February. As much had been made of Hindu-Muslim differences in connection with the work of the Committee, he wanted to tell Government when the time for discussion of the Report came that Hindu-Muslim differences had been made up and they stood united in their demands.

Mahatma Gandhi replied that Mr. Jinnah's purpose would be served by the publication of the sub-committee's report. The sub-committee would soon sit to work from day to day till it finished its labours and prepared a report. . . .

The Hindustan Times, 27-1-1925

76. MY NOTES

KATHIAWAR

Shri Bharucha, who is at present working in Kathiawar, writes to say that he goes around with Devchandbhai every day and collects cotton from different places. As many as 186 spinning members have

[1] M. A. Jinnah (1876-1948); a leader of the Muslim League; founder and first Governor-General of Pakistan

[2] 1865-1928; Congress leader from the Punjab and a social reformer; founder of the Servants of the People Society; President, Indian National Congress, 1920

[3] The task of the sub-committee was to "(a) frame such recommendations as would enable all the parties to join the Congress; (b) to frame a scheme for the representation of all the communities, races and sub-divisions on the legislative and other elective bodies under swaraj and recommend the best method of securing just and proper representation of the communities in the services with due regard to efficiency and (c) to frame a scheme of swaraj that will meet the present needs of the country." It had the instruction to submit the report on or before February 15. *The Bombay Chronicle*, 26-1-1925

already been enrolled and more are being enrolled. There is scope for getting much good work done provided the enthusiasm can be fully canalized. Proper arrangements should be made for supplying slivers, for sending spinning-wheels wherever they are required and for training those who lack a proper knowledge of spinning.

I should warn the workers in kathiawar that I shall be returning there on the 15th of February. I shall expect a great deal to have been achieved in the meantime. Even now, I am imagining the spectacle which will confront me in Rajkot. I wrote in the *Navajivan* a few months ago about the complaint by a Kutchi gentleman that there was no khadi in Rajkot. Will I face the same situation on 15th February?

CORRECT ACCOUNTING

We are collecting cotton instead of money. Hence the system of maintaining accounts is bound to differ. If accounts are maintained after due thought from the beginning, it will facilitate matters greatly in the future. Arrangements have to be made for collecting cotton, stocking it properly and incurring expenses for the various processes through which it has to pass. Moreover, some will hand in yarn spun from their own cotton, while some others will hand in yarn spun from cotton given to them by the Conference. Hence, two sets of accounts will have to be maintained. Then again, the accounts for the yarn that is used should be separate. The account books will multiply in this manner. This work can be done only with patience, forethought and understanding.

SPINNING-WHEELS WORTH A HUNDRED RUPEES

A gentleman raises the question whether those taluks which allow the contribution of two thousand yards of yarn spun by others should be entitled to the above prize. Although it may not have been clearly stated, the prize is only for those who do their own spinning. The khadi-lover's intention is not to reward that taluk which excels in recruiting members who get their yarn spun by others. I hope that there will be keen competition for this prize. The amount of Rs.100 is no consideration. It is the prize that is important, not its value. Even Borsad, if it takes it upon itself, can, by making the maximum effort, recruit five thousand members.

"KHEDUTS' "[1] CONFERENCE

I have the courage to use the word *Khedut* as the organizers in

[1] Cultivators

Sojitra have spoken of the *Patidars* as *Kheduts*. The custom of discarding old names as contemptible and coining new ones is not worthy of emulation. There is no merit in being called a *Patidar*. *Khedut* is both a sweet and a good name.

It could be said that the *Patidars* of Sojitra became *Kheduts* for at least two days. This is because they took upon themselves the burden of providing the necessary help for the Conference. A *Khedut* is always a labourer. He is great by virtue of his labour. *Patidars*, both great and small, served in Sojitra and thereby added to their own dignity. The workers themselves put up the *pandal*[1] for the Conference. It was apparent that expenses had been reduced to the minimum. Some members shared among themselves the responsibility of providing meals for the guests, delegates and others. In this manner things were better organized and the reception committee was spared that expense. The work of the Conference was facilitated since it was given all necessary facilities by the Baroda Government.

THE PRESIDENT

Dr. Sumant Mehta too looked like a *Khedut*. Waerever one looked, one saw nothing but work and service. The speeches both of the chairman of the reception committee and of Dr. Sumant Mehta were brief. They did not read out the whole of them and saved the time of the Conference by reading out only some parts.

" DHARALAS"

Along with this *Patidar* Conference, separate conferences of *Dharalas*, women and untouchables were also organized. As these had been arranged one after the other, those who wished to attend them all could easily do so. *Dharalas* have now come to regard themselves as *Baraiya* Kshatriyas. If, however, I may advise them, I would ask them to stick to the name *Dharala* and sanctify it. No purpose is served by changing a name. Status is not gained by assuming the name but only by acting in a manner befitting the Kshatriyas.

Having made this criticism, I have nothing but praise for the Conference. The *pandal* was overflowing with *Dharalas*; yet, in spite of the numbers, they maintained perfect silence. The resolutions too only dealt with reforms amongst them. The evil customs of taking liquor, forcibly carrying away women and selling brides have been prevalent among them from ancient times; the Conference passed a

[1] Covered enclosure

resolution to give up all the three practices.

It is also the Kshatriyas' dharma to abide by his pledge. The superior kind of "*apalayanam*"[1] consists in ignoring any kind of internal or external danger, and abiding by one's resolve. Courage lies not in wielding the sword but in the strength of one's determination.

WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

The number who attended the women's conference at Sojitra exceeded all estimates. One finds that most *Patidar* women observe *purdah*. In spite of this, the Conference pavilion was filled with women. The attendance was enough justification for the Conference. No resolution seemed to be necessary. It should be a matter of satisfaction that they listened attentively to speeches on the spinning-wheel. If a resolution had been proposed hands would have been raised but it was all unnecessary.

"ANTYAJAS"

The Conference of the *Antyajas* was held in the very same place. The organizers deserve to be congratulated on their courage in permitting this Conference to be held in the same *pandal*. It is a good sign that even though untouchability is not yet entirely abandoned by the *Patidars*, the Conference was held under the same roof. Many who were not untouchables attended the Conference. This Conference took the pledge to give up liquor, to ply the spinning-wheel and to wear khadi. Each word in the pledge had been explained to the men and women. Of the latter a large number was present. They had brought incense with them. I was misled by the smoke I saw. I presumed that they were smoking *bidis*[2]. However, I was immediately informed that the smoke rose from the incense. There was an expression of joy on the faces of these men and women in the *pandal*.

"KALIPARAJ"

Although the Conferences held at Sojitra were good in their own way, the Conference of *Kaliparaj* left on me a deeper impression. Underlying the former were commonsense, simplicity, economy and skill. All this was also there in the *Kaliparaj* Conference, but in addition it was artistic. I cried out unwittingly: "I have seen many conferences, but in point of unstudied beauty, I have not seen one like this." I see no exaggeration in these words. It seemed as if nature

[1] Not taking to one's heels in a battle

[2] Country cigarettes

herself had invisibly arranged everything. In my opinion, true art consists in learning from nature without struggling against it. I could be said of Vedchhi village where this Conference was held that it comprises little more than a few wells and a few houses. The *Kaliparaj* however do not live in houses or villages but in their grass huts and fields. The population of Vedchhi could not be more than three or four hundred people. However, as compared to the cluster of grass-huts of the *Kaliparaj*, the cluster of houses in Vedchhi could be said to be fairly decent. In view of this, the Conference was arranged at Vedchhi. Ordinarily a field is chosen as the site of the Conference. Our artists looked around and chose a spot which was filled with natural beauty. A river named Valmiki flows near Vedchhi. It dances along between rows of hills adorned by trees. The organizers of the Conference chose this spot. The main rostrum was placed in the flowing water and, just as branches spring out of a tree, the seats for the delegates were arranged in front of the main rostrum. As it was winter, and, moreover, as the water was cool, this artistic expert argued that not only did the delegates did not require any shade but the afternoon sun at 2.00 p.m. would be welcome to them, hence the golden sky provided the dome of the pavilion and the river sand, the seats. As this river flows on one side of a hill, the bank stretching from the opposite row of hills to the edge of the river is dry. There is no mud on the river bank but only sand. Hence no artificial adornment or carpets and such other things were needed. The canopy above the rostrum was made of bamboos and green leaves. A broad pathway led right up to the rostrum. Bamboos had been used for this purpose too and creepers of the arum plant had been entwined on the path. The first step leading to the rostrum was made of a sack filled with sand. There was not a single picture here and not a single strand of cotton was used for decorative purposes. One need not add that even decorations made of yarn cannot enhance the beauty of such a spot. Yarn is man-made and is in place in a house. Where the sky is the ceiling and sand the ground, only trees and leaves harmonize with the scene. Moreover, one who loves yarn would not waste it. On the contrary, he would store up even a yard of yarn or a wad of cotton.

EXHIBITION

A little distance away from the site of the Conference but still on the banks of the river and at the foot of the row of hills, an exhibition of spinning-wheels and khadi had been arranged. Old men and women as well as children, both boys and girls ranging from six or

seven to ten years of age, were plying some fifty spinning-wheels. This arrangement too had been well conceived. The youths had become volunteers. Some of the Khadi had been spun, woven and dyed by the people of *Kaliparaj* themselves. The rest of the coarse khadi had been sent by the Gujarat Khadi Bhandar. Along with the exhibition, the special flute of *Kaliparaj* was being played, and there were pictures of a few prominent leaders and some literature. Little had been spent on all these arrangements. The red and yellow buntings, etc., made of thin foreign paper which are usually conspicuous in *pandals* could not be seen even if one searched for them. Decorations made of such paper show neither taste nor discrimination. It is like trading one's sleep for sleeplessness. Whenever I see such paper decorations, I am pained at this outrage on art. Even Sojitra could not rise above this.

TIED BY YARN

The *Kaliparaj* is well tied up by yarn. They themselves grow cotton. The people are poor and simple, they wear foreign cloth. However, they have not developed a liking for it. If khadi is available at low price, they would certainly wear it. As the sari worn by the women is short, with the lower hem tucked into the waistband, it weighs less. Hence, the spinning-wheel and the propaganda for khadi seem to be popular among these people. A sixty-year old peasant, even though he looks after his field, regularly spins till late at night and at dawn. He had his own clothes made out of the yarn and he wishes to give what remains to his children. In this manner the goal is for one family after another to spin and weave for themselves. When I asked this old man the reason for his spinning, he replied that it was in order to save money. He saved Rs.10/- which was his annual expense on clothes.

DRINKING LIQUOR

Kaliparaj means black people. They are not so called because they are darker than those belonging to other castes. Those belonging to the higher castes, however, showed contempt for them; hence the name. Today they are in a very pitiable plight. Timidity, superstition and addiction to drink are ruining them. In spite of the fact that they live in jungles, they are afraid of everyone and everything. Drinking liquor is their greatest failing. Toddy or liquor is ruining the community. There has been some reform since they too joined in the awakening of 1921, yet much remains to be done. Liquor has taken

such hold of them that many regard drinking as something meritorious! When the agitation for prohibition started, a section arose which took upon itself the task of breaking up this movement and began harassing those advocating prohibition. It is said that the Parsi owners of liquor shops were behind this. If *Kaliparaj* gave up liquor for good, that trade would come to a standstill and the owners of liquor shops would suffer. Looking as it from this standpoint it is difficult to blame the owners. However, I believe that I have a right to address them too. I am a great admirer of the Parsi community. I am closely associated with many Parsis. I have great respect for that community. Hence the owners of liquor shops will not misunderstand me. Many persons, we know, had given up a trade which is harmful to others. These gentlemen are enterprizing and resourceful. It is not as if they cannot take to another trade if they give up this one. Whether they go to this extent or not, I hope that they do not join hands with the advocates of liquor in order to keep their business going.

PLEDGE

This Conference took two pledges after much thinking. The first one regarding the giving up of liquor and the other regarding the wearing of khadi and spinning of yarn. The pledges have been taken with God as witness. Despite this, they will succeed only if volunteers keep working ceaselessly.

" RAMANAMA"

Yet God's mercy works where man's efforts produce no result. Hence I have requested the *Dharalas*, the *Antyajas* and the *Kaliparaj* to chant the name of Rama. They should wake up in the morning before sunrise, brush their teeth, rinse their mouths and pray to God asking Him to help them in the fulfilment of their pledges, and they should chant the name of Rama. The same should be repeated before going to bed at night. My faith in *Ramanama* streches back over many years. It has proved a panacea for some friends. It has saved them from many mental anxieties. One who cannot articulate properly, one who cannot remember the *Dvadasha Mantra*[1], one who finds it difficult to pronounce the word *Ishwara*[2], even for such a person, chanting the name of "Rama" is easy. I believe that whoever chants that name with faith is well protected. May *Ramanama* bring

[1] Formula of 12 syllables, *Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya*
[2] God

good results to these men and women.

THE DUTY OF BARDOLI

I have just returned from Bardoli taluk. I was reminded of past events and past promises. I was unhappy but, being an optimist, I was not disheartened. Hence I have returned with renewed hopes regarding Bardoli.

Bardoli could do anything if it wished to. The *Patidars* of that place are far-sighted. Many of them have gone as far as South Africa and undergone sufferings. The taluk is financially well off. Excellent cotton is grown there. A great deal of effort has been put into this taluk. Volunteers from other parts of Gujarat have gone and settled down there. Ashramas have been built. Money donated by the late Parsi Rustomji has been spent there. Bardoli is famous throughout the country.

What will the *Patidars* of such a place do? If they choose to do so, they can introduce the spinning-wheel in each home, spin their own cotton, wear clothes woven out of it and boycott foreign cloth. This task is child's play for Bardoli.

Kunvarjibhai and Laxmidasbhai have taken the first step. They have both entered into a pact under which one provides the cotton and the other gets it woven. They have made this division of labour. Kunvarjibhai has pledged himself to collect 2,000 maunds of cotton, Laxmidasbhai to get it spun. If this succeeds, Bardoli would shortly become self-sufficient in cloth. May God make Bardoli famous.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-1-1925

77. LETTER TO A GERMAN

January 25, 1925

The one condition for fighting for peace and liberty is to acquire self-restraint. To do that, it is necessary to give up the pleasure of the world.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

78. SILENCE DAY NOTE[1]

January 26, 1925

True, there is cow-protection to some extent in Gujarat, but then Kathiawar is an exception. Nonetheless, there too, when there is a famine, cattle are abandoned. I have seldom been satisfied with our treatment of cattle, whereas in Europe you will hardly find any ground for dissatisfaction. In Arabia the horse is almost worshipped and is religiously taken care of. I do not know why we in India are so heartless towards the cow. The cattle in Europe are simply wonderful.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

79 . LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

DELHI

Maha Sud 3 [*January 27, 1925*][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL[3],

The demand I made in my postcard must be satisfied by someone or other. It is proper that those who give cotton get the yarn. Make suitable arrangements for this. Primarily it should be so arranged that the cotton is obtained from the district itself.

I have had satisfactory talks with Chi. Radha. She is firm in her resolve. However, it is desirable that we are also on the look-out.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall be in Delhi a few days more.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6092. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] This is in reply to Mahadev Desai's criticism of Gandhiji's speech at the Cow-protection Conference.

[2] In 1925, *Maha Sud* 3 fell on January 27. Also, Gandhiji was in Delhi at this time in connection with the meeting of the All-Party Conference Committee.

[3] Second son of Khushalchand Gandhi, Gandhiji's cousin; assisted Gandhiji in his activities and experiments in South Africa and India; manager of Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati

80. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Maha Sud 3 [*January 27, 1925*][1]

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI[2],

A letter from you, after so many days.

I do not have absolute trust in anybody; it is, however, our duty to trust all our fellow-beings. Do we not expect to be trusted by others? When both the parties are in the wrong, it is very difficult to apportion blame. I have decided upon the only way out of this—to treat the wicked equally well with the virtuous.

I may have to stay in Delhi for three or four days more. Speaking from the practical point of view, I am not exactly satisfied with the present state of things; spiritually, I am content with doing my duty.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

[PS.]

Since Dr. Ansari's[3] wife is unwell I am putting up with Sulta[n] Singhji.

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6102. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

81. INTERVIEW TO PRESS

DELHI,
[*January 27,1925*][4]

In view of the forthcoming debate on the Bengal Ordinance[5] in the Assembly our representative asked Mahatma Gandhi as to his opinion on the Bengal

[1] From the contents, it is evident that the letter was written in 1925.

[2] b.1894; Business magnate and philanthropist; chairman, Harijan Sevak Sangh

[3] Dr. M. A. Ansari (1880-1936); Physician; President, Indian National Congress, 1927.

[4] From the datelines in the reports published in *The Bombay Chronicle* and *The Searchlight*, this interview is presumed to have been given on January 27.

[5] Promulgated to enable the Government to arrest and keep in jail anyone without trial.

Ordinance and inquired whether in view of Lord Lytton's speech[1] before the Bengal Council and the Viceroy's speech[2] in the Assembly he had altered his opinion. Mahatma Gandhi said he had seen nothing to change his opinion.

On the contrary, he held that both the speeches were irrelevant to the issue before the nation, because he held that the powers taken under the Ordinance should not be granted except on an extraordinary occasion and then never without the sanction of the duly elected representatives of the people. In matters where the questions of life and death were concerned and where the liberty of the subject was involved the opinions of functionaries, however highly placed they may be, were of no consequence.

In fact, Mahatma Gandhi went further and said:

India had been used to such emphatic declarations before now. Did not Sir M. O'Dwyer[3] and even Lord Chelmsford[4] practically swear that treason and conspiracy were rampant in the Punjab, and did not Sir M. O'Dwyer claim to be able to prove the existence of general rebellion in the Punjab? We knew now that there was very little warrant for these statements.

Mahatma Gandhi, therefore, was glad that so far at any rate as the Ordinance was concerned Indian opinion was unanimous in condemnation and hoped that the agitation against it would grow in strength day after day such that it would become irresistible.

The Bombay Chronicle, 28-1-1925

[1] In a speech delivered in the Bengal Legislative Council on January 7 on the Bengal Ordinance Amendment Bill, Lord Lytton, the Governor of Bengal, had said:

"The only justification for a Bill of this kind is that the welfare of the State as a whole is in danger, that the danger cannot be averted by any other means. . . . Your swaraj government , when it comes, will never have a chance of success if you only admit the right of those who disapprove of it to threaten the murder of those who are responsible for it. . . . If you will persuade these men to sink their weapons in the Hooghly and to abandon terrorism once for all as a political method, we will promise you our whole-hearted co-operation in providing them with other and better ways of serving this country". *The Indian Quarterly Register-1925,* Vol.I, January-June

[2] Speaking in the Legislative Assembly on January 20, on the Bengal Ordinance Amendment Bill, Lord Reading had justified the promulgation of the Ordinance in order to cope with the terrorist movement in Bengal and the danger from the widespread secret societies. The progress of the movement, he said, involved loss of life among officials as well as innocent citizens and the ordinary law even when enforced by Regulation III had been ineffective in dealing with these crimes. *The Indian Quarterly Register-1925,* Vol. I, January-June

[3] Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, 1913-19

[4] 1868-1933; Viceroy of India, 1916-21

82. INTERROGATORIES ANSWERED

During last month I had a hearty discussion with an English friend who takes deep interest in matters Indian and who is anxious to serve India to the best of his ability. He asked me whether I would publish the gist of our conversation. I readily agreed but asked him to jot down the points he raised which he gladly did. I do not disclose the friend's name as the name does not matter. It is my views that matter because they are exciting some interest at the present moment. If I am a friend of Englishmen, as I claim to be, I must patiently answer all the doubts that may arise in their minds. The English friend put the questions not all on his own behalf but mostly on behalf of those Englishmen who had originally raised them.

Here are the questions with answers.

What is the real purpose of your insistence upon the khaddar programme as a means of obtaining swaraj?

I am interested in the attainment of swaraj only by non-violent and truthful means. This is possible only through a diligent and successful prosecution of the khaddar programme. Swaraj can be peacefully attained only if the whole Indian mass work as with one will, be it on ever so little a constructive and useful thing for ever so little a time. Such an effort presupposes national consciousness. This is possible only through the spinning-wheel. It is not remunerative enough for individuals. It is therefore not enough incentive for an individual selfishly inclined. It is however enough to raise at a bound the national prosperity in an appreciable manner. An increase of one rupee per head per year may mean nothing to the individual. But Rs. 5,000/- in a village containing a population of as many would mean the payment of land revenue or other dues. Thus the spinning-wheel means national consciousness and a contribution by every individual to a definite constructive national work. If India can demonstrate her capacity for such an achievement by voluntary effort she is ready for political swaraj. Any lawful demand of a nation with a will of its own must prove irresistible. I have hitherto said nothing of the immense economic value of the wheel and its product khaddar. For it is obvious. The economic prosperity of India must indirectly affect the course of her political history—even using the word "political" in its narrow sense. Lastly, when the exploitation of India by Lancashire ceases by reason of the ability of India through the wheel to clothe

herself and consequently to exclude foreign cloth and therefore also Lancashire cloth, England will have lost the feverish anxiety at any cost to hold India under subjection.

This means revolutionizing the national taste? Do you expect to persuade your countrymen to give up the use of foreign cloth?

I do. After all I am asking for very little. Millions are indifferent as to what they wear. They merely look to the cheapness of the articles they buy. It is the middle class whose taste has to be revised. I do not think that the substitution of foreign cloth by khaddar is an impossible task for them. Moreover it should be remembered that nowadays it is possible for khaddar to suit a large variety of tastes. And improvement in fineness is making steady progress. I am therefore of opinion that if any constructive work is capable of success, it is the khaddar programme.

What do you mean by swaraj and what are its limitations, if any?

By swaraj I mean the Government of India by the consent of the people ascertained by the vote of the largest number of the adult population, male or female, native-born or domiciled who have contributed by manual labour to the service of the State and who have taken the trouble of having their names registered as voters. This Government should be quite consistent with the British connection on absolutely honourable and equal terms. Personally I have not despaired of the substitution for the present servile condition of equal partnership or association. But I would not for one moment hesitate to countenance or bring about complete severance if it became necessary, i.e., if the connection impeded India's full growth.

To what extent are you committed to the programme and methods of the Swaraj Party?

I am personally committed neither to the programme nor to the methods of the Swaraj Party. As a Congressman I recognize its undoubted influence in the country and therefore its right to represent the Congress—a right which it now enjoys by arrangement but which it otherwise might have secured by a party vote.

What are the relations between you and the leaders of that party?

They are of a most cordial character. I give them the same credit for patriotic service and sacrifice that I would like to claim for myself.

It has been stated that you have surrendered to Mr. Das?

The statment is true in the sense that I have avoided a quarrel among Congressmen. But it is not true if it is intended to convey the meaning that I have surrendered an iota of my principles.

Was not your attitude on the Saha resolution[1] different from the one you have now adopted?

Not in the least. At the time of the Saha resolution I was opposing an internal error. At the present moment I am resisting external oppression based on erroneous assumptions. Moreover, my attempt then to secure consistency of conduct and control of the Congress executive by one party must not be confused with my action on the Saha resolution. The two things were totally different and were not even inter-related. As soon as I discovered that the attempt to secure unity of control led to bad blood, I retraced my steps and declared complete surrender to the Swaraj Party.

It has been stated that you have lost your moral authority by your surrender—?

Moral authority is never retained by any attempt to hold on to it. It comes without seeking and is retained without effort. I am not conscious of loss of moral authority, for I am utterly unconscious of being guilty of any single act compromising my moral conduct. What I have undoubtedly lost is the intellectual co-operation of a large number of educated men in my presentation of the means of attaining swaraj, e. g., the spinning-wheel.

Why do you insist upon non-co-operation while every one of the activities has failed? What is the purpose in speaking of its suspension?

I do not insist now. But I do not admit that every one of the activities has failed. On the contrary, every activity of non-co-operation succeeded to an extent. I can speak only of its suspension because to me non-co-operation is a vital principle of life and because in my opinion it had done India and, if you will, the world an amount of good of which, at present, we have not adequate conception and also because, if I found an atmosphere of substantial non-violence and real co-operation among the people and if the end remained still unattained, I should not hesitate to advise its resumption by the nation.

How do you propose to solve the Hindu-Muslim problem?

By constantly insisting upon both the communities cultivating

[1] Passed by the Bengal Provincial Conference, paying homage to the "patriotism" of Gopinath Saha who had murdered Ernest Day; *vide* "Interview to *The Times of India*", June 5, 1924.

mutual respect and trust and by insisting upon Hindus surrendering out of strength to the Mussalman in every mundane matter and by showing that those who claim to be nationalists and are in an overwhelming majority should stand out in any unseemly competition for legislative or administrative control. I hope also to achieve the end by demonstrating that real swaraj will come not by the acquisition of authority by a few but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when it is abused. In other words; swaraj is to be attained by educating the masses to a sense of their capacity to regulate and control authority.

What is your own real attitude towards the English and your hope about England?

My attitude towards the English is one of utter friendliness and respect. I claim to be their friend, because it is contrary to my nature to distrust a single human being or to believe that any nation on earth is incapable of redemption. I have respect for Englishmen, because I recognise their bravery, their spirit of sacrifice for what they believe to be good for themselves, their cohesion and their powers of vast organization. My hope about them is that they will at no distant date retrace their steps, revise their policy of exploitation of undisciplined and ill-organized races and give tangible proof that India is an equal friend and partner in the British Commonwealth to come. Whether such as event will ever come to pass will largely depend upon our own conduct. That is to say I have hope of England because I have hope of India. We will not for ever remain disorganised and imitative. Beneath the present disorganization, demoralization and lack of initiative I can discover organization, moral strength and initiative forming themselves. A time is coming when England will be glad of India's friendship and India will disdain to reject the proffered hand because it has once despoiled her. I know that I have nothing to offer in proof of my hope. It is based on an immutable faith. And it is a poor faith that is based on proof commonly [so] called.

Young India, 29-1-1925

83. NOTES

HOW NOT TO DO IT

Jamiet-al-Tabligh Islam has favoured me with the following translation of a resolution recently passed by it:

> Resolved that the responsibility for the entire series of deplorable events which took place during the recent disturbances at Kohat[1] and which resulted in great loss of life and property to the residents of that place, lies with the person or persons who published at Kohat the offensive and provoking pamphlet which contained vile attacks on Islam and deeply wounded the religious feelings of Mussalmans. The Hindus who fired shots and killed Mussalmans are also responsible for aggravating the delicate situation still further. This Jamiet expresses sympathy with all those residents of Kohat, irrespective of creed and caste, who suffered loss of life or property in the course of these disturbances. As a religious society, this Jamiet feels bound to point out to Mahatma Gandhi and other political leaders that unless scurrilous attacks, in writing or by speech, on religion and founders and leaders of religious movements are absolutely stopped, the creation and maintenance of Hindu-Muslim unity in India will always be found impossible.

I am unable to congratulate the Jamiet on its resolution. It seems that both the parties have made up their minds on the main fact although no impartial inquiry has yet been held. Is it an established fact that the responsibility for "the entire series of deplorable events" lies with "the person or persons who published at Kohat the offensive and provoking pamphlet"? Is it also an established fact that "the Hindus who fired shots and killed Mussalmans are also responsible for aggravating the delicate situation still further"? If the two facts above mentioned are clearly established the Hindus at least are not entitled to any sympathy which the Jamiet shows for the loss in life and property suffered by them. For they have reaped what they have sown. The Jamiet is therefore inconsistent in showing sympathy to the Hindus. And what is the point in the Jamiet telling me and other political leaders that "unless scurrilous attacks on religion and founders of religious movements are absolutely stopped the creation and

[1] As a result of strained relations between the Hindu and the Mussalman communities, riots had broken out on the 9th and 10th September, 1924, in the city of Kohat in the North-West Frontier Province.

maintenance of Hindu-Muslim unity in India will always be found impossible"? If what the Jamiet contends is true, is not the impossibility of unity a fact for the Jamiet to note as well as the political leaders? And must Hindu-Muslim unity be impossible because some person delivers attacks on religion? According to the Jamiet one insane Hindu or one insane Mussalman is enough to make Hindu-Muslim unity impossible. Fortunately Hindu-Muslim unity does not finally depend upon religious or political leaders. It depends upon the enlightened selfishness of the masses belonging to both the communities. They cannot be misled for all time. But I hope that the original resolution of the Jamiet does not read as bad as the translation before me.

IAN AZL-I- USSAIN[1]

A correspondent asks me to give my impressions of the interview I had with Mian Fazl-i-Hussain during my last visit to Lahore. I gladly comply. I had a very pleasant time with the Mian Saheb. His manners were most charming. He was reasonable and plausible in his conversation. He protested against the charge of partiality brought against him by Hindus. He said that he was trying to do tardy justice and that too in an incomplete manner to the Mussalmans. He was accessible to all and was anxious to explain his own position to anybody who cared to study the question. More than this, no man had a right to expect. Whether as a matter of fact there is anything to be said against the Mian Saheb's policy, I do not know. I have not been able to study the question on either side. When I am able to do so I shall gladly publish my opinion of Mian Fazl-i-Hussain's claim that he has done less than justice to the Mussalmans. Sufficient in the meantime for me to feel that in Mian Fazl-i-Hussain one has a gentleman, calm, cool, dignified and reasonable to deal with.

UR ELPLESSNESS

Orders are pouring in at the Ashram at Sabarmati for spinning-wheels, spindles, slivers, etc. If we were well-organized, such helplessness should be impossible. Time was when every village carpenter could make a spinning-wheel. Today city carpenters often do not know what a spinning-wheel is like, and they equally often refuse to make one from a model. Similarly, whereas formerly every carder knew how to make slivers, today they shrug their shoulders or

[1] A Muslim leader; member of the Viceroy's Executive Council

want to charge exorbitant prices. But the success of hand-spinning depends upon our resourcefulness and upon the co-operation of the artisans of India. No single institution can meet the growing demand for the wheel and its accessories. Fortunately things are improving but not as fast as they ought. Those who are in need should make a desperate effort to get these things made in their own cities or districts before ordering things from the Ashram. No doubt it is better to get them even from the Ashram than wait for an indefinite period of time for them. So far as slivers are concerned, I agree with Mr. K. Santhanam[1] who showed in his admirable essay that every spinner should make his own slivers. Carding with a small bow is an incredibly simple and easy performance. It is learnt much more quickly than spinning. And good carding invariably adds to the output of yarn and facilitates its evenness. For those who spin for wages carding adds to their earnings. There are carders all over India who can make a full living out of carding. A good carder can earn twelve annas per day—not so a good spinner. Every Congress Committee worth the name must have a depot for making and supplying wheels and the accessories.

N ASE F ISAPPROPRIATION

An Andhra friend writes:

> Many people are taking undue advantage and not paying the amounts due to Congress Committees and Khaddar Boards knowing it for certain that they would not proceed against them in British courts. This of course amounts to misappropriation and cheating if not worse. In view of what you have written already regarding misappropriation of funds, and now the removal of ban on courts, I am quite sure that the Congress Committees can proceed in courts under these circumstances.

I have already given my opinion in such cases. I have no doubt that even when the boycott of courts was on foot it was the duty of Congress Committees to proceed against fraudulent and defaulting debtors. The boycott was not meant for the Congress to commit suicide. It presupposed honesty on the part of those who dealt with the Congress.

A. I. K. B.' ESOLUTIONS

I invite the attention of all concerned to the following

[1] b. 1895; Lawyer, journalist and politician; then Secretary, Tamil Nad Congress Khaddar Board

resolutions of the A.I.K.B. regarding the working of the Congress Franchise:

In view of the Congress having made hand-spinning part of the franchise and in order to enable the provincial Committees to receive facilities in the matter, the All-India Khadi Board resolves that it will be prepared to give the following assistance directly as well as through the Provincial Khadi Boards.

1. The Board will be prepared to supply cotton to any province where cotton is not easily available.

2. The Board will be prepared to consider applications for cotton loans on terms to be arranged.

3. This Board advises the Provincial Khadi Boards to render every possible assistance to enable members to get models for making good charkhas and carding-bows and supply all necessary accessories as also to assist in the matter of getting carded slivers until members make their own arrangements.

4. The Board will, so far as possible, arrange for experts to give the necessary tuition in carding, spinning, etc., under arrangements to be made with the Board.

5. The Board will be prepared to buy yarn from any provincial Congress Committee at bazaar rates or to get it woven for the Committees.

6. The Board will be prepared, if so desired, to supply hand-spun yarn at reasonable rates in connection with the yarn required for satisfying the franchise.

7. The Board warns individuals and committees against buying hand-spun yarn from the bazaar for the purpose of the yarn franchise as the bazaar yarn is likely to be mill yarn or spun from mill slivers and not to be even and well-twisted. (It is possible only for experts to distinguish between mill-spun and hand-spun yarn or to say when yarn is well-twisted; even experts will be unable to say when hand-spun yarn is spun from mill-made slivers.)

8. Lastly, the Board will be prepared to give any further information or help to individuals or committees which it is in its power to give.

Time is running against us. I hope therefore that the Provincial Committees are organizing themselves under the new franchise. Properly worked, its possibilities are immense. But the working requires attention to the minutest details. And when once the organization is in working order, it must grow from day to day in geometrical progression and make the Congress a self-supporting, wealth-producing institution.

Young India, 29-1-1925

84. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

DELHI,
January 29, 1925

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS[1],

The enclosed is for Pyarelal[2]. I hope you are not worrying about me. I am receiving all the attention I need. Mahadev[3] is not overworked. Deen Dayal has found himself with me again. He has taken over personal attendance and freed Mahadev for the most part for personal correspondance[4]. Private negotiations are now going on for a settlement of the Hindu-Muslim problem. It is difficult to forecast the result. We are here till at least 31st. I hope you are getting stronger daily. It is very cold here and I am glad you are not here. Mr. Andrews is here and will be for two days longer. Tell Kikibehn[5] I was glad to hear that she was taking a regular tailoring class at the Ashram. It distracts her attention and will do[6] good, if she does not overwork herself.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5598

85. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

DELHI,
Maha Sud 5 [*January 29, 1925*][7]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Avantikabehn has been ill, so I have written to her that she should go to the Ashram. As she has neither answered nor acknowledged the letter, she may not have received it. Please find out and let

[1] Gandhiji's secretary
[2] Pyarelal Nayyar, Gandhiji's secretary, author of *Mahatma Gandhi*: *The Last Phase*
[3] Mahadev Desai, (1892-1942); Gandhiji's secretary for 25 years
[4] The source has "personal attendance".
[5] Sister of J. B. Kripalani
[6] The source has "go".
[7] From the postmark

me know. I have to be in Delhi at least for the next two days. Let us see what happens after that.

Anand will be all right now.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Avantikabehn's letter has arrived.

CHI. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
93 BAZAR GATE STREET
FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

86. TELEGRAM TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

January 31, 1925

TO
DR MEHTA
GOLDGOD
RANGOON

EIGHTH MARCH WOULD BE MY SILENT DAY AND I AM KATHIAWAR DURING THAT WEEK. WILL TWENTY- SIXTH FEBRUARY DO? AM PRACTICALLY ABSENT UP TO 22ND FEBRUARY.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S. N. 2456

87. A SHAME

A friend from Tanganyika writes:[1]

It is likely that the picture is completely true. I have personally observed such things happening in the Portuguese territory, i.e., in Delagoa Bay. The Muslims there have opened an orphanage for their children and thus made some provision for them. Hindus hand over their children to the care of Muslims. All these children are brought up as Muslims. This is one way out. I, however, do not approve of this

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent has described the plight of children born to Negro women secretly married to Hindus who afterwards abandoned them and left for India.

solution. To my mind, the action of both deserves condemnation. In the first place, it is wrong to treat a union of this kind as a marriage. I, for one, regard it merely as a means of sensual gratification. Moral restrictions tend to become lax in a foreign country, since the fear of social opinion disappears. But there is a difference of degree between the guilt of the two parties. The Muslims accept and rear the children of love and bring them up in their faith. If the provision made by the Muslims were not available for the children of the Hindus, the latter would simply starve to death. Since the children are the fruit of mere sensual gratification, their Hindu fathers do not care in what religious faith they are brought up. In my view, a man so blinded by lust has forsaken his religion. It is difficult for me to regard anyone who obeys no moral principle in his conduct to be a religious man. For purposes of census persons born into a certain religion may be regarded as belonging to that religion, but really speaking they have renounced religion. There is nothing apart from conduct which may be defined as religion. It is not the one who repeats the Gayatri mantra[1] every day or studies the Vedas that truly belongs to the Vedic religion, but the one who lives according to the teachings of the Vedas is a true follower of the Vedic religion. Some Christians make a deep study of the Vedas and other scriptures, but that along does not render them true followers of the Vedic religion. In other words, those who recite the Gayatri and other mantras hypocritically or because they are ruled by superstition, are not followers of the Vedas. Their claim of belonging to any religion can be accepted only if they understand the teachings of that religion and follow them in practice to the best of their ability. Judged from this point of view, the Hindus of Tanganyika should be considered to have forsaken their religion.

This is only an abstract solution. In practice, these Hindu or Muslim fathers are regarded as Hindus or Muslims, as the case may be, and so we should find a solution which will work in practice. The Hindu fathers should convert such union into regular marriage and take their children under their loving care and make necessary provision for their education, etc. This is a solution to the problem of the children already born. In future, however, everyone intending to go and live in a foreign country should take his family along with him. For those children, however, whose fathers are altogether heartless, there is no other solution except opening orphanages. Such

[1] Prayer to sun-god

orphanages should best be opened in the countries in question. We may assume that the mothers of the children will stay with them in the orphanages. These mothers had sacrificed themselves to earn their livelihood. They are, however, not aware of the sinful aspect of their conduct. For, though Negroes have the institution of marriage among them, it is not considered immoral for a woman to offer her body for money. Such women, nevertheless, do feel the mother's love in their heart. We should tend it and encourage them to do their duty as mothers. In these pitiable cases, the child's mother-tongue is different from its father-tongue. Which language should it be taught? The father generally feels little attachment for his children born in this manner and so the latter learn the mother's language. Hence, those in charge of the orphanages should teach these children their mother-tongue. If they are taught both the [father's and the mother's] languages, they will be better equipped to earn their livelihood in future.

The problem of their religion is more intriguing. It does not arise, as we have seen, as far as the Muslim fathers are concerned. But it is the general rule that the children of a Hindu father should be treated as Hindus. I have no doubt in my mind that, following this rule, the children of Hindu fathers should receive instruction in Hindu religion. The children themselves are helpless in this matter. They will assimilate the atmosphere in the orphanages where they are brought up. If these are run by men imbued with a religious spirit, they can instil it in the children.

I hope that the Hindus living in Tanganyika and such other territories will think and consider what their duty is, and do it. Their first duty is to overcome their lust. This refers to the future. To bring up properly the children already born, to provide for their religious instruction and in every way to do their duty as fathers—this is their duty at all times. Those who can should take their wives with them. A man should judge a woman's condition by his own. If a man cannot endure separation for a long time, neither can a woman. That men and women married at a proper age should not remain separated for a long time needs no proof. In not remaining so lies the guarantee of the purity of their character.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-2-1925

88. MY NOTES

WORTHY OF EMULATION

I reproduce the following relevant extract from a reader's letter from Palitana: [1]

What a great advance in reform can be brought about if other [public] servants emulate this example! Through such work one serves both the Ruler and the people, and one's own interest as well. This couple will, by and by, have all their cotton and woollen garments made from yarn and wool spun by themselves. We have noted that among the *Kaliparaj* tribals the annual expenditure on clothes amounts to Rs. 10 for every person. The expenditure in the family of this correspondent must be even higher. He will save considerably on that expenditure and, in the bargain, will have acquired a skill, earned the blessings of the poor and learnt something about the varieties of cotton and wool and how to improve their quality. At this time when spinning and allied activities are making good progress in Kathiawar, I wish that officials of all grades who come into frequent contacts with the public in the course of their work should teach the people, as this correspondent does, to spin and do other work relating to khadi. This friend wants a portable spinning-wheel which can be carried on horse-back. Others, too, are likely to ask for such a wheel. But the right solution is that people in every village should have spinning-wheels in their homes. Whether in Kathiawar or elsewhere, there ought to be no village without at least one spinning-wheel. If in a village there is none, arrangements must be made to instal them, so that officials can borrow them and do their spinning. If all the people take up spinning, there should be in the central meeting place in every village two or three spinning-wheels which may be used by the *patels*[2] as also by the poor people and the officials on their visits. Meanwhile, however, the idea of having a portable spinning-wheel which can be carried on horse-back is an excellent one.

KHADI STORE

I frequently receive letters about the closure of the khadi store

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent, who was an employee in the Palitana State service, had said that he and his wife devoted their spare time to spinning cotton and wool and that the State authorities, far from objecting to his activities, encouraged him.

[2] Village headmen

run by the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee. One such letter is lying before me just now. I notice from it that there is some misunderstanding about this matter. I have never advised that the Provincial Committee should run no khadi store. What indeed I have suggested is that a khadi store which runs at a great loss or in which the loss is increasing, instead of diminishing, should be closed down, and that buying khadi for a store from outside Gujarat should be stopped. This advice is inspired by nothing else but a careful calculation and some knowledge of economics. I cannot, even in my dream, wish ill of other provinces and well to Gujarat. It is, however, of the very essence of the principle of swadeshi that one should serve one's neighbours first. This principle is violated when wheat from the south is preferred to the wheat produced in Gujarat and the procedure, therefore, is detrimental to Gujarat, to the south and to the whole country. The philosophy of khadi had its origin in this principle.

Let us now examine the aims we hope to serve through khadi. The first is that it will revive Indian villages. This can happen only when every village produces its own khadi. This in its turn is possible only if every province produces its own khadi and uses what it produces.

The second aim behind khadi is to bring about a boycott of foreign cloth through it. This can be achieved only if India manufactures all the cloth its population requires. If Indians demand cloth similar to the foreign product, India cannot meet that demand. Indians, therefore, should accustom themselves to wear, with pleasure, such cloth as the country produces. If all the people insist on wearing only khadi manufactured in Andhra, Andhra cannot meet all that demand and the boycott of foreign cloth can never be achieved. Every province, therefore, should try to produce fine khadi. For the same reason, every province should produce its own khadi. As a general rule it is observed that, so long as there is no demand for a commodity, no effort is made to produce it.

This certainly does not mean that no one should wear or order Andhra khadi. My only point is that the Congress at any rate should always adopt the ideal course. If it wishes, the public will adopt the second best course. If, because the ideal course is difficult, even the Congress does not adopt it, no one else is likely to do, and without such efforts success is impossible.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-2-1925

89. SHORTAGE OF SPINNING-WHEELS

I notice that spinning has now spread considerably and, in consequence, there is a great demand for supply of spinning-wheels by the Ashram. The latter cannot provide all the spinning-wheels demanded. Nor can the movement progress in this manner. Each province, each district, each taluk and, finally, each village should be able to boast of a carpenter who can make spinning-wheels. The spindle-holders are now made of string or coir. The benefits of the spinning-wheel movement are not confined to the spinners and weavers. It provides work to carpenters and blacksmiths, too. There will be no section of society which will not share in the benefits.

NEED FOR VOLUNTEERS

It is but natural that at this time when a determined effort is made to spread the khadi movement in Maha Gujarat we should require a large number of volunteers. We need both part-time volunteers and full-time volunteers. It is essential that every volunteer should know all the processes connected with spinning. Any persons who wish to offer their services as such volunteers may send their names to me, so that as and when the need arises their services may be utilized. This request for names is not addressed to those who are already working some-where or other. I invite, however, the names of persons who are able and willing to serve but who have had no opportunity till now. Those who send their names should also give particulars of their age, aptitude for work, etc.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-2-1925

90. TELEGRAM TO GOKALDAS THAKER

February 1, 1925

TO

THAKERS[1] GOKALDAS

MORVI

CONVEY ONE OTHER EARLIER DATE. ACCORDING[LY] JOSHI AMRITLAL NEED NOT WAIT.

MOHANDAS

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

91. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

DELHI,

Maha Sud 8 [*February 1, 1925*][2]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. I am trying to get a better charkha for you. While at the charkha, one can repeat *Ramanama* as well. There is the case of two learned men who saved themselves from [an attack of] madness only by repeating *Ramanama* while plying the charkha. Ultimately, things happen to us according to our aspirations.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C. W. 6103. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

92. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Maha Sud 9 [*February 2, 1925*][3]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Please read the enclosed letter carefully and watch out for the steamer mentioned in it. Meet the person whose name has been given in the letter. You have only to tell him that his mother has written to me. If he intends to see me, he may come to the Ashram. Buy his ticket if he has no money. It is possible that being a sailor he may not

[1] Presumably a slip for Thaker

[2] From the reference to the charkha, it is clear that the letter belongs to 1925. Gandhiji was in Delhi on February 1, 1925.

[3] The letter is placed among the letters of 1925. *Maha Sud 9* in 1925 corresponded to February 2. Gandhiji, however, left for Rawalpindi on February 3.

be relieved. In this regard you have to accept whatever happens. Maybe it is necessary for him to obtain permission for living in India. Please see to all this. You can consult me if you want to ask anything more. I shall reach the Ashram on the 10th. I am very glad to read that Mother is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

We are going to Rawalpindi today. Preserve this letter and send it back to me.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

93. LETTER TO ABDUL KADIR BAWAZEER

DELHI,
February 2, 1925

BHAI IMAM SAHEB,

Chi. Chhaganlal writes that you are ill. Remember that we have no right to fall ill. It is our duty to keep our body healthy. I hope Amina and Qureshi are well and looking after you.

Here talks are going on, but one cannot say what the result will be. Tomorrow I may go to Rawalpindi. I hope to be there[1] on the 10th.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

BHAI IMAM SAHEB
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10784. Courtesy: Ghulam Rasul Qureshi

[1] At Ahmedabad

94. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Maha Sud 11 [*February 4, 1925*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Vithalbhai[2] is not giving the lunch. I had asked you to follow the instructions of the Party. You need not go for the lunch. I shall explain further later.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

93 BAZAR GATE STREET

FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

95. PERTINENT QUESTIONS

I printed sometime ago a thoughtful letter[3] from Bengal on the question of untouchability. The writer is still pursuing his diligent search. Now I have a similar search from a Madras correspondent in the form of questions. It is a healthy sign that the orthodox Hindus are moved to an inquiry into this thorny question. There is no denying the earnestness of the framer of the questions. They are typical because there is hardly one among the long list that has not been put to me in my rambles. In the hope, therefore, that my answers may guide the path of the correspondent who claims to be a worker and an earnest seeker, and such other workers and seekers, I make an attempt to solve the many riddles presented by my correspondent.

1. What are the practical steps to be taken to remove untouchability?

(a) To open to untouchables all public schools, temples and roads that are open to non-Brahmins and are not exclusively devoted to any particular caste.

(b) For caste Hindus to open schools for their children, to dig wells

[1] The postmark bears the date February 6, 1925, in which year *Maha Sud 11* corresponded to February 4.

[2] Vithalbhai Patel

[3] *Vide* "Can Untouchability be Defended?", December 5, 1924.

for them where they are in need and to render them all personal service that they may need, e.g., to carry on temperance and hygienic reform among them and to provide them with medical aid.

2. What would be the religious status of the untouchables when the ban of untouchability is completely removed?

The religious status would be the same as that of the caste Hindus. They will therefore be classed as Sudras instead of *Atisudras*.[1]

3. What would be the relation between the untouchable and the high-caste orthodox, Brahmin, when untouchability is removed?

The same as with non-Brahmin Hindus.

4. Do you advocate inter-mingling of castes?

I would abolish all castes and would keep the four divisions.

5. Why should not the untouchables build temples for their own worship, without interfering with the existing temples?

The "higher" castes have not left them much capacity for such enterprise. It is the wrong way of looking at the question to say that they interfere with our temples. We, the so-called higher caste men, have to do our duty by admitting them to the temples common to all Hindus.

6. Are you an advocate of communal representation, and do you hold that the untouchables must have representation in all administrative bodies?

I am not. But if the untouchables are purposely shut out by the influential classes, it would be an improper exclusion barring the road to swaraj. My disapproval of communal representation does not mean exclusion of any community from representation but, on the contrary, it lays the burden on the represented communities to see to the proper representation of the unrepresented or inadequately represented communities.

7. Are you a believer in the efficacy of *varnashrama dharma*?

Yes. But there is today a travesty of *varna*, no trace of *ashram* and a misrepresentation of dharma. The whole system needs to be revised and brought in unison with the latest discoveries in the field of religion.

8. Don't you believe that India is *Karmabhumi*, and that everybody born here is endowed with wealth and intelligence, social status and religious aspirations

[1] *Antyajas*

according to his good or ill deeds in his previous birth?

Not in the sense the correspondent means. For everybody everywhere reaps as he sows. But India is essentially *karmabhumi* (land of duty) in contradistinction to *bhogabhumi* (land of enjoyment).

9. Is not education and reform among the untouchables a primary condition to be fulfilled are one can begin to talk of the removal of untouchability?

There can be no reform or education among the untouchables without the removal of untouchability.

10. Is it not natural, and just as it should be, that non-drunkards avoid drunkards, and that vegetarians avoid non-vegetarians?

Not necessarily. A teetotaller would regard it as his duty to associate with his drunkard brother for the purpose of weaning him from the evil habit. So may a vegetarian seek out a non-vegetarian.

11. Is it not true that a pure man (in the sense that he is a teetotaller, and vegetarian) easily becomes an impure man (in the sense that he becomes a drunkard, and non-vegetarian) when he is made to single with men who drink, and kill, and eat animals?

A man who being unconscious of the wrong, drinks wine and eats flesh foods, is not necessarily an impure man. But I can understand the possibility of evil resulting from one being made to mingle with a corrupt person. In our case, however, there is no case of *making* anyone associate with untouchables.

12. Is it not owing to the above fact that a certain class of orthodox Brahmins do not mingle with the other castes (including the untouchables), but constitute themselves into a separate class, and live together or their spiritual uplift?

It must be a poor spirituality that requires to be locked up in a safe. Moreover, days are gone when men used to guard their virtue by permanent isolation.

13. Would you not be interfering with the religions and caste-system (*varnashrama dharma*) of India, whatever may be the bad or good points of the above systems and religions, if you advocate the removal of untouchability?

How do I interfere with anything or anybody by mere advocacy of a reform? Interference there would be, if I were to advocate removal of untouchability by the use of force against those who retain untouchability.

14. Would you not be guilty of doing *himsa*[1] to the orthodox Brahmins, if you

[1] Violence

interefere with their religious beliefs without convincing them in the first instance?

I cannot be guilty of *himsa* to the orthodox Brahmins as I do not interfere with their religious belief except through conviction.

15. Are not the Brahmins guilty of untouchability, when they do not touch, dine with or marry the various other castes leaving along the untouchables?

Brahmins are guilty of the sin if they refuse to "touch" the other castes.

16. Does it satisfy the hunger of the untouchable when he is made to parade Brahmin *agraharams*[1] in the exercise of his right as a man?

Man does not live by bread alone. Many prefer self-respect to food.

17. Does not satyagraha in this direction lead to violence, seeing that the untouchables are not so well educated as to understand the full doctrine of non-violence non-co-operation, and also seeing that the Brahmin cares more for his religion than or politics?

If reference is to Vykom, experience shows that the "untouchable" has shown amazing self-restraint. The latter part of the question suggests the possibility of violence by the Brahmins concerned. I should be sorry if *they* resort to violence. They would then have shown, in my opinion, not regard for religion but ignorance of and contempt for religion.

18. Do you advocate that all should become equal, without any distinction of caste, race, creed or avocation?

Such should be the case in the eye of the law in the matter of elementary human rights, even as, irrespective of caste, race, creed or colour, we have certain things in common, e.g., hunger, thirst, etc.

19. Would that supreme philosophical truth be of any use in the field of practical politics, to the average *grihastha* or householder, seeing that only great souls, who have come to the end of their cycle of karma, could realize are practise that supreme philosophical truth, and not the ordinary *grihastha*, who has only to follow what the *rishis*[2] have ordained, and in that following, get discipline which consequently leads to release from birth and death?

Not much "supreme philosophical truth" is involved in the recognition of the simple truth that no human being is to be regarded as untouchable by reason of his birth. The truth is so simple that it is

[1] Streets occupied by Brahmins

[2] Sages

recognized all over the world except by orthodox Hindus. I have questioned the statement that the *rishis* taught the doctrine of untouchability as we practise it.

Young India, 5-2-1925

96. ON ANOTHER'S LAND

A friend says :

> You ask us at every turn to yield to Mussalmans, you ask us to resort to law-courts on any account. Have you fully considered the consequences of what you are saying? Have you taken into the account human nature? What are we to do when mosques are being put up on our ground without our permission? What are we to do when unscrupulous men bring suits against us for monies we do not owe or when they actually rob us of our possessions. In giving your answers you must take our poor selves into consideration. You dare not say you do not know us. Or if you give your *fatwas*[1] in utter obliviousness of us, you must not blame us if we do not respond to your counsels of perfection. Let me tell you that you are sometimes impossible.

I sympathize with the friends who talk to me in this strain. I am prepared to recognize the limitations of human nature for the very simple reason that I recognise my own. But precisely as recognizing my own limitations, I do not decieve myself by refusing to distignuish between what I ought to do and what I fail to do. I must not deceive others by refusing to notice the same distinction and telling them that what they propose to do is not only perhaps defensible but also right. Many things are impossible and yet are the only things right. A reformer's business is to make the impossible possible by giving an ocular demonstration of the possibility in his own conduct. Whoever thought it possible before Edison to speak to people hundreds of miles away from us. Marconi went a step further and made wireless communication possible. We are daily witnessing the phenomenon of the impossible of yesterday becoming the possible of today. As in physical science so in psychological.

Now for the concrete questions. The question of mosques built on another's land without his permission is incredibly simple. If A is in possession of his land and someone comes to build some things on it, be it even a mosque. A has the right at the first opportunity of

[1] Decrees of Muslim divines.

pulling down the structure. Any building of the shape of a mosque is not a mos-que. A building to be a mosque must be duly consecrated. A building put up on another's land without his permission is a pure robbery. Robbery cannot be consecrated. If A has not the will or the capacity to destroy the building miscalled mosque, he has the right of going to a law court to have the building pulled down. Law-courts are forbidden to convinced non-co-operators but not to those who require such conviction. Moreover, full non-co-operation we have never practised. A practice has a flaw in it when it is not only inconvenient but clearly defeats the end it was desi-gned to serve. So long as I own property I must defend it whether by the force of law-courts or by the force of my own strong arms. The act is in essence the same. Our national non-co-operation is or was with a system. It presupposed co-operation among ourselves in a general way. But when we non-co-operate among ourselves, national non-co-operation is a mira-ge. Individual non-co-operation is possible when we own not a clod of earth. It is possible only for *sannyasin*. The highest fulfilment of religi-on therefore requires a giving up of all possession. Having ascertained the law of our being, we must set about reducing it to practice to the extent of our capacity and no further. That is the middle way. When a robber comes to take away A's property he can deliver the property to him, if he recognizes in him a blood brother. If he does not feel like one but dreads the robber and would wish that someone was near to knock him down, he must try to knock him down and take the consequence. If he has the desire but not the ability to fight the robber, he must allow himself to be robbed and then call in the assistance of law-courts to regain the lost property. In both the cases he has as good a chance of losing his property as of regaining it. If he is a sane man like me, he would reach with me the conclusion that to be really happy he must not own anything or own things only so long as his neighbours permit him. In the last resort we live not by our physical strength but by sufferance. Hence the necessity of uttermost humility and absolute reliance on God. This is living by soul-force. This is highest self-expression.

Let us bear the law in mind not as an academic and attractive proposition when it is written on paper but as the law of our being to be continually realized and let us fashion our practice in accordance with the law *and* the measure of our ability to live up to it.

Young India, 5-2-1925

97. WELL DONE

The Secretary, Taluka Congress Committee, Haliyal, Karwar, writes:

> Our Municipality here has a congress majority. We are therefore trying to carry out the Congress programme through it. Spinning has been made compulsory in the municipal schools. Municipal employees have khaddar costumes given to them. Primary education of the children of depressed classes has been made free and compulsory. Their children sit side by side with other children. They are permitted to make use of the common tank. We have no Hindu-Muslim or Brahmin-non-Brahmin differences. We are organizing a temperance campaign.

This is all good and substantial work. I congratulate the Haliyal Taluka Congress Committee on its solid constructive work and wish that other will follow them.

Young India , 5-2-1925

98. NOTES

TOWARDS UNITY

The All-Party Committee met to consider the questions referred to it by the Conference. It appointed a sub-committee of nearly fifty to consider the question. The sub-committee appointed a smaller committee to consider all possible swaraj schemes and report to the sub-committee the results of its deliberations. Dr. Besant is labouring at this smaller committee with her usual application and energy which put to shame younger men and women. But naturally the attention centred round the Hindu-Muslim problem; not that it is intrinsically more important except for individuals like me but because it blocks all progress towards swaraj. The sub-committee proved too formal for the task. It was necessary to avoid the reserve and the stiffness even of a committee and to be absolutely informal and to have a still smaller number of persons. This was done and a few of each community met at Hakim Saheb's house. The result has been succinctly given to the Press by Pandit Motilalji Nehru. I agree that there is no cause for anxiety or disappointment. For all want a solution. Some want it at once, some regard the time not to be seasonable, some would sacrifice everything to get a solution, others would be cautious and would wait till they have secured what to them is an indispensable minimum. But all agreed that a solution of the problem was essential to swaraj. And

as all want swaraj, a solution must not be beyond the reach of those who are engaged in finding it. The prospect was never so bright as when we parted to meet again on 28th February. Meanwhile everyone is to explore fresh avenues to a settlement.

The public will want to know my view of communal representation. I am opposed to it with all my heart but I would agree to anything so long as it ensures peace and is honourable to both the parties. In the absence of agreement on the plans suggested by either party I have presented a solution which might answer the purpose . But I need not discuss it at the present stage. I hope that the responsible members of both the communities will leave no stone unturned whether by means of private, quiet talks or by means of a public expression of their opinions. I hope too that newspapermen will write nothing to irritate any party but will observe discreet silence where they cannot usefully assist.

INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The Viceregal answer to the Deputation that waited on His Excellency was sympathetic but non-committal. It betrays unnecessary consideration for the difficulties of the Union Government. It is just for one Government to appreciate the difficulties of another but the performance might easily be overdone. The Union Government observed no delicacy when it had to make its choice. The Indian Government has had many an occasion to make such a choice. Each time, except once, it has surrendered. The exception was made by Lord Hardinge[1] who hurled defiance at the Government of South Africa and ranged himself on the side of Indians in South Africa. There were reasons for it. The Indians were fighting by direct action. The method was new. They had proved their capacity for resistance and suffering and yet they were demonstrably and wholly non-violent. But at the present moment Indians of South Africa are leaderless. With Sorabji[2], Kachalia[3], P.K.Naidu[4] and now Rustomji gone, they do not know what they should do or can do. There is ample scope for nonviolent action. But it requires thinking out and

[1] Viceroy of India, 1910-16

[2] Sorabji Shapurji Adajania; Parsi public worker and passive resister who suffered imprisonment and deportation during the satyagraha campaign in South Africa

[3] A. M. Cachalia, Chairman, Transvaal, British Indian Association

[4] Secretary of the British Indian Association, Transvaal

vigorous working out. That seems hardly possible at the present moment. I have, however, great hope of one or two young men who are resident in South Africa. Not the least among them in Sorabji, the brave son of the brave Rustomji. Young Sorabji is himself a seasoned soldier in satyagraha. He has been to prison. He organized the wonderful receptions that were given in Natal to Sarojini Devi[1]. Let our countrymen in South Africa realize that they must work out their own salvation. Even heaven helps only those who help themselves. They will find that if they show their original grit and spirit and sacrifice, they will have the people of India, the Government of India and the world helping and fighting for them.

There is a passage in the Viceregal pronouncement which needs supplementing. His Excellency says,

> It is stated in your address that "the Municipal Franchise was solemnly assured to Indians by the Natal Government when in 1896 Indians were deprived of the Parliamentary Franchise." But you have not indicated the exact source or the nature of the assurance. My Government are making the necessary enquiries to verify the position.

The statement made by the Deputation is substantially correct. It was, however, not in 1896 but probably in 1894 that the assurance was given. I am writing from memory. The facts are these. It was in 1894 that the first disfranchising bill was passed by the Natal Assembly. Whilst it was passing through that assembly a petition was presented to it on behalf of Indians wherein it was stated that the Indians enjoyed in India the Municipal and indirectly even the political franchise. Fear was also expressed that the deprivation of the political franchise was likely to be a prelude to that of the Municipal Franchise. It was in answer to this petition that the late Sir John Robinson, the Premier of Natal, and the late Mr. Escombe, the Attorney General, gave the assurance that there was no intention to go further and deprive the Indians of the Municipal Franchise at a future date. The disfranchising bill was disallowed by the superior Government but another non-racial in character was passed. The assurance referred to by me was several times repeated by Mr. Escombe who had charge of all the bills and who was virtually the dictator of Natal's policy whilst

[1] Sarojini Naidu (1879-1949), poet, patriot, congress leader and a close associate of Gandhiji. She visited South Africa in 1924.

he was in office.

IS A SWARAJIST A CONGRESSMAN?

I have before me a curious letter in which the writer says, a distinction is being made by Congressmen in Sind between Swarajists and Congressmen, and the former are obstructed by the latter. I should have hoped that such a thing would be impossible after the Belgaum Congress which recognizes the Swaraj Party as an integral party of the Congress and which suspends the non-co-operation programme. Every Swarajist who subscribes to the Congress creed and conforms to the new franchise is as much a Congressman as the one who is not a Swarajist, that is to say, who does not believe in Council-entry. Let it be also remembered that the Swaraj Party has itself altered its constitution to make it obligatory on every member of that party to accept the Congress franchise. There should therefore not only be no obstruction by one of the other but each should help the other wherever the help is not inconsistent with one's conscience.

FROM VYKOM

The following from the Satyagraha Ashram at Vykom cannot fail to be of general interest.

> I hope you have got our telegram about the spinning competition. Two volunteers took 578 yards and 508 yds., each yarn being of 8 counts. Our weaving is not up to the mark now since some of the boys who knew weaving have left the Ashram on leave. We have, according to the directions of Vinobaji,[1] reduced our number to barely fifty. But this has proved troublesome since the climate here is very bad and many of the resident volunteers become incapacitated to offer satyagraha for six hours. So it has become necessary to go in for some ten to fifteen volunteers more, so that we have to keep a permanent strength of 60 volunteers. I hope you will agree that this is necessary.
>
> Of the 24 hours 8 hours for sleep, 6 hours for satyagraha, 2 hours for spinning, 1 hour for HIndi, 2 hours for Ashram work (sweeping, washing, etc.), 2 hours for meals, bath, and other bodily wants, 1 hour for reading-room and 2 hours for daily prayer and meetings in which usually some good subjects are dealt with either by me or by some of the prominent guests who usually attend the Ashram.
>
> Our treasurer is now exerting himself for building a school in memory of

[1] Acharya Vinoba Bhave (b.1895); Gandhiji's greatest disciple; founder, Bhoodan and Gramdan movements; author of *Talks on the Gita*, etc..

the satyagraha campaign under orders from Sri Narayana Guru.[1] All of us are anxiously waiting for your coming here. It has become almost an obsession with most people here to consider what they should do to expedite your coming. I hope that God will grant you the health and time to proceed here shortly.

The scrupulous care with which things are being managed by the Vykom satyagrahis is the surest assurance of success. It may seemingly take long, but it is my deliberate conviction that it is none the less the quickest way. It is the only true way. The fight against untouchability is a religious fight. It is a fight for the recognition of human dignity. It is a fight for a mighty reform in Hinduism. It is a fight against the entrenched citadels of orthodoxy. Victory which is a certainly is worth the patience and the sacrifice, the band of devoted young Hindus is giving to it. The process of waiting is a process of self-purification for the young men engaged in the fight. If they persist they will be ranked among the makers of India of the future.

As for the satyagrahis longing that I should go to Vykom I can only give them the assurance that I am longing to be with them. I am looking for a chance. But the choice becomes difficult when there are so many calls upon my time. My heart and my prayers are with them; who knows that they are not more than my bodily presence in their midst.

BEWARE

The Ganjam District Congress Committee has sent me a postcard from a dealer asking for quotations for hanks of 2,000 yards of yarn for the purpose of sale on the market. It is not possible to object to such an open trade. But those who do not want to spin but want to buy yarn and to give it as their subscription, should beware of buying yarn in the bazaar. They should try to get their quota spun in their own families. If that be not possible they should engage a reliable spinner and get him to supply the yarn. The Akola Congre-ssmen who do not want to spin themselves have solved their difficulty by getting Mr. Mashruwala[2] who is an enthusiastic believer in hand-spinning to supply them with the required quantity. This ensures the kind and the quality of yarn. No province should import hand-spun yarn from

[1] Spiritual leader of the untouchables

[2] Kishorelal Mashruwala; constructive worker and associate of Gandhiji; editor of Gandhiji's weekly, *Harijan*, author of *Gandhi and Marx*

another province.

WASTE OF YARN

A friend from Kumbakonam writes:

> Perhaps you are aware of a custom, now prevalent in the country, to honour political leaders with hand-spun yarn garlands. Such garlands are invariably used on every political occasion and I may add that an enormous quantity of hand-spun yarn is wasted since none takes care of it. As an example of such waste, I have sent per separate post, a parcel of yarn which I was able to pick up at the Tamil Nadu Khilafat Conference held recently at Kumbakonam under the Presidency of Maulana Shaukat Ali[1]. But for my interest in the yarn 960 yards of yarn would have gone to waste. I am sure that at the said Conference alone, much larger quantity of yarn had been wasted. Hence I would like to suggest to you to instruct our countrymen through *Young India* to prepare garlands in hanks of uniform length, say 2,000 yards, so that at every meeting garlands of 2,000 yards may be collected and utilized according as the garlanded leaders propose.

I can endorse the correspondent's complaint as to waste. It is a good custom to present leaders with yarn garlands but they should be prettily made and not much yarn should be used in them. If the idea be to present yarn to leaders and not to garland them, the correspondent's suggestion should be adopted and uniform size hanks should be given. For, if the habit of presenting yarn garlands becomes universal and care is not taken, there might be an enormous waste of good yarn which might otherwise have been utilized for making cheap khaddar for poor people.

"HABITUAL WEARING"

A Bengal school teacher writes:

> I am a teacher of a national school. The resolution about national schools passed at Belgaum has given rise to considerable stir amongst the teachers and students of national schools. Some are trying to interpret the resolution as it suits their own interest. The words "habitual wearing of khaddar by students" is being interpreted by some as not meaning compulsory wearing and hence they say that those, who are attending school without khadi on, need not be debarred. All that the teachers should do is always to ask them to put on khadi and gradually initiate them into wearing it. They say, even if they have to wait indefinitely to see their students clad in khadi they can continue calling their

[1] 1873-1938; Muslim politician who along with his brother Mahomed Ali took a leading part in the Khilafat movement

institutions "national" without transgressing the resolution of Belgaum. They say, even if 60 p.c. of the students come to school with mill cloth they can claim to call their schools national if only the school teachers continued teaching the utility and propriety of using khaddar, hoping that they would take to it in due course which may be six months, one year or even more.

In our opinion the resolution does not admit of this interpretation. It means that the schools should not tolerate anybody's coming to school without khaddar but in cases of emergency or helplessness resulting from unavoidable causes over which one has no control a student may be allowed to join school on rare occasions. We think the resolution debars everybody from attending who systematically comes to school without khaddar. We have been trying to run the institutions in our area on this line.

I therefore appeal to you to write to me, and in the pages of *Young India* if you think it necessary, the real meaning and sense of the resolution in clear unequivocal language so that your idea about the point may be known to all concerned.

I have no doubt about the meaning of the word "habitual". My correspondent's meaning is the only possible meaning. A school cannot be called national, in terms of the Congress resolu- tion, whose scholars do not wear khaddar as a rule. But in seek- ing to know the meaning of words, the safest rule is "go to the dictionary". Here is the meaning given in the Concise Oxford Dictio-nary of the word "habitual": "customary, constant, continual".

SHOULD THEY AFFILIATE

The question then arises: are the schools which cannot fulfil the test then to become affiliated as Government institutions? Surely such is not the only alternative or for that matter any, for a school that has non-co-operated. There is room enough for schools independent both of the Congress and the Government. There may be schools whose conductors do not believe in Government patronage, control or interference and yet may not believe for instance in khadi or in teaching the vernacular or Hindustani. There is no reason why such schools should not continue if they receive public support or the conductors are themselves rich enough to carry them on themselves. All that the Congress has done is to prescribe the limits within which it can recognize or support educational institutions. And what can be more natural than that the Congress should insist on Congress institutions conforming to conditions which in the opinion of Congressmen promote the interest of the country?

TILAK MAHARASHTRA UNIVERSITY

Mr. Gharpure, the Registrar of the Tilak Maharashtra University, writes:

> Many friends and colleagues have drawn my attention to a sentence in your presidential address on page 25, last two lines. "Many provinces have their national schools and colleges. *Gujarat alone* has a *National University* maintained at an annual cost of Rs. 1,00,000/- and having control of three colleges and 70 schools wih 9,000 pupils."
>
> This gives rise to a misunderstanding. You are right if you mean that no other Province has a University maintained at an annual cost of one lakh. But people are liable to interpret it in another way, viz., that no other Province has a University. The cost is regarded only as an adjectival clause.
>
> I shall be glad if you will be kind enough to remove this misunderstanding through the pages of *Young India* as early as you can.
>
> The Tilak Maharashtra University is maintained at an annual cost of Rs. 6,000, with three colleges, 30 schools and 2,000 students. The annual cost is less simply because each college and school takes care of its own self and no charges are made to the University.
>
> The National Medical College is not yet recognized though it is on the way to it. Still the Tilak Mahavidyalaya maintains 75 students with an annual cost of Rs. 15,000.

I had thought that I knew English fairly well and that read in its context the sentence, referred to by Mr. Gharpure, was capable of bearing only one meaning, i.e., that not to mention the other provinces, Gujarat alone underwent so much expense and trained so many scholars. But I see that friends at least as conversant with English as myself have put a different construction upon the sentence. My only consolation is that both they and I are judging the meaning of a sentence written in a language foreign to us. I therefore derive the very poor consolation from the thought that they are as likely to be wrong in their interpretation as I in mine. But I can give them the assurance that I used Gujarat as merely an illustration and I mention Gujarat rather than any other province because I had the figures relating to Gujarat at hand. The emphasis was not meant for the University as distinguished from schools and colleges. I was aware at the time of writing my address, not only of the Gujarat National University but also of the Muslim National University at Aligarh and the Punjab National University at Lahore and the Bihar National University at Patna and the Kashi Vidyapith at Banaras besides the

Tilak Maharashtra University. I do not know the expenses of the Punjab and the Bihar Universities and the Kashi Vidyapith. But I know that the Muslim University cost last year nearly Rs. 75,000.

VOLUNTEERS

I have been asked to give my impressions of the volunteers' work at Belgaum during the Congress week. I thought that I had already dealt with it in my Belgaum impressions. But I gladly respond. Their work will bear a fuller and separate treatment. In my opinion the volunteers reached at Belgaum comparatively the highest watermark in efficiency within my experience of four Congresses. They were hardworking, efficient and willing. I heard no complaint from the delegates about them. Physically too they appeared to me to be fit. Dr. Hardikar[1] was good enough to take me through their camp which had a businesslike appearance and was fairly tidy. I say fairly tidy for in my opinion a volunteer camp must be a model of tidiness, not a thing being out of its place and everything being not only in its own place but being in its place in a neat manner. For instance, a volunteer may have his bedding in its place and yet may have put it in a heap instead of having properly and neatly folded it in the prescribed manner. In point of sanitation too a volunteer camp must be perfect, not a scrap of paper or dirt should be found anywhere. I understand that Dr. Hardikar specially restricted the number of volunteers. They had therefore more than a fair share of work to do. During the time that the Congress was in session they had to work over sixteen hours per day, being on their legs practically the whole of that time. I must not omit to mention the lady volunteers. They were most helpful and attentive. They too had undergone previous training. Though we cannot manage a Congress session without the efficient help of volunteers, let me say that work is the least part of a volunteer's training. Volunteers must be our greatest asset in winning swaraj. This they can only be, if in addition to having a spotless character and the necessary training in drilling, sanitation and first aid to the injured, they know how to organize the nation for swaraj. For this purpose therefore every volunteer must be an expert carder and spinner, and must be able in addition to doing his share of spinning, necessary for the franchise, to organize carding and spinning in his own district. It should be remembered that hand-spinning has been

[1] Organizer of the Hindustani Seva Dal which later became volunteer organization of the Congress

part of a volunteer's training since 1921.

STRIKING, IF TRUE

A correspondent writes severely criticizing the cry of Mussalman deficiency in the matter of education and says that I am being deceived. In order to enlighten me he has sent me some striking figures showing the proportion of literates among the two communities. I reproduce them below.

Province	Mussalmans per thousand	Hindus per thousand
MEN		
Burma	302	288
Central Provinces and Berar	225	89
Madras	201	170
U.P.	73	71
Baroda	309	234
C.P.	169	59
Mysore	238	133
Sikkim	833	91
Gwalior	142	60
Hyderabad	140	47
Rajputana	66	57
WOMEN		
Burma	87	86
Delhi	31	26
C.P. and Berar	27	8
Ajmer, Marwar	18	16
Bihar	8	6
U.P.	8	6
Mysore	62	16
Baroda	48	42
Hyderabad	35	4
Gwalior	26	6
C.I.	19	4
Rajputana	9	3

I must confess that I did not know that the figures were so favourable to the Mussalmans. Nevertheless my statement stands. The real rivalry is not between the rank and file—the merely literate—but

between the highly educated among both. And I suppose it is an undeniable fact that the so-called higher education is not so common among the Mussalmans as among the Hindus. I should like my correspondent to examine the figures as to higher education and say whether I am not right. Meanwhile let the students of statistics analyse the returns reproduced above and inform me of any inaccuracy in them. I have taken it for granted that the absence of figures for the provinces not mentioned by the correspondent shows that the figures in respect of them were not favourable to the charge brought by him. So far as literacy among women is concerned, I am glad to find that the percentage among Mussalman sisters in so many provinces is higher than among Hindu women. It shows that the *purdah* is no bar to literacy. This is no defence of the *purdah* for I am totally opposed to it. I note the fact as a pleasant surprise. For whilst I knew that many Mussalman sisters though remaining in seclusion were learned, I did not know that literacy among them was higher than among Hindu sisters.

EASONABLE IGURES

Whilst the Hindu-Muslim question is occupying the attention of the country, the readers will appreciate the following table[1] prepared by a friend and giving the percentage of population according to religion in India as a whole and also in the various provinces. The figures have been taken from the census of 1921.

Young India, 5-2-1925

99. TELEGRAM TO SURENDRANATH BISWAS

February 5, 1925

SURENDRANATH BISWAS[2]
16-A GOVINDGOSHEL[3] LANE
CALCUTTA

IMPOSSIBLE FIX TIME BEFORE BEGINNING NEXT MONTH. SUGGEST YOUR FIXING DATE[4] WITHOUT REFERENCE ME.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

[1] Not reproduced here
[2] Chairman, Reception Committee, Bengal Provincial Conference
[3] Govind Ghosal
[4] Presumably for the Bengal Provincial Conference; *vide* "Telegram to Surendranath Biswas", on or before January 15, 1925.

100. SPEECH AT RAWALPINDI[1]

February 5, 1925

I was present here last December and held some talks with you.[2] At that time I assured you that if you all had not returned to Kohat, I would come back and would talk to you; and if some Muslim brothers came by then from Kohat, I would make some inquiries also.

Some Muslim brothers have come from Kohat and I am talking things over with them. As a result of these discussions I am in no position to advise you to go back to Kohat. I was hoping that by holding talks with them something good might turn up. I am not without hope but today I do not have a single reason for asking you to return to Kohat. In fact I feel like advising you to the contrary. It is possible that I may not succeed in my task with the Muslim brethren. Moreover those Muslims who have got a hold over Kohat have not come here. On the other hand they have sent a telegram saying, "A compromise has already been reached here and the Hindus are returning to Kohat. Why do you call us then? Why do you again throw all people into panic?

The implication is that Shaukat Ali and myself should not interfere in this matter. But while talking to the Muslims who have come here I asked them, "Do you take the responsibility of taking Hindus to Kohat?" One of the gentlemen frankly replied, "If the Hindus want to return to Kohat, let them do so but we can take no responsibility. We are not even in a position to invite them, the reason being that those who are there at present are hated." So I cannot advise you to go back to Kohat.

There is yet another matter. If you want to return there relying on the strength of the Government and if the talks with the Government have inspired some faith in you, you are free to go back. But even now I hold firm to the belief that we are not going to benefit by working with or through the Government . And therefore I do not advise you to go there under the protection of the Government. Wherever you stay you have to rely on your own strength.

[1] Addressed to Hindus who had left Kohat owing to Hindu-Muslim riots there in September 1924.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Rawalpindi", December 9, 1924.

If there is need for holding talks with anyone before returning to Kohat it is with the Muslims. In the first place their number is large. Even if they were equal in number it would not be good to return without holding talks with them since we have run away from there in fear. It is a different thing if someone goes there and sacrifices ones honour for the sake of money or for saving one's life. To me it is not a life worth living, it is veritable death.

I learnt something very distressing yesterday namely, that many among you embraced Islam to save your lives and then you came here. In my view such poeple have not truly embraced Islam but have done so under fear and in order to save their lives. If it were not so why should they say, Cut off my tuft "or Make me read the *Kalama*"? If we do so the *Gayatri* [1] would have no meaning and our Hinduism too would be deemed meaningless. This is true or Sikhs and Arya Samajists as well. What I mean to say is that we should be prepared to lose our lives but not to change our faith. Our true wealth is not money, land or gold. They can be pillaged. But our true wealth is religion. When we abandon that we can be said to have pillaged our own homes. Ever since I heard these things I feel there is nothing to be gained in your going and staying there. You are losing much through love of wealth and life.

Sometimes Muslims kidnap a woman and make her embrace Islam. I do not understand how, in this manner, she can become a Muslim. She does not know the Koran. She does not know the *Kalama*. Alas, she knows very little even of her own religion. I cannot understand how she can become a Muslim. If someone abducts my wife and she reads the *Kalama*, then I can no more live in this world. Either I would seek your help [in defending her] or beg you to take her back into the Hindu fold. I would be a coward if I did not act in this manner. I cannot claim to be her husband. If you are men and wish to live like men, then make a solemn declaration that as long as conditions do not change, you will not return to Kohat.

I am told that if Kohat Hindus do not return, other Hindus also may well flee from the Frontier Province. I think it would be right if that happened. I ask you to live there in your own strength or in friendship with Muslims. I do not wish that Hindus should become cowards. I wish to make both Hindus and Muslims brave. I want that

[1] The credo of Islam

they should grow together in strength. I cannot bear it if Hindus grow in strength by destroying Muslims or the other way about. Hinduism does not teach us to destroy other religions.

I could not swallow that argument yesterday about the possibility of a Hindu woman being converted to Islam. I wish to have this point further clarified by Muslim friends— does Islam teach them to abduct my wife? My wife might not even know what Islam and Christianity are about. She was born in a Hindu family, she chants the name of Rama, and reads the *Ramayana* and *Bhagavata*[1]. She cannot use her intellect in embracing Islam. She continues to stick to her own dharma and that too with complete faith. What should one make of it if someone comes and tells one that such a woman has embraced Islam? She has not embraced Islam in full knowledge and therefore she is not prepared to regard herself as a Muslim. I want to ask Muslim friends: Does their religion teach them to abduct anyone's wife and make her a Muslim? It is unbearable for me if any woman living in the Frontier Province is forcibly violated. If it is argued that she has embraced Islam, I am not prepared to believe it. That is why I want to tell you that if you hold your religion dear, then do not go back as long as Muslims there do not say, "Come back with honour"; you should not go till then. If you go back you might make money but if you forsake your dharma and live there, that life is not worth living.

So far you have not died of hunger. In December I told you that I couldn't bear any able-bodied man living by alms, i.e., by begging for food. If I advise you to do that, I would be doing a wrong thing. Even today I am firm in this. That is why I have not asked for a single pie for Kohat. I would collect funds only when I know the purpose for which they are collected. I have made no list. It is true that if someone has sent something to me [for the relief of Kohat Hindus], I redirect that there. But if you act on my advice and those who are able-bodied live on their own labour, I pledge you my full help.

I am even prepared to take you to Sabarmati. There I shall give you whatever you need as food and shelter. I shall share my food with you. First I shall see you eat and then eat myself. But I will take full eight hours' work daily. If you intend to do manual labour, I am

[1] A poem dealing with the avatars of Vishnu

prepared to help you in every way. But if some of you say "we are lawyers and get us a practice", that I can't do. I can't get you a brief by getting two persons to quarrel. Similarly if some businessmen demand rupees ten or twenty lakhs or ten thousand, I certainly can't give them that. I can only provide you some kind of work. With this end in view I tell the people of India that everyone should ply the charkha at least for an hour daily. The charkha is a symbol of labour. One who plies the charkha can do other work also. I can't offer you work on land. But there is plenty of work by way of spinning, ginning and weaving from which lakhs [of people] can earn their livelihood. I read in the newspapers that the Maharaja of Mysore has also started spinning on the charkha. If those among you who are artisans want implements for their vocation, such as gold-smiths' implements,— it will be my job to provide them. It is my duty to make arrangements for each man to pursue his vocation. I am prepared to beg on their behalf. So I ask you again to prepare lists from which we can know how many can pursue a particular vocation and how many members of their families can work and what kind of work they can do. Even a sick or infirm person can do some work. I get work out of my widowed sister and only then do I feed her. She says, "we are children of a Diwan", but I do not believe in these [distinctions]. We are only labourers in the service of India; so I cannot but exact work from those whom I feed. I keep a clear account with my sister and wife and so I shall even with a widow.

There is something I have heard and which has pained me. I have heard that some of the Kohat Hindus gamble; some, having taken their ration once, ask for it again and make a row if they do not get it; if they have one quilt they ask for a second and make money by selling it. This distresses me much. I can bear what has happened in Kohat but if these things are true I cannot bear that. If you want to live like this then you may return to Kohat and drown your religion. In my view religion does not mean that one becomes a Hindu simply because one reads the *Gayatri*. According to me, he alone is a Hindu in whose heart the *Gayatri* is inscribed. A man does not become a Sikh by merely reciting the *Granth Sahib*. He alone is a true Sikh who cherishes the *Granth Sahib* in his heart with genuine pride. One does not become an Arya Samajist because one chants Vedic *mantras* well. But one who shapes his life in accordance with those *mantras* is a true Arya Samajist. I will ask Muslims also whether I become a Muslim because I read the *Kalama*. Thus, ever since I have heard this about

you I have been greatly perturbed.

This is *Kaliyuga*[1] and only because of such incidents are we in a fallen state. I request you not to put me to shame by behaving in such manner. If you want to act in this way then keep me away from you, because I would not be fit for your service.

Malaviyaji[2] agrees with me that you should not go to Kohat in this kind of atmosphere. I would not put him to the trouble of coming here, because in the Central Assembly a decision is being taken on the Bengal Ordinance and he is busy there. He was ready to come here but I told him that I would not trouble him this time. Lalaji also arrived here today. He had telephoned from Lahore. I invited him here but unfortunately he fell ill and could not be with us today. I gave him the trouble of coming here—Rawalpindi—because if we two are not of one mind, then you would be deceived. We three hold the same opinion. They do not know what I told you about Islam. But in view of what has happened in Kohat, they have come to the identical view that it would be wrong for you to return under the existing conditons. What I said over and above that was that without effecting a settlement with the Muslims it would be wrong for you to return.

I do not even wish that the free food being given to you now should be continued. It is written in the *Gita* that he who eats without performing *yajna*[3] is in fact a thief. *Yajna* has many meanings and physical labour is one of them. So it is a sin to eat without labour. I have come to talk things over with you. If you want to know anything else, you can question me. I want that you should tell those working here to make a list of persons having food here and also tell them that whatever you take from here, you would return through your labour. You must find some work for yourselves. If you come to Sabarmati with me I am prepared to give you some work. I feel like staying here with you and doing some manual work. At present, I have also other work to do. That is why I cannot stay with you. Sit down together, all of you, and think it over. If my proposal is acceptable to you, then rent a house, set up a loom and start work. I am prepared to get funds for that. There is nothing to be ashamed of in asking me for money

[1] The age of strife.

[2] Madan Mohan Malaviya (1861-1946); founder of the Benares Hindu University; twice President of the Indian National Congress

[3] Sacrifice

for this purpose.

I have thus made the request I had wanted to. I am ready to reply to your questions. Let me also know if what I have heard about you is wrong. To those who have given you shelter you owe a duty and that is to take up some work for yourselves.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini *Diary,* Vol. VII, pp. 126-32

101. EXAMINATION OF KAMAL JAILANE ON KOHAT RIOT[1]

[RAWALPINDI]
February 6, 1925

Q. Do you live near Kohat?

A. I live quite close by.

Q. Are you a zamindar?

A. I am a zamindar. I own several villages in. . . .[2] Besides these our ancestors were given shares in lands in almost all the villages (here).

Q. Are you on good terms with the Hindus?

A. I can confidently claim that my relations with the Hindus are very good.

Q. Do you ever live in Kohat itself?

A. I come and go to and from that place daily, as my dwelling place is only 500 yards away from it.

Q. What do you think is the cause of the disturbance between the Hindus and Mussalmans?

A. I think it was due to several causes that existed already. The pamphlet[3] affair proved to be the last drop. It occasioned the outbreak, but the hearts of the parties had been poisoned already.

Q. Will you please briefly explain yourself on this point?

[1] Referring to the examinations of Kamal Jailane and Ahmad Gul, Gandhiji is reported to have remarked: "Today, I have done one of the most valuable jobs during the year. . .. I have undertaken such cross-examination after many years. This time, it seems, I have exhausted all my skill in cross-examination. The witnesses never realized that they were being cross-examined." *Mahadevbhaini Diary,* Vol.VII, p. 133

[2] The source has a blank here.

[3] Published by Jivandas, Secretary of the Sanatan Dharma Sabha of Kohat. It contained a poem with some objectionable references to Islam.

A. For the last few years the Hindus have been presecuting such persons as became converts to Islam, by starting law-suits against them, thus giving vent to their resentment.

Q. Since when ?

A. The practice commenced some four or five years ago and some recent instances are: (1) a photographer's wife in Kohat, a Hindu woman in Tal, and a Hindu in Bhago, who were converted to Islam. (2) Then there was a case of a Hindu embracing Islam, or becoming a Sheikh and marrying a Mussalman woman, his subsequent reconversion to Hinduism, and institution of a law-suit in connection with the woman. (3) The filing of a suit by the Mussalmans in connection with a Mussalman girl, their failure to obtain the desired sentence against the accused, the whole thing being followed by (a campaign of) litigation (against each other). (4) The securing by the Mussalmans of more than their due share of representation in social and political life and the starting of some Hindu organizations by some Hindu young men, etc. (are some other causes.)

Q. Is this (the last thing) also four or five years old?

A. It happened within the last four or five years.

Q. Before the Khilafat movement or after?

A. It commenced a year after the inauguration of the Khilafat movement.

Q. Are conversions to Islam very frequent in Kohat district?

A. Yes. There is a very large number of conversions in the district.

Q. What would be their approximate number?

A. Some conversion does take place in every *Juma*[1] mosque. The total number of these conversions comes up to about one hundred or one hundred fifty every year, though all the cases do not necessarily belong to Kohat proper. On every Friday there are one or two cases of conversion.

Q. Are all the persons converted Hindus?

A. They are all Hindus. Sometimes they are Sikhs also.

Q. Did anything else also happen before this, besides the pamphlet incident ?

A. There were some minor incidents relating to tanks, etc., but nothing happened affecting any large number of people except the incidents mentioned already. The affairs relating to the tanks, etc., were of a very restricted nature, but they gathered head and permeated the public outside.

Q. Did the interference of the Hindus, in the matter of coversions, cause any resentment among the Mussalmans ?

[1] Friday

A. Yes, it did cause resentment. There have been conversions of Hindus to Islam always, but the Hindus never took any notice of them. But Heaven knows what has happened today. They are raising a storm over it. After all, these people embrace Islam of their free will and for the love of it.

Q. Are all these people who are converted to Islam of full age?

A. In cases where the parents accompany the children, the latter are also converted. All the rest have attained maturity.

Q. Did ever any Mussalman tell the Hindus that they ought not to behave like this ?

A. Yes. They (the Hindus) were told so. I myself told them. But none of those to whom I spoke was a person of distinction or otherwise taking interest in public affairs.

Q. Was this started before the *shuddhi* [1] movement or after ?

A. This happened after the *shuddhi* movement. All these instances that I have mentioned happened after the *shuddhi* and *sangathan*[2] movements were started.

Q. Do yo believe that this has any bearing on the disturbances ?

A. There was ill will in the hearts already. This served as an additional excuse.

Q. Is this Muslim girl to whom you have referred the same as the one mentioned in connection with Sardar Makhan Singh's son ?

A. Yes. She is the same.

Q. What is your opinion about the pamphlet, what share had the general Hindu public in it ?

A. The pamphlet was sent for and sold here with the knowledge of the members of the Sanatan Dharma Sabha.

Q. Are many Hindus members of the Sanatan Dharma Sabha ?

A. I do not know their exact number.

Q. Are Hindus in general, members of this Sabha ?

A. So far as I can think, there must be numerous (non-*Sanatani*) Hindus as its members. About fifteen or sixteen members, whose names are often mentioned here for their fanaticism, belong to this class.

Q. Have you read the whole of this pamphlet ?

A. I have read it through.

Q. Are all the poems in this pamphlet bad ?

A. The poem coming just before the objectionable poem is very good. The

[1] Literally, purification; a movement of reconversion to Hindusim
[2] A movement for organizing Hindus

remaining religious poems also are good, but song No. 11 is highly objectionable and calculated to severely shock the Muslim sentiment.

Q. Were many copies of this poem sold ?

A. Copies of the pamphlet were seen in the hands of quite a large number of people, both Hindus and Mussalmans. The first copy which I saw was with Maulvi Ahmad Gul[1] . The second copy was with another Mussalman.

Q. The Hindus say that not more than 30 or 35 copies were sold. Is it true ?

A. Maybe it is true, but I cannot say exactly.

Q. The members of the Sanatan Dharma Sabha apologized for the objectionable poem that was published. Was it not sufficient ?

A. I knew nothing about the apology till the deputation[2] returned from Peshawar. Nor have I even now seen the terms of that apology. I have heard that it was deemed insufficient by the Mussalmans.

Q. Do you know in what respect it fell short?

A. I have not seen its contents, so I can say nothing.

Q. Do you know that the page containing that poem was torn out or an the copies of the pamphlet?

A. I have no knowledge of it.

Q. Do you know that the remaining copies were sent by the Sanatan Dharma Sabha to the Deputy Commissioner and were burnt there?

A. Yes. The remaining copies were sent to the court and burnt there.

Q. Was Jivandas, the publisher of the pamphlet, arrested ?

A. Yes sir.

Q. Was the arrest of Jivandas not sufficient ?

A. So far as I am concerned, it was quite enough. When Jivandas was committed to custody, a promise regarding his prosecution was given and the remaining copies of the pamphlet were burnt.

Q. Did this leave any room for complaint on the part of the Mussalmans ?

A It ought not to have left any.

Q. Do you know when these copies were burnt ?

[1] Khilafat Secretary

[2] The Khilafat delegation of Peshawar which tried to pacify the parties but failed

A. On September 3rd 1924.

Q. Do you know also that Jivandas was let off on bail ?

A. I heard that Jivandas was let off; whether on bail or otherwise I do not know.

Q. Was he sent out of Kohat and afterwards he was let off ?

A. Yes.

Q. Did this make the Mussalmans indignant ?

A. Yes. The release of Jivandas, after the promise made by the Mussalman Deputy Commissioner that he would be prosecuted, inflamed the Mussalmans.

Q. Was any meeting of the Mussalmans held on account of this ?

A. I heard that the meeting was held on the night of September 8.

Q. Did the Mussalmans assemble in a large force and go to the Deputy Commissioner on the night of the 9th ?

A. Yes Sir.

Q. Were you present at this meeting ?

A. I was given no notice of it.

Q. Did you come to know the facts about it only from hearsay reports ?

A. Yes Sir, I saw the crowd passing through the bazaar both on its way to and back from the Deputy Commissioner's place. I saw it near the Town Hall as I was going to the bazaar.

Q. What was the strength of the crowd ?

A. There must be about 1,500 men in crowd. There was hartal in the bazaar on September 9. The shops of the Hindus and Mussalmans were closed. Here and there some Sikhs were standing in front of their shops, having been compelled to open their shops.

Q. When did this happen ?

A. I went to the town at 9 o'clock; when I returned at 11-30, all the shops were closed.

Q. Did you see the crowd both the times, *i.e.*, when it was going to and when it was returning from D.C.'s place ?

A. I saw it both the times inside the Chhavani Darwaza[1] when it was returning and near the Town Hall when it was going out.

Q. In which direction was the crowd proceeding ?

A. It was going towards the Town Hall at 9 o'clock.

Q. Did you talk to anyone from the crowd ?

[1] The source has ''Darwaha''.

A. Yes. I had some talk with some persons, while I was returning from the town.

Q. What was the nature of your conversations and what replies did you receive ?

A. I asked what the matter was and where they were going. They said that they were going to D.C. to ask why Jivandas had been released, and why he had betrayed his promise to them inasmuch as he had fixed the 11th as the date for the hearing of the case.

Q. Was this all the talk you had ?

A. There were some other things also but they were more or less of this very nature.

Q. Did you try to prevent them from this, and did your efforts have any effect ?

A. I told them that at least we (Hindus and the Mussalmans) ought not to behave like this. By quarrelling among ourselves we give the third party (the Government) chance of interfering in our affairs. But my words had no effect upon them.

Q. Have you any knowledge of the happenings on the 9th ?

A. I was in my house that day. I heard that there had been firing in the bazaar as a result of which a Mohammedan had been killed and that arson was going on.

Q. Did you come to know all this from hearsay or did you see these things yourself ?

A. I only heard about it but the flames and smoke could be seen and the reports of the firing could be heard.

Q. When you were in Kohat at about half past eleven and saw the crowd there, were any people from the villages present there ?

A. No outsiders from the vilages were present in the town.

Q. Were there any people from the villages in the crowd at the Town Hall ?

A. About 1/3 part consisted of the villagers.

Q. Did you visit Kohat on the 10th September ?

A. On the evening of the 9th I sent a man of mine to the town to fetch some things for my friends and relatives. He brought back the news that peace had been restored in the city, that losses in lives of Mussalmans were heavier than those of the Hindus and that the fire in the bazaar was going on as before.

On the 10th I motored through the school gate in my car. The Military had thrown a double cordon round the city wall. I obtained permission from the European Officer (in-charge) to enter the city. On reaching there, I found that perfect order prevailed. I saw several breaches in the city wall. As my motor reached the tahsil

gate, I again heard the reports of firing. That day was an image of the doomsday (*Kayamat ka namuna)*. This state of things continued from 10 o'clock to one o'clock.

Q. What do you mean by the image of the doomsday (*Kayamat ka namuna*) ?

A. I mean that anybody who fell into the hands of the mob was robbed and killed, the houses of the people were set on fire. The houses of both the Hindus and Mussalmans were burnt. The opportunity was seized upon for paying off all ancient grudges. All gentlemen took shelter behind closed doors for fear of their lives.

Q. Did you return at one o'clock ?

A. I returned at 10·30. But I was witnessing this spectacle from the top of a hillock near my village.

Q. You said you witnessed some horrible sights on the 9th ?

A. Yes, on the 9th I witnessed one or two incidents of unarmed Hindus being murdered.

Q. Where did these murders take place ?

A. One of these incidents took place on the Shahi Road, i.e., Bhagi Kohat Road, the other on the Charouda side.

Q. Were these people pedestrians ?

A. I afterwards learnt that one of them was proceeding in the direction of Pcshawar in a motor car and that he was taken out of this car and killed. I saw the corpse lying there.

Q. Who killed him ?

A. I think it was the villagers from outside, who did not live in the vicinity of Kohat, because in the same car besides the Hindu gentleman there were two other Mussalmans one of whom was a nephew of Khan Bhadur Gulli Khan who had been in Kohat as an E. A. for several years. Had these people come from Kohat or the neighbouring villages they would have recognized the nephew of the Khan Bahadur or the nephew of the Khan Bahadur would have recognized them.

Q. Who was the other Mussalman besides the Khan Bahadur's nephew ?

A. The other person was a professor of the Islamia College. Besides him, there was a driver, that is to say, there were three men in the car besides the driver, one of them being a Hindu who was killed.

Q. Were the three Mussalmans who were in the car with the Hindu gentleman unable to save him ?

A. These three could not save the Hindu because the assailants were so many.

Q. You mentioned another Hindu who was killed. Can you say

anything about him ?

A. I only saw his corpse lying in a field. I could not identify him.

Q. Could you recognize the other Hindu who was killed first ?

A. As I had seen his corpse lying on the road, I inquired the facts about him on my way. I do not know how many hours his corpse had been lying there before I passed by.

Q. Did you see any temples also that were burnt ?

A. After the Hindus had left for Rawalpindi I saw some portions of some temples burnt. One of these was the temple in *mandi* (market). The building adjoining it in which we sat for peace negotiations was also burnt.

Q. Did you see any burnt Gurdwara also ?

A. We saw that the Gurdwara overlooking the springs was burnt. A few months ago, dispute between the Hindus and Mussalmans had arisen over this Gurdwara. The Hindus claimed it as a temple of theirs while the Sikhs contended that it was a Gurdwara and belonged to them. Some Hindu sadhus used to sit in this Gurdwara and smoke *charas* to which the Sikhs took strong objection. The Sikhs then came to the Gurdwara in force and ejected the sadhus from that place and took possession of it. As a result, a Sub-Inspector of Police with some sergeants and a full body of police remained camped there for several weeks to prevent a disturbance as the Gurdwara was situated outside the city.

Respectable leaders of both the communities were also made to deposit securities and bound over for peace and good behaviour. I myself gave a piece of land belonging to me opposite our cemetery to that sadhu. This sadhu declared that he would not leave that place till he had burnt that Gurdwara. During the riots this sadhu along with two respectable Hindu leaders who had taken refuge with him remained there for two days and besides risking his own life, protected the lives of two other Hindus. Afterwards I learnt that some Sikh gentlemen had reported to the police that the burning of the Gurdwara had been instigated by that sadhu. So the police expelled him from that place and sent him out of the district.

Q. Did you see any other temples or Gurdwaras besides this Gurdwara that were burnt ?

A. I do not know (on being reminded, the witness admitted that Khan Jogran which was built mostly of wood had also been burnt).

Q. Do you know how many Hindus and how many Mussalmans were killed on the 9th and 10th ?

A. I do not know of any Hindu who was killed in the city on the night. Of Mussalmans, three were killed and three or four wounded. These included those boys also.

Q. Do you know the age of the child ?

A. I have heard that that child was about 10 or 11 years old.

Q. Was anyone of them a child or were both of them children ?

A. Both were children—one of them was 10 or 11 years, the other one was a bit older.

Q. Have you any knowledge of the casualties on the 10th September ?

A. All the rest of the casualties took place on the 10th September. Eight Mussalmans were killed. The number of wounded was greater. But the number of dead and wounded among the Hindus exceeded that of Mussalmans.

Q. When did the Hindus from Kohat arrive in Rawalpindi ?

A. On the eleventh Rai Bahadur Mathuradas and Rai Bahadur Isherdas sent me word that they were putting up in the Commercial House and that I should take them to the railway station. I went there with two motor cars and in seven trips brought them and their relatives to the railway station. The Hindus lying in the Commercial House and by the roadside were in very sore straits. Their women folk also were sitting by the roadside in a very sad plight. The Government had made no arrangement whatever either for their accommodation or for removing them to the railway station.

Q. When did they remove to the Commercial House ?

A. I learnt from them that they shifted to the Commercial House on the 10th September.

Q. The Hindus state that between 9th and 10th September several Hindus were forcibly converted to Islam. Do you know anything about it ?

A. I think no Hindu was forcibly converted to Islam. But some Hindus who had taken shelter with the Mussalmans, feeling that their lives were in danger, themselves requested that their tuft of hair, etc., might be removed and their protectors, feeling that the lives of Hindus were really in danger, removed their *choti*[1] & c., and gave out that they had become Mussalmans.

Q. You had mentioned another procedure also ?

A. Something like that might have happened. Only I have no knowledge of any case when a Mussalman in order to save the life of a Hindu advised him to become a Mussalman and removed his *choti*. I can, however, believe an incident like this taking place.

Q. Why do you believe it to be possible that some Mussalmans might have advised some Hindus to become Mussalmans to save their lives ?

[1] Tuft of hair

A. Simply because the people from the villages were uneducated and protection of life was a serious matter.

Q. Would you regard a person who has been converted to Islam in this manner as a Mussalman ?

A. So long as such a person does not of his own free will declare himself to be a Mussalman in circumstances of peace, he cannot be regarded as a Mussalman.

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 10530

102. EXAMINATION OF AHMAD GUL ON KOHAT RIOT[1]

[RAWALPINDI]

February 6, 1925

Q. Your name, Maulvi Saheb?

A. My name is Ahmad Gul.

Q. What work are you employed in?

A. I am a dentist.

Q. Since when are you the Secretary of Khilafat?

A. Since 1922.

Q. Since when do you live in Kohat?

A. I was born there.

Q. In your opinion what is the cause of the Kohat troubles?

A. In some respects I agree with Pir Kamal Saheb, but in others I differ. In my opinion the cause of the disturbances was the pamphlet.

Q. Any other cause, apart from the pamphlet?

A. There was another incident. In my life there were only two such occasions when the Mohammedans went to the Government in large numbers. One was the case of S. Makhan Singh's son and the other of the pamphlet. Besides these occasions never has such excitement prevailed. Neither they collected nor was there any such disturbance.

Q. Do you take only these two incidents as the cause of disturbances?

A. There were some mutual dissensions also.

Q. What was the matter regarding S. Makhan Singh's son?

A. There was a general rumour among the people that S. Makhan Singh's son had

[1] The source was defective and has been slightly edited, where absolutely necessary.

illegitimate connection with the wife of his gardener. He went away to Lahore and the *malan*[1] also followed him and this was followed with a great stir among the people. The Pathans as a community look upon this kind of action with hatred even if it is done by a Mussalman. Therefore the Government also treats the accused severely and the people are disturbed thereby even if the case is between two Mussalmans. In the case of S. Makhan Singh's son the Government did not pay heed although a deputation waited. I mean to say that the Sardar's son was not convicted and the gardener did not get justice. It was a great shock to the Mussal-mans when a Hindu or a Sikh dared to do so. It was also rumoured that S. Makhan Singh pacified the gardener by giving some money. It was also broadcast that S. Makhan Singh saved himself on other occasion also by payments.

Q. When did this occur?

A. It was about one year ago, i.e., one year before the pamphlet incident. When Jivandas was arrested and put into lock-up, S. Makhan Singh went to the jail in the capacity of a non-official visitor. The Jail Superintendent also complained against his conduct as a visitor as he interfered in jail arrangements. The Superintendent kept Jivandas in a solitary cell but the Sardar Saheb asked Jivandas to be taken out of it. There was a regular complaint about it as the daughter of Jivandas was betrothed to the Sardar's son. This rumour was also going round that Sardar Saheb would get Jivandas released in a few hours. After that when the first firing took place, the first thing that was heard was that the boys were killed before the house of Sardar Saheb. This was the past incident and again the release of Jivandas and the firing near Sardar Saheb's house excited the Mussalmans and in my opinion this is the reason of the disturbance.

Q. Who put out the rumour that Sardar Saheb and his son fired?

A. When I was in court and the crowd was being assured that Jivandas would be prosecuted, we had no complaint against other Hindus. The Mussalmans were satisfied when the court decided to proceed against the accused. The basis of the charge was being established, when the information reached there that firing took place in the bazaar. Ahmad Khan Saheb informed me and, taking me with him in motor car besides three other Mohammedans, proceeded to the scene of the occurrrence. We entered the city by the Cantonment gate and were yet fifty paces from Sardar Saheb's place when we met a crowd of fifty or sixty which came to stop us and said that firing was going on and we should not proceed further. One boy was lying killed near Sardar Makhan Singh's *balakhana*[2] and one man was wounded. On this the motor car was brought back to Kotwali without being turned as the space was not adequate. The Kotwali might be a hundred paces distance from there.

[1] Gardener's wife
[2] Upper apartment

Q. Did you go there where the firing took place.

A. No, I did not. My companion and myself got down from the motor car and Ahmad Khan Saheb went back. When I was going to my house from Kotwali, shots were being fired from all sides at that time and some people

also began to enter the city. In this fearful condition I went home as I was also indisposed. But later on I heard that the bazaar was being burnt and that three of the Mussalmans were killed and three were wounded.

Q. Did you hear of any Hindus being killed or wounded at that time?

A. I inquired about the Hindus also but no such case was reported to me. The night passed quietly.

Q. When did it happen ?

A. It was on the 9th September.

Q. When you were in the motor car and were informed of the firing, did Ahmad Khan Saheb also go there?

A. Ahmad Khan Saheb did not go to the place of firing and went back.

Q. When did you go to the bazaar?

A. When I went with Ahmad Khan Saheb to the bazaar it was about half past one.

Q. You were mentioning some other matter besides this and before the Sardar Saheb's case?

A. Those are ordinary things and are not worth mentioning here.

Q. Pir Saheb said that since four or five years ago the Hindus were taking some steps in the cases of those converted to Islam and re-sorting to law-courts. This had shocked the Muslims. Do you also agree?

A. The village people might be of this idea as Pir Saheb has connection with people of the interior. He may be of that opinion but to my mind it cannot be so.

Q. Pir Saheb said that more than four years earlier the Hindus did not care for those Hindus who were converted to Islam, and it was since then that they were resorting to courts. What is your opinion in the matter?

A. In this respect I differ from him. It happened only in the cases of converted women and not of men. It is a different thing where a Hindu becomes a Muslim and the Hindus try to take him back. All have religious liberty. As the Muslims are in majority in the Frontier, the Government cares exceptionally for the religious feelings of the Muslims. For instance, in other districts the meat prohibited for Muslims is sold in bazaars or it is openly taken in the bazaar but such has not been

the case in Kohat up till now. But on the contrary the meat prohibited for Hindus is openly sold and used in the bazaar in the Frontier especially in Kohat.

Q. When did you hear about the pamphlet?

A. I came to know of it on Friday the 29th August, when I was in the mosque.

Q. Who informed you ?

A. One volunteer named Gulam Ayub gave me the pamphlet after he had entered the mosque with a big crowd. He had with him such people also who did not enter the mosque on account of their clothes being unfit for entering and stayed out.

Q. What did the volunteer do?

A. He told me that there was a great row in the bazaar on account of this pamphlet and these people wished to consult the general Muslim public about it and take such steps by which people may be subdued.

Q. What did you do again?

A. I took that book in my hand and from all sides people were asking me to read the poem in Pushtu which they had already heard; they wished to be acquainted with its subject-matter. I translated it before the crowd and also looking to their excitement and intention which I could guess I kept them back from resorting to any kind of disturbance and reminded them of the bad consequences of the riots in Malabar, Multan, Saharanpur and in other places and advised them that in case they could not control themselves they should go to the Government in this case also, as they were doing about other matters.

Q. You said that people wanted to hear what they had heard before; why was it so when they had already heard?

A. The crowd in the mosque said so, as some knew about it and others did not.

Q. But did it hear about it for the first time in the mosque?

A. Yes.

Q. What happened later on?

A. They were whispering to each other after that and were plotting against the Khilafatists and were complaining that these people were lagging behind even in religious matters. "They took thousands of rupees from us in subscriptions but when the time for the service of Islam has come, they hesitate." They also said that on a previous occasion Pir Kamal Saheb and myself degraded the Mussalmans by taking bribe from S. Makhan Singh.

Q. What happened over the pamphlet after that ?

A. After that a letter from Sanatan Dharma Sabha came to me on 2nd September after *Isha* prayer, i.e., at about 9.30 p.m. in which Hindus had shown their excuse on behalf of the Hindus regarding the publication of the pamphlet. I took that letter with

me on 3rd September to the *mahalla*[1] of Parachgan where I had gone for condolence and where were collected people of different communities and read it to them and said that the members of the Sanatan Dharma Sabha convey their apology in those words. When I read the letter to them, instead of being satisfied with it, they felt the tone and method of the letter was. . .[2]; one of them expressed it thus, that when the soldiers were killed in the Great War and the King expressed his sorrow, this letter resembled the same. Neither there was any word of apology nor any such subject. After this the whole assembly went to the Superintendent of Police and the Assistant Commissioner so that the accused could be proceeded against. The Deputy Commissoner was at Usmana at that time. The Assistant Commissioner directed us to go to the court and he himself also went. The constables were sent to fetch Jivandas and he was brought into the room in our presence. After this the pamphlets were also sent for and Jivandas was put up in lock-up and the pamphlets were burnt there in the presence of the A.C.

Q. You said you went for condolence and there you read the letter and this was not liked by them. Did the Hindus do anything also?

A. I came to know there that some people had decided with Hindus without my knowledge that according to the custom of this place the members of the Sanatan Dharma Sabha should come to a meeting to be held for this purpose as a jirga so that the matter be decided in consultation with the Ulemas.

Q. When the people said that the letter was not satisfactory, did you agree?

A. Looking to their attitude at that time, I did not think it advisable to give any kind of opinion and did not interfere.

Q. But what was your opinion?

A. My opinion was also the same. The letter did not smell of any apology.

Q. When Jivandas was arrested and the pamphlets were burnt, what was their number?

A. I could not say, there might have been more than 500.

Q. Were you told that the objectionable poem had been taken out of it?

A. Some such plea was put forward.

Q. The copies sent to the court were without that page?

A. Some leaves were shown separately.

[1] Locality
[2] There is a gap here in the source.

Q. Was there a portrait of Krishnaji on that book?

A. Yes Sir.

Q. Did any Hindu object to it?

A. No.

Q. Had anybody said so?

A. I would have been the first man to try to take out that leaf as there was no poem on it.

Q. What about the Peshawar Deputation ?

A. On 4th September a deputation from Peshawar met me; after that Sayid Sikandar Shah Saheb came up fortunately. We were going to Pir Kamal Saheb, he met us on the way and we all went to a place near my house and talked about the matter. The Peshawar deputation and these two gentlemen tried to hush up the matter as far as they could, but the public excitement went high and everyone who tried to impose mild conditions or took up a mild attitude in this matter was suspected by the people.

Q. Did you meet in the presence of the public?

A. The public had come at that time and they troubled me so much that no occasion of a private talk with the deputation was given to me. Had I done anything against their opinion the same condition would have been created as the people had created against other national leaders. I was forced to be with them, because had I also been cut off from them there was great danger of the situation being serious, but I can say this much that, on account of my being with them, the Muslims heard my advice and did not take the lead in the disturbances.

Q. Were there Hindus also in that crowd at that time?

A. No, none. It is a different thing if there were any Sikhs standing there, as the Muslims had good opinion about them on account of their joining the Muslims on occasions of processions, etc. They could join in any meeting without any hindrance.

Q. What did the people want and what did the Peshawar Deputation do?

A. The public wanted that the Government should punish the accused in such a way that in future no Hindu should dare to publish such . . .[1] pamphlet. And the deputation wanted to decide the matter amongst ourselves as we were non-co-operaters and did not like to take the matters to the Government. The conditions which were arrived at with the deputation were these:

[1] There is a gap here in the source.

That the matter be decided according to *shrah*[1] or according to the custom of the country; the members of the Sanatan Dharma Sabha could come to the Muslims as a jirga. The deputation including Saiyid Pir Kamal Saheb talked to the Hindus but when these gentlemen met me afterwards they expressed their failure on [*sic*] behalf of the Hindus.

Q. Was Pandit Amir Chand[2] also there at that time?

A. Yes Sir. He was also there. When the deputation was talking to me about this matter in the presence of the public, he was hissed very much and Khilafatists also were cursed and it was rumoured about them that the Kohat Hindus had given ten thousand rupees as a bribe, therefore, these people not caring for our religious feelings were advising us to keep quiet on such an important matter.

Q. Pir Sahib said that the matter of jirga was not brought up in his presence?

(The previous statement of Maulvi Ahmad Gul was read to him and Saiyid Pir Kamal and others also explained the matter.)

Q. When the deputation, the Sayid Sahib and the Pir Sahib talked together, what conditions did they decide to present to the Hindus?

A. We had ceased even talking with the Hindus as the Muslims felt annoyed. I asked the deputation to appease the public who were in religious colour [*sic*] at that time.

Q. What did you all think about the matter?

A. We were in that house for about an hour and a half. It was on the 5th September and not on the 4th. On the 4th I met only the Peshawar deputation who were my guests.

Q. When you gathered on the 5th, what did you decide about the advice being given to the Hindus?

A. I decided that the case be handed over to the Government but the deputation did not wish it. At that time when the deputation and these two gentlemen met together nothing was decided.

Q. What did the people want?

A. The people wanted that the matter be handed over to the Government. The matter of *shrah* was also talked to the people. They would be very happy over it if the Hindus accepted.

[1] Injunctions of Koran
[2] A member of the Khilafat delegation of Peshawar

Q. If the people were ready for both the alternatives, then what was the necessity of appeasing them?

A. It was on account of this, that they wish to take revenge themselves. I made them understand not to take the law into their own hands.

Q. Who brought the people there?

A. The people came thems/ elves and suspected the deputation. When the matter of jirga came up Pir Saheb was not present at that time.

Q. Were the Hindus told of the *shrah* and jirga?

A. I was not present there. Only the deputation talked to the Hindus and it came back with the reply that the Hindus did not accept either of the terms. A third term was also suggested by the deputation that the matter be handed over to the Khilafat, to which I replied that the Khilafat could not decide the matter as it had gone into the hands of the general public.

Q. What happened after 5th September?

A. The deputation went back to Peshawar on the 6th September. We all were under the impression that Jivandas was in lock-up and that he would be proceeded against.

Q. Was there any excitement in Kohat on the 6th and 7th September?

A. There was nothing of the kind on those days. Ordinary business was going on normally.

Q. At what time was Jivandas released on the 8th September?

A. On that day I had gone to Churqota and was away from 4 p.m. when Mian Fazal Shah and Mian Rahmat Ullah were with me. I returned from there after the prayers of *Magrab*[1]. On my way to Kohat, I met some village people bringing their necessaries. They told me, "You are here. Jivandas has been released and there is so much uneasiness prevailing in the city. People are gathering in the mosque of Hazrat Haji Bahadur." On this I went to the mosque. It was about 8.45 p.m. at that time. I saw a crowd in and outside the mosque which went protesting against the action of the D.C. in releasing Jivandas before the fixed date, the 11th September. I went inside the mosque and inquired what they wanted. They replied, "The Government does not care for our religious feelings." We also protested against those who advised the release of Jivandas. This charge was against some of my friends also. This I contradicted and advised the crowd that we will go to the D.C. on the 9th September and would inquire from him what good he thought would come by releasing Jivandas before time, and I asked the people to go to their homes and they went away. It was about half past ten or eleven that they left. Some time we spent in prayer also.

[1] West

Q. Was there much excitement among the crowd?

A. Yes.

Q. You said that they were so very angry that they did not listen to you and then you said that you argued with them and made them understand that they would have justice and said, "If we failed, then you could do anything you liked."

A. Yes. Once the Hindus boycotted the Muslims and did not buy meat and vegetables from them. On this I posted pickets for two days on Hindu shops, which resulted in Hindu *halwais*,[1] sweets being let unsold. It was about two years ago. In fact I did boycott the Hindus. Had the Hindus not given up this atitude I would have recommended this method to the Muslims.

Q. Did the Muslims take oath of boycott in the meeting?

A. It is altogether wrong.

Q. And was there no talk of burning and looting?

A.. Not at all.

Q. What happened on 9th September?

A. I approached the D.C. at the ground near the Town Hall with the people.

Q. What was the number of people with you?

A. About 2,000.

Q. Were there village people in the crowd?

A. People of the village within the Municipality were there.

Q. Were not the people of far off places there?

A. Not of very far off places.

Q. What did you do then?

A. We gathered in the open and the D.C. went inside the Town Hall. The officers, etc., were also there. They called me inside, but the people in the crowd said that they would hear the talk in the open.

Q. Were you the leader of the deputation?

A. Yes. I was the leader. And according to their wishes I also said that we should talk in the open. At last the D.C. with other officers came out and addressing the crowd asked who would talk with him. All unanimously proposed my name. I talked to the D.C. and asked why he released Jivandas before time. "This has excited the people, now you should talk to them and subdue their excitement." He replied that he

[1] Sweetmeat sellers

had released him on bail with this idea that perhaps a large number of people would come on the appointed date, and the accused might be put to trouble. I said, "You did what you were to do, but now the demand of the people is that the one guilty of the pamphlet be hauled up and this can be only if some proceedings commenced in their presence to satisfy them." This was consented to by the D.C. and he told the Assistant Commissioner to take Jivandas's case in his own hands and commence the proceedings. After this the whole crowd reached the court as I have said before.

Q. Was the order for the D.C. conveyed to the crowd?

A. Whatever was being told by the D. C. in reply to my talk, I conveyed to the crowd at the same time. At the end I told the crowd, "The D.C. has accepted your demand." After this some dispersed and those from outside went to their homes. By outside, I mean villages nearby in municipal area; and some went to the court.

Q. Were there bamboos or axes in the hands of these people?

A. Some people had hand-sticks and some had bamboo-sticks. One or two of them had axes according to the custom of that place. The people use this in the Frontier as a pleasure.

Q. Was there no gun with anybody?

A. No gun. Had there been any, the D.C. would not come into the crowd.

Q. When did it end?

A. This ended at 12 noon.

Q. You went in motor car at half past one.

A. Yes.

Q. Is the garden of S. Makhan Singh outside the city?

A. It is near the court.

Q. Was it burnt on that date?

A. I came to know later on that on the first day the children plucked the fruits of the garden and destroyed much of it and spoiled small plants also. On the second or third day, it was also heard by me that the house in the garden was burnt.

Q. The Hindus say that this house was burnt on the 9th?

A. To my knowledge this house was not burnt on the 9th. I am fully satisfied.

Q. Was looting and burning commenced in Kohat on the 9th?

A. It was commenced in the bazaar. It was all right when I left. The houses of Hindus and Muslims were burnt and looted.

Q. Did you remain within your house on the 9th?

A. I did not stir out. People were coming to me and giving news.

Q. Up to what time did looting and burning go on on the 9th?

A. I believe the bazaar was burnt within two hours on the 9th. The flames were coming up in the night. Even on the second day the smoke was coming out. On the same occasion I heard looting was going on.

Q. When did the fire commence?

A. I was told that the flames of fire were seen at half past two.

—Ended at 12·30 p.m.

Commenced at 6·30 p.m.

Q. You said that you heard the news of firing in the court on the 9th and on this you came in motor car? Did you see yourself or did you hear from where the shot came?

A. I did not see. Neither did I see the children killed. I was told at that time that the shot came from the upper storey of Sardar Saheb as a result of which one child died and one man was wounded.

Q. Did you make any investigation about it?

A. No.

Q. Do you still believe that Sardar Saheb fired?

A. People told me so, that Sardar Saheb fired. Some said that a man was killed near the tahsil. Others said that it was he who died first.

Q. Did he die by Sardar Makhan Singh's shot?

A. I heard this.

Q. It was such a big thing and yet you did not make inquiries?

A. I did not inquire about anything. Nothing occurred to me. I was in such a condition of mind at that time that I was not able to form any opinion.

Q. What kind of relations were there between you and Sardar Sahib?

A. My relations with all Hindus have been friendly and with Sardar Saheb also.

Q. Was it not your duty to inquire from Sardar Saheb?

A. The condition was such that I could not reach him; I could neither form an opinion nor make any inquiry.

Q. When your relations with the Hindus have been good, did you think over the matter why all the Hindus whom I have seen think that you are the cause of all these troubles?

A. I myself have not been able to solve this mystery why they have formed such an opinion about me. There are some people to whom I went and for whose protection I arranged and I tried to bring about peace.Even then I have not been able to

understand the cause and even now I fail to find out the cause of being blamed.

Q. Did you protect their womenfolk?

A. Many of them came into a compound. There was one beggar woman or whose *purdah* I arranged. Men were taken to *Hujra* and all the women to a big house with some men. This is what happened on 10th September at 3 p.m. The Muslims in my *mahalla* secured certificates from the Hindus whom they protected but I did not do even that.

Q. Can you recognize the Hindus whom you helped?

A. I helped many people including women. I recognize L. Ramji Mal. There was one Ladha Ram and also Pir Sahib of Than.

Question was put to L. Ramji Mal if he was there. He answered that B. Ahmad Khan was a friend of his father. ''There were other Mussalmans also with whom we had good relations. I asked Maulvi Ahmed Gul if he could make some arrangements. He kept silent, but other Muslims said to him, 'Maulvi, let bygones be bygones, and the matter be ended now.' Other Mussalmans asked us what we wanted. They took out our children and we lived in the house of B. Ahmad Khan. On my return I said to M. Ahmad Gul, 'The Muslims are looting our houses because there is no one there.' On this, he replied, 'You should go to the Deputy Commissioner or Assistant Commissioner who would make arrangement.'

Q. You say that other Muslim brethren gave refuge on the 10th ?

A. Yes. In Jungle Khel, in Gari Muwaz Khan, Mahalla Mian Badshi Mian Khelan, Mahalla Pir Sayat-ul-Am, also Dr. Gulam Sadiq.

Question was put by S. Gurdit Singh: ''When Maulana Saheb came in Kotwali on the 10th I told him how much ruin has taken place, to which he replied that that was the scene of Vishnu's temple. Was it so?''

A. Yes, I said so.

Q. Did all the Hindus go to cantonment on the 10th?

A. Some went because I myself went with three or four groups. The volunteers were sent for protection to all places. There may be one or two instances in which Hindus suffered. I could not say. The Hindus were taken, out from their houses and brought to *Thana* and handed over to the Government.

Q. What do you mean by handing over to the Government?

A. The authorities ordered that those who stayed behind and were safe be gathered in *Thana*. D. C. told me and the police also. I said that there were some in my house.

Q. Did the D. C. leave the management in your hands?

A. There was no particular management in my hands which the authorities could do, excepting that I would give them men, so that when people would enter the city from outside they could be recognized or if anybody would go out, it would be known

that the man was not a suspicious character. There was Police and border [*sic*] with the volunteers also.

Q. Were you working with the D. C. or the Government?

A. I co-operated with them so far as by not doing so there would have been not much trouble to the people [*sic*].

Q. Are you a member of the Working Committee?

A. Yes.

Q. Are there Khilafatists on the Working Committee?

A. Four or five Khilafat workers are there.

Q. Who is the Chairman of the W. C.?

A. Nawabzada Bag Mohd. Khan, *rais* [1] of Tiri.

Q. Those who are with you here, are any of them members of the W. C.?

A. Now there are two sections of the W. C. The Khans of the city who belong to Kohat Tahsil form one party, whom the other party of city people do not recognize. There is one of my companions a member of the W. C. My connection is with the city people.

Q. What connection has the W. C. got with the Government?

A. It has no special connection with the Government. It was founded only to give relief to distressed Muslims and to arrange for the conduct of cases. In fact it was formed to arrange for a reconciliation with the Hindus. But if it could not be effected, then the Muslims would be helped in their cases.

Q. The settlement arrived at now, was it done by W. C.?

A. The members went to Peshawar many times but there was no settle- ment. When the Hindus went to Kohat, at that time open talk took place and terms of settlement were reached and both the parties signed them. The signatures were put down by those also who were outsiders, which means those who had gone out of the W.C.

Q. When negotiations were going on at Peshawar, were you there?

A. I always went to Peshawar with the W. C.

Q. How many members of the deputation were present at Peshawar?

A. Sometimes six, at other times 12 or 15.

Q. Were you the spokesman there?

[1] Man of wealth

A. Either Nawab Sahib or Pir Sahib worked as spokesman as occasion arose, and sometimes I also talked. As I did not know English, I could not take more part in it.

Q. Who is the Secretary of the W. C.?

A. Now Sheikh Abdul Rahman is the Secretary.

Q. Do you consider the last settlement a forced choice?

A. I could not say it was such. The officials described it as one beneficial for both the Hindus and the Muslims.

Q. Do you consider it a settlement free from all kinds of pressure?

A. I would have considered it as free if there had been no hand of any Government man. It was a settlement made under fear.

Q. Were the Muslims also put in jail before they were made to sign the settlement?

A. No, but the members of the Hindu deputation were put in jail and then their signatures were taken on the settlement. The conditions arrived at would not have been better between the Hindus and Muslims in my opinion whoever would have done it, as these were settled after full discussion. The discussion took place between the members of the Hindu and Muslim deputations and [the terms] were agreed upon unanimously.

Q. Why do you say so, that there could not be better terms?

A. Because conditions were such. Jivandas was released and we felt helpless. Because of the way in which he approached the people we could not say anything in his favour; he was guilty before God. When he did not obey the *Shariat*[1] he was handed over to the court as we could not help it; we feared the Ulemas.

Q. Had all the Muslims demanded the release of Jivandas, would the Government still detain him?

A. The Government said that they would take up the case against him. I could not say the Government would let him go if the Muslims agreed.

Q. Why was such a restriction placed regarding the Gurdwara? Could not the Sikhs expect something better from the Muslims?

A. They could not expect anything better as there were many mosques nearby. According to old records, the Sikhs could not construct it. It would have demolished itself. One mosque was erected near it and it fell of itself. I agreed on their behalf that the Sikhs must be given the same status as before the 9th. The condition of the cutcha wall was made because the public did not like the first condition.

Q. What became of looting and burning after the 10th?

A. Firing was going on the 10th but no looting and burning took place after that.

[1] Divine law of the Muslims

Q. Could you give any estimate of proportion of losses of Hindus?

A. I could not tell.

Q. Was the loss of the Hindus greater?

A. Surely the Hindus suffered more.

Q. Is the booty or loot to be found in the villages or Kohat?

A. I could not say about it that some goods like cloth were recovered and they are deposited in the Tahsil by the authorities. I could not say if the goods were in Kohat. They must have gone into villages.

Q. Do you agree with Pir Saheb regarding the change of faith? Was there any such incident on the 9th and 10th?

A. I agree with him. It took place in those days as Pir Saheb said.

Q. Are you of the same opinion that every year 100 or 150 conversions take place?

A. I do not agree with the number. To my mind the number is 40 in a year on the average and in this people from outside are also included.

Q. Are you of the same opinion as Pir Saheb regarding conversion of women?

A. If no pressure has been used in the case of a woman. If she accepts Islam under pressure, the Muslims are forced to let her go to her Hindu husband.

Q. If the court decides in favour of the Hindu husband, would the Muslims still not return the woman?

A. No, the Muslims would not agree to it and will consider her connection with her Hindu husband illegitimate.

Q. Can the Muslims conceal the woman or adopt some other method about it?

A. It will be the duty of the Muslims not to let the woman go to her Hindu husband, as her bond with her Hindu husband is broken as soon as she accepts Islam.

Q. How can the Hindus go back to Kohat?

A. When they would agree to two conditions. First they would not publish such a pamphlet and they would not fire as they fired. If they would accept [these terms] they could go at any time they liked; there is no danger. I see no reason for any disturbance in future if they would give up such injurious methods. The Muslims' attitude will be all right if these people are careful.

Q. Should they accept both of these conditions?

A. We did not fix any conditions before nor do we now.

Q. I would therefore ask you what they should do?

A. I don't fix any condition. They can come without any conditions.

Q. If I would seek your advice, what would you suggest?

A. I would advise them to go to their places, but they should take the Frontier into account and mind the temperament of the Pathans.

Q. Is the atmosphere of Kohat such that Hindus cannot live in Kohat honourably?

A. I have not seen such conditions nor heard it that their living there honourably is difficult.

(At this stage S. Makhan Singh said that the treatment meted out to Hindus was not the same as before.)

Q. To Hindus! Why so much said against the Maulvi Sahib?

A. Individually there is no complaint against him.

Q. (by S. Gurdit Singh) Was the apology considered in your presence when the apology was thought over by the Santan Dharma Sabha on the 2nd September? Were you there at that time?

A. I was not there, I came to know only when I got the letter. There was no mention of apology.

Q. (by M. Shaukat Ali) Did you come to know or try to know if any invitation for looting was given to the Muslims of the city or of outside on the 8th or before that?

A. No.

Q. Had there been any such movement or others would have done so, was it possible that the matter would not have come to your notice?

A. Had there been any such plot or movement, I would have got the news anyhow.

Q. Was the incident of 9th a pre-arranged one or accidental?

A. There was no arrangement by the Muslims, at least I had no idea at all.

Q. Do you know that any Khilafat worker or volunteer took part in burning or looting of Hindu houses?

A. No.

Q. Did they put fire to any bazaar or take part in looting or in exciting the people for it?

A. No, I don't think.

Q. How many volunteers are there?

A. There are 14 or 15 volunteers nowadays.

Q. Did any of them take part in it?

A. It was put into my ears, but I could not say that they did it.

Q. You non-co-operated when the Khilafat declared it; when did you commence co-operating?

A. I worked with my volunteers only [in some things] in which the Government authorities took part, so that people be not put to trouble.

Q. Did you go to the D. C. before that and ask his help?

A. Once when I joined the Anjuman one year ago, I had to go to the D.C. about the Anjuman School. Since the Khilafat commenced, besides this occasion I did not go to the D.C.

Q. What troubles arose that you gave up your principle?

A. People were suspecting the workers that they would not hear anybody. They trusted me alone. If I had gone out then, such people would have entered the field and it would have been more troublesome.

Q. Since when did you begin to mix with the officials?

A. I commenced since the pamphlet matter and it was not officially. Since I joined the Khilafat I had given up co-operation.

Q. Do your enquiries make you believe the Muslim lad was killed by the first shot?

A. Yes, on hearing of the same shot I went to bazaar.

Q. Had there been no such accident, the disturbances would not have occurred. Do you believe it?

A. Certainly not.

Q. (by Maulana Shaukat Ali) Did the volunteers take part in looting?

A. I could not swear about it that no volunteers took part.

Q. Did you hear anything about it?

A. I heard much about it, I don't think that any Muslim took part in loot.

Q. Did the Khilafatists take part in looting and burning the shops and troubling the Hindus?

A. I could not swear about it. I have heard complaints that the Muslims did so.

(Pir Sahib said none was free from it. Khilafat volunteers were also in it .)

Q. Did you hear that the Khilafat volunteers took part in looting ?

A. Yes, I heard.

Q. Were the Khilafat volunteers sent out with a message to bring outsiders for loot?

A. I have no knowledge.

—Ended at 8.30 p.m.

From the typewritten office copy: S.N. 10531

103. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA[1]

February 7, 1925

PANDIT MALAVIYAJI

BIRLA HOUSE

DELHI

REACHING DELHI TOMORROW MORNING BHATINDA MAIL.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

104. TO KATHIAWARIS

In a few days I shall be again in Kathiawar, and that, too, in Rajkot this time. Shri Bharucha has been so much impressed by Kathiawar that he has asked for permission to prolong his stay there and propagate the spinning-wheel movement . I hope that the usual remark about our being enthusiastic merely in the beginning will not be proved true in this case. If the political leaders of Rajkot decide, they can infuse new life in Rajkot as also in other parts of Kathiawar. "In other parts", because Rajkot is the central place and, as it is the headquarters of the (Political) Agency also, political workers foregather there. No one can say that politicians are pressed for time, and they have sufficient influence over the people. They can make the whole of Kathiawar khadi-minded, revitalize it and check the exodus of Kathiawaris for a few pounds of *bajri*[2]. We shall not understand how the problem will be solved in this way, by asking the question what a person can earn through the spinning-wheel; we shall be convinced that it can be, if we calculate how much money the people will save. If we only think how much everyone will suffer by the increase of a pie in a rupee in the salt tax, we shall see no reason to be seriously upset. But when we calculate the total revenue yielded by this impost, we shall be astounded by the figures. Loss of this kind is like a prick by the cobbler's needle. It is felt by the society as a whole. We can deduce from this the effect on every individual.

Similar is the case with the spinning-wheel. Suppose that in

[1] This telegram was also sent to Motilal Nehru, Delhi and Khwaja Abdul Majid, Aligarh.

[2] Coarse millet

every home spinning brings half an anna every day. That will amount to twelve rupees at the end of a year. And if we assume that there are five persons in every home, then, 2,600,000 ÷ 5 = 520,000 ¥ 12 = 6,240,000, that will be the figure of rupees saved for Kathiawar. Let us do another calculation. Assuming that for every person in the population of 2,600,000 on the average five rupee are spent every year on cloth, Kathiawar uses cloth worth Rs. 13,000,000. If we deduct from this sum one-third as representing the cost of cotton, then Kathiawar will be saving Rs. 9,000,000.

What a glow of fresh life would the people of Kathiawar feel if they found that they were exempted to the tune of nine million rupees from the levy which they have to pay to the Bombay Government annually! If we give up counting the benefit to each of us individually, we would understand the invisible gains or losses in which we share. I expect the people of Katihawar to count the collective gain or loos. If Kathiawar does that today, the rest of India will follow suit. If we merely ask, "What will it profit to me?" Our conclusion will be absurd and ruinours. Activities beneficial to society will be undertaken when we learn to ask: "How will this benefit the people?" If every person thought of his own gain, all would be ruined. When all seek the benefit of all, that is, collective welfare, the whole society and every members of it would benefit.

If the Kathiawaris think on these lines, they will realize the miracle which the spinning-wheel can work. And I hope to receive from them a balance—sheet drawn on these lines of work done in this month. Did those who took the pledge to spin do the spinning every day? Have those who did not know spinning learnt it? Has the cotton for which an appeal was addressed to the people been collected ? If it has been, has any plan been drawn up regarding its disposal? The Executive Committee and the individual workers will have to answer these and many other similar questions.

I expect of Rajkot, too, a similar—balance sheet of work done. Preparations are under way there for honouring me. What need is there to honour me? If the people think, however, that they ought to honour me, they can do so by raising a pile of yarn before me and by every person adorning himself in Khadi. I can take no pleasure in high—sounding epithets. I shall be undertaking this my second visit to Kathiawar in the hope of being able to propagate the cause of Khadi and spinning, for serving the *Antyajas*, the people and the

Rulers.

I shall be opening a national school at Rajkot. I believe that sincere workers have been giving their services for it. The Gujarat Provincial Committee has donated liberally towards its establishment. His Highness the Thakore Saheb has given land at a low price. I wish that the citizens of Rajkot should take interest in this school. They should watch it, correct any mistakes it may be making and, if it has men of character on its staff, help it by sending their children to it. It is but proper the Rajkot itself should shoulder the burden of its expenses.

This time my tour of Kathiawar will include a visit to Wadhawan. I shall give a few hours to the town for the sake of the national school there. Great sacrifices have been made for its sake. I have heard of much criticism against it, too. Clouds have gathered over it, and cleared. Some Khadi work has been done in the town. It is, again, a town which claims Motilal as its citizen. It has enjoyed the benefit of Shivlal's enterprising spirit and wealth. I will expect many things from this town. I am sure it will not disappoint me.

I wish that, instead of wasting their time and resources on honouring me, people at every place which I visit should think of utilizing my services. I request the workers to see that my time and that of the public is not wasted in useless speeches. May I claim a right to beg that, wherever a meeting is organized as being unavoidable, every man and woman attending it will be clad in khadi?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-2-1925

105. MAHARAJA OF MYSORE

His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore has taken up spinning. This news cannot but gladden the hearts of those who look upon it as a sacred duty? The correspondent reporting this news also adds that this development has followed Sir Prabhashanker Pattani taking up spinning. We need not get elated on hearing of these instances. Even so, they draw attention to the nature and extent of the power which lies in spinning. Moreover, the example of eminent men is bound to have an effect on the common people. I congratulate the Maharaja of Mysore and hope that he will not give up till the end of his life this activity which he has taken up. It will do immense good to him and

his subjects. Its immediate benefit may seem insignificant, but I have no doubt that it will ultimately grow into an impressive giant tree. The work of spinning will become a golden link binding the Maharaja and his subject. This will revive the rule that princes should engage themselves in useful work which is calculated to benefit the subjects, the knowledge that even the work done by the poorest among the subjects has a place in the palace of the Maharaja will always act as an inspiration to the people, and it will be established that in reality there is no distinction of class between the prince and the poor. Such results do not follow from a few days' work. They require continuous and regular work, done with complete faith.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-2-1925

106. TRUE EDUCATION

The following letter of Dr. Sumant Mehta came into my hands only during my recent journey to Delhi. For one thing, during tours I do not receive my post regularly and, for another, even if letters are received in time my secretary cannot look into them immediately. After he has seen them, he passes on to me those needing immediate attention, and I can look into them as and when I find time. This naturally entails delays. Had I received Dr. Sumant Mehta's letter in proper time, I would have made use of it during the convocation.[1] That occasion was missed. I, therefore, discuss the letter here. It reads as follows:[2]

I welcome this letter. In fact, Acharya Gidwani[3] had acted on the idea underlying the main suggestion made in it. That is, *snatakas*[4] were posted at various places for special service and contact was maintained with them. This practice was not a part of the curriculum but was followed in individual cases and on an experimental basis.

[1] Of the Gujarat Vidyapith

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had expressed dissatisfaction with the education programme of the Gujarat Vidyapith and, emphasizing the need for training political and social workers, offered some concrete suggestions.

[3] A. T. Gidwani, principal of the Gujarat Mahavidyalaya, Ahmedabad

[4] Graduates of Gujarat Vidyapith

The doctor proposes, and rightly, that it should be made a permanent feature and included in the curriculum itself. The letter seems to imply that the doctor intends his scheme to be adopted in place of the present scheme of studies.

Personally, I might like even that; there is, however, no need to completely replace the present scheme, and even if there be, it is not possible to do so. We had in mind the students' inclinations when framing it. In comparison with other provinces, Gujarat felt the spirit of service a little late. Every student, therefore, will not be eager for a course of studies essential for training in service. Moreover, along with the needs of social service we have to pay attention to the problem of livelihood. The prevailing idea is that education is intended to equip the student with the means of livelihood. If the aim were no more than this, it could be excused, but there is also the idea that education should help the student to make money or to get appointed to a position of authority. As long as this attitude does not change, our curriculum is bound to remain defective from a theoretical point of view. I think it impossible to change it immediately. But it is essential, and quite possible, gradually to reduce the idea of career to secondary importance.

The Vidyapith also will have to create for the students fields of social service which can offer them means of livelihood. Livelihood may not be the aim of education, but the ability to earn it must be one of the fruits of education. The aim of education is spiritual development, and where this is achieved, the ability to make a living is bound to follow.

It is also noted that students are not happy unless they acquire a knowledge of English. They also crave for a knowledge of literature. There can be no harm at all in either. We have only to guard against making a fetish of them, against making the study of English and of literature the sole aims of education and forms of self-indulgence. In their right place, which they occupy at present, they are of great value.

It cannot be maintained that the curriculum of the Government colleges is in every respect harmful. I do not feel that all of it deserves to be kept out. Its features of parrot-learning, prohibition of the use of the mother tongue, grand display of the knowledge of English, one-sided study of history, almost complete indifference to our ancient culture, absence of training in self-control, all these and similar features must be guarded against.

I, therefore, believe that there is considerable room for improvement in the present curriculum of the Vidyapith. But this is sooner said than done. Who will effect the improvement? There is none among its workers who is rich in the experience of life. Those who are in charge of formulating the curriculum are products of Government colleges. Some of them may have been disillusioned about those colleges, but how can we expect them to have a new vision and experience of new methods? Hence the defects in the curriculum of national education. The heads of all institutions have tried to effect what improvements they could and their efforts have met with some measure of success.

Now a word about Dr. Sumant Mehta's suggestion. I agree that the programme of studies embodied in his proposal deserves to be implemented. Some of the subjects suggested therein can be introduced in the early stages of the course in the Mahavidyalaya. Some others can be taught even in the pre-Mahavidyalaya stage. Yet some others seem to be such as might be taught after the general studies are completed. I invite Dr. Sumant Mehta to prepare his plan of study in detail. I could have done this even by writing a letter to him. The reason for writing about the subject here is to induce the teachers and the students to think about it, discuss it and also help Dr. Sumant Mehta. We have very few persons who can think. And even those we have are busy each in his own field of work. This position is becoming normal day by day, as is proper that it should. If everyone were to dabble in every subject, he would do justice neither to the subject nor to himself. Unless each one of usselects his own field of work and works with single-minded devotion in that, we shall never achieve our goal. The task of implementing the plan will have to be accepted by the Doctor himself. Thoughtful teachers and social workers who take interest in academic matters may assist him. My role was to bring them and him together and, to an extent, express my own views. The doctor has retired to Petlad for one year, and he has an opportunity there or experimenting with his scheme. It will be easy for him, therefore, to elaborate it.

When it is fully developed, the scheme will require teachers who can implement it, but that is a separate problem. I am sure that we shall get them when the need for them arises.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-2-1925

107. KOHAT HINDUS

[*February 9, 1925*]

I know that the pages of this week's *Young India* will be searched for the finding of Maulana Shaukat Ali and myself on the tragedy of last September. I am sorry to disappoint the curious. For Maulana Shaukat Ali is not with me and I must not publish anything without his first seeing it. I may, however, tell the reader that I have already discussed my impressions with Pandit Motilalji, then Pandit Malaviyaji and lastly with Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan[1], Dr. Ansari and the Ali brothers, and I have just[2] finished writing them out during my journey to Sabarmati. My notes will be immediately forwarded to Maulana Shaukat Ali and I shall hope to publish them[3] together with Maulana Shaukat Ali's endorsement, addition, or amendment as the case may be. But apart from the finding, I am in a position to reiterate my advice to the Hindus that in their place I should not return to Kohat unless there is an honourable peace with the Mussalmans without the Government Intervention. This is not possible at the present moment. For unfortunately, the Muslim Working Committee which is at present guiding the Mussalmans of Kohat was not and would not be represented before us. I can appreciate the delicate position of the Hindus. They do not want to lose their property. The Maulana Saheb and I have failed to bring about peace. We have failed even to draw the principal Mussalmans for a discussion. Nor am I in a position to say that we should succeed in our attempt in the near future. In the circumstances the Hindus are at liberty to take any course they may consider advisable. In spite of our failure, I can only advise one course. "Don't return till the Mussalmans take you to Kohat with self-respect and dignity." But I know that this is cold comfort except for those who are able to stand on their own legs and are in need of no advice from any quarter whatsoever. Such is not the position of the Kohat refugees. I have conveyed my views to Pandit Malaviyaji. He has been their guide from the beginning and they must act as he advises them. Lalaji came to Pindi but he was unfortunately laid up in bed. My own considered opinion is given in the statement

[1] 1865-1927; physician and politician; President, Indian National Congress, 1921

[2] On February 9

[3] *Vide* "Kohat",19-3-1925.

sent to Maulana Shaukat Ali. But I confess in advance that it will bring no solace to them. I am but a broken reed not worth relying upon.

But there is no hesitation about my advice regarding what the refugees should do whilst they are outside Kohat. I cannot help remarking that it is demoralizing for men and women who have strong arms and legs and who are otherwise physically fit, to subsist on charity. They must find out some occupation for themselves or with the aid of the local men. I have suggested carding, spinning and even weaving. But they may do any other useful work they choose or that may be chosen for them. The idea is that no person, man or woman, who is physically fit should live on charity. There must be always enough occupation in a well-ordered State for all who are willing to work. The refugees must be able to give a good account of every minute of their time whilst they are being supported by the nation. "Idle hands some mischief still will ever find to do" is not a mere schoolboy rhyme. It contains a profound truth which can be verified by everyone for himself. Let there be no distinction between rich and poor, high and low. They are all bed-fellows in adver-sity. And the rich and the well-to-do should set an example to the others by labouring usefully even though they may not be drawing rations.

What an incalculable good it must be to a nation whose members know an occupation which can stand them in good stead in distress. The refugees' life would have taken a nobler turn if they had all been spinners or carders or weavers. The refugees' camp would then have presented the appearance of a busy hive and could have been kept up indefinitely. If the men do not decide to return at once, it is not yet too late to mend. It is a mistake to issue dry rations. It is no doubt less trouble to the committee of management but it means more waste and utter indiscipline among the refugees. They should place themselves under soldiers, discipline keeping regular hours for rising, washing, praying, feeding, working and retiring. There is no reason why there should not be *Ramayana* readings or such other readings for them. All this requires thought, care, attention and diligence. Given these the calamity could be turned into a blessing in disguise.

Young India, 12-2-1925

108. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

February 9, 1925

PANDIT MALAVIYA
BIRLA HOUSE
DELHI

WHAT ABOUT COW PROTECTION CONSTITUTION. HOPE YOU ARE GOING RAWALPINDI TODAY.

GANDHI

From the handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

109. TELEGRAM TO JAIRAMDAS DAULTARAM[1]

February 9, 1925

JAIRAMDAS[2]
C/O RAMPYARELAL VAKIL
RAWALPINDI

WIRE LALAJI'S HEALTH, POST NAMES AND OTHER PRATICULARS. TWO PERSONS MURDERED NEAR KOHAT NINTH SEPTEMBER.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

110. LETTER TO CHAMANLAL VAISHNAV

Maha Vad 1 [*February 9, 1925*][3]

BHAI CHAMANLAL[4],

I write this on the train. I got your letter. It is impossible for me to go there before the 16th. I am afraid I shall be able to do so only about the 20th or 21st, or it may well be the visit is cancelled.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati; C. W. 2869. Courtesy: Shardabehn Shah

[1] The addressee accompanied Gandhiji to Rawalpindi in connection with the Kohat riots.

[2] b. 1892; Secretary, Sind Provincial Congress Committee; later became Minister of Food and Agriculture, Government of India; Governor of Bihar and Assam.

[3] Gandhiji visited wadhwan on 21st February 1925 and performed the opening ceremony of a children's school there.

[4] A political worker of Wadhwan

111. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

Maha Vad 1 [*February 9, 1925*][1]

BHAI DEVCHAND,

I write this letter on the train. I am not spending money on a wire. I got your letter. I cannot have time enough to reach Wankaner on the 14th. All my time will be taken up by Borsad. But they can (if they come to Rajkot) have an hour more at Wankaner on the 15th.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

BHAI DEVCHAND PAREKH
BARRISTER
JETPUR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5712

112. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

February 9, 1925[2]

P.S.V.
DELHI

DOES HIS EXCELLENCY NOW CONSIDER IT POSSIBLE TO PERMIT ME AND MY COLLEAGUES TO VISIT KOHAT DURING BEGINNING MARCH.[3]

GANDHI

From a hand written draft: S.N. 2456; also *Young India*, 26-2-1925

[1] The Postmark bears "Jetpur, 11 Feb. 25".

[2] February 10, as reproduced in *Young India*, 26-2-1925. It is likely that the telegram, though drafted on February 9, was sent on February 10.

[3] On February 13, the Private Secretary to the Viceroy sent the following reply: "His Excellency the viceroy desires me to thank you for your telegram and the courtesy that prompted it. His Excellency would have been glad to be able to fall in with your wishes. But his attention has been called to the advice you have just given in *Young India* to the Kohat Hindus not to return to Kohat unless the Muslims make honourable peace with them without Government intervention. The only construction His Excellency can put on his article is that if you went to Kohat your influence would be directed towards the breakdown of the recent settlement, the effecting of which was a matter of great concern to His Excellency and from which he hopes and believes an enduring reconciliation will spring. His Excellency is sure therefore that you yourself will appreciate how impossible it is for him to fall in with your wishes."

113. LETTER TO SIR PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

[Before *February 10, 1925*][1]

I have a letter charging you with adultery. I had heard the charge even at Bhavnagar when we were there. But I did not believe it. Now it has come from a man whom I cannot ignore. Can this be true? I was highly pleased at your straightforwardness and courage. But what to do if this is true?

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

114. TELEGRAM TO SIR PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

SABARMATI,
February 10, 1925

SIR PRABHASHANKER PATTANI
BHAVNAGAR
DELIGHTED YOUR LETTER.[2] THANK YOU. HOPE YOU ARE RESTORED.

GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 3191. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

115. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SABARMATI,
February 10, 1925

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
93 BAZAR GATE
BOMBAY
TELL SHUAIB[3] JOIN ME KATHIAWAD TOUR FOURTEENTH.[4]

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The reply received on February 10, 1925 said: "There were some lapses in early youth, but I do not remember to have committed any such acts on the strength of my official position. You say you will destroy my letter; but why should you? My letters are opened by my secretary and my clerks. I am dictating this letter to Batuk, and Lady Pattani also has read this letter."

[2] *ibid*

[3] Shuaib Qureshi

[4] *Vide* the following item.

116. LETTER TO SIR PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

Maha Vad 2 [*February 10, 1925*]

SUGNA BHAISHRI,

I returned from Rawalpindi yesterday. Today I got your letter for which I was waiting. I could not resist sending a telegram conveying my thanks. Please do not be angry with the person who wrote to me. I shall try to let you know his name also. On reading that you do not consider any letter as wholly confidential, I have begun to feel more proud of mankind. I feel humbled. I thought that I was perhaps the only persons who had nothing private of confidential. You have surpassed me, because you are living in an environment where it would be difficult to publicize one's private life. Had the writer been a schemer or a wicked man, I would have written nothing to you from his letter, nor would I have allowed it to influence me in the least. But he is a gentleman, discrimination, disciplined and learned. He cannot possibly have any malice towards you; but I can well understand how he came to commit this mistake. I am sending him a copy of your letter. It will do him good. He is such a pure-minded person that I wouldn't be surprised if he came to you and offered his apology. I did well in writing the letter to you. You recollect your past lapses; but who is free from these? I have been saved thrice from falling. It was not owing to my own strength but owing to my unlettered mother. She bound her son by the thread of a vow and he was saved.

I shall reach Rajkot on the 16th. Shall we meet there or any where else?

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 3196. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

117. LETTER TO FULCHAND SHAH

Maha Vad 2 [*February 10, 1925*][1]

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

Here is the outcome of your letter. I am keeping the original

[1] The letter seems to have been written on the same day as the preceding item.

with me. Tell me if you still have any doubt. Also let me know if your doubt is cleared. At the moment I do not have time for more.

Blessing from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2867. Courtesy: Shardabehn Shah

118. SPEECH AT SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI

February 10, 1925

I am in the predicament of a man who having come to know that there is a serpent under his mattress shakes the matters vigorously, sweeps the room and washes the floor with water. I have come to know what I did not know earlier about the situation in Kohat. I talk to you about it because it is a matter concerning religion. We all have to take this as a warning. It does not mean that we have to do something special and novel; but we have to prepare ourselves mentally and emotionally. We have to become purer.

At this stage Gandhiji referred to the number of conversions in Kohat and said:

That number may possibly be considered as small elsewhere. In an area were Muslims barely number 15,000, this is terrible. The Hindus there work up and the Muslims could not tolerate the awakening; those looking for a chance to wreak vengeance found it in the form of that booklet. If that was the only reason, the man concerned could have been arrested, he could have been crushed, and perhaps all those connected with the booklet could have been crushed. But here the whole community was persecuted. Its cause must be deep-seated. I found that cause quite by chance. The Muslims said many things frankly about proselytization. But that activity has hurt me very much. I would not mind it at all if 30 crores of Hindus became Muslims as a result of scriptural studies and rational arguments. Then I would be the single Hindu left and thereby I would add lustre to Hinduism. Or I would adduce proof of the immortality of Hinduism and say that the others became Muslims because they could not bear the brilliance of Hinduism. But if people turned Muslims out of greed or fear, as it happened there, I could not endure it. I am talking about this matter because I am to make you strong of mind, in order that you may be more attached to dharma. Despite this,

there will be no change in my non-violent behaviour, my attitude of love and in my behaviour towards Muslims. The more I see their weaknesses, the more shall I serve them. My love for them will certainly endure. But the language of love will change—it has become more firm and will become firmer still—just as my words to Englishmen are becoming stiffer. That will be the only difference. My sole object is to rouse you this morning and to caution you. I want to caution you because you may sometimes face a similar situation. If any little boy or girl in the Ashram is kidnapped, you should not just look on, interpreting my non-violence in a superficial way. The determination to be pure is itself a source of strength. A man having a pure and unsullied heart has no need to develop his body. His body automatically becomes strong. And thereafter mere resolve is enough. It is my resolve that I would utter the name of Rama before retiring, so that without chanting the name I can never get sleep. And if I do get it, I utter *Ramanama* while turning on my side and I do see my standing near me. The same true of every resolve.

Even a child in the Ashram is not afraid if he faces danger. If he does not have strength of soul, he surely has nails. We clip nails becuase dirt accumulates in them. When they grow big they get in the way and we clip them. In like manner, we should go on removing the dangerous elements in the body one by one.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. VII, pp. 136-7.

119. LETTER TO MANEKLAL AMRITLAL GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN,
Tuesday [*February 10, 1925*][1]

CH. MANEKLAL,

I have your letter. I follow what you say about Babu. You did well in sending him. If he can afford to stay, it is well and good.

Prabhudas his improved a lot with the change of climate there. It would be nice if Mani did likewise. But she worries a lot. And worry kills one.

Blessing from
BAPU

[1] From the postmark

[PS.]

I hope to reach Porbunder on the 19th. Devchandbhai must be thinking what to do if the epidemic spreads.

CHI. MANEKLAL AMRITLAL GANDHI
RANAVAV
KATHIAWAR

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 890. Courtesy: Maneklal A. Gandhi.

120. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS BIRLA

SABARMATI,
Magh Krishna 4 [*February 11, 1925*][1]

BHAI RAMESHWARDASJI,

Your letter. Jamnalalji[2] is here at present. He tells me that Rs. 10,000 have been received at his firm. I shall use the sum for the service of the *Antyajas.*

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

[PS.]

Glad to know that you are quite well.

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6104. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

121. SPEECH AT ANKLAV

February 11, 1925

Swaraj is there where the poorest of the poor can live happily. It is we who have not known hunger that are responsible for famine. A hundred years ago women of this village used to spin and men used to spin or else to weave.

The *Dharalas* have some bad habits. They drink liquor and commit thefts. As long as these things persist, religion is not safe. Unfortunately Hindus and Muslims here keep reviling each other. One's religion should be dear to oneself, but if untouchability is a

[1] The Vikram date appears to be incorrect as the postmark has "Anand 11-2-25."

[2] Jamnalal Bajaj (1889-1942); social worker and philanthropist, close associate of Gandhiji; treasurer, Indian National Congress for many years

part of Hinduism, I will have none of it. Even if a man has bathed and washed off his filth, we believe that still we cannot touch him—this attitude is sinful. The people of India are the *Dheds* and *Bhangis* of the world. A man has to answer for his deeds. It is not the adult of the British that we are slaves. The tree of slavery has grown from the seed of untouchability in our midst.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. VII, pp. 138-9

122. SPEECH AT BORSAD

February 11, 1925

Borsad has become a place of pilgrimage, thanks to the satyagraha struggle. But the holy places in India are no longer holy, and I hope this has not become the fate of Borsad. Your struggle and the success you achieved in it were no ordinary ones. But to fight a battle is one thing, and to follow it up with constructive work is another. One discovers that to reap happy benefits from one's success is a difficult matter,and it often seems as if the struggle had never been fought. To return to the normal conditions after a struggle is as difficult as after a prolonged fast. We discovered this even after the Kheda agitation, and feel it after the present struggle. We saw the same thing, on a wider scale in Europe. There, a great War was fought between Britain and Germany; colossal sacrifices were made and we had expected to see a new Europe as a result of these, expected to see its people more moral and pure, wiser and more godfearing. But the evil ways which prevailed there persist even today, and the people who made the sacrifices are in an unhappy plight. Let us hope that the difference in the manner of fighting that War and our struggle will be reflected in thier repsective outcomes. In the War in Europe, the two sides fought to destroy each other. In a satyagraha struggle, neither side is destroyed, but on the contrary both benefit. How does it happen, then, that we do not see the desired result at the end of even such a pure struggle as satyagraha? The reason is just this, that we find excitement to be a common feature of the two kinds of fighting. We are not able to maintain an atmosphere of peace and show patience, as we should, and so we seem to lose the gain we have made. About Borsad, however, the Durbar Saheb had forewarned me that he would not be able to show me Khadinagar, that the struggle had not taught

the people the value of khadi. I did not, therefore, come here with any high hopes and so I am not very much disappointed either.

Even running a school requires considerable ability. The aphorism, as in one's body so in the universe, holds true on all occasions. If I can conduct the Satyagraha Ashram well, I can succeed even in Lord Reading's seat. The difficulties I have to face Ashram, the anxious thought I have to bestow and the number of problems I have to solve, I do not have to in a struggle like yours. What after all is to be done in running a campaign? I have to chalk out a programme and tell you what to do, merely give instructions to people; running an Ashram is much more difficult that this. I have no aspiration to be a Viceroy even in this life; I only wish to be a devoted servant of the country. But I beg leave to say that running an Ashram taxes one's spiritual resources more agonizingly than discharging the duties of a Viceroy ever does. You, too, I wish, should tax yourselves in like manner in running the Vidya Mandir, or the more one suffers the purer one becomes.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-2-1925

123. SPEECH AT BHADRAN[1]

February 11, 1925

Before I thank you for your love and the address you have presented to me, I have one request to make. You have assembled here in such a large number at this late hour of the night. I would be guilty of a crime against you if I did not say that this makes me happy. But there is also something else which pains me. I do not know if the organizers of the meeting deliberately made the arrangements which we find here, but by now everyone who attends such meetings knows my idiosyncrasies. One of these is that I am extremely paimed to see at a meeting a separate enclosure for *Antyajas*, and find it impossible to start my speech. But, as you have said, and many others besides you say, non-violence is the central creed guiding my life, and I am trying to act every moment in accordance with it. If what you have said is true, I can never wish to give you pain. I would not like you to do anything without knowing its implications, nor can I get angry with

[1] A village in Kaira District in Gujarat

you and force you to do anything. Whatever I wish you to do, I should persuade you to do by touching your heart and reason. I, therefore, appeal to you to join me in wishing, if you believe that the practice of untouchability is a blot on Hinduism, that the wall which separates our *Antyaja* brethren from us should be demolished.

I do not mean that you should demolish that wall this very moment, or do anything that may create a disturbance in this meeting. I only want to ask you whether you agree with me. Do you wish that this wall should disappear and that our *Antyaja* sisters and brothers should take their seats with us?[1] It is only now that you have presented me an address. The manner in which you have framed your address and the fact of its being printed on [hand-made] paper or, maybe khadi, can have no value in my eyes, or only as much as you give by your daily conduct. The address, however, which you have presented to me this moment by removing the fencing [separating the *Antyajas* from the rest of the audience] will ever remain inscribed in my heart. I beg for another address like this from my Hindu sisters and brothers. I would not be pleased by your giving me a little yarn, or offering me flowers and fruits of various kinds and bringing an *Antyaja* girl to place a *tilak* on my forehead (as was done here). These I may have anywhere. But the gift you have made me just now should be accompanied with the chain of love; I want nothing less than that, for love is a part of non-violence, is comprehended in it.

My *Sanatani*[2] friends should not please believe that I wish to strike a blow at Hindu society. I count myself as a *sanatani*. I know that my claim will be accepted by few, but that is my claim and I will continue to make it. I have said again and again that people are sure to admit, if not today after my death, that Gandhi was a *sanatani* Hindu. *Sanatani* means that which goes back to ancient times. My ideals are of this kind, that is, I find them in the oldest of books and try to live up to them; I am, therefore, justified in claiming myself to be a *sanatani*. I would not accept people as *sanatanis* merely because they can recite the Shastras in a beautiful manner. Those alone deserve to be called *sanatani* who have the spirit of Hinduism in every fibre of their being. The revered Shankara summarized that spirit in

[1] Many hands were raised in support, and only one against. The *Antyajas* then came and took their seats with the rest.

[2] Orthodox Hindus

one sentence: *Brahma satyam jaganmithya*.[1] Another sage declared that there is no higher dharma than truth, and still another that Hinduism means perfect non-violence. You may accept any one of these three statements, and you will get the essence of Hinduism. They represent the very cream of the holy books of Hinduism, and I who claim to follow dharma as defined by them simply cannot wish to hurt anyone. I merely want you to mix with *Antyajas*, for they are also human beings. I want that we should serve them for they deserve our service. They render to society service which a mother gives to her child. To look upon them as untouchables and to despise them amounts to forgotting our humanity. Indians have become the pariahs of the world in this age because they look upon countless numbers of human beings as untouchables. This has resulted in the Muslims, too, being treated as untouchables, because of their association with us. What is the cause of this unhappy state of affairs? There is only one answer: "Reap as you sow" is a divine law. There is nothing mysterious in the fact that, through the world, God is dealing us this justice. It is perfect justice we are getting. "As men worship me, so I give myself to them"[2], so said Shri Krishna. If, therefore, you understand what I want from you, you will not be pained. I am not out to give pain to people. I am not asking too much from you. I have never asked you to enter into marriage ties with *Antyajas* or eat in their company. That is a matter of your own choice. But you cannot claim that to regard them as untouchables is also a matter of your choice. It cannot be a matter of your choice to avoid contact where you should not and not avoid if where you should. If you do not see the sufferings of *Antyajas*, how can you say *sarvam khalvidam Brahma*[3]? The author of that Upanishad was not hypocrite since he has ascertained that this entire universe in *Brahman;* we should be worse than brutes if we do not suffer when we see others suffer. Our dharma declares in the most emphatic terms that the brute, too, has a soul just as we have, but we have in this age distorted the teaching of that religion, Akha[4] described this idea [of anyone being defiled by the touch of another human being] as a superfluous limb. You should discard it, cut it off. I want you to destroy this evil of untouchability

[1] The *Brahman* alone is real; the phenomenal world is but an illusion.

[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, IV. 11.

[3] "Verily, all this is *Brahman*."

[4] A Gujarati poet of the 17th century, famed for his satire; vedantist and rationalist

by arousing in you compassion and love, or, if you would have it so, a sense of brotherhood. If we end it, we shall win glory for Hinduism and will have saved it. I do not mean that *Antyajas* will then stop embracing Islam or Christianity. No religion depends for its survival on the numerical strength of its followers. There has been no more fallacious idea than that the strength of a religion depends on the number of those who profess it. Even if but one person remains a true Hindu, Hinduism will not perish; if, on the other hand, the crores of Hindus in the country adopt the ways of hypocrisy and evil, Hinduism will not live long but is certain to be destroyed. When I say Hinduism will be saved, I mean that we shall have atoned for our errors, paid the debt of centuries and escaped bankruptcy.

There is no doubt that the practice of untouchability is inspired by hatred. If anyone claims that he bears love for *Antyajas* though treating them as untouchables, I will not believe him. I see no evidence of love whatsoever in this practice. If we bore love for them, we would not add-ress them insultingly, would not throw at them our left-overs; if we had love for them, we would hold them in reverence as we do our mothers, would provide them better wells and schools than what we ourselves have, and permit them to visit temples. All these would be indications of love. Love shines with the light of countless suns. If one little sun cannot be hidden, how can love remain so? Does a mother ever have to declare that she loves her child? An infant which cannot even speak looks at its mother's eyes and, as their eyes meet, we see something mysterious passing between them.

Because I say this, let no one believe that a Hindu returned from South Africa with reformist ideas wants to impose his ideas on Hinduism. I can truthfully say that I entertain no ambition of reforming other people. I am a selfish man, immersed in my own joy. I seek my own spiritual welfare, and that is why I have been able to detach myself from everything and can live in complete peace. But I want you to feel the joy which I do and, therefore, ask you to welcome contact with *Antyajas*, to serve them and experience the happiness which you will get by doing so.

We can but garland the bride and the bridegroom. What more can we desire than to see them bound with the chain of love? What more can a person wish for than that he or she should be united to another who will be his for her life's partner? Anyone who desires more than this has no right to marry. I would not like anyone to

marry in slavish obedience to rigid custom. If a girl faced with such a harsh necessity resolves to remain unmarried for her whole life and lead a life of self-sacrifice and voluntary suffering, if, like Uma, she takes a vow that she would marry only if she got a husband like Siva, she is bound to get such a husband, if not in this life in the next. Such a woman will be an ornament to her whole community. The purpose of marriage is not self-indulgence, but self-control. I want all people to understand this idea.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-2-1925

124. LEAVES FROM A DIARY[1]

Misses Angus and Hindsley were sent from Adyar to the Ashram by Dr. Besant to learn carding, spinning, etc., so as to be able to train others at Adyar. They passed a month at the Ashram and kept a diary of their daily experiences. On their departure they left relevant notes from their diary for publication in these pages. On first reading I thought I could not well publish them as they appeared to me to be too personal. The next thought was to cut out the personal references and then publish them. But on re-reading, I have decided to present the notes without a single alteration. I have stood the strain of personal reference now for a long time. I can very well bear the additional strain. There is a merit in the notes which compels publication. The references to the Ashram are not wholly true. All is not so rosy as it has appeared to these friends. The Ashram has its jars, it has its trials and difficulties, it has to wear away many a rough edge. But it does try to live up to its name. There are certainly things about the Ashram which can be copied with safety. But I must warn the reader against being carried away by some of the flattering description, and applying for admission. There is a standing notice from the Manager to me that he has more inmates than he can take care of and more work than he can cope with. Let those who like the way of the life described by Misses Angus and Hindsley copy it wherever they may be.

Young India, 12-2-1925

[1] Only Gandhiji's introductory remarks are reproduced here. The Diary apeared in *Young India* between February 12 and March 5.

125. NOTES

A BIHAR FORECAST

I take the following from a Bihar correspondent's letter[1]:

> There was a meeting of the Bihar P.C.C. . . The programme for the whole year is to secure at least 13,000 self-spinning members. . . . The P.C.C. proposes this year to produce khaddar worth at least five lacs of rupees. The present monthly production is Rs. 13,000. If they are to manufacture five lacs, the monthly production must be trebled. Rajendra Babu[2] is enthusiastic about it. . . . The people here are anxiously looking forward to your visit. If you can come, the work will certainly receive a great push.

I hope that the other provinces too will lose no time in preparing their programme of work. I should love to go to Bihar as early as I can. But I am not master of my own movements. I go where fate takes me. It is therefore futile for me to make promises in advance.

AT CAWNPORE

Dr. Abdussamad writes:[3]

> Cawnpore was a scene of disturbance on the 2nd of this month and, as it is the venue of the next Congress, I think it is just proper that you may know the truth of the affair and if the statement is corroborated by Dr. Morarilal, the President of the local Congress Committee, I hope you will publish the whole or a part of it in your paper *Young India*. . . .

I have not written to Dr. Morarilal for confirmation of Dr. Abdussamad's statement as on the face of it, it appears to be colourless and innocent. If Dr. Morarilal has a different version of the incident related, I would gladly publish it. Quarrels will sometimes take place in best regulated societies but the spirit that prompted the parties after the incident seems to have been admirable. As for the charge against "a section of Arya Samajists" I do not know how far they will admit it. I can only hope that every section in Cawnpore will try its best to exercise the greatest self-restraint, keep under control the mischievous element and be ever ready to be charitable to rivals who may hold different political views or different faiths.

A SILENT WORKER

A Chittagong correspondent sends me the following story of a

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

[2] Rajendra Prasad (1884-1963); statesman and scholar; chairman, Constituent Assembly of India, 1946-49; first President of India, 1950-62

[3] Only an excerpt is reproduced here.

silent worker:

> Sreejut Kalisanker Chakrabartee, a silent but indefatigable worker of Chittagong, has, of late, arranged practical demonstrations of charkha. He does not believe in wordy battles. He personally approaches four families every morning with his big charkha, spins before them by way of giving first lesson and begs of them their contributions. The process may seem futile to some, but the melodious sound and sweet music of the charkha, preceded by the recitation of a prayer in the early hours of the day, wonderfully conquers the sceptic who orders a good charkha and promises due contributions. Uncompromising unbelievers who sneered at the charkha are daily won over. The business-like promptitude with which Kalisanker Babu is progressing, ensures success. He has set an example to other workers who may if they choose copy it with profit to themselves and the country.

I have taken the liberty of condensing the letter and making its English readable. I commend the letter to the attention of all workers. There is no doubt that example is better than precept.

Young India, 12-2-1925

126. A REVOLUTIONARY'S DEFENCE

A correspondent, who has given his name but not his address, has sent me what he calls "an open letter". It is a letter in reply to my remarks[1] on the revoluntionary movement in my address to the Belgaum Congress. The letter breathes love of the country, fervour and a spirit of self-sacrifice. It is moreover written under a sense of wrong, said to have been done by me to the revolutionaries. I therefore gladly print the letter without the name. The address of the writer is not given. The following is the unchanged full text of the letter:[2]

> I think it my duty to remind you of the promise[3] you made some time back that you would retire from the political field at the time when the revolutionaries will once more emerge from their silence and enter into the Indian political arena. The experiment with the non-violent non co-operation movement is now over. You wanted one complete year for your experiment, but the experiment lasted at least four complete years, if not five, and still do

[1] *Vide* "Presidential Address at Belgaum Congress", December 26, 1924.

[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

[3] In 1921, to retire if swaraj was not received within a year; *vide* "One Year's Time-Limit", December 11, 1921.

you mean to say that the experiment was not tried long enough?

You are one of the greatest of personalities in the present age and under your direct guidance and inspiration, your programme was actually taken up for some reason or other by the best men in the land. Thousands of young men, the flower of the youth of our country, embraced your cult with all the enthusiasm they could gather. . . . Sacrifice and sincerity on the part of your followers were not wanting. . . . You wanted one crore of rupees and you got more than you wanted. . . . still do you mean to say that the experiment was not tried far enough? . . .

To say that non-violent non-co-operation failed because the people were not sufficiently non-violent is to argue like a lawyer and not like a prophet. The people could not be more non-violent than they were during the last few years. . . .

Non-violent non-co-operation movement failed not because there was sporadic outburst of suppressed feelings here and there but because the movement was lacking in a worthy ideal. The ideal that you preached was not in keeping with Indian culture and traditions. It savoured of imitation. . . . It was not the spirit of *kshama*[1] of the Indian *rishis*, it was not the spirit of ahimsa of the great Indian yogis. It was an imperfect physical mixture of Tolstoyism and Buddhism and not a chemical mixture of East and West. You adopted the Western methods of Congress and Conferences and tried to persuade the whole nation to accept the spirit of ahimsa, irrespective of *desh*[2], *kal*[3] and *patra*[4] like Tolstoy, but which was a matter of individual *sadhana*[5] with the Indians. And above all, you were and are still vague as regards India's ultimate political goal. This is miserable. Your idea of independence is not in consistence with Indian ideals. India stands for *sarvam paravasham dukhham sarvam atmavasham sukham*[6] and for the ideal that individual existence is solely for the purpose of humanity and through humanity serving God. *Jagat-hitaya Srikrishnaya cha*[7]. The non-violence that India preaches is not non-violence for the sake of non-violence, but non- violence for the good of humanity, and when this good for humanity will demand violence and bloodshed, India will not hesitate to shed blood just in the same way as a surgical operation necessitates the shedding of blood. To an ideal Indian,

[1] Forgiveness
[2] Place; environment
[3] Time
[4] Recipient; the other person concerned
[5] Spiritual practice
[6] "All dependence is sorrow, all self-reliance is joy."
[7] "For the welfare of the world and for the sake of God." (*Pandava Gita*)

violence or non-violence has the same significance provided they ultimately do good to humanity. *Vinashaya cha dushkrita*[1] was not spoken in vain.

To my mind therefore, the ideal that you gave to the nation or the programme of action that you laid before it is neither consistent with Indian culture nor practicable as a political programme.

It is simply inconceivable and incomprehensible to think that you still dare to entertain the slightest hope that England can be just and generous out of her free will—this England "which believes in Jallianwala Bagh massacres as a legitimate means of self-defence", this England which tried the O'Dwyer-Nair case and gave judgment in favour of barbarism. If you have an iota of faith left in you in the good sense of the British Government, then according to you where is the necessity of any programme at all? . . . A sovereign independent Indian Republic is alliance or in federation with the other independent nations of the earth is one thing, and self-governing India within this imperialistic British Empire is perfectly another thing. Your sentiment of remaining within the British Empire reminds one of the many Himalayan miscalcualtions that you have repeatedly commited. It seems to me that you have compromised a worthy ideal with the present needs of a false expediency and this is the reason that you have failed to capture the imagination of the youths of the country—youths who could dare and who are still daring to go against your wishes although they unhesitatingly recognize you as one of the greatest of personalities of the modern age. These are the Indian revolutionaries. They have now decided to remain silent no more and therefore they request you to retire from the political field or else to direct the political movement in a way so that it may be a help and not a hindrance to the revolutionary movement. . . . Further, I would like to point out that you have misjudged the revolutionaries in many respects when you blamed them in your recent presidential address in the 39th Congress. You said that the revolutionaries are retarding India's progress. I do not know what you mean by this word "progress". If you means political progress then can you deny that every political progress that India has already made, however little that might be, has been made chiefly by the sacrifices and the efforts of the revoluntionary party? Can you deny that the Bengal partition was annulled through the efforts of the Bengal revolutionaries? Can you doubt that the Morely-Minto reform was the outcome of the Indian revolutionary movement? Can you be blind to the forces of this revolutionary movement which was mainly though not wholly instrumental in bringing about the Montford reforms? . . . .

If you mean that these reforms are no index to true progress, then I would

[1] "To destroy the wicked" (*Bhagavad Gita*, IV, 8)

venture to say that this revolutionary movement has achieved no mean progress in the moral advancement of India. Indians were miserably afraid of death and this revolutionary party once more made the Indians realize the grandeur and the beauty that lie in dying for a noble cause. The revolutionaries have once again demonstrated that death has a certain charm and is not always a dreadful thing. To die for one's own beliefs and convictions, to die in the consciousness that by so dying one is serving God in the nation, to accept death or to risk one's life when there is every probability of death, for a cause which one honestly believes to be just and legitimate—is this no moral progress? . . .

You have said to the revolutionaries, "You may not care for your own lives, but you dare not disregard those of your countrymen who have no desire to die a martyr's death." But the revolutionaries are at a sad loss to understand the meaning of this sentence. Do you mean to say that the revolutionaries are responsible for the deaths of 70 men who were condemned in the Chauri Chaura trial? Do you mean to say that the revolutionaries are responsible for the bombing and killing of innocent people at Jallianwala Bagh and Gujranwala? Did the revolutionaries during their struggle for the last twenty years, in the past or in the present, ever asked the starving millions to take part in the revolutionary struggle? The revolutionaries have perhaps a better knowledge of the mass psychology than most of the present leaders. And this was the reason that they never wanted to deal with the masses until they became sure of their own strength. They always believed that the masses of Northern India were ready for any emergency and they were also right in thinking the Northern India mass as a dense matter of high explosive, dangerous to be handled carelessly. It was you and your lieutenants who misjudged the sentiment of the masses and dragged them into the satyagraha movement, people who were groaning under a thousand oppresions from within and without, where the lightning of anger laid unperceived and you had to pay the penalty for it. But can you give any instance where the revolutionaries dragged unwilling souls into the valley of death?

But if you mean by the sentence that innocent people are being harassed, imprisoned and put to death due to the activities of the revolutionaries, then I would unhesitatingly and honestly admit, as far as my knowledge goes, that not a single individual was hanged who was innocent of any revolutionary activity, and about imprisonments and tortures, I may say that many innocent men were actually harassed and put to torture. But can the revolutionary party be made responsible for the atrocities committed by a foreign government? The foreign government to determined to crush any manifestation of manhood in the nation, in any form whatsoever; but in so

crushing, the government is very liable to commit blunders and harass and imprison and put to torture cowards along with the heroes; but are the brave people to be blamed for the sufferings of the cowards? Moreover these sufferings cannot be termed as martyrs' death.

Lastly, I would like to say something about the remarks you have made in connection with the strength of the British Empire. You have said to the revoluntionaries: "Those whom you seek to depose are better armed and infinitely better organized than you are." But is it not shameful that a handful of Englishmen are able to rule India, not by the free consent of the Indian people but by the force of the sword? And if the English can be well-armed and well-organized why can the Indians be not better armed and better organized still—Indians who are saturated with the high principles of spirituality? Indians are men in the same sense as the Englishmen are. Then, what on earth makes the Indians so helpless as to think that they can never be better organized than their English masters? By what argument and logic of fact can you disprove the possibilites in which the revolutionaries have immense faith? And the spirit of non-violence that arises out of this sense of helplessness and despair can never be the non-violence of the strong, the non-violence of the Indian *rishis*. This is *tamas*[1] pure and simple?

Excuse me Mahatmaji, if I am severe in criticizing your philosophy and principles. You have criticized the revolutionaries most unsympatheti- cally and even you went so for as to describe them as the enemies of the

country, simply because they differ from your views and methods. You preach tolerance but you have been violently intolerant in your criticisms of the revolutionaries. The revolutionaries have risked their everything to serve their motherland, and if you cannot help them, at least be not intolerant towards them.

I never made any promise to anybody as to when and how I should retire from the political life of the country. But I did say and now repeat that I would certainly retire if I find that India does not imbibe my message *and* that India wants a bloody revolution. I should have no part in that movement because I do not believe in its utility either for India, or, which is the same thing, for the world.

I do believe that there was a wonderful response to the call of non-co-operation but I do also believe the success was more than proportionate to the measure of non-co-operation. The wonderful awakening of the masses is a standing demonstration of the fact.

[1] Darkness; here, inaction due to helplessness

I do believe too, that the country exercised great self-restraint; but I must reiterate my opinion that the observance of non-violence was far below the required standard.

I do not believe that "my philosophy" is an indifferent mixture of Tolstoy and Buddha. I do not know what it is except that it is what I feel to be true. It sustains me. I owe much to Tolstoy and much to Buddha. I still somehow or other fancy that "my philosophy" represents the true meaning of the teaching of the *Gita*. I may be totally mistaken. Such a mistake can do no harm either to me or to anybody. For the source of my inspiration is of no consequence if what I stand for be unadul-terated truth.

Let the philosophy I represent be tested on its own merits. I hold that the world is sick of armed rebellions. I hold too that whatever may be true of other countries, a bloody revolution will not succeed in India. The masses will not respond. A movement in which masses have no active part can do no good to them. A successful bloody revolution can only mean further misery for the masses. For it would be still foreign rule for them. The non-violence I teach is active non-violence of the strongest. But the weekest can partake in it without becoming weaker. They can only be the stronger for having been in it. The masses are far bolder today than they ever were. A non violent struggle necessarily involves construction on a mass scale. It cannot therefore lead to *tamas* or darkness or inertia. It means a quickening of the national life. That movement is still going on silently, almost imperceptibly but none the less surely.

I do not deny the revolutionary's heroism and sacrifice. But heroism and sacrifice in a bad cause are so much waste of splendid energy and hurt the good cause by drawing away attention from it by the glamour of the misused heroism and sacrifice in a bad cause.

I am not ashamed to stand erect before the heroic and self-sacrificing revolutionary because I am able to pit an equal measure of non-violent men's heroism and sacrifice untarnished by the blood of the innocent. Self-sacrifice of one innocent man is a million times more potent than the sacrifice of million men who die in the act of killing others. The willing sacrifice of the innocent is the most powerful retort to insolent tyranny that has yet been conceived by

God or man.

I invite the attention of the revolutionaries to the three great hindrances to swaraj—the incomplete spread of the spinning-wheel, the discord between Hindus and Mussalmans and the inhuman ban upon the suppressed classes. I ask them patiently to take their due share in this work of patient construction. It may not be spectacular enough. But on that very account it requires all the heroic patience, silent and sustained effort and self-effacement of which the tallest among the revolutionaries is capable. Impatience will blur the revolutionary's vision and lead him astray. Slow and inglorious self-imposed starvation among the starving masses is every time more heroic than the death of the scaffold under false exaltation.

All criticism is not intolerance. I have criticized the revolutionary because I have felt for him. He has the same right to hold me to be in error as I believe him to be in error.

There are other points that are covered by the "open letter". But I have omitted to refer to them because I think that they can be easily answered by the reader and in no case do they touch the vital issue.

Young India, 12-2-1925

127. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Maha Vad 4 [*February 12. 1925*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Give the enclosed papers to Maulana Shaukat Ali and convey his reply to me. Or he himself can send me the reply.

You must have received the message[2] I sent for Shuaib. I am leaving for Rajkot on the 14th night. It would be nice if he could be there at that time.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] The addressee received the letter on February 13, 1925, in which year *Maha Vad 4* corresponded to February 12.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[PS.]

Yes, that Englishman is none other than Polak.[1]

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

128. SPEECH IN REPLY TO SEVA MANDAL ADDRESS, BHADRAN

February 12, 1925

I have been asked to say something about *brahmacharya*[2]. This is one of those subjects on which I write in *Navajivan* from time to time. I rarely speak on it, because I think that it is an extremely difficult subject to talk about and one cannot explain one's ideas about it in a speech. You wish to hear my views on ordinary *brahmacharya* and not on *brahmacharya* in the extended definition of the term which connotes the control of all organs of sense. Even ordinary *brahmacharya* is said by the Shastras to be very difficult to observe. Permit me to say that there is ninety-nine per cent truth in this view, but that it falls short of absolute truth by one per cent. The observance of this ordinary *brahmacharya* is felt to be difficult because we do not strive to control the other organs of sense. The most important of these is the palate. For him who has learnt to control the palate. The observance of *brahmacharya* will be easy enough. Students of zoology tell us that lower creatures observe *brahmacharya* better than man. What they say is true, and if we try to know the reason we shall discover that the lower creatures have the completest control over the palate, which is not the result of an effort of will but is instinctive. They feed on grass and plants, and eat only as much as would satisfy their hunger. They eat to live, and do not live to eat. We do quite the opposite of this. The mother feeds her child all manner of delicacies, believing that only so can she express her love. By acting in this way, we do not make our food more tasty, but rather less so. Food is made tasty by appetite. A plain *rotla*[3] is more tasty to a hungry person than *ladu*[4] can be to a person who has no appetite. We actually use all kinds of spices and prepare an endless variety of

[1] Presumably the reference is to the "English friend" mentioned in Gandhiji's article "Interrogatories Answered", January 29, 1925.

[2] Literally, living in the *brahman*, the absolute. In ordinary usage, the term has come to signify celibacy.

[3] A round, thick, flat cake made of the flour of *bajri*, a coarse millet.

[4] A sweet ball

dishes so that we may be able to load our stomachs to the full, and then we ask why we cannot observe *brahmacharya*. We let our eyes, which God has given us for seeing things, be tainted with lust, and do not learn to observe what we ought to. Whyshould a mother not learn the *Gayatri* and teach it to her child? It would be enough if, without going into its deeper meaning, she merely understands that it is an invocation to the Sun-god and teaches the child to worship the Sun. *Sanatanists* and Arya Samajists, both may worship the Sun. In explaining the *Gayatri* as worship of the Sun, I have given its most obvious meaning. What is the meaning of this worship? It means that, holding up our heads and looking at the Sun we should cleanse our eyes. The author of the *Gayatri* was a *rishi*, a seer. He tells us that nowhere shall we find anything to equal the drama of sunrise or see beauty and mystery like its. There is no *sutradhara*[1] as skilled as God and no stage grander than the sky. But which mother ever asks her child to look at the sky, for fear that the child might hurt its eyes? Her mind is filled with all manner of worldly thoughts; the education which they give in that big building, she perhaps tells herself, will make her child a well-paid officer. Does she ever ask herself, however, how much the child benefits from what it learns, consciously or unconsiously, from the atmosphere in the home? Parents paid their children with clothes till they feel suffocated, try to make them look smart and handsome, but do the children really look so? Clothes are meant to cover the body, not to beautify it; they are meant to protect us against heat and cold. We should ask a child shivering with cold to go and warm itself at the stove, or sun in the street or go and work on the farm; then alone can we help it build a body as strong as steel. Anyone who has observed *brahmacharya* ought to have a body of such strength. We, on the contrary, ruin children's bodies. We wish to keep them within the four walls of the home and make them comfortable. This produces a kind of artificial heat in their skin which we can only compare to eczema. We have ruined our bodies by pampering them overmuch, we have been playing with fire.

So much about clothes. Then, through the things we talk about in the home we produce harmful effects on a child's mind. We talk about marrying the boy or the girl, and the things which the child sees around it have much the same effect on its mind. What surprises me is that we have not yet become the most uncivilized people on the earth. Despite everything calculated to destroy decent social restraints, they have survived. God has so made man that, though placed again and

[1] The producer in Sanskrit drama, who appears as a character in the beginning of the play and introduces its theme.

again in circumstances which might tempt him to evil, he comes out safe—so profound is His mystery. If we eliminate all such factors which increase the difficulties in the way of *brahmacharya*, we would find it quite easy to observe.

Though this is our condition, we wish to oppose others with physical force. Than are two ways in which we can make ourselves fit to do this, a lower and a higher. The lower way is to cultivate strength of body by any means whatever, by eating and drinking anything which may serve our purpose, training ourselves for physical fighting, eating beef, and so on . When I was a boy, a friend used to tell me that we ought to eat meat, that if we did not we would never be as strong and stout as Englishmen. The poet Narmadashanker[1] also gave this advice in a poem of his. The lines, "The Englishman rules and the Indian is content to submit" and "The foreigner is full six feet tall" are intended to suggest this very idea. Narmadashanker has rendered great service to Gujarat but there were two phases in his life, the first of self-indulgence and the second of self-control. This particular poem belongs to the period of self-indulgence. In Japan too, when they found it necessary to fight other countries beef eating became common. If, therefore, we wish to cultivate physical strength the lower way, we shall have to start eating such things.

But *brahmacharya* is the only means for us if we would cultivate physcial strength the higher way. I feel pity for myself when I hear people describing me as a man of inviolate *brahmacharya*. I have been so described in the address presented to me. I must tell you, therefore, that the person who drafted the address does not know who may be called a man of inviolate *brahmacharya*. Didn't he ask himself how a man like me, married and having several children,could be so described? A man of inviolate *brahmacharya* would never get fever, not even so much as headache, he would never have an attack of bronchitis or appendicitis. Doctors say that appendicitis may even result from an orange seed sticking in the intestines. But the seed will never be retained inside if one's body is clean and healthy. When the intestines have lost their tone, they cannot eliminate such things in the natural course. My intestines also must have lost their tone and so I might have failed to assimilate something which I swallowed. Children often swallow similar things, but their mothers seldom take serious notice of that. The reason [why no harmful effects follow] is that their intestines have the natural strength to eliminate such things. I do not,

[1] Also called Narmad, the first poet of the new age in Gujarat

therefore, want anyone to become a hypocrite by attributing to me the observance of inviolate *brahmacharya* [and following my example]. The power and light of inviolate *brahmacharya* are far greater than what I can boast of. I am not perfect in my *brahmacharya*, though it is true that I strive to be so. I have only placed before you a few observations from my experience which indicate how one may erect a protecting hedge [to preserve one's *brahmacharya*]. Observing *brahmacharya* does not mean that one may not touch any woman, not even one's sister. It means that one's mental state must be such that touching a woman would disturb one no more than touching a piece of paper. If, in order to preserve my *brahmacharya*, I must guard against touching my sister to nurse her when she is ill, that *brahmacharya* is worth no more than the dust under our feet. We would be perfect in our *brahmacharya* if, even when touching a young and extremely beautiful woman, we are disturbed no more than when we touch a corpse. If you wish your children to be capable of such *brahmacharya*, you cannot prescribe their studies but should let a man like me, imperfect though he be in his *brahmacharya*, do that.

A man who observes *brahmacharya* is a sannyasi by nature. The stage of *brahmacharya* is superior to that of *sannyasa*[1], but we have corrupted it and in the result the stage of active life as a householder and that of retired life have lost their beauty, to speak nothing of the stage of *sannyasa*—such is our plight.

If we follow the lower path indicated above, we shall not, even after five hundred years, be strong enough to fight the Pathans. If we can follow the higher path today, then we can meet them this very day, for the inward change required by that path can take place in no time, whereas change in our physical constitution will require ages to bring about. We shall be able to follow that higher path only if we have earned holy merit in our previous lives and if our parents equip us for the purpose.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-3-1925

129. SPEECH AT VIRSAD

February 12, 1925

Look at the marvel that is God! What for was I invited and what for have I come? Kashibhai[1] has decided that no unnecessary

[1] Complete renunciation, the last stage of life

[2] Dahyabhai's father-in-law

expenses should be incurred on the wedding of Dahyabhai[1] and Yashoda. For that he has brought down on himself the anger of his relatives. Let me serve notice on all the rich men who have fortunes to spend on weddings that they should send all that money to me, I will put it to good use. Money spent on ostentation is not well spent. We are going the wrong way. As a result, for one in the *Patidar* community to have a daughter has become a torture hard to bear. When Kashibhai said that he would have an inexpensive wedding, we all agreed. I seek your approval also. Pray silently within yourself that you should have the strength to perform weddings with simplicity and in a religious spirit.

I need not thank you for your address. Nor would you expect it. You have mentioned khadi and charkha in your address. If it is true that khadi has divine power, if the charkha has the power to win us swaraj and if it is a true *sudarshan chakra*[2] , then all of you should have made khadi your own. Otherwise presenting such addresses, praising khadi and the charkha and making girls sing on the occasion, serve no purpose.

Why are the *Antyajas* in the meeting sitting at the back? I bow to them. I take pride in calling myself an *Antyaja*. I have often said that if I am born again, I wish to be born an *Antyaja*. At present I do not serve them—but I am making atonement and purifying myself. I wish to ask of Hindu society "Do you want to cast me out just as you cast out the *Antyajas*?" Even though I am a non-*Antyaja* at present, I cannot say that I follow all the injunctions in thought, word and action. My prayer is that if I be reborn I should be a *purnapurusha*[3] and that in an *Antyaja* family. It is not the mark of a Kshatriya to make them sit at the back. *Patidars* are a brave community. They have many good qualities as well as a few bad ones. But there is none in this world who is without good qualities and none without bad. None of us is a true *Purushottama*[4]. That would be most unlikely in the *Kaliyug*. I can't therefore think of the *Antyajas* as low. It is much better to live among them and be untou-chable than to live with you and be touchable. I have to seek forgiveness in the court of God. He will tell me that, if I consider them untouchables, they will

[1] Sardar Patel's son
[2] The celebrated discus of Krishna.
[3] The perfect person in Vedanta.
[4] Supreme Being; a name of Krishna; here, a perfect man

give me a slap on my face; because I am guilty of the sin of treating my brothers as beasts. Kshatriyas do not retrace their steps. Keeping the *Antyajas* backward is retracing one's steps. I tell you this lest you should do wrong by keeping the *Antyajas* backward. I tell you this because attempts are being made to hide the *adharma*[1].

Patidars tyrannize over lower communities, beat them and exact forced labour from them. I know that this is true. Dread such conduct. If you persist in it, your courage would ebb away. One who is happy should try to make others happy. It is our duty to bear hardships and make the world happy. It is devilish to make others unhappy while we enjoy our pleasures. It is not your address I want. I want rather that you should make your *Antyaja* brothers happy and by so doing be happy yourselves.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. VII, pp. 158-60

130. TELEGRAM TO SIR PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

PETLAD,
February 13, 1925

SIR PRABHASHANKER
BHAVNAGAR,

YOUR LETTER, RAJKOT SUNDAY TO WEDNESDAY, PROGRAMME THEREAFTER TO BE FIXED RAJKOT, REACHING ASHRAM TONIGHT.

From a photostat: C.W. 3192. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

131. SPEECH AT PALEJ

February 13, 1925

We must develop fearlessness at the end of a war and, by doing constructive work, acquire the capacity to plan and execute. If we do not have the latter, our independence cannot be preserved. If we secure swaraj through non-violence, it can be preserved through service. If we want swaraj for the sake of power it can be retained only through violence. It is worthwhile to foster the strength of non-violence and give up the strength that comes from power. As long as we do not have the strength to live together, swaraj cannot be won through non-violence. That is why I placed before the public a

[1] Opposite of dharma.

threefold programme.

We can do anything in the name of religion but, when we realize that it is *adharma*, we cannot persist in doing that. To me untouchability is more unethical than slavery. When the movement for ending untouchability was going on here, there was a suggestion that Christians should take part in it. But I objected to it. An honest Christian like George Joseph[1] wanted to enrol himself for this work in Vykom but I had said "No" to him. If we go to the whole world for help, our work may become more complicated.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. VII, p. 160

132. ABOUT STUDENTS

A friend writes:[2]

I have often acknowledged the sacrifices made by students. But it is a universal rule admitting of no exception that the world does not take note of the sacrifices of those who themselves proclaim their sacrifices, for that is no sacrifice which has to be proclaimed by the person making it. Sacrifice speaks for itself. Would it not be better if the students thought of what they had gained, rather than of what they had sacrificed?

Anyone who does not know that national education is of value in itself does not know what it is. *Snatakas* need not believe that the value of the graduates of national universities has now gone down. Why should they themeselves reduce their value by believing so? I would expect these graduates to have full confidence in themselves. Let them not behave as baggars without self-respect. They should have faith in God. Do they want me to beg before the Rulers of Indian States? Why should they not enhance their value by their own knowledge and strength of character? We should hope for a time when employers themselves would demand graduates of national universities. It is for *snatakas* to hasten such a time. A diamond lying among pieces of glass cannot long remain undetected. That should be

[1] Barrister of Madurai; edited *Young India* and *The Independent* for some time

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had referred to the sacrifices made by students of the Gujarat Vidyapith and the hardships they suffered for want of employment, and requested Gandhiji to persuade Indian States to give preference to *snatakas* in their services.

the condition of national graduates. In my speeches in Kathiawar, I do not wish to utter a single word about *snatakas.* I am going there is the hope of being able to spread the use of khadi and the spinning-wheel, to convert the Rulers and the authorities of the States to love of khadi. I am going there so that I may request the Rulers to thing of their duty. If the value of khadi and the spinning-wheel comes to be better recognized, that of national graduates is bound to rise, for those among them who have not fully mastered the science of spinning do not deserve to be called national graduates. I am going to Kathiawar in the hope of being able to create an atmos-phere in which people would require the services of experts in spinning in the same way that State officers formerly required the services of secretaries proficient in English.

Having said this, I beg leave of my correspondent to correct a few of his errors. It is not true, as he believes, that a non-co-operating student cannot suspend non-co-operation as others have done. The painful and humiliating truth is that thousands of students who had joined non-co-operation have returned, and more are returning, to co-operation, that some *snatakas*, whom we had taken to be non-co-operators, have appeared at examinations controlled by the Government though they had obtained national diplomas. As against this, some lawyers had their *sanads*[1] cancelled by the courts and are forced to be among non-co-operators. Some others, moreover, who were in Government service and resigned their posts are truly in a pitiable condition, but they do not feel that way and are as happy as kings, for though enjoying the benefits of Government service they were slaves then, and are free now though without those benefits. For this reason, they regard themselves as fortunate.

I, therefore, ask those students who are overcome with despair to see that they have no reason to lose heart; on the contrary, they have brighter prospects before them. Of course, this is subject to one condition. The general impression about non-co-operating students is that they should be upright, fearless, self-controlled, hardworking and patriotic. Students who possess these qualities will have no reason any time to lose heart. The salvation of the country depends on them. They will be the foundation on which the golden temple of the Goddess of Freedom will be raised.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-2-1925

[1] Practising licences

133. MY NOTES

A CORRECTION

I said in the last issue that I would declare open a national school at Rajkot. The auspicious ceremony, however, is to be performed by the Thakore Saheb. That had always been the intention of the workers and in case the Thakore Saheb was not available I would be there to perform the ceremony. Having had no telegram or definite information on this point, I assumed that I would have to do the job. I was in Delhi, touring, and I wrote the note in question from there. I was happy to find, on my return to Ahmedabad, that the opening ceremony would be performed by the Thakore Saheb. This, of course, is the most proper arrangement.

AN EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW

Hulyal is a town in Karnatak. The Secretary of the taluk [Congress] Committee there writes as follows:[1]

This Municipality deserves compliments. If, besides doing the work described above, it pays attention to the civic needs of the town, keeps the public tank clean and sees to it that cattle do not wallow in it while quenching their thirst, and men and women do not bathe and wash clothes in the very same tank, and if it provides pure and cheap milk for children, then it must be regarded as a model municipality. If its example is followed by all other municipalities it requires no effort to see that our problems would be solved and the level of public life would rise very high.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-2-1925

134. SPEECH IN REPLY TO WELCOME ADDRESS, RAJKOT[2]

[*February 15, 1925*][3]

As I entered the Darbargadh today my memory went back to an

[1] The lettter is not translated here. The correspondent had given details of the measures taken by the Municipality of the town, which had a majority of nationalist councillors, to promote the constructive programme.

[2] This was Mahadev Desai's summary of Gandhiji's speech delivered in reply to an address given to him by the Representative Assembly of Rajkot and handed over by the Thakore Saheb. The address eulogized Gandhiji's services in the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity.

[3] From *Navajivan*, 22-2-1925

incident of my childhood which happened on this very spot and which I have treasured all these years. It was customary in those days, on the occasion of a royal wedding, to send a deputation to bridal States, before the wedding took place. The sons of the minister would form part of the deputation. My father who was then minister, however, had made it a point never to send his boys on such occasions. At the time which I am recalling today, deputations were to go to Kanpur and Dharampur. My father, of course, kept us back. My good mother, who was more worldly and did not want her children to be robbed of the prizes of position, pressed my brother and me to go to the late Thakore Saheb and cry before him. When he asked us what we were after, we were to tell him that we wanted to go to Dharampur. We followed the advice and we were sent not to Dharamapur but Kanpur. Today also I must cry to conquer. I shall cry not for name and fame or wealth and position. Fame, said the *shastris*[1] who blessed me, was ever a virgin inasmuch as she failed to find a suitable match for her, and they wished that that coy damsel should at last wed with me. May she ever remain "in single blessedness". For I am sure that were she to marry me I would be undone. I cry not, therefore, for fame, but one or two things you have withheld from me.

I am thankful for all the kind things you have said about me, and more for the kinder sentiment expressed by the Thakore Saheb. I wish I was worthy of them. I do not for a moment flatter myself with the belief that I am all I have been described to be . I am one of the people and want to continue as such. Let me pray that I may remain untouched by the honour you have done me.

Whilst, then, I thank you I must register my complaint about one or two things. You have omitted all mention of that in the address, whether purposely or not I do not know. You have rightly mentioned truth and non-violence as my guiding principles. I would indeed be a lifeless corpse without those two life-principles. But I am surprised that you have studiously omitted all reference to the two things , pursuit of which is inseparable from the practice of truth and non-violence. I refer to khaddar and removal of untouchability. These two things are in a manner more important than Hindu-Muslim unity, for that unity is impossible without them. So long as we have not rid

[1] Those well-versed in the scriptures

Hinduism of the stain of untouchability, it is impossible to achieve real Hindu-Muslim unity.

A very thoughtful Mussalman once told me that so long as there was untouchability in Hinduism it was difficult for Mussalmans to entertain any regard for that faith or its followers. I have repeated times without number that an "untouchable" community is unknown to the Shastras. The weaver and the scavenger are not classed as untouchables by the Shastras. I am both. My mother was certainly a scavenger inasmuch as she cleaned me when I was a child. But she did not, on that account, become an untouchable. Why then should a *Bhangi*, who renders similar necessary service, be regarded as untouchable? Even if the whole world of *shastris* were to be against me I would proclaim from the housetops that they are wrong in considering untouchability to be part of the Hindu religion.

And in this connection I take leave to mention one thing that both pleased and pained me . I was glad to notice that the *shastris'* blessings was the first item of today's programme. But I wondered whether there was a false ring about them. Their praise meant endorsement of my work on untouchability. Did they approve of my activity about it or did they merely obey the presumed or declared will of the Thakore Saheb that they should bless me? The benediction rang untrue because of the omission in your address of my campaign against untouchability. I beseech you, Thakore Saheb, to be kind to them, to befriend the depressed people of your State, even as Rama of old befriended Shabari and Guha, both presumably untouchables. I ask you to ensure them admission into schools, temples and all public places.

I was distressed to find the boy scouts clad in foreign khaki. I did expect that these at least would be clad in khaddar. If you have khaddar uniforms for your boy scouts and your Police you can relieve the misery of the poor, the untouchables and the indigent widow. I entreat you, therefore, Thakore Saheb and members of the Representative Assembly, to resolve to wear khaddar and to have khaddar uniforms for all the State employees. You have given me a rich casket. I have no strong-room nor safe to keep it in. Nor have I

men to keep charge of the strong-room or the safe, if I had them. I have thus to hand over all such costly presents to friends like Jamnalal Bajaj to take care of them for public use. But I have room enough to store khaddar and I therefore beg khaddar of everyone I meet; I would not hesitate to ask even Lord Reading to dress himself and his orderly in khaddar.

Your sword, worthy ruler, is a mighty symbol. Your path is like your sword's edge, you may not depart by even a hair's breadth from the straight and narrow path of truth. It is an eternal reminder of the fact that in your state there should be not a single drunkard, and no impure man or woman. It is your duty to put strength where there is weakness and cleanliness where there is dirt. Befriend the poor and the oppressed. Your sword is not meant for others' necks, it is meant for your own. You can tell your people that the moment you exceed the bounds of your authority they may put you to the sword. I speak in these terms to you as I owe a duty to you, Thakore Saheb. Your father made my father an unconditional gift of some land. I have thus eaten your salt and I should not be worth the salt, if I did not on this solemn occasion invite your attention to what are a prince's obvious duties. The honour you have done me lays me under a deep debt of gratitude. I prize the relief of the poor and the oppressed and the untouchables more than all that honour. Tell me that you have introduced numerous spinning-wheels in your villages and schools, that you have introduced khaddar in all your departments, and that all your public institutions and places are thrown open to the untouchables, and I shall feel doubly honoured and in reverence bow down my head to you. May God bless you with strength to serve your people.

Young India, 26-2-1925

135. SPEECH AT OPENING OF NATIONAL SCHOOL, RAJKOT

February 15, 1925

This school, or rather the Vidyapith from which it has sprung, is a part of the great experiment which is at present being conducted in the country. Durbars and Indian States rarely undertake an experiment of this kind. Their general inclination is to follow the royal path. We shall hardly find any State which would think of abandoning this path and venturing upon experiments. It is for the people, not their rulers, to undertake experiments. Rulers are the protectors and representatives of their subjects. If I may go further, I would say that a real king is the servant of his subjects. He cannot, therefore, conduct experiments at their cost. From that point of view, the Thakore Saheb was right in what he said regarding teachers, but people like me who have spent their whole lives in making experiments cannot follow any other course. I would, therefore, pray to the Thakore Saheb to look kindly on us. If the rules intended for the teachers of a country which aspires to be free, that is, to be self-controlled, are not very strict, we shall find it difficult to get teachers of even moderate quality for the ordinary schools.

I would tell the teachers that they should always be ready to face difficulties, and should follow the path of dharma till the very end. No matter if the number of students goes down from 150 to 40, they should continue to serve the school. It is their faith which will give a magnetic quality to the school and attract more students in the future. It is said that we are always brave in the beginning, but, when difficulties come, instead of praying to the God of mercy we abandon the task, the egotists that we are. If we examine the history of nations, we shall see that among people who enjoy freedom there have been countless men and women who had remained loyal to their principles at the cost of their lives. It does not matter if the school makes no progress, not merely for five years but for twenty years. In the history of a school twenty years mean nothing. Whether or no we see any tangible results, if the teachers have faith in themselves they should follow what seems to them the most straightforward path; they are bound, in the end, to see the coast.

It is necessary to say a few words about the distinctive features of this school. One is that it has decided to admit *Antyajas* in the face

of many difficulties, and another that it has given the highest importance to bodily labour. Its teachers and pupils have had a share in the labour behind the greenery we see on its grounds. Such bodily labour is a form of *yajna*. In his age, however, the best *yajna* for this country consists in spinning. Every man and woman should give half an hour daily to the spinning-wheel for the sake of the country, for the sake of the *Antyajas*, of the countless poor and the numberless widows. The parents should realize that their children ought to cultivate not only their intellect but also their bodies, should learn not merely to serve their own interests but also to work for public good. Those who see that the spinning-wheel advances public good, will never abandon it. I hear, on the contrary, that parents do not like their children to do bodily work, they do not like them to spin. True knowledge consists in a harmonious development of the body, the intellect and the soul. Our highest welfare lies in cultivating all the three. Ours is a country in which even self-sacrificing and hard-working teachers will lose heart. I pray to the Thakore Saheb that he should look kindly on teachers living in such an atmosphere.

Does the school violate any moral principles? If it does, the position of course would be different. Maybe some will think that the issue of untouchability involves a moral principle; those parents who think that contact with *Antyajas* defiles us need not send their children to this school. I will then pray to God to open my eyes if I was in the wrong, or to vouchsafe that the parents should give up their obstinacy if they are in the wrong.

I shall say in conclusion that this school will not prosper through the sympathetic interest of the Thakore Saheb or through the efforts of the parents, nor will it prosper because of my efforts or Vallabhbhai's or through the promise of help by the none too flourishing Vidyapith. Everything will depend on the teachers. I do not believe that money alone can help any institution. If it could, the Hardinge School in Calcutta would not have had to be closed. It did not succeed because it did not get sincere workers to breathe life into it, such as an institution of its kind requires. You should aspire to give life to this school and should start work with God's name on your lips. Those who regard themselves as weak as women and work with God's name of their lips, who turnto God with Draupadi's piteous cry[1] for help, will need neither the Thakore Saheb's support nor the

[1] An allusion to the incident in the *Mahabharata*, where Dusshasana attempted to disrobe Draupadi but her honour was saved by God providing her an endless sari

Vidyapith's assistance. If, therefore, it becomes necessary to close the school, the blame will be entirely the teachers'.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-3-1925

136. SPEECH AT OPENING OF JAIN STUDENTS' HOSTEL, RAJKOT

February 15, 1925

The Thakore Saheb expounded fine ideas about education, but was pessimistic about being able to put them into effect in a small State like this. But there is no justification for his pessimism. In fact a State enjoys many advantages in being small. The people of Rajkot are such that it should be easy to win their co-operation. The smaller countries of Europe, like Sweden, Norway and Switzerland—countries about which the world has not heard much because they were not involved in the last War—boast a civilization in no way inferior to that of the bigger coun-tries; they have carried out many successful experiments in the field of education. The problems of big countries are also big. I can well understand what difficulties a person in the position of Lord Reading generally has to contend with. With so many parties and interests to consider, and the field of work so large, what effective work can be done? It is, therefore, only in small countries that promising plans can be easily implemented. The Gujarat Vidyapith has been, in a way, doing what the Thakore Saheb explained. If we run one model institution with ideal students, many more institutions of the same kind will grow out of it. A zero can produce nothing, for it cannot be multiplied, whereas one can grow into many. There is, therefore, no cause for despair. The cause of despair generally lies in the man himself. The *atman* is its own friend and its own enemy.[1] We may not put any limits to what human effort can achieve. There can be any such limits only if we can see above us any obstruction to upward flight. For rising the sky is the only limit. There is a limit to how low we can fall. God Himself has created such limit in the form of land, rock, water, etc. Hence we need not despair. I advise the people to take the fullest advantage of the Ruler, and should like to say to the latter that he has done much, but much more needs to be done.

[1] A reference to the *Bhagavad Gita*, VI. 5

The Ruler and the subjects should develop the completest mutual understanding and confidence. If it is true to say "As the Ruler, so the subjects", it is equally true to say "As the subjects, so the Ruler". If you yourselves do nothing, however much the Ruler may wish to help, he, too, can do nothing. If you let hypocrisy, flattery and wickedness govern your lives, the Ruler's life is bound to mirror those evils. I have to mention this because the saying, "Salt is better even than honey", is still true.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-3-1925

137. TELEGRAM TO C. F. ANDREWS

JETPUR,
February 16, 1925

ANDREWS
CARE JEHANGIR PETIT
MOUNT PETIT
PEDDAR ROAD
BOMBAY

UP TO EIGHTEENTH RAJKOT, NINETEENTH PORBUNDER. TWENTY-FIRST WADHWAN. TWENTY SECOND ASHRAM. LOVE.

MOHAN

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

138. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

JETPUR,
February 16, 1925

MALAVIYAJI
BIRLA HOUSE
DELHI

GETTING COPIES FOR YOU. HOPE YOU HAVE BEEN RAWALPINDI.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

139. VYKOM SATYAGRAHA

Here is a letter from a Vykom satyagrahi:

> Your kind card to hand. The Travancore Legislative Council yesterday voted by 22 against 21 against the right of entry to the Vykom temple road for which purpose satyagraha is now being offered. Naturally people here are very much agitated and feel aggrieved all the more, because the voting was gained by the direct pressure brought by the Government on the voters. I am ashamed to say, one member of the depressed and prohibited classes himself voted against the entry and sided with the Government. The situation hereafter is fraught with all kinds of difficulties. There is very little enthusiasm now for the peacecful methods of satyagraha. Some have already begun to advocate "direct action" and even forcible entry into temples. Small-pox has broken out in the Satyagraha Camp itself and with the growing heat of the advancing summer it may attack more and more. We are carrying the struggle with faith in your leadership and gospel of non-violence. But I am afraid the Provincial Congress Committee of Kerala is waning in its enthusiasm. They have collected very little money during the last many months by their own efforts. For everything we depend on your own esteemed help and advice. We are hard up for money. All satyagrahis are anxiously awaiting your forthcoming visit which would, it is needless to say, be of inestimable help to our cause.

It is a good letter because it is a frank letter. I am unable to congratulate the Travancore Government, if the facts are as stated. But I do not know them. I therefore suspend my judgment till I know them first hand . I am eager to visit Vykom at the earliest possible date. I hope that it will not be long.

Meanwhile, satyagrahis must not be dejected. They dare not give way to despair. Of all my Tamil lessons one proverb at least abides with me as an evergreen. Its literal meaning is, "God is the only Help for the helpless". The grand theory of satyagraha is built upon a belief in that truth. Hindu religious literature, indeed all religious literature, is full of illustrations to prove the truth. The Travancore Durbar may have failed them. I may fail them. But God will never fail them, if they have faith in Him. Let them know that they are leaning on a broken reed if they are relying on me. I am living at a safe distance from them. I may wipe their tears, but suffering is their sole privilege. And victory will surely come out of their sufferings provided they are pure. God tries His votaries through and through, but never beyond endurance. He gives them strength enough to go through the ordeal He prescribes for them. For the satyagrahis of Vykom their satyagraha is not a mere experiment to be given up if it does not succeed within a prescribed time or after a prescribed force

of suffering. There is no time limit for a satyagrahi nor is there a limit to his capacity for suffering. Hence there is no such thing as defeat in satyagraha. Their so-called defeat may be the dawn of victory. It may be the agony of birth.

The Vykom satyagrahis are fighting a battle of no less consequence than that of swaraj. They are fighting against an age long wrong and prejudice. It is supported by orthodoxy, superstition, custom and authority. Theirs is only one among the many battles that must be fought in the holy war against irreligion masquerading as religion, ignorance appearing in the guise of learning. If their battle is to be bloodless, they must be patient under the severest trials. They must not quail before a raging fire.

The Congress Committee may give them no help. They may get no pecuniary help, they may have to starve. Their faith must shine through all these dark trials.

Theirs is "direct action". They dare not be irritated against their opponents. They know no better. They are not all dishonest men as satyagrahis are not all honest men. They are resisting what they honestly believe to be an encroachment upon their religion. The Vykom satyagraha is the argument of suffering. The hardest heart and the grossest ignorance must disappear before the rising sun of suffering without anger and without malice.

I am alarmed at the appearance of small-pox in the satyagraha camp. It is a disease born of filth and yields to hygienic treatment. They must isolate small-pox patients and discover the cause of the disease. Is their camp in a perfectly sanitary condition? Doctors have no medicine for small-pox. Water cure is the best cure. Low diet or no diet is the safest. Let the patients have copious draughts of pure water. Above all neither the patients nor the others should lose nerve. The disease is also a course of suffering. Soldiers' camps are not free from disease. Indeed it has been ascertained that more soldiers die of disease than of bullet wounds.

For finance, they need not worry. Their faith will bring them all the pecuniary aid they may need. I know of no good cause that has died for want of funds.

Young India, 19-2-1925

140. HINDU-MUSLIM QUESTION

A correspondent writes:

> You have entertained in the columns of *Young India* an attempt made by one of your correspondents to show up the shibboleth of the Muslims' extreme backwardness in education. That emboldens me, if you will permit an humble worker in the country's cause, to put before you one more of these shibboleths which has been ruling our political life for long, but which is palpably more absurd than the one as regards Muslim backwardness to which I am glad your attention has at last been drawn.
>
> "The Muslims are a minority in India." How often is such a statement made, and how many times more is it tacitly assumed in political argument! But are they really a minority? Even taking one sect of them, viz., the Sunni Henafi, for comparison, do we not find that it is numerically stronger by far than *any* single community amongst the Hindus, or even than each of the other religious groups in India, as the Christians, Parsis, Sikhs, Jains, Jews and Buddhists? And is it not the case that the Hindus are divided into communities and sects which are in most cases farther apart from one another socially than the Muslims are from the non-Muslims? Then, what about the Hindu untouchables? Is not their number equal to, if not greater than, that of the Muslim "minority"? If Muslims as "a minority" in India may claim separate and special treatment, protection and guarantees, how much stronger must the claim of this untouchable section of Hindus be allowed to be, since they not only are by their numbers as important a "minority"—and a claimant one too, since the date of the Lucknow Pact[1], —but have been suffering for ages from *actual present disabilities* with which no Muslim or any other touchable minority's *apprehensions for the future* may possibly bear comparison? As witness the Vykom satyagraha, the palghat dispute, the Bombay "lynchers". I leave alone the innumerable backward castes and the aborigines so far reckoned within the Hindu fold. Are the Muslims then the minority?

The italics and the black types are the writer's. I have given the letter for its undoubted earnestness. And yet to me, an ob- server untouched, I hope, by any bias one way or the other, the reasoning appears to be specious when it is used to demonstrate that the Mussalmans are not a minority in India. The writer forgets that the claim is that of all Mussalmans against all Hindus. The latter cannot

[1] The joint scheme of reforms adopted by the Indian National Congress and Muslim League at their sessions in Lucknow in 1916

both have the cake and eat it. Though divided among themselves, the Hindus do present a more or less united front not only to the Mussalmans but to all non-Hindus, even as the Mussalmans though divided among themselves present naturally a united front to all non-Muslims. We shall never solve the question by ignoring facts or re-arranging them to suit our plans. The facts are that the Mussalmans are seven crores against twenty-two crores of Hindus. The latter have never denied it. Let us also know the issues. A minority does not always fear a majority be-cause it is a majority. The Mussalmans fear the Hindu majority because the Hindus, they say, have not always treated them with justice, have not respected their religious prejudices and because, they say, the Hindus are superior to them in education and wealth. Whether these are facts or not is irrelevant for our purpose. It is enough that Mussalmans believe them and therefore are afraid of the Hindu majority. The Mussalmans expect to meet this fear only partially be means of separate electorates and special representation even in excess of their number in some cases. The Hindus admit the Mussalman minority but deny the Mussalman charge of injustice. This must therefore be verifed. I have not known Hindus to deny the statement that they are superior to Mussalmans in education and wealth.

The Hindus on their part fear the Mussalmans because they (the Hindus) say that Mussalmans whenever they have held power have treated them with great harshness and contend that though they were in a majority they were non-plussed by a handful of Mussalman invaders, that the danger of a repetition of the experience is ever present before the Hindus, and that in spite of the sincerity of the leading Mussalmans the Mussalman masses are bound to make common cause with any Mussalman adventurer. The Hindus therefore reject the plea of weakness on the part of the Mussalmans and refuse to entertain the idea of extending the doctrine of the Lucknow Pact. It is again beside the question whether the Hindu fear is justified. The fear is a fact to be reckoned with. It would be wrong to impute motives to any community or leaders. To distrust Malaviyaji or Mian Fazl-i-Hussain is to postpone a proper solution. Both honestly state what they feel. Wisdom lies therefore in brushing aside all side issues and facing the situation as it is, not as we would like it to be.

In my opinion therefore the writer has tried, be it ever so unconsciously, to overprove his case. He is right in saying that Hindus

are divided into many antagonistic sects or parties each setting up a claim or separate treatment. He is right also in stating that the untouchables have even stronger case than the Mussalmans for separate representation. The writer has made out a case not against the fact of Mussalman minority but against communal representation and separate electorates. He has shown that any extension of the doctrine of the Lucknow Pact must inevitably lead to communal representation for innumerable sub-castes and other denominations, thus indefinitely postponing the early advent of swaraj.

To extend the Lucknow Pact doctrine or even to retain it is fraught with danger. To ignore the Mussalman grievance as if it was not felt is also to postpone swaraj. Lovers of swaraj cannot therefore rest till a solution is found which would allay Mussalman apprehensions and yet not endanger swaraj. Such a solution is not impossible.

Here is one.

In my opinion the Mussalman claim for majority in Bengal and the Punjab in accordance with their numbers is irresistible. That claim cannot be resisted for the fear from the north or the North West. Hindus, if they want swaraj, must take the chance. So long as we fear the outside world, we must cease to think of swaraj. But swaraj we must have. I would therefore rule out the Hindu fear in considering the just claim of the Mussalmans. We must dare to do justice even at the cost of future safety.

What the Mussalmans want is not separate electorate for its own sake but they want their own real representatives to be sent to the legislatures and other elective bodies. This can be done by private arrangement rather than legal imposition. There is flexibility about private arrangement. A legal imposition tends to become more and more rigid. Private arrangement will continually test the honour and good faith of each party. Legal imposition avoids the necessity of honour or good faith. Private arrangement means a domestic settlement of domestic quarrels and a solid wall of united opposition against a common enemy—the foreign rule. I am told that the law prevents the working of the private arrangement I have in view. If it is so, we must seek to remove the legal obstacle and not create and add a new one. My plan therefore is to do away with separate electorates but secure the elec-tion of the desired and agreed number of Mussalman and other candidates in a given constituency under a joint ticket, Mussalman candidates o be nominated by previously known Mussal-

man associations. I need not enter into the question of representation in excess of numbers at the present stage. It can be considered and all difficulties in that direction can be met when the principle of private arrangement is accepted by all.

No doubt my proposal presupposes a sincere desire on the part of all concerned to reach a solution in terms of swaraj. If communalism is the goal, then any private arrangement must break down. If, however, swaraj is the goal and the parties approach the question purely from a national standpoint, there need be no fear of a break-down. On the contrary every party will be interested in its faithful working.

What the law should, however, provide is a just franchise whereby every community can have, if it wished, voters on the roll in proportion to its numbers. Our voters' rolls should answer the number of representatives in proportion to its population. But that question requires a critical examination of the working of the existing franchise. For me the existing franchise is wholly untenable for any swaraj scheme.

Young India, 19-2-1925

141. TO S.D.N.

I have dealt with one part of your letter in the leading article.[1] I must, for want of time, postpone the consideration of the other part to another occasion, probably next week.

Young India, 19-2-1925

142. NOTES

REMEMBER 1ST MARCH

It will be remembered that many workers made promises at Belgaum just after the close of the session as to the number of self-spin-ning members they would register before the 1st March next. That day is soon coming upon us. I have before me the list of promised members. I hope the makers of these promises will prove as good as their word. Let me say for general information that the number promised for the whole of India was 6,803. All the workers

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

were not present at the time. Bihar and Gujarat have, for instance, resolved upon securing far more than the figures promised at Belgaum. I would like the Provincial Secretaries, if they kindly will, to telegraph to *Young India* the numbers of self-spinning and other members registered at the end of the month. Workers everywhere are finding the task of securing voluntary spinners far more difficult than getting four-anna members. To me the value of the spinning franchise consists in its dificulty due not to want of ability but want of application. For let it be noted that the difficulty is confined not merely to unbelievers, it is applicable also to believers. They readily make promises but equally if not more readily break them. Witness the falling off in spinning during the month of December. I hope therefore that there will be ceaseless effort on the part of those who made promises.

RE: PRIZE ESSAY

Some friends have suggested that the time for sending in the prize eassay on hand-spinning and khaddar should be extended. One friend suggests the extension to as late as November. If I did so, it would defeat the purpose for which the essay is required. Mr. Revashanker has issued the prize with a view to stimulate thought and activity on the message of the spinning-wheel during this year of grace which is fast running out. The idea moreover of allowing a brief period is to concentrate the energy of the few searchers we have on the subject and to make it worthwhile even from a pecuniary standpoint for those khaddar students who may be in need, to devote their whole attention during the period to the essay. I do not expect an exhaustive treatise, but I do expect a classical introductory essay on the subject so as to serve as an infallible guide for more elaborate work. It should give an exhaustive bibliography on the subject and a scientific, brief, relevant, connected, summary of them.

There are many who question the facts often set forth in these columns and elsewhere to prove the economic value of the wheel. Many doubt the ability of the wheel to compete with the mills. Others regard it as a mere toy incapable even of producing an effect on the foreign cloth imports. The essay should contain incontestable statistics and argument in support of the value of the wheel unless the researches of impartial and truthful students make such presentation impossible. Such an effort is required during this year whilst the

spinning franchise[1] is being tested.

I am happy to be able to inform the reader that some brilliant young men are regularly at the work already and that too not for its monetary value but for the love of it. I have consulted two of them on the suggestion of extension and they would be glad if the time can be extended. I am therefore extending the period to 30th April next. That means six more weeks. I trust that the extension will be considered sufficient by all who are making the attempt to bring out an essay worthy of the occasion.

Another suggestion comes from another friend. He thinks that the examiners should include one or more mill-owners, such as Messrs Ambalal Sarabhai and Matubhai Kantawala. The names of examiners were selected by me and I must confess that the omission of a mill-owner's name was deliberate. I felt that the examiners to be just to the subject should be believers in khaddar but open to reason and able to judge. My correspondent, however, suggests that even experts like Mr. Maganlal Gandhi are likely to make mistakes for their want of an intimate knowledge of the mill industry. I recognize the force of the objection and will therefore gladly put myself in correspondence with the gentlemen concerned and seek their co-operation in the examination.

BENGAL UNTOUCHABLES

A Bengali correspondent asks:

> 1. In Bengal the untouchables are not allowed to draw water from the wells, nor are they allowed to enter the room where drinking water is kept. What should be done to remove this evil? If we dig separate wells for them or establish separate schools, that will be making allowance for this vice.
>
> 2. The mentality of the untouchables in Bengal is that the upper classes should take water from their hands, but they themselves refuse to take water from the hands of those who are below them. What should be done to wean them from the error?
>
> 3. The Hindu Mahasabha in Bengal and the Hindus in general tell the people that you do not like the idea of taking water from the hands of untouchables—?

My answers are:

1. One way of removing the evil is for us to take water from the hands of the untouchables. I do not think that digging of separate

[1] The Congress constitution was altered at Belgaum Congress, December 1924, making spinning a qualification instead of four annas per year.

wells for them will perpetuate the evil. It will take a long time to root out the effects of untouchability. It would be wrong to withhold help from the untouchables in the shape of providing them with separate wells for fear of others never letting them use public wells. My belief is that if we build good wells for the untouchables many people will use them. Reform among the untouchables must proceed side by side with breaking down of the prejudice against them by caste. Hindus realizing their duty towards them.

2. When the so-called "superior" Hindus begin to "touch" the untouchables, the untouchability among the untouchables themselves is bound to die a natural death. Our work must commence with the lowest among the untouchables.

3. I do not know what the Hindu Mahasabha of Bengal has been ascribing to me. My position is clear. Untouchables should be treated as and classed among Sudras. And since we do take water from the hands of Sudras, we should not hesitate to accept is from untouchables.

HOW IMPRISONMENT BENEFITS

I quote interesting extracts from Acharya Gidwani's letter to his wife which I have been privileged to share with her:

> How are the children? Do cure them and yourself of the tea habit and give them all the milk that they can get. How is your study progressing? You will not make further improvement soon unless you attend to your composition. I trust that you are not neglecting Hindi and spinning. Spend all the hours of daylight in sunshine and fresh air. Although the gain seems small, I feel distinctly better. By the time you come again, I hope to be quite presentable; thanks to Muller's system to which Jawaharlal[1] had introduced me when he shared a cell with me here, the injury to my health is not irreparable. Throughout those nine months of confinement I kept up my breathing and muscular exercises. I have almost mastered the system. I wish I could persuade you also to start on it and bring up the children on it also. In any case tell Parvati that I want her to introduce it at once for young and old at home. The book is available at booksellers.
>
> I have not read much since I wrote to you last. My Sanskrit study is interrupted for want of the books I asked you to send me.

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru; (1889-1964); statesmen and writer, India's first Prime Minister, 1947-64; "Bharat Ratna"; author of *Glipmses of World History* and *Autobiography*

I am taking lessons in carpentry now. I hope to start on weaving after some time.

As an ex-prisoner it is pleasant to compare notes with fellow prisoners. Acharya Gidwani is not alone in developing dislike of tea in his prison. I was myself a regular drinker of tea and coffee. But my first experience cured me of the habit. There was no tea allowed, and I began to like the idea of being free from the slavery of tea. For us in India it is a luxury we can ill-afford. But the worst of tea is that it replaces milk. Tea has only as much nutritive value as there are milk and sugar in it. The way we prepare tea in India counteracts the effect of milk and sugar because of the boiling of the leaves which sets free the injurious tanin contained in the leaf. If tea is to be drunk at all the leaves should never be boiled but they should be put in a strainer and boiling water poured gently over them. The water that thus trickles down into the kettle should be straw colour. But the safest thing to do is to follow Acharya Gidwani's prescription and to give up tea altogether. Those who want simply to drink, but not eat, may take boiling water with sugar and milk and add a little cinnamon powder to give the water a colouring. Acharya Gidwani's remarks on Muller's system will be read with interest. In my opinion the Acharya shares the weakness of new converts. All these systems promise much more than they can perform. There is nothing new in Muller's system. It is an indifferent and incomplete reproduction of some of the *Hatha Yoga*[1] practices. Considered purely from a health point of view *Hatha Yoga* practices are almost perfect. Only they share with everything Indian the disabilities of their origin. The secret consists in deep and well-regulated breathing and gently tretching the muscles. Muller attracts us because he has given physical reasons for the exercises he prescribes. His system has its use, no doubt, in that those who will not take the trouble to understand the intricacies of *Hatha Yoga* exercises can certainly profit by following the easy instructions prepared by Muller. What is more, we have not many accessible representatives of *Hatha Yoga* and the few there are naturally and rightly do not trouble about its physical consequences and therefore teach them only to those who are spiritually minded.

Lovers of spinning cannot but appreciate the Acharya's devotion to the wheel and to Hindi and Sanskrit. It is pleasure to me to be able to give after a long time a cheery letter from Acharya Gidwani

[1] A system of yoga based upon physical exercises and complicated postures

who is now keeping much better health than he did some time ago.

THE LATEST DISCOVERY

Since my return from Pindi I have visited nearly ten villages of Borsad taluk. It is a taluk of the successful and glorious satyagraha of 1923 under Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel's leadership. It contains an intelligent, able and comparatively hard population. But even in this taluk I was pained to find in some villages squalor and degradation that were due purely to poverty. The crops were damaged by a severe frost. In certain villages the people were in constant danger of having their fields raided by cattle lot loose upon them at the instance practically of the principal landowner. It was not possible for them to feel settled in life or feel that they had a home of their own which they could take pride in. The result was despair and consequent indifference to effort. There was nothing but the charkha for such people. But even the charkha makes slow headway. They do not want to do anything. They want merely to eke out a living somehow. "We have gone on like this for years, let us close our lives like this", is the reply written in their blank and incredulous looks. It is the same thing to them even if one presented them with some other industry. They do not want to *work* because they have hither- to *slaved*. And having only done that, they believe in *slaving* but not in *working*. This is a sad discovery not made by me for the first time. It was the same thing in Champaran, worse in Orissa. But it came upon me in Borsad taluk with a strange and overwhelming force. I was ill-prepared for the discovery in this taluk. On the contrary I had expected to find well-ordered villages where I would see enthusiasm and brightness and hope. Not that all the villages were alike. Although they are so near one another, each has problems of its own and each has a distinct individually. For the villages I have described, the spinning-wheel is the only hope, if there is any. Cattle cannot raid it. Frost cannot bite it. It is man's protection against cruel nature's ravages and some protection against man's depradations.

Ample work awaits those patriotic young men who do not mind the village life and who can derive pleasure from silent and sustained labour, not too taxing and yet taxing enough for its monotony. It requires sufficient application to be able to appreciate the monotony of life-giving industry. A beginner of music knows the dullness of the initial effort but the very monotony becomes a pleasure as soon as he has mastered the art. So it is with the village workers. As soon as they

have lived down the excitement of the intoxicating town life and settled down to work, the monotony of labour will give strength and hope because it is productive. Who is ever jaded by the monotonous and unfailing regularity with which the solar system works. Though as ancient as time, it has never ceased to excite wonder and praise. We know, too, that a disturbance in the even tenor of its working means destruction of our race. So it is with the village solar system whose centre is the wheel.

Young India, 19-2-1925

143. LETTER TO SIR PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

Magh Vad 11 [*February 19, 1925*][1]

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I write this letter on the train to Porbunder and hence I am using a pencil.

I shall be at the Ashram from 22nd to 26th and shall leave for Delhi on the 27th. I shall be staying there till at least the 3rd March. The English gentleman can see me during that period. The programme after the 3rd will be decided at Delhi.

At the last minute, when I was about to leave Rajkot, Jayshanker Vaghji saw me on behalf of the Jam Saheb and said that he, the Jam Saheb, was eager to meet me. He wishes to meet me in Bombay after the 7th March. It has been decided that I should send a wire to Jayshanker when I go to Bombay.

I have received an unsatisfactory reply from the Dewan of Gondal in which he says that it is improper for me to interfere in the affairs of the Gondal State. Please let me know the result of your effort.

In Rajkot the Thakore Saheb showed many courtesies. I have told him my ideas.

Hope your spinning-wheel is working well.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 3198. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

[1] On February 19 and 20, 1925, Gandhiji was at Porbunder.

144. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

PORBUNDER,
February 19, 1925

P.S.V.
DELHI

THANKS TELEGRAM.[1] IN "YOUNG INDIA" MENTIONED YOUR TELEGRAM I HAVE STATED IDEAL BUT HAVE NO DESIRE DISTURB WITHDRAWAL PROSECUTION. MY PURPOSE IS ESTABLISH REAL PEACE WHICH I HOLD IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE WITH GOVERNMENT INTER- VENTION, OR BETTER STILL WITHOUT PRIVATE AND SPONTANEOUS EFFORT [OR] INTERVENTION MY FRIENDS AND SELF CAN ONLY ASSIST GOVERNMENT EFFORT SO FAR AS IT PROMOTES SUBSTANTIAL PEACE. PLEASE REPLY SABARMATI.[2]

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456; also *Young India*, 26-2-1925

145. SPEECH IN REPLY TO WELCOME ADDRESS, PORBUNDER

February 19, 1925

I am grateful to the citizens of Porbunder for arranging that this address should be presented to me by the Diwan Saheb, and compliment them on their good sense in giving me a cheque for Rs. 201 instead of presenting the address in a casket of silver or sandalwood. If the people of this place do not understand my wishes and fulfil them, where else in this wide world can I expect the people

[1] *Vide* footnote 2 to "Telegram to Private Secretary to Viceroy;" 9-2-1925.

[2] The Private Secretary to the Viceroy replied on February 22: "His Excellency desires me to thank you for your telegram. The agreement which has now been laboriously reached was only possible with the spontaneous help of private persons of both communities. It is of course of the nature of a compromise between the two communities and any alteration in its terms would upset the whole settlement. Moreover it is only on the basis of this settlement that His Excellency consented after much heart searching to a withdrawal of prosecutions. While, therefore, His Excellency appreciates that your own desire is also for peace, he feels that your proposed visit would lead to a reopening of the case and therefore however much he may regret it, he must abide by the previous decision."

to do so? I have said at so many places that I have no provision for the safe custody of articles of silver and other valuables. To make such provision is to invite trouble. I have been able to preserve my freedom only because I have refused to possess such articles. I have been, therefore, telling the country that those who wish to follow the path of satyagraha should be ready to live in poverty and embrace death at any moment. How can I spare space for preserving a silver casket? I am, therefore, glad that you gave me a cheque instead.

But, while on the one hand I offer compliments to you, on the other I pity myself for my avarice. My appetite is more than can be satisfied by this piece of paper. A sum of two hundred and one rupees is not good enough for me. I say this because I can assure you that you will get from me twice as much as what I take from you or even more. I do not receive a single pice which does not grow into a veritable tree raining coins—not through interest but through the manner of its use. It would be much better to perish than to live on interest. I put every pice to the best possible use and profit. I will use every pice I receive to help the country to preserve its purity and to clothe its naked. Every pie, more-over, will be accounted for. I have not come into contact with any person whom I might have told that he had given me enough. This is why my Memon friends always keep away from me. Were it not so, persons like Omar Haji Amod Zaveri[1] would be present in this meeting. They tell me that wherever I meet them I try to rob them. It is, thus, very risky to be a friend of mine in these hard times. Only such persons who, being Hindus, are ready to offer their money freely for the service of the *Bhangis*, or are ready to use all their strength and their money to win the country's freedom—only such persons can afford to be my friends in these hard times. The Thakore Saheb of Rajkot showered his love on me so much that I was almost drowned in the flood. But all the time I was trembling, wondering how long I would be able to retain his friendship. Why should I not feel happy at receiving an address from the hands of the Ruler of a State in which my father was a Diwan? My grandfather was the Diwan of the State during the rule of the present Maharana's grandfather, and my great grandfather was Diwan to the latter's father. The Rana Saheb's father was my friend and client. Having

[1] A merchant of Durban who liberally contributed money for the public activities of Indians in South Africa; a trustee of phoenix; *vide* "The Phoenix Trust Deed", September 14, 1912.

received material benefit from him, is it possible that I would also not be pleased by an invitation from the present Maharana Saheb? But it is difficult to retain all friendships, for instance, I have not been able to retain that of the British. The reason is that I think it necessary to preserve only one friendship in this life, namely, God's. God means the voice of conscience. If I hear it say that I must sacrifice the world's friendship; I would be ready to do so. I am eager for your friendship and would not feel satisfied even if I could take away all your money. I will always ask you for more and, should you send me away, I would seek a place in God's house. My field of work is India. So long as a fire is raging in the country, I cannot possibly think of leaving it to go anywhere else. South Africa would welcome me, but at present I would not like to go even there as the fire in Sourth Africa can be put out only when the fire in India has been put out. I have been appealing to all Princes for help in extinguishing that fire. Is it unreasonable of me to expect most from Porbunder in this matter?

I expect similar help from the people too. I ask for co-operation from you all. If you give it, the result may be that all of us will resume co-operation with the British. I do not mean that we shall go running to them; rather, they will come running to us. They tell me that I am a good man, but that my co-workers are rogues, that incidents like the one at Chauri Chaura will betray me. But I believe in human nature. Evreyone has a soul and can exercise soul-force as much as I. You can see the soul-force in me because I have ever kept my soul wide awake by humbly entreating it, or beating a drum or dancing before it. Yours may not be equally awake, but we are all equal in our innate capacities. The Rulers and their subjects, Hindus and Muslims, all are fighting one another but without God's help they cannot move even a blade of grass. If the subjects think that they will cultivate strength and harass the Rulers and the latter think that they can be strong enough to crush the subjects, if Hindus believe that it is no difficult matter for them to crush seven crores of Muslims and the latter think that they can easily crush the twenty-two crores of Hindus nourished on no strength-giving food, then the Rulers and the subjects, Hindus and Muslims, all are thoughtless. It is *khuda's*[1] injunction, it is said in the Vedas and in the Bible, that all men are brothers. All religions proclaim that the world is held together by the chain of love, and learned students of Shastras tell us that, without this chain, the atoms

[1] God's

would fall apart, that water would lack the property of existing as liquid and each drop would exist by itself. If the same chain, likewise, did not bind hu-man beings to one another, we would all be dead. We should, therefore, have such a chain to bind us if we want swaraj or *Ramarajya*. That chain of love is no thing but the thread of hand-spun yarn. If the yarn is foreign, it would only serve as iron shackles on your feet. Your links should be with your villages, with the *Rabaris* and with the *Mers* of Barda. If, instead, you have your links with Lancashire or Ahmedabad, of what profit will that be to Porbunder? What the people really want is that we should have some use for their labour, that we should not force them to remain idle and so starve them. Is it right that instead of getting stone from Ranavav, you should order your requirements from Italy? How can you afford to order your cloth or ghee from Calcutta in preference to the cloth woven in your own villages and the ghee made from the milk of your own cows and buffaloes? If you do not use your own products but order your needs from elsewhere, I would say that you were chained with fetters. I have been a free man ever since I discovered this sacred principle of complete swadeshi and understood that my life should have a link with the poorest among the poor. Neither the Rana Saheb nor Lord Reading nor even King George can deprive me of my happiness.

I should like to tell the women that I will regard myself sanctified by their sight only when I see them adorned with khadi and know that they spin. You go to the temple regularly to preserve your dharma, but only those among you who spin will have hearts as holy as temples. I want to know from you whether you will listen to me only if I tell you about some miracles in the Himalayas. Will you say that I have lost my head because I tell you that you should have a spinning-wheel in each home as you have a stove? I am quite sane. I am wise, and have been proclaiming what I have known from experience.

Someone asked me what I hoped to gain by accepting an address in Porbunder, and advised me to ascertain first what class of persons here wear khadi. Instead of asking what class of persons wear khadi, I may ask whether anyone at all does so. You like to wear fine cloth. Some rich millionaires told me that even they could not afford to wear such cloth always. You will, however, get fine cloth to wear if you spin fine yarn with the same care with which you prepare thin

shev[1] in your homes.

So long as this problem of yarn is not solved, you will not be able to forge the chain of love with which to bind people together. If you wish to bind the whole world with such a chain, there is, assuredly, no way but this; nor is there any other way of bringing about Hindu-Muslim unity. When I went to Rajkot, I was accompanied by Shri Shuaib Qureshi[2]. The local Muslims told him that I was deceiving him, that in asking the people to propagate khadi my motive was to ruin Muslim merchants. But Shuaib is not a man who can be misled in this manner. He knows that I would never concern myself about the handful of merchants engaged in the foreign cloth trade. He himself is a lover of khadi, and he knows that I have not been able to serve the cause of khadi or the country as well as I have served Islam. Our Muslim brethren should know that India is the land of their birth, and that they cannot hope to free the Islamic countries without first securing India's freedom.

This may turn out to be my last tour of Kathiawar. Perhaps I have only a few years to live. It was with the utmost reluctance that I accepted the Presidentship of the Congress, and also of the Kathiawar Political Conference. Only ten months remain now. I have, therefore, come here to tell you that if you look upon me more especially as your brother—though I regard myself as a brother of all living creatures—listen to my appeal and spin for half an hour daily. You will lose nothing thereby, and the country will have her problem of poverty solved. On how many things shall I pour out my heart to you? If you do not get rid of the evil of untouchability, our dharma will perish. True *Vaishnava dharma*[3] is the most life-giving. At present, on the contrary, *Antyajas* are being destroyed in the name of that dharma. The essence of Hinduism does not lie in the practice of untouchability. Eradication of untouchability, Hindu-Muslim unity and khadi—these are the three sacred articles of my faith, and I appeal to both men and women, to the prince and the pauper, to work for them.

The evil of drink must go, and that through the people's own efforts. I have no doubt that people can end this evil by their own efforts. If some unthinking persons had not adopted methods of

[1] A thread-like preparation of wheat or other flour

[2] Editor of *New Era*

[3] Religion of the worshippers of Vishnu, the preserver in the Hindu Trinity

coercion, this evil would have disappeared from the country long ago. I have heard that many sea-men in Porbunder have given up drinking, and also that the Rana Saheb approves of this movement and is ready to help. We cannot hope to be free till we are free from the evil of drink. The methods adopted in Europe for winning freedom will not help us. There is a world of difference between the temper of the people in Europe and the climate there, on the one hand, and on the other, the temper of our people and our climate. The people of Europe can harden their hearts against pity, our people cannot. Muslims of other countries tell me that Muslims of India are comparatively of a mild temper. Whether this is a good thing or not, only the Hindus and the Muslims, or the world, can say. Personally, I feel that we stand to lose nothing by their being mild. Being compassionate does not mean being timid or forsaking the use of arms; the really strong man is he who, though armed, does not strike the enemy but stands before him boldly, ready to be killed. It is the ruling principle of a brave man's life, and the essence of the Kshatriya spirit, that he never abandons his post of duty, never turns back. It is necessary for anyone who wants to cultivate these qualities to give up the use of intoxicants. I, therefore, would be happy to hear that the people of Porbunder had totally given up drinking. In Rajkot, the evil is spreading wide. The shopkeepers are competing with those in the civil station, with the result that liquor is sold at the same price as soda. But those who get liquor thus cheap shed tears of blood afterwards. Workers' wives come and ask me if I cannot persuade the Thakore Saheb [to close the liquor-booths]. The evil of drinking, they tell me, has ruined their homes and introduced discord in their families; their husbands have taken to immoral ways and their homes are sinking into poverty. If we want to earn the blessings of these poor women, we shall have to take courage in our hands in asking the Rulers to save the people from this terror. That the drink-trade is a source of income to the State or that drinking makes people happy for a while should be no consideration with them. If the evil spreads, the condition of the country will become so frightful that it will automatically perish; no one will have to try to destroy it. May God bless you and give you the good sense to listen to my words and understand what I say, so that the entire world may benefit through you.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-3-1925

146. SPEECH AT "ANTYAJA" MEETING, PORBUNDER

February 19, 1925

DIWAN SAHIB, "ANTYAJA" BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I am very happy to see you all. I feel great happiness in meeting the *Antyajas* who have come here—the term denoting *Dheds, Bhangis* and *Chamars*[1] who are mistakenly treated as outcastes. You know that caste Hindus do not come into contact with *Antyajas*. They believe that they can offer to *Antyajas* the food left over by others. Thus all manner of injustice is done to them. Many amongst the Hindus are trying hard to set this right. In the Congress important discussions are going on and great efforts made [to end this].

But they cannot do much by themselves. Your help too is needed. Many Hindus tell me: "You take their side; but you should see for yourself how these people live. They eat carrion and they do not bathe or wash. One feels nausea at the sight. They have dirty habits. How then can we touch them?"

There is some truth in this. The truth is worth listening to. You should give up whatever is bad in you and should help in reforming yourselves. Even God does not help those who do not help themselves. So it is I tell you to help yourselves. Wash your face at dawn at four o'clock, clean your eyes of mucus, and pray to God. If you ask me how to do this, I would beg you to take the name of Rama. Krishna or Karsan, or whatever name we call Him by, signifies the same Being. But the name Rama is easiest of all. We must beg of Him, "Oh God, make us good"! Bathing once in several days is not good. You should bathe daily. Labourers should bathe at night after their work. You should not steal. You should keep your children clean. It is your fault if they are not clean. What can the poor school teacher do? The third thing is not to drink liquor. The man who drinks becomes Satan. You should not eat carrion,—in fact you should avoid meat. Won't it do if you get only *roti* and milk? Those who know how to weave should keep up weaving. I can put up with it if you do not spin, but not with bad habits.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. VII, pp. 183-4

[1] A community engaged in skinning dead cattle

147. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU

PORBUNDER,
February 20, 1925

PANDIT NEHRU
WESTERN HOSTEL
DELHI

THINK DR. BESANT MAY PUBLISH HER REPORT[1].

GANDHI

From a draft: S.N. 2456

148. LETTER TO REVASHANKER ZAVERI

[*February 20, 1925*]

RESPECTED REVASHANKERBHAI,

I return herewith the correspondence with Patwari. I have gone through it. I have seen the reply sent to him. I feel distressed at his behaviour. I had high hopes of him, but for the present at any rate they are vain.

Yesterday I had an interview with the Rana Saheb of Porbunder. He too has promised to give help for khadi work. We talked to our heart's content.

I reach Wankaner today.[2]

Respects from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1261

149. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

WANKANER,
Magh Krishna 13 [*February 21, 1925*][3]

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I had spoken to you about the Muslims; the National Muslim University of Aligarh is at present in straitened circumstances. I have

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 26-2-1925, sub-title,"28th February".
[2] Gandhiji reached Wankaner of February 1925.
[3] Gandhiji was at Wankaner on this date during his tour of Kathiawar.

told the workers there that I would try to get financial assistance for them. They are trying to collect a certain amount. I told them that I would try to get about Rs. 50,000 for them. Please give this matter your consi-deration and, if you feel inclined to give the entire amount, or even a part of it, please let me know. I am making a deep study of the Hindu-Muslim question. I am being more and more convinced of my own remedy, even though I see great difficulties in the way.

I am touring Kathiawar at present. My present journey will be over today.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[PS.]

I shall be in the Ashram from the 12th to the 26th and reach Delhi on the 28th.

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6105. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

150. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, WADHWAN CAMP

February 21, 1925

Today we feel keenly the absence of Shivlalbhai[1]. You have heard about the services he rendered to Kathiawar and to the country. It is India's misfortune that those worthy men who pass away are not replaced. Everyone is destined to pass away. Life and death form a pair and there should neither be happiness nor sorrow concerning them. Nevertheless we grieve when someone dies. But I feel that such grief springs from one's self-interest. The revered memory of Shivlalbhai reminds me of the extent of our own loss. If we want his memory to live for ever, we should take his place. We should feel no shame in surpassing him in work. One should be ashamed only if one does not add to one's inheritance. One is considered a true descendant only if one adds to one's inheritance. Our duty is to add to Shivlalbhai's legacy. I am sorry that this has not been done.

It is my ambition that khadi work should become every man's job and it should enter every village. As long as the wheel does not find a place in every single village and everyone does not wear khadi,

[1] Founder of a technical school in Wadhwan; *vide* "Reminiscences of Kathiawar-II", 8-3-1925.

we are not likely to attain pure swaraj. Hindus and Muslims have not united. If they want to do so they should begin spinning. Khadi also covers the problems of *Antyajas*. This problem has created commition in Wadhwan. I do not understand why. We will have to embrace the *Antyajas* if we want to make khadi every man's work. The good name of India depends on Muslim and *Antyaja* weavers. One cannot get khadi of one's liking without an organization among weavers. I have just come from Wankaner; there are three hundred Muslim weavers there whose work is beautiful. But there are only two or three who weave hand-spun yarn. If we want others to weave khadi, we must begin spinning. We do not want those women who spin for money to give up their other occupations and spin for us. We want to make those spin who do not get even two pice. In our country where one gets only *roti* and salt, the wheel is a *Kamadhenu*[1]. This much of *yajna* is essential. It is good if it is performed system-atically.

While doing the work of spinning do not go over to weaving. If we want fine yarn we have to spin with our own hands, and without fine cloth what will our delicate brothers do? You will pay six annas or eight annas for weaving one seer of yarn. But no one will spin for you forty-count yarn for six annas.

If you want to preserve the memory of Shivlalbhai, then keep his work alive. Khadi work was Shivlal's first and last love. He has given so much money for khadi work that we should be ashamed of ourselves if we failed to keep it up.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol, VII, pp. 188-90

151. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, WADHWAN

February 21, 1925

I am just returning from a visit to the *Antyaja* quarters. I felt happy as I sat among them, for I was doing my duty. For being with you here, god will certainly ask me whether I had come here to give you, the citizens of Wadhwan, any new thoughts. You have confined them to their locality and, therefore, I had much to tell them which they had never been told. I have no miracle to perform before you and dazzle you. I only beg you to understand your dharma and

[1] The mythical cow yielding all one wishes

follow it. I will tell you nothing more than that what you take to be dharma is, in fact, sin. Ponder over this carefully, accept it only if it appeals both to your heart and to your head and cease treating the *Antyajas* as untouchables.

On my returning to India [from Africa], I [first] went to Ahmedabad, consulted the citizens there, placed my views before them and established my Ashram there only after they had agreed to support and help me for one year. In my consultations with them I had also spoken of my views on the issue of *Antyajas.* I said that I did not discriminate even against those belonging to other faiths and would most certainly admit *Antyajas*. They told me that I would never get *Antyajas* of the type I had mentioned. Well, I decided to stay there, got utensils and others articles of household use. But there was no money. But I had faith [in God]. A few months passed and Duda-bhai[1] arrived with a note from Thakkar[2]. As soon as I took him in, the people of Ahmedabad decided to boycott me. The people who drew water from the same well as we also boycotted us. But I told them that I would bear everything they might do, but would not leave Ahmedabad. If it is God's will that I should live here, I told them, He will enable me to do so, otherwise I would go and live among *Antyajas.* I knew, I said, what my self-respect required, and would not feel insulted by their talking angrily with me. After five days, the people using the well melted and Dudabhai was permitted to draw water from it. But the problem of money remained. But on the day I had no money left, God came in person and gave me the money I needed. One fine day, a car drove up to the Ashram gate. A gentleman whom I had never met previously alighted from it, came up to me and told me that he wanted to donate Rs. 13,000, and asked me if I would accept the money. Next day he came with Rs. 13,000 in banknotes, gave the money to me and left. That Satyagraha Ashram still exists. I wanted to be loyal to my principles of satyagraha and stand my ground in Ahmedabad. The Ahmedabad people have not deserted me, they come to see me and I enjoy their goodwill. This is so simply because I had bound them with the chain of love and I was confident that I would get the reward of my love from Ahmedabad

[1] An untouchable teacher whose joining the Ashram caused a furore; *vide An Autobiography*, part V, Ch. X.

[2] A. V. Thakkar (1869-1950); Gandhiji's associate and a life-member of the Servants of India Society; devoted himself to the cause of tribals and untouchables

itself. Shri Fulchand is a man who will stick to his post as I did. Why should he run away from Wadhwan? He should not desert his post even if has to starve. If he does anything in anger or out of obstinacy, or says anything to hurt you, that would be sin. If, however, his words spring from love, they will touch your heart. God alone knows with what feelings he acts; the result will depend on what they are.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-3-1925

152. SPEECH AT OPENING OF NURSERY SCHOOL, WADHWAN

February 21, 1925

I am supposed to take away with me this lock and key, as also this trowel which has not been soiled with earth at all. The gold coins which Shri Dhorajiwala has given to me, I will hand over to Fulchandbhai. Both these things have a meaning. A good many activities are going on in the country at present; who can say how many of them are genuine, or what self-sacrifice and sincerity of effort lie behind them? I, for one, do not know. All that I know is that of the innumerable institutions which are being run in the country at present, a few, we can say, have life in them. An English poet has said, describing Heaven, that St. Peter stands guard at its gate, and the key with which he opens the gate is of iron and not of gold.[1] Explaining this, another poet has said that it is not easy to open the gate of Heaven, that it cannot be opened with a key made of gold since gold is a rather soft metal, whereas iron is supposed to be one of the strongest metals. The gate, therefore, can be opened only with a key made of iron. Here in Kathiawar we say of a very difficult task that it is as difficult as chewing iron pellets. Running an institution like this is a task of that kind. For building the walls of a library, a trowel made of silver can be of no use. We need one made of iron. Likewise, we cannot use a silver padlock for locking its doors. We must have an iron one. There is, thus, an artificiality about the first steps we have taken in doing both these things. I laid the foundation by merely

[1] The lines from Lord Byron's *Vision of Judgment* are:
"Saint Peter sat by the celestial gate:
His keys were rusty, and the lock was dull."

spreading some earth; the work of building will be done by the masons and the doors of the temple [of knowledge] will be opened by the teachers. A library does not mean a building containing books, or the books in it, or idle visitors who do not read the books. Were it otherwise, we would find many booksellers to be men of character. Because the building of the nursery school is a fine one, and much money has been spent on it, can we say that the school will flourish? It will do so only if it gets the services of men who can run it on sound lines, only if it has a soul in it. Ordinarily Ido not like to perform the opening ceremony of such institutions, for how does it help me to do so? But I agreed to perform the opening ceremony of this because I have faith in the workers who are behind it. That is all. You should not suppose that any particular good will follow because I have performed the opening ceremony. I am a bird ever on the wing. Today I am here, tomorrow I may be in Ahmedabad and the day after in Delhi. However, I welcome your exploiting my name to do what good you can. The survival of this library will not depend on the support of the rich, or on the children using it or on anyone donating a hundred thousand gold coins. On the contrary, all that money may prove to be an obstacle. It has been my experience that whenever I received much help in money the cause suffered. At the time of the struggle in South Africa, as soon as money poured in from this country the movement lost its vigour, in the same way that Yudhishthira's cha-riot came down a little nearer the earth when he said: "Whether man or elephant I do not know."[1]God has given only 24 hours to all of us, and all that we require for that length of time can be obtained by eight hours' work. Everyone should be satisfied with that. This is my reason for not wishing that this institution should prosper financially. It should have only enough to enable the workers to keep body and soul together while they serve it; they will lay down their lives for it if they find it necessary to do so.

I would describe an institution which had plenty of money but no more than five workers as one which had come up like a mushroom. It will survive for five days and then perish as the

[1] The story is told in the *Mahabharata* that when they found Dronacharya, leader of the Kaurava army, irresistible, Yudhishthira, who was reputed for his absolute truthfulness, was prevailed upon to say, in Drona's hearing, that Ashvatthama was killed, but he added in a whisper the words translated above. Ashvatthama was the name of Drona's son and, believing that he was killed, Drona laid down arms and was killed by Arjuna.

mushrooms do. The point of what I have been saying is that the workers who are attending this meeting and have pledged themselves to lay down their lives for it, should put their faith in god and, even when they feel that they are drowning, they should cling to their faith and keep swimming. If they do not act thus, you may be certain that they will invite upon themselves the curses of the country, for they will not have justified this imposing building. Such palatial buildings may be all right for Princes and Rulers, but this building may be all right for Princes and Rulers, but this building will become the poverty of the country, if we do not justify it by an appropriate return to the country by way of service and if the workers do not feel haunted by it as by a ghost so long as they have not been able to render such return. The establishment of this institution and my performing its opening ceremony will have been justified if Shri Fulchand and his co-workers live in it as men who had given up all attachment, even as king Janaka was known to have done though he lived in a palace. If, however, the spirit of renunciation vanishes and love of comfort comes to prevail in its place, the institution is bound to perish. That school alone is a national school which helps us to win swaraj and all whose teachers abide by the rules, are inspired by a spirit of self-sacrifice and lead an austere life.

I was pained to hear that the citizens of Wadhwan have boycotted this institution. Money should be available locally for an institution for as long as it is in need, and the workers who run it should also be able to win the goodwill of the local population. The position of public workers like us who are fighting for swaraj is difficult, for they are also reformers. A reformers finds himself in an anomalous position, for he is not able to enter the atmosphere of the locality and is content to receive that help he can get from outside. Otherwise, what connection can Dr. Mehta of Rangoon have with this school? Wadhwan contributed to the fund even though they knew Shri Fulchand's views about serving *Antyajas*; I do not understand, then, why the people have boycotted him now. I should like them to come and put their point of view to me, tell me what they feel.

A national institution means one which strengthens the nation's soul, and not merely one which is not connected with the Government in any way. A national institution flourishes on the foundation of character, it does not become national by having a large number of pupils and enabling them to make a living. They are indeed welcome to work for their livelihood; but it is not the aim of education to equip

them for that purpose. Its aim is to awaken the pupil's soul, to bring out his spiritual powers, to train his body, intellect and soul. I am told that such a large number of pupils are enrolled in the school at Wankaner because its results at examinations are one hundred per cent. This a narrow way of measuring its worth.

Probably it is true that the teachers there are good; however, the children are enrolled there not in the hope that they will learn from the teachers to live virtuous lives, but in the expectation that because of the teachers' efficiency they will pass the examinations. We must abandon this narrow criterion. The Vidyapith and the national schools exist in order that we may learn to do so. I urge the parents, therefore, to support such institutions, and urge the teachers to remain loyal to their ideals, to welcome suffering and to draw the pupils to them by the strength of their character. If they succeed in this, my coming here and performing the opening ceremony will have been fully rewarded.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-3-1925

153. MY NOTES

KHADI IN UTKAL

From Calcutta Shri Shankerlal Banker writes about Utkal, i.e., Orissa:[1]

There is no other province as poor as Utkal. Khadi work, therefore, could progress better there than anywhere else. But the above letter tells us that the work done there is the poorest. The reason is well known. Where food is scarce, energy and enthusiasm for work disappear. If good workers are steadily forthcoming, Utkal can be trusted to overtake all other provinces.

YARN IN ADDITION TO KHADI

A gentleman writes: "Will it not be much better if, instead of purchasing hand-spun yarn and sending it to you, we send you the requisite amount for khadi and wear it?" There is a misunderstanding behind this question. The Congress has demanded not one of the two things, but both of them. First, everyone should send 2,000 yards of hand-spun yarn every month whether spun by oneself or someone

[1] The letter is not translated here. It gave details of khadi work in Orissa.

else. Secondly, everyone should wear khadi. And so there is no alternative, but the two together are obligatory. A mere spinner cannot become a Congress member nor can a mere khadi-wearer. And this is quite right. By making spinning universal we shall increase the production of khadi and by making the use of khadi universal we shall increase the consumption of khadi. That along will remove starvation from India.

A WOMAN'S OBJECTION

This gentleman further writes: "When I went to persuade a woman to wear khadi, she objected: 'If I wear khadi, my husband may be attracted by a woman using foreign or mill-cloth and thus lose his character." I cannot expect such a reply from any virtuous woman. But since the issue has been raised it should be considered. If any husband deviates from his moral course simply because his wife observes simplicity or performs her duty, then the virtuous wife should scarcely care for him. A man's character is not worth anything if he could be tempted merely by another woman's clothes. A husband who is seduced by a change in dress can also be seduced by a more beautiful woman.

My experience, however, is contrary to the statement of this woman. I know hundreds of husbands who have been delighted to find their wives in khadi clothes. Their household expenditure has been reduced and their love for their khadi-clad wives has grown. But it is also possible that this sister had no mind to use khadi and so unawares she might have raised this unworthy objection. I appeal to the sisters who think like her to take boldly to khadi and realize that beauty does not consist in dress but in purity of character, and clothes are not meant for adornment but for protecting the body from heat and cold.

WHAT SHALL WE DO?

Two residents of Jetpur had sent me the following letter[1] to my Jetpur address:

The description is correct. We can hardly emerge out of the enervating atmosphere without the strength of will. The class to which the above correspondents belong suffers from the ailment of idleness. Being accustomed to earn their wealth by means of cunning, they do

[1] Not translated here. It described practical difficulties of the semi-literate business classes in adopting spinning for their livelihood.

not like to earn it by physical labour. Wants have multiplied and so the meagre earnings from physical labour cannot satisfy them. Unwarranted expenses on such heads as marriages and deaths have all soared so high that they cannot be met without incurring debts or earning by unfair means. The body cannot undertake the tiller's toil; nor is there the requisite capital or skill. All that is left is the spinning-wheel. Here the wheel symbolizes not only spinning but all the processes of cloth production. This is an occupation that requires very little capital and also very little physical strength. This can offer a good livelihood if one gives up the prevalent pomp, simplifies living and sheds lethargy. If the correspondents cultivate a little more will-power, they can with moderate efforts learn spinning and weaving and thus earn their living.

The earnings from weaving are not enough yet, because khadi has not caught the fancy of the people. But with the spread of khadi many of us will take to weaving as a profession or earn our bread by honest trade in khadi. In short, if these gentlemen can promise some little effort they should seek admission to any khadi training centre. In Kathiawar, there is one such institution at Madhada. And the Political Conference has made spread of khadi its main activity in Kathiawar these days. The correspondents can consult its secretary and find a solution to their problem. They should remember that in this occupation there is no room for parasites.

KHADI EXHIBITION

In describing the Khadi Exhibition organized during the anniversary celebrations of the Supa Gurukul, the manager of its khadi section writes:[1]

If such exhibitions are held occasionally, they will certainly result in the spread of khadi and the spinning-wheel.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-2-1925

154. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD,
February 22, 1925

Mr. Gandhi has arrived in his Satyagraha Ashram this morning after visiting Rajkot, Porbunder, Wankaner and Wadhwan in Kathiawar. He also visited on his way back Ganod Garashia centre. He met the Princes of all these States and was much

[1] The letter is not translated here.

struck by the solicitude they seemed to evince for the welfare of their subjects. People of all these States whom he met also spoke highly of their Princes. The experiment that His Highness the Thakore Saheb of Rajkot is making with a Representative Assembly he has founded, says Mr. Gandhi, is deeply interesting, though it is yet too early to give any definite opinion about it. From what he has come to know of it, however, makes him hopeful of success. Wankaner has made primary education compulsory in Wankaner itself and amongst the higher classes.

Mr. Gandhi remarked:

It is sign of the times that in all these places I noticed among the people the keenest desire for total prohibition. In Rajkot it is most keen-ly felt, because there an unhealthy an ugly competition is going on bet-ween the State liquor shops and the Civil Station liquor shops. The result is that the prices have considerably gone down and the lower classes are taking to liquor more than ever before. Their womenfolk are bitterly complaining about the havoc that is being played in their families owing to men returning day after day in a drunken state. People are urging the Thakore Saheb to abolish liquor shops altogether. The latter is reluctant to do so on the ground of individual liberty. He is of opinion that temperance should be brought about by preaching. The State Assembly has unanimously passed a resolution requesting the Darbar to close all licensed liquor shops, and prohibit distillation of liquor except for medicinal purposes, if necessary. It will be interesting to learn how the Thakore Saheb deals with this resolution.

The Hindu, 23-2-1925

155. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, CONGRESS COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA[1]

February 23, 1925

SECRETARY CONGRESS COMMITTEE
CALCUTTA

THINK GOING BENGAL MARCH ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE. CANNOT COME BEFORE APRIL.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

156. TELEGRAM TO GOVINDDAS

February 23, 1925

GOVINDDAS
TREASURER
SHERTALI

ARRANGING SEND FUNDS.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

157. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

February 23, 1925

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[2]
EXTENSION
SALEM

PAY VYKOM SATYAGRAHA ONE THOUSAND. WILL REFUND. PROPOSE COMING MARCH GOING VYKOM. DURING MARCH MUST I TRAVEL OTHER PARTS PRESIDENCY.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

[1] An identical telegram was sent by Gandhiji to the Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Bengal Provincial Conference, Faridpur.

[2] Chakravarti Rajagopalachari (b. 1879); author and statesman, Governor-General of India, 1948-50

158. TELEGRAM TO LAJPAT RAI[1]

February 23, 1925

I MUST NOT POSTPONE WITHOUT REFERENCE MEETING[2] BUT MEETING MAY POSTPONE IF DESIRABLE. HOPE YOU ARE FULLY RESTORED.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

159. TELEGRAM TO A. T. GIDWANI[3]

[*February 23, 1925*]

GIDWANI
HINDU COLLEGE
DELHI

CONGRATULATIONS. SELF REACHING DELHI SATURDAY. START TODAY IF POSSIBLE OR STAY TILL MY ARRIVAL.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

160. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU[4]

[SABARMATI,
February 23, 1925]

WIRED LALAJI. CANNOT POSTPONE WITHOUT REFER[ENCE] MEETING WHICH MUST MEET.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

[1] This was in reply to the telegram from Lajpat Rai received on February 23, 1925, which read: "Iyengar Jayakar Jairamdas and others unable attend 28th. No date before third week March suitable. Please arrange postponement and wire."

[2] *Vide* "Statement on Adjournment of All-Party Conference Sub-Committee", 2-3-1925.

[3] Acharya Gidwani, who went to jail in 1924 for accompanying a *shahidi jatha* to Jaito, had been released by the Nabha authorities on February 22 and was staying at Delhi with the Principal of the Hindu College. *Vide* "Notes", 26-2-1925, sub-little, "Acharya Gidwani Released".

[4] This was in reply to the telegram from Motilal Nehru received on February 23 which repeated Lajpat Rai's telegram; *vide* footnote 2 on preceding page.

161. LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI

SABARMATI,
February 23, 1925

MY DEAR FRIEND & BROTHER,

I have read today your commentary on my statement on Kohat. I honour you and love you all the more for your out-spokenness. But your commentary shows how with all the detachment and impartiality in the world sometimes people most closely related as we are can come to opposite conclusions on identical facts. It makes me more charitable than ever towards opponents and more distrustful of my judgment even than I am. I have twice read your commentary and I see the wide gulf that separates us in the affair. I am prepared to strongly condemn the publication of the poem but I am unable to condone the looting and arson. I do not endorse your opinion that the pamphlet was the cause of the conflagration. The ground was already prepared. I cannot treat the conversions as lightly as you seem to do. In my opinion the Khilafatists have greatly neglected their duty and Maulvi Ahmed Gul certainly betrayed the trust reposed in him.

I do not say these things to influence your opinion if there is no cause for it. But I do want you to look more deeply into the facts than you have done and see whether there is cause for reconsideration. I tremble to publish our statements. The publication will give rise to an acrimonious discussion. I would therefore even suggest the whole matter being examined by Hakim Saheb or Dr. Ansari. I would love to have new light on the question. I would like all the friends to look at the facts and try to influence us both. But if after we have exhausted all our resources to come to a joint conclusion, we fail, we must dare to let the public know our difference of opinion and know too that we shall still love one another and work together. But that very love demands that we take no hasty action. Are you coming to Delhi? If you are, let us travel together. I leave by the metergauge on 27th. But if you are coming and you would rather leave by the Punjab Mail I would join you at Baroda. It may be advisable to have leisurely discussion between us. The train seems to be the best place for such discussion. Do let me know what you would like to do. Please wire if

possible. I am not publishing the statement this week.

With love,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I am glad you are taking Kuhne treatment. You certainly need plenty of exercise.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 10524

162. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Monday, Maha Vad [*February 23, 1925*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Read the enclosed letter and pass it on to the Maulana immediately. He will send the reply himself. I shall leave for Delhi on the 27th morning or the 26th night.

I hope mother has fully recovered now. From tomorrow we are having weddings here—three of them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

163. TELEGRAM TO REVASHANKER ZAVERI

February 25, 1925

MORALITY[2]
[BOMBAY]

PRABHASHANKER REFUSES CELEBRATE MARRIAGE WITHOUT YOUR PRESENCE.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

[1] The addressee received the letter on February 23, 1925. Presumably it was delivered by hand along with the letter to Maulana Shaukat Ali, also dated February 23, 1925

[2] Secretary of the Modern School, Delhi

164. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

February 25, 1925

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
94, BAZAR GATE STREET
BOMBAY

BOOK TWO SEATS BARODA DELHI WITH SHAUKAT ALI FOR THURSDAY.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

165. TELEGRAM TO RAGHUBIR SINGH

[*February 25, 1925*][1]

RUGHBIR SINGH[2]
KASHMIRI GATE
DELHI

REACHING FRIDAY NIGHT NAGDA MAIL.

GANDHI

From a draft in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 2456

166. TELEGRAM TO DR. M.A. ANSARI

February 25, 1925

DR. ANSARI
DARYAGUNJ
DELHI

REACHING FRIDAY NIGHT NAGDA MAIL. INFORM HAKIMJI MAHOMEDALI PRESUME SHOULD STAY RAGHUBIR SINGH.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

[1] This was sent on the same day as "Telegram to Mathuradas Trikumji", 25-2-1925.

[2] *ibid*

167. TELEGRAM TO CHAUNDE MAHARAJ

February 25, 1925

CHAUNDE MAHARAJ
WAI

REACHING DELHI FRIDAY. ARE YOU COMING.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

168. LETTER TO FULCHAND SHAH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Phagan Sud 3 [*February 25, 1925*][1]

CHI. FULCHAND,

I have your letter. What you say is quite correct. In our lives, exaggeration and slander have grown rife.

Your writing to Pattani Saheb would in itself be sufficient atonement.

Write a nice letter and send it to me. I shall forward it to him.

I wish to see the wording of your letter. Did you see those three gentlemen again? It would be very nice if the citizens join you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2825. Courtesy: Sharadabehn Shah

169. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[*February 25, 1925*][2]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. When the passenger arrives, send him to the Ashram. Do make proper enquiries. I cannot suddenly take recourse to silence regarding the Hindu-Muslim problem. But that time is coming. We are being crushed by the British. Even so, when there is something done falsely to denigrate them, should we not say: 'We

[1] From the postmark
[2] *ibid*

must dare to do Justice'[1]? If my views are relevant to the situation, I must give expression to them. But you will see my views becoming clearer and clearer day by day.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Going to Delhi tomorrow evening.

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
93 BAZAR GATE STREET
FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

170. SPEECH AT AHMEDABAD[2]

February 25, 1925

Prayer time is the best time for words of blessing. On two earlier occasions, when young people who grew up in the Ashram were married off, many among us did not appreciate the significance of the occasion. Whoever comes to the Ashram, whether children or married men, would like to observe *brahmacharya*; and, therefore, how can marriage be solemnized in the Ashram where is the aim is to encourage everyone in the observance of *brahmacharya* ? It is natural that the question should arise in the minds of many people; and yet three marriages came to be solemnized here. Though the regulations of the Ashram are strict, we are unable to enforce discipline. It is not easy to impart training in *brahmacharya* to young persons. Not that older folk are able to observe *brahmacharya* strictly. To fulfil an ideal, one should have ardour in one's heart. The subject is so profound that the more I delve into it, the more aweinspiring it seems and I see its beauty and drink deep of its delights.

We can't use force on the young people whom we keep in the Ashram. It happens sometimes that marriages cannot be avoided.

[1] This sentence is in English.

[2] Blessing the couple on the occasion of the marriage of Dahyabhai Patel. *Vide* also "My Notes", 29-3-1925.

There were three such cases. In order to pacify my mind I took the one way out. The ceremonial should be performed outside the precincts of the Ashram. One should get married without deceiving the inner self or the outer world. And then one should come to the Ashram and receive everyone's blessings.

If marry one must, it should not be to indulge the senses but to practise self-control—this must be made clear to the married couple as well as the inmates of the Ashram. Inmates should not eagerly look forward to wedding occasions. It is a different matter if they can't be avoided. That is an event linking the soul and God. That is why in English the soul is feminine in gender. Jaydev has also descried the soul as a feminine entity sporting with the Supreme Being. Little remains to be done in this world after such marriage of spirits. If marriages must take place even when this union of souls does not obtain, well, let it be so. It is necessary for me to tell you on this, the fourth, occasion that marriage is not meant for greed but for sacrifice. Resolve that even if you wish to derive sense pleasure from this relationship, you will do so within limits. Among us the rule of fidelity is meant for women only, though the last four morsels given to [the couple] while solemnizing the marriage stand for the union of flesh, spirit and bone. It is a pity we did not lay down a similar rule for men. Therefore I can only say that you must live in moderation and realize that the pleasures of the body should be only a means of procreation.

Who has the right to give birth to a child in these terrible times? Countless persons in India observe *brahmacharya* and many in Europe as well. Among Roman Catholics, there are many adult men and women who observe *brahmacharya* throughout their life. An eighteen-year-old girl walks out of worldly life andobserves unbroken *brahmacharya*. They have monastries and nunneries where such men and women live. In these hard times no one in India has the right to beget children. No one has at any time the right to bear children before one is strong enough.

I wanted the marriage to be solemnized in the Ashram, because the priest performing the rites would explain their significance and you could thus learn that marriage is not a matter of pleasure but of self-control. Both of you, therefore, should understand this occasion and remember it. I have taken upon myself one responsibility and I will never regret it. The result is bound to be beneficent. You know my relations with Vallabhbhai. He asked me of his own free will that

this marriage be solemnized by me. Kashibhai was also favourable to the idea. There is no need for spending lots of money on a marriage. It is penance that is needed. Outside the Ashram a marriage cannot take place without money being spent, for you cannot have only the religious rite, leaving out things like *barat*[1]. That is why the marriage has been solemnized here. The seed that is sown will grow into a tree. But be worthy of your parents to nurture that seed and eschew worldly pleasures. For not spending money, the motive was not stinginess, and it certainly was not greed. Such expenditure bears heavily on the *Patidar* families and our intention was to save them from it altogether.

I have known Dahyabhai for a long time and Yashoda too. I feel confident that they are strong enough through self-control to add lustre to this marriage. All these things which I say to inmates of the Ashram can-not be said too often. I do not mean to seek out such occasions, for that is not my vocation. But if they arise, I perform the ceremonies in the hope that self-control can be strengthened thus. This may well be an illu-sion. I do not wish not to take the chance if it comes. But I wish for all of you that you develop more self-control through such occasions. That is why we are all assembled here. Let us pray to God that we may attain our ideals and we may bring up men and women here who do not think about marriage and procreation, but who regard all children as their own, and who spend their lives in serving children who have no sunshine in their lives. Dahyabhai and Yashoda must think for themselves and realize how great is their responsibility. It seems to me as if they have lost their freedom today. But this state too can be beautiful. Let them be happy and restrained. Let them breathe the spirit of sacrifice and be worthy of their parents and also of us; so that no one may feel like asking why this marriage was celebrated in the Ashram.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. VII, pp. 202-5

171. THE EMBARGO

I publish the following telegraphic correspondence between the Private Secretary to H.E. the Viceroy and myself.

[1] Marriage party

TELEGRAM TO THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE VICEROY[1]

REPLY TO THE ABOVE[2]

SECOND TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE VICEROY[3]

REPLY TO THE ABOVE[4]

It is quite true that my going to Kohat is likely to reopen the settlement in so far as it is intrinsically bad. It is settlement brought about my coercion, for it has been arrived at under threat of prosecutions on either side. It is not a voluntary settlement that pleases the parties. Both the Hindus and the Mussalmans whom Maulana Shaukat Ali and I met at Rawalpindi said as much. But my visit to Kohat, whatever else it may or may not bring about, can never mean greater estrangement between the parties. If, therefore, I had been permitted together with Mussalman friends to proceed to Kohat it would have meant furtherance of peace which the Viceroy claims to have at heart equally with me. Whilst, therefore, I was able somewhat to understand the refusal when the things were still in a ferment, I am unable to understand the prohibition at the present moment. Friends were not wanting who suggested that I should have proceeded to Kohat without permission or intimation and taken the risk of a prohibition order. I could not do so unless I meant to disobey any such order and court imprisonment. And as I hold that there is no atmosphere at the present moment in the country for any such step I could not take the proposed risk. I can only hope that the authorities will appreciate the deliberation with which I am avoiding every step that may precipitate civil resistance. My purpose so far as it is humanly possible is to avoid taking a single step that may even indirectly precipitate violence on the part of the people. But a time must come when non-violent resistance on my part may become a duty in total disregard of untoward consequences. I do not myself know when such a time can or will come. I know that it is a possibility. But when that time comes I hope that friends will not find me wanting. Till then I must ask them to bear with me.

Young India, 26-2-1925

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to Viceroy", 9-2-1925.

[2] *ibid*

[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to Vicero", 19-2-1925.

[4] *ibid*

172. INHUMAN IF TRUE

Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee sends me the following telegram:

> Reports from Nabha just received give harrowing details of inhuman tortures including wholesale merciless beating to unconsciousness, dragging by *keshas* (hair) and beards, ducking into water, putting hot iron rods on various parts of body and hanging by their feet heads downward, resulting in several deaths at the spot. Many more are in a precarious condition. A large number is seriously wounded. No ration issued on 13th and 14th to some *jathas*[1]. Great excitement prevails. Situation extremely serious. Immediate action necessary.

I print the telegram, but alas! what immediate action can be taken? Of Public sympathy the prisoners can be sure. I have little doubt that there will be questions and usual answers in the Assembly but of what use will they be to the sufferers? I can only hope that the picture is overdrawn and that the authorities are not guilty of the inhumanities ascribed to them. I trust that the Administrator of Nabha will give a full explanation about the awful charges brought against the prison authorities and court an impartial inquiry into the allegations.

Young India, 26-2-1925

173. MORE ABOUT VYKOM

The folllowing letter will be bread with painful interest by those Hindus who look upon untouchability as a crime:

> We have seen your article[2] in *Young India* about us. It is our fervent prayer that we do really deserve the high terms in which you have been kind enough to characterize our activities here. On reading it we have become to some extent depressed by the sense of our own shortcomings and we are strivings our utmost to come up to the level which will satisfy you when you come here and see things actually for yourself.
>
> In the meantime the local Legislative Council has thrown out "our resolution" by a majority of 22 to 21 votes. The Government majority was made up of 15 officials, 3 nominated members, one Brahmin representative of vested interests and three elected members. The constitution of the Council is

[1] Bands of satyagrahis

[2] *Vide* "Vykom Satyagraha", 19-2-1925.

15 officials, 7 nominated non-officials and 28 elected non-officials. So of the 35 non-officials 21 voted for us, two stood neutral, 7 against us and the rest were absent. And of the 7 who voted against us, as already stated three alone were elected from the general electorate. It is clear from the facts stated above that the Government, far from taking a neutral attitude, actually went the length of canvassing against the resolution. You may remember that, the Regent Maharani in her reply to the caste Hindu *jatha* expressed a desire to know the attitude of the councils before doing anything in the matter. Then we had expected that the Government would at least have kept a neutral attitude. But now we find that it is not so. It has now become clear that the Government is to a large extent acting as the real opposition where enlightened opinion is in favour of reform.

But what, however, I wished to bring to your notice is this. The result of the resolution in the Council may prove the last straw on the camel's back. There are signs everywhere of an impatience at the gentle and "slow" method of satyagraha. Even responsible leaders may fall victims to the general restlessness. So if it is absolutely impossible for you to go over here in the near future, it must be at least possible for you to issue an authoritative statement regarding the implications of satyagraha. Such a statement coming from you is bound to have the healthiest effect on minds that have begun to waver in the face of the present heavy odds. Some people have begun to advocate social ostracism of the high castes, non-co-operation and so many other methods, all of which are more or less dangerous in the present state of our society.

Considerable strength of mind and perseverance is required now even to manage the Camp. But this is not the real difficulty. The matrix in which satyagraha flourished is the general communal consciousness and I only point out that after ten months of satyagraha when people realize that the Travancore Council has thrown out the "Freedom of Road" resolution, there is either a tendency to take to extreme steps or to completely collapse. Of these I am only afraid of the first and that is why I request that a message, clearly conveying to them all the implications of satyagraha, how though seemingly dilatory in its working yet it is the quickest agent for success, and how other methods are less useful if not positively harmful, especially in a "communal problem", etc., is highly necessary. I hope you will find time to do so.

That a State reported to be advanced should work in opposition to progressive opinion is a sad commentary on its "advanced" state. The progressives really won the battle from a moral standpoint. Whilst it is regrettable that 22 should have voted against the use by the so-called untouchables of the public road in question, it is consoling to

find that 21 members vindicated the position taken by the Hindu reformers by voting in favour of their resolution. The saddest part of the letter, however, is the fact that the satyagrahis seem to be losing hope. I do not wonder. Theirs is the first experience of sustained satyagraha. Let me, however, assure them that victory is assured. For their cause is just, their means non-violent. Let them realize, too, that by their sufferings they have attracted the attention of the world. Whoever knew Vykom before the struggle commenced? They should also know that they are fighting an age-long superstition. What is a year's suffering on the part of a few reformers in their attempt to break down the iron wall of prejudice? To lose patience is to lose the battle. They must fight to the finish. What is the alternative anyone can have in view? The breaking of heads will not serve the purpose. Orthodoxy will stiffen its back and will suck nourishment out of the blood of its martyrs. For if the orthodox are injured, sympathy will irresistibly be drawn towards them though their cause is wrong. To attempt to force the entry will invite stronger barricades. And even if force succeeded, it would merely mean mechanical use of a single public road and not change of opinion.

What, however, the Hindu reformers want is the conversion of the orthodox people who have made of untouchability a religion. This they will only do by sufferings such as they are now undergoing. Satyagraha is the shortest cut to success. All the reforms that have been brought about by violent methods have taken not one year but years. The victory of enlightenment over darkness in Europe was a long and torturing process. And one is not sure that it was a lasting success. There was no conversion of those who opposed and died. The others who were converted were attracted by the sufferings of those who died even whilst inflicting death on their opponents. The net legacy that age bequeathed the world was a confirmation of belief in methods of violence. I hope therefore that the satyagrahis of Vykom will not swerve from their path even though their ranks may be thinned and victory may seem further off than ever. Satyagraha is utter self-effacement, greatest humiliation, greatest patience and brightest faith. It is its own reward.

Young India, 26-2-1925

174. NOTES

28TH FEBRUARY

The Sub-Committee appointed by the All-Parties Conference Committee is to meet once more on the 28th instant at Delhi. No Sub-Committee had perhaps a more difficult task before it. The Sub-Committee redivided itself into two groups, one for drafting a skeleton swaraj scheme and the other for framing a skeleton Hindu-Muslim Unity scheme. Dr. Besant was Chairman of the Swaraj group of the Sub-Committee and she has already presented a report for the consideration of the Sub-Committee. The adjournment took place for the consideration of the Hindu-Muslim question as no agreement could be reached last time, and as the desire was expressed that the members then present should be able to confer with those who were absent and those others who though not members might be able to assist in reaching an agreement. It is to be hoped that those who can will attend the forthcoming meeting. Lala Lajpat Rai has telegraphed asking me to postpone the meeting to a date after the third week of March. Several members have informed him that they will not be able to attend. I have informed him[1] saying that I could not postpone without reference to the meeting itself and that the meeting might postpone if it was thought desirable. Everybody has by this time made up his mind as to what should be done. No new light would possibly be thrown on the question at the forthcoming meeting. The only question for consideration would be whether there is a middle course between the two extremes that were discussed at Delhi at the last meeting. That leads to another question. Is there a will on the part of both the parties to find an immediate solution ? The swaraj scheme is also a tremendously important problem. Only, the Hindu-Muslim question seems to block all progress. I do hope that all who are at all able will come and assist the deliberations. I would advise the absentees to send in their opinions lest the meeting should decide to continue its deliberations instead of postponing as suggested by Lalaji.

ACHARYA GIDWANI RELEASED

The reader will share with me the joy of reading the following

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Lajpat Rai", 23-2-1925.

telegram received on Monday morning from Ambala:

> Gidwani released yesterday evening sentence being suspended again. Administrator's order states facts correctly this time. Administrator sent word through his brother Alim Gidwani, who went to see him on the 8th instant to ask for appointment for Mrs. Gidwani that if Gidwani did not interfere in Nabha politics he could go away that day. Gidwani sent word that if that meant obedience to externment order he had no intention of disobeying it when he came and none in future. Mrs. Gidwani brought word on the 11th that that was what Administrator required, when Gidwani sent immediately following letter: "Mrs. Gidwani tells me that you desire some assurance from me that I have no intention of disobeying your externment order. I have not the slightest hesitation in giving you that assurance. When I started from Amritsar last year I had no intention of disobeying the order when I wrote to you for permission to enter Jaito. As I explained in my written statement on 8th March 1924, I had fully intended to abide by your decision; my friends tell me that you did not get that letter in time which perhaps explains the unfortunate misunderstanding. The Congress position and Mr. Gandhi's wishes in the matter which I had ascertained personally before starting required me to obey the order and my future course of action will of course be the same, obeying the order until it is withdrawn." Administrator left for Delhi on 12th morning returned on 15th and had to go immediately to Jaito returning again on 21st night. The suspension order came at 4 a.m. on 22nd. Gidwani proceeding Delhi tonight staying with Principal, Hindu College, awaiting Mahatmaji's instructions.

I rejoice to have the news of Acharya Gidwani's release because his imprisonment was a gross injustice and because that injustice has been redressed. Truly the ways of the Nabha authorities are strange. What they have now received from the Acharya they could have had long ago. In fact as has been repeatedly pointed out in these columns, Acharya Gidwani never entered the Nabha boundary in order to defy orders. He entered purely and simply in order to perform a humanitarian service. But neither the nation nor the Acharya has lost by the imprisonment. It is the necessary training for swaraj and the price that one must pay for liberty.

STONING TO DEATH

I have a long telegram sent to me as President of the National Congress regarding the stoning to death in Afghanistan of two members of the Ahmediya sect. I purposely refrained from any comment on the awful penalty imposed on the late Niamatulla Khan

but I dare not ignore the incidents now reported especially when a personal appeal for expression of opinion is made to me. I understand that the stoning method is enjoined in the Koran only in certain circumstances which do not cover the cases under observation. But as a human being living in the fear of God I should question the morality of the method under any circumstance whatsoever. Whatever may have been necessary or permissible during the Prophet's lifetime and in that age, this particular form of penalty cannot be defended on the mere ground of its mention in the Koran. Every formula of every religion has in this age of reason, to submit to the acid test of reason and universal justice if it is to ask for universal assent. Error can claim no exemption even if it can be supported by the scriptures of the world. I extend my sympathy to the sect in its distress. Needless to say I can express no opinion on the merits of the case. I do not think the public has any data for forming an opinon on merits. It is the form penalty that wounds the human conscience. Both reason and heart refuse to reconcile themselves to torture for any crime, no matter how vile the crime may be.

SOME POSERS

"A well-wisher" sends these lines for my meditation:

> The Bible can be read in 566 languages. In how many can the Upanishads and the *Gita*?
>
> How many leper asylums and institutions for the depressed and the distressed have the missionaries? How many have you?

It is usual for me to receive such posers. "A well-wisher" deserves an answer. I have great regard for the missionaries for their zeal and self-sacrifice. But I have not hesitated to point out to them that both are often misplaced. What though the Bible were translated in every tongue in the world? Is a patent medicine better than the Upanishads for being advertised in more languages than the Upanishads? An error does not become truth by reason of multipled propagation, nor does truth become error becase nobody will see it. The Bible was a greater power when the early fathers preached it than it is today. "A well-wisher" has little conception of the way truth works, if he thinks that the translation of the Bible in more languages than the Upanishads is any test of its superiority. Truth has to be lived if it is to fructify. But if it is any satisfaction to "A well-wisher" to have my answer I may gladly tell him that the Upanishads and the *Gita* have been translated into far fewer languages than the Bible. I

have never been curious enough to know in how many languages they are translated.

As for the second question, too, I must own that the missionaries have founded many leper asylums and the like. I have founded none. But I stand unmoved. I am not competing with the missionaries or anybody else in such matters. I am trying humbly to serve humanity as God leads me. The founding of leper asylums, etc., is only one of the ways, and perhaps not the best, of serving humanity. But even such noble service loses much of its nobility when conversion is the motive behind it. That service is the noblest which is rendered for its own sake. But let me not be misunderstood. The missionaries that selflessly work away in such asylums command my respect. I am ashamed to have to confess that Hindus have become so callous as to care little for the waifs and strays of India, let alone the world.

A SUPERSTITION

A Bengal zamindar sends me a long letter dealing with Hindu-Muslim unity, untouchability and swaraj. The letter is too long for publication and covers no new ground. I cull, however, one typical sentence from it. It is:

> For over 500 years the relation between Hindus and Mussalmans was that of foes. After the advent of British rule both the Mussalmans and Hindus were compelled out of policy to forget that racial hatred and the acrimony of that bitter enmity is now no more. But the permanent difference in the constitution of these two races does even now exist. I believe the present cordial relation is due to British rule and not to the catholicity of modern Hinduism.

I regard this statement as pure superstition. The two races lived at peace among themselves during the Mussalman rule. Let it be remembered that many Hindus embraced Islam before the advent of Muslim rule in India. It is my belief that had there been no Muslim rule, there would still have been Mussalmans in India even as there would have been Christians had there been no British rule. There is nothing to prove that Hindus and Mussalmans lived at war with one another before the British rule. My belief is that the British policy of "divide and rule" has accentuated our differences and will continue to do so, till we recognize that we must unite in spite of the policy. This cannot and will not happen unless we refrain from a scramble for place and power. The beginning must be made by the Hindus.

BHARUCHA'S DIARY

Here is a record of Mr. Bharucha's work:

> Am touring in East Khandesh with Messrs Dastane and Deva. Here is the

diary:

13-2-25 Bhusaval—Khadi Rs. 350 sold principally to lawyers and cotton collection 12 Bengali maunds.

14-2-25 Jamner—Cotton collection $16\frac{1}{2}$ Bengali maunds.

15-2-25 Chalisgaon—Khadi sold to lawyers Rs. 310/- and to cloth merchants Rs. 450/-. Cotton collection 1 Bengali maund.

16-2-25 Pachora—Cotton collection 12 Maunds and at Sindurni 5 maunds pucka Bengali.

17-2-25 Today we are at Yaval. Mr. Dastane wants three days more for West Khandesh, i.e., up to 23rd instant.

I reproduce this extract from one of Mr. Bharucha's letters as spur to action by the other workers. Not without business-like and continuous effort is success possible in the spinning and khaddar propaganda. My experience is that wherever there is work put in, the response is quick.

INDIA'S PLIGHT

Mr. Higginbottom of the Agricultural Institute of Allahabad was examined by the Taxation Inquiry Committee on the 6th instant when he gave expression to interesting opinions on several matters of importance. I cull the following from the*Civil and Military Gazette*:

> India, while being poor, is the most extravagant country on the face of the earth in matters of agriculture. The extreme poverty in the land is not so much due to want of either land or material for agriculture but want of a scientific system of agriculture. The existence of numerous uneconomic cattle and religious mendicants are the source of a fearful economic drain on the country. There are far too many cattle for food supply, and there are too many cattle for the work to be done. Lack of food reduces the size and value of cattle. Lack of food and the refusal to eliminate unfit ones has led to the Indian cow giving the least amount of milk of any cow on the earth. Indian milk is most expensive to produce and over 90 per cent of the cattle in this country is an economic loss. . .
>
> The most expensive manure, which is difficult to get, is being burnt by the people.
>
> The potential taxability of India is very great, but her present taxable capacity is very low. The burden of the land tax is very much lower than what it ought to be. Land revenue in India is burdensome when the holding is smaller than an economic holding.
>
> Legislation is necessary for abolishing uneconomic holdings. The present legislation was putting a premium on small farming. The size of a

holding is seldom sufficiently large for the use of labour-saving machinery. The present state of legislation is making all economic holdings to become a number of uneconomic holdings. There is absence of a proper system of village industries to take care of the surplus people. Further the land is asked to provide a whole-time living for a very large number of men and animals who can work on it only for half the time. The remedy is to devise and devlop rural seasonal industries for men, women and oxen so that they can be gainfully occupied for a portion of the time when the land does not require their services.

The landlord regards his income as personal, and does not consider the improvement of the countryside as his gain. Moreover, tenants and landlords are eternally at war.

These extracts deal with four things. Waste of valuable manure, the distressing problem of cattle, uneconomic holdings and want of occupation for the peasantry all the year round. All these, apart from the burden of taxation, deepen the poverty of the masses and deserve conside-ration at the hands of all patriots. Everyone of them is capable of being handled in an effective manner. In a country where the cow is an object of worship, there should be no cattle problem at all. But our cow-worship has resolved itself into an ignorant fanaticism. The fact that we have more cattle than we can support is a matter for urgent treatment. I have already suggested the taking over of the question by cow-protection societies. It is their legitimate function. The question of uneconomic holdings requires revision of the family system. The question of wanton destruction of manure requires a true agricultural education and that of unemployment for half the year for millions of men and women can only be solved by the spinning-wheel. It is clear that to the fight with the Government we must add a scientific study and handling of the problems discussed by Mr. Sam Higginbottom.

Young India, 26-2-1925

175. SPINNING PROSPECTS IN ORISSA

Mr. Shankerlal Banker sends from Calcutta an account of his tour in Orissa. I give below a free translation of his letter[1].

Young India, 26-2-1925

[1] Not reproduced here. It dealt with the difficulties and the potentialities of khadi work in Orissa. *Vide* also "My Notes", 22-2-1925, sub-title, "Khadi in Utkal".

176. TELEGRAM TO ARYA, RANGOON

February 26, 1925

ARYA

RANGOON

RATILAL CHAMPA MARRIAGE CELEBRATED HAPPY AUSPICES WITH FULL RELIGIOUS RITES.

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

177. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ON WAY TO DELHI,

Phagun Sud 4 [*February 26, 1925*][1]

CHI. MATRURADAS,

I have your letter. As regards the "plot" of the 8th you will see the news in the *Statesman*. The marriages of Rami[2]; and Kunverji[3], Dahyabhai (Vallabhbhai's son) and Yashoda and Ratilal[4] (Dr. Mehta's son) and Champa took place on 24th, 25th and 26th in that order. There were strong reasons for solemnizing these marriages under the auspices of the Ashram.[5] I think I shall reach Bombay on the 4th or the 5th.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev's letters overleaf.

CHI. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

93 BAZAR GATE STREET

FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the postmark

[2] Daughter of Harilal Gandhi

[3] Kunverji Parekh

[4] Son of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

[5] *Vide* "Speech at Ahmedabad", February 25, 1925 and "My Notes", March 29, 1925.

178. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI[1]

En route DELHI,
February 27, 1925

DEAR FRIEND & BHRR. . .[2]

Why worry about nothing. Had I written to you in English probably you would have read the postcard correctly. I have always your heart hug. What matters *it* whether I have the body *hug* or not? I will not misunderstand you. I knew you were confused. Remember me to Rehana[3].

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9551

179. LETTER TO S. V. BAPAT[4]

February 27, 1925

I have your letter. "Much wants more and loses all." Pray excuse me.

M. K. GANDHI

S. V. BAPAT
"KESARI-MAHRATTA" OFFICE
POONA

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

180. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

Phagun Sud 5 [*February 27, 1925*][5]

DEAR HARIBHAU[6],

I have read your article about birth-control. I am afraid if I write

[1] 1853-1936; judge of the Baroda High Court; Gandhiji's friend and lieutenant in the non-co-operation movement

[2] A form of greeting used between Gandhiji and the addressee whenever they met or wrote to each other

[3] Addressee's daughter

[4] This seems to be in reply to the addressee's request for Gandhiji's reminiscences of Bal Gangadhar Tilak.

[5] From the contents. *Phagun Sud 5* in 1925 corresponded to this date.

[6] Then editor of *Hindi Navajivan*

on the subject what is known today only to a few will become known to thousands of people. Because of this misgiving, I have not been able to decide whether I should discuss it in *Young India* and *Navajivan*.[1] If you wish me to write about it, discuss it with me when I reach the Ashram towards the end of March.

Blessings from
BAPU

BHAI HARIBHAU
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From the Hindi original: Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

181. TELEGRAM TO ABDUL MAJID

DELHI,
February 28, 1925

KHWAJA SAHEB
ABDUL MAJID
ALIGARH

EXPECT YOU HERE TOMORROW MORNING WITHOUT FAIL. I MAY BE LEAVING TOMORROW EVENING.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S. N. 2456

182. TELEGRAM TO ANANDANANDA

DELHI,
February 28, 1925

SWAMI ANANDANANDA[2]
AHMEDABAD

CAN GIVE YOU FULL TIME 26TH MARCH. WILL IT DO. OTHERWISE AM PREPARED COME AHMEDABAD BEFORE GOING MADRAS.

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

[1] Gandhiji's article "Birth Control" appeared in *Young India*
[2] Then Manager of Navajivan Press, Ahmedabad

183. LETTER TO DR. MANCREVOUR

February 28, 1925

I thank you for your letter. My belief in satyagraha and non-violence is as green as ever. I am myself still practising non-co-operation and so are thousands of men and women of India. The agreement with those who differ from me is to suspend non-co-operation as a national programme. This suspension leaves those who wish free to enter the legislative councils of this country.

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

184. LETTER TO SIR PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

Phagan Sud 6, Samvat 1981 [*February 28, 1925*]

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I have your letter. My programme is as follows:—

Ashram	March 4
Bombay	March 5
Madras	March 7
Vykom	March 8

The programme after that will be decided in Vykom. I expect to return to the Ashram on 26th March. I have to be at Botad on the 1st April and then I have to go to Madhada, Palitana, Sihor, etc.

Now I can see the Jam Saheb only after my return from Vykom; I would come to Bombay, provided he goes there.

Herewith Bhai Fulchand's letter. I have a very high opinion of him. This is an example of how the best of men are deceived by rumours. I am sure you will forgive Bhai Fulchand. When he of his own accord wrote to me saying that he would apologize I asked him to send the letter of apology to me.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 3197 . Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

185. LETTER TO FULCHAND SHAH

Phagan Sud 6, 1981 [*February 28, 1925*]

BHAI FULCHAND,

I have your letter. I have forwarded it[1] to Pattani Saheb. I got your second letter too. I shall reply to it publicly without mentioning any names.[2] I fail to understand the propriety of the rule that we ought not to dine at a drunkard's house.

Don't I go to people who do not wear khadi? The cause of prohibition would gain nothing directly by my doing as you suggest. Our not drinking despite going to his place does help it.

If we would have no such relations, we should leave society altogether.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2870. Courtesy: Sharadabehn shah

186. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Phagun Sud 6 [*February 28, 1925*][3]

CHI MATHURADAS,

I shall be reaching there on Thursday morning by the Mail. I shall leave for Madras on the same day. Tell Shuaib that I shall reach there on Thursday. I do not think anything can be done about the Hindu-Muslim question for the present. I sense from your letter that you wish to talk about a lot of things. But it seems that I can have time for that only if you accompany me on one of my tours. This time Mahadev and Ramdas are with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Mother that I constantly think of her. I am going to the

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* "What Should Be Done Where Liquor Is Being Served?", 22-3-1925.

[3] From the postmark

Ashram tomorrow morning. I shall leave the Ashram on Wednesday by the Mail.

CHI. MATHURADAS TEKUMJI

93 BAZAR GATE STREET

FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

187. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Phagan Sud 6, 1981 [*February 28, 1925*]

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

The charkha that I got specially made for you has arrived. It is certainly very fine to look at. Bhai Mahadev and I have both tried it; it works very well. I wonder if anyone at our place can set it up properly. Please let me know how it works. I had asked Chi. Maganlal to send one more charkha; I do not know if it has reached you. You must have received my previous letter. I am proceeding to Vykom.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 1606. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

188. REMINISCENCES OF KATHIAWAR-1

PEOPLE'S REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY

The memories of my visit to Kathiawar, which lasted from the 15th to 21st , will ever remain fresh in my mind. I was delighted to see the independence displayed by the Thakore Saheb of Rajkot. I had my misgivings about the usefulness of the People's Representative Assembly, but my presence during this body's deliberations for three hours dispelled them. The ultimate benefit from this organization would be known only in the future but it can be said that it is useful even in its present form. It rests with the representatives to increase its utility. The representatives have complete freedom to express themselves and they were seen exercising this to the full. Nobody seemed to worry about what views the Thakore Saheb would approve. The representatives expressed even such views as were likely to offend the Thakore Saheb.

As the proceedings were conducted in Gujarati, the atmos- phere was lively. Here was none of the artificiality, snobbery, and so on that one finds in English speeches. Some speeches, one could say, were excellent and effective. The speeches did not drag on and most of them were to the point. I would not consider this council inferior to any other assembly in respect of debating ability, self-restraint and orderly procedure.

Prohibition was the main topic discussed by the Assembly. It unanimously passed a resolution to the effect that the Durbar should ban the distillation of liquor. The representatives knew that the Thakore Saheb was opposed to this resolution. And yet it was passed a second time.

A FLAW IN ARGUMENT

The Thakore Saheb had himself argued with the representatives. Hence his views on this subject could be known. He argued that if drink shops were banned, individual liberty would be curtailed. I think that there is a great flaw in this argument. It is difficult to understand how individual liberty is curtailed if liquor shops are closed down. People did not want drinking to be considered a crime, but they wanted a ban on the preparation and sale of liquor. No society or individual is entitled to prepare or sell a thing if it is considered harmful by them. Everyone is aware of the harm done by drinking. As there can be no liberty for anyone to steal, there can be none to distil or sell liquor. Those who cannot do without liquor may transgress the law. Many instances of such restrictions are found even in countries where individual liberty is cherished. Liberty and license are not the same thing. One cannot have the license to act as one pleases. If such license exists, then the goddess of liberty can never stay there. Everyone has the right to enjoy as much liberty as will not harm others. There is a legal maxim[1] in English that one should use one's property in such a way that others are not injured. I have every right to dig up my whole plot of land but I cannot dig it so that the foundation of my neighbour's house is damaged. If a section of the people drinks wine, the evil consequences are not suffered by the drinkers alone but their children and neighbours also suffer. America has closed down drink shops and breweries. That has not resulted in

[1] A Latin legal maxim, *Sic utere tuo ut alienum non laedars* which means: "Use your property in such a way as not to damage that of others."

the curtailment of individual liberty. When the whole world loudly protests against the drink trade, it is regrettable that the Thakore Saheb of Rajkot is defending individual liberty to drink.

PUBLIC OPINION

Assuming that the ban on the drink trade would curtail individual liberty, even then, if the people clearly hold a unanimous view, it is the duty of the ruler to act according to the wishes of the people. That is a principle recognized all over the world. There was no one in the People's Representative Assembly who did not desire a ban on the drink trade. There is evidence to show that the addicts themselves desire such a ban. Their families have suffered. It will be regrettable if the Thakore Saheb does not respect the wishes of the people in this matter. The ruler has taken the initiative in forming the People's Representative Assembly, and I would expect that he will not disregard the people's wish clinging to wrong reasoning and that he will earn the sincere blessings of the poor by banning the drink trade.

REGULARITY

The Thakore Saheb of Rajkot is a stickler for regularity. He does all his work at the appointed hour and diligently goes through all his appointments, and makes others do the same. He loves discipline. He believes that our greatest drawback is lack of discipline. That this is very much so cannot be denied. The people are not able to fulfil their good intentions for want of rules and discipline.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-3-1925

189. SILENCE DAY NOTES TO STEN KONOW[1]

[*March 2, 1925*][2]

I am sorry that I am silent. But you can say what you wish to. I will answer by writing. I am very busy editing *Young India*—but I will spare a few minutes.

INFLUENCE OF CHARKHA

It is not so much the individual I have in view as the nation. The

[1] 1867-1948; Norwegian Indologist, epigraphist and publicist, visiting professor at Santiniketan, 1924-25. These notes were written by Gandhiji in reply to Konow's questions. The sub-headings are in someone else's hand.

[2] From the addressee

effect of spinning on the individual may be imperceptible but its effect on the nation will be very considerable even as the work of a single soldier plodding at a trench may be nothing, but the cumulative effect of thousands working at it may turn the scale.

POSITION OF BROWBEATING SECTION OF INDEPENDENTS

They threaten to take a leading part. But they will not succeed. India's heart is not that way. What you have seen of brutality is, I hope, confined to a very narrow group.

POSSIBILITY OF AMICABLE SETTLEMENT WITH ENGLAND

Certainly there is every possibility. I am working to that end. But the thing largely depends upon English conduct as a whole.

From a photostat: C.W. 5993. Courtesy: Prof. George Morgenstierne

190. TELEGRAM TO ANANDANANDA

March 2, 1925

SWAMI

"NAVAJIVAN"

AHMEDABAD

OVER TEN COLUMNS POSTED TWO SECTIONS TO REACH TUESDAY. REACHING THERE WEDNESDAY. MUST LEAVE FOR BOMBAY SAME DAY. INFORM VALLABHBHAI ASHRAM.

BAPU

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

191. TELEGRAM TO JAYASHANKER WAGHJI

DELHI,
March 2, 1925

JAYASHANKER WAGHJI

JAMNAGAR

REACHING BOMBAY THURSDAY MORNING. LEAVING SAME NIGHT FOR VYKOM.

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

192. TELEGRAM TO DR. VARADARAJULU NAIDU

March 2, 1925

DR. VARADARAJULU NAIDU[1]

NOTHING CAN BE FIXED BEFORE REACHING VYKOM. REACHING MADRAS PROBABLY SATURDAY. LEAVING SAME DAY FOR VYKOM.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

193. LETTER TO BIRENDRANATH SEN GUPTA

March 2, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I kept your letter by me all this time. I can see nothing to except in Maulana Mahomed Ali's statement.[2] May not a man seven feet tall say of another five feet in height that the former is superior to the latter in height, although the latter is superior to the former in every other respect? May not the Maulana truthfully say that he is superior to the so-called greatest man in the world in so far at least as the Maulana believes a religion which in his opinion is the best of all? I think the Maulana has legitimately drawn the contrast.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

194. LETTER TO FAZAL-I-HUSSAIN

DELHI,
March 2, 1925

DEAR MIAN SAHEB,

You were kind enough to ask Maulana Mahomed Ali to let me

[1] A member of the Congress Working Committee.

[2] Mahomed Ali had said: "As a follower of Islam I am bound to regard the creed of Islam as superior to that professed by the followers of any non-Islamic religion. And in this sense the creed of even a fallen and degraded Mussalman is entitled to a higher place than that of any other non-Muslim irrespective of his character, even though the person in question be Mahatma Gandhi himself." *Vide* Appendix "(A) Mahomed Ali's Letter to Swami Shraddhanand", April 10, 1924.

see your note on Hindu-Muslim question. He therefore sent it to me. I have read and reread it. I am entirely in favour of the Mussalmans in the Punjab and Bengal having representation in accordance with their numbers. But I have been unable to follow the argument in favour of separate electorates. Its working seems to be proving unsatisfactory almost everywhere. And if you have separate electorates for one community you can hardly resist such a claim on behalf of the others and finally by sub-sects. This must mean ruin of nationalism. Have you given a thought to the proposal made by me?

I hope you are better and stronger than when I met you. I wish it was possible for us to meet again and oftener.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I am in Delhi just now. I leave tomorrow for Sabarmati and thence for Madras.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

195. LETTER TO ZAFAR ALI KHAN

March 2, 1925

I have your letter. I think you are unnecessarily perturbed. If you will reread my note, you will find it to be harmless. I am dealing with your letter in the columns of *Young India* as the subject matter is of general interest.[1] But assume that I have erred, must we not tolerate one another's opinions, especially when they are honestly held?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

196. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

March 2, 1925

What is this decision about closing the national schools even? I

[1] *Vide* "My Crime", 5-3-1925.

can understand somewhat the closing of the college. Is it necessary to close the schools also?

With love,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

197. LETTER TO SAM HIGGINBOTTOM

AS AT SABARMATI,
March 2, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which many thanks. I shall certainly call at your farm when I come to Allahabad. At the present moment I must not especially pay a visit there. I have not a day to spare. Have you seen my condensation of your evidence in *Y.I.*[1]? Did you receive my note from the Yeravda prison?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: Higginbottom Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

198. LETTER TO NAROTTAM LALJI JOSHI

March 2, 1925

I have preserved your letter for many days. If I get time, I shall make public use of it in the *Navajivan* without giving your name. If I do so, read my comments carefully. I hope to try and do it soon. You are very greedy. You wish to know everything all at once. You leave nothing for the future, no room for faith. *Ramanama* is no substitute for one's work or profession; but it is for its purification. While doing anything you can chant the Name. Only one with faith can gain some good from it. If you have no faith in your teacher, you can learn nothing from him. They will keep you in the Ashram even for a short period if there is room available. You may write to the manager if you feel like going there. You can do a lot of work in the village, if you

[1] *Vide* "Notes", February 26, 1925.

can be at peace there and do manual labour.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

199. STATEMENT ON ADJOURNMENT OF ALL-PARTY CONFERENCE SUB-COMMITTEE

DELHI,
March 2, 1925

Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Motilal Nehru have issued the following statement explaining the reasons which led to the adjournment of the Sub-committee of the All-Party Conference over the Hindu-Muslim question:

It was decided at the meeting[1] of the Sub-committee, appointed by the committee of the All-Party Conference, to adjourn the proceedings *sine die* with the provision that the meeting be called on a requisition from a majority of the members of the Sub-committee. We were also required and authorized by the meeting to give a resume of the position as it stands today. The meeting was attended by very few members—14 out of 53. They were Maulana Mahomed Ali, Maulana Shaukat Ali, Swami Shraddhanand, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr. S. Datta, Mr. Ahmed Ali, M.L.A., Raja Ahmad Ali Khan of Salempur, Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Quiyum, Mr. Mohamed Yakub, Mr. N.M. Joshi, Mr. N.C. Kelkar, besides ourselves Mr. Jinnah came in for a few minutes from another meeting (Independent Party's meeting) he was attending at that time.

Lala Lajpat Rai had asked for a postponement by reason of the inability of Messrs Jayakar,Srinivasa Iyengar[2] and Jairamdas to attend. We were unable to postpone the meeting on our own responsibility. We, therefore, informed Lala Lajpat Rai that the question of postponement be placed before the meeting. This was consequently done. But apart from the absence of Lala Lajpat Rai and of the gentlemen named by him the attendance was otherwise also too meagre for

[1] Held on March 1. Gandhiji was the President of the Sub-committee and Motilal Nehru, its General Secretary.

[2] Lawyer and Congress leader from Madras; presided over the Gauhati session of the Congress, 1926

coming to any decision. In our opinion there was moreover no material for coming to any definite conclusions. Nor is there likelihood of any being reached in the near future. We, therefore, see no hope of being able to convene a general meeting of the Conference within the prescribed period except upon a requisition referred to by us. The failure to reach a decision is likely to disapoint the public. We would, however, advise publicists and others not to despond. That the Sub-committee has not been able to reach any decision is no reason for individuals or groups to relax their effort towards a solution.

There still remains to mention the swaraj scheme framed by the Sub-committee under Dr. Besant. Dissenting notes are being received by us from the members of that committee. In view, however, of the meagre attendance and the failure to reach a decision on the Hindu-Muslim problem the scheme could not be considered by the meeting.

The Hindustan Times, 4-3-1925

200. LETTER TO MESSRS DABHOLKER & JESHTARAM[1]

SABARMATI,[2]
March 3, 1925

GENTLEMEN,

I have your letter of. . . enclosing copy of your letter of. . . I have not yet received the letter which has probably gone after me to Delhi.

As the case is before the court in an advanced state and as Mr. Godrej has his own solicitors, I do not wish to say anything about the terms of reference. I shall be glad to serve as arbitrator with anyone your client and Mr. Godrej may nominate. Only my capacity for work in that direction is limited and my co-arbitrator will kindly have to suit my other appointments. Forwarding your letter to Mr. Godrej for such action as he may choose to take.

Yours sincerely,

From a draft in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 10527 R

[1] This letter was drafted on the reverse of a letter dated March 2, 1925, from Messrs Dabholker & Jeshtaram (a firm of solicitors) to Gandhiji. The source has two blank spaces in the first paragraph.

[2] In "Letter to Fazl-i-Hussain", 2-3-1925, however, Gandhiji writes from Delhi in postscript: "I leave tomorrow for Sabarmati".

201. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[1]

[*March 4, 1925*]

REACHING MADRAS SATURDAY MORNING. LEAVING FOR VYKOM SAME DATE. DO ACCOMPANY.

From a photostat: S.N. 10633

202. NOTES-I

HINDU-MUSLIM PROBLEM

The reader will see from the statement published in the Press that the Sub-committee of the All-Party Conference has not been able to come to any decision on the problem of problems. But perhaps it was as well that it did not. The atmosphere for a reasonable solution is lacking. Each distrusts the other. In such circumstances there can be no common ground of action. Each necessarily wants to surrender as little as possible. Nor does one notice a real anxiety on the part of any of the parties for a solution. There is, however, no cause for despair. The present failure may be a stepping-stone to success, if those who can trust and who have no fear of one another will be true to their faith and try to work at a solution. Any solution to be national must disregard the Government, i.e., must have inherent working power and must not depend for its proper working upon the goodwill of the Government.

HELPLESSNESS

I have a long telegram describing a daring dacoity attempted in Sukkur at 10 p.m. on the 22nd near the Police Station and in the heart of the town. The telegram adds that the bankers are feeling unsafe and that the dacoits are still uncaught. The object of the telegram no doubt is to excite public sympathy and criticism of a Government the most expensive in the world and yet failing to afford simple protection to life and property. That sympathy the citizens of Sukkur have. Criticism of the Government they may also have by the cartload. But the more relevant question is what the bankers were doing when the dacoits came. From the telegram it would appear that they more or

[1] This was in reply to the telegram from C. Rajagopalachari to Devdas Gandhi dated March 4, 1925, which read: "Try accompany Bapu. Write immediately date reaching Madras."

less successfully attempted self-defence. Those who would keep the possessions cannot have too much power of self-defence. When the helpless cry of robbery comes under my notice, I think more of the weakness of the robbed than of the incapacity of the Government to protect. Law allows the right of self-defence. Human dignity demands the courage to defend oneself. It would be a training in swaraj if the people everywhere instead of looking to the authority to defend their lives, property and honour would learn to rely upon themselves for self-defence.

A CRY FROM SYLHET

Here is a pathetic appeal from Sylhet in support of the invitation to visit that District:

> Although our present may not justify us in giving you trouble, we have a past which may not fail to draw your sympathy. Ours is a peculiar position. Politically we are under the administration of the Government of Assam, but we have a close inseparable affinity with Bengal in all matters, linguistic, social, religious and political. This District Congress Committee is within the jurisdiction of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee.
>
> During the palmy days of non-co-operation this province of Assam including our district was perhaps a victim of bureaucratic wrath next only to the Punjab.
>
> Tea-garden-labour exodus, the incidents of tearing Koran at Maijbhag and lastly the tragedy of Kanaighat had introduced this district to the rest of India.
>
> The "Law and Order" exacted a punitive tax of two lacs more or less from this district containing about 26 lacs of souls.
>
> Nearly 200 national workers were imprisoned.
>
> This ruthless repression dealt a fatal blow to the Congress activities. Many went to their respective callings and hence there is a miserable fall in our ranks.
>
> Out of ten national schools we have only one dragging its weary life. About 20,000 handlooms are at work, but, alas, with the exception of a very few, almost all work in foreign yarn. Sufficient quantity of cotton is being exported by the foreign capitalist year by year from our hills.

The past record of Sylhet is undoubtedly brilliant. But no nation can live merely upon its past. A glorious past may be, ought to be, an inspiration for the present. But the future can only be determined by the present conduct. It is, therefore, necessary for the people in the Sylhet District to bestir themselves and make the constructive

programme a success so far as their part of the country is concerned. It is a sad reflection that all over the country the imprisonment left the people paralysed. If we had understood the secret of suffering, they should have invigorated us instead of enervating us as they did in general. It ought not to be beyond the ability of the people of Sylhet to intercept some of the cotton that leaves their district nor to persuade the weavers to weave hand-spun yarn and to supply them with such yarn spun in their own district. Then and not till then will they be entitled to ask me to visit them.

THE BAR SINISTER

General Smuts[1] has at last spoken out on the proposed extension of the Colour Bar in South African Legislation. The reader will remember the cablegram received sometime ago that the Union Government was seeking to put the ban on Asiatics being employed in the mines. Speaking on and against that legislation General Smuts is reported to have said:

> In opposing the Colour Bar Bill in the Union Assembly, General Smuts declared that the Bill sought to give the Government power by regulation to apportion work in mines and works between whites on the one hand, and Natives and Asiatics on the other, which he thought was a very serious matter. He felt that the Bill was not honest dealing and it was his deliberate opinion that there was only one guarantee of the security of white civilization namely, honest justice between man and man in this country. ("Hear, hear!") Turning to the Bill, as it affected Asiatics, he said that in the days of his negotiation with Mr. Gandhi the position which the latter took up, and which had been taken up at subsequent conferences in London, was an appeal not to dishonour Indians. "We recognize", said Mr. Gandhi, "there is a difference between you and us and that distinctions must be made, but don't cast a stigma on us in the laws of your country," but in this Bill they were doing the very thing they were asked to avoid. They were gathering on their heads the hatred of the whole of Asia from one side to the other. In conclusion, he suggested that the matter should be seriously considered, whether they should not discharge the order for the second reading of the Bill, and see whether some way out of the difficulty could not be found.

General Smuts has correctly given the substance of my conversation with him. My point was that whilst administrative

[1] J. C. Smuts (1870-1950); South African general and statesman, late Prime Minister

difference there was bound to be so long as human nature remained what it was and so long as there was a conflict between European culture and the Indian, a legal recognition of the difference in the shape of the introduction of the Bar sinister in the laws of the country was an intolerable burden. The settlement of 1914 chiefly consisted in the vindication of the Indian position. With General Smuts' opposition we may hope that the Bill will now be dropped. But let us not deceive ourselves. The Natal Disfranchising Bill recently passed is an extension of the "Bar Sinister". General Smut' opposition therefore means only a protest against the bar being introduced even in the matter of employment, not against the bar altogether. However I tender my congratulations to General Smuts on his plain speech at the risk of still further weaken-ing his political position in his country. We may not be satisfied till the South African statute-book is purged of all legal inequality as between whites and Asiatics or better still as between white and coloured people.

Young India, 5-3-1925

203. GOD AND CONGRESS

A friend writes:

> There is one matter on which I have been longing to approach you for an explanation. It is about the term "God". As a national worker I would not have anything to say against such a passage as this occurring in a recent number of *Young India*: "I present it (*Ramanama*) to the reader whose vision is not blurred and whose faith is not damped by overmuch learning. Learning takes us through many stages in life, but it fails us utterly in the hour of danger and temptation. Then faith alone saves" (*Young India*, 22-1-'25, p.27).[1] For it is a confession of your individual faith; and I know also that you have not failed on occasions to put in a word of praise about conscientious atheists where it was deserved. As witness the following sentences in your *Niti Dharma*: "We come across many wicked men, priding themselves on their religiosity, while doing the most immoral deeds. On the other hand, there are also men like the late Mr. Bradlaugh[2] who, while being extremely virtuous and moral, take pride in calling themselves atheists." As for the faith in *Ramanama* which "alone saves us in the hour of danger and temptation", I may mention the martyrdom

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 22-1-1925, sub-title, "Ramanama".

[2] 1833-91; English free thinker and politician; *vide* "Ethical Religion - V", February 2, 1907.

of the rationalist Francisco Ferrer in 1909 at Barcelona in Spain at the hands of men who believed in Jesus' name, their *Ramanama*. I shall not dwell on the Holy Wars, the burnings and mutilations of heretics, and the torture and slaughter of animals and sometimes of men in sacrifice—all of which have been carried out "for the greater glory of God and in His name". This is by the bye [*sic*].

As a national worker, however, I feel, I must draw your attention to the objection which Mr.—raised (on behalf of a rationalist friend of his) to your saying that only "godfearing" men can become true non-co-operators, and remind you of the assurance you then gave to all to the effect that the programme of national work does not require a man to declare his religious faith. (*Vide Young India*, May 4, 1921 pp. 138-9)[1] That objection applies with greater force now than it did at that time, because "God" has now a place on pledges and vows such as that administered to Congress volunteers, which begins "with God as witness, I. . ." Now you must be knowing that the Buddhists (like the Burmese. . . now an "Indian" people, and your friend Prof. Dharmanand Kosambi) and the Jains, as well as many Indians who do not belong to these ancient recognized sects are agnostic in faith. Is it possible to these, if they wish, to enrol as Congress Volunteers conscientiously and with full understanding of a pledge which begins in the name of an Entity they ignore? I not, is it proper to exclude from Congress service any such merely because of their religious faith? May I suggest that a conscience clause be added to accommodate all such cases, allowing of solemn affirmation in place of the oath in the name of God (to which even some believers in a personal God object, as the Quakers), or else a substitution of "Conscience" in a place of "God" by all conscientious objectors to the use of the latter, or—best of all— that a solemn affirmation without reference to God and with or without "Conscience" be required of *all* comers without distinction? I approach you as you are the author of that pledge and now the President of the Congress. I did so once before, but I am afraid, not in time for you to be able to attend to it before you historic arrest at Sabarmati in 1922.

So far as the conscientious objection is concerned the mention of God may be removed if required from the Congress pledge of which I am proud to think I was the author. Had such an objection been raised at the time, I would have yielded at once. I was unprepared for the objection in a place like India. Though there is officially the Charvak[2] school, I do not know that it has any votaries. I deny that

[1] *Vide* "A String of Faith", May 4, 1921.

[2] Ancient materialist philosopher whose followers are called by his name

Buddhists and Jains are atheists or agnostics. The latter they cannot be. Those who believe in the soul as apart from and capable of life independent of and after the dissolution of the body cannot be called atheists. We may all have different definitions or "God". If we could all give our own definitions of God there would be as many definitions as there are men and women. But behind all that variety of definitions there would be also a certain sameness which would be unmistakable. For the root is one. God is that indefinable something which we all feel but which we do not know. Charles Bradlaugh described himself as an atheist no doubt but many a Christian declined to regard him as such. He recognized in Bradlaugh a greater kinship with himself than many a lip Christian. I had the privilege of attending the funeral of that good friend of India. I noticed several clergymen at the function. There were certainly several Mussalmans and many Hindus in the procession. They all believed in God. Bradlaugh's denial of God was a denial of Him as He was known to Bradlaugh to have been described. His was an eloquent and indignant protest against the then current theology and the terrible contrast between precept and practice. To me God is truth and love; God is ethics and morality; God is fearlessness. God is the source of Light and Life and yet He is above and beyond all these. God is conscience. He is even the atheism of the atheist. For in His boundless love God permits the atheist to live. He is the searcher of hearts. He transcends speech and reason. He knows us and our hearts better than we do ourselves. He does not take us at our word for He knows that we often do not mean it, some knowingly and others unknowingly. He is a personal God to those who need His personal presence. He is embodied to those who need His touch. He is the purest essence. He simply Is to those who have faith. He is all things to all men. He is in us and yet above and beyond us. One may banish the word "God" from the Congress but one has no power to banish the Thing Itself. What is a solemn affirmation if it is not the same thing as in the name of God. And surely conscience is but a poor and laborious paraphrase of the simple combination of three letters called God. He cannot cease to be because hideous immoralities or inhuman brutalities are committed in His name. He is long suffering. He is patient but He is also terrible. He is the most exacting personage in the world and the world to come. He metes out the same measure to us that we mete out to our neighbours—men and brutes. With Him ignorance is no excuse. And withal He is ever forgiving for He always gives us the chance to

repent. He is the greatest democrat the world knows, for He leaves us "unfettered" to make our own choice between evil and good. He is the greatest tyrant ever known, for He often dashes the cup from our lips and, under cover of free will, leaves us a margin so wholly inadequate as to provide only mirth for Himself at our expense. Therefore, it is that Hinduism calls it all His sport—*lila*, or calls it all an illusion—*maya*. We are *not*, He along *Is*. And if we will be, we must eternally sing His praise and do His will. Let us dance to the tune of His *bansi*—lute, and all would be well.[1]

Since reference has been made to a booklet[2] of mine on ethics and religion, I must draw the attention of the reader to the fact that what the correspondent refers to is a translation of the original which is in Gujarati. But the Gujarati itself as the preface makes it clear is not an original effort but an adaptation from an American publication called *Ethical Religion* by Mr. Salter. The translation came under my notice in Yeravda Jail and I regretted to notice the absence of any mention of the source from which I had borrowed. The translator himself I understand did not rely upon the original Gujarati but a Hindi translation. The English rendering therefore is a round-about thing. I owe this explanation to the author of the original book and I am glad that the mention of the work by my correspondent has reminded me of my obligation.

Young India, 5-3-1925

204. MY CRIME

I gladly print the following from Maulana Zafar Ali Khan written by him in his capacity as President of the Punjab Khilafat Committee:

> I have read with feelings of mingled amazement and pain your pronouncement, in *Young India* of the 26th instant, on stoning inci- dents in Kabul. You say that "this particular form of penalty cannotbe defended on the mere ground of its mention in the Koran".[3] You, moreover, declare that "every formula of every religion has in this age of reason to submit to the acid test of reason and universal justice if it is to ask for universal assent". Finally you maintain that error can claim no exemption even if it can be supported by the

[1] What follows has been appended to the article under Gandhij's signature.
[2] *Vide* "Ethical Religion - V", February 2, 1907.
[3] *Vide* "Notes", 26-2-1925, sub-title,"Stoning to Death".

scriptures of the world.

I have always paid unstinted homage to your greatness and have all along looked upon you as one of the few men who are making modern history; but I would be failing in my duty as a Mussalman if I refrained from pointing out to you that by challenging the right of the Koran to regulate the life of its followers in its own way you have shaken the belief of millions of your Muslim admirers in your capacity to lead them.

You are at perfect liberty to express your opinion one way or the other as to whether renegades can be stoned to death under the law of Islam. But to hold that even if the Koran supported such form of penalty, it should be condemned outright as an error, is a form of reasoning which cannot appeal to the Mussalmans.

Error is after all a relative term and Mussalmans have their own way of interpreting it. To them the koran is an unalterable law which transcends the ever changing policies and expendiencies of puny humanity. Would to God that to your multifarious activities as leader of India you had not added the rather delicate task of adversely criticizing the teaching of the Holy Koran.

The Maulana has put an interpretation upon my note which it does not bear. I have not adversely (or otherwise) criticized the teachings of the Holy Koran. But I have criticised the teachers, that is, the interpreters, in anticipation of their defending the penalty of stoning to death. I claim to understand enough of the Koran and the history of Islam to know that a multitude of interpreters have interpreted the Koran to suit their preconceived notions. My purpose was to issue a warning against the acceptance of such interpretations. But I would like to say that even the teachings themselves of the Koran cannot be exempt from criticism . Every true scripture only gains by criticism. After all we have no other guide but our reason to tell us what may be regarded as revealed and what may not be. The early Mussalmans accepted Islam not because they knew it to be revealed but because it appealed to their virgin reason. I fully endorse the Maulana's statement that error is a relative term. But we know as a matter of fact that some things are universally accepted as errors. Death by torture is, I expect, such an error. In making the three statements the Maulana has quoted, I have simply mentioned three canons of interpretations which I think are incapable of challenge. Anyway, I abide by them . And if I am at perfect liberty to express my opinion "as to whether renegades can be stoned to death under the law of Islam" why may I not express an opinion as to whether

penalty of stoning to death can be imposed at all under the law of Islam? The Maulana has betrayed intolerance of criticism by a non Muslim of anything relating to Islam. I suggest to him that intolerance of criticism even of what one may prize as dear as life itself is not conducive to the growth of public corporate life. Surely Islam has nothing to fear from criticism even if it be unreasonable. I therefore suggest to the Maulana the advisability in the light of my criticism of applying himself to an elucidation of the tremendous issues involved in the incidents reported from Kabul.

Young India, 5-3-1925

205. NOTES–II

AN OASIS IN THE DESERT

In the midst of complaints against Bombay in the matter of Khaddar,one is glad to find that a group of ladies are doing silent and effective work in spreading khaddar. A letter before me says:

> This month we are selling over Rs. 2,000 worth of khaddar vests for the work guild and schools. Moreover we have sent some to Bhavnagar. Add to this the usual money sales. A new class is being opened in the Seva Sadan[1] on the condition that only those children are to be admitted to it who are prepared to do a certain amount of spinning every day. When they have mastered the art, they are to contribute 2,000 yards per month. This is impressing the existing classes. The girls are to commence hand-spinning in some of them.

Another friend properly remarks that it is not the people that are apathetic. It is the workers, the leaders. They are doing nothing to spread the gospel. The people have not yet developed that liking for khaddar as to make them go out of their way to procure khaddar, but if it is brought to their doors, they would gladly take it. The harvest is indeed such but the labourers are few. Why will not every worker make it a point to sell a given quantity of khaddar per month? I know that we have made sufficient progress in the manufacture of khaddar to be able to supply the most fastidious tastes. I was shown the other day a rich bride's trousers. It was all made of khaddar and silver and gold embroidery. There was nothing wanting from a rich man's point of view. And the khaddar saris were as fine as one could possibly desire. There was the inevitable richly-coloured shawl too made of

[1] Sarasvat Hall; *vide* "A Correction", 26-3-1925.

khaddar which the bride has to wear on her being given to the bridegroom. Let no one therefore pretend that he or she does not use khaddar because it is not fine enough or coloured according to one's tastes. Will the workers all over India please note and copy the example of the silent sisters whose efforts I have brought to their notice?

FARIDPUR CONFERENCE

I have telegrams from Faridpur urging me to attend the Bengal Provincial Conference. I am extremely sorry for my inability to attend it, much as I would love to do so. I had warned[1] the Faridpur friends not to rely upon my attendance. I had told them that my movements were uncertain. Mine is not an enviable position. I have calls from Bihar, Wardha, Orissa, Andhra and several other places. I would like to visit all of them. But since I cannot visit all at the same time, I must judge where I can be of the greatest service at a particular moment. I feel that my place just now is among the valiant band of satyagrahis at Vykom. It is a promise long overdue. They are endeavouring to enforce the doctrine of satyagraha in every minute detail. They are few in number. They are fighting against heavy odds. Till now I have interfered with their seeking monetary and other help from outside. It is due to them that I should as a professing expert go to them and guide them and hearten them for all that lies in front of them. The friends from the other provinces will not grudge me or them this privilege of long-deferred communion.

What is more, whereas I fancy I can be of some assistance to these satyagrahis, I feel sure that I can be of no use in the other provinces except to be on show there. My prescription for them is incredibly simple. Settle your local differences whether they are between Hindus and Mussalmans or other or whether they are between Brahmins and non-Brahmins. Spin as much as you can, wear khaddar on all occasions, enrol as many selfspinning members as you can for the Congress. And add to these those who will not spin themselves but will gladly furnish 2,000 yards of yarn per month, hand-spun for them by others. Help the suppressed classes in your district or province in every way you can, rid your place of the drink and the opium evil, and then invite me for further effort. If we want an era of hope drawning upon us next year, during this year of grace we shall

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Secretary, Congress Committee, Calcutta", 23-2-1925.

devote all our energy to the national constructive programme undeterred by anything that the Government may or may not do , the Bengal Ordinance notwithstanding. If we want to see the Ordinance removed, we must generate enough strength for the purpose. The only way I know of so doing is to work the constructive programme with all our might.

A CASE FOR RECONSIDERATION

Mr. A. V. Thakkar, that friend of the suppressed classes, has sent me a copy of the Report of the Committee appointed by the Bombay Corporation to inquire into the ejection from municipal chawls of certain members belonging to the suppressed classes. These poor men and women have been driven out on the grounds that they are not in municipal service, that some of them can afford to pay more and that some others are undesirable persons against whom prosecutions have been proved. On behalf of the evicted people it has been contended that they are near relatives of the employees, that they have been living in municipal chawls for years and that the evictions have been brought about at the instance of corrupt municipal servants who could not get bribes from the evicted persons. In the Municipal Commissioner's report it is stated that

> some years ago after visiting the chawls and making enquiries I was satisfied that the evidence and statements made (about corruption) were such that no impartial person could accept them.

I cannot recall any such statement having been made by me. But the question of bribery is irrelevant. Even if every Municipal official would be proved to be above corruption, the eviction of the people other than employees is bad in principle *so far as the suppressed classes are concerned.* Theirs is a special case. They have nowhere to go to. They do not cluster together in municipal chawls for the sake of finding cheap habitation. They live there because they can procure no other for love or money. I hold that it is the duty of the Corporation not only to let the relatives of the suppressed class employees remain with them but it is also to provide enough and decent additional accommodation for these classes. The Corporation will be entitled to charge a reasonable rent for such accommodation. I know instances of very respectable members belonging to the suppressed classes having been unable to procure lodgings at any rent whatsoever. The owners will not let their houses to these classes. The objection of the Committee or the Municipal Commissioner to

persons other than employees occupying municipal chawls would be valid, if it were raised in connection with any other class. I hope therefore that the case will be reopened and provision made for every one of the evicted men and women of the suppressed class.

Young India, 5-3-1925

206. TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT, MADRAS CORPORATION

March 5, 1925

PRESIDENT

MADRAS CORPORATION

MADRAS

THANKS. GLADLY ACCEPT ADDRESS SATURDAY AT TIME CONVENIENT CORPORATION.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

207. TELEGRAM TO DR. VARADARAJULU NAIDU

March 5, 1925

DR. VARADARAJULU NAIDU

3 BROADWAY

MADRAS

HAVE WIRED CORPORATION AGREEING ACCEPT ADDRESS SATURDAY IMPOSSIBLE STAY TWO DAYS MADRAS VIEW SILENCE DAY BEING IMMEDIATELY AFTER.

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

208. TELEGRAM TO S. SRINIVASA IYENGER

March 5, 1925

S. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

MYLAPORE

MADRAS

HAVE WIRED CORPORATION AGREEING ACCEPT ADDRESS SATURDAY.

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

209. TELEGRAM TO ANNE MARIE PETERSEN

March 5, 1925

MISS PETERSEN[1]

PORTO NOVO

REACHING MADRAS SATURDAY MORNING "EN ROUTE" VYKOM.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

210. LETTER TO AMRITLAL KHETSI

BOMBAY,

Phagan Sud 10 [*March 5, 1925*][2]

BHAISHRI AMRITLAL,

I am sorry to learn that Chi. Rami is ill. While I am at Vykom keep me informed about her. Tell her to write to me as soon as she gets well.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

BHAISHRI AMRITLAL KHETSI

NEAR KANYASHALA

DHRANGADHRA

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 677. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

211. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Phagan Sud 10 [*March 5, 1925*][3]

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter from Ranchi. A folding charkha has been sent to your Calcutta address from the Ashram and another, of a new pattern, from Delhi. Both were despatched before your letter was received; so they have gone to Calcutta.

I am sorry to learn about your wife's indifferent health. It is difficult to give you any advice without knowing the full details of her

[1] A member of the staff of the Danish Missionary Society in South India

[2] Gandhiji was in Bombay on March 5, 1925, *en route* to Vykom.

[3] Gandhiji left Bombay for Madras on March 5, 1925.

illness. However, as a general rule during illness the patient should have as little food as possible, and this too mainly milk and fruit. It is our common practice to close one's bedroom during illness whereas there is all the greater need then for fresh air. But then all the things I suggest are beside the point; whatever your doctor or *vaid*[1] says should be taken as right.

I am leaving for Vykom today. Probably I shall have to be in Madras Presidency till the end of this month. I hope to reach the Ashram by the 26th or 27th March.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6118. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

212. INTERVIEW TO PRESS ON HINDU-MUSLIM PROBLEM

BOMBAY,
March 5, 1925

My views remain the same as hitherto. Unity is inevitable. It will take longer than I had expected. The estrangement is undoubtedly growing. Let us hope that even in the midst of the storm, same of us will remain calm I am out for conquest. I as a Hindu will not therefore quarrel with the Mussalmans, neither will I yield to threats, such as I see are reported to have been uttered at Peshawar. I am in correspondence[2] both with Maulana Zafar Ali Khan and Dr. Kitchlew[3]. I hope that they are incorrectly reported. But I must refuse to lose my head even if they have said all that has been reported of them.I do not believe in the efficacy of retaliation. I would urge the Hindus not to be angry over such incidents. But I see that there is no settlement to be had in the near future. No lasting settlement can be had by higgling. I cannot be interested in a fight for sharing power with the bureaucracy. Such fight can only strengthen British dominance. I would prefer anarchy to that dominance. As equals I would value co-operation of the British, but I would prefer anarchy to their dominance. For I know that we can never become one nation through that dominance. I can see the chance of reconciliation between Hindu and Mussalmans after

[1] A physician practising the Ayurvedic system of medicine
[2] *Vide* "My Crime" , 5-3-1925.
[3] 1887-1963; Barrister and Congress leader of the Punjab

a free and hearty fight, but I see none with British arms restraining us. We must learn to restrain ourselves. My motto, therefore, is "Unite now, today, if you can; fight if you must. But in every case avoid British intervention". I know that the temptation is great. But, great or small, I must avoid it at all cost. I can see swaraj rising out of the Thermopylae being enacted in every street or village in India, but I can see no swaraj out of the armed neutrality between the two communities. There is as much need for a change of heart among the Hindus and Mussalmans, as there is among the British, before a proper settlement is arrived at.

"But who will follow your advice ?" asked the interviewer. The Mahatma replied:

I will. Is it not enough ? Must I surrender my belief because no one will follow it ?

"Still, that is no answer to my question," said the interviewer. The Mahatma answered:

Your complaint is just. I cannot however take you any further. I know that I am at a discount just now. People will rush to the Government and in such circumstances if I were the Government, probably I would do exactly as the British are doing, i.e., try to divide both and rule. What can one do with those who want to be ruled? The Hindu-Muslim problem is therefore just now an insoluble puzzle. I propose to keep out of it, holding myself available whenever wanted. I believe in God, not as a theory but a fact, more real than that of life itself. I must therefore wait upon Him. In the hour of my need He will guide my steps on this question as He has done hitherto. Meanwhile, in the spinning-wheel and untouchability, I have more than enough to occupy my time and that of those who think like me.

" But will you not make some concrete suggestion for those who will (not ?) follow your advice ?" was the last question.

I must think about them. I do not want to add to the complications by adding a new formula to the many that are current among us, unless I see a chance of its proper working.

The Hindu, 6-3-1925

213. LETTER TO JANAKDHARI PRASAD

ON THE TRAIN,
March 6, 1925

DEAR JANAKDHARI BABU[1],

Your letter has been travelling with me all this time. I am now writing this in the train that is taking me to Madras. I had no intention of being inattentive to anybody at Belgaum. But what was I to do ? I had not a moment for personal chats. I therefore hardened my heart.

You are morose. There is no occasion for it. Let us do the day's work to the best of our ability and smile. All work faithfully done has the same value in the book of life. Why then should we worry?

You have not asked any definite questions. But if you have any, pray do not hesitate to ask them. Be assured that you are the same to me that you were before. I treasure the memory of the faithful co-workers of Champaran. I shall never have and never had a more faithful band to work with. If I had such a band throughout India, swaraj will not be long in coming to India.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 48

214. TELEGRAM TO "“NAVAJIVAN”

MADRAS,
March 6, 1925

“NAVAJIVAN”
AHMEDABAD

POSTED SIXTEEN COLUMNS. ANDREWS ARTICLES MUST GO IN. PICK AND CHOOSE FROM MINE.

From a handwritten draft: S. N. 2456

[1] One of Gandhiji's co-workers in the Champaran campaign of 1917

215. TELEGRAM TO PRINCIPAL, UNION COLLEGE, ALWAYE

MADRAS,
March 6, 1925

PRINCIPAL
UNION COLLEGE
ALWAYE

PREFER FIX PROGRAMME AFTER VYKOM INSTEAD BREAKING JOURNEY.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

216. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

ON THE WAY,
Phagan Sud 11 [*March 6, 1925*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL[2],

If the man from Ankleshwar comes, give him his ring and ask him to write to me if he wants to say anything. Do not allow him to stay at all in the Ashram. The fellow is obviously mad.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

You must have sent the Rs. 5,000 of Wadhwan. Do the needful about the cheques for Rs. 4,000.

CHI. CHHAGANLAL
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 10245

217. INTERVIEW TO "SWADESAMITRAN"[3]

MADRAS,
March 7, 1925

Our representative had an interview with Mahatmaji at about 1.30 p.m. at the residence of Shri Srinivasa Iyenger. . . . When our representative arrived there, a few

[1] In 1925, *Phagan Sud* 11 fell on March 6. The postmark, however bears the date March 7, 1925.

[2] Gandhiji's nephew and associate

[3] A Tamil Daily

college girls were already there to have the *darshan*[1] of Mahatmaji.

Mahatmaji asked the girls:

Do you spin on the charkha?

One of the girls replied that as they were at college, they could not find time for spinning . Mahatmaji asked them a few questions about their college, curricula, etc, and asked,

"Do you like Tamil language more, or English?"

One of them replied that they have more liking for Tamil which was their mother tongue. At the end, when the girls took leave of Gandhiji, he advised them to take to spinning on charkha. The girls promised to do so.

Thereafter, our representative had the following conversation with Gandhiji:

QUESTION: When I read in papers about what you told a Press correspondent at Bombay regarding the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity, I felt that the atmosphere was such as to cause difference. I would therefore like to know from you directly your assessment of the present situation.

There is an increasing lack of unity between the two fraternal groups. Mutual suspicion has grown.

What would be your immediate solution to this problem?

Mutual mistrust should be given up to strengthen the bonds of unity; the people should repose faith in their leaders.

In connection with the Viceroy's visit to England, the British Press have started a propaganda campaign against India and against Indian interests and advancement. In this context, a few persons have suggested that we should also do counter-propaganda in England for making the truth known and for explaining the viewpoints of the Indian people. I would like to know your opinion in the matter.

It is impossible for us to do propaganda through the British Press. The British Press is bent upon furthering Imperial aims. However much we give them facts about the actual position in India, they would not publish them. At one time, factual material for publication as an advertisement was sent to a British paper by a person along with the charges for publication. But the paper returned the money saying that it could not publish it.

Can't we propagate our views among the general public in England?

The British people are not such as to believe only the views expressed by our speakers. The Englishmen by nature are made to

[1] Sight of a person, place or thing considered holy

realize the bad situtation in a country only by two indications, that is, by the eruption of revolution or the launching of the mass movement of non-co-operation with government in that country. Once upon a time when Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea[1] went to England and ably represented the degenerated state of affairs in India, it is said that an English gentlemen posed this question: "If what you say is true, why havn't your countrymen risen in revolt?" The same mentality still persists.

It is said that the majority report of the Reforms Enquiry Committee[2] is retrograde. Is it not necessary to start a country-wide agitation against Government accepting the findings of the committee?

As far as I am concerned, I try my level best to read the minds of the common people whether it be the retrograde findings of the Muddiman Committee, Government's repressive measures, or its frightful governance, I do not think that any of these factors would be able to arouse feelings among our countrymen at present. To the extent I can, I only see a sense of despair overwhelming the people all over our country.

What then is your suggestion to rid the people of their despair and infuse spirit in them?

There is no better device to inculcate the right spirit in the people than the universal adoption of hand-spinning on charkha. The primary demand of the masses, the poor, is food. It is charkha alone that is capable of giving food to all of them, like a grand benefactor.

You might have come across the recent speeches made by General Smuts. Is it advisable for South Africans Indian to join hands with him and his partymen in the agitation for securing the rights mentioned in his speeches?

If General Smuts really intends to put in practice all that he uttered in his [recent] speeches, it is enough if united efforts are made

[1] 1848-1925; Member of the Congress deputation to England in 1890; President of the Indian National Congress in 1895 and 1902; member, Viceroy's Executive Council.

[2] The official committee appointed under the chairmanship of Sir Alexander Muddiman to examine and report on the improved working of the Government of India Act. In its report published in March 1925, the majority comprising Muddiman and three others took the position that by their terms of reference they could not recommend remedies inconsistent with the purpose of the Act, but they praised the successful working of the system. On the other hand, the minority found that the dyarchical constitution had failed and was incapable of yielding better resume in the future; *vide India in 1925-26*.

to achieve the rights enumerated by him. At present he is in the opposition. Indians [in South Africa] may join him in his efforts to secure the said rights. But one has to be cautious as the possibility of his going back on his words when he is back in power should also be borne in mind.

Gandhiji said it was not possible for him to say then how long he would stop at Vykom, and that he would inform all concerned prior to his return to Madras.

[From Tamil]

Swadesamitran, 7-3-1925

218. INTERVIEW TO FREE PRESS OF INDIA

MADRAS,
March 7, 1925

A representative of the *Free Press of India* interviewed the Mahatma in regard to Lord Reading's visit to England.

Do you anticipate any change in Britain's Indian policy consequent on Birkenhead[1] Reading consultations?

What a big question this for a simple man believing in the spinning-wheel?

Supposing Government takes to a policy of repression in the near future, what will be your message to the country?

I will say: "Khaddar, khaddar, khaddar". That is one thing I emphasize. Remember the removal of untouchability too.

Do you believe that khaddar only is sufficient answer for repression.

Yes, that is so. It is an effective one.

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-3-1925

[1] Lord Birkenhead (1872-1930); English statesman; Secretary of State for India, 1924-28

219. INTERVIEW TO "SWARAJYA"

MADRAS,
March 7, 1925

Questioned by the *Swarajya* representative whether the acceptance of office by the Swarajists would in any way affect the relations between the Congress and the Swaraj Party, Mahatmaji answered with a decisive "No" and added that the Congress had given a *carte blanche* to the Swarajists in regard to their activities in the Councils.

On his attention being drawn to the Viceroy's assent to the Hindu Religious Endowments Act in spite of opposition from the elected Hindu members, Mahatmaji stated that he had not studied that Act or its implications, and added that in case it became absolutely necessary for him to do so he would pay his attention to it and express his opinion in course of time.

Questioned whether it was consistent with the policy of the Congress for the President of the Tamilnad Congress Committee to openly support the Act, Mahatmaji replied that he saw no objection to any Congressman supporting the Act who also accepted the principle of entry into the Councils.

To another question Mahatmaji replied that he would certainly avail himself of the opportunity of his visit to Vykom to see the Maharani Regent if he could.

He also confessed with regret that the prospects of Hindu-Muslim unity in the North which he lately visited were not very bright. He said that on his way to Bombay he had written on the subject to Dr. Kitchlew and other Muslim leaders and he was expecting a reply from them. Mahatmaji expressed his satisfaction at the cordial relationship existing between the two communities in this province.

The only message he could give to the South was.

I ask them to spin, that's all.

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-3-1925

220 SPEECH IN REPLY TO CORPORATION ADDRESS, MADRA[1]

March 7, 1925

MR. PRESIDENT, MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION, AND FRIENDS,

As usual, I hope you will excuse me for my inability to speak to you standing. I thank you very sincerely for the beautiful address that

[1] Dr. Usman, the president, read out the address of welcome on behalf of the Corporation.

you have been pleased to present to me. It is always a matter of embarrassment for me to receive addresses. On several occasions I have described myself as a scavenger, and I should be content if I could die also as a scavenger. I am a lover of municipal work. Fates have decided otherwise There was a time when I was myself thinking seriously of taking to municipal life. It is a life in which a great deal of plodding is required. I am myself a plodder, and I call myself a scavenger because I believe in sanitation from more than one point of view, that is to say, in outward sanitation, as also inward sanitation.

I am not a stranger to Madras. I have lived off and on several occasions in Madras, sufficiently long to enable me to study and understand the sanitation of your city; and it has always grieved me whenever I have walked through your streets early in the morning to see them disfigured. I used to talk when I used to live with Mr. Natesan[1] about the conditions of the streets of Madras. I do not wish to single out the streets of Madras as if they are more insanitary than the streets of other cities of India. But I cannot help remarking upon the condition of your streets because I think that more than any other city of India, the streets of Madras were at that time disfigured even by grown-up elderly men. It was a sight to which I must confess I was unused before I came to Madras, and often did I feel like taking a broom myself and cleaning up every nook and corner of the streets through which I passed. I still indulge in it as a pastime. Whenever I can get a little bit of cleaning work, I assure you, it gives me a pleasure and you could understand my weakness also from municipal addresses. If I must receive addresses at all, I always feel that the receipt of the municipal address does give me opportunity to drive this one truth home to the citizens of India. I feel that in the matter of outward sanitation we have to learn a great deal from the West. It has been my painful duty often to speak against the Western civilization and the methods of the West. I, therefore, whenever I get an opportunity, never miss the opportunity of saying what we can legitimately and usefully learn from the West; and I think that for the methods of sanitation in the large cities that we have in India we cannot do better than go to the West for the lessons. I wish I could drive the truth home to you that scavenging is an occupation which is a noble occupation although it may not give as much renown and that notoriety which services in other departments of life bring to us. You

[1] G. A. Natesan, editor of *The Indian Review*, Madras

will not misunderstand me when I make this comparison in favour of municipal service. Service in other walks of life is just as important as municipal service, but I have noticed a tendency in our public life to disregard the value of municipal service.

You have said several things in your address in praise of such humble services which I have been able to render in my capacity as a humanitarian. I am humanitarian first, and I want to remain a humanitarian up to the very last. I notice, however, one singular omission from your address, and that is in connection with khaddar. I would like to point out to you that among my humble services in the cause of humanity I place khaddar almost in the forefront. Unity among the different races and the different communities belonging to different religions of India is indispensable to the birth of national life. Remove the curse of untouchability, which is as necessary as the removal of phthisis to an individual. It is eating into the vitals of Hinduism, but the removal of the degrading poverty of the masses is dependent upon khaddar and it is for that reason that I say to every Indian, to every Englishman in India, every foreigner who comes to India to visit me when they ask me what is it that I would desire for a foreigner to do. I tell him: "Study the conditions of my country and find out whether you have anything better than simple spinning-wheel, and if you find, after a careful study of the conditions of India, that there is nothing better, speak a word on behalf of the spinning-wheel." I wish that I could isolate the spinning-wheel from several other things, from the politics of the country. But you are aware I have said on more than one occasion that all these departments of life are interwoven and intermixed, that it is impossible to isolate them from the other departments of life. But I do know that, apart from the political value of the spinning-wheel, and to produce khaddar, if we are to remove the economic distress under which this land is labouring, if we are to serve the dumb millions of India, we cannot do without khaddar, we cannot do without the spinning-wheel. I therefore humbly commend it to the attention of the Municipal Councillors. I ask you to give it a place in your schools and I ask you whether you are Englishmen or Indians, whether you are Mussalmans or Hindus, whether you belong to one political school or other in the country, to give place to the spinning-wheel and khaddar in your homes.

I assure you after a little bit of experience of spinning-wheel and khaddar that what I have said is the truth and nothing but the

truth. I thank you very much again for presenting me with this address. I wish the Municipal Corporation of Madras a successful career and in the competition for shining in the matters of municipal life the first place. I thank you once again.

The Hindu, 7-3-1925

221. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MADRAS[1]

March 7, 1925

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I thank you all and the various associations sincerely for the addresses that have been presented to me this afternoon. It is a matter for great pity that even after so many years it is not possible for you to understand Hindustani or Hindi and it is a matter of shame and sorrow for me that I am unable to speak to you either in Tamil or in Telugu. I was looking forward to the pleasure of being able to address the audiences in the southern Presidency in Tamil if I had been allowed to finish my six years in Yeravda. Unfortunately for me and unfortunately for you it was not to be. But I do hope that a time will come, and that soon, when you will insist upon people coming from the north and the western Presidency addressing you in Hindustani. You know, and if you have not, you ought to know, that over Rs. 75,000 have been brought from the other parts of India and spent in the southern Presidency in order to induce it to pick up Hindustani. There are teachers covering this Presidency who are giving lessons in Hindi or Hindustani. After all you should take the trouble of learning them. If you have not yet availed yourselves of the opportunity afforded to you let me hope that you will do so now.

It is but a stage in my journey that I find myself today in Madras. I have come not to pay a visit to Madras but to visit the satyagrahis at Vykom and if, after I have finished my work there, time is left for me I do intend to pass a few days in Madras and renew my acquaintance with you individually. ("Hear, hear!") Meanwhile, I ask you to respond to the request made from the chair that you should pray for the success of the mission that awaits me in Vykom. I am going to Vykom personally to tender my sympathy and support to the devoted band of satyagrahis. I hope that they will allow me to wait

[1] At Tilak Ghat (Triplicane Beach). The speech was translated into Tamil, sentence by sentence, by S. Satyamurti.

upon the orthodox party and try to find out their viewpoint. Satyagraha not being a war of violence but being a war of conversion and of conviction, no opportunity will be lost be me in trying to understand the view point of the orthodox party and placing my own before them. If she will graciously permit me I hope also to wait upon Her Highness the Maharani as also upon the Diwan and the other officials concerned.

For me the question of untouchability is a deeply religious question. It is a matter of penance and purification on the part of those who are not untouchables. It is a matter of essential reform in Hinduism. If you will therefore out of deepest conviction pray for success to my mission I want all these prayers of yours.

I know that having come here you will expect me to say something on the present situation that faces India, but you will not expect me to speak upon what may be termed the political side of the question. I am uninterested in it. Whilst it is an integral part of the Congress organization, I have purposely refrained from interesting myself in it.

I have no aptitude for it, nor faith in it. But that does not by any means mean that others need not or should not have faith in that programme. My life's work is chalked out for me. I know for certain that if we can ensure reform from within, the other will follow as day follows night. I am equally certain that no reform from without can avail without reform from within. Every effort that might be made in the Legislative Councils or in the Legislative Assembly, every effort that might be made on your behalf in London, will be perfectly fruitless. this is not said by way of criticism of those who are taking part in that activity, but this is said in order to emphasize the fact that you and I, the men in the street, have to look after ourselves. This is said in order to emphasize the fact that if you and I are to help the fruition of that programme, we must work from within. What can your Councils do if Hindus and Mussalmans fly at one another's throats? What can the Councillors do on the Council floor if we, the Hindus, ostracize a fifth of our own kith and kin? What can they do if we will not identify ourselves with the down-trodden, poverty-stricken masses of India by turning the wheel and wearing khaddar? I am told times without number, in season and out of season, that nothing can be done in this great country of ours unless there is some excitement provided for the people. But please remember that swaraj is not a product of excitement or intoxication. Swaraj will be the natural and inevitable

result of business-like habits. It will be a natural and inevitable result of co-operation among our own ranks, of exacting discipline and obedience, and of sustained energy and willing, well-meant, calculated sacrifice. It will be natural and inevitable result of co-operative industry on the part of the whole nation. It will be the natural and inevitable result of an enlightened awakening amongst the masses of India. But half-a dozen or twenty cities of India along working together cannot bring swaraj. We who have attained a degree of political consciousness and have begun to love our country for the sake of it, must spread ourselves out amongst the masses and go back to the villages.

Of Hindu-Muslim unity you know what I have said in Bombay. Those of you who know how to spin will understand the simile I am about to give you. Indifferent spinners amongst you know how sometimes when you are unwinding your yarn from the spindle it becomes sometimes a tangle. You know the more you try to undo the tangle the more knotty it becomes, and a wise spinner leaves his tangle aside for the moment when he has lost his temper and approaches it after he has cooled down. So it is with the Hindu-Muslim question. It has become a hopeless tangle at the present moment. I thought I was an expert in solving that tangle as I think I am also an expert in spinning. But for the time being I have put away in my cupboard this Hindu-Muslim tangle. That does not mean that I have despaired of a solution. My mind will eternally work at it till I find out a solution. But I must confess to you today that I cannot present a workable solution that you will accept. In the atmosphere surcharged as it is with mutual distrust I cannot persuade either the Hindus or the Mussalmans to accept my solution. But for you I would like to leave this little single thought that those of you who have to deal with Hindus or Mussalmans as the case may be, be straightforward, honest and fearless in your dealings with one another. In spite of the horizon which is black before you, do not lose faith, be loving to one another, remembering that the same Divine Spirit inhabits whether it is the Hindu body or Muslim body and try to be charitable, one towards the other.

Of untouchability you know the exact position wihtout my having to say a word. But I am aware, probably you will also agree, that we have, during the last four years, made a tremendous advance in the right direction. It is not enough, I know, for the purpose required; but it is enough to fill us with the hope that within the present

generation the curse will be blotted out of Hinduism.

Last but not the least to mention remain the spinning-wheel and khaddar. I know that even in that direction we have done something. But it is sheer laziness and our ignorance that have left khaddar in the position in which it stands today. There is no question here of passion and prejudice as there is about the Hindu-Muslim problem. There is no question of religious intolerance as there is about untouchability. I have not yet met a single man who has told me that it is against his conscience either to turn the spinning-wheel or to wear khaddar, its product. It is the simplest A B C of economics that millions of the masses of India who have at least four months of idleness on their hands would be able to turn those four months to good use if they had the spinning-wheels in their cottages. Whilst a few pies per day may be nothing to you and to me, those few pies are a heavensent gift to these masses. It must be a matter of ordinary common sense to understand that if we would have our masses to spin the charkha we must first of all learn the art that has all but died out before we would take the message of hope to these cottages. You will agree that it will be easy enough for a child to understand that if the masses are to spin the charkha and weave khaddar, the classes and masses together must use and wear khaddar, and I am sorry to have to prophesy that if we have become so soft as not to be able to wear coarse khaddar, remember that there is no swaraj for us in this generation. Swaraj is a hardy tree of patient growth and therefore it requires the patient toil of hardy men and women and you will have to do what Elizabeth of old did for her own country. She prohibited the import of soft cloth from Holland and herself wore and coarse cloth that was woven for her in her own dear England and imposed that obligation upon the whole of that nation. You need not go into the complications about the question of khaddar and the spinning-wheel. You need not bother your heads about the question whether it cannot by itself bring swaraj. Let it be a simple but easy test for you and for me. Are we or are we not ready to give half an hour to the nation and spin away for all we are worth for the sake of the nation, for the sake of identifying ourselves with the poorest in the land? Are we or are we not ready to wear such cloth as may be spun and woven by our sisters and brothers? What is better, that we send away one anna or two annas per yard of calico to Manchester or Ahmedabad or send one anna or two annas to the cottages near Madras? Which is your choice? Have you or have you not enough patriotism in yourselves to think of your near

neighbours who are starving?

I am patient by nature. But patient as I am, I grow impatient when clever people talk to me all kinds of sophistries, when it is easy enough for them to understand that one yard of khaddar bought by them means at least two annas in the pockets of the poorest. I have no other and better message for our land and if I am the only one living, a solitary witness of the message, I must continue to deliver that message so long as I have life in me.

You want civil disobedience. I want it also. I know it is the only substitute for an armed revolt. It is the real test of our strength. But disobedience to be civil implies discipline, thought, care, attention. Civil disobedience and excitement and intoxication go ill together. And I know that without proper careful organization of the spinning-wheel and khaddar, there is absolutely no civil disobedience. As Lalaji well said, we may gain swaraj but we shall not have the power to retain it. He said that on another occasion, speaking on another subject; but that remark applies with equal, if not greater force, in connection with civil disobedience.

I thank you for having listened to my remarks with such great patience and courtesy. Let me hope that you will be courteous enough to translate my message into action, if it has carried conviction to you. May God give you the strength and the wisdom necessary for the purpose.

In conclusion, he asked the audience to remain quite at their seats and let him slip out of the meeting without any disturbance whatsoever.

The Hindu, 9-3-1925

222. REMINISCENCES OF KATHIAWAR–II

OTHER STATES

I found that the Rulers of Porbunder, Wankaner and Wadhwan enjoyed the same popularity which I had noticed in the case of His Highness the Thakore Saheb. Each of them seemed to desire the good of the people. I was left with the impression that every one of them was trying to satisfy his subjects. However, I must say one thing. I found that in each State the Ruler's expenses exceeded his income, more or less. I am certain that a Ruler cannot justify his guardianship so long as he does not cut down his expenses. He takes a share of his subjects, earnings and offers his own services in return. One whose services are indispensable becomes the leader. He remains a true

leader only so long as he is loyal. A Ruler's loyalty should mean two things.On the one hand, he must protect the welfare, freedom and virtue of his subjects and, on the other hand, he must put to good use the revenues collected from them. If the Ruler spends money on himself in an unbecoming manner, he is not utilizing the revenues properly. He may certainly spend a little more than his subjects, he may indulge in luxuries if he so wishes; there must, however, be a limit to this. As one disinterested, I can clearly see that, in this age of public awakening, such a limit is entirely essential. No institution which cannot prove its utility for the people will be able to survive long. Having observed, as much as I could in a week, four States in Kathiawar, I did find some justification for my defence of the form of Government existing there; along with this, however, its weaknesses also became apparent to me. As a well-wisher of the Rulers, I would humbly request them voluntarily to introduce the above changes, for, if they do so, not only will they gain more popularity but will enhance the prestige of their thrones. He who sets limits to his own authority, is the real Ruler. God has Himself set limits to His own power, and in spite of having the capacity of misuse that power, He does not do so. Anyone who, despite the capacity to subsist physically, renounces that capacity attains *moksha*[1]. The perfect *brahmachari*[2], by voluntarily conserving his energies, reaches such a state that finally he becomes, as it were, impotent. That state is beyond description. It is beyond all duality. Though he appears corporeal, he is pure and immutable spirit. That is why the English maxim says: "The king can do no wrong." The author of the *Bhagavata* says that the Radiant One can do no wrong. Tulsidas remarked in his sweet Hindi: "Oh holy man! The Mighty can have no faults." In our age, all these three maxims are being misinterpreted; and it is believed and said that the powerful one even though he commits an offence cannot be guilty. The very opposite is true. He alone is strong who never misuses his strength and voluntarily renounces the misuse of his strength, so much so that he becomes incapable of such misuse. Why cannot our Rulers become so? Is it beyond their powers?

NATIONAL SCHOOLS

I witnessed the opening of two national schools. One was in Rajkot. His Highness the Thakore Saheb performed the opening

[1] Deliverance from phenomenal existence as the supreme end of life

[2] Celibate

ceremony at which I was present. The other was in Wadhwan. Here I myself performed the opening ceremony. Both had to face storms; both had to grapple with the problem of the *Antyajas*[1]. Both have solved that problem but are not completely out of danger. The strength of the teachers will be tested by their ability to avoid this danger. If the teachers carry on their work discreetly, peacefully, with circumspection and forbearance, they will not antagonize the people in spite of admitting *Antyajas;* and children of other castes will continue to attend the schools. The national character of the school consists in the strength of the teachers' character, their patriotism, their readiness for sacrifice and their determination. I am envious in a good-humoured way of the buildings of both the schools. These would prove a boon if austere teachers dwell there, otherwise they may bring about our downfall. In Burma there was a time when in every town sadhus taught diligently in good schools housed in good buildings. The buildings today are the same. However, when I visited those schools I found sleepy, indolent sadhus there. The schools existed merely in name. They had lost their souls. Just as admission of *Antyajas* is an essential aspect of national schools, so is the spinning-wheel. On the regular turning of that wheel depends the turn of the wheel of India's fortunes. The full development of the wheel is possible only through national schools. I look forward to its deification in every school. The teachers' service to the country will be measured by their ability to inculcate respect for it. The spinning-wheel is the only means for energizing this country which is slumbering in idleness. As the wheel calls for disinterested labour, it yields the greatest reward; and it is beautiful work. It may at first appear monotonous, however; there is music in that monotony. It is for the teachers to train the ear for this music. I hope that both these schools will become perfect models.

TO CITIZENS OF WADHWAN

I appeal to the citizens of Rajkot and Wadhwan to take interest in their schools. My appeal is especially directed to the citizens of the latter. There was some bitterness at Wadhwan between Acharya Fulchand and the citizens. I deliberately sought an occasion to understand this matter. I met those gentlemen who had some complaints. As a result of this, I came to the conclusion that there was no cause for complaint unless it be Shri Fulchand's temper. The

[1] Hindus traditionally regarded as untouchables

citizens have a prominent role under the new arrangements. The school belongs to them. It is desirable that they take part in its activities with enthusiasm. It is their duty to take such part. They did so once and they also contributed funds. Everyone said that had Shri Shivlal been alive Wadhwan would have shone out uniquely. All men, however, are mortal. We may, if we choose, immortalize those whom we love. Why cannot many wise citizens of Wadhwan become Shivlals? It is not too much to hope that the wealthy citizens of the town will take it upon themselves to finance the school. While the teachers are the souls of such institutions, the citizens should become the bodies.

TECHNICAL SCHOOL

The technical school for spinning and weaving founded at Wadhwan by Shri Shivlal is also remarkable. A fair amount of propagation of khadi has been carried out by that school. However, I consider it insufficient in view of the potentialities of the villages around Wadhwan. On the principle that where nothing has been done all round, even a little effort shines out, Wadhwan may be deemed to have done well. However, we cannot rest satisfied with a little. The real question is whether Wadhwan has done all that it could. I have said already that its capacity is great. The technical school is a solid memorial to Shri Shivlal. The spinning-wheel was his life's work. I was told that he had fully understood its significance. I hope that all aspects of the art of the spinning-wheel will be developed in Wadhwan.

THREE SPRINGS

Today, there are three springs of khadi in Kathiawar—Wadhwan, Madhada and Amreli. The organizing committee has drawn up plans to produce more khadi. However, it is desirable that these three centres should exchange their experience and enter into a healthy competition with one another. All the three centres can multiply the production of khadi. There is every hope that khadi will get encouragement from the States. Hence these centres should not falter in producing khadi. Proper steps should be taken incessantly for the propagation of khadi amongst the people. The organizing committee is primarily responsible for this. I wish that this committee should buy up all the khadi that is left over and stock it. It should take over the monopoly of khadi. What is practised by the rich in America in order to increase their wealth should be practised by us for the

good of the people. In order to gain control over a certain business, they buy up the entire stock of that article and then sell it at any price they choose. Why should we not do the same for khadi in the interest of the people? In America, such monopoly is practised in order to raise prices. We shall do so in order to bring down prices. The cost of producing khadi varies at different places because there is some variation in the cost of spinning, etc. Moreover, we are seeking gifts of cotton. This is in a way a bounty or encouragement for khadi. Because of this, the committee can afford to sell khadi at a loss, whereas private organizations usually cannot do this. The former can add up the different charges, then add to it the cost of cotton received by way of gift, and then sell khadi at the price arrived at. The rate at which private organizations are to be paid can be fixed by talking the matter over with the organizations concerned. They should, however, bear the following in mind.

1. They should locally dispose of as much as possible. For instance, some of the khadi produced in Wadhwan must find a local market. In other words, the organizations concerned must make efforts for local safe.

2. The organizations should improve the quality of yarn and attend to the count and fineness.

3. The standard of weaving should be improved.

4. They should take only the cost price from the committee and satisfy the committee on this score.

This task can be achieved only when everyone works diligently, honestly and in mutual trust. We are faced with many difficulties because we have not developed either the enthusiasm or the ability to team together for public service. These organizations can keep away from all these shortcomings because their workers have a well-developed sense of public service. They are imbued with a missionary spirit and have had some experience too. They might not have learnt how to work harmoniously together and to tolerate different temperaments. Where the motives are good, experience alone will overcome the shortcomings.

IMPROVE THE SPINNING - WHEEL

Ordinarily I carry my spinning-wheel with me when I travel. However, because of my faith in Kathiawar and the reluctance to travel with excessive luggage, I did not take the spinning-wheel with me and decided to borrow one wherever I went. This gave me a good

opportunity for testing [the progress of spinning]. I had hoped to get a good spinning-wheel in Rajkot, at any rate. However, I would by no means call it good. A good spinning-wheel is one the tape, belt, etc., of which are of the best quality, and its spindle is neither thin nor bent. I do not think that it passed all these tests. However, what I found intolerable was the dust that had gathered on the spinning-wheel. A workman always keeps his tools in the best shape. Why should the wheel gather dust? In Jetpur the very limit was reached. Devchandbhai hastily promised that he had an excellent spinning-wheel which he would send immediately. He had taken me to Jetpur by car. It was eleven o'clock at night but how could I go to sleep without spinning? The spinning-wheel duly arrived, but why should it work at all? The spindle worked was if it was the guest of the Girnar mountain, the tape consisted of yarn wrapped anyhow, the belt, a mere string. Ordinarily, my arm does not ache when I work on the spinning-wheel but this time I had to turn the wheel so hard that within half an hour my arm was tired. Such was Devchandbhai's fine spinning-wheel. After this bitter experience, it appeared as if Devchandbhai had called the public meeting in order to mock at the spinning-wheel. I did not spare the wheel nor its owner my rebuke at the meeting. However, in the light of the aforesaid misinterpretation of the maxim, namely, the powerful are blameless, who would put the blame on Devchandbhai's spinning-wheel? After all, he was the secretary. He himself was convinced that his spinning-wheel could not possibly be faulty. I would, therefore, like to make it publicly known that if Devchandbhai does not immediately set right his spinning-wheel, he will be removed from office.

I have had enough of joking. But even a joke has a sting. However, as the sting is merely that of conscience, it will be welcomed even though it hurts. It is difficult to get a pure and upright secretary like Devchandbhai. We should make the best use of him that we could. Where the subjects slumber, the king cannot be awake. How could Devchandbhai be vigilant when all of us are negligent ? He has understood the significance of the spinning-wheel but he did not repair or adorn it because of the slackness all around him. If he was devoted only to the spinning-wheel, the imperfection in his wheel would be unforgivable. I was a little less dissatisfied with Porbandar. The same could be said of Wankaner. This imperfection gave me an idea of the progress of the spinning-wheel in Kathiawar. The wheel has not yet secured the place of honour which it deserves. It is being

tolerated but not welcomed; it is a stranger at the door and has not become an honoured guest. So long as it is not treated as an honoured guest Kathiawar will continue to starve.

I have reason to write at length about imperfections in the spinning-wheel. It is easy to find fault with it. My suggestions are as follows:

1. The secretaries should keep account of the spinning-wheels.

2. An expert or two should be appointed to go round and examine each spinning-wheel.

3. Owners should be invited to register complaints about their spinning-wheels.

4. The spindles, etc., of the wheels in use should be repaired. Large spindles may be replaced by rods with necessary modifications.

5. The expert should explain all the changes to the owners.

6. In every town which he visits, he should train a local expert and maintain a list of these experts.

7. The expert should keep a record of the output of each spinning-wheel and the hours for which it is used.

If work is done systematically in this manner, a great improvement will be noticed within a short time in the spinning wheel and its yarn output. I found that whereas I can easily turn out a hundred yards of yarn on my spinning-wheel, on these other wheels I could hardly spin fifty. Moreover, except in Rajkot nowhere else did I experience the pleasure that one has while plying a good spinning-wheel. Before the end of this year, not only should khadi gain a firm foothold in Kathiawar, but we should acquire such skill as to be able to weave fine saris. I found that Yashodabehn had had hand-spun dhotis woven for her husband, Dahyabhai. These could compete with the fine dhotis made in Andhra. Why cannot hundreds of men and women spin such fine yarn?

POLITICS

The division of labour agreed to at the time of the conference was as follows—the people should spin, wear khadi, and I should take care of political matters. I have already explained its implications, yet it is necessary to explain them again. This is what it means. Just as the people must actively fulfil their own pledge, similarly I too must be alert and fulfil mine. The people can, by being vigilant, fulfil their pledge and succeed therein. This is because the key to success is in

their own hands. It is possible that, in spite of my vigilance and in spite of fulfilling my pledge, I may not succeed, because my success depends on others. Moreover, my success too is dependent on the people's fulfilment of their pledge. It is sad that it should still be necessary to explain how politics is linked with yarn. The collective strength of the people lies in spinning yarn. I am convinced that its invisible power will influence everything. Whether this is true or not, it is necessary that the people realize the implication of my pledge. There is no guarantee that I will indeed be able to achieve something. I have only pointed out to the people the path which I consider the best. A nation cannot achieve anything through demonstrations alone. We should also understand the situation of the Rulers. Our purpose is not served by mere condemnation or criticism. In order to understand this situation, I advised the conference to refrain from passing resolutions on political matters. I have pledged myself to examine the matter as thoroughly as possible in my capacity as the president. I am striving to fulfil the pledge. I am not reclining at ease, nor shall I do so. However, this does not mean that those who are suffering should seek no remedy. My advice merely means that the conference can assist in the above manner. It should be clearly understood that I am in no way opposed to people adopting whatever truthful and peaceful means they prefer to redress their grievances. The conference should give all possible assistance. At the moment, that assistance has taken the form of my using all my powers of persuasion with those States against which complaints have been made. Success depends on the purity of the issue and the persons concerned and on the people's fulfilment of their own pledge. The people too must create an impression by their vigilant work. They will gain self-confidence if they preserve their self-respect by means of constructive work. Today, the people of Kathiawar, like those elsewhere, have lost their self-respect. My experience suggests that in many States of Kathiawar, the conditions are such that the people can make as much progress as they wish. Some facilities that are absent in British India are available to the people of the States of Kathiawar. The people can take full advantage of these only by engaging themselves in constructive work.

FIRST OF APRIL

I have taken such a fancy for Kathiawar that I have arranged to visit it again in April. I had to see the *Antyaja* school at Botad, the khadi centre at Amreli and the Ashram at Madhada. This, however,

was not possible during my last visit. Those who wish to take me to different places should arrange my April programme in consultation with Devchandbhai and the Amreli office. I hope that no one will wish to take me to a single place where khadi is not the attraction. I expect to see a large number of members enrolled in April. I also hope that cotton which was promised has already been collected and more promises secured; and lastly, those centres which were to be opened under the Rajkot resolution have started working.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-3-1925

223. MY NOTES

A SISTER'S SENTIMENTS

Bhai Vitthaldas Jerajani writes:[1]

This feeling is understandable. Anyone who has worn khadi spun by himself and woven by himself or others can realize the value of the pearl-like tears which have fallen from this sister's eyes. A certain gentleman had lost a towel made of self-spun yarn. He was restless with anxiety so long as it was not traced. We attach no value to a match-stick or a pin but what would be our attitude if we had made it ourselves? The same sweetness and sentiment that one sees in food cooked by oneself one also finds in hand-spun, hand-woven khadi.

AMONG "KALIPARAJ"

The following is an extract from a letter I have received from the Vedchhi Khadi Ashram:[2]

The experience of this correspondent is shared by others in many places. The spinning-wheel has become the focal point for nation-building.

WHAT IS REQUIRED IN EDUCATION

An educationist writes as follows:[3]

The reader will see that these ideas are contrary to those of Dr.

[1] The letter is not translated here. It described the pain felt by a certain lady when a sari woven from her own yarn was temporarily misplaced.

[2] The letter is not translated here. It described the progress and the benevolent effects of khadi work among *Kaliparaj*, a backward community in Gujarat.

[3] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent pleaded for all-round education.

Sumant Mehta. There is truth in both these view-points. It would be good if both were put into practice. However, we do not always have the strength to do everything that is good. Experience alone will determine the ultimate shape of education. It is not our indifference to chemistry and other such subjects but rather lack of equipment which is responsible for our not teaching them at the moment. It is for this very reason that only the most important things have been accommodated. The spinning-wheel is the symbol of industry. When it is firmly established in its proper place, the sciences and crafts of the blacksmith, the carpenter and others will automatically find a place. There is no doubt that our efforts should be to meet the needs of all the four castes. I can see that we are making progress in that direction. If all educationists who put their faith in national education continue the work assigned to them with faith and courage, the desired changes will come about of their own accord. Where the intention is honest, success is inevitable. I observed during my tour that people are prepared, or almost anxious, to contribute funds for these activities, but we have a dearth of men with conviction and competence.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-3-1925

224. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

COCHIN,

[*March 8, 1925*][1]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I am able to reply to your questions today at Cochin [*Phagun Sud* 13]. There is no harm in printing my speeches. Do not mind if same errors remain in what you print. Surely we do not want to print anything about Chhotam. I see no harm in startling the Ashram inmates. If they oppose anything, drop the matter.

If our activities outside the Ashram are good, you should take as much notice of them as you can. You should also certainly take notice of the activities of the Ashram inmates who are outside the Ashram for the time being.

The reason for Chhotam's . . .[2] seems to be all right.

My only fear is that in trying to make that more attractive, other

[1] Gandhiji arrived at Cochin on this date and it also corresponded to *Phagun Sud* 13 mentioned in the first sentence as the date on which this Ietter was written.

[2] A few words here are illegible in the source.

essential matters might get neglected. But you alone can decide that.

I have heard that the Cutchha hakim's treatment has agreed with you very well. May your health improve considerably.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. PRABHUDAS GANDHI

C/O SHETH JIWANDAS VALLABHDAS, ROHA

From the Gujara ti origin al: S.N 33039

225. SPEECH IN REPLY TO CORPORATION ADDRESS, ERNAKULAM

March 8, 1925

I thank you very sincerely for the address and the sentiments expressed in it. It is a matter of great sorrow to me that, at the present moment, I have not beside me my friend Maulana Shaukat Ali or Maulana Mahomed Ali. As you know we had become almost inseparable in all our travels in India. One of the brothers, however, is today immersed in his journalism and the other Big Brother has practically buried himself in and about Bombay. As I have arrived in this Presidency purely for the sake of visiting Vykom and entering the zone, where my work chiefly lies, during the present visit, it pleases me to receive this address from you. This is an errand of peace and I want all the assistance that I can receive from public opinion throughout the length and breadth of this land. Above all, I want the prayers of those who believe in prayers, whether they are HIndus, Mussalmans, Christians, Jews or Parsis. Whatever faith they may belong to, if they believe in prayers I want their prayers for the success of my mission.

There are other things also in which I am interested and in which you should also be interested. It makes no difference whatsoever whether you belong to British India proper or to one of the Protected States. I refer to Hindu-Muslim unity which is a form of unity amongst all the races professing the various religions of India. I know that in this State you have no such question, as I understand, as between Hindus and Muslims or between Hindus and other races. It is a matter of great pleasure to me to find that in this State all the races are living in peace, amity and brotherhood. Let that state of things last

for ever. But I am afraid I am unable to pay you the same tribute so far as the spinning-wheel is concerned. I took the oppor-tunity, in replying to the address of the Madras Corporation, of mentioning the fact that no municipality's work in India can be considered to be complete until that municipality had identified itself with the lowest of its citizens. One often learns that the order is really reversed, that is to say, the municipalities give to those who have much and take away much from those who have very little. They care more for the rich and the powerful and little or less for the poor and down-trodden. ("Hear, hear.") I hope that it is not true of this town and that you are observing the proper order of things. I therefore suggest the spinning-wheel only by way of addition. It is to me a symbol of inseparable connection between the rich and the poor. It is the one certain definite solution for the poverty of the masses of India. I ask you therefore to introduce the spinning-wheel in your schools and also its product, khaddar. I ask you to give it a sacred place in your homes as it occupied years and years ago. I have not hesitated to call it one of the *yajnas* of this age and as the great ones do, so do the lower order of beings follow. You will not therefore be able success-fully to carry the message of the spinning-wheel to the humble homes of India, unless you adopt it yourselves. May you have the courage and the strength and the goodwill to follow the advice that I have humbly tendered to you!

The Hindu, 9-3-1925

226. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, COCHIN

March 8, 1925

FRIENDS,

It gives me much pleasure to be able to meet you. When I decided to come to Vykom, I little thought that it would be possible and necessary for me to stay here before proceeding there. I know that yours is a historic city. It is full of all kinds of vivid recollections, not all of them of a pleasant type. Living on the seaside you are aware of what adventure can do. The sea is an epitome of adventures. At the present moment, however, I am not concerned with the adventures that the sea offers. What we need is the spirit of adventure in our national life and if we find that we have made but little progress towards our

goal, it is because the spirit of adventure is absent from us. It requires for instance an adventurous spirit to find out in the Hindu religion its black spots. Those who are not fired with that spirit are satisfied with things as they are. They do not stop to enquire whether they are good or bad; but ever since I have been in India, after my sojourn in South Africa for a period of nearly 20 years, I have been telling the Hindus that we have in our religion a black spot which must be removed. It is untouchability and here I am sorry to add also unapproachability. I have not come in order to argue with the orthodox people. I have come with a message of peace. I want to plead wisdom and tell them that this untouchability and unapproacha-bility cannot be part of Hinduism. I have come to tell them that the satyagrahis who are fighting against enormous odds at Vykom are not out to destroy religion, but to reform it. I have come to tell them of all the implications of this struggle. I have come to tell them also that it is wrong for us to be satisfied with things as they are, if we find that they are bad. It, therefore, gives me pleasure that I shall be carrying with me your blessings and your sympathy, for in the address presented to me on your behalf by the municipality I am assured of your sympathy and support. I want you also to carry the same spirit a little further and I want you to find with me that one of the most potent causes of the ever-deepening poverty of the masses is that they have nothing to do for nearly a third part of the year throughout India. I would like you to discover with me that if we give them the spinning-wheel which had a place in every home in India only a hundred years ago, they will find enough to occupy themselves during their leisure hours. But the introduction of the spinning-wheel in the millions of our homes will be a perfectly useless thing if we do not discard the use of foreign cloth or mill-made cloth.

In going about, therefore, from place to place I am pleading with those men and women whom I see that it is their bounden duty to discard the use of foreign cloth and mill-made cloth and replace it with hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar. For you in Malabar plenty of clothing is a burden. I have no doubt that I am an object of envy with most of you. In this weather of ours the least we have in the shape of clothing the better it is from every point of view. I wish you will not run away with the idea that dignity or civilization requires multipli-

cation of clothing. (Laughter and "hear, hear!") "Handsome is not who is handsome clothed, but handsome is who handsome does." The truest test of civilization, culture and dignity is character and not clothing. I feel overwhelmed with sorrow whenever I find the people in India telling me that they have outgrown khaddar and that it is impossible for them to return to the savage days when our ancestors were satisfied with khaddar clothing. I would like you to answer with me the critics who think in that way, that the best way of ridding India of the curse of poverty and pauperism is for one and all of us to be dressed in khaddar. Those of you who will go in for fineries and fineness, it is possible for you to get as fine a hand-spun yarn as you wish to. I hope therefore that you will tax yourselves, tax your minds and dot every home in Cochin with the spinning-wheel and see to it that everyone in Cochin uses khaddar and nothing else.

I need say nothing about the Hindu-Muslim question. I know that you miss the presence of one of the Ali Brothers. It has been usual for one of them to be touring with me throughout India. But it was not possible to do so this time. But I wish to congratulate you on the freedom from this taxing problem in your midst. It is a matter of great pleasure to me to find that all the communities belonging to the different religions are living in a spirit of goodwill and brother-hood in this State. I wish that we could in every part of India copy your worthy examples. May God give you the strength and the wisdom to introduce khaddar and the spinning-wheel in your homes and to rid Hinduism of the curse of untouchability! May all the races inhabiting this fair land remain for ever united as they are today!

The Hindu, 9-3-1925

227. LETTER TO SUBRAMANIAM

[*March 9, 1925*][1]

SUBRA [MANIAM]

I thank you for your letter. I shall gladly wait on you and the other friends at the District Magistrate's house at 8 a.m. tomorrow. All those whom you mention and any others you may choose may be present at the interview. For my part I shall not bring any person beyond the ones mentioned by you. But as Sjt. Krishnaswami Iyer is not here, subject to your approval I propose to bring with me Sjt. Kelappan Nair who has taken Sjt. Krishnaswami's place.

I appreciate and reciprocate your wish that there should be no ill feeling between the parties. Indeed we should be able to tolerate one another's opinions.

What I am looking forward to is not anybody's authority but Shankaracharya's[2] in favour of unapproachability as defined by you and the other friends. Nothing would please me better than to see this question settled amicably, satisfactorily and consistent with the dignity and the purity of the faith which you and I hold in common.

I remain,
Yours in the service
of the faith,

[PS.]

I am sorry I do not know Malayalam. It will be difficult for you to get my Hindi translated. I therefore send you my reply in English.

From a microfilm: S.N. 10594

228. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

[*March 9, 1925*][3]

REVERED ANASUYABEHN,

Today is Monday. Half a day was taken up at Cochin. Now we are getting ready to go to Vykom. The country is enchanting. The people are simple. You see creeks everywhere and we have to

[1] The interview referred to in the letter took place on March 10, 1925.
[2] Eighth-century philosopher; eminent exponent of *Advaita Vedanta*
[3] From the postmark

negotiate them to go to Vykom. We are all in good health. Rajagopalachari and Ramanathan are with us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: G.N. 11546

229. LETTER TO DR. VARADARAJULU NAIDU

March 10, 1925

DEAR DR. VARADARAJULU,

With reference to the Gurukul controversy[1] I told Mr. Iyer[2] that I would not give a definite opinion unless I had seen you and heard you. Having heard you, it seems to me that in so far as the present *brahmacharis* are concerned, if the parents of the Brahmin boys insist on their boys being allowed to dine separately, their scruples should be respected. But, for the future, it may be announced that no *brahmacharis* would be accepted whose parents would not let their boys dine in the same row with the others. I understand from you that the cook at the Gurukul would be always a Brahmin. What you object to (and that properly) is the separating of non-Brahmin boys from the Brahmins. I do think that all the boys should sit in the same row whilst they are taking their meals.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 21-3-1925

[1] The question of inter-dining at the Tamil Gurukul at Shermadevi

[2] V. V. S. Iyer of the Gurukul

230. DISCUSSION WITH CASTE HINDU LEADERS, VYKOM[1]

[*March 10, 1925*]

GANDHIJI: Is it fair to exclude a whole section of Hindus, because of their supposed lower birth, from public roads which can be used by non-Hindus, by criminals and bad characters, and even by dogs and cattle?

NAMBUDIRI TRUSTEE: How can it be helped? They are reaping the reward of their karma.

G. No doubt they are suffering for their karma by being born as untouchables. But why must you add to the punishment? Are they worse than even criminals and beasts?

N. They must be so, for otherwise God would not have condemned them to be born untouchables.

G. But God may punish them. Who are we human beings to take the place of God and add to the punishment?

N. We are but instruments. God uses us as His instruments in order to impose on them the punishment that their karma has earned for them.

G. But supposing the *avarnas* said that they were instruments in the hands of God in order to impose afflictions on you? What would you do?

N. Then Government would stand between them and us and prevent them from so doing. Good men would do so. Mahatmaji, we beseech you to prevent the *avarnas* from depriving us of our age-old privileges.

G. Will you prove to me that you are entitled to prevent them from using the roads? I am sure that the suppressed classes have as much right to use the roads as you have. The Shastras nowhere lay down that they may not use these roads. Do you know that even the Dewan thinks that you have taken up a

[1] In a brief report of this, *The Hindu*, 11-3-1925, said: "Early morning yesterday Mr. Gandhi joined in the satyagrahi's prayers. . . . Mr. Gandhi met by invitation the local orthodox caste Hindu oppositionist leaders at the residence of Indanthurithi Nambyathiri. Among those who accompanied Mr. Gandhi were Messrs Rajagopalachari, Mahadev Desai, Ramdas Gandhi and Krishnaswami Iyer. He discussed with them for over three hours and made certain practical proposals with a view to bringing the struggle to a speedy termination. These alternative proposals were an arbitration, a referendum, an examination by select pandits of the Sankara *Smritis*. The oppositionists did not choose to accept any of these."

wrong attitude?

N. How does the Dewan's opinion help us? He is welcome to hold what opinion he likes. And why, Mahatmaji, do you use the word "suppressed" for these classes? Do you know why they are "suppressed"?

G. Oh, yes! Just for the same reason that Dyer massacred the innocents in Jallianwala.

N. So you think those who introduced the custom were Dyers? You would call Shankaracharya a Dyer?

G. I am calling no Acharya a Dyer. But I do characterize your action as Dyerism, and if indeed any Acharya was responsible for introducing this custom his ignorance was as monstrous as that of General Dyer.

N. But how can we give up an ancient custom? You say the satyagrahis are going through suffering. Suffering is entirely on our side. The satyagrahis sit at the gates of the temples. Their shadow would pollute us and so we have to take a long and circuitous way to the temple. Is that not a great hardship?

G. That surely is extraordinary. It reminds one of the old story of the wolf and the lamb. I beseech you to talk with some reason at least.

N. Reason is out of place in matters religious.

G. If this is an ancient *sanatani* custom it must obtain everywhere in India. But I do not find it in any other part of the country.

N. Surely untouchability is there is every part of India. We carry untouchability a little further. That is all.

G. You say these people are worse than criminals. Supposing they became Mussalmans or Christians tomorrow. Would they then cease to be criminals?

(The Nambudiri remained silent. But the Devaswom Commissioner answered on his behalf: No *fresh* Christian or Mussalman convert would have the right. It is old Christians and Mussalmans who enjoy the right.)

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI (who was present at the interview): So Christians and Mussalmans may upset God's rules and regulations?

(No Reply.)

G. You cite Shankaracharya's authority in support of your contention. Will you show it to me?

N. Yes.

G. And if Shankaracharya's books do not support the custom will you withdraw your opposition?

N. There is enough evidence there. But of course you may explain it away.

G. No, I will not explain it away. We will have it interpreted by recognized pandits.

N. If the interpretation goes against the custom we cannot accept it.

G. So then there is no authority in Shankaracharya's books, but in your own lack of reason? Well, supposing the court were to decide that the roads should be opened to the *avarnas*?

N. We should use the roads no longer, and we should leave the temples.

G. And if the Maharaja were to issue a *smriti* throwing open the roads like the Shankaracharya *Smriti* that you claim there is in support of the prohibition, what will you do?

N. The State has authority to issue what *smriti* it likes. We should have to obey it.

G. I beseech you not to forget that you are the trustee of Hinduism, and I hope you will not besmirch its fair name. Well, let me suggest a compromise. Would you accept a referendum?

N. A referendum of only the temple-going public?

G. That's not fair. I mean a referendum of all *savarnas*, I don't say of all *avarnas*. That should satisfy you.

(No reply.)

G. Another suggestion. Supposing we ask a recognized pandit in India to interpret the Shankara *Smriti*? Would you accept his interpretation?

N. There may be no authority in the *Smriti*, but there would be sufficient authority found in the commentary on the *Smriti*.

(An old man at this stage exclaimed: It was Parashurama who gave us the whole of Malabar. Now if you were to ask us to produce Parashurama's charter, how can we do so? Similar is the present right. How can we produce authority for it?)

G. A last alternative. Would you accept arbitration? You appoint a pandit, I appoint a pandit on behalf of the satyagrahis, and the Dewan acts as Umpire. What do you say to that?

(No reply.)

The Epic of Travancore, pp, 17-21

231. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, VYKOM

March 10, 1925

FRIENDS,

I know you will excuse me for not standing up to speak to you, and I hope you will also excuse me for being a few minutes late. I can only give you my assurance that my being late was due to no delay on my part. I have been occupied the whole day long with the mission that has brought me here. It gives me very great pleasure to see such a large assembly here, because it enables me to tell you the purpose of my mission.

At the outset, however, I wish to thank all those who presented me with addresses yesterday; at the time the address was presented, a letter was delivered into my hands protesting against that address and assuring me that it did not represent the sentiments of all the people in Vykom ("Shame!"). I gladly accept that protest and inform you of it. The very fact of the letter having been signed by a few gentlemen shows at least that they were not in sympathy with the address or rather the wording of it. Nor does it surprise me that the address did not carry the consent of all the people of Vykom. I know that you are unfortunately divided here over a very vital question. So far as I am concerned, I would be happier without any address whatsoever, but when I do receive addresses, they give me a topic of conversation with the meetings which I address and this address does show that in a most particular manner. I thank those who have pres-ented me with the address this evening also. That too deals with the subject that has brought me here and that is the subject of untouch-ability and unapproachability and the method, namely, satyagraha, adopted in Vykom in order to rid this place of unapproachability in a particular way. As you are aware, that struggle from its very inception has commanded my deep admiration and sympathy. It is possible that the conductors of satyagraha may have made mistakes in the campaign. Who is there in the world who is infallible? But I am satisfied that the mistakes, if any were committed, were not deliberate. Satyagraha, like the name itself, is a somewhat new doctrine, or rather a new presentation of an old doctrine.

The question of untouchability is one which lends itself to the method of satyagraha in a peculiar manner, for satyagraha is a method of suffering, not suffering imposed upon those who are opposed to you, but suffering imposed upon oneself. Now the

position taken up by the satyagrahis at Vykom is that the roads that pass by the great temple should be open to those who are considered to be untouchables or unapproachables. The claim is based upon humanity itself. Any road which is open to the public, so far as Hindus are concerned, any road that is open to those who are caste Hindus, should and does claim to be open to those who are thrown out of caste and considered untouchables or unapproachables. In my humble opinion, it is a natural and just claim. As you know, ever since I set my foot on Indian soil after a long exile in South Africa, I have been speaking frankly, fearlessly and freely on the question of untouchability. I claim to be a *sanatani* Hindu. I claim to know sufficient of the Shastras for my own purpose and I venture to suggest that untouchability and unapproachability, as they are practised in this holy land of ours, have no place or sanction in the Hindu Shastras. ("Hear, hear", and cheers.) Neither approve nor disapprove, but simply listen to my remarks. I venture to suggest to those who are professors of Hinduism, who hold Hinduism as dear as life itself, that Hinduism like every other religion, apart from the sanction of Shastras, has got to submit itself to the test of universal reason.

In this age of reason, in this age of universal knowledge, in this age of education and comparative theology, any religion which entrenches itself behind Shastric injunctions and authority is, in my own humble opinion, bound to fail. In my opinion, untouchability is a blot upon humanity and therefore upon Hinduism. It cannot stand the test of reason. It is in conflict with the fundamental precepts of Hinduism. The first among the three principles I am about to enunciate of Hinduism is *Satyannasti paro dharmah,*[1] i.e., there is no religion other than or higher than truth. The second is *Ahimsa paramo dharmah* and if ahimsa, meaning love, non-violence, is the law of life, is the greatest religion, is the only religion, then I suggest to you that untouchability is in direct conflict with that truth. The third is that God alone is Truth and everything else is transitory and illusory. If it is so, I suggest to you that it is impossible for us to reconcile untouchability and unapp-roachability with the grand doctrine. I have come, therefore, to reason with my orthodox friends. I have come to plead with them, and by their courtesy and goodwill. I was able to wait upon them this afternoon. They gave me a patient hearing and listened to me. We argued, I appealed to their reason, I appealed to their humanity, I appealed to the Hinduism in them. I am

[1] *Mahabharata,* Shantiparva, Ch. 160

sorry to confess to you that I was not able to produce an impression that I had expected I would be able to do. But "despair" is a term which does not occur in my dictionary. (Laughter.) I shall despair when I despair of myself, of God and humanity. But as I believe in God, as I believe in the fact that we are all met here together and as I believe also in humanity, because I see that in spite of all our differences, all our quarrels, humanity lives on, I believe also that the truth that I claim I represent for the time being, will impress itself upon my orthodox friends here.

I have made three sporting offers to these friends of mine. In the name and on behalf of the satyagrahis of Vykom, those offers are binding on me, but I have left them free to reject or accept them. I have pleaded with them that they should accept these offers even though it may be by way of trial. I have not hesitated to enter into such unilateral contract because I believe in the truth that I implicitly believe and stand for. For I have come not to precipitate and enhance the quarrel, but to bring about peace and goodwill between the orthodox section and those who are today trying to act in the name of humanity and justice. Though I may seem at times to be fighting, my purpose is never to fight, nor have I undertaken a fight to prolong it, but to bring about peace at the shortest possible notice. An English friend when I embarked upon non-co-operation, told me that my non-co-operation was only skin-deep but that I was pining for co-operation. I immediately closed with him and I told him that he had read my heart correctly, and so it is with my orthodox friends, I assure them. Satyagraha is there, but to be called off as soon as they wish it, it is for them to make a sporting offer and it will be accepted, only let them beware of murdering truth. A satyagrahi has always his minimum and it is the minimum that is wanted in connection with this struggle. The right of way is such a reasonable demand that it has only to be asked to be given. Let it be understood, therefore, that there is no mental reservation behind this struggle.

I have repeatedly told the Hindus of India what the removal of untouchability means to me and to those who are today engaged in that holy campaign. It does not mean the breaking up of *Varnashrama dharma*. It does not mean inter-dining or inter marriages. But it does mean the common relations between man and man that should exist in any civilized society. It does mean that places of worship should be open if they are at all open to anybody, to all those who are considered Hindus. But I grant that if there is a

particular class, say, Brahmins, who want to build temples and exclude non-Brahmins from them. I say that it is their right to do so. But if there is a temple which is open to non-Brahmins also, then there is no such thing as a fifth caste which may be put out of that temple. I see no warrant for such an exclusion in the Hindu Shastras. Similarly I claim that public places such as schools should be open alike to the untouchables, if they are open to other classes. So would it be with watering places such as wells, lakes and rivers. That is the whole of my claim on behalf of those who are engaged in this campaign against untouchability and unapproachability.

Let me, however, clear the position a little so far as Vykom is concerned. The present satyagraha is merely directed towards vindicating the right of the unapproachables to pass through the roads through which Christians and Mussalmans and caste Hindus are entitled to pass. Satyagrahis today are not fighting for entry into temples. They are not fighting—I do not know if there is any prohibition in the schools of Travancore—they are not fighting for admission in the schools, not that such is not their claim. But I am presenting you today the implications of the present struggle. Since satyagraha is a method of conversion and conviction, it seeks never to use the slightest coercion. I therefore gladly endorse in its entirety the remarks made by the Dewan Sahib in his address[1] to the Travancore Assembly, and if I find the satyagrahis in Vykom in denial of their own faith use violence or any other method in order to put undue pressure upon the orthodox Hindus of Vykom, you will find me, on proof given to me, entirely dissociating myself from those satyagrahis so-called. But so long as satyagrahis keep within the terms of their contract, so long shall I consider it to be my bounden duty to give them all the assistance that a single, humble individual is capable of giving. I plead, therefore, with all the force at my command that the orthodox Brahmins and non-Brahmins of Vykom who may be opposed to this campaign study it in all its bearings, to apply their reason to bear upon the struggle and stand for justice and humanity; if they find that this struggle is just and the means adopted by the satyagrahis to vindicate the right of humanity are also fair, reasonable and non-violent.

I am glad to be able to bear my testimony to the happy relations that have hitherto subsisted generally between the police authorities and the satyagrahis; they have shown how a decent gentlemanly battle can be carried on without any vexation, without any hard swearing

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Extract from Dewan of Travancore's Speech on Vykom Satyagraha", March 19, 1925.

and without violence. I know that prejudices die hard. Untouchability is an error of long standing. I have, therefore, told my satyagrahi friends that they will have to exercise tremendous patience.

Time is always on the side of those who will wait upon it. Public opinion, I hope, even of Vykom, is on their side. Public opinion outside Vykom, I know, is on their side. The world opinion is growing strong on their side and if the satyagrahis will only play the game well, have patience and will be able to endure silent and slow sufferings, I have no doubt that victory is theirs. The Government of Travancore, so far as I can see from the address of the Dewan Sahib, has held the scales evenly between the two parties. I know that my satyagrahi friends here shook their heads when I told them that the presentation by the Dewan was not open to exception. Whatever the truth may be, there is no doubt about it that the credit will be yours if the two sections of the community meet together and find a reasonable and honourable solution for the difficulty without the intervention of the Government. The Dewan himself, so far as his own opinion is concerned, has told the orthodox people where his opinion lies. He invites them to march with the times, to recognize the time spirit. I hope my orthodox friends will listen to the sound advice given by him. In any event, I give them my best assurance that no matter what they think of it, no matter how they behave, whether they accept my offers or reject them, I shall only do according to the behests of the Hindu religion as I know it. I recognize no one as my enemy on the face of the earth. I shall, therefore, love them in spite of differences between them and myself. I shall ever pray to God that he may guide their steps in the right direction, open the eyes of their understanding, open their eyes to the writing on the wall and render justice to these down-trodden countrymen of ours. I am humble enough also to pray to God at the same time that if I have misread the Hindu Shastras, if I have misread humanity, and have erred in giving the advice that I have tendered to the satyagrahis, He will open my eyes also, show me my error and give me strength and the necessary courage to acknowledge my error and apologize to my orthodox friends.

One thing more and I have done. When there is a difference between you and me on the question of untouchability, I hope there is no question of difference of opinion about another matter which also concerns the poorest of the land. I refer to the spinning-wheel and khaddar. You owe it to the poorest in the land to find a sacred corner in your homes for the spinning-wheel and you owe it to them that you

wear the product of the spinning-wheel and place a few coppers in the pockets of the poorest of your countrymen and countrywomen. I shall not be satisfied as I have said repeatedly until the prince and the peasant, the Viceroy and his page, are clad from top to toe in khaddar, hand-spun and hand-made.

The third thing I need not mention to you, namely, the Hindu-Muslim unity. You have in this connection much to teach to the rest of India. All the different races and communities belonging to different religions, I am happy to be able to know and testify, are living in perfect harmony and friendship in Travancore. I hope that the rest of India will copy the admirable spirit which actuates you. I thank you all for the very patient hearing you have kindly given to me and I now close with the hope and fervent prayer that the battle that is going on in Vykom may end in the only manner it should. (Cheers.)

The Hindu, 16-3-1925

232. TALK TO INMATES OF SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, VYKOM[1]

[*March 11, 1925*][2]

(The following is almost a verbatim report of the quiet talk I gave to the inmates of the Satyagraha Ashram at Vykom. The Ashram has at the present moment over fifty volunteers who stand or squat in front of the four barricades which are put up to guard the four entrances to the Vykom temple. They spin whilst they are stationed there and remain there at a stretch for six hours. They are sent in two relays. I reproduce the talk as being of general interest and applicable to all satyagrahis. M.K.G.)

I am sorry that I shall be going away today without having a chat with you which I would regard as complete and satisfactory. But it seems it is not possible to do more. Those in charge of arrangements about my programme are of opinion that I ought to see, in order to help the cause, more places than Vykom. I have yielded to their advice but my own conviction based on past experience is that the success of the movement depends more on yourselves than on outside support. If there is nothing in you, any amount of enthusiasm

[1] In *Young India*, this was published under the caption "Satyagrahi's Duty".
[2] From *The Hindu*, 14-3-1925

brought about by a passing visit like mine will be of no avail. But if I had not come here and there had been no enthusiasm on the part of the public, and if you had been true to yourselves there would have been nothing wanting. Your work would have commanded all the enthusiasm that might have been needed for a cause like this. Therefore if I could have passed here a longer time than I have, it would have been more profitable. However, that could not be done in face of the advice of friends who are guiding me.

But I want to tell you as briefly as I can what I expect of you. I would ask you to forget the political aspect of the programme. Political consequences of this struggle there are, but you are not to concern yourselves with them. If you do, you will miss the true result and also miss the political consequences, and when the real heat of the struggle is touched you will be found wanting. I am therefore anxious, even if it frightens you, to explain to you the true nature of the struggle. It is a struggle deeply religious for the Hindus. We are endeavouring to rid Hinduism of its greatest blot. The prejudice we have to fight against is an age-long prejudice. The struggle for the opening of the roads round the temple which we hold to be public to the unapproachables is but a small skirmish in the big battle. If our struggle was to end with the opening of the roads in Vykom you may be sure I would not have bothered my head about it. If therefore you think that the struggle is to end with opening of the roads in Vykom to the unapproachables you are mistaken. The road must be opened. It has got to be opened. But that will be the beginning of the end. The end is to get all such roads throughout Travancore to be opened to the unapproachables; and not only that, but we expect that our efforts may result in amelioration of the general condition of the untouchables and unapproachables. That will require tremendous sacrifice. For our aim is not to do things by violence to opponents. That will be con-version by violence or compulsion, and if we import compulsion in matters of religion, there is no doubt that we shall be committing sui-cide. We should carry on this struggle on the lines of strict non-violence, i.e., by suffering in our own persons. That is the meaning of satyagraha. The question is whether you are capable of every suffering that may be imposed upon you or may be your lot in the journey towards the goal. Even whilst you are suffering, you may have no bitterness—no trace of it—against your opponents. And I tell you it is not a mechanical act at all. On the contrary I want you to feel like loving your opponents and the way to do it is to give them the

same credit for honesty of purpose which you would claim for yourself. I know that it is a difficult task. I confess that it was a difficult task for me yesterday whilst I was talking to those friends who insisted on their right to exclude the unapproachables from the temple roads. I confess there was selfishness behind their talk. How then was I to credit them with honesty of purpose? I was thinking of this thing yesterday and also this morning, and this is what I did. I asked myself: "Wherein was their selfishness or self interest? It is true that they have their ends to serve. But so have we our ends to serve. Only we consider our ends to be pure and therefore selfless. But who is to determine where selflessness ends and selfishness begins. Selflessness may be the purest form of selfishness". I do not say this for the sake of argument. But that is what I really feel. I am considering their condition of mind from their point of view and not my own. Had they not been Hindu they would not have talked as they did yesterday. And immediately we begin to think of things as our opponents think of them we shall be able to do them full justice. I know that this requires a detached state of mind, and it is a state very difficult to reach. Nevertheless for a satyagrahi it is absolutely essential. Three fourths of the miseries and misunderstandings in the world will disappear, if we step into the shoes of our adversaries and understand their standpoint. We will then agree with our adversaries quickly or think of them charitably.

In our case there is no question of our agreeing with them quickly as our ideals are radically different. But we may be charitable to them and believe that they actually mean what they say. They do not want to open the roads to the unapproachables. Now whether it is their self-interest or ignorance that tells them to say so, we really believe that it is wrong of them to say so. Our business therefore is to show them that they are in the wrong and we should do so by our suffering. I have found that mere appeal to reason does not answer where prejudices are age-long and based on supposed religious authority. Reason has to be strengthened by suffering and suffering opens the eyes of understanding. Therefore there must be no trace of compulsion in our acts. We must not be impatient, and we must have an undying faith in the means we are adopting. The means we are adopting just now are that we approach the four barricades and as we are stopped there we sit down and spin away from day to day, and we must believe that through it the roads must be opened. I know that it is a difficult and slow process. But if you believe in the efficacy of

satyagraha you will rejoice in this slow torture and suffering, and you will not feel the discomfort of your position as you go and sit in the boiling sun from day to day. If you have faith in the cause and the means and in God the hot sun will be cool for you. You must not be tired and say "how long", and never get irritated. That is only a small portion of your penance for the sin for which Hinduism is responsible.

I regard you as soldiers in this campaign. It is not possible for you to reason out things for yourselves. You have come to the Ashram because you have faith in the management . That does not mean faith in me. For I am not manager. I am directing the movement so far as ideals and general direction are concerned. Your faith therefore must be in those who are managers for the time being. The choice before coming to the Ashram was yours. But having made your choice and come to the Ashram it is not for you to reason why. If we are to become a powerful nation you must obey all directions that may be given to you from time to time. That is the only way in which either political or religious life can be built up. You must have determined for yourselves certain principles and you must have joined the struggle in obedience to those principles. Those who remain in the Ashram are taking as much part in the struggle as those who go and offer satyagraha at the barricades. Every piece of work in connection with the struggle is just as important as any other piece, and therefore the work of sanitation in the Ashram is just as important as spinning away at the barricades. And if in this place the work of cleaning the closets and compound is more distasteful than spinning it should be considered far more important and profitable. Not a single minute should be wasted in idle conversation, but we must be absorbed in the work before us and if everyone of us works in that spirit you will see that there is pleasure in the work itself. Every bit of property, anything in the Ashram, should be regarded by you as your own property and not property that can be wasted at pleasure. You may not waste a grain of rice or a scrap of paper, and similarly a minute of your time. It is not ours. It belongs to the nation and we are trustees for the use of it.

I know that all this will sound hard and difficult for you. My presentation may be hard, but it has not been possible for me to present the thing in any other way. For it will be wrong on my part if I deceive you or myself in believing that this is an easy thing.

Much corruption has crept into our religion. We have become

lazy as a nation, we have lost the time sense. Selfishness dominates our action. There is mutual jealousy amongst the tallest of us. We are uncharitable to one another. And if I did not draw your attention to the things I have, it will not be possible for us to rid ourselves of all these evils. Satyagraha is a relentless search for truth and a determination to search truth. I can only hope you will realize the import of what you are doing. And if you do, your path will be easy—easy because you will take delight in difficulties and you will laugh in hope when everybody is in despair. I believe in the illustrations *rishis* or poets have given in religious books. For example, I literally believe in the possibility of a Sudhanva[1] smiling away whilst he was being drowned in the boiling oil. For to him it was greater torture to forget his Maker than to be in boiling oil. And so it can be in a lesser measure here, if we have a spark of Sudhanva's faith in this struggle.[2]

Mahatmaji was then put a series of questions by the workers. Mr. T. R. Krishnaswamy Iyer, M.A.,B.L.,asked how long the struggle should be continued. Mahatmaji said:

I do not know. It may last a few days, or for ever. I embarked on the South African struggle fancying that it would be over in a month's time but it lasted eight years.

Asked as to why batches in large numbers should not be sent to the barricades, he stated that it would result in disturbance and misunderstanding, and secondly, they had not sufficient numbers for the purpose. He thought good deal must be done by way of consolidating public opinion. It was claimed that public opinion was on their side which was correct to a certain extent, but that public opinion had not been rendered effective and that meant tremendous organization which they lacked. He saw no use in forcing the pace and advised the workers to learn Hindi in three months, also Sanskrit and engage themselves in work of some kind which should in the long run make the institution thoroughly self-supporting. Mahatmaji opined that if subscriptions were solicited from outside Kerala and Travancore, it should have a demoralizing effect and mentioned that in Champaran he had offers of money from all sources but did not accept them except from a private friend, that at the time of the labour strike in Ahmedabad he rejected offers of thousands of rupees from a single individual. In the Kheda campaign he accepted something from personal friends and not even half of

[1] Sudhanva, son of King Hansadhwaja of Champavati, was thrown into boiling oil for not reporting himself at the appointed place for fighting the invaders in response to the royal proclamation. But he came out unscathed because of his *bhakti*.

[2] What follows is from *The Hindu*, 14-3-1925.

what was given had been spent. From South Africa he brought back three to four lakhs of rupees. He could not recall a single battle he had fought where there was a debit balance and the amounts in every case were obtained with the minimum amount of trouble and fuss.

Young India, 19-3-1925 and *The Hindu*, 14-3-1925

233.NATIONAL EDUCATION

An Assistant Principal in a national institution writes:

> In order to save the young generation from the slave mentality created in the Government schools, the national education movement was started on a large scale in the first decade of this century. It only aimed at establishing schools where education was imparted "on national lines and under national control.". . . It undoubtedly produced a band of workers many of whom have taken a vigorous part in the struggle for freedom. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that as a purely educational movement, it had neither a separate source nor a separate existence . . . .
>
> The non-co-operation movement gave a second impetus—indeed a tremendous one– to the cause of national education. Hundreds of mushroom schools sprang into existence all over the country. Their object was also limited in scope. They mainly aimed at accommodating the N.C.O. students for one year only. The boys were to be made "Swaraj Soldiers", i.e., workers to carry out the different items of N.C.O. Here again the educational movement had no existence separate from the political one. When the latter lost its force, the former became feeble and infirm.
>
> The result is that national education has always been given a secondary or subordinate place in the programme and no scientific and independent thought has ever been accorded to it by any leader. It seems that with you it is not as dear as khaddar, or it may be that with you khaddar and national education mean one and the same thing! The Swarajists are enamoured only of the Councils. Taking these facts into consideration is it possible for the movement to make any progress? And if it meets with failure now and again, will it not produce a lamentable and discouraging effect upon the majority of the people?. . . .
>
> The aim of education is to develop the physical and mental organs of children so as to make them worthy citizens of their country. This can only be done when boys are in the secondary schools. Before that they are too young and after that their character will have taken already a

particular bent difficult to be turned to any other desirable direction. Now according to your opinion, the age in secondary schools is to be devoted mainly to hand-spinning, hand-weaving and everything connected with it. Is not that education unnatural and oppressive where students of varied capabilities and different aptitudes are cramped together in one and the same mould?. . . .

Hand-spinning and hand-weaving may become one item of the curriculum, but it cannot and must not become the whole. It is not better to lay down some broad fundamental and definite principles of national education and give every institution discretion to act according to its requirements, capabilities and the calibre of the students?. . . .

During the last forty years or more, a number of experiments were tried in the field of national education. Can you point out at least one institution, the model of which we can proudly ask the Government to imitate?

The whole world is advancing in material civilization, without which we shall certainly be handicapped. It is now a settled fact that India fell a prey to western nations because she was wanting in scientific and material progress. History has taught this lesson and it cannot be overlooked. But you never seem to give much importance to subjects like physics and chemistry. Is this not strange?

I do not know the conditions of 1906 but I do know those of 1921. National education to be truly national must reflect the national condition for the time being. And as the national condition at present is one of uncertainty national education too must remain in a more or less uncertain condition. How do children fare in a besieged place? Do they not according to their capacity take part in repelling the attack of the besiegers and suit themselves to the changing circumstances? Is that not their true education? Is not education the art of drawing out full manhood of the children under training? The greatest drawback of the present system of education is that it does not bear the stamp of reality, that the children do not react to the varying wants of the country. True education must correspond to the surrounding circumstances or it is not a healthy growth. The necessity of this response was the object of non-co-operation in education. True, we have not acted up to the ideal. That is because of our limitations, because we are unable to shake off the hypnotic effect of our surroundings.

But this is not to say that our educational institutions must become mere spinning and weaving institutes. I do regard spinning and weaving as the necessary part of any national system of

education. I do not aim at taking the whole of the childrens' time for this purpose. Like a skilled physician I tend and concentrate my attention on the diseased limb knowing that that is the best way of looking after the others. I would develop in the child his hands, his brain and his soul. The hands have almost atrophied. The soul has been altogether ignored. I therefore put in a plea in season and out of season for correcting these grave defects in our education. Is half an hour's spinning every day by our children too great a strain upon them? Will it result in mental paralysis?

I value education in the different sciences. Our children cannot have too much of chemistry and physics. And if these have not been attended to in the institutions in which I am directly supposed to be interested, it is because we have not the professors for the purpose and also because practical training in these sciences requires very expensive laboratories for which in the present state of uncertainty and infancy we are not ready.

Young India, 12-3-1925

234. SOUTH AFRICA

Things are clearly going from bad to worse in South Africa and there is no telling where they will end. In two separate measures, which have been put forward by the Government in power, "Asiatics" are discriminated against and classed with "Native", as contrasted with the "Coloured", people. It is somewhat difficult for those who have never been to South Africa to understand clearly what such discrimination means. What has to be realized is that the great bulk of the "Native" population is entirely uneducated. On the other hand, the "Coloured" people (i.e., those who have a slight mixture of European blood in their veins) are on the whole a fairly literate community. It appears that the policy of the new Government, under General Hertzog is to depress still further the "Asiatic" and to raise the status of the "Coloured" people.

A further measure is scheduled, whereby South African citizenship will be confined to the pure white population, which has been born and bred in South Africa. An Englishman coming out straight from England will not have his citizenship in South Africa as an inherent right on account of his English birth and origin. He will have to take out naturalization papers in South Africa. Leading newspapers in South Africa suggest that a compact has been made between the Labour Party (which relies chiefly on the British labour

vote) and the Nationalist Party (which relies chiefly on the Dutch vote) on the understanding that the Nationalist will support a strong anti-Asiatic labour policy provided that the labourites will support a strong "burgher" policy.

In addition to this, we have the further news that a new segregation measure, of even more drastic character than the late "Class Areas Bill", is already being prepared. It will be remembered that the Municipal Franchise Act for Natal, depriving Indians in future of municipal franchise, has now been passed and sanctioned by the Governor-General. If a racial Segregation Act is also passed, it will be difficult to see what will still remain of "vested rights", which were to be strictly observed under the Smuts-Gandhi Agreement of 1914.

In the Transvaal, a picketing system and a boycott of all Indian trade has again been started. This time, in the present inflamed atmosphere— it has met with some measure of success. The repatriation of Indians in Natal by means of Government "recruiters" is still proceeding. I have personally cross-examined those in Madras who have returned. They have told me that they have been unable to find employment in India. They are therefore now to be found, after great misery and privation, entering the emigration depot for Malaya, asking to be sent out of India to the rubber plantations of the Federated Malaya States. Truly the whole situation of Indians in South Africa has reached the lowest point where even stout hearts may find it difficult to look forward to the future with hope. There is one redeeming feature, however, which continually meets us in every fresh information that reaches us in India. The Hindu-Muslim problem out there does not exist. In face of common suffering Indians are one people—one in heart and soul as well as one in Indian birth.[1]

In view of the foregoing gloomy study of the situation in South Africa, the remarks of General Smuts quoted last week[2] in these columns derive an added interest. The picketing referred to by Mr. Andrews is nothing but veiled coercion. If with all the elaborate precautions it did not remain peaceful everywhere in India in 1921, how less likely it is to be peaceful in South Africa, only those who know its white population can realize.

Young India, 12-3-1925

[1] The foregoing article was contributed by C. F. Andrews.
[2] *Vide* "Notes-1", 5-3-1925, sub-title, "The Bar Sinister".

235. SWADESHI AND NATIONALISM

The following from a friend has been on my file for a long time:

> No doubt you have read M. Romain Rolland's book entitled *Mahatma Gandhi.* On page 176[1] of this book appears this paragraph: "What is this but the triumph of nationalism—the narrowest and most unpolluted? Stay at home, shut all doors, change nothing, hold on to everything. Export nothing, buy nothing, uplift and purify body and spirit! A gospel indeed of medieval monks! *And Gandhi of the broad mind, lets his name be associated with it*! (By way of preface to D. B. Kalelkar's[2] *Gospel of Swadeshi.*) Coming from an ardent admirer of yours, this indeed calls for an answer from you. I notice in the November 27 issue of *Young India*, you append a note at the foot of Mr. Andrews' article entitled "Truth about Nationalism", which purports to state that Indian swadeshi cannot become impure or racial. Will you not stretch the argument further in a subsequent issue and allay the fears of the author of this wonderful book and its innumerable readers?

So far as D. B. Kalelkar's pamphlet is concerned, the position is this. It is a rendering of a Gujarati pamphlet. My preface was to the original. D. B. Kalelkar is a valued associate. I therefore wrote the half dozen lines of preface also in Gujarati without studying the pamphlet. I had only glanced at passages here and there. I knew my friend's views on swadeshi. I had no difficulty about identifying myself with them. But at the instance of Mr. Andrews, I have read the translation and I confess that the presentment is narrow in places. I have discussed them with Mr. Kalelkar too and he agrees that they do read narrow in the translation for which he is not responsible. So far as my own views are concerned, my writings in *Young India* make it quite plain that my swadeshi, and for that matter Mr. Kalelkar's, is not as narrow as the pamphlet would lead one to suppose.

So much for the pamphlet itself.

My definition of swadeshi is well known. I must not serve distant neighbour at the expense of the nearest. It is never vindictive or punitive. It is in no sense narrow, for I buy from every part of the world what is needed for my growth. I refuse to buy from anybody anything however nice or beautiful if it interferes

[1] Page 115 in the sixth impression published by Messrs George Allen & Unwin LTD.

[2] b. 1885; Educationist, writer and constructive worker; Padma Vibhushan

with my growth or injures those whom Nature has made my first care. I buy useful healthy literature from every part of the world. I buy surgical instruments from England, pins and pencils from Austria and watches from Switzerland. But I will not buy an inch of the finest cotton fabric from England or Japan or any other part of the world because it has injured and increasingly injures the millions of the inhabitants of India. I hold it to be sinful for me [not] to buy the cloth spun and woven by the needy millions of India's paupers and to buy foreign cloth, although it may be superior in quality to the Indian hand-spun. My swadeshi therefore chiefly centres round the hand-spun khaddar and extends to every thing that can be and is produced in India. My nationalism is as broad as my swadeshi. I want India's rise so that the whole world may benefit. I do not want India to rise on the ruin of other nations. If therefore India was strong and able, India would send out to the world her treasures of art and health-giving spices, but will refuse to send out opium or intoxicating liquors although the traffic may bring much material benefit to India.

Young India, 12-3-1925

236. BIRTH-CONTROL

It is not without the greatest hesitation and reluctance that I approach the subject. The question of using artificial methods for birth- control has been referred to me by correspondents ever since my return to India. Though I have answered them personally, I have never hitherto dealt with the subject publicly. My attention was drawn to the subject, now thirty-five years ago, when I was a student in England. There was then a hot controversy raging between a purist who would not countenance anything but natural means and a doctor who advocated artificial means. It was at that early time in my life that I became, after leanings for a brief period towards artificial means, a convinced opponent of them. I now observe that in some Hindi papers the methods are described in a revoltingly open manner which shocks one's sense of decency. I observe, too, that one writer does not hesitate to cite my name as among the supporters of artificial methods of birth-control. I cannot recall a single occasion when I spoke or wrote in favour of such methods. I have seen also two distinguished names having been used in support. I hesitate to publish them without reference to their owners.

There can be no two opinions about the necessity of birth-

control. But the only method handed down from ages past is self-control or *brahmacharya*. It is an infallible sovereign remedy doing good to those who practise it. And medical men will earn the gratitude of mankind, if instead of devising artificial means of birth-control they will find out the means of self-control. The union is meant not for pleasure but for bringing forth progeny. And union is a crime when the desire for progeny is absent.

Artificial methods are like putting a premium upon vice. They make men and women reckless. And respectability that is being given to the methods must hasten the dissolution of the restraints that public opinion puts upon one. Adoption of artificial methods must result in imbecility and nervous prostration. The remedy will be found to be worse than the disease. It is wrong and immoral to seek to escape the consequences of one's acts. It is good for a person who overeats to have an ache and a fast. It is bad for him to indulge his appetite and then escape the consequence by taking tonics or other medicine. It is still worse for a person to indulge in his animal passions and escape the consequences of his acts. Nature is relentless and will have full revenge for any such violation of her laws. Moral results can only be produced by moral restraints. All other restraints defeat the very purpose for which they are intended. The reasoning underlying the use of artificial methods is that indulgence is a necessity of life. Nothing can be more fallacious. Let those who are eager to see the births regulated explore the lawful means devised by the ancients and try to find out how they can be revived. An enormous amount of spade-work lies in front of them. Early marriages are fruitful source of adding to the population. The present mode of life has also a great deal to do with the evil of unchecked procreation. If these causes are investigated and dealt with, society will be morally elevated. If they are ignored by impatient zealots and if artificial methods become the order of the day, nothing but moral degradation can be the result. A society that has already become enervated through a variety of causes will become still further enervated by the adoption of artificial methods. Those men therefore who are light-heartedly advocating artificial methods cannot do better than study the subject afresh, stay their injurious activity and popularize *brahmacharya* both for the married and the unmarried. That is the only noble and straight method of birth-control.

Young India, 12-3-1925

237. NOTES

LATEST FIGURES

Further figures reported since last week from Gujarat and through a telegram from Pandit Jawaharlal from Allahabad bring the total of membership to 7,851. The figure reported last week was 6,644. So far only five provinces show an advance on their position as it stood last week. The revised figures of these provinces are as follows:

		A	B	TOTAL
1.	Gujarat	1847	80	1927
2.	U.P.	129	254	1094 (including unclassified figures)
3.	Bihar	418	146	737 (do)
4.	Maharashtra	48	123	171
5.	Sind	Details not furnished		168
6.	Burma	26	3	29

The last named Province is one of the six Provinces from whom no report has been received on the 1st of March. The other five, i.e., Tamilnad, Kerala, Delhi, Assam and North-Western Provinces still remain unrepresented in the grand total given above.

As had been foreshadowed in the previous report the larger number of provinces have not yet been able to cope with the task of collecting district figures. It is hoped that full classified figures will be communicated to *Young India* office next week. Messages should not reach us later than Wednesday morning.

MEMBERSHIP RETURNS

The figures, published last week, of membership leave a great deal to be desired. Six Provinces have not sent in any returns at all. Of those that have, many have not even taken the trouble of giving the clas-sification. One had hoped, from the letter I published some weeks ago, that Berar will at least make a brave show at least in yarn-giving mem-bers. But I am sorry it stands at the bottom of the list. Ajmer could, if it wished, easily give one thousand self-spinners. It has begun with only two self- spinners against fifteen yarn givers. I expect

Bengal, Andhra, Karnatak and Bihar and Tamilnad which have well-equipped spinning centres, to beat Gujarat if only because they have a much larger population than Gujarat. They have moreover spinning traditions whose memory still lingers in the present generation.

THE RS. 1,000 PRIZE

I observe that several youngmen are making an earnest effort to win Mr. Revashanker's prize. Some of the essays promise to be brilliantly written. These competitors will be glad to learn that Mr. Ambalal Sarabhai has agreed to join the examining board. I am looking forward to worthy contributions to the growing literature on the subject.

SPINNERS' YARN

A District Congress Secretary writes to say that some spinners have grown so fond of spinning that they are anxious to purchase their own yarn and get it woven into cloth for personal use. He asks whether those who have sent their yarn as Congress subscription may buy their own yarn for the purpose mentioned. The ideal is undoubtedly for people during the leisure hours to spin enough for their own clothing. It is the easiest and the best method of India becoming self-supporting for her cloth. I would therefore advise all secretaries to encourage the idea of spinners buying their own yarn on the understanding that they do not use it for paying the subscription again.

SOME STRIKING FIGURES

A lover of khaddar has handed me the following condensation of figures to prove how easy it is to make India self-supporting for her cloth, if only the people could be induced to shake off their laziness and work the charkha and to wear khaddar garments:[1]

NO STONING IN KORAN

I gladly publish the following telegram from Dr. Mahomed Ali, President, Ahmadiya Anjuman Ishaat-i-Islam:

> The Koran enjoins no such punishment as stoning for any offence whatever. Your note is unfair to Islam and her Prophet and liable to

[1] Not reproduced here. The figures included were: For 312 million people of India, at 20 yards per head per annum, 6,240 million yards could be produced by 3 crores of charkhas and 35 lakhs of handlooms. About 200 crores of yards imported in 1922 could be produced by just one crore of charkhas and only 12 to 15 lakhs of handlooms.

tremendously prejudice the world against Islam. I am sure this is not your considered opinion and is based on hearsay. A reference to my English translation of Koran on the points concerned will convince you that your informants are in error. Pray consider and refute.

Dr. Mahomed Ali has misunderstood my criticism. I knew that stoning to death had been defended by some as a penalty described by the Koran in certain circumstances. Without stating my opinion as to whether such a penalty had or had not been prescribed in the Koran or the traditions, I simply said that it could not be defended even on the authority of the Holy Koran. I am glad that Dr. Mahomed Ali assures me that "the Koran enjoins no such punish-ment as stoning". I would like to know on what ground it has been defended at Kabul and the defence upheld in India by a section of Mussalmans. I would like to see a unanimous condemnation by Mussalmans of stoning as a form of penalty. If it could be had it would make a repetition of the penalty impossible in any part of the Islamic world.

A Typical Letter

A well-known Indian public worker once wrote to a well-known Englishman a letter asking for an interview. Here is a characteristic reply sent by the Englishman:

> In reply to your letter I regret that I cannot see you for the simple reason that, in my opinion, no benefit could be derived by you from an interview with me in the present state of the Indian question. I can neither understand nor sympathize with the action and purpose of the leaders of the Indian community. Your people must surely understand something of the nature of the race of men with whom they are dealing. Much has been given you by the British Government. Can you not put to its full use that which has been given in the spirit of justice? It is possible for your people, by high organization of their voting power and by the careful selection and continual criticism of their best men, to prove over a series of years that they are capable of exercising the highest duties and fulfilling the most exacting responsibilities of citizenship. I am sure that in giving this proof of political capacity you would carry with you for future political evolution, the best minds and the most effective sympathies of my countrymen. If you place your trust in political bargains among English parties, you can but be disappointed by results.

It is difficult to choose whether to deplore the insolence of the letter or to admire the sincerity of the writer's convictions. He had made up his mind that he had nothing to learn from the would-be visitor. He had only to give. Who can satisfy this Englishman who keeps himself locked up in a safe and refuses to see that no amount of

argumentative powers can possibly fit us for the "exacting responsibility of citizenship"? Who can prove to such an Englishman that the responsibilities of citizenship require the primary capacity for self-defence and that this cannot be acquired by learning the art of debating? Who can show to him that his own race learnt the art of self-government by developing the capacity for defending its country and that such debating power as it has learnt came to it only after the English people began to have self-government? Who can show to this writer and his like that we Indians think not that much has been given us in the spirit of justice, but that so little has been given to us, and that too by force of circumstances? Lastly, who can show him that we put our trust not in "political bargaining among English parties but in our own strength?" This ignorance of Englishmen and their attitude of studied isolation is truly deplorable. The letter, however, teaches us a lesson. We must not court insult by asking for interviews with those we do not know. Our own conduct will right our relations with the whole world.

A WORKER IMPRISONED

I have a telegram from Cochin saying that Sjt. Kurur Nambudiripad has been sentenced to two months' simple imprisonment. I do not know the cause of imprisonment. Sjt. Nambudiripad is a seasoned soldier and staunch worker. I congratulate him on his imprisonment. In my opinion he also serves who is imprisoned in the act of service and without any moral lapse.

A POLITICIAN?

Mr. Andrews sends me for answer a letter he has received from an English friend. This is the friend's puzzle:

> I was surprised to read in a recent article Gandhi's repudiation of intermarriage between touchables and untouchables. That seems to me the test question. Not that I would have him advocate marriage between any particular caste and any other, any more than between any person and any other person. But surely the right marital relations, and the right children, are found whenever man and wife are of one mind, in the fullest sense. And is that not Gandhi's aim in India? In proportion as it is reached, will not intermarriage between castes not become as natural as in Ephesus was intermarriage between Jew and Greek?
>
> I know Gandhi is a politician and I can guess he wrote the words to avoid offence. But surely the *political* price of such a statement is sure to be fatally injurious to his central aim? How can he expect the European farmer in Kenya to treat the Indian shopkeeper as he should, if Brahmins are to deny equal

privileges to sweepers *on the sole ground of caste*?

I have repeatedly expressed my view of caste and intermarriage. With me marriage is no necessary test of friendship even between husband and wife, let alone their respective clans. I cannot picture to myself a time when all mankind will have one religion. As a rule there will, therefore, be the religious bar. People will marry in their own religion. Similarly there will persist the territorial restriction. The caste restriction is an extension of the same principle. It is a social convenience. An English nobleman's son does not, as a rule, marry a grocer's daughter. She would, as a rule, be rejected on the sole ground of her birth. I am opposed to untouchability because it limits the field of service. Marriage is not an act of service. It is a comfort man or woman seeks for him or herself. And I see no harm in restricting the circle of comfort or being selective in regard to such a life-change as marriage. If a Kenya settler will not tolerate my presence in Kenya because I will not give my daughter in marriage to him or receive his for my son I should be sorry for him but would content myself with exclusion from Kenya rather than be compelled to contract an incompatible tie. I would only add that the Kenya settler would not permit me even to think of any such relation. And if I put forth any such claim it would be regarded as an additional reason for excluding me from his preserve. Though the point is absolutely clear as it seems to me and though marriage is restricted in practice all over the world to classes, clans, etc., Mr. Andrews' correspondent is not likely to be satisfied with my answer. But I can give him the assurance that I have not evaded the issue for fear of giving offence. I am not a politician in the narrow sense given to the word by the correspondent. I have written as I have believed. I have sacrificed no principle to gain a political advantage. Probably I would gain greater reputation in the circles I move in, if I did not accept the Hindu restraint on intermarriage. And what is my central aim? It is equal treatment for the whole of humanity and that equal treatment means equality of service. The duty of service may be denied to none. The privilege of marriage presupposes temperamental and other affinity. It would be no crime for a woman to reject the hand of a red-haired man but she would be guilty of a gross sin if she neglected the duty of serving him because of his red hair. Marriage is a matter of choice. Service is an obligation that cannot be shirked.

TO ANOTHER REVOLUTIONARY

I am afraid your advice to me to retire from public life is not so

easy to follow as it is to give. I claim to be servant of India and there through of humanity. I cannot always have it my own way. If I have had my share of fair weather I must face the foul too. I must not abandon the field of battle so long as I feel that I am wanted. When my work is done and I have become a disabled or worn-out soldier, I shall be put away. Till then I must continue to do my work and endeavour to neutralize in all the ways accessible to me the poison of the revolutionary activity. A well-meaning and self-sacrificing physician who prescribes arsenic when he should have given fresh grape juice is one to be shunned in spite of his good intentions and even sacrifice. I invite the revolutionaries not to commit suicide and drag with them unwilling victims. India's way is not Europe's. India is not Calcutta and Bombay. India lives in her seven hundred thousand villages. If the revolutionaries are as many let them spread out into these villages and try to bring sunshine into the dark dungeons of the millions of their countrymen. That would be worthier of their ambition and love of the land than the exciting and unquenchable thirst for the blood of English officials and those who are assisting them. It is nobler to try to change their spirit than to take their lives.

HINDU AGGRESSION

A Mussalman correspondent takes me gently to task for my article dealing with the alleged building of mosques on private property, and then quotes unsupported instances of alleged Hindu aggression. He, however, supports one statement with facts. I have invited him to support his other statements and have promised full publication and even investigation in the event of his so supporting them. Meanwhile, I give below the only statement made and supported by my correspondent:

> The Moslems of Lohani want to substitute a pucka structure for an old cutcha mosque. The Hindu might won't let the Moslem right prevail. Our brethren are using the same weapons of boycott against the rightful countrymen which they were taught to use against foreign aggression. Prayers and call to prayers are all stopped.

If the Hindus of Lohani have done what is imputed to them, they are certainly guilty of aggression. I invite them to send me their version for publication and set the matter right without delay, if the allegations made against them are right. Those who seek justice must come with clean hands.

Young India, 12-3-1925

238. THE LOWLANDS OF KENYA[1]

After a recent visit to Delhi, I feel it to be of the utmost importance to make plain, beyond any shadow of misunderstanding, how emphatically I should object to anyone being sent out from India officially to investigate an area in the Lowlands of Kenya in which large free grants of Crown lands should be given to Indians for colonization purposes.

In the first place, to accept even tentatively such an offer, or even to examine it with a view to approval, is to stultify the whole Indian position. For the Indian claim is not to receive free grants of Crown lands anywhere, but to recover the legal rights of sale and purchase of land in the Highlands which have been illegally taken away after a solemn promise had been made that they should remain intact. Indians are asking for an elementary right of citizenship. They are asking to be placed on a basis of equality with other citizens in the eyes of the law. It, therefore, can easily be seen, that if Indians even examine the proposal that they should be given grants in the Lowlands, it will be certainly understood as their final abandonment of legal rights elsewhere. I do not think that it can be made too plain, that the very *act* of sending an Indian official to examine an area in the Lowlands will be interpreted as a giving up of Indian legal rights in the Highlands altogether.

In the second place, for Indians to use the British military force to take possession of a large area in the Lowlands, thus depriving the natives of still further territory, in addition to the 12,000 square miles of fertile soil that has been taken from them in the Highlands by the whites, is to commit an injustice. It means that India, for the first time, by a definite act is prepared to enter upon a policy of imperial "grab", wherever an opportunity occurs. That the African Natives, as far as they have any voice or power, will most strongly object to any such policy of "grab", on the part of India, goes without saying. If they are voiceless and powerless, then the wrong done to them will be all the greater. It must be remembered that Kenya is not an empty country, with no Native inhabitants. It is a large territory, with only a very small fraction of good, well-watered agricultural land. If it had not been for the labour exploitation that has been going on, with its inevitable demoralization, the Native population would already have spread over the cultivable soil and occupied it. Even today, in spite of the exploitation that has taken place, the Native "reserves" are already proving too small. It would be an act of grave injustice, therefore, if Indians were to seize, under the cover of British and Indian bayonets, a great slice of the territory still remaining open for Native occupation.

[1] This was C. F. Andrews' article to which Gandhiji appended a note.

In the third place, the Indian claim to free immigration into Kenya and Uganda is based entirely on the ground that Indians are helping and not hindering the Native advancement. There is no other claim than this. What is put forward is this, that for two thousand years the trade between East Africa and India has gone on. Indians have come freely to East Africa and have been hospitably received because they came in peace and not for war; because the trade and the barter that they brought with them was mutually beneficial. East Aricans have, from this side, been able to come freely to India in the same manner. They have been hospitably received for the same reason. Thus free emigration on both sides has been encouraged and has prevailed. But if an entirely new relationship is advocated—the relationship (however decently veiled) of conquest and possession,—the whole aspect changes. The Indian claim, to respect the Native and to benefit the Native, falls to the ground. Indians become imperialistic invaders of Africa and are classed as such in the same category with the Europeans. Though feeling the iron yoke of subjection themselves, they are ready to bring others into subjection. They do not any longer stand out on the side of the oppressed, but themselves take the side of the oppressors and their own share of the spoils. Any such action on the part of responsible Indians, on such a large scale as is now contemplated, is to me unthinkable.

I entirely endorse Mr. Andrews' view that it would be wrong in every way to countenance the idea of Indians being excluded from the highlands and restricted to the lowlands especially if it is true that the lowlands have to be stolen from the native of the soil.

Young India, 12-3-1925

239. TO M. V. N.

I draw a sharp distinction between untouchability and *varna* or caste. The former has no scientific basis. It cannot be supported by reason. It denies man the privilege of service to fellow beings and deprives the "untouchables" in distress of the right of receiving service from their kind. The caste system has in my opinion a scientific basis. Reason does not revolt against it. If it has disadvantages, it has also its advantages. It does not prevent a Brahmin from serving his Sudra brother. Caste creates a social and moral restraint. The doctrine of caste cannot be extended. I would restrict it to four divisions. Any multiplication would be an evil. I would reform the castes and rid them of undoubted abuses but I can find no reason for their abolition. For me there is no question of superiority or inferiority. A Brahmin who regards himself as a superior being born to look down upon the

other castes is not a Brahmin. If he is first he is so by right of service.

Young India, 12-3-1925

240. TO R.S.S.R.

You have not given your address. If, in your opinion, the *Gita* advocates violence in the other chapters, the verses you quote from the 12th do not take us much further along non-violence. But I do not agree with you that the *Gita* advocates and teaches violence in any part of it. See the concluding discourse at the end of Chapter II. Although that chapter lends itself to a violent interpretation, the concluding verses seem to me to preclude any such interpretation. The fact is that a literal interpretation of the *Gita* lands one in a sea of contradictions. The letter truly killeth, the spirit giveth life.

Young India, 12-3-1925

241. TELEGRAM

March 12, 1925

REGRET IMPOSSIBILITY GETTING DAY IN PRESENT PROGRAMME TO MEET EX-HIGHNESS[1].

The Hindu, 14-3-1925

242. SPEECH IN REPLY TO MUNICIPAL ADDRESS, QUILON

March 12, 1925

MR. PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL AND FRIENDS,

I thank you sincerely for the beautiful address that you have given to me and the sentiments that you have expressed therein. I know that you regret, as I regret, the absence of my friend Maulana Shaukat Ali, who as a rule accompanied me in all such tours. As it so happened, it was not possible for him to tear himself away from the special engagements that have kept him in Delhi, nor was it really necessary for him to accompany me during this tour. As you are aware, I have for the time being a special mission in Travancore in which he is not so interested as we Hindus are.

The question of untouchability expresses itself in all its evil

[1] Sir Sri Rama Varma, ex-Maharaja of Cochin. Gandhiji met him at his palace on March 18.

form in Malabar. I must confess to you that before the struggle started in Vykom, I never knew that approachability was a crime. Travancore is one of the few favoured places in India where education seems to be almost universal. You are in a State which is considered—and I think rightly considered—to be progressive. This State, I know, has done a great deal for what are miscalled the depressed classes. I say the depressed classes miscalled, because the proper term is suppressed classes. It was Swami Vivekananda[1] who reminded us that the upper classes had suppressed a portion of themselves, and had thereby been depressed themselves. You cannot lower the members of your own species without lowering yourselves. It surpasses comprehension that any human being should be prohibited from making use of roads which are semi-public or altogether public. Ever since I have entered Travancore, I have been patiently and courteously listening to the arguments that can possibly be advanced in favour of such a prohibition but I must confess to you that I remain totally unconvinced, not because I am not open to conviction, but because there seems to me to be something inherently wrong in the very opposition that is taken up by the orthodox people.

I have made to them three definite offers. I will not discuss them at the present moment, but I ask you all who are assembled here to give me and give the cause your sympathy and co-operation in an active manner. (Cheers.) And that co-operation and sympathy I ask of every man and woman in this city if you are convinced with me of the error that has crept into Hinduism. Pray remember that all the religions of the world are at present in the melting pot. They may not support themselves upon mere scriptural authority. They will have to stand the severest test of reason and, *sanatana dharma* Hindu that I claim myself to be, I do not hesitate to repeat what I have said on many an occasion that if I find that there were any texts in the Vedas or Puranas that were inconsistent with reason, I would have no hesitation in rejecting them, but all the researches that the limited time and the limited knowledge have enabled me to make personally and all the assistance that I have received from the most learned Shastris that are to be found in India have convinced me that there is absolutely no warrant for unapproachability or even untouchability as they are being practised today in India in our Shastras. This is a land

[1] 1863-1902;' disciple of Ramakrishna Paramhamsa; exponent of Vedantic philosophy; founder of Ramakrishna Math

of learning and if you desire to controvert the statement that I have made I invite you to give me your assistance and give me the verses that in your opinion may support the contention of the orthodox. I assure you that if we do not wake betimes—I am speaking to the Hindu part of this audience—our religion is in danger of perishing.

I am asked to be patient in connection with this reform. I know from experience that patience is a virtue. I have in my own humble manner cultivated that virtue for the past 40 years with the greatest deliberation, but I must confess to you that I can no longer remain patient with the curse that blots Hinduism. I ask you to regard impatience with this curse a virtue. Mark my words, I do not say impatience with the orthodox people, but I ask you to be impatient with yourselves. Do not rest satisfied till you have rid the land of this curse and you will tear down the opposition of blind orthodoxy if you bestir yourself and express your own opinion with emphasis, and satyagraha is nothing but an emphatic expression of one's own opinion. Emphasis is not required in the speech, it is required in the action and emphasis of action means suffering in one's own person. I ask you in the light of this test critically to study the movement that is going on at Vykom and if you find in the satyagrahis there the slightest trace of violence, denounce them in unmeasured terms, but if you find that they are a set of honest people acting in defiance of the opinion of the orthodoxy of Vykom, but patiently enduring what becomes their lot, if you find that what I am telling you about these men is true, I ask you to support them.

Satyagraha is a force that has come to stay. No force in the world can kill it. It is a priceless possession. It blesses those who practise it and it blesses those in connection with whom it is practised. No one need fear it, and I wish that you, the educated people of this place, will study the method of satyagraha with all its implications and you will admit with me that it is a method which is matchless, if it is properly understood and practised.

I was delighted to see in the address of the Dewan of Travancore a reference to the spinning-wheel. You have passed in the Assembly a resolution recommending the adoption of the spinning-wheel in the national schools. I congratulate the Assembly upon the resolution, but as I passed through the towns or the cities of Travancore, I must confess to you that I have my misgivings about the success of the introduction of the spinning-wheel in your schools. If I remember rightly, the Dewan has advertised for an expert spinner. I wonder

whether it will be possible to get a single expert spinner in Travancore and if you have not sufficient expert spinners, I do not see how it will be possible for you to man your schools with spinning teachers, but having passed the resolution, I ask you to make of that resolution a success. Believe me, the spinning-wheel and the spinning-wheel alone will solve, if anything will solve, the problem of the deepening poverty of India. You want a universal supplementary occupation for the agricultural classes of India. Such an occupation has to be supplemented only by the spinning-wheel, nor is it a new t hing. Only a hundred years ago every cottage of India had a spinning-wheel. Restore the spinning-wheel to its place and you will solve the problem of poverty.

I have fallen in love with the women of Travancore. They do not need the inordinate lengths that the women of the Tamil land require. I am glad that the women of Travancore consi-der themselves sufficiently elegant if their limbs and bodies are covered. Their white dress has captivated me. I hope and believe that it is a symbol and emblem of the purity within, (Cheers.) but I am distressed to find that they wear the calico of Manchester or even the calico of Ahmedabad. I ask them to copy their sisters of Assam. Every woman in Assam knows how to weave, and almost every household in Assam even at the present moment has a handloom. I ask every one of you, man and woman, to clothe yourselves in khaddar, hand-spun and hand-woven. You will thereby place yourselves in direct touch with the poorest of the land and if you will kindly adopt the advice that I have humbly ventured to tender to you, you will find that this will be a land of plenty.

The Hindu, 14-3-1925

243. SPEECH IN REPLY TO "EZHAVAS '" ADDRESS, VARKALAI[1]

March 13, 1925

I am deeply grateful to you for the address that you have kindly presented to me. Needless to say, I was looking forward to this visit. I wanted to know who were the different communities that were barred entrance to roads that are public or semi-public in

[1] The address was presented at Sivagiri Hall at a large gathering of *Ezhavas* and other untouchables.

Vykom and it has, therefore, been a matter of study, to come here and make your acquaintance personally. I have now a demonstration of what is in store for His Holiness, if he went to Vykom and tried to cross the barrier.

As you are aware, I was to have waited upon Her Highness the Maharani Regent, and similarly, I was to have waited upon His Holiness (Swami Narayana Guru), both of which I did yesterday, and feel highly flattered that I was able to wait upon these high personages. I am able to tell you that Her Highness's sympathies, so far as she herself is personally concerned, are entirely with those who are trying to seek redress. I am free to tell you that she considers that the roads at Vykom and similar roads elsewhere should be open to all classes, (Cheers.) but as the head of the State, she feels powerless, unless there is public opinion behind her, and unless, therefore, public opinion in Travancore is organized in a perfectly legitimate, peaceful and constitutional manner, and unless that opinion is expressed in an equally constitutional, legitimate and peaceful manner, though ever so emphatic, she will feel powerless to grant the relief desired. I, for my part, entirely accept that position. It is for you and me to break down the opposition of blind orthodoxy. You will not feel the glow of freedom and liberty, unless you yourselves take a leading part in breaking down that opposition.

The orthodox friends whom I saw flung in my face, and rightly, the law of karma. The paraphrase that I would give of the law of karma is that everyone gets what he deserves, and we deserve what we have inherited. Hinduism believes in heredity, and so do the scientists, and Hinduism is a science reduced to practice, but that very science, that very Hinduism also teaches us to undo the law of karma and that undoing is done by doing more karma of an opposite character. If, in my past incarnation, I did something that was wrong, it is possible for me to undo the result of that evil past by doing something which is contrary to the evil, and even as it is possible for us to do better than our past, it is possible for this blindly orthodox people now to heap bad karma upon bad karma, and earn a reward which they would not like. The law of karma is no respector of persons, but I would ask you to leave the orthodoxy to itself. Man is the maker of his own destiny, and I therefore ask you to become makers of your own destiny. I am myself trying to become a bridge between my blind orthodoxy and those who are victims of that orthodoxy, and, therefore, in so far as it is possible for me, I am trying to become one

of yourselves, and then, as I was telling His Holiness this morning, I described myself as a scavenger—*Bhangi*—and *Bhangi* occupies the lowest rung of the ladder among suppressed classes. I am not ashamed to call myself a *Bhangi*, and I ask every *Bhangi* not to be ashamed of his calling. A *Bhangi*, if he is true to his salt, is a sanitarian. I described myself also as a weaver, spinner and farmer. The suppressed classes, the orthodox say, should remain suppressed because of the vices which, they say, are inherent in them. It is for you and me to show that no vice is inherent in man. That which is inherent in man is his virtue. Immediately he realizes his own potentialities, man becomes almost divine, and I would like every one of us to become what he should be, and not remain what we are.

It gives me pleasure to find amongst you so many educated men and women; to find lawyers, doctors and other professional men. But I must confess to you that I am not satisfied with that. It is good, but it is not good enough. What will tell in the end will be character and not a knowledge of letters. I would, therefore, ask you to cultivate the best in yourselves, and you will find that no strength, however invincible it may appear to be, can stand against the inherent strength you would have developed in yourselves. There are instances innumerable throughout the length and breadth of India, or people belonging to suppressed classes, having not only come into their own, but of having commanded reverence from the highest among Brahmins, and I want you to do nothing less than those distinguished men have done before you. I ask you to regard yourselves as trustees for the welfare of Hinduism. I know that there is at the present moment a wave of impatience going round the country, not only through Travancore, but throughout the length and breadth of India, amongst the suppressed classes. I assure you that it is wrong. You cannot achieve durable reform by becoming impatient. If we must be impatient, we must be impatient with ourselves, and not impatient with the wrongdoer. I have presented India with the same prescription in connection with the conduct of Englishmen towards us, and I have no other in connection with the conduct of orthodoxy towards us. And if every vice that is attributed to us is eradicated, you will find that orthodoxy has absolutely no bottom left to itself. You will say, and very properly, what can virtue and character have to do with entrance to a public road, but I want you to look beneath the surface. There is, in the mind of orthodoxy, religion mixed up inextricably with the use of certain public roads.

The position that is taken up by orthodoxy is wrong, unsound, immoral and sinful, but that is my viewpoint, that is your viewpoint, not that of orthodoxy. There was a time when our ancestors offered human sacrifice. We know that it was diabolical, that it was irreligion, but not so thought our ancestors. They knew no better and they had made of vice a virtue. And we would be doing them grave injustice if we do judge them by the standard of today. If we are to judge them rightly, it is necessary for us to step into their shoes and see how they would have felt, and they did feel when human sacrifice was abolished. This is not in justification for the past deeds, but it is a circumstance which is in favour of our ancestors, that they knew no better, and so would I have you to judge the blindly orthodox people of our own times. They know no better, and I tell you, I am speak-ing from bitter experience. I am speaking, that is to say, of experience in my own domestic life. I have not yet been able to remove the wall of prejudice that surrounds my own dear wife and I be impatient with her. I must carry her with me by showing to her the greatest consideration, the greatest courtesy and greater affection still, if it were possible for me to do so. While I remain absolutely strict with reference to my own conduct, while I must become impatient of any wrong, the slightest that may be lurking in me, I must be generous towards her. You will not expect me to do otherwise. Then similarly I expect you not to feel otherwise towards the orthodox people, and that is the secret of a true religious life. Swamiji told me yesterday, religion was one. I combated that view, and I combat it here this morning. So long as there are different human heads, so long will there be different religions, but the secret of a true religious life is to tolerate one another's religion. What may appear evil to us in certain religious practices is not necessarily evil to those who follow those practices. I cannot, I dare not, blind myself to existing differences. I cannot rub them off the slate, if I would, but knowing those differences, I must love even those who differ from me. You will find an exemplification of this law throughout the world. No two leaves of this very tree, under whose shadow we are sitting, are alike, though they spring from the same root, but, even as the leaves live together in perfect harmony and present to us a beautiful whole, so must we, divided humanity present to the outsider looking upon us a beautiful whole. That can be done when we begin to love each other and tolerate each other in spite of differences. So, although I see the deep ignorance, the black ignorance of blind orthodoxy, I refuse to be impatient with that

orthodoxy, and hence I present to the world the law of non-violence and I say that a man who wants to lead a religious life on this earth and a man who wants to realize himself on this earth in this incarnation must remain non-violent in every shape and form and in every one of his actions. And I am here to tell you that, had this Vykom satyagraha been carried on in that absolutely non-violent spirit and had that campaign received that support from you which it should have received, the battle would have closed long ago. I have given my need of praise to the satyagrahis of Vykom. They have done well. They have commanded my admiration, but that was only one side of the picture. I would be untrue to you if I did not present to you the other side of the picture but there again, applying the same law of non-violence, I refuse to condemn them. They have done their best, but I ask them and I ask you to do better. They have done no physical violence to anybody, but their thoughts and their minds were not non-violent. I discovered that even during my discussion with them. They feel bitter towards the orthodox people who are putting up this opposition. They are angry with them and they distrust their motives. They distrust the motives of the Government. I say that all these things are beneath the dignity of satyagraha. I will take the Government at its word. I believe the orthodox when they say that it does violence to their religious sentiment when I pass through their road and, by giving them the same credit for honesty which I would claim for myself, I disarm their suspicion and opposition. I place myself in a most favourable position by insinuating myself in their esteem and thereby expect to open the eyes of their understanding. I want you to take up that attitude mentally, because I believe that thoughts are infinitely more powerful than deeds. Deeds are indifferent caricatures of our thoug-hts, and a student of psychology has no difficulty in analysing the deeds and tracing them to their sources, and finding out how noble and mainly a man is and often times how equally degraded he is.

My object today is to reiterate the main principles, that we must attain our own salvation, we must be self-reliant, we must exert ourselves and I ask you to set aside every other task that may be before you and apply yourselves to the finishing of this particular satyagraha. It is a test case and the way for you to do it is to feed this noble band of satyagrahis and to feed them in every sense of this term. You must be ashamed of receiving money from me or from any other person outside this province, if it were possible even outside

Vykom. You must not only find this physical food for them but you must also dedicate yourselves to the cause, and never allow the ceaseless flow of satyagrahis to dry up. You must not be satisfied with a few young men, brave lads, day in and day out sitting in and spinning away in that fierce sun before the barricades, but you must take your due share in the cause, you must also perform *tapas-charya* by being baked in the sun, and what is more, since sacrifice is a sacred thing, you must approach this task with a sacred heart. Your character must therefore be above suspicion and you must be truthful and self-controlled. You must not indulge in luxuries for the time being at any rate, you must cut your necessaries down to the lowest point, you must cut yourselves off from every worldly tie for the time being; having taken leave of your elders, you must not turn your back towards them. They may not expect you to help them even in time of their need, once you have gone from them. Try to do this in reality and you will find for yourselves that you have carved a status which no power on earth can deprive you of; all cannot have the privilege of doing this special work, but all of you can do social amelioration work among the community. There is the drink evil, you must tackle that evil. I do not sufficiently know the other evil habits that may be prevalent in your community. But you must remove untouchability from amongst yourselves. You must go out to those among the suppressed classes who are still lower down in the scale, befriend them and help them in every manner possible.

Take up the gospel of spinning and khaddar. I have urged His Holiness to take up this thing in right earnest and ask everyone of you to take to spinning and weaving and wear the product of your own labour. I understand that not very long ago everyone of you or at least every woman in your community was a beautiful spinner. Thousands upon thousands knew how to weave. Both are noble callings. In spinning alone lies the economic salvation of India, I am convinced. Individually spinning, I admit, is not a profitable occupation; nationally it is one of the most noble and the most profitable of occupations. Hence I have called spinning the *yajna* of this age for India. I was gladdened beyond measure when His Holiness told me that he would spin himself (Cheers.) and he has given me his assurance that henceforth he is going to ask everyone of his devoted disciples not to appear in his presence unless he is clad in spotless khaddar. I expect all the educated men among you to feel the privilege of spinning and the privilege of wearing khaddar. I expect

you to go amongst your women folk and ask them to do likewise. You do not go in for the heavy saris that the Tamil sisters wear in the Madras Presidency. You do not go in for variety and colour. I am charmed with the spotless white dress of your women. A few yards of cloth suffices for the wants of men and women. You must regard it as a matter of shame and humiliation and degradation that you should have to fall back upon Manchester or Ahmedabad calico. If you would attend to these things, that would be your contribution to the national cause or to the cause of satyagraha at Vykom. Do not be frightened that it is a long-drawn-out battle. His Holiness told me yesterday that we might not see the end of this agony during our life time, in this generation, and that I should have to wait for another incarnation of mine before I had the pleasure of seeing the end of this agony. I respectfully differed from him. I hope to see the end in this very age during my lifetime, but I do not hope to do so without your assistance. Assist me to the full measure of your ability to show to you that this wrong becomes a thing of the past. Do your duty manfull and I undertake to show to you that this fifth class from Hinduism entirely eradicated. (Cheers.) May God grant the necessary strength and determination to His Holiness to infect you with a proper understanding and may God grant you the wisdom and the strength to carry out this sacred task.

I tender my thanks publicly to His Holiness for the extreme kindness that he has shown to me and the hospitality that he has extended to me. I thank you once more for the address that you have presented to me and for the patience with which you have listened to me, but the best reward that I ask you to give me, I expect, is the translation of what you have listened to in action (Loud and continued cheers.)

The Hindu, 16-3-1925

244. SPEECH IN REPLY TO STUDENTS' ADDRESS, TRIVANDRUM[1]

March 13, 1925

It is a common superstition in India, and more so outside India—because, that is what I find from my correspondence in

[1] At the Maharaja's College of Science

Europe and America—that I am an opponent, a foe, of science. Nothing can be farther from truth than a charge of this character. It is perfectly true, however, that I am not an admirer of science unmixed with something that I am about to say to you. I think that we cannot live without science, if we keep it in its right place. But I have learnt so much during my wanderings in the world about the misuse of science that I have often remarked, or made such remarks, as would lead people to consider that I was really an opponent of science. In my humble opinion there are limitations even to scientific search, and the limitations that I place upon scientific search are the limitations that humanity imposes upon us. I was only the other day discussing with a friend on the uses of science, and at that time I told him a story of my life which I propose to repeat to you. I told him that there was a time in my life when I very nearly went in for medicine and I told him also that had I gone in for it, probably, I would have become a celebrated physician or a celebrated surgeon or both; because, really I am a lover of both these branches and I feel that I could have rendered a great deal of service in that department. But when I understood from a medical friend–and he was a distinguished doctor—that I would have to practise vivisection I recoiled with horror from it.[1]

Probably, some of you will laugh at my horror, but I do not want you to laugh at it. I want you to consider carefully what I am really saying. I feel that we are placed on this earth to adore our Maker, to know ourselves, in other words, to realize ourselves and therefore to realize our destiny. Vivisection cannot add, in my opinion, an inch to our moral height. It may—though many medical men tell me that it is not an absolutely correct statement—it may, I say, bring in some relief to a man whose body is ailing. But I must honestly confess to you that I believe in placing limitations upon the remedies for keeping the body alive. After all it is a broken weed to rely upon. It may slip out of our hands at any moment. I recovered from the skilful handling of Col. Maddock[2] from the operation that was performed by him upon me. But there was no guarantee whatsoever that after my recovery I may not fall under a stroke of lighting or under some other accident. Such being the case, I feel that we have got to explore whether we should restrain ourselves or whether we might let ourselves go.

I have only given you one illustration of the limitation that I

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", September 8, 1909 & October 14, 1909.

[2] Surgeon in the Sassoon Hospital, Poona, who operated upon Gandhiji for appendicitis in January 1924

would place upon scientific research and upon the uses of science. Therefore, I would simply say—as I have said to so many of the students of India, and I have the good fortune to enjoy the confidence of the students world and the good fortune to come in contact with the thou- sands and thousands of students all over India, and therefore I would not hesitate to tell them—that they must make up their minds about one thing at least in life, viz., to understand what they are in this world for. I place the same view in all humility before professors and teachers and it is for that reason that I have so often written and spoken upon and against the materialistic tendency of modern civilization—I will not say Western civilization though as it so happens for the time being, the two have become convertible terms. But there is another aspect also which I would like to place before you. Many students go in for science not for the sake of knowledge but for the sake of livelihood that their scientific studies might give them. It is true not only for students belonging to colleges of science, but it is equally true of students belonging to any other college. But seeing that science is one of the few things in which you have to go in for accuracy of thought and accuracy of handling, the warning that I wish to utter to you will perhaps come home to you with greater force than to others.

I would like you to keep the two most brilliant examples we have in our own dear country, and those two are Drs. J.C. Bose[1] and P.C. Ray[2]. At least to the students of science, they must be household words, household names. I believe that they are household names to the whole of the educated India. They went in for science for the sake of science and we know what they have achieved. They never thought of what the profession of science would bring them in the shape of money or fame. They cultivated it for the sake of it and Sir J.C. Bose once told me that he had accepted the limitations for himself long before I had uttered a single word about how we should apply our minds to science and I speak upon his authority that all his researches have been devoted in order to enable us to come nearer our Maker.

But students in India labour under one very serious disability. Those who go in for this class of education or for higher education are drawn from the middle class. Unfortunately for us and unfortu-

[1] 1858-1937; botanist; Fellow of the Royal Society; founded the Bose Institute near Calcutta

[2] 1861-1944; Chemist and patriot

nately for our country, the middle classes have almost lost the use of their hands and I hold it to be utterly impossible for a boy to understand the secrets of science or the pleasures and the delights that scientific pursuits can give, if that boy is not prepared to use his hands, to tuck up his sleeves and labour like an ordinary labourer in the streets.

I well remember the classes that I used to attend on chemistry. It seemed to me then to be one of the dullest subjects. (Laughter.) I know now what an interesting subject it is. Although I am an adorer of all my teachers, I must confess to you that the blame was not mine but that of my teacher. He asked me to learn by heart all those awful sounding names without knowing what they were. He never agreed to place even the different metals before me. I had simply to learn things by heart. He brought frightful notes carefully written by him, read those notes to us; we had to copy those notes and memorize them. I revolted and failed in that one subject, (Laughter.) so much so that he might not have issued to me the certificate for goin in for my Matriculation Examination. Fortunately for me, I was at that time ill; he took pity on me and issued the certificate. Had it been so, he would really have blamed me for not having passed in the Chemistry paper instead of blaming himself.

So, the professors and teachers—I except you, Sir, and your race from the category—the Indian teachers and professors and the Indian students, all sail in the same boat. Science is essentially one of those things in which theory alone is of no value whatsoever—unless you have practical knowledge and unless you conduct practical experiments. I wonder how far you go in for practical experiments and how far you take the keenest delight in it. If you go in for science in the right spirit then I know that there is nothing so great or so valuable for making us accurate in thought and accurate in action. Unless our hands go hand in hand with our heads we would be able to do nothing whatsoever.

Unfortunately we, who learn in colleges, forget that India lives in her villages and not in her towns.

India has 7,00,000 villages and you, who receive a liberal education, are expected to take that education or the fruits of that education to the villages. How will you infect the people of the villages with your scientific knowledge? Are you then learning science in terms of the villages and will you be so handy and so practical that the knowledge

that you derive in a college so magnificently built—and I believe equally magnificently equipped—you will be able to use for the benefit of the villagers ?

Lastly then, I place before you the instrument to which you may apply your scientific knowledge and that is the humble spinning-wheel. Seven lakhs villages in India are today pining for want of that simple instrument. It was in every home and every cottage of India only a century ago, and at that time, India was not a lazy country that it is today. Her agriculturists—and agriculturists form 85 per cent of the population—were not forced to be idle for at least four months in the year. That is not what I am telling you. This is not my testimony. This is the testimony of another scientist, that is Mr. Higginbottom[1]. He has lately been giving evidence before the Taxation Committee and he said that India's poverty, which was growing, would not diminish but would grow unless the Indian millions had a supplementary occupation. Now apply your scientific means to finding out what such supplementary occupation can be which will serve the needs of 7,00,000 villages scattered over a surface 1,900 miles long and 1,500 miles broad, and I assure you, you will come to the same irresistible conclusion that I have, that nothing but the spinning-wheel can do it.

The spinning-wheel has gone out of use now. Wherever I go I ask for a spinning wheel and instead of a spinning-wheel I get a toy. I cannot get good yarn, which will give you good khaddar, out of toys. It is for you to make the spinning-wheel hum. I present to you the noble example of Dr. P. C. Ray who is the maker of the Bengal Chemical Works. It is a growing concern which has furnished a calling for hundreds of students. But Dr. Ray is a scientist of scientists and he wanted to give the benefit of his scientific knowledge to the villagers of India. Because he was working at the time of the Khulna famine he saw the secret of the spinning-wheel and you know today that he is devoting his life only to the spinning-wheel propaganda and the noble band of workers under him, all scientists, are endeavouring to perfect the spinning-wheel, to perfect every accessory required for the spinning-wheel. It is a noble calling. It is worthy of scientists. May it also find an abiding place in your hearts. I thank you for giving me this patient hearing. (Cheers.)

The Principal then garlanded Mahatmaji and presented a beautiful flower bouquet. Mahatmaji said, "I thought it would be of homespun yarn." As Mahatmaji

[1] Of the Agricultural Institute of Allahabad

stepped into the car he said, "I expect to see you all next time in khaddar, khaddar woven by yourselves." Amid cries of "*Vandemataram*" and cheers Mahatmaji left the Science College premises.

The Hindu, 19-3-1925

245. SPEECH IN REPLY TO WELCOME ADDRESSES, TRIVANDRUM[1]

March 13, 1925

Mahatmaji, in the course of a joint reply, wished publicly to express his thanks to Her Highness the Maharani and also to the Dewan whom he interviewed on the Vykom struggle. He had also visited Swami Narayana Guru at Sivagiri Math and heard some of the *Pulaya* boys reciting Sanskrit. *Ezhavas* were clean and as good as the highest in the land and it hurt his sense of religion, humanity and sense of nationalism because the Swamiji could not enter the prohibited roads of Vykom.

Referring to the discussion with obstructionists at Vykom, the Mahatma said he placed three proposals before them for acceptance. The first was a referendum either at Vykom or the whole of Travancore restricted only to *savarna* Hindus[2], which the spokesmen would not accept but stated that the verdict of the majority could not possibly bind those who had settled convictions. In the second place Mahatmaji offered to place the authority on which the spokesman based his settled convictions before learned Shastris of India but it was said their decision as to authenticity and interpretation was not binding on the obstructionists who were free to reject it if hostile to them. Thirdly on behalf of satyagrahis, he undertook to nominate one Shastri as arbitrator asking the oppositionists to nominate their arbitrator, the Dewan sitting as umpire over them, Mahatmaji undertaking to be bound by the arbitrator's decision and the umpire, whatever it was. These offers were still open for acceptance, and he asked the *savarna* Hindus and the whole Hindu community to insist on breaking down the prejudice of orthodoxy in Vykom, and compel by pressure of public opinion the opening of these roads to the untouchables and unapproachables. Both the Maharani and the Dewan appreciated the proposals made and showed their sympathy with the reformers and both had promised to the best of their ability to help the reform movement otherwise than by legislation at the present moment. He felt sure that organized public opinion would help the reformers even by legislative action. He had invited Her Highness to help them in obtaining a

[1] This was Gandhiji's joint reply to the several addresses of welcome presented to him at a public meeting on the Cantonment maidan by the Travancore citizens, the Kerala Hindu Sabha, the Humanitarian Scoiety, the local Congress and Khilafat Committees and the Hindi students.

[2] Caste Hindus

referendum, but whether she was able to do so or not, there was nothing to prevent them from organizing public opinion. Blind orthodoxy could not stand the fierce light of local public criticism provided it was sympathetic, non-violent and humble. There were only sixty thousand Brahmins, compared to eight lakh non-Brahmins and 17 lakh untouchables in Malabar, and while he was gratified on their educational advancement, he felt they should not be refused the rights of common humanity. Mahatmaji concluded his speech by making an appeal particularly to ladies who were present in large numbers to wear khaddar.

The Hindu, 14-3-1925

246. SPEECH IN REPLY TO MUNICIPAL ADDRESS, TRIVANDRUM[1]

March 14, 1925

From what little I have been able to see of Travancore and its conditions, I can heartily endorse the sentiments that you have expressed in your address in connection with the Royal House of Travancore. As I have been saying to my friends who were with me, the severe simplicity of the Royalty in Travancore has bewitched me. I know the position of so many Princes of India that I must confess I was totally unprepared for this simplicity of life that rules the Royalty in Travancore and I thought that I would be guilty of discourtesy or suppressing the truth if I did not publicly give voice to what has so enraptured me.

After referring to the existence of two dirty slums in Trivandrum which he had noticed in his drive, he considered that a Municipal Councillor to be worthy of his office should regard himself as the custodian of the health of the citizens he represented. The majority of diseases in towns were due to dirt, filth and filthy air. He instanced the case of Trichinopoly where nuisance was committed on the banks of the Cauvery, the water of which was drunk by the people. Though Trichinopoly was a big town, its water supply was so awfully neglected by its citizens, but in Trivandrum he was struck by its cleanliness. People stifled themselves in big towns and cities in dungeons where no fresh air could be had and he was glad they lived in cottages in Travancore scattered all over the land. As a lover of municipal life, he had studied the activities of many Corporations and considered it a misfortune that he had not been able to devote his lifetime to municipal service.

Continuing, Mahatmaji stated that though his countrymen were suffering in South Africa under disabilities which he thought was only a passing phase, South Africa had very noble people who understood the world current. Whatever their views

[1] At the Victoria Jubilee Town Hall

in connection with colour, he had the privilege of learning a great deal from their management of Corporations. They had made ugly spots pretty. Johannesburg which was merely a sandy desert, was turned into a garden, and they had spent a fortune over adorning that beautiful city. When plague broke out in Johannesburg, they spent money like water and rid the town of disease in 24 hours. They isolated the area, and the Government, on the report of the Sanitary Inspector, reduced to ashes a beautiful market. To take time by the forelock and take energetic measures was municipal economy.

The ordinary life of municipalities throughout India should be untouched by politics, but concentrated upon the health of the citizens, upon their proper feeding and upon their proper education. He did not for a moment share the belief that municipalities should control merely the primary education of children, but thought they should take care of the highest form of education of the children that grew under their care. His experience with two great Corporations convinced him that municipalities should also have the control of the Police of their towns, besides the lighting of streets and scavenging. In congratulating the townsmen on the passing of the spinning resolution in the Council, he asked them to work it in earnest.

The Hindu, 16-3-1925

247. SPEECH AT LAW COLLEGE, TRIVANDRUM[1]

March 14, 1925

After paying a short visit to the Fort High School and the Mahila Mandiram, an association for women to which a hostel also is attached, Mahatma Gandhi came to the Law College where Mr. M. K. Govinda Pillai, Acting Principal of the College, received him. An address was presented by the students to which Mahatmaji made a reply in the course of which he gave an account of his early education, his first voyage to England and his initiation into the bar 40 years ago when the profession was overcrowded. He advised the students who took to law to have a complete mastery of facts, to understand human nature, to sift every case given to them, and if they found it a just cause that commended itself to them, to take it up or otherwise throw it overboard. They as lawyers should not sell their conscience for a mess of pottage. When they got a good case, they should identify themselves with the client and make the client's case their own by asking for all the facts they wanted without being led by him.

You know how strongly I have spoken against lawyers and their ways—but who should speak if not I who knew all the intricacies of legal life, who knew all the spheres of a legal life—and so I took courage to deliver myself of what was within me in connection with the legal profession.

[1] In reply to an address of welcome presented by the students of the College

The late Sir Pherozeshah Mehta and Badruddin Tyabji[1] were not by any means the tallest among lawyers, but their services to the national cause were invaluable. The late Mana Mohan Ghose[2] was a friend of the poor and he refused to charge fees when it was a poor man's case. He rendered invaluable services at the time of the Indigo riots in Bengal.[3]

In asking them to study the lives of lawyers like Ghose, Mahatma Gandhi asked them not merely to be satisfied with the heritage those great lawyers had left for them, but wished the present generation to do better. They should become the poor man's friend in every sense and then alone would they be able to justify the legal profession. Their end was not to get more than a decent livelihood or how to shine in life, but to serve humanity in order to serve the motherland. They ought not to become lawyers in order to increase cases. The education they received ought not to be prostituted to the base use of earning a livelihood, it ought to be used to promote moral growth to enable them to realize themselves, to understand that there was the Maker who saw everything and registered all thoughts, pure and impure, and the learning they derived should be dedicated to a vigorous self-analysis and not prostituted.

Concluding, Mahatmaji gave the students the message of the spinning-wheel and asked them to remember that not from the law-books or platform oratory but only from the spinning-wheel would they find the deliverance of India.

A purse of Rs.500 was given over to Mahatmaji as proceeds of collections made yesterday at the public meeting.

The Hindu, 16-3-1925

[1] 1844-1906; distinguished member of the Bombay Bar and later Judge of the Bombay High Court; President of the Indian National Congress in 1887

[2] 1844-1896; one of the early leaders of the Indian National Congress

[3] Mana Mohan Ghose started a vigorous Indigo agitation in the columns of the *Hindu Patriot.* Subsequently, an Indigo Commission was appointed.

248. IN SEARCH OF KNOWLEDGE

A French writer has written a story with the title "In Search of Knowledge". The writer sends many learned men in this search to different continents. One of them comes to India. This seeker goes to those who have understood *Brahman*[1] to those who have learned the Shastras, to coutriers and others, but fails to get knowledge anywhere. He is convinced that knowledge means the search for God. Finally, he comes upon the home of an *Antyaja*. Here he finds devotion at its best. Here for the first time he experiences simplicity, innocence, and artlessness. Here he comes face to face with God, and he reaches the conclusion that one who wishes to discover God easily must search for Him amongst the poor and the humble.

This is an imaginary story. Our Shastras, however, bear witness to this very truth. Sudama[1] readily found God. Mirabai[2] found God when she ceased to be a queen. Duryodhana[3], because he went and sat near Krishna's head, got the latter's army only. God became the charioteer of Arjuna[4] who sat at His feet.

These thoughts have occurred to me because of the following letter:[5]

It has been written by one who has a clear conscience. The correspondent is in search of knowledge. However, the more he seeks it, the more it evades him. He is making vain efforts to grasp by reason something which is beyond reason. Giving up the desire for the fruit of one's action does not imply that no result will follow. It implies that every action brings in its result and in the mysterious scheme of things, where fibres are so interwoven that the trunk is not distinguishable from the branches, who can identify the fruit of one man's action amidst the complex of the collective acts of many persons? What right have we to know this? Even a king's soldier has no right to know the result of his own action, why should we who are the servants of the people know the results of our particular actions? Is

[1] A poor Brahmin friend of Lord Krishna

[2] A medieval saint-poetess of Rajasthan; queen of Mewar

[3] Chief of the Kaurava princes in the *Mahabharata*

[4] Third of the Pandava brothers

[5] Not translated here. The correspondent, a young man of 25, had described his Philosophical quandary.

it not enough to know that action necessarily brings results?

This correspondent, however, has no faith in *Ramanama*, no faith in God. I beg him to have faith in the experiences of millions of men. The world subsists on the omnipresence of God. *Ramanama* is God's name. If anyone is hostile to *Ramanama*, let him worship God by any other name that he likes. There is no reason to believe that the example of Ajamil[1] is fictitious. But the question is not whether Ajamil did exist; it is whether someone did save himself by chanting the name of God. To disregard the experiences of mankind as described by the authors of the Puranas, is to disregard the history of mankind. The battle against *maya* is going on all the time. A person such as Ajamil chanted the name of Narayana while fighting that battle. Mirabai repeated the name of Giridhar[2] while sleeping, sitting, eating or drinking. This is not a substitute for struggle, but rather it sanctifies the struggle. Anyone who chants *Ramanama*, who repeats the *Dwadashamantra*, is not defeated in his battle with *maya*, but defeats the latter. Hence the poet has sung that although *maya* entices all, it accepts defeat at the hands of the true devotees of God.

The example of Rama confronting Ravana[3] is ever present before us. If this does not satisfy one, it only means that one regards Rama and Ravana as historical characters. As such, they no longer exist. However, Ravana as *maya* continues to exist today and Rama's devotees, those whose heart is His abode, are every day destroying Ravana.

What a delusion it is to desire to know that which is known only after death? What would be the plight of a child of five if it desires to know what is going to happen to him at fifty? However, just as an intelligent child can guess his future from the experience of others , we too can satisfy ourselves by guessing the state after death on the basis of other men's experience.

Where is the need, however, to know what is to happen after death? Is it not sufficient to know that good actions are well rewarded and evil ones bring forth bitter fruits? The fruit of the best actions is *moksha*, this is the definition of *moksha* that I would suggest to the above correspondent.

[1] A hardened sinner who in his last moments called for his son, Narayan, and was saved by the divine attendants for uttering the name of God.

[2] Another name of Lord Krishna

[3] Legendary ruler of Lanka and enemy of Rama

The correspondent has taken an image literally, has used a mislea-ding metaphor and, as a result, has fallen into a trap. The image is not God. Man, however, projects godliness on it and makes it an object of rapt contemplation. We cannot create human beings out of wood nor use wooden dolls to serve our purpose; but hundreds of thousands of those good sons and daughters, who refresh the memories of their parents throu-gh photographs do nothing wrong! God is omnipresent, even a pebble in the Narmada can represent Him and serve as an object of worship.

Finally, if the correspondent feels that he will find happiness in villages and in service to villagers through the spinning-wheel and such other things, he should hasten to go there.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-3-1925

249. CONCERNING "NAVAJIVAN "

A subscriber of *Navajivan* has written a long letter of complaint. Its substance is as follows:

1. *Navajivan* has become like a monthly magazine because it contains uninteresting and depressing articles on the spinning-wheel and khadi.

2. Mahadev gives something like a diary of my tours in the *Navajivan* and goes on writing on the same theme.

3. The supplement to *Navajivan* which is supposed to deal with education gives disheartening news regarding education; but it too has no plans for education.

4. Other articles find no place in *Navajivan*. This is indeed the limit.

5. Perhaps no other weekly in the world is as expensive as *Navajivan*. Moreover, although the prices of paper have gone down, the price of *Navajivan* remains the same.

There is some truth in these arguments. The subscriber wishes me to discuss this matter in the paper.

I regard the subscribers as partners in *Navajivan*. I insist on publishing it only as long as a certain minimum number of persons subscribe to it. I also propose to meet its expenses through subscriptions alone and not through advertisements. Hence its subscribers can, if they so desire, put an end to its publication.

It is indeed true that *Navajivan* is not a newspaper, but a paper intended to propagate certain views. It tests these views in two ways: in the first place by bringing them up for discussion from time to time, and secondly, by finding out the number of people who support these views.

Navajivan searches for the means for securing swaraj and puts them before the public; hence it presents something new. It does not attempt to do what other newspapers do. What is not found in other newspapers constantly appears in *Navajivan*, and in this way the paper maintains its novelty and distinctiveness. It does not propose to compete with other newspapers.

It is obvious that *Navajivan* is not as interesting as it used to be. At one time its subscribers numbered about 40,000 as against only 6,000 today. Swami Anand believes that the reason is that now-a-days I write more for *Young India* and less for *Navajivan*. I do not think this is correct. *Young India* is in the same pitiable plight today as *Navajivan*. Its circulation, too, which had reached the figure of 30,000 is now almost the same as that of *Navajivan*.

Nevertheless, I still cherish the desire to write more in *Navajivan*. God willing, it will be fulfilled, and then the Swami's doubts will be resolved.

The fact is that what I am putting before the public now is neither intoxicating nor exciting. Moreover, there is no hope of winning swaraj soon. *Navajivan* does not put forward new means for securing swaraj but it rather attempts to place before the public the same old means in new ways. It is interesting precisely because it is uninteresting. As it promotes the cause of swaraj, it is only those who have faith in the spinning-wheel and such other means that subscribe to it; this is enough to satisfy me. Its publication will continue so long as a certain minimum number of subscribers are pleased with it.

Those who look upon the spinning-wheel as a powerful means for securing swaraj, those who regard it as the panacea for ridding India of her poverty, will not tire of *Navajivan*. I have no doubt that those who have patience and faith will come to realize the power of that weapon, if not today then tomorrow, and I hope that readers of *Navajivan* will never entertain such doubts.

The fact that Shri Mahadev Desai gives a diary of my tours should not be a cause for complaint. My tours are not for my pleasure but for service. Hence readers have a right to know their impact and it

is my duty to report it in some form or other . It is indeed a fault of Mahadev's diary that it often praises me. That, however, seems to be inevitable. My secretary who travels along with me and who works as my slave, can hardly be my critic. What inspires him to accompany me can be only love or a sort of fascination. He is not tempted by a salary. I can exercise restraint on his praises, but I cannot altogether prevent these. If the good opinion of those who are my close associates does not swell my head with pride, I would rather look upon it as a burden and make special efforts to be worthy of it. As long as I do so, this praise is not likely to prove harmful.

Nevertheless, I wish to stress this criticism of the correspondent. There is always a danger lurking behind praise. If a son continuously praises his father, he is likely to commit the sin of misleading his father. Hence a son who loves his father does not praise him. On the other hand, the father who continuously praises his son is likely to do him harm rather than good. Or, friends who sing the praises of each other are likely to dig each other's graves.

Hence, I request Mahadev to comprehend the essence of the correspondent's criticism and act upon it. I myself will try and be more on my guard.

There is a difficulty even in this, namely, that I cannot read all that Mahadev writes before it is published in *Navajivan* and I cannot do so even afterwards. Hence certain things are published which could have been omitted had I read them in time. In these circumstances, if *Navajivan* performs other useful service, this particular defect, so far as it is unavoidable, may please be ignored by those like the present subscriber.

The supplement on education is also issued as a matter of service. When it was decided that the Vidyapith would save a considerable sum by issuing its magazine on education as a supplement to *Navajivan*, it was resolved to do so. It too reflects a truthful picture of national education, and hence, it is but natural that its readers feel disheartened. The truth, even if it is uninteresting or painful , must be told wherever it is relevant. National education is at a low ebb today, hence a review of it must carry disappointing news. However, rays of hope are emerging from this dark disappointment. The reader should not concentrate on the number of children who take advantage of it, but should rather note the kinds of difficulties amidst which the ship of education is making headway. That which is

being poured into national education today will generate fearlessness in children, will make them fit for swaraj, and will lead to their physical , mental and spiritual advancement.

There is no need now to show why the price of *Navajivan* cannot be reduced. Nevertheless, I would add that those who subscribe to *Navajivan* are its owners, and the profits earned by it are not private but public income. *Navajivan* cannot be made a monthly as it does not contain merely articles; it is a weekly record of progress towards swaraj.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-3-1925

250. QUINTESSENCE OF NON-VIOLENCE

A certain gentleman asks the following questions:

1. Is it a fact that in the manufacture of foreign sugar, bones, blood and such other unclean things are added?

2. Can anyone who observes the vow of non-violence consume foreign sugar?

3. Will thsoe who wear khadi as a matter of non-violence continue to do so after securing swaraj or will they wear all kinds of cloth afterwards?

4. Is Khadi related to non-violence or is it a political matter? As between [Indian] mill-made cltoh and foreign cloth, which is worse from the standpoint of violence, considering that both are equally machine-made?

5. Can anyone who observes the vow of non-violence drink tea? If the answer is in the negative, how does it involve any violence?

I hesitate to answer such questions as they indicate ignorance. Nevertheless, since readers frequently raise such doubts, it is proper that they should be resolved. Moreover, while answering these questions, I wish to indicate the essence of non-violence as I understand it.

It is not that foreign sugar contains bones and such other substances, but that these are said to be used in the process of refining sugar. There is no reason to believe that Indian sugar is not subjected to this same. process.

Hence, from the standpoint of non-violence, the use of both kinds of sugar should, perhaps, be given up. Or, if it has to be taken, the process of its manufacture should be ascertained. Thus, foreign

sugar has to be renounced solely for giving an impetus to swadeshi. There is, however, a subtle non-violent consideration for which all sugar might be given up. Every process involves violence, hence the less an edible substance is processed, the better. It is best to eat sugarcane, jaggery is next in order, and sugar is the worst of all. I do not see any necessity for the common man to enter into such minute details.

Those who wear khadi should continue to do so after the attainment of swaraj, both for the sake of swaraj and of non- violence. The very same means by which we shall secure swaraj will enable us to preserve and strengthen it. A nation which relies upon others for its necessities loses its independence or enslaves others. Wearing khadi is a matter of non-violence, politics and economics. In accordance with the above-mentioned law, khadi involves less of violence as it is processed less.

Then again, as between foreign and [Indian] mill-made cloth, although both are manufactured by the same kind of machines, the use of the latter involves less of violence, as wearing it connotes a feeling of love for our neighbours, whereas the use of foreign cloth not only implies a lack of such feeling but connotes the presence of sheer self-indulgence, selfishness and indifference to others. It also implies absence of benevolence, and non-violence.

Anyone who practises the vow of non-violence may or may not drink tea. There is life even in tea; it is not an essential article of food and, therefore, the violence involved in drinking it is not unavoidable. Giving up tea is therefore desirable. Indentured labourers are employed wherever there are tea gardens. India is well aware of the miseries of such labourers. From the point of view of non-violence, an article in producing which the labourers suffer should also be given up. In actual practice, we do not go into such minute details, hence we could regard tea as being innocent from the standpoint of non-violence just as we do in the case of other things. From the medical point of view, tea is more harmful than beneficial, especially when it is boiled.

It is clear from the above questions that those who talk of non-violence know very little about it. Non-violence is a quality of the mind. One who has not understood it will gain little by renouncing any number of things. A sick person who gives up many things because of his illness gets no other benefits besides being cured of his disease. The victims of famine, who get no food to eat, do not reap the

fruit of fasting for that reason. One who has no self-control, although his outward acts may look like the result of such control, acquires no merit. Non-violence does not consist merely in restrictions on eating. It is the virtue of the Kshatriya. A coward cannot practise it. The brave alone can show mercy. An act can be said to be non-violent in so far as it is compassio-nate. Knowledge is necessary for compassion. Blind love is not non-vio-lence. The mother who under the influence of blind love pampers her child in all sorts of ways practises violence born out of ignorance rather than non-violence. I wish that people would not attach undue importance to restrictions on eating and drinking and, while observing these restri-ctions, understand the meaning of non-violence in its broader sense, its subtle form and essence. A Western saint who eats beef because it is cus-tomary there, is a million times more non-violent than a wicked hypo-crite who following the custom in his country does not eat beef. The person who has put the questions to me should say to himself: "Although I give up foreign sugar, foreign cloth and tea, if I do not have compassion for my neighbour, if I do not regard other people's children as my own, if I am not honest in my trade, if I do not regard my servants as members of my family and do not love them, the restrictions on my diet are meaningless, they are mere show, senseless practices born out of ignorance." Narasinha Mehta's[1] sacred utterance is, "So long as one has not realized the truth about the *atman* all penance is in vain." To realize the self is to become non-violent. To be non-violent is to love even one's opponent , to do good to him who has harmed us, to reward vice with virtue, and while doing so, to look upon it not as something strange but as one's natural duty.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 15-3-1925

251. NOTES

A TEACHER'S DIFFICULTY

A teacher writes:[2]

As this teacher has answered his own questions, my task is simplified. What I had said could not possibly mean that ten teachers

[1] A medieval Gujarati saint-poet
[2] The letter is not translated here.

or a single teacher should rest after teaching only one child. My contention is that not merely ten but even twenty teachers should not forsake a solitary student or leave a school but should try to increase their number. When plenty of students are available, the teacher should draw an allowance sufficient for his living, but his true test lies in his ability to accept nothing and starve to death if the need arises, and let his dependents also starve to death. Such a teacher sacrifices his relations, his parents, his children, his all for his work. What do those who practise other professions do when they incur heavy losses? If a person does not find a job despite all possible efforts, he lets his dependents starve along with himself; this should be the case with the teachers in national schools. This would make our dependents work for their livelihood. When teachers are idle for want of students, they should, of course, take up some other activity, but even while doing so, they must try to revive the school. Moreover, seeking out some other activity means that, in the absence of children, and during spare time, they should earn their living through the work of carding and weaving.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-3-1925

252. SPEECH IN REPLY TO WELCOME ADDRESSES, KOTTAYAM[1]

March 15, 1925

It has given me pleasure to be able to come to a place which is the centre of Christian influence. All the world over, I enjoy the privilege of having many Christian friends and I expect from Christians in India a great deal. There is nothing in the programme that I have ventured to place before the nation in which a Christian cannot whole-heartedly participate. Indeed I go so far as to say, if I may do so in all humility, that a Christian is the less a Christian if he does not whole-heartedly participate in this constructive programme. Those who are born and bred in this land, and to whom this land is as much the motherland as it is to me, as it is to the Mussalmans, if these Christians do not promote the nation's growth, to that extent, I venture to say, they are denying Christianity. You cannot serve God and

[1] The addresses were presented by the Kottayam Municipality and the Hindi students.

refuse to serve your neighbours. But he who passes over his neighbour, be he Hindu, Christian or Mussalman, denies his God. I, therefore, suggest to my Christian friends that they should regard it as a special privilege, and therefore special duty, to serve India to the best of their ability.

We may have different religions, we may hold different views about our conception of God, we may have different views about salvation. But there is one thing which binds all Indians to the soil. There is one thing which binds all Indians, one to another, is an indissoluble tie and that is the spinning-wheel and its product khaddar. I harp upon khaddar and the spinning-wheel in season and out of season beacause I know that in khaddar alone, in the spinning-wheel alone, lies the economic salvation of India. The spinning-wheel is a symbol and a symbol of the binding tie between the masses and the classes. The classes derive their sustenance from the labour of the masses and I beg the classes to make some small return to the masses for what they receive from them. I, therefore, say to every Indian, also to every Englishman domiciled in India, or who derives his livelihood from India, let him adopt khaddar. In his own home let him dress himself from top to toe in khaddar and make a return to the masses. (Cheers.)

I say to the women of Kottayam and the surrounding places and to the men: "If you will reinstate the spinning-wheel in your homes, you will find that you have delivered to the famishing millions of India a message of hope and comfort."

Referring to untouchability he said:

Her Highness and the Dewan have assured me of their sympathy with the reformers and if I have understood them correctly I know that they are only waiting for an emphatic, unequivocal, disciplined and articulate expression of public opinion on the part of the *savarna* Hindus in order to do away with this disgrace and if the Hindus are true to their faith and will consider themselves as the custodians of the dignity of their religion, and if they feel as keenly as I do about this untouchability, they will not rest satisfied unless they have convinced the Maharani Regent and the Dewan that the whole public opinion of Travancore demands this reform.

The Hindu, 16-3-1925

253. ALL-INDIA COW-PROTECTION SABHA

[*March 15, 1925*][1]

Readers will recall that among the many conferences held at Belgaum last December, there was one for the protection of cows. Reluctantly I yielded to importunity and became its chairman. I believe that the protection of cows is an important and necessary task in this age for those who believe in Hinduism. I think I have been carrying on this work for many years in my own way. The whole of India is aware that the protection of cows is one of the vital reasons for the friendship that I deliberately wish to cultivate with the Muslims. However, I do not regard saving cows from Muslims as the most important aspect of cow-protection. The most important aspect is to make Hindus protect cows. My definition of cow-protection includes sparing cows and bullocks from the cruelty to which they are subjected.

However, I have taken little direct interest until today in this great task of protection. I have practised penance in order to be worthy of taking such a part but have not yet attained such worthiness. I was, therefore, hesitant to accept the chair, and yet I did accept it. One of the resolutions of the conference related to establishing a permanent committee. I had to take part in that too. Hence, the committee nominated by the conference met in the last week of January[2] in Delhi. At that meeting it was decided to establish an All-India Cow-protection Sabha; its constitution was framed and accepted by the committee. The fact that this Sabha could progress so far is primarily due to the famous worker for the cause of the cows, Chaunde Maharaj, who comes from Wai. I am being drawn to it by his earnestness and initiative. The members of the committee included Dadasaheb Karandikar, Lala Lajpat Rai, Babu Bhagwandas[3], Shri Kelkar[4], Dr. Moonje[5], Swami Shraddhanandji[6] and others. However, I

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's visit to Kanyakumari "yesterday", the article appears to have been written on March 15.

[2] On the 24th, according to Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1925

[3] Scholar and public worker of Banaras; took leading part in establishing Kashi Vidyapith, a National University at Banaras

[4] N. C. Kelker (1872-1947); leader from Maharashtra; auther and journalist

[5] Dr. B. S. Moonje, Eye Surgeon, Nagpur; leader of the Hindu Mahasabha; attended the Round Table Conference in 1930

[6] Mahatma Munshiram (1856-1926); nationalist leader of Arya Samaj who took prominent part in public activities in Delhi and the Punjab and co-operated with Gandhiji

would regard the existence of such an Association an impossibility without Shri Malviyaji, the jewel of India. Hence, I suggested that it was necessary to obtain his approval before announcing the constitution of the proposed society. This suggestion was unanimously accepted. Hence, the task of showing him the draft constitution fell to me. I did so and he gave his approval.

Nevertheless, I hesitate to publish it because the chairmanship still rests with me. Moreover, the founders would like me to continue. I am doubtful about my suitability. I feel that so long as those who are regarded as leading Hindus do not approve of this great task, it cannot make any significant progress. I also fear that in view of my firm views on untouchability, my chairmanship may prove harmful. I expressed my doubts of Chaunde Maharaj again. He believes that my views on untouchability have nothing to do with this work and even if some individuals keep away on that score, it is our duty to carry on this work inspite of such a risk.

I do not know whether it is our duty or not. However, I put before the people the constitution which has been approved bythe committee. I expect to reach Bombay on the 26th; a date has then to be fixed for holding a general body meeting to pass the constitution. The meeting will then be held.

May He, who came to Draupadi's rescue, also come to my help. I am an orphan and look to Him for assistance. He alone knows what love I have for the cause of cow-protection. Should that love be pure, may He make this unworthy servant worthy. I have taken upon my shoulders many responsibilities that He has burdened me with. He may add one more to these, if He so desires. He alone can make me overcome my fears.

The readers may, perhaps, be unable to realize the nature of my suffering. I am writing this in the early hours of the morning. My pen shakes as I write this. There are tears in my eyes. Yesterday, I have had the *darshan* of Kanyakumari. If time permits, I will put before the reader the thoughts which overwhelm me. My predicament is very much that of a child who weeps profusely because he does not have the stomach to eat all that he wishes to. I am greedy. I am impatient to see and to demonstrate the victory of dharma. I am ever anxious to do all that may be needed for it. It is for this reason alone that I want swaraj as also the spinning-wheel, Hindu-Muslim unity, cow-protection, abolition of untouchability and prohibition. Which of these should I pursue and which should I give up? The ship of my

longings is thus rolling back and forth on a stormy sea.

Once there was a fearful storm on the sea. All the passengers were agitated. All prayed for the help of Lord Krishna. The Muslims cried out in the name of Allah. The Hindus started uttering the name of Rama. The Parsis too started chanting their scriptures. I saw suffering on the faces of all. The storm subsided and all were happy. The very moment they were happy they forgot God and started behaving as if the storm had never been.

I am in a strange plight. I am ever in the midst of a storm. Hence I cannot but remember Rama, Sitapati[1]. However, sometimes, when I experience a great turmoil, I am even more perturbed than my fellow-voyagers and cry out, "Save me, save me."

With this preface, I remember the mother-cow, kneel before God and place this constitution[2] before the public.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-3-1925

254. LETTER TO KALYANJI V. MEHTA

Monday [*March 16, 1925*][3]

BHAI KALYANJI,

I felt at first like sending you a wire, but succumbed to my tendency to thrift. Only today I read in *Navajivan* about your release. Well and good. I shall reach the Ashram on the 27th. You will no doubt come to see me there. I hope you are perfectly all right now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of Gujarati: G.N. 2678

[1] Husband of Sita

[2] Not translated here; *vide* "Draft Constitution of All-India Cow-Protection Sabha", 24-1-1925.

[3] The news of Kalyanji's release from Sabarmati Jail appeared in *Navajivan*, 15-3-1925.

255. LETTER TO W. H. PITT

ALWAI,
March 18, 1925

DEAR MR. PITT[1] ,

With reference to the conversations[2] we have had as to the possibility and desirability of removing the barriers at Vykom and the picket which prevent satyagrahi volunteers from crossing the boundary-line on the roads leading to the temple, the position as I understand is this. It is common cause between Government and the reformers that the embargo upon the so-called untouchables making use of the roads around the temple should be removed. In your opinion the cause I have at heart will succeed earlier if I advise the satyagrahis to respect the boundary line pending final decision without the barricades and the picket. You tell me that the orthodox opinion gathers strength from the presence of the barricades and the picket, because the orthodox people wrongly infer that the intention in putting up the barricades and keeping the pickets is to help them to maintain their position. I have gathered from our conversations that it would be possible for you to have the existing orders withdrawn under which you are acting, if I undertake to respect the boundary-line in the manner suggested by you. Whilst I hesitate to believe that the action proposed by you, if taken by the satyagrahis, will soften the hearts of the orthodox people and weaken their position, I fully appreciate the motive that lies behind your suggestion. I am, therefore, prepared to advise, by way of trial, adoption of the suggestion made by you. After all, what the satyagrahis want is to create an active and overwhelming public opinion in their behalf. Their object is not to irritate orthodoxy but to win it over to their side. Their object moreover is in no way to embarrass the Government in the prosecution of the campaign but, so far as it is possible, to enlist its sympathy and support on their side. I am therefore prepared to act upon your suggestion immediately on learning from you that the prohibitory order referred to herein is withdrawn. The effect of this would be that a very small number, not larger than at present, will continue to march up to the boundary-line by way of pleading their cause and stand or spin as they are now doing in front of the lines.

[1] Commissioner of Police, Trivandrum
[2] The interview took place on March 10 at Trivandrum.

They will not cross it on any account whatsoever whilst their agreement lasts and I expect that if it ever becomes necessary to challenge in a court of law the so-called right or custom under which the so-called untouchables are prohibited from making use of the roads round the temple the prosecution would be under the ordinary criminal law of Travancore. But I am hoping, with the assistance of the Travancore Government, to formulate public opinion so that it becomes irresistible and that without recourse to law on either side the common right of using public or semi-public roads is not denied to any class of people by reason of their birth. I have already discussed with you the three proposals made by me, namely, referendum by taking the vote of the *savarna* Hindus in select areas; arbitration; or interpretation and examination of the authority of texts from Hindu Shastras supposed to be available to the orthodox in support of their contention as to the use of roads round certain temples. It must be a very simple matter to adopt one or all of the suggestions.

In closing this letter I would place on record my sincere thanks for the perfect arrangement made by you during the whole of my sojourn in Travancore.[1]

I am,

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13267

256. SPEECH IN REPLY TO ADDRESSES, PARUR[2]

March 18, 1925

Mahatmaji in his reply observed that it was in keeping with their traditions that they carried to the very letter whatever they resolved upon and hoped that the resolve, the Municipal Councillors had expressed that they would spin and wear khaddar hereafter, would be followed in earnest. He regretted that untouchability and unapproachability prevailed in worst forms in Travancore and they owed it to the Motherland and Hinduism to eradicate them. He observed that their tastes were so simple that neither men nor women considered it civilized to have multiplicity of clothing. He considered it a matter of shame and humiliation to wear foreign or mill-made clothes. The *Ezhavas*[3] were weavers who at one time produced all their clothing.

[1] For the Police Commissioner's reply, *vide* footnote 1 to "Telegram to W. H. Pitt", 24-3-1925.

[2] Presented by the Municipality, the Parur citizens and the *Ezhavas*

[3] Community in Malabar traditionally regarded as untouchable

He was informed by a Christian that it was impossible to wear khaddar and refused to believe that any Archbishop or Roman Catholic priest could command his flock not to use pure hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar. Organization and expert assistance were required in enforcing their promise to wear khaddar and he appealed to them to get help from Tamilnad friends.

The Hindu, 19-3-1925

257. SPEECH AT UNION COLLEGE, ALWAYE

March 18, 1925

Gandhiji in his reply congratulated the college on its splendid site and on the hostel being opened by the great poet[1] of Asia. To think of earning one's livelihood out of mental culture was prostitution of education. He was afraid they neglected culture of heart and body. Concluding, the Mahatma asked the students not to be satisfied with benevolent neutrality with regard to khaddar and the spinning-wheel and placed before them the notable example of Dr. P. C. Ray who had dedicated himself to relieve the poor.

The Hindu, 19-3-1925

258. SPEECH AT ADVAIT ASHRAM, ALWAYE[2]

[*March 18, 1925*][3]

I am grateful to you for the beautiful address you have given me, which was well read out by an *Antyaja* boy. I am sorry that I cannot reply to you in Sanskrit. But had I been a Sanskrit pundit, even then I would not have replied in Sanskrit, because unfortunately today we Hindus have neglected the study of Sanskrit and therefore the masses cannot be expected to understand that language. But in order to be in tune with the Sanskrit atmosphere here, I would have spoken in Hindi, had it been possible to do so. However, you would not understand it; this proves our sad plight. I hope that the organizers of the Ashram will provide facilities to enable every student to understand. Hindi. It is essential for us to recognize our limitations. It is beyond our power today to steep our minds in Sanskrit so that all

[1] Rabindranath Tagore who had visited the college

[2] In reply to an address of welcome in Sanskrit which was read out by a *Pulaya* student.

[3] From *The Hindu*, 19-3-1925

our communication may be carried on in that language. It is not a difficult thing, however, to start communicating in Hindi.

Your motto is, "One community, one religion, one God". I had discussions with Shri Narayan Guru Swami on this subject and since you have given the subject the first place in your welcome address, I am also obliged to mention it in my reply. I feel that the attainment of what is implied by this motto is also beyond our powers. I can understand the principle of one God. In spite of our worshipping Him in a million different ways, our adoration finds its way to Him. However, I feel that so long as the human race continues, differences of creeds and religions will indeed exist, since there are many minds and not one. If we look at Nature, we shall find that it is full of diversities and it is through them that the one God becomes many. To expect that at any stage in the history of the human race the world will have a single religion and a single creed is, I think, as good as wishing that the laws of Nature should become topsy turvy. As a result of my limited reading, reflection and meditation, I feel that human society cannot do without the four-fold divisions of *varna* and *ashrama*. Hence, diverse religions and diverse creeds seem to be inevitable. Tolerance should be our aim. If all of us hold uniform views, where then is the scope for this generous virtue of tolerance? However, this search for uniformity is as futile as looking for flowers in the sky. Hence, the only possible alternative for us is to tolerate one antoher's views. According to my Muslim friends, I, a born idol-worshipper, a believer in incarnation and rebirth, must necessarily cultivate tolerance for Muslims who do not believe in idol-worship, who do not believe in incarnation and perhaps in rebirth. I, a believer in incarnations, do not think that Christ alone was God, or that he alone was the son of God. Nevertheless, I should tolerate the fact that my Christian friends look upon Christ as God and, similarly, Muslims and Christians should tolerate the fact that I bow in reverence to Kanyakumari and Jagannath. I can see that the age of tolerance is dawning in my own lifetime, because tolerance is at the root of the dharma of ashimsa. That very same tolerance is at the root of the dharma of truth. Truth, like God, has a thousand diverse aspects. I cannot therefore insist that my view about the nature of truth is the correct one, and those of others wrong. That is why I feel we are fast approaching the age of mutual tolerance and mutual love. If, therefore, I cannot persuade Shri Narayan Guru Swami to accept the ideal of tolerance, I shall content by understanding the ideal in my own way.

Leaving aside this abstract discussion, let us come to more concrete things. While we cannot have before us the ideal of one caste, one religion and one creed, we can certainly have before us the ideal of performing one task daily and regularly for the good of the country. When shall We learn to wear khadi and thereby establish a bond of union with the poorest of the poor? We can learn this one *mantra* of making common cause with the poor. Instead of talking of universal love, it would be enough if we give up the calico made in the mills of Ahmedabad, Japan or England and win instead the simple love of the poor by wearing cloth spun and woven by our own brothers and sisters. Shri Narayan Guru Swami has assured me that he will himself take up spinning and forbid his followers from approaching him unless they are clad in khadi.

We have to practise the dharma of ahimsa and love in another matter as well. We must free our country from the sin of keeping our own brothers away as untouchables. A caste Hindu approached me and told me that the *Ezhavas* too treat those who belong to lower castes as untouchables. This must stop. More- over, he also told me that if the *Ezhavas* and *Pulayas*[1] gave up liquor, the problem of untouchability would be automatically solved. I do not regard this as a proper defence. However, the only way open to us is to profit from this advice and do whatever needs to be done. We cannot answer back that caste Hindus too drink secretly. It is sufficient for us to be aware of our own faults and get rid of them. I hope that, in this Sanskrit atmosphere, you will bear in mind whatever I have briefly told you and speedily advance towards the religious ideal which Shri Narayan Guru Swami is placing before you.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-4-1925

259. SPEECH IN REPLY TO ADDRESSES, TRICHUR[2]

March 18, 1925

I am sorry that I cannot be in these pleasant surroundings for any length of time. I shall be leaving this beautiful country, I do not know for how long. It is difficult to tear myself away from all the

[1] Community in Malabar traditionally regarded as untouchable

[2] Presented by the Municipality, the Nambudiri Yogakshema Sabha and the Trichur students at the Tekkingad Maidan

overwhelming kindness. It is equally difficult to tear myself away from the beautiful scenery that I have witnessed around me. But among all these pleasant recollections the one bitter recollection that I shall carry with me is that this fair land should be blotted with the curse of untouchability and unapproachability. But I was reminded only just now that there is also in this land the curse of invisibility, that the very sight of man offends. If this is Hinduism I would renounce it today, but as a *sanatani* Hindu that I call myself, and one brought up in an orthodox family, I know that it is no part of Hinduism to have untouchability, unapproachability or invisibility as they are practised today. But I shall be leaving this land in the hope that all those crowds that have attended such gatherings and all those crowds who have associated themselves in the sentiments expressed in the addresses which have censured this caste custom will see to it that this blot is removed from Travancore and Cochin.

I have seen thousands of sisters in Travancore and Cochin. To see them in their beautiful white dress has been a perfectly pleasant and ennobling sight for me. But it has equally depressed me to find that they have taken to calico instead of khaddar. If you intend to do so it is possible for you to clothe yourselve, both men and women, in khaddar without the slightst difficulty and without any loss of time. Not very long ago, every home in Malabar had a spinning-wheel. I ask you to reinstate the spinning-wheel in every home. You have even now thousands of *Ezhava* weavers weaving beautiful cloth. Spin, and they will weave the yarn spun by you. If you will only do this you will find out for yourselves that you have saved lakhs upon lakhs of rupees for your land. Both Travancore and Cochin together have a population of nearly 70 lakhs. If I were to count the cost of spinning and weaving, it will come to rupees three on an average per head. That means nearly two crores and ten lakhs. Just think what it means for this land and it costs no effort to you to clothe yourself in khaddar.

The Hindu, 19-3-1925

260. NOTES [*-I*]

VYKOM SATYAGRAHA

I offer no apology to the reader for giving much space in these pages to Vykom satyagraha by reproducing the whole of that portion

of the address[1] of the Dewan of Travancore to its Popular Assembly which deals with the Vykom satyagraha. It enables the reader to understand and appreciate the nature of the brave struggle that is being carried on by a band of satyagrahis as also the importance of the cause for which satyagraha is being offered. Vykom is a test case so far as Travancore and, for that matter, Malabar is concerned. It affects the common rights of more than one sixth of the entire population of Travancore. Those therefore who are interested in the removal of the curse of untouchability cannot but read the Dewan's address with interest. I do not propose to comment on it this week as it would be unfair to do so in view of the fact that I am to have the honour of meeting him before this will have been printed and in view of the further fact that I have not at the time of writing completed my investigations. But I cannot help endorsing the remark of Dewan Bahadur T. Raghaviah that

> there is a world of difference between satyagraha meant to be an educative force and satyagraha intended as an instrument for the coercion of the Government and through them of the orthodox Hindu. What the satyagrahis should aim at is the conversion of the orthodox to whom untouchability is a part of their faith.

I make bold to state that from the very outset satyagraha at Vykom was intended to be an educative force and never an instrument of coercion of the orthodox. It was for that reason that the fast against the orthodox was abandoned. It was to avoid coercion of the Government by embarrassment that the barricades have been scrupulously respected. It was for that reason that no attempt was made to dodge the police. It has been recognized that what appears to the reformers as a gross and sinful superstition is to the orthodox a part of their faith. The satyagrahi's appeal has therefore been to the reason of the orthodox. But experience has shown that mere appeal to the reason produces no effect upon those who have settled convictions. The eyes of their understanding are opened not by argument but by the suffering of the satyagrahi. The satyagrahi strives to reach the reason through the heart. The method of reaching the heart is to awaken public opinion. Public opinion for which one cares is a mightier force than that of gunpowder. The Vykom satyagraha has vindicated itself in that it has drawn the attention of the whole of India to the cause and it has been instrumental in the Travancore

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Extract from Dewan of Travancore's Speech on Vykom Satyagraha", March 19, 1925.

Assembly considering in a remarkable debate a resolution favouring the reform sought for and lastly in eliciting a considered reply from the Dewan of Travancore. I am sure that victory is a certainty if only the satyagrahis will retain their patience and their spirit of suffering.

MAN'S INHUMANITY TO MAN

In the midst of the incessant rush I am going through in this land of palms (Travancore) where I am writing these notes, I cannot resist noting down a never-fading sight I had to witness at Cochin. Cochin has imported from Japan numerous rickshaws which its well-to-do citizens use for their convenience. These are drawn not by animals but by men. I carefully noted as many of these carriers as passed. Not one impressed me with his physique. They had neither the calves nor the chest nor the arms well-formed for the arduous task of carrying a burden in the hot sun and melting heat. The rickshaws are built for carrying one passenger only. In my opinion, it is bad enough for a healthy and full-limbed man to be carried by man, but I was ashamed of my species and pained beyond measure to see two and even three passengers huddled together in some rickshaws. It was no doubt wrong for the carrier not to refuse to carry more than one burden. But what is one to say of the pair or the trio who in order to save a few coppers would not be ashamed to be carried by a member of their species who is hardly fit to carry even one of them. I hope there is a law in Cochin prohibiting the carrying of more than one passenger in these rickshaws. And if there is one, I hope the kindly citizens will see to it that it is strictly obeyed. But if there is no such law, I hope that one would be passed making the carriage of more than one passenger an impossibility. If I had the power I would abolish the rickshaw. But that I know must remain a pious hope. But is it too much to hope that men who ply these rickshaws will be subjected to a strict medical examination as to their fitness for the heavy work?

INTER-DINING

A correspondent asks: "Should children belonging to different castes and living in one boarding-house be made to dine together in a common dining-room?" The question is not well put. But the answer to the question as it is put would be that children cannot be *made* to inter-dine. If, however, it be urged that no boarding-house keeper can make rules requiring all who care to join it to inter-dine, it would be as unreasonable a demand as it would be to compel children who are

admitted without such stipulation as to inter-dining to dine in company with children belonging to other castes. In the absence of any rule to the contrary, I should imagine that the presumption would be that the usual rules for separate dining arrangements would apply. This question of inter-dining is a vexed one and in my opinion no hard and fast rules can be laid down. Personally, I am not sure that inter-dining is a necessary reform. At the same time I recognize the tendency towards breaking down the restriction altogether. I can find reasons for and against the restriction. I would not force the pace. I do not regard it as a sin for a person not to dine with another nor do I regard it as sinful if one advocates and practises inter-dining. I should, however, resist the attempt to break down the restriction in disregard of the feelings of others. On the contrary I would respect their scruples in the matter.

THE "KISANS" OF OUDH

Mr. Manilal Doctor of Fyzabad sends me the following for publication:

> I have been brought over from Gaya to Fyzabad at the request of thousands of *kisans*.
>
> In Bihar—in Champaran—I was disillusioned. India is by no means a bed of roses for the workers on land. It is not surprising that Assam, Calcutta, Cawnpore, Ahmedabad, Burma and the distant Colonies are able to attract coolies. Oudh seems to be in a worse condition still. The cry is: "Let us be free from this foreign yoke and labour will have its
> due." I am not sure in my mind that workers and peasants will get justice at the hands of those who are likely to succeed the British Government.
>
> Anyhow, the position that I am prepared to act upon is this: The workers and peasants should not allow themselves to be made tools of by either Indian capitalists or the British Government. They must look after their own interests and only so far as may be consonant with them, that they may "co-operate" or "non-co-operate". Of course the charkha should spread amongst them and it will be better for them to spin yarn for clothing themselves with, than spin litigation during the slack months of the Indian year, which is absolutely dependent on the favours of the four rainy months (unlike the tropical colonies, where there are showers throughout the year).
>
> India is a good country, but human beings—Indian and foreign—have "co-operated" to make a hell of it!!! How long Oh! Lord!! How long !!!"

I hope that Mr. Manilal Doctor will succeed in introducing the charkha in every ptals village and in the act make a careful study of

the economic position of the *kisans*. What we need is a patient and exact study of typical Indian villages of India such as Dr. Mann[1] published some years ago regarding a few Deccan villages.

Young India, 19-3-1925

261. A DIFFICULT PROBLEM

An Andhra correspondent invites attention to his difficulties as follows:

> In last week's *Young India* in one of your answers to a Bengal correspondent on untouchability you have stated thus: "Since 'we' do take water from the hands of Sudras we should not hesitate to accept it from the hands of untouchables", meaning by "we" the high-caste Hindus. I do not know the customs *prevalent* in Northern India. But are you aware of the fact that in Andhra as well as in still Southern parts of India Brahmins do not only not take water from the hands of non-Brahmins (of any of the other three castes) but the more orthodox of them observe strict untouchability with non-Brahmins.
>
> You have often said that you do not advocate inter-dining as essential to the removal of the present false notions of superiority of castes. You have quoted once an instance of Pandit Malaviyaji to bring out the fact that, living as you are in mutual admiration and respect, you could not think Malaviyaji meaning any contempt to you if he refused water or anything else from your hands. I agree there it might have meant no contempt. But do you know that the Brahmins of our part do not take food if seen by a non-Brahmin even if it be from a distance of hundred yards, let alone the touching of it by him? May I also point out that a word or two escaping the mouth of a Sudra in a street is enough to rouse the orthodox Brahmin at meal to anger—and he will go without meal the whole day? In what way can these facts be interpreted if they can mean no contempt? Has not the Brahmin put an air of superiority? Will you please enlighten me on these points? I am myself a Brahmin youth and hence write with first-hand knowledge.

Untouchability is a hydro-headed monster. It is a deeply moral and religious question. Inter-dining, to me, is a social question. Behind the present untouchability there is undoubtedly and necessa-

[1] Dr. Harold H. Mann; first Principal of the Poona Agricultural College; Director of Agriculture, Government of Bombay, 1923-27; author of *Land and Labour in a Deccan Village*

rily contempt for a portion of one's species. It is a canker that is eating into the vitals of society. It is a denial of the rights of man. It does not stand on a par with inter-dining. And I would strongly urge social reformers not to mix the two. If they do, they would injure the sacred cause of "the untouchables and the unapproa-chables". The Brahmin correspondent's difficulty is real. It shows the length to which the evil has been carried. The name Brahmin should be, as it once was, a synonym for utter humility, self-effacement, sacrifice, purity, courage, forgiveness and true knowledge. But today this sacred land is cursed with divisions between Brahmins and non-Brahmins. In many instances the Brahmin has lost the superiority which he never claimed but which was his by right of service. He is now desperately striving to assert what he cannot claim and has, therefore, roused the jealousy of non-Brahmins in some parts of India. Fortunately for Hinduism and fortunately for the country there are Brahmins like the correspondent who are fighting with all their strength the tendency towards the ominous assertion and are serving the non-Brahmins with a selfless pertinacity which is worthy of their high traditions. Everywhere one finds Brahmins in the forefront fighting the evil of untouchability and supporting their brief with authorities from scriptures. I urge the Southern Brahmin of the type mentioned by the Andhra correspondent to recognize the signs of the times and rid himself of false notions of superiority or of superstition that smells sin in the visible approach of a non-Brahmin or regards his dinner as polluted if he hears the voice of a non-Brahmin. The Brahmins taught the world to see *Brahman* in everything. Surely then there can be no defilement from outside. It comes from within. Let the Brahmin re-deliver the message that the untouchables and the unapproachables are the evil thoughts that one harbours. He taught the world to believe that "man is truly his own deliverer as he is also his own defiler or captor".

The non-Brahmin must not be ruffled by the things mentioned by the Andhra correspondent. Brahmins like the Andhra correspondent will fight, as they are fighting, his battle. He must not, as I fear is the growing tendency, despise the whole race of Brahmins because of the sins of a few. Let him be dignified enough not to claim right conduct towards himself from those who will misconduct themselves. I need not feel insulted because the passerby does not acknowledge me or because he feels polluted by my touch or presence or voice. It is enough that I refuse at his bidding to move

from my path or to desist from speaking for fear of his hearing my voice. I may pity his ignorant assumption of superiority or his superstition but I may not get irritated and develop the contempt I would fain resent when directed towards myself. The non-Brahmin will lose his case by loss of self-restraint. Above all let him not, by overstepping the mark, embarrass his Brahmin champions. The Brahmin is the finest flower of Hinduism and humanity. I will do nothing to wither it. I know that it is well able to take care of itself. It has weathered many a storm before now. Only let it not be said of non-Brahmins that they attempted to rob the flower of its fragrance and lustre. I would not have the non-Brahmins to rise on the ruin of the Brahmins. I would rather that they rose to the height that the Brahmins have occupied before now. Brahmins are born, not so Brahminism. It is a quality open to be cultivated by the lowliest or the lowest among us.

Young India, 19-3-1925

262. NOTES [*-II*]

"A MAD MAN OR A SAINT"

A friend has taken the trouble of copying out the following extracts from *My Magazine* which he tells me is intended for children and asks me to reply to it:

> Something happened to his soul in 1918 which was fatal to its power. He became neither a saint nor a statesman, but a fanatic. . . . In losing heart in Britain's word Gandhi also lost his head.
>
> In his anger against European civilization he has gone to the extreme point of condemning all science and all culture. He would abolish the schoolmaster and the doctor as well as the engineer. He would do away with the bacteriologist as well as the manufacturer. No one is to learn anything. The body of man is to dwell in everlasting passiveness and the soul is to do nothing but receive the whispers of God.
>
> We may seek to justify him, and say that European civilizaiton is a disease. We may speak of disease and strikes, of slums and destitution, of vice and shameless luxury; and yet, when all is said and done, it is the engineer who has irrigated the deserts of India, the doctor who has fought down plague, and the schoolmaster who has quickened the Indian mind. Without the ceaseless toil of scientific men, India would be decimated by disease; and without the protection of Britain she would become the slave of Japan.

Gandhi believes that the soul of men must get back to some fabulous time in the past when all was peace and love; we believe that the soul of man must march forward from barbarism and inertia to knowledge, power and dominion. Gandhi thinks we are on the wrong road; we think our raod, difficult as it is, leads to a better world. Gandhi thinks a man is elevated only by his spirit; we think that a man's spirit can best be elevated by a mind that is never satisfied. We believe in work, knowledge, and dominion. Gandhi believes in non-resistance, ignorance and passiveness.

There is something in this indictment against European civilization, but we must not be led away to suppose that India is a land of beauty, peace, and goodness, reposing in the love of God. There are things in India not to be spoken of, so horrible are they; and there are slums in India not to be matched by anything in Europe. If our civilization is dangerous to spritual life the civilization of India is fatel. Let the mind of man drowse, and it will perish.

It is not immodest to think that we can help Gandhi if he will do us the courtesy of regarding what is best in our civilization, and not only what is worst.

A LIBEL

The article from which the extracts are taken is said to be devoted to a critical examination of what I am supposed to stand for and is headed "An Extraordinary Man. Is He a Mad Man or a Saint?" I have often said that I do not claim to be an extraordinary man unless one who is mad after the search for truth be called extraordinary. I am certainly mad in the sense that every honest man should be. I have disclaimed the title of a saint for I am fully conscious of my limitations and imperfections. I claim to be a servant of India and therethrough of humanity.

The writer of the article is honest but ignorant and yet writes with an assurance which is amazing. The pity of it is that the writing of that character is not an uncommon thing in modern literature. If palpable untruth can be put before the public about contemporary men and women, one shudders to think of the distortion that must appear years after they are gone.

Let us see how truth has suffered at the hands of the writer of the article. "In his anger against European civilization, he has gone to the extreme point of condemning all science and all culture," says the writer. Though I have undoubtedly spoken and written strongly against Europ-ean civilization, I cannot recall ever having condemned "all science and all culture". My life is a standing testimony against

the libel. Every sentence that follows thereafter is the reverse of truth. Where the writer has derived his idea of desire to abolish schoolmasters and engineers I do not know. Anybody who knows anything of me knows that I loathe pas-siveness of the body. I recognize the everlasting activity of nature going on about me and I respond to it by keeping my own body and those of my co-workers in incessant activity, always, I hope, of a beneficial character. The writer tells us that "without the protection of Britain she (India) would become the slave of Japan". If a schoolboy was called upon to point out the inacccuracy of the statement, will he not say that with- out the slavery of Britain, India would be a free nation living in peace and alliance with Japan and her other Asiatic neighbours? The writer considers the civilization of India fatal to spiritual life. No European scholar to my knowledge has made such a statement. Whatever else India may not be, she is at least one thing. She is the greatest storehouse of spiritual knowledge. She is the best representative of spiritual life. She does not let the mind "drowse" for one single moment.

"HOW TO LIVE"

On reading an article of his in *Young India*, a correspondent sent Mr. Andrews the following poser which he handed to me for reply some months ago:

> I was born and bred up in a village. My father used to repeat *Ahimsa paramo dharmah*[1] off and on, while engaged in religious conversations with his friends. It is, as you say, the complementary truth following from the original truth of the *Advaitam*[2]. Let me admit the truth substantially. Let me further submit that *Advaitam* is not confined to oneness of all spiritual life. It is, as you apear to hold, the oneness of all things in the universe, without any exception of whatever kind.
>
> The moment one gets himself fitted to catch *Advaitam* as his guide, his progress is assured. All differences must disappear. We are all one. How am I justified in injuring that which is myself? Here doubts begin to crop up. Is the idea of ahimsa to be carried into practice to its logical end? If so carried to the end, will it remain a vritue?
>
> My father used to repeat *Ahimsa paramo dharmah*. However, when the family buffalo took into its—why not 'her'—head not to stand still for being

[1] "Non-violence is the highest dharma."
[2] Absolute monism; literally, non-dualism

milked, my father used to take up the stick and beat her to her senses. That was for securing milk for his children. Did he do the right thing?

The Hindus call the avatar of Rama as *Dharma Avatar*[1]. Rama killed Ravana. Was it a wrong deed? Rama killed Bali and, Bali protesting, Rama replied:

अनुजवधू भगिनी सुतनारी
सुनु सठ यह कन्या सम चारी
इन्हैं कुदृष्टि विलोकहि जोई
तेहि `धे कछु पाप न होई[2]

Here there is the doctrine of "Killing no murder" put in the mouth of the very avatar of dharma.

We may descend further and come to the time of Lord Krishna. Here we have the *Bhagavad Gita*. Arjuna is unwilling to kill those who are, after all, his nearest relations. Lord Krishna urges him to fight and "kill" and the doctrine of ahimsa is left in the background.

One has thus to inquire whether there is a limit to the practice of ahimsa. A girl is being outraged. Is she not justified in killing the devil to escape from his clutches? Is she to observe non-violence?

Catching fish is violence. Uprooting plants for use as vegetable is violence. Use of disinfectants for germs of disease is violence. How to live?

A Brahmin

If the father had not milked the unwilling buffalo, the world will have lost nothing. There are many things put in the mouth of Rama by Tulsidas which I do not understand. The whole episode about Bali is of that type. The literal application of the lines attributed to Rama by Tulsidas will land the doer in trouble if it will not send him to the gallows. Everything related of every hero in *Ramayana* or *Mahabharata* I do not take literally, nor do I take these books as historical records. They give us essential truths in a variety of ways. Nor do I regard Rama and Krishna as portrayed in the two poems as infallible beings. They reflect the thoughts and aspirations of their ages. Only an infallible person can do justice to the lives of infallible beings. One can therefore only take the spirit of these great works for

[1] Incarnation of dharma

[2] "Wife of a younger brother, sister, and the daughter-in-law—all these, O wicked one, are as one's own daughter. There is no sin in killing a person who casts an evil eye on them." —*Kishkindha Kanda* (Book Four) of Tulsidas's *Ramacharitamanasa*

only guidance, the letter will smother one and stop all growth. So far as the *Gita* is concerned, I do not regard it as a historical discourse. It takes a physical illustration to drive home a spiritual truth. It is the description not of a war between cousins but between the two natures in us—the good and the evil. I would suggest to "A Brahmin" an examination of the doctrine of ahimsa apart from the incidents he quotes. *Ahimsa paramo dharmah* is one of the highest truths of life. Any fall from it must be regarded as a fall. Euclid's straight line may not be capable of being drawn on a blackboard. But the impossibility of the task cannot be permitted to alter the definition. Judged by that test even the uprooting of a plant is an evil. And who does not feel a pang on plucking a beautiful rose? That we do not feel a pang on plucking a weed does not affect the doctrine. It shows that we do not know the place of weeds in nature. Therefore all injury is a violation of the doctrine of ahimsa. The fullest application of ahimsa does make life impossible. Then, let the truth remain though we may all perish. The teachers of old have carried the doctrine to its logical extent and laid down that the physical life is an evil, an embarrassment. *Moksha* is a bodyless superphysical state in which there is neither drinking nor eating and therefore neither the milking of buffalo nor the plucking even of a weed. It may be difficult for us to grasp or appreciate the truth, it may be and is impossible fully to live up to it. Nevertheless, I have no doubt that it is the truth. And virtue lies in regulating our lives in accordance with it and to the best of our ability. A true perception is half the battle. Life becomes livable and lovable only to the extent that we apply the grand doctrine in actual practice. For then we hold the flesh in bondage rather than live in perpetual bondage to the flesh.

Yound India, 19-3-1925

263. KOHAT

[*March 19, 1925*]

I am able only now to publish my statement[1] and that of Maulana Shaukat Ali on the Kohat tragedy. It was not possible to do so earlier as both Maulana Shaukat Ali and I have been travelling and not staying at the same place. I am not sure that the publication at this

[1] A draft (S. N. 10676 R) of this was prepared earlier; *vide* "Kohat Hindus", 9-2-1925.

juncture of our statements on the tragedy can do any tangible good except in so far as the fulfilment of a promise must do in any case. The publication will, however, do one indirect good.There are material differences between us on the inferences we have drawn from the same facts. There are differences too in the degree of reliance we have placed upon the evidence given to us by witnesses. When we discovered the differences between us we both felt grieved and tried to come nearer each other. We even referred our differences to Hakim Saheb and Dr. Ansari for our guidance. Fortunatley, Pandit Motilalji was present at our discussion. We could find nothing in the discussion to induce us to make any radical alteration in our view- points. These discussions took place at Delhi. We then decided to travel together a few hours to re-examine ourselves and to see whether we could remodel our statements. Beyond making some altera-tions we were not able to come nearer. We also examined the suggestion made by Hakim Saheb and supported to an extent by Pandit Motilalji not to publish the statements. But we, or at least I, came to the conclusion that the public which had hitherto known the Ali Brothers and me to be always in agreement about so many public things should know that we too might differ on some matters, but without suspecting each other of conscious bias or wilful perversion of facts and without mutual affection being in any way affected. Our open acknowled-gment of our differences will be an object-lesson in mutual toleration. Let the public know that neither the Maulana Saheb nor I have spared pains to come near each other. But there was no desire for suppression of opinion. We have made alterations in our original drafts. But in no case has either party surrendered his confirmed opinions. We have each softened expressions here and there so as not to wound susceptibilities. But beyond that the originals have not suffered material alterations.

M. K. G.

MR. GANDHI'S STATEMENT

TIRUPUR,
March 19, 1925

Maulana Shaukat Ali and I went to Rawalpindi on the 4th February to meet the Hindu refugees and the Mussalmans of Kohat to whom the Maulana had written and who were excepted to come to Rawalpindi. Lala Lajpat Rai followed a day later. But unfortunately he came with a predisposition to fever and was laid up in bed the whole

of the time we were in Rawalpindi.

Of the Mussalmans Maulvi Ahmad Gul and Pir Saheb Kamal were the principal parties whose evidence we took. The Hindus had their written and printed statements to which they had nothing to add. The Muslim Working Committee which is functioning in Kohat did not and would not come. They sent a wire to Maulana Saheb saying:

> A reconciliation has already been effected between Hindus and Muslims. In our opinion this question should not be reopened. The Muslims should therefore be excused for not sending their representatives to Rawalpindi.

Maulvi Ahmad Gul and another gentleman who came to Rawalpindi with him were members of the Working Committee but they said they came not as such but as members of the Khilafat Committee.

It was difficult to come to any conclusions on details without a thorough examination on the spot and without examining many more witnesses. This, however, we could not do. We could not go to Kohat nor was it our purpose to rake up the whole controversy again by going into minute details. Our purpose was to bring together the two parties if it was at all possible. We therefore confined ourselves to elucidating the main facts.

As I am writing this without a detailed consultation with the Maulana Saheb, I state my own conclusions, leaving him either to confirm mine or to state his own.

The causes of the events of the 9th September and after were many. Among these was the resentment felt by the Mussalmans over the resentment felt in their turn by the Hindus over the conversions (so-called in my opinion) of Hindus—men and married women, and consequent steps taken by them, the Hindus. The desire of the *parachas* (Mussalman traders of Kohat) to oust the Hindus of Kohat was another.[1] The resentment felt over the alleged abduction by Sardar Makhan Singh's son of a married Mussalman girl was the third.[2]

The cumulative effect of these causes was to create great tension between the two communities. The immediate cause that lighted the

[1] The original draft here has: "(3) Resentment over the Hindu abstention from the rejoicings over the Turkish Victory celebrations."

[2] The original draft here has: "The case has been since found to be false."

conflagration was a poem in the notorious pamphlet published by Mr. Jiwandas, Secretary, Sanatan Dharma Sabha at Rawalpindi, and imported by him into Kohat. It contained a number of *bhajans* or poems in praise of Shri Krishna and Hindu-Muslim unity. But it also contained the one in question. It was a highly offensive poem, undoubtedly calculated to wound Muslim susceptibility. Mr. Jiwandas was not the author. He did not import the pamphlet in order to irritate the Mussalmans. As soon as the matter was brought to the notice of the Sanatan Dharma Sabha, it sent a written apology to the Mussalmans for the offending poem and removed it from the unsold copies. This might have satisfied the Mussalmans, but it did not. The unsold copies, over 500 according to Mussalman testimony and over 900 according to Hindu testimony, were brought to the Town Hall and publicly burnt in the presence of the Assistant Commissioner and a large concourse of Mussalmans. The cover of the pamphlet contained a portrait of Shri Krishna. Mr. Jiwandas was arrested. This took place on the 3rd September, 1924. He was to be brought before the Court on the 11th. The Hindus tried to avoid the Court proceedings and to settle the matter amicably. A Khilafat deputation, too, came from Peshawar for the purpose. The Mussalmans wanted to try Mr. Jiwandas according to *Shariat*. The Hindus declined but offered to submit to the award of the Khilafatists. The negotiations fell through. The Hindus, therefore, applied for discharge of Mr. Jiwandas. He was released on the 8th September under security and under instructions to leave Kohat. He did leave Kohat immediately. This anticipation of the date of trial enraged the Mussalmans. During the night of the 8th September they held an excited meeting at which fiery speeches were made. It was resolved to approach the Deputy Commissioner in a body and to demand the re-arrest of Mr. Jiwandas and the arrest of certain other members of the Sanatan Dharma Sabha. Reprisals against the Hindus were threatened if the Deputy Commissioner did not listen to the demand. Messages were sent out to the neighbouring villages to join the assembly in the morning. About two thousand angry Mussalmans, according to Pir Kamal, marched to the Town Hall. The request of the Deputy Commissioner that a samll party from among the assembly should see him in the Town Hall was rejected and he was compelled to face the vast crowd outside. He yielded to the demand and the elated crowd dispersed.

The Hindus had become nervous through fright during the preceding week. On the 6th of September they sent a letter to the

Deputy Commissioner informing him of the prevailing excitement among the Mussalmans. But no precautions were taken by him for their safety. They were aware of the proceedings of the meeting during the night of the 8th. They therefore sent in the morning of the 9th telegrams notifying the authorities of their fears and requesting them not to re-arrest Jiwandas. The latter still took no notice. There is a hot dispute as to what the crowd did after dispersal near the Town Hall. The Mussalman version is that the Hindus fired the first shot killing a Mussalman boy and wounding another, that this infuriated the mob resulting in the burning and looting that took place that day. The Hindu version is that the first shot was fired by the Mussalmans, that they, the Hindus, fired afterwards and in self-defence and that the whole of the looting and burning was according to a pre-arranged plan and after pre-arranged signals.

There is no direct evidence on the point and I am unable to reach a definite conclusion. The Mussalmans contend that no damage would have occurred if the Hindus had not fired the first shot. I am unable to accept the contention. In my opinion some damage was bound to be done, whether the Hindus had fired or not.

It is certain to me that Sardar Makhan Singh's suburban residence was burnt and its garden damaged by the crowd before the firing, no matter from which side it was begun. But there is no doubt that the Hindus did fire and kill or wound some Mussalmans at some stage or other. My opinion is that the crowd elated by its success dispersed itself in several directions and made hostile demonstrations in front of Hindu houses or shops. I should not be surprised if the Hindus who, as shown above, were already nervous and were expecting trouble, took fright at the demonstration and fired in order to scare away the mob. But such an attitude of resistance would infuriate the Mussalmans who were unused to resistance on the part of Hindus. For as Pir Kamal said, the Frontier Mussalmans regarded themselves as *Nayaks* (protectors) and the Hindus as *Hamsayas* (here meaning protected). The more, therefore, the Hindus showed resistance the greater became the fury of the mob.

To me, then, who fired the first shot has not much significance for the purpose of the distribution of blame. No doubt, if the Hindus had not defended themselves at all or if they had not fired the first shot, assuming that they did, the Mussalman demonstration would have exhausted itself sooner. But such was not to be expected of the

Hindus who were in possession of arms and knew more or less indifferently how to use them. Mussalman witnesses questioned Hindu deaths or even injury to Hindus on the 9th. I am, however, certain that several Hindus died or were wounded on the 9th at the hands of the Mussalmans. It is difficult to give the total number. It is a pleasure, however, to note here that some Mussalmans befriended the Hindus and gave them shelter.

It is generally admitted that on the 10th September the Mussalman fury knew no bounds. No doubt highly exaggerated reports of Mussalman deaths at Hindu hands were spread and tribesmen from all parts stole into Kohat by making breaches in the walls and otherwise. Destruction of life and property, in which the constabulary freely partook, which was witnessed by the officials and which they could have prevented, was general. Had not the Hindus been withdrawn from their places and taken to the Cantonment, not many would have lived. Much has been made of the fact that Mussalmans too suffered and that tribesmen, once their passion for looting is let loose, make no distinction between Hindu property and Mussalman property. Whilst this statement is true, I do not believe that the Mussalmans have suffered in any way proportionate to the Hindus. And I must respectfully mention that even some Khilafat volunteers, whose duty it was to protect Hindus and regard them as their own kith and kin, neglected their duty and not only joined in the loot but also took part in the previous incitement.

But the worst is yet to be related. During these days temples including a Gurdwara were damaged and idols broken. There were numerous forced conversions[1], or conversions so-called, i.e., conversions pretended for safety. Two Hindus at least were brutally murdered because they (the one certainly, the other inferentially) would not accept Islam. The so-called conversions are thus described by a Mussalman witness:

> The Hindus came and asked to have their *shikhas*[2] cut and sacred threads destroyed, or the Mussalmans whom they approached for protection said they could be protected only by declaring themselves Mussalmans and removing

[1] Shaukat Ali in his statement published in *Young India*, 26-3-1925, wrote : "As for the so-called conversions to Islam during the days of the riots, my position is clear. I detest forced conversions. They are against the spirit of Islam. If there were any, they deserve the greatest condemnation. But I am not satisfied that there were."

[2] Tufts of hair

the signs of Hinduism.

I fear the truth is bitterer than is put here if I am to credit the Hindu version. I must say in fairness to the Mussalman friend that he did not regard these acts as conversions at all. Taking it at its lowest, the performance is humiliating alike for the Mussalmans and the Hindus. It would have redounded to the credit of the Mussalmans concerned, if they had steeled the hearts of the unmanly Hindus and offered them protection in spite of their remaining Hindus and retaining the symbols of Hindu-ism. The Hindus would have gone down to posterity as martyrs and heroes of whom mankind, let alone Hindus, would have been proud if they had preferred death to denying their faith, albeit outwardly, in order to live.

I must now say a word regarding the Government. The authorities on the spot betrayed callous indifference, incompetence and weakness.

It was an error to have burnt the pamphlet after the offending poem was withdrawn.

It was right to arrest Mr. Jiwandas in the first instance, but it was an error of judgment to have released him before the 11th.

It was criminal to have re-arrested him after release.

It was criminal to have disregarded the warnings given by the Hindus on the 6th September and repeated on the 9th that their lives and property were in danger.

It was criminal not to have offered protection when the riot eventually broke out.

It was inhuman not to have provided the refugees with food after their removal and to have left them to their own resources after their removal to Rawalpindi.

It was a gross neglect of their duty on the part of the Government of India not to have appointed an impartial commission to inquire into the events and the conduct of the officials concerned.

As to the future I am sorry that it is no brighter than the past. It is a matter of great pity that the Muslim Working Committee was not represented at our inquiry. The so-called reconciliation is a reconciliation brought about under threat of prosecution against both. It passes comprehension how a strong Government could be party to such a compromise. If it wanted to avoid prosecutions for fear of another demonstration on the part of the tribesmen, it should have

boldly said so and declined to prosecute and then tried to bring about an amicable and honourable settlement between the parties.

The compromise is intrinsically bad, because it makes no provision for restoration of lost and damaged property. It is also bad because it still involves prosecution of Mr. Jiwandas who is being made the scapegoat.

It is therefore necessary, if there is to be real cleansing of hearts and genuine reconciliation, for the Mussalmans to invite the Hindu refugees and give them assurances of protection and help in reinstating their temples and Gurdwaras.

But the most important assurance that should be given is, that in future no conversions are to take place except in the presence of the elders of the communities and except in the cases of those who understand the full meaning of what they are doing; and if such conversions are attempted they should recieve no recognition. I would personally like the stopping of all conversions and *shuddhis*. One's faith is a personal matter with oneself. It is open to any person of mature age to change his or her faith when and as often as he or she wishes. But if I could do so, I would stop all propaganda except through one's conduct. Conversion is a matter of heart and reason. An appeal to heart and reason can only be made through conduct. I am unable to conceive genuine conversions on the Frontier where Hindus live purely for purposes of gain and where they, a hopeless minority untrained in the use of arms, live in the midst of an overwhelming majority who are, moreover, by far their superiors in bodily strength and use of arms. The temptation for a weak man in such circumstances to embrace Islam for worldly gain is irresistible.

Whether such assurances are forthcoming or not, whether a genuine change of heart is possible or not, I am quite clear on the course that should be adopted. Whilst this foreign domination is in existence some contact with it somewhere is inevitable. But all voluntary contact must be avoided wherever possible. This is the way to feel independent and to cultivate independence. And when a large number feels independent we are ready for swaraj. I can only suggest solutions of questions in terms of swaraj. I would therefore sacrifice present individual gain for future national gain. Even if Mussalmans refuse to make approaches and even if the Hindus of Kohat may have to lose their all, I should still say that they must not think of returning to Kohat till there is complete reconciliation between them and the Mussalmans, and until they feel that they are able to live at peace with

the latter without the protection of the British bayonet. But I know that this a counsel of perfection and not likely to be followed by the Hindus. Nevertheless, I can tender no other advice. For me it is the only practical advice I can give. And if they cannot appreciate it, they must follow their own inclination. They are the best judges of their own capacity. They were in Kohat not as nationalists. They want to return not as nationalists but for the purpose of regaining their possessions. They will therefore do what to them seems feasible and advantageous. Only they must not try to do two things at a time—to try to follow my advice and at the same time to negotiate with the Government for terms. I know that they are not non-co-operators. They have ever relied upon British help. I can but point out consequences and leave them to choose their course.

My advice to the Mussalmans is equally simple.

There was no cause for offence at the Hindus feeling perturbed at the so-called conversions or Hindu husbands taking means to regain lost wives.

I know that in spite of the discharge of Sardar Makhan Singh's son upon the charge of abduction, many Mussalmans continue to believe in the guilt of the Sardar's son. But assuming the guilt of the young Sardar, his crime was no warrant for the fearful vengeance wreaked upon a whole community.

The importation of the pamphlet containing the highly offensive poem was undoubtedly bad, especially in a place like Kohat. But the Sabha made enough reparation by its apology. It was, however, held insufficient by the Mussalmans, and the Sanatan Sabha was compelled to make further reparation by the burning of the copies of the whole pamphlet including the portrait of Shri Krishna. Everything done thereafter to the Hindus was far in excess of the requirements. As I have said before, I am not sure who fired the first shot; but assuming that the Hindus did it, it was done in panic and in self-protection and therefore excusable even if not justifiable, and that the reprisals taken were wholly unwarranted. Therefore it is the Mussalmans who owe them such reparation as is possible in the circumstances. They, the Mussalmans, need no Government protection or aid against the Hindus. The latter can do them no harm even if they wished. But here again I am on unsafe ground. I do not possess even the honour of an acquaintance with the present advisers of the Mussalmans of Kohat. They must therefore be the best judges of what is good for the Mussalmans and good for India.

If both the parties desire Government intervention my services are perfectly useless as I do not believe in the desirability of seeking such intervention and I could take no part in any negotiations with the Government. Whilst the Hindus are entitled to and must claim fair treatment from the Mussalmans, both need to protect themselves against the Government whose policy it is to set the one against the other. The Frontier is a non-regulation province where the will of an official is the law. It should be the pride of the Hindus and the Mussalmans to co-operate with one another to achieve full representative government. Such cannot be the case unless the two communities can trust one another and the desire is common to both.

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 26-3-1925

264. SPEECH IN REPLY TO RAILWAY LABOURERS' ADDRESS, PODANUR

March 19, 1925

Mahatmaji in reply said he was pleased to hear that all races were living together in perfect amity and goodwill and that they had no problem of untouchability or Hindu-Muslim problem. He exhorted the labourers to spin half an hour daily for the sake of the country and wear khaddar. If Maulana Shaukat Ali had been with him, he would have been glad to hear that there was no inter-communal strife among the labourers. Concluding, Mahatmaji advised the labourers to eradicate the drink evil.

The Hindu, 19-3-1925

265. SPEECH IN REPLY TO MUNICIPAL ADDRESS, TIRUPUR

March 19, 1925

FRIENDS,

I am very much obliged to you for all these addresses. I am sorry that the last address from my Mussalman friends I have not been able to understand for want of translation, but I presume that it contains very much the same sentiments that are contained in the other addresses. You will share my sorrow that this time the Ali Brothers or one of them is not with me; owing to their preoccupations

in Delhi and Bombay, it was not possible for any of them to accompany me.

The municipal address calls this the khaddar capital and calls me the khaddar king. I am certainly flattered by the description given to me, and I do feel that if any place can be khaddar capital, Tirupur certainly desevres to be so called, but I am quite aware of my limitations. I realize what a poor khaddar king I must be. (Laughter.) For this khaddar capital shows no more than ten thousand spinning-wheels and one thousand looms. The sales do not amount to more than three lakhs and a half or thereabouts. When you realize what a khaddar king aspires after, you will realize what humility must cover him when he hears of these figures. I was told that although this district was capable of producing 50 lakhs worth of khaddar per year, this district could not be made to use more than ten per cent of khaddar and when I look about me in this meeting, you men and women, I realize how true that remark is.

During my visits to the several khaddar stores in this town I was given this book of samples by the Khaddar Board Bhandar. I do not know if all of you know what Tirupur is capable of giving you in the shape of khaddar. You have here different kinds of checks. You have also a variety of colours. All the khaddar is by no means too thick for weaving in this climate. There are women here who are capable of spinning 20 counts and even finer counts. You can see here a variety of chintz also, and you can see spotless white khaddar calico, and those who like borders can also see from that distance a variety of border too. Yard for yard the price of this stuff is no doubt greater than the price of calico from Manchester, Japan or Bombay and Ahmedabad and when you compare the durability of this khaddar with the durability of the stuff that you get from Manchester, I am sure that you will find this khaddar cheaper than calico. I also present you with the universal experience of those who are habitually using khaddar that their tastes are so refined and become so simple that their clothing requirements are immediately reduced when they begin to use khaddar, and what is more, do you not owe it to those poor men and women who are living in this district that even though their wares may be a little dearer than what may be sent to you from Manchester or Japan, or even Bombay and Ahmedabad, you should prefer your wares to those foreign wares? Your love of the country must be of an

indifferent character if you neglect your neighbours, though all are your neighbours, [for] your distant neighbours of the Punjab, even though the Punjab may be in India. If everyone of you will look after his or her immediate neighbours, you will realize that there will be no difficulty and there will be no distress in India. All of you are agreed that this message of khaddar is an inestimable message. I therefore ask every one of you to immediately adopt khaddar if you have not done so already; and I ask you also to reinstate the spinning-wheel in every home here, for unless hundreds and thousands take to voluntary spinning, it will not be possible for us to reach that fineness in yarn which we want to realize, and unless we take to voluntary spinning, it will not be possible for us to cheapen khaddar as we are able to, and it was because of the immense possibility of the spinning-wheel that I ventured to suggest to every Congressman that the franchise should include the spinning test. I had the pleasure of seeing so many of our sisters at the spinning-wheel today.

I have visited also the weavers of a model village. If you had seen these women working at the spinning-wheel, and if you had seen what happiness the spinning-wheel had brought to their homes, you will soon be converted to the message of khaddar. I understand that for want of your patronage the Khaddar Board is unable to engage thousands of women spinners. I ask the Municipal Councillors, I ask you, the citizens of this place, to visit these centres and realize the truth of what I am saying for yourselves.

I am glad that you are not pestered with the problem of untouchability or unapproachability as some other parts of the South, but I do hope that such untouchability or unapproachability as may still be lurking in our midst will be eradicated without the slightest hesitation. I am convinced this is no part of Hinduism.

The third thing, I have said times without number, is Hindu-Muslim unity. It is impossible to reach the fullest height that this nation is capable of unless we realize the value of the unity of all the races living in our midst. And the fourth is temperance. Throughout my wanderings in Cochin and Travancore, it was pressed upon me that the drink evil was destroying many a home. If the population in this district is given to the drink habit, I hope you will tackle that problem also. (Loud and continued cheers.)

The Hindu, 20-3-1925

266. SPEECH AT VILLAGERS' MEETING PUDUPALAYAM

March 21, 1925

FRIENDS,

It gives me very great pleasure to be able to meet you all in this out-of-the-way place, and on seeing the musical instruments here, I wished to hear some of your songs in your own natural way. I know that songs play an important part in the development of national life. But there is song and song and there is all the difference between different varieties. There is song that ennobles and there is song that degrades; and when you get a real, good song full of devotion and fervour, it ennobles. Such are some of our old songs all over India. In days of old, we had our own string instruments, but today the harmonium has displaced those noble instruments. I wish that we could revert to the stringed instruments. They produce a deeper melody and so far as I am concerned they have a far more soothing effect on me than a harmonium.

When I look at all of you and all these sisters who have come here, I find the majority of them have foreign cloth on. Now I would like you for a few minutes to consider what the wearing of foreign cloth means. Not more than a hundred years ago, every one of our ancestors—men and women—had a spinning-wheel in their homes. And just as toda we have got a kitchen and a cooking stove in every house, so had we a spinning-wheel in every house at which the women spun. The village weavers wove the yarn that our sisters spun; and we clothed ourselves that way. Now if everyone spends for himself, say, Rs. 8 per year, for his clothing and supposing this village had a population of 5,000, we would have saved Rs. 40,000 a year. Today we are sending nearly Rs. 40,000 from our own village to Manchester or to Japan or to Bombay. In every case it is bad.

In ancient times, we were doing what was right and what was good for our country and which kept our country away from hunger. Now we have changed it; the result is, when there is famine here we do not know what to do. I would like you, therefore, everyone to take a vow never henceforth to wear anything but khadi—hand-spun and hand-woven.

I would ask you also, those of you who have not already introduced a spinning-wheel in your homes, to do so. That will be our *Kamadhenu*. I observe with the greatest pleasure, our friend Mr. Ratn-

asabhapathy Gounder[1] has introduced not one but many spinning-wheels in his family. It was for me a noble sight to see the ladies of his household spinning away, when I had the pleasure of visiting his house yesterday. He has his cloth woven out of the yarn thus spun. He and his people were clothed in khaddar from top to toe. God has given him plenty of money and it was not for the sake of money he took up the spinning-wheel and wears khaddar. But he has done it for the sake of his country and for the sake of his religion. But we who are poor should do the thing for our own sake.

Now a gentleman has given me some money to buy food and distribute it among the poor. I do not believe in distribution of food among even the poorest of men, if they have strong arms wherewith to earn their living. Nor do I believe in distributing robes when the people can work for them. In my opinion, our rich men practise wrong philanthropy when they indiscriminately distribute money among poor people, by which they merely want to please their fancy. Such charity is to be reserved only for those who are disabled, who are lame or blind or otherwise incapable of doing work.

Therefore, in consultation with Sjt. C. Rajagopalachariar, I have come to the conclusion that this money might be used for distributing cloth to the poor people in this village or in this audience, at a rate lower than the bazaar rate. Ordinarily, I must confess that yard for yard, the khaddar we can produce today is dearer than the cloth sold in the bazaar; and many poor people tell me that they would gladly wear khaddar if it is sold at the same rate as in the bazaar. Therefore, I make this offer to you that those of you who are really poor and cannot pay much money, will register their names and take a promise that they would henceforth wear khaddar only and they will be supplied with khaddar at a cheaper price than in the bazaar. And if there are more poor people here than can be supplied by the donation now on hand, I will see to it that I get a bigger donation, provided all of you present here, promise to wear khaddar only. Now, that is the good thing we have given up, but which we must now restore. And I must talk to you about the bad thing we are refusing to give up.

That bad thing is untouchability. It is one of the greatest curses which is damaging our country and our religion. Claiming to be a *sanatani* Hindu, I tell you our religion does not countenance untouchability as we practise it today. Untouchability I hold is a sin, if

[1] Mittadar (zemindar) of Pudupalayam

Bhagavad Gita is one of our Divine Books. There are only four *varnas* or castes, not five. There are undoubtedly some verses in the *smritis*[1], which refer to untouchability, but not to the untouchability of today. That untouchability is applicable to certain occupations and certain states—temporary states. When my mother or sister or wife has the monthly sickness, I may not touch her while the sickness lasts. When my mother cleans her other smaller children, she is an untouchable till she bathes; and so is the scavenger who cleans my closet an untouchable until he has cleaned himself after cleaning the closet. Untouchability is a temporary state to be practised only in connection with such occupations which involve dirty work. But it is a crime and a sin to regard a person as untouchable because he is born in a particular community. And after all, what the Shastras require of you and me is that we should bathe when we touch a particular person. But the untouchability of today has degraded a fifth of the race. It carries with it the suppression of our own countrymen. It has set up a system of superiority and inferiority. The so-called caste Hindus, Brahmins and non-Brahmins, treat the untouchables, the *Panchama*[2] caste, with contempt and derision. They sinfully give them bad, dirty food. They sinfully refuse to let them use public roads. They sinfully degrade them in every way imaginable.

I venture to say that there is absolutely no warrant in our scriptures for such inhuman treatment of our fellow-beings. It is contrary to humanity, it is contrary to the religion we profess—the religion of ahimsa—to say that caste Hindus may not serve an untouchable who is bitten by a snake or scorpion. On the contrary, my religion, the Hindu religion, teaches me that if I see my son and an untouchable side by side bit by a snake and I am given the option of saving first the untouchable or my son, it is my bounden duty to save the untouchable in preference to my son. God will never forgive me if I forsake that untouchable boy. There is no other way of self-realization, except the way of complete self-abandonment. I ask you, therefore, to shed this bad habit, no matter for how many years we have been practising it.

The third thing is the drink curse. I know that many in this southern Presidency are given to this drink habit. Everyone in this,

[1] *Smriti* means, literally, that which is remembered; a class of Hindu religious literature consisting particularly of law books

[2] Literally, belonging to the fifth class, traditionally regarded as untouchables

who is given to the drink habit, will, I hope, give it up completely. Drink makes a man forget himself. He ceases to be a man for the time being. He becomes less than a beast. He loses control over his tongue and every other limb. It never does the slightest good. I hope, therefore, that you will combat the drink evil with all your strength.

Now it is in order to combat the disease of untouchability and the disease of drink and in order to introduce people to take to khaddar and to the spinning-wheel that Sjt. C. Rajagopalachariar has planted himself in your midst.

He has a band of able, intelligent, self-sacrificing, young men to assist him. Sjt. Gounder has placed at his disposal his beautiful garden. They have left, all of them, their remunerative callings and have come in order to serve you. Already, within a few months' time, hundreds of spinning-wheels have been revived. Several hundreds of women are receiving cotton from week to week. They turn it into yarn and bring it from week to week and take away money for their yarn. That yarn is woven and is at your disposal in the shape of khadi. But he and the few men he has, cannot render you much assistance unless you co-operate with him. This is a poor district suffering from famine for the last three or four years and I assure you that there is no insurance so effective as the spinning-wheel against famine.

And you can help in a variety of ways. Those of you who are fairly well-to-do and cannot spare much money can spare half an hour daily to spinning. You can learn carding and spinning at the Ashram here, take sufficient cotton from week to week, turn it into yarn and deliver that yarn free to the Ashram. That will enable Sjt. Rajagopalachariar to sell khadi at a lower cost than today. Those of you who cannot afford to give cotton may give cash. The Ashram is public property. You have a right to see it at any time you like. It is in your midst. And so long as you find that its activity is a helpful activity and serves your district, it is your bounden duty to help it in every way.

After the close of the address, Sjt. Rajagopalachariar invited the poor, who promised to boycott foreign cloth and wear only khaddar, to register their names at the Ashram, when they would be supplied with khaddar at a price cheaper than the bazaar price of mill-cloth.

The Hindu, 23-3-1925

267. SPEECH AT ASHRAM, PUDUPALAYAM[1]

March 21, 1925

I have read the translation of the address very carefully. Naturally my sympathies are entirely with you. It was at Cocanada that for the first time I came into touch with this class of people and ever since that time, I have been deeply interested in their problems and difficulties. It is a very horrible thing what we are practising everyday in the name of religion. I agree that it is very difficult to solve the problem so long as there are men who are willing to tamper with the chastity of women and so long as there are women ready to sell away their honour for the sake of money. So long as there are such people, so long will this go on. But one thing we can do is to bring discredit on this profession and destroy the air of respectability which it now has. We must rob it of every vestige of respectability. That we shall do by mercilessly condemning the custom.

I would advise you to take census of every family in which the custom of setting apart a girl for prostitution exists. We must persuade these people to consider such a course as absolutely wrong. Secondly, we must take up the case of these unfortunate women and find them suitable employment. I discussed this matter for over two hours with such classes of women in Barisal, Bengal.[2] The income of these women is large; we cannot promise them the same income in their alternative professions as they are getting from their sinful practice; nor would they require such an income if they lead a reformed life. Spinning may not secure a living for them. They could take to it only as a recreation, as a sacrificial practice. I place it before them only as purification. But other occupations can be found for them which they can easily learn and follow. There is weaving, tailoring or fancy-work on khaddar. Some Parsi women have taken to fancy weaving. There is also lace-work, embroidery and other handicrafts which can easily yield them an income of three quarter of a rupee to one and a half rupees per day. The *Devadasi*[3] class being small, it must not be a difficult matter to find five or six handicrafts for them. We require men and women —preferably women who have

[1] In reply to a welcome address presented in Tamil by the members of the Coimbatore District Sengunthar Mahajana Sangham who had specially come for the purpose

[2] *Vide* "Fallen Sisters", September 11, 1921.

[3] Literally, servant of God; a female dancer attached to a temple

been trained in these handicrafts and lead a pure life—to take up this cause of reformation of their fallen sisters. You may also study and copy the institutions with similar objects working in other places. There should be a specialist to devote his life to this nobel work of reclamation.

After the close of the reply, there was an interesting incident when Mahatmaji solicited and got the earrings and finger-ring of Lakshmana Mudaliar for public work and presented them back to Mr. Lakshmana Mudaliar himself to form the nucleus of a fund to be raised and devoted for the reform of the *Devadasis*.

The Hindu, 22-3-1925

268. SPEECH IN REPLY TO WELCOME ADDRESSES, TIRUCHENGODE[1]

March 21, 1925

FRIENDS,

I thank you for all these addresses. I note that you endorse my activities in connection with khaddar. The more I think of the possibilities of the spinning-wheel and khadi, the more certain I feel that it is the only thing which can solve the problem of the deep distress which has overtaken our land. And as I saw this morning at the Ashram, old women and old men streaming in, and as I saw old women being served with cotton, I felt millions of men and women like this had and could have no other occupation than the spinning-wheel. If it were not for our self-satisfaction with our own lot and happiness so called, the contemplation of the paupe-rism of India would make life a terrible burden to us. Just picture to ourselves an India with a whole one-tenth of her population living on merely one meal a day, living on a bread and a pinch of salt, and you will have some conception of the poverty prevailing in India. It is not a picture drawn from my imagination but it is a statement based on facts collected by the inexhaustible energy of the Grand Old Man of India, Dadabhai Naoroji. It was he who first introduced us to the statistics that were prepared by English administrators and from these statistics he showed that India was daily growing poorer and poorer.

Now, the remedy for removing the distress lies in our own hands. We are responsible for the distress. We gave up the use of cloth

[1] Presented by members of the Tiruchengode Union, the local Congress Committee and Valiba Swarajya Sangam. The speech was translated by Dr. T. S. S. Rajan.

that was woven by our own weavers out of yarn spun by millions of our own sisters. We chose to adopt the calico from Manchester, Japan and lately from Bombay and Ahmedabad. And in doing so, we did not care a straw as to what happened to our own neighbours. We did not stop to think that the use of calico from mills, no matter where they were situated, deprived the poor labourers who were devoted to agriculture of the profit they received from working during their spare hours. It was a crime for which we have paid heavily and we are still paying heavily. But happily it is not yet too late. If only we will cease to be callous and indifferent to the sufferings of our own countrymen and countrywomen, we can adopt the remedy today and help to remove the poverty from our land.

I have been visiting the khaddar centres in the South and I have been told that if the people of this Presidency were to patronize or rather do their duty by the people by buying khaddar, thousands of these men and women would get a few coppers more into their pockets. Everywhere they complain they are obliged to turn away the women that flock to them for cotton because they are unable to sell all the khaddar they produce. I plead with you, therefore, every one of the men and every one of the women who are able to hear my voice, that you would speedily remove all the mill-made cloth you wear and put on khaddar which will help your poor sisters and brothers. It is the highest service you can render to your motherland. If you will only be good enough to be satisfied with the khaddar produced here, you will be able to serve your country and in order that we can reach the fineness of yarn which is necessary to produce fine khaddar and in order that we can issue khaddar to rich and poor at cheap rates almost comparable to Manchester cloth, I would request you to devote half-an-hour daily to the spinning-wheel. It is an incredibly simple and certain solution of the problem which has been engaging the attention of the best of our countrymen for a generation. You are unable now to complain of want of means to learn spinning or secure khaddar. You have now in your midst an Ashram established which is devoting the whole of the energy of some of the best of the youth of our country to the propagation of khaddar. You have but to walk there and you can have your spinning lessons for nothing, you can have good spinning-wheels and you can have khaddar to your heart's satisfaction.

Equally important is the question of untouchability if we are to serve our religion. I am not tired of repeating that untouchability is a

curse. As we practise it today, it has no warrant in our scriptures. It is contrary to humanity and reason. It is a denial of God. God never made man that he may consider another man as an untouchable. I do not ask you to dine with anybody, I do not ask you to give your daughters to anybody you do not like, but I do ask you not to treat anybody as untouchable merely because he is born in a particular community. God will cease to be God if he brought to being a single person with the hall-mark of inferiority. Go to the Ashram, look at the *Panchama* boys who are brought up there and I defy you to be able to distinguish between the *Panchama* boys and other Brahmin or caste Hindu boys there. A little touch of kindness, a little touch of humanity and love has made them one flesh with everyone else in that Ashram. They are as intelligent, as attentive and as lovable as any single one in the Ashram. They are as clean and as godfearing as the highest Brahmin in the Ashram. Let us therefore shed our arrogance and save Hinduism from the destination that is impending, if we do not take warning betimes.

The problem of drink is another problem which awaits instant solution. It is destroying many a home and I hope those of you who are patriotic, who consider yourselves as servants of the country, will bestir themselves and go into the midst of those given to the drink evil and try to convert them. Copy the noble example of Mr. Ratnasabhapathy Gounder and do what he is doing in order to save the country from being ruined by the drink curse. It gave me joy and comfort to find his cousin brother only a few months ago making a solemn vow to me that he would throw himself heart and soul into temperance and khaddar work. It gave me the greatest joy to see his wife spinning away at the wheel. She needed no money. She spins for the sake of the country. But I ask every man and woman to spin from today.

I thank you once more for your address and I hope you will bear what I have ventured to say in mind and carry out these three things as best as you can.

The Hindu, 23-3-1925

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

M. N. ROY ON BOLSHEVISM

Some of his American friends wrote Mahatma Gandhi that, in the name of religion, he was probably introducing Bolshevism into India. These gratuitous "friends" obviously taking their cue from the spokesmen of Anglo-Saxon Imperialism (who often masquerade as pacifists), depict the revolt of the Moslem peoples as a menace to the world, because this revolt is supported by Bolshevik Russia. It should have been very simple for Mahatmaji to give a fitting reply to this impudent communication. He could have told his "responsibly (?) foreign friends" that the Moslem peoples have legitimate reason to revolt, and that any political doctrine or government supporting this revolt is to be considered favourably by all apostles of freedom. Besides, he could have requested his American friends to get busy at home, if they sincerely dreaded any menace to the world. What is menacing the world more today than American Imperialism? Is the revolt of the Moslem people more sinister than the Ku-Klux-Klan and the American Legion? Is Bolshevist atheism more godless than the anti-Asiatic spirit of the American democracy?

The Mahatma, however, did not give such a direct answer. He preferred to justify himself—to absolve himself from any possible suspicion of Bolshevist tendency. But the curious thing is, that although by his own confession he did not know anything about Bolshevism, nevertheless he was extremely solicitous to disown any leaning towards it, so sure is his instinctive antipathy for it. In an article in *Young India* he writes: "In the first place I must confess that I do not know the meaning of Bolshevism." This is indeed a very damaging confession, in view of the fact that it is made by one standing at the head of a great popular movement. The Mahatma said in the same article that he knew that there were two opposite pictures of Bolshevism, "one painting it in the blackest colour, the other hailing it as a deliverance for the downtrodden masses all the world over." But he does not know what to believe. Here again he could follow a simple human course. He could easily find out who paints the first picture. It is done by those who are ruling over the world with the policy of blood and iron. In deference to his scruples of impartiality, he might not believe those giving the second picture; but certainly Mahatmaji does need to be convinced that the first party is not the friend or deliverer of the human race. Therefore when they depict a thing in the blackest colour, the oppressed section of humanity can instinctively sense some sinister motive, they feel that the "blackest colour" is for deceiving them. By this unerring instinct, Indian nationalists during

the War used to read two German victories in the place of each allied victory cabled by Reuter, and the Mexican peon calls himself proudly a Bolshevik, for the simple reason that the American capitalists are so much against Bolshevism. But I suppose, the mentality of a Mahatma is too complicated an organism to admit of such a simple instinctive process.

Since the deplorable ignorance of Bolshevism is not the Mahatma's alone, but is shared by many in India, and since this ignorance does not preclude them from forming an opinion on the subject, it may not be uncalled for to say a few words about this "monstrous" doctrine. It is the more called for, in view of the fact that Bolshevism (which, by the way, is not the result, as is commonly believed, but the basic principle of the Russian Revolution of 1917) is the most dominant political factor of the contemporary world. Just as the great French Revolution of 1789 affected the political thought and life of Europe at that epoch, the Russian Revolution is bound to play the same role in our time, with the difference that the geographical situation of Russia, coupled with the principles of her revolution, will bring wider spheres, including Asia and Africa, under its sway. This is the case, despite the explicable apprehension and righteous indignation of the pacifically minded ladies and gentlemen, whose good faith is taken for granted by Mahatmaji, but is seriously doubted by more practical men of the world.

Now, as far as Mahatmaji is concerned, the main principles of Bolshevism will not be anything new. He himself will think so. But principles become a bundle of dead formulas if they are not put into action. By his own declaration, the Mahatma desires to see the masses freed from the domination of capitalism. Well, Bolshevism does not propose anything more monstrous. The Bolsheviks are generally in agreement with Mahatmaji when he says, "the greatest menace to the world today is the growing, exploiting, irresponsible imperialism which is threatening the independent existence and expansion of the weaker races." But the difference between Mahatmaji and the Bolsheviks is that in the hands of the former, this gospel of freedom loses all practical value, being subordinated to an intricate conception of morality, religion and God, while the latter do not permit their vision to be clouded by illusions, and deal with the world as it is. The result is, that while Bolshevism forges ahead, breaking one link after another of the mighty chain of time-honoured servitude, in the face of united and determined Opposition of the powers that be, Gandhism gropes in the dark, spinning out ethical and religious dogmas, that only prevent the masses from developing the will to fight for freedom.

It can be taken for granted that Mahatmaji is acquainted with the general principles of Socialism; not the Utopian brand of St. Simon, Thomas More, Tolstoy, etc., but that formulated on the basis of scientific knowledge and economic facts by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. The principles of Socialism are (1) to overthrow the

capitalist system of production; (2) abolition of private property; (3) reorganization of the means of social production and distribution on the basis of communal ownership and (4) transformation of the class-ridden society into a human fraternity. These are also the principles of Bolshevism, the latter being Socialism in its militant and initial stages of victory.

The term "Bolshevism" which has come to be associated with bloodshed, destruction, terror and what not, is very harmless in its meaning. It is derived from the Russian word *bolsheviki*, which is the synonym for the adherents of the majority. The term was first used when the Russian Socialist Democratic Labour Party split in 1903 into two factions on the questions of programme and tactics. The programme and tactics advocated by the majority, led by Lenin together with others, came to be known as Bolshevism; and since the Russian proletariat scored the victory in October 1917, having fought according to the programme and tactics advocated by the majority of the party ever since 1903, the October Revolution is called a Bolshevist victory, which means the first triumph of Socialism. What are the concrete results of the Russian Revolution? (1) A corrupt, irresponsible despotism was overthrown. (2) The bourgeoisie, which under the guise of democracy, sought in conjunction with foreign powers to deprive the Russian masses of the benefits of the Revolution, was also overthrown. (3) The landed aristocracy, the mainstay of the Czarist despotism, was destroyed, land declared to be the property of the entire nation and distributed among the cultivators. (4) Large industries were nationalized. (5) Foreign trade made a State monopoly. (6) All legislative and administrative power was transferred to the overwhelming majority of the people, namely, the workers, peasants and soldiers, who exercised this power through their councils (soviets). (7) All right of private property and the class privilege accruing therefrom was abolished. These in general are the principles of Bolshevism, applied practically in Russia in consequence of the Revolution. Now that he knows what Bolshevism is, what is the attitude of the Mahatma towards it? It will be interesting for India, as well as the whole world, to know the reply.

Now comes the thorny question. Mahatmaji might not take exception to these principles, but he would certainly make many a stipulation as to the method of realizing them. For him there is only one touch-stone for everything. If Bolshevism is atheistic, he is against it. That is all. Well, there we have given him a definition of Bolshevism in a nutshell. It is for him to pronounce whether it is a negation of God or what. He cannot maintain that it is a negation of God, unless he holds private property and vested interests to be a divine ordinance, because Bolshevism is certainly a negation of private property and vested interests, which from the dawn of civilization, have been the curse of human society. In the practical programme of Bolshevism there is no question of God or religion. It is neither theistic nor

atheistic. It concerns the worldly life of man. The possible conflict with God and religion occurs only when the latter stands in the way; when the conception of God or religion clashes with this practical programme. In that case, Bolshevism does not hesitate to take up the challenge even of the supposed Almighty, and become atheistic, thus running the risk of forfeiting the approbation of the Mahatma. But by doing so, it not only becomes the champion of the material rights of the masses, but holds up as well the torch of intellectual and spiritual emancipation to dissipate the gloom of ignorance and superstition in which the masses have been kept for ages by the dominating class.

The programme of Bolshevism, which Mahatmaji cannot deny to be humanitarian (unless he chooses to take up openly the cause of the upper class) is, however, not easily put into practice. The reign of terror and devastating civil war, that undeniably took place in Russia after the revolution, owe their origin to the fact that a brutal resistance was put up to prevent the realization of this programme. Not only the Russian aristocracy and bourgeoisie, who naturally frantically tried to regain their lost position, put up this resistance; they were openly backed by the international bourgeoisie, who saw in the Russian Revolution the first breach in their vital citadel. A part of this ceaseless campaign was the picturing of Bolshevism in the darkest colours, which did not altogether fail to impress even the Mahatma. Now what were the Bolsheviks to do in that situation? There were two alternatives: to call upon the Russian workers and peasants to be godfearing and meekly slip back into the bondage they had so heroically broken or to keep on fighting even against God anal religion, if they stood in the way, to protect and consolidate the freedom won. Bolshevism was obliged to accept the second alternative, because not only all available material forces were concentrated in order to force the Russian workers and peasants back under the capitalist and Czarist tyranny; all the arms of God and religion were also mobilized for the same purpose. Bolshevism is not a gospel of God: Bolshevists are not angels. But neither is Bolshevism the spirit of demons. The Mahatma proposes “to touch the masses through their hearts, their better nature” It is a fascinating proposition, to which Bolshvism would not object, had it been found workable in the practice of liberating the masses from class domination and imperialist oppression. His theory of “discipline” is also very questionable. It may be good for the spiritual well-being of the masses; but it certainly weakens their will to fight for freedom. All these doctrines about “heart”, “better nature”, “discipline” and the like have been adumbrated from time immemorial by those who were the (perhaps unconscious) instruments of class domination. Bolshevism does not shirk any task, however disagreeable or difficult it may be. It challenges the existence of God and denounces all the codes of religion and ethics originating therefrom because in the struggle for freedom they are all found arrayed on the side of despotism, tyranny and oppression.

Bolshevism is prepared to leave God alone, if He and His agents on earth agree not to meddle in things temporal. But if they do not agree to be satisfied with their super-material position and seek to make trouble on earth, Bolshevism will preach atheism to liberate the masses from the snare of ignorance woven by religion.

M. N. ROY

Young India, 1-1-1925

APPENDIX II

EXTRACT FROM C. RAJAGOPALACHARI'S COMMENT ON CHARKHA

No-changers who feel that the salvation of the country, the permanent anchor of its hope, rests on the charkha, must not look up, on this side or that, but prayerfully carry the burden. There is no rest or fatigue for us. The wheel is our hope, our joy, our friend, our good angel. We must work for it in our waking hours, and dream about it when we sleep. I did not see fully the meaning of things at first. I therefore thought Mahatmaji went along paths where I saw no logic or light. But I now see things clearly, and hope all those who felt distracted by doubts like myself will also see. Spin, spin and spin and make others spin—this is our single *mantra*, our *Gayatri*.

While I saw all this, I felt at the same time that there was some sort of unreality, some sort of political playing with truth, casting a shadow over all this plan of Satyagraha. But here I depend on judgement of the guru whose instinctive sense of Truth is so much greater than mine, and I feel at ease.

C. R.

Young India, 15-1-1925

APPENDIX III

EXTRACT FROM DEWAN OF TRAVANCORE'S SPEECH ON VYKOM SATYAGRAHA

The third matter relates to the resolution that was moved by Mr. N. Kumaran recommending that the Government should throw open the roads around and in the vicinity of the Vykom temple to all classes. I propose to deal with this resolution at some length and explain the position of the Government. The custom prohibiting the use by certain communities of certain roads forms the basis of the Vykom satyagraha and has been the cause of considerable comment both in and outside Travancore. There are certain Hindu communities falling outside the fold of caste in Kerala, whose approach or touch has been, from time immemorial, unfortunately considered to carry pollution with it, both to the members of caste Hindu communities and to the deities

in the temples to which the latter communities have access. In consequence, these non-caste Hindu communities have not been allowed the use of roads lying within a certain distance from some Hindu temples even though such roads are public in the sense that they are open to certain classes of the public. The existence of this custom is admitted by the non-caste Hindus. The most important among the non-caste Hindu communities, so far as Travancore is concerned, are the *Ezhavas*, who constitute one-sixth of the entire population, and who have, within recent times, made rapid advance in education and in material prosperity. This community naturally feels that the prohibition is derogatory to its self-respect and it is a feeling with which every right-minded man is bound to sympathize. The case of the *Ezhavas* and their brethren has, as a matter of fact, secured a certain amount of sympathy from members of communities more fortunately circumstanced.

The satyagraha movement at Vykom was started nearly a year ago by a band of *Ezhavas* and their sympathizers to get this disability removed. The *modus operandi* of the movement consisted in the attempt to break through the long-established custom referred to above by entering the prohibited area, even though it meant wounding the religious susceptibilities of the caste Hindus, and by defying the orders of the local Magistracy forbidding entry into the prohibited area, such orders having had to be passed to preserve the public peace threatened by the action of the non-caste Hindu communities. The aim of the satyagrahis is to force the hands of the Government to authorize by an executive order the violation of an established custom, which has received the recognition of the Travancore High Court in a series of decisions commencing with the case in 5 T.L.R. and which is therefore the present law of the land.

It is not the intention of the Government to justify the existence of this custom. Some may call it prejudice and some superstition. But, by whatever name it may be called, the custom is there and has to be reckoned with. As I have already said, it is based upon religious belief; and, as you all know, such beliefs are dear to the people who hold them. Such customs based upon religious beliefs are not unknown in other parts of India. In the Madras Presidency, for example, non-caste Hindus are not permitted to use some of the public streets inhabited by caste Hindus, and an attempt to violate this custom in the Salem District led, within the last few months, to a riot attended with murder and in the Malabar District, to a disturbance of the public peace. Even among the non-caste communities, wells touched by some of them are not used by some others. In Upper India also similar customs are widely prevalent. It is the paramount duty of every Government not to interfere with the religious beliefs or usages based upon them, so long as they are not outrageously in-human. It is also the duty to the Government to preserve the public peace, and maintain the *status quo ante*. Every Executive Government is bound to maintain and

carry out the laws as it exists and as it is interpreted by its courts of justice. This is what the Travancore Government have done, as pointed out by the Additional Head Sirkar Vakil at the discussion of the resolution in the Legislative Council and this is also the policy pursued by other Governments in India.

Now let us examine the position at Vykom in some detail. The roads immediately surrounding the temple are the private property of the temple and are not public roads. Those that converge towards the temple are, on the contrary, public roads. But, according to admitted and immemorial custom, they are up to within a certain distance of the temple public in a qualified sense only, viz., that they are open to certain classes of the public alone and are not king's highways open to all communities. There is no public institution necessitating the entry into them of the entire public. The only real material inconvenience occasioned by the prohibition of entry into this area is the necessity to take devious and more lengthy routes from one point of the town of Vykom to another. This inconvenience the Government promised to remove by opening new roads for the use of the entire public on the outskirts of the prohibited area. This offer was not accepted, so that the sole justification for the demand for the removal of the prohibition is a feeling of self-respect or, in other words, sentiment. I grant that this feeling deserves to be respected; but I ask, is it possible for a Government to respect it if, in so doing, it is compelled to act in violation of a well-recognized and well-established legal position and, in defiance of the religious beliefs entertained by another community?

It has been urged, in the course of the discussion on the resolution, that the Government having thrown open public institutions, public offices and the public service to these communities, they cannot now refuse to remove this disability which is derogatory to their self-respect. It is true that the Government have done their utmost to remove several disabilities under which these communities have laboured so long and to give them equal opportunities with the other communities as far as possible; but the grant of permission to enter areas considered sacred by certain other sections of the Hindu community is of quite a different, character, as it would violate established rights based on religious faith.

It is a matter for deep regret that the *Ezhavas* and other non-caste Hindus of Travancore should have greatly prejudiced their cause by the methods they have adopted. The policy of attempting to secure the recognition of their claims by the caste Hindus through pressure put upon them by the Executive Government will be neither lasting nor far-reaching in its results. All settlements arrived at as the result of the exercise of *force majeure* are bound to be short-lived. It should have been far better had the *Ezhavas* devoted their energies to methods of peaceful persuasion and the education of the caste communities to a realization of the fact that the custom of untouchability is as degrading to the latter as it is unjust to the former. There is a

world of difference between satyagraha meant to be an educative force and satyagraha intended as an instrument for the coercion of the Government and through them of the orthodox Hindus. What the sayagrahis should aim at is the conversion of the orthodox to whom untouchability is part of their faith. The results of such a course of action will, no doubt, be slow but being based on voluntary assent, will be permanent.

A satisfactory solution of the question can be reached only through negotiations between the disputing communities and by a compromise acceptable to both. While the Government recognize the legal right of the caste Hindu communities to maintain the prohibition so long as the law is what it is, they cannot but feel that it would be wise for these communities not to insist too strongly on their legal rights but to recognize the time-spirit and give up, as quickly as possible, religious beliefs and prejudices which militate against communal harmony, and to admit claims which the world has come to regard as irrefutable. The Government are prepared to do everything in their power to explore the avenues along which negotiations to this end may proceed and the needed *rapprochement* reached. More than this it is unreasonable to expect the Government to undertake and further persistence of both sides in this struggle, without change in their angle of vision, would only serve to further intensify class hatred and endanger the public peace.

Young India, 19-3-1925

1. WHAT SHOULD BE DONE WHERE LIQUOR IS BEING SERVED?

A gentleman asks in sorrow:[1]

I am not aware of liquor having been served at the garden party. However, I would have attended it even if I had known it. A banquet was held on the same day. I attended it even though liquor was served there. I was not going to eat anything at either of these two functions. At the dinner a lady was sitting on one side and a gentleman on the other side of me. After the lady had helped herself with the bottle it would come to me. It would have to pass me in order to reach the gentleman. It was my duty to pass it on to the latter. I deliberately performed my duty. I could have easily refused to pass it saying that I would not touch a bottle of liquor. This, however, I considered to be improper.

Two questions arise now. Is it proper for persons like me to go where drinks are served ? If the answer is in the affirmative, is it proper to pass a bottle of liquor from one person to another? So far as I am concerned the answer to both the questions is in the affirmative. It could be otherwise in the case of others. In such matters, I know of no royal road and, if there were any, it would be that one should altogether shun such parties and dinners. If we impose any restrictions with regard to liquor, why not impose them with regard to meat, etc.? If we do so with the latter, why not with regard to other items which we regard as unfeatable? Hence if we look upon attending such parties as harmful in certain circumstances, the best way seems to give up going to all such parties.

Why then did I go? Because I have been doing so for many years now and there was no special reason for not doing so on this occasion. On such occasions I myself eat nothing or only fruit, hence I could satisfy my conscience that the part I had taken did not involve any impropriety. I know that my participation in this manner has resulted in some persons giving up liquor and some others giving up meat. This, however, cannot be an argument in favour of attending such parties. I am stating how I satisfied my own conscience. I would

[1] The letter is not translated here. It referred to a garden party given by the Thakore Saheb of Rajkot on February 17, “where drinks were served”.

not be worried in the least if others act exactly as I do. However, I am aware than, in following my example, others would not merely attend but also run the risk of not discriminating between what should be eaten or drunk and what should not. I even know that this has actually happened. Moreover, a third question arises, viz., how long should we be held back by such fears? In brief, such questions are always most difficult. Discretion should be used by each person in finding an answer for himself. My advice is that in such matters where one cannot see one single way that is to be followed and where action contrary to mine is also proper, the best course for anyone who is ready to act as I advise, is to do as I ask him, disregarding what I myself do. There is danger in imitating my acts. Hence it is advisable that people do not go to places where drinks and meat are served, despite the fact that I do so.

There is no connection between my insistence on khadi and my going to a place where liquor was served. It is not a fact that I do not go to any place where khadi is not worn. I am firm with regard to the use of khadi at meetings or organizations over which I exercise control or where my firmness is not misunderstood. In the durbar at Rajkot, not ever- yone was clad in khadi; nevertheless I went there. I do not like attending marriages and such other functions. Hence, when anyone insists on my attending them, if possible I put down the wearing of khadi clothes as a condition.

All these are questions which involve discrimination and love. A thing may be proper on one occasion and improper in another. Man is a living being and not an inanimate object like a machine. Hence, among human beings and in the acts of every one of them, there is variation, novelty, apparent contradiction, etc. However, under the divine guidance of truth and love a discriminating observer could but perceive identity in difference, harmony amidst discord and unity in diversity. Love without tolerance is not worth the name. I acquire the right to plead courteously with a Muslim not to slaughter the sacred cow by tolerating such slaughter to begin with. I acquired the right to bring up courteously the subject of prohibition at the Thakore Saheb's gathering by suffer- ing drinks being served there. Would the Thakore Saheb prevent me from bringing up this subject even if I did not attend his party? Someone may ask this question. The answer is that Thakore Saheb would listen to me because he is polite, but while listening to me he would hardly pay any attention to the subject. However, if I talk of prohibition in spite of having attended his

reception, he would give careful consideration to what I say and would not let my tolerance go in vain.

In conclusion, I should say once again that imitating me in this matter may be dangerous. Hence those associating with me should beware of such imitation.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-3-1925

2. A TEACHER'S PROBLEM

Khadi is compulsory in schools because its propagation is indispensable for swaraj. A teacher argues as follows against such compulsion.[1]

> 1. A child being attracted by the colourful foreign clothes of the other members of the family and neighbours accepts khadi as something that is being thrust upon him and, in this way, he learns to practise deceit from his childhood. If you claim that such a child would naturally choose khadi in a school where a majority of pupils wear it, rather than make it detested by making it compulsory. . . it would be better to let the child be attracted to khadi naturally after it is admitted to the school and allowing some time for the process.

The word"compulsory" has been misconstrued here. If attending a national school was compulsory and then the rule of wearing khadi was compulsory, perhaps it could be said that khadi was made compulsory in an improper way. I use the word "perhaps" here because even when education becomes compulsory, certain conditions will still be there for admission. It is difficult to say that such compulsion is necessarily improper. Certain subjects will be com-pulsory for the pupils. Moreover, it will also be required that they should be clean when they come to school, should not wear dirty clothes, nor come naked or with gay, multicoloured clothes. Just becasue these are compulsory requirements, would anyone dare to say that they are improper?

I have the feeling that the question of compulsion and option arises only in the minds of those who are not firmly convinced about the necessity of khadi. Whether parents approve of it or not, whether the attitude of neighbours is favourable or not, still we cannot but exercise control over children in some matters. For instance, we shall

[1] The arguments are summarized here.

have to clothe a naked child coming from the jungles. Afterwards, when it returns home, it may revert to its naked state. If the child uses foul language, we shall have to stop it from doing so. Every teacher would impose many such unavoidable restrictions, and, none of the arguments of the above- mentioned teacher will hold good against them.

It is not a fact that wearing khadi had to be made compulsory because we did not succeed in making pupils wear it voluntarily. It is because some persons like me think that the necessary atmosphere has not been created for making khadi compulsory, that spinning and khadi are being made compulsory in national schools. Very often society accepts compulsion because although the spirit is willing, the flesh resists. Hence, many difficulties will be solved if we understand the meaning of the word“compulsory”. Compulsion is that which the rulers by virtue of their authority enforce on subjects in the teeth of opposition and under threat of punishment. If this definition is accepted, there is no basis for the issue that the teacher has raised.

> 2. Khadi which is worn with understanding, love and in a spirit of rivalary will be worn for a greater length of time. . . . Does the method of being patient for a few days rather than making the wearing of khadi compulsory on the first day serve the original purpose any the less?

Understanding, love and rivalry are necessarily involved in our compulsory use of khadi. The burden of making it compulsory lies on the teacher, not on the children. The former will not order them like a policeman, but use whatever skill he has in order to win over the hearts of the children. We are not talking of making them wear khadi on the very first day but of making them wear it after four years [since the establishment of national schools]. The word “compulsory” or “obligatory” governs the action of the teacher. It draws the latter's attention to his obligation. Hence the question does not even arise whether the method of being patient is more or less conducive to the original purpose. Patience is, or at any rate should be, the quality of a teacher.

> 3. The rule making khadi compulsory proclaims that its voluntary spread was unsuccessful.

This doubt has been resolved above.

> 4. Will there not be an increase in the number of hypocrites because of this rule of compulsion?. . . .

If the fear of hypocrisy is with reference to children, I do not recognize it. Children are not hypocrites. If it is in relation to teachers, the possibility may be there. However, an element of hypocrisy comes in wherever a rule is observed with some vigour.

The remedy for this lies in purifying the atmosphere, not in making the rules flexible.

5. Because of compulsory khadi, national schools would be only for those who have fulfilled the conditions for swaraj; what schools are there for those who have yet to be trained?. . . .

There are two reasons for founding national schools. In the first place, it is to provide facilities for those who have been imbued with the spirit of nationalism, and secondly, in order to inspire others by serving as models. The purpose could not possibly be to mislead the latter by diluting the ideal of nationalism. Gradually, as the character of the teachers and pupils in the national schools is formed and becomes apparent, others will not be able to resist the temptation of joining these schools.

6. Rules become a snare. . . .

Whether rules become snares or not depends on those who impose them. Even their voluntary observance depends on the rule-maker. Primary schools are like tender branches and they can be bent as we wish. Let us, however, decide to keep them straight.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-3-1925

3. MY NOTES

CRUELTY

I write these notes in Travancore-Cochin. Among many beautiful things that I saw, I cannot forget an intolerable scene that I witnessed on my way to the motor boat for Vykom. The people of Cochin make very little use of horse-drawn carriages and motor cars, but in their place they use human beings. The Japanese type rickshaw is seen everywhere. The sight of rickshaws did not pain me much, as I had seen them often in Durban. However, when I saw three or four persons huddled together in one rickshaw, I felt like getting down from my carriage and going over to help that rickshaw-puller. I was to reach a destination and could not get down. The wound it inflicted on my mind, however, did not heal. This rickshaw is so built that only

one person can sit in it. It is also true that so many persons cannot be huddled in it if the puller protests. The cruelty of the passengers, however, is not the less for that. A human being does a thousand wrong things because of poverty. He even crawls on his stomach, performs many base acts. However, what is to be said of those who witness these things? What of those who compel him to do them? There may even be a law in Cochin that not more than one person can ride in a rickshaw. If this is so, those who thus overload it are doubly guilty. There is a large population of Gujaratis in Cochin; they are influential people. The persons that I saw huddled in the rickshaw were Malayalis. I do not know whether Gujaratis go to this extreme or not. I hope, however, that no Gujarati is so cruel. I would like to request them to serve Cochin. They should educate public opinion there so that no one would misuse rickshaws. I would even advise them to give up using rickshaws. This, by giving them some exercise, would improve their health. Except in case of illness or disability, it seems sinful for a person to be carried by another. How can we put human beings to the same use as animals? How can we make others do what we are not prepared to do ourselves?

A HUSBAND'S DUTY

A gentleman asks what a husband should do if his wife does not assist him in practising the dharma of self-control. My experience tells me that one does not require the consent of the other partner in practising self-control. It is enjoyment that requires consent. Renunciation is everyone's prerogative. In these matters, however, a great deal of discrimination is required. Self-control should be genuine. The man should carefully observe his own feelings. He can persuade the wife to accept his idea through gentleness and pure love. It is possible that the wife is not as enlightened as the husband. If so, it is his dharma to share his knowledge with her. There is no difficulty in practising self-control where there is such wisdom in family relationships. It is my experience that the woman is the first to practise self-control. It is the husband who prevents her from doing so. Hence this question appears irrelevant to me; nevertheless, I have answered it with some hesitation because I feel that it required to be answered.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FATHER AND SON

The father is rich and pleasure-loving, while the son loves renunciation and a simple life. The father stands in the way. What

should the son do? In my humble opinion, the son should not give up his desire for renunciation. He should try and gently plead with his father. I believe that, where the son is both courteous and firm, the father does not interfere. Very often the son becomes arrogant and annoys the father by making even renunciation look like indulgence. I do not regard such renunciation as worthy of the name. In its pure form there is so much humility that the father is not even aware of the renunciation. There is no need to make much fuss about it. Renunciation which is natural does not herald its coming by the blowing of trumpets. It comes in imperceptibly without letting anyone notice it. Such renunciation is worthy of its name and enduring. No one considers it excessive and it is infectious.

TEACHER FOR UNTOUCHABLES

The answer to this question[1] is simple. If teachers for the other castes could be engaged at a salary of Rs. 60/- to Rs. 75/-, they could also be so engaged for the untouchables. Much, however, depends on the character of the teacher. I do not think that one deserves this salary only because one has graduated from the Vidyapith. I would wish all of them to be men of character. I know, however, that this is not so. Besides weaving, etc., *Antyajas* could also be trained in carpentry or other crafts. However, I would, if possible, develop weaving more. Many *Antyajas* do weaving. A great deal of time may have to be spent in teaching them the finer points of the art. The *Antyaja* weavers do not weave fine yarn in much quantity, they do not even weave broadcloth, they hardly weave any designs. Our task is to give them complete training in the art of weaving. We do not have the means to do so as our knowledge does not extend so far. Because of this shortcoming on our part, we should not put them to the trouble of learning other crafts, but we should overcome our own shortcoming. The latter is the real tragedy. We are aware of what we should teach but we have not yet acquired the fitness to do so.

I see difficulties in immediately introducing any formula about the teacher pupil ratio in national schools. In ideal schools, the number of teachers will certainly be large. Some time will elapse before students fill them up. Until such time, we cannot fix the ratio.

OUR LIMITATIONS

The same teacher writes to ask:[2]

[1] The question is not translated here.
[2] The letter is not translated here.

If the Indian Princes entrust the education department to us we should certainly take it over, but we must lay down out conditions in doing so. Our rules regarding khadi, spinning, etc., must be accepted there. We should regard as untouchable a department which shuns *Antyajas*. If we take over the management of such departments hoping to introduce our reforms gradually, we shall be swallowed up by them. If becomes very difficult to renounce something that has been accepted. Not for a moment can we afford to be indifferent to the rules which we regard as essential.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-3-1925

4. LETTER TO KUNVERJI KHETSI

Phagan Vad 13 [*March 22, 1925*][1]

CHI. KUNVERJI,

I have your letters. I have ceased worrying about Chi. Rami[2] after giving her to you [in marriage]. I have full trust in you. Diseases cling to the body. They will come and go. After your letter there was one from Chi. Bali[3] which gave the news that she [Rami] was much better. Require Rami to do physical work according to her capacity. That would keep her fit. I shall reach the Ashram on the 27th. Ask Rami to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. KUNVERJI KHETSI

C/O GOKALDAS TRIBHUVAN PAREKH

MORVI, KATHIAWAR

From a copy of the Gujarati original: C.W. 6108. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

[1] Gandhiji reached the Ashram on 27th March 1925 after his tour of Vykom, Madras and other places.

[2] Daughter of Harilal Gandhi

[3] Sister-in-law of Harilal Gandhi

5. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Phalgun Krishna 13 [*March 22, 1925*][1]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your two letters.

You have taken a load of worry off my mind concerning the Muslim University. I would certainly not wish your donation to be the cause of dispute among your brothers. I shall not disclose your name.

As for the land acquired by you in Chhota Nagpur, I will not advise you to give it up just because of the death of some of your employees. There is not much difference between landed property and property in the shape of bullion; and property is bound to lead to quarrels, even murder. There is only one way out of your dilemma; to give up property altogether. This, you do not wish to do at present. But, as I have said, since property becomes the cause of quarrels and tempts us to do wrong things, we should give it up, and so long as we are not ready to renounce it completely, we should, as its trustees, use it for the good of others and make the minimum use of it for our own enjoyment. There is another possibility. Has an attempt been made to get in touch with the gentleman who is creating trouble? Why does he give this trouble? May- be, it was his foolishness but has his land been acquired for a song? Even a fool would not like to throw away his property. But this is another moral problem I have raised.

Is your wife feeling a little better now?

I shall leave Madras on the 24th.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6107. Courtesy G.D. Birla

6. SPEECH AT SOCIAL SERVICE LEAGUE, MADRAS[2]

March 22, 1925

It has given me the greatest pleasure to begin this part of my tour in this Presidency with this function. The address that has just

[1] Gandhiji in his letter dated February 21, 1925, had asked the addressee to donate Rs. 50,000 to the National Muslim University of Aligarh. The addressee agreed to pay the sum and thus relieved Gandhiji of his worry.

[2] In reply to its address of welcome

been read to me thanks me for accepting this invitation. Your thanks are, however, due not to me a prisoner but my jailor, Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar. (Laughter). It was for him to dispose of the whole of my time in this place. He has to his heart the removal of untouchability as much as any of us. You have remarked upon the apathy of the young generation towards social service. To a certain measure, I endorse it. It is true that the young generation requires excitement rather than work. But let me also inform you that there are hundreds of people not known to the world, not known to fame, who display ability in social service of a character infinitely more difficult than the service that you have just now described not me. Here, in Madras you have the amenities of what is called civilization. (Laughter.) The young men of whom I am talking to you, I have got their names in my mind, have devoted the whole of their time to social service in villages. They are barred from all intercourse with the outside world. They do not see the newspaper. Excitement has no place in their diary. They lived in the midst of people and live the same life they are living. I commend their unknown labour to your attention. Let their service, so whole-hearted and so self-sacrificing, be regarded as a penance for the other part of the young people. And let their self-sacrificing service be also a spur to effort for the rest of the younger generation who have not known what real service is.

In my opinion, in that service lies the best part of our education. I am no enemy of the education that is being imparted in our numerous schools. But in my own scheme of life it occupies but a secondary place. I disregard the value of this education if it does not result in mak-ing us servants of the nation. I very much fear that social service that is generally rendered in our towns takes the form, as Gokhale[1] would say, of recreation; whereas, if it should be effective and valuable for the people whom we serve and for the nation, if should be the chief part of our daily business. Social service that savours of patronage is not service.

I sincerely tender my congratulations to you for the great work that you are doing. Only it appears to me to be incomplete and admits of great improvement. In my opinion, regard being had to the con-ditions of this country, no social service is complete without the foun-dation of spinning-wheel and khaddar behind it. You may laugh at it,

[1] G. K. Gokhale (1866-1915); educationist and statesman

if you wish to. But a time is coming when it will be the fundamental maxim of social service that no social servant would be worthy of his name if he is clad in anything but khaddar and who does not know how to spin. I shall tell you why. You have begun rightly with the service of the lowest strata of society. May I then remind you of the fact, the indisputable fact, that the lowest strata of our society do not live in towns but in villages? May I also inform you of the fact stated not by a man like me but by historians that one-tenth of India's population lives in semi-starvation? And it is also admitted that they do so because for nearly four months in the year they have no occupation. There must be some universal occupation which will be of a universal character. Such an occupation is only the spinning-wheel.

Pray do not consider it in terms of the individual but in terms of the nation. And you will find immediately that the sum total of the savings to the nation amounts, not to a few lakhs, but nearly 120 crores of rupees. It is the one indisputable service which carries its own reward. It is impossible to render this service if we go to the people as their patrons. We can render this service to them; we can ask them to wear khaddar when they see us wearing that khaddar ourselves. The spinning-wheel would fail to attract masses unless we begin today spinning ourselves. And since we have lost the cunning of the wheel, it is impossible for us to take the message of the wheel to them unless we master the science of the wheel and the intricacies of that simple instrument. In that service and that service alone there is no waste of efforts. There is no room for despondency. For just as every blade of grass that is grown by the tiller adds to the wealth of the country, so also every yard of cotton spun in the name of the country adds to the wealth of the country and puts it, even if it is a pie, into the pockets of the starving millions. I, therefore, in all humility, venture to hope that you (addressing Mr. T. V. Seshagiri Iyer, as a leader of this band of workers) will endeavour to study this problem in all its bearings and apply your fine imagination and intellect to the solution of the problem, and I have no doubt that after your studies, you will come to the same conclusion that the great P. C. Ray came to, that there is no salvation for the toiling millions apart from the spinning-wheel.

I am working against time today. My jailor has imposed a heavy programme on me—(Laughter.)—somewhat more exacting than the jailor of Yeravad. There are many branches of social service about which I could talk to you. But I wish to end with merely carrying this

message of the spinning-wheel, and I hope that when I have the privilege of meeting you again, I wish to see you all dressed in khaddar, from top to toe. I again tender you my congratulations on the work that has already been done by your league.

The Hindu, 23-3-1925

7. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, MADRAS[1]

March 22, 1925

SISTERS AND FRIENDS,

I am obliged to you for this beautiful address and it gives me very great pleasure to have visited this spinning competition. But I cannot withhold from you the distress I feel that so many of the sisters are not clad in khaddar. You, the women of India, keep in the palm of your hands the destiny of your country. The swaraj of my dream is an impossibility unless the women of India play their full part side by side with the men. At women's meetings, I have described swaraj as *Ramarajya* and *Ramarajya* is an impossibility unless we have thousands of Sitas. I assure you that in the days of Rama and Sita there was nothing but khaddar, handspun and hand-woven. When Sita traversed the length and breadth of India she was not dressed, as you are, in foreign cloth. For Sita, what cloth her country produced was quite enough for her decoratoin. It was reserved for the modern women of India to tell me that khaddar is too coarse for them. But do you know that by your ceasing to wear khaddar millions of our sisters and brothers have been reduced to poverty? It is all very well for you, who are fairly well-to-do, to attend functions and to go about in saris of 18 cubits. But remember that your sisters in the villages of India have not only no saris such as you have, but have not even enough food to eat. And I am telling God's truth when I say that I have seen hundreds, if not thousands, of women in India who have no clothes to wear but rags.

I, therefore, ask you for the sake of those sisters, for the sake of your religion, and for the sake of God, to throw away all the foreign cloth that you are using and to wear such khaddar saris as you can procure. I ask you that in order that khaddar might be cheap, and in

[1] In reply to an address of welcome (in Tamil) presented by Mrs. Chinnaswami Iyengar. The speech was translated into Tamil, sentence by sentence, by S. Srinivasa Iyengar.

order that you may have as fine saris as you like, to spin for at least half an hour a day and to make a present of these yarns that you may sping, to the country. It will be possible to cheapen khaddar. I hope all of you have seen the sisters spinning in the hall at the back. If you have not done so, I invite you to inspect the spinning in batches of ten at a time. Not very long ago we had in every home a spinning-wheel as we have today in every home a cooking-stove. In removing this spinning-wheel from its place in our home, we have debarred from ourselves at least a quarter of our source of income. I ask you once more to restore the spinning-wheel to its proper place. Your presence here pleases me. But it will soon become painful and intolerable for me to attend such meetings if sisters continue to besiege these meetings dressed in foreign cloth. I have no desire to hear my own voice, and if I still continue to address meetings, it is because I have still a hope lingering in my breast that some words of mine will penetrate the minds of those that I address. May my words uttered this afternoon produce such an effect upon your minds!

The Hindu, 23-3-1925

8. SPEECH AT THE "HINDU" OFFICE, MADRAS[1]

March 22, 1925

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

When I received the invitation to unveil this portrait, in my reply I said that I would feel honoured to perform this ceremony. I feel doubly honoured now, first, because you have given me this privilege of unveiling the portrait of the late Mr. Kasturiranga Iyenger, and secondly, because I am doing it under the chairmanship of one whom I love and respect. It shows great wisdom on the part of those who have issued these invitations, that they confined their attention or invitation to no one party, but to all parties.

I had the privilege of knowing Mr. Kasturiranga Iyengar for the first time in 1915, I think, and in those days when I could say I was a fairly regular reader of newspapers which I am not today. (Laughter.) Among the newspapers that I read was certainly *The Hindu* and I came to understand the value of that paper from that very moment. I

[1] On the occasion of the unveiling of the portrait of S. Kasturiranga Iyengar. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri presided.

believe that Mr. Kasturiranga Iyengar represented some of the best that is to be found in Indian journalism. He had, I know, a style all his own. He commanded a sarcasm which was also peculiarly his own. Whether he wrote as an opponent or as a friend, you could not fail to admire the style in which he wrote. Sometimes, although the home thrusts that he gave to his opponents felt bitter at the time they were delivered, there appeared always to be a great deal of truth in them because he had a most plausible style. I think it can be fairly claimed for him that he never wavered in his faith in his own country. And although he was always a courteous critic, he was also one of the most fearless critics of the Government.

I had on many an occasion to differ from him. But I always valued his decision because I understood thereby wherein lay the weakness of my argument or my position; because, I cannot recall an occasion when there was not something to be said for the argument that he advanced. Very often it appeared to me that he occupied, if I may take such a parallel, about the same position in this Presidency that the editor of the London *Times* occupies in England (Applause.) and it was in this manner. I never thought that Mr. Kasturiranga Iyengar was an out and out reformer but he had cultivated journalism for the sake of journalism as it appeared to him. ("Hear, hear.") He felt that if he was to retain that character, he must not lead the country, at least not lead the country too much, but always accurately reflect its opinion.

Those who followed the columns of *The Hindu* cannot fail to recognize that whenever they saw a change in the editorial policy, it was because with an unerring instinct he recognized which way the country was going or which way the wind was blowing. It may be said that this was a defect in him, but I do not consider it to be so. (Mr. C. R. Reddy: "Hear, hear.") If he had taken upon himself, as I venture to say I have, the role of a reformer, then he would have to give expression to his own individual opinion, no matter what the whole country around him thought of it. I think that also is a phase in the country's life; but that is not the peculiar function of a journalist. A journalist's peculiar function is to read the mind of the country and to give definite and fearless expression to that mind. And I think that Mr. Kasturiranga Iyengar was almost unrivalled this quality of his. (Applause).

What is more; there was one other thing also I noticed about *The Hindu* and that was that its news columns satisfied the ambition of a most voracious reader ("Hear, hear" and laughter.); because Mr. Kasturiranga Iyengar gave everything that was to be given in the shape of the events in the country and he had also cultivated the art—and it is an art as I can tell you from my own experience—of clipping. All his clippings were really admirable; and if a man studied *The Hindu* he would not have to read any other newspaper so far as the news of the world was concerned, because he had a most catholic taste. He went to the whole newspaper world and he made the choicest extracts from all the magazines and all the newspapers and placed them before his readers in an attractive manner. So a man living in the Madras Presidency if he took up *The Hindu*, and as a counterblast, took up the Madras *Mail*, I think he would find that he had all he wanted to know about both sides of the question. That, in my opinion, sums up the journalism of Mr. Kasturiranga Iyengar. But when I have said that, I feel that I have paid him all the compliment that I am capable of paying.

I regard *The Hindu* among the very few newspapers, very few daily newspapers—without which really you cannot do ("Hear, hear.") and whose loss will be felt not merely in this side of India, but in the north as well; because although his influence among the reading public of this Presidency is unrivalled, it was no less so among the public workers all over India. They always wanted to know what *The Hindu* had to say upon a particular question. It was, therefore, a matter of very great regret to me to find in the jail that Mr. Kasturiranga Iyengar was no more and I always felt that if I had a proper public occasion, I would give expression to my regret publicly, and it gives me much pleasure that I have been given this privilege of paying a humble tribute to the memory of one whom I regarded with the greatest respect although very often he differed from me and never hesitated to express his differences when he considered that it was his duty to do so. He never considered men and their feelings when he felt that he could not help it and when the interests of the country demanded an emphatic expression of his views. Such was Mr. Kasturiranga Iyengar.

I have not been able, as I have told you, to follow the newspapers lately for several years; but I have heard that Editor and Mr. Kasturiranga Iyengar's son are following closely the policy and the traditions they have inherited from their illustrious chief. I hope

that *The Hindu* will prosper. I hope that it will continue to render the same service that Mr. Kasturiranga Iyengar for such a long time rendered to the country. Journalism has a distinct place in familiarizing and expressing public opinion. We are yet cultivating or we have yet to cultivate the best of journalism among us. We have many wonderfully able journalists to copy. We have also patriots who lived long ago like Kristodas Pal[1]. When it was difficult to speak or write fearlessly he led public opinion and he never hesitated to say what the country wanted or what he himself felt. We have those wonderfully good traditions therefore to follow; yet, from whatever little I know of journalism, I realize that there is still a great deal to be done. In our march towards our goal, I knew that journalism will play a most important part in shaping the destinies of our country.

I have, therefore, never been tired of reiterating to journalists whom I know that journalism should never be prostituted for selfish ends or for the sake of merely earning a livelihood or, worse still, for amassing money. Journalism, to be useful and serviceable to the country, will take its definite place only when it becomes unselfish and when it devotes its best for the service of the country and, whatever happens to the editors or to the journal itself, editors would express the views of the country irrespective of consequences. I think that we have in our midst the making of journalism of that character. *The Hindu* is one of those few newspapers which can do so. It has acquired a prestige which is all its own. Let me therefore hope that the present managers and the editorial staff of *The Hindu* will continue to follow the best traditions and may I also add that the best way of glorifying one's inheritance is not merely to keep it intact but to add to it.

I think there is always room for adding; there is always room for new thought and may I hope, therefore, that the editorial staff will recognize that there is a new clsss of readers rapidly rising in India which requires a different character of thought, a different character of deed, and perhaps even a different character of news. That rising class is derived from the masses. You will perhaps take my evidence when I tell you that throughout all my wanderings I noticed a definite, conscious longing on the part of the masses for something better for our India, for something better for themselves, and if journalists want to penetrate the hearts of these great masses of people of India who

[1] 1834-1884; editor of *The Hindu Patriot*

have not hitherto been served by journalists, then, I think they will have to strike a different path and a different line also. You will not expect me to say what that line is. If I had my own choice, you know what that line will be or should be. I simply leave these thoughts with you.

With these words, once more, I thank the editor and Mr. Kasturiranga Iyengar's sons for giving me this unique honour—because I regard it as unique honour—of being able to unveil this portrait. (Loud and prolonged applause.)

The Hindu, 23-3-1925

9. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MADRAS[1]

March 22, 1925

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I am obliged to all the poeple or associations who have presented these addresses to me. You, Mr. President, have dealt with the Hindu-Muslim question at some length. I endorse the sentiments expressed by you. If the Hindus and Mussalmans do not unite reasonably, they will unite forcibly, because one party cannot lead this country; and so long as there are some Hindus and some Mussalmans with whom unity of all the races is an article of faith. I have every hope that we shall unite and unite whole-heartedly. I for one do not object to the Congress being described as a social organization or a spinning association. For, if we neglect what may be called social and economic matters, it is impossible—he who runs may see—to attain swaraj. But the Congress is also a political organization, in that the Swaraj Party is an integral part of the Congress and the Congress enables you, every one of the Congressmen who wants to realize political ambition, to realize that ambition to the highest degree through the Swaraj Party. But for me, at any rate for the time being, my politics do not go beyond the spinning-wheel. Its revolutions are so rapid and so certain that in their sweep they take in every other activity. It is, together with the unity between all the races and the removal of untouchability, the foundation on which you may erect any political or other national structure. Without the removal of

[1] In reply to addresses of welcome presented by the Gujarati Sevak Mandir, Amarabala Vilasini Sabha and the Naoroji-Gokhale Union at Tilak Ghat (Triplicane Beach). Yakub Hasan presided.

untouchability, any structure you may seek to build will topple like a house on sand. I, therefore, offer no apology for engaging your attention for a while on the Vykom satyagraha.

Those of you who read newspapers have perhaps followed my movement throughout Travancore. I have every hope that, before consolidated and organized public opinion, the wall of prejudice that surrounds orthodoxy will go. I am of opinion that the Govern- ment of Travancore is not against reform. Untouchability is a curse which every Hindu is bound to remove at the earliest opportunity. I have seen it in its worst form, not only as unapproachability but also as invisibility. Mere sight of a certain man is considered by blind orthodoxy as a sin. *Nayadis* are expected to remain invisible. I saw two men belonging to that caste in Trichur. Except for the human form I saw nothing of humanness about them. (Laughter.) My friends, it is not a matter for laughter but it is a matter for shedding tears of blood. They had no eyes, but two openings in which eyes might have been if they had been treated as human beings. There was no lustre in their eyes that I see in yours. They were supposed to bring addresses to me, but they had to be lifted up to the carriage and they were holding those addresses in their shaking hands. I tried to wake them up and excite a little bit of cheer in their faces. I failed miserably. They could not hand over the addresses to me. I had to take them from them. They had to be lifted back as they had to be lifted towards me. If we had sufficient imagination and if we had sufficient love for our country or our religion, we would refuse to be satisfied until this curse was blotted out of this land. I reject the Shastras if I am told that the Shastras countenance any such evil. But I am positive, as I am positive that we are sitting here together, than our Shastras enjoin or countenance no such devilry. To say that a single human being, because of his birth, becomes an untouchable, unapproachable or invisible, is to deny God. I, therefore, ask you to support the brave struggle that the satyagrahis are carrying on in Travancore by holding public meetings and by cultivating public opinion in every legitimate manner. If I could, I would organize the Hindu opinion on this one point from the Punjab to Kanyakumari and from Assam to Sind.

A gentleman has just now handed me a note containing some questions on this matter.

I will gladly answer. He asks if the untouchables are allowed the use of roads you would support their further claim to enter Hindu temples like any other Hindu. I am surprised at this question at this

time of the day. My answer is emphatically in the affirmative. I claim that to the untouchables, not only public roads should be open but also all temples which are open to non-Brahmins, and all public schools where non-Brahmins and others are admitted and all public places such as public wells or travellers' bungalows, or anything which is supposed to belong to the public at large, should be open to the untouchables as they are to us. Not till this simple elementary, primary human right is guaran-teed to every single human being on this piece of God's earth will I consider that the claim in regard to untouchability is vindicated. It is not so much a right that belongs to the untouchables as it is the duty which we, the caste Hindus, owe to them. It is the least penance that we owe to the untouchables and to the world at large. But let me not be misunderstood. I do not want at this stage to vindicate the whole of this right by way of satyagraha. Vykom satyagraha will stop immediately the roads in question are thrown open. I recognize that, wrongly though it is, there is opposed to us a tremendous wall of prejudice in connection with temples. I for one would be no party to any violence in any shape or form being used even in order to eradicate this root evil which is eating into the vitals of the Hindu community. But there is no mistaking the fact that it is the bounden duty of every Hindu not to rest satisfied until full right is guaranteed to the untouchables and until the very word "untouchables", or "invisibles" is blotted out of our dictionary.

The friend next asked me for a definition of a *sanatani* Hindu and say: "Could a *sanatani* Hindu Brahmin inter-dine with a Hindu non-Brahmin although the latter may be a non-vegetarian?" My definition of a *sanatani* Brahmin is: He who believes in the fundamental principles of Hinduism is a *sanatani* Hindu. And the fundamental principles of Hinduism are absolute believe in truth (*satya*) and ahimsa (non-violence). The Upanishads proclaim, the *Mahabharata* proclaims from the housetop: "Put in one scale all your *rajasuyas*[1], all your *ashvamedhas*[2] and all your merits and put truth in the other scale, the scale in which truth is thrown will outweight everything else." Therefore use truth as your anvil, non-violence as your hammer and anything that does not stand the test when it is brought to the anvil of truth and hammered with ahimsa, reject as

[1] Sacrifices performed at the time of the coronation of Hindu kings in ancient times

[2] Horse sacrifices performed by emperors to establish their supremacy

non-Hindu. For a fuller definition of *sanatani* Hindu I must refer the friends and those who have similar doubts to the pages of *Young India.* I have said repeatedly that inter-dining and intermarriage have no connection whatsoever with the removal of untouchability, for inter-dining or intermarrying is a matter of choice and should be so too with every human being. It is an indulgence, whereas untouchability is a refusal to serve our fellowbeings. And truth and ahimsa demand that no human being may debar himself from serving any other human being, no matter how sinful he may be.

My friend asks me my views on *varnashramadharma*. I believe in the four *varnas* and the four *ashramas.* We have created confusion in these four *varnas* and instead of treating them as we ought to, we have arrogated to ourselves superiority, one over another. And to our humiliation and degradation we have blotted out three *ashramas* and retained an apology for *grihasthashrama*. All the four stages in a man's life are devised by the seers in Hinduism for imposing discipline and self-restraint. *Grihasthashrama* is the fair fruit of *brahmacharya* in life for a series of years. We have grown into the habit of straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel. It was the first *ashrama* that gave a stability to Hinduism which has survived many an age and has witnessed the fall of many civilizations and which still remains secure. And if we would resume the other two *ashramas*—*vanaprastha* and *sannyasa*—and become wholesale national workers devoting our whole time and attention to national service, we would not then have witnessed the farce, the degradation and tragedy of infant marriages and infant widows. And if we but follow *varnashramadharma* in its spirit, we shall cease to be puny individuals and we shall walk in the fear of God and never fear a single human being. Today we are afraid of one another, we are afraid of Mussalmans and we are afraid of Englishmen. We have lost the nerve force that we had inherited from our forefathers and we have become a bundle of nerves.

The friend lastly asks—rather it is the first question—"What is the duty of the voters in the coming elections to the Legislative Council? Do you advise me to abstain from voting?" It is a fall from the sublime to the ridiculous. If I were a voter and if I exercise the right to vote, I shall tell you what I should do. I will first of all scan the candidates from top to bottom and if I find that among all the candidates there is not one man who is dressed from top to toe in khaddar, I will retain my vote in my pocket absolutely sealed. And if I

am satisfied that there is at least one man who is dressed from top to toe in khaddar, I will go to him in all humility and ask him if he is dressed in this style for the occasion or if he habitually at home and out of home wears hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar. If he returns an answer in the negative, I should again retain my vote in my pocket. I would next ask him: "It is extremely good that you always wear khaddar. Do you also spin for the sake of the masses at least for half an hour?" And if I am entirely satisfied on this question, my next question will be: "Do you believe in Hindu-Muslim-Parsi-Christian-Jewish unity?" And if I am still satisfied with the answer, my next question will be, if he is a Hindu and if there is a general electorate in which I can vote for Hindus, Mussalmans and others: "Do you believe in the removal of untouchability in the sense in which I have put it before you?" I am an ambitious and a zealous voter. Therefore, I would further ask: "Do you favour temperance reform? And do you favour total immediate prohibition even though everyone of our schools will have to be closed for want of revenue?" And if he says "Yes", I would take heart and immediately ask him a few questions to see that he is as sound on the Brahmin-non-Brahmin question and I shall vote for him. That is what I would do. You may ask fifty other questions. But I would ask you never to be satisfied until you have asked all these questions and added many more.

One word about the thing which is uppermost in my mind at the present moment. There are 10,000 charkhas going on at Tiruppur and 1,000 looms. Over Rs. 3 lakhs are distributed amongst those weavers, weaving sisters of ours. Mr. Santhanam, Tamil Nad Congress Secretary, complains that you do not buy khaddar which is supplied to you and therefore he has to turn away hundreds of women who would gladly spin for 8 hours a day for a few pies. He tells me that it is possible to manufacture khaddar in one year to the extent of Rs. 50 lakhs in that single district. The same thing is true of many other places in the Presidency. Let me throw in the information for doubting non-Brahmins, if there are any, that all these weavers and spinners are non-Brahmins. There is Rs. 75,000 worth of khaddar stored in Tirupur alone. One of your general secreta-ries, Mr. Bharucha has come today in order to preach that you should spin and wear khaddar for the sake of your countrymen. With a bundle of khaddar on his shoulder he will move from place to place and from door to door to ask you to engage your attention on behalf of your countrymen. For God's sake do not idle away your time, do not argue

whether khaddar can solve this great problem of the rapidly growing pauperism of India. Believe me that in the proper and full solution of that one problems lies the solution of thousands of problems that today defy solution. Do not hesitate to give at least half an hour of your time to spinning in order that khaddar may be cheap for the masses. God willing I hope to return within three months' time. (Cheers.) Do not let me come to witness a tragedy that even during those three months you are no further than you are to- day. Let me hope and pray you will see to it that the several yards of kha-ddar now lying in the various national stores wil be used up by you and in three months' time you will have so organized yourselves that those who are in charge of khaddar manufacture are never henceforth able to say that they cannot feed hungry mouths for want of patronage of khaddar. Let it not be said of this great city that it was weighed in the balance and found wanting.

I thank you for the patience with which you have listened to me.

Mahatma Gandhi asked the audience not to leave the meeting until he reached the beach road.

The Hindu, 23-3-1925

10. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, MADRAS[1]

March 22, 1925

I am grateful to you for this beautiful address. I have, throughout my wanderings, come across thousands of students representing every variety of opinion. I have had discussion with them on all sorts of matters, not merely political. I carry on constant correspondence with them to the present day and therefore I understand the aspirations of the student world. I realize their difficulties and I know their ambitions. You have asked me not to lose faith in the students. How can I ? I have been a student and it was at Madras, I think, at a meet vving, that I addressed them as "fellow-students", but that in a different sense. It is a true I claim to be a student and, therefore, I can realize my identity with them. A student is a searcher after truth. I do not talk here of the student in the restricted sense, who learns or studies a few books, memorizes some of them, attends lectures and passes the examinations. All that, in my opinion, is the least part of a

[1] At the Gokhale Hall where members of the Madras Inter-Hostel Debating Society presented a welcome address

student's work or a student's duty. But a student is he who continuously uses his faculty of observation, puts two and two together and carves out for himself a path in life. He must first think of duty in life more than of securing rights. If you do your duty, the rights will follow as day follows night. The students should lay greater stress upon this aspect of life than on any other. I have been urging the students all through India that whatever they may do in the colleges and schools, let them not forget that they are the chosen representative of the nation, that our schools and colleges represent an infinitesimal portion of the youth of the country and that our villagers do not come in contact with the student world at all as education is at present arranged. So long as education remains in that condition, it is, I believe, the duty of the students to understand the mass mind and to serve the masses. In order to serve the masses and to prepare themselves for it, let me recall the beautiful story that Mr. C. F. Andrews wrote for *Young India* about the students of Santiniketan.

Continuing, Mahatmaji next narrated how a batch of students of the Santiniketan Ashram went to some villages near by in order to render service. But this party of students went to the villagers as patrons but not as servants. At first they were disappointed because the villagers did not respond to them. They asked the villagers to do something and when they returned to the village the next day to see what the villages had turned out, they found nothing was done. The students at once found out the difference when they themselves took up the spade and shovel and bent their backs. Mahatmaji, proceeding, pointed out how those students introduced the spinning-wheel in the villages and how the villagers co-operated with the party in all their endeavours to do service. He next referred to Dr. Dev of the Servants of India Society who was sent on a medical mission to some of the villages near Champaran where Mahatmaji was then helping the villagers in removing some of their grievances. Dr. Dev, he said, was endeavouring to establish model villages by bringing forward reforms in sanitation and removal of dirt and disease. He next described the way in which Dr. Dev with the co-operation of the villagers and others, introduced sanitary principles in the village by themselves cleaning the wells, and removing dirt and filth from the houses. Dr. Dev and his co-workers soon found a ready response from the villagers in such kinds of social service, and the villagers out of their own shame came forward not only to help Dr. Dev and others but to learn how they themselves could do the work.

Proceeding, Mahatmaji exhorted the students in these words to equip themselves for rendering social service:

Your real education begins after you leave your colleges and schools. You learn things there from day to day, but you should know how to apply what you have learnt there. Very often what you have learnt there has to be unlearnt by you, viz., those ideas of false economics which have been dinned into your ears and ideas of false history that are given to you. You have, therefore, to use the faculty of observation and see beneath the surface of things, rather scratch the surface and see what is hidden underneath it. The foundation of service to the nation and the foundation of your education is to be laid not by reading Shakespeare, Milton and other poets or prose writers in English or by reading Sanskrit works of Kalidasa or Bhavabhuti. The foundation of service and your real training lie in spinning khaddar. Why do I say that? Because you have to deal with millions of people and you have to make two blades of grass grow where only one blade is growing today. If you want to add to the wealth of the country and its output, then believe me that the spinning-wheel is the only salvation. The classes alone read the *shlokas* of Kalidasa or even of Rabindranath Tagore. I know the life of Bengal and can say that these things are read only in the classes. How to link the classes with the masses is for me one of the greatest problems. I have hundreds and thousands of students in the Gujarat Vidyapith for whose welfare I am supposed to be one of the trustees. This problem puzzles me. But I consider that their real work lies not in the big cities where they receive education, but in going out to villages after finishing their education and in spreading the message that they have learnt into the villages, thereby establishing a living relationship with the villagers. I defy anybody to say how that can be established except on their own terms. The villagers want bread—and not butter— and disciplined work, some work that will supplement their agricultural avocations which do not go on for all the 12 months. My friends, if you will seriously consider your avocation in life, let this be the foundation of your work and I am sure you will do it. (Loud cheers.)

The Hindu, 23-3-1925

11. SPEECH AT LABOURERS' MEETING, MADRAS[1]

March 22, 1925

FRIENDS AND FELLOW LABOURERS,

I thank you for the address that you have presented to me. I thank also the Madras Literary Academy for its address. I call you fellow-labourers, that is, I call myself a labourer because I take pride in calling myself a spinner, weaver, farmer and scavenger. I have thrown in my lot with you so far as a man like me could do, and I have done so because I feel that India's salvation lies through you. I have done so also because I feel that India's salvation lies in labour, in manual labour, which is not to be had by reading books or mental gymnastics. I have realized and I am realizing it day after day that man is born to labour with his own body for his bodily sustenance. In mixing with a spinner, weaver and other labourers, I insistently tell them never to cease to be labourers but to add to their bodily labour mental education. But I know that the joy that I can derive from labour is not your lot. Labour to most of you is painful toil without pleasure. It is so, and it is painful toil, partly because your labour is exploited by moneyed men but mostly because of your own defects and limitations. The third reason, therefore, why I have become a labourer is to be able to draw, from the same level that you occupy, your attention to these limitations and defects. You know that I am practically living with thousands of labourers in Ahmedabad. I know the whole of their life and I do not suppose that you are very different from them. There I have observed that these labourers, and probably you also, are given to the drink habit. Many of you gamble away your money. You do not live at peace with your neighbour but quarrel with one another. You are often jealous of one another. You often do not do the work allotted to you in an honest manner. You often place yourselves under the guidance of those who do not lead you in the proper channel and, I know, become impatient of any wrong that is done to you. You sometimes think that you can remove that wrong by using violence. Those of you who do not belong to the *Panchama* classes regard your*Panchama* brethren with despite and contempt. If night-schools are opened for you, you will not attend them. If schools

[1] Addresses of welcome were presented at the meeting by the Choolai Congress and the Madras Literary Academy. Gandhiji's speech was translated into Tamil, sentence by sentence, by M. S. Subramania Iyer.

are opened for your little children, you will not send your children to those schools. You do not very often know what a nation is. Instead of living for the nation, very often you are satisfied with living merely for yourself. That is not the kind of labourer I call myself or want to be. You do not even think of your still poorer countrymen and women and, therefore, do not use hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar. Therefore, I am never tired of speaking, when I speak to labour gatherings such as these, of drawing the attention of the labourers to their own limitations.

I want you, therefore, to recognize and realize that you are not and you should be in no way inferior to any other class of people in this country. I want you to be able to develop the capacity for understanding national affairs. If you will do all these things, you must give up drink. You should give up insanitation and filth. Whether you are living in houses for which you are paying rent and whether you are living in houses built for you by your employers, you should decline positively to live in dirty houses where there is no sunshine and where there is no air. You must keep your houses and yards absolutely clean of all dirt, of insanitation. You must keep your own bodies clean by washing them properly evey day, and as your bodies and surroundings must be absolutely clean so should your life be chaste. You must never gamble. Send your children to schools that may be started or made by you, not so that your children may become clerks and cease to be labourers, but that they may remain labourers and be able to use their intelligence also. If you have no temples, if you are Hindus, if you have no mosques, if you are Mohammedans, you should lay by a certain sum and build these places of worship for yourselves. Those of you who are Hindus should not regard any body of Hindus as untouchables, *Panchamas* or Pariahs. No man dare cast his lustful eyes upon another's woman and lastly,as to your wearings—I know many of you are wearing foreign clothes, whether it comes from Manchester or Japan or even from Bombay and Ahmedabad, you must cease to wear them and wear only hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar. I ask you to wear khaddar because every yard of khaddar that you buy means a few annash, two or three anna, into the pockets of labourers like yourselves.

I am asking every labourer of India to learn and practise everybody hand-spinning, carding and, if possible, even weaving. There is a special reason for my asking the labourers to do so. In 1918, when the first strike of mill-hands took place in Ahmedabad, I

refused to lead that strike upon public subscription. But I called upon them to labour elsewhere in order to be able to bring the strike to a successful end, without troubling the public. Since then, I have learned better and now I ask the labourers to learn these so that if they have to embark upon strikes they can live to an indefinite length of time upon spinning, carding and weaving. If you are sufficiently industrious, you can weave your own cloth. I hope you will take in all that I have said to you tonight. You should endeavour to do everything that I have told you. Early in the morning, getting up at four o'clock, ask God, before you do anything else, to help you to do the things that I have referred to this evening.

I thank you for coming to this meeting and listening to me with so much patience. May God bless you and enable you to lead pure and good lives ! (Loud and prolonged cheers.)

The Hindu, 23-3-1925

12. IS BOMBAY ASLEEP ?

[MADRAS,
Monday, March 23, 1925][1]

I constantly hear complaints to the effect that spinning-wheels do not ply in Bombay, no one buys khadi, the people are not found wearing it, black caps are again as common as in 1920, national schools are closing down, etc., etc. Bombay is being served by two khadi bhandars[2] and the All-India Khadi Board. Together, their sales do not exceed Rs. 30,000. Shri Jerajani[3] has published the figures for four years, which throw some useful light. It is now the fifth year since the bhandar started working under his management. Its sales during January 1923 amounted to Rs. 22,299 and during January 1924 to Rs. 22,516, whereas last January they amounted to only Rs. 14,401. In those years, for the month of February they amounted to Rs. 15,747 and Rs. 21,664, respectively, as compared to which this February they amounted to Rs. 13,524 only. Thus I find that instead of rising, the sales are on the decline. I have also come to know that since my release from prison there has been a fall in the sale of khadi in the

[1] From Gandhiji's reference to the date and place of writing in the last paragraph

entire country, as compared to what it was when I was still in prison. Although this is something that makes me ashamed, nevertheless I can understand it. So long as I was in prison, people were concerned for me and believed that the spread of khadi was a way of securing my release before my term expired and that, on my release, I would immediately secure swaraj. As for the first consideration, it was meaningless to feel concern for me. I was not unhappy in prison either mentally or physically. I liked living there. I still wonder whether I can be of the same service outside prison as I was in it. The second considera-tion needs to be further examined. For all out pro-pagation of khadi would certainly have secured my early release. The consideration, however, that I would secure swaraj immediately on my release, was one which should make the people feel ashamed of themselves. Who am I to give them swaraj? Swaraj has to be won, who can give it and to whom? Moreover, I have been released but swaraj seems to be preceding farther. According to me, it is coming nearer. I believe further that the speed with which it approaches us is in direct proportion to the number of yards of yarn that we spin and the number of yards of khadi that we make and use.

This does not, of course, mean that we have to give up our other obligations. But it does mean that, in spite of fulfilling all other tasks, there can be no swaraj without khadi and no khadi without the spinning-wheel.

Hence, I am pained when I hear reports that the sale of khadi in Bombay has declined. The sale at the second bhandar which is in Kalbadevi is relatively good, but its figures for last year are not available as its very existence was uncertain. It has now been placed on a sound footing. Nevertheless, even though the total monthly sale at he two bhandars may amount to Rs. 30,000, it is nothing much for a city like Bombay! It would not cause surprise if five or even ten such bhandars thrive there. Not a single street in Bombay is without a shop selling foreign cloth. On one road, at every step, there are many such shops. A shop selling khadi appears to be something foreign, strange there, while one selling foreign goods seems like swadeshi—our own. What kind of swaraj would it be which the owners of those shops and their customers hope for? Would it not be foreign rule mistakenly termed swaraj? Alternatively, would it not be a rule of selfishness? What place would the poor have in this trade amounting to crores of

rupees? Where could the poor turn for relie under such a government? I regard it as impossible even to understand the sentiment of swaraj so long as khadi is not fully accepted—and foreign cloth is not totally boycotted. How can anyone who has no teeth know the joy of chewing ? How can anyone who has no tongue realize what it means to speak? How can anyone who hesitates to wear the cloth that is spun and woven by the poor of his country know what it means to serve the poor? What does he know of swaraj? What could India's freedom mean to anyone who does not like Indian villages, Indian customs and Indian food? What part of the country would be served by his plan of swaraj?

Hence the khadi bhandars are the instruments for measuring how far the citizens of Bombay are eager to win swaraj. The readings on this instrument give a depressing picture of Bombay.

Let us now examine the condition of the *Antyajas*.

How very strange it is that the *Antyajas* cannot get any living accommodation? Many of them have to vacate even the dilapi- dated municipal buildings, those who live there do so with difficulty, Hindu landlords do not rent out buildings to them. In such circumstances, what could swaraj mean to the *Antyajas*? Supposing Bombay had a Hindu Governor, his chief minister, a man who regarded untouchability as his dharma, his minister, a person who would not rent out his building to the *Antyajas*; in such a swaraj set-up, what freedom will the *Antyajas* taste? Bombay, it seems, would fail even in this test.

Let us now examine the remaining problem, namely, Hindu-Muslim unity. Although it cannot be said that the problem is as acute in Bombay as it is elsewhere, something like a wrestling bout goes on even there. Things may appear smooth on the surface; God alone, however, knows what is hidden beneath. I frequently hear reports that the members of either community are smouldering within. The fellow-feeling which existed in 1921 no longer exists. Instead, there is certainly sourness if not bitterness. The abscess of suspicion has appeared. Each community has practically lost faith in the other.

Bombay, which is the first city of India, which was the capital of Pherozshah Mehta's empire, the field of Dadabhai's activity, the place where Ranade[1], Badruddin and others achieved fame, appears to be

[1] Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842-1901); judge, social reformer and author; one of the founders of the Indian National Congress.

asleep today!

I am writing this article in Madras on Monday the 23rd in the serenity of my silence day. On Friday[2] the 26th, I have to meet the Bombay Provincial Committee. I shall then know more of the real state of affairs. After that, we shall review once again the situation there.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-3-1925

13. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

March 23, 1925

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS,

This is an idle letter merely to tell you that I have always thought of you and Guruji. I wonder if he has still the same doubt he had about the pact. I hope he is keeping well.

You seem to be keeping better. You *must* know that whenever you feel like travelling with me, you are free to do so. Do not expect me to take the initiative. For, I can get your service best where you feel most happy and keep good health. I have or should have no likes and dislikes. We are all soldiers fighting the same battle. I am a general requiring the best soldiers to tell me where they can serve most. When I feel that I want to make dispositions myself, I will not hesitate for a single moment.

Here is a cutting you gave me months ago and which I have carried with me all these months. I reach there 27th.

With blessings,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5599

[2] 26th was a Thursday.

14. TELEGRAM TO C. R. DAS

MADRAS,
March 24,1925

DESHBANDHU DAS
RENIER ROAD
CALCUTTA

CONGRATULATIONS Y[OU]R VICTORY. HOPE YOU ARE RESTORED. GOING AHMEDABAD TODAY .

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft : S.N.2456

15. TELEGRAM TO W. H. PITT[1]

MADRAS,
March 24, 1925

POLICE COMMISSIONER
TRIVANDRUM

THANKS WIRE. AM WIRING VYKOM COMPLETION AGREEMENT IN TERMS MY LETTER OF 18TH AND INSTRUCTING OBSERVANCE. TRUST WITHDRAWAL ORDER WILL BE FOLLOWED UP BY OTHER MEASURES CONTEMPLATED MY LETTER.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft : S.N.2456

[1] In reply to the addressee's telegram dated March 23, 1925 (S.N.13268 M) which read: "Reference your letter 18th instant. Prohibitory order will be withdrawn from Tuesday 7th April on your telegraphing acceptance. Kindly instruct Vykom satyagrahis to observe agreement from that date."

16. TELEGRAM TO K. KELAPPAN NAIR

Via MADRAS,
March 24, 1925

KELAPPAN NAIR
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
VYKOM

RECEIVED WIRE FROM GOVERNMENT ACCEPTING LETTER 18TH INSTANT. ORDER WILL BE WITHDRAWN 7TH APRIL AND BARRICADES AND PICKETS TOO WILL BE REMOVED. PRESENT NUMBER SATYAGRAHIS SHOULD CONTINUE SPIN OR STAND WHERE THEY ARE BUT ON NO ACCOUNT CROSS BOUNDARY LINE NOTWITHSTANDING REMOVAL ORDER BARRICADES AND PICKETS. LEAVING TODAY FOR AHMEDABAD WHERE WIRE PROGRESS.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft : S.N. 2456

17. LETTER TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

March 24, 1925

In handing the above correspondence[1] for publication, it is only necessary for me to point out that the agreement embodied therein marks a step forward in the movement now going on at Vykom. The satyagrahis respecting the boundary line, in spite of the removal of the barrier and removal also of the order of prohibition, would, on the one hand, show the completely non-violent nature of the struggle and, on the other, prove the *bona fides* of the Government declaration that they favour the reform for which the satyagrahis are fighting. I am hoping that the opponents of the reform will reciprocate the gesture made by the satyagrahis.

The Hindu, 24-3-1925

[1] *Vide* "Letter to W. H. Pitt", 18-3-1925 and "Telegram to W. H. Pitt", 24-3-1925.

18. SPEECH AT CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY, MADRAS [1]

March 24, 1925

FRIENDS,

I am obliged to you for having invited me to meet you. I am obliged to you also for your address. I appreciate and understand your sentiments; the more so, as you may not admit it, but some day even you will admit that I am engaged in running the greatest co-operative society that the world has ever seen. I may fail miserably and if I fail it will be because of your weakness or want of response. I am engaged in running a cooperative society in which 300 millions of people of this earth may become willing members, men, women and children, lepers and men—men who are in perfect health and lepers in mind, body and soul. So you see that at least here there is a desire to follow literally the maxim that you have got, viz.,"Each shall live for all and all shall live for each." If you really measure the value of that teaching, you will find the hidden meaning of that truth and understand the deep and hidden meaning of the spinning wheel. Therefore, I invite you, the co-operators, to join the greatest co-operative society in the world. You cannot begin to do that unless you make up your minds to spin for at least half an hour per day, and unless you adopt khaddar as your costume.

The Hindu, 24-3-1925

19. SPEECH AT AYURVEDIC PHARMACY, MADRAS [2]

March 24, 1925

Mahatamaji said that perhaps those responsible for the function did not realize that he seemed to be entirely out of tune there. They did not know that he made these remarks even when he performed the opening ceremony of a medical college with which his esteemed friend Hakim Ajmal Khan, was connected. From his chair on that occasion he had to dissociate himself from much that went under the name of Unani, Ayurvedic or European medicine. He was opposed to indiscriminate use of drugs. It did not give any pleasure to him to hear that Dr. Sri Ramacharlu was able to distribute his medicines amongst two lakhs of people or twenty lakhs of people. He could not

[1] In reply to a welcome address presented by the Triplicane Urban Cooperative Society at Big Street

[2] In reply to its welcome address at Mount Road

congratulate the doctor on his successful advertisement of makaradhwaja[1]. What was wanted among their physicians was a real touch of humility. It was a matter of good fortune to him to have friends among both allopathic doctors and Ayurvedic and Unani physicians; but they all knew his mind thoroughly that he could not possibly endorse their activities in the distribution of drugs.

He wished the physicians of the modern day took the role of the physicians of old, when they gave their lifetime to make researches and distribute relief among the people without taking a single farthing. That was unfortunately not the case today. What he noticed at present was that the Ayurvedic physicians were trying to live on the past glories ofAyurveda. The system of diagnosis was still in the primitive stage and it could not be in any measure compared with that prevailing under the Western system. Whatever might be said of the Western system—he had said a great deal on that subject—one thing must be said in its favour, that it had got humility and it had got research; and there were physicians and surgeons who gave their whole time to this work, the world not knowing them. He wished that spirit would fire the Ayurvedic physicians. But unfortunately what he noticed today was hunger for wealth and renown and hunger for coming to the top. That was not the way in which they would be able to serve Ayurveda. He knew there were most potent and efficacious drugs in Ayurveda. But today because they had forgotten the art, they had really lost the use of that. He had discussed these things with many physicians and they had nodded assent to all that he had been saying.

You would not call me a dear friend of yours, when you have purposely invited me to come here, if I do not utter this truth that is lying deeply rooted in me. And it is a result not of a day's thought or a hurried thought; but it is the result of nearly 40 years of observation and also experiments in hygiene and sanitation. As a result of these things, I have come to the deliberate conclusion that the best physician is one who administers the least number of drugs. The surgeon who performed the operation on the late King Edward and so successfully performed it, has said that in his pharmacopoeia their were but two or three drugs that he used. Otherwise he left nature to do its own work. I trust that our physicians understand the secret that nature is the sweetest, the quickest and the best restorer of health, whereas what I find is that all kinds of experiments are being made, arousing the basest passions of humanity. The advertisements that I see of medicines made me sick. I feel that physicians are rendering no service to

[1] An Ayurvedic medicinal preparation

humanity whatsoever but the greatest disservice by claiming every medicine as the panacea for all ills of life. I plead for humility, simplicity and truth.

The Hindu, 24-3-1925

20. SPEECH ON PROHIBITION, MADRAS[1]

March 24, 1925

It is a very great pleasure that I am able today to speak to you on the matter of temperance and it is a matter of great honour that I am doing so under the chairmanship of one whom I revere for her long, great and continuous services to the motherland. The cause of temperance I have handled now, I think, for 30 years, if not longer. The horror of drink I have inherited from my revered mother when she gave me her permis-sion to proceed to England. Some of you may know she imposed upon me three vows or obligations, one of which was that I should abstain from drinking. I may tell you that she did not know what a great curse the drink evil was. She had no knowledge of the masses and the destruction that the drink evil was bringing into their homes. In the place where I was brought up and at the time of which I am now speaking to you there was probably very little drinking going on in that beautiful little city, Rajkot. However, the fact that she imposed this obligation on me, naturally, put me upon my guard and set me thinking also why it was that rather than imposing other vows she had imposed these three vows of which this was one. I set sail and I met several people on board. I was a duffer and could not carry on a sustained conversation with my fellow-passengers in English.One of them was from Kutch, a district in Kathiawar, and he told me that after we had crossed the Bay of Biscay I would be compelled to drink. I said I would wait. He asked what I would do if my doctors advised drink. I said I would die if that were the only condition on which I could live, rather than break a sacred promise deliberately made to my mother.

So I proceeded to London. I saw everything that was going on before my eyes whenever I stood in front of those great palaces called public houses, where people went in as sober men and came out of

[1] At a meeting of temperance workers at the Gokhale Hall. Dr. Besant presided.

these so-called palaces dead drunk. I had absolutely no opportunity to do any work in England. It filled one with a great desire for working in the cause of temperance and a great desire for rescuing Indians from this curse. I may also inform you that the time when I went to London was the time when some of the students and teachers were infatuated with everything Western and so they drank on the liner and it was supposed to be a fashionable thing to do so. So when I observed this in London, I felt that I should work in order to wean away the youths of our country from indulging in drink in this land.

Little did I know that I would find myself within two years of my return to India in South Africa and amidst some of the poorest of our land, all of whom were given not only to drinking but drinking to excess. But such was my good fortune or misfortune, whichever you may call it, that I witnessed the ruin, in Natal, among the indentured Indians, of hun-dreds of helpless women as well as men who were given to drinking. I tried— and in those days I was not a non-co-operator; although I was fighting the Government in different parts of South Africa, I was closely co-operating with them in all humility wherever they accepted the co-ope-ration so tendered—I tried to persuade them to prohibit drinking among our own countrymen. You will be painfully surprised to know that I had to face opposition from our own countrymen and they set up the question of rights and privileges and they said that where Europeans could drink freely, Indians must also have that right. (Laughter.) It was not possible for me and, I must confess, it was to my shame that the majority of them I was really unable to convince, even after 20 years' stay in South Africa, that was a question which admitted of no privilege and competition. If I had time I could give pictures of captains who were dead drunk, when sailing under them was really a dangerous thing; not that they wanted to drink to excess but that they forgot themselves. Some of them had become my friends but when they took to these things I saw what a curse it proved to them; what a danger they were to the community which was at that time under their absolute charge. I told my friends that it was not a matter of right, that if we at least for ourselves could secure prohibition, we could save these families. And ever since that time it has been a question with me and some of my friends who were against me on the matter of prohibition *versus* purely taking the gospel of temperance to the

homes of the people.

I have definitely come to the conclusion that merely preaching amongst the masses will not do, for they do not know what they are doing. I was, just before I came to this Presidency, travelling as you are aware, in Kathiawar. It is a place which contains numerous small principalities. In one of these places the families of men who were given to this wretched habit pleaded that they should be saved from themselves. How could I save them from themselves except by prohibiting distillation altogether, except or medicinal purposes? I would apply absolutely the same formula to drink as the opium lea-gues in America are applying to opium. I do not know whether opium is a greater evil than drink. Possibly there is not much to choose, but from a purely moral point of view I am inclined to think that if I had to give a decided opinion, I would vote against drinking because drinking saps the moral foundations. I know thousands of men who consider themselves moderate drinkers but they have not trained themselves to be moderate in their habits. I have bosom friends who knew no distinction between wife, mother and sister, but when they revive and regain their senses, they do not understand what an evil it was, and go to it again and again. I recall the instance of a friend, an English friend from Australia. He was earning £40 a month. It is a good income. He was a fine engineer and, I may tell you, Madam, that he was a good theosophist because he really wanted to be helped against himself. He asked me whether I knew anything because he knew my inclination in this direction that I was a dietician and reformer about diet and that I had dabbled in these things. So we became friends through that small theosophical circle which often used to invite me to attend their meetings. His name was Patterson. I don't know what he is doing today. He struggled against the heaviest odds. So long as he was with me and under my roof, he kept himself under restraint. Immediately we were separated, a few days later I received a letter from him saying, "I have gone back again." Such is the mastery that it gets over men. Opium does likewise, it stupefies and it deadens us but drink excites and stimulates so much that from the lap of God we find ourselves in the lap of Satan.

Therefore, I eel that if we could persuade our legislators to give up this income from opium and drink, I would do so today. I would sacrifice the education of all our children, If we could not educate them without this revenue. But I do not want to speak to you this morning about his revenue that we are deriving from our unfortunate

countrymen. Better it is or me that I should place before you some of my experiences and tell you how it is possible to work amongst the people because legislation is a matter not given to all of us. It is for the legislators and it is given to the Government. But to reach these homes and take a little bit of comfort to them is given to everyone of us. I have found by experience that it is not preaching that will serve the purpose at all. We must go into these homes and study their lives. I fully endorse your remarks, Madam, that it woould be no solution of the problem unless we probe into the causes. Our countrymen, I say, people all over the world, do not drink for the sake of drinking. Those who have drunk or tasted liquor tell me that the taste of it was not fine. There is no delicacy about it unless there may be delicacy about wines a hundred or two hundred years old. That was not what millions of the people drink or can possibly drink. I am inclined to think that it was an acquired taste. I am talking of ordinary liquors. They tell me that they take it more for the after-effects, the delirium that it produces, the momentary pleasure that they have when they forget themselves. All of us perhaps at some time of our lives have to forget ourselves. We can recall some pleasures which are no pleasures but are really painful, I was going to use a stronger expression, “hell fire”.So if we want to do temperance work we should go to the homes, not [look down] from our lofty superior heights and not treat these countrymen of ours with contempt, not consider ourselves angels coming from heaven because we do not drink and they drink. We must ask ourselves when we go there whether we would not have done exactly the same thing that they do. Do you know what the labourers in Bombay are doing? They are in boxes miscalled houses. There is no ventilation; not one family but many families live in the same room, which these wretched people often sublet, many times contrary to regulations; because they spend their all on drink and they have to feed their starving children. For the sake of those children not only do they sublet but they gamble and indulge in all conceivable vices.

Why do they drink? Living in pestilential dens, they are suffocated. You don't go to their places. They work for 8 or 10 hours under overseers who are goading them to the task. You do not go there and return from one den to another much worse. You do not serve under these conditions. When you cannot get good and clean rice, when you get *atta* (flour) putrefied and fermented and when even for their babies they cannot get milk, you will understand their condition. Even some of the richest gentlemen in Bombay cannot get

pure and unadulterated milk, unless they keep cows or buffaloes in their homes. It is very difficult for even a millionaire to keep cows or buffaloes in Bombay which is horribly over-crowded. Then what are these people to do? They have no homes as you can see. Their workshop is a hell. They have no friends to give them advice. They have no God because they have forgotten God, they almost fancy there is no God because if there was a God they would not be so forsaken. Such is their miserable condition.

What can we do for them? Let some of you go to those places and try to live in those dens and then see whether you do not also want to drink. With my own hands I have given rum to the people in the Boer War, in the forced march we had to make under the sultry sun. One of the wounded soldiers that we carried was the late General Woodgate. Among the stretcher-bearers who did valiant work there were some who were given to drink. They said: "You must get us at least some rum, if you want work from us tomorrow, for those who do hard work". I pleaded with them: "I have marched with you and rum was allowed as a ration. Especially with others who don't want rum, must you have it?" They said, "Yes". I went to the officer in charge of the rations and signed a memorandum, as I was in charge of the Ambulance Corps. I had the greatest pleasure to give them the rum, not without compunction, mind you. I can feel so if I was in the midst of labourers and under these trying circumstances I would feel tempted to give rum, whisky, brandy, whatever it was, to these men so that they might forget their sorrow. That is the origin of this curse. Men and women helplessly go to it and, if you want to redeem them, you can never do it by speeches. We shall do it by going down to them and by stooping to conquer, by trying to understand their difficulties and trying to remove them. In the attempt to remove those difficulties you must remain firm, and if you remained untouched and free there is hope for you and hope for them. Otherwise there is no other hope. I thought I could give you a bit of my experience and I would engage your attention upon scores of such instances drawn from life, everyone of them; not merely in one part of India but almost from every part of India, not from one stratum of society but from all strata and not merely in South Africa but also in England. But, I think, I have told you enough at least to fire the ambition of some of you to make researches in that direction. You have got in the slums of Madras many men and women who do not think of the severe nature of the problem. If you will think of the whole problem

you will be baffled. It is not one man's work. It is not given to all to compass this magnificent work. But like every drop in the ocean which singly will not enable a great steamer to sail but will do so if all drops stand, let all stand in their places resolute so that they could perform the Herculean task. If we regard ourselves as the drops in the sea, a miserable drop, and will be true to ourselves, I have no doubt that a day will dawn upon India when the drink curse will have vanished. (Loud applauses.)

The Hindu, 24-3-1925

21. SPEECH AT HINDI PRACHAR KARYALAYA, MADRAS[1]

March 24, 1925

FRIENDS,

It is a strange thing for me to have to speak to you in English although this is a place where Hindi is supposed to be under-stood. As a majority of those present just now do not know Hindi, I propose to confine my speech to the English language.Hindi pro-paganda is, in my opinion, a necessary thing for the growth of real nationalism in India especially, as that nationalism is to be conceived in terms of the masses. More than five years ago, this idea was conceived in Indore when I presided over the Hindi Sahitya Samme-lan Conference. At that time the idea was that for five years the whole propaganda should be conducted with money collected from outside the Southern Presidency, as the majority of the speakers were Marwari gentlemen who were lovers of Hindi. Five years have clapsed and something has been done to make it self-supporting. I, therefore, seek another opportunity of saying that the Southern Presidency should take this burden from off the shoulders of the North. It is a matter of duty on their part to do so. There are very few young men who study and learn Hindi. When the idea was conceived, I thought that there would be young men who would be flocking to the free Hindi classes in the name of the Congress whenever they could. But it has been a matter of great disappointment to me and to those who are conducting the classes that the young men have given very little encouragement. But it is not for us to give way to despair. This institution is going to

[1] In reply to an address of welcome in Hindi presented by the Hindi Prachar Samiti, Madras

remain here even though there may be only one Tamilian wishing to learn Hindi, because those who have taken this burden on their shoulders have full faith in themselves. At the same time the lovers of Hindi language who bring the language to the door of the Tamils are bound to tell them that they have not received adequate response.

The Hindu, 24-3-1925

22. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN COLLEGE, MADRAS

March 24, 1925

As you know, throughout my journey in India, I meet students, both boys and girls, but whenever I come to the South, I meet many more girls than I meet elsewhere except, perhaps in Bengal, because in Bengal the education of girls has gone forward much more than in other parts of Upper India but, by no means, so much as in South India. I was really surprised to see the stride that education among girls had taken in the State of Travancore. It was a perfect eye-opener to me. The question has always occurred to me: "What will India do with its modern girls?" I call you modern girls of India. The education that we are receiving on these institutions, in my opinion, does not correspond with the life around us, and, when I say life around us, I do not mean the life around us in the cities but the life around us in the villages. Perhaps some of you girls, if not all of you, know that real India is to be found not here in the very few cities but in the seven hundred thousand villages covering a surface of 1,900 miles long and 1,500 miles broad. The question is whether you have any message for your sisters in the villages. Men do not need the message perhaps so much as the women, and I have long before come to the conclusion that unless women of India work side by side with men, there is no salvation for India, salvation in more senses than one. I mean political salvation in the broadest sense, and I mean economic salvation and spiritual salvation also.

We may call ourselves Christians, Hindus or Mohammedans. Whatever we may be, beneath that diversity there is a oneness which is unmistakable and underneath many religions there is also one religion. As far as my experience goes, at one time or other, we, the Mohammedans, Christians or Hindus, discover that there are many points of contact and very few points of difference. Then I would like you to ask yourselves whether you have any message for the villages, for the women of the villages, for your sisters there. I am afraid you will also come to the same conclusion as I have, that you will never

have a message unless something is added to your education. It is true that the present educational system takes no notice of the village life. It is not so in other parts of the world. In the others parts of the world, I have noticed that those in charge of education take note of the masses of the people among whom these products of schools and colleges have to live and have to disperse, among whom they have to act. But in India, I have noticed that the student world is isolated from the masses of the people. I have no doubt that some of you are poor girls descended of poor parents. If you have not made that discovery yourselves, I ask you to make it for yourselves and ask yourselves whether the things that you learnt here you are able to take to them or whether there is real correspondence between home life and school life. The lack of that correspondence has appeared to be the tragedy. I have suggested, therefore, to the whole student world of India to add something to what they are learning in schools, and then you will find there will be some satisfaction for themselves and some satisfaction for the masses also and to those who will be so good as to think of the masses.

I have known that Christian girls and Christian boys, at least some of them, consider that they have nothing in common with the vast masses of people. That is mere ignorance. No good Christian nowadays says that and, I am sure, no one here in charge of your education gives you that training and teaches you that you have nothing in common with the masses. No matter to what religion you belong, I say that you were born in India, take Indian food and pass your life in India. Your life would be incomplete in more senses than one unless you can identify yourselves with the masses. What is that bond between the masses and yourselves? You may know or you may be told about the ridiculous percentage of literacy in India. You will perhaps be told that the literacy in India is on the decrease whilst higher education is increasing. Somehow or other, education among the msses is decreasing. Whereas every village had a school 50 years ago, these schools have gone for want of patrons. The Government had established new schools but unfortunately those in charge of the educational system took no notice of these village schools. The proportion of literate people in India today is really less than the proportion that existed 50 years ago.

What is the message? I suggest the spinning-wheel because of the deep poverty of the Indian masses. Some of us know that in this country, at any rate among the masses, women have to earn side by

side with the men. This is perhaps one of the few countries in the world where women do the hard task also. I am coming from a part of India where women take up even a shovel or a pickaxe. They do the work on the roads and break stones. One hundred years ago, they did not do this. Whenever social workers go to work among the masses, women surround them and ask for the spinning-wheel so that they might get a few pice. This may mean nothing to you but they mean a fortune to them. I wish that your Principal will one day take you to the surrounding villages so that you might have an ocular demonstration of what the women of India are doing. You will not then need that I should press this message home to you. You will have to take up the spinning-wheel, which is the bond that will tie you indissolubly to the masses. Let it be for ever a reminder to you. After your education is finished you will not disappear from public life; you will not disappear in the household simply doing the household work but you will extend your helping hand to the poor and needy, who need all the help that can be given to them. I hope this will serve as an inestimable instrument in your hands to bring cheer into those unhappy homes where extreme desolation prevails. The historians of India will tell us that about one-tenth of the population live in semi-starvation. Can you contemplate that with any degree of satisfaction? Can I not hope to fire you with the ambition to serve them? I see that a majority of you are Christians. Let me remind you of one saying of Jesus. He said: "It would be easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven." Remem-bering this, dedicate the education that you are receiving for the use of the poor.

May God bless you!

The Hindu, 25-3-1925

23. SPEECH AT "SWARAJYA" OFFICE, MADRAS[1]

March 24, 1925

You have very clearly set forth what my ambition at the present moment is. Eating, walking, sleeping and doing everything, I can think of nothing but the spinning of khaddar, removal of untouchability and unity of almost all classes and races. But there is a

[1] T. Prakasam, the editor, presented an address of welcome to Gandhiji on behalf of the directors and staff of *Swarajya*.

limit to our capacity for doing the work in the last two things; all cannot pay equal contribution to the removal of untouchability and all cannot also pay equal contribution to the bringing together of the different classes say, at the present day, the Hindus and Mussalmans, or, as I now discover, the non-Brahmins and Brahmins. (Laughter.) As I say, this is not one in which everyone could only assist or simply refrain by doing anything [*sic*]. Therefore, it takes a negative character; whereas in spinning and khaddar the young, the old and debilitated could do their very best. A little *Panchama* boy could beat Mr. Prakasam hollow, if he chooses, in hand-spinning, (Laughter.) and a man in the street can give points to Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar, so far as wearing khaddar is concerned.

I feel thankful, therefore, for the reassurance given to me in this address that *Swarajya* will not abandon this message of khaddar and of the spinning-wheel, but it will carry it to the hamlets. I do not know how it will carry it to the hamlets, because people do not read the English *Swarajya*. I know that is the only programme before the country which is incredibly the simplest proposition in which all could participate. But the simplest of propositions carry with them the significance of the highest order. I know, I have only this message to give at the present moment and that is our unfortunate tragic position. As I said, speaking to the girls of the college, illiteracy in India is very great and only a small percentage of our people can read and write. How can they take the message from the newspapers? Therefore, I have suggested to Mr. Prakasam at Poona that he should become a walking newspaper, and to everyone. If we talk less or talk simply of the spinning-wheel, then the message of the spinning-wheel would spread. Take the spinning-wheel, plant yourself in some place in the village and simply turn it away. The villagers and their children will take to it.

I was really that all our newspapers talk about nothing but the charkha just as you know during the War and even after the War, every home in Europe talked of nothing but the War and its evils. Why may we not do the same thing, if we are convinced that there is no other living tangible programme before the country, and as far as I know, this is the only tangible programme before the country. Therefore, let this message percolate from this office to every hamlet at least in the Southern Presidency. (Loud cheers.)

The Hindu, 25-3-1925

24. SPEECH AT SCAVENGERS' MEETING, MADRAS

March 24, 1925

The scavengers living in Kuppathoti Maidan near Monigar Choultry welcomed Mahatmaji last evening. . . . A member of this profession read a welcome address in Telugu to which Mahatmaji made a brief reply in Hindi which was translated by Mr. G. Rangiah Naidu. Mahatma Gandhi impressed upon them the necessity to observe the principles of sanitation in their daily lives. He advised them to be clean and tidy in their dress and to take a bath every day in the morning. They should pray to God early in the morning and evening. He was sorry to see most of them dressed in dirty clothes. They must not leave their work nor spend their income by taking to vicious habits like drink. In conclusion, he asked them to spin and wear khaddar.

The Hindu, 25-3-1925

25. SPEECH IN REPLY TO CONGRESS SABHA ADDRESS, MADRAS[1]

March 24, 1925

FRIENDS,

I thank you for the address you have presented to me. You know the remedy that I have suggested for the attainment of swaraj. The first thing is that we must all spin for the sake of the country for at least half an hour. We must all wear khaddar, hand-spun and hand-woven. You will not gain anything by crowding in thousands at such meetings if you do not listen to what is being said to you. You must, therefore, everyone of you, discard your foreign cloth and wear khaddar. Hindus must regard untouchability as a crime and a sin. Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis and Jews must all remain together and live together in Peace and brotherliness. We must give up drink and gambling and we must all, in due humility, worship God according to our own ways and early in the morning, after having washed our mouth, cleaned our teeth and having regained perfect possession of our faculties, we must announce the name of God and ask Him to help us to be and remain good. We must ask Him to help us to do our duty by our country. We must not think ill of anybody or think of injuring anybody. And if we can do these things, I can see my way clear to attain our freedom in an incredibly short time. If we are to do all these things, we must learn how to keep discipline. All the noise

[1] At Peddunaikenpet

you make, whether it is about me or whether it is about any other servant of the nation, is of no use whatsoever.

If we want, on due occasions, to give expression to certain national cries, they must be given expression to in a musical manner and they must not be taken up on every occasion and every time, but there must be fixed occasions and when the leader takes up the cry others should follow. We heard a great deal of noise at the time when we commenced the meeting. If we are to be soldiers of the nation, we must do even as the soldiers do. Therefore our movements should be orderly. We should be able to hold meetings which thousands can attend without discomfort and without any noise. It is no use trying to touch my feet and shower flowers upon me. By such blind affection and devotion you will be no nearer to swaraj than you are today. Now, I wait to test you just now to see whether you have understood what I have been saying, whether the truth has gone home to you. I am about to finish my speech. I want you not to shout but give me a clear passage to go out without any of you touching my feet, and enable me to pass through swiftly. It should not be necessary for volunteers to form cordons in order to protect me from your embarrassing affection. But before I put you to that test, I want to sum up what I have been saying. This is my last meeting in Madras. From you I am straightaway going to the station.The programme that I have sketched before you now has been before the nation since 1920. I hope to return to this Presidency inside of three months and one thing that I hope is to see everyone I meet in Madras clad from top to toe in hand-spun khaddar. I hope you will besiege Congress offices for cotton and slivers for spinning or spinning-wheels. I pray to God that He may give you all the wisdom to see the necessity of doing what I have been asking you to do and the strength to do these things. I am exceedingly thankful to you for the great patience and silence with which you have listened to my remarks. Now comes the test. I expect all friends on this side of this meeting to give me clear passage and also to keep sitting till I have boarded the car. If you will but do this little thing I shall go easily filled with hope of you and hope of India. God bless you! (Loud applause.)

The Hindu, 25-3-1925

26. ALL ABOUT TRAVANCORE

A LAND OF BEAUTY

It was a perfect pleasure to visit Travancore and incidentally Cochin. It is a land of perfect beauty. My few days in Travancore were days of incessant journeying and meeting vast crowds of people. Travancore is blessed with a magnificent waterway and equally magnificent roads. Its extreme length is 179 miles and breadth 75 miles. Its area is 7,625 square miles more than half of which is covered by hills and forests. I entered at the northern entrance. Vykom lies almost on the northern border. The route lay through a beautiful waterway studded on either side with luxuriant vegetation, chiefly palms. I was taken to the extreme south, the Cape Comorin, where the sea daily washes in adoration the feet of *Hind Mata*[1]. And as I travelled, I seemed to go from one end of a beautifully laid out garden to the other. Travancore is not a country containing a few towns and many villages. It looks like one vast city containing a popu-lation of over 4,00,000 males and females almost equally divided and distributed in small farms studded with pleasant looking cottages. There was, therefore, here none of the ugliness of so many Indian villages in which human beings and cattle live together in an overcrowded state in spite of the open air and open space surrounding them. How the Malabaris are able to live thus in isolated cottages and to feel, as they evidently do, safe from the robber and the beast I do not know. Those of whom I inquired about the cause could not say anything beyond corroborating my inference that both men and women must be brave.

THE STATUS OF WOMEN

The woman in India lives nowhere in greater freedom than in Malabar. She is more than well protected by the local law and custom. Education among women is nowhere greater than in Travancore. Indeed Travancore appears educationally to be the most advanced part of India. In 1922, general literacy was 244 per thousand of the population, 330 in the case of males and 150 in the case of females. This literacy is daily increasing both among males and females. The backward classes are taking their full share in this wonderful progress. This progress even disturbs a sceptic like me. If all the education

[1] Mother India

means a general discontent with one's surroundings, a wrench with the past without hope for the future and a general scramble for employment, the whole of the beautiful edifice must one fine morning come down with a sudden crash. Without the culture of the heart and the hand mere growth of literacy has no attraction for me. What is wanted therefore is a drastic measure giving not an indifferent manual training but a proper occupational training specially designed to make it worth while for highly educated men not to look up to Government service but to farming, or say weaving, for their maintenance. Unless the mind of the student world is given a bent in the direction of the main and natural sources of livelihood and is developed in a scientific spirit in keeping with the special Indian conditions, the gulf between the educated classes and the masses must widen, the former must live on the latter instead of the former living with and for the latter and sweetening their life.

HER HIGHNESS THE MAHARANI REGENT

But I do not wish to write this note in a critical spirit. For the photograph I have on my mind of Travancore is altogether pleasing. My visit to Her Highness was an agreeable surprise for me. Instead of my being ushered into the presence of an over-decorated woman, sporting costly diamond pendants and necklaces, I found myself in the presence of a modest young woman who relied not upon jewels or gaudy dress for beauty but on her own naturally well-formed features and exactness of manners. Her room was as plainly furnished as she was plainly dressed. Her severe simplicity became the object of my envy. She seemed to me an object lesson for many a prince and many a millionaire whose loud ornamentation, ugly looking diamonds, rings and studs and still more loud and almost vulgar furniture offend the taste and present a terrible and sad contrast between them and the masses from whom they derive their wealth. I had the honour too of waiting on the young Maharaja and the junior Maharani. I found the same simplicity pervading the palace. His Highness was dressed in a spotlessly white dhoti worn in the form of a *lungi*, and vest reaching just below the waist. I do not think he had even a fingerring for an ornament. The junior Maharani was as simply dressed as the senior Maharani the Regent. It was with difficulty that I

could see on her person a thin delicate *mangala mala*[1]. Both the ladies had on their persons spotlessly white cotton hand-woven saris and half-sleeved jackets of similar stuff without any lace or embroidery.

The reader must pardon this minute description of the Travancore royalty. It has a lesson for us all. The royal simplicity was so natural because it was in keeping with the whole of the surroundings. I must own that I have fallen in love with the women of Malabar. Barring Assam I have not seen the women of India so simply yet elegantly dressed as the women of Malabar. But let the Assamese sisters know that the women of Malabar are, if possible, simpler still. They do not require even borders to their saris. The length needed is under four yards, a sharp contrast to the Tamil sisters on the east coast who need nearly ten yards heavily coloured saris. The Malabari women reminded me of Sita as she must have been dressed when she hallowed with her beautiful bare feet the fields and forests of India along the route she traversed. To me their white dress has meant the emblem of purity within. I was told that in spite of the utmost freedom they enjoyed, the women of Malabar were exceptionally chaste. The eyes of the most educated and advanced girls I met betokened the same modesty and gentleness with which God has perhaps endowed the women of India in an exceptional degree. Neither their freedom nor their education seemed to have robbed them of this inimitable grace of theirs. The men of Malabar in general are also just as simple in their taste as the women. But, sad to say, their so-called high education has affected the men for the worse and many have added to the simple articles of their original dress and in so doing have purchased discomfort in the bargain. For, in the melting climate of this country the fewest white garments are the proper thing. In making unnatural unbecoming additions they violate the laws of both art and health.

WANT OF KHADDAR

After all this generally flattering description of the men and women of Malabar, the reader would expect to find here the widest use of khaddar. I am sorry, however, to say that such is not the case. Though there is no warrant for the use of mill-made cloth in Malabar, khaddar has made but little progress. If khaddar was well-organized, the people would take to it without the slightest difficulty. For they have not the excuse for not using it that the people in other parts of India have. The want no colours. They do not need large lengths. They wear no turbans or other head-dress. They are, therefore, well

[1] Auspicious necklace

able to take to khaddar without the need of a revolution in their tastes. Not one Malabari spoke to me about the difficulty of persuading the people to adopt khaddar. Some did speak to me about its prohibitive cost. But locally made khaddar need not be dear. For the wages here are low. But no one has thought of organizing the wheel and khaddar. Happily the art has not altogether died out. Near the Cape there is still held a fair at which hand-spun yarn is sold . There are thousands of weavers who are weaving mill-spun yarn.

The Provincial Congress Committee has done some thing but it is sadly little. The Vykom satyagrahis have been doing much more. But ever so much more requires to be done.

THE HOPE

The Legislative Council has recently passed a resolution requiring the Government to introduce the spinning-wheel in the State Vernacular Schools. The Dewan in his address to Sri Mulam Popular Assembly said that effect would be given to the resolution during the next school year, the necessary provision for the purpose having been made in the current year's budget and the services of a competent spinning instructor having been advertised for. A great deal can be done to popularize hand-spinning if the local Government act in a business-like manner. The State has a hand-weaving department. It has a textile expert. The reference in the address to hand-weaving is worth reproducing. Here it is:

> The textile expert was directed to devote his attention first to the improvement of handloom weaving which is the most important cottage industry in the country. For the introduction and demonstration of improved methods in weaving and dyeing, a central technical institute on a large scale is necessary. The required buildings are in process of construction within the premises of the School of Arts, which have been enlarged by the acquisition of adjoining lands. Pending their completion, a beginning has been made in a rented building, where the textile expert has taken six students each for training in weaving, dyeing and knitting, and is demonstrating improved methods of knitting and handloom weaving and the possibility of utilizing indigenous dyes for dyeing. The institution is open to the public and it is hoped that the people interested in these matters will freely visit it. Two itinerant weaving parties have been entertained to work among cottage weavers in the southern and the northern taluks of the State respectively. It is through these parties that the results obtained by the experiments of the textile expert are spread among the numerous cottage weavers scattered over

the whole State. It is reported about 200 dhobis were newly introduced by these parties into the country during 1099. Two depots have been opened for the sale, at cheap rates, of loom accessories to cottage weavers, one at Trivandrum and the other at Nagarcoil, and the itinerant parties also carry for sale these accessories to the cottage weavers' doors.

The same thing that is being done regarding weaving will have to be done regarding hand-spinning if it is to be successful. The department can improve the wheels and inspect those that may be in use. It can give loans of wheels to the poor people and sell them on hire-purchase system. It can encourage voluntary spinning by undertaking weaving at a cheap rate. It can encourage the weavers to take to using hand-spun yarn. What can be more graceful or more appropriate than the royalty taking to spinning and thus popularizing it among the submerged classes? The population is roughly as follows:

Brahmins	60,000
Cast Hindus	7,85,000
Untouchables	17,00,000
Christians	11,72,934
Mussalmans	2,70,478
Animists	12,637
Other religions	349
Total	40,01,398[1]

Of these, the majority of the seventeen lakhs of untouchables and the eleven lakhs of Christians are very poor. To them spinning as a home industry during leisure hours must be a veritable blessing. Those who have farms do not and cannot work in them the whole day.

The State concentration on the development of this great national industry and the State patronage of khaddar will, at a stroke, increase the saving or, which is the same thing, the income of the people by at least Rs. 12,000,000 counting only Rs. 3 per head of population, for the labour to be spent upon the cotton before it is turned into cloth required for the use of its 40 lakhs of people. An extremely well regulated State like Travancore can solve the problem of famines, floods and poverty in an incredibly short time by handling the question of hand-spinning in a scientific manner.

[1] The source, however, has “40,06,062”.

TO THE CHRISTIANS

It was a sad sight to see the Christians from the Bishop downward using foreign cloth. They are the most educated and progressive community in the State. They owe it to the country to use their high education and intelligence for its service. The best service they can render is to adopt spinning and khaddar and lead the way for the other communities. I single out the Christians because they are better organized than the Hindus and the Mussalmans. They are the most influential and the most numerous here compared to the Christians in other parts of India. They can, therefore, easily take the lead in Travancore though they cannot be expected to do so elsewhere.

THE DRINK CURSE

The one thing most deplorable next to untouchability is the drink curse. The total excise revenue of the State was, in 1922, Rs. 46,94,300 against land revenue Rs. 38,18,652 and out of a total revenue of Rs. 1,96,70,130. This I regard as a most serious blot upon the administration. That so much of its revenue shuld be derived from intoxicants affords food for serious reflection. The excise revenue subdivides itself thus:

Abkari	Rs. 26,82,367
Opium and Ganja	Rs. 3,11,635
Tobacco	Rs. 17,00,298
Total	Rs. 46,94,300

Thus the liquor revenue is a terrific item. I was told that the drink was most prevalent among the Christians and that it was decimating hundreds of homes and bringing poverty and disgrace upon thousands of men otherwise able and intelligent. From all one can see, the State is looking upon the increasing revenue with philosophic calmness, if not pleasure. The communities are playing with the evil and playing at temperance. It is necessary to stamp out the evil before it is too late. The most effective method no doubt is to make the getting of liquor impossible except upon a medical prescription. How to give up the largest source of revenue is the question. If I was the autocrat able to impose my will upon Travancore, I would remove that source of revenue altogether and close every liquor shop, take a census of those who are addicted to the habit and find out means of giving them healthy refreshments

and healthy amusement or employment as the case may be and rely upon the people turned sober, contributing to the revenue more by their increased efficiency than by drinking. But the days of autocracy are over. Democracy is the autocrat. The Legislative Council and the Popular Assembly can do the whole thing. It would be wrong to fling one stone at the Maharani Regent and another at the Dewan and say that the duty was done. The people are having a daily increasing share in the administration of the State. They are extremely well-educated. They can force the State to use the whole of the revenue while it is being received, towards the eradication of the evil and insist upon closing the nefarious traffic in a year's time. But whether it can be done in a year, for it must take longer, is for the people to decide. Let them knew that there is a snake in the grass. And I respectfully ask once more, who can lead in this matter if not the Christians? My importunity to the Christians does not absolve either the Hindus or the Mussalmans. But in such matters the first appeal must be to the stronger party.

UNAPPROACHABILITY

I have reserved the question that took me to Travancore to the last. I have positively dreaded to write about it. I have remained in exile during the best years of my life and after reaching the age of responsibility. Having returned, I have been absorbed in a series of undertakings which have excluded all other pursuits. I must, therefore, confess my ignorance of many things that as an Indian I should have known. Although I know vaguely that Travancore was called a progressive state, I did not know anything of the marvellous progress it had made in some directions, nor did I know of the ravishing beauty of its landscape. But when I saw with my own eyes what the State is, what a cultured ruler and what a cultured Dewan it had, this existence of unapproachability staggered and puzzled me. How the inhuman thing could exist in such a State with such a sovereign, such a Dewan and such a people, baffled me as it still baffles me. But for the satyagraha no one would have known anything of it. But now that it is known in its nakedness, I must own that I have become impatient for its removal. I am impatient because I am a Hindu, because the State is a Hindu State, because its Dewan is a Hindu, because the people are educated and because the evil is acknowledged. If it was the British Government, it could certainly plead neutrality if it wished. But since

it is a Hindu Government and in this case and in such cases it is not dominated or influenced—not so far as I am aware—by the British Government, it cannot plead or profess neutrality. It must take the side of reform and oppose blind orthodoxy or superstition even as it would take the side of the robbed and come down upon robbers with a heavy hand. A Hindu sovereign is the custodian of the dignity and protection of Hinduism against assault from without and disintegration and corruption from within. It can remove abuses that have crept into Hinduism without any difficulty or even in spite of it. Whilst, therefore, I have been able to appreciate the extreme caution observed by Her Highness and the Dewan Bahadur as representing the Government of Travancore, I have not been able to understand or appreciate the nervous anxiety about the consequences of removing the abuse. But I believe both to be anxious for the removal of the abuse. Though the local men have told me that but for the support, secret and open, given by Government officials to the opponents of reform there would not be even the little opposition that there is to the proposed reform, I have not been able to share this view. I am inclined to think that it is largely based upon suspicion. I, therefore, take at their face value the Dewan's references reproduced last week in these pages.[1] I am of opinion that the sincerely believes that there is a legal difficulty and that public opinion is not ripe for the reform by legislation. He, therefore, wants to bring it about by consent. The reformers claim that public opinion of *savarna* Hindus has been expressed with sufficient emphasis in that the vast majority of the *savarna* Hindus voted for the council resolution favouring the reform and that the caste Hindu *jatha* that travelled from Vykom to Trivandrum last year proved the same thing. They further point out that of nearly eight lakhs of caste Hindus, over seven lakhs are Nairs and that the Nairs are almost to a man in favour of the reform at least in so far as the use by the unapproachables of public or semi-public roads is concerned. They argue further that the temples are public property of which the Government are trustees. All this argu-ment deserves consideration. But I still feel that it is open to the

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Extract from Dewan of Travancore's Speech on Vykom Satyagraha".

Government to dispute the inference that the opinion of the *savarnas* is overwhelmingly in favour of reform.

I had the privilege of meeting the opponents of reform who kindly permitted me to wait upon them.[1] They claim that the movement is confined only to a few youngsters, mostly outsiders, that the caste Hindus are overwhelmingly opposed to the claim of the unapproachables which they, the orthodox opponents, refuse to call reform. They contend that the prohibition to use the roads surrounding temples such as the one at Vykom has been handed down from immemorial times and is based on direct writings of Shankaracharya. The spokesman said that if the unapproachables were permitted to pass throuth the roads in question, the orthodox would not be able to go to the temple for worship. Asked whether Christians and Mussalmans were permitted to use these roads, he replied in the affirmative and said that they were superior to the unapproachables in as much as, he said, they, the unapproachables, were so born as a fit punishment for their misdeeds in the past incarnation and that the taint was indelible during their present incarnation. The spokesman who expressed these views is, I am told, a learned man. I have no doubt that he believes what he says. Whilst, therefore, I hold this view to be totally mistaken and contrary to Hinduism and humanity, I can find it in me to treat him as a friend worthy of regard and affection. That is my meaning of toleration. I do not look forward to a time when we shall all hold one and the same view but I do look forward to a time when we shall love one another in spite of the sharpest differences of opinion.

And so I made the following proposals to the friends:

1. They should produce Shankara's authority in support of their contention and I would advise the withdrawal of satyagraha from Vykom should the learned Shastris, whom I may consult, regard it as authentic and clearly bearing the construction sought to be put upon it by the orthodox party. It could not bind me for all places for the simple reason that even if Shankaracharya held the view in his time, I would not be bound by what appeared to me to be contrary to religion and humanity.

2. The whole matter could be referred to arbitration consisting of a learned man to be nominated by them, another to be

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with Caste Hindu Leaders, Vykom", 10-3-1925

nominated by me on behalf of the satyagrahis and the Dewan of Travancore to be the umpire.

3. A referendum to be taken of all the adult male and female caste Hindus of Vykom alone or of the whole of Travancore or selected areas according as they prefered. The Government should be invited to participate in the organization of the referendum.

The third proposal was put first by me as it was contended by the orthodox party that the caste Hindus were against the reform. But when I took them at their word and said that I would gladly agree to a referendum, the spoksmen veered round and said that in a matter of religious conviction a man could not be bound by the verdict of a majority. I appreciated the force of the suggestion and made the other two proposals. I may say in passing that I proposed a referendum because the present satyagraha is based upon the supposition that *savarna* public opinion is in favour of reform.

None of the proposals was, however, accepted by the gentlemen and I am sorry to say that we parted company without coming to any understanding. I then waited upon Her Highness and she granted me a patient and courteous hearing. She was anxious for the opening of the road at Vykom and appreciated the proposals made by me.

I waited also upon His Holiness Shri Narayan Swami Guru. He entirely approved of the satyagraha movement and said that violence would never succeed and that non-violence as the only method. The next day I waited upon the Dewan Bahadur. He too said he was entirely on the side of reform. His only difficulty was that as an administrator he could not legislate unless there was strong and clearly expressed public opinion. I suggested that he should insist upon the opponents of reform accepting one of my proposals. They could not entrench themselves behind an ancient custom if it was, as this was, contrary to humanity and public morals.

SATYAGRAHI'S DUTY

Here the matter rests for the time being. The satyagrahis hold the result in the hollow of their hands. They must continue without fatigue, without despair, without anger or irritation and with forbearance towards the opponents and the Government. By their dignified bearing and patient suffering they will break down the iron wall of prejudice and they will stimulate and draw public opinion towards them and will force the hands of the Government if the orthodoxy itself does not yield to their gentle treatment.

Young India, 26-3-1925

27. A CORRECTION

I wrote the other day[1] about a spinning class being opened in Seva Sadan. The sister who wrote to me says it was not Seva Sadan she referred to. It was the Sarasvat Hall where the class was to be opened. I am sorry for the error.

Young India, 26-3-1925

28. STONING TO DEATH

My brief note[2] on the penalty of stoning of death awarded against certain members of the Ahmadiya community has resulted in a great deal of correspondence on the subject. I am unable to print all the correspondence. But I am printing enough to put the reader in possession of the views of my correspondents. Here is what Maulana Zafar Ali Khan has to say in the matter.

> I hasten to fulfil the promise which I made in my last letter to deal at some length with the controversial points arising out of your note on the stoning of certain *Qadianis* in Kabul. I have read the note over and over again and each successive study has strengthened me in the conviction that as President of the National Congress and above all in your personal capacity you had better left it unwritten. I reproduce the passages, which to my mind are open to exception:
>
> "I understand that the stoning method is enjoined in the Koran only in certain circumstances which do not cover the cases under observation. But as a human being living in fear of God, I should question the morality of the method under any circumstance whatsoever. Whatever may have been necessary or permissible during the Prophet's lifetime and in that age this particular form of penalty cannot be defended on the mere ground of its mention in the Koran. Every formula of every religion has in this age of reason to submit to the acid test of reason and universal justice if it is to ask for universal assent. Error can claim no exemption even if it can be supported by the scriptures of the world. . . . It is the form of penalty that wounds the human conscience. Both reason and heart refuse to reconcile themselves to torture for any crime no matter how vile the crime may be."
>
> The opening lines of the above extract are open to correction. The

[1] *Vide*, "Notes", 5-3-1925, sub-title, "An Oasis in the Desert".

[2] *Vide* "Notes", 26-2-1925, sub-title "Stoning to Death". Subsequently, Gandhiji wrote on the subject in "My Crime", 5-3-1925 and in "Notes", 12-3-1925, sub-title, "No Stoning in Koran".

Koran nowhere prescribes stoning to death as a penalty for any crime and you have erroneously attributed to it a statement which has no basis in fact. This is, however, a very trivial affair as compared with the attitude taken up by you that you form of penalty which according to your standard of morality is unacceptable to you must be condemned as inhuman even if it is supported by the Koran and all the other scriptures of the world. This means that the Koran as a source of Islamic law must be looked upon as a bundle of errors because it "wounds the human conscience" by ordaining the punishment of flogging for adultery and mutilation in respect of theft. I would not mind in the least if such sweeping statements emanated from the unsympathetic critics of Islam with whom we are only too familiar. But your position is quite different. As President of the National Congress you occupy the proud position of the head of the three hundred million Indians who expect you to respect their beliefs. As Mahatma Gandhi, the champion of Khilafat, millions of Mussalmans have grown accustomed to regard you as their "guide", philosoher and friend". Your categorical denunciation, therefore, of a peculiar aspect of the penal provisions of the *Shariat* was most unexpected; and Mussalmans whose susceptibilities in matters concerning the fundamentals of their faith are extremely delicate, naturally look upon the expression of such views as an uncalled for interference in an affair which concerns themselves alone. You have certainly the right of personally holding any opinion as to the validity of the moral sanction of penalties imposed by Islam on such of its followers as transgress its law. But a public expression of this opinion, in what very much looks like the capacity of a Muslim jurisconsult makes your illustrious position rather awkward, and it is my solicitude for your prestige throughout the Islamic world that has prompted me to address you in this manner.

I now turn to the main point at issue. The Koran as a penal code has prescribed punishment only in respect of a limited number of crimes, viz., murder, adultery, theft and slander of chaste women. Punishment for other offences has been left to the discretion of the Prophet whose lifelong practice forms the basis of the legislative activities of his successors. Full latitude for the exercise of independent judgment has been conceded to the latter where the Prophet's authority is not forthcoming. Thus the Koran as the word of God, the practice of the Prophet, the first and infallible interpreter of the revealed book, and the collective judgment of the Islamic world constitute the *Shariat*, and no Mussalman who is worth his salt dare impugn its authority.

Now apostasy, as such, is an offence punishable with death under the *Shariat*; and although the Koran is silent on the subject, the other two sources of the Islamic law have announced in unmistakable language that an apostate

must forfeit his life. I have dealt exhaustively with this subject in a series of articles which I am writing for the *Zamindar*.

To people who have been dazzled by the glamour of modern scepticism, this unrelenting attitude of Islam towards apostasy might seem a direct challenge to the freedom of human conscience, whatever that expression may connote. These gentry should, however, remember that Islam is not only an institution for the guidance of those who profess it but a State which must exact allegiance from its subjects. If a British Indian subject can be hanged for infringing Section 121 of the Indian Penal Code and cannot escape such fate on the plausible plea that he is at liberty to shake off King George's allegiance, surely it stands to reason, on similar grounds, that a Mussalman who rebels against the overlordship of Islam should pay for the act with his life.

The question now is whether capital punishment in the case of an apostate should or should not take the form of stoning. I will cut short this discussion in one word. Forms of punishment are always regulated by the cultural stage of a people. Legislators in every age have obeyed this psychological necessity. Even the British Government which prides itself on its humanitarianism has been forced to enact the notorious Frontier Crimes Regulation in the North-West Frontier Province, which it would not think of promulgating in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh. The Kabul Government is following the same natural law in stoning to death a number of *Quadianis* who have been proved guilty of high treason not only against the spiritual but the temporal power of Islam.

Maulana M. Safdar writing from Sialkot says:

I have read your note "Stoning to Death" in the *Young India* dated 26th February, as well as the rejoinder by Maulvi Zafar Ali Khan as published in the *Zamindar* dated 4th March. I am afraid any controversy might lead to misunderstandings and the point in issue should be cleared at once. As you have stated Koran enjoins the punishment of *Rajam* i.e., stoning to death, nowhere. The word *Rajam* is only twice mentioned in the Koran. Firstly in *Sura Had* where the people of Midian tell their Prophet, "O Shuaib! We do not understand much of what you say and most surely we see you to be weak among us, and were it not for your family we would surely *stone* you and you are not mighty against us". (*Sura Had*, verse 91, page 470-M. Mohammed Ali's translation). Secondly in *Sura* "The Cave" where one of the dwellers in the cave goes to the market to purchase food with a coin hundreds of years old and is told by the provision seller, "or surely if they (i.e., Government) prevail against you they would *stone* you to death of force you back to their religion

and then you will never succeed" (*Sura* "The Cave", verse 20, page 591-M. Mohammed Ali's translation). This will show that the word *Rajam* is mentioned only in the course of references to the ancient history and is not at all enjoined by the Koran as a punishment. I feel, you are right in saying that the present human morality cannot stand this barbarous penalty and in saying this you by no means contravene the teaching of the Koran and thus wound the religious susceptibilities of the Mussalmans. I fear, M. Zafar Ali Khan is not right in qualifying *Rajam* as Islamic *Shariat*. Koran does not support him and opinions differ as to what later Muslim jurists hold it to be.

Khwaja Kamaluddin, head of the Muslim Mission at Woking, says:

The Koran proposes no punishment whatsoever for apostasy, on this side of the grave. The Book advocates absolute freedom of conscience in matters of religion and prohibits all sorts of compulsion in this respect. I have directed my office (Lahore) to send you a copy of my book *India in the Balance* which I wrote sometime in 1922; in it you will find a chapter on the subject as an appendix. You have read the Koran, and I am afraid you made a mistake in saying that the Koran proposes punishment of stoning to death. Will you kindly refer to the Verse as well, when you write on the subject again. I fail to see anything like that in the Book. Apostasy occurred in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet in many cases, but no punishment was awarded to anyone, solely for it. No tradition can abrogate the Koran. The Holy Prophet said, "You will hear many sayings ascribed to me; if they are according to the Koran they are from me; if they are not according to the Koran they are not from me." This is the only test with us to find the truth of what has been ascribed to our Prophet as his traditions.

I am very glad to find that there is no penalty of stoning to death in the Koran. I did not say that there positively was. I said, "I understand that the stoning method & c. . ." But Maulana Zafar Ali Khan whilst saying that the penalty is not prescribed in the Koran energetically argues that it has nevertheless a place in Islam and gives it his support. To me, an outsider, it is the same thing so long as a particular practice is part of Islamic practice whether it is defended on the basis of "the practice of the Prophet" or "the collective judgment of the Islamic world". What I would like my Mussalman friends to do is unhesitatingly to condemn, irrespective of its source, what the world's reasoned opinion rejects as contrary to humanity. I am glad, therefore, that Maulana Safdar and Khwaja Kamaluddin condemn the penalty of stoning altogether, and that of death at all, for apostasy. I wish that they could say with me that even if it could be established

that the practice of stoning of death could be proved to be derived from the Prophet's practice or "the collective judgment of the Islamic world", they could not defend it as being repugnant to their sense of humanity. I would relieve the Maulana of his anxiety for my "prestige throughout the Islamic world". It would not be worth a day's purchase if it could be reduced to a nullity on account of an honest expression of my opinion about practices defended in the name of Islam. But the fact is, I have no desire for prestige anywhere. It is furniture required in courts of kings. I am a servant of Mussalmans, Christians, Parsis and Jews as I am of Hindus. And a servant is in need of love, not prestige. That is assured to me so long as I remained a faithful servant. And I would ask the Maulana to transfer his anxiety to the prestige of Islam. And I shall share his burden. In my opinion he has unconsciously diminished that prestige by his defence of an indefensible practice. No amount of casuistry can defend the penalty of stoning to death in any event or that of death, whether by stoning or otherwise, for apostasy.

My own position is clear. In my writing about Islam I take the same care of its prestige that I do of Hinduism. I apply the same method of interpretation to it that I apply to Hinduism. I no more defend on the mere ground of authority a single text in the Hindu scriptures than I can defend one from the Koran. Everything has to submit to the test of reason. Islam appeals to people because it appeals also to reason. And in the long run it will be found that any other method would land one in trouble. There are undoubtedly things in the world which transcend reason. We do not refuse to bring them on the anvil of reason but they will not come themselves. By their very nature they defy reason. Such is the mystery of the deity. It is not inconsistent with reason, it is beyond it. But stoning to death is no more beyond reason than, say, the practice of honesty or of swearing. Taken in its broadest sense apostasy means "abandonment of one's religion". Is that a grievous crime meriting the punishment of death? If it is, reconversion of a Hindu convert to Islam is a step involving capital punishment. The Maulana Saheb's suggestion that I should not criticize any act in Islam or say anything of the Koran because I am President of the Congress and friend of Mussalmans is, I am afraid, unacceptable. I should be unworthy of either position if at a critical moment I suppressed my own judgment. The stoning incident

is a matter with which every publicist is concerned. It is a matter of public morality and general humanity which is the basis of all true religions.

Young India, 26-3-1925

29. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

BOMBAY,
March 26, 1925

PANDIT M. M. MALAVIYA
BIRLA MILL
DELHI

PROPOSE CALLING COW-PROTECTION MEETING BOMBAY 22ND APRIL. PLEASE WIRE SABARMATI IF THAT WILL SUIT.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

30. TELEGRAM TO SIR PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

March 26, 1925

SIR PRABHASHANKER PATTANI
BHAVNAGAR

REACHING ASHRAM TOMORROW. LEAVING SAME FOR KATHIAWAR TUESDAY.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

31. TELEGRAM TO RANCHHODLAL PATWARI

March 26, 1925

RANCHHODLAL PATWARI[1]
MORVI

REACHING ASHRAM TOMORROW. LEAVING SAME FOR KATHIAWAR TUESDAY. WIRE ASHRAM WHETHER WE CAN MEET ANYWHERE.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

[1] Life-long friend of Gandhiji; served as Dewan in the Princely States of Western India

32. TELEGRAM TO JAYASHANKER WAGHJI

March 26, 1925

JAYASHANKER WAGHJI

PASSENGER BOMBAY MAIL

IMPOSSIBLE STAY BOMBAY. PLEASE STOP AHMEDABAD. MEET THERE TOMORROW.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

33. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

March 26, 1925

VALLABHBHAI PATEL

AHMEDABAD

DETAIN AHMEDABAD JAYASHANKER WAGHJI OF JAMNAGAR TRAVELLING TONIGHT'S MAIL FOR BOMBAY. ASK HIM STOP AHMEDABAD MEET ME TOMORROW.

GANDHI

From a handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

34. LETTER TO HAKIM AJMAL KHAN

March 26, 1925

BHAI SAHEB,

I have received your telegram. Does the money[1] have to be sent in lump sum? I did not say so to the friend[2] who has promised to send it; but there should be no harm if it is paid well in time every month. Please send the reply to the Ashram address. When are you going to Europe? Has there been another riot in Delhi? Who was at fault? I know nothing about it. I heard something only on reaching Madras. I hope you are keeping well.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

HAKIM SAHEB AJMAL KHAN
DELHI

From the Urdu original: A. M. Khwaja Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] For the Aligarh Muslim University

[2] G. D. Birla; *vide* following item and "Letter to G. D. Birla", March 30, 1925.

35. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Chaitra Sud 2 [*March 26, 1925*][1]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Here is Hakim Saheb's telegram. Can you send me Rs. 25,000[2] now? If you can, will you send it to Hakim Saheb's address or to Jamnalalji's firm in Bombay? If it could be credited at Delhi some commission might perhaps be saved. I shall be at the Ashram till the 1st of April; after that I shall be proceeding to Kathiawar again. I have got to reach Faridpur on May 2.

I hope your wife is quite well.

I intend to take up the work of cow-protection on my own lines, or rather I will have to take it up. I expect to receive help in this work from all of your brothers. I have agreed to take up this work after much hesitation.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6108. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

36. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

BOMBAY

March 26, 1925

What about your mission to Vykom? Was it a success?

It was neither a success nor a failure. It was not a success because the roads are not yet thrown open, not a failure because I believe that success is near if the satyagrahis remain true to their faith.

But in your offers, contrary to your wont, have you not put a common right of humanity in jeopardy by making it subservient to the opinion of a class, which is presumably opposed to your contention, or to Shastric authority?

I do not think I have done any such thing, because the caste Hindu opinion, if I am correctly informed by my co-workers, is overwhelmingly in favour of reform. The original satyagraha is based upon the assumption that the opinion of caste Hindus is in favour of reform. Such being the case, when the orthodox party suggested that

[1] From the reference to cow-protection and second visit to Kathiawar, the letter appears to belong to 1925.

[2] For Aligarh ; *vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 30-3-1925.

the opinion was not in favour of the reform and when I knew that the Government wanted an unequivocal expression of that opinion, I was bound to suggest a referendum in order to satisfy ignorant but honest orthodoxy. I was bound to suggest the reference to learned shastris as I knew in the matter of use of public roads there was no authority at all to suggest the contention. It must be understood that the contention of the Government is that the law in Travancore is against the reformers. It is, therefore, necessary for the Government to pass new legislation, if there is orthodox opposition. How far this contention is correct, I do not know, but I had to reckon with it.

What about the future of satyagraha?

I expect Government to take the next natural step to adopt one of the suggestions made by me, whether with or without the concurrence of the orthodox party.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-3-1925

37. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

March 26, 1925

Gandhiji said the yarn spun here was not of the requisite quality and fineness but the fault was their own, for the high hopes they had first entertained when they had met in such large numbers on the Chowpatty some four years ago were not fulfilled. He wanted 40s and higher counts if they were to supply their personal requirements as far as cloth was concerned. He had 800 counts spun in this country, and it was such fine yarn that made the Dacca mulls possible. He asked the women of Bombay to make it possible for him to realize the high hopes he had entertained in regard to khadi and spinning. He had recently toured in Southern India and had been even to Kanyakumari and had seen all sorts of people from the Maharani of Travancore down- wards and he was glad to tell them that the Maharani had promised him to wear nothing but khadi and also to spin yarn. He had seen evidence for himself that in Travancore, until a few years ago, every household spun its own yarn and made its own cloth. In Cochin the royal family was wearing khadi and also spun yarn. But how many of the women who were there that day were wearing khaddar? He fully realized that the people of Bombay could not well realize the importance of the spinning wheel—they who spent money so heedlessly. But the famine-stricken men and women of Orissa who looked like mere bundle of bones, did realize the importance of khadi and the charkha. Even these

[1] Under the auspices of the Rashtriya Stree Sabha at the Congress House, Girgaum. Sarojini Naidu presided.

starving people of Orissa had helped him with their offerings when he had been there to make collections for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. To starving people like these, the charkha was of greater importance than to the women of Bombay. Mrs. Naidu had informed him that the Begum of Bhopal had ordered a lot of khaddar for her use. The reason why he asked Begums and rich men and women to devote a small portion of their time to spinning was in order that they might bring themselves to the level of the poor in this country and realize to some extent at least their trials and tribulations. In this connection he said those who endowed *sadavrat* [1] for the poor were really committing sin, although unintentionally.

Why were so many lakhs of able-bodied men in this country, who were we able to earn an honest livelihood, starving and loafing? It was because they had no work and could not find any work. At best the mills in India could employ a few lakhs, but not the many crores who were there starving and workers. He did not ask the women to give him any money for these people, but to dedicate at least 30 minutes a day to spinning for the sake of the starving masses. Let them wear khaddar for the sake of these poor men and women; they must give up all foreign cloth, even mill-cloth and until they did so, they could not be free, could not have swaraj and *Ramarajya*. He invited the women of Bombay to take part in the national functions which would be held in the Congress House, which would be the centre of all national activities in this city. The women of Bombay had given him much, but he asked them to give him something more for the country and that was half-an hour daily devoted to spinning.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-3-1925

38. SPEECH AT MEETING OF DEPRESSED CLASSES, BOMBAY [2]

March 26, 1925

The Mahatma said it was unnecessary for him to tell them all he wanted to do, or had already done, for the abolition of untouchability from this land, and while he admitted that untouchability was fast disappearing from India, he regretted that the pace was not fast enough for him. They knew in Vykom satyagraha was being performed by the untouchables in order to assert their right to walk in a street adjoining the temple. These untouchables were offering satyagraha with a view to bringing round to reason those Hindus who in their bigotry had become blind to all real principles of Hindu religion. It was to open the eyes of these caste Hindus that

[1] Alms or charity

[2] An address of welcome praising Gandhiji's services for the removal of untouchability was presented. S. V. Puntambekar translated the speech into Marathi.

the untouchables in Vykom were offering satyagraha. Gandhiji hoped their efforts would prove successful in the end. These people were performing *topascharya*, sacrifice, in order to convince the caste Hindus of their mistaken notions. These untouchables had a great spiritual leader, Narayan Guru, who had promised him not to allow any of his followers to approach him without wearing khaddar. If the young boys in the audience could not understand his Hindi speech, he could only bless them and wish them a long life, which he hoped they would spend in the service of their country, in good deeds, in truthfulness and in fearlessness. They should fear no man, and fearing none, serve their country. He also asked them to give up drink.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-3-1925

39. SPEECH AT OPENING OF CONGRESS HOUSE, BOMBAY

March 26, 1925

Gandhiji after congratulating the winners of the medals[1] said the work for which they had gathered there was a blessed one. But before opening the House they must fully realize their responsibility. The national flag was a mere piece of khaddar with a charkha on it, yet they loved it immensely, and it symbolized their hopes and pride. The hoisting of the flag meant something more than the mere ceremony signified. In this country at the present time there was suspicion among the different communities towards each other. In the South, the Hindus were fighting with each other. From the prayers said there by the representatives of various communities, they would find that they contained the same eternal truth about the great God pervadin everywhere. If they but realized that all religions were great and must be honoured and respected as such, and that they must tolerate each other, the object of such a ceremony would be realized. Once the flag was hoisted, it should never be lowered whatever happened, even if they all died for it. If the man who was holding it aloft fell stricken down, then the next man must take it from his hands and never allow it to die in the dust. The flag was the embodiment of all that they cherished and honoured. With the hoisting of the flag, Gandhiji said, the House would be opened by him. The House was purchased out of the Tilak Swaraj Fund, to which Bombay was the largest contributor. The House was consecrated to the Congress work, and he asked them all to take advantage of the building. He then prayed to God to make their hearts clean, that they might bear no ill will towards each other, that they might serve the country, that the flag which they had hoisted that day would never be lowered, and that the members of the Congress would bear no ill will towards their countrymen.

[1] In the spinning competition organized by the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee before the function.

Gandhiji then walked upto the flagstaff and slowly unfurled the national banner and hoisted it amidst loud cries of *Vandemataram.*

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-3-1925

40. LETTER TO C.F. ANDREWS

March 27, 1925

MY DEAREST CHARLIE,

I am so sorry about Gurudev. I do hope he is not so ill as your letter leads me to think.

I understand your remarks about birth-control. I have been drawn into the controversy now. You will therefore see the thing developing in *Young India*.

I am quite sure that Banarasidas's[1] going to East Africa will do no good. It will if he could stay there for some time.

Yours,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 963

41. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Chaitra Sud 3 [*March 28, 1925*][2]

Why do you say that my report[3] has become lame[4] ? What is it that I have left out? Did you not see my first one? But even if I see to be obtuse, I shall be satisfied if all of you who have understood the position will retain the spirit of justice and non-violence while remaining firm in your convictions.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 76

[1] Banarasidas Chaturvedi (b. 1892); journalist and writer; professor of Hindi, 1921-25, Gujarat Mahavidyalaya, a constituent college of the Gujarat Vidyapith.

[2] As in the source.

[3] On Hindu-Muslim riots in the country, specially in Kohat

[4] According to the addressee, he had described the report as "dry" but Gandhiji misread the word to mean "lame".

42. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Chaitra Sud 3 [*March 28, 1925*][1]

I was unhappy because I could not meet Anand[2] this time, but I was helpless. Next time when I come, I shall certainly see her.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 80

43. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Chaitra Sud 4 [*March 28, 1925*][3]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. What you have heard is absolutely incorrect. I made a thorough inquiry in Delhi itself. It is true that a Muslim eloped with a Hindu woman. But neither of the brothers was in any way involved. It is a long story. If you ask me when I go there, I shall explain. The story appearing in *Milap* is wholly false. Neither of the Maulana's nephews has anything to do with it.

There are some things that are worth doing always, while there are other things that should be done only under certain circurnstances. The Use of one's writing ability for a good cause is admirable. But it is a crime to use it to promote wickedness.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

93 BAZAR GATE STREET

FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The year and month as in the source

[2] Anandbehn, Gandhiji's sister's daughter

[3] The postmark bears the date March 29, 1925, in which year *Chaitra Sud 4* corresponded to March 28.

44. LETTER TO INDRA VIDYAVACHASPATI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 28 [*1925*][1]

MY DEAR INDRAJI[2],

I am sending you herewith something received from a correspondent. What have you to say regarding the statements made therein? Are there really any editions of the *Satyartha Prakash* which do not contain Chap. XIV about Islam? Was the chapter written or inserted after the death of the Maharshi[3]? And if so, by whom? Gandhiji wants your detailed reply and he thinks only you could enlighten him in the matter.

What is this rioting in Delhi? Newspaper accounts are meagre. We read something whilst we were in Travancore, and have heard nothing more.

Yours sincerely,
MAHADEV DESAI

[PS.]

Please return enclosure with your reply.

From a photostat: G.N. 7207. Also C. W. 4867. Courtesy: Chandra Gupta Vidyalankar

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's visit to Travancore, which took place in March, 1925

[2] Son of Swami Shraddhanand

[3] Swami Dayanand

45. TELEGRAM TO "ENGLISHMAN" [1]

SABARMATI,
[After *March 29, 1925*]

WITHOUT CONSULTATION WITH DESHBANDHU DAS AND UNDERSTANDING THE IMPLICATIONS I HESITATE TO MAKE ANY STATEMENT BUT GENERALLY I CAN SAFELY SAY THAT CO-OPERATION WITH ALL PARTIES ANY DAY IS POSSIBLE ON HONOURABLE TERMS.

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-4-1925

46. THE "DARSHAN" OF KANYAKUMARI

India's frontiers extend from Kashmir to Kanyakumari and from Karachi to Assam. These are the four corners of India. The summit of Hindukush is her crest, the strength and beauty of Mother India. At the base, the pure waters of the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal wash her feet. Kanyakumari is no other than Parvati[2] who practised penance in order to be united in marriage with Siva, the Lord Supreme transcending all worldly attachments. We see the ocean on all three sides of Kanyakumari as it is on the tip of India. Since there is a confluence of two waters, two tints are visible here. As we face due south, we can see from the very same spot the sun rise to out left and set to our right. We did not have the time to witness that spectacle; nevertheless, we could imagine the sun rising at dawn after a bath in the great Bay of Bengal, robbing the stars of their brightness,

[1] In reply to the *Englishman's* telegram requesting Gandhiji for his views on C.R. Das's manifesto published on March 29 which had said: "Apprehension has gained considerable ground in the minds of Europeans in India and Great Britain that Swaraj Party has encouraged and is encouraging political assassinations and intimidation. . . . I am opposed on principle to political assassinations and violence in any shape or form. It is absolutely abhorrent to me and to my Party. I consider it an obstacle to our political progress. . . . I am equally opposed to and equally abhor any form of repression by the Government. . . . We are determined to secure swaraj and political equality of India on terms of equality and honourable partnership in the Empire."

[2] Siva's consort

and, in the evening, going down the golden sky and retiring for rest into the western ocean full of germs. The watchman of the State guest-house there tried his best of persuade us to stay on to see the majestic sunset, but how could we, who were astride a horse, or rather a car, stay on to enjoy such bliss? I had to be content with having my feet purified in the waves of the ocean sanctified through washing the feet of Mother India.

What a magnificent structure the *rishis* have raised! What a sense of beauty the *Puranis* had! Here on the tip of India, which is the end of our world, the *rishis* built the temple of Kanyakumari and the authors of Puranas beautified it with pictures. I had no desire to enjoy the beauty of nature, although it fills the place to overflowing. For my part, I drank in here the nectar of the mystery of religion. When I was still dipping my feet in the ocean on the beautiful ghat there, one of my companions said to me. "Vivekananda used to go and meditate on the hill over there." Whether he in fact did so or not, he could have done it. A good swimmer could swim to that spot. There could not but be perfect peace on that island promontory. The music of the ocean-waves, sweet and gentle like strains from a *vina*[1] could only invite one to meditation. Hence my religious yearning grew stronger. Adjoining the steps is a raised platform on which a hundred persons could sit with ease. I felt like sitting down there and reciting the Gita. Finally, however, I suppressed even that sacred desire and sat in silence, my heart filled with the image of the teacher of the *Gita.*

Having thus sanctified ourselves, we went to the temple. As I am a crusader for the abolition of untouchability and call myself a *Bhangi*, there was some doubt whether I could enter the temple. I told the man in charge of the temple not to take me anywhere where he felt that I had no right to go. I would respect those restrictions. He said that the Goddess's *darshan* could be had only after half-past five and that we had come at four o'clock. However, he would show us everything else. The restriction imposed on us was only with respect to approaching the sanctuary where the Goddess is installed. That, however, applied to all who had been abroad. I replied that I would gladly abide by it. After this conversation, the man in charge led me within and took me round the place.

[1] Indian string instrument.

I did not pity the ignorance of the idolatrous Hindu, but, on the contrary, realized his wisdom. By discovering the way of image-worship, he has not multiplied the one God into many, but realized the fact and shown it to the world that man can worship—and he will continue to worship—God in His diverse forms. Although the Christians and the Muslims do not regard themselves as idolators, nevertheless, those who worship their ideals are also image-worshippers. A mosque or a church also involved a form of image-worship. Imagining that one can become more holy only by going to these places is a form of idolworship, and there is no harm in such belief. Even the faith that God is revealed only in the Koran or the Bible is idol-worship and an innocent one. The Hindu goes further and says that everyone should worship God in the form he likes. Even a person who makes an idol of stone or gold or silver and after attributing divinity to it, purifies himself by meditating on it, will be fully qualified to attain *moksha*. While circumambulating the temple, all this became clearer to me.

However, even there my happiness was not untainted by sorrow. I was allowed to make a complete circle, but I was not permitted to go to the inner shrine because I had been to England. The restriction imposed on untouchables, however, was due to the fact of their birth. How can this be tolerated?Could Kanyakumari be polluted? Has this practice been followed since ancient times? My inner voice cried out that this could not be. Moreover, if it had been, it would be sinful. That which is sinful does not cease to be so or become meritorious through its antiquity. Hence, I was all the more convinced that it was the duty of every Hindu to make a mighty effort to remove this stigma.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan , 29-3-1925

47. THE COMING WEEK

Is it possible to forget the 6th or the 13th of April? On the 6th of April 1919, the people had a new birth; on the 13th of that month they performed a human sacrifice in which hundreds laid down their lives. It is true that the sacrifice was unplanned and enforced. Nevertheless, it undoubtedly deserved the name. In the carnage at Jallianwala Bagh, the blood of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs mingled freely. Those who seemed separate while alive, became one in death.

Hindus and Muslims may fight and wrestle, may kill and be killed. Such disputes will be forgotten; but will the event of Jallianwala Bagh be ever forgotten? Its memory will remain fresh so long as India exists. Hence these two dates cannot be forgotten.

What should we do this year? The days of hartals are over. These have value no longer. Moreover, today public enthusiasm is too low to support such moves. Hartals would not be appropriate so long as Hindus and Muslims are full of bitterness. However, those who look upon national service as a part of their dharma, those who desire to secure swaraj through peaceful and pure means alone, should fast for half a day or observe *roza*[1] on that day. They should specially meditate and worship God on that day, purify their hearts and participate in the present programme of the Congress.

Although these three tasks are important, they cannot be taken up simultaneously. Hence I would suggest that those who spin should spin more during that week, those who have not yet given up foreign cloth should do so and urge others to do so. Then again, during that week propaganda for khadi should be given special impetus, so much so that no stocks of khadi should remain unsold in any of the Congress Khadi Bhandars. All people should shed the bitterness in their minds towards others and every Hindu should serve the *Antyajas* in one form or another during this week. Those who cannot do anything in particular should, at any rate, contribute some money for the service of the *Antyajas*.

Some may ask how the cause of swaraj is served by such trivial tasks. Those who do so could not have fully thought things out. If they do so, they will realize that, apart from this, there is nothing else to be done for swaraj at the moment. Swaraj may not be secured by merely doing this, but without this it can never, never, never be secured. Should anyone who lacks faith humorously ask me what is proved by repeating "never" thrice, the answer is that by doing so I do not wish to prove the worthiness of the cause, but only to express my firm conviction and my determination.

As a matter of fact, no doubts should arise about the need for the three things mentioned above. All these three assume supreme importance and become inseparable parts ot the Congress programme because of the knowledge and the enthusiasm aroused during that

[1] Fast among Muslims

week in 1919. The pledges regarding swadeshi, Hindu-Muslim unity and the abolition of untouchability were taken on that very occasion. It immediately became apparent that swadeshi meant the spinning-wheel and khadi. Rules were framed for the spread of the spinning-wheel. How can we, therefore, doubt today what we have regarded as an essential part of the activity for swaraj?

Supposing, however, that we had been mistaken? If so, we should certainly rectify the errors. The Congress, however, not only has not regarded it as such, but has also passed resolutions to encourage the programme. There is, therefore, no room for considering it a mistake.

One doubt alone remains to be considered now. Non-co-operation is suspended, civil disobedience is suspended. What is the use of khadi, etc., now? This argument is like a bad workman quarrelling with his tools. If we have realized that civil disobedience is impossible without these things, how then can we put forward such an argument? If I claim that there can be no civil disobedience without the threefold programme of khadi, etc., and if the public claims that the latter is not possible without the former, we would be placed in the same situation as the oilman's bullock[1]. However, that man or woman who does not get involved in this circular argument, but rather follows the straight thread of the yarn, will continue to progress and will never lose his way during the journey because the thread will be his guide. He need not look this side or that. Hence there is no danger of his losing his way.

If, during the journey, he carries with him food in the form of Hindu-Muslim unity, etc., there is no danger of hunger, etc., for him. If perhaps he does not take that food with him, his fasting, that is, his penance will generate the food for him.

During his journey, he will pass through the gardens of prohibition and other social services, will roam there, and end the suffering of those who are addicted to liquor by pointing out the straight way of the yarn, and make companions of the ex-addicts who will have purified themselves through *prayaschitta*[2] .

On the way, he will meet many skeletons who though alive are as good as dead. On seeing his yarn they will dance, and, seeing his

[1] Going round and round in a circle
[2] Atonement

wheel, they too will want to work it, and by infusing blood into their skeletons, they will save themselves from the clutches of death and contribute their offering to the sacrificialfire of swaraj. I request every one of my brothers and sisters to perform this fine sacrifice next week.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-3-1925

48. A GOLDEN GARDEN

Travancore is not a province. It is like a large city. Its citizens do not live in flats with the walls of one touching those of another, as the citizens of Bombay do. They live in their beautiful single-storeyed houses with thatched roofs, a mile or a little less apart from one another and surrounded by their own fields and gardens. I have not seen the like of this anywhere except in Malabar and the region of Kerala which surrounds it. Travancore is like a beautiful garden or an orchard. One comes across coconut, banana, pepper and mango trees everywhere. The coconut trees, however, hide all the rest. The traveller passes through these groves. There are two modes of travel. One can travel in boats by way of canals and backwaters or by road in a car. The railway too is there, but it serves only a very few areas. The view on the backwaters is magnificent. Both the shores are, of course, visible. Moreover, all the year round, as far as the eye can see, there stretches an endless garden on both shores. I have described it as a golden garden. If anyone looks at these gardens before sunset while journeying on the backwaters, the trees appear to have golden leaves. The sun peeps through these leaves and looks like a revolving mount of gold. Man would never get tired of looking at it and singing the praises of God'screation. No painter can paint such a scene. Who can paint a scene that changes every moment and grows ever more beautiful? Man's handiwork appears insignificant by the side of it. Moreover, millions of men can see this scene free of cost.

After having seen the sights in Travancore and Assam I feel that there is no need for Indians to go abroad in search of natural beauty. For salubrious climate, we have in India mountains like the Himalayas, the Nilgiris and Mount Abu. How is it that people are not happy in such a beautiful country where anyone can get the climate that he

wants? Or, in the words of the late Shri Malbari[1], how can man develop the capacity to see or know anything of foreign lands so long as he has not appreciated the beauty of the history and geography of his own home, his own street, his own town and his own country? Until then, he has no standard of comparison and hence he sees nothing though he has eyes. Just as tailors, cobblers and such other persons cannot take measurements without a tape, similarly, a lover of nature cannot appreciate other countries even though he sees them, if he has no knowledge of his motherland. To him only those things at which he looks with wide eyes and open mouth are beautiful, or else he merely repeats what others have written about those countries.

I found that what is true of the natural beauty of Travancore is also true of its government. Its motto is:"Dharma is verily our strength." I have not seen such roads anywhere else in India. There seemed to be no disorder in the State. For the past many years the rulers have not harassed the subjects. The Ruler does not disregard any rules or laws. The Maharaja of Travancore is always the offspring of a marriage betwcen a Brahmin and a Kshatriya. The late Maharaja was looked upon as a devout and learned man. Travancore has had a legislative assembly for many years. There are large numbers of Hindus, Muslims and Christians in Travancore. Of the population of above forty-six lakhs, almost a half are Christians. It seemed that everyone found employment without any discrimination. The people can freely express their views. There is hardly any part of the country where education is as widespread as in Travancore. And this is true of girls as well as of boys. A good proportion of the State's revenue is spent on education. It is difficult to come across illiterate men and women in Travancore. There is a special college for women in its capital Trivandrum. Not only are the untouchables permitted to join any school and any department but a certain sum is spent on them is spent on them every year.

MAHARANIS

I saw the dowager Queen-mother who runs the Government on behalf of the boy-king and the younger queen who is his mother. On meeting both of them I was delighted by their august simplicity. Both were clad exclusively in white garments. I could not see any ornaments on them except for a necklace of tiny black beads. They wore

[1] Behramji Merwanji Malbari (1854-1912) ; poet, author and social reformer

nothing on their ears or noses. I did not see any diamond or pearl rings on their fingers. I have never seen such simplicity even in middle class women. Their furniture was in keeping with their attire. When I compared the furniture of these Maharanis to that of our wealthy class, I felt pity for the latter. Why is it that we have become so luxury-loving?

I found that both the Maharanis were free from any ostentation. To me, the boy-Maharaja appeared very good-natured. I found that his dress consisted only of a shirt and a dhoti simply wrapped around the waist sash-like. I could see no special sign to denote his being a Maharaja. All these three things won my heart. It is possible that on closer acquaintance, I may find it necessary to qualify my description. I did ask others. No one contradicted the impression that I had. I do not suggest that the intrigues found in an average royal court do not exist there despite all this simplicity. It was certainly not my dharma to look for faults. I seek virtues and worship them. I am thrilled and dazzled when I find them. I like singing their praises. No one is without faults in this world. When I see these, I note them and feel sad and sometimes, if it is relevant, I speak of them with a heavy heart.

I would request those to whom God has given a little money to take a trip to Travancore and Cochin.

SIMPLICITY AND PEASANTS

As is the king, so are the subjects. I have not found such similarity between the dress of the ruler and the subjects anywhere else as I found here. The dress of the ruling class and the peasant class was almost the same. It is amongst the peasants that I found some variety in dress. One may come across a few highly educated persons wearing western clothes or some women dressed in silk saris; however, the common dress of the Malayalis consists of an untucked dhoti and a shirt. The women also wear the same kind of dhoti, but one end of that dhoti serves as an upper garment, and of late a shirt or a blouse has been added.

Khadi can be easily introduced in these parts because women require neither dyeing nor any border, nor any great length like our sari or *ghaghra*[1]. Despite this, calico and nainsook have wrought

[1] Petticoat worn low up to ankles

ruin. Khadi has found its way after the recent struggle[1]. Nevertheless, there is no end to the number of spinners and weavers in these parts. In the vicinity of Kanyakumari there is a village called Nagarcoil where hand-spun yarn is sold at a regular weekly market.

SATYAGRAHA AT VYKOM

How is it that untouchability is practised with such fanaticism in a region where there is so much education, where there is good government and where the people have many rights? This is the beauty of an ancient custom. It seems even ignorance passes off as knowledge when it receives the sanction of tradition. I even met persons here who sincerely believed that Christians might use roads near temples but the untouchables should not; not even a barrister or a lawyer of that class should be allowed to pass by. There is an untouchable swami here who performs the *sandhya*[2] and such other rites. He has a good knowledge of Sanskrit and dresses like a sannyasi. He has thousands of disciples . He owns thousands of acres of land and has established an Advait Ashram. Even he cannot pass by the roads near temples. How well-protected are these temples ! They are surrounded by six feet high walls. Around these are roads on which even bullock-carts move. And yet, no untouchable is allowed to pass that way. Satyagraha is being offered in Vykom to end such ignorance, such injustice. I met and talked courteously with the *sanatanis* who defend this practice. They put forward many arguments to support it, but I found them insubstantial. Finally, I made three suggestions, and agreed to withdraw the satyagraha if any of them was accepted, irrespective of the outcome being unfavourable to the demands of the satyagrahis. These gentlemen were not ready to accept even these suggestions. The agreement eventually arrived at a result of a conference with the local police commissioner[3] has been given in Mahadev Desai's letter elsewhere.

Thus, the movement is at a standstill now. As my suggestions meet with the approval of the authorities, I hope that this struggle will soon come to a successful end. However, everything depends upon the true, that is, gentle persistence of the satyagrahis. I have an

[1] Satyagraha in Vykom
[2] Morning and evening prayers with a set formula
[3] W. H. Pitt

undeviating faith that the result will be nothing but good if they do not transgress the restrictions they have willingly accepted.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-3-1925

49. MY RESPONSIBILITY

I am often asked questions about the reports of my speeches appearing in newspapers. I find it impossible to answer them. I do not read newspapers, for I cannot. Much of my time is spent in travelling about, and my mail is also delayed because of that. I have also to make a good many speeches in the course of my tours. Placed in such an unenviable condition, I do not know whom to answer and whom not to. We have very few reporters in our country who can take down speeches in short hand. I have, therefore, hardly read a report of my speech which I have liked. One single word in place of another can distort the speaker's meaning. I would, therefore, request all friends that, if they come across anything in the reports of my speeches in newspapers which is contrary to my known views, they should assume that I did not say it. An effort is made to report in *Navajivan* everything in my speeches which is considered important enough to be preserved. Other things which I may have said were addressed to the audience and personally I do not mind if they are not preserved in print. Even those who place a high value on my views have no cause to feel sorry on this account. What does it matter whether or not reports of the same views and ideas, clothed in different language every time, are made available to them? What is more important at present is to digest what one reads or hears, and then act accordingly. Too much reading may even do harm rather than good.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-3-1925

50. MY NOTES

FOUR MARRIAGES

For want of time I have not been able to write, though I wanted to, about the three marriages which took place under my supervision and which, it may even be said, were solemnized by me on the premises of the Ashram in Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta's bungalow. However, as they are well worth knowing about, I am dealing with them

here. It is not my function to arrange or encourage any marriage or to take part in one. Moreover, allowing marriages on the Ashram soil is not in keeping with its ideals. My dharma is to practise *brahmacharya* and persuade others to do so. Moreover, I look upon these times as difficult ones. I regard it as harmful for people to marry or multiply population during these difficult days. The duty of wise people now is to reduce enjoyments and encourage renunciation.

This is but one view of the matter. My wishes and my ideals are one thing. However, I would join, not to condemn, and in some cases would even approve, an act which is inevitable and also not altogether harmful and in which special stress is laid on the dharma of self-control and propagation of Khadi.

These three marriages belonged to this class. I had previously also helped in celeberating two marriages of this kind—those of the two daughters of Imam Sahib[1], who lived with me and was like my own brother. I have always regarded these girls as my own daughters. One of the sisters, Fatima, died only a few years after her marriage. Amina was the other daughter. Imam Sahib and I were bound to get them married in accordance with their wishes. As much simplicity as possible was introduced into these marriages. In both of them, the bride and the bridegroom were, of course, dressed in khadi. Apart from intimate friends, no one else was invited. This time, one of the three marriages was that of a girl who had been brought up in the Ashram itself. The other was that of Shri Vallabhbhai's son[2] and the third, that of Dr. Mehta's son[3] . All the three were celebrated on the very same day and the ceremony took only one day. In each case, both the parties in the marriages used nothing but khadi. In the wedding ceremony there were no drums, *shehnai*, feasts, etc. There were neither invitation cards nor a large party consisting of the bridegroom's relations and friends. Some friends had come along as witnesses. Deliberately, not even sherbet was served to them.

Not only was a single step not omitted from the wedding ritual but, in addition, the vows that had to be taken were fully explained to the couples in Gujarati. The couples and their elders who performed

[1] Imam Abdul Kadir Bawazeer, a Muslim priest who took prominent part in satyagraha in South Africa and later lived with Gandhiji as Sabarmati

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Ahmedabad", 25-2-1925.

[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Arya, Rangoon", 26-2-1925.\

the ceremony of *kanyadan*[1] had fasted in the customary fashion. In this manner, the couples embarking upon the journey of life were made aware of the fact that marriage, according to Hinduism, is for practising self-control and not for enjoyment. The ceremony was concluded with blessings on the couples and with the Ashram's prayer to God.

Of these three marriages, one should be given some special mention. The marriage of Shri Vallabhbhai's son, Shri Dahyabhai, with Shri Kashibhai's daughter, Yashoda, may be regarded as one of their own choice.The two selected each other and decided to get married after receiving permission from their parents. Both desired only to serve the country together. The future alone will show how long they will abide by this youthful desire. This could be regarded as an ideal marriage in the *Patidar* community. Both the families are well-known and Shri Kashibhai could have spent much money if he had wished to. Nevertheless, he deliberately decided to dispense with all expenses at the wedding. To some extent this incurred the wrath of other members of their caste. I expect other *Patidars* to have such marriages, and other castes too should do the same and free themselves from the burden of heavy expenses. This would relieve the poor, while the wealthy could use the money thus saved for serving the country or for religious purposes, according to their own wishes.

The fourth marriage took place at Jetpur between Shri Devchandbhai's daughter and Shri Trikamlal Shah of the Gujarat Vidyapith. Shri Devchandbhai insisted upon my attending it so that I could see how it was celebrated with the utmost simplicity[2] and that nothing but khadi would be found there, and the bride and bridegroom could receive my blessings. I gave in to his sincere and pressing invitation and attended the wedding. There were many men and women present there who had been invited by Devchandbhai's family. On the bridegroom's side, however, there was no one except the bridegroom himself. Shri Trikamlal was determined to marry if he could find a worthy bride, with no more than a *tulsi*[3] leaf as dowry. He carried out that decision of his. The wedding ceremony ended with the bride giving away khadi clothes to

[1] Giving away the bride
[2] *Vide*, however, "My Notes", 19-4-1925, sub-title, "A Correction".
[3] A sacred plant tended in Indian homes

the children of the *Antyajas* in their locality. In this marriage, too, music, songs, etc., were completely left out. My request to the *mahajans*[1] of Kathiawar is not to be enraged at such simplicity, but rather regard it as praiseworthy and propagate it. The era of large dinner parties should be regarded as having ended. Some practices should indeed change with every age. Just as winter clothes are useless in the summer, even so the customs of one age sometimes become useless and indeed harmful in another.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-3-1925

51. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Chaitra Sud 6 [*March 30, 1925*][2]

CHI. VASUMATI,

Your letter. It appears you did not get my letter from the South to your Surat address. You were never out of my mind during the tour. I was keenly reminded of you while watching the scenery and while visiting the temple at Kanyakumari.

I am all right. I may stay for about eight days in Kathiawar. I have to come to Bombay for a couple of days in April.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 588. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

52. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Chaitra Sud 6 [*March 30, 1925*][3]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

These days I happen to be writing to you daily.

Have two of the enclosed sent to Maulana Shaukat Ali and one to Chi. Vasumati[4]. Vasumati lives on Lamington Road opposite the

[1] Elders of the community

[2] From the reference to the visit to Kanyakumari, Kathiawar and Bombay

[3] The addressee received the letter on April 1, 1925, in which year *Chaitra Sud 6* corresponded to March 30.

[4] Vasumati Pandit. For Gandhiji's letter to her dated March 30, 1925.

Powell Building. She has just gone there from Surat.

Give me news about Anand. I shall definitely meet her this time when I go there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

53. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Chaitra Shukla 6 [*March 30, 1925*][1]

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter.

Your yarn is quite good. I hope you will never give up the sacred work you have taken up.

As regards your wife, you can take a vow that in case she dies you will strictly observe *ekapatnivrata*, i.e., the vow that you will not marry again. If you have the inclination and the strength to take this vow, I would advise you to do so before your wife.

As regards the amount of Rs. 20,000, I shall make enquiries from Jamnalalji's firm.

I had very close relations with Shri Raychandji[2] . I do not think he followed truth and non-violence with greater devotion than I, but I do believe that he far surpassed me in knowledge of the scriptures and retentiveness of memory. He had self-knowledge and self-confidence from his childhood. I know that he was not a *jivanmukta*[3] and he was himself conscious that he was not. But he was fast progressing in that direction. I know his views on Buddha and others. We shall talk about these things when we meet. My tour in Bengal begins in May.

I have already asked you for Rs. 25,000 for Aligarh. I have also sent you Hakimji's telegram.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C.W.6109. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

[1] From the references to the appeal for Rs. 25,000 for the Muslim University and the illness of the addressee's wife, it is evident that the letter belongs to 1925.

[2] A businessman, jeweller and karmayogi who profoundly influenced Gandhiji; *vide An Autobiography*, P. II, Ch. I.

[3] One who has attained deliverance in one's life

54. LETTER TO R. D. BIRLA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Chaitra Shukla 6 [*March 30, 1925*][1]

BHAISHRI RAMESHWARDASJI,

I have your letter. When I get the Rs. 5,000, I shall spend the amount on the untouchables' welfare, as desired by you. No letter from Jamnalalji as yet. At present he is touring Rajputana for khadi propaganda.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

SJT. RAMESHWARDAS BIRLA
BIRLA HOUSE
RANCHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6122. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

55.VYKOM SATYAGRAHA

After the last lines on the Vykom affair were written for the last week's issue, I received a wire from Mr. Pitt, Commisioner of Police, Travancore. It was then too late to publish in *Young India* the correspondence between the Commissioner of Police and myself. Police and myself. The reader must, however, have seen the correspondence[2] in the Press. It makes a distinct advance in the reform aimed at. The correspondence shows unmistakably that the Travancore Government favour the reform and that they are also pledged to carry it out at the earliest opportunity. Let no one

[1] The date is given on the presumption that Jamnalal Bajaj toured Rajasthan in 1925.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Associated Press of India", 24-3-1925.

consider that in agreeing to a referendum or Shastric interpretation I have endangered the reform itself. The present campaign in its inception is based on the assumption that the reform is required by the vast majority of the caste Hindus and that the prohibition against the suppressed classes is not warranted by the genuine Hindu scriptures. For me, therefore, not to have made the proposals would have betrayed woeful lack of resourcefulness. It was the most natural thing for a satyagrahi like myself to have made the proposals which, if they had proceeded from the orthodox party, I could not have honestly rejected. Indeed, I make bold to say that my proposals paved the way for the remarkable support the cause received everywhere, save among the very few members of the orthodox party. Had there been real opposition from the majority of caste Hindus, or had there been any doubt as to the Shastric endorsement of the reform, the satyagraha would have assumed a different shape altogether. It would have been then a movement for a change in the religion rather than the removal of an irreligious custom. Indeed, those who were in immediate charge of the movement never questioned the propriety of my proposals. I could not take any step without consultation with them and without their full concurrence. It now remains for the satyagrahis at Vykom to carry out the letter and the spirit of the agreement and for the caste Hindus to support the movement in the manner promised by them everywhere to ensure the speedy and successful ending of the struggle. The satyagrahis must fulfil the letter by not overstepping the boundary-line until a settlement is reached, or a crossing after due notice by me becomes necessary for furthering the object of the agreement. The spirit of it requires gentleness and utmost humility on the part of the satyagrahis. Their uniform courtesy towards the opponents of reform will break the edge of the opposition. They must regard the Government not as opposed to the reform but as pledged to carry it out at the earliest possible moment. I have not the slightest reason to doubt the word of Her Highness the Maharani Regent or the Dewan or the Commissioner of Police. The conduct of satyagrahis in the Ashram must be in correspondence with their bearing at the boundary-line. The Ashram must be a busy hive in which every member is ever found at his own allotted task. It must be a model of simplicity and sanitation. The members are pledged to the charkha work during all spare moments. The spinning, the carding and the weaving departments admit of considerable improvement. Every

inmate should be an expert carder and spinner if everyone cannot also become an expert weaver. The members must insist on spinning and weaving at least the cloth required by them. They should also learn Hindi well. They are or should regard themselves as trustees for the prestige and dignity of Hinduism. Theirs is a fight not to end with the opening of the roads round temples but it should be considered to be the beginning of a glorious struggle for the purity of hinduism and removal of the abuses that have crept into it. They are not reformers who would take no note of the opposite side or would violate every sentiment of the orthodox people. They would vie with the tallest among the orthodox in purity of conduct and veneration for all that is good and noble in the Shastras. They would not disregard scriptural authority without the deepest thought, and to tha end, some of them would even study Sanskrit and explore the possibilities of reform within the four corners of the scriptures. They will not be in a hurry, but having fearlessly taken all the steps that they can consistently with their creed of truth and non-violence, will have the patience and the faith of the *rishis* of old.

ENTRY INTO TEMPLES

For, the opening of the roads is not the final but the first step in the ladder of reform. Temples in general, public wells, public schools must be open to the untouchables equally with the caste Hindus. But that is not the present goal of the satyagrahis. We may not force the pace. The schools are almost all open to the untouchables. The temples and the public wells or tanks are not. Public opinion should be carefully cultivated and the majority should be converted before the reform can be successfully carried out. Meanwhile, the remedy lies in founding temples and digging tanks or wells that would be open to the untouchables and to the other Hindus. I have no doubt that the movement for the removal of untouchability has made tremendous headway. Let us not retard it by indiscretion or over-zeal. Once the idea of pollution by the touch of a person by reason of his birth is gone, the rest is easy and bound to follow.

Young India, 2-4-1925

56. NOTES

SIKH SACRIFICE

The Akali position still seems to be uncertain. In the resume published by Sardar Mangal Singh in his capacity as President of the Central Sikh League occurs the following summary of the Sikh sacrifices:

> 30,000 arrested, 400 died and killed, 2,000 wounded, Rs. 15 lakhs of fine including forfeitures of pensions of retired soldiers.

If these figures are verifiable, they tell a tale of sacrifice which reflects the highest credit on Sikh courage and self-sacrifice, and means equal discredit for a Government that has taken no count of their sufferings.

BENGAL

I hope to attend the Provincial Conference that is to be held at Faridpur on 2nd May next. I must confess that the impelling force is the temptation of doing khaddar, charkha and untouchables' work. The same temptation will take me to other parts of Bengal. Those, therefore, who want me to visit the other parts will kindly put themselves in correspondence with the organizers of the tour. Deshbandhu Das should naturally be the one to arrange the tour but I have just received a wire from Acharya Ray saying that Deshbandhu is at Patna and that he would like to fix up his khadi centres for visiting. I, therefore, hope that those interested in my tour will place themselves in communication with Dr. P. C. Ray.

MILK SLIVERS

I understand that in several places mill slivers are still used for spinning. I need hardly point out that yarn spun from mill slivers is not hand-spun yarn. Mill slivers are themselves almost like very thick yarn and their use defeats the purpose for which hand-spinning is intended namely, reintroduction of hand-spinning is seven hundred thousand villages of India. It is impossible and useless to send mill slivers to these villages. To cart slivers from Bombay to a Punjab village would be a remedy worse than the disease. Carding is not a defunct occupation. It is possible to get professional carders almost anywhere. Moreover, carding is an employment which pays in cities as well as villages. Therefore, it is an occupation which young men may learn even as a trade. In any event, no Congress office worth the name should be without facilities for carding. A good carder is as

much a necessity in a Congress office as an honest clerk and book-keeper.

KHADDAR IN BENGAL

The following is the translation of Mr. Shankerlal Banker's notes[1] on Khaddar work in Bengal:

Young India, 2-4-1925

57. CONUNDRUMS

A Mussalman lawyer handed me the following questions for answer. I am omitting from two questions argumentative matter:

> How far do you approve of the contention of Muslims like Mr. Jinnah and his school of thought that the Indian National Congress which has a large Hindu majority in it cannot adequately and justly represent and safeguard the interests of the Muslim minority and that, therefore, a separate and communal organization like the Muslim League is absolutely necessary?

I do not agree with the contention imputed to Mr. Jinnah. In my opinion, the Congress has from its birth gone out of its way to solicit Mussalman co-operation, even patronage. The existence of the League must, therefore, be justified on other grounds.

> How far do you give countenance to the contention of eminent Hindus like Lala Lajpat Rai and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and their school of thought that the same Indian National Congress, although it consists of a large Hindu majority, cannot also be taken to represent and safeguard the interests of the Hindu community, and that, therefore, separate and communal organizations like the Hindu Mahasabha and the Sangathan are absolutely necessary and essential to protect Hindu interests?

I do not think that the Congress has failed to represent the Hindu interest in so far as it was consistent with the national interest, i.e., the interests of all communities considered as one nation. The existence, therefore, of the Hindu Mahasabha, too, must be justified on other grounds. It is obvious that the Congress cannot represent mutually antagonistic interests. Its existence presupposes mutuality of interest and effort.

> What is your honest belief and conviction as to the real cause, whether remote or immediate, of the frequent riots and differences between Mussalmans and Hindus in North India and of their absence or infrequency in South India?

[1] Not reproduced here

I can only guess and my guess is that the two communities quarrel more frequently in the North because they are more equally balanced than in the South. Where riots do take place, they occur because both think communally and because either fears and distrusts the other, and because neither has the courage nor the foresight to forego the present for the sake of the future, or the communal interests for the sake of the national.

> Do you really hope to solve the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity placing as you do reliance upon the present day orthodox Ulema of the Theological School of Deoband and of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind, who condemn in season and out of season as *kafirs*, infidels, apostates, and as deserving of no other punishment than being stoned to death, a considerable section of the Muslim community, popularly known as Qadianies, Mrisais, or better as Ahmediyas, or will you seek assistance for the solution of the mighty problem from the Ahmediya community who seem really to hold the key to the situation, and who have already solved the question of Hindu-Muslim unity by their writings and their conduct?

I must woo the orthodox Ulema as well as the Ahmediya community. It is impossible, even if it were desirable, to disregard the "orthodox Ulema". What one must, however, do is not to truckle to any person or party. Having fixed one's minimum from which one may not recede, one may stoop to conquer the whole world.

> Have you ever inquired as to why, while the Muslim community in India as a whole is so keenly interested in the affairs of Muslim countries abroad, not the least appreciable proportion of it takes any active interest in the internal political life and advancement of the country and especially in the Presidency of Madras?

In so far as the charge is correct, the Mussalmans take less interest because they do not yet regard India as their home of which they must feel proud. Many regard themselves, quite wrongly, I think, as belonging to a race of conquerors. We Hindus are in a measure to blame for this aloofness on the part of the Mussalmans. We have not come to regard them as an integral part of the nation. We have not set out to win their hearts. The causes for this unfortunate state of things are historic and were in their origin inevitable. The blame of the Hindus, therefore, can be felt only now. The consciousness being of recent growth is naturally not universal and the physical fear of the Mussalmans in a vast number of cases makes it constitutionally difficult for the Hindus to adopt the blame and proceed to win the

Mussalman heart. But I must own to the reader that I no longer regard myself as an expert on the Hindu-Muslim question. My opinion has, therefore, only an academic value. I still hold to my own view even though I admit that I have found it difficult to make it acceptable to either party.

> What is your remedy for the unfortunate turn the politics of this country have ever since taken, viz., that while politics and political life in this country have from the beginning attracted successfully only a few of the rich and well-to-do classes, it has become almost an impossible thing for men of the middle and the poor classes to lead anything like an active and successful political life in this country, especially during the last four years?

The politics have taken no unfortunate turn. We are passing through a necessary stage. The immense self-consciousness among the poorer classes has upset old calculations and formulae. We have not yet adjusted ourselves to the new state of things. But I see signs everywhere of settling down to the new order of things. Taking even the Hindu-Muslim disturbances in that light, I do not despair of the future. Order must come out of the present chaos. We would expedite the advent of order by watching, waiting and praying. If we do so, the evil that has come to the surface will disappear much quicker than if, in our haste and impatience, we would disturb the surface and thus send the dirt to the bottom again instead of allowing it to throw itself out.

Young India, 2-4-1925

58.THE NATIONAL WEEK

The 6th and 13th of April must for ever remain green in Indian memory. 6th April 1919 witnessed an unexpected and huge mass awakening of the nation. On 13th of April the nation we made to offer a sacrifice in which Hindu, Mussalman and Sikh blood mingled at Jallianwala Bagh. They became one in death.

Since then much water has flown under the Sabarmati bridge. The nation has passed through many vicissitudes. Today Hindu-Muslim unity seems to have been but a dream. I observe that both are preparing for a fight. Each claims that it is preparing in self-defence. Each is in a measure right. And if they must fight, let them fight bravely, disdaining the protection of the police or the law-courts. If they will do that, the lesson of 13th April will not have been lost upon them. If we will cease to be slaves, we must cease to rely for protection

upon the British bayonet or the slippery justice of law-courts. Not to rely upon either, at the crucial moment, is the best training for swaraj. The supersession[1] of Sir Abdur Rahim, the passage of the Supplementary Ordinance[2], the restoration of the salt tax, tell us in plainest language that the British rulers propose to rule in spite of our opposition. In fact, they tell us by their action as clearly as possible, that they can and will rule without our assistance. Shall we not have the negative courage of doing without their assistance? We have seen that we can, when we do not quarrel. It is possible, if we have some courage, to do without that assistance even if we quarrel. It is any day better to stand erect with a broken and bandaged head than to crawl on one's belly in order to be able to save one's head. I can see Hindu-Muslim unity issuing out of our street fights without Government intervention. I should despair of real unity if we would fight under the shadow of the British uniform and perjured evidence before British Courts. We must be men before we would rule ourselves.

But the satyagraha week is preeminently one of self-purification and self-introspection. It is my fixed conviction, daily growing on me, that we shall not make this unhappy land happy except by purity of conduct which, spelt otherwise, means truth and non-violence. Such purity can come only by prayer and fasting. Hartal in the present state of things is out of question. I, therefore, suggest to those who believe in prayer and fasting to devote 6th and 13th to that sacred purpose. Khaddar and the wheel are the only universal programme in which young and old, rich and poor, men and women can usefully take part. Those who can spin should spin as much as they can and induce their friends to do likewise. Those who can will hawk khaddar in their places and thus the week can be used as a week of dedication to this most important national work.

Hindus have also the impurity of untouchability to remove. They can fraternize with the untouchables. They can set apart what

[1] The appointment of Sir John Kerr as the acting Governor of Bengal for the period Lord Lytton was to take over as Viceroy during Lord Reading's absence from India. Sir Abdur Rahim, a senior member of the Council, should have been given the Governorship.

[2] The Bengal Ordinance, promulgated to supplement the ordinary criminal law in Bengal for the suppression of revolutionary crime

they can spare for the relief of distress among them and; in a variety of ways, make them feel that they are no longer the despised class among Hindus.

Hindu-Muslim unity, khaddar and removal of untouchability are to me the foundation for swaraj. On that firm foundation it is possible to erect a structure nobler than which the world has not seen. Anything without that foundation will be like a building built on sand.

Young India, 2-4-1925

59. TWO QUESTIONS

During my travels in the South, I discovered that Congress organizations accepted money in lieu of yarn for membership. I understood that the practice had become almost universal. As a member myself and as editor, I have no hesitation in saying that the practice is illegal. Whether it is so in fact or not only the Working Committee can decide. I have no desire as President to give rulings in such matters. But as a common sense man writing for common sense people, I remind Congressmen that the idea of importing money payment as an alternative was discussed and rejected. The idea of yarn being treated as subscription was that everyone desirous of joining the Congress was to be expected himself to take the trouble of knowing good hand-spun yarn from bad and purchasing it. The Congress ledgers can only contain yarn receipts, not monetary subscriptions. To take money payments, therefore, is to violate the constitution. I would go a step further and say that the spirit of the pact[1] requires the Congress organizations to cater and canvass for only self-spinning members. Those who do not wish to spin themselves may send in their quota of yarn but a Congress organization should put forth its best effort by merely catering for self-spinners to popularize hand-spinning among its members. I, therefore, hold it to be the duty of the Congress organizations to return all monetary payments. It is for private agencies to provide hand-spun yarn to those who wish to buy it. Unless this limitation is observed, we cannot claim to have worked or given a fair trial to the new franchise. Personally, I do not mind even though we may have only a few hundred self-spinning members

[1] The Calcutta Pact; *vide* "Joint Statement with Party Leaders", November 6, 1924.

provided that they do the spinning without any stimulation save what is contained in the pride of belonging to the Congress. I hope, therefore, that those Congress offices that have taken money in lieu of yarn will return the same and advise the subscribers to send in hand-spun yarn if they wish to remain members. If the latter feel aggrieved, they have a perfect right to secure a ruling from the Working Committee.

The second question I came to know only on reaching Bombay. I understand that there are gentlemen who persist in attending Congress meetings without being fully clad in khaddar.In my opinion, such persons cannot be considered members and have no right to take part in any Congress meetings so long as they remain clad in anything but hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar. In that state, they can neither vote nor speak.

Young India 2-4-1925

60. SOME ARGUMENTS CONSIDERED

My article[1] on birth-control has, as was to be expected, given rise to energetic correspondence in favour of artificial methods. I select three typical letters. There is a fourth letter which is largely theological. I, therefore, omit it. Here is one of the three letters:

> I have read your article on "Birth-control" with great interest. The subject is, at present, exercising the minds of many educated men. Last year, we had long and heated debates. They proved at least this much, that young men are acutely interested in this problem, that there is a great deal of prudery and prejudice about it, that in a free and open discussion one's sense of "decency" is rarely shocked. Your article has set me thinking afresh and I appeal to you for some more light to dispel many doubts that arise in my mind.
>
> I agree that "there can be no two opinions about the necessity of birth-control". I further agree that "*brahmacharya* is an infallible sovereign remedy doing good to those who practise it". But I ask whether the problem is not one of "birth-control", than of "self-control". If so, let us see if self-control is a feasible method of birth-control, for the average person.
>
> I believe that this problem can be examined from two different points of view, that of the individual and society. It is the duty of each individual to restrain his carnal passions, and thus evolve his spiritual strength. At all

[1] *Vide* "Birth-control", 12-3-1925

times, there are a few such persons of great moral fibre who set up this noble standard before themselves and will follow no other. But I wonder whether they have any perception of the problem of birth-control which they are intent on solving. A sannyasin is out for salvation, but not for birth-control.

But can this method solve an economic, social and political question of the greatest importance to the vast majority of people within a reasonable period of time? It presses for solution on every thinking and prudent *grihastha* even now. How many children can one feed, clothe, educate and settle in life is a question which brooks no delay. Knowing human nature, as you do, can you reasonably expect large numbers completely abstaining from sexual pleasure after the need for progeny has been satisfied? But, I believe, you would permit a rational and temperate exercise of the sexual instinct, as is recommended by our *smritikaras*[1]. The vast majority may be asked neither to indulge the passion nor to repress it, but only to regulate it. But, even if this were possible, would this method control births? I believe that we shall then have better people but not fewer people. In fact, the problem of population would become more acute, as an efficient population grows faster than an inefficient one. The art of cattle-breeding does not give us few cattle, but more and better cattle.

I agree that "union is meant not for pleasure but for bringing forth progeny". But you must grant that pleasure is the chief, if not the only inducement to it. It is Nature's lure to fulfil its purpose. How many would fulfil it, and do fulfil it, where pleasure is lacking? How many go for pleasure and get progeny, and how many go for progeny and also find pleasure? You say that "Union is a crime when the desire for progeny is absent". It beautifully suits a sannyasin, like you, to say so. For have you not also said that he who owns more than he needs is a "thief" and a "robber", that who loves not others more, loves himself less? But why be so hard on poor and weak mortals? To them, a little pleasure without desire for progeny would soothe and meet natural changes in body and mind. The fear of progeny would, in several cases, agitate nerves, and in some cases, delay marriage. The deisre for progeny, in normal cases, would cease after a few years of marriage. Would union after that be a crime? Do you think that a man afraid of committing that "crime" would be morally superior, by sitting tight over the safety-valve of his restless passions? After all, why do you tolerate "thieves", who hold more than they need, but not the "criminals" who unite after the desire for progeny is satisfied? Is it because "thieves" are too numerrous and powerful to reform?

[1] Authors of the *smritis*, law-books regulating social and moral conduct

Lastly, you allege that "artificial methods are like putting a pre- mium upon vice. They make men and women reckless". This is a heavy charge, if true. I ask whether "public opinion" has ever been strong enough to restrain sexual excess.I am aware of drunkards being restrained by fear of such opinion. But I am also aware of the saying that "God never sends mouths but he sends meat also" that "Children are born because of God's Will"; of the prejudice that a large progeny is a proof of manliness. I know cases where such opinion gives a license to husbands over wives and considers the exercise of the sex instinct as the main bond of marriage. Besides, is it certain that "adoption of artificial methods must result in imbecility and nervous prostration ?" There are methods and methods, and I believe that science has discovered, or will soon discover, innocuous methods. This is not beyond the wit of man.

But it seems that you would not allow their use, in any case, for, "it is wrong and immoral to seek to escape the consequences of one's acts". This is unexceptionable, only you assume that even a moderate exercise of one's appetite, without desire for progeny, is immoral. Moreover I ask, whoever is restrained by the fear of progeny, the consequences of one's acts? In any case, many are impelled to seek the advice of quacks, reckless of their health and happiness. How many abortions have not been caused while "seeking to escape the consequences of one's acts". But, even if "fear" proved an effective restraint, the "moral" results would be poor indeed. Besides, by what system of justice should the sins of parents be visited upon the heads of their progeny and the imprudence of individuals hurt society? It is true that "Nature is relentless, and will have full revenge for any such violation of her laws". But, why assume that the use of artificial methods is *such a violation*. None calls the use of artificial teeth, eyes and limbs, as "unnatural". That alone is unnatural which does not secure our well-being. I do not believe that mankind is by nature vicious, and that the use of these methods will make it worse. There is enough of license even now, not even India excepted. It is as easy to prove that this new power will be properly used as that it may be abused. But let us recognize that man is on the point of winning this tremendous power over Nature, and that we can ignore it only at our cost. Wisdom lies in controlling it, not in shunning it. Some of the noblest workers seek the propagation of these methods, not for indulgence, but to help men to self-control. Let us also not forget that woman and her needs have been ignored too long. She means to have her say in this matter, for she refuses to allow men to treat her body "as tilth for offspring".

The strain of modern civilization is too great to permit her to rear a large

family with all the drudgery and worry it means. Dr. Marie Stopes[1] and Miss Ellen Key[2] would never seek the "nervous prostration" of woman. The methods they suggest can be made effective chiefly by woman, and are more likely to evolve wise motherhood than reckless indulgence. In any case there are circumstances when a lesser evil may avoid a greater. There are dangerous diseases which must be avoided even at the cost of ''nervous prostration". There are natural periods of lactation when union is unavoidable but injurious if fruitful. There are women, otherwise healthy, who can bear children only at a serious risk to their lives.

I neither wish nor expect you to turn into a propagandist of birth-control. You are at your best in keeping the light of truth and chastity burning in its purity and holding it before mortals who seek it. But a prudent parent will seek that light more than an imprudent one. Who realizes the need of birth-control may easily evolve self-control. The present license, thoughtlessness and ignorance are so great that even you cry, as if in a wilderness. There is great need for more enlightened discussion than your apologetic and ''reluctant'' article permits. If you cannot join in it, you must at least recognize it, and, if need be, guide it betimes, for there are breakers ahead; and it will serve no purpose to blink our eyes at the danger, and ''hesitate on approaching this subject.

Let me clear the ground by saying that I have not written for sannyasins or as a sannyasin. I do not claim to be one in the accepted sense of the term. My observations are based upon unbroken personal practice with a slight aberration for a period of twenty-five years and that of those who have joined me in the experiment for a long enough period to warrant certain conclusions. In the experiment, both young and old men and women are included. I claim a certain degree of scientific accuracy for the experiment. It has undoubtedly a strictly moral basis but it originated in the desire for birth-control. My own case was peculiarly for that purpose. Tremendous moral consequences developed as an afterthought though in a perfectly natural sequence. I venture to claim that by judicious treatment it is possible to observe self-control without much difficulty. Indeed it is a claim put forth not merely by me but German and other Nature-cure practitioners. The latter teach that water treatment or earth compresses and a non-heating and chiefly fruitarian diet soothes the nervous system and brings animal passions under easy subjection

[1] 1880-1958; author of works on birth-control

[2] 1849-1926; Swedish author who wrote on welfare of women and children.

whilst it, at the same time, invigorates the system. The same result is claimed by rajayogis[1] for scientifically regulated *pranayam*[2] without reference to the higher practices. Neither the Western nor the ancient Indian treatment is intended for the sannyasin but essentially for the householder. If it is contended that birth-control is necessary for the nation because of over-population, I dispute the proposition. It has never been proved. In my opinion, by a proper land system, better agriculture and a supplementary industry, this country is capable of supporting twice as many people as there are in it today. But I have joined hands with the advocates of birth-control in India from the stand-point of the present political condition of the country.

I do suggest that men must cease to indulge their animal passions after the need for progeny has ceased. The remedy of self-control can be made popular and effective. It has never had a trial with the educated class. That class has not yet, thanks to the joint family system, felt the pressure. Those that have, have not given a thought to the moral issues involved in the question. Save for stray lectures on *brahmacharya*, no systematic propaganda has been carried for advocating self-control for the definite purpose of limiting progeny. On the contrary, the superstition of larger family being an auspicious thing and therefore desirable still persists. Religious teachers do not generally teach that restriction of progeny in given circumstances is as much a religious obligation as procreation may be under certain other circumstances.

I am afraid that advocates of birth-control take it for granted that indulgence in animal passion is a necessity of life and in itself a desirable thing. The solicitude shown for the fair sex is most pathetic. In my opinion, it is insult to the fair sex to put up her case in support of birth-control by artificial methods. As it is, man has sufficiently degraded her for his lust, and artificial methods, no matter how well meaning the advocates may be, will still further degrade her. I know that there are modern women who advocate these methods. But I have little doubt that the vast majority of women will reject them as inconsistent with their dignity. If man means well by her, let him exercise control over himself. It is not she who tempts. In reality, man being the aggressor, is the real culprit and the tempter.

[1] Those who practise yoga as a means of liberation

[2] Regulation of breathing, the fourth stage of yoga

I urge the advocates of artificial methods to consider the consequences. Any large use of the methods is likely to result in the dissolution of the marriage bond and in free love. If a man may indulge in animal passion for the sake of it, what is he to do whilst he is, say, away from his home for any length of time, or when he is engaged as a soldier in a protracted war,or when he is widowed, or when his wife is too ill to permit him theindulgence without injury to her health notwithstanding the use of artificial methods?

But says another correspondent:

> With respect to your article on birth-control in a recent issue, may I respectfully point out that you start by begging the whole question when you assert that artificial methods are injurious. In the Contraceptive Section of the last International Birth-control Conference (London, 1922), attended by members of the medical profession only, the following resolution was passed with 3 dissentients out of 164 present:
>
> "That this meeting of the Medical members of the Fifth International Birth-control Conference wishes to point out that birth-control by hygienic contraceptive devices is absolutely distinct from abortion in its physiological, legal and moral aspects. It further records its opinion that *there is no evidence that the best contraceptive methods are injurious to health or conducive to sterility.*"
>
> Now it seems to me that the opinion of such a large body of medical men and women including some of the most eminent names in the profession can hardly be set aside with a stroke of the pen. You say: "Adoption of artificial methods must lead to imbecility and nervous prostration." Why "must"? I venture to submit that modern scientific methods do not lead to anything of the kind, though the use of harmful methods through ignorance may. This is only one more argument why proper methods should be taught to all who are likely to need them, i.e., to all adults capable of reproduction. You blame these methods for being artificial, and still want medical men to find out "means of self-control". I do not quite understand what you mean, but as you refer to medical men, would not any "means of self-control" devised by them be equally artificial? You say: "Union is meant not for pleasure, but for bringing forth progency." Meant by whom? By God? In that case, what did he create the sexual instinct for? You further say: "Nature is relentless and will have full revenge for any such violation of her laws." But Nature, at any rate, is not a person as God is supposed to be, and does not issue orders to anybody. It is not possible to violate Nature's laws. The consequences of actions are inevitable in Nature. Good and bad are words that we apply to them. The

people who use artificial methods do take the consequences of their acts like those who don't. Your argument, therefore, does not mean anything unless you can prove that artifical methods are injurious. I assert, from observation and experiment, that they are not, provided proper methods are used. Actions must be judged moral or immoral according to their results and no by a *priori* assumptions as to their morality.

The method you propose was also advised by Malthus, but is absolutely impracticable except for a few selected individuals like you. What is the use of advocating methods which cannot be practised? The benefits of *brahmacharya* have been greatly exaggerated. Modern medical auhorities (I mean those who have no religious prejudices) think that it is positively harmful beyond the age of 22 or so. It is religious prejudice which makes you think that sexual union is a sin except for procreation. As nobody can guarantee the result beforehand, you condemn everybody either to complete abstinence or to take the chance of spinning. Physiology does not teach this and it is now too late in the day to ask people to ignore science in favour of dogma.

This writer has taken up an uncompromising attitude. I hope I have given enough illustrations to show that self-restraint and not indulgence must be regarded as the law of life, if we are to accept and retain the sanctity of the marriage time. I have not begged the question, for I do contend that artificial methods, however proper they may be, are harmful. They are harmful not perhaps in themselves but because they increase the appetite which grows with every feed. The mind that is so tuned as to regard indulgence not only lawful but even desirable will simply feed itself on the indulgence and will at last become so weak as to lose all strength of will. I do maintain that every act of indulgence means loss of precious vitality so needful to keep a man or woman strong in body, mind and soul. Though I have now mentioned the soul, I have purposely eliminated it from the discussion which is intended merely to combat the arguments advanced by my correspondents who seem to disregard its existence. The tuition that is needed for much married and enervated India is not that of indulgence with artificial means but complete restraint, if only for the sake of regaining lost vitality. Let the immoral medicines whose advertisements disfigure our Press be a warning to the advocates of birth-control. It is not prudery or false modesty which restraints me from discussing the subject. The restraining force is the certain knowledge that the devitalized and enervated youth of the country fall

an easy prey to the specious arguments advanced in favour of indulgence.

It is perhaps now hardly necessary for me to combat the medical certificate produced by the second correspondent. It is wholly irrelevant to my case. I neither affirm nor deny that proper artificial methods injure the organs or produce sterility. No array, however brilliant, of medical men can disprove the ruin which I have witnessed of hundreds of youths who have indulged their passions even though it may be with their own wives.

The analogy drawn by the first writer from false teeth seems to me to be inapplicable. False teeth are indeed artificial and unnatural but they may serve a necessary purpose. Whereas artificial methods are like antidotes taken by a man who wants to eat not for satisfying hunger but for pleasing the palate. Eating for the sake of pleasure is a sin like animal indulgence for the sake of it.

The last letter is interesting for the information it gives:

> The question is now vexing the governments of the world. I refer to your article on "Birth-control". You doubtless know the antipathy of the American Government towards its propagation. You have no doubt also heard about the free sanction given to it by an Eastern Power—I mean the Empire of Japan. The one rules out birth-control altogether—whether as a result of artificial means or natural ones—for reasons best known to everyone. The other sponsors it for reasons also universally known. In my opinion, there is nothing to admire in the action of the first. Is there much, however, to despise in the step of the second? Don't you think the Japanese Government should be given credit at least for facing facts? They must stop procreation; they must also take human nature at its *present worth.* Is not birth-control, as at present understood in the West, the only way out for them? You will say an emphatic "No". But may I ask, if the course you suggest is practicable? *It may be very ideal, but is it practical*? Can humanity be expected to forgo sexual pleasure to any very appreciable degree? It may be easy of find a glorious few who practise self-control or *brahmacharya*. Can this method, however, be depended upon for any mass movement in this direction? And nothing less than a mass movement is necessary in India to meet the situation.

I must confess my ignorance of the facts about America and Japan. Why Japan is advocating birth-control I do not know. If the writer's facts are correct and if birth-control by artificial methods is at all general in Japan, I make bold to say that this fine nation is rushing headlong to its moral ruin.

I may be wholly wrong. My conclusions may be based on false data. But the advocates of artificial methods have need to be patient. They have no data at all except the modern examples. Surely, it is too early to predict anything with any degree of certainty of a system of control which on the face of it, seems to be repugnant to the moral sense of mankind. It is easy enough to trifle with youthful nature. It will be difficult to undo the evil effects of such trifling.

Young India, 2-4-1925

61. DIFFICULTIES IN DHOLKA TALUK

A Correspondent writes from Dholka:[1]

If what the correspondent says is true, there are three ways of ending the hardships, and they can be adopted simultaneously. We should explain things and educate those who submit to injustice through ignorance or fear, approach the constables and explain to them their duty and lodge complaints with the officials of the department concerned. Those who submit to hardships cannot be called non-co-operators. They can always petition. There is also the fourth way, going to the court. Kind-hearted lawyers can offer their services free to the people. The last course can be adopted only if the grievance is not redressed by the Government.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-4-1925

62. SPEECH AT MADHADA

April 2, 1925

I have an unyielding faith in devotion to duty. A fighter knows no fatigue. He wishes to die with his boots on and is confident that, if he cannot win while living, victory will be his after he is dead. Even if you lose your life as a result of your *tapascharya* and the entire Ashram is ruined, you should still believe that the principle of faith in oneself taught by Gandhi is true, and that you will win your goal in the next birth, if not in this.

It often happens that, when we feel ourselves thoroughly

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had described the harassment of the villagers by the officials and constables in charge of a customs post in the taluk.

beaten and the whole world seems against us, money starts suddenly pouring in from unexpected, unknown quarters; I can cite many instances of such bitter sweet experiences from my own life. When I fixed one year as the time limit within which we would have swaraj, God humbled me. He asked me who I was to fix a time-limit. I had no doubt fixed this limit subject to certain conditions being fulfilled, but even so I should have properly measured the strength of the country before doing that. I alone am to blame for misjudging that strength. However, I have far more faith and confidence today than what I had in 1920-21, and they are a source of peace and happiness to me. Those who would share my peace and happiness should cultivate the same faith that I have. You described me as a prophet of non-violence, but my friend Shastri and the Government regard me as a prophet of violence. Non-violence is my creed, but what is the meaning of this non-violence if people kill, or abuse others, all in my name? I have been observing that the response to everything I say or do seems to distort it out of recognition, so that I ask myself what must be the quality of the non-violence which I profess to practise. In spite of such difficulties, I am clinging like a fanatic to the principle of non-violence. I go on working wihout being influenced by what other people think or say, and that enables me to do my work without any fear of losing my sanity or self-control.[1]

Udyog Ashram is a fine name indeed; in industry everything is included. Where the trinity of knowledge, service and action is the aim, two different names like Udyog Ashram and Seva Ashram connote an error in our thinking. We should aim at a happy synthesis of the three ways, and tell the aspirant not to lose faith in God even for a second, not to play with Him. We should ask him not to think that the people of India are hyprocrites. They are not. In fact, they are the 33 crores of deities in the Hindu pantheon, if only we can be one with them, otherwise we may even think them to be devils. parvati had to perfrom *tapascharya* for thousands of years to get the great Siva as her consort. On the other hand, the age in which we live is age of strife. I you think that you can achieve a happy synthesis of knowledge, service and action in a short time, you are sadly mistaken. Shankaracharya, describing the patience a seeker after *moksha* must have, says that it is more than the patience of a man who would empty

[1] In what follows, Gandhiji refers to several names of the Ashram

the ocean with the help of a straw. Here Pandit Lalan and Shivjibhai want money. They should show more patience even than the seeker after *moksha*. If they desire that money should pour in, I would tell them that money is but a trifle. Goodwill is a noble quality of the soul and is more difficult to cultivate in others. When Shivjibhai and Lalan feel that people are not coming forward with offers of money, they must attribute the fact to their lack of strength of purpose and the imperfection of their spiritual realization. Instead of believing that they have had self-realization, they should think that they have had an illusion of it. If, having observed a little *brahmacharya*, we start boasting, or, having kept somewhat the vow of non-possession, we start lecturing others, what an attempt it would be to impose on the world! personally, I feel every day that the definition of *brahmacharya* and the field of its practice are much wider than I had thought, and I am not today such a *brahmachari* as to be able to give a perfect definition of *brahmacharya*. The same is true about the definition of truth. I have not yet become such a devoted follower of truth in my life that I can give a perfect definition of it. Non-violence, too, is equally difficult to define. The author of the holy books who discovered this principle could not find a positive word for it, for he said that there was no limit to a virtue. He, therefore, employed the word ahimsa. His plight was similar to that of the seers who ended up with *neti, neti*[1]. Anybody who dedicates himself to a high aim must understand this first.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-4-1925

63. SPEECH AT DHASA

April 2, 1925

The Government has deposed the Durbar Saheb[2] because he served his people; but has he lost his exalted position? He lost the rule of Dhasa and gained that of Borsad. The whole world knows him today. He now rules over the hearts of the people of Borsad. Many people have made heavy sacrifices in this great *yajna* for the freedom

[1] Literally, "not this, not this", indicating the ineffable nature of Reality

[2] Durbar Gopaldas, ruler of a small State in Saurashtra; he had joined the Congress.

of India, but he is the only one among the rulers to have done so. Has he really lost the rule of Dhasa? He will do that only when you, the people, throw him out and say that you have no place for him in your hearts.I am afraid, however, that you have actually deposed him, since you have broken the ledges you made to him. The *Antyajas* have not kept their pledge not to weave foreign yarn, not to touch liquor or eat meat. Let the whole world perish, but a pledge must not be broken. And especially if you do not keep a pledge made to your ruler, you would deserve to have your heads chopped off. But we have no Harischandras[1] now who would sell themselves for the sake of their word, nor any ruler who deserves the right to demand a man's head. If the *Antyajas* broke their pledge, so did you. Would you behave as you do if you really wanted your Durbar Saheb back? How many women wear khadi? How many have taken to spinning? The Government may have deprived the Durbar Saheb of his authority; if, however, you in Dhasa pay the revenue to the Government but respect the Durbar Saheb's orders in other matters, will he have been deposed? When Rama went to live in the forest, his subjects insisted on going with him and suffered voluntarily for his sake. A brother like Bharata performed *tapascharya* at Nandi Gram, installed Ramchandra's wooden sandals on the throne and moditated on them. What did you do? You can get back your Durbar if you obey orders issued from Borsad. I shall tell you. Listen how you can do this.

Let every man and woman wear khadi and ply the spinning wheel, let the *Antyajas* weave only with hand-spun yarn and wear khadi themselves. The *mahajan* should not ill-treat the *Antyajas*;it should attend to their difficulties about water, etc., and refuse to regard them as untouchables. Do this, and then ask me what the position of the Durbar is. Whether he returns or not, I will then come to you, giving up the fight for the country's freedom, and join you in your *tapascharya*.

What are you waiting for? Has the love for the Durbar Saheb which you once professed before me evaporated? You complain that the *Kothis* let loose their cattle into your fields. Did the Durbar forbid you to defend yourselves and your fields? Even the British Government gives you the right to drive out poachers and beat off cattle from your fields. Why have you become so helpless? Why did you break all your promises?

[1] King of Ayodhya who suffered the severest ordeals for the sake of truth

But let bygones by bygones. Are you ready to make a fresh start? You have seen the Durbar in a turban and rich clothes. But now he wears a shirt of coarse khadi. He wears no cap, and has only a coarse loin cloth wrapped round his waist. What do you intend to do? Have you given up your turbans? Will you lose your manhood by doing so? What have you done so far that I should regard you fit to call the Durbar back? Do not mind, however; take a pledge today for one year. Let the *Antyaja* give up meat and drink and stop weaving foreign yarn. You should give up foreign cloth. Everybody should spin and wear hand-woven cloth. If you do not wish to burn your foreign clothes put them aside for the time being. If, after living for a year in this manner, you find that I do not keep my pledge, you may cut off my head and start wearing your old, foreign clothes again. Each and every home must have a spinning-wheel. If you do not get enough cloth, wear only a cod piece or wrap a little bit of khadi round your waist. Welcome the *Antyajas* among you, and let them also use the water which God has provided for you. I you do not, you may be sure you will see the end of the world. Do not for a moment talk of asking the *Antyajas* to drink water from those ponds from which you yourselves would never draw your drinking water.

Do these simple things which are in your own interest, and if then you do not get the Durbar back, write to me. Though I am a non-co-operator, I will still request the Government to restore him to you. If I fail, I will join you in your *tapascharya*. May God give you the strength to keep your pledges, and like-wise give me the strength to keep mine. I have poured out my heart to you and expressed my hopes. You may now act as you think best.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-4-1925

64. SPEECH AT BAGASARA

April 2, 1925

I have a special liking for Bagasara. I did not know the difference between a loom and a spining-wheel in 1908, though I had written about the latter in *Hind Swaraj*[1] then. When I returned to India, Bagasara was the first place to help me in reviving weaving. I was in

[1] *Vide* "Hind Swaraj", November 22, 1909.

search of someone from whom I could secure a specimen loom, and I wrote to Shri Ranchhoddas Patwari.[1] He informed me that I could get one from Durbar Shri Vajsurwala. This gentlemen was the first to give me a loom; afterwards the Nawab Saheb of Palanpur gave me another and also sent a worker. I had succeeded in securing a loom, but I found it hard to start weaving. Then, too, the Bagasara weavers came to my help. This town is a centre of weaving and, if the weavers and traders here take sufficient interest, they can supply enough khadi for the whole of Kathiawar.[2]

I cannot find words strong enough to condemn the practice of accepting bride-money. A daughter is like a meek cow; anyone who, instead of giving her in marriage as a sacred gift, treats her as a means of making money and sells her, commits a sin far more heinous than killing a cow. When I think about the probable origin of communities like *Chandalas*[3] and *Antyajas*, I feel that society must have cut off relations with persons who accepted bride-money and treated such persons as outside the pale of the recognized castes. If any people deserve to be so treated, I believe it is those who accept bride-money though, of course, in no circumstances can it be right to treat a person and his descendants as perpetual untouchables.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-4-1925

65. SPEECH IN REPLY TO WELCOME ADDRESS, PALITANA

April 3, 1925

HON'BLE THAKORE SAHEB, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I thank you all for presenting me with an address. Receiving it from Thakore Saheb's hand, I feel honoured all the more. All kinds of praises have been showered on me in the address. These are nothing new to me now. Wherever I go, I find the same words arranged in different ways. When I listen to them all, I am so touched

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Ranchhodlal Patwari", June 5 and 9, 1915.

[2] Gandhiji then explained the scheme of the Kathiawar Political Conference for raising a fund of Rs. 20,000 and continued as follows.

[3] Outcastes regarded as untouchable

that I feel like praying to God to grant me that whatever is said in these addresses may come true.

Let me tell you something else which has been left out in the address. Only one side has been referred to in the address but it must not be forgotten that there is another side to the medal. I find those who praise me and take part in these functions are indifferent to the ideas they praise me for. It is my fate that wherever I go, I should criticize. But that is unavoidable. I do not ask blind faith from the public; neither do I seek polite phrases from rajas and maharajas. Those may be pleasant to hear. But I wish to become a link between the ruler and the subjects. I shall deem my duty done if I can bring them together and explain the views of one to the other. I have maintained the same relationship with the British. It is my intention to bring the British and the Indians together. I shall not be able to achieve this task if I don't receive the full co-operation of the subjects. I do not say "of the ruler" because I am myself a subject and wish to remain so. I am therefore better able to understand the distress of the people and their words and I can expect greater co-operation from them. Let me ask of them therefore that what they praise [in me] they should praise themselves.

I have often said that the maxim, "As the king, so the subjects" is true and so too its converse, "As the subjects, so the king". If the subjects are truthful then there is no likelihood of disrespect [for the king]. There would be nothing wrong with the king. If the subjects are indolent and untruly, what is there that the best of rulers can do? Think over it. Our *rishis* have not conceived of a better king than Janaka. Rama was an avatar and accepted as God. So we cannot regard him as an ideal [for a king]. But Kalidas[1] has attributed all the [kingly] qualities to Janaka. Suppose the people of Janaka's times were not attuned to his ways, what could the king have done? If today the people do not respond, what can the ruler do? I have seen in Travancore that if the subjects do their duties, the Maharani will manage to do hers. But if the subjects remain recalcitrant, the Maharani cannot do anything, however much she wants. If today I alone were to declare my rejection of untouchability, it will be of no avail. I am telling you all this in the presence of Thakore Saheb with a somewhat selfish motive. Today you have praised me, but if you do nothing tomorrow and I reprimand you for it, you would be nasty to

[1] Apparently a slip for Valmiki

me. On subjects such as these, I expect more from the people than from the ruler. What work can the ruler get out of idlers and drunkards? I had a talk with Thakore Saheb about drinking. He told me that there were no liquor shops here, not even a tea shop; but there are many who would take smuggled drinks. Where things have come to such a pass, what can the ruler do? Can a ruler cure one of one's bad habits? All that can be expected to him is that he should not be a party to the corrupting of his people.

That is why unless the people of Kathiawar are steadfast in their conduct, nothing can be achieved. Without that the prosperity we aspire for, we are not likely to attain. I entertain especial hopes of the people becasue I see promise of prosperity in Kathiawar. I we can get [help] from the people we shall get it from the ruler. And that is the *bhiksha*[1] I beg for. There was a time when I asked for money. And people were not slow to respond. Women took off their jewellery and gave it. people have given away their diamonds and pearls. But today I ask for something else and that is a change in conduct. I ask that the defects in our character should be removed. But I get no res-ponse. Wealth you can give me. I thank you for presenting me a purse. It will have its uses. But that will not satisfy me.

You must have compassion. Palitana is sacred and the greatest among the places of Jian pilgrimage. But its people have not yet imparted to others the lesson which they should. Seeing the women did not make me happy; on the contrary I felt unhappy. These women do not understand even the common ethics of compassion. If the poor people of Kathiawar have to leave the State for earning a paltry two or four annas a day to whom is it a disgrace? I regret to say that it is to both the ruler and the subjects. If the matter were in my hands, I would permit no one to leave and would even pass a law to that effect. For the sake of adventure, let them go from one end of the globe to the other. Today there is not a corner of the earth without a Kathiawari. They include castemen, *Vagheals* and Rajputs. Tod[2] has stated that there were many Thermopylaes[3] in Rajputana. How many Thermopylaes do we see here in Kathiawar? Let the poeple seek adventure to beocme millionaires. Let them seek adventure for the

[1] Alms

[2] James Tod (1782-1835); historian; Political Agent to the Western Rajput States; author of *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*

[3] A reference to the historic battle of Thermopylae (480 B.C.)

sake of education. But I feel sorry when Kathiawaris say that they go elsewhere because they have nothing to eat at home. There is a shortage of water in Kathiawar. So it is in South Africa, but there the adventurous Boers lifted water from deep wells. I was a member of such a farm[1] where a drop of water could not be had. We tried hard and succeeded in watering 1100 acres of land by digging a well in a small spring. we have to dig deep down before we strike water. The deeper we go the more water we get. Minerals as well as springs of water occur inside the earth. But these are conditions of extreme scarcity.

It would be exile for the poor of Kathiawar if its industry of a hundred years is not revived . But to keep poverty at bay, people must needs wear khadi. There is no salvation unless we wear khadi, coarse or fine. I urge the ruler and the subjects to practise this simple religion. There is nothing to lose by doing so; no one can stop us from practising it and there is no need for machinery. I does not demand self-sacrifice or penance. It only needs a change of heart. Merely by wearing a particular kind of cloth, one fulfils a great dharma. I feel upset that though I receive all these addresses, I cannot persuade the ruler or the subjects to do this little thing. I believe in heeding the inner voice and therefore think that there is something wanting in my *tapascharya*. But I do not give up hope. I my *sadhana* is true, a time will come when the whole of India will put on khadi.

I repeat my words to Lord Reading and Lord Willingdon. My soul will not abide in peace so long as the king, the queen, the porter, the officer, the people and the *Bhangi* do not all become khadi-minded. For there is not other means for eradication of poverty than this. There is not other way but that of the spining-wheel. Hence I call it *Kamadhenu* and value it higher than the sword. Rama did not give up the bow and arrow, but he gathered firewood for Vishvamitra. He did nothing which the people had not done. As long as the king does not win the hearts of his subjects, he cannot understand them well. The king must do that which is vital for the people's livelihood. That is why training in the Navy is obligatory for the British kings. Their King George drank black coffee and ate cheese. The king takes on

[1] The Phoenix Settlement near Durban started by Gandhiji in 1904; *vide An Autobiography*, Pt. IV, Ch. XIX.

the people's habits. Because the subjects are virtuous, the king enjoys happiness. If they overcome their bad habits he will be happy for ever. We can't say when they would do that. But when they do that, their virtues will be there for the whole world to see. I wish that our rulers and the people may emulate the virtues and adventures of those people. I wish that we may overcome our shortcomings. During the War the barristers and the professors carried thread and needle in their hands and with these they sewed gowns. I was drafted for ambulance work. Those who could not go to the front in Belgium and France did have this work at any rate. They made the work so easy that even an untrained person could sew as many gowns as the expert. I can cite many such instances. If all that you have said in the address is true, you should imbibe all these virtues.

Why have you become so lax? Why is machine yarn used in the *Antyaja* colony? Can't you produce that much yarn in Palitana? I do not want you to encourage Ahmedabad [mills]. I want you to make the finest khadi.

I visited the *Antyaja* school and was unhappy. There was not a single non-*Antyaja* teacher that could be found for the school. Whose fault is it? The Thakore's? You look upon yourselves as pious. But is not there even one among you who is ready to do this work? It is my hope that Brahmins and Banias will come forward offering to teach. In that school one does not get even drinking-water. This is also your job, Thakore Saheb! Why should your subjects not get water? Those people dig in the river bed and try hard to extract water. There are wells even in dharmsalas. But *Antyajas* cannot draw water from there ! What kind of dharma is it that even the travellers can get water but not the *Antyajas?* Who brothers about them? Who among you claims to be compassionate? How can you call yourselves Hindus?

There is no place in our religion for the kind of untouchability being practised these days. After reflection on the Shastras, purifying myself, and much introspection, I have come to the conclusion that the way we practise Hinduism will prove to be its destruction. That is why I ask you to beware. It is the duty of the ruler and the subjects to protect Hinduism. The only way of reform Hinduism is to serve the *Antyajas*. We cannot wash off our sins without self-purification. I request you therefore to befriend the *Antyajas*. Just as you have come here tidied, provide them with the means with which to clean

themselves. If in spite of this they do not clean themselves, tell them that they are unclean and therefore untouchable. But I know that there are thousands of *Antyajas* who are no less clean that I am. They have every capacity and no shortcomings. Whatever shortcoming we see in them, is due to us. That is why I ask you to take the matter into your own hands and apply for service in the school. One person had asked for a salary of Rs. 150 but how can we afford such large amounts? Demand what you need or your livelihood and start an *Antyaja* school from tomorrow. No man may dump his dirt into his neighbourhood.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. VII, pp. 318-24

66. DISCUSSION WITH A JAIN "MUNI" AT PALITANA[1]

April 3, 1925

GANDHIJI: Does this imply that Lalan can ply the spinning-wheel only if he makes no such claim [to practise ahimsa to the utmost limit]? I have not understood in what way it involves the renunciation of the dharma of ahimsa. It is understandable that unlike a house-holder, a sadhu should do nothing which would promote his self-interest; but surely he may ply the spinning-wheel for the welfare of others. Let us take one instance. A sadhu may not go out at night. Supposing, however a neighbour's house is on fire, if a sadhu stays at home and does not help his neighbour with water, it would, I think, amount to violence rather than non-violence. Similarly, if during a famine, those who are stricken by it are given food only after they do some set work, it becomes their dharma to do what is assigned to them. If people are dying of thirst, but no one is ready to dig with spade and hoe, a sadhu has no choice but to set an example by taking up these tools. It is not enough to ask others to dig. Even when you do not wish to drink a drop of water, nevertheless, if you get ready with a spade and a hoe and are content only after you have quenched

[1] Gandhiji visited Munishri Kapurvijay at Palitana. Lalan who accompanied Gandhiji, asked the Munishri whether there was any objection to a *muni* (saint) spinning on a wheel. Munishri replied in the affirmative and added that a *muni* claiming to practise supreme ahimsa could not ply a wheel. thereupon Gandhiji initiated the conversation. The conversation has been extracted from Mahadev Desai's article "Third Time in Kathiawar."

the thirst of others, than can be called ahimsa. There is not harm if you drink water even if you do not wish to do so after having quenched the thirst of others. In this way, a sadhu may do many things for the welfare of others; it becomes his duty to do so. Similarly, when there is widespread starvation in India today, when the spinning-wheel enables the poor to be fed, when it has become one's dharma to make every idle person take to spinning, how can a sadhu be permitted not to spin and advise others of do so? Why should people do something that sadhus do not regard as worthwhile? It becomes the dharma of the sadhu, therefore, to sit down with a spinning-wheel and silently work at it. He should not answer if anyone comes to him and seeks his advice; even if he is asked a second time, he should keep silent; finally, he should break his silence and say that besides doing this he has no other advice to give. Hence this alone is the dharma of the sadhu who is attentive and vigilant. There is a risk of the sadhu turning selfish in this work; in that case, his downfall is but proper. Instead of remaining idle and being a burden to society, he will become industrious and work for his livelihood.

I accept the state of extreme non-violence . What, however, is the nature of that state? As a matter of fact, today, sadhus eat and drink like househodlers, they wear and same kind of clothes, they live in the *apasaras* that have been built for them by the people; they must therefore take part in public life. They must participate in that work which is the greatest public service today.

MUNISHRI: It would then be an *apaddharma*[1].

GANDHIJI: No, it is not that, but the dharma of the age. Today, the dharma of our times is to spin and so long as the sadhu is dependent on society for his daily needs, he must spread the dharma of the age by practising it. Today, you eat the rice grown and cooked by the people, and wear the clothes produced by them. It is a different matter, however, if he eats left-overs lying around, does not care to cover himself, and lives in some unapproachable and unseen cave away from society. He is then free not to observe the dharma of the age. Otherwise, I would say the very same thing today even to the sannyasi who lives and moves in society. In Travancore, I have told the sannyasi who is the guru of the *Thiyas*[2] not to accept anyone as a

[1] Action allowable only during extreme distress or calamity

[2] A community in Malabar traditionally regarded as untouchable

disciple unless he comes to him dressed in khadi, so that it would also put an end to overcrowding there. I would ask this of you also. It is possible that this would encourage hypocrisy; but then were there no hypocrites surrounding Shri Rajchandra? It is not we who are harmed by such hypocrisy but the hypocrites themselves.

MUNISHRI: I have not gone into this matter in such detail. I shall discuss it with you after doing so.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-4-1925

67. A SPINNER'S DIFFICULTIES

A lover of the spinning-wheel from Bombay describes what he had to go through before he secured one. It was with great difficulty that he found a shop selling spinning-wheels. He got one after waiting for two and a half hours. He paid Rs. 4 as. 8 for it and, on returning home, found that the spindle was bent. The spinning-wheel moved by fits and starts and even now it does not work well. Now, this gentleman asks me what he should do. Another gentleman writes to say that he spins well when he stays at one place; however, he cannot do so while touring around, as he is unable to get a spinning-wheel everywhere.

The difficulties of both are real and yet not so. Anyone who has fully mastered the technique of spinning will not experience the first difficulty because he would be able to repair a bad spinning-wheel. He could carry his spindle with him. However, just as each spinner should become fully proficient in spinning, each Congress Committee should maintain spinning-wheels and other accessories in good working condition. If this is not done, those who have enthusiasm but no knowledge would be left in the lurch. The Congress officials could also remove the difficulties of the second gentleman. There should be an arrangement in the Congress Committee for those who wish to spin. Even in the smaller Congress offices a few spinning-wheels should be in operation.

However, the *takli*[1] can solve all these problems. Anyone who can spin on the *takli* can travel with his spinning-wheel in his pocket. During my tour of Travancore, I found the *takli* invaluable. I carry it

[1] A spindle consisting of a round disc attached in the centre to a thin rod about seven inches long

with me in a bamboo tube. It costs little, and it is immensely useful. Hence I would advise every spinner to carry, without fail, a *takli* with him. It may produce only twenty-five yards in an hour, but, as it is something that can be used at any time and at any place, there is no end to its usefulness. It is for this reason that it can complete with a spinning-wheel in spite of producing less yarn per hour. For the poor, the *takli* is like a blessed sister.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-4-1925

68. TWO CONVERSATIONS

A large number of students come and ask me questions on various subjects. Some of them harass me very much, while others go away satisfied after asking me a few questions in a quiet manner. Both these types of conversations took place during the past few days, and as they are interesting I give them below:

FIRST CONVERSATION[1]

During the return journey from Madras, I lay tired and exhausted in the train and was trying to catch up with my writing. The train halted at a station and presently a young man who had just completed studies entered my compartment after asking my permission. He asked me:

"Are you returning form Vykom?"

"Yes."

"What happened there?"

I did not like this question and asked him in return, "Where, do you come from?"

"I belong to Malabar."

He carried two newspapers.I asked, "Do you read newspapers?"

"How can I? I have to travel so much, you see."

"I see you are carrying a copy of *The Hindu*. You can get all the news you want of Vykom front it."

"But I want to hear it from you."

"If everyone, like you, starts asking me the news and I have to

[1] This took place at Guntakal on March 25, while Gandhiji was on his way to Bombay.

answer, I would have no time for any other work. Have you thought of that?"

"But you can tell me."

"Do you read *Young India?*"

"No, I do not get time for reading. I read *The Times* though, for I can get it."

"Then I cannot spare any time for you. You do not read *The Hindu*, nor *Young India*. What can I tell you, then, in ten minutes during a chance meeting like this? Please excuse me."

"So you will not tell me"?

"Please excuse me. You do not even wear khadi and are needlessly harassing me."

"But it is your duty to tell me what happened."

"And it is your duty to wear khadi."

"I have no money."

"You are wearing gold buttons. You give them to me and I shall provide you khadi."

"I have a fancy for these buttons and that is why I wear them. Why should I give them to you?"

"Then please excuse me now."

"So you will not tell me anything because I do not wear khadi?"

"Take it that way if you like. But please excuse me."

"Why don't you say that you will not tell me what happened?"

"All right, if you would have it so."

"I shall make this behaviour of yours public."

"You may, with pleasure. But you should now allow me to do my work."

"I have been doing what I can. I had even collected something like a hundred rupees for the Malabar Fund."

"And yet you will not wear khadi which is woven by poor people."

"When people die of starvation, you think of asking people to spin—do I not know that?"

"Let us not discuss that subject."

"Should I go away then?"

"Please do, now."

I am afraid, I could not make this friend see that he should not waste my time, which is people's time, by asking me about things he can easily learn from newspapers. After he had left, I felt that had I, instead of being serious with him, talked to him good-humouredly, I could have converted him, though I should certainly have had to spend more time on him. I fear that my seriousness and the consequent stiffness lost me a public worker. Truly, how difficult is the path of non-violence! One has always to be vigilant, however busy one may be, and must constantly try to enter the heart of the person with whom one is talking and that of the bystanders. Those who follow the path of non-violence can have no time of their own and cannot think of their convenience. Whether or not they are in a position to attend to a thing or can sparte the necessary time, they are servants who have sold themselves to the world for its service. I saved my time, looked to my convenience, tried to become a teacher and, seeking to instruct, lost the pupil. Tulsidas and other saints have rightly said that a person without discrimination is a brute.

SECOND CONVERSATION

The one whom I wanted to teach had proved to be my teacher. I had learnt the lesson and did not wish to lose another worker. I was, therefore, vigilant. This student was from the Punjab. The Punjabis whom I have met were all of them courteous people. This student, too, was extremely polite and so I had no occasion to exercise vigilance and restrain myself.

"I have been trying for five years," he said, "to be able to see you. My ambition has been fulfilled today."

"You are welcome. Do you have anything in particular to ask me ?"

"With your permission, Sir, I should like to ask you a question or two in regard to my studies."

"You are welcome to do that."

"Do you believe that I can make a living from the spinning-wheel?"

"No. I have never recommended spinning as a means of livelihood for people like you. You can take it up only as a form of *yajna*.

"What should I do then?"

"If I can persuade you, I would ask you to take up carding and

weaving as a means of livelihood. These crafts can be easily learnt."

"Will they help me to maintain my family?"

"Yes, if all your family members help you in the work."

"That is impossible for a family like mine. As you see, I wear khadi. I also spin. I believe in spinning. But how can I create the same faith in my family members? And even if I succeed in doing so, they will not agree to do this work."

"I can well understand your difficulty, but a good many of us will have to change our way of living; otherwise there is nothing but despaire for the seven lakh villages of our country."

"I understand the idea, but I do not have the strength to follow it in practice today. I want your blessings so that I may have it, but till then what should I do?"

"That is for you and your elders to think out. I have placed before you what I believe to be the ideal."

"Should I learn some craft like pottery ?"

"It is certainly useful. You can make a living from it and, if you have some capital to invest and start a factory, you will also help a few others to earn their livelihood. But you must admit that in that case you will have to exploit the labourers, for you will be keeping more for yourself and pay them less."

"That is true. But, being used to city life, I think I cannot do anything else, for the present at any rate. I shall, however, never forget what you have told me. I hope I have your blessings?"

"Every student has my blessings in all good undertakings."

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-4-1925

69. IS THIS NON-CO-OPERATION?

A gentleman writes to say:[1]

If any teachers in a national school or leaders have acted as alleged in this letter, their conduct was certainly disgraceful and should make one sad. If a teacher who was joined the non-co-operation movement applies for a Government job and, failing to get it, applies to a national institution and joins it, he certainly cannot be counted a non-co-operator. If the national school to which he applied knew of his having sought a Government job, it would not appoint him, and if it was forced by circumstances to appoint him he would not thereby be qualified to be called a non-co-operator. The leaders who preserved their own valuable foreign garments and got others' burnt were worse than these teachers. They decived their countrymen and still maintained their leadership. I do not know if the teachers or the leaders acted in the manner alleged. The correspondent has even sent their names to me, but I have not thought it proper to reveal them. It is also possible that the correspondent, though he has given the names, has himself been misled and that his information may be incorrect. I have often received such allegations, and they were found to be without any foundation.

But suppose that what the correspondent writes is true; even so, he was no ground for the conclusions he has drawn. I two teachers or a couple of leaders have betrayed the movement, that does not mean that everyone is like them. Hundreds of non-co-operators have remained staunch in the face of overwhelming temptations. Hundreds of *snatakas* have refused to appear at Government recognized examinations; they suffer hardships, but do not give up courage. I have, therefore, no reason to feel repentant.

It is thoughtless to say that all khadi-wearers are hypocrites and cheats. I should certainly like to see people in khadi caps wherever go,[2] but I do not see anything of the sort. I have no reason whatever to believe that the few people who wear khadi caps are cheats. They are

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had cited several instances to show that people had not been sincere in their support of the non-co-operation movement and suggested to Gandhiji that he should adopt the programme of the Swaraj Party.

[2] The correspondent had argued that Gandhiji was taken in by the sight of people in khadi caps wherever he went.

perfect strangers to me. Some of them I would probably see only once in my life. What do such persons expect to gain by wearing khadi only to please me? Even if they wear khadi with that motive, I would still not call them hypocrites.

It is not true that non-co-operation was planned without feeling the pulse of the people. I would not have got the idea of khadi had I not felt their pulse. If any movement is being carried on steadily, it is that of khadi and the spinning-wheel. I do not know of any other national activity in which so many voluntary workers are engaged and which is a source of untainted income to so many people. This programme is making some progress, no mater how small. Even if the poor have not taken it up actively, they have welcomed it. They know instinctively that the programme is rightly conceived, adds to the country's wealth and is of universal value.

The correspondent says that the spinning programme will not succeed and I should, therefore, give it up and also withdraw the spinning qualification for the franchise. I cannot give it up for reasons explained above. I have no authority to Omit the spinning qualification for voting. The Congress can do so at the end of the year if it wishes to. But even if it does, the correspondent will always find me a worshipper of khadi and the spinning-wheel.

The correspondent further says that swaraj cannot be won by khadi alone. I have never said that if can; but what I have said, and repeat again, is that it cannot be won without khadi. It is not true that we lost our independence although we used to wear khadi then. We gave up khadi and lost our independence. If we introduce khadi again, we shall get back our independence also. Besides, when we lost our freedom we did not know that khadi has the virtue of preserving it. Now we know that. If we do not know that we can walk long distances if our lungs are strong, we may possibly lose that strength by neglecting to take care of them so that they become diseased. If even after knowing it, we do not regain our strength by improving the lungs, we would be reckoned fools. The same thing can be said about khadi.

The correspondent wants everyone to be a Swarajist. I can only say that that is not the view of the Congress. At any rate, the khadi movement does not prevent a single person from joining the Swaraj Party. A sincere Swarajist can be a devotee of khadi. There are swar-

ajists who are such devotees. The compact endorsed by the Congress[1] assumes that both the parties have faith in khadi, and has explained what that faith is. It is, therefore, permissible to a person, while spinning and persuading others to spin or weaving khadi and persuading others to do so, to join the Swaraj Party and invite others to join it.

I do not at all feel sorry that only a few members are left in the Congress. If it has only ten thousand members who are sincere lovers of khadi, they will be able to serve the Congress and the country more effectively than hundreds of thousands of members, who are such only in name and who do nothing but pay their four-anna subscription to the Congress. Indeed a large number of such members may do more harm than good.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-4-1925

70. INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

General Smuts deserves credit or supporting the cause of the Indians in South Africa. But this by itself will not remove their hardships. Their plight is becoming more nad more pitiable. European traders are out to destroy completely the Indians' business, the very means of their existence. They are, therefore, now ready openly to attack the trade-interests of Indians settled in the Transvaal. India is not in a position to help them. Government has given up all pretence of decency. It sets no store by public opinion in this country. No matter what the result of voting in the Legislative Assembly is, the Government goes its own way. Public opinion in India is of course in favour of their countrymen in South Africa. Whatever is possible will certainly in Sourth Africa.Whatever is possible will certainly be done here. But I feel it my duty to warn the Indians living in Sourth Africa or other foreign countries that they must in the last resort rely on their own strength. The saying, "One cannot go to heaven except by giving up one's own life" fully applies to their situation.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-4-1925

[1] *Vide* "Resolution on Calcutta Agreement and Spinning Franchise, Belgaum Congress", December 26, 1924.

71. MY NOTES

UNINTENDED INJUSTICE

Shri Amritlal Thakkar had dedicated himself to the service of the poor and is, therefore, always thinking about them; some times it is the *Bhils*[1] and sometimes it is the *Bhangis*, or it may be a small store selling pure khadi. True to this self-imposed mission, or, if you like, this vocation of his, he writes to me as follows:[2]

If I have, intentionally or otherwise, used *Navajivan* it give publicity to the other two stores, I now give like publicity, with full intention, to this khadi store so dear to Amritlal, and wish that its monthly sales may go up from Rs. 3,000 to Rs. 30,000. This is not an impossible hope. The author of the *Mahabharata* asks"Between human effort and Fate, which is more potent?" and, not being able to come to any definite conclusion, he represents sometimes the former and sometimes the latter as the more potent. If the proprietor of this khadi store has faith and courage and is sincere, his efforts will draw Fate to his side, and his store will prosper and help the other two also to prosper; for it can be asserted in regard to the khadi movement that if one store prospers other stores in the same town, will also prosper. I have seen this with my own eyes at Tirupur. It is a small town, but has five or six stores. When people liked khadi, all of them flourished. However, when people became indifferent to khadi, all of them lost custom.

CASH IN LIEU OF YARN

It has been noticed that some Committees accept cash in lieu of yarn when enrolling members of the Congress. According to me, this is against rules. It was suggested that those who might no spin or get the required yarn spun by others, could pay cash, but the suggestion was rejected on the ground that if a person wishing to become a member did not even take the trouble to obtain yarn from somebody

[1] An aboriginal tribe

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had drawn Gandhiji's attention to a small khadi store run by a private gentleman at some loss to himself, and said that Gandhiji had done it an injustice by not mentioning it in his article "Is Bombay Asleep?", 23-3-1925.

else, the spinning qualification for the franchise would be rendered pointless. If, nevertheless, members are enrolled on payment of cash, it is surprising indeed. The truth is that if the spinning qualification for the franchise is to succeed, Congress Committees should exert themselves to see that all those enrolled as members are persons who themselves spin. A person offering purchased yarn may certainly be enrolled, but the Congress should try to encourage only those who spin with their own hands, if it wishes to see the new plan succeed. Whether or not this is done, it is a violation of the Congress constitution to enrol members by accepting cash.

THOSE WHO DO NOT WEAR KHADI

To have the right of voting in the Congress, a member has to wear khadi when doing Congress work and on similar occasions. In spite of this, it is found in places that members do not wear khadi. In my view, this is also against the rules of the Congress. Personally, I do not understand how we can win swaraj if we do not obey rules framed by ourselves. Somebody may argue that it is only proper to disregard the rules of the Congress which one does not approve of. But this is not right, for, if everybody disregarded rules which he did not like, there would be no rule which would be obeyed by all, and as a result the constitution, i.e., the very system, would break down. Before a rule is introduced, one may oppose it as much as one likes, but to violate it after it has been accepted would be to invite chaos. Let no one say that my argument would also rule out civil disobedience. The argument is not correct. Civil disobedience is offered only when not to do so would be immoral. In this case, there is no question of immorality. To wear khadi is not immoral. I have yet to hear anyone argue that it is immoral to wear khadi.

The question, therefore, arises what should be done when a member not wearing khadi comes to attend a Committee meeting. The president can politely ask him of leave; if the member disregards the request, he can be stopped from making a speech. In any case, his vote should not be counted. Do I express these views as he President of the Congress, or are they just my private views? I have no desire whatsoever to express a view as the President. If an occasion arises requiring a ruling on this matter, I do not wish to give any. I will ask the Working Committee to decide. I myself seggested the change in the franchise and drafted the rule; I therefore, do not think it would be proper for me as President to give any ruling. The right thing would

be for the Working Committee to give a ruling. But I hope that nonbody will ask for an authoritative ruling from the Working Committee on a simple point like this.

NEXT WEEK

This issue will be in the readers' hands before April 6. I have already explained what we should do during the National Week.[1] I, however, wish of lay stress again on khadi and spinning. This is one programme which the people can carry out successfully, if they wish to. So far we have not been able to complete a single national programme of permanent value. Khadi is one such programme, which we can successfully carry out if only we decide to do so. there can be no religious objection to it. I have never heard of one. It is not difficult to carry out either, for we have the necessary resources and means. Only he will is lacking. Even more than the will, we lack efficiency, do not work hard enough. Has anything been ever achieved in this world, can anything be achieved, without hard work? If we do not understand this, what great task can we ever accomplish? I have often hard people saying that they would work if others did. But how are we concerned with what others do? It will be enough if we do our duty. I wish that every reader will understand this and spend all this energy in khadi work during the forthcoming Week.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-4-1925

72. MY NOTES

HARDSHIPS OF WEARING KHADI

I am giving below a few excerpts, in his own language, from a letter which a cobbler friend writes from Karachi:[2]

Such difficulties will always arise. Every reformer has to face hardships. I compliment this cobbler family.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-4-1925 (Supplement)

[1] *Vide* "The Coming Week", March 29, 1925.

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had recounted the difficulties he had had to face on having adopted khadi and insisting on wearing khadi at the time of marriage.

73. SPEECH AT LATHI

April 5, 1925

Why has the Lathi of 'Kalapi' come to be known as Ramjibhai's[1] Lathi? Is there anything so special about him?

Only this, that at a time when everyone else refused of weave hand-spun yarn, he and Gangabehn gave a lead and set out to do so. What did he lose by doing so? Today, he is well known throughout Gujarat. He went as far as even Kashi Vishwanath and taught weaving; he was able to come to Poona too to see me. He gained this reputation only because of his singleness of purpose in weaving hand-spun yarn. Gangabai surpasses even her husband at weaving. I worship her although she is an untouchable because that aged lady is holy and abides by her vow. I shall not encourage you in your demand for a temple[2] and I shall also ask the manager not to go out of his way to do so. If I ask for a lakh of rupees for you today, I can get it, but why should I ask for this sum? If you wish to build a temple, you can do so on your own. I shall look after your physical well-being; you should, no your own, make arrangements to satisfy the hunger of your souls. If I have a temple built for you now, you would dance in it after getting drunk—I found this to be a fact in Dhoraji. If you, therefore, feel a real need for a temple, contribute towards it by the sweat of your brow, ask Ramjibhai to contribute funds and when a good amount has been collected, request the manager to contribute an equal sum. If you do this much, I shall add a sum equal to the above two sums. Do so if you really need such a temple. Have only a true *Vaishnava* as the priest. The temple should have three trustees—the manager of the temple or Thakore Saheb when he ascends the throne, myself and a person nominated by you; and the temple will continue to function only so long as it is run well, otherwise, it will be taken away from you.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-4-1925

[1] A weaver; *vide An Autobiograhy*, Pt. V, Ch. XL.

[2] The teachers at the *Antyaja* school, while submitting their report before Gandhiji, had suggested the building of a temple for *Antyajas*.

74. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

[After *April 5, 1925*][1]

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM[2],

I received your letter yesterday. I am writing this reply after the morning prayers. How years pass! I had not realized you were already sixteen. I too wish that you should become devout and brilliant as Hanuman. I am giving you better blessings than you have asked for. I bless you that you may always try to be like Hanuman. Therein lies achievement. We can then feel that we are making whole-hearted effort and for one who feels this there is only joy. Hanuman is an ideal character. Whether we can attain to the ideal depends on many factors. The responsibility of making efforts, however, rests solely on us, and in that rests our striving.

Radha told me that you thought that I had forgotten you. I am forgetful, no doubt, but I have seen you and listened to your singing so many times that I could not have easily forgotten you. I often think of you and of others whom I can remember. Hopes of a bright future rest only on young people like you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: C.W. 914. Courte sy: Narand as Gandhi

75. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

[*April 6, 1925*][3]

REVERED ANASUYABEHN,

Today is a silence-day. I continue to have only one meal a day. Just now I have been writing for *Young lndia*. In the morning we are leaving Amreli. I have to go to Bombay without detraining at Ahmedabad. I shall pass Ahmedabad on Friday night by the Mail. You will no doubt see me at the station. If Ba wants to come to the station bring her.

[1] The date has been inferred from Gandhiji's blessings for the sixteenth birthday of the addressee who was born on April 5, l909.

[2] Son of Narandas Gandhi

[3] The date has been inferred from the contents of the letter and from Gandhiji's itinerary.

I went up to Shatrunjaya and came down without being carried. Jamnabehn also did the same thing. I enjoyed the excursion. God is the help of the helpless.

Blessings from

BAPU

Anasuyabehn
Sevashram
Mirzapur
Ahmedabad

From the Gujara ti origin al: G.N. 11544

76. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

AMRELI,
Silence Day [*April 6, 1925*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I am reaching there on Saturday by the Gujarat Mail. I shall be there till Monday at least. Inform Maulana Shaukat Ali so he can talk to anyone he may choose about this. You should also inform Sarojini Devi, so that I do not have to write to her.

Anand, I trust, is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
93 BAZAR GATE STREET
FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujara ti origin al: Pyarel al Papers . Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y. Courte sy: Belade vi Nayyar and Dr. Sushil a Nayyar

77. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Monday [April 6, 1925][2]

BHAISHRI , GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. I certainly was not joking when I said that you surpassed me. I see nothing wrong in it. Surely, one should

[1] The postmark bears the date April 9, 1925. The silence-day, i.e., Monday, preceding this date fell on April 6.

[2] *Vide* Letter to the addressee dated March 30, 1925.

endeavour to surpass one's elders and friends in moral strength. It is my duty to add to the moral heritage bequeathed to me by my elders. I always pray to God that He may grant my friends more strength than I possess, which only means that He may save them from my shortcomings. I do wish you surpass me in moral strength. Therein lies the fulfilment of my association with you. Similarly you should wish greater strength to me. That is one thing in which competition will not breed jealousy.

I hinted at re-marriage only to safeguard you against any eventuality.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6110. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

78. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MANGROL

April 8, 1925

There is a limit to a man's patience and I, too, have reached mine. When I see *Antyaja* girls being asked to sing from that distance, I can keep quiet no longer. You must have noticed that every five minutes my eyes turned to the *Antyajas* standing there in that corner outside the cordon. I could not bear that they should be given seats there. If *Antyaja* girls are to sing from there, the presentation of the address on behalf of the Congress committee would be a mere farce, it would be just for show. I have said again and again that I am a *Dhed*, an *Antyaja* a *Bhangi*. I take pride in describing myself thus. It gives me joy to do so. When asked about my profession in the past, I described myself as a farmer and weaver,[1] but, in my reply to the address of the Madras Municipal Corporation,[2] I went a step further and described myself as a *Bhangi*. How, then, can you keep at a distance those among whom I count myself and at the same time expect to keep me among you? While singing my praises, you throw verses from the *Gita* in my face; how then do you imagine that I would keep these people at a distance? If you are honest in the praise you have bestowed on me, in attributing the virtues you have done to

[1] *Vide* "Trial and Statement in Court", March 11, 1922.

[2] On March 7, 1925. *Vide* "Speech in Reply to Corporation Address, Madras".

me, we should ask those girls to take their seats right in our midst. You are irritated at this and ask in anger why these people should have come to the meeting at all to disturb the peaceful and happy atmosphere here. If their coming here has pained you, as seeing them standing at a distance has pained me, do tell me so. We have, all these days, been merely passing resolutions. On your welcome arches I read slogans about abolition of untouchability. Either these are merely for show, or what we see here betrays your weakness. It is my duty on this occasion to help you overcome that weakness. I ask you, therefore, either to take back the address you have given me, or let me go and sit in the midst of the *Dheds*. If you sincerely wish that our *Antyaja* sisters and brothers should sit among us, tell me so. My religion enjoins non-violence, as does yours. In fact, every religion teaches non-violence; the difference is only in the extent to which one is required to practise it in action. I do not, therefore, wish to hurt you at all. If you let the *Dheds* come over here merely out of your regard for me, my non-violence will have been compromised. Permit them to come only if you feel it your duty to do so, convinced that what I have told you a thousand times about following dharma is right and should be accepted. It will not hurt me even if you raise your hands against admitting them. I shall only ask myself, with a sigh, how and when Hindus will see light. And, therefore, let everyone raise his hand for whichever side he likes, without fear and without false regard for anyone.

I am placed in a very unhappy position. As the number of those who want the *Antyajas* to be kept at a distance is very small, it is my humble request to them that they should retire from the meeting. If they do not appreciate the spirit of my request and take offence, it is better that I myself should go and sit among the *Antyajas*.

We cannot follow here the ordinary law of meetings. In this difficult situation, it is better that you let me go and sit there.

You should not feel hurt. You had not told the people in advance that *Antyajas* would be admitted. In fact, you had let all of them sit apart and, if I had not protested, you would have let them remain where they were. It seems to me, therefore, that by applying the ordinary law of meetings on this occasion we shall be hurting those others. My sitting there will give me no pain, and it will save you

embarrassment, will make things easier for you.[1]

The problem of *Antyajas* has unexpectedly assumed a serious shape here. That people left the meeting was, I think, an auspicious beginning. I compliment the friends who left quietly, as also those who have stayed behind intending to take a bath after returning home. It would have been very good if you had let me go. But what has happened is not bad either. The meeting has acted within its rights, and I would have violated my non-violence if I had forced you to act in a particular way. Besides, it is not right for me to put all the pressure on those who agree with me. I, therefore, understood the keen desire of my supporters and kept to my seat, content with the arrangement which followed.

I shall now address a few words of those who oppose me. Though this matter is being discussed for the last several years, what a pity it is that you still do not wake up to the truth! You would have had no objection if a *Dhed* had quietly come and taken his seat in your midst. The objection came only because the matter was mentioned.[2] If any volunteer did this, he acted well, but he has been guilty of deception if he admitted an *Antyaja* making it appear that he was not an *Antyaja*. If he did, he has deceived me and deceived those who believe that they earn religious merit through the practice of untouchability. We cannot force anyone to follow dharma. There can be no compulsion in any matter concerning dharma; by using compulsion, we really violate dharma. If any volunteer has acted in this manner, he should atone for his conduct, should apologize for it.

The person who interrupted me earlier did not understand what I was trying to say. You do not mind contact with *Antyajas* in trains, public offices, mills and other public places where they mix with us. In mills, actually, we employ them to work and naturally, therefore, we don't object to contact with them. It is neither human nor clever nor wise to forget this and to think that those who consider untouchability sinful and abominable are foolish men, thus closing one's eyes to the truth. I advise you to have some practical wisdom. *Vaishnavas* claim that they are full of love. What love did they show

[1] The person in the audience who had protested against the admission of *Antyajas* was finally persuaded to leave, after which Gandhiji proceeded with his speech.

[2] Someone in the audience protested at this point, saying that in fact volunteers had admitted *Antyajas*.

for *Antyajas* in this meeting? I meet a few *Antyajas* on my way Bagasara. They told me that they were not allowed to draw water from the common well, and that they were obliged to get it from open ponds. Is this compassion? Is it compassion to force these people to get their drinking water from what serves animals, and from which we never drink? It is, on the contrary, sheer cruelty, it is the very opposite of dharma, it is sin, it is the demoniac way. It is no part of Vaishnavism, nor of the teaching of the *Bhagavata*. If it is proved that any of the scriptures teach this thing, I shall have nothing to do with that Vaishnavism or that Hinduism. I heard the same tale in Hadala. The *Antyaja* who is endowed with the same five sense-organs that we possess, who is, like us, capable of good or evil, this *Antyaja* to be forbidden to drink the water given to us by God! The reason, that he eats meat! If he does, he does it publicly. What do we do to those who eat is secretly? We accept bride-money which is heinous as killing acow as and then we observe the practice of untouchability as dharma. Those who follow this dharma have no compassion, they are actuated by hypocrisy and cruelty in every fibre of their being. The only rule of cleanliness enjoined in the *Manusmriti*[1] is that one should avoid touching a woman while she is in her period and with a *chandal* while he is engaged in his unclean work. The most that the Shastras enjoin is that after touching a person in whose circle of relatives a death has occurred, or a *chandal* or a woman in her period, one must take a bath. If so, what is the justification for all this oppression? Why special residential localities for *Dheds*? Why the boycott of *Dheds* and *Bhangis* in every matter? We follow these practices and still claim to be descendants of Narasinh Mehta, pretend to perform devotions with the *Navakar mantra*[2]. Your claims will avail you little till your hearts have become compassionate. Even if the whole country said that I was not a true Hindu, I would claim that I was the only true Hindu, and assert that others who held the practice of untouchability to be a part of dharma were false Hindus. Even at the moment of death, I will keep repeating that this thing is a sin. There can be no *moksha* for me, for I am passionately attached to this cause. But who am I to eradicate this practice? I do indeed want Hinduism to be purged of cruelty, to be free from the practice of untouchability, from immorality and from sin. That is my wish, and I express it on every occasion. When I have

[1] The code of Manu, an ancient Hindu jurist

[2] A Jain prayer

the strength to bring this about merely by wishing it, I shall retire to the Himalayas. For the present, however, my life is a life of activity. But in the midst of all this activity I am not restless, I shall sleep in peace. Whether you are *Vaishnavas* or *Shaivas*, let all Hindus understand this: the fate of your religion is hanging in the balance. You do not know that in every part of the world Parsis, Christians and Muslims ask: Which religion is true, which has more of compassion and love in it, which enjoins worship of one God? At a time like this, you should understand that you will not succeed if you try to preserve Hinduism in an unclean box. All your sacred marks on the forehead and your temples will avail you little so long as your hearts are not saturated with love for all human beings, all creatures. This explains why the women did not raise their hands against admitting *Antyajas*, a fact which shows that the virtue of pure womanhood is still alive among us. I have seen all over the country that it is only the women who follow the right path. Why don't you understand, then? Why don't you understand that sixty million people cannot be treated as *Antyajas*? Malaviyaji and the Shankaracharya of Karvir-Peeth also say that this is impossible.[1] That friend believes that what I am saying proceeds from ignorance, and I believe that he is talking in ignorance. Who will judge between us? People will judge only after both of us are dead. I confess that I am an imperfect man. I do not follow my own definition of truth. If I did, would I have to argue with people? If I had perfect non-violence in me, would this friend possibly feel hatred for me? Would he have been angry?[2] I only wished to say, my friend, that my non-violence was imperfect, for you had become angry. If, however, what you say is true and you were not angry, that proves that I do have in some measure the spirit of non-violence in me. I do believe that I have a modicum of ahimsa. What I am saying proceeds from love, it is one hundred per cent gold.[3] No one should lose self-control while speaking to him. Those who raised their hands in my favour are under a double obligation to tolerate even this friend. I have said all this to restrain your anger, and also to win over a little to my side those who oppose me. But, how can I expect to succeed in this in one evening? All I shall say is, we shall not secure swaraj till we

[1] Gandhiji was interrupted at this stage by a member of the audience.

[2] The person in question protested to say that he was not angry and had spoken calmly.

[3] The critic again interrupted Gandhiji.

have made our hearts like the pure ocean.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-4-1925

79. NOTES

TO PROVINCIAL SECRETARIES

I hope that Provincial Secretaries will continue to send to the General Secretary and to *Young India* office the returns of membership from week to week and with such further details as may throw light on the working of the franchise. It is the easiest thing for Congress organizations to defeat the purpose of the new franchise. But they are expected to put their whole heart into it, to make it work successfully. Nor is mere enlistment the sole or even the chief part of the work. To keep up the membership requires ceaseless watching and continuously improved oraganization. It is no easy thing for those who have hitherto satisfied their national conscience by simply flinging a few rupees or a few annas into the Congress cash-box to think of the nation day after day and to labour for it even though it be for half an hour per day. Ten thousand such spinners will revolutionize our national life and bring light to the dim eyes of millions of paupers of India. These ten thousand spinners must be voluntary in every sense of the term—not the semi-starved spinners who spin for a living but who would give also perhaps half an hour to the nation free. I want these, too, if they will spin without undue pressure. But the real khaddar atmosphere—the atmosphere of action rather than speech, of self-help rather than helplessness—will be produced only by ten thousand spinners drawn from the middle class men and women who today belong to the Congress and work the organization.

KHADDAR IN KATHIAWAR

The Working Committee of the Kathiawar Political Conference has arrived at an important decision regarding khaddar propaganda. It resolved to collect cotton from the various districts of Kathiawar for distribution among spinners and get it spun. It had already received promises of over 300 maunds from donors. Now it had resolved to

collect at least 800 maunds or, which is the same thing, Rs. 19,200 for the work. The idea is to get this cotton spun and woven into khaddar. Kathiawar is a poor peninsula with a very small rainfall. In some places there is a chronic famine condition. Thousands of women would spin for supplementing their slender resources. It has also thousands of weavers among untouchables, who for want of their hereditary occupation are obliged to go to Bombay or elsewhere and work as scavengers in order to keep body and soul together. Khaddar at the present moment is not as cheap as it might be. It has, therefore, been resolved to find out families that would spin for their own clothing if they had a supply of silvers at cheap rates and facilities for getting their yarn woven also at cheap rates. The Parishad has, therefore, in order to encourage such families, undertaken to supply silvers at 6 annas per lb., no family to be supplied with more than 10 lbs. during the year, and to pay half the cost of weaving. The khaddar will cost the consumer a little over a third of the cost of $3\frac{1}{4}$ annas per yard instead of 9 annas which is the usual rate ruling in Kathiawar. Thus he will have 50 p.c. bounty in order to induce him to spin and wear the khaddar woven out of his yarn. To put it another way it is proposed to clothe out of Rs. 19,000 worth of cotton at least 2,750 families consisting of husband, wife and child. The following wages will have been distributed or earned before the cotton becomes khaddar:

Ginning	800 Mds.	Rs. 1,000
Carding	800 Mds.	Rs. 4,000
Spinning	700 Mds.	Rs. 7,000
Weaving	675 Mds.	Rs. 6,750
	Total :	Rs. 18,750

In the process of carding the weight will be reduced from 800 to 700 and in spinning it will be further reduced to 675 mds. In length the khaddar will be 67,500 yards and 30 inches in width. The count will be on an average 8. This is an experiment which is fraught with important economic consequences. The cotton, it will be noted, will be hand ginned. I hope to summarize the results of the experiment from time to time. I must mention here that it is possible to contemplate an experiment of his nature only because Kathiawar has got three well-managed khaddar centres with trained workers. The money has still to be collected and it must be inside of two months' time. I hope that every Kathiawari will help either by contributing his labour or funds.

FROM UPANISHADS

Borodada[1], who is ever watchful of the happenings in national affairs, sends me the following:

> In corroboration of what you have said in one of your excellent articles about the sinfulness of committing brutal crimes said to be sanctioned by high religious authorities of one's own sect I quote with the greatest pleasure the following injunction of a Guru to his disciple given in the *Taittiriya Upanishad*:
>
> थान्थनवद्यानि कर्माणि। तानि सेवितव्यानि। नो इतराणि।
> थान्थस्माकं सुचरितानि। तानि त्वथोपास्थानि। नो इतराणि।
>
> "Those actions which are irreproachable shalt thou practise, and no other. Whatsoever good actions we perform, those shalt thou look up to with reverence as examples to be followed, and no other."

KHADI WORKER'S DIFFICULTIES

Sjt. Adi Narayan Chettiar who is in charge of organizing Congress members in Tamilnad has put a series of questions to which he would like me to reply. His first question is:

> Do you wish to discourage the enlistment of C class members hereafter, or do you advise the stopping of such enlistment altogether?

I have no right to *discourage* the enlistment of C class members, i.e., those who buy yarn. They have as much right under the constitution to be enrolled as class A, i.e., self-spinners. But I will not encourage such enlistment. If I was a canvasser I would put forth my best efforts exclusively to the enlistment of A class, but gladly take in the others when they offer themselves for enlistment.

The second question is:

> There are a large number of women in places like Tirupur, Pudupalaiyam, Tendiruperai, Adarampatnam, Kallakurichi, etc., who spin for their livelihood. Do you think some of these may be enrolled as Congress (A class) members—after explaining to them that by joining the Congress as members they throw their half an hour's labour into the Nation's begging bowl—only labour, for, I propose that the Congress Committees should supply them with the requisite cotton for spinning 2000 yards of yarn per month, *gratis*.

I would certainly enlist these sisters as members if they understand what the Congress is and if they wear khaddar.

[1] Dwijendranath Tagore, elder brother of Rabindranath Tagore

The third question is:

> What is your advice as regards the employment of paid propagandists to stimulate hand-spinning and the enlistment of such spinners as Congress members as per Belgaum resolution?

Paid workers may be certainly engaged wherever funds permit and funds should be obtained by begging cotton.

The fourth is:

> Some want loans—and loans in my experience end in gifts for what of proper accounting and collecting agencies—of charkhas and even cotton as a condition precedent to their commencing to spin. I must say some of them are really poor people. Do you advise compliance with this request? If so, on what terms?

Loans of charkhas, etc., ought to be given wherever necessary and reasonable security should be taken for return of the materials. Charkhas may be sold even on hire-purchase system.

"TO BE ATTAINED"

A friend writes:

> You have always preached that swaraj must be *attained* and not *obtained*. In this connection I send from Daniel's *Life of Woodrow Wilson*, the following apposite passage, thinking it will interest you.
>
> "In his (Wilson's[1]) minds, the *means* of bringing about democratic Government comes from within not without, *by moral, not by physical, force.*"
>
> "I have not read history" he said, "without observing that the greatest forces in the world, and the only permanent forces are the moral forces."

Young India, 9-4-1925

80. COW-PROTECTION

It will be remembered that at the Cow-Protection Conference held at Belgaum a committee was appointed to frame a constitution for the founding of a permanent All-India Cow-Protection Organization. In consequence of the resolution, the Committee met in January at Delhi and framed a draft constitution in Hindi which will be submitted to a general meeting to be held in due course. The following[2] is the translation:

Young India, 9-4-1925

[1] 1856-1924; President of the U.S.A., 1913-21

[2] *Vide* "Draft Constitution of All-India Cow Protection Sabha", 24-1-1925.

81. MY FRIEND, THE REVOLUTIONARY

The revolutionary whom I endeavoured to answer[1] some time ago, has returned to the charge and challenges me to answer certain questions that arise out of my previous answers to him. I gladly do so. He seems to me to be seeking light, even as I am, and argues fairly and without much passion. So long as he continues to reason calmly, I promise to continue the discussion. His first question is:

> Do you really believe that the revolutionaries of India are less sacrificing, less noble or less lovers of their country than the Swarajists, Moderates and the Nationalists? May I challenge you to keep before the public the names of some Swarajists, Moderates of Nationalists who have embraced the death of a martyr for the sake of the motherland? Can you be bold, any, arrogant enough to deny it in the face of historical facts that the revolutionaries have sacrificed more for their country than any other party which professes of serve India? You are ready to make compromises with other parties, while you abhor our party and describe the[ir] sentiments as poison. Will you not tremble to use the same word of intolerance for the sentiments of any other party which is decidedly inferior in the eyes of God and men to us? What makes you shrink from calling them misguided patriots or venomous reptiles?

I do not regard the revolutionaries of India to be less sacrificing, less noble or less lovers of their country than the rest. But I respectfully contend that their sacrifice, nobility and love are not only a waste of effort, but being ignorant and misguided, do and have done more harm to the country than any other activity. For, the revolutionaries have retarded the progress of the country. Their reckless disregard of the lives of their opponents has brought on repression that has made those that do not take part in their warfare more cowardly than they were before. Repression does good only to those who are prepared for it. The masses are not prepared for the repression that follows in the trail of revolutionary activities and unwittingly strengthen the hands of the very Government which the revolutionaries are seeking to destroy. It is my certain conviction that

[1] *Vide* “A Revolutionary’s Defence”, 12-2-1925.

had the Chauri Chaura murders not taken place the movement attempted at Bardoli would have resulted in the establishment of swaraj. Is it, therefore, any wonder that, with such opinion I call the revolutionary a misguided and therefore, dangerous patriot? I would call my son a misguided and dangerous nurse who, because of his ignorance and blind love, fought at the cost of his own life the physicians whose system of medicine no doubt did me harm but which I could not escape for want of will or ability. The result would be that I would lose a noble son and bring down upon my head the wrath of the physicians who, suspecting my complicity in the son's activities, might seek to punish me in addition to continuing their harmful course of treatment. If the son had attempted to convince the physicians of their error, or me of my weakness in submitting to the treatment, the physicians might have mended their way, or I might have rejected the treatment, or would, at least, have escaped the wrath of the physicians. I do make certain compromises with the other parties because, though I disagree with them, I do not regard their activities as positively harmful and dangerous as I regard the revolutionaries'. I have never called the revolutionaries"venom- ous reptiles". But I must refuse to fall into hysterics over their sacrifices, however great they may be, even as I must refuse to give praise to the sacrifice of my misguided son for his sacrifice in the illustration supposed by me. I feel sure that those who through insufficient reasoning or false sentiment, secretly or openly, give praise to the revolutionaries for their sacrifices, do harm to them and the cause they have at heart. The writer has asked me to quote instances of non-revolutionary patriots who gave their lives for the country. Well, two completed cases occur to me as I write these notes. Gokhale and Tilak[1] died for their country. They worked in almost total disregard of their health and died much earlier than they need have. There is no necessary charm about death on the gallows; often such death is easier than a life of drudgery and toil in malarious tracts. I am quite satisfied that among the Swarajists and others there are men who will any day lay down their lives if they felt convinced that their death would bring deliverance to the country. I suggest to my friend, the revolutionary,

[1] B. G. Tilak (1856-1920); patriot, politician and scholar.

that death on the gallows serves the country only when the victim is a "spotless lamb".

> "India's path is not Europe's". Do you really believe it? Do you mean to say that warfare and organization of army was not in existence in India, before she came in contact with Europe? Warfare for fair cuase—Is it against the spirit of India? *Vinashaya cha dushkritam*—Is it something imported from Europe? Granted that it is, will you be fanatic enough not to take from Europe what is good? Do you believe that nothing good is possible in Europe? If conspiracy, bloodshed and sacrifice for fair cause are bad for India, will they not be bad as well for Europe?

I do not deny that India had armies, warfare, etc., before she came in contact with Europe. But I do say that it never was the normal course of Indian life. The masses, unlike those of Europe were untouched by the warlike spirits. I have already said in these pages that I ascribe to the *Gita*, from which the writer has quoted the celebrated verse, a totally different meaning from that ordinarily given. I do not regard it as a description of, or an exhortation to, physical warfare. And, in any case, according to the verse quoted it is God the All Knowing Who descends to the earth to punish the wicked. I must be pardoned if I refuse to regard every revolutionary as an all-knowing God or an avatar. I do not condemn everything European. But I condemn, for all climes and for all times, secret murders and unfair methods even for a fair cause.

> "India is not Calcutta and Bombay" May I most respectfully put it before your Mahatmaship that the revolutionaries know the geography of India enough to be able to know this geographical fact easily. We hold this fact as much as we hold that a few spinners do no form the Indian nation. We are entering villages and have been successful everywhere. Can you not believe that they , the son of Shivaji, Pratap and Ranjit, can appreciate our sentiments with more readiness and depth than anything else? Don't you think that armed and conspired resistance against something satanic and ignoble is infinitely more befitting for any nation, especially Indian, than the prevalence of effortlessness and philosophical cowardice? I mean the cowardice which is pervading the length and breadth of Indian owing to the preaching of your theory of non-violence or more correctly the wrong interpretation and misuse of it. Non-violence is not the theory of the weak and helpless, it is the theory of the strong. We want to produce such men in India, who will not shrink from death—whenever it may come and in whatever form—will do the good and die. This is the spirit with which we are entering the villages. We are not entering the villages to extort votes for councils and district boards, but our object is to secure co-martyrs for the country who will die and a stone will not tell where

his poor corpse lies. Do you believe like Mazzini that ideas ripen quickly, when nourished by the blood of martyrs?

It is not enough to know the geographical difference between Calcutta and the villages outside the railways. If the revolutionaries knew the organic difference between these, they would, like me, become spinners. I own that the few spinners we have, do not make India. But I claim that it is possible to make all India spin as it did before, and so far as sympathy is concerned, millions are even now in sympathy with the movement, but they never will be with the revolutionary. I dispute the claim that the revolutionaries are succeeding with the villagers. But if they are, I am sorry. I shall spare no pains to frustrate their effort. Armed conspiracies against something satanic is like matching satans against Satan. But since one Satan is one too many for me, I would not multiply him. Whether my activity is effortlessness or all efforts, remains perhaps to be seen. Meanwhile, if it has resulted in making two yards of yarn spun where only one was spinning, it is so much to the good. Cowardice, whether philosophical or otherwise, I abhor. And if I could be persuaded that revolutionary activity has dispelled cowardice, it will go a long way to soften my abhorrence of the method, however much I may still oppose it on principle. But he who runs may see that owing to the non-violent movement, the villagers have assumed a boldness to which only a few years ago they were strangers. I admit that non-violence is a weapon essentially of the strong. I also admit that often cowardice is mistaken for non-violence.

My friend begs the question when he says a revolutionary is one who “does the good and dies”. That is precisely what I question. In my opinion, he does the evil and dies. I do not regard killing or assassination or terrorism as good in any circumstances whatsoever. I do believe that ideas ripen quickly when nourished by the blood of martyrs. But a man who dies slowly of jungle fever in service bleeds as certainly as the one on the gallows. And if the one who dies on the gallows is not innocent of another's blood, he never had ideas that deserved to ripen.

One of your objections against the revolutionaries is that their movement, is not mass movement, consequently the mass at large will be very little benefited by the revolution, for which we are preparing. That is indirectly saying that we shall be most benefitted by it. Is it really what you mean to say? Do you believe that those persons who are ever ready to die for

their country—those mad lovers of their country—I mean the revolutionaries of India in whom the spirit of *nishkama karma*[1] reigns, will betray their motherland and secure privileges for a life—this trifling life? It is true that we will not drag the mass just now in the field of action, because we know that it is weak, but when the preparation is complete, we shall call them in the open field. We profess to understand the present Indian psychology full well, because we daily get the chance of weighing our brethren along with ourselves. We know that the mass of India is after all Indian, it is not weak by itself but there is want of efficient leaders; so when we have begot the number of leaders required by constant propaganda and preaching, and the arms, we shall not shrink from calling, and if necessary, dragging the mass in the open field to prove that they are the descendants of Shivaji, Ranjit, Pratap and Govind Singh. Besides we have been constantly preaching that the mass is not for the revolution but the revolution is for the mass. Is it sufficient to remove your prejudice in this connection?

I neither say nor imply that the revolutionary benefits if the masses do not. On the contrary, and as a rule, the revolutionary never benefits in the ordinary sense of the word. If the revolutionaries succeed in attracting, not "dragging", the masses to them, they will find that the murderous campaign is totally unnecessary. It sounds very pleasant and exciting to talk of "the descendants of Shivaji, Ranjit, Pratap and Govind Singh". But is it true? Are we all descen-0dants of these heroes in the sense in which the writer understands it? We are their countrymen, but their descendants are the military classes. We may, in future, be able to obliterate caste, but today it persists and therefore the claim put up by the writer cannot in my opinion be sustained.

Last of all, I shall ask you to answer these questions: Was Guru Govind Singh a misguided patriot because he believed in warfare for noble cause? What will you like to say about Washington, Garibaldi and Lenin? What do you think of Kamal Pasha and De Valera? Would you like to call Shivaji and Pratap, well-meaning and sacrificing physicians who prescribed arsenic when they should have given fresh grape-juice? Will you like to call Krishna Europeanized because he believed also in the *vinasha of dushkritas*?

This is a hard or rather awkward question. But I dare not shirk it. In the first instance Guru Govind Singh and the others whose names are mentioned did not believe in secret murder. In the second,

[1] Effort without desire, the principal teaching of the *Gita*

these patriots knew their work and their men, whereas the modern Indian revolutionary does not know his work. He has not the men, he has not the atmosphere, that the patriots mentioned had. Though my views are derived from my theory of life I have not put them before the nation on that ground. I have based my opposition to the revolutionaries on the sole ground of expedience. Therefore, to compare their activities with those of Guru Govind Singh or Washington or Garibaldi or Lenin would be most misleading and dangerous. But by test of the theory of non-violence, I do not hesitate to say that it is highly likely that had I lived as their contemporary and in the respective countries, I would have called everyone of them a misguided patriot, even though a successful and brave warrior. As it is, I must not judge them. I disbelieve history so far as details of acts of heroes are concerned. I accept broad facts of history and draw my own lessons or my conduct. I do not want to repeat it in so far as the broad facts contradict the highest laws of life. But I positively refuse to judge men from the scanty material furnished to us by history. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum.*[1] Kamal Pasha and De Valera too I cannot judge. But for me, as a believer in non-violence out and out they cannot be my guides in life in so far as their faith in war is concerned. I believe in Krishna perhaps more than the writer. But my Krishna is the Lord of the universe, the creator, preserver and destroyer of us all. He may destroy because He creates. But I must not be drawn into a philosophical or religious argument with my friends. I have not the qualifications for teaching my philosophy of life. I have barely qualifications for practising the philosophy I believe. I am but a poor struggling soul yearning to be wholly good—wholly truthful and wholly non-violent in thought, word and deed, but ever failing to reach the ideal which I know to be true. I admit, and assure my revolutionary friends, it is a painful climb but the pain of it is a positive pleasure for me. Each step upward makes me feel stronger and fit for the next. But all that pain and the pleasure are for me. The revolutionaries are at liberty to reject the whole of my philosophy. To them I merely present my own experiences as co-worker in the same a cause even as I have successfully presented them to the Ali Brothers

[1] Of the dead say nothing but good.

and many other friends. They can and do applaud whole-heartedly the action of Mustafa Kamal Pasha and possibly De Valera and Lenin. But they realize with me that India is not like Turkey or Ireland or Russia and that revolutionary activity is suicidal at this stage of the country's life at any rate, if not for all time in a country so vast, so hopelessly divided and with the masses so deeply sunk in pauperism and so fearfully terror-struck.

Young India, 9-4-1925

82. MESSAGE TO "DESH" [1]

[Before *April 12, 1925*]

The work which I am doing at present is better than satyagraha. It is difficult to make people realize that, but it is true. Satyagraha means general civil disobedience but we must develop the capacity of disobey laws. At present, I am trying to acquire that fitness. Spinning and wearing khaddar is a vital part of this effort. Without them, it is impossible for us to launch civil disobedience. My request to all leaders in the country is to spin at least for half an hour a day and to become habitual wearers of khaddar.

[From Bengali]

Ananda Bazar Patrika, 12-4-1925

83. TO KATHIAWARIS

The last meeting of the Working Committee of the Kathiawar Political Conference held in Amreli was attended by 26 members. It was held in two sessions and lasted six hours. Some very important decisions were taken at this meeting. They are as follows:

1. Any individual or family that agrees to wear cloth woven exclusively from self-spun yarn should be supplied slivers subject to a maximum of ten pounds, at half the cost price and arrangements should be made to get their yarn woven at half the normal rate. The following members of the Committee undertake to enlist volunteers who will always wear self-spun khadi:

Shri Shivji Devshibhai	500	Volunteers
Shri Ramjibhai Hansraj	1000	„
Shri Chhotalal Tribhovandas	100	„
Shri Devchand Uttamchand Parekh	1000	„

[1] A nationalist weekly, now defunct, founded in Patna by Rajendra Prasad

Shri Jagjivandas Naranji Mehta	100	„
Shri Manilal Paramananddas	50	„

Gandhiji should collect 800 maunds of cotton needed for this purpose or should collect Rs. 19,200 as its cost. The amount already collected, less Rs. 1,000 spent out of it already, should be deducted from this sum.

Further, every person who gets cotton from the General Secretaries should maintain in the required manner an account of the quantity received by him and should sent the account to the Secretaries.

Resolution relating to enrolment:

2. The following members of the Conference undertake to enrol additional members as noted against their names:

Shri Chhotalal Tribhovandas: 251 members (with provision for 3 pounds of cotton in lieu of one member)

Shri Shivjibhai Devshibhai: 151 members (no provision about cotton)

Shri Ramjibhai Hansraj: 101 members (no provision about cotton)

Shri Jagjivandas Naranji: 151 members (no provision about cotton)

Shri Shivanand: 101 members (with provision for cotton in lieu)

Persons doing enrolment work will have the right to get the yarn spun by them woven into khadi and to sell that khadi at cost price; if they cannot arrange to get the yarn woven, they may send it to the Central office.

3. If the Khadi Centres at Wadhwan, Madhada and Amreli cannot sell the khadi produced by them, the Conference should buy it up at cost price (which should not include more than $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent as overhead expenses).

These resolutions provide three ways of popularizing khadi and spinning. The first and the best is to induce some Families to wear cloth made from yarn spun by themselves. The second is to have a class of members who would spin for half an hour daily and would always wear khadi, buying their requirements from the market. The third way is to produce khadi for those who wear it though they themselves do not spin.

Though the last two steps in this are important, they call for no discussion. But the first one does. It is the best way for popularizing khadi. It involves a little expenditure, however. I say “a little” advisedly, because compared to the consequent benefit the money

required is very little. The plan is to get 2750 families to spin and wear khadi, at an expenditure of Rs. 19,200. One family is estimated as consisting of a couple and a child, making a total of 8250 persons. The benefit is evident enough. Yarn produced from ten pounds of slivers will give sufficient cloth for a family to last for a year. After this, no further effort will be required to create love of khadi in those who have worn it for a year.

But the special advantage of this method is that people will be employed in work at home. A family which is so employed will be free from the fear of famine. Hence Shri Devchandbhai has described this plan as an insurance against famine, and he is right.

The plan is estimated to cost Rs. 19,200. That is 800 maunds of cotton will be distributed among workers, who will get khadi made from it and also find buyers for it. The expenses to be incurred over the necessary arrangements for this will be met from the sum mentioned. They have been estimated for one year. The plan will benefit ginners, carders and spinners, and will produce 67,500 yards of khadi of 30 inches width. The aggregate wages for the workers will be as follows:

Ginning 800 maunds of cotton:	Rs. 1,000
Carding ,, ,, ,,	Rs. 4,000
Spinning 700 ,, ,,	Rs. 7,000
Weaving 675 ,, yarn.	Rs. 6,750
Total :	Rs. 18,750

These figures do not include overhead expenses. There will of course be such expenditure, but it will be so little that it can be met from the Rs. 19,200 to be collected. The explanation for this lies in the provision for expenditure on spinning. We have to include this in the total cost of production, but actually we shall be paying nothing to the spinners. They count their labour as part of the cost of the cloth. The organizers are in a sense spared this expenditure, and they give a corresponding concession to the consumer-spinner. That is, though slivers cost them 12 annas a seer they supply these to the spinner at 6 annas a seer, and though they pay weavers at the rate of Rs. 10 a maund of yarn they charge the consumer-spinner Rs. 5 a maund. In other words, a person spinning one maund of yarn gets ten rupees plus a maund of cotton as a gift.

We can put the same thing in another way and say that khadi for

which one pays $9\frac{1}{2}$ annas a yard in the stores costs this person only 3 annas a yard, leaving out of account his own labour. We can expect, therefore, a large number of people to agree to wear such cheap khadi.

But where is the money to come from? Devchandbhai has undertaken to enlist a thousand families or, failing that, to collect money or cotton. I myself cannot stay in Kathiawar. If the money is to be collected, it will have to be either by Devchandbhai or by me. As I too must share in the work, I have undertaken to collect the money. I have done this because of my full confidence in Kathiawaris. About 300 maunds of cotton has already been offered. This had brought in Rs. 1,000. The balance remains to be collected. Even against the one thousand collected a like sum has already been spent and the amount, therefore, should not be taken into account. Hence, my demand is for the full sum of Rs. 19,200. Kathiawaris should find this sum for me, and that in two months. That is the active season. We shall have to get 800 maunds of cotton ginned by hand. The work is going on in Wadhwan, and the money for the cotton has to be paid immediately. Ginning can be continued only up to the end of Vaishakh[1].

This appeal is for donation of cotton, but it is more convenient to receive money. Moreover, the cotton which we buy for ginning is collected from one place and is, therefore, soft, so that in carding it half the labour required for carding the pressed cotton of bales is saved. I have actually seen some samples of cotton which could be used for spinning without first being carded.

With these advantages in mind, I appeal for contributions in cash. I hope I shall not be disappointed. People may send anything they wish. Contributions will be acknowledged in *Navajivan*. According to me, the responsibility of providing this money is especially of those who are not engaged in any active work. I hope every Kathiawari, wherever he may be living, will send whatever he can afford. I think I should also stage that this sum of Rs. 19,200 represents the minimum amount which will need to be spent. If we get people who will spin, as contemplated in the Resolution many more families will come forward. If so, it will be the duty of the people in Kathiawar in meet their needs. Everyone, therefore, should give right now as much as he can. I hope readers of *Navajivan* will respond to

[1] A month in the Indian calendar, roughly corresponding to May

this appeal of mine as generously as they did to the appeal for the Malabar Fund. Many Kathiawari women live outside Kathiawar. I expect something from them too.

I need not, of course, say that the Conference will maintain a complete account of how this money is spent. In every place, moreover, where cotton is distributed, accounts will be maintained under the supervision of the Conference Secretaries.

[From Gujarati]

Navanjvan, 12-4-1925

84. TO N. D. K.

It is not easy to explain the difference between violence and non-violence. But this can be said in a general way, that what counts is the spirit in which the person concerned acts. Arsenic given out of love may have the effect of *amrita*[1] on some and benefit them, but, given in hatred, it will act as poison and cause death. Lord Buddha left his innocent queen, and so attained his soul's salvation and helped that of the world. His action was a perfect expression of love. The action of the gambler who leaves his sleeping wife and goes out to play springs from violence and ignorance. Between these two instances fall all those given by you.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-4-1925

85. POLITICS

Most probably, this will be my last tour in Kathiawar this year. During this year I have given, I believe, as much attention to Kathiawar as was possible for me. I have collected all the information I could, and have not direclty interfered in politics anywhere. This is true, of course, with regard to the whole of the country. Politics in the ordinary sense is not out of my mind, but I believe that there is much work which the people need to do among themselves.

I look upon spinning as the centre, or the foundation, of such work. Hence, I have concentrated all my attention on it. I attach equal importance to Hindus serving the *Antyajas* and have, therefore, given attention to that item too. What I have heard about the political policy

[1] Mythological drink of the gods, supposed to confer immortality

being adopted in Gondal and Jamnagar has engaged my attention, but I have stated publicly my view that the problem there should not be, cannot be, dealt with through the Political Conference. I am still of this view.

"ANTYAJA" SCHOOL

One reason why I gave the first place of Botad during my present tour of Kathiawar was that even at the time of the last tour I had wished to visit the *Antyaja* school there but did not have time then. This school is run by Shri Dudabhai. I look upon him as a man of character among *Antyajas* . I have always admired his devotion to duty. I have brought up his daughter as mine. I have received an excellent opinion about Dudabhai from his superior. It was his desire, and mine, that I should personally see his work. I had heard, moreover, that the *Mahajan* at Botad was indifferent to the welfare of the *Antyajas*. And so I thought that, taking the opportunity of a visit to the *Antyaja* School, I would plead wih the *Mahajan*.

The school was indeed a fine institution. The pupils would be second to none in regard to cleanliness or intelligence. Many of them were dressed in khadi. Most of the *Antyajas* here have given up meat-eating and liquor. They have a temple of their own, too, in running which they have to face considerable financial difficulty. They are without the amenity of a well and have difficulties about houses too. A well is being dug by the State, but there is not enough water in it. These are the hardships which the *Antyajas* live with. Many of them are actually weavers.

The *Mahajan* had also arranged a public meeting, which was very well attended. No one in the meeting opposed my views. It is my request to the *Mahajan* that those who disapprove of my activities should publicly express their opposition. If they do so with restraint, it will be easier for me to explain my views to them. Even if, however, they express their opposition in any terms and in any manner that they choose, I am in duty bound to put up with it. I am constrained to say this because I know that there are persons who oppose my views and do so with bitterness and exaggeration. I do not wish to say that those who support the movement for the removal of untouchability are also not guilty in the same way. Exaggeration and bitterness

deserve to be condemned, wherever they may be found.

FREEDOM OF OPINION

From Botad, we had to go to Ranpur of *Saurashtra* fame. Were it not that *Saurashtra* was being published from there, I doubt if we would have visited the place. Shri Amritlal Sheth knows my enthusiasm for the songs, the *rasas*[1] and the *bhajans*[2] of Kathiawar. He had invited some women who took delight in these, and had also arranged for the presence of a band of *bhajan* singers. I stayed there listening on, without feeling tired for a single moment. I was absorbed in the sweet music and words of the *bhajans* and the sound of the cymbals.

Ranpur's contribution of cotton has been good. They had promised me a spinning-wheel, but I did not get a good one. Shri Amritlal produced before me one which was supposed to be good. But a spinning-wheel is not an editorial in a newspaper for him to judge its worth. And so this thing had a cord which would hardly hold, to what one might. About the spindle, the less said the better. It was no more than a kind of thick needle, of the kind which was common in old days. The pulley looked like a pillar. What sort of yarn, then, could it produce?

I was something of an expert, and so could operate this wheel somehow. But I also thought that if I could pay some money and become a Director of *Saurashtra*, I should like to do so, and then, with the support of others' votes, I would promptly give short notice to Shri Amritlal to the effect that unless, within a specified time, he acquired the same proficiency in plying the spinning-wheel which he displayed in wielding the pen, he should cease to be the editor of *Saurashtra*. But, as the phrase goes, could one ever hope to see such a day? Who would give me money for this purpose? Even if some enemy of Amritlal should give me the money, what guarantee was there that other Directors would support me? Supposing they agreed, where would I be if it turned out that Shri Amritlal, as the founder of *Saurashtra*, was beyond the authority of the Directors according to its Articles of Association? Thus, while spinning, I was, on the one hand, making many schemes to punish Amritlal; but on the other hand, I was being restrained by my regard for non-violence and the *bhajans*

[1] A folk dance in Gujarat accompanied by singing and circular movement
[2] Devotional songs

which were going on and the thought of their having been arranged by him had also a softening effect on my uncharitabe impulse.

Meanwhile, someone talked of my giving "blessing," to *Saurashtras*, and I saw placed in my hand an article captioned "at the Feet of Mahatmaji". Let along dismissing Amritlal for his ineptitude in spinning, here was a suggestion for blessings[1] ! This was indeed adding insult to injury! There was, besides, Kathiawari courtesy. How to wriggle out of this wed? I felt that I had been swept into the current, was being carried along helplessly and sinking. How could I give blessings to *Saurashtra*—a paper whose editor did not spin or card or persuade others to do so? But the Beloved One came to help. There were two or three sentences in "At the Feet of Mahatmaji" which enabled me to give my blessings, to preserve my non-violence, to respect truth and also incidentally write for *Navajivan* an article containing a mixture of sweet and bitter on the subject of the spinning-wheel. How could I have thus exposed Amritlal's weakness if I had not been able to give my sincere blessings?

That article captioned "At the Feet" had hinted that everyone should be free to express disagreement with me. I have, it said, always encouraged people to express sincere difference of opinion in a non-violent manner, how is it, then, that an attitude of intolerance has come to prevail among those who surround me—and so on. I liked these remarks and, though I had been requested merely to say a few words by way of blessings, I gladly spoke, instead, several sentences, for I believe that if we do not encourage complete freedom of opinion this country will never progress. Whether it be a so-called mahatma, like me, or King George V, even the humblest among the humble should be free to express his disagreement with him. If the mahatma does not listen with patience and courtesy to such expression of dissent, he would be in reality *alpatma*[1]; if the Emperor does not listen to it, the crown on his head would begin to shake that very instant and the time approach, one may be sure, for its fall.

Everyone cannot be of the same mind, and none is perfect. People holding different views on the same question can all be right each from his own point of view. It is necessary for progress that people understand all this. I, therefore, not only liked the remarks by the workers of *Saurashtra* but actually welcomed them.

[1] A small soul, the opposite of mahatma

"May *Saurashtra* defend truthfully and non-violently true freedom of the individual, no matter if, for that purpose, it opposes the spinning-wheel or any of the other things which for me are my very life—the paper has my blessings despite such opposition.'' Having thus given my unreserved blessings, I have earned the right to advise Amritlal and all the other workers of *Saurashtra* to take up the spinning-wheel. They should all card and spin, and persuade others to do likewise.

CHARKHA ASHRAM

The Ashram for whose sake I was invited to visit Sonegarh is not named Charkha Ashram. It is in fact called ''Mahavira Ratna Ashram''. Buy its chief object is to popularize the spinning-wheel and khadi. Its founder leader is Munishri Charitravijayji. He himself always wears khadi. A number of buildings have already been put up, and a few more are to be built. The aim of the Ashram is to admit and educate pupils, and also to provide shelter to Jain monks. It is intended to instruct these monks not only in religion but also in spinning. In fact, some monks now living there spin regularly. I was extremely glad, and also surprised, to see all this. I saw in the whole thing the catholicity and courage of the Munishri in matters of religion.

Hence, in my reply to the address presented to me there, I explained how it was right and proper that sadhus should take up spinning, etc., and urged on them to remain firm in their plan, having made a happy beginning with it. It is my conviction that every sadhu and sannyasi in this age should ply the spinning-wheel. None of them can completely refrain from action and work. We cannot avoid these as long as we are in this body. Eating, drinking, breathing, going the rounds begging alms, preaching, all this is work. But sannyasis are not asked to refrain from these activities, for they are done in a disinterested spirit and for the service of others. It is the duty of sadhus and sannyasis in this age to ply the spinning-wheel in the same disinterested spirit and for the same end. Since they obtain the means of livelihood from society, it is their duty to help preserve society. If they do not serve people afflicted with the plague, who else should? If a sadhu sitting in contemplation and hearing a cry for help does not immediately get up and run, he is no sadhu. Seeing a man stung by a serpent, a sadhu is in duty bound to suck the poison out of the wound and to run the risk of being poisoned himself. And, likewise, he is

bound, for the general welfare, to ply the spinning-wheel in order to provide work to people in a country afflicted with unemployment and starvation, and so help in ending both. A Jain sadhu can chant the navakar mantra with con-centration while plying the spinning-wheel and can feel one with the world. It is likely enough that many sadhus, while sitting it contem-plation, involuntarily let their thoughts roam on many things. A mantra chanted absent mindedly will be almost ineffective. But a sadhu who repeats the mantra as he plies the spinning-wheel will, even if he does not become absorbed in the mantra, be doing public service by the amount of yarn he produces, will to that extent be helping to end the starvation in the country and adding to its wealth. Selfless service is the only true worship.

With these words, I urged the Munishri to remain firm in the plan which he had adopted after careful thinking, even if there should be opposition to it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-4-1925

86. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

Sunday Chaitra Vad 4 [*April 12, 1925*][1]

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,[2]

I got your letter at Manavadar. May you live long and may all your pious wishes be fulfilled.

I am in Bombay today. Chi. Jamnadas is with me. Chi. Prabhudas met me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

On Tuesday I shall tour the Jalalpur taluk.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 894. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] From the postmark

[2] Son of Narandas Gandhi, Gandhiji's nephew

87. INTERVIEW TO " THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE[1]"

BOMBAY,
[On or before *April 13, 1925*]

Questioned whether there was any truth in the suggestion that he had purposely avoided calling the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee, although more than three months had elapsed since the Congress session, Mahatma replied:

The charge is baseless. I have not convened a meeting of the A.I.C.C. for the simple and obvious reason that I have no new policy or new programme to place before the country. Nor have I heard of any new programme to be placed before the Committee by any member. The one that was mapped out at Belgaum is incredibly simple. It has only to be worked out by each province to the best of its ability. If, however, there is a desire on the part of any members for the A.I.C.C. to meet, I shall gladly ask Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to convene the meeting.

Is it true that some Committees are accepting cash value for yarn as subscription from members?

I know, that some Committees are doing it, and my own personal opinion is that it is wrong.

I understand that the secretaries of some Committees act as the buying agents of the members from whom they accept cash and purchase yarn on their behalf to be tendered to the Committees. Would there be anything wrong in such a practice?

It is not a desirable practice for secretaries to encourage.

Questioned whether there was any movement to challenge the representative character of the Swarajists in the Councils and the Assembly, Mahatmaji said that he had not heard of a single No-changer wishing, in any shape or form, to reopen the question. Even if any member desired to reopen it now at a meeting of the A.I.C.C., it was not open to him to do so at this stage. It could only be done at the next session of the Congress.

[1] Lord Birkenhead, in reply to a question in Parliament on March 31, 1925 invited C. R. Das to dissociate himself from revolutionary activities and co-operate with the Government in repressing violence for the realization of responsible government.

Asked to state his views on the Das-Birkenhead statements,[1] Mahatmaji replied that he had absolutely nothing to say, as he had not so far taken any part in the discusssion.

Do you agree with the interpretation put by the Anglo-Indians and Europeans on Mr. Das's manifesto on non-violence?

No. I don't think it is a recantation of his former views on the subject. Mr. Das has merely reiterated his faith more clearly and more precisely.

What have you to say regarding Earl Winterton's[2] suggestion that Indians must first enlist the support of the Government of India and the local Governments for any proposals they have to make before approaching the Imperial Government or British Parliament?

In my opinion, the suggestion is a euphemistic way of saying that no proposals coming from the Nationalists would be considered by the India Office. Virtue lies in the India Office considering suggestions, irrespective of the *imprimature* of the Government of India, and even though they may come from, say, the revolutionaries.

What are the prospects of inter-communal unity at present?

I do not see any immediate prospect of achieving much. I am inclined to leave the question to work itself out. There are some diseases which, medical men tell us, are best left alone. The more they are pampered, the worse they become. This communal trouble appears just now to have developed that character.

The Bombay Chronicle, 13-4-1925

[1] On April 3, C. R. Das in a statement replied that the Bengal Act would not finally eradicate the evil and that he could do nothing unless a "favourable atmosphere" was created by the Government itself; *vide India in 1925-26*, pp 2-3.

[2] Under Secretary of State for India. On April 6, he had rejected in Parliament a suggestion that C. R. Das, Gandhiji and other Indian leaders should be called to London for consultations during the Viceroy's visit.

88. LETTER TO KHWAJA ABDUL MAJID

April 13 [*1925*][1]

MY DEAR KHWAJA SAHEB,

Mr. Birla writes to me that he is sending the money to Hakim Saheb. I do not know whether the money has been received there. Please let me know what has happened. I do expect to hear from you now and then and have a report about the progress of the Institution. If the money has not been received, please let me know at once. My permanent address is the Ashram. But you may overtake me earlier by following my tour. I do not know whether anything appears in the papers about my movements. I am never anywhere for more than two days as a rule.

How are you now?

Remember, if you are now without funds, it will be your fault entirely. If the money is not received, give me the dates and I shall see to the money being handed.

My regards to you and Khurshed Begum.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Please see that Mr. Birla's name is not published anywhere as donor.

From the origin al: A. M. Khwaja Papers . Courte sy: Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y

89. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Monday, Chaitra Krishna 5 [*April 13, 1925*][2]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your two letters to hand. You have discontinued giving dates in your letters. Please do give the dates, for if you don't, I cannot know during my tour which letter was written when.

Hakimji has gone to Europe. I have enquired of Khwaja Saheb

[1] The year has been inferred from the contents of the letter; *vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", April 13, 1925.

[2] From the circumstances mentioned, it is evident that the letter was written in 1925.

if the money has been received. Please let me know when you get any news.

On making enquiries from Jamnalalji's firm I learnt that they have so far received Rs. 30,000. The accountant acknowledged receipt for Rs. 10,000 on 1-11-24 and for Rs. 20,000 on 5-1-25.

If the doctors are hopeful, why do you have any apprehensions about your wife dying? I know from experience that it is very difficult to control our passions; but then that is our duty. In this age of *Kali*[1] I regard *Ramanama* as a most invaluable thing. I know of friends who have attained great peace by repeating *Ramanama*. *Ramanama* is only God's name. The [*dwa*] *dashamantra* also gives the same result. It is better to chant a name to which one is accustomed. One is always confronted with the question: How can the mind be controlled in this passion-ridden world? I am very sad to read journals that are published nowadays propagating birth-control. I find many writers holding the view that sex-enjoyment is our duty. In such an atmosphere my upholding the doctrine of self-restraint must seem very queer. But how could I disregard my own experience? I have no doubt that one can become completely free from passion. It is the duty of everyone to try to do so. Of all the means for this, the most potent is the chanting of *Ramanama*. Chanting *Ramanama* the first thing in the morning and praying to Him to make one passionless does certainly make people passionless—some today and others tomorrow, provided the paryer is sincere, from the depth of one's heart. The main thing is that God's formless image should be constantly present in our mind, before our eyes. This can easily be done with practice.

I shall reach Bengal on the 1st and will leave Calcutta for Faridpur the same day.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6111. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Darkness; strife

90. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

April 13, 1925

Mahatma Gandhi said they had heard three speeches that day and Mr. Patel had asked him to place such a programme before the country as would enthuse the people, or that they should find out for themselves such a programme.[2] He did not think that the people had anything to seek beyond charkha to enthuse them to a proper pitch, as well as to make them fit for a fight with the bureaucracy. They had failed because they were not really earnest in their aims. The charkha taught them to have immense patience, and it also taught them to be brave. It taught them to do their work bravely and with faith. Yet the people were unable to spin for even half an hour a day. He was firmly of the opinion that if they would merely spin, they would get all they wanted. Since 1919 he had been telling them about these things, and what more could he tell them now? If they really sought enthusiasm let them take to spinning, as without spinning they could not get swaraj. They would go on with their fighting between Hindus and Muslims, between Brahmins, and non-Brahmins, *avarnas*[3] and *savarnas*—he had learnt these terms in Travancore—and there were also other communities to fight with. The country had to make sacrifices for swaraj and for satyagraha. He was the originator of the term satyagraha and he knew something about it.

Without satyagraha, Mahatmaji continued, they would never get swaraj. He would be satisfied even if they practised satyagraha between Hindus and Muslims and so on, but the people were not ready even for that small thing. The people were ready, however, for *duragraha*[4] and they were ready to break each other's heads, and after doing it, they wanted to run away. Those were not the ways of winning swaraj. For satyagraha, they must have a peaceful atmosphere and that was not there. He was not ashamed to own up that their meeting was held in the Congress House grounds because they did not expect to get a large number of people if they had their meeting on the Chowpatty. He himself had never lost hope despite the present position, for

[1] Under the auspices of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee at the Congress House, Girgaum to observe the Jallianwala Bagh Day. Sarojini Naidu presided.

[2] Patel had referred to the reduction in the number of Congress members from 25 lakhs to 11 thousand as a result of the spinning franchise.

[3] Those outside the four castes

[4] Improper and wilful insistence; the opposite of satyagraha

as long as there was satyagraha in the country they were sure of winning swaraj. The only thing was that the necessary peaceful atmosphere was not there. In spite of all their disappointments, he was of opinion that they had not lost anything during the last five years; on the other hand, they had gained something. It would never do to lose heart or do nothing. They must go on with redoubled efforts and that was essential if they were bent upon winning the fight. Even if there were ten true men in the Congress, he would be quite satisfied; on the other hand, it was no use having lakhs of men who did not mean business. Formerly, they had a four-anna franchise and they had lakhs of members and yet they had not got swaraj. Because he was convinced that they would not get swaraj by these means, he had got the franchise altered, for he knew that as long as there were not even a few men who were ready to make sacrifice for the country, they would never hope to win in the end.

They must, proceeded Mahatmaji, be resolved to win in spite of all obstacles in their way. They knew that the Government were determined that Indians should fight with each other. But how many people were there in this country who were equally determined not to fight whatever happened? Only the charkha could give them sufficient enthusiasm for satyagraha, and they had to prepare themselves by spinning. If they wanted to offer satyagraha, they might do so on their own account, but he would be no party to it. He knew something about satyagraha, for he was the author of it. If he did not resort to satyagraha, it was not because he did not want it, but because he knew that the country was not ready for it. As long as they had not done the three things that they were required to do, they could not be said to be ready for satyagraha. Although it was always possible to offer individual satyagraha, he did not think that the country was ripe for a mass satyagraha. Between the 6th and 13th April a whole cycle's history was written, and when he found that they were ready for satyagraha, he would be the first man to tell them so, but he did not believe in bluffing the Government as this Government was not to be bluffed by such threats. It was a difficult thing to fool the Government. Speaking for himself, he would say that he would never give up the struggle as long as his object was not won. If they wanted to call themselves satyagrahis, he would ask them to unite with each other, take to charkha, and remove untouchability. If they did that, they were sure to win.

Summarizing his speech in a couple of sentences in English, the Mahatma said for him there was no swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity, the charkha and the removal of untouchability. Without those three things there could never be swaraj. Satyagraha meant the strictest adherence to truth and *shanti*[1] and ahimsa and without these there could not be satyagraha. There could be a satyagraha without these three things, but in the satyagraha which he wanted these three were the indispensable things.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-4-1925

[1] Peace

91. TELEGRAM TO HARIHAR SHARMA[1]

[On or after *April 15, 1925*][2]

PRESENTLY GOING BENGAL. AM WRITING BAJPAI AGAIN.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 11293

92. SPEECH AT KARADI

April 15, 1925

I am surprised as well as happy to see the quiet in the meeting. I have lost my voice and hence am unable to talk audibly. I feel therefore happy that just now you are all sitting quietly. I liked the children playing cymbals while chanting the name of God. Only those who have attended *bhajan* parties know the charm of cymbals; and I know it very well.

Many of you are wearing white caps and I like that very much. I don't know if you have only put these on for today's meeting. Since your caps are of khadi, I assume that your other clothes too are of khadi. If they are not, I would advise you to have these made of khadi. You must realize that much time has been wasted; we should not be thinking of these things now. We should have no love for foreign and mill-made cloth and we should not be ashamed of wearing khadi. We should not find it heavy. How can the cloth made by our poor spinners and weavers be heavy? It is our fault if we spin thick [yarn]. Good cotton from which thin yarn can be drawn is available, then why should we wear coarse clothes? I do not see women here wearing khadi. Women should not need foreign or mill-made cloth. It is not nice to come here wearing mill-made cloth. If you are going to do that, it is much better for me to sit at Sabarmati. But I have yielded to temptation in coming here. My co-workers have been similarly tempted by the same desire and said,"Invite him, perhaps good may result from his coming" I want swaraj and so do

[1] Formerly of the Ganganath Vidyalaya, Baroda; also called "Anna" (brother)

[2] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram dated April 15, 1925 from Madras which read: "Sammelan insists depositing money its own name opinion differs other matters also making position awkward definite settlement indispensable wire here when shall I meet you postponement harmful."

you. How it would come, no one knows. Take it that swaraj without khadi would be useless. Without khadi, the purity and independence necessary in life cannot come. I know that those who wear khadi can also be fraudulent and unclean. But we should know what we are doing when we wear it. As long as we do not put it on we can do neither our religious nor our secular task.

As long as we keep the *Antyajas* at arm's length, the rest of the world would do the same to us. Untouchability has no place in our religion. In the matter of toilet let there be untouchability. To say that a man is born untouchable is dishonest, immoral and monstrous. A man who says that man is untouchable by birth is wrong.

Thirdly, there is alcohol. *Kolis* and *Dublas* are given to drinking. Imagine what a deadly enemy alcohol must be that it won't let go of you. It must be given up. The best recourse for giving it up is to take the name of Rama early in the morning. Weep before God and ask to be delivered from foreign goods, meat-eating and loose-living. It was God who rescued Prahlad[1]. If you want to pray to Him by another name, do so. But let me tell you that pray you must.

The work of Hindu-Muslim unity has received a setback. I have myself been defeated. The whole of yesterday Shaukat Ali and Shuaib were with me. I could not bring them here because they are undergoing penance in order to dispel the fears the people of Bombay have about Khilafat. I have washed my hands of it. At present my advice won't be of any help. My advice is for mainly men and not for cowards. If someone swears at me, not to swear in return, if someone hits me, not to hit him back; that is my dharma. I can't expound this to other people, so I have given it up. The Muslims have gone mad and so too the Hindus. They enrae each other. If I sit down to sum up [the position] in India, Muslims are more to be blamed than Hindus. Should I give up their friendship for that reason? A father knows the defects of his son but can he give him up for that reason? The father does not curse him. I shall tell him that he goes to women of ill fame and drinks, and that he should reform himself. Surely I won't tell him to go and drowm himself in the sea. Similarly

[1] A devotee of God cruelly persecuted by his unbelieving father Hiranyakashipu, a demon-king. Hiranyakashipu was eventually killed by Narasinha, an incarnation of Vishnu, who emerged from a pillar of his palace to rescue Prahlad.

I cannot disown Muslims even if they harass Hindus for no fault of theirs. I shall try to please them. I shall go on telling them that what they are doing is *adharma* and not Islam. I will keep on saying so while facing their kicks. There is none today to listen to this advice of mine. I affirm that there is no way out for the two communities but to unite some say. Were I to die tomorrow, you would still go to one who says he same thing. One must, of course, give up fear. This is a movement for overcoming fear. That is all I had to say. It is not that one has to touch an *Antyaya* always. It is also enough if you cleanse your heart about Hindu-Muslim unity. It is easy to unite with the *Antyajas*. It is also not difficult to see that it is your dharma to wear khadi.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol.VII, pp. 347-49

93. NOTES

TO CORRESPONDENTS

I have before me a pile of correspondence from all parts of the world which demands my personal attention. That part of it which can be disposed of by my assistants receives prompt enough attention. But there is a daily growing accumulation which demands personal perusal and replies. My travelling this year has become far more intense than during any other period. The correspondence can only receive attention during the odd moments I can spare after writing for *Young India* and *Navajivan*. The result is that the correspondence has grown beyond my capacity for response. I have still four to six months' programme of travelling cut out for me, unless I become incapacitated. My correspondents will therefore please forgive me if I do not answer them in time or at all. They will understand that the delay or the omission is not due to want of will or courtesy.

The foregoing remarks apply, too, to the correspondence I receive for *Young India* or *Navajivan*. I should like to give it more time than I do. But I am helpless. I know that I have often to neglect important communications. This rush is the evil of modern life. It reoils with double effect upon an ambitious man like me. Some of my dearest friends have often advised me to throw overboard some activities and rest and be thankful. But I daily realize to my cost the truth of the saying that man is a creature of circumstances. The saying connotes only half the truth. But the half that is true is potent enough

to compel this apology to my correspondents. But I may tell them that I am trying to reform myself and insist on taking time for correspondence. I must try to re-impose on myself more days of silence than one per week. I must plead with the Bengal friends to lead the way.

THE BENGAL TOUR

This lame apology brings me to the Bengal tour. Telegrams before me tell me that the programme extends to five weeks. I hope that the organizers have taken the Mondays into account. These are days of obligatory silence and freedom from movement as a rule. But I would like the organizers, if possible, to leave Wednesdays too for silence so as to enable me to cope with all the writing I have to do from week to week. It was my wont to carry a spinning-wheel with me. I have now altered the arrangement and ask those who feed me to provide me with a wheel too in working order. I find that the new arrangement enables me to examine the local wheels and as generally my host tries to provide me with the best working wheel, it enables me to gauge the capacity of the place visited for yarn production. For, when I find the best available wheel to be an indifferent piece of furniture, I know that the production is poor. I hope therefore that a every place the host will kindly provide me with the best wheel available in it, and find me time or spinning. Thirdly, I hope that instructions will be issued to the crowds of people gathering not to shout or make noise and to keep a clear passage to the platform. Often there is a frightful waste of time in passing through these vast crowds. When volunteers have to form themselves into chains, it shows that the people have not yet been disciplined to obey the rules regulating crowds. I know that it is possible to discipline the crowds if leaflets giving detailed instructions are distributed beforehand and instructions are given repeatedly by word of mouth from the platform before the commencement of meetings. Crowds should also be instructed not to touch my feet. I have no desire for such homage. The homage I do desire is, for people who wish to honour me to practise what they profess to like of my preaching. It is enough if they stand erect with chests forward and salaam, or bow, if they wish to, with folded hands. If I could have my way, I would discard that too. There is no difficulty in reading affection in the eyes. No further gesture is necessary. But what I would love to see is that the crowds I expect to see in Bengal will be all clad in khaddar. Not that a single

person who is not so clad should be turned out. Those who do not believe in khaddar may come in their foreign or mill-spun and mill-made cloth by all means. But the vast majority who I understand believe in khaddar should at least practise what they believe. Let them demonstrate their belief in their own persons. Lastly, I hope that all parties will attend these meetings. I would love to see people belonging to all the different schools and different races not excluding English-men. May I also add that it will be better if the local organizers will arrange more for personal and private (not secret) chats than for huge gatherings for speech-making? That spectacular part may be necessary, but it should occupy the least time. I would naturally meet the students. Ladies' meetings are a feature everywhere and I would now like a meeting of untouchables too in every place. And if, as in these parts of India, there are separate quarters for them in Bengal, I should like to visit them. In a word, let the tour be a business tour and the mission one of peace and goodwill.

ALL-INDIA COW-PROTECTION SABHA

This movement for founding a permanent All-India Cow-Protection Organization has advanced a step further. The readers will see, if they have not done so already, an advertisement convening a meeting in Bombay of the general public for the purpose of considering and, if found desirable after consideration, of adopting the consitution. The reader has a rough but accurate translation of the constitution which is drawn up in Hindi. The meeting is to take place in Madhv Bagh justly famous for initiating such movements, precisely at 8 p.m. on the 28th instant. I trust that everyone who appreciates the constitution and the methods recommended therein for ensuring cow-protection as far as it is humanly possible and along the lines of least resistance will attend. The protection is to be ensured not by energetic or even wild appeals to non-Hindus but by ridding Hinduism of the blemishes and corruption that have crept into it. The constitution insist upon and emphasizes its economic character and if successful it will provide cities within a measurable distance of time with the cleanest and perfectly sterilized milk that they have hitherto had. It is designed to annex tanneries to the institu-tions that might be founded or affiliated by this organization. I invite all, big and small, Rajas and Maharajas, whoever may see these lines to study the constitution and if they find that it is generally acceptable to them, to attend the meeting and bless it by their presence. And those who cannot for some

unavoidable reason attend the meeting will oblige the organizers by sending letters of sympathy or even their contributions, whether in kind or in cash.

Young India, 16-4-1925

94. MY POSITION

It was for the first time and in Bombay that I heard, the other day, some complaint about my not having called a meeting of the A.I.C.C. A press reporter came to me and tackled me on the question to which he seemed to attach the highest importance. I could not understand his agitation for some minutes for I was innocent of any newspaper controversy on the subject. My incessant travelling has practically cut me off from the newspaper world. It was only when Mr. Shastri[1] told me in Madras, some days after the event, that I knew Sir Abdur Rahim was superseded. I do not regret this gross ignorance of mine on current events. I know that I am apparently useless for making any impression on such events. I can show no immediate remedy for such ills as the supersession of Sir Abdur Rahim. My ignorance of current events, therefore, does not matter much. I must apply myself to preparing efficient non-violent self-sacrificing workers with a living faith in hand- spinning and khaddar, Hindu-Muslim unity and, if they are Hindus, in removal of untouchability also. For the current year at any rate, this is the national programme and no other.

I do not need to worry about the purely"Political"programme which the Congress has entrusted to the Swarajists who are an integral part of it. As a time economist I would be foolish if I bothered my head about things which with my eyes open and full trust I have handed over to a body of men who are at least capable as myself, if not much more, in the domain which they have specially selected for themselves. It is enough for me to watch from a distance with admiration the valiant effort of Pandit Motilal Nehru in the Assembly, the brilliance of Deshbandhu who at the cost of his health pitted himself against an all-powerful Government and came out victorious each time the Government gave him battle, or the

[1] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri (1869-1946); scholar and statesman; president, Servants of India Society, 1916-27

marvellous cohesion of the Swarajists in the Central Provinces, or the courteous and almost unperceived encroachments of Mr. Jayakar. I would not insult these great workers by my officious and indifferent attention. I help them by my prayers for their success and by ceaseless effort to prepare the nation from within in the only manner I know.

I know of no division in the Congress ranks. I shall be party to no division. The Working Committee has a majority which does not wholly share my views. It is there to keep me straight. I shall never do a single thing during the year which my precious colleagues do not endorse. I am in correspondence with them as to the advisability of holding a meeting of the Working Committee. I am anxious not to take their time unnecessarily. Similar considerations guide me in not worrying the A.I.C.C. It is a body which has to be summoned only for giving new directions or framing new programmes. There are no new directions or framing new programmes. There are no new directions to be given, no new programme to be settled. It is no light thing to bring from long distances nearly four hundred men, the majority of whom are poor and all of whom are or should be busy. I have, therefore, purposely refrained from convening the A.I.C.C. But if there is a large body of members who wish to have a meeting called, and if they would name the purpose, I would have it summoned without avoidable delay.

What is most necessary, however, is for Provinces to organize themselves. Their Committees may meet frequently. We have practical provincial autonomy in the Congress. Let each Province honestly and industriously work the franchise. There seems to be a disposition to regard its failure as a foregone conclusion. Let me inform the pessimists and alarmists that the spinning movement is gaining, not losing, ground.There are workers all over India who are working at it silently, surely and effectively. The production and quality of khaddar have considerably improved. Many interesting experiments are being made to make khaddar cheaper and more durable. Tirupur perhaps heads the list. But Tirupur is only a sample of what is going on. The Gujarat experiment has only just begun. It has in it immense potentialities. It is an attempt to reduce the price of khaddar from nine annas to three annas per yard and at the same time to improve its quality. The indirect effect of the franchise has been already great. The direct effect depends upon the capacity and integrity of those who are working it. My advice to them is:

1. Canvass only for those who would spin themselves, but take

in all who would bring their own yarn.

2. But be detached even regarding self-spinners. You must not pamper them. The franchise is a privilege. Those only are to be valued who will value the privilege and work to retain it.

3. Do not be disappointed if you have only a few members so long as they are true members.

4. Do not take money for yarn for you to convert it into yarn. Throw the burden of supplying the yarn on those who want to become members. You may open yarn depots for the sake of those who may want yarn. Let the Provincial Khaddar Boards undertake the supply of yarn.

Let me make my position clear. I am wedded to the threefold programme. I cannot tease Hindu-Muslim unity into life. It, therefore, requires no outward activity from me. As a Hindu I shall serve as many Mussalmans as will let me serve them. I shall advise those who seek my advice. For the rest, I cease to worry about what I cannot mend. But I have a living faith in unity coming. It must come even if it has to do so after a few pitched battles. If there are men who will fight, nobody on earth can prevent them.

Untouchability us doomed. It may take time. But the progress made is truly marvellous. It is more still in the thought world. But in action too one notices the effect everywhere. It was a glorious sight, the other day, to see in Mangrol not one of the ladies raising her hand against untouchables sitting side by side with them. And when they were actually brought in, none of these brave women moved. It is not a solitary instance. But I know that there is a dark side to the picture. Hindus must unremittingly toil away at the reform. The larger the number of workers the more substantial the result.

But the most encouraging results are to be seen in spinning. It is spreading to the villages. I make bold to say that it is the most effective method of village reconstruction. There are thousands of women hungering to spin, because they want a few coppers to find them food. There are no doubt villages where the villagers do not need any supplementary income. I would not touch them for the time being. Just as I would not pamper self-spinners for the franchise, so would I not pamper spinners for money. They must spin if they need, not otherwise. The greatest difficulty in the way of workers is to induce men and women to spin or to do any other work even though they need some work. They either live on charity or are content to starve to

death. There are millions in India who have lost all interest in life. We can only touch them by ourselves spinning. I am interested in producing the spinning atmosphere. When many people do a particular thing, it produces a subtle unperceivable effect which pervades the surroundings and which proves infectious. I want that atmosphere so that the idle hands I have described will be irresistibly drawn to the wheel. They will be so drawn when they see people spinning who do not need to. Hence the franchise.

But if the Congress workers do not wish to take part in the work, let them revise the programme next year. I shall resolutely refrain from any fight next year either. I shall swear by the franchise even if only a few spin to become members. But I have no desire to retain my hold on the Congress by mechanical means. I simply state my limitations. I cannot work at the reforms without any power behind. That power can only come by organizing the people either for violence or non-violence. I can only try to organize them for non-violence or fail. There is no indication of failure yet. There is every hope of success. Organization for non-violence means giving villagers remunerative work to do and inducing them to give up some of their bad habits and to bring into being consciousness of one nationality by making untouchables proud of their Hinduism and bringing Hindus, Mussalmans and others to believe in and to work for the common cause with a full heart. I have no apptitude for any other work along political lines till the three things are done. I am as keen as the tallest among us to establish swaraj at the earliest moment. I am as impatient of wrong as the most ardent patriot. But I recognize the nation's limitations. I must work according to my lights to remove those limitations. It may be a long and dreary route but I know that it will be found to be the shortest. But all need not think alike, do not think alike. If there is an overwhelming body of opinion in the country that requires a change of methods and change of the franchise even during the current year, they can have it if they can ensure a full hous of the A.I.C.C., and secure an overwhelming majority. Though it may be a straining of the Congress constitution I will not stand in the way of a vast majority of the members of the A.I.C.C. altering even the constituion.The A.I.C.C. can take such a drastic step if this urgency can be demonstrated and an overwhelming majority demand it. But if there is nothing to warrant such a change, then it behoves every one of us to rivet our attention to the franchise without interfering with the Swarajist part of the Congress activity in any

shape or form. Half an hour to be honestly given by every Congressman and Congresswoman to the wheel and whole time to its organizing by those who have an aptitute for it, is not an exorbitant demand for the national cause.

Young India, 16-4-1925

95. OUR UNFORTUNATE SISTERS

Of all the addresses I received in the South the most touching was one on behalf of the *Devadasis*—a euphemism for prostitutes. It was prepared and brought by people who belong to the clan from which these unfortunate sisters are drawn. I understood from the deputation that brought the address[1] that reform from within was going on but that the rate of progress was still slow. The gentleman who led the deputation told me that the public in general was apathetic to the reform. The first shock I received was at Cocanada. And I did not mince matters when I spoke to the men of that place. The second was at Barisal where I met a large number of these unfortunate sisters. Whether they be known as *Devadasis* or by any other name, the problem is the same. It is a matter of bitter shame and sorrow, of deep humiliation, that a number of women have to sell their chastity for man's lust. Man the law giver will have to pay a dreadful penalty for the degradation he had imposed upon the so-called weaker sex. When woman, freed from man's snares, rises to the full height and rebels against man's legislation and institutions designed by him, her rebellion, no doubt non-violent, will be none the less effective. Let the Indian man ponder over the fate of the thousands of sisters who are destined to a life of shame for his unlawful and immoral indulgence. The pity of it is that the vast majority of the men who visit these pestilential haunts are married men and, therefore, commit a double sin. They sin against their wives to whom they have sworn allegiance and they sin against the sisters whose purity they are bound to guard with as much jealousy as that of their own blood-sisters. It is an evil which cannot last for a single day, if we men of India realize our own dignity.

If many of the most respectable among us were not steeped in the vice this kind of indulgence would be regarded as am greater crime than the stealing of a banana by a hungry man or the

[1] For Gandhiji's reply, *Vide*, "Speech at Ashram, Pudupalayam", 21-3-1925.

picking of a pocket by a youngster who is in need of money. What is worse of more hurtful to society—to steal property or to steal the honour of a woman? Let me not be told that the public woman is party to the sale of her honour, but not the millionaire on the racecourse whose pocket is picked by a professional pickpocket. Who is worse— an urchin who picks a pocket or a scoundrel who drugs his victim and then makes him sign away the whole of his property? Does not man by his subtle and unscrupulous ways first job woman of her noblest instinct and then make her partner in the crime committed against her? Or are some women, like *Panchamas*, born to a life of degradation? I ask every young man, married or unmarried, to contemplate the implications of what I have written. I cannot write all I have learnt about this social disease, this moral leprosy. Let his imaginaiton fill in the rest and then let him recoil with horror and shame from the sin if he has himself been guilty of it. And let every pure man, wherever he is, do what he can to purify his neighbourhood. I know that the second part is easier written than practised. It is a delicate matter. But for its very delicacy, it demands the attention of all thoughtful men. Work among the unfortunate sisters must be left everywhere to experts. My suggestion has reference to work among the visitors to these houses of ill-fame.

Young India, 16-4-1925

96. ON " STONING TO DEATH"

I had no desire to open the columns of *Young India* to a dissertation on the *Quran* on any subject treated in that holy Book. But having ventured on a discussion myself on "stoning to death" penalty,[1] I could not very well refuse admission to Khwaja Saheb's article,[2] in order that the readers of *Young India* may authoritatively know that the *Quran* does not countenance stoning to death in any

[1] *Vide* "Stoning to Death", March 26, 1925.

[2] In this article, Khwaja Kamaluddin wrote:

"The Mahatma has done a piece of service to Islam by entering into the controversy on the penalty of apostasy in Islam. . . .

"The *Quran* admittedly allows freedom of conscience. It respects personal judgment in religion. 'No compulsion in religion' is the golden rule promulgated

case whatsoever and does not punish apostasy during man's life on earth. But this shall be the last mention in *Young India* about "stoning to death" penalty.

Young India, 16-4-1925

97. IN DEFENCE[1]

TO

THE EDITOR, *Young India*,

AHMEDABAD

SIR,

In the course of an article on Travancore[2] published in your esteemed paper, Mr. M. K. Gandhi refers to the drink evil and says, giving some facts and figures:

"From all one can see the State is looking upon the increasing revenue wigh philosophic calmness, if not with pleasure."

I am afraid that the above statement is thoroughly unfounded. . . . I shall only place some facts. . . . these are culled from the report published last week of a Committee of officials and non-officials appointed by His Highness's Government to submit their proposals to enable Government ot attain success in their declared policy of prohibition by slow and easy stages. . . . For further particulars about the measures taken to minimize the drink evil, I would refer you to *The Times of India* of 31st March, 1925.

A TRAVANCOREAN

I was not unprepared for some such defence. But I remain unrepentant. I have paid unstinted tribute to the Travancore administration. But the *abkari* [3] policy admits of no such defence. The extracts quoted read like pages from British Administration reports. Liquor is not a matter to trifle with. No soft and easy-going policy will cope with the tremendous evil. Nothing short of total prohibition can save the people from the curse.

Young India, 16-4-1925

[1] exclusively by the *Quran*. Apostasy, after all, is a change of opinion in religion. If it is punished, it is compulsion in religion, and therefore contrary to the *Quran*. . . . I agree with the Mahatma when he says that 'everything has to submit to the test of reason.' The *Quran* says the same thing when preaching its truth. . ."

[2] *Vide* "All about Travancore", 26-3-1925.

[3] Excise

98. SPEECH AT GURUKUL, SUPA[1]

April 16, 1925

Last time I had decided to come here but could not. I have come today; but it will be apparent from my voice that I cannot speak loudly and for any length of time. I am unwell for the last four or five days and am therefore unfit for travel. But I had given promises to many and wanted to fulfil as many engagements as the body would permit. As I am not well, I will have to leave the place immediately. Otherwise I would have passed some time here and left after cultivating closer acquaintance with you.

I am pleased to see the boys. Here there should be no need to honour me with an address. My visit of this place is no unusual event. There are hardly one or two *gurukuls*[2] which I have not visited. The Kangri Gurukul is the parent of all such institutions and I have visited it several times. My relation with Swamiji[3] is of long standing. It dates back to the year 1908, the period of the struggle in South Africa. At that time I had not met Swamiji; but he had sent me an account, with details, of the work done by his students. The bond which was formed then has continued right up to the present day. Please do not be misled by any comments of mine about the Arya Samaj which you may have read, for, as my conscience bears testimony, my criticism is always prompted by love. My relation with the Gurukul is a spiritual bond and is unbreakable. I shall tell you what that work done by the students of the Kangri Gurukul was which created the bond between us.

When the satyagrahis in South Africa were filling the prisons, money was pouring in from India. At that time satyagraha was a new idea. Nobody could believe that Indians, most of them illiterate, would fight against the Europeans and go to jail. But they did. This touched the heart of India and funds began to be collected. The students or the Gurukul asked themselves what they could do. Obviously, they had no money. If they had, they would no have deserved the title of *brahmacharis*. They approached Swamiji. He advised them to do manual labour. A dam was under construction at

[1] In Bardoli taluk, in reply to an address of welcome

[2] Forest abodes which servcd as educational institutions in olden times

[3] Swami Shraddhanand

the place. Swamiji wrote a note requesting that his students might be employed on daily wages. The contractor was only too glad to do so. He offered the students better wages than what the labourers got. The students were happy. They wanted to remit the money to Africa. The jobber felt that it would be generous to him to pay a little more to the students. A few days passed. The students did more work than the labourers. Even their leaders feared that this might not last long. But the students did not get tired right till the end. They worked with the same energy up to the last day. I advise you to do what these students did. You should engage yourselves in a *Yajna* of manual labour for the country. The work done for the good of others is called a *yajna*. You should perform the *yajna* of manual labour, like those students, for your country. If elders cannot do much physical labour, they may simply work with the pick-axe or clean latrines.

Have you heard the story of the Kangri Gurukul? (If you have not heard it, your teacher should be dismissed). Near it the Ganga flows in torrents. Tigers and leopards infested the area and the forest was dense. Swamiji was tall like a rock. Little boys like you could hardly reach Swamiji's ears even by standing upon one another. He enrolled such boys and got everything done by them. Even now the leopards are there, but the boys were not afraid even of leopards. This is how the Gurukul was established. There is certainly self-interest in making the Gurukul a beautiful place, but the work is also spiritually uplifting. You should do the *yajna* of mental work along wiht that of physical labour. The mind should be trained, not in order to amass wealth but to serve the country. Even the *yajna* of spiritual striving should be for the service of the country. With every gift we possess we should perform a *yajna* for the service of the country and in the cause of dharma. We can thus engage ourselves in three types of *yajna*. One should remain a celibate up to the age of 25. Unless an institution gives such training that up to that age the student is not disturbed by physical desire, it does not deserve the name of Gurukul. Children and sannyasis are alike. Children drink in purity of mind and self-control with their mother's milk. If one cannot observe celibacy throughout life, there is the stage of married life. One should observe the rules of that stage and lead a life of self-control. I wish that you should learn to lead a life of self-control, and bless you that you may.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, VII, pp. 357-59

99. REMARKS IN GURUKUL VISITORS' BOOK

April 16, 1925

Thank God that my long felt desire to see this Gurukul is fulfilled today. May the institution prosper and the students studying there turn our true workers for the religion and the country.

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-4-1925

100. SPEECH IN "ANTYAJA" ASHRAM, NAVSARI

April 16, 1925

Your duty is twofold. It is your duty as *Antyajas* to serve others. You are all boys and generally it is believed that boys do not act on their own responsibility. They are led by their teachers or those in charge of the institution. But this rule does not apply to you. Although you are boys, you are also grown-ups. There is a girl named Lakshmi accompanying me. I would tell her that a great responsibility lies on her, that other *Antyajas* would be judged through her. You have to show to the world, which at present holds down the *Antyajas*, that there is no difference between them and others. There are good and bad people among both. Hindu society does not understand even this simple thing. This Ashram is a means of educating it so that it may understand that. If it succeeds, the problem of untouchability may be solved to some extent. What is children's duty? You should not eat forbidden articles. Banish from your mind the very thought of doing so. A person who is accustomed to eat unwholesome things will not like to eat good things, if offered. It is your duty to remain scrupulously clean. You should brush your teeth properly. They should be as white as milk. Eyes and nose should also be kept clean. On rising from bed, you should start repeating Rama's name. The air where we live should be kept pure. You should maintain internal purity and always speak the truth.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, VII, pp. 360-61

101. SPEECH AT PARSIS' MEETING, NAVSARI[1]

April 16, 1925

Another interesting item during the visit to Navasari was the meeting with the Parsi friends. Gandhiji delivered himself of his whole soul before them. I dare say it stirred the Parsi friends through and through. His friendship with and debt to the Parsi community, said Gandhiji, was an old story. It was Parsi Rustomji who, at grave risk to his life and property, gave him refuge whilst the Euorpeans in South Africa lynched him and wanted his head on a charger. It was Dadabhai Naoroji a whose feet he sat when he first went to England. Sir Pherozeshah Mehta guided his footsteps when in 1896 he returned from South Africa. Even today amongst his closest associates were grand daughters of Dadabhai Naoroji, and Mithubhai Petit and Mr. Bharucha who think of naught else but the propagation of khaddar. How then could he find any fault with that community? If at all he could get into closer touch with it he would feel himself blessed. It was Ratan Tata[2] whom Gokhale asked him to look to when he wanted money for South Africa, and he responded magnificently. At the time of the Swaraj Fund collections it was a Parsi who headed the list of donors. Dodds had placed Parsis at the top amongst the benefactors of mankind, for charity is a quality of the soul and they excelled in it. If they had given out of the largeness of the charity so much in the past, would they not go a step further? He wanted no money, but charity in the noblest sense of the term. He wanted the Parsi sisters' heart for the poor of the land. He wanted them to give up their silk saris and take to the exclusive use of khaddar. Mrs. Perin Captain, Mrs. Nargis Captain and Miss Mithubai Petit were devoting themselves heart and soul to getting fine khaddar embroidered by poor Parsi women, and to selling it to rich Parsi and Hindu sisters. Would they not purchase khaddar from these sisters? But all were not rich. The majority were poor, and the thing that even the poorest could give was half an hour's labour on the spinning-wheel everyday. That was the only way in which they could identify themselves with the poor.

His other request to the community was to give up the use and sale of liquor. He knew it was a difficult thing to give up liquor. It was with very great difficulty that he could persuade his friend Parsi Rustomji to take a vow not to touch liquor. And even he, brave as he was, went back on his vow, after a certain time. But the attempt must be made and seriously and once for all. They must understand that the community could not have an exhuastless

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's article "With Gandhiji in Gujarat".

[2] 1871-1918; Parsi philanthropist who sent large sums of money for the satyagrahis in South Africa; *vide* "Public Letter to Ratan J. Tata", April 1, 1912.

stream of Tatas and Readymoneys and once a vicious habit contaminated it, the spring was sure to dry up. It would mean the ruin of a little community like theirs. It was not difficult for them to give up dealing in liquor. Theirs was an enterprising community. They could find any amount of other business to do. It was far easier for a little community like theirs to carry out the reform than for an unwieldy community like the Hindu. His heart wept to see Parsis in charge of liquor shops wherever he went. He hoped they would lay his advice to heart, and put him at ease so far as boycott of foreign cloth and liquor were concerned.

Young India, 23-4-1925

102. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

Chaitra Vad 10 [*April 18, 1925*][1]

BHAISHRI DAHYABHAI,[2]

Owing to my weak health I have to postpone this time my visit to Dholka. For this I feel ashamed and unhappy. But I have become helpless. By taking rest, I wish to conserve whatever strength I have for the long tour in Bengal. Therefore I hope the men and women of Dholka will excuse me. My resolve to visit Dholka still stands and I shall go there at the first opportunity and satisfy the people. Please on my behalf give them this assurance. Meanwhile I wish everyone to promote the use of charkha and of khaddar, to contribute cotton or its equivalent in money and bear love towards the untouchables.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 2689. Courtesy: D.M. Patel

[1] The letter must have been written before Gandhiji left on his Bengal tour towards the end of April 1925.

[2] A public worker of Dholka taluk in Gujarat

103. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Saturday [*April 18, 1925*][1]

LET ANAND[2] HAVE SERVICE FROM US AS LONG AS SHE PLEASES.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p . 80

104. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

SABARMATI,
Chaitra Vad 10 [*April 18, 1925*][3]

BHAI JETHALAL,

You will have informed Lakshmidas of your decision. Only if he agrees should you leave Ramesara. I am going to Bengal in a few days, so I cannot say when we shall meet. I do not even know how long I shall be able to stay at the Ashram.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

Frorn the Gujara ti origin al: C.W. 9840. Courte sy: Naraya n Jethal al Sampat

105. SPEECH IN REPLY TO MUNICIPAL ADDRESS, JAMBUSAR[4]

April 18, 1925

I am pained to observe that you have been guilty of neglecting *Antyajas*. Where this small but important section of society is neglected, the municipality does not deserve its name. No matter how closely bound we feel with our brethren, we should not go with them even an inch if a principle is involved. You ignored this rule. You forgot it in your eagerness to delude yourself into believing that you

[1] The printed source has given the date as Saturday, 19-4-1925, but Saturday was the 18th.

[2] Addressee's mother

[3] The postmark bears the date "April 19, 1925". *Chaitra Vad 10* in 1925 corresponded to April 18.

[4] In Gujarat

had given me an address. You cannot split the life of a man to whom you wish to present an address, by taking into account one side of his life and ignoring another. I have said, not once but many times, that I regard it my first duty to eradicate untouchability. I would not regard myself a true Hindu if I did not talk about this subject day and night. If Hinduism harbours untouchability, the 22 crores if Hindus will perish, which means India will perish. If, therefore, the persons who arranged this address were opposed or indifferent to the movement for the removal of untouchability, they had no right to do what they have done. An address should reflect the real sentiments of the heart. Perhaps there would have been some justification for showering flattery on me if I had been an officer or a chieftain. But I am neither; I am only a *Bhangi*, a *Chamar*, a farmer, and a servant. You can, of course, present an address even to a servant like me, but only if you approve of what is the most important aspect of my service. It is quite true that we cannot win swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity. But what would it matter if they continue to fight with each other? Hinduism is not likely to perish in consequence. After we have done enough of fighting, one day we shall become united. Hinduism is not likely to perish even if khadi and the spinning-wheel are wholly forgotten, though, of course, we shall pay for our folly and starve. But unless the practice of untouchability is rooted out, we shall perish, Hinduism will perish, we shall have to hang our head in shame before the whole world. We shall have to face its challenge and people everywhere will laugh at our preaching a universal religion.

This address you have presented is not an address, but a warning signal. How can you accept a person like me, a *Bhangi*, unless you have given up untouchability? You could have instead told me that you did not agree with my views about untouchability and that, if despite that I came, you would welcome me. You have admitted your lack of progress in regard to khadi; but, then, till you have given up untouchability, can you expect any other result than that progress in khadi should be slow? How can you stop consumption of liquor, either , sitting all the time on the fifth or the sixth storey? Unless you descend to the ground floor, you cannot know anything about the fire raging there.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-4-1925

106. SPEECH IN REPLY TO ADDRESS BY LOCAL BOARD, BROACH

April 18, 1925

Prompted by your overwhelming love for me, you have used irrelevant epithets in your address. Whether I deserve them or not is a different matter. It is therefore difficult for me to make a fitting reply. Your duties include cleaning of roads and making provision for the education of children, including the children of *Antyajas*. These are certainly public duties, and of considerable importance though seemingly trivial. But the epithets you have used will not help you in their performance. If, on the contrary, you had said,"Kindly join us and take interest in our work. We approve of your movement for social reform. How good it would have been had you not, willingly or unwillingly, entered politics!", I would have been happy. But I shall take it that it is implied in your address and will make a short reply.

I was forced by circumstances to enter politics. My friends tell me that I am a misfit in that sphere because I talk of khadi, prohibition, etc., which are remotely connected with politics. But is it likely that I would not know that roads should be in good condition? I can imagine how many people must be abusing the Local Board when they see the roads in a bad condition. You do not have to suffer from the vast quantities of dust as much as it is my lot to suffer. Today, my patience was taxed to the utmost by this nuisance, and I thought on the way that I would say something about this matter. If, however, I say anything, pat will come the reply from you that Government has exhausted the treasury. It would not be proper for you to reply that I should fight and get your treasury filled. You should press the Government hard on the subject. If roads are good, what comfort it would mean for you, me and everyone else! I do not know what sense of responsibility you display in regard to drainage. Besides, the population is predominantly agricultural. Farmers'children should be given such education as would be useful to them in their agricultural avocation. Mere knowledge of letters will not help them. Someone told me once that the education imparted to farmers'children was altogether wasted. It is not the duty of the Minister for Education to think about this aspect of education. He cannot take the initiative in

such matters. You should do your best to solve this problem. To the basketful to epithets which you used for me in your address, this is the only proper reply.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, VII, pp. 370-71

107. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BROACH

April 18, 1925

Whatever the real reasons for the absence of high spirits and enthusiasm in the country, if people say the fault is wholly mine, for I placed before them a programme which no one could implement, I shall have to plead guilty to the charge. But I had no alternative. If an ailing man calls in a doctor, and suggests various means and remedies, but the patient refuses to employ them, what else can we expect but that the doctor will fail? I am being treated like a doctor to whom the patient clings even after such failure. You will not employ the means I suggest, you invite me, want to hear me but do not want to carry out my programme—such is the difficult position in which I am placed. Shri Chandulal said that the people here are affectionate. Certainly they are, but what should I do with your love? I wouldn't mind if the people of Broach did not love me; let them only throw yarn at me, even in anger, thinking that I am a crazy man, who should, however, be kept quiet and so they should spin and fling some yarn at me—I shall be satisfied with this. I am always talking about yarn because the money we shall earn through it will go to the walking skeletons in the country. It will not go to the shareholders in Manchester, Bombay and Ahmedabad. They don't need me, the skeletons do. . . . The spinning-wheel is the foundation, the centre of our work for our uplift. We have at present lost our good name and to regain it we should serve the people. This is why I go on touring from place to place, and do not feel ashamed talking about the spinning-wheel anywhere and everywhere nor lose faith in it. On the contrary, my faith becomes stronger day by day. It was with this very aim that I suggested regular spinning as a condition for the right of voting. If people who do not spin do not, therefore, join the Congress, the ship will not sink. It will not matter if only a few thousands, just five or ten, join it. I shall be able to solve the economic problems of the country thorugh them. I can, on the other hand, do nothing through people who have no appreciation of the

economic condition of the country, even if there should be crores of them. They can be of no use to me.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-4-1925

108. MY NOTES

A CORRECTION

Writing about the wedding of Shri Devchandbhai Parekh's daughter, I said that Shri Trikamlal alone had formed the bridegroom's party.[1] But he informs me that he had gone merely in conformity with the practice in his community, that is, accompanied by twenty-five for more persons. I felt unhappy when I heard this. He also felt sorry to have to correct my error. But whether or not one feels sorry, an error is an error and must be corrected. We cannot create examples by imagining what never happened. Shri Trikamlal need not have taken twenty-five persons with him. But, having already carried out many reforms, he did not have the courage to attempt one more and so took with him such a large party. Even so, he followed one rule very firmly, and that is, that no one in the party accepted even a pie by way of customary gift from the bride's father.

HARDSHIPS OF "ANTYAJAS"

During the present tour of Kathiawar, I have come to know more about the hardships of *Antyajas*. They cannot get water from wells in the villages. They are permitted to draw it only from troughs meant for cattle and other animals. They complained to me at many places about this. This is, certainly, no small hardship. It is well-nigh impossible of dig separate wells for them in every village. In the hard soil of Kathiawar, where water is struck only at very great depth, digging a well may cost as much as three thousand rupees. In such circumstances, how many new wells can we afford to dig? Everyone has a right to water. To exclude *Antyajas* even from this is the very limit of hatred. If people are afraid of being polluted by contact with them, separate hours for drawing water may be fixed for them. I cannot see any trace of religion in such hard-heartedness.

[1] *Vide* "My Notes", 29-3-1925.

EVILS AMONG "ANTYAJAS"

If I saw more of the cruelty towards *Antyajas* during this tour of Kathiawar, I had also some bitter experience of the evils prevalent among them. While talking with the *Antyajas* of Dhasa, Hadala and Mangrol, I came to know that they eat carrion. They call it 'dust'. When I pressed them to give us this unclean habit, they replied that it was an old practice and was difficult to give up. I tried hard to persuade them, but to no effect. They admitted that the practice should be given up, but pleaded that they did not have the necessary energy and said no more. However earnestly one may plead with Hindus, it will be extremely difficult to remove the general aversion against those who eat rottent meat. Perhaps people may tolerate this unclean habit of the *Antyajas* but they will never mix with them with real love. Whatever the difficulty in the way, the *Antyajas* should make a determined effort to get rid of this habit. They and their sadhus should start a vigorous movement and must end this extremely disgusting practice. One *Antyaja*, while admitting his weakness, was frank enough to tell me that if they were never asked to remove dead cattle, they would give up eating their flesh. I asked him if *Antyajas* would agree to the Durbar Saheb passing a law forbidding any chamar from removing dead cattle, and he immediately answered they would.

''But, then, how would you live ?''

''We shall manage somehow, perhaps take up weaving, but will not come to you with our difficulties.''

I knew that it was necessary to study the chamar's profession and remove the drawbacks in it, but I realized this all the more clearly after the above conversation.

Another evil among the *Antyajas* is that *Dheds*, who are weavers, avoid touching chamars and the latter avoid touching *Bhangis*. In this way, the practice of untouchability has spread as between sections of the *Antyajas*. The logical meaning of this is that we should have separate wells, schools, etc., for chamars, *Bhangis* and so on. It is extremely difficult to satisfy all sections among six crores of *Antyajas*. The only way out of this is that we should mix freely among the communities regarded as the lowest among them and, whatever we do to help *Antyajas*, should be for the benefit of these communities and only in places where their needs are likely to be served. Then all distinctions will disappear automatically.

For these evils, it is the so-called high-caste Hindus who are responsible. They kept away from the *Antyajas* completely, and the latter, for want of opportunities of advance, fell very low. In giving them a helping hand, we shall be raising ourselves. Unless one comes down, one cannot raise others. In raising the *Antyajas*, the caste Hindus will be raising themselves.

MODEL VILLAGES

Chalala, a village at a little distance from Amreli, is in many ways a model village. A meeting was held there in the early morning The utmost quiet prevailed and the arrangements made were the finest. The people of the village have, with their own unaided efforts, reared trees on the road and so we saw there beautiful *neem* trees such as are rare in those parts. The village has a school which runs very well. *Antyajas* are freely admitted to it. They attended the meeting and sat mixed indistinguishably with the rest of the audience. There is a school for khadi work in Chalala, in which people spin, some more, some less.Very few people were dressed in khadi, but when I appealed to them to take a pledge quite a few hands were raised. The village owed these reforms to four or five persons, and chiefly, as others told me, to the ceaseless efforts of Shri Hargovind, a school teacher, and Manibehn, his sister. A visitor to Chalala will discover what the sincere and persevering efforts of one or two persons can achieve.

KATHIAWAR COTTON FUND

I made a real start at Mangrol for contributions to the fund of Rs.19,200 which I have undertaken to collect. The collections there may be said to be satisfactory. I do not remember the names of all contributors; the total collection, however, came very near to 2,000. I earnestly hope that the collection at Manavdar will not be less. As the work of collecting contributions had not been completed up to the time of our leaving Manavdar, I hope to give the authentic figures of collections at the two places next week. The following are the names of persons who sent in their contributions after reading *Navajivan*.

P. M. Parpiya Rs. 100

Vithaldas Jerajani Rs.111

I am writing this note while on tour. I have, therefore, mentioned only the sums I have received in the course of my visits to places.

DELICATE

There are young men among us who are much too soft in every way, soft in body and soft in mind. Some of these delicate friends have addressed letters to me after reading my article. "Is this Non-co-operation?"[1] The substance of their letters is that I have not listened to and tried to understand the non-co-operators, side of the story and have done them injustice. The correspondents believe that my criticism was aimed at them. I do not know against whom it was aimed. I did not have any particular person in mind when writing the article. I merely used letters of criticism from other correspondents and tried to remove some misconceptions. There is not a single sentence in my criticism which can be interpreted to mean that I have credited the statements of those correspondents. When I receive any criticism of a person, and doubts arise in my mind, I generally place my doubts. before him and only then do I make any statement. In this particular case, I do not even remember the names, except one. I do not understand how these friends who have written to me thought that the criticism in my altogether objective article fitted them. If they deserve the criticism, they have no reason to feel hurt. If they do not deserve it, they should see that it is not meant for them.

These correspondents should not think that this explanation, too, is aimed at them. It is aimed at the softness common among us, at our sensitiveness. Public workers should know that they are certain to be criticized. It is one of the qualities necessary in such workers that they should be able to bear criticism. People who criticize do so with pure motives. There are exceptions, of course; some persons criticize through spite. One should bear even their criticism. My criticism was, and is, about a certain state of mind which is quite common.

THE PLAGUE

I had to return through Rajkot at the end of my recent tour of Kathiawar. From friends who met me at the station I heard that the city had been completely deserted because of the plague. I will not discuss at the moment whether it is right for people thus to leave a place out of fear or to remain there and observe the rules of cleanlines and take other suitable measures. This, however, I can say, that it

[1] Dated April 5, 1925

should be quite easy to protect a city like Rajkot against the plague.

But the report which pained me most was that some persons are even afraid of performing the funeral rites of plague victims, and these rites, therefore, have to be attended to by the Seva Samiti or the State. However much one may fear death, one is bound to nurse one's own people. It is one's sacred duty to perform funeral rites. If people thus do not attend even so their ordinary duties, social bonds will lose their force and society will perish altogether.

CART FOR CARRYING THE DEAD

In this connection, I recall Bhai Chhotalal Tejpal's suggestion for a cart to carry the dead. He has, in fact, gone crazy over his idea. As I see a panacea in the spinning-wheel, so he sees one in such a cart. We need not however, pay attention to his habit of exaggeration or to his craziness. We should only consider the valid elements in his argument. He argues that carrying the body of a dead person on shoulders in a hardship, that it requires the attendance of many person at the funeral and that it is an almost impossible task for the poorest sections in society. He suggests, therefore, that the right thing is to use a cart for carrying a dead body. With this idea, he has actually designed a cart for use in Rajkot and lends it free of charge to the common people. We may leave aside for the moment the question whether on every occasion of death we should carry the body in a cart. But in situations like an epidemic of the plague, when men are not available in sufficient number and those who carry the bodies run a risk, it is wisdom to use a cart whenever necessary. It has not been laid down that the body of a dead person should always be carried by men on their shoulders. It is only a matter of custom. In places where the cremation ground is at a distance or there is extreme heat or the number of persons to carry the body is very small, the cart can be a great help. The cart designed by Shri Chhotalal can be drawn by men and does not require a horse or any other animal. Just one or two persons can draw it all the way without getting fatigued. I would advise everyone to use this cart wherever necessary.

TO THOSE WHO WEAVE KHADI

The quality of khadi produced in Gujarat has been improving during the last four years. But there is room for further improvement. Its width is much too narrow. As the quality of yarn improves, it

should be broader. Our ultimate aim is, and ought to be, that every province should meet its own needs of every variety of khadi.

SPINNING-WHEEL FOR RELIEF OF FLOOD-VICTIMS

Relief work is aid of those who lost their all in the floods in Malabar is still going on. Some part of the money sent through me for this purpose is being spent for providing help through the spinning- wheel. Since the women there are not familiar with it they have to be trained in every process. The situation in the Punjab is quite the opposite. There, too, some areas had suffered much destruction. The spinning-wheel has proved a boon to the affected people. At first, they were given doles of flour. Then someone thought of making the people ply the spinning-wheel. There was a spinning-wheel in every house, and the women knew spinning very well. It was decided to pay them wages at more than the prevailing rate. The work is now proceeding well. Had the control been in the hands of a spinning-wheel expert it seems the work would not have had to suffer the losses which it does at present. If the use of khadi becomes universal, it would be very easy to provide relief through the spinning-wheel.

ALL-INDIA COW-PROTECTION ASSOCIATION

A public meeting will be held in Bombay, at Madhav Bagh, at 8 p.m. on the 28th, for starting this society. Readers of *Navajivan* know the genesis of the idea. I earnestly hope that all those to whom the cause of cow-protection is dear, who regard it asa sacred duty, will attend. The aims of this movement can be realized only if a large number of voluntary workers take up the cause of cow- protection. One universal feature of Hinduism is its concern for cow- protection. But cow-protection cannot be ensured merely by wishing it; it can be ensured only by applying our mind to the problem and taking suitable measures. There should be, therefore, a public body which will give thought to the problem and plan necessary measures. This meeting is being held with the object of bringing such a body into existence. I hope it will be attended by a large number of voluntary workers in the cause of cow-protection.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-4-1925

109. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Sunday [*April 19, 1925*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. 1 am returning the papers about C.P.

The thing about the educational institution is correct. Please settle the matter.

Anand can take service as long as she wishes.

My health is all right. I did not get fever again.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: Pyarel al Papers . Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y. Courte sy: Belade vi Nayyar and Dr. Sushil a Nayyar

110. TELEGRAM TO KANTIPRASAD C. ANTANI

SABARMATI,
April 20, 1925

KANTIPRASAD ANTANI

ANJAR

TILL TWENTY-SEVEN ASHRAM AND BOMBAY. MAY JUNE BENGAL.

GANDHI

Purush arthi Kantip rasad, pp. 72-3

111. LETTER TO KALYANJI MEHTA

Chaitra Vad 12 [*April 20, 1925*][2]

BHAI KALYANJI,

Herewith Pragji's[3] letter addressed to Parvati[4] and to me. Send Parvati's relpy to me and return my letter, too, so that I can send an acknowledgement to Pragji. If there is anything else to be

[1] The addressee received the letter on April 20, 1925. The Sunday preceding this date fell on April 19.

[2] Pragji Khandubhai Desai referred to in the letter was in jail at this time.

[3] Gandhiji's colleague since South African days.

[4] Pragji's wife

communicated to Pragji, let me have that a lso. Are you going to see him?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2675

112. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

Chaitra Krishna 12 [*April 20, 1925*][1]

BHAI BRIJKRISHNA[2]

I have your letter. I liked it very much. I shall write something about Delhi on the strength of the letter. I hope your mind is quite calm.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2349

113. TELEGRAM[3]

[On or before *April 21, 1925*]

I HAD MALARIAL FEVER, BUT I AM BETTER NOW. I HOPE TO REACH CALCUTTA[4] ON THE 1ST MAY BY THE NAGPUR MAIL.

The Hindu, 21-4-1925

114. NOTES

VYKOM

The reader will be glad to learn that the Travancore Government have released Sjt. Karur Nambudripad and withdrawn the prohibition order against Sjt. Ramaswamy Naicker. I understand too that the Travancore Government is giving full effect to the agreement arrived at

[1] *Vide* "Work in Delhi", 23-4-1925.
[2] Co-worker of Gandhiji; author of *At the Feet of Bapu*
[3] Sent to Calcutta from Sabarmati
[4] In connection with the Bengal Provincial Conference at Faridpur

between the Commissioner of Police and myself. I tender my congratulations to the Travancore Government on the admirable spirit with which it is acting in the matter of the long delayed reform.Let me hope that before long the prohibition against the use by'untouchables' of public roads surrounding temples will be a thing of the past. I need hardly point out to the satyagrahis the absolute necessity of a scrupulous observance of their part of the compact.

BENGAL AGAIN

I am looking forward to the Bengal tour in great hope. Bengal has the finest imagination. The Bengali youth are keenwitted. They are self-sacrificing. Letters received from all over Bengal are most enticing. I wish I had the health to stand the strain that the tour should involve. My Kathiawar tour has given me malarial fever which though brought under subjection has left me very weak. I hope to pick up strength during the nine days that still remain at my disposal. But I ask the organizers to make my daily labour as light as possible. I repeat once more that I would like the whole tour to be thoroughly business-like. Bengal is said to lack business capacity. Let the charge be falsified. When business-like habits are added to a keen and imaginative intellect the combination carries everything before it. May Bengal show the combination. I expect, in every place, full statistical information. If every address, instead of reminding or informing me of my many virtues, were to give a faithful record of the activities of the district or town presenting it, what an education it would be for me? For instance, every address can give me accurate information about the number of self-spinning and other members, the number of spinning-wheels working, the average capacity of each wheel, the counts spun, the monthly output of yarn and khaddar, the number of looms working with hand-spun and other yarn, the number of khaddar depots and the sales in each, etc. The address may also give the number of national schools and colleges with the number of boys and girls attending them. It may add all the information about activity among the untouchables and their condition before and after the commencement of organized work among them. It should describe the Hindu-Muslim condition and finish off with a description of the drink and opium traffic. Even if it be too late to embody all the valuable information in the addresses, it would be well to give me the information on a separate piece of paper. May I also say that it would be wrong to give me costly caskets or frames for the addresses?

I should be satisfied with hand-written addresses on handmade paper or on a piece of khaddar. I need not tell Bengal that it may make an address artistic without making if costly or unportable. In Travancore, in several places, the addresses were traced on delicate little palmyra leaves. I want to reach the heart of Bengal as of India. And where heart is to speak to heart, costly things and even fine phrases are a hindrance rather than a help. I am hungering for deeds not words. Solid khaddar work is dearer to me than heavy gold or silver plate.

MORE TALES OR WOE

The Sikh cup of sorrow is evidently not yet full. Here is a wire from Amritsar:

> Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee has received harrowing details of beating not excluding pulling of bears and *keshas* of members 2nd Shahidi Jatha in Camp Jails Nabha on 16th April. Beating inflicted to exact apologies. Committee has also received some hair and beards pulled out. There are now in Nabha one hundred and fourteen cases of sufferers of this beating. Composition as under: serious seven, contusion of head two, face eight, arm ten, thigh seven, shin eight, private parts eight, back five, minor hurts fifty one. Kindly arrange immediate visit Nabha Camp Jail.

Either the statement is true or it is untrue. If it is true, it calls for an open and impartial inquiry. The Government of India cannot plead neutrality. Their own officer is administering the State. To the Sikh friends I can only say every wrong has a remedy. And this wrong, if the allegations can be sustained, will not long remain without a remedy. As a journalist as well as President of the Congress, I plead my present helplessness to render aid beyond giving publicity and tendering my sympathy, but God willing I shall not remain long helpless. Every wound inflicted on innocence is a wound cut deep into every Congressman and every journalist. And these wounds are winged messengers who carry their own tale to the four corners of the earth, pierce through the heavens and reach the great white Throne of Justice.

Young India, 23-4-1925

115. NO SIGN YET

One of the numerous addresses presented to me in the South contains the following remarkable sentence:

> Though you have cried halt at Bardoli, we still cherish the hope that you will, in the near future, lead us to the battlefield, wherein we shall all subdue our differences in our fight for swaraj, with the pure and unsullied weapon of non-violent mass civil disobedience, wihout which, it is well-nigh impossible to attain swaraj from the hands of an unwilling and greedy nation, whose imperialism is nothing but ruthless exploitation.

There is here a slight disappoinment over the Bardoli decision. I know that many thought at the time, and still think, that the Bardoli decision was a political blunder of the first magnitude and showed my utter unfitness for political leadership. In my opinion, however, the Bardoli decision was a great service I rendered to the country. It showed on my part, not lack of political judgment, but abundance of political foresight. The lessons that we have learnt since were well worth learning. If we had then earned a cheap victory, it would have cost us dear, and British Imperialism would have consolidated itself with fresh vigour. Not that it is not consolidated enough now. But the consolidation then would have been far more effective.

Critics may say this is all argument based on probability. And so far it is. But for me the probability borders on certainty. Anyway, the Bardoli decision enables me to hope for a day, not far distant, when a fight will become a great probability. Any fight now to be undertaken must be a fight to the finish. But I must freely confess that there is nothing today on the Indian horizon to warrant the hope of early mass civil disobedience. For one thing, there are not enough workers for organizing such a struggle. It requires closer touch with the masses than we have yet shown ourselves capable of. It needs greater, warmer and continuous service of, and identification with the masses than we have yet felt desirous of. We must feel and be one with the masses before we can expect successfully to lead them to a peaceful victory. Indeed when we have arrived at that stage, mass civil disobedience will hardly be necessary. But we must have that confidence in ourselves. Today I, at any rate, have none. Any attempt at the present moment at mass civil disobedience must result in undisciplined sporadic violence which will be put down the instant it breaks forth. But civil disobedience does not admit of any violence or countenancing of violence directly or indirectly. The spinning-wheel

is undoubtedly designed to bring about that peaceful and calm atmosphere of solemn determination. It is the symbol of social service of the highest order. It is the cement to bind the masses to us national servants. It is a precursor of conscious co-operation on a scale hitherto unknown to the world. If the wheel fails, it means blank despair and starvation for the masses. Nothing can so quickly put the masses on their legs as the spinning-wheel and all it means. It is resistless in its march. It is innocence personified. It adds dignity to the poverty of the masses because if relieves it of its worst features. The wheel is marking progress but not rapid enough for our purpose—not even for bringing about exclusion of foreign cloth from the country.

But there is no cuase for despair. The wheel will weather many a storm and will come through them all scatheless. And as I have no other means but truth and non-violence for fighting India's battle for freedom, I must swear by it.Though, therefore, mass civil disobedience is practically an impossibility, individual civil disobedience is a possibility, at any time. But even that time is not yet. There are too many dark and threatening clouds on the horizon that threaten to overwhelm us from within. The faith of the out-and-out believers in charkha, removal of untouchability and Hindu-Muslim unity has still to be tested to warrant a positive knowledge of who is who.

Young India, 23-4-1925

116. VARNASHRAM AGAIN

A correspondent writes:

> If your recent Madras speech[1] you have re-stated your faith in the our *varnas*. But should the *varnas* be strictly hereditary? Some people think that you favour rigid adherence to the hereditary principle; others that you do not. From a perusal of your writings I am inclined to agree with the former. For instance, what else does your dictum, that the 'untouchables should be classed with Shudras' and that they should enjoy all the rights of non-Brahmins, indicate? Why this constant reiteration of the old arbitrary distinction between Brahmin and non-Brahmin as if the two belonged to biologically different spcies? If an untouchables can become a non-Brahmin, can he not also become a Brahmin in this very life? Again, if it is possible for an untouchable to become a Shudras, how is it impossible for a Shudra to

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Madras", 22-3-1925.

become a Vaisya, for a Vaisya to become a Kshatriya or for a Kshatriya to become a Brahmin in this very life? Why do you hurl the Law of Karma in the face of those who believe it to be possible? Is there a better Brahmin than Sree Narayana Guru Swami, the *Ezhava*? I have no better Brahmin than Gandhiji, the Bania. I know also of hundreds of other 'non-Brahmins' who are better Brahmins (in the best sense of that term) than most birth-Brahmins.

If you did not favour strict application of the principle of heredity, you would not seek to prohibit intermarriages between people of the same race professing the same religion and following the same customs as are several members of the three *Dwija* [1] castes. Nor would you so strenuously oppose inter-dining between, say, vegetarian Brahmins and vegetarian non-Brahmins.

Of course, heredity is a great law of life, but there are even greater laws controlling its mysterious processes. One of them is the law of variation in the phraseology of Evolutionary Biology. Heredity is the *static* and variation is the *dynamic* principle of the universe. The latter it is that holds the key to what we call 'Progress' for want of a better name. No social system can ignore the law of heredity with impuntity; neither can a social system ignore the law of variation except at is peril. The history of the caste system in India affords enough proof of this. It proves above all that the worst form in which the law of heredity can be applied in any social organization is of create a *hereditary clergy* to be the sole custodians of its intellectual and spiritual affairs and trustees in perpetuity of its religion.

Even Babu Bhagwan Das, than whom there is no more orhodox Brahmin and who has done some hard thinking on the subject of social reconstruction in India, conceded some years ago that the herditary principle in Varnashrama Dharma must be considerably relaxed. It would be indeed, strange if you of all men championed rigid adherence to it. As a great many people do not know what exactly you think of it all, I hope it will be possible for you to publish this letter with your reply in your esteemed journal.

I fancy that I have answered all the arguments advanced by the correspondent agains *Varnashram*. But evidently readers have short memories or only those who are concerned for the moment read what is written for them. Thus, for instance, I have often shown the distinction betwen *Varnashram* and untouchability. I have

[1] Literally twice-born—the term refers to the ceremony of investiture with *Upanayma* (sacred thread) which was denied to the Sudras but considered obligatory for the Brahmins, Vaisyas and Kshatriyas.

defended the one as a rational scientific fact and condemned the other as an excrescence, an unmitigated evil. I may be that my denseness sees a distinction where none exists. It may be, too, that I see science where there is ignorance or superstition. But I do regard *Varnashram* as a healthy division of work based on birth. The present ideas of caste are a perversion of the original. There is no question with me of superiority or inferiority. It is purely a question of duty. I have indeed stated that *varna* is based on birth. But I have also said that it is possible for a Shudra, for instance, to become a Vaisya. But in order to perform the *duty* of a Vaisya he does not need the label of a Vaisya. Swami Narayan Guru does not need to be called a Brahmin in order to enable him to be, what he reported to be, a Sanskrit scholar. He who performs the duty of a Brahmin will easily become one in the next incarnation. But a translation from one *varna* to another in the present incarnation must result in a great deal of fraud. The natural consequence must be the obliteration [of] *varna*. I have seen no reason to justfiy its destruction. It may be a hindrance to material ambition. I must be excused from applying material considerations to an institution that is based on religious considerations.

Nor is the correspondent happy in his analogy. I have asked that a *Panchama* should be regarded as a Shudra because I hold that there is no warrant for belief in a fifth case. A *Panchama* does the work of a Shudra and he is, therefore naturally classfied as such when he ceases to be regar-ded as a *Panchama*. I do believe that this constant confusion between untouchability and *Varnashram* and attack on the latter in the same breath as the former retards the progress of reform regarding untouchability.

It is now clear that the law of variation is left untouched by *Varnashram.* Nay it is provided for. Only, types do not vary in a few years or even in a few generations. There is no fundamental difference between a Brahmin and a Pariah, but he who runs may see that class considered, there is a marked and noticeable difference between Brahmins and Pariahs or for that matter all the four castes. What I would like my correspondent to join me in is a fight against an arrogant assumption of superiority whether it is assumed by Brahmins or others. It is the abuse of *Varnashram* that should be combated, not the thing itself.

Young India, 23-4-1925

117. WORK IN DELHI

A Delhi correspondent writes saying that during the Satyagraha Week[1] some workers decided to hawk khaddar. They approached the task in fear and trembling, for they were not sure of response from divided Delhi. To their agreeable surprise, however, the hawking and the *bhajans* that accompanied it, took effect. All the common folk bought khaddar with pleasure and the volunteer hawkers had on difficulty in disposing of their stock from day to day. This experience has a lesson of its own. The general body of people are still sound, if the facts given by my correspondent are facts. I have no reason whatsoever to doubt their accuracy. Will the Congress workers try to enlist members more systematically and with more confidence than hitherto? Nothing can be a greater tribute to Hakim Saheb than that in his absence Delhi has come up to her former level.

Young India , 23-4-1925

118. PRIZES FOR SPINNERS

I gladly make room for the following from Meerut:[2]

Young India, 23-4-1925

119. KHADDAR IN ANDHRA

I have said in my previous writings that the khaddar movement is slowly but surely penetrating the villages. I take the following extracts[3] from the Nellore District Khadi Board Report:

Spinners should note the care the Nellore women are bestowing on the slivers. Good carding and good slivers are half the battle.

The following[4] from Ongole makes equally interesting reading:

The foregoing is merely an extract from a detailed report of work in the five villages selected by the Company.[5] The output during the period under review[6] was 18,522 yards and the sales, Rs. 13,452-12-1.

Young India, 23-4-1925

[1] The National Week which was observed from April 6 to 13

[2] Not reproduced here. The report mentioned the names of prize-winners at a spinning competition held at the Navchandi Fair.

[3] Not reproduced here

[4] *ibid*

[5] For khaddar production and sale business

[6] July to December 1924

120. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

TITHAL,
April 23, 1925

MY DEAR BHUR-R-R,

Yes, I had five days' go at fever but I am all right now. I am a bit weak yet. I came to Tithal this morning to have five days' cool air. On 28th I reach Bombay which I leave on 29th for Bengal for five weeks' tour. Yes I heard about the incident from Vallabhbhai. These incidents will happen in life. It is an eternal duel between Hyde and Jekyll.

With love to you all,

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9552

121. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

TITHAL,
Vaishakh Sud 1 [*April 23, 1925*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI[2] ,

I have your postcard. The weather here is of course fine. How nice it would be if you were here. If I had to stay here longer, I would certainly have sent for you. But my stay is for four days only. Even so, I would advise you to come and stay here, in case you do not go to Hajira. The weather is pretty cool and the water is considered to be good.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I shall reach Bombay on the 28th and leave for Calcutta on the 29th. My address there is: 148 Russa Road, Calcutta.

CHI. VASUMATI DHIMATRAM
KELAPITH
SURAT

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 461. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

[1] The postmark bears the date "24 April 25"

[2] An inmate of the Sabarmati Ashram; daughter-in-law of Navalram Pandya, a well-known literature of Gujarat

122. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

TITHAL,

Vaishakh Sud 1 [*April 23, 1925*][1]

I hope Anand is calm. If she has any fear of death, let her rid herself of it.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 80

123. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Vaishakh Sud 1 [*April 23, 1925*][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Chi. Chhotelal is not likely to have peace here. He wishes immediately to return to the Ashram. He says he is ready to do as you wish. But he wants to have some work all the time. I feel that Chi. Chhotelal should be put either on carding or on weaving. Let him card or spin the whole day. We do need such workers also. Under the arrangement Chi. Chhotelal will not have to come frequently into contact with others and will be able to remain at peace. Nevertheless, if you can think of any other work more suitable for him, you may certainly give him that.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati Original : C.W. 6093. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] As in the printed source, except that the date has been corrected to tally with the *tithi*

[2] The letter has on it the words "Ashram file" with the date 27-4-1925, evidently the date of receipt

124. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

TITHAL,
Vaishakh Sud I [*April 24, 1925*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Please have the enclosed letter passed on to Maulana Saheb. The letter of the playwright is not indicative of the tolerant attitude of Hinduism; it is indicative of his cowardice. I find the attack on him unbearable. I have read only two articles. Who knows how many such articles have been published and where.

I am enjoying the change of air at Tithal. I came here yesterday morning. I shall reach there on the 28th.

Anand must be calm. If she is having even the slightest fear of death, it should be removed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

125. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

April 25, 1925

MY DEAREST CHARLIE,

I have horribly neglected my correspondents including you. Most precious letters have remained unanswered. But I have been perfectly helpless. I have been moving from place to place at break-neck speed. And I am recuperating for four days at Tithal in anticipation of the Bengal ordeal[2]. That enables me to overtake at least a part of the heap of correspondence lying in my bundle.

Salutation of the national flag is in my opinion unobjectionable. I see nothing inherently wrong about it. A national spirit is necessary for national existence. A flag is a material aid to the development of such a spirit.

[1] The addressee received the letter on April 25, 1925. The date has been inferred from the reference to Gandhiji's reaching Tithal the previous day. He arrived at Tithal on April 23.

[2] The forthcoming tour of Bengal in connection with the Bengal Provincial Conference at Faridpur.

Military training in universities is, I think, inevitable. I do not think India will tolerate compulsion. I do not anticipate, at least in our generation, a complete cessation of the warlike spirit, i.e., even to the extent of banishing punishment of robbers and raiders. All I am aiming at is non-violence in regaining national freedom and possibly cessation of war as between nations as a natural or necessary corollary. Beyond that I have not the confidence to preach.

About birth-control, I should like to study the Holland figures and conditions. But even supposing that they are all that they are claimed to be, the posers I have suggested remain unanswered. The inevitable result of admitting that indulgence is a virtue or a necessity loosening of the marriage bond is a matter of course or the ideas about marriage must be so revised as to banish chastity from all consideration [*sic*]. And I have heard protagonists of birth-control arguing against regarding chastity as a virtue. And personally, if I were to admit that indulgence is a virtue, I do not see how we can escape the natural deduction that free love is also a virtue. That is my difficulty. I never knew that birth-control by artificial means had so seized the imagination of the Indian youths.

I hope to meet you at Faridpur.

With love,

Yours,

MOHAN

[PS.]

I have your wire. I did have a mild attack of malaria. But it was nothing. I had thirty grains of quinine after the attack. There is no cause for anxiety. I have replied by wire. Love.

MOHAN

From a photostat : G.N. 964

126. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

April 25, 1925

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I am in Tithal, a place somewhat like Juhu, resting for four days to fit myself for the Bengal ordeal. I am trying here to overtake my correspondence in which I find your letter referring to the article

"God and Congress"[1]. I sympathize with you in your difficulties. True religion being the greatest thing in life and in the world, it has been exploited the most. And those who have seen the exploiters and the exploitation and missed the reality naturally get disgusted with the thing itself. But religion is, after all, a matter for each individual, and then too a matter of the heart, call it then by whatever name you like, that which gives one the greatest solace in the midst of the severest fire is God. Anyway, you are on the right track. I do not mind reason being the sole test even though it often bewilders one and lands one in errors that border on superstition. Cow-protection to me is infinitely more than mere protection of the cow. The cow is merely a type for all that lives. Cow-protection means protection of the weak, the helpless, the dumb and the deaf. Man becomes then not the lord and master of all creation but he is its servant. The cow to me is a sermon on pity. As yet we are merely playing at cow-protection . But we shall soon have to grapple with the reality.

I hope you have received all my previous letters. I have a doleful letter from Mr. Satyapal[2]. I wish you could go to the Punjab even if it is only for a few days. Your visit will hearten him. I wish Father would have two months in a quiet and cool place. And why will you not go to Almora for a week or so and combine work with a breath of cool air?

Yours,

BAPU

A *Bunch of Old Letters,* p. 42

[1] Dated March 3, 1925

[2] A medical practitioner and Congress leader of the Punjab

127. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Vaishakh Sud 2 [*April 25, 1925*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have decided to leave by the fast train on Monday night. So I shall reach Grant Road at 5 a.m. Inform Maulana Saheb and Shuaib. This time neither you nor they should come to the station, I shall alight at Gamdevi.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

93 BAZAR GATE STREET

FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

128. ROADS IN GUJARAT

The control of Local Boards in gradually passing into the hands of Congressmen. People should get the benefit of this. They can get it in two ways, through improvement of roads and children's education. I can claim to have travelled a great deal on Gujarat's roads. I have travelled on almost all the roads in the districts of Kaira, Broach, Surat, the Panch Mahals and Ahmedabad. All of them can be described as more or less unsatis-factory. They are dusty beyond description. Villages have practically no roads. This is a great hardship both to human beings and cattle. I have heard the complaint that Local Boards lack funds, and there may even be considerable substance in the complaint. I have not studied the problem how to raise funds. But those whose duty it is to make and maintain roads should resign if they are without the necessary resources or cannot raise them.

The same is true about education. We must strike out a new path in education. Farmers' children should generally attend schools in villages. They are no going to become, should not become, clerks. Their education, therefore, should centre round their agricultural

[1] The postmark bears the date "April 26, 1925", in which year *Vaishakh Sud 2* corresponded to April 25.

work.So long as children's education is not related to their surroundings, it will not have full or beneficial results on society. A country without a sea coast can derive no benefit from naval education, which means that such education would be a waste of effort; much the same is true about the present education of our children. If, however, city children's education is wasted, it is chiefly the cities whose interests will suffer, but the education of the children of crores of farmers wasted will mean total ruin for the whole country. Crores of children cannot become clerks; if they are also rendered unfit for agriculture, who will attend to it? This, therefore, is a problem of great importance for the Local Boards.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-4-1925

129. MY NOTES

BURDEN ON ME

A Kathiawari friend writes:[1]

I see nothing but delusion behind this suggestion. I don't think that many people will, if I give away yarn spun by me, take to spinning or do it with greater devotion. All the same, if this friend is right in what he thinks, I am ready to spin more for the sake of other workers. It is quite easy for me to spare a few bundles of yarn for gifts. But only those who spin regularly will get them. My own wish, however, is that people should spin for the sake of spinning. I can see no advantage in their spinning provided they get yarn spun by me. The right thing is that people should realize the duty of spinning and do it.

"WITH SUFFERING HEART"

A friend from Kathiawar writes:[2]

How can I believe that a person who gives money cheerfully and with a smile on his face and persuades others to give it, does so with

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had suggested that Gandhiji should present yarn spun by himself to khadi-workers with whose work he was satisfied. This, he had argued, would inspire greater devotion in them and would help in popularizing khadi.

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had said that people who contributed to the fund which he was collecting did so very unwillingly.

suffering heart? How did the correspondent come to read the hearts of all such person? How is the merchant-class being deceived? Is it ever likely to be deceived? If no from this class, from which other class can we get or collect money? If we cannot improve the economic condition of the country with the help of traders, through whose help can we hope to improve it? Upright traders admit that conditions have deteriorated because of their class, and that is why some of them give away money as some sort of atonement. The experiment, moreover, of distributing khadi among the poor is still to be carried out. How, then, can anyone argue that the money collected does not pass on to them ? I am convinced that the persons who are in control of the Conference are unselfish men, and I believe that the fund will be managed by them, or under their supervision, with care and honesty. They will do nothing wrong, at any rate deliberately. The question in the letter, "If that is the aim, can those who claim to serve draw Rs. 75 a month?" is irrelevant to the other question whether or not the money is being distributed among the poor. Is it not surprising, the salaried men should administer funds to the tune of lakhs? I do not know, moreover, whether, those who claim to serve get Rs. 75 a month, or any other sum, though I know that some workers get this amount. Why grudge them that ? All workers are not rich. Persons who give their whole time to public service are entitled to accept payment. The only questions which can be asked are; Whether the payment a worker receives represents his needs; whether the needs of an ordinary person amount to what the worker gets; how much he would earn elsewhere; and , finally, whether he is honest and whether the public needs his services. If the answers to these questions are satisfactory, the public worker commits no crime in taking Rs. 75 a month. The people will require thousands of workers, and all of them cannot be honorary.

"INDUCEMENT"

The same friend further writes:[1]

In the first place, the word "inducement" was used with inn-

[1] The remarks are not translated here. The correspondent had asked Gandhiji whether he was right in suggesting in his speech that people should be offered inducement to wear khadi.

ocent intention. I see nothing wrong in inducing the poor to wear khadi by supplying them slivers at low cost. I am a salesman of swaraj. I am a devotee of khadi. It is my duty to induce people, by every honest means, to wear khadi. This, according to me, will help us in securing swaraj. Have the authorities done wrong in countries where people are given "bounties"for promoting the sale of certain articles? Germany offered large bounties to help the consumption of her sugar in all countries, and she derived nothing but profit from the practice. New industries in our country should be helped either by the government or by the people. I do not believe that the help which the people are giving to khadi is anything very big. What is being done is but a beginning. The results are bound to be beneficial. There is nothing wrong in selling khadi at less than the cost price. We do not have a large stock of it now. We need to produce khadi worth not lakhs but crores. The question,"What about the interests of traders in khadi" is certainly pertinent. But we do not have even as many such traders as can be counted on the fingers of a hand. Finally, it is not likely that the Conference itself will organize the sale of khadi. The time when this can happen has not yet come. Under the scheme adopted by the Conference, only those who spin will benefit and the question, therefore, about the interests of traders does not arise.

NO SPINNING-WHEEL

The friend writes further:[1]

I do not believe that work in the khadi centres is being done in a mercenary spirit. The Manager of the Amreli Centre makes no profit for himself but, on the contrary, invests his own and his friends' money in it. In Wadhwan, the organizers have been working purely in a spirit of selfless service. There are allegations about Madhada. The Secretary has been asked to go there and examine the accounts thoroughly. Shri Shivji has agreed to a complete scrutiny of his accounts. I will certainly publish the results of the examination. There are, of course, people who refuse to accept a spinning-wheel even

[1] The remarks are not translated here. He had alleged that people had no genuine interest in the spinning-wheel.

when offered at half the cost price. The only remedy for such suscepticism is for the faithful to strengthen their faith. If faith remains unshaken, scepticism will disappear. Faith is like the sun and lack of it like the night. When the sun rises, the night must disappear. The fact that well-to-do families do not agree to have a spinning-wheel in their homes is itself our real misfortune. It only means absence of the spirit of *yajna*. The spinning-wheel is a means of learning sefless labour. What better form of *yajna*, of service, can I then suggest for young men and women? Many other forms of service may be undertaken along with it, or in addition to it, but it is the foundation.

SHRI JAYAKAR'S SPINNING-WHEEL

In this connection, the reader will be pleased to know that Barrister Jayakar has started spinning regularly. He has sent me the second instalment of yarn spun by him, and has asked for a good spinning-wheel. The one he has at present is altogether unsatisfactory, but even on that he has been spinning regularly. I compliment Shri Jayakar. May he ever remain firm in his resolution.

BENT SPINDLE

While talking with the pupils of a school, I discovered that they were quite eager to ply the spinning-wheel, but that the spindle frequently got bent. I asked the teacher if he did not know how to straighten it. His reply was frank;"I know spinning, but I do not know how to set right defects in a spinning-wheel; in any case, I do not know how to straighten a spindle." Personally, I believe that every teacher in a national school should be an expert in the technique of the spinning-wheel. We cannot engage a special teacher in every school to look after the spinning-wheel. If, therefore, we really want to see the spinning-wheel being plied in every national school, we should encourage the teachers to learn its technique. This means learning to make and fix the belt, to examine the condition of washers and make new ones of leather or some other material, to fix a tape on and straighten the spindle. He is no carpenter who does not

know how to keep his tools in good condition; likewise, he is no spinner who cannot discover and repair the defects in his spinning-wheel. One who does not know the science of the spinning-wheel and having no practical experience of it should no longer be considered fit to be a teacher. Anyone who cares to can learn this thing in a short time and with very little effort.

UNWASHED CLOTHES

During my recent tour of Gujarat, I observed a large number of pupils in the national schools. Many of them were untidy and dirty in appearance. Some of them wore caps which were so soiled with perspiration and stank so badly that it was difficult to touch them. The garments which some of the children wore were also strange to look at. Some had too many clothes on them for this time of the year. Some wore trousers, but had not taken care to button them properly. Some wore clothes which were torn. I think that, as children suffering from contagious diseases are forbidden to attend school, so also children whose clothes or bodies are dirty or who are wearing torn clothes should be forbidden to attend. If it is asked when and where, in that case, the children will learn to be tidy, the reply is simple. A child which comes to the school in such condition should first be taken to the tap and washed there; it should be made to wash its clothes with its own hands and should be provided with other garments from the school while its own are drying. When they have dried, it may change into them, then wash the garments provided by the school, dry them and return them properly folded. If it is feared that this will mean increase in the school's expenditure, the child should be given a note and sent home, and may be permitted to attend when it returns in a clean condition. Physical cleanliness and tidiness should be the first lesson. Even if it is difficult to make a rule requiring all children to attend school in a uniform, it certainly cannot be tolerated if they attend dressed in any kind or condition of clothes.

What has been said about clean clothes also holds good about drill. Children must know how to walk, sit down and stand up, and march thousands together. One child sits stooping, and another with legs jutting out; one is yawning and stretching its limbs in boredom, while another is crying. How, then, can we expect that they will be able to march in step? Children should be taught how to do this right in their early years. They will look smart, raise the prestige of the school

and will feel a new kind of energy in them. Moreover, children who have been taught drill can be taken from one place to another thousands at a time, without difficulty and without any kind of commotion. I can call to mind one or two schools in which 900 pupils came together, noiselessly, within three minutes of a whistle and, when the programme was over, they returned to their classes in the same number of minutes, and were back at work as if they had never left them.

With regard to dress, according to me shorts or a dhoti, a shirt and a cap, all of khadi, should suffice. When especially they are washed, thou-sands of children in this dress are a beautiful sight to see. Many children wear, in addition, a jacket or a half-coat and attract attention in the midst of the others. They should be saved from this miserable condition.

I know that cleanliness, tidiness, drill, etc., do not exhaust a child's education. The child should, in addition, develop strength of character, and have knowledge of the letters. But we cannot neglect a single aspect of children's education. We should attend to all three aspects—physical, mental and spiritual. Whichever of these three is neglected will be a cause of suffering to the child when it grows up into a man and he will realize and regret the deficiency. Not only this, the neglect will have a very unhappy effect on society too. Even today, we are suffering the consequences of the deficiences in our education. There is such lack of cleanliness among us that we are unable to root out diseases like the plague. It has become almost impossible to have clean surroundings in cities. We do not know even the fundamentals of civic life, and those who know them do not observe them in practice.

A "RISHIKUL"[1]

The *Acharya*[2] of a certain *Rishikul* does not believe in untouchability, but he fears that if he does not observe the practice in his institution the latter will close down for want of support and, so, though he knows untouchability to be an evil, he harbours it. In my humble view, it is better that *Rishikuls* in which this is likely to happen should not be started at all or, if already established, should close down. How can anyone, knowing that untouchability is a sin, still cling

[1] A type of residential educational institution, generally run by Arya Samajists
[2] The head

to it in order to run a *Rishikul* ? Where in an institution there is such divergence between precept and practice of the *Acharya* himself, how can it help having a bad effect on the pupils ? How good it would be if teachers who are not ready to practise what they preach give up the teaching profession and earn their living in some other way ? Our experience, however, is that very often persons who are fit for nothing else become teachers.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-4-1925

130. LETTER TO V. G. CHERTKOV

SABARMATI,
April 26, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your greetings of 28th February, 1924. I was then unable to write to you. I hope you will keep me acquainted with Tolstoyan activities in Russia and condition of things in general.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 11077. Courtesy: Tolstoy State Museum, Moscow

131. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

TITHAL,
Vaishakh Sud 3 [*April 26, 1925*]>[1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. Mahadev must have met you by the time. He has told me nothing. But from your talk about your business, I had understood something. Now, your letter makes everything clear. Don't be in the least perturbed, whatever happens to the business. As for money, you have some today and you may have nothing to-morrow. You have given away plenty of money; now if time takes away what you have, why worry ? He who has may give it and he may also lose it. Your place is always secure with me. Because of the strength of your character, you have become my daughter. Character

[1] Gandhiji was at Tithal from 23rd to 27th.

is a thing that another can neither confer nor take away. I wish you therefore to be fearless and free from worry. Consult me whenever you want to. If you have to do so when I am away or Mahadev too is away, do not hesitate to write to either of us. And you can always consult Devdas[1]. He is sensible and can give correct advice. You should not hesitate to write anything to me.

Take good care of your health. You may come to Bombay if you find it necessary while I am there. This letter should reach you tomorrow, Monday. I am in Bombay on Tuesday and Wednesday. I shall go to Bombay by the passenger train.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 546. Courtesy : Vasumati Pandit

132. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Vaishakh Sud 3, 1981 [*April 26, 1925*][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL

You will find that I have preserved this[3] carefully. I have discarded the other portion which was not meant for preservation.

I do not find any violation of the principle in keeping all the tools you have referred to. We may keep them when we feel that they are necessary. But I feel that we do not have the capacity to keep and use them at the present moment. When we do not have the strength to cope with the work we have in hand, why should we take up other activities? Therefore, my reply would be that for saving time on the current activities, we may make use of the tools which are not beyond our means. Ask or write to me if you are not fully satisfied with this reply.

The letter from Lala Vasanalal is enclosed. I am sending it to you as you wanted it back. I have sent him a postcard saying that

[1] Youngest son of Gandhiji

[2] *Vaishakh Sud* 3 in Samvat 1981 corresponded to April 26, 1925.

[3] That is, the last page of the addressee's 5-page letter on which Gandhiji began writing his reply. The addressee therein had chiefly requested Gandhiji to put down in writing his views on agriculture and use of machine tools.

answers to all his questions will be found in *Young India*. If still he wants them, he can ask for them.

Here the air is good but the water does not seem to be good.

You have done a good thing in going to [Mt.] Abu even if it is only for a few days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 32928

133. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[*April 27, 1925*][1]

MOTHER'S PASSING AWAY GOOD. MERITED RELIEF.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 80

134. LETTER TO FULCHAND SHAH

BULSAR,

Vaishakh Sud 4, [*April 27, 1925*][2]

BHAI FULCHAND,

Someone in Amreli has complained that there are stones in the cotton sent out from there; and they are probably included in the weight.

There cotton is quickly sold away; you will therefore see to it that it is secured immediately and no mischief is done.

Hope your mother is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am in Bombay on the 28th and 29th. After that Calcutta.

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 2827. Courtesy : Shardabehn Shah

[1] As in the printed source. The original telegram in English is not available.

[2] The postmark bears this date.

135. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

BOMBAY,
April 28, 1925

His attention being drawn to the objection to the spinning franchise raised in certain quarters on the ground that it seriously interfered with the representative character of the Congress which was slowly drifting into a body representing only a few hundreds of spinners, Mahatma Gandhi said:

About the spinning franchise I retain the same opinion which I held at Belgaum. While it is perfectly true that numerically the Congress has suffered, the masses are still behind it. But as I have said in the pages of *Young India*,[1] if the members do not like the franchise, it is for them to alter it, however much I may deplore such an alteration.

Asked if he thought Dr. Annie Besant's scheme of Commonwealth of India Bill[2] worthy of being discussed at a Round Table Conference of all parties including Swarajists, Mahatma Gandhi said:

I have promised to study the Bill and give Dr. Besant my opinion upon it. Anything from her must command a respectful hear-ing. Whether today the people are in a mood to consider any swaraj scheme or not is a different question. . . .

Asked about his health, Mahatmaji said that he was better than what he was at Ahmedabad. It was not true that he was not attending the Bengal Provincial Conference for reasons of health. "Well I am quite fit to go to Bengal," said the Mahatma with a smile.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-4-1925

[1] *Vide* "My Position", 16-4-1925.

[2] Mrs. Besant's Bill which was published early in January 1925, contained the following proposals:

[1] Classification of units of administration into a fivefold grade—from the village to the Central Government.

[2]. Definition of the qualifications of voters.

[3]. A declaration of Fundamental Rights.

[4]. Viceroy's control as King's representative over military forces and foreign relations until the Indian Parliament assumed control.

[5]. Previous approval of the Viceroy before the Central Legislature took any step concerning the Indian States.

The scheme was finally adopted at the Cawnpore Convention, early in April, under the chairmanship of Sir T. B. Sapru; *vide India in 1924-25*, p. 341.

136. SPEECH AT ALL-INDIA COW-PROTECTION CONFERENCE, BOMBAY

April 28, 1925

In presenting for approval the draft constitution of the All-India Cow-Protection Association[1] to the public meeting held at Madhav Bag, Bombay, on the 28th April, Mr. Gandhi made a speech in Gujarati, of which the following is a summary :

I do not think that I have in my life approached any undertaking with the fear and trembling that I experience today. I am regarded as a man who is generally not afraid of taking risks. I have interested myself in cow-protection, almost ever since my childhood, and have given a careful study to the subject during the past thirty years. I have also occasionally written and spoken about it. And yet I have not felt myself equal to the present undertaking, nor do I feel today. Not that I do not know the ways to do it. I do know it. But the successful carrying out takes more than an intellectual understanding of the ways and means. It requires deeper purification and I would have fain added to my modest stock of it before I launched on this new undertaking. But Fates decide my undertakings for me. I never go to seek them. They come to me almost in spite of me. That has been my lot all my life long, in South Africa as well as ever since my return to India. I had not dreamt that the task of forming an All-India Cow-Protection Association would fall to me, when I consented to preside over the Cow-Protection Conference at Belgaum. But those in charge of it had formulated big plans, and as President I had to consider them. We had a meeting of the committee appointed thereto at Delhi, where a draft constitution was prepared and approved by all present there, including men like Pandit Malaviyaji, Lala Lajpat Rai, Swami Shraddhanandji and Dr. Moonje. Even then I was marking time. I waited and watched, before I could decide on taking the final step. But the ever active Chaunde Maharaj would not leave me in peace. I then proposed that we should get the whole constitution approved and accepted at a public meeting of all interested in cow-protection. This meeting then which should have been help in Delhi is held here tonight, more for my convenience than anything else.

The task for which I want your approval and in which I seek your help is immense. It is bigger than perhaps the struggle for swaraj

[1] *Vide* "Draft Constitution of All-India Cow-Protection Sabha", 24-1-1925

inasmuch as it is of an entirely religious character. In my work of a prominently political character, I have often erred and blundered, I have done penance and repaired those errors and blunders. But in the present undertaking an error would be well-night irretrievable for the simple reason that the cow we propose to serve is a dumb creature, she cannot complain, she has no voice to raise against what may be against her interests. An untouchable may cry and raise a protest, a Hindu or a Mussalman may raise a protest and even break heads to settle a grievance. But the cow is entirely at our mercy. She consents to be led to slaughter, and to be embarked for Australia and gives her progeny to carry whatever burden we want it to carry, in sun or rain. The task is thus immense and I have undertaken it out of a pure sense of duty.

But I may warn that there are limits to my capacity for undertakings. There are certain limits which are obvious. For instance though I can collect funds for my purposes, and though I know that the love of my countrymen for me is deep enough to find me money for any good undertaking that I take up, I want you to know that I cannot go about from place to place asking for money for the present task. I have not the time nor the energy for it. Then there is the honest, careful and efficient disposal of the funds. I obviously cannot look to or supervise every detail, and the cow won't impale you on her horns for mismanagement or similar blunders. We have, therefore, to do the work in fear of God and with the full consciousness of the sacredness of the task.

I gave at Belgaum[1] my meaning of cow-protection. It includes, as I explained, the protection and service of "both man and bird and beast". It presupposes a through eschewal of violence. A Hindu, if he is a true Hindu, may not raise his hand against a Mussalman or an Englishman to protect the cow. I have, for our present purposes, confined myself to considering the ways and means of protecting the cow merely. For I know that if we once succeed in the protection of the cow proper, we shall some day be able to serve the cow in all creation. And if we succeed in Bombay, we shall also thereafter succeed elsewhere.

But to do so we have to bring both our reason and our heart to bear on the task. We shall have to examine ourselves and realize that it is primarily a Hindu's duty in the matter that this Association seeks to

[1] *Vide* "Presidential Address at Cow-Protection Conference, Belgaum", 28-12-1924.

be fulfilled, we have to realize that we have not so much to save the cow from the butcher's knife as from our own. And, for that purpose, we shall have to grasp the economics of the thing. Nowhere in the world is the proportion of the bovine to the human population so small as in India. Nowhere is the cow so feeble, and her yield so little as in India. Nowhere is she so badly treated as she is today in India by the Hindus. I am saying this not to excite you. I am stating the barest truth, without the slightest exaggeration. It is the Hindus, therefore, who have to fulfil their obligations in the matter. The Mussalmans will do their duty after we have done what is obviously ours. I gave all the help that I could for the Khilafat, because I wanted to enlist the Mussalman's sympathy in the matter of cow-protection. But let us fulfil our obligations first. We are doing nothing today. The little work that is being done by Chaunde Maharaj and others is as a mere drop in the ocean.

Two things I want to invite your attention to as important in the constitution, viz., the establishment of tanneries and dairies. That is too practical, too earthly you will say. But religion which takes no count of practical affairs and does not help to solve them, is no religion. That is what the life of the Ascetic King Janaka teaches us. And that is why I am putting a religious matter before you in a practical form.

We shall have to take control of the milk supply and also of the disposal of dead cattle. You are perhaps shocked as I speak of hides and tanneries. But do you know that because we would not take charge of them the untouchable who does the work today excuses himself for eating carrion and remaining unclean ? Let us show him the proper way of doing things and he will reform his ways. I am suggesting all these things with the fullest consciousness of the meaning of all that I say. I may tell you that it was I who vowed never more to take cow's or buffalo's milk when I learnt for the first time in South Africa the cruel way in which the last drop of milk was drawn out of them. I know that there are beef-eaters amongst Vaishnavas, I know that there are Vaishnavas who do not hesitate to take Liebeg's "Extract of Beef", on the pretext that it is prescribed by the doctor. Should we then hesitate to control tanneries in a religious spirit ? I tell you we have come to this state because we would not take care of disabled and dead cattle and because we exported them to America.

Let us, therefore, establish tanneries and look to the proper disposal of dead cattle. Let us establish dairies and ensure a cheaper

and better supply of milk. I will not hesitate to seek co-opertation of the government in this matter, for I know they have got the services of good dairy experts. If we do these two things then alone is it possible to stop the avoidable slaughter of thosuands of cattle annually. The other things in the constitution are of a non-controversial character and explain themselves.

We now want a treasurer and a secretary for our work. The treasurer should be such as everyone trusts, as can collect the necessary funds, and can find them himself when they are not forthcoming. The secretary's first qualification is that he should be a *brahmachari* if possible,—not a mere celebrate but a truly religious *brahmachari* who has control over all the senses. He should then have a fair knowledge to the vernaculars and a knowledge of English. He should be an energetic and an active man, for, he would have to go about from place to place and meet different people. Failing a *brahmachari*, even a *grihastha* of high character will do. I hope you will approach the task in the proper spirit and I pray that God may give us the strength and the sacrfice needed for it.

Young India, 7-5-1925

137. INTERVIEW TO A PRESS REPRESENTATIVE

BOMBAY

[*April 29, 1925*][1]

''I know nothing whatsoever about it'', declared Mahatma Gandhi, when interviewed by a Press represnetative, before he left for Bengal, with regard to the statement appearing in *The Madras Mail* that, at the Bengal Provincial Conference, he and Mr. Das would finally abandon non-co-operation and state the terms on which they were prepared to co-operate with the Government.

Mahatmaji declared that there was no exchange of correspondence between Mr. Das and himself on the subject, and that he was visiting Bengal with the sole purpose of fulfilling a long-standing promise.

The Hindu, 30-4-1925

[1] Gandhiji left Bombay for Bengal on this date.

138. INTERVIEW TO " NEW INDIA"

BOMBAY,
April 29, 1925

Interviewed by *New India's* special correspondent on the Commonwealth of India Bill, Gandhiji said:

I wish I had the time to study Dr. Besant's Commonwealth of India Bill with the care and attention that it demands. But such study as I have been able to give it has led me to the following conclusion : The recognition of the King-Emperor as Sovereign and Protector of the Common-wealth seems to have been assumed as an indispensable condition. I do not subscribe to it.

I recognize that in any Bill passed by mutual consent, some such provision is necessary, but I could not teach the people that the British connection is an inviolable thing. There should be some provision in the Bill for the immediate participation by Parliament in the defence of the Commonwealth. All the existing financial and other obligations of the Government of India seem to have been taken over under the Bill. I cannot be a party to such a transaction. The moral justice of every commitment and contract of the existing Government should be examined by an impartial Commission, consisting say, of a nominee of the President and a nominee of the British Crown, the two to choose an umpire. The jurisdiction of the Privy Council should be abolished. A local one should be established and the principle of compulsory arbitration in every civil suit should be laid down. The right of the Commonwealth to impose a protective tariff upon all goods, whether British or other, should be clearly recognized, subject to most-favoured nation treatment to Great Britain. Hindi or Hindustani should be the language of the State. The qualification of voters and members of the legislative bodies is too complicated for me. I dislike the graded franchise. The franchise for the villages is too broad. A lunatic, for instance, may be a voter. There is no provision anywhere for labour. My formula is, no labour, no vote; hence the spinning franchise.

Subject to the foregoing amendments and to the co-operation of Mussalmans, I should subscribe to the Bill. My own opinion is that we have not the requisite atmosphere for considering the measure. I

could not undertake to convene an All-Parties' Conference, even if the Bill undergoes the changes submitted by me, but I should gladly attend any Conference convened for the purpose. The more I study the present situation, the more convinced I feel that my funciton is to work for power from within. Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas[1] tells me that the draft before me is not the final draft, and that another is in course of preparation which will include most or at least some of my suggestions. This final draft, I understand, is to be in terms of the conclusions arrived at recently at Cawnpore. I need hardly state that Dr. Besant's is one of the few schemes now before the public, and as such, deserves careful study by every lover of India. That swaraj is a necessity of national life goes without saying. Any step, therefore, that brings us nearer to it is a welcome effort. Lastly, I cannot help placing on record my opinion that the Bill is most comprehensive and has been drawn with extraordinary care. In some respects, it is quite original.

(The final draft was discussed and passed at Cawnpore and is now in the press, and will be sent to Gandhiji. But I do not think that it can be said to embody his suggestions, as they are very unusual and were not before the Convention. —Annie Besant).

New India, 29-4-1925

139. NOTES

WORTHY OF EMULATION

A teacher of a national school in Bardoli taluk writes to say that he picked during the past four months seven maunds of cotton pods, ginned them and carded the cotton thus ginned and spun eighteen pounds of yarn in weight and 3 lakhs of yards in length. It is a great achievement to have continued the quantity of yarn spun for four months, and this in addition to the work of teaching. The teacher tells me that he is going not only to continue the quantity but to do better during the rest of the year. What this industry means is better illustrated by a report that teachers me from an Amreli worker. He reports the following sentiments expressed by a sixty-year-old dame who had walked four miles to take her share of slivers for spinning :

You people have conferred a great boon upon us. We have had three

[1] Home Rule leader and a member of the All-Party Conference Committee's sub-committee on Hindu-Muslim unity.

successive lean years. We were without any work. And how could one live without work ? Now I have got work and I shall be happy.

The teacher was not without work. He had no need to do the strenuous labour he imposed upon himself. But his example will in the end prove infectious and others who are idling away their time will be engaged in this wealth-producing and necessary national industry. The old dame's, however, is a typical instance. There are tens of thousands of men and women who are famishing for want to work. Many, as in Orissa have passed the working stage and with them idleness has become a habit. There is no other remedy save hand-spinning for dealing with calamity and introducing happiness into millions of homes in this country.

HAVE I PROPERTY ?

Among the many curious inquiries I received, here are some from a correspondent in Guntur District:

> People say Gandhiji does not do what he says. He preaches poverty but possesses property. He wants others to become poor, but he is not poor. He advocates simple and inexpensive life yet his is expensive. So answer the questions below. Do you take anything from the A.I.C.C. or Gujarat Congress Committee for your living and touring expenses? If so, what is the amount? If not, how are you meeting the expenses for your long tours and your food and clothing, if you are, as people take you to be, a propertyless man?

There is much more in the letter of the same kind but I have taken out the most salient points.

I do make the claim that I attempt to act as I preach. But I must confess that I am not as inexpensive in my wants, as I would like to be. My food since my illness costs more than it should. By no means can I call it a poor man's food. My travels too cost more than they did before my illness. I am no longer able to travel long distances third class. Nor do I travel, as I did before, without a companion. All this means not simplicity and poverty, but the reverse of it. I draw nothing from the A.I.C.C. or the Gujarat Committee. But friends find my travelling expenses including food and clothing. Often during my tours, railway tickets are purchased by those who invite me and my host everywhere covers me with kind attention which often embarrasses me. People present me during my tours with much more khaddar than I need. The balance goes to clothe those who need it or it is put in the general khaddar stock of Ashram which is conducted in

the public interest. I own no property and yet I feel that I am perhaps the richest man in the world. For, I have never been in want either for myself or for my public concerns. God has always and invariably resonded in time. I can recall several occasions when almost the last penny had been spent for my public activities. Monies the came in from the most unexpected quarters. These responses have made me humble and filled me with a faith in God and His goodness that will stand the strain of utter distress if it ever becomes my lot in life. It is open to the world, therefore, to laugh at my dispossessing myself of all property. For me the dispossession has been a positive gain. I would like people to complete with me in my contentment. It is the richest treasure I own. Hence, it is perhaps right to say that though I preach poverty, I am a rich man!

HINDI AND ENGLISH

A Tamil lawyer suggests that I should print *Young India* with Hindi translation in parallel columns so as to enable the Tamilian to learn Hindi without difficulty. I apreciate the motive but I am sorry. I cannot adopt the suggestion. *Young India* has a definite mission. Through its medium I seek to popularize the ideals I try to represent among that large body of men and women who do not understand either Gujarati or Hindi, but who understand English. I must not extend the scope of the paper. But for Tamilians who would understand Hindi, and it is high time they did, I recommend the Hindi Prachar office in Triplicane, Madras. This institution publishes, too, a journal which is printed in Hindi, Tamil, Telugu and English. The sole function of the institution is to spread a knowledge of Hindi among those in the South who are patriotic enough to wish to learn it. The enthusiast, if he likes, can also avail himself of the *Hindi Navajivan* which contains translations of the main articles and notes in *Young India* and *Navajivan*.

FOR BIHARIS

My forthcoming visit to Bengal has raised lively expectations in Bihar and correspondents have already asked me to include their places in my Bihar tour. Instead of sending them individual replies I venture to inform them hereby that no date for the Bihar tour has as yet been fixed. If my health keeps after the Bengal tour (I say this because I have not yet regained my former vitality after the recent attack of malaria), I shall endeavour to suit the Bihar friends. But no

date can be fixed before the Bengal tour has well advanced. In any case, my Bihar friends who want me to visit their places should correspond with He will be in charge of the programme on the same conditions as to days of quiet, etc., that I have urged for Bengal.

TRANSVAAL INDIANS

Here is a cable from the Secretary, British Indian Association, Johannesburg :

> Mr. Collins, opposition member Ermelo, introduced in the Assembly a bill prohibiting the grant for renewal of trading or business licences within six miles Transvaal municipal or township area to any Asiatic wherein he is not owner of fixed property, also to any Asiatic company corporate or otherwise. Bill if passed will grossly violate Smuts-Gandhi agreement respecting vested rights and sell total annihilation and final extermination of Indians. Association emphatically protests against its passage and urges you adopt means for its withdrawal. H.E. the Viceroy has been cabled.

The cable was received sometime ago but owing to my incessant travelling it has remained unattended to till now. I offer my apologies to the Association. The matter, however, is not stale nor beyond help. This measure is after the style of what General Hertzog introduced and which General Smuts so energetically opposed. In appealing to me, the Association has relied on a broken reed. I can but give publicity to the grievance and hope that the appeal to the Viceroy will not prove fruitless. His Excellency can at least vindicate the position of Indian settlers overseas if he can do nothing else. The proposed Bill is a manifest breach of the Smuts Gandhi agreement of 1914. It is dishonest to mention Asiatic owners of fixed property in the Transvaal, for it is known to everyone that they cannot become owners of fixed property except in Locations and that they are denied the right of owning fixed property even in Locations. Everyone knows, moreover, that to confine Asiatic trade to Locations is to kill that trade. If extermination of the Asiatic is the goal, the honest course would be to bring in an expatriation bill and challenge the Indian Government to do its worst.

WHERE IS IT ?

A correspondent writes :

In your issue of the 12th instant there is a Mussalman's complaint about some mosque at ''Lohani''. This name does not occur at all in the Indian post Office Directory for British India as well as the States. So it would be advisable for the guidance of workers as well as for verification of complaints, if you made a point while publishing names of small places in such connections, of giving their P.O.s or at least the districts to which they belong. Does Lohani exist at all?

I asked the complainant about the location of Lohani. He refers me to the Delhi Khilafat Committee. I have written to it. But to save time, I seek information from all concerned. I must confess my own ignorance of Lohani.

Young India, 30-4-1925

140. QUANTITY v. *QUALITY*

There is at the present moment a note of despondency in the air over the number of Congress members. The complaint is that the members have been never so few as today. The complaint would be reasonable if the franchise being the same, the response was less than before. It would also be reasonable if the influence of the Congress was to be measured by the number of members. Opinions would undoubtedly differ as to the measure to be applied for gauging the Congress influence. For me there is one measure. I attach the highest importance to quality irrespective almost of quantity, the more so for Indian conditions. In the midst of suspicion, discord, antagonistic interests, superstition, fear, distrust and the like, there is not only no safety in numbers but there may be even danger in them. Who does not know how often numbers have embarrassed us during the past four years? Numbers become irresistible when they act as one man under exact discipline. They are a self-destroying force when each pulls his own way or when no one knows which way to pull.

I am convinced that there is safety in fewness so long as we have not evolved cohesion, exactness and intelligent co-operation and responsiveness. One virtuous son is better than one hundred loafers. Five Pandavas[1] were more than a match for one hundred Kauravas[2]. A

[1] Five brothers, heroes of the *Mahabharata*

[2] Cousins of the Pandavas

disciplined army of a few hundred picked men has times without number routed countless undisciplined hordes. A few members fully satisfying the Congress test can give a good account of themselves, whereas one million members nominally on the Congress register may not be worth the register itself. I do not for one moment suggest that those whom we have now on the register are sound or even sounder than those whom we had before. That can only be verified at the end of the year.

What I would like to drive home is that we should know what we want. Do we believe in the paramount value of the spinning-wheel? Then we must adopt it whether we are few or many. Do we believe in the necessity, in terms of swaraj, of removing the curse of untouchability? Then we may not surrender, though we may be overwhelmed. Do we regard Hindu-Muslim unity as absolutely necessary for the attainment of swaraj? Then we must stake much to achieve it. We may not be satisfied with a sham. We must have the real coin or none.

"But these are not politics. There is no giving battle to the Government in all this", say some friends. My answer is we cannot give effective battle to the Government till we achieve these things. "But we shall never achieve any single one of these things till we attain swaraj", say others. I answer that we must evolve the ability to achieve these things notwithstanding Government indifference for opposition, secret or open. Achievement of these things to me means half the battle, if not the whole of it.

"What then of the Swarajist programme?", say they. That programme must go on side by side with the development of internal strength. The Swarajists are an integral part of the Congress They are able, they are on the alert, they will shape their policy; in accordance with the exigencies of the situation. Let those who have the aptitude prosecute that programme as well, But let them not forget the internal work. If twelve thousand men and women, nay, two thousand men and women, can be induced vigo rously to work the constructive programme, things will immediately wear a different apsect. Throughout my wanderings, I have noticed a lamentable dearth of workers—brave, honest, self-sacrificing, self-reliant and with confindence in themselves and the mission. The harvest is indeed rich but the labourers are few.

Sjt. Srinivasa Aiyengar and I were attending a meeting in Madras. People were bubbling with enthusiasm. We were driving to keep time for another meeting. But my 'admireres' insisted on exhibiting me through a street which was not on the programme. He pleaded, I pleaded, want of time. Sjt. Aiyengar pleaded on behalf of my health. It was all to no purpose. We were driven! —shall I say compulsorily? Both of us realized that these men were no help to the cause, they were a positive hindrance. Things were set right only when I took the law in my hands, declined to be driven, actually got out of the car and defied the crowd to carry me bodily if they wished. Here there was an ocular demonstration of danger in numbers. I can cite a score of such experiences. The people are well-meaning but ignorant and thoughtless. How many well-meaning mothers drug their children to death?

We want not excitement at the present moment but calm constructive work. It is a laborious task, it is stupendous. But it is not beyond our capacity. It need not even take time. What hinders progress is indefiniteness. The verbal assent without practical performance embarrasses. I plead for quality and quality alone. I must, therefore, refuse to trouble the All-India Congress Committee unless I receive a requisition to summon it. The present programe has been framed to arrive at the requisite quality. And so long as it remains, I can but advise every Congress worker to put his or her whole soul into its working so that we might have, at the end of the year, if it is at all possible, a compact body of men and women possessing the requisite qualifications, be the number ever so small.

Young India, 30-4-1925

141. TO P. N. P. (*TRIVANDRUM*)

You are wholly wrong. My remarks about Christian drinking were based upon the information given by Christians and at their instance. If the information was not correct, I am glad. Your mistake and your sorrow are due to your separating yourself from the other Indians. Why may you not think with me that if a Christian Indian or a Mussalman Indian or a Hindu Indian drinks or otherwise falls, it is as much your shame as it is mine? All of us are members of the same body and if one member suffers the whole body suffers.

Young India, 30-4-1925

142. TO 'REVOLUTIONARY IN THE MAKING'

You will pardon me for not reproducing your letter. I would have gladly published it, if it was a presentable letter—not that the language of your letter is at all in bad taste or violent. On the contrary, you have attempted to present your case fairly and calmly, but the argument is loosely and unconvincingly put. What you want to say is that the revolutionary does no violence because when he takes the life of his adversary, he does so to benefit him, *i.e.*, his soul, even as a surgeon performs a painful operation on a patient for his (the latter's) good. You argue that the adversary has a vile body which vitiates the soul and that the sooner it is destroyed, the better for him.

Now, the analogy of the surgeon is wrong because he is concerned merely with the body. He operates on the body to benefit the body. His science ignores the soul. Who can say how many bodies have been repaired by surgeons at the expense of the soul? But the revolutionary destroys the body for the supposed benefit of the adversary's soul. In the first instance, I do not know a single revolutionary who has ever thought of the adversary's soul. His single aim has been of benefit the country even though the adversary may perish, body and soul. In the second instance, since you believe in the Law of Karma, a compulsory destruction of a body merely paves the way for the creation of a tougher body for the same soul. For the man whose body is destroyed will weave for himself a body after his own longing. That, to my mind, is the meaning of the persistence of evil and the crimes we see about us. The more we punish, the more persistent crimes become. They may change colour, but the substance is the same. The way to serve the adversary's soul is to appeal to the soul. It defies destruction, but it is amenable to appeals tuned to the required pitch. Souls must react upon souls. And since non-violence is essentially a quality of the soul, the only effective appeal to the soul must lie through non-violence. And do we not arrogate to ourselves infallibility when we seek to punish our adversaries ? Let us remember that they regard us to be as harmful to society as we regard them. It is idle to drag in the name of Krishna. Either we believe him to be the very God or we do not. If we do, we impute to him omniscience and omnipotence. Such a one can surely destroy. But we are puny mortals ever erring and ever revising our views and opinions. We may not without coming to grief ape Krishna, the inspirer of the *Gita.* You should remember too that the so-called Christians of the Middle Ages

thought exactly as you believe revolutionaries think. They burnt heretics for the benefit of the latter's souls. We of today laugh at the atrocious folly of these ignorant so-called Christians of the Middle Ages. We now know that the inquisitors were wrong, their victims were totally innocent.

I am glad you are turning the wheel. Its silent revolution will bring you peace and bring the freedom you love much nearer than you imagine. Do not mind your fickle friends who have deserted you leaving behind a legacy of "bug-ridden bed born" slivers. If I were you, I would recard these slivers. You may not know carding. If you do not, you must go to the nearest man who knows it and learn the beautiful art of carding. He is an indifferent spinner who knows not how to card. You need not be afraid that the method of non-violence is a slow long-drawn-out process. It is the swiftest the world has seen, for it is the surest. You will see that it will overtake the revolutionaries whom you imagine I have misjudged. To point out errors is not to misjudge. I am devoting so much space to them because I want their exhaustless energy to be directed in the right channel.

Young India, 30-4-1925

143. INTER-DINING AGAIN

A correspondent writes :

> You have answered[1] at length an Englishman's 'puzzle' on the question of intermarriage. But what about inter-dining which is a much less vital affair but more frequent in life? Suppose some men of goodwill organize, as one means promoting goodwill amongst all classes, an inter-caste, inter-communal and inter-national dinner on purely vegetarian and non-alcoholic lines; would you from your own *sanatan* point of view object, if any Hindus—say, some members of your caste or of your own family—wished to join that dinner of invitation (and not, of course, on compulsion!) and asked your opinion on it? Similarly, may a Brahmin with *your* view of the *sanatan* (or *maryada*) dharma accept a clean dish of rice and a pure cup of water which a *chandal* or a Mussalman or a Christian has offered him (and not, of course, forced on him), finding the Brahmin wayworn, hungry and thirsty (and almost on the point of fainting, let us say) in a lone wild place? In fine, the question is; Does such a demonstration of goodwill as the "cosmopolitan" dinner or the

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 12-3-1925, sub-title, "A Politician".

offer of a dishby a supposed untouchable to a touchable Hindu and acceptance thereof square with your idea of the *sanatan* or *varnashram dharma* or *maryada dharma*[1] or does it not?

If a Brahmin is in distress he would take, if he wishes to hold on to his body, clean food by whomsoever offered. I would neither object to nor advocate participation in an international or cosmopolitan dinner, for the simple reason that such functions do not necessarily promote friendship or goodwill. It is possible today to organize a dinner party between Hindus and Mussalmans but I dare to say that such a dinner will no more bring the two communities together than the absence of it keeps them apart. I have known deadly enemies dine and chat together heartily and yet remain enemies. Where will the correspondent draw the line? Why does he stop at vegetarian and non-alcoholic meals? A man who regards flesh-eating a virtue and wine bibbing a harmless and pleasurable refreshment, will see nothing but promotion of goodwill in dividing with the world his beefsteak and exchanging with it the sparkling cup! On the argument underlying the correspondent's query, there can be no dividing line. I, therefore, rule out inter-dining as the means of promoting goodwill. Whilst I do not myself observe these restrictions and take food that I do not regard as forbidden at the hands of anyone so long as it is cleanly dressed, I respect the scruples of those who observe the restrictions. Nor do I pat myself on the back for my "liberal" practice as against the others'"narrowness". I may be narrow and selfish in spite of my apparently liberal practice and my friend may be liberal and unselfish notwithstanding his apparently narrow practice. Merit or demerit lies in the motive. Insistence upon inter-dining as part of the programme of promotion of fellowship, in my opinion, retards the growth of goodwill by raising false issues and even false hope. What I am trying to remove is the idea of pollution and superiority. These self-imposed restrictions have a sanitary as also a spiritual value. But non-observance no more dooms a man to perdition than its observance raises him to the seventh heaven. A man who observes the dining restrictions in a most punctilious manner may be a veritable blackguard fit to be shunned by society, and a cosmopolitan omnivorous man may be one ever walking in the fear of God whose society it would be a privilege to cultivate.

Young India, 30-4-1925

[1] Path of knowledge and conduct prescribed by the Shastras

144. IS THERE GOD?

TO

THE EDITOR, *Young India*

SIR,

With reference to your article "God and Congress" I beg to say that while the Charvak school was materialistic out and out, Buddhism is silent on and Jainism doubts the existence of *Ishvara* or any supernatural Entity that may be said to correspond to God, although both faiths believe in the transmigration of the soul and the Law of Karma, in common with Hinduism. (Your friend Prof. Dharmanand Kosambi whom I mentioned may be consulted on this point.) Buddha with Karma, and Jina with Karma, respectively, may be said to take the place of God in the ritual practice of those two religions.

Of modern religious movements, the Deva Samaj of the Punjab which is mostly a humanitarian and social-service body and lays great store by ahimsa is (I believe) frankly atheistic in its creed, but *not* materialistic. I have read that it believes neither in God nor gods. In the light of this, its name of *Deva*[1] Samaj appears rather paradoxical. *Lucas a non-lucendo*![2]

Of Bardlaugh you say that his denial of God was a denial of Him as He was known to Bradlaugh to have been described. Was this denial inclusive, or was it exclusive, of that "certain unmistakable sameness" behind all that variety of definitions which there would be if we could all give our own definitions of God, as you say? I presume, it cannot be the latter, for Bradlaugh was learned and observant enough. If the former is the case, what made Bradlaugh deny the existence of God even in the aspect of that "unmistakable sameness"?

I doubt not but that the following excerpt will be of some interest to you in this connection:

The very idea of a god, as creating or in any way ruling the world, is utterly absent in the Buddhist system. God is not so much as denied; he is simple not known. Contrary to the opinion once confidently and generally held, that a nation of atheists never existed, it is no longer tobe disputed that the numerous Buddhist nations are essentially atheist; for they know no beings with greater supernatural power than any man is supposed capable of attaining to by virtue, austerity, and science; and a remarkable indication of this startling fact is to be seen in the circumstance, that some at least of the

[1] God

[2] The grove (*lucus*) is so named from its not shining (*lucendo*).

Buddhist nations—the Chinese, Mongols, and Tibetans—have no word in their languages to express the notion of God. The future condition of the Buddhist, then, is not assigned him by the Ruler of the universe; the "Karma" of his actions determines it by a sort of virtue inherent in the nature of things—by the blind and unconscious concatenation of cause and effect."

—*Chamber's Encyclopaedia, sub.* Buddhism.

Let me conclude with a *shloka*;

नमस्यामो देवान् ननु हतविधेस्तेऽपि वशगा:

विधिर्वन्द्य: सोऽपि प्रतिनियतकर्मैकफलद:।

फलं कर्मायत्तं किममरगणै: कि चै विधिना

नमस्तत्कर्मभ्यो विधिरपि न येभ्य: प्रभवति॥

भर्तृहरि:, नीतिशतके।

To the gods or angels we our homage pay;
But to sorry Fate subject e'en them we find;
Then, is our worship due to Fate?
Sure *he* yields but the fruit our actions rate.
And the fruit on actions of our own depends;
—Hence small account of gods or angels or of Fate.
Then hail, our actions small or great!
Over whom not even Fate prevails!

—My own attempt at a free rendering of the above from Bhartrihari —*Nitishataka*.

I am, etc.,

S. D. NADKARNI

Karwar (N. Kanara)

10th March, 1925.

I cannot refuse space to Mr. Nadkarni's clever letter. I must, however, adhere to my opinion that neither Jainism nor Buddhism are atheistic. I present Mr. Nadkarni with these definitions of God: The sum total of Karma is God. That which impels man to do the right is God. The sum total of all that lives is God. That which makes man the mere plaything of fate is God. That which sustained Bradlaugh throughout all his trials was God. He is the Denial of the atheist.

Young India, 30-4-1925

145. "SEEKER AFTER TRUTH"

One who describes himself a seeker after truth sends me his own reflections arising out of my discussion of revolutionary views. He tells me that at first he was a non-co-operator, then, he began to think that non-co-operation was merely a social movement and that the revolutionary was the only true political movement. At Belgaum again, he began to think anew. I condense below his reflections without in any way whatsoever changing the sense or his language:

> The Revolutionary is certainly patriotic. He is a Hero. He is prepared to give up his life in the cause of Motherland. But his very aim is wrong.
>
> What is it the Revolutionary wants? Freedom for the country. So far quite right. Why is the freedom required? So that the people may be happy. This also is right. How can the people be happy? By changing the system of Government.
>
> Now here comes the real point.
>
> Let us just consider our state. We Indians have ever so many virtues. But what of our weaknesses? We have become cowards. We have taken to several vices. Amongst the Hindus we have the untouchables. We till the ground and produce grains, vegetables and such things which could very easily feed us all. All the same, the fact remains that the major portion of us are half-starving. We all weave and work in mills. Still we are but half-clad. We have got enough clay. We know how to make bricks and build beautiful houses. Still there are several of us who have no other place than beneath trees to live.
>
> No doubt the foreigners are, to a very large extent, to blame for our difficulties. Wrong though it may be, that is our sincere opinion. But what of our own share of the responsibility? Are we not at all to blame?
>
> Or suppose that we, with the help of the revolvers or such things, do drive away the enemies? Is it not possible for any other foreigner to occupy the position of the present foreigner? After all warfare is but a sort of gambling.
>
> I do not propose to deal with the utility or otherwise of non-violence, maintaining armies and such things. I consider myself absolutely incompetent to discuss this subject. Suffice it to say that I am beginning to understand Gandhiji's views on this subject and his views appear to me to be right.
>
> The United States of America, it is generally said, have a very good Government. What of the several plots, the several murders, dacoities, swindlings, etc., that take place there? The Bolshevik system is considered to be good. Why then the daily increasing capital punishment, riots and such things? Any number of such examples can be given.

To dispose of Gandhiji's ideas as merely idealistic and impracticable is wrong; much more so for a revolutionary to do so. For he has really the welfare of the people at heart.

It is not impossible to bring about a situation where the world will be an abode of happiness. The best thing, of course, is to do good to others. But at present you need not even go so far. Do good to your own self.

Don't you waste a good portion of your time? Don't you send out crores of your rupees to other countries by purchasing their cotton goods? Spin and make good use of your time. Weave your own cloth and use the same and save your crores.

This spinning, I take it, does not merely mean spinning of cotton yarn. I take it to mean home industry. It is a solution as much for any other country as for India.

Removal of untouchability, Hindu-Muslim unity and such things are internal. It is self-purification. Everyone has his own dirt to wash. The Hindus have the untouchability, the Indians, the Hindu-Muslim rupture. It is thus for every country to wash itself of its own curse.

The revolutionary will thus see that he has more useful work in spreading this wonderful cure of the world-illness. He serves not only himself and his countrymen, but he serves the whole world.

When you have purified yourself, and when you have become self-sufficient how on earth can anyone levy tax or collect by any other means money from you without your co-operation? It is impossible to govern without the co-operation of the governed. Now we, the governed, are not pure, we are not self-sufficient. But we will soon become such. This is the real meaning of non-violent non-co-operation. Fear none but your conscience. Why do you hide and throw bombs on the foreigner? Come out and tell him boldly that we hold him to a large extent responsible for our weaknesses, fear not if he sends you to jail. Tell him also that you propose as much to change him as your own self. Thus you will be doing good both to your own self and to the person whom you now consider to be your enemy.

Young India, 30-4-1925

146. SPEECH AT NAGPUR

April 30, 1925

Amidst the thundering cries of "*Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai*" the train conveying Mahatma Gandhi *en route* to Calcutta arrived here at exactly 9.25 a.m. . . . Mahatmaji was led to the dais by Sikh volunteers with naked swords in hands. After requesting the audience to remain quiet Mahatmaji delivered a small speech. He said that though he was very glad to see them there, his heart burned within himself to find very few clad in pure khaddar. So long as they did not put on khaddar and all classes of people such as Sikhs, Parsis, Hindus, Mahomedans and others were not firmly united, and so long as the curse of untouchability was not removed, swaraj was impossible. He appealed to the people of Nagpur to bring about real Hindu-Muslim unity and take to spinning. After this speech Mahatmaji was presented by the Secretary, City Congress Committee, with the report of the work done in the city. Mahatmaji left Nagpur at about 10.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-5-1925

147. ILLUMINATING DOCUMENTS

[*April 30, 1925*][1]

These notes are being written during the trying journey to Calcutta. This being my first passage through the Central Provinces after my discharge from prison, people are embarrassingly attentive at every station and there is no rest for the wearied limbs. The discarding of khaddar is most noticeable. Instead of a forest of white khaddar caps, I see everywhere the provoking black foreign caps on almost every head. A friend sadly remarked to me that there was hardly one in a thousand who wore khaddar habitually. I am witnessing all along the route a striking demonstration of the fact. All honour then to the one per thousand who remain faithful to khaddar against heavy odds. My faith in khaddar rises as I find this indifference to if not revolt against khaddar.

The demonstration of the painful truth became complete at Nagpur—the centre that re-affirmed the Calcutta resolution of non-violent non-co-operation. There was a vast crowd at the station. The Congress officials had even arranged a meeting just outside the station. The hot sun was beating overhead. The din was terrific.

[1] From the reference to the "journey to Calcutta", the article appears to have been written on April 30 after the halt at Nagpur. Gandhiji reached Calcutta on the morning of May 1.

Nobody heard anybody, much less listened to anybody. There were volunteers but there was no discipline. No way was kept for me to pass through. I insisted on a way being made if I was to go to the meeting place during the half hour that the train was to stop at the station. The way was made with difficulty. I waded through it in the best manner I could took me over five minutes to reach the platform. Without the crowd pressing from all sides, I could have reached it in half a minute. I took no more than one minute to deliver my message. It took me longer to return to the train than it took to reach the platform, for the crowd had now lost its head completely. The intoxication of affection was now at its height. The shouts of " *ki jai*" rent the sky. I was ill able to bear the din and the dust and the suffocation. "O God! deliver me from this affection" was the silent prayer that went up to the Great White Throne. I reached the train in safety. It was provokingly late going. I stood in the doorway wishing and hoping to talk to the crowd if it would keep still for a while. The Congress officials tried, a big Akali tried, to silence the crowd. It was no use. It had come to have *darshan*. That it was having with delirious joy. Its joy was my pain. My name on the lips and black caps on the heads,—what a terrible contrast! What a lie! I could not fight the battle of swaraj with that crowd. And yet, I know that Maulana Shaukat Ali would say there was hope so long as there was that affection, blind though it was. I am not so sure and therefore I was in agony.

At last, I got a hearing. I demanded the black caps. The response was instantaneous but not generous. From that vast crowd I do not think more than one hundred caps were thrown, four of which were thrown not by the owners. They were claimed and promptly returned. This sight had a double lesson for me. With proper organized work, people could be induced to discard foreign or mill-made cloth. That was one lesson; but there was another. People there were who were yet ready to remove the neighbour's cap, just the preliminary to coercion. But there should be no coercion in khaddar wearing or in anything else. Those who wear it must do so voluntarily or not at all.

But the most illuminating information was given to me by the documents that the business-like officials had prepared for presentation to me. The documents tell me a truthful, simple, unvarnished story of Congress work. One paper contains information about Provincial Congress Committee activities. In March last, it had a membership of 204 of which 114 were self-spinners and 90 gave yarn

spun by others. In April, the membership fell to 132, self-spinners being 80 and the others 52. Thus there was a big drop among both the classes in one month. What it will now be remains to be seen. The committee reports 4 national schools in the province and donation of Rs. 5,000 from the trustees of the late Harishanker Vyas for untouchables. A sub-committee has been appointed to draft a scheme for the uplift of the untouchables. The paper mentions that, thanks to the effort of Pandit Motilal Nehru and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Hindus and Muslims"have been maintaining very peaceful relations with one another".

The second paper is a summary report of Congress activities in the city of Nagpur. It states that in the August of 1924 there were 1,133 members. In March 1925 the figures were:

A	B	Total
37	70	107

In April they were:

A	B	Total
29	30	59

In one month the defaulters were 48.

Number of spinning-wheels working is"about"40. The average output of yarn is 60 to 70 thousand yards per month. Average counts are 10 to 14. No looms work with hand-spun yarn.

There is one khaddar shop with an average sale of Rs. 500 per month.

The report says "no information can be given about drink and opium" and then, this extraordinarily brief and truthful statement ends thus:

> The above-given figures in Congress membership fairly show the future of the spinning franchise. The self-spinning members come mostly from the No-change section of the Congress. The B class members are mainly from the Swaraj Party. Not a single Swarajist is a self-spinner. Out of the five members from this Nagar who hold seats on the A.I.C.C., only one is a self-spinner; one has regularly paid his quota of purchased yarn; two are defaulters and one has even failed to pay his quota for March and is no longer a member of the Congress. Some of those who hold seats on the P.C.C. are also found to be in defaulters, list and some of them hold responsible positions in the P.C.C. This will show how far the franchise is workable. The No-change section, which has faith in spinning and khaddar, is gradually weakening and is, at

present, limited to individuals. The Swarajists of Nagpur are anxious to throw off the franchise and so is the Centrist or the Independent party which at present holds the P.C.C.

A ray of hope: Generally, people (common people) look with love and respect at those who spin regularly and who have sacrificed their careers for the Congress work.

Some of the causes of the slack work:

(a) Want of organization in the workers who have faith in the franchise.

(b) Want of sympathy in big Congress leaders for the franchise and infirmness of the originator of the franchise to maintain it against all odds. Even the workers in the No-change Party have come to believe that the franchise is going to be repealed at the next session of the Congress and this has taken away all the enthusiasm in them for any patient and effective work.

Anti-propaganda: Most of the Congress and public speakers lay greater stress on other matters and point out the weak points about the franchise and scrupulously avoid saying anything in its favour. And this cannot be counteracted for fear of creating controversy which is sure to lead to unhealthy atmosphere and in which no support can be expected from Mahatma Gandhi.

I note the gentle rebuke administered to me for my "infirmness to maintain it (the spinning franchise) against all odds". But let me tell the authors of the report that I will maintain it against all odds for myself. But, if I have a spark of the democratic spirit in me, I cannot maintain it for the Congress. That must be left to the Congress members. The responsibility must be joint and several. Why should those who believe in the franchise, i.e., in hand-spinning, for the nation, not maintain it all the more when others are lukewarm? And supposing that the Congress next year alters the franchise, what will the believers do? Will they leave off spinning? Or are they going to spin for themselves and vicariously for others also?

The authors of the report are right when they say that I would lend no support to controversy that is "sure to lead to unhealthy atmosphere". But if anyone is lukewarm, the way to counteract the lukewarmness is not to talk about or against it but to go one's way and organize what one believes in.Who can prevent those who believe in spinning from organizing it? Let me inform the authors of the report that there have sprung up in the country silent workers who are spreading the message of the wheel effectively and unostentatiously.

There are still two more documents for me to refer to among the

batch that was handed to me at Nagpur. The third is the report on Tilak Vidyalaya. This institution started with 1,000 students and over 40 teachers in 1921. This grand number fell to 150 in 1923-24. In July 1924, it was reduced to 55. Now it is 45 with 8 teachers. Spinning had been dropped. It has now been re-introduced. Carpentry, book-binding, tailoring, etc. are taught in this institution. The total monthly expenses are Rs. 355. The income is Rs. 180, including fees. They had a windfall in the shape of a legacy of Rs. 5,000 from the estate of the late Hari Shanker Vyas of Betul.

The Vidyalaya is said to give religious instruction and physical training.

They need Rs. 1,000 as capital for their technical department and Rs. 10,000 to enable them to run the school for six years.

The story of the fate of this Vidyalaya is about the story of almost every other national school in the country. Disheartening as the story may appear in the reading, there is no occasion to lose heart. If the teachers are determined, competent and self-sacrificing, they can make their small institutions effective and useful from the national standpoint. Numbers are valueless if they do not satisfy the required test, whatever it may be. If the teachers of the Nagpur Tilak Vidyalaya have grit in them and can satisfy the Congress test, I do not think they will have difficulty in finding financial support. I know of no institution that has died for want of financial backing. I know many that have died for want of the requisite quality among the teachers.

I have reserved the most hopeful document to the last. It is a list of those who spun yarn for presentation to me apart from their quota for membership. The list has 41 names of which two are institutions. Therefore, there were more than 41 individual spinners. I find in the list Maharashtrians and Marwaris. I find also four Parsis, one Muslim and four ladies. The list gives the yards and the weight and the counts spun against every name. The length spun is 753,974 yards. The counts range from 96 to 6. I have not yet examined the yarn. But if all of it is weavable, it is a quantity to be proud of. And if all these members have an independent living faith in hand-spinning, I should not despair of success within a reasonable distance of time.

Young India, 7-5-1925

148. MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE

There is no use of glorifying me. If you really wish to please me, follow my advice.

I beg all people, ladies and gentlemen, to buy khaddar as much as your purse can permit.

A few coppers may not mean much to you, but they mean everything to those poor villagers.

M. K. GANDHI

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 1-5-1925

149. INTERVIEW TO "THE STATESMAN"

CALCUTTA,

May 1, 1925

In a room practically devoid of furniture, on the floor of which were spread lengths of carpet, Mr. Gandhi, clad only in loin-cloth, sat cross-legged and, after a greeting, asked to be excused while his spinning-wheel was adjusted. He then expressed his readiness to converse, and proceeded to do so, spinning rapidly and skilfully the while.

Seldom taking his eyes from his work, he answered questions without the slightest hesitation, although his voice, soft and musical, was sometimes almost inaudible through the gentle whirr of the charkha.At the outset he smilingly acquiesced in a suggestion that the charkha was the machine on which he pinned his political faith.

Mr. Gandhi was first invited to express an opinion regarding the attitude of Europeans in the present political situation and the difficulty which many people experienced in defining a clear-cut policy from the maze of political panaceas enunciated from time to time.

He replied that there must be some organization to guide political thought and the National Congress ought to represent the national feeling. There were two sides to the present programme—the internal and the external. The object of the former was to achieve unity among all races, "Hindu-Muslim unity" being a short term to cover all classes—the removal of untouchability by the Hindus, the spinning-wheel and khaddar.

On the external side, there was the activity in the Council represented by the Swaraj Party, which was an integral part of the National Congress. That was the whole of the national programme.

Asked to express his opinion on the general political situation in India, Mahatma Gandhi said :

I am certainly not a pessimist, but I do not see much sign of hope. I shall begin to hope when we meet with demonstrable success in our internal programme. . . . meaning thereby the unity of all races in India, the removal of untouchability and the development of spinning and the use of khaddar.

As a declared "friend of the British", Mr. Gandhi regretted that he was unable to see a change of heart on their part.

Europeans may well co-operate on the internal as well as on the external side, and I invite them, as I have always invited them, to examine the programme in both its aspects. As regards the external side, if they are satisfied that we mean what we say, that we have absolutely no desire, even if we could, to drive out the English, or to end the British connection they should make common cause with us.

Touching on the question of non-co-operation, Mr. Gandhi said :

The programme of non-co-operation, so far as the nation is concerned, is suspended, but so far as I am personally concerned, it is not suspended, although the individual suspension had little meaning in it today. I never was a Council-goer, but I suppose at the present moment with me it is a virtue of necessity, because my late imprisonment debars my entry into the Councils. I had long suspended my practice, but the Society of the Inner Temple has removed the last vestige of temptation from me.[1]

What, therefore, remains of non-co-operation in me is, as Mr. Das[2] would put it, a matter of "mental attitude". But it is an attitude that I personally prize because, claiming as I do, to be a friend of the British, I want to tell them that I see no trace yet of any real change of

[1] By striking his name off the rolls; *vide* Appendix "Inner Temple Order", 21-12-1922.

[2] Chitta Ranjan Das (1870-1925); eminent lawyer and Congress leader; orator and author; President, Indian National Congress, 1922; founded the Swaraj Party in 1923

heart.

I am a born co-operator, but non-co-operation with me became a necessity; but I am waiting for the opportunity when I can declare that I will again become a hearty co-operator.

Referring to the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity, Mr. Gandhi said :

My travels have shown me that both communities are filled with mutual distrust and fear, but I have not a shadow of doubt that unity is coming in the near future. Each party regards it as a national necessity.

Mr. Gandhi added that there might be a clash before that came about, but whether they escaped that calamity or had to face it, unity was eventually a certainty.

On the subject of Mr. Das's manifesto and his terms on which a settlement might be reached, Mr. Gandhi said :

I prefer to say nothing until I have had a consultation with Mr. Das. But I can say generally that I am bound under the agreement, and even without it, not to embarrass the Swaraj Party or Mr. Das personally in their political activity.

Asked to give his views regarding His Excellency the Viceroy's[1] visit to England, Mr. Gandhi said :

I know nothing of the nature of the negotiations and I do not want to go by the newspapers, especially as I have become, again of necessity, an indifferent reader of newspapers and bazaar talk had never interested me. I do not know what Lord Reading's mission is, I do not know the implications in Lord Birkenhead's[2] speech, much less do I know what is going on behind the curtain.

The Statesman, 2-5-1925

[1] Lord Reading (1860-1935); Chief Justice of England, 1913-21; Viceroy and Governor-General of India, 1921-26; Foreign Secretary, 1931

[2] Secretary of State for India, 1924-28

150. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

CALCUTTA,
May 1, 1925

Mahatma Gandhi was spinning when a representative of the Associated Press called on him this afternoon. Referring to the Das-Birkenhead discussions, Mahatmaji refused to make any statement until he had seen Mr. Das personally. He did not want to embarrass his position by any statement at present :

I have come to Bengal not to hinder, but to help Mr. Das, as far as it lies in my power.

As regards the object of his extended visit to Bengal, Mr. Gandhi said he had come here to study the possibility of Bengal so far as khadi is concerned, to study the untouchability problem and to know the Hindu-Muslim relations here. He had been for a long time under a promise to visit certain places in Bengal. As soon as he finished his Southern India tour he took the first opportunity of coming to Bengal. Mahatmaji said that he was feeling well and he expressed confidence that he would be able to fulfil his Bengal programme.

Asked by the representative what attitude he would take if more power was given to the transferred department and the probable date of Dominion Status was announced, Mr. Gandhi smilingly replied :

Why should I accept a mere supposition when I know that I can see Mr. Das tomorrow and discuss with him?

The Hindu, 2-5-1925

151. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CALCUTTA[1]

May 1, 1925

FRIENDS,

I have spoken sufficiently in Hindusthani and I hope that a large part of this audience has followed my broken Hindusthani. It is always a matter of deep grief to me that, whenever I go to the South or I come to Bengal, I am obliged in order to be able to make myself understood by my educated countrymen to speak in English. I wish that the people of the South and the people of Bengal would rid themselves of this laziness and make up their minds once for all to

[1] The meeting, held at Mirzapur Park, was attended by about 10,000 persons. Dr. P. C. Ray presided.

add to a knowledge of their own mother tongue a passable knowledge of Hindi or Hindusthani which, and which alone, can become the language of internal commerce in India. Let English be, as it ought to be, language of international diplomacy, the language of intercourse between all the different nations of the world. But English can never usurp the function that specially belongs to Hindi or Hindusthani. You ought to know that nearly twenty crores of the people of India can understand my broken Hindusthani. Let it not be said that ten crores of India want to impose their speech or English speech on the twenty crores of India. I have said in my opening remarks what a deep grief it was to me this morning to enter 148 Russa Road. I know that that house no longer belonged to Deshbandhu Das. I knew that he contemplated making over that beautiful mansion to trustees in order to divest himself of the last vestige of wealth that he possessed in this world. But, man of the world, living still in the world as I am doing, when I actually entered the house with the knowledge that its distinguished owner had voluntarily dispossessed himself of it, I could not help shedding a tear. I felt a wrench within me that the house was no longer Das's, and when I heard that he had not yet been able to repair his broken down constitution, I felt doubly grieved and my grief was still further increased when I received a brief but beautiful and loving message from him, written by him in pencil hand, telling me how it was impossible for him to stand the double strain and why therefore he had gone away to Faridpur in advance. May God grant him health and long life to serve the country which he loves so dearly.

You will not expect me to tell you anything on what is called the political situation. A newspaper reporter told me today about the negotiations that are going on between Lord Birkenhead and Deshbandhu Das. I am totally unaware of any such negotiations. I have no knowledge of any such negotiations whatsoever; but I do know that there is what may be called a political situation in this country today. But that political situation does not interest me sufficiently today. I am an economist of time; I have deliberately given my general power of attorney to the Swaraj Party which is an integral part of the Congress. The Swaraj Party is in charge of the political programme of the Congress and, seeing that I have the fullest faith in the ability of theSwaraj Party to handle the political situation, seeing that I have the

fullest faith in the wisdom of Deshbandhu Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru[1], so far as the Council programme is concerned, it would be impudence on my part to concern myself about it unless they want me to do so and there is absolutely no reason for them to want my interference or to desire my opinion. When they do so you may depend on it that I am always at their service but, what is more, it would be impossible for me to make any effective statement on the political situation unless I have had a consultation with Deshbandhu Das. I have not come to Bengal, I am not travelling throughout the length and breadth of India to embarrass the Swaraj Party or to embarrass Deshbandhu or a single member of that party. I am pledged in the name of God to help that party to the best of my ability. I am pledged not even mentally to interfere with its programme and, if I do not throw myself heart and soul into that programme, it is because of my limitations, it is because I do not see eye to eye with them in their policy. But that does not mean that I must not help them. That does not mean that their policy is inimical to the country. It simply means that there is a difference of opinion as to the weight and the relative importance to be attached to the political programme and the constructive programme. I swear by the constructive programme; the more I examine myself the more I feel that I am more fitted for handling the constructive programme for developing our own power from within than for engaging into diplomatic relations with the matchless diplomats from England. I confess to you that I will be ill at ease in carrying on negotiations with any of those officials unless I feel that we have power from within and I am here to confess to you that we have lost today the power that we thought in 1921 we had in abundance, and therefore I propose to the best of my ability to concentrate solely and exclusively upon the constructive programme. That will be my best contribution to the country and to the Swaraj Party, and I promise to you that if you, the young men and the young women of Bengal, will help me—no matter to what political party you may belong—if you will kindly help me in making this constructive programme a living, a swinging success, you will find that our fetters automatically drop. You will find that those

[1] 1861-1931; lawyer and Swarajist leader; President, Indian National Congress, Amritsar, 1919, and Calcutta, 1928

whom we consider unjustly incarcerated and kept under detention, that those who are today pining away in the Jail at Mandalay, you will find that, if you can make the constructive programme a success, they will be discharged without your asking for their discharge. What is that constructive programme by which I swear? Let me take you through these three items as rapidly as I can. Hindu-Muslim unity, meaning unity between all the races that inhabit the fair land of ours. Is that programme unattainable byus? Is that programme undesirable? But I have admitted my incompetence. I have admitted that I have been found wanting as a physician prescribing a cure for this malady. I do not find that either the Hindus or the Mussalmans are ready to accept my cure and therefore I simply nowadays confine myself to a passing mention of this problem and content myself by saying that some day or other we Hindus and Mussalmans will have to come together if we want the deliverance of our country; and, if it is to be our lot that before we can come together, we must shed one another's blood then I say the sooner we do so the better it is for us. If we propose to break one another's head, let us do so in a manly way, let us not then shed crocodile tears, let us not ask for sympathy from any quarter if you do not propose to give any quarter. That is what I have to say about the Hindu-Muslim unity. Is it a long-drawn-out programme or an impossible programme that we Hindus should rid ourselves of the curse of untouchability? So long as untouchability disfigures Hinduism, so long do I hold the attainment of swaraj to be an utter impossibility. Supposing it would be a gift descending from Downing Street to India that gift would be a curse upon this holy land. If we do not get rid of this curse, it would be a curse added to curse, swaraj without the freedom of the untouchables. But what are the implications of this removal of untouchability? Let the *sanatani* Hindus understand from me who claims to be a *sanatani* Hindu. I do not ask you to interdine with anybody; I do not ask you to exchange your daughters with the untouchables or with anybody, but I do ask you to remove this curse so that you may not put him beyond the pale of service. For me the removal of untouchability is the acceptance of the privilege of service to people whom we have kept under bondage in the sacred name of religion. Listen to me the *sanatani* Hindus of Calcutta, that this Hinduism is in the balance and it will go down to

perdition if you do not get rid of this untouchability. So much and so far for untoucha-bility. Then take the third item in your programme, the spinning-wheel and the khaddar. What do I ask of you? The millionaires of Calcutta, the barristers, the M.L.A.s and the M.L.C.s of Calcutta, what do I ask of you? The women of Calcutta, what do I ask of you? Half an hour, in the name of God, for the sake of perishing and famishing humanity of India. Is it too much for you to give half an hour of your time to doing that—to spinning for the sake of these poor people so that you can cheapen khaddar, so that I can tell the villagers of Bengal that the daughters and sons of millionaires are spinning? Why will you not spin? Do you know that the villagers have lost faith in us, in themselves and in God Himself? Because they find that we often go to them, sometimes to collect money, sometimes with one programme and sometimes with another programme. They do not know where we want to lead them and so they are distrustful of us and when we take in our simplicity, the spinning-wheel to their homes, they smile at us the smile of no-confidence. They do not say: "We do not understand this instrument of yours. We do not know what meaning lies behind the spinning-wheel." So when the villagers have forgotten the use and the beauty, the life-giving beauty of the spinning-wheel, they do not take to it kindly. If you want them to take to this home industry of yours kindly, then it is necessary for you to spin the wheel yourself. And remember again that, unless you take to spinning yourselves, you will not be able to make necessary improvements on it, you will not be able to re-establish this almost lost industry of India. No agricultural country in the world has yet lived which has not added a supplementary industry to it. And I defy any Indian, no matter how distinguished an economist he may be to show me an effective substitute for the millions of India who are scattered all over the land which is 1900 miles long and 1500 miles broad and scattered in 700 thousand villages most of which are outside even the railway tracts. I defy anybody to propose or to show any effective substitute. But till such an effective substitute is placed before you, do not idle away your time, do not grudge the poor, down-trodden humanity of India, the half an hour that I ask of you, the Congress asks of you. And then, if you take to the spinning-wheel, what about its product? Why is this spinning-wheel a necessity? Because we want

clothes made not in Manchester or Japan, made not in Ahmedabad or Bombay which did not stand Bengal in good stead at the time of Partition, but we want beautiful khaddar manufactured in our own village homes which always stands us in good stead. We want the villagers to be smiling with plenty; we want the people of Khulna, when again they have got famine, to know that they are not to live on doles of rice thrown at their face by a Dr. Ray[1], but I want the people of Khulna to feel that they do not need the assistance of even a Ray, because they have got the spinning-wheel to fall back upon. Let them not become beggars when they have got ready in their hands an instrument of living, an instrument which shall be an insurance, a permanent insurance against famine. That is why I ask you to take up the spinning-wheel and khaddar and that is what has brought me to Bengal.

I do not want to interfere with the politics of Bengal or India today. There are men who are able enough to handle it, but I regard myself as a charkha expert; I regard myself as a khaddar expert. I believe that I have something to say to every man and woman in connection with this message of khaddar, and therefore, while I have yet life left in me, whilst Bengal is yet ready and willing to listen to me, I want to redeliver my message to Bengal with all the power at my command and say if you want freedom for your country do anything else you like but at least lay a firm and stable foundation on which you will be able to erect a proper and firm structure, and remember the words of this old man speaking to you again and again in Calcutta and will speak again and again throughout his tour in Bengal that, if you do not lay this sure and certain foundation, remember that any reform that you get, any liberty or freedom that you think you possess will be nothing but a house built of cards which is going to topple down under the first gust of wind. Therefore, I pray of you to work up this message, the living message of khaddar and spinning-wheel. Hindus, remove this curse of untouchability. Hindus and Mussalmans, if it is at all possible for you without shedding a drop of blood, do come together and embrace each other as brothers in arms.

I thank you for the patience with which you have listened to me.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 2-5-1925

[1] Prafulla Chandra Ray (1861-1944); professor of Chemistry at Presidency college, Calcutta; author of *History of Hindu Chemistry*; educationist and patriot

152. SPEECH AT INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITION, FARIDPUR

May 2, 1925

In declaring the exhibition open Mr. Gandhi said, as a son of a cultivator, he claimed to know something of agriculture. He had considerable experience of the peasantry of India and of South Africa where he had spent more than 20 years of his life. He had seen working in Agricultural Departments in these two countries and he could say that this department was anxious to help even ordinary poor peasants. Unfortunately, nothing was practically done in this direction. It had been said, though he did not agree, that peasantry of India were lethargic. In fact he admitted they remained idle for about 6 months in the year. This was not because they were lethargic but because they had no work to do. They could very well take to spinning during these months and thus ameliorate their condition. He was prepared to proclaim with all emphasis that he could command that the salvation of India lay in the spinning-wheel. There could be no difference of opinion about it.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 3-5-1925

153. SPEECH AT ALL-BENGAL HINDU SAMMELAN[1]

FARIDPUR,
May 2, 1925

I am requested by President to address you on three things. Firstly, Hindu-Muslim unity is a vital question on which I have bestowed a good deal of thought. I pray to God that He might give us the peace we so much desire. Now the Hindus and Muslims are at loggerheads and fighting bitterly and there is no unity of heart; I tried my best to bring about the unity and I am not ashamed to own my failure. I only wished they fought like men, but of course not go to court and then only know that one community cannot exterminate the other nor the whole of India can be converted either into Hinduism or Mahommedanism. Thus the much-desired-for unity will come automatically.

[1] P. C. Ray, who presided over the second session of the Sammelan requested Gandhiji to speak "on the burning questions of the day". Gandhiji spoke in Hindi.

As regards untouchability, my views are well-known and I have spoken from a thousand platforms. I believe that so long as there is untouchability among Hindus no good can come to them. It is a great sin and has no religious sanction behind it. How can Hindus be great when they condemn millions of their brothers as untouchables? I therefore appeal to everybody present here to remove the blot of untouchability and induce others to do so. The removal of untouchability does never mean destruction of *varnashrama*[1] dharma which is a very beautiful and beneficial thing and never a bad one. But I know, in the name of *varnashrama* dharma, many wrongs are being done which must be removed. This does not mean that we are to inter-dine and inter-marry amongst each other. You must never forget the distinction between untouchability and *varnashrama* dharma.

As regards charkha and khaddar, charkha is the life of Hindustan and I have compared it to the *Sudarshan Chakra* and *Kamdhenu*.The destruction of charkha meant the beginning of poverty in India, and to drive [away] poverty we must reinstate charkha in its proper place. Charkha should be given the first place in Indian homes. Let the wheel be plied in every home every day for half an hour in the name of God for the salvation of his or her starving brothers. The educated people should first adopt it so that others may follow. When, in the morning, I opened the industrial exhibition, I noticed many defects in construction of the spinning [-wheel] which can only be remedied by the educated applying their brains to it. You know the improved wheels, I mean the mills of Manchester, they spelt disaster for the Indian masses and it is my earnest desire that no home should be without charkha. I appeal to you to wear khaddar. Four years ago when I visited Dacca, my heart yearned for the Dacca muslin which is now made of foreign yarn coming from England or Japan. Wear such khaddar as your place produces. The other day a young Bengali girl named Aparna Devi, who could spin very fine counts of thread, came to see me and I rather considered myself fortunate enough to see her. I appeal to Bengali ladies to exert themselves so that they might clothe their husbands and sons with fine khadi.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 3-5-1925

[1] The division of society into four *varnas* or castes and of the individual life into four ashramas or stages

154. SPEECH AT BENGAL PROVINCIAL YOUNG MEN'S CONFERENCE

May 2, 1925

The President[1] requested Mahatmaji to speak a few words of advice to the young hopefuls of the country assembled there. Mahatmaji spoke for a pretty long time and, in the course of his speech, referred to the part played by the youth in the regeneration of the country. He was tired of speeches, he said, but wanted to have a heart-to-heart talk with them. Young men should banish all evil thoughts from their mind and the motto of their life should be service, or, in one word, the indispensable condition of life should be *brahmacharya* and the message of *brahmacharya* was not confined to the Hindu religion only—it was, in fact, the corner-stone of all religions in all ages. He then cited the instance of a certain brilliant young man who had been spoilt for ever for want of *brahmacharya*, and wanted an assurance from every one of them that they would lead a pure life.

He then referred to Non-co-operation movement as nothing but a movement for self-purification and advised them to surrender themselves comple- tely to God's will. He thereupon passed on to what he described as his eternal message, viz., khaddar, removal of untouchability and Hindu-Muslim unity. He emphasized the capacity of the charkha as a means of concentration and self-purification—two things essentially necessary at the present moment. He blessed the young men and prayed to God so that they might act up to the noble traditions of India.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 8-5-1925

[1] Jitendra Mohan Roy

155. TALK WITH UNTOUCHABLES

FARIDPUR,

[On or before *May 3, 1925*][1]

Gandhiji first sought information about "untouchability" in Bengal, and he was told about the different sections—*Shahas, Kaivartas, Namasudras* and *Mehtars*—and the canker of superiority that had entered even amongst these sub-sections. Then he asked about the disabilities they had to undergo. The gentleman admitted that there was no untouchability of the kind we find in West or South India, but the feeling of superiority was there. A *Namasudra* could enter the house of a "superior Hindu", but could not enter the room where water was kept; no Hindu would accept water at his hands; he would not be allowed to enter a temple, he could not get the services of a barber or a washerman. "How are we to remedy these disabilities, Sir?" he asked.

That's a nice question that you have asked. Now there are ways and ways. There are some who would use violence against the offending party and wrest reform from them. I met such friends in Poona. They wanted to present an address to me. It was not in Marathi or Hindi but in English, as the function was arranged by an English-knowing lad who claimed to be their leader. In the address they said that, if the higher classes did not mend their behaviour towards them, they would use physical force and teach them a lesson. That is one way. I told them that that was the surest way to lose all sympathy of sober men and to defeat the ends they wanted to achieve, as also to frustrate the efforts of the reformers to help them. There is another class of people—I met them in the South—who threaten to leave Hinduism and take to Christianity or Islam. I said to them that, if they had any religion in them, it was only now that it was on trial and, if they renounced it because they were ill-treated, their religion was not worth a moment's purchase. I was excommunicated, and I think wrongly, when I went to England, but for that reason, should I have renounced my religion? The third way and the only pure way, to my mind, is that of self-purification, i.e., being free from all the charges

[1] Gandhiji was at Faridpur from May 1 to May 4. May 4 being a Monday was Gandhiji's silence day. This talk, therefore, must have been given on or before May 3.

that are levelled against you.

I understand it all. Violence and the kind of threats you have described are no good, echoed the *vakil* friend.

Yes. Self-purification is the way. I wonder if you eat carrion?

No,—very few amongst us use meat at all. The *Vaishnavas* amongst us do not eat meat at all. We do eat fish though.

Well then; you have to do less than others by way of self-purification. What little there may be of the idea of superiority among yourselves you must get rid of. Try to rid yourselves of all that the orthodox Hindus have, perhaps with some reason, to say against you and you will overcome their prejudices. Not that they have no vices. But it is not yours to point the finger of scorn at them. It may be a long process, but it is a sure one. I know you can bring them to their knees by drastic measures at times. In cities like Calcutta, for instance, if the sweepers go on strike saying they would not resume work unless their disabilities are remedied, I am sure they would succeed, but the minds of the opposite party will not be changed. Their hatred will increase all the more. The only way is to be above reproach yourselves and leave the rest to reformers. As you know, I am fighting the evil with all the energy at my command. It is an entirely religious question for me.

You want us to trust the reformers. We trust you, but how may we trust the others? They talk of untouchability today because we are useful pawns in their political game, but the moment their political ends are achieved, they will leave us in the lurch. We do not think, in their heart of hearts they believe that it is a question of purifying themselves, nor that swaraj is useless without the removal of untouchability. Dr. Ray is there who, I admit, is fighting hard for us. His feeling for us is intense. But I am not sure of others. There is Deshbandhu Das, of course, but he too is hardly doing all that he could.

But I assure you he has nothing against you, and he wants the reform as much as I do. Do you know why he cannot interest himself in it as much as I?

I know, Sir. He has many things to do and he has hardly any time.

Yes, that is it. And there is another thing. He feels that no work can be done unless by swift political action we obtain our freedom. That is the only difference between him and me. But he is absolutely in earnest about the question, and he wants the removal of the curse as soon as you and I.

I agree. But, then, would you want us simply to rely on the reformers? You know it has so happened that whenever we have shown fight they have come down, and whenever we have sat supine they have looked on with unconcern,. . .[1] says we should refuse to have anything to do with them. Let us also refuse all social intercourse, let us refuse water from them as they refuse water from us.

He is hysterical, you know. Don't do anything of the kind. You will antagonize the caste Hindus all the more. You may not feel any love for them. But I do think you can rid yourselves of all hatred against them. Maintain a dignified attitude. Dignified attitude and not vindictiveness.

How can we join the national programme in these circumstances?

Why not? What is the national programme today? Removal of untouchability by the Hindus, khaddar and Hindu-Muslim unity. I think all the three items are calculated to help a solution of your difficulties. Even Hindu-Muslim unity means more or less a solution of the untouchability question too, and khaddar can unite us as nothing else can. Yes, if people come to you with schemes of swaraj in which there is no provision for you, and to which they want your assent just for the political exigencies of the hour, or if missionaries come to you with all sorts of schemes in which special rights are asked for you, you will be on your guard. You will brush both aside.

I have come across such missionaries and you are quite right. Our disabilities are various and we are handicapped almost everywhere.

They will end. There are many workers in the field. Many high-class Hindus are devoting all their time and energy to the question. And you have to trust to the good sense inherent in human nature too. When you have purified yourselves, your opponents are bound to awaken to a sense of their duty. I have passed through the same disabilities as you in South Africa and I want you to do as I did. You know what I did? The European barbers refused to serve me. I got a pair of clippers one fine morning and began to crop my hair standing before a looking-glass. A European friend peeped in just then and found me in the midst of the operation. "What are you doing?" he said."If European barbers won't serve me," I said, "I will serve myself." Then he offered his services, with the result that my hair was cropped in a most amusing fashion—patches of hair here, patches there and bare spaces in between![2] With regard to sending my children

[1] The name is omitted in the source.
[2] *Vide An Autobiography*, Pt. III, Ch. IX.

to school there was the same difficulty. They said, an exception could be made in favour of my children who would be allowed to go to an English school. I said, "No, unless all Indian children with clean habits were free to go to English schools, I won't send mine." And I kept my children without school education, even incurring the charge that I was neglecting their education. Oh! There were any number of disabilities. I can feel as one of you because I have passed through exactly the same difficulties. I boarded a bus once and took my seat. For refusing to leave the seat that was given to me I was kicked and brutally mauled about. The other passengers were so alarmed at this man's behaviour that they remonstrated with him, and out of sheer shame he left me.[1] But you know that I lived down these prejudices in course of time, not by retaliation but by suffering. I verily believe that the treatment of our countrymen overseas is a just nemesis for the ill-treatment you receive in India. That is what I mean when I repeat everywhere that we have made ourselves pariahs in the Empire and that Hinduism will be blotted out of the face of the earth if we don't take care betimes and get rid of the curse.

I know, Sir, you have said that often, and one does feel like that. But untouchability has persisted so long. How will it be destroyed now?

Why? Was there not cannibalism in some parts, and the custom of Suttee, in India? Do you think Hinduism could have endured if those things had also persisted? They had to disappear. Thinking minds revolted against these horrors, and now that the consciousness of the horror of untouchability has been aroused everywhere, it is bound to go. The consciousness is growing upon every one of us that Hinduism is on its trial and if it is not to be found wanting, it must rid itself of the curse.

Then, you think we must join the Congress?

You should and help as much as you can in the national programme. Do the national work, take to the charkha and wear khaddar, and purify yourselves. Above all realize the inherent effectiveness and value of character. It is your character that will tell in the end.

"We are very thankful indeed and shall try to carry out the suggestions. Please

[1] *Vide An Autobiography*, Pt. II, Ch. IX.

pardon us for having troubled you at this late hour," said he, as they were taking their leave. Gandhi very cordially said :

No, it has been a perfect pleasure to me—this talk with you. Had it not been so, I should not have talked at such length with you.

Young India, 14-5-1925

156. REPLY TO ADDRESS[1]

[On or before *May 3, 1925*]

I thank you sincerely for the address you have given me, and more for the trouble you have taken to come here.[2] I sent the message half in jest and had hardly expected that you would respond to it. I am delighted that you have come. I wanted to give you a demonstration in spinning, an object-lesson, and explain to you that it was essential that you take up spinning as a religious duty to bring about the regeneration of the country. Today you see only a thread coming out as I turn the wheel and draw the sliver. But it is my conviction that, with every thread that I draw, I am spinning the destiny of India. The conviction is growing upon me that without the spinning-wheel there is no salvation for this country of ours, and I ask you, as I am turning the wheel, to set apart half an hour each day from your talking, writing or playing and devote it to spinning. The evil of untouchability that has entered Hinduism and is eating into its vitals and killing the spirit of nationalism from within is more infectious than even the plague. It has affected the Parsis, the Christians and the Muslims, too, and in consequence all of us have become untouchables outside India. How can this evil be eradicated? I told the friend who met me that this can be done only by the efforts of the caste Hindus. He then told me frankly that he was afraid we might use the *Antyaj* [3] as pawns in the game, that after we had secured swaraj we might leave them to their fate. What would be their lot then, he asked. There was an element of truth in his criticism. We must assure people who think like him that there is no political motive in the movement for the uplift of the

[1] Presented by students who attended the Students' Conference in Faridpur; the first paragraph has been reproduced from *Young India*, 14-5-1925.

[2] The address was to have been presented in a theatre; Gandhiji, however, sent a message through J. B. Kripalani that he would like to receive the address at his camp where he was busy spinning. So the students went to Gandhiji's camp and presented the address there.

[3] Hindu communities traditionally regarded as untouchables

Antyajas, that the motive inspiring it is the religious one of doing one's duty and atoning for one's sins. If we do not pay this debt, we shall be guilty in the eyes of God and shall remain neither Hindus nor human beings.

A young man asked me what would happen to him if he should be excommunicated for working for *Antyaja* uplift. I told him that, if he had some standing in his community, I would be very happy to hear that he was excommunicated. But we are not ready to sacrifice our position in society for such a cause. I visited a place in Kathiawar where thousands of people gave me the impression that they did not approve of the practice of untouchability. When leaving the place, I asked a friend, who is a very good worker, to visit it. He is a Brahmin, but he takes with him an *Antyaja* child so that it may help him in his work. That child is so clean in his habits that, upon seeing him, you would not notice any difference between him and the cleanest child among you. When I had asked those people to keep both these with them, they had felt happy because they needed such persons to serve the *Antyajas* of that town. But when the worker and the *Antyaja* child went there, the person who had invited them there got frightened and did not receive them. That was a moment of trial for him and he was found wanting. He failed and betrayed his Hinduism. I expect courage from you at such a time.

Moreover, eradication of untouchability does not mean destruction of the *varnashrama* system. Surely, you ought to understand this thing. It is not necessary for me, in order that I may serve humanity, to eat in the company of any person or to give my daughter in marriage to him. Neither Andrews[1] nor Shaukat Ali[2] eats with me, and yet I look upon them as more than my blood-brothers. I cannot eat with Shaukat Ali because he is a non-vegetarian. If I ate any type of food which Shaukat Ali regarded as forbidden, he too would not eat in my company, but that would make no difference at all to his love for me. Restrictions about eating and marrying do not come in the way of our serving others. Even if God should forbid me to serve a living being, I would disobey Him. But let me clarify a point further. I do not desire that you should eat or enter into marriage ties with

[1] Charles Freer Andrews (1871-1940); English missionary, author, educationist, and a close associate of Gandhiji

[2] Shaukat Ali (1873-1938); Muslim leader who, along with his brother Mahomed Ali, took a leading part in the Khilafat movement

Antyajas or the *Namasudras* [1] but I certainly want you to maintain the relations with them which you do with other Sudras. I have heard that Hindus do not accept water from a *Namasudra*. If you can drink water offered by a Sudra, it is wrong not to accept it from a *Namasudra*. I heard that the *Namasudras* do not get the services of barbers and washermen. This is a crime against humanity. It is not a very noble sentiment which forbids you to serve a living creature.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-5-1925

157. COW-PROTECTION

We have taken one step forward. The Bombay meeting[2] in Madhav Baug has approved by a majority the constitution of a body for cow-protection, which has been published in *Navajivan*. Four persons had raised their hands against the constitution. One of them wanted to oppose a particular clause in it. I could not permit him to do so. All I could do was to advise him that, if he objected to the principle underlying it, he should oppose the entire constitution, but that, if he had no objection to the principle, he should accept the constitution. It is my humble view that, at such meetings, we cannot go ahead with the work in any other way. I wish that everyone will understand the reason behind my ruling. The meeting was held in order to start a new body. It could have been inaugurated even without a public meeting, since the constitution was drawn up by a committee appointed by the Cow-protection conference[3] and it could have after adopting the constitution, proceeded immediately to set up the proposed All-India Cow-protection Society. Instead, to invest the event with greater importance a public meeting was convened for adopting the constitution. In such a meeting no one can oppose particular clauses. But anyone who does not approve of the proposed body or constitution has a right to oppose either, and as chairman I conceded that right to the person who had objected.

I wish to draw the reader's attention to my speech[4] (publish- ed elsewhere in this issue). To me the cause of cow-protection is dearer

[1] A community in Bengal

[2] Held on April 28, 1925, with Gandhiji in the chair

[3] Held at Belgaum on December 28, 1924 under Gandhiji's chairmanship

[4] *Vide* "Speech at All-India Cow-Protection Conference, Bombay", 28-4-1925.

than anything else. It is my view that we have not given careful thought to this important problem of cow-protection. How can we stop the *adharma*[1] that is going on in the name of cow-protection? My reason does not function when I start thinking about it. Religious-minded Hindus donate lakhs of rupees for cow-protection, but their aim is not served. In a country in which protection of the cow is a sacred duty, the cow is least cared for! Neither cow-slaughter nor cruelty to the cow is stopped. Those who sell cows for being slaughtered are Hindus, as also those who inflict cruelty on them. Not a single measure out of the many adopted for cow-protection succeeds, or promises to succeed. Why is it so?

This all-India body must think about the problem. But whose responsibility will it be to think? Should the president or the secretary think or the committee as a whole deliberate about it? Thinking about the problem presupposes study. What is the condition of the cow and of the bullock? What is their number? Are they really a burden to the country, or are they put to service? What are the reasons for their being slaughtered? Why are they weak? These and many other related questions will have to be considered.

Who should spare the time? Is there anyone who takes so much interest? Unless people take interest, how can they accomplish anything? I explained, therefore, that cow-protection required *tapas-charya*[2] restraint, study and so on. Hence I shall expect not only money from those who wish to serve the cause of cow-protection, but also thought and study.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-5-1925

158. MY NOTES

KATHIAWAR'S CONTRIBUTION

Shri Manilal Kothari has been touring Kathiawar to complete the collection of Rs. 20,000, which is its quota. According to a telegram from him, further contributions have been collected as under

[1] Opposite of dharma
[2] Voluntary suffering as moral discipline

Other contributions from Manavadar	Rs.	1,100
Shri Jivanlal, Chorwad	„	2,500
Other contributions from Chorwad	„	200
Veraval	„	2,500
Total	Rs.	6,300

I hope that Kathiawar will contribute its share within the allotted time. I am looking forward to receiving the contribution of Kathiawaris residing in Bombay. I wish Kathiawaris to remember that this sum of Rs. 20,000 will be spent entirely in Kathiawar itself.

"BONDAGE OF CASTE"

I have accepted caste as conducive to self-control, but in this age we find it to be a bondage and not a means of self-control. Self-control gives dignity to a person and makes him free. Bondage, being like shackles, brings disgrace. Caste as understood at present is neither wholesome nor sanctioned by Shastras. The latter do not know the word "caste" in the sense in which it is used nowadays. They recognize *varnas*, but there are only four of them. Even among the innumerable communities there are sub-castes and we find a growing tendency to prohibit marriage between members of different sub-castes. These are signs not of progress but of degradation. These reflections have been prompted by the following letter :[1]

If true, this report is saddening. Why should there be fighting for the positions of president and secretary? Why should there be differences of *Surati, Agri, Damani,*[2] etc.? When I attended a meeting of the Lad Yuvak Mandal[3] I came away with a very good impression. Presidentship offers an opportunity for service, it cannot be used for acquiring honour. A secretary is the servant of the society. Even if there is a contest for that office, it should be a friendly one. I hope that the two parties will come together and end the conflict described above. Why should not all *Vaniks*[4] combine and form one single caste? Nowhere have I seen it laid down as dharma that members of

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had stated that in his *Lad* community there were many sub-castes and differences of opinion became so grave, at times, as to lead to fighting.

[2] Names of the sub-castes of the Lad community

[3] Lad Youth Association

[4] Business communities

Vaisya communities may not marry among themselves. I respect to some extent the division into sub-castes as a matter of social convenience. But when I come across instances like the one described above, I feel that we should actively shake ourselves free of these bonds and persuade others to do so.

BOTH "IDOLATER" AND "ICONOCLAST"

I once said in a speech that I was both an idol-worshipper and an idol-breaker. If the speech in which I said this had been reported in full, my meaning would have been easy to understand. I have not seen its report. A correspondent quotes my remarks and writes :[1]

Here the word idol has different meanings. If we take it to mean a physical object of worship, I am an idol-breaker. If we take the word to mean an object which helps us in contemplation, or a means of showing honour or of cherishing a memory, I am an idol- worshipper. An idol does not mean merely a physical object. Those who blindly worship even a book are idol-worshippers or idolaters. To believe in everything which is supposed to be stated in the Vedas, without using our reason, without discriminating between the essential and in essential and trying to determine the meaning of the text—this is idol-worship and should be rejected—it is, in other words, idolatry. Tulsidas[2] who worshipped an idol in the presence of which he felt a thrill running through his limbs and became absorbed in the vision of God, of Rama, was pure in his idol-worship and, therefore, deserves to be revered and his example is worthy of being followed.

Superstition in every form is idolatry, that is, idol-worship which deserves to be condemned. Those who believe in any tradition as sacred are idol-worshippers of this kind, and in respect of them I am an idol-breaker. No one can convince me, with the help of quotations from Shastras, that untruth is truth, cruelty is kindness and hatred is love. In that sense I am an idol-breaker. I am an idol-breaker because no one can, by quoting ambiguous or interpolated stanzas or by holding out threats, persuade me to shun or slight the *Antyajas* or to regard them as untoucha-bles. I can see the wrong even of my parents as wrong and, therefore, despite my great love for my country, I can

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had requested Gandhiji to explain his meaning for the benefit of persons like himself who had lost faith in idol-worship and yet respected it in some of its forms.

[2] A sixteenth-century Hindi poet, author of the *Ramacharitamanasa* (*Ramayana*)

see and publicly expose its evils, and hence, I am an idol-breaker. But generally I feel a very high and quite spontaneous veneration for the Vedas and other holy books; I can see God even in a piece of stone and, therefore, I instinctively bow my head before statues of saints; for this reason I regard myself as an idol-worshipper.

Thus, it is the emotions in the heart which are good or bad rather than outward actions. Every action is to be judged by the emotion of the person acting. Touching one's mother with an impure emotion will send the son to hell, but touching the same mother with a pure emotion will take him to heaven. A wound inflicted with a knife through hatred will take the victim's life; a cut made with the same knife through love will save life. A cat's teeth which protect her kittens are fatal to a mouse.

There is nothing obnoxious in idol-worship as such; it is worship without understanding which is so.

DUTY OF PETLAD SATYAGRAHIS

When the struggle of Petlad satyagrahis ended happily, I was on tour and did not know about the result. Now I hear that some of the satyagrahis repudiate the resolution which was adopted by the leaders. If this is so, it is a matter for regret. The most important virtue of a soldier is that he should accept everything which the leader does even if his action is wrong, so long as he is acting in good faith. They have a right to remove him or repudiate his action only when it can be positively asserted that he has proved himself a traitor. If this rule is not observed, the nation's capacity for collective action will not last. Not only that, but the nation will cease to be a nation. In this particular incident, however, I see no error on the part of the leaders. The satyagraha was started not for the sake of monetary concessions but for a principle. Satyagraha can never be merely for monetary gain. There is always some principle behind it and, therefore, it is of universal benefit. I have before me the resolution concerning the Petlad satyagraha. From it I see that, according to the people's belief, the Revision Settlement was not lawful and their demand was merely that the Government of the Gaekwar should appoint a committee of officials to examine it. The people scored a victory the moment such a committee was appointed. That victory was even celebrated. There is

nothing to be said from the point of view of principle against the final decision which has now been announced. The Dewan Saheb was courteous enough to invite the representatives, and he announced his decision after apprising them of it. One does not see much monetary gain in that decision. It would have been more welcome if it had contained such benefit. But the principle having been safeguarded, one cannot continue to fight merely for monetary gain.The satyagraha resolution contained no demand for monetary benefit. The demand was only for justice. Hence the satyagrahis have no ground for repudiating the resolution adopted by their representatives. I hope, therefore, that those who have taken the wrong step of rejecting that resolution will realize their error and correct it.

A TEACHER'S SPINNING

Shri Zaverbhai, a teacher at the Rashtriya Kumar Mandir of Varad writes :[1]

I congratulate Shri Zaverbhai on showing so much enthusiasm. Let other teachers follow his example. I feel like making one suggestion to Shri Zaverbhai. Three lakh yards of yarn weighing 18 seers means yarn of six counts. The cotton growing in Bardoli is usually good. Moreover, if the cotton is hand-picked and hand-carded, one can easily spin from it yarn of 20 counts. It may be true that more care is required in spinning yarn of 20 counts and, therefore, relatively more time will be needed to produce a given number of yards of such yarn. It does not matter if more time is required; there will be economy of cotton in spinning 20-count yarn. Moreover, we in Gujarat have to start spinning fine yarn. We can expect those who spin for love and with devotion to take the lead in producing such yarn. We can now find a number of men and women in Gujarat who are enthusiastic spinners like Zaverbhai. I suggest to them that they should spin fine yarn. If they wish to wear coarse khadi, they may certainly buy and wear such khadi and give away the fine yarn spun by them so that it may meet the needs of men and women who love to wear fine khadi. I believe the Khadi Association can easily arrange to give coarse khadi in return for fine yarn which can be woven into khadi. If this is done, the middle-class people who spin fine yarn and

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that he himself had, in the course of four months, picked 7 maunds of cotton, carded it and made slivers from it; that he had spun 18 seers of yarn (measuring 3 lakh yards) and intended to give all his spare time to spinning in the current month.

are content with coarse khadi will help much in the production of fine khadi in Gujarat itself.

AN OLD WOMAN'S TESTIMONIAL

I give an extract from a letter[1] I have received from the khadi centre at Amreli :

Such remarks are made not by one old woman but by many. I have heard many old women say that the spinning-wheel pro- vides them much-needed relief. Many widows have averred that it is their only support. It is the refuge of the down-trodden. There is a friend who, whenever he is angry, seeks out the spinning-wheel and its soothing movement brings peace to his soul. It is but natural that everyone may not have this experience. "As one's faith, so one's experience."

HOW KHADI MAY SPREAD

Nellore is a part of the Tamil-Telugu region. A correspondent from there writes to say :[2]

Even in parts where agriculture is a profitable occupation, people get enough spare time for spinning. They are able to do plenty of spinning from March to October, that is, for eight months, and earn at the rate of Rs. 5 a month. It is unfortunate that the women who spin wear foreign cloth, but, this will end only when the so-called cultured classes see dignity in wearing khadi, so that our ignorant country folk in the villages, who generally follow the example of city people, will also come to see dignity in cloth made out of hand-spun yarn. In fact, it is not in all regions that the women who spin behave in this way. In some villages which I visited, among the women who did spinning, I did not see any wearing cloth other than what was woven from yarn spun by themselves. What the correspondent has described happens in places where people have more money than they know what to do with.

Another thing worth noting is that where the women who spin take real interest in their work, they themselves attend carefully to the preparation of slivers. We can see from the correspondent's account that they engage a carder to work in their homes and get merely

[1] Not translated here. It stated that on the day of reporting there was a huge crowd to buy slivers at cheap prices. Among them was an old woman of 60 who was especially happy because she could now work and not be dependent on others.

[2] The letter is not translated here.

carding done by him; they watch the work and give directions so that the carding is done to their satisfaction. Afterwards, they find some time and themselves make the slivers. To have good slivers, it is certainly essential that the cotton should have been properly carded but it is also necessary that the rolling of slivers should be done with equal care. If in making a sliver the fibre is merely rolled into a cylindrical shape anyhow, even well-carded cotton will be wasted.

If cotton is spread out evenly on a hollow board and, with a thin stick placed over it, rolled with one's palm five or six times, the fibres get stretched out properly and form a roll to make a fine sliver. Only the person who spins with such a sliver knows the pleasure that spinning gives. If one or two more turns are given with the palm, the result will be still better. On the contrary, if only one or two turns are given, the sliver so made will not yield a well-twisted and even thread in spinning. In such slivers the fibres just stick together somehow and the thread, therefore, can never be even. The women in the region near the Nellore taluk probably know this and, therefore, do not entrust the rolling of slivers to the carders. If the carding is not well done, the defect is immediately noticed and can be remedied. On the other hand, if the slivers are made carelessly, it is not possible afterwards to improve their quality.

I hope that those who love spinning will keep in mind the points made here.

KANCHANLAL MOTILAL BARFIWALA

The person bearing this name is a resident of Surat. He is aged about 21 years. His parents do not know his whereabouts since *Ashadha Sud* 3, Samvat 1980[1]. He used to wear khadi and likes doing public service. He wears glasses. He was a *Navajivan* reader. His relatives do not know why he left home and where he has gone. If he happens to see this copy of *Navajivan*, I request him to get in touch immediately with his elders and relieve their anxiety. These days some young men seem to think it a great virtue to disappear without informing anyone. They do not, however, realize what suffering they cause to their relations. If any reader comes to know the whereabouts of this man, I request him to communicate the same to Kanchanlal's parents. Their address in Surat is Rani Talao.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-5-1925

[1] July 5, 1924

159. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

FARIDPUR,
Sunday, Vaisakha Shukla 10 [*May 3, 1925*]

BHAISHRI BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. I don't think the factory can be run with Rs. 5,000. No matter how much more capital is invested to run it, I think it is futile to hope for immediate returns. No person who offers any money should do so in the hope of any profit. No one who is not aware of all the facts about khadi and about the processing of yarn can, I think, be of any use. Whatever you do, please bear in mind all these factors. I suggest that on this matter we consult Bhai Vitthaldas Jerajani who runs the store in Bombay.

I too shall write to Mahomed Ali[1] to spare a Muslim [worker]. Collecting free cotton has come to be regarded as a means of making khadi cheaper. This experiment is being tried in Gujarat. I shall be in Bengal at least for this week. I have with me Mahadev[2] and Krishnadas[3].

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

My address in Bengal : 148 Russa Road, Calcutta.

From a photostat of the Hindi original : G.N. 2356

[1] 1878-1931; Journalist and politician; led the Khilafat delegation to England in 1920; President, Indian National Congress, Cocanada, 1923

[2] Mahadev Desai (1892-1943); lawyer, journalist and author; Gandhiji's private secretary and biographer

[3] Author of *Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi*

160. REPLY TO CIVIC ADDRESSES, FARIDPUR[1]

May 3, 1925

In course of his reply Mahatma Gandhi said that he was a lover of Municipal life. He esteemed it a great privilege whenever he was associated with anybody in Municipal service, which was really the foundation for a larger political life after which they were all hankering. But unless the foundation was truly laid, there was no such thing as a larger life. Municipal life was the life of service. They had to look after the health of the citizens. They had to look after water supply which was a great thing in Bengal, especially in East Bengal.

As regards the eradication of malaria referred to in the address . . . he knew it required a remedy, but it was impossible for him, a frail imperfect human being, to prescribe a ready cure. He was not a medical man who had got so many drugs in his pocket, one of which he would offer as a remedy for all ills of life. He knew that the remedy lay through municipal service; it was really an impossible thing for them to commence at the top; they must begin at the bottom and that was what he was talking about, in season and out of season, about the spinning-wheel. It was reducing their towns to the simplicity of the village. And this message of the spinning-wheel was that they, the people of the city, who were drawing their sustenance from villages, should make some little return to the villages for the great thing they were doing for them. He hoped they would take care of spinning-wheel which, as he had said, was the foundation of their larger political life. He had not the slightest doubt that the larger life would take care of itself and that swaraj, which was the dream of his life, was not going to be attained unless they looked after these simple little things. He hoped the mofussil councillors would introduce spinning in municipal schools and start spinning companies. They could make khaddar dress compulsory.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 4-5-1925

[1] Gandhiji and C. R. Das were presented with addresses at a meeting of the Municipal Corporation, Faridpur, held in front of the Town Hall. C. R. Das requested Gandhiji to reply on his behalf also.

161. SPEECH AT BENGAL PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE, FARIDPUR

May 3, 1925

PRESIDENT AND FRIENDS,

I am supposed to be speaking to you to return thanks for the very kind and generous words spoken about me by the Chairman of the Reception Committee and our worthy President. At the outset I want to tender my congratulations to the Subjects Committee on having finished its deliberations in perfect harmony. It is an open secret—and latterly we have ceased to have any secrets whatsoever in connection with our politics and, therefore, we have been welcoming, and even inviting, detectives so as to enable them to detect flaws in our policy, detect flaws in our doings and in everything that we may do in connection with the national policy and even outside the national policy. But still, as I said, it is an open secret that there were some disputes or differences or dissensions in connection with the resolutions that will be brought before this House this afternoon. But all's well that ends well. I do not recall any Subjects Committee in which there have not been little differences or little jars. I suppose, they will abide with us to the end of time whether they are in India or elsewhere. European Cabinets have their secrets, but if we are permitted to pry into their secrets and into the secrets of their Subjects Committees, I suppose, we would have about the same kind of reports as reports are to be found in connection with our dissensions and disputes. Let us not, therefore, exaggerate those dissensions and differences, but let us treasure the thought that, after all, in the end we can unite and we can unite to a purpose. ("Hear, hear".)

I read the address of Deshbandhu Das and I have had the privilege and pleasure of reading the English translation. I do not know which is the original, whether Bengali or the English translation, because Bengali scholars tell me that the Bengali version reads as sweet and as eloquent as the English version, but, in any case, I had the pleasure and privilege of having an advanced copy of the English address when I was in Calcutta with a brief, little, loving, sweet note from Deshbandhu that, if I could spare a few minutes, I should read that address. Well, I read from the start to the finish and I was wondering whether he had pilfered every sentiment from me. (Laughter.) But I must confess to you that I saw that the language was

not mine. The language was that of a scholar and not of a rustic who delights in calling himself a spinner, a scavenger, a weaver, a farmer and now even a *Namasudra*. (Laughter.) And so I saw that the language was not mine, but the thoughts seemed to have been pilfered and so immediately I said to myself, if he would ask me to subscribe to it, I would have no hesitation in doing so without perhaps altering a single word or a single phrase. But, perhaps, some of you will consider that this is no recommendation whatever for that address, but on the contrary that is the surest guarantee that the address is as dull as ditch water. Well, I assure you that it is not as dull as ditch water. And why do I want to give you that assurance? You have listened to it. You read it. And when a thing is not dull in reading, you may depend upon it.

I want to look not at phraseology. I do not want to look at the language. I only want to look at the thoughts that under lie it and what he has said to us in that address. If we are true to ourselves, if we are true to the nation, if we are true to the policy that was enunciated for the first time in Calcutta in 1920 with all the great deliberation that we could bring to bear upon that policy, if we are to be true to that, then, there is absolutely nothing in that address to cavil at. And that address is a reenunciation and an emphatic and unequivocal re-enunciation of the policy that was laid down for the first time in the history of the Congress in 1920. When I say laid down for the first time in the history of the Congress, it is not that the Congress ever believed in a policy of violence, nor that the Congress ever believed that we should follow anything but legitimate methods, but that the Congress never made that declaration. But in 1920 we chose deliberately to tell the world that we intended to attain that goal of swaraj, that in order to attain that goal we intended to follow a means that was absolutely peaceful and legitimate. And as I have translated these two phrases or these two words or paraphrases, "non-violent and truthful" means, do you abide by that interpretation or that paraphrase or these two words? And during the four or five years that have intervened, Deshbandhu has been one of those who have had a part in the shaping of the national policy in those terms—and you have no right to expect anything else from him and you have no right to expect anything more from him today. Anything more I say, because some of us like pepper and salt eschewed from our programme for the time being, at any rate. We have considered it, everyone of the leaders has considered it, that it is not possible for us to attain our freedom with pepper and salt or with fire and brimstone. We shall be able to attain

our national regeneration—shall we say, national salvation—only by means that are absolutely non-violent and truthful; not that it need be the religion of any single one of us—it is sufficient if it is our policy, it is sufficient if we accept it from motives of expediency and no other or no higher motive.

We have problems in India to deal with which no other nation on the earth has. We have, if we are Hindus, to deal with our Muslim countrymen, with our Christian countrymen, with our Zoroastrian countrymen, with the Sikhs and so many sections and sub-sections of Hindus, which dignify themselves by a name which does not belong to Hinduism. How are we to achieve the unity of purpose, the unity of action between the diverse elements except by means which are not open to any question, namely, non-violence and truthfulness? We will not be able to deal with our Muslim countrymen or with our Hindu countrymen on any other terms. And then we have our provincialism. Bengal thinks that she must rule the whole of India and that the whole of India is to be merged in that little province called Bengal (Laughter), and Gujarat probably thinks likewise. Gujarat, which is merely a drop in the ocean compared to Bengal, thinks it must rule the whole of India and India should be merged in Gujarat. Then take the brave Mahrattas with their recent traditions. Why should they not think that they must shape the destiny and policy of India? The Muslim with his still later traditions thinks that he must establish or re-establish a Muslim empire. From these diverse elements and provincialism there is no escape for us except through non-violent and truthful means because, otherwise, we are sitting on a mine which is likely to explode at any moment. The slightest trace of dirt in us is likely to make us perish and that is why I have insisted in season and out of season upon a policy not of religion but a policy of non-violence and truthfulness. You may do anything you like with your country after you have attained your goal.

You may resort to any means that you consider legitimate or proper for the vindication of your country's honour, but for me I make no secret. It is the first and the last. It is my religion. It is the breath of my nostrils—non-violence and truthfulness, and I wish, I could infect every young man in this hall with that zeal and with that devotion for this non-violence and truthfulness.

I know many a Bengali youth. I know that he has got courage which is matchless; I know he is eager to die for the freedom of his

country as he is today living for the country. I claim, if it is not impertinence on my part, that I have also the ability to die for the country as I am today living for the country. But, as I have said, it is for me a living death. Death on the gallows has absolutely no terror for me. I believe I have got the capacity for dying on the gallows with a smile on my lips if I am innocent. If my hands and my heart are as white as snow, then death has no terror for me. Let it be so with every young man in Bengal. And Deshbandhu has re-enunciated and re-stated that policy for you. Did he not say the same thing in his beautiful address[1] at Gaya? I have not read that address even now, but I heard the echoes of that address delivered to me at the Yeravda Jail.[2] I did not pilfer that news. I may tell you I carried out every instruction of the Jailor's, but the Jailor and visitors sometimes told me what was passing outside the walls of that prison and I came to know in ordinary course that Deshbandhu had enunciated in emphatic terms the policy of non-violence and the policy of truthfulness. He thinks likewise for you, for me, for himself and for the whole of the country. You know how he has been assailed. You know how many detractors he has, not merely amongst Europeans but amongst our own countrymen. He has detractors in his own camp. What is he to do? Is he to sit on the fence? Yes, he might have sat on the fence if he had not his country's interest in all his heart—if he did not dream about the deliverance of his country, and if he was not prepared to say in most loving manner : I cannot possibly wish you, Mahatma Gandhi, a long life because you are destined to die the moment we have achieved swaraj, because you are living for swaraj and swaraj alone and as I want my swaraj for India today, I cannot pray to God that Mahatma Gandhi may live long lest my swaraj be delayed. I treasure that thought and in that thought, although humorously uttered, is the highest compliment that he is capable of paying me or you are capable of paying me because it is right.

I am as impatient as any single one of you to attain swaraj. But I understand our functions, know what we have got to do. If we could get swaraj by a doze of intoxicating medicines, I would today hurl defiance at the great British throne and say out with you I want my swaraj today. But I cannot do that today. I cannot hurl that defiance. I admit my incapacity. I admit the incapacity of my country today. Yes,

[1] At the Congress session in 1922

[2] During 1922-24

I can certainly take off a few Englishmen's heads as anyone can. It does not require strong arms. It requires a strong heart. A little bit of revolver can be manipulated by me just as [by] any one of you. But what is the use of my taking off the head of Lord Reading or Lord Lytton or of any Englishman? But I cannot possibly put that head on a charger and say that here is the deliverance of my country. Deliverance of the country requires a sterner stuff. We have got to evolve not merely the capacity for dying. We have got to evolve not merely the capacity for killing, but, as Dr. Besant[1] once said, it required some amount of courage, even to live in the face of odium, censure, neglect and boycott—even from those whom you have treasured as nearest and dearest to you. And she was right. I say that every moment of my life it requires some degree of courage even to live in the midst of such storms and strife.

But how, then, are we to attain freedom of our country? Not certainly by killing, not certainly at the present moment even by dying, but by plodding, and that is the reason why I have humbly ventured to place before you these three things : Hindu-Muslim unity, removal of untouchability and the spinning-wheel. But the Hindu-Muslim unity cannot occupy a young man's whole twenty-four hours. It is our creed. Just as a Mussalman has said his *kalma* it is finished and then he has got to live up to the implication of the *kalma*, just as I have recited a *gayatri*[2], it is finished with me and I need not be reciting it fifty million times during the day, but I must live up to it—so this is but a creed—of Hindu-Muslim unity, removal of untouchability. But every one of us can put our hands to something tangible, to something feasible. Everyone of us can put our hands to the beautiful spinning-wheel and with every yard of yarn that you spin, you spin every yard of the destiny of India. That is the finest revolution that I know for India. I know that some of you laugh—the laugh of incredulity. Some of you will consider—here is an idiot speaking to us in season and out of season about the spinning-wheel.

[1] Annie Besant (1847-1933); British theosophist, orator and writer; founded the Theosophical Society in 1907; established the Indian Home Rule League in 1916; presided over the Indian National Congress in 1917; edited a daily, *New India*, and a weekly, *The Commonweal*; author of *The Religious Problem in India* and other books

[2] Vedic prayer to Sun-god

But I promise, I prophesy that a day is to dawn, and is not very far, when nobody will call me an idiot. But the finest testimony that will be given to me will be that I revived the cult of charkha—that Gandhi gave the simple message of the rustic when he asked us to spin—that he spoke in terms of swaraj for the masses and millions of his down-trodden countrymen when he delivered the message of charkha. I have no misgiving about the future of my career. My career is ensured. My future is ensured so long as I swear by the charkha and I promise to you that [even if] everyone of the audience here, including Deshbandhu Das, says : "Gandhi is wrong; charkha is nothing, it is an idiotic thing in this age of machinery and speed", I will still say the same thing up to the very last breath of my life:"Give me the spinning-wheel and I will spin swaraj for India."You will not get swaraj for India on any other terms. We must become a nation of workers and not a nation of talkers or idlers. We are by nature not idle but, by force of circumstances, millions of our countrymen have to live in enforced idleness. You do not know the idle masses as I do. I have lived in the midst of the 17 lakhs of people of Champaran for six months or more, and I have seen them hovering round me from day to day without doing anything whatsoever. They were satisfied to draw a little of warmth from one whom they considered to be their true servant, but they would not work. But I had not, at that time, this spinning-wheel or I would have placed it before them. They were not famishing, not starving, but they had forgotten the use of their limbs. They would scratch a little bit of earth, grow indigo, reap corn, but would not spin. They had no industry in their homes and, having forgotten it for years, they now consider it perfectly useless. That is why I call it enforced idleness. Our limbs were cut off by the East India Company—that is one of the blackest crimes that I have charged the British Rule with and that is why I have said that, not until I see a change of heart amongst the Englishmen, and not until they feel in terms of the masses of India and say:"Yes, we repent, we ought to return to India what we have taken from her"—for me there is no hand extended; to them I say, "I cannot clasp your hand if you do not call me, 'my dear brother'."I cannot do that unless he sympathzes with the masses of India. He flings alittle bit of sympathy in the face of the masses from time to time. It is not enough for me. I

want him to read the hearts of the masses and understand their economy, not economics borrowed from Europe, no matter how distinguished a personage he may be. He must think in terms of the masses and, the moment the Englishman begins to think in terms of the masses, you will find me fall prostrate at his feet, because I know his virtues, his capacities. But I cannot do so unless he develops along right lines. That being so, unless he does so, what is the use of my speaking to the Englishman; for I charge him with a black crime in that he has robbed me of the spinning-wheel. But why should I charge him when you, my countrymen, refuse to spin for half an hour, when you send messages or when you write sometimes that 'this fool of a Gandhi has imposed this cursed franchise on us; let us get rid of it as he has imposed this cursed burden upon us.' But does he ask you to do something marvellous, something beyond your capacity when he asks, in the name of God, for the sake of the country, to spin if it is only for half an hour? Does he ask you to do something which you are incapable of doing when he asks you to be clad from top to toe in hand-spun and hand-woven cloth? What shall I say to you, what shall I do with you or how shall I attain my swaraj if you cannot do this little practical thing? They accuse you, they accuse the Bengalis, of want of practicability and in some respects they are right. We want everything, but without having to work for it sufficiently. If we speak about the thing sufficiently, if we pass resolutions, but immediately, when it comes to actual work, we shirk it, remember those who shirk work for the sake of the nation shall have no hand in shaping the destiny of India, shall have no hand in attaining swaraj for India. I ask you, therefore, to retain this "Yarn Franchise". Make it still more restrictive. If it is to be restricted, make it obligatory on every man and woman who wants to serve India through the Congress, a living organization, make it obligatory upon every man and woman, upon every girl and boy, to spin for at least half an hour and to wear khaddar, not only on ceremonial occasions, not for Congress work, but for all work. In your home also, you will wear nothing but khaddar. You will go stark naked rather than that you should wear anything that is not hand-spun by your sister and hand-woven by your brother in your home and not in the factory. That is the message of the spinning-wheel. That is the simple little demand I make of

every man and woman who loves India and who wants freedom of India. Would you be surprised if I tell you that, if you want to have the discharge of those prisoners who are cooped within the walls of the Mandalay Prison, if you want the release of Subhash Chandra Bose[1] and others you must spin. Without work it is impossible. If you want him and his fellow-prisoners to be discharged with honour and with dignity, then I say, spin.

Promise me that every Bengali man and woman will henceforth wear khaddar and nothing but khaddar, that every man and woman will go to the charkha with the same delight that he goes to his meal or with the same delight of a young lover who goes to his sweetheart. Then I promise deliverance of those young men in no time.

You will find that this incredibly simple thing will secure their deliverance, because that will be a sign of your determination to work for India without expecting any remuneration; because I have asked only for half an hour's free labour for the sake of India. It is not a mighty thing that I ask of you. But [it is] because you are of little faith, because you have no faith in your masses, because you have no faith in yourselves, because you have no faith in your country, that you decline to spin and still feel that Deshbandhu would secure the key of that prison, break their fetters and unlock those gates. It is impossible for him to do so.

Some of you consider that he is carrying on negotiations with the Government in secret. He has no secrecy whatsoever, so far as I know. Secrecy is prohibited in Congress politics. When somebody asked him what is at the back of all this, he said, "There is as much in the back of it as in the front". (Laughter.) Lord Birkenhead has sent no secret message to him. He is not in secret negotiations with him. All that he had got to say, you will find it in his beautiful address. You will find it in his writings and speeches. You will find it in his life when he is closeted in his own inner chamber or when he is in this big *pandal*. If you scratch him, I know you will find the same man wanting deliverance for the country. That is the link that binds me to

[1] 1897-1945; politician and nationalist; President, All-India Trade Union Congress, 1929-31; President, India National Congress, 1938, 1939; author of *The Indian Struggle*, founder of the Indian National Army

him, that is the link that should bind the audience to him. That is the link which should bind you to him.

You may not be convinced with our reasons. You may say : "Our heart is satisfied that you are on the right track. We subscribe to your advice so long as we hold you to be our ideal." That is the way for you. That is the way I would like you to treat those whom you love. You [are] like sepoys and soldiers, it is not for you to reason why after you have chosen your leader. If you have not made your choice and are called upon to make your choice, exercise your reason to its utmost. Scan the would be candidate to leadership from top to toe. But after having made your choice and after having garlanded, like Sita, your chosen person, never flinch and, like Sita, go throught the fire with him and all will be well with you. (Applause.)

The Searchlight, 8-5-1925

162. REMINISCENCES OF BENGAL

May 4, 1925

I am writing these reminiscences on Monday after returning from Faridpur. I write sitting on the covered terrace of the mansion formerly belonging to Deshbandhu Das. I have been in Bengal for four days but have still not recovered from the shock I felt when I first entered this mansion. I knew that the Deshbandhu had made over this building for public purposes. He had debts, I knew, but I also knew that he could clear them by practising for less than a year and keep the mansion. But he did not at all want to practise, or, rather, he wanted to plead the cause of his country without demanding fees. He decided, therefore, to give away this palatial building and made over its control to trustees. He wanted, however, that whenever I travelled I should stay while in Calcutta in that old building. And so I am lodged here.

But it is one thing to know a thing and quite another to see it with one's own eyes. My heart wept when I entered the house, and my eyes were moist with tears. In the absence of its former master, and no more his property, the mansion seemed to me like a jail. I felt miserable in it, and I have still not got out of that feeling.

I know that this is ignorant attachment. By giving up his ownership of the house, Deshbandhu has in fact lightened his burden. What use had the Dases for a building in which they would lose their way? If they want, they can turn a hut into a royal palace. For both of them it was a willing sacrifice. Why feel sad about it? Well, this is being philosophical. If I did not have this gift I would feel impelled to start building a palace for myself straightway.

Is it easy to escape the consequence of the *atman* dwelling in a physical body? Do others in the world act as Das did? People in the world would welcome a palace if they can have it, whereas this man gave away one. All honour to him! The tears in my eyes spring from love. The shock I felt was also the result of love. But is there no selfishness in this? If I had no bond at all with Deshbandhu, if I had not known him reigning like a king in this building, I would have felt no shock. I have seen many palaces whose owners departed from this world itself, leaving palaces behind them, but I shed no tears when entering them. These tears, therefore, spring from selfishness too.

Chittaranjan Das has lost nothing by giving away the palatial bungalow. His services are the richer for this sacrifice.

The Bengalis are mad folk. If Das was mad, so is Prafulla Chandra Ray. He dances on the dais when addressing an audience. No one would believe that he is a learned man; he thumps his hands and stamps his feet. Whenever he likes he introduces English words and phrases in his Bengali. When speaking, he forgets himself. He is then totally absorbed in the flow of his thoughts and does not bother to know whether others laugh at him or what they think about him. We do not understand his greatness until we hear him speak, with our eyes fixed on his face. I remember that when I was staying with Gokhale[1] in Calcutta and Acharya Ray was his neighbour, the three of us went to the station one day. I had my third-class ticket with me, and they two had come to see me off. Anyone coming to see a third-class passenger off must be a beggar, people believe. But Gokhale's chubby face, his silken turban and silk-bordered dhoti were enough

[1] Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915); scholar, patriot and statesman; was associated with the Indian National Congress since its inception and presided over its Banaras session in 1905; founded Servants of India Society at Pooona, member of Indian Public Services Commission, 1912-15

for the station master. But who would let this skeleton of a young bachelor, wearing a soiled long shirt and as lean as a beggar, go in without a ticket? So far as I remember, he cheerfully stayed out. Criticizing my obstinacy when he saw me literally squeezed in my seat in the compartment, Gokhale went away and rejoined his comrade. Why does Acharya Ray reign supreme over the hearts of innumerable students? Because he is also a man of self-sacrifice. And now he has gone khadi-crazy. He did not feel the slightest embarrassment in asking a Bengali woman officer of the Education Department : "What good can you do unless you wear khadi?" If he did not say this, would anyone buy khadi manufactured by his beggars of Khulna?

The same night we left for Faridpur. Shri Shankerlal[1] had given Satish Babu[2] a rather alarming account of my health. There was nothing, therefore, he would not do to make me comfortable. He, too, belonged to the mad folks' league. He had looked into the minutest of details. In order that I might rest my back while sitting, a wooden support was kept ready wherever I sat. I could accept it because it was a simple and inexpensive thing. But when we reached the station, there was a first-class compartment for my companions and me. The Faridpur Reception Committee had also a hand in this arrangement. Only a few days ago a correspondent had asked me in a letter published in Young India whether I was a poor man or rich. It seemed as if Bengal had answered that question. I asked them if a second-class compartment was not good enough for my comfort, and why Bengal had arranged a first-class compartment for me. I was told in reply that they had paid for a second-class compartment and secured a first-class one. How could that reply satisfy me? According to my principle, we should not avail ourselves of a thing of which we do not approve even if it is offered gratis. If there should be anyone so foolish or mad as to offer me, free, a diamond necklace to wear, should I wear it? Are my companions, too, who serve me as secretaries and may even clean the lavatory, as weak as I so that for them also a first-class compartment should be provided at second-class fare? Moreover, this could not

[1] Shankerlal Ghelabhai Banker, a Congress worker and labour leader of Gujarat; Ghandhiji's associate for many years

[2] Satish Chandra Dasgupta, an associate of Acharya P. C. Ray, worked for Khadi Pratishtan; then Secretary, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee

have been managed without the Railway people obliging. Should such personal favours be accepted? I saw in this arrangement the madness or excess of love. I must find a solution to this problem. God's will be done. But, then, this madness is not confined to one class of people. We started for Faridpur at night and I had thought that I would get plenty of rest on the way and would be able to make up fully for the lost hours of sleep. But that was not to be. I had great difficulty in getting sleep, thanks to cries of "*alo, alo*" and other noises. The train also stopped at almost every station. At every station there were crowds and people insisted on having *darshan*. But I had resolved never to give *darshan* during night-time. So I kept lying down. But that did not help. My companions, too, tried hard to explain the position to the people, but the more they explained the more did the crowds get excited. There were louder and still louder shouts of "*Vandemataram, Mahatma Gandhi ki jai, alo, alo*". *Alo* means light. The train lights had been switched off. The people wanted them to be switched on so that they could at least see me sleeping. This was the state of affairs at almost every station up to Faridpur. All the time I kept earnestly praying to God to save me from such love! When we arrived at Faridpur, there was a huge crowd, of course, but the arrangements on the whole were good. Babu Surendra Biswas, the chairman of the Reception Com-mittee, had instructed the people in advance not to shout or rush towards me. The car, moreover, was kept right at the spot where I was to alight, so that we entered the city without harassment. EXHIBITION

Before being taken to the place where I was to stay, I had to declare an exhibition open. They had accepted for it varieties of seeds and other such things supplied by the Government Agriculture Depar-tment, but the main sections related to khadi. Biswas Babu had decided not to permit the display of any specimen of cloth not manufactured from hand-spun, yarn, wool or silk. This helped the khadi section very much; it became the centre of interest and the visitors had no chance to compare it with mill-cloth. There were, among the varieties of khadi, a great many specimens of fine cloth too. There was also a large quantity of fine yarn. There were even two persons sitting on a chair and spinning, neither of whom had to turn aside for winding the yarn. The yarn was being wound as it was spun. No doubt that type of the spinning-wheel did not produce more yarn at a faster rate, but there was one operation less to attend to and, as the

wheel was being turned by foot, both hands remained free.

Looms had been received as exhibits from the Government factory at Serampur, and these also were accepted on condition that only hand-spun yarn must be used for both warp and woof. It was learnt on inquiry that students were now taught hand-spinning too in that factory. There were many *fataka* looms, too, on which they used only hand-spun yarn as warp. Even jute and wool were spun by hand in this section.

The processes relating to the tanning and dyeing of hides were also being demonstrated in the exhibition.

There were spinning competitions, and since many men and women had taken part in them the two sections were kept separate. Almost all of them drew fine yarn. All this created the impression on my mind that, if Bengal took up this work enthusiastically, it would come to occupy the first place in regard to khadi. I found very few people in Bengal who insisted on not wearing khadi. There is plenty of artistic sense, and much skill in spinning too. Many middle-class women spin fine yarn and with sincere devotion. The wife of the chairman of the Reception committee, in whose house I was put up, has spun a large quantity for her family. She grows the dev variety of cotton on her small farm and spins it uncarded. This good lady made slivers for me with her own hands. They were very good indeed. She picks cotton from the plants as she needs it and arranges it properly to turn it into slivers. In a matter of minutes a whole heap of slivers is ready. A good many Swarajists in Bengal seem to have taken up spinning. Biswas Babu himself is a Swarajist. The chairman of one of the [Congress] committees in Calcutta is also a Swarajist. He had sent to me at a public meeting yarn spun by him. We saw many men in Faridpur clad exclusively in khadi. There was a separate meeting for women. At this meeting, too, one saw a relatively larger number of women, larger than in similar meetings in Gujarat, dressed in khadi. I observed that the Bengali women did not have pleats in their saris, and, therefore, did not require any great length in their saris. But this is not the explanation of there being a large number of women in khadi at the meeting. We can only say that women in this part are more intelligent. It is true, of course, that a number of men and women had put on khadi specially for this occasion.

I have given here only the impression produced on me in Faridpur. As my present tour is connected solely with the khadi

movement, I have still many more experiences in store for me. The reader will know afterwards what the sum total of these experiences comes to. As there is no entrance fee for the exhibition, thousands of people have taken advantage of it. On the next day, before I left Faridpur, prizes were awarded to persons who had demonstrated the different processes relating to khadi. The recipients of medals and prizes probably included equal numbers of men and of women. Among those who received medals three were Muslims. There were graded medals and prizes for the best carders, best sliver-makers, best spinners and best weavers.

AT THE CONFERENCE[1]

I found Deshbandhu's physical condition to be very bad. His voice has lost its strength. There is extreme weakness. In fact, he has not recovered well enough to be fit to undertake such exertions. Just now, the doctors have advised him to go to Darjeeling or some place in Europe to recuperate his strength. But he intends to do this only as a last resort.

A khadi marquee was specially erected for the Conference. It displayed the utmost simplicity. Seating arrangements were made on the ground. Not a chair was to be seen. The work of erecting the marquee was entrusted only to a tent-maker. He said he had made it exclusively of pure khadi, but all of us have serious doubts whether the cloth used was really khadi. I am trying to ascertain the truth. The important thing, however, is that the organizers' intention was to have a khadi marquee and they believed that the one which was erected was of khadi.

Deshbandhu's speech was short and interesting. Every sentence breathed the spirit of non-violence. He stated clearly in his speech that India's salvation could come only through a non-violent struggle. If anyone asked me to put my signature to it, I would hardly find it necessary to alter a word or phrase.

It was but natural that the resolutions should be in tune with such a speech. There was, therefore, a good deal of heat in the Subjects Committee. Matters reached a stage when Deshbandhu felt it necessary to offer to resign, but ultimately his influence carried the day and the important resolutions of the Conference were passed without unpleasantness.

[1] Bengal Provincial Agricultural Conference

Muslim friends had arranged a separate meeting[1] to which we both were invited. Accordingly, Deshbandhu, his wife Vasantidevi and I went to it. There is some estrangement [between Hindus and Muslims] in Faridpur. I advised that the matter should be settled through arbitration and suggested that the Muslims should participate in the Conference. As a result, about a hundred of them attended on Sunday evening.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-5-1925

163. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

CALCUTTA,
Monday [*May 4, 1925*][2]

REVERED ANNASYABEHN,

I am quite well. Satis Babu[3] has made more than adequate arrangements and spent a lot of money. It is all because of Bhai Shankerlal's letter. I wish he had not written so elaborately. There have to be limits to the arrangements one gets up. But this I write only to tell you that I am being fully looked after. The weather is excellent. There is no sickness. I wish you to go to Nainital. It will be good if Bhai Shankerlal can also go there or somewhere else.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I returned from Faridpur today.

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 11545

[1] On May 3, 1925
[2] From the postmark. May 4 in 1925 was a Monday.
[3] Satis Chandra Das Gupta of Khadi Prathisthan, Sodepur

164. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Vaishakh Sud 11 [*May 4, 1925*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I think you need a change of air if only for a short time. There is the problem of Harikishen. But if you can manage, you must steel your heart and go at least for a week, even if it is only to Matheran. I am being looked after very well here. Do not worry at all. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
93 BAZAR GATE STREET
FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

165. LETTER TO KHWAJA ABDUL MAJID

148 RUSSA ROAD, CALCUTTA,
May 5, 1925

DEAR KHWAJA SAHEB,

I wrote to you some time ago to ask you whether you had the money that I was to collect and what decision had ultimately been arrived at. I have to enquire this of you again. I understand that the money has been paid over at Hakimji's. Pray remember me to Khurshed Begum.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

KHWAJA SAHEB ABDUL MAJID
NATIONAL MUSLIM UNIVERSITY
ALIGARH

From the original: A. M. Khwaja Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] From the postmark. *Vaishakh Sud 11* corresponded to this date in 1925.

166. SPEECH AT PRABARTAK ASHRAM, CHANDERNAGORE

May 5, 1925

The Mahatma said that he had long been entertaining the wish to come to the Ashram and he was glad that his wish was at last fulfiled. He had heard from Nirmal Babu a good deal about the inner life and history of the Sangha and expressed how profoundly he appreciated its high ideal and mission. He was told that the Sangha was founded on spiritual life. The members followed the inner knowledge and institution and lived the integral ideal of the ancient, *sanatan* dharma. Their principle was not merely a philosophy of *tyaga* or rejection, but total acceptance of life for the fulfilment of God's expression. That was the Vedic dharma and its foundation was *atma-darshan* or spiritual self-realization. It was not perfectly true to say that his own ideal of life was quite different—nay, largely political. Whatever he did, his ideal was *paramartha* or "selflessenss of the highest self" as he would say, and he was strictly a *mumukshu* or *moksharthi,* in the sense that he wanted his salvation through the service and salvation of the nation and humanity. Here he was really spiritual, for his motive was self-consecration and his whole life and work was dedicated entirely to the feet of Sri Krishna and Bharat Mata. Therefore, gently insisted the Mahatma that his ideal was nowhere essentially different from that of the "Prabartak Sangha". Next, he dwelt on the excellent system of spiritual education imparted at the Ashram and he was glad that their motto was *swavalamban* or practical self-help. Spirituality without economic foundation, as he believed, was a broken reed, and he congratulated the Sangha in having achieved such a unique harmony between spiritual life and economic *tapasya*.

Afterwards he dwelt on khadi and charkha and said he would be still more glad, when he would find that the Sangha had totally rejected mixed yarn. As now he would tell people wherever he went, to go to the Prabartak Ashram at Chandernagore, to see the excellent work there in respect of spiritual culture, exemplary character-building—so also he longed to say that the Sangha was doing pure khadi work alone as an ideal institution.

He explained further how his heart throbbed for the crores of India's sons and daughters who could not get even a mouthful meal every day and were plunged in abject misery. For these crores of India's poverty-ridden souls and for nationwide unity did he preach his triple gospel of khaddar, Hindu-Muslim unity and removal of

untouchability. It was for him his practical Vedanta, for he believed in the one self in all and would harm none for his life, which was the true meaning of his ideal of non-violence. He exhorted the audience to spin, weave and wear khaddar as the only means revealed to him, for securing swaraj for the millions of India.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 8-5-1925

167. SPEECH AT ASHTANGA AYURVEDA VIDYALAYA

CALCUTTA,
May 6, 1925

FRIENDS,

It was not without greatest hesitation that I accepted the invitation to lay the foundation-stone of this great institution. You know that some years ago I performed the opening ceremony of the Tibbia College[1] whose presiding deity was my esteemed friend and brother, Hakim Ajmal Khan[2] . Even then it was not without hesitation that I performed the ceremony. I could not resist the invitation that was given to me by a bosom friend and little could I resist a similar invitation coming again from a bosom friend. But I would be untrue to myself and untrue to those assembled if I did not express my deepest thoughts about medicine and particularly about Ayurvedic and Unani medicines and the profession in general. It was in 1908[3] that, for the first time, I reduced to writing my views about medicines and the medical profession, and I am not able, looking at it after so many years, to alter a single word of what I have said there. No doubt what I wrote in 1908 was compressed, it was a passing reference to a subject which was included among so many others which I had to deal within a mere booklet. Since then I have expanded the same thought, but I have not diminished the strength of the thought that I expressed in 1908. Every time I approach medical men and their medicines, I do so in fear and trembling, and it takes nothing away from my fear that I submitted to the living knife of a surgeon whom I only knew

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Opening of Tibbia College", 13-2-1921.

[2] 1865-1927; eminent Muslim physician and politician who took a leading part in the Khilafat movement; President, Indian National Congres, 1921

[3] Slip for 1909; for Gandhiji's observation on doctors and medicine in *Hind Swaraj* (1909)

perfunctorily in the Yeravda jail[1]. I had the fullest confidence in Col. Maddock[2] as a man and as a friend but I had not the fullest confidence in his ways and in the medicines that he prescribed. If you were to go to him today, he will issue a double certificate—one in my favour and the other against me. He will certify to you that to a certain extent I was a willing, obedient and a loyal patient, a more loyal patient he could not wish for. But he will also say and certify that I was one of the most difficult patients he had to deal with. He had to deal with my prohibitions. I will take this and I will not take that and my negations were far more than my ayes. And, therefore, he always came to me in des-pair whenever he felt that he wanted me to put a little more weight. It was with the greatest difficulty that he could persuade me to take so many of the medicines that he thought I should take and that I thought I ought not to take. (Laughter.) Well, there it is. I have merely given you a skeleton of my views about the profession, but perhaps you will better understand my views when I tell you that I belong to that noble, growing, but the still small school of thought which believes more in prevention than in cure, which believes in Nature doing things for herself even for suffering humanity if we would but let Nature take her course. I believe in that school of thought which considers that the less interference there is on the part of doctors, on the part of physicians and surgeons, the better it is for humanity and its morals. I belong to that school of thought among medical men who are fast coming to the conclusion that it is not their duty merely to subserve the needs of the body, but it is their bounden religious duty to consider the resident within that body, which is after all imperishable. And I belong to that school of thought among medical men who consider that they will do nothing in connection with that body if whatever they do is going to impair, in the slightest degree, the soul, the spirit within. And it grieves me so often when I find some of my best medical friends—and you will accept my word—but I assure you that it grieves me when they discuss with me the question whether there is such a thing as soul and when they tell me that, if there was a soul, it would not escape their deadly knife. Little do they know that the soul survives the knife and that the

[1] Gandhiji was operated upon for appendicitis in 1924

[2] Surgeon-General Sassoon Hospital, Poona, who performed the operation

soul is not to be found by any probing of knife, however deep it may be. (Laughter). Therefore, it was with the greatest hesitation that I have approached this function.

I wonder whether it is a real sign of civilization when the number of hospitals in a particular place is larger than in another place. I wonder whether it is really a test of growth to find in the catalogues and in the directories of medical men that every year their sales are increasing by leaps and bounds and that the inmates in the hospitals and dispensaries are increasing. I really wonder whether it is a sign of real progress. However, I know that there is the other side of it. I don't want to labour only on one side of this question. But, in all humility I have placed [these] for consideration of those who are put in charge of the management of this great institution. I have hitherto confined my remarks to medicine and surgery in general, but when I come to the Ayurvedic and the Unani system, I am filled with greater doubts. You may not know that, even from my boyhood. I have come in contact with many physicians, some of them known to be distinguished in their own localities. There was a time when I used to swear by the Ayurvedic medicine and used to commend it to all my friends, who went in for Western medicine, to go to these Ayurvedic physicians. But I feel sorry to have to own to you that I was undeceived and I found that our Ayurvedic and Unani physician lack sanity. They lack the humility. Instead of that I found in them an arrogance that they knew everything (Laughter), that there was no disease which they could not cure. (Renewed laughter.) I found that they believed that the mere feeling of the pulse could enable them to understand whether the patient was suffering from appendicitis or same such other disease. When I found that their diagnosis was false, that it was incomplete in most cases, I felt that it was nothing short of humbug. When I turned to the advertisements of medicines—I shall not say from *Kavirajas*—but Unani Hakims and *Vaidyarajas,* I felt humiliated I felt a sense of shame coming over me—these advertisements which pander to the basest passion of humanity, disfigure our newspapers and magazines. I have handled magazines devoted to the education of ladies. I have seen magazines devoted to the education and information of young men, and I have found these advertisements alluring, no doubt, profitable, no doubt, to those who advertise these nauseating things. I felt that they are cutting deep into the vitals of the suffering humanity.

Therefore, whilst I am going to perform this ceremony of laying the foundation stone of this noble institution and whilst I do so with a prayerful heart and wish it all success, I want the organizers to note

my limitations, to understand the note of warning that I have uttered to those who are called upon to devote their wealth to this institution. I utter an all humility this note of warning. May this institution be of use to the real suffers. May this institution take care not merely of the need of the body but of the imperishable soul that resides in that body. May it never be said of this institution that it panders to the basest taste of humanity, that it panders to the basest taste of the youths of Bengal—and I know the youths of Bengal. I know how their fair life is being sapped by the medicines that are poured down their throats by physicians who, in the words of the Lord Justice Stephen, "introduce drugs of which they know little into the bodies of which they know less".[1] And so I plead, as I pleaded in Madras at a similar function, for sanity, for humility, for truthfulness, for fear of God among those who are the present organizers of the institution and those who follow. With these words I shall have much pleasure as soon as you give me room to go to the place where I have to lay the foundation and I shall have equal pleasure in praying for the success of this institution.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 8-5-1925

168. COW-PROTECTION

Rightly or wrongly, most reluctantly and in fear and trembling I have shouldered the burden of conducting the All-India Cow-protection Organization that was brought into being at Madhavbag in Bombay on the 28th ultimo.

It is a tremendous task for which I am hardly fitted. I fancy that I know the disease. I know the remedy, but I have neither the time nor yet the men who can help me to carry out the ideas that are to govern this institution.

Cow-protection to me is not mere protection of the cow. It means protection of all that lives and is helpless and weak in the world. But for the moment cow-protection means primarily protection of the cow and her progeny from cruelty and slaughter and derivatively all other cattle, e.g., the buffalo.

India is the one country in the world where cow-protection is a religious obligation for over twenty crores of her people. And yet the

[1] *Vide* also "General Knowledge About Health [-II]", 11-1-1913.

cattle of India are miserable-looking, ill-treated, underfed, over-burdened, deteriorating and are even said to be a burden on the land. Nowhere else on the earth are milch cattle led to the slaughter house because they go dry long before they should. Nowhere else perhaps do cattle give less milk than they cost to feed and keep.

How can this state of things be remedied? Certainly not by multiplying cow-protection societies which do not know their business; most certainly not by fighting the Mussalmans about things which they cannot help even if they would. I do not here take note of those Mussalmans who, merely to wound Hindu susceptibility, kill cows deliberately and preferably and, as it were, in the Hindus' faces. These are exceptional cases. I am thinking of the cattle economics. If we take care of them, the rest will take care of itself. If the cattle are an economic burden and if one cannot set the condition right, nothing can prevent them from perishing or being slaughtered. The problem, therefore, is to study the question calmly and without sentiment. Religion without the backing of reason and enlightenment is a worthless sentiment which is bound to die of inanition. It is knowledge that ultimately gives salvation. Devotion to the cow divorced from knowledge is the surest way of imposing premature death on her. Therefore, one man with an accurate knowledge of the cattle problem, if he has the heart for the cow, represents in his own person all the cow-protection societies that were and will be ever formed. This all-India organization is conceived with that end in view, to find out men, chaste, pure, lovers of the cow and learned who would give their whole time to the work of investigation and administration. I want, therefore, a secretary whose qualifications I have described in the opening speech reported elsewhere in these pages. A treasurer too has still to be found. Meanwhile, a provisional committee and a provisional treasurer and a provisional secretary have been appointed in order to do the preliminary work. The committee is by no means represen-tative of all India. For it was necessary to appoint one from those present. The members of this provisional committee have undertaken, during the three months that are to elapse before it meets again, to enlist over twelve hundred members. If the organization is to be representative, it should have members from all the provinces. The provisional secretary is Sjt. Nagindas Amulakhrai of Bombay, (30, Hanuman

Building, Homji Street, Circus Road) and the provisional treasurer is Sjt. Rewashanker Jagjivan Jhaveri[1] of Jhaveri Bazar, Bombay. I hope that those who are interested in cow-protection will send in their subscriptions to the secretary or the treasurer. The subscription is Rs. 5 per year payable in advance or two thousand yards of hand-spun yarn per month.

Young India, 7-5-1925

169. AT IT AGAIN

My revolutionary friend has returned to the charge, but I must tell him that he has not been as patient with his composition as before. He has introduced in his letter under discussion much irrelevant matter and has argued loosely. So far as I can see, he has exhausted all his argument and has nothing new to say. But should he write again, I advise him to write his letter more carefully and boil down his thoughts. I have been obliged to do that for him this time. But as he is seeking light, let him read carefully what I write, then think out his thoughts calmly and then write out clearly and briefly. If it is merely questions he has to ask, let him simply write them out without arguing to convince me. I do not pretend to know everything about the revolutionary movement, but as I have been obliged to think, observe and write a great deal, there is very little new that he can tell me. Whilst, therefore, I promise to keep an open mind, I ask him, please, to spare a busy servant of the nation and a true friend of the revolutionary the labour of reading much that he need not read. I am anxious to keep in touch with the revolutionary and I can only do so through these columns. I have a soft corner for him in my heart, for there is one thing in common between him and me—the ability to suffer. But as I humbly believe him to be mistaken and misguided, I desire to wean him from his error or in the process myself be weaned from mine.

My revolutionary friend's first question is :

> "The revolutionaries have retarded the progress of the country." Do you differ with your own view, when you wrote in connection with the Bengal Partition : 'After the Partition people saw that petitions must be backed up by force, and that they must be capable of suffering. This spirit must be considered to be the chief result of the Partition . . . . That which the people said tremblingly and in secret began to be said and written openly. . . . People,

[1] A friend of Gandhiji and brother of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

young and old, used to run away at the sight of an English face; it no longer awed them. They did not fear even a row, or being imprisoned. Some of the 'best sons of India' are at present in banishment."[1] The movement which followed the Partition or more correctly which was the manifestation of the unrest of the people was the revolutionary movement, and the best sons of India you speak of are mostly revolutionaries or semi-revolutionaries. How is it that these so-called ignorant and misguided persons were able to reduce, if not remove, the cowardice of India? Would you be so intolerant as to call the revolutionaries ignorant, because they cannot understand your peculiar dogma of non-violence?

There is no difference between the view expressed in *Indian Home Rule*[2] from which the writer has quoted and the views now expressed by me. Those who led the Partition movement, whatever and whoever they were, undoubtedly shed the fear of Englishmen. That was a distinct service to the country. But bravery and self-sacrifice need not kill. Let my friend remember that *indian Home Rule*,as the booklet itself states, was written in answer to the revolutionary's arguments and methods. It was an attempt to offer the revolutionary something infinitely superior to what he had, retaining the whole of the spirit of self-sacrifice and bravery that was to be found in the revolutionary. I do not call the revolutionary ignorant merely because he does not understand or appreciate my method, but because he does not even appear to me to understand the art of warfare. Every one of the warriors whom my friend quotes knew his art and had his men.

The second question is :

Was Terence MacSwiney a "spotless lamb" when he died of hunger-strike of 71 days? Please remember that he was to the last an advocate of conspiracy, bloodshed and terrorism, and maintained his ideas expressed in his famous book *Principles of Freedom.* If you can call MacSwiney a "spotless lamb", will you not be ready to use the same term for Gopimohan Shaha[3] ?

I am sorry to say I do not know enough of the life of MacSwiney to be able to give an opinion. But if he advocated 'conspiracy, bloodshed and terrorism", his method was open to the same objections that have been advanced in these pages. I never

[1] *Vide* "Hind Swaraj - Chapter II : The Partition of Bengal", 22-11-1909.
[2] *Vide* "Hind Swaraj", 22-11-1909.
[3] Slip for Gopi Nath Saha; *vide* "Interview to *The Times of India*", 5-6-1924.

regarded him as a "spotless lamb". I gave my humble opinion when his fast was declared, that from my standpoint it was an error. I do not justify every fast.

The third question is :

> You believe in *varnas.* Therefore, it is self-evident that you hold the Kshatriyas to be of the same utility as any other *varna.* The revo- lutionaries profess to be Kshatriyas in this *Nikshatriya* epoch in India. *Kshatat trayate iti Kshatriyah.* I consider this state of India to be the greatest *Kshata* which India has ever met with, in other words this is the time when the need of Kshatriyas in India is the uttermost. Manu, the Prince of Hindu lawgivers prescribes four ways for the Kshatriya: "*sama, dana, danda, bheda*". In this connection I reproduce a passage from Vivekananda, which I think will greatly help you to comprehend the matter full well.
>
> "All great teachers have taught 'Resist not evil", have taught that the non-resisting is the highest moral ideal. We all know that if, in the present state of world, people try to carry out this doctrine, the whole social fabric would fall to pieces, society would be destroyed, the violent and the wicked will take possession of our property, and possibly take our lives also. Even one day of such non-resistance would lead to the utter dissolution of the country". I know what you will do in this awkward position, you will try to interpret it differently, but you shall find that he left no room for such misinterpretation, because he instantly adds, "Some of you have read perhaps the *Bhagavad Gita* and many of you in Western countries may have felt astonished at the first chapter wherein our Shri Krishna calls Arjuna a hypocrite and coward, on account of his refusal to fight or offer resistance, because his adversaries were his friends and relatives—his refusal on the plea that non-resistance was the highest ideal of love. There is a great lesson for us all to learn, that in all things the two extremes are alike; the extreme positive and the extreme negative are always similar; when the vibrations of light are too slow we do not see them nor do we see them when they are too rapid; so also with sound, when very low in pitch we do not hear it, when very high we do not hear it either. Of like nature is the difference between resistance and non-resistance . . . We must first care to understand whether we have the power of resistance or not. Then having the power, if we renounce it and do not resist, we are doing a grand act of love; but if we cannot resist and yet at the same time make it appear and ourselves believe that we are actuated by motives of highest love, we shall be doing the exact opposite of what is morally good. Arjuna became coward at the sight of the mightly array against him, his 'love' made him forget his duty towards his country and King. That is why Shri

Krishna told him that he was a hypocrite: 'Thou talkest like a wise man, but thy actions betray thee to be a coward, therefore stand up and flight." I want to add nothing more except a few questions. Do you think that your so-called heart-and-soul non-violent disciples can resist this alien bureaucrat government by physical force? If yes, on what ground; if not, how then does your non-violence remain the weapon of the strong? Please answer these questions in the most unmistakable terms, so that no one can make different interpretations.

Along with it I shall ask you the following questions, which directly arise from your statement. In your swaraj, is there any place for sol- diers? Will your swaraj government keep armies? If so, will they fight—I mean use physical force, when necessary, or will they offer satyagraha against their opponents?

I have room in my philosophy of life for Kshatriyas. But my definition of him I take from the *Gita.* He who does not run away from battle, i.e., danger, is a Kshatriya. As the world progresses, the same terms acquire new values. Manu and the other law-givers did not lay down eternal principles of conduct. They enunciated certain eternal maxims of life and laid down for their age rules of conduct more or less in accord with those maxims. I am unable to subscribe to the methods of bribery and deceit even for gaining entrance into heaven, much less for gaining India's freedom. For heaven will not be heaven and freedom will not be freedom if either is gained through such methods.

I have not verified the quotation said to be from Vivekananda. It has neither the freshness nor the brevity that mark most of that great man's writings. But whether it is from his writings or not, it does not satisfy me. If a large number of people carry out the doctrine of non-resistance, the present state of the world will not be what it is. Those individuals who have carried it out have not lost anything. They have not been butchered by the violent and the wicked. On the contrary, the latter have shed both their violence and wickedness in the presence of the non-violent and the good.

I have already stated my meaning of the *Gita.* It deals with the eternal duel between good and evil. And who does not, like Arjuna, often quail when the dividing line between good and evil is thin and when the right choice is so difficult?

I heartily endorse, however, the statement that he alone is truly non-violent who remains non-violent even though he has the ability to

strike. I do, therefore, claim that my disciple (I have only one and that is myself) is quite capable of striking, very indifferently and perhaps ineffectively, I admit; but he has no desire to do so. I have had in my life many an opportunity of shooting my opponents and earning the crown of martyrdom, but I had not the heart to shoot any of them. For I did not want them to shoot me, however much they disliked my methods. I wanted them to convince me of my error as I was trying to convince them of theirs. "Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you."

Alas! In my swaraj of today there is room for soldiers. Let the revolutionary friend know that I have described the disarmament and consequent emasculation of a whole people as the blackest crime of the British. I have not the capacity for preaching universal non-violence to the country. I preach, therefore, non-violence restricted strictly to the purpose of winning our freedom and, therefore, perhaps for preaching the regulation of international relations by non-violent means. But my incapacity must not be mistaken for that of doctrine of the non-violence. I see it with my intellect in all its effulgence. My heart grasps it. But I have not yet the attainments for preaching universal non-violence with effect. I am not advanced enough for the great task. I have yet anger within me, I have yet the *dwaita bhava*—duality in me. I can regulate my passions. I keep them under subjection, but before I can preach universal non-violence with effect, I must be wholly free from passions. I must be wholly incapable of sin. Let the revolutionary pray with and for me that I may soon become that. But, meanwhile, let him take with me the one step to it which I see as clearly as day-light, i.e., to win India's freedom with strictly non-violent means. And, then, under swaraj, you and I shall have a disciplined, intelligent, educated police force that would keep order within and fight raiders from without if, by that time, I or someone else does not show a better way of ealing with either.

Young India, 7-5-1925

170. NOTES

DEIFICATION OF ME

A Muslim friend met me at Dungargarh station and told me that the process of deifying me, especially among the Gonds, was going on as merrily as ever. I have expressed my horror and strongest disapproval of this type of idolatry more than once. I claim to be a mere mortal, heir to all the weaknesses that human flesh betrays. It would be infinitely better that the Gonds should be taught to understand the meaning of my simple massage than that they should indulge in a meaningless deification of me which can do no good either to them or to me and can intensify the superstitious nature of such simple people as the Gonds. I be-speak the help of every Congressman in the necessary work of un-deceiving the Gonds of their error.

THE UNTOUCHABLES

At one of the stations on the way to Calcutta, I found to my great joy a number of untouchables. They presented me with a piece of khaddar spun and woven by them. The workers told me that the most substantial work was really done by the untouchables. They were giving up drink and carrion and taking to khaddar. Had I not been told that the people I met at this station. Jharsingada, were untouchables, I should not have distinguished them from the rest of the company.

KHADDAR

At Raigarh I was astounded to hear that there was not a single spinning-wheel. The men who had come to meet me quietly told me that some of them wore what the poor people from the interior brought. They informed me that khaddar has become very popular among the people in the villages and that, if there was more interest taken in the work, it could easily become universal. The people of the Central Provinces including Chhatisgarh are specially adapted for the wheel and the loom which merely await organization.

SPLITTING HAIRS

A well-known Congressman for whom I have great regard and who prides himself of being a disciplinarian was found the other day not being wholly dressed in khaddar. I thought that he was fully dressed in khaddar. But the friends who lived in the same town with him knew better and asked me to persuade this friend to respect the

Congress resolution. The friend frankly admitted that all the articles of his clothing were not made of khaddar, but said that, in having come to me, he was not on Congress work. This was a hair-splitter for which I was wholly unprepared, especially from a disciplinarian. I enjoyed no private relations with him. He came to discuss with me public affairs and, therefore, I thought that, in coming to see me, he had come on Congress or public work. But the friend held otherwise and said that he came to see me not on Congress business. I told him such hair-spliting distinctions delayed the advent of swaraj. The Congress resolution, in my opinion, provides for exceptional circumstances in which khaddar dress may be dispensed with without the wearer forfeiting his membership. It does not absolve members from the natural obligation to wear khaddar on all occasions. If men at the top resort to fine distinctions for not wearing khaddar, it is impossible for the common folk conform to the khaddar dress unless it becomes cheaper and more easily available than foreign calico. They expect the leaders to go the whole length in order to enable them to go a quarter.

Young India, 7-5-1925

171. BENGAL NOTES

[*May 7, 1925*]

'1ST-CLASS SCANDAL'

Gujarat thinks that it can take more care of my body than the other provinces. Bengal evidently thinks otherwise. "I must travel in first-class through saloons," says Bengal. Satish Babu whom I questioned regarding the "scandal" of putting me in a first-class saloon said it was the Faridpur Reception Committee that was responsible for it. His other excuse was that a through saloon was taken to avoid a night change, that a through bogie necessarily contained a first-class compartment and that the railway authorities had generously charged 2nd-class fares for 1st-class seats. Let the reader understand that the bogie meant payment of at least ten 2nd-class fares. All this, it was suggested, was necessary in the interest of my health which, whilst I was in Bengal, must not on any account be put in jeopardy by any act of omission or commission on the part of the organizers.

My own opinion is that my tour cannot do much good if I must be thus wrapped in cottonwool. I must either live or travel as like the

millions of poor people as possible or cease to travel at all in the public interest. I am quite certain that I can no more effectively deliver my massage to the millions by travelling not even double first but fivefold first than the Viceroy can rule over the *hearts* of India's millions from his unapproachable Simla heights. Single 2nd class is about as much as it is possible to tolerate. Finding me in a luxuriously fitted 1st-class compartment, the poor cannot regard me as one of themselves. They, therefore, peeped into it with awe every time they came near it. I also felt queer looking at them. My body may have found more comfort, but my soul was ill at ease. I am convinced that we cannot enter the hearts of the poor unless we would suffer with them. I have always known that my usefulness for the service of the poor was half curtailed when I was disabled, or thought I was disabled, for travelling 3rd class. Had I never travelled 3rd class, I would never have felt like the poor and one of them. I look upon my 3rd-class travelling as the most precious among my experiences. I, therefore, feel that ordinary 2nd class is about the limit beyond which I must not go, beyond which friends must not take me or tempt me, if they would have me to serve the country by touring. When I become unfit for even 2nd-class travelling. I must cease to serve by touring. God does not give direct notices. He sends us signs which those who will may read. I am not much disturbing the present arrangements made by the Reception Committee, but I hereby give notice to my friends that they may not smother me with excessive affection. They may take all precautions that may not be inconsistent with a due sense of proportion. But let them leave something to God. No precaution will be enough if God wished me not to tour and no want of it will lay me prostrate so long as it is His will that I should serve through touring. Let me also assure them that I am too careful of my body to neglect those bodily wants which I regard as necessary. Let me also record with gratitude the fact that no province, not even Gujarat, has showered on me greater affection than Bengal. It has been my precious privilege never to feel a stranger in any of the provinces, least of all in Bengal.

A FIT NEMESIS

But though the Reception Committee had taken excessive precautions for my comfort, gods had willed otherwise. For the whole night's rest, during the journey to Faridpur, was disturbed by crowds at almost every station howling for *darshan*. My companions tried in

vain to pacify these blind admirers. They vainly pleaded for rest for my fatigued body. "*Also, alo,*" light, light, "*—ki jai*", rent the air and exasperated the sleeping passengers. The crowd felt no consideration even for them. I remained obdurate. I would not rise from my bed though I risked the loss of my Mahatmaship. I regarded it as a crime to pander to such wild and meaningless affection. There can be no doubt about it that we need iron discipline. Our affection for individuals or for the country should be enlightened. So long as it is not brought under control, it must run to waste and, at times, even cause injury by unintended explosions. Every village must have silent, self-effacing and intelligent workers who would lead people to transmute their affection into real power for the country. "Handsome is that handsome does." True affection will show itself not in midnight shouts but in quiet national work. All the people of intermediate stations cannot see me or their other idols. But all can use the occasion of their visits for shaking of lethargy and doing more work.

MAD BENGALIS

Bengalis are mad. Deshbandhu Das gives up his palatial house to the trustees for national purposes. I know that the house carries with it certain liabilities. But the Deshbandhu could have, if he had chosen, wiped them out inside of a year by returning to his princely practice. I could not enter the vast mansion without feeling sad and shedding a tear. As a philosopher I knew that, in getting rid of the house, he has got rid of a burden. But, as a man living in the world, I know that millions would be glad to shoulder such burdens and feel happy in uncomfortably big mansions. I therefore could not restrain myself as I entered the house and was lodged in the very room which was but yesterday occupied by the distinguished servant of India. But that is not the limit of his madness. He is ailing, he is weak. He squats with difficulty. He rises from his seat with difficulty. His voice has lost its original strength. But he must preside—not for applause, but, for service. He must sit up late at the Subjects Committee. He must reason with those who will not or cannot see the necessity of the lucid explanation of his position.

Nor is he the only mad Bengali. There is the great Acharya Ray. In perfect self-forgetfulness he dances on the platform, now thumping this leg and now that. Quite unnecessarily he would break out into English before a pure Bengali audience. He does not care what others will think of him. He is lost in his theme. And who that does not know

him will ever consider him to be one of the greatest among the scientists of the world? He still loves his science college. He gives it his very soul. But he is khaddar mad. He divides his love between science and khaddar. Or perhaps, he regards khaddar as a true product of scientific research. Be that as it may, it requires a mad man to ply the charkha when he might be handling exquisitely delicate instruments in order to wrest from Nature some of her precious secrets. I could, perhaps, indefinitely multiply the names of such mad Bengalis. But the reader must be satisfied with these two brilliant samples.

NOTHING BEHIND IT

But I must return to the Deshbandhu. So many people have asked me, "What is at the back of his manifesto?" I put to him the question on behalf of the inquirers. His answer was emphatic and characteristic.

> There is no more at the back of it than there is in the front of it. My manifesto and my address are in reply to the challenge of European friends. I have repeatedly told them that I abhor violence. I believe that India's freedom can only be attained by non-violence. They then asked me to say the same thing in public in emphatic and unequivocal language. I had no objection and no hesitation. This is the whole history of the manifesto and my address. In them I have condemned both—the violence of the revolutionary and the repression of the Government, which is but another name for violence. I have also stated the terms on which as a selfrespecting men, I can co-operate. Let any reasonable man examine them dispassionately and, if he discovers a flaw in them or in the statement of my position, let him point it out to me. It now rests with the Euro-peans and the Government to take the next step.

This is as I have understood to be the Deshbandhu's position. I have not been able to reproduce his language. I have endeavoured to reproduce his thought. The address is remarkably brief, lucid and temperate. There is a studied attempt not to wound anybody's susceptibilities. His condemnation of violence is beyond cavil. If I were asked to subscribe to it, I should do so without perhaps altering a single word or phrase. In my opinion, he has built a golden bridge over the gulf that divides the British from us. It is for them to use it if they will.

THE RESOLUTIONS

The resolutions are in the main a summary of the address. Exception has been taken to their utility inasmuch as there were differences of opinion in the Subjects Committee about some of them. So there were. But, in my opinion, they acquire added importance from that fact. They have been passed after full discussion and deliberation. Expression of differences of opinion is a healthy sign of growth, by no means that of weakness of capacity for execution.

POSSIBILITIES OF KHADDAR

I was unprepared for the discovery I seem to have made of the spread of khaddar in Bengal. The Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition held at Faridpur was more a khaddar exhibition than anything else. Khaddar was not assigned a mere corner in the exhibition. It overshadowed all other exhibits. There were many weavers, some wearing artistic designs, but all were working with hand-spun—either cotton or silk. The Government industrial institution at Serampore had also sent their demonstrators. They showed jute-spinning by the hand and other processes that jute goes through. As jute is one of the greatest industries of Bengal, spinning jute by the hand may give honourable cottage industry to many a home. At the present moment, jute goes to the mills directly from the field conditions said to be in no way favourable to the jute the growers. The average cotton-spinning of Bengal is probably superior to [that of] Andhra. The spinning competition held on the exhibition grounds showed a degree of skill among voluntary spinners not to be met with perhaps elsewhere. Specimens of khaddar too would compare favourably with the best Andhra make. In fineness of counts Bengal, if it is a little better organized, is likely to beat Andhra in a year's time. No other province can perhaps compete with Bengal in this respect.

On a par with the competition at the Faridpur exhibition was a competition arranged by the Khadi Pratishthan at Mirzapur Park. Rai Yatindra Nath Chaudhari of Nakipur and Mrs. Kamini Roy, the distinguished poetess, took part in it. Babu Shyam Sunder Chakravarti and Satish Babu, the Secretary of the Provincial Congress Committee, were also in it and last but not the least, Dr. Ray himself took part in it. He already draws an even good thread not less than 12 counts. He tells me the charkha is growing on him and he takes delight in his spinning. Nearly 180 spinners took part the competition. I do not

think it is possible in any other part of India to get together so many men and women of the upper middle class taking part in such an exhibition and spinning with such great skill. Let me note, too, that many Swarajists are themselves spinning regularly and with zest. My hostess in Faridpur is the wife of a staunch Swarajist, Babu Suresh Biswas. She is a fine spinner. She and her children are devoted to the wheel. She gives all her spare time to the wheel. I am told that, during my tour which really commences today (I am writing these notes on 7th May at Calcutta), I shall see still better exhibition of khaddar work of Bengal. There is no doubt that, if Bengal wills, it can lead the country in khaddar as she can in several other things. She has talent, she has a fine imagination, she has poetry, she as great self-sacrifice to her credit, she has the necessary skill, she has material. Will she add to these qualities the will to do it? May God grant it.

THE SAGE OF BARRACKPORE

I was privileged to visit Sir Surendranath Banerjea[1] at his residence at Barrackpore. I had heard that he was ailing and that age had told upon his steel frame. I was anxious, therefore, to pay my respects to him. Though he might not approve of some of my activities, my regard for him as a maker of modern Bengal and a Nestor of Indian politics has not suffered any diminution. I remember the time when educated India hung on his lips. It was, therefore, with great joy that I approached the pilgrimage to Barrackpore. Sir Surendra has a magnificent mansion situated on the river bank among beautiful surroundings. All around there is great quiet. One can understand what a great relief it must have been to him to be able, every day, to retire to this pleasant retreat after the daily toil in crowded Calcutta. I expected to see him lying in bed weak and care-worn. Instead, I found myself in the presence of a man standing erect from his seat to greet me affectionately and talking to me with the buoyancy of youth. He told me in the course of our conversation that his memory was still as green as ever. He could paint, he told me, the scenes of his childhood. The reminiscences that have just been published he wrote during the past nine years. He showed me with justifiable pride the whole of his beautiful manuscript. It is all written methodically in clear, bold hand with a steady pen. Sir Surendra Nath

[1] 1848-1925; President, Indian National Congress in 1895 and 1902; later, one of the leaders of the Moderate party; author of *A Nation in Making*

is now 77 years old, but he has, like Pandit Malaviyaji[1], faith in himself. He said, "I have given myself ninety-one years. And I hope to be able to retain my present energy till then." When I inquired what he was reading, he told me he was revising his reminiscences as he expected to publish a second edition inside of a year. He takes a lively interest in everything that passes around him. He has taken from me a promise to meet him again before I leave Bengal. "I must come to you if you cannot find the time to run up to Barrackpore," he said. "I will not think of putting you to that trouble. I will make time to come again without fail," I replied. Sir Surendra Nath owes his vitality to his unfailingly regular habits. Nothing could keep him overnight in Calcutta. It might almost be said that he never missed his last train for Barrackpore. This regularity, he would say, was as necessary for the service of India as strenuous work itself.

A CONTRAST

The poor, thank God, are always with me. They sought me out at the great man's mansion. Among them was a humble Bihari clerk who wanted me to go to his quarters where he had six charkhas going and where he was selling khaddar to poor men. The request was irresistible. We went to his humble quarters which were situated in the coolie-barracks connected with the waterworks. He showed me the wheels that he and his friends were working and the nicely arranged stock of khaddar, all of which he received from Bihar. "Why don't you get the locally manufactured khaddar?" I asked. "Because," he answered, "I am helping to sell the surplus stock from Bihar." He told me that he made no profits. For running this humble store the coolies give him, to defray the out of pocket expenses, one pice per rupee of their wages. He sells nearly Rs. 2,500 worth of pure khaddar among the coolies who come from Bihar and the contiguous districts of U. P. We have no notion of the penetrating capacity of the wheel and khaddar. Wherever I go, I find these unknown, self-appointed, honest young men taking their humble share in this glorious work

[1] Madan Mohan Malaviya (1861-1946); elected four times President of the congress; founder of Benares Hindu University; author and parliamentarian; member, Round Table Conference and Imperial Legislative Council

which is bound to succeed and solve the problem of the grinding pauperism of the masses by providing them with the labour they can do with ease and comfort.

Young India, 14-5-1925

172. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

CALCUTTA,
May 7, 1925

DEAR GURUDEV[1],

Suneeti Devi tells me she is going to Bolpur to take part in the celebration of your 64th birthday. May I add my wish and prayer to the many that will be sent up tomorrow for your health and long life?

Andrews told me in one of his letters that you were not keeping well. I hope that you are now feeling stronger.

I am
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR RABINDRANATH TAGORE
SANTINIKETAN

From a photostat: G. N. 4628

[1] 1861-1941; poet and author; was awarded Nobel Prize for literature in 1913; founder of a school at Santiniketan later known as Visva Bharati.

173. SPEECH AT BUDDHA BIRTH ANNIVERSARY [1]

CALCUTTA,
May 7, 1925

FRIENDS,

It is now my pleasant duty to perform this service. I shall not say anything of these proceedings. Dr. Dharmapala has added a pathetic touch to this service[2]. And he has laid on my shoulders a burden which I consider I am ill-fitted to carry. I hesitated last year when Mr. Natarajan drew me out of my convalescent bed and asked me to preside at the anniversary last year[3], but I could not resist Mr. Natarajan, for I have very great and deep affection for him. I know that from that time I would be perhaps called upon to take part at such functions somewhere in India from year to year. And so it happened even when I came to Calcutta. It is a very strange thing that almost all the professors of great religions of the world claim me as their own. The Jains mistake me for a Jain. Scores of Buddhist friends have taken me for a Buddhist. Hundreds of Christian friends still consider that I am a Christian and some Christian friends do not even hesitate to ascribe, by implication, cowardice to me and say: "We know, you are a Christian, but you are afraid to own it. Why don't you come forward boldly and say you believe in Jesus and his salvation?" Many of my Mussalman friends consider that, although I do not call myself a Mussalman, to all intents and purposes, I am one of them; and some Mussalman friends consider that I am on the road to it, very near, but still far short of it. All this is extremely flattering to me and I take it as a mark of their affection and their esteem. For me, however, I regard myself as one of the humblest of Hindus, but the deeper I study Hinduism the stronger be comes the belief in me that Hinduism is as

[1] Gandhiji presided over the birth anniversary of Lord Buddha celebrated at the Buddha Vihara, under the auspices of the Mahabodhi Society.

[2] The General Secretary of the Society had spoken earlier on the teachings of the Buddha and the way he had himself been carrying on the work of the Buddha in Bengal.

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Buddha Jayanti Meeting", May 18, 1924.

broad as the Universe and it takes in its fold all that is good in this world. And so I find that with Mussalmans I can appreciate the beauties of Islam and sing its praises. And so simultaneously with the professors of other religions, and still something within me tells me that, for all that deep veneration I show to these several religions, I am all the more a Hindu, none the less for it.

Nearly 40 or 38 years ago, I went to England as a lad and the first religious book that was placed into my hands was the *Light of Asia.* I had read nothing of any religion in the world, nothing therefore of Hinduism. I knew of Hinduism what my parents taught me, not directly but indirectly, that is, by their practice, and I know a little more of it from a Brahmin to whom they sent me in order to learn *Rama Raksha*.[1]. That was the stock with which I sailed for England. So, when I found myself in possession of the *Light of Asia,* I devoured it.

From page to page I went; I was really an indifferent reader of literature, but I could not resist the temptation that each page afforded to me and I closed the book with deep veneration for the expounding or teaching which has been so beautifully expressed by Sir Edwin Arnold. I read the book again when I had commenced the practice of my profession in South Africa. At that time, I had read something of the other great religions of the world, but the second study of that book did not diminish my veneration. Beyond that I have practically no acquaintance with Buddhism. I read some more literature in the Yeravda Jail, but I know that the reason why I am called upon to preside at such functions, whether they were in connection with Buddha or Mahavira or even with Jesus Christ, is that I endeavour to follow to the best of my ability such of these masters' teachings as my limited understanding enables me to appreciate. Many friends consider that I am expressing in my own life the teachings of Buddha. I accept their testimony and I am free to confess that I am trying my level best to follow these teachings. Unlike Buddhistic professors and unlike also many Hindu students—I was going to say philosophers—I draw no distinction between the essential teachings of Hinduism and Buddhism. In my opinion, Buddha lived Hinduism in his own life. He

[1] A prayer in Sanskrit, seeking Lord Rama's protection and grace

was no doubt a reformer of his terrible time, that is to say he was a reformer deeply in earnest and counted no cost or pain great for achieving the reform which he thought was indispensable for his own growth and for the uplift of the body. If historical records are correct, the blind Brahmins of that period rejected his reform because they were selfish. But the masses were not philosophers who whiled away their time in philosophizing. They were philosophers in action, they had robust common sense and so they brushed aside the beast in the Brahmins, that is to say, selfishness, and they had no hesitation in recognizing in Buddha the true exponent of their own faith. And so, being myself also one of the masses living in their midst, I found that Buddhism is nothing but Hinduism reduced to practice in terms of the masses. And, therefore, sometimes the learned men are not satisfied with the incredibly simple teachings of Buddha. They go to it for the satisfaction of their intellect and they are disappointed. Religion is preeminently a matter of the heart and a man who approaches it with intellectual pride is doomed to disappointment.

I make bold to say that Buddha was not an atheist. God refuses to see any person, any devotee who goes in with his pride. He believes not in men rubbing their noses on the ground, he wants not to see the marks on the noses, and some of you may not know that many Mussalmans really carry these marks on their foreheads as they lie prostrate in their mosques, rub their foreheads day after day so that they have got the scar on their forehead about the circumference of a rupee, sometimes, even larger. God does not want the marks. He sees through and through. A man may cut his nose and rub it on the ground, but God will not recognize him who will turn his back upon a man with pointed nose, if his heart is no bruised and blood does not flow freely from his heart. He recognizes that as his own. And the masses, not knowing what pride is, approach him in all humility and become the splendid philosophers in action, and we can freely follow them. That, in my opinion, is the essential teaching of Buddhism. It is pre-eminently a religion of the masses. I do not despair. I do not for one moment consider that Buddhism has been banished from India. Every essential characteristic of Buddhism, I see, is being translated into action in India, much more perhaps than in China, Ceylon and Japan, which nominally profess Buddhism. I make bold to say that we in India translate Buddhism into action far more and far better than our Burmese friends do. It is impossible to banish Buddha. You cannot deprive him of his birth in India. In his own life, he made out

for himself an imperishable name. He lives today in the lives of millions of human beings. What does it matter whether we go to a little temple and worship his image or whether we even take his name. My Hinduism teaches me that, if my heart is pure, I may mispronounce the name of Sri Rama as Mara, still I can speak it with as much force as may, even more than, the learned Brahmins. So, I say to Dr. Dharmapala, what does it matter whether he can count upon the support of so many men, or whether a lady from Honolulu contributes a huge sum or not. Buddha has taught us, in my humble opinion, that it is not necessary for millions to associate themselves with one man who seeks for truth.

Let each one say for himself how much of the massage of mercy and pity that Buddha came to deliver we have translated into our own lives, and in so much as we have translated that message in our own lives are we fit to pay our homage to that great Lord, Master and Teacher of mankind. So long as the world lasts, I have not a shadow of doubt that he will rank among the greatest of teachers of mankind. The thoughts that Buddha gave about 2,500 years ago will never vanish—thoughts leave also a mark, thought going at snail's pace. It is still germinating, though one may find that Buddhism, like every other religion, at the present moment is really decadent. I am optimistic enough to feel that a day is dawning when all these great religions will be purged of all frauds, hypocrisy, humbug, untruthfulness, incredulity and all that may be described under the term "degradation". They will be purified of that fraud and we will see a day dawned when he who learns to see will find that truth and love, after all, are two faces of a coin. That and that alone is the only current coin and every other is a base coin.

May God help us to realize the massage that the Lord Buddha delivered to mankind so many hundred years ago and may we, each one of us, endeavour to translate that message in our lives, whether we call ourselves Hindus or not.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 9-5-1925

174. SPEECH AT LOHOGUNJ [1]

May 8, 1925

Mr. Gandhi, in acknowledging the address and purse, delivered a short speech and said that he was sorry that he could not bring the Ali Brothers as they were busy in their own work. If they wanted swaraj, they had to make up their mind. It was for this reason the Congress had declared that swaraj was to be obtained by love and non-violence, and the Congress repeatedly expressed that all people, irrespective of religion, would devote their heart and soul to the work, and asked them to remove untouchability. Their religion instructed them not to hate anybody. He appealed to them to spin at least half an hour daily and wear hand-woven khaddar. He was sorry to say that very few people had come with khaddar on even now. They should understand their work and spin on the charkha. He further urged them to send their sons and daughters to national schools. Referring to the purse, he said that the money presented to him would not be used for him, but would be spent in charkha and looms and hence he appealed to them to subscribe the promised amount[2] . There was no use seeing him or hearing his speech. If they promised to do that, it would be of immense profit to them and their country. He hoped and prayed that his instructions would be carried out.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 9-5-1925

175. SPEECH AT MALIKANDA[3]

May 8, 1925

In the course of his speech, Mahatmaji said it pained him very much to find that some of them were not clad in khaddar. He wanted to speak to them about three things and he was confident that, if they translated his message into practice, swaraj would come to them automatically. The first thing to be followed in this connection was that the Hindus and Mohamedans should live in complete harmony. They should be tolerant towards each other and love each other. Mahatmaji emphasized that the curse of untouchability should go. Finally, he strongly urged the audience to wear khaddar and to take to the spinning-wheel. It might not be necessary for them to spin for their livelihood but, if they were to stop the huge drain of the country's wealth,

[1] Gandhiji arrived at Lohogunj, a business centre in Dacca, in the afternoon and was presented with an address and a pure of Rs. 5,500 on behalf of the people of Vikrampur.

[2] Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ghosh had earlier referred to a target of Rs. 15,000.

[3] Malikanda was the venue of a khadi exhibition. Gandhiji's speech was in Hindi, but was rendered into Bengali.

they should spin at least half an hour a day. He hoped that under the able guidance of Dr. Prafulla Chandra they would soon learn to spin and give up foreign cloth. He had heard that the barbers and washermen of the place would not serve *Namasudras*. This was untouchability. The essence of the Hindu religion was truth, non-violence and love. For barbers and washermen not to serve *Namasudras* was not love, but hatred.

The Hindu, 9-5-1925

176. REMARKS AT NATIONAL SCHOOL, DIGHIRPUR [1]

May 9, 1925

I am shocked at these wheels. No wonder, we fail in our attempt to popularize the charkha here. I am glad I have come here. Other wise, I should have blamed the villagers in case of failure. Now I see that the fault is all ours. Look at the rickety wheels and the thick spindles. They have to turn and turn the wheel before they can coax a thread to come out. And look at the horrid sound they make. How can the boys sing whilst spinning, if the wheel does not sing in harmony with their music? The only consolation is that the boys know the art. They have taken to it like fish to water, they have got the cunning of the fingers and I can see that in spite of the wretched condition of the wheels they are drawing out beautiful yarn. If the wheels were better and the spindles thinner, they could easily spin double the present quantity. Your maximum speed you say is 300 yards an hour. I promise it will be 600 yards as soon as you have reformed the wheels. The dexterity with which your boys handle them should give you an idea of the immense possibilities of spinnings, and you yourself must do a year's penance to master the art and the technique of the wheel if you do not know it today.

Young India, 21-5-1925

[1] Gandhiji addressed these to Jatindranath Kushari, who was in charge of the school where 30 students were learning spinning. This report is an extract from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour in East Bengal, under the title "With Gandhiji in Bengal".

177. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, DIGHIRPUR [1]

May 9, 1925

Gandhiji, addressing the gathering which numbered more than ten thousand, said that he was sorry to find that the attempt made by the Congress people to remove untou-chability was not successful. Defending his attitude regarding untouchability, he stated he had never said that anybody should take food in the same plate with a *Namasudra*. He would never drink water polluted even by his own mother, but if his mother or anybody else gave him water in a clean pot, it would be a sin if he refused it. Similarly it would be a sin if barbers and washermen did not serve their *Namasudra* brethren. He asserted that the Hindu religion meant service. Service meant equality and love. Swaraj was impossible without Hindu-Muslim unity. That was why he used to take one of the Ali Brother along with him in his wanderings. He was pleased to recognize that there was some khaddar and charkha work in the locality. He wanted to kill the poverty in Hindusthan, but he was sorry to find that very few people were clad in khaddar. He was pleased that the Union Board had presented five charkhas free on the occasion of his visit.

Finally, Gandhiji urged them to be respectful towards their parents, to love their teachers and all the members of their family and to be on friendly terms with their fellow-students.

The Hindu, 11-5-1925

178. SPEECH AT KHADI WORKERS' MEETING, TALTOLA[2]

May 9, 1925

I must tell you in the first place that I have never said that charkha is our only salvation. I have said that swaraj for the messes is impossible without the charkha. But I am prepared here to advance the first also. I would ask you to exercise your imagination. And just as you visualize gods and goddesses on the Himalayas because your

[1] The Union Board of Dighirpur presented an address to Gandhiji on behalf of the people of the locality.

[2] A metting of khadi workers was held, but it was thought more convenient to hold it on the boat and accordingly the workers accompanied Gandhiji to Narayan Ganj. Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ghosh who was with Gandhiji remarked that the workers' faith was waning : "Most of them do not believe that charkha is our only salvation, though they do believe in the economic value of it. Some of us feel that it is unnecessary to be Congress members. Pray clear our doubts and fortify our faith if you can."

mind is filled with sacredness, you will also visualize the tremendous possibilitiies of spinning if you fill your minds with the elaborate details of a successful working of the spinning programme. It requires a tremendous effort to keep things going as we are doing, much more to make millions spin. Every one of us will have to take charge of little details and be under exact discipline. Universalization of spinning means the automatic solution of many other questions. Take the untouchability problem. It is impossible to universalize the wheel without tackling untouchability. Do you know that the untouchables would have nothing to do with khadi if we had not made them our own? They would say,"What shall we do with khadi when we are treated as untouchables?"And unless they co-operate, you cannot achieve the full khadi programme. And so also for the Hindu-Muslim question. The two things hang together. You can thus see that spinning alone does lead to swaraj.

But I want to take you a little deeper. Do you know the Government have their hands on every string of the violin except the one which is in my hand? That is non-violence. You can win swaraj only with non-violence and never with violence. If you are convinced of that, you will not take time to be convinced that by spinning alone can you win swaraj. For, non-violence in action can be achieved by nothing but a successful working out of a peaceful programme of the universalization of the spinning-wheel. How will you solve the Hindu-Muslim question but by getting the Hindu to work in the cause of khadi of the Mussalman, and *vice versa?* And in order that you get the Mussalman and the Hindu and the untouchable to work together, you have to plod away in faith and confidence in yourselves. Take first the smoothest channels, leave the difficult ones alone. These are the maharajas, nawabs, etc. Let us fill the land with a net-work of expect carders and spinners and make the spinning-wheel the centre of the whole programme. Don't say the atmosphere is spoiled. Let there be dissensions. You will spin in spite of them. And you will see that all about would be spinning like you one day. If you are clean, all about you are bound to be clean one day. Shall I say good-bye to *brahmacharya,* truth and ahimsa, because the opposite is going on all around me? No, I must work away in the faith that my method is right even though I may be the sole representative of it.

"And how will the spinners bring swaraj?"you ask. I say, nothing will need to be done after you have universalized the spinning-

wheel. You will have acquired a power and a strength which everybody will automatically recognize.

But possibly the struggle before us may be long. There is no shorter cut. I can make the Congress hum with a thousand genuine workers. A million non-spinners whose sole business is to give four annas each will be worse that an encumbrance. I have faith in God and in the fact that the few shall act, when the time comes.

Young India, 21-5-1925

179. SPEECH AT MALKHANAGAR

May 9, 1925

The first thing is that I never said that we could win swaraj merely by spinning, though I believe that we can. But I have certainly said on many occasions that unless we spin we cannot win swaraj. However, I am ready to prove to you that both the statements are true. What do we mean when we speak of spinning? We mean that we should make it universal. Spinning means learning all the other processes, such as ginning and carding, and getting the yarn produced woven into cloth. What an effort is needed to do all these things ourselves and set crores of people spinning in that sense! Such an effort implies setting up an organization through the length and the breadth of the country. Is it a small thing to set up a system like the one that obtains on big liners where everyone obeys the captain's orders and those who do not can be shot dead? And when you set crores to spin, the problem of untouchability will be solved, even that of Hindu-Muslim unity will be solved. Why do I say that the problem of untouchability will be solved? Today the untouchables work for khadi for my sake. They told me in Madras that, when the people regarded them as untouchable, why should they labour for the people and weave khadi for them? All the same, they weave for my sake. When untouchability has disappeared, they will of their own free will take sincere interest in this work, and, when they do so, untouchability too will disappear. Can the khadi movement succeed unless Hindus and Muslims work unitedly? In order, thus, to get all communities to spin, you will have to continue living in this marshy place.

But you may ask how spinning can mean swaraj. My reply is that when you have made spinning universal, the three big problems which face the Congress today will be solved. And when all the three are solved, what more will remain? When these three things are done

we shall be in a position to insist in the fulfilment of our conditions. Thereafter, the British may leave if they choose or stay on if they like to remain here on our terms. If you ask me whether I would co-operate with the British against whom we have carried on such a long and determined struggle and who have perpetrated such atrocities on us, I would say, "Yes, I would certainly co-operate, because I want to convert even enemies into friends."

In order to understand how swaraj can be won by spinning, you must be clear about one thing. It is this—by what means do you want to win it? If you want to win it by violent means, you may give up the thought of spinning. But I can see it as clearly as I do the things before me that you will not be able to overcome the British by violent means. In the game we are playing today, they have all the pieces in their hand, and only one is in mine—non-violence. It is only by means of that piece that we can possibly win against them. If you admit this, you will understand that you have no choice but to take up spinning, for the spinning-wheel is the centre round which the other items of the non-violence programme revolve.

The atmosphere has not been vitiated. The Government wants fighting, it will even find people who delight in creating discord, but I count on you to say that you will go on spinning no matter what obstacles are placed in your way. Because others give up spinning, should you on that account stop spinning? If others forsake purity, *brahmacharya* and non-violence, will you also do ?

Those who sincerely devote themselves to spinning in this way will certainly come forward when the time comes [for action]. I can get no work done through three crore members if they do not spin. But I can rouse the whole country if there are 300 sincere persons. If you ask me why I believe these people will come forward for a fight, I cannot answer your question. I shall merely say that God will prompt them to join the fight. I have such faith in God that I rely upon Him, when the time comes to rouse everyone. What happened in the Transvaal? Till the last moment, no one was asked [to join the fight]. But when the coolies saw that all of us were in prison, they too came out and followed us. Hurbatsingh[1] was a free man. He did not have to pay the [poll] tax, but he too was inspired, and went to jail and died there. The mines were turned into jails in which the workers were

[1] *Vide* "Letter to *Indian Opinion*", after January 5, 1914.

confined, and they endured countless atrocities. How could I imagine that all this would happen? It was, in fact, the result of my faith in God. Hence, if people ask me when I propose to start civil disobedience, I give them no reply. I merely say that God will create the circumstances for it.

Now I come to the question what purpose is served by our continuing as members of the Congress. I admit it serves no great purpose, but our leaving it will hurt the Swarajists needlessly and they will believe that we do not want even to extend our support to them. This year, at any rate, we must become members of the Congress and do as much constructive work as possible. If they do not want even this next year, then we shall see what to do. We shall, then, be able to set up a spinning association. Truly speaking, however, such an association will be the result of our labours during this year. Even if you believe that nothing is to be gained by remaining in the Congress, there is at any rate no harm in doing so.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-5-1925

180. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

May 9, 1925

Mr. Gandhi agreed to the existence of individuality in different localities as suggested by Mr. Ghosh and he said that the work should proceed on the individuality of each locality,[1] but he said that charkha might form the main part of the constructive work whereas other things might be added to it consulting each individual case. Charkha, he said, could be universally introduced in every locality. Mr. Ghosh then referred to his Faridpur speech[2] wherein he said it required a strong heart and not a strong arm to deliver the country. Mr. Gandhi said that we might get swaraj by a strong heart, but to maintain internal peace and order as well as to protect the country from external enemies, it could require a strong arm. Mr. Gandhi in reply

[1] Kali Mohan Ghosh had asked Gandhiji whether charkha, as a part of the constructive activity, would be equally suitable for people of all localities, with their different individual characteristics, and whether organizational work should not take these variations into consideration.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Bengal Provincial Conference, Faridpur", 3-5-1925.

said that he answered the question in the *Young India*[1] and he did not say that a strong arm was not required. Rather the police and the army would be necessary when we would get swaraj to protect the country, but first of all we must have a strong heart to attain swaraj.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 12-5-1925

181. UNTOUCHABLE SAINT NANDA

Shri Mahadev has called the story of Nanda from the literature of the South. I wish that everyone should read it with interest. Let no one believe that the story of Nanda is anyone's invention. There may be exaggeration in it. But there indeed lived a saintly *Antyaja* named Nanda six hundred years ago. That, by the strength of his character, he earned his right to enter a temple and that even today he is worshipped by Hindus as an avatar is not to be doubted.The sanctifying story of Nanda teaches us that though the condition in which one is born is the fruit of one's actions in the previous life, the Creator has left scope for human effort, so that an *Antyaja* like Nanda could, by the strength of his character, purify himself during his life and was regarded by others as purified. The Brahmins accepted him with love. If Nanda could become pure during his life, we must believe that all of us have that power in us. Every *Antyaja*, therefore, should have the right to enter our temples for worship.

I hope that no one will advance the argument that Nanda had entered fire [to prove the purity of his character], and that *Antyajas* are welcome to do what he did and then enter temples. The story of his going through fire is pure poetry. Or, even if we believe it to be true, he entered fire of his own free will. The vast majority of Brahmins were ready to permit Nanda to enter the temple for the purpose of *darshan*[2] on condition only that he should take a bath. The only moral we should draw from this story is that an *Antyaja* can, by right effort, purify himself during his present life. That is to say, the *Antyajas* should be free to enter temples on the same condition on which other Hindus can.

This much for the so-called caste Hindus.

Nanda's story is one which should inspire the *Antyajas* and

[1] *Vide* "At it Again", 7-5-1925.

[2] Sight of a person, place or thing considered holy

bring purity in their lives. I for one wish it should be read in every *Antyaja* home. But they should not content themselves merely with reading it. Every *Antyaja* should do what Nanda did. Let every *Antyaja* show Nanda's purity, as also his patience, his compassion, his truthfulness and his determination. Nanda was the very embodiment of satyagraha. He converted atheists to believers in God. May every *Antyaja* read the story of Nanda and be inspired by it to strive to rid himself of his faults and have the strength to succeed in his effort.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-5-1925

182. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Sunday, Vaishakha Vad 3 [*May 10, 1925*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL[2],

Herewith Puniya's letter which you want back. You will see that I have made use of it in *Young India* as well as in *Navajivan*.

I have already written to you about Chi. Rukhi[3]. I am learning here many new things about khadi work. Some of the work done here surpasses ours. Is our spinning and weaving being done smoothly and regularly? My health has been very nice so far. If Ramniklal[4] has come back, tell him that there was a letter from Charitravijayji[5] in which he has categorically denied everything. Let him collect as much evidence as he can about . . . and . . . I have not forgotten both these things, nor do I wish to. Do you know the facts about . . .? There are allegations against him of embezzlement and adultery, and those who

[1] The contents of the letter suggest that it was written during Gandhiji's Bengal tour in 1925.

[2] Gandhiji's nephew and associate; manager, Sabarmati Ashram; member, All-India Khadi Board

[3] Addressee's daughter

[4] Ramniklal Modi, an inmate of Sabarmati Ashram

[5] Founder of Mahavir Ratna Ashram, a centre for training students and others for propagation of khadi, at Sonegarh in Saurashtra

have informed me are firm in making those charges. If you or Chhaganlal[1] have come to know anything about it, please let me know.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Ba that I met Harilal[2] . I talked with him for three hours. Harilal particularly told me that Ba should not go to Calcutta. At present he is staying with some of his friends.

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 6206. Courtesy : Radhabehn Choudhri.

183. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Vaishakh Vad 3 [*May 10, 1925*][3]

REVERED ANASUYABEHN,

I write this from Chandpur on Sunday evening, after starting silence. Do not worry about me. Satis Babu is with me. He looks after me well. We have taken many small things with us. A doctor is also with us. I am quite comfortable. I will keep writing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 11547

184. SPEECH AT MERCHANTS' ASSOCIATION, PURANBAZAR

May 10, 1925

Replying to the address[4], Gandhiji at the outset expressed his keen sense of regret at his inability to bring either of the Ali Brothers with him. He said that the mere singing of his praise was of no use. What he wanted was complete Hindu-Muslim unity. Untouchability should go. He admitted that it did not exist in Bengal in the form in which it existed in South India, but from the *Namasudras* of Bengal, he came to learn of the iniquitous treatment which was being meted out to them. To remove poverty from Hindustan, they should all take to the charkha and wear khadi. He

[1] Addressee's brother and a close associate of Gandhiji since his South African days

[2] Gandhiji's eldest son

[3] The date has been inferred from the fact that Gandhiji was at Chandpur on May 10, 1925, which was a Sunday.

[4] Presented earlier to Gandhiji

wanted to purge the country of all sins, including the vice of drinking. It was his firm conviction that swaraj would never come to them unless they worked up the triple programme laid down by him.

The Hindu, 11-5-1925

185. SPEECH AT CIVIC RECEPTION, CHANDPUR[1]

May 10, 1925

Mahatmaji at first thanked the Reception Committee and the Municipality for the addresses (*manpatras* as he called them) they had given him. It was only the outcome of their love for him that the references to his virtues were made therein. Accepting their love he said he would pray to God for acquiring those virtues and he, therefore, accepted the encomiums as a token of their love.

Referring to the expression of disappointment mentioned in the Reception Committee's address so far as the amount of work was concerned, he said that there was nothing to be disheartened, if one would stick to one's work with earnestness, spirit of sacrifice and humility.

God said that we should always stick to the performance of our duty irrespective of the result.

Mahatmaji emphasized this, saying our religion teaches us to remain engaged to duty. He said that he understood the reason of the slow progress of their work; it was because the country had very lately entered into the sphere of real action.

Up to this time we had only talked of work, but did not apply ourselves seriously to undertake work. From the period of words we were approaching the period of action. We have to advance towards the spiritual life through the *sadhana* of karma now that we had stepped into the region of action. We realized our real situation ten years before when address, eulogy and clapping of hands, were the fashion of political platforms. We had thousands of workers. Nowadays it is no wonder that the number of workers at the charkha are found less.

[1] A public meeting was held on the Railway Ground in the morning. Hand-spun yarn and addresses printed on khaddar were presented to Gandhiji on behalf of the people and the Municipality. Gandhiji's reply in Hindi was translated into Bengali by Satish Chandra Dasgupta of Khadi Pratisthan, Sodepur.

Mahatmaji said that he did not feel at all disappointed at the abnormal decrease in the number of Congress members and no increase in the number of charkha. He felt that it was giving him more determination for work. For this reason he urged upon his brothers and sisters to have faith in their work. He said he would consider thirty members of the Congress who fulfil the conditions of the spinning franchise, Hindu-Muslim unity and untouchability more valuable assets than one crore of Congress members who would pay fouranna subscription and do nothing. He said that five or seven real and genuine coins were more valuable than one crore of counterfeit coins which should be thrown away into the river and discarded.

So the spinning franchise of the Congress is only a test to determine the real workers and it would help in finding out counterfeit materials. If anybody would say that he has no faith in charkha, he must give up charkha, but if you have faith in charkha you need not be disappointed because others do not take to it. You must be alive to your duty and go on with your work.

Mahatmaji emphatically said that, even if the charkha was given up by the last man of the country, he would alone remain in his house and work with his charkha silently for 8 hours a day.

He again referred to the miserable condition of the people arising out of want mentioned in the Reception Committee's address. He said he heard of water hyacinth pest in this part of the country which is greatly damaging yearly crop.

In my opinion, it is owing to the habit of indolence that we are suffering, and it is owing to the very same reason that the water hyacinth is increasing without any check. It is for the deliverance of the people of India from their miseries and adversities that I am preaching the gospel of charkha. Along with charkha, other items of work necessary for our deliverance could be introduced. Charkha give hope even in the midst of disappointment. Man is his own enemy as well as his own friend.[1] Remember God when you are in difficulty. God is so cruel that, unless you be dutiful, you cannot expect God's favour in any work. I exhort all to remember God and to go on working and working.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 13-5-1925

[1] A reference to the *Bhagavad Gita*, VI. 5

186. SPEECH AT NATIONAL SCHOOL, CHANDPUR

May 10, 1925

The Mahatma met the students at National School and the proceedings there were of extreme interest. He first called those boys who would consider themselves to be most wicked. None offered at the call at first. Later on some boys came forward admitting that they were wicked boys. Mahatmaji then called who considered themselves to be ignorant and silly. A big lot of boys offered themselves as belonging to the latter category which aroused laughter. Mahatmaji then explained the virtues of a wicked boy as well as those of ignorant boys and he gave them some instructions which were heard with attention. He asked them to realize the growing poverty of the country. Boys who spin the charkhas, he said, could feel this. Therefore he urged them to try their best to spin yarn daily. The boy who kept no ideal in view in spite of many disappointments was a naughty boy, and an idiot boy was one who felt satisfaction at nothing. The more he produced yarn, the more would he think that he had done his duty. In the struggle for swaraj these sets of boys are indispensable. Finally Mahatma Gandhi urged them to be respectful towards their parents, to love their teachers and all the members of the family and to be on friendly terms with their colleagues. With these words he gave them his hearty blessing.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 13-5-1925

187. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CHANDPUR [1]

May 10, 1925

Gandhiji began by saying that, as the Muslims predominated in the meeting, he wanted to tell them about the talk he had with the Ali Brothers in connection with Hindu-Muslim unity. They had decided that they should not fight again. It was impossible to get swaraj as long as they did not live together. They should resolve not to quarrel with each other and they should work at the charkha. Neither the Hindu nor the Muslims were doing any spinning work.

Incidentally, Gandhiji referred to the fact that the Muslims wore less khaddar and did less spinning. He appealed to them to do more work. They should remember what splendid work Sir P. C. Ray did during the Eastern Bengal Floods and how by the help of the charkha he assisted many Muslim sisters. Gandhiji also appealed to the Muslim sisters to spin. Crores of Hindus were dying of starvation. For them there was no other alternative but to take to the charkha. For this reason he was travelling in Hindustan and was appealing to them take up charkha work. Then and then alone

[1] Gandhiji addressed another public meeting in the evening attended by over, 5,000 people.

would they be able to drive poverty out of the country. Everyone he had spoken to had agreed that the charkha should be worked and that foreign cloth should be discarded. In spite of their admission, they did not use swadeshi cloth. The reason was they did not love their country and secondly they had no regard for their country.

Referring to untouchability Gandhiji said that the *Namasudras* were suffering a great deal, though not so much as in Southern India.[1]

The Hindu, 12-5-1925

188. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

Sunday [On or after *May 10, 1925*][2]

DEAR BRIJKRISHNA,

Your letter. I trust you; but to seek financial assistance on someone's behalf is outside my province. If I were to act thus with my rich friends our relations would become defiled. In this matter you must solve your difficulties by your own efforts.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 2370

189. A WORKER'S DIFFICULTY

[*May 11, 1925*]

Many suggestions are being handed to me during my Bengal tour. I appreciate them all, even though I may not be able to adopt them. Here is one from a staunch worker :[3]

I am writing these notes on my silence day[4] . Satish Babu of the Khadi Pratisthan is sitting by me. I therefore handed the suggestion to

[1] Later Gandhiji addressed a women's meeting and advised them to follow in the footsteps of Sita, and not to put on foreign cloth.

[2] The letter appears to have been writing after the one to the addressee on May 3, 1925. The Sunday following it was May 10.

[3] Not reproduced here. The worker had pointed out the comparative coastliness of khaddar because of the high price of cotton which could be remedied only through extensive cultivation and hoped that Gandhiji would stress the importance of this during his tour of Bengal

[4] Monday, May 11, 1925

him for reply as he knows the Bengal conditions much better than I can ever hope to. Here is his reply :

The writer thinks that the real difficulty about the spread of khaddar in Bengal lies in the high price of cotton. The remedy suggested is to introduce and encourage the cultivation of cotton.

It is surely a difficulty in Bengal that cotton is not grown everywhere. But it is not the only difficulty or a serious difficulty. Manchester buys her cotton from America and Bombay and sends her mill-products to India. Surely Bengal can get all the cotton she wants at any of the cotton marts of India. Lacs of rupees worth of cotton is grown in Bengal and sent away from the ports of Chittagong and Calcutta. Bengal does not utilize for home-spinning a fraction of the cotton she grows. She can use all her Chittagong and Comilla produce for home-spinning and buy what more she requires in the markets of Bihar and United Provinces.

The real difficulty in the way of the spread of khadi is neither its high price nor the absence of cultivation of cotton. What is wanting for the spread of khadi is a desire to spin and use khadi and an organization to create and cater for the desire.

The Ashram from which the writer sends the note may be made a centre for selling "cheap" cotton, i.e., cotton at fair market price. The Ashram might train up an expert in spinning and carding and then demonstrate to the sisters in the neighbourhood that with good slivers and a good charkha it is a pleasure to spin. It is only when spinning becomes irksome that imaginary difficulties about the spread of khadi crop up. If the sisters of Bengal are helped from orgnizations where charkha experts are in a mood to serve, then every difficulty will disappear and I may even see culti-vators introducing cotton cultivation without much coaxing.

Spinning is the central process. There are processes before it and after it. Cotton cultivation, ginning and carding precede, spinning and weaving come after. We must confine our attention to efficient carding, spinning and weaving now. Serious effort made by determined men from efficient organizations will override all difficulties and make spinning a success in Bengal. I hope to see such a day in the near future.

Whilst I fully endorse the reply, I would add that the men require as much organizing for spinning as women. Without the men organizing, it would be most difficult to get the women to respond. We need an army of voluntary spinners before we shall be able to organize women spinners for hire. It is only through husbands or fathers or brothers that we may hope to improve the wheel. The vast majority of workers are males. They are not able even to see the manner in which the women are working. But from the spinning exhibitions I visit, I am able to imagine what is going on behind the

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As for cotton-growing, all the parts of Bengal are not fit for growing cotton. Importation to some extent will always be, therefore, necessary. Every new industry requires protection. State protection we may not get as yet. Voluntary protection is, therefore, the only remedy. It can be afforded by free spinning. That is one object of the Congress franchise. The second method is to beg cotton and, like Gujarat, sell slivers or cotton at half price and getting the yarn woven also at half price for those who would spin enough for their wants. Comparison with the mills is a useless pastime. It is conceivable that Japan and Manchester may even practically give away their cloth to kill the reviving cottage industry of home-spinning. There must be, even then, people who will not have foreign or mill-made cloth even as a gift. It is they through whom we may expect to spread the charkha and make it a success.

Young India, 21-5-1925

190. INTERVIEW TO HARDAYAL NAG

CHANDPUR,
[Before *May 12, 1925*]

Gandhiji was interviewed by Babu Hardayal Nag and gave replies to questions put to him.

Q[UESTION]: Do you still hold that swaraj cannot come from abroad?

A[NSWER] : Yes, most emphatically.

Q. Then why did you not controvert Mr. Das's new theory of swaraj by way of gift and necessarily within the Empire?

A. I do not think that Mr. Das has said any such thing in his presidential address at Faridpur. I read the address quite differently from what you do. For Deshbandhu Das does not say that it is necessarily within the British Empire. On the contrary, he adheres to the formula—"Within the Empire, if possible; without it, if necessary."

Q. Do you not feel that certain classes of people are trying to change the colour of administration only, but not its character?

A. I know that some people merely want to change the colour but not the character.

Q. I venture to suggest that the Swarajists are trying to add another class to these classes for capturing the services with certain amount of false power transferred to them.

A. I hope not; nor do I believe it is so. I know Deshbandhu Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru. I am convinced that they will not be satisfied with mere change of colour.

Q. I cite the Calcutta Corporation as an instance. It is now manned by Swarajists, as far as possible. The Swarajists, I suggest, want to capture the provincial and local administrations only to man them with Swarajists.

A. I do not know what is happening in the Calcutta Corporation.

Q. I and many others think that swaraj must grow from within and it must be built in the village and we accept charkha as the only weapon for the foundation for it. Do you agree?

A. I literally endorse your view. But we feel that our task is very difficult on account of the apathy of the Swarajists. In Bengal, almost all the Congress organizations are in their hands and they have no

faith in charkha. That being the case, charkha is suffering most on account of want of provincial or district organizations.

Q. Do you approve of any separate organization in favour of charkha and khadi movement?

A. I shall be very sorry if I discover that the Swarajists have no faith in the spinning-wheel. I am aware that some of them do not possess the same faith in it that you and I have, but so far as my knowledge goes, I have not met a single Swarajist who has shown his disbelief in the spinning-wheel. Assuming that they do not believe in the charkha at all, I am still unable to understand your deduction that their apathy is hampering your or my progress. On the contrary, you and I should to that extent make greater effort. I, therefore, do not consider a separate organization for the development of spinning necessary, so long as the Swarajists do not repudiate the spinning-wheel.

Q. Do you recognize the fact that the two parties are not pulling on well in their respective work?

A. I do not recognize the fact, but if the two parties are not pulling on well, I would then blame the non-Swarajists more than the Swarajists, for the simple reason that the former had not the slightest occasion to stand in the latter's path. They at least have, I expect, made their final choice. Let them abide by it and live up to it.

Q. But considering the fact that you are the accredited leader of both the parties, does your duty end in blaming this party or that party?

A. Yes, certainly, because though I may be the nominal head of both the parties, I am myself a non-Swarajist. Therefore, I am entitled to blame the non-Swarajists more.

Q. Many of us have of course individually implicit faith in non-violent non-co-operation as a means to win swaraj. Now it is evident that the Swarajists are trying to discredit non-co-operation only for their class or party purposes and have already made gestures for co-operation, of course on certain terms quite immaterial to the people of the country. Under the circumstances, in his presidential address at Faridpur, Mr. Das has declared non-co-operation as a failure. In your speech, subsequently made at Faridpur, you laid stress on non-violence and truthfulness, but you did not say a word to save non-co-operation from the attack of Deshbandhu Das. Will you illuminate us on this point?

A. I have discovered no attack on the part of Mr. Das on non-co-operation. Therefore, non-co-operation was not a relevant matter. Moreover, I have debarred myself from saying a word upon non-co-

operation from the congress platform, being the author of the resolution suspending non-co-operation at Belgaum. But my own individual view is known to the world and my personal abstention from co-operation is an ocular demonstration of my view.

Q. Of course at Faridpur you spoke not as President of the All-India Congress Committee, but in your individual character and the phrases you used there were non-violence and truthfulness but not a word about non-co-operation. To my mind, non-violence without non-co-operation is meaningless. There is non-violence even in cowardice. If you have a firm faith in non-violent non-co-operation, how can you allow any Swarajist to speak against it without any protest?

A. As I have told you there is not a word, so far as I am aware, said in Deshbandhu's address against non-co-operation. And we should also recollect that I was speaking on the creed of the Congress. The creed of the Congress makes no mention of non-co-operation. But it does make mention of "peaceful and legitimate means" and I took care in my speech to say that I paraphrased these two terms by the adjectives : non-violence and truthfulness.

Q. Your declaration at Faridpur is that you have given your general power of attorney to Deshbandhu Das to do what he is doing in the Council. Anyone can take it by implication that his performances in the Council are on behalf of you as principal, he being only an agent of you. No one can be blamed for taking such a view of your statement according to the law relating to principal and agent. Is that the case? Do you support also what Deshbandhu Das does in the Council?

A. When I spoke of Deshbandhu Das or Swarajists being agents I spoke, as an Irishman once spoke of himself as one of the proprietors of the Empire, as one of the shareholders of the concern called the Indian National Congress. And the Congress having given authority to the Swarajists to prosecute their Council programme, I think I was quite correct in describing the Swarajists as holders of my general power of attorney, so far as their Council work is concerned. I need not, therefore, on that account endorse every detail of the Swarajists' policy in the provincial Councils or Legislative Assembly. As a wise and practical man, having once given my general power of attorney to the agents of my own choice, I do not bother my head about what they are doing.

Q. If the Swarajists succeed in obtaining a concession from the bureaucracy based on a certain agreement, will you be a party to that agreement?

A. Oh, when the terms of any agreement with the bureaucracy are out, I shall have to consider them. I have issued no power of

attorney to anybody to conclude any settlement with the Government. I therefore reserve, like every individual Congressman, my full right to scrutinize any terms of settlement that may be proposed for national acceptance.

Q. Do you understand what Deshbandhu Das means by provincial autonomy?

A. I can guess.

Q. Then what is it?

A. I take the word in the dictionary sense of the term.

Q. Can't I expect a clear answer from you on this point?

A. That is the answer. For I have closely followed Deshbandhu's address at Faridpur, but he has not gone into details there. Therefore, I am entitled to give provincial autonomy the meaning that is given to it in the English language.

Q. Is not the Faridpur speech liable to the interpretation that Deshbandhu Das has changed his views with reference to provincial autonomy?

A. I should think not. That is certainly not my impression.

Q. Then why has he fought shy of the phrase in his presidential address?

A. Has he laid any stress on this matter, I mean upon provincial autonomy? There was no occasion. All that he has laid stress upon is swaraj and swaraj is a term which to me is more inclusive because it goes farther than provincial autonomy.

Q. But can you illuminate us why he studiously avoided the word which he has been preaching so long?

A. For the simple reason that he has used a more general term, an inclusive term.

Q. Can you guess the ultimate result of the work of the Swarajists in Council?

A. I do not need to. Because whenever I want to understand what they have done, I have got the newspaper records to fall back upon. Further, I have got my own measure for gauging the worth of all such work. And I know that it can be no more and no less than the work that you and I are doing outside and internally. Because those who have gone to the Councils have declared and must declare that their potency depends upon the work done by the people themselves and the power evolved by them for self-rule, I suggest that measure for your and everybody's acceptance. In that case, we need not search the newspaper files nor resort to the dangerous pastime of guessing.

Q. Do you not feel that non-co-operation is suffering most on account of

your giving a long rope to the Swarajists?

A. I do not think so at all. Rather, I hold that it is suffering because of the weakness of non-co-operators.

Q. Are you aware that the Swarajists have not yet changed their methods?

A. What method?

Q. Their methods and procedure. I cite this instance. Do you know anything of the supersession of Dr. P. C. Ray's election as President of the Bengal provincial Conference at Faridpur?

A. I know nothing of it. What was it?

Q. At the time of election Dr. Ray stood second, while Mr. B. N. Sasmal stood first. Mr. Sasmal having resigned, Dr. Ray's election was set aside and Mr. Das was elected President. Do you not know anything about it?

A. I know nothing about it.

Q. If I cite this as an instance of their method, what have you got to say?

A. I cannot give any opinion without hearing the Swarajists and without knowing the full facts.

Q. Are you willing to enquire?

A. I would not lose my time over a thing that is finished.

Q. I bring this matter to your notice as a vivid example of the Swarajists' method. What have you to say to this?

A. I know nothing of their methods whatsoever. Without examining the instances, I am not able to pass any opinion, as I do not want to sit in judgment on the Swarajists or anybody, specially where there is no necessity for it.

Q. When you find the Swarajists have not yet changed their methods, can you accuse the puritans of incompetency?

A. In the first instance, you are assuming that the methods of the Swarajists are questionable. You would, therefore, have to satisfy me on that point. Secondly, I have not accused those whom you are pleased to call puritans, I do not know with what right, of their incompetency. But I have accused them of want of faith in their own mission. And even now, taking for granted for the sake of argument that the Swarajists' methods are questionable, what has that got to do with the purity of the puritans? Need I be impure, if the whole world around me is impure or is not that the time for testing the strength of my purity? I may only add that the puritans have not understood the implication of their claim. If they want to make good their claim, they should not grumble, they should not find fault with anybody in the

world, far less with their erstwhile co-workers, but they should silently and surely set their faces against obstacles and they should shine the brightest when the obstacles are the greatest.

Q. Is not the present attitude of the Swarajists worse than their open hostility?

A. If the Swarajists are really apathetic to charkha, I grant that it would be far better to be openly hostile than to be secretly apathetic.

Q. If the Swarajists are really apathetic, is not a separate organization or charkha and khaddar advisable?

A. Yes, certainly.

Q. If that is so, is it premature to think of a separate all-India non-co-operation organization?

A. I think it is premature for the present moment. We must finish this year of grace before pronouncing judgment or taking a decided step.

Q. Many orthodox non-co-operators feel embarrassed to work together with the Swarajists. Can you suggest other remedy?

A. A good non-co-operator ought not to feel embarrassed in working with the Swarajists. For what is the meaning of working with the Swarajist except to work charkha together with him if you have not got to work together with him in the Councils? I suggest a good non-co-operator will work even with the Viceroy, if the Viceroy will kindly sit down to the charkha.

Q. But Mahatmaji, you should not ignore facts, they are there.

A. I suggest then they are not non-co-operators because they have not understood the secret of non-co-operation. You non-co-operate with measures, not with men.

Q. We appreciate your view, but the fact is that we feel embarrassed. They are obstructing us.

A. I have not seen any statement to corroborate the charge that they are obstructing. If they are not spinning, that is not obstruction. They will obstruct you, when you go to the villages, ask the masses to spin and they say spinning is no good. That is obstruction. But I have not known that that charge can be levelled against a single Swarajist.

Q. Do you not know that the scheme suggested by them for the re-construction of the villages does not contain any scheme of charkha?

A. I can simply say that it was the Swarajists who organized the exhibition of khaddar at Faridpur and it was a pure charkha

exhibi-tion. Deshbandhu Das has laid stress in his presidential address on the constructive programme in the Congress, without which he held that they could achieve nothing. I may further add that I know the family of at least one Swarajist which is devoted to spinning as much as you or I can possibly be.

Q. Your reference to the Faridpur Conference reminds me of another objectionable method of the Swarajists. They invited you to kill the Non-co-operation Movement in Bengal, but they have been disappointed.

A. You are too suspicious, too diffident.

Q. But man proposes, God disposes. Mr. Desai wrote to me from Delhi that Mahatmaji would not visit Bengal very soon. But when you accepted the invitation of the Faridpur Conference, they did not think you would visit Bengal. But they were simply non-plussed when you accepted our invitation. It was to us a heavenly blessing. Do you not know that they did not want you to visit Bengal?

A. I think you are hyper-suspicious.

Q. Well, it is my mental attitude.

A. You are hopelessly wrong, because my tour has been jointly arranged by the Swarajists and non-Swarajists. It is the Swarajists who are taking me to Chittagong and Noakhali, because Chittagong and Noakhali were not on Satish Babu's tour programme.

Q. Did you not notice that the orthodox non-co-operators were conspicuous by their absence at Faridpur?

A. I do not know. Probably they were. If so, it was their fault.

Q. Can you ascribe any reason for it?

A. I cannot, except this that if they were absent, it was their fault.

Q. I suggest the reason is that that was the only way to save their life.

A. I think it is a libel.

Q. Do you feel that this unnatural combination of those having faith in constructive work and those having no faith in Council obstruction is creating a political scepticism in the mass-mind?

A. Mass-mind responds to work and nothing but work. Immediately there is solid work, self-sacrifice, the mass-mind sees it instinctively. Otherwise, the mass-mind goes to sleep like Kumbha-karna[1]. It does not listen at all.

[1] Brother of Ravana in the *Ramayana*, who slept for half the year at a stretch

Q. Do you think any political education is necessary for educating the masses?

A. Yes, that is charkha.

Q. If that is so, who should do it?

A. Of course, those who have kept awake a living faith in it. They should become the instructors of the masses.

Q. Do they not need any organization for it?

A. I am now coming from Calcutta, seeing two young men doing their work perfectly, effectively and systematically without any monetary or others aid. They need no organization. That is the beauty of the charkha.

Q. Is any change of heart possible in the hearts of our rulers who boast of tiger qualities?

A. Change of heart is possible, otherwise non-co-operation is of no use. Let there be first a change of heart among the non-co-operators, then there will be a change of heart in the rulers. I have no doubt in my mind about it.

Q. I only refer you to a case in the animal world. Do you think real friendship possible between a tiger and a sheep?

A. No, but that analogy cannot be carried to the human platform because man is man, whether he believes in spinning or in Council obstruction, whether he believes in the cult of the tyrant and the slave or in the brotherhood of man.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 14-5-1925

191. LETTER TO G. V. KETKAR

ON THE TRAIN,
May 12, 1925

DEAR MR. KETKAR[1]

I have read with pleasure the article on the *Gita Beej* sent me by Mr. Kelkar[2]. I really do not think that the *Gita* is a scientific treatise to be treated scientifically. We may, however, evolve science out of it.

[1] Editor, *Kesari*

[2] Narasinh Chintaman Kelkar; editor of the *Kesari* and *The Mahratta;* a close associate of Tilak; sometime Secretary of the Indian National Congress.

Your selection is certainly ingenious and supported by good reasoning. Whether it is the best, I cannot say.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

G. V. KETKAR, ESQ.

THE "KASARI" OFFICE

POONA CITY

From a photostat : G.N. 7963

192. LETTER TO C. RAMALINGA REDDY

May 12, 1925

DEAR MR. REDDY,

I have your letter. I am writing this on the train carrying me to Chittagong. I realize fully that the problem in the South is an exceptional problem though it is the same disease at bottom. In my opinion the construction programme too must fail not because the Scheme is bad but because we are not ready. Internal quarrels and jealousies leave us no time for anything else. The masses are untouched by them. Whether in the South or here in Bengal I find no difficulty in getting thousands [to] listen to the Congress message of the wheel. I can find no substitute for it, nor can I find at the present moment any addition to it. Untouchability is there. But I cannot find through it work for thousands. I have therefore practically staked my all on the wheel. Look at the untouchable problem in the South or the non-Brahmin question, who wants swaraj? Are we to divide ourselves into watertight compartments and show this is swaraj?

I am therefore more interested in the news you give me about your sister spinning. She is undoubtedly bringing swaraj nearer. Tell her, if I had any money and if I was a gambler, I would put my all on her and what is more expect to win.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : C. W. 11333. Courtesy : Dr. N. Rama Murthy and C. A. Reddi

193. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CHITTAGONG[1]

May 12, 1925

Mahatma Gandhi in the course of his speech said he was grateful for the addresses, but was sorry that he could not bring either of the Ali Brothers with him. He further regretted that Mr. Sen Gupta was also absent. Last time when he visited their place, he was prohibited from speaking by the orders of the Government. He thanked the Municipality for the splendid work they were doing. He did not know whether it was useful to make education compulsory. There were two opinions on the subject. He, however, promised to think over the matter more carefully. He thanked the Municipality for stopping drink and making its employees wear khaddar. Nothing could be done except by khaddar. Civil disobedience was an impossibility without khaddar. The charkha was necessary to drive poverty out of the country. His movement was for self-purification. He would never say anything which he did not do himself.[2]

I have been just now asked to say a few words in English. I know the Bengali infatuation for English. You have heard every word I said translated fairly accurately in Bengali, your mother tongue. I can't imagine I can drive truth home with greater force, or in clearer words, through the medium of a language which is as foreign to you as it is to me. However, I have to do my work and if I convert a few people to the cult of khaddar or convince, if they are not already convinced, a few of them to the truths of non-violence through the medium of the English language, I should do so. And therefore, if I take up your time just now by speaking in English, it is merely to flatter those who want me to speak in English, so that, perchance, if they have not yet seen the very simple truth that I have been speaking to the masses of India, they might be able to see it.

One of my co-workers said some years ago, writing in connection with the spinning-wheel, that its very simplicity frightened the educated classes. He said, and he said it with great truth in it, that because of its simplicity the educated Indians fail to understand its beauty and grand meaning. Simple as the spinning-wheel is, I am absolutely convinced, after years of continuous, deep and powerful

[1] Gandhiji arrived in Chittagong at 6 a.m. and addressed an hour later, a meeting of over 20 thousand people. Three addresses were presented to him on behalf of the Municipality, the Gandhi Reception Committee and the Cess-payers' Association of Chittagong. Gandhiji first spoke in HIndi and then in English.

[2] This paragraph is from a report in *The Hindu,* 13-5-1925. What follows is a report of Gandhiji's speech in English extracted from *Amrita Bazar Patrika,* 15-5-1925.

thinking, that there is nothing before India so efficacious for her many ills as the spinning-wheel and khaddar.

The problems of our dear country are so vast, so complex that nothing but a very simple remedy will solve the riddle. The complex character of the education and the training that we have received has confounded our thoughts, paralysed our brains and, unless we have something presented to us in an inexplicable manner, we refuse to see the truth that lies in it.

But if you tax your brains or, better still, if you retire into your private rooms to bend your knee before God and ask Him to guide you, He will guide your hand and put it unerringly on the spinning-wheel. We have spoken, we have delivered speeches, we have written in newspapers, we have published books, we have even made researches. But the age of speaking, the age of writing, the age of delivering oration is gone, never to return again. The age of action has commenced. You have to battle not against a race of speakers, but you have to give battle to the race of born workers—a race that has not known what it is to yield, a race that has inflexible determination, a race which is made of some of the finest soldiers in the world. No diplomacy that we can call to our aid will be able to do the task that is before everyone of us. You want mass consciousness, you want co-operation of the masses? You want Councillors to speak with power. At the present moment there is no power in their words—there is no power in their resolutions— not because they don't know how to speak. Deshbandhu has shown how he can outwit the Government in defeating its resolution, defeating its policy. But he can do little unless he has power behind him. You and I, everyone of us, can't go to the Councils. I have said repeatedly I don't believe in Councils. But I have granted, those who believe in Councils should go there. But I want to arm the Councillors with power. I do not want them to become discredited after they have gone there. I want them to be listened to with respect and attention by the Government. How is that to be done? Not by holding mass meetings, not by passing resolutions, not by approving of their policy of resolutions, but by giving some power to them. And you will not, cannot, give them power unless you have evolved it for yourselves, in yourselves. We have not got power. I defy anybody to match the violence of the Government with violence. No matter what may have been [done] in other parts of the world, I am positively certain that we should not attain our freedom by violent means.

I have placed, therefore, a non-violent programme with full knowledge of what I am doing and not because it is a religion, as it is with me, but because it is expedient. It is the only politics for the country. And he who has any political wisdom must come to the conclusion that violent means will serve no earthly purpose. I understand, I appreciate the impatience of those who are burning to deliver the country from the shackles that bind her. I yield to none in my desire to free the country from the shackles. But I consider myself to be a sane man. I regard myself as having a great deal of common sense. I regard myself as a man who has been something of the world. I am born a fighter from the earliest days of my youth. I am fighting even though it may be with my brothers, friends, wife, children, my co-religionists and, if it is Mussalman, with Mussalmans. But throughout my fight I have understood that one weapon is common to all these fights and that is the weapon of non-violence.

I could not fight my wife with violence, I could not fight my brothers with violence, I refuse to fight the Mussalmans with violence and I dare not fight the Hindus, some of whom are opposing me on the question of untouchability, with violence. I, therefore, deduce from that fund of experience that I cannot fight Englishmen with violence. You have seen in one of my writings that I have converted more Englishmen to love India than any single one of the present generation. I know it is a large claim, it is a proud claim, but it is the claim of the humble man, who has put forth that claim in all humility. I feel, if we are to fight our battle non-violently it will not be by mere words. Non-violence must be expressed in action. Action without intermission, without rest, without recreation, without the slightest pause, with continuous determination—action with the fullest faith in its efficacy is the only remedy for India and the only remedy that I can place in the hands of those little girls and boys, in the hands of the grownup people, in the hands of poets and philosophers, in the hands of sannyasins, politicians, learned professors and sweepers, in the hands of women and in the hands of robust men. The only universal remedy I can discover today is the spinning-wheel. Multiply the force of this charkha and spin until it is done by 3 hundred millions of men and then tell me what its power will be, tell me then what it will not do. Is there nothing that we can claim to our credit? Throughout all this long, dreary forty years of political life, we have not been able to show to the world one simple action done to perfection and to fulfilment. We have placed before ourselves many programmes, I place before

the nation only one programme and ask the nation to fulfil that programme before it can dare think of any other. Is it an impossible programme that you and I should wear nothing but khaddar, although it may be costly? It may be coarse. If it is costly, than, tear it into half and do cover your nakedness with half the cloth and it will go to your credit in the book of life. If it is coarse, then, for the sake of India, you will wear coarse cloth. Understand that the slavery of India is coarser than the coarsest khaddar, understand that the pauperism of India is infinitely coarser than the coarsest khaddar that can be produced in Chittagong. If you have heart to think for famishing millions of India, if you have heart to spin, then spin till your hands are paralysed and wear khaddar till you perspire in the coarsest khadi and then you will find that the swaraj of my dream—and of your dream—will break forth in the horizon and then you will dance in joy.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 15-5-1925

194. SPEECH TO STUDENTS, CHITTAGONG

May 13, 1925

Well, then I would say that true national education begins with training in spinning. Just as every boy in England receives naval training and you in Bengal normally know swimming and rowing, so the seven lakh villages in the country should know, for their own protection, spinning as a subsidiary occupation besides agriculture. Even in America, they attach importance to a subsidiary occupation, though the people there have no problem of the joint family and enjoy self-government. In India, no farmer can have enough to live on without some small extra income and he can get it only through spinning. Weaving will not serve the purpose, for it cannot be done only in spare time. I have been to the women's meeting and given them demonstration in spinning. Here is my spinning-wheel in this small bag.[1] You will not think it a particularly good one, but the one which was fine I gave away to Miss Ghosh in Faridpur. She is the head of the education department. She liked it and has written to me saying she will spin and also teach her friends to spin. You can ply it even while you are talking with friends, or relaxing in their company, or thinking about problems in geometry. Shepherds on our side ply it as

[1] Gandhiji held up his *takli*.

they walk. They watch their sheep and ply the *takli* at the same time. If you do not understand what I am saying, go and ask Satish Babu. He has joined this movement having given up his chemical works and his income. He will convince you better than I can because his is the brain of a scientist. If you feel that you should perform this daily *yajna* for the sake of your starving countrymen, start it right now.

Now tell me, how many of you are convinced of what I have said.[1]

Well, then, how many of you promise to spin?[2]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-5-1925

195. SPEECH AT TRADERS' MEETING, CHITTAGONG

May 13, 1925

My relations with merchants have always been close. I am sure in my mind that it is through merchants that we lost India and it is through them that we shall win it back. India's freedom cannot be secured through the educated classes. We do not know of any instance in the world of a country's freedom having been defended by its educated classes. Those who save a country are the traders and the soldiers. It was not through defeat in battle that India lost its freedom, it was through trade. I tell you, therefore, that when I get the fullest co-operation of merchants in my work, the country will have its freedom for the asking and I urge you to make your full contribution to the public cause of spreading the use of khadi. You should spin for half an hour daily by way of *yajna* and wear pure khadi. One or two of my millionaire friends spin and wear khadi. Why should you not do likewise? You can also help with both money and intelligence. If you want you can do more work than I do. I appeal to you to contribute to this cause with your body, mind and wealth.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-5-1925

[1] Between 50 and 60 students raised their hands.

[2] About 20 students raised their hands.

196. KHADDAR IN KARNATAK

I gladly publish the following[1] from Sjt. H. S. Kaujalgi about an experiment that is being made in the district of Bijapur for cheapening khaddar :

This idea of collecting cotton has certainly caught on. Mr. Bharucha reported the other day good collections in East Khandesh in which the Marwaris and the Parsis joined the local people in giving their quota. I would appreciate reports from the other places where similar experiments are being made.

Young India, 14-5-1925

197. NOTES

WEAVERS' COMPLAINT

With reference to the yarn sent by members under the Ahmedabad A.I.C.C. resolution, a worker writes :

> The weavers are complaining that there is no twist to the fine yarn. A large quantity will, therefore, be useless for weaving. The spinners seem more to have cared for the credit of having spun than for the quality of their spinning. I think you did not handle the hanks there. Some of the weavers are even returning the warp after sizing. Their second complaint is regarding the different sizes of hanks. On account of these avoidable defects, the weavers tell me they are not able to weave even one yard per day and thus can hardly earn even two annas a day.

This is a legitimate complaint. I have said in these pages that yarn that cannot be easily woven is not yarn at all, even as bread that cannot be eaten is no bread at all. The complaint is proof of great indifference on the part of the spinning members. Work ill-done is sometimes worse than no work. A lawyer who does not handle his case skilfully steals his client's money. A doctor who carelessly treats his patient steals his patient's money and may even be guilty of man-slaughter. Similarly, a spinner who spins indifferently and sends yarn that is not tested steals merit.

Under swaraj, we shall have the reins of government in our own

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had written that he along with a few others had collected cotton by begging from door to door. It was woven into and cloth made available to the people at a comparatively low price.

hands. How will it do if the officials skip over their work, as spinners seem to have skipped over their spinning? Spinning is a simple operation but it is a test of our merit. In that sense, any other such work will no doubt be an equal test. But spinning has been selected as it is the most needed in the country. There can be only one universal test and, in order to be universal, it should be simple, easy to learn, and should occupy the least time of each individual, so as to leave him or her free to devote time and attention to other pursuits, whether public or private. That test is spinning, and if even those who do take it up do their work negligently, indifferently or unskilfully, they will have failed in the easiest practical test imaginable. It may be that people do not like spinning or do not believe in it. Then, the straightest course would be not to spin at all. But to spin without putting one's heart into it is to deceive oneself and the nation.

THE HANDLOOM

The Director of Information has circulated a memorandum on handloom weaving done under the Department of Industries and Commerce. I publish below the salient extracts from the memorandum:[1]

May I point out to the Department that the attempt to introduce the handloom in the homes of agriculturists is foredoomed to failure? A little knowledge of the agricultural life will demonstrate the impracticability of such introduction. Hand-weaving is a long process requiring sustained labour and in itself demanding several processes at which more than one person is required to work at one and the same time. This is not possible in a peasant's cottage. Hence, from times immemorial, hands-weaving has been a separate occupation and an independent and sole means of livelihood. A peasant requires an auxiliary occupation which he can take up or leave at will. Such an occupation for the millions is only hand-spinning. There are, no doubt, other such occupations for utilizing odd moments. But no other than hand-spinning will be found to serve millions of men and women. Hence if the Department of Industries will justify its existence and will think in terms of the millions rather than of individuals and of India rather than of England, then it will devote its attention principally to hand-spinning, organize it among the villagers and

[1] Not reproduced here. It gave an account of the progress made in handloom weaving in the preceding 15 years. The Department had opened several schools in the agricultural areas to train people in weaving and dyeing.

make improvements in the various methods of hand-spinning. I am glad to note here that the kindred department in Bengal is turning its attention to hand-spinning though still in a perfunctory manner. This hand-spinning is the one thing in which the Government, if it at all means well, can co-operate with people in making it a success. We have often been told to co-operate with the Government. The proper and natural thing, however, is for the Government to co-operate with the people, anticipate their wants and provide for them. I would also take the liberty of pointing out to the Department that, until they control all the processes cotton has to go through before it is brought to the loom, the latter will act merely as feeder to Manchester, Japan or even Bombay. Whereas the business of the Department is or should be to teach the villager to subject the produce of his field to all the processes in his own home or village, so that he has a variety of occupation and so that he may not feel stranded and helpless when famine or flood overtakes him and leaves him without crops and without work.

Young India, 14-5-1925

198. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

NOAKHALI,
May 14, 1925

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letter. We certainly go to Shantiniketan and meet at Burdwan.

I note what you say about Mr. Mcmillan. If a man refrains from untruth for fear of punishment after death, is it any good? Shall we prefer destruction of moral bonds to their existence if they are due to force of public opinion? A friend who advocates birthcontrol frankly admits that he does not believe in the moral tie and that promiscuous intercourse is an ideal state. I wonder!

With love,

Yours,

MOHAN

C. F. ANDREWS, ESQ.
C/O MR. CHALIHA
JORHAT
ASSAM

From a photostat : G. N. 966

199. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Thursday, Vaishakha Vad 6 [*May 14, 1925*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

Your letter reached me here today. Do not be sorry if all the property is gone; and what does it matter even if the house is lost? Navibandar is the place where you can go just now because Devdas[2] has gone there. He is hardly likely to stay there long. But it is a quiet place. I have not myself seen it but have heard much about it. I hope you are well. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. VASUMATI DHIMATRAM,

DOULATRAM KASIRAM CO., ETC.

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 462. Courtesy : Vasumati Pandit

200. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Vaishakha Vad 6 [*May 14, 1925*][3]

CHI. MANI[4]

I was delighted to have your long letter. It is indeed very difficult to work among women. Nevertheless you should patiently do what you can. Dahyabhai must have gone to Mount Abu or to Navibandar. I have not forgotten about the conch-shell bangles you wanted. They are available in Dacca, which I shall be reaching in about three days. Has Father had any opportunity to go for a change?

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MANIBEHN

C/O VALLABHBHAI PATEL, BARRISTER

AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna patro—Manibehn patelne, p. 22

[1] Devdas was in Navibandar in 1925. In that year *Vaishakha Vad* 6 fell on May 14.

[2] Devdas Gandhi (1900-57); Gandhiji's youngest son; was associated with Gandhiji in most of his public activities and suffered imprisonment; Editor, *The Hindustan Times,* 1940-57

[3] As in the source

[4] Daughter of Vallabhbhai Patel

201. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, NOAKHALI[1]

May 14, 1925

Mr. Gandhi replying to the addresses said that he thanked them for the addresses presented to him. He was sorry to hear that Sjt. Satyendra Mitter was not present, but that he was in jail in Mandalay. He hoped that shortly he would come back. Speaking of Hindu-Muslim unity he said his sense of responsibility was double as none of the Ali Brothers was present. They were busy in their own work. He had heard that there was no disunion among them, but now disunion was visible in them. He said that both communities were unwilling to follow his advice. Whenever he found that there was disunion, he thought both were responsible for it. If they were determined to be united, there was no power on earth to separate them and he said that, if they did not clear up their minds, they both would be responsible. So long they had lived in unity and friendship.

Referring to untouchability he said that, so long as it would last, it was impossible for India to advance. Being a *sanatani* Hindu, he said that there was no such thing as untouchability in the Hindu religion. He thanked them for the attempt to uplift the class of untouchables, but he was told that some Brahmins were thwarting them. But he was sure that they would make a determined attempt to abolish untouchability. He hoped that the Noakhali people would do all in their power to remove it altogether. Further, he hoped they would explain this matter to washermen.

Concluding, he said that they were aware that many people had no work for four months in the year and, as a result, they were becoming poorer. All over the world, agriculture was supplemented by some work. And in Hindusthan, there was nothing like the charkha. That is why he called it *Annapurna*. From the fields they would get rice, but through the charkha alone they could improve their condition. He emphasized that the middle-class people should work at least half an hour daily on the charkha wherever they were. If they, for the sake of the poor people, worked on the charkha, there was no greater work. Hence he had been travelling in various places to emphasize on this point. Subsequently, he referred to erosion of Noakhali by river.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 16-5-1925

[1] Gandhiji was presented with four addresses at the meeting in the Collectorate compound attended by over 25,000 people, most of them Muslims.

202. INTERVIEW TO TEACHERS AT NOAKHALI

May 14, 1925

On the occasion of Mahatma Gandhi's visit to Noakhali on the 14th instant, an interview was sought for and granted by him to some representatives of the District Teachers' Association. The deputationists put some searching questions to Mahatmaji regarding the present system of education and asked how, under the existing circumstances, the teachers could render real service to the country. Mahatmaji smilingly began by saying, "Spin and spin still more." He then advised the teachers that they should change the entire moral atmosphere of educational institutions by making impressions upon the minds of boys who are completely under their control by the example of their own character and work. If the teachers, he said, were earnest in their efforts, no amount of Government interference through the agency of the Inspectorate could thwart their aims and objects, as the teachers were not Government servants. Though the teachers of Bengal, and for the matter that of the whole of India, form a distinct class, yet no united effort at this stage could be expected. But individual earnest workers should bear their part manfully. Concluding, Mahatmaji remarked that he had in the past pointed out the duties and responsibilities of teachers and would do so more emphatically and definitely through the columns of his paper.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 21-5-1925

203. REPLY TO WOMEN'S ADDRESS, NOAKHALI

May 14, 1925

Who says that woman is dependent on others? The Shastras say nothing of the sort. Sita was Rama's better half and enjoyed empire over his heart. Neither was Damayanti[1] dependent. Who will say, after reading the Mahabharata, that Draupadi[2] was dependent on others? Who will call Draupadi dependent, Draupadi who, when the Pandavas failed to protect her, saved herself by an appeal to Lord Krishna? We cherish as sacred the names of seven women as chaste and virtuous wives. Were they dependent? A woman who has the strength to preserve her purity, to defend her virtue—to call such a woman dependent is to murder language and violate dharma.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 31-5-1925

[1] Wife of King Nala, in the *Mahabharata*

[2] Wife of the five Pandava princes, in the *Mahabharata*

204. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, COMILLA[1]

May 15,1925

Mahatmaji replied suitably saying that the addresses might be presented in Bengali. He would, he said, appreciate it better if, in future, those who wanted to give him addresses would do so either in Bengali or in Hindi. He was told that Comilla proposed to go forward, but found facts not bearing out this statement. He said he was not in the least sorry for being instrumental in introducing the charkha as franchise for the Congress. They admitted the truth that their work should begin in the villages; but let them ask any worker, and he (the worker) would unhesitatingly reply that the charkha was the only remedy—that was the surest way of removing the growing poverty of the masses. Mahatmaji then thanked the people of the locality for living together in perfect harmony and emphasized its absolute necessity for attaining swaraj.

He regretted that Ali Brothers did not accompany him. Maulana Shaukat Ali did not like to leave Bombay before finishing his work there and Maulana Mahomed Ali could not leave Delhi as he was busy with two papers. But he had not come to Comilla to tell new things. In one address there was a tone of despair, but the note of despair was throughout India. He was not sorry for the franchise for the membership of the Congress. He could think of no medicine for India except the charkha. He did not ask the middle-class people to take to charkha for their bread, but they were to be examples to the poor and make a sacrifice for Hindusthan. Besides this, Hindus and Muslims must cleanse their hearts and in this there is happily no difference between the two communities. In conclusion, he dealt with the question of untouchability.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 17-5-1925

205. SPEECH TO STUDENTS[2]

COMILLA,
May 15, 1925

Mahatmaji addressed the students in English. He thanked them for the clear exposition of their position and reminded them that the future of India lay upon her youths. He again emphasized the meaning of the ideal of swaraj which was dharma raj as opposed to *adharma* raj. He asked them to observe *brahmacharya* and made them

[1] Addresses were presented to Gandhiji, at a public meeting in the morning, by the Municipality, the District Board, the Traders' Association, Ryots' Association and Santisena.

[2] In an address presented to Gandhiji, the students stated that only two per cent of them spun and wore pure khadi. This poor response was due to their lack of faith in the charkha and their indolence.

realize the grave responsibilities they had to undertake in the regeneration of the country. He asked them to read books, but that, in his opinion, should occupy only second place, for the primary duty was to form their character without which all learning was of no avail. Mahatmaji stressed upon the fact that the charkha would help them in the formation of their character.

Analysing the reasons of the negligence of the charkha, Mahatmaji assign- ed it mainly to their failure to appreciate the groaning poverty of the masses. As to the reference that the charkha did not give return for labour, he mildly admonished them and said this habit of calculation ought not to disfigure their lives from boyhood. They should, he said, view the matter from a higher point of view and retain faith in the charkha. Let them not see to their own comforts, but let them feel that every yarn spun by them was nearing the solution of India's problems. The remedy lay in their hands and he hoped the students would act up to his programme.

Referring to the Hindu-Muslim problem, he said that those elderly people who wanted Government employment and who wanted to go to the Councils might fight, but the students had no time nor business to do it.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 17-5-1925

206. REPLY TO WELCOME ADDRESS[1], COMILLA

May 15, 1925

It will be a mere formality on my part to thank you for this welcome address, for, as you yourselves have admitted, I too have had a share in bringing this Ashram into existence.[2] When I was preparing to visit Bengal, I had a keen desire to meet young men like you and see their work. I know very well the sacrifices which they have made. I know that, until we have many such persons in the country who come forward to make sacrifices, we cannot hope for swaraj. For every young man, renunciation should be his enjoyment. I have never believed that rennuciation means suffering, and, if anyone believes that it is so, his renunciation will not endure. Hence, whenever in the course of my tours I come across instances of renunciation and see young men giving up positions of Rs. 500 to Rs. 1000 a month and accepting just a few pice for their livelihood, I do not feel unhappy. On the contrary, I feel that such youths have lost little, having freed themselves from the burden of heavy emoluments.

[1] Presented by Abhoy Ashram; the speech has been extracted from Mahadev Desai's report.

[2] When Gandhiji was in Bengal in 1920, he had approved the scheme of founding this Ashram.

But I wish to stress one thing, for when we give up a thing for the sake of service, we generally embrace something else in its place. I know that some young men think of self-sacrifice as sufficient in itself. But this is a great error. While giving up something, one should know what other work one must take up. Only then will our life be filled with contentment. We should thus use discrimination in all our activities. According to me, the youths who come forward today to serve the country should have before them only one aim—how to provide work for the idle millions. They will see then that we have no other means of doing so except the spinning-wheel. Hence I regard the medical work and the running of a [medical] school here as unimportant activities.[1] Both these activities have a place only in so far as they can supplement the spinning movement. I was, therefore, glad to learn that in your school, too, spinning and other khadi work is going on. I should advise the workers who run this school to take a vow that, after a fixed date, no boy or girl not wearing khadi would be admitted to this school. The parents should be informed that their children would be obliged to spin and wear khadi. The same rule should be followed in running the dispensary. It would be my wish to see everyone whom I treated here dressed in khadi. There are, of course, many other dispensaries. Running a dispensary is nothing new and that is why young men are able to take up this work. I hope that all persons who have taken a vow of service and renunciation will go in only for those activities which are most difficult, which can be universally adopted and will be most productive of results in our country.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-5-1925

207. TALK TO WORKERS OF VIKRAMPUR

COMILLA,

May 15, 1925

In course of a conversation with some of Vikrampur workers, he [Gandhiji] made his position clear with regard to the proposed abolition of yarn franchise. He said :

The time for retirement from the Congress is not come nor for establishing an All-India Spinning Association. If spinning franchise

[1] This remark was with reference to Dr. Suresh Bannerji's statement that they had planned to set up not only a dispensary but also a medical school.

is abolished, it will be time then to think of a separate organization, but if I am allowed to act up to my programme as an integral body of the Congress, just as the Swarajists are at present, I disfavour the idea of a separate organization. If that is refused to me, I shall have to start a new organization.

As regards complete unity among Hindus and Mussalmans, Mahatmaji said:

I don't expect complete unity between Hindus and Mussalmans, I expect workable unity to get swaraj either today or a hundred years after. This workable unity must be established. This unity does not mean extraction of some power from the Government.

As to the meaning of untouchability, Mahatmaji said :

Untouchability is a question of sanitation. If a man is sanitarily clean, I can not only take water from his hands, but allow him to cook my meal; but that is not inter-dining. If a man takes meal from my plate, I call that inter-dining. I don't even allow my wife to share my food from my plate. As a Hindu wife, she often wishes to do it. But, as I don't always swallow everything of Hinduism, I decline to do this.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 17-5-1925

208. INTERVIEW WITH A FRIEND

[After *May 15, 1925*]

We are repeating our past mistakes, Mahatmaji, he said, in 1905-1908 we built a house of cards which broke down no sooner than it was put up and we are in for the same thing now.

You compare the earlier swadeshi agitation with the present? You forget that we have no fireworks now, but only quiet work.

I know it, sir, but there is no organization.

Pardon me, you are ignorant of the state of things. Do you know that we have the best organizations in Bengal, Tamilnad and Gujarat for example? You think institutions like the Khadi Pratishthan and Abhoy Ashram, Comilla, are going to die?

But how will they go on? We are living on subsistence allowance and asking our young men to do with less. How long can it go on?

How long? Why, our whole history is replete with it. You think our young men have no grit? They have gone to their work with eyes open and they are not going to give it up, whatever happens. The Abhoy Ashram, which I saw a few days ago, is situated on a beautiful spot; they have got clean nice little huts, a beautiful tank and a plot of

land. They cook their own food, do their own scavenging and make both ends meet from the proceeds of a hospital. Dr. Suresh is no child, he knows his business and he will see that his khaddar work goes on increasing every day, whatever happens to him and his co-workers. And Khadi Pratishthan, whose rates are very high you say, have at the present moment more orders than they can cope with. Look at Satish Babu's work. Have you ever been to the flood areas? From flood relief they have embarked upon permanent relief work. And I may tell you that Khadi Pratishthan does not believe in subsistence allowance. It pays its workers their market wages.

Well sir, it is your visit that has created a boom.

It does not matter. You may call it a blister. It will fall back to its normal state which is quite satisfactory. And go to a yarn *hat*[1]. Where only a few maunds of yarn was being sold, hundreds of maunds are being sold today. There are hundreds of families supplimenting, if not earning, their livelihood from their charkha. It is a sight to see how the workers are besieged by people asking for cotton to spin, on the market days. 'And if these workers retired from their field, what would happen?,' you may ask. But they cannot retire. They did not give up their fine careers for nothing. The Abhoy Ashram men have got three strings to their bow, a hospital from which they find the wherewithals and which Suresh Babu thinks of supplementing by a medical school—and he has got enough medical talents—and besides the khadi work which is the main thing, they are running a big boys' school, hoping to have greater hold on the people through the boys. Then there are Pravartak Sangh workers. I do not know their work, but I know they are as many as 200 and they are working against tremendous odds.

"But there are only three such institutions," said the questioner still unsatisfied.

By no means. There are many more working away in their humble way, and if they were only t hree, what then? There are men like Jamnalalji[2] Rajagopalachari[3] Shankerlal Banker, giving all their twenty-four hours to the work, working with devotion and dogged pertinacity. They are working with patience to wait for a century if

[1] Weekly market

[2] Jamnalal Bajaj (1889-1942); merchant , social worker and philanthropist; treasurer of the Congress for a number of years and a close associate of Gandhiji.

[3] C. Rajagopalachari (b. 1879); lawyer, journalist, author and statesmen; Governor-General of India, 1948-50

necessary and working with the desire to succeed to-morrow. And you do not know how the swadeshi movement of 1905-8 differs from the present. It was a movement magnificent in conception. But it had no knowledge or organization behind it. It made the boycott of British cloth a shibboleth, and relied on the bro-ken reeds of the mills of Bombay and Ahmedabad. Today you are guarding against all the disasters that attended the earlier enterprise. Today you bid fair to show that, if all the mills in India were burnt down, you can clothe the whole of India by cloth produced by your cottage spinners and weavers.

Let us not be too sure. You know of people who in those days had to hang themselves for want of cloth.

You are talking of the days of Noah, my friend. Weavers were then deluded into the belief that they could not weave except with machine-spun or foreign yarn. Today I am asking the whole organization to be taken into intelligent hands. No movement can be made universal unless it can be propagated entirely without foreign agency. But I ask you to study things; study the prices of khaddar in the beginning of the movement and today; study the quality of it; study the yarn we are producing; in short, study the evolution of the charkha and khaddar, and then say what you have to say.

Can't we depend on the growth of our mill-industry?

I have often shown in pages of *Young India* the fallacy of those who argue in favour of the mills and shall not labour the point today. I do not want to depend on mills, I want the mills to depend on me. That is the long and short of it.

we can have national mills.

Well, he who suggests a proposition must work it out himself.

I do not know whether he went away convinced, but he apologized for having tired Gandhiji who assured him that no one could tire him out on the charkha.

Young India, 2-7-1925

209. TALK TO A MUSLIM FRIEND

[After *May 15, 1925*]

A Mussalman friend came with a long catalogue of grievances. First was untouchability against them observed by the Hindus; second, differences about cow-slaughters; third, insufficient representation; fourth, books and pamphlets against Islam; fifth, newspaper reports about abductions and such other alleged crimes by

Mussalmans; sixth, exclusion from services; seventh, exactions by *mahajans*; eighth, *abvabs* by zamindars for Kalipuja. Gandhiji showed him that some of the grievances were purely local, some were against particular individuals and some reciprocal; the real grievance was the first. And he immediately agreed that that was the principal grievance and others arose out of it. "They do not even sell sweetmeats to us, Gandhiji," said he.

Yes, I see it. That is a genuine grievance; but you should not, as you did in the beginning, magnify everything into a grievance suffered by Mussalmans as a community. I tell the Hindus that, if they want to protect Hinduism by an elaborate law of pollution, then it had better perish. You cannot convert India into a *Jazirat-ul-Arab.* Hindus have, in the days gone by, absorbed all sorts of nationalities. I am sure we shall have to revise our code of pollution and remove the unnecessary barriers that strangle Hinduism rather than strengthen it. We were never exclusive, we were inclusive. Its beauty is that it has never been a missionary religion like Islam or Christianity ever counting heads. It has carried on absorption unconsciously, following a sort of natural accretion. "Why', I ask my Hindu friends, "why do we at this time of the day prevent sweetmeat sellers from selling sweets to Mussalmans when we have no objection to getting chocolates from a European confectioner?"

Young India, 2-7-1925

210. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, COMILLA[1]

May 16, 1925

Mahatmaji said in his reply to the address that he felt pleasure in receiving their address and should feel more pleasure when all the sisters would be spinning and wearing khaddar. Mahatma desired them to follow the ideal of Sita, which was an ideal of absolute purity. Cloth made of yarn spun on charkha was then in use and there was no poverty then in the land. Foreign cloth was impure and not to be worn on their pure body. He expected the ladies to take a vow not to wear foreign cloth. Mahatmaji appealed for the removal of the blot of untouchability and said those who showed contempt to fellow human beings on the alleged sanction of religion committed an impious and irreligious act. Ramachandra became purer by embracing Guha, a *Chandal*[2].

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 17-5-1925

[1] Gandhiji was presented with an address to which he replied in Hindi.
[2] Member of a community treated as untouchable

211. POWER OF "RAMANAMA[1] "

A correspondent asks the following question :[2]

I do not know the writer. The fact that he had the letter delivered to me through his brother when I was leaving Bombay shows the strength of his curiosity in this matter. Ordinarily, such questions should not be discussed in public. It is evident that, if it became the general practice with the public to probe into the private life of an individual, most unpleasant results would follow. But I cannot escape being the object of such curiosity, whether it is worthy or unworthy. I have no right to try to escape. Neither do I wish to do so. My private life has become public life. For my part there is not a single thing in the world which I would conceal from others. My experi-ments are spiritual. Some of them are novel. They depend very much on self-exami-nation on my part. I have carried them out, following the maxim: "As in one's body, so in the universe". The underlying assumption is that what is possible to me must be so to all others. Hence I have to answer some questions about private matters too.

Moreover, I cannot resist the opportunity I have got, in answer-ing this question, of explaining the power of *Ramanama*.

I should, however, like to request this correspondent and others who may put questions to me in future that, if they base their questions on newspaper reports, they should send me copies of the papers in question. I have often stated that I do not read newspapers for the simple reason that I am not able to do so. I do not know what *Saurashtra* has written. It is difficult to take notes of my speeches. Mahadevbhai does so, but I do not always, approve the notes he takes.The reason is that when subtle or new ideas are being expressed, an error in reporting even one word may misrepresent the speaker's meaning. Hence, when reporters who are not familiar with my ideas take notes of my speeches, they can never be relied upon, and I have often asked readers not to depend on such reports. When they have a doubt about anything, they may ask me and, while doing so, they should also send me a copy of the newspaper in which they have read reports of my speeches.

[1] Repitition of the holy name of Rama

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had mentioned Gandhiji's statement in a speech that he had thrice been saved from sin by *Ramanama*. Pointing out that a local paper, *Saurashtra*, had commented on this statement and drawn inferences which were not clear, he had asked Gandhiji himself to explain what he had meant.

With these prefatory remarks, even though I do not know what *Saurashtra* has said on the matter, I shall describe how I was saved on those three occasions by the grace of God. All the three occasions concern public women. I was taken to two of them by friends on different occasions.

On the first occasion, I went to the place[1] out of false regard for the friend and, if God had not saved me, I would certainly have fallen. This time the woman whose house I had entered herself threw me out with contempt. I simply did not know what to say or how to behave in such a situation. Prior to this incident, I always regarded it as shameful even to sit near a public woman, so that I was trembling even when entering that house. After going in, I could not even look at her face and I do not know what her face was like. What could that smart woman do to such a fool but turn him out? She said a few angry words to me and asked me to go away. At that time, of course, I did not realize that God had saved me. I left feeling miserable. I felt crest fallen and even unhappy about my stupidity! I felt that I lacked manliness. It was later I realized that I had been shielded by my stupidity. God had saved me by making me behave like a fool. Else how could I, who had entered a house of ill-fame with evil intention, have been saved?

The second occasion was more dreadful than the first one. I was not so innocent then as I was at the time of the first incident, though I was of course more vigilant. Moreover, I had the protection of a vow administered to me by my revered mother.[2] But this time the place was in England. I was in the very flush of youth. Two of us friends were lodged in one house. We had gone there only for a few days.[3] The land-lady was as good as a prostitute. Two or three of us sat down to play cards with her. In those days I used to play cards on occasion. In England, a mother and a son can, and do, play cards for innocent amusement. On this occasion too, we sat down to play, following the usual custom. The beginning was completely innocent. I, of course, did not know that the landlady lived on her body. But as the play

[1] In Rajkot, when Gandhiji was a high school student; *vide An Autobiography*, Pt. I, Ch. VII.

[2] Gandhiji's mother was unwilling to send him to England, but when he vowed not to touch meat, wine and woman, she gave her consent; *vide An Autobiography* Pt. I, Ch. XI.

[3] In connection with the Vegetarian Conference at Portsmouth; *vide An Autobiography*, Pt. I, Ch. XXI.

warmed up, the atmosphere changed. The woman started making gestures. I was observ-ing my friend. He had abandoned all restraints. I felt tempted. I was flushed in the face, for lust had entered me and I had become impatient.

But who can harm him whom Rama protects? To be sure, His name was not on my lips at that hour, but He ruled my heart. On my lips was the language of lust. My good friend noticed my behaviour. We knew each other very well. He had seen me in difficult sutuations in which I had, with an effort of will, kept my purity. But he saw that on this occasion evil had entered my mind and that, it the night progressed while I was in that mood, I too would fall like him.

It was this friend who first made me realize that even immoral men have good instincts. He felt unhappy to see me in that plight. I was younger than he. Rama came to my help through his person. He aimed arrows of love at me: "Moniya!" (This is an affectionate form of "Mohandas". I remember that I used to be called by that name by my mother, my father and the eldest cousin in our family. The fourth person to call me so was this friend who, through his goodness, proved a brother to me.) "Moniya, be careful. You know that I have fallen. But I shall not let you fall. Recall the promise you have made to your mother. This thing is not for you. Be off from here. Go to bed. Are you gone? Throw off the cards."

I do not remember whether I replied to him. I put down the cards. For a moment I felt unhappy. I felt ashamed and my heart began to beat fast. I got up and went to bed.

I woke up. I started repeating the name of Rama."How miraculously I have been saved, how He has saved me! All honour to my promise! All glory to my mother! All glory to my friend ! All glory to Rama!"—I kept saying to myself. For me this was indeed a miracle. If my friend had not shot at me the invincible arrows of Rama, where would I have been today?

He on whom Rama's arrows have lighted—
he knows what they are.
He on whom love's arrows have lighted—
he knows what they are.

For me, this was an occasion when I first became aware of the existence of God.

If today the whole of world told me that there is no God, no

Rama, I would say it lied. If I had fallen on that terrible night, I would not today be waging battles of satyagraha, would not be washing away the filth of untouchability, would not be repeating the holy name of the spinning-wheel, would not regard myself fit to be blessed by the *darshan* of millions of women, and would not be surrounded by hundreds of thousands of them who sit near me without fear as they sit around a child. I would always be running away from them, and they would have quite justifiable kept themselves at a distance from me. I look upon this occasion as the most perilous in my life. Seeking pleasure I learnt self-restraint. On the path to forsake Rama's name, I had his *darshan*. A miracle indeed.

> Oh scion of Raghu's race, protect my honour,
>
> I am a fallen man, old in my evil ways;
>
> Take my boat safely to the other shore.

The third incident[1] is amusing. During one of my journeys, I came into fairly close contact with the ship's captain, as also with an English passenger. In every port where the ship weighed anchor, the captain and some passengers would go and search for brothels. The captain once invited me to go with him and see the port. I did not know what that meant. We went and stood before a prostitute's house. Then I knew what was meant by going to see a port. Three women were produced before us. I was completely taken aback, but felt too embarrassed to say anything. Nor could I run away. I had of course no wish to indulge in this immoral pleasure. Those two went into the rooms. The third woman led me into her own room. While I was still thinking what I should do, the other two came out of the rooms. I do not know what that woman must have thought about me. She stood smiling before me, but that did not have the slightest effect on me. Since we spoke different languages, there was no question of my talking to her. Those friends shouted for me and so I went out. I certainly felt a little humiliated. They had seen that I was a fool in these matters. They even joked between themselves on this point. They pitied me, of course. From that day, I was enrolled among the fools of the world, as far as the captain was concerned. He never invited me again to see a port. If I had remained in the room longer or if I had known that woman's language, I do not know what would have been my plight. But I certainly realized that day, too, I was not

[1] *Vide An Autobiography*, Pt. II, Ch. VI.

saved by my own power, but that it was God who had protected me by having made me stupid in such matters.

I remembered only these three incidents at the time of the speech in question. The reader should not think that I have not been through more of similar experiences. But I certainly wish to state that every time I escaped, thanks to *Ramanama*. God gives strength only to the weak who approach Him in utter helplessness.

So long as the elephant trusted to his own strength,
So long his efforts availed him not.
Let the weak appeal to Rama's strength,
He will come to help before the name is uttered in full.

What, then, does this *Ramanama* mean? Is it something to be repeated parrot-like? Certainly not. It that were so, all of us would win deliverance by repeating it mechanically. *Ramanama* ought to be repeated from the depth of one's heart; it would not then matter if the words are not pronounced correctly. The broken words which proceed from the heart are acceptable in God's court. Even though the heart cries out "*Mara, mara*" [1], this appeal of the heart will be recorded in one's credit column. On the contrary, though the tongue may pronounce the name of Rama correctly, if the lord of that heart is Ravana, the correct repetition of Rama's name will be recorded in one's debit column.

Tulsidas did not sing the glory of *Ramanama* for the benefit of the hypocrite who "has Rama's name on his lips and a knife under his arm". His wise calculations will go wrong, while the seeming errors of the man who has installed Rama in his heart will succeed. Rama alone can repair one's fortunes and so the poet Surdas[2] lover of God, sings:

Who will repair my fortunes?
O who else but Rama?
Everyone is a friend of his on whom good fortune smiles,
None of his whom fortune has forsaken.

The reader, therefore, should understand clearly that *Ramanama* is a matter of the heart. Where speech and the mind are not in harmony with each other, mere speech is falsehood, no more than

[1] *Rama* pronounced wrongly, that is, in the reverse, and then meaning *"dying, dying"*

[2] A medieval Hindi poet

pretence or play of words. Such chanting may well deceive the world, but can Rama who dwells in man's heart be deceived? Hanuman[1] broke open the beads in the necklace which Sita gave him as a gift, wanting to see whether they were inscribed with Rama's name. Some courtiers who thought themselves wise asked him why he showed disrespect to Sita's necklace. Hanuman's reply was that, if the beads were not inscribed with Rama's name inside, then every necklace given to him by Sita was a burden to him.The wise courtiers there upon smilingly asked him if Rama's name was inscribed in his heart. Hanuman drew out his knife and, cutting open his chest, said : "Now look inside. Tell me if you see anything else there except Rama's name." The courtiers felt ashamed. Flowers rained on Hanuman from the sky, and from that day Hanuman's name is always invoked when Rama's story is recited.

This may be only a legend or a dramatist's invention. Its moral is valid for all time : only that which is in one's heart is true.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-5-1925

212. SIR SURENDRANATH BANERJEA

Who has not heard of Sir Surendranath Banerjea? There was a time when he was known as the lion of Bengal, and was one of the pillars of the Congress. Young Bengal used to worship him. Thousands of youths eagerly waited for an opportunity to listen to his roar. When Surendranath stood up and spoke, the people never felt tired of listening to his speech. At the time of the Congress session in Poona in 1895, Sir Surendranath was its President. His speech ran into an eighty page booklet of octavo size. He had written out the speech, but he delivered the whole of it without reference to the text and the speech did not differ from the printed text even in one word. He had referred to a sheet of paper only to read out certain figures. It took him three hours to deliver his speech, and it is said that the people listened attentively to his speech lasting so many hours.

Now times have changed. Today the people will not give even one hour to the best of speakers. The love of oratorical speeches has almost vanished.

But a wonderful memory and powerful oratory were not Sir Surendra's only qualities. He has fought many battles against the Government. He also went to jail. He has been a teacher of a high calibre. His services were of great value. It is our fault that we

[1] The Vanara-hero in the *Ramayana;* humble and devoted servant of Rama

underrate them today. No one else could have done in those days what he did. It is ingratitude to forget the virtues of a man of a past age simply because times have changed. The services of such a person should be measured only by the standards of his age. If we apply today's standards to him, we shall be doing injustice both to him and to us. We do injustice to ourselves because, if we forget our legacy of the past, that would be so much loss to us. There is little in common between his views and mine, and yet my respect for him is the same today as it was then. I can never forget the services he rendered to the country. When, therefore, I heard the news of his illness I went[1] to his villa to inquire after him. I had never seen it before. He lives in a quiet suburb of Calcutta named Barrackpore. His villa stands on an extensive plot of land in the middle of a beautiful park, with the Ganga flowing in front of it. As it is in a secluded spot, great quiet reigns there.

I thought I would see him lying in bed, but he was sitting in his writing chair in front of his table laden with books. On seeing me, he rose from his seat and embraced me very lovingly. His body had certainly become emaciated but he stood erect. There was no weakness in his voice. He is 77 years of age and yet he discussed every matter with lively interest like a 17-year-old youth. When I praised his power of memory, he said : "Even today my memory is as good as it was. So well do I remember things of the days when I was just a child five years old that I can describe those events just as they happened." Only recently he has published his reminiscences. It took him nine years to write them; he showed me the exercise books in which he had recorded the incidents. The matter covers five or six books of foolscap size. His handwriting is so clear and uniform that I was moved to admiration. Nowhere did I notice evidence of the hand shaking.

I asked him what he read these days. He replied with a smile: "Shall I tell you? I am going through my reminiscences for the purpose of a second edition. I want to make some changes and additions. I have been told by the booksellers that all the copies will be exhausted by the end of the year. I am, therefore, getting ready [for a second edition]."

The conversation turning to the subject of his physical condition, he said : "I shall live to be 91. I still have so much energy that it doesn't seem too long a period."

Bharat Bhushan Malaviyaji has fixed a hundred years for himself. I, therefore, asked him why he did not fix the same period for

[1] On May 6, 1925; Banerjea died on August 6, 1925.

himself. He replied : “I don’t think I shall be able to work that long, and I don’t wish to live on after I have become too weak.”

He believes that the secret of his long life is his regularity of routine, from which he never departed, and his habit of working systematically. I had heard the story, and he confirmed it, that in the course of his busy life he never missed his fixed train every night by which he returned to Barrackpore. He says:“I attached as much importance to regular rest as to tireless work in public service. Hence I regard failure to take a night’s rest as a sin of failing in the duty of service.”

FROM PALACE TO HUT

Wherever I go, the poor are always with me. They seek me out wherever I may be. No one had been informed about my trip to Barrackpore. I did not know that there were labourers living round about. But a little after I reached Sir Surendranath’s villa, about a hundred or two poor people of the neighbourhood flocked to his park. Within a minute, they came to know of my visit, God knows how. Ordinarily, they would be afraid or would hesitate even to enter in this manner the villa of a great man. But believing that they have a right to enter where I go, they come in unafraid, and no one stops them. Among those poor people, there were one or two Biharis. They used to work as teachers in the labour area. Barrackpore is situated on an elevation. There is a lake there. Water from the Ganga is drawn here and then filtered and purified. Hundreds of labourers have been engaged on this work. These labourers hail from Bihar and from the part of United Provinces[1] bordering on Bihar. One of the Bihari teachers invited me to his house and expressed a desire to show me the yarn spun by him and the khadi store which he ran. He works on six spinning-wheels and, ordering khadi from Bihar, sells it to the labourers. How could I slight or decline his invitation? We went there. The labourers came and surrounded us. To be sure, there were spinning-wheels in that tiny house. On our side, khadi worth three or four hundred rupees was attractively arranged on a bench.

He said, “My brother, some of my friends and I work on these spinning-wheels. We get slivers from Calcutta. We sell this khadi to the labourers without charging any profit. Four or five of us wear khadi exclusively. As money is needed to carry on this work, the labourers give me one pice for every rupee of their wage. I take nothing for myself out of what they give. It only helps in meeting the extra expense incurred on khadi.” I asked him why they did not order khadi from Bengal. He replied: “Because we must help dispose of

[1] Now known as Uttar Pradesh

khadi produced in Bihar. We should give what help we can from here." In this way, these youths sell khadi worth Rs. 2,500 annually to the poor labourers. Who can say how many such poor, selfless youths there are who silently help in spreading the use of khadi without expecting or desiring publicity? Sir Surendranath could not help expressing approval of the khadi and spinning movement. Before we left the hut of this poor youth, he showed us the book in which in very clear hand, he had written the accounts relating to his khadi work.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-5-1925

213. MY NOTES

SIMPLICITY *v.* DISORDER

Discussing difficulties which deter people from taking up public work, a young man writes :[1]

It is not at all easy to say how far the difficulties pointed out here deter the educated class. My own belief is that the difficulties will not deter a sincere worker. Those who have been taking tea continue to do so and at the same time devote themselves to service. Many workers travel second class and yet do real service. There is no sin in drinking tea or travelling second class. Those who can do without tea or the comforts of the second class should do so, but those who cannot endure the physical discomforts of the third class may travel second class and serve. This is plain enough. Those who adopt untidy and slovenly ways in the name of simplicity certainly commit a sin. Simplicity is incompatible with slovenliness because simplicity is a virtue while disregard for order is a defect. One finds even those who live in style wanting in a sense of order. An unmethodical person cannot be regarded as simple. Simplicity can be acquired by training. A person who cannot have furniture and therefore manages without it is not a man of simple habits. He wants more of it and is miserable because he has to make do with a little. A man of simple habits is contented with a little even when he can get much and regards plenty as a source of misery.

What is true of lack of order and method is also true of uncleanliness. A person who loves simplicity will never be unclean. We know, however, that many people of seemingly simple habits are very dirty and bring discredit to simplicity. It is the duty of those who

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that Gandhiji's advice to the people to be simple in their food and living habits had been misinterpreted by many to mean disregard for order and regularity.

wear khadi to keep it always clean and as white as milk, to wash it daily and to mend the garment if it is torn in any part. One need not be ashamed of patches on one's clothes, but torn clothes are a sign of indolence and therefore something to be ashamed of. There ought to be cleanliness in simplicity. In rying to maintain cleanliness in the midst of plenty, one is driven to burden oneself with more and more possessions; that is why some people cultivate simple habits. Anyone who adopts such habits should, therefore, understand that he must avoid slovenliness and uncleanliness.

A little leisure is certainly necessary to cultivate these qualities. If shop assistants have to be in their shops right from morning to night, they cannot even think of correcting bad habits such as lack of cleanliness. They carry on observing as much cleanliness as custom requires. They do not cultivate simplicity for its own sake. Being helpless they may make a show of being saints. If they have any scope for earning money, they would probably make a great deal of it. Nevertheless, it is necessary to reduce the working hours for such people. It is quite possible that some of them will misuse their leisure, but there is no doubt that the risk must be taken. The remedy lies mainly in the hands of the assistants themselves. If they are keen enough to reform themselves, they will find their own way in the matter. If the proprietors have sympathy for them or if they understand their own real interests, they too can introduce the needed reform on their own.

TO SPINNERS

I have frequently stated that spinning does not mean merely drawing out a thread. Just as a *rotla*[1] made somehow from any sort of flour and cooked on any wretched stove is not *rotla* and may cause indigestion if eaten, so too if we draw out a thread from cotton of any sort carded anyhow, it will not be yarn. That alone is yarn which can be easily woven into cloth. In this respect our standard is mill-yarn. Till our yarn is as good as mill-yarn, the deficiency will be counted as our failure. It is a matter of experience that not only can we equal it but can also excel it. Good hand-spun yarn is always superior to good mill-yarn. The softness to be found in cloth woven from the former is never to be found in mill-cloth. So long as we have not reached that level, there are bound to be complaints against khadi. Not only that, but it will also be difficult to get every weaver to weave only khadi. I had to make these observations because of a letter which the All-India Khadi Board has recently received from a worker. Before spinning

[1] Thick, round cake of unleavened bread

was introduced as a qualification for the franchise, members of the Working Committee had to send their yarn to the All-India Khadi Board. The experiences gained in getting that yarn woven should be regarded as valuable. One of these is the report I have mentioned above. The worker has pointed out in it that sometimes the yarn is too weak for weaving. Moreover, the yarn had been wound on winding-frames of different sizes according to the whim of each spinner, so that the weavers had to spend a great deal of their time in making hanks of standard size. Both these difficulties should be eliminated. The members of the Working Committee could easily have paid attention to this point, but they do not seem to have done so. The result may be that either we shall have to stop using such yarn for weaving khadi from it, or else to use it for some unimportant purpose.

LET THAT BE

As spinning has been introduced as a qualification for the franchise, the number of spinners is bound to increase. Everyone who spins should, therefore, ponder further on the experience reported above. He should bear two things in mind :

1. He should spin well-twisted and uniform yarn.
2. Yarn should be wound round a four-foot winding-frame and every 100 yards should be made into a hank.

Yarn which does not satisfy these two conditions does not deserve the name. A more careful spinner will understand the quality of cotton, card it or get it carded properly and produce yarn of the highest count he can and every time, before removing the yarn, blow water over it. Anyone who does this will have done full justice to himself and to the country. He will have got out of cotton as much as is possible. Such a person understands the economics of khadi. If we can, on the whole, produce yarn of 20 counts, the price of khadi can be much reduced and there will be no more complaints from women.

If the voters understand their duty well, we should get the best yarn at the price of cotton. If we can do this, all the difficulties experienced in regard to khadi will automatically disappear. The voters' honest labour is a protection, a source of support to khadi and royal patronage of it.

Will the voters—men and women spinners—respond to this request?

We have received the following report from the Punjab about the help which the spinning-wheel can render during famine :[1]

I have taken this from the report received by the All-India Khadi Board. What is to be noted about it is that whereas formerly foodgrain was distributed to people, now they are paid for work done by them. We also see from the report that in making people work, one has to learn the work oneself. If the organizers were particular about the quality of yarn, the same price would not be paid to all irrespective of the quality of yarn, and the Relief Organization would be saved the needless expense it is being put to and no injustice would be done to the poor as at present. We observe, moreover, that in such work correct accounts ought to be maintained, but that this is not being done. It does not seem that this is due to dishonesty. It seems, rather, to be due to lack of efficiency and to the negligence of the organizing department. If the work is done in a clean manner, the people engaged in it being paid a little more if necessary, such undertakings are sure to become self-supporting in most cases.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-5-1925

214. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Silence Day, Vaishakha Vad 10 [*May 17, 1925*][2]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I am not at all worried about you and hence do not write to you, knowing that you get all the news about me. I liked your going to Navibandar. The others also will have a change to a cool place. Millions have to bear equally the heat and the cold. We have not reached that stage. I wish we had; but how can we change the mould in which we are cast?

[1] The report is not translated here.
[2] The postmark bears the date 18-5-1925; *Vaishakha Vad 10* fell on May 17.

I am quite happy. Satish Babu's arrangements leave nothing to be desired. Kristodas[1] had temperature for a day. Blessings to all the boys and girls.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. DEVDAS GANDHI
C/O CHI. MANEKLAL A. GANDHI
NAVIBANDAR *via* PORBANDAR
KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati original : G.N. 2046

215. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Vaishakh Vad 10 [*May 17, 1925*][2]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I hope you have fully regained your health by now. Here is how I would define a Brahmin deserving the gift of a cow.

A poor man who can maintain cow and who is in need of a cow.

An institution which maintains cows and provides cheap milk to the poor.

In Bombay such a Brahmin is not to be found. There are no facilities for rearing cows in Bombay. So ultimately you will have to give only cash. I would advise you to give out on interest the money kept aside for a good cow. If my activities prosper you can then make donations to me. If not we shall think about giving it to a deserving institution.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I had a certain claim over Anand[3], hadn't I?

CHI. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
93 BAZAR GATE STREET
FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Krishnadas

[2] The postmark bears the date "May 19, 1925", in which year *Vaishakh Vad 10* corresponded to May 17.

[3] Who had died on April 25, 1925; *vide* also "Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", May 18, 1925.

216. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, DACCA[1]

May 17, 1925

FRIENDS,

I am making a departure from my ordinary rule of giving a reply to the addresses in Hindustani.[2] I am breaking that rule mostly as a compliment to the reader of the District Board address who, with exactness, recited the address instead of reading it. It reminds me of Sir Surendranath Banerjea when he was not Knighted. I was only a stripling then but those who were present, when he recited his address at Poona, told me that, without misplacing a single adjective, he recited the whole of the address which covered nearly 80 octavo pages. It reminds me also of Babu Ambika Charan Mazumdar to whose address I had the pleasure of listening at Lucknow. He began to recite his address and went through a page and half without a single mistake and probably, but for a hint from our friends, Lucknow would not have been able to stand, or to ask him to read, an address which covered about 30 foolscap pages.

I don't know who else read the remaining portion of the address. When I came to Bengal, I had occasion to witness these things mostly in connection with the addresses presented to me.

I must not steal from you or me the most impassioned grief and intense longing. I had to listen to the exquisite music of the Bengali language when I came to Bengal. Spare me from our English diction and elocution, no matter how lofty it might be. Give in un-adulterated Bengali, when you cannot and may not give in Hindustani. All that Bengal wishes to tell is a message to all India. I think it is high time to conduct our proceedings, specially proceedings of this character, in the vernacular of the provinces or in Hindustani. A time will come when we shall all feel ashamed to use this tongue (English). I think I have taken time on a matter over which I have already expressed my opinion. I am obliged to thank you sincerely for the sentiment expressed in your addresses. I don't thank you for the exquisite caskets in which you have put your addresses. I possess nothing nor have I any use for all these, but for the pieces of paper, which are more a thing of the heart and which come from a corner of your heart. You talk of the departed glory of Dacca. It is specially real. As I walk and as I roam from place to place, I find illimitable

[1] Gandhiji was presented addresses by the District Board, the Municipality and
the People's Association, at the meeting held in the Northbrook Hall.

[2] This sentence is based on a report in *The Hindu*, 18-5-1925.

possibilities for returning to old Bengal. Once more, let Bengal export not all her raw produces, jute, rice or cotton, but let Bengal export the finest fabrics, let Bengal revive her great art for which she was famous. Depend upon it that not until you tackle the problem of hand-spinning, the problem of the revival of the finest art will be impossible. I have been accused of one thing—of the inartisticness to realize the artistic beauty for which India stands, and my heart weeps for the fact that that beauty has departed. We want our own fabric. Until we spin our own yarn, we shall not be able to revive that fabric of ours. If you import 'muslins' from Paris or Japan, I know to my cost or to your cost, if you import the finest yarn from Paris or Japan, as I saw when I was in Dacca, you cannot and you will never be able to revive the art. What will you do for the dumb millions of Bengal? What will you do for the sisters of yours who are pining away behind the *purdah*. I visited a village in Comilla and a representative of the sisters of ours—who have not a place in the District Board to send their representatives—insisted on giving cotton and receiving in exchange the yarn from them. If you send your representative there to buy yarn, it may be one rupee, two rupees or three rupees and buy yarn for the supply of their bread, what a service you will do for them! Do you think that your District Board and People's Association can help them?

I have just now come from the meeting of the untouchables, the *Bhangis*. The *Bhangis* are keeping your town clean and their services are indispensable. They told me that they had 80 children to teach, but there is no school to teach them. I asked them whether they would want a school to educate their boys. One of them in reply said, "We have asked for a school in our address presented to you."

Speaking on khaddar Mahatmaji said :

If you and the middle-class people give at least half an hour only for spinning, I could swamp Dacca with khaddar. I can compete with Japan, Manchester and any town.The people want to wear khaddar. Be sure that they will wear khaddar. Khaddar shall be sufficient to clothe the whole of Dacca if you can make up your minds. You can do just the very simple thing, that is, to revive the past glory of Dacca in a much more glorious manner. I don't think I will keep you for many minutes.

Coming to the question of Hindu-Muslim unity you have touched upon, it grieves me that I have not here with me one of the two brothers, Maulanas Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali, to listen to the testimony—the warm testimony—that comes from your hearts.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 19-5-1925

217. TALK TO STUDENTS AT DACCA[1]

May 17, 1925

At Dacca the students' meeting was cancelled, but Gandhiji asked the students to come and have a chat after all the public functions were over, and they had more than they could even in their wildest dreams have expected. Gandhiji, always at his best when provoked, unbosomed himself when a friend objected that spinning was a waste of energy and time, and another that his advice took no count of the principle of division of labour.

Do I ask you to do spinning for the whole of the day? Do I ask you to take it up as a sbstantive occupation? Where, then, is the breach of the principle of division of labour? Do you have a division of labour in eating and drinking? Just as everyone of us must eat and drink and clothe himself, even so, everyone of us must spin himself. And it is a waste, you say? Fellow-feeling for your countrymen, you say, you have in an abundant measure? And what is that fellow-feeling without the milk of human kindness? Do you feel anything like the love that a cow feels for her calf or a mother for her baby? The cow's udders and the mother's breast overflow with milk at the sight of their young ones. Do your hearts overflow with love at the sight of your famished countrymen? By spinning, my friends, you demonstrate your love for them. You spin and you make them shake off their idleness. A friend goes and beautifully sings before a crowd and affects their hearts. Is it a waste of effort? It would be, of course, if he vainly howls *Vande Mataram* before them. But spinning means more. It has a purpose and it means added production. The purpose is that it serves as a bond with the masses. And the mechanical effort has something as its result, whilst there is absolutely nothing like it which all alike can do without much effort and skill, nothing which can be done by millions—by the best of us as by the mediocre. And the students should all do it particularly because they are the salt of the earth. Their life is yet to begin, they can imbibe new ideas as no one else can, and they have long years of service before them. You can put new wine into new bottles and not into old. And imagine what a disciplined band of students with fire, energy and reason can do. Imagine what a mighty thing it would be, the product of a half-hour's labour given to hand-spinning by every one of the 11,000 students of Dacca! And do you know that if you all wear khadi the spinners get a major part of the money you spend? You will perhaps think of England with her elaborate machinery. But she lives on the exploitation of other nations. She has conquered our labour. It is an

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour in Bengal

economic drain which is even more disastrous than the Home Charges and other drains that Dadabhai Naoroji[1] opened our eyes to. Even he could not see this insidious drain, but I, being his disciple working along his lines, have discovered this subtle drain and say that the economic drain involved in our being made a nation of idlers is the most ruinous of all.

And so on and so forth, until he brought them face to face with the havoc this enforced idleness has wrought on the fair face of the land—the famishing of Jagannath Puri and the impoverished of Bihar and the women in other parts to whom an anna per day is a coveted godsend. There is nothing which I have heard from him for many a long day which can exceed this talk in melting pathos and incisive appeal.

Young India, 28-5-1925

218. SPEECH AT NATIONAL COLLEGE, SHYAMPUR [2]

May 17, 1925

He said that he could confer benediction on boys on the foundation stone of the hospital with pleasure, but he said he had little faith in *kavirajas* and doctors and far less in Medical College. Patients, when they came under the treatment of the doctors and *Kavirajas*, became all the more invalids. The education these professional men acquired was for money and so they were always anxious to earn more money. Mahatmaji said that he could confer benediction on boys on the condition that, after they come out of the Medical College, they would sacrifice their lives for the sake of the country.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 19-5-1925

219. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

May 18, 1925

DEAR GURUDEV,

Nepal Babu has sent me your very kind and cordial note[2] . I do want to pass a day or two at Bolpur. I would not think of your leaving Bolpur to meet me. I know the delicate state of your health. I shall

[1] 1825-1917; pioneer Indian statesman known as the "Grand Old Man of India"; President, Indian National Congress, 1886, 1893 and 1906; first enunciated swaraj as the objective of the Congress; was elected member of the House of Commons, 1893

[2] Gandhiji arrived at Shyampur from Narayanganj in the morning and laid the foundation of the National College Hospital building. He was presented with an address by the professors and students of the National College to which he replied in Hindi.

[3] This is not available.

inform you of the date when I can come.[1]

I am, yours,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. RABINDRANATH TAGORE

SANTINIKETAN

via BOLPUR

E. I. RY.

From a photostat : G.N. 4629

220. LETTER TO MAHOMED ALI [2]

May 18, 1925

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

Before you wrote to me,[3] I had realized your position. Such must be the lot of genuine workers. We were doing little when we were swimming with the tide. We have to exert ourselves only when we swim against it. Now we shall know whether we have strength. It is child's play for a soldier to fight against a foe, however formidable. But not many can stand demoralization, distrust, indiscipline and want of faith among their own ranks. You and I have to face that fact.

My prayers are always with you and for you. My faith in the twins[4] is also unshakable, not in your method of work, however. If you rigidly set apart time for every activity, you will find a margin left. The busiest man has always time for more. For a godfearing man the whole day is prayer time. The fixed times for prayer are merely finger posts. They show that we must have appointed times for all tasks. Have we not dedicated all to God? Even eating may well be prayer and fasting may well be an indulgence. Enough of sermo-nizing.

I miss you and I miss Gulnar[5] . All my flowers and trinkets are wasted. Tell her she must not grow too big for me.

With love to you all,

Yours,

M.K.G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

[1] Gandhiji visited Santiniketan on May 29.

[2] Though the draft bears no address, the contents make it clear that it was addressed to Mahomed Ali.

[3] This communication is not available.

[4] Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali

[5] Addressee's daughter, wife of Shuaib Qureshi

221. LETTER TO KHWAJA ABDUL MAJID

May 18, 1925

DEAR KHWAJA SAHEB,

I had your wire, not the promised letter. I do hope you will keep me informed of how things are shaping. I shall owe it to the donor to tell him something about the institution.

How are you feeling now?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

KHWAJA SAHEB ABDUL MAJID
NATIONAL MUSLIM UNIVERSITY
ALIGARH

From the original: A. M. Khwaja Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

222. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI [1]

Vaishakha Vad 10, May 18, 1925

Didn't Anand[2] owe me a debt?

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 80

223. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, MYMENSINGH [3]

May 19, 1925

Mahatmaji after having thanked the ladies on their address and presents said that by swaraj he meant dharma raj or Ram raj. Without dharma and morality there could be no swaraj for India. For Ram raj, he wanted to have Sitaji. It was for Sitaji that we could worship Ramachandra. If Sita did not take birth, there would have been no existence of Ramachandra. Mahatmaji prayed that his sisters be like Sita. Sita kept heart as well as body pure. He urged his sisters to purify their body by wearing khaddar. Sitaji used to wear cloth made in India. In her days not a bit of foreign cloth was imported into India. But ladies of the present day wanted cloth from France, Japan and Manchester. To use foreign cloth was impurity. For it implied that they forgot their poor brothers. There was a time when millions of his Indian sisters earned their

[1] 1894-1951; grandson of Gandhiji's step-sister; Secretary, Bombay Congress Committee, 1922-23; member, Bombay Municipal Corporation, 1923-25, and later Mayor

[2] Addressee's mother

[3] At the meeting, held in the morning, hand-spun yarn, jewellery and coins were presented to Gandhiji. An address of welcome was read out in Bengali. Gandhiji replied in Hindi.

bread by spinning with charkha. But for our use of foreign cloth their work on the charkha had not been stopped. Sisters ought to spin at least half an hour every day. Mahatmaji called mill-made cloth, "half-khaddar". He remarked that, although all his sisters, who had come to the meeting, wore khaddar, they must have done so either to express their love for him or to deceive him. But their love for India was what was required most—this would prompt them to use khaddar. He would feel quite satisfied if his sisters in Mymensingh undertook to do the following three things :—(1) Spinning on the charkha for half an hour a day, (2) use of khaddar and (3) abandonment of hatred of *Namasudras*, erroneously considered to be untouchables.

Mahatmaji, in conclusion, said that the presents that were given to him in the form of yarn, money and jewellery would be devoted to khaddar propaganda.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 22-5-1925

224. SPEECH AT MYMENSINGH[1]

May 19, 1925

I am feeling forlorn without either of Ali Brothers. For, with them I would have felt absolutely safe, through them I would have easily reached the Mussalman heart.[2]

Touching upon Hindu-Muslim question, he regretted that neither community was willing to surrender, not their vital interest, but little temporary interests. At present they were fighting not even for loaves and fishes, but for stones and not for vital interests. But he realized that, until they had cleansed their heart and purified their soul, they would not be able to live as brothers. He advised them not to endanger their unity on the rock of selfishness. After all, he believed the solution of this question did not depend on them. Optimistic as he was, he believed that God would show mercy on this blessed land and enable them to live as brothers, in spite of their having fought each other.

The Hindu and the Mussalman must each add a common article to their creeds, viz., that he can never live without the other. God who has placed together 7 crores of Mussalmans with 22 crores of Hindus will have some mercy on us and will make us live as brothers in spite of ourselves.[3]

Dealing with the question of khaddar and spinning he said that these two things were indispensable if they wanted to live with the masses. Had they not exploited the masses for their sake? Had they given any return to them? If they cared

[1] At a representative gathering at the Maharaja's palace, addresses were presented to Gandhiji on behalf of the Municipality and the District Board of Mymensingh.

[2] This paragraph is extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour in
Young India, 28-5-1925.

[3] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account

to travel through the length and breadth of India, they would easily find that they were living on the blood of their people. The result had been that poverty and pauperism had crept into the vitals of the nation and possessed their minds in such a way that they had forgotten that they had even the capacity for labour. In fact, the masses had become idlers perforce. Therefore they must spin. That was the reason why he asked all zamidars and distinguished men to spin and give some slight return to the masses. They complained that khaddar was coarse, khaddar was not durable, it was not good. How could that be if they did not spin half an hour for their poor brothers and sisters? Playing the charkha would not do. It could not produce a large quantity of yarn and why? Because the charkha was not worked properly. The best charkha they had yet got available in the market was the charkha of the Khadi Pratisthan.

Turning next to the people of Mymensingh, he made a passionate appeal to their sense of patriotism and hoped that they would work in the manner suggested by him. Mahatma Gandhi decried spurious khaddar in unmeasured terms; half khaddar to him was impure and should be burnt immediately. If they wanted good khadi, durable and fashionable, let them make a present of half an hour's labour for the masses, their poor sisters and brothers, who were famishing and starving, suffering from degrading poverty. He asked them to give half an hour free of charge and spin half an hour for the national cause and he immediately undertook to cheapen khaddar, make it good, fashionable and durable, and he assured them that he would bring them swaraj.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 22-5-1925

225. TALK TO ZAMINDARS AT MYMENSINGH[1]

May 19, 1925

If you have your own dhobi, your own scavenger, why don't you have your own weaver? And for fine, beautiful yarn, you can get the services of the finest spinners in your parts.

Why do not leading men and educated men, take to the charkha?

Because they do not feel for the poor, and they do not feel because they do not know the sufferings of the poor. Please do not say they are lazy. We have helped them to become idle. How to create interest in them? You and I and all must plod on night and day and not be impatient like the boy who planted the mango seed and would not even wait for six months for the seed to take root and grow into a tree.

Young India, 28-5-1925

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour

226. A REMARKABLE ADDRESS

In the majority of cases, addresses presented to me contain adjectives which I am ill able to carry. Their use can do good neither to the writers not to me. They unnecessarily humiliate me, for I have to confess that I do not deserve them. When they are deserved, their use is superfluous. It cannot add to the strength of the qualities possessed by me. They may, if I am not on my guard, easily turn my head. The good that a man does is more often than not, better left unsaid. Imitation is the sincerest flattery. I commend it, therefore, to the attention of all admirers. If it is my spinning they like, let them admire it by doing it themselves; if it is my regularity they appreciate, let them flatter me by being regular themselves. And if it is my truthfulness and non-violence they treasure, let them show their appreciation by their conduct.

But not all the addresses contain a mere recital of my praises. On rare occasions they give me valuable information. A Chandpur address[1] was remarkable for a frank expression of its limitations. The address does contain some reference to my qualities, imaginary or real; but the greatest part of it is devoted to a catalogue of the activities of the inhabitants of Chandpur. Here is the catalogue :

1. Number of Congress members—Class "A" 10, class "B" 68, total 78.
2. Number of spinning-wheels working—245.
3. Average capacity of each wheel—100 yds. per hour, the highest speed being 500 yds. per hour.
4. Average count—12, the highest being 152.
5. Monthly output of yarn—1 maund.
6. Number of looms working with hand-spun and other yarn-more than one thousand. Only seven looms produce pure khadi.
7. Monthly output of pure khadi—250 yds.
8. Number of khaddar depots—3 only.
9. Average monthly consumption of khadi—worth 300 rupees.
10. Total number of national schools—4, total number of students being 167.

As regards liquor traffic, it has been gradually increasing since 1922.

[1] This was presented to Gandhiji by the people of Chandpur on May 10, 1925. *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Chandpur", 10-5-1925.

Then follows an interesting commentary on most of the items. It is wound up as follows :

> We feel we will be failing in our obvious duty, if we do not allude to the terrible poverty and consequent mortality rampant amongst the people of the country. They are simply groaning under heavy indebtedness. The balance-sheet of most of them indicates the hopeless condition of utter bankruptcy. This state of things, brought about by the total annihilation of the cottage industries, leads to serious crimes, and we shudder to conceive the final result of this economic depression of the people.

The record is certainly not a proud one. But there is nothing here to despair of. We, each one of us, can but do our best. We do not, cannot, control results which depend upon so many other circumstances. We may feel quite at ease, when we have done our real best. Unfortunately, in the majority of cases, we do not work or do it indifferently and still complain of poverty of results. All is well if we have done the best that is possible for us to do.

Truly, the problems that face us are enormous and many. For one man or many to presume to tackle them all at once is to arrogate omnipotence. Any such attempt is foredoomed to failure. Our difficulties are aggravated because we are a subject nation. Many can be remedied if we were not. But it is equally true that we shall not come to our own unless we tackle as many now. Not to handle them till swaraj is obtained is to postpone both swaraj and the solution of the problems. He, therefore, who handles the main problems to the best of his ability helps their solution and brings swaraj nearer.

If, then, the workers in Chandpur have exerted their utmost, results shown by them need not be considered discouraging. Time must work in their favour, for it always does in favour of honest and industrious workers. Better to have even 10 “A” class members than none, and for me, it is any day better to have 10 working members than to have ten thousand members who will pay four annas per year and then no more think about the Congress than miss their four annas. The ten, if they will remain faithful to their trust, will soon convert themselves into one hundred. I know no alternative to the wheel. Those who do must set it up. Till then the ten who work the wheel must hold the field undaunted.

But my fear is that the organizers have not worked sufficiently strenuously. I discovered that there were nearly 120 volunteers in Chandpur. Now, of those nearly 100 knew how to spin, but hardly five or six spun daily. One of the resolutions makes spinning by volunteers obligatory. And if a volunteer does not strictly respect the franchise resolution, who else will? The Reception Committee should

have been strict in the choice of its volunteers. If it could not get enough properly qualified men, it should have managed its work with a few. An unskilled surgeon is worse than no surgeon. An indifferent volunteer is often a hindrance [rather] than a help. Let me note, in passing, that the volunteers were extremely good to me. They served to their utmost. But I want not personal service and attachment, precious as both are; I want national service and national attachment. I want strictest devotion to duty and scrupulous fulfilment of all obligations imposed and accepted.

The address mentions increase in the liquor traffic. It is a serious thing and may be dealt with by workers who will specially dedicate themselves to the reform. But I fear that liquor traffic is one of those things which can be brought under effective control only by prohibition.

The concluding commentary is a statement of our general condition. Revival of the cottage industry, and not cottage industries, will remove the growing poverty. When once we have revived the one industry, all the other industries will follow. They will add to the country's wealth. But the wheel alone can solve the general problem of starvation. Each district has no doubt its varying wants. They must have attention. But I would make the spinning-wheel the foundation on which to build a sound village life, I would make the wheel the centre round which all the other activities will revolve. No spinner enters the village life without coming in contact with and helping to solve the other problems that tax the villagers. But if a worker enters a village and takes up any activity that comes his way and not wheel, he will miss the central point and, therefore, simply grope without reaching every villager.

Young India, 21-5-1925

227. 'ON THE VERGE OF IT'

After putting the questions he has, a correspondent thus concludes his letter :

I hope you will be courteous enough to throw light on these points and continue to discuss with me until I do not talk nonsense. I am your follower and have gone to jail under your leadership and guidance. I have never gone to see and talk to you even when I was very near to you and had ample opportunity, simply because I hated to encroach upon your time. I have not even touched your feet. I now feel very much shaken in my faith in your reasoning and politics. I am not a revolutionary but I am on the verge of being a revolutionary. If you answer these questions

satisfactorily, you may save me.

I now take his questions seriatim.

1. What is non-violence, an attitude of the mind or non-destruction of life? If it be the latter, is it possible to translate it into practice and carry it to its logical consequences when we destroy numberless lives daily in taking our meals, etc.? We cannot even eat vegetables in that case.

Non-violence is both an attitude of mind and action consequent upon it. No doubt, there is life in vegetables. But the taking of vegetable life is inevitable. It is none the less destruction of life. Only it may be regarded as excusable.

The second question is :

2. If we cannot avoid destroying life, it certainly does not mean that we should recklessly destroy it; but then, in proved cases of necessity it cannot be objected to on principle. It may be objected to on expediency.

Even in proved cases of necessity, violence cannot be defended "on principle". It may be defended on grounds of expedience.

The third question is :

3. If non-violence is non-destruction of life, how can you consistently ask anybody to give up his own life in a cause howsoever holy and righteous it may be? Would that not be violence to one's own self?

I can consistently ask a person to give up his life for a cause and yet not be guilty of violence. For non-violence means refraining from injury to others.

The fourth is :

4. It is human nature to love one's own life. If one should sacrifice one's life when necessary for his country and people, why should he not sacrifice the lives of others when necessary? We have only to prove whether it was necessary. It is, therefore, a matter of expediency again.

"He that shall love his own life shall lose it. He that shall lose his own life shall find it." Sacrifice of the lives of others cannot be justified on grounds of necessity, for it is impossible to prove necessity. We may not be judges ourselves. The sole judges must be those whose lives we would take. One good reason for non-violence is our fallible judgment. The inquisitors implicitly believed in the righteousness of their deeds, but we now know that they were wholly wrong.

The fifth question is :

5. What is the difference between sacrifice and murder?

Sacrifice consists in suffering in one's own person so that others may benefit. Murder consists in making others suffer unto death so that the murderer, or those others for whom he murders, may benefit.

The sixth question is :

6. Is a doctor, who operates upon you, condemnable, for he is violent in giving you trouble temporarily? Do we not praise him all the more for that—looking not to his violent action but to his attitude of mind which is to give relief to the patient?

This is a misuse of the word violence, which means causing injury to another without his consent or without doing any good to him. In my case, the surgeon caused me temporary pain with my written and willing consent and for my sole good. A revolutionary murders or robs not for the good of his victims, whom he often considers to be fit only to be injured, but for the supposed good of society.

His seventh question is :

7.Is not physical force as much a potent factor of life as any other force? As non-violence can be taken by cowards as a garb to cover their cowardice, so can violence be misused by brutes and tyrants. It does not prove that violent of itself is bad.

Physical force undoubtedly is a potent factor of life. Violence has certainly been misused by tyrants, but in the sense in which I have defined violence, its good use is inconceivable. See the definition in the answer to the preceding question.

The eighth question is :

8. You will put lunatics and dangerous criminals who are a nuisance to society in prisons. Will you allow us to capture those civilized criminals, who are functioning as government officials today, and deport or imprison them in some Himalayan caves instead of murdering them?

I am not sure that it is right to put lunatics or criminals, dangerous or otherwise, in prisons, i.e., for punishment. Lunatics are not so put even now. And we are reaching a time when even criminals will be put under restraint for their ultimate reform, not for their punishment. But I would gladly join any society for the confinement, under proper safeguards for their comfort, of the Viceroy and every civilian, English or Indian, who are today consciously or unconsciously bleeding India, provided that a scheme can be produced before me that is perfectly feasible from every point of view. And I would be prepared to join such a society even though it may be argued that such confinement might fall within my definition of violence.

The ninth question is :

9. What is more inhuman and terrible, rather what is more violent, to let 33 millions suffer, stagnate and perish, or a few thousand be killed? What would you

prefer, to see the slow death of a mass of 33 millions through sheer degeneration, or killing of a few hundred of people? This certainly is to be proved that the killing of a few hundred will stop the degeneration of 33 millions. But then, it is a matter of detail and not principle. It may be later on discussed whether it is expedient or not. But if it is proved that by killing a few hundred, we can put a stop to the degeneration of 33 millions, will you object to violence on principle?

There is no principle worth the name if it i s not wholly good. I swear by non-violence because I know that it alone conduces to the highest good of mankind, not merely in the next world but in this also. I object to violence because, when it appears to do good, the good is only temporary; the evil it does is permanent. I do not believe that the killing of even every Englishman can do the slightest good to India. The millions will be just as badly off as they are today, if someone made it possible to kill off every Englishman tomorrow. The responsibility is more ours than that of the English for the present state of things. The English will be powerless to do evil if we will but do good. Hence my incessant emphasis on reform from within.

But, before the revolutionary, I have urged non-violence not on the highest ground of morality but on the lower ground of expedience. I contend that the revolutionary method cannot succeed in India. If an open warfare were a possibility, I may concede that we may tread the path of violence that the other countries have and at least evolve the qualities that bravery on the battlefield brings forth. But attainment of swaraj through warfare I hold to be an impossibility for any time that we can foresee. Warfare may give us another rule for the English rule but not self-rule in terms of the masses. The pilgrimage to swaraj is a painful climb. It requires attention to details. It means vast organizing ability, it means penetration into the villages solely for the service of the villagers. In other words it means national education, i.e., education of the masses. It means an awakening of national consciousness among the masses. It will not spring like the magician's mango. It will grow almost unperceived like the banyan tree. A bloody revolution will never perform the trick. Haste here is most certainly waste. The revolution of the spinning-wheel is the quickest revolution conceivable.

The tenth and the last question is :

10. Is not all logic and reason discarded where vital interests of life are concerned? It is not a fact that a few selfish, tyrant and obdurate men may, as they do, refuse to listen to reason and continue to rule, tyrannize and do injustice to a mass of people? Lord Krishna failed to bring about a settlement peacefully between the obdurate Kauravas and the Pandavas. *Mahabharata* may be fiction. Poor Krishna may be less spiritual. But even you failed to persuade your judge to resign from his post

and not convict you, whom even he, as everybody else, regarded innocent.[1] How far can persuasion through self-sacrifice be successful in such cases?

It is sad but true that, where so-called vital interests are concerned, logic and reason are thrown to the wind. Tyrants are, indeed, obdurate. The English tyrant is obduracy personified. But he is a multi-headed monster. He refuses to be killed. He cannot be paid in his own coin, for he has left none for us to pay him with. I have a coin that is not cast in his mint and he cannot steal it. It is superior to any he has yet produced. It is non-violence; and the symbol of it is the spinning-wheel. I have, therefore, presented it to the country with the fullest confidence. Krishna failed to do nothing he wished to do, so says the author of the *Mahabharata*. He was omnipotent. It is futile to drag Krishna from His heights. If he has to be judged as a mere mortal, I fear He will fare badly and will have to take a back seat. *Mahabharata* is neither fiction nor history commonly so called. It is the history of the human soul in which God as Krishna is the chief actor. There are many things in that poem that my poor understanding cannot fathom. There are in it many things which are obvious interpolations. It is not a treasure chest. It is a mine which needs to be explored, which needs to be dug deep and from which diamonds have to be extracted after removing much foreign matter. Therefore, I would urge my friends, the full-fledged revolutionaries, or those in the making, or on the verge of being such, to keep their feet firm on mother earth and not scale the Himalayan heights to which the poet took Arjuna and his other heroes. Anyway, I must respectfully refuse even to attempt the ascent. The plains of Hindustan are good enough for me.

To descend to the plains, then, let the questioner understand that I had not gone to the court to persuade the judge of my innocence. But on the contrary, I went there to plead fully guilty and ask for the highest penalty. For, the breach by me of the man-made law was deliberate. The judge did not, could not, believe me to be innocent. There was not much sacrifice in undergoing the imprisonment. True sacrifice is made of sterner stuff. Let my friend understand the implications of non-violence. It is a process of conversion. I am convinced. I must be pardoned for saying it that my out-and-out non-violence has converted many more Englishmen than any amount of threats or deeds of violence. I know that when conscious non-violence becomes general in India swaraj will not be far.

Young India, 21-5-1925

[1] *Vide* "The Great Trial", March 18, 1922.

228. NOTES

DONORS, PLEASE NOTE

Though I have often remarked upon the unportability of addresses when they are framed or when they are put in expensive caskets, I continue to receive heavy frames and, sometimes, expensive caskets. The Calcutta Corporation is the greatest sinner so far as costliness is concerned. When I received its address, it was on a borrowed gold plate. The one specially ordered was not ready. During the present tour, Deshbandhu Das placed into my hands a beautifully made gold plate on which the whole address is carved. As soon as I received it, I was nervous as to where I should keep it and so was he, although it was in his own old mansion that he gave the plate. As he went, he called Mahadev Desai aside and left word with him that the plate should be put in a secure place. Fortunately, Babu Satish Mukerji was by me and I had already mentioned to him the fact of the gold plate and he had taken charge of it. It will have to go where all my other costly presents have gone. The friends to whom I have given these things for disposal have not yet decided where to sell them or to put them to some museum. How much better, if knowing that I cannot keep costly things, those who must give me addresses will give me inexpensive ones? And frames? Well, they are most inconvenient things to carry. Most friends have recognized the situation and nowadays give me addresses printed on khaddar. That to my mind is the simplest and the best method. I can carry with me any amount of khaddar. To have addresses printed on it is so much spread of khaddar. But if a casket must accompany even a khaddar address, I commend to the attention of future donors the example of Faridpur. Both the Municipality and the Jeevashiva Mission gave inexpensive cylinders, one made of stained bamboo and the other of bamboo covered with local matting with simple silver tops. The latter could easily have been omitted. The simplest thing may be made elegant by a little touch of art which one can copy from one's surroundings. The Indian village life, though it has become shoddy, has still enough poetry and art left in it for us to copy. In Travancore they made copious use of the palm leaf. Indeed, I would advise artistic simplicity about all addresses, but in my case it is imperative for the very good reason that I have neither the convenience nor the desire for keeping

costly or bulky caskets and frames.

INVERTED UNTOUCHABILITY

A correspondent writes :

> You have answered a correspondent's query as to how to remove the untouchability obtaining amongst the untouchables themselves. Let me put another query similar to it.
>
> Perhaps you do not know that some of the "untouchables" themselves labour under a sense of sin attaching to the act of touching a "touchable", or approaching within a particular distance of him, or drawing water from his well, or entering his temple, or doing any such thing in relation to the "touchable"—though allowed and even invited to do so. The "untouchable" thinks that he would be transgressing his *maryada*[1] and be guilty of sin in doing any such acts. This is the inverse of the untouchability usually so-called and known to obtain amongst the higher castes (touchable and untouchable) against the lower ones. This is untouchability up side down. It may be the case—and the touchables may flatter themselves with the thought—that this sort of untouchability (little known, but as strong as the other) is not retaliatory in spirit. All the same it is there, and even the special correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, who interviewed you in Sabarmati Jail and toured India in 1922,[2] noted it in Anand and Bardoli taluks in Gujarat. What, I wonder, is the remedy you would advise anti-untouchability workers to adopt to cure the "untouchables" of this inverse of untouchability? Is this also a sin like the other sort? Does not the so-called *maryadadharma* come in our way here? Is it possible for a conscientious untouchable believer in this dharma to rescue drowning Brahmin whom he otherwise could?

I am not unaware of the atrocious result of untouchability observed by the correspondent. Sometimes, I find it difficult to make the "untouchables" approach me, much less to touch me. I do not believe that it is a question primarily of religion with the untouchables not to touch the touchables. They simply do not realize the possibility of touching those who have hitherto regarded them as untouchables. In the majority of cases therefore, it is fear that deters the untouchables even under permission from touching the untouchables. The case is on a par with that of the French prisoner who, having been for years locked up in the dungeons of Bastille, could not, when discharged, bear the light of day. He had almost lost the sense of sight. But I have come across in Bengal a suggestion made to the so-called untouchables that they should, by way of retaliation, regard the so-called higher

[1] Bounds of Propriety
[2] *Vide* "Interview to *Manchester Guardian*", March 18, 1922.

class Hindus as untouchables, refuse to them all the services they are now rendering and refuse also water or food at their hands. I should deplore the day that such retaliation comes. But, in this age of freedom and also licence, it need cause no surprise if what is now an object of mere talk is translated into action and retaliation descends upon the devoted heads of the so-called higher classes. Nature gives us ninety nine chances of reform and, if we do not take advantage of any of them, the hundredth time she compels obedience and accompanies it with a punishment which at least makes us feel uneasy.

A CORRESPONDENT'S DILEMMA

Thus writes a correspondent.[1] I am not aware of having "placed before man the ideal of a sanyasin". On the contrary, I have constantly kept before India the ideal of swaraj. In doing so, I have preached simplicity no doubt. I have also preached godliness. But godliness, simplicity and kindred qualities are not the exclusive property of privilege or sanyasin. Moreover, I do not for one moment grant that a sanyasin need be a recluse caring not for the world. A sanyasin is one who cares not for himself but cares all his time for others. He has renounced all selfishness. But he is full of selfless activity, even as God is full of sleepless and selfless activity. A sanyasin, therefore, to be true to his creed of renunciation, must care for swaraj, not for his own sake (he has it), but for the sake of others. He has no worldly ambition for himself. That does not mean that he may not help others to understand their place in the world. If the sanyasins of the old did not seem to bother their heads about the political life of society, it was because society was differently constructed. But politics properly so-called rule every detail of our lives today. We come in touch, that is to say, with the State on hundreds of occasions whether we will or no. The State affects our moral being. A sanyasin, therefore, being well-wisher and servant *par excellence* of society, must concern himself with the relations of the people with the State, that is to say, he must show the way to the people to attain swaraj. Thus conceived, swaraj is not a false goal for

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent, claiming to be a student of Gandhiji's writings and speeches, noticed inconsistency between Gandhiji's "idealization" of sannyasa and his struggle for swaraj, and asked Gandhiji how he reconciled the one with the other.

anyone. The Lokamanya[1] never gave the country a greater truth than when he taught the meanest of us to say : "Swaraj is my birthright." A sanyasin, having attained swaraj in his own person, is the fittest to show us the way. A sanyasin is in the world, but he is not of the world. In all the most important functions of life he does exactly as we the common people do. Only his outlook upon them is different. He does without attachment the things we do with attachment. It is given to everyone of us to cultivate detachment. It is a worthy aspiration surely for all.

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

Now that I have shouldered the tremendous burden of controlling an all-India cow-protection organization, my correspondence already heavy has become heavier for the inclusion of letters on subjects akin to cow-protection. Here is a sample :[2]

I have often walked through the streets of Calcutta. What the writer says about cruelty to the draught cattle and horses is only too true. The writer's indictment of owners is not an exaggeration, though my own opinion is that the owners are more indifferent than calculatedly cruel. They too are amenable to reason as are the carriers and drivers. How to reach them is the question. To look after the condition of animals used within municipal jurisdiction is the function of the municipality concerned. Private philanthropic bodies can, however, write to or wait on the owners concerned and call upon them to remove all cause of complaint wherever it may exist. I feel sure that much can be done by constant watch and a judicious appeal to the parties concerned.

Of the condition of chickens and turkeys, I know nothing; but if the crime is committed in the municipal market, the Corporation can easily deal with it. Much of the cruelty practised by men on dumb creation can be dealt with by a proper mobilization of the humane forces. The Bengal Presidency Council of Women can depute volunteers to note all the cases that come under their observation and report them to the Corporation or the individual owners concerned.

Young India, 21-5-1925

[1] Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920); Indian political leader, scholar and writer, popularly known as "Lokamanya"; one of the founders of Deccan Education Society, Poona and the newspapers, the *Kesari* and *The Mahratta*

[2] Gandhiji quoted here a letter on behalf of the Bengal Presidency Council of Women detailing cruelties to animals in Calcutta, such as misuse of buffaloes and bullocks for heavy transport, extraction of milk by blowing, etc., and appealing to Gandhiji to write or speak deprecating such disgraceful practices.

229. SPEECH TO UNTOUCHABLES, DINAJPUR[1]

May 21, 1925

Gandhiji had . . . nothing more to tell them than that they should not get restive; that they should take comfort in the thought that their condition was much better than that of many of their brethren elsewhere; and that they could, if they chose, send a notice to the Municipality that they were going away leaving the conservancy work to the mercy of the gods, if their demands were not granted, bearing in mind, however, that they had come and settled there of their own accord and not at the invitation of the Municipality!

Young India, 4-6-1925

230. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, DINAJPUR

May 21, 1925

In his reply he expressed his high satisfaction in receiving the addresses in the sweet Bengali,[2] Hindi and Sanskrit languages. For this treat he was ready to forgive the English of the District Board address. He then paid a tribute to the orderly behaviour of the crowd and the silence they observed according to his wishes. He also spoke highly of the spinners. He observed :

During all my tours in Bengal, the spinners of Dinajpur have pleased me best and I am charmed to see them work. It is also a very good sign that pleaders, doctors and other persons placed high in society were spinning together, sitting side by side with *Santhals, Mehtars* and other people so long held in low esteem.

He finished his address after emphasizing his triple programme of khaddar, removal of untouchability and Hindu-Muslim unity.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 23-5-1925

231. SPEECH TO STUDENTS, DINAJPUR

May 21, 1925

A friend once told me that whenever he felt the urge of passion he took up the spinning-wheel to forget it, and another that whenever he was angry he took up the spinning-wheel and felt calm. That is to say, the spinning-wheel gives one the peace of mind one needs for observing *brahmacharya*[3]. Two or three days ago, some boys told me that they could not work on the spinning-wheel, that they were ready

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour in Bengal

[2] This was read out by Jogendra Chandra Chakravarti, president of the local Congress Committee.

[3] Celibacy

to mount the gallows and asked me to give them a programme which would have on them the exciting effect of an intoxicant. I felt that these students did not observe *brahmacharya*, since they did not like the spinning-wheel which gives peace. I feel that the spinning-wheel has all the virtues needed to make one's life truthful, pure and peaceful and fill it with the spirit of service. I, therefore, beg of you all to give half an hour's labour daily in the form of spinning.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 31-5-1925

232. INTERVIEW AT DINAJPUR[1]

May 21, 1925

Questioned as to whether he regarded his Bardoli decision as a mistake, he replied most emphatically in the negative.

That has been one of the sanest acts of my life. Future historians will regard me as the saviour of India at the most critical period of her history. If I had not taken step I would have been regarded by posterity as the greatest monster in the guise of a political leader, and India would have been doomed for many generations to come. It required Herculean courage to order the retreat of that army marching onward and [I] feel proud to say that I was not wanting in that courage at that time. My ultimatum to the Viceroy was nothing—even a child could put his signature to it, but the Bardoli resolution truly required heroic courage. It appears I am giving a certificate to myself, but I must tell you frankly what I feel.

Q. Your programme was within an inch of success as admitted by Sir George Lloyd[2] himself. The Europeans were all terribly afraid.

A. They were afraid because they thought it was going to be a criminal instead of a civil disobedience. You see, the weapon wielded by me is entirely foreign to theirs. They had no instrument to measure me and as such [were] quite powerless to tackle my activities with.

Q. Then, was it not a mistake to cry halt, since your plan was running so successfully?

A. No, my friends, the country was not prepared, as Chauri

[1] Gandhiji was interviewed by the local landholders and others at the Maharaja's guest house where he was staying. Gandhiji spoke in Hindi and English.

[2] Governor of Bombay, *Vide* Appendix "Drew Pearson's Interview with Sir George Lloyd", 22-11-1923.

Chaura[1] demonstrated. There was sin amongst our own workers. The passions and prejudices were not yet under control, and, even if swaraj were established, it would not have lasted a moment owing to strifes and dissensions amongst ourselves.

After reiterating the general economic and political importance of the charkha, he added :

It is moreover a splendid test as to how far our workers have the capacity for sincere and devoted work. I am fully convinced that, at present, charkha is the only key to India's salvation.

Q. But, Mahatmaji, surely you are in a minority as to the efficacy of the charkha in winning national freedom.

A. I do not care. Even if I be in the minority of one and all India ranged on the other side, I will stand erect with my views. Those who differ from me are welcome to serve the country according to their lights, but I assert with all the emphasis I can command that charkha will bring us swaraj. All these may appear tall talk to you, but they are not. To me it is all practical common sense. Just as a musician can say with confidence that, if he strikes a certain string, a definite note will issue; so it is with me in regard to the solution of this problem.

Mahatmaji was then told that there was some doubt among orthodox Hindus as to how far he wished to carry his untouchability doctrine. With his characteristic simplicity and brevity he replied :

I will explain it in one word. There are four classes among the Hindus and I recognize no fifth one. My conviction comes from the perusal of the Shastras. The so-called untouchables should be treated like Sudras and no worse. Those who have no objection to inter-dining with the Sudras should have none to treat the untouchables in a like manner. But those who do not dine with the Sudras need not of course do so with the untouchables.

Somebody expressed regret that the Hindu-Muslim unity of 1920-21 has of late been decaying. Mahatmaji sorrowfully replied :

There was none worth the name. It was only an attempt at unity. Can any power in the world separate my wife from me? When there will be real heart-to-heart unity, no amount of temptations and cajolery from third parties will be able to break it up.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 23-5-1925

[1] A village in Gorakhpur district of Uttar Pradesh where, on February 5, 1922, the mob set fire to the police station and 22 constables were burnt alive. Gandhiji was profoundly shocked by this and imposed on himself a five-day fast on February 12.

233. SPEECH AT WORKERS' SCHOOL, BOGRA[1]

May 22, 1925

I shall not speak to you on the charkha. You know what I have been saying elsewhere. I shall, however, tell you something about ahimsa in order to strengthen your faith in it. A student at Dacca told me that he would more willingly face the gallows than ply the wheel which afforded no excitement.[2] I have no doubt that he believed neither in ahimsa nor *brahmacharya*. For the wheel is an emblem of peace and ahimsa, and I have pinned my faith to it, because ahimsa is not a policy with me, but a creed, a religion. Why do I regard it as such? Because I know that it is not *himsa* or destructive energy that sustains the world, it is ahimsa, the creative energy. I do admit that the destructive energy is there, but it is evanescent, always futile before the creative which is permanent. If the destructive one had the upper hand, all the sacred ties—love between parents and child, brother and sister, master and disciple, rulers and the ruled, would be snapped. Ahimsa is like the sun whose worship, as the symbol of God, our *rishis* immortalized in the *Gayatri*. As the sun "keeps watch over man's mortality", going his eternal rounds and dispelling darkness and sin and gloom, even so does ahimsa. Ahimsa inspires you with love than which you cannot think of a better excitement. And that is why my faith in the wheel, which is a symbol of peace and love, is increasing as I grow older. And that is why I do not think I am committing an impropriety in spinning whilst I am talking to you. As I am turning the wheel, I am saying to myself : "Why does God give me my daily bread, whilst He starves multitudes of men? Let Him starve me also, or enable me to do something to remove their starvation." And as I turn it, I am practising ahimsa and truth which are the obverse and reverse of the same coin. Ahimsa is my God, and Truth is my God. When I look for Ahimsa, Truth says, 'Find it out through me.' When I look for Truth, Ahimsa says, 'Find it out through me.' So the rhapsody easily became one on charkha and ahimsa instead of that on ahimsa alone.

Young India, 4-6-1925

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour in Bengal

[2] *Vide* "Talk to Students at Dacca", 17-5-1925.

234. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BOGRA[1]

May 22, 1925

Replying Mahatmaji thanked them for the addresses and assured them he would hand over the purse to the Khadi Pratishthan for cheapening khaddar and distributing charkhas free of charge to the poor. In this connection Mahatmaji paid a tribute to Dr. Ray with whom his connection dated from 1901. It was the late Mr. Gokhale, said Mahatmaji, who introduced him to Prafulla Chandra and since then their mutual relations had grown firmer. It was in the fitness of things that he should think himself fortunate in visiting this district which recalled to his mind the glorious work done and being done by Dr. Ray for the poor.

Mahatmaji added that his conviction in the potency of the charkha had been strengthened by Dinajpur and Bogra where for the first time he had seen rich and poor, fathers and little boys and girls, untouchables and Brahmins, all sitting together and spinning for the country's cause. This he said, augured well for the future.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 24-5-1925

235. SPEECH AT TALODA[2]

May 22, 1925

At the meeting in Bogra I said that for me a visit to this place was a pilgrimage, and I say it here again. Perhaps you do not know the sacrifices made by Dr. Ray as much as I do, and when I heard that this was one of the many centres of his activities, I decided to make this pilgrimage once. Moreover, when I came here and saw that the greater number of those who had been helped by him were muslims my joy and my regard for him rose immeasurably. For, only when Hindus serve Muslims in this manner and Muslims serve Hindus will there be a spontaneous union of hearts between Hindus and Muslims. I very much regret that neither Maulana Shaukat Ali nor Maulana Mahomed Ali is present here to witness this rare sight. The condition of the country today renders it difficult for our workers to leave their tasks and go anywhere. But I have no doubt that both the brothers will be very happy when I tell them about this place.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-6-1925

[1] Gandhiji was presented with addresses on behalf of the Municipality, the District Board and the public.

[2] Where a khadi centre was run by Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ray

236. LETTER TO KALYANJI MEHTA

Jeth Sud 1 [*May 23, 1925*][1]

BHAISHRI KALYANJI[2]

I have your letter. Tell Parvati[3] to write to me occasionally. I hope you take great interest in the Bardoli work. I am keeping well. I enclose a letter of blessings for Chi. Rukhi. I trust the marriage was celebrated with simplicity and everything went off smoothly. My tour in Bengal will be further extended.[4] I shall have to go to Assam too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original : G.N. 2676

237. BENGAL'S SACRIFICE

I overflow with joy to see examples of purest sacrifice in Bengal. The whole family of a zamindar has taken to khadi. All the women spin. The men and women wear khadi exclusively. The zamindar has made over his house and his land for the use of Khadi Pratishthan. The sacrifice made by Satish Babu, who is the life of Khadi Pratishthan, is something extraordinary. He used to earn a monthly salary of Rs. 1,500 in the Chemical Works of Dr. Ray. He had been provided with a bungalow too. He could have got more if he had asked for it. He was doing khadi work even then, but he was not satisfied with that. His tender heart felt that, if he attempted two tasks at a time, both might suffer in consequence. He was the very life of the Chemical Works and, if he did not give his full time to it, it would certainly suffer. But, then, khadi meant service of the poor, and he did not think it right that he should do that work in his spare time. Just as it is a sin for a man to have two wives, so also it is wrong for a man to make two things his life's mission. Moreover, no sacrifice is too great in the cause of khadi. Arguing thus with himself he decided in an instant to leave the Works which he himself had built up. And now he meets his household expenses from the income from his meagre savings and devotes all the 24 hours of the day to the cause of khadi. He has by now opened eleven branches of his centre, out of which five are already in production, and he is thinking of opening more still.

[1] Gandhiji toured Bengal in 1925; *Jeth Sud* 1 in that year fell on May 23.

[2] Congress leader of Surat district; educationist and author; first Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Gujarat State in 1960

[3] Wife of Pragji Desai

[4] It was extended up to August 31, 1925.

Through his efforts 5,060 spinning-wheels are plying. The number of handlooms weaving pure khadi is 597.

His wife, too, has joined her husband in this work. This good lady must be unhappy to have to face want in place of the plenty of former days, and it must be hard for her to be contented with one of the small blocks in a rented tenement in place of an independent bungalow to live in; but she bears all these hardships with a cheerful face.

Satish Babu's, however, is not the only instance of this kind. Many other young men have been making sacrifices which fill us with admiration. Satish Babu had much and he gave up much but he has no problem of meeting his daily needs. He has, on the whole, no hardship regarding accommodation. But there are about a hundred young men who receive Rs. 20 a month to meet all their needs. We cannot realize how difficult life in Bengal is without seeing the conditions ourselves. In the rainy season, they are forced practically to live in water. At any time the houses, all of them, may be washed away by floods. Even for going from one house to another they have to use small boats. The insanitary conditions at such a time are impossible to describe. These young men suffer such hardships and serve the people. Many of them are engaged in khadi work and some in national schools. Spinning, of course, is being done in all schools.

In these conditions, there can be no question of their being able to indulge their palate. They cannot always get milk and curds. The usual food is rice and dal. Pure vegetarians are rare in Bengal. Even those who do not eat meat eat fish. These poor workers do eat fish, if nothing else. We must admit that this is a great help when they do not get milk and curds. This fact does not detract from the value of their sacrifice. I have mentioned this fact of their having fish to eat, only because I do not want to be guilty of exaggeration in describing the young men's hardships.

All these young men are educated. Many of them were professors and drew big salaries. They do not regret their sacrifice. On the contrary, they feel joy in it. Were it not so, they would not be able to keep up the extremely difficult sacrifice they have made. When I think of their sacrifice, Gujarat's sacrifice, what little there has been, seems insignificant by comparison. The sacrifices which I see here made by the educated class can only be compared with similar sacrifices in Maharashtra.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-5-1925

238. MY NOTES

IF ONE IS BOYCOTTED?

A gentleman writes :[1]

To this there is only one reply I can give. However unjustly *mahajans*[2] act, we should not take them to courts. Let them inflict any punishment they choose. If we submit to it, their hearts will melt and they will repent. Moreover, when a *mahajan* acts unjustly one should especially welcome being ostracized by it. There is nothing to be gained by remaining in a community in which people sell girls in marriage, in which the atmosphere is vitiated by hypocrisy and whose *mahajan* connives at its members eating meat and drinking. The institution of caste is only a tradition and not an essential part of dharma. Membership of a community confers some advantages. When, however, the institution becomes an instrument of immorality, the best course is to defy it. The principle on which we have acted in resorting to non-co-operation with the Government should also be applied to one's caste and one can non-co-operate with it.

But in this case there is no need at all to do anything of that kind. Here it is the community which ostracizes a member. The latter should welcome this as a happy event. But this can be done only by one who has followed dharma in his conduct, who has served the community and willingly obeyed its rules which promote morality. Only a man of self-control will welcome ostracism, the man who lives for pleasure will be hurt by it. But, then, it is not for a person of the latter type to interest himself in the abolition of untouchability, it is work which should be taken up only by a man of self-control. This movement is not intended to enlarge the scope of enjoyment in life; it is meant to increase opportunities for service, to see that no one is excluded from the scope of our service.

INDIAN STATES

A gentleman has asked me this question.[3] There is some truth in what he says, but there is also another side to the question. Where the subjects have some spirit in them, the ruler will not act unjustly. To a

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had asked whether *mahajans*,

which ostracized those who discouraged untouchability but took no action against members who were guilty of real sins, should not be taken to courts of law.

[2] Representative bodies managing the affairs of communities

[3] Not translated here. The correspondent had stated that, from its very nature, the rule of Indian Princes tended towards despotism, and asked Gandhiji whether he favoured the continued existence of Indian States.

people without spirit, what difference does it make whether they are ruled by a king or have a republican form of Government? What will they do with power who do not know how to use it? That is why I have often said: "As the subjects, so the ruler."[1] Wherever have seen injustice being done, I have observed that the subjects are also to blame, because of their weakness. In such States, every official acts as if he himself were the ruler.

I have not favoured the existence of States where there is no control over the rulers. The form and degree of control are matters for the ruler and subjects in each State to decide. Wherever the subjects are vigilant, it is impossible to do injustice. Wherever they slumber, there is bound to be injustice no matter what type of Government they have. We can have an Indian Government with a clean and perfectly just administration. We have before us the example of Rama's rule. The evils we find in the present-day Indian States are to be attributed, on the one hand, to the evils among the subjects and, on the other, to those of British rule. Hence the prevailing anarchy in the Indian States should occasion no surprise. When some Indian States, though subject to evil influences from both these directions, enjoy a reputation for good administration, does not this fact speak well for their sense of moral responsibility? In all that I have said or written on this subject, I only mean that it is not right to hold that there is nothing worth preserving in Indian States and that the best course is to abolish them. It is quite possible to reform them and, if reformed, they can become model governments. I certainly do not mean that they should continue to exist in the same condition in which they are today.

ZAMINDAR'S SERVICES

Chaudhari Raghuvir Narayansingh is a zamindar of Meerut. He has not gone back on the sacrifices he had made at the time of the non-co-operation movement. All the members of his family are khadi-lovers. He had taken a pledge, at Belgaum, to enrol 500 spinning members the Congress. Referring to that pledge, he writes :[1]

It is true that Chaudhariji has not been able to enrol 500 spinning members. Even so, his enthusiasm for the cause is some

[1] Reversing the saying, "As the ruler, so the subjects."

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had expresssed his regret that, owing to the illness and death of his elder brother, he had not been able to fulfil his pledge, assured Gandhiji of his continuing interest in khadi and given details of the work he had been doing for the cause.

thing which others would do well to emulate. If many rich people join in this work, spinning and khadi would make rapid progress.

JAIN "MUNIS"[1] AND SPINNING-WHEEL

I have received several let ters about the report which appeared in *Navajivan* of the conversation I had in Palitana on the spinning wheel.[2] I do not wish to be drawn into a discussion on this subject; it may not, however, be out of place to clarify a few points. I have studied Jain Shastras according to my lights, but I know that I am not at all qualified to explain their meaning. In the conversation referred to, I only explained the meaning of ahimsa and of being a *muni*. It is possible that Jain philosophy does not accept my meaning. I would be sorry if that was so, and admit that my view was different from the accepted Jain view. Even so, I should have the right to state what appeals to my reason and my heart. I may be mistaken in my view and, if I am, I am bound to suffer for my error; if I have erred through ignorance, I must correct my error as soon as I realize it. My explanation of the meaning of ahimsa and of being a *muni* ought not hurt any Jain. Why should anyone feel hurt when there was no intention on my part at all to cause any pain? If someone does not agree with our view and we are convinced that we are right, we may by all means think that the other person is a fool, but why should we feel hurt?

Having said this, I repeat in all humility that at this time it is the sacred duty even of *munis* to work at the spinning-wheel for general welfare. As they are entitled to have food and drink in order that they may live and serve others, so it is their duty to spin for the service of others. In my humble view, therefore, a *muni* who refuses to do work which may save even one soul does not deserve to be called a *muni*.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-5-1925

[1] Monks

[2] *Vide* "Discusion with a Jain 'Muni' at Palitana", April 3, 1925.

239. NEEDLESS EXPENDITURE

A long letter lies before me. It contains a well-deserved but gentle criticism of our present movement and of the workers engaged in it. I reproduce below extracts from it which one should read :[1]

I have given a summary of the 25-page letter almost in the correspondent's own words. The writer is a thoughtful person and has said everything with a good motive. I know nothing about some of his allegations, but it is indeed my experience that public funds are being misused a great deal. I have even criticized this from time to time. I have known many instances of more money than was necessary having been spent on the comforts of workers. This practice is very much less prevalent now, but I must admit that there is still room for reform. There is certainly some substance in the complaint that expenses on conveyance are incurred much too readily. We now wish to serve the poorest of the poor and to be their representatives. I have no doubt, therefore, that there should be much greater simplicity in our lives than there is at present. A carriage must not be hired so long as one can walk the distance. Public workers arriving as one's guests need not be treated to banquets. Workers come together not to enjoy dinners but to render service.

I have not understood what the correspondent has in mind in the veiled reference he has made to the subject of association with women. The point did not become clear to me even after I had read the whole letter. But one can guess a little from the analogy the writer has used. I have no doubt that seeking women's company for its own sake is sinful and reprehensive. Workers who are guilty of this can render little service to the people. But association with women in the ordinary course of public work is unavoidable and, therefore, to be accepted. We have kept women very much suppressed. They have lost their womanhood. A woman has a right to go out of her home in order to serve, it is her duty to do so. As day by day women come to take greater part in our movement, we shall see more and more men and women coming together in meetings. This seems to me quite a normal situation.

That *brahmacharya* which can be observed only by living in a forest is neither *brahmacharya* nor self-control. Many would like to live in a forest. Everyone will find such solitude beneficial in some

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had complained of the workers' love of comforts and their preference for foreign articles, and also drawn Gandhiji's attention to the needless expenditure incurred on his account whenever he visited a place.

measure. But it is to be sought in order that it may help one in reflection and in striving for self-realization, and not for one's safety. He alone who, though living in the midst of the busy world, is unaffected by its concerns is a man of self-control and lives in safety.

The walls which were erected in the old days may have been necessary in those times. But we see in Europe in these days that, though large numbers of men and women mix with great freedom, they are able to preserve their moral character and purity. If anyone believes that it is impossible to preserve one's purity in Europe, he betrays his utter ignorance. It is true, certainly, that it is difficult for us to preserve our purity in Europe. But the reason is not that women enjoy great freedom in Europe, but that people there look upon enjoyment as the only good in life. Moreover, we are not accustomed to the freedom that obtains in Europe in these matters.

The example of Europe is useful to us only to a certain extent. To follow it in every respect would be dangerous. My aim in referring to it is merely to show that the idea of association with women being reprehensible in all circumstances, or its being sinful for a man of self-control, is not true at all times and in all places.

In introducing whatever reforms are necessary in our culture, we should take into account the general atmosphere in our country. On the one hand, we have to introduce reforms in the conditions of women's life and, on the other, we have to guard against any harmful consequence during the transitional stage. We shall also have to take some risks. I have received complaints from one or two places to the effect that all is not well there. I have been inquiring into the matter to the extent that it lies in my power to do so.

According to me, it is desirable for a man and a woman to avoid being alone together at all times and in all places, in order to safeguard their purity. If the relationship is pure, there is no need for privacy. There is need for reform in our education, our speech, our diet and our habits. The very thought of our obeying in modern times some of the injunctions of the Shastras which were laid down for their times makes me shudder. As it was thought to be a sin even to look at a woman, the fear has taken possession of us that we cannot look at a woman without evil thoughts. A son feels purified by the sight of his mother. There can be no sin in a brother's innocent look at his sister. Sin depends on the state of one's mind. A man who can never look at a woman without an evil thought had better put out his eyes, or live in a forest till he was pure enough. Anyone who keeps looking at a woman without reason and yet protests that he has no evil thought in his mind is a hypocrite. But the man who is afraid to look at a woman

when he happens to meet one should overcome his timidity. It is definitely sinful to stare at a woman who is not known to us, but there can be no inflexible rule in this matter. No matter how many screens you erect, a polluted mind will look for opportunities for sin and, not getting them, will at any rate go on sinning mentally. A pure mind will survive temptations which assail unexpectedly and preserve unsullied purity.

Finally, the man of self-control should, without resentment, keep in mind the suggestions made by the correspondent, be vigilant and go on with his work of service.

But the most important part of the foregoing letter concerns me. I think that the correspondent's criticism is fully justified. For the expenditure that is being incurred in my name the responsibility, I have no doubt, rests on me. I often feel that much needless expenditure is incurred for my sake. I have quarrelled good-humouredly with a number of my friends over this matter. In many cases, I write in advance about my needs. Despite this, excessive love will not refrain from excess. It incurs expense under one excuse or another. All this cannot always be prevented, however much one tries. Maybe this is because of my weakness. It is possible that my mind secretly craves for pleasures about which I am not conscious. I am a mahatma in name, but it is certain that I am an *alpatma*[1]. Else why do I not completely discourage all excess, even at the risk of hurting my friends? Let me hope that such a time too will come. I have done many such things in my life. Here, I only acknowledge my fault and lighten it somewhat, and assure the correspondent that his letter has made me more vigilant and I will remain so in future.

I shall have to defend myself on one point, namely, sanitary conveniences. I learnt 35 years ago that a lavatory must be as clean as a drawing-room. I learnt this in the West. I believe that many rules about cleanliness in lavatories are observed more scrupulously in the West than in the East. There are some defects in their rules in this matter, which can be easily remedied. The cause of many of our diseases is the condition of our lavatories and our bad habit of disposing of excreta anywhere and everywhere. I, therefore, believe in the absolute necessity of a clean place for answering the call of nature and clean articles for use at the time, have accustomed myself to them and wish that all others should do the same. The habit has become so firm in me that even if I wished to change it I would not be able to do so. Nor do I wish to change it. My host is put to some trouble in

[1] A small soul

providing these facilities. But to order out a commode from Bombay on that account is certainly wrong. A secluded spot, a hole dug in the ground, if it is open land, and a few steps around it are all that I need. It is necessary for this spot to be near the place where I sleep. In cities this is possible only if a commode is provided, and so many friends use it. But it is not necessary to get a commode made in Bombay. Any carpenter can make the box and a half kerosene tin can serve as the pan. One can point out many more devices for maintaining cleanliness and meeting our needs.

None of the equipment need be of foreign make. The principle of khadi certainly implies that even the other articles we use should, as far as possible, have been made in our own country. Wearing khadi can never mean licence to use all other articles of foreign make. But khadi also does not mean that one should hate a thing simply because it is foreign-made. Khadi means conservation, not destruction. The destruction implicit in the process of conservation is inevitable. Hence we should conserve only that which is absolutely necessary. We cannot do without cloth, and cloth can easily be produced in India. The textile industry provides employment to crores of people in India. Hence khadi means safeguarding their means of livelihood. Wearing khadi, therefore, is a sacred duty and, for the same reason, wearing foreign cloth and for that matter even Indian mill-made cloth is morally wrong. But a medicine called "iodine" which is imported from the West and which cannot be produced in India is a necessity and, therefore, acceptable though foreign-made. But those public workers who use foreign, or even indigenous, articles merely to increase their comforts violate dharma. A servant of the country can never be guilty of this. It is, thus, altogether wrong for a servant to take mangoes all the way from Bombay to Mayavati merely to pander to his palate. If a servant spends two rupees where only one will do, it is open theft.

I, therefore, give below what I have often conveyed to friends about my needs. Anyone who keeps ready more conveniences for me than those indicated below will not be obliging me, nor serving the people, nor helping himself.

I want the place for answering the call of nature to be as clean as that for sleeping.

I shall be satisfied if I have a clean place with fresh air in which I can work and rest and sleep. A bedstead is not necessary. I carry with me what I require as bedding and covering and hence, there is no need to provide a bed or mattress for me.

For food, a maximum of three seers of goat's milk every day

and two sour lemons will suffice for me. The dry fruit which I need besides these two, I carry with me. I do not require ghee made from goat's milk. If I need a preparation made from goat's milk during a journey, I get it made before I start and carry it with me. I consider it a great sin to get ghee made from goat's milk at great cost.

No car is needed for my comfort. But one can certainly be pressed into service to save time.

It is certainly not necessary to have a first-class bogey for me. For myself, I do require second-class accommodation at present, but third-class accommodation will be good enough for my companions. Sometimes, men and women friends travel with me at their own expense. They arrange for their own accommodation in trains.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-5-1925

240. MESSAGE TO "FORWARD"

May 25, 1925

Forward with the spinning-wheel. For I know that through it we can give strength to the Swarajists. Let the readers of *Forward* . . .[1] every house with the wheel and we shall have Subhas Chandra Bose in our midst in no time.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original : G.N. 8049

241. LETTER TO N. C. KELKAR

May 25, 1925

DEAR MR. KELKAR,

I have your note. Of course we must not enter upon arbitration unless we have a proper deed of reference. The parties know that I have insisted upon that from the first. I have also stipulated that they must not bind me to time.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : C. W. 3114. Courtesy : Kashinath N. Kelkar

[1] The source is illegible here.

242. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

May 25, 1925

CHI. RAMDAS,

I am encolosing herewith the letter you wanted to be returned.

You must have read the story of Nanda.[1] Meet poet Hansraj, and ask him to read that story twice or thrice, and then compose a poem about it. I wish to publish the poem if it comes out well. If he finds the task beyond his capacity, let me know. The purpose is to sing it from house to house and also among the untouchables.

There has been no letter from you now for almost a week. I am in Calcutta today. I shall be going to Burdwan either tomorrow or this evening. I shall return here by the 27th for the Committee[2] meeting. My health is fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I had preserved one of your letters for some purpose. Reading it again today, I realize that you have completed 29 years. I have not noted the birthday of any of you brothers, hence I rarely think about such things. Growing in age means having one's life shortened. It means so many days or years less for endeavour. Is it something to be sorry for or to be happy about? One can take it either way. Happiness and sorrow are the same. Or they are echoes of one's mind. But you have put them to good use. You have grown in self-restraint. May God keep you happy and in peace and may He grant you a long life.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Ramdas Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Which appeared in *Navajivan*, 10-5-1925, under the title "Untouchable Saint Nanda"

[2] Congress Working Committee; *vide* also the following item.

243. NOTES

LATEST RETURNS

Here are the latest returns, supplied by the All-India Congress Committee, of Congress membership :

	PROVINCE	Last month		Current month		Total
		A	B	A	B	
1.	Ajmer . .	2	15	. .	. .	17
2.	Andhra . .	. .	. .	. .	. .	1,965
3.	Assam . .	113	1	. .	. .	114
4.	Bihar . .	718	261	. .	. .	979*
5.	Bengal . .	354	1,919	. .	. .	2,273
6.	Berar . .	. .	. .	6	20	26†
7.	Burma . .	42	28	33	28	61
8.	C.P. (Hindi). .	. .	. .	. .	. .	500
9.	C.P. (Marathi)	. .	80	52	. .	. .
132						
10.	Bombay . .	231	133	242	201	443
11.	Delhi . .	83	62	243	647	890
12.	Gujarat . .	2,095	101	. .	. .	2,196
13.	Karnatak . .	376	344	. .	. .	720
14.	Kerala . .	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .§
15.	Maharashtra. .	408	292	. .	. .	700
16.	Punjab . .	50	574	50	754	804+
17.	Sind . .	73	192	107	234	341
18.	Tamilnad . .	. .	. .	. .	nearly	1,400
19.	U.P. . .	237	467	. .	. .	1,484**
20.	Utkal . .	. .	. .	. .	. .	310††
		4,862	4,441	681	1,884	15,355

*103 out of class B sent yarn spun by family members.

†Figures for 3 out of 4 Districts not received.

§No information was received even for March.

+ It is not known how many of these actually paid subscriptions.

**780 members are unclassified.

††Of these, only 116 members paid their subscriptions for April up to middle of April.

These returns are an interesting study for those who believe in the new franchise, or those who would make the Congress an effective and efficient working institution. Kerala was made a new Province at Nagpur. It gave promise of much work and greater sacrifice, but today Kerala is almost dead to the Congress call. It will not even condescend to send an explanation to the All-India Congress Committee. It has Vykom to its credit, but no person or institution can eternally live upon its credit. He who does not add to his credit loses what he has. C.P. (Hindustani), also a new Province, and which has distinguished itself before now for its pluck, is satisfied with sending a stationary return in round figures. I suspect the figure 500. Why not 499 or 501? It has not given the classification. An explanation is necessary to show the meaning. Has there been no increase upon 500? Have there been no defaulters? Are they all self-spinning members? Or, have they all sent yarn spun by others? If not, in what way have they sent their quota? Or, has the Congress taken up the agency for those who wanted to become members and purchased yarn for them in order to save the members the trouble of buying and examining the yarn? If the Congress has taken up the agency, on what terms has it done so? These are the questions to which one would fain have answers. Andhra has a record wholly unworthy of its past traditions, because, I presume, it is torn with internal dissensions, and therefore, its capacity for growth has become paralysed. Tamilnad fares no better. It could easily make a much braver show if it could but settle its eternal Brahmin-non-Brahmin controversy. The condition, however, does not daunt me. I am a hardened criminal, slow to reform. The black picture I have drawn is for me a reason not for altering the franchise, but for adhering to it; not for watering it down, but for strengthening its main purpose. I can see no way of making the Congress a truly national organization, responsive to national want and representative of the masses and capable of action at a given moment, without discipline, without the co-operation of all its parts, and without a due sense of responsibility in every member. 15,000 members are more than enough for the national purpose, if they would be true to their creed and satisfy all self-imposed tests. All the observations that I have made and I am making about this incessant

travelling to which I have subjected myself convince me of the necessity of making Congress predominantly a self-spinning association. Nothing but this very simple discipline will cure the nation of the lethargy that has overtaken it.

Young India, 28-5-1925

244. RYOTS' CRY

As my Bengal tour progresses, the addresses I receive are becoming more and more businesslike. Instead of containing praises of me and my work, they are becoming instructive, containing valuable information. One such address was from Tipperah Ryots' Association. It contained these pregnant sentences :[1]

Let me assure the reader that I have only omitted the usual opening and the concluding brief one-sentence paragraphs and half a sentence of unnecessary epithets. I am prepared to believe that there is exaggeration in the foregoing statement. But I cannot help remarking that, on the whole, it is a fair statement of the ryots' position from their own point of view. The most remarkable part in the statement is that relating to six months' unemployment. It is an echo of the other parts of the country. Many people work on their miserably small holdings for six months, and for six months they labour in factories far away from their homes. A studious reader will notice that this unemployment naturally occupies the first place in the tale of woes. It is also mainly the cause of the other troubles mentioned. If they had steady work in their own homes for the whole of the year, they would not be obliged to run to the money-lender. If they had anything to lay by, they would not be obliged to sell their jute at rates dictated to them. Six months' industrial employment must revolutionize their lives.

But they say they do not know spinning. They want me to tell the Congressmen to take note of the fact. I wish I could fire Congressmen with my faith in and zeal for the charkha. Of course, they should, as representatives of the people, spread themselves among them and take to them the message of the wheel. In taking that message and in inducing them to spin, they will automatically know many things about them and share their sorrows as well as their rejoicings. Congressmen may not descend upon villages as locusts

[1] Not reproduced here. The address dwelt on the plight of the food-growing and jute-producing farmers of Tipperah due to low wages, under-employment, inequitable prices for their produce, lack of drinking-water, litigation, etc., and appealed for relief.

upon crops, but they should approach them as loving messengers to understand their wants and to help them to better their condition. I should not be at all sorry or upset, if, after having gone there to spread spinning, they find it necessary to render some other help instead. Let them go to the villages and stay there as servants. Everyone whom I meet agrees that it is necessary to work among the villages but few actually do so. Of those who have gone to the villages the majority find the spinning-wheel the proper instrument of service. But the villages are seven hundred thousand and we have not perhaps seven hundred true village-workers in all India. The ryots' address is a rebuke and a reminder to us. It will be time to speak of swaraj when we have a respectable number of workers in the villages.

Young India, 28-5-1925

245. THE DRAWBACKS

The more I see the Bengal life the more do I realize its immense possibilities in many directions. It has given the world's greatest poet of the day. It has given two scientists[1] who are among the greatest in the world. It has singers who are hard to beat. It has painters whose art has spread from one end of India to the other.[2] It has sacrifice to its credit which even Maharashtra cannot rival. When I wrote in answer to the revolutionary friend, I had not seen with my own eyes the workers in the malarial districts, working among the people on a mere pittance. I had not actually known that there were young men who were living in such penury and want that they had contracted diseases that were due purely to want of proper nourishment or change to a healthy climate. I have now seen such places and such men. Both men and women of Bengal have a special talent for spinning. I have watched both working at Chandpur, Chittagong, Mahajanhat, Noakhali, Comilla, Dacca and Mymensingh. Everywhere I have found their work to be on the whole superior to any I have noticed in India. They were not professional spinners, they were not even habitual spinners, for most had come to please or to honour me if not to humour me. And yet their work was not to be despised. But for want of technical skill, this talent and this sacrifice are running to waste. The majority of the spinning-wheels I saw were indifferent machines. They were either not working properly or they were so made as to make their working heavy and give not the maximum, but the minimum of revolutions of

[1] Dr. J. C. Bose and Dr. P. C. Ray
[2] *Vide* "At It Again", 7-5-1925.

the spindle. Their yield could, therefore, be very poor. I worked at one such wheel for fully thirty minutes. My average output is 130 yards per half-hour. On this Bengal wheel it was only 30 yards. With a proper charkha it is possible easily to treble the output. It is no small gain to the nation or the individual to treble his earning in any given hour. Bengal has a very good and very cheap wheel. Khadi Pratishthan has an excellent wheel that works well and sells at rupees two and annas eight. I have not known a cheaper machine in all India of the same type. I do wish that Bengal will adopt the Pratishthan model. It is also necessary for an expert to travel to all the places where wheels are working and put the wheels in order and destroy where repair is impossible. The expert may also demonstrate the superiority of the wheel he may recommend. All this work can only be done by men who know and who will give the whole of their time and attention to khaddar work to the exclusion of every thing else. Such organization is the Khadi Pratishthan and such a specialist is Satish Babu who has given up everything for the sake of the wheel. Then there is the unwholesome competition of mixed or half khaddar with the pure. If the Congress resolutions have any weight with Congressmen, the latter at any rate can have nothing to do with mixed khaddar. I hope, therefore, that Congress organizations that are manufacturing or supporting half-khaddar will cease to do so. Half-khaddar is generally that stuff whose warp is made of mill-yarn. Now it is the warp which enables us to test the quality of yarn. And if we get into the habit of using mill-spun yarn for warp, we shall never improve the quality of hand spun yarn and hence we shall never be able to reestablish hand-spinning as a cottage industry, nor succeed in achieving the exclusion of foreign cloth.

Young India, 28-5-1925

246. NATIONAL SERVICE AND PAY

Thus writes a correspondent[1] It is evident that he is not a constant reader of *Young India*, or else he would have noticed that I have said repeatedly that I would deem it an honour to belong to paid national service. My travelling and other such expenses stand on a different footing. I cannot charge them against the Congress without a

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent, who described himself as a Khilafat and Congress worker drawing an allowance, referring to "Notes", 30-4-1925, said he found himself in a fix at leaders like Gandhiji, the Ali Brothers, Motilal Nehru and C. R. Das considering it "beneath their dignity to be put on the nation's Civil list".

vote. I do not travel in virtue of any resolution of the Congress or at its instance. I travel at the call of different provinces. It would be quite wrong for me to charge these expenses against the Congress or to ask the Congress to vote them. The correspondent does not know that even members of the A.I.C.C., when they attend in answer to a summon from the Congress, make no charge against it. The Congress funds would be soon exhausted if such a charge was made. But, if I became a whole-time Congress worker in the technical sense of the term, and if we had a paid national service, I should be the first to put myself on the pay list for the sake of encourag-ing others. Such a service we have not yet established and I have found many practical difficulties in evolving a scheme, whether for the whole of India or even for Gujarat. More than once I have been obliged to drop it no sooner than I had conceived it. The correspondent, therefore, need have no qualms of conscience in drawing pay from the Khilafat Office for work honestly done. If it be any consolation to him, let him know that the Ali Brothers did charge the Khilafat Committee travelling expenses when they travelled at its instance. Let him have the further consolation of knowing that the Khilafat Committee bore my travelling expenses twice or thrice, when I travelled with the Ali Brothers on what was regarded as mainly Khilafat work. I could even then have fallen back upon friends, but I deemed it an honour to call myself one of the Khilafat Party. If Ali Brothers do not and did not charge their personal expenses against the Khilafat Committee, it was because their obligations were larger than they could legitimately ask the Khilafat Committee to discharge. If they had, it would have been a bad precedent.

Young India, 28-5-1925

247. NOTES

HAKIM SAHIB

Hakim Sahib Ajmal Khan has sent an Urdu letter to me from Marseilles. I translate below the relevant portion :

We left Bombay [on] 10th April and we have reached Marseilles today, 22nd April. My health was somewhat better on the way. I was sorry not to have been able to meet you before I sailed. God willing, I shall give myself the pleasure on my return. I shall feel deeply ashamed when anyone asks me about the condition of India. For what shall I be able to say except that it is wretched,—that its two great but unfortunate communities are fighting to their hearts' content among themselves. How I wish that those who are engaged in widening the gulf would have pity on India, on Asia, indeed, on their own respective

communities, and would turn their faces towards the true path and would put life into the lifeless Congress. Dr. Ansari is well and seems to have benefited by the change.

Those who know the good soul will readily appreciate and share his great grief over our dissensions.

'THE SIAMESE TWINS'

It is a sign of the times that there should be people who think that as none of them is with me during my tour, there must be some rupture between me and the Ali Brothers, or the 'Siamese twins' as Maulana Mahomed Ali delights to call himself and his big brother. Some friends at Noakhali told me that many people suspected an open rupture between us. I told them that there was none and there was likely to be none, but that, if a rupture did ever take place between us, I would not be slow to advertise it as I have advertised our friendship. But I warn the reader against hoping for or expecting any such announcement, if he wishes to avoid disappointment. Friendships are not easily made, they are less easily broken. They bear much strain. The only strain they cannot stand is dishonesty or faithlessness. Let no one imagine that the differences between Maulana Shaukat Ali and myself about Kohat have put any strain whatsoever upon our relations. It would have been a false friendship if either of us had, in order to please the other, concealed his honest opinion.

"Then why was not one of them with us?", was the natural and next question. I told the inquirers that Maulana Shaukat Ali was tied down to Bombay till he had repaired the broken barque of the Khilafat Committee and Maulana Mahomed Ali could not be spared from his two papers which were taxing him beyond his strength. Moreover, the fact is that there is not that imperative necessity today for us always to be travelling together that there was in 1920-21. On the contrary, at the present moment very available worker is required to attend to his allotted task. The programme of work is before the country. It has got to be worked. I travel as the inspector general to see how the new franchise is working. I travel in order to test for myself the value of the new franchise. Having taken over the burden of office I can best discharge it, during this year of grace, by travelling, wherever I may be wanted, with a Mussalman friend if possible, or, even without if necessary. So far as the Hindu-Muslim question is concerned, I have had my say. I have prescribed the cure. It has been found wanting for the time being. I must now wait, watch and pray. I discharge my obligation in that respect nowadays by simply reciting and re-affirming my creed. My sole energy is being devoted to the spinning-wheel and untouchability.

CART AND CHARKHA

During my tour in Bengal, I meet with all kinds of ingenious arguments against the wheel from the ingenious Bengalis. Most of them have been examined in these pages. But as readers never remember what they read in journalistic literature, a journalist is always safe in repeating the same thing so long as perhaps he takes care to repeat at fair intervals. One of these friends asked me whether I propose to replace the railways with country carts, and if I did not, how I expected to replace mills with wheels. I told him that I did not propose to replace railways with carts, because I could not do so even if I wished. Three hundred million carts could not destroy distance. But I could replace mills with wheels. For railways solved the question of speed. With mills it was a question of production in which the wheel could easily compete if there were enough hands to work as there were in India. I told him that as a matter of fact a villager could manufacture for himself sufficient cloth cheaper than mills if he did not count the value of his labour. And he did not need to do so as he would spin or even weave during his spare hours. It is remarkable how false or incomplete analogies deceive people. In the case in point, the difference between mills and railways on the one hand and wheels and country-carts on the other, is so obvious that the comparison should never have been made. But probably the friend thought I was against all machinery in every conceivable circumstance. Probably he had in mind my objections to railways stated in my *Indian Home Rule* though I have repeatedly said that I am not working out the different fundamental problems raised in that booklet.

WASTE OF EFFORT?

Another argument advanced was that the spinning-wheel was a waste of effort. It was an astounding argument advanced without any thought given to it. I showed that anything done with a purpose could not be regarded as waste of effort. The spinning-wheel was presented to the nation for giving occupation to the millions who had, at least, for four months in the year, nothing to do. I told the objector, too, that seeing that the wheel produced at least 100 yards of yarn per every half hour it could not be regarded as waste of effort. Moreover, it not only was not a waste of effort, but a sound economic proposition. For, what was required for the millions was a universal productive occupation which could be taken up during odd moments and which did not require any special talent or long course of training to learn. Such an occupation was only hand-spinning and no other.

RISE AND FALL

The District of Noakhali is a promising centre of khaddar work.

It had evidently much work to its credit when the khaddar movement first started. The following report of its rise and fall, handed to me at Noakhali, cannot fail to be of general interest :[1]

The moral is obvious. Workers must not lose heart. They must continue their work in the face of all odds even as a re sourceful merchant does. Till khaddar becomes current coin, we must become voluntary merchants, not for personal but for the country's gain. Khaddar work must be above the shifting party-politics of the Congress. It may change its programme fifty times but never its programme of the charkha and khaddar, on which depends the fortune of the poor and dumb millions.

FALLEN SISTERS SPINNING

At Noakhali, I was told that two fallen sisters were not only spinning, but that they were entirely supporting themselves by spinning. These were not young girls but women over forty who could no longer sell their shame but who would, but for spinning, have lived on begging. They were, therefore, strictly speaking, weaned from begging and not from their original trade. It is, however, a great thing for Noakhali to come in touch with these sisters and interest itself in their welfare. I was also told that some of them, though they had not given up their calling, had taken to spinning. I do not know if it could be considered a gain for such sisters to spin if they would not give up their calling. It may well be used to cover their shame. At the same time there is no doubt that spinning could not be recommended to them as a means of livelihood. They are used to earning so much as one to two rupees per day if not even more. They must have either weaving or even embroidery or other fancy work which would bring them a fair remuneration. It is, too, not a question that man can tackle. It must be reserved for the fair sex to rise to the occasion. Not until a woman of exceptional purity and strength of character rises and devotes herself to the task of redeeming this portion of fallen humanity will the problem of prostitution be tackled. No doubt man can do much among men who degrade themselves by enticing young women to sell themselves for their lust. Prostitution is as old as the world, but I wonder if it was ever a regular feature of town-life that it is today. In any case, time must come when humanity will rise against the curse and make prostitution a thing of the past, as it has got rid of many evil customs, however time honoured they might have been.

[1] The report, not reproduced here, concerned the cotton-growing district of Noakhali, with its 55,000 weavers, and in referring to the fall in khadi consumption and consequent fall in output, stressed the potentialities of production, given necessary organization, funds and workers.

SPINNING IN MEERUT

Chaudhari Rughbeer Narayan Singh, writing from Meerut, says that though he promised at Belgaum to enlist 500 members under the new franchise, he was not able to do so within the stipulated time owing to the serious illness of his brother who, I am sorry to report, is no more. But now with the aid of Babu Jyoti Prasad, a Swarajist *vakil* and other friends, he has been able to get 647 members of whom 200 are self-spinners. This is certainly good so far as it goes. But let me remind the Chaudhariji that he was to enlist 500 self-spinning members. I hope that he and his co-workers will bear the fact in mind and not be satisfied till Meerut has that number of self-spinners. The Chaudhariji further says that they have been organizing spinning competitions among both men and women and that these are attended by many people. On the whole, he reports that, though the progress is slow, it is steady. They have also a class for teaching spinning and carding.

SPINNING IN GOD'S NAME

Some young men of Bowringpet have sent me over 3,200 yards of yarn spun by them during seven days following the Ram Navmi. They describe the ceremony of repeating *Ramanama* during these seven days by all people, young and old. But these young men, besides taking part in that ceremony, spun simultaneously. It is an example worth copying. I know several young men who concentrate on God whilst they are spinning. Those who spin for sacrifice can surround the act with all that is noble and good. In Dacca, some musicians called on the day of my silence to entertain me with *sitar* playing. Now Monday is not merely a day of silence but it is also a day of editing. I could ill-afford, therefore, to listen to their music. But I did not want to disappoint them. I, therefore, wrote for them a message that I would spin whilst they played on the *sitar*. They readily agreed. The result was that I spun better than usual. The hand was steadier for the music. I always use a noiseless charkha. It, therefore, did not interfere with my enjoyment of the music. On the contrary it enhanced the pleasure of listening to the music and the music enhanced the pleasure of spinning. And neither interrupted my communion with God. The hand, the ear and the heart acted in perfect harmony. Let the sceptics test the experience for themselves.

INDISCIPLINE OR INDIFFERENCE?

I receive letters from various Provinces complaining that the Head Office does not get returns or answers from Districts in spite of repeated warnings and reminders. What are they to do in such a case, they ask. The ordinary answer would be "disbandment". A

subordinate office that does not obey or respond to the head office is worse than useless. The new franchise tests the quality of obedience from the individual member and the sub-committees. A member's constancy is tested from month to month in that he or she has to send his or her quota of yarn from month to month. An organization is not worth much if its members will not take the trouble of paying their subscriptions regularly. I know that the complaint about non-payment and non-attendance is as old as the Congress itself. Irregularity of payment has not crept in since the new franchise. Imagine what would happen to a firm or a government whose employees did not attend to their work regularly or majority of whose subscribers or rate-payers did no pay rates or subscriptions regularly and without call? The firm or the government would cease to function. The Congress is, or should be, more than a firm or a government. Yet its members have to be coaxed to pay their rates or subscription. How can the Congress produce the desired effect? I do not suppose that the A.I.C.C. has got its quota of yarn. I am convinced that the provincial headquarters as well as the A.I.C.C. should be absolutely firm in securing the quota. The Congress is no stronger than the strength of regularity with which the members and groups are doing their self-imposed tasks.

SENTIMENTAL NONSENSE

There is sentiment that is sensible and useful, such, for instance, as love for one's country and consequent toil. There is sentiment which is nonsensical and useless. Of this latter kind is the following :[1]

I sympathize with the young graduate, but I cannot help saying the suicide he suggests is a crime. All fasting is not meritorious. The candidate for self-immolation can not only not advance swaraj by his suicide, but he would certainly retard it, if he committed the crime of self-murder. It bespeaks want of faith in oneself. I honour the determination not to seek employment under the Government. But surely, suicide is not the only alternative. If the national school in question does not support him, he has dozens of opportunities for earning an honest livelihood and supporting his parents. Has he the will to labour with his hands? I do not know a single honest and willing worker who is unable to get suitable work in a national or public organization or in a private firm. I know that national work

[1] In the letter, not reproduced here, a frustrated correspondent referred to his dilemma in choosing between non-co-operation and co-operation with Government for his family's sake, and sought Gandhiji's opinion as to the propriety of the correspondent's fasting unto death "for the salvation of the motherland and for the well-being" of his family.

awaits the willing through paid service of honest and industrious young men and women for its full development. The young man can become a weaver or a carpenter and earn fair wages. He can apply to, say, the Khadi Pratishthan and if he has the requisite qualifications, he would get employment there. A young man should never give way to despondency. He should have self-confidence enough to know that real merit never goes unrewarded.

100-YEAR-OLD WHEEL

At Comilla, a charkha was shown me which was said to be hundred years old and still in working order. The present owner of the wheel is a widow over 58 years. Her mother had it from her mother-in-law. The owner became a widow at the age of 14. She has had her own and her people's cloth woven out of the yarn spun by her. She is said never to have purchased foreign cloth for herself or her people.

Young India, 28-5-1925

248. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CALCUTTA[1]

May 28, 1925

Addressing the gathering Mahatmaji said that he had told them one thing and he did not know whether they had heard it or not. He would speak to them one thing which they would hear by ears and he had told them something which they had heard by eyes. He had shown them practically his only message of charkha and he could not speak anything more than that. Referring to the significance of one saying, he said, that they would go to cinema and see the deliverance of actors and actresses on the screen but what significance there could be on their cinema visit if they did not try to take to heart the morals and the spirit of the play and try to translate it in their own life? There was no significance of one's utterances if one did not practise them in one's own life. So what he would say and what Dr. Naidu had said he had explained with his own hand.

Proceeding Mahatmaji said that he would be all the more sorry if he had to speak anything more than what he had shown. Before Bengal tour he did not demonstrate his message to the public but in Faridpur he had begun that. They had seen him spinning short and coarse thread and his intention was not surely to show them his thread but to impress them with his own practice so that they could imbibe it and work up to it. He was sitting amongst the citizens of Calcutta, but his heart was always with the suffering masses in the remotest villages of Bengal. He wished to

[1] The meeting was held at Harish Park in Bhowanipur in the evening. Gandhiji addressed the meeting after Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. Varadarajulu Naidu had spoken.

mix with the masses, with the neglected poor cultivators, with down-trodden untouchables. While attending to his wheel and to the songs his heart was amongst those poor women of East Bengal who had been suffering from starvation and with those down-trodden villagers who were treated as untouchables. They died of starvation for his sake and, for their sake they did not get full meals every day. He wished to mix with them and try to discern the cause of their woes and help them in their salvation.

Referring to Dr. Varadarajulu Naidu's appeal, he said that Dr. Naidu had asked them to join and help the Swaraj Party. To him this appeal meant that they must do something for swaraj. He could only interpret it in that way. How could those youngsters present in the meeting enter the Councils? Chittaranjan might go to the Council with only a few Das Guptas with him and they had gone there. But all of those present in the meeting could not aspire for that. Once Chittaranjan Babu had told them at Faridpur to go to the villages and work with the masses. In the words of Deshbandhu he could explain his message and say that mere entrance into the Swaraj Party would be no real work. They must go to the masses and live with them if they wished to uplift them. They might give a handful of rice as a dole, but this would not infuse real life and enthusiasm in their heart.

In East Bengal many poor villagers had told him that they had to sit idle for six months in a year having no work to do. They wanted charkha to be introduced amongst them. They did not know where charkha could be had and where they could get cotton. So they must go to them with the message of charkha and educate them in plying the wheel. They must purchase khaddar produced by their poor brethren and sisters with yarn spun by them.

Mahatmaji continued, wherever they might go and travel whether in Calcutta or in Delhi or in any other city, they must always think of the poor cultivators, their heart must always be with them, expressing their gratitude which they morally owed to them. Whatever they ate was produced by these poor cultivators, whatever amenities they enjoyed in cities was the outcome of the toil of their starving brothers and sisters. They were leaders sitting at the desk and writing articles and speeches. But if they wanted to do something for the masses they must spin and put on khaddar. One sister had told him that, when she went to East Bengal, she saw people wearing khaddar, but when she came to cities, she was disappointed to see her sisters with foreign clothes on. What more painful a fact could be than this!

Alluding to an incident during his Champaran work, Mahatmaji said that, in a train his wife met a woman who had only one piece of khaddar with her. She had told his wife that she used only that piece of cloth always. When she had to bathe in the Ganges she had to do it with her body practi cally naked and would put on that cloth after finishing her bath. This was a very painful fact and he expected that they would not let such occurrences recur.

Mahatmaji appealed to his sisters in a most impressive tone that, if they wished to establish *Ramaraj*, they must try to emulate Sitaji. Sita Devi never used

foreign clothes, she used to spin regularly and they must spin like her.

Speaking about untouchability he said that *sanatan* dharma had nothing as untouchability. This age-honoured magnanimous religion had no scorn and spite in its fold. If they were to save this religion from decay, they must do away with this evil eating into the vitals of their religion. Gokhale had said that the whole world would look upon India as pariah because they had looked upon their brothers and sisters in the same light. He saw that this saying of Gokhale was true to every word.

Concluding his speech, Mahatmaji said that the few yards he had spun there had only advanced him on the way to swaraj by so many yards and his only prayer was that they should spin for the swaraj of Hindustan, for Deshbandhu, for the untouchables, for the Hindus, for the Mussalmans and for all other castes of Hindustan.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 29-5-1925

249. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

Jeth Sud 7 [*May 29, 1925*][1]

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I have your letter. I am sorry to know that you will not be able to take up the treasurership of the Gauraksha Mandal. May I hope you will view it with sympathy.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SIR PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

NAVSARI CHAMBERS

OUTRAM ROAD

FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 6196. Courtesy : Purushottamdas Thakurdas

250. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

SANTINIKETAN,
May 30, 1925

DEAR MIRABAI,

I have your letter as also your telegram. Your description of your place is so enchanting that you make me jealous. May the rest there restore you to tolerable health. I suppose it is useless to hope for complete restoration in your case.

[1] The postmark is "Santiniketan, May 30, '25". *Jeth Sud* 7 fell on May 29.

Everybody felt like you the non-necessity of attending the W.C. So there was only Dr. Varadarajulu[1] besides Jawahar and myself. All the same I pardon you for not coming. The rest you are giving yourself is absolutely necessary. You want me to call a meeting of 12 representatives. I do not see the utility at present. No one wants unity of the heart for no one wants to sacrifice anything. You cannot force on a people what they are not ready for. But you evidently believe in the present possibility of achieving it. If you or anyone else calls such a meeting, I would gladly attend. I must not lead.

If girls are bolder with me than boys it is because the former respond more quickly to my call. But I shall make no distinction and therefore send love to both and you also, on condition that you get well quickly.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

251. LETTER TO KHWAJA ABDUL MAJID

ON TOUR,
May 30, 1925

DEAR KHWAJA SAHEB,

I have your letter at last. I hope you will be able to transfer to Delhi without any difficulty. I suppose it is better for you to issue your appeal after the transfer. I am afraid you may not enter the Councils whilst you are doing the University work.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

KHWAJA SAHEB ABDUL MAJID

NATIONAL MUSLIM UNIVERSITY

ALIGARH

From the original: A. M. Khwaja Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Dr. Varadarajulu Naidu

252. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

Saturday, Jeth Sud 7 [*May 30, 1925*][1]

Correct mistakes and read.

BHAI SHANKERLAL,

I have your letter. Do not worry about the length. The Working Committee did not meet after all. Only three members[2] were present. I have acquainted myself with Dr. Naidu's view. I shall also know Deshbandhu's view since I shall be meeting him in Darjeeling. Regardless of the outcome you should carry on the work without worrying. We must not worry about anything when we are doing our duty.

I have sent a telegram to Arjun Lal Sethi that the Working Committee could not meet, but that I am willing to give my personal view. He must convey whatever he has in mind within a week. It is planned to convene another meeting of the Working Committee. We will at least manage the quorum. I shall ascertain the views of other members before that. Do not worry about the authority of the Board. Let me worry about it. Do not be perturbed by the fact that the solution of the Ajmer imbroglio will take a little time. You can certainly open any shop, etc., you wish to have in Ajmer. Let him appeal against it if he wants. He will surely not stop any work by resorting to physical force? Who can stop you from working in Jaipur and other such places? It is also Dr. Naidu's view that the Board can do any independent (khadi) work that it chooses. Provincial Khadi Boards cannot make appointments without consulting the Committee. We do not have much to do with the provincial Board. Who is connected with the shop opened in Bombay? You can extend your activities in Rajputana as much as you wish without the intervention of the Provincial Board. That is also Jawaharlal's view. Even then, you need not do it if you do not feel strong enough. You may consult me again if you want.

There is nothing at all to be done if Sethiji abuses Jamnalalji. He was at one time a dependent of Jamnalalji. The abuses from adependent do not have to be answered. Nor need there be any angry reaction. That is Sethiji's nature. It would be good for you to live in solitude for a few days. If nothing else, you may come to me for some days and also talk things over.

[1] Inferred the contents of the letter. In 1925 *Jeth Sud 7* corresponded to this date, a Saturday.

[2] Viz., Gandhiji, Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. Varadarajulu Naidu, *vide* p. 305.

If Jawaharlal did not have to go to Dalhousie the Committee could have been called in July.

I am at Santiniketan today. I shall reach Calcutta on Tuesday. The same day I shall leave for Darjeeling for a . three-day stay. It is not possible to spare more days for Darjeeling. My health is fine. I had a long talk with the Poet today—four hours. It is very likely he will start plying the charkha. In any case he will not oppose it. We are meeting again. I have built great hopes on Bengal. You will see it from my articles in *Young India*.

Take good care of your health. I am also going to Assam for 10 or 12 days.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am not revising this letter. It is time to go to bed. I may not write a separate letter to Anasuyabehn. She will have all the news from this.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32692

253. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SANTINIKETAN,

Jeth Sud 7 [*May 30, 1925*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. I had put off writing to you as I thought you would be coming for the Committee meeting and we would then talk about everything personally. I was not at all worried that you did not come. I had inferred from Girdhari's letter that you would definitely come.

I am constantly on the look-out for someone or other for the College[2]; but none has appealed to me. If Jugalkishore[3] comes, it would in a way solve the problem. He is without doubt a man of character. From his letters to Gidwani, I am not fully satisfied. If Gidwani thinks of coming and can come, it would be all right. For the present there is none else I can think of. I always think that it would be better if we found someone from the South.

[1] From the book, *Panchven Putra ko Bapu ke Ashirvad*, p. 36

[2] Gujarat Vidyapith

[3] Acharya Jugalkishore; joined the Vidyapith staff; later, A.I.C.C. Secretary; Minister in U.P. Government

Is it necessary to have the inaugural function of the College performed in June itself? I will be in Assam in the later part of June. Then immediately I must go to Bihar; but if it is necessary to go to Wardha directly from Assam, I shall first go there and then proceed thence to Bihar. I shall spend one month in Bihar. Ever since people have come to know about my visit to Wardha they have been asking me to visit other places also. There are letters from Nagpur, Amravati and Akola. I think it advisable to visit those places from which there are invitations. I consider it my duty to tour all the places where I am wanted during this year. If I do so, please draw up the programme for my C.P. tour and, if it is possible and convenient to you, it will be better if you accompany me.

Please let me know

1. when I should go to Wardha;
2. whether or not I should tour C.P. and
3. if I tour C.P., whether you would draw up my itinerary and accompany me.

I do not think I shall be able to go to the Ashram for several days to come. After Bengal, I have to go immediately to Bihar, C.P. and other places. I can return only after these tours are over. This means it would probably be in September.

The Working Committee did not meet as there were only three members present—Jawaharlal, Dr. Naidu and myself. Though Aney was to come, he did not. Hence we could not decide anything about Ajmer. However, if you think it advisable to come and see me in that connection, do so. We need not be perturbed about it. I am myself going to write to Arjunlalji saying that whatever he has to say, he should tell me.

I hope all of you there are in good health. I am keeping well. Today, Saturday, I am in Bolpur. I shall stay here till Monday. On Tuesday I shall go to Calcutta and from there I shall go to Darjeeling for three days. I shall send you my further programme which will be fixed today or tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the photostat of the Gujarati original : G.N. 2852

254. INTERVIEW WITH RABINDRANATH TAGORE[1]

May 30, 1925

Mr. Gandhi explained very carefully his own meaning, showing that he did not believe in the sub-divisions of castes of modern days, but believed that the division into the main vocational castes was scientifically correct. But he did believe in a vocational division of manhood in which there was no question of inferior or superior but rather of different functions being performed in the body corporate of humanity.[2]

The Poet doubted if even such vocational divisions, when perpetuated, led to anything else but sterility in the long run. The Poet contended that to make this depend on birth was unscientific and unnatural because in mankind nature aimed at variety and personal choice and freedom.[3]

Mr. Gandhi again explained with great earnestness and elaboration his own position. In the end the Poet asked him to explain at length his charkha and khaddar programme.

Mr. Gandhi described his own experience in East Bengal, and how the revival of spinning had already put new life into the villages there. The Poet was evidently deeply impressed because his own heart has ever been touched by the sufferings of the villagers. Mr. Gandhi explained clearly that he did not wish the educated classes to do anything else, except to spin for a very limited time every day, in order to represent in a living way, their sympathy with the poor and the oppressed, and the brotherhood of man. He asked the Poet for his own invaluable help in the great enterprise which he had undertaken. After the most cordial greeting the interview came to a close.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 2-6-1925

255. MY NOTES

KATHIAWAR'S CONTRIBUTION

The people of Kathiawar were required to contribute Rs. 20,000

[1] Gandhiji arrived at Bolpur on the night of May 29. He was received by C. F. Andrews, among others, and drove to Santiniketan. On arrival, he was escorted to a flower-decked room of the Poet's Santiniketan house. Gandhiji, it is reported, asked Tagore : "Why bring me to this bridal chamber?" Tagore replied with a smile : "Santiniketan, the ever-young queen of our hearts, welcomes you."

During this three-day stay, Gandhiji had talks with the Poet. No detailed report of these, however, is available. Andrews also had several interviews with Gandhiji on May 30, but reports of these are not available. Andrews appears to have conveyed to Gandhiji his views on the opium problem and the condition of the tea-plantation labourers of Assam.

[2] This sentence is from a report in *The Hindu* 1-6-1925.

[3] *ibid*

for the propagation of khadi. Shri Manilal Kothari has sent me a telegram, saying that the sum has been collected. In his latest telegram he informs me that he has received from a friend Rs. 5,000 for cotton and Rs. 1,000 for distributing spinning-wheels to the poor. This together with the funds collected by me adds up to Rs. 20,000. I thank the people of Kathiawar and Shri Manilal for having made up the required sum with such speed.[1]

PRISONER PRAGJI DESAI[2]

Shri Kalyanji, who has just returned after seeing Shri Pragji in Karachi writes :[3]

The suggestion here is that in South Africa he was rather sensitive, it being his first experience of imprisonment. Now he has been seasoned and so it is quite natural that he should have learnt patience.

SCHOOLS FOR "ANTYAJAS" IN KARACHI

In the same letter Shri Kalyanji informs me that Shri Narandas has been running in Karachi four schools for *Antyajas* at his own expense, that those schools have Brahmin teachers and that, as the children are helped to clean their teeth, are given a bath and fed in the school itself, they keep quite clean. The practice of helping pupils to clean their teeth deserves to be introduced in other schools too. It is generally not realized that physical health depends in great measure on the cleanliness of one's teeth. If it were, teachers of schools where the children's teeth are not kept clean would be regarded as deserving punishment.

HOLIDAY FOR EMPLOYEES

Always ready to welcome anything good, I do not mind accepting it from wherever I see it. The Bible has enjoined that Sunday should be dedicated to God. Very few Christians observe that injunction in the spirit in which it was meant to be observed. But almost everywhere in the West Sunday is observed as an off day, that

[1] Here followed a paragraph under the caption "A Century-old Spinning-wheel", not reproduced here. Gandhiji had written in more or less identical terms under "Notes", 28-5-1925.

[2] Pragji Khandubhai Desai, Gandhiji's associate in South Africa; later, Congress worker in Gujarat

[3] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that Pragji was quite comfortable in the prison and wanted Gandhiji to know that he was not the kind of prisoner he used to be in South Africa.

is, as a holiday. This practice does not reduce the output of work. On the contrary, the common experience is that the work is done better and better. A friend from Bombay, who thinks that it would be good if private firms in India followed this practice and observed one day in the week as holiday, writes :[1]

I do not know whether anyone will attach weight to my advice. But I fully support this suggestion. I have no doubt at all that if the mer-chants take time off and allow the same privilege to their employees, even at the risk of less work and less income in a month, both the merchants and their assistants would benefit in a number of ways. The Government departments do observe Sunday as a holiday, but we cannot say that the people have lost anything thereby. English firms are closed every Sunday, but we do not know of any loss suffered by them on that account. I have not heard of big profits made by shops which remain open from morning and do business till late in the evening, with the help of lights. The disadvantages of the practice are obvious enough. Neither the shopkeeper nor his assistants get even breathing time. Those who spend almost their whole day in the shop and are at home only when they eat and sleep cannot be regarded as house-holders but should be looked upon as living in their shops. They cannot look after their children, let alone give them their company. Moreover, they must have medicines daily to keep them healthy. The assistants are in a worse plight still. The proprietor attends the shop of his own free will and it is, therefore, natural that he may be able to take interest in the work then. He may even absent himself if he so desires. An assistant passes the whole day thinking "When shall I be able to leave?" No wonder, in these circumstances, he does not keep good health. Instead of this, if he gets a Sunday or any other day as an off day every week and if he has to work only for a fixed number of hours every day, he would remain contented and be more ready to regard his employer's work as his own.

Many reforms like these do not come about because no one is wil-ling to take the lead. Even if one trader from among many gives the lead, the other traders will follow suit. If shop assistants, too, think about the matter with some sense of responsibility and place a plan or proposal respectfully before their employers, there is a chance of its being accepted.

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that private firms in the country did not give their employees even half a holiday in the week, and requested Gandhiji to write about this in *Navajivan*.

A volunteer gives expression to his feelings as follows :[1]

I have deliberately refrained from giving the name of the village or the taluka. It is in Gujarat. I state this lest someone should think that I have translated a Hindi or English letter. Since I am always outside Gujarat, touring, I only see from a distance the bright side of things. I had been telling myself that the 2,000 voters in Gujarat were hundred per cent sincere. And now I have the above letter.

I assume that the facts as reported in the letter above are true; and since generally it happens that what is true in one place will also be true in other places, how if the same state of affairs obtains elsewhere? If it does, we shall have frankly to admit the fact. Gujarat will shine with two instead of 2,000 such spinner- voters, but two lakhs of papersoldiers in place of 20,000 will be of no service. Necessary facilities should certainly be provided but, even in spite of them and in spite of our appeals, if people are not willing to spin and give yarn, we cannot force them to do so and need not maintain their names on muster.

What would then happen to the franchise clause? As long as I attach importance to spinning and visualize no improvement in India's economic condition without it, I shall stick to it as the qualification for the franchise. Mine is the beautiful condition of the mother who hugs her child more closely to her bosom the more the others dislike and slight it. As others' ill opinion does not make a mother doubt the value or promise of her child, I too cannot entertain any doubt about the value of the franchise qualification or about the beneficial results likely to follow from the adoption of spinning. I will, therefore, cling to the spinning-wheel and advise my co-workers to do likewise.

It is also my view that we should see that spinning for social benefit does not prove costly instead of helping to make khadi less costly, that we need not flatter anyone too much and provide facilities which are expensive. If the cost of inducing others to go on spinning is greater than that of the yarn produced, such spinning serves no useful purpose. For that means that in inducing someone to spin, we give him something instead of receiving something from him. This kind of business means bankruptcy. It does not bring the benefit which spinning is supposed to do.

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had described the state of affairs in his village and the practices followed by Congress members after spinning had been made a qualification for the franchise.

The experiment of spinning should be conducted on a scientific basis. This means that we should see how many truly selfless men and women spinners we get; they alone are sincere workers who, of their own accord, spin 2,000 yards of yarn and send it [to the Congress office] or, if they happen to be poor, get cotton from the Congress office and spin it and return the yarn produced.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 31-5-1925

256. ENTERING VILLAGES

Wherever I go I observe more suffering than happiness and also discover that we ourselves are the cause of that suffering.

Most of the welcome addresses which I received in Bengal mentioned the ravages of Kalaazar and other diseases. The workers in Bengal have responded admirably to my appeal. I had asked that welcome addresses should contain information about the people's condition rather than praise of me. I find my suggestion fully acted upon in most welcome addresses and I have by now plenty of information. In some places the population is dwindling because the people have been dying of various diseases. Now to the diseases of the body has been added the curse of a plant called water-hyacinth, that plays havoc with cereal crops. I do not know its Indian name. It is said that some person unwittingly brought it from the West. From wherever it was introduced, it is to be seen stretching for miles in the waters of the Padma river. This plant destroys cereal crops. Wherever it is seen growing, the paddy crops in the fields on the banks of the river in those parts have been almost completely destroyed. The Government has of course launched measures to destroy this poisonous weed, but so far none of them is known to have proved effective.

Who will help regions suffering from such hardships? And how? Without knowing the problems of villages, no remedies can be devised. The condition will improve only when the prevailing state of ignorance in rural areas is replaced by the light of knowledge. The people do not know the rules of healthy living. They bathe in and drink from the same tank in which they clean their bodies, scrub utensils and from which cattle drink. It simply does not occur to anyone to drain away stagnant water from marshy swamps by means of a shallow canal; even if it does, it is nobody's job and, therefore, no one does it.

The people are too poor to afford wholesome and nutritious food, which they need, let alone being able to pay for medicines. Villagers, it is assumed, do not require change of air.

Some customs too are so cruel that they kill both the body and the soul. Girls of very tender age are married off! A girl of 13 becomes a mother! A seven-year-old girl becomes a widow! Some of them do not know their husbands. How can a seven-year-old girl know what a husband is?

Should we look to the Government for a remedy for this? Will a cure for these customs be found when we have swaraj; is it not, rather, that swaraj will never come till we find a cure for them?

There is, of course, one easy remedy. The educated classes should, in a spirit of humble service, go into villages and study the condition of the people. In doing so, many will fall ill and many will die. We shall find the remedy when we have learnt to bear all this. It is only then that the people will understand and adopt the remedy that has been found. I certainly believe it will be difficult, if not impossible, to convince people with arguments addressed to their reason. The people will understand only through their heart, and they alone can speak through their hearts who have won the people's confidence through service, love and sacrifice. We shall find it written on every page of the history of the world, and especially of the history of India, that the people are guided by their emotions and that reason is helpless before them. May it be that the heart always takes precedence over reason? Can it be that where reason is not purified by the Ganga, the heart is unavailing? Ravana's reason, being untouched by the heart, was of no service to him despite its command of magic, whereas Rama's, purified by the sacred influences of the heart, easily remained invincible.

The Deshbandhu says that there can be no swaraj unless the villages are properly organized. Others too say the same thing. My experiences in Bengal also teach this very lesson, that till we enter the villages we shall never know India.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 31-5-1925

257. SPINNING IN BENGAL

The first lap of my tour of Bengal has concluded without any mishap. I say "without mishap" because many of my friends had doubts whether my health would be able to stand its strain. What I saw in Bengal has surpassed my expectations and inspires hope for the future. There are big zamindars here who spin along with members of their families. Here I saw in Dinajpur and other places zamindars, lawyers, barristers, untouchables, Hindus and Muslims, all sitting together in big meetings and spinning. I saw here in Bengal hundreds

of well-to-do men and women spinning beautifully. They do not spin daily, but the very fact that so many men and women are skilled in spinning and occasionally sit down to spin pleases me. I have not seen such skill anywhere else in India. What men and women learn with effort elsewhere, I found people doing naturally here. Just as people generally have a separate dress for weddings, etc., as also separate dresses for wearing at home and in the office, so also many people have included khadi too in their wardrobe. There is hardly any other part of India in which we shall see this.

Here I did not find a climate of opposition to khadi. The No-changers and Swarajists both use khadi, some more some less. I came across only three persons who said that the spinning-wheel would not help, and they too were not leading men. Here Moderates and extremists all use khadi a little more or a little less.

No other province can beat the slivers made here. No particles of dust and wool are ever found in them. In some places cotton called *devkapas* is being used for spinning. This does not need carding at all, nor ginning. The cotton easily comes out when removed with the fingers; it is made into slivers by arranging together the fibre-lengths and then spun into the finest yarn. Another variety of cotton which is grown in the hills is of a very inferior quality. Its fibres are extremely short, and it is not smooth. This cotton certainly needs to be carded, but when that is done no particles of dust and wool remain. The standard of its carding is inferior but, since the people are accustomed to careful carding, no one does the work in a slipshod manner. The yarn too which we see in the market does not contain dust and wool particles. It is rarely of a count under ten.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 31-5-1925

258. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

SANTINIKETAN,

Jeth Sud 8 [*May 31, 1925*][1]

BHAISHRI DEVCHAND,

I have your detailed letter. I dare not do anything on my own. I am therefore sending your letter to Ramjibhai[2]. Let him read and discuss it with you and then do what you all think proper. We want somehow to fill Kathiawar with khadi and make the life of the farmers

[1] From the postmark

[2] Ramji Hansraj of Amreli

simple and happy. If you think it necessary to invite Maganlal and Lakshmidas to decide about it, you may do so.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall be a month and a half more in Bengal. I have then to visit Assam.

BHAISHRI DEVCHAND UTTAMCHAND PAREKH

BARRISTER

JETPUR, KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati original : G.N. 5693

259. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Jeth Sud 8 [*May 31, 1925*][1]

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. If I thought of writing a long letter, I would not be able to write at all. I therefore rest content with writing this short one. I hope you have already received the bangles which were sent from Calcutta. I have bought some more in Dacca; these you will have only when I return. Mahadev, I believe, has written a long letter in reply to yours as regards Chi. Dahyabhai. If Dahyabhai wishes to take up a gainful occupation let him do so by all means. I am glad to know that he is now in good health. Ask Chi. Yashoda[2] to write to me. All the three of you should attend upon Father and sha re his burdens to the best of your ability. I will have to stay on in Bengal for a month more.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 23

[1] As in the source

[2] Dahyabhai's wife

260. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

Sunday [*May 31, 1925*][1]

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I forgot to mention one thing in my letter yesterday. The orphanage needs to raise a loan of Rs. 10,000. They give 9 percent interest. If they give a guarantee and mortgage their land would there be any difficulty about the Board lending them that amount? They are willing to agree to whatever conditions we lay down. The value of the land along with the building is definitely more than Rs. 10,000. Please consider the matter and let me know at your earliest. If you think it proper to reply telegraphically, do so. Between Wednesday and Friday I shall be at Darjeeling.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original S.N. 32691

261. SPEECH AT SANTINIKETAN[2]

May 31, 1925

I do not ask you to give up your poetry, literature or music. All I ask is that, side by side with these pursuits, you give half an hour every day to the charkha. No one has till now advanced the excuse that he does not have even half an hour to spare. The charkha will help us overcome our narrowness. Today a North Indian visiting Bengal has to tell others that he is an Indian. Bengalis living in other provinces regard themselves as foreigners. Similarly, South Indians become foreigners as soon as they set foot in North India. The charkha is the only device which makes us all feel that we are children of the same land. We have so far accomplished nothing. Let us accomplish some little thing at any rate. Boycott of foreign cloth is something which all can equally further, towards which all can contribute equally. Untouchability hurts Hindus alone; the quarrels between the Hindus and Muslims will also be over some time or other; but if there is no khadi, the whole country will remain sunk in utter poverty. In Central Africa they have a malady known as sleeping sickness. When it strikes anyone, he becomes unconscious and, after

[1] From the contents. Gandhiji was in Darjeeling from June 3, 1925, a Wednesday, to June 6, 1925.

[2] A brief report of this speech was also published in *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 3-6-1925.

lying for months in a state of paralysis, dies at last. We also have a kind of sleeping sickness here in our own country, and the sole remedy for this sickness is the charkha.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 18-6-1925

262. INTERVIEW TO DR. H. W. B. MORENO

SANTINIKETAN,
May 31, 1925

The Anglo-Indian question was gone into fully with Mahatma Gandhi on his being again interviewed by Dr. H. W. B. Moreno. At the outset Dr. Moreno pointed out the difficulties involved in Mr. Gandhi's advice as to spinning and wearing khaddar; Anglo-Indians would find such difficulties insurmountable in adopting this peculiar method of employment even assuming that the arguments in favour of khaddar as advanced by Mr. Gandhi were correct.

Mr. Gandhi admitted that it was not easy to win over an entire community, such as the Anglo-Indians were, to the way of adopting such methods of occupation, but he was prepared to exercise his patience on their behalf. He would be satisfied for the present if only the favourable mental attitude was achieved by Anglo-Indians as regards his spinning programme. Spinning was meant principally to relieve the distress of the suffering masses; spinning was the common bond of union between rich and poor and he would advise even Englishmen, resident in India and eating up the salt of India, to be true to the land of their adoption and to take to spinning.

Dr. Moreno pointed out that at present Anglo-Indians had some definite representation in the Councils, in the Assembly and in other public bodies. What would be the fate of this minority community, if swaraj should come in? What place would they occupy along with the greater communities of India?

Mr. Gandhi replied that he could foresee no disastrous consequence if the Anglo-Indians were to come in, along with the other communities. He held that the Hindu and Muslim communities should go out of their way and grant Anglo-Indians even preference in India's representative institutions, for the simple reason that they were minorities and required greater protection.

I think that I am giving undue preference to it. I alone know that I am performing what I consider to be my parental duty towards this child, irrespective of what others may say.

Dr. Moreno pointed out that Anglo-Indians at present, by virtue of long association and by their particular mode of living were eminently suited for the positions they now held in the Railways, in the Customs Service, and in other such

departments of employment in India. Did "Indianization" mean the taking away of these posts from Anglo-Indians and giving them to Indians? That was a grave foreboding the Anglo-Indian had in his mind, now for some time.

Mr. Gandhi replied that the great test for all service should be efficiency. If Anglo-Indians were suited for such posts, by all means let them retain them for some time to come. When Indians would in time qualify for these posts, on the grounds of efficiency, they could not be restricted from holding them, but by that time there might be other avenues of employment that could be open for Anglo-Indians. He did not want a levelling down so far as the communities of India were concerned, it should be a levelling up. He preferred to go in a railway carriage which was propelled by a locomotive driver of a qualified European or Anglo-Indian type, such as now were to be seen, rather then have an indifferent Indian driver at the engine.

Dr. Moreno touched on the woeful condition of Anglo-Indian education and referred to the attempts sometimes made in the Legislative Councils to cut down the grants for European education, on the grounds that they were too liberal as compared to the educational grants given to other communities and the taking away of them meant social ruin for the community in the near future. Mr. Gandhi said :

There lies the mistake. I should go out of my way to placate Anglo-Indians because they are in the minority and need special protection. When the riots broke out in Bombay in which Anglo-Indians and Parsis alike were brutally assaulted, I spoke words of fire to my Indian brethren. In the unity of all parties in India, I always refer to and include Anglo-Indians, Parsis, Jews, and so forth; without these there could be no unity, except the tyranny of the great over the small. The greater communities of India, such as the Hindus and Muslims, had solemn obligations to perform towards the lesser communities.

Referring to the education of Anglo-Indians, he would say that it did not improve much their morals, for while travelling he often noticed that Anglo-Indians, instead of having the virtues of the European and Indian communities, had the vices of both. The worst expressions of abuse in the Indian vocabulary and the vilest words of the English language were mingled in their common speech. Such depraved tastes had to be rectified by the Anglo-Indians themselves. The reason why this still continued with the community was because they isolated themselves and had ceased to assimilate what was best in their neighbours. On railway platforms he had even noticed that their physical tastes were becoming depraved; and stealthily they would purchase and consume unnoticed the most unwholesome trash exhibited for sale in the way of foodstuffs. The physical taste was an index of the mental taste.

Dr. Moreno pointed out that it was a patent fact that up to now Anglo- Indians had taken little or no interest in Congress activities. During the time of Surendranath Banerjea's leadership of Bengal, Dr. J. R. Wallace, the then leader of the community,

was invited to join the Congress, but when this idea spread in the community Dr. Wallace was ostracized for some time.

We should welcome you in the Congress. Why do you not come in? Whose fault is it, if you stand outside? I for one would welcome you with outstretched arms, as I would welcome the Jews or Parsis. The Congress is no true national institution if it does not embrace all parties. As regards the yarn franchise Anglo-Indians could get over the difficulty, as others at present did, by purchasing yarn locally and forwarding it on.

Dr. Moreno said there was a tendency in the community to divide itself into two classes, one leaning towards the European side, the other to the Indian side, but opinions were fast veering round.

Mr. Gandhi stated that he himself had noted the change of opinion of Anglo-Indians towards the idea of classing themselves as Indians. He gathered this from his talks with his many Anglo-Indian friends. He deprecated such a vain expression of sentiment found among certain Anglo-Indians based on a mere theorizing of the pigmentation of the skin.

The real difficulty lies when you consider the poor of your community. They are degenerating and are adopting the vices of the lowest classes of Indians, because the breach is becoming wider between them and their more affluent brethren. For the richer Anglo-Indian there is no communal problem, he is receiving more than he deserves. The problem of the poorer classes is the problem for Anglo-Indian thinker to solve. We have our problem of the untouchables. You have the same problem in another form.

He decried the false mode of existence adopted by an Anglo-Indian railway station master in South India whose friendship he enjoyed. After twenty years of service this man secured a salary of Rs. 300 a month, but as he had to live up to European standards he could not save a pice after providing for the wants of his wife and his four children and giving the family the advantages of a suitable education. This Anglo-Indian had told him that he was forced to maintain such a standard of existence, although he felt it was ruinous, simply because he knew that if he adopted any other standard, his future promotion in the railway would cease for all time.

Dr. Moreno said that he was but voicing some of the difficulties the community laboured under and sought Mr. Gandhi's advice as a true friend of India. His community was a community of the soil and had permanent interests in the country.

Mr. Gandhi said in reply that he appreciated such sentiments. The abid- ing interest of the Anglo-Indian community was eulogized by all Indians alike. There was little to separate the Anglo-Indian from the Indian. He was glad that Dr. Moreno had so freely talked the matter over with him. He had seen many other Anglo-Indians as well in his travels all over the country. They came and sought his advice from time to

time; scores of such Anglo-Indians came to see him privately and consulted him on all communal affairs, but though they admitted the justice of his arguments, they failed to carry them out into practice. They lacked the moral courage of action. He advised Dr. Moreno not to slacken in his mission in life, which was the only policy of future salvation to the community. He asked him not to be disconcerted by the criticisms and think and move in narrow circles. The intelligentsia of Bengal and the toiling masses of the country was a case in point.

At the conclusion of the interview Dr. Moreno asked Mr. Gandhi to allow him to ask a series of set questions affecting the Anglo-Indian community in Mr. Gandhi's paper, with a view to securing studied answers on the issues involved. Mr. Gandhi said :

I shall welcome such questions as a friend of your community, as indeed of all those who are born or resident in India. I shall be glad to do what I can do to clear the issue so that we may have a better vision of the future. After all, we are both working for a common purpose : the uplift of India, your country and mine.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 2-6-1925

263. LETTER TO G. V. SUBBA RAO[1]

June 1, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I am wholly unaware of many things mentioned in your letter[2].

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 3624

[1] G. V. Subba Rao Pantulu; General Secretary of the Congress in 1914; re-elected in 1917 but resigned

[2] This is not available.

264. LETTER TO JITENDRANATH KUSARY

June 1, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I congratulate you on the progress made by you in so few days. I hope it will continue.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. JITENDRANATH KUSARY
SATYASHRAM
BAHROK P.O.
DACCA DT.

From a photostat : G.N. 7187

265. LETTER TO S. A. VAZE[1]

SANTINIKETAN,
June 1, 1925

I have carefully gone through your memorandum[2]. It is very valu-able and closely reasoned. But there is a chance of its being understood to mean that you will favour if there was to be a choice legislative discrimination. So far as I can see, you will make no such choice. A statute is a difficult thing to amend. A regulation or mere practice without regulation can be easily varied. Only some of us can become judges, but how would we relish the idea of a whole class being statutorily excluded? The proposed legal bar would not affect perhaps a single Asiatic. Nevertheless it must be resisted. The formula is : no legal bar and no stiffening of the administrative distinction, but on the contrary a relaxation of administrative inequality. I know all the parties on the stage. In spite of the proverbial slimness of Smuts, he is more equitable than Hertzog or Beyer or Cresswell. I tell you these things merely to help you to make your position clearer. If, however, you are of opinion that in any event if discrimination has to be made, it must be solidified into legislation, I have nothing to say.

[1] Secretary, Imperial Citizenship Association and member, Servants of India Society; worked for the benefit of Indians living abroad

[2] This is not available.

Only, in that case, we must agree to differ. Even in the extreme case of Australia, when the Australian statesmen wish to become reasonable, they can do so without resort to any legislative amendment.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

266. SPEECH AT BHOWANIPUR, CALCUTTA[1]

June 2, 1925

Mr. Gandhi said that the spinning-wheel was near to his heart and he was glad to learn that it had found a place in the curriculum of the National School. He hoped that boys would apply themselves to it and become expert spinners. He expected every man, woman and child, who felt for the masses, to ply the charkha for at least half an hour a day. Mr. Gandhi declared that the charkha was the one visible link between the masses and the classes.

Mr. Gandhi also dwelt on untouchability and Hindu-Muslim unity.

The Hindu, 4-6-1925

267. VYKOM

The public must not be allowed to forget the Vaikom struggle.[2] Let them understand that the satyagrahis are, at the present moment, undergoing a higher form of discipline than they were doing before. Formerly they were plying their wheels in front of a physical obstacle to their further progress. It was barred by a barricade guarded by the police. Now, as the reader is aware, the barricade has been removed, the guard withdrawn and so is the notice of prohibition. The satyagrahis are, therefore, voluntarily submitting to the self-imposed moral restraint, no doubt, in the clearly expressed hope that the *savarna* Hindus directly concerned will relent and that the Government will themselves make an early declaration that the roads are open to the so-called unapproachables as they are to every other human being and even to cats and dogs. The Hindu Government of Travancore owes the suppressed classes a double duty, the one that every humane government owes to suppressed humanity under its care, and the other, a Hindu Government owes to Hinduism, that the

[1] Gandhiji was presented with addresses on behalf of the National School and Sevak Samiti at Bhowanipur in South Calcutta.

[2] *Ezhavas* and other backward class Hindus were not allowed access to a temple and the roads leading to it at Vykom (also spelt as Vaikom) in Travancore, now a part of Kerala State. Satyagraha was organized against this discrimination in 1924

State will lend no countenance to an inhuman superstition that has crept into Hinduism.

So far for the State.

The *savarna* Hindus of Travancore promised, and they owe it to themselves without the necessity of any promise to me, that they would not allow any rest to the Government till the roads in question were thrown open to the 'unapproachables'. They assured me that they would hold meetings throughout Travancore showing clearly to the Government that they regarded the prohibition as inconsistent with Hinduism and intolerable. Besides holding public meetings, they were to promote a monster petition signed by *savarna* Hindus demanding the opening of the roads. I wonder if those gentlemen who gave me the assurance are keeping their promise?

And now for the 'unapproachables' miscalled. I understand that they are getting restive. They have a right to do so. I am further told that they are losing faith in satyagraha. If so, their want of faith betrays ignorance of the working of satyagraha. It is a force that works silently and apparently slowly. In reality, there is no force in the world that is so direct or so swift in working. But sometimes apparent success is more quickly attained by brute force. To earn one's living by body-labour is a method of earning if by satyagraha. A gamble on the stock-exchange or house-breaking, either of which is the reverse of satyagraha, may apparently lead to an instantaneous acquisition of wealth. But the world has by now, I presume, realized that house-breaking and gambling are no methods of earning one's livelihood and that they do harm rather than good to the gambler or the thief. The 'unapproachables' may force their way by engaging in a free fight with the superstitious *savarnas* but they will not have reformed Hinduism. Theirs will be a method of forcible conversion. But I am further told that some of them even threaten to seek shelter in Christianity, Islam or Buddhism if relief is not coming soon. Those who use the threat do not, in my humble opinion, know the meaning of religion. Religion is a matter of life and death. A man does not change religion as he changes his garments. He takes it with him beyond the grave. Nor does a man profess his religion to oblige others. He professes a religion because he cannot do otherwise. A faithful husband loves his wife as he would love no other woman. Even her faithlessness would not wean him from his faith. The bond is more than blood-relationship. So is the religious bond if it is worth anything. It is a matter of the heart. An untouchable who lives his Hinduism in the face of persecution at the hands of those Hindus who arrogate to themselves a superior status is a better Hindu than the self-styled superior Hindu who, by the very act of claiming superiority,

denies his Hinduism. Therefore, those who threaten to renounce Hinduism are, in my opinion, betraying their faith.

But the satyagrahi's course is plain. He must stand unmoved in the midst of all these cross-currents. He may not be impatient with blind orthodoxy, nor be irritated over the unbelief of the suppressed people. He must know that his suffering will melt the stoniest heart of the stoniest fanatic and that it will also be a wall of protection for the wavering *Panchama* brother who has been held under suppression for ages. He must know that relief will come when there is the least hope for it. For such is the way of that cruelly-kind Deity who insists upon testing His devotees through a fiery furnace and delights in humbling him to the dust. In his hour of distress let the satyagrahi recall to his mind the prayer of the fabled godly Elephant King who was saved only when he thought he was at his last gasp.

ANGLO-INDIANS

I observe that some writers have laughed at the suggestion made by me to Mr. Moreno that Anglo-Indians like every other Indian should spin and wear khaddar. It is easy enough to laugh at the suggestion, but I have confidence in my remedy and I know that the ridicule will very soon give place to warm approval. As I entertain no ill will against Anglo-Indians and as my conception of swaraj provides for them just as much as any other born in India, or who have adopted India as their home, I know that Anglo-Indians will not misunderstand me in the end, even if some may do so for the time being. Not making any distinction between Indians and Indians, I have the good fortune to meet many poor-class Anglo-Indians. To live at all comfortably they must make common cause with the other poor Indians. They must share their sorrows and, so far as may be, live their lives. Surely, khaddar can be common to all, and why should they not spin side by side with the others? There is no shame in adopting that one visible universal bond of sympathy between the poor of the land and themselves. Why should the Anglo-Indian be behindhand in identifying himself with the poorest of the land of his birth? It is the false sense of superiority which he has been taught to adopt for himself over the ordinary Indian that has really made him a comparative stranger in his own land. And he cannot possibly be assimilated with the English. It is impossible for him to regard any other country as his home. If he attempted to emigrate to any of the Colonies, he will share the same fate and the same disabilities as the ordinary Indian settler does. I have, therefore, said in all humility, but in absolute sincerity which comes from deep conviction, that he should revise his ideas of life. He should be, what in reality he is, one

among the millions. He will then, having a due sense of proportion, adopt the virtues of both his parents and render an immense service to himself, to his country as also to his European parent. Occupying a position that most becomes him, he will be able to speak to Englishmen with effect and from vantage-ground of personal experience. I do not suggest, and did not suggest, to Mr. Moreno that Anglo-Indians, even the poorest among them, might be satisfied with spinning as a means of livelihood. But there is no reason whatsoever why the highest among them should not spin from the national standpoint. I have, of course, no hesitation to suggest that some of them who are poor may become accomplished weavers. It is an additional calling which those who are adapted for it may learn for the sake of earning an honest livelihood. Because those who become accomplished and artistic weavers can earn as much as forty to fifty rupees per month.

Young India, 4-6-1925

268. KHADI PRATISHTHAN

I have elsewhere dealt with the development of spinning as part of flood and famine relief. It is an experiment standing by itself. But the experience gained therein by Acharya Ray and his right-hand man, as he loves to call Satish Babu, was not to end with the experiment. They are both chemists. Their scientific minds compel them to explore the possibilities of the wheel and khaddar as a permanent supplementary industry for the Bengal agriculturists. From a small experiment it has developed into a big organization called Khadi Pratishthan. It has branches in many parts of Bengal and contemplates opening more. Its object is to manufacture and sell pure khaddar and popularize the wheel and khaddar through publications, lantern lectures, etc. In order to give it a more stable character, it has been converted into a public trust. I have before me the trust-deed and the balance sheet. I mention these facts as I promised an inquirer at a public meeting at Pabna that I shall deal with the Pratishthan work in the pages of *Young India*. I was recommending the universal adoption in Bengal of the Pratishthan charkha as I have found it to be the best available in Bengal, and as experiments are being daily made to improve it. The inquirer in question thereupon complained of the high prices of Pratishthan khaddar. And I promised to deal with the complaint through these pages. The charge may be considered true in a sense. The idea is to manufacture khaddar on the largest scale and to introduce the wheel in every home. The authors of the trust want to make khaddar self-supporting and improve the quality of yarn. The management must work in those centres too which are not at present

favourable for khaddar manufacture. Thus, it pools all the khaddar it manufactures and charges an average price. It follows, therefore, that those who operate in favourable centres only can sell khaddar cheaper than the Pratishthan. This is no matter for embarrassment for the time being, as the few centres that are manufacturing pure khaddar have their own customers who do not concern themselves with the prices. The Pratishthan sells khaddar even now at a loss but it seeks to minimize the loss. It cannot always be run on donations. I am satisfied that every attempt is being made to reduce the price of khaddar sold by the Pratishthan. It cannot be too widely known that nobody has any private interest in the Pratishthan. The main actors have their own sources of income. They have given to the Pratishthan. They take nothing from it. So far I have inspected five other organized centres of khaddar manufacture. These are the Abhoy Ashram at Comilla, Dr. Prafulla Ghosh's Ashram at Malikanda, Pravartak Sangh's at Chittagong, Satsang Ashram at Pabna and Duadando Khadi Kendra. The latter I have not seen personally, but I had the pleasure of meeting the principal workers and seeing their khaddar and wheels at Hooghly. The Pravartak Sangh has hitherto dealt in half-khaddar too. But it has now definitely decided to deal exclusively in pure khaddar so far as Chittagong is concerned. It had already started the experiment at Kutiandu, but the management made the final decision for the whole of the Chittagong District during my visit there. They have still half-khaddar at their Calcutta depot and at the head office at Chandranagar. But they are striving to do away with half-khaddar altogether at the first opportunity. They accept the principle that it is not in the interest of the khaddar movement to deal in half-khaddar. All these activities are good. Some work is being done officially too by the Congress organizations. As a matter of fact, I regard all these organizations as Congress activities in spirit though not in name. What is, however, necessary is to co-ordinate these scattered forces and economize time, talent, labour and funds. The heads of these organizations must meet together, compare notes and evolve a joint programme of action. It must come in time. In any case, the question is whether the time can be hastened. The Khadi Pratishthan has an advantage over all in that it has men who have dedicated themselves solely to the spread of the message of the charkha. It has great organizing talent at its service. It has a celebrated name behind it. It has, therefore, limitless scope for expansion. Hence it is that I commend its activity to the whole of India in general and Bengal in particular. I invite the critics to examine it critically and demonstrate its short-comings if they discover any. I invite sympathizers to study its accounts which are an open book and help it. And I invite the

indifferent to throw off their indifference and, after studying it, oppose its activities or support them. Dr. Ray has a world-wide reputation as a scientist. But the millions of his countrymen will not know him for the fine soaps he may manufacture, nor yet for the careers he has found for many a young Bengali. They will know him for the light and comfort his khaddar work may bring into their humble cottages. Let his organization be like a vast banyan tree, giving shelter to all small sister organizations that would receive help and guidance from it. The Khadi Pratishthan is more than the Chemical Works, great as they are. For the former has its roots in the country's soil. It is not a super-imposition. It requires more deliberate handling for its growth. It will evoke the best in every one of its organizers, if it is to grow into a huge national organization. May it fulfil all the expectations of which it seems to me to give promise.

Young India, 4-6-1925

269. NOTES

A BASELESS CHARGE

I have heard the charge that the Congressmen, i.e., Swarajists killed the charkha in Bengal. It is a baseless charge. In the first place, the charkha is not killed in Bengal. In the second place, whatever set-back the movement might have received, it is not due to the Swarajists any more than it is due to any other party. Let me here acknowledge that the Swarajists have everywhere co-operated to make the charkha demonstrations a success. They have taken part in organizing them and also in spinning. Some Swarajists are out-and-out enthusiasts with their whole families. I have already written about my host in Faridpur.[1] His wife and his children were devotees of the wheel. They supply the yarn for the khaddar required for the family use. The wife of Sjt. Basant Kumar Mazumdar is also an enthusiast. She organized a big demonstration at Comilla, Jogen Babu of Dinajpur is himself a regular spinner and it was a treat to watch the whole of his family spinning dexterously. Indeed, the best spinning demonstration of the tour was at Dinajpur. I could multiply such instances. What is true is that the Swarajists do not pin their whole faith to the charkha as, say, I do. Of this they have made no secret. They would not enter the Councils if they believed wholly and solely in the constructive programme. Their position is incredibly simple. They believe in the constructive programme including the charkha. They believe, too, that without it swaraj cannot be obtained. But they also believe it to be

[1] *Vide* "Bengal Notes", 7-5-1925.

necessary to capture the Councils and all representative or semi-representative institutions through which pressure can be exerted upon the Govern- ment. This is an honest attitude at which there can be nothing to cavil. And the Bengal Swarajists at any rate are, in my opinion, living up to their faith.

CORRUPTION?

Whilst I am discussing the doings of the Swarajists, I would like to advert to the charge of corruption brought against them. Some distinguished public men came to me and warned me against playing into the hands of the Swarajists and urged me to use my influence to purify the political life of Bengal. I told the gentlemen that I had no reason to believe the charges they were making, but that, if they would give me chapter and verse and be prepared to substantiate them, I would gladly investigate and, if I found them to be true, I should have no hesitation in denouncing the party. I told them, too, that I had heard of these charges before and that I had brought them to the notice of Deshbandhu Das who had assured me that there was no truth in them, and that, if my informants could produce names and specific charges, he, Deshbandhu, was perfectly willing to have them investigated. The gentlemen told me that the belief about corruption was common property, but that it was not always possible to give legal proof. I told them that in that case we must follow the golden rule of not believing what could not be proved. If we did not follow the rule, no public man's reputation would be safe.

After this interview I had forgotten all about the charges. Hardayal Babu, however, returned to the charge with double fury at Chandpur.[1] But I could not treat his denunciation seriously, nor did he expect me to. Although he and I belong to the same school, our methods of looking at public men and activities are different. Behind my non-co-operation there is always the keenest desire to co-operate on the slightest pretext even with the worst of opponents. To me, a very imperfect mortal, ever in need of God's grace, no one is beyond redemption. Behind Hardayal Babu's non-co-operation there is fierce distrust and disinclination for reverting to co-operation. He wants mighty signs whereas a mere gesture suffices me.

But I had the charge repeated in an unexpected quarter. I pricked up my ears and became serious. I began a little gentle inquiry. I was, however, relieved on my reaching Calcutta by Babu Nalini Sircar, the chief whip of the Swaraj Party, Babu Nirmal Chandra, Babu Kirenshekhar Ray and Babu Hirendra Nath Das Gupta

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Hardayal Nag", before 12-5-1925.

coming to me and offering unasked to answer any questions I might have about the Swaraj Party's doings in any matter whatsoever. I thereupon mentioned all the charges I had heard. They were able to give me complete satisfaction about them and invited me to investigate further and even to inspect their books. But I told them that I could not possibly inspect their books unless there was more authentic information about the charges. As it was, I had nothing beyond unsupported allegations. They assured me that there was not a vestige of truth in the charge of bribery and corruption.

I appeal to those who are ready to make charges to be chary of believing the stories that may be brought before them regarding their adversaries. Do we not know the Government has been badly sold by its informants? Do they not know that even Ranade[1] and Gokhale were shadowed for a long time? Do they not know what scandals were talked about the late Sir Pherozeshah[2] and even Sir Surendranath Banerjea? Even the G.O.M. was not beyond the reach of calumny. A gentleman in London once gave me such details that he at least required me to approach the great patriot whom I worshipped. Well, I did approach him with trembling and fear. I sat down at his feet and I remember the occasion as I looked into his benign face and pleadingly asked whether what was said to be could be true. It was a garret which the G.O.M. was occupying as his office in Brixton. I shall never forget the scene. I came away knowing that the charge brought against him was a simple calumny. What would happen to me if I were to believe all I have been told about the "selfishness and perfidy" of the Ali Brothers whom I believe to be above corruption and perfidy? There are enough differences to divide us, but why accentuate them by giving a ready ear to every charge of baseness brought against opponents? I find enough justification for honest differences. Let us then honour our opponents for the same honesty of purpose and patriotic motive that we claim for ourselves. One gentleman who spoke about the so-called Swarajist corruption was candid enough to tell me that in spite of it all there was no other leader in Bengal but Chittaranjan Das. There is room enough for all to serve. There is no room for jealousy when all wish to serve. I believe in trusting. Trust begets trust. Suspicion is foetid and only stinks. He who trusts has never yet lost in the world. A suspicious man is lost to

[1] Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842-1901); social reformer and author; Judge of the Bombay High Court

[2] Sir Pherozeshah Merwanji Mehta (1845-1915); first Parsi to be called to the English Bar; member of Bombay Legislative Council in 1893; was associated with the Indian National Congress since its inception and became its President in 1890.

himself and the world. Let those who have made of non-violence a creed beware of suspecting opponents. Suspicion is of the brood of violence. Non-violence cannot but trust. I must at any rate, refuse to believe any-thing against anybody, much less against my honoured fellow-workers, unless I have absolute proof. But Hardayal Babu will say, "Do you want us to disbelieve the testimony of our eyes and ears?" I say, yes and no. I have known people whose eyes and ears have deceived them. They see and hear only what they would like to see and hear. To these I say, "Do not believe even your eyes and ears when you have unbiassed testimony to the contrary." But there are others who have seen, heard and known, but have not been able to impart the truth to others. They must persist in their belief even though the whole world may be against them. Only before them I shall plead for a little toleration for those like me who, in spite of all their desire to see the pure truth, fail to see it in the light the others see. I am yet unconvinced about the corruption ascribed to the Swarajists. And those who believe the contrary must bear with me till they convince me.

PREFER DEATH TO SPINNING

In one of my talks with students, one of them said, "Do you know why we do not spin? There is no excitement about the wheel. Our education has unfitted us for any such work. Many of us would prefer death to spinning. Death on the gallows we can gladly embrace, but spinning is an impossibility. Give us something grand. We love romance and there is none about spinning." I told my romantic friend that there was more romance about the spinning wheel than he thought. And why did he accuse Bengal that has given India a Bose and a Ray of being purely romantic in the sense of being unpractical and dreamy? I told him that those who found some excuse or other for not spinning were really not lovers of the country. Would not a father follow even ridiculous instructions of physicians if thereby his dying child could be saved? It was common cause between my audience and me that India's millions were in a dying condition and that spinning could solve the problem of their distressful poverty. Indeed, one of the most astonishing and pleasant experiences during my Bengal tour has been the absence of resistance to spinning on the part of all parties. I have invited all my visitors to oppose spinning if they did not believe in it. But apart from the three persons whose arguments I combated the other day, I have not met with any opposition to it. And even the three who opposed me were themselves dressed in khaddar. It has been a matter of great joy to me to see big zamindars and lawyers spinning side by side with *Santhals*, and little girls and boys at spinning demonstrations which have been a regular

feature in the programme at every centre I have visited. There- fore, the romantic objection had no bottom to it. Unfortunately, the ordinary student lacks application except for the sake of passing his examination. Real love of the country should be a far greater incentive to application than the desire to gain a pass certificate. There is as much romance about solving a difficult geometrical problem or working an arithmetical sum requiring long additions and multiplication as there is about spinning. And if the Bengali boy does not plead want of romance about his examinations, he has less reason to plead it about spinning, which is as necessary for national as an examination is for individual sustenance.

CHINA TO MEDITERRANEAN

A fine old Mussalman friend met me at Mymensing and our conversation naturally turned upon khaddar. I observed that he had not khaddar on and gently asked him whether he believed in it. "Oh yes, I do." I then gave him my definition of khaddar. It was no use. "All cloth however and wherever manufactured between China and Mediterranean is khaddar for me. You see my swadeshi is not narrow," retorted the friend. In vain I tried to show that his first duty lay towards India's millions from whom he derived his livelihood, that India was well able to manufacture all the cloth for her needs and that India's teeming millions were semi-starved for want of an industry supplementary to agriculture. Like Lucy he persisted in his proposition with the fullest self-satisfaction. He had made up his mind and therefore no argument could produce any impression on him. It would have been just the same if I had told him that the English colonials, though they belonged to the same race and religion, protected their industries by imposing heavy tariffs against the sister colonies and England itself and that every man's primary and natural obligation was to serve his needy neighbour in preference to one more remote. But I had no time. The company had to break up for another appointment. As if, however, to emphasize his point and yet to show that we were friends in spite of our differences of opinion, he smilingly put a few rupees in my hands for the furtherance of my work, all the while repeating his formula "China to Mediterranean". If he ever sees these lines, let me tell him that, if many people were to follow his formula, the several thousands of Mussalman sisters who are today supplementing their husbands' earnings in Bengal by hand-spinning would be without that necessary addition to their all too slender resources.

SINDH'S APATHY

A Gujarati correspondent writes to say that he observed some khaddar on the persons of Gujaratis in Karachi and that a spin- ning class for ladies was being conducted under Mr. Ranchhoddas's management, but that there was little or no khaddar among the Sindhis themselves. He adds that beyond a few Congressmen who could be counted on one's fingers, there was to be seen hardly a Sindhi who wore khaddar in Hyderabad. This is remarkable because there are in Sind fine and honest devotees of khaddar. The reason could only be that, among the Hindus, Amils are too educated and Europeanized to believe in the simple message of the charkha, that the *bhaibandhs* are too occupied with their foreign-silk trade even to think of khaddar and that the Mussalmans of Sind are as yet too untouched by the national spirit to appreciate anything in terms of India. All honour to the few who persist in khaddar and spinning in an atmosphere so adverse as in Sind. I have little doubt that if their faith survives the present ordeal, it will infect the highly "civilized" Amils, the preoccupied *bhaibandhs* and the non-nationalist Mussalmans.

KHADDAR IN COORG

A Correspondent writes :

> The present "Khaddar Stores" was opened only a couple of months back and we have been getting our supply of pure khaddar stuff from the Tamilnad Congress Committee's Vasthralayam at Tiruppur and already about Rs. 5,000 worth of khaddar clothes have been bought and sold. The khaddar has spread in these parts. A few months back you would not have found many among the thousands wearing this material. But now, after the session of the National Congress, you will find many in a hundred wearing pure khaddar.
>
> Already there is a good number of charkhas working. A strong committee has been formed to push on hand-spinning in this country.

Such is the happy experience of all who open new centres. But after a time they slacken. Let us hope that the reports from Coorg will be progressively good. To be so, honest organizing is all that is needed.

Young India, 4-6-1925

270. FLOOD RELIEF

It was impossible for me to visit Bengal and omit the flood area and the relief given there by Acharya Prafulla Chandra Ray's committee. It was a place of pilgrimage for me first because of my association with the Acharya since 1901 and secondly because of the

successful manner in which he demonstrated the efficacy of the Charkha as an instrument of relief and an insurance against future distress. If the villagers were well instructed in the methods of dealing with floods and famine and were also accustomed to an occupation besides agriculture which is impossible in times of flood or famines, much time, money and labour that are generally required on such occasions could be saved. When people are taught at such times to depend upon charity for their sustenance, they lose their self-respect and also the use of their limbs. Demoralization then sets in and at last such people are reduced to a state worse than that of mere lower animals. For the latter have at least pleasure in living. The former are dead to life. I, therefore, wanted to see as much as I could with my own eyes what the charkha-mad chemist had done in the relief area.

I was taken to Bogra and thence to Talora where I met the distinguished countryman in his element. "This hut is more precious to me than the palatial Science College. I got more peace and quiet of mind here than elsewhere. And the charkha is growing on me. It gives rest to a mind distracted by study of books!" Talora is a little village where the Relief Committee has one of its centres. The committee has bought a piece of land about 20 *bighas* and erected bamboo huts with thatched roofs amid surroundings of great natural beauty. There is malaria in East Bengal which is nature's revenge for man's neglect of her laws. But East Bengal has vegetation which gives it a beauty that is hard to excel. Man has succeeded in making it malarial but not yet in robbing the land of its natural beauty.

Here in restful surroundings I learnt the whole story of the relief operations. The address presented to me would not adorn me with a single adjective. Its six typed foolscap sides are a recital of facts and figures which I propose to digest for the benefit of the reader.

The great flood overwhelmed parts of Rajshahi and Bogra districts in the September of 1922, devastating nearly 4,000 square miles of Northern Bangal. The loss was estimated at one crore rupees. The first difficulty felt was that of organizing the Relief organization and co-ordinating the activities of Relief parties that sprang up like mushrooms. Everyone who knows anything of relief works knows that the mere will to serve for money are of no avail if the requisite knowledge and ability are wanting. By judicious handling overlapping and ignorant management were checked. The affected area was divided into fifty centres. The head of this vast organization was no other than Sjt. Subhas Chandra Bose, now His Majesty's guest in the Mandalay fort. He was assisted by Dr. Indra Narayan Sen Gupta. This agency distributed food stuff to the value of Rs. 25,606 and clothing

worth Rs. 55,200 besides 80,000 pieces and 75,000 old jackets and shirts. It distributed also fodder of the value Rs. 1,274 and 52 waggonloads of straw received as gift. Ten thousand huts were constructed under its supervision. "Materials were brought to the doors of the villagers, labour charges were given to them in instalments after the previous ones were properly utilized and inspection reports submitted." Supervision was so strict that there were only three cases of defalcation of Rs. 1,500, Rs. 350 and Rs. 200 respectively. These were soon detected and money was duly realized. The construction of huts cost Rs. 1,12,755. If at Kalikapur land was to be reclaimed, embankment was a necessity. It was strictly speaking the District Board's work. But that body, being unable to shoulder the burden, the Committee built the embankment a mile long costing only Rs. 5,775 and reclaiming 6,000 *bighas* of land. Gradually, as the things settled, the Committee thought of engaging the villagers in some work if they gave them food and clothing. So they were given paddy to husk. A quantity was advanced to each distressed family which had to return husked rice to the centre appointed. Each family was entitled to retain the fixed quantity for its maintenance. There were 14 such operating centres. 20,000 mouths were fed for 4 months from these centres. Out of 50,000 maunds of paddy 27,400 maunds of rice were realized. There were no defaulters. This operation cost Rs. 43,000. Side by side with this relief medical assistance was freely given.

But this did not satisfy the Committee's ambition. It wanted to deserve the generous aid it had received from the public by doing permanent work. It wanted to make the people self-supporting and self-reliant in times of trouble. I must give the details of the introduction of spinning in the language of the address :[1]

Brilliant as the results are, they are nothing compared to what they are likely to be. A stage must be reached when it will be no longer necessary to take cotton to the doors of the villagers and receive yarn from them, but when they will get cotton and sell yarn in the ordinary course, as they are doing in the Feni District in Bengal today and in several villages in the Punjab, Rajputana and elsewhere. The organization of the charkha seems to me to be so complete that I do not anticipate any difficulty in the evolution of the movement in

[1] This is not reproduced here. It gave an account how spinning brought relief to famine-stricken people in Ichamargaon, Talorea, Champapur, Durgapur and Tilakpur in Bengal.

the direction indicated.

This experiment marks, too, real progress in the Hindu-Muslim unity. A predominantly Hindu organization is helping a predominantly Mussalman population with the sole purpose of improving their economic status. It has Mussalman workers who are never made to feel that they are not as valuable as the Hindus. Indeed, by sheer ability two of them occupy the highest rank among spinners. I had the good fortune to watch 32 volunteers spinning. All spun at the rate of over 400 yards per hour but the Mussalman spinner spun 720 yards per hour. Let me note that these volunteers are paid the market wage. Satish Babu to whose genius the whole of this organization is due told me that he had found by experience that it was better to pay the wholetime voluntary workers full wages if one is to expect exact discipline from them. The wages he pays the 62 volunteers average Rs. 25 per month.

Young India, 4-6-1925

271. DRAFT OF LETTER TO ANNIE BESANT[1]

June 4, 1925

DEAR DR. BESANT,

I have your kind letters. I have shown your memorandum[2] to Mr. Gandhi who came here last evening and we have both come to the conclusion that whilst with certain necessary amendments your draft manifesto can be accepted by us personally, it has no chance of acceptance by Mr. Shastri[3] Mr. Jinnah[4] or Pundit Malaviyaji not to speak of others who have declared themselves uncompromisingly against civil disobedience. We feel that unless there is a clear understanding among all parties on the exact terms of our demand and upon the remedy we should adopt in the event of rejection, it would be futile to put forth anything as a national demand. The other

[1] This was drafted by Gandhiji on behalf of C. R. Das, and signed and despatched by the latter on June 5. Mahadev Desai has recorded, in his diary on June 4, that C. R. Das remarked to his wife : "I would have taken three days in drafting this reply. Gandhiji did it in 15 minutes."

[2] This was regarding the Commonwealth of India Bill which she had drafted.

[3] Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri (1869-1946); educationist and orator; President, Servants of India Society, 1915-27; member, Viceroy's Legislative Council and Council of State; Agent-General of the Indian Government in South Africa

[4] Mahomed Ali Jinnah (1879-1948); barrister and statesman; first Governor-General of Pakistan, 1947-48

difficulty in our way is want of a clear understanding between Hindus and Mussalmans and Brahmins and Non-Brahmins. We therefore feel that at the present moment we should concentrate our attention on privately cultivating the opinion of men whose voice counts in national affairs. This I am doing to the best of my ability.

I have not wired to you any definite reply as I could not convey to you the above by wire. I am sorry I have not been able to send you anything encouraging.

Yours,

From a photostat of the draft : S.N. 10674

272. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

DARJEELING, BENGAL,
June 5, 1925

CHI. RAMDAS,

I get your letters regularly. I write this with the mountains of Darjeeling in front of me. It pricks me that you are not here to share with me the view. But I derive satisfaction from the thought that you are enjoying the scenery there and that it gives you peace. What profit talking about the Himalayan scenery to one on death-bed? Only the sight of bread will satisfy the hungry. Therefore true scenery for a person is that which satisfies the mind. What effect can the scenic beauty have on the thousands of Gurkhas staying here? They do not even see it. It is my blessing and my prayer that you may find complete rest and peace there.

I had written that as a general rule when we had a difference of opinion with our superior officers, we should obey the officers. I had written this with Devchandbhai[1] in mind. He is in charge of the work there. You have asked for double the quantity of cotton. If Devchandbhai does not agree, do not be disheartened. Accept his decision cheerfully. Thus alone can an individual or a nation rise.

There are occasions when one must seek forgiveness not from another but from one's inner self. The transformation in the heart can cause miracles. Sometimes seeking forgiveness does harm rather than good. If I have still not made you understand this do ask me. Harilal sees me often. I meet him and talk to him very gently. I do not worry. There is a sentence in the *Gita* which means that one cannot change one's nature by force. Our duty is to try to remove our faults. To be lethargic in that is sin. We may only make the endeavour, leaving the

[1] Devchand Parekh

fruit of it in the hands of God. Therefore, renouncing the desire for the fruit, we should act.

Now there is no part of your letter left unanswered. I am not sending blessings to Ch. Jaisukhlal, etc. That does not mean that theydo not have my blessings. They certainly do. It is unnecessary to write.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Motana Man, pp. 29-30

273. LETTER TO NISHITHNATH KUNDU

[DARJEELING,][1]

June 6, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[2] . I am now trying to discuss the thing with Deshbandhu.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

NISHITHNATH KUNDU
DIST. CONGRESS COMMITTEE
DINAJPUR

From a photostat : G.N. 8020

274. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Jeth Sud 9 [*June 6, 1925*]

CHI. NARANDAS[3]

No news from you. I want you to send me every month your report on khadi work. It will be better still, if you send it every fortnight.

It seems you have not been able to make an inquiry about Shri. . . . Now do so quickly. There are allegations of misappropriation and adultery against him. How can you possibly make an inquiry in the matter of the allegation of adultery? With regard to this I would only ask you to go to . . . with your eyes open. Examine the accounts

[1] From the postmark
[2] This is not available.
[3] Nephew of Gandhiji

minutely, so that if they are found to be kept honestly I can unhesitatingly declare them to be so.

You know that I have already written in *Navajivan* about the allegations made against him.

I hope you all are keeping well.

My regards to Khushalbhai and Devbhabhi[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 6292. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

275. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Jeth Sud 14, Saturday [*June 6, 1925*][2]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Efforts have been made to get money from Badrul. But there has been no success. Something will certainly come from Naik in the end. A sum of Rs. 4,000 has so far been received from him. Instructions have been sent that this should be paid to the Committee there. Shuaib has been entrusted with the task of collecting money from these two sources. Keep in touch with him.

You will have regained your health. What is the condition of your nephew?

We are at Darjeeling. We shall leave Darjeeling on Tuesday.

Blessings from

BAPU

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
93 BAZAR GATE STREET
FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

276. SPEECH TO WOMEN MISSIONARIES [3]

June 6, 1925

I accepted your invitation to speak before you only in order that I may have an opportunity to explain certain things which I wanted

[1] Addressee's mother and wife of Khushalbhai

[2] From the postmark

[3] Delivered at the School of Indian Languages, Darjeeling, conducted by Miss Rowlands, for missionaries serving in India

you to understand. The movement with which the Deshbandhu and others including myself are identified is a movement for self-purification. This does not mean that it is not a political one; it is indeed very much a political movement. But what is political and what is religious? Can life be divided into such watertight compar-tments? The whole machine is run by one person from one place. If that person and that place are clean and pure, then all the activities will also be clean and pure; if they are both tainted, then all the activities will also be tainted. I am amused at such distinction of our various activities, because my experience has been different. I have never made such distinctions. The seemingly different activities are complementary and produce the sweet harmony of life. Politics separated from religion stinks, religion detached from politics is meaningless. Politics means any activity for the welfare of the people. How can anyone who seeks God remain indifferent to this benevolent activity? And since according to me God and Truth are one, I will always cherish the wish to see the rule of truth prevail even in the domain of politics.

To try to explain Jesus' teachings to the followers of Jesus is like carrying the Ganga water to Varanasi. But although I am myself not a Christian, as an humble student of the Bible, who approaches it with faith and reverence, I wish respectfully to place before you the essence of the Sermon on the Mount. If, while doing so, I do not place before you frankly my inmost thoughts, I would be unfit to address you as brothers and sisters. I remember the speech I delivered in 1916 before a conference of missionaries in Madras.[1] I had observed at that time that the missionaries were making a grave error in counting the numbers of their followers. I have absolutely no faith in the proselytizing activity that is being carried on today. It may have benefited some persons, but the benefit is of little account when compared with the harm which has followed. Religious controversy serves no purpose. God wants us to profess what we sincerely believe. There are thousands of men and women today who, though they may not have heard about the Bible or Jesus have more faith and are more godfearing than Christians who know the Bible and who talk of its Ten Commandments. Religion is no matter for words, it is the path of the brave. And my humble intelligence refuses to believe that a man becomes good when he renounces one religion and embraces another. I can cite numberous instances of Indians and Zulus who have

[1] *Vide* "Speech on Swadeshi at Missionary Conference, Madras", February 14, 1916

become Christians but who know nothing of Jesus' way of love or sacrifice or his message.

In this connection, I recall the talk I had with a missionary named Mr. Murray in Johannesburg. A friend had introduced me to him hoping that I would become a Christian. We went out for a walk in the course of which Mr. Murray cross-examined me by asking me a number of questions. When he had cross-examined me enough, he told me : "No, friend! I do not wish to convert you. Not only that, I will never try to convert anyone in future." I was very much pleased. He even accepted my interpretation of Jesus' teaching! Quoting from the Bible itself,[1] I had said to him : "Not he who says 'God, God' shall gain deliverance, but he who surrenders himself to God and does His will, he alone shall gain it. I am aware of my weaknesses. I am struggling against them with what strength God has given me, not with my own. Do you wish that, instead of thus struggling with my God-given strength, I should repeat parrotwise that Jesus has washed off my sins and that I have become pure?" He looked up, stopped me and said : "I understand what you say."

I am today talking to you with the same emotion with which I talked to my friend then, because I want to touch your hearts just as I wanted to touch his. Why do you want merely to count heads, why do you not go on with silent service? Will you please tell me why you wish to convert people? Should it not be enough if, by coming into contact with you, people learn to live pure and noble lives, they give up the way of untruth and darkness and take to the path of truth and light? What more do you want than that you take up a helpless child and help it to earn the means wherewith to feed and clothe it self? Is not this sufficient reward for your work? Or is it that you wish to make the person whom you serve say without conviction, "I have become a Christian"? Today we see competition and conflict among different reli-gions for counting the number of their followers. I feel deeply ashamed of this and, when I hear of people's achievement in converting such and such a number to a particular faith, I feel that that is no achievement at all, that on the contrary it is a blasphemy against God and the self.

Your work does not end with serving people. You should identify yourselves with them. Only when you meet the poorest of the poor will you be able to render true service. In this connection I recall the words of Lord Salisbury[2] to a deputation of missionaries which waited on him. Those missionaries had arrived from China and were

[1] *St. Matt.* VII, 21; XXI, 28-31

[2] 1830-1903; Prime Minister of England, 1885-86, 1886-92 and 1895-1902

seeking Government protection against the Boxers. Lord Salis-bury told them : "I am not unwilling to offer you protection. But will it do you any credit? The missionaries of old were brave. Trusting that the only true protection was God's they opposed all obstacled and sacrificed their lives. If you must go as far as China for the propagation of religion, you should seek such protection as the godfearing seek and take the risks which one would take for whom religion is one's very lifebreath would take." Those were the words of an honest and practical man. You, too, if you wish to serve the people of India, should go on with your work moving about with your life in your hand. Whatever the failures or harassment you may have to face, serve them in a truly missionary spirit.

If you would breathe life into these poor people, embrace the programme which I have been placing before every Indian today and enter their lives along with it. Through no other kind of work can you fulfil the command of Jesus as well as you can through this.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-6-1925

277. INVASION IN THE NAME OF RELIGION

I have received a long letter about the struggle that is going on in the *Lad* community. The writer has made an honest attempt to provide me with lots of information and shown that all possible steps have been taken to reach a compromise. I am prepared to believe that. But my intention is not to write or suggest something about the *Lad* community but to place the thoughts provoked by it before Hindu society.

On the one hand, unification is going on for the protection of Hinduism, on the other, the weaknesses which have entered Hinduism are corroding it from within. That is to say, just as a worm in the heart of a thick log of wood goes on eating it, and, even if we put a covering on it from above or apply some solution to it, the wood will ultimately be eaten away, similarly if we do not destroy the worm that has entered the heart of Hinduism and is consuming it, no matter how much we protect it from outside, it will surely be destroyed.

In the name of preservation of the castes, the castes are being and have been intermingled. The restraints of caste have dis-appeared, only its excesses have endured. These restraints were intended to preserve religion, these have now become retrograde and are now corroding it. The castes should be four in number but they have become far too many. The castes having become extinct, communities have become divided into sub-castes and, like cattle

wandering about in a backyard being forced into a pen, we who are without a master have been caught up in the mesh of sub-castes and are held prisoner there. The castes gave sustenance to the people; the sub-castes have proved destructive to them. Instead of serving the Hindus or India, we have been engaged in protecting our sub-castes, that is, our shackles, and have been draining our intelligence, and our money in solving problems arising therefrom. A hunter stands in front of the foolish honeybees intent on destroying their honeycomb, while they are arguing about the control of one another's residence. When the distinction between *Visha* and *Dasha* deserves to be obliterated, how can there be any question whether *Visha* is greater or *Dasha* is greater? When the need is to unite the *Vania* community throughout India, how can there be any room for the distinctions and quarrels between *Dasha* and *Visha*, *Modh* and *Lad, Halari* and *Ghoghari*?

The castes came into being because of the professions, while the sub-castes subsist on account of the relationship of marriage, etc. As long as I conform to these restrictions, what does it matter if I run a wine shop, bear arms or sell canned beef from foreign lands? In spite of doing all this, I can be an honoured member of the *Vania* community. Whether I observe the principle of one-man-one-wife or flirt with many damsels is no concern of my community; and regardless of what I do, I can pass as a rich man of the community, can compose new scriptures for it and can win honour from it. It takes note of where I dine or where I marry off my son or daughter, but it will not scrutinize my conduct. As I have now returned from abroad, I cannot enter the *sanctorum* of the temple of Kanyakumari, but if I have openly been leading an adulterous life, no one can stop me from entering it!

There is no exaggeration in this picture. This is no dharma; this is the extreme limit of *adharma*. This does not mean protection of caste but its annihilation. I who am keen to preserve the caste system shall prove incapable of doing so if *adharma* is not done away with. In this travesty going by the name of caste, instead of the destruction of the excess, there is danger of caste itself being annihilated.

Now let us see how the innumerable castes can be preserved. A religion in which non-violence predominates protects castes by means of violence. A man who has broken the artificial and improper restrictions of caste is not shown his "mistake" but is instantaneously boycotted. Boycott means his harassment in every way; his meals are stopped, no girl is offered to him in marriage, he is denied obsequies and this punishment descends even to the heirs of the boycotted man! This means leading an army to kill an ant or, to speak in the language

of this age, Dyerism. By such harassment, communities of a thousand or two thousand people instead of continuing to live will perish. Destruction is desirable but destruction brought about by force is harmful. If this destruction is brought about deliberately, then alone will it provide sustenance to society.

The best remedy is that the *mahajans* of the various small communities should join together and constitute a single caste, and that this big association should merge with other associations and the four castes should become a single caste. But in the present atmosphere of weakness such a reform would be considered impossible.

That is to say following dharma is as easy as it is difficult. Just as every organization can promote the growth of dharma, individuals too can do likewise. An individual should be fearless and follow what he regards as dharma and if he is boycotted he should not worry. He should courteously welcome the three punishments of the caste and should regard them as free from compulsion. There is no benefit in giving caste dinners, very often there is in not giving them. I for one regard it a sin to give dinners after a person's death. Even if a girl cannot be found for a boy or a boy for a girl in the same community, that too need not cause worry, because it is no punishment to one who does not believe in the existence of sub-castes. There will certainly be no difficulty in getting a suitable match from the reformers of other groups if the boy or girl herself is worthy. But if there is difficulty, dharma consists in putting up with it. To a man of character and restraint these are no troubles at all. He bears with them with a composed mind. If he does not receive help from his community at the time of his death, why should it trouble him? There will be others to help. I have already written about a hearse. We can do with little help if it comes into use. And one who cannot command even that little help should engage labourers. One who is so poor as not to afford even labourers is a creature of God and he should be confident that He would send him succour from any quarter. Satyagraha consists in not being bothered by punishment. Just as satyagraha is a golden weapon with which to fight the Government, so it is to fight the caste-organization, because both the ailments are the same and hence the remedy too is the same. The remedy against oppression is satyagraha. Satyagraha alone can preserve Hinduism or any other religion.

It is my humble advice to every lover of religion that he should keep clear of the petty squabbles of the communities and should remain devoted to his duty. His duty is to protect his religion and his

country. Protection of dharma does not lie in according unjustified protection to small communities, but in leading a life of religion. Protection of religion means protection of every Hindu. The protection of every Hindu consists only in ourselves being men of character. To acquire character means to follow the vows of truth, *brahmacharya*, ahimsa, etc. To become fearless means to cease to fear any man, to trust in God and fear Him alone, to know that He is witness to all our actions and all our thoughts and to tremble even to entertain evil thoughts, to help every created being, to regard even a follower of another religion as a friend, to pass our time doing good to others, etc., etc. The existence of sub-castes can, at the present time at any rate, be considered as pardonable if their activity on the whole gives sustenance to religion and country. The caste which uses the whole world to promote its own interests will be destroyed. The caste which permits itself to be used in promoting the welfare of the world will live.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-6-1925

278. IN BENGAL

I am not able to leave Bengal and Bengal will not let me go. I have already spent a month here and must spend another. A swift trip to Assam in the meantime cannot be avoided. Shri Phookan writes : "Assam has not done much. But you must give it a chance to show what it can do in the matter of khadi. Give it at least a week." Without his writing all this, I would have gone on a mere invitation because I hope for much from Assam. Moreover, Assam is so far away that one cannot go there often. But the most important reason for my going there is that perhaps few provinces have suffered as much as Assam did in 1921. Assam's crime was that it had banned opium. For that reason hundreds of youths had to go to jail and bear several other hardships. This had such a bad effect that panic spread among the people and they could not stand up fearlessly. One needs no argument for going to this province. Therefore, I promptly accepted S hri Phookan's invitation. Now I have to reach Assam by the fifteenth. I may spend two weeks there. After that I would resume and conclude the Bengal tour. Even so a part of Bengal would remain uncovered.

I am not able to leave Bengal because I hope for much from this province. The more I come in contact with the Bengalis, the more I am fascinated by their simplicity and self-denial. Wherever I turn, I find around me youths ready to sacrifice themselves. They are full of

ardour for serving the country. They are ever on the look-out for ways of serving it. Some work is going on without anyone taking note of it, because the description of it can never be interesting. Simple life in itself is interesting. The more interesting such life is, the less so is the description of it. The greatest joy lies in perfect peace. How can one describe this peace or joy ever now? How can one describe the peace and joy of a man who collects around him the village children and teaches them day after day with a father's love? Who can equal him in his joy or snatch it away from him? It grows daily because he sees how his work of teaching bears fruit. He has no thought about whether he has one pupil or many. His thoughts do not extend beyond the lesson. His work is his own and he can make or mar his own happiness.

I have a feeling that workers of this kind are found mostly in Bengal, and scattered in many places there. There is little mutual contact among them. Each one is preoccupied with his own work. I often have the honour of meeting such persons. The more I see them the less wil-ling I am to leave the province. It is in such workers that I see the seeds of swaraj. In them lies India's hope. They don't speak, their work does.

LANGUAGE OF THE HAND

Having seen such workers I had in one of my speeches uttered, without knowing, the phrase : "the language of the hand". This meeting was held in Calcutta. I reached there in time. Many men and women were still coming in. The meeting was to begin with music, but the musician had yet to come and it would be some time before I was due to speak. I took out the case containing my *takli* which I always carry about with me for spinning with whenever I get time. I have been a poor student in working on the *takli*. I have not become as adept as I should have. Where my fault lies no one has been able to tell me. But I am not going to be defeated by the *takli* and so goes on the battle between us two. I do spin some sort of yarn. Hence I utilized this time in plying the *takli*. All the slivers I had were used up and there was still some time before I was to speak. Then I thought out what I had to say and said something like this to the audience :

Where is the need for me to speak now? Ordinary speech proceeds from the tongue and is heard by the ears. But I have been speaking with my hands and, if you had used your eyes, you would have heard it. In a speech made by the tongue, the link between the tongue and the heart may sometimes be lacking. There is something

in the heart, but it is something else that is spoken. Such a flaw finds no place in the language of the hand, because it has no connection with the heart. You may ascribe one meaning you like to the action of the hand on seeing it. The yarn spun out by the hand can never go in vain. I have spoken much with my tongue and you have heard enough with your ears. But Bengal taught me to speak with my hands. The students of Faridpur gave me my first les-son. I have not forgotten that since then I have been plying the charkha at many meetings and, as at Faridpur, I speak with my tongue too while I work on the charkha. I thus show the connection between the tongue and the hands. I see the age of silence coming when the language of the hand will be regarded as the true language. This language, the dumb and the unlettered too can speak and the deaf, if they have eyes, can hear.

But spinning yarn is not an end in itself. By doing so I showed you that, although you have my body here, my heart dwells in the huts of Bengal's villages. Through spinning I keep in constant touch with them because I know that this yarn is the thread of life for millions of poor, struggling Indians. If we do not ply the charkha for their sake, then there will be no flesh on their bodies. If we do not spin, they will remain naked though clad, and they will remain idle though working. They must work on the charkha regarding it as Annapurna. We have to work at it as at a *yajna* to show them the way, to give them peace, and to make khadi cheap. They must work on the charkha during all their leisure hours. We should do that for half an hour a day for their sake and as a *yajna*. They won't ply the charkha if we don't. If we don't ply it, who would remove its shortcomings, who would then create a science of the charkha and who would measure its capacity? It was with our hands that it was destroyed, so by our hands must it be revived. These and many other meanings were contained in the speech I made with my hands. We have extorted enough from the poor peasants and it is our dharma to repay them by plying the charkha.

SANTINIKETAN

And is it only one temptation that Bengal holds for me? There are many. How can I do without going to Santiniketan? I write these notes from there on a silence day. The inmates of Santiniketan fill me with peace supreme. The girls sing sweet songs. I have talked to the poet for hours on end to my heart's content. I have understood him better, rather I would say he has begun to understand me better. His affection for me knows no limits. His elder brother, Dwijendra Nath Tagore, who is known as Borodada, has for me a father's love for a son. He totally refuses to notice my faults. In his view I have never

made a mistake. [He believes that] my non-co-operation, my charkha, my being a *sanatani*, my idea of Hindu-Muslim unity and my antipathy to untouchability are all worthy things. He has made my idea of swaraj his own. A doting father does not wish to see the faults of his son; similarly Borodada does not wish to see mine. I can only notice his infatuation and his love. I can't describe it. I make efforts to be worthy of that love. He is more than eighty years of age. But he keeps himself informed about the smallest things. He knows what is going on in India. He gathers his information by making others read out to him. Both the brothers have a profound knowledge of the Vedas, etc. Both know Sanskrit. *Mantras* and *slokas* from the Upanishads and the *Gita* are ever on their lips.

There are also devotees of the charkha in Santiniketan. Some ply it regularly and some occasionally. Most of them use khadi. I hope that in this world-famous institution charkha will find a larger place.

NANDINI BALA

Few Gujaratis probably know that there are some Gujarati children here. Some of their families stay here. There was one such Bhatia family and a daughter was born to them. The mother fell very ill and went off her head. So Gurudev's daughter-in-law adopted this girl and now she is bringing her up. The girl is about two and a half years old. She is Gurudev's darling. Everyone knows her as his grand-daughter. Nowadays Gurudev is resting. Since he has heart disease, doctors have forbidden all movement. He may not do even strenuous mental work. So twice or thrice a day he indulges in innocent jokes with this girl—Nandini—and tells her various types of stories. She becomes petulant if she is not told stories. She is now venting some manner of displeasure on me. She got ready to take a garland of flowers from me but now bluntly refuses to come to me. Who knows she may be avenging herself because I was talking to Gurudev during her story-time. How can one get to the bottom of a child's displeasure or a king's? If a king goes into a huff, a satyagrahi like me knows how to deal with him. But before a child's petulance my brilliant weapon loses its lustre. Moreover silence day intervened. And so I have to leave Santiniketan without winning Nandini over. To whom can I tell this sad story of my failure?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-6-1925

279. KHADI IN KATHIAWAR

From the letters I receive from Kathiawar I find that those who had undertaken to enlist farmers and members of poor classes who would spin by hand seem to have succeeded. Devchandbhai[1] is very hopeful about this. It seems the workers are succeeding in finding such families without much effort. Devchandbhai believes that many more families would come forward [for spinning] if we had more workers and were in a position to supply more slivers at half price. But the question is whether it would be better to serve the families we have already enlisted or to welcome more families than we had provided for and meet their needs. Serving these families means strengthening the intermediate agencies, improving the spinning-wheel and helping the families to improve the quality of spinning and teaching them carding, etc. I cannot offer, and hold that I have no right to offer, any advice from this distance. I consider it dangerous to give advice without regard to the changing circumstances. I, therefore, wish to place before the workers my experiences in Bengal. I find here that hardly at any place do they supply slivers [to the spinners]. In fact they are supplied nowhere except in Calcutta, instead they supply only cotton. Thousands of women-spinners ask only for cotton, which they gin with their own hands. Those who know anything about spinning will see that persons who do the ginning and carding themselves naturally earn more. Anyone who has done these things will know that it is not difficult to attend to all these processes at home. In Bengal people have still not forgotten the old days and, therefore, they readily respond to these ideas. No one can surpass the slivers available in Bengal. One will never find any particle in them. Even if everyone who spins cannot do ginning in his home, why cannot he do carding? The carding instruments here are very simple and hardly cost four to six annas. They moisten a bamboo rod and bend it, and in many cases make the bowstring out of banana fibre. The striker, of course, they never use. Instead, they work with a finger. We may not go so far, it may not even be necessary to do so. But it is certainly necessary for those who are regular spinners to learn carding forthwith. I think it will be difficult to go on supplying slivers for ever. Another thing I observed here is that hardly anyone spins yarn of less than ten counts. The yarn available in the market is mostly of more than ten counts.

[1] Devchand Parekh

Leaving out *devkapas*, the cotton here is of an inferior quality to that of our *mathia*. The implements used on this side are cheaper than ours. I wonder if cheap instruments do no ultimately prove costly.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-6-1925

280. A NOTE OF ADVICE

June 7, 1925

Never make a promise in haste. Having once made it, fulfil it at the cost of your life.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 8735

281. LETTER TO THE EDITOR, "THE WORLD"

SABARMATI,
June 8, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1] with good wishes for which I thank you. In my opinion the speculation you ask me to indulge in is a vain speculation. Who knows what the whole present is? But we all know that the whole future will be a direct result of the present. The one change needful is humility and introspection. In our arrogance we want to reform the world without reforming ourselves. "Man, know thyself" is as true today as when it was first uttered.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

282. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA GURTOO

June 8, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I have read your circular letter. You do not seem to have seen any of the cruelties yourself. Unless there are proved specific

[1] This is not available.

instances, it is useless for me to give currency to the allegations. The cruelty appears to me to be too horrible to believe.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. BRIJKRISHNA GURTOO
VAKIL OF LUCKNOW
SOLON
SIMLA DISTT.

From a photostat: G.N. 10843

283. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, JALPAIGURI

June 10, 1925

Addressing a public meeting Mr. Gandhi requested the merchants and businessmen to utilize their wealth and their business talent for the welfare of India. The educated classes, he said, had exclusively served India up to now. It was now the turn of the mercantile classes and masses to enter the field of constructive work before the country demanded all their business skill and farsightedness which, if they were devoted to the welfare of the country, would result in an annual saving of sixty crores of rupees, exclusion of all foreign cloth and production of khaddar enough to clothe the country. Everyone of seven hundred thousand villages in India was, in the opinion of the speaker, like a spinning and weaving mill thoroughly self-contained in the matter of machinery, labour and capital.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 11-6-1925

284. TALK TO VOLUNTEERS, JALPAIGURI[1]

June 10, 1925

You say there is no fun in spinning. But I ask you, is there any fun in reciting the *gayatri*? Is there any fun in reciting the *kalma*? You do it as it is a duty, as it is a sacrament. Even so, spinning is a duty and a sacrament. India is dying. It is on death bed. And have you ever watched a dying man? Have you ever felt his feet? You find that they are cold and benumbed, though you still feel some warmth on the head and comfort yourselves that the life is not yet gone out of him. But it is ebbing away. Even so the masses of India—the feet of the Mother—are cold and palsied. If you want to save India, do it by doing the little that I ask for, I warn you. Take up the wheel betimes, or perish.

Young India, 25-6-1925

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour in Bengal

285. NOTES

ONE MORE RECRUIT

The army of my sweet-hearts is daily increasing. The princess among them is, of course, Gulnar, my deputy who was to occupy the autocratic chair in my absence as His Majesty's guest as often as I received the invitation. But the lesser stars are too numerous to mention. The latest recruit is Ranibala of Burdwan, a darling perhaps 10 years old. I dare not ask her age. I was playing with her as usual and casting furtive glances at her six heavy gold-bangles. I gently explained to her that they were too heavy a burden on her delicate little wrists and down went her hand on the bangles. "Yes, yes, give up the bangles to Mahatmaji", said her grandfather, Shyam Babu of the *Servant* fame. I thought this was generosity at somebody else's expense. "Oh, you do not know my daughter and my son-in-law. My daughter will be glad to hear that the girl has given her bangles to you and my son-in-law can well afford to do without them. He is a most generous-hearted man. He helps the poor." All the while he was speaking, he was helping Ranibala to remove the bangles and encouraging her. I must confess I was embarrassed. I was merely joking as I always do when I see little girls and jokingly create in them a distaste for much ornamentation and a desire to part with their jewellery for the sake of the poor. I tried to return the bangles. But Shyam Babu cut short all such attempt by telling me that her mother would regard it as an ill-omen to take back the bangles. I had made known my condition of acceptance, viz., that the girl should not ask for new gold bangles in the place of those given to me. She might have the beautiful snow-white conch-shell bangles if she liked. The girl and the grandfather accepted the condition. Well, whether the gift was a good omen for the family or not, I do not know. It proved one for the poor and me. For, the example proved contagious and at the ladies' meeting I addressed at Burdwan I got quite a dozen bangles and two or three pairs of earrings all unasked. Needless to say, these will be utilized for khaddar and charkha *prachar*[1] in Bengal. I notify to all the young girls and their parents and grand-parents that I am open to have as many sweet-hearts as would come to me on Ranibala's terms. They will be handsomer for the thought that they gave their prized ornaments to be used for the service of the poor. Let the little girls of India treasure the proverb "handsome is that

[1] Propagation

handsome does".

The Secretary, Satyashram school at Baherok in the course of a letter says:[1]

This is very good progress indeed. Let it not however be eleven days' wonder. We are often charged with lack of sustained energy and application. I hope that the improvement so well begun will continue. I know that a good and noiseless charkha in the hands of a competent spinner is "a thing of beauty and a joy for ever".

ANALYSIS OF COMPETITORS

The reader will be interested to learn the analysis according to provinces of the competitors who have sent in their essays on hand-spinning. Here is the list :

Andhra	4	Tamilnad	19
Gujarat	9	Bombay	4
U.P.	3	Bihar	2
Bengal	3	Maharashtra	3
Burma	1	Kerala	1
Orissa	2	Karnatak	1
Punjab	5	C.P. (Marathi)	1
Sind	1	Ceylon	1
A Gujarati, (London)	1	Anonymous	1
			62

The response made is a healthy sign of the interest that is being taken in the competition. We shall soon know the result as to quality. The examiners are busy examining the essays.

'TOO HARSH A REBUKE'

A pleader friend writes :[2]

If what the friend writes about the supposed inability to test the quality of yarn without one being a weaver or a spinning expert were true, my remarks might be regarded as "too harsh a rebuke". But, as a matter of fact, to distinguish weavable yarn from unweavable is a simple performance. The eye tells one whether it is even or uneven or fluffy, and a pull by the hand shows whether it is well-twisted or not. It

[1] This is not reproduced here. The secretary referred to the progress made by the boys in spinning during eleven days after Gandhiji's visit.

[2] Not reproduced here. Referring to the article "Weavers' Complaint", under "Notes", 14-5-1925, the correspondent had written, *inter alia* : "I cannot agree with your remarks that the spinner whose yarn is not quite up to the mark spins indifferently or without putting his heart into it and thus deceives himself and the nation. It will be unfair to determine the sincerity of a spinning member from the quality of the yarn he has been able to spin. The defects in the yarn may be due to want of proper knowledge as to the required twist."

is, therefore, not necessary for one to be a weaver to know roughly the quality of yarn spun. Moreover, a careful man will go to a weaver to have his yarn tested by him. Thousands who are spinning well are not weavers at all, but they distinguish good yarn from bad without much difficulty. It is quite likely that the yarn sent by my correspondent was received at the Ashram. But, being incessantly on the move, I would not have got it. But, henceforth, he should adopt the suggestion I have made. In the jail, we had a sample of mill-spun yarn about two yards in length given and we were called upon to spin according to the sample. Everyone who cannot judge from directions should procure a little mill-yarn of a given count and draw a thread of that count and quality. It is, perhaps, now clear why I accused spinners, who sent indifferent ropes, of "stealing merit". But to show that I did not wish to do any injustice to any spinner I hasten to admit that there must be many like the pleader friend who have sent bad yarn, because they have known no better. But these are not many for the simple reason that warnings and instructions were repeatedly issued in these pages as also separately by the A.I.K.B. during the time that yarn was being delivered to it.

SPINNING IN SCHOOLS

The brilliant success that has attended the introduction of spinning in the Allahabad Municipal schools has been adverted to in the columns of *Young India* already. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru now reports :

> The Municipal Boards of Lucknow, Farrukhabad, Banaras, Cawnpore and Mirzapur, and the District Boards of Jhanshi, Banda, Basti and Azambag have introduced or are introducing spinning in their schools. It appears that many other local boards in U.P. are considering the matter and are communicating with the U.P., P.C.C. in regard to it.

I venture to congratulate these municipalities on their lauda- ble resolve. A serious obstacle in the way of introducing spinning in its schools that was complained of by the municipal education department of Allahabad, in its report, was the frequency with which the wheels got out of order and want of space. With care- ful handling, no spinning-wheel need go out of repair. But the complaint about space is a serious handicap in all cities. I commend to the attention of the school authorities the beautiful *takli*. It is carried in one's pocket. All the children can work it simultaneously. It can be used anywhere and everywhere. In the Allahabad municipal schools, for instance, there were only 334 wheels for 3,400 boys and girls to work at but of these one half remained idle for want of repair. I am sure that the wheels did not give more than 150 yards per boy or girl per 45 minutes. That means 47,250 yards daily at the most. A *takli* will not

yield more than 30 yards in the same time. But all the 3,400 can work at the same time. Therefore, one would get, through the use of the *takli*, 10,200 yards per day, i.e., more than double the quantity yielded by the wheels. The *takli*, therefore, is the best spinning instrument in the long run for schools and such groups. The *takli* takes no more time to master than the wheel. I, therefore, recommend the immediate adoption of the *takli* in the Allahabad municipal schools. They may retain the charkha for individual boys who may want to give extra time to them and are anxious to turn out large quantities of yarn.

Young India, 11-6-1925

286. NOT MAN'S WORK?

Thus writes a professor :

> Personally, I have full faith in the spinning-wheel and khaddar. I fully understand that without khaddar there can be no common bond between the classes and the masses of India. And without a common bond, without feeling as one, no country can accomplish anything, much less India. Besides, I can very well understand that a success in sufficient production of khaddar is bound to result in excluding foreign cloth. Khaddar programme must be worked out to a success, if India is to achieve freedom.
>
> But I am of opinion that you have begun at the wrong end. To ask able-bodied men to sit for spinning, like women, is what appears odd in the eyes of most of the people. I quite appreciate the reflection that we, at present, are no better than women. Still, the reality is that we, all of us, can't take up the work which has been associated in our country, for centuries, with women. Again, I would have consented to shake off this acquired notion, could I be persuaded to believe that at least the female population of the country have taken up the cause of spinning and that it still requires further support from the male population. To ask men to ply the spinning-wheel, while the female folk strut about in fine foreign saris, is putting the cart before the horse. Besides, the question of foreign cloth in India is not so much of men's creation as of women's and therefore, I think, to press the use of the spinning-wheel and khaddar on men, instead of women, is to begin the solution at the wrong end.
>
> In my humble opinion, you should have left men alone, busy with their various sorts of political propagandas and should have taken your message direct to the women of the land. Let your great programme of charkha and khaddar be confined to women for the present and let men fight the battle of freedom with manlier weapons.

The letter was rather long. I have boiled down the argument without changing the language. It is evident the learned professor does not know the condition of the women of India. Or, he would

have known that, ordinarily, men do not get the privilege or the opportunity of addressing women. It has been my good fortune, no doubt, to be able to do so to a certain extent. But, in spite of all the facilities given to me, I have not been able to reach them to the extent I have reached men. He should also know that the women cannot act without the consent of men. I can quote several instances where men have prevented women from adopting the charkha or khaddar. Thirdly, women cannot make the inventions and the changes that men can make. Had the movement of spinning been confined only to women, it would have been impossible to make the improvements that the charkha has undergone during the past four years or to organize spinning in the manner it has been. Fourthly, it is contrary to experience to say that any vocation is exclusively reserved for one sex only. Cooking is predominantly the occupation of women. But a soldier would be worthless who cannot cook his own food. The whole of the cooking in camps is necessarily and naturally done by men. Moreover, whilst women naturally cook for the household, organized cooking on a large scale is universally done by men throughout the world. Fighting is predominantly men's occupation, but Arab women fought like heroines side by side with their husbands in the early struggles of Islam. Rani of Jhansi distinguished herself for her bravery as very few men did during the Sepoy Revolt. And today in Europe we find women shining as lawyers, doctors and administrators. The clerical profession is being almost monopolized by women shorthand writers and typists. Why is spinning not a manly occupation? Why is anything that will bring about the economic and spiritual uplift of India (and spinning will according to the professor) not manly enough for men? Does not the professor know that it was a man who invented the spinning jenny ?Had he not invented it the history of mankind would have been written differently. Needle-work is essentially women's work. But the master tailors of the world are men. And it was a man who invented the sewing machine. Had Singer despised the needle, he would not have left his legacy to mankind. Had men taken care of spinning side by side with the women of India in days gone by, we would perhaps have never given up spinning as we did under pressure from the East India Company. The politician may devote himself to pure politics as much as he likes, but if we are to clothe ourselves by the joint effort of millions, the politician, the poet, the potentate, the pundit and the pauper, male or female, Hindu or Mussalman, Christian, Parsi or Jew, will have religiously to give half

an hour to spinning for the sake of the country. Religion of humanity is not the exclusive prerogative of any sex or class. It is the prerogative, nay the duty, of all. The religion of Indian humanity demands half an hour's spinning at least from everyone who calls himself or herself Indian.

Young India, 11-6-1925

287. AYURVEDIC SYSTEM

Kaviraj Gananath Sen writes :

> I take this opportunity of drawing your attention to the fact that the speech you delivered when laying the foundation stone of the Ashtanga Ayurveda Vidyalaya[1] has been greatly misconstrued both by the public and by the Ayurvedic physicians of Calcutta. May I suggest that you will kindly explain that you did not mean to condemn Ayurveda itself or its conscientious votaries but only a certain section of them who lived by fraud? To me such an explanation appears to be urgently required in view of the fact that almost all Bengali papers are misinterpreting your speech and condemning us for not contradicting it.

I gladly comply with the request, the more so as it enables me to express my views about Ayurvedic medicine.

I must say at the outset that I was reluctant to perform the ceremony referred to as I was reluctant even to perform the ceremony of opening the Tibbia College by reason of the views I hold on Medicine in general as expressed in my booklet *Indian Home Rule*. Seventeen years' observation has made no material change in them. If I rewrote the book, it is just possible that I should state the views in a different language. But I could no more resist the organizers of my tour than I could a bosom friend like Hakim Saheb. But I told them that my speech might prove embarrassing. Had I been absolutely hostile to the movement, I should, of course, have declined the honour at any cost. But I could reconcile myself to the performance subject to the conditions I named at the meeting. I hope that the college of which I laid the foundation and to which I understand the founder, himself a *Kaviraj*, had devoted a princely sum, will contribute to the alleviation of real suffering and make discoveries and researches in Ayurveda that will enable the poorest in the land to know and use the simple indigenous drugs and teach people to learn the laws of preventing disease rather than curing them.

My quarrel with the medical profession in general is that it ignores the soul altogether and strains at nothing in seeking merely to

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Ashtanga Ayurveda Vidyalaya", 6-5-1925.

repair such a fragile instrument as the body. Thus ignoring the soul, the profession puts men at its mercy and contributes to the diminution of human dignity and self-control. I note with thankfulness that in the West a school of thought is rising slowly but surely which takes count of the soul in trying to repair a diseased body and which, therefore, relies less on drugs and more on nature as a powerful healing agent. My quarrel with the professors of Ayurvedic system is that many of them, if not indeed a vast majority of them, are mere quacks pretending to know much more than they actually do, arrogating to themselves an infallibility and ability to cure all diseases. These gentlemen have no humility in them. They will not study the Ayurvedic system and wrest from it the secrets which appear at present to be completely hidden from the world. They impute to Ayurveda an omnipotence which it does not possess, and in so doing they have made it a stagnant system instead of a gloriously progressive science. I know of not a single discovery or invention of any importance on the part of Ayurvedic physicians as against a brilliant array of discoveries and inventions which Western physicians and surgeons boast. In fact, Ayurvedic physicians' diagnosis, as a rule, consists in feeling the pulse which, I have known many to claim, enables them to know even whether the patient is suffering from appendicitis. Whether the science of the pulse ever enabled ancient physicians to diagnose every known disease no one can tell. But it is certain that the claim cannot be sustained at the present moment. The only thing Ayurvedic physicians can safely claim is a knowledge of some vegetable and metallic drugs of great potency which some of them succeed in administering for disease they only guess and, therefore, often with much harm to their poor patients. The advertisements of medicine that excite animal passions add immorality to incapacity and make those who resort to these practices a real danger to society.

I know of no association of Ayurvedic physicians that protests against or endeavours to check this ceaseless flow of immorality which is sapping Indian manhood and making of many old men monsters living merely to satisfy their lust. Indeed, I have known such physicians enjoying a status of respectability in medical society. Whenever, therefore, I get an opportunity I seize it to drive the truth home to the physicians Ayurvedic and Unani and plead for truth, humility and patient research. I am a lover of all that is ancient and noble. I believe that there was a time when Ayurvedic and Unani medicine served a noble purpose and was progressive. There was a time when I actively helped these physicians and believed in them. But experience has undeceived me. I have been grieved to find arrogance and ignorance among many such physicians. It hurts me to find a

noble profession being prostituted for making money. I have written this not to condemn individuals. I have merely reduced to writing the impression that has been left on my mind by a long course of observation of the practice of Ayurvedic physicians. It is no answer to say, as has been said, that Ayurvedic physicians have copied the evils I have named from their Western brethren. A wise man copies not what is bad but that which is good. Let our *Kavirajas*, *Vaidyas* and *Hakims* apply to their calling a scientific spirit that Western physicians show, let them copy the latter's humility, let them reduce themselves to poverty in investigating the indigenous drugs and let them frankly acknowledge and assimilate that part of Western medicine which they at present do not possess. Let them shun the irreligion of the Western scientists, which, in order to heal the body and in the name of science, subjects the lower animal kingdom to the hideous tortures which pass muster under the name of vivisection. Some will retort that there is warrant for vivisection in Ayurveda. If there is, I am sorry. No warrant even in the four Vedas can sanctify sacrilege.

Young India, 11-6-1925

288. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

ON WAY TO NAWABGANJ,
Jeth Vad 5 [*June 11, 1925*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I was glad to know that the letter which was dictated to Chi. Manhar is with you. It is quite right that you should come for the Working Committee meeting if you feel like doing so. If I particularly want your presence I shall send for you. I am on the look-out for a principal. I shall give one month to C.P. after the 16th of July. I have letters from the Municipal Committees of Amravati and Akola. I do not know their names. We should go wherever necessary. In the first place I would like to spend a quiet week in Wardha. This should be considered a more peaceful time than even the time I spent at Darjeeling. The tour should start after this. I am definitely here up to the 16th of July. I shall leave Calcutta for Assam on the 18th. From there I shall return to Calcutta on the 2nd of July. You have spun quite a lot of yarn.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original : G.N. 2853

[1] From the postmark

289. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Jeth Sud 5 [*June 11, 1925*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I get your letters regularly. I do write to you a letter every week. A reply does go to every letter received from you. When you are free from the work of the shop, I would wish you to have some peace. If you like the environment of the Ashram, you may find peace there. Both Janakibehn and Jamnalalji are very devout persons. Jamnalalji wants to give shelter to many widows. If your health is restored a little, I would like to take plenty of work from you. For that you should have steadiness. It will take us three months yet to return to the Ashram; perhaps more, but not less. I write this letter on board the steamer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original : C.W. Courtesy : Vasumati Pandit

290. SPEECH TO STUDENTS, NAWABGANJ[2]

June 11, 1925

You all spin and wear khaddar but tell me how many of you always speak the truth and never lie?

A few boys raised their hands.

Well, now tell me how many of you occasionally happen to lie?

Two boys immediately raised their hands, then three, then four and finally, almost all.

Thank you, there will be always hope for those of you who know and own that they occasionally lie. The path of those who think they never lie is difficult. I wish both success.

Young India, 25-6-1925

291. REMARKS IN VISITORS' BOOK[3]

I was much pleased to note that spinning has been compulsory for the past four years. I have read the remarks of the Inspector about

[1] From the postmark. The *tithi* (date) according to Vikram Calendar should be *Jeth Vad* 5, not *Jeth Sud* 5.

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour in Bengal

[3] This was at the Bijhari School, Upashi, in the Nawabganj District. The school was experimenting with compulsory weaving of khaddar and spinning.

failure of spinning. I hold totally contrary views, but I know that it is possible to make spinning absolutely self-supporting, if not profitable. To that end I venture to suggest the following :

(1) Existing teachers should be induced to learn the art and the science of spinning, on promise of a prize or even a slight increment in pay.

(2) The yarn spun by the boys should be always tested and tickets attached giving the strength and count.

(3) Boys should be encouraged to improve the quality of their yarn from day to day.

(4) Yarn should be sold to the existing spinning organizations, such for instance as Khadi Pratishthan, at agreed prices always above the price of cotton. To this end cotton may be taken from the same organization.

(5) Weaving department I do not hold as a necessity, and should be kept up only if the salary of the weaving master is earned from it. I am glad in this connection to have the promise that all foreign or mill-yarn will be henceforth dispensed with.

(6) Special attention should be paid to carding which the boys must be taught to do for themselves.

(7) The charkhas make a great deal of sound foreign to them. This must interfere with good spinning. They can be and should be made noiseless. This is possible only when the spinning master knows the science of spinning which necessarily includes a knowledge of charkha repair. When the charkhas work well, they produce a musical sound which is soothing to the ear. They can be made a positive delight to the boys, besides being a lesson in sacrifice.

I congratulate the Committee and staff on their experiment and wish them every success.

Young India, 25-6-1925

292. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Friday, Jeth Vad 6 [*June 12, 1925*][1]

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. I am on the steamer today. The bangles are in Calcutta. I reach there on the 18th. After reaching there, I shall send them to you by parcel. Even if Devdas has not arrived at the Ashram, do make inquiries there as the parcel addressed to him will certainly be there. You may take it.

[1] As in the source

Dahyabhai[1] had shown his preference for agriculture and hence the advice I gave him. But if he is inclined to go abroad, I for one would not stand in his way. But there is one great difficulty for me. I would have to ask someone for the money. Some- one may come forward with an offer, but we should not accept money like that as far as possible. This is the ideal. But if we cannot live up to it, there is no harm in getting assistance andgoing. It will take me some time to return. I shall be in Bengal till 15th July. Dahyabhai may come here and have a talk with me; or he may wait till I return to the Ashram. We must not displease him in any way. I want to meet his wishes and guide him gently. There are three ways :

1. To take up private service.
2. To take up farming.
3. To go to America for further studies.

He may do any one of these he likes. I have no objection. The fourth way is to serve the nation and take a remuneration for it. But this is not to his liking and therefore out of the question. I wonder if he likes studying medicine. There is a national college here as well as in Delhi. Tell this to Dahyabhai if he does not know about it already. The college here is considered to be good. He can study here if he wants.

I am keeping quite fit. A few days back I had a slight cold, but that was nothing serious. At every place they provide sufficient rest for me.

Write to . . .[2] regularly. That will give him satisfaction. . . .[3] is hungry for love.

Attend to Father to the best of your ability. When the wife dies and there is plenty of outside activity to attend to, it is the children who can make their father forget all his sorrow if they are devoted and attend upon him. I tell you both brother and sister this is my own experience as an obedient son of my father. I am also witness to the immense good done to children in such a case. Every moment of life I am enjoying the fruit of having served my parents as God. I write to you all this because I know that Father has a heavy burden to carry. I myself am unable to share it. I cannot find the time even to write to him. So I am passing on my responsibility also to you.

Take great care of your health. Do not worry if you have to stay longer [at the college] for your studies. Mahadev was telling me that

[1] Addressee's brother
[2] Omissions are in the source
[3] *ibid*

both your brother and you are weak in spelling. Remove this defect. Whatever we learn, we must learn well. In case of doubt, consult a dictionary. Nothing else needs to be done.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, pp. 24-5

293. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BHOJESWAR[1]

June 12, 1925

Mahatmaji spoke in Hindi and Badshah Mia translated it in Bengali. Mahatmaji, after thanking them for the address they had given him, said that they had asked him to speak about Congress. He would comply with their expectation. He said that, if they wanted swaraj in Hindusthan, they would have to do three things. Everyone, king or peasant, rich or poor, Hindu or Mussalman, man or woman, would have to spin at least half an hour daily. Everyone should try to bring about Hindu-Mussalman unity and to remove untouchability.

Mahatmaji did not believe their assertion that there was no untouchability in Bengal as it was in other parts of India. He said that Hindu religion never taught that they should not drink water touched by *Namsudras*, barbers and washermen.

Mahatmaji next advised them to forsake evils. He asked them not to drink, and not to visit the houses of public women.

Referring to Congress work, he said that those who thought the Congress to be dead were wrong in their conclusion. Congress was not dead. Its workers had practically died. Hitherto people knew that the Congress work meant speech-making and creating excitement. But that was not the real work of this great national organization. The duty of the Congress workers was to serve people and it was the want of that spirit of silent and unostentatious service that had thrown the Congress in the background. He said, as long as there were five real workers in the Congress, it could not die. Congress had no want of work to do as long as one single man of India puts on foreign clothes.

Referring to the duties of the Congress workers, Mahatmaji said that millions of Indians were starving. Let them give them the charkha and they would be able to save their brothers.[2]

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 16-6-1925

[1] Gandhiji was earlier presented with an address on behalf of the people of Dakshinapara.

[2] A purse of one thousand rupees was presented to Gandhiji.

294. LETTER TO C. R. DAS

[Before *June 13, 1925*]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I had very happy days with you. I feel that we have come nearer each other for the communion at Darjeeling.[1]

Had a purse of only Rs. 7,000 at Jalpaiguri. This I have handed to Satish Babu with instructions to transfer it to the Charkha Committee you are appointing. At Jalpaiguri, too, I had the same experience as elsewhere. Spinners are there but nobody to organize them. There is a good girls' school here. They have about 20 wheels not one of which is passable. The poor school-mistress, though she spins fine, does not know a good charkha from a bad. The committee is unconcerned as to the condition of the charkha. This can be easily remedied if there was expert guidance. The proposed committee will supply that guidance.

I do want you to learn spinning both at the wheel and the *takli*. You can do it if you will but put your mind to it. If the Governor said, 'Spin and take what you want', you will work at the wheel for twenty-four hours and master it. Well, it is not the Governor who is saying it; but one who loves you and loves India does say : 'Spin and take swaraj.' Oh that we could do one thing of permanent value! To clothe ourselves through the wheel is not an impossible programme. The spinner whom Satish Babu promised will be with you as soon as we reach Calcutta. Do learn the thing and spin religiously for half an hour for the sake of the millions and in the name of God.[2] It will give you peace and happiness. And then when you are doing it, the young men over whom you excercise such wonderful control will also take it up. I hope fever will not worry you again.

A letter is going to Bhorlal by the same mail that will take this to you. We reach Calcutta by 18th. We are at Barisal between 14-16.

Please tell Basanti Devi to send her first quota of yarn to me. I

[1] Gandhiji was with the addressee in Darjeeling, where the latter was recouping his health, for five days. For Gandhiji's account of his stay and talks with Das, *vide* "At Darjeeling", 10-7-1925.

[2] For the addressee's attempts to learn spinning, *vide* "Notes", 18-6-1925, sub-title, "Spinning in Darjeeling".

want thirty days' collection made into strands of 100 yards each nicely and neatly. Nothing but first class work will be accepted from the Mayoress of Calcutta.

With love to you all.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

295. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MADARIPUR[1]

June 13, 1925

It is dangerous, this association with fallen sisters, especially for young men. All that you need do is to entrust the work to your women, guiding them from a distance. The volunteers in their address asked me to tell them how they could push on their work. They are all under the vow of ahimsa, and as ahimsa is love, I can show them where they can concentrate all their energies with love as their weapon. Let them plead with the men who corrupt themselves and these women, let them open these men's eyes to the bestial, diabolical character of their offence, and wean them from their evil ways. Let them form a Ladies Volunteers League for the reclamation of fallen women and work through them. You have said in your address that Madaripur has been marked out by Government as the chief among revolutionary centres. Well, nothing short of a revolution is needed amongst the women of India to fight this evil and may Madaripur lay the foundation of that revolution.

Young India, 25-6-1925

296. SPEECH AT PUBLIC LIBRARY, MADARIPUR

June 13, 1925

In reply to the address Mahatmaji said that he was very much pleased with the address that was just presented to him and thanked the Hony. Secretary for it. He spoke very highly of the girl who took so much pains to beautify the nice bamboo casket with coloured khaddar and locally hand- spun yarn. From the synopsis supplied to him by the Secretary, he was glad to find that the Library possessed a good number of books and quite a large number of people assembled there every day to read the

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour in Bengal. Gandhiji referred to the fallen sisters, some of whom were spinning in a corner of the meeting.

books, magazines and newspapers available there. He was, however, anxious to know the exact nature of the benefit they derived by going through these books, etc. Be that as it may, Mahatmaji proceeded to say that libraries had now become indispensable in our daily life. These libraries, he said, had now become a part and parcel of our existence, and it gratified him to see that this library contained all sorts of newspapers and magazines. Mahatma Gandhi then spoke on the importance of public libraries, laying special stress on the selection of books.[1] Mahatmaji again thanked the Hony. Secretary for the address and the beautiful casket presented to him and then left the hall, the Secretary leading the way to the gate.[2]

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-6-1925

297. ABOUT "ANTYAJAS"

A gentleman has asked me some searching questions, which, being important, I give below :[3]

If the *Antyaja* members cannot stay where the other members of the conference lodge, certainly it cannot be said that untouchability has been eradicated. Our *Antyaja* brethren should have the liberty to do all that the other four castes can do. It is their duty to refuse to stay where the *Antyaja* members cannot stay.

SECOND QUESTION[4]

Just as members of other communities sit in one row with due regard for decorum, so should *Antyajas* be able to do as a matter of right. This volunteer did well when he politely got up and took another seat on being criticized by a *Vaishnava*. Good manners require that those who are in a large gathering should yield to the sentiments of the majority. If, in this particular incident, the correspondent yielded to the request of one so-litary *Vaishnava*, his conduct deserves especial commendation. It is not right for us to force others to conform to our views. Our dharma is to protect and serve *Antyajas*. We should, therefore, share such of their hardships as we cannot relieve.

[1] According to a report in *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 16-6-1925, Gandhiji said that "libraries should contain such books which could help the readers to become men."

[2] The Honorary Secretary requested Gandhiji to autograph the Visitors' Book. Gandhiji wrote : "I wish the institution every success."

[3] The questions are not translated here. The first question was whether at the time of the conference it was not the duty of the delegates to see that the *Antyaja* members stayed with them.

[4] It was about the seating at dinner of delegates who did not believe in untouchability.

THIRD QUESTION[1]

When at every step we find injustice being done, we may help in stopping as much of it as we can. However we act, we are bound to do injustice in one way or another and therefore, when we must make a choice from among several courses, we should choose that which would do the least injustice.

FOURTH QUESTION[2]

Anyone who thinks or acts unworthily will find some reason for doing so. If I did not visit the *Antyaja* localities, I would not be able to meet all of them. In a public meeting they can get no opportunity of pouring out their hearts. In visiting their localities there is also the desire to stress the need for internal reform among them. The aim behind admitting *Antyajas* to public meetings is to make people accept their presence. We cannot ignore either of these aims.

Wherever, therefore, a public meeting is held from which *Antyajas* are kept out, I should adopt it as a general rule not to address it. If the incident reported by this volunteer to have taken place at Amreli[3] did take place, it is a painful thing. The thought that *Antyajas* should be prevented from attending meetings in Gaekwar's Baroda State, and that too in Amreli, is unbearable. "If the sea catches fire, how can we put it out?" I, however, realize from the example of Amreli the need for greater vigilance on my part. May God help me.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-6-1925

[1] It was whether Gandhiji's staying, when on a tour of Saurashtra, in places to which *Antyajas* were not admitted, was not an injustice to those of them who wanted to see him but might not have been able to attend meetings addressed by him in their quarters.

[2] The correspondent had referred to Gandhiji's practice of visiting *Antyaja* quarters and said that this gave an excuse to the conservative elements in the local population to argue that *Antyajas* need not attend the general meeting. He had mentioned, as an example, the meeting at Amreli where this had happened.

[3] A town in Kathiawar where Gandhiji received a Municipal address on April 4, 1925, and presided over the meeting of the managing committee of the Kathiawar Political Conference

298. VIRTUES OF A VOLUNTEER

A volunteer writes as follows :[1]

It is true that I had once thought of fixing the rate of payment for voluntary workers. I had even discussed the matter with Vallabh-bhai[2] and others. But we could not come to any conclusion. We felt at that time, and do so even now, that the ideal of Bengal and Maharashtra is too high for Gujarat. We felt that it would be almost impossible to induce the workers already engaged to accept only ten rupees as honorarium. The situation, as we saw it, was that the country would then lose the services of most workers.

Rules can be framed only when certain ideals come to be generally accepted. No rules can be laid down so long as they remain unusual. Gujarat has accepted the ideal of poverty only recently. Maharastra and Bengal accepted it thirty years ago, or even earlier than that, and many young men were trained to live according to it. Very few institutions, therefore, can be run on the basis of the ideal of extreme poverty. In Gujarat we shall have to depend for the present on individual workers. A man who is sincere in his self-denial or ideal of self-control will not give up his way merely because others do not or cannot follow it. When we have a few Gujaratis who elect to live in extreme poverty and die in the same state, many more will come forward to adopt their way of life.

For the present we should accept poverty as the ideal to be reached and act accordingly as far as we can.

The most serious obstacle in our path which we have had to face was that of my illness, which prevented me from carrying out fully the experiment of poverty in my own life. I do not at all regard my present experiment as one of living in poverty. Men ascribe the same weaknesses to others which they themselves suffer from. One shivering with cold and covered in several garments believes that the whole world needs all that clothing. One who bathes in hot water pities anyone bathing in cold water. A person who cannot move about without a conveyance wishes that others should also have the same facility. I am in such a pitiable state.

I naturally feel that others should get what I eat. I travel by second class, so I hesitate to tell others firmly as I used to that they

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had complained that there were different rates of honorarium for voluntary workers in Bengal and Gujarat, and requested Gandhiji to stress the need for voluntary poverty for such workers and fix a uniform rate of honorarium.

[2] Vallabhbhai Patel (1875-1950); Congress leader of Gujarat; later became the first Deputy Prime Minister of free India

should travel third. I feel the need of certain other facilities which others go without. I bear this situation, but feel sore about it. I know that this is my ignorance, or whatever it is, this is the truth. However loudly a man may speak about the things which he himself does not or cannot act upon, he can have no influence on others.

This certainly does not mean that the progress of the ideal of poverty in Gujarat is dependent on me. What I have said above is addressed to my co-workers and is a confession that I myself am unable to lead Gujarat along this path.

What is true about me is also true about my creation—the Ashram. Its inmates strive to observe the vows of non-possession, etc. They are tried men and women who feel it an honour to live in poverty. My belief is that they do not merely pretend. Nevertheless, we have not been able to embrace simplicity and poverty to the degree that we would like to. In order, therefore, not to obstruct the progress of anyone, all have the liberty to make any experiment within their ability, with the result that there are some who cook their meals themselves. The minimum expenditure per head which anyone has been able to reach is seven rupees a month. The two or three unmarried men, who experiment in this way of living do so, we believe, at the cost of considerable suffering to themselves. Those who have not been able to go so far bear with their additional needs as something they cannot help and strive to give up as many of them as they can. It must, however, be admitted that we do much less than what we have accepted as the ideal. We have tried hard to cultivate the spirit of self-denial in the Ashram, but our efforts have not met with much success. This having been my experience, I do not have the courage to ask others to undertake far-reaching experiments.

Would it not be better, then, if I asked those who are not yet ready for the ideal of service to come forward only after they have trained themselves for it? This cannot always be done in the field of public work. Where the aim is simply to train the workers, this rule may be applied. But where the aim is the attainment of a particular object, we should get the work done without violating any moral principles through any workers we can get. One of our aims is to educate *Antyaja* children. It would be best if we could get teachers imbued with the spirit of self-sacrifice. If we do not get such teachers and if we have the funds, we may engage teachers of good character even by paying them handsomely. Similarly, it is our aim to propagate spinning and khadi. For this purpose, we may certainly employ workers of good character who cannot live in poverty, to the extent that our resources permit. In trying to gain everything, we run the risk of losing everything.

If we regard poverty as one of our ideals, it is my view, based on experience, that we shall reach it ultimately while working for the other aims.

The same argument holds good about tea, etc. It is not our aim at present to reform people's dietary habits. We should, therefore, certainly accept the services of a worker who takes tea.

We ought to exercise some discrimination about such matters. This world is a strange place. Some of us want to go through it without being caught up in all manner of enslaving concerns. To some swaraj means the rule of dharma—*Ramarajya*. They cannot tolerate violation of moral principles. For them, the path of swaraj is the path leading to *moksha*[1]. Swaraj is an important milestone on that path. They believe that without crossing it they cannot attain *moksha*. But everyone does not accept this meaning of swaraj. Even so, the swaraj they want is included in the conception of swaraj explained above and, therefore, the seekers after *moksha* are unable to forgo their co-operation. There are some others who are not interested in swaraj at all but to whom the spinning-wheel is everything. Though millionaires, they have accepted spinning as a sacred duty. They want to end the poverty of the country. Those seekers after *moksha* want to keep these last, too, with them, for the spinning-wheel is an essential part of the swaraj which they want. The seekers after *moksha* journey on, accepting whatever sacrifices people are ready to make, and thus lighten their burden in the initial stages of their journey.

I wish that no one should draw wrong conclusions from my reply. I should be very happy to get a band of workers dedicated to poverty, I know that the coming of swaraj would be very much hastened if we had such a band of workers. Individual workers should always bear this in mind. But at the same time, we should also remember our weaknesses and shortcomings. The path we follow is the path of love. We may be strict with ourselves, but should be correspondingly liberal in our attitude to others. That is the way of non-violence. Our sacrifice should never make us proud. We should not be critical of the lesser sacrifices of others. It happens sometimes that a man carrying a load of five maunds may yet be a miser about his strength while a man carrying one maund draws upon all the strength he has. Between the two, the honest worker is the one who carries one maund. Hence, instead of sitting in judgment over others, we should examine our own record, use all our strength to force sacrifices from ourselves and, banishing uncharitable thoughts, accept with love whatever sacrifices others make.

[1] Deliverance from phenomenal existence

There is one question in the foregoing letter which has already been answered. Whether a public worker is rich or poor, it is our duty to see that, when we go to the villages, we do not become a burden on the villagers. We should live so as to give them the least trouble. Whatever little inconvenience we cause to them should be compensated by our services. We may demonstrate to them the methods of spinning and carding and, doing that work ourselves, add to their stock of yarn and slivers. Even in this matter, however, there is no one rule which can be followed in all places, at all times and by all persons. The villagers should never get the impression that any worker has come into their midst to have a happy time or to enjoy a picnic. There can be no absolute rule in things like this. I see that the rule that we should not let the village people exceed a certain limit in their hospitality to us is being proved right by experience.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 14-6-1925

299. MY DUTY

One gentleman writes :[1]

We see in this letter, for one thing, an error which most people fall into. It illustrates our fond notion that big results can be achieved by preaching to people. Actually, it has been our experience through the ages that preaching has little effect. Hundreds of sadhus preach and hundreds of Brahmins recite daily from the *Gita*, the *Bhagavata*, etc. These things have practically no effect. It is true that preaching does seem to produce an effect something, but in actual fact the effect is the result of the actions of the man preaching and not of his preaching. If he preaches more than what he himself puts into practice, his preaching has no effect—such is the magic power of truth. However much we try to cover it up with a gloss of words, it cannot be hidden. If I myself do not possess the strength to climb the Himalayas, but advise others to climb them, my preaching will have no effect. If, on the contrary, I simply climb them without talking about it, hundreds will follow me. A man's practice is his best precept.

Moreover, one should be fit to preach. Though I myself refrain from violence towards animals, I must admit that I am not fit enough to dissuade others from it. I know that we have a duty towards animals, but cannot make others feel it. For that I need to have far greater purity, compassion and self-control in me. Without these, I cannot have deep spiritual knowledge and, in the absence of such knowledge,

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had asked Gandhiji to appeal to the people in Bengal to desist from cruelty to animals.

I cannot find the proper language.

Without this kind of knowledge one cannot have self-confidence. I do not believe that I have the strength to persuade others to refrain from violence towards animals.

But I believe in God. I intensely yearn to serve the animal world. Man can explain his suffering, and can even try to free himself from it. Animals cannot do this. Knowing, therefore, that we have a twofold duty towards them and wishing that I had the strength to serve them, I feel ashamed that I do not have such strength; but I blame God for my weakness. Why did He not give me this strength? I constantly wrestle with Him, entreat Him. But God's will is His; He pays attention to no one's wishes, why should He to mine? It may be that He will fulfil my wishes more readily than others'. I assure the reader that when He grants me the requisite strength, I will not wait to be reminded of my duty by this correspondent. Meanwhile, my *tapascharya* will continue. May it not be that as I go on with the work to which I have devoted myself, I shall by and by get the strength to serve the animal world? I am sure I am not a miser. I have surrendered all my powers to Lord Krishna. If, therefore, I ever acquire the strength to stop violence to animals, I will not let it remain unused.

Meanwhile, there is nothing else to do but to endure what we cannot cure.

Innocent people are harassed in many parts of the world, but we do not regard it as our duty to stop their ill-treatment. Realizing that it is beyond our power to do so, we merely pray every day for the prosperity of the world and do nothing more. It is because of this helplessness that we cultivate patriotism as one of the virtues. That patriotism, however, which is imbued with the sprit of religion does the world no harm. To seek the good of one's own country at the cost of the rest of the world is false patriotism. Just as service to one's country inspired by the spirit of religion is also service to humanity, so my service of human beings includes service to the animal-world. My reason for this belief is that my service to human beings is not incompatible with the welfare of the animal-world.

There is a false, outward show of religion in our country. We want to do impossible or futile acts of what seems to us kindness but we would not do what lies within our capacity. In the words of Dhira Bhagat[1], we steal an anvil and resolve to make amends by the gift of a needle. If we put the idea in the language of the Gita, we omit to do what little good we easily can by adhering to our own dharma and cherish ambitions of doing what falls within the sphere of others'

[1] A medieval poet of Gujarat

dharma, *with the result that we succeed in doing nothing.* It is to explain this that I have taken the trouble to answer the letter in question and explain why I do not at present engage myself in this highest dharma of ending cruelty to animals.

We are not creators of the universe. We are not omnipotent. If we put to good use the strength we possess, it will increase of itself and we shall not then, if we are honest, fail to use it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-6-1925

300. LETTER TO KHWAJA ABDUL MAJID

June 14, 1925

MY DEAR KHWAJA SAHEB,

Panditji[1] has written to me about you and sent me your letter to him. You must not saddle the whole responsibility on me. I am but a humble co-worker with you about the Jamia. You know better than I do what should be done. If you consider that consistently with the interest of the Jamia, you can and should contest the Council of State election, you should not hesitate to say and do as you feel. I have simply given my opinion of what I should do in your place. If you must consult friends, you should consult Hakimji, Dr. Ansari and if you don't mind, the Ali Brothers. As a matter of fact I am no judge in this matter. But you and the other friends must know the thing better than I ever can.

Whatever you do, let it be your decision and not mine, please.

My regards to you and Khurshed Begum.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

KHWAJA SAHEB ABDUL MAJID
JAMIA MILLIA
ALIGARH

From the original: A. M. Khwaja Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Motilal Nehru; *vide* also "Letter to Motilal Nehru", June 15, 1925.

301. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BARISAL[1]

June 14, 1925

In a joint reply Mr. Gandhi said that, when he visited the place last time, he found Aswini Kumar Dutta, though not in the best of health, yet, alive. He was an extraordinary man, with innumerable qualities, a man who founded a number of institutions. He suffered for the country and made wonderful sacrifices.

Mr. Gandhi thought it their bounden duty to perpetuate the memory of a man of that character, but he was sorry to hear that attempts made to collect money to perpetuate his memory had not been crowned with success. He had heard with regret that sufficient funds had not been collected. He recollected vividly all that he had seen at Barisal on the last occasion and regretted that the Ali Brothers were not with him this time. He was not satisfied with the charkhas, though he was pleased to hear from reports that yarns produced in the district were much better than those of other districts.

Mr Gandhi appealed to the people to follow the Belgaum Conrgess resolution and to show a brighter record in the near future. He was pleased to note that the question of untouchability was not so acute in Barisal as in Madras and that Hindu-Muslim relations had not reached a deplorable state.

The Hindu, 16-6-1925

302. REMARKS TO FATHER STRONG

[*June 14, 1925*]

Father Strong of the Oxford Mission had invited Gandhiji to call on them and inspect their weaving. He paid a flying visit, and Father Strong showed him over the weaving shed. Gandhiji said to him :

But this is all mill-yarn and if you use mill-yarns you do not benefit the millions, but the millionaires. Weaving cannot be a cottage industry for the millions. For them the only supplementary occupation can be spinning. According to Lord Curzon, the annual average income of an Indian was 30 rupees, according to our cal-culation it is 26. And if it is the average income of the masses exclu-ding the classes, the actual would be much less. Now if by spinning you can add 10 rupees to this, would it not be a fortune to them? You may not miss 5 rupees, but to those who have nothing, 5 rupees is a fortune.

Young India, 25-6-1925

[1] Gandhiji was presented with three addresses, by the Municipality, the Reception Committee and the Samaj Sevak Sangh. About 5,000 people attended the meeting.

303. LETTER TO RAJA MAHENDRA PRATAP

[On or before *June 15, 1925*]

I continue to hear from you from time to time. I know that we differ in our outlook upon life. I know there are as many minds as there are men. But as cold and heat cannot coexist in the same place at the same time and in the same circumstances, so can violence not coexist with non-violence at the same time and place and in the same circumstances.

Yours sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

304. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

BARISAL,
June 15, 1925

DEAR PANDITJI,

I was distressed to learn from your letter of relapse and Jawahar's fever. I hope both of you were free soon after your letter and that you are both now enjoying the bracing atmosphere.

I have wired[1] to you about Khwaja[2]. He is wrong in saddling me with responsibility. But if he must, what can I say but what I should do in his place? If the Jamia breeds intolerance, it is Khwaja's fault. He is its head. It was started by the best of Mussalmans. It may be reformed, if it has become bad, but in my opinion it must not be allowed to die for want of care. It must, therefore, claim Khawaja's undivided attention if it is to prosper. He is not a mere figure-head, but he is the soul of the movement. He is also administrator. I am therefore objecting not on the ground of principle but policy, that is, in the present case, more if possible even than principle. The only way Khwaja can seek election is by finding a substitute equally efficient for the college.

Moreover I am not the only party to advise. Khwaja has to consult Hakim Saheb and Dr. Ansari if he will not also consult the Ali Brothers. They are co-trustees with him. I hope you now appreciate my difficulty. I feel that I am helping the party with all my heart. I

[1] This telegram is not available.

[2] A. M. Khawaja of Jamia Millia Islamia, Aligarh

want to help it more for my own satisfaction than for that of friends much as I prize their satisfaction.

You may show this to Khwaja if it will help him to come to an independent decision.

Yours truly,

M. K. G.

[PS.]

I hope you received my letter in reply to your first letter.[1]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

305. LETTER TO ANTOINETTE MIRBEL

[As at] SABARMATI,

June 15, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter.[2] But I must not encourage you to undertake what is a long and expensive journey for the mere purpose of seeing me. Nor is it necessary for you to see me for your spiritual progress. It comes through service rendered in the name of God.[3]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MADAME ANTOINETTE MIRBEL
100 RUE BRULE MAISON
LILLE—NORD, FRANCE

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

[1] Gandhiji had written a postcard to Khwaja on May 23, but this is not available. Acknowledging it on May 25, Khwaja had written, *inter alia:* Pandit Motilal Nehru is pressing me to stand for the Council of States and I had asked for orders as I had written to him that, having placed my services at your disposal for the year, I shall do nothing without your permission. Panditji met me on his way to the hills and took upon himself to secure your permission. Still I have made no announcement without hearing from you.

[2] In her letter of January 26, 1925, the addressee had introduced herself as a married woman of 36, frustrated by the bigotry, "the narrowness of the spirit" of her religion and greatly impressed by Theosophist literature. Having waited 11 years to meet her "Master of Compassion", she longed to become Gandhiji's disciple and wanted Gandhiji to fix a date for her visit to the Ashram.

[3] To this Antoinette Mirbel replied on July 6. *Vide* "Letter to Antoinette Mirbel," 13-8-1925.

306. LETTER TO SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

June 15, 1925

MY DEAR SARAT BABU,

I am glad you at once understand that another meeting could only be treated as a counter demonstration. Non-violence is love. It works silently, almost secretly. Hence the saying: the right hand knoweth not what the left is giving. Love has no play as between friends and relatives. These love one another from selfishness, not from enlightenment. It has play only as between opponents so called. It demands, therefore, the highest charity and all the chivalry one is capable of showing towards those who oppose or persecute one.

In the light of the above please consider and answer the following charges they brought against you yesterday after you had left.[1]

I find it impossible to believe any of the charges. You need not answer them now. You may do so when I call on you. But if you would give a categorical answer in writing, you may do so.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

307. COMMENTS ON A LETTER [2]

[Before *June 16, 1925*]

I have much pleasure in printing the foregoing as received. Sardar Jogendra Singh has written from the depth of his heart. I value his advice. I have a vivid recollection of the conversation referred to by the Sardarji. He questions the advisability of my having entered into the agreement with the Swarajists.[3] Nine months have nearly gone by since it was entered into. But I have seen no reason to repent of the agreement. I have sacrificed no principle. The Congress is no preserve

[1] In the source here follows a sentence, obviously by Mahadev Desai, which reads: Here follow charges about hindering even constructive work, vilifying Congress members, collecting yarn without authority, refusal to deliver Congress furniture, etc.

[2] This was written before C. R. Das's death at Darjeeling, which took place on June 16, 1925. For the text of the letter by Sardar Jogendra Singh, *vide* Appendix I.

[3] For the text of the statement, *vide* "Joint Statement with Swaraj Party Leaders", November 6, 1924.

of any single individual. It is a democratic body with, in my opinion, the widest intelligent franchise the world has ever seen. For it gives statutory recognition to the dignity of labour. I wish it was the sole test. It accommodates all shades of opinion save violence and untruth. The Swarajists had a perfect right of enforcing their will by a battle of votes. I was unprepared for it; for I have known the voting power to demoralize the people, especially when the electorate has not been accustomed to use independent judgment. I was bound as a sane man to recognize the growing power of the Swarajists. They were willing to give the predominant place to the constructive programme. More could not be expected from them. If I had forced them to the vote, they might not only have made Council-entry the national programme, but they might, in the heat of battle, have even thrown overboard the constructive programme or relegated it to an insignificant place. So much for the principle.

In practice the agreement has largely laid to rest the acerbity between Pro-changers and No-changers. It has enabled both to work the joint programme in tolerable harmony. I witness the benefits of the pact in the South. I witness them in Bengal. I do not share the opinion that Swarajists have failed. I do not attach much importance to promises made at the hustings. It is the tacitly recognized law that like promises made at marriage, those made at election times must not be taken too seriously. Once grant the premise that Council-entry is not wholly bad, the Swarajists have nothing to be ashamed of about their achievements. They have spoken fearlessly in the Council halls; they have outvoted the Government; they have shown that the Government does not enjoy the confidence even of the electorate of its own creating; they have shown a discipline and solidarity hitherto unknown among Councillors and above all (for me at least), they have introduced khaddar in these forbidden places and have not been afraid to appear in their daily national costume which, at one time, as if we were ashamed or afraid of it, we wore only in our homes. Have not the proceedings of the Swarajists set the Government a-thinking? It is true that the latter has flouted public opinion. It is true that it has gone its way in the face of hostile votes. The Swarajists could not help it. If they had the power behind, they would have dislodged the Government and dared it to defy their vote. That power has still to come. It is coming slowly but surely. The Government knows that it dare not act against public opinion for all time. The Swarajists have made it feel more than before the weakness of its position. I have political differences with them, but their bravery, discipline, patriotism command my admiration. And I should do all in my power consistently with my principles to help and strengthen them. I remain

as the head of the Congress only so long as it pleases them to keep me there. Where I cannot help, I must resolutely refuse to hinder.

For me personally, non-violent non-co-operation is creed. I heartily endorse the Sardarji's statement that Non-co-operation is co-operation in essence and stronger than the might of armies. And if I could convert but the major part of educated India to my view, swaraj can be had without further effort. The conviction is daily growing stronger that there is no peace for India, and indeed for the world, save through non-violence. For me, therefore, the spinning-wheel is not merely a symbol of simplicity and economic freedom but it is also a symbol of peace. For if we, Hindus, Mussalmans, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis and Jews unite in achieving the universalization of the wheel in India, we shall not only have arrived at real unity and exclusion of foreign cloth, but we shall also have acquired self-confidence and organizing ability which render violence wholly unnecessary for regaining our freedom. Success of the charkha to me, therefore, means victory of non-violence, such as to serve as an object-lesson for the whole world.

The Sardarji advises the introduction of electric power in the villages side by side with the charkha. I fear he knows only a few villages of the Punjab. If he knew the life of all India, as I claim to do, he would not write of electricity with the assurance he does. In the present state of India, anything like a universal introduction of electric power in our villages is an utterly impracticable proposition. That time may come. But it will not before the charkha occupies an abiding place in every home. I am anxious, therefore, to avoid fogging the public by raising side or false issue and false hopes. Even if the charkha means no more than what the Sardarji says or implies, we must concentrate upon it and it alone till we have made it a success. And when through it we have made the lives of the villagers livable and have provided them with honourable and profitable work during the slack season, all the things that should be added to make them happier will follow as a matter of course. Let me assure the Sardarji that I am not against machinery as such. The charkha itself, for that matter, is machinery. But I am a deter-mined foe of all machinery that is designed for exploitation of people.

The Sardarji need not entertain any fear of Englishmen being excluded from the circle of unity. For it includes everyone who chooses to call himself an Indian, whether by birth or adoption. It includes all denominations and all races. Nor is the combination intended to be hostile to any nation or individuals, not even a Dyer. For it seeks to convert, not to destroy.

Young India, 25-6-1925

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM JOGENDRA SINGH

I feel diffident in writing to you about matters which have been engaging your mind and heart night and day all these years. Indeed, I confess I have hardly any claim to hazard an opinion except that I have been in close touch with life and few people in the political world know the villages, as I do, which make real India. A voice from the villages may be of some use to you in reaching realities.

I had the pleasure of meeting you, in Lahore, many years ago, with Mr. Padshah. We discussed the economics of charkha and power-driven machines. I disagreed with your view. I still feel that human nature in itself is not capable of working above and beyond the surrounding environment and the environment now embraces the whole world; none the less, I admit that if human nature could find illumination for a while, simple living and high thinking point the surest road to happiness. I also see that if men learn to co-operate against things which they dislike and accept self-suffering, they can enforce their will wielding compelling powers without incurring the risk of devastations which follow wars and revolutions.

God entrusted you with a message, a message of freedom based on goodwill, ensuring peace; saving civilization from committing *hara-kiri* by exploiting forces of nature without cultivating necessary discipline and moral restraint which from time immemorial has been held essential in the East. Give your message and time will carry it to the hearts of men. The love of your motherland calls you to apply your principles to the pressing problems of the day; you have been even persuaded to permit others to test a policy of pacts and compromises which appeal to the politicians more than the uncompromising pursuit of truth. They have been at it for a long while seeking to weld the people together by an agreed distribution of loaves and fishes and hoping to secure swaraj by constant obstruction in the Legislatures. Failure has been pursuing these efforts from the start. I wonder if the leaders are disenchanted. In any case pursue your own path, it is your dharma. You and they cannot walk the same road for long. The great work before you is to confine yourself to the essentials; prove that non-co-operation is co-operation in essence and stronger than the might of armies, that non-co-operation is co-operation of righteous men to overcome the unrighteous in a spirit of tolerance and goodwill, accepting self-suffering to awaken an understanding in the opponents. India needs it, but more than India Europe needs it, and indeed the whole world needs it. This alone can give the League of Nations strength to enforce its will. This alone can confer power on unarmed nations to assert their manhood and to keep their places in the sun. This

alone can dispel darkness which drives nations into wars, in search of supremacy at the sacrifice of protection and peace. The new world waits for this new message; proclaim it with all the power that God has given you.

The problem of food is as important as the problem of peace. When you placed charkha on the banner of your flag you raised the symbol of economic independence of nations great and small. Happiness is not to be found in wild pursuit of pleasure and possessions and unlimited production. These feed the flames of desire. Let each householder produce what he needs and then what he cannot produce let him procure from his neighbour in and outside the bounds of his own land. Let trade be an exchange of things, not wild exploitation by one nation of the other; an organized competition which must fail unless saved by a large-hearted readjustment of economic relations of the world. Let charkha be as a symbol for practical purposes; we must modernize the village bringing electric power to its service, to weave cloth, to pump water, to press oil and to do a thousand other services which some of our congested villages need to secure enough food and clothing. You cannot be altogether unaware that no country can entirely escape the influence of the new age; an age of magic and machinery, ruled by new inventions and human nature. You can place new inventions in the hands of the village worker in his own home, you can transfuse a divine sense of service to elevate human nature. You can inculcate ethics of work, love and labour by reviving the system of *kathas*, to keep alive ideals and traditions which have saved India through centuries of unfavouring circumstances.

The great problem you have set your hand to is to bring harmony between Hindus and Mussalmans. I am sure you will not exclude Englishmen from this great concord of hearts and minds. I fear you have been exploring the possibilities of pacts and political arrangement against your better reason and agreed to let your friends try the methods with which they are familiar. They have failed and you can now turn round and tell them to let you go your own way. You may not be followed today but truth shall conquer. Light up the flame of understanding by your example transfiguring unity by living it. No one can do more. Hindus and Mussalmans who have their eye on the main chance repeat the creed without conviction. They will never find unity. They want places of power. Leave them in the old familiar caves, dark with the darkness of ages. Turn to the villages, unity exists there already. Factors which work discords can be examined and removed—fetishes which have usurped the sanction of religion. Remove untouchability between Hindus and Mussalmans in the matter of food, give freedom to the Mussalmans to sacrifice cows if they so desire, open the Hindu temples to the Mussalmans to desecrate if they dare. When doors are flung open to them as friends allow them to carry their processions wherever they like and to cut the *peepul* trees. Let the Hindus not only tolerate but join these processions and let the Mussalmans also do the same—allow the Hindus to

blow their conches and unfurl their flag remembering in the words of Iqbal : "They are both companions on the long road and the night has overtaken them both."

Do this and rest will follow. This work has to be done in the villages, in the temples and the mosques and in the towns, wherever men of greater goodwill can be found. Let the order go forth that "We shall fight no more over these things and that Hindus shall open their temples and the Mussalmans their mosques and partake freely in each other's festivals."

The political problem is certainly important but more important is the serving of the needs of the people. There is a ploughing season and a sowing season and a harvesting season. A bad agriculturist ploughs his land badly, sows his seed and weeps when he turns to gather a harvest. A good agriculturist ploughs patiently and ploughs again and again and secures a rich harvest. We are still in the ploughing season. We need better education, more food, better houses and a larger coming together of races and creeds. The true worker never hurries. Modern methods made fully subservient to man and kept under control can add greatly to the production of the soil and the making of a better man morally and physically. Do something towards this. Make electric power the servant of man in the hearth and home and the fields outside, helping every man to attain his manhood. Preach your doctrine of love and self-determination and freedom. Man is the master of his own destiny and in his realization all immediate problems will find an easy solution. I have made suggestions not that I know more but only because it may help you to know what people need. Politics often have a trick of wrapping truth in a veil of mystery and giving to what is temporary and unimportant preference over the permanent and deeply important.

Young India, 25-6-1925

1. TELEGRAM TO MAHOMED ALI

KHULNA,
[*June 17, 1925*]

REGARDING DELHI TROUBLE[1] WANT SAY NOTHING ON MERITS. HAVE FULLEST FAITH YOUR INTEGRITY AND GODLINESS. MAY HE GUIDE US ALL.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 10644

2. TELEGRAM TO BASANTI DEVI DAS[2]

[KHULNA,
June 17, 1925]

BASANTI DEVI DAS
STEPASIDE
DARJEELING

MY HEART WITH YOU. MAY GOD BLESS YOU. EXPECT YOU BE BRAVE. BABY[3] MUST NOT OVERGRIEVE. REACHING CALCUTTA EVENING.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 10644

3. TELEGRAM TO SATCOURIPATI ROY

[KHULNA,
June 17, 1925]

UNTHINKABLE BUT GOD IS GREAT. MISSING FIRST TRAIN KEEP ESSENTIAL ENGAGEMENTS. LEAVING NOON. PRAY AWAIT ARRIVAL FINAL FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS. THINK BODY SHOULD BE RECEIVED RUSSA ROAD UNLESS FRIENDS HAVE VALID REASONS CONTRARY. NATION'S WORK MUST NOT STOP BUT ADVANCE DOUBLE SPEED HIS GREAT SPIRIT NOBLE EXAMPLE GUIDING US. HOPE PARTY STRIF WILL BE HUSHE AND ALL WILL HEARTILY JOIN DO HONOUR

[1] The reference is not clear.

[2] This and the telegrams that follow were sent on the passing away of C. R. Das on June 16, at Darjeeling. Gandhiji received the news at Khulna on the following day.

[3] Mona Das

MEMORY THIS IDOL OF BENGAL AND ONE OF GREATEST OF INDIA'S SERVANTS. CANCELLING ASSAM TOUR.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 10644

4. TELEGRAM TO URMILA DEVI

[KHULNA,
June 17, 1925]

URMILA DEVI

NATURAL GRIEVE OVER DEATH LOVED ONES. BRAVE REMAIN UNPERTURBED. I WANT YOU BE BRAVE AND MAKE EVERY MAN YOUR BLOOD BROTHER. REACHING EVENING.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 10644

5. TELEGRAM TO MONA DAS

[KHULNA,
June 17, 1925]

MONA

BE TRUE TO FATHER AND BE BRAVE FACE IRREPARABLE LOSS, MAY GOD COMFORT YOU. EXPECT YOU CONSOLE BHOMBLE AND SUJATA. REACHING EVENING.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 10644

6. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

[KHULNA,
June 17, 1925]

VALLABHBHAI PATEL

DESHBANDHU DIED HEART FAILURE DARJEELING. REMAINS REACHING CALCUTTA TOMORROW. AM PROCEEDING THERE TODAY. OBSERVE MOURNING BEFITTING OCCASION INVITE ALL PARTIES.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 10644

7. TELEGRAM TO SAROJINI NAIDU

[KHULNA,
June 17, 1925]

SAROJINI NAIDU

HYDERABAD

DESHBANDHU DIED YESTERDAY DARJEELING. WHO CAN KNOW OR FRUSTRATE GOD'S PURPOSE. YOU MUST NOT DISTURB REST IF YOU WILL CONTRIBUTE FULL SHARE MAKING UP LOSS ACCORDING OUR CAPACITY.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 10644

8. TELEGRAM TO SHAUKAT ALI [1]

[KHULNA,
June, 17, 1925]

SHAUKAT ALI

DESHBANDHU GONE. GOD'S WILL BE DONE. HE ALONE IS GREAT.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 10644

9. TELEGRAM TO SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, VYKOM[2]

June 17, 1925

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM

VYKOM

I HEAR PROHIBITION ORDERS WITHDRAWN. MY CONGRATULATIONS. HOPE NO OFFENSIVE DEMONSTRATION AND NO ACT CALCULATED UNNECESSARILY IRRITATE ORTHODOXY.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 10644

[1] At the end of this telegram Gandhiji wrote : Repeat to Mahomed Ali and add "inform Maulana Abul Kalam".

[2] In March 1925, Gandhiji went on a tour of Kerala, and held discussion with local leaders like K. Kelappan Nair, and the Commissioner of Police, Trivandrum— W. H. Pitt, with whom he later maintained contact in regard to the problem; *vide* "Letter to W. H. Pitt", 18-3-1925. Gandhiji released this correspondence to the Press on March 24, stating that the "agreement" embodied therein marked some progress in the movement for the reform.

10. AN APPEAL[1]

June 17, 1925

DEAR COUNTRYMEN,

The nation is in mourning for Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das. And yet why should we mourn? For though Deshbandhu is dead, he shall live in us. We must take up the work at the point he has left it. Our first lesson must commence with rendering the honours that are due to the dead. Let our affection be not blind but intelligent.

When the remains reach the Sealdah station, there is likely to be a great rush of people. If we are to satisfy the desire of everyone to pay his or her respect to the remains, the following rules must be observed :

1. There must be no shouting.
2. There must be no rush towards the carriage. People should stand where they find themselves and must not push their way through the crowd.
3. A clear way must be kept for the coffin-bearers to pass.
4. There should be no one in front save the authorized band of *Kirtankars* and others. Those who wish to take part in the procession will kindly take up the rear.

They must not break through the line.

5. At the burning ghat, there should be no rush made towards the funeral pyre. It will not be possible to expose the body to view as it is feared that, three days having already elapsed, it must be in a state of decomposition.
6. Please remember that respect for the memory of the deceased patriot demands not any outward temporary show of affection, but an inward determination to deserve heritage the Deshbandhu has left us.

I am your servant,

M. K. GANDHI

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 19-6-1925

11. THE GREAT BEREAVEMENT

CALCUTTA,

June 17, 1925

When the heart feels a deep cut, the pen refuses to move. I am too much in the centre of grief to be able to send much for the

[1] This was distributed in the form of leaflet.

readers of *Young India* across the wire. The five days of communion with the great patriot which I had at Darjeeling brought us nearer to each other than we ever were before. I realized not only how great Deshbandhu was, but also how good he was. India has lost a jewel. But we must regain it by gaining swaraj.

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 18-6-1925

12. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

Wednesday, June 17, 1925

CHI. RAMDAS,

I am waiting for a train at Khulna. On reaching Khulna from Barisal by steamer I received a telegram that Deshbandhu Das[1] was no more. I am deeply shocked; because we had come very close at Darjeeling[2]. My anguish has a selfish cause: But it is there and I am not able to get over it. I have sent a few telegrams.[3] After debating whether I should eat or fast I came to the conclusion that it would be proper to eat. And then of course there was the meeting here. I attended it.[4] But for that meeting I would have gone straight to Calcutta. At the meeting I broke down although I did my best not to. After that I had no desire left to write. So I span. Spinning brought comfort. Then I bathed and ate. Then the post was brought. It included your letter and many others. I went through them. And now I have sat down to write to you, because this is the most convenient time.

It means a lot to me that you have started taking interest in the work there. May that interest continue. Try to read the *Gita* occasionally, and if possible regularly. Even if you read only two verses you must read them along with the meaning.

Your report about Kundla is interesting. If you overcome your fear, you will see that you have a lot of strength.

[1] Chitta Ranjan Das had passed away at Darjeeling on June 16, 1925.

[2] Where Gandhiji had staved with C. R. Das from June 3 to June 6. 1925; *vide* "At Darjeeling", 10-7-1925.

[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Basanti Devi Das", 17-6-1925, "Telegram Satcouripati Roy", 17-6-1925, "Telegram to Urmila Devi", 17-6-1925, "Telegram to Mona Das", 17-6-1925, "Telegram to Vallabhbhai Patel", 17-6-1925, "Telegram to Sarojini Naidu", 17-6-1925 and "Telegram Shaukat Ali", 17-6-1925.

[4] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Khulna", 17-6-1925.

In view of the above circumstances you may take it that I shall be in Calcutta for the time being. I shall write more from there.

Only this much for now.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]
Surendra's letter is worth reading. I am sending it to you. You may tear it up after reading.

From the Gujarati original: Ramdas Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

13. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KHULNA[1]

June 17, 1925

You have heard from Acharya Ray what a terrible blow has befallen us, but I know that if we are true servants of the country, no blow, however great, will break our spirit. I was faced with a conflict of duties this morning as soon as the sad news was broken to me. It was my duty to leave for Calcutta by the first train available. It was also my duty to go through the programme you had fixed up for me. The spirit of service in me prompted me to finish the work here, but whilst I have preferred to stop here, to meet those who have come from distant places, I shall, instead of my usual speech on Congress work, devote it to the memory of the departed Deshbandhu. I am sure that my staying here to go through the programme in preference to running up to Calcutta will please his soul.

Mr. Das was one of the greatest of men.[2] I have had the privilege of knowing him for the last six years, and, when I parted from him only a few days ago at Darjeeling, I said to a friend that the closer I came to him the more I came to love him. I saw during my brief stay at Darjeeling that no thought but that of the welfare of India occupied his mind. He dreamed and thought and talked of the freedom of India and of nothing else and I may tell you that, until the moment I took leave of him in Darjeeling, he was asking me to stop longer in Bengal to bring the different parties together, so that the energies of all may be concentrated on one

[1] Seven addresses were presented to Gandhiji on behalf of the local bodies, the Municipality, the District Board and the People's Association. Sir P. C. Ray announced the news of the death of C. R. Das.

[2] The newspaper reports that Gandhiji broke down and was unable to proceed for a minute or two.

purpose throughout my tour in Bengal.

Those who had differences with him, those who bitterly criticized him did not hesitate to admit that no other man could take his place in Bengal. He was fearless. He was brave. His love for the young men of Bengal was boundless. There is not a young man but has told me that never had his request to Mr. Das for help gone in vain. He earned lakhs and gave away lakhs to the young men of Bengal. His sacrifice was matchless. And who am I to talk of his great intellect and his statesmanship?

On more than one occasion at Darjeeling, he told me that the freedom of India depends on non-violence and truth. The Hindus and Mussalmans of India should know that his heart knew no difference between the Hindus and the Mussalmans. I would like to tell all Englishmen in India that he bore no ill will to them. "If I live I live for swaraj; if I die I die for swaraj," that was his vow to his motherland.

What shall we do to perpetuate his memory? It is easy to shed tears, but no tears can help us or his nearest and dearest. Only if everyone of us, Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis and Christians, all who call themselves Indians, pledge ourselves to do the work in which he lived, moved and had his being, shall we have done something. We are all believers in God. We should know that the body is ever perishing. The soul is imperishable. The body that held Mr. Das has perished, but his soul will never perish, not only the soul, but even the name of him who had served and sacrificed so much will remain immortal and every one, young and old, who follow his example to ever so little an extent will help to perpetuate his memory. We have none of us his intellect, but we can imitate the spirit in which he served the motherland.

Mr. Das tried to learn spinning in Patna, and in Darjeeling I gave him spinning lessons and he promised me that he would try to learn spinning and spin so long as his body allowed. He had converted his Darjeeling House into a spinning club. His good wife pledged herself to spin at least for half an hour every day, excepting when she was ill, and his daughter who was there, his sister and sister's daughter were all regularly spinning. Often would he say to me : 'I think it is essential to go to the Councils, but spinning is equally essential and not only is it essential, it is impossible to make Council work effective without spinning.'

It is not for me to say how much he had done to bring the Hindus and Mussalmans together; and as to his love for the untouchables, I need only tell you what I heard last night from a *Namasudra* leader at Barisal. He said that the first to help him with

money was Mr. Das and the next was Dr. Ray. You cannot all go to the Councils, but you can do all the three things that were dear to him.

I regard myself as a loyal servant of India and a loyal brother and colleague of the late Mr. Das and as such I publicly declare that I shall, consistently with my principle, try to give hence-forward, if it is possible, even more help to the followers of Mr. Das than I have up to now done in their Council programme. I pray to God that He may ever keep me from doing or speaking aught calculated to injure his work. Our differences regarding the Council-entry remained, but our hearts were one. Differences in political methods will remain until the end of time, but they should never separate people or make of them mutual enemies. The same love of the motherland which prompted me to do one thing prompted him to do something else and such honest difference means no detriment to the cause of the country. Not differences in methods, but insincerity is the curse.

During my stay at Darjeeling, I could see that Mr. Das's tenderness towards his political opponents was every day increasing, but I must not attempt to describe those sacred memories. Mr. Das was one of the jewels among the servants of the country. His service and his sacrifice were matchless. May their memory ever remain with us and may his example inspire us to noble efforts! Our way is long and dreary and nothing will stand us in good stead as our own reliance on ourselves. Self-reliance was Mr. Das's watchword and may it long inspire us! May his soul rest in peace!

The Hindu, 18-6-1925

14. NOTES

SPINNING IN DARJEELING

But for the presence of Deshbandhu Das in Darjeeling, I hardly think I would have gone there though the sight of the snowy range was a temptation. I had thought that, for me, to deliver the message of the charkha to the fashionable people of Darjeeling would be simple folly. My fear was wholly unjustified. I was privileged to address a meeting of ladies who listened to the message of the wheel with sympathy. Mrs. Blair, the late W. C. Bonnerjee's daughter, was to start a spinning class for the fashionable ladies. I was privileged, too, to deliver my message to a small meeting of missionaries. Of this, however, perhaps more later. Nor did I know that I should have the good fortune to see so

many Nepali, Bhutia and other people. They evinced the greatest interest in the massage. But my keenest joy was to see Shrimati Basanti Devi Das learning spinning and taking a vow religiously to spin every day for at least half an hour except in cases of illness. Her daughter knew it already. But she had neglected. it. She has now returned to it and added spinning by the *takli* which she picked in ten minutes. Shrimati Urmila Devi and her children have been spinning regularly for some time now. And Deshbandhu himself took lessons on the *takli.* But he finds spinning harder than giving defeats to the Government or winning cases for clients. "My husband can hardly turn the key of his box right; I have always to help him", pleaded Basanti Devi on behalf of her husband. "You can, therefore, understand why it is so difficult for him to learn spinning." But Deshbandhu has assured me that he is going to insist on learning spinning. He had lessons in spinning at the wheel in Patna. They were interrupted by his illness. He told me that he thoroughly believed in the charkha and wanted to help it in every way possible. It was a perfect pleasure to me to see the whole house-hold of the Mayor of Calcutta plying the charkha in fashionable Darjeeling creating a charkha atmosphere there. Needless to say, they were all dressed in khaddar. For Deshbandhu khaddar is not ceremonial wear. It is habitual with him. He tells me it would be difficult for him to revert to the foreign or mill-made cloth even if he wished to.[1]

WANTED A SECRETARY

Those who are interested in cow-protection will not, I hope, think that I am neglecting the trust imposed upon me. At the time of accepting it, I warned the members of the Committee that I should be perfectly useless for any work for the Association if I did not succeed in finding a good secretary. I regret to inform them, and others interested, that I have as yet failed to find one to my satisfaction. He must have a competent knowledge of English and at least a working knowledge of Hindustani. He should be a whole-time worker with no other calls upon his time. He must be a lover of the cow and have faith in the programme sketched by the Association to achieve its object. He must have a pure character and a healthy body. He will be paid according to his needs so long as they are not extraordinary. Lastly, he must be a student capable of application; for he will be expected to study the literature connected with cow-protection. Will those who think they possess

[1] Here *Young India* has the following note: Since the above was set in type, we have received the sad news of the passing away of the Deshbandhu on Tuesday, at 5.30 p. m. at Darjeeling, owing to heart-failure. Asstt. Editor, *Y.I.*

the foregoing qualifications please write to me giving full particulars including the salary required?

TILAK SWARAJ FUND

What use has been made of this fund is a question that still continues to worry people. A Punjabi correspondent says that, in the course of his khaddar tour, he finds people inquiring about the disposal of the fund. I have repeatedly stated in these columns that full and certified balance-sheets have been published from time to time. Let the public also realize that the fund was distributed among twenty-one provinces and that several lacs were earmarked. Not only has the A.I.C.C. published an all-India balance-sheet, but the Provinces too, have done likewise. Though there has been here and there misapplication of the funds and even defalcation, on the whole I am satisfied that the money has been spent for the purpose intended. Any patient student of Congress affairs can, whenever he wishes, study the printed figures and find out for himself how the money was used.

WHAT OF PURSES?

The same Punjabi correspondent asks how the purses presented to me at the different places are utilized. As a rule, the money is left at the places where it is given with instructions for its use in the khaddar propaganda. Only, where I find no one whom I want to entrust with the use of the money given, I keep it with me and use it through the Ashram for khaddar propaganda. Where the money is earmarked, naturally, I have nothing to do but to hand the contents for the earmarked purpose to the persons concerned.

HAS NO USE NOW

The correspondent writes :

> During my hawking tours I find people saying: "As the Congress is on the wane, why are you giving yourself the useless trouble of hawking khaddar? When the Congress becomes strong again, we will buy khaddar; now we wear foreign cloth. Let us give ourselves the pleasure of using it for the time-being." Thus talked to me several pleaders. This is one side of the picture. I met a pleader who bought some himself and took us to people and promised to hawk khaddar twice every week among all sorts of people.

The instances of steady work can be multiplied. But I have never yet met anyone to say what these pleader friends in the Punjab are reported to have said. Surely, they do not need to be told that khaddar is not for temporary use. It is a permanent article of wear as wheat and rice are permanent article of food. And they

could only have been joking when they said that they wanted the pleasure of wearing foreign cloth. Is there pleasure in wearing it? Is it not the same thing as saying that there is pleasure in slavery? It was not an uncommon experience, when slavery was abolished in the Southern States, to find slaves refusing freedom; slavery had become second nature with them.

'FEED THE MILLIONS'

A member of the 49 Bengal Regiment writes:

> It is admitted on all hands that you are the greatest leader of the world. What is the greatest leader for? The greatest leader is for providing the starving millions of India! Isn't it? So long as you are not able to feed and clothe the thirty-two crores of Indians, you can't expect swaraj. I can give you swaraj in no time, if you can give me one hundred crores of rupees. You speak of swaraj, you speak of charkha, etc., but you do not speak of feeding the starving people. The man who does not get proper food, cannot take to charkha. First of all "belly" then cloth. I can remain stark naked for a day, but I cannot remain without food even for a couple of hours. If you can feed and give money to the Indians, the Indian masses will at once respond to your call, otherwise not.

In the first place, let me repudiate the "greatest man" title though I do not need to do it, as I have never claimed or accepted it. Daily do I feel both my littleness and helplessness. I have never yet realized my greatness. But if 'providing the starving millions' can make me great, I am on the way to greatness. For I claim nothing less for my prescription, the charkha. It is designed to feed and clothe the starving millions. Clothing, I admit, is a secondary consideration. But the charkha is intended to feed first and then to clothe. I have proposed to give not merely one hundred crores of rupees once for all. My proposal is to give sixty crores at least every year. I gladly accept the formula that the famishing masses will respond to the call only of those who give them food and money. My gift includes both. But who will bell the cat? A physician can prescribe an infallible remedy, he cannot compel the patient to adopt it. The disease of the masses is not want of money so much as it is want of work. Labour is money. He who provides dignified labour for the millions in their cottages, provides food and clothing or, which is the same thing, money. The charkha provides such labour. Till a better substituted is found, it must, therefore, hold the field.

NATIONALISM *V.* INTERNATIONALISM

A gentleman met me in Darjeeling and related to me the story of a nurse who preferred not to serve her nation to the injury

of others. The story was, I could see at once, related for my edification. I gently explained to the friend that evidently he had not followed my writings of doings, though he claimed to have done so. I told him, too, that my patriotism was not narrow, and that, it included not merely the welfare of India but the whole world. I told him further, that being a humble man knowing my own limitations, I was satisfied with the service of my own country, taking care at the same time that I did nothing with the intention of injuring another country. In my opinion, it is impossible for one to be internationalist without being a nationalist. Internationalism is possible only when nationalism becomes a fact, i.e., when peoples belonging to different countries have organized themselves and are able to act as one man. It is not nationalism that is evil, it is the narrowness, selfishness, exclusiveness which is the bane of modern nations which is evil. Each wants to profit at the expense of and rise on the ruin of the other. Indian nationalism has, I hope, struck a different path. It wants to organize itself or to find full self-expression for the benefit and service of humanity at large. Anyway, there is no uncertainty about my patriotism or nationalism. God having cast my lot in the midst of the people of India, I should be untrue to my Maker if I failed to serve them. If I do not know how to serve them, I shall never know how to serve humanity. And cannot possibly go wrong so long as I do not harm other nations in the act of serving my country.

HINDI IN BENGAL

Some lovers of Hindi are not satisfied that I insist on speaking in Hindi to the audiences in Bengal and that I plead for it in season and out of season at public meetings. By the permission and kindness of the member who were all English scholars, I spoke, even to the select audience I had at the Bengal Sahitya Parishad's meeting, in Hindi. But these lovers of Hindi would have me to open Hindi classes in Bengal and carry on propaganda as I was instrumental in doing in the Southern Presidency. I am sorry I cannot respond. I have come to the limit of my resources. Moreover, there is a large Hindi-knowing population in Calcutta. There are even Hindi newspapers published in that city of palaces. It is, therefore, up to the lovers of Hindi in Calcutta to shoulder the burden. They have both money and scholars. It is possible for them to have Hindi classes in all the chief centres of Bengal. My sympathy would naturally be with any such movement. But the organization must be conducted by local enthusiasts. If the South and Bengal can be induced to take up Hindi, the question of a

common medium for all India is easily solved. Nowhere else have I ever found any difficulty in making myself understood through my broken Hindi or Hindustani.

TAMILNAD

The reader will recall that, in the list of Congress membership under the new franchise, Tamilnad figures were given in a lump at 1,400. I have now received a wire from the Secretary saying that, till the end of May, there were 989 enrolled as A class and 802 as B class members. Encouraging as this is, Tamilnad can easily do much better.

V. V. S. IYER

The readers of *Young India* will share my regret over the death by drowning of Sjt. V. V. S. Iyer[1]. I had the pleasure of meeting him in London years ago. He was then a fierce anarchist. But he gradually mellowed down. The fire of patriotism burnt none the less brightly in him. He was a staunch Non-co-operator and, latterly, he had intended to devote himself entirely to conducting the Shermadevi Gurukul. I always regarded him as a fine, sincere and persevering servant of the nation. May his soul rest in peace.

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15. ARE WE READY?

Mr. Bharucha[2] has made a public appeal to me to call an all-parties conference again because, in his opinion, time is now favourable for it. Deshbandhu Das has placed in my hands a copy of *The Mahratta* in which also I observe a similar appeal. I am aware that Sarojini Devi holds similar views. But my position is much the same on this suggestion as on that of calling an A.I.C.C. meeting. If I get a requisition, say from Mr. Jinnah, Sir Mohamad Shafi, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji, Lala Lajpat Rai, Mr. Srinivasa Sastri, Sir Surendra Nath, the orthodox non-Brahmin leaders, Mr. C. Y. Chintamani[3], Dr. Sapru[4] and others, I shall gladly the conference. Personally, I think that we are not more ready today for coming together than we were in Delhi. If it is

[1] Barrister-at-law, Tamil scholar; translated the *Kural* into English; wrote commentary on *Kamba Ramayanam*, etc.

[2] B. F. Bharucha

[3] 1880-1941; editor of *The Leader*, English daily from Allahabad

[4] Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru (1875-1949); eminent lawyer, constitutionalist and politician; Law Member in Viceroy's Council, 1920-22; President of the Liberal Federation in 1923 and 1927

about swaraj that we are to meet, we shall quarrels over the Hindu-Muslim question. If it is about getting all parties on the Congress platform, then the A.I.C.C. is the proper body first to consider or devise new plans. For unless the present Congressmen are fairly united in the desire and the plan of execution, a general conference must prove futile. If it is the spinning franchise alone that stands in the way, the method is simpler still. The original party to the franchise pact should first consider the suggestion to revise it. They are the Swaraj Party—not the individual Swarajists—and myself. The pact was between the Party and myself, representing no party but still representing an indefinite number of men holding my views. I want to do nothing in the Congress without the consent of the Swaraj Party. If that party, therefore, desires a revision of the franchise, it can have it even now for the asking, so far as I am concerned. And when the party has made up its mind, the A.I.C.C. meeting can be called to give effect to its desires. I regard myself as nothing in the Congress. I admit that I do not carry educated India with me in my views on spinning as on several other things. Educated Indians brought the Congress into being and they must dominate and shape its policy. I feel that I represent the mass-mind however inadequately it may be. But I want to act upon the Congress only indirectly by carrying conviction to individuals by argument and facts,—not by taking votes which might be given for considerations not based on merits. So long as the masses do not think for themselves and are likely to be swayed by those who, for the time being, exercise influence on them, it will be wrong to use their votes. If, therefore, the Swaraj Party, which undoubtedly represents the bulk of educated India, desires to reject the spinning franchise, it can do so today without any opposition from me. Only, then it will be improper to expect me to lead the Congress. I am unfit just now for any other work but that of the triple constructive programme. For me success in it is swaraj, and swaraj without it is an impossibility. I must, therefore, make room for those who take what has been called a broader view of things.

Mr. Deshmukh is said to have suggested that I should retire from public life if I cannot revise my views. I have not seen his Satara address. But if he has said so, I think he had a perfect right to do so. I would say the same thing of one who, I may think, was, by his activity, doing harm to the country. Did not all non-co-operators call upon councillors to resign? Mr. Deshmukh may be wrong, but his right to correct a public man may not be questioned; nor has he said anything strange or new. Indeed, there was a time when I seriously thought of retiring, but I found that it

was no use. I believe with Maulana Mahomed Ali that a public man may not give up his trust so long as he believes in it. He must be relieved of it. He said that if I retired prematurely I would be putting an undue strain upon political opponents and on the country. I must cease to be popular before I could retire in spite of confidence in my message. And even then, it often becomes a point of extreme delicacy to decide between persistence and withdrawal. The fact is, retirement at the bidding of another from service voluntarily taken up is not so simple as it may appear. But Mr. Deshmukh has courageously paved the way for the public to think out the question.Those who would have me to leave the field should at least create public opinion against my methods and views which they regard as unsound. My mahatmaship is no passport for the currency of bad coin.

But the charkha is no bad coin for me. I have faith in it to defend it against the whole world. I want freedom for all. I can think of it only in non-violent terms. If we are to get our freedom by strictly non-violent means, we can get it only through the charkha, which necessarily includes Hindu-Muslim unity, removal of untouchability and several other things which I need not mention here. In my opinion, the Congress will commit a terrible mistake if it abolishes the franchise. But my belief in democracy is worth nothing if it does not include the right to commit even terrible mistakes. I, therefore, know that my belief, though right in my estimation, must be rejected if the others do not feel it within them. I want a living faith in the charkha and consequent active co-operation. Mere mechanical assent without corresponding action can do no good to anybody. And in coming to a conclusion on the subject, my personality must be dismissed from consideration. No man is indispensable for the evolution of this great and ancient land of dharma. Let India live, though a hundred Gandhis have to perish.

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16. A DOMESTIC CHAPTER

A *vakil* from Layallpur sends the following letter addressed to the Editor, *Young India :*

> About three or four years ago, a company, “All-India Stores Ltd.”, was started at Calcutta with Mr. H. M. Gandhi, son of our Mahatmaji, as one of the directors, as advertised by a representative of the said company at Rawalpindi. A client of mine was persuaded to pay certain sums to the said representative and also to the company in pursuance of his having

been so persuaded to become a shareholder. I have written to the known and notified address, 22 Amratalla Street, Calcutta, of the company and so has my client. My client fears that perhaps it was a bogus affair and he has been done out of his money. In the interests of your (Mahatma's) good name and the economic welfare of this poor country, I fondly hope and wish and even pray, my client's fears may be unfounded. The post office has returned all our letters back through the Dead Letter Office. So, some ground at least exists for my client's suspecting that the company is no more. Is it a fact that Mahatmaji's son was a Director in it, and is it a fact that such a company came into being and is still existing, and where?

Please excuse my writing to you about it. My client who is a Mohammedan gentleman and whose respect for Mahatmaji led him to become a shareholder in the company, wants to verify these facts. Hence the query.

But for some important principles involved in the letter, I would have satisfied myself with a private reply, though the letter is meant for publication. It was necessary to publish it also, because it is highlylikely that many shareholders feel like the *vakil's* client. They too should have such satisfaction as I could render to them. I do indeed happen to be the father of Harilal M. Gandhi. He is my eldest boy, is over 36 years old and is father of four children, the eldest being 19 years old. His ideals and mine having been discovered over fifteen years ago to be different, he has been having separately from me and, since 1915 has not been supported by or through me. It has been my invariable rule to regard my boys as my friends and equals as soon as they completed their sixteen years. The tremendous changes that my outer life has undergone from time to time were bound to leave their impress on my immediate surroundings,—especially on my children. Harilal who was witness to all the changes, being old enough to understand them, was naturally influenced by the Western veneer that my life at one time did have. His commercial undertakings were totally independent of me. Could I have influenced him, he would have been found associated with me in my several public activities and earning, at the same time, a decent livelihood. But he chose, as he had every right to do, a different and independent path. He was and is still ambitious. He wants to become rich and that too, easily. Possibly he has a grievance against me that, when it was open to me to do so, I did not equip him and my other children for careers that lead to wealth and fame that wealth brings. He started the Stores in question without any the least assistance of any kind whatsoever from me. I did not lend my name to them. I never recommended his enterprise to

anybody either privately or openly. Those who helped him did so on the merits of the enterprise. No doubt his sonship must have helped him. As long as the world lasts, and in spite of its protest against *varnashrama*, it will give credit to heredity. Being my son, he must be good and straight, cautious in his pecuniary affairs and as reliable as his father. So must many have argued. They have my sympathy, but beyond that nothing more. I must disclaim all responsibility, moral or otherwise, for the doings of even those who are nearest and dearest to me except those wherein they act with me or, I permit them to act in my name or with my certificate. I have enough to be responsible for myself. I alone know my sorrows and my troubles in the course of the eternal duel going on within me and which admits of no truce. I ask the reader to believe me when I say that it taxes all my energy, and if I feel as a rule stronger for the combat, it is only because I remain wide awake. I make the reader a present of the thought that even my swaraj activity has a bearing on that duel. It is for the supreme satisfaction of my soul that I engage in it. "This is selfishness double distilled," said a friend once to me. I quickly agreed with him.

I do not know Harilal's affairs. He meets me occasionally, but I never pry into his affairs. I do not know that he is a Director in his Company. I do not know how his affairs stand at present, except that they are in a bad way. If he is honest, limited or unlimited though his Stores were, he will not rest till he has paid all the creditors in full. That is my view of honest trade. But he may hold different views and seek shelter under the law of insolvency. Sufficient for me to assure the public that nothing crooked will have countenance from me. For me, the law of satyagraha, the law of love, is an eternal principle. I co-operate with all that is good. I desire to non-co-operate with all that is evil,—whether it is associated with my wife, son or myself. I have no desire to shield any of the two. I would like the world to know the whole of the evil in us. And in so far as I can, with decency, I let the world into all the domestic secrets so-called. I never make the slightest attempt to hide them, for I know that concealment can only hurt us.

There is much in Harilal's life that I dislike. He knows that. But I love him in spite of his faults. The bosom of a father will take him in as soon as he seeks entrance. For the present, he has shut the door against himself. He must still wander in the wilderness. The protection of a human father has its decided limitations. That of the Divine Father is ever open to him. Let him

seek it and he will find it.

Let the *vakil* and his client know that my good name is not worth keeping, if it suffers because of the errors of a grown-up boy who has no encouragement from me in them. "The economic welfare of this poor country" will be fairly safe in spite of failures of private firms, if the President for the time being of the Congress and the members of the various organizations remain true to their trust and never mishandle a single pice. I pity the client who, out of respect for me, became a share-holder in a concern whose constitution he evidently never cared to study. Let the client's example be a warning against people being guided by big names in their transactions. Men may be good, not necessarily their children. Men may be good in some respects, not necessarily, therefore, in all. A man who is anauthority on one matter is not, therefore, an authority on all matters. *Coveat emptor.*

Young India, 18-6-1925

17. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU

CALCUTTA,
June 18, 1925[1]

PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU
HURST LODGE
DALHOUSIE

AM OFFICIATING FOR YOU. WILL DO NOTHING CON-SCIOUSLY THAT YOU MAY NOT ENDORSE. AM CONSTANTLY BY WIDOW'S SIDE. PRAY TAKE REST AND NO RISK. YOU MUST DESCEND TO PLAINS IN FULL VIGOUR. STAYING CALCUTTA TILL MEMORIAL SERVICE AT LEAST. WIRE PROGRESS HEALTH. IS JAWAHARLAL STAYING THERE.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 10644

[1] The body of C. R. Das reached Calcutta on this day.

18. TELEGRAM TO K. KELAPPAN NAIR [1]

[CALCUTTA,
On or after *June 18, 1925*]

WE MAY NOT AGREE ANY HALF SETTLEMENT BUT SATYAGRAHIS MAY POST THEMSELVES WHERE COMMIS-SIONER DOES NOT OBJECT. YOUR WIRE NOT EX-PLICIT. ANYWAY ROADS MUST BE FULLY OPEN.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 10691

19. LONG LIVE DESHBANDHU ! [2]

[*June 19, 1925*]

Calcutta demonstrated yesterday the hold Deshbandhu had on Bengal, nay, India. Calcutta is, like Bombay, cosmopolitan. It has people from all the provinces. And all these people were as hearty participators in the procession as the Bengalis. The wires that are pouring in from every part of India emphasize the fact of his all-India popularity.It could not well be otherwise among a people known for their gratefulness. And he deserved it all. His sacrifice was great. His generosity had no bounds. His loving hand was opened out to all. He was reckless in his charities. And only the other day, when I gently remarked that he might have been

[1] This was in reply to the telegram from Kelappan concerning the Vykom Satyagraha received on June 18, 1925, which read : Government tacitly permitting use half roads. No proclamation. Closing remaining roads means perpetuating unapproachability. Solution unacceptable. Abandoning satyagraha means acquiescing in unapproachability. Wire. Kelappan also wrote in detail on the same day; *vide Appendix* "Letter from K. Kelappan Nair", 18-6-1925. Along with the letter, he forwarded to Gandhiji a sketch of the Vykom roads access to which was the subject of satyagraha. Gandhiji wrote again, *vide* "Letter to K. Kelappan Nair", 28-7-1925.

On June 21, W. H. Pitt wired Gandhiji, at Calcutta, thus; "Please telegraph to your Vaikom friends not to cross original boundary without your permission. Situation is complicated by doubts as to action satyagrahis may take. Anything they do cannot possibly advance matters and may retard them. So they had better stand still." In reply to this Gandhiji seems to have sent either a copy of his telegram to Kelappan or some other message which is, however, not available. It was to this that Pitt evidently referred to in his further telegram dated June 22 : "Thanks wire. Satyagrahis have already broken pact and advanced. Police picquets therefore restored. But will be withdrawn again on your enforcing discipline."

At about the same time Gandhiji sent a telegram to Kelappan; it is likely that Gandhiji sought C. Rajagopalachari's view of the matter. On June 20, Gandhiji received a telegram from him reading : "My opinion partial opening not acceptable. Modified satyagraha may continue for prohibited roads."

[2] This was also published in *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 20-6-1925.

discriminate, prompt came the reply, “I do not think I have lost by my indiscriminations.” His board was free to the prince and the pauper. His heart went out to everyone in distress. Where is the young man in all Bengal who does not owe a debt of gratitude to Deshbandhu in some shape or other? His unrivalled legal talents were also at the disposal of the poor. I understand that he defended many, if not all, political prisoners without charging them a pie. He went to the Punjab inquiry and paid his own expenses. He carried a princely house-hold in those days. I had it from him that he spent during that stay in the Punjab Rs. 50,000. This large-heartedness towards all who sought his help made him the undisputed ruler of thousands of young hearts.

He was as fearless as he was generous. His stormy speeches at Amritsar took my breath away. He wanted immediate deliverance for his country. He would not brook the alteration or removal of an adjective—not because he was unreasonable but because he loved his country so well, only too well. He gave his life for it. He controlled enormous forces. He brought power to his party by his indomitable zeal and perseverance. But this tremendous outpouring of energy cost him his life. It was a willing sacrifice. It was noble.

Faridpur was his crowning triumph. That utterance of his is a demonstration of his supreme reasonableness and statesmanship. It was a deliberate, unequivocal and, for him (as he said to me), final acceptance of non-violence as the only policy and, therefore, political creed for India.

In constructing together with Pandit Motilal Nehru and the disciplined stalwarts from Maharashtra the great and growing Swaraj Party out of nothing, he showed his determination, originality, resourcefulness and contempt of consequences after he had once made up his mind that the thing to be done was right. And today the Swaraj Party is a compact, well-disciplined organization. My differences about the Council-entry were and are fundamental, but I never doubted the usefulness of Council-entry for the purpose of embarrassment and continuously putting the Government in the wrong. No one can deny the greatness of the work done by the Party in the Councils. And the credit for it must predominantly belong to Deshbandhu. I entered into the pact with him with my eyes open. I have since done my little best to help the Party. His death renders it doubly my duty to stand by the party, now that the leader is gone. I shall do nothing to impede its progress where I may not be able to help.

But I must hark back to the Faridpur speech. The nation will

appreciate the courtesy of the acting Viceroy in sending a message of condolence to Shrimati Basanti Devi Das. I note with gratefulness the warm tributes paid by the Anglo-Indian Press, to the memory of the deceased. The Faridpur speech seems to have impressed most Englishmen with its transparent sincerity. I am anxious that this death should not end with a mere display of courtesy. The Faridpur speech had a great purpose behind it. It was a generous response to the Anglo-Indian friends who were anxious for the great patriot to make his position clear and make the first approach. He made it. The cruel hand of death has removed the author of the gesture from our midst. But I would like to assure Englishmen who may be still doubtful about the sincerity of Deshbandhu's motive that, throughout my stay in Darjeeling, the one thing that struck me most forcibly was his utter sincerity about that utterance. Can this glorious death be utilized to heal wounds and forget distrust? I make a simple suggestion. Will the Government, in honour of the memory of Chittaranjan Das, who is no longer with us to plead the cause, release the political prisoners who he protested were innocent? I am not now asking for their discharge on the ground of innocence. The Government may have the best proof of their guilt. I simply ask for their discharge as a tribute to the deceased and without prejudice. If the Government mean to do anything to placate Indian opinion, there can be no more opportune time and no better inauguration of a favourable atmosphere than the release of these prisoners. I have travelled practically all over Bengal.

Public feeling, not all necessarily Swarajist, is sore on the point. May the fire that burnt yesterday the perishable part of Deshbandhu also burn the perishable distrust, suspicion and fear. The Government may then call a conference, if they will, to consider the best means of meeting Indian demand whatever it may be.

But we will have to do our part, if the government are to do their. We must be able to show that we are no one-man show. In the words of Mr. Winston Churchill, uttered at the time of the War, we must be able to say : 'Business as usual.' The Swaraj Party must be immediately reconstructed. Even the Punjab Hindus and Mussalmans appear to have forgotten their quarrels in the face of this "bolt from the blue". Can both parties feel strong and sensible enough to close the ranks? Deshbandhu was a believer in and lover of Hindu-Muslim unity. He held the Hindus and Mussalmans together under circumstances the most trying. Can the funeral fire purge us of our disunion? But perhaps the prelude

to it is a meeting of all the parties on a common platform. Deshbandhu was anxious for it. He could be bitter in speaking of his opponents. But, during my stay in Darjeeling, I don't remember a harsh word having escaped his lips about a single political opponent. He wanted me to help all I could to bring all parties together. It is then for us, educated Indians, to give effect to the vision of Deshbandhu and realize the one ambition of his life by immediately rising a few steps in the ladder of swaraj, even if we may not rise to the top just yet. Then may we all cry from the bottom of our hearts :'Deshbandhu is dead, Long live Deshbandhu.'

Young India, 25-6-1925

20. SUGGESTION FOR MEMORIAL SERVICE

CALCUTTA,
June 19, 1925

India has honoured herself by holding demonstrations of grief all over the country. But people had hardly time to give adequate expression to the affection they bear towards Deshbandhu. I, therefore, suggest that a memorial meeting be held all over India in every town and every village that has come under Congress influence, where suitable resolutions should be passed. I hope that people belonging to all parties, including Europeans, will be invited to take part in the memorial service.

As I have already remarked elsewhere, Deshbandhu's dying wish was to see all parties united for the common purpose. May this All-India Memorial Service pave the way for such a real union of parties and races.

I have consulted the leaders who are in Calcutta as also the members of Deshbandhu's family as to the date of the service. They recommended first of July as the day to be fixed, as that is the "Shraddha" day, being the 16th day after the tragic event. The solemnity of the service will be heightened if the hour of service is also the same all over the Country. I suggest, therefore, 5 p. m. (standard time) on the 1st July next.

The Searchlight, 24-6-1925

21. LETTER TO THE PRESS[1]

June 19, 1925

It is due to the public for me to tell them that Shrimati Basanti Devi Das has had enormous strain put upon her ever since the death of her great husband. During the two days I have been watching the continuous strain of mourners comming to her. Her unfailing good nature will not permit her to say 'no' to anybody. The result today has been an almost utter collapse. The public should know that she has a very weak constitution and she suffers from a weak heart. It is her wonderful courage that is keeping her up during the crisis that has overtaken her in common with the nation. But even under normal circumstances it would not be possible for even a healthy person to bear the strain of visitors coming in from morning till late at night. After much persuasion she has permitted me to regulate the time for receiving visitors and after consultation with friends including her medical advisers I have suggested with her consent 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. for receiving visitors. May I respectfully urge all those who may wish to see the stricken lady to do so during the hours mentioned. If this request is respected, it will be possible to avert what threatens to be a complete collapse.

May I ask the vernacular Press to translate this note?

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 10592

22. CHITTARANJAN DAS

June 20, 1925

A giant among men has fallen. Bengal is like a widow today. A critic of the Deshbandhu remarked to me some weeks ago, "I find fault with him, it is true, but I must candidly confess to you that we have absolutely no one to replace him." When I related the anecdote at the meeting at Khulna where I first heard the stunning news, Acharya Ray exclaimed, "It is but too true. If I could tell who can take Rabindranath's place as a poet, I could tell you who can take Deshbandhu's as a leader. There is no man in Bengal even anywhere near Deshbandhu." He was a hero of a hundred battles. He was generous to a fault. Though he earned lacs of rupees from his practice, he never permitted himself to be

[1] The message, released to the Press from Calcutta, is in Gandhiji's own handwriting.

rich. And even gave up the mansion he had.

I came to know him personally for the first time in 1919 in con-nection with the Punjab Congress Inquiry Committee. I approached our meeting with suspicion and awe. I had heard from a distance of his roaring practice and his still more roaring eloquence. He had come with his motor car and with his wife and family and was living like a prince. My first experience was none too happy. We had met to consider the question of leading evidence before the Hunter Inquiry. I found in him all the legal subtleties and a lawyer's keen desire to "floor' witnesses by cross-examination and to expose the many wickednesses of the Martial Law administration. My own purpose was to do something different. I reasoned. The second interview put me at rest and dispelled all my fears. He was all reasonableness and gave a willing ear to all I said. It was my first intimate contact with so many public men in India. We knew one another from a distance. I had taken practically no part in Congress affairs. They merely knew me as a South African warrior. But all my colleagues at once made me feel at home with them, none more so than this illustrious servant of India. I was supposed to be the Chairman of the Committee. "I shall say my say on points wherein we may differ, but I give you my assurance that I shall yield to your judgment." We had come near enough, before this assurance was volunteered, to embolden me to discover my previous suspicions to him. So, when he gave the assurance, I felt proud of a comrade so loyal but at the same time I felt a little humiliated; because I knew that I was a mere novice in Indian politics and hardly entitled to such implicit trust. But discipline knows no ra-nk. A king who knows its value submits to his page in matters where he appoints him as the sole judge. I occupied a place analogous to that of the page. And I record it with grateful pride that, among all the loyal colleagues I had the privilege of being associated with, none was more loyal than Chittaranjan Das.

At the Amritsar Congress, I could no longer claim the rights of discipline. There we were warriors, each holding in trust the welfare of the nation according to his ability. Here there was to be no yielding but to pure reason or party exigencies. It was a perfect treat for me to put up first fight on a Congress platform. All courteous, all equally unyielding; the great Malviyaji trying to hold the balance evenly, now pleading with one and now with the other. The President of the Congress, Pandit Motilalji, thought the game was all over. I had a rare time between Lokamanya and Deshbandhu. They had a common formula for the Reforms

resolution. Each party wanted to convince the other. But there was no conviction. There was a stalemate and a tragedy behind as many thought. The Ali Brothers whom I knew and loved, but did not know as I do now, pleaded with me for Deshbandhu's resolution. "You must not undo," said Mahomed Ali with his persuasive humility, "the great work you have done in the inquiry." But I was unconvinced. Jairamdas[1], that cool-headed Sindhi, came to the rescue. He passed me a slip containing his suggestion and pleading for a compromise. I hardly knew him. Something in his eyes and face captivated me. I read the suggestion. It was good. I passed it on to Deshbandhu. "Yes, if my party will accept it," was his reply. Mark the loyalty again! He must placate his party,—one secret of his wonderful hold on his people. It passed muster. Lokamanya with his eagle eyes was watching what was transpiring. Pandit Malviyaji's Gangetic stream was pouring from the rostrum—his one eye looking towards the dais, where we manikins were deciding a nation's fate. Lokamanya said, "I don't want to see it, if Das has approved, it is good enough for me." Malviyaji overheard it, snatched the paper from my hands and, amid deafening cheers announced that a compromise had been arrived at. I have given a detailed description of the incident because it epitomizes the reasons of Deshbandhu's greatness and unquestioned leadership, firmness in action, reasonableness in judgment and loyalty to party.

I must pass on. We come to Juhu, Ahmedabad, Delhi and Darjeeling. At Juhu he and Motilalji came to convert me. They had become twins. We had different view points. But they could not brook any difference with me. Could they do so, they would go fifty miles if I wanted them to go only twenty-five. But they would not surrender an inch even to the dearest friend where the country's interest was at stake. We had a kind of compromise. We are unsatisfied, but not in despair. We were out to conquer one another. We met at Ahmedabad. Deshbandhu was in his element, watching every thing as a tactician would. He gave me a splendid defeat.[2] How many such defeats I would not have at the hands of friends like him now, alas, no more in body. Let no one consider that we had become enemies because of the Saha resolution.[3] We believed each other to be in the wrong. But it was a difference

[1] Jairamdas Doulatram (b. 1892); Secretary, Sind Provincial Congress Committee; later became Minister for Food and Agriculture, Government of India; Governor of Bihar and Assam; member, Rajya Sabha, since 1959

[2] The reference is to the A.I.C.C. meeting which was held in Ahmedabad from June 27 to 30, 1924; *vide* "Defeated and Humbled", 3-7-1924.

[3] *Vide* "The Acid Test", 19-6-1924.

between lovers. Let faithful husbands and wives recall scenes of their sacred differences and in their differences giving themselves pain in order to heighten the pleasure of a reunion. Such was our condition. So we must meet again at Delhi, the polished Pandit with his terrible jaws, the docile Das in spite of the exterior which, to a passing on-looker, might appear rough. The skeleton of the pact was made and approved there. It was an indissoluble bond which one party has now sealed with death.

I must postpone Darjeeling for the time being. He used often to claim spirituality and used to say that he had no differences with me in religion. But though he never said it, he probably implied that I was too unpoetic to see the fundamental identity of our belief. I own that he was right. He demonstrated during these precious five days in every act of his that he was deeply religious. That he was not merely great, but he was good and growing in goodness. But I must reserve a description of the precious experiences of those five days for a later day. I felt forlorn when cruel fate snatched away Lokmanya from us. I have not yet got over the shock, for I am yet wooing his dearly beloved disciples. But Deshbandhu's withdrawal leaves me in a worse plight. For, when Lokamanya left us, the country was full of hopes. Hindus and Mussalmans appeared to be united for ever. We were on the eve of battle. Now?

Young India, 25-6-1925

23. NEED FOR PROTECTION

The history of the world shows that no business has prospered in the past without protection or help. Help is of three kinds; it can come from the State of society or the individual himself. In any new venture started with the intention of making money, the rich man invests his money without any hope of immediate return on his capital. In a trade venture started for the benefit of society as a whole, the latter bears the material. Where the Government is well organized and run for the benefit of the people, it will protect the new industry by subsidizing it.

The propagation of khadi is not for the benefit of any single individual and, therefore, it cannot receive protection from one person; even if it does, beyond a certain point such protection will be ineffective, for propagation of khadi cannot be achieved with money only. If we can get the enthusiastic and unstinted support of the Government in this popular cause, what more could we want? That would be evidence of change of heart on its part and

we would gladly co-operate with it.

Now about the support of society. Without it, we cannot expect the use of khadi to become universal in the immediate future. We have been trying to secure this support in three ways, the aim being to make khadi cheaper and to improve its quality. In the first place, we reduce the cost of khadi by obtaining monetary help from the wealthy. Next, it is being helped through the franchise qualification. One of the aims behind the inclusion of spinning as a qualification for the franchise is that people may donate half an hour's daily labour to spinning and help reduce the cost of khadi and improve its quality. The third way of helping the movement is to increase the number of khadi experts. Efforts to help the cause in all three ways are going on simultaneously. During my tours I could see that there is enough love for khadi among the people, or in other words, they are ready to wear it; but are not prepared to suffer the inconvenience of looking for it, or to spend more on it than they do on foreign cloth. We have thus reached a stage when we can say that, if we can reduce the cost of producing khadi or sell it at cheaper prices, people will use it.

We have not received enough help from the wealthy. Spinning has been included as a qualification for the franchise, but it has not been sincerely welcomed by the people so that the yarn produced in consequence may influence the price. Thus, if society is not prepared to do even this for Mother India, how can we spread the use of khadi as widely as we would like? Besides, as long as voluntary workers who are experts in spinning are not available in large numbers, the quality of yarn and of khadi cannot be improved. All the three aims can be realized with the help of the middle class, that is, by a minority of the people. If they are realized, people will take to khadi very soon. It is, therefore, the middle class which is to blame, whether for a serious lapse or for inadequate effort. If this class—the educated class—understands the importance of khadi it will not be difficult to spread its use; for then we shall be able to lower the price of khadi as much as we wish.

If we have a sufficient number of experts in spinning, we can have, in the same time, double or one and a half times the quantity of yarn we get now and of correspondingly better quality. In their absence, we work on spinning-wheels of indifferent quality and accept yarn of any quality we get. These experts will repair defects in the spinning-wheels and so help in increasing the out put of yarn and removing defects in its quality. As a result, weaving will also cost less. Handspun yarn, being of uneven quality, takes a

longer time to weave and so the weaving charges are higher than for the mill yarn. Unfortunately, in the whole country we have only a limited number of spinning experts. With the scanty preparation with which we started propaganda for spinning, we could have made no progress in any other activity. The progress we have made despite our inadequate preparation is evidence of the power of khadi and its great importance for the country. It is my firm belief that the khadi work is the most important among the activities going on in the country. No other countrywide activity aiming at people's welfare has involved as much circulation of money as khadi during the past four years, or has as many workers engaged in it and earning an honest livelihood through it or working for it honorarily. The number is daily increasing. If such a beneficial activity which requires only a modest effort to yield results receives help in all the three ways we have explained and in the right measure, I am sure that the country would become khadi-minded in no time. Let the wealthy give money, yet all men and women—Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and Christians—give at least half an hour [to spinning] and let khadi-lovers become experts in its science and give the benefit of their knowledge. The country will then become khadiminded, the flow of sixty crore rupees from it to foreign countries will stop and the money will be distributed among the poor, and, lastly, the country will acquire confidence in its own strength.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-6-1925

24. PURIFYING FLAME

"At sight of the purifying flame in the path of love, people run away in fear." So sang Pritam[1]. The path of love requires that we should not mind touching the so-called untouchable, that we should honour the despised. This path is strewn with difficulties. That alone is love which endures even when one is abandoned by one's father, turned out of home by the mother, shunned by society and forbidden by the priest to enter the temple.

In a small region like Kathiawar, the movement for the abolition

[1] A Gujarati poet

of untouchability has created a stir in the *Vaishnava* world. The gates of *havelis* are being closed against those who do not honour the practice of untouchability and regard it as wrong. Will it not be hard for them to be prevented from visiting the *haveli*? What should they do? There can be only one reply : they should give up the thought of the *haveli*.

After all, it is we ourselves who install the image in the temple. The image which comes to be associated with an evil practice will do more harm than good to us. The ultimate *haveli* is one's own heart. The *haveli* walls are what crutches are to the lame. They are merely a support. When they cease to be a support and instead become a burden, we should throw them away. The gates of the physical *haveli* can be closed, but the doors of the heart-temple are open for all the twenty-four hours. The all-knowing God dwelling in it protects us all the time. May those who tread the path of love realize the presence of that God installed in that shrine and be blessed.

"But the *haveli* is a public place. Supposing we do not respect the prohibition against us? Is it necessary to respect an unreasonable prohibition?" May not some people reason thus? May it not be a sin to respect this prohibition? We can imagine situations in which it will be a sin to respect a prohibition. I do not think that the prohibition against entering *havelis* is of that category. But those who think that it is, will certainly visit *havelis* and suffer the consequences. There is no one single rule in such matters. The general rule should be that, if asmall minority regard the practice of untouchability as sinful, but hundreds of others look upon it as virtuous, then the minority should have patience and respect the prohibition against them. They should try to educate public opinion. They should see the priest and talk with him respectfully. They should plead with the *mahajan* of their community, but, so long as a majority of the *mahajan* has not come round, it would be best for them to respect the prohibition. If public opinion is against the prohibition, one may disregard it after respectfully informing the authorities of one's intention to do so.

I would respectfully submit to the priests that, if they want to become and remain protectors of religion, they should wake up. If, in violation of divine laws, they insist on building walls of superstition and evil, they will not survive long. I believe that, being myself a child, however weak, of the Vallabha sect[1], I have a right to say this. The

[1] *Vaishnava* cult founded by Vallabhacharya, 15th-16th century

hereditary seat of honour which they occupy is in danger. I do not want them to cherish untouchability and become untouchables themselves. The idea of untouchability as it is practised today has no place either in the *Bhagavata* or in the *Gita* or in the Vedas or in the Upanishads. Why, it is not even honoured in practice. *Vaishnavas* of their own free will touch people who are regarded as untouchables when their business makes it necessary for them to do so. The law does not recognize untouchability. When *Vaishnavas* go to courts and mills, they touch the untouchables and eat, and even go to *havelis*, without first taking a bath. To keep up this idea of untouchability which has ceased to be followed in practice just in order to harass and show our contempt for the men and women who are regarded as untouchables is neither commonsense nor farsightedness, neither spiritual knowledge nor decency. I describe myself as a *Vaishnava* because I believe that Vaishnavism has a place f or all these virtues. In my opinion, the *Vaishnava* way of life had its very origin in compassion, in spiritual knowledge and in the desire to purify the fallen. I see this in Bengal. What Vallabhacharya achieved in the western part, Chaitanya[1] did in the eastern. In Bengal Chaitanya lifted up thousands of peoples who were regarded as untouchables. He weakened the hold of the idea over people's minds and today untouchability is practised in Bengal in a very mild form. The idea of being defiled by touch is altogether unknown there. Untouchability as practised in Bengal only means not accepting water from the "untouchables" and denying them the services of washermen and barbers. Even this ignorant notion has lost much of its strength, and there are today many "untouchables" who are doctors and lawyers. Education is spreading among them. In few parts of Bengal do we come across special areas where untouchables live.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-6-1925

[1] 1485-1533; a Hindu religious reformer who created a casteless society of *Vaishnavas* in Bengal and Orissa which afforded asylum to low-caste Hindus

25. APPEAL FOR DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL FUND

CALCUTTA,
June 22, 1925

The public may be aware that the late Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das gave, during his lifetime, his mansion at Russa Road, situated on over 4 bighas of land, in trust for several public objects. We are informed by the trustees that the present value of the property is estimated at Rs. 3,25,000 and that it is burdened with a debt of Rs. 2,20,000. The net value of the donation is therefore about Rs. 1,05,000.

We the undersigned feel sure that Bengal would desire to erect a Memorial worthy of the deceased patriot. Indeed, the unexampled manifestation of grief witnessed in Calcutta on the 18th instant and the public meetings held all over the country to honour the memory of the deceased are positive proof of such a desire. We think that the best way to carry out what appears to us to be the central idea of Deshbandhu in creating the trust referred to by us would be to help in the uplift of the womanhood of Bengal. The founding of a hospital for women irrespective of caste or creed and an institution for the training of nurses is, we believe, a project eminently calculated to promote Deshbandhu's intention.

It is estimated that nothing less than Rs. 10,00,000 would meet the requirements. We believe, too, that 10 lakhs is in no way an extravagant sum for a Memorial to our deceased countryman. We, therefore, appeal to the public of Bengal for the sum. Our desire is to make this a non-party Memorial so that all who know the worth of Deshbandhu, although they might not have shared his politics, might take part in subscribing to the memorial. The present trustees are :

Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy
Sj. Nirmal Chunder Chunder
Sj. Tulsi Ch. Goswami
Kumar Satya Mohan Ghosal
Sj. Nalini Ranjan Sarkar

They have consented, in order to give the trust a non-party character and under the powers reserved to them, to take two more

trustees, namely : Dr. Sir Nilratan Sarkar and Sj. Satish Ranjan Das.

Sir Rajendra Mukherjee of No. 7, Harington Street, has kindly consented to act as Treasurer.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 23-6-1925

26. APPEAL FOR DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL FUND

CALCUTTA,
June 22, 1925

I trust that the appeal signed by Lord Sinha and others for an All-Bengal Deshbandhu Memorial Fund will find an enthusiastic and quick response from the public of Bengal. I hope that ten lakhs would be made up by contributions from all the Bengalis and all those who have made Bengal their domicile and are earning their livelihood or making money in Bengal. Above all, my appeal is to young Bengal which, perhaps, more than any other class, is indebted to Deshbandhu. Whilst ten lakhs may come from ten millionaires, it is desirable that the amount is made up chiefly from the poor who can afford even a few pice. The lakhs of men who made the mourning procession in Calcutta on the 18th instant can and should pay their quota.

It should be remembered that ten lakhs is the minimum required, by no means the maximum. After paying Rs. 2,20,000/- for the debts due on the property, there will be available only Rs. 7,80,000/- —not a large sum—for a hospital and a training school for nurses.

Shall we aim at finishing the collection before the first of July? I know that the time is short, but if all the centres organize at once and all work methodically, it is not beyond Bengal's ability

to collect the sum. As a somewhat experienced collector of funds, let me say to the public that they must not pay to any but the collectors whom they know and trust. There is not a moment to spare, if we are to finish the collection in eight days. It is possible only :

1. if all who can, give and induce others to give;
2. if all give now;
3. if all give the utmost they can ;
4. if the mofussil centres take up the work at once.

The public should remember that

1. this is an All-Bengal Memorial without distinction of race, creed, caste or party;
2. that it is intended to perpetuate the memory of one of the greatest of India's sons;
3. that it is to be for a purely humanitarian purpose.

I understand too that a private hospital exclusively for women and an institution for training nurses are wanted in Calcutta.

I need hardly point out that the names of the Trustees are a guarantee of a proper use of the monies that might be given by donors.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 24-6-1925

27. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

Ashad Sud 1 [*June 22, 1925*][1]

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I can understand monetary help from the Princes. I hesitate however to entrust all the work to their officials. But I shall be able to come to a definite decision after all of you meet and think about it. We have to think how we can reduce our expenses every year and put the people on their own feet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original : C.W. 6205. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

28. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Ashad Sud 1 [*June 22, 1925*][2]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got both your letters at almost the same time. At present I will have to stay in Calcutta itself for one month. Then I shall start touring. I wish you to be settled both in mind and in your place of residence. As to your being fit for work, it is for me—is it not?—to consider. But

[1] The postmark is "Calcutta June 23, '25". *Ashad Sud* 1 fell on June 22.
[2] The postmark is "June 23, '25". In the year 1925 *Ashad Sud* 1 fell on June

we shall think of this later. Though I am at present settled in one place, I am very much engrossed in work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original : C.W. 464. Courtesy : Vasumati Pandit

29. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Ashad Sud 1 [*June 22, 1925*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter covering reports of all the branches. It seems Devchandbhai has put too much reliance on others. Where accounts are not well kept, we shall have cause to regret. I wrote to . . .[2] that he should show the books which he considers private. From the reports of the branches you have sent, prepare a summary that would be instructive and interesting to people and send it for publication. Also mention therein how many in this activity are meeting their own expenses, how many at reduced pay and how many at their market-price and also how much all of them together receive. You will also give the total number of spinning-wheels plying. What had happened to Jamnadas? My regards to Khushalbhai and Devbhabhi.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall be here in Calcutta for some time to come.

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 6193. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

[1] The postmark is "June 23, '25". In the year 1925 *Ashad Sud* 1 fell on June

[2] Omission in the source

30. ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SUBSCRIPTIONS [1]

CALCUTTA,
June 23, 1925

I have much pleasure in announcing to the public that the following subscriptions have been handed to Sir R. Mookherjee already :

N. N. Sircar	Rs.	10,000/-
S. R. Das	„	5,000/-
Rai A. N. Bose	„	1,000/-
C. C. Law	„	1,000/-
S.	„	1,000/-
K.	„	1,000/-
A.	„	1,000/-
Suprava Devi	„	100/-
Anonymous	„	10/-
Maulvi Abdul Hakim	„	100/-
Total	Rs.	20,210/-

And I have one cheque of Rs. 1,000/- and a gold ring to be delivered to Sir Mookherjee. I know, too, that Sir Rajendra has small amounts directly sent to him.

Thus the beginning has been well made.

To collect ten lakhs before first July means a collection per day of $1\frac{1}{4}$ lakhs. The average can only be kept up by strenuous labour on the part of every worker. I hope, therefore, that no worker will wait for invitation, but collect from friends.

The concrete response should be as spontaneous as the attendance on the 18th. I was called to attend the meeting at the Municipal Market tonight. It was a huge meeting. I had gone merely in the hope of collecting subscriptions for the Memorial. But the meeting was too large and unwieldy for the purpose. Organizers of meetings will render service if they will spare me during the period of collection from having to attend a single meeting where there is no collection possible.

Much is to be expected from the mofussil. Telegrams have been

[1] Received for the All-Bengal Deshbandhu Memorial Fund

sent to prominent men in the various districts. I trust that they will all collect and send to the Treasurer before first July.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 24-6-1925

31. INTERVIEW TO "THE STATESMAN"

[Before *June 24, 1925*]

In the course of an interview which he granted to a representative of *The Statesman* in Calcutta he said :

I shall remain here as long as I feel that I am required, or as long as the trusted lieutenants of Mr. Das want me. I have placed myself unreservedly at their disposal.

I have already suggested that Memorial services should be held throughout India on July 1. I am hoping that people representing every variety of opinion will attend in every important centre in India and I am likely to remain here at least up to that date.

Asked for his opinion regarding the future, Mr. Gandhi said :

It is very difficult to say as a man of the world what the future will be, but as a man of faith I can say that the virtues which I was privileged to see in the late Mr. Das will be an asset, resulting in nothing but good. How it will work out I do not know.

Referring to a suggestion which he had previously made that the death of Mr. Das should be marked by a union of parties, Mr. Gandhi said :

If the union can be brought about, not mechanical, but real, it would be for that united party to formulate its demand. It is no use myself personally saying what it should be, but I can say this that, whatever I may wish, I shall not stand in the way of what the majority may wish.

"What is your definition of swaraj?" Mr. Gandhi was asked.

My definition of swaraj is the will for the time being of the people of India, as expressed through their representatives. There cannot be any hard and fast definition of swaraj, as you have, for instance, of a straight line in geometry. It has a varying value according to the variation in the temperament of the people dominated by various circumstances. Therefore, the immediate definition of swaraj is "Dominion Home Rule".

Mr. Gandhi was asked whether he would advise the abandonment of obstructive

tactics with particular reference to Bengal.

"If there is an expressed desire for a Ministry when the Bengal Council next meets, would you advise the Council as a whole to oppose it?" Gandhiji replied with a smile :

I would prefer not to answer that question. I would like Bengal not to be despondent, not to lose faith, because that would be betrayal of the great leader who has passed away. I know that he believed often, when there was absolutely no valid reason for belief, and yet his belief was justified by events. No good cause has ever prospered by taking a despondent view.

Bengal has great imagination and it has got great powers of endurance, as I have discovered during my tour. I would ask them to add to this an inexhaustible faith and all will be well.

Incidentally, Mr. Gandhi said that he regarded it as a privilege to be by the side of Mrs. Das at this juncture. She was bearing her grief nobly.

He also paid a tribute to the young men who helped him in the crowd at Mr. Das's funeral.

I might certainly have been crushed to atoms, were it not for their strong arms. This was particularly the case at the burning-ghat.

The Searchlight, 24-6-1925

32. INTERVIEW TO "THE SEARCHLIGHT"

[Before *June 24, 1925*]

Mr. Gandhi, when informed of the reported result of the conversations [in England] between Lord Reading and Lord Birkenhead, said :

The statement, if true, would not surprise me, because I did not expect anything better. However, it will create a sensation in India and deeply hurt the feelings, not merely of the Swaraj Party, but of all parties. Personally, I do not understand what the meaning of Indianization having gone far enough means.

The Searchlight, 24-6-1925

33. TELEGRAM TO S. K. RUDRA

June 24, 1925

SUSHIL KUMAR RUDRA[1]
SOLAN

MY DEEPEST LOVE AND PRAYER WITH YOU FOR PERFECT PEACE TO YOUR SOUL. SO GLAD CHARLIE WITH YOU.

GANDHI

From the original : C.W. 6048. Courtesy : Mrs. S. K. Rudra

34. INTERVIEW TO "THE ENGLISHMAN"

CALCUTTA,
June 24, 1925

Mr. Gandhi in the course of an interview to *The Englishman* said :

There is no split in the Swaraj Party and there will be none.

Much speculation, he added, was rife and rumours afloat as to the future of the Swaraj Party, but these were mere conjectures and had no foundation at all.

Asked whether he was prepared to accept the leadership of the Party, if it was offered to him, Mr. Gandhi replied in the negative. It was absolutely essential, said Mr. Gandhi, that the leader of the Swaraj Party in Bengal must be a Bengali. As regards actual leadership, there was more than one Bengali Swarajist who was qualified for that high honour but, in his opinion, the best fitted, so far as combined ability, experience and knowledge of the Swarajist working went, was Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta, the late Mr. C. R. Das's lieutenant.

Regarding the suggested fusion of the Nationalists and the Swarajists, Mr. Gandhi said that it would be in the best interests of the country if the two parties could unite on honourable terms.

Mr. Gandhi stated that he was in the best of health and would stay in Calcutta for a month more.

The Hindu, 26-6-1925

[1] Principal, St. Stephen's College, Delhi. He was seriously ill and passed away on June 30.

35. NOTES

NO INJUSTICE MEANT

When you say you have not attracted educated India to your message, are you not doing an injustice to educated Indians? Look at Rajagopalachari, your right-hand man, not to mention the band of selfless educated Indian workers scattered throughout the length and breadth of India whom you rarely even mention in *Young India*! Where would you have been but for them? It is all very well to talk of village work, but you are doing that too by their aid!

This question raises a false issue. One swallow does not make a summer. The handful of selfless educated Indians who are silently serving and spreading the message of the spinning-wheel are, indeed, a credit to themselves and the country. Without them I should be perfectly helpless. But they are no more representatives of educated India than I am. As a class, educated Indians stand aloof, not because they are unwilling, but because they are unconvinced. When I wrote the passage[1], I had in my mind such men as Messrs Sastri, Jinnah, Chintamani, Sapru and a whole host of our distinguished educated countrymen. The rank and file, though they like me personally, have a horror for my views and methods. Some of them occasionally but earnestly plead with me to mend my ways so as to make it possible for them to work with me. Nor did I write the passage referred to by way of complaint. I have simply stated the fact with the object of my showing limitations and showing, too, that they are as necessary for the national uplift as the tallest among those who represent the spinning-wheel with all its implications. I own again that the leadership of the Congress should be rightly theirs and that I must not force the issue by a mere shuffling of votes. On the contrary, I must patiently wait till I have convinced them of the supreme necessity of the spinning-wheel and khaddar even for the political emancipation of India.

INSTITUTIONS BEFORE PARENTS

During my Bengal tour, I heard the astounding statement that the inmates of a public institution claimed to prefer the maintenance of their institution to that of their parents. This was said to command my approval. If anything I have written in t hese pages has given any such impression, I apologize to the readers. I am

[1] The reference presumably is to the article "Are We Ready?", 18-6-1925.

not conscious of any such guilt. I owe all I am to my parents. I felt towards them as Shravana is said to have done towards his parents. So, when I heard the statement, it was with greatest difficulty that I could curb the anger that was rising in me. The young man who took up the position was hardly serious about it. But nowadays it has become the fashion with some young men to adopt the superior attitude and pose as paragons of perfection. In my opinion, the maintenance of one's aged and infirm parents is a first charge upon grown-up sons. They may not marry if they are not in a position to support their parents. They may not take up public work till this primary condition is fulfilled. They must starve so that their parents may be fed and clothed. What, however, young men are not expected to do is to comply with the demand of thoughtless or ignorant parents. Parents have been known to demand money for things not required for sustenance, but for false show or for uncalled-for marriage expenses of daughters. In my opinion, it is the duty of public workers respectfully to refuse to meet such demands. As a matter of fact, I cannot remember having met a single deserving case of starvation of a public worker. I have found some living in want. I have found a few who should get more than they are able to give themselves. But, as their work prospers and their worth is known, they will not suffer from want. Difficulties and trials make a man. They are a sign of healthy growth. If every young man found himself in plenty and never knew what it was to go without anything necessary, he may be found wanting when the trial comes. Sacrifice is joy.

It is, therefore, not right to parade one's sacrifice before the public. I was told by several workers that they did not mind any sacrifice. On cross-questioning, I was told that the sacrifice consisted in living by begging, in other words, on donations. I told them that there was no sacrifice in living on donations. Many public workers did so, but they did not on that account claim to have sacrificed anything. Many young men have sacrificed lucrative careers. That is certainly to their credit. But even there I should respectfully suggest that praising can well be overdone. No sacrifice is worth the name unless it is a joy. Sacrifice and a long face go ill together. Sacrifice is "making sacred". He must be a poor specimen of humanity who is in need of sympathy for his sacrifice. Buddha renounced everything because he could not help it. To have anything was a torture to him. The Lokamanya remained poor because it was

painful for him to possess riches. Andrews regards the possession of even a few rupees a burden, and continually contrives to lose them if he gets any. I have often told him that he is in need of a care-taker. He listens, he laughs and repeats the same performance without the slightest contrition. *Madar-i-Hind* is a terrible goddess. She will exact the willing, aye, even unwilling sacrifice of many a young man and young woman before she deigns to say, 'Well done, my children, you are now free.' We are as yet playing at sacrifice. The reality has still to come.

SPINNING IN AFFILIATED SCHOOLS

During this Bengal tour of mine, I am coming upon many revelations—many pleasant, some unpleasant. There is a village called Upashi, not far from Madaripur. A High School is being conducted in this village. It is affiliated, but takes no aid from the Government. Spinning for one hour has been compulsory for all the boys since the revival of spinning. Weaving was introduced as an optional subject on the arrest in 1921 of Maulana Mahomed Ali. Weaving has been still recently confined to half-khaddar. It was only a few months ago that full-khaddar weaving was introduced. Now the management has undertaken to do away with half-khaddar and confine their attention only to pure khaddar. It was a perfect pleasure to watch about a hundred boys spinning all at the same time. Upon inquiry, I found that the attendance had not suffered by reason of compulsory spinning. The head master told me that he could not have continued it if the parents had disapproved of it or the boys resented it.

The head master put the visitors' book before me for my remarks. On turning over the pages, I read a long report from the Inspector of Schools. Whilst he had no prejudice against spinning, his experience of the experiment, wherever made, went to show that they were a failure as at this school. The Inspector thought that the experiment to be called a success should be self-supporting. I do not know why a spinning class should be self-supporting any more than a geometry class. The success of the latter would be measured by the progress made by the boys in geometry. The success of a spinning class should be measured by the proficiency of the boys in spinning. And that the boys of the High School could show any day. But I am quite prepared to accept the Inspector's challenge and show that, whilst the literary classes cannot be made self-supporting except in certain cases, a spinning class can always be made self-supporting. In

the first instance, a separate spinning master is not a necessity. By small inducements the existing staff can be induced to acquire sufficient knowledge in spinning and they can teach their respective classes. It is even enough to train willing school boys themselves to learn the science so as to be able to teach. The extras to be paid will be easily covered after the first month's tuition. Boys will earn on an average no less than $\frac{1}{2}$ pice per hour. They should really earn one pice each. A class of thirty-two boys will earn four annas per day. That means Rs. $7\frac{1}{2}$ per month. The increase given to the teacher will be no more than Rs. $2\frac{1}{2}$ per month, thus leaving a margin of Rs. 5 per month as saving. This presupposes that yarn spun by the boys will sell. There is no difficulty about selling well-spun yarn. And the boys spinning under supervision must turn out good yarn. Indeed, so far as this particular institution is concerned, Khadi Pratishthan has offered to advance enough cotton and take over yarn at a stated price. The fact is that enough interest is not taken by the teachers in this national art. Hence the apparent failure judged by the Inspector's standard.

A Village Experiment

Thus writes Sjt. Rajagopalachari about the work that is being done at Pudupalayam, a village in the District of Salem :[1]

The reader will note that the actual work began only in August last. The progress reported for so short a time as nine months is most encouraging. The reader will note, too, that though one village has been made the centre, twenty villages are actually being served. It is no small matter to know that ten *Panchama* boys have already received training at this Ashram. And let it be remembered that this is not the only activity of its kind in India. I have already noted several such attempts in Bengal. I have omitted from the letter all reference to finance and audited balance-sheets which are certified by two Chartered Accountants. From these I observe that the khaddar department is not run at a loss.

'On the Verge of It'

I have read your closely written fifteen sheets of note paper. In reply I can only advise you to read my answers in this con- nection

[1] Not reproduced here

again and again. You will then find that everyone of the points raised by you is covered by my previous answers. If they do not convince I must wait and pray. Nothing that I write further is likely to carry conviction to you. I have observed that there comes a time in our lives when argument makes no appeal to us; we are ready with a counter-argument. I find it even with friends who agree with me on most points. But there are others on which we agree to differ. I must do likewise with you. But I appreciate and honour your striving. You must find me out somewhere in my wanderings. I shall gladly discuss the whole of your philosophy with you. Sometimes a conversation answers when the cold print fails. One thing, however, I may say here. Why do you think that we cannot spin and wear khaddar or remove untouchability or be friends with the Mussalmans till we get swaraj? How will the withdrawal of Englishmen help Hindus to trust the Mussalmans or *vice versa* or open the eyes of blind orthodoxy and better the lot of the oppressed people or induce the idle to work the spinning-wheel and those whose tastes are degraded to revise them and revert to khaddar? Surely if we cannot do these things now under the pressure of adversity, we are not likely to do them when we are lulled into a sense of false security by nominal swaraj? What is there to prevent us now from attempting or accomplishing all or any of these three things if it is not our own unwillingness, lethargy or worse? I invite you and your friends to give your undoubted ability and energy to this constructive programme and you will see swaraj coming nearer every day. Whether you see it or not, I tell you that it is coming nearer exactly in the same proportion as we are accomplishing the three objects above named. The Bastille of untouchability is becoming more and more undermined daily. The pleasing hum of the spinning-wheel is growing more and more audible, and, though seemingly Hindus and Mussalmans are preparing for a pitched battle, they are realizing that it is a useless enterprise. But the battle may be inevitable. If it comes, it will be the dawn of peace.

HUMBLED PRIDE

The General Secretary to the Congress writes :

> I am sorry that I made a mistake in the membership chart sent to you on the 16th. The last month's total for Burma should be 75 instead of 70. But the Burma P.C.C. in furnishing this later figure 75 has given no details under classes A and B.
>
> It will be noticed from the chart under reference that only 6 out of 20

provinces furnished information during the current month. Kerala never sent any at all. For the remaining 13 provinces last month's figures only are available. Adding the last month's totals for these 13 and the current month's figures for the 6 provinces the grand total of membership comes to 15,355.

I reproduce this letter not merely for the sake of the correction, but for confessing my failure to command discipline even in such a simple matter as the getting of monthly returns. I used to talk at Belgaum[1] of being exacting in enforcing discipline. I see that I have failed to secure the co-operation of the provincial committees. The Congress constitution provides no sanction against recalcitrant committees. Even if it did, I should be loath to enforce it. But though my pride is humbled, I must still plead and hope. Will the committees please wake up to a sense of their duty and respond to the request of the General Secretary for returns?

Young India, 25-6-1925

36. PLEA FOR HUMILITY

In my talks with public workers in Bengal, I came across a young man who among his claims for public recognition, mentioned his and his fellow-workers' *brahmacharya* or celibacy. The manner of presenting the claim and the self-assurance with which the young man spoke repelled me and I felt that he was talking about things he little knew. His fellow-workers repudiated the claim. And the young man himself, when I cross-questioned him, admitted that the claim could not be sustained. A man who consciously sins with his mind, even though he may not sin with his body is not a celibate. One who cannot remain unmoved at the sight of a woman, however beautiful she may be, is not a celibate. One who keeps his body under control from sheer necessity, does well but is not a celibate. We may not degrade sacred words by a loose use of them. True celibacy has important results which can be verified. It is a difficult virtue to practise. Many attempt it but few succeed. Those who walk about the country in the garb of sannyasins are often no more celibates than the ordinary man in the street. Only the latter is often a better man as he makes no pretension to virtue. He is satisfied that his Maker knows

[1] At the annual session of the Indian National Congress, in December 1924; *vide* "Speech at Subjects Committee Meeting, Belgaum", 25-12-1924.

his trials, temptations and his century of triumphs in resisting temptations as also his few falls in spite of heroic attempts. He is satisfied to be judged by the world for his falls. His successes he treasures secretly like a miser. He is too humble to make them known. Such a man has hope of redemption. Not so the self-satisfied sannyasin who does not even know the A B C of restraint. There is danger of public workers who do not wear the garb of sannyasins, but who prate about sacrifice and celibacy, making both cheap and discrediting themselves and their mission of service.

When I drew up the rules for the guidance of the Ashram at Sabarmati, I circulated copies among friends for advice and criticism. One was sent to the late Sir Gurudas Banerjee. In acknowledging his copy he advised me to add humility to the vows mentioned in the rules. In his letter he said that young workers lacked humility. I told the late Sir Gurudas that whilst I valued his advice and fully recognized the necessity of humility, the mention of it as a vow would derogate from its dignity. It must be taken for granted that those who cultivate truth, ahimsa, *brahmacharya*, must be humble. Truth without humility would be an arrogant caricature. He who wants to practise truth knows how hard it is. The world may applaud his so-called triumphs. Little does the world know his falls. A truthful man is a chastened being. He has need to be humble. A man who wants to love the whole world including one who calls himself his enemy knows how impossible it is to do so in his own strength. He must be as mere dust before he can understand the elements of ahimsa. He is nothing if he does not daily grow in humility as he grows in love. A man who would have his eye single, who would regard every woman as his blood sister or mother, has to be less than dust. He stands on the brink of a precipice. The slightest turn of the head brings him down. He dare not whisper his virtue to his very own. For he knows not what the next moment has in store for him. For him "pride goeth before destruction and haughtiness before a fall." Well has the *Gita* said, "Passions subside in a fasting man, not the desire for them. The desire goes only when man sees God face to face." And no one can see God face to face who has aught of the I in him. He must become a cypher if he would see God. Who shall dare say in this storm-tossed universe, 'I have won'? God triumphs in us, never we.

Let us not lower the values of these virtues so that we may all be able to claim them. What is true of the physical world is true of the spiritual. If in order to gain a worldly battle, Europe sacrificed several

million lives during the late War, itself a transitory event, what wonder that, in the spiritual battle, millions have to perish in the attempt so that one complete example may be left to the world. It is ours merely to make the attempt in the uttermost humility.

The cultivation of these higher virtues is its own reward. He who cashes anyone of them loses his soul. Virtues are not to trade with. My truth, my ahimsa, my *brahmacharya* are matters between myself and my Maker. They are not articles of trade. Any young man who dares to trade with them will do so at his peril. The world has no standard, no means, wherewith to judge these things. They defy scrutiny and analysis. Let us workers, therefore, cultivate them for our own purification. Let the world be asked to judge us only by our work. An institution or an Ashram that claims public support must have a material object, e.g., a hospital, a school, spinning and khaddar propaganda. The public have the right to know the worth of these activities and if they approve of them, they may support them. The conditions are obvious. There must be honesty and ability about the managers. An honest man who knows nothing of pedagogy has no claim to public support as a teacher. These public institutions must keep proper and audited accounts which should be subject to inspection by the public. These are the tests which conductors have to satisfy. Their private character must not obtrude itself upon public attention for admiration and patronage.

Young India, 25-6-1925

37. FALLEN SISTERS

At Madaripur the reception committee had arranged a spinning demonstration by the fallen sisters. I felt pleased at the sight, but I drew the attention of the organizers to the dangers attendant upon handling the question. But, at Barisal, where the movement for their reclamation first took definite shape, instead of its having taken a healthy course, the appearance of it was decidedly ugly. These unfortunate sisters have been organized there. A misleading name has been given to the organization. Its 'present aims and objects' are stated as follows :

1. To help the poor and nurse the sick brothers and sisters.
2. (a) To spread education amongst themselves;

(b)to promote spinning, weaving, tailoring, needle-works and other handicrafts, by establishing a *Nari Silpasram*;

(c) to give higher musical training.

3. To join with all other institutions, which have satyagraha and non-violence at their creed.

To say the least, this is putting the cart before the horse. These sisters are advised to do humanitarian work before re- forming themselves. The idea of giving higher musical training will be accounted as extremely funny if it was not tragic in its consequence. For let it be understood these women do know how to dance and sing. And they may join all organizations which have satyagraha and non-violence as their creed all the time they are, by their trade, doing violence to truth and non-violence!

The document before me says further that they have been enrolled as Congress members and have also been allowed to "do other national work befitting their humble position". They have been even elected as delegates. I have seen what I regard as an obscene manifesto written in their name.

Whatever be the motives, I cannot but regard the whole of this development as disgraceful. I appreciate spinning, but it must not be used as a passport to vice. I like everybody to subscribe to satyagraha, but I would prevent by all the power at my command an unrepentant professional murderer from signing the creed. My whole heart is with these sisters. But I am unable to identify myself with the methods adopted at Barisal. These sisters have acquired a status which, for the sake of the moral well-being of society, they must not have. We will not incorporate an association of known thieves for the purpose for which these women have formed their association. There is less warrant for this association, for these are more dangerous than thieves. The latter steal material possessions, the former steal virtue. Whilst man is primarily responsible for the existence of these unfortunate members of society, it must not be forgotten that they have acquired tremendously dangerous powers for mischief. I was told in Barisal that the corporate activity of these women had made them unhealthily forward and that they were already producing a corrupt influence upon the Barisal youths. I wish that the association could be disbanded. I am firmly of opinion that, so long as they continue the life of shame, it is wrong to accept donations or services from them or to elect them as delegates or to encourage them to become members

of the Congress. There is no legal bar against their entry into the Congress, but I had hoped that public opinion would keep them off the Congress and that they themselves would have the modesty to refrain from seeking Congress membership.

I wish that my words could reach them. I would urge them to withdraw their names from the Congress, forget that they had an association, but quickly and resolutely give up their immoral trade. Then and not till then, they may take up spinning as discipline, and weaving or any other remunerative and clean occupation for a living.

Young India, 25-6-1925

38. THREE QUESTIONS

A gentleman sent me the following three questions for answer at Barisal :

1. Are our fallen sisters entitled to be returned as delegates to the district and provincial conferences or the like representative bodies? If not, how could such delegates be sent from Barisal to the conferences at Perojpur and Jessore?

Under the present constitution of the Congress, even a moral leper *is entitled* to be returned as a delegate, if he can find electors to elect him. But I should not think much of electors who would elect 'fallen sisters' knowing them to be such and whilst they are carrying on their sinful trade. I know nothing of the conferences mentioned.

2. If any individual person or an organized body misappropriates Congress funds or refuses to make over the papers and account-books along with the funds and other properties of the District Congress Committee to the newly elected executive committee duly approved by the B.P.C.C., what steps should be taken to realize the funds and get back the Congress properties?

Although I am still a confirmed non-co-operator, I should have no hesitation, if my entreaty failed, in taking legal proceedings, civil or criminal, against the wrongdoer even though he may be my own father or son. The Congress constitution and resolutions are not designed to defeat the Congress end.

3. How do you account for the fact that Indians and Europeans not excluding high Government officials, that were and still are opposed to the noble cause you espouse and did not join the functions you attended (except to hinder them) during your last Bengal tour, are so very enthusiastic this time over your reception? Is there any reason to believe that these people have since been imbued with the noble spirit of non-violent non-co-operation or does it prove that your power as the greatest

political leader of India is on the wane, if not altogether extinct?

I am not aware of the hindrances the Government offered during my last Bengal tour, but the correspondent is entitled to draw the inference if, during the present tour, the authorities are enthusiastic about my receptions now, that "my power as the greatest political leader of India is on the wane, if it is not altogether extinct." But I hope the correspondent will not make the mistake that the authorities, according to him, seem to be making. For the power of a civil resister is like that of the fabled bird that has the capacity of rising from its own ashes.

Young India, 25-6-1925

39. DUTY OF SATYAGRAHIS

CALCUTTA,
June 25, 1925

We have been asked what is the duty of satyagrahis in view of the recent judgment of the District Court of Hooghly, appointing a Receiver for all the properties including the Temple at Tarakeshwar and purporting to belong to the Mohunt.

In our opinion, it is impossible for satyagrahis to resist the possession by the Receiver when he comes to take it, nor is there any meaning in resisting his possession. The satyagraha was offered against the Mohunt or rather his methods. He is not in possession and the Court's order does not put him in possession. On the contrary, the judgment makes it clear that the Mohunt could not succeed, though he tried in gaining whole or partial possession.

The object of satyagraha was to get rid of abuses in connection with the temple and to secure public entry to the Lakshmi Narain Temple. There is no question under the Court's order of any reversion to the old abuses or prohibition to temple entry. It is a matter of no moment to satyagrahis who has possession so long as the Temple management is pure and it is not the Mohunt who has the management.

The satyagrahis' duty will, therefore, be to hand [over], on demand, the possession to the Receiver. It will be time to reconsider the position when and if abuses creep in. It does not matter who become trustees of the Temple so long as there is a public trust

properly managed. If the plaintiffs collude with the Mohunt, it will be again a matter for consideration as to what the satyagrahis should do.

The foregoing was finally approved by Deshbandhu on 8th June at Darjeeling and it was to be published over our joint signatures, if it was considered necessary. I understand that the publication of the statement is necessary. I have therefore no hesitation in permitting its publication as our joint statement. I have seen nothing since to alter my opinion.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 9-7-1925

40. LETTER TO MAHARAJA OF BURDWAN

June 26, 1925

I could not be a true friend, as I regard myself, of Rajas and Maharajas, if I did not tell you that I was hurt by your letter conveying your decision about your subscription to the Memorial Fund. It betrays, may I say, a weak faith in your own countrymen and an incorrect attitude. You have graciously permitted your name to appear as one of the signatories to the appeal. If it signifies anything, it ought to mean a fixed determination on your part to make the collection a success. But the conditions you impose are calculated to defeat the collection. If you, a Maharaja and signatory, have the right to make payment conditional upon the collection reaching a certain total, how much more the humbler signatories? And if they all impose such conditions, how can the collections proceed at all? In all the many subscriptions I have had the privilege of collecting, I have known the signatories to be sureties for the success of funds for which they made themselves sponsors. Will you not revise the wholly incorrect position you have taken up, let me hope, quite unconsciously.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

41. LETTER TO SHUAIB QURESHI

June 26, 1925

All you say about Hindu-Mussalman quarrels is too true! I am following the course adopted by the Prophet's companions in Osman's time. They withdrew to the caves when Islam was split up into rival factions. We may figuratively retire into ourselves whilst the two may be fighting like cats and dogs.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

42. SPEECH AT CONDOLENCE MEETING, CALCUTTA[1]

June 26, 1925

Mahatma Gandhi then said that the Gujarati community simply did their duty in framing the resolution and nothing more. The 18th day of June was a day when it was an occasion to show mourning at the death of Deshbandhu and he believed most of them present in the meeting had attended the funeral procession of Deshbandhu . He said he had already appealed for raising of a fund of at least ten lacs of rupees to commemorate the memory of Deshbandhu on the lines laid down by him in the document which might be called the will of Deshbandhu. He was at present absorbed in the task and when Seth Anandji Hari Das and other friends approached him requesting him to preside over this function, he had distinctly given them to understand that he expected a response from the Gujarati community to his appeal in a befitting manner. He enquired if they had made any collection to contribute their quota, but was disappointed to see that no such previous arrangement was made. He was a practical man and he did not like to waste a single minute he had at his disposal to raise the fund, and he hoped in the meeting he had come to receive the quota of the Gujarati community to Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. In conclusion he said that it was always his habit to speak frankly and even harshly to his Gujarati brethren, but he was glad his words always met with a kind response from Gujaratis. It was his habit to create rivalry not in bad things but in good things between the different provinces. He was not sure which province would be the first to unfurl the standard of swaraj when swaraj was established. But he felt sure that that province which would perform its duty in its real sense towards the whole country would have the good fortune. It

[1] The meeting was held at Alfred Theatre in the evening, to mourn the death of C. R. Das. Gandhiji presided and spoke after a condolence resolution had been adopted unanimously.

was Gujaratis who had responded splendidly when he had made an appeal for Tilak Swaraj Fund of one crore of rupees and he was glad his appeal this evening to the Gujaratis of Calcutta would not go in vain. He knew the very great depression in trade at present; he, however, had to ask for at least ten lacs of rupees from the Gujarati community and he hoped that the deficit would be made up within the next three or four days left for collection.[1]

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 27-6-1925

43. APPEAL REGARDING DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL SERVICE

I hope that the public will bear in mind the 1st of July. Those who are organizing the Deshbandhu Memorial Service in Calcutta have come to the conclusion that it is necessary to have three meetings—one, a mass meeting in the Maidan, north of Victoria Memorial, another exclusively for ladies at Mirzapur Park, and the third at the Town Hall, where admission would be by tickets. As the functions all over India on the 1st of July are designed to be of a non-party character and as many who did not share Deshbandhu's political opinion have signified their intention of being present at the Memorial Service and of showing their respect for his memory, it has been thought advisable, apart from the mass meeting, to hold the meeting at the Town Hall, which can be attended by people belonging to different parties and where suitable speeches can be made. The difficulty that faces the organizers is to choose names for sending tickets of admission to the Town Hall. There is, I understand, accommodation in the Town Hall only for 1,200 people. A certain number of seats will necessarily have to be reserved. For the balance, applications should be made to Sj. N. C. Sen at 98, Beltola Road, Bhawanipore. They will be received up to Sunday next. And if the number exceeds the accommodation available, lots will be drawn for deciding upon the names of those who should receive admission cards. I know the prejudice that exists against regulating attendance at such public meetings. But I hope that the public will realize the difficulty of the organizers who are anxious to have a representative gathering at the Town Hall. It will not be possible to have many or any speeches at the mass meeting. And yet, it will be a pity if those

[1] After the speech was over, a collection for the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund was made. The cash and promises to pay amounted to some Rs. 7,000.

who wish to express their sentiments are not provided with a platform. This can be had at the Town Hall.

I hope, therefore, that the public will heartily co-operate with the organizers in making the Town Hall function a success. Maharajadhiraj of Burdwan has kindly consented to preside at the Town Hall meeting.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 27-6-1925

44. FIRST OF JULY

I have suggested that a public meeting should be held in every town and village in memory of Deshbandhu on the occasion of his *shraddha*[1]. On that day people religiously inclined may fast the whole day, or eat only one meal. All the usual ceremonies are being performed in Deshbandhu's family. He loved *kirtans*[2] and, therefore, these are being conducted every night. Those who would like to bathe may do that as well. The important thing, however, is that a meeting should be held exactly at five (standard time, i.e., Madras time) and resolutions should be passed. It would be a good thing to hold a meeting in every place in Gujarat where the message of the Congress can reach. It will be enough to send copies of those resolutions by post to *Ganga-swarup*[3] Basanti Devi. If, in addition, a telegram is despatched from the Provincial Congress Committee giving the names of the towns, she will know where and in how many places meetings were held. The meetings should of course pass condolence resolutions extolling Deshbandhu's virtues. But they can do more than that. We revere Deshbandhu for his services to the cause of swaraj. Deshbandhu's soul will rest in perfect peace if we secure swaraj today. That, however, is beyond our capacity, though it is not beyond our capacity to bring it nearer.

What can all people, the prince and the pauper, capitalists and workers, the old and the young, men and woman, Hindus and Muslims, do to bring swaraj nearer? Is there anything which everyone can do? There is certainly one such thing, and that is khadi. Everyone can resolve to wear pure khadi and can take a pledge to spin for half

[1] The thirteenth and concluding day of the ceremonies which follow the death of a person

[2] Devotional songs sung in chorus

[3] The term prefixed to the name of a widow, among Hindus; literally, in a state like that of the holy Ganga

an hour daily by way of *yajna*[1] for the service of country. This is not at all difficult for anyone to do. Having taken such a pledge, everyone should daily remind himself of Deshbandhu's services. If hundreds of thousands of people take this pledge, is there anything we cannot achieve? We can bring about complete boycott of foreign cloth and acquire self-confidence. Deshbandhu wanted us to have that. We should become self-reliant, for Deshbandhu wanted us to be so. He wanted all of us, Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, etc., to unite, and this also we can bring about through the spinning-wheel. I, therefore, wish that everyone should take a pledge to wear khadi and to spin.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-6-1925

45. SOME MEMORIES

What else could I think of for this issue?

The rock-like Deshbandhu having fallen, the newspapers are full of him. They are even ready to give the smallest details about him. *Servant* has brought out a special issue. *Vasumate*, Bengal's newspaper with the largest circulation, is also preparing to bring out a special issue. Smt. Basanti Devi has received more than a thousand telegrams, and more are pouring in from distant countries. Meetings are being held everywhere. There was hardly any village under Congress influence which did not hold a meeting.

On the 18th, Calcutta was swept by a wave of emotion. Statisticians estimate that not less than two lakhs must have assembled. Men and woman stood on the roads, climbed the electric poles and perched on roofs of trams, not to mention the men and women waiting on balconies to catch a glimpse [of the procession].

There were *bhajans* and *kirtans*, it goes without saying. People rained flowers. Deshbandhu's body had been kept open to view, but it lay buried under a mountain of flowers.

At the head of the procession were volunteers, carrying a *fulwari*[2], in which was kept a spinning-wheel decorated with flowers. The procession started from the station at 7.30 [a.m.] and reached the burning-ground at 3 [p.m.]. The cremation began at 3.30.

There were swarming crowds on the burning-ground. It was

[1] Sacrifice

[2] Floral frame

very difficult to check the crowds pressing from behind. I think that, had not some strong persons lifted me up on their shoulders and placed me in front of the crowd pressing forward, something terrible might have happened. Two or three strong men held me up by turns on their shoulders and from that position I struggled to check the surging crowd and went on entreating them to sit down. They would comply as long as they could see me, but they took me from spot to spot where there was fear of disturbance and, as soon as my back was turned, the crowd would stand up. The people had lost their senses. Thousands of eyes were fixed on the bier. As the pyre was lit, the people lost all self-control. Involuntarily, the whole crowd stood up and pressed towards the pyre. It was feared that, in a moment, people would be falling on the pyre. What was to be done? I told the people : "Now it is all over, please go back to your homes." I then told the man who was carrying me to take me out of the crowd. I kept on telling the people, suggesting by signs and shouting at them loudly that they should follow me. This succeeded very well with the crowd of thousands and we were saved from a grave danger. The pyre was made up entirely of sandalwood.

It looked as if people had come for a picnic. There was seriousness on their faces, but they did not seen to be distressed. The grief of relatives and of persons like me seemed selfish. My philosophy was found wanting, but the people's had remained unaffected because they were unattached. They were filled with the highest respect [for Deshbandhu], but their devotion had no element of selfishness in it. They had come there to testify to the greatness of a son of the country, of their brother. They seemed to say with their eyes and their movements, "Well done! May there be a thousand others like you."

Deshbandhu was as kind as he was noble. I realized this fully in Darjeeling[1]. He talked about religion, about the things which had impressed him most. He was very keen on having direct spiritual experience. "Whatever may be true about other countries, in this country only the path of non-violence can save us. I will show the young men of Bengal that we can win swaraj by non-violent means." "If we are good, we can make the British Good." "In this atmosphere of darkness and hypocrisy, I can see no way except that of truth. Nor do we need any other." "I wish to bring together all the

[1] Where Gandhiji stayed with C. R. Das from June 3 to June 6, 1925

parties. The only obstacle is the timidity of our people. In trying to bring them together, we run the risk of becoming timid ourselves." "You should try to bring all of them together, meet—[1], see the editor of—[2] and ask him what he gains by abusing the Swaraj Party in your presence. He may point out to me any error or wrong I may have been guilty of. If I do not satisfy him, then he may abuse me to his heart's content." "I am daily growing more convinced about your spinning-wheel. If my shoulder did not ache and if I were not such a bad pupil in spinning, I would have learnt it sooner. Once I have learnt it, I would not find it boring to do it every day. But I am bored when I try to learn it. See how the thread snaps again and again." "But how can you say that? Is there anything you will not do for swaraj?" "That is true of course. It is not that I refuse to learn. Only, I point out to you my difficulties. Ask Basanti Devi how bad I am at such things." Basanti Devi agreed : "That is true. If he wants to open his box, I have to come to turn the key". I said : "That is your cleverness. In this way you have made him helpless, so that he will have always to flatter you and be dependent on you." The room was filled with laughter. Deshbandhu intervened : "You may examine me after a month. I shall not be drawing ropes then." "All right", I said, "Satish Babu will even send a teacher for you. If you pass [the test], take it that swaraj is at hand." There are so many pleasant incidents like this that, if I tried to describe all of them, I should never end.

There are some memories which I simply cannot narrate.

I would be ungrateful if I did not try to give some description of the love I had been receiving at [Darjeeling]. He took personal interest in the smallest matters. He would himself order dry fruits from Calcutta. As it would be difficult to secure goats or goats' milk in Darjeeling, he had got five from the plains and kept them where he was staying. He would not let me manage without any of the things to which I was used. There was only a wall between our two rooms. Every morning, he would wait for me as soon as he was free. He would be in bed, for he could not leave it. He knew my manner of sitting cross-legged, and so would not let me sit on the chair, but would make me sit on his bed facing him. He would get some more mattresses spread and also have cushions placed for me. I could not

[1] Names omitted in the source
[2] *ibid.*

help joking : “This scene reminds me of a day forty years’ ago when I got married, the bride and I sat like this on a plank. All that remains is holding each other’s hands.” I had hardly finished this when the whole house rang with Deshbandhu’s laughter. Whenever he laughed, the sound of his laughter could be heard from a great distance.

Deshbandhu was daily becoming gentler. Custom did not forbid him meat or fish. But when the non-co-operation move- ment started he gave up meat eating, drinking and smoking, all three. Later these things came back, but his inclination was always for giving them up. Recently, again, he had come into contact with a sadhu of the Radhaswami sect and after that his eagerness to adopt vegetarian food had increased. When, therefore, I visited him at Darjeeling, he again started the experiment of vegetarian diet, and while I was there, he did not allow meat and fish in the house. He told me several times : “If I can manage, I will never eat meat or fish now. I do not like eating them, and I realize that they obstruct our spiritual growth. My guru was very particular about this matter and told me that, in the interest of the spiritual effort I have undertaken, I must give up meat-eating.”

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-6-1925

46. EXPERIMENT IN KATHIAWAR

Writing about the experiment which is being conducted in Kathiawar, the Secretary of the Conference says :[1]

From my experience in Bengal, I see that if we had there the means of making the experiment which is being made in Kathiawar, people would flock to buy slivers on these conditions. No, I forget. There is no need at all to supply slivers in Bengal, for there are many people who spin, card cotton and make slivers themselves. We should only have to give them cotton at half price and weaving charges would have to be at half the usual rate. Many of them are ready to produce yarn if they are supplied cotton pods, since they know ginning and actually do it. In Kathiawar, the entire stock of slivers has been sold off. Let us wait for the results.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-6-1925

[1]The letter is not translated here. It gave particulars of the progress made in the scheme of khadi production undertaken by the Kathiawar Political Conference.

47. LONG LIVE DESHBANDHU!

I had the good fortune of being in Bombay when the Lokamanya passed away. Providence favoured me also on the day when Deshbandhu was cremated, or, rather, Fate seemed to have waited for the first lap of my tour to be over, for had the cremation taken place one day earlier, I would not have been able to witness the scene which I did in Calcutta.

Just as the citizens of Bombay had abandoned themselves to grief on the day of the Lokamanya's death, so did the people of Calcutta on this day. At that time, countless men and women had come out to have *darshan*, to weep and express their love. Now, as then, there was no community or race whose members were not present to honour the departed. When the train arrived at the station, there was not an inch of space on the platform. People vied with oneanother for the honour of carrying Deshbandhu's bier, as they had for the Lokamanya's.

On both these occasions, it was the people's rule. The crowds were not ruled by the police, but the latter of their own free will were ruled by the people. The authority of the Government was voluntarily suspended and the people's rule was in force. On that day, people did what they chose. What Deshbandhu wanted to see people doing when he was alive, they did on the day of his leaving this world for the next.

Is this an object-lesson of small value? Is there anything which the bond of love will not make people do? On that day, they "endured hardships, bore hunger and thirst, cold and heat", and did it all cheerfully. It was not necessary to plead with them and persuade them to suffer what they did.

No such crowds collect on the death of an emperor. People do not notice the death of a sannyasi, nor do newspapers and news agencies. Urged by what sense of duty, then, had the old and the young, men and women, the rich and the poor, Hindus and Muslims gathered there, uninvited, in the twinkling of an eye? It was their sense of duty to the nation. People will in these days describe only those who do this duty as men imbued with the spirit of dharma. They are even ready to forget the weaknesses of those who follow this dharma. There is some mean-ing in this. People are not foolish in acting thus. God alone is perfect. Every human being is liable to err. If, however,

any person does his own proper duty to the best of his ability, his weaknesses will not be noticed and, as he goes on doing his duty, they will ultimately disappear.

National service is the only dharma today, for unless we follow that we can follow no other. The power of the State has penetrated every aspect of national life. In countries where the power of the State is the power of the people, the subjects are happy on the whole, and where the State is hostile to the people, the latter are miserable and utterly weak. In such countries the people lead a sinful life and call it good, for those who live in fear are incapable of good- ness. To free ourselves from this paralysing fear, i.e., to learn the first lesson in self-realization, is what we call the dharma of national service. What have our patriotic leaders been teaching us? That we should not fear even a king, that we are men and men need fear God alone. Neither King George V nor his representatives can inspire fear in them. The Lokamanya had abandoned all fear of the State's machinery of law and order and, therefore, he was the adored of the people, even of learned men, for he inspired them with courage. Deshbandhu had also completely shed fear of the Government. To his mind, the Viceroy and the gate-keeper were equal. He had seen with his inner eye that, everything considered, there was no difference between the two. If it is unmanly to fear the Viceroy, so is it to try to overcome the gate-keeper. There is a profound spiritual vision behind this attitude, and that is the meaning of the dharma of national service. For this reason, consciously or unconsciously and even against their will, people look with reverence upon those who follow this dharma. The Lokamanya was a Brahmin. His knowledge of the scriptures was such as humbled the pride of pundits. But he was not adored for that knowledge of his. Deshbandhu was not a Brahmin. He was a Vaisya. But people never thought about what caste he belonged to. Deshbandhu did not know Sanskrit and had not studied the scriptures. He merely followed the dharma of national service. He had made himself completely fearless. That is why even learned men bowed to him and, on that unforgettable day, they mingled their tears with the people's. The dharma of national service means all-embracing love. It is not universal love, but it is an important facet of it. It is not the Dhavalgiri of love, but its Darjeeling. From Darjeeling, the visitor has a golden vision of Dhavalgiri and thinks to himself : 'If the Darjeeling of love is so beautiful as this, how much more beautiful must be its Dhavalgiri, which shines in the distance before me.' Love of one's country is not

opposed to love of mankind, but is a concrete instance of it. It ultimately lifts one to the highest peak of universal love. That is why people shower blessings on those who are filled with patriotic love. People know love of family, and are not, therefore, moved to admiration by it. To some extent they also understand love of the village. But love of the country only a Deshbandhu or a Lokamanya understands. People adore such men because they themselves want to be like them.

Deshbandhu's liberality knew no restraints. He earned lakhs and spent lakhs. He never refused to give, even borrowed and gave. He fought for the poor in courts without charging any fees. It is said that in Aurobindo Ghosh's[1] case he exhausted himself and his resources for nine months. He spent from his own pocket and did not charge a single pie. This large-heartedness, too, was the result of his patriotism.

If he opposed me, it was certainly not that he wanted to harass me or undermine my position; he did so only for the sake of national service. He, who did not fear the Viceroy, was not likely to be afraid of me. His attitude was that if the activities of even his brother obstructed the progress of the country, he would oppose him. This should be the attitude of all of us. Our differences were like the differences between brothers. Neither of us wanted to part company with the other for ever. If we did, we would have shown ourselves wanting in patriotism. Hence, even when we seemed to drift away from each other, we were drawing closer. Our situation was a test of the quality of our hearts. Deshbandhu has passed that test, but I have still to show that I have passed it. I must keep undiminished my love for Deshbandhu and for other co-workers. If I fail in that, I shall have failed in the test.

Deshbandhu's progress, during the last three or four months of his life was marvellous. Many must have had experience of his hot temper. His gentleness of which I had experience at Faridpur[2] went on increasing. The Faridpur speech was not written without due thought. It was a beautiful flower of mature thought. I observed him making progress even beyond that point. In Darjeeling, he had reached the

[1] 1872-1950; mystic, poet and philosopher; since 1910 lived at Pondicherry where he established an ashram. He was one of the 23 accused in the Alipore Bomb Case for which the regular trial started in October, 1908.

[2] Where Bengal Provincial Agricultural Conference was held in May 1925 under the presidentship of C. R. Das

fullest limit on this new direction. I never weary of describing my experiences during those five days. Everything that he did and said seemed to breathe love. His optimism was becoming stronger. He could be caustic about his enemies but I found no evidence of this during those five days. In fact he spoke about many of them but I found no bitter word in anything he said. Sir Surendranath's opposition had remained unchanged, but even for him Deshbandhu had nothing but regard. He wanted to win over SirSurendranath's heart. He wished that I, too, should try to do that. His advice was : "Try to win over as many as you can."

We talked at great length about how to carry on the struggle henceforward, what the Swaraj Party should do and what place the spinning-wheel occupied in the programme. We also drew up a plan of work of Bengal. That may even be put into execution. But where are the men to carry it out?

I left Darjeeling with a light heart. My fears had disappeared. I could see my path clearly before me the path of swaraj. But now the horizon is overcast with clouds. I was in a fright when the Lokamanya passed away. So far I had to plead only with one, but from now on, I thought, I would have to plead with many. I could explain my problems to him and seek his help to solve them. Instead, I would now have to discuss them with several leaders, and even then, I knew, they would not be able to solve them. The time had come when I had to wipe their tears.

The passing away of Deshbandhu has left me in greater difficulties. Deshbandhu meant Bengal. His consent was as good as a draft in my hand which I could cash without further difficulty. So far, my difficulties at the passing of Deshbandhu are similar to those at the passing away of the Lokamanya. But when the latter died, the path before us was clear. People had been filled with new hopes. They wanted to try their strength and make new experiments. Hindus and Muslims seemed to have become united.

But what is the position now? The sky overhead and the earth below. I have no fresh ideas to put forward. Hindus and Muslims are getting ready to fight each other. In the name of religion, they seem to have forgotten the dharma of national service. Brahmins and non-Brahmins are also fighting with each other. The Government believes that it can now do what it likes in the country. Civil disobedience seems to be far away. At this time, one would feel the passing of any

great soldier, but that of Das with his ten hands is a loss impossible to bear.

However, I believe in God and therefore, have not lost heart. God may sport with us as He wills. Why should we be miserable or happy because of anything He may do? Why should it make any difference to us if events over which we have no control end in one way rather than in another? I understand my duty. Maybe my understanding of it is wrong, but so long as I am convinced that it is my duty I should do it, and when I have done it my responsibility is over. I console myself with such attempts at philosophical reflection. My selfishness simply does not let me forget that I shall see Deshbandhu no more.

But how can Deshbandhu die? His physical frame has passed away. But can his virtues die? They still live. If we but cultivate them in ourselves, he lives in all of us. One who has served the world can never die. It is wrong to say that Rama and Krishna have left this world. Both live in the hearts of the thousands of their devotees. The same is true of Harishchandra[1] and others. By Harishchandra we do not mean his physical body; we mean truth. He still lives in countless Harishchandras who serve truth. So does Deshbandhu. His mortal body has perished. His spirit of service, his liberality, his love of the country, his self-sacrifice, his fearlessness—can we say that these, too, have perished? They will go on increasing in strength among the people, whether in greater or smaller measure.

And so Deshbandhu lives, though dead. As long as India lives, Deshbandhu lives. Let us, therefore, say, "Long live Deshbandhu!"

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-6-1925

48. "GANGA-SWARUP" BASANTI DEVI

Some years ago I described my meeting[2] with the late Ramabai Ranade. I had known her as an ideal widow.

This time Fate has decreed that I should describe a great hero's wife beginning to lead a widow's life.

[1] Legendary King of Ayodhya who gave up his wife, son, kingdom and wealth for the sake of truth

[2] *Vide* More thoughts about Widows", 16-5-1920.

I have known Basanti Devi since the year 1919. I came closer to her in 1921. I had heard a great deal about her goodness, her intelligence and her hospitality, and also had some experience of them. As I drew closer to Deshbandhu in Darjeeling, so did I to Basanti Devi. In her widowhood, I have come much closer to her. I have been practically by her side from the day they came from Darjeeling to Calcutta with Deshbandhu's body. My first meeting with her as a widow was in her son-in-law's house. She sat surrounded by a number of women. In the old days, as soon as I entered the house she herself would come out to receive and welcome me. Now that she was a widow, who would talk to me? I had to recognize her in the midst of all those women sitting as still as statues. For a minute, my eyes searched for her. Vermilion at the parting of the hair, *tika* on the forehead, betel-leaf in the mouth, bangles on the wrists, a bordered sari and a smiling face—without any of these signs how could I recognize Basanti Devi? I went and sat where I thought she should be and scanned the face. The sight was too much. Yes, I recognized the face. I found it difficult to keep back my tears, let alone hardening my heart and offering consolation.

Where was today the usual smile on her face? I tried in many ways to console her, to cheer her up and make her speak. After a long time I succeeded a little.

Devi smiled faintly.

That gave me courage and I said, "You cannot weep. If you do, others also will weep. We have quietened Mona (elder daughter) with the utmost difficulty. As for Baby (younger daughter) you know her condition. Sujata (daughter-in-law) has been crying uncontrollably and has barely stopped. You should have compassion on these. We want you to do many things yet."

The brave woman replied with great firmness of mind : "I will not weep. How can I, when tears don't come?" I understood what this meant and was satisfied. Crying lightens the heart. But this bereaved sister did not want to lighten her grief. She wanted to bear the burden. So, why should she weep? How could I say, now : "Come, let us brother and sister weep and pour out our grief to each other?"

A Hindu widow is an image of suffering. She has taken upon herself the misery of the world. She has learnt to find happiness in suffering, has accepted suffering as sacred.

Basanti Devi had no objection to eating any type of food. In the

period of her life up to 1920, all manner of delicacies were cooked in her kitchen and hundreds of people feasted in her house. She could not go without *pan* even for an hour. A box containing betel-leaves was always to be found with her.

And, now, she has given up all adornment, given up betel-leaves, sweet dishes and meat and fish too. All the time, her thoughts are fixed on her husband and on God.

I plead with many women to pay less attention to adorning their person, ask many of them to give up addictions. Rarely does any give up these things. But think what a widow does? The moment a Hindu woman becomes a widow, she gives up addictions and lays aside jewellery and other adornments as the snake casts off its slough. She needs neither persuasion nor help from anyone for doing that. Is there anything which custom does not make easy?

Is it a virtue or a sin to suffer in this way? We do not find this practice among the followers of any other religion. Could the authors of the Hindu Shastras have made a mistake? When I see Basanti Devi, I do not think they have; I see in the practice the purest spirit of dharma. The widow's manner of life is the glory of Hinduism. Let the world say what it will, the life of dharma has its glory in renunciation, not in enjoyment.

But what is that widow's life which the Hindu Shastras admire and praise? Certainly not that of the fifteen-year-old girl who does not know even the meaning of marriage. For a girl married and widowed in childhood, a widow's life means not virtue, but sin. If the god of love should himself try to tempt Basanti Devi, he would be burnt to ashes. Basanti Devi has a third eye, like Siva's. But what does a fifteen-year-old girl know about the beauty of widowhood? For her, such a life is cruelty. In the increasing number of such widows, I see the destruction of Hinduism. In women like Basanti Devi leading the customary life of widows, I see a source of strength for dharma. There is no inviolable law that in all circumstances, in all places and at all times a widow must remain a widow and lead a widow's life. This is a dharma only for a woman who can follow it.

It is good to swim in the waters of tradition, but to sink in them is suicide.

There should be the same rule for men as for women. Rama acted in this manner. He could not bear separation from Sita, whom

he had sent away. He himself sent her away and yet suffered for what he had done. After she had left, he gradually lost the light and power which were his. He abandoned Sita physically, but installed her as the queen of his heart. From that time onwards, he felt no interest in dressing himself well or in other kingly pleasures. He attended, disinterestedly, to the affairs of his kingdom as a matter of duty and lived a peaceful life.

Hinduism will remain imperfect as long as men do not accept suffering as Basanti Devi did and, like her, withdraw their interest from the pleasures of this life. Sweets to the one and thorns to the other—such perverted justice can never be, and is not, acceptable in God's court. But among the Hindus at present, disregarding the divine law, men have ordained perpetual widowhood for women and conferred on themselves the right to fix marriage with another partner, on the cremation-ground itself.

Basanti Devi has not till now shed a drop of tear in anyone's presence. Even then, the light on her face has not returned. It seems as dull as if she had recovered from a long illness. Seeing her in this condition, I requested her to go out with me for a little fresh air. She did come along with me and sat in the car but did not speak a word. I talked about many things. She listened, but hardly said anything in reply. She had a drive, but felt miserable afterwards. She could not sleep the whole night. "Cursed that I am, I enjoyed today what was so dear to me. Is this all that my grief comes to?" She spent the whole night in such thoughts. Bhombal (her son) came and told me about this. Today is my silence day. I simply wrote on a piece of paper : "We must cure mother of this madness. There are many things which our beloved one may have loved and which we have no choice but to do. Mother did not have a drive for enjoyment, she had it for the sake of her health. She was in great need of fresh air. We must strengthen her and take care of her health. We must keep her alive so that we may be worthy of the legacy of Father's work and carry it forward. Convey this to Mother."

He said : "Mother had asked me not to tell you this. But I could not help telling you; so I have come. It would be better if, for some time, you did not ask her to go out in a car."

Poor Bhombal! He who would not be controlled by anyone, God bless him, has become today as meek as a lamb.

But what should we think about this good widow? Widow-hood

may be cherished but it appears unbearable. Sudhanva[1] kept dancing in the cauldron of boiling oil but a person like me, watching the scene, would tremble with the thought of his agony. May chaste and virtuous women ever cling to their suffering. Their suffering is not suffering, but happiness. Thinking of them, many have found deliverance and many more will find it in future.

Jai Basanti Devi!

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-6-1925

49. WHO IS TO BLAME?

A volunteer writes :[2]

I realize the truth of these words everywhere here in Bengal. It is only recently that we thought of going into the villages. At first, we wanted things from the village people. It is only now that we are going to the villages in order to give the people something. How can we expect to win their confidence in such a short time? It often happens that a father takes years to win his son's confidence. We have to win back our honoured place among the village people, and will get nothing through impatience. Some persons serve their own interests under the guise of service. What other means do the village people have, except experience, to distinguish between such persons and genuine workers? Public workers, therefore, must cultivate patience, forbearance, selflessness and such other virtues. The masses can have no other knowledge but experience to guide them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-6-1925

[1] Son of King Hansadhwaj of Champavati in the *Mahabharata*. He was thrown into boiling oil for disobeying his father, who was an atheist, but he came out unscathed because of his devotion to God.

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated on the basis of his experience that, if villagers did not trust workers, the fault lay with the latter.

50. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

June 29, 1925

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letter[1] and the article on "Father Forgive Them" passage. I must have the original letter before I can make use of your article. Please search and send. I am fixed up in Bengal till the end of July. I hope Barasaheb[2] is suffering less pain.

Pray give him my love and tell him I constantly think of him.

Yours,

MOHAN

C. F. ANDREWS, ESQ.
C/O PRINCIPAL S. RUDRA
SOLON
SIMLA HILLS

From the original : C.W. 6049

51. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Monday [*June 29, 1925*][3]

CHI. DEVDAS,

If I do not write this postcard, I am afraid, I may not be able to write at all. I have your beautiful letter. Your style and Gujarati both are excellent. It would be nice if you start writing something for *Y. I.* and *N. J.* I am busy collecting funds. Krishnadas has not received the letters. It is good that Ba spins. I too cannot tell you the names and particulars of all the progeny of Ota Gandhi. It is well that you havestarted collecting this literature. I have heard that Uttamchand Bapa had six sons. Khushalbhai may be able to give you more information. Tell Bal Gangadhar that I am very happy that he has come. I have no misgivings whatever about him. Doing good to others never harms anyone. Even the mistakes of Balkrishna lead ultimately to his advancement.

[1] This is not available.
[2] Presumably, Sushil Kumar Rudra, who was ailing
[3] The postmark is "Kalighat, June 30, '25". Monday was June 29.

I am celebrating the *shraddha* of Deshbandhu in the most fitting way.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original : G.N. 2045

52. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Monday [*June 29, 1925*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. I have written something quite differently about Alwar this time. I am afraid it will take a little time to decide about my going there. I think it will be possible to go only in the beginning of August. I intend to pass the last week of July in the Ashram and then start the tour. I am sure you will come on the 16th. I hope you received the wires I sent there to you and to Sabarmati.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : original : G.N. 2854

53. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Monday [*June 29, 1925*][2]

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. You should look out for various occasions to serve Father. As a matter of fact you hardly have to search for them. Nevertheless I understand what you say. Since Dahyabhai attends Navajivan office let him work there diligently. He will derive much benefit by working under Swami's[3] discipline. That is good education; even if he is asked to work as a labourer, he should do it conscientiously. I shall drop in some time at Ahmedabad, but God knows when I shall be able to do so. Do keep me informed about

[1] The postmark is "Calcutta, June 30, '25". Monday was June 29.
[2] As in the source
[3] Swami Anandanand; then manager of Navajivan Press

Father's health. If Father is weak in spelling, should you too be so? One must emulate one's father's virtues, never his weaknesses.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 26

54. TELEGRAM TO SUDHIR RUDRA[1]

CALCUTTA,

June 30, 1925

MY HEART, MY PRAYERS WITH YOU IN YOUR GRIEF. GOD WILL GIVE YOU ALL STRENGTH BEAR LOSS. LOVE.

GANDHI

From the original : C.W. 6050. Courtesy : Mrs. S. K. Rudra, Allahabad

55. SPEECH AT UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE, CALCUTTA[2]

June 30, 1925

Mahatmaji . . . paid a glowing tribute to Deshbandhu. He said that Deshbandhu was always a warrior from top to toe. He had been engaged in many a battle and had never spared his adversaries. He had never, so far as he remembered, taken undue advantage of anybody. He would never forget his last five days' stay with Deshbandhu at Darjeeling because he came to realize what was noble in his life. He had no ill will towards any of his opponents. Deshbandhu was always anxious to co-operate with everybody in working for the good of his country. Chittaranjan Das conquered the whole country with sincere love and he was decorated with the title "Deshbandhu". The country had shown to him a sincere respect for his great sacrifice which he did for the good of his countrymen. Throughout his tour in East Bengal Mahatmaji came in contact with thousands of people young and old and by their feeling he could understand what affection, love and respect they had for Deshbandhu Das. He was still receiving hundreds of letters daily from the students who paid homage to his sacred

[1] This was sent on S. K. Rudra's death. It was delivered to the addressee at Solon on July 1.

[2] A large number of students and leading citizens of Calcutta attended the meeting at which Gandhiji presided.

and loving memory. Deshbandhu was a father to the young men of Bengal, and always took every one of them under his protection for life. In his death Mahatmaji thought that whole student community had lost their true leader who could lead them to their goal if God had kept him alive for a few days more. His generosity was boundless and his love for the students was also boundless. Proceeding, the speaker said he did not come to the meeting to sing the praises of that great son of Mother India, but he wanted the youth of Bengal to realize with gratitude what Deshbandhu had done for them. He was confident that the youth of Bengal would help him in raising a suitable memorial for Deshbandhu Das. The speaker did not want them to come forward with their money but he advised them to go to their parents, friends and relations and collect money for the purpose. In conclusion, the Mahatma asked the young men of Bengal to finish the work which Deshbandhu had left unfinished to attain swaraj.[1]

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 1-7-1925

56. APPEAL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL FUND[2]

July 1, 1925

My capacity for writing original articles on the same subject is strictly limited. I must, therefore, turn to good account the request of the editor to write something on Deshbandhu. I am more concerned with making the best use of the wonderful appreciations that have already appeared than adding one more from me. As heirs to the great legacy left by him, we must deserve it by our action. I gratefully acknowledge the response from hundreds of men and women to the memorial fund. But it has got to come from thousands and tens of thousands if we are to reach ten lacs, as we must, within a short time. I hope that those who see these lines will not wait for a call, but will quickly send their subscription—not the least they can, but the best that is possible. They may collect, too, from their friends. Then they need no authority. They can become self-appointed volunteers. Here there is economy of time, maximum of results and minimum of chance of fraud.

I know that people are impatient to attain swaraj. Some think

[1] A sum of about Rs. 2,500 was collected on the spot and the purse was handed over to Gandhiji as the first instalment of the contribution of the members of the Institute.

[2] This was reproduced from the special "Deshbandhu Number" of *Forward*, 1-7-1925.

that a hospital as a memorial to Deshbandhu is a poor honour done to the memory of one who gave his life for swaraj. These do not know Deshbandhu. For him every noble deed done by an Indian was a step towards swaraj. Every successful corporate effort is a big step towards swaraj. We must have political power. It cannot long be withheld from us. But that power, whenever it comes, will be the ripe fruit of the labours of many for a common end. The collection of the fund, especially if it comes from lacs, be it in ever so small a coin, will be a striking demonstration not merely of the genuine love of the people but also of our organizing ability. To contribute therefore to the fund is for the time being the best appreciation of Deshbandhu.

The Hindustan Times, 14-7-1925

57. SPEECH ON THE "SHRADDHA" DAY OF C. R. DAS

CALCUTTA,
July 1, 1925

I speak often in the Ashram, but then it is before my own people; they understand and bear with me. Moreover, as occasion arises, I quote something from the *Gita*, and even then the talk would not be called a religious discourse. To me religion means living in the way prescribed by religion. A discourse may be in place occasionally, but not every religious man can give one. It is true, though, that anyone who gives such discourses should himself be a man of dedicated religious life.

The *Gita* is for me a perennial guide to conduct. From it I seek support for all my actions and, if, in a particular case, I do not find the needed support, I would refrain from the proposed action or at any rate feel uncertain about it. So, when despite my embarrassment I accepted the invitation to speak, I decided to say something about the meaning of birth and death. Every time I have suffered the loss of a relative or friend, I sought consolation in the *Gita*; and the one thing it teaches is that death is nothing to be mourned. If ever I have shed tears, it has been through weakness, it was in spite of myself. When I think how I was shocked at the news of Deshbandhu's death and how tears welled up in my eyes, I ascribe all that to my weakness. Let us look in the *Gita* today for some comfort.

I have often stated that the *Gita* is a great allegory. I simply cannot think that the battle it describes was an actual battle between two armies, and this belief of mine was confirmed when I read the *Mahabharata* in jail. The *Mahabharata* itself seems to me to be a great treatise on dharma. It contains historical incidents, but it is not history. When, for instance, we read about *sarpasatra*[1], can we rest in its literal meaning ? We should, then, have to swallow enough superstitions to choke us to death. The poet himself has warned us so emphatically, that he is not a historian. The *Gita*, then, describes the conflict within us; it is true that for this purpose it has used some historical incidents, but the aim behind them is to kindle a light in our hearts and impel us to examine them with its help. When you reach the concluding part of Chapter II, it becomes impossible even to suspect that the poem describes a historical battle. It seems strange that Arjuna should want to know the marks of a man firmly established in spiritual vision and that the Lord should explain them to a person all set for a battle.

But what I want to do is to explain to you the meaning of death. If you believe with me that the *Gita* is an allegory, you will also be able to understand the meaning of death as explained in it :

> What is non-Being is never known to have been, and what is Being is never known not to have been. Of both these the secret has been seen by the seers of the truth.[2]

This verse contains the whole meaning. Verse after verse states that the body is *asat*. *Asat* does not mean *maya*[3]; to say that the body is *asat* does not mean that it never came into existence at all; the statement simply means that it is transitory, perishable, that it is subject to change. And yet, we live our life as if it would last for ever. We worship it, we cling to it—all this is contrary to the teaching of Hinduism. If Hinduism has asserted anything in the clearest possible terms, it is that the body and all that we behold is *asat*. But there are probably no other people who fear death and cry and grieve over it as much as we do. In the *Mahabharata*, in fact, it is stated that lamentation after someone's death gives pain to the departed soul, and the *Gita*, too, was composed to remove the fear of death. Man's body

[1] Serpent sacrifice
[2] *Bhagawad Gita*, II, 16
[3] Illusion

wears out through continuous activity and death releases it from suffering. The more I think about the ceaselessly active life of Deshbandhu, the more I feel that he is alive today. While he lived in the body, he was not fully alive, but he is so today. In our selfishness, we believed that his body was all that mattered, whereas the *Gita* teaches—and I understand the truth of this more clearly as days pass—that all worry about a perishable thing is meaningless, is so much waste of time.

Non-Being simply does not exist, and Being never ceases to exist. Shakespeare was wrong when he said that the evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones.[1] The good and the true alone live for ever. The world remembers only those who did some good while they lived in it. It readily forgets that which was false and evil, and preserves only what is good. Take the example of Ramachandra. Personally, I believe him to be an incarnation of God, but I do not believe that he was guilty of no error while he lived in the body. Today, however, we regard him as perfect. Krishna, too, we regard as the plenary incarnation of Godhead. Among the millions of Hindus, you will not find today a single person who will see error in anything which Rama or Krishna did. This fact, too, reveals the meaning of the verse "What is non-Being is never known to have been". The world has preserved only what was imperishable in them, and no one knows anything about the perishable elements—their errors, if they committed any. We want to follow Deshbandhu's example. Is it his life in the body which we should follow as an example? Was it his body we adored? If that was so, would his dear, dear son light the fire which consumed it?

And so, in that verse, the *Gita* declares in the most emphatic language that we should follow truth in our lives and keep away from the unreal and the false, from deception. Very often our words do not express the truth, they become a form of deception. Anger is a form of untruth, desire, attachment, pride; all these are forms of untruth. We have to perform the *satra* of all these snakes. A living snake harms only the body, but these snakes infect every fibre in our being and threaten to harm even the *atman*. This, however, is never harmed. It never dies. If we know what is meant by *sat*, we shall also understand the real meaning of birth and death. The chemists say that when a

[1] *Julius Caesar*, III, ii. 75-6

candle burns nothing is destroyed; similarly, when the body dies and is consumed by fire, nothing is destroyed. Birth and death are two conditions of the same reality. It is wholly because of our selfishness that we lament the death of our dear one. When on that day I saw the crowds on the cremation-ground and observed no sigh of grief on their faces, for a moment I felt irritated, angry because they seemed to lack sense and did not even understand the gravity of the hour. But a little later I realized that it was they who were right. They had come there not with any selfish motive but merely to honour a noble life, to bear testimony to Deshbandhu's services and express their admiration for the supreme achievement of his life. Their joy had more truth and meaning in it than our grief. All admiration to the revered Basanti Devi, whom I did not even recognize when I first met her [after Deshbandhu's death], because she shed no tears before me. However, even one's face should not be touched with grief, one should have no feeling of sadness or gloom. Only if we have such a faith can it be said that we have understood the transitoriness of the body. It is not to the body that one is married. In marriage, two souls come together not to seek bodily pleasure but to strive for their own growth and refinement. When the body of one partner disappears, the union becomes all the closer. We have assembled today, therefore, not to shed tears. Let us, rather, think of Deshbandhu's virtues, the substance of his which will never die, and take them into our own lives.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 12-7-1925

58. A STRING OF QUESTIONS

1. In the account of your interview with some gentlemen belonging to the untouchable class at Faridpur, published in the issue of the *Young India* dated 14th May, 1925, you have asked them to do things by way of self-purification. Now what do you think by self-purification? What are the outer manifestations of self-purification? Does the self-purification consist in *kayik*, *manasik* and *vachanik* purification[1] or one of them alone?

Self-purification means cleansing oneself of all impurities whether of the mind, speech or body. The 'untouchable' friends were asked to think no evil, speak no untruth or abuse and to keep the

[1] Purification of the body, mind and speech

body pure by careful wash, pure food and avoidance of carrion or other impure food or intoxicating liquors or drugs.

2. If any class or individual attains that standard, can they or he be treated as untouchable?

Even if a person does not attain the standard and it is unattainable at once by most of us, he may not be regarded as an untouchable. It would go hard with us if that standard was applied to us.

3. There is no unity in food, drink or worship among all the Hindu classes. What do you think to be the first step to bring about that unity?

I am doing nothing to achieve such unity. Unity I hanker after is one of heart. It transcends these barriers and can subsist in spite of them. We worship the same God under diverse forms and names.

4. It is suggested that if entrance into public places of worship and confectionery shops be opened to sanitary, clean Hindus, that will be the first step to bring about unity. What is your opinion about it?

Places of public worship should be open to all who obey the laws of common decency. Who shall judge the standard of cleanliness in dress? These things are regulated not by law but by public opinion. A confectioner, if he is himself clean, would undoubtedly refuse to sell to those who are dirty. If he did not, he would lose his custom. But a confectioner who refuses to sell to an untouchable because he is so called, forfeits his right to carry on his business.

5. Your sense of untouchability is a difficult one. Even among higher-class Hindus, they do not drink water and eat cooked food from the hands of their *asanskrit* children. Do you call this untouchability?

I do not call that untouchability. I have explained scores of times that there is no such thing as a fifth *varna* in Hinduism. The untouchable, therefore, should have all the rights common to the four *varnas*.

6. Some suggest that instead of putting too much stress on the drinking of water, it is better to try to remove the sense of superiority and inferiority from the heart of higher-caste Hindus and increase mutual love and help. Do you approve of this suggestion?

I do approve of the suggestion where it is not made to cover hypocrisy. You shall judge a tree by its fruit. I never lay stress on drinking and eating. But I do and would when a man refuses to drink

at the hands of an untouchable because he is so called. For, then, the refusal is a sign of arrogation of superiority.

7. To that end spread of *Vaishnava* teaching by religious *kirtans* and religious feasting in a body irrespective of creed and caste is an easy and simple method. This method has been in vogue for more than four centuries. What is your opinion about this suggestion?

I have not studied the effect of these *kirtans*. But I would welcome any good method that will break down the wall of insolent superiority.

8. It is almost admitted that the Hindus of Bengal are a dying race. What do you think to be the principal causes of this gradual decay? What are the preventives of this decay? It is also admitted that there has been physical deterioration among the Hindus in height, strength and vitality. How to revive them?

I have seen the statements but I have seen no proof of Hindu deterioration. I should, however, believe the assertion that we are becoming physically weaker. The reasons are obvious. Our growing poverty and early marriages are two substantial causes for the decay. The one can be remedied by the charkha and the other by individuals resolutely refusing to marry their children, whether male or female, till they are over sixteen and nearer twenty. The later the better. I would run almost every imaginable risk and postpone marriage till a boy or girl is well advanced and is capable of shouldering the burden and is perfectly healthy. The way to do it is for those who feel the necessity of reform to initiate it themselves and advocate it among their neighbours. Those who desire the reform and would minimize chances of risk must bring up their children in healthier and purer surrounding than they have at present.

Young India, 27-7-1925

59. MY INCAPACITY

It would be most comfortable for my pride if I could give every applicant for help the satisfaction he may desire. But here is a sample of my hopeless incapacity.

> Of what use is your leadership or Mahatmaship if you cannot stop cow-killing by asking the Mussalmans to stop it? Look at your studied silence on the Alwar atrocities and your criminal silence about the affront put by the Nizam upon Panditji whom you delight to call your respected elder brother and

one of the first among the public servants and whom you have yourself acquitted of any malice against Mussalmans.

Thus have argued not the same but several persons. The first rebuke mentioned was the last to be received and it has proved the proverbial last straw. There is a telegram before me asking me to request the Mussalmans not to kill cows as sacrifice on *Bakr-Id.* I thought it was time for me at least to offer an explanation over my silence. I was prepared to live down the charge regarding Panditji, although it was a charge brought by a dear friend. He was almost apprehensive about my fame. He thought I would be accused of fear of Mussalmans and what not. But I was firm in my resolve not to take any public notice of the ban on Panditji. There was no fear of his misunderstanding me. And I knew that he stood in no need of my protection. He will survive all the bans that can be declared against him by any temporal power. His philosophy is his stay. I have watched him at close quarters amid many a crisis. He has stood unmoved. He knows his work and prosecutes it without elation or perturbation in fair weather or foul. I, therefore, laughed to my heart's content when I heard of the ban. Strange are the ways of potentates. Nothing that I could write in the pages of *Young India* would, I knew, induce H.E.H. the Nizam to recall his fiat. If I had the honour of a personal acquaintance, I would have straightway written to the ruler of Hyderabad respectfully telling him that the ban on Panditji could do no good to his State, much less to Islam. I would have even advised him to offer Panditji his hospitality when he went to Hyderabad and could have cited such example from the lives of the Prophet and his companions. But I do not possess that honour. And I knew that a public reference by me might not even reach his ears. Save, therefore, for adding to the acerbity already existing, it could have served no purpose. And as I could not add to it, even if I could not diminish it, I chose to be silent. And my present reference I propose to use for the sake of advising such Hindus as would listen to me not to feel irritated over the incident nor to make it a cause of complaint against Islam or Mussalmans. It is not the Mussalman in the Nizam that is responsible for the ban. Arbitrary procedure is an attribute of autocracy whether it be Hindu or Mussalman. We must devise means of checking autocratic vagaries without seeking to destroy the Indian States. The remedy is cultivation of enlightened and forceful public opinion. The process must begin, as it has begun, in British India proper; because it is naturally freer, being

administered directly, unlike the States which are administered through the vassals of the Emperor. They, therefore, reproduce the evils of the British system without containing the few safeguards that direct British administration provides for its own sake. In the Indian States, therefore, orderliness depends more upon the personal character and whims of the chiefs for the time being than upon the constitution or rather the constitutions under which the States' government is regulated. It follows, therefore, that real reform of the States can only come when the chilling control of the British Imperial system is at least tempered by the freedom of British India secured by the disciplined power of the people. Not that, therefore, all the journals have to observe silence. Reference to abuses in the States is undoubtedly a necessary part of journalism, and it is a means of creating public opinion. Only, my scope is strictly limited, I have taken up journalism not for its sake but merely as an aid to what I have conceived to be my mission in life. My mission is to teach by example and precept under severe restraint the use of the matchless weapon of satyagraha which is direct corollary of non-violence and truth. I am anxious, indeed I am impatient, to demonstrate that there is no remedy for the many ills of life save that of non-violence. It is a solvent strong enough to melt the stoniest heart. To be true to my faith, therefore, I may not write in anger or malice. I may not write idly. I may not write merely to excite passion. The reader can have no idea of the restraint I have to exercise from week to week in the choice of topics and my vocabulary. It is a training for me. It enables me to peep into myself and make discoveries of my weaknesses. Often my vanity dictates a smart expression or my anger a harsh adjective. It is a terrible ordeal but a fine exercise to remove these weeds. The reader sees the pages of *Young India* fairly well dressed up and sometimes with Romain Rolland, he is inclined to say 'what a fine old man this must be'. Well, let the world understand that the fineness is carefully and prayerfully cultivated. And if it has proved acceptable to some whose opinion I cherish, let the reader understand that when that fineness has become perfectly natural, i.e., when I have become incapable of evil and when nothing harsh or haughty occupies, be it momentarily, my thought-world, then and not till then, my non-violence will move all the hearts of all the world. I have placed before me and the reader no impossible ideal or ordeal. It is man's prerogative and birthright. We have lost the paradise only to regain it. If it takes time, then it is but a speck in the complete time-circle. The

Divine Teacher of the *Gita* knew when he said that millions of our days are equal to only a day of Brahma. Let us not, therefore, be impatient and in our weakness think that non-violence is a sign of soft brains. It is not.

But I must hasten to the end. The reader knows now why I have been silent about Alwar. I have no data to go upon. Alwar can laugh with as much disdain as the Nizam at anything I may say or write. If all the reports that are published are true, they are proof of Dyerism double distilled. But I know that I have for the moment no remedy. I watch with admiration the effort to the Press to secure at least a decent public inquiry into the awful allegations. I note the silent movement of Panditji's diplomacy cutting its gentle way. Why need I bother then? Let those who appeal to me for prescriptions know that I am not an infallible *kaviraj* with an inexhaustible pharmacopoeia. I am a humble, groping specialist with hardly two indistinguishable drugs in my little pocket. The specialist pleads present incapacity to deal with the evils complained of.

And to the lovers of the cow, have I not already said that I no longer profess, as I did only a short time ago, to claim any influence over Hindus or Mussalmans? Till I have regained it, *gomata* will forgive her humble child that I claim to be. My life is wound up with hers. She knows I am incapable of betraying her. But she understands my incapacity if her other adorers do not.

Young India, 2-7-1925

60. NOTES

ALL-INDIA MEMORIAL

I have been asked to inaugurate an All-India Deshbandhu memorial as I have, in consultation with the Bengal friends, inaugurated an all-Bengal memorial. I can assure the reader that the matter has not escaped my attention at all. I have been conferring with the friends who are by me. But we have not yet evolved a formula. For the all-Bengal memorial there was no difficulty in arriving at the conclusion. Deshbandhu's trust-deed was there as the pole-star. But the all-India memorial is not quite so easy a matter. The delay is unavoidable. Probably, by the time this is in print, a conclusion will have been reached. For the present, I must ask everybody to accept my assurance that there will be no unnecessary delay in making the

announcement. That there should be an all-India memorial I have not a shadow of a doubt. The universal testimony of grief received from every nook and corner of India is the most eloquent proof of Deshbandhu's universal popularity.

FROM 'A REVOLUTIONARY'

Shrimati Basanti Devi has handed me an anonymous letter received by her from 'a revolutionary', from which I take the following :

> Tears roll down and blur my sight in my attempt to write to you at this moment. I tried to go for a visit to 148, but could not sum up my courage to stand before you. The sight is heart-rending.
>
> In the death of Deshbandhu Das a great man has fallen—perhaps the greatest the country has produced. There is none to fill up the gap. I am one of those who came to know him not when he gave up his extensive practice at the Bar and its princely income, but long before that when out of his seclusion—as it were—he came out to defend Sreejut Aurobindo Ghose in the Alipur Bomb Case, and from that time came to love him, came to have the highest regard and admiration for and devotion to him. He, too, always had a very soft and warm corner for us in his heart though he has not seen eye to eye with us in politics. For I am one of those who were, in the Partition days, wrongly called Anarchists and who are now very wrongly called the "Revolutionaries". He knew we were much misunderstood and misrepresented and much maligned because of our love of freedom for our common Motherland. To everyone of us he always extended a brother's hand, always trying to guide us in the right path. We sadly miss him today. We are overwhelmed with grief today to his death, for we know there is no man in the country whom we can turn to in our hour of sore need.
>
> Leaders will come and leaders will go; but Deshbandhu Das will never come. He was the hope and inspiration of the people. He was the idol of the nation. His help and guidance were always, as it were, at our disposal and our services, nay our very lives, he knew, were at his command. And here I need only assure you, my dear sister, that our services—nay our lives—are, and shall ever continue to be, at your command.

The portion omitted is a reassurance of sympathy. This letter is an unsolicited testimonial of Deshbandhu's views on revolutionary activities. The reason for his hold on young Bengal is to be sought in his fatherly care of them in spite of their faults. He loved them not because he liked their methods but because he wished to wean them from their ways. Will those who did not listen to him whilst he was

alive listen to the voice of his spirit which says to them 'not through violence lies the way to India's freedom'? Will they trust to his riper judgment rather than their own?

AN ERROR?

Here is a letter from the Secretary, District Congress Committee, Pabna :[1]

I appreciate the letter as it expects from me the utmost accuracy of statement and scrupulous impartiality. I am anxious to live up to the expectation as far as it is humanly possible. But, in spite of all my care, I may do an injustice to some and may be unduly biassed in favour of others; after all both are injustices in the long run. A man or an institution that is undeservedly belauded may even suffer more than the one unjustly decried. But in the case in point I have been most guarded. And whilst almost everything that the secretary says may have been true at one time, it was not true at the time I wrote. I was not adjudging the relative merits of the institutions named nor comparing their account. I merely stated that, at the time of writing there were so many khaddar-producing institutions which I had visited. I included in these Satsang Ashram, though it was the latest recruit. I saw more than 40 wheels going when I visited the Ashram. Among those spinning were the relatives of the founder, including his wife. I was shown too, khaddar woven at the place. But above all, Deshbandhu, at whose instance I visited the Ashram, had told me that the founder had decided to make spinning and production of khaddar one of its principal activities. The manager who was my guide during my visit confirmed that statement. I would have been unjust if I had not, after all this evidence before me, included the Ashram as one of the khaddar centres. I admit that, at the present moment, there can be no comparison between the Satsang Ashram and the Abhoy Ashram. The letter is as old as, if not older than, the Khadi Pratishthan and was founded chiefly for khaddar and the wheel. Its production is only next to that of Khadi Pratishthan, and [it] has branches in several parts. But my purpose in writing the article in question was not to examine the relative merits, but to bring to the notice of the public the

[1] Not reproduced here. This drew Gandhiji's attention to an error in the article "Khadi Pratishthan", 12-7-1925, in which he wrote of a Satsang Ashram at Pabna as a khaddar manufacturing centre comparable to the Abhoy Ashram at Comilla. According to the correspondent, the Ashram did little work of this kind and actually helped to promote sale of foreign cloth.

possibilities of Bengal for khaddar propaganda and its premier khaddar organization as a model. I should certainly be pained, if it is true that there is a store conducted in Pabna under the aegis of Satsang Ashram for the sale of foreign cloth.

'A REVOLUTIONARY IN THE MAKING'

You are too philosophical and too abstruse for me. We must for the time being, therefore, agree to differ and pray for each other till we meet some day in the course of my wanderings. Your decision to add carding to spinning appeals to me most forcibly. I hope that you will make discoveries of the hidden powers of the spinning-wheel and the carding-bow. You can infect your surrounding, too, with your zeal for spinning and, if it becomes successful, as it can be, when all who are ready-made revolutionaries or who are on the verge of it or are in the making, devote their undoubted talents and energy to the great task, they will find that a bloody revolution is not necessary for our country's salvation. Let these friends of mine help me to make the spinning-wheel hum, let them help me to make the villagers busy and happy and, if even then, we have not succeeded in bringing the Englishmen to book, they will catch me in my weakest moment and may possibly claim me as their convert. And then, like all converts, they may expect me to outstrip them in my red activities.

AN ANCIENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY

When I was at Santiniketan, Mr. Andrews handed me the following extracts from a celebrated Tamil poet, Vemana[1], on untouchability :

BOOK II

135. Consider not him a pariah who is so by birth; he who breaks his word is far viler. He who reproaches the pariah is (go to) worse than him (*sic*).

156. Why should you revile a pariah when you see him? This is merely unmannerly language. Of what caste is He who speaks in the pariah?

BOOK III

111. "Thou art defiled and unclean, touch me not!" they cry. What limits are there to defilement? What is its source? All human bodies are equally unclean; defilement is born with ourselves in the body.

162. They that are born Sudras, and yet revile Sudras; who hold themselves twice-born and rely on their title; still, if unable to restrain their

[1] Vemama was a Telugu poet who flourished in the early part of the fifteenth century.

hearts, are the lowest of Sudras.

164. If a man still has in his heart the principles of a pariah, and yet scorns pariahs, how should he become twice-born, while devoid of every good quality?

217. If we carefully observe and examine the universe, we shall see that all castes equally originated therein; then all are equal; surely all men are brothers.

223. There is not a viler wretch in the earth than the man who scorns other men, calling them Sudras. After his death he shall fall into hell.

227. Why should we constantly revile the pariah? Are not his flesh and blood the same as ours? And of what caste is He who pervades the pariah (as well as all other men)?

231. Though a man be by birth an outcaste, if he orders his heart aright he is no outcaste; he who can [not] govern his affections is the vilest of the vile.

234. His mother was a prostitute and his wife a pariah, yet Vasishtha was the tutor to the noble Rama : by austerities he became a Brahmin, but if you look to his caste, what is it like?

The extracts show that the Hindu heart was sorely distressed over the inhuman treatment of the so-called untouchables. There is no equivocation about Vemana's emphatic denunciation of the practice of degrading and suppressing our own kith and kin.

Young India, 2-7-1925

61. DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL FUND

Friends have pressed it upon me that, in the interest of the Memorial Fund that is being collected, it is necessary for me not to leave Calcutta at the present moment for the projected tour. Whilst I recognize the usefulness of my presence, after comparing notes with Satcowri Babu, I have come to the conclusion that the tour already advertised ought not to be abandoned. After all, the collections that are pouring in come from thousands of grateful hearts. Personally I have never entertained the slightest doubt about the response of Bengal. We are not an ungrateful nation, and Bengal is not [to] be surpassed by any province in gratefulness. Given the proper cause, Bengal is capable of rising to the highest height. And what cause can be more proper and sacred, more insistent, than a memorial in honour of Deshbandhu? I do not, therefore, regard my presence in Calcutta as essential for ensuring the continuous flow, and shall carry out the tour in the full confidence that the subscriptions will continue with

unabated perseverance, until the whole of the sum of ten lakhs is made up. I see that, at the time of writing this note, the total collections amount to over Rs. 2,40,000, of which over Rs. 61,000/-, being today's collection, has to be still delivered to the treasurer. If anything like the present rate of progress continues—and there is no reason why it ought not to—we shall reach ten lakhs by the middle of this month. That we were not able to collect the whole sum by the end of June means no reflection on Bengal. It was possible, but only just possible, to complete the collection in the eight days that were available. It pre-supposed a perfect organization or ability and willingness on the part of a few to find the whole sum. I can almost say that, where ever I have gone, I have gone, I have found the will to pay, but owing to the great depression in trade, the ability to pay large sums has been lacking. And it must be frankly confessed that nowhere in India are we sufficiently organized to reach the names for small collections amongst them in a short time. It is a magnificient tribute to Deshbandhu's memory that, with the very imperfect organization that the Committee have been able to bring into being, small sums are pouring in such a manner as to keep at least six workers at work, receiving monies from early morning to 10 o'clock at night and even later, not to mention a number of clerks that Sir Rajendra Nath has put on the work of receiving subscriptions and copying the very long lists, containing the names of subscribers, of annas, pice and even half pice. Whilst, therefore, I shall undertake to finish the balance of the Bengal tour without any misgivings, I wish to notify it to the friends who have invited me to different places mentioned in the tour programme, that my principal work in the tour will be to deliver the living message of the late patriot and to collect subscriptions for the memorial. And I hope that they will so arrange the programme in the respective places as to enable maximum amounts to be collected. I trust that they will not spend much money on reception arrangements. I suggest that all decoration will be carefully eschewed and the collections made for reception be saved to the utmost extent possible and be devoted to the Memorial Fund, as is already being done in North Calcutta. I would like here gratefully to mention the fact that telegraphic and postal money orders are pouring in from all parts of Bengal and all other parts of India where Bengalis are domiciled.

I may add that those who are at present receiving monies at 148, Russa Road, will continue to do so in my temporary absence which will begin from part of next Saturday to Wednesday following. I

expect to return to Calcutta on Thursday week, the 9th instant, leaving for Serajganj and other places the same day and returning again Sunday morning, the 12th instant.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 2-7-1925

62. RAINING BANGLES

It was a grand sight—the mass meeting on the Maidan. The arrangements made by the volunteers were perfect. Not a man moved from his seat up to the time of the passing of the resolution in solemn silence, the whole of the great audience standing for full one minute. I have never witnessed in Bengal a meeting so dignified, so solemn and so respectful. I tender my congratulations to those who gathered at the Maidan and the volunteers who carried out the arrangements. I am sorry that I was unable to attend the Town Hall meeting, much as I had intended to. I was detained for over an hour, i.e., up to 7.45 at the ladies' meeting. This meeting was a wonderful sight. In response to the appeal made to them, they rained gold bangles, rings and necklaces. Besides over Rs. 500/-, sixty gold bangles, six chains, sixteen rings, some of them studded, and over twenty ear-rings were given by these devoted daughters of India. I hope that the ladies of Calcutta will continue the work begun at the meeting and those who had no chance of attending the meeting will send in their quota. The simplest of collecting among the ladies is for those who care to collect only amongst friends. I understand that there has been on previous occasions a great deal of fraudulent collection on the part of unauthorized persons; and as even authority has been found to have been manufactured, the Committee has not shouldered the responsibility of issuing letters of authority to ladies. It is for that reason that I lay emphasis upon those who will, collecting only amongst their friends, so as to avoid all possibility of fraud.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 2-7-1925

63. ADVICE TO HINDUS [1]

CALCUTTA,
July 2, 1925

At the Hindu quarters, where Mr. Gandhi spoke to the Hindus, Maulana Azad was also present. Mr. Gandhi asked the Hindus to leave their lathis and purify their minds. He said that the Hindus had done wrong by molesting their Mohammedan brethren. His information was that no *kurbani* (slaughter) took place before the eyes of the Hindus. Even if there was a *kurbani* the Hindus had no right to kill men. As it was the injunction of the Hindu Shastra to protect the cow, it was also the injunction to protect men in order to protect the cow. They had no right to kill men. To kill men was a greater crime than killing cows. If Hinduism meant righting a wrong by committing a greater crime then his religion was not Hinduism. Mr. Gandhi said :

I have come to help you, if you have committed any crime. I would ask the culprit to come forward and say : 'I have killed or wounded men'. Let him confess to the police and go to jail or be hanged.

The Hindu, 3-7-1925

64. STATEMENT TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

CALCUTTA,
July 2, 1925

At about 4 p.m. whilst I was attending a meeting of signatories to the Memorial, Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta gave the meeting the information that , there was a man waiting outside with a report of a serious riot in the coolie lines at Kidderpore dock. We immediately asked the man to come inside and, hearing his report, I suggested to Mr. Sen Gupta that he might telephone and enquire what the matter really was. He, however, preferred to motor himself and find out the situation and on reaching there, the scene of trouble, he sent a telephone message to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Saheb asking him to go there and take me with him. Maulana Saheb came and we immediately motored. This was about 5.30 p.m. On the way, we f ound a large number of Mussalmans in an excited state saying that

[1] Riots had broken out in Calcutta on the occasion of *Bakr-Id*. *Vide* also the following item.

many Mussalmans had been killed. They had lathis with them. Maulana Saheb pacified them and told them that he and I were going to investigate and that, whatever had happened, they must not think of taking revenge for what they might consider wrong done by Hindus. They listened to Maulana Saheb and consented to disperse. On reaching the gate, we met Mr. Sen Gupta who told us that when he arrived there, there was a free fight going on which was stopped with some difficulty. Police were guarding the approaches and the compound seemed to have been cleared of strangers. We then went to Coolie barracks and on the way met a large crowd of Hindus armed with lathis. Upon enquiring, they said they had gathered there in self-defence as they were afraid of being attacked by Mussalmans. I spoke to them at some length and told them that the information at our disposal went to show that Hindus had mercilessly assaulted Mussalmans who were numerically much weaker than they. And I told them that, if they had done wrong, they should apologize. One of them said that a cow was killed in the lines contrary to custom and that enraged the coolies. We then went to the spot where the cow was said to have been killed. Upon reaching, we found there was no trace whatsoever of any cow having been killed on the spot that was shown to us. There were parts of a carcass without the skin. Mussalmans present told us that the cow was killed in a mosque and the meat, after the skinning, was brought to their homes in their carriage. There was no blood or any other mark of slaughter. The Commissioner of Police, Mr. Tegart, was present whilst we were making enquiry. So far as I can judge the blame appears to me to be wholly that of Hindus. I told accordingly, and I did not find any serious contradiction. The Hindus even asked for forgiveness of Mussalmans and said that they would not repeat the wrong. Up to that time, according to information in the possession of the Commissioner of Police, no deaths had occurred, though, among many injured Mussalmans, two were in a serious state. Maulana Saheb pacified the Mussalmans and told them that they ought not to give any credence to exaggerated reports and up to that time no one had died. He asked them all to disperse quietly which they consented to do. Assuming the truth of what we heard and saw, there is no doubt that Hindu coolies were entirely in the wrong and that they had hurt innocent Mussalmans and made themselves responsible for at least one death which, as I now understand, has occurred. It is terrible to contemplate that, according to information given to me by the Associated Press representative, there is not a single

Hindu wounded amongst those who were sent to the hospital. I can only hope that wrong-doers will deliver themselves to the authorities.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 3-7-1925

65. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KHARAGPUR

July 4, 1925

From the Indian Institute Mahatmaji was taken to the Indian Recreation ground where about 20,000 persons had assembled all sitting on the ground. Several European officials of the B. N. Railway were seen present at the meeting and eagerly watching Mahatmaji who addressed the people in Hindi. He referred to the deplorable Hindu-Muslim riot at Kidderpore on the *Bakr-Id* day and said that the blame was entirely on the side of the Hindus. He very eloquently pleaded for Hindu-Muslim unity and expected the Hindus not to interfere with the observance of the religious rites by the Muslims. He also requested the latter not to wound the feelings of their Hindu brethren by anything they did.

At the conclusion he appealed for contribution in cash to the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund and a large sum of money was collected on the spot.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 7-7-1925

66. DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

A friend writes :[1]

It is necessary to correct the language of this letter. I do not remember to have said that we need not be concerned even if a satyagrahi is unjustified in his satyagraha. There is risk of harm in every wrong step. But I have certainly said that, if a satyagrahi is in the wrong, he himself will have to suffer, and he will deserve to suffer. A satyagrahi is not to be held responsible for the suffering which may be caused to the person against whom his satyagraha is directed, for a satyagrahi never wishes to inflict suffering on the other party. If the latter feels hurt or suffers, the satyagrahi need not blame himself. If I start a fast with a pure motive and the fast causes suffering to my co-workers, I must resign myself to that.

In the case imagined [in the letter], a father is said to be angry. A satyagrahi will never become angry and, if he does become in spite of himself, he will, till his anger has subsided and he has recovered his composure, take no step which may have an effect on the person who

[1] The letter is not translated here.

is the cause of his anger. Should the satyagrahi, after long and careful deliberation, still think that what his parents have done is wrong, he may certainly try to rectify it, maintaining the utmost respect towards them while doing so; if, in spite of his respectful behaviour, they commit suicide, he need not feel troubled in his conscience. The parents alone would be to blame if in their folly they kill themselves. Why should a son hold himself responsible if his parents invite suffering on themselves by their own actions? If they ask him to do something which is a sin and, on his refusing to obey, they commit suicide, how is he to blame? Prahlad continued to repeat the name of God. This enraged Hiranyakashipu who in the end was destroyed. Prahlad is in no way to be held responsible for this result. Rama honoured his father's word and in the event Dasharatha died; the former is not, on that account, to be held guilty of Dasharatha's death. The subjects were submerged in a sea of grief but Rama hardened his heart and kept his pledge. So did Bhishma despite the intense suffering of Satyavati.[1] The main thing to be borne in mind about this matter is that the urge for satyagraha does not come from anyone. It must be spontaneous. Rama did not consult his elders and gurus before deciding to go and dwell in the forest. In fact, there were enough priests who told him that he would be committing a sin by going to dwell in the forest, and would commit none by refusing to go. But he followed what he thought was his duty, and went to the forest, and thereby won immortal fame. In this unhappy land of ours, people have become impotent to such an extent that on the flimsiest excuse persons threaten to kill themselves or fast unto death. We must not submit to such threats, even when we have reason to believe that they are likely to be carried out. I have often explained in *Navajivan* the difference between a fast which is satyagraha and a fast which is *duragraha*[2].

The same friend gives another instance as follows :

A husband's duty is to provide shelter, food and clothing to his wife appropriate to their circumstances and within his means. A man who has grown poor cannot provide for his wife the luxuries which he could when he was better off. A husband who lives in ignorance may

[1] In the *Mahabharata*, to facilitate the marriage of his father, King Santanu, with Satyavati, Bhishma had taken a vow that he would never accept the throne, nor marry.

[2] Firmness in a wrong cause

lead, and help his wife to lead, a life of pleasure with dancing and drinking and foreign things to wear. Likewise, on awakening he will reform his life and also want the wife to reform hers. One needs to exercise discretion in this matter. The accepted idea in society is that the wife should follow the husband. But a husband has certainly no right to compel his wife or a father his children in matters like this. Anyone who, having himself adopted khadi, forces his wife and adult sons and daughters to do the same commits a sin. The person is not bound, however, to buy foreign cloth for them to wear. Grown-up sons, if they are not happy with the situation, may separate from the father. The wife's position is difficult. It is not so easy for her to leave the husband. She is generally incapable of supporting herself. I can, therefore, conceive situations in which, if the wife is not ready to follow the husband, it may be the latter's duty to buy foreign cloth for her. Giving up the use of foreign cloth is like changing one's religion. There is, and can be, no rule that every time the husband changes religion the wife too should change hers. The husband should let his wife follow her own religion or way of life, and *vice versa*. In such a case, therefore, the husband will agree to buy foreign cloth for his wife not because he has submitted to her threat, but because he knows it would be wrong to compel her to do anything against her own wishes. Suppose that the wife not only wants foreign cloth for herself, but also wants the husband to wear it and threatens to kill herself if he does not agree. The husband must not submit to such a threat.

The third instance is as follows :

I have not the slightest doubt in my mind that the son should not respect the practice of untouchability even if his conduct causes the utmost suffering to his father. The caution I gave when discussing the first case is relevant here too. This hard-hearted advice is not meant for one who has come to believe that the practice of untouchability is a sin because he has read it so described in my articles. It is meant only for those who are themselves convinced of its being a sin. The point is that so long as one holds an idea as an intellectual belief and no more, one must not disregard the duty, which has reference to the heart, of obeying one's parents. If Prahlad had learnt to repeat Rama's name at someone's suggestion, it would have been his duty to stop repeating it when forbidden by his father.

The fourth, and the last, instance is as follows :[1]

I do not believe that it is the duty of a husband or a wife to gratify his or her partner's desire. It is a kind of coercion for either partner to compel the other to share in his or her weakness. A husband and a wife have no right to use coercion in their relations with each other. Desire is like fire. It consumes human beings as fire consumes hay. Light one blade in a stack of hay and the whole will be on fire. We need not take the trouble of lighting all the blades one by one. When one partner is overcome with desire, the other is bound to be affected. I bow in all reverence to the husband or the wife who is not so affected.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-7-1925

67. LEARNING AND ENJOYING

Pupils are taught astronomy in schools which teach English, — or they were in my time. It was not to be expected that the subject should figure in schools which taught only Gujarati. In teaching it, however, it never occurred to the teacher to point to the stars in the sky. Even if a teacher thought of doing so, what could he teach? If asked by someone to point out the planet Mars, I certainly doubt whether he could have done so. As, however, the study of astronomy means learning to recognize the planets and the stars moving in the heavens, the subject should be taught by directly pointing these out.

But nothing of the sort was done in those days. I knew, of course, that astronomy could be a very interesting study if the subject was taught through direct observation of the heavens, but this became especially clear to me while I was spending my days in the holy Yeravda Jail.[2] We were permitted there to sleep in the open and, therefore, my desire to converse with the stars became very strong. But, not knowing their language, what was I to talk with them about? I wished to learn their language with the help of books, but could not do so. For I had busied myself with work there, and knowing that I had to spend six years in jail, I had thought that I would learn to

[1] The extract is not translated here. It described the difficulty of a husband who had taken the vow of *brahmacharya*, but had to consider his wife's desire for a son, the couple having lost all the four sons born to them.

[2] From March 1922 to February 1924

converse with these denizens of the sky after completing the study of the Upanishads which I had undertaken.

But I was destined to be a witness to the death of Chittaranjan[1] and so did not remain in Yeravda as long as I would have been happy to. The God who rules our fate sent me out, providing a reason in my illness, and so I remained without the knowledge of the solar system. I envy Shri Shankerlal, for, a book in hand, he had started every night making the acquaintance of the stars. I have before me an illustration, in a handwritten newspaper, of how one may enjoy learning this subject; I quote from it here :[2]

If the reader would taste the joy described in this passage, let him look at the sky on a cloudless night. If he is altogether ignorant about the planets, he would be in the same plight as I am. Let him come out of it without delay. He should get hold of a book which will teach him astronomy interestingly, and go through it. If necessary, he may write to the Gujarat Vidyapith to inquire from where he may order it. If he does not get the required information from that source, or is told that no such book is available, he may stop contributing money to the Vidyapith if he has been doing so. If, on the other hand, he succeeds in finding the book, he should contribute something now even in case he has hitherto contributed nothing.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-7-1925

68. MY NOTES

DESHBANDHU'S LAST JOURNEY

The scriptures say that, as a man abandons an old house and goes to live in a new one, so the *atman* dwelling in a body aban- dons it when it grows old, builds another and lives in that. As one does not feel happy when leaving one's old house, because of long association with it, likewise the soul is not happy when leaving the body because of the association, even if the legs are swollen and look like pillars, the body is emaciated into a mere skeleton and the man struggles for breath. But one forgets the old house when the new one is ready and the soul, too, when it has a new home to dwell in, retains no memory at all of the old—such is the mystery of death and birth. If this is so,

[1] C. R. Das

[2] The passage is not translated here.

what cause do we have for fear or grief? It is more correct to think of death as the last journey than as mere extinction.

If we wish Deshbandhu's soul to have peace in its last journey, there is only one thing we can do, and that is to develop in ourselves as many of his virtues as we can. Some of them we certainly can. All of us cannot command English like his or be lawyers of his calibre or do the work he did in legislatures, but we can all have his patriotism and cultivate generosity like his. We may not be able to give as much money as he did, but anyone who gives to the best of his means will have given enough. A copper coin given by a widow counts far more than the thousands a Maharaja may give from the crores in his possession. After he had started wearing khadi, Deshbandhu never used any other cloth for his dress either at home or in public. Shall we not start wearing khadi? Deshbandhu never demanded fine khadi. He preferred coarse khadi. He tried to learn spinning. Will those who have not started spinning do so?

ALL-INDIA MEMORIAL

At present, money is being collected for a memorial to him in Bengal. But will it be right not to have an all-India memorial? Since all of us are busy here with the collection for Bengal, I have not been able to consult friends. But I have been thinking about the matter in my own mind. As for the kind of memorial it should be, I have Deshbandhu's trust-deed with me. This is not written down, as the written will for the memorial in Bengal, but it is as good as a written testament. I shall say no more about it in this issue; my appeal will have come out before the next issue.

The reader should get ready to loosen his purse strings. Since people will be asked to contribute only as much as their means permit, no one need get nervous. Deshbandhu gave money not out of fear but of his own free will; he enjoyed giving. If he threw up a practice worth millions, it was with no painful effort of will; he did so because he found it unbearable to continue it. Let no one, therefore, feel nervous at my suggestion. With the progressive awakening in the country, every time there is a calamity, people will have to part with some share of their earnings; they should be ready to do so willingly. That is not love which merely sheds tears and does no more. Profession without action, is no love; it is but empty words. Love gives, and acts, without talking. One who loves his father does not go about, like a bard, praising the father's virtues; he preserves his legacy,

improves upon it and adds to it. A father's best property consists in his virtues, which the son cultivates in himself and so brings credit both to the father and to himself. In the same way, we who are Deshbandhu's heirs must contribute what we can to enhance what he has left behind.

GUJARATIS IN CALCUTTA

There is a special bond of regard between the Gujaratis and me. I have a way of saying harsh things, and the country has put up with it. It is to the Gujaratis, however, that I say the harshest things. They do not misunderstand me, but take my words in the right spirit, regard them as the salutary doses of a *vaid*[1] and love me all the more for them. I had this experience with the Gujaratis in Calcutta last week. They had called a meeting to express condolence on the death of Deshbandhu.[2] I was invited to attend and preside over it. The organizers had also promised me that they would make a collection. I saw that there had been no collection. I was, therefore, forced to say a few harsh things. We do well in holding a condolence meeting; but there should be only one, not too many. There had been one on the day on which Deshbandhu died, and again on July 1 there will be meetings in the whole country. There can be, therefore, only one reason for holding a meeting in between, confined to a particular community and that reason must be to start some constructive activity, namely to collect contributions for the fund. Some activity of this kind is the best thing which Gujaratis, Marwaris and other outsiders living in Bengal can take up. This is what I said in my speech. It did not make the Gujaratis angry; on the contrary, they understood my point and there was a shower of rupees from the galleries in the theatre in which the meeting was held, and a sum of more than Rs. 6,000 was collected on the spot. If anyone offered less than he should, there was no dearth of persons to rebuke him. I have been told that there are still many persons who have not given as much as they can. If it is so, I should like such persons to make good the deficiency.

In this Note, however, my aim is to thank my Gujarati brothers in Calcutta.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-7-1925

[1] Physician practising Ayurvedic system of medicine

[2] The meeting was held at Alfred Theatre on June 26, 1925.

69. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

MIDNAPUR,
July 6, 1925

MY DEAREST MIRABAI,

I have your letter of sweet rebuke. May your striving succeed. Do you think that I am wilfully holding back? Nothing will keep me, not even you, from a forward movement when I have the call from within. Do I not remember those pearl drops you shed from your big eyes when you peremptorily asked me to go to the Punjab? I could not go then. But I did not stop a moment when I felt the call. No doubt those hot tears had their inevitable melting effect on some snowy parts lurking unconsciously within me. By all means therefore continue to strive and deliver your non-violent blows. I shall never misunderstand you or be angry with you. I want you to act on me. Believe me, I am as impatient as you are to go forward. I feel that we are going forward, appearances to the contrary notwithstanding. Only I have not the immediate hope of 1921. That was a new birth and the joyous hope of it. Today the hope is there but it is based on mature experience and calculation. However I am watching every movement in the Indian sky. Above all I am praying. Yes, the self-deprecation is there. We do need to be humble and purify ourselves.

Your estimate of Deshbandhu is perfect. I am thankful to God for those precious days at Darjeeling. Having put the cup to my lips cruel fate has dashed it before me as if to mock me.

With love to you and Padmaja,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

My right hand refuses to work any more after a good day's labour. Hence this effort with the left hand.

Are you coming on 16th?

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

70. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*July 6, 1925*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I do understand your grief at our separation. Will that not become permanent one day? So bear this much which is inevitable.

I had Motilalji's wire. Meet Basanti Devi. Consult her and then send a wire directly from there. Let her stay with us if she can be well looked after at 148 [Russa Road]. However, this depends entirely upon Basanti Devi.

I have also received your letter here. The thing must have been given to the *Forward*. It is bound to appear some day. Send a copy to Shyambabu.

Rs. 500/- have been collected at Khadagpur and Rs. 500/- at Contai. Some more have been promised. Let us see how much we get here at Midnapur. Rajendra Babu parted from us here. He has gone to Purulia.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Meet Basanti Devi every day. I wrote two more columns for *Young India* in the train.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original : S.N. 11432

71. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Ashad Vad 1 [*July 7, 1925*][2]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I must write something to you. I have your mail. I have not received any addressed to Khadi Pratishthan. I shall write about the collection after going there. I hope the summaries of my speeches appear in the papers. That article was all right. Here in Midnapur I gave the Rani a lesson in spinning. She had taken a vow too. I shall certainly examine the Chinaman. If we can keep him, I would

[1] From the postmark
[2] *ibid*

certainly do so. You may keep him under your shelter. It would be better if he learnt Hindi. Yesterday I went to sleep four times. The desire for sleep is not yet satisfied. Many a one has taught me to eat off silver utensils. Here I had a lesson in eating off gold utensils. Just imagine a gold bowl upon our wooden plate! How to accept such worshipful hospitality? I was stunned. Said not a word to the Rani. Could God be tempting me? But how long? What faith this country has! May God save me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 11430

72. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

MIDNAPUR,
Ashadh Vad 1 [*July 7, 1925*][1]

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I have overworked my right hand, so I am using the left hand. You will get an idea of my preoccupations from *Navajivan* and *Young India*. I have now resumed the unfinished tour of Bengal. It will be completed in eight days.

A woman gave me a present. It will be fitting to send it to you. Hence I do so.

My entire programme has become disarranged for the present. So I cannot write anything about my movements with certainty. I shall be here the whole of this month. The programme afterwards will be finalized after the 16th.

I hope you and Shankerlal are keeping well. This time neither Mahadev nor Krishnadas is with me. I have left Mahadev behind for the collection of funds and have sent Krishnadas for improving his health.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Satis Babu is with me.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32788

[1] In 1925 Gandhiji was in Midnapur on this date which corresponded to *Ashadh Vad* 1.

73. SPEECH TO STUDENTS, MIDNAPUR[1]

July 7, 1925

He said that he was pleased that the function at Midnapore began with a welcome from the students. His present tour, he said, was meant for the realization of the teachings of Deshbandhu Das and for the raising of a subscription for his memorial. He said that Deshbandhu sacrificed his property and life for the welfare of the young men and that he hoped and depended much on them, specially the students. Mahatma said that the life of that illustrious patriot might be divided into two parts—external and internal. The external only tended to help the internal. Deshbandhu wanted to increase the strength of the nation and free the country. So far as the external was concerned, it was only for the rich and the educated to follow, but as to the internal, it might be cultivated alike by the rich and the poor, by the educated and the illiterate, by the boy and the girl, by the young and the old. For the last 6 or 9 months of his life, Deshbandhu tried to hold before the public the ideal of village reorganization or village reconstruction in which males and females of every age and grade in society might take part.

Mahatmaji directed the attention of the students to this and said that the foremost and easiest way of beginning work in the village is the introduction of charkha in every household. He had long discussions with Deshbandhu over this at Darjeeling and both of them agreed as above, and the latter communicated the same to Babu Satcouripati Roy only a few days before he expired. It is a pity, said the Mahatma, that Deshbandhu was not among them too complete the programme he had chalked out for his countrymen. He said that, if they had any love or admiration for their Deshbandhu, they would take a vow to spin for at least half an hour every day, never use any foreign cloth and take up the work of village reconstruction in right earnest. In conclusion, he appealed to the students to take the permission of their parents and contribute whatever they could to the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. He asked them to give any gold buttons or articles of luxury they had with them or curtail their daily expenditure, even by fasting, for one, two or three days, if necessary, and contribute the savings to the fund. This sort of sacrifice, he said, was not new to the students, and that, during the last 30 or 40 years of his political activity, he received such help from them on many occasions, notably during the last Malabar flood relief. He, however, warned them that, if this sacrifice on their part was not done with pleasure, he would not accept a farthing from them. He asked them to choose one of

[1] Gandhiji was presented with an address by the students, to which he replied in Hindi.

them or one of their elders as their leader and collect subscriptions through him and take a vow to spin regularly and never to use foreign cloth.[1]

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 8-7-1925

74. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BANKURA[2]

July 8, 1925

Mahatmaji said that, after his arrival in the district, he had heard of the many activities of Anil Babu and the hold he had on the affection of the people. Mahatmaji exhorted the people to carry on the work of Anil Babu and hoped that Anil Babu would soon be back from jail. Then he said that he was carrying the message of Deshbandhu and the lessons the departed hero taught us—the lesson of sacrifice, of intense activity, of extreme devotion to the motherland and of love of the poor.

He asked the people to accelerate the work of the Swaraj Party, not by paying a mere subscription or enlisting the name, but by reconstruction of the village. It was not possible for everyone to enter the Councils, but it was possible for everyone to help in the work of reconstruction. Mahatmaji said that, at Darjeeling, he and Deshbandhu were in complete conformity so far as charkha and village reconstruction were concerned. How was it possible to attain swaraj unless the village life was revived? The charkha was the emblem of the unity of the village and the town. The root of all famines, diseases and other calamities was India's poverty. That was the lesson he was taught from the early days of the Congress from the pages of the Dada of Hindusthan, Dadabhai Naoroji.[3] And how could we get rid of that poverty? By taking to the charkha. He asked the people to reflect upon the immense possibilities of the charkha. He then concluded by appealing for collections for the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. Coins and ornaments now began to pour in and the meeting dispersed.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 11-7-1925

[1] Later in the day Gandhiji addressed a women's meeting and in the evening, a largely-attended public gathering, where he was presented addresses by several institutions and spoke emphasizing the need for rural reconstruction, spinning, Hindu-Muslim unity, etc.

[2] Gandhiji was presented with addresses by the public, the District Board, the Municipality and Bankura Sammilani. He replied to them in Hindi.

[3] Reference to *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India*

75. NOTES

TWO DIFFICULTIES

A distinguished countryman has sent me through a common friend the following questions for answer in *Young India* :

> 1. You admit that untouchability is a blot not only upon Hinduism but upon humanity. Why then do you restrict the circle of reformers to Hindus only? Why may not Mussalmans take up the reform the same as Hindus?
>
> 2. You insist continuously upon Hindu-Muslim unity, will you please point out anything concrete you have done for Islam or Mussalmans?

As to the first question, although the evil of untouchability is not merely a blot upon Hinduism, but is also a blot upon humanity, it is a question which Hindus must solve for themselves, even as they are solving several other questions regarding Hinduism. There is the question of *devadasis*, for instance. Their existence is not a small evil. The institution is a blot upon humanity. But no non-Hindu thinks of medling with it in the same sense in which Hindus are. The reason is obvious. Removal of these abuses has to come from within, not imposed upon Hindus. This can only be brought about by Hindus. Mussalmans, Christians and other non-Hindus are at perfect liberty to criticize untouchability as any other evil in Hinduism. They can lend the reform their moral support. But they may not go further without exposing themselves to the charge of having designs upon Hinduism.

As to the second charge, I must content myself with having noted it. I cannot answer it without committing a breach of propriety. If I have to prove to Mussalmans my concrete contribution to unity, it follows that there is none. And I must, therefore, submit to the condemnation that the question carries with it, till such time that my *bona fides* are self-proved. But, in fairness to the Mussalmans in general, I must say that it is for the first time that I have been called upon to produce a certificate of service. Let me say, however, that they also serve who wait and pray. And if there are many Mussalmans like the distinguished inquirer who want to inspect my record of service, I ask them not to bother their heads about it, but to be content with the assurance that I am at least watching, waiting and praying, if I am not actively serving.

"VAIDYAS" COMPLAINT

The *vaidyas* have been deeply hurt by my criticism of Ayurveda

and Unani physicians. They accuse me of softness of brain and denial of ahimsa. I am sorry to have caused so much hurt to them. But I cannot plead guilty. I have not criticized Ayurveda. I have criticized those who have professed to follow it. I have not criticized all of them, but I have criticized the large number who make the pretensions I have accused them of. There is no contradiction between my endorsement of proposition to promote research in the indigenous drugs and plants and my condemnation of the method adopted by some to these physicians, even as there is none between my laying the foundation of the Ayurvedic College in Calcutta and my warning to the *kavirajas*. It is open to the *vaidyas* of Poona to reject the criticism offered in a friendly spirit. I shall be sorry for the decision, but the rejection will not alter my opinion which is based on experience. I have chapter and verse for every statement I have made. I do like everything that is ancient and noble, but I utterly dislike a parody of it. And I must respectfully refuse to believe that ancient books are the last word on the matters treated in them. As a wise heir to the ancients, I am desirous of adding to and enriching the legacy inherited by us. Let me inform the protestants that some *kavirajas* have welcomed my criticism, which has set them thinking. Needless to say that it was not directed against those who are carrying on scientific research in a spirit of humility and without counting the cost. Only, they are too few to be counted. I plead for an appreciable increase.

SPINNING RESOLUTION

The reader will recall the spinning resolution of the A.I.C.C. at Ahmedabad. The following figures have been supplied to me by the A.I.K.B. of the use made of the yarn received in terms of the resolution :[1]

This brief report has its own moral. The output is nothing compared to what it should be or can be. But the effort shows how the slightest inattention to detail hampers progress in every direction. An organization is like machinery; just as, if the smallest screw becomes loose, the whole machinery becomes loose and may even break down, so in an organization the least looseness affects its smooth working and the results expected. The brief experiment of three months has a lesson for those who are dealing with the spinning franchise.

[1] The report, which spoke of the inferiority of much of the yarn spun, is not reproduced here.

The price of this khaddar has not been reduced for the simple reason that the quantity is too small to warrant reduction. And it was a difficult thing to determine who should receive the benefit of the cheapness. Spinners beware! On you, as you can see from the report, depends the question of exclusion of foreign cloth and the production of khaddar enough to clothe the whole country.

SPINNING A NEW HABIT

An esteemed American friend who has been practising spinning writes :

> May I take the liberty of making a suggestion, growing out of my temporary failure some time ago to keep up my spinning regularly? (I have reformed now.) It is this : that in asking people to spin or in talking with them after they have promised to spin, might it not be worth while to get them to realize that they are about to establish a *new habit*; that new habits must be very assiduously tended until they get firmly established; that one failure in regularity, one omission will undo the work and strivings of many days in the early stages of formation of the habit; that new channels of nervous and muscular action and control have to be worn by *constant, regular* practice; that probably the habit is not safely established until one can spin and at the same time talk with people and discuss matters entirely different, while keeping the hands going. Then the control and response have become automatic. People ought to realize that mere emotional enthusiasm does not always carry through the labour of firmly establishing the habit; that they should reinforce their emotions by their minds, by clearly thinking out the values, meaning, applications of charkha and khaddar to themselves, their family, their village and nation, —politically, economically, morally and spiritually. Those who can afford to ought to buy your "Wheel of Fortune" and read all the discussions of the subject they can.
>
> Personally I feel that people, especially intellectuals unused to hand-work and simple realities, need to reinforce their enthusiasm by their minds. I feel that one of the reasons for much of the back-sliding since 1920 may have been due to this lack of realization by new converts of how they should go about the establishment of such a new habit, what are the dangers to guard against, how they can provide in advance to keep themselves in a favourable frame of mind of free from distractions or interruptions at the chosen spinning hour each day, how they can provide favourable surroundings and atmosphere, how to get a due sense of what is really important, etc.
>
> Maybe, you always do give them advice, or maybe I am reasoning wrongly out of experience of American character and in ignorance of the

Indian nature. Those were some of the things which caused my failure for several weeks, so I pass them along to you for whatever worth they may have.

The friend need not have apologized for relating his experience, for human nature at bottom is the same even as the American sky as a matter of fact is the same as the Indian. Only the presentation is different from what the readers of *Young India* are accustomed to. The voluntary spinners who have become accustomed to spinning have had the same difficulties that have faced the American friend. What is wanted is resolution at the back of one's mind. It anticipates and overcomes all difficulties. The value of the friend's analysis of his difficulties lies in the fact that he has made plain to us what most of us have felt without perceiving.

Young India, 9-7-1925

76. PAINFULLY ILLUMINATING

This letter[1] was handed to me at Chittagong and has been in my jacket, awaiting attention at the first opportunity. The reader is aware how the attempt to wean the fallen sisters from their error has apparently resulted in giving a passport to vice. Prostitution I knew was a tremendous and a growing evil. The tendency to see virtue in vice and excuse evil in the sacred name of art or some other false sentiment has clothed this debasing indulgence with a kind of subtle respectability which is responsible for the moral leprosy which he who runs may see. But I was unprepared for the terrible state the correspondent declares to exist. I fear that he has not exaggerated the evil. For, during my tour, I have had corroboration from various sources. Great as the evil is in this age of unbelief or a mere mechanical belief in God and an age of multiplicity of comforts and luxuries, almost reminding one of the degradation to which Rome had descended when she was apparently at the zenith of her power, it is not easy to prescribe a remedy. It cannot be remedied by law. London is seething with the vice. Paris is notorious for its vice which has almost become a fashion. If law would have prevented it, these highly organized nations would have cured their capitals of the vice. No amount of writing on the part of reformers like myself can deal with

[1] Not reproduced here. It spoke of the evils of brothels, cinema-houses, drinking and smoking.

the evil in any appreciable form. The political domination of England is bad enough. The cultural is infinitely worse. For, whilst we resent and, therefore, endeavour to resist the political domination, we hug the cultural, not realizing in our infatuation that, when the cultural domination is complete, the political will defy resistance. Let me not be misunderstood. I do not wish to imply that, before the British rule, prostitution was unknown in India. But I do say that it was not so rampant as now. It was confined to the few upper ten. Now it is fast undoing the youth of the middle classes. My hope lies in the youth of the country. Such of them as are prey to the vice are not vicious by nature. They are helplessly and thoughtlessly drawn to it. They must realize the harm that it has done them and society. They must understand, too, that nothing but a rigorously disciplined life will save them and the country from utter ruin. Above all, unless they visualize God and seek His aid in keeping them from temptation, no amount of dry discipline will do them much good. Truly has the Seer said in the *Gita* that "desire persists though man may by fasting keep his body under restraint. Desire goes only when one has seen God face to face." Seeing God face to face is to feel that He is enthroned in our hearts even as a child feels a mother's affection without needing any demonstration. Does a child reason out the existence of a mother's love? Can he prove it to other? He triumphantly declares : "It is." So must it be with the existence of God. He defies reason. But He is experienced. Let us not reject the experience of Tulsidas, Chaitanya, Ramdas and a host of other spiritual teachers even as do not reject that of mundane teachers.

The correspondent has inquired whether Congressmen may do the many things he has enumerated, such as theatre-going, etc. I have already remarked that man cannot be made good by law. If I had the power of persuasion, I would certainly stop women of illfame from acting as actresses, I would prevent people from drinking and smoking, I would certainly prevent all the degrading advertisements that disfigure even reputable journals and newspapers and I would most decidedly stop the obscene literature and portraits that soil the pages of some of our magazines. But, alas, I have not the persuasive power I would gladly possess. But to regulate these things by law, whether of the State or the Congress, would be a remedy probably worse than the disease. What is wanted is an intelligent, sane, healthy and pure public opinion. There is no law against using kitchens as

closets or drawing rooms as stables. But public opinion, that is, public taste will not tolerate such a combination. The evolution of public opinion is at times a tardy process but it is the only effective one.

Young India, 9-7-1925

77. 'THE SCIENCE OF SURRENDER'

Exception has been taken to my remarks at a meeting in Calcutta that Deshbandhu, in his relations with the Mussalmans, brought "the science of surrender to perfection". The exception has been taken because my critics impute to me the implication that by surrender I mean that Deshbandhu conferred on Mussalmans favours, that is, things they were not entitled to. The critics opine that the Hindus are acting towards the Mussalmans much the same as Englishmen are acting towards us all—having first taken away everything and then offering us doles in the name of favours.

I know what I said at the meeting in question. I have not read the reports of my speech, but I desire to abide by all I said at that meeting. I make bold to say that without mutual surrender there is no hope for this distraught country. Let us not be hyper-sensitive or devoid of imagination. To surrender is not to confer favour. Justice that love gives is a surrender, justice that law gives is a punishment. What a lover gives transcends justice. And yet it is always less than he wished to give, because he is anxious to give more and frets that he has nothing left. It is libellous to say that Hindus act like Englishmen. Hindus cannot even if they would, and this I say in spite of the brutality of the labourers of Kidderpore. Both Hindus and Mussalmans sail in the same boat. Both are fallen. And they are in the position of lovers, have to be, whether they will or no. Every act, therefore, of a Hindu towards the Mussalman and *vice versa* must be an act of surrender and not mere justice. They may not weigh their acts in golden scales and exact consideration. Each has to regard himself ever a debtor of the other. By justice, why should not a Mussalman kill a cow every day in front of me? But his love for me restrains him from so doing and he goes out of his way sometimes even to refrain from eating beef for his love of me, and yet thinks that he has done only just what is right. Justice permits me to shout my music in the ear of Maulana Mahomed Ali when he is at prayer, but I go out of my way to anticipate his feel-ings and make my talks whispers whilst he is praying and still consider that I have conferred

no favour on the Maulana. On the other hand, I should become a loathsome creature if I exercised my just right of playing tomtom precisely at the time of his prayer. Justice might have been satisfied if Deshbandhu Das had not filled certain posts with Mussalmans, but he went out of his way to anticipate Mussalman wishes and placate Mussalman sentiment. It was his sensitiveness to placate them that hastened his death. For I know what a shock it was to him to learn that law, i.e., justice, would compel him to disinter certain remains buried in unauthorized ground and he was trying to find out means of avoiding any the slightest offence to Muslim sentiment, even though it may be unreasonable. This was all going out of the way—not his way, but the way of the world. And yet he never considered that he was conferring any favour on the Mussalmans by delicately considering their feelings. Love never claims, it ever gives. Love ever suffers, never resents, never revenges itself.

This talk, therefore, of justice and nothing but justice is a thoughtless, angry and ignorant outburst whether it comes from Hindus or Mussalmans. So long as Hindu and Mussalmans continue to prate about justice, they will never come together. 'Might is right' is the last word of 'justice and nothing but justice.'. Why should Englishmen surrender an inch of what they have earned by right of conquest? Or why should Indians, when they come to power, not make the English disgorge everything which their ancestors robbed them of? And yet when we come to a settlement, as we shall some day, we will not weigh in the scales of justice so called. But we shall introduce into the calculation the disturbing factor of surrender, otherwise called love or affection or fellow-feeling. And so will it be with us Hindus and Mussalmans when we have sufficiently broken one another's heads and spilled a few gallons of innocent blood and realized our foolishness. The scales will then fall off our eyes and we shall recognize that vengeance was not the law of friendship; not justice but surrender and nothing but surrender was the law of friendship. Hindus will have to learn to bear the sight of cow-slaughter and the Mussalmans will have to discover that it was against the law of Islam to kill a cow in order to wound the susceptibilities of Hindus. When that happy day arrives, we shall know only each other's virtues. Our vices will not obtrude themselves upon our gaze. That day may be far off or it may be very near. I feel it coming soon. I shall work for that end and no other.

It is scarcely necessary for me to add by way of caution that my

surrender does not mean surrender of principle. I made the point clear at the meeting and I wish to emphasize it here once more. But what we are just now fighting for is not any principle at all, but vanity and prejudice. We strain at a gnat and swallow a camel.

Young India, 9-7-1925

78. A SILENT SERVANT

I would ask the reader to share my grief over the death of an esteemed friend and silent servant—I mean Principal Sushil Rudra, who died on Tuesday, 30th June. India, whose chief disease is her political servitude, recognizes only those who are fighting publicly to remove it by giving battle to a bureaucracy that has protected itself with a treble line of entrenchment—army and navy, money and diplomacy. She naturally does not know her selfless and self-effacing workers in other walks of life, no less useful than the purely political. Such a humble worker was Sushil Rudra, late principal of St. Stephen's College. He was a first-class educationist. As principal, he had made himself universally popular. There was a kind of spiritual bond between him and his pupils. Though he was a Christian, he had room in his bosom for Hinduism and Islam which he regarded with great veneration. His was not an exclusive Christianity that condemned to perdition everyone who did not believe in Jesus Christ as the only saviour of the world. Jealous of the reputation of his own, he was tolerant towards the other faiths. He was a keen and careful student of politics. Of his sympathies with the so-called extremists, if he made no parade, he never made any secret either. Ever since my return home in 1915, I had been his guest whenever I had occasion to go to Delhi. It was plain sailing enough so long as I had not declared satyagraha in respect of the Rowlatt Act. He had many English friends in the higher circles. He belonged to a purely English Mission. He was the first Indian principal chosen in his college. I, therefore, felt that his intimate association with me and his giving me shelter under his roof might compromise him and expose his college to unnecessary risk. I, therefore, offered to seek shelter elsewhere. His reply was characteristic: "My religion is deeper than people may imagine. Some of my opinions are vital parts of my being. They are formed after deep and prolonged prayers. They are known to my English friends. I cannot possibly be misunderstood by keeping you under my roof as an honoured friend and guest. And if ever I have to make

a choice between losing what influence I may have among Englishmen and losing you, I know what I would choose. You cannot leave me." "But what about all kinds of friends who come to see me? Surely, you must not let your house become a caravanserai when I am in Delhi," I said. "To tell you the truth," he replied, "I like it all. I like the friends who come to see you. It gives me pleasure to think that, in keeping you with me, I am doing some little service to my country." The reader may not be aware that my open letter[1] to the Viceroy, giving concrete shape to the Khilafat claim, was conceived and drafted under Principal Rudra's roof. He and Charlie Andrews were my revisionists. Non-co-operation was conceived and hatched under his hospitable roof. He was a silent but deeply interested spectator at the private conference that took place between the Maulanas, other Mussalman friends and myself. Religious motive wasthe foundation for all his acts. There was, therefore, no fear of temporal power, though the same motive also enabled him to value the existence and the use and the friendship of temporal power. He exemplified in his life the truth that religious perception gives one a correct sense of proportion resulting in a beautiful harmony between action and belief. Principal Rudra drew to himself as fine characters as one could possibly wish for. Not many people know that we owe C. F. Andrews to Principal Rudra. They were twins. Their relationship was a study in ideal friendship. Principal Rudra leaves behind him two sons and a daughter, all grown up and settled in life. They know their grief is shared by the numerous friends and admirers of their noble-hearted father.

Young India, 9-7-1925

79. CHANCE OF PEACE[2]

I do not read the Faridpur message as Mr. Chatterji does. Deshbandhu made his position clear to the extent that he was prepared to wait for full responsible government till 1929, provided an honourable compromise was offered by the Government making it possible for the people's representatives to work the Reforms. What those terms should be was a matter of friendly discussion at a round-

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 22-6-1920.

[2] This was Gandhiji's rejoinder to B. C. Chatterji's letter dated July 3; *vide* Appendix "Letter from B. C. Chatterjee", 9-7-1925.

table conference. It was impossible for Deshbandhu to accept, in advance and without accurately knowing them, the minority recommendations of the Muddiman Committee. My own position is incredibly simple. I am interested in the Reforms through my accredited agents, the Swarajists. They have specialized in the matter and I shall endorse whatever they recommend. I have nothing to offer the British Government save my weakness at the present moment. In my weakness, I can only wait for England to make a sincere gesture. When she does, I shall close unconditionally. Even in my weakness, I feel strong enough to know what is and is not life-giving and to reject what is not life-giving. I cannot deceive myself. I expect nothing substantial till my poor country is strong. I must, therefore, gather strength. And since I eschew violence from my selection of means, I have to fall back upon the spinning-wheel and such like or the more comprehensive term given by Deshbandhu—village reconstruction, and if and when necessary, civil disobedience.

As to union of parties, I fear the differences between the Liberals and the Swarajists are in some respects fundamental. A mere acceptance of Reforms under improved conditions does not necessarily destroy the difference. If I may state the difference as it appears to me, in one sentence, it is this : the Swarajists expect to be able to retaliate within a measurable distance of time if the Government do not accept the reasonable demands of the people, the Liberals expect to secure what is possible merely by reasoning with the Government. Liberals will, therefore, march with the Swarajists only up to a certain point. But I may be, I hope I am, mistaken. Like Barkis, I am ever willing.

Young India, 9-7-1925

80. NOT TWO RACES

The following will be read with interest :

I have many times noted that you have referred to the Hindus and the Muslims as two 'races' in India. In my humble opinion, it is only less mischievous to speak of these two religious communities as 'races' than it is to call them two 'nations' as a Mussalman correspondent of yours once did. (See *Young India*, 24-7-'24, p. 244).[1] The fact is that about 90 per cent of the

[1] *Vide* "A Gloomy Picture", 24-7-1924.

Mussal-man Indians (I would call them so, and not Indian Mussalmans, as they are wont to call t hemselves) are of the same 'race' or races as the Hindus,—having been descended from Indian ancestors who embraced Islam in India itself. As for the remaining 10 per cent of the Mussalman Indians, though they may have some drops of Turkish, Tatar, Arab, Pathan, Persian or Abyssinian blood in their veins, yet it is so much intermixed with native Indian blood by inter-marriage down through the generation that those 10 per cent may safely be designated as 90 per cent native by race. In fact, the Hindus and Mussalmans in India no more represent two races than do the Protestants and Catholics in England. It is a question upon which history, ethnology and anthropometry can fairly accurately pronounce. But above all, whatever the racial constitution of their blood, the fact cannot be denied that *all* of them (cent per cent) were born in India, are living in India, will die in India and be buried in India, like their fathers before them. And India is one country, and therefore they are all of one nation with Hindus. If only they were to regard themselves in Indian politics as Mussalman Indians, and not Indian Mussalmans!

All the above applies *mutatis mutandis* also to Christian Indians, the third important religious community in India. (Perhaps no religious community in India or outside is of one race. Certainly not the Hindus. Then why speak of any community as a race?) Let our Christians, too, in their country's politics treat themselves as Christian Indians, even as their fellows in faith are doing in Egypt, Palestine, China, Japan and the Philippines.

The correspondent's position is historically accurate. It is difficult to get out of the habit of using words which have passed current with a definite meaning. Even "two communities" is open to the same objection. I can only promise to be careful in future. The watchful correspondent must not relax his effort to make the language of *Young India* accord with facts.

Young India, 9-7-1925

81. SPEECH AT SWARAJIST COUNCILLORS' MEETING, CALCUTTA[1]

July 9, 1925

The Mahatma said that they should not indulge in the petty question whether Mr. Sen Gupta was a resident of Calcutta or not. The great point was that he was the leader of the Swaraj Party and the President of the Bengal Congress Committee. The Mayoralty should be associated with the man whom they had appointed leader the other day. They ought not to indulge in acrimonious discussions and, given fair trial, Mr. Sen Gupta would prove an asset to the Corporation. His hands should not be tied and it was up to the people to follow him in all matters, whether political or municipal. By associating himself in almost all the activities of the Deshbandhu, Mr. Sen Gupta had possessed a heritage from which he would never falter. He assured that Mr. Sen Gupta's administration would be happy and prosperous, with the co-operation and good will of his colleagues.[2]

The Hindu, 10-7-1925

82. AT DARJEELING

[*July 10, 1925*]

I have almost promised the reader the sacred recollections of the five days I had with Deshbandhu at Darjeeling. I have called them among the most precious in my life. As time passes, the preciousness increases. I must tell the reader why. Though I had lived under Deshbandhu's roof before, ours was then a purely political meeting. We were both engrossed in our own allotted tasks. But in Darjeeling it was different. I had Deshbandhu wholly to myself. He was resting and I had gone solely to have communion with him. My going to Darjeeling for rest was a mere excuse. But for Deshbandhu's presence

[1] The meeting was held to elect a Mayor for the Municipal Corporation from among the two contestants—Sarat Chandra Bose, Swarajist Alderman, and J. M. Sen Gupta. Gandhiji and Abul Kalam Azad were deputed by the Bengal Provinical Congress Committee to persuade the Councillors to elect the latter. The point was raised in objection to Sen Gupta's candidature that he was not a resident of Calcutta, as he came from Chittagong. After an hourlong speech by Gandhiji, the full report of which is not available, Sen Gupta was elected by 31 votes to 6.

[2] For Gandhiji explanation as to his motives in espousing Sen Gupta's mayoralty, *vide* "Calcutta's Mayor", 16-7-1925.

there I would not have gone in spite of the attraction of the snowy range. But in one of his pencil notes, which he had lately taken to writing to me, he said, “Remember, you are under my jurisdiction. I am Chairman of the Reception Committee. You have to include Darjeeling in your tour. This is a command.” I wish I had kept those sweet notes of his, but, alas! they have gone the way hundreds of such documents in my possession have gone. I pleaded that I had the Working Committee to take. “Then bring the whole Committee. I shall arrange for their accommodation. The B.P.C.C. shall pay the fares of the members. I am wiring to Satcouri accordingly,” was his telegraphic reply. I was unable to take the Working Committee to Darjeeling, but I promised to go as soon after that meeting as possible. And so I went. I had gone there for only two days. He kept me with him for five. He got Basanti Devi to ask

Sjt. Phooken to postpone the Assam tour and himself postponed the Bengal tour by three days. I am mentioning these details to show the eagerness we had to be with each other. As it has turned out, Deshbandhu’s approaching long sleep was preparing us for a close communion.

He was on a convalescent if not on a sick-bed. He had need to be taken care of. But he insisted on attending to every detail regarding my comfort and that of my companions. His appointment must be on a lavish scale. He had ordered five goats to be brought from the plains. He would not have me miss my milk for a single meal. I had often come under Basanti Devi’s sisterly care, but at Darjeeling I was the object of Deshbandhu’s personal attention. Nor was there any artificiality about it. Hospitality was the badge of his clan. He related several striking anecdotes about their lavish hospitality. It was at Darjeeling that I came to know his great regard for strangers or political opponents. At his instance, Satish Babu of Khadi Pratishthan was sent for to discuss with him the plan we had settled of working hand-spinning and khaddar in Bengal. I asked him where he would like Satish Babu to stay. “Of course in this house,” he said. “But we are over-crowded here,” I said. “Certainly not. He can have my room for that matter,” was the retort. Whilst I was thinking of him and his over-worked partner, he thought of Satish Babu’s comfort. “Besides,” he said, “I know that Satish Babu thinks I am prejudiced against him. He is a comparative stranger to me. You know that I do not worry about my other friends. They cannot misunderstand me. Satish Babu must stay in this house.”

We talked of different political groups in Bengal and, incidentally, I told him of the charges of bribery and corruption brought against the Swaraj Party. I mentioned to him the fact that Sir Surendranath had invited me to go to his house again before leaving Bengal. He said, "Do go and tell him all about our conversations and my emphatic denial of all charges of bribery and corruption. I am prepared to retire from public life if one such charge against the Party can be proved to be true. The fact is that Bengal political life is one of mutual jealousy and back-biting. The phenomenal rise and success of the Swaraj Party have become unbearable to some people. I want you, therefore, thoroughly to go into all the char-ges that may be brought against the Party and give your considered judg-ment. I assure you I do not believe in dishonesty any more than you do. I know that my country cannot be free by dishonest means. You will be rendering a distinct service if you can bring all the parties together or, at least, rid the air of mutual recrimination. You should specially speak to Shyam Babu and Suresh Babu. Why do they not come to me if they distrust or suspect anything? We may hold different views, but we need not swear at each other." "What about a similar charge against *Forward*? I do not know, because I do not read these newspapers; but I have heard complaints of that nature against *Forward* also", I interposed. "Yes, *Forward* may have been guilty. You know that I do not write for or supervise *Forward* as you do in case of *Young India*. But if people will bring such things to my notice, I will gladly investigate and set matters right. You will, I think, find *Forward* always on the defensive, but one may cross the boundary line even in putting up a defence. As you know, I am investigating a serious case of unpardonable exaggeration in *Forward* if the facts are as they have been put before me. I assure you I have written most strongly about it. I have even sent for the writer." Thus the conversation went on. I found, throughout it all, a scrupulous care about justice to opponents and an honourable meeting of all parties.

"What do you say to convening an All-Parties meeting, or, as Mr. Kelkar suggests it, of the All-India Congress Committee?" I asked. "I do not want it at present," he replied. "The A.I.C.C. is useless, because we Swarajists must play the game and give the fullest trial to the new franchise. I tell you, I am more and more coming round to your position about the charkha. I am afraid we have not played the game everywhere. Here in Bengal, as you have said, you had no opposition from any party. But had I not been laid up, I would

have shown the charkha to be a swinging success. I tell you I intended to work the charkha whole-heartedly and I wanted you to help me in the organization; but, as you see, I have been helpless. No revision can take place this year. On the contrary, we must all give the new franchise the fairest trial. I am going to write to the Maharashtra friends about it."

Of the proposed All-Parties Conference he said, "We must not have the conference just yet. I expect big things from Lord Birkenhead. He is a strong man and I like strong men. He is not as bad as he speaks. If we hold the meeting, we must say something on the situation. I do not want to embarrass him by pitching our demands higher than he may be prepared to grant at the present moment. I do not want to disappoint him by understating our demands. We must watch and wait. We can lose nothing by so doing. If his statement is not satisfactory, that may be the time for calling a meeting of all parties to decide upon a common course of action." This was to me novel reason for not convening the proposed meeting, so I said, "I shall not call the meeting unless you and Motilalji want it or unless I get a representative requisition. But I must confess to you that I do not share your faith. Look at the Hindu-Muslim differences which are widening. Contemplate the Brahmin and non-Brahmin quarrels. See the political parties in Bengal. We have apparently never been so weak as now. And don't you agree with me that Englishmen have never conceded anything to weakness? I feel that we must make ourselves irresistible before we may expect anything big from England." Deshbandhu became impatient and said, 'You are arguing like a logician. I am speaking to you what I feel. Something within me tells me we are in for something big." I argued no more. I bowed my head in reverence before a faith so robust. I told him I had great regard for English character, I had inestimable friends among them, but I saw that his faith in them was greater than mine. Let Englishmen know what a great friend they have lost in Deshbandhu.

The Pir question at Calcutta troubled him a great deal. He was anxious that I should do what I could for its settlement. He said: "I want to placate the Mussalman feeling. I had hoped that, after the walling-in of the tomb, there would be nothing more heard about it. But now that there is a strong agitation about the disinterment, I cannot resist it. The law seems clearly against the burial on unauthorized ground. Neither Subhash nor Suhrawardy had any authority to grant the permission. But I must carry the Mussalmans

with me in all I do. I am trying to induce them to remove the body themselves. I have every hope that they will listen to me."

We discussed the Tarakeshwar affair and the result was embodied in a statement[1] which was to be signed by him and me if it was necessary. We discussed, too, Dr. Besant's manifesto. It was the first in point of time to be discussed as he had promised an early reply to her. The result of that discussion was a letter[2] that he despatched to Dr. Besant.

But the thing that most occupied our time was a discussion of the charkha and khaddar especially in their bearing on village reorganization on which he had set his heart and for which he had collected nearly $1\frac{1}{2}$ lacs of rupees. I told him that his scheme was much too ambitious to be put into force all at once, that I had studied the skeleton which was shown to me by Pratap Babu and that I had strongly disapproved of it as wholly impractical. Deshbandhu had not seen it. He agreed that it was unworkable. In fact, Pratap Babu had himself admitted its unworkability. I told Deshbandhu that he should make the wheel the centre of all other village activities and that the latter should be made to revolve round the wheel and that they could be added wherever the charkha obtained a footing. I suggested, too, that this village organization should be independent of all political turmoil and, therefore, it should be entrusted to an expert committee with permanent powers sole function would be to carry on the village work. I suggested that he should invite Satish Babu to form a committee and take charge of the work on behalf of the Congress. I have reproduced merely the substance of the argument. Deshbandhu not only agreed with it all, but he took down notes and was eager to enforce the scheme at once. He said that he would like to discuss it fully with Satish Babu whilst I was in Darjeeling, and then give instructions for passing the necessary resolution by the Congress Committee. Satish Babu was, therefore, immediately sent for. He came. At first we three had discussions and then I was freed for other work and Deshbandhu had various chats with Satish Babu alone. The latter was to be the first member of the Board. Satcouri Babu was to be the second member and they two were to select a third. They were to have a part of the village fund at once placed at their disposal and I

[1] *Vide* "Duty of Satyagrahis", 25-6-1925.
[2] *Vide* "Draft of Letter to Annie Besant", 4-6-1925.

was to give to the Board or Committee a part of the purse that was to be presented to me at Jalpaiguri. This committee, in order to place it on a firm footing, was even to be registered if necessary under the Benevolent Societies Registration Act which Deshbandhu said he would study for the purpose. Deshbandhu told Pratap Babu of the discussions and decision with instructions to carry out the decision.

Such was his passion for the wheel and therethrough of village organization. "If Lord Birkenhead disappoints us," he said, "I do not know what we should do in the Councils. But this I know that we must prosecute your programme of the charkha and organize our villages. We must become an industrious nation once more. We must bring power in the Councils. I must control the young men of Bengal. I must demonstrate, with the aid of the Government if possible and without if necessary, the possibility of achieving swaraj without violence. Non-violence has become as much my final creed as yours for the deli- verance of our country. We can have no civil disobedience without non-violence. And without the ability to offer civil resistance, there is no swaraj. We need not have to offer it in fact, but we must have the ability. I must find work for my impatient young men. I agree with you that there is danger of corruption creeping into our camp if we do not take care. I have learnt from my guru the value of Truth in all our dealings. I want you to live with him for a few days at least. Your need is not the same as mine. But he has given me strength I did not possess before. I see things clearly which I saw dimly before.

But I dare not carry on this part of the conversation any further. I can only tell the reader that it developed into a spiritual discussion or rather discourse, for it was all an endless stream on his part of what he was then doing and what he proposed to do when he was stronger. The discourse gave me an insight into his deeply spiritual nature which I did not possess before. I did not know that it was his ruling passion as it is that of so many distinguished Bengalis. When he first talked, now four years ago, of building a hut on the banks of the Ganges and repeated it at Sassoon Hospital when he came to see me, I laughed within myself at the idea and jocosely said that, when he built his hut, I must share it with him. But I discovered my error at Darjeeling. He was more in earnest about it than about his politics on which he had entered only by force of circumstances.

Nor need the reader consider that I have exhausted all the topics we discussed. I have endeavoured to recall only the principal things. I

have omitted his pictures of men both European and Indian.

But if our main conversation always turned round the charkha, our daily routine was not otherwise. The whole household had become a spinning club. Mahadev, Satish Babu and I had become expert teachers. We all had our share of teaching Deshbandhu. He had begun his lessons seriously at Patna. He had asked Rajendra Babu for a teacher. But he was too ill then to make much progress. At Darjeeling he had better hope. His left shoulder was aching, but when the ache was gone, he would do much better, he said. “But mind, I am very stupid with my hands. Ask my wife how helpless I am.” “Yes,” said Basanti Devi, “he calls me in even for unlocking his little box.” “You women are too cunning for men. You keep your husband helpless even in small matters, so as to have your complete mastery over him,”I said. The whole house seemed to come down with the ringing of Deshbandhu’s laughter. He had both the capacity for heartily weeping and laughing. His weeping he did in secret, like his wife. During this overwhelming grief, Basanti Devi has disdained to weep even before his dearest ones. But Deshbandhu could laugh before crowds of people and cover them with the sunshine of his laughter. Our serious discussion started with laughter which the whole of that big household heard. He knew that I liked sitting cross-legged. He was reclining in his bedstead. I was in a chair. He could not bear the sight of my sitting in the chair with my legs dangling uncomfortably or attempting to cross them in the chair. So he had a pillow put opposite him on his bedstead and a handspun rug arranged on the bedding to make a gadi. He seated me on it. “Do you know, what this reminds me of,” I said, as I sat comfortably on it just face to face with him, “My memory goes back to over forty years ago. It was thus my wife and I sat when we were married. The only thing now lacking is the hand-clasp. I wonder what Basanti Devi has to say to all this.” And the house rang with a laughter, alas!, no more to be heard.

* * *

The foregoing recollections were written at Bankura on the 8th instant. Lord Birkenhead’s speech was published at Calcutta on the 9th and I glanced at it on the same day. I am writing this note on the 10th. I have now carefully read the speech. It gives an added value to the recol-lections. I know what a shock Lord Birkenhead’s speech would have pro-ved to Deshbandhu. Somehow or other he had made up his mind that Lord Birkenhead was going to do something big. In

my humble opinion, the speech is a severe disappointment not so much for what it does not give as for the utter inactualities for which the Secretary of State for India has made himself responsible. Every fundamental position that he takes up is challenged by almost every educated Indian, no matter to what party he may belong. The pity of it is that probably he believes all he says. Englishmen have an amazing capacity for self-deception. It no doubt saves them many an uncomfortable situation, but it does infinite harm to the world, a large part of which they rule. They delude themselves into the belief that they do so chiefly if not wholly for its benefit. I must endeavour to examine this curious performance if possible next week. Meanwhile, we owe a duty to the dead man who is one of the parties responsible for making English politicians think about India more than they did before. How would he have acted if he had been alive? There is no cause for despair. There is less for anger. We had no data for expecting anything from Lord Birkenhead. What he has said in praise of English rule in India is not new. A diligent sub-editor has only to take up his scissors and paste to find out parallel passages in almost identical words from his illustrious predecessors. The speech is a notice to us to set our own house in order. I for one am thankful for it. I have also Deshbandhu's prescription before me. I have shared it with the reader.

Young India, 16-7-1925

83. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

ON WAY BACK FROM SIRAJGANJ
Friday [*July 10, 1925*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

The train is jolting very much.

I am writing this with nothing particular to say. I may have to despatch directly from here the matter for *Young India*. It is not yet ready. It will, therefore, be sent perhaps by the Assam Mail. Take the Trust-deed and keep it with you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

The collection here will be about three thousand.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 11431

[1] Gandhiji visited Sirajganj on July 10, 1925.

84. GURDWARA LEGISLATION[1]

[*July 11, 1925*]

Both the Punjab Government and the Sikhs are to be congratulated upon the happy ending of the Akali movement. It has required the self-immolation of hundreds of the bravest in the land. It has required the imprisonment of thousands of brave Akalis. The public is familiar with the tale of their sufferings in the jails. Such marvellous sacrifice could not go in vain. Let us hope that the gurdwara reform will now proceed steadily and without a hitch. The Government deserve the congratulations, too, on their release of Akali prisoners and relaxation in the stringency of conditions regarding the *Akhand Path*[2] . I note that the conditions imposed by the Government regarding the release and the *Akhand Path* have caused some dissatisfaction. It is difficult to pronounce an opinion on them. At the time of writing this note (11-7-25), I have only the meagre Press telegram before me. But, if the conditions are not humiliating but merely precautionary or designed to save the prestige of the Government, I hope that the Akali friends will not raise unnecessary objection. Their chief aim was to attain the reform of the gurdwaras. This has been completely attained. The rest I regard as a matter of subsidiary, if not trivial, importance. The Akalis will, therefore, be well advised in not being strict in their interpretation of the conditions the Government may have imposed upon the release of prisoners and the performance of the *Akhand Path*.

Young India, 16-7-1925

85. THIS IS SELF-CONTROL UNDER COMPULSION

A child-widow, who has given her name and address, laments her condition as follows :[3]

Not only do I get such letters often, but I also come across

[1] This was reproduced in *The Hindustan Times*, 17-7-1925.

[2] Continuous reading of a holy book, here the Granth Saheb, the Sikh scripture

[3] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent requested Gandhiji to take up the cause of widows with the same earnestness with which he championed that of the untouchables.

child-widows wherever I go. I have known countless women and, therefore, can understand their suffering. I have made myself a woman—am always trying to be ever more like one—in order to share women's suffering as best as a man can. I try to fill the place of a mother to many a girl. Hence I fully understand the suffering of this sister.

I feel more and more strongly that there should be no such phenomenon as a child-widow, a contradiction in terms. It is not in remaining a widow, but in self-control that dharma consists. Compulsion and self-control are mutually exclusive terms. The former degrades a human being, whereas the latter is uplifting. Remaining a widow under compulsion is a sin, but doing so of one's own free will is virtue, lends beauty to the soul and acts as a shield for the purity of society. To say that a girl of fifteen remains a widow voluntarily is sheer impudence and ignorance. How can such a girl ever know the misery of a widow's life? It is the duty of her parents to give her every facility to marry again. It is cowardice to submit to a cruel custom, and manliness to defy it.

I have heard a great deal about the way in which marriages are arranged among *Patidars*[1] and the customs which prevail among them. I see no element of exaggeration in this sister's letter.

When I consider what advice I should give to widows who are young, I realize my utter helplessness. It is easy to ask such a girl to marry again. But whom should she marry. Who will find a husband for her ? Should she marry outside her caste? Can a girl find a husband by looking for one? Should she marry by advertising for a husband? Is marriage a business arrangement? Where social opinion is hostile or indifferent to her, it is almost impossible for a child-widow to find a husband. And how can I advise a girl to bind herself to any kind of fellow if she fails to find a suitable partner?

I can, therefore, only appeal to the guardians of childwidows. But I doubt if *Navajivan* is ever likely to find its way into their hands. Persons of their class generally do not read newspapers. This is the difficulty in which I find myself. But I can give this advice to child-widows. They should suffer in patience. They may pour out their suffering before their elders, men or women, and tell them everything they want. If the elders do not understand their feelings or do not

[1] A community in Gujarat

agree with them, they should not worry, and, if and when they find suitable partner, should get married. To find a partner, one should like Damayanti, Savitri[1] and Parvati[2] in the past, do *tapascharya* appropriate and possible in this age. That *tapascharya* is study. For a widow, there is nothing better than intellectual and spiritual studies and physical activity to steady the mind. They can do physical *tapascharya* by devoting every moment of their time to the spinning-wheel, intellectual *tapascharya* by devoting themselves to literary studies and spiritual *tapascharya* by purifying themselves inwardly, by striving to realize the *atman*. The elders cannot come in their way in any of these pursuits; and, even if they try, they cannot succeed. Everyone has a right to do these three things. If a widow is denied this right, she should certainly resort to satyagraha.

I know that this course, too, is difficult. But the right course always seems difficult at first; we have the Lord's assurance, however, that in the end we shall not find it difficult.

The elders of such widows will have reason for regret afterwards if they refuse to follow the course of wisdom now, for I witness immorality everywhere. By placing restrictions on a widow, we do not protect either her or the family or dharma. I see the degradation of all three before our very eyes.

Let the guardians of child-widows follow the course of wisdom.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-7-1925

86. STOP PUBLISHING "NAVAJIVAN"

A reader has written a long letter to me, which I summarize in my own words since his language does not admit of compression. He says :

> Readers are tired of reading all the time about the spinning-wheel in *Navajivan*. If you bring out a separate Spinning-wheel Number every month as you publish an Education Number, that will save money and you may also get readers for it. This advice may be offered to you since you do not publish *Navajivan* for profit. If you want that the weekly *Navajivan* must continue,

[1] Wife of Satyavan; whom she retrieved from Death

[2] Who performed severe penance to secure Shiva as her husband

you should use it to tell the people about other activities of the kind which will inspire fear in the British. Look at what Turkey has done. In the world as we find it, there is no love but what is inspired by fear.

I am never without such advisers. Since in answering their questions from time to time, I can also explain the aim of *Navajivan*, a discussion of the subject is not without purpose. It is not true to say that *Navajivan* discusses only the spinning-wheel, but it may be said that the spinning-wheel gets the first importance. However, I can see from the subscribers that still remain that they do not mind exclusive attention to the spinning-wheel.

Navajivan is not run for making money, nor is it intended for promoting any and every kind of activity : it is only a medium for the propagation of my ideas. *Navajivan* will not continue publication with the help of loans, or seek to meet its expenses by accepting advertisements. Nor will it be brought out and offered free to readers, with the help of donations from a few friends. Its readers should regard themselves as its proprietors. *Navajivan* is my weekly letter to them. They will spend money on it, subscribe to it and keep it alive so long as the ideas presented through it appeal to them, for every week I pour out my soul in it and I know that nothing but good can result from studying a thing which expresses the very heart of its author, even though he may be an illiterate person.

Navajivan is an organ for telling the people about the invaluable method of satyagraha. If I may say so, I live only to teach its use. The idea is not new. I am convinced that I am only putting before the people an old thing in a somewhat new language and a new garb. I believe that we can secure swaraj only through satyagraha. Swaraj is our life-breath and, deprived of it, we are in the condition of a man choking without air. I am quite clear in my mind that, if I succeed in explaining to the people the basic principles of satyagraha, an easy path will have been discovered, which the country and the world can follow. It is possible, of course, that I may die before I have succeeded in leading the people to this royal road.

Even if that happens, nothing will have been lost. It is an immutable law that a good deed done is never wasted.

This path of satyagraha cannot be followed except with the help of the spinning-wheel. God, for the hungry, is food. This is why the Upanishads, even describe food as *Brahman*. Food is produced by the

labour of man's body. Since we do not work enough with our bodies, we get less food. People remain unemployed during four months in a year. The net result of this has been that the nation has lost its vitality. The spinning-wheel is an unrivalled means of restoring strength to it and ending its hunger. One drop of rain is of no consequence, but an infinite number of them have such power of nourishing that they give new life to the whole world every year. In the same way, it may be that one spinning-wheel will seem to achieve nothing, but a multitude of them have as much power, at least, as a mass of rain drops. In one sense, it has more. One drop of water by itself will be wasted; a mass of them out of season may do harm. But even one spinning-wheel will bring some gain to the person who works on it. There is no time of the year when the spinning-wheel will be out of season. That is why "Here no effort undertaken is lost, no disaster befalls. Even a little of this righteous course delivers one from great fear."[1]

These being my convictions, *Navajivan* would have no work left if it did not give the highest place to the spinning-wheel.

It is, moreover, a lesson in peace, and a potent means of self-purification. There are other means, too, of self-purification which *Navajivan* discusses, and will continue to discuss, from time to time. All articles, in the final analysis, are concerned with one idea, namely, self-purification, swaraj, satyagraha. *Navajivan's* aim is to increase our inner strength and help us to win swaraj through it. If, therefore, it discusses subjects like Council-entry, it is only with the aim of promoting self-purification, of developing spiritual strength. *Navajivan* can give nothing exciting just now, for there is no gain in doing so. Time spent in criticizing others is merely wasted. Criticism has some meaning only when it is backed by strength. Those who understand this point will appreciate the policy followed in *Navajivan* and will not stop reading it. The paper will continue as long as it has a fair number of subscribers. When the number falls below a certain limit, I will not lose a moment, nor shall I feel one pang of heart, in stopping its publication.

And even if *Navajivan* stops publication, my spinning-wheel will not stop, for I do not even need friends to help me in keeping it going.

The other piece of advice which the correspondent gives is that I

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II, 40

should suggest something which will inspire fear in the hearts of the British. That thing is against my very nature and I can never bring myself to do it. I want to win over the British through love. It may be that this is beyond the capacity of the country to attempt. It can adopt the path of violence. But it will not, in that case, need my services, since I am not a worthy soldier in such an effort. Every weapon which I find it possible to employ has its roots in love or truth. My plan may be wrong; my intention is never unworthy.

This is *Navajivan's* limitation and mine.

Another reader has made a different suggestion, which also I shall discuss here. He says that people find the price of five pice much too high. If the price is kept at one pice, he says, there will be a large number of subscribers and *Navajivan* will not have to draw from its own resources. Those who understand something about accounts will see that, if a thing is priced below a certain level, the larger its sale the greater will be the loss. That is, increase in sales will be a gain only if the thing is sold at profit. If a paper is published at a loss, as the sales increase the loss will increase. At first *Navajivan* used to be published at a loss. After due calculations, the subscription has been fixed at a suitable rate. It certainly yields some profit, which increases when the sales increase. If anyone feels inclined to suggest that the price should be fixed so as to eliminate this profit, he should know that the profit is not large enough for its elimination to make a difference to the rate of subscription.[1] *Navajivan* is not in such a position that it can be offered at one or two pice. But I may say, at the same time, that it is sent altogether free whenever this seems justified. I do not know many persons who find the price of *Navajivan* too high, but who would be glad to read it if they got a free copy. If there are any such persons, I should certainly like to have their names and addresses, for some friends have offered help to enable us to send free copies of *Navajivan*, and I would certainly avail myself of this offer for the sake of the readers. If there are such persons, they should write to the

[1] On June 30 it was resolved to effect the following two changes in regard to *Navajivan* : 1. When the present stock of paper is exhausted, paper of better quality should be used for *Navajivan*. 2. At present, subscribers are charged separately for the supplements to *Navajivan* brought out periodically whenever there is excess of matter; this should be stopped and, with effect from the commencement of *Navajivan's* seventh year (September 1925), whenever there is excess of matter, extra pages should be printed and given free to the readers as was done formerly.

Manager, who, if he thinks it proper, will send them *Navajivan* free or at a reduced rate of subscription. But readers should understand that the cost of such copies will be borne by some friend or other, and not by *Navajivan*, for it is no longer in a position to do so.

This correspondent also seems to believe that *Navajivan* still meets the loss incurred on *Young India*. This is not true. *Young India* does not now run at a loss. *Hindi Navajivan* may still be said to be in that position. Its sales have not become so regular that it can be considered to be self-supporting. They still rise and fall. But the loss on its account is also not being borne exclusively by the subscribers of *Navajivan*. It is borne by the institution as a whole, i.e., by all its departments jointly. Friends could have borne the loss, but, knowing that this family was not likely to give up its pledge to accept no help from outside, they did not press the offer.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-7-1925

87. KHADI PRATISHTHAN

Readers of *Navajivan* know how deeply I have been impressed by the work of the Bengal Khadi Pratishthan. After reading my report, Shri Lakshmidas[1] sent Shri Mathuradas to inspect its work; the latter has written down the conclusions which he has arrived at after personal inquiry and given me a copy of the report. However careful my examination might have been, it could not be treated as scientific. Shri Mathuradas's inquiry, on the other hand, was scientific, for he has specialized in this field, has conducted careful inquiries into the working of other such establishments and is so well informed about the finances of some of them that he can reel off precise figures. I, therefore, attach greater value to his inquiry than to mine. In my report the reader would find my conclusions, but, little of the evidence on which they are based, whereas in the report of this scientific inquiry he would get the evidence as well. Shri Mathuradas's inquiry being of this character, its results are given elsewhere in this issue.

I should like khadi workers to read the report very carefully. The distinguishing feature of the Khadi Pratishthan is that it takes

[1] Laskhmidas Asar, an inmate of the Sabarmati Ashram who specialized in khadi and village industries

work from its employees like any business establishment and pays them adequately. But, even then, it has on its staff men who work in a spirit of self-sacrifice, and the reason is that the two chief workers, Acharya Ray and his right-hand man, Satish Babu, are men of this type. Another reason is that, though the methods of work followed are those of a business establishment, selfish motives find no place in it.

I told the merchants in Jalpaiguri[1] that this was the key to the country's freedom. Our merchants helped in the enslavement of India for the sake of their trade, and so the country will come into its own again only when this class learns to think less of self-interest and more of public interest. It is not enough that they should contribute crores. They are doing that. We shall reach our goal when they dedicate their intelli-gence to the service of the country. A merchant who has done this will not think of amassing wealth for himself; he will earn it for the country. He will not, moreover, consider which business will earn most for the country; he will rather think which trade will help the largest number among the masses to earn most by working in their own villages. We have got a few business men of this type, and that is why we are making the progress we see today. Anyone of us can measure this progress by making an elementary calculation. I praise Satish Babu's work because, though he has sacrificed his business worth millions and dedicated his intelligence, the services of the members of his family and his resources to the propagation of khadi, he is not in the least conscious of his self-sacrifice, or rather he has no trace of pride for having done all this. This is because he has found joy in self-sacrifice. It would be impossible for him to live without it.

The reader need not conclude from my eulogy that, from a business point of view, Satish Babu's work is above criticism. If there is anything in it deserving of criticism, it is due to no fault of his. He lacks, to that extent, knowledge of business matters. This ignorance will disappear with experience. Let us hope that many more such business men of intelligence will sacrifice their all and come forward to do business in khadi not with an eye to profit but for the sake of the country.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-7-1925

[1] In Bengal, where a public meeting was held on June 10, 1925

88. MY NOTES

I give below the summary of a statement[1], sent to me by the All-India Khadi Association, relating to the disposal of the yarn received by it in virtue of the resolution on the subject passed last year by the All-India Congress Committee.

These facts teach us some important lessons. An organi- zation is like a machine. If in a machine one screw becomes loose, it slows down or, sometimes, even breaks down; the same thing happens to organizations, especially organizations doing constructive work. If attention is not paid even to the minutest details of their working, production will fall. Weak yarn, carelessly wound bundles of yarn, bundles of yarn not stored properly—any such negligence will bring down the quality of khadi, raise the cost of weav- ing and reduce its speed. We observe, too, that the slow progress in work was wholly due to negligence at the spinning stage.

SPINNERS, BEWARE!

The khadi produced has been priced at market rates, for the quantity available was so little that there was no meaning in selling it at reduced price. It would also have been a problem, if the khadi were offered at reduced price, to decide who had the prior right to buy it. That such a problem should not arise over a small stock of khadi was one reason for my advice that it should be sold at market rates.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-7-1925

89. ENTRY IN VISITORS' BOOK[2]

July 12, 1925

It is good to read clean books, but it is better to weave into our lives that which we read in ennobling literature.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 6051. Courtesy : Public Library, Allahabad

[1] The statement is not translated here.

[2] Of the Rajshahi Public Library

90. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, RAJSHAHI [1]

July 12, 1925

After thanking those who gave him addresses and for the presents[2] made to him, Mahatmaji explained that he had only two objects in view in making his tour. His first object was to secure 10 lakhs of rupees for Deshbandhu Memorial. He hoped to receive suitable donation towards the Memorial Fund from the people of Rajshahi, where there were many big zamindars, pleaders and business men. He asked everyone to contribute his mite to this fund. He told that millions of people were lamenting the death of Deshbandhu Das and he wanted to utilize this feeling of deep love for Deshbandhu to increase the strength and power of Hindustan. He pointed out that our first duty was to render our utmost help for the Memorial of Deshbandhu and then to carry out the wishes of late Deshbandhu.

Mahatmaji then spoke about his meeting with Deshbandhu at Darjeeling, when Deshbandhu impressed it clearly that nothing could be done without organizing the villagers and that charkha was the main centre of work for this village organization. He asked the people to act in accordance with the wishes of late Deshbandhu, viz., (1) to work on charkha for at least half an hour a day, (2) to wear khaddar and (3) to maintain Hindu-Muslim unity, which he said occupied the first place in Deshbandhu's talk with him at Darjeeling.

Mahatmaji also told the people that Deshbandhu had no feeling of hatred for any man and that Deshbandhu had by his own life demonstrated that untouchability had no place in religion. Mahatmaji again asked the people to act up to the wishes of Deshbandhu and win swaraj if they really loved and felt for Deshbandhu.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 17-7-1925

91. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

July 13, 1925

DEAR MOTI BABU[3],

I have just got your letter. I am off again tomorrow morning. The whole of the week I shall be very busy. Could you please come or send Nirmal Babu Tuesday next week early morning, say, 7 a.m.?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 11018

[1] Gandhiji received addresses from the Reception Committee, the Municipality, the District and Local Boards, and other public organizations. His reply in Hindi was translated into Bengali by Satish Chandra Das Gupta.

[2] Set of brass utensils made at Kalam and a charkha that could be folded into a small box

[3] Of the Pravartak Sangh, Chandranagore

92. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

[CALCUTTA][1]

Ashad Vad 4 [*July 13, 1925*]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. You say you don't know what to write. Does it mean that you are worried? If so, please stop worrying. There is no cause whatever for it. One should not be upset because of the loss of money. If there is any other reason for worry, let me know. You should not feel nervous to go to the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

PS.

My programme is uncertain. I shall have to spend the whole of this month here.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 9216

93. REPLIES TO QUESTIONNAIRE [2]

ON TRAIN TO JESSORE,

[On or before *July 14, 1925*][3]

Q. (1) Do you think that the Congress creed should be changed for your being its member? If you think change is essential, will you define the creed acceptable to yourself?

A. If it is changed, the alternative of buying and paying yarn should be done away with.

(2) If there is an annual money contribution as well as the yarn quota in the alternative, as the franchise qualification, will it be acceptable to you?

Anything will be acceptable to me that is acceptable to the Swaraj party.

[1] The postmark shows that the letter was posted at Calcutta on July 13.

[2] Which *The Bombay Chronicle* had addressed to leaders of various political parties

[3] Gandhiji was in Calcutta on July 13 and in Jessore on July 14. It is not clear whether he left Calcutta for Jessore on July 13 or 14.

(3) If the Congress revokes the yarn franchise and, instead of delegating to the Swarajists the power to determine political work in the legislatures, frames a political programme of its own, including work in the Councils, will you co-operate in carrying it out?

So far as I know myself at present, I think I would not be able to lead such an organization.

(4) What, in your opinion, should the Congress programme inside as well as outside the Councils be?

The present programme.

(5) Do you think by constitutional agitation alone the British people will be persuaded to give us Home Rule?

I am inclined to think not.

(6) If extra-constitutional agitation is essential, what form or forms of direct action will you suggest and will you recommend to the Congress, the contesting of elections to the legislatures on the issue of non-payment of taxes?

Civil disobedience at present excluding non-payment of taxes is the only form of direct action feasible.

(7) Are you prepared personally to give up the use of foreign cloth? If you are still using it, will you help the swadeshi movement by giving it up?

I do not use foreign cloth. For me khaddar is the only swadeshi essential.

(8) If you are elected an M.L.C.[1] in your province, will you, under the present circumstances, accept a ministership?

Thank God I am legally barred.

(9) If the Reading-Birkenhead negotiations are disappointing to you, what course will you advise the public to take in addition to vigorous vocal protest and will you support the programme of persistent refusal of supplies before redress of grievances?

If I have the power, I would use the disappointment for achieving the only possible thing, viz., exclusion of foreign cloth.

(10) If the essential provisions of the Commonwealth of India Bill are satisfactory to you, will you in the event of its non-acceptance by Parliament before October 1926, recommend to the Congress the contesting of elections to the legislatures on the issue of non-payment of taxes?

This is answered elsewhere.

[1] Mamber of the Legislative Council

(11) Do you think the Swarajists are actively working in the country in furtherance of the constructive programme?

Not everywhere; not all.

(12) Do you think the differences in the mental attitudes and political methods of Congressmen on the one hand and the Independents or liberals on the other are too vital to be harmonized by mutual adjustments and to make united action on their part possible?

They appear to be so. I hope that the appearance is deceptive.

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-7-1925

94. A PLEA FOR TRUTH

I have not worried the readers of *Young India* with an account of the Kidderpore Hindu-Muslim riot on the *Bakr-Id* day, although I happened to be on the scene of the riot only a few hours after it had taken place. I did, however, give a long interview[1] to the Associated Press almost after my return to Russa Road from Kidderpore. In the interview, I gave it as my deliberate opinion that the Hindu labourers were wholly in the wrong. This statement has enraged some of my Hindu correspondents who have favoured me with most abusive and offensive letters protesting against my having found fault with the Hindus. One of them would have me adopt a Muslim name. I take notice of this correspondence in order to show to what pass some of us have come in our blind zeal for our respective faiths. We refuse to see anything wrong in ourselves. When such becomes the normal state of a majority of people belonging to a particular faith, that faith is dying. For nothing based on a lie can persist for any length of time.

I venture to suggest that I have rendered a service to Hinduism by exposing without any reservation the wrong done by the Hindu labourers in question. They, the labourers themselves, did not resent my plain speaking. On the contrary, they seemed to be grateful for it. They felt penitent, admitted the wrong done and sincerely apologized for it.

What was I to do, if I was not to speak out about what I saw with my own eyes and felt within me? Was I to prevaricate for the sake of protecting the guilty? Was I to refuse to give the interview when the

[1] For the interview of July 2, *vide* "Statement to Associated Press of India", 2-7-1925.

ubiquitous Press man sought me out at mid-night? I would have forfeited the right to call myself a Hindu, been unworthy of holding the office of President of the Congress and sullied my name as a satyagrahi if I had hesitated to tell the truth when the telling of it had become relevant. Let Hindus not be guilty of the charge they do not hesitate to bring against Mussalmans, viz., that of committing a wrong and then seeking to hide it.

One correspondent says when Hindus sought help in Delhi, I pleaded helplessness, when my presence is sought in Lucknow I evade it, but when it is a matter of condemning Hindus, I hasten to the scene of action and thoughtlessly judge them. Let it be known that I went to Kidderpore on the strength of an invitation received from a Hindu on behalf of the Hindus and upon a call from Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta who had preceded me. In spite of my helplessness, if I heard of an actual fight and especially if I found that I was wanted by either party, I should hasten to the rescue. It is when one party only calls me to adjust a quarrel or prevent it, I should plead helplessness because of loss of influence among a certain class of Hindus and Mussalmans. The difference between the two positions is too obvious to need pointing out.

But it is urged by the correspondents, as it was urged by a deputation that waited on me, that by my severe condemnation of the Hindus, I had encouraged the Mussalmans to commit assaults on innocent men and exposed the Bazar Hindu shopkeepers to looting and worse by Mussalman *goondas*. I should feel sorry if my condemnation of a Hindu misdeed should give rise to a Mussalman misdeed. But I could even then be not deterred from doing the right thing. And why should Hindus be afraid of Mussalman reprisals? Surely it would be right for Hindus, if they cannot follow my method of non-violence and resignation—and I admit that it is most difficult for propertied men to do so—to defend themselves by every means at their disposal. To be men we must shed cowardice, whether we are Hindus or Mussalmans, and learn the art of self-defence. No amount of hide and seek can avert the certain danger that awaits those who will not learn to defend themselves, although they would like to be defended by others. My condemnation of Hindus of Kidderpore does not carry with it condemnation of those who defend themselves when attacked. Had the Hindus instead of being the aggressors been found defending themselves against heavy odds and had died in the attempt, I would have praised their valour. But at Kidderpore, so far as I know

they were in an overwhelming majority, they were the aggressors. The Mussalmans had given them no cause for quarrel. I wouldunhesitatingly condemn unprovoked violence as I had no difficulty about condemning the Mussalman misdeeds in Kohat and Gulbarga which I thought were utterly uncalled for. I can even understand two blows against one, but I cannot reconcile myself to any blow without the slightest provocation or provocation worked up for the occasion.

Young India, 16-7-1925

95. WHAT IS TAMMANY HALL ?

Exception has been taken to my defence at a Memorial meeting of the memory of Deshbandhu against the charge of Tammany Hall meth-ods. It has been taken on the ground that such a reference at a Memorial meeting was a jarring note. I believe that I have the sense of the delicate. I knew what I was doing. I was presenting Deshbandhu's life to the students of Calcutta. I had in my mind audible whispers about Tammany Hall methods alleged to have been adopted by Deshbandhu. And as I had a most vivid recollection of my conversation with him on the matter, I felt that I would have been false to the sacred memory of a comrade if I had not assured the students of the baselessness of the charge. After all, we will not make the memory of our distinguished countrymen sacred by covering their blemishes. It should be permissible to cherish the memory of our heroes at the same time that we acknowledge their proved blemishes. False delicacy is no delicacy. If Deshbandhu was guilty of Tammany Hall methods, let us own the fact and, whilst treasuring all that was noblest in him, let us beware of his particular methods. But believing as I did that he was not guilty of those methods, I could not conceive a happier occasion than the one I had at the University Institute.[1]

But what are Tammany Hall methods? If I know them correctly, it is a name given to the machinations secret and open resorted to by a class of men in America for seizing for their selfish end corporations and offices in which they do not hesitate to make use of fraud, bribery and every form of public corruption. I had the most emphatic repudiation from Deshbandhu's most trusted lieutenants and, then, at

[1] *Vide* "Speech at University Institute, Calcutta", 30-6-1925.

Darjeeling, from Deshbandhu himself, with the invitation to investigate such char-ges and publicly denounce every proved charge of bribery or corruption. The first indispensable test of Tammany Hall is obviously lacking. Neither Deshbandhu nor his lieutenants to his knowledge had any selfish ends to serve. Indeed, such people could not long remain with him. So if any one bribed anybody else, it was for an unselfish end. But, personally, I draw no distinction between the two forms of bribery. Nor did Deshbandhu draw any. He said to me emphatically that he could not, even if he would, free his country by corrupt methods, if only because the Government had reduced bribery or corruption to a perfect science. The truth is that for the first time, within the experience of the present generation we have a well-drilled, disciplined and compact political party functioning in the Councils and the Assembly. It, therefore, seems unthinkable to some that such a party could be kept together without bribery and corruption. The Government has done their best to discredit the party by all the means at its command. Rival political parties have lent a ready ear to every rumour or talk about bribery. There is no doubt that some people honestly believe that bribery was one of the means resorted to by Deshbandhu for keeping the Party together and gaining other support at crucial moments in the Council.

So far as I know, there is no foundation for the charge. The memory of Deshbandhu will not suffer by anyone who can clearly establish the charges of his having done so. It is better that the public know definitely what is said in inaudible tones. After all, the charge was not merely against the Deshbandhu, rather it was more against his party than against him personally. Though he is no more among us, the Party survives. And if I know it, I know that it is capable of standing the searchlight of investigation if anyone had proof of corruption against it.

Young India, 16-7-1925

96. CALCUTTA'S MAYOR

Some friends in Bengal have resented my interference[1] in the matter of the choice of the Mayor of Calcutta. Perhaps common courtesy requires an explanation from me. Whilst after the national

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Swarajist Councillors" Meeting", 9-7-1925.

loss I decided to stand by Bengal in the hour of her greatest need and, so far as was possible, to wipe her tears and to comfort Basanti Devi as also the fatherless children, I had also decided not to force myself on any of them, but humbly to hold myself at their disposal. It was a simple duty I owed to the memory of a departed friend and comrade. The inauguration of an All-Bengal Deshbandhu Memorial Fund for which I was chiefly responsible made my stay in Bengal peremptory. Events have justified the wisdom of my decision.

But I had little expected that I should have to give any advice or guidance in the selection of the Mayor of Calcutta in the place of Deshbandhu. It was a task I would gladly have avoided. But for a soldier there is often no choice. The matter was referred to me by parties interested in the selection. and I could not shirk the responsibility, as I could not conscientiously plead incapacity. Having been drawn into the vortex, there was no escape from it till the matter was formally decided by the Congress Municipal Party.

Whether the advice I tendered was sound or not, whether it was in the interest of the city or not is undoubtedly a matter which is capable of many opinions. I can only say that I gave the advice that, in my opinion, was the best for the country and for the City of Palaces. I had before me a tradition and a policy as my measure. My duty lay in doing that which, in my opinion, Deshbandhu would have done if he was with us in the flesh, in so far as it was in no way in conflict with known and recognized ethical principles. The Congress has for the past four years decided to capture municipalities and local boards in its own interest and for the furtherance of its constructive programme. The idea behind the capture was not better care of sanitation, but acquisition of greater political power. There was nothing wrong in this ambition. The Government itself has used these institutions of its creation more for the consolidation of its power and enhancement of its prestige than for better sanitation. I have known London county council elections fought on political issues. And when political fever has run high, a municipal election has been used as an index for gauging the political barometer. And if it has been considered necessary to use municipalities in England for political purposes, much more is it so in a country where a whole nation lies under the political domination of another. Once grant the advisability of utilizing the machinery created by the Government, the capture of municipal institutions for gaining political power is an inevitable step. Deshbandhu captured the Corporation of Calcutta to that end and he

used it most effectively for the consolidation of the power of the Congress or, which is almost the same thing in Bengal, the Swaraj Party. Did he thereby neglect the interest of the corporation? I venture to say emphatically no. On the contrary, his municipal ambition was as high as the political.

Who was then to be the Mayor in his place? It was a gift within the power of the party of his creation. It must be bestowed upon him who could best carry out the tradition bequeathed by the great chief and who could gain additional prestige for the Party, it being understood that he was also, in the Party, the best person considered from the purely Municipal standpoint. In my opinion, Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta was the fittest person answering these requirements. And if he was good enough to lead the Swaraj Party, he deserved all the adventitious support that could be given to him in order to enable him to wear Deshbandhu's mantle with grace and dignity.

But could he do justice to the triple burden? He was already elected President of the Provincial Congress Committee. Could he lead the Swaraj Party, and, at the same time, carry out the constructive programme of the Congress and discharge the heavy responsibility of the Mayoralty of Calcutta? What was the use of the triple honour if the burden was to break him? My answer was that Mr. Sen Gupta alone was the best judge of his own capacity. The power should be given him if he needed and wanted it. It should not be thrust upon him. It was, undoubtedly, a dangerous experiment if Mr. Sen Gupta was a schemer, putting his own interest before the country's. In that case, it was dangerous even to make him leader of the Swaraj Party. If he was above suspicion, he should have the Mayoralty if he needed it for his work and if he could creditably discharge the burden. No Congressman worthy of the name, much less the successor of Deshbandhu, could dare seek honour for honour's sake. For me, Mr. Sen Gupta occupied the position of MacSwiney, who wanted to become the Lord Mayor of Cork, not so that he might gain any honour for himself, but so that he might face the danger that was then in store for him who occupied the exalted position. The position of the successor of Deshbandhu is, if possible, fraught with greater danger than MacSwiney had to face. MacSwiney put his life at stake. Deshbandhu's successor had to put his whole reputation at stake. The slightest deviation from the standard of sacrifice and honour bequeathed by Deshbandhu might blast his successor's reputation for life,—a living death worse than the death of the mere body. Thus I

reasoned to myself and my friends in pressing Mr. Sen Gupta's claim to the Mayoralty of Calcutta. And I am thankful to be able to record that both the Congress Party and the Congress Municipal Party understood and appreciated my argument and, with but few dissentients, accepted the nomination of Mr. Sen Gupta. I only hope that they will make his burden as light as it is possible for them to make. I have no doubt in my mind that Mr. Sen Gupta will try to live up to the high standard set by Deshbandhu.

But let no one regard this as a precedent for all time. On pure principle it is wrong to combine three important functions in one person, no matter how able he may be. No man can do full justice to three heavy tasks. The temptation, too, for self-aggrandizement for any man is too great. It is unfair to expose anyone to avoidable temptation. Moreover, even though political parties may capture municipal bodies, it would be wrong to give municipal responsibilities to active politicians. We must, even in our bondage, treat municipal matters on their own merits and create municipal specialists who would refuse to be guided by political considerations in the discharge of their municipal duties. If we do not take all these precautions, our experiment of capturing municipal bodies is foredoomed to failure. Municipal life requires a training which a busy politician is not always fitted for. A municipal councillor, therefore, best serves his political party by divesting himself of the politician whilst he is occupying the municipal chair, even as a judge, on assuming office, ceases to be an advocate or a politician. The reason why, in spite of my love of municipal life and my knowledge of its utmost importance, I have permitted myself to advise the dangerous combination of three functions in one person is because I conceive the present to be an extraordinary occasion requiring a drastic, nay, a dangerous step. Dases are not born every day. Deshbandhu has left a gap which it is impossible for any man to fill. He who has to shoulder the burden left by him needs, therefore, extraordinary props. And on the assumption of average ability and honesty, he should have them. But, so far as I am concerned, this experiment, I hope, is the first and the last in my life. I have countenanced it with a full sense of my responsibility and the danger attendant upon it. May God grant the necessary wisdom and the power to Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta. Let the citizens of Calcutta rest assured that the election of an active politician is not intended to be a menace to the healthy growth of the municipal life of Calcutta. We have precedents for it in the brilliant example of Pherozeshah Mehta

than whom we never had a better President of a corporation or a better councillor. His tradition was kept up last year by Vithalbhai Patel, who, even his opponents admitted, discharged the burden of his high office with great ability and equally great impartiality. And Vithalbhai Patel is nothing if he is not a fiercely active politician. In stating my position, I have really dealt with the highest form of municipal life. That type has yet to be evolved by us in India. And I am hoping that it would be the privilege of the Congress to do so. It will not be till we have men whose ambition will be more than fully satisfied if they can keep the gutters and closets of their cities scrupulously clean and supply the purest milk at the cheapest rates and rid them of drunknness and prostitution.

Young India, 16-7-1925

97. NOTES

A MEMORIAL TOUR

The tour that I am now making in Bengal has been turned into a Memorial tour. I was disinclined to tear myself away from Calcutta at the present moment and whilst the ten lacs are uncollected. But I had not the heart to disappoint the people of the respective Districts which I was under promise to visit. But I had warned the people that my tour this time would be for collecting the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund and deliver-ing his message. And even from the Memorial standpoint, I am glad I am touring. The response of the Poor people, both men and women, has been marvellous everywhere. They have needed no coaxing. They have given to the fullest measure for the asking. It has been a common experience to find old widows undoing the little knots of the corners of their saris and giving up all they had in them. Often have I felt like returning such donations. But, on second thoughts, I have not only reconciled myself to them, but felt it to be a pleasing duty to receive them. Had not Deshbandhu given his all? And was not the hospital to be for women in distress? Were not some poor widows destined to receive training as nurses at the institution that will soon be founded? Why should I doubt the law of God which says that He rewards tenfold those who give their all for a good cause? Nor have the well-to-do been unwill-ing to pay. I was not prepared for ornaments at women's meetings in the *mofussil*. But in no place have the good sisters failed to give their orna-ments. At Serajgunj two of them gave away their heavy gold chains. It is remarkable too that, in

all the four places I have visited at the time of writing these notes, the collections at the women's meetings, though naturally attended by hundreds against men's thousands, have been as much as at the men's.

SIGN OF POVERTY

These collections have been a study in more ways than one. They have been an ocular demonstration of the poverty of the masses. I am collecting from thousands of them. At every meeting coppers have abounded. In many cases, they have given even half pices. Not because the people have been unwilling to give more, but because to my knowledge they had no other coins. They undid their knots or emptied their pockets in my presence.

SILENT WORKERS

From Serajgunj to Ishurdi we have been travelling in a slow train. It is a branch service. There are stations every ten minutes. Villagers have attended the stations in their hundreds and, at several places, in their thousands and have paid their pice. The whole of this great demonstration has been arranged by the silent, selfless youth of Bengal. Their names will never be noted in the newspapers. They probably do not even want themselves to be advertised. Their sterling work is their advertisement. Without them the villagers would have known noth- ing. They, the young men, are their walking newspapers. For they neither read nor write. And those few that do are too poor to buy news-papers. All honour to these brave, sacrificing servants of India. Every one of the meetings at these stations has been most orderly, noiseless, solemn and business-like. Swaraj will certainly come through these young lovers of their country. Nor must I omit to mention the railway officials. The railway authorities from the highest to the lowest have been exceptionally courteous and attentive throughout my previous tour, but I am undoubtedly more in need of their help now than before. The task of collection from thousands at wayside stations within a few minutes is no light task. And yet it has been achieved because they too conspired with the people and the volunteers to make my task as light as possible. Be it noted that I had to alight at all the stations and pass through crowds, make the collection and return to my compartment in time. Deshbandhu dead is a more powerful force for drawing the best out of men than he was when he was alive. His countrymen realize the debt they owe him and, therefore, to their country.

WHAT OF THE HOUSE ?

Doubts have been raised as to whether the proposed hospital is to be opened in the very mansion that has belonged to his family for two generations. I thought that the matter was absolutely clear in the appeal signed by Lord Sinha and others. That mansion is already in the hands of the trustees for such purposes as a hospital and the like. Its value is over three lacs. It is burdened with a debt of over two lacs. The debt will be paid naturally out of the collections being now made. But the trustees of the Memorial will then acquire a property worth three lacs for two lacs. In other words, the trustees will have eleven lacs of capital when they have finished their collection of ten lacs.

TO DOUBTERS

There are still people who ask me whether I am really serious and sanguine about collecting 10 lacs. All I can say is that I do not know Bengal at all if it does not give 10 lacs for this Memorial towards which I have not yet met a single person who has refused to give something. The question of collecting the amount is merely a question of time and organization. I do not entertain the slightest doubt about the success of the collection.

NOT INSPIRING ?

I have answered locally the charge that the object of the Memorial is not inspiring. The sceptics imply thereby that the object should have been political. But let me remind them that the signatories to the appeal had no choice. Those who want to revere Deshbandhu's memory cannot do so if they do not respect his own wishes. I hold that his wishes must be a first charge upon any collection that may be made by us, the survivors, to perpetuate his memory. Deshbandhu knew what he was doing when he made over his property to a trust. He deliberately chose to give it for a charitable, not a political, purpose. The survivors are not only, therefore, bound to acquire the house for the nation, but also to use it for the purpose intended by the donor. Bengal is, therefore, in my opinion, in honour bound to use the mansion as a hospital for women and an institution for training nurses. I hear that in some places Bengalis are collecting funds for local memorials. I hope that every city will have a memorial worthy of the great patriot. But that time is not yet. In my humble opinion, the honour of every Bengali who cherishes Deshbandhu's memory is pledged to finish the collection of 10 lacs for the All-Bengal Memorial before diverting a single pice for a local memorial.

The Bengalis outside Bengal, beware. They have not all yet made their returns. If all the Bengalis who have known Deshbandhu will not exert themselves, the collection is likely to be unduly prolonged. I hope, therefore, that those Bengalis who read these notes will exert themselves to the utmost within their own circles to secure the best subscriptions.

Young India, 16-7-1925

98. TO REMOVE A MISGIVING

I have lately been calling on a number of rich people to collect donations for the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. One of them was Shri Sadhuram Tularam. There I not only secured a generous donation, but also had occasion to talk to those present about religious matters. Untouchability was mentioned and it was said that something had appeared in the newspapers attributing to me the view that we should interdine and intermarry with the socalled untouchables. What I said to disabuse them regarding this only seemed to surprise those who had raised the point, and they suggested that I might publish a summary of what I told them in the *Hindi Navajivan*. I have accepted the suggestion and give here the required summary.

I must make it clear to the people, in the first place, that I do not as a rule read newspapers and on the rare occasions when I do, I find it impossible to repudiate all the false things that are attributed to me. If, therefore, anyone at any time has a doubt, he should ask me what I had said on any given occasion. Now, if someone has said in the newspapers that I stand for or encourage interdining and intermarrying with our untouchable brethren, he has made a mistake. I have stated categorically a thousand times that abolition of untouchability does not mean the abolition of the social restraints governing eating and marrying. With whom shall one eat or marry is an entirely different question and I do not find it necessary at the moment to pronounce upon it. I believe on the contrary that our mixing the two questions may impede the reform we wish to bring about. It is the duty of everyone who considers himself a Hindu to work for the eradication of untouchability. By mixing it up with other issues we shall be harming our cause.

Yes, about accepting water to drink I shall say something. If we accept clean water from a Sudra, as we should and as we do, we should

also accept water at the hands of an untouchable. I recognize only four *varnas*. There is to me no fifth *varna* called the untouchables. We must, therefore, eradicate untouchability, and the sufferings of the Hindus considered untouchable, and purify Hinduism as well as ourselves. In other words, there is no room for hatred and contempt in religion. Hatred is implicit in untouchability. We must do away with this hatred. Hinduism is a religion which holds service to be of the highest importance. Why should those considered untouchable be denied service?

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 16-7-1925

99. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

July 16, 1925

MY DEAR C. R.,

Somehow or other I need your letter to feel that all is well with you. My position is this. My body and mind are living in a world by which I remain unaffected, but in which I am being tried. My soul is living in a world physically away from me and yet a world by which I am and want to be affected. You are a part of that world and perhaps the nearest to me. My innermost being wants your approbation of what I am doing and thinking. I may not always succeed in getting it, but it craves for your verdict.

Now you understand exactly why I want to hear from you apart from many other reasons. You must let me have if it is only a postcard every week. Mahadev, Devdas, Pyarelal[1] should keep you posted with what is going on.

And you must keep well.

Your *sadhana* is the development of the place where you are and a scientific test of our theory of the value of hand-spinning. Even if it proves untrue in the end, neither we nor the world will have lost anything, for I know that we are true in the sense that we have full faith in the programme and, if it is intrinsically not immoral, our theory can be claimed to be true, when a fairly large number of villages sustain hand-spinning and khadi without protection as the whole of India sustains home cookery without protection.

[1] Pyarelal Nayyar; Gandhiji's secretary, 1920-48, and biographer

Surely this is a long introduction to what I want to say. Here is Pitt's letter and the letters from Kelappan. I am simply saying that we must keep nominally a satyagrahi at the Eastern gate unless the local men think otherwise. But you may come to other conclusion. You should write to Kelappan. He seems to be a nice, useful man.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

100. LETTER TO W. H. PITT

ON TOUR,
July 16, 1925

DEAR MR. PITT,

I thank you for your long and interesting letter[1]. In view of your letter, I am just now writing nothing publicly. But I fear that the posting of a satyagrahi at the point of prohibition is necessary as a matter of principle and discipline. In my opinion, an unequivocal declaration by the State is necessary. The condition of the untouchables should not be precarious. But, as before, I shall do nothing in a hurry and shall correspond with you before taking any step forward. I hope, however, that the prohibition that still exists in reality will be removed very soon and without the necessity of direct action. What about the other temple?[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 11098

[1] This is not available. Prior to it Pitt appears to have sent Gandhiji a telegram : "Am writing in detail. Please suspend judgment."

[2] For Pitt's reply *vide* appendix "Letter from W. H. Pitt", 22-7-1925. Earlier Pitt seems to have received a copy of a telegram which Gandhiji sent Kelappan "to picquet the Eastern gate only of Vaikom temple." But this message is not available.

101. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Thursday [*July 16, 1925*][1]

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. If you want the other bangles just now, let me know and I shall send them by post. Will Dahyabhai like to study in the National Medical College of Calcutta? It seems to be working well. Or what is Dahyabhai's real desire in the matter? I am so busy that I cannot possibly write long letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 27

102. RESOLUTIONS AT SWARAJ PARTY MEETING [2]

CALCUTTA,

July 16, 1925

1. The General Council of the Swaraj Party, whilst sharing with the country the deep grief universally expressed over the sudden and premature death of Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das, feels that the Party has lost its founder and infallible guide who kept it from harm in the midst of difficulties and led it in Bengal from victory to victory and set to the Party a standard of courage, self-sacrifice and discipline for which the Party owes to the memory of the deceased Chief a debt which it can never hope to repay. The Council tenders to Shrimati Basanti Devi and the family its respectful condolences.

2. The meeting of the General Council of the all-India Swaraj Party wholly endorses the sentiments regarding violence and the strong condemnation thereof contained, and the offer of honourable co-operation with the Government and the conditions thereof laid

[1] As in the printed source

[2] The General Council of the All-India Swarajists Party met at 148, Russa Road under the presidentship of Motilal Nehru. Gandhiji and Sarojini Naidu attended on special invitation. According to a report in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 17-7-1925, the second resolution was drafted by Gandhiji. Presumably the first resolution too was drafted by him.

down, in the Faridpore speech, dated the 2nd day of May, 1925, of the late President of the Party, Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das.

The Council, however, regrets that the recent pronouncement of the Rt. Hon'ble the Secretary of State for India in the House of Lords is not only no response to the late President's offer, but, on the contrary, is calculated by reason of its tone and language to make the chances of honourable co-operation difficult, if not impossible. The Council, therefore, sees in that pronouncement no reason for a revision of the policy of the Swaraj Party, but will be pre-pared to reconsider it if the final declaration to be made by the Government of India, and referred to by Lord Birkenhead, is found to be at all adequate to meet the requirements of the existing situation in the country.

Forward, 17-7-1925

103. SPEECH AT SWARAJ PARTY MEETING [1]

CALCUTTA,
July 16, 1925

When the business of the meeting was finished, Mahatmaji addressed the gathering with reference to the question of giving up the spinning franchise. He said that many Swarajists were present there. To them he would submit that, if they wanted to drop the spinning franchise, he would call a meeting of the A.I.C.C. for that purpose. Personally, he believed that much work had been done in regard to the spinning franchise in the course of the last six months and he expected that much would be done in course of the re-maining half year. But, still, if they wanted to drop it, he would no longer make delay in the matter.[2]

The Searchlight, 19-7-1925

[1] Those present included Sarojini Naidu, V. J. Patel, N. C. Kelkar, M. S. Aney, Dr. Moonje, T. Prakasam, S. Srinivasa Iyengar, Rangaswami Ayengar and J. M. Sen Gupta.

[2] On this point J. M. Sen Gupta and Motilal felt that the Swarajists must abide by the pact they had made with the Congress, and breach of it would imply breach of the Congress policy by the Swarajists who were all Congressmen.

104. SPEECH AT SWARAJ PARTY MEETING[1]

CALCUTTA,
July 17, 1925

Mahatmaji, who was present at the meeting, declared clearly that if they wanted to abolish the said franchise he would at once accede to their demand and convene a meeting of the A.I.C.C. But for him personally the only course open would be to resign the Presidentship of the Congress Working Committee and work separately for spreading charkha and khaddar. He said that he was ready to do away with the pact with the Swarajists and thereby make them completely independent of any obligation regarding Congress mandate. The pact had made it obligatory to the Swarajists to abide by the spinning franchise for full one year and for this reason many of them were inclined to observe it for the full term. But if the majority were for abolition, he must dissolve the pact in due deference to their wishes. In conclusion he declared that, if the Congress would abolish the spinning franchise, he would, while remaining within the Congress, form a separate organization for spinning and would work it up just as Deshbandhu Das and others formed and worked up the Swaraj Party.[2]

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-7-1925

105 A DECEPTIVE SPEECH

[*July 18, 1925*]

Lord Birkenhead's pronouncement is deceptive in a double sense. It does not read as harsh on second reading as it did on first, but it disappoints more on the second than it did on the first. The

[1] The meeting was held in the morning at the residence of S. C. Roy, son-in-law of C. R. Das, to discuss the abolition of the spinning franchise.

[2] The meeting of the A.I.C.C., it was decided, would be held late in September or early October to discuss the question of spinning franchise fully. According to the report : "At the conclusion of the sitting, Mahatmaji sent a note to Pandit Motilal Nehru saying that since the Swarajists had majority in the Congress and since Panditji was the President of the Swaraj Party, he should also assume the Presidentship of the Congress Working Committee. He did no longer like to be the President of this body. This note had created a sensation in the Swarajists' camp most of whom did not like to lose Mahatmaji's counsel. However, it was finally arranged that for at least the remaining period of this year, Mahatmaji will remain as the President of the A.I.C.C. But if the spinning franchise be dropped at the next meeting of the A.I.C.C., he will resign and set up a separate spinning organization."

harshness of it is unintended. The Secretary of State could not help himself. He has spoken as he has felt or rather been coached to feel. But his promises are only apparently alluring. A closer perusal leaves one under the impression that the maker of them knows that he will never be called upon to fulfil them. Let us take the most tempting of them. It says, in effect, 'produce your constitution and we will consider it.' Is it not our thirty-five years' experience that we have made petitions that we have considered to be perfect, but that they have been rejected "after careful consideration"? Having had that experience, we dropped the beggar's bowl in 1920 and made up our minds to live by our own exertion, even though we should perish in the attempt. It is not draughtsmanship that his Lordship really asks, it is swordsmanship he invites, with the full knowledge that the invitation will not be and could not be accepted. The evidence is in the speech itself. He had before him the Minority report of the Muddiman Committee, i.e., of Dr. Sapru and Mr. Jinnah, two among the cleverest lawyers we have in India and who have never been guilty of the crime of non-co-operation, and one of whom has been Law Member of the Viceregal Council. They and their colleague have been told that they did not know their business. Has then a constitution framed by Pandit Motilal Nehru and endorsed by, say, the Right Honourable Srinivasa Sastri and Mian Fazli Hussain[1] a better chance of favourable reception? Is not Lord Birkenhead's offer a trap for the unwary to fall in? Supposing an honest constitution is drawn up just to meet the present situation, will it not be immediately regarded as preposterous and something infinitely less offered in its stead? When I was hardly twenty-five years old, I was taught to believe that, if we wished to be satisfied with 4 annas, we must ask for 16 annas in order to get the 4 annas. I never learnt that lesson because I believed in asking for just what I needed and fighting for it. But I have not failed to observe that there was a great deal of truth in the very practical advice.

The silliest constitution backed by force, whether violent or non-violent, will receive the promptest consideration especially from the British, who know only too well the value of at least one kind of force.

There is the Bill taken to England by that tireless servant of India, Dr. Besant. It is signed by many eminent Indians. And if some others have not signed it, it is not because they will not be satisfied

[1] A member of the Viceroy's Executive Council

with it, but because they know that nothing but the waste-paper basket is its destiny. It has not been signed because those who have refrained do not wish to be party to the insult of the nation which its summary rejection will imply. Let Lord Birkenhead say that he will accept any reasonable constitution that may be prepared by a party or parties overwhelmingly representative of Indian public opinion and he will have a constitution in a week's time. Let him publicly assure Dr. Besant that her Bill will have every chance of acceptance if it is endorsed by Pandit Motilal Nehru and others whom he may name, and I shall undertake to secure those signatures. The fact is that there is no sincere ring about the offer.

It is no fault of the Secretary of State for India that his offer does not read sincere. We are not ready as yet to demand anything. Therefore, naturally, it is for the British Government to give and for us to reject, if what is offered is not deemed enough for the time being. For us that the new Commander-in-Chief considers as unattainable is the only thing worth living for, fighting for and dying for. One's birthright is never unattainable and Lokamanya taught us that swaraj was our birthright. The definition of that swaraj is to rule ourselves, although we misrule ourselves for the time being. We, the English and the Indians, are in a hopeless muddle. Lord Birkenhead thinks the British Government are trustees for our welfare. We think that they hold us in bondage for their own benefit. Trustees never charge as their commission seventy-five per cent of the income of their wards. His Lordship says we cannot be a nation with our 9 religions and 130 languages. We contend that, for all practical purpose and for protection from outside the Indian border, we are one nation. He thinks that Non-co-operation was a dreadful mistake. The vast majority of us think that it alone awakened this sleeping nation from its torpor, it alone has given the nation a force whose strength is beyond measure. The Swaraj Party is a direct result of that force. He says that in Hindu-Mussalman dissensions the British Government have "kept their hands unsullied". It is the certain belief of almost every Indian that they, the British Government, are principally responsible for most of our quarrels. He thinks that we must co-operate with them. We say that, when they mean well or when there is change of heart, they will co-operate with us. He says that no gifted leader arose to make use of the Reforms. We say that Messrs Sastri and Chintamani, not to mention others, were gifted enough to make

the Reforms a success but, in spite of all the good will in the world, they found that they could not do so. Deshbandhu showed a way out. His offer stands.

But what hope is there of his offer being responded to in the spirit in which it has been made? There are the different viewpoints which make us English and Indians see things contrarywise. Is there any chance, then, of finding a common meeting ground?

Yes, there is.

We, the two peoples, occupy an unnatural position, i.e., of rulers and ruled. We Indians must cease to think that we are the ruled. That we can only do when we have some kind of force. We seemed to think we had it in 1921 and so we fancied that swaraj was coming inside of a year. Now no one dare prophesy. Let us gather that force—the non-violent force of civil resistance—and we shall be equal. This is no threat, no menace. It is a hard fact. And if I do not nowadays regularly criticize the acts of our 'rulers', as I used to before, it is not because the fire of the civil resister has died down in me, but because I am an economist of speech, pen and thought. When I am ready, I shall speak freely. I have ventured to criticize Lord Birkenhead's pronouncement to tell the bereaved people of Bengal in particular and of India in general that I feel the unintended prick of Lord Birkenhead's speech just as much as they do, and that, whilst Motilalji will be fighting in the Assembly and leading the Swaraj Party in the place of Deshbandhu, I shall be leaving no stone unturned to prepare the atmosphere needed for civil resistance—a vocation for which I seem to me to be more fitted than for any other. Has not the singer of the *Gita* said, "Better by far is the performance of one's own dharma (duty), however humble it may be, than another's, however loftier it may be?"

Young India, 23-7-1925

106. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

[*July 18, 1925*][1]

CHI. RAMDAS,

This postcard has been lying with me. I had thought of using it for writing to you, and that too not on the day fixed for

[1] From the postmark

writing to you but whenever I happened to get two minutes.

BAPU

CHI. RAMDAS GANDHI

KHADI KARYALAYA

AMRELI

KATHIAWAD

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

107. MY NOTES

HONOUR AMONG THIEVES

I never thought that I would have to write a note with this heading, and that too in connection with national activity in Gujarat. But the unexpected has happened. The Gujarat Khadi Mandal has resolved as under :

> As it has become difficult to collect some of the outstanding dues of the Mandal and it has become necessary to file a suit to realize them, it is resolved that a statement containing the facts about these dues should be sent to Gandhiji through the Provincial Committee and, after his reply is received, necessary steps be taken to recover the dues in question.

The resolution has been occasioned by one or two particular cases. I have got the name and address of one party, but I do not wish to publish them just now, nor do I intend to advise the Khadi Mandal to file a suit in a court. I have already stated my view on this subject, to the effect that the resolutions of the Congress were not intended to harm its own interests. When they were proposed, it was taken for granted that its members would not break their promises to one another at any rate, that they would be honest among themselves in the matter of Congress work. But I find from the papers before me that Congressmen themselves—workers trusted by the Khadi Mandal—have been refusing to return the money advanced to them by the Mandal. Some persons who offered to mediate between the parties have also failed to keep their promise. If in dealing with such persons, we follow the Congress resolution on the boycott of courts, the Congress itself will have to declare bankruptcy. Will a Gujarati refuse to follow even the code of conduct which thieves recognize? 'Honour among thieves' means the morality which thieves respect. Their thieving is, to be sure, violation of morality, but they do not

thieve among themselves. If one of them lends a sum to another, the latter scrupulously returns it. Are there really Gujaratis who will not observe morality even to this extent? I would urge those who have kept back the Khadi Mandal's money to pay up, at any rate, the amounts which they have admitted as due from them.

ALL UNMARRIED

Through pride, maybe, or ignorance, or both, I thought that myself and my co-workers were the only people who tried to keep all their sons and daughters unmarried. But my pride has been humbled and my ignorance has been dispelled. One of the volunteers attending on me is a nephew of the Secretary of the local Congress Committee. Not only is he himself unmarried, but his father wants all his brothers to remain unmarried. If the young men themselves wish to marry, he will agree to find suitable brides for them; he has no intention to force them to remain unmarried against their will. But he is, at the same time, so training his sons that they will resolve to remain unmarried. All his sons are grown-up young men and settled in some profession or other, but so far they have remained unmarried of their own free will. I observe that in Bengal even girls are being trained to remain unmarried. The number of such girls is very small, but the movement does exist; it does not owe anything to Western influence; the parents of the girls who are trying to train their daughters in this manner are inspired solely by religious motives.

RIGHT *v.* LEFT

No one can say definitely why people came to make a distinction between the right hand and the left hand and how it became customary to avoid using the left hand for doing certain things and to use, instead, the right hand. But the result, as we know, is that for want of practice the left hand has become useless for many purposes and also remains weaker than the right hand.

It is not so in Japan. There people are taught to use both hands equally well from their early years. As a result, their physical efficiency is greater than ours.

I place this suggestion before the reader for his benefit in the light of my present experience. It is more than twenty years since I read about the practice in Japan. When I came to know of it, I started learning to write with my left hand and acquired tolerable proficiency in it. I now regret that I did not acquire the same speed in writing with the left hand as I had with the right, thinking that I could not afford

the time required for that. Now my right hand does not give the desired service in writing. It starts paining when I have written for some time with it. Being anxious to retain as long as possible the ability to write with the right hand, I have again started using the left hand. I do not have time enough now to do all my writing with the left hand and learn to write with it as fast as with the right hand. But it has been serving me well whenever I am in difficulty; I have, therefore, placed my experience in this matter before the reader. Those who can spare the required time and are keen enough should train themselves to write with the left hand too. Everyone who does so will discover in the course of time the value of this ability. Besides writing, it is useful to learn to do other things too with the left hand. Most of us have come across many persons who cannot even manage to eat with the left hand when the right hand has become unserviceable for some reason. I hope that this note will make no one go crazy about using the left hand. My only purpose in writing it is to advise people to keep the left hand in practice as much as they can in the ordinary course. It may be worth while for teachers to follow this suggestion and train children in this manner.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-7-1925

108. WHEN CAN WE RISE ?

A public worker writes :[1]

I have omitted here the details about Indian States given by the correspondent.

Faith cannot be a gift from anyone and, therefore, "Sevak"[2] must himself acquire or feel the faith which he wants. I can, however, explain the flaw in his thinking. What a society deserves by way of reward and punishment for its actions is determined by the sum total of its activities. Moreover, we have been using the term "swaraj" in a restricted sense. It means the transfer of the reins of government from the hands of the British rulers into our hands. In this connection, we should compare the deserts of the two [the British and the Indian

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had described the evils prevalent in the country and asked how, in view of those evils, they could expect the country to prosper.

[2] Correspondent's pseudonym; literally, servant

people] on the basis of their social and political ethics. Social morality will include such virtues as our capacity for organization, fearlessness in social life, and so on. When our people have these virtues we shall be able to secure the reins of government in our hands. Moreover, at present swaraj means the freedom of British India only. No doubt freedom will have the profoundest effect on Indian States, but their problem will remain a separate one and will in all probability solve itself when British India has won its freedom. How-ever evil the rule in Indian States, British India can be free today if it is strong enough. Hence, in judging what the country deserves, we should take into account the actions of the people in British India only. If we take into account the conditions in Indian States as well, our conclusion will go wrong. Really speaking, the Indian States represent British authority. They are subject to that authority, are responsible to it and yet are not. Their responsibility is limited to paying the tribute and remaining loyal to it. In regard to their relation with their subjects, they are almost independent. In any case, they are not responsible to the subjects. This makes them more susceptible to the evil influences in their environment. To put it in other words, they have many temptations to rule oppressively. If they respect justice as much as they do, it is because they still have some independent policy of their own. The wonder is that, though the Indian States are free from any control and though the British Government would welcome their following a policy of oppression, they manage to preserve the decency which they do. The credit for this goes to the ancient civilization of India.

By saying this, I am not defending the Indian States. I am only trying to assess the situation as it is and am pointing out to "Sevak" the flaw in his thinking, so as to help him to overcome his feeling of despair. However bad the Indian States may be, if the millions in the country who are directly under British rule display the social virtues which a nation must possess, they can secure control of the government. If they choose, the Indian States can help the people to cultivate those virtues. But even if they do not help, or actually obstruct our efforts, the people can acquire them.

We have often examined in the past what these requirements are—the spinning-wheel, i.e., khadi, Hindu-Muslim unity and eradication of untouchability. These things are necessary if we wish to secure swaraj through peaceful means. None of them would be required if we wished to win it with the sword. But, then, the freedom

we should then win would not be the people's freedom; it would be freedom for those with strength of arms. The people would have merely exchanged one form of slavery for another : a brown-skinned Dyer would not be more acceptable than the white-skinned one was. The plight of the subjects of Indian States which "Sevak" bemoans would then be the plight of the whole country, for the body of men which would have wrested power from the British with the help of the sword would hardly regard itself as responsible to the people. *Asi, talwar, shamsher,* "sword"—all these terms denote the same thing.

At present British rule would certainly seem milder than the rule of the Indian Princes. That indeed is the beauty of British rule. The Government must please some people in order to run the administration. The middle classes, therefore, do not have to submit to perpetual injustice. Since British tyranny has a much wider field, it is felt by a few individuals to be relatively mild and, because of long familiarity, we do not even recognize it as tyranny. The slaves in the southern States in the U.S.A. had come to love their condition so much, because of their long familiarity with it that, when they were set free, some of them broke into tears. They were faced with serious problems such as where to go, what to do and how to earn their livelihood. Many of us are in a similar condition. We do not feel the subtle but nonetheless deadly tyranny of British rule. Many victims of tuberculosis, though warned by doctors about their condition are deceived by the flush on their cheeks, not knowing that it is unnatural. They do not pay attention to the paleness of their legs.

Let me warn the reader that I offer no plea for the Indian States; I am only describing the country's sad plight. The Indian States may be bad, but their badness is shielded by the British Government. On superficial examination, British rule may seem better than the rule of the Indian Princes, but in reality it is by no means so. The British system of Government ruins the people physically, mentally and spiritually. Indian Princes ruin their subjects physically for the most part. If British rule gives place to people's rule, I believe the reform of the Indian States will follow as a matter of course. If the rule of force by white British arms is replaced by similar rule by brown arms, the change will bring no benefit to the people nor reform the Indian States. Any thoughtful person will be able to convince himself or herself of the truth of these two statements.

Though the atmosphere at present is confusing, I clearly

visualize progress of the spinning-wheel and khadi movement. The practice of untouchability is disappearing, and the Hindus and the Muslims are bound to return to the path of sanity, if not through reason, then, after fighting with each other. Hence, my faith that we can win swaraj remains unshaken.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-7-1925

109. NATIONAL EDUCATION

I give below the substance of what a Gujarati friend, after first describing the present unhappy state of national education, writes :

> When students are leaving the national schools and colleges, when the workers grow slack and send their own children to Government schools for education, when the pupils who still remain wear khadi only when attending the national schools and the students who have obtained the *snataka* degree do not know what profession to take up—in these circumstances, how can we expect the national education movement to survive? I hope you will not say that the *snatakas* should go on spinning.

Every movement has its periods of ebb and flow before it succeeds in its aim. It is the same with the national education movement. Only those whose faith in it remains unshaken even during the periods of ebb will in the end bring glory to it. Having faith in the cause of national education, I am not afraid of a period of ebb but know that ebb will surely be followed by flood. Hence those who have faith should not lose it. The problem of employment for *snatakas* is a complicated one. The national education movement has not yet reached a stage when we can say that no *snataka* is in the slightest worried about employment. Some of them will be absorbed in the field of national education itself, but for the majority of them there should be something else, and the only field is that of khadi. That is the one field of national activity which throbs with life and can employ the largest number of young men. *Snatakas* in good numbers should come forward to work in it. Spinning as a means of earning one's livelihood is meant for the poorest. The work which middle-class people can take up as a means of livelihood is popularizing spinning. I see in Bengal that hundreds of young men can make a modest living through such employment. I am collecting the figures relating to this. I am sure people will be pleasantly surprised by them.

But this work is only for those young men who have faith in the power of khadi and have the necessary patience to learn the various processes connected with it. I concede that those who have no faith in the spinning-wheel and in khadi will serve no useful purpose by hanging on to national education.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-7-1925

110. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

CALCUTTA,
July 19, 1925

DEAR PANDITJI,

During these few days I have been taxing myself what special exclusive contribution I can make to the memory of Deshbandhu and the situation created by Lord Birkenhead's speech, and I have come to the conclusion that I should absolve the Swaraj Party from all obligations under the Pact of last year. The result of this act is that the Congress need no longer be a predominantly spinning association. I recognize that, under the situation created by the speech, the authority and the influence of the Swaraj Party need to be increased. I would fail in my duty if I neglected a single step within my power to increase the strength of the Party. This can be done if the Congress becomes a predominantly political body. Under the Pact, the Congress activity is restricted to the constructive programme mentioned therein. I recognize that this restriction should not continue under the altered circumstances that face the country. Not only do I, therefore, personally absolve you from the restriction, but I propose to ask the forthcoming meeting of the A.I.C.C. to do likewise and place the whole machinery of the Congress at your disposal so as to enable you to bring before that body such political resolutions as you may consider necessary in the interest of the country. In fact, I would have you regard me at your disposal in all such matters in which I can conscientiously serve you and the Swaraj Party.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 23-7-1925

[1] For Motilal Nehru's reply, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Motilal Nehru", 21-7-1925.

111. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Monday [*July 20, 1925*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

Thank God that I am able to write even a postcard to you. You have imagined too many things in my assistance. I do not see the necessity of reserving you for the kind of assistance you talk of. Let everyone go to the Assembly if he likes. I would neither go myself nor send anybody there. The charkha alone is our work. If Deshbandhu had lived on, he would have done mainly this work; he was interested in the charkha so much. But all this when we meet. Just now all my time goes in collecting ten lakhs and in meeting Panditji. Hardly to I get any time to write for the weeklies.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 2132

112. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

July 21, 1925

DEAR RAJENDRA BABU,

I must write to you in English to save time. My right hand refuses to work. To write with the left would take much time. I am, therefore, just now taking shorthand assistance. In fact, I commenced it only today. I am afraid it will not be possible to hold the meeting of the A.I.C.C. in Patna.[2] The people from Maharashtra and Madras, and especially the latter, complain bitterly, and there is much truth in their complaint. So all fixed upon Bombay. This time we want a full meeting. Very important resolutions to be taken making changes in the constitution and policy. I would like the resolutions, whatever they are, to be taken in a full house. But if you can have me in Bihar in the beginning of September, I could come and I would like to take as little as possible for Bihar. But if you must have a whole month, you can have it. As a matter of fact, as you will be having me in Purulia, and as all the workers will be coming there, perhaps it would be unnecessary for you to take me to many centres at the present

[1] The postmark is dated "Calcutta, July 21, 1925.

[2] The meeting came off on October 1, 1925.

moment. But you shall be the sole judge. I have sent word with the messenger who came with your first note that you will find me in Purulia on the 12th. If, however, you will have me earlier, please let me know in any case. You must so arrange as to enable me to reach Bombay on 30th September. And all the members from Bihar should attend the A.I.C.C. meeting. As to the circular about the charkha, I have not yet read it, but I hope to do so in the course of a week and write about it for next week's *Young India*. Yes, all-India Memorial notice will be now out. Jawaharlal has already written about it. It will be solely devoted to the propagation of the spinning-wheel and khaddar and, though it is not stated in the appeal, naturally the monies collected in the provinces will be disbursed in those provinces so far as possible. But the operation will take place through the All-India. . . .[1]

From a microfilm : S.N. 10679

113. AN ALL-INDIA MEMORIAL

[On or before *July 22, 1925*][2]

We the undersigned are of opinion that an all-India fund is as much a necessity as an all-Bengal one to perpetuate the memory of Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das. He was as much an all-India man as he was an all-Bengal man. Just as we knew what Deshbandhu would have himself wished us to do as an all-Bengal Memorial, so do we know what he would have wished us to do regarding an all-India Memorial. His idea was clearly expressed over a year ago and repeated in his Faridpur speech that village reconstruction was the thing dearest and nearest to his heart for the regenerationof India and for the attainment of swaraj along peaceful and evolutionary lines. We know, too, that he believed that the beginning and the centre of such activity lay in the revivalanddevelopmentofhand-spinningin villages and universalization of khaddar. It is the one activity that can be made common to all India and yet can be handled with the least cost. It is the one activity that is calculated to yield immediate results, be they ever so small. All people, rich and poor, young and old, men and women, can personally help and engage in it if they will. It can, as nothing else

[1] The letter is incomplete.

[2] This joint appeal was evidently drafted and signed before July 22, when Gandhiji issued another appeal referring to this; *vide* the following item.

can, bind the city people to the villagers and introduce the educated class to them in a most useful manner. It is the one activity that can be common to all the provinces and all the sects of India and produce the largest economic results. Lastly, though it has a political side, it is in its nature so obviously social and economical that it should enlist the support of all, without distinction of party, who believe in the spinning-wheel as a great economic factor and as a factor in village reconstruction.

We, therefore, cannot conceive a more fitting Memorial than the universal propagation of the spinning-wheel and khaddar and, therefore, invite funds for that purpose. We refrain from naming the sum required for this Memorial as it can absorb all it can receive. The subscription given by the public will be the measure of their regard for the memory of the deceased patriot, of their belief in the usefulness of the form the Memorial is to take and of their trust in those who are to handle and operate on the funds. They will be Sjt. M. K. Gandhi, Pandit Motilal Nehru, Maulana Shaukat Ali, Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ray, Shrimati Sarojini Devi, Sjt. Jamnalal Bajaj and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, with power to add to their number. Pandit Jawaharlal has consented to act as Hon. Secretary for the Trustees and Sjt. Jamnalal Bajaj as Treasurer. Remittances should be sent to Sjt. Jamnalal Bajaj, 395, Kalbadevi Road, Bombay, or to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, 107, Hewett Road, Allahabad. A full list of donations will be sent to the Press for publication from week to week.

M. K. GANDHI

MOTILAL NEHRU	C. F. ANDREWS
RABINDRANATH TAGORE	VALLABHBHAI PATEL
A. K. AZAD	B. F. BHARUCHA
P. C. RAY	SHYAMSUNDAR CHAKRAVARTI
JAMNALAL BAJAJ	BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY
SAROJINI NAIDU	SARAT CHANDRA BOSE
NIL RATAN SIRCAR	NALINI RANJAN SIRKAR
J. M. SEN GUPTA	SATYANAND BOSE

(More signatures to follow.)

Young India, 23-7-1925

114. APPEAL FOR ALL-INDIA DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL

148, RUSSA ROAD,
CALCUTTA,
July 22, 1925

I hope that the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial appeal will not in any way disturb the all-Bengal Deshbandhu collection. The all-India collection will last a considerable period, seeing that Bengal will have paid a heavy sum for the All-Bengal Memorial. The collection in Bengal for the All-India Memorial need not be made for three months or a longer period if necessary. The attention of Bengal should not be diverted from the all-Bengal collection. It must be a point of honour with every Bengali and everyone domiciled in Bengal to make the Bengal collection a full success. Over five lakhs have now been already paid. Though the balance, I take it, is assured, it is likely to take longer than the first five lakhs unless the workers will concentrate their effort on quickness in collection.

Sjt. Manilal Kothari has shown what can be done in the direction by specialists. In view of his success in inducing some of those who have already paid to double and even to quadruple their subscriptions, there is perhaps a possibility of some of the others, who have already subscribed, paying a second and substantial instalment. But, apart from this possibility, there are schools and colleges left untouched. Will the Principals of these institutions or the students themselves move, as I was told at the beginning of the month that they would, as soon as these institutions were open after the vacation? There are all the Bengal merchants and traders in the busy centres of Calcutta mostly untouched. I could see, when I was taken to some of these shops, that is was possible to collect, if not the whole sum, at least a large part of it from these merchants. Again, all the districts have not yet sent in their returns, nor have the Bengalis from the other provinces, except in some cases. Will all these friends respond in good time?

I would like to plead a little for myself. I had hoped to be able to leave Bengal by the middle of this month. I see no hope of doing so before the end of the month. I ask for the assistance of those who revere the memory of Deshbandhu and who are able themselves to

subscribe and induce others to do so in finishing the collection as early as possible.

M. K. GANDHI

Forward, 23-7-1925

115. LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI

CALCUTTA,
July 22, 1925

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

I have your two letters.[1] I must not try to write myself just now. My right hand refuses to bear any strain. It insists upon rest. Hence this dictating. I had a long chat with Shuaib[2]. He thinks that he is utterly incompetent for *Comrade* work not because of his inability as editor, but because of incompatibility of temperament. He says what is the use of going there only to prove a dismal failure. Knowing Shuaib as I now do, I see considerable force in what he says. I am quite clear in my mind that, if immediate and definite assistance is not procurable, Mahomed Ali should give up both the papers or at least one. A good soldier, when he knows defeat to be a certainty, takes to an orderly retreat and does not wait for completion of the disaster or annihilation. But you know best, not he. I have the same faith in your robust common sense that I started with. You must, therefore, exercise your judgment and lay down the law for Mahomed Ali. I am following the movements of both of you as much as it is possible for me to do without reading newspapers. With us, or better still, with you, the battle has only now begun. I say 'with you' for the simple reason that I am now inured to difficulties and dangers and defeats so called. My heart and my prayers are with you.

I must still remain in Calcutta to finish the ten lakhs.[3] It is an uphill job, but it delights my heart to see the poorest of Bengal giving their pice and even their half-pice. You must have seen what I am doing and I have done regarding the Swarajists. I am trying to give them all help that I am capable of rendering, and personally I am certain that the Congress must be wholly theirs, and we who do not

[1] These are not available.

[2] Shuaib Qureshi

[3] Target for collection of funds for the Deshbandhu Memorial

believe in Council-entry should remain in the Congress on their sufferance. But this time I have avoided any understanding. The All-India Congress Committee will be absolutely free to take any decision it likes unhampered by me or anybody else. So far as I am concerned, I am becoming more and more convinced that, when there is a wreckage of everything else, hand-spinning and khaddar will survive. It is only safe and potent constructive activities which can remain unaffected by any storm however violent. Shuaib knows, I think, the goal of my mind and so does Shankerlal[1], who was here. I must refer you to them for the balance and then to the pages of *Young India*, which is more and more becoming my weekly letter to my friends.

Yours sincerely,

MAULANA SHAUKAT ALI

From a photostat : S.N. 19339

116. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

July 22, 1925

MY DEAR KRISTODAS,

I have asked Satis Babu to send one hundred rupees to Hardayal Babu. My right hand is causing some trouble. I am, therefore, dictating this.

I continue to hear about you from Satis Babu. You must become healthy and strong as early as possible. All mental worries must be put aside. I hope you are going to Comilla as early as possible. Jamnalalji is going to Atrai. He will be there a few days perhaps before he proceeds to Chandpur. Will you not go at once therefore to Comilla and recuperate yourself.

Yours sincerely,

B. KRISHNADAS
C/O RADHA MADHAB SINGHA
CHANDPUR

From a microfilm : S.N. 19338

[1] Shankerlal Banker

117. LETTER TO NISHITHNATH KUNDU

148 RUSSA ROAD,
CALCUTTA,
July 22, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I did discuss the conditions of the committee at Dinajpur with Deshbandhu. He told me that at the present moment it was difficult for the provincial committee to help a district like yours. There are no funds with the committee. What it is now possible for me to suggest is that workers who have full faith in khadi should put themselves in correspondence with Khadi Pratishthan and work under it.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 8021

118. THE SPINNING FRANCHISE

There was an informal meeting of the Swarajists and others on the 17th instant.[1] It was a representative gathering. All including myself felt that a revision of the franchise was necessary and all felt that the self-spinning as an alternative should be permanently retained, and not merely by way of trial, in the Congress franchise. That means permanent recognition of the right of labour to be directly represented in the Congress. All agreed that yarn as distinguished from spinning franchise must be abolished. It had given rise to hypocrisy and even dishonesty. The question of quantity to self-spun yarn or cash sub-scription was held in abeyance. There was a divergence of opinion. An overwhelming majority favoured also the retention of khaddar- wearing as a permanent part of the franchise. This is, in my opinion, a decided gain. The third proposition unanimously agreed to was that an All-India Spinners' Association should be formed to be an integral part of the Congress, with absolute powers, which would control the spinning part of the Congress activity and act as the Congress Agency for receiving and testing spinning subscriptions. The result, if the recommendations are accepted, would

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Swaraj Party Meeting", 17-7-1925.

be that the Swarajists will 'run' the Congress and the A.I.S.A. will take the place analogous to the Swaraj Party.

The A.I.C.C. will meet on the 1st of October to consider the proposal. It will meet without any restriction on the freedom of the members. Not even those who were present at the informal meeting will be bound by the vote they gave at it. If, on further consideration, they think differently, they will be free to vote against the proposals that will be submitted to the meeting. The members of the A.I.C.C. will be free also to move amendments and criticize as they please. Each one will vote as a Congressman or, better still, as an Indian without any party obligation. As the reader will observe from my letter to Panditji,[1] I have as a matter of duty absolved the Swaraj party from any obligation under last year's Pact. The propositions to be submitted to the A.I.C.C. must be examined on merits. I do not desire that any member, Swarajist or No-changer, should vote to placate me. We are trying to evolve a democratic constitution. It is one's conscience alone which needs placating and no person, however great he may be. For me there are no No-changers and Pro-changers. Those who advocate Council-entry and those who do not equally serve the nation if their action or inaction is prompted by love of the country. Indeed, I urge those who have no absolute scruples against Council-entry immediately to join the Swaraj Party and strengthen its hands.

I hope that every member of the A.I.C.C. will attend the forthcoming meeting, take part in the proceedings and register his opinion. Personally I do not want the matter to be decided by a majority of votes. Whetever is done must be done by almost absolute unanimity.

What is proposed is a vital change in the constitution. Ordinarily the A.I.C.C. should not interfere with it. But there are moments when it will be disloyal not to do so. If the overwhelming opinion in the country requires a change that admits of no delay, it is the most proper thing for the A.I.C.C. to make the change and take the consequences of having its decision revoked and its action censured by the Congress. An agent has always the right to anticipate the unexpressed wished of his principal when he acts in the latter's interest and at his own peril. I have, therefore, no hesitation in saying that, if an overwhelming majority of the members of the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Motilal Nehru", 19-7-1925.

A.I.C.C. desire the change above fore-shadowed, it would be wrong on their part by hesitation to waste precious three months of the nation. The Cawnpore Congress should be relieved of the necessity of a prolonged discussion over a matter which could well be decided by the A.I.C.C. Its time should be left free for tackling larger problems.

Let it be also noted that the Congress will, under the scheme sketched by me, become a predominantly political body, taking the adjective in its generally accepted sense. Swarajists will become, as they ought to be, the Congress, instead of being its chief and only political agents. That is the least answer that the A.I.C.C. can make to Lord Birkenhead.

Young India, 23-7-1925

119. FRUIT OF SUPPRESSION

An esteemed American friend sends me the following illuminating passage from Dr. Miller's *Races, Nations and Classes :*

> Within a suppressed group there grow up many bitter factions. This has become notorious among the Irish. The dissension within all the suppressed nationalities is an illustration of the same thing. Each has focussed on its own struggle for freedom and selected particular outlet for the struggle, and when these factions find it necessary to work together to accomplish a common end, there is the immediate tendency to call attention to the differences, which, though subsidiary, are considered of prime importance. Under the conditions of freedom, both for the individual and the group, this particular aspect of the psychosis will gradually wear off, but it must be accepted as an inevitable consequence of restricted freedom.

The friend observes, "This illuminates the situation in India. Doesn't it?" It does, indeed, and it is for that reason that people like Dr. Besant persevere in their attempt to secure freedom in spite of the communal dissensions. There is room for both—those who seek freedom despite differences and those who seek to remove differences for the sake of paving the road to freedom.

Young India, 23-7-1925

120. NOTES

'ALWAR ATROCITIES'

What has been known as "Alwar atrocities" came before the Congress Working Committee that met in Calcutta, in the form of a

motion by Sjt. Jamnalal Bajaj for the appointment of a committee of inquiry. Now it has been long a tradition of the Congress not to interfere in the internal affairs of Indian States. The members of the Committee felt that it was a healthy tradition which it would be unwise to break. Sjt. Jamnalalji then did not press his motion. I told him, however, that I should discuss the question in these pages and give my reasons for my personal opinion that the Congress should not interfere in the internal administration of the Indian States. This may, if one chooses to put it so, be regarded as a virtue of necessity or a matter of policy, It is both and perhaps a little more. It must be frankly admitted that the Congress possesses no authority for enforcing its will in Indian States even to the extent it does in British India proper. Prudence, therefore, dictates inaction where action would be waste of effort, if not folly. But if inaction is prudential, it is also benevolent. The Congress seeks not to embarrass the States, it desires to help them. It does not wish to destroy them, it wishes to reform them. And this the Congress for the moment does by abstention as an earnest of its goodwill.

But abstention by the Congress does not mean absence of effort on the part of Congressmen. Those who have any relation with the States will no doubt use their influence. The local committes can help and guide the distressed people so long as they do not come in clash with authority. Nor does the Congress regulate or control the action of individual Congressmen. But when they take action, they do so not as Congressmen. The position of the Congress must not be compromised.

May the subjects of Indian States then expect no relief from the Congress which claims to be a national institution? I fear the answer must be party in the negative. They may not expect any direct assistance. But indirect assistance they do get. For, to the measure that the Congress becomes powerful and efficient, to that measure also is levelled up the condition of the subjects of the Indian States. The moral pressure of the Congress must be felt all over the land either directly or indirectly. I hope, therefore, the afflicted people will realize that, if the Congress does not offer any direct help, it is not for want of will, but it is entirely due to want of ability and opportunity.

FOR ANGLO-INDIANS

Dr.Moreno has handed me the following questions foranswers :[1]

1. The present distress of the Anglo-Indians is deplorable and is becoming more acute as the days go on. The unemployed themselves do not desire charity, they want work. In my mind, industrial occupations would suit them best. What is your suggestion?

I am glad the unemployed do not desire charity. I must be pardoned for saying that the unemployed can find industrial occupation in hand-weaving. But I am free to confess that the Anglo-Indian with his present training may be ill-fitted for weaving unless he is gifted with an exceptionally strong will. It is difficult to give advice on a hypothetical question. It is for an enterprising and philanthropic Anglo-Indian to prepare a census of the unemployed and then think out occupations for which the community is best fitted and prepare for training them therein.

2. To bring such a community, as the Anglo-Indians go to form, to your way of thinking as regards spinning and khaddar would require an active propaganda spread over a considerable length of time. Would it meet your wishes if the Anglo-Indians showed a mind not inimical to the programme you have set out?

I agree that the Anglo-Indians as a class may take time before they grow to like spinning even as a sacrament; but there is no reason to delay over the use of khaddar. A jacket made of khaddar is as serviceable as the one made of foreign cloth and bed-sheets of khaddar are better to the touch than the ordinary mill manufacture. It is the feeling of kinship with the masses that is needed to induce Anglo-Indians to use khaddar. That is, in my opinion, the first step to a real spirit of nationalism.

3. The Anglo-Imdian community goes to form one of the minorities of India. How would your programme go to include them in your all party combination?

The Anglo-Indians will be treated precisely in the same manner as the other minorities.

4. In your desire to secure a Unity Congress for the future in India, how would you include Anglo-Indian representatives, bearing in mind (a) your spinning franchise and (b) the non-inclusion of Anglo-Indian representatives hitherto in the Congress?

[1] *Vide* also “Interview to Dr. H. W. B. Moreno”, 31-5-1925.

Under the proposed change, a cash subscription will be accepted in lieu of yarn. If hitherto Anglo-Indians have not joined, it is largely due to their unwillingness. If it is suggested that the Congress should have made a special effort to enlist their support, I can only say that it is difficult in respect of those who regard themselves superiors and strangers to Indians, as I fear Anglo-Indians have hitherto done.

5. You are aware that there is in the Anglo-Indian community a desire among some to lean on the European side, and among others to go to the Indian side. What would you advise the Anglo-Indian community as a whole to do (a) for their own benefit and (b) for the benefit of India?

I know the existence of the painful attitude. The only dignified attitude, in my opinion, is for Anglo-Indians to throw in their lot with those in whose midst they are born and among whom they have to "live and move and have their being". Their fruitless attempt to hang on to the coat-tails of Englishmen only retards their settling down to a permanent and progressive condition. To aspire to be European is unnatural. To return to their Indian parentage and surroundings is the most natural and dignified condition for them. And the doing of that which is natural and dignified must benefit both them and India, their motherland, in every sense of the word.

PREVENTIBLE WASTE

It was an ennobling sight, the meeting of ladies at Rajshahi. Like their sisters in the University Institute, they poured in their rupees and their ornaments. They have, indeed, done so everywhere. But at Rajshahi it was a never-ending flow. They had also a grand spinning competition in which over two hundred ladies must have taken part. One of them was an accomplished spinner of fine yarn, possibly finer even than that of Aparna Devi who only the other day came first-class first. She showed on her own person a sari of exceedingly fine yarn which she said she had spun herself. But almost every one of the wheels, including this lady's, was a useless noise-making toy, yielding poor results in quantity. The maker of these wheels, Babu Taraknath Maitra, is an enthusiast. But he is a blind enthusiast. He knows something of mechanism, but knows nothing of spinning-wheels. I do not think he knows even the principles of spinning. I must plead with him to desist from inflicting his machines on these cultured and patriotic sisters of Rajshahi. If he makes these wheels for profit, let him withdraw them and make proper wheels. If he makes them from love of service, let him destroy the useless things, study the science of

the wheel and not make another till he has acquainted himself with the best wheel. I have known in Bengal only three patterns which can at all be claimed to be good wheels. Of these three, the Khadi Pratishthan pattern has appealed to me as the best. The second is what is used by the workers at Duadando. Its speciality is that the spindle is kept slanting. A third is the old Bengal pattern with a short platform and a heavy revolving wheel and a long spindle. The tests of a good wheel are: (1) noiselessness, and (2) yield of at least 400 yards of yarn of ten counts per hour by an ordinary spinner. I have heard that the other two patterns have been known to yield 600 yards of at least ten counts per hour. I have seen the Khadi Pratishthan wheel yield over 850 yards per hour. All its workers can spin 400 yards per hour on the Khadi Pratishthan pattern. Let the manufacturers of wheels know that they are injuring the cause when they put on the market a noisy charkha that will not yield the average quantity. I warn the workers, too, against putting below-standard wheels in the hands of spinners, professional or voluntary, when they know that they can get wheels that answer the standard that I have laid down. If any man in Bengal has a better wheel, let him send it on to me. I promise to test it and report the result without undue delay. Spinning is a matter of life and death for the masses. Let not those who are engaged in spreading it indulge in waste that a little knowledge can easily prevent.

Young India, 23-7-1925

121. SPEECH AT MARWARI AGRAWAL CONFERENCE, CALCUTTA

[Before *July 24, 1925*]

MR. PRESIDENT, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Iam grateful to you for inviting me to this conference and asking me to speak. I have gone through the booklet containing the resolutions to be taken up today. The question of remarriage of widows has been raised and, from the allusions made to me, I understand that you expect me to say something about it. I shall, however, prefer not to say anything now on the matter. I have said what I had to say in *Navajivan* and *Young India*, and those who wish to know my views on this question should look for them in these journals. In this way your time will be saved and you can satisfy yourself on the point.

What I wish to say to you today about the numerous reforms

that the Hindu society needs will be of a general nature. I shall merely enunciate a principle. With many of you I am closely acquainted. What I feel on the question of remarriage of widows I have said in the columns of *Navajivan* and *Young India*. What I should like to make very clear here is that, though a reformer, I accept nothing against dharma.

I am convinced that I am not a Westernized reformer. There are cri-tics who say that I am an apologist of the Western ways. I consider them childish. For they have not understood my views, nor by living with me understood my life. If I once accept something, as a satyagrahi I stub-bornly cling to it. Satyagraha here does not mean what it is commonly understood to mean. Satyagraha, in its correct meaning, is holding on to truth. I openly proclaim any Western ideas that I wish to propagate. For instance, with reference to *Ayurveda* I said once that, in the matter of health, we have far less to teach the West than we have to learn from it.

I consider myself a *sanatani* Hindu. It increases our anguish when we have to suffer at the hands of outsiders. I have repeatedly said that I accept the system of *Varnashrama.* But I wish to cleanse it of the caste distinctions that have crept into it. It is my belief that Hinduism is non-violent.

Please sheathe the sword of ostracism. This is not the time for it. If a man marries off his very young daughter, you at once apply ostracism against him, but, if a man is a libertine and eats flesh, you do nothing to ostracize him. Practice of ostracism in this manner will ultimately lead to the ostracized becoming a separate caste and to an increase of discord in the community. Thus, when I went to England in 1887, I found on my return that, while some of my caste accepted me, some others ostracized me. I, however, have no grievance against my caste on that account. My policy is one of non-violence. I have no desire to cause them pain. I eat with untouchables. I also eat with Muslims. There has been no protest from my caste over this. They do not invite me to communal meals, but they invite my people. We should not condemn anyone for his being a reformer. We should not ostracize him. If you want to unite the Hindus, do not exaggerate small things nor make light of big things. Now when castes have become so hybridized and immorality is so widespread, when we are not able even to guard our own honour, whom can we ostracize? The better course would be to ostracize ourselves; that is the way of self-

purification. Yes, I must tell you not to misuse the weapon of ostracism.

I am happy that, among the Hindus, the Marwari community enjoys affluence. I know also that it know how to make money and that it does so. I am not unaware either that your community is well-known for its generosity. The Marwaris know equally well the art of making money and of spending it. I know all this well enough. But, with all this, they have a failing, and that failing is very marked : they waste money. The Marwaris, it is true, earn money and also spend it on good works; it is usually their desire to have some religious cause to support. But generally they do not spend their money properly. I would, therefore, say to the Marwaris that they should keep certain things in mind when they spend money, thinking they are putting it to a good use. It is necessary to give great thought to the question of spending money. You should make quite sure, before you spend money, that you are making good use of it. Since you are charitable and generous, it is all the more necessary for you to be thoughtful in spending. You must be aware that in America there are millionaires and multi-millionaires who are far richer than you. There used to be a millionaire called Carnegie there (I do not know whether he is alive now). It was his peculiarity that he would be guided in his actions entirely by his own ideas. He paid absolutely no attention to the ideas of others. One day it occurred to him to spend his money for some good cause. And lo and behold—he started shipping his wealth to Scotland. He did it to support libraries in Scotland. The teachers of Scotland, however, wrote him a letter requesting him to spare Scotland his charitable attentions. So we must be very careful how we disburse money. We must think hard before we undertake anything. You have necessarily to exercise care and discretion while spending money. You must understand that, unless you do so, you will not be making the right use of your money. Therefore, for a community so generous as yours care and discretion are of great importance.

I have fallen in love with the Parsi community. I should like to state here that the Parsis occupy the first place in generosity. The Jews come next. And I feel sad to say that the third place is that of the Marwaris among Hindus. I have myself seen how generous Parsis are and what great care they exercise in spending even the smallest sum. I shall, therefore, say here no more than that you Marwaris should show that among Hindus, too, there is at least one community that knows both how to earn money and how to spend it.

My views about cow-protection are well known. I have repeatedly stated that it is a very noble work. But I cannot help saying also that it needs to be improved. I myself dabbled in it, but I did not get any great response. I have a fair amount of experience of this work. I have been at it for some thirty years. I have also done some *tapasya*. As for the response from people, I once requested a Marwari friend to accept the treasurership of a cow-protection fund, but he refused, although my intention in making him the treasurer was not to ask him for any excessive financial assistance. All the same, I must emphatically assert that, if the Marwari community cannot take up this work of cow-protection, if it cannot save the cow, I do not see which other community can. In other words, if Marwaris cannot save the cow, then no one among the Hindus can. But, for cow-protection a number of things are needed. It needs application and time quite as much as money. So, when considering this question, we must keep in mind these three requirements as well as other things. Then alone can we make any satisfactory progress in this work.

In the end, I must express my gratitude to all of you for giving me a calm and patient hearing. I pray to God that He may bestow his grace on you.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 24-7-1925

122. LETTER TO MADELEINE SLADE [1]

148 RUSSA ROAD,
CALCUTTA
July 24, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I was pleased to receive your letter[2] which has touched me deeply. The samples of wool you have sent are excellent.

You are welcome whenever you choose to come. If I have advice of the steamer that brings you, there will be someone receiving you at the steamer, and guiding you to the train that will take you to Sabarmati. Only please remember that the life at the

[1] b. 1892; Gandhiji gave her the name Mirabehn; joined Gandhiji's Ashram in November 1925; accompanied Gandhiji to London for Round Table Conference in 1931; suffered several terms of imprisonment during India's struggle for freedom.

[2] For the text of the letter, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Madeleine Slade", 29-5-1925.

Ashram is not all rosy. It is strenuous. Bodily labour is given by every inmate. The climate of this country is also not a small consideration. I mention these things not to frighten you, but merely to warn you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

As my right hand requires rest, I am dictating my correspondence.

From the original : C.W. 5182. Courtesy : Mirabehn

123. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

148 RUSSA ROAD,
CALCUTTA,
July 24, 1925

MY DEAR VENKATAPPAYYA,

I like your letter[1] for its fullness and frankness and for your determination to keep as healthy as it is possible for you to do.

My own position is clear. The Congress has appointed the Swarajist Party its agents for conducting the political campaign, therefore, every individual Congressman can say that the Swarajist Party is its agent for the political work. When he finds that he cannot endorse the sum total of the Swarajist activity, he can secede from the Congress or he can resist in the Congress. My own individual position is neither the one nor the other. If I must have any political representative on behalf of the Congress in the Councils, I can only appoint the Swarajist Party because of its fighting capacity and this I can say in spite of my being against Council-entry on principle. As an Indian I have to make a choice between thieves and the police, and though both are alike unacceptable to me as a believer in ahimsa, I cannot divest myself of responsibility as a social bein[g] and, therefore, must continually make my choice. It is because of this difficulty that our sages have made room for the cave-dwellers who do not want to share the responsibility for the actions of their fellow-men. They not only shun the haunts of men, but refuse to eat the corn grown by human labour. They only eat the fruits and root[s]

[1] This is not available.

which grow without human agency. I do not consider my se[lf] fit for that state. I remain in human society and, therefore, consistently with my individual views make myself responsible, where it is inevitable, for many acts which I cannot otherwise approve. Similarly, I have not yet bee[n] brought to the pitch of saying I do not want to [be] in the Congress. The agency of the Swarajist Party is strictly limited in its scope. I recognize its agency so far as the general political work is concerned. I do not make myself responsible for the character or the conduct of individual Swarajists. I wonder if I have made myself intelligible. You know the further step I have taken in view of Lord Birkenhead's speech and, of course, Deshbandhu's death. I must no longer prevent the Congress from becoming a predominantly political body by the force of my person; hence the letter to Punditji. But my decision need not affect that of a single Congressman unless it commends itself to his reason. I have simply stated my own personal opinion and, as I do not consider it to be binding on anybody in any shape or form and as I though[t] that an announcement of that character at the present moment would strengthen the Swarajist Party, I wrote the letter without any hesitation. For yourself, you know the local circumstances, and if you find that your indirect endorsement of the Swarajist Party will be to me your endorsement of the views and character of individual Swarajists, you will not hesitate to sever your connection with the Congress, while still retaining the resolute determination not to say anything against the Swarajist Party. More from the pages of *Young India*.

I expect you to be in Bombay on the 1st October; meanwhile, by all means write whatever you feel. My right hand requires rest; hence, for the last three days I am falling back upon shorthand assistance.

From a photostat : S.N. 19340

124. SPEECH ON KRISTODAS PAL[1]

July 24, 1925

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I want to tender a double apology to you first because I have not arrived in time, but you know the difficulties that beset me at the present moment. I have not a minute that I can call my own. Hence the delay. I want to apologize to you also for interrupting the proceedings and my apologies are due to Mr. Wordsworth whose speech has been suspended in order to make room for me. I am deeply grateful for these facilities which everywhere my countrymen and others afford to me, realizing as they do my situation.

I must confess to you that I know very little of the life of Kristodas Pal. The best years of my life have been spent outside India and, as a busy man that I was in South Africa, I was not able to keep myself in touch with all that was going on in India. It is a humiliating confession, but I must make that confession to you. At the same time, I feel honoured in that I was invited to be present at this function. It is a matter of privilege to me that I can associate myself with you in the tributes that will be paid, this evening, to the memory of that great and illustrious countryman of ours. His grandson has been kind enough to place at my disposal some literature dealing with his writings and, during the spare moments I could get yesterday, I came upon a passage in one of his writings bearing upon Home Rule. I little thought that, even in his bad time, that great man thought out things which we are today endeavouring to the best of our ability to reduce to practice. He gave us those ideas of freedom which we are today endeavouring to translate into action. I have read also something else from his writings. As a youth I knew this much that he was one of the greatest journalists of his time, that he was a fearless patriot, but with his fearlessness he combined a polished and cultured courtesy which never left in anything that he wrote a sting behind. We of the present generation, in our attempt to attain our freedom, need to treasure the lesson that we have inherited from the great man; we need also to copy his fearlessness and gentleness, because fearlessness without gentleness is mere brag and bluster.

[1] A meeting to pay tribute to the memory of Kristodas Pal was held on his 41st death anniversary at the University Institute, Calcutta.

The young men who have gathered together to do honour to the memory of that great patriot should remember this one lesson from his life that, even at his time of day, he has lost nothing for having been courteous. On the contrary, we are enabled to treasure his memory because he never lost sight of the fact that a man, who has to deal with opponents, and who has to wring freedom from unwilling hands, has still need to be gentle and courteous. May I translate it in my own language and say that fearlessness is only true when combined with it is non-violence. I have summed up all these gentle virtues in that oneword which we have inherited from the *rishis* of old. If it be true that our religion, Hinduism, is saturated with ahimsa, then, in every walk of life, it is the one thing that we must exhibit most promi-nently.

Speakers who will follow me, from their greater acquaintance of his life, I have no doubt, will tell you many things of his other virtues. But, in my humble opinion, they will not be able to pick out a single one of his characteristics which will excel the one thing I have the honour to present to you for your acceptance and treasuring. It is well that we have gathered here together to do honour to the memory of that great man, but it will be better if we translate some part of those virtues into our own life.

May God help you and help me to do so that we may become better and fitter instruments for the task that lies before us.

Forward, 25-7-1925

125. SPEECH AT EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION MEETING[1]

CALCUTTA,
July 24, 1925

Mahatma Gandhi then addressed the meeting.

He apologized for not standing up to do so, and explained the cause—a severe attack of dysentery some 5 or 6 years ago, which had incapacitated him physically. He thanked the European Association for extending such an invitation to him. Mahatma Gandhi said :

I am dying to co-operate.[2]

[1] Held at the Grand Hotel; the meeting was presided over by W. W. page, after whose introductory remarks Gandhiji addressed the gathering.

[2] According to the report in *The Englishman*, 25-7-1925, Gandhiji said that "some time ago an English friend wrote to him that although he proposed to be a non-co-operator, he (Mr. Gandhi) was dying to co-operate. He wrote back that his English friend was right."

He went on to say that he was glad whenever he got an opportunity of meeting Europeans anywhere or on any pretext, and that as a non-combatant, he was never afraid of getting hurt.

You are at liberty to ask whatever you like and to say whateveryou like and I will take it with good grace. The destinies of England and India have been thrown together and have been thrown together for a good purpose, namely, the service of humanity, and I personally never miss the opportunity of understanding the European viewpoint. It is in that mood that I approach you this evening and ask you to reciprocate. I expect Englishmen to make the advance to Indians and not Indians to Europeans.

Mahatma Gandhi said he frankly confessed that the subject proposed to him was not very attractive, chiefly because it was not of so much importance as many other subjects—the subject, "Why did I intervene in the election of the Mayor of Calcutta?"[1] Mahatmaji said he had heard that his action was resented both by Europeans and Indians. But the intervention was not of his seeking. He said :

Why did I support Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta's nomination and not that of somebody else? As you know, for some months past I have been saying that the Swarajists hold my general power of attorney so far as the politics of India are concerned. I have found them capable of sacrifice, lovers of their country, but not haters of Englishmen. I have thrown in my lot with the Swarajists. I have studied your (European) history. I have seen some of your institution grow, those in South Africa, for instance, under my very gaze. The Swarajists are today the most powerful political party in India. Not because we do not know, but because we do not care to know is why Europeans and Indians find themselves so far apart.

One of the greatest friends of Englishmen has gone from us. The throne is left vacant. His followers do not possess his magic. They are unequal to shoulder his burden.

This was how Mahatmaji referred to the late Mr. C. R. Das.

Mahatma Gandhi then said that his first impression was that the Mayor of Calcutta should be a Mussalman and asked the gathering to remember how interested he was on the question of Hindu-Muslim unity.[2]

If you have got an honest and able Mohammedan, of which two

[1] *Vide* "Calcutta's Mayor", 16-7-1925.

[2] The two paragraphs which follow are taken from a report in *The Englishman*, 25-7-1925.

facts you shall be the sole judges, and if he can serve the corporation with a single-minded purpose, then, it shall be my duty to recommend him for the chair.

The very next day, however, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, a Mohammedan leader, came and told him that there was no Mohammedan fit for the office and asked him to recommend Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta. Now Maulana Abul Kalam Azad did not belong to the Corporation or to the Swaraj Party, but was one of the most capable Mohammedans in India. He asked the Maulana why he wanted Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta, and the latter replied, "Do you want the Swaraj Party to hold together?"Mahatma Gandhi said he had had the honour of meeting Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta in Chittagong. Mr. Sen Gupta had made a mark in the Legis-lative Council, he was leader of the Bengal Swaraj Party and President of the Provincial Congress Committee. Mahatma Gandhi said he must confess that he thought Mr. Sen Gupta could carry a triple burden on his shoulders if he had able lieutenants. And if Mr. Sen Gupta could do justice to the Mayoral chair and serve Calcutta's citizens consistently, then Mr. Sen Gupta was the man for the job.

I think I have given you the whole reason why I put forward Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta's name for the Mayor's chair. I knew of some objections that have been raised in the Press. I want to put before you with candour and truth what it was that guided me. If you think Mr. Sen Gupta has gone to the Corporation as Mayor to advance his own interest or those of his party, it is not so. I assure you that you are mistaken. I have heard the expression "Tammany Hall" applied. Dismiss it from your minds. I should be the first to renounce such methods. The only methods that my country can rise through are methods which are above board. If I have thrown my lot into the affairs of Calcutta, I have done so in order to serve you. I have examined this question from every point of view. Mr. Sen Gupta has got the ability to fill the Mayoral chair, and I would have been unjust if I did not advocate that, if there was nothing against Mr. Sen Gupta, then he should be elected Mayor of Calcutta.[1]

He said he did not like Sir Hubert Carr's expression "political jobbery" because it was current coin in the world's politics.[2] An objection had been raised that

[1] Sir Hubert Carr, Harry Hobbs and some other members who spoke criticized Sen Gupta's election to the Mayoralty. Gandhiji replied to them in brief.

[2] *The Englishman*, 25-7-1925, reported Gandhiji as saying here : " . . . if this was political jobbery, then this had been going on throughout the world on the most extensive scale and, seeing that it had been current coin in the political world such a long time, it would be better to call it by a less bad name."

Mr. Sen Gupta was a perfect stranger to Calcutta. Mr. Gandhi said he did not know this before. Mr. Sen Gupta was educated in Calcutta and had spent the best part of his life in that city.

I would lay down the principle that all other things being equal, a political party has the right to elect whomsoever they consider to be the best man.[1]

Mahatma Gandhi reminded his audience that Mr. Sen Gupta had promised that he was not going to make use of his political views while occupying the Mayoral chair, and asked who was better for the post than a trained lawyer. Mahatma Gandhi would up by referring to the late Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, who was chairman of the Bombay Corporation as well as the leader of his political party.

No one has run the Bombay Municipality with such distinction. The Swaraj Party has done no violence to any principle followed in India.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 25-7-1925

126. MY DUTY

In all this universe, God alone is changeless and ever the same. Everything else rises for a time and then declines. An organization which does not change when circumstances demand is nearing its death. The Congress is still young; it aspires to grow to a far greater height still and, therefore, it will continue to change. The defects in its constitution which experience has revealed ought to be remedied.

Moreover, the passing away of Deshbandhu and lord Birkenhead's speech have created a situation in which it is necessary that any changes which seem desirable are made without delay.

I have been observing since the Belgaum session[2] that there is an unceasing demand for a change in the franchise clause.[3] I also notice that the educated class is dissatisfied with my method of work. Many of them wish that the various Congress committees should interest themselves in what are known as political matters, i.e., matters

[1] *The Englishman* report here has : "Further, that political party would be doing violence to itself if it did not seize the opportunity to better its position so long as that interest was not in conflict with the best interest of the Corporation. . . . He asked them to put aside Sir Hubert Carr's proposition that this was political jobbery, because Government itself had resorted to political jobbery."

[2] Held in December 1924, under the presidentship of Gandhiji

[3] Which made spinning, instead of a small subscription, a qualification for Congress membership

connected with work in legislatures.

I do not wish to stand in the way of either of these demands. This does not mean that I myself want these changes. But I appreciate popular opinion, believe in its importance and respect it. When that opinion seems unacceptable to me, I believe it my duty to oppose it at my cost—not at the cost of people's interests. In this case, I have no ground for opposing it. Popular opinion with the Congress means the opinion of the educated class. The Congress is the creation of this class. It, which means the educated class, has rendered many services to the country. I cannot forget these merely because of my differences with that class. As I look at the matter, I must carry the educated class with me in my attempt to convert the Congress into a mass organization. We cannot be true representatives of the masses so long as we do not do physical work to qualify ourselves for membership of the Congress. But I have not been able to convince the educated class of this. A few individuals have understood it, but the class as a whole has not responded. I must have patience and make it as easy as possible for the educated class to join the Congress. While Deshbandhu lived, my responsibility in this matter was, I felt, not so heavy. He and Motilalji served as a link between the educated class and me. With the passing away of one of them, I see that it has become my clear duty to understand the predicament of Motilalji. I see that educated people feel it as a burden even to buy hand-spun yarn and offer it as a subscription, for they lack faith in spinning. The result has been that the work of the Congress suffers from hypocrisy and insincerity. One and the same bundle of yarn has sometimes done duty for several numbers. The danger of such abuse had been pointed out to me even at Belgaum, but I had made light of it. I thought that everyone would obey the rule and, in any case, no one would practise deception. My reasoning has been proved wrong. I think, therefore, that the rule about buying yarn and giving it must be dropped. Panditji and other Swarajists felt that, in view of the pact[1] between them and me, they could not ask me to agree to the repeal of the rule even though they wanted it to be repealed. Hence I decided that I should free them from their feeling of being bound, but that I myself should not endorse the change which they desire. I have already written to him to this effect.

As far as I understand, all Swarajists want the revival of the old

[1] The Gandhi-Nehru-Das pact finally ratified at the Belgaum session

practice of paying money instead of buying yarn and giving it. It seemed to be their unanimous view that those who preferred to give their labour to the people should have a permanent place in the Congress. I was very happy indeed about this. I welcome this measure of tolerance. This decision means that spinning will always have a place in the Congress programme. It remains to be seen how many people with faith in spinning we get. If the All-India Congress Committee[1] adopts this change, we shall know who are sincere about spinning.

The second requirement of the franchise clause is the obligation to wear khadi. A majority of the Swarajists do not want this rule to be repealed. If the educated class sincerely allows this condition to stand, I would regard it as the greatest good fortune of the country. It is desirable that the change which is made now should be made and the conditions which are retained should be retained not as experimental measures but as permanent features and because members want them.

The third issue is about the Swaraj Party getting the leadership of the Congress instead of remaining its representative or an intermediary [between the Congress and the Government]. I think that, in the situation which faces us, it is not proper to continue a kind of boycott of the Swarajist movement in the Congress. It seems desirable, instead, that the particular work of the Swarajists should become the main acti-vity of the Congress and that spinning and propagation of khadi should be carried on through people who function as intermediaries [between the Congress and the people]. The spinning-wheel movement does not need the prestige of the Congress name as much as the Swarajists need it. The former depends for its success entirely on constructive work, whereas the success of the latter's activities depends on cultivation of public opinion. I, therefore, intend to propose at the forthcoming meeting of the All-India Congress Committee that it should accord the Swaraj Party the dominant place and set up a separate body to promote spinning, make this body a part of the Congress and entrust it with the responsibility of carrying on the movement. If this is done, it will also make the propagation of khadi easier in a way, and the body set up to promote spinning, not being dependent on votes, will also be free from the uncertainty resulting from changes in public opinion. Once a public opinion in favour of spinning has come into existence, the spread of the movement depends wholly on money and management, that is, on

business ability. Hence the body to be set up should be the business wing of the Congress. The leaders assembled[1] in Calcutta seemed to be in favour of this too.

My duty is as clear to me as daylight. I should help the Swaraj Party to the best of my ability and within the limits of my principles, should not oppose political work becoming the principal activity of the Congress and advise the All-India Congress Committee to amend the franchise clause so as to permit members to pay money instead of their being required to buy yarn and give it. This is also the duty, it seems to me, of others in A.I. C.C. who are, like me, No-changers. There is, however, no in-tention to present a formal compact to the forthcoming A.I.C.C. Every member may exercise his freedom I have not bound anyone in any way. I have freed the Swaraj Party from its obligation[2] and, therefore, both the Swarajists and the No-changers will be able to vote according to their inclination, and I want them do so.

One issue remains to be examined. Can the A.I.C.C., a body with powers delegated by the Congress, amend a rule laid down by the latter? Ordinarily, it cannot do so, but in extra-ordinary circumstances and in the interest of the Congress itself, it certainly can. A person holding a power of attorney from someone, or an agent, has no authority at all to exceed the limits prescribed by his employer. But he can venture a great deal at his own risk and in the interest of the latter. The risk he will run is that the employer may revoke the power of attorney. If any loss results from the agent acting at his own risk, he is bound to bear it, since no agent can, without his employer's permission, do anything which might put the latter to loss. In short, the employer is entitled to receive the benefit of anything done by the agent in excess of his authority, but has no obligation to bear the loss. According to this principle, if the A.I.C.C., at its own risk, makes any changes without specific authority, it will run two risks: one of them is the possibility of the Congress condemning its action as improper; the other is, if the A.I.C.C., when faced with a difficult situation, does not disregard the constitution and take necessary action to meet it, it will have proved its timidity and incompetence.

But, then, such changes are generally made only when they are

[1] For the meeting of the Congress Working Committee and of the Swaraj Party held on July 16 and 17, 1925

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Motilal Nehru", 19-7-1925.

approved almost unanimously. When a fairly good number of members oppose them, it will be improper to adopt them, besides being unconstitutional.

Members should do nothing under the influence of my suggestion or recommendation. The A.I.C.C. may unanimously make any changes it thinks best in the interest of the Congress, that is, of the people. I wish that no member attends as a Swarajist or a No-changer. Everyone should attend as a Congressman, or, better still, as an Indian. I hope that all the members will attend this important meeting. I have never troubled members of the A.I.C.C. unnecessarily; I trouble them in the present crisis because I am helpless.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-7-1925

127. ALL-INDIA DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL

Just as Bengal has decided to collect a sum of Rs. 10 lakhs for a memorial to Deshbandhu and to start, in his ancestral home, a hospital for women to be named after him and an institution for training nurses, so the country as a whole should also decide to do something to perpetuate his sacred memory. I had been consulting Bengali friends what should be done, but being of the view that I should make no suggestion before the advice of Motilalji, I did not publicly express my ideas on the subject. I have now had discussions with Panditji, the revered Basanti Devi and Deshbandhu's close associates and followers, and have issued an appeal under some signatures, a translation of which the reader will find on the first page.

I have showed clearly that Deshbandhu had finally come to believe so firmly in the spinning-wheel and khadi that, leaving these, we should think of no other means of perpetuating his memory.

If anyone asks why we should not have a statue or some other similar form of memorial, the reply is that such local memorials will be put up in many cities. We should think of something through which Deshbandhu will be remembered even by growing boys and girls, by the rich and the poor, something which will be in the nature of a permanent blessing for the country and which is not beyond our means. The only thing of this kind is the spinning-wheel and khadi.

But, what about the parliamentary activities? It is doubtful if Deshbandhu's memory can be kept alive for ever through these. The work will certainly go on, but we know Deshbandhu himself has said

that these activities are of passing importance and that their field is limited. Khadi work is the only activity which can engage everyone and which concerns everyone.

Such questions were also raised when, after the Lokamanya's death, there was a proposal for a memorial to him. But afterwards it was admitted by all that he had spent his life in giving to the country the message : "Swaraj is my birthright." Deshbandhu's task and ours was to take up that message and think out universal and enduring scope for carrying it into effect. Among these, we gave the first place to the spinning-wheel and khadi, and, through them, to the boycott of foreign cloth. Deshbandhu's work thus lay in organizing the means. This is why, during the last year of his life, he was always exhorting people to take up village reconstruction. He harped on this in the Assembly and also as a Mayor, and in his speech at Faridpur he stated plainly that lawyers might go on with parliamentary work but ordinary people should devote themselves to village reconstruction. In Darjeeling he finally came to the conclusion that village reconstruction meant the spinning-wheel and khadi. Deshbandhu saw clearly that, in the solar system of the means of swaraj, the spinning-wheel held the place of the sun, and he even sent a message to his followers that they should take up the work of village reconstruction through it.

This was Deshbandhu's last will and testament in politics. It is our duty to water the seed which he sowed and help it to grow into a tree. Hence, promoting the spinning-wheel movement is the only right way of perpetuating his memory.

Let us now consider how much we should raise. Contrary to my usual practice, I have not specified a particular sum which we should collect, for there is no upward limit to the figure. Moreover, wherever I lay down a particular figure, it becomes a very heavy weight on my mind and I insist on its being reached at any cost. This time, too, I have fixed a figure in my mind and I insist on its being reached at any cost; but I do not want to involve in it the friends who have signed the appeal with me. Out of their regard for me and faith in the people, they would subscribe to the figure and invite a responsibility on themselves, but they would not be able to give all or most of their time for reaching the figure.

However, the reader should understand that we wish to start a business which would have a turn-over of sixty crores. No sum can be

too much for this purpose. But I have unshakable faith that, as people observe the success of the khadi movement, their confidence in it will increase and we shall get more and more money.

As pointed out in the leaflet, the contributions we get will depend on three things: people's love for Deshbandhu, their faith in khadi and the spinning-wheel and their confidence in the trustees. The whole country has demonstrated its love for Deshbandhu. My experience is that people's faith in khadi and the spinning-wheel is steadily growing. The trustees are known to the country. With a man of transparent honesty like Jamnalalji as treasurer and an equally conscientious and upright secretary in Jawaharlal, there can be no reason for distrust.

I wish that no one will wait to see what others do. Readers of *Navajivan* may send to it whatever amounts they wish to contribute. Their contributions will be acknowledged in the paper. If they are sent directly to Jamnalalji, *Navajivan* will be saved the trouble of maintaining the accounts and passing them on to him.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-7-1925

128. MISCELLANEOUS

VISIBLE *v.* INVISIBLE

A friend writes to say :[1]

This trend of thought is entirely correct; however, it should not have arisen as a result of my article. All of us desire *moksha*, whether consciously or unconsciously. In my article, however, I considered only the value of the service rendered by workers. In addition, I also discussed, in passing, the kind of service that the people welcome today. The world hardly knows true sannyasis. These keep working in an invisible manner. To them, praise is as good as censure; in other words, it could be said that they fight shy of praise. In my article I discussed no such persons at all. Moreover, the service of those whose motive is to gain praise has little value. Monuments to honour them as well as the so-called sannyasis have been raised and will continue to be raised. In the article, the reference was only to such selfless service as was rendered by Deshbandhu and, in this connection, I indicated

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had offered some comments on Gandhiji's obituary notice on Das; *vide* "Long Live Deshbandhu!". 28-6-1925.

that in the present age those who come forward to safeguard the people's freedom are worshipped. Such persons could hardly afford to remain unseen. In other words, one who works in the political field cannot possibly remain hidden. For him, there is no other alternative but to come into contact with thousands of people, hence the world cannot fail to take note of this service. We should be aware of one thing alone viz., even those workers who were frauds have had monuments erected intheir honour; we should, therefore, guard ourselves against the temptation of doing anything in order to win glory. We should ratherfight shy of it. However, when we find that people have been showering affection on an illustrious worker like Deshbandhu, we realize that they readily appreciate service rendered for the welfare of others. Moreover, though their assessment is sometimes wrong, it is more often right. Our dharma today is to serve the country in a non-violent and truthful manner. All of us should contribute our share of service, while maintaining an indifference towards the resulting praise or blame.

THE VOLUNTEER'S DHARMA

A volunteer writes as follows:[1]

I have omitted from this letter portions dealing with certain facts. The caution is quite relevant. The purpose of the correspondent is to state that we should not be greedy and that we should do nothing which might go against the responsibility which has been entrusted to us. We should have nothing to do with the private affairs of our host. Where is the room for a personal connection when the relationship is a public one? Wherever a volunteer happens to stay, he does so not because of any personal friendship but only because of his work, and therefore regards the place as a guest-house. Moreover, one who desires to be pure always avoids meeting a woman when she is alone. This is the dharma not only of the volunteer but also of a friend, a guest, a dependent and of every man. No one should sleep near a married couple's room. This is gentlemanly conduct. Unfortunately, we do not have such facilities in our houses and we do not have the habit of practising such discretion; however, there can be no difference of opinion regarding the propriety and necessity of having a married couple's room away from those of others. The volunteer

[1] Not translated here

should during his stay exercise great care wherever such facilities do not exist and, if he finds this difficult he should look for accommodation elsewhere.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-7-1925

129. MESSAGE TO "FORWARD"

July 27, 1925

Lokamanya lived and died for swaraj. He taught us to believe that swaraj was our birthright. I know that we cannot regain this birthright of ours without reinstating the charkha in our villages in its ancient dignity. This we cannot do unless we, the educated class, learn the beautiful life-giving art of spinning and wear khadi, whether it is coarse or fine, whether it is dear or cheap. No price is too great to pay for swaraj. If, then, we would honour the memory of Lokamanya, let us solemnly resolve to spin at least half an hour every day and habitually wear khadi and induce others to do likewise.

M. K. GANDHI

Forward, 1-8-1925

130. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

Monday, Shravana Sud 6, July 27, 1925

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have stopped writing with the right hand altogether. I shall give it rest and see. There is no reason at all to worry.

I had asked you if you were getting the *Ashram Samachar*. Even though there is no reply from you, I am sending you the issues lying with me.

You have now begun to figure in the press. I am sending the enclosed cutting for your amusement. May your present work bring you perfect inner peace and may you have a long and healthy life. In your spiritual growth lies my own spiritual growth; because some of my notions of spiritual growth rest on the growth of you four brothers. There can be a mistake in my calculations, but so far my predictions have proved correct. I do not believe at all that the children of virtuous parents must necessarily be sinful. I am

experiencing my four states in you four brothers. I have here given expression to a subtle thought and told you of a rule of the world. Do ask me if you have not understood that rule. There is no need for you to think too much about it. The knowledge of that rule has a limited use. That is precisely why all religions have given greater importance to action inspired by devotion.

You may take it that I shall be here till the 31st of August. Ten lakh rupees[1] cannot be collected without my presence here and if that does not happen, Bengal will lose its good name. I shall be going to Bihar in September. I shall be able to go to the Ashram. I shall definitely be in Bombay on October 1.

Jamnadas is still here. A young Chinese is also here. He seems very polite and industrious. He has come to me as Santiniketan could not accommodate him. He will go to the Ashram with Jamnadas.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Ramdas Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

131. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

CALCUTTA,

Shravana Sud 6 [*July 27, 1925*][2]

BHAI BENARSIDASJI,

I write this with my left hand as the right hand fingers ache. I have your letter. I have written to Chhaganlal about the money and have asked him to send you all the balance if he has no difficulty. I take it that you will send the account directly to Mr. Petit. I also take it that whatever we are doing this time is in perfect conformity with our agreement with Mr. Petit.

[1] For the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund; for Gandhiji's appeal for it, *vide* "Appeal for Deshbandhu Memorial Fund", 22-6-1925 "All,-India Memorial", on or before 22-7-1925 and "Appeal for All-India Deshbandhu Memorial", 22-7-1925.

[2] The postmark is dated "July 28, 1925".

Towards the end of your letter I notice some anger and despair. What is the reason?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI
FEROZABAD
DIST. AGRA

From a photostat of the Hindi original : G.N. 2520

132. LETTER TO D. HANUMANT RAO

148, RUSSA ROAD,
BHAWANIPORE
[CALCUTTA,]
July [*28*], *1925*

MY DEAR HANUMANT RAO,

My right hand requires rest. I am therefore dictating this. It was a delight to receive your letter. I shall not be satisfied unless I see you strong, healthy and active. I want you to become a walking advertisement of nature cure.

My impression, which is growing stronger daily, is that water cure is only an indifferent thing. The real cure has still to be found and that is air. There is still a step further, but that is far away from this. We do not realize the value of fresh air and different climates. I wish you could change from climate to climate till you find a suitable one where you can completely restore yourself. Do send Mr. Sharma. I am in Calcutta up to 31st August probably; certainly up to the middle of it. May have to be absent for two or three days. I shall try to give him whatever time I can spare. How is Krishnaiya ?

Yours sincerely,

D. HANUMANT RAO, ESQ.
DIGUMARTI HOUSE
BERHAMPORE
GANJAM DIST.

From a photostat of a typewritten copy : S.N. 10593

133. LETTER TO W. H. PITT

148, RUSSA ROAD,
BHAWANIPORE,
July 28, 1925

DEAR MR. PITT,

I have your confidential letter.[1] I appreciate the force of your reasoning and the goodwill lying behind it. The fundamental difference still remains both because of our temperamental differences and apart from these the point of view from which each of us looks at the same question. However, my business is to meet as far as it is possible those who may be interested in solving the same question, whether as friends, opponents or neutrals. I am now corresponding with Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, who, as you know, is my co-worker in this matter, and on whose judgment I place the greatest reliance. I am asking him even to go to Vaikom or Trivandrum if necessary. Meanwhile I shall continue to observe perfect reticence in public. No forward step will be taken without due notice to you and without the greatest deliberation. The assurance you have given me that the authorities are doing their best to remove the evil is a great temptation for me to fall in with your suggestion. But from this distance I do not want to trust to my unaided judgment.

Your sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

My right [hand] is disabled.[2]

From a photostat of a handwritten copy : S.N. 11100

134. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

148, RUSSA ROAD,
BHAWANIPORE,
July 28, 1925

MY DEAR C. R.,

My hand requires rest for a few days. I am, therefore, dictating my correspondence. I hope you received a letter I sent to you from

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from W. H. Pitt", 22-7-1925.

[2] The letter is in Mahadev Desai's hand.

Mr. Pitt. Here is another and a copy of my reply.[1] I am also sending you Kelappan's letters. Please advise. You may enter into direct correspondence with the Commissioner if you wish and write to Kelappan yourself.[2] As you will see from my letter to the Commissioner, I am inclined to fall in with his suggestion, but I am in a fog. It is necessary to understand the viewpoint of the volunteers. You will also consider Kelappan's proposal that he should be relieved. I feel that it would be necessary.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 11103

135. LETTER TO K. KELAPPAN NAIR

148, RUSSA ROAD,
BHAWANIPORE,
July 28, 1925

MY DEAR KELAPPAN,

I have your letter.[3] I have also a long letter[4] from Mr. Pitt. I send you a copy of that letter as also copies of my letters to Mr. Pitt and Mr. Rajagopalachari. Please correspond with the letter and give him your views. If, consistently with the upkeep of the Ashram, you can be relieved, you could certainly go and take charge of the Kerala Committee.

I hope you are now completely restored. Workers must not get ill.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 11102

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Rajagopalachari accordingly communicated with Pitt who, in a letter of September 2, acknowledged Rajagopalachari's letter of August 19.

[3] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from K. Kelappan Nair", 18-6-1925.

[4] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from W. H. Pitt", 22-7-1925.

136. LETTER TO FRED E. CAMPBELL

148, RUSSA ROAD,
CALCUTTA,
July 28, 1925

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND[1],

I like your frank and sincere letter[2] for which I thank you.

You seem to have taken it for granted that I hate the British. What makes you think so? I have hundreds of friends among the British people. I cannot love the Mussalmans and for that matter the Hindus if I hate the British. My love is not an exclusive affair. If I hate the British today, I would have to hate the Mohammedans tomorrow and the Hindus the day after. But what I do detest is the system of government that the British have set up in my country. It has almost brought about the economic and moral ruin of the people of India. But just as I love my wife and my children, in spite of their faults which are many, I love also the British in spite of the bad system for which they have unfortunately made themselves responsible. That love which is blind is no love, that love which shuts its eyes to the faults of loved ones is partial and even dangerous. You must write again if this letter does not satisfy you.[3]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 10547

[1] Campbell described himself as a young boy of 15 from Kansas,.U.S.A.

[2] In his letter of May 4, Campbell had written : "A few days ago I heard a sermon in one of our Christian churches in which the minister gave a vivid account of your fasting in order to stop the hard feeling between the Mohammedans and Hindus. . . . I have to say is that the man said that you were the foremost example of Christ today, although you are not a Christian. After hearing this, I determined to read more about you. In this I read of your troubles with the British. What is your main reason for hatred towards them? Is it a commercial matter? If you could find time to answer this, I would be more than pleased. I am thanking you in advance."

[3] Some further correspondence appears to have ensued; *vide* "Letter to Fred E. Campbell", 23-4-1926.

137. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Shravana Shukla 8, July 28, 1925

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. I am convinced that without Malaviyaji and Shraddhanandji Hindu-Muslim unity is impossible to achieve. I can only guide and when stray quarrels take place, do something about them if I can. My task is that of a scavenger: to work for and ensure cleanliness. When the time comes to work out a settlement it will be most necessary to consult Malaviyaji and others.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Prem Prasadi, p. 32

138. LETTER TO C. RAMALINGA REDDY

148 RUSSA ROAD,
CALCUTTA,
July 28, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

Thank you for your letter. As my right hand refuses to work and insists upon rest I have taken to dictation.

You will see my views about my own special fitness in my article on Lord Birkenhead's speech[1]. If I felt that power within, I would seek the leadership which you would have me take up, but I have not that power today.

My congratulations to your nieces and yourself on their effect and your good fortune in securing the fruit of their effort. I really believe that they are bringing swaraj nearer by their adding to the wealth of the country, and by their setting an example in national labour to others. I do not know when I shall be able to visit Andhra Desh. When I do I shall certainly try to bring Sahib.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. C. R. REDDY, ESQ.
CHITTOOR (N. A.)

From a copy : C. W. 11334. Courtesy : Dr. N. Rama Murthy and C. A. Reddi

[1] *Vide* "A Deceptive Speech", 18-7-1925.

139. SPEECH AT MEETING OF MISSIONARIES

July 28, 1925

I had the pleasure of delivering an address before the missionaries in Calcutta at Y.M.C.A. on 28th ultimo. I have been supplied with shorthand notes of that address, and as it was of general interest I reproduce below an abridgment of it. I have omitted onsalient thought or expression, but I have omitted some descriptive passages.

M. K. G.

No many of you perhaps know that my association with Christians, not Christians so called but real Christians, dates from 1889, when as a lad I found myself in London; and that association has grown riper as years have rolled on. In South Africa, where I found myself in the midst of inhospitable surroundings, I was able to make hundreds of Christian friends. I came in touch with the late Mr. Spencer Watton, Director of South Africa General Mission, and, later, with the great divine, Rew. Mr. A. Murray and several others.

My acquaintance, therefore, this evening with so many missionaries is by no means a new thing. There was even a time in my life when a very sincere and intimate friend of mine, a great and good Quaker, had designs on me. (Laughter.) He thought that I was too good not to become a Christian. I was sorry to have disappointed him. One missionary friend of mine in South Africa still writes to me and asks me, 'How is it with you?' I have always told this friend that so far as I know, it is all well with me. If it was prayer that these friends expected me to make, I was able to tell them that every day the heart-felt prayer within the closed door of my closet went to the Almighty to show me light and give wisdom and courage to follow that light.

In answer to promises made to one of these Christian friends of mine, I thought it my duty to see one of the biggest of Indian Christians, as I was told he was,—the late Kali Charan Banerjee. I went over to him—I am telling you of the deep search that I have undergone in order that I might leave no stone unturned to find out the true path—I went to him with an absolutely open mind and in a receptive mood, and I met him also under circumstances which were most affecting. I found that there was much in common between Mr. Banerjee and myself. His simplicity, his humility, his courage, his

truthfulness, all these things I have all along admired. He met me when his wife was on her death-bed. You cannot imagine a more impressive scene, a more ennobling circumstance. I told Mr. Banerjee, 'I have come to you as a seeker,'—this was in 1901—'I have come to you in fulfilment of a sacred promise I have made to some of my dearest Christian friends that I will leave no stone unturned to find out the true light.' I told him that I had given my friends the assurance that no worldly gain would keep me away from the light, if I could but see it. Well, I am not going to engage you in giving a description of the little discussion that we had between us. It was very good, very noble. I came away, not sorry, not dejected, not disappointed, but I felt sad that even Mr. Banerjee could not convince me. This was my final deliberate striving to realize Christianity as it was presented to me. Today my position is that though I admire much in Christianity, I am unable to identify myself with orthodox Christianity. I must tell you in all humility that Hinduism as I know it, entirely satisfies my soul, fills my whole being and I find a solace in the *Bhagavad Gita* and Upanishads that I miss even in the Sermon on the Mount. Not that I do not prize the ideal presented therein, not that some of the precious teachings in the Sermon on the Mount have not left a deep impression upon me, but I must confess to you that when doubts haunt me, when disappointments stare me in the face, and when I see not one ray of light on the horizon I turn to the *Bhagavad Gita,* and find a verse to comfort me; and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming sorrow. My life has been full of external tragedies and if they have not left any visible and indelible effect on me, I owe it to the teaching of the *Bhagavad Gita.*

I have told you all these things in order to make it absolutely clear to you where I stand, so that I may have, if you will, closer touch with you. I must add that I did not stop at studying the Bible and the commentaries and other books on Christianity that my friends placed in my hands; but I said to myself, if I was to find my satisfaction through reasoning, I must study the scriptures of other religions also and make my choice. And I turned to the Koran. I tried to understand what I could of Judaism as distinguished from Christianity. I studied Zoroastrianism and I came to the conclusion that all religions were right, but every one of them imperfect, imperfect naturally and necessarily,—because they were interpreted with our poor intellects, sometimes with our poor hearts, and more often misinterpreted. In all religions, I found to my grief, that there

were various and even contradictory interpretations of some texts, and I said to myself, 'Not these things for me. If I want the satisfaction of my soul, I must feel my way. I must wait silently upon God and ask Him to guide me.' There is a beautiful verse in Sanskrit which says 'God helps only when man feels utterly helpless and utterly humble'. Some of you have come from the Tamil land. When I was studying Tamil, I found in one of the books of Dr. Pope a Tamil proverb which means' God helps the helpless'. I have given you this life-story of my own experience for you to ponder over.

You, the missionaries come to India thinking that you come to a land of heathens, of idolators, of men who do not know God. One of the greatest of Christian divines, Bishop Heber, wrote the two lines which have always left a sting with me: "Where every prospect pleases, and man alone is vile." I wish he had not written them. My own experience in my travels throughout India has been to the contrary. I have gone from one end of the country to the other, without any prejudice, in a relentless search after truth, and I am not able to say that here in this fair land, watered by the great Ganges, the Brahmaputra and the Jumna, man is vile. He is not vile. He is as much a seeker after truth as you and I are, possibly more so. This reminds me of a French book translated for me by a French friend. It is an account of an imaginary expedition in search of knowledge. One party landed in India and found Truth andGod personified, in a little pariah's hut. I tell you there are many such huts belonging to the untouchables where you will certainly find God. They do not reason but they persist in their belief that God is. They depend upon God for His assistance and find it too. There are many stories told throughout the length and breadth of India about these noble untouchables. Vile as some of them may be, there are noblest specimens of humanity in their midst. But does my experience exhaust itself merely with the untouchables? No. I am here to tell you that there are non-Brahmins, there are Brahmins who are as fine specimens of humanity as you will find in any place on the earth. There are Brahmins today in India who are embodiments of self-sacrifice, godliness, and humility. There are Brahmins who are devoting themselves body and soul to the service of untouchables, with no expectation of reward from the untouchables, but with execration from orthodoxy. They do not mind it, because in serving pariahs they are serving God. I can quote chapter and verse from my experience. I place these facts before you in all humility for the

simple reason that you may know this land better, the land to which you have come to serve. You are here to find out the distress of the people of India and remove it. But I hope you are here also in a receptive mood and, if there is anything that India has to give, you will not stop your ears, you will not close your eyes and steel your hearts, but open up your ears, eyes and, most of all, your hearts to receive all that may be good in this land. I give you my assurance that there is a great deal of good in India. Do not flatter yourselves with the belief that a mere recital of that celebrated verse in St. John makes a man a Christian. If I have read the Bible correctly, I know many men who have never heard the name of Jesus Christ or have even rejected the official interpretation of Christianity will, probably, if Jesus came in our midst today in the flesh, be owned by him more than many of us. I therefore ask you to approach the problem before you with open-heartedness, and humility.

I was engaged in a friendly conversation with some missionaries this morning. I do not want to relate that conversation. But I do want to say that they are fine specimens of humanity. They did not want to misunderstand me, but I had to pass nearly one hour and a half in my attempt to explain to them that, in writing what I had written, I had not written anything in a spirit of ill will or hatred towards Englishmen. I was hard put to it to carry that conviction. In fact, I do not know whether I carried that conviction to them at all. If salt loseth its savour, wherewith will it be salted? If I could not drive home the truth that was in me to the three friends who certainly came with open minds, how should I fare with others? It has often occurred to me that a seeker after truth has to be silent. I know the wonderful efficacy of silence. I visited a Trappist monastery in South Africa. A beautiful place it was. Most of the inmates of that place were under a vow of silence. I enquired of the Father the motive of it and he said that the motive was apparent. 'We are frail human beings. We do not know very often what we say. If we want to listen to the still small voice that is always speaking within us, it will not be heard if we continually speak.' I understood that precious lesson. I know the secret of silence. I do not know just now as I speak to you whether it would not have been wise if I had said nothing to those friends beyond saying, 'We shall know each other better when the mists have rolled away.' As I speak to you, I feel humiliated. Why did I argue with these friends? But I say these things to you, first of all, to make this confession and, secondly, to tell you also that, if you will refuse to see

the other side, if you will refuse to understand what India is thinking, then you will deny yourselves the real privilege of service.

I have told my missionary friends,'Noble as you are, you have isolated yourselves from the people whom you want to serve.' I cannot help recalling to you the conversation I related in Darjeeling at the Missionary Language School. Lord Salisbury was waited upon by a deputation of missionaries in connection with China and this deputation wanted protection. I cannot recall the exact words, but give you the purport of the answer Lord Salisbury gave. He said, "Gentlemen, if you want to go to China, to preach the message of Christianity, then do not ask for assistance of temporal power. Go with your lives in your hands and if the people of China want to kill you, imagine that you have been killed in the service of God". Lord Salisbury was right. Christian missionaries come to India under the shadow, or, if you like, under the protection of a temporal power, and it creates an impassable bar.

If you give me statistics that so many orphans have been reclaimed and brought to the Christian faith, I would accept them, but I do not feel convinced thereby that it is your mission. In my opinion, your mission is infinitely superior to that. You want to find men in India and if you want to do that, you will have to go to the lowly cottages not to give them something, might be to take something from them. A true friend as I claim to be of the missionaries of India and of the Europeans, I speak to you what I feel from the bottom of my heart. I miss receptiveness, humility, willingness on your part to identify yourselves with the masses of India. I have talked straight from my heart. May it find a response from hearts.

At the end of the address questions were invited. The most important questions and their answers are given below :

Q.How do you think should the missionaries indentify themselves with the masses?

A. The question is somewhat embarrassing. But I would venture to say, 'Copy Charlie Andrews.'

Another in the audience asked :

What definite work would you suggest that a missionary should do for and among the masses?

A. Since I have been challenged I must unhesitatingly answer, 'The Spinning-wheel.' You naturally laugh, but if you knew the

masses as I do, you will look upon this very simple instrument of torture (here Mr. Gandhi produced the *takli* he carries with him) with seriousness. You cannot present the hungry and famished masses with God. Their God is their food. General Booth knew what he was doing when at his numerous depots the first thing he did to the hungry men and women who flocked there was to give them a plate of soup. Before he would give them their next meal, he called upon them to make splinters for his match factory, and then he introduced them to God. The famished millions are famishing not because there is not enough food produced in India, but because they have no work to do. The only work for the millions is the spinning-wheel. I know the Industrial Mission House in Calcutta. It is good in its way, but it does not touch even the fringe of the question. The problem is how to take work to the cottages of these men, cottages which are scattered over a surface 1,900 miles long and 1,500 broad. They will not take the spinning-wheel unless they learn the art themselves and unless they spin to set an example to these men who have lost faith in themselves and faith in everything and everybody. And the spinning-wheel is useless unless you and I wear khaddar. Hence it is that I have not hesitated to say to Lord Reading or to Lord Willingdon that I will not be satisfied unless they and their orderlies are dressed from top to toe in khaddar.

A third inquirer asked :

Q Do you definitely feel the presence of the living Christ within you?

A. If it is the historical Jesus, surnamed Christ, that the inquirer refers to, I must say I do not. If it is an adjective signifying one of the names of God, then I must say I do feel the presence of God—call him Christ, call him Krishna, call him Rama. We have one thousand names to denote God, and if I did not feel the presence of God within me, I see so much of misery and disappointment every day that I would be a raving maniac and my destination would be the Hooghli.

Young India, 6-8-1925

140. APPEAL FOR ALL-BENGAL DESHBANDHU FUND

The All-Bengal Deshbandhu Memorial Committee has at last fixed the final date for closing the subscriptions at 31st August. I would like the public to note that no such date was fixed before. Finality must be final and cannot admit of reopening. I, however, suggested that we should make a Herculean effort to collect the full

ten lakhs on or before the 1st of July. In this we failed, but I cannot say for want of effort. We failed for want of organization. It is a fine tribute to the memory of Deshbandhu that we shall, before this week is out, have collected six lakhs. It will have been fully five weeks for the collection of six lakhs, and that gives an average of a little less than a lakh and a quarter a week, or nearly seventeen thousand per day.

Now, in spite of a little better though by no means a satisfactory organization, we shall not be able to keep up the average as a majority of large subscriptions have been collected. It is only on the basis of past experience that the Memorial Committee has fixed the 31st August as the very last date for receiving collections. It is a long enough time for collecting what must be regarded as a paltry sum for Bengal, and for a purpose so sacred as that of perpetuating the memory of Deshbandhu. The public will remember that only three months were fixed for collecting one crore for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. On the assumption that six lakhs will have been collected before the end of this month, there will be thirtytwo days left for collecting four lakhs. That leaves an average exactly of Rs. 12,500 per day. And if we are to secure the sum by the end of next month, we must never fall below the average. And those who are collecting and are concerned with the reputation of Bengal and with the success of the Memorial will, I hope, make it a point of honour to secure the daily average. I remind the principals of schools and colleges all over Bengal of their duty. I know that the school-going boys and girls are as eager as any to pay their mite. They simply await the call. I know, too, that many zamindars who owe not a little to Deshbandhu, have not yet sent in their subscriptions. May I respectfully ask them to send them in unsolicited?

Nor have all the ladies paid their quota. I have been told that they merge in their husbands. I respectfully dissent from that view, I want them to give, each one, their ornaments and pocket money as I did at the time of collecting the Tilak Swaraj Fund. I ask them now to part with what is their own without asking their partners to replace them. Then there is no loss felt; only the pleasure of giving remains. It is in that spirit that hundreds of sisters have already paid. May I ask the remaining ones to copy that spirit if the memory of Deshbandhu is a treasure for them and if a decently equipped hospital for women and equally decent institution for training nurses appeal to them as worthy objects?

Forward, 29-7-1925

141 LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI

148, RUSSA ROAD,
CALCUTTA,
July 29, 1925

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

A magazine editor has sent me an article he has written on the Prophet and which has given rise to an exciting meeting in Ahmedabad. He sends me also a copy of the *Khilafat* dated 29th May.

The article is not discourteous or abusive. I do not think that it warrants all the excitement that it has given rise to. At the same time it is an ignorant writing. The writer does not appear to me to have read any good biography. Certainly, he has not read the Koran. He has given an estimate of the life of the Prophet which we find in the ordinary European reviews. The writer has asked for my opinion and I have told him as much as I have told you. I would not have worried you about this thing, had it not been for the number of *Khilafat* that he has sent me.

In my opinion, the *Khilafat* writer has unnecessarily excited passion. I have read other portions of that number also out of curiosity, and I must confess that I do not like the language or the general tone of this particular number at all. "Fools, asses, downright lying" and such choice epithets embellish its paragraphs. I think you ought to control the language of the paper. I have not read a single well-thought-out, decent paragraph. I am sure that the writer does not even know that he has used unbecoming language.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

142. SPEECH AT MEETING OF ANGLO-INDIANS [1]

July 29, 1925

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I suppose it is better for me at the outset of our conversation to say—because we are such a small, beautiful compact gathering —that I would like this to be turned into a conversation rather than a set address by me.[2]

[1] Gandhiji spoke to a gathering of Anglo-Indians at Wellesley Square in the evening.

[2] This paragraph has been extracted from a report in *Forward*, 30-7-1925.

At the outset I would like to clear the ground by taking up the last sentiment of the chairman.[1] I appreciate the viewpoint that he has placed before me and there was a time when I could also say these things about loyalty. But as you know, for the past six years I have not been speaking of loyalty, but of disloyalty. It is not that I harbour disloyalty towards anything whatsoever, but I do so against all untruth, all that is unjust, all that is evil. This I want to make clear as I do not want to sail under false colours. I remain loyal to an institution so long as that institution conduces to my growth, to the growth of the nation. Immediately I find that the institution instead of conducing to its growth impedes it, I hold it to be my bounden duty to be disloyal to it. I cannot for one moment say that I am loyal to the present Government, that is, to the present system of Government. I assert that I am, every moment of my life, seeking to destroy this system of Government which is sapping the manhood of India, which is sapping its vitality and its resources, which is degrading alike those who are in charge of the system and those who are governed by that system.

But I think that whilst we may agree to differ on this very fundamental question, we must seek to find out whether there are not many points of contact between you and me—between you and the vast mass of the people who inhabit this beautiful land—if I may say so—of ours. What the ultimate destiny of India will be we do not know, or we know only this much that it is in our making, it will be what everyone of us whose lot is cast in India wants it to be. But beyond this we do not know, having no control over the minds of millions of human beings who compose Hindustan. But everyone should become an optimist and then there is nothing but the brightest future for this land. That is, today, everyone should be able to say to himself, "I live for this land. I shall die for this land." I want you, therefore, to approach the question in a spirit of service and, when there is that spirit of service, we may erase that disturbing factor. 'Loyalty' or 'disloyalty' does not matter much when a person really wants to serve.

I have come here this evening in a spirit of utter humility and in a spirit of absolute friendship and goodwill towards you. During my incessant wanderings, I have come in contact not merely with Hindus, not merely with Mussalmans, but I have come deliberately in contact with all sorts and conditions of people. I hope I have made myself

[1] Dr. Moreno had said that loyalty was the creed of Anglo-Indians.

accessible to anybody who has wanted to see me, but I have even gone out of my way to search out the minorities. As the Mussalmans are the big minority, I, as representing the majority of India, think it is my duty to befriend them even though they may reject my advice. You do not occupy even that numerical position and, therefore, I have not, wherever I found opportunities to approach you, hesitated to meet you. But I am here to confess to you that the Anglo-Indians have not freely reciprocated that feeling.

My largest contact with the Anglo-Indians has been on the railway trains, because they have somehow or other fought shy of the public meetings, perhaps because of the notion that these meetings were meetings of disloyalists. And as you have made loyalty your creed, naturally these meetings have repelled you. On the trains, however, I have sought you out.

As an instance of how the Anglo-Indians have isolated themselves from the Indians, Mr. Gandhi gave a vivid narrative of his meeting with some Anglo-Indian youngsters who travelled with him in the same train from Ajmer. He had an occasion to listen to their profuse vocabulary of slang until they recognized him, shed their naturalness and put on manners. And the behaviour of even those boys afforded ample proof of their isolation. One of them liked Indian sweets. But he dared not purchase them when others saw him. "I eat the sweets only when no one sees me," he said. He was not an Indian, he thought, and did not want to be observed by Indians. This, Mr. Gandhi said, was due to their schooling.

Though you have got Indian blood of which you need be proud—you need not be ashamed of that—I know when you receive a reminder of it you are pained.

Mr. Gandhi next told them the story of a young Anglo-Indian who opened his heart to him, who though getting Rs. 400 was scarcely able to make the two ends meet, who had to live beyond his means, because "I must look a European every inch of me."

I was stabbed to listen to his story. This is doing violence to humanity, I said to myself. He was a Christian, there was nothing wrong in his demeanour and in spite of the surface polish there was the canker eating into his vitals that he was leading an untrue life.

Well, I have given you two telling instances. You have to make a choice. What shall you do? Will you attempt the impossible or will you be what you should be : every inch of you Indian? Let me tell you one thing more. If you go to South Africa or Australia or any Dominion, you know that the same thing which is in store for me is in

store for you. You will be classed among the coloured men and you will have no status. Those of you who may possess a white skin may deceive the Immigration Officer, but your relatives and sons may betray you. That is the position. The colour bar is too terrible there. You also will be counted among moral lepers. Mr. Malan now says he would not drive us out, he would starve us out of South Africa, and would practise hypocrisy double-distilled. The "bar sinister", as Lord Morley put it, applies to us even in England. Now it is your privilege to fight this. If you cast in your lot with the masses of India from which you have sprung, there is nothing but hope for you, me and even for Government to whom you think you are bound to be loyal.

You can become a bridge so that all Indians and all Englishmen may cross to and fro without either feeling injured or hurt or feeling any degree of inconvenience. But if you want to aspire after the heights of Simla, well, those heights are unattainable and therefore poverty must be your lot, and also the lot of India. An important community like the Anglo-Indians, brave, resourceful, you are going to perdition simply because you would not see the plain truth, but persist in an impossible attempt. In this process, you are cutting yourselves away from the masses. Thus you have been ostracized by Indians and Europeans both.

He gave another anecdote of a very cultured Anglo-Indian in Kathiawar trying to live the European way of life, being ostracized everywhere. He said :

The picture of that tragedy still rises before me.

I do want to tell you at this critical moment of our national life, "Anglo-Indians, make your choice with determination and courage, whether you want to go away from the nation and whether you want to live up to the style of Europeans." Mind you, I am not asking you to cut yourselves adrift from Englishmen. They are far more precious to me today than they were before, because today I am leading the natural life. There was a time when I was also aping the Europeans. Little things guided my life then. But at a precious moment of my life, I threw them into the Indian Ocean, and turned my back on them. 'No more this life for me,' I said, 'no more shall I consent to become the "blotting-sheet of civilization," 'to use Sidgwick's picturesque phrase. Hence I have become more lovable, more approachable. I had never before in my life so many friends in Europe as I have today. That is because I have shed all unnaturalness. I may be blunt, but bluntness is better than put-up courtesy. I would, therefore, ask you to

shed this aping habit, to think for the masses, merge yourselves into the masses so that they can be lifted and we can show to the world a beautiful specimen of Indian humanity in which all races can blend and mingle, each retaining its special admirable characteristics, each keeping every bit of what is best in it. That is your privilege, if you will exercise it.

I have talked to you about your duty. You will naturally like to know my duty. Well, if I became the Viceroy of India, which I think is never coming to pass, I would simply give you and the other minorities the choice and ask you to take what you want. I would call all the leaders of the parties and tell them my proposal. Then I would call such of you as are numerically weakest to come first and to ask what you want. In services I would insist on a decent examination test, i.e., I would only ask a candidate, 'How much of a man or woman you are? Have you got the ability to rise to the occasion?" Provided he or she passes these tests, I would select first the one who belongs to the least numerical section. I would thus give preference to all minorities along just lines, consistent with the welfare of India. When I use this phrase, I assure you I am not doing any verbal jugglery. It will be none of my object to see that only Hindus can come in. Welfare of India as a whole, not of Hindus and Mussalmans or of a particular community. I would not flatter you or pamper you, but give you your due.

Mr. Gandhi next suggested that the Anglo-Indians' interests, as those of all minorities, would under his scheme, be protected by a voluntary pact— a pact not supported by legislation which always presupposes a third party, but absolutely voluntary like the pact between himself and the Swarajists, like the pact he offered to the Mussalmans at Delhi. So long as they had no faith in the justice of the majorities, they must have this protection by a voluntary pact. The parties to the pact were in honour bound to act according to the pact. If they reduced it to a scrap of paper, they would do so at their risk. To the Anglo-Indians he would say that, if the pact was not respected, if sacred promises were not carried out, they could have revenge on those who broke the pact. Concluding, Mr. Gandhi said :

I have dissected my heart. It has come unpolished in a spirit of friendship. May you also receive it in such a spirit.

Mr. Gandhi then invited questions. Dr. Moreno was the first questioner : "What would be your attitude if, as it appears, in the scheme of Indianization Anglo-Indians would be adversely affected?"

ANSWER : I would not oust a single Anglo-Indian if it was in my hands.

QUESTION : You have made over the Congress to Swarajists and yet you talk of an all-party programme. How can the Anglo-Indians engage in obstructionist tactics with Swarajists?

ANSWER : I have not made over the Congress to the Swarajists. I have absolved them from the Pact entered into between them and me. I could not, even if I would, hand over the Congress to anyone. It only means that every member can exercise his judgment in respect of the alteration or otherwise of the franchise. The Congress, which was made at Belgaum a non-political organization, will now be converted into a predominantly political institution, with the result that political resolutions could be brought forward now, and the bar would be removed from the path of those who could not enter the Congress as a non-political body. It would not be a Swarajist body, it would be a predominantly political body. The Swarajists are, it is true, predominant today, but that is because others have kept back, and if they outnumber others, it will be because the others have no organization. As regards obstruction, it may be wrong, it may be right. But you surely do not expect to react on the Swarajists by standing out of the Congress. Join the Congress in large numbers and make them change their policy if you wish.

In reply to a question how Mr. Gandhi could secure their interests when under proportional representation they could get none at all, Mr. Gandhi made his proposal of the voluntary pact clearer.

Before I would draw up the swaraj scheme, I would ask you what you want. A document setting out the terms would be publicly acknowledged. Assuming a fair measure of public opinion and honesty, Anglo-Indians and other minorities could not be possibly treated unfairly.

Questioned as to why Mr. Gandhi had not signed Mrs. Besant's memorandum on the Commonwealth of India Bill, he said that as he had said before, if he got a cablegram from Lord Birkenhead that the Bill would be passed if he subscribed to it, he would cable his signature. But he had declined to associate his name with the Bill simply because he did not want to be insulted. When he knew that the throwing of the Bill on the scrap-heap was an absolute certainty, as he felt it could not otherwise be, he could not possibly sign it. He had had enough insults before, but he had never courted them. He had taken insults in good grace when they had been flung in his face. But, in this particular case, he thought it would be courting an insult, which he was not prepared to do. As it is, he had got an indication of it that very day. Referring to that indication he said :

I made a most innocent practical suggestion to the Government of India. Deshbandhu Das had played the game, and you know how much at heart he had the case of the political prisoners. I said to the Government, 'Will you perform one single graceful act which will strike the imagination of the nation? Will you release the prisoners?' If that was done, it would have served a double purpose. That would have taken the sting, if there was any, out of these political prisoners, because they would have felt that they had been released out of respect to the memory of Deshbandhu and they could not commit a breach of trust reposed in them. And, then by this act the Government would have gained a supreme moral victory, so that they could have cleared the atmosphere for negotiations. But no. Lord Birkenhead says he is prepared to consider anything that Indians might have to suggest in order to allay animosities, but the suggestion made is not practical. I tell you I have not the ingenuity to make a more practical suggestion than what I have made. But it has gone to the usual waste-paper basket. So if these little things could not be had, what is the use of going on with the big Commonwealth of India Bill? Mrs. Besant has a robust optimism and, though on the wrong side of life like me, she thinks she must work on.

Another friend asked as to what Mr. Gandhi would suggest in the transition stage, if, for instance, they dropped the prefix 'Anglo' and joined the Congress. They would lose some of the trifling privileges they enjoy, and would get nothing to compensate for them.

That was the fairest of questions. For some purposes, you say, you are classed with Europeans. I have asked you to shed those privileges. You have mentioned the eligibility to the Indian Auxiliary Force. I would suggest that you will proudly say, 'We will have none of these special privileges. They demoralize and pauperize us.' I want you to think in the terms of the masses and not in the terms of the hierarchy and priesthood of Anglo-India. The upper section amongst you wants to be absorbed by Europeans—an impossible ambition—and the lower would be absorbed in the Indians in spite of itself. This involuntary merging can do no good. How then, you will ask, is it possible for you to be absorbed voluntarily? Well, I would not want you to be lulled into a false sense of security, but I would ask you to unhesitatingly shed the unnatural life you lead. If after becoming Indians, you are betrayed by the Indians themselves, you will turn rebels against the Indians, but refuse to aspire to be Europeans again. I ask you not to be cowed down by the thought of a small minority. It

is sometimes a privilege. I have so often said that I would love to be in the minority of one, because this artificial majority, which is the result of the masses' reverence for me, is a clog in my progress. But for the clog, I would hurl defiance today. I can neither be quickened into vanity by blind adoration, nor shall I sacrifice a tittle of my principle for mass adora- tion. The Englishmen are a microscopic minority. They do not fear that they would be engulfed. Of course, at the back of their security is the force of the bayonet. But it will some day ruin them if they are not warned betimes. You may rely either on your soul-force or sword-force. But in no case would you put up with the present degradation.

Asked whether he was an optimist, and if so, why he should despair of the future because Lord Birkenhead might not be always in office, he said :

I am an irrepressible optimist, because I believe in myself. That sounds very arrogant; doesn't it? But I say it from the depths of my humility. I believe in the supreme power of God. I believe in Truth and, therefore, I have no doubt in the future of this country or the future of humanity. Whatever Lord Birkenhead may say, I trust in God who knows how to confound the wisdom of men. He is a consummate *jadugar*[1] and I have placed myself in His hands. But He is a hard taskmaster. He would accept nothing short of the best you are capable of. To me the change of Government does not mean anything. I am an optimist because I expect many things from myself. I have not got them I know, as I am not yet a perfect being. If I was one, I should not even need to reason with you. When I am a perfect being, I have simply to say the word, and the nation will listen. I want to attain that perfection by service.

Young India, 13-8-1925

143. NOTES

G. O. M. CENTENARY

If the reminder was needed, Mr. Bharucha has reminded the public that 4th September next is the centenary of Dadabhai Naoroji. Whilst he was alive, we called him, as he was, the Grand Old Man of India. He was the father of Indian nationalism. He was the first to introduce the word 'swaraj' in Congress parlance and was as ardent an

[1] Magician

advocate of it as Lokamanya himself. His service to the country was long, steady, selfless. He taught us to understand the poverty of the masses. His articles on that subject are still the Indian patriot's text book. His statistics stand almost unchallenged to this day. He had a record for unblemished character. How shall we celebrate the centenary of Dadabhai Naoroji, one of the noblest sons of India? Meetings we must have wherever the Congress flag flies. I would like to make these meetings business meetings that would take us a few steps definitely forward towards our goal. Though a full representative of educated India, Dadabhai thought for and of the masses. His spirit lived in their midst, the swaraj of his dreams included the economic amelioration of the masses. What can better bring the classes nearer to the masses than the spinning-wheel and khaddar? I would suggest raising of subscriptions at these meetings for the Deshbandhu Charkha and Khaddar Memorial. The meetings may also pass resolutions about hand-spinning and use of khaddar. Wherever there is a surplus stock of khaddar, volunteers may dedicate the day to hawking khaddar. From now those who have leisure may utilize the whole of the day for spinning good yarn and presenting it at these meetings for the nation.

These are my suggestions. They may not commend themselves to everybody. Let those who do not appreciate my advice adopt any other form that may commend itself to them, but I hope that all parties without distinction will celebrate the centenary in a manner worthy of the occasion.

CHINA'S PLIGHT

I hope that the readers of *Young India* have read the very long cablegram received by me from the Commissioner, Foreign Affairs, National Government, Canton. The cablegram has evidently been sent to several parts of the world.

I do not know what we in India can do to help China in her distress. We ourselves are in need of help. If we had any voice in the management of our own affairs, we should not tolerate the humiliating and degrading spectacle of Indian soldiers shooting innocent Chinese students and others like rabbits, i.e., if the story recited in the cablegram is to be believed. We can, therefore, only pray for their deliverance from all their troubles. But the situation in China reminds us that our slavery is not merely injurious to ourselves, but it is also injurious to our neighbours. It demonstrates also most forcibly that

India is being kept under subjection, not merely for the exploitation of India herself, but that it enables Great Britain to exploit the great and ancient Chinese nation.

If any responsible Chinese should read these lines, I would commend to their attention the method that we have adopted in India, that is non-violence. Let the Chinese understand that they are numerically the greatest nation on earth. They have glorious traditions, they are not emasculated as we are. If they would only follow the policy of non-violence and truth, victory is not only certain but it is very near. Surely a nation containing nearly four hundred million souls need not be crushed under the weight of European and Japanese ambition. China can free herself from foreign exploitation by purely internal peaceful effort. If she succeeds in her boycott of foreign goods, she removes the temptation in the way of foreign powers to retain their hold on her.

ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION

When the Congress has become a predominantly political body and if it is still in some form to represent the masses, there must be a spinners' association all over India which will regulate and develop the spinning part of the franchise, which will take charge of all yarn that spinning members may give and will concentrate itself solely upon hand-spinning and khaddar.

This association, if it comes into being, must be purely a business concern, it must be a permanent body not in any shape or form fluctuating with the fluctuations in the Congress politics. It must, therefore, have a fairly permanent executive. It must organize a khaddar service. It will, therefore, represent and develop village organization by taking the message of the spinning-wheel to the most distant villages and, for the first time distributing wealth among the villagers instead of draining it away from them. It will be a peaceful penetration into the villages and an outflowing, after a time, of real national life from them. It ought to be the mightiest co-operative effort the world has yet seen. Given a fair amount of talent, only a fair amount of sacrifice, average honesty and support from the monied and middle classes, its success is assured. Let us see what the future has in store for India.

A MISUNDERSTANDING

With reference to the two questions by a distinguished Mussalman put to me through a common friend, and dealt with in

Young India of July 16, the friend tells me that I misunderstood the second question.

> If he had asked that question, I would not have left you for a minute to reply. It would be downright impertinence for any Mussalman to ask you that question, but poor. . .did not ask the second question in that form. What he said was this, "Mahatmaji talks of love and unity between the two communities, but this won't do at this moment. He should devise some tangible scheme in order to bring about the desired unity, something on the lines of Mr. C. R. Das's pact in Bengal."

I am sorry that I misunderstood the question, though my impression is that I was so startled by the question as I understood it that I had the friend to repeat it. However, even the question as it now stands need not have been put, if the enquiring friend had followed the proceedings of the Conference at Delhi and the tangible scheme I put forth there. I swear by that scheme even now and feel that we shall have to fall back upon it when we have regained sanity. It is shortly this : There should be an electorate under a franchise which would admit of all capable of understanding their responsibilities being placed on the voters' roll and which would be true reflex of the proportion each community bears to the other in point of numbers and that com- munal representation should be dealt with outside the law. The proportion to be given to Mussalmans has never worried me. The only thing I would like to guard against is a statutory distinction. I would not have the Government adjust the proportion and provide for its working. However divided we may be amongst ourselves, if we have the true national consciousness, we must be able to approach the Government with one voice. For the Government there should be neither Mussalman nor Hindu, Christian, Sikh nor Parsi nor Brahmin nor non-Brahmin. For them we must all be nationalists. This solution may not be acceptable, but it cannot be said that I talk of love and unity but devise no tangible scheme. I do not agitate now for its acceptance, because I have admitted that I have lost influence over the vocal sections of both the communities.

CONGRESS CORRUPTION

I receive letters every week complaining that corruption and indiscipline have crept into the Congress ranks, that people have got into the Congress who seek to exploit it for their own private end. Here is the latest typical letter duly signed :

> . . . President, Congress Committee . . . enlisted about 1,300 members for

the Congress, but the subscriptions are not forthcoming from him, nor has he submitted any accounts.

With characteristic lack of scruples the Secretary and . . . are not convening the long overdue annual meeting lest they might be turned out of office. In contravention of rules . . . has been making payment without sanction. . . . is a notorious character who collected money which he never accounted for to the authorities.

There are also several other charges mentioned in the foregoing indictment. The complaint too had been received that the Congress Committees in several parts of India have been using monies received by them for purposes other than those for which they were earmarked. I hope that responsible Congressmen will look into their respective organi-zations and, wherever any corruption or misappropriation is discovered, they will not hesitate to denounce such corruption and remove it.

DESHBANDHU AND HAND-SPINNING

Shrijut Priya Rai writing about a charkha which he has invented and which he is trying to perfect says :

I am impelled to acquaint you with one more fact, that is, as to what Deshbandhu thought of and wanted to do with my charkha. I had occasion to show him the blankets, carpets, coatings and sundries, —product of the yarn from my charkha, and had the privilege of a free expression of my thoughts and ideas. I can never forget the warmth and earnestness with which Deshbandhu talked and listened about charkha and spinning. It was he who unfolded to my vision the immense possibilities of charkha even with our educated young men. He seemed very much pleased with the little improvement I have been able to set up in my charkha and, as was his wont, requested me to formulate a scheme, whereby, to start with, he could introduce my charkha in the primary schools, financed by the Calcutta Corporation and, later, in bigger areas. I was not ready with a cut-and-dry scheme before the hands of death snatched him away from amongst us. I do not know whether or not it is possible to give effect to the scheme, but I can tell you this that my humble services are at the command of those who might take up the work.

I know this charkha. It can be worked sitting in a chair with the feet, leaving both the hands free, but it is not yet possible for me to recommend it to the public, because its yield per hour is considerably below that of the ordinary charkha.

Priya Babu's charkha would yield no more than 300 yards of yarn per hour against 850 yards,—the highest speed attained by the

Khadi Pratishthan pattern. If the inventor can think of improvements which would give a greater yield than the Khadi Pratishthan charkha there should be no difficulty in popularizing his invention.

'TOO COSTLY'

A correspondent from Jamshedpur says that khaddar is too costly for the common or middle-class people; it does not last long; it gets dirty too soon, and to keep it clean means an additional expenditure; and adds, 'Will you please explain in detail how it will be possible for men like us to wear khaddar in these circumstances?'

Although questions like these have been already answered in these pages, it is not superfluous to revert to them again and again. Yard for yard, at the present moment, khaddar is undoubtedly dearer than mill-cloth. But my invariable experience is that those who have taken to khaddar have, consciously or unconsciously, simplified their dress. They do not require so much as when they used mill-cloth. Itis not the experience of all that khaddar does not last as long as mill-cloth. In the beginning stages the hand-spun yarn was ill-twisted. Therefore, khaddar woven from such yarn was undoubtedly not durable. But the quality has since improved. I suggest too that if khaddar is washed at home, it will last twice as long as when it is sent to the washermen. I admit that, if khaddar is sent out for washing, the cost of washing khaddar would be greater than that of washing ordinary calico. The only remedy is home-washing which need not frighten people. Soaking khaddar overnight in hot water with soap enables one to wash it perfectly clean in no time.

When the correspondent says that it gets dirty all too soon, I presume that he implies that being white it shows dirt. If the intention be to conceal dirt the remedy is to colour it precisely in the same manner that mill-cloth is coloured. And at the present moment, plenty of coloured khaddar is available in the market. But let me make the confession that khaddar cannot make headway if the middle-class people compare it in price and everything else with mill-made cloth. The incentive to use khaddar must be national for the middle-class people, and they are expected to put themselves to inconvenience in order to popularize it.

If the State had belonged to the people, it would have protected khaddar by legislation. But seeing that the State is foreign and neutral, if not even hostile to khaddar, it is for the people who believe in its national value go give it due protection by putting up with the

inconvenience and extra expenditure that its use may involve before it becomes universal in India. Only five years ago, I sold very coarse and ill-spun-and ill-woven khaddar at 17 as. per yard. Such bad khaddar is now nowhere to be seen. Its evolution has been phenomenal, so much so that much superior khaddar is today sold at nine annas per yard in the same part of India. Every attempt is being made to bring down the price of khaddar and, if the All-India Deshbandhu Charkha Memorial becomes a success and the scheme that is now being conceived comes into operation, I am expecting a still further decline in prices.

I would like the readers to remember what I said at Chittagong that, if khaddar is dear, freedom is dearer still. And he who feels for the masses will not grudge them the extra price that during the transition stage has to be paid for khaddar.

AN INSULT AND CHARKHA

A correspondent writes :

> Fortunately or unfortunately a rich person, holding a Government position, assaulted me the other day. I had to accept ten rupees by way of compensation for injury to my feelings. I feel I can best use the amount by sending it to you kindly to buy charkhas with it for those that deserve them.

I congratulate the donor on his wise decision. As the letter was received on the day on which the appeal for an All-India Deshbandhu Memorial was published, and as that memorial is to spread the gospel of the charkha, I am sending the amount to the Treasurer and, no doubt, deserving persons will receive spinning-wheels that can be bought with the amount.

Young India, 30-7-1925

144. CONGRESS AND POLITICAL PARTIES

I gladly publish the following from Sjt. Satyananda Bose, a veteran Congressman whom I had the pleasure of knowing even while I was in South Africa, because of his help to my late lamented comrade Sorabji of Adajan (Surat) :

> Some misapprehension has arisen in the minds of the public in regard to your proposal to hand over the Congress to the Swaraj Party.
>
> It is said that the Congress will henceforth be the tail of the Swaraj Party organization and it will cease to occupy the dominant position in the public life of the country. The provision in your last year's pact with the Swaraj Party, viz., that

the latter will carry on the work in connection with the Central and Provincial Legislatures on behalf of the Congress, strengthens this suspicion.

No doubt you have dissolved the pact. But it is suspected that there will be another pact giving to the Swaraj Party the power of direction and control over the Congress in *express words*.

Personally I cannot believe that either you or Pandit Motilal Nehru contemplate this course.

It goes without saying that, as the Swaraj Party is in the majority in the Congress and outside it, they partly will control the Congress for the present. But this position is different from a pact which gives the party a predominant position irrespective of every other fact and consideration.

The Congress ought to be like the British Parliament. In the latter there are members belonging to different political parties and those who are in the majority for the time being guide and control its affairs. This condition is the result of the elections and is *not* due to any agreement arrived at from outside. In the Indian National Congress, too, this constitutional state of things should prevail.

I request you to make your position clear. There is a growing desire amongst the non-Swarajists to join the Congress. I hope nothing will be done to put any obstacle in the way.

The Congress should remain as it has been in the past—the predominant national body, whatever party may control its affairs for the time being.

PS.

Written pacts are artificial, unconstitutional and unnecessary and they only serve to create difference and dissension. Pacts no doubt may be reversed. But why should there be a pact at all?

I do not think that there is anything in my letter to Pandit Motilalji to warrant the misapprehension referred to by Satyananda Babu. All that my letter is intended to convey is that the embargo, for which I made myself responsible, on pure political activities in the Congress at Belgaum should be removed.

Personally, I retain the same opinion that I did last year, that if educated Indians concentrated on the triple constructive programme and made it their predominant occupation, we should be nearer swaraj. But I confess that I have failed to carry that conviction home. I must, therefore, no longer stand in the way of the Congress being developed and guided by educated Indians rather than by one like myself, who has thrown in his lot entirely with the masses, and who has fundamental differences with the mind of educated India as a body. I

still want to act upon them, but not by leading the Congress; on the contrary, by working my way to their hearts silently so far as possible, even as I did between 1915 and 1919. I recognize the great services rendered to the country by educated India in the face of tremendous odds. It has got its own method of work; it has its own place in the national life. I cannot be blind to the fact that, no matter what may be said to the contrary, the disciplined resistance of the Swaraj Party has made its impression upon the rulers. The best way in which I can help that activity is by removing myself out of the way and by concentrating myself solely upon constructive work with the help of the Congress and in its name and that, too, only so far as educated Indians will permit me to do so.

I recognize that it is educated India which is to set the pace in the Congress, not I and those who have ceased to think politically for the time being. In my opinion, both have a place in the national evolution. And each group remaining in its own sphere can complement and help the activity of the other. I pin my faith to the spinning-wheel and khaddar. It is a programme which can absorb the energies of the most advanced youths of the country. It is an effort which demands the exclusive attention, not of one man, but of hundreds, indeed thousands, of men and women. I do not want to engage in disputations about the necessity or the utility of the spinning-wheel and khaddar. Time has come for working out the propositions I have advanced in behalf of khaddar, and in working them out I want the goodwill and co-operation of all who will extend them to the movement, and this is possible only by removing the spinning-wheel from the arena of Congress politics. The spinning-wheel and khaddar will, therefore, retain that place in the Congress which may be freely given to them by the politically-minded countrymen. If my advice is, therefore, accepted by the All-India Congress Committee, the ban upon political propaganda through the Congress will be entirely removed, and the Swaraj Party will, therefore, then function not through its separate organization, but through the Congress itself, not by virtue of any new pact but by reason of the dissolution of the pact existing between the Party and myself, and consequent amendment of the Congress constitution and of the Congress resolution that gave effect to the pact. The pact threw the door open to the other political parties by suspending non-co-operation. Its dissolution will make the opening wider still inasmuch as the politically-minded people of the country will no longer labour

under the handicap of the Congress being confined merely to the constructive programme. They had some hesitation in joining the Swaraj Party, and in their opinion, the Congress did not afford sufficient scope for their energies and talents. But when the ban is removed, they can, if they will, whole-heartedly join the Congress and move any political resolutions that they may desire from the Congress platform, and cross swords with the Swarajists and so act upon them and the country.

The compulsory yarn franchise will no longer hamper them. The only impediment in their way will be the compulsory adoption of khaddar as national wear. But it may be that the All-India Congress Committee will reject even khaddar as part of the franchise. I shall not stand in the way even of such rejection, painful though it will certainly be to me; for, in my opinion, then educated India will cut off the only visible and tangible tie that today binds it to the masses. I shall hope, therefore, that khaddar will find a permanent place in the Congress franchise. Do we not want to encourage cottage industries and handicrafts? Do we not want millions of women who have no work to do, and who will gladly earn a few pice per day, to do so by spinning? Hand-spinning, I understand, is to be retained as a permanent part of the franchise as an alternative. To that I should think there can be no objection. If, therefore, the proposals that I have made are accepted by the All-India Congress Committee, it will become possible for every educated Indian to join the Congress and evolve a united national political programme that will meet the emer-gency that has arisen both by Deshbandhu's death and Lord Birkenhead's speech.

Young India, 30-7-1925

145. THE CONGRESS UNEMPLOYED

Whilst I was discussing with friends the object of the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial, certain friends asked, "Why should not the maintenance of dependents of those who are in prison or deported and alleviation of unemployment of Congressmen who are starving by reason of their non-co-operation be one of the objects, if not the object?" The same question has come before me during my stay in Bengal in a variety of ways. In my opinion, it is not possible to raise the fund suggested from all over India and from all parties for such a purpose. So far as the maintenance of the dependents of political prisoners and detenues is concerned, it is a matter that requires most

delicate handling and must be left to each province to settle in the manner that may be considered most suitable in that province. I cannot reconcile myself to a permanent fund for that object. My own practical experience in South Africa, and to a limited extent here, has shown me that very often undeserving people get relief and the deserving are left out. A permanent fund for distant contingencies of this nature offers temptation to those who do not mind living on charity. In order to obviate chances of dishonest practices, I had to establish a settlement in South Africa where all those who needed and deserved relief could be accommodated, fed, and looked after. At a single stroke it was possible by this arrangement to save thousands of rupees, to provide for every honest case of distress, to do absolute justice to everyone, to put people in distress in ideal surroundings, to find use- ful employment for them and to provide education for the children of such families. I suggested a similar course in Chittagong after the great strike in 1921. There is danger of charity being misplaced unless drastic measures as I have suggested be adopted to deal with cases of political imprisonment or detention. The real fight, if it is to come at all on a large scale, is still to come. We shall have to pay a price adequate to the freedom we want and, unless we think out and devise some plan of meeting such contingencies in a reaso- nable manner, in the struggle for freedom, it is possible for us to be starved into an ignominious surrender. Apart, therefore, from the question of Memorial and on the merits of the case, I am against any permanent fund for the relief of what may be called political distress.

The question of the Congress unemployed is more urgent and of a permanent character. Although we have resolutions on the subject, hitherto we have been unable to establish an All-India Congress Service or even a Provincial Congress Service, not for want of will but for want of ability. Personally, I have endeavoured to tackle it more than once, but I own I have been baffled. It has not been possible to fix a maximum to be paid nor has it been possible to devise grades of service. Wherever, therefore, it has been sought to establish a system, it has been found necessary to leave well alone and try every case on its merits. It is perhaps not possible as yet to establish a regular service, but I have no doubt that the scale and the system are gradually growing.

There are two branches of constructive activity which absorb the largest number of Congress workers,—khaddar and, to a lesser extent, education. But here again every province will have to be responsible

for its own scheme and as it too depends, as a rule, upon local contributions, it is a fairly sound proposition that that Service only deserves to live which obtains local support, because the test of appreciation of service is the support given by those who are served. The very existence of the Congress depends upon the fact that it supplies a local want. It is not like a Government super-imposed and, therefore, independent of the support of those whom it seeks to rule. Both the khaddar and the educational services presuppose continued activity and continued preparation. I have laid it down as a rule for my own guidance that, if neither of these activities has local support, it is due to want of tact or ability on the part of those who are engaged in the respective services. I do not know a single case of starvation of deserving men. I know cases of straitened circumstances of Congress workers eking out an honest but precarious life. But I fear that that will be progressively our lot, and, if in some cases, some of us have not yet reconciled ourselves to the simplicity and severity that have entered into the national life, and if some owing to a long course of habit are even constitutionally unfitted to adopt themselves to the severe simplicity which is expected of them, in any case I hope it is now clear why the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial may not take the form of giving relief to the distressed or finding employment for Congress workers. The present object of the Memorial is calculated indirectly to do both.

Young India, 30-7-1925

146. AGRICULTURE v. *KHADDAR*

An M.A.,B.L. writes thus :[1]

The question of unemployment raised in this letter I have dealt with elsewhere. But as others besides the correspondent have brought the question of agriculture in connection with khaddar, it might be as well to deal with the appeal of my lawyer correspondent.

Let me first of all point out to him that he is mistaken in thinking that he has merely to get a loan of two thousand rupees to make his proposed agricultural experiment a ‘swinging success’. Indeed, agriculture requires just as much application and study as law.

[1] In this letter, not reproduced here, the correspondent appealed to Gandhiji to raise 100 lacs to finance agriculture and small industries as a solution of the unemployment problem.

The correspondent also seems to labour under the delusion that the message of khaddar is being presented to India in order to clothe the naked. On the contrary, khaddar is intended to serve the same purpose that paddy does. The spinning-wheel will provide additional occupation to the millions, which would mean an additional income wherewith to supplement the insufficient food that they are able to get today.

Agriculture is not a dying occupation in India. It requires reform and improvement. But agricultural reforms are possible under a national government. Individual agricultural effort can leave little impression upon the masses whose sole occupation is agriculture which gives them less than what they need for proper bodily sustenance. If this correspondent is really tired of his profession and wishes to give it up, he must not build castles in the air. He must become an expert spinner and he will find himself engaged, not in spinning for his maintenance, but in the organizations that are being conducted in Bengal for propagating spinning and khaddar.

Young India, 30-7-1925

147. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

July 30, 1925

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad informs me that the newspaper reports of my speech,[1] before the European Association, the other day, has given rise to a great deal of controversy among the Mus-salman friends and even some resentment, because some Mus- salman friends read into my speech the view that I could not find an able and honourable Mussalman who could occupy the Mayoral chair, and that the Maulana Sahib also had given me a similar opinion. I have now read the report of my speech from which these deductions have been made. Though it is not a verbatim report, even as it stands, I do not consider that it warrants the deductions that have been drawn from it.

What I said was that, instead of leaving it to those friends who had come to me to judge as to the ability and honesty of any Mohammedan name that might be suggested, if I had known such a one myself, I should have unconditionally recommended his name for adoption.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at European Association Meeting", 24-7-1925.

The Maulana certainly never conveyed to me directly or indirectly, that his recommendation of Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta's name was based upon the fact that there was no honest and able Mussalman in the Corporation or outside on whom the distinction could be conferred, but simply suggested a political motive for his recommendation, namely giving as much adventitious aid as possible to the Swaraj Party in the absence of its illustrious Chief. Whatever the interpretation that my speech, as reported, may be capable of, the public will accept my assurance that nothing was more remote from my mind, or that of Maulana Sahib than to think that there was no honest and able Mussalman who could be recommended for the honour. In fact, for me, it would be ludicrous presumption, when I did not sufficiently know any Mussalman in Calcutta except the Maulana, to say that there was no honest and able Mussalman who could occupy the chair. Indeed, if the Maulana Sahib's suggestion had not come to me or, having come, had not appealed to me, I would have continued to prosecute Mr. Suhrawardy's claim as I had come to know something of his ability, and I was entitled to presume his honesty from his occupation of the chair of the Deputy Mayor.

M. K. GANDHI

Forward, 31-7-1925

148. LETTER TO "THE STATESMAN"

148, RUSSA ROAD,
July 31, 1925

You will perhaps extend me the courtesy of finding room for a reply to your article headed "Civil Resistance" in today's *Statesman*. You see an inconsistency between my desire to prepare an atmosphere for civil resistance and my statement to the European Association that I was dying for co-operation. My speech before the European Association was delivered on July 24. I write for *Young India* on Saturday for the issue of Thursday following. The reference to civil resistance which you have quoted appears in *Young India* of July 23. I give you the dates in order to show that the idea or preparation for civil resistance was not conceived after the statement to the European Association.

I see no inconsistency between the desire for civil resistance and

for co-operation. You will remember that my statement to the European Association was a recalling of an old story. When, in the heyday of non-co-operation, an Englishman twitted me with the remark that, although I professed non-co-operation I was dying to co-operate, I said to him emphatically that I was doing so. And I say that that is my position also today. Civil resistance to wrong in not a new doctrine or practice with me. It is a life-long belief and a life-long practice. To prepare the country for civil resistance is to prepare it for non-violence. To prepare the country for non-violence is to organize it for constructive work which, to me, is synonymous with the spinning-wheel. You evidently seem to think that I have repented of my non-co-operation or civil resis-tance. I have never done so. I remain a confirmed non-co-operator. If I could carry educated India with me, I would declare non-co-operation in its entirety today. Being a practical man, I recognize the facts that stare me in the face. I have failed to convince some of my most esteemed colleagues that the particular form of non-co-operation which we embarked upon in 1920 can do good to the country at the present moment. It, therefore, remains under suspension. But I cannot hide from you the fact that, if I could reconvert my colleagues, I would certainly ask the Congress to renew the battle.

Personally, I have no desire to co-operate voluntarily with the Government in my weakness; that would be the co-operation of a slave. I admit my weakness, and, therefore, I remain satisfied with the mere desire for co-operation and I seek to fulfil that desire by developing strength. If I believed in violence, I would make no secret of it and would take the consequences. But I would let the country know publicly, and know in unequivocal terms, that there is no freedom for her and no room for honourable co-operation with the Government, unless she is prepared to match the British bayonet with the Indian. As it is, I do not believe in the creed of the bayonet. I further believe that, fortunately or unfortunately, it will never succeed in India. A substitute for it is, however, necessary and that is civil resistance.In your opinion it is as dangerous as violence, and if such is also the opinion of the Government, it has to suppress me, for after my discharge from prison, I have not allowed a moment to pass when I have not endeavoured to fit myself or the country for civil resistance. Let me inform you in all humility that, if I could but secure the absolute co-operation of my revolutionary friends by the entirecessation of their activity, and if I could produce an atmosphere

of general non-violence, I would declare mass civil resistance today and thus prepare the ground for honourable co-operation. I admit that I failed to do so in 1921, and when I found that Chauri Chaura betrayed me, I had no hesitation within twenty-four hours of the declaration of civil resistance to suspend it, and to take the consequences of a general depression in the country that followed.

And if I insist *ad nauseam* on Hindu-Muslim unity, and the spinning-wheel and khaddar, it is in order to ensure a state of non-violence necessary for civil resistance. I have, I confess, despaired of achieving Hindu-Muslim unity in the very near future. Untouchability is surely but slowly going, the spinning-wheel is surely but slowly making its way. Meanwhile, the ruthless exploitation of the country is proceeding apace. I am, therefore, thinking out plans of some form of effective individual civil resistance which, if it brings no relief to this poor country, will at least bring some solace to those whose creed is non-violence, to know that they have left no stone unturned to help the deliverance of the country from a bondage which is enervating a whole nation.

I confess, again that I have no ready-made plan, for if I had, I would not keep it from you or the country. But I am giving you the whole of the working of my mind. I have no desire to obtain or retain the goodwill of Englishmen under false pretences. Even as the Government abates no precaution or preparation for ensuring its existence and stability, when it may be offering terms to Indian politicians, even so do I want my country to abate no effort to arm itself with a weapon on which she may rely when the Government fails to respond to its wishes.

You may know (for the communication is published) that Deshbandhu did not sign Dr. Besant's manifesto on her Bill, one of the grounds for which was that there was no sanction stipulated for in the event of rejection. That sanction was to be civil resistance. Will you have the country's manhood absolutely paralysed and rendered utterly ineffective for any resistance, violent or non-violent, before the British Government can possibly think of offering any terms or considering proposals that might be made by the Swaraj Party or any other? If so, I assure you, no self-respecting Indian will voluntarily be party to a condition so degrading.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Statesman, 1-8-1925

149. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CALCUTTA[1]

July 31, 1925

Mahatma Gandhi, who presided, said that two things were dear to the heart of the deceased patriot, one of which was that he stood, without any mental reservation, out and out for Hindu-Muslim unity. He was also an ardent advocate of swadeshi. The times when Rasul lived were comparatively ancient, and he wished to interpret his message in the spirit of modern times. In the programme that was sketched out for the nation in 1920, both Hindu-Muslim unity and swadeshi were duly emphasized. But they gave a new meaning to both these two things. They then decided that it was not enough that a few educated Indians should stand shoulder to shoulder, work together, perhaps mix socia-lly also. They then felt the necessity of taking that message to the masses. They had not half done the task. In fact, they had not yet made a beginning. They all wanted Hindu-Muslim unity, but they would not get it by simply talking about it. Then and then only would Hindu-Muslim unity be established when Hindus would learn to serve the Mohammedans without expecting the slightest reward and Mohammedans would learn to serve Hindus in a similarly disinterested spirit. The new meaning of swadeshi was, not that they should put together the several parts of an article, say a watch or harmonium, imported from abroad and label it as swadeshi, but their swadeshi now consisted in every part being made in India. They now recognized that the central fact round which swadeshi should revolve was "khaddar". That was the modern dictionary meaning of swadeshi and not until they had done this one thing would they be able to realize the dream that Abdur Rasul dreamt.

Proceeding, Mahatma Gandhi said that he had that afternoon seen hundreds of hungry people being fed in front of the Marble Palace in Chor Bagan. The sight was one which was neither ennobling nor honourable to those who had organized the meal for the hungry people of Calcutta from day to day. They did not know what they were doing. They were ignorant of the irreparable harm they were doing to India by this misplaced benevolence. Not one of these men and women who were being fed were incapacitated for work. They had just as strong arms and legs as anyone of them had. Did they think there was any merit in feeding people who could work for their living? He differed from those who considered this as a merit. Let them not be flattered with the testimony that was sometimes ignorantly given by European writers that there were no such things as work-houses in India. These European writers believed that the Indians had a system of feeding the poor and the hungry which was self-organized, and which did away with the necessity of having work-houses. The

[1] This was held on the eighth anniversary of Abdur Rasul's death, and was held at Albert Hall.

statement was only partially true, and the system had done no good to India. They were today feeding the idlers. Some of them were thieves and, if this process continued for any length of time, he saw no bright future for this unhappy country. Let them, therefore, beware of this system. He did not introduce this story to criticize the philanthropist. He wished he had their [1]ear, and then he would ask them not to misplace their philanthropy in this way; rather he would ask them to give some work to these men and women. Had they ever paused to enquire why these people were idlers, why millions of people of India were idling away their time? Indians were not a nation of idlers. Had they been so, they would have died long ago. The fact was that there was not enough work for them and therefore this glorious land of theirs, because of their ignorance, because of their want of real patriotism, was throwing out people who could not be sustained on the land. Therefore the remedy lay in finding an occupation for them. And what better occupation could be provided for these millions of men than the spinning-wheel or the charkha. Let the educated community, therefore, spin for at least half an hour if they wanted to remove this degrading poverty of the masses.

Forward, 1-8-1925

150. INTERVIEW TO "THE ENGLISHMAN"

[Before *August 1, 1925*]

Interviewed by a representative of *The Englishman*, Mr. Gandhi said that he did not know that what was going on between Lord Lytton and Deshbandhu[2] could be described as negotiations. But some kind of communications were certainly going on between Lord Lytton and Deshbandhu through an intermediary. He did not know the actual and verifiable contents of these communications, but he knew perhaps the general trend which it was neither profitable nor advisable to disclose.

Mr. Gandhi added that no letter was sent to him by Pandit Motilal Nehru for approval and signature.

The Englishman, 1-8-1925

[2] C. R. Das

151. LETTER TO THE REV. ALLWOOD

148, RUSSA ROAD,
CALCUTTA,
August 1, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

It was a pleasure to meet you and have that little discussion, and an equal pleasure to have received your letter.[1] What I said at the meeting[2] was based upon recent experiences.

I know that individual instances of a broader and truer outlook upon religions are on the increase. The tolerance with which I was listened to at that meeting is a proof of it. But the literature that was sent me by unknown friends in the jail and the letters that I received almost every month from Christian friends, both in India and outside, demonstrate the truth of my remarks. As to Bishop Heber's Hymn[3], you will realize, perhaps, that it is one thing for a man to think of himself as vile and unclean, but it is another for the world to pronounce him as such. Augustine considered himself as chief among sinners. The world calls him a saint. Tulsidas had no adjective harsh enough to describe himself as a sinner. The world regards him also as a saint. Lastly, I wonder if you know that the Christian Literature Society continues to sell the utterly unbalanced views and opinions of Mr. Murdoch and others. And if you only knew the literature in the vernaculars that is distributed through tens of thousands of leaflets and booklets, you will, perhaps, appreciate the force of my remarks. These things hurt me only because I know that they believe the teachings of Jesus, in whose name they are said and written; and it hurts me also because Indian Christians are fed upon such ignorance which they, in their simplicity, imbibe as God's truth, and hence learn to hate those who were once their friends, companions and relatives. You perhaps do not know that I mix as freely with Christian Indians in the lower strata of society as I mix with a similar class of Hindus and Mussalmans. I say these things

[1] This is not available.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Meeting of Anglo-Indians", 29-7-1925.

[3] Which contains the lines: "What though the spicy breezes/Blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle,/Though every prospect pleases, /And only man is vile."

[not] by way of argument, but to tell you that I spoke in that meeting out of fullness of knowledge and love. I went there in a spirit of service and I have written this also in the same spirit. That is the best appreciation I can tender of your well-meant letter. Please remember me to the friends who accompanied you.

Just after finishing dictating the foregoing letter, I read a letter from another Christian friend, this time an Indian. It is a long letter, but I cannot help giving you two extracts from it.

Here they are:

(1) I was greatly disappointed to hear you at the Calcutta Missionary Conference yesterday. I was under the impression all along that you were a true follower of Jesus Christ, but the utterance which you made last night broke my heart altogether. I do not know how I can call you 'Seeker for the Truth,' when you say Jesus Christ is only a great teacher and nothing else. What a great pity, a man of your calibre and culture says—Jesus Christ is a teacher. I must say, in that case, that either you have not cared to study the noble life of Jesus Christ intrinsically and prayerfully, or you studied the life with a deep prejudice in mind.

(2) It has been said by the leading men of different religions, other than Christians, supposed to be seekers for Truth, that Chaitanya, Buddha, Mahomed, Krishna and Christ are all the same. This is a most idle talk; where ignorance is bliss, it is folly to be wise. This class of people have no business to call themselves—"Seeker for Truth"—they should be called the "enemies for Truth"—Truth is Truth and there is not the slightest compromising element in it. I cannot believe even for a moment that a true Hindu is a Christian, or a true Buddhist a Hindu and so on. Howcould you say that at the meeting yesterday? I am at a loss to discern. A man of your calibre and learning and experience would be the last man to utter such blunders.

Yours sincerely,

[PS.]

After the letter was typed, I got a copy of the Hymn. Here it is. You will observe that the good Bishop was thinking only of non-Christians. The Hymn still finds a place in ordinary hymn books. I have often heard it sung in churches in South Africa.

M. K. G.

[TO
THE REV. ALLWOOD
BARRACKPORE]

From a photostat: S.N. 10648

152. LETTER TO A FRIEND[1]

148, RUSSA ROAD,
CALCUTTA,
August 1, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. A man who owns land which is haunted by wild beasts will be able to excuse himself for shooting them. It would be classed as inevitable *himsa*. It will be justified on the ground of necessity, but there is no doubt that, if one has a full perception of ahimsa, it would be well for him to let his land be overrun by wild beasts or be himself killed by them. Ahimsa is not a mechanical matter, it is personal to everyone. Moreover, possession of property against the whole world is inconsistent with ahimsa. A man who will follow the principle of non-violence to its uttermost limit has nothing in this world he can call his own. He must merge himself into the whole, which includes snakes, scorpions, tigers, wolves, etc. There are instances on record of innocent men whose innocence even wild beasts have recognized. We must all strive to reach that stage.

The same remark applies to your second question. It is *himsa* to kill the germs and the insects, but even as we commit *himsa* by taking vegetable food (for vegetables have life) but regard it as inevitable, so must we treat the germ life. You will recognize that the doctrine of necessity can be stretched so as to justify even man-eating. A man who believes in ahimsa carefully refrains from every act that leads to injury. [My] argument only applies to those who believe in ahimsa. The necessity that I have in mind is a universal necessity, hence it is not permissible to take ahimsa beyond a limit. That is why the Shastras of custom only permit *himsa* in certain cases. It is not only lawful but obligatory upon everyone to make the least use possible of the permission and relaxation. It is unlawful to go beyond the limitation.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10595

[1] The identity of the addressee is not ascertainable.
[2] The copy carries corrections in Gandhiji's hand.

153. SPEECH AT TILAK ANNIVERSARY MEETING[1]

CALCUTTA,
August 1, 1925

Mahatma Gandhi, speaking in Hindustani, said that the great *mantra* that Bal Gangadhar gave to India was that "Swaraj was their birthright." By swaraj he (Lokamanya) meant swaraj for the toiling crores of India. To Mahatmaji's mind the call was clear: If they wished to achieve swaraj for the masses of India, they must have to work for it through charkha and khaddar and thus identify them with the poor, starving millions of Hindustan. If they really wanted to get inspiration from the memory of Lokamanya and if they really desired swaraj for the poor, then they should hear the old man speaking to them in season and out of season and take to the spinning-wheel. Let them promise from the very day that they would discard foreign cloth and take to swadeshi homespun and hand-woven cloth.

The other day, Mahatmaji proceeded, they declared a boycott of British goods in reply to Lord Birkenhead's statement. He had his doubt as to the possibility of its achievement. But although he was on principle against boycott, he would be glad if the people discarded British cloth. They had failed to act up to their leaders' advice for the last four years, they had not as yet universally taken to charkha and khaddar. They might, however, from now rectify their mistake the take a solemn vow from today onward to discard the use of foreign goods and use swadeshi.[2]

Foreward, 4-8-1925

154. NEW RITUALS

In the meetings and functions that were held after the death of Deshbandhu, besides the commonly practised rites, people introduced such new rituals as they found appropriate. *Kirtans* were held at many places in Bengal, the poor were fed at some places while, at other places, people took baths, etc., and performed religious ceremonies. The villagers of Chadia, in Kathiawar, observed the day[3] in the following manner:

1. They prayed to God for peace to the departed soul and for the birth in India of others like Deshbandhu.

[1] The meeting was held at the Albert Hall. J.M. Sen Gupta presided.

[2] At the conclusion, Gandhiji addressed an overflow meeting at College Square. No report is available.

[3] Presumably, July 1, 1925, the day on which the *shraddha* ceremony of C.R. Das was performed

2. They gave balls of sweetmeat to dogs and cows.

3. They refrained from using the bullock to plough or to draw water from the well.

4. They decided to store enough good quality cotton in the coming year for their own domestic use.

At some other places, the day was spent in fasting and spinning. Such innovations are to be welcomed. To make such days the occasion for promoting those beneficial activities which one can think of and which were dear to the departed persons, is a good way of showing our love for them.

Not using the bullock for ploughing or drawing water indicates kindness to animals. Except during the monsoon, we are almost always callously engaged in drawing water and so on. Actually, this does more harm than good. People have lost nothing but have rather gained something where it is customary to give a weekly day of rest to servants and animals; hence it is a good beginning to stop drawing water with the leather bucket and thereby giving rest to servants and animals on such occasions of mourning for great men.

MISPLACED KINDNESS

Giving sweetmeat balls to dogs and cows, however, is misplaced kindness. There is no reason to believe that just because we like these sweets, cows and dogs also like them and are benefited by eating them. Animals have not had their taste for food spoilt. If even among human beings the taste for food varies, what can we say of animals? An Englishman, if given a sweetmeat ball, would throw it away. Many of us would not like English sweets. If anyone served a meal of *rotis* in Madras, our countrymen there would be unable to eat it. It is useless to serve a meal of rice in the Punjab. What then is the meaning of serving such sweets to cows and dogs? The fact that dogs eat these up is no argument in support of feeding them with these sweets. It is kindness to give grass to undernourished cattle. In villages, however there should be no such cattle. There is no kindness in giving such food to dogs; I see only ignorance in it. We are exchanging wakefulness for sleep. We increase their progeny by tempting dogs in an improper way and, then, since no one owns them, they remain undernourished. All dogs should be kept as pets. The existence of stray dogs is a sign of our sin and our ignorance. Ahmedabad claims to practise the religion of compassion by driving out its dogs without any owners from one place to another. A little reflection on the

religion of compassion would make it clear to us that practising kindness only in name doubles the amount of cruelty and violence. Violence is involved, first, in catching these dogs and driving them away from familiar surroundings and second, in releasing them in other poor villages. For the nuisance of stray dogs, civilized human beings should seek out a solution on a consideration of both ethics and expediency. Such tasks can be accomplished only if the *mahajans*[1] make a profound study of the religion of compassion. And, if they do not do so, the time is at last drawing near when irreligious persons in authority will hurriedly destroy dogs. The immediate solution seems to be to start a home for stray dogs under the supervision of someone who is an expert in the matter.

Starting from a common topic, I have gone into details. However, on reading the resolution to give sweetmeat balls to dogs I saw before my mind's eye the invasions of stray dogs on the Sabarmati Ashram and that has led me to put forward some views for the benefit of the *mahajans*.

In our country, however, just as there are lean and famished animals, similarly there are such human beings too. We have been piling up sin by regarding it a virtue to let them live on thus.

Last week I had been to Suri. As I am regarded as a servant of the poor, the *mahajans* of that place fed the poor in my honour. Their meal was fixed for the same time as that of the arrival of my train. I was taken in a car which passed between rows of poor people sitting down for their meal on either side of the road. I felt ashamed and, had I not been afraid of being discourteous, I would have got down then and there and run away. What kind of an arrogant servant of the poor was this who rode in comfort in a car between rows of people eating? I said a few words about this in the meeting at Suri. I saw a similar sight in an ancient wealthy family in Calcutta. I had been taken there in order to collect funds for the memorial to Deshbandhu. The palace of this faimly is known as the 'Marble Palace' and it is indeed made exclusively of marble. The building is a majestic one and well worth seeing. In front of this palace, the poor are always fed. They are given cooked cereals. The owners had asked me to come at the very time when these people are fed with the innocent purpose of demonstrating their generosity to me and with the good intention of pleasing me. I had agreed to go without giving any thought to the matter. However, I was even more pained and

[1] Representative bodies managing the affairs of communities

irritated on seeing the sight there than I had been at Suri. I was not taken in a car between rows of diners but, wherever I went, a whole crowd always followed me. This crowd rushed towards me from in between the people who were having their meal. The poor diners necessarily came into contact with the feet of these people. For a moment they even stopped eating. If in their souls they had blessed me, I would congratulate them on their restraint and generosity. What a contrast between that dusty courtyard and the tall, snow-white palace! I felt as if the palace laughed at those poor people and as if their benefactors who carelessly walked through them joined in this laughter.

Could there by any merit in feeding people in this manner? To me, it appeared to be a mere sin committed through thoughtlessness and ignorance, even though the sentiment behind it may be of the purest nature. Such *sadavartas*[1] are to be found at various places in the country. These add to our poverty, idleness, hypocrisy, theft, etc. This is because, if food is available without effort, those who are habitually lazy remain idle and become poorer. According to the saying that Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do, these poor people learn to steal. Over and above this, they practise other vices which are harmful to them. I see only evil resulting from these *sadavartas*. The wealthy should give some thought to the free meals they serve in charity. It is not necessary to show that merit does not lie in all charity. *Sadavarta* is indeed to be commended for the lame, the crippled and those who are disabled by disease. Even when feeding these persons, however, some courtesy should be shown. Even the disabled should not be fed with thousands of people watching them. There should be a proper place, private and quiet, for feeding them. In fact, there should be special ashramas for them. There are a few such places scattered over India. Wealthy persons who wish to feed the disabled should either send their donations to such good ashramas or establish them at places where they do not exist and are needed.

Some sort of occupation must be found for the disabled poor. The spinning-wheel is the only means of benefiting hundreds of thousands of persons.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-8-1925

[1] Institutions where free meals are supplied

155. WHAT ABOUT GUJARAT?

Perhaps some people are wondering how Gujarat should interpret the letter[1] I have written to Pandit Motilalji. What is meant by the Swarajists capturing the Congress? Should Gujarat too change its opinion? Or, what should the Gujarat Provincial Committee do?

In the first place, the fact is that I have merely stated my views. I have not made any pact with anyone or on behalf of anyone. I hope that all members will attend the A.I.C.C. Session.[2] They will independently express their views and the resolution passed by them will be regarded as the one to be accepted.

Taking it for granted, however, that all the members will accept my views, that would only mean that, on the strength of the Congress resolution, the ban that existed on introducing political matters into the Congress will henceforth be lifted. If my advice is accepted, the Swarajists who have had to keep their mouths shut because of the Congress resolution will no longer have to do so. What is it that can be done by me alone and that I should do myself, becauseof the death of Deshbandhu and in reply to Lord Birkenhead's speech? It was my own idea that political matters should be kept out of the Congress for the time being. The pact too was between myself and the Swarajists. I alone can free them from this bond immediately. The Congress Committee is free to act as it chooses. If a sizable number of the members of that committee are opposed to my advice, I shall have to keep it to myself.

Accepting my advice would only mean that, in those provinces where there are many Swarajists, they could introduce and discuss any resolution relating to political matters through the provincial committees. Wherever, as in Gujarat, the committee has a large number of No-changers as members, the proposed change would have no great effect. Even in such places, I would like to give as much weight as possible to the Swarajists. Sitting in Bengal I could not say how this could be done. We see how that party has impressed the British authorities and, it is our dharma to make good use of this impression. There are many selfless men and women in that party. Their hearts are full of patriotism. Such persons deserve to be honoured, irrespective of the party to which they belong. Everyone

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Motilal Nehru", 19-7-1925.

[2] This session was held at Patna during September 22-24, 1925.

has the right to hold his own independent opinions. That independence is worth maintaining.

The doors of the Congress cannot be forcibly closed against anyone. So long as we cannot create faith in khadi and the power of the spinning-wheel amongst the educated class, the latter can never attain a place of importance. It is, I think, a barren gesture to give the spinning-wheel an important place for fear of embarrassing me or in order to keep me in the Congress. It would have significance only if the educated class has faith in it or if this class wishes to give prominence to those who believe in it. Even at a meeting of the members of the Swaraj Party, no one ever thought of displacing the spinning-wheel. Even if they had wished to do so, I was ready to agree to it, but they were not prepared to listen to any talk even about doing so. They were wholly satisfied if those who did not spin were allowed to contribute money instead. They are not even prepared to do away with the necessity of putting on khadi clothes. If this is the extent to which the Swarajists think independently, I would regard it as promoting effectively the cause of kahdi.

The very terms Swarajists and No-changers should be given up. The number of persons going into Legislative Assemblies will always be small. Everyone cannot go there. I do not see any reason for opposing this. If the very people who enter them can create the atmosphere for civil disobedience, they will come out of their own accord or give all possible help while continuing to remain in the Legislative Assemblies. Or, they will have to be opposed if and when they offer resistance to civil disobedience. That the Swarajists would do so I cannot imagine.

Those who understand the meaning of civil disobedience will sing the praises of the spinning-wheel all the twenty-four hours; hence my suggestion is that the latter should be given the same standing that the Swarajists occupy today or, in other words, an association for the spinning-wheel should be founded under the auspices of the Congress, whose only task would be to spread the use of the spinning-wheel and khadi. That association should also collect the yarn stipulated as a condition for the right to vote and should keep that yarn with itself. It should frame its own independent constitution. If work is carried on in this way, the two movements would continue to function without coming into clash with each other, but assisting each other.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-8-1925

156. MY NOTES

DADABHAI CENTENARY

The centenary of Dadabhai Naoroji's birth falls on the ensuing 4th September. Shri Bharucha has given us a timely reminder of this. We knew Dadabhai as the Grand Old Man of India. He dedicated his life to the country. He made the service of the country our dharma. He was the friend of the poor of our land. It was he who first presented the picture of the poverty of India. To this day, no one has been able to contradict the statistics he furnished. He made no distinction between Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians and others. He regarded them all as the children of Mother India and hence all received equal service from him. His two grand-daughters have, we find, inherited in full measure this trait.

How shall we celebrate the centenary of this great servant of India? We shall, of course, hold meetings and that too not only in cities, but also in all villages to which the voice of the Congress can be carried. And what shall we do there? Praise Dadabhai? If this is all that we wish to do, why should we not sit comfortably, send for bards and minstrels and call upon them to employ their imagination and their torrential flow of words? If, however, we wish to emulate his virtues, we should think of them and take stock of our capacity to acquire them.

Dadabhai saw the poverty of India. He taught us that swaraj is the remedy for it. However, he left to us the task of seeking out the key to swaraj. The principal reason for exalting Dadabhai was his devotion to the country and he spent himself in it.

We know that the spinning-wheel is the chief means of winning swaraj. India's poverty is due to its peasants remaining idle for four to six months in a year. And, if this enforced idleness becomes a voluntary one, or in other words, we become habitually lazy, not only will this country not gain its freedom, but it will perish altogether. The spinning-wheel is the only way of getting rid of this idleness. Hence, all activities which encourage its use amount to an imitation of Dadabhai's virtues.

The spinning-wheel means khadi, it means the boycott of foreign cloth, it means sixty crores of rupees finding their way into the huts of the poor.

The spinning-wheel is the sole answer to the appeal for All-India

Deshbandhu Memorial. Hence, collecting funds for this purpose on that day, is an excellent way of celebrating Dadabhai's centenary. People should, therefore, get together on that day and totally eschew foreign cloth, wear khadi made of hand-spun yarn alone, reaffirm their determination to spin every day for at least half an hour and collect funds for the spread of khadi. Those who grow cotton should keep with them at least the quantity that they require for their own use.

However, what of those who do not like to utter the word spinning-wheel? What solution can I offer for this? What suggestion can I offer to those who do not like the word swaraj for celebrating the centenary? Such persons should discover a path for themselves. My suggestion is for the people at large. It cannot be anything but this. It is a different matter altogether if someone searches for other virtues in Dadabhai and tries to imitate them. He has a right to celebrate this centenary in a different way. Or, if members of the Swaraj Party wish to do something special in cities, they should certainly do so. I can only refer to that which can be practised alike by villagers and city-dwellers, old men as well as children, women as well as men, Hindus as well as Muslims.

We should start making preparations today if we wish to celebrate the Dadabhai centenary in accordance with my suggestion. We should start using the spinning-wheel today in view of that programme. We should start today producing khadi for that occasion and hold meetings at various places in which khadi alone may be seen and which would bring credit to us and the country.

ALL-INDIA DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL

Signatures are still being taken on the circular appealing for funds for this memorial. Naturally, I am happy to have received the signature of the great Poet[1]. Let the reader too feel happy at this. I had specially sent him a message asking him to sign only if he had such faith in the spinning-wheel as was described in the circular. When it became clear to me that an all-India memorial could only be associated with the spinning-wheel and kahdi, I expressed this idea to the Poet before doing so to anyone else. That was about three weeks before I wrote this article. He had readily agreed, even then, to sign such an appeal. Those who do not have faith in the spinning-wheel

[1] Rabindranath Tagore

and khadi, or who believe that these should have no place in the memorial, are not at all urged to sign this appeal. Not only was there an insistence to get signatures from those who have faith, but the decision had also been taken that the memorial should not be associated with the spinning-wheel and khadi if those who were particular followers of Deshbandhu did not approve of the idea. Such a memorial was not to be insisted upon if all those whom we would ordinarily expect to sign this appeal did not unhesitatingly do so. I know that there is a difference of opinion as regards the usefulness of the spinning-wheel and khadi. To give it the place of prime importance in the memorial of a great leader like Deshbandhu would not perhaps be readily acceptable to many people. I, however, had to carry out my duty as the friend and colleague of Deshbandhu and, if I had to think separately in terms of an all-Bengal Memorial, I would certainly not have approved of a hospital. I have never recognized the need for a large number of hospitals. However, I have not even let the thought enter my mind as to what I would do if I had the freedom to decide. I had before me the trust-deed made out by Deshbandhu. It clearly showed me the path I had to take and I regarded it as my duty to make it the heart of the memorial if it met with the approval of his followers and I have now stayed on in Bengal for the sole purpose of collecting Rs. 10 lakhs for it. The trust-deed was made out a year ago. Nevertheless, I know that Deshbandhu continued to hold until his death the views expressed in it. This is because he had asked me to help collect money to pay off the mortgage on the building. It could be said that except me, perhaps, no one but his wife knows his views on the spinning-wheel and khadi towards the end of his life. I had acquainted myself with the views of Shrimati Basanti Devi before issuing this circular. Similarly I had acquainted myself with the views of Deshbandhu's close friend and partner, Pandit Motilalji, and, later, those of his particular followers in Bengal. Only after having done so did I decide to draft the circular. I must admit this much that the work of this memorial is very close to my heart. Even though this is true, the reader must believe me when I say that I am unconcerned about its success. But this could not be said about the all-Bengal memorial. I am making ceaseless efforts to make a success of it. There are reasons for such a discrimination. My faith in the power of the spinning-wheel is inexhaustible despite the difference of opinion in this matter. Such a memorial cannot be established with limited resources. I would like to have an

inexhaustible sum of money only if there is any power in the spinning-wheel and if India has genuine faith in it. Hence, Pandit Malaviyaji's signature has given me the same measure of satisfaction as the signature of the great Poet. I have suggested to Shri Jawaharlal Nehru to make an appeal for other signatures.

It has to be seen now what contribution Gujarat will make to this memorial. My expectations are that its contribution will be worthy of Gujarat and will add to the glory of the memorial.

I hope that the readers of *Navajivan* and lovers of khadi will contribute their mite without waiting for anyone to approach them in this matter. This will be acknowledged in *Navajivan*. This appeal is not only to readers of *Navajivan* in Gujarat or in India, but also to those who live abroad.

THE CASTE SITUATION

In Calcutta, I was taken to a gathering of our Marwari brothers. Matters relating to reforms in the caste alone were taken up and discussed. What kind of speech could I make at such a place? Instead of talking of reforms, I mainly put before them the principle of boycott. I was aware that the ostracism had taken on a terrible form amongst these people with the result that there was bitterness amongst them. I give here the substance of my speech,[1] as it is applicable to all Hindus.

The weapon of boycott is well used only by those individuals who are pure. Otherwise, it would take the form of pure violence and perhaps lead to the destruction of the one who uses it and even of the one against whom it is used.

Today, we are not worthy of practising boycott. Could there be any merit in treating as an outcaste a father who arranges for the remarriage of his daughther widowed at the age of ten and extending the same treatment to the daughter as well as the person who marries her? Do we boycott persons who are immoral, and openly licentious and who partake of meat and wine? What of those who are guilty of licentious thoughts? In other words, so long as we are not purified, who is fit to boycott whom? None of us is fit to do so.

Boycott results in the creation of new castes. What we call factions today will become castes tomorrow. Hence, in this age when

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Marwari Agrawal Conference, Calcutta", before 24-7-1925.

castes are getting merged together, boycott is totally harmful.

Varnashrama[1] is a dharma; the existence of many castes is not. Protecting the former is desirable; destruction of the latter is equally desirable. Hence reformers deserve encouragement. Reform in this matter cannot be checked however much we try. This is because Hinduism is full of undesirable elements and there is an all-round awakening today.

The wise thing to do is to give reform the status of dharma. However, boycott is harmful even when the reform appears to be unacceptable.

The Marwari community is intelligent and brave. It has done good as well as harm to India. As a friend, it is my dharma to mention the latter also. May God spare it from this latter and bless it.

I would end this discussion of boycott by asking those against whom it is practised to exercise restraint and, through courtesy, put a stop to the spread of bitterness and also to persist for their part in what they think is right.

DISCRIMINATION IN CHARITY

While praising the generosity of our Marwari brothers, I have suggested the need for discrimination in practising this virtue. Carnegie became a multi-millionaire. He was fond of establishing libraries indiscriminately; hence Scottish professors warned him tobe careful and suggested that it would be proper on his part to announce donations after consulting experts. Such advice is needed by all philanthropists and should be noted by them. There is no reason to believe that charity *per se* is meritorious. Our Marwari brothers are true protectors of the cow. Much of their wealth they use in that work. However, this is not always done with discrimination. If anyone can protect the cow, the Marwaris can, for they have courage. It is mainly a question of funds and business acumen. They possess both these requirements. If these are used with discretion, they can truly bring about cow-protection on a large scale.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-8-1925

[1] The division of society into four castes and of the individual's life into four *ashramas* or stages

157. CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IN THE CONGRESS

We have, very often, said in the *Navajivan* that civil disobedience may be practised not only towards those whom we regard as our enemies or those who regard us as enemies, but also towards those whom we regard as our friends or our elders. It is now time to apply this to the Congress. The constitutional changes which it is necessary to bring about are stated elsewhere in this issue. Ordinarily, however, the Congress Committee is not authorized to make these changes. They can be made only by amending the constitution. The Congress alone is authorized to amend it. This power is not vested in the Congress Committee. The latter would have to make use of its extraordinary powers in order to do so. The use of such powers may also be called "civil disobedience" of the law. Not only has every person and every organization the right to practise this if occasion arises, but it may become even their duty to do so. If we recognize the necessity of the reforms suggested by me, this is now our duty. This matter should certainly be discussed at the Congress session. The rule which permits the purchase of yarn to be contributed must be annulled because, not only has spinning gained nothing by it but, on the contrary it has led to an increase in hypocrisy and falsehood. If the Congress Committee does not make this necessary change, it may be regarded as having failed in its duty, because the public will be wasting a few months. Perhaps, there would have been room for difference of opinion on this subject if Deshbandhu had not died and if Lord Birkenhead had not made his speech; but there is no such room left now. It may be that some members of the Congress Committee do not accept the immediate necessity of making the change; in that case, they have no right to practise civil disobedience and, hence, I have stated that the Congress Committee can make such changes only by near, if not complete, unanimity.

The necessity of making such changes is not a sufficient ground for offering civil disobedience. Those against whom it is offered must also be benefited by it. This condition is wholly fulfilled in this case as the above changes are necessary only for the benefit of the Congress. The second condition is that those who practise such disobedience must bear no ill will. This is implied in its very name, as 'civility' is opposed to ill will. Moreover, how can there be any ill will when we only wish the Congess well? My purpose in writing this article is not to make anyone declare against his wishes that the

constitution should indeed be changed. In this matter, too, all concerned should make use of their independent judgment. Those, too, who feel that changing the constitution in this manner by the Congress Committee would result in greater harm than good, they too should in duty oppose these changes being made by the Congress Committee, although they may accept the necessity for making them. Civil disobedience cannot—it should not—be practised because someone else asks us to do so. It should be practised only when it seems appropriate to us; then alone is it worth the name, then alone it is worth practising. This is because human beings do not have strength to do a thing about which they are themselves not convinced, and civil disobedience relies for its success solely on the strength of the individual.

The chief purpose of writing this article is to describe the circumstances in which civil disobedience may be practised. I regard myself as an expert on the subject, I regard it as my own independent discovery and, I look upon it as my dharma to show from time to time its applicability and its limitations. Not only am I totally unconcerned whether the changes are made or not but I regard them as harmful if everyone does not exercise his independent judgment. This criticism applies particularly to those who regard themselves as my followers. I do not approve of blind worship. I am very much opposed to it. Swaraj cannot be secured by it and, if secured, cannot be maintained. Hence I would like to get work out of my 'followers' so as to utilize also their intelligence. If we make the above changes intelligently and honestly practise them, I expect very good results to follow.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-8-1925

158. INTERVIEW WITH DR. H. W. B. MORENO

CALCUTTA,
August 4, 1925

Mr. Gandhi had recently said[1] at a public meeting of the Anglo-Indians that "the Anglo-Indians should not ape the Europeans", on the contrary, they should even keep to the Indian style of dress and should look at all things political from the

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Meeting of Anglo-Indians", 29-7-1925.

Indian standpoint. Dr. Moreno questioned the value of such a statement. He said from their earliest childhood Anglo-Indians used the English style of dress and spoke the English language. Such were their traditions and they respected these traditions.

Mr. Gandhi in reply said that he had been misunderstood. What he wanted was that "the Anglo-Indians should not ape the Europeans". The Anglo-Indians had their distinctive mode of dress and so had the Mussalmans. He did not, however, refer to any particular mode of dress. He was conscious of the fact that Anglo-Indians lived according to certain European standards, but he deprecated Anglo-Indians keeping up a false appearance as Europeans, beyond their means, which led in most instances to bankruptcy. He referred especially to the bulk of the community who were far from being well off. He did not refer to those in the higher grades who had little or nothing in common with the community. He wanted Anglo-Indians to regard everything from the Indian viewpoint. Even if he were wrong in his suggestions, he left it to the community to decide for themselves, as they had the most intimate knowledge of their own condition.

Forward, 7-8-1925

159. SPEECH AT MEETING OF CHRISTIANS[1]

CALCUTTA,
August 4, 1925

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

You, Sir, have just said that probably this is for the first time I am privileged to address a meeting of Indian Christians only. If you refer to my present visit, you are perfectly correct. But if you refer or have referred to the whole of the time that I have been in India since my return from South Africa, then I have to inform you that I had such a privilege in 1915.[2] But my connection with Indian Christians dates back to 1893. That was the time when I went to South Africa and found myself in the midst of a large Christian Indian community. I was agreeably surprised to find so many young men and young women who, whilst they were devoted Christians, were equally devoted to the motherland, and it gave me greater pleasure when I discovered that most of the young men and young women had never seen India. The majority of them were born in Natal; some of them in Mauritius, because it was from Mauritius that the first batch of free Indian settlers

[1] The meeting was held at the L.M. Institution. S.C. Mukerjee, M.L.C., presided.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at reception by Indian Christians, Madras", 26-4-1915.

found their way to South Africa. They were most of them children of indentured parents. Indentured Indians were those who had gone to work on the sugar estates of Natal under an indissoluble contract to work on those estates for at least five years and as they had gone under this contract, otherwise called indenture, they were called Indentured Indians. Their state was described during his lifetime by the late Sir William Hunter as a state very near to slavery. I have mentioned this in order to show to you under what difficulties and disabilities these countrymen and countrywomen of ours laboured in South Africa and how they were able to overcome those difficulties, and, in the face of them, cut out for themselves honourable careers. Today, some of these men have even received a liberal education in England. Some of them are store-keepers, some of them occupying humbler walks of life. These brave lads offered their services to the Government at the time of the Boer War and the Zulu Rebellion. Some of them were brought up in my own home; two of them at least became barristers. So you understand what intimate relations I enjoyed with the Christian Indian community. I do not think there is in that land a single Indian Christian whom I do not know or who does not know me. It gives me, therefore, much pleasure to be able to come before you this evening to speak to you on "Brotherhood of Man".

It goes hard with people who have to suffer the disabilities that our countrymen whom I have just now described to you, have to labour under, to understand that there can be any such thing as "Brotherhood of Man". If you are readers of newspapers and if you take any interest in what goes on outside the four corners of India, you may know that, today, in that South Africa an attempt is being made by the Government of the country to drive away the Indians, or,as it has been well put by one of the newspapers here, English-owned, to starve them out of South Africa; and in this scheme of starvation are included some of these very men I have described to you. Whether ultimately this thing will come to pass, whether ultimately the Government of India will sanction or tolerate this thing, remains to be seen. But the connection in which I mention this thing to you is, as I have already told you, that it is difficult for such men to realize the meaning of brotherhood; and yet I have undertaken to speak to you on brotherhood at this time because it is in such times of stress and difficulty that one's spirit of brotherhood is really tested.

I receive compliments very often. They pass through my mind like water poured on to a duck's back. But you, Sir, have paid a compliment to me this evening which I feel inclined to accept. You think that if there is any person who has a right to speak on Brotherhood of Man, at least I should have that right, and I think so too. I have tried myself on many an occasion to find out whether it is possible for me to hate—I don't say love—my persecutor, and I must honestly but in all humility confess to you that I have not succeeded, I cannot recall a single occasion when I have felt constrained to hate a single human being. How I came to it I do not know. But I am simply giving to you a life-long practice and, therefore, it is really literally true that, if there is any person who has the right to speak on Brotherhood of Man, I at least have that right.

Brotherhood does not mean loving or sympathizing with those, extending the hand of fellowship to those who will in return love you. That is a bargain. Brotherhood is not a mercantile affair. And my philosophy, my religion teaches me that brotherhood is not confined merely to the human species; that is, if we really have imbibed the spirit of brotherhood, it extends to the lower animals. In one of the magazines issued in England by those great philanthropic societies 30 or 35 years ago, I remember having read some beautiful verses. I think the title of those verses was *My Brother Ox*. In them the writer beautifully described how on a man who loved his fellow men it was obligatory to love his fellow-animals also, taking the word animals to mean the sub-human species. The thought struck me most forcibly. At that time, I had learnt very little of Hinduism. All I knew about it was what I had imbibed from my surroundings, from my parents and others. But I realized the force of that writing. However I do not intend today to dwell upon this broadest brotherhood. I shall confine myself to "Brotherhood of Man". I have brought this thing in order to illustrate that our brotherhood is a mockery if we are not prepared to love even our enemies. In other words, one who has imbibed the spirit of brotherhood cannot possibly allow it to be said of him that he has any enemy at all. People may consider themselves to be our enemies, but we should reject any such claim. I have heard that claim made; that is the reason why I use the word 'claim'. The question then arises: how is it possible to love those who consider themselves to be our enemies? Almost every week, I receive letters either from Hindus or from Mussalmans, sometimes from Christians, combating this fundamental position that I have taken

up. If it is a Hindu who writes, then he asks me, "How is it possible for me to love a Mussalman who kills the cow", which is dear to me as my life? Or if it is a Christian who writes to me, he asks, "How is it possible to love Hindus who so ill-treat those whom they call untouchables, Hindus who have suppressed a fifth of their own numbers?" And if it is a Mussalman who writes, he asks, "How is it possible to extend the hand of brotherhood or fellowship to Hindus who are worshippers of stock and stone?" I say to all these three: "Your brotherhood is of no value to me if you cannot love the respective parties that you have described." But what does the attitude signify after all? Does it not signify cowardly fear or intolerance? If all of us are God's creation, why should we fear one another or hate those who do not hold the same belief that we do? A Hindu will ask me, is he to sit or look on, while a Mussalman is doing something which is most repugnant to him? My brotherhood replies, "Yes". And I add "You must sacrifice yourself, or in the language you have just listened to, you must bear the cross. If you want to defend one who is dear to you, you must die without killing." I have personal experience of such occurrences. If you have the courage to suffer lovingly, you melt the stoniest heart. You may raise your hand against one whom you regard as a ruffian, but how if he overpowers you? Will not the ruffian be more ferocious because of his victory over you? Does not history show that evil feeds on resistance? History also furnishes instances of men having tamed the fiercest men with their all-embracing love. But I admit that such non-resistance requires far greater courage than that of a soldier who returns two blows against one. I also admit that if a man has anger instead of love in him for the evil-doer, it is better for him to fight clean rather than, in a cowardly manner, to sit still for fear of dying. Cowardice and brotherhood are contradictory terms. I know that the world does not accept the fundamental position that I have endeavoured to place before you. I know that in Christian Europe, this doctrine of non-retaliation is pooh-poohed. At the present moment, I am privileged to receive precious letters from friends all over Europe and America, some of them asking me to still further expound the doctrine of non-resistance. Some others are laughing at me and telling me: "It is all right for you to talk these things in India, but you dare not do so in Europe." Yet others tell me: "Our Christianity is a whitewash, we do not understand the message of Jesus, it has got to be still delivered to us, so that we can understand it." All these three

positions are more or less right from the standpoint of the writers. But I venture to tell you that there is no peace for this world, and to take the name of brotherhood is a blasphemy, until we arrive at this fundamental position. Men there are who ask and so also women who ask: "Is it human to refrain from retaliation?" I say it is human. Up to now we have not realized our humanity, we have not realized our dignity; we are supposed to be, if Darwin is to be believed, the descendants of monkeys, and I am afraid that we have not yet shed our original state.

The late Dr. Anna Kingsford in one of her books wrote once: "As I walk about the streets of Paris, I seem to see before me diverse lions and snakes personified." She says these animals have only the human form but no more. Man, to realize his full stature, has to become absolutely fearless. This he will do not by being armed from head to foot, but by generating force from within. A Kshatriya is one who does not fly from danger, he is not one who strikes a blow for a blow. The *Mahabharata* says also that forgiveness is the quality of a brave man. There is a statue erected, I am told, in the memory of the late General Gordon. The sculptor does not put a sword in his hands, he puts only a stick. It is considered to be a beautiful work of art. If I was born a sculptor and I had the order, I would not have put even a stick in the hands of General Gordon, but I would have pictured him as one with folded arms, with his chest put forward in all humility telling the world: "Come, all of you, who want to throw your darts, here is General Gordon to receive them without flinching, without retaliation." That is my ideal of a soldier. Such soldiers have lived on the earth. Christianity undoubtedly has given birth to such solders, and so has Hinduism, so has Islam. In my opinion, it is not true to say that Islam is a religion of the sword. History does not bear that out. But I am just now speaking to you of individual instances, and what is true of the individual can be true of nations or of groups of individuals; not all at once, I admit, but in the process of evolution, when men after men live this truth in their lives before our very eyes, they cannot but affect us. Such is the history of Quakers. Such is the history of Dukhobors whom Tolstoy has described. I do not know how far the latter, after having gone to Canada, are carrying out their original resolution, but the fact stands that they have lived this life of non-resistance as a community. I therefore feel that we are trifling with that sacred name,

Brotherhood of Man, unless and until we are ruled by this fundamental fact in life.

What I am just now combating is the position that is taken up by some of the finest writers in Europe and by some of the finest writers even in India: that man, as a class, will never be able to arrive at a stage when he can do without retaliation. I have a fundamental quarrel with that position. On the contrary, I say that man, as man, will not realize his full destiny, and his full dignity, until he has been so far educated as to be able to refrain from retaliation. Whether we like it or whether we do not like it, we are being driven to it. It would be to our credit if, instead of being driven to the position, we will take ourselves to it, and I have come here this evening to ask you to exercise this privilege, the privilege of voluntarily taking up this idea in practice. Indeed, I ought not to have to be speaking to a Christian audience on this, because some of my friends tell me that I am really a Christian, when I talk about non-retaliation. Little do they know that I have got to strive with the Christians, as I have to with Hindus and my Muslim friends. I do not know many Christians who have adopted this thing as a rule of their life. Some of the very best Christians that I know do not admit that this is the teaching of Christ. I do believe that it is the teaching of Christ. They say it was meant merely for his twelve disciples, not meant for the world, and they quote some passages from the New Testament in support of their contention. The opponents of non-violence as a rule of life say that it can only breed a race of cowards, and if India takes up this message of non-retaliation, she is a doomed country. On the contrary, the fundamental position that I place before you is, that unless India takes up this position, she is a doomed nation and with her all the nations of the world. India is a continent, and when India takes up the doctrine of force, as Europe today seems to have taken it up, then India becomes one of the exploiters of the weaker races of the world. Just imagine what it must mean to the world.

I call myself a nationalist and I pride myself in it. My nationalism is as broad as the universe. It includes in its sweep even the lower animals. It includes in its sweep all the nations of the earth, and if I possibly could convince the whole of India of the truth of this message, then, India would be something to the whole world for which the world is longing. My nationalism includes the well-being of the whole world. I do not want my India to rise on the ashes of other

nations. I do not want India to exploit a single human being. I want India to become strong in order that she can infect the other nations also with her strength. Not so with the other nations of the world, not so with a single nation in Europe today. They do not give strength to the others. We are not receiving any strength. It is in the nature of things impossible for them to do so, and that is why I have taken the uncompromising position that I cannot possibly be a party to a constitution whose basis is brute force.

President Wilson mentioned his beautiful 14 points, and do you know what he wound up with? He said:"After all, if this endeavour of ours to arrive at peace fails, we have got our armaments to fall back upon." I want to reverse that position, and I say: "Our armaments have failed already. Let us now be in search of something new, and let us try the force of love and God which is Truth." When we have got that, we shall want nothing else. There is the story of the devotee, Prahlad. It may be a fable, but no fable for me. He was a lad of hardly 12 years. His father asked him not to take the name of God. Prahlad said: "I can't do without it, it is my life." Then his father asked him: "Show me your God." A red hot iron pillar was shown to Prahlad and he was aksed to embrace it. Yes, there was God in that pillar. Prahlad embraced it in love and faith. He was unhurt. If we would realize brotherhood, we must have the love and the faith and the truth of Prahlad in us.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 15-8-1925

160. NOTES

KERALA NOT DEAD

The new Secretary, Kerala Provincial Congress Committee, says that there are now 122 A class and 52 B class Congress members in Kerala and says, Kerala is not dead to the Congress call. I am glad to be able to publish this information. I trust that the work thus begun will continue unabated.

SAD END OF A PROMISING LIFE

Some time ago a serious-looking young Englishman named Harries announced himself with a note of introduction from Shuaib Qureshi. Without ceremony he at once told me that he had come to India for a short stay in pursuit of a philosophical research in

company with an Indian fellow-student. He engaged me in a swift conversation, and allowed me to see that he did not require much argument from me to make my meaning clear. Though he took me through his examination with lightning speed, I saw that I could not satisfy his appetite in the few minutes that I could then give him. I promised him another appointment if he wanted it. He gratefully accepted the offer. Next time he came with his friend and fellow-worker Basanta Kumar Mullick. I was much taken up with Harries's earnestness, intelligence and honesty of mind. During the time at my disposal he could not finish his enquiry. I gave him promise of another appointment to which I was looking forward when I got the sad news that young Harries was no more. Here is a summary of a pathetic account of his death and life sent to me by his fellow-worker Basanta Kumar Mullick:

> Thomas Wilfred Harries, a young Englishman from Balliol (Oxford) came over, in the third week of June, to stay with me; but as luck would have it, he fell a victim to an attack of malaria before even July was half way through. He was only 24 when he died, and the attack lasted not even for full four days. The blow is still ringing in my head, as it ever will; and everybody who ever met him since he was out in India is mourning his death.
>
> *There is no need, nor is it possible, to say what he was to me. Neither can I try and say at the moment what the loss means for his country or mine. Sooner or later it will be recognized and recorded. Let me only state as simply as I can some features of his career which stand out prominently. T. W. Harries was a Balliol man, and* it will not be exaggerating the truth to say that he was one of the most brilliant students Balliol produced in recent years. Except only in the 1st public examination of Oxford known as Hon. Mods, he never missed his first. In 1923, he was one of the few who sat for the 1st examination in Modern Greats, and he took a brilliant first in it. Since then he had been lecturing on Economics, History and Philosophy to the W. E. A., in the Potteries in the place of Towney where he was already one of the most popular and respected of teachers.
>
> The object of his visit to India was as simple as his life was unostentatious and clean. He came out for a holiday and, what is more to the point, to finish the work which we had begun in Oxford some four or five years ago. There is a long history connected with this work, and this is not the place to relate it, but to show how Harries came to be associated with it, I have to mention that, after I had met him in a debate of the Lotus Club in the Oxford University of which he was the President, he, along with a few others who are

all dear to me, joined me in a philosophical investigation which I had been carrying on for some years before. The aim of this investigation was to expound a new system of thought which rose straight out of the scepticism of the age. We had lost our faith in tradition long ago. Contemporary life to us, except when it managed to avoid vital issues, was as defunct as the existing institutions were long past the stage where they could yield any new order of peace or a fresh ideal of life. What seemed to be evident was that not before a more compact and a less warlike though more efficient order of human society had arisen, could there be any real peace or rest.

I tender my condolences to the friends and family of Harries. Noble ideas once conceived never perish, and Harries will live through his ideas. The unknown and humble plodders like Harries ever continue the work bequeathed by their departed co-workers. All honour to them!

PARIAHS OF THE EMPIRE

Lest we forget our status and proper place in the imperial economy, we receive a constant reminder now from England and now from South Africa, or some such place, of what we are. The Secretary of State for India puts us in mind of 'the sharp edge of the British sword'. The Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's forces in India gives it as his deliberate opinion that what we are aiming at is 'unattainable'. Mr. Malan, the Union Minister in South Africa tells us that there shall be no equality between Europeans and Indians, and that, therefore, if he will not kill out the Indian settler, he will squeeze him out of South Africa and will reduce him to such a state that he cannot even think of equality. The ghetto is his proper place, and menial labour his proper sphere of action. We must be and remain a suppressed class of the world. To mention this evil is not to get rid of it.'No pariahs need apply' is the permanent sign-board which is hung up in every Imperial Secretariat. What to do is the question. Pherozeshah Mehta disapproved even of my going to South Africa. He said that nothing was to be done in South Africa until we had vindicated our position in India. Lokamanya said much the same thing. 'Seek ye first swaraj and everything will be added unto you' was his refrain. But swaraj is a result of the sum-total of India's energy. The order of the day is work from without and work from within. It is a long-drawn-out agony, but there is no new birth without the necessary pains of labour. We must pass through this inevitable life-giving, life-sustaining discipline, fiery though it is. Our

countrymen in South Africa must do the very best they can without flinching. If they have the old spirit of resistance and cohesion in them, and if they think that the moment has arrived, they must take up the cross of suffering. They must be sole judges of their fitness and of the psychological moment for taking the plunge. They must know that public opinion of India is with them. But they will also realize that it is an opinion which is powerless to help them. They must therefore rely upon their own strength and capacity for enduring hardships and in the innate justice of their cause.

A POLITICAL SUFFERER

Here is a description of a political sufferer. He says:

> Will you help the poor and starving family of a political sufferer? You can easily gather lacs and lacs of rupees for our late revered leader Deshbandhu C. R. Das's memorial and you cannot help my poor family by giving me at least Rs. 5,000 for the maintenance of my family and for introducing in . . . village the charkhas. I am sure to get Rs. 2,000, if not Rs. 5,000, if you only speak but a single word to the revered[1] . . . You have written to me to take up weaving and earn Rs. 15 per month. I do not know weaving. Your formula is, no work, no food. Can you give me such work as will enable me to earn at least Rs.100 per month? Can you not try for me a handsome job in the Corporation of Calcutta by asking the Deputy Mayor and the Chief Executive Officer?

This represents the mentality of the average youth. Thousands of young men have to be satisfied with Rs. 30 per month. But here this political sufferer wants at lest Rs. 100 per month, or Rs. 2,000 at least in a lump sum. There is no connection between the two proposals. But they are made in all good faith in the expectation of acceptance. It is impossible to satisfy ambition such as this. The Corporation of Calcutta cannot be used as a medium for finding work for the unemployed. As a matter of fact, all the public departments and private offices are almost over-supplied. The remedy, therefore, lies, first, in modifying one's ambition to suit the poor environment of the country and, secondly, in finding new scope for employment. Artificial wants must be curtailed; evil social customs must be got rid of. The custom of one man supporting the rest of the members of a family, although they may be able to do their share of work, must go by the board. It is then possible to be satisfied with Rs. 30 per month.

[1] According to the source, there followed a string of names here.

Many young men in Bengal have voluntarily rearranged their ideas, and are now living on Rs. 30 per month, whereas at one time they were earning even as much as four to five hundred per month. The only new source of employment which can give work to hundreds of young men and women is a well-organized khaddar service. I am hoping that the All-India Spinners' Association that I have in view will soon come into being. I am hoping also that the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial will receive an adequate response from the public. Let all honest men and women who are in search of employment qualify themselves by becoming expert carders and spinners, if not also weavers. They will not be called upon to earn their living by spinning and weaving, but they will be called upon to organize production and sale. But this organization will require on the part of the organizers an accurate knowledge of the art of carding and spinning, and all the processes which cotton has to undergo before it becomes weavable yarn.

INTIMIDATION IN PUBLIC LIFE

A correspondent from the South writes:[1]

If the report is true, and it appears to me to be quite authentic, and if it is also true that rowdyism of the type referred to by the correspondent is at all general, is a most regrettable thing. It consolidates the very power against which both the rowdies and we are endeavouring to fight. I have the names and full addresses of the parties and I have no doubt that those who know will have no difficulty in dotting the 'i's and crossing the 't's . But my purpose is not to expose the evil-doers. I want to expose the wrong that they are doing, in the hope that it might not be repeated. Those who are in charge of affairs should courageously deal with the evil and nip it in the bud.

WREATH OR GARLAND?

I have observed in many parts of India but in Bengal especially the custom of garlanding guests with wreaths instead of a beautiful *bona-fide* swadeshi *mala*. I suppose it is considered more dignified to offer wreaths because they are much more expensive than the *malas*—

[1] The letter, not reproduced here, cited the instance of a co-worker having been manhandled for having complained to the Press, and observed that "intimidation is threatening to become the rule in settling political differences and disputed personal loyalties."

garlands. Wreaths are an importation from the West. So far as I am aware they are used for decorating coffins. The flowers are held together with a wire which often hurts. I am one of such individuals who have been hurt by the wires of wreaths which have been forced upon me by overzealous admirers. It is difficult to carry a wreath in one's hand for fear of getting hurt. A wreath being stiff instead of adorning the body, in my opinion, disfigures it. Whereas a *mala* strung together beautifully on a piece of string hangs loosely round the neck and causes no discomfort. Will Reception Committees please note ?

Young India, 6-8-1925

161 . DO I HATE ENGLISHMEN?

Some esteemed English friends have taken exception to the italicized sentence in the following extract from my article "The Science of Surrender" in *Young India*, dated the 9th July, 1925.[1]

> I make bold to say that without mutual surrender there is no hope for this distraught country. Let us not be hyper-sensitive or devoid of imagination. To surrender is not to confer favour. Justice that love gives is a surrender, Justice that law gives is a punishment. What a lover gives transcends justice. And yet it is always less than he wishes to give, because he is anxious to give more and frets that he has nothing left. *It is libellous to say that Hindus act like Englishmen; Hindus cannot even if they would*, and this I say in spite of the brutality of the labourers of Kidderpore. Both Hindus and Mussalmans sail in the same boat. Both are fallen. And they are in the position of lovers, have to be, whether they will or no.

The friends think that, in writing that sentence, I have done a grave injustice to Englishmen, for they say that the implied censure applies to *all* Englishmen. I feel sorry that there could be any such interpretation possible regarding the passage. I had never intended it. I assure the friends that such was not my meaning. The context makes it clear that my remarks are not applicable to Englishmen as a whole. They could not, for instance, apply to C. F. Andrews who has utterly effaced himself for the sake of India.

The Mussalman charge was that the Hindus were trying to suppress and enslave them even as Englishmen had done with both

[1] *Vide "The Science of Surrender"*, 9-7-1925.

Hindus and Mussalmans—meaning, necessarily, the majority of Hindus and Englishmen. In the extract quoted my endeavour was to show that Hindus had not the power even if they had the desire, to suppress Mussalmans. The friends do not object to my statement if it applies to Englishmen as a class in India,—not that they endorse my opinion even to that extent, but they could not be shocked as they had known me to hold that opinion for many years. But they were shocked because they thought that I had included in the condemnation all Englishmen, including the three friends who were honestly trying to serve India to the best of their ability. They thought that the passage was written in hatred and anger. As a matter of fact, there was neither hatred nor anger at the time I wrote the passage, and if the passage bears the meaning, which I still hold it does not, I can only plead my ignorance of the English language which is not my mother-tongue and whose intricacies, I own, I have not mastered. I hold myself to be incapable of hating any being on earth. By a long course of prayerful discipline, I have ceased for over forty years to hate anybody. I know that this is a big claim. Nevertheless, I make it in all humility. But I can and I do hate evil wherever it exists. I hate the system of Government that the British people have set up in India. I hate the domineering manner of Englishmen as a class in India. I hate the ruthless exploitation of India even as I hate from the bottom of my heart the hideous system of untouchability for which millions of Hindus have made themselves responsible. But I do not hate the domineering Englishmen as I refuse to hate the domineering Hindus. I seek to reform them in all the loving ways that are open to me. My non-co-operation has its root not in hatred, but in love. My personal religion peremptorily forbids me to hate anybody. I learnt this simple yet grand doctrine when I was twelve years old, though a school book, and the conviction has presisted up to now. It is daily growing on me. It is a burning passion with me. I beg therefore to assure every Englishman, who like these friends might have misunderstood me, that I shall never be guilty of hating Englishmen even though I might have to fight them fiercely, even as I did in 1921. It will be a non-violent fight, it will be clean, it will be truthful.

Mine is not an exclusive love. I cannot love Mussalmans or Hindus and hate Englishmen. For, if I merely love Hindus and Mussalmans because their ways are on the whole pleasing to me, I shall soon begin to hate them when their ways displease me, as they may well do any moment. A love that is based on the goodness of

those whom you love is a mercenary affair, whereas true love is self effacing and demands no consideration. It is like that of a model Hindu wife, Sita, for instance, who loved her Rama even whilst he bid her pass through a raging fire. It was well with Sita, for she knew what she was doing. She sacrificed herself out of her strength, not out of her weakness. Love is the strongest force the world possesses and yet it is the humblest imaginable.

Young India, 6-8-1925

162. SNARES OF SATAN

The following extract from a letter of a passionate lover of khaddar will be read with interest :

> I believe in khaddar. I see the mission of khaddar clear as crystal. It simplifies and hence purifies life. It binds us to the poor by the tie of service. It is the only insurance against poverty which is killing the body and the soul of the nation, for at least as far as the illiterate millions are concerned there is no question of the soul without the body. Realized Yoga and its votaries might talk of it, but for the millions soul is mockery without body. Last and not least, charkha is the only insurance against violent social outbreaks as are now flooding Europe with blood and passions. Charkha brings the masses and the classes together and as long as India accepts it Bolshevism and kindred violent eruptions would be impossible. These things convince me of the vital need of the charkha. But there is only one difficulty. Can it work? Can it succeed? Can we now plant again the charkha in its old place of sanctity in every home ? Is it not too late? Before you went to prison I never would have questioned thus. There was room for hope. But now it is not all hope. And there is Bertrand Russell who says thatindustrialism is like a force of nature and India, too, will be submerged whether we want it or no. Only such people say we should find our own solution for industrialism. There is truth in what they say. Industrialism is flooding all the world and, after the flood, they are finding their own solutions. Take Europe. I do not believe that Europe will perish. I have too much faith in human nature, and human nature will find the remedy sooner or later. Can India, even if she wants to, isolate herself and get out of the clutches of industrialism ?

The argument to which this lover of khaddar has been involuntarily and irresistibly drawn is Satan's old device. He always goes with us half way, and then suddenly insinuates that it is no good going further and points to the seeming impossibility of further

progress. He applauds virtue, but immediately says that it is not given to man to attain it.

Now, the difficulty that has occurred to the friend is a difficulty that faces a reformer at every step. Have not untruth and hypocrisy permeated society? Yet those who believe in the ultimate triumph of truth, persist in it in the absolute hope of success. A reformer never permits time to run against him, for he defies that ancient enemy. Of course, industrialism is like a force of Nature, but it is given to man to control Nature and to conquer her forces. His dignity demands from him resolution in the face of overwhelming odds. Our daily life is such a conquest. An agriculturist knows it only too well.

What is industrialism but a control of the majority by a small minority? There is nothing attractive about it, nor is there anything inevitable in it. If the majority simply wills to say 'no' to the blandishments of the minority, the latter is powerless for mischief.

It is good to have faith in human nature. I live because I have that faith. But that faith does not blind me to the fact of history that, whilst in the ultimate all is well, individuals and groups called nations have before now perished. Rome, Greece, Babylon, Egypt and many others are a standing testimony in proof of the fact that nations have perished before now because of their misdeeds. What may be hoped for is that Europe, on account of her fine and scientific intellect, will realize the obvious and retrace her steps, and from the demoralizing industrialism she will find a way out. It will not necessarily be a return to the old absolute simplicity. But it will have to be a reorganization in which village life will predominate, and in which brute and material force will be subordinated to the spiritual force.

Lastly, we must not be entrapped by false analogies. European writers are handicapped for want of experience and accurate information. They cannot guide us beyond a certain measure if they have to generalize from European examples which cannot be on all fours with Indian conditions, because in Europe they have nothing like the conditions of India, not even excluding Russia. What may be, therefore, true of Europe is not necessarily true of India. We know, too, that each nation has its own characteristics and individuality. India has her own; and if we are to find out a true solution for her many ills, we shall have to take all the idiosyncrasies of her constitution into account, and then prescribe a remedy. I claim that to industrialize India in the same sense as Europe is to attempt the impossible. India

has stood many a storm. Each has left its own indelible mark it is ture, but she has hitherto dauntlessly maintained her individuality. India is one of the few nations of the earth which have witnessed the fall of many civilizations, herself remaining scatheless. India is one of the few nations on the earth which have retained some of their ancient institutions although they have been overlaid with superstition and error. But she has hitherto shown an inherent capacity for purging herself of error and superstition. My faith in her ability to solve the economic problem that faces her millions has never been so bright as it is today, especially after my study of the conditions in Bengal.

Young India, 6-8-1925

163 TEACHERS' CONDITION

A deputation from the All-Bengal Teachers' Association waited upon me some time ago and asked me to advise them how they could better their condition and be of service to the country. They admitted that, at the present moment, they were not doing much good to the country. This is how they described their condition:

> The teachers are now engaged in performing a thankless task under a heavy personal sacrifice. They are imparting an education which is unprofitable and uninteresting through no fault of their own. They are to mechanically follow a curriculum of studies which provides for no religious, moral and vocational training. The education given today in Bengal through nearly 900 schools and by 20,000 teachers is domineered over by an examination system which only encourages cramming. The teachers are looked down upon as they are miserably underpaid. There is a large number ofcases of mutual distrust and lack of sympathy between the teachers and the school authorities as well as the guardians. Education does not provide for physical training and is imparted through the foreign medium, resulting in a huge waste of national energy.

To all this the teachers might have added that the pupils are devitalized and have lost all initiative. I gave them an answer which satisfied them for the time being, but they took from me a promise that I would deal with the problem in these pages.

In my opinion, the root of the evil lies in the foreign domination, and the root of foreign domination lies in ourselves. I am aware that we shall never deal with these problems unless and until we deal with the root evil. If we had our own government, the teachers would be able to vindicate their position. Having our own government

means a government never strong enough to override by force of arms the wishes of the majority, in other words, a government responsible to public opinion. Today the teachers have public opinion behind them in many things, but it is helpless against a power that is armed for dealing with any possible physical combination on the part of the people of India. No government in the world is so irresponsible and so unresponsive to the opinion of the millions of men and women of India as the Government of India. It was the realization of this fact that made Gokhale postpone everything else to the effort for winning self-government. Lokamanya was so impatient that he made his formula, "Swaraj is my birthright", ring from one end of India to the other. He suppressed his taste for scholarship and philosophy in favour of swaraj. Deshbandhu laid down his life in the same pursuit. All those who are like the teachers have, therefore, no remedy for their disease save that of gaining swaraj as quickly as possible. How is that to be attained. I have pointed out the remedy and the country is supposed to have adopted it. The only change is that to the effort within must be added the effort without, viz., entry into the legislatures. The teachers cannot enter these institutions, they cannot take part in active politics, but they can all spin or, if they like, do some other labour. They must not expect their pupils to labour, if the teachers will not labour themselves and I have suggested spinning because all can be engaged in it, not for private profit, but for discipline and national profit. Self-government means continuous effort to be independent of government control, whether it is foreign government or whether it is national. Swaraj government will be a sorry affair if people look up to it for the regulation of every detail of life. Do the teachers realize that the pupils are an exaggerated edition of what they themselves are? If they will have the initiative, the pupils will soon begin to have it. The examination system, as it is, becomes doubly oppressive by reason of the mechanical method of instruction. Only the other day, inspecting a school, I asked a boy to tell me what and where Pataliputra—about which he had read to me from his book—was. He could not tell. This was neither the fault of the Government nor the pupils, assuredly the teachers'. Teachers can, if they will, make their tuition interesting and effective in spite of the deadening weight of the examination system. In spite of the medium of instruction being the English language in the higher classes, it is open to the teachers to take care of the mother tongue of the boys under them. There is no rule preventing them talking to the boys in

their mother tongues. The fact is that most teachers do not know the vernacular names for technical expressions and find it difficult to make themselves intelligible in the vernacular when the subject of their discourse is technical. We have got into the very slovenly habit, in order, as we fancy to give point to our conversations, of using English adjectives, adverbs and even phrases of the English language. If the teachers wish it, many of the defects of the present system could be cured by them.

I have given only a few out of many possible illustrations of what can be done under the present system. It was my recognition of the evil of the system that made me conceive non-co-operation, but a revival of it just now seems to be almost an impossibility. I am, therefore, recommending what is, in some respects, more difficult of accomplishment. It is easier for the average man to run away from evil than remain in it and still remain unaffected by it. Many men can shun grog-shops and remain teetotallers, but not many can remain in these pestilential places and avoid the contagion.

However, the teachers have asked for advice and I can but place it before them so that each may then respond to the best of his ability. The unfortunate position is that educated Indians take to teaching not for the love of it, but because they have nothing better and nothing else for giving them a livelihood. Many of them even enter the teaching profession with a view to preparing for what they regard as a better thing. The wonder is that in spite of this self-imposed initial handicap so many teachers are not worse than they are. By well-ordered agitation, no doubt, they may better their pecuniary prospects, but I see no chance even under a swaraj government of the scale of salary being raised much higher than it is today. I believe in the ancient idea of teachers teaching for the love of it and receiving the barest maintenance. The Roman Catholics have retained that idea and they are responsible for some of the best educational institutions in the world. The *rishis* of old did even better. They made their pupils members of their families, but in those days that class of teaching which they imparted was not intended for the masses. They simply brought up a race of real teachers of mankind in India. The masses got their training in their homes and in their hereditary occupations. It was a good enough ideal for those times. Circumstances have now changed. There is a general insistent demand for literary training. The masses claim the same attention as the

classes. How far it is possible and beneficial to mankind generally cannot be discussed here. There is nothing inherently wrong in the desire for learning. If it is directed in a healthy channel it can only do good. Without, therefore, stopping to devise means for avoiding the inevitable, we must make the best use possible of it. Thousands of teachers cannot be had for the asking, nor will they live by begging. They must have a salary guaranteed, and as we shall require quite an army of teachers their remuneration cannot be in proportion to the intrinsic worth of their calling but it will have to be in proportion to the capacity of the nation for payment. We may expect a steady rise as we realize the relative merits of the different callings. The rise must be painfully slow. There must, therefore, arise a class of men and women in India who will from patriotic motives choose teaching as a profession, irrespective of the material gain that it may bring them. Then the nation will not underrate the calling of the teacher. On the contrary, it will give the first place in its affection to these self-sacrificing men and women. And so we come to this that, as our swaraj is possible largely by our own efforts, so is the teachers' rise possible mainly by their own effort. They must bravely and patiently cut their way through to success.

Young India, 6-8-1925

164. ALL -INDIA DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL

The readers will share with me the pleasure to know that Pandit Malviyaji has signed the appeal[1] for the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial published last week. Several others who are likely to endorse the appeal have been approached. At the time of writing this note, their replies have not been received. It has been a delicate matter to decide who should be approached, because of the object of the Memorial on which there is room for difference of opinion. I, therefore, hereby give a general invitation for signing to those who revere the memory of Deshbandhu and who believe in the potency of spinning-wheel and khaddar, to the extent defined in the appeal which I recopy below.

Supplement to *Young India*, 6-8-1925

[1] *Vide* "Appeal for All-India Deshbandhu Memorial", 22-7-1925.

165. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

AZIMGANJ,
Thursday [*August 6, 1925*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your two letters. I write this letter from Azimganj. Manilal[2] has brought me here for making collections for the DeshbanDhu Memorial Fund. Tomorrow, i.e., on Friday, I reach Calcutta; and from there I shall proceed to Jamshedpur the same day. I shall stay in Jamshedpur on Saturday and Sunday and return to Calcutta on Monday morning. For the time being I am leaving Mahadev in Calcutta for making collections, On account of his illness Kristodas is staying at the Abhaya Ashram, Comilla. Jamnadas[3] has gone to Santiniketan and will reach Calcutta on Monday. Take care of your health. What to say about Kashi[4]? Ask Prabhudas[5] to write to me about his mental and physical condition.

I get letters from Lakshmi. If she wants to come to me let me know.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 6194. Courtesy : Chhaganlal Gandhi

166. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Shravana Vad 2 [*August 6, 1925*][6]

CHI. MANI,

I had your letter as well as Dahyabhai's. I had asked Mahadev to send a reply immediately to Dahyabhai's letter. I hope it has reached him. Dahyabhai had not answered the question put to him. If Dahyabhai wishes to study surgery there are enough facilities here as well as in Calcuttta. These Colleges have nothing to do with the Government.

Since Manilal has sent you twelve bangles I believe you do not need any more for the present. But remember that if these bangles

[1] The date of receipt as given by the addressee is *Shravana Vad* 6, 1981, that is, August 10. The Thursday preceding it was August 6.

[2] Manilal Vallabhji Kothari, a political worker of Gujarat

[3] Addressee's brother

[4] Addressee's wife

[5] Addressee's son

[6] From the source

break frequently, they would prove costly. Even silver ones would be cheaper or those prepared from cotton yarn. These can be so knitted that they are thick, strong and always washable. But we will think more on this when we meet. Meanwhile you have a good stock with you.

Nothing is definite about my going there. Perhaps I may go over to Ahmedabad in October for a day or two.

Since you have bought a bicycle, you should use it for exercise.

We are in Murshidabad district today. Manilal too is here.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MANIBEHN
C/O VALLABHBHAI ZAVERBHAI PATEL, BARRISTER
KHAMASA CHOWKI
AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, pp. 27-8

167. SPEECH AT KRISHNATH COLLEGE, BEHRAMPUR[1]

August 6, 1925

MAHARAJA SAHIB, FRIENDS AND FELLOW STUDENTS,

I address you as fellow students because I regard myself as a student, 56 years though I am. The more I live on this earth, the more I realize how much I have yet to learn and possibly how much I have yet to unlearn. It gives me great pleasure to meet you this afternoon. It is a double pleasure. I always seek an opportunity of meeting the student world all over India. It was, therefore, a pleasure to find this function amongst the various functions arranged by the Reception Committee, but the knowledge that this College is associated with one of the magnificient charities of the Maharaja Bahadur was an additional pleasure when I understood what this College was. I have known his great charities since 1915, when I had the honour of coming in contract with the Maharaja Bahadur, but I never realized till

[1] Gandhiji visited the Krishnath College on August 6, where he was presented with an address and a purse of Rs. 1,067 for the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. Gandhiji's reply was recorded in shorthand and reproduced as an appendix in the College Commemoration Volume.

I came here what was the quantity of these charities. I understand from reliable sources that they amount to more than one crore of rupees. I had flattered myself with the belief that my Parsi friends beat everyone on the face of the earth in their charities, and I suppose, now, that statement will stand unchallenged so far as the whole community is concerned; but so far as individuals are concerned, I do not recollect a single Parsi name that has exceeded the charities of Cossimbazar. As I told you, therefore, it is a double pleasure for me to meet you this afternoon.

I thank you for the purse that you have presented towards the Deshbandhu Memorial. You know better than I do how much the student world is indebted to Deshbandhu not merely because he was one of their patrons, not merely because the students found his purse open for them, but also because his advice was always at the disposal of students, and he has left to the student world a legacy of self-sacrifice and devotion to the motherland which is not to be surpassed by anybody, if it can be at all equalled. It is, therefore, nothing out of the way that you have given this good purse for this memorial and I hope that students all over Bengal will follow your noble example.

You have asked me to answer certain questions which you have put to me. I have understood these questions. I have not given myself much time to speak to you this afternoon, but before I come to these questions, I want to talk to you of things that are much more permanent for students and, therefore, of much greater importance than even the important questions that you have put to me. Throughout my travels in the world and my association with students and my experience as an amateur teacher of youth and of girls, I have come to the conclusion that the literary knowledge that a schoolmaster or a professor gives is by no means composed of what he has to give. You are not to be judged by the excellene of your pronunciation or by the excellence of your grammar, not even by the excellence of your eloquence; for that matter you might have never come to colleges, and yet it is possible for you to give a good account of yourselves to the world, it is possible for you to live a decent life as citizens of India—as citizens of the world. What you come to schools and colleges for is essentially to build your character. The highest ideal that can possibly be conceived for the student life has been placed before us by our Hindu ancestors, the great *rishis* of old. They likened the life of a student to that of a sannyasi, and they have laid

down laws for the guidance of students just as rigorous as those they have laid down for the fourth ashrama, the fourth stage—the stage of a sannyasi. What a sannyasi is expected to do after a full expericnce of the world, out of the fullness of his knowledge, a student is voluntarily expected to do because of tradition, because of regard for his spiritual and for his worldly preceptors. You know the distinction between worldly knowledge and divine knowledge. They used worldly ambition and worldly knowledge also for the uplift of the soul, and even whilst they discoursed on matters of the world, they gave us a secret knowledge of the soul. Anyone who has studied the glorious Upanishads will be able, without the slightest hesitation, to corroborate what I am just now telling you. Ask yourselves then, "Are you leading the life of a sannyasi, are you—all of you—*brahmacharis* ?"

Throughout my travels in Bengal I have heard a lot about the students of Bengal. I have heard something to your credit. I have also heard something to your discredit. I have been told that the life of the average student in Bengal, if not throughout India, is not particularly pure. He spends his time not in reading the purest literature, but he even devotes his spare hours to reading magazines which should never find a place in a decent library or in a gentleman's drawing-room. I do not know how far this is true. But what I have told, I have received from men of knowledge, from men of culture, from men who have passed from those colleges. Some of them have declared to me that such is the life of the students of Bengal. They have told me that there is a general but sure deterioration in character. I hope this is not a proper and truthful generalization and that the average student is not so bad as he is made out to be. I recall to myself a story told by a Hindu widow, some weeks ago, with tears in her eyes. She has several daughters, some of whom are not yet married. She asked me what she was to do with her daughters. They are all educated. She is not sparing herself in order to give her daughters a decent education. I asked her what the ages of these daughters were. In my opinion they are not yet fit to be married. The mother said, "How can I help marrying my girls? Can you show me a place where I can hide them, where I can consider that my girls will be in safety?" She said, "You do not know the young men of Bengal, you do not know how dangerous it is for young girls to walk about unprotected; they are not free from the lustful eyes of students who walk about the streets of Calcutta." Can this be true? I hope it is not. But that widowed mother is not an illiterate woman. Let me tell you she is a great Congress worker; she

spoke from knowledge, she spoke from the bitterness of her own experience and she said, "You may ask anybody you like, and you will find that, in general, my remarks will be corroborated by the parents in Bengal."

I have read only lately a paragraph in newspapers that a girl—I forget her name—committed suicide. I am not talking to you about Snehalata of a sacred memory, but I am talking to you of a girl who has recently committed suicide. She is supposed to have committed suicide because her father could not find a suitable match for his daughter. Why? Because, as the newspapers relate, a frightful sum was asked by young men who were approached by the parents. Is marriage a matter of money, is it a bargain or is it a sacred institution? Is it a matter of love or is it a matter of commerce? What have we learnt in our colleges and schools ? If this is true, as it seems to me to be true, the responsibility for the death of the girl lies upon the heads of the students of Bengal. If it is true it is for everyone of you to correct that evil. Let us not talk of swaraj, let us not talk of liberty of India, so long as the liberty of a single girl in Bengal is imperilled, so long as a girl finds it necessary to commit suicide because her parents have not got money enough to buy a suitable match. Let this blot be removed from the face of Bengal and let the students of Bengal be worthy of the charity of Cossimbazar. Let the students prove to the world, let them prove to the parents of Bengal that the honour of every girl in Bengal is as sacred in their hands as it is sacred or should be in the hands of her parents; and unless we learn this primary lesson I feel that we have lived in vain, that the students have lived in vain in Bengal, and all this money that is being spent upon them in giving them a liberal education, in housing them in magnificient buildings, is a waste of effort and waste of money. May God give you strength and the wisdom to understand the substance of what I am telling you. Do not criticize it, do not talk high of it, but say to yourselves how far the information given to me is likely to be correct. But if it is an overstatement, it is still damning enough for the student world. If it is true of several hundreds of students, I ask you to regard it as a dangerous thing. It is an eyesore, it is a canker that is eating into the very vitals of society, and that kind of evil will spread throughout the length and breadth of Bengal, if it is not nipped in the bud. Therefore, without criticizing my remarks to you and trying to measure the truth of it in golden scales, take the substance of it and make the best use, what every one of you can, of what I have said.

The *rishis* of old tell us that the education of a student begins not with literature. Do you know what the student in the Vedic times was called upon to do when he went to the teachers? Not to pass any examination in letters. He had to go before the *rishis* with *samid khand*—with a bundle of wood—in his hand. What did that signify? It signified purity of heart, sincerity of heart. It signified determination on the part of the student to labour for his preceptor, so that he could get from his preceptor what he deserved. He was not to ask any questions; he was to take what the preceptor gave him. If you are satisfied with learning by heart brilliant passages from Shakespeare and Milton, I do not grudge you that. But it must be added to something that is more substantial. You must build upon a stable foundation—you must build, therefore, upon a foundation of absolute truth—you must build upon a foundation of a absolute love and non-violence. It is obligatory upon every student to observe these fundamental maxims of life. You know what the *Mahabharata* taught us about the value of truth. He said, "Put truth in one scale and put your *yajnas* in another scale. Still truth will weigh heavier." There is nothing on this earth, the seer of *Mahabharata* tells us, that can possibly excel truth. And he was right. No matter how much in your little bit of experience you may find untruth work, no matter how you find in history also, fraud has given princes and potentates power and kingdoms, remember that these are only momentary changes. What are a few thousands of years in the life of a nation, in the life of the whole world? As students, you are not to bother your heads about these things; make up your minds to follow truth and non-violence. If you only remember these sign-posts, you will never go wrong and then you may add all the literature and all the science and everything. But if you have not this foundation, then however beautiful the house may appear to be for the time being, remember it is only a house of cards, and a mere whiff of wind will bring it down.

Now I come to the questions. You ask me what the spinning-wheel can do. Well, I think I have demonstrated to you what the spinning-wheel can do. The spinning-wheel will do for India what it did when the *rishis* lived. That was the golden age. I do not for one moment endorse what some historians tell us, that the golden age is merely a figment of the imagination or the diseased minds of poets. It is not so. We had our golden age. We are certainly coming to another cycle which will lead to another golden age. We have lived through that golden age when, in this land, there were not these semi-starved

millions as they are today. The creed of the spinning-wheel is that there should be a bond established between yourselves and the villagers; that is the meaning of village reconstruction—that is your another question. And the village reconstruction must dance round your charkha as the centre. You may not go to the villages, unless you take a little bit of bread to the semi-starved villagers. They will starve. During six months, if Sir P. C. Ray is to be depended upon, for six solid months cultivators of India, i.e., eighty percent of the population of India—have no work. They are idle. Do you suppose that the peasantry of any part of the world can possibly enjoy four months' holiday and make both ends meet. Not even a millionaire in this age will be able to enjoy four months' holiday. They soon find there is a deficit to meet or there is some hopeless mismanagement of their estate. If you want to take a little bit of life into these little cottages of India, you will only do so by the revolution of the charkha and, therefore, I say, whoever draws one yard of yarn per day, has added to the wealth of India; he has done something to alleviate the distress, and as the *Gita* says :

As the great men do so do the men in the street.

You are the future great men of India, you are the salt of the earth. If you, the future hope of India, do not know how to deal with this problem—the very serious problem of poverty of the masses—how are you going to solve it ? What is your education worth? Are you content to rest upon the ashes of seven hundred thousand villages? Will you allow the seven hundred thousand villages to be blotted out off the face of the earth, and if in India there may be a few, say a hundred, cities containing a population, of not three hundred millions but probably twenty millions, can you be satisfied with that and that all these villagers should die out? Will you perform the process that Mr. Malan of South Africa suggested? He says he won't drive the Indians out by the stroke of pen, but he will starve them out. In order that you may receive liberal education, villagers will starve! Is it economics of India? Study the figures and find out where all these millions upon millions of rupees go. Dadabhai Naoroji gave some figures, but it was child's play before the discoveries which are being made now from day to day, because of the double drain from India. The bulk of the revenue which supports this great military expenditure comes from the villages—that is one drain. But there is another drain—the drain of labour; not that the labourers are taken

away but the people are becoming incapacitated for work, so that later on they will say, "We have lost all vigour for work." All that we can do is to adjust the revenue a little bit. Hence it is I say to the students, you must spin for half an hour and wear khaddar.

You ask me a question about mill cloth *versus* foreign cloth. You have not studied the recent economics. I place mill cloth and foreign cloth in the same category. I will not have you wear mill cloth that comes from Ahmedabad, Bombay or even Banga Lakshmi. That is meant for those who do not think of India, who do not think of her future. Therefore, for you the real economics is to wear khaddar. When you wear khaddar, you are supporting the labour of a poor weaver. If you are to wear khaddar, you will be supporting many widows, you will be supporting many of your cultivators who may spin during their idle hours. You will be supporting many weavers who are not getting today sufficient for their labour. Study any history—economic history—and it will tell you that the majority of weavers have died out. Thank God, the weavers as a class have not died! Do you know that in the Punjab the majority of weavers have either become butchers or worse, because they have become soldiers who shot the innocent Chinese in Shanghai and who shot innocent men in Turkey and in all parts of the world? What is this the weavers of the Punjab have been reduced to? There is nothing wrong in becoming soldiers, in becoming butchers. I say it is wrong giving up their honourable calling as weavers. It is a sin for which you and I are responsible. Hence I tell you the real economics for you are that you should wear khaddar. You should spin and spin. Spin in order to make khaddar cheap. That is discipline for you. It will enable you to create your purity. Sit at the spinning-wheel calmly for half an hour and watch the transformation of your heart. I can quote to you instances of many men and women, of brilliant administrators, one of whom was a member in the Bombay Executive Council. He is as old as I am. He learnt spinning only a few months ago. He said: "After I began spinning at the wheel, I have somewhat got rid of my insomnia. I returned from office tired, sometimes at mid-night and, then, I was dozing, thinking of many problems which I did not want to think of. Now I sit at the spinning-wheel and spin away. Immediately comes the all-refreshing sleep—the sleep of innocence." Find out for yourselves what it can do. Find out what it cannot do.

You want excitement? Excitement for a *brahmachari* is

forbidden. In the student life you must steel your hearts against all excitement. Life itself is excitement enough for you. You will find all that excitement when you become a householder. But today you do not want excitement. You want calmness of mind. Read the last 20 verses of the second chapter of the *Gita* and read side by side Wordsworth's description of soldier. Find the common factor between the two. Study that and you won't need ask any questions at all.

I hope I have answered all your questions. If you want to know anything more, write to me and I shall reply to you at the earliest opportunity consistent with my other engagements.

I cannot convince you, God alone can convince you. I can only strive, I can pray for you.

May God help you to be what you ought to be.

Krishnath College Centenary Commemoration Volume, pp. 91 & 100-5

168. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

August 7, 1925

I have just returned from Sir Surendra Nath's home[1] and,when I tell you that I was expecting next Friday to be able to pay my second and promised visit and to enjoy a pleasant and instructive conversation with him, you can imagine with what sadness I must have gone there to pay the visit of condolence. The grief of the womenfolk whom I was privileged to see was unbearable. But Sir Surendra Nath has left a much larger family to mourn over his death than the blood relations whom I saw. Let that thought be a comfort to the bereaved family.

He was at one time the supreme idol of Bengal, if not of the nation. As a young man, during the congress session of 1901[2], which I attended from far-off South Africa, I could see what influence he exerted in Congress deliberations and how nothing could go on without this seasoned soldier. He was one of the makers of Modern India, and if not the originator, certainly one of the originators of the National Congress. I am certain that, when all the strife is over and when we have come to our own, the services of Sir Surendra Nath will be remembered by his countrymen as much as those of any of the

[1] Accompanied by C. F. Andrews and Jamnalal Bajaj, Gandhiji had visited Barrackpore in the morning on his visit of condolence.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Calcutta Congress", 27-12-1901.

patriots who today rule the heart of India. In his own time Sir Surendra Nath was unsurpassed, and I know that, in spite of later differences, some of them fundamental, a grateful country will always cherish the memory of the late patriot who served India not for a few years, but for over a generation. He began when many of us were not even born, and never left the reins.

Forward, 8-8-1925

169. SPEECH AT INDIAN ASSOCIATION, JAMSHEDPUR[1]

[*August 8, 1925*]

I have great pleasure in being able to visit these great steel works. I have been thinking of coming to this place ever since 1917, the year in which I was trying to serve the Champaran agriculturists. It was then that Sir Edward Gait told me that I ought not to leave Bihar without having seen these works. But man proposes and God disposes and with me God had disposed otherwise. I made many attempts to see this place.[2]

As you know I am a labourer myself, I pride myself on calling myself a scavenger, weaver, spinner, farmer and what not, and I do not feel ashamed that some of these things I know but indifferently. It is a pleasure to me to identify myself with the labouring classes, because without labour we can do nothing. There is a great Latin saying of which the meaning is 'to labour is to pray', and one of the finest writers of Europe has said that a man is not entitled to eat unless he labours, and by labour he does not mean labour with the intellect, but labour with the hands. The same thought runs throughout Hindu religion. 'He who eats without labour eats sin, is verily a thief.' This is the literal meaning of a verse in *Bhagavad Gita*. I therefore pride myself on the fact that I can identify myself with labour throughout the world.

It is my ambition to see one of the greatest—if not the greatest—Indian enterprises in India, and study the conditions of work there. But none of my activities is one-sided, and as my religion begins and ends with truth and non-violence, my identification with

[1] Gandhiji was givien an at-home in the evening and addressed a gather-ing of Indians and Europeans.

[2] This paragraph is taken from the report of the speech in *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 14-8-1925.

labour does not conflict with my friendship with capital. And believe me, throughout my public service of 35 years, though I have been obliged to range myself seemingly against capital, capitalists have in the end regarded me as their true friend. And in all humility I maysay that I have come here also as a friend of the capitalists—a friend of the Tatas. And here it would be ungrateful on my part if I do not give you a little anecdote about how my connection with the Tatasbegan. In South Africa, when I was struggling along with the the Indians there in the attempt to retain our self-respect and to vindicate our status, it was the late Sir Ratan Tata who first came forward with assistance. He wrote me a great letter and sent a princely donation,—a cheque for Rs. 25,000 and a promise in the letter to send more, if necessary. Ever since I have a vivid recollection of my relations with the Tatas and you can well imagine how pleasurable it has been for me to be with you, and you will believe me when I say that, when I part company with you tomorrow, I shall do so with a heavy heart, because I shall have to go away without having seen so many things, for it would be presumption on my part to say at the end of two days that I had really studied things here, I know well enough the magnitude of the task before one who wants to study this great enterprise.

I wish to this great Indian firm all the prosperity that it deserves and to this great enterprise every success. And may I hope that the relations between this great house and labourers who work here under their care will be of the friendliest character? At Ahmedabad I have had much to do with the capitalists and workmen, and I have always said that my ideal is that capital and labour should supplement and help each other. They should be a great family living in unity and harmony, capital not only looking to the material welfare of the labourers but their moral welfare also,—capitalists being trustees for the welfare of the labouring classes under them.

I am told that though so many Europeans and Indians live here, their relations are of a happy character. I hope the information is literally true. It is the privilege of both of you to be associated in this great enterprise and it is possible for you to give India an object-lesson in amity and goodwill. You will, I hope, have best relations with one another not only under the roofs of the huge workshops you work in, but you will also carry your amity outside your workshops and both of you will realize that you have come to live and work here

as brothers and sisters, never regarding another as inferior, or oneself as inferior. And if you succeed in doing that you will have a miniature swaraj.

I have said that I am a non-co-operator, I call myself a civil resister—and both words have come to possess a bad odour in the English language like so many other English words—but I non-co-operate in order that I may be able to co-operate. I cannot satisfy myself with false co-operation—anything inferior to 24 carats gold. My non-co-operation does not prevent me from being friendly even to Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer. It harms no one, it is non-co-operation with evil, with an evil system and not with the evil-doer. My religion teaches me to love even an evil-doer, and my non-co-operation is but part of that religion. I am saying these things not to soothe the ears of any one—I have in my life never been guilty of saying things I did not mean—my nature is to go straight to the heart, and if often I fail in doing so for the time being, I know that truth will ultimately make itself heard and felt, as it has often done in my experience. The wish, therefore, that the relations between you should be of the friendliest character is a desire from the bottom of my heart. And it is my deep prayer that you may help in delivering India from evil and bondage and help her to give the message of peace to the outside world. For this meeting of Indians and Europeans in India must have or can be made to have a special meaning, and what can be better than that we two may live together so as to spread peace and goodwill on earth? May God grant that, in serving the Tatas, you will also serve India and will always realize that you are here for a much higher mission than merely working for an industrial enterprise.

Young India, 20-8-1925

170. PROBLEMS OF NON-VIOLENCE

People keep asking me which acts may be termed violent and which non-violent and, what is one's duty at a particular time. While some of these queries reveral the ignorance of the inquirers, others serve to bring out the difficult dilemmas involved. A Punjabi gentleman has put a question the answer to which is worth giving here. It is as follows :

What should be done when tigers, wolves and other wild beasts come and carry away other animals or human beings? Or, what should

be done about germs in water?

In my humble opinion the simple answer is that where there is danger from tigers, wolves and so on, then killing them becomes inevitable. The germs that water contains must also be inevitably destroyed. Violence which is inevitable does not therefore cease to be so and become non-violence. It has to be recognized as violence. I have no doubt that it would be best if we could contrive to sruvive without destroying tigers, wolves, etc. However, who could do so?Only he who is not afraid of these animals and can regard them as friends, he alone could do so. Anyone who refrains from violence because he is afraid, is nevertheless guilty of violence. The mouse is not non-violent towards the cat. At heart, he always has a feeling of violence towards the cat. He cannot kill the latter because he is weak. He alone has the power to practise the dharma of ahimsa who although fully capable of inflicting violence does not inflict it. He alone practises the ahimsa dharma who voluntarily and with love refrains from inflicting violence on anyone. Non-violence implies love, compassion, forgiveness. The Shastras describe these as the virtues of the brave. This courage is not physical but mental.There have been instances of physically frail men having indulged in grave acts of violence with the help of others. There have also been cases where those as physically strong as Yudhishthira[1] have granted pardon to such persons as king Virata[2]. Hence, so long as one has not developed inner strength, one can never practise the dharma of ahimsa. The non-violence practised by the banias today does not deserve the name; one finds in it cruelty sometime and ignorance all the time.

It was because I know this weakness of ours that during the War I went all out to recruit soldiers in Kheda.[3] And, it was for this very reason that I said at that time that perhaps the most brutal act of the British Government was to have disarmed and thus emasculated the Indian people. I hold the same view even today. If anyone afraid at heart cannot, while remaining unarmed, rid himself of that fear, he should certainly arm himself with a stick or an even more deadly weapon.

Ahimsa is a great vow; it is more difficult than walking on the

[1] The eldest of the five Pandava princes in the *Mahabharata*

[2] At whose court the Pandavas had lived in disguise

[3] In 1918; *vide* "Appeal for Enlistment", 22-6-1918 & "Appeal for Enlistment", 22-7-1918.

edge of a sword. Complete adherence to it is almost impossible for one who has a physical form. Severe penance is required for its practice. Penance should be taken to mean renunciation and knowledge. Anyone who desires to possess land cannot practise ahimsa. A peasant necessarily has to protect his land. He must guard it against tigers and wolves. A peasant who is not prepared to punish these animals or thieves, etc., should always be prepared to abandonhis field.

In order to be able to practise the dharma of ahimsa, man must abide by the limits laid down by the Shastras and custom. The Shastras do not enjoin violence. But they permit certain acts of violence by regarding them as unavoidable at particular times. For instance, it is believed that the *Manusmriti*[1] permits the slaughter of certain animals. Such slaughter has not been ordained. Thereafter, with progress in thinking, it was decided that this would not be permitted in the Kaliyuga[2]. Hence it is customary today to regard certain forms of violence as pardonable, while some of the forms of violence allowed by *Manusmriti* are forbidden. It is obviously wrong to argue that we can go beyond the concessions allowed by the Shastras. There is dharma in self-control and, *adharma*[3] in indulgence. Anyone who does not make use of the latitude given by the Shastras deserves to be congratulated. Ahimsa knows no limits because there are none to self-control. The latter has been welcomed by all the scriptures of the world, while opinions differ widely regarding indulgence. A right angle is the same everywhere, while there is no end to the number of other angles. Non-violence and truth together form, as it were, the right angle of all religions. Conduct which does not fit into that angle should undoubtedly be given up. Imperfect conduct may, perhaps, be permitted. Anyone who practises the dharma of ahimsa should increase his inner strength by being always on the alert and progressively restricting the latitude that he has allowed for himself. There is certainly nothing religious about indulgence. Renouncing through knowledge the worldly life—this is the attainment of *moksha*[4] . Such absolute renunciation is not to be

[1] The Code of Manu which is the foundation of Hindu Law
[2] Age of strife
[3] Opposite of dharma
[4] Deliverance from phenomenal existence

found even on the peaks of the Himalayas. The true cave is the one in the heart. Man can hide himself within it and thus protected can remain untouched by the world even though living and moving freely in it, taking part in those activities which cannot be avoided.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-8-1925

171. LOKAMANYA'S DEATH ANNIVERSARY

This death anniversary has come and gone. It was celebrated here—in Calcutta—too. I had to attend the celebrations. Meetings were held at two places and I attended both. What should I have said there?

What does a son do on the death anniversary of his father? If he is a worthy son, he does not make a speech on his father's virtues but rather does something that the latter would have liked him to do. In the present-day meetings too we shall not invite the sons and relatives of the departed leaders to make speeches. Both they and we should be ashamed if we did. The death anniversaries of two leaders came in close succession, viz., that of Moulvi Abdul Rasul and later that of Lokamanya. I saw the former gentleman's son-in-law at the first meeting. No one asked him to make a speech; that task was left to others. This would suggest that just as fingers are kept at a distance from the nail, we too are separated by a distance from relatives. As a matter of fact, this should not be the case. If a son is not permitted to sing his father's praises like a minstrel, we too should not do so.

I had, therefore, decided against singing praises. I felt embarrassed on the day of the anniversary. Only the previous day I had spoken of the spinning-wheel in the same hall. Would I have to repeat all that again? I received the reply: "Where will you run to for fear of criticism, derision or defeat? You have assumed the task of adhering to truth. Of what consequence is it if that which appears to be true to you does not appear to be so to the rest of the world? It is your dharma to tell the truth and practise it." Hence, I repeated the very same things.

Tilak Maharaj gave the people the first half of a *sloka*[1] "Swaraj is my birthright". He passed away, leaving it to us to supply the other

[1] Used here for "Sacred Verse"

half of it, which we did as follows: "The spinning-wheel and khadi are the means of obtaining it." Swaraj is not for the educated class alone. It is not for Hindus or Muslims alone, nor is it only for the wealthy class. Lokamanya's swaraj is for Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians, all. It is for the educated as well the uneducated, for men as well as women, for villagers as well as city-dwellers. Moreover, this swaraj is such that all should take a more or less equal part in the effort to secure it. That which can be secured through the efforts of a single section of people or a single community is not swaraj but rather rule by that particular community or section. What then is the activity which everyone can take up and which leads to the growth of everone's strength? Spining is such an activity. We cannot have cloth without spinning and without spinning we cannot save sixty crores of rupees which are spent in buying cloth from abroad. Moreover, our purpose will not be served if we just save this sum. It should be distributed among crores of Indians.

The spinning-wheel is the only answer to this problem. We can boycott foreign cloth by means of an acitivity which can be taken up by all and which yields good results. Moreover, by doing so we can become strong enough to preserve swaraj as well as to secure it. Hence, those who have come to pay homage to Lokamanya should altogether renounce foreign cloth, wear khadi alone and spin every day for at least half an hour.

Ramanam was dear to Prahlad while he was sleeping, sitting, playing or eating. He cried out that very name even when he was tied to a red hot iron pillar. What could the poor boy do? I am placed in a similar situation with regard to khadi and the spinning-wheel. Even if someone were to tie me up and flog me, I would still cry out that the spinning-wheel and khadi are the means of securing swaraj. There may be—should be—many satellites revolving round it; but, just as the solar system without the sun is nothing, just as an army without a general is like a corpse, just as all activities are futile without Rama, even so without the spinning-wheel all other activities for swaraj are futile.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-8-1925

172. TO CHAIRMEN OF MEETINGS

The function of a judge is not to speak much. It is to listen to good, bad or indifferent speeches. Hence some of these gentlemen scrawl on the papers lying in front of them, others draw good pictures on them, while some others keep fidgeting with pieces of string. The chairman of a meeting is in the same pitiable condition.

On the occasion of Moulvi Abdul Rasul's death anniversary, I was given the honour of presiding over the meeting. I had not known the said gentleman personally but, on inquiry, was informed that although he was a learned barrister, he was humble, a whole-hearted supporter of swaraj and one who maintained his independence and self-respect. He regarded Hindu-Muslim unity as a dharma and was a devotee of swadeshi.

How could I make myself worthy of presiding over a meeting on the death anniversary of such a gentleman? My *takli* which shares whatever fate has in store for me, which is my goddess of peace, which is the source of relief to the poor and miserable in India— is always with me. For fear of having it some day separated from me, through oversight, it is now included in the same case as my spectacles or, more precisely, the latter share the same case with the *takli*. I cannot leave it behind any more than I can my spectacles. I took it out and started spinning. I was no longer worried whether the speeches were interesting or otherwise and I started giving an object-lesson in swadeshi which was dear to Maulana Rasul. At the same time as the speeches, my stock of slivers was coming to an end too. The audience benefited in two ways, by listening to the words of the speakers and by looking at the message spelt out by my hands.

What else would I have to say even at the conclusion of the meeting? My true speech took the form of action. Hence, by way of explanation, I spoke on the spinning-wheel. Swadeshi was dear to Maulana Rasul but he had not fully understood its true implications.We had come to bestow the name of "swadeshi" on those musical instruments or clocks whose parts had all been imported but which had been assembled here. We know now that practical and widespread swadeshi means hand-woven khadi made of hand-spun yarn. This was the interpretation of the message given by my hands.

All chairmen cannot have this twofold benefit. However, I would suggest to those who do not have contempt for the *takli* that if they can keep spinning while sitting on their gadi or chair, they could

spend their time peacefully and also have the honour of adding something to India's wealth.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-8-1925

173. MY NOTES

BASANTI DEVI'S SPINNING-WHEEL

I take every opportunity of paying a visit to Shrimati Basanti Devi. I have not yet succeeded in persuading her to go out daily for a walk. Her courage knows no bounds. However, she cannot shake off her mental agony. She can take interest in nothing. Often, late at night, she visits the cremation ground. But that is not to forget her sorrow; it is rather to add to it. There is only one thing in which she can keep herself occupied. She plies the spinning-wheel for two hours at a stretch and likes the work. The famous European poet Goethe makes the heroine of his best play—*Faust*—hold a spinning-wheel and sing the sweetest of songs. Sir Prabhashanker Pattani described in his public speech the effect the spinning-wheel had on him. It is worth while remembering it on this occasion. He suffers from insomnia. Hence, even at midnight he plies the spinning-wheel. In this way, he overcomes various mental anxieties suffered during the day and then he can sleep peacefully. The spinning-wheel, in this manner, has been able to bring relief to a politician, one who is separated from a dear one and a widow.

PROPAGANDA FOR KHADI IN MAHA GUJARAT

From some figures published by the Gujarat Khadi Mandal relating to propagation of khadi, I find that there are thirty khadi-promoting institutions in Maha Gujarat. The khadi produced in the last twelve months by 16 of these institutions out of yarn spun by its members themselves or of purchased hand-spun yarn, amounted to more than 2,64,000 square yards. The sale of khadi in that period amounted to Rs. 3,85,761-1-3. The net sale proceeds after deducting various charges, etc., are slightly smaller. The figures include khadi that has been brought from outside— for example, Andhra.

This quantity of khadi cannot be regarded as the total quantity produced by Gujarat. For instance, at some places in Kutch and Kathiawar, where the spinning-wheel had never ceased working, the weaving of khadi goes on all the time. Nevertheless, the above

quantity is far less than what we wish to achieve.

Besides these figures, the following is worth knowing: the number of spinning-wheels, the number of persons who weave hand-spun yarn, how many of these latter have taken to weaving again because of the swadeshi movement and how many of them are weavers who have recently learnt this art, how many of them are the so-called untouchables and what is their monthly income, etc. We should find out: the number of spinning-wheels that are in use as a means of livelihood and the number of those which are being used as a sacrificial offering, what is the value of the khadi which was brought over from other parts; how many volunteer workers there are in these organizations and of these how many are paid workers and how many honorary; the amount of the average salary paid to a person and what is the maximum and minimum salary paid to a single individual.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-8-1925

174. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, JAMSHEDPUR[1]

August 9, 1925

Replying to the address in Hindi, Mr. Gandhi announced that at the meeting at which he himself was present along with Mr. R. D. Tata, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Steel Co., Mr. Andrews, and Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, Mr. Tata agreed that the Labour Association with officers duly elected would be recognized by the Company, and that the Company would be prepared to collect subscriptions of the members of the Labour Association from their pay and further that, subject to the confirmation of the Board of Directors, as a token of goodwill and conciliation, Mr. G. Sethi who was dismissed by the Company and Mr. Thomas, who has since been working as an Honorary Secretary of the Labour Association, would be offered re-employment in the Company's works.

Mr. Gandhi hoped the Labour Association would devote its energies principally to the welfare of the labourers and the concessions made would end all the cause of friction between the Company and tens of thousands of workers.

Mr. Gandhi then exhorted his audience to shun two great evils which were

[1] Gandhiji was presented with an address in Hindi and a purse of Rs.5,000 at a mass meeting attended by some 20,000 people.

only too prevalent among the labouring classes all over India. These evils were eating into their vitals. He said:

You cannot get swaraj until you can leave off drink and until you can look upon all women as your mothers and sisters.

The Searchlight, 14-8-1925

175. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Shravana Vad 7 [*August 10, 1925*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. Your handwriting is very clear, I want it just like this every time. Both of you will be happy to know that my weight is nearly eight stone, i.e., 112 lb. I had come down to 106 or 108 in Juhu. I was weighed in the Jamshedpur Hospital.

The Dadabhai Centenary falls on 4th September. I will definitely go to Bombay then.[2] So I shall have only a few days at the Ashram. I must reach Bihar on the 12th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: C.W. 591 also S. N. 9346. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit.

176. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Shravana Vad 7 [*August 10, 1925*][3]

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I got your letter along with the *rakhadi*. *Rakhadi* signifies protection which I always get from you. May God bless you.

I am not able to cope with my Gujarati correspondence with my left hand. Every Monday I want to write to you and Ramdas after I have done with writing for *Navajivan* but the *Navajivan* work takes me late into the night. I am writing this at 8.30 p.m. There is plenty to do. For the English work, however, there are for the present many helpers.

[1] Reference to the Dadabhai Centenary suggests that the letter was written in 1925; in that year *Shravana Vad* 7 fell on August 10.

[2] Gandhiji presided over the Dadabhai Centenary meeting held in Bombay on September 4, 1925.

[3] From the contents of the letter. *Shravana Vad* 7 in 1925 fell on August 10.

I missed you a lot in Jamshedpur. It is a city of workers, isn't it? Mr. Ratan Tata did not give us any trouble. He immediately accepted our demands. You will read more about this in the newspapers.[1]

I was weighed in the hospital there. You will be glad to know that I weighed eight stone. That means I eat as much as I used to at the Ashram. I can even regain my original weight. For me, however, even my present weight is more than enough.

Now I shall have to reach Bombay by September 4. I have to preside over Dadabhai's[2] anniversary which falls on the 4th. After that I shall visit the Ashram for two to four days. I have to reach Bihar by September 12.

Shankerlal was in indifferent health while here. I hope he is all right now. Tell him to take proper care of himself.

I understand about Bhai's signature. I will not insist even on your signature. I can understand your point of view.

I shan't write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32835

177. REMARKS IN VISITORS' BOOK

August 12, 1925

I was taken to the *Basumati* offices. I was pleased with the appointments. I congratulate the proprietor on the choice and cheapness of some of his publications.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 5992

178. SPEECH AT Y.M.C.A., CALCUTTA[3]

[*August 12, 1925*]

In the course of his lecture Mahatmaji asked the young Indian Christians to

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXVIII, pp. 55-6.

[2] Dadabhai Naoroji

[3] The meeting was held at 9.30 p.m. at the Chowringhee Branch of the Y.M.C.A. and was attended largely by Europeans.

follow the noble and glorious examples of the late Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Kalicharan Banerjee and Susil Kumar Rudra, to imbibe their ardent love of mother tongue and national manners and modes of living. Also in their duty to the religion they had given up and secondly, the duty to the religion they had embraced. He appealed to them not to allow themselves to be isolated, but to try to understand the wishes and aspirations of the millions,understand the difficult social problems of the masses and of the mankind and to solve them. Let them prepare for villages, study the wants, the primary wants of the villagers and satisfy those wants.[1]

Forward, 13-8-1925

179. THE LION OF BENGAL

The death of Sir Surendranath Bannerjea removes from Indian political life one who has left upon it the deep impress of his own personality. What though with new ideals and new hopes withing recent times he receded into the background? Our present is the result of our past. Ideals and aspirations of the present day would have been impossible without the invaluable work done by pioneers like Sir Surendra. Time was when the student world idolized him, when his advice was considered indispensable in all national deliberations, and his eloquence held audiences spell-bound. It is impossible to recall the stirring events of the partition days in Bengal and not to think with gratitude and pride of Sir Surendranath's matchless services in connection with it. It was then that Sir Surendranath justly earned from his greatful countrymen the title of "Surrender-not". During the blackest period of the time of partition, Sir Surendranath never wavered, never lost hope. He threw himself into the agitation with all his might. His enthusiasm infected the whole of Bengal. His determination to unsettle the 'settled fact' was unshaken. He gave us the necessary training in courage and resolution. He taught us not to fear authority. His work in the Education department was no less valuable than in the political. Through the Ripon College thousands of young men came under his direct influence and received their liberal education. His regular habits gave him health, vigour, and, what may be called for India, a long life. He retained his mental faculties

[1] Questions were asked at the conclusion of the speech. To a question what was the duty of young Indians towards young Europeans, Gandhiji's reply was "Fraternization". To this he added a rider in a lighter vein, in answer to a supplementary, "By arranging boxing matches".

unimpaired up to the last moment. It required a courage of no small order to resume in his seventy-seventh year the editorship of his paper the *Bengalee*. Indeed, he was so confident of his mental vigour and physical capacity, that he said to me, when I had the privilege of meeting him at Barrackpore two months ago, that he expected to live till 91 years, after which he would not wish to live as he would not retain his mental vigour long thereafter. But Fates had decided otherwise. They snatched him away from us without notice. For nobody had expected so sudden a death. Up to the early hours of the morning of Thursday the 6th instant, he betrayed no sign of dissolution. But though he is no longer with us in the body, his services to the country will never be forgotten. He will ever be remembered as one of the makers of modern India.

Young India, 13-8-1925

180. NOTES

KHADDAR WORKERS' CENSUS

The Secretary, A.I.K.B., had circularized all the provinces to send a list of their khaddar workers with particulars about their qualifications, work and remuneration. Figures have been received only from centres in seven provinces, viz., Bihar, U.P., Utkal, Assam, Maharashtra, Bengal, Kerala and Karnatak, those provinces where khaddar work on any considerable scale is being done having not yet sent their figures. Even the facts and figures so far received from the other provinces are incomplete. Thus, for instance, Bihar reports 32 paid and 2 honorary workers, but the names of some of the most prominent workers there are to be missed. Many centres have been mentioned but not Malkhachak. From Bengal only the Abhoy Ashram has sent the list from which, too, the names of Dr. Suresh Bennerjee, Sjt. Haripad Chatterjea and Annadababu are unaccountably left out. The Karnatak list does not contain the name of Sjt. Gangadharrao Deshpande who has, since Belgaum,[1] devoted the whole of his time to khaddar work. Only the Maharashtra list seems to be fairly full and accurate. Gujarat, Andhra, Bengal, Tamil Nadu, whose lists should heve been particularly interesting and instructive have been entirely reticent.

[1] The reference is to the Congress session of 1924 held here.

And yet the incomplete and meagre details received have an interest of their own. The total number of paid workers are 148, receiving an aggregate allowance of Rs. 3,469, i.e., an average allowance of Rs. 23 per head. The number of honorary workers is 58; though the educational qualifications in some cases have not been shown, the lists show no less than 16 graduates and three lawyers and a number of undergraduates. The maximum allowance received does not exceed Rs. 65 per mensem, and the minimum is as low as Rs. 2. Almost all the workers are full-time workers, and three of the honorary full-time workers are ladies. 128 khaddar centres are mentioned.

NO LABOUR, NO MEAL

Some time ago, I was taken to a magnificent mansion called the 'Marble Palace' in Calcutta. It is richly furnished with some very expensive and some very beautiful paintings. The owners feed, in the compound in front of the palace, all the beggars who choose to go there, and I am told that the number every day is several thousands. This is no doubt a princely charity. It does great credit to the benevolent spirit of the donors, but the incongruity of this ragged humanity feeding whilst the majestic palace is, as it were, mocking at their wretched condition does not seem to strike the donors at all. Another such painful sight was witnessed by me on my visit to Suri, where the reception committee had arranged for feeding the beggars of the district. At the Marble Palace, the crowd that besieged me passed through the line of baggars eating off their dusty leaves spread on the gound. Some almost trampled over them. It was by no means a pleasant spectacle. In Suri it was a little more decently managed, for the crowd was not to pass through the line of baggars, but the motor car that drove me to my destination was slowly taken through the line of the beggars as they were eating. I felt humiliated, more so to think that this was all done in my honour, because, as it was put to me by one of the friends there, I was 'friend of the poor'. My friendship for them must be a sorry affair if I could be satisfied with a large part of humanity being reduced to beggary. Little did my friends know that my friendship for the paupers of India has made me hard-hearted enough to contemplate their utter starvation with equanimity in preference to their utter reduction to beggary. My ashimsa would not tolerate the idea of giving a free meal to a healthy person who has not worked for it in some honest way, and if I had the

power I would stop every *Sadavarta* where free meals are given. It has degraded the nation and it has encouraged laziness, idleness, hypocrisy and even crime. Such misplaced charity adds nothing to the wealth of the country, whether material or spiritual, and gives a false sense of meritoriousness to the donor. How nice and wise it would be if the donor were to open institutions where they would give meals under healthy, clean surroundings to men and women who would work for them. I personally think that the spinning-wheel or any of the processes that cotton has to go through will be an ideal occupation. But if they will not have that, they may choose any other work, only the rule should be: no labour, no meal. Every city has its own difficult problem of beggars, a problem for which the monied men are responsible. I know that it is eaiser to fling free meals in the faces of idlers, but much more difficult to organize an institution where honest work has to be done before meals are served. From a pecuniary standpoint, in the initial stages at any rate, the cost of feeding people after taking work from them will be more than the cost of the present free kitchens. But I am convinced that it will be cheaper in the long run, if we do not want to increase in geometrical progression the race of loafers which is fast overrunning this land.

"VARNASHRAMA" AND UNTOUCHABILITY

A correspondent writes:

> With reference to your comments on my letter on *Varnashrama* published in *Young India* of the 23rd April 1925, I fully appreciate the distinction between *Varnashrama* and untouchability and agree that there is no sanction whatsoever for the latter in Hinduism. But is it not clear that, if the principle of 'division of work based on birth which you approve continues to be the basis of our social organization, the untouchables will be always with us? What is more reasonable than to suppose that in tha cas those members of society who hereditarily perform such social duties as scavenging, corpse-bearing and grave-digging will continue to be looked upon as too unclean to be touched by the rest of the community? In all other countries, scavengers,cobblers,barberswashermen, grave-diggers, undertakers etc.,are not considered untouchable either as individuals or as a class for the simple reason that in those countries these occupations are not hereditary and any member of any of the classes can at any a soldier, trader, teacher, lawyer, politician or priest. It seems to me, therefore, that the root of the evil of the untouchability so peculiar to our country lies in our peculiar social system exclusively based on the principle of heredity. And it also seems to me that so

long as we adhere to that principle we cannot hope to get rid of untouchability. It is just conceivable that, under the influence of mighty reformers like Ramanuja or under the stress of a strong political passion, its virulence may abate from time to time but the evil cannot be wholly eliminated. I am afraid that every attempt to end untouchability without ending the caste idea will prove as futile as attempting to cut off a tree at its top.

The letter is very plausible and, unless the reformer takes care, the danger which the correspondent fears may become a stern reality. There is, however, a clear confusion of thought in the argument. Does untouchability in the case of a cobbler or scavenger attach to birth or to occupation? If it attaches to birth, it is hideous and must be rooted out; if it attaches to occupation, it may be a sanitary rule of great importance. It is of universal application. A collier, whilst he is engaged in his work, is practically an untouchable. He himself refuses to shake the hand extended to him and says, "I am too dirty". But his work finished, he takes his bath, changes his dress, and very properly mixes with the highest in the land. Immediately, therefore, we remove the taint of birth, i.e., the idea of superiority and inferiority attaching to birth, we purify *Varnashrama*. The scavenger's children may remain scavengers without being or feeling degraded and they will be no more considered untouchables than Brahmins. The fault does not, therefore, lie in recognizing the law of heredity and transmission of qualities from generation to generation, but it lies with the faulty conception of inequality.

Varnashrama, in my opinion, was not conceived in any narrow spirit. On the contrary, it gave the labourer, the Sudra, the same status as the thinker, the Brahmin. It provided for the accentuation of merit and elimination of demerit, and it transferred human ambition from the general worldly sphere to the permanent and the spiritual. The aim of the Brahmin and the Sudra was common—*moksha*, or self-realization—not realization of fame, riches and power. Later on, this lofty conception of *varnashrama* became degraded and came to be identified with mere empty ceremonial and assumption of superiority by some and imposition fo degradation upon others. This admission is not a demonstration of the weakness of *Varnashrama*, but of human nature which, if it has a tendency under certain circumstances to rise to the highest point, it has also a tendency under certain other circumstances to go down to the lowest. What the reformer seeks to do is to end the curse of untouchability and to restore *Varnashrama* to its

proper place. Whether *Varnashrama* thus transmuted will survive the reform or not remains to be seen. It will surely depend upon the new Brahmin class that is imperceptibly coming into being, namely, those who are dedicating themselves, body, soul and mind, to service of Hinduism and the country. If they have nothing of worldly ambition, it will be well with Hinduism, if they have, Hinduism, like any other ism, coming into the hands of ambitious men will perish. But I have an immutable faith in the capacity of Hinduism to purge itself of all impurities from time to time. I do not think that that capacity is now exhausted.

ADVICE FROM JAPAN

Some time during last months two Japanese friends came to me, engaged me in a pleasant conversation and left with me the following document:

> The great spirits of India once came to Japan through China.
>
> They made great influences upon the whole of the souls of Japanese.
>
> The influences still have upon us Japanese and will have for ever, so Japanese pay great special respects to India.
>
> Now I am here in India— so much respected country by our people—I feel quite happy.
>
> Even in the present time, at our own age, there came out a greatest man who is wholly self-sacrificed and absolutely honest to the justice and truth.
>
> It should be great happiness to me if I should be allowed to be present before him and should be permitted to be given some influences from him directly.
>
> We know him only through books and newspapers. There may be some misunderstandings on us to know about him.
>
> Let me have honour to be given some of his opinions upon our thoughts.
>
> Men are borned naked. But to them two hands are given.
>
> We think God have given paradise upon men, but he have not given it directly upon men, he have given it indirectly upon them by giving two hands,— the power to create any and everything—to make paradise itself in the present world, so I think it is the duty of men to make use their hands best.For instance, they must make clothes with many variety and beauty to fit to several climates and different occasions. And in some occasions they must be clothed more beautiful than wild beasts and fowls, more beautiful than the skin of tigers or peacocks. Because to be beautiful is one essential thing in

paradise with to be good and to be truth.

To make railroads, steamers, and many different machines is our duty and we must utilize them with utmost efficiency, so yarn system, make pardon to say, I think, is not the final end of our purposes to attain, only one of means to teach people to be thrift, frugality, sound minded and such as to give other many good influences upon them, and make utilize plenty of time in country lifes where many hands are left idle.

I have purposely refrained from making any corrections, for its quaintness would then be gone. I wish I had read this document before seeing these friends, in which case I would have told them that it was my realization of the fact that God has given us two hands that made me think of asking millions of the inhabitants of this land not to allow them to remain idle for a single minute, but to make the best use possible of them so as to be able, by their use during leisure hours, to clothe the whole of India. I would also have asked my visitors to help us to realize our destiny by inducing Japan not to inflict her cloth upon us, but to engage only in such commerce with us as would be mutually beneficial. Finally, I would have told them that I had no quarrel with railroads, steamers and many different machines as such, but that I protested against the abuse that was at present being made of them, either for exploiting many nations of the earth or for destroying them.

Young India, 13-8-1925

181. CURRENCY AND COTTON MILLS

Here is a boiled-down wail from Trichinopoly:

It is regrettable to find that in all your speeches you fail to say a single word about the Indian currency problem and how the Government of India is trying to destroy the indigenous industries by raising the exchange to suit the interests of London merchants. Perhaps you are of opinion that about 300 cotton mills started in India are not a national asset and that the people will be more benefited by the import of cheaper foreign goods from Lancashire. For the past 30 years, the adoption of 1 s. 4d. to the rupee worked well. Even at that time, the Bombay cotton mills were unable to compete with Lancashire owing to the crushing excise duty. There is no excise duty on jute mills of Calcutta which were declaring a dividend of 100 to 400 for the past eight years. At present, the cotton mills are passing through a severe trade depression owing to the huge accumulation of stock from Lancashire which

has been dumped into India when the Government of India raised the exchange from 1s. 4d. in 1923 to 1s. 6d. in 1924 to stimulate imports from Great Britain. There is no use of asking the people to burn foreign clothes, or to spin yarn and wear khaddar unless they are sold at a moderate price. The competition from Lancashire owing to the present high exchange will destroy the khaddar industry even more quickly than the mill industry.

In these circumstances, I earnestly appeal to Mahatmaji to turn his attention more to the industrial regeneration of India *by agitating against the present high exchange policy and against the excise duty* which is unjustly levied upon the cotton mills merely to help Lancashire.

I publish the foregoing not for any merit it contains, but for dispelling the ignorance of methods of warfare the letter woefully betrays. Of course, I have not dealt with currency in the pages of *Young India*, as I have not dealt with many other evils of the present system of Government, e.g., the huge army expenditure. If any writing of mine could possibly remove these gigantic evils, I would every week recount them and impress the services of friends for the same purpose so as to be able to say the same thing in a variety of ways. But those who think like my correspondent should understand that if the evils we know still persist, they do so not because they have not been publicly proclaimed or because the rulers do not know them. Abler men than myself have exposed the wickedness of the Government currency policy, but the exposure has proved of no avail. The policy is supported, not by force of reason, but by the 'sharp edge of the sword'. I am an economist of time and labour. I believe in putting before the readers only those things in which they themselves can, if they will, do something. I do not need to rouse the feeling of the readers in respect of the evils we are suffereing from. They feel them daily. But they are helpless. My privilege, therefore, is to place before them a remedy, or remedies if I can think of more than one. At the risk, therefore, of being unpopular and tiresome by reason of repetition, I continue with all the capacity at my command to tell the reader how we can help to advance the salvation of this depressed country.

Exclusion of foreign cloth is the one thing which is most practicable and is the most effective remedy for our many ills. I must, therefore, continue to harp on that one (to me) pleasant theme.

The correspondent is wholly mistaken if he thinks that this country has to wait, for bringing about exclusion of foreign cloth, for

a phenomenal reduction in the price of khaddar or even of indigenous mill-cloth. The exclusion will be brought about only when the nation realizes its national dharma which she must perform, cost what it may. A good Hindu does not count the cost of performing his *Gayatri* or his multitudinous ceremonials. A good Mussalman does not count the cost of offering his prayers five times a day, neither bargains for an easier road to heaven. It is the business of the Manchester merchants to take their calico to the remotest village of India at the lowest price possible. It is the duty of the villager to reject it in preference to his ill-made khaddar which, from a purely economic point of view, may cost more than the Manchester calico. Why should we think that any agitation on our part will induce the Manchester merchants to become so philanthropic as to waive the facilities by way of currency and otherwise which they can command from the Government of their own making? Will an Indian merchant similarly placed do otherwise than what his Manchester brother is doing today? The only agitation, therefore, that is relevant and effective is the generation of some kind of force that will effectively prevent the dumping down of Manchester and other foreign cloth on the sacred soil of India. My correspondent must be an indifferent reader of *Young India*, or he should have known that I am not indifferent to the mill industry of my country. I proclaim on every relevent occasion that I want all the protection that I can secure for the industry, and that, if I had the power, I would impose a prohibitive tariff on all foreign cloth. But there my duty ends. The mill industry stands in no need of other support from me. It has capital, it has agents who take its manufactures to all parts of India. It is well able to take care of itself. Unfortunately, it is timid and not national. It thinks in terms of profits of its few shareholders. It takes no note of the masses who are the purchasers of its manufactures. Khaddar is no enemy to that industry. Khaddar is its infant brother standing in need of delicate nursing—all the protection that a loving nurse can extend to it. It, therefore, commands my exclusive attention and I endeavour to enlist it from others. When it has grown to maturity, and not before,will be the time to consider the rival claims of the big brother—the mill industry. Only a little clear thinking is required to perceive that rehabilitation of khaddar necessarily means protection for the indigenous mill industry for perhaps a generation to come. But if out of our ignorance we fail to concentrate upon khaddar, not only is

khaddar doomed, but with it is doomed the mill industry of India.

Young India, 13-8-1925

182. SOME STRIKING FACTS

The following report received from the Secretary of the All-India Khaddar Board will be read with the greatest interest:[1]

The report does not only show us how much work has been possible in a year's time amongst the villagers through the simple instrumentality of the spinning population. But what is more striking is a comparison between the figures regarding the earnings from hand-spinning and from agriculture. These figures dispel the idea once for all about the insignificance of the wages received from hand-spinning by professional spinners. The lowest income from the charkha is 14% of the other income, but in some individual families the percentage is as high as 66. The reader will not fail to note too how other reforms naturally come in side by side with spinning. The foregoing report refers to temperance work. In many places in Bengal I have noticed that those who are interested in introducing spinning amongst the villagers took up medical relief as a matter of course and, if they do not touch the other departments of life in the villages, it is not because of want of will, but because the workers are too few, and the villagers too conservative to respond merely for the asking. What is true of the villages[2] examined in Tamil Nadu is equally true of many villages in Bengal. My enquiries have led to the discovery that thousands of cultivators make no more than Rs. 7 to 8 per month during the year. An addition of Rs. 2/- out of spinning done only by the family members is a very substantial relief for these poor cultivators.

Young India, 13-8-1925

183. LETTER TO ANTOINETTE MIRBEL

August 13, 1925

I have your most touching letter.[3] I do not want to strive against

[1] The report, which dealt in detail with the progress of spinning, khadi, etc., in certain villages in the Salem district of Madras, is not reproduced here.

[2] These were: Uppupalayam, Sembampalayam, Chittalandur, Pulianpatti and Pudupalayam.

[3] She had written that she had read a book of extracts from Gandhiji's writings, and wanted to make Gandhiji her "Master and Guru".

you, and if you wish to come, by all means do. Only remember that you will find me of the same flesh of which you and all other fellow-mortals are made. The imperishable soul within can meet and talk from a distance of thousands of miles. However, I do not wish to deny the usefulness, at times, of physical nearness, and if you gain anything by being near me physically, it will be because of your marvellous faith and not because of any superhuman powers that I possess. I am merely a seeker after truth—undoubtedly striving to attain human perfection which all of us can attain by continuous effort. If you decide to come, and if I know the steamer you are to take, someone will meet you at the Bombay docks and take you to the train leaving for Sabarmati. As my right hand is disabled, I am dictating this letter and signing with my left hand.[1]

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai.

184. LETTER TO J. KUSARY

148, RUSSA ROAD,
CALCUTTA,
August 15, 1925

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I like your business-like letter. Here is my reply. There should be no hurry.You will find enough work with the spinning-wheel. You need not think of attracting all classes at once. I should not start Hindu Sabhas, at least for the time being. Conducting a school and giving medical relief may well form part of a spinning organization, so far as they help spinning. If workers engage in paying industries, they cannot give exclusive attention to spinning. But if to spinning you add weaving, you make your institution financially self-supporting in the end. During the interval, you must expect the nation to find livelihood for the workers who give their whole time to the development of spinning. You must not think of having property that will yield a permanent income.

I do not know what you mean by the example of Christian

[1] In her reply of September 6, Antoinette Mirbel wrote to Gandhiji how his letter had made her "shed tears of joy over it." On September 29, she informed Gandhiji that she was leaving Marseilles on October 9 and would reach Bombay on October 23.

missionaries. You are yourselves working in villages. To make people self-reliant, fearless, self-supporting, resourceful and healthy is to make them keep swaraj always in view. There is nothing in the name swaraj apart from the qualities I have mentioned. Philanthropic societies exclude the idea of political freedom. You do not exclude it, neither do you parade it to raise false notions.

You may seek help from district boards and the like for your work so long as you are not called upon to sacrifice your freedom. Villagers' non-co-operation consists in modelling their lives, so far as practicable, independently of Government. They need not go to law-courts if they will not quarrel, and if they will submit to arbitration.They need not send their children to Government schools.

If the workers have the spirit of real non-violent non-co-operation, they will infect the villagers with it, not by speech but by their conduct.

I would not be a party to voluntarily sending any boy to a Government school. National schools, imperfect though they may be, must be encouraged, but here again no boy need be prevented by any mechanical contrivance from going to a Government school. It is nouse his refraining unless he feels the indignity himself.

If by half-educated Indians you mean those who cannot speak English correctly, I know many such who have got the highest ideals. There are thousands of graduates who have no higher ideal than to make as much money as they can, and disappear from public life altogether.

I wonder if I have answered all your questions.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. JITENDRANATH KUSARY
SATYASHRAM
BAHROK P. O.
DACCA

From a photostat : G.N. 7188

185. LETTER TO SAMBAMURTI

148, RUSSA ROAD,
August 15, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

My unexpectedly long stay in Bengal has upset all my arrangements. Up to the end of October I am booked in Bihar. There

will then remain the following provinces which I was expected to visit before the end of the year. They are Andhra, Tamilnad, Kerala, Karnatak, C.P. Marathi, C.P. Hindi and Maharashtra.

It is impossible to visit all these provinces in less than two months. Unless, therefore, it is absolutely necessary, I would ask you to disengage me from the projected visit to your province. If, however, you consider that it is absolutely necessary for me to visit your province, please let me know how long you will want me.

If more provinces require my presence than it is possible for me to visit during the time available, I propose to draw lots. I would urge you, therefore, to waive the visit if it is at all possible.

I am in Calcutta up to the 31st instant. I would like you to let me have your reply by letter or telegram before that date.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. SAMBAMURTI
PRESIDENT, P.C.C.
RAJAHMUNDRY

From a microfilm : S.N. 10651

186. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CALCUTTA[1]

August 15, 1925

With profound feelings of sorrow, this meeting of the citizens of Calcutta, representative of all parties and all communities, desires to place on record its deep and abiding sense of the loss sustained by the country by the demise of Sir Surendranath Banerjea, Kt., the high priest of Indian nationalism. His undaunted and unremitting labours for the last 50 years in the service of the motherland, fired with the warmth of apostolic fervour, constitute an unparalleled record of noble endeavour and high achievement which will ever remain enshrined in the grateful recollections of his countrymen and be a source of unfailing inspiration to the nation he served. This meeting tenders its respectful homage to his adored memory, and conveys its deep sympathy to the members of the bereaved family in their great loss.

Mahatmaji said that he regarded it as a privilege to be able to attend the

[1] The meeting was held at the Town Hall to pay homage to the late Sir Surendranath Banerjea.

meeting—a privilege to be able to move the resolution. He knew that they did not want him to make a long speech in praise of the old patriot. The resolution itself summed up what Sir Surendranath was to them and what he meant to the nation. Of late, from many a platform, he had been obliged to warn them against being satisfied with mere lip praise. At one meeting he had said: "Let us not be bards." He had the honour of making the acquaintance of and paying his respect to the late Sir Surendranath in 1896, when he came from South Africa to pay a temporary visit. Long before that he had heard about his matchless oratory. When the speaker approached the great leader in 1896, as a young man, he then dimly realized what he was. He had the pleasure of renewing that acquaintance in 1901. He was able, if he might say so in all humility and reverence, to study him at close quarters. He watched him at the Subjects Committee; he watched him haranguing huge crowds that used a hang upon him during those days. The speaker saw then how indispensable his presence was considered at every meeting, whether it was a mass meeting or whether it was a private conference. He was needed for every national deliberation and he was needed in order to fire the enthusiasm of his countrymen. Whilst he was in South Africa, reading the proceedings of one of the National Congress sessions, he read that as soon as Sir Surendranath rose and made an appeal to the audience for money, ornaments were flung by ladies into his lap or on his table. Monied men threw notes on the table. Many promises were forthcoming. Whenever money was wanted, Sir Surendranath was also wanted and so throughout his observations, he understood what Sir Surendranath meant to Bengal and what he meant to India.

Let us, the present generation, not forget the services of those heroes of the nation—services they rendered before many of us were born. It makes not the slightest difference that we may not see eye to eye with such illustrious men. If they had not laid the foundation, we would not have been able to build; if they had not laid the foundation, we would not have been able to do what we are doing today. They set in those days an example when others were not forthcoming—an example in courage, an example in sacrifice, an example in diplomacy—not the diplomacy of the mean sort which is so much in vogue today. I am talking of that diplomacy which every nation requires, which every individual requires. Let us think of his services of those days, let us treasure the memory of the great deeds wrought by men like Sir Surendranath whom the nation in its admiration called 'Surrender-not'. And is it not true? Was not the title deserved by him during those dark but brilliant days of Partition? Was he not able, through the assistance of Bengal behind him and the whole of India, to unsettle the 'settled fact'? Was he not able to do many things of which we, the present generation, have every reason to be proud? Let

us not, therefore, in our better wisdom, which we so impute to ourselves, forget the great services of the great heroes. Let us shed, therefore, tears over the ashes of Sir Surendranath. But let us do a little better. Let us follow some of the things which it is given to every one of us today. We may not have his eloquence, probably not one of us has his great memory, but every one of us can imitate his love of the land, every one of us can imitate his unfailing regularity. Until the other day, when I had the honour of waiting upon him at Barrackpore, he told me that the secret of his health and the secret of his vitality was his unfailing regularity. I remember in 1901, when an important meeting was going on, the meeting could not be finished. Sir Surendranath apologized and said, "Gentlemen, I must catch my last train for Barrackpore." Sir Surendranath could not wait for the meeting. The meeting had to be postponed for Sir Surendranath. What did he do ? He kept his time not from selfish motives, but he did so for the sake of the nation he loved so much. Let us, therefore, remember these constructive virtues. What has he not done for the education of Bengal! Was he not at one time the idol of young men of Bengal? Let us imitate him in the love of the motherland; every one of us, man, woman or child, all of us can imitate.

There are many more things, but one thing I must not omit because it is a treasured memory. When I was with him at Barrackpore, he said to me, "I am going to live till 91 years. I am now preparing the second edition of my reminiscences. I am going to give many a battle to the Government, many a battle to the Swarajists. I shall be engaged in all these things. But do you know what is the nearest to my heart?""I don't know," said I."I belong," replied Sir Surendranath, "to the school of Vidyasagar. You will find it written in the first page of my book. If I had to rewrite the whole of my life, what do you think I would do? I would serve the neglected widow. I would repair the fortunes of many a broken home. I cannot bear the sight of innocent children having widowhood enforced upon them." Let the young men of Bengal remember their little innocent sisters. I hear such cases from every side of Bengal. Bengal is no exception, things are going the same all over India. A case was brought to my notice only last night. I do not want to detain you on that case. I simply mention this thing to enable the young men of Bengal to understand what it is that we have to do.

The political freedom of this country involves our contract with

every department of life. You may not get political freedom but cannot wait for social amelioration. If you will have little girls marrying and becoming mothers, we shall have to live as a race of pigmies. No wonder, then, if we are not able to think clearly for ourselves, no wonder, then, if in the words of Lord Willingdon, we will not say "yes" when we should say "yes"and "no" when we mean "no". I know many Englishmen have asked me: "When will you learn to say "yes" when you mean "yes" and "no"when you mean "no", irrespective of consequences."

Let us therefore, touch the national life in every department and we will have sufficiently revered the memory of this great patriot.

Forward, 16-8-1925

187. LABOURERS' SAD PLIGHT

A gentleman has written the following letter[1], mentioning his own name and address:

There seems to be no exaggeration in this letter. Those who have some experience of the labouring class are aware of this. In spite of any improvement that may take place in their condition, I do not see the possibility of much change in it.What is involved here is the education of this class. The labourers that the writer refers to are not those employed in mills. Theirs is a different tale. These facts relate to labourers employed in masonry work, etc. That class will continue to exist so long as the world lasts. The only safeguard for them is in education. There is no reason why they should offer bribes, there is no reason why they should remain suppressed. Their ignorance and weakness are the reasons why they offer bribes, remain suppressed, witness or perform licentious acts. Neither the spinning-wheel nor weaving offers any remedy for this. These can help a little, but they cannot impart knowledge to these labourers. The correspondent himself shows weakness. If he is able to feed his mother and educate his brother only on condition that he is a witness to such immorality, he should starve himself and feed his mother and put a stop to his brother's education. His brother's as well as his own education could be said to begin from the very day that he does so. The mother, if she

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent, himself a labourer, had complained about bribery among overseers who supervised the work and about their licentious behaviour towards women labourers.

is not a cripple, should also work. She should either spin or weave. In order to fulfil his vow of spinning, the correspondent should carry a *takli* wherever he goes and then he would never have to suffer hunger even if he has no spinning-wheel. And, with more such brave labourers the atmosphere around them will get purified.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-8-1925

188. MY SENTINELS

Lucky is the man who has self-appointed sentinels. I think I am such a fortunate person. Numberless are my critics. Some speak out of malice, others out of ignorance, some apparently because that is their custom. I learn all I can from these persons; this, however, is not much. I deliberately refrain from reading comments which I know are merely malicious, lest I should be angry with the critics and anger lead to delusion.

Those who keep guard over me, however, belong to a different category; they are trying to make a perfect man of me. They will forgive faults in others, but they get agitated when they find any fault in me. Such sentinels I welcome as, with their help, I hope to attain perfection. It is the dharma of everyone to become perfect. I have been able to see my dharma.The attainment of perfection should not, I think, be impossible if the circumstances are favourable. My sentinels have been contriving to create for me such circumstances. One such sentinel writes to say:[1]

I welcome this letter. The correspondent mentions only three funds. In my life, however, I must have collected not three nor thirteen, nor even thirty, but perhaps three hundred funds, large as well as small. There is one rule that I always abide by. I do not lend a hand in collecting funds where I do not regard the secretaries or treasures as dependable. And, to this day I have had no experience where those in charge of maintaining accounts have misappropriated funds.This does not imply that not a single pie has been missing from any of the funds. Despite great vigilance on the part of the secretary and the treasurer, sums have been misappropriated. I have found that the secretary or the officers primarily concerned are not to blame for

[1] Note translated here

this. I shall cease to collect funds when I start doubting my judgment of persons. This is not to say that my judgment is correct, but I believe that as a rule I would obtain pass marks in any test for ability to judge.

Let us now take up those funds one after the other. Accounts of the funds of the Satyagraha Sabha[1] and the Swaraj Sabha[2] have beenkept. Shri Shankerlal Banker was their life and leading light. The accounts are open to inspection. The sums in these funds were small and the account-books have been preserved.

The Jallianwala Bagh Fund[3] was a large one. It did amount to about five lakhs, though not to ten. Pandit Malaviyaji, the jewel of India, was its very soul. Its accounts up to the last pie have been published many times. They have been brought out as a booklet and have also been published in newspapers. A part of the fund has been used for the purchase of a piece of land, in which there is today a beautiful well-maintained garden. And if the project has gone no further, perhaps I am mainly responsible for it. The hopes we entertained when it was conceived are there no longer. It is only when communal disputes are settled that some form of a fitting memorial can be built there. The reader will be sorry to learn that today even that garden has become a bone of contention. I dare not spend the money in building a useless memorial. If a proper building is not constructed during the life-time of the present trustees, it will be done in future. Mean-while, I am satisfied at any rate that the money is in good hands.

The largest fund was the Tilak Swaraj Fund. It too has been severely criticized. Its accounts were maintained fully and are still there. They have been published in the form of a book. The accounts have been examined by auditors. I am firmly convinced that that fund has been least mismanaged. It may be said that it was not used very intelligently. This, however, was inevitable. In this first attempt to use a large sum of money through an organization the lack of competence was less than is usually found. The reason for this was the constant vigilance on the part of the secretary and the treasurer. There has not been as much written off here as in a business firm; on an average such a firm makes allowance for a loss of ten per cent by way of bad

[1] Founded by Gandhiji in Bombay in 1919

[2] All-India Home Rule League which was re-named by Gandhiji as Swaraj Sabha after he accepted its presidentship in April 1920

debts. I have found certain big businessmen in South Africa writing off 25 per cent as bad debts. The Congress might have suffered a loss of hardly one per cent. I may be mistaken in this. This may actually amount to two per cent but certainly not to ten per cent. The reader must note that this fund has not yet been exhausted. It has enabled us to have transactions in khadi amounting to lakhs of rupees and to buy a building in Bombay. Thousands of spinning-wheels have started working because of it, national schools have been established all over the country, and are run even today, out of this fund. Not even a pie from it has been used outside the country.

The other fund, worth knowing about although it involves a small amount, is the Padhiar[1] Fund. There may be a difference of opinion on the use it has been put to. I had, however, looked into the details of the fund. I know, at any rate, that not a single rupee was misused and that the fund has been entrusted to honest persons.

Last year, I was given large sums by my readers for relieving distress in Malabar.[2] Detailed accounts of the amount that was spent from it were published in the South Indian newspapers. There is still some balance left over with me in the bank. I cannot give the figures now as I am out of station. I am looking for proper ways to use that sum for some good purpose. I do not know of a single pie of it having been misused.

Let us now come to the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund in Bengal. Some of the best people in Bengal are among its trustees. Seven persons are in charge of operating it. From this fund, two lakhs of rupees were paid by way of debts. The public got a large building worth three lakhs in return. Arrangements are being made for the immediate opening of a hospital in that building. That work is being looked after by the well-known doctor of the place—Dr. Bidhan Roy. I am, therfore, certain that these funds will be used as we would like them to be.

Finally, let us take the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund.For the time being, by becoming its chairman I have taken the responsibility for it on myself. I am mainly responsible for nominating its trustees. I wish that my capacity, such as it is, may be gauged by the way in which this fund is administered. Its secretary

[1] Sunderji Padhiar, a Gujarati author much admired by Gandhiji
[2] *Vide* Vol. XXV, pp. 2-4.

and treasurer are noted workers. Its aim is to propagate the spinning - wheel and khadi. I wish to dedicate the latter part of my life to this work. But I do not know what the will of God may be.

The work of cow-protection has of course to be done.That task is beyond my capacity to handle. I am on the look-out for a good Marwari treasurer. I have received letters from many aspirants to the secretaryship. I have to select someone from among these persons. Let me, however, talk only of the funds now. I have no desire, whatsoever, to collect any more funds in addition to these. Whether the totalamounts to 10 lakhs or not, contributions from Bengal will be discontinued at the end of this month. I made a small beginning in Jamshedpur for the All-India memorial.The sum of Rs. 5,000 collected by the menfolk there will go to the Bengal fund. The sum the women gave me will be used for the all-India fund. This amounted to over a thousand. Another sum of Rs. 500 donated by a Gujarati gentelman and a sum of Rs. 500 donated by a Sikh gentleman will also be credited to the latter fund. The only reason for doing so is that Jamshedpur is in Bihar.The ten lakhs to be contributed by Bengal should be collected from Bengal and from Bengalis living in other provinces. If other Indians of their own accord send money for this purpose, it will not be refused.This, however, can not be insisted upon. And, where the matter is left to my discretion, it is my dharma to credit these sums to the all-India fund.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 16-8-1925

189. MY NOTES

VISIT TO JAMSHEDPUR

Jamshedpur was originally called Sakchi. It is in the province of Bihar. Born of the vision of Jamshedji Tata it has become one of the largest iron producers in the world. This place was formerly an unpopulated forest; now 1,06,000 people live there. Among them there are people of all communities and faiths—Bengalis, Biharis, Sikhs, Kabulis, Parsis and Christians. There are several factories there. This township owes a debt of gratitude to the courage of Jamshedji Tata. Hence the then Governor or Viceroy named it Jamshedpur. It is also called Tatanagar by the labourers.

I had planned to see this factory many years ago. One thing

after another, however, prevented me from doing so. On this occasion, too I would have been unable to go had Andrews not urged me to go there for the sake of the labourers. Andrews and persons like him make me helpless and drag me along according to their wishes. Hence, I went to Jamshedpur and stayed there for two days.[1]

However, what can one see of such a large factory in two days ? I could not see a single thing well. I myself am a labourer and went there to serve the labourers. Nevertheless I have been unable to get any idea of the living conditions of the labourers. What could I find out until I had seen their homes, their courtyards, and so on.

Nevertheless, what follows will convey my impression: The climate is good; there is very good water supply. The houses presented a good appearance from outside.To all appearances, people seemed to be happy. The roads looked well built. Mr. Andrews is the president of the labour union.Three outstanding matters were resolved after a little discussion,viz., that the company should recognize the labour union, that the latter could freely elect its own leaders, that Mr. Shethi could continue to be the secretary of the union and that Mr. Ratan Tata should arrange to re-employ him in the company. If the labourers would apply in writing, the company would, within a period that it found suitable,pay their dues directly to the union by deducting them from wages. The union must primarily assume the responsibility to improve the conditions of the labourers themselves. The company has gained in credit by accepting these demands. The labourers now have to play their part.

This time I was able to take Mahadev along with me; hence, readers may expect a detailed description in his article.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-8-1925

190. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Shravana Krishna 13 [*August 17, 1925*][2]

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter about subsisting on fruit. I have myself lived on dried and fresh fruits for some years and it did me no harm. I had

[1] In the second week of August 1925

[2] The year is inferred from the reference to the addressee's wife.

at that time also given up salt. I cannot advise you to try this experiment. However, if you give up salt and ghee for a while it will certainly help you in cooling down your passions. It is essential to give up spices as well as pan and the like. One cannot subdue one's sex and allied passions merely with a restricted diet; an aspirant can least afford to do away with any of the accompanying observances.Absolute cessation of desire comes only after revelation of the Supreme.This is on the authority of the *Gita* and is quite true. You must read my book *Arogya Digdarshan*, if you haven't read it already. A Hindi translation was published years ago.

I hope you are now perfectly all right. I wish your wife peace.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original : C.W. 6112. Courtesy: G.D.Birla

191. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

Monday, August 17, 1925

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your letter. I approve of the first plan but we have to think more about it. I hope to reach the Ashram on the 5th. I must return on the 9th. But during those four days it would be good if some of us got together. I am afraid that the happy ones would benefit from our leniency whereas the unhappy ones might be left out. The wheel will, we reckon, put an end to the misery of the unhappy people. Proverty is increasing, we believe, in Kathiawar. If that is not true, we will have to think over it again. We should keep two things in mind.We should make khadi so cheap that the poor too can wear it and those who are hard up for even one pice should be given the spinning-wheel and work. The third point is that even if we stop giving bonus after a certain period the work should not stop. We can only discuss all this only when we meet.

Fix whatever day you wish to, after talking to Vallabhbhai. If you wish to convene the Parishad Committee, you may do so.

The Franchise Committee has not yet met.The All-India Congress Committee will meet and do as they please. Jawahar is considering some of the suggestions. I hope to circulate the draft in a few days.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5725

192. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Monday [*August 17, 1925*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

Owing to too much travelling at present, I forget to write nor have I the time. I know that you are calm, so I do not worry if I cannot write.Whether I write or not I expect your letter, in which you must give your diary.

Your health should now have improved a lot.

We start for Orissa tomorrow.

Blessings from

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: C.W. 513. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

193. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

Monday [August 17, 1925][2]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. Do not mind having made it a long one. It seems to me that you are harming your health by being somewhat hasty. I may not have as much faith in Hakimji as you have but that does not mean you should give up his treatment. Despair is a witch. Drive her out. Do not mind if your efforts bear no fruit. Exert yourself only within the limits of your strength.

As regards your mental condition too, instead of lamenting over it, you should go on trying to overcome it.

You need not at all worry about Kaka. He is strong enough to look after himself. He will not be disheartened by differences of opinion. How can we bring all people to look at a thing from the same point of view? The opposition of students will subside when they face him. And, finally, why grieve what is inevitable?

If I can, I will look into the Phoenix matter. About the Tolstoy Farm, I wrote as and when I remembered [the incidents]. It is possible

[1] Gandhiji left on his Orissa tour on August 18.

[2] Somebody, possibly Prabhudas himself, has noted '*Bhadarva Sud* 1, Thursday, Samvat 1981', presumably as the date of the receipt of this letter. Samvat 1981 corresponded to the year 1925, and in that year *Bhadarva Sud* 1, Thursday was on August 20. The Monday, preceding that Thursday, was on August 17.

that I may have been ignorant of some things.[1]

It is desirable that, even when ill, one should wake up at four and pray.

Would not Jaikrishnabhai[2] agree to join the Ashram and teach?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 33020

194. SPEECH AT ROTARY CLUB[3]

CALCUTTA,
August 18, 1925

After thanking the Rotarians for the delicate courtesy that they had extended to him in making their luncheon a Bengali widow's luncheon—a mere potato-and-cabbage luncheon—and for inviting him to speak to them on a subject which was perhaps as uninteresting as the menu spread before them, Mr. Gandhi said:

"Charkha" is not an inviting word though I see that your magazine is called *Charkha*. I did not know that this was an Indian word you had copied.That means charkha—a wheel. I have also come to represent the potency of the wheel, the spinning-wheel or the spindle I hold in my hand (showing a little instrument), and I have so often humorously said to my mill-owning friends that I propose to compete with them with this little spindle. But beyond that humour it has a seriousness all its own.

First of all, as to its economic value. You know that the surface of India is 1,900 miles long from north to south and 1,500 milesbroad from east to west and it includes 700,000 villages over this vast surface. The majority of the villages are not served by any railway system at all. There was a time in India when the spinning-wheel was a supplementary occupation of this vast agricultural population.The present agricultural population of India as the Government statistics

[1] The reference seems to be to Gandhiji's treatment of the Phoenix Settlement and the Tolstoy Farm in the chapters relating to them in the *History, of Satyagaraha in South Africa* in Gujarati which was serially published in *Navajivan* from April 13, 1924 onwards.

[2] J. P. Bhansali

[3] Gandhiji was the chief guest and speaker at the Rotarians' meeting held in the Grand Hotel.

tell us is nothing less than 85 per cent.The Government statistics also tell us that this 85 per cent of the population of India has at least four months in the year absolutely idle. Some of them who are in the know tell me that in Bengal there are agriculturists who have nothing to do for six months in the year. You can imagine what will happen to a man who takes four months' or six months' holiday without pay. Not even the Viceroy of India can afford that vacation. Besinessmen, I think, even though they may be millionaries never give themselves all that holiday and do no business. Much less can this vast agricultural population which the historian of India, the late Sir William Hunter, told us 30 years ago was living a hand-to-mouth existence. He said that one-tenth of the population of India was living on one meal only per day and that meal consisted of dry bread and a pinch of dirty salt. They did not know what milk or ghee was. Nor did they get any vegetables.

As you know, famine is chronic in India, It is a money famine. I suggest to you, as business people, that for such people a supplementary occupation is an absolute necessity, and if it is an absolute necessity it must fulfil certain conditions to apply to this vast mass of mankind. It must, therefore, be a universal occupation. It must be an occupation whose products can be easily taken over by the whole of the population. Therefore it will be idle to suggest that they should make articles of luxury. It must be one that they could easily learn.If it requires a good deal of skill or if the instrument of production requires a great manufacturing skill or if it was expensive, it would not answer.

Showing a small spindle in his hand Mr.Gandhi said that that little simple device could produce 50 yards of yarn per hour. A spinning-wheel on an average could give 400 yards per hour. The highest output of a spinning-wheel was 850 yards per hour. No mill spindle had yet produced 850 yards of 10 counts per hour. That could only be done by the human hand. What the mill could do was that thousands of spindles could be worked by a few women with a great power behind it. It was good, it had its place.He did not want to displace the machinery from its proper place. He ventured to suggest that for these few millions of peasantry of India there was no other cottage occupation of that universal character as the spinning-wheel. Any body going to the villages would find some remnants of spinning-wheel. Women throughout the length and breadth of India were taking it up without the slightest difficulty because they were born to it. They knew what it was. But one other condition had to be fulfilled. Who would use the product of that wheel? Naturally the

people of India, as they did 200 or even 100 years ago, when every Indian was clothed in garments spun by Indian women and woven by Indian weavers. The weaving industry had not died out entirely but the spinning industry had all died out and there was a reason for it. The spinning industry could not support a large body of people by itself. It could only be a supplementary industry and therefore there was not that resistance to its destruction which the weaving industry offered, for the simple reason that the weavers lived purely upon weaving as their sole occupation whearas the peasantry had their agriculture as the backbone. India imported Rs. 60 crore worth of foreign yarn and adding a similar quantity to it produced by local mills, they could easily imagine what it meant to a poor country like India whose average income, according to Lord Curzon, was in his time Rs. 30 to 33 per year. The late Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji calculated the average annual income to be Rs. 26.The late Mr. R.C. Dutt challenged Lord Curzon's figure, and Mr.Gandhi thought that it was successfully proved that Mr. Dadabhai's figure was more reliable and more correct. Even taking Lord Curzon's figure what did it signify? Less than Rs. 3 a month. If the spinning-wheel could add even Rs. 5 or Rs. 6 per year to their income, was it not a fortune to them ? It was, said Mr.Gandhi. That was the economic aspect of the spinning-wheel. That would solve largely the problem of the economic distress. It would solve the problem of famine. It would solve the problem of poverty. People need not live on charity which must be shameful to the giver as well as to the taker who had his limbs unimpaired.

As for the spiritual aspect of the charkha, Mr. Gandhi said that it flowed naturally from the former. If they must industrialize India in the English and American fashion by covering it with factories, they could do with a small population but could not deal with a vast population in a summary fashion. He asked :

> Do you want the people to congregate in boxes where men and women are huddled together in a manner which I could not picture to you. I save them from such an immorality by giving them this occupation. There is another spiritual aspect about it. A man is often known by his occupation. There is a great deal of truth in the proverb 'When Adam delved and Eve span, who was then the gentleman?' That was the time when men were really contented and there was real brotherhood.[1]

If the mills made superfluous additions to the treasures of the already rich, the spinning-wheel was certainly spiritually superior to it inasmuch as it filled the pockets not of those who were already rich but of the starving and the needy millions.

[1] The paragraph that follows is taken from Mahadev Desai's report in *Young India*, 27-8-1925.

I read with deep interest Drummond's book *Natural Law in the Spiritual World* long ago, and I am sure that if I had that writer's facile pen, I would demonstrate even better that there is a spiritual law in the natural world.

He had read books by sane men seriously advocating electrocution to end the race of the starving and the diseased and the infirm. It may be an eminently economical remedy, but it was not a human or a spiritual remedy. In the spinning-wheel he was offering to his countrymen a spiritual remedy, a remedy with which they had been familiar for ages, and a remedy which if seriously tried would save them from the hideous consequences that town and factory life involved. And need he say anything as to the spiritual reaction on the mind, of the simple instrument? Well so many who had tried it bore witness to the fact that it brought peace to the distracted and troubled mind, and the genius of Goethe had woven that effect into song for ages, when he represented Margaret spinning away at the wheel and through its inspiration spinning out of her lips a song as perfect as the yarn from the wheel. He was not an enemy of inventions, said he, clinching the argument, but as matter misplaced was dirt, all inventions misplaced were abominations, to be shunned if they did not add to human dignity and peace.

Questions were invited. . . Mr. A. T. Weston said that he gathered from Mr. Gandhi's observations that weaving was also necessary besides spinning.Why should not then mill-made yarn be used for weaving on a large scale? Mr. Gandhi replied that everyone of the millions of India could spin during their spare time but they could not weave in a similar manner. That was why he had placed the spinning-wheel in the forefront.[1]

Gandhiji had studiously avoided the political aspect of the spinning-wheel throughout his discourse, but Dr. Sarbadhikari, a Rotarian, who spoke last compelled him to do so. 'If the spinning-wheel', he asked in effect, 'had played such a large part in Hindu ritual and was a living thing in the Bengali home, how had it fallen into disuse? Is it not the cost of the product of the wheel which had driven it out?' That, said Gandhiji, involved the spiritual aspect too. If he had the authority of Queen Elizabeth he would deal with the question just as she had done. She made it criminal for her people to use Holland lace,and imported workmen from abroad to teach the people how to make lace, and interdicted the use of lace until then. He was not an out-and-out free trader and he would if he could effectively stop all import of foreign cloth by heavy import duties. He said warming up:

And you have asked how the industry had died. Well it is a painful answer, but I must give it. *It was made to die*.

[1] What follows is from Mahadev Desai's report in *Young India*, 27-8-1925.

He could have narrated the whole blood-curdling tale which tarnished the record of East India Company, but he refrained.

It would make the blood of every honest man and women boil to turn over the pages written not by Indians but by the servants of the Company. When I tell you that people had to cut off their thumbs in order to escape the terrorism let loose, you would understand the position.

The charkha was not living in every home, as Dr. Sarbadhikari had said, it had been killed, and it was now being revived. Every country had to organize its industries, and it did not matter if they had to pay more for their products in the beginning. 'Service before self' was the motto of the Club, and the speaker, reminding them of it, said:

You are trustees of the welfare of the people of India. You will have to put service before self and teach them to feel that they should not have Manchester Calico or mill-made cloth when they can make cloth in their own homes.

He instanced the competition betweeen a foregin Steam Navigation Company and a British Company, where the former went the length of selling tickets almost free for deck passengers which once used to cost Rs. 91, and said:

Healthy industry cannot stand that competition. You will educate the world opinion against such immoral competition. I want fair competition, and no favour.

The Englishman, 19-8-1925

195 LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Wednesday, Shravana Vad 15 [*August 19, 1925*]

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. It is not that I wish you to be without bangles. I advise you to wear silver bangles. Just wearing rosewood bangles would not look nice. But there is no harm in wearing conch-shell bangles. I see that they are not cheap. I have already sent a reply as regards Dahyabhai. On the whole I feel Tibbia College would be good. But now I hope to reach there on the 5th September, so we shall discuss it when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 28

196. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Shravana Vad 15 [*August 19, 1925*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I had your letters, but I did not write as there was nothing much to reply to.

I do not have time and moreover writing with the left hand takes double the time. I shall reach the Ashram on the 5th and start from there on the 9th. Meet me then.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI NARANDAS KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI
OPP. MIDDLE SCHOOL
NAVAPARA

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 6198. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

197. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

Shravana Krishna 15 [*August 19, 1925*][2]

BHAI BENARSIDASJI,

I had guessed from your language that you were angry. If you were not, I have nothing to say. Hope you are keeping well.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

PS.

I write this with my left hand as the right one aches.

PANDIT BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI
FIROZABAD
DIST. AGRA

From the Hindi original : G.N. 2557

198. WHY NOT SURRENDER COMPLETELY ?

The following is a typical letter. It is signed by several No-changes.

> Your promise to please the whole Congress machinery at the disposal of the Swarajists in order to make it predominantly a political body must have shocked almost all the No-changers. Sir, what is the political programme in

[1] From the postmark
[2] *ibid*

the first place? Was not non-co-operation programme a political one which you suspended last year? Why should you not renew it, in different form if wanted, to meet the present situation, created by the speech of Lord Birkenhead? You made a pact with the Swarajists last year. Did they faithfully work it out as promised at Belgaum? What obstructed them? You know that most of the No-changers did not like the pact but accepted it against their wishes for you. Now again you have thrown them overboard by your promise to the Swarajists without their previous consultation.Once accepted by you, it will have to be accepted by the No-changers though against their wishes. They are being dragged as it were.

Is the Council programme the only political programme? Will Councils give strength to the country for civil disobedience or non-payment of taxes? Under your leadership, the Congress had become a working body and now you again want to turn it into a place for vocal protests for arm-chair politicians. Congress Committee are today at least spinning associations, khaddar depots or khaddar shops, but hereafter they will be nothing more than debating clubs.

You propose alternative franchise, money or self-spun yarn, but the Maharashtra party do not approve of it, nor do they approve of khaddar-wearing. They are going to raise an opposition against, and are sure, though not this year, next year, they will do away with that. They don't want your spinning association. Why not start it outside Congress and surrender completely to the Swarajists?

The writers forget that I do not claim to lead or have any party, if only for the reason that I seem to be constantly changing and shifting my ground. To me I seem to be constantly growing. I must respond to varying conditions, and yet remain changeless within. I have no desire to drag anybody. My appeal is continuously to the head and heart combined. At the forthcoming meeting I expect an open and unfettered discussion wherein my opinion should be counted as only one among the many that would be then expressed. I know that this would appear to many to be utterly nonsensical. But if I persist long enough in expressing my opinion freely, those who feel that they are being dragged will soon resist me. But, after all, what have I done save that I have truly gauged the mind of educated India? I do not wish violently to wrest the Congress from educated India. The latter must grow to the new thought, if such it is. It is not for those who have ceased to believe in the particular method of non-co-

operation adopted in 1920 to give it a retrial or to find out a third thing. It is for those like me, who still believe in that form of non-co-operation, to demonstrate its present utility, so that the sceptics might veer round. But I must confess that I can present nothing in the shape of a fire-works display to those who came to non-co-operation, not with an inward conviction, but for the alluring promise it made of immediate deliverance. That deliverance in the way it was expected not having come, who shall blame them if they fall back upon the original programme, with such changes as it is capable of admitting? After all, those who have led an active political life in the old fashion, cannot posibly be expected to sit idle,whilst "dreamers" like me expect to evolve an intensely active programme out of a "harmless toy"like the spinning-wheel.They brought the Congress into being, and I must wait for their conversion before the Congress can become a purely spinning association.

I do not know what the Maharashtra party will or will not do. It is undoubtedly open to it or anybody else to oppose spinning as an alternative franchise or the wearing of khaddar as part of the franchise.It is equally open to the others to insist on spinning and khaddar being retained. If we do not finally arrive at a practically unanimous agreement, no change is possible before the Congress session at Cawnpore. We may cavil, if we like, at people's opinions. That would be a sign of intolerance. Each one should have faith in his own programme and must be prepared to work it even single-handed if necessary.

Experience teaches me that there is room for both the programmes in the country,—for spinning and Council-entry. I must, therefore, whilst I retain my own views about Council-entry in the abstract, support those Council-goers who are likely to serve my ideals better, who have greater powers of resistance and greater faith in the wheel and khaddar. These are the Swarajists in general.

A spinning association does become a necessity under the new scheme. But it must be under the Congress patronage so long as the Congress continues to extend it. I have too great a regard for the Congress to want to do without it. It is the one institution that has weathered many a breeze fair or foul. It is the fruit of years of patient labour given to it by educated India. I shall wilfully do nothing to decrease its usefulness.

Lastly, let no one think anything to be a foregone conclusion at

the forthcoming meeting of the A.I.C.C. It is the duty of every member to attend it and come to it with an open mind determined to exercise his or her independent judgment fearlessly and in the best interest of the country.

Young India, 20-8-1925

199. PUBLIC FUNDS

I have critics who see nothing but flaws in everything I say or do. I profit by their criticism sometimes. But I have also the good fortune to have friends who may be described as guardians of my virtue. They would have me to become a perfect man, and therefore, feel agitated when they think that I have erred, or am likely to err in anything I may say or do. One such well-wisher, whose caution has before now proved to be of the greatest value to me, writes to the following effect:

> Within my experience, you have been responsible for collecting subscriptions for several funds, such as for Jallianwala, Satyagraha Sabha, Swadeshi, Swaraj, and now you have fixed yourself up in Bengal for Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. Are you satisfied that the previous funds have been well managed, and now the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund will also be properly managed? You owe it to the public to render a full explanation.

The correspondent might have added theTilak Swaraj Fund, and also the Flood Relief Fund in the South.

The question is pertinent. Even in course of my collection for the Deshbandhu Memorial, those who have paid me handsomely have given me the caution. My general rule is that I never identify myself with any fund where I do not know those who are to operate upon it, and where I am not satisfied about their honesty. The first three funds were raised not by me, or on the strength of any reputation I possess, but they were raised by Mr. Banker, whom even then I knew well and who had a perfect right to use my name. I know, too, that he could have raised all the money that was received on the strength of his own undoubted reputation and service rendered. Fullest accounts were kept of the receipts and disbursements, and were published also, if my recollection serves me right. But, in any event, these are very small accounts.

I have referred to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, although my correspondent has not. I have heard repeated complaints about it. It was the biggest public fund ever raised. I have the clearest conscience about it. The closest scrutiny of the disposal of that fund will show that generally there has been no laxity about its administration, and that there have been far less losses than are incurred by commercial

firms. The latter generally write off 10 p.c. as their book-debts. I have known big South African firms writing off so much as 25 p.c. as a normal thing. In the transactions on the Tilak Swaraj Fund, we have not lost anything near 10 p.c. I doubt if the total losses would amount to 2 p.c. The working treasurer insisted upon vouchers for everything. The accounts have been audited from time to time. They have been published. This is not to say that in some cases there has not been gross misappropriation by Congress workers who were entrusted with funds. This is inevitable where monies have to be disbursed through hundreds of channels. All that is possible is to ensure against the looseness or carelessness on the part of top men. The wonder to me is that, on the whole, it is possible to show as clean a record as we have.

Then take the Jallianwala Bagh Fund. Here, again, there is accurate account-keeping. The accounts have been published also from time to time. The place is well looked after. Pandit Malavyaji may be considered to be the soul of that fund. The place is kept beautifully clean, and from a dung-heap it has been turned into a garden. Complaints, however, have been made that no fitting memorial has yet been raised, and the money is allowed to lie idle. If it is a charge, I must confess that I am perhaps more answerable for it than the others. Even plans have been prepared, but I felt that conditions of the time when the fund was raised were altered immediately after. The Bagh itself has been in some way or other, a bone of contention between different parties. I do not know that we have seen the last of it. The Memorial was to be, as it should be, a memorial of solid communal unity—a triumph out of a tragedy. Hindu, Mussalman and Sikh blood that flowed on that fateful 13th in a mingled stream was to signify an unbreakable union. Where is that union today? It will be time to think of building a memorial when we stand united. For the present, so far as I am concerned, it is enough that the Bagh stands, as a little bit of a lung in crowded Amritsar, with its narrow, tortuous and dirty lanes.

Now, I come to the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. The treasurer of the fund is a host in himself. But I know that he will not be forever possessed of it. It will ultimately vest in the trustees. The five original trustees are nominees of the deceased patriot. Every one of them has a status in society, and a reputation to lose. Some of them are monied men. These five original trustees have added two more. They are, again, men connected not with one public trust but many. One of

them, Sir Nilratan Sircar, is the premier physician of Calcutta, and the other, Mr. S. R. Das, the first cousin of the deceased, is the Advocate-General of Bengal. If these seven trustees are not capable of rendering a good account of themselves, and doing justice to the trust reposed in them, I should despair of any trust succeeding in India. The mansion is there, and I know that Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, another medical trustee and a physician of the first rank is busy evolving plans for putting it to the use for which it is intended. It has been whispered to me that possibly Mr. S. R. Das, being the Advocate-General of Bengal, cannot be trustee. I do not know the law in the matter. I knew that he was Advocate-General of Bengal when he undertook the trust; but if it is an oversight, there will be a trustee appointed in his place who will be equal in reputation to him. If Mr. S. R. Das can remain a trustee, I was privileged to know enough of him to be able to assure the readers that he will neglect nothing to make the administration of the trust athorough success. Up to the moment of his departure for England, it occupied his care and attention. But I feel sure that every one of the original trustees will be as jealous of the memory of the deceased as any can be, and that they will make the proposed hospital and nurses' training institution worthy of his memory. So much for the All-Bengal Deshbandhu Memorial Fund.

About the All-India Memorial Fund, I am myself one of the trustees. The object of the Memorial is nearest to my heart. My fellow-trustees are as well known to the public as any public men. The Secretary is a seasoned soldier, and so is the treasurer, both respectively Secretary and Treasurer of the Congress also.

Let me, however, in conclusion, warn the public that the safety of the public fund lies more even in an intelligent vigilance of the public than in the strict integrity of those who are in charge of funds. Absolute honesty of the trustees is a necessity, but public inertia is a crime. Ignorant criticism must not be mistaken for intelligent vigilance. What I have found generally is ignorant criticism.What I would love to see is, that some public men, with a knowledge of account-keeping, make it a point, now and again, of overhauling the administration of public funds, an bringing the administrators to book.

Young India, 20-8-1925

200. FOR CHRISTIAN INDIANS

[The other day[1] I was privileged to address what was to be a meeting of Christian Indians predominantly, but what turned out to be a meeting of European Christians predominantly. My address, therefore, took naturally a different shape from what it was to be. Nevertheless, I give below a brief summary of portions of the address, as, in my opinion, it is of interest to know what one who has lived in their midst, amid various scenes and surroundings, has thought about and felt for them. M. K. G.]

When I was a youth, I remember a Hindu having become a convert to Christianity. The whole town understood that the initiation took the shape of this well-bred Hindu partaking of beef and brandy in the name of Jesus Christ and discarding his national costume. I learnt in later years, that such a convert, as so many of my missionary friends put it, came to a life of freedom out of a life of bondage, to a life of plenty out of one of penury. As I wander about throughout the length and breadth of India I see many Christian Indians almost ashamed of their birth, certainly of their ancestral religion, and of their ancestral dress. The aping of Europeans on the part of Anglo-Indians is bad enough, but the aping of them by Indian converts is a violence done to their country and, shall I say, even to their new religion. There is a verse in the New Testament to bid Christians avoid meat if it would offend their neighbours. Meat here, I presume, includes drink and dress. I can appreciate uncompromising avoidance of all that is evil in the old, but where there is not only no question of anything evil but where an ancient practice may be even desirable, it would be a crime to part with it when one knows for certain that the giving up would deeply hurt relatives and friends.Conversion must not mean denationalization. Conversion should mean a definite giving up of the evil of the old, adoption of all the good of the new and a scrupulous avoidance of everything evil in the new. Conversion, therefore, should mean a life of greater dedication to one's own country, greater surrender to God, greater self-purification. Years ago I met the late Kali Charan Banerjee. Had I not known before I went there that he was a Christian, I should certainly not have noticed from the appearance of his home that he was one. It was no different from an ordinary modern Hindu home,—simple and meagre in furniture.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Meeting of Christians", 4-8-1925.

The great man was dressed like an ordinary un-European and Hindu Bengali. I know that there is a marvellous change coming over Christian Indians. There is on the part of a large number of them a longing to revert to original simplicity, a longing to belong to the nation and to serve it, but the process is too slow. There need be no waiting. It requires not much effort, but I was told, and even as I write, I have a letter from a Christian Indian before me telling me that he and his friends find it difficult to make the change, because of the opposition of their superiors. Some of them tell me that they are even jealously watched, and any movement on their part to identify themselves with national movements is strongly condemned. The late Principal Rudra and I used often to discuss this evil tendency. I well remember how he used to deplore it. I am offering a tribute to the memory of a dead friend when I inform the reader that he used often to express his grief that it was too late in life for him to change some of the unnecessary European habits to which he was brought up. Is it not truely deplorable that many Christian Indians discard their own mother tongue, bring up their children only to speak in English? Do they not thereby completely cut themselves adrift from the nation in whose midst they have to live? But they may answer in self-defence that many Hindu and even Mussalmans have become denationalized. The *tu quoque* argument serves no useful purpose. I am writing not as a critic but as a friend who has enjoyed for the past thirty years the closest intimacy with hundreds of Christian Indians. I want my missionary friends and Christian Indians to reciprocate the spirit in which these lines are written. I write in the name and for the sake of heart-unity which I want to see established among the people of this land professing different faiths. In nature there is a fundamental unity running through all the diversity we see about us. Religions are no exception to the natural law. They are given to mankind so as to accelerate the process of realization of fundamental unity.

Young India, 20-8-1925

201. NOTES

A DECLARATION ON SWARAJ

An esteemed correspondent has sent me a letter which is so well reasoned and otherwise able that, in spite of my inability to agree with all that is said in it, I should like to publish it. But the correspondent

has himself advanced very cogent reasons for non-publication of the major, and the most interesting, part of his letter. The burden of the letter is to prove to me that my insistence on Hindu-Muslim unity and the manner of achieving it, have really resulted, at least for the time being, in an ever-growing estrangement. He then advises me not to harp upon it any longer and then ends the letter thus:

> Now that you know the unexpected results of these acts of commission and omission on your part, let me request you to declare in the most public and unmistakable way that the swaraj you are immediately aiming at for your country is a (modern) democratic raj or government, that the State shall not take note of men's religious beliefs, that there shall be 'no compulsion in religion', that no one shall be debarred from doing anything or going anywhere merely because of his or her birth (as an 'untouchable', 'unapproachable', or 'unseeable', or 'unhearable'), and that *equality of opportunity to all* shall be the motto of the State, including, as a necessary corollary, the policy of *special encouragement to the poor and the backward* of all creeds and communities in accordance with their needs and in proportion to their poverty and backwardness the manner and the degree of the encouragement to be judged on the merits of each individual case and *not* by the accident of birth or the fact of creed alone or at all, or, in short, that a 'free field' to every citizen in his or her life—and no favour nor handicap by reason of birth or creed—shall be the immutable rule for the State in every department to follow.
>
> Secure the acceptance of these principles by the chief communal leaders and you shall have more than half won the battle of unity among the children of *Madar-i-Hind*. But as regards the declaration I have mentioned, you owe it to yourself and to your deluded Hindu and Muslim fellow-countrymen. It would be well if you got the Brothers Ali, too, to make such a declaration on behalf of the Khilafatists.

I have anticipated the advice of the correspondent about Hindu-Muslim unity. I agree that it will do no good for me to be speaking upon it, as I used to. I am satisfied with letting my action speak for itself. So far as the declaration about swaraj is concerned, I accept the advice in full and ask the reader to regard the declaration suggested by the correspondent as my own.

A TRAVELLING CHARKHA

The travelling wheel of the Khadi Pratishthan has solved the question of providing an efficient travelling spinning-wheel. I have been using one for the last three months with the greatest satisfaction.

It yields as much to me as the ordinary charkha. I therefore use the same thing, whether at home or travelling. I have been able to use it in a moving train also. It is lighter than the ordinary wheel, and the principle of construction is the same. Success has been attained by making the wheel collapsible. When it is put away, it is an elegant and handy little box, capable of being carried without any effort. Its dimensions when packed up are 16”x6”x6” and the weight is 7 lb. The wheel is made of steel wires. It takes no more than two to three minutes to put it up, and no more to pack it up. By suspending the spindle inside the uprights, rather than the outside, the motion becomes perfectly noiseless and easier. There is also less danger of the spindle being bent. Holders are made of pieces of gut collected out of the breakage of carding guts and, therefore, cost nothing. The guts are held in position by wedges being driven from outside into the receiving poles made in the uprights.The box can accommodate an oil can, simple tools, slivers, etc.The price of this wheel is Rs. 15. Satis Babu informs me that it is possible for him to supply a few only of these charkhas at a time. I bring it to the notice of the readers only for the sake of those who would not suspend their spinning while travelling. I meet so many who give their constant travelling as an excuse for not spinning. This travelling wheel removes any such ground for excuse.

Young India, 20-8-1925

202. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

[*August 20, 1925*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. Stay in peace at the Ashram. Let me know where you are staying. I have not seen Navibunder but I can draw a mental picture of it. Today I am in Cuttack. I have come to see the tannery. Mahadev and Satis Babu are with me. You must make a

[1] From the postmark

complete recovery. I am certain if you stay at Hajira you will be completely all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Now we shall meet soon. I shall reach there on the 5th.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9217

203. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

August 20, 1925

BHAI MATHURADAS,

I was very pleased on reading your letter in which you own up your mistake. This weakness is common. Decisive speech is for him only who never speaks without thinking and who speaks only when it is absolutely necessary. One should use language as sparingly as a miser. Everything will be well since you are firm about it. Today I am in Cuttack and have some leisure, so I am disposing of all pending letters such as yours.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3725

204. LETTER TO KALYANJI MEHTA

[*August 20, 1925*][1]

BHAI KALYANJI,

I have read your letter to Mahadev. If Parvati wants to see Pragji, she may do so. Does Pragji spin? I would like you to leave Surat and settle in Bardoli. Most certainly open a school. It will be of use if you can run it on your conditions. Here is the message for *Navayug*:

"What message can I send to the Gujaratis? Let Gujarat work at the spinning-wheel,wear khadi, discard foreign cloth and then ask: 'What shall we do now?' When the first railway line was laid, there was an obstacle. There was a deep trench. If that could be filled up the railway line could be laid. The engineer said: 'Fill up the trench'. It

[1] From the postmark

could not be filled up in any way. The men who were trying to fill it up got tired and asked, 'What shall we do now'? 'Fill up the trench,' was the reply received again. They tried but could not fill it up. They asked: 'What now?' Once more they got the reply 'Fill up the trench'. So again basketfuls of rubbish were dumped into it. At last the trench was filled. Stevenson became immortal. I also want to be immortal. So I tell you only one thing: ' Spin and wear khadi'."

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original : G.N. 2677

205. REMARK IN VISITORS' BOOK

August 20, 1925

It has been a privilege to be able to visit this asylum[1].

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 11017

206. INTERVIEW TO " THE ENGLISHMAN"

August 21, 1925

In connection with Dr. Abdulla Suhrawardy's resignation from the Swaraj Party, Mr. Gandhi who returned to Calcutta from Cuttack on Friday morning was interviewed by a representative of *The Englishman*. Questioned as to whether he would enlighten the public as to Dr. Suhrawardy's resignation, Mr. Gandhi replied:

All I can say is that I am surprised at the resignation. Evidently, all of Dr.Suhrawardy's grievance is purely against me, but I am not a member of the Swaraj Party. He may express all the resentment that he wishes to against me regarding the opinion that I gave at the meeting to which I was invited. But that was my own personal opinion.

So far as I am concerned, I still hold that it was wrong on his part, as it would be wrong on the part of any member of the Swaraj party, to see His Excellency the Governor on the eve of an election which was to be contested on party lines, and in which one like Dr. Suhrawardy stood as the party candidate.

I do not think that anyone at that meeting questioned the right of any member to enjoy the most intimate social relations with His

[1] Leper Asylum, Cuttack

Excellency the Governor or any political opponent, but, if the worthy Doctor's visit was social, the time chosen for it was inopportune and unfortunate.

We are fighting a bureaucracy which is resourceful and, I venture to say, unscupulous.

I know cases in which Government officials have resorted to temptation, threats and other kinds of pressure to induce men to act against what they knew to be the country's interest.

I cannot, therefore, help saying that it is a healthy rule to prohibit members of the Swaraj Party from meeting or seeing officials without the permission of the Party. Many things have been known to take place at so-called social functions, but as I have said, this is my personal opinion which the Swaraj Party may or may not endorse.

If it is not too late for Dr. Suhrawardy, I would strongly advise him to be content with venting his anger against me, and to remain in the Party to which he has professed loyalty, especially after the death of the Deshbandhu, whose memory he rightly reveres.

The Englishman, 22-8-1925

207. MY NOTES

TO THE RESIDENTS OF KUTCH

As I have promised to go to Kutch, residents of Kutch have been asking me about the time of my visit and what are my expectations there. I have been eager to go there ever since I gave the promise. One of the reasons for my eagerness is that I have never been to Kutch, though I have all along wanted to go there. The second reason is that a promise is like a debt, which should be discharged at the earliest opportunity. However, I do not think that I shall now be able to go there before November or perhaps even January.[1] I had expressed this fear even when making the promise. I have to go to Bihar in September or October. After that the southern provinces remain and so too some others. I shall visit whichever of these I can. If that can be postponed, I could go to Kutch in November or December. If this is not possible, it will of course have to be in January.

Now as to my expectations.

[1] Gandhiji, however, managed to go to Kutch on October 22, 1925; his Kutch tour lasted thirteen days.

I have of course to collect funds for the All-India Deshbandhu Spinning-wheel Memorial. I entertain very high hopes regarding the contribution of Kutch.

I shall also expect not to find anyone there clad in anything but khadi.

I shall expect that there will be no contempt for untouchables there.

I shall expect to see clean schools for these people.

I shall expect Hindu-Muslim unity.

I shall expect to hear *Ramanam* being chanted in every Hindu home.

I shall expect to find that there is a feeling of love between the Ruler and his subjects and that the latter are happy.

I shall expect to find the women clad in pure khadi and having the same steadfastness as Sita

THROUGH THE GOOD OFFICES OF THE "PANCH"[1]

Having seen my advice on taking legal steps in cases where the funds of khadi boards were misappropriated by the members of the Congress itself, a gentleman suggests that justice should be sought through the good offices of the *panch* and also that the idea of the *panch* should be propagated among the people. The idea underlying the *panch* is very dear to me, but those who have been guilty are not likely to accept the verdict of the *panch*. A thief, one finds, yields to punishment; so does a rogue. There is no element of non-violence in letting off either of these types because of our lack of strength. Society has not reached a stage where the practice of punishing persons can be given up.Today, such non-violence seems to be possible only for individuals. Even among individuals, only those who have altogether renounced material possessions can afford to give up all recourse to punishments. In the present case, both those who borrowed money and those who stood guarantee for them have failed to repay the sums borrowed from the Khadi Board. The Board has only one way open to it, and that is to recover the amount even by going to a court of law. A realistic interpretation of the *Gita* too leads to the same conclusion. Of what use was the *smashan panditya*[2] to

[1] Board of arbitration; literally a group of five

[2] Other-worldly philosophy; literally, cremation-ground learning

Arjuna who had used weapons throughout his life? The very fact that he made preparations for the battle showed that he had to fight it. It was his dharma to fight and defend the faith of his age. Similarly, as soon as the Khadi Board lent out public funds it became its dharma to recover the sums by taking the guarantors, etc., to a court of law if the latter proved unworthy. The idea of the *panch* can only function where both parties are prepared to respect its decision. That respect is as good as non-existent now. In this case all that we can do is to go to the law-courts, always being prepared to abide by decisions of the *panch* and making efforts to re-establish the institution. However, before the idea of the *panch* is generally accepted, many individuals will have to practise penance and purify themselves. Let us do this to the best of our ability.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-8-1925

208. ONE OF THE OWNERS

I meant it when I said that the subscribers of *Navajivan* should regard themselves as its owners. In order to prove this I shall publish here a letter from one such 'owner', after sorting out his questions, because he is an 'owner', and give a reply.

> In spite of the Navajivan Trust having saved Rs. 50,000, in comparison with other newspapers and so far as its subscribers were concerned, is it not unfair that these subscribers were given no direct benefit out of this? Every daily, weekly or monthly gives away some literature annually as gifts, why should not *Navajivan* do likewise and give a substantial gift?

Every periodical has its own point of view. The *Navajivan* does not enter into competition with anyone. It is not published for anyone's personal benefit. Its income is derived solely from its subscriptions. It does not wish to continue its existence by tempting people with gifts. It is prepared to cease publication if intrinsically it is not sufficiently rewarding to the readers. I do not wish to express verbally my disapproval of the policy pursued by ordinary newspapers but I would rather place before them an object lesson by acting in the very opposite direction within my humble capacity. Would the subscribers of *Navajivan* be satisfied by partaking in this

experiment? Let the *Navajivan* set an object-lesson even for those subscriber-owners who are not so satisfied.

> *The History of the Satyagraha in South Africa* was published as a supplement to *Navajivan*[1] and later published in the form of a book. Rather than this, would it not have been better if in the very first instance the book had been published and presented to the subscribers or offered to them at a reduced price?
>
> In the first place, *Navajivan* is published on cheap paper; besides, as the supplement also contains other matter, the portion containing the history could not be separated from the rest. Only readers of *Navajivan* would have the advantage of readiing it, the pages would get crumpled if many people read it and it would not remain in a fit condition to be filed. If instead a book were brought out, many people could read it. Only a handful of persons read the *Navajivan*, but many would like to read a book and yet a book would not get crumpled. It could be read at any time. The more it is read, the more would people come to know of it. In spite of this why is there such parsimony and lack of foresight in an institution which is run under your control ? How difficult it is for one with a meagre income like myself to incur this double expense! Has the ideal of supplying good literature at low prices been adhered to here?

The History of the Satyagraha in South Africa has not been completely written. Only a few chapters were written in prison.[2] I spare some time for this purpose and write a chapter each week for the readers of *Navajivan*. If I had intended to publish it in book form in the very first instance, I would not to this day have been able to present anything to the public. Moreover, its price would have been higher. The poorest readers of *Navajivan* read it in libraries. Some share a copy with others. A gentleman supplies some poor persons with copies at a reduced price or even free of charge. This correspondent should carefully preserve his own copy and have it bound himself. The ability to preserve the smallest things with care is included among the fine characteristics of virtuous poverty. *Navajivan* is thrifty to the extent that some people work for it, spending money out of their own pockets.

What, however, should be said to this owner? He buys *Navajivan*

[1] From April 1924 onwards; it was published in book form in 1924-25, in Gujarati.

[2] Yeravda Central Prison, Poona, where Gandhiji was imprisoned from March 1922 to February 1924

and is content with merely reading it. Some owners add to their wealth, others lose it. Some promote morality, others help its decline. Some make you laugh, others make you cry; some pull you towards swaraj, others push you towards foreign rule. It is clear that the ownership of *Navajivan* brings no wealth. It is clear on the other hand that its ownership makes the subscribers poorer. But is there anything suprising in this? Should I not be regarded as its principal owner? I have to buy stamps from other departments for posting articles for *Navajivan*. Sometimes, I have to send even telegrams. I can give at least this assurance to the subscribers that I have to spend more than what they do. And, I am not the only one who has to do so. My other colleagues are also in a similar predicament. And is it not sufficient that one applies the same rule to oneself that one applies to others? The subscribers have no more responsibility after paying the annual subscription. What, however, is the plight of the honorary manager-*cum*-proprietor? To buy *Navajivan* is to take the road of swaraj, to chant the praises of the spinning-wheel. To sell it is to deal in truth and non-violence. I have no desire, whatsoever, to offer other temptations in order to find subscribers.

> You say that *Navajivan* is not a means of making money. Its readers must regard themselves as its proprietors. These, however, are only your ideas. Should they be not put into practice? Does saving Rs. 50,000 not amount to making money? If in spite of this, the subscribers do not get any benefit from it, what then is the meaning of proprietorship? Is this not doing injustice to those who subscribe to *Navajivan*, by cutting down other expenses?

I still maintain that *Navajivan* is not a means of making money. Fifty thousand rupees may be regarded as money earned if the organizers make use of that amount. There are five thousand subscribers of *Navajivan* today; previously there were 30,000. If *Navajivan* can attract the same number of subscribers again, I would not reduce its price but rather resume using the one pice saved per subscriber for public welfare and look upon its subscriber-owners as having gained something in this way.

> Actually the 'Prakashan Mandir'[1] owes a debt of gratitude to *Navajivan*. Would you please accept it as a fact that the former is therefore indirectly grateful to the subscribers of *Navajivan*? Despite this, why should there be

[1] Navajivan Publishing House

such a preferential treatment that books published by the Mandir should be given to its customers at a reduced price, while subscribers of *Navajivan* should have to pay a higher price? Why should we also not get at reduced price the books that we require? What fault have those persons committed who have been subscribing to *Navajivan* continuously for the last six years?

I did not conceive the plan of having cheap publications. The manager[1] of the press conceived it, although it is being carried out with my approval. Such publishing activity would certainly appeal to me. When the press had less work to do for the weeklies, this scheme came into being with the idea that it would have at least some work in its spare time. In doing so, the press receives payment at the market rate and, in return, undertakes to shoulder the entire responsibility free of any charge, the subscribers of *Navajivan* do not have to do so. Consequently, it is but proper that only those who are the customers of the Mandir get the benefit of the reduced price. Those who have been subscribing to *Navajivan* for the last six years have gained a lot by way of the weekly reading material they get.

Shall I tell you of how I was deceived like the client of a lawyer of Lyallpur?[2] I was cheated only because of the appeal in *Navajivan* to encourage the Swadeshi Bhandar, Ltd., in Nadiad. It is a mistake to believe that your son is like you and so be deceived, but, how could one disbelieve the facts that are mentioned in your newspaper? I bought five shares of Rs. 10/- each. A poor person like me invested half his capital in it with a view to encourage swadeshi and at the same time earn some interest on it. What was the result of this? Let alone receiving an interest, although it is three years since the company was liquidated I have not yet recovered a single pie. In spite of having written as many as three times to Master Co. and the Bhandar I have received no reply as to how the liquidation has proceeded. I wrote a letter appealing to Gokuldas Talati in this connection, yet he too did not reply to it. Do you regard it as proper that the liquidators of the Bhandar thus refrain from giving a reply and even a person like Shri Talati does not look into the matter and send a reply? Have you nothing to say to them? How shall we be able to get on if we do not have even this much organizational responsibility and honest intention? Just as *Navajivan* had published an appeal for the Bhandar, could it not after looking into the affair explain who was to blame for the liquidation, whether there was any mismanagement and whether the organizers or others thought only of filling their own purses?

I do not know of the circumstances of the Nadiad Swadeshi Bhandar. If that Bhandar has gone into liquidation, if it has been guilty of dishonesty and if I had given a testimonial to it, I was

[1] Swami Anandanand
[2] *Vide* Vol. XXVII, pp. 259-62.

undoubtedly a party to the sin. It indicates my lack of knowledge. I have often admitted that I am liable to err. If the number of times that I have proved to be correct adds up to more than the number of my mistakes, what I say should to that extent carry weight. The better way is not to rely on testimonials given by others but to trust one's own experience. However, as this is not always possible, the world will be led to believe in testimonials and be deceived sometimes. I do not know if any fraud has been practised in the Nadiad Bhandar. I invite the organizers to give an explanation. I do not even know what kind of a certificate I gave it. I do not carry files along with me on my tours.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 23-8-1925

209. TEMPLES FOR THE UNTOUCHABLES

I have already expressed my views regarding temples for the untouchables. In my opinion the value of all temples is determined by the penance that underlies them. For instance, if a licentious or cruel man builds temples at various places in order to help or hide his sins, they do not acquire sancity because they have the name or form of temples. As against this, if a few devout persons put in their own labour, build a hut of mud and straw, install an image and constantly meditate there, this would be a place of pilgrimage as compared to the jewel-studded edifice called a temple raised by the loose liver. Following the same line of thought, I believe that temples for the untouchables would be worth while only if our untouchable brothers contributed the largest share in the form of labour, in building these. I gave such advice to our untouchable brothers and sisters in Lathi[1] and they have acted on it too. They contributed money and ornaments at that very meeting. I suggested the following conditions: The State should contribute a sum equal to that collected by our untouchable brothers. I should raise an amount equal to these two amounts put together. A trust should be formed for the temple, consisting of one trustee representing the untouchables, one representing the State and a third representing me. If this is done the temple would have a good organization, some sentiment would attach to it and our untouchable brothers would have the facility to practise

[1] A small town in Saurashtra; then capital of a princely State

their faith. The facility for a school, etc., in the temple was also kept in view. I hope that the untouchable brothers of Lathi have not given up efforts begun by them.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 23-8-1925

210. MORE QUESTIONS

The correspondent who has posed the question appearing in today's leading article has also, in that very letter, asked some other separate questions which I quote below:

> Was it not a mistake on the part of Pandit Malaviyaji not to accept the offer held out by the State of Alwar, allowing him to carry out alone an independent inquiry? Is it not unworthy of a leader of the status of Panditji to forgo the opportunity for investigation that was granted to him, by being cowed down because of the financial assistance offered by the State, relinquishing one's duty and hesitating to show his courage publicly?

What I wrote about Panditji was based on what I had read in the newspapers. The correspondent has hastily formed a wrong opinion. Panditji did not get permission to go and investigate in Alwar. The officials of the Alwar Ruler have acted much like General Dyer and the Ruler, by preventing a public inquiry, has acted in an autocratic manner and has taken the shine out of his crown. Panditji is not such a coward as to forgo the opportunity for investigating if it is given to him. No one should imagine even in his dreams that Panditji would sell his soul for the sake of money.

> I find the following suggestion of yours to be improper, viz., that a husband and wife should tolerate each other's dharma even if they are opposed and in order to do so the husband should even get foreign clothes for her. If the wife disobeys the husband, under what law should the latter obey the former? In the case of a reformed couple who drink liquor, if the husband gives it up later and asks his wife to do likewise, should he obtain it for her if she refuses to give it up? You yourself have often compared burning of foreign cloth withgiving up liquor, why then do you give such advice? Is this not the very opposite of knowledge? The husband may possibly get for her Indian mill-made clothes but certainly not foreign ones.

The dharma of the husband and the wife towards each other is full of perils. A Hindu husband seems to think that a wife is a chattel.

I have heard monster-like husbands referring to the wives as their property. What should we say to those who claim that the wife should immediately understand and put into practice any changes made by the husband in his way of life?

Does not the wife have an individuality too ?

Damayanti[1] had it, Mirabai[2] showed that she too had. The dharma of a married couple is not an easy one. The children of a suppressed woman would also be likewise suppressed. A devotee of khadi has to tolerate the foreign clothes of others; he should similarly tolerate those of his wife. Supposing my wife and I are meat-eaters; later I become purified and give up meat. Must my wife, therefore, give it up too? Or, should I persuade her and reason with her, asking her to give it up? Supposing I force her to give it up and later crave for meat, should my wife start eating meat again? How is widowhood any worse than having one's husband alive under such circumstances? Even Mandodari,[3] who was the wife of a demon enjoyed freedom. Draupadi used to scold the Pandavas. Even a husband like Bhima[4] became meek in front of Draupadi. What could we not say of Sita's husband? Rama was worshipped because of Sita. No force can be used in the matter of dharma. Dharma is like the edge of a sword. Shri Krishna's words "what action should one perform" should be construed as "what dharma should one pursue". Even the poets, that is learned men, have yielded to the fascination of searching for its import. I am a true devotee of khadi and yet believe that I have no right to force my wife to take to khadi. The mutual love of husband and wife is not something gross. Through it one gets a glimpse of the love of the soul for God. Such love can never be sensual. Only animals yield to their senses. We call it animal behaviour. Force has no place where there is pure love. Where there is pure love each respects the beliefs of the other and both go forward on the path of dharma.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-8-1925

[1] Wife of King Nala, in *Mahabharata*

[2] A sixteenth-century saint-poetess of Rajasthan

[3] Wife of Ravana, the demon king of Lanka, in the *Ramayana*

[4] One of the five Pandavas in *Mahabharata*

211. LETTER TO NANABHAI ICHCHHARAM MASHRUWALA

148, RUSSA ROAD,
CALCUTTA,
Bhadra Sud 4 [*August 23, 1925*][1]

BHAISHRI NANABHAI,

I have your letter. I shall surely go there whenever I find time. Whether or no the country does something, we must keep on doing our work. That is the easiest way of educating people. The conduct of the Amravati lawyers only betrays our weakness.

I shall definitely go over when I find time. But I at present have no moment to spare; so I am helpless. Invitations continue to pour in from many quarters, but I can accept none.

Tell me of everything that happens there.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1170a. Courtesy: Sushilaben Gandhi

212. LETTER TO SUDHIR RUDRA

148, RUSSA ROAD,
CALCUTTA,
August 25, 1925

MY DEAR SUDHIR,

As my left hand refuses to work, I am dictating this little note. Charlie Andrews tells me that you are moody and have given way to grief. It is unworthy of Sushil Rudra's son. If father is no more with us in body, is he not with us in the spirit and possibly more so? Let us all translate into our own lives all his noblest qualities and we need not grieve over the dissolution of the body.

With love,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From the typewritten original: C.W. 6094. Courtesy: Mrs. Rajmohini Rudra

[1] The year is deduced from the fact that in 1925 Gandiji was in Calcutta, staying at 148, Russa Road.

213. SPEECH AT Y.M.C.A., CALCUTTA[1]

August 25, 1925

At a meeting of the College Branch of the Young Men's Christian Association, Calcutta, Gandhiji was called upon to speak, last month, on a subject he had not thought of before. There was evidently some misunderstanding. He was under the impression that he had to speak on 'Village Organization' whereas he was asked to speak on 'Value and Possibility of Personality' a subject which puzzled him a little. But he came to a compromise and spoke on the subject of the evening incidentally touching on the subject of village organization too.

If personality meant character, as he had no doubt it did, then almost anyone could be got to address on the value of character. Bhartrihari, king, philosopher and poet rolled into one, thus summed up the power of character: 'What will not *satsang* do for a man?'

Character should be lived into one's own life. He who places purity of public life before anything else and say that a nation which disregarded purity of public life was doomed to perdition.Village organization seemed a simple word, but it meant the organization of the whole of India, inasmuch as India was predominantly rural. Sir Henry Maine had left a work on Village Communities which everyone might treasure. He had shown to India and to the world that the village life of India today was what it was five thousand years ago, which did not imply that the Indians were barbarous. On the contrary, the writer had made it clear that the Indian village life had so much vitality and character that it had persisted all these long years and weathered many a storm. He had described these villages as so many village republics completely self-contained, having all that one may want—schools, arbitration boards, sanitation boards, and no Poor Law, indeed, but ample provision for the relief of the poor.

He had also shown the treasures of art that the genius of the Indian villager had produced. The villager then learnt from his parents by word of mouth all the wisdom that he should learn. In daily contact with people, he was able to realize the value and possibility of personality. To him the village headman was a personality in himself. He was not the impostor of today; he was the servant of the people whom they could go to in times of difficulties, whom every child in the village knew and loved. He was incorruptible, he was a gentleman. But such a one was a rare bird today. The speaker asked with a sigh:

What has come over this land that all these beautiful things are not to be found anywhere, that instead of those self-contained villages

[1] Admission for the meeting, held in the Overtoun Hall, was by tickets and the gate money was donated to the All-Bengal Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. Rev. Dr. W. S. Urquhart presided.

of a few hundred years ago we find villages dependent for their very necessities of life on Lancashire or Japan?

The whole village life was broken. People were dying by millions of malaria, hookworm and other diseases, all brought about by insanitaition, deep poverty, sloth and idleness. What created this disruption and brought about this downfall? One might search the records of the East India Company and see for oneself how ruthlessly the village system was broken up by means mainly foul. Men who had served the East India Company had left imperishable records of how injustice, bribery and corruption reigned supreme in those days, and how relentlessly the handicrafts of India were ruined. A famine or a flood left the villagers absolutely destitute. But why should a village flooded be absolutely stranded and compelled to live on charity? The speaker had known the effects of flood in South Africa. There no relief was necessary. They had not to be fed by the State. They had cottage occupations. They worked. They had savings to fall back upon. Here there was no occupation save agriculture, no work and no savings, unemployment for four months and even six months in the year in the villages of Bengal. That was a problem, before village organizers and in the solution of that problem, the speaker said, the power of personality could be made to be felt. Summing up, the speaker said:

I say go with your character to the villages and express it through some loving act of service or kindness. It will be instinctively understood and responded to. Let any young man who has a character to save venture out to the villages and he will get a response. But he will have to be patient and truthful. There is no character where there is no patience and truth and gentleness and humility. He will not go out as a patron saint of the villages, he will have to go in humility with a broom-stick in his hand. There is a Trinity of Evil—insanitation, poverty and idleness—that you will have to be faced with and you will fight them with broom-sticks, quinine and castor oil and, if you will believe me, with the spinning-wheel. But all these will not help you without character.You must come down from your high pedestals, stoop to conquer, take the risk of catching malaria yourself. This work will give you all the satisfaction that your soul can desire. It will enrich the villagers' life and your life.

Young India, 17-9-1925

214. INTERVIEW TO INDIAN PSYCHO-ANALYTICAL SOCIETY[1]

CALCUTTA,
August 26, 1925

Mr. Gandhi agreed whole-heartedly about "the unconscious factor", but he thought that the suggestion put forward by Major Berkeley Hill would not have the desired effect. He thought that cow killing was not the most important factor. There were many more factors involved in the problem, all of which could [not] be tackled from the stand-point of "the unconscious". The problem should be taken up by individual workers with reference to different provincial conditions and not in an amateurish manner.The feeling against cow-killing was strongest in Bihar and United Provinces. It is a problem from the past, requiring a life's study of several workers. He wanted the members to take up this work on the lines suggested. He was not a specialist in the line and could not undertake such work himself. He kept an open mind and would give his attention to all suggestions of a practical nature.

He was at present in a state of "collapse" so far as the solution of Hindu-Muslim Unity was concerned. He left the thing to nature. He believed that one, two, three pitched battles would convince the masses of the futility of such fights which were being engineered by the local and quarrelsome sections of both the communities. He had no power over these men. He believed that Hindu-Muslim Unity was coming fast like swaraj and that India was passing through a crisis.

The Hindu, 29-8-1925

[1] The members of the Society met Gandhiji at 148, Russa Road, at 3.30 p.m. Earlier they had sent him the text of a lecture by Major Owen Berkely Hill, Superintendent of the Ranchi European Mental Hospital, who had observed that the efforts hitherto made in uniting the Hindus and Muslims had failed because "the uncosconscious factor" involved in the problem had been neglected. The cow in his opinion was a "totem" for the Hindus, and as such was the repository of unconscious ambivalent feelings. When a cow was killed a large amount of his repressed emotion was let loose and was responsible for the trouble. He suggested that if a suitable symbolic animal could be devised, and if Hindus and Muslims could meet on a common platform, and participate in the sacrifice of this symbol, the tension could be relieved. The members of the Society sought Gandhiji's views on this thesis.

215. NOTES

"SANATANA" HINDU

I have a correspondent who always brings me to book for the slightest negligence on my part. He is evidently a regular student of *Young India*, but no blind admirer. Here is a candid but friendly critic, and, if he sees something good in my writings, he detects also errors. One of his letters drawing attention to a possible inconsistency in my writings has long remained in my file. One portion of it deals with the definition of '*sanatana* Hindu'. Here is the letter:

> You have often declared yourself a *sanatana* Hindu, defining one as a believer in the Vedas, *Smritis* etc., and laid emphasis on the institution of castes by birth as legitimately following from those 'scriptures'. Of course you limit the number of castes to the supposed pristine four. (I say 'supposed pristine' advisedly—for, even as early as the times of the production of Manu ['s] and other *Smritis*, there had been already so many castes evolved out of and recognized over and above the ideal four, although, be it noted, interdining and intermarriage amongst them all had not yet come to be interdicted.) Now the fourth or, last in order of the 'fundamental' castes, is the Sudra, which is debarred by those very 'scriptures' a belief in which you regard as the *sine qua non* of a *sanatana* Hindu, as well as by their 'twice-born' professors, from studying or reciting the Divine Vedas including the *Gayatri*, a recitation of which you mention as obligatory upon a *sanatana* Hindu (without distinction of caste). So the question arises: How can anyone (e.g., a Sudra) be said to belong to a religion (viz., Hinduism as defined by you), if the mere reading, reciting or even the hearing of its scripture is tabooed to him, as though it were a sacrilege? How can you expect a man to be a swimmer without letting him step into water? Either one who is born a Sudra cannot be a *sanatana* Hindu in your sense, or else a *sanatana* Hindu must be something very different from what you define one to be. (I refer you to your old article on '*Hindusism*' in 1921 and your address to the cow conference at Belgaum as printed in *Young India*, 29-1-'25). I for one, who am a Brahmin by birth, cannot glory in the name of 'Hindu' so long as an exemplar of *real sanatana* dharma like you permits the term to cover a bundle of contradictions like the one I have pointed out. Lastly, in view of your mention of *Gayatri*, may I humbly inquire whether you have in your 'twice-born' life never omitted to include the *Gayatri* in your daily prayers?"

I am not a literalist. Therefore, I try to understand the spirit of the various scriptures of the world. I apply the test of Truth and Ahimsa laid down by these very scriptures for interpretation. I reject what is inconsistent with that test, and I appropriate all that is consistent with it. The story of a Sudra having been punished by Ramachandra for daring to learn the Vedas I reject as an

interpolation. And in any event, I worship Rama, the perfect being of my conception, not a historical person, facts about whose life may vary with the progress of new historical discoveries and researches. Tulsidas had nothing to do with the Rama of history. Judged by historical test, his *Ramayana* would be fit for the scrap heap. As a spiritual experience, his book is almost unrivalled, at least for me. And then too, I do not swear by every word that is to be found in so many editions published as the *Ramayana* of Tulsidas. It is the spirit running through the book that holds me spell-bound. I cannot myself subscribe to the prohibition against Sudras learning the Vedas. Indeed, in my opinion, at the present moment, we are all predominantly Sudras so long as we are serfs. Knowledge cannot be the prerogative of any class or section. But I can conceive the impossibility of people assimilating higher or subtler truths, unless they have undergone preliminary training, even as those who have not made preliminary prepartaions are quite unfit to breathe the rarefied atmosphere in high altitudes, or those who have no preliminary training in simple mathematics are unfit to understand or assimilate higher geometry or algebra. Lastly, I believe in certain healthy conventions. There is a convention surrounding the recitation of the *Gayatri*. The convention is that it should be recited only at stated times and after ablutions performed in the prescribed manner. As I believe in those conventions, and as I am not able always to conform to them, for years past I have followed the later Saints, and therefore have satisfied myself with the *Dwadasha Mantra* of the Bhagavata or the still simpler formula of Tulsidas and a few selections from the *Gita* and other works, and a few *bhajans* in Prakrit. These are my daily spiritual food—my *Gayatri*. They give me all the peace and solace I need from day to day.

WHERE IS IT ?

The same correspondent writes:

> 'Where is it ?' Where is Lohani? Echo still answers: Where? (Please see *Young India*, 30-4-'25, p. 150.) On two or three previous occations, I remember, you published complaints from some Mussalmans alleging unholy hands to have been laid on their mosques by Hindus, but subsequently, on enquiry, you were forced to admit that the complaints were groundless; yet you failed or forgot then to specify the disproved cases and withdraw the published charges formally enough. Now, I fear the complaint about 'Lohani' is the latest of such inventions. If you refer to *Young India* 12-3-'25, p. 91, you will

be reminded that the Lohani complaint was the only one which was picked out by you for publication out of a mass of other allegations that were made by your Muslim correspondent, but rejected by you as 'unsupported'. And now, what about that chosen one? *Does Lohani exist*? If so, is the allegation well-founded? If not, will you please wash your hands of the *patak*[1] by publishing a vicarious retraction at least as prominently as you did the original complaint, and that as early as possible?

I have removed the two or three concluding sentences which betray a style somewhat more energetic than the writer usually adopts. I must inform the readers that, in spite of very diligent inquiry from the original complainant and all those to whom he referred me, I have failed to identify the place in the map of India. As I have ceased to regard myself as an expert or an authority on the Hindu-Muslim question, I need not dwell upon the other points raised by the correspondent. It is with reluctance that I have found room at all for the paragraph. I felt that I was in honour bound to inform the readers of the result of my enquiry about Lohani.

THE CATTLE PROBLEM

Mr. Andrews has sent me the following cutting for disposal:

'What other country on earth pays such a staggering price for the veneration of an animal?' asks the June issue of *The Round Table*, the quarterly review of the politics of the British Commonwealth. Figures are supplied by the article entitled 'The Disabilites of Rural Indian', showing that the annual economic loss 'is greater than the total revenue of British India',—an economic waste which is 'almost unbelievable'. The article referred to points out that 'the regard, even veneration, which some of the people have for all forms of animal life prevents them from restricting its multiplication, even when it comes into direct economic competition with men for the produce of the soil, or makes it impossible for him to develop it to its full capacity', and the following are the figures representing India's 'staggering price' for cow-veneration:

What surplus oxen cost India.	Rs. 1,15,20,00,000
What surplus cows cost India.	Rs. 61,20,00,000
Total	Rs. 1,76,40,00,000

This amount calculated at Rs.15 to the £ equals £117,600,000. The annual land revenue for British India, we are told, amounts to 36 crores of rupees, so that the annual economic loss due to surplus cattle is over four times the land revenue.

[1] Sin

There is no doubt that, like the growing poverty of India, the cattle problem is growing more and more serious. But the cattle problem of India is, for the vast majority of the population—the Hindus, the problem of cow-protection, taking the expression in its broad sense. There is, therefore, no doubt that we shall have to pay 'a staggering price' for ever. If we have no 'cow-veneration', we could make short work of all the surplus and dilapidated cattle, and save the seventeen hundred and sixty-four millions of rupees which the writer has dished out for us. Similarly, no doubt, we could free this land from poverty by killing out all the surplus population, all the diseased, all the weaklings, and a few thousands of us may then live on this vast surface of the earth, with a few pistols or some more quickly-working weapon of destruction for ridding ourselves of those men and animals, ferocious or otherwise, whom we may regard as a burden. But in India, like the poor and the diseased everywhere, we shall have to have our brethren the cattle also, and we must, therefore, solve the cattle problem, as the poverty problem, along our own, or as some might say, superstitious lines. I have endeavoured to show the way in my address to the Cow-Protection Conference. Within the limitations prescribed by religious sentiment, we must adopt the latest scientific methods. We must resort to scientific castration, we must find out an economical method of feeding our cattle, we must take the maximum of service consistently with the welfare of the cattle, we must increase the milk supply from the existing cows and buffaloes, and we must make the best economical use of the hides of all dead cattle. If we succeed in doing these things, we shall have gone a long way towards solving the cattle problem.

There will still have to be a price paid for religious sentiment, but a religious sentiment is not worth the name if it is not worth paying for. The money that is daily being paid in the name of cow-protection blindly and in utter ignorance of scientific facts can be well utilized for the purposes above mentioned. It will make no direct return, but it will, under better conditions, prevent the wicked waste that is going on, and certainly save thousands of cattle from the butcher's knife to which they fall victim, not because of Mussalman or English cussedness, but because of Hindu stupidity. Today, because of our ignorance and slothfulness, millions of human beings and millions of cattle are dying of semi-starvation—a sad reflection upon religious India.

STEADY PROGRESS

The reader will remember my note on the progress made in eleven days in spinning at Satyashram, in Baherok. I have now another letter showing further progress, which I reproduce below:

> Perhaps you remember my last letter re the progress I made in spinning within 11 days. I am glad to inform you that we have been continuing the practice of spinning in competition almost every day. In the last four years, all our work would stop when the rains would set in, as the country at that time becomes a vast sheet of water. But since your last visit, we have been making steady progress in our work, in spite of the inelement weather of the rainy season.
>
> The total amount of yarn produced in the locality, which was only 1 or 2 seers at the time of your visit, has reached up to half a maund per month. The progress made by the boys of the national school is much more encouraging. The speed of a boy of 16 has come up to 730 yards of 15 counts per hour. The quality of the yarn is also appreciably improved.
>
> As regards the wheels, they are the same machines shown to you in the demonstration held in the Ashram compound. We have only changed the spindles. We hope to make further progress. May we have your sympathy and blessings?

If the authorities continue their faith in the spinning-wheel unabated, I have very little doubt that progress in spinning will also be continuous.

CONGRESS YARN

A correspondent from Conjeeveram writes:

> You have introduced a new factor into our politics, and that is khaddar. The common people have evinced very great interest in working it up. Up to the end of April, 1925 eighteen thousand yards of yarn have been sent as subscription. But the senders do not know what has become of the yarn. Neither the district nor the provincial Committees inform as to what is going on. Could we send subscriptions direct to you?

Another correspondent from Burra Bazar writes:

> I regularly send the yarn I spin to my District Congress Committee. But the answer to the question what is being done to it is that it is being eaten up by the rats. I would like you to enquire into this and provide a remedy.

I have picked up samples out of the many complaints received by me. I have no authority to receive subscriptions. I can receive donations of yarn as I do from every part of India. But subscriptions

must go to authorized channels. It is, however, in order to remedy such defects that the proposal to form an All-India Spinners' Association has been made by me. Through it, if the Congress retains spinning as an optional part of the franchise and appoints the proposed body as its agency to receive spinning subscriptions, the defects mentioned can be obviated. Anyway, I have no doubt that some solution will be found by the forthcoming meeting of the All-India Congress Committee. Meanwhile, I commend the complaints to their respective Committees for attention.

Young India, 27-8-1925

216. AGE OF CONSENT

Mrs.Dorothy Jinarajadasa has issued a circular letter upon a Bill before the Legislative Assembly, whose object is to raise the Age of Consent at least to 14. She has favoured me with a copy of the circular letter which I reproduce below:

> I am writing to ask you if you can use your influence to obtain support for the Children's Protection Act that is coming up in the Legislative Assembly during the next session. I think very strongly that, if India is to be a great nation honoured and respected among the nations of the world, the blot of child motherhood must be removed from her.
>
> Last time the Bill came up, it received a very great deal of support in the country and in the Assembly, and I think that during the next session, there will not be much difficulty in passing it, if only we get a certain amount of expression of public opinion from the people. To my certain knowledge, there are quite a large number of meetings being held all over the country, especially my women, supporting this Bill, and I am sure that it is in line with the wishes of the majority of women that the age for the consummation of marriage for little girls should be raised to at least 14.
>
> I am sure that it would be a considerable help to the passage of the Bill if you could express your opinion strongly in support of it and also urge on men and women the importance of both supporting the Bill and living up to its principles in daily practice.

I must confess that I am ignorant of the Bill but I am strongly in favour of raising the Age of Consent not merely to 14, but even to 16. Whilst, therefore, I can say nothing about the text of the Bill, I should heartily endorse any movement whose object is to save innocent girls of tender age from man's lust. A so-called marriage rite

ought no longer to confer legality upon an immoral and inhuman act which consummation even at the age of 14, in my humble opinion, undoubtedly is. Sanskrit texts of doubtful authority cannot be invoked[1] to sanctify a practice which is in itself immoral. I have witnessed the ruin of the health of many a child-mother, and when, to the horrors of an early marriage is added enforced early widowhood, human tragedy becomes complete. Any sensible legislation in the direction of raising the Age of Consent will certainly have my approval. But I am painfully conscious of the fact that even the existing legislation has proved abortive for want of public opinion to support it. The task before the reformer in this, as in many other directions, is most difficult. Constant and continuous agitation is necessary if any real impression is to be made on the Hindu public. I wish every success to those who are engaged in the noble task of rescuing Indian girls from premature old age and early death, and Hinuduism from being responsible for bringing into being rickety weaklings.

Young India, 27-8-1925

217. SWARAJ OR DEATH

The following[2] is printed not for its intrinsic worth but for the earnestness of the writer whom I know, and for the reason that many people hold similar views:

There is some truth in the correspondent's reasoning. But he is wholly wrong in imputing all evil to the Government. After all, is there not a great deal of truth in the saying that a people get the Government they deserve? If we had not been a people easily duped and as easily subdued, we would not have succumbed to the blandishments or the force of the East India Company and given up hand-spinning or khaddar. If the Hindus and Mussalmans had been living like brothers, the British satraps could not have divided us. And it is libellous to blame the Government for the existence of untouchability. Probably, if the Government had no fear of a revolt of orthodoxy, they would have made short work of untouchability long ago. I do not know a single case in which the Government have obstructed that reform. The correspondent is wrong in imputing

[1] The Source has "involved."

[2] For the text of this letter, *vide* Appendix I.

blame to the British Government for the Vaikom business. It is solely due to the timidity of the indigenous Government. I am no lover of the existing system of Government. But I shall fail to destroy it if, in my rage, I lose the faculty for discrimination. 'Give the devil his due' is a sound proverb worth bearing in mind.

But I fully suspect that, when khaddar becomes powerful enough to oust foreign cloth, the Government will probably endeavour to kill it. I refuse to believe that it is or need be a rebel's dress. What is true is that there is a subtle propaganda against khaddar in Government circles. I am told that the wearing of khaddar places the wearer under observation. He cannot get the facilities he would otherwise get in Government circles. But there is nothing to prevent the general body of people from adopting khaddar. Surely swaraj will not drop from the clouds. It will be the fruit of patience, perseverance, ceaseless toil, courage and an intelligent appreciation of the environment. Even the 'divine agency' of which the correspondent writes will be available to prayerful toil, not laziness of mind or body. Prayer without labour is like faith without works—a Dead Sea apple. Whilst, therefore, we may not have complete exclusion of foreign cloth, we might at least make a 'decent show' of khaddar before swaraj is won. What is, there, for instance, to prevent Congressmen from wearing khaddar on all occasions or from spinning? Or are they to be expected to wear khaddar and spin after swaraj is established? Are we angels merely waiting for the establishment of national Government to flap our wings? We may not have an ideal communal unity before swaraj. But what is there to prevent a workable unity ? Is it not rather a fact that we distrust one another too much really to desire swaraj?

The correspondent's mistake lies in his misconception of the function of Government. He evidently thinks that an ideal Government is that which orders everything for us so that we need not even think for ourselves. Whereas, in truth, a Government that is ideal governs the least. It is no self-government that leaves nothing for the people to do. That is pupilage—our present state. My correspondent is evidently unable as yet to rise superior to that. But, if we are to attain swaraj, a large number of us must outgrow enforced nonage and feel our adolescence. We must govern ourselves at least where there is no deadly opposition from armed authority. The triple programme is the test of our capacity for self-government. If we impute all our

weaknesses to the present Government, we shall never shed them.

The correspondent reminds me of a statement made by me at Belgaum that, probably, at the end of the year, if there is not much headway made, I would find a way whereby we could make our final choice and say 'Death or Swaraj'. He has evidently in mind some strange upheaval in which all distinction between violence and non-violence will be abolished. Such confusion will most assuredly lead to self-indulgence [which] is not self-rule. Self-indulgence is anarchy, and though anarchy is every time better than slavery or suppression of self, it is a state which I would not only have no hand in consciously bringing into being, but which I am by nature unfitted to bring about. Any method of 'Death or Swaraj' that I may suggest will always avoid confusion and anarchy. My swaraj will be, therefore, not a result of murder of others, but a voluntary act of continuous self-sacrifice. My swaraj will not be a bloody usurpation of rights but the acquisition of power. It will be a beautiful and natural fruit of duty well and truly performed. It will, therefore, provide amplest excitement of the Chaitanya type, not of the Nero type. I have no formula at the present moment, but with my correspondent I share the belief that it will be a divine guidance. I am awaiting the sign. It can come, often does come, when the horizon is the blackest. But I know that it will be precededby the rise of a class of young men and women who will find full excitement in work, work and nothing but work for the nation.

Young India, 27-8-1925

218. KHADDAR WORKERS' CENSUS

The following figures will speak for themselves. I am glad almost all the important centres have expedited their reports.

M. K. G.

Centre	No. full time workers	Gra- duates	Paid or Hon.	Maxi- mum	Mini mum	Ave- rage	Remu- neration	Total
				Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	
1.Tamil Nad Khadi Board	22	1	Paid	80	15	32-4-4	710	
2. All India Khadi Board	24	8	2H+22P	150	10	64-8-0	1,504	
3. Khadi Pratish-than Bengal	88	13	4H+84P	100	10	26	2,345	
4. Gujarat Khadi Mandal	32	5	Paid	100	15	43-12	1,402	
5. Punjab Khadi Board	15	1	Paid	150	20	50	750	
6. C.P. (Hindi) Khadi Board	6	—	Paid	40	10	18	107	

Young India, 27-8-1925

219. A COMMON SCRIPT

If we are to make good our claim as one nation, we must have several things in common. We have a common culture running through a variety of creeds and sub-creeds. We have common disabilities. I am endeavouring to show that a common material for our dress is not only desirable but necessary. We need also a common language not in supersession of the vernaculars, but in addition to them. It is generally agreed that that medium should be Hindustani—a resultant of Hindi and Urdu, neither highly Sanskritized, nor Persianized or Arabianized. The greatest obstacle in the way are the numerous script, we have for the vernaculars. If it is possible to adopt a common script we should remove a great hindrance in the way of realizing the dream which, at present, is of having a common language. A variety of scripts iss an obstacle in more ways than one. It constitutes an effectual barrier against the acquisition of knowledge. The Aryan languages have so much in common that, if a great deal of

time had not to be wasted in mastering the different scripts, we should all know several languages without much difficulty; for instance, most people who have a little knowledge of Sanskrit would have no difficulty in understanding the matchless creation of Rabindranath Tagore, if it was all printed in Devanagari script. But the Bengali script is a notice to the non-Bengalis—"hands off". Conversely, if the Bengalis knew the Devanagari script, they would at once be able to enjoy the marvellous beauty and spirituality of Tulsidas and a host of other Hindustani writers. When I returned to India in 1915,[1] I had a communication from a society whose headquarters were, I believe, in Calcutta, and whose object was to advocate a common script for all India. I do not know the activities of that society, but its object isworthy, and a great deal of substantial work can be done by a few earnest workers in this direction. There are obvious limitations. A common script for all India is a distant ideal. A common script for all those who speak the Indo-Sanskrit languages, including the Southern stock, is a practical ideal, if we can but shed our provincialisms. There is little virtue, for instance, in a Gujarati clinging to the Gujarati script. A provincial patriotism is good where it feeds the larger stream of all-India patriotism, as the latter is good to the extent that it serves the still larger end of the universe. But a provincial patriotism that says "India is nothing, Gujarat is all", is wickedness. I have selected Gujarat because it is the half-way house, and because I am myself a Gujarati. In Gujarat, somewhat fortunately, those who settled the principles of primary education decided to make Devanagari script compulsory. Every Gujarati boy or girl who has passsed through a school, therefore, knows both the Gujarati and the Devanagari scipts. If the committee had decided upon purely Devanagari script, it would have been better still. No doubt, the research scholars would still have learnt the Gujarati script for deciphering old manuscripts, but the Gujarati boy's energy would have been spared for more useful labour, if he had to learn only one instead of two scipts. The committee that settled the education scheme for Maharashtra, was more enlightened, and it simply required the Devanagari script. The result is that a Mahratta reads, so far as mere reading is concerned, Tulsidas with as much facility as he reads Tukaram, and Gujaratis and Hindustanis read Tukaram with equal facility. The committee in Bengal, on the other hand, ruled otherwise, with the result we all know and many of

[1] The source has "1905", obviously a misprint.

us deplore. The treasures of the richest Indian vernacular have been rendered most difficult of access as if by design. That Devanagari should be the common script, I suppose, does not need any demonstration—the deciding factor being that it is the script known to the largest part of India.

These reflections arise, because, I was called upon to solve, during my visit to Cuttack, a practical question. There is a tribe wedged between the Hindi speaking people in Bihar and Uriya speaking people of Orissa. What was to be done for the education of its children ? Were they to be taught through Uriya or through Hindi? Or were they to be taught through their own dialect and, if they were, was the script to be Devanagari or a new invention? The first thought of the Utkal friends was to absorb the tribe amongst the Uriyas. The Biharis would think of absorbing them in Bihar, and if the elders of the tribe were consulted, they would most probably and naturally say that their dialect was just as good as the Uriya or the Bihari, and that it should be reduced to writing. And for them it would be a toss whether the script to be adopted should be Devanagari or Uriya, if not even a newly invented script, as has happened in modern times in at least two instances I know. Endeavouring to think in terms of all India, I suggested to my friends that, whilst it was proper for them to strengthen the Uriya language among the Uriya speaking people, the children of this tribe should be taught Hindi and, naturally, the script should be Devanagari. A spirit that is so exclusive and narrow as to want every form of speech to be perpetuated and developed is anti-national and anti-universal. All undeveloped and unwritten dialects should, in my humble opinion, be sacrificed and merged in the great Hindustani stream. It would be a sacrifice only to be nobler, not a suicide. If we are to have a common language for cultured India, we must arrest the growth of any process of disintegration or multiplication of languages and scripts. We must promote a common language. The beginning must naturally be made with the script, and until the Hindu-Muslim question is solved, confined perhaps to Hindu India. If I could have my way, I would make the learning of Devanagari script and Urdu script, in addition to the established provincial script compulsory in all the provinces and I would print in Devanagari chief books in the different vernaculars with a literal translation in Hindustani. Unfortunately, not many Congressmen have taken the trouble of learning the Devanagari script and fewer still the Urdu script.

Young India, 27-8-1925

220. HOOKWORM AND CHARKHA

In the letter enclosing the cutting about cattle, dealt with elsewhere in this issue, Mr. Andrews writes:

> I have just had with me here Dr. Tendrich of the Rockefeller International Health Board who has been plodding away in Madras. He tells me that on examination 92 to 85 p.c. of the peasantry have hookworm, and other infections from night-soil, like typhoid and dysentery, which are rife owing to evacuations getting everywhere mixed up with the water supply. He says that they were just in the same condition as the Negroes in the Southern States twenty years ago. The consequence also was the same, —no vitality, a wretched life of weakness. Now, in the very same States today there is prosperity and vitality, because hookworm, typhoid, etc, have been conquered by the night-soil being got under control. He said to me that, if a change were made in the people's habits in this direction by the very simple method of a village drainage, which would be filled in every six months, and then every six months afterwards dug out and used as a perfectly safe fertilizer, as they do mostly in China, Japan and the States, the economic gain is so great as to be quite incalculable. My point is that the charkha has opened the village problem, but it has not solved it. And if you say that it alone will solve it, by concentrating on it alone, that is too narrow. The cattle problem and the sanitation problem are equally vital.

In this paragraph Mr. Andrews has raised the question of sanitation. I am not blind to the necessity of sanitation. I became a sanitary reformer long before I discovered the charkha. I was myself carrying on at the farm in Phoenix, Natal, experiments in burying night-soil and converting it into rich manure. We had there no scavenger; we were our own scavengers, and as, Mr. Andrews himself knows, one could walk about the settlement in Phoenix bare-footed without the danger of treading upon any dirt. The same treatment of night-soil is being continued at the Satyagraha Ashram on the banks of the Sabarmati. But I do not carry on any propaganda about it for the simple reason that it cannot solve the problem of the daily-growing poverty immediately and directly. Moreover, in dealing with this question of insanitation, one has to fight against old prejudices and old habits. It is a matter of sustained education and one that cannot be dealt with without State aid. I regret to have to confess that ingrained bad habits handed down from generation to generation do not yield to persuasion. Legislation seems to me to be the only effective remedy.

But the same objection does not apply to the charkha. On the contrary, it is to be the precursor of every reform, and if I can only concentrate the attention of the nation upon the charkha, it will automatically solve all the other problems and pave the way for legislation where legislation is required. The charkha is calculated to make an immediate return, be it ever so small, to the individual. It presents the least difficulty in its working. There is no rooted prejudice against it. For the simple folk at least it requires no elaborate reasoning. It needs the smallest capital. It is the only constructive effort that is possible on a national scale. It is fraught with tremendous political consequences if it becomes successful, and seeing that it cannot succeed without co-operation it makes for a mighty co-operative effort. Hence the claim that concentration on charkha alone leads to swaraj, and if this is too strong a proposition, let it be put in another way— 'Without the charkha and all it implies there is no swaraj, and therefore a wise economist will concentrate his attention upon the charkha alone, knowing that the rest will follow.'

Let me diagnose the disease a little deeper. It is not the drain that matters so much as poverty, and it is not even poverty that matters so much as idleness which was at first enforced, and has now become a habit that matters. The drain may be stopped and poverty is merely a symptom, but idleness is the great cause, the root of all evil, and if that root can be destroyed, most of the evils, can be remedied without further effort. A nation that is starving has little hope or initiative left in it. It becomes indifferent to filth and disease. It says of all reforms 'to what good?' That winter of despair can only be turned into the 'sunshine of hope' for the millions only through the life-giving wheel, the charkha.

Young India, 27-8-1925

221. STATEMENT REGARDING A.I.C.C. MEETING

[*August 27,1925*]

Some friends have been to me telling me that the date 22nd September for the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee is an inconvenient one for the Bengalis in view of the forthcoming Puja holidays. The date has been fixed in consultation with Pandit Motilal Nehru who has chosen it after consultation with the members of the Assembly. The original date fixed has been anticipated for the

convenience of these members so that they might not have a double journey. Had the 1st of October been retained, it would not have been possible to fix the venue at Patna. Even as it is, a telegram has been received from Sind protesting against the venue being fixed at Patna. I appreciate the difficulty of the Sindhi friends. But Patna has been chosen after much consultation and for the convenience of the majority of the members. The real Puja holiday commences on the 24th and I have promised the Bengal friends that, even though there may have to be a late night sitting, I shall finish the deliberations of the All-India Congress Committee on the 22nd so as to free the members to leave for Calcutta the night of 22nd. If any routine matters requiring the attention of the All-India Congress Committee remain over, and on which Bengali friends might not have any fixed views, subject to their consent, the proceedings will be prolonged beyond the 22nd. But the main purpose for which the meeting is being convened will be finished on the 22nd. I hope to be in Patna on the 20th. 21st is my day of silence, and I shall be free to discuss with friends who might arrive on the 20th any question that they may wish to discuss in regard to the proposed change in the constitution. Needless to say that no change in constitution will be adopted unless there is an absolute unanimity. I hope all the members of the A.I.C.C. will attend the forthcoming meeting.

If all goes well, it is my desire also to inaugurate the All-India Spinners' Association and to discuss matters relating to the spinning-wheel and khaddar. I therefore, invite all khadi workers who may wish to help at the framing of the constitution of this organizatinon to attend.

M. K. GANDHI

Forward, 30-8-1925

222. A TESTIMONIAL

August 28, 1925

F. N. GOOPTU & CO.,

It has been a great pleasure to me to be able to visit this pencil and penholder factory. I was delighted to be informed some of the machines were designed and made in this factory. I wish this national enterprise every success.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

223 SPEECH AT MECCANO CLUB, CALCUTTA[1]

August 28,1925

You have very adroitly got rid of the obligation of bestowing some little praise upon the speaker of the evening. I wish I could do likewise and avoid anything to speak at all. I had hoped that a little bit of praise from you would give me some encouragement, but that was not to be my lot. But I am convinced from the manner in which you have been conducting these proceedings and in which you have garlanded this little girl[2] that you at least are not guilty of any race hatred.

But in India, at the present moment, the young generation is undoubtedly face to face with this very problem. Is it possible to love one's country and not to hate those who rule over one's country, whose domination we do not want, whose domination we dislike from the bottom of our hearts? The answer has been in the hearts of many young men that it is impossible to love one's country and not to hate those who rule over one's country. Some of them expressed their opinion in board daylight, a few of them translate that opinion into action. Many, however, harbour this opinion in secret and feed upon that opinion.

I have been a student of this question, not since my return to India in 1915, but ever since I entered into public life and public service. That was in 1894. But I have come deliberately to the conclusion that love of one's country, namely nationalism, is perfectly consistent with the love of those whose rule, whose domination whose methods we do not like. I was face to face with that problem in my dealings with the South African Government or, more accurately speaking, the then Natal Government; later on with the Transvaal Government and later still with the Union Government. Most of you are aware of the disabilities—the glaring disabilities—under which our countrymen labour in that sub-continent—South Africa. It is enough; those disabilities are really enough to make one hate one's fellow beings, if one did not preserve one's sanity. You find there injustice rampant for no cause save that you do not have the same colour of

[1] The meeting to which admission was by tickets, was held at the Overtoun Hall. The proceeds were sent to the All-Bengal Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. Rev. T.E.T.Shore presided.

[2] Here Gandhiji pointed to a five-year -old girl.

skin. There shall be no equality between the white and the coloured races—so runs the constitution of the Union Government. It was at one time an article of the Transvaal Government constitution, but the constitution has today been adopted by the Union Government. When you come to India you find, though not the same thing, much the same thing and very often one finds it most difficult to reconcile the two things, love of one's country and love also of one whom you may consider to be the tiger. It is beside the point whether you are just and correct in your estimate or whether you are incorrect, but the impression left upon your mind is that you are labouring under the grossest form of tyranny, grossest form of injustice. How shall you then love the tiger?

Let me put it in another way—not necessarily that you should love the tiger, but love is an active force and the subject of this evening is—Is it necessary to hate the tiger? Is hatred essential for nationalism? You may not love, but must you also hate? The answer, as I have said before, in the minds of many people is undoubtedly that you must hate. Some, I know, consider it their duty to hate the tiger and they cite instances from modern constitutions, they cite the late disastrous War in Europe, they cite wars of which they have learnt in history; they cite also the law, and they say society hangs on the gallows those who are guilty of murder. Is not that a sign of hatred? There certainly is no love. Would not one love one's father, would not one love one's dearest ones, even if they might err? [Would one wish them] to be hanged on the gallows? One would pray for their reformation but not for their punishment, and yet, it is said, perhaps with a great deal of justification, that society will break into pieces if under the law of sanction punishment was withdrawn, abolished or suspended. With those illustrations before them, the young men rush to the conclusion that those who consider that hatred is not essential for nationalism are in the wrong. I do not blame them. They have to be pitied; they command my sympathy, but I have not a shadow of doubt in my mind that they are labouring under the grossest delusion; and so long as they retain that attitude, so long as a large body of men and women retain that attitude the progress of this country, the progress of the world is retarded. It does not matter to me that all those illustrations that I have placed before you can be cited in order to justify their conduct.

The world is weary of it. We see the fatigue overcoming theWestern nations. We see that this song of hate has not benefited

humanity. Let it be the privilege of India to turn a new leaf and set a lesson to the world. (Cries of 'hear, hear'.) Is it necessary that three hundred millions of people should hate one hundred thousand Englishmen? That is the concrete term to which I can reduce this evening's subject. In my humble opinion it is derogatory to the dignity of mankind, it is derogatory to the dignity of India to entertain for one single moment hatred towards Englishmen. That does not mean that you are to be blind to the excesses that English rulers have been found to commit in India. I have drawn this particular distinction between the evil and the evil-doer. Hate the evil but not the evil-doer. We ourselves, every one of us, are full of evil. And we want the world to be patient with us, to be forgiving, to be gentle with us. I would like the same thing to be meted out to the Englishmen. Heaven knows no one in India perhaps can claim better than myself to have spoken as fiercely and as fearlessly of the many misdeeds of English rulers and the corrupt nature of the system under which we are governed. My freedom from hatred—I would even go so far as to claim for myself individually—my love of those who consider themselves to be my enemies, does not make me blind to their faults. That is no love which is extended simply because of the possession of some virtues fancied or real in the beloved. If I am true to myself, if I am true to mankind, if I am true to humanity, I must understand all the faults that human flesh is heir to. I must understand the weaknesses of my opponents, the vices of my opponents and, yet, in spite of these vices, not hate but even love them. It is by itself a force. Brute force has been handed down to us from generation to generation. We have used it and we have found what it has done for Europe and what it has done for the world. The glamour of European civilization does not dazzle us. Scratch beneath the surface and you will find there very little to choose.

Do not for one moment consider that I condemn all that is Western. For the time being I am dealing with the predominant character of modern civilization, do not call it Western civilization, and the predominant character of modern civilization is the exploitation of the weaker races of the earth. The predominant character of modern civilization is to dethrone God and enthrone Materialism . I have not hesitated to use the word "Satan". I have not hesitated to call this system of government under which we are labouring "Satanic". And I withdraw not one word from it. But, however, I shall not deal with it this evening. If I begin to devise means of punishing the evil-doer,

my business is to love them and by patient and gentle handling to convert them. Non-co-operation or satyagraha, therefore, is not a hymn of hate. I know that many who call themselves satyagrahis or non-co-operators do not deserve to bear that name. They have done a violence to their own creed. They were not real representatives of this principle. Real non-co-operation is non-co-operation with evil and not with the evil-doer. Sometimes it is difficult, I know, to distinguish between evil and evil-doer. But how are you to non-co-operate with the evil and not with the evil-doer? I do not want to go into the whole of the intricate doctrine. I can simply comment on what is going on during these 5 or 6 years. If we understand the secret of this doctrine and the beautiful consistency between hating evil and not hating evil-doers, I have said that all that we need today is to extend the law that we apply in our domestic relations to the political field, and, therefore, to the relations between the rulers and the ruled and you will find the true solution. What does a father do to a son who is inclined to do evil and become corrupted? He does not punish him nor does he encourage him, but tries to correct him.

Your non-co-operation is intended not to encourage evil. That is the meaning. One of the greatest writers has said that if the world ceases to encourage evil, evil will die of inanition. If we simply find out for ourselves to what extent we are responsible for the evil that exists in society today, we will soon see that evil will soon be gone from society. But we tolerate it under a false sense of love. I am not talking of the blind love that dotes on an erring son and pats him on the back while he errs, nor am I speaking of the son who, under a false sense of loyalty to his father, tolerates evil in his father. I am not talking of that. I am talking of the love that discriminates, that is intelligent, that is not blind to a single fault .That is the love of reform, and the moment we have seized the secret, that very moment the evil goes out of sight.

I talk of the relations between the two races. Think of the many evils from which we are suffering today in Hindu society. Let alone Mussalmans, let alone Christians, Parsis and others. The majority of us are Hindus. How should we deal with the evil that is rampant in Hinduism? Shall we hate those who consider untouchability part and parcel of Hindu religion and quote scriptures in favour of untouchability or shall we remove untouchability by our persistent conduct? The secret, then, is suffering, but not to subject the evil-doers to suffering, but to take the suffering upon our own shoulders.

If we reform Hinduism of the many abuses that have crept into it, we shall only do so by taking the instance of Vaikom. It comes to me naturally because it is through praise that you see the finished example. I know every one of the brave young men. I think I know every one of them who are working in Vaikom under terrible difficulites. They have undergone suffering which I cannot possibly describe here in the few moments, but I dare give this testimony to you that these young men have not erred by a hair's breadth. I mean the young men of Vaikom. I don't say individuals have not erred, but they have kept their record absolutely clean. The result is that they have not yet got rid of the whole of abuses, but I have not a shadow of doubt in my mind that in Travancore today untouchability has lost its foothold, it is fast dying simply because of the determination of a handful of youth who plunged themselves down into the midst of Vaikom and invited suffering on their own shoulders. That is really the secret. In my humble opinion hatred is not essential for nationalism. Race hatred will kill the real national spirit. Let us understand what nationalism is. We want freedom for our country. We do not want sufferings for other countries: we do not want the exploitation of other countries; we do not want the degradation of other countries. For my part I don't want the freedom of India if it means the disappearance of Englishmen, if it means the extinction of Englishmen. I want the freedom of my country so that other countries may learn something from this free country of mine. I want freedom of my country so that the resources of my country might be utilized for the benefit of mankind just as the cult of patriotism teaches us today that the individual has to die for the family, the family has to die for the village, the village for the district, the district for the Province and the Provinces for the whole nation, and when we indulge in provincialism I as a Gujarati say, Gujarat first, Bengal and the rest of Provinces next. There is no nationalism in it. On the contrary if I live in Gujarat and prepare Gujarat, I should prepare Gujarat so that the vast resources of Gujarat might be placed at the disposal of Bengal, nay, of the whole of India, that Gujarat may die for the whole of India. My love, therefore, of nationalism, or my idea of nationalism is that my country may become free—free that if need be the whole of the country may die— so that the human race may live. There is no

room here for race hatred. Let that be our nationalism.[1]

A question from Mr. Chapman, the Librarian of the Imperial Library, at the conclusion of the speech, drew a telling reply from Gandhiji. 'Was not the insistence on political freedom and political equality on the part of Indians conducive to race hatred, when Indians themselves were not capable of ruling themselves' was in effect Mr. Chapman's question.

If you have drawn the deduction from what I said that we should tolerate your rule so long as we are not capable of managing our affairs, you are mistaken. We can develop that capacity only by resistance to the system. And may I say that the questioner unconsciously betrayed his own race prejudice when he referred to Indians as incapable of ruling themselves. Underlying that prejudice is the idea of superiority and the conceit that the Englishmen are born to manage the affairs of the world. That is an idea to fight which my whole life has been dedicated. Unless the Englishmen are dislodged from that position there is no peace in india, nor any peace for the weaker races of the earth. It is the absolute right of India to misgovern herself. My heart rebels against any foreigner imposing on my country the peace which is here called 'Pax Britannica'.

Forward, 29-8-1925

224. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, CALCUTTA[2]

August 29, 1925

In thanking the students for the purse presented to him, Mahatma Gandhi said they should remember that, in revering the memory of Deshbandhu, they were revering their country and they pledged themselves to do something, be it ever so little—to the best of their ability—for their country. But, as he had said repeatedly, these subscriptions he regarded only as an earnest of what the subscribers were going to do for their country.

Speaking of organization, Mahatmaji said that, first of all, they should understand what was meant by organization. But what was the meaning of organization? Organization meant that the people should have a united purpose, a united will. Immediately they had got these two conditions fulfilled, they had brought

[1] What follows is extracted from Mahadev Desai's account in *Young India*, 10-9-1925.

[2] The Ashutosh college Students' Parliament, under whose auspices the meeting was held at Russa Theatre Hall, presented Gandhiji with a purse of Rs. 1,001 for the All-Bengal Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. Prof. M.C. Bhattacharya presided.

into being a little organization. Although, they, the Indians, seemed to have acommon aspiration, they had not yet discovered that, for common aspirations,common methods were also necessary. They had not yet received the faculty for application in connection with these common aspirations. These aspirations of theirs still more or less remained only as ideals and a few of them, who were endeavouring to translate those ideals into action, were too few to bring into being organizations that were necessary in order to permeate the masses of India. Another requirement for efficient organization was a leader, or more than a leader, soldiers. They might have a towering personality like Deshbandhu and people in their adoration and admiration might follow such a man for the time being irresistibly attracted to him. But that did not bring into being an organization. The test of an organization was that they should work as soldiers, not because they were irresistibly drawn to a personality but because they were irresistibly drawn to the principle. Therefore, the requirements of an organization were common will, common purpose, a leader, disciplined soldiers.

How could students then learn the spirit of organization? That was to say, in concrete terms, what was to be their own purpose, what was to be their common will in connection with India in terms of the nation? Naturally, the first answer was that students should import national consideration even in their studies. While students they should not only think for themselves, what they should do after they were discharged from colleges, but they should also learn how they would utilize the knowledge they were gaining. They should see that there was no contradiction or inconsistency between obligations to the family and obligations to the nation. Taking his audience back to 1908, Mahatmaji said that he had discoverd one thing common and that was the spinning-wheel. He had discovered, and he challenged anybody to disprove the discovery, that this nation was dying of sloth and idleness. Poverty, hunger, drain from India—certainly all these things could be stopped in a moment if they would only shed their idleness and sloth . If they would go to the villages, they would see for themselves that the root cause of the deep, distressing poverty of India was slothfulness. Nay he would go so far as to say that idleness was the cause of their foreign domination. For it was his settled conviction that a nation which was not a nation of idlers, a nation which utilized all its time for its existence, defied the whole might of the universe. India should do likewise. Every villager should consider it his duty to work every spare moment at his disposal for the sake of the motherland.

Then, what was the work that every one of them could do, retaining his own individual work? The answer was simple, and that was the charkha. Therefore, students should go to the villages, and try to impress upon the villagers the potency of the charkha and that they would succeed in doing only when they had shed their slothfulness and idleness and gone there not as patrons, but as servants.

Speaking about swadeshism, Mahatmaji said that swadeshism is a conservative spirit—not conservative or radical—but conservative in its original root meaning, i.e. something that conserved. The spirit of swadeshi would enable and teach them to conserve all that was best. There was a process of rejection also, but not summary rejection nor blind adoration of all that was ancient, simply because it was ancient. They must use the God-gifted reason, discrimination. Swadeshism was a discriminating, conservative spirit which would retain all that was best in national life, in ancient tradition and at the same time absorb by assimilation—not by base imitation—all that was best in the modern world, all that was best in the West, so that from good they might grow to better and from better to still better. But there was some fundamental principle in their religion which could not be improved upon. What possible improvement could they make on the statement "God is Truth and Love"? But there were certain usages and customs which had been handed down to them. All these customs must vary according to the varying circumstances and here they must reject them if they conflicted with reason, with their moral sense of mankind.

But he knew what swadeshism had become cheap today. Anything imported from Germany, Japan became a swadeshi article. To him that was a parody of swadeshism.

My swadeshi is khaddar, because I have taken my stand on one thing, and restricted my swadeshism. Manufactured goods we must not use—goods from outside which we can usefully manufacture in our own country. That is not antagonistic to anything, but it is the law of charity beginning at home it is the law of charity which teachs us that, if we do not serve our family, our neighbour, we will not be able to serve our distant neighbour. Remember one yard of calico puts into the pockets of the labourers one pie. One yard of khaddar, khaddar bought from the villagers, puts into the hands of the famishing villagers at least four annas. Make your choice—one pie or four annas and decide for yourselves.

Forward, 30-8-1925

225. SPEECH AT BENGAL CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE, CALCUTTA

August 29, 1925

On rising to speak, Mahatmaji was accorded a great ovation and he began by saying that, when the son[1] of late Babu Kalicharan Banerjee requested him to address the meeting of the Indian Christian community, he could not but comply with his request, because the request was made by the son of one whom he revered most and whom he had the good fortune to meet on an occasion of seeking his advice at a critical time.

Mahatmaji continued to say that he had no new message to deliver to them. Whatever he had got to say to his Christian brethren of Indian nationality he had said on many previous occasions and they had read it in newspapers. His first intimate relations with the Indian Christians began while he was in South Africa. There he made acquaintance with a large number of Indian Christians who used to share his joys and trials equally with him. Ever since that time his intimacy with them had been on the increase.

Mahatmaji next referred to the deplorable condition of the Indian Christians for their mixing Christianity with European modes and methods. He said that, for the first time, he detected this perverse mentality of the Indian Christians in South Africa and from that time he had been all along striving hard to combat this evil idea. He had very often tried to prove that there was a clear distinction between the modes and manners of Europeans and Indian Christians. On the previous evening, he showed that race hatred was not nationalization[2]. Similarly, he had shown that Christianity did not mean denationalization. He was quite sure that for them Christianity did not mean Europeanization. It had no geographical limit. Jesus lived every inch of him in Asia and certainly Christianity had no relation whatsoever with Europeanization.

Mahatmaji further observed that there seemed to exist a wide gulf between the Indian Christians and Indian Hindus and Mohammedans. No doubt the gulf was getting narrower day by day. But it should be bridged over without any further delay. Everyone of a particular religion must love those who belonged to other religions. Referring to his experience in Travancore, Mahatmaji said that in that State there was a large number of highly educated and cultured Indian Christians. He was glad to find them try to do away with hatred and ill will of any sort for men of other religions. The sooner the number of such Christians increased, the better for India.

[1] J. K. Banerjee, who presided at the meeting.
[2] *Vide*" Speech at Meccano Club, Calcutta" , 28-8-1925.

Mahatmaji continued that they had gone away far from their original religion. Therefore, they must be prepared to come back to their old brethren with loving hearts. They had gone within the fold of another religion simply to rise above, at least as they thought it to be, superstition and errors of their ancient forefathers. So, they must rise above any malice or despite for their brethren. Next he referred to internationalism and said that his strong belief was that, without being nationalist, none could lay claim to internationalism. Unless a man could serve his family, his village and his country he could not serve the world. Internationalism had got no malice, no ill will or contempt, but it had only peace and goodwill in it, and unless a man began to love heartily his neighbours, he could not cultivate the spirit of love for the outside world. He continued that Christianity to them must be a better expression of nationalism, so they should be prepared to die for the nation before they could claim to give up their life for the cause of the world. In his opinion, Christianity must not be repugnant to nationalism. It must mean a greater dedication of their lives to the country's cause and for that they must enter into the hearts of the masses. He had heard many Christians say that they had nothing to do with the masses of India. He thought no religion could say so, since all of them were imperfect in some sense or other. Mahatmaji requested the Indian Christians to dispel such ideas from their minds.

Referring to the poverty of India, Mahatmaji next said that certainly Christianity did not mean multiplication of wants—wants which poor India could ill afford to supply. Many might say that their outlook was not limited within a narrow sphere. He would ask them to examine their hearts and see whether their utterances were at one with their belief, and he was sure they wouldn't be able to reconcile their utterances with their beliefs.

Last of all, Mahatmaji appealed to them to put on khaddar at least, if they could not spin. For every yard of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar they bought, they paid in a way at least four annas to their suffering brethren in the villages who were dying of starvation practically for want of work. Mahatmaji concluded his speech by saying that in pursuance of the high tenets of their religion which was absolutely based on the spirit of service to mankind they should buy khaddar and thus save their millions of starving brethren who lived in the remote villages.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 30-8-1925

226. A GREAT DISEASE

India is a land of peasants. In a way the whole world belongs to peasants. In other countries, however, people do not live by farming alone. In some countries people earn their living by hunting. England

lives by its industries. It imports much of the grain that it needs. For India, however, farming is the only means of subsistence. If the rains fail, the people have to starve. The farmers have to look up to the clouds in the monsoon.

However, as only a few persons can cultivate the land all the year round, crores of people are without any occupation for four to six months. Hence we have become idle. This has not always been our plight. Crores of people were kept employed when we made cloth ourselves. All these crores suffer from idleness today. Their eyes have lost lustre. They are without hope; their faces are devoid of enthusiasm. We are in such a sad plight where idleness has become second nature to us. This idleness of the peasants is shared by the middle class too. There can be no swaraj for an idle nation. Idleness leads to destruction. While moving amidst hundreds of thousands of people, I find that they do not get weary of chatting or just sitting doing nothing. If I don't look out, many people would sit around me and believe that they were doing something meritorious.

This idleness is a great disease with us, whose symptom is poverty. I believe that while the drain of money from this country is the cause of our poverty, it is not the cause. It is our idleness that is responsible both for our poverty and the drain of our resources. And, what else can an idle person become but a slave? Idlers have never become, and never will become, self-reliant.

How to get rid of this idleness? By taking up some sort of activity. Which is the activity that can be taken up by crores of human beings? In my opinion the spinning-wheel is the only activity of this kind. Anyone who can find a better activity for the people is free not to work on the spinning-wheel. I have been claiming from the very beginning that the spinning-wheel is the best possible means of making an idle person active; however, if anyone points out a more fruitful means which could be generally adopted, I will readily bow to him. I have come across many persons who are hard working themselves . But does this make the whole country industrious? There are ten or twenty millionaires in India, there are twenty-five or fifty rulers; does that, however make everyone a millionaire or a ruler? We can be called a single nation when those who are well-to-do partake of the misery of the country. Even a person like Shri Krishna had to work for the mass of people even though it was unnecessary so far as he himself was concerned. Moreover, it is not sufficient to be engaged

in work that is directed to one's self-interest. Those who can be called public leaders or public servants will pursue for the good of others an activity which crores of persons pursue in mere self interest. If they do not do this, even those who work of the sake of self-interest will give it up under a false glamour or illusion. In this case, we have to fashion workers out of idlers. We have also to teach them an activity which will bring about the good of the individual and society. The spinning-wheel alone can offer such an activity. It is for this very reason that I call the spinning-wheel a *Kamadhenu*[1]. Once the people realize the value of time, they will be able to understand everything else.

Mr. Andrews has posed two questions. We incur a loss of crores of rupees every year as cattle are not properly looked after. Moreover, as people do not put their excreta to good use, manure worth crores of rupees is wasted, and this also leads to the spread of diseases among people. If I can stress the importance of the activity of spinning, why do I not attempt readily to save crores of rupees by stressing the importance of this problem of cattle and this problem of filth? I have taken up the responsibility of cow-protection by way of protecting cattle. The problem of filth is a very difficult one which also owes its existence partly to our idleness. If people realize the importance of working hard the problem of cattle and that of filth would immediately be solved. If people do not take up the activity of spinning which is both easy and immediately rewarding how will they understand the problem posed by cattle and filth, which can be solved after very great efforts? Hence, from whichever angle you look you will see the very same thing. Idleness is the great disease of India and the spinning-wheel is the sole remedy for it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-8-1925

227. MY NOTES

END OF THE BENGAL TOUR

By the end of August, my tour of Bengal will be over. I would have stayed about a month and a half longer than intended[2]. I had not known the Bengalis previously as I have come to know them this time. I have had the pleasure of knowing many types of Bengalis. However,

[1] Mythical cow yielding whatever is asked of her

[2] Gandhiji was in Bengal from May 1, 1925 to September 1, 1925.

right now I do not wish to describe my experiences. What I write now is meant for Gujaratis.

I shall be reaching Bombay in connection with the Dadabhai Centenary, on the 3rd. After celebrating this occasion on the 4th, I expect to reach the Ashram on the 5th. I shall have to leave the Ashram again on the 9th. I hope to complete some tasks during these four days. Among these, I hope to give an account of the work of the Kathiawar Political Conference[1]. The latter has given khadi a place of prime importance. Devchandbhai will give an account of the extent to which this task has been carried out. In my opinion, a fairly good proportion of what was expected has been accomplished. The workers have not been idle.

What now remains is the political work . To some extent, I had taken this burden upon my shoulders. I have not been oblivious of this task although I was not in Gujarat. This does not imply that any success has been achieved. I only wish to say here that I do not, in any way, regret the advice that I offered to Kathiawar.[2] My experience confirms its wisdom.

It is extremely difficult to solve the problem of mismanagement where it exists in the Indian States. But it is not impossible. That, however, depends on increasing the strength of the peasantry and educating the rulers. The srength of the former cannot be increased by any outward struggle but through their own training. Hence, constructive work is the basis for solving political problems. Opinions may differ on whether this means the spinning-wheel or some other activity. But the time is drawing near when there will be a general agreement that the true solution of political problems lies in the education of the people. This education does not imply mere literacy but an awakening of the people from their slumber. The people should become aware of their own condition. Such awareness is possible only through public work and not through talks. This does not also mean that every outward agitation is useless. As I have said in *Young India*, outward agitations too have their place. Journalists must certainly carry on such agitation. It is bound to produce effect in

[1] On September 6, Gandhiji presided over the meeting of its managing committee held at Sabarmati Ashram.

[2] As president of the Kathiawar Political Conference, when its third session was held at Bhavnagar on January 8, 1925

proportion to its truthfulness and scope. But outward agitation cannot be given the first place. It is of subsidiary importance and it depends for its success entirely on the success of that which is internal, viz. constructive work. A corpse cannot be revived by artificial respiration. This would help only a person who, although asphyxiated, is alive and has the strength to make an effort. This is also true of society. The agitation acts as a support but is not the crux of he matter. However much the world may resound with tales of the sufferings of the Negroes, the entire movement would be futile if the Negroes themselves remained unaffected. There are many such contemporary examples. If the Indians in South Africa remain passive, their position will grow weaker in spite of the efforts made here. The Kathiawar Political Conference must choose its own field of activity.

GUJARATIS LIVING OUTSIDE GUJARAT

Wherever I go I happen to meet Gujaratis living outside their province. I get their help at every place. After Shri Manilal Kothari came to Calcutta, his contribution to the Bengal Deshbandhu Fund exceeds all expectations. The Gujaratis of Kharagpur have also sent in their contributions. There are only a few Gujaratis in Cuttack; they have, however, contributed a good sum. I had a novel experience in Kharagpur which pained me. There were three gentlemen who were afraid of coming to me and handing in their contribution, for fear of losing the contracts that they had been getting from Englishmen. At present, there is no ground for such fear. Even Englishmen are friendly to me. Fear is something internal. Everyone frightens one who is afraid; no one dares to frighten one who is fearless. And it is not even true that the fearless cannot earn a living.

Yes, a guilty conscience makes a man miserable. Those who earn a living dishonestly are afraid of everyone. Why then were these gentlemen afraid? Those who resort to fraudulent practices in contracts see fear where there is none. However, I hope that these timid gentlemen had no such cause for fear. I do not wish to see any Indian, man or woman, being frightened. I had imagined that Gujaratis who live outside their province must have rid themselves of ordinary fears. While on tour, I have had direct experiecne of Gujaratis being fearless when others were afraid. The incident in Kharagpur was the one exception and I hope that these gentlemen will shed their fear. [From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-8-1925

228. OUR DIRTY WAYS

Elsewhere in this issue appears my article written at the request of Mr. Andrews, on the question of our dirty habits; nevertheless, it is necessary to take it up separately for discussion. I do remember having written on this subject even when I first took up the editorship of *Navajivan*. It is, however, a subject on which one can write repeatedly.

Our rules regarding cleanliness are fine: one should always take a bath. We do not, however, know the implications of all these acts; hence they have become merely a ritual. Alternatively, we give in to superstitions and believe that the touch of water—of whatever quality and in however small a quantity—purifies us and makes us fit for heaven. Science, however, tells us that a bath is beneficial only when it is taken with clean water and when the body is rubbed and cleaned. There is no sense in sprinkling a few drops of water or just in pouring water on oneself and putting on dirty clothes; this may even be harmful. Our lavatories are like hell on earth. To visit these is like committing a sin. We could improve these with a little effort, thought and discretion. There is no question of any expense involved in it. Knowledge is all that is required. Even the poorest of the poor can, if he wishes to follow the rules of cleanliness. It is true that he cannot afford to have an aversion for looking at and cleaning up his own excreta. The farmer has no such aversions. He fills up cart-loads of filth in a very dirty way.

The lanes of Ahmedabad are dirty not because of poverty but because of great ignorance and idleness. In Madras in the well-to-do localities I found wealthy persons of fifty using the lanes as latrines in the morning. I feel disgusted even when I think of that sight. In Hardwar, the pilgrims fill the banks of the holy Ganges with foul smell, morning and evening. It becomes impossible to sit or walk there. At some places these people clean themselves directly in the river and do not even carry water in vessel to clean themselves with. In the river near Trichinopoly one can see excreta with the naked eye! And , the same water is used for bathing and drinking! In Bengal hundreds of puddle-like tiny lakes are used for the purpose of bathing, washing and drinking—by cattle and human beings.

The complaint made by Mr. Andrews's friend, however, relates to something else. He says, "the farmers make dirty the soil by defecating and urinating at any place. When it rains there, the water is

polluted by all this filth and, since lakhs of people walk bare-foot, they fall a prey to hookworm, dysentery, etc. Many people suffer and many die an untimely death. Fine manure can be made out of this filth. The people of China save crores of rupees by doing so. Why should not Indians do so and, at the same time, keep healthy? At one time the conditions in South America were the same as those obtaining in India. They have been changed in twenty years with great effort and the people are free from many diseases".

We, too, could save ourselves if we so desire. Next week, we shall discuss how to do so.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-8-1925

229. LETTER TO PROTAP CHANDRA GUHA ROY

[Before *September 1, 1925*]

I thought you had surrendered already. I was thinking of you early this morning and thought you had gone without my seeing you. I am glad you have come. Do keep well in the jail, go in for introspection. There is much work to be done if we are to get swaraj before long. We must achieve power, but that will not be without enlightened consecration. I know that consecration through the charkha is the best and the noblest because it is so selfless. You cannot spin the wheel and not think of the dumb millions. I know nothing better.

Forward, 1-9-1925

230. NOTES

THE LATE DR. BHANDARKAR

The death of Sir Ramakrishna Bhandarkar[1] removes from our midst a celebrated Sanskrit scholar and social reformer. Dr. Bhandarkar's services to Sanskrit learning will always be remembered. He made Sanskrit learning by English-speaking Indians easy, interesting and popular. The Sanskrit text-books written by him still

[1] 1837-1925; the Oriental Research Institute at Poona was named after him. Gandhiji first met him in 1896, when he presided over a meeting addressed by Gandhiji.

retain their popularity. His researches won the recognition and admiration of Oriental scholars throughout the world. Dr. Bhandarkar was as ardent a social reformer as he was a ripe Sanskrit scholar. A grateful country will ever cherish the memory of the deceased scholar. I tender my respectful condolences to his family.

THE FORTHCOMING A. I. C. C.

I hope that every member of the A.I.C.C, unless he is prevented by unforeseen circumstances, will make it a point to attend the forthcoming meeting of the Committee and take part in its deliberations and register his vote. The change sought to be made in the constitution can only be justified, if there is a unanimous and insistent demand for it. Unanimity and insistence can only be proved by every member attending even at considerable inconvenience and sacrifice if necessary. It will not do for members to assume anything as a foregone conclusion, and let those who attend do what they like. Absence from the meeting will be presumed to be a sign of want of sense of responsibiltiy unless the absence is otherwise duly accounted for. Members should realize that I have not worried them throughout the year, and but for the emergency I would certainly not have worried them now. In my opinion, a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee and the expense attendant upon it can only be warranted if a new policy has to be initiated or important resolutions of an educative character are required to be passed. The intention at first was to hold the meeting on the 1st of October in Bombay. But it was suggested that an earlier meeting will be more convenient for the members of the Committee, and that it could be more conveniently held at Patna. There is hardly a place which is equally suitable for all. When Bombay was thought of, the Bengalis were perturbed. Patna having been appointed, there is a protest from far-off Sind. I wish it was possible for me to please all the members and all the provinces in justifying the choice of Patna. I can only say that it was selected because many considered that it was the most suitable place, and more especially, because Pandit Motilalji desired it after consultation with his colleagues in the Assembly. And I had no hesitation in fixing Patna when I knew that Panditji's health would be better conserved by selecting Patna as the venue. He is by no means yet strong or completely restored. Asthmatic spasms are only under check and are kept so by the greatest vigilance and care. I, therefore, hope that no member will absent himself because Patna is too far away for him.

It is my intention, too, at the same meeting, if all goes well, to inaugurate the All-India Spinners' Association. I would like, therefore, all khaddar workers who are interested in its inauguration, and who have valuable suggestions to make, to attend at Patna whether they are members of the A.I.C.C. or not. I would like them to advise Babu Rajendra Prasad of their intention to attend and of the addresses where they would be staying. If they require Babu Rajendra Prasad to arrange for their food and lodging, they should give him due notice. I have requested Rajendra Babu to advertise the charges it would be necessary for intending visitors to pay if they want him to make the arrangements for them.

Why Not All Parties

The idea running through my mind is to lighten the burden of the forthcoming Congress, to adjust defferences that there may be amongst Congressmen, and to explore avenues, if any, of common action by all parties so that the Congress may be free to discuss and initiate new policies and new programmes if any. It may be asked why I am not inviting leaders of other parties also to meet at Patna. I had given most anxious consideration to the matter, and I have come to the conclusion that such an invitation at this stage will bear no fruit. It will be time enough to take the next step when all the Congressmen know their own minds and become of one mind. The differences between the Congressmen and others are well known and well defined. It will be for the Congressmen first to consider how far it is possible for them to go, and then to hold consultation with the leaders of the other parties. For the time being, I must content myself with giving the assurance to all concerned that I yield to no one in my disire to see all the parties united on a common platform. But I know that when the differences are fundamental, it is difficult, in spite of all the desire in the world, to construct a common platform. What is true of Chemistry is true of human beings. Incompatibles meet but to explode. What every Congressman aims at, and must aim at, is a real union or combination which would mean strength, not a patched-up makeshift which can only weaken the nation and, therefore, retard the national cause.

A friend writes from Purulia:

> As you are expected to come to Purulia, all the people are buying khaddar just to wear it during your stay. Your visit has reminded some of these men of their promise to use khaddar, and some are buying it just to escape public criticism. Now, if a man uses foreign cloth as a rule, but only wears khaddar on certain occasions, he is a hypocrite. And if your visit increases the number of such men, what is the use? Hypocrites never help the self-government of any country. There was a time when I deemed it a pleasure to present khaddar garments on marriage ceremonies. But I found by experience that it was almost impossible to get pure khaddar locally. What is generally bought as such is made in Japan or in Indian mills, and what I have bought from Swaraj Ashram has warp made of mill yarn.

This letter raises two important points. One is whether there is any use in occasional use of khaddar. On the principle that something is better than nothing even an occasional use of khaddar is to be encouraged. We want to sell home-made, home-woven, and home-spun cloth. Any demand for such cloth is, therefore, welcome and those who make occasional use are likely to make even habitual use of khaddar. I would, therefore, encourage its use of every occasion. Nor can I endorse the remark that those who wear khaddar on particular occasions are necessarily hypocrites. If a man pretends to be what he is not, he is a hypocrite, not one who makes no such pretences. One who drinks secretly and makes his neighbour believe that he is a teetotaller is a hypocrite to be shunned. A man who makes no secret of his habit of drinking, but omits drinking in society, or out of regard for his friends, is not only not a hypocrite, but a sensible and considerate man, and there is every hope of his being weaned from his habit. If, therefore, the people of Purulia, who are reported to be buying khaddar in view of my forthcoming visit, are doing so in order to induce the belief in me that they have never worn any other cloth, they are undoubtedly hypocrites. But I do not believe that they are buying khaddar with any such unholy design. It is no secret to me that a vast number of people have not yet given up the habit of using mill-made cloth, foreign or indigenous. But they do not mind using khaddar occasionally, and, since it has now become the Congress dress, people who attend Congress functions even occasionally consider it proper to wear khaddar. Whilst, therefore, I should like all

those in Bihar who are buying khaddar to enable them to appear at Congress functions during my tour, to wear it habitually, I am unable to condemn its use for the occasion of my tour. It is some gain, be it ever so small, that the surplus khaddar stock in Bihar will be used up and so much money freed for manufacture of more khaddar.

The second point raised by the correspondent is serious. The only way to avoid fraudulent imitations is for purchasers to ensure the purity of their purchases. Congress organizations, or khaddar organizations can do a great deal to prevent, or, at any rate, to check the evil. The correspondent states khaddar stores should be run by the Congress in all principal centres. Some such thing has been attempted, but it is a matter of finance and organization. The All-India Spinners' Association is being conceived for the purpose of dealing with such evils. Meanwhile I would urge writers like my correspondent not to give up khaddar for want of facility. It is because the successful organizing of khaddar and the spinning-wheel means the evoking of all that is best in us that I often say that the adoption of the spinning-wheel will lead to swaraj.

HALF-KHADDAR

The correspondent also deals with the evil of half-khaddar being manufactured and sold by Congress organizations. The evil is serious enough. A Congress organization, which is pledged to sell khaddar, can have nothing to do with half-khaddar. So long as Congressmen do not see the simple truth that manufacture of half-khaddar prevents the evolution of hand-spun yarn, spinning will be done indifferently. To subject hand-spun yarn to the test of the loom by using it for the warp is the surest and the quickest way of improving the quality of hand-spun yarn. It is a superstition to believe that by and by one would be able to displace mill yarn from warp. The difficulty will have to be faced one day. It has already been faced by several Congress organizations. There is no difficulty about getting hand-spun yarn woven, if not in the district of its production, in some other district. I wish, therefore, that Congress organizations should cease to weave or deal in half-khaddar.

COW-PROTECTION

Those who imposed on me the responsibility of conducting the All-India Cow-Protection Association and those who were responsible for its inauguration may rest assured that its affairs have not escaped

my attention. Only, the more I study the subject, the more I realize the difficulty of the task. With the protection of the cow, in the sense in which I have used it, is bound up not merely the welfare of the cattle of all India and the good name of Hinduism, but, also to a very large extent, the economic welfare of the country. The conviction is also becoming more and more deep-rooted in me that the solution of the problem lies in the acceptance by Hindus in particular, and the Indians in general, of the methods adopted by the Association. In order to enable me to study, or to have studied, all the literature on cow-protection, I invite all local Associations and those interested in the cattle problem, including the Agriculture Department of the Government of India as also the provincial Governments, to favour me with such literature and statistics as they may possess on the cattle problem, the conducting of dairies, tanneries, etc. The meeting of the Committee of the Association takes place in Bombay on the 3rd inst., at which I hope to announce the choice of a Secretary and a permanent Treasurer. I hope, too, that those who undertook to enroll a certain number of members, will be able to announce the fulfilment of their undertaking. The literature I have asked for may be sent to the address of the All-India Cow-Protection Association, Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati.

SPINNING AT A GOVERNMENT INSTITUTE

There is at Serampore a weaving institute run by the Government of Bengal, through its Department of Industries, where hand-spinning is being systematically taught. I was curious to know its progress and the methods of instruction. I, therefore, applied for permission to visit the institute which was readily granted. Mr. Hoogwerf showed me round. There was hand-weaving, dyeing, and spinning not restricted to cotton only, but extended to jute, silk, etc.

I propose, however, to confine my attention to cotton-spinning only. I appreciated the anxiety of the staff about it, but I discovered at once that there was not that technical ability and guidance which one would expect in a teaching institution. I had gone there to find a spinning expert with faith in hand-spinning. I had expected to find also up-to-date spinning-wheels. I say this not by way of idle criticism, but in the hope of definite improvement taking place in the near future. Some of the spinning-wheels I saw there were indifferently made and open to the same objections which I have raised in these columns to many specimens I saw during my tour. Some of them

even created a jarring sound. The slivers were also not of the best. Under the circumstances I should not at all wonder if in a short time one finds a report to the effect that the experiment in hand-spinning was a failure. Any experiment, before it can be pronounced a failure, must be given the fairest chance. It must, therefore, be conducted by one who has faith in it, and the requisite ability. There is, I understand, a desire to introduce instruction in power-loom weaving also at the Institute. As it is, the Institute is living on starvation wages. It is intended to promote cottage industries. In my opinion, the introduction of the power-loom will be a waste of public money, and I say this not because of my disbelief in power-looms, but because it dos not promote the object for which the Institute has been founded. Every rupee voted for its management must be devoted to the development of cottage industries, and, therefore, all the activities of the Institute should be devoted to the exploration of possibilities of hand-spinning, and the antecedent processes and instruction therein.

One thing I noticed in the Institute which can be copied by all national institutions where hand-spinning is taught and developed. Mr. Hoogwerf took me to his home which contains testing instruments for testing the strength and the count of yarn, its evenness, the staple of cotton and the durability of cloth when it is woven. If some of these simple instruments are kept in national institutions and judiciously used, they will help spinners to make rapid progress and to check their spinning.

I must not omit an institution which is run chiefly from the aid of the Government Institute and is situated near by. It is really a home for girls to which a missionary lady has devoted herself. There, too, hand-spinning is one of the things taught. But my criticism applies equally to this home. The superintendent, in spite of all her will to make it a success, cannot do so, until she herself learns the art, so as to enable her to know a good wheel from a bad [one] and to know when spinning is done properly.

Young India. 3-9-1925

231. WHAT OF THE WEST?

A European friend thus writes:

> What can be done, what would you suggest that could be tried in favour of the starving millions of the West? By starving millions I mean the masses of the European and American proletariat who are being driven to the

abyss, who live a life not worth the name, full of the direst privations, who can nourish no dream of future relief by any form of swaraj, who are perhaps more hopeless than the millions of India because the faith in God, the consolation of religion, has left them to be replaced by nothing but hatred.

The iron hands which press down the Indian nation are at work there also. the devilish system is at work in each of these independent countries; politics do not count as there is a close solidarity of greed. Vice is devastating these masses who natually try to escape the hell of their life at any cost, at the cost of making it a greater hell, and who have no longer the outlet of religious hopes, as Christianity by siding for centuries with the powerful and the greedy has lost all credit.

Of course, I expect Mahatmaji to answer that the only way to salvation for these masses, if there is any left, if the whole Western world is not already doomed, lies in the application of a disciplined non-violent resistance carried on, on a large scale. But there are no traditions of ahimsa in the European soil and mind. Even the spreading of the doctrine would encounter huge difficulties, what about its right understanding and application!

The problem underlying the question so sincerely put by the friend lies outside my orbit. I, therefore, attempt an answer merely in courteous recognition of friendship between the questioner and myself. I confess that no value attaches to my answer, save what we attach to every considered argument. I know neither the diagnosis of the European disease nor the remedy in the same sense that I claim to know both in the case of India.

I, however, feel that fundamentally the disease is the same in Europe as it is in India, in spite of the fact that in the former country the people enjoy political self-government, No mere transference of political power in India will satisfy my ambition, even though I hold such transference to be a vital necessity of Indian national life. The peoples of Europe have no doubt political power but no swaraj. Asian and African races are exploited for their partial benefit, and they, on their part, are being exploited by the ruling class or caste under the sacred name of democracy. At the root, therefore, the disease appears to be the same as in India. The same remedy is, therefore, likely to be applicable. Shorn of all the camouflage, the exploitation of the masses of Europe is sustained by violence.

Violence on the part of the masses will never remove the disease. Anyway, up to now experience shows that success of violence has

been short-lived. It has led to greater violence. What has been tried hitherto has been a variety of violence and artificial checks dependent mainly upon the will of the violent. At the crucial moment these checks have naturally broken down. It seems to me, therefore, that sooner or later, the European masses will have to take to non-violence if they are to find their deliverance. That there is no hope of their taking to it in a body and at once does not baffle me. A few thousand years are but a speck in the vast time circle. Someone has to make a beginning with a faith that will not flinch. I doubt not that the masses, even of Europe, will respond, but what is more emergent in point of time is not so much a large experiment in non-violence as a precise grasp of the meaning of deliverance.

From what will the masses be delivered? It will not do to have vague generalization and to answer "from exploitation and degradation". Is not the answer this that they want to occupy the status that capital does today? If so, it can be attained only by violence. But if they want to shun the evils of capital, in other words, if they would revise the viewpoint of capital, they would strive to attain a juster distribution of the products of labour. This immediately takes us to contentment and simplicity, voluntarily adopted. Under the new outlook multiplicity of material wants will not be the aim of life, the aim will be rather their restriction consistently with comfort. We shall cease to think of getting what we can, but we shall decline to receive what all cannot get. It occurs to me that it ought not to be difficult to make a successful appeal to the masses of Europe in terms of economics, and a fairly successful working of such an experiment must lead to immense and unconscious spiritual results. I do not believe that the spiritual law works on a field of its own. On the contrary, it expresses itself only through the ordinary activities of life. It thus affects the economic, the social, and the political fields. If the masses of Europe can be persuaded to adopt the view I have suggested, it will be found that violence will be wholly unnecessary to attain the aim and they can easily come to their own by following out the obvious corollaries of non-violence. It may even be that what seems to me to be so natural and feasible for India, may take longer to permeate the inert Indian masses than the active European masses. But I must reiterate my confession that all my argument is based on suppositions and assumptions and must, therefore, be taken for what it is worth.

Young India, 3-9-1925

232. INDIA AND SOUTH AFRICA

The following cable has been received by me from Mr. Amed Bhayat, President of a mass meeting of Indians held in Durban:

> The Asiatic Bill[1] in the Union Parliament is far reaching in its results. It is inequitous and disastrous to Indian interests and is deliberate violation of Gandhi-Smuts understanding to recognize vested interests. The Bill provides for allocating residential and trading areas only within which Indians may buy and lease property. In rural districts Indians will be confined to thirty miles from the coast line wherein areas may be defined. The result will be that the business of thousands of Indians must cease on the expiry of present leases. It amounts to compulsory segregation, deliberate deprivation of Indian property. Ultimate aim is apparently repatriation and confiscation of rights. The right of *bona-fide* Indians to enter the Union is seriously jeopardized. Many provisions of the Bill will enable the Government to declare Indians as prohibited immigrants and domicile rights will be practically forfeited. Mere absence over three years causes forfeiture. The wives and children of domiciled Indians cannot enter the Union after five years from August 1925. Thousands of ex-indentured Indians who are now for thirty years here and their descendants may be declared prohibited immigrants and cannot claim domicile. South African born Indians domiciled in one province of the Union must return to the province of their birth, and there also into segregated areas. Indians born here could also be declared prohibited immigrants if unsuitable to the requirements of the Union . Such prohibited Indians will lose all property and vested rights in the Union and be driven away. Protest mass meeting Natal Indians been called for 31st in Durban. We rely upon you for creating strong influential public opinion so that the Indian Government may be roused into determined action to protect us. Affront to Indian nation must be met with dignified protests from India. The insult is gratuitous and we resent same in a most strenuous and emphatic manner. We implore you to press Indian Government to give immediate public expression to its attitude as supineness may be misunderstood by all concerned.

Although it has been published in the Press, it can bear repetition here. I have also received a copy of the *Gazette* containing the full text of the Bill. It is a long Bill divided into three chapters, containing 27 sections and a schedule. It occupies 9 foolscap sides

[1] The Areas Reservation and Immigration and Registration (Further Provision) Bill, introduced in the Union Parliament in July 1925. The Bill was intended to prevent the acquisition of land by Asiatics save in certain specified areas.

closely printed. I do not print the Bill, as without the aid of previous enactments with which it deals and which it modifies or repeals, it is not capable of being undrstood by the reader. Suffice it to observe here that the cablegram faithfully summarizes the restrictions sought to be imposed by the Bill. It reduces the position of the resident Indian population to such an extent that, without the Union Government having to pay any compensation whatsoever, there will be no Indian settlers in South Africa within a few years' time. If the provisions of the Bill are applied with enough stringency, there will be powers given to the administration to freeze out every Indian, no matter what the step may be, in the land of his adoption and even of his birth, for the Bill makes no distinction between Indians born in South Africa and domiciled. The safeguards provided by the Bill are all illusory and can be rendered perfectly nugatory. That the Bill has not yet become law is a matter of little comfort. The Bill is an indication of the determination of the Union Government to starve the Indians out of South Africa. Mr. Malan has made no secret of it. It is a matter of time when every Indian will have left South Africa. Let the reader remember, or know, that the Chinese labourers who were imported for developing the gold mines of Johannesburg, were summarily repatriated when the Government had made up its mind. The Chinese had no voice. So it will be with Indians unless the Government of India choose to do its duty. Mr. Bhayat has made a pathetic appeal to us here. So far as public opinion is concerned, it is unanimously for the Indian settlers. Unfortunately for them, it is at present ineffective. Such as it is, it will certainly be mobilized for the purpose of preventing the impending spoliation of our countrymen in South Africa in total disregard of the Agreement of 1914, which was designed to guarantee the then existing rights of the Indian residents in South Africa.

Young India, 3-9-1925

233. DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL

I am leaving Bengal not without much sorrow. I have almost become domiciled in Bengal. I shall miss my daily pilgrimage to Basanti Devi, and I shall miss the happy smiling faces of the numerous subscribers who have been coming daily from various parts. I know that if we have not reached ten lakhs, it is not because of want of devotion to the memory of Deshbandhu or of will on the part of the

Bengalis, but because of the universally defective organization for which we are responsible. Had it been possible to canvass every village in Bengal, we would have long ago made up the full total. But even as it is, the sum of Rs. 7,74,165-10-5½ is not unworthy of Bengal. I have had a rough calculation made, and the result shows that the resident Marwaris have contributed over Rs. 140,000, the resident Gujaratis have contributed nearly Rs.60,000, and the balance is contributed by the Bengalis in Bengal, and outside Bengal, including small sums from other provinces. The burden now rests upon those who are in charge of the funds to fulfil the objects for which it has been raised.

There remains still the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. Organized collection for it has not yet begun, Pandit Jawaharlal has circulated a list[1] of collections up to the 23rd August, which brings the total to Rs. 2,002-8-6 and which I give below as an interesting study.

Young India, 3-9-1925

234. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

Some friends have been telling me that the date 22nd September for the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee is an inconvenient one for the Bengalis in view of the forthcoming Puja holidays . The date has been fixed in consultation with Pandit Motilal Nehru who has chosen it after consultation with the members of the Assembly. The original date fixed has been anticipated for the convenience of these members so that they might not have a double journey. Had the 1st of October been retained, it would not have been possible to fix the venue at Patna. Even as it is, a telegram has been received from Sind protesting against the venue being fixed at Patna. I appreciate the difficulty of the Sindhi friends. But Patna has been chosen after much consultation and for the convenience of the majority of the members. The real Puja holiday commences on the 24th and I have promised the Bengali friends that, even though there may have to be a late night sitting, I shall finish the deliberations of the All-India Congress Committee on the 22nd so as to free the members to leave for Calcutta the night of 22nd. If any routine matters requiring the attention of the All-India Congress Committee remain over, and on which Bengali friends might not have any fixed

[1] Not reproduced here, the list showed contributions from almost all over the country.

views, subject to their consent, the proceedings will be prolonged beyond the 22nd. But the main purpose for which the meeting is being convened will be finished on the 22nd. I hope to be in Patna on the 20th. 21st is my day of silence, and I shall be free to discuss with friends who might arrive on the 20th any question that they may wish to discuss in regard to the proposed change in the constitution. Needless to say that no change in the constitution will be adopted unless there is an absolute unanimity. I hope all the members of the A.I.C.C. will attend the forthcoming meeting.

If all goes well, it is my desire also to inaugurate the All-India Spinners' Association and to discuss matters relating to the spinning-wheel and khaddar. I therefore invite all khadi workers who may wish to help at the framing of the constitution of this organization to attend.

The Hindu, 3-9-1925

235. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE

Bhadra Vad 1 [*September 3, 1925*][1]

BHAI MAMA,[2]

I have your letter. You may certainly sit with Vallabhbhai and prepare a budget as you please. It will have to be passed. If you wishto stay on in the Sangh who can throw you out? I shall reach the Ashram on the 5th and stay there till the 9th. Give the Samiti all the information it wants about the Ashram[3]. You may write to say that the deed has been passed on to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3811

[1] The dates, 5th and 9th, of Gandhiji's reaching the Ashram and of his leaving it, which are mentioned in the letter, coincide with September 5, 1925, when in fact he arrived at Satyagraha Ashram, and September 9, 1925, when he departed for Bihar.

[2] Vithal Laxman Phadke was popularly known as *Mama*, 'maternal uncle'.

[3] Antyaja Ashram at Godhra in Gujarat, managed by the addressee

236. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

[*September 3, 1925*]

Mahatma Gandhi arrived in Bombay yesterday. On his arrival at the Victoria Terminus station in the morning he was received by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and several other friends. He is staying in Revashanker Jagjivans's house, Laburnum Road, Gamdevi, his usual Bombay residence. Knowing that he would soon be caught up in the maze of engagements that have been fixed for him even in advance of his arrival, a representative of *The Chronicle* sought an interview with him soon after his arrival at his residence. Gandhiji readily consented to give one, though visitors had already begun to call. He had a slightly tired look but otherwise was as cheery and fit as ever.

Our representative began by asking about Gandhiji's outstanding impressions of his Bengal tour and he replied that so far as khaddar was concerned, the thing that counted most, the province in general showed as much enthusiasm for khaddar and as much disposition to work out the programme as any other province. It might even do more. Asked what advice he had given or would give to the Bengal Swarajists with regard to the policy in the Legislative Council, he replied that he had only advised them to follow the lead of Pandit Motilal Nehru. Gandhiji had by now taken out his twirligig[1] and begun plying it.

"What remedy would you suggest against the prevailing stagnation in the country?" was the next question. He fixed a fond look on the twirligig, drew out a fine long thread, and said with a beaming smile:

> Well, I have already prescribed my remedy. Spin, spin, spin, till stagnation vanishes. That is my remedy and it holds the field till another or an alternative remedy is suggested and a case made out for it.

Our representative pointed out that village panchayats were being suggested in several places, especially in Maharashtra and also co-operative societies for khaddar work as adjuncts for village organizations. Gandhiji said:

> They are all right where they can properly be worked out in a spirit of absolute self-reliance. Where this spirit prevails, I would welcome almost any organization as better than none, but I fear that in many cases these institutions might turn out to be additional instruments to accustom people to lean on officials or their agents. What we want to unite and vitalize the whole nation is a common industry which all can carry on entirely by themselves. Universal spinning is the thing.

[1] The *takli* or spindle-like contrivance for spinning

"Do you see any signs , even if stray, of the Hindu-Muslim tension easing?" he was asked next. He said gravely:

No, it is growing worse, but only to grow better. I fear the growing tension may end in an explosion, though we shall try to make it as little violent as possible. But with the reaction following, the two communities must coalesce, and absorption in common constructive work can keep down the violence of the explosion and will further cement the union when it comes.

"What reply would you have the Congress give to Lord Birkenhead?" The prompt reply was:

More work and more briskly on the lines I have already suggested.

"May we not," our representative asked, "take him at his word in a sporting mood and spring a swaraj scheme upon him?"

If the offer were made in a genuine sporting mood we could accept it so, but, in the absence of any actual signs of a change of heart on his part, I only fear that the offer to consider any scheme prepared by us may turn out to be a trap. I would not walk into it.

Asked if he would not convene a representative leaders' conference to re-explore the avenues to the unity of all parties, he replied:

I have answered this question several days ago. I am also referring to the topic in today's *Young India*. Informal attempts are being made but the time for a formal conference is not yet. At present almost each party wants unity, no doubt, but unity on its own terms. No conference can succeed under these circumstances. As soon as I see any general disposition to subordinate one's individual or party views to the present needs of the country, I shall be the first to call such a conference.

The Bombay Chronicle, 4-9-1925

237. MESSAGE ON CENTENARY OF DADABHAI NAOROJI

Dadabhai justly earned the affectionate title of the G.O.M. of India. Was it not he who first introduced us to the problem of the deep poverty of the masses? In discovering the growing poverty of the masses Dadabhai put his finger upon the root evil of the present system of Government. In my opinion, therefore, the best way we can celebrate the forthcoming Centenary is to do something tangible for dealing with the problem of poverty. It cannot be dealt with

satisfactorily save through the universal adoption of spinning-wheel and khaddar. Hence it is that I have unhesitatingly recommended the celebration of the Centenary by making collections for khaddar and charkha, by holding khaddar exhibitions, by hawking khaddar and in every becoming manner pushing forward the cause of khaddar and the spinning-wheel, in other words the cause of the millions.

The Bombay Chronicle, 4-9-1925

238. INTERVIEW TO "FORWARD" [1]

BOMBAY,
September 4, 1925

A glowing tribute to Bengal and the Swaraj Party was paid by Mahatma Gandhi in course of a special interview for *Forward* which I had this morning. Questioned whether the Swaraj Party had been weakened by Deshbandhu's death, Mahatmaji replied:

Any party, any institution must be weakened after Deshbandhu's death. But that in no sense means that the Party will break up. On the contrary up to now the Party has been exceptionally loyal to the memory of Deshbandhu and has to the best of its ability carried out his wishes.

Has the resignation of Dr. Suhrawardy had any adverse effect on the Party?

Personally, I do not see.

In your opinion, Mahatmaji, are the election of Mr. Patel[2] as President of the Assembly and Panditji's acceptance of a seat on the Skeen Committee[3] consistent with the Swaraj Party's principles?

I see no inconsistency in either of these things. Any party which is growing in strength or wants to grow in strength must adapt itself to the circumstances. I think the acceptance by Panditji of a seat on the Skeen Committee and the election of Mr. Patel were fine strokes.

Forward, 5-9-1925

[1] Some of the questions and answers occurring in this report are the same as those in "Interview to *The Bombay Chronicle*", 3-9-1925, and are not being reproduced here.

[2] Vithalbhai Patel

[3] The Committee, set up under the chairmanship of Sir Andrew Skeen, had been asked to consider whether it was desirable to start a military college in India. The demand for such a college had been made in a resolution passed by the Legislative Assembly in Delhi.

239. SPEECH AT DADABHAI NAOROJI CENTENARY MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

September 4, 1925

Mahatma Gandhi said he was a real worshipper of Dadabhai Naoroji, the Dada of India. Any man or woman who did his or her duty and died in the performance of it, the name of such a person would never die. Dadabhai was with them in spirit, although he was not there in his physical body and his sweet voice could not be heard by them any more. The passage of time had merely made Dadabhai's name dearer to them and it was more deeply engraved on their hearts. It was in 1888 that he had occasion to sit at the feet of Dadabhai and, although he was not reading newspapers then—in the same way as he was not reading them now—he had heard the name of Dadabhai. A Deccani gentleman gave him a letter of introduction to Dadabhai, although he was not acquainted with him and, when he took it to him in England, although Dadabhai did not know the writer of the letter, he took him (Gandhiji) to his heart and said: If you are ever in any difficulty come to me. Dadabhai was living in England not to enjoy life, or play any games or to go to the theatre, but to serve India. He there had a large number of Indian students under his care, to whom he acted guardian, but had he done only that he would never have been remembered by Indians. .Although Dadabhai had never been into the villages, yet his heart was so big that it found room for the poor villager. He not only had a heart big enough to include all the Indian communities, but even the poorest of the poor were remembered by him. He knew that the poor villagers were dumb and he wanted to make their voice heard by the rulers of this land. He knew that the villagers could not get even one square meal a day, not to speak of such luxuries as ghee and milk. And what Dadabhai had said 30 or 40 years ago was true even to this day. Dadabhai knew that, so long as a majority of Indians were skeletons and were mere bags of bones, they could not achieve anything. In England Dadabhai had a small office-room for doing his work and he lived there like an ascetic serving the cause of India. The speaker said he was a true worshipper of Dadabhai and it did not matter to him even if his idol had blemishes. The audience that night had come to that meeting to worship Dadabhai, but how many of them were actuated by a sincere desire to do so? Dadabhai had taught him two things: that he must give his idol his fullest love and worship without any reservation and that, if he wanted to serve India, he must serve the poor. Gandhiji said he could only serve the poor by becoming the very poorest of the poor, the meanest of the mean by becoming a Hindu, a Muslim and a Parsi, for to Dadabhai all Indians were alike. Although Dadabhai was staunch Zoroastrian, he never disliked the other

[1] The meeting, organized by 13 representatives of local associations, was held in the Cowasji Jehangir Hall and was presided over by Gandhiji. Sarojini Naidu and Shaukat Ali also spoke.

communities. He even respected Englishmen. Dadabhai never said that India alone should be great at the cost of the whole world. He was willing to sacrifice India for the good of the world, but for that pupose a free nation was required, and he knew that a slave nation could not do anything. Therefore, through his noble life he worshipped at the shrine of the goddess of freedom and liberty. It was said that if they offered their God even a simple flower, He was pleased and that merely showed how easy it was to please Him, provided they were sincere. The best way of celebrating the centenary of Dadabhai was to resolve to serve the country. Gandhiji asked the audience not to follow whatever Dadabhai did, but do only that which would please his soul. He who could serve India ceaselessly, sincerely, and whole-heartedly would always be honoured, and to do that was the only way they could celebrate the centenary of Dadabhai.

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-9-1925

240. COW-PROTECTION

The more I study the problem of protecting cows, the more I realize its importance. This problem will become increasingly serious in India, since it involves the economic well-being of the country. I believe that from its very nature religion embraces economic, political and other problems. The religion which is opposed to true economics is no religion, nor that which is opposed to true politics. Economics devoid of religion should be shunned, and political power uninformed with the spirit of religion is Satanic. There is no such thing as dharma unrelated to economic and other activities. Individuals and society, both survive through dharma and perish without it. Accumulation of wealth, that is commerce, through truthful means fosters the growth of society, but commerce carried on without any regard for truth destroys it. Many instances can be cited to show that what is gained through falsehood, through dishonest and devious means is but shortlived and proves harmful in the end.

Hence, while discussing our duty to protect cows we must consider its economic aspect as well. If cow-protection is opposed to true economics, we have no choice but to give up the effort. Not only that, but we shall discover in that case that we cannot succeed in protecting cows even if we wish to do so.

It is because we have not even thought about the economic benefits of cow-protection that, in a country where countless people regard the protection of the cow and her offspring as a sacred duty,

the latter starve. We see them reduced to mere skin and bone, so much so that all their bones can be counted, and they are slaughtered only because of the indifference of Hindus. Cow-protection involves the very existence of Indian agriculture. Cow-slaughter would cease if every Hindu understood the economics of Cow-protection. The destruction of cows through the sheer stupidity of Hindus must be a hundred times greater than their slaughter in the name of religion. So long as Hindus themselves do not understand the right method of protecting cows, not all the crores of rupees which they can spend will save the latter.

In Gujarat, *Banias*, *Bhatias* and Marwaris take interest in the cause of cow-protection. They spend large sums on it. And even among them the Marwaris, especially, go to great lengths, Marwari business men run the largest number of *goshalas* in India. They cheerfully contribute lakhs of rupees towards these and it is for this reason that I have said that the problem of protecting cows cannot be solved without the help of Marwaris. I have often visited *goshalas*, but I cannot say that I saw any which was an ideal one.

These reflections were provoked by my visit to the *goshala* at Liluah in Calcutta. Two and a half lakh rupees are spent on it every year, but the return is practically nil. A *goshala* which gets two and a half lakh rupees every year should be able to save the lives of not less than 10,000 head of cattle in a year. Even the cattle tended by this institution do not come to so many. The organizers are not to be blamed for this, nor are they dishonest. The secretary who took me round to show the institution is serving it to the best of his ability. The system itself is to blame for this result. We do not know how to run such institutions, and so the people do not derive the fullest benefit from them.

Practical ability is not considered necessary in matters concerning religion. Such institutions are regarded as well run simply if those who manage them do not misappropriate funds. In a business firm in which additional capital of two and a half lakh rupees is invested every year, the best available paid workers are employed, whereas in this case persons engaged in their own business spare some of their time as a social duty. Those who do so deserve to be congratulated, but their work does not help the cause of cow-protection. This cause requires full-time services of able and efficient persons. Only men of spiritual knowledge who live a life of self-denial

and self-sacrifice will offer such services, or able, worldly men if properly paid. It would not matter if those who donate money for charitable purposes are not practical persons, but those who run charity institutions must be more capable and hard-working than even business men. All the moral rules which apply to business men also apply to charitable institutions. if *goshalas* were run as commercial concerns, men with scientific knowledge of such matters would be working in them, and they would daily conduct new experiments and save the lives of more and more cows, would carry out many experiments about rearing cattle in *goshalas* and about ensuring the purity and increasing the quantity of milk. It is quite obvious that the knowledge about rearing cattle which can be obtained through *goshalas* cannot be got elsewhere. Since, however, they are charity institutions, they are not being run properly and no one is concerned about them. It would be slighting the Vedas if schools which are meant to teach them taught us the least about them; the present-day *goshalas* are in the same condition.

I have doubts whether the *goshala* at Liluah is properly located. That the buildings are not of the right kind can be judged even by a layman like me who knows nothing about the scientific method of running *goshalas*. There are no instruments there for examining the quality of the milk and other products. There is no one there who can say whether it is possible to increase the yield of milk. The institution seems to be the responsibility of no one. I would advice those who are in charge of it to consult experts in the management of *goshalas* and employ paid workers who know their job and leave it to them to run it. Institutions of this kind should train people in rearing cattle and bullocks, provide instruction in regared to improved techniques of castration, cattle feed and the methods of growing them, hygienic processes of obtaining milk and of removing skin and processing it. So long as there is indifference in those matters, we should feel that *goshalas* are not being put to the best use. We should feel ashamed even if a single cow or bullock dies an untimely death or is exported. I am convinced that this can be easily prevented through *goshalas*.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-9-1925

241. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

September 6, 1925

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have received your letter. I think I have already written to you about the Sangh. Having a Sangh means getting people together. It is your job to collect people, if God grants you satisfaction there and if you can concentrate on the work. You have the capacity to attract people. It is on people that the Sangh must depend. If the Sangh is created and people devote themselves to it, other people will be drawn to it. But the basis is still people. I have already written to you to this effect.

What you have written about irregularity, etc., is correct. I intend to discuss that part of it in *Navajivan*. Maybe it can be done next week. I have no doubt at all that there is nothing sinful in having a fashionable hair-style. In the case of such external actions, the sin lies in the intention, not in the act. A thing done with an innocent heart is never sinful. Of course, with regard to such behaviour it has been said that even if an act is pure, it should be abandoned if it incurs popular disapproval. For instance, the solar hat is absolutely harmless. It has many advantages in the summer. Nevertheless, I feel that if people do not approve of it, it should not be worn. I do not object to people wearing that headdress but I do wish that they should respect popular sentiment.

Chi. Harilal came to the station. Then I went back to Faridpur. I returned today, that is, on Monday. He may come here tomorrow.

I am in good health. Don't worry at all.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am sending you the letter I have received from Fulchandbhai.Read it, then give it to Ramjibhai Jaisukhlal to read and then destroy it.

From the Gujarati original: Ramdas Gandhi Papers, Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

242. SPEECH AT LABOUR UNION SCHOOLS, AHMEDABAD[1]

September 6,1925

I am pleased to hear the report of your work and I offer you my congratulations. I have observed the activities of your schools during my tours. I see what classes of children are taught here and what sort of education is imparted to them. Nowhere else have I seen the orderly management found in these schools. This does not mean that I have some sort of partiality for these schools. Since there is such a possibility, I have made allowance for it. And so I should like to stick to my opinion. This appreciation is not meant to flatter you. I have expressed it because it is well deserved. My duty is rather to point out your defects than to congratulate you. I can see clearly your efforts at strict observance of the rules of cleanliness, but I would urge you to look at the problem from my view-point. I was shocked to find dirt in the nails of the girl there. It is uncleanliness; it is a wrong thing. The roll-call is not complete until the nails, teeth, etc. of every child are inspected. We contract perhaps more diseases through the nails and teeth than otherwise. These two things are most serviceable and it is easy to maintain them in good condition. Do not yield any scope here for "as far as possible". The cleanliness of the nose and eyes is of lesser importance. The children themselves will learn to take care of them. It is necessary to inspect their hair also.

I congratulate you on your work with the *takli*. No national school has, I think, made so much progress in this respect. I add my own experience of the *takli* to yours. It was a wrong experiment to have introduced in the school the spinning-wheel which does not possess the potency of the *takli*. Even if the spinning-wheel is completely destroyed, the *takli* has the potency to bring about a boycott of foreign cloth. The spinning-wheel is a nuisance though it does good. It is an ornament to a hut. The *takli* is an ornament only to a school. It is a top which is useful. I congratulate you also on having such a large number of children here.

It would be a misfortune if the mill-owners failed to encourage these schools. It will bring them credit if they develop them. It is their duty to do so. I am deeply grieved to learn that the grant of Rs. 1,200 which used to be received from the Tilak Swaraj Fund has stopped

[1] The meeting was arranged by the organizers, teachers and students of the schools *vide* also "Notes," 10-9-1925, sub-title, "A Remarkable Record".

coming in. The grant ought to be resumed. But Anasuyabehn ought to be relieved of her anxiety by making some other aid available. What can I say to the rich who would not take advantage of the services of honorary workers? I do wish that you too should listen to me just as Mr. G.G. has done. That is my prayer to you. You have to request the mill-owners to donate funds for your education.

The Arab brushes his teeth as he travels about in the ship and hence the Somali Arab is healthy and handsome. Can black-skinned people not look handsome?

God is a wonderful watch-maker. He alone can set right his watch that has gone out of order. Harijan children are my adopted children; therefore they should keep themselves very clean. One should have a pure tongue, a pure mind and a pure body.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. VIII

243. SPEECH AT MEETING OF LABOUR UNION, AHMEDABAD[1]

[*September 6, 1925*][2]

Gandhiji in his speech laid especial stress on the labourers' duty. He knew they had grievances about insufficient water supply, lack of dining sheds, proper cleaning of latrines, beatings and ill-treatment by jobbers and numerous breakages of ends in the throstle department and consequent less work and less wages. But he was sure that some of the things depended on themselves, on their cultvation of proper self-respect. He was glad to note that the Union had redeemed the debts of some of them and substituted cheap loans for loans on exorbitant rates of interest. But it was a sad commentary on their way of life that they should have to borrow so much. Their wages may be insufficient, but he had no doubt that if they were more thrifty, free from drink and other evil habits, they would not have to be indebted. He was very glad that the mill-hands recognized the difficult situation of the mill-owners at the present moment. He said:

I am glad, you recognize this. You cannot ask for more pay when they are going through serious difficulties. A time might come when loyal labourers may have to come forward with an offer to serve

[1] This was the annual general meeting of the Labour Union at which Gandhiji presided. No full version of the speech is available. But *Young India* and *The Bombay Chronicle* seem to have reported different parts of it.

[2] As given by *The Bombay Chronicle*

without any wages, in order that the mills may not have to be closed down. But I know that you are not prepared today for that. There is not that amount of trust between you and the mill-owners. You are labouring under numerous injustices, and unless the mill-owners have won you over by considerate and loving treatment, you are going to do nothing of the kind today. But that is a consummation towards which I want you to work.[1]

Mahatma Gandhi said that they were benefited by the establishment of the Union. Still their grievances were manifold. For that they themselves were responsible. It was easy to point out the defects of the mill agents. If they remedied their own defects, they could impress the mill agents as well as others. They could achieve a great deal by being courteous and truthful. He wished they might regain the wages that were cut and obtain higher wages, but they should know that there was trade depression and that the mils had to fight with Government. At such a time it was their duty not to expect higher wages. There was mutual distrust. The burden of dispelling this distrust lay on their shoulders. If they worked efficiently without the supervision of overseers they would not have to ask for the redress of grievances.

Young India, 10-9-1925, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 8-9-1925

244. NOTES

A REMARKABLE RECORD

I have before me a brief and business-like report of the remarkable work that is silently but most efficiently being done by the Labour Union managed under the gentle care of Shrimati Anasuyabai. It deals with the educational work being done among the labourers.

In 1924 there were 8 day schools. Today there are 9. Of these two are for all children, six for untouchables and one for Mussalmans. There were 11 night schools in 1924. Today there are 15. Of these, 1 for all, 8 for untouchables, 5 for Mussalmans and 1 for *Vaghris*. In 1924 there were 1,119 scholars and the attendance was 979.4. There were 692 untouchables, 221 touchables and 206 Mussalmans. In the beginning of the year there were 1,166 scholars 798 being untouchables, 219 touchables and 169 Mussalmans and 60 *Vaghris*. The attendance was 907-92. At the present moment there are 1,285.

[1] This is taken from *Young India*. What follows is from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

The boys and girls learn all the subjects taught in the ordinary primary schools. In addition they have hand-spinning. The management at first tried the wheels. Among so many boys and girls, the wheels were found to be too expensive and inconvenient because of the space required. They have, therefore taken up the *takli* which every scholar can possess. It was a fine sight to see several hundred boys and girls spinning all at the same time. Their average speed is 30 to 40 yards per hour each . They have already spun 2 mds. and 8 seers of good yarn.

There is also a residential school with 16 untouchable boys. Of these 6 pay Rs.5 each towards boarding expenses. The rest are free. They learn to card, spin and weave. In 1924, they span $1\frac{1}{4}$ mds. of yarn and wove 125 yards of khaddar. In 1924, there were 66 teachers, today there are 77 teachers. The total expenses were Rs. 22,254-8-4. Of these Rs. 1,250 monthly were contributed by the Mill-owners' Association being part of interest on Tilak Swaraj Fund contributed by its members and earmarked for the purpose of the welfare of the labourers. A donation of Rs. 60 per month was received from Mr. Brijvalabhdas Jekisandas. The rest was found by the Union. The residential school expenses were paid by the Provincial Congress Committee.

The most stiking fact is the very large number of untouchable children receiving education in these schools. I understand that their parents do not need coaxing. They gladly send their children. If anything, it is the other parents who require to be approached and induced to send theirs.

Needless to say, these schools are independent of all Government aid or control.

Special attention is paid to the cleanliness of these scholars. Indeed, the schools will compare favourably with any primary schools throughout India. I draw the attention of all school-masters to the necessity of cleanliness and tidiness among the scholars. It requires no special effort daily to hold a parade of all the scholars before commencing the classes and examine their teeth, nails, ears, eyes, etc. I have seen neglect of these simple things even in schools claiming to be model schools.

IS IT OVER-CONFIDENCE?

An esteemed friend, jealous of my reputation for correct conduct, asks how it is that I feel confident of my being right in my latest attitude of whole-hearted support to the Swaraj Party. Have I not made Himalayan blunders? Do I not notice, the friend asks, that many of my No-changer friends are bewildered over what to them appears to be my inconsistency? Might I not be guilty of over-confidence?

I do not think so. For a man of truth must ever be confident, if he has also equal need to be diffident. His devotion to truth demands the fullest confidence. His consciousness of the fallibility of human nature must make him humble and therefore ever ready to retrace his steps immediately he discovers his error. It makes no difference to his confidence that he had peviously made Himalayan blunders. His confession and penance make him, if anything, stronger for future action. Discovery of errors makes the votary of truth more cautious of believing things and forming things and forming conclusions, but once he has made up his mind, his conscience must remain unshaken. His errors may result in men's reliance upon his judgments being shaken, but he must not doubt the truth of his position once he has come to a conclusion. It should further be borne in mind that my errors have been errors of calculation and judging men, not in appreciating the true nature of truth and ahimsa or in their application. Indeed these errors and my prompt confessions have made me surer, if possible, of my insight into the implications of truth and ahimsa. For I am convinced that my action in suspending civil disobedience at Ahmedabad, Bombay and Bardoli has advanced the cause of India's freedom and world's peace. I am convinced that because of the suspensions we are nearer swaraj than we would have been without, and this I say in spite of despair being written in thick black letters on the horizon. Such being my deep conviction, I cannot help being confident of my present position as regards Swarajists and other matters. It is traceable to one source only, a lively understanding of the implications of truth and ahimsa.

ALL-INDIA MEMORIAL

Sjt. Manilal Kothari has already commenced his operations. The Parsi friend whom he induced to subscribe Rs. 25,000 told me that it was impossible for him to resist Manilal Kothari. The *Bhatia* friend who subscribed Rs. 51,000 must have felt the same thing. But I assure them that whilst their donations are no doubt princely, they are not

too much for the purpose to which they are to be devoted. Our duty to the memory of Deshbandhu will not have been performed unless by khaddar work we achieve the exclusion of foreign cloth. And that is not possible without men and money. I hope, therefore, that the response will be quick and generous. Up till now Rs.1,087-3-3 have been received at the *Young India* Office and Rs. 2,096-12-6 by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru at Allahabad (up to 29-8-1925) .

Young India, 10-9-1925

245. A VILLAGE EXPERIMENT

The following will be read with interest by everyone concerned with village reconstruction:[1]

This is in many respects a remarkable experiment. Quiet work has gone on without fuss, without advertisement, and practically without capital and this has been possible because the people were willing to revise their taste in dress material and to make use of their idle hours. The population of the village is 640. The cloth budget is estimated at Rs. 3,640. Therefore, when all the villagers are clothed in khaddar, they will add to their annual income Rs. 3,640 by simply using their waste moments. There is no village reconstruction scheme which can possibly yield such brilliant, tangible and quick results. This khaddar work is also an object-lesson in co-operation. And by the time khaddar becomes a permanent part of the village life, selfless village workers can, if they will, promote sanitation, education and social reform. This is practical self-government. Imagine thousands of such villages bound together by a common tie through khaddar, and you have swaraj for the asking. For when India learns to deny itself the use of foreign cloth, she will have sterilized the many undesirable activities of the British people and paved the way for real swaraj. I hope that the good people of Kanur will not rest content till every man, woman and child living in it habitually wears khaddar. It is to be hoped, too, that the infection will not be confined to Pudur only, but that it will spread from village to village.

Young India, 10-9-1925

[1] Not reproduced here. The writing dealt with the progress of spinning and use of khaddar in Kanur village of Coimbatore district, in South India.

246. ALL-BENGAL DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL

Friends have been inquiring whether they may still pay their subscription to the All-Bengal Memorial Fund. So far as the official collection is concerned, it was closed on the 31st ultimo. But if there are any who still wish to pay to *that* fund, they can do so through the Trustees. But whatever may now be received by me will be credited to the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial unless the subscriber directs to the contrary.

Young India, 10-9-1925

247. ABOUT UNTOUCHABLES

Sjt. T. N. Sarma of Andhra Desh came to me the other day at Calcutta and asked me certain questions regarding the difficulties found in the path of those who were serving the *Panchamas*.[1] He has now reduced my answers to writing and sent them to me to correct and publish if possible. As they are likely to help workers, I gladly find room for the questions and my answers.

1. What methods do you suggest for the propaganda for the removal of untouchability?

Not much lip propaganda is necessary now. Work is propaganda. You should work fearlessly, unmindful of social ostracism, for bettering the condition of the untouchables. Lectures may be arranged when leading men pay you a visit.

2. There are two shades of opinion in our Andhra province, and a resolution was proposed to the effect that money should not be spent for the non-*Panchamas* to do propaganda work. Some people think that the *Panchamas* should be educated first, and the demand for the removal should come from them, while others think that paid propaganda should be done among the higher classes to change their hearts, and to make them feel that untouchability is a sin, and pundits and workers should be appointed to do this work.

I would not spend even a single pie over the pundits. if you pay them they become hirelings. They must work for pay. Money should be spent on the *Panchamas* to make them realize their own position. Our methods should always be non-violent. Men of the so-called higher classes must change their attitude, and remove the ban for their

[1] Castes regarded as untouchables

own elevation and purification. If they do not do so and persist in suppressing them, time must come when the untouchables will rebel against us, and may have recourse even to violent methods. I am trying my utmost to prevent such a catastrophe, and so must we all do who believe untouchability to be a sin.

3. Do you think that schools started exclusively for the *Panchamas* will help in any way in removing untouchability?

They must in the long run do so, as all education must. But such schools should not be exclusively *Panchama* schools as boys from other castes also should be welcomed. They will not come at present. But the prejudice will break down in time if the schools are well managed. If you want mixed schools, you must start one in your locality. Suppose you own a house. Nobody can ask you to go away from your house. Bring an untouchable boy to your house and start a school with him. Induce other boys to come and attend that school.

4. In our province encouragement is given to the schools where the children of both the untouchables and the touchables read together.

Yes. You may encourage them. But you should not refuse help to schools or institutions where there are only untouchables.

5. In some Taluk Boards , there are orders that schools will be abolished if admission is refused to the untouchables. Do you advise us to help the *Panchamas* at such places in getting admission through our propagandists?

Certainly. You should help them. But there is no need for special propagandists. Your workers will do for that purpose.

6. Then what about the propaganda work? Do you think that silent work will do?

Yes.There is no good of propaganda when there is no solid work behind to elevate the *Panchamas*.

(In this connection, Gandhiji referred to the Vaikom struggle, and said that it had a very tremendous effect on the people of those parts.)

7. Shall we spend money freely for the propaganda at a time when such questions arise?

Not freely. Solid work is its own propaganda. At Vaikom most of the money is spent for constructive work.

8. Are you going to take up the question of untouchability more vigorously at any time in the near future?

I have already taken up that question as vigorously as possible. We are trying to start schools, dig wells, and build temples, etc., for them

wherever it is possible. The work does not stop for want of money. Perhaps you are thinking that nothing is done for them, because it is not advertised in the papers.

9. According to the Belgaum resolution, no school can be called 'national' where *Panchamas* are refused admission.

Certainly. They are not national schools.

10. Do you say that such schools should not be given help from Congress funds, even though they satisfy all the other conditions to be called national schools?

No help should be given.

Young India, 10-9-1925

248. LETTER TO JETHALAL MANSUR

Bhadra Vad 8,'81 [*September 10,1925*]

BHAI JETHALAL,

I have your letter. Try to collect soon donations for the temple.[1] How much do you expect from Ramjibhai?[2] The members of his family have donated ornaments also. The delay there will be responsible for the delay in the temple construcion. It is also necessary to know who will be the priest in charge of this temple.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 11135 (1)

[1] For Harijans at Lathi, chief town of the then princely State of Lathi in Saurashtra.

[2] Presumably, Ramjibhai of Lathi who, with his wife Gangabehn, responded to Gandhiji's appeal for reviving in Gujarat the craft of weaving from hand-spun yarn, and taught it to others in Sabarmati Ashram.

249. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN,
Friday [*September 11, 1925*][1]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I read your letter carefully in the train. I understand your suffering and appreciate your arguments. But even so, it seems to me that you should certainly take an injection and even after doing so, try to control your impure thoughts. Be constantly alert for that purpose. There will be no difficulty in sending you to a place like Almora. But that will be considered later. For the present, watch the effect of the injection and avoid fatiguing exertion.

In fact, if you can make yourself completely free from impure thoughts, you will not need even the *chiretta*[2]. All of us should try to attain that state. Surely one of us will succeed in it. Rarely do we find anyone in the world who is pure even in his thoughts. Nothing is impossible for such a person. I wish you to make greater effort than others in that direction.

Write to me when you feel so inclined. Look after Lakshmi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 33021

250. SPEECH AT PURULIA[3]

September 12, 1925

Mahatmaji first of all thanked the members of the District Board and the Municipality for the addresses that they had presented to him. In one of the addresses, he said, reference had very fittingly been made and regret had been expressed over

[1] The dateline in Gandhiji's hand has 'Friday, on the train' whereas the addressee has noted it as '*Rentiabaras*, Samvat 1981'. *Rentiabaras*, i.e. *Bhadarva Vad* 12 in Vikram Era 1981 fell on September 14, 1925, which was a Monday, not a Friday. The letter, therefore, appears to have been written on the preceding Friday, i.e. on September 11, 1925 when Gandhiji was travelling from Bombay to Purulia. *'Rentiabaras'* may have been the day on which the addressee received the letter.

[2] An Ayurvedic medicine

[3] In district Manbhum, Bihar

thepassing away of Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das.[1] Although it was now some months that he had passed away, still they had not been able to forget the pang of separation from him. He knew before he entered that town that Purulia was the place of rest for Deshbandhu. And the day he entered his house in that town, he was greatly grieved to find that it was after his death that he had an occasion to enter his house. He thanked the members for all that had been done to perpetuate the memory of Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das. References had been made in both the addresses to khaddar and the charkha. Charkha, said Mahatmaji, had become the very *mantra* of his life. He did not see any other method by which he could get rid of the poverty of India. The poverty of Bihar was well known. Barring Orissa and perhaps one or two more provinces, he thought Bihar was the poorest of all the provinces in the country. There was a time when Bihar used to export to other places some very fine hand-woven cloth made of hand-spun. Like Bengal, Bihar too was famous for production of fine cloth. But today there were people in Bihar who did not know how to satisfy their hunger. And for them there was no other course but to take to the charkha. Today there were thousands of Biharis in Assam earning food in that province and at Calcutta. It would not do for us to leave them there. Man was not born only to amass money. One who lost his soul did great harm to his soul. They could know better than him about the character of those people living in Assam and in Calcutta. But even if they left them out of consideration, there were lakhs of Biharis who did not know what was called two meals a day. They did not know how to earn their livelihood.

I have become a Bihari from the date I began my work in Champaran. If you do not know, I would like to tell you that there in Champaran women could hardly earn 5 pice a day. For males 6 pice or two annas was considered to be too much. Today, although the wages have gone up, still these peoples have to pay commission (*dastur*) out of their wages. Their condition today continues more or less the same as before. But if the charkha was placed in their hands, what would be the result? Let the economists judge for themselves. But it lies in the hands of the educated people to revive it.

It was a fact that the masses followed the higher and the influential. If they went to the villages, preached the charkha to them and plied the wheel themselves, it was only then they could evoke enthusiasm for the charkha among the villagers. If they wanted Bihar to get rid of her poverty, if they wanted to give employment to the unemployed during the time of the flood, famine and other scourges of nature, then they must ply the charkha themselves and preach it to the people. But that alone

[1] Gandhiji had earlier unveiled a portrait of C. R. Das, after the presentation of the addresses.

would not do.

They would have to give up their charm for the foreign and even the mill-made cloth of Bombay and Ahmedabad. So long as they did not do that, they would not be able to achieve anything substantial. Their very self-respect demanded that they (the Biharis) should use cloth made in Bihar only and not go in for the mill-products of Bombay and Ahmedabad.

If you are the real well-wishers of India, if you want to serve Bihar sincerely, you must be able to understand and appreciate well this first *mantra* of the charkha.

Mahatmaji proceeding congratulated them on the absence of any communal trouble in the district and hoped that it would continue to be so. He also congratulated the members on all that was being done by them for the propagation of the charkha and for uplifting of the untouchables. Concluding he appealed for the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. He explained that the Fund would be for the scheme for village reconstruction which was so near and dear to Deshbandhu's heart. And the amount collected would be spent through the proposed new organization to be called "The All-India Spinners' Association". He knew that the middle-class people of Bihar were not every rich. But if they appreciated the methods of the charkha and if they approved of the method of utilizing the sum collected, they must contribute their mite to this fund. The major portion of the money collected in Bihar would be spent in this very province.

The Searchlight, 16-9-1925

251. "WHAT SHOULD WE DO?"

Although I stayed in Gujarat for only five days[1], during that period I met co-workers and came to know much through them. I heard, too, about some serious matters. I do not have the time to discuss everything that I heard. Just now I shall write about only one subject. Some co-workers tell me that they do not get money from people in their districts. They are ready to send their children to [national] schools but do not contribute towards their expenses. It is with the greatest difficulty that people are made to spin. What should they do in such circumstances? Why should the Provincial Committee not provide funds?

This is an unworthy attitude. Wherever local help is not available

[1] After his four-month tour of Bengal, Gandhiji returned to Gujarat on September 5, and left for Bihar on September 9.

the general rule is not to take up any work. There can be only a few exceptions to this. Where the aim is to spread a completely new idea, help from outside may be taken for a certain period, but this cannot be a permanent practice. The service of *Antyajas* is a cause of this nature. It is a sacred duty. It is possible that local help may not be available for such work in the initial stages. In that case, workers may secure it from other sources. But no such help can be expected from a popularly elected body like the Provincial Committee. The worker should rely on his own influence with people. This rule, however, cannot be followed in the matter of the education of the people. If the residents of a village want facilities for education, they must provide the necessary funds. If they do not do so, we may conclude that no such institution is required there. Very often, the fault lies with theworker. He may lack strength of character, or ability or may not be hard-working. Such a worker should have patience. He should reform his character, acquire ability through experience and make an effort to be hard-working. This is what we mean by *tapascharya*[1] Through *tapas*[2] the world exists, through it Bhavani[3] won Shambhu, Savitri brought back Satyavan[4] to life, Lakshmana[5] defeated Indrajit[6] and Rama defeated Ravana. Instances in modern times are there right before us; I would, therefore, strongly advise co-workers to try to obtain local help and wherever this is not available, to limit the field of their work.

Let us consider the limits of the Provincial Committee. Where does it get its funds from? From the districts. What would happen if all the districts looked to it for help and contributed nothing to its funds? The rule is that every area should contribute to the funds of the Provincial Committee and then ask for help from it. I would advise the Provincial Committee to wind up its work if it, too, has to carry it on with funds obtained from outside Gujarat. For this very reason I have always advocated that Gujarat should depend primarily on Gujaratis' money. This is the secret of swaraj. Local autonomy implies local responsibility. We should not be too eager to run a single institution

[1] *Tapascharya* is the pursuit of *tapas*.
[2] *Tapas* is penance generating spiritual strength.
[3] Parvati, consort of Siva also known as Shambhu
[4] Husband of Savitri in the *Mahabharata*
[5] Brother of Rama in the *Ramayana*
[6] Son of Ravana, King of Lanka, in the Ramayana

out of a false sense of prestige. Dharma is the only thing we can pursue in opposition to public opinion, and to pursue dharma means to lay down one's life. This does not require any monetary help. Can running a library or a school possibly be one's dharma? Non-co-operation can be. We may bear hardships in employing it. It requires no monetary help whatsoever. If the residents of a village do not wish to get their children educated by me, there should be no question at all of my attracting the children to me against their wishes. If they are ready to send their children but not prepared to contribute funds, that means that they beg for charity. They will get it only if they need it. *Antyajas* are such a class of people, for we have neglected our duty towards them so far. It is, therefore, useless to expect help from the Provincial Committee in every matter. If the latter gives any help under pressure, it would be doing a wrong and may have even to stop business. I know at first hand that some Provincial Committees are reduced to such straits. Gujarat is not in such a plight because its workers weigh everything most carefully in carrying on their work and continually walk on the razor's edge. They are ever vigilant.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 13-9-1925

252. PURITY

Corruption has gradually entered our public life. A learned gentleman has remarked that our public life has become corrupted ever since the Congress got one crore rupees. There was intense malice in this criticism, but it also contained a drop of nectar. With money in the Congress treasury, temptation followed and laxity came over its working. Why should we work ourselves, [we thought] for what we can obtain with money? Vices do not trumpet their coming. They work as thieves and poisonous germs do. They enter stealthily, without our being aware of their coming. They creep in and lodge themselves as an innocent lamb would creep unnoticed into your home. We cannot get rid of them, however much we try. If we are not on our guard, they pull at us and draw us behind them. Unknown to us, corruption has entered us. It is necessary to be on our guard against it.

Many people have borrowed money from the [Provincial] Committee. This should have been returned. Some have obtained khadi from the khadi Association. All these sums have not been

returned. This is laxity and means an indirect breach of trust. If we had obtained similar facilites on business terms and failed to repay the sums in time, we would have had to suffer punishment by being sent to prison. We seem to believe, however, that we need not follow business standards in repaying money borrowed from public bodies like the [Provincial] Committee.

Really speaking, the position should be that the money due to the Committee should be regarded as a loan received on one's credit. In English such a debt is known as a debt of honour, or, in other words, money obtained on one's credit as a man of one's word and it is a law among business men, a law of the world, that such debt should be repaid at the earliest opportunity. One should be particularly anxious to repay it. There is another law, too, namely, that the King's tax should be paid before a private debt. This should be the law whichone should follow in regard to the money borrowed from the Committee, otherwise the Committees cannot continue to function. Our laxity may suggest to us many excuses, but none will serve. We deserve no admiration if we refrain from crimes for which the world would punish us; there certainly is no virtue in such conduct. It is no test of our truthfulness. He alone is a man of truth who saves himself from a crime to which God would be the only witness. Innocence consists in voluntarily refraining from a crime for which the world would not punish us. There is no merit in forced charity or one done through fear. Thus, from whatever point of view we look at the matter, our duty is clear, and that is that all those who have received loans from the Committee or other public bodies should wake up, shake off their lethargy and repay the loans without any further delay.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-9-1925

253. OUR DIRTY WAYS-II

Last week we discussed our dirty ways[1]. The people should give up their habit of defecating at any and every place whether in cities or villages. We should follow the practice of using only fixed places for this purpose. At present we do quite the opposite of this and do not even hesitate to dirty our courtyards or our streets. There is, in

[1] *Vide* "Our Dirty Ways", 30-8-1925

consequence, an excess of foul smell and it becomes difficult even to walk. In villages, one should go to the fields which have been fixed for such use or go to one's own fields, and after defecation one should invariably throw dry earth over the faeces. The best way of doing this is to dig a hole with a small shovel or a spade and, after defecation, fill up the hole with the mud so dug up. If, in addition, people follow the practice of marking such spots by fixed signs, everyone would know them. In order to ensure privacy in following this method, a few places should be selected for use.

If people understand this and co-operate in following such a method, the necessary arrangements can be made easily and without expense. Really speaking, such a method would add to the nation's wealth at no cost of labour and bring about improvement in public health. It is the experience of the whole world that the productivity of the field which is used for such purposes increases. If the people welcome this idea, they would actually offer to pay for their fields being put to such use. They do that in other countries. In our country, too, in certain parts we see peasants securing a monopoly of removing the night-soil, but they remove it in such a dirty manner that one feels disgusted at the sight of it. If my suggestion is followed, no one would need to remove night-soil, the air would not become polluted and villages would remain very clean.

This is with regard to villages. The same practice cannot be followed in cities. They must have lavatories. It is not necessary to say anything about cities which have Western-style water-closets and where the night-soil is collected through sewers at one place. All that needs to be considered is what people can do on their own. They should voluntarily observe the following rules.

1. Both excretary functions should be performed only at fixed places.

2. To pass urine anywhere in a street, at any place not meant for the purpose should be regarded an offence.

3. After passing urine at any selected place, one should cover up the spot well with dry earth.

4. Lavatories should be kept very clean. Even the part through which the water flows should be kept clean. Our lavatories bring our civilization into discredit, they violate the rules of hygiene.

5. All the night-soil should be removed to fields.

How can we ensure the observance of all these rules? The answer is, through education. Laws are useless so long as people do not understand them and do not recognize their necessity. A law can be passed to compel only a small numebr of persons. The penalty prescribed by a law which is either not understood or not obeyed by a large number of people serves no useful purpose.

Literacy is not essential for such education. Through magic lanterns and lectures, people should be told about the diseases which spread through filth and about the advantages of saving night-soil for use as manure. Different ways of doing this should be demonstrated.

The best method of education, however, is to show the way through one's own practice. Those who have been convinced of the necessity of putting these suggestions into practice should do so and set an example to others.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-9-1925

254. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, PURULIA[1]

September 13, 1925

Mahatmaji, in reply to the address, said that he was highly pleased to see so many *satis* assembled there. He continued that his religion had taught him to utter the names of *satis* in the morning and thus revere them. Asking all of them to be *pratasmaraniya*[2] like Sita and Damayanti he said that it was only by virtue of their purity of body, soul and deeds that they had become so. In fact, he appealed to the womanhood of India to be as pure as Sita and, until and unless they were so, it was quite impossible to attain swaraj either by the manhood or by the womanhood. To him swaraj was *Ramraj* or *dharamaraj* and that could be obtained only when the women of india had become like Sita. Sita Devi knew no suffering. She entered fire without the least sense of suffering and they too could attain that stage if they had followed in her footsteps.

Mahatmaji next appealed to them to spin and wear khadi. He said that in the time of Sita no woman or, as a matter of fact, no man used to put on foreign cloth. Just as there was a hearth in every house, there was at least one spinning-wheel in it and the female members used to spin. To those who could afford to buy khaddar he

[1] At the meeting, held at 8 a.m., Gandhiji was presented an address of welcome on behalf of the women of Purulia.

[2] Worthy of being remembered in the early morning.

appealed to do so, but at the same time they should spin for their suffering brothers and sisters and contribute the yarn to the All-India Khadi Board.

In conclusion he appealed to them to contribute to the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund which would be spent for khaddar and village organization according to the last wishes of Deshbandhu.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 15-9-1925

255. SPEECH AT MEETING OF UNTOUCHABLES, PURULIA[1]

September 13, 1925

I want to tell those brothers and sisters who have shown by raising their hands that Hindus regard them as untouchables, that I am also a *Dom*. Call me *Bhangi* or *Dom* and I am so. It is my firm conviction that one does not become bad or despised simply because one cleans night-soil. The mother always does so for her child, but society never condemns her as an untouchable. Untouchables are really those who do evil acts, and whose heart is not pure. I therefore want to tell my *Dom* brothers and sisters and others of the untouchable class that they should hate neither Hindus nor their religion. Hindus are trying their best to find out remedies and make amends for the ill-treatment meted out by them to the *Doms* and members of the other untouchable class. There are to be found all over the country Hindus at the present time, who have dedicated their whole time to the cause of ameliorating the condition of the untouchables.

But I have a request to make to the untouchables. I must ask you to eradicate those evils which have crept into your society. During my tour in Bengal, I came in contact with many untouchable brethren, from the United Provinces and Bihar. From them I came to know that they were addicted to the habits of drinking and gambling. It is true that nowadays other Hindus too, even Brahmins, are subject to these vices of drinking and gambling. But let us not imitate the evils in others. I therefore appeal to my *Dom* and other untouchable brothers and sisters that, for God's sake, they should shun the evils in them.

I have also come to know from none else but yourselves that you all are victims of corruption, immorality and untruth as well. You

[1] Before replying to the address in Hindi, Gandhiji had asked those in the audience who were untouchables to raise their hands to enable him to know how many of them were there.

must be able to eradicate these evils also out of yourselves.

You might be acquainted, if you have known Tulsidas's *Ramayana*, with the fact that Ramachandra, Sita and Lakshman had very affectionately embraced the untouchable Guha and I want to see the same repeated once again in India. Let even those who are known as *Chandals*[1] eradicate the evils in them and become the devotees ofShri Ramachandra. I would also request you to shun the use of foreign clothes and take to the use of hand-woven clothes made of hand-spun yarn. You should bear in mind that, in the days of Shri Ramachandra, neither rich nor poor used any foreign cloth and the khadi produced in the country was in the general use of all.

Further, I would like to tell my other brothers besides the untouchables, who are present here, that untouchability has got no place in the Hindu religion.

My personal belief is strong about it. The moment I am convinced that untouchability is an essential element of Hindu religion, I would immediately renounce my religion. We regard the Shastras and the Vedas as divine revelations. How can then a divine revelation advocate any hatred against members of a particular community? So long as the Hindus continue just to tolerate the untouchables among them and treat them with contempt, the nation would continue to be treated as untouchables by other nations, as is the case today.

And thus also I believe and trust we will not be able to attain swaraj unless we are able to purge the Hindu society of this evil of untouchability. *Ramayana* and Tulsidas have preached the religion of kindness. I would therefore appeal to Hindus of the higher castes present here that, if they call themselves *sanatanadharmi*[2], if they love the cow, they should not hate the members of untouchable classes.

May God bless you all.

The Searchlight, 20-9-1925

256. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

September 15, 1925

MY DEAR MOTI BABU,

I have carried your letter with me so as to remind me that I must

[1] Lowest class of Harijans, removers and eaters of carrion

[2] Followers of the original or orthodox Hinduism

send you a line. Do please keep me informed of your doings and happenings there. I am in and about Bihar till the end of October. My address will be Patna during the Bihar tour. I reach Patna on 19th and shall be there till 24th.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 11019

257. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Bhadra Vad 13 [September 15, 1925][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your two letters. I hope you received the wire I sent yesterday. I wish you not to come if it makes Durga unhappy. I shall manage somehow in regard to the Gujarati writing. Dalal has told me that for writing I should use the right hand, a little at any rate. So I shall use it for *Navajivan* at least. The English I shall dictate to Kristodas and Pyarelal. Mr. Sen has sent word that he is not coming.

I hope you have understood what I said about Ramdas in the telegram. Satis Babu is with me. His brother, Hemprabhadevi and Prafulla Ghosh also were with me in Purulia. Urmila Devi and Mona have not come. My programme is as follows:

17 Ranchi

18 Hazaribagh

19 Gaya, and Patna at night

19-24 Patna

I do not know further .

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11433

258. SPEECH AT NATIONAL SCHOOL, CHAKRADHARPUR

September 15, 1925

Mahatmaji accompanied by Sjt. Rajendra Prasad and Satis Babu reached Chakradharpur this morning. Addressing the students of the National School

[1] The itinerary in the letter indicates that the letter was written in September. 1925.

Mahatmaji said that the student of the old days used to approach the teacher *samitpani*[1] or with wood in hand, indicating that he had come to be taught and give in exchange his services. The modern system of education has changed this order of things, the result being that the process of giving and receiving education has become a dry one. The students of national schools should give something in return for what they receive today. They are to come to the teacher *sutrapani*—with yarn—or ply the charkha in return for education received. The students should spin and thereby serve the nation in exchange for the education they receive.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 16-9-1925

259. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, RAMLILA COMMITTEE, ALLAHABAD

RANCHI,
[On or before *September 17, 1925*][2]

REGRET HAVE NO INFLUENCE OVER EITHER SECTION.[3]

GANDHI

The Leader, 20-9-1925

260. NOTES

THE INDIAN HERCULES AND BRAHMINS

I had a visit by appointment on the 8th instant during my brief stay at Sabarmati at 4 o'clock in the morning from the Indian Hercules, as Professor Rama Murti delights to describe himself. He engaged me in an entertaining conversation on the wickedness of modern Brahmins and drew from me questions that seemed to give him full satisfaction, and there seemed to be, for the moment, a kinship between our non-Brahmin souls and a vision was opened out before him of a non-Brahmin war to the knife against the Brahmins who, as he said, after all represented but a microscopic minority.

After our conversation, the athletic Professor seriously

[1] Offering of forest twigs and wood to the gurukul or ashram was an ancient practice.

[2] The telegram according to the source, was received on September 17.

[3] The reference is not clear, but from the context apparently concerned the observance of *Dussehra*, a Hindu festival

concerned himself about my bodily vigour and initiated me into the mysteries of 'healthy mind in healthy body'. He found in me a very willing convert. The exercises which he gave me were delightful but I am inclined to think that they were a trifle too much for one like me who has passed the meridian of life. He claimed for them a superiority over all the European methods, which certificate I heartily endorsed. The exercises were nothing but a few *Hatha Yoga* practices.I commend them to all young men. *Pranayam* has a great health-giving value if practised under skilled supervision. But let there be no self-deception about it. Those who practise these exercises should do so for the purpose of health and that only. They have, no doubt, restricted spiritual value. But I would strongly dissuade young men from going in for *Hatha Yoga* practices for spiritual regeneration. In the present age such regeneration comes more from heart-devotion than through physical practices. And for acquiring spiritual merit through *Hatha Yaga* one needs a preceptor who is himself a spiritual adept through these practices. I have searched for such and I have failed. That does not necessarily mean that there are no pure *Hatha Yogis* in India, but where a diligent searcher like me has not succeeded, let young men beware of accepting claimants without severe examination.

But I have gone astray, I must redeem the promise I have made to the Professor when he sent me a digest of our political talk for revision that I would give the substance myself in these columns instead of revising his own reproduction which I received at a time when I had not a moment to spare. He told me that, at Municipal and District-Board elections, my name was being unlawfully exploited by those who described themselves as Congressmen or Swarajists and told me also that on that account I was losing my influence among the masses. I informed him that I was not concerned with my influence and that I could not help if people made an unlawful use of my name. But, retorted the Professor, could I not at least guide the voters by saying what I wanted them to do. I told him that I had done so already on more occasions than one. For me mere Congress label was of no avail. I could only give my vote, if at all, to those who were Congressmen or Swarajists in reality and, therefore, I would give my vote to those who believed in the Congress creed, who habitually wore hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar, who believed in unity among all classes and, if Hindus, were active champions of the so-called untouchables and believed that untouchability was an evil to be

removed without delay, who were total prohibitionists as to intoxicating drinks and drugs, and who otherwise conformed to the Congress resolutions. If I found no such candidates, I would keep my vote with myself. Not to give the vote is as much an exercise of the privilege of the voter as the giving of it.

The Professor then asked me for my definition of a Brahmin. I told him that a Brahmin was one who sacrificed himself for his religion and his country and who accepted poverty as his happy lot in life for the sake of service. "Are there any such Brahmins?" quickly asked the Professor. "Not many," I answered, "but more, perhaps, than you expect."

HARSH *v.* PLEASANT TRUTH

With reference to my removal of certain passages from a correspondent's letter recently published, he thus complains:

> In spite of the expurgation you have thought fit to effect in my letter, I may claim that in all my letters to you, especially where communal questions are involved, I have tried to observe not the 'prudent' maxim, सत्यं ब्रूयात् प्रियं ब्रूयात् सत्यमप्रियम् (which means in brief 'speak not the unpleasant truth') although it be found in most of our received texts of Manu, but the saying of William Lloyd Garrison, the American slave-liberator, which has stood for many years at the head of the *Indian Social Reformer*[1] of Bombay as its motto: I *will be* as harsh as truth, and as uncompromising as justice, etc.

I do not mind harsh truth but I do object to spiced truth. Spicy language is as foreign to truth as hot chillies to a healthy stomach. The passages removed by me were not necessary to elucidate the meaning of the correspondent or give point to it. They were offensive without being useful or necessary. There seems to be the fashion to think that, in order to be truthful, one must use harsh language; whereas truth suffers when it is harshly put. It is like wanting to support strength; truth being itself fully strong is insulted when an attempt is made to support it with harshness. I see no conflict between the Sanskrit text and Garrison's motto quoted by the correspondent . In my opinion, the Sanskrit text means that one should speak the truth in gentle language. One had better not speak it if one cannot do so in a gentle way, meaning thereby that there is not truth in a man who cannot control his tongue. In other words, truth without non-violence is not truth but untruth. Garrison's motto requires to be interpreted in

[1] Weekly edited by K. Natarajan

terms of his own life. He was one of the gentlest of men of his time. Mark his language. He will be as harsh as truth, but since truth to be truth is never harsh but always gentle and beneficial, the motto can only mean that Garrison would be as gentle as truth but no more. Both the texts have relation to the inner state of the speaker or writer, not to the effect that will be produced upon those to whom the speech or the writing is addressed. The *Indian Social Reformer* is rarely, if ever, harsh. It tries to be fair though it often jumps to conclusions in a hurry and is obliged later to revise its estimate of men and things. In these days of surrounding bitterness one cannot be too cautious. After all who knows the absolute truth? It is in ordinary affairs of life only a relative term. What is truth to me is not necessarily truth to the rest of my companions. We are all like the blind men who, on examining an elephant, gave different descriptions of the same animal according to the touch they were able to have of him. And they were all, according to their own lights, in the right. But we know also that they were all in the wrong. Every one of them fell far short of the truth. One cannot be too insistent therefore upon the necessity of guarding oneself against bitterness. Bitterness blurs the vision and to that extent disables one from seeing even the limited truth that the physically blind men in the fable were able to do.

A STRING OF QUESTIONS

One of the best of national workers sends me questions for answers. Here they are with answers:

You say we must help the Swaraj Party. What is the meaning of this help?

My meaning is that everone should help this party to the best of his ability and as far as his conscience will permit. Thus one who is inclined towards the Council programme and has no conscientious objections to it will join the Party. One who has conscientious objections will refrain but, short of joining, give all the other help that he can. He may object to vote also. He will then refrain even from voting. In no case will he vilify the Party.

Should young workers in the villages take part in the election turmoil and canvass for votes for the Swarajists?

I have not conceived that as possible except for Pro-changers. Those village workers who are, for instance, doing khaddar work, and who are not politically inclined will certainly not disturb themselves and their work to the extent contemplated in the question.

The Swarajists will want to capture village boards, municipalities, local boards, etc. What are khadi workers to do?

I expect Swarajists also to be khadi workers. The difference between them and No-changers is that Swarajists add Council work to khadi work. They, therefore, whilst remaining lovers of khadi, give the first place to Council work. No-changers have nothing but khadi and other constructive work to fall back upon. Each may go his own way and each is expected to help the other to the best of his ability and conscience.

What is my position when there are Brahmin and Non-Brahmin candidates,—one set opposing the other?

In such a case, if I were you, I would refrain from interfering except to remove strife and bitterness.

You have said not only should No-changers refrain from opposition to the Swarajists but they should even help them. What is the extent of this help?

I have already answered this question. When there is friendliness, there are many ways of giving help without hindering one's own special work. But each one must determine for himself the extent of help that he is to render. Such help has to be a voluntary offering which cannot be dictated, much less can there be any coercion. There is no question here of party discipline. Mine is the opinion of an individual. The meaning of it can be more fully derived from my own conduct.

Have you decided to help the Swarajists as a matter of necessity, or because you consider that through Councils India will benefit?

There is room for a third reason. I do not consider that Councils will benefit India in the present condition. Nor is it a matter of necessity that I help the Swarajists in my own poor way. I dislike the Council programme but I see that the majority of educated Indians cannot do without the Council programme. The most forward amongst them will gladly retire if they had a fiercely active political propaganda. They cannot be satisfied with the mere constructive programme. It is too slow for them. I recognize the honesty of this attitude. And as one wanting to harness all the forces for the good of the country and realizing that, if one goes to the Councils, one may even there advance the constructive programme and offer dignified opposition to such measures as are detrimental to the welfare of the country, I choose for my help that party which best fulfils my conditions.

KHADDAR WORKERS' CENSUS

The following further figures have been received:[1]

Name of Province or Centre	Total No. of Workers	Remuner-ated	Paid or Hon. Graduates	Average Expense Per Worker

Young India, 17-9-1925

261. TO AMERICAN FRIENDS

It is a privilege for me to enjoy the friendship of so many unknown American and European friends. It pleases me to note that the circle is ever widening, perhaps more especially in America. I had the pleasure of receiving a warm invitation about a year ago to visit that continent. The same invitation has now been repeated with redoubled strength and with the offer to pay all expenses. I was unable then as I am now, to respond to the kind invitation. To accept it is an easy enough task, but I must resist the temptation, for I feel that I can make no effective appeal to the people of that great continent unless I make my position good with the intellectuals of India.

I have not a shadow of doubt about the truth of my fundamental position. But I know that I am unable to carry with me the bulk of educated India. I can therefore gain no effective help for my country from the Americans and Europeans so long as I remain isolated from educated India. I do want to think in terms of the whole world. My patriotism includes the good of mankind in general. Therefore, my service of India includes the service of humanity. But I feel that I should be going out of my orbit if I left it for help from the West. I must be satisfied for the time being with such help as I can get from the West, speaking to it from my smaller Indian platform. If I go to America or to Europe, I must go in my strength, not in my weakness, which I feel today,—the weakness I mean, of my country. For the whole scheme for the liberation of India is based upon the development of internal strength. It is a plan of self-purification. The peoples of the West, therefore, can best help the Indian movement by setting apart specialists to study the inwardness of it. Let the specialists come to India with an open mind and in a spirit of humility as befits

[1] For the figures, given earlier, *vide* "Khaddar Workers' Census", 27-8-1925.

a searcher after Truth. Then, perhaps, they will see the reality instead of a glorified edition that, in spite of all my desire to be absolutely truthful, I am likely to present if I went to America. I believe in thought-power more than in the power of the word, whether written or spoken. And if the movement that I seek to represent has vitality in it and has divine blessing upon it, it will permeate the whole world without my physical presence in its different parts. Anyway, at the present moment I see no light before me. I must patiently plod in India until I see my way clear for going outside the Indian border.

After pressing the invitation, the American friend puts a number of questions for my consideration. I welcome them and gladly take the opportunity of answering them through these columns. He says:

Whether you decide, now or later, to come here or not to come, I trust you will find the following questions worth considering. They have developed insistently in my mind for a long time.

His first question is:

Has the time arrived—or is it coming—when your best way to help India will be by moving the whole world—and especially England and America—to a new consciousness?

I have partly answered the question already. In my opinion the time has not yet arrived—it may come any day—for me to go out of India to move the whole world to a new consciousness. The process, however, is even now indirectly and unconsciously going on though slowly.

Are not the present-day interests of all mankind, everywhere, so inextricably interwoven that no single country, like India, can be moved far out of its present relationships to the others?

I do believe with the writer that no single country can remain in isolation for any length of time. The present plan for securing swaraj is not to attain a position of isolation but one of full self-realization and self-expression for the benefit of all. The present position of bondage and helplessness hurts not only India, not only England, but the whole world.

Is not your message and method essentially a world gospel—which will find its power in responsive souls, here and there, in many countries, who will thereby, gradually, remake the world?

If I can say so without arrogance and with due humility, my message and methods are indeed in their essentials for the whole world and it gives me keen satisfaction to know that it has already received a wonderful response in the hearts of a large and daily-growing number of men and women of the West.

If you demonstrate your message in the language only of the East and in terms only of Indian emergencies, is there not grave danger that inessentials will be confused with fundamentals—that some features which correspond only to extreme situations in India will be wrongly understood to be vital in the universal sense?

I am alive to the danger pointed out by the writer, but it seems to be inevitable. I am in the position of a scientist who is in the midst of a very incomplete experiment and who, therefore is unable to forecast large results and larger corollaries in a language capable of being understood. In the experimental stage, therefore, I must run the risk of the experiment being misunderstood as it has been, and probably still is, in many places.

Ought you not to come to America (which in spite of all her faults is perhaps, potentially, the most spiritual of all living peoples) and tell the world what your message means in terms of Western, as well as Eastern, civilization?

People in general will understand my message through its results. The shortest way, therefore, perhaps of making it effectively heard is to let it speak for itself, at any rate for the time being.

For example, should the Western followers of your inspiration preach and practise the spinning-wheel?

It is certainly not necessary for the Western people to preach and practise the spinning-wheel unless they will do so out of sympathy or for discipline or with a view to applying their matchless inventive faculty to making the spinning-wheel a better instrument while retaining its essential characteristic as a cottage industry. But the message of the spinning-wheel is much wider than its circumference. Its message is one of simplicity, service of mankind, living so as not to hurt others, creating an indissoluble bond between the rich and the poor, capital and labour, the prince and the peasant. That larger message is naturally for all.

Is your condemnation of railroads, doctors, hospitals and other features of modern civilization essential and unalterable? Should we not, first, try to develop a spirit great enough to spiritualize the machinery and the organized, scientific and productive powers of modern life?

My condemnation of railroads, etc., whilst true where it stands, has little or no bearing on the present movement which disregards none of the institutions mentioned by the writer. In the present movement, I am neither attacking railroads nor hospitals; but in an ideal State they seem to me to have little or no place. The present movement is just the attempt the writer desires. Yet it is not an attempt

to spiritualize the machinery—because that seems to me an impossible task—but to introduce, if it is at all possible, a human or the humane spirit among the men behind the machinery. Organization of machinery for the purpose of concentrating wealth and power in the hands of a few and for the exploitation of many I hold to be altogether wrong. Much of the organization of machinery of the present age is of that type. The movement of the spinning-wheel is an organized attempt to displace machinery from that state of exclusiveness and exploitation and to place it in its proper state. Under my scheme, therefore, men in charge of machinery will think not of themselves or even of the nation to which they belong but of the whole human race. Thus Lancashire men will cease to use their machinery for exploiting India and other countries but, on the contrary, they will devise means of enabling India to convert in her own villages her cotton into cloth. Nor will Americans under my scheme seek to enrich themselves by exploiting the other races of the earth through their inventive skill.

Is it not possible, in conditions so favourable as America's, to clarify and advance the evolution of the best human consciousness into such purpose and power, courage and beneficence, as shall liberate the souls of India's millions—and of all men everywhere?

It is undoubtedly possible. Indeed, it is my hope that America will seek the evolution of the best human consciousness; but that time is perhaps not yet. Probably it will not be before India has found her own soul. Nothing will please me more than to find America and Europe making the difficult path of India as easy as it is possible for them to do. They can do so by withdrawing the temptations in India's way and by encouraging her in her attempt to revive her ancient industries in her own villages.

Why is it that people like myself, in every country, are grateful to you and eager to follow you? Is it not for two reasons chiefly: first; Because the next [*sic*] and basic need throughout the wrorld is for a new spiritual consciousness—a realization, in the thought and feeling of average people, of the equal divinity of all human beings and the unity, brotherhood, of all; second, because you, more than any other widely known man, have this consciousness—together with the power to arouse it in others?

I can only hope that the writer's estimate is true.

It is a world need—is it not?—to which you have the best answer that God has vouchsafed to man? How can your mission be fulfilled in India alone? If my arm or leg

could be vitalized to an extent far beyond the balance of my body, would that make for my general health—or even for the permanent best good of the one favoured member?

I am fully aware that my mission cannot be fulfilled in India alone, but I hope I am humble enough to recognize my limitations and to see that I must keep for the time being, to my restricted Indian platform till I know the result of the experiment in India itself. As I have already replied, I would like to see India free and strong so that she may offer herself as a willing and pure sacrifice for the betterment of the world. The individual, being pure, sacrifices himself for the family, the latter for the village, the village for the district, the district for the province, the province for the nation, the nation for all.

May I even submit,—with deep reverence for your message— that possibly your own vision and inspiration would benefit by adjustment to the world instead of only, or chiefly, to India?

I recognize the considerable force of the foregoing statement. It is not at all impossible that a visit to the West may give me not a wider outlook—for I have endeavoured to show that it is the widest possible but it may enable me to discover new methods of realizing the outlook. If such is my need, God will open the way for me .

Is the political form of government, in India or anywhere, so important as the average individual's soul-force—his courageous expression of the best inspiration be can derive from the divine spirit within and all about him?

The average individual's soul-force is any day the most important thing. The political form is but a concrete expression of that soul-force. I do not conceive the average individual's soul-force as distinguished and existing apart from the political form of government. Hence I believe that after all a people has the government which it deserves. In other words self-government can only come through self-effort.

Is not the basic need, everywhere, for the clarification and development of this soul-force in individuals—beginning, possibly, with a few people and spreading like a divine contagion to the many?

It is, indeed.

You teach, rightly, that the faithful development of such soul-force in India will assure India's freedom. Will it not everywhere shape all political, economic and international institutions including the issues of Peace or War? Can those forms of human civilization be made radically superior in India to the rest of the world—now, when all mankind are neighbours?

I have already answered this question in the preceding paragraphs. I have claimed in these pages before now that India's freedom must revolutionize the world's outlook upon Peace and War. Her impotence affects the whole of mankind.

You know, better than I or anyone, how all these questions should be answered. I chiefly seek to express my eager faith in your gospel, my hungry desire for your leadership in solving the urgent problems of America and of all mankind. Therefore, will you graciously remember that, if (or when) the time may come that India's progress in the directions you have so inspiringly outlined appears to pause—waiting for the Western world to come up alongside—then we of the West stand urging you to give us a few months of your time and your personal presence. My own feeling is that if you will call us and instruct us, we (your uncounted followers scattered obscurely over the wide earth) will join our lives to yours in the discovery and realization of a new and noble, worldwide Commonwealth of the Spirit in which man's age-old dreams of brotherhood, democracy, peace and soul progress shall characterize the daily life of average people—in India, England, America and everywhere.

I wish I had confidence in my leadership on the world platfom. I have no false modesty about me. If I felt the call within, I would not wait a single second but straightway respond to an invitation so cordial as this. But with my limitations of which I am painfully conscious, I feel somehow that my experiment must be restricted to a fragment. What may be true of the fragment is likely to be true of the whole. It is true indeed that India's progress in the direction I desire seems to have come to a pause but I think that it only seems so. The little seed that was sown in 1920 has not perished. It is, I think, taking deep root. Presently it will come out as a stately tree. But if I am labouring under a delusion, I fear that no artificial stimulus that my visit to America may temporarily bring can revive it. I am pining for the assistance of the whole world. I see it coming. The urgent invitation is one of the many signs. But I know that we shall have to deserve it before it comes upon us like a mighty flood, a flood that cleanses and invigorates.

Young India, 17-9-1925

262. AN INSTRUCTIVE TABLE

The following table prepared by the Provincial Congress Committee of Gujarat is a most instructive study:

Figures of the working of the franchise in Gujarat for the half year ended 31st August:

Members originally registered	A 2,215 B 365
Members who have paid full annual quota	266
Members who have paid 6 months' quota	314
Irregular subscribers	1,273
Complete defaulters	727
Total yarn received in yards	15,83,000

Note: The table shows that out of a total of 2, 580 members who originally gave in their names only 580 are entitled to vote at the next A.I.C.C. elections.

The irregular subscribers have paid 6,750 thousand yards of yarn in 5,500 yards on an average instead of 12,000 yards that they should have paid.

These figures give one an idea of the work lying in front of us. There is no lack of organization in Gujarat; no lack of khadi workers, but, strange as it may appear, less than one-fourth of the number registered have actually carried out their obligation. The figures need not disappoint any earnest worker who has faith in himself and his cause. But he must not underrate the difficulties in his path. We will not get swaraj without working for it. Congressmen have got into the slovenly habit of making promises and straightway forgetting them, especially when it is a matter of giving any work. In ordinary affairs of life we are made to fulfil the pledges we give. A breach of promise to pay in a commercial transaction carries with it a penalty. A voluntary promise made to a voluntary organization imposes in well-organized societies a stricter obligation of the giver of the promise than a promise made in a commercial transaction. Thus debts of honour have a prior claim for fulfilment than debts enforcible at law. But somehow or other, Congress debts have not yet acquired any such sanctity as ordinary debts of honour. Those who

have no faith in khadi will no doubt argue that the Gujarat figures are an eloquent testimony to the complete failure of the spinning franchise. I should venture to join issue with such objectors. The spinning franchise has enabled us to lay our finger on the weakest spot. Let it be known that even the four-anna franchise fared no better.

Those who registered their names once did not come the second time to pay of their own accord. And had there been a monthly subscription we would have found almost as many defaulters as we have found among spinners. But pecuniary obligation is a totally different proposition from the obligation to work from day to day. Swaraj is not a pecuniary transaction. It is not to be bought with money. It has to be bought with solid, sustained, vigorous work. And I venture to suggest that we would have noticed the same result, if, instead of spinning, the Congress had imposed the obligation to mend pencils for half an hour every day. The lesson, therefore, that I draw from a study of these figures is that we must preserve along the same lines that we commenced at Belgaum if we are to make the Congress a working, effective and powerful organization. In all probability compulsory spinning will be done away with, but if the Congress retains spinning as an alternative franchise, the effort to make it effective should in no way be relaxed. Out of a population of three hundred millions, we should not have difficulty in finding a few lacs of men and women who would willingly and with unfailing regularity labour for the nation. Spinning is the form chosen because of its great national value and its simplicity. I have not burdened the reader with the detailed working of the franchise in the different districts of Gujarat. The Provincial Congress Committee's report does contain a detailed study. The Committee's organization is so thorough and so honest that, if the strength of the people is properly brought out, their weakness is never suppressed. The detailed study shows that even the five hundred and forty members who are still paying their full quota are not distributed over all Gujarat. But they are drawn from the five spinning organizations, for want of which there would not be even five hundred and forty members remaining. Spinning organizations all over India are therefore a necessity, if voluntary spinning is to be universal.

Young India, 17-9-1925

263. IS THERE SATAN IN HINDUISM?

A correspondent writes:

> A few months back under a heading not quite justified by its contents you published a letter of mine concerning certain religious systems and the belief in God.[1] Now I am tempted to put you a question concerning his adversary (according to Semitic beliefs), whose name you are so often using in your writings and speeches—not of course without effect, as witness the article "Snares of Satan" in your issue of 6-8-'25. If it was only rhetorical effect that was intended thereby because you were writing or speaking in the language of a people who have been taught to believe in Satan's existence through the Semitic creed of Christianity, then I would have nothing to say. But the article cited, among other things, does seem to point to a belief on your part in Satan's existence, —a belief, in my humble opinion, quite un-Hindu. Asked by Arjuna what was the cause of man's continual fall, Sri Krishna said: "*Kama esha, krodha esha*", etc. ("It is lust, it is anger"—). According to Hindu belief, it would seem, the Tempter is no person outside of us, nor indeed is it *one*; for there are the six enemies' of man enumerated in the Shastras: *kama* or lust, *krodha* or anger, *lobha* or greed, *moha* or infatuation, *mada* or pride, and *matsara*, i.e., envy or jealousy. So it is clear, Hinduism has no place for Satan, the Fallen Angel, the Tempter, or as he has been called by a French writer (Anatole France), 'God's man-of-affairs'! How is it then that you who are a Hindu speak and write as if you believed in the real existence of the Old One?

This correspondent[2] is well known to the readers of *Young India*. He is too wide awake not to know the sense in which I could use the world Satan. But I have observed in him a disposition to draw me out on many matters about which there is a likelihood of the slightest misunderstanding or about which a greater elucidation may be considered necessary. In my opinion the beauty of Hinduism lies in its all-embracing inclusiveness. What the divine author of the *Mahabharata* said of his great creation is eaually true of Hinduism. What of substance is contained in any other religion is always to be found in Hinduism. And what is not contained in it is insubstantial or unnecessary. I do believe that there is room for Satan in Hinduism. The Biblical conception is neither new nor original. Satan is not a personality even in the Bible. Or he is as much a personality in the

[1] *Vide* "Is there God?", 10-3-1925.

[2] S. D. Nadkarni

Bible as Ravana or the whole brood of the *Asuras* is in Hinduism.I no more believe in a historical Ravana with ten heads and twenty arms than in a historical Satan. And even as Satan and his companions are fallen angels, so are Ravana and his companions fallen angels or callthem gods, if you will. If it be a crime to clothe evil passions and ennobling thoughts in personalities, it is a crime for which perhaps Hinduism is the most responsible. For are not the six passions referred to by my correspondent, and nameless others, embodied in Hinduism? Who or what is Dhritarashtra and his hundred sons? To the end of time imagination, that is, poetry, will play a useful and necessary part in the human evolution. We shall continue to talk of passions as if they were persons. Do they not torment us as much as evil persons? Therefore, as in innumerable other things, in the matter under notice the letter killeth, the spirit giveth life.

Young India, 17-9-1925

264. REMARKS IN VISITORS' BOOK[1]

Bhadra Krishna[3]*, September 17, 1925*

I wish this institution to progress in every way. It has made a good impression on me. I hope more knowledge will spread through the plying of the spinning-wheel.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Autobiography of a Yogi, p. 465

265.SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, RANCHI[2]

September 17, 1925

In reply Mahatmaji told them that the conviction was daily growing upon him that there was nothing but charkha to feed India's starving millions. There were other occupations, no doubt, for leisure hours, but none was more suited for the millions than charkha-spinning. He had been touring throughout the country but nobody had yet been able to suggest to him another substitute for charkha. Bihar had got one lakh worth of khadi stock and if that was sold, the released money would help in producing

[1] Gandhiji wrote this when he visited the Brahmacharyashram of Swami Yogananda of Ranchi.

[2] The meeting was held at 3 p.m on St. Paul's School ground. The gathering was estimated at about 12000 people. An address of welcome on behalf of the Ranchi public was read. A purse of Rs.1,001 was also presented to Gandhiji towards the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund.

double the quantity. It was not difficult for Ranchi alone to buy that khadi. People talked of millcloth as swadeshi, but could they substitute Delhi or Bombay biscuits for their home-made bread? Then why should not they use Bihar-made khadi instead of Bombay-made mill-made cloth? If they wanted to clothe their naked mothers and sisters, they must buy khadi. What did comparative dearness of khadi matter when every pice spent went to the poor women in the villages. This charkha had saved the Bombay untouchables. Referring to the problem of untouchability he said that Hinduism knew no untouchability and this untouchability had made Indians untouchables in the whole world and those who wanted to see the condition of untouchable Indians should go to South Africa and realize what untouchability meant. The late Sjt. Gokhale knew it and Mrs. Naidu had come to know of it. Tulsidas had taught them the religion of kindness (*daya* dharma) but today they were going against it. They must eradicate that problem of untouchability, otherwise swaraj was impossible to attain.

The Searchlight, 20-9-1925

266.SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, HAZARIBAGH

September 18,1925

Mahatmaji replying to the addresses[1] said that he was thankful to them for the addresses they had presented to him, but he was grieved to learn of the two things pointed out in one of the addresses. They stated that recently goodwill [had] prevailed amongst the Hindus and the Mussalmans of the place, but now some misunderstanding had crept in. He was grieved to learn that that was so, but he hoped that leading men of both the communities would join hands and settle the matter. Secondly, they had told him that something similar was passing between the Biharis and the Bengalis too. He could not understand what it was due to. But he knew this much that, if they wanted to free India, if they wanted to gain swaraj for India, they must forget that they were Biharis, Bengalis, Gujaratis or Marwaris, but should bear in mind that they were Indians above all. As provincial men, they should work with the idea that they were preparing their province for the service of the country as a whole. He could not understand how such unpleasantness could enter the societies as this; also, he would say the same thing which he said about the Hindu-Muslim differences. In concluding the speech, Mahatmaji spoke of khaddar and the charkha.

The Searchlight, 20-9-1925

[1]Addresses on behalf of the citizens of Hazaribagh, the District Board and the Municipality were presented to Gandhiji in a beautiful, locally made wooden casket together with a purse of Rs. 1,300.

267. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, HAZARIBAGH[1]

[*September 18,1925*][2]

I have nothing set for you. I had no notion when I came here that I would be called upon to address this gathering. I would, however, venture to put before you some stray thoughts on social service. At one of the meetings that I attended at Calcutta, I said that the first necessity for social service was character that, unless a man who aspires after social service has a character, to keep and to lose, he is unfit for that service. Although apparently my life has been a life of political turmoils, all those who at all know me will tell you that it has been predominantly devoted to social service. I am a lover of it and I have very often claimed to be an expert in that line of work—if 30 years' unbroken experience of service can make one an expert.

In my life, I have had the great privilege of a long association not with dozens or even hundreds but of tens of hundreds of men and women, both Indian and European, devoted to social service. In my humble opinion, even political service of the true type is hardly possible without social service, and it was at an early stage of my career as a social servant, whilst I was in South Africa, more so after I returned to India—that I realized the absolute necessity of character for social service. For hard as it was in South Africa to render social service the difficulties there were nothing compared to the difficulties that confront one in India. Here one has to battle against a tremendous amount of superstition, prejudice and conservatism. Conservatism is a good thing in its own way. It keeps a man clean and on the right path, but when conservatism comes to be allied to ignorance, prejudice and superstition, it becomes most undesirable. Unfortunately, in India, a social worker finds himself confronted by this trinity of evils at the very outset of his career. The field for social service here is abundant and a man or woman who wants to render social service has hardly to think what he or she shall do. There are hundreds of things that await a social servant, they obtrude themselves on his attention if he will only exercise his faculty of observation, so that one may most truthfully say that here more than anywhere else, the harvest is really rich and plentiful but the labourers are few and, it is really amazing that, even after all these long years of education in

[1] The meeting was held at St. Columba's College.

[2] Date given in *Buddhi Prakash*

the colleges of India, we find so few students taking to social service in after-life.

It is true that in social service there is no excitement, no fire-works display. It is all hard, plodding work. It is also true that it has no pecuniary attraction about it; one has got to be satisfied with a bare pittance and sometimes not even that. At present, throughout the length and breadth of the land, there are young men, some of them brilliant graduates, men of sterling character, who are engaged in social service. But some of them have to live upon what may be called starvation wages. But they do not regret it. They have voluntarily abandoned lucrative careers and chosen their thorny but beautiful path of duty and service which is its own reward and satisfaction. The satisfaction which a man feels when he sees his work of alleviating the distress of humanity prospered before him from day to day gives to him a pleasure that is all its own. It gives him a peace of the soul which he cannot get elsewhere. Let us, therefore, explore the various branches of social service and examine their possibilities. We will find as soon as we do that, that there is one fundamental fact which is common to all India and that is its ever-deepening pauperism. It is acknowledged by all. Even those Englishmen who belong to the Civil Service have stated in their evidence that the poverty of India is most distressing and is growing. They have also said that one-tenth of the population of India is living in a state of semi-starvation, getting nothing but stale chupatty and dirty salt. They do not know what milk is. They have never tasted ghee, some of them may have tasted whey. They do not get even oil. You who are studying in colleges and visit the villages only rarely, have you ever thought that within a stone's throw of you in the village there are living men and women whose poverty is most distressing, who hardly get enough to eat. Probably you would not believe me if I told you all the misery that they endure and, even if you believed me, you would not be able to form a mental picture of it. If I were to take you with me throughout my travels, all over the length and breadth of the country, outside the railway's beat, perhaps you would be able to understand what that state of semi-starvation is whose results in degradation and filth and helplessness. I have often met these men in the villages and tried to tell them something about God and I confess to you that I have come back from these talks absolutely humiliated. I said to myself:I have no right to talk to these men about God before I can give them bread to eat. These people do not know what God is. Their God is their stomach.

Look at their faces. There is no lustre in their eyes. You talk to them about work. They smile-nay deride, not smile. They cannot understand why they should work at all. They have lost all hope, they have almost come to regard starvation as their natural condition. Such is their state of utter helplessness. Here among these men then—and they are not few but millions and millions of them—there is almost unlimited field for social service for all of you. In this very district of Chota Nagpur, I learnt that there was a tribe called the Ho, but I did not know all their customs and habits. These men, in this province which should be flowing with milk and honey, which is so nice in its climate and scenary, so rich in mineral resources, I found, are forced to go to Assam to work on tea plantations. I do not mind their working on tea plantations if such be their need but such is not their need. Among these backward tribes there is work enough for all young men. Here you have got a vast field for research and investigation. Wonderful discoveries you will come across in course of your research work— hidden cords underlying the human breast whose presence you little suspected. And when you succeed in touching some of these cords and find that they are responsive to human touch, it will give you all the satisfaction that a man can legitimately desire. I have often told young men that for social service of a universal character they must have one thing. You will laugh when I tell you what that one thing is and say that this old man, whether he talks of politics or social service or alleviating economic distress, cannot help harping upon the charkha. Yes, it is true, I cannot help doing so. This time at Calcutta I was privileged to meet a larger number of people, some of them engaged in missionary work, others in commercial undertakings, and after all these talks, my conviction has grown deeper that social service on a large scale is impossible without a thorough knowledge of the science of the charkha. The disease from which we as a nation are suffering is idleness—enforced at one time, now grown in habit—and a nation living in idleness does not deserve to live. The middle class people will slave away for their maintenance for eight hours, but a man who slaves away like that for 8 hours is not necessarily industrious. They have no sense of time. I know this to my cost. I have lived in the midst of thousands of labourers in south Africa and, ever with my rickety constitution, I was able to overtake them in their work because they lost so many idle moments. A friend, who is a Collector, once wrote to me; “I detest your politics,”—meaning non-co-operation about which he had read

little, known less—but he loves the charkha. "As an Englishman I do not understand Indian economics," he wrote, "but I like this hobby of yours because by delivering your message of the charkha, you have rendered a great social service." With me it is not a mere hobby—though I should prize it even as a hobby—but a life-giving thing which has revolutionized the lives of thousands of men and women, and if I could carry you educated people with me, if I could make the Englishman agree with me, millions of people should go with a smile on their faces where there is a look of blank despair now. And why? Simply because they have no work and so starve. They feel the pinch of hunger, but they cannot go to the costly works that the Government has opened for them. The work there mostly consists of breaking stones for the roads or carrying metal. And what are the conditions under which this work has to be done. The majority of them are women and they have to work under the supervision of overseers, who have no character to lose or to keep, and who are lustful. The rest you can understand. I would not describe it to you. These women who ought to be as dear to you as your mothers or sisters, if you have any regard for them, have been weaned from this class of labour. The charkha gives them all that they need. An old lady of 60 years walks two miles to obtain slivers from my son and says, "Tell your father he has given me something which is a blessing to me because it has given me a dignity which I did not have before." Today there are millions of such men and women in Champaran to whom the charkha would give independence. The wages of women there are anything between 5 and 6 pice per day, those of boys between 3 and 4 pice and those of men between 8 to 10 pice. The average annual income of an Indian today, I am told, is Rs. 50. I do not know that. But I know that Dadabhai Naoroji calculated it at Rs. 26. The late Lord Curzon, who challenged the accuracy of this figure, set it down at Rs. 33. Even if we accept the late Lord Curzon's figure, including as it does, the crores of the millionaires like the Tatas, as correct, just consider what it would mean to put two to three rupees per month in the pockets of these people. And through what agency? Not the insolent overseers who rob these sisters of their shame and take one rupee as their *dasturi* of the three rupees that they give to them, but by working under the observation of clean lads who will regard their honour as sacred as of their ownsisters and give them money with a smile. It makes all the difference in the world whether you receive 8 or 10 annas from

insolent hands or four pice from hands sanctified with work.

That is the dignity of the charkha. There are many other departments of social service. But I have neither the time nor the energy to talk about them to you. If some of you will be fired with the zeal to render this kind of selfless and unassuming social service, you will receive no applause, no Mahatmaship, no pecuniary reward—these, it will not be your privilege to receive. But you will receive instead the blessings of the poor people, a gift greater than riches and treasure—a gift that descends upon you when God says: "Well done, my faithful servant. I am well pleased with thy work." You will, by serving His dumb millions, be able to establish the closest bond of relationship with your Maker. What greater mission can you have? Nothing can be greater. May such be your lot!

The Searchlight, 27-9-1925

268. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

BANKIPORE,
September 19, 1925

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
93 BAZAR GATE
BOMBAY

AM GLAD HE IS GONE. COMFORT WIDOW MY BEHALF.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

269. MY NOTES

MISUSE OF MY NAME

It seems a certain business man in Ahmedabad who is trading in tea, puts out many advertisements. And in these my name has been used in such a manner as to give an impression that I have been encouraging his business or, that I approve of the habit of taking tea. I have received four or five letters of complaints on this matter. I do not wish to advertise his tea any further by giving the name and other particulars of the dealer. It is sufficient to state that I have given no certificate to any tea merchant in India for his tea. For many years, I

have not taken tea. I do not believe that it is essential for the human body. Tea, if boiled, is harmful. I believe that much harm has been done by people giving up milk because of tea. I do not approve of tea also because the labourers in tea-gardens are subjected to much hardship. Those who get addicted to tea feel nervous when they cannot have it. It is better to give up a thing of this kind which becomes an addiction. For those especially who wish to court imprisonment, it is best to give up tea, as it is not served in prison. It is, therefore, improper to associate my name in any manner with advertisements of tea, and it pains me to see this done. Hence, I would ask those who have been using my name to remove it from their advertisements.

Even otherwise, the story of the misuse of my name is a long one. Men have been killed and falsehood propagated in my name; my name has been misused at the time of elections; cigarettes, to which I am totally opposed, are sold in my name, as also medicines! When the evil is so widespread, what can one do against it?

A British writer has said that cheats prosper where there is a large number of foolish or ignorant people. Is there anyone who has not known the truth of this from his own experience? I have been crying from the house-tops that no one should be deceived by the use of my name. The merits or otherwise of every object must be judged independently. In cases where my certificate is regarded by anyone as essential and there is ground for the slightest suspicion, it is absolutely necessary to refer to me for an explanation.

CENSUS OF "GOSHALAS"

The work of the All-India Cow-protection Association is progressing at a snail's pace, but, let the reader know that it is progressing.

At the last meeting, a resolution was passed to the effect that a census of *gashalas* and *pinjrapoles*, containing certain particulars, should be prepared. Particulars of certain *goshalas* are available but it is necessary that they should be complete. The following details are required for this census.

1. Name.
2. Address.
3. Date of establishment.
4. Number of cattle, under different heads, such as cows,

buffaloes, disabled cattle, cattle which do not yield milk, oxen, etc.

5. Description of the land and the building, their area, size, etc.

6. Income and expenditure.

7. Names, and other particulars of the members of the committee. If any bulletins are being issued, a copy should be sent.

8. Does the institution require workers to educate people about its aims?

9. How far removed is the slaughter-house?

10. Is there a cattle market?

Those in charge of *goshalas* and *pinjrapoles* are requested to send a statement giving these particulars to Shri Nagindas Amulakhrai (at Homji Street, Hanuman Building, Fort, Bombay- 1).

Chaude Maharaj has undertaken to get through his workers all the details from places which are within their reach. I assume that those in charge of the institutions they visit, will give all possible help.

REPORT ON GUJARAT

The report of the Gujarat Provincial Committee, with figures, is published elsewhere in today's issue. These figures teach a great deal and explain many things. I do not feel disappointed by them, but I find that even in Gujarat the spinning franchise has succeeded less than it was hoped. I do not believe that it has failed, for, if the remaining 580 members do their duty, we can get much out of them. Three things, however, become plain from these figures:

1. We attach little value to our provinces.

2. We are not sufficiently hard-working .

3. Something can be achieved only if there are workers.

The spinning franchise was not forced upon us by the Government; the Congress had introduced it after much deliberation. No one was forced, either, to offer their names; people did so voluntarily. Nevertheless, out of 2,580 persons only 580 have stayed on. What does this imply? Does this not mean simply that people do not wish to work? That, further, they attach no value to their words. If anyone says that this is true only with regard to spinning, he is not right. Even when members had to pay their subscriptions in cash, all those who signed did not pay regularly. If we give up the spinning-

wheel now and decide on some other form of work, it will meet the same fate. Suppose for a moment that everyone is asked to make as many pens from reeds as they can in half an hour's time, and give them to the Congress as supscription fee, only a few of those who promise to do so will keep their promise. In this laxity lies the cause of the delay in winning swaraj.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-9-1925

270. WHAT HAS GUJARAT ACHIEVED?

A non-co-operator expresses his dissatisfaction in the following words:[1]

Knowing as I do the conditions prevailing in the rest of the country, I can see that this dissatisfaction springs from a one-sided view of the matter. It is but natural that the correspondent cannot see this. As he would expect complete success, he would naturally feel dissatisfied with anything less. In my opinion, Gujarat has done more than the other provinces, but the difference is so insignificant that no Gujarati should seek consolation in this fact. No one who wishes to make progress should pride himself on having less to blame himself for than others and be complacent; he should on the contrary, continually examine himself for any shortcomings he may have, feel ashamed of those which he may discover and try to remedy them. If, instead of criticizing others, everyone attended to his own duty this world would be a very much better place to live in .

I, therefore, welcome this letter. We could do much even if we only kept our pledges with regard to khadi. A small but solid achievement yields permanent results. More ambitious work done haphazardly proves short-lived in its results, very often fruitless and sometimes even dangerous. A mason who builds a slanting wall and does not use a T-square may in a short time put up a building which has a beautiful appearance but it will collapse with the very first rains. If there are any people living in it, they too will perish. That mason, however, who patiently and intelligently builds a solid and straight

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had complained that Gujarat, which was a stronghold of No-changers, had not done all that had been hoped for from it by way of constructive work.

wall with no defects in it, may perhaps take longer to complete it. Nevertheless, the wall he builds will endure so long that, though he may have taken more time, his work will on the whole prove of greater worth than that of the idle, dishonest and ignorant mason. This is true of every kind of work.

But, having known our shortcomings, it is improper to go on lamenting them. We should examine them only in order that we may overcome them. We know what our shortcomings are and there is only one way of remedying them.

We who know what they are should not lose hope, but should try to get rid of them. Whether or not others take notice, we should silently continue to do our work. Even if in any village there is only one person who is a genuine lover of khadi and spins, he will not lose heart. He will methodically sit down for work and without wavering in his faith, continue to spin. This *yajna*[1], this patience and this *tapascharya* cannot but have their effect on the surrounding atmosphere. All great things have been achieved in this manner. What would have happened if Rama had lost heart at the sight of the army of demons, or if Arjuna[2] had taken to his heels at the very sight of the large army of the Kauravas[3] confronting his own smaller one? What would have been the result if Galileo had lost faith in himself because of fear of public opinion and of bigoted priests? We can look for and collect such instances from all parts of the world. The beginning is always made by one man or woman with determination. If such a person is patient, he or, she either converts the entire world to his or her views, or being humble and honest, sees his or her error, admits it and corrects it.

It is the Lord's assurance that one who strives for the welfare of his soul never suffers an evil fate for his effort. Everyone who makes a sincere effort is a person striving for his welfare. Even the error of such a one does the world no harm. On the other hand, even the kindness done by a person whose intentions are evil or whose mind is disordered proves dangerous.

Knowing this, all Gujaratis who understand their duty should keep up perfect faith and, without thinking about anything else,

[1] Sacrifice

[2] Most valiant of the Pandava princes, in the *Mahabharata*

[3] The hundred sons of King Dhritarashtra, in the *Mahabharata*

devote themselves to their work. If they do so, they are bound to serve Gujarat, India and the whole world, for their work is inspired by ill will to none.

From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-9-1925

271. VIOLENCE IN AGRICULTURE

A regular reader of *Navajivan* asks:[1]

It is indeed true that agriculture involves the destruction of countless insects. But another statement, equally true, is that the process of living, even respiration, involves violence of the same kind. But just as by committing suicide one does not completely get rid of the body, so also by refusing to take up agriculture one does not abolish it. A human being is made of earth. His body springs from the earth and derives its sustenance from the various forms which earth takes. Anyone who lives by begging his food in order to avoid the sin that is involved in agriculture commits a twofold sin. He is guilty of the sin involved in agriculture since the food which he begs was produced by the labour of some farmer. He who fills his stomach by begging shares the sin of which that farmer is guilty by virtue of his farming. Secondly, he is guilty of the sin of harbouring ignorance and the indolence which results from it.

If it is desirable for one individual to keep away from agriculture, it is so for all. If too many people live by begging their food, a few poor farmers would be crushed under the burden of supporting beggars. Who would have to answer for this sin, if not the latter? Such essential work as farming is, like bodily functions, a form of violence which cannot be avoided. Such violence does not cease to be violence but, being unavoidable, is less sinful and, through spiritual knowledge and devotion to God, man secures deliverance from such sins and thereby also saves himself from the necessity of violence of this kind. This is why, if man's body is a form of bondage for him, it is also a means of attaining deliverance. Likewise, farming becomes a cause of bondage to anyone who takes it up in order to become rich,

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that he was very eager to take up farming, but shrank from it because of the violence which it involved.

but for him who takes it up to earn a livelihood it is a means of attaining deliverance.

No work or activity or profession is blameless. All essential work involves the same degree of evil. Business in pearls or silk and the profession of the goldsmith are far more sinful than agriculture since these are not absolutely essential. They certainly involve much violence. Pearls cannot be obtained without violence. Silkworms are boiled. If one could ask the insects that are burnt in the blue flame lighted by the goldsmith and if they could reply, we would get some idea of the violence involved in this profession.

All reverence to that great man who lit the lamp of the dharma of non-violence in this world afflicted with a universal reign of violence.

It is our natural dharma to be careful not to destroy even an ant as we walk. Anyone who walks on proudly, holding his head high and not caring to look below, does not even give a thought to the innumerable insects being crushed under his feet, wilfully commits a sin for which there is no justification and opens the gates of hell for himself. He cannot be compared to the farmers, who should be regarded as relatively innocent. Countless numbers of these latter walk carefully in order to spare the lives of ants and such other insects. There is no pride in them, they are humble. They sustain the world by their toil. Nine-tenths of the world's people are engaged in agriculture, and this is to the good of the world. Agriculture is a necessity and a form of pure sacrifice. Even the most conscientious man can take it up, and anyone who gives up some inessential occupation to take it up earns holy merit.

The correspondent has mentioned the use of goads without thinking about the matter. All farmers do not use goads. Many of them look upon bullocks and other animals as members of their household and treat them with love.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-9-1925

272. PRAYING TO GOD

I do not know how to pray and sing devotional hymns and to whom to address the prayer and the hyms, and you constantly advise people to pray. Will you kindly explain how one may do so?

A correspondent has put this question. A devotional hymn is in praise of God, and prayers are a confession of our unworthiness, of our weakness. God has a thousand, which means countless names, or say rather that He has no name. We may sing hymns to Him or pray to Him, using any name which we prefer. Some know Him by the name of Rama, some know Him as Krishna, others call Him Rahim, and yet others call Him God. All these worship the same spiritual Being. However, just as everyone does not like the same food so all these names do not find acceptance with everyone. A person knows God by that name which is familiar to him, and He, who ever dwells in our hearts and is omnipotent, understands our feelings and answers us according to our worthiness.

This is to say that one can pray, sing devotional songs not with the lips but with the heart. That is why even the dumb, the stammerer and the brainless can pray. What avails honey on the tongue when there is poison in the heart? Can a paper rose ever smell sweet? Hence, anyone who wishes sincerely to cultivate devotion to God should purify his heart. Hanuman's[1] strength was boundless because the same Rama who was on his lips was the lord of his heart. It is faith which fills the sails of one's ship, which enables one to lift a mountain or to leap across an ocean. That is, a person can achieve almost anything if the omnipotent God dwells in his heart, be he a leper or a consumptive. Whosoever has God in his heart will have all his diseases destroyed.

How may one attune one's heart in such a manner? This question is not put by the correspondent but is suggested by what I have said above in reply to him. Anyone can teach us to utter certain words, but who can teach us the language of the heart? Only a lover of God can do so. The *Gita* explains, at three places in particular and everywhere generally, what is meant by a devotee. But one does not find such a person simply because one knows his marks or can describe him. It is almost impossible to meet any in this age. I have,

[1] *Vanara* hero, devoted servant of Rama, in the *Ramayana*

therefore, advocated the way of service. God comes unsought, comes because He must, and dwells in the heart of one who serves others. Hence it is that Narsinh Mehta, who had gained knowledge through experience, has sung:

> He is the true *Vaishnava* who understands the sufferings of others.

What class of people suffer? The *Antyajas* and the poor. We should serve them with all means at our command. How can those who regard *Antyajas* as untouchables serve them physically? Those who are indolent, those who take the trouble of plying the spinning-wheel for the sake of the poor and invent all manner of excuses; do not know the meaning of service. Those among the poor who are disabled may be helped with free doles, but feeding those who have their limbs sound without their having to work has the effect of demoralizing them. Anyone who sits before a poor person and spins, persuades him to do the same, serves God in the best possible manner. God has said, "Anyone who offers me a leaf, a flower orsome water with devotion serves me."[1] We see it proved again and again that God dwells more often in the homes of the poor. Hence spinning for the sake of the poor is the supreme prayer, the supreme sacrifice, the supreme service.

The correspondent's question can now be answered. We can pray to God by any name. As for the manner of praying one should pray with one's heart, and one can learn to pray in this manner by following the path of service. In this age, those Hindus who serve the *Antyajas* sincerely offer the best prayers. Whoever spins with love for the poor among the Hindus and among Indians of other faiths also follows the path of service and offers prayers from his heart.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-9-1925

[1] *Bhagavad Gita* IX, 26

273. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

PATNA,

Sunday [*September 20,1925*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

You may or may not follow the other rules, you may or may not have [my] address, but do write to me even if you should be sitting on the stake. May this devotion bring you fruit. It is for the same reason that I too am ever desirous of writing to you; but I am only an object of worship. How can I write so long as I do not become a devotee? Many an idol may be falling, whereas innumerable devotees have crossed over. Many attained *moksha* with the help of Krishna's name. But poor Krishna of the *Mahabharata* had to die without glory. For how could he have Krishna's name on his lips? Now tell me who is greater. Is it not the devotee rather than God?

That you would fall ill I certainly knew. I hope you are quite well by now. Yesterday I sent you about 12 columns and I shall try to send you some more today. Without worrying, stay there. Let Durga be completely satisfied. I want you to observe one condition: do not get bed-ridden.

Maulana Shaukat Ali reached here only yesterday. Jawahar[2] and others are arriving today.

I am sending you Urmila Devi's letter just for fun. I had asked Devdas for the *Indian Opinion* file. I have not yet got it.

Keep writing to Rajagopalachari. He is just now both happy and unhappy.

Here they have found the best accommodation for me. It is right on the bank of the Ganges. From where I sit I can see the river flowing before my eyes. I am writing you this letter early in the

[1] Gandhiji was in Patna on this date.
[2] Jawaharlal Nehru

morning. Indescribable peace prevails. Rajendra Babu who thoroughly tried me yesterday, has compensated for it today.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I do not know my tour programme, but today I shall ask them to send it to you.

I see I have destroyed Urmila Devi's letter as is my custom.

I have entrusted Devdhar's case to Perinbehn[1]. Devdhar did not meet me. Vallabhbhai was to decide about Dahyabhai[2]. I shall write to Perinbehn. If Vallabhbhai decides about Dahyabhai, I shall promptly follow it up.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11451

274. SPEECH AT PATNA

September 21, 1925

It is understood that at the informal meeting Mahatma Gandhi was heckled with numerous questions. Some suggested that the spinners should not be Congressmen.

The Mahatma asserted that they were doing the most patriotic work and a spinner must have equal claim on the Congress with the subscriber of money.

Replying to a question whether a professional spinner could be a Congressman, Mahatmaji answererd in the negative and said so long as one did not sign the Congress creed one was ineligible to become a member.

As to the question of instituting a political sufferers' fund, Mahatma Gandhi declared that it was most impracticable at the present time.

The Hindustan Times, 23-9-1925

[1] Perinbehn Captain, a congress worker of Bombay, grand-daughter of Dadabhai Naoroji

[2] Son of Vallabhbhai Patel

275. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

PATNA,
September 22, 1925

DEAR MOTI BABU,

Do you not think that pure khaddar does not sell because you are still selling half-khaddar? When you give your buyer the choice, he will take what he is more used to. Everyone who has tried to sell both has failed. If you are convinced of the error or the fallacy of half-khaddar, you must give up the latter at all cost.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 11020

276. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING, PATNA[1]

September 22,1925

Mahatma Gandhi, in opening the proceedings, observed that a very heavy responsibility rested upon his shoulders because they had to revise one of the most important sections of the Congress constitution. He did not propose to give any ruling on the merits of the question as to whether the A.I.C.C. could revise the constitution, but wanted to leave the ultimate decision on it in the hands of the members themselves. He would give rulings on matters of procedure only. He emphasized the fact that the two questions of revising the franchise and of revoking the Pact[2] entered into last year were very important. It was for them to consider, in a free and frank manner but with calmness, the various difficulties involved in it and settle them, so that in Cawnpore they might be ready to revise their national programme in a manner conducive to the early attainment of swaraj.

[1] The afternoon session of the A.I.C.C. was presided over by Gandhiji and attended by about a hundred members.

[2] The Pact entered into between Gandhiji and the Swaraj Party, restricted Congress activity to specified items of the constructive programme and provided that the work in connection with Central and Provincial legislatures be carried on by the Swaraj Party as an integral part of the Congress. *Vide* "Joint Statement with Swaraj Party Leaders", 6-11-1924.

But if they all thought that the entire question should be left to the Congress to decide, then they should not hesitate to say so. On the contrary, if they thought that they should make the way clear for the Congress, they would say so. First of all, what they had to decide was whether the matter was urgent enough to be taken up and decided by the A.I.C.C. He once more appealed to them to consider the questionwith a full sense of responsibility.[1]

The Searchlight, 25-9-1925

277. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING, PATNA[2]

September 22,1925

Mahatma Gandhi said that they must vote unfettered by any consideration for himself or for his opinions. If they did not want the yarn franchise, they might reject it altogether. They might with equal freedom reject the suggested use of khaddar if they did not want it. He wanted them to vote with the full comprehension of the implications of the clause relating to the proposed Spinners' Association. They must remember that the new Association would not be controlled by the Congress. But it would use the prestige of the Congress and help the Congress. There was a view thatthe All-India Spinners' Association should have a separate existence and should try to create a prestige for itself. The All-India Khadi Board and its funds were the properties of the Congress. They might say that they did not want to part with the properties of the All-India Khadi Board in favour of the Association. They were fully entitled to say that. But the All-India Spinners' Association was intended to be an active body. There was nothing [dubious] behind the creation of the All-India Spinners' Association. It was intended to be a purely commercial body to look after the economic side of khaddar. Proceeding, Mahatmaji said that he knew very well that khaddar by itself had no capacity to bring about an atmosphere for civil disobedience. It was for them to make it so and some of them felt that it was possible for them to do

[1] In the discussion that followed, R. K. Sidhwa (Sind) objected that the A.I.C.C. was not competent to initiate any change in the constitution which only the Congress could do. Motilal Nehru held that the A.I.C.C. possessed competence. S. Srinivasa Iyengar believed that nothing was sacrosanct and they should favour a change for better conditions in the country. J. M. Sen Gupta complained that the existing franchise prevented functioning, while Madan Mohan Malaviya wanted elections on the basis of a new franchise. On Gandhiji's putting the resolution to vote 93 supported a change in the constitution while 7 opposed it. Motilal Nehru then moved the "New Franchise" resolution.

[2] Gandhiji intervened in the debate on the Constitution Amendment Resolution.

so. Those who believed in civil disobedience wanted some evolution of power, in India, something as a cohesive force. And therein lay the political significance of khaddar. The All-India Spinners' Association would invite Englishmen to be its members; it would invite Sir Ali Imam to become its member if he agreed to put on khaddar; it would invite the Maharaja of Bikaner to be its member if he patronized khaddar. The All-India Spinners' Association thus would have the means and would have the strength to boycott foreign cloth which, to their utter shame, they must confess, they had not done so far.

If they wanted willingly to part with the All-India Khadi Board funds they might do so. But the Congress would not shape the policy of the Spinners' Association. It would not have the same franchise as the Congress. But it would only act as the agency of the Congress at its pleasure. In reply to a question as to who will form the Spinners' Association, Mahatmaji said:

I am going to form the Spinners' Association. It will be a very small association. I have not fixed the number [of members] as yet. But the Congress could not bind the policy of that Association.

Mahatmaji said he had received a large number of amendments, but instead of putting each one of them successively he would take up the main principles covered by the amendments and take the sense of the House on them.

The first item that Mahatmaji proceeded to take vote on was whether they wanted spinning as an alternative franchise.

Only five voted against and the alternative spinning franchise was carried by an overwhelming majority.

Mahatma Gandhi pointed out that All-India Khadi Board was faced with tremendous difficulties. They were only changing the name of the Khadi Board by founding the new organization—which he was founding only to give a permanent footing to khaddar work. The All-India khadi Board had well-nigh exhausted its funds and they would be removing the present obstacles in the way of the Khadi Board by giving it the new orientation he was proposing. As long as the Congress believed in khaddar, they could not but see that the proposed Association would be an invaluable asset to it.

Mahatmaji again explained the resolution and put Pandit Malaviya's amendment to vote. The result of voting this time was as follows: For habitual wear of khaddar—36; against 51. Habitual wear of khaddar was lost this time.

Babu Rajendra Prasad wanted to know from Mahatmaji, if he and his friends were in honour bound to vote for the proviso.

Mahatma Gandhi said there was no question of honour involved in it. The Pact was between Pandit Motilal Nehru on behalf of the Swaraj Party and himself and those

who had any conscientious objection were at liberty to vote as they thought proper. He might be doing unintentionally a disservice to the Congress and the country, but he for himself thought that the congress could not do better than support the Swaraj Party in the ensuing elections. The No-changers ought to surrender the Congress to them and make it a political organization for all purposes. He himself had not contributed a single pie to the Swaraj Party nor did he intend to pay one, because whatever he got, he would prefer to spend on the charkha and khaddar as he considered them to be above everything else . All the same, the Swarajists had, no doubt, his moral support. But no one on that account should vote for the resolution if he honestly felt otherwise about it. He wanted everybody to vote freely. There was no point of honour involved in it. Some people were of the opinion that some evil genius had possessed him at the present moment and that he was selling himself to the Swaraj Party. He honestly felt that they should surrender to the Swaraj Party. But it was their duty to resist him if they felt otherwise.Put to the vote 61 voted for the proviso and 22 against it. The proviso was therefore retained as it was.

The whole of the resolution was then put to the vote with following result: Part A—Carried unanimously. Part B—For 74: Against 12. The meeting adjourned till the day following .

The Searchlight, 25-9-1925

278. SPEECH AT KHILAFAT CONFERENCE, PATNA[1]

September 22,1925

After the recitation of an *ayat* from the holy Koran and an opening song, Mahatma Gandhi was the first to address the gathering. He said that when he was invited to attend the Conference, he had told the Secretary not to ask him to make any speech there. But he was told that some ladies were also expected to attend the Conference and that he should tell them something about khaddar and charkha. That was certainly a source of great temptation to him to speak to them on khaddar and that was why he had immediately agreed to do so.

People were heard saying that the Gandhi of 1921, who always spoke to them about the Hindu-Muslim unity then, did not do so now, but that the moment he was asked to speak on khaddar and charkha he immediately consented to do so. The question was a very pertinent one and he was ready with his reply. He had told them so many times, both in his speeches and in his writing in the Press, that he

[1] The Patna District Khilafat Conference commenced its sittings in the Anjuman Islamia Hall at 7 p.m. Among those present were Shaukat Ali, Abul Kalam Azad, Mahomed Ali, Zafar Ali Khan, Shafi and Rejendra Prasad.

had now lost his hold on both the Hindus and the Mussalmans. Today neither of the communities listened to him nor was ready to act up to his advice as was the case in 1921. And he claimed the same was the case with the Ali Brothers as well. They too had lost their hold on both the communities. Under the circumstances nothing was left to him but to pray and pray to God. Why should he go and speak to one who was not ready to listen to him? That was why he preferred to remain silent on the subject. In other matters as well, in respect of the matter of attaining freedom for the country, he had lost his hold on the educated people of the country. But he had trust in both of them. Even today he was for non-co-operation. That was his creed yet, as was Hindu-Muslim unity. But he did not find that unity existing today. That was why he was silent about it, and preferred to speak to them once again about khaddar, of which he had already spoken so many times, khaddar was vital both to the Hindu and the Mussalman who regarded India as his own.

They would have to realize that it was a sin both for the Mussalmans and for the Hindus to put on anything but khaddar, made of the yarn spun by the poor in the villages. Let Hindus and Mussalmans fight one another and fight to their heart's content. Let them break each other's heads and let there flow a stream of blood out of it. But let not the Government interfere with it. And despite all this, let not the Indians persist in saying that even in their degradation, they would use the cloth made in Manchester, Lancashire or Japan or even made in the mills at Bombay. He reprobated the use even of the latter in comparison with khaddar. They knew very well that in India millions of both the Hindus and the Mussalmans in the villages knew not what was called two meals a day. The speaker had seen the miserable condition of such people in villages in Bengal during his recent tour in that province. And if they also saw with his eyes, their eyes would, no doubt, be at once filled with tears. In villages near about Atrai, 90 per cent of the people were Mohammedans and in that very area Babu Satis Chandra Das Gupta had been carrying on his khaddar work under Dr. P.C. Ray, as a result of which, if the women in that area were able to earn even two and a half rupees a month, they were immensely pleased. Those who were well-off might laugh at it and not be able to realize the value of it. But it was no doubt of considerable value to those families whose entire income from agriculture amounted to but seven rupees a month. The constables and the orderlies in the employ of the Government would readily be able to realize the value of it. If these people got an increase of even one rupee, how immensely pleased they were and grateful they felt to the officers concerned. Concluding, Mahatmaji eloquently appealed to the people in the name of the millions of starving people in the villages to take to khaddar and the charkha. Let them, for the sake of these poor people, spin and give their yarn to him so that he might be able to cheapen the cost of khaddar, mainly for these starving millions and ultimately for all. He had heard a Mussalman saying that Mahatmaji must have gone mad to expect that the Mussalmans would at all take to khaddar. The

Mussalmans of the United Provinces wanted fine cloth like nainsook, *malmal*, etc., for their use. The rough and coarse khaddar was not to their taste. But he did not agree with them. The Mussalmans also were born in and belonged to India. They also had the sense of humanity in them and they also felt for these starving millions in the villages. He hoped they would also take to khaddar as, in fact, many of them had already done. They would be serving two purposes thereby. They would get cloth for themselves as well as help the starving millions in the villages. For God's sake and for the sake of the starving poor of the country, let them all, today and, if possible, at that very moment, take to the charkha and spinning.

The Searchlight, 23-9-1925

279. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[Before *September 23,1925*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I wrote to you on the train. You must have received the letter. It seems sickness has visited everyone there. Let me know how all of them are doing.

I believe Nimu[2] is not yet old enough to be bothered with the question of when she would like to marry. I personally would wish that we wait for two years. If Ramdas is willing to wait, I will insist on waiting. I am thinking of Nimu's interest only. After marriage she is sure to live with Ramdas, and I shudder at the thought of her becoming pregnant, which would be but a natural consequence. Nimu is by no means fit to carry the burden of a child. I have agreed to this engagement out of consideration for you and Ramdas. Had Ramdas not been agreeable, I would have opposed your wish. I gather from Jamnadas that they were on the point of selling off Nimu. I would not then have held myself responsible for it. In the present case the responsibility lies on your head and mine.

Get Nimu engaged after telling her that I would like her to wait for two years for the marriage. Whatever religious ceremony is necessary for the engagement should be done at Amreli. If she wants the marriage to be celebrated at Lakhtar I will not oppose it, but will try to dissuade her. I shall take part in the marriage as a religious rite only. Ramdas too is of the same opinion. If Ba objects, put her at ease.

[1] The letter was received by the addressee on 23-9-1925

[2] A niece of the addressee

I have already written to her. Now you may do as you think best. If Nimu happens to grow very fast, I will not insist next year on waiting further. I hope she does not grow that fast. May God help her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7744. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

280. BIHAR NOTES

The tour in Bihar commenced with my attending the Bihar Provincial Conference at Purulia. The chief business of the Conference was to pass a recommendatory resolution endorsing the proposed change in the spinning franchise. The presidential speech was delivered in English. I wish Moulvi Zubair had delivered it in Hindustani. I know that half the audience did not understand this otherwise admirable speech. There was, too, the Hindu Sabha and the next day the Khilafat Conference in the same *pandal*. It was a most pleasing thing for me to find all the presidents respecting my wish not to speak at any of the conferences. I have grown weary of speaking. I have nothing new to say. I travel because I fancy that the masses want to meet me. I certainly want to meet them. I deliver my simple message to them in a few words and they and I are satisfied. It penetrates the mass mind slowly but surely.

Annexed to the Conference was a well-arranged Industrial Exhibition. You saw there the undoubted evolution of khaddar. There was the spinning competition and the distribution of prizes. Osman of the Khadi Pratishthan carried the first prize which consisted of a gold medal. A little girl six years old was also a prize-winner. Her spinning was not bad at all. She carried the prize in that she was only six years and yet could steadily spin for the competition. The lantern-slide lecture on khaddar, which Khitish Babu of the Khadi Pratishthan delivered to an appreciative audience, was another feature.

The usual addresses and purse were there. The purse was intended for the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. There were collections, too, on the spot both at men's and women's meetings. The collection at the latter was as usual larger.

I was taken too to a village called Golunda, a co-operative centre where spinning is being tried. It is an interesting experiment and, if it

is carried out scientifically, it is bound to succeed and yield startling results.

Purulia has an old Leper Asylum managed entirely by the London Missionary Society. I saw the first Leper Asylum at Cuttack. But there it was a hurried visit. I was able only to see the lepers and the Superintendent. I had no time to see the appointments. At Purulia I was able to see the quarters and understand the working of the institution. In both the places the superintendents and their wives have become devoted friends of the lepers. There was no unhappiness on the faces of the inmates. They were able to forget their distress through the loving care of their Superintendents. I was told at Purulia that leprosy was brought under subjection by means of oil injections, especially in the initial stages. The Superintendent also told me that the cases that looked horrible—burnt-up skin or burnt toes and fingers—were not contagious at all. In such cases the disease had done its work. There was no contagion and no cure. The contagious cases were those which neither the public nor the patient recognized as such. These are the cases that admit of complete cure through injections. It is a matter of humiliation for us that the very necessary and humane work of looking after this portion of distressed humanity should be taken up solely by Christian foreigners. All honour to them, but what of us? The reader will be sorry to learn that leprosy is on the increase. The general reason assigned was unchaste living and wrong dieting.

Unlike other parts of Bihar, Purulia and the surrounding country is a predominantly Bengali-speaking tract. It has a comparatively better and cooler climate than Calcutta. The Bengalis use Purulia as a health resort. Deshbandhu's father built a beautiful home in Purulia. I was put up in this house. I felt sad having to be in Deshbandhu's house when he was no more. His father's and his mother's *samadhis* were in this house. They lie in a corner. A simple unpretentious stone platform marks the spot where their ashes lie buried. Yonder was a dilapidated building which was built by one of Deshbandhu's sisters which she was conducting as a Widows' Home. With her premature death the Home died a natural death. Yet another dilapidated building was pointed out to me as a block of rooms which were built for housing poor people. The whole surroundings seemed to be in keeping with the mystic charity of this family of philanthropists. It was therefore a privilege for me to be asked to

unveil Deshbandhu's portraits and uncover two plates directing the stranger to a Deshbandhu Avenue and a Deshbandhu Road.

I must deal with my entry into the territories inhabited by the Hos, the Mundas and the other aboriginal tribes among whom a silent reform movement is going on.

Young India, 24-9-1925

281. UNTOUCHABILITY AND GOVERNMENT

A correspondent writes:[1]

Here there is evidently a confusion of thought, I know all about the manufactured addresses by Untouchables during the visit of the Prince of Wales. And whilst I know nothing about the British Government being at the back of the movement referred to by the correspondent I should not be at all surprised to find that the charge is well founded. The tendency of the Government is undoubtedly to divide us. Its strength lies in our divisions. Our unity will dissolve it. But such a policy of the Government is no proof of its interference with our work for untouchables. The Government, for instance, does not directly or indirectly obstruct us in removing untouchability, conducting schools for untouchables, digging wells for them or sharing our own with them. Reform on the part of the Hindus is a totally different thing from the exploitation of the untouchables. Indeed, that exploitation is a certainty if we obstinately refuse to do our duty and purge Hinduism of the curse. And we shall not be able to exert ourselves to the utmost in this direction if we put the blame on the shoulders of the Government and thus wait for the removal of untouchability till swaraj is attained.

Young India, 24-9-1925

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent referred to Gandhiji's remark in *Young India* of 27-8-1925 that he did not know of "a single instance where the Government have obstructed the public in its programme of removing untouchability". The correspondent held that "the Government, if not actually hindering the reform, has been certainly trying to pervert it." He cited instances of the "addresses of welcome" by chamars of Meerut manoeuvred by the Government at the time of the visit of the Prince of Wales, and of a "Adi-Hindu Andolan" or movement in Manipuri, Itawah, Etah and Kanpur districts instigating the untouchables to demand separate representation and fair proportion in the services and to rise in revolt against caste Hindus. In the correspondent's opinion, "it was an open secret that the authorities are at the back of this movement."

282. WHAT OF THE BRITISH LION?

Here is a letter all the way from California:

Enclosed please find a small cutting. Read this cutting first:

"Kennedy was seated in the ranch house and happened to glance into the yard where his four-year-old grand-daughter was playing. He saw a mountain lion stealthily creeping upon her. Kennedy rushed for his rifle and fired through the window at the lion as it was ready to spring. The bullet pierced its heart."

Now give your opinion regarding the method used by the child's father. Please answer the following questions:

"Was he justified to kill the lion? Should the father remain non-violent and let the lion devour his child? Should the father appeal to the soul of the lion and thus endanger the life of his child? Was it possible for the father to plead mercy in order to save the child? Are you going to keep on appealing to the soul of the British lion and let them devour the lives of many million Indians?"

My answer to his first question is that the father was justified in killing the lion. In asking the other questions the correspondent has betrayed his ignorance of non-violence and its working. Non-violence is not so much a mental or intellectual attitude as a quality of the heart, the soul. If Kennedy had no fear of the lion—fearlessness being the first and indispensable condition of non-violence—if he had a heart-recognition of the fact that the lion possessed a soul as much as he himself did, instead of rushing to his rifle and relying upon the problematical chance of the lion waiting till he reached his rifle and of taking an unerring aim, he should have rushed to the lion and put his arms round him in the fullest confidence of being able to appeal to the soul within him and rescuing his child. That such non-violence is reached by the fewest possible is only too true, and therefore mankind in general will always kill lions and tigers in order to save their children and cattle. But the fundamental position remains unaffected. The phenomenon of real sadhus fearlessly meeting and remaining unharmed without harming the wild beasts of the jungle is not an unknown thing in Hindustan. We have a historical record of such instances in the West also. The writer has further committed the error of imagining an unimaginable case with brave men. If Kennedy had remained a passive spectator of his child being devoured, the case would have been one not of non-violence in any shape or form but of rank and heartless cowardice, the very opposite of non-violence.

The last question put by the correspondent is really what his letter is intended to lead up to. In it the correspondent has shown woeful ignorance of the history of our own times. He must know that the movement for which I have made myself responsible is not an appeal of the kind he imagines to the soul of the British lion, but it is an appeal to the soul of India to find itself. It is a movement to develop internal strength. In its final form, therefore, it is undoubtedly an appeal to the soul of the British lion. But it then becomes an appeal from an equal to an equal, not an appeal of a beggar to a possible donor, or the vain appeal of a dwarf to a giant to save him. It will then be an irresistible appeal of soul to soul. In the process of development of internal strength, the inevitable devouring will no doubt go on. But it will not cease even when and if India rushes like Kennedy to the rifle. But whereas Kennedy tried to reach the rifle which he possessed and whose use he knew, the Indian Kennedy unlike the Californian would be trying to destroy the British lion without possessing the necessary weapon or the skill to use it. Under my method, there is the present possibility not of destroying the British lion but of changing his nature. Again, under the Kennedy method India will have to develop the same qualities which we at present deplore in the British lion. Lastly, the third course which evidently the correspondent imagines to be not merely possible but the alternative to his method does not arise at all in the case of India, as it did not in the Californian case. India to be free has only two choices. She must either become, for the purpose of achieving her freedom and to that extent only, non-violent, or must endeavour to develop the Western methods of violence with all its implications.

Young India, 24-9-1925

283. NATIONAL ARBITRATION ?

I am supposed to be Chairman of the National Arbitration Board appointed at Delhi last year regarding communal disputes. I had wires and letters seeking my intervention at Delhi, then at Panipat and now at Allahabad. I was regretfully obliged to advise these parties that I claimed no longer to exercise influence over the respective communities. An arbitration is useful when the board of arbitration has influence over the disputing parties and when they are ready to abide by their award. Times have changed since the Delhi meeting. Parties are just now better organized for quarrels than for settlement.

No doubt they will finally meet. But it seems that they will do so only after they have finished with the arbitrament of the sword. I think I know my limitations and believe that I shall serve the cause of peace by remaining away from all intervention in communal disputes.

Young India, 24-9-1925

284. NOTES

MISUSE OF MY NAME

A correspondent from Madras has addressed to me a printed open letter describing what are in his opinion the many misdeeds of the Swarajists in Tamilnad and drawing my attention to the uses to which my name has been put in connection with municipal elections. Here are some samples:[1]

If the foregoing is a correct picture, it is certainly deplorable. The correspondent asks me to dissociate myself from such methods. His suggestion either means that he does not know me, for I have more than once expressed my strongest disapproval of untruth and violence including rowdyism. I have even done penance more than once for an illegitimate use of my name when there was even the remotest chance of my position being misunderstood. It is impossible for me, however, to hold myself responsible for the acts of those who will do evil deeds in my name without the slightest warrant for it; or the suggestion of the correspondent means that if what he has related is true, I should cease to help the Swaraj Party. I cannot do it so long as men like Pandit Motilalji guide its deliberations, and so long as its creed remains what it is. My general help to the Swaraj Party does not mean endorsement of every method adopted in the name of the Party, or of the acts of individual Swarajists. I have no doubt that there are loafers and humbugs in the Swaraj Party, but I am sorry to have to confess that I have not yet belonged to a single democratic institution which has been able to keep itself clear of such types of humanity. The utmost that a man can do to keep himself clean is to examine the creed of institutions and the general character of those who run them, and to sever his connection when the creed itself becomes questionable, or an institution though safe as to its creed passes into

[1] Not reproduced here. The letter cited breach of promise, bribery, corruption, misuse and exploitation of Gandhiji's name, misrepresentation to voters or tipping them with wine etc.

the hands of men proved to be unscrupulous. If bad men have crept into the Swaraj Party it can also claim many able, honest, self-sacrificing and hard-working men. It will not suffer in comparison with the other parties. The correspondent may rest assured that no amount of encouragement from me of any party can possibly save it from extinction if the adoption of methods such as he describes becomes general. The question, therefore, for the correspondent, the public and me is to find out how far the methods described are adopted and countenanced by the Swaraj Party. My duty in this direction is discharged by publishing the digest of such charges and expressing my disapproval of crooked methods even for gaining a laudable end. The probability is that the charges brought by the correspondent will be refuted by those against whom they are levelled. I am chary of believing them because experience has taught me that where party spirit runs high unfounded accusations are made by opponents one against the other. Even my mahatmaship has not rendered me immune from charges which I know to be untrue. Recently I was charged whilst at Calcutta with prevarication and with gross inconsistency. Many of the Punjab patriots during the Rowlatt Act agitation were charged with wickednesses of which they were absolutely innocent. I do not know a single public man who has not been under the shadow of suspicion at some stage or other of his public life. There is reason to be cautious, therefore, in believing charges against parties or party leaders.

TRUE SATYAGRAHA

For a long time I have purposely refrained from writing anything in these columns about Vaikom and its struggle against unapproachability. Nor do I want as yet to say anything directly bearing on it. But I do want to tell the reader how the satyagrahis at Vaikom are passing their time.

A letter was received at Calcutta from Vaikom dated the 1st of August. It has remained unpublished through oversight. But the substance of it is as fresh today as it was when it was received. I reproduce it below:

> Now there are only ten volunteers including myself. One of us daily does the kitchen work while others except one offer satyagraha for three hours each. Including the time taken to go and return, the time for satyagraha comes to four hours. We regularly get up at 4.30 a.m. and prayer takes half an hour. From 5 to 6 we have sweeping, drawing water and cleaning vessels. By seven

all of us except two (who go for satyagraha at 5.45 after bath) return after bath and spin or card till it is time for going to the barricade. Most of us regularly give 1,000 yards each per day and some of us even more. The average output is over 10,000 yards per day. I do not insist on our doing any work on Sundays when each does according to his will. Some of us card and spin for two or three hours on Sundays too. Anyhow no yarn is returned on Sundays. Those who are Congress members spin for the Congress franchise on Sundays. Some of us are now spinning on Sundays and other spare hours for our humble gift towards All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund which you have instituted. We wish to pack a small bundle of yarn to you on the 4th September (G.O.M. Centenary Day). I hope you will be glad to receive it. This we shall spin apart from our routine work. We mean either to beg or to spin the whole of that auspicious day and to send whatever is obtained. We have not yet settled what we should do.

This shows that the satyagrahis of Vaikom have understood the spirit of their work. There is no bluster, there is no fireworks display; but there is here a simple determination to conquer by exact conduct. A satyagrahi should be able to give a good account of every minute at his disposal. This the Vaikom satyagrahis are doing. The reader cannot fail to notice the honesty in spinning Congress yarn, and the yarn for the G.O.M. Centenary during their off-day. The idea too of spinning for the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial is in keeping with the rest of their doings. The letter before me gives me details of each member's spinning during the preceding week omitting Sunday. The largest quantity spun by a single inmate in 6,895 yards of 17 counts. The lowest is 2,936 yards of 18 counts. The remark against his name is that he was absent on leave for three days. The average per man per day during that week was 866.6 yards. I have also before me the figures for the week ending 26th August. The highest during that week was 7,700 for a single individual, and the lowest was 2,000, the spinner having spun only two days during the week. The reader may ask what connection is there between the removal of untouchability and spinning. Apparently nothing. In reality much. It is not any single isolated act which can be called satyagraha apart from the spirit behind. Here, there is spirit behind the spinning which is bound to tell in the long run; for spinning to these young men is a sacrificial

national act calculated unconsciously to exhibit true humility, patience and pertinacity—qualities indispensable for clean success.

COMPULSORY MILITARY TRAINING

An Allahabad Graduate writes:

> I am a registered graduate of the Allahabad University. I am entitled to vote for a candidate seeking election to the Allahabad University Court.
>
> Exception has been taken to my opposition to making military training compulsory in the universities. On this point I seek your opinion through the columns of *Young India*. My view briefly is this:
>
> I admit that under a swaraj government our young men would be required to take to the Army as a career and we shall have to encourage that spirit. But under an alien government I feel there is absolutely no security that these university corps would not be used against the Indian nation, as the Indian army has been used in the past. Moreover would it not be adding another link to the chain of moral slavery if our young men are c*ompelled* to take up military training? Does it not clash with the ideal of a university, where at least we can expect a free atmosphere for growth? Would it not cast our ideals in a militarist mould? My information about foreign universities is limited, but so far as I could gather I understand there is no compulsion even in universities of free countries like England and America. Even if we ignore political considerations should we not allow the individual his freedom of conscience to preserve which large numbers of Englishmen went to jail during the War. All of them were not afraid to die.
>
> These are considerations which deserve fullest attention. On the other hand compulsion in physical training I would gladly support—as a matter of fact, I advocate. I feel that if it is made compulsory all the requirements of a university would be met.
>
> We should not shut the doors of the University against those who hold different views on life or politics. There is already too much of cramping in these institutions.

As a pacifist by religion I heartily endorse all that my correspondent says about compulsory military training in the universities. But the argument seems to be sound even from the purely utilitarian and national standpoint. Not only can there be no security against the use being made of university corps for purposes antagonistic to the national interest, but whilst the Government retains its anti-national character there is every likelihood of these corps

being used against the nation on due occasions. What, for instance, could prevent a future Dyer from using these university men for enacting another Jallianwala Bagh? May not young men themselves offer their services for an expedition against the innocent Chinese, or the equally innocent Tibetans when their subjection is felt necessary in the interests of imperial commerce? Some of the young volunteers who served during the War justified their action by saying that thereby they gained experience in the art of war, just the reason which consciously or unconsciously prompted some of the Frontier expeditions. Those who run empires successfully have an instinctive knowledge of human nature. It is not deliberately bad or wicked. It acts excellently under a high impulse. And thousands of young men who, before they join any corps, must take the oath of allegiance and must on scores of occasions salute the Union Jack, will naturally want to give a good account of their loyalty and willingly shoot down their fellow men upon receiving from their superiors orders to fire. Whilst, therefore, even as an out-and-out believer in ahimsa, I can understand and appreciate military training for those who believe in the necessity of the use of arms on given occasions, I am unable to advocate the military training under the Government of the youth of the country so long as it remains utterly irresponsive to the needs of the people, and I should be against compulsory military training in every case and even under a national government. Those who do not wish to take military training should not be debarred from joining public universities. Physical culture stands on a different basis altogether. It can be and should be part of any sound educational scheme even as many other subjects are.

PLIGHT OF MILL-HANDS

A letter from Calcutta gives me the following figures about, and description of, its mill-hands:[1]

I cannot vouch for the accuracy of the figures or the description, but both may be safely taken as generally correct. The writer of the letter says that Deshbandhu had promised "to relieve them of their sufferings," and asks me to complete the work that death prevented Deshbandhu from even beginning. He then suggests that I should find a capital of ten thousand rupees for helping a

[1] Not reproduced here. The report showed a total of 6,62,000 mill-hands, complained of their being illiterate, addicted to vice, and prone to run into debt, and asked if there was no way to save them.

cinema company worker so that he may give exhibitions in the mill areas and that looms and charkhas may be established in their midst.

The writer is well-meaning but it is clear that he does not know that the cinema will not make the men and women literate or wean them from the vices he mentions. He does not know also that these labourers are not likely to take to the looms or the spinning-wheels as a supplementary occupation for they do not need it; they may learn spinning and weaving to help them in hartals or when they are out of employment. Moral and social reform among the labourers is most difficult and taxing. It is slow work and can only be done at the hands of reformers who will live practically in their midst and by their sterling character affect the lives of the mill-hands for the better. Such work requires no capital and whatever is required will be gladly paid for by the mill-hands themselves as is actually happening today in Ahmedabad and will presently happen in Jamshedpur.

Young India, 24-9-1925

285. THE CONSTITUTION OF THE ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION[1]

[*September 24,1925*][2]

Whereas the time has arrived for the establishment of an expert organization for the development of hand-spinning and khaddar, and whereas experience has shown that such development is not possible without a permanent organization, unaffected and uncontrolled by politics, political changes or political bodies, an organization called the All-India Spinners' Association is hereby established with the consent of the All-India Congress Committee, as an integral part of the Congress organization, but with independent existence and powers.

The said Association shall consist of members and associates and donors hereinafter defined and shall have an Executive Council consisting of the following persons who shall hold office for five years:

[1] Evidently, the constitution was as per draft which Gandhiji mentions having circulated and which was in some respects amended by others. The article "All-India Spinners' Association", 1-10 -1925, refers to a provision or two in the original draft which had to be dropped or changed.

[2] The constitution was finalized at the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee held at Patna on this date.

1. Mahatma Gandhi
2. Maulana Shaukat Ali
3. Syt . Rajendra Prasad
4. Syt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta
5. Syt. Maganlal K. Gandhi
6. Seth Jamnalal Bajaj, Treasurer.
7. Mr. Shuaib Qureshi
8. Syt. Shankerlal G. Banker } Secretaries
9. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

POWERS OF THE COUNCIL

The Council shall take over all the funds and assets belonging to the All-India Khadi Board and all Provincial Khadi Boards with full powers to administer these and other funds and shall discharge their existing financial obligations.

The Council shall have the right to raise loans, to collect subscriptions, to hold immovable property, to invest funds under proper security, to give and take mortgages for the furtherance of hand-spinning and khaddar, to give financial assistance to khaddar organizations by way of loans, gifts or bounties, to help or establish schools or institutions where hand-spinning is taught, to help or open khadi stores to establish a khaddar service, to act as agency on behalf of the Congress to receive self-spun yarn as subscription to the Congress and to issue certificates, and to do all the things that may be considered necessary for the furtherance of its objects, with power to make regulations for the conduct of affairs of the Association or the Council and to amend them, as also the present constitution, as may be considered necessary from time to time.

Vacancies in the existing Council by death, resignation or otherwise shall be filled by the remaining members .

The Council shall have the right to add to its numbers which shall not exceed 12 at any time and four members shall form the quorum for a meeting of the Council.

All decisions shall be taken by majority of votes.

The Council shall keep an accurate account of all subscriptions, donations and fees, whether in cash or kind, and of expenditure. The books shall be open to public inspection and shall be audited by competent auditors every three months.

The Central office of the Association shall be at the Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, and those who are desirous of becoming spinning members of the Congress shall send their yarn subscriptions to the central office with particulars in the following form:

TO

THE SECRETARY,

ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION,

SABARMATI.

SIR,

I enclose herewith _____ yards of yarn _____ _____ in weight spun by me being my subscription to the National Congress. I am or wish to become a member of the_____[1] Congress Committee. My age is _____. My occupation is ____ _____. My address is _____.

Yours faithfully,

(Signature in legible hand, and if a woman state whether married or unmarried)

Upon receipt of the subscription the Secretary shall examine the quantity and quality of yarn and if found satisfactory shall send to the Congress Committee concerned a certificate in the following form:

This is to certify that_____has sent to the A.I.S.A._____ yards of yarn being subscription for membership of the Congress for the year_____in ____ _____ Congress Committee of _____P.C.C.

A duplicate of the certificate with signature of the Secretary shall be sent to the sender of the yarn.

The central office shall keep a separate ledger containing a list with full particulars of all yarn received by the A.I.S.A. for membership of the Congress.

MEMBERS

There shall be two classes of members of the Association, A and B:

(i) The A class shall consist of persons above eighteen years of

[1] The source has here "State address".

age and habitually wearing khadi, who deposit regularly from month to month with the treasurer or any agency duly appointed thereto by the Council 1,000 yards of self-spun yarn well-twisted and uniform.

(ii) The B class shall consist of persons above eighteen years of age habitually wearing khadi who pay an annual subscription of 2,000 yards of self-spun yarn, well-twisted and uniform.

Any yarn paid to the Association for membership of the National Congress shall be considered part of the subscription to the Association.

RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF MEMBERS

The duty of every member, both A and B classes, shall be to carry on a propaganda for hand-spinning and khadi.

The members shall have the right to elect from among members of the A class the Executive Council after the expiry by efflux of time of the present Council. The members present at a meeting duly convened may by a three-fourths majority change the constitution of the Association after expiry of five years from the date hereof.

When in any province fifty members have been enrolled, they may elect from among the members of class A, an advisory committee of five to advise the Council about provincial matters relating to the objects of the Association.

ASSOCIATES

Those who pay the All-India Spinners' Association Rs. 12 per year in advance and habitually wear khaddar shall be considered Associate Members of the Association.

Any person who wears khaddar habitually and pays in advance a consolidated amount of Rs. 500 shall become a Life Associate of the Association.

All Associates will be entitled to receive free of charge copies of statements, balance-sheets, and minutes of proceedings of the Councils.

Every person wishing to join the Association shall apply in the following form:

TO

THE SECRETARY,

ALL -INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION,

SABARMATI

DEAR SIR,

I have read the rules of the A.I.S.A. I desire to become a member of class/an associate member and I forward herewith my subscription for—Please enrol me as a member.

Yours faithfully,

Young India, 1-10-1925

286. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, PATNA[1]

Septeml

Replying to the address Mahatmaji, first of all, thanked the people of Patna and the members of the District Board for the addresses presented to him. Referring to the observation made by Khan Bahadur Nawab Sarfaraz Hussain Khan[2] about Hindu-Muslim unity, he said that there was a time when he did claim that there had come about a real unity between the Hindus and the Mussalmans and that it was going to stay for ever. And he could have justly claimed for himself, then, a great deal of the credit for that result. But he was grieved to say that the same was not true of today. He had already said it so many times, and he would say the same thing that evening, that he had now lost his hold both on the Hindus as well as on the Mohammedans. In that meeting there were present both the Hindus and the Mussalmans but he did not at all deceive himself that their presence was any indication of their acceptance of his creed of Hindu-Muslim unity. Indeed, it went against his grain to go to such meetings, which were attended by people whose hearts were not pure and whose relations with one another were not cordial, and thereby deceive the world and himself regarding the unity between the two communities. He did not like to go even to such meetings as were attended solely by the members of either community. He was trying to look equally on both the Hindus and the Mussalmans and treat them impartially. It was true, as both Indians and even the Westerners had admitted, that his ideal of swaraj and

[1] The meeting, attended by a large number of people, was held in the Baptist Mission Compound at 7.30 p.m.

[2] Member, Bihar Legislative Assembly and Chairman, Reception Committee

non-co-operation was not intended to do any harm to anyone. It aimed at the well-being of the whole world. And so when the members of the two communities quarrelled among themselves and tried to associate him with one side or the other, he could not go to such meetings. He could not be partial to any one of the communities. He was not prepared to say that Hindus always did the right or that the Mussalmans did no wrong. In fact, both of them were in the wrong and both of them had gone mad. In the circumstances, therefore, the least that he could do was to keep himself away from them, and pray to God to relieve him of the pain and the pang that the existing state of things caused. Let the Hindus and the Mussalmans fight out to their heart's content and, perhaps, then it would be time for him to interfere and ask them what they had gained? He had not wanted to tell them even those few words about the communal trouble, but he had been led to make those observations by the few words uttered by the Chairman. But all the same he had hope and trust that despite the present quarrels, Hindus and Mussalmans would unite once again and that soon. In the words of Maulana Shaukat Ali, it was but a temporary fever which was sure to pass off ere long.

Mahatmaji proceeding dwelt upon the importance and necessity of the charkha and khaddar and said that in the present circumstances though Hindus-Muslim unity was no doubt dear to his heart the only thing which was no less dear to him and which he could work was the charkha. It was his firm belief that if there was anything capable of removing the poverty of the country, it was the charkha. If they wanted to remove the poverty of the starving millions in the villages, if they wanted to provide useful occupation for the people in the villages who remained idle at least for four months in the year, they could do it only by the charkha. Those who were opposed to it, Mahatmaji thought, could not suggest any substitute for it. But the charkha could only succeed when all the people took to it. Proceeding, he referred to the newly-formed All-India Spinners' Association and congratulated Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan and the people on his becoming the member of the Association and his agreeing to ply the charkha. The use of khaddar was necessary for the membership of that Association. If the people of Bihar took to khaddar and the charkha, then alone could they remove the poverty of the people as only then would they be able to send millions of money direct to the poor without any intermediary agency. If they purchased, for instance, a yard of khaddar for ten annas, the whole of that amount, including the price paid for cotton, went directly to the poor. But where they used cloth made even in the mills of Bombay and Ahmedabad, not to speak of Manchester and other foreign-made cloth, the major portion of the money went to the capitalists and only a very small portion of it to the poor. When he said that it did not mean that he was opposed to the capitalists amassing wealth—he could not be—but what they had to consider was whether it was just to feed the overfed or the millions of the starving poor. Undoubtedly those who satisfied the hunger of the poor deserved all

blessings. The khaddar, in spite of its dearness, was cheap and preferable to mill-made cloth because through khaddar they could directly help the poor. That was why he had decided to devote his life to the cause of khaddar and the charkha and thereby save both the Hindus and the Mussalmans from utter ruin. He therefore wanted them all to become members of the All-India Spinners' Association. There were two classes of membership of the Association. The "A" class of members were required to contribute 1,000 yards of self-spun yarn every month. But those who could not do so might become "B" class members and contribute annually 2,000 yards of yarn. Besides, the members would have always to wear khaddar and khaddar alone.

But all this could not be done without money. He would, therefore, appeal to all to contribute their mite to the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund which would be utilized for the propagation of khaddar and the charkha.

Concluding, Mahatmaji condemned untouchability and said that he as a *sanatani* Hindu would tell the *sanatanists* that untouchability was a great sin. Tulsidas preached that their religion demanded that they should be kind unto all. Hatred and contempt had no place in their religion. Let every Hindu be true to his religion and live in terms of peace and amity.[1]

The Searchlight, 27-9-1925

287. SPEECH AT NATIONAL SCHOOL, KHAGAUL[2]

September 24,1925

Mahatmaji thanked the people who had been helping the school and hoped that they would continue the help that they had been giving for so long. He felt grieved to hear that the number of students had come down to ninety from one hundred and twenty-five. But, for this he was not going to blame the teachers. He knew of many schools where in spite of the very best teachers trying their best, the number had gone down. This was due to the mentality of students and guardians to whom the only end of education was money making.

He was more grieved to learn that their students had not made much progress in spinning. The reason was before him. To expect students to go on with spinning, with as bad spindles as they had been supplied with was impossible. For this he would

[1] At the end of the speech a collection was made for the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund.

[2] The School was inaugurated by Gandhiji in 1921, as a national institution under the Bihar Vidyapith. On the present occasion, he was laying the foundation-stone of a new building for the school.

blame the teachers. If they could not create in the students the love for it, how could they expect them to stick to it with pleasure. The teachers, it seemed, knew nothing of the science of the charkha. They must study it and know that hundreds of charkhas working together must not make a lecture impossible. A very small humming sound was the best.

As to weaving, now there was no excuse for saying that weavers did not accept hand-spun yarn or preferred mill-spun to it. They must know that even badly- spun yarn can be doubled, twisted and made fit for weaving some kind of cloth or another. The best thing was to use better charkhas and to see that the yarn was well spun.

Before he laid the foundation-stone, he wanted to ask them once more to continue their help to the institution so long as it was teaching spinning, teaching Hindi as the common language and fostering national feeling. This was the definition of a national school as conceived by the National Congress. But if it failed in these things, it certainly did not deserve any help and they should from that moment cease to help it.

Then, in the end, with an appeal for the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund, he concluded his speech and went to the ladies' meeting where a good collection was made.

The Searchlight, 27-9-1925

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM B. C. CHATTERJEE

Sir,

Your recent pronouncement that Deshbandhu's Faridpur speech is to be the basis of future action has struck a vibrant note of hope and inspiration. For one cannot but read into it an open invitation on your part to all the country's workers to reunite on a common platform. The Presidential speech at the Faridpur Conference had this great end transparently in view. Your endorsement of that speech could only signify your accep-tance of that end. Let me be a little clearer. Deshbandhu left none in doubt about his considered opinion that the country would be well-advised to subscribe to the Reforms in the event of the Government carrying through the recommendations of the minority of the Muddiman Committee, and enlarging the men detained under the Bengal Ordinance. By this one declaration he cut away the real ground of difference between the Swaraj Party and the other political groups. The Liberal Party as a whole, and, indeed, all believers in the Reforms who have not ceased to respect themselves or their country are bound in honour to stand away from the Montagu-Chelmsford dispensation, unless and until Government have given legislative effect to the minority report embodying, as it does, the practical experience of those who have so finely faced unpopularity in making an honest effort to work the Reforms. And, in the next place, no Indian worth the name could think of offering co-operation to Great Britain on the basis of her sufferance of measures like the Bengal Ordinance. In the name of every Indian Nationalist who has rendered you the homage of his heart in spite of differences of opinion, I conjure you with all my soul's prayer and passion to tell the country with that explicitness, which is of your essence, whether you will or will not subscribe to the Reforms if Government do actually carry out the Deshbandhu's two fold suggestion.

Your answer in the affirmative would be the opening of a new—and may I beg leave to add?—a greater chapter in the history of your personality, and of India's destiny. It would mean a gathering of all India under your banner, the taking of a fresh oath of allegiance to your cause by the Swarajists, the Liberal and the Nationalist alike, by all the children of the mother in fact, if one may only leave out those who are ready to leave their brothers just for a handful of silver or a bit of ribbon to stick in their coat. Such men have not counted in history, nor ever shall.

You would clear, the issue, by your single promulgation, between Great Britain and a united India—the issue of on which side the spirit of sincerity abides on the question of responsible Government for India. Does Great Britain really mean to advance India on the road to responsible government, or is she out merely to confer favours on the henchmen and pick-thanks? That is the question you shall ask from the platform of the coming Congress that shall have been reunited by reason of your reaffirmation of Deshbandhu's parting message of Faridpur. The test of Great Britain's sincerity shall be in her readiness, to respond to the demand of a united India for the removal of the minor obstacles barring the way of the Minister, and the release of the men detained without trial. And that of our people under your leadership shall consist in their whole-hearted co-operation in the cause of the Reforms after England has acquiesced in India's twin demand.

Pray, do not listen to the man who will prattle of prestige. I can almost hear the muttered protest of numbers of your followers calling upon you to desist from lowering your prestige by going out to make an offer to England. But my faith in you bids me to feel sure that considerations of prestige—that moral curse of a country ridden by snobbery—never can and never shall strangle the straightforwardness of your course of life. I would conclude with my final appeal to you to offer Great Britain this chance of proving her sincerity and India this chance of achieving her unity.

B. C. CHATTERJEE

Young India, 9-7-1925

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM W. H. PITT

July 22, 1925

MY DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I was in the midst of a long letter to you when the post arrived with your letter of the 16th instant for which I thank you. It was very kind of you amidst your many important engagements in Bengal to find time to write to me.

1. I had already received a copy of your telegram to Mr. Kelappan Nair advising him to picket the eastern gate only of Vaikom temple and it was on this subject that I am writing to you. My belief was that you had misunderstood the position and my suggestion, but from your letter I see that your advice was given after full consideration of the facts then before you and for reasons that appeared to you to be adequate.

2. With regard to an unequivocal declaration by Government on the subject

of roads which you would like to see you are probably not aware that there is already a Royal Proclamation, having the force of law, in Travancore declaring all public roads to be open to all subjects of His Highness the Maharajah. It is questionable whether it is capable of extension or has ever been authoritatively interpreted by the law-courts. The diehards of the orthodox party are now talking of seeking an injunction from the courts restraining the *avarna* Hindus from using any of the roads round Vaikom temple. If they do so, I believe they will fail and the whole question will be settled once for all. However this may be, so far as my information goes, there is no prospect of another Proclamation being issued. Personally I do not think one necessary.

3. There is one point that I have not yet mentioned to you, but which deserves your consideration. The authorities in Travancore are bound to see that the customary pujas and ceremonies connected with the State religion proceed uninterruptedly and are duly performed. In fact, certain officers have pledged their word that if innovations are permitted with regard to the use of temple roads, these will not interfere with public worship. At the present moment some difficulty is being experienced in redeeming this pledge and in fact it has not been altogether redeemed. Given time, the authorities will overcome all difficulties but they have to be cautious and examine the ground before advancing.

There can be no question of taking any action that will lead to a general interruption of public worship. The fight of your volunteers on the eastern road alarms even those orthodox Hindus who have agreed to the advance already made and the authorities are embarrassed by this silent threat from you to penetrate to the eastern gate. That you will get there is to most people, a foregone conclusion but this is not the moment to press forward or even to threaten an advance.

I have no hesitation in stating positively that the picketing of the eastern road is extremely detrimental to your cause and I say with confidence that in making this statement I am supported by a majority of the local democrats and all the *avarna* Hindu leaders. The authorities require a calm atmosphere in which to deal with those orthodox Hindus who fear that their religion or perhaps their community's interests are in danger and everything that tends to disrupt the atmosphere retards further advance. I appreciate your point that principle and discipline demand that the volunteers should not withdraw, but I am doubtful whether the morale of a handful of volunteers ought to be set above the interests of 2,000,000 *avarna* Hindus. I therefore put it to you (i) that the picketing of the eastern road is a source of embarrassment to the authorities in pacifying the orthodox Hindus; (ii) that the authorities cannot and will not advance further without carrying the vast majority of Hindus with them; (iii) that the advance will be quicker if you withdraw and I would ask you kindly to consider whether if you still think it necessary to occupy the local

Ruhr, you cannot withdraw the standing picket and abstain from all demonstrations against the eastern gate of the temple.

Mr. R. Krishna Pillai, Devaswom Commissioner, is engaged in negotiations with the orthodox Hindus at other places having temples and is confident, if left in peace, of being able to induce them to abandon any claim they may have to the exclusive use of, at any rate, roads of general public utility.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 11099

APPENDIX III

LETTER FROM K. KELAPPAN NAIR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
VAIKOM,
June 18, 1925

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

The first class Magistrate, the Asstt. Supdt. of Police and the Devaswom officials are come here ready to open tomorrow just half the roads in question (*vide* the plan enclosed)[1], if I would thereupon stop satyagraha. We cannot accept this solution which is no solution at all. We never had any fascination for these Vaikom temple roads. We fought to establish a principle. Our contention was no man should be excluded from the use of public roads on the ground that he is an unapproachable. The Govt. by shutting them out from the use of half of the roads, in fact perpetuates the contention that certain public roads ought to be closed against certain individuals on the ground that they belong to a particular caste. If we stop the satyagraha it would mean that we acquiesce in the old principle which the Travancore Govt. newly enunciates. We certainly cannot do that. I therefore said that I could not abandon the fight.

The cure is worse than the disease. Till now we could at least give the people the hope that we shall succeed in the end. If we stop satyagraha now we cannot face the people holding our heads erect. Why is the eastern road not open? Not because the *savarnas* who opposed our entry into any of those roads are agreeable to this arrangement. If three roads are to be opened in spite of them they do not at all mind if the fourth road is also opened. Then why has the Government adopted this stupid course which satisfies no party? I cannot find any conceivable reason for it except

[1] Not reproduced here

that the Govt. also uphold unapproachability. If it be that the priests will not perform puja they have already secured better men from the point of view of their learning, to perform puja in case the present men strike. The Government could not have conceived of a more silly solution.

We shall have failed deplorably in the eyes of the people if we abandon the fight in these circumstances. Please advise me what to do.

Awaiting your reply by wire,

Yours obediently,

K. KELAPPAN

PS.

Today I have also sent to you a telegram for your instructions.

From a photostat : S.N. 11093

APPENDIX IV

LETTER FROM MOTILAL NEHRU

CALCUTTA,
July 21, 1925

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

The Swaraj Party is under a deep debt of gratitude to you for your generous support on the irreparable loss it sustained by the premature death of its great leader, Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das. You have now redoubled that debt by the noble offer contained in your letter of the 19th July. It seems to me that the only way to repay that debt is to accept your offer in all humility and strive with your help to meet the situation created by Lord Birkenhead's speech in the spirit of the last pronouncement of Deshbandhu made at Faridpur.

Lord Birkenhead seems to have spurned the honourable co-operation offered by Deshbandhu and to have made it clear that in our struggle for freedom we have still to face many unnecessary obstacles and many ill-informed opponents. Our plain duty at this stage is, therefore, to go ahead along the line chalked out for us and prepare the country for an effective challenge to irresponsible and insolent authority. In the words of the great Faridpur speech "We shall fight, but fight clean, not forgetting that when the time for settlement comes, as it is bound to come, we have to enter the Peace Conference not in a spirit of arrogance but with becoming humility, so that it may be said of us that we were greater in our achievement than in our adversity." You have now enabled us to fulfil the message of Deshbandhu with the unite 'strength of the Congress at our back. Under such auspices we need entertain no misgivings

about the result which can only be what it has invariably been in all ages and countries : the ultimate triumph of right over might.

I desire to say one word about the Pact from which you have so generously absolved the Swaraj Party. As you know, both Deshbandhu and I had no desire to have the conditions of the Pact altered in the course of the year. We wanted to give it a full and fair trial and it was our wish to help personally in every way in making it a success. Ill-health and many preoccupations prevented us both from doing as much for it as we had wished, but I entirely agree with you that a new situation has been created by recent events and under the circumstances the Congress should without loss of time adapt itself to this situation by making itself a predominantly political body. I therefore, welcome your offer. This, however, does not mean that the Congress should give up in any way the constructive programme. All our efforts would be of little avail if they are not backed up by the organized strength of the nation.

We shall now go ahead in full confidence with our work inside the Councils and outside in the country and if the occasion demands organized action in the country I need not assure you that the Swaraj Party will whole-heartedly help in such activity.

Yours sincerely,

MOTILAL NEHRU

Young India, 23-7-1925

APPENDIX V

LETTER FROM MADELEINE SLADE

63, BEDFORD GARDENS,
CAMPDEN HILL,
LONDON, W. 8
PARIS
May 29, 1925

MOST DEAR MASTER,

I thank you profoundly for having answered my first letter to you—I had never dared to hope such a thing! I have eagerly taken to heart all you said, and I now venture to write to you again, my year of self-imposed trial being more than half over.

The first impulse has never faded, but on the contrary my desire to serve you has grown ever more and more fervent. It is impossible to express in words the

greatness of the inspiration which impels me but I pray God with all my heart that I may be able to give expression to my love in work—in acts. However humble they may be they will at least be utterly sincere.

And now I want to put before you my *most earnest request* :

May I come to your Ashram to study spinning and weaving, to learn to live your ideals and principles in daily life, and indeed to learn in what way I may hope to serve you in the future? In order to become a fit servant of your cause I feel the absolute necessity of that training and I will do my very best to be a not too unworthy pupil if you will accept me!

In the meantime I continue my preparations as best I can. I spin and weave (only with wool, nobody seeming to know about the management of cotton in France or England). With the aid of many kind Indian friends I perplex my head over long Hindustani exercises I read. What a revelation is that reading! The more I enter into Indian thought, the more I feel as if I were reaching at last, a long lost home.

In matters of daily life I simplify as much as is possible under present circumstances. I have given up the drinking of all wines, beers or spirits, and I no longer eat meat of any kind.

My being is filled with a great joy and a great auguish. The joy of giving all I have to you and to your people and the anguish of being able to give so little.

I pine for the day when I shall come to India. Alas, there are still five months to wait! I reach Bombay on November 6th, and if I am permitted to join the Ashram I will take the train that evening arriving at Ahmedabad the next morning.

Dear Master, may I come?

Please do not think of troubling to reply to this letter yourself, but perhaps you could send me a word of answer through someone else.

Ever your humble and most devoted servant,

MADELEINE SLADE

PS.

Enclosed are two little samples of wool which I have spun.

From a photostat : S.N. 10541

APPENDIX VI

SWARAJ OR DEATH

In your *Young India* of the 25th June, I find things which I utterly fail to understand. On page 219 under the heading "On the Verge of It" you have, I think, asked your correspondent to explain—"Why do you think that we cannot spin and wear khaddar or remove untouchability or be friends with the Mussalmans till we get swaraj? How will the withdrawal of Englishmen help Hindus to trust the Mussalmans or *vice versa*, or open the eyes of blind orthodoxy and better the lot of the oppressed people or induce the idle to work the spinning-wheel and those whose tastes are degraded to revise them and revert to khaddar? Surely, if we cannot do these things now under the pressure of adversity, we are not likely to do them when we are lulled into a sense of false security by nominal swaraj. What is there to prevent us now from attempting or accomplishing all or any of these three things if it is not our own unwillingness, lethargy or worse?"

I cannot say what the correspondent will answer to these your queries but I respectfully like to point out to you that your assertion—that without khaddar, Hindu-Muslim unity and the removal of untouchability there can be no swaraj—also appears to be based on wrong premises. There appears to be some truth also in the alternative assertion of your correspondent, and in his support I say this:

(1) The spinning and use of khaddar will be wholly popularized only after the establishment of swaraj and not before. The reasons are as follows:

The Government is a part and parcel of every society. Everybody seeks its help every moment. For the time being life, honour and property of all individuals under the Government are entrusted to it. Some have to win cases, some to get titles and honours, some are to be provided with appointments and so on. Everybody can do without the Government help only for a fixed period of time and that only a small one, but nobody can do without it (the Government) for a longer period. Everywhere in the country, specially in my district, the use of khaddar is a symbol of anti-Government sentiment. It is regarded as the dress of the rebel. It may not have been enacted in any code of law, but in practice it is so. You must be knowing that, in this country, law is one thing and its administration is another. Everybody is afraid of incurring the displeasure of the Government side. How can it, viz, the use of khaddar with its antecedents be popular? The heroes and the soldiers alone will take it up, but not the masses. Thus the use of khaddar will not be popular before swaraj. In fact, the use of khaddar is a crime now. You may ask: How will the people fight and overthrow this Government when they are so cowardly as not to use even khaddar? Mahatmaji, any great event takes place in the world only through divine agencies and the reasons are inexplicable to men. Overthrow of

such a mighty Government will be effected really through divine agencies and outwardly through a great national excitement amounting to a temporary madness on the part of all or at least the majority of the Indian people. And everybody will afford during the great national excitement to be so mad, fearless and brave for some time for this purpose.

After swaraj it will be popular, for there will be no necessity of fear from the use of khaddar. Besides, the people will be encouraged to use it and they will also try to seek the favour of the nationalists forming the Government as we find in District Boards and Municipalities these days under nationalists. Above all, there will be a legislation declaring the use of foreign cloth as a crime, as every nation has done and is doing to encourage home industries.

(2) There can be no permanent Hindu-Muslim unity before swaraj. The reasons are as follows:

During my boyhood one of my paternal uncles told me a story which runs thus— "Once there were two young men who were fast friends. They appeared to have had two bodies but one soul. Their parents did not like it and were on the look-out to effect enmity between these friends. They proclaimed probably by a beat of drum a handsome reward to anyone successfully effecting a breach between the friends. One old woman popularly known as 'Kutni' undertook the task. She went to the friends and called only one of them apart from the other but within his (other friend's) sight. She took her mouth to the ears of the friend whom she had called apart, pretended to say something to him, said nothing and went away. The man returned to his friend who was left behind and was asked to state what the woman had told him. The poor man stated that she had said nothing. Suspicion naturally arose in the mind of the other man who saw so many performances with his own eyes and was in the dark as to their purposes and result, and it developed. In course of time their friendship came to an end and the woman got the reward."

Exactly in the same way, Mahatmaji, please do not expect perfect unity between the Hindus and Mussalmans so long as the third party, with not only all the available resources of the country but also with those of the whole British Empire and with a clear knowledge that its very existence depends only on the disunion and quarrel among the several races inhabiting this country, is always persistently trying every moment to keep the people fighting among themselves. You are too anxious for Hindu-Muslim unity as a road to swaraj but if you please think of it over and over again, I am sure you will arrive at a conclusion that the overthrow of this Government and establishment of swaraj in this country are the road to peace and unity among the several communities of the country and not the *vice versa*. Permanent unity is impossible before swaraj.

(3) Untouchability even cannot be removed before swaraj is established in

this country. The reasons are as follows:

Anything and everything done for the good of the country is opposed by the present Government and at its insinuation by its native allies. The removal of untouchability is for the good of the country and hence it has been and will be thwarted by the Government. You are a reformer. Your followers in Travancore were so much harassed by the Government there at Vaikom. If you want that the untouchables be given certain rights and privileges in a certain Hindu temple, there will be a protest from the orthodox section of the Hindu community but is it not a fact that this Government comes and will come to help them against the untouchables? How can you succeed in this matter unless and until you remove this Government? At present, Mahatmaji, for any thing evil in this country this Government is alone responsible. You are supported in this your programme by the majority of the Indian people but it is not fulfilled only owing to the existence of this Government.

There is much truth in what you say in regard to your triple programme but I most respectfully suggest that the practical side of the human affair is certainly overlooked by you in a certain degree. The country and we, your soldiers, are faithfully carrying out your orders to the extent we can. But it is my prayer that you kindly think of swaraj first and of any other thing afterwards. Swaraj alone will solve all national troubles. You have already declared that if the people fail to complete the khaddar programme by the end of this year, you will give the country a programme by following which there will be either swaraj or death to all patriots. I think you remember it. Please make haste or everything will get dull. The time has almost arrived when you should publish your programme and call upon the nation either to win swaraj or to die.

Young India, 27-8-1925

1. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

It is matter of great grief and disappointment to me not to be able to complete the whole of the Bihar tour as was previously arranged. I see that the continuous travelling for the past 12 months has put a severe strain upon my constitution. I must therefore take the tour in easy stages. The Reception Committee has kindly accommodated me. I hope that the committee and the people in the parts which are being omitted will forgive me. I shall endeavour early next year to finish the balance of the tour.

The Searchlight, 25-9-1925

2. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BIKRAM[1]

September 25,1925

Mahatmaji . . . first apologized for not being able to go to them the previous day as arranged. Then he told them that he did not know what he was to say to them as the thing which he wanted to say they must have heard already. Their presence in such large numbers was a sufficient proof of it. The belief was growing in him every day that they had nothing except the charkha which would appease the hunger of crores of Indian villagers. They knew that for four months in the year they had no work and that time could be employed best in plying the charkha. The poorest of them had to spend on cloth at least five or ten rupees in a year. The small sum amounted to crores which could be saved and brought in the villages only by the charkha. He did not know why people did not understand such a simple thing. If they did not do such a simple work even, it was impossible to establish swaraj, or *Ramarajya* or whatever they might call it. Those who did not spin formerly, he hoped, would begin to spin now. Then he turned towards the organizers of the meeting and said he was grieved to see the children who sang the opening song were not clad in khaddar. He hoped that they would not repeat the mistake. He told the Hindus that Hinduism recognized nothing like untouchability. If anybody thought that touching another man was a sin, he was himself committing a sin.

As to Hindu-Muslim unity he did not know what was to be said. He had lost all influence over both communities. But he did not forget that unless both communities joined hands, swaraj was a dream, never to be realized.

In the end with an appeal for Deshbandhu Das Memorial Fund he concluded.

The Searchlight, 27-9-1925

[1] Among those who accompanied Gandhiji during his visit to Bikram and later, in the afternoon, to the meeting, were Rajendra Prasad, Jamnalal Bajaj, Satis Chandra Das Gupta, and Jagat Narayan Lal.

3. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[About *September 25,1925*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. The coconut for Nimu should be sent to Amreli for religious reasons. It seems better if it is not sent to the Ashram. This is just my feeling. If the same feeling persists, it can be made use of in future. Ramdas is independent. He has set up a house in Amreli. He finds peace there. Therefore, I would feel happy if the coconut is sent there. I would like that the marriage, whenever it is to take place, should take place at Dr. Mehta's bungalow. However, I will abide by the wishes of Nimu's grandfather. I feel that its performance at Dr. Mehta's bungalow will add to the solemnity of the occasion.

It is good that Nimu has started menstruating. We will be happy to get her married the moment she reaches the age when she can bear the burden of children. If her grandfather is indifferent, I would like to influence Nimu from today itself to postpone her marriage. We seem to believe that Radha, Moti and others have reached the age of marriage. However if their minds are pure, age is of no consequence. Take the case of Miss Schlesin. I find such women here too. Only we believe that the girls should be married off the moment their bodies are filled out. But the experience of the whole world shows that it is not true. Sixteen is the minimum age. Average age should be 20 years. At that age, one is mentally mature. I wish I am able to talk to Nimu as freely as I am able to talk with Ramdas today. Now I would not write anything more. I am happy that we all think of Nimu's good. If we find that she is getting impatient, we will solemnize her marriage soon as we did in Rami's case. I decided to do that after ascertaining Rami's desire myself. I hope you know my programme.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 32852

[1] Ramdas and Nimu got married on January 27, 1928. The letter, however, appears to have been written about the same time as the one to the addressee dated 'before September 23, 1925, *Vide*?Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", before 23-9-1925.

4. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

Saturday, September 26,1925

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I shall reach Bombay on the 20th [October]. Will you come with me to Kutch on the 21st? If so, you should be in Bombay on the 20th. There is a telegram from Devdhar about Manibehn. I have sent it to her. He is willing to take her in December. We may not put Dahyabhai to work in a mill. If we place him with Birla, it is very likely that he would be put to work only in a mill. We shall talk it over when we meet. I am discussing this with Jamnalalji.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have no time to write more.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Sardar Vallabhbhaine

5. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Saturday [*September 26,1925*][1]

CHI. MANI,

I enclose Devdhar's telegram. I think it is better to wait till then. But, meanwhile if you like, I will try to put you in the Sevasadan at Bombay or, if you knows about the schools at Calcutta, but he is not in favour of your joining it. He is, however, willing to make arrangements at the Girls' School at Wardha. There is Marathi in Wardha and you will feel at home there, so it is better to have your first experience there.

Let me know what you wish to do.

Send your reply to me at Patna.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne

[1] As in the source

[2] Gandhiji was in Patna from September 20 to September 29 and also from October 12 to October 15.

6. KHADI PROGRAMME

Although the following letter is full of criticism, I print it in the hope that all workers may learn from it whatever is worth learning:[1]

I hope that no worker will misunderstand the aim behind this criticism. It is the duty of khadi workers to accept whatever part of it is applicable. What has been described as?inducement" by the critic I would call protection or?bounty" as it is known in English. We have forsaken khadi for a long time. It is natural that help should be necessary in the initial stage in order to propagate khadi amongst people who have less or no patriotism in them. Everyone knows that such assistance cannot be given for ever. Even during the period when assistance is given, there must be a gradual butcontinuous improvement in the quality of khadi, the cost of production should come down and the quantum of help diminish. All this is happening. There has been an improvement in the quality, there has been a reduction in the cost and in the assistance given. I am not pained by the fact that the cloth produced in the Amreli Centre is being sent to Bombay, but it pains me that so little is sold in Amreli itself. This is a measure of the sad plight of our country. The thoughtful people of Amreli have not understood their natural duty of wearing khadi. They fail to take advantage of the Ganga which flows by their doorstep. Time alone will improve this state of affairs. The residents of Amreli should let the khadi centre know if it is to blame for sending out locally-manufactured cloth. As far as I know the centre does try to sell khadi locally but its efforts have not met with the success they deserve. In these circumstances, we cannot indeed deprive the poor in Amreli of the help they receive by way of wages for spinning. It is, of course, necessary to see that the women who spin start wearing khadi themselves. Experience suggests that even this cannot be brought about all at once. The women who spin for money do so only to earn something and cannot be asked to buy expensive khadi. They will wear khadi only if we reduce its price for them.

Hence, khadi workers who wish to make khadi wholly self-supporting should take account of the difficulties involved. If they do

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had argued that the cause of khadi could prosper only through the spontaneous endeavour of farmers and not through the efforts of outside workers.

not, it will be impossible to advance the cause of khadi. In such circumstances, one should use one's common sense as to when one should rest satisfied with a little and when one may rest satisfied with anything short of perfection.

But we also need the services of workers who are disinclined to work in such an imperfect field and aim at perfection. The following ways are open to them:

1. If they have the necessary strength—that is, the strength to work and maintain themselves with a little—they should spend all their time in carding, spinning and, if they feel inclined, weaving and thus become self-reliant.

2. Those who do not have such strength should spend in spinning all the time they can spare form their own work and gift that yarn for the sake of the country.

It should not be necessary to say that they themselves should exclusively wear khadi and persuade others to do so . Let us consider in this connection the principles on which the khadi movement is based:

1. Crores of people in India are so poor that a few pice have the same value to them as one rupee.

2. Crores of them remain unemployed for four months in a year.

3. For such persons, there is no other work which can be taken up by one and all and which will produce immediate results.

A khadi worker should objectively apply these principles to his own sphere of work. Only then can we say that the khadi movement is being carried on in a scientific manner. In other words:

1. Those who have other occupations from which they earn something should not be induced to spin for money.

2. Only in those parts where the people are very poor should they induce them to spin for money and even in such places they should pay no more in wages than the country can afford. Experience shows that not more than four annas can be paid for a seer (the weight of forty rupees) of number six yarn .

3. In other places those who spin can be helped only by way of instruction, etc. To spend money for them is to harm the interests of the poor who really need it. It would be a different matter if they themselves offered to pay for instruction. It would also be a different

matter if in a place like Bardoli some people gifted cotton and it was then distributed among others.

4. No money should be spent for those who spin by way of *yajna*. Yarn received in this manner should be treated as a pure gift. It is wrong to accept anything as gift if securing the gift costs as much as the thing itself.

5. Other expenses should be incurred only on training khadi workers, that is, on giving training in spinning, etc., on carrying on propaganda for khadi and on improvements in the spinning-wheel. To put it briefly, money should be spent only when it is likey to benefit the poor for whose sake the spinning movement has been conceived.

Wherever these principles are not followed, there is either ignorance or false attachment, or both, behind the work being done.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-9-1925

7. SOME QUESTIONS

A teacher from Kutch has asked several questions, which I reproduce below and answer, as they deserve to be answered in public:

> 1. I am a school-teacher. I do not posses the required strength of character, truthfulness or capacity for *brahmacharya*, though of course I have been making every effort to develop these qualities. My father is in debt. In these circumstances, do you advise me to resign my post as teacher?

I think that the idea of resigning on the ground of not possessing the necessary strength of character is a very good one. Nevertheless, it is necessary to exercise discretion in this matter. It should not be considered necessary to resign if, as we go ahead with our work, our shortcomings gradually disappear. None of us is perfect. At present we do not come across much strength of character among teachers. We may be satisfied if we are conscientious in our own work and put in our best effort. In such matters, however, the same rule cannot be applied to all. Everyone should decide for himself.

The question about the father's debt is easy to answer. If it was properly incurred, it should be repaid. If he cannot repay it by working as a teacher, he should take up another job or another

profession and repay it.

2. Apart from the moral benefit, is there any advantage to health to be derived from a weekly day of silence?

In a general way, one may say, silence is beneficial to health. However, a person who finds no happiness in silence will derive no benefit to his health.

3. In your book entitled *General Knowledge about Health* you have said that both milk and salt should be given up, the former from the point of view of non-violence and the latter for the sake of health. Anyone who gives up milk would also have to give up ghee, buttermilk and other milk products. Has your opinion on this subject undergone any change, or does it remain what it was?

My views on this subject have not changed, but my practice has. It is my conviction that those who do without milk derive benefit spiritually. Giving up milk and milk products helps one in observing *brahmacharya*. Anyone who gives up milk should also give up buttermilk or ghee. Whether out of my strong desire to live or as a matter of necessity, I consented to take goat's milk. If I were not working in public life, I would again give up milk and continue my experiment. Unfortunately, I have not met any doctor, *vaid* or *hakim* who would guide me in my experiment of milk-free diet. I had hoped that *vaids* would be helpful. I had assumed that the health of the soul had a place in their system. But I have not met a *vaid* who would inspire confidence in me. I have, therefore, been obliged to use milk. I see that it is useful for preserving one's life and health and, therefore, no longer advise anyone to give it up. I do not, however, wish to alter the views expressed in my book. Some of my friends still experiment with a milk-free diet, and I neither discourage nor encourage them.

There are two opinions regarding salt. I do not think that going without salt does any harm. However, I no longer insist upon avoiding salt completely. I know that temporary or permanent abstinence from salt is beneficial from the spiritual point of view. We should remember that through water, etc., we take in a little quantity of salt every day. If anyone wants to try the experiment of milk-free or salt-free diet for the purpose of health, it is desirable that he should do so after consulting a good doctor or *vaid*. Anyone who wants to try this for spiritual reasons should be strong in his desire for a life of abstinence.

4. Anyone who wants to practise ahimsa would have to abstain from almost all kinds of food. Even eating fruit involves violence, as there is life in fruits and flowers too. However, there can be no objection to eating ripe fruits which

have fallen from the tree without anyone having plucked them. But a poor person like me would find it very expensive to live on such fruits. One may, however, live only on wheat, availing oneself of the freedom permitted in certain times and circumstances. Even wheat may be taken only in the form of porridge made from the bran. Vegetables and fruits may be excluded altogether. Would you believe it possible, then, or say from experience, that a young man of nineteen, such as I am, who wishes to remain a *brahmachari* for life, can live his whole life eating only this porridge morning and evening and whether it can provide sufficient nourishment for him?

Even the ripe fruit that falls to the ground has life in it and, therefore, eating it should also be regarded as a sin. The fact of our having a body is itself an evil, and wherever there is evil there is suffering. Hence the imperative need for *moksha*. One cannot, however, be rid of the body by destroying it. Our association with the body can be totally ended only through complete freedom from desire, indifference to material happiness and renunciation. Desire or the ego is the root cause of the body. Once they have vanished, the body cannot but cease to exit. But while the body continues to exist, one must have the minimum quantity of food necessary to keep it functioning. Man's essential requirements of nutrition are met by fruits and foods obtained from plants. Anyone who subsists on the smallest quantity of these, obtaining them with the least violence to ethical principles may be said to be free from sin though living on impure food. Such a person eats not in order to satisfy his palate but to keep himself alive, to keep the body functioning. It will now be seen that a ripe fruit which has fallen off the tree, if eaten to gratify one's palate will be tainted food while a cooked meal of vegetables and cereals, prepared and served in the normal course, will be pure food if eaten to satisfy one's hunger and without any thought of gratifying the palate.

I believe that a person of self-control who is free from any disease, can subsist only on porridge of wheat bran. My advice to the correspondent is that it will be enough if he takes ordinary food, without chillies or other spices, paying no attention to its taste or savour. For observing *brahmacharya*, the essential thing is to learn to be indifferent to the pleasures which objects of sense give. A person who enjoys all manner of rich dishes cannot be said to have conquered the desire for material pleasure. The common people, however, who eat ordinary food may be regarded as having done so. In the last analysis, every individual should examine himself to find

out when he eats in order to gratify his palate and when to meet the needs of his body. Even in the matter of food, we have no straight path before us. The only straight path there is in life is one's heart. The external world is a deceitful illusion; it is like an enormous banyan tree with intertwining boughs, and one has to live in this and attain union with the *Brahman*.

5. If the mind is hankering after food and the body, too, is very hungry, does it do any good to repress the desire and fast?

Whether or not a fast will do any good depends on one's motive and one's capacity to undertake it. The poet has compared the mind to a drunken ape, and to be sure there is no end to its desires. These should be checked every moment.

6. I do not take tea, but the other members of my family do. As I am the earning member, would it be proper on my part to prevent them from doing so by not buying any tea at all? Irrespective of whether or not I am the earning member, would it be regarded as coercion on my relatives if I made them give up tea by resorting to fasting?

The head of the family or the earning member who stops other members from taking tea because he himself does not do so is employing coercion. The right thing for him is to reason with them patiently. As long as they are not converted to his views, I believe that he should buy tea for them. Resorting to fasting simply because others do not stop doing a particular thing is a form of blackmail, and that is coercion.

7. I believe that no one is reformed through physical punishment. If, nevertheless, I punished pupils in my class, would that not be violence on my part? If I did not punish the naughty or the dull pupils myself and sent them instead to the head master, knowing that he would punish them, would I not, in that case, be guilty of violence?

There is violence in punishing pupils and also in sending them to the head master in order that they may be punished. The correspondent has not asked whether a teacher is free to punish any pupil, but the question is implied in the one which he has asked. I myself can imagine a situation in which it becomes one's duty to punish a child who has done something wrong, knowing that it is wrong. Every teacher should think and decide for himself what his duty is. The general rule, however, is that a teacher should never inflict physical punishment on a pupil. If anyone should have this right at all, let it rest with the parents. A punishment is just only if the pupil

himself accepts it as such. Such occasions are not frequent. Even when an occasion has arisen, the pupil should not be punished if there is any doubt about the punishment being justified. In any case, no one should be punished in anger.

8. Supposing I am not really angry—for I know that anger has a harmful effect both on health and character—but even then pretend to be angry with a pupil or threaten to punish without intending to do so, would that be a dishonest act on my part?

We find many people guilty of this wrong. To pretend to punish is altogether reprehensible.

9. I accept the argument that observing *brahmacharya* is the only right method of birth-control. Though my heart accepts this, my reason revolts against it and doubts whether, in the same way that there can be no wrong in the use of any of the other sense-organs, that it might do harm on the contrary not to use them, it might not be harmful not to exercise this function of the body. It was to this effect that the president of the committee for birth-control had addressed a letter to you in *The Chronicle*. Would you, therefore, deal with this argument?

There is no such principle that the use of all organs of the body is essential. The man who deliberately gives up the use of speech lays the world under an obligation. Dharma requires not that we use the sense-organs but that we control them. Control of the senses practised intelligently and voluntarily is beneficial spiritually, and not harmful. The use of the sexual organs is permitted only for the sake of procreation. However, the Shastras honour those who renounce the desire for progeny. The glorification of passion is taken to such lengths in this age that irreligion has come to be known as religion. It is a grave error to believe that the world is benefited by the encouragement or gratification of lust. This is my conviction, this is the testimony of the Shastras and this is the undisputed experience of people who have realized the self. In India, we are forced into the prison of marriage right from childhood. In such circumstances, to devise means for the gratification of passion and establish associations for popularizing them is the very limit of ignorance and of blind imitation. To say that passion cannot be curbed or that curbing it is harmful is itself very harmful. I have no doubt that the Indian nation will lose vigour and finally perish if a movement for encouraging the gratification of lust ever comes to thrive in this country of weaklings. Methods of birth-control which permit the gratification of lust may

not be harmful in countries where the human body has the strength of a monster and is nourished on food and drink proper for a monster, but India's good lies only in the lesson of self-control.

> 10. One who practises ahimsa cannot use any conveyance and must give up eating almost all edible substances. The question then arises, why did God create these substances and these animals which draw the vehicles? God's will is inscrutable, but, I shall be obliged if all the same you could say something on this subject.

The answer to this is included in the answer given above. Nevertheless, it could be added that one who practises ahimsa does not necessarily refuse the use of vehicles for conveyance when absolutely necessary. There are many things which it is best to give up altogether. There are some which it would be enough to give up as far as possible. All God's creations are related to one another. Every creature is the living image of some human desire or other. Just as, therefore, it is good to renounce desire, it is good to stop exploiting other living beings. Everyone should set his own limits. For instance, those who can make do with earth may not use soap, but they should also not be guilty of greater violence by criticizing others who do use soap. While walking on thorny or hot ground, one may freely use shoes to protect one's feet, but one should walk barefoot when there is no need to wear shoes.

There are some other questions which need not be stated, as they can be inferred from the answers given.

1. It is absolutely necessary for anyone doing exercise to wear drawers. Even in the West they think it necessary to do this.

2. It is beneficial to drink hot water in the morning soon after rising and brushing one's teeth. Many people drink even cold water which is clean. In any case, the practice does no harm.

3. To grow one's hair while living as a householder means either accumulating dirt on one's person or spending much time in keeping it clean. The best thing for a man is to keep only a small tuft of hair in the centre and have the rest cut or shaved. If people would listen to me, I would certainly have even girl's hair cut. We believe that hair adds to one's beauty because we are used to growing hair long. Beauty lies in conduct and not in external appearance. That hair cannot be cut or shaved as it is something natural is a mere superstition. We cut our nails. If we failed to do so, they would accumulate dirt, or we would have to be cleaning them the whole day.

By taking a bath we constantly remove the outer layer on skin. We shall not consider here the rules which apply to those who live in forests and have stopped doing many things which people normally do.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-9-1925

8. MY NOTES

IS IT TRUE?

I was absolutely taken aback by the account which I read in *Navajivan* of the High School in Borsad. I feel all the time that it could not be true. I have a faint recollection that I have met the head master of that school. I know him as a brave person. Vallabhbhai has lived in Borsad and has unfurled the flag of victory there. Could such disgraceful conduct be possible on the part of the principal, parents and students? If Vithalbhai, who is the President of the Assembly, can attend it in only a khadi shirt, cannot the students of Barsad go to school clad in a similar way?

If Shri Kalidas Dave[1] has been misinformed, I request the head master to correct his error. If the information is correct and there is anything which he would like to say in defence, I am prepared to hear it and publish it. If there is no defence, I hope that teachers, trustees and parents would not descend so low in order to secure recognition for the school.

THE ?GOSHALA" AT CHAIBASA

Chaibasa is a small town in Chhotanagpur. The scenery there is beautiful and the climate is good. I was taken to see the *goshala* there. The secretary is an energetic man. His views are liberal but the donors do not let him have his way. The criticism I have made against other *goshalas* applies to this one too. This institution has been in existence for twenty-seven years. During this period, a sum of one and a half lakhs of rupees has been received by way of donations and ten thousand head of cattle have been provided shelter. Two to three hundred are given shelter every year. But we cannot rest satisfied with this. A *goshala*, if run systematically, would become self-supporting

[1] Editor, *Kelavani Ank*—the educational supplement of *Navajivan*

in twenty-seven years. Milk, curds, etc., are produced in this one. But how much can one person do? How is it possible to have the animals examined so long as there is no expert in animal husbandry available?

A special feature of this *goshala* which was brought to my knowledge was that dead cattle were given away free. Nothing was charged for their hides. The more I think about the matter the more I realize that by not utilizing hides, etc., of dead cows through the *goshala* we encourage cow-slaughter and reduce our capacity to protect cows. One of the principal tasks of those working in this field is to fight the superstitious prejudice against trading in hides of dead cattle. One dead cow, it may be said, saves the life of another cow. I am making a thorough study of the economics of this subject. But even my present partial study is enough to convince me that we lose at least ten rupees on each animal which dies by not directly utilizing its hide. In any case, it is ultimately we who use this hide.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-9-1925

9. LETTER TO BISHAN NATH

September 27, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

You have not told me why you are leaving the board nor why your interest or faith in khadi is on the wane. I see nothing wrong in accepting wages for national service faithfully rendered.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

LALA BISHAN NATH
PUNJAB KHADDAR BOARD
PURI
LAHORE

From a photostat : G.N. 7942

10. LETTER TO V.G. DESAI

Aso Sud 10 [*September 27,1925*][1]

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I have both your letters. You may come and stay at Dr. Mehta's bungalow. Occupy only the portion that you need, so that the rest may be available for other visitors. Decide this matter with Chi. Chhaganlal and Maganlal. Start collecting literature on cow-protection. Think over it and find out how the cow-protection movement started. Take help, if you need, from someone. Collect literature on dairies and tanneries. I hope you will become a spinning member of the cow-protection association. Much against my wish, I am publishing that pamphlet[2] as a supplement of *Y.I.* Read my explanation in *Y.I.*

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 7741. Courtesy : V.G. Desai

11. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Ashvina Sud 10 [*September 27,1925*][3]

CHI. VASUMATI,

Your letter. You must now be steady, that is, steady in mind. You must definitely tell me what worries you even now. I am both father and mother. If a daughter does not confide everything to her mother, to whom else will she? As the train is moving, I cannot write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

TILL THE 15TH : BIHAR

20TH: BOMBAY

21ST TO 3RD NOV.: KUTCH

THEN ASHRAM

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9219; also C.W. 468. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

[1] From the postmark

[2] The reference is to the?Cow-protection Supplement" issued by the Ghatkopar Humanitarian Association without the permission of Gandhiji, who was then the President of the All-India Cow-protection Association, but in anticipation of it. For Gandhiji's comments on this supplement, *vide*?Notes", 1-10-1925.

[3] The letter bears the postmark, Bhagalpur:1-10-1925. *Ashvina Sud* 10 fell on September 27.

12. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

PATNA,
Aso Sud 10 [*September 27, 1925*][1]

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. I shall not trouble you much about Lohani just now.

Jamnalalji told me that the amount of Rs. 25,000 you gave to the Muslim University was to be considered as part of the Rs. 60,000 promised by you at Juhu. Such was [not] my understanding; and I was planning to spend Rs. 60,000 on other things. But if what you meant was in fact not what I thought you meant, I have nothing to say.

There is another thing. You know my views on cow-protection. Shri Madhusudan Das owns a tannery at Cuttack which he has developed into a limited company. I feel like acquiring a majority of its shares with a view to controlling it for public benefit in the interest of cow-protection. The tannery's liabilities amount to Rs. 1,20,000. It is necessary to rescue it from this dead weight. The tannery uses only the hides of dead animals, but the hides of specially-killed *patlaghos*[2] are also used. In case it is decided to take over the tannery, three conditions should be insisted on :

1. Only hides of dead animals will be taken;
2. The practice of killing *patlaghos* for the sake of their hides must be discontinued;
3. The idea of charging interest[3] must be given up; if there is any profit, it should be used for the expansion of the tannery.

I would like you to take over the tannery provided it is available on these terms; I would also like you to undertake its management. If that is not practicable, I shall find someone else who can manage it. The tannery has a few acres of land which I have seen myself. Shri Madhusudan Das has spent a considerable amount on it out of his own pocket.

Thirdly, there is the All-India Spinners' Association. Can you

[1] Reference in the letter to the tour in Bihar which Gandhiji left on October 15,1925, suggests that the letter was written in that year.

[2] Kind of iguana

[3] In the source the word ',ÍÃ' (yarn) has been used. It appears to be a slip for the word ',ÍÔŒ' (interest).

give your co-operation in this work? I would like you to contribute a handsome amount to the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund.

Jamnalalji will have a detailed talk with you on all these three matters, if he happens to meet you in Delhi.

Is your wife feeling better?

I shall be in Bihar till the 15th.

Yours sincerely,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 6113; also *Gandhijiki Chhatrachhayamen*
Courtesy: G. D. Birla

13. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

The A.I.C.C. has come to a wise decision. It enables the Cawnpore Congress to devote its full time to the problem of the hour and to devise a method to make it possible for others to join it. But, before it could do so, it had to set right the relations between the two Congress Parties. The All-India Congress Committee has done that. The All-India Spinners' Association has been installed to further the Congress cause and not in opposition to it. All Congressmen and others who believe in the value of spinning should join it and make it a success.

The Hindu, 28-9-1925

14. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Aso Sud 11 [*September 28,1925*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letters. Owing to the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee,[2] a lot of papers are in arrears. I shall be in Bihar till the 15th. Then I shall go direct from Bombay to Kutch. I shall reach the Ashram by 6th November. Take care of your health. How did you keep in the Ashram? Did you like your stay there? How was Laxmi doing?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 467. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

[1] From the postmark

[2] Held at Patna on September 22, 23 and 24

15. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

Aso Sud 11 [*September 28, 1925*][1]

BHAI DEVCHANDBHAI

I have your letter. We must take care of both the parties. In some parts of India where there is acute poverty, a lot of khadi is made. We must make others wear it. Are the millionaires going to spin all the yarn they need for themselves?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5698

16. LETTER TO FULCHAND SHAH

Aso Sud 11 [*September 28, 1925*][2]

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,[3]

I have both your letters. If the untouchables are denied the right to enter the Municipality, try to educate public opinion. Go to Thakore Saheb[4] but do not start a satyagraha. The *Antyajas* can go to the Municipality and fight. What is needed is patience. You may read what I have said in a general way about [caste] dinners in my article[5] sent for *Navajivan*. If we work patiently, calmly and gently, the *mahajan* will come round.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2830. Courtesy: Shardabehn Shah

[1] From the postmark; the date of delivery is 2-10-1925.

[2] From the postmark

[3] Fulchand Kasturchand Shah, a Congress worker of Wadhwan in Saura-shtra

[4] The ruler of the then princely State of Wadhwan

[5] Gandhiji refers here, presumably, to his article,?If Expelled from One's Community", 11-10-1925.

17. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Ashwin Sud 11 [*September 28, 1925*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Meet the lady[2] on the date she mentions, help her disembark and send her to Sabarmati. She must get off at Ahmedabad. Send a wire about her arrival to the Ashram. The lady has written many letters.

Keep this letter safe. You may send it to Mahadev if you like after taking down the name and the address. Or, you may send it to him later.

Enrol members for the Charkha Sangh. Also collect money. Collect money for cow-protection work too.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall leave Patna on the 30th. I shall leave Bihar on the 15 and reach Bombay on the 20th. On the 20th I shall board the steamer for Mandvi.

From the Courtesy: original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

18. LETTER TO GOPABANDHU DAS

PATNA,
September 29, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. After all I am glad you did not come to Patna. For I was able to understand the case against Mahavir Singh[3] without any difficulty. Both Niranjan Babu and he were present. It has

[1] The year has been inferred from Gandhiji's itinerary mentioned in the letter. In 1925, *Aashwin Sud 11* corresponded to September 28.

[2] Madeleine Slade, later known as Mirabehn, was scheduled to arrive at Bombay on November 6, 1925.

[3] President, Utkal Provincial Congress Committee. He had been charged by the Sambalpur District Congress Committee with?embezzlement of national money."

now been arranged that Niranjan Babu should send Mahavir Singh the papers he wants. There would be no difficulty about getting his admission of the debt. But there is likely to be great difficulty about recovery. I have undertaken to settle the dispute about the jurisdiction in Singhbhum, C.P., Andhra and elsewhere, so far as the Congress is concerned. I should very much like you to have a written case prepared together with the evidence you will produce in support of your case. Each case should be short and precise. I would then ask for the replies of the other parties. I am glad of your determination to stick to the flood area and organize charkha relief there. I would like you so much to succeed in this effort of yours. I hope you liked the A.I.C.C. resolutions and the All-India Spinners' Association constitution. I hope you are keeping well. I send you herewith a resolution[1] received from Sambalpur.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 7747 . Courtesy: Radhanath Rath

19. LETTER TO N. C. KELKAR

PATNA,
September 29,1925

DEAR MR. KELKAR,

I have received a copy of the Government's order regarding Mr. Nanjappa's case. How do you think we should proceed?

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: C.W. 3116. Courtesy: K. N. Kelkar

[1] Not reproduced here. The resolution *inter alia* invited Gandhiji to settle the dispute between the Utkal Provincial Congress Committee and the Sambalpur District Congress Committee.

20. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, PATNA[1]

September 29,1925

Mahatma Gandhi replying expressed his gratitude for the presentation of the address. It was not the first time that he had come into their midst. It was now four years since he had met them last and, though he recollected the details of that visit vividly and the fact that though both he and they were the same, the difference between then and now was tremendous. He scarcely needed to dilate on it, the difference in the atmosphere about them and in their outlook. He was glad to be able to meet them and he would like to address them briefly on their civic duties and problems connected with municipal life which was dear to him and of which he could claim some knowledge. If the municipal commissioners and citizens of a town were to attend seriously to municipal improvement, they would be doing a great service to the country. It was supremely necessary to do so, for the reflection of town life on their villages was unmistakable. If town life was dirty, the dirt and the squalor were reflected in the villages as well. If they had cinemas in the towns, village life was also to some extent influenced. He had seen this interconnection between towns and villages for himself in Bengal and he remembered vividly the charges made against town-dwellers by village folk. On the residents in a town the responsibility lay not only of keeping their towns pure, their lanes clean, but they had a duty towards their village brethren. Little though that duty might be, it made them in some sense the trustees of the villages. In the manner they in the towns conducted themselves, the people in the villages would.

The worst was their inner life was becoming as dirty as the dirt accumulated about them. There were not many roads in Patna and yet, when he saw their condition, he felt pained beyond measure just as he was on seeing the degeneration in their inner life. There were some very pertinent questions in respect of their civic duties which he would put before them. Did they properly look after the cleanliness of the town or did they leave it solely to the *Bhangis*? What arrangements, if any, had they made for suply of pure and cheap milk to the children? Were their men and women as dirty as were likely to impart their own dirt to others? What did they do for their untouchables? And, lastly, did they have drink shops in the town and, if so, how many? He knew they could not altogether control the number and the existence of these shops and much depended on the Government. But it was not altogether the fault of the government either, for if they bestirred themselves, satisfied those who drank about

[1] The meeting organized by the Patna Municipality, was held in Mangal's Tank Grounds and was largely attended. An address was presented to Gandhiji on behalf of the Municipality.

the evils the habit generated and provided them with suitable substitutes, why should people insist on infesting the grog shops? These were all questions which the ratepayers should attend to. If they did that, they could once more make their towns as clean and as beautiful as they were in the past.

He had often used strong language about Western civilization; he stood by all that he had said and he had to withdraw nothing. But he could distinguish good from bad and see and accept good even in things evil. And in this matter of civic life, the West had gone very much ahead. In the Western countries, particularly in England and America, people lived mostly in towns because they were not agriculturists, but engaged in industrial labour. How to keep their towns clean, how to provide those necessities and amentities which were unavoidable for decent living—in these the Westerners were truly their exemplars. Drink, of course, was rampant in the West. But let them take a look at how they dealt with epidemics in the West. The manner in which they grappled with it, stemmed its onward progress and finally killed it contrasted disagreeably with the apathy they in India displayed over the matter. He would appeal to them never to overlook the solemn duties that devolved on them as citizens of a town, to think over them earnestly and to discharge them to the best of their powers.

Adverting to the question of untouchables, Mahatmaji was glad they had frankly admitted their fault in the address they had presented him.[1] But admissions were valuable only if they were followed by efforts to remove the things admitted. Till they were able to serve their untouchable brethren to enter into their lives and to remove the hardships which beset them, they would fail in the discharge of their sloemn duty. To say that they were Hindus and believed in the religion of *daya* and dharma and yet to shun untouchables was to emphasize an incompatibility. If they said that their religion taught them to believe in *himsa*, he had nothing to say to them. But if, on the other hand, they believed in ahimsa as a cardinal principle of their faith, they could not possibly face the world with that crime of untouchability on their head.

Proceeding Mahatmaji said that, if they were earnest in atoning for the stink they had been introducing into the villages, they could not help remembering the grim poverty in the land and thus they were brought face to face with the only feasible

[1] The address had stated:?. . . No special arrangements have been made for the uplift of the untouchables and the depressed—a cause most dear to your heart—although there have been in existence two schools for the untouchables and there is no restriction to their admission in the other schools as well."

remedy of that poverty—spinning and the charkha. He prayed that the townsmen should have this much of sense in them as to realize that, if they could not purify the villages, they could at least do their bit to remove poverty. God would not forgive them for shunning cloth made of yarn produced by their sisters in the villages, regarding that cloth as coarse, and to take to mill produce, thereby plunging their sisters into poverty. He was grieved to find that the khaddar depot in the town sold only Rs. 2,000 worth of cloth every month and that there was Rs. 2,00,000 worth of stock in the depot. It was a complete misunderstanding of the real scope and purpose of khaddar for people to urge that imported and Indian mill-made stuffs were comparatively cheaper. They must remember that all that they paid for khaddar went directly into the pockets of their poorer countrymen, whereas but a small fraction of it did so in the case of the cloth manufactured in the Indian mills. Their duty towards the poorer brothers was supreme and must transcend all other considerations, so much so that he for one would not appreciate that, while they starved the poor, they might present him with gilded addresses.

Proceeding, Mahatmaji said that he had deliberately refrained from speaking of Hindu-Muslim unity, for holding as he did that both Hindus and Mohammedans had gone mad it was no use speaking to lunatics. But if they dwelt awhile on all that he had told them, he felt he would feel he had not come to them in vain.

Concluding, the speaker appealed to the people present to contribute to the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund which was being raised for the purpose of village reconstruction that was so dear to the late lamented leader.

The Searchlight, 7-10-1925

21. LETTER TO JAWAHARILAL NEHRU

September 30,1925

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

We are living in strange times. Sitla Sahai may defend himself. Please keep me informed of further developments. What is he? Is he a lawyer? Had he ever any connection with revolutionary activity?

As for the Congress, it would be better to make it as simple as possible so as to enable the present remaining workers to cope with it. I know that your burden will be now increased. But you must not endanger your health in any way whatsoever. I am anxious about your health. I do not at all like these frequent attacks of fever you are having. I wish you could give yourself and Kamala a holiday.

Father has written to me. Of course, I never wanted to go as far as he supposes. I would not think of asking anyone to support father. But I would not hesitate to ask a friend or friends who would consider it a privilege to pay you for your public services. I would press you to take it from public funds, if your wants owing to the situation in which you are and must be were not extraordinary. I am myself convinced that you should contribute to the common purse either by doing some business or by letting your personal friends find funds for retaining your services. There is no immediate hurry but without fretting about it, come to a final decision. I will not mind even if you decided to do some business. I want your mental peace. I know that you will serve the country even as manager of a business. I am sure that father will not mind any decision you may arrive at so long as it gives you complete peace.

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

I see that I must reserve the right hand for*Y.I.*

A Bunch of Old Letters, p. 44

22. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

Aso Sud 13, 1981 [*September 30, 1925*]

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your letter. It is good that you have discussed the matter in detail. Let me first take up what you have written about the franchise of the new khadi organization.[1] You must have come to know from the newspapers that there are two categories of franchise. [A member of] the first category has to spin and send one thousand yards every month, while [a member of] the second has to spin and send two thousand yards every year. We can include the professional spinners in the second category, but we shall not do so just now. We should so work that we do not give rise to the fear that we may capture the Congress with the help of these voters. In this way we can free the Swaraj Party from fear and suspicion. It does not mean that we want to restrict the number of new spinners. We should enrol as many of them as possible, and herein lies the success of this Association. By putting a contribution of two thousand yeards for the second category, we have made it easy for the new spinners. Even half a pound of cotton is not consumed in spinning two thousand yards of yarn of five or six counts. This much cotton would cost less than 4 annas and, if the yarn is finer, it would hardly cost 2 as. Whatever the member contributes to the Association over and above the cost of cotton is like his respectful offering to the spinning-wheel. And at present the Association would welcome even this. So you see this suits your wishes. Now let us consider the next problem raised by you, that of the production and sale of khadi.

In regard to the sale of khadi the procedure of the old Association is quite clear. It gives interest-free advances against good surety to traders in khadi. The margin of profit has been kept at $6\frac{1}{4}$ per cent so that they should not be tempted to charge higher prices and exploit the people's love for khadi; in case of loss, the association undertakes to compensate it by a bounty of 2 per cent. In this manner, the traders will gradually stand on their own, and the Association will have little to do in this regard. Thus, you will find that there is nothing to object to in this procedure, seeing that it involves little

[1] The All-India Spinners' Association, whose constitution was finalized on September 24, 1925.

botheration and has the additional advantage of getting the use of the traders' capital.

Now let us come to the question of production. This involves training people through the spread of education in schools to spin and wear clothes made out of their own yarn. This work must continue. The result of this effort, however, will be visible only in the long run. Therefore, it would not be right to depend entirely on this. The more I observe the more I notice that we have not yet been able to reach those areas where the spinning-wheel is natural and cheap. In some of these areas, the work is going on in such a way that they can afford to maintain skilled workers and pay them adequate wages. We can easily put the khadi work on a sound footing by deputing to such areas adequately paid experts in the craft and the economics of khaddar to remedy the few defects found there. If we cut down on this, it would be short-sighted economy. Therefore I think it necessary to employ paid experts in the trade and technique of khadi. I see the need of many such men. But we do not have trained men. Therefore, we must find men who claim to love this work and undertake to train them. I have also seen from experience that it won't do to have men who have had mere superficial training. It is essential to give them thorough training. For this purpose, we should have one or more centres to impart all-round training in khadi.

Thus, we will try to infuse life in those areas which show signs of hope, but which are dormant and backaward. At the same time, we shall have to put in great effort in some areas which seem to be recalcitrant. We shall have to patronize the weavers also for some time. Otherwise, there will always be danger of every kind of deceit and frequent depression, and it is quite likely that our work may be washed out. In order to cope with all these problems, I think we need an army of efficient, staunch and honest workers. We must not be impatient in this matter. We should be careful in the choice of men. We should also practise strict economy. I am sure all this work will not be difficult if we are alert. I have no doubt that as and when these areas get stabilized, they will earn the hire of the workers. I am already noticing several such instances.

Besides this, there are many other matters which I wish to explain to you. But I leave them for another occasion. Remamber that khadi has to be produced also to prevent famine. We may not turn back a single woman who wants to spin for her livelihood. Hence we will need houses, etc.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5727

23 . LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

[*September/October, 1925*][1]

MY DEAREST CHARLIE,

Though you do not want me to write to you, I cannot help.

What can be the cause of Gurudev wanting you? God who has kept you from harm so long, will keep you as long as he needs your service. But you sometimes will not help Him even where you can and must. And for you to have nervousness about anything or anybody is bad. When I see you anxious about anything, I ask myself, what is the meaning of 'Be careful for nothing'.

Your Jamshedpur report is wonderful. Only you could have written it. No beating about the bush.

I am all with you in keeping up the *langoti* for the Bhil children.

With deepest love,

Yours,

MOHAN

[PS.]

Never again eating rich foods even to please the host. I should like that definite promise.

[PPS.]

Kristodas has just showed me your reference to a cobra creeping on me. I wish what you say was a true account. The gentleman did creep up, but that was after prayer whilst I was lying and we were talking. There was even a little stir. I kept still while a friend removed the cloth covering me on which it had crept. You should send a correction I think.

6, DWARKANATH LANE

From a photostat: G.N. 2640; also *Charles Freer Andrew*, p. 208

[1] The date is as given in *Charles Freer Andrews* by Benarsidas Chaturvedi and Marjorie Sykes. Cf., however,"Comments of C. F. Andrews's Letter", 5-6-1924, the subject of *langoti* for Bhil children referred to in the letter is first discussed.

24. THE ALL - INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTE

The transfer of power into the Swarajists' hands was completed by the All-India Congress Committee at Patna. The resolutions[1] were keenly debated and on the whole with the greatest self-restraint. The majorities for the different parts of the resolution were not always as large as I had expected or desired, so as to warrant a change in the constitution of a parent body by its subordinate. But I feel that I consulted the best interests of the country in allowing the resolutions. I have admitted before now that the making of the change in the constitution was outside the ordinary jurisdiction of the All-India Congress Committee and that it was of the nature of a rebellion. But I hold that it is the duty of every institution jealous of its reputation courageously to face such a crisis if it is convinced that the rebellion is needed for the existence or welfare of the insititution itself. It was for that reason that I invited the Committee in the first instance to decide whether a crisis had arisen justifying a change in the constitution without waiting for the Congress session. The majority in favour of an immediate change was overwhelming. I was not, therefore, insistent upon similar majorities in connection with votes for the resolution itself. It now remains for the congress either to endorse the action of the All-India Congress Committee or to censure it by rejecting it or even to censure the action even while accepting its decision, it being an accomplished fact. It was suggested by one or two members that censure was an impossible thing because the resolution of the All-india Congress Committee was to be enforced immediately and that therefore those who would come to the Congress would come naturally under the new franchise and those who benefited by it could hardly be expected to censure the action of their benefactor. Such, however, need not be the case. If the change made by the Committee is resented on pure constitutional grounds, even men who may take advantage of the benefit conferred may still very properly condemn the unconstitutional action of the Committee. They may admit the advisability of the change but repudiate the right of All-India Congress Committee to make it under any circumstance whatsoever.

As to the substance of the change made, there is really nothing

[1] *Vide*"A. I. C. C. Resolutions", 1-10-1925.

drastic in it. No interest in injured. No single person is disfranchised. No single party is in a worse position than it was before the change. Non-co-operators need not complain, because non-co-operation as a national policy has been suspended. The constructive programme remains unaffected. Hand-spinning and khaddar still remain part of the national programme. The Council programme which was being worked by the Swaraj Party in the name of the Congress will now be worked by the Congress through the Swaraj Party . This may be called a distinction without a difference. Those who put spinning before the political programme and those who believe in spinning to the exclusion of any political programme strictly so called are not injured because they have a separate organization for its development and because hand-spinning still remains as an alternative part of the franchise and the use of khaddar on Congress and other public occasions still remains obligatory. Nor are the other parties who are outside the Congress adversely affected by it. Whereas under the Belgaum resolution they had to convert or negotiate with both No-changers and Swarajists, now they have only to convert or confer with the Swarajists. The change therefore in every respect extends the right of representation and makes the union of all the parties less difficult than it was. No Congress can possibly resent a change in extension of pupular liberty. What is more, the change in my opinion, is in accordance with the requirements of those who have hitherto been identified with the Congress. For them, perhaps, it does not go far enough. I should be sorry if such is the fact.

The discussion at the meeting betrayed on the part of some members a fear that the delivery of the yarn suscription directly to the All-India Spinners' Association might result in an unscrupulous exploitation of professional spinners or, worse still, in dishonest practices to flood the Congress, thus bringing about an undesirable state of things and defeating the very end sought to be accomplished by the resolution. This fear was felt not if the yarn was to be delivered at the centre, but if it was to be delivered to the provincial agencies. There was no difficulty in meeting this objection. The clause in the constitution of the Association requiring Congress members who wanted to spin rather than pay a four-anna subscription to send their yarn to the central offices was inserted to meet this difficulty. My own view is certainly not to flood the Congress with spinners and thus to convert it once more into a purely or predominantly spinners' organization to the exclusion of Council policies. I would like it to be so undoubtedly, but that can only happen when those to whom the

transfer has been made bcome converted to spinning out and out. And that can only happen by the spinners' action not within the Congress but without it. If hand-spinning has any intrinsic vitality and becomes so universal as to bring us within a measurable distance of excluding foreign cloth—and that can happen only by incessant and exclusive effort on the part of those who believe in spinning out and out, working out their belief in practice—the Swarajists will become complete converts. My strong advice, therefore, is that those who are at present spinning members of the Congress may, if they wish, continue to be so by sending their yarn to he central office. No canvassing need be made by them for increasing the strength of membership through hand-spinning. They may work to the utmost of their ability to enrol as many members of the Association as possible. And if we can get a large number of voluntary spinners drawn not from the professional class, but from those who spin purely for sacrifice and not for livelihood, it would be an achievement that cannot but tell. But, at the present moment, and up to the time that all suspicion is set at rest, they should refrain from becoming members of the Congress. I have always held that the National Congress should have no wrangling within its ranks and that there should be no unseemly attempt to capture the Congress. Those who cannot see eye to eye with the policy of the majority should either refrain from fighting to the division point in vital matters, or if their conscience would not allow it they should for the time being retire altogether from the Congress. I will, therefore, urge the fierce Non-co-operators, who if they remain in the Congress would consider it their duty to fight the Swarajists at every step and stage, to retire from the Congress, and build up public opinion if they so will, from without. They must leave the Swarajists an open field and give them the best opportunity of working out their policy. In my opinion, if they are to create an impression upon the government they must have the Congress organization undisturbed by Non-co-operators.

Hence, in my opinion, wherever the two parties are evenly balanced, Non-co-operators or No-changers should surrender full control to theSwarajists and voluntarily give up offices if they hold any. Where the No-changers are in an overwhelming majority, they should not hamper the Swarajists, and should help them wherever they conscientiously can. In no case may any Congres Committee put up for the legislatures condidates that are not selected by the Swarajists or are in opposition to them.

One pleasing thing I must not omit to note. There was a decided inclination on the part of the majority to make khaddar wear the

National dress for all Congressmen. The motion to that end was not pressed only when it became clear that it would embarrass the Swaraj Party. But an improvement upon the Belgaum resolution was heartily accepted to the effect that whilst khaddar was obligatory on Congress and other public occasions it was expected of all Congressmen to wear khaddar on all the occasions, but in no case shall they wear or use foreign cloth.

Young India, 1-10-1925

25. TO VOLUNTARY SPINNERS

The Secretaries ask me to draw the attention of voluntary spinners to the following.:

Every person wishing to join the Association shall apply in the following form:

TO

THE SECRETARY,

ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION,

SABARMATI

DEAR SIR,

I have read the rules of the A.I.S.A. I desire to become a member of lass/ an associate member and I forward herewith my subscription for . . . .

Please enrol me as a member.

Yours faithfully,

2. The yarn must be sent direct to Sabarmati.
3. A slip containing the following particulars of information should be attached to the yarn:
   - I. Name and address of the member, denoting Congress province and taluqa.
   - ii. Month of subscription.
   - iii. (a) Length of yarn.
     - (b) Weight of yarn.
     - (c) Count of yarn.
     - (d) Size of hank.
     - (e) Kind of cotton used.

Those two hundred who gave their names at the inauguration meeting of the Association please note,

Young India, 1-10-1925

26. SIKHISM

During his visit to Patna for the A.I.C.C., Sardar Mangal Singh drew my attention to an article in *Young India* entitled"My friend, the revolutionary" in the issue dated 9th April last.[1] He told me that many Sikh friends were offended because they thought I have described Guru Govind Singh as a misguided patriot whereas I had glorified krishna. The Sardarji asked me to take an early opportunity of explaining what I meant by the passages he drew my attention to. The careful reader will note that my language is most guarded. I have made no positive assertion. All that I have said is that believing every statement made about the heroes mentioned including Guru Govind Singh to be true, had I lived as their contemporary I would have called every one of them a misguided patriot. But, in the very next sentence, I have hastened to add that I must not judge them and that I disbelieve history as far as the details of the acts of the heroes are concerned. My belief about the Sikh Gurus is that they were all deeply religious teachers and reformers, that they were all Hindus and that Guru Govind Singh was one of the greatest defenders of Hinduism. I believe, too, that he drew the sword in its defence. But I cannot judge his actions, nor can I use him as my model so far as his resort to the sword is concerned. What I would have done had I lived in his times and held the same views that I hold now I do not know. Such speculation I regard as perfect waste of time. I do not regard Sikhism as a religion distinct from Hinduism. I regard it as part of Hinduism and the reformation in the same sense that *vaishnavism* is. I read in the Yeravda Prison all the writings that I could lay my hands upon regarding the Sikhs. I read portions of Granth Saheb. Its deeply spiritual and moral tone I found to be uplifting. In the collection of hymns we have at the *Ashram*, we have some of Guru Nanak's also. At the same time, I do not quarrel with the Sikhs for considering, if they wish, Sikhism as totally distinct from Hinduism. And when during my first visit to the Punjab, a few Sikh friends told me that my reference to Sikhism as part of Hinduism displeased them, I ceased to refer to it as such. But the Sikh friends will pardon me for avowing my belief when I am asked to express my opinion about Sikhism.

Now about Krishna. Whilst I have dealt with the Gurus as

[1] *Vide*"My Friend, the Revolutionary", 9-4-1925.

historical personages about whose existence we have trustworthy records, I have no knowledge that the Krishna of the *Mahabharata* ever lived. My Krishna has nothing to do with any historical person. I would refuse to bow my head to the Krishna who would kill because his pride is hurt, or the Krishna whom non-Hindus portray as a dissolute youth. I believe in Krishna of my imagination as a perfect incarnation, spotless in every sense of the word, the inspirer of the *Gita* and the inspirer of the lives of millions of human beings. But if it was proved to me that the *Mahabharata* is history in the same sense that modern historical books are, that every word of the *Mahabharata* is authentic and that the Krishna of the *Mahabharata* actually did some of the acts attributed to him, even at the risk of being banished from the Hindu fold, I should not hesitate to reject that Krishna as God incarnate. But to me the *Mahabharata* is a profoundly religious book, largely allegorical, in no way meant to be a historical record. It is the description of the eternal duel going on within ourselves, given so vividly as to make us think, for the time being that the deeds described therein were actually done by the human beings. Nor do I regard the *Mahabharata* as we have it now as a faultless copy of the original. On the contrary I consider that it has undergone many emendations.

Young India, 1-10-1925

27. ALL -INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION

The reader will see printed elsewhere the constitution of the All-India Spinners' Association. A careful study of it will show that it is, at the present moment, not only not a democratic institution but that, in efect, it is a one man's show. It may represent either the arrogance of the person who calls into being such an institution or his absolute faith in the cause and in himself. So far as man can be aware of himself, I know that there is no arrogance in giving an autocratic character to the Association. Commercial bodies can never be democratic. And if hand-spinning is to become universal and successful in the country, its non-political and purely economical side must be now fully developed. That development is sought to be attained by the All-India Spinners' Association.

In choosing my colleagues in the Association, I have been guided by the sole consideration of utility. Each one has been selected

for his special qualification. In making the selection there was no question of representation of different provinces. And some of the best workers have been left out of the Council because of the possibility of misunderstandings. What special qualification from the spinners' standpoint has Maulana Shaukat Ali, it may be asked. The special qualification that he has is that he is a Mussalman, a pukka believer in khadi, wants to spin one thousand yards every month and to do all he can for the charkha and khaddar. I have purposely omitted active Swarajists because, for obvious reasons, they cannot give their time predominantly to khaddar.

At the time of the formation of the Association at which I was assisted by over one hundred khaddar lovers, including Swarajists, I was asked whether I had ceased to believe in the political importance of khadi or of its ability to produce an atmosphere for civil resistance. My answer was an emphatic 'no'. The political importance of khaddar consists in its economic capacity. A people that are starving for want of occupation can have no political consciousness. Khaddar will have no political importance in a country where no cloth is needed and where people live on hunting, or in a country where people live on exploitation of peoples belonging to other countries. The political importance of khaddar in India is derived from her peculiar condition in that it needs cloth, it exploits no other country, and its millions have nothing to do for four months in the year, though they are starving. The ability of khaddar to give an atmosphere of civil resistance consists in its ability, if successful, of making us conscious of some power within us and its ability to produce an atmosphere of calmness, and yet fixed determination behind that calmness. Many people who have civil resistance on their lips have still little notion of what it means. They mix it up with an atmosphere of intense excitement, ready at any moment to develop into actual violence, whereas civil resistance is the very opposite of it. And neither the political result nor the calm atmosphere are possible without khadi becoming an economic success. Hence it is necessary to emphasize its paramount and economic aspect which is also its direct result. The preamble, therefore, is deliberate and vital. The fiercest politician and the fiercest civil resister may join the Association, but he does so as an economic worker. No maharaja need shun the Association if he admits the great economic value of khadi and the paramount necessity of finding a proper supplementary employment for the starving millions of India. I, therefore, venture to invite all

those who believe in khadi and the spinning-wheel to join the Association irrespective of their politics and irrespective of race or creed. I would invite Englishmen and other Europeans who are mindful of the welfare of the starving millions of India to join the Association. I know that there are many who believe in khadi, who believe in hand-spinning, but will not spin themselves. Let them become Associates, if they will not even wear khadi and yet want khadi to make all the progress it can. Let them support want khadi to make all the progress it can. Let them support the Association with their donations.

Let there be, however, no mistake that so long as it pleases the Congres to allow it, the Association will remain an integral part of the Congress organization. As such it will be its duty to render all the assistance it can to the Congress in its programme of hand-spinning and khadi. The connecting link between the Congress and the Association is thus a common faith in the spinning-wheel and khadi. The Association as such will not concern itself or be in any way affected by the varying politics of the Congress. Its existence will be independent, its object merely confined to the propagation of the spinning-wheel and khadi, and it will be governed by its own separate constitution, so much so that it has adopted a different franchise and it can take in, as I have already said, non-congressmen as members and no congressman, not even a spinning member, is bound to become a member of the Association.

The constitution is not as rigid as I had at first intended. The drafts circulated by me required two thousand yards of yarn per month for membership of A class; and a declaration to the following effect was intended to be required from such members:"It is my firm belief that the economic salvation of the masses of India is impossible without the universal adoption by the country of the spinning-wheel and its product khaddar. I shall, therefore, except when desabled by illness or some unforeseen event, spin daily, for at least half an hour and habitually wear hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar, and in the event of my belief undergoing a change, or my ceasing to spin or wear khaddar, I shall resign the membership of this Association."

The two thousand yards were reduced to one thousand because a strenuous fight was put up on behalf of those who wanted to become A class members and yet found it difficult to give 2,000 yards per month. The declaration itself was dropped because the vey idea of a

solemn undertaking seemed to be repugnant, I still think quite wrongly, to others. My own opinion and that of many others is that promises or vows are necessary for the strongest of us. A promise is like a right angle not nearly but exactly of 90°. The slightest deflection makes it useless for the grand purpose that the right angle serves. A voluntary promise is like a plumb line keeping a man straight and warning him when he is going wrong. Rules of general application do not serve the same purpose as an individual vow. We find therefore the system of declarations followed in all large and well conducted institutions. The Viceroy has to take the oath of office. Members of Legislatures have to do likewise all the world over, andin my opinion rightly so. A soldier joining an army has to do likewise. Moreover, a written undertaking reminds onw of what one has promised to do. Memory is a very frail thing. The written word stands for ever. But as there was fairly strong opposition to the retention of declarations, I felt that I should waive them as it was common ground among all that, whilst the declaration might not be taken as a matter of fact, the belief affirmed in the declaration was and should be the belief of every member and that every member was expected to spin at least for half an hour daily except when unavoidably prevented from doing so. There was an additional clause to the declaration to be made by members of the Council, and it was this:

"I promise faithfully to discharge the obligations of my office as member of the Council of the Association and give preference to the furtherance of its objects over all other work, public or private, that I might undertake."

It was suggested that whilst the declaration should not be taken, the promise of faithful discharge of obligations of office must be an understood thing in an association whose Council was necessarily to consist of whole-timers. Indeed, the holding of office in the Council is all duty and no right. And where it is all service and no certificate save that of one's own conscience, all can take part in it whether they hold office or not. I hope therefore that no omission will be resented or misunderstood. On the contrary I am hoping that allo the khadi workers, who had any new or important idea, or special talent for serving, will not fail to give the association the benefit of his or her idea or talent. If its activity is to succeed, it will need all the assistance that the lowliest among us can give.

Young India, 1-10-1925

28. NOTES

MY APOLOGIES

It is a matter of deep regret that I had to be party to the postponement of the rest of my tour in Bihar. But I was helpless. I saw that my health was becoming gradually undermined by the incessant travelling which I have been doing since the fast[1] of last year. There seems to be nothing organically wrong with me. Only tired limbs need some rest. Babu Rajendra Prasad observed my dilapidated condition and observed also that I was ill able to stand the shouts of thousands of men, however lovingly meant they were. He has, therefore, absolved me from the tour beyond 15th October, and the revised programme even up to that date has been made so light as to give me ample rest every day and leave me two clear days per week for my editing. The U.P. friends have been equally indulgent and obliging and will be satisfied with only two days in the U.P. The Maharashtrian khaddar lovers have absolved me from my promise to visit some parts of Maharashtra during November. And I am to finish this year's travelling with an easy fortnight in Cutch. The Cutch friends are insistent that I should visit them during October. But they promise to make my tour in Cutch noiseless and thoroughly restful and they have dangled before me a fat purse for the advancement of hand-spinning, spinning-wheel and khaddar. I thank all those who have been so kind and considerate to me. I expect the Cutch friends to be true to their promise. To those provinces who have been indulgent to me I promise that I will visit them if they still wish me to do so next year. The programme can be fixed by mutual consultation at Cawnpore.

REMEMBER 11TH OCTOBER

I draw the attention of Congress organization and other public bodies to the following resolution of the A.I.C.C.

> The All-India Congress Committee expresses its deep sympathy with the Indian settlers in South Africa in their troubles and assures them of all the support that it is within the power of the Congress to give them to maintain their position and self- respect in South Africa. In the opinion of the All-India Congress Committee, India should not become a party to any scheme of repatriation whether described as voluntary or compulsory. The Congress is

[1] The twenty-one days' fast from September 18 to October 8, 1924, undertaken as a penance for communal riots; *vide*"Statement Announcing 21-Day Fast", 18-9-1924.

further of opinion that the Bill proposed to be passed by the Union Parliament is manifestly in breach of the settlement of 1914.[1] The A.I.C.C. suggests to the Congress organizations to call public meetings of all parties on the eleventh day of October 1925 to protest against the treatment meted out to the Indian settlers in South Africa.

If these meetings to be held all over India are to become a success, all parties including Chambers of Commerce, European and Anglo-Indian Associations, missionary bodies, etc., should cooperate whole-heartedly, as I hope they will. There is no division of opinion of this one point. And I believe that the Government of India will welcome an emphatic and unanimous expression of public opinion.

POOR ON 14 LACS

A friend writes:

> You are reported to claim to be a sannyasi and yet to have taken scrupulous care to have provided yourself with handsome living for yourself and your dependents and that you have made to that end a trust of tour estate which is worth fourteen lacs and that you are leading a very easy and comfortable life. Some of us were staggered to hear this. Will you kindly enlighten the public on the point? I myself refuse to believe the report.

If this query had not come from an honest friend whom I know, I would have taken no notice of it, especially as some months ago, in answer to a question about my personal expenses, I have dealt with my private affairs. I never had 14 lacs of rupees which I could call my own. What I did have I had certainly reduced to a trust when I renounced all property. But it was a trust for public purposes. I retained for myself nothing out of that trust. But I have never described myself as a sannyasi. Sannyas is made of sterner stuff, I regard myself as a householder, leading a humble life of service and, in common with my fellow-workers, living upon the charity of friends who defray the expenses of Satyagraha Ashram at Sabarmati of which I am one of the founders. The life I am living is certainly very easy and very comfortable, if ease and comfort are a mental state. I have all I need without the slightest care of having to keep any personal treasures. Mine is a life full of joy in the midst of incessant work. In not wanting to think of what tomorrow will bring for me I feel as free as a bird. Indeed at the present moment I may even be described to be living a life of luxury. An English lady, the other day, came to me whilst the train was standing at Gaya station and said,"How is it I see you

[1] *Vide*"Cable to G. K. Gokhale", 22-1-1914.

travelling so comfortably in a second-class compartment surrounded by so many people when I expected to find you in a crowded third-class compartment? Have you not said that you want to live like the poor? Do you suppose poor people can afford the luxury of second-class travelling? Is not your practice inconsistent with your profession?" I straightway pleaded guilty and did not care to inform this fair inquirer that my body had become too dilapidated to bear the fatigue of incessant third-class travelling. I feel that the weakness of the body could not be pleaded as an excuse. I am painfully aware of the fact that there are tens of thousands of men and women much weaker in body that travel third class because they have no friends to provide them with second-class travelling expenses. There was, undoubtedly, an inconsistency between my practice and pro-fession of identification with the poor. Such is the tragedy of life and yet, in the midst of it, I refuse to part with my joy. The thought that I am ceaselessly and honestly struggling against the requirements of the flesh sustains me in spite of the contradiction that the good lady could not fail to see.

EFFECT OF THE WHEEL

A correspondent who, being a State servant, is not a Congress member but who is a believer in the mission of the charkha and who therefore spins regularly, writes:

> From what little experience I have had with the charkha (some thing like 150 hours during the last seven months), I feel that any revival of the charkha is impossible unless men have taken to it and set an example to their womenfolk in the matter of producing fine, well twisted, weavable yarn. I also feel that highly undisciplined as we are, the charkha is sure to impart a wholesome discipline and infuse a sense of responsibility in our irresponsitions dispositions.

He is not the only one who has found the wheel to impart to the spinner a spirit of discipline. And who that is engaged in a spinning propaganda will fail to endorse the statement that if women are to spin, men must not only set the example but teach the women the technique of the art. All the small but important improvements that have been made in the charkha are due solely to the efforts of the devoted educated men who are working at it selflessly and regularly.

COW-PROTECTION SUPPLEMENT

The reader will find circulated with this number a supplement of *Young India* printed not by me but by the Ghatkopar Humanitarian

Association and printed too without my permission but in anticipation of it. The Association has undergone considerable expense in having the pamphlet printed. Had they asked for my permission before printing, I would have declined to circulate the pamphlet which contains the accounts and reports of the Association. I cannot afford to circulate to the readers of *Young India* such things however admirable they may be in themselves unless I would change the character of this journal. But it contains some valuable reading matter for lovers of the cow. The mistake of putting in such readable matter in the midst of the accounts and appeals for funds is due to excessive zeal. I know that my permisson has been anticipated for the purpose of disseminating among the readers a plea for the protection of our fellow-creatures, the lower animals, written by a friend whose learning and love of humanity I prize. He is, like me, an idealist. But if I had been given the choice of revising his article I would have tonedit down, though I believe his argument to be convincing. I regard myself as a practical reformer confining my attention to things that are, humanly speaking, possible. I would therefore have boiled down the paper to the reproduction of the valuable statistics given in it, the informative report of the Municipal Commissioner of Bombay on the criminal waste of cattle life in that city miscalled"the beautiful" and the terrible extract from the report of Dr. Mann describing the condition of the stables of Bombay. I commend to the attention of the reader all these things in the so-called supplement to *Young India.* Let him read pages 2 and 6 to 10 at least and excuse the overzeal of the energetic Secretary of the Ghatkopar Humanitarian Association. If he reads the whole of the supplement, he will find that the Association is doing good work in the face of difficulties due to apathy and ignorance. For the indifferent or the very busy reader I collect a few startling facts. During the twelve months ending 31st march 1924, 90, 314 cattle were slaughtered in Calcutta, 58,154 in Bandra (Bombay), 14,128 in Ahmedabad, 29,565 in Delhi. This is all a terrific economic waste. The slaughter is preventable not by any sentimental appeal to the Mussalmans or Christians or any others. It is preventable by an intelligent application of the funds that are being today wasted throughout the length and breadth of India in the name of cow-protection by men who have hearts full of love for all life but who do not know how to save it. I am convinced that the establishment of dairies and tanneries not for profit but for saving cattle life is the only solution for preventing the wanton destruction of precious life.

Religious sentiment that takes no note of hard econmic facts or that is built up on prejudice is worse than useless. Religious sentiment allied to reason and practical knowledge becomes irresistible. Cattle life, if it is to saved, must be too expensive to take. No religious sentiment will save it so long as it remains profitable to kill it, as itis in India at the present moment.

Young India, 1-10-1925

29. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BHAGALPUR[1]

October 1, 1925

MR. PRESIDENT AND MY HINDU AND MUSLIM BRETHREN,

I am grateful to you for the addresses you have given me. I want to tell you that the fact that I have got the opportunity to come over to you has greatly increased my pleasure.

I perfectly remember the last time I came over here, some 4 or 5 years ago. What difference do I mark in the situation of then and now? You have referred to the Hindu-Muslim question in one of the addresses. I would like to say something about this question to my Hindu and Muslim brethren. But I regard myself to be a sensible man. I know my limitations well. I have fully realized that I have no longer that influence which I commanded over the Hindu and Mohammedans in 1921. Today I can persuade neither the Hindus nor the Mohammedans. I know it full well that any good result can come out only when both rid themselves of their madness. Call it God or Khuda, there is a force before which our heads always bow.We ought to fear Him and determine our duty through that fear. There is no reason whatsoever to justify the Hindus and the mussalmans to fight one another. I see neither religious grievance nor any other justification for the fight. It is our madness alone which is responsible for it. If we want to get right of this ignorance and become men, we must give up our pride and in fear of God purify our hearts and again try to unite and become one.

Man wants one thing and God may want another. What do we know of the purpose which He wants to fulfil by making our hearts so bad? God's work only He knows. On being asked about it by a few Mussalman friends who are genuinely and really anxious to settle this

[1]Gandhiji was replying in Hindi to addresses of welcome presented by the Municipality and the District Board of Bhagalpur.

quarrel, I have advised them to do exactly as some Mussalmans of the time of the first four Caliphs did? What is to be done when two brothers fight among themselves? Misunderstanding is created, God is forgotten and they are at daggers drawn to cut one another's throat. We should treat this case as the one just described, and do what the noble Mussalmans of those days did. I have this advice for both the Hindus and the Mussalmans—that those Hindus who do not hate the Muslims and have regard for the Koran and those Mussalmans who have no enmity with the Hindus and respect the *Gita* as well should bring themselves into the depth of their own hearts. Now the days are no more when one used to seek refuge in the caves of Egypt or the jungles of the Himalayas. Even there one can get no peace now. He will be followed by the electric light, and even if that does not happen, the airships will be there to disturb him. In these days we have access to only one cave. We are to sit in that cave of our hearts and pray to God;"Keep at least my heart pure." When the quarrelling brothers are cured of their madness, the cave-dwellers will be requisitioned for service. May God bless the whole nation and all those who have kept aloof from these quarrels! Not only these two communities but all classes living in india, men of all provinces, may live together asbrothers and sisters. They may regard others' women as their own mothers and sisters. I would like every Mussalman to know that it is only they who are mad who think of saving islam by the help of the sword only. And to those Hindus also who want to save Hinduism by the help of the sword my message is that, if you want to draw your swords, draw them by all means, but for the sake of God do not call in a third party to arbitrate. You want to escape from one another and it is because of this that you recognize the necessity of the existence of a third party. So I have thought it fit to bring myself into my own heart. I am no more going to fast for Hindu-Muslim quarrels. All that was possible for a man to do I have tried. Now I pray to God for more knowledge. I believe that in due time the Hindus and the Mussalmans will come round, but let those fight who want to. Let all Hindus and Mussalmans who like to draw their swords against one another, draw them, but it would have been much better if they had taken to the practice of non violence as a religious duty. I have understood non-violence only after having fully known what violence is. I have said this many a time and I do it now again—better commit violence than sit help-lessly in the name of non-violence. To the coward I shall not be able to deliver my massage of non-violence. Him I shall not be

able to teach the lesson of peacefulness; I will be able to give the lesson of peace, the lesson of non-violence, only to those who do not fear to die, who are not afraid of their opponents. Maulana Shaukat Ali once told me that he and his brother had not lost their senses when they accepted non-violence as a policy. They did so because they knew that the non-violence that I suggested required the use of all the bravery that they a possessed. They knew that in non-violence also it was necessary to know and practise the art of dying and they were prepared to die happily if occasion arose for it. But they felt that, if they died with their swords drawn, they would be committing suicide, but as they wanted to die in the service of the country and Islam, they would have to die without drawing blood.

Whenever I see cowardice and fear, I ask people to draw the sword. The inhabitants of a neighbouring village told me, when I went to Bettiah in 1921, that the policemen molested their women and looted their houses and whilst the police were doing this, they had run away. When I asked them the reason for it, they at once told me that their running away was due to my teaching of non-violence. I felt then that if the earth could have given me place, it would have been better for me to have buried myself therein. Had I ever given the lesson never to draw the sword in any case? If one could not die without drawing blood, one must retaliate and die in the protection of one's property and honour. I had told them to die long before anybody could touch their wives and if they could not die without retaliation, they were to take their swords in their hands and die before anybody could reach their women. They were to teach their women also to proctect their own honour, to die before anybody could lay his hands upon their body. One who knows how to die becomes free for ever. The sword becomes a worthless weapon for him. The swordsman loses all his strength with the destruction of his sword, but one who knows the science of dying without injuring the wrongdoer dies while doing his work. His weapon knows no destruction. But what am I to say to them who leave their women to their fate and fly away? Such a man is worse than a mere animal? It would be much better if he at least fought with sword in hand, but a coward would not use even the sword. For his protection he will go to the Government, he will engage the *gundas* and what not. What am I to say to such men? I know only one lesson and I am trying to teach it to India and want the world also to learn it. If you do not learn it, I do not know what is going to happen. Today the crores of India cannot

use the sword and I do not see the time coming in the near future when they will be able to do so. I do not know if such a day is going to come even in a hundred years, but this much I know full well that if India wanted, it could be free even now. The sum and substance of all that I have said is this that I have lost all influence over both the Hindus and the Mussalmans and therefore my remedy may be taken to be a useless one and those who want to fight may fight to their satisfaction. But I have no remedy for one who flies away in fear.

Now comes the question of khadi. This business is one in which everybody can take part. But even if the whole country were to give up khadi, I at least am not going to throw away my charkha. You say that you have not been able to do much khadi work. One of the reasons you put forward for this is the legal powers. This is true. There are legal difficulties no doubt, but I am going to ask this whole assembly and the members of the Municipality and the District Board if there is any law prohibiting them personally to wear khadi. But if the absence of fine khadi is one of the obstacles in your way of using it, then you should spin fine yarn yourself and get that woven into fine khadi and that khadi you are to use. In the name of God, for the sake of your poor countrymen, please spin and use coarse cloth as well. That will not do you any harm.

You say that khadi is sold at a high price and you want to practice economy. I will then ask you to shorten your dhoti of 6 yards in length and 44 to 50 inches in breadth, if you have the best love for India. Better use dhotis only three yards long. If anybody ever wants to know the reason for it, tell him what I am used to say to such men. You are to tell him that you are using short clothes for the sake of India. We are poor people, we cannot afford to buy long khadi dhotis and so we use only half dhotis. A shirt cannot be halved, but this also can be easily shortened. The same money which you spend on foreign cloth may be very usefully employed in covering the naked bodies of a few of the poor sisters. Today in Bihar, you have got unsold khadi worth one lakh, the whole of which if sold could go to the poor sisters of Bihar. When our sisters spin khadi is woven out of their yarn and we give them some break by purchasing that khadi. If you want to serve India in the least, if you all want to ameliorate the suffering of your brothers and sisters, if you want to make khaddar cheap, then you must wear it.

Maulana Shaukat Ali has asked me to say everywhere, where I

meet Mussalmans, that he had joined the Spinners' Association. He has got unlimited faith in the charkha because he knows that, so long as both the Hindus and Mussalmans are not wholly clad in khaddar, India cannot be free. Therefore, he has promised to give me three thousand 'A' Class Mussalman members of the A.I.S.A. within this very year. Only they can be 'A' Class members of the A.I.S.A. who contribute to it one thousand yards of self-spun yarn per month—in all, twelve thousand yards in the year—and are habitual wearers of khadi. The Maulana hopes that he will be able to bring round three thousand members from among the Mussalmans before the year closes. It has been complained that, whereas there are many Hindus in the khadi service, there are but few Mussalmans. Therefore, the Maulana wants me to declare this also that all such Mussalmans whose hearts are pure and who are industrious had got their place in it. But they who want to come into it must obey its laws. Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians, Parsis, jews and all have their place in this A.I.S.A., if they believe in khadi.

To the Hindus I want to say something about untouchability. If you want to do some real service, and want to save your Hindu dharma, you must remove this. If you fail to get rid of this, be sure that Hinduism itself will be rid of you. That religion cannot be a holy religion in which hatred is taught against even one man. Let a man be a very great criminal; the least you can do is to reform him and not to hate him. Where is the justification for hating the untouchables who are servants of the country? Let us think it to be no sin to touch them. Let us not fly from them. To those who claim to be *sanatani* Hindus, I say that the religion of untouchability, as it is understood today, is not to be found in any of the Vedas or the shastras. Ramachandra had no scruples in touching Guharaj. He embraced Guharaj, drank water from his hands. Bharatji went so far as to bow to Guharaj.

You have referred to liquor also, Truly, we had reduced it to a very great extent in 1921, rather we had almost given it up, but our boat has now drifted away from the shore. I know the then picketers used sometimes even violence. Had violence not been used, perhaps, this picketing also would not have been discontinued. But even today you had better do what little you can do in this direction and induce others to give up this habit. In the same way, you are to give up smoking, taking *ganja*, bhang and other intoxicants.

The Searchlight, 16-10-1925

30. SPEECH AT MARWARI AGARWAL SABHA, BHAGALPUR

October 1, 1925

In reply to an address presented to him on behalf of the Marwari community at the first session of the Marwari Agarwal Sabha that held its sittings at Bhagalpur the other day, Mahatmaji said that when it was found that it was physically impossible for him to complete the Bihar tour, the question arose as to where he should go and where not and when that was being considered, he had told Rajendra Babu not to exclude Bhagalpur from his shortened tour, because he had already received their telegram at Ranchi inviting him to the place and also because his self-interest also lay in visiting that place. He thought that the moment he went to them he would be able to get something from them. He had still some value left, although he had ceased to be a practising lawyer long ago. That was why wherever he went he made the people of the place do some work. Of the people of Bhagalpur, he expected both: he wanted to make them work as well as to get as much money from them as possible, if they were prepared to give him. Proceeding, he said:

What should I say of the address that you have presented to me? It would be a mere commonplace to say that I am grateful to you for it. What I expect of those who present any address to me is that they should act and mould their conduct in accordance with the sentiments and the ideals expressed in the address. That will give me real pleasure indeed. A time comes when one becomes sick of hearing one's praise and I stand before you as the living illustration of it. I can well fancy that one's own praise might be agreeable to a certain extent, but whether it is always so I cannot say. My won experience for the last 40 years is that my own praise has never been pleasing to me. But even to those who do like to hear their praise, a time comes when theyfeel sick of it. I for one am not prepared to lose my sleep simply for the sake of hearing myself praised and you will, therefore, have to do some work in accordance with what you have said in the address.

The President has asked me to speak on social and religious subjects. It may mean that I should not, at the present moment, make any reference to politics. They say that I have given up politics altogether; that I have gone off my head. But none has dared to say so far that I have become obsessed by any kind of fear. It is not, however, necessary for me to say anything here of politics or of civil disobedience. The social aspect of civil disobedience is indeed, very important. At some places it has assumed serious proportions. I shall

here relate to you an incident from Gujarat. At a certain place in Gujarat there lives a very saintly person who has sacrificed his all and who wants to serve the Hindu community from the religious point of view. He calls himself a true Hindu and does not believe in Western civilization and reform. You will never find, however carefully you may look at him, even a trace of Westernism in him. But he serves the depressed classes. He regards untouchability as a great sin calculated to do immense harm to the Hindu community. He, therefore, wants to atone for it and believes that he would be able to do so to a certain extent by serving those untouchable brethren of his. But, at the same time, he would not like to have marriage or interdining relations with them. He would suck the poison out of the body of an untouchable if bitten by a snake, even at the risk of his life and he does not regard his religion (dharma) as suffering a whit by the touch of an untouchable. In so acting he simply follows the religion of love and kindness (*daya*) taught by Tulsidas, in the pursuit of which, if one were to die, one would go straight to heaven. Thus, this saint regards untouchablity as a great sin. He takes untouchables away from the place where they live to a better surrounding and offers them food enough to satisfy their hunger—not in the manner in which you and I throw the refuse of our dishes to them. I myself have seen my mother and my wife doing so—but he feeds them lovingly and a affectionately. In our houses separate arrangements exist for cooking food for our dogs, cows, oxen, etc. But these untouchables receive but the very refuse of our dishes. I do not regard it as *daya* dharma. We must be loving and affectionate in feeding even the untouchables and our religion would not suffer in any way for that. Some people act in that spirit with the result that they have been boycotted by society. I have told these people that they should not harbour any ill will or hatred against their community or society on that account. If society wants to boycott them, let it do so. Let them tell society that they regard it as their duty (dharma) to be boycotted by it under the circumstances, that what they are doing today is right and that it shall be followed in future as well. When influential men in society go wrong, when out of ignorance or malice they want to boycott a certain man, then it is his duty, he who does not agree with them, to allow himself to be boycotted by them. We have been obsessed by self-interest, for which I do not find any justification. I see before my own eyes the debauchee and the rake with whose sins we are fully familiar, yet they are never boycotted by society. But as soon as you touch an

untouchable, regarding it as your dharma, you are immediately boycotted. This is nothing but sheer high-handedness and is sure to lead society to ruin. Boycott has a science and method of its own. I do not propose to take your time in discussing the details of it.

But I would ask men of status and influence not to take recourse to it all on a sudden, without any thought. You must be sympathetic to him who attempts to reform the community in any particular direction. Do not destroy the Hindu dharma which we want to protect. In future, there is to be an intermixture of various communities. I would beg of you to give up this weapon of boycott for it is of no value so long as there reign supreme all sorts of corruption and sins among us and so long as we have not developed self-restraint and self-discipline among ourselves.

Proceeding, Mahatmaji said that *varnashrama* was one thing and the exitence of several smaller castes was quite a different thing.

Members of one caste living in different provinces, far away from one another, and following different vocations in life have become strangers to each other. This is narrow-mindedness. Your Sammelan is dear to me so long as it continues to minister to the good of the community. There can only be one community of Brahmins. Why cannot a Gujarati Brahmin give away his daughter in marriage to a Bengali or a Marwari Brahmin? Why should one contracting such a relation be boycotted by society? Your Shastras do not lay down any injunction that a Vaisya of Gujarat should not contract any relationship with a Vaisya of any other province. The Marwari community would soon be swept out of existence if the interrelations between the different classes of Marwaris be regarded as *adharma*. The sham and the unreal hold the field today. If you want to recognize the *varnashrama* dharma, you will have to give the go by to all these. If bigger folks are obsessed with the pride of self-importance, it is for the workers to go on with their business undauted by anything. It matters not if they are boycotted, if they are deprived of the services of a barber or a dhobi or a domestic servant and suffer consequently. Things have, indeed, come to such a pass in Gujarat. The gentleman I have referred to above writes to me to say that he gets neither the services of a barber nor a dhobi nor does he get anyone to fetch water for him. And in reply I have told him that he should better die of thirst and hunger than swerve even an inch from the path which he thinks it his duty to follow. If the bigger folks

would forsake their path of righteousness and boycott you, your duty is simply to act with such wisdom and undergo humiliation with such calmness and courage as may ultimately make them yield to you. When Prahlad's father boycotted his son, he could never silence him or make him inactive. Prahlad taught his classmates to utter the name of Rama and he thus civilly disobeyed his father. The same may be done by a member of a particular community towards his own community.

Mahatmaji proceeding dwelt upon the problem of child-widow remarriage and said that at first he thought that a society could tolerate a child-widow to the extent of even 10 to 20 thousand in number. But under the present state of affairs something would have to be done to bring about reforms in this direction as well. He said:

At first I thought that the problem could be solved if the widower also did not remarry. But nobody agrees to it. In fact, some people begin settling their remarriage even at the burning ghat. The fathers of some of the brides betrothed their daughters by telegram and it matters not if the age of the bridegroom be even 45 and that of the bride only 12.

There under the present state of affairs I have come to the conclusion that child-widows will have to be remarried. If it is not done, the result will be that cases of suicide, as have happened in Bengal and Delhi, would go on increasing. We have no right perforce to keep these child-widows always in that state. Our duty, our dharma, tells us to remarry such widows. A certain sister of mine asked me if I would help her in raising the marriageable age of girls to 14 years. I would tell her that not to speak of 14, I would not marry a girl even at the age of 16.

I have also some girls under my control and I also know fathers of some girls who do hear me and I have been able to persuade them not to entertain any proposal or ever have any talk about early marriage of their wards. It is for us to teach our wards to have pure thoughts and not to corrupt their minds by talking about their marriages. I want to make the mothers of these girls Sitas of yore. How is that to be done? Sita could withstand the fire-test so well. She entered the fire but came out absolutely unscathed. How we wish there were reborn ladies of such great eminence amongst us! But how can we expect it to be so, if from their very childhood we make our girls imbibe bad ideas. One who has been able to realize the importance of this reform will be prepared to undergo any sacrifice

for its sake. Even in Western countries, where indulgence predominates and which are not noted for renunciation, there are to be found women even today whose hearts are pure and uncontaminated. I had such a girl[1] with me in South Africa who served thousands of men, who carried on the entire work of satyagraha in the Transvaal when I, along with my other fellow-workers, was sent to jail. She came in contact, then, with thousands of people, but none could cast an evil eye on her.

There was also an Indian lady with me there, but she could not do that work. She went to jail but, she would not have been able to do even that, had I not deprived her of all her ornaments. One must have a right to go to jail and she alone has that right who has given up her ornaments.

Now, I shall tell you of my own pet subject. You have referred to khadi in your address. I have thought very deeply on the subject and it is only after considerable meditation that I have come to this conclusion and taken to the work of khadi. I know I shall not be able to achieve all I want in this life.

The next point dwelt upon by Mahatmaji was the subject of cow-protection. He said:

If we want to protect the cows we can do so only by looking at the problem as I do, not by fighting the Mussalmans or the Englishmen or by begging favours of them. Begging without resolve would be absolutely useless. I am compiling today a statement showing the number of cattle for the loss of which we ourselves are responsible. The *gwalas* (milkmen) are our own men—they are Hindus. But it is they who sell their cattle to the butchers. Marwaris are also our men and they also export their cows and oxen to other places. Some of these exported cattle are butchered in the slaughter-houses of Bombay and Calcutta and some are sent out to Australia from where their meat is exported to this country as tinned beef. The way to prevent this is by taking upon ourselves the responsibility of supplying milk and leather. And the responsibility for all this rests on our shoulders. I know well how chamars in some native States poison their cattle. In a certain native state, I understand, they are givencontracts at the rate of per thousand of dead animals. This is not right. It would be better if the rate be not per thousand but per one

[1] Sonja Schlesin, *vide*"Letter to L. W. Ritch", 7-4-1911.

single dead animal. I do not like that the chamars should take the meat of dead animals. When I ask them to give up this habit, they tell me that so long as they deal in dead animals, it is difficult for them to give up that habit because the meat is so tasty. They contend that it is not right to place the sweets before a boy and ask him not to take them. They say that, if they are to give up that business, they should be engaged in some other business, e.g., weaving. Likewise, the Marwaris express their willingness to give up their dealing in foreign cloth. They even give me money for that purpose. But they say that so long as people do not give up using foreign cloth, it is difficult for them to give up dealing in the same. They contend that they have no enmity with khaddar, but unless there is created a market for the same they would not give up their business in foreign cloth. Thus, if we want to protect the cows, we will have to take to the business of a chamar, we will have to take into our own hands all the tanneries in the country. There is only one tannery in the country which does not accept hides of slaughtered animals. Today lakhs of cattle are slaughtered in the country. The hides of such animals cost dearer than the hides of those who die a natural death because the dead ones have to be dragged and so their hides get stained. They, therefore, find it difficult to dispose of such hides in the market. The tanneries, therefore, in order to have brisk business, purchase the hides of slaughtered animals only. And the shoes that you use are made of such hides. Thus they will have to see to it that only the hides of the dead animals are made use of. And for this the chamars will have so be impressed with what their duties are. They should make use of the hides of dead animals only. And secondly, they will have to give up taking meat of dead animals. If this is not done, cow-protection will be an impossible proposition. We should fully understand the economic condition of the country and if we can make arrangements for sufficient supply of milk to those living in towns, it is just possible the slaughter of cows may decrease considerably. The large number of tanneries also subsist on the number of animals slaughtered in the country. On the fall in the number of the latter, the number of the former will also go down.

Proceeding, he said that in that way they would have more money for the *goshalas*. Those that exist were languishing for want of sufficient funds. They would have to improve them if they were keen on cow-protection.

Mahatmaji next dwelt upon the subject of propagation of Hindi and Devanagari characters and said that some five or six years back he had spoken to them

on the subject and they were pleased to subscribe 50 thousand repees which had been utilized for teaching Hindi to thousands of Dravidians in South India and an account of which had already been published. Considerable work in that direction had been done in that part of the country. Hindi presses had been started, Hindi magazines were being published, Hindi-Telugu and Hindu-Tamil and other primary Hindi books in Tamil had been published. But much still remained to be done. He appealed to them to accept and propagate at least the Devanagari characters and publish important works of different languages in Hindi. If Rabindra Babu's works were published in Devanagari characters, those who knew Sanskrit might be able to follow them.

Thus Mahatmaji spoke to them on the four important subjects of the day, and appealed to them to help any or all of the four causes whichever they liked most. He also appealed to them to contribute handsomely to the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. He again reminded them of the four things about which he had spoken to them and appealed to them to help any one of the four they liked or all. But he would tell them that all the four were equally important and righteous causes. Referring again to the untouchables, he said that he was trying to open schools to make arrangements for water for them where none existed. He wanted also to make separate temples for them. But the latter work must await till really capable and righteous men came out from among the untouchables to manage the temples.

Concluding, Mahatmaji expressed his sincere gratitude to the audience for calmly listening to his long address and said:

I am now a poor man, but I am seeking the co-operation of the rich for providing clothes to my naked sisters. I want to establish *Ramarajya*. I do not talk to the men about *Ramaraiya* because I know that they are sure to help that cause when the womenfolk come forward to do so. Therefore, whenever I talk to the women-folk I always talk not about swaraj but of *Ramarajya*. This *Ramarajya* does not concern merely the administration of the country. But certain other reforms as well are absolutely necessary and these are comprehended in the four things I have mentioned above. Therefore, I do not want to offer to you any temptation except that of dharma. Both you as well as your sisters in villages will reap the fruits thereof.

We will be able to protect our dharma mainly by the strength of our own character. By character alone we will be able to offer protection even to the world. You are rendering all possible help to me as you should in this direction. May I always prove worthy of the same is my earnest prayer to God.

The Searchlight, 9-10-1925

31. LETTER TO J. KUSARY

ON TOUR,
October3, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

You asked me questions now over a month ago about the advisability of getting enough recognition from the Calcutta University so as to enable you to take boys who might desire to appear for its examinations. Personally I am averse to it. I do not like this mania for examinations. It has undermined the mental and physical health of our youth. For this reason alone, if for no other, I would like national institutions to remain unbending and depend for their progress upon their own inherent merit. I would like a proper revolt against the soul-destroying examinations. But you know best what you should do in the circumstances that face you and if you have not the same repugnance that I have for the mania for university certificates, you would unhesitatingly secure the restricted recognition you mention. What with my temperament would be bad for me need not be necessarily bad for you or anyone else with a different temperament. I would therefore like you not to follow my opinion unless it appeals to you so forcibly as to give you satisfaction, even though without recognition your school may contain only twenty boys or even less. I would love to train even one boy with robust independence. I thoroughly understand and appreciate all that you say in favour of securing 'recognition' of the limited type referred to by you and it is a view that deserves respectful consideration. I would not therefore misunderstand you if, after weighing all the pros and cons, you come to the conclusion that it is best for you and the people in whose midst you are working to apply for recognition .

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 7189

32. TO MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF KUTCH

On the 21st of October, I shall, God willing, set foot in Kutch for the first time in my life.[1] In agreeing to go there at this time I have yielded to the power of love. Other provinces, out of compassion for me, have left me free for this year. You want me to go there while the Maharao[2] is present and the thought was painful to me that, if I did not go in October, a trip that had been talked about for nine months could not be undertaken until April. You have assured me that you will let me have rest in Kutch and that you will hand me large sums of money for the cause of the spinning-whel and khadi. This is great temptation for me.

I too am eager to meet the Maharao Saheb. I am a good friend and servant of the Princes. My father, grand-father and other relations were in the service of Indian States. Even today, I see a few of my relations earning their living in the States of kathiawar.

But my connections with Indian States cannot blind my eyes to facts. I am not unaware of the state of misrule in certain States. I have received a pile of letters from the people regarding the Maharao Saheb's administration. I shall express my genuine regards for the Maharao Saheb by putting the substance of these letters before him with an open mind.

I do not hanker after respect from either the Princes or their subjects. I have had too much of respect. If I was not afraid of appearing guilty of discourtesy, I would agree to visit a place only on condition that I was not given an address of welcome there. The cries of"Victory to the Mahatma" jar on my ears. All shouting has become unbearable to me. I wish to remain an untouchable so far as touching of my feet in reverence is concerned. If people feel any respect for me, I should certainly like to see them emulate whatever is good in me. My brothers and sisters in Kutch have showered love on me. They have also given me large sums of money for my work.

My hunger, however, can never be satisfied.

In my old age now I have only two or three means of worshipping God. I should like to devote the rest of my life to these.

[1] Gandhiji reached Kutch on October 22,1925.

[2] The ruler of the then princely State of Kutch

The name of Rama is dear to my lips; if, however, this is not engraved in my heart, its mechanical repetition would only bring me degradation. What is in one's heart is certain to be expressed in one's actions. I have, therefore, always regarded the service of others as the only true dharma.

Thus it is that I found the spinning-wheel and the work of eradication of untouchability. Through the spinning-wheel I serve the poorest of the poor in the country. I invite the Maharao Saheb and his subjects to join me in this *yajna*.

Howerever, the people of Kutch are of a venturesome spirit. They cross the oceans for the sake of trade. It is not enough for them to spin and wear khadi. I expect them to give me money and help the walking skeletons in the country to put on some flesh. It should not be forgotten that this is what we have resolved to do to perpetuate Deshbandhu's memory. I have heard it said that I take money from Kutch and send it elsewhere. This is a fact, but it should not be a complaint. Why should I collect money for Kutch? If there is poverty in Kutch, the fact is a slur on the Maharao Saheb and on the multi-millionaires of Kutch. I have never lived there. Through whom can I use the money there? It would be proper for the people of Kutch to collect the money which they need and use it there. It is my job to collect money from wherever possible and use it where I see the need and for work which seems essential to me or for specified, worthy causes. There are rich *Vaishnavas* in Kutch. Being myself a *Vaishnava*, I believe I know what the term means. My conscience can never accept the idea that a *Vaishnava* can regard himself polluted by the touch of an *Antyaja* and still be a *Vaishnava*. Just as, through the spinning-wheel, I wish to serve the Divine Mother, whose children are the poor, so I wish to purify Hinduism by working for the eradication of untouchability and serving the *Antyajas* thereby. We cannot persist in the practice of untouchability, and at the same time hope to preserve Hinduism. I cannot bear *Antyajas* being treated with contempt. I would not have even the soverignty of this world or the next if I had to forsake the *Antyajas* for that. I wish that the *Vaishnavas* of Kutch will understand their dharma.

Do not forget that king Yudhishthira refused to leave behind even the dog who had accompanied him and enter heaven by himself. He

accepted the same dharma as you and I do. Who was king Nishad[1] from whom Rama accepted fruit with love? Bharat felt sanctified as he embraced the other with love. Who is a *Chandal* in this *Kaliyuga*, or rather, who is not? Let us not distort the meaning of the Shastras. Let us not drown ourselves in a well just because it belongs to our forefathers. Let us swim in it instead. A custom or Shastra which is contrary to universally accepted moral principles is not fit to be followed. If anyone can show that the Vedas enjoin cow-slaughter or killing of animals, shall we be prepared to follow them?

You have no Hindu-Muslim problem in your part of the country, and even if you have one, I have accepted defeat and abandoned the attempt to solve it. As, however, the elephant king learnt to pray truly only when he had failed in all his attempts, so I believe that I, too, having failed in my efforts, am now truly praying to God for the welfare of both the communities. Dharma enjoins *tapascharya* in times of diffeculty. *Tapascharya* means self-purification, knowledge of the *atman* and its realization. If there are amongst us some who are pure in heart, despite our conflicts everthing will turn out well in the end.

I have always told women that my swaraj means *Ramarajya* or the rule of dharma. We cannot succeed in establishing it unless we carry out the programmes mentioned above.

For the Hindus, however, rule of dharma is impossible as long as they do not attend also to the dharma of protecting cows. This cannot be done by merely establishing *goshalas* of some sort. I have started effective work in this field only lately, but I think we can succeed in it with the help of people like you. I see that it is quite possible to prevent the slaughter of innumerable cows, bullocks, buffaloes, etc. All that is required is expert knowledge, systematic work and money. Money is donated in plently but, in my opinion, it is misused for want of knowledge.

I have written all this for you to reflect upon. Give much thought to it. As you will let me have plenty of rest, we shall be able to discuss these matters if you can set apart some time for the purpose. Point out to me any error you may see in my line of reasoning. If there is none, give me all possible help.

Your friend and servant,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-10-1925

[1] King of a tribe dwelling in the Vindhyas, in the *Ramayana*

33. SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION

The establishment of the spinners' Association is no ordinary event. It is the fruit of the pledge taken by its founders. It proclaims their faith in the spinning-wheel and their determination to sacrifice everything for its sake.

To me, it stands for swaraj. I believe it to be impossible to serve the millions except through it. No one can serve all individually. Every person, however, can engage himself in work which involves the service of all and whose fruit will be shard by everyone. Only the spinning-wheel can reach crores of people, can satisfy their hunger and function as *Annapoorna*[1] to them. If I start a factory which makes baskets, I would thereby be able to help thousands of persons, if a soap factory, I can provide employment to about four thousand persons, and to the same number through a textile mill,—all the mills taken together provide employment to fifteen lakhs of persons and offer dividentds to about four thousand persons. If, however, I engage myself in promoting spinning, I join an industry providing employment to crores.

On reflection, the reader will see that there is no other work which can benefit crores. Agriculture is indeed one such profession. But, for one thing, it has not disappeared and, for another it is not a kind of work which anyone can do at any hour and for any length of time. But spinning? One can do it at any place, and if one carries a *takli* in one's pocket, one can spin a few yards by way of *yajna* even while walking. Spinning done even for a minute is useful, but one cannot do farming in that way. That work must be done for a certain minimum, and considerable length of time at one place. Spinning, therefore, is a great sacrifice in which all can easily join.

Is there anyone who would not like to join an Association devoted to such work? How can we argue with people who object to spinning? Why should anyone fail to welcome the addition of a few yards of yarn to the country's wealth, and that too through work done in spare time?

I wish that all men and women will join this Association. I did not like and many others also did not like, the change permitting the contribution of 1,000 instead of 2,000 yards of yarn. This however

[1] Goddess of plenty

is no reason for keeping out of the Association. Anyone who wishes may certainly contribute 2,000 yards. It is a very desirable thing to take a pledge, but the omission of the clause requiring a pledge does not mean that those who were in favour of taking a pledge should not join the Association. They may, as individuals, certainly take the pledge. Moreover, even though a pledge is not necessary the understanding is that, except for circumstances beyond one's control, every member will spin daily for half an hour. The idea of prescribing a pledge was dropped, but every member of the Executive Committee will regard the spinning movement as his principal sphere of work.

But what about persons under eighteen and those who cannot spin regularly? As in the past, they should spin and send as gift as much yarn as they can.

No cotton will be given this time, and no attempt will be made to flatter and persuade people to spin. Let only those send yarn who accept spinning as a sacred duty. Cotton costs very little and, besides, we should not spend on anything more than it is worth. The very purpose of begging for voluntary gifts of cotton is that:

1. khadi may be made cheaper;

2. people, instead of idling away their time, may spend it in the service of the country;

3. the rich may establish a direct link with the poor and think of them every day;

4. Everyone may help in bringing about boycott of foreign cloth;

5. everyone may serve the country in one way or another to the best of his or her ability;

6. the middle class, which at present lives on the toil of the poor and willingly gives nothing in return, may now give something;

7. the middle class may, by its example of spinning, show to the poor who have lost faith in life itself the means of recovering that faith.

These results will follow only if people spin with love. Much monetary help will be required in this great task. I hope that those who have faith in the spinning-wheel will not only contribute yarn but also, if they can afford it, help with money.

This body will provide employment to many in the middle class. The figures which I have published show that even today a large number are earning their livelihood through this work. If the Association works in a big way it can become a means of providing

employment to thousands. It is not at all surprising that a work which involves trade worth crores of rupees can help thousands to earn an honest living.

And now about the question of confidence. Are the members of the Committee men of ability and do they inspire confidence? In my humble view, they are and they do. It is true that there are other workers of equal worth who have been left out. It has been suggested that a sort of Brains Trust should be formed by including in it all those who ought to have been on the Committee but are not. I have thought over this suggestion, and feel that there is no need for such a body. There is less to think about and more to do. It would, therefore, be better to have as small a body as possible consisting of men who would give all their time to the task of setting up a machinery for implementing the decisions.

This is an Association for service, and not for satisfying one's desire for power and authority. In a body in which there is no scope at all for anyone to assume leadership and the only duty is that of service, there can be no rivalry for positions of authority. I wish that those whose one aim is to serve will send whatever suggestions they feel like making any time. If we form a Brains Trust, it should meet and deliberate. This may be necessary when we have to consider a new policy or method of work. In the present instance, what is required is supervision of work. I, therefore, feel that a committee of twelve is sufficient for our purpose. I have given up the idea of filling the three vacancies which remain even in this small number, for it is not necessary that every place should be filled. Experience alone will teach us what more we need.

Our aim in undertaking trade in khadi is service. The service motive has no place in other forms of trade. It is believed that business and service do not go together.We cannot do trade in khadi at all without State patronage or unless we undertake it with service motive. If those who undertake it should do so with such a motive, those who buy khadi should be actuated by the same motive. There is no doubt that anyone who gives up the use of Paris lace or Manchester muslin, despite all his love for them, and takes to khadi, will be serving others by his action.

May God increase the number of dedicated khadi workers.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-10-1925

34. ABOUT SOUTH AFRICA

The All-India Congress Committee has passed a resolution to the efect that meetings should be held at all places on the 11th of October to extend our moral support to the Indians in South Africa in the impending calamity that threatens them. People belonging to all parties should be invited to these meetings. As there is no difference of opinion on this matter, we can hope that persons belonging to all parties will attend. Even an expression of our feelings will strengthen the spirit of the Indians of South Africa. These meetings will help the Indian Government if it wishes to do something, and, in any case, we shall have done our best. I, therefore, hope that meetings will be held at all place and that people will attend in large numbers. No one with any political consciouseness can be altogether ignorant of the problem in South Africa.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-10-1925

35. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

October 5, 1925

MY DEAR ESTHER,

I am writing this at Deoghar which is a beautiful place in the Bihar tour. Today is my Monday[1]. I have your long letter before me. I have always thought of you all. I was much relieved to know that you had completely recovered and that the recovery was due to an Indian medicine. I hope that, having regained your health you will keep it.

It is good that Miss Petersen is to go to Denmark early next year. She deserves the rest. It is nice too that she will leave the school in a progressive state. I had no doubt about its success. Patience was all that was needed. In these days of many bogus or selfish things, people look askance at anything new or out of the ordinary.

Are you also at Porto Novo? Or has Menon got something after his heart?

Of course, you are all coming into the Spinners' Association.

[1] Day of silence

Have you read the constitution?

I had a very sweet letter a month or two ago from a Danish lady. I would certainly love to go to Denmark. But [I] have no desire to leave India until non-violence is more firmly rooted than it is in the soil. I know that it is truth, but I may be a poor representative of it. This I know that I cannot live without truth and non-violence.

If you take up the task of writing my biography, you have to pass many months at the Ashram and, may be, even travel to South Africa and visit Champaran and Kheda, probably the Punjab, too. It is a big job if it is done thoroughly. It was in these places I tried to work out non-violence as I understand and know it.

With love to you all and kisses to baby,

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

I reach the Ashram in the beginning of November.

From a photostat: Courtesy: National Archives of India

36. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

Ashwin Krishna 4 [*October 5, 1925*][1]

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I told Jamnalalji that I had replied to your letter. Now I have a feeling that I have not done so. If suitable arrangement can be made about *Navajivan* I would like you to do khadi work in Rajasthan. More when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

37. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

October 7, 1925

Happily the question of British Indians in South Africa is not a party question. India must be able to avert the calamity that threatens

[1] From the postmark

to over take our countrymen in that sub-continent. The proposed legislation[1] is a manifest breach of the Settlement of 1914. My experience of the Indian question in South Africa is one of a series of breaches of promises and declarations which have been proved form official records. The proposed legislation is in effect a confis-cation of almost every right that the British Indians possess. Their sole crime consists in being good traders and not being Europeans. There can be no comp-romise in this matter, no repatriation even when euphemistically des-cribed as voluntary. Let me, however, say that retaliation will be no remedy if only because there can be no effective retaliation. The only remedy is diplomatic perssure. Lord Hardinge applied it successfully[2]. Will the present government repeat the perforemance?

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-10-1925

38. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

Aso Vad 5 [*October 7, 1925*][3]

BHAI DAHYABHAI,

I have not been able yet to read your long letter. I had your second one yesterday. It is certain that I will not be able to go there on the 31st October but I shall fix the date when I reach the Ashram in the beginning of November.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2692. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

[1] Areas Reservation and Immigration and Registration (Further Provision) Bill, introduced in the Union Parliament in July 1925. The Bill sought to prevent acquisi-tion of land by Asiatics except in certain specified areas. *Vide*"South Africa", 12-3-1925.

[2] The reference presumably is to a speech Lord Hardinge delivered at Madras on November 24, 1913 concerning the condition of Inidans in South Africa; *vide*"Lord hardinge's Speewch", 3-12-1913.

[3] From the postmark.

39. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, GIRIDIH

October 7, 1925

Gandhiji received addresses from the Local Board, the public, the Municipality and the *goshala* in a public meeting attended by not less than ten thousand men.

Mahatmaji said that he was given to understand that Giridih being a mica field labourers could not be induced to take to the charkha when they got more money by working in the pits. To them he said that he could understand labourers not spinning, but he could not understand where was the difficulty in their not using khadi. The middle-class people had ample time to spare and they could easily afford to give half an hour to spinning, not for themselves but for the sake of their country, and give over the yarn produced as charity to the Congress. One yard of khaddar was certainly comparatively dearer than the cheaper foreign cloth, but all the same it was cheaper as it enabled some money to go direct into the pockets of their poor sisters and the weavers. He next referred to untouchability and said that it was a standing disgrace for Hinduism, and although he thanked them for running a school for the untoucha-bles, he could not be satisfied if they themselves did not go to them to mix with them and enquire about their poverty and their grievances, and try to remove them.

In the Local Board address it was hinted that the obstinacy of the laws and their differences with the District Board stood in the way of their doing even their own work.

In these conditions it was practically impossible for them to claim any solid work to their credit . But they could promise to do any work whatever in future when conditions improved. To them Mahatmaji said that no obstacle was too great if they only had the will to surmount it. On this somebody whispered that it was difficult to keep the roads in a good condition when they had no money. Mahatmaji retorting said that they should work on the roads themselves and see that they were well kept if they had not sifficient money to repair them.

A municipal commissioner said that he had not sufficient money to engage scavengers. In that case, Mahatmaji said they must do the work of scavengers themselves and clean even the night-soil themselves. He had done these things in Durban and he knew the dignity of it.

The *goshala* address referred to cow-protection. To them he would only say this—that the Hindus themselves were responsible for the large number of cows slaughtered. If they wanted, they could stop cow-slaughter today for which they would have to raise its price and not appeal to or fight with the Muslims or Englishmen to spare the cows. They had to establish dairies where cheapest and purest milk could be had. They must not look upon the business of tannery as a peculiarly low one, but should organize the *mochis*[1] and have tanneries of their own where hides of only dead, and not slaughtered, animals could be used. Their *goshalas* were not working well.

[1] Cobblers or shoe-makers

They must be run on commercial lines. With an appeal for the Deshbandhu fund he concluded his address. A decent collection was made on the spot and a purse of Rs. 2,075 was presented to him on behalf of the Giridih public.

The Searchlight, 9-10-1925

40. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, GIRIDIH

October 7, 1925

Gandhiji in reply[1]. . .thanked the the ladies for the kind words expressed in the address. He said that, in order to attain swaraj which was not only the political Home Rule but also dharma raj of the kind which was generally understood as *Ramarajya*, which was something higher than ordinary political emancipation, they must try to become like Sita of yore who was the soul of *Ramarajya*. In the days of Sita every household had its charkha just as they find a hearth in every home. Sita also spun on her own charkha which might have been bedecked with jewels and probably ornamented with gold, but all the same it was still a charkha. Moreover they must try to idealize her in her piety as well. Concluding, he appealed for the A.I. Deshbandhu Memorial Fund in response to which a good collection was made on the spot.

The Searchlight, 11-10-1925

41. BIHAR NOTES

WITH ABORIGINALS

From Chakradharpur to Chaibasa is a pleasant motor ride over a very good road. It was at Chaibasa that I made the acquaintance of the *Ho* tribe—a most interesting body of men and women, simple as children, with a faith that it is not easy to shake. Many of them have taken to the charkha and khaddar. Congress workers began the work of reformation among them in 1921. Many have given up eating carrion and some have even taken to vegetarianism. The *mundas* are another tribe whom I met at Khunti on my way to Ranchi. The scope for work in their midst is inexhaustible. Christian missionaries have been doing valuable service for generations, but, in my humble opinion, their work suffers because at the end of it they expect conversion of these simple people to Christianity. I had the pleasure of seeing some of their schools in these places. It was all pleasing, but

[1] An address was presented to Gandhiji by the Head Mistress of the local girls' school. He also received a purse for the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund.

I could see the coming conflict between the missionaries and the Hindu workers. The latter have no difficulty in making their service commendable to the *Hos*, the *Mundas* and the others. How very nice it would be if the missionaries rendered humanitarian service without the ulterior aim of conversion! But I must not reiterate the remarks I made before the Missionary Conference and other Christian bodies in Calcutta.[1] I know that such a revolutionary change in Christian endeavour as I am advocating cannot come through any advice, especially from an outsider, however well-meant it may be; it can only come either out of a definite individual conviction or out of some great mass movement among Christians themselves. Among these tribes there is quite a colony of them called *bhaktas*, literally meaning devotees. They are believers in khaddar. Men as well as women ply the charkha regularly. They wear khaddar woven by themselves. Many of them had walked miles with their charkhas on their shoulders. I saw nearly four hundred of them all plying their charkhas most assiduously at the meeting I had the privilege of addressing. They have their own *bhajans* which they sing in chorus.

IN CHHOTA NAGPUR

Almost the whole of my travelling in Chhota Nagpur was in motor-cars, but the roads are all good and the scenery around magnificent. From Chaibasa we had to retrace our steps to chakradharpur and from there we motored to Ranchi, halting at Khunti and one or two other places. Just before reaching Ranchi at 7 o'clock in the evening a meeting of ladies had been arranged. I do not think that either the organizers or the ladies had bargained for my appeal for the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. But as I hardly ever fail to make that appeal when I address public meetings, I made it at this meeting also. The vast majority were Bengalis. Many being unprepared had no money with them. These, therefore, parted with their ornaments, some of which were heavy things. It did one's soul good to see these sisters gladly parting with their ornaments in order to honour the memory of one they loved. Needless to say, I make it perfectly clear at these meetings that the whole of the gifts would be utilized for spreading the charkha and khaddar.

In Ranchi I was taken to Golkunda,[2] a little village where an

[1] *Vide*"Speech at Meeting of Missionaries", 28-7-1925.

[2] It transpired that Gandhiji had made a slip in regard to the name *Vide*"Notes". 22-10-1925, sub-title,"A correction".

experiment in hand-spinning is being made under the aegis of a co-operative society by Babu Girishchandr Majumdara, who is a khaddar enthusiast. He expects spinning to become a thorough success. The experiment has just begun. If organizing is properly done and the spinning-wheels fulfil the standard requirements, there should be no difficulty about the charkha becoming the success it has been elsewhere.

There were two theatrical performances given at Ranchi by amateur companies for the purpose of Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. One was given by Bengalis and the other by Biharis. As they were given by amateurs I had no difficulty in accepting their invitations but I was severely disappointed over the Bengali performance. I could see little difference between the performances of professionals and this amateur company. There was complete aping of professionals. The dresses were all made of foreign material. The colouring of faces was also resorted to whereas I had expected that these performances would be subdued and that there would be at least khaddar used for dress material. So when I undertook to go to the Bihari amateurs' play I made the condition that if they wanted me to see their play they should have their dresses made of khaddar and that not merely for the occasion but for all their performances. To my agreeable surprise, the condition was readily accepted. There were only a few hours left for making all that change, but they did it and the manager made the announcement of the promise given to me and prayed for God's help that they might be able to fulfil the promise. What the Biharis' play lost in tinsel effect it gained, in my opinion, in dignity by the change adopted. I commend this very desirable change to all amateur theatrical companies. Indeed, even the professionals who have any patriotic instinct can easily make this change and thus contribute, though ever so little, to the economic uplift of the teeming millions of India.

I must omit several interesting items including a very pleasing discussion on khaddar with Messrs N. K. Roy and S. K. Rao of the Department of Industries and a visit to the Brahmacharya Ashram which owes its existence to the munificence the Maharajah of Kasimbazar. From Ranchi we motored to Hazaribagh where, in addition to the usual appointments, I was called upon to address the students of St. Columba's Missionary College, a very old institution. I spoke to the students on social service and endeavoured to show that it was impossible without character and that such service on a large scale

in India was only possible through penetration into the villages and that it had to be its own reward for it brought no excitement, no advertisement and had often to be done under most trying circumstances and in the teeth of superstition and ignorance. I endeavoured to show that the best form that social service could take in India was through the spinning-wheel and khaddar, because it brought young men in touch with the villagers, it enabled them to put a few coppers every day into the pockets of the villagers and created an indissoluble bond between the latter and themselves, and it helped them to know their maker because the selfless service of the poor was the service of God.

KHUDA BUX LIBRARY

From Hazaribagh, with a few stoppages on the motor road to Gaya we went to Patna where the main work was the activity of the All-India Congress Committee and the inauguration of the All-India Spinners' Association. It was at Patna that I discovered my health would break down under the incessant fatigue of travelling. The shouts of the crowds had almost proved unbearable as we were nearing Gaya where I was obliged even to stuff my ears to prevent the shouts making me almost swoon. Rajendra Babu had therefore taken elaborate precautions to prevent noisy demonstrations of blind but well-meant affection and he very kindly revised and cut down my programme. I had therefore comparative rest at Patna. I was able to fulfil the long cherished desire of visiting the Khuda Bux Oriental Library. I had heard much about it. But I had never realized that it had the rich treasures I was privileged to see. Its devoted founder Khan Bahadur Khuda Bux who was a *vakil*, made it a labour of love to collect even from abroad many ancient and rare Arabic and Persian books. The decorations in some of the hand-written copies of koran that I saw were of great beauty. The unknown artists must have given years of patient labour to the creation. Every page of the decorated edition of the *Shahanamah* is a work of art—a veritable feast for the eye. I understand that the literary value of some of the manuscripts treasured in this library is no less great. All honour to the founder for his great gift to the nation.

A GOVERNMENT EXPERIMENT

The other interesting thing I was able to see in Patna was the workshop conducted by the Department of industries. Mr. Rao is the

Superintendent. The workshop itself is a modern building, well lighted, well ventilated, well planned and scrupulously clean. Handloom weaving and toy-making, which is the speciality of Patna are the features of this workshop. Improved looms for weaving tapes and bedstead-straps are commendable. I could, however, not help feeling that in this admirable workshop, the central thing, the spinning-wheel, was wanting. Improved toy-making will certainly give better wages to the makers of toys and it has therefore properly a place in a workshop in a city like Patna. An Indian workshop is also incomplete without handloom weaving. But no national department of industries can be considered to be at all complete that takes no note of hand-spinning and there-through of millions of villagers who are at present without a supplementary industry. The difficulties that were suggested to me in making hand- spinning a succes were mainly two:

(1) Hand-spun yarn can never compete with mill-spun yarn because it has never yet been found to be as strong as mill-spun yarn.

(2) The output of the spinning-wheels is too small to be profitable.

The experience of those who have worn khaddar for years is that where it is made of good hand-spun yarn it is any day more durable than the best mill-spun cloth of the same count. For instance, some of my Andhra friends have shown me their dhotis which have lasted four years and upwards against mill-spun dhotis which wear out inside of a year. But my point is not that hand-spun is more durable, but that hand-spinning being the only possible supplementary industry for the peasantry of India, which means 85 per cent of its population, all our arrangements regarding clothing should be fashioned on the understanding that it must be supplied from hand-spun yarn. Thus, our energy should be concentrated not on finding out the best and the cheapest yarn, no matter where and how spun, but on finding out the cheapest and the best hand-spun yarn. If my proposition is sound all the industrial departments of the nation should revolve round the charkha as the centre. The Department of Industries, therefore, would make improvements in the spinning-wheels so as to increase the output. They would buy nothing but hand-spun yarn, so that hand-spinning is automatically stimulated. They would devise means of utilizing every quality of hand-spun yarn obtainable. They would issue prizes for the finest hand-spun yarn. They would explore all possible fields for getting good hand-spun

yarn. This does not mean less encouragement to hand-weaving.weaving. It simply means adding to the encouragement of hand-weaving and hand-spinning and thereby serving those most in need of help.

But it has been objected that hand-spinning is not profitable. But surely it is profitable for those who have many an idle hour at their disposal and to whose scanty income even a pice is a welcome addition. The whole of the charkha programme falls to pieces if millions of peasants are not living in enforced idleness for at least four months in the year. Wherever khaddar workers are doing their labour of love, it has become not only profitable but a blessing to villagers to have men who would buy their yarn. Those whose income does not exceed five to six rupees per month and have time at their disposal would gladly take in work that brings them an addition of two rupees per month.

MALKHACHAK AND OTHER CENTRES

I have before me a report of work done by a band of volunteers in several parts of Bihar. I visited their centre at Malkhachak after my visit to the industrial workshop. The place is about twelve miles from Patna. In Malkhachak alone, with a population of about a thousand there are four hundred wheels going and there are thirty weavers weaving hand-spun yarn. I saw some of the sisters plying their wheels. They were indifferently constructed. Yet the spinners seemed to be happy with them. They get two rupees per month on an average. An addition of eight hundred rupees per month in a village containing one thousand souls is surely a big income any day. I do not count the wages earned by the weavers at the rate of fifteen rupees per month. That may not be a new addition. These workers, in addition to organizing spinning, are also giving the village folk such medical relief as is possible with their limited resources and still more limited medical knowledge. The report of their work whichwas started in 1921 mentions that they are serving six centres, viz., Madhubani, Kapasia, Shakri, Madhepur and Pupri, besides Malkhachak. They wove in 1922, Rs. 62,000 worth of khaddar, in 1923, Rs. 84,000, in 1924, Rs. 63,000. And they have already woven one lac worth during the nine months of 1925. They wove less in 1924 because of want of cotton. Their capacity for extension, the report says, is almost unlimited, given a regular supply of cotton and a market insured for the disposal of their wares. They believe that almost every village

in the neighbourhood would welcome the presence of these workers. The quality of khaddar produced by them is excellent and is by no means all of the coarsest variety. Some of it is even exceedingly fine. They pay four annas per seer of 40 *tolas* for spinning ten counts and 2½ annas per yard of 45 inches width for weaving. They have 28 workers. The upkeep of these depots including food and travelling amounts to Rs. 25 per month per worker on an aver-age. These depots are not at a loss. They organize their own sales. The quality of yarn they receive shows a steady improvement from month to month. I invite the Department of Industries and the public in general to study the condition of these villages and verify the facts given above for themselves. These workers are responsible for 7,000 wheels and 250 looms weaving hand-spun yarn in the villages.

The condition of Bihar is in no way extraordinary. It is more or less the same in many parts of Bengal, Andhra, Tamilnad and the United Provinces. I have mentioned these provinces because the condition of those who have taken up spinning can be studied there. At the present moment, most of the other provinces would show the same state of things. Orissa for instance where the people are living from hand to mouth only awaits skilled workers and efficient organization. Rajputana, in spite of its millionaires, is again a tract where the art of spinning is still alive and where the people are extremely poor. If only the Rajahs and the Maharajahs will lend their hearty support to the movement, encourage khaddar wear in their States and remove the handicap on khadi wherever it exists, this land of chronic droughts will, without any great outlet of capital and without any fuss, have lacs of rupees per year for its poor people.

Young India, 8-10-1925

42. FATE OF NON-CO-OPERATORS

A friend asks :

> With your complete surrender to the Swaraj Party what will be the fate of those who have made non-co-operation their political religion?

The questioner forgets that I remain just as confirmed a non-co-operator as ever. And it is not only my political but it is also my domestic and social religion. As I has repeatedly said in these pages, voluntary and health-giving co-operation is impossible without the

possibility of non-co-operation at a certain stage and under certain conditions. The Congress does not prescribe to anybody his religion. It is a sensitive barometer from time to time registering the variation in the temperament of politically-minded India. No Congressman is bound to act contrary to his political religion. But he may not now use the name of the Congress for furthering non-co-operation. Under the resolution, the prestige and financial resources of the Congress where they are not earmarked are pledged for the support of furthering the Swarajist Council policy and, therefore, not only are Congress organizations entitled to vote supplies for the furtherance of the Swarajist policy, but they are bound, where they would spend money for Council propaganda at all, to use them for the Swarajist policy. Conversely, no Congress organization where there is a clear majority against spending or raising money for any pure political work is bound by the resolution to do so contrary to their own belief. All Congress resolutions are for guidance and direction; they cannot be for coercion.

The correspondent further asks:

> What will be the position of the Spinners' Association with reference to non-co-operation?

The association has nothing to do with political non-co-operation. The preamble precludes politics. I am the President of that association, not in my capacity as a confirmed non-co-operator, but in that of an out-and-out khadi lover. It is a commercial or economic association with philanthropic motives. It will conduct commerce in khaddar not for the benefit of its members but of the nation. The members instead of receiving dividends will give yearly subscriptions. It invites the politically-minded co-operators and non-co-operators, Rajahs, Maharajahs and persons belonging to all castes and creeds who have faith in the economic capacity of the spinning-wheel and khaddar.

The correspondent adds:

> The programme of the Spinners' Association cannot be complete without the fivefold boycott.

I do not see it at all. Why may not the busiest lawyer at least wear khaddar as some are now doing? Why may not the scholars and teachers of Government schools do likewise? The Council-goers are certainly doing it, so far as the Swarajists are concerned. They have taken khaddar to the Assembly and the Councils. Several titled men

habitually wear khaddar.

The last difficulty of my correspondent is:

> If the irreconcilable non-co-operators are driven out of the Congress and also find no place in the Spinners' Association, will it be possible for them to form an all-India association of their own?

The question is extremely badly put. No one is ever driven out of the Congress. People may and do retire from it when they find the action of the majority to be in conflict with their conscience. The majority cannot be blamed for not suiting itself to the conscience of a minority. And if there are non-co-operators who consider it to be repugnant to their conscience to remain in the Congress while it countenances Council-entry, they may certaily retire. I would even go further and suggest that they should retire, if by remaining in the Congress they wish to hamper Council work. In my opinion the Congress machinery needs to be worked without any friction from within. I have already shown that there is room for non-co-operators in the Spinners' Association as there is also for co-operators. If in spite of it there are non-co-operators who consider it their duty to form an all-India association of their own, it is certainly possible for them to do so, but I would consider it to be thoroughly inadvisable. It is enough if the non-co-operators will, for the time being, carry on their non-co-operation in their own persons.

Young India, 8-10-1925

43. FROM EUROPE

When I think of my littleness and my limitations on the one hand and of the expectations raised about me on the other, I become dazed for the moment, but I come to myself as soon as I realize that these expectations are a tribute not to me, a curious mixture of Jekyll and Hyde, but to the incarnation however imperfect but comparatively great in me, of the two priceless qualities of truth and non-violence. I must therefore not shirk the responsibility of giving what aid I can to fellow-seekers after truth from the West.

I have already dealt with a letter from America. I have before me one from Germany. It is a closely reasoned letter. It has remained with me for nearly a month. At first I thought I would send a private reply and let it be published in Germany, if the correspondent desired it. But, having reread the letter, I have come to the conclusion that I

should deal with it in these columns. I give the letter below in full:[1]

In my travels I have not the file of *Young India* before me, but there is no difficulty about my endorsing the statement that"Satyagraha demands absolute non-violence and that even a women who is in danger of being violated must not defend herself with violence." Both these statements relate to an ideal state and, therefore, are made with reference to those men and women who have so far purified themselves as to have no malice, no anger, no violence in them. That does not mean that the woman in the imagined case would quietly allow herself to be violated. In the first instance, such a woman would stand in no danger of violence and, in the second, if she did, without doing violence to the ruffian she would be able completely to defend her honour.

But I must not enter into details. Even women who can defend themselves with violence are not many. Happily, however, cases of indecent assaults are not also very many. Be that as it may, I believe implicitly in the proposition that perfect purity is its own defence. The veriest ruffian becomes, for the time being, tame in the presence of resplendent purity.

The writer is not correctly informed about my attitude in regard to General Dyer. He would be pleased to know that not only did I not recommend any punishment of General Dyer but even my colleagues, largely out of their generous regard for me, waived the demand for punishment. What, however, I did ask for, and I do press for even now, is the stopping of the pension to General Dyer. It is no part of the plan of non-violence to pay the wrong-doer for the wrong he does which practically would be the case if I became a willing party to the continuation of the pension to General Dyer. But let me not be misunderstood. I am quite capable of recommending even punishment to wrong-doers under conceivable circumstances; for instance I would not hesitate under the present state of society to confine thieves and robbers, which is in itself a kind of punishment. But I would also admit that it is not satyagraha and that it is a fall from the puredoctrine. That would be not an admission of weakness of the doctrine but weakness of myself. I have no other remedy to suggest in such cases in the present state of society. I am therefore satisfied with advocating the use of prisons more as reformatories than as places of punishment.

[1] For the text of this letter, *vide*"From Europe", 8-10-1925.

But I would draw the distinction between killing and detention or even corporal punishment. I think that there is a difference not merely in quantity but also in quality. I can recall the punishment of detention. I can make reparation to the man upon whom I inflict corporal punishment. But once a man is killed, the punishment is beyond recall or reparation. God alone can take life, because He alone gives it.

I hope there is no confusion in the writer's mind when he couples the self-immolation of a satyagrahi with the punishment imposed from without. But, in order to avoid even a possibility of it, let me make it clear that the doctrine of violence has reference only to the doing of injury by one to another. Suffering injury in one's own person, is on the contrary, of the essence of non-violence and is the chosen substitute for violence to others. It is not because I value life low that I can countenance with joy thousands voluntarily losing their lives for satyagraha, but because I know that it results in the long run in the least loss of life and what is more, it ennobles those who lose their lives and morally enriches the world for their sacrifice. I think that the writer is correct in saying that non-co-operation is not merely an ideal but also"a safe and quick way to freedom for India". I do suggest that the doctrine holds good also as between States and States. I know that I am treading on delicate ground if I refer to the late War. But I fear that I must in order to make the position clear. It was a war of aggrandizement, as I have understood, on either part. It was a war for dividing the spoils of the exploitation of weaker races, otherwise euphemistically called the world commerce. If Germany today changed her policy and made a determination to use her freedom not for dividing the commerce of the world but for protecting through her moral superiority the weaker races of the earth, she could certainly do that without armament. It would be found that, before general disarmament in Europe commences, as it must some day unless Europe is to commit suicide, some nation will have to dare to disarm herself and take large risks. The level of non-violence in that nation, if that event happily comes to pass, will naturally have risen so high as to command universal respect. Her judgments will be unerring, her decisions will be firm, her capacity for heroic self-sacrifice will be great, and she will want to live as much for other nations as for herself. I may not push this delicate subject any further. I know that I am writing in a theoretical way upon a practical question without knowing all its bearings. My only excuse is, if I understand it correctly, that that

is what the writer has wanted me to do.

I do justify entire non-violence and consider it possible in relations between man and man and nations and nations, but it is not"a resignation from all real fighting against wickedness". On the contrary, the non-violence of my conception is a more active and more real fighting against wickedness than retaliation whose very nature is to increase wickedness. I contemplate a mental and, therefore, a moral opposition to immoralities. I seek entirely to blunt the edge of the tyrant's sword, not by putting up against it a sharper-edged weapon, but by disappointing his expectation that I would be offering physical resistance. The resistance of the soul that I should offer instead would elude him. It would at first dazzle him and at last compel recognition from him which recognition would not humiliate him but would uplift him. It may be urged that this again is an ideal state. And so it is. The propositions from which I have drawn my arguments are as true as Euclid's definitions which are none the less true because in practice we are unable even to draw Euclid's line on a blackboard. But even a geometrician finds it impossible to get on without bearing in mind Euclid's definitions. Nor may we, the German friend, his colleagues and myself, dispense with the fundamental propositions on which the doctrine of satyagraha is based.

There remains for me now only one ticklish question to answer. In a most ingenious manner the writer has compared the English arrogation of the right of becoming tutors to the whole world to my views on relations between married people. But the comparison does not hold good. The marriage bond involves seeing each other only by mutual agreement. But surely abstention requires no consent. Married life would be intolerable, as it does become, when one partner breaks through all bonds of restraint. Marriage confirms the right of union between two partners to the exclusion of all the others when, in their joint opinion, they consider such union to be desirable, but it confers no right upon one partner to demand obedience of the other to one's wish for union. What should be done when one partner on moral or other grounds cannot conform to the wishes of the other is a separate question. Personally, if divorce was the only alternative I should not hesitate to accept it, rather than interrupt my moral progress,—assuming that I want to restrain myself on purely moral grounds.

Young India, 8-10-1925

44."TAKLI" UNIVERSAL

It is wonderful what hold upon mankind the simple instrument *takli* has retained in spite of the inroads of spinning mills. Not only am I finding its use spread all over India but Dr. Ansari sent me a postcard in which a woman is portrayed comfortably seated with a *takli* plying in a little earthen pot which she has held in her right hand with the left holding the sliver from which she is drawing the thread. It is a picture of a scene in Beirut. The capacity of *takli* for giving use anywhere and at all odd times is really remarkable. A busy man who may find it difficult to sit down for half an hour at a stretch at the wheel cannot do better than carry a *takli* about him and spin his quota on the *takli.*

Young India, 8-10-1925

45. NOTES

PRESIDENT-ELECT

So Sarojini Devi has been elected President of the Congress for the ensuing year. It was an honour that was to have been done to her last year. It is thoroughly well-earned by her. It is due to her for her tireless energy, for her great services as the national ambassador in East and South Africa; and in these days of a steady awakening among women, it is a graceful tribute to India's womanhood for the Reception Committee to have elected as President one of India's most gifted daughters. Her election will give great satisfaction to our countrymen across the seas and give them courage to fight the battle that is in front of them. May her occupancy of the highest office in the gift of the nation result in freedom coming nearer to us.

BIG BROTHER'S UNDERTAKING

Maulana Shaukat Ali is bent upon earning his position on the Council of the All-India Spinners' Association. He wants to justify his faith in khaddar by his work. Though he has done spinning more or less regularly before now, he will now insist upon doing it with the utmost possible regularity and supply me with his monthly quota. He has undertaken to enrol before the end of the year at least 3,000 A class Muslim members. I have told the Maulana Saheb that enrolment

of real 3,000 A class members before the end of the year will give me complete satisfaction. But I have told him also that it will tax his resources to the utmost to get 3,000 Mussalmans who not being professional spinners will spin regularly and deliver their yarn from month to month. There are not today in all India, 3,000 members, men and women, on the Congress register who have paid their full quota of 2,000 yards to date. It is tragic, but it is true. No doubt, the reduction to one half will make a change. Experience, however, shows that men will come willingly to do certain things at a pinch and in a fit of exaltation, but many will not do things with sustained regularity from day to day and month to month. And yet I am convinced that, before we can make substantial headway we shall have to get men who will regard it as a point of honour to fulfil long engagements undertaken by them for the sake of the nation. I therefore wish every success to the Maulana Saheb.

A HINDU PRESERVE?

The Maulana told me that a Mussalman friend warned him that the khaddar service under the Spinners' Association would be a Hindu preserve as it has been under the Khadi Board. He had already challenged the Mussalman friend because he himself knew that Mr. Banker had tried his best to get some Mussalman workers. I add my own experience. Wherever I have gone I have asked managers of khaddar organizations whether they have Mussalman workers with them and they have invariably complained of the difficulty of getting Mussalman workers for khaddar. Khadi Pratishthan has some but they belong to the humbler walks of life. The Abhoy Ashram has one or two. I cannot multiply these instances. The thing is that khadi service has not yet become a popular service. There is not much money to be had for service. In the figures I analysed some time ago the highest pay given was Rs. 150/- per month. That was paid to a very able organizer. The best khaddar workers are all volunteers everywhere. The terms of service must necessarily be stiff. You cannot have whole-time khaddar workers who do not themselves spin or habitually wear khaddar. I would love to have many Mussalmans of the right stamp offering their services. Let them all apply to the Maulana Saheb. He has undertaken to examine every case personally and make his recommendation to the Council. But I give due warning to all concerned whether Mussalmans, Christians, Parsis or Jews,that they must not blame the Council if the khaddar service becomes a Hindu

preserve for want of efforts, ability or love for khaddar on the part of the others.

DEBTS OF HONOUR

I had some time ago in the pages of *Navajivan* to refer to the default on the part of Congress debtors in Gujarat. Now that I have taken up the burden of the All-India Spinners' Association, the first present I received was a list from Mr. Banker of 70 debtors to the Bihar Provincial Khadi Board. These are all debts of long standing incurred by Congressmen,—many of them are for khaddar sold. They amount to over Rs. 20,000. It is a matter of shame and sorrow that there should be so many debts outstanding. The Khadi Board has, in my opinion, been over-lenient. All public institutions are public trust and those who are in charge of them have oftentimes to harden their hearts and rigorously collect all debts owing to the trust under their charge. Leniency in the management of a public trust is a misplaced virtue and may often amount to an unpardonable breach. I know that a false notion of non-co-operation has often come in the way of proceedings being taken against defaulters. But as I have so often pointed out, laws are made by institutions for self-preservation, not for suicide. When, therefore, they hamper their growth they are worse than useless, and must be set aside. Boycott of law-courts was undertaken in order to invigorate the nation, to wean people from running on the slightest pretext to law-courts, to popularize private arbitration, never to bolster up fraud or cover defaulters. It proceeded upon the assumption that Congressmen would at least carry out their obligations to one another and to the Congress without the necessity of resort even to arbitration, much less to law-courts. I hope, therefore, that those gentlemen who owe anything to the Khadi Board will hasten to discharge their debts and will not put the Board to the painful necessity of taking proceedings against them.

HINTS FOR SPINNING EXAMINERS

A correspondent who has evidently given some thought to the spinning-wheel makes the following suggestions:

> The training and the tests may be conducted on the following lines and the same method may be adopted in the spinning competition during the Congress Week also:
>
> The art of spinning may be classified into 'carding', 'spinning proper' and 'mechanism'.

Carding Tests

1. Fineness of carding and outturn in a fixed time from the given ginned cotton.

2. Difference between hard and soft rolled slivers.

3. Uses of the different parts of carding-bow and the accessories.

Spinning Proper

1. Fineness and uniformity of yarn outturn in a fixed time from self-carded slivers and from any given carded slivers.

2. Ability to spin yarn of a given count (sample of which may be given).

3. Manipulation of the parts of the wheel,—uses of the different parts.

Mechanism (Practical)

1. A spinning-wheel out of use for some time (of course not requiring any carpentry work) may be asked to be set right.

2. A wheel with its parts slackened may be asked to be set right. Different patterns of wheels may be tried for the above purpose. (This is what is done in practical examinations of typewriting, levelling and other scientific instruments.)

As years pass on, the different tests may be gradually introduced in the competitions.

In the selection of persons to manage and conduct the affairs of the Spinners' Association, men of tried character and tried sincerity have to be selected, so that this method at last may work to a success, unlike the previous attempts whose seeming failures are all due to want of workers of sincerity and selflessness. There are many undesirables who have already got into the existing national organizations and there are yet many just rising and scheming to get into this new organization also.

The suggestions for examiners are good. About undesirables one knows that democratic institutions, all the world over, run the risk of bad people getting into them. This fate will pursue such institutions till the millenium arrives and we have to reckon with the fact and provide accordingly. Since the Spinners' Association is designed to be not a democratic body with a fluctuating policy but a philanthropic commercial body, the democratic element has been kept under well-regulated checks. Even so there can be no absolute guarantee against bad men getting into even a self-appointed and selective, philanthropic corporation. One can only hope that the Spinners' Association will offer no attraction to the evil- minded people.

LACK OF MORAL COURAGE

A friend sends me the following cutting for reproduction in *Young India:*

This lack of moral courage is a great evil in the church. Many, rather

than contend against their superiors, will contend against God Himself. And they rid themselves of all responsibility by substituting their superiors' conscience for their own wherein God speaks. They do not understand that by striving against what is good, or by refraining from striving against what is evil, in obedience to their superiors, they give scandal to the world, they stain the christian character in the eyes of the world. They do not understand that both their duty toward God and their duty toward their superiors may be fulfilled, by never striving against what is good, by never refraining from striving against what is evil, by never judging their superiors, byobeying them with perfect obedience in every thing that is neither opposed to what is good nor in favour of what is evil, by laying even life itself at their feet, but not their conscience; their conscience, never! Thus the inferior, stripped of everything save conscience and just obedience, becomes a pure grain of the salt of the earth; and where many such grains are united, the substance to which they adhere will be saved from corruption, and that to which they do not adhere, will rot and fall to pieces.

This passage contains an echo of what many of us do every day, subordinating the clear voice of God to the voice of man, who for the time being exercises authority over us. We should be free in a moment if we could strike the happy medium and know when to yield to the voice of authority and when to resist it even at the risk of losing one's life.

Young India, 8-10-1925

46. MESSAGE TO"FORWARD"

KISHANGANJ,
October 10,1925

I wish *Forward* many happy returns. The longer young men like Subhas Bose are denied the right of a fair trial and yet kept under lock and key, the quicker is our pace towards our goal. Fight for freedom is no mock affair. It is so real and so terrible that it will require the best of thousands of us. Let us not grudge the price.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 8050

47. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

October 10, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your good wishes. I would like you to correspond with Satis Babu about khaddar.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. MOTILAL ROY
PRABARTAK SANGH
CHANDRANAGAR

From a photostat: G.N. 11021

48. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL

Saturday, October 10,1925

BHAISHRI RAMNIKLAL,

Today on the train to Katihar, I read with interest your report[1] on the school. The train has stopped, people are staring but, taking no notice of them, I am writing to you.

The report brings out prominently to our notice the changes that have taken place among the teachers. But who can say which change could have been prevented? If we can even now undo them, we should.

Kaka's[2] grief causes grief to me also. How nice it would be if Kaka improves his health and while doing so forgets his grief! To a student of the *Gita* how could there be any sorrow or joy? But who can impart this wisdom? It seems one attains it only out of experience.

I am sending back the report. I quite approve of Kishorelal's[3] decision.

I hope both of you are at peace and in good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 10683

[1] Report on the Ashram school for *Samvat* 1980-81, of the Vikram era
[2] Kaka Kalelkar
[3] Kishorelal Mashruwala

49. IF EXPELLED FROM ONE'S COMMUNITY

When the leaders of a community thoughtlessly expel persons from it, guided by nothing but their unthinking attachment to ideas and customs, superstitions, ignorance and envy, it is better for one to be boycotted by it than to continue as a member of it, for no one who loves truth can remain in a society from which another such person has been expelled.

This is the principle. Although it cannot always be followed in practice, it needs to be borne in mind. We observe nowadays that heads of communities are becoming increasingly high-handed. There are heads who regard it as a sin even to serve a meal to an *Antyaja*. A Hindu who invites an *Antyaja* to sit with other Hindus at a dinner or consents to another doing this is regarded as having committed a sin. Let all lovers of goodness join the company of such sinners.

To be sure, boycott is not easy to bear. One is not served meals, and is denied the services of the dhobi, the barber and, it is not impossible, even of the doctor. They inflict every hardship, short of putting one to death. A reformer who is boycotted must have the strength to remain steadfast unto death. The best service to *Antyajas* can be rendered only by Hindus who have made their lives pure, dedicated their lives. What does it matter whether one is served meals or not? Why cannot we stay at home, cook our own food and eat in peace? If the dhobi refuses to wash our clothes, we may wash them ourselves and save money. Shaving oneself has now become a common practice. Yes, but how to find a match for one's daughter, and a bride for one's son, it will be asked . If we are particular that the partner for either should be from our own community and cannot find one, the daughter or the son should cultivate self- control. If they do not have the strength for this, we should look for a partner in some other community. If we are disappointed even in this, we should resign ourselves to what cannot be helped.

There are only four castes, whether communities number four or forty thousand. The merger of sub-divisions in communities is something to be actually welcomed. Small social circles with rigid barriers have done great harm to Hinduism. Why should not a Vaisya try to enter into marriage alliance with another Vaisya in any part of the country? Why should a Brahmin of Gujarat not look for a son-in-law or daughter-in-law in any Brahmin family of the same level of

culture as his? If we lack the courage even for this reform, Hinduism will be in danger of becoming a religion of extremely narrow outlook. A Gujarati girl marrying in Bengal or a Bengali girl marrying in Gujarat is not altogether a calamity. If those who wish to preserve the division of society into four castes also try to preserve the present sub-divisions into communities, the former will disappear along with the latter, which are already disappearing.

Today, even the division into four castes has lost its sanction. Thinking men and women ought to consider this problem. As a first step, if the various castes in Gujarat meet and decide to enlarge the boundaries of social intercourse within them, will not that be great progress? Can they not decide to merge the communities which form their sub-divisions?

If the heads of these communities have no desire even to think over this problem, it is very necessary that individuals should take the lead.

But I wished to discuss in this article the question of social boycott. If I have written about the sub-divisions of castes, it is for the comfort of the victims of boycott. There is only one way to fight tyranny, whether it is by our own people or by others. The victim of boycott has at present a very simple way open to him. Let us, however, suppose that in the exiting atmosphere in the country a person boycotted by his sub-division of the caste will be boycotted by the entire caste. Even if it is so, what does it matter? We need today all over the country reformers who will cultivate the strength to stand alone.

Anyone, however, who shows the courage to do this will be, if his motive is pure, free from anger and ill-will, will bear hardships in patience, will not hate the oppressor, wish well even to him and minister to him when an opportunity offers. No one should, in any circumstances, forsake his duty of service. No one, indeed, has a right to exact service from others. Dharma says:"I am nothing but service. The Creator has given me no rights at all." How can one lose what one does not possess? The victim of boycott should give up all desire to be served by others. There is, most certainly, a peculiar law that some will come forward to offer their services to such a person, but the worker himeself will remain unconcerned whether or not anybody does so. Anyone who claims that he wants no service, hoping all the time that some people will offer to serve him, is a thief and is bound to be disapointed in his hope.

Workers who would serve *Antyajas*, be as humble as the dust under your feet and let people harass you if they choose. The earth, though we ever trample her under our feet, is all forgiveness, and that is why we call her mother and sing to her every morning as we wake up.

> Divine one, you who are Vishnu's spouse, I bow unto you with the seas of the world a garment round your body and the mountains your breasts. Forgive us that we tread on you with our feet.

Workers who have learnt perfect humility from such a mother will suffer no harm by being boycotted.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-10-1925

50. MEANING OF THE"GITA"

A friend puts the following question:[1]

Such doubts will continue to arise. Those who have made some study [of the *Gita*] should try to resolve them to the best of their ability. I will try to do so, but I must say at the same time that in the last resort man acts according to the dictates of his heart. The heart takes precedence over the intellect. The principle is accepted first, and proof follows afterwards. Inspiration precedes the arguments with which we justify it. That is why it is said that the intellect is led by one's actions. Man discovers arguments in favour of what he wants to do or has done.

I can, therefore, understand that my interpretation of the *Gita* may not be acceptable to everyone. In these circumstances, I think it should suffice if I describe how I arrived at my interpretation of the *Gita* and explain the principles which I have followed in determining the meaning of Shastras."My duty is to fight, and be unconcerned with the result. The enemies who deserve to die are dead already, my part is simply to be an instrument in killing them."

I became acquainted with the *Gita* in 1889. I was twenty years of age at that time. I had not yet fully understood the significance of non-violence as a principle of dharma. It was from Shamal Bhatt's

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had argued that chapters I and XI of the *Gita* did not seem to support Gandhiji's view that it taught non-violence.

couplet,"Let him offer water, and a good meal to eat", that I had first learnt the principle of winning over even an enemy with love. Its truth had made deep appeal to my heart, but the couplet had not suggested to me the principle of compassion for all creatures. I had even eaten meat before that time while I was still in India. I believed that it was one's duty to kill snakes and other such creatures. I remember having killed bed-bugs and other insects. I remember killing a scorpion once. Today I think that we should not kill even such poisonous creatures. In those days I believed that we would have to fit ourselves to fight the British. I used to murmur to myself the lines of the poem begining,"Is it any wonder that the British rule over us?" My eating meat was for the purpose of fitting myself for this fighting in future. These were the views I held before I left for England. It was my desire to keep, even at the cost of my life, the promises which I had given to my mother that saved me from eating meat and other sins. My love of truth has saved me in many difficult situations.

It was at his time that, coming into contact with two Englishmen, I was induced to read the *Gita*. I say"induced" because I had no particular desire to read it when these two friends asked me to read the *Gita* with them, I felt rather ashamed. The consciousness that I knew nothing about our holy books made me feel miserable. The reason, I think, was my vanity. I did not know sanskrit well enough to be able to red the *Gita* without help. The two English friends, on their part, did not know Sanskrit at all. They gave me sir Edwin Arnold's excellent translation of the poem. I went through the whole of it immediately and was fascinated by it. From that time till now, the last nineteen stanzas of Chapter II have ever remained engraved in my heart. For me, they contain the essence of dharma. They embody the highest knowledge. The principles enunciated in them are immutable. The intellect, too, is active in them in the highest degree, but it is intellect disciplined to high purpose. The knowledge which they contain is the fruit of experience.

This was my first introduction to the *Gita.* Since then, I have read many other translations and commentaries and listened to many discourses but the impression made by that first reading persists. These stanzas are the key to the understanding of the *Gita.* I would even go so far as to advise people to reject statements in the poem which bear a meaning contrary to that of these nineteen stanzas. For a person who is humble there can be no question of rejecting anything.

He will merely reason: 'It is the imperfection of my own intellect that today other stanzas seem to me inconsistent with these. In the course of time, I shall be able to see their consistency.' So he will tell himself and others, and leave the matter there.

For understanding the meaning of the Shastras, one must have a well-cultivated moral sensibility and experience in the practice of their truths. The injunction against Sudras studying the Vedas is not altogether unjustified. A Sudra, in other words a person without moral education, without sense and without knowledge, would completely misread the Shastras. No person, even if grown up in age, is qualified to understand difficult problems in Algebra without preparation. Before anyone can understand such problems, he must have studied the elements of the subject. How would"*Aham Brahmasmi*" [1] soundin the mouth of a lustful man? What meaning, or distorted meaning, would he not attach to it?

Hence anyone who offers to interpret the Shastras must have observed the prescribed disciplines in his life. A mechanical observance of these disciplines is as futile as it is is difficult. The Shastras regard it essential that one should have a guru. But gurus are rare in this age and, therefore, wise men of learning advise regular study of books in regional languages which are steeped in the spirit of devotion. Those, however who are devoid of this spirit and lack even faith, are not qualified to explain the meaning of the Shastras. Learned men may please themselves and draw seemingly profound meanings from the Shastras, but what they offer is not the real sense of these. Only those who have experience in practice of their truths can explain the real meaning of the Shastras.

There are, however, principles for the guidance of the common man too. Any interpretation of a Shastra which is opposed to truth cannot be right. The Shastras are not meant for those who question the validity of the principle of truth itself, or rather, the Shastras are no better than ordinary books for such a person. No one can meet him in argument. Anyone, on the other hand, who does not find the principle of non-violence in the Shastras is indeed in danger, but his case is not hopeless. Truth is a positive value, while non-violence is a negative value. Truth affirms. Non-violence forbids something which is real enough. Truth exists, untruth does not exist. Violence exists,non-violence does not. Even so, the highest dharma for us is that nothing

[1] "I am the *Brahman*, the Absolute", the central teaching of Advaita Vedanta.

but non-violence can be. Truth is its own proof, and non-violence is its supreme fruit. The latter is necessarily contained in the former. Since, however, it is not evident as truth is, one may try to discover the meaning of the Shastras without believing in it. But the spirit of non-violence alone will reveal to one the true meaning of the Shastras.

Tapascharya is certainly necessary for the realization of truth. Some sage who had realized truth revealed to the world the goddess of non-violence from amidst the prevailing violence, and said:"Violence comes of illusion; it avails not. Non-violence alone is true." Without non-violence, it is not possible to realize truth. The vows of *brahmacharya*, non-stealing and non-possession are of importance for the sake of non-violence, they help one to realize it in oneself. It is the life-breath of truth. Without it, man is a beast. The seeker after truth will discover all this very early in his quest, and then he will have no difficulty at any time in understanding the meaning of Shastras.

The second rule to be followed in determining the meaning of text in a Shastra is that one should not stick to its letter, but try to understand its spirit, its meaning in the total context. Tulsidas's *Ramayana* is one of the greatest works because its spirit is that of purity, compassion and devotion to God. An evil fate awaits one who beats his wife because Tulsidas has said in his work that a Sudra, a dull-witted person, a beast and a woman merit chastisement. Rama not only never raised his hand against Sita, he did not even displease her at any time. Tulsidas merely stated a common belief. He could never have thought that there would be brutes who might beat their wives and justify their action by reference to his verse. May be Tulsidas himself, following the practice of his time, used to beat his wife; what even then? The practice does not cease to be reprehensible. In any case, his *Ramayana* was not composed to justify men beating their wives. It was composed to display the character of a perfect man, to tell us about Sita, the noblest among chaste and devoted wives, and to delineate the ideal devotion of Bharat. The support which the work seems to lend to evil customs should be ignored. Tulsidas did not compose his priceless work to teach geography. We should, therefore, reject any erroneous statements of a geographical character which we may find in it.

Let us now examine the *Gita*. Its subject-matter is simply the realization of *Brahman* and the means thereto; the battle is only the occasion for its teaching. One can say, if one likes, that the poet used it as an occasion because he did not look upon war as morally wrong.

On reading the *Mahabharata*, I formed quite different impression. Vyasa wrote his supremely beautiful epic to depict the futility of war. What did the Kauravas' defeat and the Pandavas' victory avail? How many among the victors survived? What was their fate? What was the end of Kunti, mother of the Pandavas? What trace is left today of the Yadava race?

Since the *Gita's* subject is not description of the battle and justification of violece, it is perfectly wrong to give much importance to these. If, moreover it is difficult to reconcile a few of the verses with the idea that the *Gita* advocates non-violence, it is still more difficult to reconcile the teaching of the work as a whole with the advocacy of violence.

When a poet composes his work, he does not have a clear conception of all its possible implications. It is the very beauty of good poem that it is greater than its author. The truth which a poet utters in his moment of inspiration, we do not often see him following in his own life. Hence the lives of many poets are at vari-ance with the teaching of their poems. That the overall teaching of the *Gita* is not violence but non-violence is evident from the argu-ment which begins in Chapter II and ends in chapter XVIII. The in-tervening chapters propound the same theme. Violence is simply not possible unless one is driven by anger, by ignorant love and by hatred. The *Gita*, on the other hand, wants us to be incapable of anger and attain to a state unaffected by the three *gunas*[1]. Such a person can never feel anger. I see even now the red eyes of Arjuna every time he aimed an arrow from his bow, drawing the string as far as his ear.

But, then, had Arjuna's obstinate refusal to fight anything to do with non-violence? In fact, he had fought often enough in the past. On the present occasion, his reason was suddenly clouded by ignorant attachment. He did not wish to kill his kinsmen. He did not say that he would not kill anyone even if he believed that person to be wicked. Shri Krishna is the Lord dwelling in everyone's heart. He understands the momentary darkening of Arjuna's reason. He, therefore, tells him:"You have already committed violence. By talking now like a wise man, you will not learn non-violence. Having started on this course, you must finish the job." If a passenger travelling in a train which is running at a speed of forty miles an hour suddenly feels aversion to travelling and jumps out of the train, he will have but

[1] *Sattva* (purity or clarity), *rajas* (restlessness) and *tamas* (torpidity)

committed suicide. He has not in truth realized the futility of travelling as such or of travelling by train. Arjuna was in a similar condition. Krishna, who believed in non-violence, could not have given Arjuna any advice other than what he did. But to conclude from this that the *Gita* teaches violence or justifies war is as unwarranted as to argue that, since violence in some form or other is inescapable for maintaining the body in existence, dharma lies only in violence. The man of discriminating intellect, on the other hand, teaches the duty of striving for deliverance from this body which exists through violence, the duty, that is, of striving for *moksha*.

But whom does Dhritarashtra represent, and likewise Duryodhana, Yudhishthira, or Arjuna? Whom does Krishna represent? Were they historical personages? Does the *Gita* relate their actual doings? Is it likely that Arjuna should suddenly, without warning , ask a question when the battle was about to commence, and that krishna should recite the whole *Gita* in reply? And then, Arjuna, who had said that his ignorance had been dispelled, forgets what he was taught in the *Gita*, and Krishna is made to repeat his teaching in the *Anugita*.[1]

Personally, I believe that Duryodhana and his supporters stand for the Satanic impulses in us, and Arjuna and others stand for Godward impulses. The battle-field is our body. The poet-seer, who knows from experience the problems of life, has given a faithful account of the conflict which is eternally going on within us. Shri Krishna is the Lord dwelling in everyone's heart who is ever murmuring His promptings in a pure *chitta*[2] like a clock ticking in a room. If the clock of the chitta is not wound up with the key of self-purification, the in-dwelling Lord no doubt remains where he is, but the ticking is heard no more.

I do not wish to suggest that violence has no place at all in the teaching of the *Gita*. The dharma which it teaches does not mean that a person who has not yet awakened to the truth of non-violence may act like a coward. Anyone who fears others, accumulates possessions and indulges in sense-pleasures will certainly fight with violent means, but violence does not, for that reason, become justified as his dharma. There is only one dharma. Non-violence means *moksha*, and *moksha* means realizing Satyanarayana[3]. But this dharma does not under any

[1] Epilogue to the *Gita*

[2] Mind-stuff

[3] Truth as God; God in the form of Truth

circumstances countenance running away in fear. In this world which baffles our reason, violence there will then always be. The Gita shows the way which will lead us out of it, but it also says that we cannot escape it simply by running away from it like cowards. Anyone who prepares to run away would do better, instead, to kill and be killed.

If the verses cited by the correspondent cannot be understood even after this explanation, I cannot explain them. I am sure no one doubts that God, who is omnipotent, is, and must be, the Creator, the Preserver and the Destroyer of the Universe. He who creates has certainly the right to destroy. Even so, He does not kill, for He does nothing. God is so merciful He does not violate the law that every creature that is born will die one day. If He were to follow His fancies and whims, where should we be?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-10-1925

51. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

Sunday [*October 11,1925*][1]

BHAI DAHYABHAI,

I was able to read your letter[2] today. Its purport is: that the khadi activity has not been carried on properly in Gujarat, that we cannot reach villages through the spinning-wheel, that workers are so in name only and that for the sake of mere polemics I put aside Dr. Sumant's[3] proposal.

I think we could have improved the khadi activity in Gujarat, but when everyone was inexperienced, whom could we blame? No one has done wrong intentionally.

I am unable to give up the faith that we can really reach the villages through the spinning-wheel alone. Where the people starve, this is the only means of relief. Where the people are well-off but lazy, it is the only thing which will rid them of their laziness. Its partial failure is only because very few with faith in it have stayed in the villages.

[1] The postmark bears the date 12-10-1925.

[2] The long letter mentioned in the previous letter to the addressee, dated 7-10-1925

[3] Dr. Sumant Mehta, who had proposed that volunteers should be given systematic training in social service

Those who have been working in Gujarat are not workers in name only. If your allegation is against Laxmidas[1], you do not know him. With his wife and daughter he has dedicated himself to the work. In which Ashram except Satyagraha Ashram have lakhs been wasted? But all its accounts are clear. In Bardoli[2] there was certainly waste of money on the building but it was due to lack of experience. In Sarbhon[3] there was no extra expense. In Godhra[4] extra money was spent but it will bear fruit, because how else can the untouchables have such a building? If you would present the matter more clearly I could explain it better.

I did not brush aside Dr. Sumant's suggestion for the sake of polemics. How could I do so when I am proud of Dr. Sumant and when I would not disregard even a child's suggestion? But what to do when I don't understand something? I acted according to my knowledge. If the Satyagraha Ashram is not a Sevak Samaj[5] what else is it? How could I shape it better than I knew. I wish we had other societies, too, but who should do this work—they who know better or I?

The fact is that you have not realized my limitations. I am not omnipotent. I do not reserve my strength, but use if fully; what more can I do?

I shall definitely go to Dholka, unless God wills it otherwise. When I reach the Ashram, you may join me so that we may reduce our worries. Do not reply to this, but argue it out with me when we meet.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2693. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

[1] Laxmidas Asar

[2] Village in the Surat district of Gujarat where buildings of Swaraj Ashrams had lately been built

[3] *ibid.*

[4] A town in Gujarat where, too, an ashram building for Harijans had just been constructed

[5] Servants' society

52. LETTER TO A WORKER IN LUCKNOW

[PATNA,]
October 12, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I have a wire complaining that I am disturbing the Sitapur programme. I had your wire also. I, therefore, wired to you to the effect that your programme should be framed subject to confirmation by the committee at Sitapur. I must, however, confess that even if there is an interval of five hours at Lucknow, I should be allowed that time for rest. But if such is not possible, you should send me to Sitapur by motor and not keep me engaged for five hours at Lucknow. A train journey is preferable to a motor ride but a motor ride is preferable to work till a late hour. I have grown so weak that I am washed out at 7 p.m. When I attend meetings at night I yawn. Now you know all about me and my wish and you may do what you think is best in the public interest. For I have no stomach left for addresses. Better ask me to give a spinning demonstration.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 7750

53. LETTER TO FULCHAND SHAH

October 12,1925

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I have your letter. I am writing to Chi. Chhaganlal about the Rs. 1,000. Tell Devchandbhai to ask me when I am in Kutch[1] about the meeting of the Parishad Committee[2].

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Is your mother all right?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2871. Courtesy: Fulchand Shah

[1] Gandhiji was in Kutch from October 22 to November 3.
[2] Executive Committee of the Kathiawar Political Conference.

54. SPEECH AT VISHANPUR[1]

October 13, 1925

In his reply Mahatmaji said, with other things, that it was not quite happy on the part of the reception committee to have made allegations against Darbhanga Raj without sufficient proofs and specially in an address, but if they had really any grievances, they ought to try to get them removed.

The Searchlight, 16-10-1925

55. BIHAR NOTES

HINDU-MUSLIM QUESTION

From Patna we went to Bhagalpur. At Bhagalpur there was a very great public meeting at which I was obliged to make a somewhat lengthy reference to the Hindu-Muslim question. Though my influence over those who are agitating the question is gone, they continue to discuss with me the various problems arising from it. I felt, therefore, that I should redeclare my views for what they might be worth. Apart from merits I must confess that I have not liked this constant reference to the Government by both the parties on matters which they by mutual settlement or appeal to the sword can adjust. I, therefore, told the audience that since neither party was prepared to compromise and each was afraid of the other, the best way would be without seeking the intervention of the Government to settle the matters in dispute by the method of the lathi. Retreat out of fear was cowardice and Cowardice would not hasten a settlement or the advent of non-violence. Cowardice was a species of violence which it was most difficult to overcome. One could hope to persuade a violently inclined person to shed his violence and take up the superior force of non-violence, but since cowardice was negation of all force, it was impossible to teach a mouse non-violence in respect of a cat. He

[1] According to the report, the reception by a disciplined, fifty-thousand strong gathering at this important interior village in the Purnia district of Bihar was attended with pageantry in which scores of elephants and horses featured long a two-mile, specially-constructed road. Gandhiji was presented an address of welcome and contributions were made to the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund.

would simply not understand what non-violence could be, because he had not the capacity for violence against the cat. Would it not be a mockery to ask a blind man not to look at ugly things? Maulana Shaukat Ali and I were at Bettiah in 1921. The people of a village near Bettiah told me that they had run away whilst the police were looting their houses and molesting their womenfolk.[1] When they said that they had run away because I had told them to be non-violent, I hung my head in shame. I assured them that such was not the meaning of my non-violence. I expected them to intercept the mightiest power that might be in the act of harming those who were under their protection, and draw without retaliation all harm upon their own heads even to the point of death, but never to run away from the storm centre. It was manly enough to defend one's property, honour or religion at the point of sword. It was manlier and nobler to defend them without seeking to injure the wrongdoer. But it wasunmanly, unnatural and dishonourable to forsake the post of duty and in order to save one's skin to leave property, honour or religion to the mercy of the wrongdoer. I could see my way of successfully delivering the message of ahimsa to those who knew how to die, not to those who were afraid of death. I told the audience further, that those like me who deliberately did not want to fight and were powerless to effect a settlement might follow the example of those Mussalmans who, during the time of the first four Caliphs, sought the refuge of the cave when brothers began to fight one against the other. The mountain cave in these days was a practicalimpossibility but they could retire to the cave which each of us carried within himself. But such could be only those who had mutual regard for one another's religion and customs.

FOLLY OF EXCOMMUNICATION

Then there was a Provincial Marwari Sammelan where I spoke on the question of social boycott and on the crying need of social reform. I told the Marwari friends that ex-communication was a lawful weapon in the hands only of those who deserved to be classed as *mahajan*, which meant pure men who were real representatives of their respective groups or castes and who declared ex-communication not from personal spite but from the selfless motive of conserving the interest of fellow-beings. It was an immoral abuse of power to put

[1] *Vide*"Speech at Bettiah", 8-12-1920.

under the ban of ex-communication a person who for the sake of learning or legitimate gain crossed the waters or who for the sake of obtaining a suitable match for his son or daughter went outside his sub-caste or who dared to remarry his widowed daughter of tender age. If *varnashrama* which had a useful and proper place in the Hindu social system was to be rescued from destruction it was high time that the innumerable sub-divisions were fused into one. There was, for instance, no reason why a Marwari Brahmin or Vaisya should not seek marriage relations with a Bengali Brahmin or Vaisya. The *mahajan* to be truly great will have to encourage rather than suppress tendencies towards fusion.

If ex-communication was ever deserved nowadays, it was deserved by those who gave away their daughters in marriage before they were full-grown, at least before they were sixteen, and if secret immorality was to be discountenanced, it was the duty of parents of child widows to encourage their remarriage.

THE "PANDAS"

From Bhagalpur we motored to Banka where there was a district conference presided over by Maulana Shaffi Sahib. There was nothing noteworthy here except for the huge and embarrassing crowds through which I passed with difficulty with my bruised toe. We went thence to Devgarh otherwise known as Vaidyanath Dham. This is not only a famous place of pilgrimage, but also a health resort beautifully situated and surrounded by hills. This is a favourite place with the Bengalis. Unlike as in other places of pilgrimage, I found here the *pandas*, i.e., the priests in charge of the shrines, to be a fairly cultured body of men. The majority of volunteers were smart *panda* youths who rendered great assistance, I was told, to the pilgrims. There are several educated men amongst them, one being even a High Court pleader. I had the pleasure too of a visit from the elderly *pandas*. They wanted me to tell them what they should do to serve the people and, when I told them that they should serve the pilgrims instead of seeking to profiteer at their expense, and endeavour to make the places of pilgrimage really holy places by themselves leading pure and restrained lives, they readily agreed and there seemed to me to be a ring of sincerity about their assent to my proposals and a humble recognition of the existence of the evils I had ventured to point out. I was agreeably surprised to discover that the great temple was open to the so-called untouchables. The usual women's meeting was arranged

in the spacious temple compound just opposite the shrine. The order kept by the *panda* volunteers wherever I went in Devgarh was certainly much better than I have observed elsewhere.

VIRTUE OF SUFFERING

The public meeting was so well-organized as to ensure perfect quiet. The public address made pointed reference to terrible sufferings that the people of this district underwent in 1921-22. It should be noted here that this is the district called Santhal Parganas. It is a Non-Regulation part of Bihar. The Commissioner's will is therefore the law of the land. The address also referred to the fact that whereas during 1921 and 1922 the drink habit had all but disappeared, It was again making headway amongst the *Santhals*. The possibilities of khaddar were stated to be very great. In my reply I pointed out that no nation had ever come to its own without much suffering. I, therefore, did not mind the sufferings that the people underwent in 1921-22. Only suffering to be beneficial must be voluntary and must be enjoyed. When it came, such suffering left the sufferer stronger and happier at the end of it. I was, therefore, grieved to discover that the suffering in the district had caused demoralization amongst the people. It meant that all the suffering was not voluntary. It was up to the workers to set an example in pure and voluntary suffering. There should be persistent agitation amongst *Santhals* against the drink habit and the charkha work should be systematically organized.

TWO PICTURES

There was, too, a separate presentation of an address by the Municipality. I take note of this event especially for the exceedingly tasteful but simple arrangements made for the presentation in the open air. The attendance was evidently regulated by tickets and was confined to so few that the audience could have been easily accommodated in any commodious building. But the Commissioners chose to erect a little *pandal* decorated with foliage tastefully arranged in the midst of beautiful natural scenery. I could not, therefore, help recalling in my reply to the address of the Municipality the dirty state of the road leading to the temple and the dilapidation surrounding it. I have visited almost all the places of pilgrimage in India, and everywhere the condition in and about the temples is deplorable—disorder, dirt, din and stench. All these are probably less marked in

Devgarh than elsewhere. But all the same the contrast between the temple surroundings and the place where the address was presented was painful. If the Municipality, the *pandas* and the pilgrims combined together, they could make the temple and its precincts beautiful, sweet-smelling and uplifting as they ought to be. If honest and proper management could be assured, I had no doubt, I told them, that the rich pilgrims would gladly pay for the comfort that they would get at such holy places.

USELESS AND UGLY

From Devgarh we proceeded to Kharagdeha which is reached through Giridih from where it is a motor ride of 26 miles. At this place the programme began with a meeting of ladies. Hitherto I have restrained myself from criticizing the heavily ornamental decoration of some of my fair audiences, oppressive though it has often appeared to me. But the bangled arms from wrist practically to elbow, the huge thick nose-rings with about a three-inch diameter which could with difficulty be suspended from two holes, proved beyond endurance, and I gently remarked that this heavy ornamentation added nothing to the beauty of person, caused much discomfort, must often lead to disesase and was, I could plainly see, a repository of dirt. I had never seen so much ornamentation anywhere else. Heavier articles I have seen, as for instance the unbearable heavy ankle-hoops—I cannot call them rings—of Kathiawar ladies, but never so much body space covered over with so many bangles and what-nots. I was told that these huge nose-rings often resulted in cutting the delicate nasal membranes. I was nervous about the effect my very straight remarks would produce upon my gentle audience. I was, therefore, considerably relieved when at the end of my speech and in response to my appeal for Deshbandhu Memorial Fund, they crowded round me and gave liberally from their purses. I took care to drive my point home to every donor individually and asked her to give up a large part of her superfluous ornaments. The ladies received my remarks with a gracious smile and some of them even gave me a part of these ornaments. I do not know whether the quality and the quantity of adornment has anything to do with the development of character. That it has something to do with the intellect can be proved from innumerable instances. That it has connection with culture as distinguished from character is also obvious. But as I put character before even culture, I wonder whether I would be always right in

making use, for advocating reform in the art of decoration, of the privilege I enjoy of addressing thousands of women in all the different parts of India. Be that as it may, I would urge upon the parents and husbands of these simple folk, on grounds of economy and health, the necessity of inducing among them a considerable reduction in these articles of personal furniture.

MAHURIS

It was at this place that I made the acquaintance of Mahuris, otherwise known as Mathuris, a body of Vaisyas who, generations ago, are supposed to have migrated from Mathura and the surrounding country and settled in Bihar. They are fairly well-to-do and enterprising. Their chief occupation is commerce. Some of them are staunch reformers. They have taken to khaddar and appreciate its advantages for the poor people. Many of them have given up meat and drink which they used to take before. In their address they stated that they understood the movement of non-co-operation as purely one of self-purification, and that it had revolutionized their inner life. They take little or no part in politics but they are intent upon making all kinds of reforms in their own little community. This moral effect of non-co-operation upon so many people all over India is perhaps its most enduring result. It is fraught with consequences of which we can have as yet but little notion. Similar reforms were reported to me as having taken place also amongst the *Santhals*, many of whom have become, from having been habitual drunkards, complete teetotallers. That movement among them received a check when picketing was withdrawn, but it is again reviving without the element of violence which had crept into the movement in 1921. It will be the saving of the simple but ignorant races like the *Santhals* if they can be weaned from the drink habit.

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56. NATIONAL EDUCATION

During my travels, those who are interested in national education tell me that, whereas I constantly harp upon khaddar, untouchability, Hindu-Muslim unity, nowadays one rarely finds mention even of national education in *Young India*. As a matter of fact the statement is true, but it must not be cited as a ground of complaint against me, if only because I am directly interested in the

largest national university in India. But national education is not a thing which can now be advanced by any writing on my part. Its advance depends totally upon a proper working of the institutions now in existence. We cannot, we must not, any longer appeal to the youth of the country who are now receiving education in the Government insititutions to leave them for they now know the pros and cons of the subject. They are in Government institutions either out of weakness or out of their fondness for them or for their want of faith in national institutions. Whatever the reason, the only way to deal with their weakness, fondness or want of faith is to make the national institutions strong and popular by sheer force of the character and ability of the teachers.

There is before me an appeal by the South Calcutta National School. In a covering letter, I am reminded that I paid during my prolonged stay in Calcutta a hurried visit to the institution. The appeal is signed by influential men. Hand-spinning, I am reminded, is compulsory. There are one hundred boys on the rolls and eighteen teachers, so the appeal runs. The school receives an annual grant of Rs. 200. There are many such institutions throughout the length and breadth of India from whose teachers I receive requests either for advertising them in these columns or, better still, becoming signatory to a direct appeal for funds. I must not yield to the temptation, even at the risk of overlooking some very deserving institutions. A hurried visit and an impression created by such a visit must not be allowed to harm an institution if the impression is bad. Nor must a false but favourable impression be allowed to bolster up an institution that is in reality undeserving. It is my settled conviction that no deserving institution ever dies for want of support. Institutions that have died have done so either because there was nothing in them to commend them to the public or because those in control have themselves lost faith or, which is perhaps the same thing, lost stamina. I would, therefore, urge the conductors of this and other such institutions not to give in because of the general depression. It is a time of test for worthy institutions. There are several at the present moment in India which are struggling against the heaviest odds, where, though the teachers are living in want, they have faith in themselves and their cause. I know that they will prosper in the end and be the stronger for the ordeal they are passing through. I would advise the public to study such institutions and support them if they find them desirable and deserving.

I have observed in many institutions I have visited a tendency to patronize spinning because it has become somewhat of a fashion nowadays. It is far from doing justice to a great cause or to pupils. If spinning is to be revived as an indispensable industry, it must be treated seriously and must be taught in proper and scientific manner like the other subjects taught in well managed schools. The wheels will then be in perfectly good order and condition, will conform to all the tests laid down in these columns from time to time, the pupils' work would be regularly tested form day to day just as all their exercises would be or should be. And this is impossible unless all the teachers will learn the art with its technique. It is a waste of money to have a spinning expert. Every teacher has to become one if spinning has to be effectively taught, and if the teacher believes in the necessity of spinning, he can learn it without any difficulty in a months's time if he would give two hours to it daily. But I have said that whilst charkha spinning may be taught so as to enable boys and girls if they wish to use the spinning-wheel in their own homes, for class-spinning the *takli* is the most economical and the most profitable instrument. It is any day better that five hundred boys spin twenty-five yards each for half an hour at a stated time daily than fifty boys at intervals spinning one hundred yards each in the same half hour. Five hundred boys will spin 12,500 yards daily on the *takli* against 5,000 of fifty boys on the charkha.

Young India, 15-10-1925

57. ABOUT EDUCATED CLASSES

A friend has handed me during my tour in Bihar the following questions for answers through these columns:

> You complain that the educated classes in India do not follow your lead and have gone out of your hands. Is it not due to the fact that you threw them overboard at the very beginning of the movement and demanded impossible sacrifices from them?

I do not know that I have complained about the educated class not following my lead. If anything, I have complained of my own failure to convince that class as a body of the truth of my essential position. To say that I threw the educated class overboard at any time is to misunderstand me. Does a reformer ever throw anybody overboard? He simply invites people to join him in a particular reform. He begins with his own conversion. In other words, he isolates

himself from society and remains in that condition till society sees the virtue of reform, and it is not the fault of the society if its heart orhead cannot understand or appreciate a particular reform. There is obviously something wanting in the reform or the reformer if he does not get the members of the society to which he belongs to take up his reform. I suppose it must be admitted that the sacrifices that the new movement demanded were impossible for the educated class as a whole, and yet are not the exceptional cases brilliant?

If we remember aright, in the beginning of the movement you gave out that you did not care for the intelligentsia if the masses were with you. If this is correct, have you now modified your views? If so, what are you doing or intend doing now to bring the intelligentsia to your views?

I hope I never"gave out" that I"did not care for the intelligentsia". A reformer cannot afford to say or do so. But I did say and do hold even now that if the masses take up the spirit of non-co-operation, swaraj is attainable even without the educated classes. For the masses the chief thing they have to do in that line is to non-co-operate with foreign and mill-spun cloth and establish closest co-operation with cloth of their own spinning and weaving. Unfortunately even this very simple-looking thing cannot be done without the aid of the educated class. I gratefully and fully confess that if hundreds of educated men and women were not helping me in spreading the message of the spinning-wheel and khaddar, it would not have made the progress it has, and if the progress is not as fast as it might be, it is because the educated class as a whole stands aside from the khaddar movement.

Are you seriously of opinion that the masses are with you or they simply applaud you as a Mahatma, little caring for your advice?

I do believe that the masses are wholly with me mentally. But they lack the heart to do what their mind approves. I have examined thousands upon this point and every one of them without exception practically has said."What can we do? We understand what you say. But we lack the strength for it. Give us the strength to do it." If the strength was in my gift, the masses would have been transformed by now. But I know my helplessness in that direction. God alone can give the strength which they vainly seek from me.

Do you think the masses can be so organized as to be thoroughly fitted for mass civil disobedience and are they not always liable to run amok and kill any political movement by their over-enthusiasm and indiscipline?

I do believe, in spite of appearances to the contrary, that the masses can be thoroughly organized for mass civil disobedience, that is to say, more quickly than for violence. I draw the distinction between spasmodic, sporadic and senseless violence and organized mass violence. To turn India into a military camp like, say, Germany, is in my opinion a work of ages, whereas to teach the people in an organized manner to remain passive, that is, pacific under suffering, is comparatively an easier task. This was demonstrated in a most marvellous manner in 1921 in spite of the aberrations at Bombay, Chauri Chaura, and elsewhere. But I freely confess that I have myself despaired of being able to organize the country for mass civil disobedience in the near future. The reasons for it I need not enter into. But this I know that, if India is to attain swaraj in terms of the masses, it will only attain it through developing capacity for mass civil disobedience. The last part of the question betrays the questioner's want of faith in the masses or impatience with them. How long have we been in touch with the masses to enable us to accuse them of indiscipline and over-enthusiasm? It is a crime of which we are perhaps more guilty than the masses. I see it verified even during the progress of my tour in Bihar. The workers have realized that my health will not stand the strain of noise and bustle; they have been previously preparing the huge crowds that gather at every place to remain perfectly noiseless and undemonstrative save by their presence, and to my agreeable astonishment the people are responding nobly here as they did in Bengal. Such is the universal experience of workers who have established any touch with the masses.

What steps are you taking to organize and discipline the masses?

The only step that I or anybody can take to organize and discipline the masses is to serve them selflessly, and this service is possible only through khaddar.

Are you not fully aware of the introduction of many undesirable elements in the Congress organization? If so, what steps are you taking to purge the movement of such undesirable elements?

I am aware of the unfortunate fact. It is the fate of every democratic organization. It is useless, therefore, to address the question to me or to any single individual as to what steps he or she is taking. All who consider themselves to be"desirable elements" must

make a combined effort to keep the Congress organization pure.

> Are you not aware that most of those who gave up their only source of livelihood in order to follow your lead have been thrown over their family and society as so many drones to be maintained and supported by their better circumstanced relatives; if so, how are you going to remedy this defect?

I am unable to endorse the view the writer takes. There are a few cases in which there is great suffering no doubt. But that is due to the parties being unable to revise their standard of life and curtail their expenditure. In their case they have preferred to suffer and be maintained by relatives and friends to returning to legal practice or to service. In my opinion their choice carries no humiliation with it.

> Is it not necessary to have a public fund vested in a Board of Trustees for the maintenance of all genuine public workers and their families?

I am averse to the raising of a public fund for the maintenance of the type of workers mentioned. That would indeed establish a colony of drones. Every genuine public worker should consider it an honour to belong to some branch of Congress service and to accept payment for it.

> In giving a *carte blanche* to the Swaraj Party to represent the Congress in the Provincial Councils and Assembly, have you satisfied yourself that they are amenable? Or are not the recent utterances of their leaders tantamount to saying that they will rather leave the Congress than modify their creed or programme according to any resolution of the Congress?

No *carte blanche* as conceived by the writer has been given to the Swaraj Party. I am entirely satisfied that the Party will be amenable to any well-expressed opinion of the Congress, if only because being a democratic body it must, as it has to, depend upon popular support in every respect.

> Your starting a spinning association leads me to think that since you have handed over the Congress to the Swaraj Party, you will carry on your constructive programme as a subsidiary activity instead of being a chief plank of the Congress platform. If so, are you not practically withdrawing from the Congress and throwing overboard all those who followed you when the Swaraj Party practically rebelled after the Gaya Congress?

I have not handed over nor have I any right to hand over the Congress to the Swaraj Party or to any other party. The Swaraj Party cannot retain control of the Congress for a single day if the Congressmen are not with it. I hope that the constructive programme

will not become a subsidiary activity in the Congress. All that the A.I.C.C. resolution has done is to put the Council programme on a par with the constructive programme and bring into existence an independent organization of experts for the conduct of the charkha and khaddar programme. So long as the Congress extends its patronage to the All-India Spinners' Association, I cannot be said to have withdrawn from the Congress. As I have already said, I am throwing overboard nobody. Those who believe in the charkha only and not in the Councils at all can still belong to the A.I.S.A.

If the Swaraj Party fail to carry out their promises, what is your opinion as to the future programme for the political emancipation of the country beyond the charkha and khaddar?

I do not know what promises are referred to in this question. The political emancipation of the country is possible only if and when it is prepared for armed or civil resistance. Capacity for armed resistance can only come after prolonged and tortuous preparation. Capacity for civil resistance can come only by evolving constructive ability on the part of a daily growing number of people, and as I have no faith whatever in the capacity of India for armed resis-tance for generations to come, I pin my faith to the silent, sure and effective revolution of the charkha.

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58. EUROPEAN CIVILIZATION

A Danish friend sends me translation of extracts from an article printed in *Gads Danske Magasin*. The heading he has given to the extracts is"European Civilization and Gandhi". In adopting his heading for *Young India* I have omitted my name as I have omitted references to my views in the extracts. My views are nothing new to the readers of *Young India*. Here is the translation received:[1]

These extracts present a very lurid picture but probably they are true in substance. That the sum total of the activities of European nations is a denial of the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount will not, I think, be gainsaid. I have reproduced the extracts merely to emphasize the necessary caution against our being lifted off our feet by the dazzle and the glitter of European arms. If the foregoing

[1] For the text, *vide* Appendix"From Europe", 8-10-1925.

picture were the whole of Europe it would be sad for Europe as for the world. Fortunately there is a considerable body of men and women of Europe who are devoting the whole of their energy to combat the war-fever and the breathless pursuit after material wealth and enjoyment. There are reasons for hoping that this body is daily gaining in numbers and in influence. May it be the privilege of India to take part in the new awakening and to advance it, instead of retarding it by succumbing to the European excesses which the best mind of Europe condemns in unmeasured terms and is manfully struggling to bring under effective control.

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59. A GOOD RESOLUTION

During August last, whilst I was passing through Manmad on my way back from Calcutta, some friends met me at the station. I asked as usual how many were regularly spinning in Manmad and there was no answer. Some of them thereafter thought that they would make the commencement, and a letter before me which I have kept on my file for some weeks tells me that, at the time of writing, that is 3rd September, twenty had already commenced to spin with religious regularity. I congratulate these friends on their resolution. I do hope that it will not share the fate of a similar resolution that many made last year and which but few have successfully carried out. Let the word of each one of us be as good as a written bond whose breach carries with it a swift and sharp penalty. I regard resolutions such as the one made by the Manmad friends as promises made to the nation. Those who make them are as a rule grown-up people with a full sense of their responsibiltiy. I hope that the Manmad friends will send in their names to the All-India Spinners' Association.

Young India, 15-10-1925

60. NOTES

SEND YOUR YARN

The year of the All-India Spinners' Association begins from this month, and intending members should, therefore, begin sending their monthly subscription of yarn immediately. Those who were regular members of the Congress under the spinning franchise should

find no difficulty to be members of the A.I.S.A. But even the irregular members, that is, those who could not give in the full subscription, should also be able to do so, as it has been reduced to one half of the original Congress subscription. In any case, none of these last should find any difficulty in joining the A.I.S.A. as B class members.

SUBSIDIARY INDUSTRY"PAR EXCELLENCE"

A friend sends me the following from Keatinge's *Agricultural Progress in Western Inida:*

> Attempts have been made to get cultivators to take up unskilled work such as cotton spinning by hand, but in view of the efficiency of spinning mills such operations can be justified economically on the assumption that the cultivator now wastes so much of his time that any work which he does, however badly paid, will be better than nothing. Unfortunately, the existing facts in many cases justify such an assumption, but to condemn the cultivators to this uphill and uneven competition is a counsel of despair. The subsidiary industry *par excellence* of the cultivators should be breeding and rearing of livestock which provides an occupation and income at all seasons, and returns to the soil the manure which is necessary to maintain it in high fertility.

This question is valuable for its two simple admissions, namely, that in many cases the cultivator in india has much time to waste and that any occupation during that time, however badly paid, is better than nothing. The writer, however, discourages hand-spinning because of the efficiencey of spinning mills. Upon a close examination the argument will be found to be fallacious. The cultivator has not to compete with efficient mills at his own door. The only thing he has to compete with is his new-fangled taste for starchy and flimsy mill-made cloth. If he would only revive his old taste and return to the simple but soft and beautiful khaddar, he is never in the danger of having an idle moment thrown upon him. The efficient hotels and bakeries offer no inducement or competition to the millions of people who prefer their crudely made chapatties to the geometrically rounded and well-baked and well-spiced biscuits. The subsidiary industry of cattle-breeding that has been suggested is no doubt good and any day more paying than spinning. But it requires capital and a knowledge of breeding which the ordinary cultivator does not possess and cannot and will not possess without much previous preparation. Turn it how you will therefore, for Indian conditions there is no other subsidiary industry that can compete with hand-spinning. Its

inestimable value consists not in its capacity for paying a few individuals highly but in immediately providing a remunerative occupation for millions. It is the only subsidiary occupation, therefore, that is capable of being successfully organized. Hence, not cattle-breeding, however good it is in itself, but hand-spinning is the subsidiary industry *par excellence*.

NECESSITY OF BODILY LABOUR

A vigilant friend writes:

> In your address to the Jamshedpur gathering published in *Young India* of the 20th August,[1] in the first paragraph, after stressing the importance of bodily labour above intellectual, you are reported to have said:"The same thought runs throughout Hindu religion. 'He who eats without labour eats sin, is verily a thief.' This is the literal meaning of a verse in the *Bhagavad Gita*." Now, the question apart whether the *Gita* makes any such distinction between (so-called) manual and (so-called) intellectual labour, I can say that the only passage in the *Gita* which could conceivably be taken to mean what (according to the report) you have said a verse in the *Gita* literally means is the passage, Ch. III, verses 12 & 13; so that in the first place it is not a verse but two, which have been requisitioned in support of your view of"labour", and secondly there is no mention of"labour", manual or other, in either of those verses; but in the first verse there is mentioned, by way of explanation of the duty of *yajna*, man's partaking with or dedicating to the higher powers what they have bestowed upon him—failing in which"he is verily a thief", —and in the second verse we are told that"they eat sin who cook for themselves alone". So that is pretty far removed from"the literal sense of a verse" in the *Gita* as you are reported to have given it in your own paper by M.D. I hope you will make a note of it at your convenience.

Technically speaking the writer is correct in saying that the translation given by M. D. is not of one verse but a combination of parts of two verses, and I am thankful to the writer for the accuracy of his correction. But the substance of his argument seems to me to be that there is no warrant for the translation given in the report of my speech of the famous word *yajna* in the *Gita*. But I propose to stand by that translation and venture to suggest that in the verses 12 & 13 of Chapter III quoted by the writer, the word is capable of only one meaning. The fourteenth verse makes it absolutely clear which means:

> By food the living live; food comes of rain,
> And rain comes by the pious sacrifice,
> And sacrifice is paid with tithes of toil
>
> —ARNOLD

[1] *Vide*"Speech at Indian Association, Jamshedpur", 8-8-1925.

Here therefore there is not only the theory, in my opinion, of bodily labour propounded, but there is also the theory established of labour not only for oneself but for others, when and when only it becomes *yajna* or sacrifice. The rains come not through intellectual feats, but through sheer bodily labour. It is a well-established scientific fact that where forests are denuded of trees, rains cease, where trees are planted, rains are attracted and the volume of water received increases with the increase of vegetation. Laws of nature are still unexplored. We have but scratched the surface. Who knows all the ill-effects, moral and physical, of the cessation of bodily labour? Let me not be misunderstood. I do not discount the value of intellectual labour, but no amount of it is any compensation for bodily labour which every one of us is born to give for the common good of all. It may be, often is infinitely superior to bodily labour, but it never is or can be a substitute for it, even as intellectual food, though far superior to the grains we eat, never can be a substitute for them. Indeed without the products of the earth those of the intellect would be an impossibility.

HUMILIATION OR HONOUR?

A worker writes:

> I assure you that the majority of our workers feel humiliated when they get their allowances form the Congress funds, but they cannot help it. I request you to kindly encourage them through the pages of *Young India*.

How is it that young men undertake arduous labours and spend money like water in order to belong to the Indian Civil Service? They not only feel no humiliation, but they are themselves proud of the fact and are entertained by their friends when they pass the examination and receive congratulatory addresess when they get some employment in the Civil Service. Is it more honourable to be able to exercise authority over lacs of people and to collect revenue at the point of the bayonet, often from people who can ill-afford it, than to belong to the Congress service where there is no authority to be wielded save that of love and service and where the only remuneration possible is a bare livelihood? If it be urged that in the Congress service there is an unwholesome juxtaposition of honorary workers and paid workers, there is the same juxtaposition in the Government service. The Government has, and every government must have, against one paid servant tens of honorary servants. There is very often even jealousy

between the two classes. The only reason, therefore, for the disinclination for Congress service so far as I have been able to gather is its newness and instability. All the other reasons are more or less imaginary. Indeed, when the Congress acquires real prestige, which it has not at present—its popularity is merely comparative and not absolute—even a peon will consider it to be an honour to belong to this national service and to take less than the market wage. Meanwhile, I would urge all honest paid workers in the Congress organization, whether at the centre or in the educational, khaddar or the Swarajist branches, to make the service and the institution popular and attractive by strictest integrity, devotion, and ceaseless application. Those who are conscious that they are giving all the time and attention that they bargained for to the paid national service need feel no compunction about belonging to it. The more progress we makein the work of construction, the more paid workers we shall need. We are too poor as a nation to afford a large number of whole-time honorary workers. We will have to fall back more and more upon paid workers. The sooner, therefore, the idea of humiliation about accepting payment, when it is a necessity, is given up the better it will be for the nation.

Young India, 15-10-1925

61. SPEECH AT DISTRICT CONFERENCE, BALLIA[1]

October 16,1925

After making an appeal for silence and thanking the associations that had presented him addresses, Mr. Gandhi said that, in 1921, he had a mind to visit Ballia, but he was sorry he could not. He then had asked Mr. Motilal Nehru to go instead and give peace unto them. Four years after, he was happy to be amidst them. He would have stayed longer with them but for exigency of time. There was one thing that pained him and which he did not like to conceal. He believed in the power of the people of Ballia. But he also believed that that power could be kept under control by the managing capacity of the workers. Now that he was weak and infirm, unable to withstand the din and bustle of crowds, he had hoped he would be spared the trouble incidental to such gatherings.

Continuing, he observed that the constructive work done by the workers of

[1] Among those that attended the conference were Rajendra Prasad, Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. Syed Mahmud. Various local bodies presented addresses.

Ballia pleased him, on which he congratulated them. He was also glad to learn that the two communities lived amicably in Ballia. He prayed that their vow of friendship might be successful and they might set an example to others in this direction. Dwelling on the poverty of India, he confidently remarked that there was no more potent remedy for it than the charkha. Many women were compelled to break stones for their livelihood and he knew how some of the overseers treated them. He spoke from personal experience. He exhorted the audience to help Indian women to be as pure as Sita by abandoning foreign-cloth and plying the charkha."Wear khaddar and increase the power of the charkha." He warned the people against intoxicants, gambling and prostitution. The Yadavakula[1] was exterminated from India because they abandoned dharma and indulged in gambling. They had reminded him that theirs was part of the land of Valmiki, the Ganges and the Sarju and they were determined to serve India. Surely they did what could possibly be done in 1921. But they should do penance for the mistakes they committed in those days.

In the end he appealed for contributions to the Deshbandhu fund which is to be devoted to the popularization of the charkha. He laid stress on the necessity for real, solid work for the regeneration of India.

The Leader, 21-10-1925

62. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Diwali [*October 17, 1925*][2]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I expected a letter from you today also but got none. Keep writing to me. Try to remember and understand the prayer of Draupadi which we recite daily at the women's meeting. I very much feel like writing but just now I must not. I shall think over it after I receive the reply to my letter. Take care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9309. Also C.W. 549. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

[1] The clan to which Shri Krishna belonged

[2] The reference to prayer at the women's meeting would indicate that the addressee at the time was staying at the Sabarmati Ashram. This was in 1925, when Diwali fell on October 17.

63. SPEECH AT KASHI VIDYAPITH, BANARAS

October 17, 1925

BABU BHAGWANDAS, TEACHERS, STUDENTS, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

It is true that this Vidyapith was started by me. But that it still exists is due, first, to the generosity and love, or attachment if you like, of Shri Shivprasad and, secondly, to the love of Shri Bhagwandas. It cannot be called attachment in his case for he uses discretion in doing what he considers his duty. It is owing to the enthusiasm, the intellectual effort and the money of these two that the Vidyapith is there even today.

I have been asked if I still believe in these Vidyapiths. Was I right or in error when, in 1921, I asked the students to leave Government shcools and colleges? I have often asked myself. As you know I am not ashamed to admit my mistakes and am always ready to repent. I confess my errors publicly. I ask my inmost self whether I am right or wrong and it is my experience that the voice that comes from there expresses the truth. I have not known it to prove false. Now, after all this bitter experience the voice still says that I was on the right path. What was done in 1921 was just the thing to do. It was good to set up Vidyapiths. It is essential to have Vidyapiths for our boys and girls. Of all the Vidyapiths that were established in the country those in Banaras, Patna, Poona and Gujarat are still functioning. I do not say that they are functioning very satisfactorily, but I do wish that they should exist and make progress. I do not mean by progress that they should each have a thousand scholars in them. A Vidyalaya teacher complained to me at Madhupur that boys were not too eager to join. I told him not to despair and to look into his own heart. If he stood firmly on the principles which had moved him to join the Vidyalaya, he was bound to keep the Vidyalaya going even if there was only one scholar left in it. He felt grieved because he cared more for numbers. Our tradition lays down that even if there should be only one scholar and one teacher in a school, but both with faith in each other and the teacher believing in the goodness of gifting learning and the scholar believing that it is for his emancipation and for shaping his life here and in the world beyond, then the school should go on. This applies to this Vidyapith. I want to tell Shri Bhagwandas and Shri Shivprasad also not to worry about numbers.

The restriction concerning the Congress is no longer there. If you feel that the Vidyapith should be kept going you should dedicate your lives for it. There is a Sanskrit verse saying that one should dedicate oneself to the task that one undertakes. But this expresses a half-truth. For does it mean that if one takes to drink one should keep drinking all one's life? The Shastras ask us to be firm in our faith. If you stand firm on your principles and wish to continue your experiment you should not mind even if public opinion is against it. If the Vidyapith turns out fine students who would dedicate themselves wholly to the cause of the country, or even one such, we should consider that the Vidyapith has been a success, for the aim of the Vidyapith is to teach boys to dedicate their lives for the country. So long as our aim is clear before us we should not worry whether we have five students or one. In the thirty five years of my public life it has been my experience, not once but several times, that if we are firm in our faith and go on working accordingly, the numbers also increase. The good of India, therefore, lies in our firmly holding on to principles in our work.

I appeal to the students not to think about numbers or worry about their livelihood. No assurance can be given them with regard to livelihood, but if they do bodily labour they will manage to get enough to eat though not enough to deck themselves in finery or live in luxury. But if there are students here who think that they have to go out and take up employment, like others, to earn more money, it is better that they leave the Vidyapith. Only those who have thoroughly understood the aims of this institution should remain here.

I am not ashamed that I have given the first position to the charkha. If the whole of India gives up plying the charkha I shall be able to devote 10 hours to the charkha, for then there will be no need for me to indulge in fruitless speech-making before the people. There is nothing for me like the charkha . . .[1] Life is changing where there are charkhas plying. I saw it during my tour of Bihar. Ply the charkha for only half an hour or fifteen minutes and think of India when you do it. You should do it, Hindus and Muslims, with the name of God on your lips and you will see what power it generates. How many there are who see God in a stone idol. But it is the feeling that matters. It is feeling that made Shri Ramdas Gaur take me to his place and show me the image of Shri Rama.

[1] Here some words are missing in the source.

I know the economics of villagers. That is why I have become a *Bhangi* or a chamar. I know their suffering. I am charkha-mad. I am madder even than Laila or Majnu. Even if a student does not have faith in the charkha he can come to the Vidyapith for his education. Please run the Vidyapith for the sake of your principles. May God make this institution prosper.

At the end of the speech Shri Bhagwandas, on behalf of the students, asked Gandhiji:"It is your wish that the country should advance through the charkha, is it not? You wish to make it the god that we should worship?"

GANGHIJI: That is right.

SHRI BHAGWANDAS: . . . I accept the importance of the charkha but I do not share the view that we can worship Lakshmi, Saraswati and other deities only through the charkha. We have to bring about political and social changes. This can be done only if we accept the doctrine of *varna* by karma.

GANDHIJI: I believe in the view of *varna* not only by karma but also by birth. I give the charkha the pride of place but I do not consider it the be-all and end-all. The charkha has the first place because there is no other method of doing away with the poverty of hundreds of millions of our countrymen. Lakshmi acquires through this not only individual power but social power. For Sarawati we have the Vidyapith. Our old civilization has become soiled. It will become cleansed by our removing untouchability. Out of the 24 hours we must spin on the charkha for half an hour. As to what the genius of this Vidyapith can be, I am not fit to say. Only Shri Bhagwandas can tell us that.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 19-10-1925

64. SPEECH AT MUNICIPAL MEETING, LUCKNOW[1]

[*October 17,1925*][2]

MR. PRESIDENT, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I thank you for the address you have presented. It is couched in the best Lucknowi diction. I spent a good deal of time reading Urdu while I was in Yeravda Jail. Even so I find the Urdu of your address a little difficult to understand. I must ask you to keep this kind of language to yourselves. Let me have Urdu which even those not belonging to U.P. can understand. It should be Hindustani. I call that language Hindustani which contains such Sanskrit and Persian words as a peasant like me can understand.

In replying to the Calcutta Corporation's address, I said one or two things, which I shall repeat here. In Bihar the municipalities which gave me addresses also confessed their shortcomings in their addresses. In your address you have not mentioned any shortcomings. When I was motoring here with Motilalji, the latter remarked:"What kind of roads they have here!" I shall therefore say to you: Please make your roads as good as your language so that they will be a comfort to those who travel on *ekkas* and those who, like me, go in motor-cars. In their addresses several municipalities complained of paucity of funds. If your municipality also has insufficient funds, I would ask your Chairman to take a pickaxe in hand and with the help of Congress volunteers put the roads right so that *ekkas* can ply comfortably on them.

A dairy farm has been mentioned in the address. I do not know whether these dairies can supply good milk to the people of the town. You can assure enough milk to people only when you have sufficient cows and buffaloes.

It is good that those who oppose you politically do not oppose your administration. You have certainly done better work than the preceding Board and I congratulate you upon it. New elections to the Board are about to be held. I advise voters to elect

[1] Held on Municipal grounds at 5 p.m. Gandhiji, who was accompanied by Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. Syed Mahmud, was replying to an address of welcome presented to him by the Municipality.

[2] From reports in *The Hindustan Times*, 20-10-1925 and *The Pioneer*, 19-10-1925

only those candidates who will undetake to improve the roads of Lucknow, will arrange for good milk being made available and will speak a language that all can understand. If the Lucknow Board can show the work I have suggested, I shall recommend to the Congress President, Sarojini Devi, to have a resolution passed by the Congress congratulating you.

Nothing has been said in the address on the subject of Hindu-Muslim unity. It is sad. It is shameful that there is so much bad blood between the Hindus and Mussalmans here. The atmosphere in the whole country has been poisoned. I say if the two communities must fight, let them do so but what will be the upshot? They have both got to live here together. Neither Hindus nor Mussalmans can leave India. They have to live here and therefore they must unite. And if they cannot unite here in Lucknow, where else can they unite? If the two communities live together in amity, what can prevent us from having what we want? The whole world is laughing at us . Dr. Ansari says people in foreign countries are asking if cow-killing and music are things over which Hindus and Mussalmans must continue to fight and smash each other's heads.

I do not need addresses. I am tired of praise. But I wish you to take up the responsibility for being able to say, when I come here next, that there has been no rioting here during the interval and unity has prevailed between Hindus and Mussalmans. May God grant good sense to the people of Lucknow. I thank you again for your address.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 24-10-1925

65. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, LUCKNOW[1]

October 17, 1925

. . . Mahatmaji began by saying that he was taken unawares. He never knew he would have to address a public meeting at Lucknow. He regretted that Lucknow of which he held a very good opinion should have turned into a battle-ground of communal animosities. When he was keeping twenty-one days' fast at Delhi, he had received a letter from the Hindu and Muslim leaders of Lucknow asking him to intervene in the matter. He had agreed to it, but no one had turned up. He thought they had better compose their differences among themselves without his aid. They

[1] Held at Aminuddaula Park, with Harkaran Nath Mishra in the chair

thought that the sword was the only solution. Let them try it rather than seek the assistance of a helpless and non-violent man like himself. He then said that on his return from Europe Dr. Ansari ran up to him to give an account of his experiences in Europe. The Doctor had occasion to meet all sorts of people in Europe, particularly Turks, and all of them were unanimously of the opinion that it was sheer madness on the part of Hindus and Muslims to spend their energies in quarrelling on trifles and thus sacrifice their greater ends. He consequently exhorted the audience to compose their differences and achieve unity as soon as possible. But that unity must be a real unity and not a fake .

Mahatmaji said his appeal for khaddar might fall flat if made to the fashionable citizens of Lucknow. But on behalf of the poor people of India, he would make that appeal in spite of his fear. He exhorted the audience to wear khaddar and explained some of its advantages. He said:

Khaddar means five annas out of every seven annas to the poor. Mill cloth means one pice in every five annas to the poor. But foreign cloth does not help even the poor of England. Almost all of it goes to the capitalist.

He then said, that the use of the charkha must be made by Indians of higher social status to inspire the poor with honesty of conviction and purpose.

He then deprecated the existence of the institution of untouchability which, he said, was no part of Hindu religion. It was irreligious an ungodly. India should purge itself of the ugly blot.

The Hindustan Times, 20-10-1925

66. SPEECH AT SITAPUR

October 17, 1925

The Municipal Board of Sitapur presented an address to Mahatma Gandhi at Lalbag. The address was read by Babu Sambhu Nath, Chairman of the Municipality, in which Mahatmaji was requested to help them with some suggestions from his wide experience of municipal affairs both at home and abroad which would guide the Municipal Commissioners of Sitapur as an ideal in their efforts for improving the city. He said that only one rupee had been sanctioned for expenditure in connection with the address.

Mahatma Gandhi in reply said that he would not have voted even one pice for the purpose if he had been a member of the Sitapur Municipal board. He said that he was not against Congressmen entering the Municipal Boards and District Boards with the object of serving their fellow-countrymen. But no one should try to be a member in these local bodies for the sake of self-aggrandizement, and with selfish

motives. It was futile to enter a Municipal Board without a genuine spirit of service and self-sacrifice. He knew no other ideal for a Municipal Board than that of keeping the city clean and free from disease, helping the poor and keeping their quarters free from filth and squalor, and making slums an impossibility.

Financial stringency should not be advanced as an excuse. The Municipal Commissioners must be prepared to work with their own hands if money was wanting. Thus they would set an example that would be followed by each and every citizen, and was sure to remove all obstacles in the path of progress in municipal affairs.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 24-10-1925

67. SPEECH AT SITAPUR

October 17,1925

. . . Mahatma Gandhi said that he was not entitled to the addresses presnted on behalf of the two Sabhas[1], for he had been a critic of both, and excepting such comment and criticism he had done nothing for them. But he had said nothing that he did not believe to be true, and his criticism was that of a friend and well-wisher, offered in a spirit of sympathy and with a desire to help them. To render real service to the Hindu Sabha, one must be a true Hindu. The Hindu dharma was the *sanatan* dharma. He believed the Vedas and the Hindu religion to be eternal, and Truth was also eternal. Hence he saw no difference between Hinduism and truth. Whatever was untrue could not belong to the Hindu religion. He could never persuade himself to forsake truth, and he would tell the truth in the teeth of all opposition and even if thousands of swords were drawn against him. There was little difference between truth and ahimsa. As a Hindu he could not cherish feelings of enmity in his heart against anybody. Even if he had an enemy, he could win him through love. The Hindus could advance and serve the cause of their religion best on the path of ahimsa. Let the Hindus work for the regeneration of their religion, but in their hearts there must be no ill-will against their Mussalman brethren.

Some thought that he was preaching cowardice in the name of ahimsa. That was entirely false. He hated nothing more than cowardice. The Hindus of Bettiah had also misunderstood him. He would like to see them die fighting for the honour of their mothers and daughters, but flying in fear on such occasions was sheer cowardice, and nothing could be more disgraceful. Ahimsa and not cowardice was preferable to violence. True ahimsa required real bravery. The most essential thing for Hindu *sangathan*[2] was the formation of character. Without this and unless every Hindu

[1] The Hindu Sabha and the Vaidya Sabha
[2] Bringing together

stood on truth and character, real *sangathan* was impossible and Hinduism would be nowhere.

Replying to the address of the Vaidya Sabha, he said that he had been mercilessly criticized in the Press and on platforms and even abused in many quarters for what he had said about the *vaidyas*. But he stuck to his guns. He neither retraced nor withdrew anything. He was afraid he had been misunderstood. His comments and critisism were in the main meant for the *vaidyas* of the present time, and not for the Ayurvedic system which they served. He was not against the great system itself, but he did not like their attitude of self-satisfaction and the methods they were following .

He had criticized them for their failure to understand and do justice to Ayurveda. He had tried his level best to promote the cause of Ayurveda, and help the *vaidyas* in all possible ways. But their performance had been disappointing. The *vaidyas* must go ahead. It was wrong to think that they had nothing to learn from the West. Although he had condemned the West for its neglect of the soul, he was not blind to its achievements in many fields of action. The *vaidyas* must be prepared to supplement their knowledge by taking lessons from the West. They must not sleep with the idea that the system they upheld was the last word on the subject. They must be up and doing and their motto must be"Progress".

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 24-10-1925

68. ABOUT UNTOUCHABILITY

A friend has asked some questions about untouchability which I believe I ought to answer as best as I may and which, therefore, I give below:[1]

In my opinion, untouchability in the form in which we practise it today is not, and ought not to be, an essential part of Hinduism. There is sheer ignorance and cruelty behind it. I look upon it as an excrescence on Hinduism. It does not protect religion, but suffocates it. Its practice on certain occasions, as during the days following the death of a near relation, is in a different class. One may follow it to the extent one wants to. It is not followed with equal rigidity by all communities. The practice of untouchability in this form should be treated as a matter of hygiene. To a greater or less extent,

[1] The questions are not translated here. The correspondent had compared restrictions about marrying and eating and the practice of untouchability to three concentric walls erected to protect Hindu society and asked (1) whether the last was not a fundamental principle for the Hindus like the other two and (2) whether the pulling down of the outer wall would not weaken the inner two walls.

some such regulations are found all over the world. But treating *Antyajas* as untouchables is a cruel form of boycott. Whatever justification there may have been for the practice when it started, there is none now. Like tuberculosis, therefore, it is eating into the vitals of Hinduism.

Just as the many dilapidated and useless parts of a building, if not pulled down, weaken the rest of the building, so the outer wall of untouchability weakens, instead of protecting, the inner wall of restrictions in regard to eating in company and marrying outside one's circle. It is true that, in the same way as we look upon untouchability as an evil, there are some who regard these restrictions also as an evil and attack them as such. There is, however, some reasonable principle behind them. It would ordinarily be improper for a conscientious vegetarian to eat at a non-vegetarian's place. But I see no dharma in treating as untouchables those who do not follow the rules that we do. No one practises such a dharma. Anyone who wants to practise it would have to treat everyone else in the world as an untouchable.[1]

The movement for the eradication of untouchability has no connection with the problem of caste. However, according to the rule that one important reform leads to another, reformers have turned their eyes to the problem of caste-division too. I desire the disappearance of sub-castes, and in fact they are disappearing. I do not, however, see the same evil in them as I see in the practice of untouchability. These sub-divisions are a source of inconvenience. They obstruct social intercourse in some ways. But their abolition is a reform which can wait. The eradication of untouchability cannot wait and it is, therefore, very necessary to keep the two apart and understand the distinction between them.

I see no harm in accepting clean water from a pot filled in a clean manner by a clean *Antyaja*. Ordinarily, members of other communities accept water served by *Kanabis*[2] or G*hatis*;[3] that rule should also apply to *Antyajas*. That is, in dealing with them the same

[1] The third question was where the movement for the eradication of untouchability would stop, since most of those who advocated it also wanted reformation of the caste system and even Gandhiji saw no harm in accepting water from an *Antyaja*.

[2] A peasant community in Gujarat

[3] *ibid*

rule should be followed which the so-called upper castes generally follow in their intercourse with the other castes. In the South, where every non-Brahmin is an untouchable in the eyes of a Brahmin, the pracitce is an excrescence even on an excrescence. I have come across no one who would defend it, and the practice is gradually disappearing.[1]

It is not true that *Antyaja* children must necessarily be dirty. I have seen many *Antyaja* children who were cleaner than other children. The only rule can be this: a child which does not pass a certain test of cleanliness ought not to be admitted to the school, or, all children who are dirty should be put in a separate division meant for them and should be given special instruction in cleanliness. To assume that *Antyaja* children must necessarily by dirty and refuse admission to a child even if he is clean, is to treat *Antyajas* in the same way in which Indians are treated in the Colonies. There, the very fact of having been born an Indian is a crime. Generally speaking, the practical thing to do in the present circumstances is to start a large number of schools specially for *Antyaja* children. However much we try, all *Antyaja* children will not be brought for enrolment in the general primary schools. Admission to general schools, therefore, should be open to such of them as observe the rules of cleanliness, but there should also be separate primary schools for them for their special encouragement.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-10-1925

69. ABOUT MARWARIS

The national awakening in 1921 did not show its effect in regard to one issue only. It was so comprehensive that its effect was felt by all communities and in connection with all problems. If anyone is hasty enough to believe that that movement was a short-lived affair he is welcome to do so, but as time passes everyone will see that there was no truth in such a belief. The form of the movement may seem to have changed, but its substance will be seen to have

[1] The fourth question was whether, it was not risky to admit *Antyaja* children to schools attended by other children so long as the former had not learnt to observe the ordinary rules of personal cleanliness.

remained unaltered. These thoughts occur to me as I reflect on my speech to the Marwari Conference[1] in Bhagalpur. A many-sided movement for reform is going on among Marwaris. This particular conference was of Agarwal Marwaris. As we see heads of communities in some places in Gujarat employing the weapon of boycott in connection with the movement on the issue of *Antyajas*, so also among Marwaris, we see the heads using that weapon in other circumstances too.

The issues of widow-remarriage, child-marriage, etc., affect all sections of Hindu society in some degree. And, therefore, though I have already reproduced in *Young India* a part of what I told the Marwari friends, I wish to elaborate on the subject a little here. Boycott is a dangerous weapon and, if not used carefully, it can easily degenerate into a species of violence. If this happens, the community using it will perish. I, therefore, advised the Marwari friends never to use the weapon of boycott. So long as the heads of communities are not wise and selfless men, filled with the spirit of love, they should never think of using the weapon of boycott. Anyone who wishes to introduce a reform should be allowed to do so. In what way does he harm the community? One can understand action being taken to prevent or discourage what the whole world believes to be immoral. But is there any ground for expelling from the community a person who mixes with *Antyajas*, another who has decided to get his daughter married only after she has attained puberty, a third who comes forward to marry a girl who became a widow while she was still a child and a fourth who is ready to accept a partner for his son from another sub-division of his own community, all because they think that it is dharma to act as they do? Boycotting such persons will have the effect of preventing reform of any kind and rule out the possibility of progress of one's religion and community and of the country. I have no doubt in my mind that the weapon of boycott ought not to be misused in this manner. As I keep touring in other provinces, the tales which I hear of the sufferings of widows, of the immorality which prevails because of child-widows and of the marriages of children of very tender age make me shudder. Is it any wonder that the progeny of such social life as the Hindus' should lack virility? If the heads of communities understand where their duty lies and what would become

[1] Bihar Provincial Marwari Conference, which was held from October 1 to October 4, 1925.

them best, they would encourage reformers who tried to rid society of such evils.

I discussed at the conference the problem of cow-protection and of social reform. As I see more of *goshalas*, I realize that the people do not get all the benefit they can from them. How very painful it is that hides of dead animals, worth nine crores of rupees, are exported every year to countries like Germany while we use foot-wear made from the hides of slaughtered animals and still believe that we are preserving our dharma! Marwaris run the largest number of *goshalas* in the country. They seem to be contributing most to the cause of cow-protection. But the money they give is not used wisely, with the result that the number of cows and bullocks slaughtered is increasing, instead of decreasing. Their quality is degenerating, milk is becoming costlier and its adulteration is becoming more widespread. What a chaotic state of affairs! Marwari friends do not mismanage their business in this manner. Why do they, after contributing money for *goshalas*, take no further interest in them? Does not a philanthropic cause call for efficiency and practical ability? It is in the power of Marwaris to stop the use of the hides of slaughtered cattle. It is their dharma to take in their hand, with a purely philanthropic motive, the trade in the hides of dead cattle. At present, we refuse, in the name of religion and through sheer superstition, to utilize the hides of cattle which die in *goshalas*. We thereby encourage the slaughter of other cattle, for it would be a different matter if we refused to use the hides of cattle altogether, dead or slaughterd. But no Hindu looks at the matter in this way; on the contrary, Hinduism permits free use of hides, in the same way that, though we venerate the cow, we regard her milk as holy and encourage its consumption. I can look at this matter objectively, since I never consume cow's or buffalo's milk and use leather as little as possible. I have, from experience, come to the conclusion that, if we wish to protect the cow and the buffalo, we shall have to use their milk and hides and the manure which they yield to the fullest extent. If a time comes when we will not use even milk, we should welcome it; but, when it comes, we shall no longer be running *goshalas* and Nature will protect cows and buffaloes according to her own laws as she now does with other animals which we have not domesticated. Till that time comes, the principle behind cow-protection seems to me to be the protection of all useful cattle which have been or may be domesticated; and their protection, too, means refusing to kill them for food or pleasure and looking after

their physical well-being, as long as the animals are alive, with as much care as we exercise in looking after our own bodies. If with that end in view we do not use their hide after they are dead, the number of cattle slaughtered is bound to increase from day to day. This is why I wish to plead with Marwari friends who want to serve the cause of cow-protection that they use their intelligence and their business acumen in one year, and, in the course of time, will succeed in stopping their slaughter altogether without having to entreat anyone for the purpose. Those who see no wrong in eating beef will not desist from eating it just out of respect for the Hindu sentiment, so long as it is cheap. Giving up something even though it costs little requires a sensibility of a very high order. Such sensibility is a religious feeling, and it can be awakened neither through force nor through entreaties. I wish, therefore, to make the same suggestion to other Hindus which I have made to Marwari friends. They should not only overcome their aversion to taking advantage of tanneries, but should also realize that, within limits, it is one of the essential functions of *goshalas* to run them.

Just as Marwari friends have made the cause of cow-protection their own, so also have they made the propagation of Hindi a special object of their charities. This cause, too, requires exercise of intelligence as much as it requires money. I realize that this subject will not be of as much interest to Gujarati readers [of *Navajivan*] as it is to Marwari friends. Nevertheless, I discuss it here in the hope that Gujaratis, too, may come to take the fullest interest in this cause. Propagation of Hindi can be discussed under three heads:

First, the development of Hindi in areas where it is the mother-tongue. This is the work of Hindi-speaking writers, and, since they have today no Rabindranath among them, apart from expressing my discontent I wish to say no more.

Second, propagating Hindi in non-Hindi areas. My belief is that this work is going on systematically in the South. Practically nothing, however, is being done in a large field such as Bengal offers. Able teachers of Hindi should be engaged there, free classes for teaching Hindi should be started and, as has been done in the South, simple books easy to read should be brought out which would help people to learn Hindi through Bengali.

Third, spreading the use of the Devanagari script. If everyone learnt this script in addition to his own, Hindi would come to be

understood with the greatest ease in all parts, and people in the different provinces speaking languages descended form Sanskrit would understand one another's language with equal ease. The best way of thus propagating Hindi in Bengal, for example, is to bring out editions of the best books in that language in Devanagari script, with a glossary in each book giving the meaning of Bengali words in Hindi. If the rich classes among Marwaris, Gujaratis and others and men of letters take up this work, in a very short time excellent progress can be made.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-10-1925

70. SPEECH AT U.P. HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN, SITAPUR [1]

October 18, 1925

Replying to an address of welcome, Mr. Gandhi supported the claim of Hindi to be the national language of India. He was glad that work was being done in Madras to popularize Hindi, but nothing was being done in Bengal and elsewhere. Referring to the language of the welcome address, Mr. Gandhi said it contained too many Sanskrit words just as the address presented by the Lucknow Municipal Board on the previous day contained too many persian words. It was difficult for him to follow such language. For a language to be the national language it was necessary that it was easily intelligible to the ordinary people.

The Leader, 21-10-1925

71. SPEECH AT U.P. POLITICAL CONFERENCE, SITAPUR [2]

October 18, 1925

Mr. Gandhi, who had so far been busy in spinning, was. . . requested to address the Conference. He said he would not say anything on the Hindu -Muslim question, for he had no influence on either community, at least on the section that was fighting He would speak at length on the subject of the charkha which the president had only

[1] Held at Rajah School under the presidentship of Ramjilal Sharma

[2] The Conference was held at Lalbagh under the presidentship of Shaukat Ali. Mahomed Ali, Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. Syed Mahmud were among those present.

touched upon, and untouchability which the Maulana had not touched upon, being a non-Hindu. Charkha and khaddar were his creed and he could not refrain from dwelling on it . He thought no man would die of starvation in India if everyone took to the charkha. He had travelled in rural areas and seen the poor condition of the peasantry. For four months at least in a year peasants were idle, and if they took to spinning in their leisure time, the earnings would make substantial increase in their poor incomes. No machine could utilize the labour of those agriculturists in the country. He pointed out that wherever the people were plying the charkha their incomes had increased. In Bengal he found that the income of every worker's family had increased by Rs. 2 per month and according to Lord Curzon it was Rs. 30 per head per year. Charkha can give you Rs. 24 per head per year as additional income. Out of Rs. 7 as price of cloth Rs. 2 will go to agriculturists and Rs. 5 or 4 to the spinner and weaver.

He had just been at Atrai and seen the difference that spinning, as a supplementary occupation, had made in the condition of thousands of families. But if villagers were to be given this supplementary occupation, people must take to wearing khaddar. He further said that swaraj was not possible without the support of masses, which could not be had without village organization and the charkha was the only means of organizing villages. If those who thought he had gone mad could point out .anything that could achieve the same object in an equally good or better manner, he would have no hesitation in giving up the charkha. But no such alternative had been pointed out.

He had founded the Spinning Association with a view to organize the people. It was non-political. Even Lord Reading and Indian soldiers could join the Association.

During the course of his speech Mahatmaji said, the Conference would be soon called upon to lend its support to the resolution passed by the A.I.C.C. at Patna. This resolution makes one fundamental change in the franchise with a view to give more facility to the people to become members of the Congress. It converted the Congress into an essentially political organization which would carry on its work through the Swaraj Party whose policy would be controlled by the Congress. The Swaraj Party would draw its own programme and rules in all local and central legislatures. The Swaraj Party has its own programmes and rules. These programmes and rules the Congress had adopted. The Congress would give every support to the Swaraj Party's political work. The Congress pledged itself at Belgaum, Delhi and Patna to give full scope and support to the Swaraj Party to carry on the political work on behalf of the Congress. The Swarajists had carried khaddar into legislatures even and on the presidential chair of the Assembly. Swarajists can do much in the interest of temperance and the peoples' poverty through the legislatures.

If any other party would go a step further, or even so far in working their constructive programme inside the legislatures and local boards, he would not have

hesitated in extending his support to them. He concluded by appealing to the Hindus to remove the canker of untouchability from the body of Hinduism.[1]

The Leader 21-10-1925 and *The Hindustan Times* 21-10-1925

72. SPEECH AT ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY CONFERENCE, SITAPUR [2]

October 18, 1925

Mr. Gandhi endorsed the remark of the late Mr. Gakhale that by treating some of their countrymen as untouchables Indians had become untouchables themselves in the whole world outside India. He also endorsed Swami Shraddhanand's suggestion that as a practical measure to remove untouchability each high-caste Hindu family should keep a person belonging to some so-called untouchable class. Mr. Gandhi was sure, there was no place in Hinduism for untouchability. It was a sin to treat any human being as untouchable and, therefore, the so-called high-caste Hindus should purify not the untouchables but themselves. He also appealed to the untouchables to be clean physically as well as morally and to adopt the charkha and patronize khaddar.

The Leader, 21-10-1925

73. MESSAGE TO CONGRESS WORKERS OF KANPUR

October 19, 1925

I am confident that all the workers there, women as well as men, will help in every way to make the session of the Congress a success.[3]

From the Hindi original: C.W. 9270. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

[1] At the end, a resolution of condolence on the death of C. R. Das and Sir Surendranath Banerjea was moved from the Chair and adopted. A second resolution welcoming the Patna Congress decisions and moved by Motilal Nehru was also adopted.

[2] Presided over by the Raja Saheb of Maheva, this was held in the evening.

[3] This message was sent in connection with the Congress session to be held in December 1925 at Kanpur where there was a split among the workers.

74. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Kartik Sud 3 [*October 20, 1925*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I write this on a moving train. I have your letter. It will be a relief when the problem in Bombay is solved. You cannot afford to spoil your health. Those who have faith in God will never worry because God is there in all His greatness to do all the worrying. Why should we carry His burden?

Ask Ramdas to give you whatever you want. Hasn't a sister a right to ask anything of her brother? You can most certainly receive anything from me. Participate as much as possible in every activity of Ramdas and learn everything you can. Mix with other women and try to understand their difficulties. This letter will be posted from Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9340. Also C.W. 585. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

75. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[Before *October 21, 1925*][2]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your letter. I am saving an anna by enclosing this with the letter to Chhaganlal. Durga should try to write with the left hand.

I too believe what you say about Harilal[3]. The Pathan's bogey is always there, but he will not come. Mona wrote in her letter that Bhombal has paid up all the debts of Harilal.

About Dahyabhai, I can decide nothing here. Let Dahyabhai go with me to Kutch. If you are prepared to come, bring him along. Vallabhbhai too will come.

[1] The year has been inferred from the contents. In 1925 *Kartik Sud* 3 corresponded to October 20.

[2] Reference in the letter to the Kutch tour suggests that it was written before Gandhiji left Bombay for Kutch on October 21, 1925.

[3] Gandhiji's eldest son

You are right. Whenever you have been ill, you have been away from me. The inference is terrible. You can't stay without me? What about Durga then? Polak at times was in the same condition and I used to tell him that he had wedded two wives and that, too, when the English law allowed him to have only one.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I send you today some more material for *Y.I.*

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S.N. 11435

76. SPEECH AT BOMBAY[1]

October 21, 1925

Mahatmaji . . . thanked the Cutchi residents of Bombay and the people of Cutch for extending him an invitation to visit their province. He did not know why he was going to Cutch, except that, perhaps, it was the love of the Cutchi people that was dragging him there. They all knew the things that were dear to his heart and he did not propose to say anything anew about them. He was nearing death, but all the same his ideals and ambitions remained unlimited. In fact, the nearer he approached his end, the higher and wider grew his ambition. He only requested them that they should all shower their blessings on him and Pray god to give him strength and courage to stick to his ideals and work. He would in passing remind them that in everything he did, he was prompted by his love for truth and dharma. He assured them that he would do nothing in Cutch that would make them repent for the hospitality that they were extending him.

Continuing, Mahatmaji said that he was in urgent need of rest and he looked forward to getting that in Cutch. He was too much over-burdened with anxiety. He had received many letters stating the grievances and the urgent needs of the Cutchi people. He did not want to say anything about them beyond saying that, if he were unsuccessful in mitigating them, they should not take it as a sign of apathy, but as a sign of his weakness.

Mahatmaji was then taken to the s.s. *Rupavati* of the Bombay Steam Navigation Company which was specially chartered for the trip by Sheth Kanji Jadhavji and conveyed to his cabin. Mahatmaji's party includes Messr Mahadev Desai, Vallabhbhai Patel, Manilal Kothari and Jivraj Nensey.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-10-1925

[1] Gandhiji was leaving for Kutch by steamer. He addressed a large number of people who had gathered at Ferry Wharf, Carnac Bunder, to see him off.

77. BOYCOTTS v. *CONSTRUCTION*

An Andhra friend, in his urgent invitation asking me to be present at the forthcoming Ganjam District Conference, writes as follows:

> The best part of our Congress work in connection with the constructive programme was done in places round Hiramandalam. Majority of the people wear khaddar. You are probably aware that Andhra Desha is not in love with Council work. It belongs to the No-change party. It never excuses you for dropping the boycotts. Our hope lies in constructive work. People are getting disheartened. Their enthusiasm is at a low ebb. Hiramandalam is a great khaddar producing centre. The Fiska Congress Committee manufactures several varieties of khaddar and has one of the best shops in the district. It has also a national school. It is a Vaisya (Bania) centre. They are almost all khaddarwalahs. But what good? Their enthusiasm for swaraj is well-nigh extinguished. Without the boycotts people have no faith in constructive work. Our efforts to rekindle enthusiasm are unavailing. I have surrendered all my worldly prospects, been rendered utterly destitute and am still at the work, hoping against hope to achieve swaraj.

I have informed him that it is impossible for me to be present at the Ganjam District Conference however much I should like to be able to do so. I am, with great difficulty, and for me, in slow stages, finishing the remaining and indispensable part of the tour programme for the year, after which I hope to have rest from incessant travelling. I am, therefore, sorry to have to disappoint the Andhra friends. But I have reproduced the foregoing extract not for the purpose of advertising the necessity for rest for my tired limbs, but in order to remove the confusion of thought that has enabled the writer to attribute want of interest in constructive work to the suspension of boycotts by the Congress. In the first place, if Andhra Desh has no love for Council work, the Congress does not compel it tomanufacture love for Councils. It merely authorizes those who believe in Council work to take it up on behalf of and in the name of the Congress. It withdraws the prohibition from those who gave up such work not out of faith but merely out of loyalty to the Congress. It prohibits people from using the name of the Congress to condemn entry into the legislative bodies and, lastly, it encourages those who believe in such political work to prosecute it with zeal. But it does not in any way fetter a single Congressman's conscience. Those must have a poor

faith in themselves whose zeal is damped for want of extraneous support. Moreover, the writer forgets that the Congress has not only not dropped boycott of foreign-cloth, but it will bless and issue a certificate of merit to those who will achieve that boycott. I am striving my best to deserve that certificate and I invite everybody to join me in the endeavour. That boycott can be achieved only when khaddar becomes popular enough to be universal. Hence the inauguration of the All-India Spinners' Association. Every boycott has its constructive side. The Association will devote its best energy ot the constructive effort. What have the other boycotts—for instance that of titles or schools or law-courts—to do with the manufacture and wearing of khaddar? The beauty of these boycotts lies in their individuality and capacity to stand alone. The individual taking part in any or all of them always benefits, and when a sufficiently large number take part in them the nation becomes fit for swaraj. Blind enthusiasm and blind faith can lead to no lasting good. It is, therefore, necessary to realize that the constructive programme by itself has an inestimable value even apart from its undoubted capacity to fit us for swaraj.

The writer has done well in surrendering all his worldly prospects and in rendering himself utterly destitute. But let him consider that sacrifice to be its own reward. Thousands upon thousands will have to do likewise before swaraj is attained by the nation. He who has sacrificed his all for swaraj has certainly attained it for himself. There is no need, therefore, for such a one to 'hope against hope', for if his sacrifice is voluntary and intelligent, it is all hope without any disappointment. One's faith has got to be bright and intelligent before it can enkindle faith in others. Those, therefore, who believe in khaddar and other parts of the programme of 1921 must be able to stand unmoved in spite of variations in the policy, politics and programme of the Congress.

Young India, 22-10-1925

78. NOTES

A CORRECTION

In the issue of 8th October, in my Bihar Notes , I have said:"In Ranchi I was taken to Golcunda." This was a stupid slip on my part. The Bihari friends are now laughing at my geographical ignorance and tell me that Golcunda is not near Ranchi but near Purulia. I owe

an apology to Purulia for the blunder. When, however, several villages and several places in the same village or town have to be visited on the same day and these performances follow in quick succession it is difficult for one to remember all the places accurately. I am, therefore, obliged to omit the mention of the names of many places and persons and simply confine myself to narration of events because at the moment I do not remember either the names of places or persons concerned. When, therefore, people find that the names of persons or places, that in their opinion I should have mentioned, have been omitted, let them understand that often the omission is unintentional and that it is due purely to my weak memory.

SPINNING ESSAY

The reader will remember that early this year[1] Sjt. Rewashanker Jagjivan announced a prize of one thousand rupees to be given to the writer of the best essay on hand-spinning, its history and its use. These were the terms:

> (1) The essay should be in English in four parts; the first part to contain the history of hand-spinning and the khaddar (meaning hand-spun, including the celebrated *shubnum* of Dacca) trade of India before the British advent, the second part should trace the history of the ruin of hand-spinning and the khaddar trade, the third part should be an examination of the possibilities of hand-spinning and khaddar and a comparison between the Indian mill industry and hand-spinning and handweaving, the fourth part should examine the possibilities of achieving boycott of foreign-cloth through the spinning-wheel. The essay should be supported by authoritative statistics and should have an appendix containing a list of all the reference books and authorities used by the author in support of his argument.
>
> (2) The essay may be as brief as the competitors wish to make it, consistently with the giving of a full record of facts and figures.
>
> (3) The essay should be sent to the office of *Young India* by registered book post with the author's name on a separate sheet and should reach the office of *Young India* not later than 15th March next. The judges will be Messrs Shankerlal Banker, Maganlal K. Gandhi and myself. The result will be announced not later than 31st March 1925. The judges will reserve to themselves the right of rejecting all the essays if they fall below a certain standard. The prize will be paid to the winner on the announcement thereof. The right of publication will vest in the All-India Khadi Board in accordance with the donor's wishes.

Later Sjt. Ambalal Sarabhai was invited also to act as judge and

[1] On January 1. For details, *Vide*"Notes", 1-1-925.

he kindly consented. The time fixed for the delivery of the essay was 15th March. It was subsequently extended to 30th April and over sixty essays were received within the stipulated time. Each one of the judges carried on an independent examination. Two of us awarded the first prize to one, the third awarded the first prize to another and the fourth to a third. After mutual consultation we decided upon splitting the prize and distributing it between Sjt. S.V. Puntambekar and Sjt. N.S.Varadachari and the judges have proposed that either both of them or, if it is not possible for them to do so, whoever has the leisure and the inclination should combine the essays and give for publication the result of the combination. I am sorry that means a little more delay. All the delay that has up to now taken place has been unavoidable. The examination had to be and was thorough. That by itself took a great deal of time. The delay that has now taken place is equally inevitable, the idea being to give to the public a thoroughly good compendium on hand-spinning. I congratulate the prize-winners and I tender my congratulations also to those who have not been able to win the prize, for the effort made by them. For, some of the essays show a great deal of diligence.

SPINNERS, PLEASE NOTE

Those who were in charge of the yarn that was received under the All-India Congress Committee resolution last year ask me to warn the spinners who become members of the A.I.S.A. against sending yarn that is not evenly spun and uniform. A quantity of bad yarn still lies unused. Just as bread that is stodgy and ill-baked is no bread, similarly yarn that is not easily woven is no yarn, and the condition of membership is not a thousand yards of self-spun yarn merely but a thousand yards per month of self-spun yarn *well-twisted and uniform* for A class and two thousand yards yearly of the same quality of self-spun yarn for B class members. Therefore, if the secretaries are to do their duty well, it will be necessary for them not to take yarn that is considered to be below standard, and the standard while it need not be stiff will certainly be stiff enough to meet the elementary requirements of good weavable yarn. In cash subscriptions a bad coin cannot be accepted as a proper tender nor can bad yarn be accepted as proper tender when subscription is payable in yarn.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

If you are a believer in spinning and if you have faith in the

A.I.S.A., have you joined the Association? If you have not, will you write why you have not? If you have already joined, beyond sending your quota of well-spun and uniform yarn of your own spinning, what more do you propose to do to make khaddar universal? Have you invited the members of your own family and friends to join? Are you asking even the youngsters of your family to labour for the sake of the country? It is no mean training for the youngsters to learn during their childhood the lesson of intelligent self-sacrifice and understand the power of organization. Unorganized half hour's labour may mean nothing but labour given to an organization even from the remotest part of india has a potency that can revolutionize national life. It is no mean thing, again, for little children regularly every day to remember their country in a tangible manner. It will give them priceless discipline. In the act of demonstrating to the children the virtue of the simple little act of labour you will discover for yourself the implications of the charkha which you have little thought of. Please do not raise in front of you a mountain of difficulties by asking what use your labour can be when all India is lying supine. It is enough for you to do your little best, the rest will take care of itself. We have not the governance of the universe in our hands but we have our own in our hands and you will find that that is about all it is possible for us to do. But it is at that same time all in all. There is much truth in the homely English proverb: Take care of the pennies and the pounds will take care of themselves.

LOHANI AT LAST

After I had given up all hope of finding Lohani, I received help from an unexpected quarter and I have now before me full details in the shape of newspaper cuttings. I observe that these cuttings are based upon my first reference to Lohani in the pages of *Young India*. The writers of these newspaper reports evidently thought that I would see their references. They are obviously unaware of the fact that I do not get the time to read the numerous newspapers which the kind editors and proprietors send me in exchange for *Young India* or *Navajivan*. I have often requested and I repeat the request that those who seek to give me information or correct me or advise me through their writings in newspapers will kindly send me the cuttings in question. The writer in one of the cuttings expresses his surprise and astonishment that I should not know where Lohani is. I share the regret. But why astonishment? I have before now admitted my ignorance of the geography of my own country. In the vernacular

school I had the barest outlines of the geography of India and, in the English school, from the very first standard I was called upon, on pain of being caned, to learn by heart the names of all the counties of England and many other foreign names which it gave me headache to pronounce and remember. Nobody taught me, and I am sure my teacher did not know, where Lohani was. Even Bhiwani, near which, I now see, Lohani is situated, was unknown to me before I went to the Punjab. Lohani then according to the cutting in my possession, is a little Hindu village, six miles from Bhiwani. The Hindu zamindars, the cutting proceeds, introduced in Lohani some Musalmans. The Hindus and the Mussalmans are now fighting over a piece of land which , the Mussalmans claim, is consecrated and the Hindus claim has never ceased to be their property. The matter is before the courts. And there I must leave it. The writer of the newspaper article invites me to investigate the matter and pronounce my own opinion upon it. If I had the authority which I thought at one time I possessed, I would certainly investigate and prevent the quarrel from being decided in a court of law. But I must now plead my incapacity. I would, however, advise both the parties to approach those in whom they have confidence and seek their intervention.

A TOTAL DENIAL

With regard to the charges of bribery, corruption and intimidation brought against the Swarajists of Madras in connection with the late Municipal elections and recently referred to in these columns, I have a long letter from Sjt. P. S. Doraiswamy Mudaliar totally and specifically denying every one of those charges and on the contrary holding that the defeated party was guilty of the very charges brought against the Swarajists. The correspondent contends that not only the illiterate masses threw in their lot with the Swarajists but so did also"many lawyers, medical practitioners and many eminent men". And he says that they did so because they were disgusted with the tactics of the other party. I am not reproducing the whole of the letter because I have no desire to interest the readers of *Young India* in a local controversy and to open its columns for an interminable correspondence on it.

THE GOANESE UNDER SWARAJ

A Goan friend asks:

> What would be your attitude and that of all Indians towards the Goanese who reside and earn their living in this country when swaraj is attained?

In briefest terms the answer is, that the attitude towards the Goanese will be exactly the same as towards any other Indian, for, the Goanese are as much inhabitants of India as the inhabitants of any other part. That they are under another foreign Government can make no difference in their treatment. If the fear underlying this question is due to difference of religion, then, it has been repeatedly stated in these columns that swaraj is not intended for any one religion only but for all, and that those who are not born or domiciled in India would be fully protected, as fully as under the present Government, where they are not unduly favoured. That is the swaraj of my conception. What it is ultimately going to be depends upon what thinking humanity in India does in the long run. The Goanese population has the making of the India of the future as much in their hands as any other group. No one need therefore ask what will become of him under swaraj because no one but idiots and the imbecile will live on sufferance. Each one will guard his own individual liberty, if the State encroaches upon it. Not until many people acquire that power of resistance will India obtain real freedom.

WHEN CRIME NOT IMMORAL

A fair friend sends me 'crisp sayings' by Dan Griffiths on crime and wants me to find room for them in these pages. Here are some extracts which a satyagrahi can readily subscribe to:

> State law is not necessarily moral. Crime is not necessarily immoral. There is a world of difference between illegality and immorality. Not all illegalities are immoral and not all immoralities are illegal.

Who can say that, whilst not to crawl on one's belly at the dictation of an officer might be an illegality, it is also an immorality? Rather is it not true that refusal to crawl on one's belly may be illegal, but it would be in the highest degree moral? An other illuminating passage is the following:

> Modern society is in itself a crime factory. The militarist is a relative of the murderer and the burglar is the compliment of the stock jobber.

The third excerpt runs as follows:

> The thief in law is merely a person who satisfies his acquisitive instincts in ways not sanctioned by the community. The real thief is the person who takes more out of society than he puts into it. But society punishes those who *annoy* it, not those who *injure* it, the *retail* and not the *wholesale* offenders.

The same fair friend wants readers of *Young India* to know, if they do not already, the following seven social sins:

Politics without principles
Wealth without work
Pleasure without conscience
Knowledge without character
Commerce without morality
Science without humanity
Worship without sacrifice

Naturally, the friend does not want the readers to know these things merely through the intellect but to know them through the heart so as to avoid them.

Young India, 22-10-1925

79. THAT ETERNAL QUESTION

However much I may wish to avoid it, the Hindu-Muslim question will not avoid me. Muslim friends insist upon my intervention to solve it. The Hindu friends would have me discuss it with them and some of them say I have sown the wind and must reap the whirlwind. Whilst I was in Calcutta, a Bihar friend had written to me in grief and anger telling me of the alleged kidnapping of Hindu boys and specially girls. I had written to him telling him point blank that I did not believe those allegations, but that, if he had proof and gave it to me I would gladly examine it, and if I was satisfied, I would denounce it although I might not be able to do any tangible good. Since then I have had cuttings from newspapers describing in harrowing detail cases of kindnapping. I had told the friend that newspaper extracts could not be accepted as any evidence of the crime, that in many cases newspaper paragraphs were inflammatory, misleading and often absolutely false. There are Hindu and Muslim sheets that delight in blackguarding Mussalmans and Hindus respectively and if both of them could be accepted as true, both the parties were loathsome creatures. But I have proved to my own satisfaction that many of these reported cases are highly exaggerated if they are not false. I have, therefore, asked for such incontestable proofs as would be accepted in any court of law. The Titagarh case is certainly such a one. A Hindu girl had been kidnapped. She is

supposed to have embraced Islam and in spite of the court's order she has not yet been produced so far as I am aware. What is more, respectable people are concerned in the non-production of the girl. When I was in Titagarh, nobody seemed prepared to shoulder the responsibility about the girl. At Patna, too, some startling information was given to me with corroborative evidence. I refrain at the present moment from going into it because it is not before me in its completed form. Such cases set one athinking and need the attention of all well-wishers of the country. There is then the question of music in front of mosques. I have heard of a peremptory demand for total cessation of music, soft or loud, at any time whatsoever in front of mosques. There is too a demand for the stopping of *arati* during prayer hours in temples in the neighbourhood of mosques. I heard in Calcutta that even boys passing by a mosque early in the morning and reciting *Ramanama* were stopped.

What is to be done? Recourse to law-courts in such matters is a broken reed. If I allow my daughter to be kidnapped and then go to court for protection, the latter would be powerless or, if the judge got angry over my cowardice, he would dismiss me from his presence with deserved contempt. Courts deal with ordinary crimes. General kidnapping of girls or boys is not an ordinary crime. People in such cases are expected to look after themselves. Courts help those who are largely able to help themselves. Theirs is supplementary protection. So long as there are weak people so long will there be someone to prey upon their weakness. The remedy therefore lies in organizing for self-defence. I could find it in me to justify the most violent defence in such cases unless the people concerned are capable of a non-violent defence. No doubt where girls or boys of poor and helpless parents are kidnapped, the case becomes much more complicated. There the remedy has to be found not by the individual but by a whole clan or caste. A presentation, however, of authentic cases of kidnapping is a prime necessity before public opinion can be well-organized.

The question of music is much simpler than that of kidnapping. Either continuous music, *arati* or the repeating of *Ramanama* is a religious necessity or it is not. If it is a religious necessity, no prohibition order by a court of law can be held obligatory. Music must be played, *arati* must be made and *Ramanama* repeated, cost what it may. If my formula were accepted a procession of the meekest

men and women, unarmed even with lathis, would march with *Ramanama* on their lips, supposing that that was the bone of contention and draw down on their heads the whole of the Mussalman wrath. But, if they would not accept that formula, they would still proceed with the sacred name of their lips and fight every inch of the ground. But to stop music for fear of a row or because of an order of court is to deny one's religion.

But, then, there is the other side to the question. Is continuous playing of music even while passing mosques at prayer time always a religious necessity? Is repeating of *Ramanama* a similar necessity? What about the charge that the fashion nowadays is to organize processions purely for the sake of irritating Mussalmans and to make *arati* just at the time of prayer and to utter *Ramanama* not because it is held religiously necessary but in order to create an occasion for a fight? If such be the case it will defeat its own end and naturally, the zest being wanting, a court's order, a military display or a shower of brickbats would end the irreligious show.

A religious necessity must, therefore, be clearly established. Every semblance of irritation must be avoided. A mutual understanding should be sincerely sought. And where it is not possible, an irreducible minimum should be fixed making due allowance for the opposite sentiment and then without seeking the intervention of courts or in spite of a prohibition order, a fight must be put up for that minimum. Let no one charge me with ever having advised or encouraged weakness or surrender on matters of principle. But I have said, as I say again, that every trifle must not be dignified into a principle.

Young India, 22-10-1925

80. BIHAR NOTES

FUNCTION OF LOCAL BOARD MEMBERS

At Giridih the addresses presented to me contained interesting references and there was also, as in Chaibasa, an address from the Goshala Committee. The Local Board address referred to the bad condition of the roads under its charge. The justification given was shortage of funds. I had no hesitation in replying that shortage of funds was no excuse for keeping the roads in bad repair when

Congresssmen manned local boards. After all, roads were national property, Congressmen were national servants and when by entering local boards, they obtained charge of roads they were expected to keep them in good repair whether there were funds or not. They might put up on every good point a valiant fight with the Government, but their constructive work should in no way be allowed to be neglected. If they found that they could not properly discharge their trust, they must resign. Want of funds was no cause for resignation because that could be made up for by voluntary effort. Let the members of such boards take up the pickaxe and the shovel, gird up their loins and themselves work at the roads and call a party of volunteers to asist them. They will earn the blessings of the public as also of the dumb cattle and command the respect of the superior authority. Indeed, in all municipal work everywhere, a large part of it is done by the councillors unofficially and with the voluntary support of the public. The late Mr. Joseph Chamberlain[1] turned Birmingham into a clean city studded with statues and other decorations, not merely through the paid service of the Corporation but by the voluntary support, pecuniary and other, of its citizens. The Municipality of Glasgow dealt with its plague epidemic in summary and exemplary fashion only because the members of the Corporation received the willing and unstinted support of its citizens. The Municipality of Johannesburg, within my own experience, dealt with similar trouble in the same summary manner. It counted no cost too great for the eradication of plague, burnt down its market buildings and its location and had behind it the resources of its determined citizens. I told my audience that therefore I was asking for nothing heroic of the Local Board members by askingthem to do the road repair themselves with the assistance of Congress volunteers if they had not enough funds. If we captured municipalities and local boards, we must be able to give a good account of ourselves in all the constructive work that was entrusted to our charge under statutory authority.

COW- PROTECTION

The Committee of the Giridih *goshala* said in its address that it had an annual income of nine thousand rupees in donations and an

[1]1836-1914; British statesmen. He was mayor of Birmingham from 1873 to 1876.

income of only two thousand rupees from milk, etc. The reader will recall that it is the same tale as that of Chaibasa. Much cry but little wool. An ideal *goshala* would supply the city of its domicile with cheap and wholesome milk from cattle of its own keeping and cheap and lasting foot-wear not out of slaughtered hide but out of the hide of dead cattle. Such a *goshala* will not be on one or two acres of ground in the heart of a city or in its immediate neighbourhood, but it would have, at some distance but within easy reach, fifty to a hundred acres of ground where a modern dairy and a modern tannery would be conducted on strictly business but national lines. Thus there would be no profits and no dividends to be paid and there would be also no loss incurred. In the long run such institutions dotted all over India would be a triumph of Hinduism and would be proof of Hindu earnestness about cow, that is, cattle protection and it would provide decent employment for thousands of men including educated men; for both dairy and tannery work require expert scientific knowledge. Not Denmark but India should be a model State for the finest dairy experiments and India should not to her shame have to export nine crore rupees worth of dead cattle hide annually and for her own consumption use slaughtered cattle hide . If such a state of things is a shame for India it is a greater shame for Hindus. I wish that all the *goshala* committees will take to heart the remarks I made in reply to the Giridih address[1] and make their *goshalas* into ideal dairies and tanneries and a refuge for all worn out and maimed cattle.

WHO SHOULD SPIN?

A third interesting reference in the Giridih address was to non-spinning by its labourers. Giridih has several mica mines. It has, therefore, many labourers working in those mines. These labourers get naturally a higher wage than they can possibly get from spinning and they are, therefore, not spinning at all. As a matter of fact, there need have been no such apologetic reference as was made in the address. The readers of *Young India* know that I have never suggested that those who are more lucratively employed should give up their lucrative employment and prefer hand-spinning. I have said repeatedly that those only are expected and should be induced to spin who have no other paying employment and that too only during the hours of unemployment. The whole theory of hand-spinning is based

[1] *Vide*"Speech at Public Meeting, Giridih", 7-10-1925.

upon the assumption that there are millions of men and women in this land who are idle for at least four months in the year for want of some employment. There are only, therefore, two classes of people who are expected to spin, those who would spin for hire, whom I have already mentioned, and the thinking part of India who should spin for sacrifice by way of example and in order to cheapen khaddar. But whilst I could understand labourers not spinning, I could not understand their not wearing khaddar. There was no excuse for a single person in that vast audience not to wear khaddar. Giridih can produce and manufacture its own yarn and weave its own khaddar without any difficulty and, in any case can get all its supply of khaddar ready-made and comparatively cheap from the other parts of Bihar. But I notice that, whilst these addresses admit shortcomings about khaddar and the charkha, they are mentioned, I fear, not as an earnest of reform in the immediate future, but by way of consolation for continuing the same state of things. A confession is good only when it is intended to be followed up by a retracing; it is worse than that the confessions made in the many addresses presented to me will be precursors of a definite change.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS

From Giridih we came to Madhupur. There I was called upon to perform the opening ceremony of its new elegant-looking little Town Hall. In performing the opening ceremony and in congratulating the Municipality on possessing its own abode, I expressed the hope that the Municipality would make Madhupur a beauty-spot worthy of the climate and natural surroundings it possessed. The difficulties in the way of improving big cities like Calcutta and Bombay were very great. But in little places like Madhupur, if municipalities had a very small income, they had also no difficulty to face in keeping their areas spotlessly clean and free from diseases. I visited, too, the national school which Madhupur boasts. The head master in the address which he read drew a gloomy picture of the prospects before him—decreasing attendance and decreasing pecuniary support from the people. He mentioned also that some parents withdrew their boys because hand-spinning was compulsory. The address asked me to point the way out of the difficulties mentioned. I replied that if the teachers believed in their mission, they need not be disappointed. Ups and downs in all new institutions were their natural lot. Their difficulties, therefore, were the teachers' testing time. Those

convictions only could be described as stable which would stand the stress of storms. The teachers should, therefore, count no sacrifice too great if they believed that they had a message to deliver to their surroundings through their schools. They would then remain unconcerned whether there was only one boy or there were one hundred in the school, provided it was perfectly clear to them that they had done their best for the school and that it was not their shortcomings that estranged the parents and the boys but that the very principle for which they stood was repugnant to them. If they had faith in hand-spinning, they would not mind the parents withdrawing their children from the school. If they had retained spinning only because it was a fashion, or because the Congress resolution required it, and not because they had faith in it, they need not hesitate then to do away with spinning and retain the goodwill of the people. Time has arrived when national teachers have to make a definite choice for themselves, because, when new changes are made there are always some people who resent one or all of them. It is only the teacher with faith in himself and his cause who could resist opposition to the changes which he considers to be necessary and which alone, perhaps, justify the existence of his new enterprise.

MISCELLANEOUS

From Madhupur we proceeded to the Purnea District, which meant a new surrounding and a new country. For, Purnea District is on the northern bank of the Ganges, and it lies to the north-east. All that district is really the Himalayan *terai*. The climate and the people are almost like those of Champaran. We crossed from Sakrigali Ghat to Maniari Ghat, a voyage of about two hours duration. We reached Maniari early in the morning. The people of this place presented a purse for the Deshbandhu Memorial. We went from Maniari by train to Katihar Junction where there were the usual public meetings. The next day we went to Kishangunj where also there were the usual meetings and a purse. Kishangunj contains a large Marwari population. They had made a good collection. A deputation came to me complaining that although they were ready and willing to wear khaddar they could not get any in Kishangunj. They said that the whole of the cloth trade was in the hands of the Marwari merchants who sold only foreign cloth, bcause, the deputation said, the Marwari merchants told them it paid them best. I told the deputation, however, that whilst I would gladly speak to the Marwari friends, their excuse

was really inadmissible because, if there was a large demand for khaddar in Kishangunj, they could open a co-operative store themselves. If was no use blaming the Marwari merchants who were after all in Kishangunj for their business. It was for those like the deputation who believed in khaddar to set the fashion, go to some trouble in stocking it, and then induce Marwari friends to take it up also. This, however, I saw, they were not prepared to do. I told them, too, that if they guaranteed a minimum sale I would undertake to persuade Rajendra Babu to open a khaddar depot in Kishangunj. This they were not prepared to risk. I spoke to the leading Marwari merchants who told me that, as a matter of fact, for some time some Marwaris did have some khaddar in their stores, but there was no great demand for it. And they admitted that there was no special effort made by the Marwari merchants to push khaddar before the public.

CONFUSION

From Kishangunj we went to Araria, and from Araria to Forbesgunj, the north-eastern extreme point of Bihar near which commences the Nepal border, and from where, I was told, on a clear day one could see the magnificent snowy range of the Himalayas. Before we reached Forbesgunj, I was inclined to congratulate Rajendra Babu and his band of workers upon the excellent control they had obtained upon the people in that, unlike as on previous occasions, the vast crowds of people were orderly, noiseless and exercised exemplary self-restraint by refraining from besieging me to touch my feet. I was, however, disillusioned at Forbesgunj, because the order broke down there. The crowd was immense. The meeting had to take place under the fierce sun. The people had been waiting since morning without any shade over-head. The noise and the din were terrible. It was impossible for me to get any quiet; and volunteers were unable to restrain the vast crowd from coming to touch me. The fact is that not much work had been done there before. The volunteers were new to the task. The poor fellows tried their best. Nobody was to blame. It was a new situation and a new experience for them. And the people were not to be deprived of what they must have considered to be the only opportunity of coming near me and touching me. It is an affectionate superstition; but it is also most embarrassing for me. I spoke to them about khaddar, about the spinning-wheel, about temperance, gambling and the like; but I am afraid that it was all like foreign speech to them. Mysterious are the ways of God. Tens of

thousands of people irresistibly drawn to someone or to something of whom or which they had but the vaguest idea. I do not know whether they profited by coming to see me. a perfectly strange being to them. I do not know whether it was worth while my going to Forbesgunj. Perhaps it is as well that we do not know the results of all we do, if only we do things for the service of God and humanity and do nothing which we know to be wrong.

CONCLUSION

From Forbesgunj we proceeded to Vishanpur which is about 25 miles from Purnea. It is a rough motor ride because there is no proper metalled road. There was a tremendous gathering in this village and I was surprised to see so much public spirit in a place so remote from the railway line. The people presented a good purse for the Memorial. A novel feature of this meeting was that a permanent platform was built for the meeting. It was nearly fifteen feet high. It is brick-built. Underneath is a khaddar store. The whole conception combines beauty with use. The most pleasing funciton in this village was a nicely built library and reading-room which I had the privilege of opening. There is a large open enclosure surrounding the library building, provided with marble benches, and the library itself is a memorial to the deceased wife of Chaudhry Lalchand. That in a place like Vishanpur such an up-to-date memorial should have been thought of shows a great advance in political education of the right sort. From Vishanpur we came back to Purnea which is the headquarters of the district, where practically the Bihar tour was concluded with the usual functions. The tour really concluded at Hajipur to which I was attracted four years ago by the youthful zeal of a band of workers through whose energy a national school was established. Purnea District has supplied over seventeen thousand rupees, a part of which is earmarked for the Bihar (National) Vidyapith. The rest about fifteen thousand is for the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. Throughout the Bihar tour, including this sum, the total collection for the Memorial amounted to about 50,000 rupees.

It is not without sorrow that I am leaving the simple and good people of Bihar. I hope, if all goes well, to finish the balance of the Bihar tour early next year, but I expect that the Biharis will show much further progress in khaddar and charkha during the intervening months. The whole of the stock of beautiful khaddar now lying in its khaddar stores should be cleared. There must be many members of

the A.I.S.A. enrolled and centres where poor people are awaiting, volunteers should be organized for spinning. The drink evil should be brought under control.

Young India, 22-10-1925

81. A DILEMMA

A friend finds himself in a dilemma. He is serving in an Indian concern that requires his services from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., I suppose with a break for dinner. But the employers do not prescribe the kind or the quality of the material of which his dress should be made. And by choice therefore he wears khaddar. A foreign firm, however, offers him double the salary with fewer hours of service but will not have his dress made of khaddar. Now the difficulty which faces him is this: If he accepts the foreign service, he can not only improve his material position but get enough time for spinning daily in which he believes but has to deny himself khaddar dress which he loves. If he remains where he is he has to slave for 12 hours, pinch himself and get no time for spinning. What is he to do? I have little hesitation in giving my opinion. Apart from the question of khaddar, for a self-respecting man, the foreigner's tempting offer is totally unacceptable for the simple reason that it is coupled with an undue restraint upon one's liberty, especially when that restraint is against national interest and, from the fact stated is due to prejudice against khaddar. On merits, too, I would any day prefer liberty to wear khaddar although for want of time spinning may have to be sacrificed for the time being. If all were obliged to discard khaddar spinning will have no value. The vartue of spinning is not absolute but relative. If the product of spinning is not marketable, it would be a cruel mockery to call upon millions of semi-starved men and women to spin. The need of the time is, therefore, popularization ofkhaddar wear. Spinning is undoubtedly necessary. But when there is a choice between spinning and wearing khaddar, naturally the latter has the undisputed preference. Spinning is required from those who want to add to their slender resources and that, too, during spare hours and without payments from those who have time to spare for giving even a few moments' labour in that particular form to the nation. In the case in point the will to spin being there, the time will certainly be found in due course. Probably, the correspondent has to go by tram or train to

his office. Let him take the *takli* with him and give the odd moments to it. There are many within my knowledge who are thus utilizing their odd moments. I therefore hope that the correspondent will never, for any temptation, give up his khaddar wear. I had hoped that the prejudice against khaddar had died down in the foreign mercantile firms. The European merchants in Calcutta to whom I had the privilege of talking showed no prejudice against khaddar wear. I wish that influential European merchants who may see this paragraph will exert their influence to remove the prejudice reported by my correspondent. And it is high time for Indian firms to remodel their businesses so as to curtail the inordinately long hours for which their employees are detained. The world's experience shows that long hours do not mean more but actually less work. It simply requires a little courage and a little initiative to make the much-needed reform voluntarily and generously—a reform that is otherwise bound to come in any case. But, then, when it comes under pressure it will have lost all its grace. Shorter hours for employees is a world movement which nobody can stop. Will not the Indian Chamber of Commerce or some such mercantile association lead the way?

Young India, 22-10-1925

82. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[*October 22, 1925*][1]

CH. MAGANLAL,

I have your letter. Make whatever arrangements you think fit with Parsottambhai. I intend to take the amount from Revashankerbhai. Or we shall do whatever is needful. I am thinking of sending away the children. There is no end to illness here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 7745. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] From the postmark

83. LETTER TO RANCHHODDAS PATWARI

Kartika Sud 5 [*October 22,1925*][1]

REVERED RANCHHODBHAI,

It has become a problem to decide what route I should take on my way back from Kutch. Do you wish me to go *via* Morvi? And if so, do you think I should have the committee meeting of the Political Conference[2] there? If you permit me to go there I would certainly ask for your help in the khadi and cow-protection work. Your help does not mean the help of your State. If I do get it, well and good. But your own help I do want. It would be nice if I could have a reply by wire. If you send it to Bhuj I shall get it wherever I may be.

Regards from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

My right hand is aching; hence as far as possible I write with the left hand.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4113

84. SPEECH ON BOARD STEAMER, DWARKA

October 22, 1925

S.S. *Rupavati* touched Dwarka on the way to Mandvi at the special request of the people of Dwarka who sent a deputation on board to accord Gandhiji their respectful greetings with a request that he might visit Dwarka on his return journey. In their address, the deputation pointed out with becoming humility that they were poor representatives of the high ideals of Hindu religion of which Dwarka is recognized a sacred place and that they wanted to profit by Gandhiji's advice and teachings.

Gandhiji gave suitable reply. He said that it might not be possible to visit Dwarka this time, but he urged that, if they wanted seriously to set about the task of reform, they might make a good beginning by discarding all foreign cloth and adopting the wear of pure khaddar for all purposes. He said that the sacred places of India should be the first and foremost in discarding foreign cloth. He also pointed out that, although Hindus were idol-worshippers, it was not the idol that they worshipped

[1] Reference in the letter to the Kutch tour indicates that it was written in 1925.

[2] Kathiawar Political Conference

but the spirit of God inculcated in the idol, and he appealed the deputation to try in their humble way to realize in life whatever appertained to the spirit of the idol they worshipped.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-10-1925

85. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BHUJ [1]

October 22, 1925

I had expected from your welcome address that you would not be drawing a line between the *Antyajas* and others in this meeting, but when I saw that you had done so, I felt that my place was with the former. For, wherever I have gone I have described myself as a *Bhangi*. I do not make that claim out of vanity nor is it an instance of my ignorance or of Western influence on me. I make the claim wholly in a spirit of service, and that too after a life-long study of Hinduism and effort to live it by carefully following the example of my pious parents, and not, I repeat, under the influence of Western ideas I have endeavourd to understand the relationship beteween the body and the Dweller within. I have studied the Shastras with as much care as is possible for a layman, and have also tried to put their teachings into practice. From my study of them and my experience of living in accordance with their teachings, I have come to the firm conclusion that if Hinduism clings to the practice of untouchability, it will perish, Hindus will perish and India will perish. As I discuss the subject with innumerable shastris and pundits in the course of my tours in the various parts of the counry, I become daily more confirmed in my view. I frankly tell you , therefore, that if, holding the views that I do, I am an untouchable in your eyes, with whom it is proper that all contact should be avoided, you should be firm and keep away from me, and ask me to end my visit in a day. Far from causing me pain, you will make me happy by acting in this way. I will think that Kutch has self-respect, that it has courage and its people are not afraid of expressing their difference from even a reputedly big man. If, therefore, you ask me to leave, you will be doing good not only to yourself but also to the *Antyajas* and to me. You may rest assured that your forsaking me will make no difference to our relations. You will show no disrespect to me by forsaking me, but you show extreme

[1] Bhuj was the capital of the then princely State of Kutch; The speech is extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour.

disrespect to me by inviting me here and then slighting the *Antyajas*. I have identified myself with Hinduism. I live for it and wish to die for it. If I felt today that my death would benefit Hinduism, I would embrace death with the same love and eagerness with which I embrace you here. I, who serve this Hinduism, believe that the practice of untouchability is a great blot on it. *Antyajas* are dear to me as my very life. Therefore just as a lover of *Ramayana* would run miles away from a place where the holy name of Rama was being slighted, I too cannot stay where Antyajas are despised. I am bound to run away from such a spot, for I would feel deeply hurt there. You have said flattering things about my satyagraha. Well then, I take this opportunity to give an object-lesson in it. Let the *Antyajas* come in, or permit me to go and sit in their midst. But remember that it will not be proper for you to do anything out of false regard for me and with the thought in your mind that you will take a bath after returning home. I had, through the letter which I addressed to you, warned you before coming on this visit. If , therefore, you permit the *Antyajas* to come and sit in your midst, let it be with the conviction that you are doing a virtuous act and not committing a sin, that you are purifying Hinduism and not defiling it. If, however, you believe that you will be committing a sin by letting them come in, do please permit me to go and sit in their midst. No matter which course you adopt, if you act with decision and without fear of or false regard for anyone, I will think that you have presented me something of greater worth than this silver spinning-wheel and this silver casket containing your address. But consider: if, as they did at Mangrol,[1] you let the *Antyajas* in today but ill-treat them afterwards, you will be doing them disservice, not service. I should also like to add that the reform which you may adopt today should be adopted after due thought, should be adopted after weighing your strength and with the idea of following it permanently.

We have now to take the next step. We shall have to carry out a silent movement as they do in an army manoeuvre. The majority of the audience desires that the *Antyajas* should not cross the fencing in front of them. Please, therefore, permit the volunteers to lift the table there and put it silently on the side reserved for *Antyajas.* You will now hear me complete the rest of my speech from that side. It would hurt me to go on with my speech sitting here, yielding to your love or persuasion. I shall feel happy if you let me sit there. Untouchability

[1] In Saurashtra; Gandhiji met the *Antyajas* at Mangrol on April 7, 1925.

cannot be abolished through force; it can be abolished only by satyagraha, by the strength of love. Reforms in matters of religion can be effected only by the reformer suffering voluntarily by his undergoing *tapascharya*, and in no other way. They cannot be affected by anyone acting with anger or resentment or hatred in his heart. It is the duty of a satyagrahi not to bear ill-will even mentally towards a person opposing the cause of truth. The fact of a majority being on your side has not hurt me, and has certainly not made me angry. Now, let everyone remain where he is; I alone will go over to that side and take my seat there, for I have a special duty in this place and on this occasion. As I had once found it my special duty to keep and *Antyaja* girl with me and bring her up in the Ashram, so it is my special duty today to go to that side and address you from there. You should remain seated where you are; you will then be able to hear me in complete silence.

If either Shastras or history taught us that a kingdom could be ruled only by a person like Rama, I would have been an implacable enemy of monarchy. But the very same history which tells us of Ravana also tells us of Rama, and proclaims to the world that Ravana's rule did not last for all time, that victory was Rama's. A king's rule can endure only if he introduces dharma into his rule. I would offer my worship to the government of a king—I long for such a government—under whose rule no one would ever die of hunger, a girl might safely move about where she willed and no wicked person would dare to cast evil glances at her, a king who looked upon his subjects as his children and all women, other than his wife, as his mothers or daughters, who never drank and had no addictions, who would see to the safety of his subjects as they slept before himself retiring for the day and ensured that they had enough to eat before he ate himself. I wish to see a bond of love between the Princes and their subjects in order that we might have rulers of this type. When we have them, there will be no famine and starvation in the country, no immorality and no people addicted to drinking. At present, however, we have all these things in the Indian States. What does this fact signify? That the Princes have forgotten their dharma—their dharma of protecting the lives, the properties and the dharma of their subjects, that they have not been able to preserve purity of character. The Shastras, on the other hand, proclaim with all the emphasis at their command that even the race in which Krishna was born perished while

he lived as soon as the three evils of immorality, drinking and gambling entered it. Krishna had the misfortune to be a witness to the complete destruction of the Yadava race. That is why I say that the Princes of Kutch should so rule their State that the subjects would have no cause for complaint against them. As long as the Prince has a good charcater and is a good ruler, the subjects will certainly help him, assist him in the administration of justice and pay the taxes. What should they do, however, if he becomes oppressive in his rule? The Shastras say that in such circumstances it becomes the duty of the subjects to put their grievances frankly before the ruler, for it should be borne in mind that if the saying"As the ruler, so the subjects" is true, it is equally true to say"As the subjects, so the king." This very thing is expresssd differently in an English saying:"A people get the government that they deserve." In other words, a ruler and his subjects always act and react on each other. The truthfulness, vigour and strength of purpose displayed by the subjects cannot but produce an effect on the ruler. Likewise, the ruler's misconduct and disregard for truth cannot but have their effect on the subjects. What, then is the duty of the people of Kutch, a people who have the spirit of adventure in them, who cross the oceans and journey to distant lands, who go round the whole earth and return with riches? If the grievances which you have hinted at are real, why do you fear to place them all before the ruler with due courtesy and with full regard for him? How can I express any views about them without first discussing them with the Maharao? If they are real, I tell you the remedy lies with you, not the remedy of uncivil and thoughtless resistance but that of truth and love. Where truth, courage and love are found together, nothing is impossible. I advise you, on the strength of the experience I have gathered during thirty years of vigilant political life, that you should once acquaint the Maharao with all your grievances, with firmness, with the fullest regard for truth and with due civility. Let my words sink in your heart and follow the advice I have given; you will then realize that I have placed in your hands a remedy of unfailing effect.[1]

If people do not like this arrangement, I am even ready to address a meeting attended only by classes other than *Antyajas*, but I

[1] Gandhiji then suggested to the workers, in regard to the arrangements for the next day's meeting, that the people should be informed in advance that *Antyajas* would be permitted to sit with others, but that a special space would be reserved for those who did not like such an arrangement.

would not go to a meeting where space is reserved for *Antyajas* at some distance. Frame your programme, therefore, with due regard for my views and temperament. I state, not merely as a formality, but deliberately and as a truth, that the meeting exercised proper judgment in acting as it did today, and expressed nothing but its love for me. I am grateful to you for respecting my wishes and carrying out the suggestion I made. You have proved by this behaviour of yours that you are better people than the residents of Mangrol and Bhadaran.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-11-1925

86. TELEGRAM TO TULSI MAHER [2]

[On or before *October 23, 1925*][3]

SHOCKED HEAR YOUR GROWING WEAKNESS. YOU MUST TAKE MILK OTHERS THINGS AND EVEN CHANGE COLDER CLIMATE IF REBUILDING IMPOSSIBLE THERE..

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 6522

87. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BHUJ [4]

October 23, 1925

I have had a meeting with the Maharaoshri. He heard me patiently. I put before him everything, all your grievances, excepting one unimportant matter. I cannot say what the outcome will be. I can tell you, however, that if you follow the advice I gave yesterday the remedy for your grievances is quite simple. Why is it that even our Princes feel that they should listen to me? It is because they all know that I speak out what I have in my mind. I observe due courtesy in all that I say, and there is sweetness behind my strong words; there is no

[1] In the Kheda district of Gujarat; on February 11, 1925, Gandhiji addressed a public meeting there in which the *Antyajas* were made to sit in a separate enclosure.

[2] A Nepalese constructive worker

[3] The telegram is quoted in a letter, dated 23-10-1925, from Mahadev Desai to Kishorelal Mashruwala.

[4] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour

bitterness in my heart, no unworthy thought or hatred or any other ignoble feeling. There is such power in truth itself that one need not resort to exaggeration to add to it. When I say that"one should speak the truth, and say what is agreeable", I mean that our truth should be inspired by love and not by hatred or violence. Today, though we recognize the value of truth, we have shown ourselves bankrupt of it. You should, therefore, tell the ruler whatever you feel to be true without any fear in your heart—this is not only your right but your duty.

The cause of cow-protection has suffered through the folly of the so-called"servants of the cow". A hundred times more cows are slaughtered for commercial purposes than are killed by Muslims as sacrificial offering. The saughter-houses in the country exist to serve the needs not only of Muslims but of the army too and to supplyhides. Slaughter-houses pay because of the ignorance of the rich in the country about what Hinduism means, and because of a lack of genuine religious consciousness among our *Vaishnavas* and our priests and because of their laxity. Cows are owned by Hindus and, therefore, it is none other than the Hindus who sell cows for slaughter. All those who wear shoes use the hide of slaughtered animals, for the hide of dead cattle is not easily tanned. If we wish to save the cattle that would otherwise be slaughtered there is no other way but for the well-to-do to interest themselves in the trade in milk and hides. I appeal to you for funds so that it may be possible to take up all this work.

You want me to collect funds to be used exclusively in Kutch. Why should I come to you to collect funds for that purpose? You yourselves can do that . The money collected by me is for the poor in the country. When in 1921 we collected 38 lakhs from Bombay, did any resident of Kutch stipulate that his contribution should be spent in Kutch? I would not accept a pie from my friends in Kutch if they offer money on any such condition. I ask for money to serve the much-suffering cows in the country, to help poor women protect their honour and the starving millions to get some food. If, then, you adopt the short-sighted policy of"money from Kutch to be spent in Kutch", there will be no hope for the country. If you have no faith in my capacity and my judgment to spend your money properly, you had better give me nothing. Please remember that Kutch is a tiny drop in the sea that is India; this drop must make a sacrifice for the vast

country. You should on your own collect money to meet the needs of Kutch. It does not befit you or me that you should use my name to collect it. Have the Marwaris given me money on condition that I should spend it in Marwar? They gave me money—one lakh rupees—for the propagation of Hindi in Madras and are giving generously now for the cause of cow-protection. For Bihar, they gave me a big pile. Only yesterday, I collected a very large sum from Marwaris living in Bihar, none of whom asked me to spend a part of it in Marwar. I heard such a condition being made only by residents of Kutch, and I was extremely pained by it. It is your duty to give money for the whole of the country, for you get it from the whole country, from your trade in and with all parts of it. You must make a return for what you receive.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-11-1925

88. HOW TO WORSHIP GOD

A Parsi gentleman has written to me from Persia. He has addressed to me some profound questions[1] which I quote below in his own words. At two or three places where he has used English words I have given their Gujarati equivalents instead.

If even a single leaf does not stir without the will of God, what is there left for man to do? This is a question dating back to times immemorial and it will always continue to be asked in the future; however, the answer is included in the question itself as it is God Himself who has given us the capacity to ask it. All our actions are governed by laws, and the same is true of god. As our laws and our knowledge are imperfect, we can violate these laws in a civil or uncivil manner. Being all-knowing and omnipotent God never violates His own laws. These admit of no improvements or additions. They are immutable. Our freedom lies in the capacity bestowed on us to think, distinguish and choose between good and evil in various ways. This freedom is strictly limited. It is so limited that a learned person has said that it is even less than that enjoyed by a sailor on board a ship, to walk on the deck. However little it may be, there is this freedom and even though it is not much, it is sufficient, at any rate, to enable a

[1] Not translated here

human being to attain *mukti*[1] through it. Destiny and man's effort to attain the aims of life go hand in hand. However. destiny does not thwart the prupose of anyone who treads the road of *mukti.*

Hence, all that now remains to consider is how to serve or worship God. He can be served in one way alone. To serve the poor is to serve God. By serving even an ant, one serves Him . It is He who gives the tiny particle [of food] to the ant and the six maunds to the elephant. Anyone who refrains from trampling an ant also serves it; one who does not intentionally harm it will not harm other animals or his fellowmen. At each place and at each point of time service assumes a different form, although the sentiment involved in it is the same. In serving those who suffer, one serves God. Discretion should be exercised in this service. There is no reason to believe that one is doing nothing but service by giving grains to the hungry. It is a sin to provide food for an idle person who makes no effort and depends on others for food. It is a meritorious act to provide him with an occupation and, if he refuses to work, to let him starve is to render service to him. God's name should be chanted and it is necessary to worship Him with rituals as this leads to self-purification, which in its turn enables man to find his own way. However, ceremonial worship by itself does not constitute the service of God. It is a means of doing that service. It is for this reason that Narasinh Mehta has sung:"Nothing is achieved by bathing and worshipping, or counting one's beads and chanting His name."

And from this reply we get the answer to the third question which is as follows. What is the aim of life? It is to know the Self. In the words of Narasinh Mehta,"So long as the essence of the Self is not realized, all our efforts are in vain." This realization of the Self, or Self-knowledge, is not possible until one has achieved unity with all living beings—has become one with God. To accomplish such a unity implies deliberate sharing of the suffering of others and the eradication of such suffering.

[Form Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-10-1925

[1] Deliverance from phenomenal existence, as the end of life

89. MY NOTES

GET ENROLLED IN THE SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION

Those who are contributing yarn spun by themselves to the Congress should now send in their names to the Spinners' Association. All those belonging to this group can send in yarn every month if they choose to do so or 12,000 yards in a single instalment. A large sum is being spent on postage and of this as much as possible should be saved. It is, therefore, desirable that all the yarn be sent together. Moreover, it is also hoped that many perosns can send their yarn in the same parcel. With some such motive Shri Dastane handed over to me, on my way, at Bhusawal Station, yarn spun by fifty-seven members along with their names and addresses. Yarn from all places should start coming in now.

THE MEANING OF KHADI

Just as some people wear coarse material thinking it is khadi although it has been spun and woven in a textile mill, others persist in the belief that khadi necessarily means thick and coarse cloth made of hand-spun yarn. This latter belief is not borne out by facts. Hand-woven cloth made of hand-spun yarn is of course khadi, however fine it may be. It may be made of cotton, silk or even of wool. One should wear whichever of these one happens to find convenient. The khadi from Andhra is very fine. In Assam, one can get some khadi made of silk. Woollen khadi is made in Kathiawar. In other words, the only criterion of khadi is its being hand-spun and hand-woven. Ordinarily, hand-spun khadi is found to be coarse and thick, hence, some people erroneously believe that khadi can only be of this type, though in fact fine khadi of sixty to eighty count yarn is also made. Nevertheless, those who have used thick khadi know that the touch of coarse rough khadi is soft to the body and, being rough, it affords better protection to the skin.

THE KANPUR CONGRESS

There is not much time left before the Kanpur Congress.[1] The reception committee was faced with unexpected difficulties. The

[1] The Kanpur Congress was held in the last week of December, 1925.

obstacle that the committee met in getting land has now been removed. However, in order the complete the preparations within the time left, a large number of volunteers and large sums of money are required. My expectations are that the reception committee will receive that help and the work will be speeded up.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-10-1925

90. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

Kartika Sud 8 [*October 25, 1925*][1]

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

When I heard that you had fever, I was not worried. Now Bhai Kishorelal writes that your frame has become very weak and the weakness persists and yet you adhere to your milkless diet. I have already, on receiving that letter, sent you a wire.[2] I hope you have resumed taking milk. I hope you have taken no vow. I approve of experiments in giving up milk, but until I succeed in my experiment, I would not agree to my colleagues trying it at the cost of their health. So I cannot tolerate your abstaining from milk even after you have become weak. If you have not started taking it, please do so. Take only milk and fruit for the present. As you get stronger, have wheat, rice, etc. In case you are suffering from constipation, go to a cooler place, if necessary.

Write to me a detailed letter. May God give you good health soon!

Give the enclosed letter to Shanti and Menali. If you send the reply to Mandvi, I shall get it there.

Today I intend to leave Bhuj.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6521

[1] From the postmark

[2] *Vide*" Telegram to Tulsi Maher", on or before 23-10-1925.

91. LETTER TO FULCHAND SHAH

KUTCH KOTADA,
Sunday [*October 25, 1925*][1]

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I have your letter. You must have received the Rs. 1,000. As for Gondal, as long as the people there do nothing you and I cannot do much.

What can others do with an immoral family? The reason why something can be done in regard to Shivajibhai[2] is that we have a hand in the management of his affairs. But we do not have the right to interfere in the affairs of others who run such institutions. We have comparatively less right to interfere in Charitravijayji's case.

We cannot go about judging the world. So I wish you not to worry about Gondal or other such States. The best way to reform the world is to reform oneself. Therefore, it is only right that one should take up duties which come naturally to one. If this is true, I think it proper to have patience with Gondal. We shall talk over it further when we meet.

Moreover, I gather from your letter that you think that I have received plenty of evidence about the evils in Gondal. But I have not. I have no evidence at all. I had told the Committee[3] that I tried my best to meet the Ruler of Gondal but I did not succeed. Just now I know only one immediate remedy, that those who are volunteers should increase their strength. Even this will improve things in the future.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: C.W. 2828. Courtesy: Fulchand shah

[1] Gandhiji was in Kotada on this date.
[2] He had established three Ashrams at Madhda in Kathiawar.
[3] Presumably, Executive Committee of the Kathiawar Political Con-ference

92. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

Monday [*October 26, 1925*][1]

BHAI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your letter about the sub-castes. We shall soon be meeting somewhere and then we shall discuss your draft. Then we shall do what is necessary.

I have written a personal letter to Patwari, saying that if he is agreeable I shall go to the Ashram *via* Morvi where we can hold the Committee meeting. I have not yet received a reply to it. I should have. If I get no reply, I shall go *via* Jamnagar, but will not hold the meeting there. It seems now there will be no time left for it. So we shall have to hold the meeting at the Ashram. I must reach the Ashram on the 7th .

If you have any suggestion to offer, write to me at Mandvi. I shall be in Mandvi on the 29th and 30th; in Anjar on Sunday and Monday.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5723

93. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Monday [*October 26,1925*][2]

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. I hear also that you have sustained burns. I shall be reaching there shortly, so more when we meet. Hope your hand is completely all right. I have had a long talk with Dahyabhai and shall have another in a day or two. We will come to some decision before we reach Ahmedabad. As for you, I have already made up my mind.

Blessigns from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro— Manibehn Patelne, p. 32

[1] In the letter, Gandhiji asks the addressee to send a reply to him at Mandvi, Kutch. He was there on October 30 and 31. The preceding Monday fell on October 26.

[2] From the source

94. NOTES

WOOL OR COTTON

A friend enquires whether the hill tribes who never use cotton, who have plenty of wool and who always wear woollen clothing can become members of the Congress by spinning and sending woollen yarn instead of cotton yarn. The hillsmen can certainly send wool yarn and become Congress members. The emphasis is not on cotton, but on hand-spinning. And I do hope that Congressmen who are working in the hills will enrol as many wool spinners as they can for both the Congress and the All-India Spinners' Association.

A SPINNER'S DIFFICULTY

A correspondent writes:"The postage required for sending yarn subscription to the A.I.S.A. is greater than the value of yarn to be sent. Is there no way of saving this cost? Must all packets be registered? Or if not, may they be sent 'not-paid'?" This objection was considered when in terms of the Ahmedabad resolution yarn had to be sent to the All-India Khadi Board. It is impossible to save the postage in its entirety at the present moment or at any moment altogether. But much may be saved even now. Registration of packets containing yarn is totally unnecessary. It would not, however, do to send 'not-paid' packets. The postage must be borne by the senders; but there is no reason why everyone should send his or her yarn separately. In every village or street wherever members may be living within easy reach of one another, one party should collect all the yarn at one place and send the whole of it in one parcel. This can be easily arranged by someone taking the initiative and making himself responsible. Then, again, it is not obligatory to send the yearly subscription in twelve instalments. Those who have got ample leisure may spin their twelve thousand in one month and send the whole in one parcel or, it may be sent in as many instalments as is convenient. The quesion then arises what will become of the idea of spinning regularly every day. Regular spinning should be done although the subscription may be paid and yarn thus spun may be utilized for one's own personal use. The obligation of regular spinning is distinct from the obligation of sending twelve thousand yards of self-spun yarn. And it is necessary in the interest of national economy to spin

twelve thousand yards in the quickest possible time so as to save postage. I hope after some time arrangements will be made for establishing receiving depots in suitable centres so as to avoid postage.

ONE THOUSAND RUPEES PRIZE

A text-book on cow-protection has been found to be a necessity. An American friend who is interesting himself in the question of cow-protection wanted me to supply him with a book upon it. I failed to find for him a volume that would give him all the information that he needed. I therefore approached Sjt. Revashanker Jagjivan and asked him whether he would issue a prize for a cow-protection essay. He has kindly consented to pay one thousand rupees for the best essay on the subject. The terms are that the essay should be delivered at Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, to the Secretary, All-India Cow-Protection Association, on or before March 31, 1926. It may be in English, Sanskrit or Hindi. It should deal with the origin, meaning and implications of cow-protection quoting texts in support. It should contain an examination of the Shastras and find whether there is any prohibition in the Shastras for conducting dairies and tanneries by Associations interested in cow-protection. It should trace the history of cow-protection in India and methods adopted to achieve it from time to time. It should contain statistics giving the number of cattle in India and examine the question of pasture land and the effect of the Government policy about pasture land in India and suggest remedy to be adopted for securing cow-protection. I am inviting Acharya Anandshanker Dhruva and Sjt. C. V. Vaidya to allow themselves to be appointed judges of the essays to be received. The terms of competition are subject to change within a fortnight from the date of publication so as to allow me to receive the opinions of friends interested in cow-protection from the standpoint of the All-India Cow-Protection Association. And if no change is announced within that fortnight, the foregoing terms may be regarded as final.

FORTHCOMING CONGRESS

Cawnpore has been experiencing, but also fortunately overcoming, exceptional difficulties in its preparations for the forthcoming Congress. The difficulty about finally securing the plot of land required has been only just settled. It has domestic quarrels also. Dr. Murarilal and his Committee will, I hope, get all the assistance they may need, whether in men or money. Success of a

Congress session largely depends upon the application, intelligence, tact and resourcefulness of those who compose the Reception Commitee, and the Committee's success depends upon the active co-operation and goodwill of local people. I hope that the women of Cawnpore will remember that it is a daughter of India who is to preside over the deliberations of the Congress for the first time in its long and chequered history. I hope that there will be an able corps of women volunteers ministering to the needs and the comforts of the female delegates and visitors who may be expected to attend the Congress in larger numbers than before.

FOR MEMBERS A.I.S.A.

I propose to publish from week to week, or at longer intervals if the A. I.S.A. is unable to supply weekly, names of members who may send their quota. This will be the only receipt issued by the Association. The plan will not only ensure accuracy but save postage and some portion of routine work at the Central Office. Those who do not find their names acknowledged in these columns should complain directly to the Central Office. In sending their yarn members should take care to give their full name, full address including the taluk and the Congress province, the class of membership and whether the member desires to become a member of the Congress or not. It should be noted that no extra subscription is necessary for the Congress. Thus sending of 2,000 yards of self-spun yarn entitles the sender if so desired to become enrolled as member of the Congress as also of the Association. There should also be a card attached to every hank of yarn containing the number of yards, the measurement of the winder, the weight, the count, the variety of cotton used and whether the yarn is spun on a wheel or on a *takli*. If members will take care to send in these particulars accurately, they will save a large amount of national time.

SPURIOUS KHADI

A friend sends me a pictorial card taken from spurious khadi woven in some of the Indian mills. It has printed upon it a charkha with a basket full of slivers and a few bobbins with yarn wound upon them lying in front. My correspondent tells me that such imitation khaddar is manufactured in almost all the Indian mills and such stuff is sent here by Japan also. He adds that poor people, who know that they should wear khaddar when they see a charkha stamp upon it and

upon applying at the shops have stuff looking like khaddar given to them, unquestioningly buy it and flatter themselves with the belief that they have done something towards the alleviation of the economic distress of India. It is a thousand pities that mill-owners should lack all patriotic fervour and, in order to swell dividends, or, maybe, now, to be able to keep the mills going, pay no regard to the national will. And yet people are not wanting who expect with the assistance of Indian mills to achieve the boycott of foreign cloth. The tremendous mistake underlying such belief consists in supposing that the mill industry can ever be utilized for the national purpose before khaddar has attained a proper commercial footing. I doubt not that one day all the mills will fall in line with the great national purpose; but that time will not come before khaddar can hold its own against the whole world, in other words, before the national taste has undergone such a revolution that the general body of people would refuse to wear anything but khaddar and they will have been so far educated as to be able without difficulty to distinguish between real khaddar and the base imitation.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

All communications intended for the All-India Cow-Protection Association should be addressed to the Secretary of the Association at Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, and not at Bombay.

Young India, 29-10-1925

95. INTERROGATORIES

Whilst I was at Lucknow the sub-editor of the *Indian Daily Telegraph* handed me some interrogatories for my answer. They are rather interesting. I therefore reproduce the most important of them with my answers.

1. Do you propose to launch mass civil disobedience within one year, or within any specified time?

I entertain no present hope of being able to launch mass civil disobedience within any measurable distance of time.

2. Do you believe in the dictum 'the end justifies the means'?

I have never believed in the dictum.

3. A year ago it was reported that you intended to launch civil disobedience, and once launched you would go on with it, even if sporadic violence occurred. Absolute non-violence being impossible on the part of the

masses, will you now take the risk of a modicum of violence (minimum, so far as it lies in your power) and launch civil disobedience?

What I said a year ago and what I wish to repeat now is that whatever step I may take now will be, I hope, not conditional, but absolute and irrevocable. Whenever I have suspended civil disobedience I have done so not by reason of any outbreak of violence, but upon the discovery of such violence as had been initiated or encouraged by Congressmen who should have known better. Any outbreak of violence would not have brought about suspension, as, for instance, the Moplah outbreak. But Chauri Chaura did for the simple reason that persons connected with the Congress were involved in it.

4. In the Calcutta riot case, you laid the blame at the door of the Hindus. The Marwari Association or some Hindu organization challenged your verdict and produced evidence to prove the guilt of the Muslims in giving sufficient cause for provocation to the Hindus. You promised to publicly modify your verdict if you found your previous opinion mistaken. Will you now publicly modify your previous verdict?

I have seen nothing to modify my previous verdict.

5. You have consented to accept address from the Municipal Board (which is now in the hands of the Swarajist Party), but you have avoided address from the Hindu Sabha. Why do you make this invidious distinction against a body which represents the Hindu community, to which you belong?

I have never avoided address from the Lucknow Hindu Sabha. On the contrary, I told them that I would gladly accept their address when I paid a visit to Lucknow. The Swarajist Municipality approached me later and pressed me to accept its address even whilst I was passing through Lucknow. The Hindu Sabha might have done likewise. There was no question of avoidance. I simply thought that the Sabha would not want to present me with an address whilst I was merely passing through Lucknow specially as the Sabha had desired to discuss with me the Hindu-Muslim tension in Lucknow. It will be remembered that I gladly accepted the Hindu Sabha address in Sitapur.

6. The Aminabad Park *arati-namaz* question is hanging fire for more than a year. Will you kindly give your decision, if both parties promise to abide by it?

I have dealt with this matter in my U.P. Notes.

7. As a Hindu what is your candid opinion about the question?

I have no opinion, as I do not know the facts. If I had made up

my mind beforehand, I could not consent to arbitrate even if both the parties were willing to abide by my award.

8. Hindus never object to Muslim music during Moharrum, or at any time. Why should Muslims object to Hindu music? Are the Hindus not entitled to safeguard their religious rights by every means?

This question deals with two questions of fact about which I know nothing. As to the third part of the question, Hindus are entitled to defend their religious rights not by every means but by every truthful and, in my opinion, non-violent means.

9. At Patna two kidnapped Hindu girls were produced before you. As a Hindu, what steps do you advise the Hindus to take against the growing evil of kidnapping throughout India?

I dealt with this delicate question last week.[1]

10. Are not the Hindus justified in organizing themselves, not for any aggressive action against Muslims or others, but for safeguarding their religious rights and stamping out such evils as kidnapping, etc., as also for the physical, social, moral and material advancement of the Hindu community?

I do not suppose anybody can possibly object to the organization such as the question mentions. I certainly do not object.

11. Maulana Shaukat Ali sent a message through you to the Bihar Khilafat Conference. If Lala Lajpat Rai or Pandit Malaviya send a message through you to a Hindu Conference, will you have any objection to it?

Maulana Shaukat Ali never sent through me any message to the Bihar Khilafat Conference; but if he had, I would certainly have carried any message from him, provided it was unobjectionable. And I should certainly carry out a similar commission entrusted to me by Pandit Malaviyaji or Lala Lajpat Rai.

Young India, 29-10-1925

96. U.P. NOTES

A RICKETY PLATFORM

At Hajipur my Bihar tour ended. It was all orderliness and noiselessness at Hajipur. Though I was lodged in the national school huts in front of which the huge public meeting took place, the

[1] *Vide* "That Eternal Question", 22-10-1925.

volunteers were disciplined and the crowds were previously informed through notice and otherwise that I was ill able to bear the strain of noise, rush and the touching of feet. In spite, therefore, of there being hundreds of men crowding round the school premises, I had perfect quiet. Of all the national schools in Bihar, this is perhaps the best managed and the best manned, Janakdhari Babu, a non-co-operating *vakil* with a character of great beauty, being the principal. There was a purse, too, of nearly Rs. 5,000 at Hajipur. With this pleasant ending and the ceremony at Sonepur of opening a Sevashram, chiefly for the purpose of attending to the comfort and requirements of thousands of visitors who annually flock to Sonepur in connection with a unique fair that takes place there every full moon day of the first month of the Hindu year and which draws the finest horses, elephants and cattle to the Sonepur fair, the Bihar tour ended and I entered U.P., Ballia being the first place.

The travel to Ballia, although requiring only four hours, was most trying . The meeting there was a terrible ordeal and a contrast to all I had seen and experienced in Bihar. It was a slow train that carried me to Ballia from Chhapra. There were stations every few minutes. Vast crowds gathered at every station and made a most noisy demonstration which the volunteers were unable to control. I know that it was all blind and excessive affection. I was to have gone to Ballia in 1921. I was unable to do so then. The people, therefore, were almost incredulous, but when I actually did go there, they became delirious with joy. The volunteers could keep no control. As soon, however, as I could get them to listen to me, and understand my appeal for the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund, they paid freely. At Ballia itself, the crowd at the station was most unmanageable. Rev. Mr. Perill of the American Mission had kindly brought his car to the platform which I could reach with the greatest difficulty but which alone made it possible to pass unhurt through the pressing crowd. From the station, we went directly to the public meeting. There was a huge and lofty platform which, I saw at a glance, had been erected by an amateur and was wholly unsafe for the number of persons which the floor space could accommodate and for which it was intended. There were nearly seven addresses. All the members connected with these should naturally have been on the platform. The stairs leading to the platform were shaky, slippery and unsafe. The platform swung to and fro when anybody walked on it. It could hardly bear the weight of ten people and it was dangerous even for one person at a time to walk on

some parts of it. The chairman at once recognized that, if a tragedy was to be avoided, all but myself should remove themselves from the platform. So they gently hurried down, leaving Rajendra Babu in charge of me. Those who were to read the addresses came one at a time and in spite of these precautions, it was not at all certain that the whole structure might not come down at any moment. This was by no means my first experience of a dangerously weak platform. I recall at least two accidents. This was the weakest I had seen. The very appearance was enough for an ordinary, trained eye to detect the weakness, but those in charge had no experience and evidently the man who was entrusted with the erection had none. Let this Ballia instance be a warning to Congress workers all over that they should not attempt ambitious platforms or, when they do, they should leave the erection to trained men who know what they are doing.

The meeting too was almost uncontrollable by the volunteers. The noise continued whilst the addresses were being read, but, in spite of it all, they observed perfect silence when I appealed to them to give me a hearing. I deduced from this fact the conclusion that a little previous preparation as in Bihar would have produced the same results and I would have done much more substantial work at Ballia than I was able to do. What is wanted is quiet and sustained work. Ballia possesses some very good workers, and it is possible to make it a greater centre of activity. I know that the people of Ballia are patient and long-suffering. Theirs was no mean sacrifice in 1921-22.

KASHI VIDYAPITH

From Ballia we went to Banaras where we had to change for Lucknow on our way to Sitapur. There was a halt of five hours in Banaras. Babu Bhagwan Das took the opportunity of arranging a meeting of students of the Kashi Vidyapith. He took me also to see the good work in spinning and weaving done by the middle schools conducted by the Municipality. Their work, it will be remembered, was started by Prof. Ramdas Gour, and it has been since continued. Both *takli* and the spinning-wheel are at work in the school. The experiment may fairly be claimed to be a success. At the Vidyapith I was shown the workshop. Its growing feature is its carpentry department. The spinning-wheel cannot be claimed to have prospered in the Vidyapith. I had occasion in my speech[1] to say to the students

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Kashi Vidyapith, Banaras", 17-10-1925.

and the professors that, if they had no faith in the spinning-wheel, they should remove it from their curriculum entirely. It was no use giving it a place because it was the fashion to consider it part of national activity. Time had arrived when every national institution worth the name had to evolve its educational policy and to prosecute it even in spite of opposition and indifference.

AT LUCKNOW

From Banaras we went to Lucknow, where there was a halt of over there hours. There the Lucknow Municipality did me the honour of presenting me with an address which was written in choice high-flown Urdu. Special care was taken to make the language as difficult as possible for a simple man like me, not belonging to U.P., to understand. Most difficult Persian and Arabic words were used and it seemed as if every word of Sanskrit origin or word spoken by the crowd was deliberately excluded. Naturally, therefore, I was supplied with an English translation. I, therefore, told the Municipality that it was not possible for me to congratulate it on its high-flown Urdu. I believe in a national language for interprovincial commerce but that language could neither be Lucknavi Urdu nor Sanskritized Hindi. It must be Hindustani, a combination of words generally spoken by the Urdu-knowing and the Hindi-knowing public, a language easily understood by Hindus and Mussalmans alike. The Municipality of Lucknow is essentially a Swarajist municipality. It has a record of work in no way inferior to that of its predecessors. But I told my audience that it would be improper to be satisfied with merely coming to the standard of its predecessors. Congressmen wherever they capture an institution should be able to show a better record, and it was therefore a matter for thought that the Lucknow roads were so bad as they were. If want of funds was the cause, the excuse was inadmissible as Congressmen were expected to take up the spade and the shovel and repair the roads by their voluntary labour. I congratulated the Municipality on its experiments in dairying, but I warned them against being satisfied until they could supply cheap and pure milk to the population within their jurisdiction.

The address of the Municipality was discreetly silent about the Hindu-Muslim question. Speaking, however, amongst friends (most of the councillors, whether Hindus or Mussalmans, were friends whom I knew) I could not ignore the question and therefore spoke upon the growing tension between the two parties. I suggested that whatever

happened in other parts of India, Lucknow at least should be able to compose the differences and to achieve a unity unbreakable under any strain and irrespective of what happened in other parts of India.

I had time, too, to pay a flying visit to its Women's College. This is a college conducted by the American Mission, said to be the oldest institution of its kind in all Asia. I saw there girls drawn from almost every part of India. They flocked round me to get my autograph in their autograph books. I have scared away many autograph-mongers by mentioning the condition under which I generally give my autograph, and that is that the applicants should promise to wear khaddar and spin regularly. I mentioned the conditions to the girls. Nothing daunted, they readily made the promise which the lady superintendent has assured me she would see was religiously kept.

IN SITAPUR

From Lucknow we motored to Sitapur, reaching there about 10 p.m. Before reaching my quarters I had to attend a meeting of the Hindu Sabha to receive its address. In reply to the address, I said that I hardly deserved it because I had done nothing for the Sabha as such; on the contrary, I had even criticized, though in a perfectly friendly spirit, some of its activities; but I accepted the address as I yielded to no one in my devotion to Hinduism. I said further that all religious activity was of true service only in so far as it adhered to truth and non-violence in their fulness. From the Hindu Sabha meeting, I was taken to a public meeting where there was to be an address of the Municipality. The next day I visited, in company with the Ali Brothers the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan Conference. The Presidential address, admirable in many respects, had scrupulously avoided the use of words of Persian or Arabic origin. In my speech, therefore, I was obliged to reiterate the views I expressed in the reply to the Lucknow Municipality address. Highly artifcial and Sanskritized Hindi is as avoidable as highly Persianized Urdu. Both the speeches are unintelligible to the masses. I have accepted Hindustani as a common medium because it is understood by over 20 crores of the people of Inida. This is not the artificial Lucknavi Urdu or the Sammelani Hindi. And one would expect at least a Sammelan address to be such as would be understood by both Hindus and Mussalmans of the common type. The animal who, if he pronounces the name *Ishwar* dreads to pronounce the name *Khuda*, or the one who would prnounce the name *Khuda* at every turn, but would regard it as sinful to utter the name *Ishwar*, is not an attractive being. I reminded the audience, too, that Hindi propaganda in U.P. could only consist in

improving the literature and creating an atmosphere for the advent of a Hindi Rabindranath and that the Sammelan should devote its attention outside U.P. to popularizing Hindustani speech and by publishing standard works of other languages in Devnagari character. Maulana Mahomed Ali emphasized my first point by remarking that if Hindustani speech required an artificial stimulus in the home of its birth the atempt to make it the common medium had better be given up. In the afternoon, there was the conference presided over by Maulana Shaukat Ali. His address, which was a thesis on Hindu-Muslim unity, wound up with an exhortation on charkha and khaddar. I was called upon to follow him and, therefore, took up the theme the Maulana had just introduced. I showed the necessity of the charkha and khaddar and ended with my reasons for helping the Patna decision which, I contended, was not a forced growth, but an exact indication of Congress public opinion. Pandit Motilalji, who followed me, took up the Patna resolution and explained it in detail and, whilst reiterating his own belief in the charkha and khaddar, said that the Congress could not be thoroughly representative of the people unless it became predominantly political. After passing Panditiji's resolution confirming the Patna decision and approving the formation of the Spinners' Association, the delegates went to the Gujarati *pandal* to partake of light refreshments that were provided by the Gujarati merchants who were domiciled in Sitapur.

My tour in U.P., if it may be so called, was wound up with a long and hearty discussion with a Hindu Sabha deputation that had come from Lucknow specially to confer with me on the Hindu-Muslim tension in Lucknow. I told them that I had not gone back on my undertaking to arbitrate upon their disputes. I told them that I had offered to hear the evidence last year in Delhi, but I told them that now under the changed conditions, neither party might care to submit the matters in dispute to me. But that, if they did, I would gladly make time even to go to Lucknow and arbitrate. On the deputation telling me that the Hindus would like me to arbitrate, I advised them to approach the Mussalmans and let me know if the responsible men of both the parties were prepared to abide by my award.

Thus ended my tour in Bihar and U.P. At the time of writing these notes I find myself in Cutch where I have Mahadev Desai with me to take up the burden of writing down the notes of the interesting experiences of this weird, secluded land.

Young India, 29-10-1925

97. MUNICIPAL LIFE

The fashion, that seems now to have become permanent, of presenting prominent Congressmen with addresses by municipalities and local boards has resulted in my coming in touch with the working of municipalites almost all over India. I have come to the conclusion from my observation of so many municipalities that the greatest problem they have to tackle is sanitation. I am aware that it is a stupendous problem. Some of the national habits are bad beyond description, and yet so ingrained as to defy all human effort. Wherever I go this insanitation obtrudes itself upon my gaze in some shape or another. In the Punjab and Sind, in total disregard of the elementary laws of health we dirty our terraces and roofs breeding billions of disease-producing microbes and founding colonies of flies. Down south, we do not hesitate to dirty our streets, and early in the morning, it is impossible for anyone in whom the sense of decency is developed to walk through the streets which are lined with peopleperforming functions of nature which are meant to be performed in seclusion and in spots which human beings need not ordinarily tread. In Bengal, the same tale in a varying form has to be told; the same pool in which people have washed their dirt, their pots, and in which cattle have drunk, supplies drinking water. And here in Cutch men and women think nothing of repeating the performance I have seen in Madras. These are not ignorant people; they are not illiterate; many have travelled even beyond the borders of India. They ought to know better; but they do not. And nobody worries about giving them an education in the elements of sanitation. It is, or should be, one of the privileges of municipalities and local boards to make it their chief concern to eradicate insanitation within their limits. If we are to live in cities, if we are to live an organized life, if we are to grow in health and wisdom—we shall have to get rid of insanitation some day or other. The sooner we do so the better. Let us not postpone everything till swaraj is attained. Some things no doubt will only be done when that much-wished-for event has happened. But it will never happen if we do not do the many things which can be done today as easily as under swaraj, and which are signs of corporate and civilized national life. No institution can handle this problem better and more speedily than our muncipalities. They have, so far as I am aware, all the powers they need in this direction and they can get more, if

necessary. Only the will is often wanting. It is not recognized that a municipality does not deserve to exist which does not possess model closets and where streets and lanes are not scrupulously clean all the hours of the day and the night. But the reform cannot be brought about without infinite application on the part of members of municipalities and local boards. To think of all the municipalities in the aggregate and to wait till everyone has begun the work is indifinitely to postpone the reform. Let those who have got the will and the ability commence the reform in right earnest now, and the rest will follow.

It is with this end in view that I reproduce[1] elsewhere a translation of a humorously written letter by Dr. Hariprasad Desai of Ahmedabad and published recently in *Navajivan*. The Municipality of Ahmedabad had taken up the problem seriously. Ahmedabad is an exceptionally difficult town to deal with from the sanitary standpoint. It is unclean. I have not seen a more unclean city. Its *pols* are seething with stench and dirt. The superstitions and prejudices to be overcome are immense. Insanitation has acquired an almost religious sanction. Even the doctrine of ahimsa is invoked in favour of dirty habits! I invite the reader to carefully peruse the translation. He will then appreciate the difficulties that face the reformer in Ahmedabad. Not many volunteers are to be had for this thankless and difficult work. The reader will note too that it is being done by the commissioners who are interested in making Ahmedabad a model city in point of sanitation. They are doing their work outside office hours and partly as a labour of love. No municipality need expect any brilliant result if it is to be satisfied with mere routine work, issuing instructions to its executive officer. Every municipal commissioner will have to become a self-constituted scavenger in the city under his care if the cities of India are to become fit to live in for the poorest people in a decent sanitary condition.

Young India, 29-10-1925

[1] Not reproduced here. For purport of the letter; *vide*"Sanitation in Ahmedabad", 5-11-1925.

98. TELEGRAM TO RANCHHODDAS PATWARI

KUTCH MANDVI
October 30, 1925

TO
DIWAN SAHEB MORVI

SURPRISED OFFICIAL REPLY PURELY PERSONAL LETTER[1] NO DESIRE PASS THROUGH MORVI IF I MAY NOT HOLD MEETING OF SMALL WORKING COMMITTEE WHICH HAS FROM ITS INCEPTION SCRUPULOUSLY AVOIDED REFERENCE PURE POLITICS OR . . .[2] KATHIAWAR STATES.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the original: G.N. 4121

99. SPEECH AT MANDVI[3]

October 31,1925

Who acts courageously and for what purpose? One could be courageous in order to be licentious, one could be courageous for the sake of a woman and, even for the sake of wealth. However, all this is like being courageous in order to jump into a well. Courage should be shown for the purpose of swimming across to the other shore. The supreme effort should be made for the sake of self-realization. We should take up a profession in which we offend no one and in which not a single pie has to be borrowed from anyone. Gentlemen with whom I was very familiar and who were like the multi-millionaires with whom I conversed the other day have been reduced to the sort of penury described in the couplet.[4]"I saw the relations of Shah Alam[5] begging in the streets." Hence, why should there be all this rush, pretence and fuss about something that is of a fleeting nature? Courage should be shown in having a vision of the glory of God and in singing His praises. True courage consists in losing one's mind in looking around at God's creations. These countless stars which shine in the sky, whose is the lustre they shed? One may spend many lives in

[1] *Vide*"Letter to Ranchhoddas Patwari", 22-10-1925.
[2] One word is illegible.
[3] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour
[4] By Behramji Malbari, a Parsi poet of Gujarat
[5] One of the last Mogul emperors

trying to solve this riddle. Shrimad Rajchandra[1] lay in insufferable agony before his death; however, he was not aware of it, he only eagerly awaited the vision of God. Today, I have to say harsh things gently; hence I feel I am lucky in being able to recall to memory of a man like Shrimad Rajchandra and to praise his non-violence. Let us today derive from the memory of this man the strength to speak out without fear the plain, milk-white truth as seen by the soul. Let us stand in awe of the self alone; let us be concerned that the Self, which is ever watchful, does not suffer pain. Let us learn endless penance from Rajchandra's life and realize that at the end of such penance, he came to worship *Chaitanya*[2]. Let us make our lives meaningful by realizing our insignificance and thus become meek as a lamb and strong as a lion by contemplating the *Chaitanya* that is within us.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-11-1925

100 . SCHEME FOR COW-PROTECTION

The work of cow-protection has been going on at a snail's pace. I can assure the *gosevaks*[3] that the movement does not come to a standstill even for a single moment. I keep all the time thinking of it and also discuss it. And, as there are many people in Kutch who wish to serve this cause and also because it does not seem likely that I shall be able to come to Kutch again, I have explained my scheme and collected some funds. As I write this, Rs. 3,000 has been collected and I hope to collect some more too.

Some friends have asked for the facts and figures of the cow-protection scheme. Here they are:

1. We are responsible for the sin involved in the export of the hides of dead cattle, while we use the hides of animals that are slaughtered. In order to prevent this, we should start tanneries and look upon it as our dharma to do so. I have no doubt whatsoever that this should become a part of our movement for cow-protection. This

[1] Business man and jeweller; had profound influence on Gandhiji's religious development.

[2] Universal Consciousness

[3] Workers who serve the cow

work can begin with the establishment of a tannery. Rs. 1,25,000 may be required today for this work. No loss can be incurred in this in the long run. As there is no question of making a profit, there is no fear of competition .

2. People should be trained for this work as it calls for considerable study. Scholarships should be offered to deserving trainees. I would put Rs. 5,000 as the expense under this head.

3. The Association[1] needs a library. This must contain books on cattle-breeding, on plants for purifying milk and on leather. A sum of about Rs. 3,000 may be required for this.

4. I consider a sum of Rs. 10,000 as necessary for a preliminary investigation of the dairy scheme, that is, for engaging a dairy scientist, to make out a report, getting a survey made of particular city in the light of this idea and for covering such other preliminary expenses.

According to this plan it is intended to spend Rs. 1,43,000 a year in this way. Under it the expenses on the tannery are by way of capital investment. That would amount to Rs. 1,30,000. The other preliminary expenses cover training and investigation.

The recurring expenses of the Association are not included here, as I would regard the Association as a failure if the expenses are not met by ordinary subscriptions. A secretary has already been appointed. I have chosen Shri Valji Govindji Desai for this post. He was a professor, first in the Gujarat College and later on in the Hindu University. It has been decided that he should be paid a salary of Rs. 200. Besides this, he has to be provided housing. At present he pays no rent as he lives in the Ashram, but he may hereafter have to be paid a sum of Rs. 25 towards rent. No other expenses have been incurred for the office so far. Other persons will also have to be engaged. However, we shall have an idea of what to do in this respect as the membership increases. It is my confirmed belief that a sum of Rs. 1,48,000 should be spent under any circumstances, as I regard cow-protection as an impossible task unless we run a tannery and a dairy as part of our dharma.

[1] The All-India Cow-Protection Association established in April 1925.

I hope that those who wish to serve this noble cause will contribute towards it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-11-1925

101. SOME COMPLAINTS AND SUGGESTIONS

I have before me a very long letter containing complaints and suggestions. I feel it is necessary to publish it as it is from a volunteer. Omitting nothing important, I give below a summary of it.[1]

I do not believe that spinning-wheels cannot function in Gujarat. The farmers of Gujarat do have some spare time, although they may not have as much as farmers elsewhere. It is our duty to cure them of their idleness and make them work at some virtuous industry; but we have not yet firmly established ourselves in the villages. And yet I know that the present trend, at any rate, is in this direction. No doubt, this programme will take some time. The spinning-wheel will not disappear so long as even one individual like myself is steadfast in his belief and keeps on working according to his own capacity. Whatever be the number of the activities circling round the spinning-wheel, the wheel is the cornerstone, the hub, the center.

I am prepared to believe that some unnecessary expenses were incurred in Gujarat; this, however, could not be avoided. All of us were beginners, novices in this new field. We did not have the benefit of anyone's previous experience in this matter. The other provinces had the experience of Gujarat before them; is it not sufficient that the organizers were honest and prepared to make sacrifices? If all the Gujaratis with whom we had to deal had been capable and honest, we would not have suffered the loss of a single pie or would have suffered only that loss which we incurred with open eyes.

Had the allegations against the ashrams been specific and detailed, we would have investigated them. Why is it that the correspondent makes no mention of the Satyagraha Ashram? More than a lakh of rupees have been spent in it alone. Its accounts have been maintained down to the minutest detail, I do not know of any unnecessary expenses being incurred by the ashrams with which either the provincial committee or I am associated. I knew of some expenses having been incurred without full deliberation; however, so long as we

[1] Not translated here

are unable to get fully competent workers, we shall find that such expenses continue to be incurred. If I was to lay the foundation of the Satyagraha Ashram today, I would organize it differently in the light of my experience to date. However, I have no regret whatsoever, as regards what has already been done. What can a man give, over and above his all? The same rule should be applied while judging all institutions. Have the organizers guarded these, regarding them as their own? Have they, at the same time, regarded them as belonging to someone else and maintained accounts down to the very last pie, knowing that others are there to examine these? And, do the organizers have the ordinary capacity to carry out their duties? And institutions with regard to which these questions can be satisfactorily answered are above criticism.

The correspondent has alleged that I have not taken Dr. Sumant's suggestion seriously. He does not know that I have esteemed Dr. Sumant ever since I came to know him in 1915. His spirit of sacrifice has always drawn me towards him. And by nature I am inclined to regard even a child's suggestion seriously; how could I then laugh at Dr. Sumant's suggestion? And why should one whose whole being is moved only by the desire to serve dismiss lightly any suggestion whatsoever?

May I expose here the subtle praise implied in this allegation against me? The correspondent suggests that I perceive everything instantaneously. I must admit that I have no such power. On the contrary, I know that I understand certain things only after a great deal of effort. It may be that I have failed to understand Dr. Sumant's suggestion. I know this that I have never in my life shut my mind to a single suggestion.

Then again, the correspondent advises me to establish a society of servants like the one founded by Gokhale. What I have already said covers this too. the Satyagraha Ashram is a society of servants. Such as it is, it is a measure of my capacity. In it I have made and am still making full use of my intelligence. I have been well aware of its defects. I realize and admit that its shortcomings are a reflection of my shortcomings. If, on weighing the merits of this Ashram against its drawbacks, it is found wanting, the world has a right and duty to say that I have lived my life in vain as I have attempted to put my whole soul into it. No one stands in my way there; the men and women there live their lives in accordance with my wishes. They live there because I

have called or chosen them. I confess in all humility that it is not within my power to build anything better.

Now where and how should I set up another society of servants? And anything I set up would be an image or a branch of this Ashram.

Vallabhbhai and I had thought of founding another institution, call it big or small. Funds would be available, if we established it. However, we could come to no decision and have allowed things to go on.

I am also firmly convinced that the Satyagraha Ashram is not all-comprehensive. It does not claim to do everything or to satisfy everyone. There is room for many institutions to suit temperaments which differ from mine; but then I cannot be their founder. This task has to be done by others. Even in these I would serve if I could, but I cannot assume responsibility for them. To do so would be false attachment. There are limits to my capacity and I would simply die if I crossed these.

In my opinion, the triple programme[1] suggested by the correspondent is already being implemented. It has not yet yielded much result because enough workers have not been trained so far. All will be well if all workers—men and women—steadfastly engage themselves, each in the task assigned to him or her.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-11-1925

102. SPEECH AT MUNDRA[2]

November 1, 1925

The problem of Kutch has, it is true, shaken the whole of India; however, at no place have I had the occasion to use this form of address as at no other place has the problem assumed such proportions as it has here. The storm broke at Bhuj. As soon as the report reached the people of Mundra, they sent a telegram to the secretary of the reception committee enquiring whether the latter was indulging in any undesirable mixing of persons? Such allegations can

[1] Mass contact with villagers, training for social service and propagation of khadi

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of the Kutch tour; Gandhiji commenced the speech by addressing the audience as"*Antyaja* brothers and sisters, their sympathizers, and other Hindu brothers and sisters".

only be made at places where the people are steeped in superstition and make a mountain out of a mole hill. When the dispute first arose in Bhuj, I had congratulated the people on having solved it in a simple way. However, after this episode my heart has not readily agreed to congratulate people at other places. What took place at Bhuj was not deliberately done. However, no congratulations can be offered on a situation which, once created unconsciously, is made a permanent feature in course of time; for this only sorrow can be expressed. I have to speak exactly as I feel, before the ruler and the people. This is because I am responsible to Him who keeps a strict account of every moment of mine. Hence, I have to tell you too what your conduct was and is like. The telegram that you had sent broke the bounds of propriety. I dictated the reply that no one committed the fault of any undesirable mingling of people and only those who regarded untouchability as a sin would be seated along with the *Antyajas*. However, it is wrong to invite me to a place where the entire public believes in untouchability. It is an insult to invite me to a place where the untouchables are treated with nothing but contempt. After having come here, I heard of the school for the untouchables. I felt that at such a place the *Antyajas* would receive service. I would congratulate Ibrahim Pradhan Saheb on the school but the Hindu public deserves no such congratulations. Its existence puts the Hindus to shame. It is a matter of shame for me if a Muslim builds a Siva temple for my benefit. I was pleased to see the school's activity of spinning and weaving; however, I immediately felt that neither I nor the Hindus could take credit for this meritorious deed. I can have no sense of satisfaction if a Muslim recites the *Gayatri mantra* instead of me. I can only feel satisfied when a Brahmin comes along and offers to recite the *Gayatri* for me. However, in this case, the Khojas are doing the work that should be done by Hindus. Here, no one is bothered in the least about the *Antyajas*. I do not see any non-*Antyajas* except the guests sitting among the *Antyajas* here before me. Even those who go around with me during the day have abandoned them and are seated in the enclosure for high-caste gentlemen. If you could rip open my heart today, you would find it crying—O Lord! Could this be the Hindu dharma, where no one cares for the *Antyajas*? Is there not a single person in the town who will come to their rescue?

VARIOUS DIFFERENCES OF OPINION

Everywhere there are differences of opinion. But there should

be some limit to these. I should not be invited to a place where these differences are so wide that there is no common meeting ground at all. The Ali Brothers and I, who are such close associates, do not enter into discussions about religion. How can I explain my dharma of non-violence to them? Only through my conduct can I show them what my religion consists in. I would be transgressing the limits if I went beyond this; and then they too might do likewise. At heart they may feel that I should become a Muslim, but they have never actually asked me to become a Muslim and to read the *Kalama*. How could I entrust my daughter to them if they said so? I cannot insult anyone's religion by asking him to give it up. Maulana Shaukat Ali is a hefty person. It is difficult for him even to bend down to say his *namaz*. Nevertheless, while travelling, he somehow manages to sit on the wooden seat and say his *namaz* and thereby shows me what his dharma is. I too would show my dharma through conduct alone. Let us learn to do so and let our relationship remain cordial. However, you cannot show your dharma by inviting me in this manner. Your dharma is distinct from mine. Even though we do not agree, let us bear love towards one another. What separates us is not a gulf but an ocean. Hence it is better that you should come over to Sabarmati to hear my views rather than call me here to receive such a welcome. I should be invited only by those persons who love to serve the *Antyajas* and who wish to know more about them. But those, who cannot sit beside the untouchables even for a moment, why should they invite me? When I think of the dharma that you practise today I feel in my heart of hearts that it had better perish. Just as during the Boer War one Englishman prayed for his country's defeat, just as Bhishma, while helping the Kauravas, gave his blessings to the Pandavas, just as Lord Krishna's blessings went to the latter alone, similarly my prayer to God is that if this is Hinduism, may it perish. I told my wife that if my dharma were distinct from hers, it was only proper that we should live in separate huts; but she should not insist on my sending away Lakshmi and I, on my part, should not insist on her having Lakshmi with her. If all of you felt polluted at the touch of *Antyajas*, it was your dharma to read my writings, to get acquainted with my views and thus have a look at me from a distance. I am a slave of India and can stand all alone in following my dharma and practising it. Though the whole world should side with me, I could not bear to live if I had to give it up. Hence, it was your dharma to tell me, without any reservations:"You need not come here; let them regard

you as a Mahatma in America." What good is it your describing me as one whose praises are sung by the whole world? It is the satyagraha in me that alone deserves praise. This term does not mean revolt against the British, but it means an increasing awareness of dharma, an awareness which first came to me in 1887 and which continues to this very day. In that year my caste had threatened to ex-communicate me in case I went to England. I replied that it was welcome to do so, but I would certainly go to England. My satyagraha was born on that day. The satyagraha with the Government is only a part of my satyagraha; my first satyagraha was directed against the *mahajan* which I regarded as my father. It could be that you called me here so that I can explain this satyagraha. You can have me in your midst only if satyagraha and my love of the *Antyajas* and of khadi that go with it, things which make up my being, are dear to you.

If they [the *Antyajas*] steal needles, we steal anvils and give nothing in return. From where have you earned your lakhs? Kutchis in Kharagpur, Calcutta, Zanzibar, South Africa and other places have given me large sums of money, but they made no conditions! Yet, having come to Kutch today, I have to hear such harsh words and that too from millionaires! If an *Antyaja* gives me the money earned by him he can ask me to use it in Kutch alone. Poor people, however, have uttered not a word of any such condition. You mention the Rs. 500 that you had sent to poor Gokuldas and then add the other five hundred to it. Why do you not say, instead, that you would give me nothing? I do not like a Bania-like attitude. Having been born in that caste, I knew its ways and gave them up. Having been brought up in Kathiawar I was familiar with intrigues and gave up these too. Today, I fearlessly ask everyone, whether he be a millionaire or an emperor or a poor man, not to play the Bania with me, not to try to outwit me, not to be clever, but to be straightforward in their dealings with me.

For my part, I wish to learn the tanner's trade in order to afford protection to cows[1]. If a teacher wishes you to give up your trade in order to study, ask him to teach me that trade first and then talk of studying. We are now entering an era in which not the *Antyajas* only but every Hindu will have to learn the tanner's trade for the sake of cow-protection. There is nothing demeaning or shameful about a profession. Have I not cleaned lavatories? I have done so for many

[1] Gandhiji said this with reference to the statement made by one of the pupils of the *Antyaja* school,"I shall not handle leather any more; I wish to study now."

persons like you and it is because I have done so that I allow a Nagar Brahmin like Daulatram to clean mine. Otherwise, who am I as compared to him, a Brahmin? I should be doing for him what I allow him to do for me and I am not ashamed, as I have not been ashamed, to do the same dirty work for many like you, and would not be ashamed to do so even today. There is no disgrace in doing so; on the contrary, it amounts to great service. A mother becomes worthy of being remembered every morning only because she cleans our filth. Why should we not regard a *Bhangi* in the same way?

Having come here today I have an idea of the parsimony and callousness of the people of Kutch. Although you recite the verses of the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Gayatri mantra* and the *Navakar mantra*[1] —there is no place in your hearts for the *Antyajas.* The dharma that you practise is neither Hindu dharma nor Jain dharma. He who is prepared to protect the bed-bug, should he not protect the *Antyajas* who are as meek as cows? You must learn something at least. What you ought to learn from me is not strength to fight but love. The former is only a small part of my life and, even that is born of my love for truth, my compassion, my love. Without this last, my whole struggle and my persistence in it would be futile. Only he who puts this love into practice in his own life can get the blessings of the *Antyajas* and the cows. Open your eyes and the curtains that cover your hearts! Take some warning at any rate! May God bless you!

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-11-1925

103. REMINISENCES OF KUTCH [*-1*]

November 2, 1925

MOUNTAIN OF HOPE

Before boarding the steamer for Kutch, I had uttered unawares the words that I did not know why I was going there. Now that only a day remains of this seemingly long tour[2], I again wonder why I came here. Whenever I went to any place, I know what I had to do there and what to expect of it. Regarding Kutch, I had no idea at all. I set out, yielding simply to the persistent request of some Kutch gentlemen

[1] A Jain prayer

[2] Gandhiji's Kutch tour began on October 22 and ended on November 3.

and their love for me. I have deliberately said"some", as I found after coming here that there were people who went so far as to say that they had not been consulted before I was invited to Kutch and that they were finally forced to agree. I had built a mountain of hope without any foundations; hence it seems to me that I find here nothing but despair everywhere. However, there is no despair for a sailor who has the *Gita* for his beacon, without which he would always be despondent. Because I had raised such a castle of hopes this time, the singer of the *Gita* tells me with a smile on his lips and tears in his eyes:"Why did you make this mistake? Pay for it now. Because you had hopes, you now taste the bitterness of disappointment. You have known that if you start out with despair, the end is always sweet. Never again make this mistake. Despair too is a figment of the mind; one who is vigilant need not suffer it as expectation finds no harbour in his mind."

This was the philosophical way of looking at the matter. It is good for the soul. Now, let us look at the historical aspect.

ROADS IN KUTCH

The trip was undertaken in the following order: Mandvi, Bhuj, Kotda, Kothara, Veenjhan, Naranpur, Dumrao, Goghra, Khakhar, Bhujpar, Mundra, Kero, Kokva, Anjar and Tuni. I am writing this at Mundra. I shall complete it in Bhuj and, it will be posted before I reach Anjar.

The twenty-four hours of the calm voyage[1] passed off like a moment. At the Mandvi port at first there was the launch, then the *machhva*[2], then the *tari*[3], after that the chariot, then the horse-drawn carriage—such was the chaotic arrangement. The chariot had to wade through water. I call it chaotic as the arrangement was governed by no rules. The crowd caused confusion and it was with difficulty that we could change from one mode of transportation to another. I saw a dilapidated dock here, but it is not in use. We shall consider later why the traveller has to put up with so many inconveniences.

We reached Mandvi on 22nd October. Today is November 2. During this length of time, I could visit many more places and travel

[1] Gandhiji left Bombay for Kutch by a steamer on October 21, 1925, and reached Mandvi port in Kutch at 11 a.m. the next day.

[2] A small boat propelled by oars

[3] A raft

much greater distances, in other parts of India. None of the above mentioned towns is more than 60 miles from Bhuj. There are only a few motorable roads in Kutch—three or four. Railway lines are even fewer. A line goes from Bhuj to the port of Tuni or that of Khari. Hence, one can go only by car from Mandvi to Bhuj, from Bhuj to Kotda and from Mundra to Bhuj. The rest of the journey was covered by bullock-carts and that at great risk. At every place there were unlimited quantities of sand and dust. I have used the word bullock-cart for *chadiko*. The latter means a small *ekka* drawn by a bullock, in which only one person can sit comfortably and no one can sleep. Even the journey by car on the first day almost killed me. I developed a little temperature too. The reception committee, therefore, made arrangements to enable me to lie down in the car or the bullock-cart. They obtained a large *chadiko* or chariot for me. As it had four wheels, a mattress could be spread in it and it also gave one fewer jolts. Despite this, because the road from Kotda to Kothara was terribly bad, I was taken part of the way in a palanquin. The idea of being carried in a palanquin has never appealed to me but here the alternatives before me were either to leave Kothara or to run the risk of falling ill or to ride in a palanquin; and of these alternatives even the reception committee would not permit the risk of my falling ill. I, therefore, chose the alternative of riding in a palanquin. I may here confess that I had been offered a great temptation by Kothara. There were many good workers there, I had been told, that I could collect large sums of money, that I would get there an idea of the famine conditions in Kutch, etc., etc. Hence I fell for the palanquin. The palanquin-bearers seemed to be favoured by the State. They kept bullying the poor volunteers all the way and, if these latter put in a word, they got enraged and talked back sharply. Throughout the journey, they kept grumbling and complaining. I found it very painful to be carried by such persons. I wanted to walk, but how could I do so? That would create a false impression; hence just as a corpse being carried makes no comments, I too lay quiet without opening my mouth. I shall think many times before riding in a palanquin again.

Among the many wrong notions current about me is one that I totally disapprove of railways, motor-cars, etc. One gentleman asked me in all seriousness whether I preferred tarred roads or cutcha ones like those in Kutch? I shall take this opportunity to remove this false notion. I believe that railways or motor-cars are not essential for human civilization. This is an ideal. However, the railways have come

to stay in India today. Hence, I would not foolishly try to prevent one particular city from being served by railways when these and motor-cars are there all over the country. if there are ships going up to Mandvi, far from opposing I would welcome a railway line running from Mandvi to Bhuj. The same is true of motor-cars. I am for all roads being tarred. Both these means of transport help speed. There is no question of dharma here. In fact, tarred roads enable us to practise our dharma. How much suffering do uneven roads cause to animals? I also look forward to improvements in bullock-carts as well as the roads meant for these. Good roads are the mark of a well-organized government. It is the duty of both the ruler and the subjects to build good roads. Good roads are recognized as absolutely necessary for motor-cars, so why not for animals too? Is it because they are dumb? If the ruler does not go in for good roads, why cannot the wealthy class do so? Building good roads should be easy in Kutch, as the distances are short. This is a difficult venture for the people to undertake; but it is not impossible. In the first instance, the people should place this request before the ruler.

THE PROBLEM OF UNTOUCHABILITY

Nowhere else have I experienced such difficulties raised by the problem of untouchability as in Kutch. One reason may be that I found a great deal of awakening among the *Antyajas* of Kutch. At every place, large crowds of them attended the public meetings. The volunteers also encouraged them to do so. The reception committee, on the other hand, adopted the policy of keeping everyone pleased. At every place, therefore, a section of the public was found opposing the idea of seating the *Antyajas* along with others at public meetings. I came across the difficulty first in Bhuj, but I satisfied myself that it was very well there. I found, however, that what was accomplished there was misinterpreted elsewhere. What seemed proper in Bhuj took such a form at other places that it appeared to be thoroughly discourteous and cruel. At every place, factions arose and in the end it looked as if the entire reception committee considered untouchability a dharma, with the result that my companions and I were regarded as untouchables. Wherever we went we had strange, tragic and ludicrous experiences. They were ludicrous because no one was deliberately impolite. At some places my speeches were misinterpreted, while at other places people were discourteous without meaning it.

I do not wish to describe at length my experiences at every

place. This has been done in the vivid narrative of Mahadev Desai. I only wish to give an idea of the over-all impression they left on my mind. And that too in order to show that whoever believes that untouchability is widely prevalent in Kutch is mistaken. If the leaders of the reception committee had shown no weakness and if what I had brought about in Bhuj had not been misunderstood elsewhere, the people of Kutch would not have exposed themselves to ridicule. In Kutch, there are separate localities for untouchables even in cities. This I saw in fact in Mundra and also in Anjar. In Mandvi, there is a children's home founded by a *Bhatia*[1] gentleman and beside it is the locality for the *Antyajas.* I found the *Antyajas* even there to be more fearless than their counterparts in Kathiawar. Perhaps they are also more intelligent. Many of them are weavers by trade. An *Antyaja* family in Bhujpar is doing business in cotton yarn. Nowhere else have I found as many untouchables attending public meetings as in Kutch. I used to ask them questions at the meetings. And the answers they gave were thoughtful and fearless. They told—with explanation—the tales of their sufferings as well. In Mandvi, twenty-five of the *Antyaja* families—that is a hundred persons—took a pledge that they would give up eating meat and drinking liquor and would wear khadi. In Anjar, at a large meeting, many *Antyajas* took the pledge not to eat carrion and not to drink liquor. It also seemed to me that in Kutch there is less of drinking among this section of the people. Moreover, it seems that among the ordinary people here there is a total absence of the belief that one is polluted by the touch of the *Antyajas*. Only the so-called higher castes—the Brahmins, Banias, *Bhatias, Luhanas* and so on—make a show of this belief. I say"show" because many who took their seats in the enclosure meant for those who believed in this did so out of fear. Many of them told me themselves that they did not believe in untouchability, but could not say so publicly for fear of being ex-communicated from their castes. No one was"polluted" because of the *Antyajas* joining in the processions and, wherever I visited the *Antyaja* localities, many of the high-caste Hindus accompanied me. If the reception committee had courageously declared that the meetings were open to all, I am sure that almost as many persons would have attended them as did in fact attend. Certain wealthy people might not have come. At many places I found many youths belonging to the higher castes serving the *Antyajas* without

[1] A Hindu community in Gujarat

fear. Hence, despite my painful experiences with regard to *Antyajas* in Kutch, I have come to the conclusion that untouchability has lost its hold there. Some bigoted people are still clinging to it, but I think they are wasting effort.

I had my bitterest experience in Mundra. I found only hypocrisy, insincerity and play-acting there. Even Muslims were made to sit in the enclosure for those who supported untouchability as if they too believed in it. Hence, only my companions and the Muslim volunteers remained in the section reserved for *Antyajas.* Many among the Hindu volunteers, though they claimed that they did not believe in untouchability at all, were nevertheless kept in the enclosure meant for those who did believe in it.

There is a school for the *Antyajas* in Mundra but it is a philanthropic Muslim gentleman, Sheth Ibrahim Pradhan, who runs it at his own expense.

The school may be regarded as good up to a point. The children are kept very clean. The building is in the centre of the city. The children had even been taught Sanskrit verses, [which they recited] in a broken accent. Spinning, carding, ginning and weaving were taught in the school itself. Only children's clothes were not made of khadi; however, the organizers had gone in for the cloth believing it to be pure khadi. The reader might perhaps conclude that this school would give me some satisfaction. It gave me no satisfaction but caused me grief, rather, as the credit for it would not go to a Hindu. I have already mentioned the name of the gentleman who finances it. The gentleman in charge of this school is the heir of the Aga Khan in Mundra. Sheth Ibrahim Pradhan deserves all praise for his charity, as I was informed that this school is not being run for the purpose of converting the untouchables or schoolchildren to Islam, but in order to enable them to make progress as Hindus. The people of Mundra also informed me that the gentleman in charge, Mauledina Meghji was a *vedantin* and a learned person. All this must be regarded as satisfactory. However, what is the contribution of the Hindus? Untouchability is an ugly blot on the Hindu religion, it is a sin. The Hindus alone can do *prayaschitta*[1] for it. The dirt on my body will go

[1] Atonement for sins

only when I myself remove it. This institution adds to the prestige of Sheth Ibrahim Pradhan and to that extent to the shame of the Hindus.

However, just as I was destined to come across such unfortunate incidents, I also came across happy ones. The readers of *Navajivan* are familiar with Shri Jivram Kalyanji's name. He has made the service of the *Antyajas* his dharma. His greatest virtue is not so much his philanthropy as his insistence on doing service himself. He gives his wealth and his time to the cause of khadi and the untouchables. In Mandvi, Shri Gokuldas Khimji too is fearlessly serving the *Antyajas*. He is running a school for them at his own expense, and because in several places I came across such workers, I see on the whole no reason for despair in Kutch in regard to this problem of untouchability. The show which brought disgrace to meetings I regard as a temporary phenomenon. Work of a permanent nature is already being done and I have no doubt that it will go on.

The *Antyajas*, however, have not a little suffering inflicted upon them by the State. There is a law regarding the *Antyajas* which has been described by some as a monopoly for [punishing] licentious conduct. On the basis of this law, the *Antyajas* are punished for such conduct. A monopoly is given with regard to this crime, that is, to the person who pays the largest sum the State gives in return the sole authority to catch such offenders, and to collect from them the fines imposed for such crimes. The one who has this monopoly sees to ittherefore that the maximum number of such crimes are committed. In other words, the former makes a living by encouraging such conduct or by making false allegations to this effect. This leads to harassment of the *Antyajas*.

Another hardship is inflicted on the weavers. So long as they have not repaid the debts they owe to the money-lender they cannot weave for others. Because of this, they have become the slaves of one or two individuals. They have to accept the payment that these latter give them and have to keep weaving for them. The creditor may charge any rate of interest that he likes, pay for the cloth any price that he chooses. The *Antyajas*, therefore, cannot escape from their clutches. Because of this difficulty, some persons have been even forced to give up their profession. There are thousands of *Antyaja*

weavers in Kutch and, but for this cruel practice, they would have had no difficulty in earning their living. The Ruler of Kutch will, I hope, relieve these miserable people from both these hardships of which I have spoken to him. (*To be continued*) [1]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-11-1925

104. SPEECH AT ANJAR

November 2, 1925

This is the last meeting in my Kutch tour. Two or three items in the programme are still left over; nevertheless, so far as meetings are concerned this is the last one. I now do not wish to repeat the things which I have said in many different ways at various meetings. You have come to know my views from many sources and by various channels, and there is no need to reiterate them.

[1] Mahadev Desai has provided in his"Notes" the background to this meeting of orthodox Hindus. It reveals the sort of difficulties Gandhiji was beginning to encounter in his anti-untouchability work. The extract reproduced here also throws light on his own approach to the problem:

He [Gandhiji] suggested to the orthodox President who was also our host to drop the meeting and the address, and to have instead a general meeting in the untouchables' quarter, and then, if necessary, a conference with the orthodox next day."But we have already made these arrangements. Is it not natural that we may not accept some of your views? We must do honour to you and you should not deprive us of the privilege of listening to your advice," he argued."But" said Gandhiji,"what is the meaning of honouring me when you do not accept the thing nearest my heart, when you insult those that I hold dearer to me than life itself? And there should be some propriety, some decorum observed. I have addressed meetings of Europeans who share none of my views. But they know their business better. They make no secret of the fact that I would not be spared at the meeting, and yet they know how to receive and honour their guest. At Calcutta they had a strictly vegetarian lunch entirely out of regard for me. But here? You seize a temporary arrangement suggested by me at Bhuj, and turn and twist it to your advantage, and do not hesitate to reduce it to an a bsurdity as at Mundra. How would it look if I tell my boy that he is at liberty to abuse me if he likes, and he makes it a point to abuse me to his heart's content every morning? That is what you have done. The President, I suggested at the first day's meeting at Mandvi, could have dropped the address into my hands from a distance, and the next day's Pesident lost no time in benefiting by the suggestion? Is that the way you want to honour me?"

"No," persisted the President,"but, sir, you must go on repeating your views so that they may catch root some day."

"I am not going to emulate the preachers who go on delivering their sermons

I would say only this that in Kutch, as in the rest of India, I have experienced everywhere a feeling of love, and nothing but love, towards myself. In Kutch, I have received more service than I need for myself. At every place, men and women have taken great pains to make me feel happy and have done all they could to fulfil my personal needs. However, you should realize that I did not come to Kutch in order to be personally served. I do not tour around India for this purpose. On the contrary, the more attentively I am served and the more comforts I am provided with, the greater is the actual burden that I have to bear and the debt that I come to owe. Hence the way to spare me is to fulfil only those needs of mine which I specify. I feel irritated if provided with a larger number of volunteers and carriages than I actually require. Kutch has left nothing undone so far as serving me is concerned; Kutch is second to none in this respect.

However, this has no meaning for me. I hunger and thirst after something quite different. God provides a tiny particle of food to the ant and heaps of it to the elephant and He will continue to do so.

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day in and day out before unwilling audiences. If you want to know and understand my views, you had better come to Sabarmati. At the little place Bhujpar whence we are coming, the organizers saw that no reception could be given me on my terms, and they accordingly dropped the reception and the address, and held the meeting in the untouchables' quarter. It was honest and courageous of them. I beseech you not to indulge in these unreal demonstrations. I want you not even to entertain me and my party. I shall be content to be the guest of the untouchables and find my soul's delight in their frugal but genuine hospitality," said Gandhiji arguing at length.

"But", urged the redoubtable President,"we have made all arrangements. The Reception Committee is very anxious to present the address. I appreciate what you say, but we did all this, not knowing you."

"How can you? I shall be known only after I am dead.,"

If the orthodox meeting could be had first, and the untouchables' thereafter, the President would probably have been satisfied. But what Gandhiji had suggested was humiliating! Gandhiji then asked him to call a meeting of the Reception Committee, place his proposal before them, and take their decision."But mind you," said he,"no middle course. Either accept my proposal *in toto* or go through the programme as you have arranged."

The Committee met for about two hours and decided upon an elaborate plan of enclosures and the platform, the President to speak from a distance, eight members of the Committee to sit amongst the untouchables, and the Seth of the town to hand over the address to Gandhiji—and not to drop it as at Mandvi, but of course to have a purificatory bath on going home! There was no room for argument now."So you do not want to conform to my wishes. You want me to conform to yours," Gandhiji asked."Yes sir. That is the desire of the Committee," said the President. Gandhiji cheerfully accepted the defeat, went to the meeting and received the address.

Hence, there is nothing special in satisfying one's hunger or fulfilling one's daily needs; this is something common to beast as well as man. Perhaps, we do not experience the same feeling of pleasure after eating dainty dishes that an ant has after obtaining a small particle of food.

Hence, after accepting your boundless love, I will only ask you not to crush me under its weight. I do not wish to speak today of the kind of love that would please me. If I do speak about it, you would be pained even though you would listen to my speech. I will not, however, do so.

All the scriptures of the world say that one remembers God when one encounters misery. Draupadi cried out to Krishna and got his help when her husbands were unable to help her. Sitaji derived consolation by merely repeating the name of Rama when she was alone in the Ashoka grove. My friends who were in prison with me also tried to forget their own troubles and derived consolation by repeating the name of God.

There was a well-educated, simple-hearted young man with me—Shankerlal Badker; the hardships of prison did not cause him any grief, his agony was that of the mind. His mind was seething with ideas and he was in constant mental turmoil. What did he do? After waking up at four in the morning and, disregarding the bitterly cold weather, his first task was to switch on the light and spin. However, I do not even wish to speak of the spinning-wheel today.

But, I do wish to speak of that which he did along with spinning. He chanted the name of Rama and he smiled as he did so. The change that came over him was such that his jailor would repeatedly approach him and run away in dismay, and then come and tell me:"He is always absorbed in himself. He is always spinning; what can I talk to him about?"

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-11-1925

105. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

BHUJ,
November 3, 1925

MATHURADAS
93 BAZAR GATE STREET
BOMBAY

TAKE PERINBEN[1] OR NARGISBEHN[2] WITH YOU MEET SLADE[3]. UNLESS THEY CAN HOUSE HER FOR DAY TAKE HER HOTEL. SEND SAME DAY AHMEDABAD.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushlia Nayyar

106. FAREWELL MESSAGE TO KUTCH PEOPLE[4]

[*November 3, 1925*][5]

It is difficult to sum up the results of the extraordinary experiences of my Cutch tour. So far as I am personally concerned, I had nothing but kindness and attention from the State and the people. The thing that taxed me most was the 'untouchable' question. Curious devices were resorted to by the orthodox to satisfy their consciences, but there is a great awakening among the untouchables themselves. They are alive to their rights. They understand their responsibilities. Many have undertaken to give up carrion and drink. The common people have no prejudice against them. It is only the so-called higher castes, a microscopic minority, who make a parade of their belief in untouchability which, in private, they would confess is unreasonable and contrary to real religion. But even amongst them, there are a few noble spirits who, in defiance of the caste tyranny, are

[1] Perin Captain and Nargis Captain, grand-daughters of Dadabhai Naoroji

[2] *ibid*

[3] Mirabehn arrived in Ahmedabad on November 7, 1925. The silence-day, i.e., Monday, following this date was November 9.

[4] This was also published in *Gujarati*, 8-11-1925.

[5] The message was delivered at Tuna port when Gandhiji left Kutch for Jamnagar on his way to Ahmedabad.

serving the untouchables with their money, as well as personal labour. These poor people are disqualified from entering into contracts with any person they like so long as they have not discharged their obligations to the creditors with whom they have first dealt. This makes them eternal slaves of their original creditors who dictate what terms they choose.

I have brought these things to the notice of His Highness who, I feel sure, will remove these very serious hardships. Khadi has the greatest possibilities and awaits development at the hands of khadi lovers. Insanitary habits of the townsmen breed plague and cholera, which should be impossible in a dry climate, like that of Cutch, and among people who are well-fed and strong in body. There is also immediate need for a society to protect trees. By proper attention to tree culture, Cutch, which is in danger of being denuded of its population for want of water, can increase its rainfall.

These are the things on which patriotic Cutchis can well concentrate their attention. Of Cutch politics, for the present, I prefer to say nothing. Everything I was told I have brought to the notice of His Highness, who gave me a patient and long hearing.

The Hindu, 6-11-1925

107. NOTES

LEST WE FORGET

Sjt. J. M. Sengupta[1] writes to me to say that Bengal has decided to hold on Sunday, the 8th November, an all-parties' all-Bengal demonstration against internments and imprisonments without trial, and suggests that such meetings should be held all over India. For my part, I heartily endorse the suggestion. I have passed it on to Pandit Motilal Nehru and, subject to his consent and approval, notices will have been issued before this is in print. I am writing this in Cutch, a part of India which is isolated from all chief centres of activity. It is, therefore, difficult for me to follow or overtake events that are

[1] Leader of the Swaraj Party in the Bengal Legislative Council, Mayor of Calcutta and President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee

happening outside from day to day. I can, therefore, merely express my opinion on the suggestion. It is this. We may make no impression upon a Government that is irresponsive to public opinion. But a demonstration like the one suggested by Sjt. Sengupta will be a reminder to us that there are countrymen whom we believe to be innocent, but who are either interned or imprisoned without any trial whatever. Every day that passes without bringing these men to an open trial or, in default, without discharging them, makes heavier the indictment against the Government. I hope, therefore, that meetings will be held all over India composed of men belonging to all parties to demonstrate the national feeling in the matter.

A SCHEME OF COW-PROTECTION

In private talks with friends I have often asked them to interest themselves in and help the movement on its constructive side. In response to their desire, I publish the scheme I have discussed with some:

1. In order to test the efficacy of tanneries as part of a programme of cow-protection, it is necessary to own one and to utilize it not for profit, but purely for cow-protection. For this purpose a sum of Rs. 1,25,000 is required to be invested in one of the existing tanneries. The information in my possession shows that the majority of existing tanneries buy and cure the hide of slaughtered cattle, and that India exports the bulk of the hide of dead cattle. These conditions of things can only be remedied by lovers of the cow controlling tanneries and preventing by their philanthropy leather becoming an article of trade competition.

2. Preliminary research must be carried out for exploring the possibilities not of remunerative dairy farming, but of conducting dairies on a vast scale, if without profit, also without loss in the long run. For this preliminary work, a sum of ten thousand rupees at least must be spent inside of twelve months in engaging services of dairy experts and finding out suitable places for accommodating tens of thousands of cattle. Without acquiring such control the terrible toll we pay in the slaughter of cattle which are simply through ill use or ignorance rendered profitless and, therefore, sold for slaughter by the *goalas* in the several cities of India must continue. Nothing can save

the cattle from the butcher's knife if they become uneconomic.

3. Scholarships must be found for preparing students for tannery and dairy work. For this a sum of Rs. 5,000 for one year is necessary.

4. A sum of Rs. 3,000 is required for books on cattle-breeding, dairy farming, tannery, etc.

Thus, a sum of Rs. 1,28,000 is required for capital expenditure and Rs. 15,000 for research, exploration and preparation. I omit the current expenditure, which must be found from the normal income from membership of the All-India Cow-Protection Association. It must be dissolved if it cannot pay its way. In terms of the authority given to me, I have already engaged the services of a paid secretary. Sjt. V. G. Desai has been selected for the work to be done. Among those whose names were before me, he appeared to me to be the fittest. He is an English and Sanskrit scholar. He is a lover of animals and has been always a believer in cow-protection. He had choice of work before him and had made cow-protection, I hope, his final and life-long choice. I have known him intimately ever since my return to India in 1915. He is to receive a salary of Rs. 200 per month. At the present moment, he is lodged at the Satyagraha Ashram without having to pay any rent. But it may become necessary to pay twenty-five rupees in addition, in lieu of rent. If donations in respect of the scheme are received, it will be necessary to increase the paid staff. At the present moment not even an office boy has been engaged. Expansion of the work depends upon public response. During the Cutch tour, I have been expounding the scheme to the Cutch friends and they have given me already over Rs. 3,000, which includes the sum of Rs. 500 from a Khoja friend. There must be, however, a better response both in donations and membership.

Young India, 5-11-1925

108. SANITATION IN AHMEDABAD

The following is the letter referred to in the above article by Dr. Hariprasad Desai, one of the members of the Sanitary Committee, Ahmedabad Municipal Board:[1]

This letter was begun on the 2nd October and finished on the 4th, the postscript was appended thereafter, probably on the same date. This is not a letter. It is a little pamphlet. But it is brimming over with so much humour and urbane persiflage, and so much art that I am sure the reader will read it with the same interest as I have done. Dr. Hariprasad has succeeded in giving not only an intensely interesting, but a perfectly vivid picture of our filth and squalor. I wish him complete success in his endeavour.

But this is only paying compliments. My innermost desire would be to join him with a spade, a broom, a *chunam* bucket and a brush. But I know that I can have little to do in a city where Vallabhbhai is the Master Sweeper. I am, therefore, watching what is going on in Ahmedabad as an interested spectator, and wishing that the Ahmedabad Municipality may win the first place in India in point of cleanliness, cohesion, primary education and in the supply of clean and cheap milk. I am sure that, if it succeeds in achieving this, Ahmedabad will have given a considerable share in the movement for swaraj.

But this is a Himalayan task. It is not the work of one or two men. Everyone must put his or her shoulder to the wheel—men and women, boys and girls, Swarajists and No-changers, titled men and commoners, rich and poor. Only then could Ahmedabad be made an ideal city. If everyone of us holds himself severally responsible for removing the dirt and filth in any part of the city and if we strive to keep all parts as clean as we keep our seats, only then would it be an

[1] The letter of Dr. Desai, a physician and Congress worker, which is not reproduced here, appeared in *Navajivan*, 28-10-1925. The translation was published in two instalments in *Young India* of 29-10-1925 and 5-11-1925. It provided a first-hand and picturesque description in detail of the appalling insanitary conditions in the Ahmedabad city and its several *pols* or parish like divisions. It also examined the relative responsibilty of different religious communities for the unhygienic state, gave an idea of the work of sanitary reform in progress and sought Gandhiji's support.

ideal city.

The wealthy must help with money, sanitarians with their knowledge, you and everyone with voluntary service. Today the work is being done in the teeth of ignorance, indifference and opposition. Why should volunteers be not forthcoming to keep the city clean? Why should not the boys of schools and colleges have a training in sanitation and offer themselves as volunteers?

Dr. Hariprasad's letter suggests many another thought. But I shall not cap a pamphlet with another. Let us all understand and appreciate Dr. Hariprasad's sweet irony and help in this work of humanitarian service. If his letter bears that much fruit, it will not have been written by him and published by me in vain.

Young India, 29-10-1925 and 5-11-1925

109. THE POET AND THE CHARKHA

When Sir Rabindranath's criticism of charkha was published some time ago,[1] several friends asked me to reply to it. Being heavily engaged, I was unable then to study it in full. But I had read enough of it to know its trend. I was in no hurry to reply. Those who had read it were too much agitated or influenced to be able to appreciate what I might have then written even if I had the time. Now, therefore, is really the time for me to write on it and to ensure a dispassionate view being taken of the Poet's criticism or my reply, if such it may be called.

The criticism is a sharp rebuke to Acharya Ray[2] for his impatience of the Poet's and Acharya Seal's position regarding the charkha, and gentle rebuke to me for my exclusive and excessive love of it. Let the public understand that the Poet does not deny its great economic value. Let them know that he signed the appeal for the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial after he had written his criticism. He signed the appeal after studying its contents carefully and, even as he signed it, he sent me the message that he had written something on the charkha which might not quite please me. I knew, therefore, what was coming. But it has not displeased me. Why should mere disagreement with my views displease? If every disagreement were to displease, since no two men agree exactly on all points, life would be a bundle of

[1] *Vide* Appendix"The Cult of the Charkha", September, 1925.

[2] Prafulla Chandra Ray

unpleasant sensations and, therefore, a perfect nuisance. On the contrary the frank criticism pleases me. For our friendship becomes all the richer for our disagreements. Friends to be friends are not called upon to agree even on most points, Only disagreements must have no sharpness, much less bitterness, about them. And I gratefully admit that there is none about the Poet's criticism.

I am obliged to make these prefatory remarks as dame rumour has whispered that jealousy is the root of all that criticism. Such baseless suspicion betrays an atmosphere of weakness and intolerance. A little reflection must remove all ground for such a cruel charge. Of what should the Poet be jealous in me? Jealousy presupposes the possibility of rivalry. Well, I have never succeeded in writing a single rhyme in my life. There is nothing of the Poet about me. I cannot aspire after his greatness. He is the undisputed master of it. The world today does not possess his equal as a poet. My 'mahatmaship' has no relation to the Poet's undisputed position. It is time to realize that our fields are absolutely different and at no point overlapping. The Poet lives in a magnificent world of his own creation—his world of ideas. I am a slave of somebody else's creation—the spinning-wheel. The Poet makes his *gopis* dance to the tune of his flute. I wander after my beloved Sita, the charkha, and seek to deliver her from the ten-headed monster from Japan, Manchester, Paris, etc. The Poet is an inventor—he creates, destroys and recreates. I am an explorer and having discovered a thing, I must cling to it. The Poet presents the world with new and attractive things from day to day. I can merely show the hidden possibilities of old and even worn-out things. The world easily finds an honourable place for the magician who produces new and dazzling things. I have to struggle laboriously to find a corner for my worn-out things. Thus there is no competition between us. But I may say in all humility that we complement each other's activity.

The fact is that the Poet's criticism is a poetic licence and he who takes it literally is in danger of finding himself in an awkward corner. An ancient poet has said that Solomon arrayed in all his glory was not like one of the lilies of the field. He clearly referred to the natural beauty and innocence of the lily contrasted with the artificiality of Solomon's glory and his sinfulness in spite of his many good deeds. Or take the poetical licence in: 'It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.' We know that no camel has ever passed through the eye

of a needle and we know too that rich men like Janaka have entered the Kingdom of Heaven. Or take the beautiful simile of human teeth being likened to the pomegranate seed. Foolish women who have taken the poetical exaggeration literally have been found to disfigure, and even harm, their teeth. Painters and poets are obliged to exaggerate the proportions of their figures in order to give a true perspective. Those therefore who take the Poet's denunciation of the charkha literally will be doing an injustice to the Poet and an injury to themselves.

The Poet does not, he is not expected, he has no need, to read *Young India*. All he knows about the movement is what he has picked up from table talk. He has, therefore, denounced what he has imagined to be the excesses of the charkha cult.

He thinks, for instance, that I want everybody to spin the whole of his or her time to the exclusion of all other activity, that is to say, that I want the poet to forsake his muse, the farmer his plough, the lawyer his brief and the doctor his lancet. So far is this from truth that I have asked no one to abandon his calling but, on the contrary, to adorn it by giving every day only thirty minutes to spinning as sacrifice for the whole nation. I have, indeed, asked the famishing man or woman who is idle for want of any work whatsoever to spin for a living and the half-starved farmer to spin during his leisure hours to supplement his slender resources. If the Poet span half an hour daily his poetry would gain in richness. For it would then represent the poor man's wants and woes in a more forcible manner than now.

The Poet thinks that the charkha is calculated to bring about a death-like sameness in the nation and, thus imagining, he would shun it if he could. The truth is that the charkha is intended to realize the essential and living oneness of interest among India's myriads. Behind the magnificent and kaleidoscopic variety, one discovers in nature a unity of purpose, design and form which is equally unmistakable. No two men are absolutely alike, not even twins, and yet there is much that is indispensably common to all mankind. And behind the commonness of form there is the same life pervading all. The idea of sameness or oneness was carried by Shankara to its utmost logical and natural limit and he exclaimed that there was only one truth, one God—*Brahman*—and all form, *nam, rupa* was illusion or illusory, evanescent. We need not debate whether what we see is

unreal; and whether the real behind the unreality is what we do not see. Let both be equally real, if you will. All I say is that there is a sameness, identity or oneness behind the multiplicity and variety. And so do I hold that behind a variety of occupations there is an indispensable sameness also of occupation. Is not agriculture common to the vast majority of mankind? Even so, was spinning common not long ago to a vast majority of mankind? Just as both prince and peasant must eat and clothe themselves so must both labour for supplying their primary wants. The prince may do so if only by way of symbol and sacrifice, but that much is indispensable for him if he will be true to himself and his people. Europe may not realize this vital necessity at the present moment, because it has made of exploitation of non-European races a religion. But it is a false religion bound to perish in the near future. The non-European races will not for ever allow themselves to be exploited. I have endeavoured to show a way out that is peaceful, humane and, therefore, noble. It may be rejected if it is, the alternative is a tug of war, in which each will try to pull down the other. Then, when non-Europeans will seek to exploit the Europeans, the truth of the charkha will have to be realized. Just as, if we are to live, we must breathe not air imported from England nor eat food so imported, so may we not import cloth made in England. I do not hesitate to carry the doctrine to its logical limit and say that Bengal dare not import her cloth even from Bombay or from Banga Lakshmi. If Bengal will live her natural and free life without exploiting the rest of India or the world outside, she must manufacture her cloth in her own villages as she grows her corn there. Machinery has its place; it has come to stay. But it must not be allowed to displace the necessary human labour. An improved plough is a good thing. But if, by some chance, one man could plough up by some mechanical invention of his the whole of the land of India and control all the agricultural produce and if the millions had no other occupation, they would starve, and being idle, they would become dunces, as many have already become. There is hourly danger of many more being reduced to that unenviable state. I would welcome every improvement in the cottage machine, but I know that it is criminal to displace the hand labour by the introduction of power-driven spindles unless one is, at the same time, ready to give millions

of farmers some other occupation in their homes.

The Irish analogy does not take us very far. It is perfect in so far as it enables us to realize the necessity of economic co-operation. But Indian circumstances being different, the method of working out co-operation is necessarily different. For Indian distress every effort at co-operation has to centre round the charkha if it is to apply to the majority of the inhabitants of this vast peninsula 1,900 miles long and 1,500 broad. Sir Gangaram may give us a model farm which can be no model for the penniless Indian farmer, who has hardly two to three acres of land which every day runs the risk of being still further cut up.

Round the charkha, that is amidst the people who have shed their idleness and who have understood the value of co-operation, a national servant would build up a programme of anti-malaria campaign, improved sanitation, settlement of village disputes, conservation and breeding of cattle and hundreds of other beneficial activities. Wherever charkha work is fairly established, all such ameliorative activity is going on according to the capacity of the villagers and the workers concerned.

It is not my purpose to traverse all the Poet's arguments in detail. Where the differences between us are not fundamental—and these I have endeavoured to state—there is nothing in the Poet's argument which I cannot endorse and still maintain my position regarding the charkha. The many things about the charkha which he has ridiculed I have never said. The merits I have claimed for the charkha remain undamaged by the Poet's battery.

One thing, and one thing only, has hurt me, the Poet's belief, again picked up from table talk, that I look upon Ram Mohan Roy as a 'pigmy'. Well, I have never anywhere described that great reformer as a pigmy much less regarded him as such. He is to me as much a giant as he is to the Poet. I do not remember any occasion save one when I had to use Ram Mohan Roy's name. That was in connection with Western education. This was on the Cuttack sands now four years ago.[1] What I do remember having said was that it was possible to attain highest culture without Western education. And when someone mentioned Ram Mohan Roy, I remember having said that he was a

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting, Cuttack", 24-3-1921.

pigmy compared to the unknown authors, say, of the Upanishads. This is altogether different from looking upon Ram Mohan Roy as a pigmy. I do not think meanly of Tennyson if I say that he was a pigmy before Milton or Shakespeare. I claim that I enhance the greatness of both. If I adore the Poet, as he knows I do in spite of differences between us, I am not likely to disparage the greatness of the man who made the great reform movement of Bengal possible and of which the Poet is one of the finest of fruits.

Young India, 5-11-1925

110. DISTRESS IN ORISSA

I have a telegram from Mr. Andrews advising me that there is terrible distress among the cattle of Orissa and men also. He has asked me to find ten thousand rupees for keeping the cattle alive and he has written a letter in which he tells me that khaddar is required for women who are almost in a naked state. I am trying to find a reliable agent who would take charge of the work. I do not propose at the present moment to appeal for funds to the public as there is still a large amount remaining unspent out of the Malabar Relief Fund that the readers of *Young India* and *Navajivan* contributed. As I am writing this note in Cutch, I do not know the exact amount available. But I have no right to disburse anything from the Malabar Relief Fund for relief in Orissa without the consent of the donors. I, therefore, appeal to the donors of the Malabar Relief Fund to send me, if they approve of my suggestion, their consent to utilize the balance of their contributions for relief of distress in Orissa. Those who may send their consent are requested to mention the original amount paid so as to enable me to identify the amount.

Young India, 5-11-1925

111. A HOTCH-POT OF QUESTIONS

I have got some taxing readers of *Young India* who often ask inconvenient questions. But, as they please them, I must suffer the inconvenience and answer their questions, however vexing they may be. This is how a correspondent fires the first shot:

> Who is responsible for the word 'Mahatma' before your name in the list of Executive Councillors, A.I S.A, as given in *Young India* of 1st October?

The correspondent may depend upon it that the editor is not responsible for the appearance of the word 'Mahatma' in the list of members of the Council of A.I.S.A. Those who passed the constitution are certainly responsible for it. Had I offered satyagraha against it, the word might not have appeared. But I did not consider the offence to be serious enough to call for the use of that terrible weapon. Unless some catastrophe takes place the offensive word will always be associated with my name, and the patient critics must tolerate it even as I do.

> You say you live, in common with other fellow-workers, on the charity of friends who defray the expenses of Sabarmati Satyagraha Ashram. Do you think it proper for an institution of able-bodied men to live on the charity of friends?

The correspondent has taken the word 'charity' too literally. Let him understand that every member of the institution gives both his or her body and mind to its work. But the institution can still be said to live on the charity of friends, because the latter get no return for their donations. The fruits of the labour of the inmates go to the nation.

> What is your view on what Tolstoy calls 'bread labour'? Do you really earn your living by your bodily labour?

Strictly speaking, bread labour is not a word of Tolstoy's coining. He took it from another Russian writer Bondarif, and it means that everyone is expected to perform sufficient body labour in order to entitle him to it. It is not, therefore, necessary to earn one's living by bread labour, taking the word living in its broader sense. But everyone must perform some useful body labour. For me, at the present moment, spinning is the only body labour I give. It is a mere symbol. I do not give enough body labour. That is also one of the

reasons why I consider myself as living upon charity. But I also believe that such men will have to be found in every nation who will give themselves body, soul and mind to it and for their sustenance throw themselves on the mercy of their fellowmen, that is, on God.

> I think that you have said somewhere that young men must simplify their wants and must ordinarily be able to live on Rs. 30 a month. Is it possible for educated youths to live without books, without travels, without even a wish to come into contact with great minds? All these things mean money. They must save something, too, to provide against circumstances of age, sickness, etc.

In a well-ordered society, such national servants as the correspondent refers to will have access to free libraries and the necessary travelling expenses will be paid by the nation, and the very nature of their work will bring them in contact with great minds. They will also be supported by the nation during sickness, old age, etc. This is no new conception, whether for India or elsewhere.

> You seem to advocate the starting of temples for *Panchamas* as a step in the direction of their amelioration. Is it not a fact that the Hindu mind, confined for generations past within things like the temple, has generally lost the power of any larger vision of God? When you seek to remove untouchability, when you seek to raise the untouchables and accord them a place of freedom and dignity in society, need you do so by encouraging them to copy the present-day caste Hindus even in the matter of the latter's vices, sins and superstitions? In the course of ameliorating the untouchables, may we not also reform the Hindu community as a whole, so far at least as worship of temple gods is concerned? In the course of freeing the depressed classes from their present social disabilities, may we not seek also to free their mind and thought, and thus let social reforms bring into being a broader religious and intellectual outlook?
>
> It may be pointed out as a parallel case that the khaddar propaganda to be really successful must not only aim at replacement of foreign cloth, but also seek to remove the non-national and anti-climatic fashions and tastes in dress, as indeed it has already done to some extent.

I do not regard the existence of temples as a sin or superstition. Some form of common worship, and a common place of worship appear to be a human necessity. Whether the temples should contain images or not is a matter of temperament and taste. I do not regard a Hindu or a Roman Catholic place of worship containing images as necessarily bad or superstitious and a mosqueor a Protestant place of

worship being good or free of superstition merely because of their exclusion of images. A symbol such as a Cross or a book may easily become idolatrous, and, therefore, superstitious. And the worship of the image of child Krishna or Virgin Mary may become ennobling and free of all superstition. It depends upon the attitude of the heart of the worshipper.

I do not see the parallel between the khaddar propaganda and the building of temples for the so-called untouchables. But I grant the argument of the correspondent that the agitation against foreign cloth should include the giving up of unnecessary and harmful foreign fashions and tastes. But this does not need separate preaching. As a rule, those who have adopted khaddar have also eschewed such fashions and tastes in dress as are wholly unnecessary for our climate.

> I am under the impression that you supported the Khilafat cause because your brothers, the Indian Muslims, felt strongly about it. But is it just or right to help any cause without oneself being satisfied as to its intrinsic worth, simply because one's brothers rightly or wrongly feel keenly about it? Or was it that you were satisfied yourself that the Khilafat, as such, was a worthy and right cause? If so, will you give your reasons, seeing that even modern Turkey has at one stroke done away with this institution which she presumably considers is calculated to perpetuate a most unreasonable and virulent type of fanaticism in the Islamic world?

The correspondent is quite correct in his contention that even a brother's cause has to be examined and proved to be just to one's satisfaction before one can help him. I was myself satisfied when I decided to throw in my lot with my Muslim brothers that their cause was just. I must refer to the contemporary files of *Young India* for my reasons for considering the Khilafat cause to be just. Everything that modern Turkey does is not necessarily defensible. Further, Mussalmans may make whatever innovations they like in their practices. A non-Muslim cannot dictate innovations in Islam. All he can do is to examine the general morality of a system or practice before he defends it. I had satisfied myself that there was nothing intrinsically wrong in the institution of Khilafat. The correctness of the Islamic position was admitted by other non-Muslims including Mr. Llyod George himself and the institution was defended by me against non-Muslim attack.

> Were you not helping the cause of war when you, both while in Africa and here, enlisted men for field service? How does it tally with your principle

of ahimsa?

By enlisting men for ambulance work in South Africa and in England, and recruits for field service in India, I helped not the cause of war, but I helped the institution called the British Empire in whose ultimate beneficial character I then believed. My repugnance to war was as strong then as it is today; and I could not then have and would not have shouldered a rifle. But one's life is not a single straight line; it is a bundle of duties very often conflicting. And one is called upon continually to make one's choice between one duty and another. As a citizen not then, and not even now, a reformer leading an agitation against the institution of war, I had to advise and lead men who believed in war but who, from cowardice or from base motives, or from anger against the British Government, refrained from enlisting. I did not hesitate to advise them that, so long as they believed in war and professed loyalty to the British constitution, they were in duty bound to support it by enlistment. Though I do not believe in the use of arms, and though it is contrary to the religion of ahimsa which I profess, I should not hesitate to join an agitation for a repeal of the debasing Arms Act which I have considered amongst the blackest crimes of the British Government against India. I do not believe in retaliation, but I did not hesitate to tell the villagers near Bettiah four years ago that they who knew nothing of ahimsa were guilty of cowardice in failing to defend the honour of their womenfolk and their property by force of arms. And I have not hesitated as the correspondent should know only recently to tell the Hindus that, if they do not believe in out-and-out ahimsa and cannot practise it, they would be guilty of a crime against their religion and humanity if they failed to defend by force of arms the honour of their women against any kidnapper who chooses to take away their women. And all this advice and my previous practice I hold to be not only consistent with my profession of the religion of ahimsa out and out, but a direct result of it. To state that noble doctrine is simple enough; to know it and to practise it in the midst of a world full of strife, turmoil and passions is a task whose difficulty I realize more and more day by day. And yet the conviction, too, that without it life is not worth living is growing daily deeper.

Young India, 5-11-1925

112. THE CANKER OF SUPERIORITY

The following remarkable paper handed to me at Mymensing by the District Vaisya Sabha Association cannot fail to be of general interest.[1]

It is likely that there is some exaggeration in the foregoing statement. But the reason why I have reproduced the paper is to show how deep the canker of superiority has eaten into the very vitals of Hinduism. The writers, themselves a despised group in the estimation of their so-called superiors, have not hesitated to claim for themselves a status superior to and distinct from those more despised. The same notion of superiority and inferiority runs through the despised untouchables. I notice throughout my tour in Cutch that, as in other parts of India, the untouchables have among themselves also superior and inferior castes, and the higher caste *Antyajas* will not touch the lower caste, will positively refuse to send their children to schools belonging to the lower caste. Inter-marriage and inter-dining between them is unthinkable. This is caste reduced to the grossest absurdity. And it is by way of protest against this arrogation of superiority by one class over another that I delight in calling myself a *Bhangi*, that is, a sweeper, beyond which so far as I am aware inferiority does not travel. He is the social leper shunned by all and yet he belongs to the one group more indispensable than any other for the sanitary well-being of society, and, therefore, its very physical existence. My sympathies are all with gentlemen on whose behalf the foregoing statement was given to me. But I warn them against claiming superiority over men more unfortunately placed than themselves. Let it be their privilege to take even these with them and refuse to take privileges which may be denied to others. It is necessary, if we will rid Hinduism of the curse of unnatural inequalities, for some of us to rise with our whole soul in revolt against it. In my opinion, he who claims superiority by the very nature of the claim forfeits it. Real, natural superiority comes without the claiming. It is recognized ungrudgingly, and ever refused, not pompously, not out of a false sense of modesty, but because the superiority is not even felt, and because the superior man knows that there is no distinction whatsoever between the soul within himself and the soul within one who regards himself as his inferior. Recognition of the essential identity and oneness of all that lives excludes the very idea of superiority and

[1] For the text of the paper, *vide*" The Canker of Superiority", 5-11-1925.

inferiority. Life is duty, not a bundle of rights and privileges. That religion is doomed to destruction which bases itself upon a system of gradations high and low. Such is not the meaning for me of *Varnashrama*. I believe in it because I imagine that it defines the duties of men belonging to the different vocations. And Brahmin is he who is the servant of all, even the Sudras and the untouchables. He dedicates his all to such service and lives upon the charity and sufferance of his fellow-beings. He is no Kshatriya who puts forth pretensions to rank, power and privileges. He alone is a Kshatriya who uses the whole of himself for the defence and honour of society. And a Vaisya who earns for himself only, and believes in merely amassing wealth is a thief. A Sudra because he labours for hire on behalf of society is in no way inferior to the three classes. According to my conception of Hinduism there is no such thing as a fifth or untouchable class. The so-called untouchables are as much privileged labourers of society as Sudras. *Varnashrama* seems to me to be an ideal system conceived for the highest good of society. What we see today is a travesty and a mockery of the original. And if *Varnashrama* is to abide, Hindus must sweep away the mockery and restore *Varnashrama* to its pristine dignity.

Young India, 5-11-1925

113. INTERVIEW TO PRESS, AHMEDABAD

Before *November 6, 1925*

Mr. Gandhi returned here after having finished his tour in Cutch. He looks very much pulled down.

Asked about his health, he said:

There is no cause for anxiety about my health. I have certainly grown weaker than I was after my Bengal tour, owing to the very bad roads and the continuous travelling which I had to undergo in Cutch. I am very much shaken, and have lost nearly eight pounds in weight, but the rest which I shall get at the Ashram will, I feel sure, restore the lost weight and lost strength. I must make it clear that nobody is to blame for the trials of the Cutch tour, which, we had all thought, would give me, comparatively speaking, rest from incessant toil. Everything possible was done by all around me to make me comfortable, but nobody had bargained for the nature of the toil that travelling in carts, on rough roads, would mean for my dilapidated limbs.

Asked as to what he will do in the Cawnpore Congress, Mahatmaji said:

My mind is a perfect blank as to what I shall do in the Congress except that, wherever possible, I shall assist the Swarajists in

accordance with my promise; but the Congress programme will have to be framed by Mrs. Sarojini Devi in consultation with Pandit Motilalji.

Asked if they would do nothing to bring the Liberals and the Independents within the Congress, Mr. Gandhi said:

There is no reason why the Liberals and the Independents should not join the Congress and convert the Swarajists to their view even as they entered the Councils and the Assembly to convert their opponents and the Government to their view.

Mr. Gandhi proposes to stay in his Ashram for full one month.

The Hindu, 6-11-1925

114. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

November 7, 1925

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

I have the letter signed by you and Hakim Saheb.[1] What is the use of the Congress President sending a cable to the League of Nations? I feel like a caged lion, only with this difference that the lion foams and frets and gnashes his teeth and lashes the iron bars furiously in the vain attempt to be free, whereas I recognize my limitations and refuse to foam and fret. If we had any power behind us, I would immediately send the cable suggested by you. Things I omit to mention in the pages of *Young India* are buried deep down in my bosom and they are far weightier than those I advertise. But I do not fail to advertise them daily before the Unseen Power. When I think of the horizon about us, my heart becomes sick and weary. And when I listen to the still small voice within, I derive hope and smile in spite of the conflagration raging round me. Do save me from having to advertise our impotence.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 10597

[1] The letter dealt with the hardships of the Druses, inhabiting Southern Syria, at the hands of the Mandatory Power, France, For the text, *vide"* Our Impotence", 12-11-1925.

115. LETTER TO P. A. NARIELWALA

SABARMATI,
November 7, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and donation. If you will send it directly to the Secretary, A.I.S.A., Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, it will be more convenient.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[P. A.] NARIELWALA, ESQ.
"ROSE LEA"
ALTAMONT ROAD
CUMBALLA HILL
BOMBAY

From the original:: C.W. 9275. Courtesy: P. A. Narielwala

116. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

Kartika Vad 8 [*November 8, 1925*][1]

BHAI SHANTIKUMAR,

I had your two letters in Kutch. Give me the correct information, if indeed you have it, about Sholapur. Have you come to know the main cause of the quarrel?

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I have used my left hand as the right hand is out of action.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4699. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

117. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO MIRABEHN

[On or after *November 9, 1925*][4]

God is great and He will help you and protect you. It is nothing that we err if we know how to mend. And that, thank God, you have

[1] The reference in the letter to Kutch suggests that it was written in 1925.

done never to go back. You have come nevertheless to face storms but they are all bracing. May they make you powerful and a fit instrument of service.

From the original: C.W. 5448. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9450

118. OUR IMPOTENCE

The following letter has been addressed to me by Hakimsaheb Ajmal Khan and Dr. Ansari who have just returned from a prolonged tour on the continent including Syria:

> Recent events in Southern Syria, the country where the Druses live, and where an armed resistance is being carried on by these oppressed people against the French, the Mandatory Power, have brought to light the fringhtfulness of the French authorities there. A cable, received two days back from Palestine sent by Syed Jamaluddin-al-Husaini, Secretary of Lajnatut-Tanfiziyah, the most popular and influential organization of the people of Palestine, says that the town of Damascus has terribly suffered from the French bombardment and the death-roll has been tremendous. Although from the various accounts published in the British Press one could gather that things were bad in Syria, yet this telegram from Palestine and Reuter's cable from Cairo, received subsequently, show the utter barbarity and inhumanity which is being practised by the French of the pupulation in the Druse country and Damascus.
>
> Apart from the recent instances of frightfulness, our tour in Syria brought under our observation many facts which proved the callousness of the French and their utter disregard for the elementary rights of the people of the mandated territory in Syria.
>
> We have already published our experiences in the Indian Press, but in order to save you the trouble of reading the Urdu reports, published in the *Hamdard*, we would briefly give you some of the most salient facts regarding the situation in Syria.
>
> When the League of Nations gave the mandate of Syria to France, the French Government and the High Commissioner made a public declaration to the people of Syria of granting them complete autonomy regarding their internal affairs, Syria was to be divided in several autonomous provinces each with a governor, elected by the people and an advisory council representing the people and elected by them. Whilst this promise was partially and outwardly carried out in the provinces of Lebanon and Damascus, the province of Hauran, the country of the Druses, was neither given auto-nomy nor a council for a president elected by them, but a French officer Captain Carbiollet, was forced on the Druses against their wish and when they made demons-trations and representations against this, their deputation was

insulted, their nota-bles were publicly thrashed and imprisoned, and their womenfolk were maltreated.

Captain Carbiollet, who had come from French Congo, practised all the atrocities to which the poor inhabitants of the French Congo had been subjected by the French, but the Druses being an ancient, proud, warlike race resisted these methods and were forced to take up arms. They inflicted considerable losses on the French forces and have so far resisted the French invasion of their country success-fully, but the methods practised by the French in the adjoining parts of Syria, viz. Damascus and Alleppo, are causing the spread of revolt to these parts. The telegrams quoted above refer to the most recent atrocities committed on the people of Damascus.

The French Government are also practising unfair and dishonest methods and are depleting the country of its wealth by removing all the gold in the country and replacing it by paper money. They are gradually undermining all the economic resources of the country which is resulting in destitution and poverty. To add to this depletion, they have also been collecting gold from the people of town and villages in the shape of fines and punishments.

We are writing this to you in order to elicit your sympathy for these Asiatic brethren, and to request you, as the President of the Congress, to send a cable to the League of Nations which has granted this mandate to France, and to instruct other Congress organizations to do the same. We are conscious that the present situation in India is not very favourable to such an action, but it is our considered opinion as Indians, as Muslims, and as Asiatics that we should sympathize with all the oppressed Asiatic people and cultivate friendly relations with them which would be beneficial to us and to them.

I could not see my way to accept their advice to send a cable to the League of Nations in the name of the Congress, and therefore sent the following answer:[1]

But the next best thing I could do was to publish the valuable letter and my reply. I do not believe in making appeals when there is no force behind them whether moral or material. Moral force comes from the determination of the appellants to do something, to sacrifice something for the sake of making their appeal effective. Even children instinctively know this elementary principle. They starve, they cry, or, if they are naughty, they do not hesitate to strike their mothers who will not grant their peremptory demands. Unless we recognize and are prepared to reduce to practice this principle we can but expose the Congress and ourselves to ridicule, if not worse.

We cannot be naughty even if we will. We *can* suffer if *only* we

[1] *Vide*" Letter to Dr. M.A. Ansari", 7-11-1925.

will. I want us as Indians, Hindus or Mussalmans, Christians or Parsis, or Asiatics to realize our impotence in the face of this humiliation, babarity, Dyerism, or call it what you will, inflicted on Syria. A definite realization of our impotence might teach us to imitate if it is only the animals who in the presence of stormy weather come close together and seek warmth and courage from one another. They do not make a vain appeal to the god of the weather to moderate his wrath. They simply provide against it.

And we? Hindus and Mussalmans fight against one another and the gulf seems to be daily widening. We have not yet understood the meaning of the charkha. Those that have find all kinds of pretexts not to wear khaddar and not to spin. The storm is raging round us. And instead of seeking warmth one from the other, we prefer to shiver or petition the god of storms to stay his hand. If I cannot bring about Hindu-Muslim union or persuade the people to take up the wheel, I have the wisdom at least not to sign any petition for mercy.

And what is the League of Nations? Is it not in reality merely England and France? Do the other powers count? Is it any use appealing to France which is denying her motto of Fraternity, Equality and Justice? She has denied justice to Germany, there is little fraternity between her and the Riffs, and the doctrine of equality she is trampling underfoot in Syria. If we would appeal to England, we need not go to the League of Nations. She is much nearer home. She is perched on the heights of Simla except when she descends to Delhi for a brief period. But to appeal to her is to appeal to Caesar against Augustus.

Let us then perceive the truth in its nakedness and learn to appeal to the nation to do her duty. Relief of Syria lies through India. And if we cannot appreciate our greatness, let us confess our littleness and say nothing. But we need not be little. Let us do at least one thing thoroughly—either fight to the bitter end, even as our brothers the four-footed animals often do, or, as men, let us learn and teach through co-operation on the largest scale known to the world the uselessness, nay, the sinfulness of exploitation of those weaker than ourselves. That co-operation among millions is possible only through the spinning-wheel.

Young India, 12-11-1925

119. NOTES

MESSENGER OF PEACE

Mr. C. F. Andrews's self-chosen function is to do the service he can and think no more about it. His service takes the form of bringing about peace. He had hardly finished his work in Orissa among the men or cattle in distress or among the mill-hands of Bombay, when he felt the call to go to South Africa and help the Indian settlers who are in distress. But he will be helping not only the Indians there but also the Europeans. He has no malice or anger in him. He wants no favours for the Indians. He wants bare justice. Mr. Andrews is no stranger to South Africa[1]. South African statesmen know and admit that he is as much Europeans' friend as Indians. The Indian question has reached a most critical stage. For the Indians resident in South Africa it is a matter practically of life and death. Mr.Andrews's presence in their midst at this juncture must bring the greatest comfort to them. May this good friend's labours bear ample fruit as they have done before now. Let the settlers, however, not be lulled into a sense of false security by Mr. Andrews's presence which by itself can bring them little relief. He can but guide, advise and negotiate. But all the guidance, advice and negotiation will come to nothing if there is no cohesion or courage among the settlers themselves.

AN OPIUM REPORT

The Congress Opium Enquiry Report for Assam has been just published and can be had at the Congress Office, Jorhat, Assam, or of Mr. C F. Andrews, Santiniketan, for Rs. 1/8 or two shillings. It is well printed and covers 166 pages including a map, appendices, a glossary of unusual terms and a subject index. The report itself covers 44 pages. It has nine chapters. There is, too, an introduction by Mr. C. F. Andrews who was a co-opted member and who is mainly responsible for the creation of the Committee and the conduct of the Enquiry. Sjt. Kuladhar Chatia was the chairman of the Committee. This is the tribute Mr. Andrews pays to the workers:

> I wish to express my sincere admiration for the devoted courage and perseverance of the workers on the present committee who have sacrificed time and

[1] Andrews had visited the country in 1914, when Gandhiji was still there.

ease and leisure and business occupations in order to do this service to their country. This enquiry is one among a series. Assam was the first province chosen because it has the blackest record for opium in all India. Whereas the standard medical requirement of opium , according to the League of Nations, is 6 seers per each 10,000, the lowest figure for Assam is over 45 seers and the highest over 237 seers! The report shows that, during the Non-co- operation period, the figures for opium dropped from 1,614 maunds to 884. This was due to picketing which was rendered illegal. 1,100 workers were imprisoned including lawyers, graduates, college students , etc. But I must not anticipate the pleasure that a patriot or a reformer would gain by reading the whole of the instructive report. I must, therefore, close this review of the report by copying the recommendations.

(1) The sale of opium and its derivations should be ultimately limited to the medical and scientific needs of Assam.

(2) Provision should be made for confirmed addicts above the age of forty, enabling them to procure a rationed amount of opium, their names being registered for that purpose.

(3) All opium-addicts, who are under forty years of age, should be dealt with as medical patients. Wherever opium is needed by them, it should be given only under the order of a fully qualified doctor, the medical permission to obtain it being subject to quarterly renewal.

(4) These changes would be carried out within the next five years. At the end of five years, opium should be placed on the list of poisons under a Dangerous Drugs Act, and treated as such for all inhabitants of Assam.

While much depends of the Government action, we feel that no progress can be made without the education of public opinion. The Non-co-operation movement showed what a great advance could be made in opium restriction by voluntary effort and public propaganda. The decrease in consumption in a single year is a proof of what can be done by these methods. This work needs to be still further promoted and sustained.

We, therefore, appeal to all those who desire the welfare or Assam to organize themselves into anti-opium societies and to advocate opium prohibition amongst the people in general. This will lead to the education of public opinion against the opium evil and create a moral atmosphere, without which no great success can be achieved. Every avenue of approaching the illiterate masses, who are the greatest consumers, should be employed. Especially necessary is the careful training of the young children in all the elementary schools of the Assam valley and among the hill tribes. We would invite the co-operation of all sections of the community in this educational

work, and we would specially appeal to the missionaries to help us in organizing temperance societies among the hill tribes with whom they are closely connected.

Finally, we would venture to ask Mahatma Gandhi once more to come to Assam and put himself at the head of a great anti-opium campaign to be carried on by entirely peaceful means.

I note the appeal made to me. It was a matter of deep regret to me that I was unable to take in Assam during the Bengal tour when the cruel hand of death snatched away Deshbandhu from us. I am, however, under promise to Sjt. Phooken to visit that fair garden next year if all goes well. My terms are well-known. Deshbandhu's formula was men, munitions and money. It must abide even though he is not with us in body. Munitions are hand-spun yarn—bullets that hurt no one and whose saving power has no limits. I would undertake to wean the Assa-mese from the opium habit if Sjt. Phooken and his friends will induce them by their own glorious example to shed their idleness and take to charkha. He believes and I believe with him that Assam has great possi-bilities for khaddar. May they soon become realities. Then I shall exc-use every learned Assamese for having been lured into the Councils net.

COW-PROTECTION ESSAY

The readers will be glad to learn that Acharya Dhruva and Sjt. C. V. Vaidya have both kindly consented to be judges of the competition essays. I only hope that the essays will be worthy of the great scholars who have consented to judge them and the subject chosen. Acharya Dhruva suggests that I should make it clear that the scholars should examine the Shastras not from the dry and profitless dialectic standpoint but from the broad historical standpoint. So also does he hope the essayists will deal with the question of tanneries and dairies. They will, therefore, historically trace the growth of cow-protection and examine all possible ways of protecting and preserving the cow and hence cattle life, not inconsistent with the sanctions of religion.

A correspondent inquires what length the essay should be. No limit has been considered necessary because it depends upon the manner of treatment. But I would say generally that the shorter the essay the better it would be. I know the judges well enough to be able say for them that they will not in any way be influenced by the length of the essays. Each competitor will therefore use his own discretion.

Only I hope that they will carefully revise their compositions and prune them down wherever necessary. I give this caution in the light of my experience of the essays on spinning.

Another correspondent suggests extension of the time limit for the very cogent reason that Sanskrit professors who may wish to take part in the competition may not be able to finish their labours within the stipulated period. I, therefore, gladly extend the time to 31st May 1926 instead of 31st March next.

There remains one suggestion to consider. A correspondent questions the utility of choosing Sanskrit as one of the languages for the essay. The reason for selecting Sanskrit is to enable and induce the very large number of learned pundits throughout India to give the nation the benefit of their deep learning. During my peregrinations in the South I had the honour of meeting several pundits, who were deeply interested in modern movements, but of whose learning we receive little benefit because Sanskrit learning is at a discount. I hope that Sanskrit scholars who do not know English well enough or in spite of their knowledge of the latter will give the nation a standard treatise in Sanskrit. I need hardly say that if a Sanskrit essay wins the prize it will be translated not only in English and Hindi but in Urdu and all other important languages. It will all depend upon the merit of the prize essay. I shall hope that we shall have a treatise of such merit as to occupy a permanent place in religious literature no matter in what language the original is written.

SPIN, SPIN, SPIN

If you feel the force of Hakim Saheb's letter reproduced elsewhere, you will join the A.I.S.A. and help to achieve the one big thing it is possible for the nation to achieve even today. She will do so when many of us do it. The best method of doing it is to join the A.I.S.A. and induce others to do likewise. Do not find out excuses for not spinning and not wearing khaddar, but rather discover the many reasons why you should, You can join the Association without sacrificing any of your other activities. The only thing you are called upon to sacrifice is your taste for foreign or mill-made cloth. There is not much there to sacrifice, if you will but put against it the tremendous national gain. We have been talking about swadeshi for the past thirty years. We have been talking loosely about boycott of foreign goods, British goods at least, since 1906. We have been still more loosely practising it. We have succeeded in nothing. Experience

has shown that we can only achieve boycott of foreign cloth and that alone. Reason proclaims that we must achieve it, if we would at all live. It is our right as well as duty. I make bold to say that nothing has come nearer success than this one simple and necessary boycott. It can be made wholly successful if enough good people join the Spinners' Association.

A KHADI CATALOGUE

The manager of the Khadi Bhandar, Princess Street, run in Bombay by the All-India Khadi Board (now All-India Spinners' Association) has sent me a copy of his neatly printed price list, It shows the progress made by khaddar. The total sales during the four years of its existence amount to Rs, 8,30, 329. The highest sales were in 1922-23 , viz , Rs. 2,45,515, the lowest during the current year, viz., Rs. 1,68,280. It has been suggested that the sales went up in 1922-23 because I was in jail. People thought and rightly that the more khaddar they used, the nearer was swaraj. And swaraj meant my discharge. The flaw, however, consisted in the reasoning that khaddar was only a temporary necessity. Whereas the fact is that it is as necessary for all times as native food and native air are. The lower sales therefore are better in a way if they represent permanent custom. The existence of this and other khaddar stores shows that they supply a felt want, The political effect of khaddar however can be obtained only when the sales are not a little over one hundred thousand rupees per year but they amount to several crores, strictly speaking, sixty crores. Bombay, therefore, should support not one or two such stores but several hundred, even as it today supports several hundred foreign cloth stores. There is now no excuse for the public not to support this and such other stores. For they satisfy all reasonable tastes. I observe in the catalogue, shirtings, muslin khadi, saris, handkerchiefs, towels, dhotis, ready-made shirts, vests, caps, bags, bedsheets, shawls, curtains, counterpanes, tablecloths, pillow-slips, blouses, drawers for babies and adults, etc." But," says the critic," compare the prices." I compare them and satisfy myself that, where the price is apparently higher, it is in reality cheaper, for in addition to getting khaddar for your money, you contribute towards the attainment of swaraj. If you do not believe in the capacity of khaddar to secure swaraj, then know that by buying khaddar you are at least partly supporting some starving man or woman. If an averagekhaddar wearer pays Rs. 10 per year for his cloth then four such wearers

wholly support at least one starving person per year. Can khaddar with that potentiality be ever considered dear by one who loves his country and cares for the poor?

Young India, 12-11-1925

120. LETTER TO ROMAIN ROLLAND

SABARMATI,
November 13, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your very kind letter.[1] Miss Slade quickly followed it. What a treasure you have sent me! I shall try to be worthy of the great trust. I shall leave no stone unturned to assist her to become a bridge between East and West. I am too imperfect to have disciples. She shall be fellow-seeker with me and as I am older in years and therefore presumably in spiritual experience, I propose to share the honour of fatherhood with you. Miss Slade is showing wonderful adaptability and has already put us at ease about herself.

I must leave the rest to be told you by Miss Slade whom I am asking to tell you all about a French sister who came to the Ashram just a few days before she came.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Romain Rolland and Gandhi Correspondence, pp. 50-1

121. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

November 14, 1925

MY DEAR PADMAJA,

Mother is here today to see how I look after the Cutch tour. She tells me this should reach you on your birthday. This, therefore,comes to you charged with all the love I am capable of bearing towards you. And you know what that love is. Are you going to behave yourself

[1] Referring to Mirabehn, the addressee in his letter dated October 1, 1925 had written:" . . . .I am sure you will find in her one of your most staunch and faithful disciples. Her soul is full of admirable energy and ardent devotion; she is straightforward and upright. Europe cannot offer a nobler or more disinterested heart to your cause. May she bear with her the love of thousands of Europeans, and my veneration."

and be strong? You have to help mother in her labours next year.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

My right hand refuses to work. Hence this is written with the left.

M.K.G.

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

122." RAMANAMA" AND KHADI

"Juna Jogi"[1] writes as follows:[2]

This letter has been lying with me for two months. I had hoped, when I had leisure, to place it before the readers of *Navajivan*. I have found that leisure today or, rather, I have contrived to find it. The writer has advised me not to go fault-finding. And let it not be said that I am finding fault with his letter if I happen to criticize it, for the motive behind my criticism is somehow to fit it into these pages so as to expound the glory of God. Let the writer and others know that I am adopting whatever in it is worth adopting. I feel I have nothing new to learn about the glory of *Ramanama* as I have realized it through experience. And I hold that it cannot be propagated in the same manner as khadi or swaraj. In these very difficult times, even the utterance of the Name is done in a wrong way. In other words, I have heard it repeated often for mere show, sometimes for selfish ends and sometimes even in order to feed licentious conduct. There would be nothing to object to if one uttered *Mara* reversing the order of syllables, while chanting the Name. We read of the pure in heart having attained *mukti* even by chanting it in an erroneous manner and we can believe this too to be true. However, what are we to say of sinners who, although their pronunciation is perfect, chant the *mantra* of *Ramanama* in order to nourish their sins? That is why I am afraid of any propaganda for *Ramanama*. Those persons who believe that by sitting together in company and loudly repeating the Name they

[1] A pseudonym meaning" old worker"

[2] The letter is not translated here; the correspondent advised Gandhiji to attach greater importance to *Ramanama* than to swaraj.

can wash away all their past, present and future sins and that nothing besides this shouting is expected of them, deserve to be bowed to from a distance. No one should imitate them. I, for my part, regard those who support and spread khadi, etc., as being worthy of repeating *Ramanama*. But repeating the Name, I find, has nowhere brought about an atmosphere congenial for the spread of khadi.

How can a servant of Rama put it down in writing saying hat no one in this world has been able to convert learned men?[1] It does not seem to me that I am under any delusion. Learned persons too belong to the world of Rama and many of them have attained *moksha* by repeating His Name. The truth of the matter is that no one but a devotee can convert learned persons. And I, who hope to become a devotee, am ever trying to make these persons understand. And as I have no delusion, I am not angry with those who do not understand but rather with myself because my devotion is imperfect. Hence in order that Rama may for ever dwell in my heart I welcome the advice that I should further purify my heart, and I constantly give myself such advice. It is the devotee who is to blame, not the listener, if he cannot make his devotion interesting. If the devotion has any attractive qualities, these will certainly be seized upon by the listener; however, is the listener to blame if he can find nothing interesting in it? If Krishna's flute had been a broken one and if the *gopis* had shrunk from the harsh tunes coming out of it, Krishna would have been disgraced and no one would blame the *gopis*. Poor Arjuna was hardly aware of the fact that he was a mere book-worm, or that he was making a false claim to learning. However, Krishna's clarity of vision enabled him to purify Arjuna's vision and cure him of his delusion. Hence, one who wishes to propagate *Ramanama* should do so after convincing himself, purifying himself and, establishing Rama's kingdom in his own heart. To this the world will respond and it will begin chanting His Name. However, to have it chanted anywhere and in any manner one likes is to bring disgrace to *Ramanama* by adding to the hypocrisy which is already there and accelerating the torrential current of atheism.

It is hardly possible for one today to stay in peace in one place.[2] How can even Rama have any effect on one whose body is chained

[1] The correspondent had said in the letter:" In this world none has been able to convert learned persons. Those who possess the spirit of devotion can be converted. Rama and Krishna did not hold discussions with learned persons".

[2] This is with reference to what the correspondent has said:" God is His own true devotee and teaches devotion to the world. You should now stay in peace, in one place."

but whose mind constantly traverses across millions of miles? However, what can be said of the person who, like Damayanti searching for Nala, wanders from one forest to another, questions even the trees and animals of the whereabouts of Rama—should it be said of him that he is a wanderer or, should it be said that he stays in peace in one place? Can we not say rather that the real seer is he alone who has seen the seated one wandering around and the wanderer staying in one place? How can the duty that one has to perform be determined? Is it not determined simply by doing it? And, if this is true, I have conquered the world as I never ask anyone to do what I do not do myself. I have no alternative before me but to tell the reader of the delusion of this" Juna Jogi". Others may not know this, but the gentleman in question certainly knows that I have no such attendants who would hold back from me any letter, such as this one, which has been written in a friendly spirit. I received this letter promptly. Who is, however, to blame for my inability to reply to it for two months—those poor attendants, myself, fate, or the writer himself? Let us conclude that the writer himself is to blame. A person who writes to me a letter which puts me into an extremely difficult dilemma, should certainly have the patience to wait for a reply. The problem that he has posed is not so simple that I could solve it instantly as I could point out that cloth made of mill-spun yarn is not khadi. I was certainly afraid that, by replying to such a letter, I might impair the glory of *Ramanama*. Hence, I still feel that there was nothing wrong in not replying to it, and perhaps there is some delusion in this reply! However, even if there is, I place this reply at the feet of Rama in the same why as I would some meritorious deed.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-11-1925

123. MY NOTES

RAILWAY TRAVEL

There was a time when I actually experienced the discomforts of a railway journey and then I also felt strongly about them; those days are over for me. I now get little first-hand experience of them, as I no longer travel third class. One does not take notice of what one does not constantly experience. Moreover, other matters, which appear to be more important to my mind, occupy all my time; hence it rarely occurs to me to write on the hardships of passengers or to investigate

this matter. During my tour of Kutch, however, Shri Jivraj Nensey reminded me that a day had been set apart every year for recalling passengers' grievances and he then asked me to write something on this subject. A day should thus be set apart and passengers should recall their grievances on that day. Ways should be found to remedy these, and new measures should be devised only after those taken during the previous year have been reviewed. Here, however, as on every question there are two aspects. It is not only the authorities who are to blame for the hardships that the passengers have to undergo. It has been my experience that much of the blame has to be shared by the latter also. What could the railway authorities do if the passengers make no complaints or do not know they have any rights? Or, how can we blame the railway authorities when the passengers themselves are responsible for committing offences? Hence, I expect some self-examination to take place when such gatherings are held. It is all very well to find fault with others. but along with that one should also look at one's own faults. If we do not get rid of some of our bad habits, many of the hardships suffered by passengers will continue, however good the railway regulations and however honest the authorities may be. Moreover, some grievances have their origin in the entire system of Government being evil; these cannot be done away with so long as the system is not changed. For instance, the basic objective of the railways is not to serve passengers but to drain the wealth of India and also to suppress any revolt that we may raise. In other words, the railway is meant for the military authorities. The hardships result from this which is the very root of the problem. Swaraj is the only remedy for it; and swaraj should be a government based on morality. In this manner, in calling to memory the hardships of passengers, we find that there are three aspects of the question which should be considered and I hope the organizers will consider them all.

TO SPINNERS

I have received the following letter[1] from the Spinners' Association:

The only comment to be made on this is that as members of the Association try to understand the suggestions and act accordingly, the Association will gain not only in strength but also in wealth. There should be one price for bad yarn and another for good yarn. The

[1] Not translated here

effort put in by the spinner for both the types is almost the same. Moreover, the quality of the yarn is a test of the spinner. Good yarn implies that the cost of weaving will be lower. Yarn packed well is well- protected. Following the suggestions will save the time of those in charge. In this way, a small amount of effort can automatically bring in financial gain to the Spinners' Association beyond one's guess. Regarding the last suggestion in the above letter, it is sufficient to say that although there may be no 'D' class for members, even if those who have not become total converts to khadi spin and send in their yarn there is some gain, at any rate. The Spinners' Association does not exist merely in name; it is there for concrete work. Hence there is merit in everyone trying to further its cause to the best of their ability and in any manner they can think of.

SOME REPLIES

Several lovers of khadi have asked questions to which I give below the answers. The questions can be inferred from the answers.

1. Receipts for yarn will either continue being sent to the members individually or through newspapers or otherwise.

2. 'A' class members can send in their yarn every month. They can even send in a year's quota at one and the same time. Such persons cannot be regarded as members when their contribution is in arrears for a month; however, when they make up their arrears and also send in advance their quota for the future, they would again be treated as members.

3. One certainly cannot use mill-made slivers for spinning.

4. The Association began its year in October. Those who have already contributed fourteen thousand yards to the Congress, will continue to be its members. With effect from October, however, new yarn should be sent in to the Spinners' Association.

INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The kind-hearted Mr. Andrews is always present wherever there is suffering. He reached Orissa, on hearing of the suffering of the animals there. He shared the sufferings of the labourers of Bombay. He is now on his way to South Africa to share the miseries of the Indians there. One to whom service alone is dharma finds happiness only in service. If the Indians in South Africa wish to take full advantage of the service of this kindhearted Englishman, they should bear two things in mind. When someone comes forward to help, we

sometimes become slack, assuming that he will do single-handed all that needs to be done; this should not happen in South Africa. His visit can be utilized only if his presence makes them more alert and makes them put in greater effort. Secondly, they must unite, forget all differences and work with courage and determination. And if this is done, the game is not yet lost. Before resorting to satyagraha, they must give full thought to it. Satyagraha can never be practised as a threat. Those who strive for truth must speak the truth alone and act only truthfully. Not to resort to satyagraha would bring no disgrace; but, not practising it after resolving to do so will not only bring disgrace but is also likely to harm the community.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-11-1925

124. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

Monday [*November 16, 1925*][1]

MY DEAR CHARLIE.

Your commandments are being carried out. The wire[2] went to Sarojini this morning. I am giving a leading article to your mission.[3]

I hope you are quite well. God keep you well on the voyage.

With deepest love,

Yours,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 2632

[1] C. F. Andrews left for South Africa a few days before the official deputation, which left on November 25. This, as well as the reference to the leading article in *Young India*, would indicate that the letter was written on November 16, which was a Monday.

[2] Not available

[3] *Vide*" Indians in South Africa" , 26-11-1925.

125. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[*November 18, 1925*][1]

I am worried after reading the letter about your health. First I thought of sending Mahadev or Devdas. Then I remembered Nargisbehn. She is bringing this letter. Tell her everything. She will, of course, wire to me her own opinion. But do tell her everything in detail. Ask her to send me a wire if you need even the least help, so that I can send Mahadev or Devdas from here. You must take rest. Ba sends her blessings.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi , p. 81

126. NOTES

THE NAKED TRUTH

> We did not conquer India for the benefit of the Indians. I know it is said at missionary meetings that we conquered India to raise the level of the Indians. That is cant. We conquered India as the outlet for the goods of Great Britain. We conquered India by the sword and by the sword we should hold it. ("Shame!") Call shame if you like. I am stating facts. I am interested in missionary work in India and have done much work of that kind, but I am not such a hypocrite as to say we hold India for the Indians. We hold it as the finest outlet for British goods in general, and for Lancashire cotton goods in particular.

This is reported to have been said by Sir William Johnson-Hicks. But he is not the first minister to have reminded us of our serfdom. Why should truth be at all unpalatable? It must do us good to know ourselves as we are—destined to be hewers of wood and drawers of water for the benefit of whosoever will claim us by the prowess of his sword. It is good, too, that due emphasis is laid on Lancashire goods. The sword will be sheathed as soon as Manchester calico ceases to be saleable in India. It is much more economical expeditious and possible to give up the use of Manchester and, therefore, foreign calico than to blunt the edge of Sir William's

[1] As in the source

sword. The process will multiply the number of swords and, therefore, also miseries in the world. Like opium production, the world manufacture of swords needs to be restricted. The sword is probably responsible for more misery in the world than opium. Hence do I say that, if India takes to the spinning-wheel, she will contribute to the resitriction of armament and peace of the world as no other country and nothing else can.

GOVERNMENT SERVANTS AND A.I.S.A.

A Government servant writes to say that he has been a habitual khaddar-wearer for the last four years, and his khaddar is made out of yarn of his own spinning. He is a regular spinner; but, being a Government servant, has not hitherto belonged to any association. He now enquires whether, the A.I.S.A. being, as its preamble shows, non-political in character, he may become its member. I am certainly of opinion that even the Viceroy can become a member of the Association with perfect impunity if he approves of its objects. Unless, therefore, there is anything in the rules of Government service debarring Government servants from becoming members of any association whatsoever although non-political, no Government servant who is in sympathy with A.I.S.A. should hesitate to become its member. The same correspondent asks whether it is obligatory to spin half an hour daily or whether a member may finish the whole quota as soon as he can. According to the constitution of the Association, it is open to anyone to send the whole of his annual subscription of twelve thousand yards at once. It is not obligatory to spin daily. But it is certainly advisable to do so even though one may have finished his quota.

PASSENGERS' DAY

It is a good idea to observe a Passengers' Day and review the progress of improvement in the condition of millions of passengers who use either the railways or the waterways connecting one part of India with another. In my palmy days when I enjoyed the privilege of travelling 3rd class I used to have much to say about the condition of 3rd-class passengers whether by rail or water.[1] But, on the principle of 'out of sight out of mind', not experiencing in my own person the

[1] *Vide*" Railway Passengers", before 26-7-1916," Letter to the Press on Third Class Travelling on Indian Railways", 25-9-1917;" Letter to Commerce and Industries Secretary", 31-10-1917.

difficulties of 3rd-class railway travelling, I have ceased to write upon it. But the forthcoming Passengers' Day reminds one ofone's duty towards the dumb millions who are packed like sardines in ill-constructed, dirty compartments and whose wants nobody ever cares to look after. The difficulites due to the indifference of railway authorities are however one part of the distress. It would be well to lay stress upon that part; but the indifference and ignorance of the passengers themselves are almost equally responsible for their difficulties. The speakers, therefore, at the meetings that would be held in different parts of the country would do well to emphasize the duty of passengers towards themselves. Our insanitary habits, want of consideration for our neighbours, insistence upon getting into overcrowded compartments and a host of other bad habits must be removed before 3rd-class railway travelling can be made bearable. It requires great vigilance and there is risk of an association that deals with the internal aspect of the question even courting unpopularity in the initial stages. I wish every success to the effort of Mr. Jivraj Nensey and his fellow organizers.

'LOW MORAL TONE'?

A correspondent writes:

> I am myself a Hindu and belong to the highest brahmin class. But I belong to the advanced party. I believe in Reason, for Reason is God and God is Reason. The philosophy of the Hindus which emphasizes the *soham*—I am He—doctrine has today built up a barrier which is more impenetrable than the Mt. Everest. The religion that built up its shrine of Mind-Purity is so obscured by the weed growths of ritualism that the real light is hidden from view. The culture that emphasized 'universal brotherhood under the fatherhood of God' stands today for the trading of the millions by Brahma's offspring who have nothing in common but the archaic mythological derivation from the common stock. The ahimsa doctrine has made us sneaking, snivelling cowards. A Hindu never plays fair with a Hindu; a Mohammedan plays fair with a Mohammedan and so does a Christian with a Christian. A Hindu is more tolerant of other customs outside the Hindu fold—another instance of downright cowardice—a Mohammedan is never tolerant and a Christian seldom. Shall educated Hindus continue this game of humbuggism or by taking up arms end it?

I can throw little light on what the correspondent says but I can advise. Reform must begin with ourselves. 'Physician heal thyself' is a sound doctrine. Those who realize the lowness of the moral tone and

the presence of cowardice among Hindus may at least begin with themselves. The truth of the charge may be generally admitted though not without reservations. But will resort to arms end the evil? How is the low moral tone to be remedied by the brandishing of the sword? Can the innumerable sub-castes or untouchability or the often meaningless ritual be removed by force? Will it not be introducing religion by compulsion? If God is reason, then the appeal must be not to the sword but to reason.

Or does the writer refer to the Hindu-Muslim tension and want the Hindus to resort to force of arms? On a close examination, it will be discovered that in a vast majority of cases, resort to arms is not only not necessary but harmful. What is wanted is the art of suffering. I hold that it is not ahimsa that has made of us cowards but the loss of it. Surely it is not ahimsa that makes us wish ill to people that oppose us but our utter ignorance of it. Those who do not take up arms refrain not because they are deterred by any notion of ahimsa but because they are afraid to die. I have often wished that those who have no scruples about arms will dare to take them up. Then shall we be free of the burden of so-called ahimsaists who being afraid of injury seek to cover their cowardice under the name of ahimsa and corrupt the greatest truth of life. The same may be said of *Soham*. It is a scientific truth which we belie in our treatment of the untouchables. The charges recited in the last paragraph cannot be sustained. What is true of Hindus is also largely true of the other sects. Human nature works in the same manner in the same circumstances. Is a Mussalman never tolerant? I see hundreds in my peregrinations who are as tolerant as Hindus. I have seen Christians, too, not seldom but frequently tolerant. The writer will also find upon observation that those who are intolerant towards other sects are no less intolerant among themselves.

A BRAHMO PRAYER

Here is a letter from a Brahmo friend:

> I am glad to see that your attention was drawn by Dr. Rabindranath Tagore to the great offence that you had unknowingly given to the Brahmo Samaj a few years ago by calling Raja Rammohan Roy a pigmy. Now that you have explained[1] under what circumstances you had used that expression and how high is your admiration for the great founder of the Brahmo Samaj, I hope

[1] *Vide*" The Poet and the Charkha", 5-11-1925.

my Brahmo friends in Bengal and elsewhere will with equal magnanimity of mind accept your explanation and join you in your spiritual and social work which, if rightly understood, is the mission of the Brahmo Samaj. Your faith in prayer and simplicity of life, your insistence on using reason in interpreting Shastras, your love for Truth from all quarters, your reverence for great prophets like Christ, Buddha and Mohammed, your work for communal unity, the removal of untouchability and for temperance, —have already won for you the respect and admiration of many individual Brahmos. I hope and trust that now that you have removed the misunderstanding, the Brahmo Samaj will welcome your efforts for the regeneration of our motherland in matters spiritual and social. May this understanding bear good fruit under Divine Providence is my humble prayer.

Whilst I join the prayer, let me point out that I never called the great Raja a pigmy in the absolute sense. I have looked up the old file of *Young India*. The issue of 13-4-21 sets forth the circumstances under which I used the expression and the speech reads better even than I had recollections of it.[1] Nor have I ever known that the Brahmos have held aloof from participation in my activities any more than the others or that they have kept aloof because of my reference to the great reformer in my Cuttack speech. In any event if any have, I hope and pray that they will now respond. I note in the Brahmo friend's letter a conspicuous omission. The greatest of my activities is the charkha. I hold it to be the best part of my service—social, political and spiritual. For it includes these branches of service. My invitation to all to spin if only for half an hour daily for the sake of the starving millions of this land makes the movement at once both political and spiritual. Let the writer and the other Brahmo friends, therefore, take note of the little wheel and its product khaddar.

TREE PROTECTION

All religion is presumably in response to the human aspiration or need. Religion is some irresistible binding force. The cow was a peremptory need and we had cow-protection in India. Digging of wells where water is scarce is a religion. It would be ludicrous to dig wells where the water supply is inexhaustible. Similarly whilst tree plantation would be superfluous in, say, Travancore, in some parts of India it is a religious necessity. Such a place is undoubtedly Cutch. It has a beautiful climate but some parts threaten to be a desolate waste

[1] *Vide*" Speech at Mass Meeting, Cuttack", 24-3-1921.

unless there is proper rainfall in them. Rainfall can be almost regulated by deforestation or afforestation. Cutch needs conservation of every tree and every shrub. The most pleasant function therefore that I was required to perform in Cutch was the planting of these trees and inauguration of a tree planting and protection society. The enterprise was due to the genius of one man. His name is Jaykrishna Indrajit. Gujarat has very few specialists. Of these Sjt. Jaykrishna is among the most distinguished. He is a lover of plant life. He is the author of an accurate work on the fauna and flora of the Barda hills in the Porbunder State. He is now forest officer in Cutch and is trying to interest the people of Cutch and the State in forestry. He believes that with judicious plantation Cutch can be turned into a land flowing with milk and honey. He is of opinion, and I venture to share his belief, that the parts which the wind ruins by turning them into sand heaps can be turned into gardens if its inhabitants will pledge themselves each to plant and rear so many trees per year as they buy and keep cows. Whether all the alluring promises which he makes can be realized or not, there is no doubt that Cutch needs tree plantations on a large scale. It is wicked waste to destroy a single tree in Cutch for firewood. The State should import all the firewood or coal that it may need. It should be criminal to cut down a single tree in a place like Cutch. I hope, therefore, that the society established in Mandvi will open branches all over Cutch and, by co-operation between the people and the State, it is possible to cover the land with thousands of trees within a short time. At little expense the inhabitants of Cutch can make an immense addition to its wealth and beauty. They have a capable enthusiast to guide them. Will they have the sense and the energy to follow his guidance?

What is true of Cutch is almost equally true of Kathiawar. This land of immense possibilities is cut up into small States, each possessing sovereign powers with more or less limitations. There is little or no co-ordination between them. The people, therefore, in this little compact peninsula, though having everything else in common, are governed by different heads under different laws. The conservation of forests, systematic plantation of trees, irrigation and many other things cannot be properly done without a common policy. I reproduced some time ago the opinion of Mr. Elmshurst that, if the chiefs and the people of Kathiawar did not evolve and follow a common policy of tree plantation, Kathiawar was likely to suffer from a water famine of such magnitude as to make

life impossible in that land of fine soldiers that once were. In Cutch, Kathiawar, Rajputana, Sind and such other places a study of practical botany should be compulsory in all schools. And the princes can do worse than encourage in every possible way the habit of planting and rearing trees.

ALL -INDIA DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL

Here is the twelfth press list of All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund:

	Rs.	As.	Ps.
Already acknowledged	66,443	6	6
Part of Cutch collections	8,250	0	0
	74,693	6	6

More has been collected in Cutch, but it has not yet reached the treasurer. But adding the balance of Cutch collections does not mean much. I would remind workers that they should not be remiss in their zeal for collections. It is not proper for those who are to pay to wait for me to tour in their province before they would pay. All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund must be worthy of that friend of the people and of the cause to which it is to be devoted. Khadi cannot be organized all over India, if we do not have enough funds. Let the reader remember that every rupee means honest work for at least eight needy toilers of India.

At the meeting of the Council of All-India Spinners' Association which met for five days, for want of funds the Council had to decide that no new applications for grants of loans should be entertained till sufficient funds had been collected. The pending applications had to be considered in anticipation of funds. If, therefore, khadi work must be thoroughly organized, khadi lovers must collect without delay.

ALL-INDIA COW-PROTECTION ASSOCIATION

The Secretary has handed me the following list of yarn subscriptions received to date from members:

No.	Name	Yds.
	BOMBAY 4	
1.	Divalibai Jhaverdas	8,000
2.	Jamnadas Gandabhai	4.000

3. K. D. Lele		8,000
4. Shankarlal Gupta		20,000
	C. P. (MARATHI)	
5. Jamnalal Bajaj	Wardha	4,000
	GUJARAT 4	
6. M. K. Gandhi	Sabarmati	6,375
7. Kalyanji Narottam	Kotda	24,000
8. Chhaganlal Shivlal	Dahod	8,000
9. Maganlal K. Gandhi	Sabarmati	3,000
	MAHARASHTRA 20	
10. Yamutai Parvate	Wai	4,000
11. Parvatibai Chitnis	”	4,000
12. Yashodabai Bapat	”	4,000
13. Sarasvatibai Bapat	”	4,000
14. Anandibai Thatte	”	2,000
15. Venubai Bapaye	”	4,000
16. Bhagirathibai Bapaye	”	4,000
17. Gangabai Godbole	”	4,000
18. Parvatibai Sathe	”	4,000
19. Avantikabai Sathe	”	2,000
20. Venubai Bhave	”	2,000
21. Indirabai Marathe	”	4,000
22. Vyankatacharya Vale	”	4,000
23. Narayan Sadashiv Son	”	6,000
24. Manekbai Gujarbai	”	2,000
25. Durgatai Deshpande	”	2,000
26. Ramabai Tambe	Poona	24,000
27. Radhabai Gokhale	”	2,000
28. S. B. Parulekar	”	4,000
29. S. S. Dole	Thana	2,000

YARN AS DONATIONS

Bharata Govardhana Mandala & Co.,
through Sr. M. K. Joshi, Belgaum 19,500

I publish the list by way of encouragement to others to become

spinning members of the Association. A list from Wai is due to the effort of Chaunde Maharaj of Goverdhan Sanstha. I hope at an early date to publish the list of cash subscriptions. Greater support to the Association is necessary if it is to do its work efficiently.

Young India, 19-11-1925

127. OUR INSANITATION

During my wanderings nothing has been so painful to me as to observe our insanitation throughout the length and breadth of the land. I do not believe in the use of force for carrying out reforms, but when I think of the time that must elapse before the ingrained habits of millions of people can be changed, I almost reconcile myself to compulsion in this the most important matter of insanitation. Several diseases can be directly traced to insanitation. Hookworm, for instance, is such a direct result. Not a single human being who observes the elementary principles of sanitation need suffer from hookworm. The disease is not even due to poverty. The only reason is gross ignorance of the first principles of sanitation.

These reflections arise from the abominations I saw in Mandvi. The people of Mandvi are not poor. They cannot be classed as ignorant. And yet their habits are dirty beyond description. Men and women dirty the streets that they walk on with bare feet. They do this every morning. There is practically no such thing as a closet in that port. It was with the greatest difficulty that I was able to pass through these streets.

Let me not be hard on the poor inhabitants of Mandvi. I know that I saw nothing better in many streets of Madras. The sight of grown-up people lining the river banks and, after the performance, proceeding with criminal thoughtlessness to the river and cleaning themselves in it and injecting into its sacred water typhoid, cholera and dysentery germs has not yet faded from memory. This is the water that is used also for drinking. In the Punjab we violate God's laws by dirtying our roofs and breeding millions of flies. In Bengal the same tank quenches the thirst of man and beast and cleanses him and his pots. But I must not continue this description of our shame. Seeing that it is there, it would be sinful to hide it. But I dare not carry it any further. I know I have underdrawn the picture.

I would urge the enterprising people of Mandvi to lead the way

in model sanitation. Let them, whether the State help them or not, call in a specialist and spend money in improving their sanitation so as to make it perfect. 'Cleanliness is next to godliness.' We can no more gain God's blessings with an unclean body than with an unclean mind. A clean body cannot reside in an unclean city.

Let us not put off everything till swaraj is attained and thus put off swaraj itself. Swaraj can be had only by brave and clean people. Whilst the Government has to answer for a lot, I know that the British officers are not responsible for our insanitation. Indeed if we gave them free scope in this matter, they would improve our habits at the point of the sword. They do not do so because it does not pay. But they would gladly welcome and encourage any effort towards improved sanitation. In this matter Europe has much to teach us. We quote with pride a few texts from Manu or, if we are Mussalmans, from the *Quran*. We do not carry even these into practice. Europeans have deduced an elaborate code of sanitation from the principles laid down in these books. Let us learn these from them and adapt them to our needs and habits. How I would love to see not ornamental but useful sanitary associations whose members will deem it a privilege to take up the broom, the shovel and the bucket. Here is great national work for schoolboys, schoolgirls and collegiates all over India.

Young India, 19-11-1925

128. A TRUE CONGRESSMAN

(i)

You do not know what we (Congressmen) are. I will tell you. One well-known Congressman went to a comfortable house. He was not invited there. He had not written either to the owner. On reaching there he was asked by the owner:" Where are you going to stay?" This Congressman said," Here of course, where else do you think?" The owner was unprepared for this favour. But he had to make the best of the job though he never omitted to speak about the meanness of this guest who had imposed himself upon him. He even made opportunities for delicately insulting this Congressman who was too far gone to notice the insults. I must tell you that the unwilling host was not a Congressman.

(ii)

Another Congressman imposed himself on a Congress worker without notice. He had a large company with him and felt mightily offended

when he could not get all the convenience that he had expected. We Congressmen have come to think so much of ourselves that we presume we have a right to demand and receive the best service without the least cost.

These incidents were related to me by an earnest Congress worker with so much pain that I thought I should place them on record and draw a moral from them. Let no one, however, wear the cap unless it fits him. The incidents have been purposely defaced. I do not know the other side. No one, therefore, need waste his time in a vain effort to identify them.

The thing is to avoid copying examples quoted. A Congressman to be true must be above suspicion. Let him remember that he is out to gain swaraj by" legitimate and peaceful means". We have been a long time getting it. The obvious inference is that we have not at all adopted even in our mutual intercourse means that can bear scrutiny. Indeed, a correspondent once suggested that, whilst we must be truthful and peaceful towards opponents, we need not be that in our mutual dealings. But experience shows that we cannot be truthful and peaceful on some occasions and for some people only, if we are not so on all occasions. And if we will not be considerate towards one another, we shall not be considerate to the world outside. All the prestige acquired by the Congress will be gone if we are not scrupulously clean in our dealings within or without in every detail. Pounds will take care of themselves if we could but take care of the pennies.

A true Congressman is a true servant. He ever gives, never wants service. He is easily satisfied so long as his own comfort is concerned. He is always content to take a back seat. He is never communal or provincial. His country is his paramount consideration. He is brave to a fault because he has shed all earthly ambition, fear of Death himself. And he is generous because he is brave, forgiving because he is humble and conscious of his own failings and limitations.

If such Congressmen are rare, swaraj is far off and we must revise our creed. The fact that we have not got swaraj as yet is proof presumptive that we have not as many true Congressmen as we want. Be that however as it may, if I have placed on record the ugly incidents which can be multiplied, I must bear grateful testimony to the fact that there are nameless Congressmen, no doubt few today, but daily growing in number, who fulfil all the tests I have mentioned. They are unknown to fame. It is well that they are. Work would be

impossible if they wanted to shine in the limelight and expected honourable mention in Congress dispatches. Those who obtain even Victoria Crosses are by no means and necessarily always the bravest humanitarians. To the end of time the real heroes of the world will be never known. Their deeds remain imperishable. They are their own reward. Such men are the real scavengers without whom the earth will be a plague spot not worth living in. It has been my lot to meet such men and women in the Congress ranks. But for them the Congress will not be an institution to which it would be a pride to belong. There is no doubt at the present moment a hunt for offices and an unhealthy competition to capture the Congress. It is a disease which has come to the surface and it is bound to give place in the course of time to health. That will not happen if the Congress becomes anything but an institution for hard, honest and selfless toil.

Let the Congress be ever so democratic, but democracy must not be brag and bluster, a passport to receiving service from people. If *Vox populi* is to be *Vox dei*, it must be the voice of honesty, bravery, gentle-ness, humility and complete self-sacrifice. A woman[1] is to guide the Congress next year. Woman is nothing if she is not self-sacrificing and purity personified. Let us men and women of the Congress humble our-selves, purify our hearts and be worthy representatives of the dumb millions.

Young India, 19-11-1925

129. A CRY FROM GERMANY

Bora Dada[2] has received a letter from Germany from which I take the following:

> Corruption cries to the sky. All bad men live in wealth but all good men have a hard struggle to fight out; the poorest of all are we, town clerks, for our salary is very small, 35 dollars a month, and so is our life a perpetual starvation.
>
> I often desire fervently to come and see India, to sit at the feet of Mr. Gandhi. I am quite alone. I have neither wife nor children. A poor sick niece who has none but me keeps my house. I should become a priest, if there was not my poor niece. I cannot leave her in misery. However I am an academician. I have studied classical and modern foreign languages. I have also studied

[1] Sarojini Naidu
[2] Dwijendra Nath Tagore

Mysticism and Buddhism. I cannot find a better place nor a better salary. That is so in the Germany of today.

Before the terrible War 15 years ago I was an independent man, an investigator; now, after the terrible decline in value of our money-standard, I am a beggar like a thousand other learned men in Germany. Now I am 45 years old and you cannot think how desperate and hopeless I am, what a great disgust I feel in Europe. Here the men have no soul and are wild beasts who devour one another. Could I go to India? Could I become an Indian philosopher? I believe in India and I hope India will save us.

The opening lines of this letter might well have been written by any Indian clerk. His position is no better than the German clerk's. In India too" bad men live in wealth and good men have a hard struggle to fight out." It is therefore a case of distance lending enchantment to the view. Friends like this German writer must be warned against regarding India as better than Germany or any other country. Let him realize that riches are no test of goodness. Indeed poverty often is the only test. A good man voluntarily embraces poverty. If the writer was at one time in affluent circumstances, Germany was at that time exploiting other countries. The remedy lies with every individual in every country. Each one has to find his peace from within. And peace to be real must be unaffected by outside circumstances. The writer says that, but for his poor neice, he might have become a priest. This seems to me to be a distorted view. It would almost appear that the writer's present state is somewhat better than that of a priest of his imagination. For now he has at least one poor person to look after. Under the priestly licence, he would have none to look after! The fact, however, is that as a true priest he would have hundreds of nieces and even nephews to look after. As a priest the sphere of his responsibility would be as wide as that of the universe. Whereas now he slaves for himself and his niece, as a priest he would be expected to slave for the whole of distressed mankind. I would then venture to advice this friend and others like him without adopting the clerical robe to identify themselves with all in distress. They would then have all the advantages of the priestly calling without being exposed to its terrible temptations.

The German friend would like to become an Indian philosopher. I assure him that there are no territorial distinctions in philosophy. An Indian philosopher is as good or as bad as a European philosopher.

One thing the writer, in my opinion, has guessed somewhat correctly. Though India has her share of wild and soulless two-footed beasts, probably the tendency of the average Indian mind is to discard the wild beast in it. And it is my certain conviction that, if India retains the way she chose in 1921, Europe has reason to hope much from India. She chose then with the greatest deliberation the way of truth and peace and symbolized it in her acceptance of the charkha and non-co-operation with all that was evil. From all I know of her, she has not yet rejected it and is not likely to.

Young India, 19-11-1925

130. SPINNING IN AMERICA

A friend has sent me a cutting from an American newspaper published in New London whose name I cannot trace on the cutting. It contains a bright article by Cassie Hardwick on the spinning-wheel. It shows the hold it had upon the Americans during the War of Independence and how according to the writer, the spinning-wheel contributed to success. The chief interest however consists for the reader in the fact that even in America there is a revival of the old art. I give below some of the interesting extracts:[1]

Young India, 19-11-1925

131. SOCIAL CO-OPERATION

I offer no apology to the reader for publishing in this issue Dr. Hariprasad's second letter on Ahmedabad Municipality. By and large, I do not waste the time of readers of *Navajivan* by discussing matters relating to a particular city or village. I utilize it for dealing with matters that concern the whole of Gujarat or the whole of India. And the space that I am taking up now in *Navajivan* to describe the lanes of Ahmedabad is justified by the rule that what holds good of one place holds good of all places. For the insanitary conditions we see in Ahmedabad and the bad habits that cause these conditions are found all over India. If people are trained to adopt sanitary habits even in a single town and if we could make the place a model in this respect, it would be easier to bring about sanitary conditions at all other places

[1] *Vide*" Spinning in America", 19-11-1925.

through such training.

Our carelessness and lack of social co-operation are responsible for the terribly insanitary conditions that prevail amongst us. In those spheres where non-co-operation is called for, either consciouslyor unconsciously, we practise co-operation; for instance, we co-operate with many of our bad habits; we co-operate with the administrative machinery of the Government, knowing that it is destroying the nation's vitality; we co-operate with our insanitary conditions which sap our physical strength and make us victims of plague and such other diseases, However, we fail to co-operate with our neighbours in whose happiness lies our own happiness and whose convenience we should consult in everything we do. There is a legal maxim which is not meant to foster barren legal arguments but which suggests a religious principle:" Use your property in such a manner that it does no harm to others." The *Gita* says this very thing in another way." He alone can be called a seer, he alone can be called learned, who sees himself in others and others in himself." At every step we violate this basic principle of non-violence which is universally applicable and is at the same time the noblest of all. This violation in the case of our carelessness with regard to performing our excretary functions has moreover dangerous consequences.

How much carelessness is involved in my throwing the rubbish collected from my compound into that of my neighbour's or in throwing bits of glass out of my window, in throwing rubbish, in pouring out water and in spitting out of my window with total disregard of those who walk down below? What a great deal of violence is involved in all this! What a barbarous non-co-operation with society! What thoughtlessness in being indifferent to the fact that water from my drain could do harm to others! If we only realize that the public is a part of us and that we in turn are a part of it, our insanitary conditions would become an impossibility and by freeing ourselves of diseases, etc., we would add to the nation's strength and even its wealth. A writer has said that dirt is matter misplaced. The sand which covers the river banks adds to the beauty of nature and the welfare of human beings; that very sand becomes dust if a particle of it gets into one's eyes; if it falls into food, the food becomes unfit for consumption. Human excreta, if thrown on the road on which one has to walk, becomes filth, gives out an offensive odour and becomes the root cause of many diseases; while the same substance, buried in the

field, serves as manure which is as good as gold. Farmers collect it and willingly pay a price for it. The same may be said of all other things. In these circumstances, if society is taught the ordinary rules to be observed with regard to one's excretary functions and, if it acts in accordance with these, it would result in social co-operation and the human excreta, now regarded as filth, could be carried over by us to fields and transformed into golden manure.

This task cannot be accomplished by Dr. Hariprasad alone. Nor can a handful of persons do it. The help of the entire society is required for this purpose and this could be obtained in two ways. One way is to frame strict rules and enforce them, while the other is to explain the facts to people, create interest in such work and persuade them voluntarily to make improvements.

The four instances quoted by Dr. Hariprasad are worthy of emulation. Some persons belonging to the wealthy class seem to hold the view that they can be happy and well-protected if only they build marble palaces worth lakhs of rupees and then raise hedges all round them. In fact, if there is dirt in the surrounding area, they will have built for themselves a prison of marble instead of mud, they will be surrounded by several foul odours and exposed to several diseases. If they spend on training people in removing dirt and maintaining the purity of the atmosphere, half of what they spend on palaces, they would get the full benefit of their own palaces and also benefit others. In this manner they would secure a happy blending of self-interest and benevolence.

In my opinion, the removal of insanitary conditions in a city like Ahmedabad is not possible through increase in taxation alone. Some increase may perhaps be necessary to meet the expenses on sanitation; however, this can be brought about in a large measure only through the philanthropy of rich persons. Could we not have small children's parks in every locality in Ahmedabad? Could not the roads be broadened? Could not the by-lanes be kept so clean that we may, without any hesitation, walk in them barefoot?

All these improvements are only possible if there is co-operation between the wealthy class and the poor, that is, if there is social co-operation between all citizens and if the rich regard the entire city as their own and spend their riches on beautifying it. They should also realize that wealth spent in this way begets wealth. If a good road is constructed in a city, the value of the buildings appreciates. Similarly,

if the roads in Ahmedabad are widened and kept clean the adjoining land will rise in value. In addition to this, there is an economic gain which follows from improved health of the people and the resulting increase in their vitality and their life-span. A beginning has to be made, just now, with keeping clean the roads that we already have. This beginning will finally result in the widening of narrow roads, in the making of small parks in various localities and in beautifying the city by bringing into view the temples and mosques now surrounded by ugly buildings.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-11-1925

132. REMINISCENCES OF KUTCH [*—II*]

TREE-PRESERVATION AND PLANTING

Among the questions I had to consider during my tour of Kutch, one was that of planting trees and protecting them. In some respects, Kutch may be regarded as a part of Sind. The latter however can subsist because it has the advantage of the Indus flowing through it. Had it not been for this river, Sind would have been ruined. Kutch enjoys the advantage of no such river. Hence few trees are found in Kutch, barring a few places like Anjar and Mundra. And the rainfall is low wherever there is no vegetation. Such is the plight of Kutch. The rainfall is so slight and irregular that almost every year there is a famine there. The shortage of water is perpetual. If trees are planted in Kutch regularly and diligently, the rainfall there can be increased and the land made more fertile. Shri Jaykrishna Indrajit is making great efforts in this direction. He made me plant a tree in a lovely open space at some distance from Mandvi. This was, I feel, the most pleasant function I performed in Kutch. On that very day, a society for the protection of trees was also founded there. The purpose for which this society was founded, the purpose with which I was made to plant trees, will, I hope, be crowned with success.

Shri Jaykrishna Indrajit is a gem of Gujarat. There are only a fewin Gujarat who are engrossed in their own field of activity. Shri Jaykrishna Indrajit enjoys a pride of place among such leading persons. He knows each tree and each leaf in Barda. He has such great faith in planting trees that he accords it a place of prime importance.

And he believes that a great deal can be achieved by these means. His enthusiasm and his faith in this matter are infectious. I have long ago been infected by these. Both the ruler and the subjects can, if they wish, take full advantage of the presence in their midst of such a wise man and raise a beautiful forest.

Johannesburg was a similar region. Nothing but grass grew there at one time. There was not a single building. Within forty years this same place became a golden city. There was a time when people had to pay twelve annas for a single bucket of water and sometimes had to make do with soda-water. Sometimes they had to wash even their face and hands with the latter! Today, there is water there and there are trees also. From the very beginning, owners of gold mines converted the region into a relatively green belt and increased the amount of rainfall by enthusiastically bringing over saplings from far off places and planting them. There are other such instances also where the amount of rainfall has been reduced by deforestation and where it has been increased by afforestation,

A great deal of improvement can be brought about if the wealthy class in Kutch takes interest in this work which is a dharma for them. In such a region protection of trees is a dharma in the same way as cow-protection. The person who rears a cow is, we believe, rewarded for this meritorious deed. Similarly, in regions such as Kutch and Kathiawar, anyone who grows trees should be rewarded for this equally meritorious deed. Not a single tree should be cut down for use as fuel or for any other purpose. It is cheaper to import wood for fuel from other parts than to cut down trees in the vicinity for use as fuel. The person who cuts down a tree straightway gets fuel free of cost; but who can compensate Kutch for the harm caused to it by this action. It takes ten years or more for a tree to grow big enough to provide wood. How can one think of cutting down a tree on which ten years of labour has been spent and which affords protection to the soil and man in various ways?

In Kathiawar the situation is almost the same as in Kutch, and the problem of tree-preservation is becoming increasingly important. However, the problem here is more difficult, as Kathiawar, though a small and beautiful peninsula, is sub-divided into so many small States[1] which are independent of one another so that unless there is

[1] The number of the then Princely States in Kathiawar exceeded a hundred.

consensus of opinion among them on such matters, the task of planting trees or protecting them cannot be carried on in a systematic manner. Despite all this, Kutch and Kathiawar should, unless they wish to become barren tracts, immediately adopt drastic measures.

INSANITARY CONDITIONS IN MANDVI

I was taken inside the city of Mandvi in order to give *darshan* on the very day on which I planted a tree at a clean spot in pleasant surroundings swept by a gentle breeze. The business of giving *darshan* become very distasteful to me because while doing so I got a glimpse of the insanitary conditions in Mandvi. In the early hours of the morning, when people should purify themselves and pray to God in a sacred atmosphere, aged men and women of Mandvi, as well as children, adorn its streets with their own filth. Here is no inhibition arising out of a sense of shame, no considerations of hygiene, no feeling of compassion for society. The citizens of Mandvi are not ignorant, they are not fools. They have gone round the world, been abroad, seen clean cities. One cannot understand how despite all this they do not hesitate to soil the streets on which they have to walk barefoot, on which their children always have to play and where they have sometimes to hold feasts. I am ashamed even to describe fully the insanitary conditions that prevail in Mandvi. The reader should imagine it for himself from what I have said. True, the horrible sight that I saw in Mandvi is also to be seen elsewhere. I recall having seen a similar sight in Porbunder in my childhood. Everywhere in this sacred land I have come across such insanitary conditions, such profound ignorance and gross violation of the rules governing the performance of the excretary functions and I have been pained by this.

However, even if the entire world commits a sin, that does not give us a right to commit it. Even so, the insanitary conditions in Mandvi cannot be excused on the ground that such conditions also prevail elsewhere. And because I regard it as part of my dharma of service to write of my reminiscences of Kutch and describe conditions just as I found them, I cannot refrain from putting down these painful recollections of Mandvi. What is true of Mandvi is also true of other towns and villages of Kutch. However, Mandvi is a port, the people there have presumably more courage and wisdom and they have wealth; hence they should be regarded as being more culpable. Whether the State gives any assistance or not, the people should immediately adopt the necessary sanitary measures for the city. With

the help of experts in sanitation, citizens should construct private as well as public lavatories. The *mahajans* should take more interest in the removal of these insanitary conditions in Mandvi than they do in treating the untouchables with contempt. They should rather excommunicate those who violate the rules of sanitation and perform their natural functions outside the lavatories provided for the purpose or misuse the lavatories. By doing this, they can add to their own prestige. This is a work which can be done readily and it does not involve any great expense. A little enthusiasm is all that is required. Time and again, Mandvi is gripped by the plague. It should be surprising if the plague did not break out in a place where mother earth is insulted so badly. The air of Mandvi is naturally so pure that no outbreak of plague or cholera can occur in that city. But we, of our own accord, pollute the air. The wise reader will understand without my saying it that keeping ourselves healthy is closely bound up with the abolition of untouchability.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-11-1925

133. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, AHMEDABAD

November 22, 1925

Mr. Gandhi opened this afternoon the Youth Week organized by the local students. Addressing the students, he said he was spared formal public functions whenever he came to Ahmedabad for taking rest, but when he was asked to open the Youth Week in place of Mr. Jayakar, who could not come owing to illness, he gladly consented. He was glad to hear that the students of the Government College and the National College had co-operated in organizing that function. He never expected them to hate one another. He was at present laying emphasis on the charkha but he would not do so before them. He would ask them during the Youth Week to clean the streets of Ahmedabad like the sweepers.[1]

He had been noticing a spirit of depression among them, and he wanted them to be optimistic. He expected of them sacrifice and self-control, without which their movement would be a failure. If their goal was dharmaraj, it would be impossible to attain it without sacrifice. Even if they got it without sacrifice they would not be able to retain it. If they really wanted to do work they should uplift themselves and the

[1] This is from *The Bombay Chronicle*. What follows has been taken from *The Hindu*.

nation. He continued:

You can picket liquor shops quietly and advise drunkards in their houses, in these seven days, to refrain from drink, just like the Salvation Army. You must subject yourselves to introspection and come out like Ramachandra. Take a vow to cleanse your hearts, keeping God, and not Satan, as your witness, and make your life simple and easy. If you do these, you will have truly observed the Youth Week. May God give you that intellect and strength.

The Bombay Chronicle and *The Hindu*, 23-11-1925

134. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SABARMATI,
November 23, 1925

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

93 BAZARGATE

BOMBAY

DEAR SON KEEP CHEERFUL. AVOID CROWD AROUND. MAHADEV LEAVING TONIGHT.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy; Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

135. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

AHMEDABAD,
November 23, 1925

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

93, BAZARGATE

BOMBAY

SORRY MAHADEV CANNOT COME. HE HAS SUDDENLY DEVELOPED FEVER.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

136. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Monday [*November 23, 1925*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I am under pressure, so I am writing with the right hand. You must have received my express telegram earlier.[2] But when do things happen as man would wish? It is now five o'clock. As I eat, Mahadev says he is shivering. He is getting fever. It is already 100° F., so how can I send him? It seems hardly any use sending Devdas. You do not need nursing; you need Mahadev's company. If you need Devdas, send me a telegram.

God will always do good. Do not worry. Do your best and concentrate on the *Gita*.

Going by Nargisbehn's letter and Chhagnalal's talk I had decided to send Mahadev. Do not try to write to me yourself. But somebody should always write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

137. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

November 24, 1925

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
93 BAZAR GATE
BOMBAY

SWAMI[3] LEAVING TONIGHT STEAD MAHADEV. CHEER UP. BLESSINGS.

BAPU

From the original Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum ane Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The addressee received this letter on November 24, 1925. The Monday preceding this date fell on November 23.

[2] Gandhiji was anxious about the health of the addressee who was suffering from tuberculosis; *vide* the preceding two items and" Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", 18-11-1925.

[3] Swami Anand

138. A SILENCE-DAY NOTE

[On or before *November 24, 1925*][1]

It is not usual for me to allow such things to appear in the pages of *Young India*. Though much as I value the opinion of so great and so good a writer as Romain Rolland, I cannot afford to print his certificates. But an accident is responsible for the publication of the foregoing as also premature introduction to the reader of Mirabai as we in the Ashram call Miss Madeleine Slade, more for the sake of the convenience of children and those many who do not know English than for anything else. As an Indian name had to be chosen the one that best describes Miss Slade's aspirations was chosen. The accident happened this way. As Mirabai was sitting by my bedside spinning her *takli* which she learnt the moment she took it in her hand, she pleadingly asked," Can I not render some service to you during your fast?"" Oh yes, you can edit *Young India* for me this week," I replied smilingly. She said," If you mean seriously I take up the challenge." And an old man of India was beaten by a mere English girl. She had to share the responsibility with Mahadev Desai for editing the current issue. Hence the foregoing advertisement. I had not the heart to reject it. Let the reader know that I had not the strength to give anything original in its place. I was loath to replace it with an admirable extract from Mr. Page's pamphlet[2], which has been crowded out this week.

From the original: C.W. 5445. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9147

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's fast which began on November 24, 1925

[2] On the causes of World War I. For Gandhiji's remarks on the pamphlet published in *Young India* in 21 instalments, *vide*" Notes", 26-11-1925.

139. LETTER TO NARGIS D. CAPTAIN[1]

November 24 [*1925*][2]

Don't You Be Alarmed

Irregularities on the part of many boys have necessitated my undertaking the lightest fast I can, that is, seven days. If I could be sure of [your] not knowing about it at all till it was finished, I would certainly have kept the news from you till it was finished, but as so many people know locally that it is almost impossible to keep it from you. I do not want you to run up to Sabarmati either. But you must go straightaway to Kutch and restore yourself completely. You may depend upon it that I have not taken this fast without much thought. I have given two nights to it. The first symptoms came upon me on Sunday[3] night. I made the final decision this morning at the school prayer meeting. I have become so much used to fasting that seven days is merely nothing, and I do not know that I shall not feel even physically the better for it in the end, as I certainly did after 21 days, fast[4]. This letter is not only for you sisters but it is also for Mithubehn and Jaibehn. I am not going to write to them separately, and I appoint you as my general agent to console all those who may out of false compassion unnecessarily disturb themselves.

From a photostat: S. N. 10662

140. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

AHMEDABAD ,
November 24, 1925

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

I have your letter. Whatever your views are about the acceptance of office, I could see no harm in your consenting to serve on the proposed deputation to South Africa, and I know that you would be the tower of strength.[5] Whether you go or anybodyelse, the terms of appointment should be ascertained. I have dealt with the matter

[1] Grand-daughter of Dadabhai Naoroji
[2] From the reference to the seven days' fast
[3] November 22, 1925
[4] From September 18 to October 8, 1924.
[5] Jayakar, however, declined the Government's invitation.

slightly in the forthcoming issue of *Young India*. If the terms restrict the members in an undesirable manner or if they require them to accept the position, which we as nationalists would hold to be unacceptable, naturally no self-respecting Indian would serve on the deputation. You do not want me to say what the deputation should do in South Africa, though I have said something about it too in the article I have written in *Young India*. You have mentioned the differences between yourself and Panditji[1]. I have a letter from a friend asking me to compose these differences, but I did not then feel called upon [to write] either to you or to Panditji, but as you have incidentally mentioned them, may I suggest your seeking an interview with Panditji and settling the differences if it is at all possible? Though I have not been able to follow the newspaper reports, from all I hear there is not even a common understanding as to what it is on which you differ.

Yours sincerely,

M. R. JAYAKAR, ESQR.
391, THAKURDWAR, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 10663

141. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

AHMEDABAD,
November 24, 1925

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have your letter. I hope I would have written you three days ago.

I would love the idea of Kamala going to Switzerland for treatment and taking Jawaharlal with her. The cure would be certainly more permanent than hoped to have here, but I suggest she should not be sent during winter, but only in April. At the present moment, therefore, I am quite clear in my mind that she should be sent to Lucknow and that Jawaharlal should give her as much time as it is possible for him. My whole heart goes out in your domestic troubles. I hope that Kamala would be soon restored to health.

Even though it is owing to the domestic trouble, I do not mind this brief interruption in your toil, you do need some rest

[1] Motilal Nehru

fromincessant toil. Political troubles and differences will be always with us. A brief interruption, therefore, will not matter much. I have not been reading the reports of all the meetings, but I have been reading the head lines and a few sentences here and there, and I was able to gather from this cursory reading that you were having a very successful time; of this I have no doubt.

You refer me to an interview I am said to have given, but I have been guilty of no such atrocity. Our friend. Sadanand[1] approached me and I sent a message to him that I had nothing to say. The Associated Press correspondent had been to me more than once and I have given him the same reply. I have asked Devdas to let me know if anything has appeared in the Press. He too has seen nothing except an extract from some correspondent, which I think has been lifted from *Young India*.

Mrs. Naidu was in Ahmedabad for one day, but she told me she broke her journey merely to see how I was looking, after having dropped some pounds of flesh in Kutch. She told me she was coming here at the end of the month to discuss the contents of her address. She is at present in Bombay. I leave for Bombay Satyagraha Ashram on 7th December. I reach Bombay on 8th. I leave Bombay on 9th for Wardha reaching there on 10th. If you think it is not too late we can meet at Wardha, but Mrs. Naidu may herself find that to be too late. I am free whenever you can come here and certainly equally free in Wardha. If you hear that I have been fasting again, pray do not be alarmed, it is only a week's fast of purification undertaken in connection with misbehaviour on the part of youngsters who are undergoing training in the Ashram School attached to the Ashram. Such fasting has become part of my need. It does me good and at least temporarily keeps the surroundings clean. Fast breaks on Tuesday morning, and I shall have no difficulty in regaining my strength almost immediately after. I have written to Dastane already. I have spoken to Gangadharrao personally because he was here.

I hope you will keep good health in spite of extra worry and pressure that the crisis means for you.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 10664

[1] Of the *Free Press Journal*

142. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Tuesday [*November 24, 1925*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI

I have your letters but I cannot be so easily satisfied. I want your handwriting to be as good as print; it is not going to improve unless you make a habit of delineating every letter you write. You should write as meticulously as you did the last sentence. I shall also want a picture of your mental state. You should not altogether omit to write, fearing someone might read your letters. You should not omit to write about any improvement that is worth mentioning. If there is no loose earth lying around for use at the lavatory, you should get some from near abouts. If this cannot be done, you should preserve the ash from the fuel; this can be regularly used after it is sifted. There ought to be some separate arrangement for the disposal of urine. I can make a number of other suggestions but you too should study the situation and find out many of the things for yourself.

Somebody have written to you about my fast. So I do not write anything about it nor about other happenings at the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 551. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

143. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

November 24, 1925

God will do nothing but good. You should not worry. You should take all care and meditate on the *Gita.*

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 82

[1] From the reference to the fast

144. NOTES

A SILENT WORKER

No country possesses a record of the names of its noblest sons. They are known only by their works like the authors of the most valuable ancient books. There are many young men who die in the service of their country and yet remain unknown to fame. I have received the news of the death of such a silent worker in the cause of khadi in Arambagh, Hooghly. He and his friends went to one of the most malarial districts of Bengal first to tend and nurse the sick when an epidemic broke out in that district. They remained there to develop khadi among and through its needy people. This is what his friend and fellow-worker writes about him:[1]

> It is with deep sorrow that I send you the news of the death of my . . . friend . . . Hazra . . . the best worker of the centre. . . . He was the" nurse" of the centre.... He could spin well and was a weaver withal. Now God takes him away for the higher grade service, and as you so beautifully wrote to me, for service to be rendered under" better auspices". He leaves behind him his parents and two younger brothers.

May this noble soul have peace and may his parents and brothers preserve the memory of the deceased by continuing the work left by him. For Hazra I do believe that he has left the corruptible body having outgrown its use and has gone to a better state.

JUVENILE BRANCH

Little children have been writing to ask why they cannot become members even though they may be confirmed khadi weavers and be spinning most regularly. Among these is a girl nine years old. The proposition is being seriously considered to form a juvenile branch. I am now engaged in wooing a little girl to take the lead and trying to secure her parents' permission to form such a branch. It would be useless to form it, if only a few boys and girls come forward. It would be worth while only if many parents co-operate to make it a success. Every school, government or national, can help the movement which has been made purposely non-political. No one need fight shy of itwho does not dread the political consequence of khadi, viz., the

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

displacing through it of foreign cloth. The juvenile branch, if it comes into being, will be a true league of mercy to bind little children to an *act* of sacrifice for the sake of the famishing millions.

THE WHY OF IT

An American friend sent me sometime ago a pamphlet written by Mr. Page with an introduction by Mr. Harry Emerson Fosdick. It is an illuminating essay on the causes of the late world War. An examination of the causes of that great upheaval will never be considered stale and as these have been compressed in a closely reasoned pamphlet of 89 pages octavo, I make no apology for reproducing some of the most telling extracts from it. The author who appears to be an earnest Christian seeker divides the causes under five heads—economic imperialism, militarism, alliances secret diplomacies, fear. Under the first head he remarks:[1]

The extracts[2] regarding the other four causes will be reproduced later as space permits.

The following is the second instalment of the causes of the Great War from Mr. Page's pamphlet. I had not the heart to remove anything save the footnotes.[3]

I give below the next instalment from Mr. Page's illuminating pamphlet without removing a single word except the footnotes.[4]

Mr. Page thus concludes his chapter on the losses of the war.[5]

In the concluding chapter of his pamphlet Mr. Page discusses the methods of preventing war. The reader will find the writer weak in his statement of remedies, not because he is weak in his belief, but because it is new ground for everybody. Nobody wants war. But how can an age-long institution be easily destroyed? Is it at all possible to do away with it? Let us listen to what the author has to say. He suggests five measures. I present to the reader the first of them in this issue of *Young India*[6].

[1] Extracts not reproduced here

[2] Not reproduced here; these were published in *Young India* in 21 instalments, the last one in the issue dated 6-5-1926. Gandhiji,s introductory remarks are reproduced together here, and not under their respective dates. For dates of the instalments, *vide* Appendix" Swaraj or Death", 27-8-1925.

[3] In *Young India*, 10-12-1925

[4] In *Young India*, 17-12-1925

[5] In *Young India*, 18-2-1926

[6] Of 25-2-1926, under the title" Can It Be Prevented?"

His last chapter is called by Mr. Page" What Shall the Churches Do about War?" I have given it a name more suited to thereaders of *Young India*.[1] They will note that much of Mr. Page's argument applies to all religions.

In the sections into which Chapter IV is divided Mr. Page has examined in his own able manner the different reasons summarized by him, the first being" *War is inherently and essentially a supreme violation of Jesus' way of life"*. Though for the orthodox Christian there is much in the section that is worth reading, the average reader will not understand the reference summarized by the writer. But the writer shows that modern war is a calamity which no man with any moral sense can contemplate with equanimity and quotes the following from Winston S. Churchill's writings:

> It differed from all ancient wars in the immense power of the combatants and their fearful agencies of destruction. . . . Torture and cannibalism were the only two expedients that the civilized, scientific, Christian States had been able to deny themselves. . . .

The second reason why men of religion should oppose war is that it is" *ineffective as a means of furthering Christ's Kingdom and is self-defeating in its very nature"* and he proceeds. . . .[2]

We are now nearing the end of Mr. Page's valuable pamphlet. I omit the last three sections as not being sufficiently interesting for the readers of Young India. The third section of the last chapter is an attempt to show that" *the absolute repudiation of war by individuals, groups and corporate bodies is the most effective way of compelling Governments to abandon the war system and to discover more adequate means of securing safety and justice"*. The following paragraphs are useful for all religiously-minded men and for all reform.[3]

Young India, 26-11-1925

[1] In *Young India*, 22-4-1926, under the title" How Can Religion Help?"'

[2] In *Young India*, 29-4-1926

[3] In *Young India*, 6-5-1926

145. INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The departure of C. F. Andrews for South Africa, the impending departure of the Government of India deputation and the impending arrival of a deputation to India headed by Dr. Abdur Rahman make the South African question the question of the hour. For the Indian settlers it is a question of life and death. The Union Government seem to be determined to put an end to Indian existence in South Africa not by straightforward means offorcible expulsion but by the dishonest process of squeezing. The proposed legislation practically deprives them of all the honourable avenues of earning and by so doing it seeks to deprive them of every shred of self-respect. The Union Government will cease to be troubled about the Indian question when they have ceased to be troubled by the presence in their midst of self-respecting and independent Indians and have to deal only with labourers, waiters, cooks and the like. They want a few servants, they do not want equals, fellow farmers or fellow traders.

The answer therefore returned by the Union Government to the Indian deputation that waited on them is not surprising. They have avowed their determination to proceed with the proposed legislation. They will only consider" constructive suggestions" in details. They have not made up their minds about a round table conference.

I expect a great deal from Mr. Andrews' presence in South Africa if the settlers show firmness and cohesion among themselves. The Government of India deputation can do much if they have instructions not to yield on fundamentals. No repatriation and no curtailment, at the very least, of rights existing at the time of the Settlement of 1914. The proposed legislation is a deprivation of these rights.

Anyone who knows anything of the condition of South Africa knows that there is no real active opposition on the part of the mass of the European population to the presence of the Indian settlers. If there was, the overwhelmingly large European population would without legislative aid make it impossible for the Indian settler to remain in South Africa. Nor is the original population of South Africa hostile to the settlers. It is because the general European and Native population is not only not ill disposed towards the Indian settler but willingly and

freely deals with him that he can at all live there. The proposed legislation is an attempt to interfere with the free mercantile intercourse between Europeans and Natives on the one hand and Indians on the other. If therefore the Government of India take up a firm attitude the Union Government's case must fall to pieces. The legitimate fear of being swamped by India's millions having been removed in 1914 the Union Government were in honour bound to grant and guarantee to the resident Indian population full rights of inter-migration, trade and ownership of land. The present is an attempt to go back upon the understanding. Ireproduce[1] elsewhere the correspondence embodying the Agreement of 1914, for the guidance of the reader.

Young India, 26-11-1925

146. MAULANA AZAD'S APPEAL

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad has very considerately sent me a copy of his Press message on the Hindu-Muslim question. He is one of the very few men who may be claimed to be sincerely desirous to attain unity. He has asked me to call a meeting of the Working Committee in order to consider the question. I am not doing so before the Congress week at Cawnpore because the annual function is too near to warrant an earlier meeting of the Working Committee. I wish the Committee could discover a solution of the problem. But I must frankly confess that I despair. That is not to say that I despair of a solution altogether. I despair of the Congress discovering and enforcing a solution. Let us not conceal from ourselves the truth that the Congress does not represent the fighters in either camp. Not till those unseen ones who are behind the fighters are under the Congress influence and the newspaper editors who are fomenting dissensions are either converted to the unity doctrine or cease to have any influence, can the Congress do any useful work in the direction of unity. My bitter experience has taught me that they who take the name of unity mean disunion. The atmosphere around us is as false as was the atmosphere in Europe at the time of the last War. The newspapers never told the truth. The representatives of their respective nations had made of lying a fine art. All was fair in War. The old formula of

[1] Not reproduced here; *vide"* Letter from E. M. Gorges", 30-6-1914 and" Letter to E. M. Gorges", 30-6-1914.

Jehovah thirsting for the blood even of children was revived in all its nakedness. And so it is today in what may be called a miniature war between Hindus and Muslims. We may lie and cheat for saving our faiths. This has been said to me not by one mouth but many.

This, however, is no cause for the slightest despair. I know that the demon of disunion is at his last gasp. A lie has no bottom. Disunion is a lie. Even if it is sheer self-interest, it will bring about unity. I had hoped for disinterested unity. But I will welcome a unity based even on mutual interest. Only it will not come in the way suggested by the Maulana Saheb. It will come, when it does come, in a way perhaps least expected by us. God is the Master Trickster. He knows how to confound us, frustrate our 'knavish tricks'. He sends death when one least expects it.He sends life when we see no sign of it. Let us admit our abject helplessness, let us own that we are utterly defeated. Out of the dust of our humility will, I feel sure, be built up an impregnable citadel of unity.

I am sorry I am unable to return a more encouraging answer to the Maulana's appeal. Let him take comfort from the fact that I share his desire for union with the same intensity that he will credit himself with. What does it matter if I feel unable to share his faith in his plan of achieving unity? I shall do nothing to hinder it. I shall pray for the success of every sincere effort in that direction. My ceasing to fret does not mean the unity is no longer an article of my creed. Let me re-declare my undying faith in it. For the sake of it I must renounce the privilege of being a maker of the unity that is coming. I have the wisdom to stand aside and wait when my interference can only disturb the wound without healing.

Young India, 26-11-1925

147. A NOTEWORTHY RESULT

A correspondent writes:[1]

This shows the silent march of khadi. Spinners such as are mentioned by the correspondent have been discovered by me everywhere. This is, however, a striking record. Results of such

[1] The letter, not reproduced here, gave an analysis of 152 spinners in Tirupati including M.L.A.s, lawyers, doctors, teachers, clerks, merchants, students, women, and children.

voluntary spinning without the assistance of and connection with any association are rarely known. In my opinion therefore it is merely a question of time—not very far off—when khadi will become universal. And if it becomes popular through voluntary effort no machinery worked by power can possibly compete with it.

ENCOURAGING FIGURES

The following figures for the year ending 30th September, 1925 for khadi in Tamil Nadu are worth noting:

	1924-25	1923-24
Production by the Khadi Board	Rs. 3,08,826	2,90,148
Production by other aided and unaided producers	Rs. 3,96,962	1,82,216
Total	Rs. 7,05,788	4,72,364

Retail sales alone during 1924-25 amounted to Rs. 4,45,324, nearly-as much as the total production of the previous year.

The total sales for the year including sales to other provinces amount to Rs. 8,32,846 as against Rs. 3,65,858, the figure for 1923-24.

Both production and sales have increased this year, the former by 50 per cent, the latter have more than doubled.

Young India, 26-11-1925

148. TAKLI SPINNING IN AHMEDABAD[1]

Shrimati Anasuyabehn organized a competition in takli spinning among boys in the Labour Union schools in Ahmedabad . . . 202 boys . . . took part....

The stock of yarn spun by these boys on the takli is so great that Shrimati Anasuyabehn expects to clothe them next year with cloth woven out. of this yarn. .. .

No wonder Sjt. Rajagopalachari was much struck with the demonstration and hoped that the experiment would be imitated in all national and municipal schools... .

Municipal commissioners, please note.

Young India, 26-11-1925

[1] From this report by Mahadev Desai, only excerpts are reproduced here.

149. '0UR TIME A TRUST!'[1]

Often in these columns have I reported Gandhiji having said to various audiences on various occasions that our time is a trust. But the lesson was burnt deep into me the other day only when I myself happened to be the offender. I have often laughed at these people's expense. Let them laugh today at mine.

Outwardly it is a story of how I began and ended the study of French.... I asked my teacher [Miss Madeleine Slade] whether Gandhiji knew that I had begun French. She said, he did and that" he was amused and surprised."" Surprised" gave me a sort of alarm and I began to imagine in my mind what was coming. And scarcely had I finished the second lesson when the message came that I was wanted by Gandhiji.

I went, of course, in fear and trembling, though hardly prepared for all that followed. There was some casual inquiry and I thought only my consciencehad made a coward of me. But no. The storm came almost as soon as I had begun to re-assure myself." So you have begun French?", he asked, smiling, disguising all his indignation. I smiled an affirmative answer.

I thought, when she was making the appointment with you yesterday, that you were going to her to give her a lesson in Hindi. But she told me this morning, as I asked her how she had spent her time, that she gave you a French lesson for an hour. Do you know what I told her?

"Yes," I said," she told me you were amused and surprised."

Well then, I tell you what I said. I said Caesar aimed at the crown and failed!

And then began a volley of questions.

What have you begun learning French for? Because Miss Slade, a French scholar, is here? Or you want to read Romain Rolland in French? Or to read our French correspondence?

No, I have been long wanting to learn French. French-knowing friends told me that it was easy to learn the language, and useful too.

Well, do you know that not all Englishmen know French, and the best of them are content to read the French authors in translations? And much of the best French literature is turned into English as soon as it is published.

There was a pause for a minute or two.

[1] From this report by Mahadev Desai, only excerpts are reproduced here,

How long do you think you will take to learn it?

About six months, I am told.

How many hours?

An hour each day.

Regularly?

Yes.

Do you think you can get an hour each day whilst we tour about?

Hardly, but I think I might snatch some time whilst actually travelling.

Indeed? Are you sure?

I hesitated.

And now that you want to learn French, I must keep you free each day for an hour, should I not?

This was more than I could bear." No," said I energetically," you need not I shall find time somehow!

You will not find time, you will steal time.

I was silenced.

Don't you think so?

He asked, expecting a confession." I do," said I," I could give to spinning all the time I give to French."

Yes; there are many another things. But when we are engaged in a life and death struggle, how could you think of learning French? You may read as much French as you like after swaraj. But until then—'

"I stop it from today," I said expecting to be forgiven and allowed to go.

But that is not all, the charge sheet is not yet over. Do you know that Miss Slade has come here, having burnt all her boats? Do you know that her sacrifice for our cause is greater than that of any one of us? Do you know that she is here to learn and study and serve and give all her time to the service of our people and thereby her own people, and that nothing that happens at her own home will swerve her from her appointed task here? Every minute of her time is therefore doubly precious and it is for us to give her as much as we can. She wants to know everything about us, she must master Hindustani. How else is she to do it unless we help her in making the best of her time? She may be quite willing to oblige us, but our duty is to give her as

much as we can. Our own time is sacred enough. Hers is a more sacred trust. Rather than indulge in the luxury of learning French, I would expect you to give her an hour in Hindi, Sanskrit or such other thing.

Clearly there was no answer for me. I hung my head in shame. My speechlessness was an eloquent confession of my blunder. Was there any penance I might make? It was unwise to ask him. It should suggest itself to me. But his unfailing kindness had already forgiven me and he himself suggested the penance.

So go again tomorrow at the same hour and tell her your mistake, and take up reading Hindi hymns with her instead of French.

(Censored and passed though not without considerable hesitation. M. K. G.

Young India, 26-11-1925

150. SLAUGHTER AND SHOES

We present to the reader below some illuminating extracts[1] from the Minutes of Evidence recorded by the Indian Industrial Commission in Bengal and the Central Provinces which throw a flood of light upon the subject and serve to establish beyond the shadow of a doubt that the quality shoes which we wear as well as the pretty attache-cases we proudly carry in our hands and the ponderous suit-cases in which we pack our precious clothing, be it khadi, mill-made or foreign, are tarnished with the blood of innocent cattle, although we will be so blind as not to see it; and if there is any such thing as a moral government of the universe, we must answer for it some day.

The foregoing extracts have been culled and copied *verbatim* by Sri. [V. G.] Desai from the voluminous evidence recorded by the Industrial Commission. If they move the reader he must become a member of the All-India Cow-Protection Association (Sabarmati), or if he can afford to pay more, he should send a donation so as to enable it to carry out the scheme adumbrated in these pages regarding tanneries where the hides of dead cattle only shall be manufactured into leather.

Young India, 26-11-1925

[1] Not reproduced here

151. TELEGRAM TO LAJPAT RAI

November 26, 1925

DO PLEASE COME ANY DAY. YOU SHALL STAY ASHRAM.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10661

152. LETTER TO M. A. ANSARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 26, 1925

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

I have your letter. Do you not see any difference between a cable to the President of the League of Nations and Council work? Personally I am as much opposed to Council-entry as I ever was. You may depend upon it that my part in the Patna Resolution was a matter of necessity and not of choice. Necessity in the sense that I recognize the democratic character of the Congress. And knowing that I could not convince the Swarajists of the error of Council-entry and knowing also that my best friends and co-workers had become Swarajists, I took it that I could not do less than throw my weight with them as against other political parties. Thus though I would personally dislike my appeal to the League of Nations while we were impotent, if there were two parties one wanting to approve of the French atrocity and another wanting to help the sufferers, I would throw in my weight with the latter.

You do not know how much people have strayed away from the true path. What is the use of making myself ludicrous when I know that I would get no more than Rs. 100/- in answer to my appeal. I am sick unto death over the unreality and untruth that surrounds us at the present moment. Please therefore forget me for any other work than the humble work of khadi and untouchability and the unpopular method of protecting the cow. I confess my utter inability to tackle successfully any other problem.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 10668

153. LETTER TO SARDUL SINGH CAVEESHAR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

November 26, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your printed letter. My own conviction is that the prisoners will lose nothing by giving the undertaking asked for. In my opinion, the Gurdwara Act is a tremendous step in advance and it is gained by the determined resistance of the Sikhs, and when the central point is gained, the undertaking, which I believe is in itself harmless, is a matter of little concern. But if the prisoners remain adamant and refuse to give any undertaking whatsoever, they have a perfect right to do so. But then, we must not grumble for the sufferings that they might have to undergo. It is also my opinion that if they endure persecution long enough in refusing compliance with the Government conditions, the prisoners would be released. But what I will not do myself, I must not commend to the public. If I write anything publicly, I should write advising waiving of the conditions. But if the prisoners decline to give the undertaking, they will have my passive praise for their sufferings.

Yours sincerely,

SARDAR SARDUL SINGH CAVEESHAR
DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PUBLICITY BUREAU
RAMGALI, LAHORE

From a photostat: S.N. 10669

154. LETTER TO RASIK

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Thursday, Ma[*gsar*] *Sud 11* [*November 26, 1925*][1]

BHAISHRI RASIK,

Herewith answers to your questions:

1. There is nothing wrong in the *shraddha* ceremony performed after death, and it may be regarded as essential for thosewho believe in it. It is quite proper that you will not give a community-feast. I regard

[1] The source has the entry," 4-2-1925", but the day and the date do not tally.

it as neither necessary nor proper. Unlike the *shraddha* ceremony it is devoid of any religious sentiment. If your mother asks you to feast the community after her death, you should humbly suggest to her not to bind you with such a wish. If she still insists on it, you should feed some invalids with the amount which might have been thus spent or hand over the sum to the community for utilizing it as a scholarship for some needy student.

2. If you really do not want to get married and if your mother importunes you, you should humbly resist the pressure. I think parents have no right to marry their children against the latter's wishes.

3. And the simple diet you take will help you in your practice of *brahmacharya*. But for checking impure thoughts you should make ceaseless efforts with absolute devotion to God, in the form of recitation of *Ramanama* and should harness your mental as well as physical energies to some benevolent activity or to some honest profession.

4. You simply cannot serve in a place where you are required to utter falsehood or practise deceit, even if this means starvation or ruin of your family. It is on this account that I have often maintained that a person desirous of staying free should teach himself some independent craft as weaving and the like and subsist on that. In my opinion it is absolutely not binding to support an able-bodied member of the family.

5. To a certain extent physical strength and spiritual strength are necessarily related. We do come across some instances where an extremely dynamic soul dwells in an extremely feeble body. But if the body is worn out with disease the soul too usually loses its vigour.

6. There is no harm in taking milk and ghee to acquire a reasonable amount of physical strength.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 10623

155. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU

AHMEDABAD,
November 27, 1925

PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU
ALLAHABAD

YOUR LETTER RECEIVED. GLAD KAMALA GONE LUCKNOW. DO NOT DISTURB PROGRAMME BECAUSE OF FAST WHICH BREAKS TUESDAY.

GANDHI

From the original: Motilal Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

156. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Magshar Sud 12 [*November 27, 1925*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I am kept posted with news of you. I have letters from Swami and Nargisbehn. As soon as you are fit enough to leave the house you must have a long spell at Nasik or Deolali or any other place considered good and improve your health. You must exercise more. Mahadev did not get fever again. But I am not sending him because Swami is already there. I have received the telegram about Taramati. Let mother and son live in peace. Anand's soul must be pleased because she valued this a lot. You do not have to worry about me at all. Three [days] out of the seven have already passed. I am still carrying on with my work. Only moving about is stopped. Lying in bed, I am doing everything.

Blessing from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The year has been inferred from the contents. In 1925 *Magshar Sud 12* corresponded to November 27.

157. LETTER TO TARAMATI M. TRIKUMJI

November 27, 1925.

May you live in peace, mother and son. Anand's[1] spirit must be happy at the event[2], as she prized it greatly.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 83

158. THE VINAY MANDIR AT ODE

Is there anyone who is not pained by reading this note?[3] I at any rate am very much pained, as I have very pleasant memories of ode. I cannot forget the enthusiasm displayed by its residents. What a contrast between that ode and the one described by Mahadev Desai. Its Vinay Mandir counts among the better national schools. It has many pupils and able teachers. The people of Ode have money; how sad that, despite all this, even the funds already collected for the school are not being used and those who established it, no longer wish to see it continue its existence! But, then, can anyone win over people whose only concern is self-interest? I know that wherever such schools are being closed down, the people will repent it some day. Whatever the standard of a national school, where else will the pupils get the education for freedom which it provides? Will the leaders of Ode wake up even now and save a school which can still be rescued without much effort?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-11-1925

[1] Addressee's mother-in-law

[2] Birth of a son to addressee

[3] The note by Mahadev Desai is not reproduced here. It described the precarious plight of the national school at Ode.

159. INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The problem of Indians in South Africa is attracting increasing public attention, for, while Mr. Andrews will be soon leaving for South Africa, the emissaries of the Government would have been able to leave for that country before this appears in print and, from the other side, the representatives of the Indians there will shortly be here. Public attention, therefore, is bound to be drawn to this problem.

A sword is hanging over the heads of the Indian settlers in South Africa. The Government there does not have the courage to forcibly expel the Indians in a direct and straightforward manner, but is planning indirectly to make them leave South Africa by harassing them. If any of the Indians remain behind, there would be a handful employed in various capacities, whose presence the whites desire, such as, for instance, the farm labourers, cooks and bearers. The rest, independent Indians, businessmen and others, who have a sense of self-respect and cherish it, would not continue to live there even for an hour under the conditions which Government wishes to create, for under the new Bill it seeks to deprive these Indians of all their present rights in regard to ownership of land, trade and interprovincial movement. Indians would have nothing to fear if a judicial settlement of the problem were sought. There will be no need, then, for any emissary from here to proceed to South Africa or any representative from there to come here. Any unbiased judge would rule in favour of the Indians, with costs.

However, they wish to follow the law of the sword, of brute force. They do not wish to respect the principle of equal rights for all, their principle is that might is right. The British Government will tolerate even injustice perpetrated by the Government of South Africa; at the most it will plead with the Union Government for a little mitigation of it, and, if the request is not heeded, it will remain quiet. If South Africa is in the British Empire, it is through the grace of the whites. While in the case of India even experienced Englishmen believe that she is held in the Empire by the sword of the latter, and that is on the whole true. If the whites of South Africa chose they could leave the British Empire right now. The slaves in India, however much they might like to, cannot leave the Empire without the consent of the British Government. This being the trueposition, the Indians,in

South Africa, too, can remain there only through the goodwill of the government there. India, who is herself a prisoner, can give only as much help to the Indian prisoners in South Africa as one prisoner can give to another. Under such unhappy conditions, every Indian must depend on his own determined effort to win his own freedom. Only if the Indians in South Africa can put forward such an effort, can act, though slaves, as if they were free, can they hope to be delivered. How long can one live on the goodwill of others? Goodwill cannot be assured through documents. Once it vanishes, even documents which may have been signed are trampled under foot. Nevertheless, India must do all she can. It is our duty to welcome the representatives from South Africa who are due to arrive here and help them to the best of our ability. To discharge this duty is the least we can do.

The guests who will be arriving include Dr. Abdur Rahman, who is a well-known Malay doctor from Cape Town. He has Indian blood too. The second member is James Godfrey, a barrister and son of an Indian Christian school-teacher. The third member is Sorabji, the brave son of the late Parsi Rustomji. He is a tried soldier and has been to prison. Those who have read the *History of Satyagraha in South Africa* will be familiar with his name. I pray that their visit and their efforts may meet with success.

[From Gujarati].

Navajivan, 29-11-1925

160. THE LATEST FAST

November 30, 1925

This the latest (seven days) fast of mine which is closing tomorrow morning could not be kept from the public in spite of my attempt to the contrary. It has brought many inquiries and some angry protests.

The public may rest perfectly at ease about my health. It is something for me to be able to write this myself on the seventh day of my fast. But by the time this is in the hands of the reader, I hope to be almost up and doing.

The alarm was felt on the fourth day when I was much exhausted with work. In my vanity I had thought that during the comparatively brief fast, I would be able to work all the fullseven days. In fairness to myself I must say that much of the work I did

during the three and a half days was inevitable as it was connected with the object of the fast. But as soon as I realized that I had overworked myself, I stopped all work, and on the last day I am stronger than on the fourth.

But the public will have to neglect my fasts and cease to worry about them. They are a part of my being. I can as well do without my eyes, for instance, as I can without fasts. What the eyes are for the outer world, fasts are for the inner. And much as I should like the latest fast to be the very last in my life, something within me tells me that I might have to go through many such ordeals and, who knows, much more trying. I may be wholly wrong. Then the world will be able to write an epitaph over my ashes: 'Well deserved thou fool.' But for the time being my error, if it be one, must sustain me. Is it not better that I satisfy my conscience though misguided, because not perfectly pure, than that I should listen to every voice, be it ever so friendly but by no means infallible? If I had a guru,—and I am looking for one,—I should surrender myself body and soul to him. But in this age of unbelief a true guru is hard to find. A substitute will be worse than useless, often positively harmful. I must therefore warn all against accepting imperfect ones as gurus. It is better to grope in the dark and wade through a million errors to Truth than to entrust oneself to one who" knows not that he knows not". Has a man ever learnt swimming by tying a stone to his neck?

And who shall lose by erroneous fasting? of course only myself. But I am public property, it is said. So be it. But I must be taken with all my faults. I am a searcher after truth. My experiments I hold to be infinitely more important than the best-equipped Himalayan expeditions. And the results? If the search is scientific, surely there is no comparison between the two. Let me therefore go my way. I shall lose my usefulness the moment I stifle the still small voice within.

Well, this fast has nothing to do with the public. I am conducting a big institution called the Satyagraha Ashram. Trusting friends have given me already over two lacs of rupees for land and buildings alone. They are paying for its annual upkeep not less than eighteen thousand rupees per year. They do so in the hope that I am building up character. There are grown-up men and women in the Ashram. There are boys and girls. The latter are trained to remain unmarried as long as possible. At no place within my knowledge do women andgirls enjoy so much freedom as at the Ashram. It is my best and only

creation. The world will judge me by its results. No man or woman, no boy or girl can live there, if I do not want them. I believe that it contains some of the purest characters we have in India. If I am to deserve the implicit trust of friends who support it, I must be doubly vigilant, since they will neither examine the accounts, nor the activity of the Ashram. I discovered errors among the boys and somewhat among the girls. I know that hardly a school or any other institution is free from the errors I am referring to. I am anxious to see the Ashram free from errors which are sapping the manhood of the nation and undermining the character of the youth. It was not permissible to punish the boys. Experience gained in two schools under my control. has taught me that punishment does not purify, if anything it hardens children. In such cases in South Africa I have resorted to fasts with, in my opinion, the best of results. I have resorted to the same process here and let me say of a milder type. The basis of the action is mutual love. I know that I possess the love of the boys and the girls. I know too that if the giving up of my life can make them spotless, it would be my supreme joy to give it. Therefore I could do no less to bring the youngsters to a sense of their error. So far the results seem to be promising.

What however if I cannot perceive the fruit? I can but do the will of God as I feel it The result is in His disposing. This suffering for things great and small is the keynote of satyagraha.

But why should not the teachers perform the penance? They cannot, so long as I remain the chief. If they had fasted with me all work would have come to a standstill. As with big institutions so with small ones. As the king must share the sins of his subjects even as he arrogates to himself all their virtues so must I, a tiny chosen king in the little Ashram, atone for the sins of the least among the children of the Ashram, if I may proudly claim the presence in it of many noble characters. If I am to identify myself with the grief of the least in India, aye, if I have the power, the least in the world, let me identify myself with the sins of the little ones who are under my care. And so doing in all humility I hope some day to see God—Truth—face to face.

Young India, 3-12-1925

161. THE CURSE OF UNTOUCHABILITY

Mahatma Gandhi writes to *The survey* (America) of December 1, 1925:

The movement for the removal of untouchability in India is one of purification of Hinduism—a religion that is professed by nearly two hundred and forty million human beings. It is estimated that over forty million human beings are regarded as untouchables. This untouchability takes in the Southern parts of India the extreme form even of unapproachability and invisibility. Untouchability is refraining on the part of the so-called higher classes from touching those who are branded with the stigma of untouchability. Unapproachable are those whose approach within a stipulated distance pollutes the higher classes. The invisibles are those whose very sight defiles.

These outcastes of Hindu society are confined to what may be fitly described as ghettos. They are denied the usual services that in a well-ordered society are regarded as the right of every human being, such for instance as medical aid, the offices of barbers, washermen, etc. This suppression of a large number of human beings has left an indelible mark on the suppressors themselves and the canker of untouchability, is eating into the vitals of Hinduism, so much so that it has degraded what was at one time a noble institution. I mean *varnashrama,* falsely or perhaps loosely rendered as caste. What was meant to be a scientific division of labour and occupation has become an elaborate system regulating inter-dining and intermarriage. one of the noblest religions on earth has been reduced to a farcical code of dining and marriage rules.

Why then do I cling to a religion which tolerates such a curse?. For the simple reason that I do not regard it as an integral part of Hinduism which is described as the religion *par excellence* of truth and non-violence or love. I have tried to understand the Hindu scriptures, some in the originals, the rest through translations. I have tried in my humble way to live up to the teachings of that religion. After having studied Christianity, Islam and other great faiths of the world, I have found in Hinduism my highest comfort. I have not found any to be perfect. I have discovered superstition and error in the practice of all these faiths. It is enough therefore for me that I do not believe in untouchability. I can certainly find no warrant in theHindu scriptures for the belief that a simple person becomes

untouchable by reason of his birth in a particular family or clan. But if I must call myself a Hindu, as I do, I owe it to my faith as I owe it to my country to fight the evil of untouchability with my whole soul, counting no cost too much for achieving the reform.

Let not the reader imagine that I am the only reformer. There are hundreds of educated Indians, who take pride in calling themselves Hindus, fighting the evil with all their might. It is the accepted creed of the enlightened Hindus that swaraj is unattainable without the removal of the curse.

The way we are combating the sin is to demonstrate to the so-called higher classes the enormity of the wrong, and passing resolutions at mass meetings condemning the practice. The Congress has made the reform an integral part of its programme. The reformers seek also to improve the condition of the suppressed classes by opening schools for their children, digging wells for them, pointing out to them the bad habits they have contracted through the criminal neglect of the higher classes, and so forth. Whenever it is found necessary as at Vaikam (Vykom) even the direct method of satyagraha is being adopted. In no case is violence offered to blind orthodoxy but an attempt is being made to win them over by patient argument and loving service. The reformers suffer for their cause without imposing suffering on their opponents.

My conviction is that the effort is bearing fruit and that before long Hinduism will have purified itself of the sin of untouchability.

The Hindu, 19-1-1926

162. SPEECH TO STUDENTS

December 1, 1925

Before breaking his fast on the morning of the 1st December, he gathered the boys to his bed-side and delivered the following message in slow, moving accents:

Think of last Tuesday, when I began my fast. Why did I take that step? There were three ways open to me:

1. PUNISHMENT: I could have followed the easy road of corporal punishment. Usually a teacher on detecting errors on the part of pupils would flatter himself with having done a good thing if he punished them. I have been a teacher myself, thoughmy

preoccupations prevent me from teaching you during these days. As a teacher I had no option but to reject this accepted method for I know by experience it is futile and even harmful.

2. INDIFFERENCE: I could have left you to your fate. Not unoften does a teacher do so. 'It is enough', he argues, 'that the boys do their lessons tolerably well and reproduce what they are taught. Surely I am not concerned with their private behaviour. And even if I was, how am I to keep watch over them?' This indifference could not appeal to me.

3. The third was the method of Love. Your character is to me a sacred trust. I must therefore try to enter into your lives, your innermost thoughts, your desires and your impulses, and help you to detect and eradicate impurities, if any. For inward cleanliness is the first thing that should be taught, other things must follow after the first and most important lesson has gone home. I discovered irregularities amongst you. What was I to do? Punishing you was out of the question. Being the chief among the teachers, I had to take the punishment on myself in the form of the fast which breaks today.

I have learnt a lot during these days of quiet thinking. What have you? Could you assure me that you will never repeat your mistake? You may err again but this fast will be lost on you if you do not realize the way out if it. Truthfulness is the master-key. Do not lie under any circumstances whatsoever. Keep nothing secret, take your teachers and your elders into your confidence and make a clean breast of everything to them. Bear ill will to none, do not say an evil thing of anyone behind his back, above all" to thine own self be true", so that you are false to no one else. Truthful dealing even in the least little things of life is the only secret of a pure life.

You must have noticed that I receive my inspiration on such occasions from the hymn, *Vaishnava Jana to tene kahiye* (He is the true *Vaishnava,* etc.). That hymn is enough to sustain me, even if I were to forget the *Bhagavad Gita*. To tell you the truth, however, there is one thing which is even simpler, but which may possibly be difficult for you to understand. But that has been my pole star all along during life's journey—the conviction that Truth is God and untruth a denial of Him.

Young India, 10-12-1925

163. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

December 1, 1925

Mahatmaji, though weak, gave the following statement regarding the reasons for the fast:

I have dealt with it fully in the pages of *Young India*.[1] I do not, therefore, propose to anticipate them, save to say that they were purely private and personal and for Ashram purification. I have kept perfectly healthy and reasonably strong throughout the week. There never was the slightest cause for any anxiety. After the breaking of the fast I am feeling perfectly well There is no reaction yet noticeable that generally follows breaking of fast.

I hope soon to regain the lost weight and vitality. I hope also, if friends will be indulgent and not over-tax me, to go through the programme I had mapped out before this fast. Easy journey and mild conversation will not, I think, tax me out. Friends need have no anxiety about my health. I am sorry to have caused grief during the fast. Such is my life. If I could have saved them grief, I certainly would have done so; but I saw no way out.

After the statement was made, Mahatmaji was asked whether he would go to Dholka, as decided. He replied:

Certainly so. I cannot defer that.

The Hindu, 1-12-1925

164. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SABARMATI,
December 1, 1925

JAMNALAL BAJAJ
WARDHA

FAST BROKEN. CONDITION EXCELLENT. NO CAUSE SLIGHTEST ANXIETY.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirwad, p. 40

[1] *Vide"* The Latest Fast", 30-11-1925.

165. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

AHMEDABAD,
December 1, 1925

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
ANAND BHAVAN
ALLAHABAD

FAST BROKEN. CONDITION PERFECT. HOPE KAMALA STEADILY PROGRESSING. SARUP HERE.

GANDHI

A Bunch of old Letters, p. 45

166. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SABARMATI,
December 1, 1925

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
93 BAZAR GATE
BOMBAY

FAST BROKEN HAPPIEST AUSPICES. CONDITION EXCELLENT. GET WELL SOON.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

167. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

December 1, 1925

DEAR MOTI BABU,

I have your letter of 27th ultimo. The previous letter I have not received.[1] If I had, I would have sent you may congratulations at once. But it is not too late even now. Pray accept them now. I hope that you

[1] The addressee had written to Gandhiji on October 20, 1925 informing him that the Prabartak Sangh at Chandranagar had been converted into a pure khadi centre; *vide"* Notes", 10-12-1925.

will have to face no extraordinary difficulties in the transition stage.

How are you getting on otherwise?

I am going to Wardha today and hope to rest there for ten days. Please write to me there if necessary care of Sjt. Jamnalalji Bajaj.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 11022

168. NOTES

SPINNERS' DIFFICULTIES

A spinner asks," What is a member of A.I.S.A.[1] expected to do under the rules?" His duty shall be to carry on propaganda for hand-spinning and khadi. A greedy president like me would expect a member to go out among the people and invite them to wear khadi, spin regularly and become members of the A.I.S.A. He would also ask him to hawk khadi among them and to teach them spinning and to collect donations among friends. But to expect is one thing, to have one's expectation fulfilled is another. Therefore when one becomes a member and scrupulously and diligently spins and never uses anything but khadi, wherever cloth is required, he has done the minimum required of him. The majority would no doubt fluctuate between the two extremes.

Another asks," Though khadi is habitual with me, I do wear foreign cloth on twenty-five occasions out of a hundred. I spin regularly. Can I become a member of the A.I.S.A.?" I fear that such men cannot become members of the A.I.S.A. Habitual wear of khadi excludes the use of other cloth save for extraordinary and unavoidable causes. Though on the part of the founders the desire to swell the list of members was no doubt strong, the desire to get 'whole-hoggers' was stronger still. For the Association to be useful must have as its members workers who are uncompromising believers in khadi. We have to convert millions. We cannot succeed if we begin with half-heartedness. Those who cannot wear khadihabitually may send yarn self-spun or money or cotton and help

[1] All-India Spinners' Association

the movement in a variety of other ways.

SPURIOUS KHADI

A correspondent sends me from Nagpur a pictorial label taken from cloth which is palmed off as genuine khadi on gullible people and he tells me that people buy it largely in the belief that it is good khadi. The belief is strengthened by their seeing the label which contains a hideous caricature of my likeness and a spinning-wheel. This kind of practice can hardly be called patriotic or pure and it gives rise to a feeling against mills which one would fain avoid. Cannot the Mill-owners' Association deal with such questionable practices of which I have been obliged to take notice from time to time?

Young India, 3-12-1925

169. COW-PROTECTION ESSAY

Several competition essays have already been received. Most of them are indifferently written. Some are written on both sides of the paper. Some are illegible. The future competitors are requested to write their essays

1. on one side of the paper only;
2. in legible, clear, bold hand in ink;
3. on stout paper well bound, giving full name and address of the competitor.

The competitors are also warned that rejected essays will not be returned. Those therefore who desire copies should make and keep them before sending.

Young India, 3-12-1925

170. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

AHMEDABAD,
December 4, 1925

JAMNALAL BAJAJ
WARDHA

PERFECT REST POSSIBLE ONLY AT WARDHA.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirwad, p. 42

171. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SHAHI BAGH,

December 4, 1925

MATHURADAS
93 BAZAR GATE STREET
BOMBAY

NO CAUSE SLIGHTEST ANXIETY. GAINING STRENGTH DAILY.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

172. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

December 4, 1925

MY DEAR MIRA,

I have your loving present. Shankerlal Banker had prepared me for it. He told me you had surprises in store for me. I understood. Both Urdu and Hindi hand is good, certainly better than mine. And that is as it should be. You will not squander the inheritance you have claimed as yours but you will add to it a thousandfold.

You have been constantly in my thoughts. This three days' separation is good discipline. You have made the best use of it.

Devdas tells me you have now completely regained your voice.

You will tell me all about your warm clothing tomorrow.

May God bless you and keep you from harm.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5183. Courtesy: Mirabehn

173. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Friday [*December 4, 1925*][1]

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I had sent a reply to your letter through Jamnalalji; I hope you had it. When I got your lengthy letter, I sent a detailed reply under a registered cover to your Solan address. I fail to understand why it has not reached you.

Let me repeat what I wrote in it.

I had appreciated your action in contributing Rs. l,00,000/- to the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund, and had made a request for early payment of the sum.

I had also given my reasons for not being able to co-operate with *Pujya*[2] Malaviyaji and *Pujya* Lalaji but had affirmed a deep sense of respect for both. I help Pandit Motilalji and the Swarajya Party because after all their ideals are somewhat close to mine. There is no question of my helping individuals.

I wrote many other things in that letter; but now I cannot recall all of them.

I hope both of you are in good health.

You must have heard of my fast. That I am gaining strength will be evident from the fact that I am writing this to you. I hope to undertake a little physical work in a few days.

I shall reach Wardha on the 10th and stay there for some ten days.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6114. Courtesy: G. D. Birla .

[1] From the reference to the fast

[2] Revered

174. SPEECH AT GUJARAT VIDYAPITH CONVOCATION AHMEDABAD[1]

December 5, 1925

I congratulate the students who have taken their degrees and won their prizes today. I wish them long life, and may their degrees and their knowledge do credit to them and their country. Let us not lose our way in the surrounding darkness of despair. We shall have to look for rays of hope not in the outward firmament, but in the inward firmament of our hearts. The student who has faith, who has cast off all fear, who is absorbed in his work, who finds his rights in the performance of his duties, will not cower before the surrounding gloom. He will know that the gloom is transitory and that the light is near. Non-co-operation has not failed. Co-operation and non-co-operation have been there from the beginning of time. Truth and falsehood, peace and strife, life and death and all the dual throng is bound to be there. But if we have to co-operate with truth, we have to non-co-operate with falsehood; if loyalty to the motherland is laudable, disloyalty is despicable; if we have to co-operate with liberty we have to non-co-operate with slavery. Whether, therefore, there be one national school or many, whether there be one student there or many, the future historian will have to give the national school a prominent place among the means for the attainment of freedom. Ours are new-fangled enterprises. The critic will find therein much to cavil at. Some drawbacks we can see ourselves. We shall have to go on with our endeavours to remedythem. I know that our administration leaves much to be desired, that our organizers and professors are imperfect. We are quite watchful about these things and shall leave no stone unturned to remove the shortcomings.

Students, have patience. Believe that you are soldiers in the army of swaraj. Do nothing, speak nothing, think nothing unbecoming of such a soldier. May God bless you.

Young India, 10-12-1925

[1] From a report by Mahadev Desai; the speech was read out by the Registrar; Gandhiji, the Chancellor, was present at the function.

175. SPEECH TO VIDYALAYA SOCIAL, AHMEDABAD[1]

December 5, 1925

Social gatherings are part of student life. There are many benefits to be gained from such gatherings. I have also known their disadvantages. I would like to suggest one benefit. It is as much necessary to develop sympathy for the poor of India as it is desirable for the students to cultivate fellow-feeling among themselves. How can I bring home to the students that yarn is the bond of such sympathy? There must be some divine power in the yarn and that must be why God has been given the name of *Sutradhar*[2]. How nice it would be if we become little *sutradhars* in the army of that great *Sutradhar*?

[From Gujarati]

Sabarmati, Vol. IV, No. IV

[1] Read out by Mridulabehn on the occasion of the fifth social gathering of the Gujarat Mahavidyalalya; Gandhiji presided.

[2] Literally, one who holds the strings; Master of the Play

176. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Sunday [*December 6, 1925*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I write this from Dholka, which should indicate to you the state of my health. Within the last five days I have regained five pounds of the lost weight. Now I also walk a little; so you should not at all worry on my account. Tomorrow morning I am going to Ahmedabad and shall leave for Bombay the same day. From Bombay I go on the 9th to Wardha. I shall stay there for two days and then go to Kanpur. I hope you and your brother are keeping well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 617. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

177. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, DHOLKA[2]

December 6, 1925

I am thankful that in spite of my physical inability, God has enabled me to keep my promise to pay you a visit. I hear that there are many talukdars here. I hope they will cultivate and maintain sweet relations with their tenants. I am told there is no Hindu-Muslim tension here. Let the relations be more friendly than they are. How am I to convince you that spinning and exclusive use of khaddar is the swiftest way to swaraj? A yard of khaddar used by you means four or five annas in the pockets of your poor countrymen. I wish I could also carry home to you my conviction that to regard any human being as 'untouchable' is to insult oneself and one's religion. It is the evil passions in us that are untouchables; let us be rid of them. Purify yourselves and spin half an hour daily as a sacrifice, if. you think spinning need not add to your income. Spin in the name of God and spin for the poor of your land. . . .

I have given my message. You cannot have a new or fresh message from me. Carry out that message and let me know the results. . .

Young India, 17-12-1925

[1] Gandhiji was in Dholka on this date.

[2] From a report by Mahadev Desai; the speech was read out; Gandhiji was present at the meeting.

178. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Monday [*December 7, 1925*][1]

CHI. MANI,

I get your letters all right. I have your entire programme. I know that you would find the atmosphere at Seva Sadan [Poona] quite different. But the discipline, the methods, the enthusiasmand the honesty there are admirable. Moreover there is hardly any other institution so full of life. We have to adopt such of its methods and other things as appeal to us. We must learn to appreciate the good points of everything, and follow those we like. And then should we not learn to live with tolerance among people who differ from us?

I hope you are keeping well. Do not worry about me. I am gaining strength. I am going to Bombay today. I shall stay there for a day and then go to Wardha. Write to me regularly at Wardha. Better keep a diary of your experiences at Poona.

On Vithalbhai's persistence Dahyabhai is going to live with him for the present. He will leave in a few days, and will attend the Congress with him.

You should stay there as long as you like and keep me informed of everyone of the thoughts that pass through your mind.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro Manibehn Patelne, p. 30

[1] As given by the addressee

179. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

[*December 7, 1925*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I had your letter after I returned from Dholka. The pendant may be sold through Dahyalal. But Revashankarbhai should directly contact Dahyalal and Dahyalal should sell it in consultation with him and deposit the money with him.

I am in a hurry and shall write nothing else.

Ramdas should wake up.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Shanti I was very glad to have her letter; she should write again.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 601. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

180. SPEECH AT GUJARATI NATIONAL SCHOOL, BOMBAY

December 8, 1925

I thank God for giving me the strength to attend this function. This is one of the few surviving national schools and I congratulate its teachers on their selfless dedication to the work. Just now I

have learnt that the teachers have voluntarily reduced their salaries by fifteen per cent. It is also extremely gratifying that the principal works entirely gratis. I hope that the public will appreciate and encourage this school.

Children, you should realize that you came to this school to learn national service. Most of what you study here should therefore be dedicated to the country. This is the significance of the charkha. Those of you who spin, do so for the country and its poor. Thus you learn the lesson of service from your childhood. Never forsake the charkha.

I feel inclined to find one fault. Let there be dramatic activities in such schools but the costumes should be of khadi alone. There is

[1] Gandhiji arrived at Ahmedabad from Dholka on December 7, 1925.

absolutely no need of brocade. In the Tilak Rashtriya Kanya Vidyalaya all participants had khadi costumes. Teachers here could have done the same. We who have devoted ourselves to the National Movement and have faith in khadi, should not forsake it even on such occasions. Histrionic art consists not in costumes but in the competence of the actors to give life to a role. The audience should be so absorbed in the action that they would hardly notice the costumes. I hope that in future you will use khadi alone on such occasions. If we insist upon small things, we will learn to persevere with bigger things.

I wish the children long lives for true national service. May the school forge ahead!

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-12-1925

181. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

ON WAY TO WARDHA,
Wednesday [*December 9, 1925*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

The state of your health causes me anxiety. I see that because of it Mahadev cannot come. Why should Mahadev have to be detained for *Navajivan* when you are there? I always feel you do not take proper care of your health and commit irregularities. Can you not relieve me of worries? It is good if you take some rest. Avantikabai will write to you. Stay with her or do what you think proper. Keep writing to me. I have also spoken to Swami.

I spent much time with Mathuradas; I saw him twice. Last night I was with him for three hours. Mirabehn is fine; she is with Jamnabehn. Lalaji saw me; there was nothing the matter. Sir Devaprasad Sarvadhikari also came to see me.

I am of course well. It was no great strain to climb the stairs. Sunderlal also saw me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2044

[1] *Vide*"Letter to Vasumati Pandit", 6-12-1925.

182. THE SOUTH AFRICAN DEPUTATION

Here is the full list of the deputation that is coming from South Africa and is due to reach here on the 12th instant.

1. Dr. Abdur Rahman
2. Mr. Sorabji Rustomji
3. Sjt. B. S. Pather
4. Seth G. Mirza
5. Seth Amod Bhayat
6. Mr. James Godfrey
7. Seth Haji Esmail
8. Sjt. Bhawani Dayal

This is a representative deputation of persons well known in South Africa. They can speak for the different groups and interests among our countrymen in South Africa. Dr. Abdur Rahman, the headof the deputation, is South African born, as for that matter are some others. The worthy doctor is popularly known as a Malay doctor. But he has Indian blood in him. The Malays are an integral part of the South African community. They are without exception Mussalmans. Malay women freely marry Indian Mussalmans; The unions are happy and the children born of such mixtures are some of them highly educated. Dr. Abdur Rahman belongs to that distinguished category. He received his medical training in Scotland and is a successful practitioner in Cape Town. He was a member of the old Cape Legislative Council and also a prominent Corporator. But even he has not been unexposed to the colour prejudice.

The deputation is assured of a warm welcome and a patient hearing. The question of Indians overseas is happily not a party question. It is a question on which Anglo-Indian opinion too has ranged itself on the side of Indians. The cause itself is supremely just. The question is, therefore, merely of India's ability to vindicate justice. If the Government of India remains firm and is backed by the Imperial Government, the Union Government cannot but yield to the decisive pressure from the Centre. But there is the fear of South Africa 'cutting the painter'. Imperialists alone know the value of keeping unwilling partners tied up in a knot which may snap under the slightest strain. This excessive anxiety to hold together forces that are

mutually disruptive has degraded imperial politics to the formula of exploitation of African and Asiatic races, to the exclusion, if possible, of other European powers from the spoils of exploitation. Great Britain's policy in the matter of the treatment of Indian settlers in the Dominions is an acid test of her intentions. Will she dare to do the right in spite of the pressure from the Union Government? The South African deputation is coming for an answer to that question.

Young India, 10-12-1925

183. NATIONAL EDUCATION

The Gujarat Vidyapith had its annual convocation[1] for the granting of degrees and prizes. There was the annual stock-taking; an unvarnished truthful tale of diminution in the number of boys and girls studying in the various institutions managed under it or affiliated to it. Gujarat has perhaps the best financed national institutions if not also the best managed. Of these institutions, at least, it can be said that it is not due to want of funds that they appear to be dwindling. There can be no doubt that national institutions are just now not popular. They cannot boast handsome and expensive buildings or furniture. They cannot boast highly-paid teachers and professors. Nor can they claim continuity of tradition or method. Nor can they promise alluring careers. What they claim offers no temptation to many. They claim many selfless, patriotic teachers who are living in penury and want, so that the youth of the country may benefit by their tuition. These institutions teach hand-spinning and all it means. They teach the art of service. They try to impart instruction through the medium of the vernaculars. They endeavour to revive national games and teach national music. They strive to prepare the boys for service in the villages and to that end cultivate in them fellow-feeling with the poor of India. But this is not sufficiently attractive. Hence the falling off in numbers. The so-called unattractiveness is, however, not the sole reason for the unpopularity of these institutions. Many things were done in 1921—that year of excitement, intoxication and hope. The intoxication having subsided, depression has followed as a matter of course. The boys have gone in for calculation and not knowing that patriotism is not a matter of mathematical calculation have arrived at

[1] For Gandhiji's speech, *vide* "Speech at Gujarat Vidyapith Convocation, Ahmedabad", 5-12-1925.

wrong conclusions and given preference to the Government schools and colleges. No fault of theirs. Everything around us has been reduced to terms of commerce and bargain. It is too much to expect boys and girls to rise above the surrounding atmosphere.

Nor is this all. National teachers are not perfect. They are not all selfless. They are not all above petty intrigues. They are not all patriotic. Again, no fault of theirs. We are all creatures of circumstances. Brought up only to work as servants under constant constraint and with all initiative killed in us, we cannot respond to the call for self-sacrifice, for love of the country above love of self or family, for service without distinction.

It is, therefore, perfectly possible to account for the present deprssion. But my faith in national schools as in every other item of our original programme is undying. I recognize the depression in the national barometer and therefore even promote Congress resolutions recognizing the situation. But I remain unaffected by it and invite others to do likewise. These national institutions in spite of their falls are to me so many oases in the desert of our hopes and aspirations. From them must rise the nation of the future, as they even today supply to us the largest number of unpaid or poorly-paid silent workers. Go wherever you will, you cannot but find non-co-operating young men and even young girls, who are devoting all their powers to the service of the motherland without the slightest expectation of reward.

I must, therefore, refuse to listen to the advice of a critic who writes to me to say that the Gujarat Mahavidyalaya should be closed because of the diminishing numbers. If the people support it or if the teachers have the stamina whether the people support it or not, the Mahavidyalaya must continue so long as there is one true boy or girl who will finish his or her training in that institution with all its ideals. Fair weather was no condition of the continuance of that institution. As with national servants so with national institutions. They must go through their programme through fair weather or foul.

Young India, 10-12-1925

184. NOTES

THE BREAKING OF THE FAST

Friends who are interested in my health will be glad to learn that if I lost nine pounds during the seven days' fast, I have regained upto the seventh day after the breaking of the fast over six pounds in weight. I am even able to take moderate exercise and go through a fair amount of work every day. By the time this is out, I shall find myself in Wardha where I propose to take as much rest as possible up to the time of the meeting of the Congress. May I therefore ask C. P. and other friends not to regard me as being in Wardha on business? It will tax all my energy to attend to my weekly editing and daily correspondence. I hope to regain much of the lost strength by the time I reach Cawnpore.

TO CORRESPONDENTS

I regret to inform my correspondents that owing to the fast I am considerably in arrears regarding my correspondence. Whilst my assistants have dealt with the bulk of it, I see before me quite a pile awaiting my attention. The correspondents will forgive me for the delay. I hope to overtake the correspondence as early as possible.

THE HIDE TRADE

The hide industry of India ranks fifth in value of the products of India. The normal value of the annual export of hides is about Rs. 1,170 lacs. Of these over Rs. 844 lacs are exported from Calcutta. The bulk of this trade was before the War and is now in German hands. Nationalization of tanneries means therefore not only the saving of thousands of cattle that are slaughtered for hides but the retention of hides in India means utilization of skilled labour in the country itself and additional wealth.

ALL-INDIA DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL

This Fund now stands as under:[1]

The progress though slow is steady. The list shows too that the habit of paying only to influence rather than the cause still persists[*sic*]. I would urge the would-be subscribers not to reverse the process.

[1] Not reproduced here

The Pravartak Sangh of Chandernagore is a big organization. It has hitherto manufactured and sold half khadi. During my visit to Chetagunj, Sjt. Motilal Roy the chief of the Sangh changed his depot there into a pure khadi depot. He now writes:

> We have transferred our 'Mrinalini Bastralaya Kanyalay' at Chandernagore and the 'Pravartak Emporium' in Calcutta into pure khadi centres from 20th October last, and informed you on the very day of the great change. The whole organization now stands for pure khadi but you are surely aware what considerable risks we have taken on our shoulders for such a venture.

I am sorry I never saw the intimation of the change referred to by him. I tender my congratulations to Moti Babu on the change and hope that the change to pure khadi will persist in spite of initial difficulties which every khadi organization has to face.

Young India, 10-12-1925

185. TELEGRAM TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

WARDHAGANJ,

December 10, 1925

BANKER
ASHRAM SABARMATI

PERFECT CONDITION PERFECT PEACE. PLEASE BREAK YOUR FAST.

BAPU

From the original: S.N. 32745

186. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
[*December 10, 1925*][1]

BHAI MAMA,

I could read your letter only today after reaching Wardha. At the Ashram whatever energy I had I spent for Ashram work and for *Young India* and *Navajivan.* I came here today and devoted my time entirely to correspondence. I am quite well. I am here till the 21st. On the 22nd morning I leave for Kanpur reaching there on the 23rd.

What you say about living in the Ashram is true. At Kanpur I shall make a final decision regarding this. I am also inclined to stay at the Ashram. But"with a frail thread has Hari tied me and I turn the way He pulls me."[2] This is my position and it will always be so.

We shall talk about Godhra when I come to the Ashram. When you ask for *Antyaja* children I presume you are offering them freeships. Are we to bear all the expenditure? Lakshmi's is a difficult case. Can you take up the challenge of looking after her? Are you ready to give me an *Anyaja* boy? You did not say how many students you have at present. I am certainly serving as your canvasser.

Never again think of exhibiting the children; that will surely ruin the Ashram. It is not proper to lure children into the Ashram and neglect their development. It cannot be your business to hunt for children. Your task is to educate a lone boy if he is the only inmate. It is another matter that you maintain contacts with the local *Antyajas* and serve them as far as you can. But this too you must not do at the cost of education. Nor should you be tempted to impart muchlearning. Improve the quality; the pattern will take care of itself. But if you concentrate on the pattern, nothing will be accomplished; the quality too will suffer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3812

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's arrival at Wardha; however, the source has the entry,"15-12-1925".

[2] From a song by Mira

187. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
Magsar Vad 10, 1981 [*December 10, 1925*]

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I reached Wardha today. I shall stay here for 11 days.

I have asked Chi. Chhaganlal to deposit Rs. 11,000 belonging to the Parishad.

Enclosed herewith is a letter from Balvantrai. Devchandbhai and you should consider it and do whatever is necessary. I have sent a reply regarding the matter indicated by the cross.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2829. Courtesy: Shardabehn Shah

188. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

[*December 10, 1925*][1]

BHAISHRI BHAGWANJI,

It is all right that you wrote to me. But, as usual, your letters show your impatience and thoughtlessness. You do not know at the moment I have become a registrar of marriages. Do you know how many marriages were performed at the Ashram? I do advocate *brahmacharya* but it certainly cannot be forced. Whatever weaknesses were observed at the Ashram naturally pertained to the youngsters. Surely you do not want me to let children marry in their early teens. I do not write all this to stop your criticism; I do this with a friendly desire to sharpen your wits and to save you from the tendency to criticize without knowing facts.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

BHAI BHAGWANJI ANUPCHAND VAKIL
RAJKOT, KATHIAWAR

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 3032. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] From the postmark

189. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
Magsar Vad 10 [*December 10, 1925*]

BHAI PUNJABHAI[1],

I had your letter in Bombay but read it at Wardha. Do not be miserable on account of the discharge. You should retire at night after reciting either *Ramanama* or the *navakara mantra*[2]. Slowly and gradually you will recover. Maybe it will suit you better to take only milk at night. Meditate on the *bhajans* that are recited. God Himself is the Lord of all *rasa*[3]. Derive all your *rasa* from this meditation.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAI PUNJABHAI NANA
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 185. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

190. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
Magsar Vad 10 [*December 10, 1925*]

BHAI NAJUKLAL,

I have a letter from Mahadev which tells me that the 4th of January will not suit your mother; so now we shall fix up only the 19th of January.[4] We should not displease her needlessly. I shall somehow manage to remain in the Ashram on that day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 12106

[1] Alias Vinubhai Shah

[2] *Navakara* or *naukara* meaning *namaskara;* a formula for the Jains to recite

[3] Pleasure or bliss

[4] For the addressee's marriage; the function actually took place on January 18, 1926.

191. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

WARDHA,

December 11, 1925

MY DEAR ESTHER,

I was looking forward to hearing from you for a long time. I was therefore delighted to hear from you. I am glad you are better.

You have heard all about my fast? I am none the worse for it. I have almost regained the lost weight in ten days and am now resting with J. at Wardha.

Miss Slade whom we call Mira is with me and is coming to the Congress. She was glad to get your letter. She will write to you, I expect, if she has not done so already.

I hope to return to the Ashram about New Year's Day.

M. has lofty ideas of service. May they all be realized!

Is the school growing? How many children—boys and girls—have you? What is your syllabus?

With love to you all,

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

I am here till 21st instant.

My Dear Child, p. 77

192. LETTER TO W. H. PITT

AS AT SABARMATI,[1]

December 11, 1925

DEAR MR. PITT[2],

I thank you for your letter of 30th November. The local committee has not yet corresponded with me but you may depend upon it that so far as I am concerned I shall strive my utmost to prevent satyagraha being adopted at this stage for temple-entry. I have

[1] Permanent address

[2] Police Commissioner in Trivandrum during Vykom Satyagraha.

always distinguished between the use of road and entry into temples. Public opinion has to be cultivated for the latter before satyagraha can be adopted. I hope to deal with it in the pages of *Young India*. I heard from Mr. Rajagopalachari about your marriage. I wish you and yours a happy and long life.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 11108

193. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

WARDHA,

Margashirsha Krishna 11 [*December 11, 1925*]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. You must have had my previous letter[1] written after my fast and sent to your Delhi address. You have well understood the significance of my fast.

Yesterday I came over to Wardha. I find plenty of peace here. Moreover, these days the weather too is very pleasant indeed.

I am glad to learn, your wife is quite at peace. When death approaches why should we not face it contentedly?

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SJT. GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
MAHESH VILLA
SOLAN, SIMLA HILLS.

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6115. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

[1] *Vide*"Letter to G. D. Birla", 4-12-1925.

194. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

WARDHA,

Friday, December [*11*][1] *1925*

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter, When you leave Poona Seva Sadan you may stay in Bombay for some time or else come here direct. Probably they do not have a long vacation here; so you can begin work in the girls' school straightway. At the same time we have arranged for you to teach Kamala and Madalasa, Jamnalalji's daughters. You will put up with Janakidevi [Bajaj] for the present. You will get a salary of Rs. 50/- a month from the day you come over. So come when you like. If you wish to attend the Congress session, you can either accompany me from here or go to Kanpur direct. I have to reach there on the 23rd. In any case, manage to reach Wardha on January 1.

I have recovered nine pounds from the weight I had lost and have yet to make up six pounds.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRIMATI MANIBEHN VALLABHBHAI PATEL
SEVA SADAN, SADASHIV PETH
POONA CITY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-Manibehn Patelne, p. 31

[1] The source has"12" which, however, was a Saturday.

195. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHA,

December 12, 1925

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
93 BAZAR GATE
BOMBAY

WIRED DEVDAS COME WITH YOU AS NURSE.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

196. LETTER TO A FRIEND

December 12, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

The use of 'Sir' for the Poet was deliberate. It was done for the sake of precision and correctness. The Poet never renounced the title, he asked to be relieved of it. The Government did not relieve him.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

197. THE PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF FASTING

[*December 13, 1925*][1]

A medical friend who believes in fasting cure under certain circumstances invites me to reduce to writing the physical effects of fasting as I might have observed them. As they are not inconsiderable and as I know many cases in which people who fasted have done themselves harm, I gladly comply with the medical friend's request. Though almost all my fasts have been undertaken for a moral purpose, being an inveterate diet reformer and a believer in fasting as a cure for many obstinate diseases, I have not failed to note their physical effects. I must, however, confess that I have not made any

[1] Written on the twelfth day after breaking the fast

accurate observations for the simple reason that it was not possible for me to combine the two. I was much too preoccupied with the moral values to note or mind the physical. I can therefore only give the general impressions. For accurate observations I can only refer the reader to Drs. Ansari and Abdur Rahman who were my medical guides throughout the long fast of last year. They were most painstaking. They were constantly by my bed-side and had thrown themselves heart and soul into the work of looking after me.

Let me at the outset note a disaster that befell me after the second long fast, that is, of fourteen days, in South Africa in 1914. Almost on the second day of the breaking of the fast I began strenuous walking, feeling that I should come to no harm. I walked nearly three miles, the second or the third day, and suffered excruciating pains in the muscleless calves. Not knowing the cause I persisted in walking as soon as the pain subsided. It was in this condition that I left South Africa for England and came under the observation of Dr. Jivraj Mehta, who warned me that if I persisted I might be a cripple for life and that I must lie in bed for at least a fortnight. But the warning was too late to keep my general health, which used to be excellent such that I was capable of taking a forty-mile march without being over-fatigued. Twenty miles in a day was nothing for me in those days. It was as a result of the strain I ignorantly put upon my body that I had to suffer from a violent attack of pluerisy which permanently injured a constitution that was fairly sound. It was the first serious attack of any disease in my life. From this very costly experiment I learned that perfect physical rest during fast and for a time proportionate to the length of the fast, after the breaking of it, is a necessity, and if this simple rule can be observed no evil effect of fasting need be feared. Indeed, it is my conviction that the body gains by a well-regulated fast. For during fasting the body gets rid of many of its impurities. During the last year's fast, as during this year, but unlike the previous fast, I took water with salt and bicarbonate of soda added to it. Somehow or other I develop during fasts a distaste for water. With the addition of salt and soda it becomes somewhat bearable. I found that drinking copious draughts of water kept the system clean and the mouth moist. To every six to eight ounces of water five grains of salt and an equal quantity of soda were added, and I drank during the day from forty to forty-eight ounces of water, in six to eight doses. I took also regularly every day an enema containing nearly three quarters of a pint of water

with nearly forty grains of salt and nearly an equal quantity of soda dissolved in it. The water was always warm. I had also a sponge bath every day given to me in bed. I had both during last year's and this year's fast refreshing sleep at night and at least an hour during the day time. For three days and a half during the last fast, I worked practically from 4 o'clock in the morning till 8 o'clock in the evening, holding discussions on the question that had entailed the fast, and attending to my correspon-dence and editing. On the fourth day I developed a violent headache and the strain was proving unbearable. In the afternoon of the fourth day I stopped all work. The following day I felt recuperated, the feeling of exhaustion was gone, headache had almost subsided. On the sixth day I felt fresher still and on the seventh day which was also my silent day I felt so fresh and strong that I was able to write with a steady hand my article[1] on the fast.

I am not aware during the whole of the fast of having suffered any pangs of hunger. Indeed on the day of breaking the fast I was in no hurry, I broke it half an hour later than I need have. There was no difficulty during the fast about spinning. I was able to sit up every day for over half an hour, with a pillow to support the back, and spin almost with my usual speed. Nor did I have to miss any of the three daily prayer-meetings. During the last four days I had to be carried on a cot to these meetings. With an effort I could even have sat up at the meetings, but I thought it better to conserve my energy. I am not conscious of having suffered much physical pain. The only pain which the memory has stored is a feeling of nausea, creeping over me now and then, which was as a rule overcome by sipping water.

I broke the fast on orange-juice and grape-juice, about six ounces altogether, and I sucked the pulp of an orange. I repeated the performance two hours after, adding ten grapes, which too were slowly sucked, leaving out all the skin. Later in the day and after the enema, I had six ounces of goat's milk with two ounces of water, followed by an orange and ten grapes. The next day the quantity of milk was raised to eighteen ounces, water always added, and thus I continued to increase the quantity of milk by six ounces every day, till I reached forty-eight ounces. Milk is still diluted with water, though now one ounce of water is added to each portion. For one day and a half I tried undiluted milk, but I noticed a certain heaviness, which I attribute to undiluted milk and have therefore gone back to diluting it.

[1] *Vide* "The Latest Fast", 30-11-1925.

At the time of writing these notes it is the twelfth day after the breaking of the fast.[1] I have not yet taken any solid food. Part of the fruit is still turned into juice and during the past three days I have added to grapes and oranges either papaw or pomegranate and *chiku*. The largest quantity of milk I have taken is sixty-four ounces. The average is forty-eight. I add at times baker's bread or home-made light *chapati*. But for months together I have been living simply on milk and fruit and keeping myself in a fit condition.

My highest weight since my discharge from prison has been 112 lbs. The weight lost during the seven days of fast was 9 Ibs. I have now regained the whole of that weight and am now weighing a little over 103 lbs. For the last three days, I have taken regular exercise, both in the morning and evening, without the slightest fatigue. There is no difficulty in walking on level ground. There is still some strain felt in ascending or descending steps. The bowels move fairly regularly, and I sleep almost to order.

My own opinion is that I have lost physically nothing as a result either of the twenty-one days' fast or this the latest seven days' fast. The loss of weight during the seven days was no doubt somewhat alarming, but it was clearly due to the severe strain that was put upon the constitution during the first three and a half days. A little more rest, and I should regain my original vitality with which I started the fast and probably regain without difficulty the weight and strength lost in Cutch.

From a layman's and from a purely physical standpoint I should lay down the following rules for all those who may wish to fast on any account whatsoever:

1. Conserve your energy both physical and mental from the very beginning.
2. You must cease to think of food whilst you are fasting.
3. Drink as much cold water as you can, with or without soda and salt, but in small quantities at a time (water should be boiled, strained and cooled). Do not be afraid of salt and soda, because most waters contain both these salts in a free state.
4. Have a warm sponge daily.
5. Take an enema regularly during fast. You will be surprised at the impurities you will expel daily.
6. Sleep as much as possible in the open air.

[1] Gandhiji broke his fast on December 1.

7. Bathe in the morning sun. A sun and air bath is at least as great a purifier as a water bath.

8. Think of anything else but the fast.

9. No matter from what motive you are fasting, during this precious time, think of your Maker, and of your relation to Him and His other creation, and you will make discoveries you may not have even dreamed of.

With apologies to medical friends, but out of the fulness of my own experience and that of fellow-cranks I say without hesitation, fast (l) if you are constipated, (2) if you are anaemic, (3) if you are feverish, (4) if you have indigestion, (5) if you have a headache, (6) if you are rheumatic, (7) if you are gouty, (8) if you are fretting and fuming, (9) if you are depressed, (10) if you are overjoyed; and you will avoid medical prescriptions and patent medicines.

Eat *only* when you are *hungry* and when you have laboured for your food.

Young India, 17-12-1925

198. MY NOTES

GUJARATI NATLONAL SCHOOL IN BOMBAY

Among the national schools which continue to run despite the sword that is hanging over their heads, the Gujarati School in Bombay is one. It could be said of it that it owes its survival to this day solely to the efforts of the teachers. I hope that the Bombay Provincial [Congress] Committee will maintain this school or make a substantial contribution towards its maintenance.

The annual function of this school was celebrated on the 8th of this month. On that occasion the students enacted some dramatic pieces, revealed their musical talent and rendered set dialogues in Hindi, Sanskrit, English and Gujarati. Some of the students acquitted themselves very well. The music, too, was of a higher standard than what I had heard on a previous occasion. The enunciation of Sanskrit was clear. On the whole, the students made a good impression on me, at any rate, with their artistic talents.

We see from the report of this school that all the subjects are taught in it through the mother tongue. The teachers claim to teach history and geography according to new methods. It is no small

advantage to the pupils to be taught subjects like geometry through Gujarati. Stress is laid on Sanskrit and Hindi too. Accountancy finds a place in the curriculum. The handicrafts taught of course include spinning on the takli and the spinning-wheel, but in addition to this pottery, carpentry, painting and such other crafts are also being taught.

The teachers are inspired by a spirit of self-sacrifice. They have voluntarily agreed to a cut of fifteen per cent in their salaries. The head master himself serves in an honorary capacity There is an Educational Association too, with Shri Revashankar Jagjivan Jhaveri as its President. The accounts of the Association seem to be well maintained. It is but proper that people should help a school such as this—in which the education is liberal, the teachers are patriotic and the accounts in proper order—by giving it financial assistance and by enrolling pupils in it.

There is only one point which calls for criticism. In the dramatic performances the costumes used were made of foreign cloth, and this was out of keeping with the national character of the school and therefore painful. Was it quite necessary to use such costumes? The people did not go there to see a play acted, they went there to see the attainments of the pupils. It is usual in plays to use rich, gorgeous clothes which, in spite of their dazzle, are not pleasing to a fastidious eye. This practice should certainly not be followed in an educational institution which aspires to cultivate idealism in the pupils. We should place before the boys nothing less than the highest ideal. There should be no need to dress Hamlet in foreign clothes. We may dress him in the costume of his time, or in one imagined by us as proper to him. We can dress him according to our Indian image of him, since what he thinks and feels is a universal experience. The costume of characters belonging to Moghul times can be in the genuine Moghul style or in some other style imagined by us. We are lovers of khadi and, therefore, should use khadi in all such performances. I did not like even the curtains which were procured from a theatre. If I could have my way, I would not use such curtains but would design, instead, some artistic arrangement with khadi. This, however, will be done only if the workers have great love for khadi and give careful thought to such matters. Where else shall we look for either if not in those who run a national school? Let us pray that the national schools should demonstrate in their practice the ideals of future

India, that they should be the sources, as holy as Gangotri and Jamnotri, from which will flow noble thoughts and noble ideals of conduct.

SPINNING-WHEEL FOR FAMINE RELIEF

It must be for the very first time in history that the spinning-wheel was used in India for famine relief. Atrai and some other parts of Bengal were the first to do this. In Orissa a successful experiment is being carried on to introduce spinning in areas which have suffered heavy losses through floods, though the work being done there can be on a larger scale still. A similar experiment is being carried on in the Utukuli taluka of Coimbatore district in the South, of which a worker has sent the following beautiful account:[1]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-12-1925

199. LETTER TO A.. HANUMANTHA RAO

December 13, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. We often understand things through the head but we have not the heart to reduce them to practice.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 157

[1] Not translated here

200. LETTER TO R. D. BIRLA.

WARDHA,
Margashirsha Krishna 13 [*December 13, 1925*][1]

BHAI RAMESEHWARDASJI,

Bhai Jagjivandas Mehta tells me that if I approve of his . venture to build a temple for the *Antyajas, you* are prepared to finance it. I know Bhai Jagjivandas; he is a good man and an active social worker. I have looked over his plan for a temple for the *Antyajas.* He has also consulted other *Antyaja* workers as suggested by me. He estimates the cost of the proposed temple at Rs. 2,500; and I too agree that with such a building and the subsequent expenditure [the figure would amount to that]. In case you intend to spend such an amount on charity, this, I believe, is a noble cause.

Yours

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6116. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

201. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI

Magsar Vad 13 [*December 13, 1925*][2]

BHAI PUNJABHAI,

I regularly get your nice letters. I hope you had the letter[3] I wrote after reaching here. With persistent efforts you will be able to clear your eye [of evil]. Always be on the alert. The way to escape violence in speech is to talk as little as possible and not to speak at all without weighing your words.

Blessings from
BAPU

BHAI PUNJABHAI (NANA)
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 186. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] During his tour in Kathiawar in 1925 some people had approached Gandhiji with a request for a temple for the untouchables which later came to be known as the Lathi Antyaja Mandir.

[2] From the postmark

[3] Dated December 10, 1925

202. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

WARDHA,

Monday Night [*December 14, 1925*]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. It puts me at ease to know that you are there, because Ramdas can derive some comfort from it.

What is wrong if Nimu learns Sanskrit and Ramdas does not know the language? Is it again the woman's fault that she may not learn more than her husband? Ramdas will not be such an inconsiderate husband. Ramdas himself wants Nimu to learn Sanskrit as well as the *sitar.* Among the English there are quite a few women who are more learned than their husbands but neither do they make much of it nor are the husbands ashamed of it. Who can judge whether Sita was wiser or Rama? As for Mandodari she was certainly wiser than Ravana. Did not Kausalya ultimately far surpass Dasharatha? Draupadi lorded it over all her five husbands and all five of them had a feeling of awe before her and they were none the worse for it. Let Ramdas gain in dignity on account of Nimu. But I do not think Nimu can surpass Ramdas. Ramdas has not yet gained confidence but he has many qualities and all will be well with him. Nimu certainly seems to be a good girl She will make Ramadas happy, and Ramadas happy, and Ramadas will make her happy.

I have written simultaneously to Jamnabehn. I very much liked her firm yet polite language.

You and your brother should both take care of your health.

I am fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 555. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

203. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Monday [*December 14, 1925*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your telegram. On Friday itself I had sent a telegram to Chi. Devdas asking him to go to you. As yet I have not received his reply. I shall make some other arrangement if he cannot go.

I must have news about your health every day. Even here the weather is very lovely and at present there is a good deal of company too. Jamnalalji even suggested that you should be asked to come here. But right now you have to see to things there.

I am writing to Taramati. I shall send the letter to your address, even though she is not staying there.

Do not put yourself to any inconvenience there. Let me know what facilities you are having. If there is need to send a telegram do not hesitate. If Devdas has not gone there and if you need somebody urgently, send me a telegram. In that case, Mahadev will go.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Telegrams may reach early if they are sent to Wardhaganj. I received your letter only today at 10 o'clock.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

204. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
Monday [*December 14, 1925*][2]

CHI. TARAMATI,

There is a telegram from Mathuradas saying that your health is not good and you look pale and sad. You certainly do not have to worry about Mathuradas. I am there to worry about him. In truth it is God who worries about us. You must look after your health and that

[1] The addressee received the letter on December 16, 1925. The Monday preceding this date fell on December, 14.

[2] The addressee has noted the date"December 1, 1925"; *vide* however the preceding item.

of the child. Therein lies your service. Write to me. I have wired to Devdas to go to Mathuradas.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

205. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHA,
December 14, 1925

MATHURADAS
WINDY HALL
NASIK
P.O. DEOLALI

GLAD YOU HAVE RESUMED WRITING TARAMATI.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

206. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHA,
December 15, 1925

MATHURADAS
WINDY HALL
NASIK ROAD
DEOLALI

OBSERVE DEVDAS CANT COME. GIRDHARI LEAVING NAGPUR MAIL. GOD BLESS YOU.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

207. LETTER TO N. C. KELKAR

WARDHA,
December 15, 1925

DEAR MR. KELKAR,

In going through my correspondence I see your letter about Nanjappa *v.* Godrej. I look to you to wake me up when you are ready.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: C.W. 3117. Courtesy: Kashinath N. Kelkar

208. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

WARDHA,
Magsar Vad Amas, December [*15*][1] *1925*

I hope you have my letters. You may go to Ahmedabad if absolutely necessary. But remember that you must start work here on January 1 at the latest. You must now be mature enough not to hanker after meeting people.

I am fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 32

209. LETTER TO DWIJENDRANATH TAGORE[2]

[On or after *December 15, 1925*]

You have sent me joyful news indeed. May that which you have got remain an everlasting treasure with you.

Yours,

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] The source, however, has"16".

[2] In reply to his letter received on December 15, stating that he had got"that beyond which there is nothing to desire"

210. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[*December 15, 1925*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Your letter and that of Devdas arrived today by the same post. I am enclosing the letter from Devdas. What he writes seems only proper to me, and so I do not wish to suppress him. So he persuaded Mahadev to go to you. In the mean time Jamnalalji suggested that Girdhari should be sent. Mahadev said that you had asked for either Surendra or Girdhari. Therefore, instead of Mahadev, I am sending Girdhari. Even so, if you really want Mahadev, I am also willing to send him. It seems to me that Mahadev should be with me at Kanpur. So for the present Mahadev could have stayed with you only a day or two. Were I to send Mahadev today, he would have to return from there on the 22nd and I would have to send somebody else to take his place. Girdhari recites the *Gita*, etc., very well and also sings bhajans. He is of course very light-hearted. But I want to do only what will bring you peace of mind. Hence, just as a son would ask for anything from his father without any hesitation, or a friend from a friend or a patient from his doctor, you should feel free to ask for anything fromme. To you I am like father and friend. And I am of course your doctor.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You will be able to tell from my handwriting how my pen moves.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the contents; *vide* the preceding item.

211. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

WARDHA,

Paush Shukla 1 [*December 16, 1925*]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. I shall talk to you about the Swaraj Party when we meet. I do not want you to change your view because by justifying your views I seek to justify my position as well. In my position I can do nothing else in the interest solely of dharma, i.e., for the good of the country.

Whatever you want to send you should send to Jamnalalji or deposit it at the Ahmedabad branch of the Bank of Baroda. It will be rather inconvenient for me to have it in Calcutta or Delhi. But if you prefer to deposit it with some bank in Calcutta or Delhi you may do so in my name and send over the bank's credit note to me. Do whatever you find convenient.

Swami Anand writes that he has not yet received any payment for the free copies of *Navjivan, Young India* and other periodicals that are dispatched on your advice. The amount is Rs. 299-15-0. Can you send this? He would like to have it before the end of the year.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6117. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

212. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

WARDHA,
Paush Sud 1, [On or after *December 16, 1925*][1]

BHAISHREE VALJI,

I will talk to the editor[2] of *Maharashtra-Dharma.* You will get shoes made from the hides of dead animals only in Utkal tannery in Cuttack. I do not know of another place.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 11278. Courtesy : Valji G. Desai

213. A STUDENT'S QUESTIONS

A student who is carrying on post-graduate studies in America writes:

> I am one of those who are extremely interested in the utilization of Indian resources as one of the means for remedying the poverty of India. This is my sixth year in this country My special field is wood-chemistry. I would have entered executive services or taken up medical studies if I were not so profoundly convinced of the importance of the industrial development of India. . . . Would you approve of my going into industrial enterprise, say pulp and paper manufacture? What is your attitude in general on the question of adopting a sane, humanitarian industrial policy for India? Do you stand for the progress of science? I mean such progress which brings blessings to mankind, e.g., the work of Pasteur of France and that of Dr. Benting of Toronto.

I answer this question publicly as so many inquiries are received by me from students all over, and as so much misconception exists regarding my views on science. I should have no objection whatsoever to industrial enterprise such as the student has in view. Only I would not call it necessarily humanitarian. A humanitarian industrial policy for India means to me a glorified revival of hand-spinning, for through it alone can pauperism, which is blighting the lives of millions of human beings in their own cottages in this land, be immediately

[1] The letter evidently was written after Gandhiji had visited the Utkal tannery at Cuttack on August 19, 1925. In 1925 *Paush Sud* I corresponded to the 16th of December when Gandhiji was at Wardha.

[2] Vinoba Bhave

removed. Everything else may thereafter be added, so as to increase the productive capacity of this country. I would therefore have all young men with a scientific training to utilize their skill in making the spinning-wheel, if it is possible, a more efficient instrument of production in India's cottages. I am not opposed to the progress of science as such. On the contrary the scientific spirit of the West commands my admiration and if that admiration is qualified, it is because the scientist of the West takes no note of God's lower creation. I abhor vivisection with my whole soul. I detest the unpardonable slaughter of innocent life in the name of science and humanity so-called, and all the scientist discoveries stained with innocent blood I count as of no consequence. If the circulation of blood theory could not have been discovered with out vivisection the human kind could well have done without it. And I see the day clearly dawning when the honest scientist of the West will put limitations upon the present methods of pursuing knowledge. Future measurements will take note not only of the human family but of all that lives and even as we are slowly but surely discovering that it is an error to suppose that Hindus can thrive upon the degradation of a fifth of themselves or that peoples of the West can rise or live upon the exploitation and degradation of the Eastern and African nations, so shall we realize in the fulness of time, that our dominion over the lower order of creation is not for their slaughter, but for their benefit equally with ours. For I am as certain that they are endowed with a soul as that I am.

The same student asks:

> I would like to know your very frank evaluation of the work of Christian missionaries in India. Do you believe that Christianity has some contribution to make to the life of our country? Can we do without Christianity?

In my opinion Christian missionaries have done good to us indirectly. Their direct contribution is probably more harmful than otherwise. I am against the modern method of proselytizing. Years' experience of proselytizing both in South Africa and India has convinced me that it has not raised the general moral tone of the converts who have imbibed the superficialities of European civilization, and have missed the teaching of Jesus. I must be understood to refer to the general tendency and not to brilliant exceptions. The indirect contribution, on the other hand, of Christian missionary effort is great. It has stimulated Hindu and Mussalman

religious research. It has forced us to put our own houses in order. The great educational and curative institutions of Christian missions I also count, amongst indirect results, because they have been established, not for their own sakes, but as an aid to proselytizing.

The world, and therefore we, can no more do without the teaching of Jesus than we can without that of Mahomed or the Unpanishads. I hold all these to be complementary to one another, in no case exclusive. Their true. meaning, their interdependence and interrelation, have still to be revealed to us. We are but indifferent representatives of our respective faiths which we believe more often than not.

The third question put by the student is as follows:

In our united staies of India, are we going to leave the present native States intact, or have a democracy there? In order to have political unity, what should be our common language? Why can't we make it English? The Indian States are even now changing their character, be it ever so imperceptibly. They cannot he autocratic when the bulk of India becomes democratic. What, however, Indian democracy will be no one can tell. It is easy enough to foresee the future, if English were our common language. For it would be then the democracy of a mere handful But if we desire to realize, as we must, the political unity of the vast mass of Indian humanity, he must be a prophet who would foretell the future. And the common language of the vast mass can never be English. It is as a matter of course a resultant of Hindi and Urdu or Hindustani as I would call it. Our English speech has isolated us from the millions of our countrymen. We have become foreigners in our own land. The manner in which English speech has permeated the political-minded men of India constitutes in my humble opinion a crime against the country, indeed humanity; because we are a stumbling-block in the progress of our own country, and the progress of what is after all a continent must mean the progress of humanity and *vice versa.* Every English-educated Indian who has penetrated the villages has realized this burning truth, even as I have. I have profound admiration for the English language and many noble qualities of the English people, but I have no manner of doubt in my mind that the English language and the English people occupy a place in our life which retards our progress and theirs as well.

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214. LAST YEAR'S KHADI WORK

The report of the All-India Khadi Board, now converted into the All-India Spinners' Association, on khadi work done by the late Board during the last year is an instructive document which I commend to the attention not merely of every lover of khadi but also of every critic and sceptic. The report can be had from the Secretaries, All-India Spinners' Association, Sabarmati. It omits mention of no weak point, it sufficiently deals with the delays and the neglect of provincial bodies, it takes note of the tremendous difficulties in the progress of the spinning-wheel. But when all is said and done, what remains of substantial work shows the headway khadi has made, not yet enough to be striking, not yet enough to affect the villagers' life, nor yet enough to bring about the coveted boycott of foreign cloth, but by itself the record is striking. Superficial observers tell me that khadi is on the wane, because in big cities they see fewer white caps than before. I call them 'white' because all white caps are not khadi caps. Experience has taught me that these caps were a gross deception. Many of these wearers were no more khadi lovers than the honest man who because he does not otherwise discard foreign cloth refuses to wear the khadi cap for a mere show or worse. The figures tell a different tale altogether. More khadi is being manufactured today than in 1921, more charkhas are plying than before, their output is larger, and the quality of khadi manufacture is far superior to what it was four years ago. The work has become more systematized and better organized for more rapid progress. There are more spinners spinning for hire. The number of steady voluntary spinners is also growing though slowly. More young men and women are earning their livelihood as khadi organizers than in any other national department. Khadi service is an ever-growing service. Its capacity for paying a decent salary to honest, intelligent, and industrious workers is almost limitless. Khadi claims also the largest number of unpaid national workers. Above all it has now become an established fact that khadi work cannot be done without an efficient organization exclusively devoted to it and commanding the services paid and unpaid, of an army of able workers. Its technical department is responsible for several important inventions, as for instance, an improved yarn press for pressing and baling small quantities of yarn. It examines samples of khadi, samples of yarn and detects spurious

khadi. It trains also students as organized or workers in their own homes. It has been carrying on experiments in dyeing and introducing waterproof khadi. And both of these experiments have met with considerable success. Let the sceptic verify the facts for himself by securing a copy of the report, and if he is satisfied, let him join the Association, or if he cannot yet fulfil the conditions, help it with such work as he can do, or with such funds as he can spare.

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215. NOTES

COUNCILS-ENTRY

An American publicist writes:

> I am sorry to see you support, in any way, going into the Councils. If you were right before you came to this position, you are wrong now, I have always likened Councils to a tin plate given to a baby with the statement:"This is the moon; play, dear, with it, all you wish."

The writer reading scrappy bits from my writing, has evidently misunderstood my position. I hold to the same position that I occupied in 1920-21 regarding Councils-entry. I do not support going into the Councils. But I claim to be a practical man. I do not blind my eyes and refuse to see facts that stare me in the face. I recognize that some of my best friends and coworkers who sailed in the same vessel with me in 1920-21 have gone off the vessel and altered their course. They are as much representatives of the nation as I claim to be. I have therefore to determine the extent to which I can accommodate my course to theirs, and Councils-entry being a fact which I cannot alter, I have had no hesitation in tendering to my colleagues, the Swarajists, such help as it is possible for me to give, just as, though pacifist myself, I cannot help sympathizing with the brave Riffs as against the European usurpers.

MALAVIYAJI AND LALAJI

An active member of the Hindu Mahasabha has sent me fifteen questions to answer in the pages of *Young India* and *Navajivan*. Another has discussed several matters after the style of these questions. I do not propose to answer all of them. But some of them I dare not avoid. They draw my attention to the attacks being made in the Press on Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji and Lalaji. The

questions put to me are:

> Do you question their good faith? Do you regard them as being opposed to Hindu-Muslim unity either directly or indirectly? Do you consider them to be capable wilfully of doing harm to the country?

I do occasionally see the attacks made against these patriots. I know also that many of my Mussalman friends thoroughly distrust both these distinguished public men. But however much I may differ from them in many respects, I have never been able to distrust either of them. Indeed I have noticed among Hindu circles similar attacks on several prominent Mussalman workers as I have in Mussalman circles against Malaviyaji and Lalaji. I have not been able to believe either the one or the other charge. But I have not been able to carry home my belief to either party. Malaviyaji and Lalaji are both tried servants of the country, both have to their credit a long, unbroken and distinguished record of service. I have had the privilege of enjoying confidential relations with them, and I cannot recall a single occasion when I have found them to be anti-Muslim. Not that therefore they have not distrusted Mussalman leaders, or that their views and mine about the solution of the very difficult and delicate question have been identical. They have never questioned the necessity of unity, and they have ever, according to their own lights, striven for it. In my opinion to question the good faith of these leaders is to doubt the possibility of unity. The voices will count as effectively in Hindu society when. we come to terms—as some day we must as say, precisely, the voices of Hakim Saheb and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad will count in Muslim circles. Indeed my prescription to every public worker is to take every worker at his own word till there is positive proof to the contrary. A believer loses nothing even where he has been misled and cheated. Public life in the midst of suspicion and distrust becomes intolerable when it does not become impossible.

KHADI EXHIBITION

A correspondent inquires whether at the forthcoming Khadi Exhibition at Cawnpore during the Congress week khadi with foreign or mill-made yarn added to it or carpets with a mixture of foreign or mill-made yarn can be exhibited. A question of that character arose in Belgaum also, and it was then decided that only pure khadi can be exhibited at a Khadi Exhibition and that nothing that has any foreign or mill-made yarn about it can be. The position is in no way altered today and I am quite sure that at a Khadi Exhibition to exhibit

anything but pure khadi would be a kind of deception.

POTENCY OF CHARKHA

Acharya Rama Deva of Kangri Gurukul who has just returned from his East African tour says among other things:

> I am convinced more than ever that British domination will not cease, so long as its motive lasts, and the motive is economic exploitation. The only effective means of rendering economic exploitation an impossibility and of shutting out the drain upon our resources is khaddar. In the Gurukul all the boys of the Secondary Department and many boys m the colleges know spinning and most of the former and a sufficiently large number of the latter spin regularly. The principal of our Veda Mahavidyalaya, Pandit Deva Sharma Vidyalankar, is a regular spinner who spins religiously every day. Two or three of our professors are trying to follow in his footsteps. I am not sure that, when we meet next time, you will not find me a spinner. Principal Vidyawati is anxious to improve the teaching of spinning and to introduce weaving in the Kanya Gurukul at Delhi.

I hope that Acharya Rama Deva will prove as good as his word, and that when I meet him I shall find him as accomplished a spinner as he is a scholar. I tender my congratulations to the boys and to the professors who are spinning regularly by way of sacrifice.

KENYA INDIANS, BEWARE

Acharya Rama Deva was in East Africa for close on six months. He gives me a gloomy picture of Indian life there. He tells me that many Hindus and Mussalmans have taken to drink, they do not mind the use of *videshi* things even when they are avoidable. He considers the local Congress finances to be in a bad way, and he ends by saying that the leaders are not leading. He makes several other allegations and even authorizes me to publish them but I refrain for the moment. I wish I could act in accordance with his suggestion that I should depute someone to East Africa and inquire into the allegations he makes. I am sorry, however, that it is not possible for me to do so, at any rate for the time being. But I do appeal to the Kenya Indians to go through the process of introspection, filling the blank spaces left in this note and get their own house in order. Those who are given to drink must get rid of the drink habit, and those who are not, should help their less fortunate co-settlers to avoid the curse.

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216. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

WARDHA,
Thursday [*December 17, 1925*]

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I hope you have written to Chaunde Baba. Let me also know when the day is fixed. When you come, bring along the account books, the members' names, addresses, etc. I have looked through the constitution. We should call the annual meeting.

We shall also think about appointing an efficient Working Committee.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7742. Courtesy: Valjibhai Desai

217. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGARWAL

WARDHA,

Pausha Shukla 2 [*December 17, 1925*]

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

I have your letter. Wearing khaddar is in no way opposing the Government. A dishonest person is one who does not do the job for which he is paid, as for instance a postman who does not promptly deliver the letters or who destroys them. But a postman who participates in national activities commits no *adharma*.

Bhishma and the others sided with the Kauravas on the plea that they were obliged to the latter for their bread. It was not a meritorious deed. Vidura committed no sin in not taking sides. Vibhishana did a meritorious act in forsaking his wicked brother.

Yours

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 766

218. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

WARDHA,
December 18, 1925

DEAR MOTI BABU,

I have your letter. I shall certainly help you to the best of my ability in your khaddar work. But I need not say more as you will be sending a representative to Kanpur.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. MOTILAL ROY
PRABARTAK SANGH
CHANDRANAGAR

From a photostat: G.N. 11023

219. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Paush Sud 3, Friday [*December 18, 1925*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Your two letters arrived together today. If Dr. Dalal goes there again, you must see him. Tell his wife about it in advance. Who is the doctor there? It would be proper not to sit up even for writing so long as the pain persists. The pain will subside on its own. Be out in the sun morning and evening as much as possible. You must definitely take enema or a purgative if your bowels do not move. I think enema would be better. But consult the doctor and do as he says. Girdhari will of course stay with you till I send somebody else. I intend returning to the Ashram early. But I can know only after going to Kanpur.[2] You must always dictate to Girdhari your letters to me.

If Devdas is surprised by anything I do, so are you bound to be.

Let me know if I should write to Taramati at any particular address.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The adressee received the letter on December 19, 1925 in which year *Paush Sud 3* corresponded to December 18.

[2] Gandhiji left Wardha on December 22

220. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Friday, Paush Sud 3 [*December 18, 1925*][1]

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I have your letter. Jamnabehn is totally engrossed in service. You are spreading your wings from there. I have got the blanket. You are surely reaching earlier than I So what is the point in deliberating about Kanpur?[2]

Tell Mridula I think of her and the children constantly, She must be getting ready for her work. Tell Bhabhi[3] that I shall forever remember the three days I spent in Shahi Bagh.[4] I can only pay for such love by doing more service and by achieving greater purity. I shall certainly try to do that.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32822

221. LETTER TO KESHAVDEV NEVATIA

WARDHA,

Pausha Shukla 3 [*December 18, 1925*]

BHAI KESHAVDEVJI,

It seems better to me to solemnize Chi. Kamala's and Chi. Rameshwar's marriage at Sabarmati. Four months ago I gave my consent to have it in Bombay hoping that it would make an impact on other people. But, after further consideration, I feel that such matters should be decided only with the couple's wellbeing in view. Marriage is a sacrament. It means a new life for the couple. The quieter the ceremony and the more religious the atmosphere, the better for them. Such an atmosphere can be created when we drop all superfluous ceremony and maintain quiet. It is possible the womenfolk might be disappointed. But I think it is our duty to do what is right, regarding their disappointment as momentary. So I wish you too to give your

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Gandhiji reached Kanpur on December 23.

[3] Saraladevi Sarabhi

[4] Gandhiji Had stayed at Ambala Sarabhai's place in Ahmedabad on the 2nd, 3rd and 4thd of December 1925.

consent to have the wedding performed at Sabarmati. It is no botheration, no trouble for me to have the wedding there.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchaven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 263

222. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI

WARDHA,
Posh [*Sud*] *3* [*December 18, 1925*][1]

BHAI PUNJABHAI,

You are writing pretty regularly. This will do you good. I expect to read your well-kept notes of Balkrishna's discourse. If the others disturb your work you should politely tell them about this. If the disturbance persists learn a lesson in tolerance, looking upon it as inevitable. But never lose your temper. Meditate on the *bhajans* as much as you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

It does not matter if you lose appetite only on account of indigestion.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 187. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

223. MY DHARMA

There are many friends who point out"my dharma" to me, and I am happy that they do it. The fact that they write to me freely is evidence of their love for me and their confidence that what they say will not hurt me. I have just received one such letter. The correspondents are well-known Gujarati workers and leaders in their respective districts. The reader will easily see that the letter has been prompted by their regard for me. I, therefore, give it here with a few omissions:[2]

[1] From the postmark,"Sabarmati, December 21, 1925"; the source, however, has"*Posh Vad 3"* which corresponds to January 13, 1925.

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondents had suggested that Gandhiji should undertake a tour of America, Europe and Africa for about a year.

Though the letter has been written with a good motive and seems at first to be well-reasoned, I am unable to follow the advice of these friends.

Our holy books tell us in the plainest words that one's own dharma is to be preferred even though it may require no great virtue to follow it. Another's dharma may seem to have superior virtue in it but it is better even to lose one's life in following one's modest dharma. It is dangerous to follow another's dharma. Can I leave the field merely because today people do not accept my views? The idea of non-co-operation was conceived first by me. I did not know then how it would be received. I put into practice what I believed to be dharma and invited others to follow me. A good many were attracted by the idea. What difference does it make to me if it has now lost attraction for them? Should I give up my dharma because of that? If It do so, I would dishonour my ideal of service. My faith in the efficacy of non-co-operation remains what it was at the time of its inception.

The alternation of flood and ebb is a law of nature. Why should we be elated with pride at flood-tide and be filled with despair at ebb-tide? one who has no control over the helm may lose direction. My hands are. firm on the helm and, therefore,. I have no such fear.

People's love of khadi has increased rather than diminished. Blind worship has changed into intelligent love. On the whole, the quality of khadi being produced is. daily improving and the demand for it is increasing. Among public activities which are going on independently of the Government, I think there is none which is as much alive as the Khadi Movement. This statement can be proved with the help of figures. It is a fact that spinning and carding have stopped in a few places; nevertheless, they are better organized today than they were at any time during the past four years.

The Hindu-Muslim problem is, today, like the lump of clay on the potter's wheel. The Almighty alone knows what kind of pot will emerge. However, having regard to the unparalleled popular awakening, the present developments, though painful, should surprise no one. All the dirt has come up to the surface and, therefore, it is all that we see. What today the Hindus and Muslims cannot be persuaded to do, they will be forced to do sooner or later by the pressure of circumstances. They have no choice but to become united, and so I am not worried on that score. If Fate has decreed that we should fight

a few battles among ourselves, let us. This will not be the first instance of such fighting in the annals of the world. Brothers sometimes fight with one another, but unite again. When the era of peace dawns upon us, wars will seem barbaric. Today, however, fighting is looked upon as civilized.

Untouchability is on its last legs. Its soul is dead, what we see is only its skeleton.

We need not be filled with despair because our struggle for swaraj has resulted in creating disunity among us. Such things have taken place among all nations which have become free. Our duty is only to take note of them and seek remedies for them; to lose heart in the face of them would be evidence of our cowardice.

A person who has accepted defeat in India, what can he give to America or bring thence for our country? People's admiration for me in America or Europe cannot blind me. We shall profit nothing by begging for help from the West. My returning with a certificate from the West would be a matter of shame for the country and me. I see no good reason at present which could induce me to go to Europe or America. Let no one believe that the leaders of those continents are simply pining to meet me or hear me. Whatever reputation I enjoy in those countries is among people whose voice would carry no weight at all with the general public. They, too, like me, seem to have nothing else to do and so build castles in the air and formulate plans for the betterment of the world. I shall retain their love so long as I remain devoted to truth and non-violence. The reader, however, should know that these persons do not hold the reins of power in the West. Whatever strength I have can best be demonstrated in our country. Hills seem beautiful from a distance. Immediately I leave India, I shall have stepped out of my true sphere, and such persons have no place anywhere in the world.

Even in Africa, I can do nothing now. I am, in this matter, in the same plight as Arjuna, who was robbed by a Kaba[1] though he held the same bow and arrow which he had wielded all his life. My Krishna would not be there by my side now. A soldier distinguishes himself in a fight which comes to him unsought. One who goes out in search of a fight would be a gambler. I may say that I have never once gambled in my life, and, fortunately for me, I lost even on the one occasion

[1] A highway man who waylaid and robbed Arjuna, while escorting womenfolk to Indraprashtha. This happened after Krishna's life-time.

when I played for stakes.

If the leaders and the country have wearied of me, I should retire to the Himalayas. By the Himalayas I do not mean the Dhavalagiri Hills, I mean the Himalaya in my heart. It would be easy for me to find a cave in that Himalaya and live there. Even this I will not myself seek, it will come seeking me. The devotee does not himself go to God. If he did, he would not be able to bear His dazzling light. Hence God Himself comes down to His devotees and appears to them in the form in which they have adored Him. My God knows that I am impatiently awaiting His coming; a mere sign from Him will suffice for me."With a frail thread has Hari tied me, and I turn the way He pulls me." So sang Mirabai. I am Mirabai's disciple, and so I may also sing this song after making the necessary change in the gender of the pronoun. I should always hold myself ready to be pulled by such a thread. That is why I am always drawing out thread and reminding my"roving mind" that it should always be ready to set out for its homeland. It matters little whether that homeland be a cave in my heart or some unknown country. Whatever the place to which I retire, He will be present there and, therefore, I shall have nothing to fear.

I would immediately open shops for selling khadi in every taluk, if only the workers in each taluk would assure me that they would be able to sell a fixed quantity of khadi. people should write to the Khadi Association for detailed information.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-12-1925

224. MY NOTES

KALIPARAJ CONFERENCE

Two conferences, one of the Kaliparaj communities and another of Bhils, have been held recently. I have seen no report of the latter. I have seen the report[1] of the Kaliparaj Conference, for it was sent to me by Shri Jugatram and I publish it below. Excellent work is being done among both these communities. There is much in common between them and there are good workers among both. We but serve ourselves in serving either. We should pray that there should be an awakening among both the communities and that they should join in serving the

[1] Not translated here

country. It is not a small service to humanity to become human ourselves. Let us hope that these communities will give up drinking and such other evils understand their proper place in society and engage themselves in useful work, and that workers will help them in their efforts in that direction.

COMMUNITY DINNER AMONG BHANGIS

Shri Mohanlal Pandya writes to say:[1]

I hope that Bhangi friends will remain loyal to the pledge they have taken.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan 20-12-1925

225. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

December 20, 1925

This is my last letter to you before we meet at Cawnpore where a mere woman displaces a mere man. May your words come out of purity, may you adorn Indian womanhood and Hinduism. May your words be as balm to the Hindu-Muslim wound. You are too great to notice the childish display of unchivalrous incivility.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

226. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Sunday [*December 20, 1925*][2]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. Jamnalalji will not be inconvenienced by Girdhari's staying with you for the present. Right now, I can send you no one better than Girdhari. But I will send someone as soon as I reach Sabarmati; so Girdhari may stay on there without hesitation.

You are bound to regain your health there. Why must you think now about how long you may have to rest? You certainly have to do it at least till you recover. There is no reason to be impatient when we

[1] The letter is not translated here. It narrated, among other things, how the Bhangis had resolved to give up some vicious habits.

[2] Inferred from the mention of Gandhiji's departure for Kanpur on Tuesday i.e., December 22, 1925. The Sunday preceding this date fell on December 20.

are taking all possible measures.

If it does not involve the slightest strain there is no harm in writing letters. But I am informed that bed-rest brings the quickest recovery in chest diseases. Avoid walking for the present.

Send for anything you may need.

I will write separately to Taramati.[1]

Now that the special train has been discontinued, Sarojinibai cannot come at all. She cannot expect you to be at the station. If she did, it would be useless. You cannot leave the bungalow right now.

I feel hesitant to write to Dr. Dalal. Now that your health is improving, I should not write to him. If you feel the need, send me a telegram. You would be receiving this letter in the morning. Send a telegram here if you think that you have got to consult the doctor. I shall be leaving here on Tuesday evening. After that I shall be at Kanpur.

There was no letter from you yesterday. I must have news of you every day. I do receive letters on Tuesdays. If you post the letter on Monday before 12 o'clock, I shall surely get it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

227. SPEECH AT WARDHA[2]

December 21, 1925

Ten years have passed since I left South Africa. I have received hundreds of letters, and have replied to them. I have explained this matter a hundred times over in *Young India* and in *Navajivan,* and yet, when I come to the Wardha Ashram I am being asked the very same questions. This has revived old memories for me and distressed me very much. I do not say that such questions should not occur to anyone, but, if they do, people may approach Vinoba and have their doubts answered. However, the reason for my being distressed was that it has become a widespread disease to ask such questions. We should

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] At the morning prayer in the Ashram

resist the temptation to ask them. Please understand my words properly. What I wish to say is that such questions may certainly occur to us, but, they should be kept back in one's mind. When, thousands of yearsago, the battle of Kurukshetra was fought, the doubts which occurred to Arjuna were answered by Shri Krishna in the *Gita;* but that battle of Kurukshetra is going on, will go on, for ever within us, the Prince of Yogis, Lord Krishna, the universal *atman* dwelling in the hearts of us all, will always be there to guide Arjuna, the human soul, and our Godward impulses represented by the Pandavas will always triumph over the demoniac impulses represented by the Kauravas. Till, however,. that victory is won, we should have faith and let the battle go on, and be patient meanwhile. This does not mean that we should suppress our inner urge for fear of anyone; it means that if such an urge takes the form of the question"Who created God?", we should curb it, tell ourselves that it is impious to ask such a question and have faith that the question will answer itself by and by.

This physical frame which God has given us is a prison, but it is also the door leading to deliverance and, if we wish that it should serve only that purpose, we should understand its limitations. We may well desire to clutch the stars in the heavens, but we should note that it is beyond our power to do so; for our soul is imprisoned in a cage, its wings, therefore, have been clipped and it cannot fly as high as it would. It can secure a great many occult powers, but it will fail in its aim of winning deliverance if it goes after such powers. Hence, the kind of abstract questions which were put to me the other day should be avoided —in the conviction that in the course of time the soul will become strong enough and know the answers to them. Instead of discussing such abstract questions, we should follow the advice of the poet:"Let us spend today to some purpose, for who knows what tomorrow will bring?" This line may seem to come from the pen of Charvak, who also says:"Live in ease while you live, drink ghee even if you have to borrow money for it, for the body will never return to life after it is cremated." But the line is not by Charvak. Its author was a devotee and, when he advised us to spend today profitably, he meant that we should discharge the duty which lies before us today. We do not know if we shall be alive tomorrow, though a little later he says that we shall be born again. This duty is what was explained by Vinoba the other day,"ending the misery of all creatures that suffer", destroying the chain of ever-recurring birth and death. The only

means for this is *bhakti*[1]. An Englishman named Newman, a grate devotee, wrote in a poem of his"One step enough for me." This half line is the quintessence of all philosophy. That one step means patient, unswerving *bhakti*. If a sick person gets up and tries to walk down a staircase, he would feel giddy and fall. If we do not understand our limitations and try to get knowledge which is beyond us, we would not only not be able to digest it but would be sick with surfeit.

We should, therefore, cure ourselves of the disease of asking abstract questions, should attend to the immediate duty before us today and leave these questions for some other day. The couplet from a *bhajan* which was sung here today teaches us the very same thing, that instead of talking about *mukti*[2] all the time we should spend our time in *bhakti*. Without *bhakti* there can be no deliverance. Only he, therefore, wins deliverance who is devoted to duty and fills his heart with love of God—he alone wins deliverance who never thinks about it.

Bhakti, moreover, does not imply ineptitude in practical affairs. That which produces such ineptitude cannot be called *bhakti*. It may, of course, be that, looking at the way we conduct our affairs, people will think of us as simpletons. A true devotee, though fully attentive to practical affairs, brings the spirit of *bhakti* into them. His conduct will always be in harmony with dharma. It is because Krishna acted in this manner that he is looked upon as the *Purnavatara*[3]. A devotee finds no difficulty in attending to the practical affairs of life.

Ashrams like this one are established so that such a way of life in complete harmony with dharma may prevail everywhere. I have, therefore, always cherished the hope that these Ashrams will serve as instruments for raising the country and teaching and spreading true dharma. I do not worry whether that hope will be fulfilled in the present or after many generations—it is sufficient for us that we go on doing our duty along the path we have chalked out for ourselves. For this, we should strive to cultivate the qualities of both a Brahmin—truth and faith—and a Kshatriya and non-violence. It is my faith that this Ashram will help its inmates to cultivate both these types of qualities. I do not suggest, of course, that other Ashrams cannot do that. I believe that this Ashram, at any rate, will do some good. If we realize that truth and non-violence have a particular value for us and

[1] Loving devotion to God
[2] Deliverance
[3] Prefect avatar

practise them in our lives, if we have the faith that there is no principle in this world which admits of an exception, we shall in the course of time understand the meaning of perfect truth and perfect non-violence. The peace which I have enjoyed here during the past ten days on observing that the inmates of the Ashram perform their duty in the spirit I have explained, I have enjoyed nowhere else, and you can very well imagine what my feelings must be now that I shall have to leave this peaceful atmosphere and go back to a world full of turmoil. But, as I told a friend, our study of the *Gita* would have been to no purpose if we get frightened of the turmoil in the world; we should get our peace not from the external environment; but from within us, and so I do not worry.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-12-1925

228. LETTER TO SHASTRI MAHASHAY

December 21,1925

DEAR SHASTRI MAHASHAY,

I had to make my choice—to write to Gurudev directly or to Ramanand Babu or to you. At the last I have made my choice and I leave it to you to show this letter to Gurudev and Ramanand Babu.

I had R. Babu's article in *The Modern Review* on the charkha read out to me. I must own that it has deeply pained me. I know that he is too good wilfully to misunderstand anybody. It is my misfortune that what I thought I had written with the purest motives should be understood as being otherwise written even by men like him. I should not pardon myself if even Gurudev so understood my article.[1]

I can but explain my position and ask every friend in Shantiniketan to accept my explanation. Gurudev's title was not used in ignorance. I knew that he had not renounced the title but had asked to be relieved of it. He was not so relieved. And Andrews and I had a discussion over it and we both came to the conclusion that the title not having been taken away, we, Gurudev's friends, should make no fuss about it. We also felt that it would be courtesy even to make use of the title now and then. I know what poison has been emitted over these boycotts. I have therefore gone out of my way to describe titled personages by their titles in order to show that the use of titles was no

[1] *Vide* "The Poet and the Charkha", 5-11-1925.

crime. It was thus out of regard for Gurudev that I used the title. It was used so automatically that I knew that I had used it, only when Mahadev drew my attention to it, on receipt of Ramachandran's letter.

As to jealousy. Let R. Babu and the other friends know that not one but several Bengali friends and some Gujarati friends and even others mentioned the matter in that light. Let me also add that I tried to disabuse them of the prejudice. When I discovered that the belief was fairly general in certain circles, I thought I must refer to it in the columns of *Young India*.

It surprised me to find R. Babu mention the Poet's other qualifications. I take leave to say that they are not to be compared with his matchless poetry. As a reformer I should cross swords with him. But who can equal him as a poet? There are many reformers in the world today, but he is the only Poet outdistancing every other in the race. He is a great schoolmaster, but himself has told me his pedagogy is his plaything. To mention his other qualifications, however great they may be, side by side with his poetry is to ignore the unquestioned supremacy of his poetry. At least that is what I think.

Lastly pray believe me when I assure you that I wrote that article in no unloving, unfriendly or critical spirit. I wrote it to disarm criticism and to testify that his differences with me could not possibly diminish my regard and affection for him. So please all of you regard me as one of you, incapable of misunderstanding the Poet, or his mission. I must not be deserted or misunderstood by you. Do please ask R. Babu to let me have a line to say that he accepts my explanation. And will you get an assurance from the Poet that he at least did not misunderstand me?

You may share this with anyone you like.

With love,

Yours,

M.K.G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

229. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Paush Sud 6 [*December 21, 1925*][1]

CHI. TARAMATI,

You will have received the letter I wrote you at your home address. Since there has been no reply I am writing this. You must recoup your health. You and the child should stay in the open air as long as possible. How nice it would be if you could go to Deolali after you recovered. It will do you both good and you will be able to nurse Mathuradas too. Of course, you should not worry about Mathuradas at all. His health is gradually improving. Girdhari is with him. He is a good nurse. Now you must write to me at Kanpur or at the Ashram. I shall be at Kanpur for five days. After that I hope to go straight to the Ashram. If you write to Kanpur, it should be at the Congress address.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

230. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Paush Sud 7 [*December 22, 1925*][2]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I wrote to you yesterday. Today Girdhari's letter and yours dated the 18th arrived together. The letter written after the 18th arrived yesterday. It contained information that you were better. Girdhari's letter also says that you are better but that the pain continues and the temperature is 98° F. If the temperature remains at that level throughout the day, nothing needs to be said. I should have news of you regularly even at Kanpur. Arrange with Girdhari that he should read to you something. Did I write to you that he sang bhajans very well and read the *Gita* also beautifully? Girdhari is a *rasika*. Do not be in a hurry to get up early. If there is anything interesting you would want him to read to you, have him do it.

I have suggested to Taramati that it will be nice if she stays with

[1] Mathuradas Trikumji has noted the date"December 23. 1925". but in 1925 *Paush Sud 6* corresponded to December 21.

[2] The addressee received the letter on December 23, 1925.

you when she has regained strength.[1] It will be good for her and the child. You will enjoy being with her and she will also nurse you. Think over this matter yourself. You will have to stay there for a considerable time. Then why should Taramati and the child not have the benefit of the air and the sun and the opportunity to be with you? Since Girdhari is there you do not have to worry about Jamnalalji.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

231. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Paush Sud 8 [*December 23, 1925*][2]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Yesterday on the train I asked Mahadev to write to you. Today also I am on the train. It will take two days if I go to Ahmedabad *via* Deolali. And I must spend at least a day with you. That means it will take me three days to reach the Ashram. I am afraid therefore that I shall have to give up the temptation to see you. None the less, any definite decision can be made only at Kanpur. I feel that after I reach the Ashram either Mahadev or Devdas has to be sent to you. If Devdas is ready to go, I intend to send him. I should receive your letters regularly at Kanpur.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] From the postmark and contents

232. NOTES

TOTAL PROHIBITION

Sjt. C. Rajagopalachari has issued a very brief but telling manifesto recommending total prohibition as a constructive single item in the Congress as it will be constituted, when and if it endorses the Patna Resolution. In a private letter he says that total prohibition can be, should be and is"the only unifying political force". It can bring together Brahmins and non-Brahmins. It can weld all political parties and it can also appeal to the masses who are directly concerned in and are to be affected by total prohibition. There is not a shadow of a doubt that total prohibition is a crying need and that without it the ruin that the drink curse has brought to thousands of happy homes must continue its deadly course at an ever-increasing pace. It is therefore to be hoped that the suggestion made in the manifesto will be taken up by all concerned.

AMERICAN SATISFACTION

Whilst several Indian friends have of late been rebuking me for not having accepted the invitation to visit America, an esteemed American friend who knows India fairly well says:

> May I express my gratification at your answer to the request of some American friends to visit this country? I hope you will maintain this attitude because you can do us very much more good from India. There is an element of curiosity-hunting in even the best of our people to which I should exceedingly dislike to see you subjected.

I may assure the writer that there is no fear of my visiting America to satisfy idle curiosity. I am quite clear in my mind that whether for better or for worse, not till I have made good my position in India can a visit to America or Europe by me be of any service either to the West or to the East.

TO WHAT STATE FALLEN

It is wonderful how when a person or an institution begins to recede from a position, the return takes him or it sometimes even below the original state. A correspondent says in effect:

> From non-co-operation, we are hurrying down to cooperation. Presently we shall perform an operation in amputation so that we have nothing but the useless trunk left! Here are some of the conditions imposed upon what was at one

time a well-managed national school, if it is to receive Government recognition: The present head master should not only resign, but should not be a member of the School Committee and should have nothing to do with the management in any shape or form. He must not live on the school premises. The boys and teachers must not take part in political meetings or in any anti-Government demonstrations. The rules governing the management should be so changed as to render non-co-operation in future impossible. For another school which is awaiting recognition summary orders are said to have been issued that recognition cannot be granted unless certain books by well-known Indian writers have been removed from the school library, and other similar humiliating conditions are satisfied.

This reminds one of the conditions that were imposed during the Punjab martial law days upon the dismissed scholars if they were to be re-admitted. It seems that the lesson of the Punjab has been lost upon the schoolmasters and scholars. I can understand reaction against non-co-operation because it appeared to be a new idea which could not be demonstrated to have succeeded, but servile co-operation such as the conditions imply is inexplicable. One would think that a national school, ill-conducted it may be, housed in an ill-constructed dilapidated building, is any day superior to a well-conducted Government school housed in a glittering place where neither the schoolmaster nor the scholars can retain their self-respect.

"HIDE YOUR VIRTUE"

A correspondent writes:

> About your fasts and other penances as well as prayers it strikes me that there is something lacking, and that is why they do not produce proper effects. These sacrifices in order to be effective should not be trumpe-ted, but should be observed in strict silence and secrecy. The Shastras say that virtue should be veiled while sin should be exposed.

There is a great deal of truth in what the correspondent says. For my own fasts and penances and prayers some of them had necessarily to be public when they were meant for some public effect. But I labour under a grave disability. Nothing even that I desire to keep from the public is allowed to be so kept. I must therefore go my hum-

ble way and secure such solace as may be possible in the circumstances from penances. Enough, if I can certify for myself that I desire no publication of private penances. Of public penances I have no manner of doubt as to their intrinsic value and it means nothing to me that immediate results are not always to be seen. Faith will be a poor thing if every act, good or bad, was to produce its own instantaneous and visible effect. It is the uncertainty of effect which puts a man on his mettle, humbles him, and tests his faith and sincerity.

AN EXAMPLE TO COPY

Mr. Shuaib Qureshi, who the reader is aware is at present in Arabia with the Hedjaz Deputation, has sent his quota of yarn for the Spinners' Association from Arabia for the current month. If every member of the Association will follow this example and continue to send his quota no matter where he is, and how circumstanced, the Association will become an effective body for the purpose for which it has been brought into being. It is enough for a person to pay his monetary subscription in a lump or through an agent. But it requires a disciplined mind and anxious care to furnish from time to time products of his own labour. Let every member of the Association realize his or her responsibility even as Mr. Shuaib Qureshi has.

Young India, 24-12-1925

233. THE SOUTH AFRICAN PUZZLE

The more one reads the papers brought with them by the Indian deputation from South Africa, the more insoluble the puzzle appears to be. Dr. Malan thinks that his proposed Bill[1] does not constitute any violation of the Smuts-Gandhi Agreement of 1914. Mr. James Godfrey who led the deputation that waited on him, and who is now in India as one of the members of the deputation successfully combated the view. Now that Agreement finally closed all the questions that were the subject matter of satyagraha or passive resistance as it was known at the time. That struggle was intended to close once for all the door against legislation based upon racial or colour distinctions. That

[1] Areas Reservation and Immigration and Registration (Further Provison) Bill

central fact was brought out not once but again and again during the six years that the struggle lasted. A time was reached when both the late General Botha and General Smuts were ready to concede almost every material point, provided what they called the sentimental objection against race distinction was waived by the Indian community. From that time, i.e., from 1908 the struggle chiefly centred round that one"sentimental" objection and General Botha had declared that on that point no South African Government could yield an inch; and he said that in further prosecuting the struggle the Indian community would be"kicking against pricks". Surely then it was the essence of the Agreement that no race distinction should be made in any legislation affecting the Indian community. Dr. Malan's Billon the other hand breathes through every line of it the racial spirit.

In my humble opinion, therefore, the Bill is a clear breach of that Agreement in this respect. Moreover, the struggle was one against the imposition of further disabilities upon Indians. The Settlement was to be an augury of a better future for the Indian community. It is so stated in the correspondence. What could be the meaning of the Settlement? Where was any security for the Indian residents against further encroachments upon their status, if new restrictions could be imposed at the sweet will of the Government of the day? Let there be no mistake that the Settlement was wrung from an unwilling Government after eight years' hard and prolonged struggle involving sufferings of thousands of Indians and death of a good few. What could be the value of a settlement which closes matters in dispute only to re-open them the very next day? Were the existing laws to be administered with punctilious regard for existing rights, only to attack the latter with new laws? Yet such is the meaning of Dr. Malan's contention and interpretation of the Agreement. There is, however, some consolation even in the Minister's tragic contention in that he does not repudiate the Settlement, but says that his Bill is not in breach of it. One would therefore suppose that if it could be proved that the Bill was in breach of the Agreement it would have to go.

What then is to be done when parties to an agreement differ as to its interpretation? Everybody knows the usual remedy, but let me quote two South African precedents. There were about the year of

1893 certain matters in dispute between the Government of the South African (Transvaal) Republic and the British Government regarding the status of British Indian settlers in the Transvaal. Among these was the question of interpretation of Law 3 of 1885. All these matters were referred to arbitration by mutual consent, and Chief Justice Melins de Villiers of the then Orange Free State was appointed sole arbitrator. The second precedent is a question of interpretation of the Treaty of Vereeniging between the Transvaal Government represented by General Botha and the British Government. I think it was the late Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman who laid down that the interpretation that the weaker party, i.e., the Transvaal Government, put upon the Treaty should be accepted, and without arbitration and without further ado General Botha's interpretation was accepted as against Lord Kitchener's by the British Government. Will Dr. Malan follow either precedent, or will he say after the style of the giant in the story of the giant and the dwarf that his contention must be always right? Anyway the Indian deputation has a strong case for arbitration, seeing that Dr. Malan accepts the Settlement of 1914.

In their able statements for the Viceroy they have made out an overwhelming case. Perhaps naturally they have not discussed the disabilities enumerated there in terms of the Settlement of 1914, having been summarily told by Dr. Malan that his proposed legislation is not in breach of the Agreement. But it is a case not to be easily abandoned. Theirs is undoubtedly a difficult task. Here is a stubborn Government determined upon going on with its highly racial legislation. All European parties seem to be in agreement on this one question. General Smuts, Mr. Andrews tells us, has thrown his weight on the Government side. It does not surprise me because he has always chosen to sail with the wind. No statesman has perhaps shown so much contempt for past promises and declarations as General Smuts,—a trait in him which has earned for him the title of"Slim Janny". But right is clearly on the Indian side and if they have also a fixed determination not to yield an inch of ground on matters of principle, they must win.

Dr. Malan wanted James Godfrey to accept the principle of the measure, and to discuss matters of detail, to make, what he was pleased

to call, constructive proposals. I am glad to note that he resolutely declined to fall into the trap. The Deputation will have all the aid that India, weak as she is, can give them. They will have the support of all the parties. Let them take heart and fight on.

Young India, 24-12-1925

234. ON THE EYE

The forth coming session of the Congress will be a landmark in its history. An Indian woman will for the first time enjoy the highest honour in the gift of the nation. Despised we may be. Slaves we may be. Helpless we may be. The world may, if it chooses, therefore think nothing of the national assembly. But for us a President of our assembly must be all in all. That unique honour will be hers this year as a matter of right. Shrimati Sarojini Naidu has a world reputation as a poetess. From the time she entered public life she has never forsaken it. She has made herself accessible to all. She has ever been found ready for any service that the nation has demanded of her. Unity is her creed. Bravery is written in her face. Unperturbed she wandered about the streets of Bombay during the riots of 1921, reproving the mad crowds for their blind fury. If readiness to respond to every call at a moment's notice even at the risk of one's health be deemed sacrifice, she has shown herself to be capable of great sacrifice. Those who were with her during her African tour[1] have told me of her unwearied toil under difficult circumstances, a toil that would put many a young man to shame. Her mission to South Africa showed her to be an ambassador of high merit. In the midst of strange surroundings and able statesmanship, she proved herself equal to the task. If her tour did not bring tangible relief to our afflicted countrymen, it shows not her incapacity but the difficult nature of the problem. No one could have done better. I have no manner of doubt that we could not have superseded Sarojini Devi without being guilty of a gross breach of duty. It was enough to have done so last year.

It is therefore our duty to give her all the support in our power to make her task easy and her burden bearable. She is faced with

[1] In 1924.

delicate and difficult problems. I need not enumerate them. They are both internal and external. Our internal difficulties are perhaps greater than the external. The battle is three-fourths won if we can remove them root and branch. Woman is the supreme mistress in domestic matters. Can Sarojini Devi then succeed in removing our domestic difficulties where men have failed? But woman though she is, unsupported by us she cannot succeed. Every Congress-man should regard it his duty to take his due share in the solution. External difficulties may be dealt with by experts. But we are or should be all experts in dealing with internal problems. We can all work to bring peace and cease to quarrel and fight with one another. We can all become patriotic and cease to be parochial. We can all honestly fulfil the obligations that we may impose on ourselves by our own resolutions. Without our co-operation she can do little. With our unstinted support, she can do things which she as woman and poetess is specially fit for. May God bless her with all the strength and wisdom she will need in the discharge of her arduous office.

Young India, 24-12-1925

235. TELL-TALE FIGURES

The following table can hardly fail to interest and instruct a worker in the cause of India's freedom:

Year	Population including States (in millions)	Area under cultivation Br. India (million acres)	Area under food-grains (million acres)	Food-grain area per head (acre)	Area under cotton (million acres)
1921	318	271	204	0.64	15
1911	315	257	195	0.62	14
1901	294	231	177	0.60	9.6

In twenty years the population has gone up from 294 millions to 318; the area under cultivation of food-grains from 177 to 204 millions. Therefore the food-grain area per head has apparently gone up from .60 to .64, but the increase is deceptive. The nation was

underfed in 1901. It was still more underfed in 1921, for food-grain area has to show a much larger increase than the increase in population, if the standard of nutriment is to keep pace with the increasing population. The foregoing figures were prepared for me to show the comparative rise in cotton area. From 9.6 to 15 million acres is a phenomenal rise. No doubt it has brought more money to cultivators but it has also increased the price of food-grains, thus adding to the starvation of the people making it more and more difficult for the lowest strata of society to buy enough grain. Becauseit must be remembered that whilst those who grow cotton increase the price of food-grains the balance of the population representing a vast majority not growing cotton havenot been able to increase their capacity for buying. If these figures were further explored it would be found that the increase in cultivation area means so much displacement of grazing area with the result that either our cattle become co-sharers with us in our food or are like ourselves becoming increasingly underfed and therefore giving us less milk, which is what has happened as a matter of fact. And thus it is that those who have studied the cattle question tell us that our cattle have become a burden on the land. This does not mean that they should necessarily become a burden. The figures present a case for overhauling the land revenue system. They demand a scientific study of the relative value of cotton-growing and the growing of grains, and the scientific method of breeding, rearing and feeding cattle. The figures also demonstrate the absolute necessity of cottage industry auxiliary to cultivation. No agricultural country in the world can possibly support a population on less than one acre per head, if the population is to subsist merely or principally on agriculture.

Young India, 24-12-1925

236. SPEECH AT SWADESHI EXHIBITION, KANPUR

December 24, 1925

Mr. Gandhi in declaring the exhibition open said that it was a holy task for him to perform this ceremony. He heard from Mrs. Sarojini Naidu that there were 30 conferences to be held this week. He had received more than one invitation to preside over conferences but had declined all of them. He considered himself fit only for this function. Though he was for Hindu-Muslim unity, he could not accept it if there was no room for khaddar in it.

I dream of nothing but khaddar. I undertook to open the exhibition only after getting an assurance from Pandit Jawaharlal that there would be nothing foreign here. From my five years' experience of khaddar I can assure you we have made tremendous progress. In 1920 I myself sold khaddar at 17 as. a yard. Even at that price people were willing to buy and wear it. Now you can get good khaddar at 9 as. per yard. That is progress, steady and remarkable. In the beginning all who wore khaddar caps were considered to be khaddar-wearers. Now it is not so. But the number of full and complete khadi-wearers has considerably increased. But they did not act fully—what could I do? I had no reason to disbelieve them—they did not carry out their promises and therefore we failed to achieve swaraj within the expected year. Even today I tell you with all the confidence that I can command that if only you all completely boycott all foreign and Indian mill-made cloth, you will achieve swaraj within less than a year. But remember the condition that you must implicitly do what I request you to do.

Proceeding, Mr. Gandhi said that the quality of charkhas and the number of charkhas had increased. He had even put a price on his autograph. Anyone who wanted his autograph was asked to take a vow that he would wear khaddar. (Applause.)

The Leader, 26-12-1925

237. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING, KANPUR

December 24, 1925

Mahatma Gandhi, the retiring President of the All-India Congress Committee, in formally handing over"the reins of the Congress Government", as he called it, to Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, acknowledged the support he had invariably received

from every member of the Committee who had never questioned his rulings and instantly obeyed every call he made, but he wished he could say the same regarding the call made upon them by the resolutions that they were themselves instrumental in passing. If they had responded to that call they would have been in a better and stronger position, and now that the burden of guiding Congress politics was passing on to the shoulders of Mrs. Naidu, he wished her every success and prayed that under her regime the situation would be brighter and so many dark clouds might at least disappear. She had rendered the most wonderful service in South Africa. By her poetry she bewitched the Europeans there, by her sweet reasonableness she disarmed all opposition and by her diplomacy she was able to beard the lion in his own den. For the moment the anti-Asiatic legislation was dropped. For the moment the Europeans there felt that if people like Mrs. Sarojini Naidu could go to South Africa there would not be trouble. He had even received letters from his English friends in South Africa:"Send Sarojini Naidu again to South Africa or people like her." These facts showed that she could achieve several things and was capable of guiding them. But he warned her against being over-generous, as women generally were, regarding Congress funds which at the present moment were probably not more than a lakh and a half.[1]

The Hindustan Times, 27-12-1925

238. SPEECH ON FRANCHISE RESOLUTION[2], SUBJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING, KANPUR

December 24, 1925

Shri Babasaheb Paranjape and Shri Sambamurti have asked me to withdraw this resolution. What right have I to do so? It is only an accident that I have been asked to introduce it. The author of the resolution is the Working Committee. Why do you, moreover, *appeal* to me? That does no credit to me, nor to you. Who am I, after all? Forget me altogether; if you want democracy, do not think of the position of the person sponsoring a resolution. Consider the merits of the Resolution itself. Besides, what is it you ask me to withdraw? Do you want me to withdraw the most deeply cherished principles of my life?

[1] Replying, Sarojini Naidu said that she would leave financial matters to"such distinguished misers as Mahatmaji".

[2] The resolution recommended changes made in the Congress Constitution at Patna in September last by way of a compromise between No-changers and Swarajists, that the franchise be alternative, that payment of four annas per anum or 2,000 yards of self-spun yarn be supplied by each member, and that no one was entitled to vote unless he wore khaddar.

Shri Jayakar and Shri Kelkar have also raised objections. You forget that the qualification for the franchise depends on the aim we have in view. Shall we run away from something just because it is difficult to put into practice? Why not give up talking of swaraj, since it is so difficult to secure it? . . .[1] If I were convinced that swaraj could be won merely by enrolling one crore members, I would do away with the fee of four annas and remove the restriction in regard to age, would in fact have no condition at all. If you wish to undo all that has been achieved, why don't you have a resolution permitting everyone to become a member of the Congress? But, my good friends, would not anyone who is not ready to put his body to the slightest trouble for the sake of the Congress feel ashamed of calling himself a Congressman? If you really wish to be rid of foreign cloth, dismiss mill cloth from your mind. I belong to a province which has a large number of textile mills, and I have happy relations with mill-owners. But I know that they have never stood by the country in the hour of its need. They plainly tell us that they are not patriots, that their sole aim is to make money. If the Government wants, it can force all cotton mills to close down, can stop the import of machinery, but it would never dare to throw our spinning-wheels and spindles into fire. It prevented a German engineer from coming here. I have faith in the English character as I have faith in human nature but it is also a trait of the English that the interests of their country come first to them, and these interests can be served only by keeping Lancashire alive and by dumping their poor manufactures into countries like India against their wishes. To fight these British, we shall have to make our blood as cheap as water. Winning swaraj is no play, it is not so cheap. One must be ready to pay for it with one's head, it cannot be had for nothing. Today you may oppose me, but the time is near when all of you will say that Gandhi was right. So long, therefore, as the majority is with me, I appeal to the others not to obstruct this resolution because of a little sacrifice they may have to make.

Why should we assume that the members of the Congress will not act honestly? Can we not expect that people will follow at any rate the resolutions which they themselves have passed? Yes, of course, if you object on principle to wearing khadi, if it offends your conscience, you should certainly leave the Congress. But you cannot ignore a Congress resolution while remaining in the Congress. So long as I remain in the Congress, I must abide by a resolution passed

[1] Some words are missing here.

by it even if very few people had voted with me.

And you talk, moreover, of the tyranny of the majority! A handful of men are ruling over you according to their arbitrary will, and we do not even seem to be conscious of their tyranny. But we know how to raise fanciful objections to truth. I warn you, if you bid good-bye to khadi, the people, too, will bid good-bye to you—there will be nothing to distinguish you from the Liberals if you give up khadi. We are a strange people, we expect leaders to wear nothing but khadi even when we ourselves do not do so. I may not have served the people as well as Babasaheb; but, in the ten years during which I have served them I have come to know them fully and that is why I warn you that you will gain nothing by giving up khadi.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan 3-1-1926

239. A RESOLUTION[1]

[*December 25, 1925*][2]

The Congress places on record its sense of deep sorrow over the deaths of Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das, Sir Surendranath Bannerjee[3], Dr. Ram Krishna Bhandarkar[4], Krishna Sammi Sharma, V. V. S. Aiyer[5] and the other patriots who worked for the country's progress in their respective spheres and tenders its respectful condolences to the bereaved families.

From the original: A.I.C.C. File No. 69-1, 1926. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] This was moved at the Kanpur session of the Indian National Congress on December 25, 1925. For another resolution moved by Gandhiji along with this, *vide*"Speech on Resolution on South African Indians, Subjects Committee Meeting", 25-12-1925.

[6] The postmark bears the date"December 28, 1925." The Friday prior to this date was December 25.

[2] *ibid*

[3] On August 7, 1925; *vide*"Speech at Public Meeting, Calcutta", 15-8-1925.

[4] For Gandhiji's tribute to him, *ibid*.

[5] For Gandhiji's tribute to him, *vide*"Notes", 18-6-1925.

240. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Friday [*December 25, 1925*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I get your letters regularly. Do not be in a hurry to start walking. Read whatever you feel like reading. And eat as much as you can easily digest. I think it would be good to try fruit after consulting the doctor at Deolali. Sweet-lime and grapes are entirely sweet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

241. SPEECH ON RESOLUTION ON SOUTH AFRICAN INDIANS, SUBJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING

December 25, 1925

Mr. Gandhi moved:

The Congress extends its cordial welcome to the South African Indian Congress deputation and assures the Indian settlers of South Africa of its full support in their struggle against the consolidated forces which threaten their very existence in that sub-continent.

This Congress is emphatically of opinion that the proposed legislation known as the Areas Reservation and Immigration Registration (Further Provision) Bill is a breach of the Smuts-Gandhi Agreement of 1914 in that it is racial in character and is calculated not only to make the position of settlers much worse than it was in 1914, but is designed to make the residence in that country of any self-respecting Indian impossible. In the opinion of the Congress, if the interpretation of the said Agreement, as put upon it on behalf of the settlers, is not accepted by the Union Government, it should be decided by reference to arbitration as was done in 1893 in connection with matters affecting the Indian settlers of the Transvaal and in matters arising from the administration of Law 3 of 1885.

The Congress heartily endorses the suggestion that a round table

[1] The postmark bears the date"December 28, 1925." The Friday prior to this date was December 25.

conference containing among others proper Indian representatives should be called to settle the question and trusts that the Dominion Government will accept that reasonable suggestion. In the event of the proposal of a round table conference and the proposal regarding arbitration failing, the Congress is of opinion that the Imperial Government should withhold Royal assent to the Bill, should it pass through the Union Parliament.

Pandit Benarsidas Chaturvedi held that culpable negligence was shown by the Congress regarding the plight of Indians overseas. He wanted the various leaders to organize a big agitation for support and help, otherwise the promise of"full support" made in the resolution was meaningless. He also deplored the mentality created among the masses that the cause of Indians abroad could not be helped till they got swaraj.

Mr. Gandhi, replying, acknowledged that Pandit Benarsidas was one of the few workers in the cause of Indians overseas, but he had been led away by overzeal. The Congress had done all it possibly could in the past. They were not capable of doing much. His resolution had been drafted after a three hours' discussion with the South African deputation. It told the world the utmost limit to which the Congress could go. As regards financial help, the Imperial Citizenship Association had ample public funds for the purpose. He himself had supplied funds to Pandit Benarsidas. As regards the objection taken by another speaker who had urged the deletion of the sentence asking the British Government to withhold assent, Mr. Gandhi asked, if they deleted it, what consolation would it be to South African Indians? Then, again, had they not gone to work the Councils? He wished, he could do without it, but they could not. He asked them to believe that he knew every iota of the feeling in South Africa and if he had felt that his visit to South Africa would be of help he would have gone there.

The resolution was finally passed amidst acclamation.

The Leader, 28-12-1925

242. MESSAGE TO"KAMNA"[1]

[*December 26, 1925*][2]

Whether you are Liberal, Moderate, or Nationalist, Hindu or Mussalman, from east or west, if you desire to own fellowship with the people of India, with whom you have thrown in your lot, among whom you are born, use nothing but hand-spun and hand-woven khadi for your dress material.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 29-12-1925

[1] An Urdu magazine of Kanpur

[2] Released on this date by the Associated Press of India from Kanpur

243. LETTER TO A SISTER

[*December 26, 1925*][1]

CHI. . . .

I am not satisfied with the letters from either of you. It is not for the children to seek shelter under the proverb about a mother's solicitude surviving her child's wrong-doing. Children who thus excuse themselves never come up. It is the children's duty to excel their parents. So I can say, such are my failings which please condone; but never commit them yourself, else I should perish. When a couple pray for offspring they expect it to bring them credit, i.e., excel them and thus immortalize them. So said Ramachandra: 'The tradition of the Raghu race remains unbroken; they will keep their word at the cost of their life'. He did not say it was his own principle. Ramachandra savedthe race of Raghus. In the same way, you also should save . . . 's family and save the Ashram too. At the Ashram there are quite a few things to be desired; we elders are to blame for this. But are you supposed to take advantage of that? Your duty is to take in whatever is good in the Ashram. I therefore did not like your request to be excused from the promise to write letters. Man can work hard in his youth. For an understanding person youth is not for self-indulgence but for cultivating restraint.

Perhaps you may not understand what I have written. Get Chi. . . . to explain it to you. Do not destroy this letter. I have remembered you both in the midst of great burden of work. I wished to say only a few words, but I have written at length and in a serious vein. That is why I ask you to preserve the letter.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] As in the source

244. LETTER TO A BROTHER

[*December 26, 1925*][1]

CHL . . .

I have your letter and now I am reassured. I no more have the fear that Bhai . . . might beguile you. Our dharma has always asked us to love both the good and the wicked though we may know them. We often think loving others means not seeing the wickedness in them. It was certainly not proper for Chi. . . . to have kept back a certain part. But I was not sorry on that account. I had only a feeling of pity that she was shaken to confess that much. We do not shrink from committing the vilest of sins, but quake to confess it. But how many such persons can be found on earth who see their own sins and let the world look at them? What could . . . do? Now may God take care of him. It is good that you narrated this last episode too to Bhai. . . .

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

245. SPEECH ON RESOLUTION ON SOUTH AFRICAN INDIANS, KANPUR CONGRESS

December 26, 1925

In his Hindi speech on the Congress resolution about the situation in South Africa, Mr. Gandhi said that the Class Areas Bill if passed into law would compel every Indian with any sense of self-respect to leave South Africa. It was worse than repatriation inasmuch as it was legalized expulsion without any compensation to be given to those expelled. It symbolized the determination of the white race to root out the Asiatics from South Africa. Not even the tallest amongst the Indians—doctors, barristers like Mr. James Godfrey, one of the members of the deputation who was born and bred up there and who is visiting India for the first time—were to be suffered to stay there. The resolution suggested three solutions of the question—arbitration, round table conference and, failing both, the Govern-ment of India asking the Imperial Government to exercise the right of veto. It asked Indians to stand by their countrymen in the hour of their trial, and to render them full help. If they decided on satyagraha, the Indians should render them all material help in their power. Fain

[1] As in the source

would he start a satyagraha campaign in India on this tremendous issue, but the atmosphere was against him. If the Hindu and Mussal-mans could convince him that they were united for a peaceful campaign of satyagraha, if they could convince him that they had forgotten their differences in the dark hour of the Hindus and Mussalmans in South Africa, He would readily gird up his loins and get ready for the fight. Until then, the fight had to be carried on by the Indians over there, and India had to rest content with rendering them all help in her power. In order that Dr. Rahman may understand his feelings in the matter, and in order also that his word of warning may reach the ears of the South African statesmen, Mr. Gandhi expressed himself at length in English thus:

SHRIMATI SAROJINI DEVI AND FRIENDS,

I do not know if you have, received copies of the resolution that is in my hand; in that case, I want to spare you the trouble of listening to the resolution and save some portion of the nation's time. This is how the resolution reads:[1]

This is the resolution which I have not only the greatest pleasure in submitting to you for approval but I consider it a rareprivilege that I am authorized by Sarojini Devi to place it before you. She has introduced me to you as a South African. She might have added, 'by adoption'. Though born in India, I was adopted by South Africa, and you will discover that when Dr. Rahman, the leader of the deputation to which you will extend your cordial welcome—comes on this platform, he will tell you that Indians of South Africa claim that they have given me to you. I accept that claim. It is perfectly true that whatever service I have been able to render—it may be disservice—to India, comes from South Africa. If it is disservice it is not their fault, it is through my limitations. I propose to place before you facts in support of the statement made here that the Bill, which is hanging like the sword of Damocles over the heads of our countrymen in South Africa, is designed not merely to heap greater wrongs upon their heads, but virtually to expel them from South Africa.

LORD READING'S REPLY

Such is admittedly the meaning of the Bill. It is admitted by the Europeans of South Africa and it is not denied by the Union

[1] This paragraph beginning with the salutation has been taken from *The Report of the Indian National Congress, Fortieth Session, Cawnpore, 1925.* For the text of the resolution, *vide"*Speech on Resolution on South African Indians, Subjects Committee Meeting", 25-12-1925.

Government itself. If such is the result, you can imagine how keenly the Indians in South Africa must feel. Imagine for one moment that an Expulsion Bill is to be passed in the next session of the Assembly, expelling one hundred thousand Indians from India. What should we do or how should we behave under such a crisis? It is under such circumstances that you have the deputation in your midst. It comes here for support from the people of India, from the Congress, from the Viceroy, the Government of India and through it the Imperial Government itself.

Lord Reading has given them a long reply, and I wish I could have said also a satisfactory reply. The reply His Excellency has given is as unsatisfactory as it is long. and if that was all the comfort that Lord Reading proposed to give to the members of the deputation he could have said that in a few words and spared them, and spared this land, the humiliating spectacle of a great Government confessing its inability to render proper redress to those, who for no fault of their own and who, as many South African Europeans would admit, for their very virtues, are now in danger of being expelled from South Africa. To some of them South Africa is a land of their birth. It was no comfort to those friends of ours, it is no comfort to us, to be told that the Indian Government has always reserved to itself the right of making representations to the South African Government—the right of petitioning. That is to say, a mighty Government, a Government which is supposed to hold the destinyof 300 millions of people in the hollow of its hand that Government confesses its powerlessness ! And why? Because South Africa enjoys Dominion Status, because South Africa threatens to ‘‘cut the painter” if the Indian and the Imperial Governments intervene in any of the steps that the Government of South Africa may take.

“DOMESTIC POLICY”

Lord Reading has told the deputation that the Indian Government or Imperial Government may not interfere with the domestic policy of a colony enjoying Dominion Status. What is the meaning of”domestic policy” when that policy is calculated to bring ruin upon the homes of thousands of Indian settlers domiciled there, and whom they deny the common rights of humanity? Is that domestic policy? Well, what would be the case if instead of Indians they happened to be Europeans or Englishmen?

Let me quote a precedent. Do you know why the great Boer War

took place? It took place in order to protect the Europeans of South Africa who were domiciled there,"Uitlanders" as they were described by the Transvaal Republican Government. The late Mr. Joseph Chamberlain claimed for the British Government that even though the Transvaal was an independent Government he declined to admit that this was purely a domestic question. He claimed to protect the rights of the"Uitlanders" of the Transvaal, and that was why the great Boer War took place.

CONFLICT OF CIVILIZATIONS

Lord Lansdowne, in justification of the war, said that it made his blood boil when he thought of the disabilities of Indians in the Transvaal. He held that one of the potent causes of the Boer War was the disabilities of Indians in South Africa, or more accurately Indians of the Transvaal. Where are those declarations today? Why does not the British Government go to war against the Union Government when the life, honour and livelihood of one hundred and fifty thousand Indians are at stake?

Nobody questions the description I have given to you of the effects of this legislation. Nobody questions the ever-growing grievances of the British Indians in South Africa. If you have seen a beautiful little pamphlet published by Bishop Fisher who went only a few mouths ago to South Africa, you will find that there he gives a summary of the wrongs that are being heaped upon the South African Indians. The Bishop has come to the impartial conclusion that for these wrongs the Indians are not to blame. It is the jealousy and theinsolence of the European trader that is responsible for these wrongs. He gives his testimony that Indians have deserved better at the hands of Europeans of South Africa. If justice counts, if Right rules this world, it should be impossible to bring this Bill and unnecessary for me to waste your precious time and for the deputation to waste their money.

But evidently Right does not count. Might is Right. The Europeans of South Africa have chosen to heap this wrong upon . Our countrymen, and for what purpose?"Conflict of the two civilizations." It is not my expression. It is that of General Smuts. He cannot put up with it. Europeans of South Africa consider that they will be overwhelmed by the East if they allow hordes to pour down into South Africa from India. But how could we corrupt their civilization? Is it because we live as thrifty men and women? Because

we are not ashamed to hawk vegetables and fruits and bring them to the very doors of the South African farmers? The South African farms are not two or three *bighas*, but hundreds of acres belonging to one man who is the sole undisputed owner of them. You understand what great service the Indian hawkers are rendering to these South African, European or Boer farmers. That is the conflict.

PERIL OF ISLAM

Someone has said (I do not know where, but only recently) that Europeans in South Africa dread the advent of Islam,— Islam that civilized Spain, Islam that took the torchlight to Morocco and preached to the world the Gospel of Brotherhood. The Europeans of South Africa dread the advent of Islam, for they are afraid of the fact that if the Native races embrace Islam they may claim equality with the white races. They may well dread it. If brotherhood is a sin, if it is equality of Coloured races that they dread, then that dread is well founded. For I have seen that any Zulu embracing Christianity does not *ipso facto* come on a level with all Christians, whilst immediately he embraces Islam, he drinks from the same cup and eats from the same dish as a Mussalman. That is what they dread. The thing is they want to become lords of the universe. They want to appropriate the land for themselves. The Kaiser, though downtrodden, fears an Asiatic federation and speaks even from his exile that it is a danger which Europeans should guard themselves against. That is the conflict of civilizations and that is why Lord Reading is powerless to intervene in their domestic policy.

Such are the tremendous consequences of the struggle which this resolution describes as unequal and, it is in that unequal struggle that this Congress is called upon to take its due share. I want to make an appeal, if my voice can go as far as South Africa, to the statesmen that are ruling the destiny of South African Indians.

THE BRIGHT SIDE

I have so far given you only the dark side of South African Europeans. Let me also say that I claim among them some of my most precious friends and I have enjoyed from individual South African Europeans the greatest kindness and the greatest hospitality. I claim the privilege of having been a close friend of that great poetess and philanthropist and that most self-effacing woman— Olive Schreiner. She was a friend of the Indians equally with the Natives of

South Africa. She knew no distinction between white and black races. She loved the Indian, the Zulu and the Bantu as her own children. She would prefer to accept the hospitality of a South African Native in his humble hut. What she gave away with her right hand her left hand never knew. Such precious men and women have also been born and bred in South Africa.

A WARNING

I can give you many more such names. I claim also to know General Smuts, though I may not claim to be his friend. He was party to the Agreement on behalf of his Government with me on behalf of the Indians. He it was who said that the British Indians in South Africa had deserved that settlement. It was he who said that that was a final settlement and that Indians should not threaten passive resistance and that the European settlers in South Africa should allow rest to the Indian community.

But hardly had I turned my back from South Africa than a series of wrongs began to be heaped upon them. Where is the plighted word of General Smuts? General Smuts will go one of these days the same way that every human being has to go, but his words and deeds shall remain after him. He is not a mere individual. He spoke the right thing in his representative capacity. He claims to be a Christian and every one of the members of the South African Government makes the same claim. Before they open their Parliament they read the common prayer from the Bible and a South African divine opens the proceedings with a prayer that goes up to God, not the God of white men, not the God of the Negro, not of the Mussalman, not of the Hindu, but the God of all, the God of the Universe.

I say this from my place of position, and knowing my responsibility to its fullest extent, that they will deny their Bible, they will deny their God, if they hesitate for one moment, if they fail to render the elementary justice that is due to the Indians of South Africa.

Young India, 7-1-1926

246. PATRIOT'S WAIL[1]

December 27, 1925

A friend has thus unbosomed himself:

> In your weeklies you write nothing about the agriculturists, who form the bulk of the population of India. In most parts of India the agriculturist is a mere tenant, at the mercy of the zemindar, and dragging on a miserable existence. Don't you think these zemindars and talukdars are a pest in the country? Can't we solve the problem by dispossessing these zemindars and distributing their land among the poor?
>
> The headman and the *sowkar* are another pest. They exploit the poor agriculturist on all occasions.
>
> The agriculturist himself does not know his own interests. Everywhere in Gujarat he has taken to growing cotton, and has thus made foodstuffs dear. Could not the Swarajists get some legislation passed requiring them not to exceed 5 *bighas* of cotton cultivation? India needs only two million bales of cotton. Why should we grow six instead? Can't we carry on village propaganda for concentrating more on the cultivation of food-crops?
>
> The *Patidars* in Gujarat are mad after tobacco cultivation. And for whose benefit? Possibly we are more responsible for the vice of smoking than any other part of India. Can't we persuade them to grow fruit-trees instead?
>
> And why don't you say something strong about our miserable widows? Their orthodox parents or guardians are never going to listen to reason. Why not encourage the widows to take the initiative?
>
> And then there are our numerous evil customs and usages, our wretched dowry system, our post-nuptial and post-mortem dinners and so on.
>
> And what a woeful number of sub-castes!
>
> Why not resume bonfires and picketing of foreign cloth?

I have boiled down a very long letter which, though rambling, is the cry of an agonized soul.

I have not been writing much about the agriculturists advisedly. For I know that it is impossible for us to do anything for them today. There are a thousand and one things that need to be done for the amelioration of the lot of the agiculturists. But so long as the reins of

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan,* 27-12-1925. This is a translation by Mahadev Desai.

Government are not in the hands of the agriculturists' representatives, i.e., so. long as we have no swaraj— dharmaraj— that amelioration is very difficult if not impossible. I know that the peasant is dragging a miserable existence and hardly gets even a scanty meal a day. That is why I have suggested the revival of the spinning-wheel.

And the need for internal reform is as great as that for legislative reform. And internal reform can be only partly achieved when numerous volunteers are found to take up village-work as the mission of their lives. The evil habits of ages cannot go in a year or two.

We may not forcibly dispossess the zemindars and talukdars, of their thousands of *bighas.* And among whom shall we distribute them? We need not dispossess them. They only need a change of the heart. When that is done, and when they learn to melt at their tenants' woe, they will hold their lands in trust for them, will give them a major part of the produce, keeping only sufficient for themselves. 'We had better wait for that day until the Greek Calends,' someone will say. I do not think so. I think that the world is moving towards peace, i.e., ahimsa. The way of violence has been tried for ages and has been found wanting. Let no one believe that the people in Russia, Italy and other countries are happy or are independent. The sword of Damocles is always hanging over their heads. Those who have the good of the Indian agriculturists at heart must pin their faith on non-violence and plod on. Those who think of other methods are vainly flattering themselves with hope of success. The agriculturist never figures in their calculations, or at any rate they do not know his condition.

What I have said above applies equally to the *sowkar* and other exploiters. Nothing but their own profit appeals to them. But there too the remedy is the moral education of both. The oppressed need no other education, except in satyagraha and non-co-operation. A slave is a slave because he consents to slavery. If training in physical resistance is possible, why should that in spiritual resistance be impossible? If we know the use of the body, why can we not know the use and power of the soul?

Till he is educated who can persuade the agriculturist to limit or stop his cultivation of cotton and tobacco?

And reform of immoral customs and usages? How can it be brought about? By lectures? Here too an education of popular conscience is necessary. Those whose consciences are awake should act according to their convictions and accept the consequences. We

may before long look forward to a measure of fusion of sub-castes.

Smoking is in a way a greater curse than drink, inasmuch as the victim does not realize its evil in time. It is not regarded as a sign of barbarism, it is even acclaimed by civilized people. I can only say, let those who can give it up and set the example.

Remarriage of widows is necessary to a certain extent. The reform can be brought about only when our youths have purified themselves. Are they pure? Do they profit by their education? or why blame their education? From childhood up a slave-mentality is sedulously cultivated in us. And if we cannot think freely how can we act freely? We are alike slaves of the caste, of a foreign education, and of an alien Government. Every one of the facilities provided us have become our fetters. There are so many educated youths amongst us. How few of them have thought of the lot of the widows in their own homes? How few have resisted the temptation of lucre? How few regard them as their own sisters and mothers and protect their honour? How few have had the courage of their convictions and defied their castes to do their worst? Whom is the poor widow to approach? What comfort can I bring her? How few of them are readers of *Navajivan?* How few even of those who read it can act up to their convictions? And yet I have occasionally devoted the columns of *Navajivan* to the widows' wail and hope to do more as opportunity offers itself. In the meantime I would appeal to everyone who has a child-widow under his care to consider it his duty to marry her off.

The correspondent has cast a lurid light on our social customs. But' when the whole body is rotten, how can we be satisfied with a few patches here and there? Post-mortem dinners are barbarous. But post-nuptial dinners are no less so. We might consider the latter to be less barbarous, because the religious ceremony of marriage is, all the world over, an expensive affair, more or less. But the Hindus alone have the monopoly of having post-mortem dinners! These and other matters badly need attention. But a reform all over will come with the awakening of the moral consciousness of our people and with the liberation of their thought. So long as our thought and action are not free, patchwork will be worse than useless.

The last item in the correspondent's wail is about the resumption of burning and picketing of foreign cloth. If someone could assure me that the people will burn only their own foreign clothing, and will not touch others', I would again appeal to the nation

to make bonfires of foreign cloth. I have never doubted the propriety of these bonfires. But I have genuine dread of people resorting to violence. When even a thing springing from love and non-violence is abused, we must take it that time is not ripe for placing it before the public. And when I saw in Bombay with my own eyes people wearing foreign cloth wresting it from others and consigning it to flames I recalled the weapon. Today when the ugliest of our passions have come to the surface, all peaceful experiments also must be reduced to a minimum. That is why I have hitched my waggon to only one star—spinning and weaving and propagating khaddar where abuse is unthinkable, and where there is no possibility of any harm being done. Those who want swaraj or dharmaraj for India by peaceful methods must pursue this unfailing remedy as a principal duty.

Young India, 4-2-1926

247. EXCESS OF LOYALTY

A gentleman writes to say:[1]

Such an argument can be advanced only in our country. India has cultivated the virtue of loyalty to a high degree, and has benefited, too, by doing so. But today we see merely an excess or perversion even of the best.

To start with, let us leave aside the instance from the *Mahabharata*. When Yudhishthira approached Bhishma, the latter did not plead loyalty in his defence, but pointed at his stomach and said that he had done what he did for the sake of the sinful belly. Vidura did not help either side. If we turn our attention to the *Ramayana*, we find that Vibhishana, disregarded both loyalty and love for a brother when he considered what dharma required of him. He gave all help to Ramachandra, told him the secrets of Lanka and so came to be reckoned among such devotees as Prahlad.

But even if we get instances of an opposite kind, we should certainly disregard them if they conflict with moral principles. Just because we find mention of beef in the *Ramayana* or of animal-sacrifice in the Vedas, we will not start eating beef or slaughter-ing animals. Principles remain the same in all ages, but the practices based

[1] The letter is not translated here. It referred to criticisms of Government servants for sympathizing with national activities.

on them vary with times and circumstances.

Let us now examine the question of loyalty. There is no published or implied rule of Government service forbidding Government servants to wear khadi, except that some of them are required to wear special uniforms. Even these can publicly wear khadi when they are not on duty. Khadi is not, and is not regarded, anti-Government. Nor is there any rule forbidding a Government servant expressing sympathy for any popular movement. It is true, of course, that a loyal Government servant, so long as he is in service, cannot take part in a movement which the Government regards as seditious. If, however, he believes the order of the Government in regard to such a movement unjustified, and if he has courage, he may resign his post and oppose that order. There is no moral or any other law that anyone who has been a servant always remains a servant, or that a servant must not judge the morality or otherwise of his master's actions. There is a limit even to loyalty. Loyalty only requires that we should be loyal in the sphere of our service and while we remain in service. That is, an employee of the Post and Telegraph Department, for instance, should work for the required number of hours, should not misappropriate money or steal letters and should not divulge any Government secrets which he may have come to know in the course of his duties. However, he is not a peon for all the twenty-four hours. He has not sold his soul. Anyone who understands the nature of the national movement is always free to entertain sympathy for it in his mind, and can even express it in action if that is not against published rules.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-12-1926

248. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

KANPUR,

Silence Day [*December 28, 1925*]

CHI. VASUMATI,

Again it is four days and no letter from you. It will do if I get one a week.

I am keeping well. It may be said that curds and fruit agreed with me. My weight has certainly gone up. It is 98 lbs. On the spring

balance, i.e., 94 in our scales or at least 93. This addition is appreciable. Of course, I can work well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 598. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

249. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

Monday [*December 28, 1925*][1]

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I can see Sir Harold Mann only at Ahmedabad. I shall go to Ahmedabad *via* Delhi. I start tomorrow and reach the Ashram on the 31st.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7743. Courtesy: Valjibhai Desai

250. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

KANPUR,
Monday [*December 28, 1925*]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Today is my silence day. So in spite of the hullabaloo of the Congress session, I am at peace. I have received both your letters. You will certainly improve your health there.

I have received Taramati's letter. I am sending it on to you. If you regularly teach her Gujarati she will learn faster. I get away by telling others to do what I myself cannot do.

I shall be leaving here tomorrow. I shall be going via Delhi. Address your letters to the Ashram. I will try to free Girdhari as soon as I reach there. Write to me if you need anything.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the postmark

251. CERTIFICATE TO TULSI MAHER

KANPUR,
December 29, 1925

Shri Tusli Maher has lived in the Satyagraha Ashram at least for four years. His self-control has made a deep impression on my mind. He lived a very simple life at the Ashram. He was also commendably industrious. He has learnt carding, spinning and weaving. He has always been foremost among the carders. Even today I regard him as one of the inmates of the Ashram.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6523

252. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA, KANPUR

December 29, 1925

Interviewed by the Associated Press representative regarding his attitude towards Pandit Motilal's resolution which was passed last evening in the Congress. . . Gandhiji said:

I did not attend yesterday's Congress because it was my silence day and I avoid, as far as possible, going out of my place during my time of silence. So far as the resolution itself is concerned, my position is this. At Patna I personally surrendered all control to the Swaraj Party and I promised to give them all such support as an anti-Council man could give. I still remain opposed to Council-entry on principle, but I had to make my choice either to abandon my old colleagues entirely or to render them such support as I could give. I had no difficulty about making my choice. If I could not help them actively I felt that I should at least refrain from instructing them in any shape or form. I, therefore, felt that I should advise the No-changers, like myself, to abstain from striving for controlling the Congress but to surrender it voluntarily to the Swarajists which I am glad to say they have done.

Q. Will you tell me if you are satisfied with the resolution passed by the Congress?

A: As a matter of fact Pandit Motilal showed the resolution to

me and when he showed it to me I told him that it was for him and the Swarajists to decide what the text should be and as he showed the resolution to me I endeavoured to suggest some alterations. He accepted what he thought he could conscientiously do but there were certain suggestions which he could not accept but it was not for me to press for their acceptance. I had to deliver the goods and I could only deliver the goods if I accepted what resolution commended itself to a majority of Swarajist representatives.

Asked what his future programme would be as the result of the Congress decision, Gandhiji replied:

My position is to remain passive and do the constructive work of which I am capable and to leave the rest, that is, the working out of the resolution of the Congress entirely into the hands of the Swarajists unhampered by me and even aided by me wherever it is possible.

The Hindustan Times, 31-12-1925

253. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Thursday [*December 31, 1925*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have returned to the Ashram this afternoon. Devdas will leave here tomorrow and reach there on Saturday, the 2nd. I have received your letter. I wish you would not worry. There is no reason at all to be concerned about Taramati. I have a letter from her. She writes that she will be reaching there after *Sankranti*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the postmark

254. DRAFT RESOLUTION ON ATROCITIES AT NIMUCHANA

[*December, 1925*][1]

This session of the States People's Conference expresses its distress over the inhuman atrocities at Nimuchana in the state of Alwar and the intransigence of the State Government in refusing to hold an open and impartial inquiry into the causes and consequences of the barbaric atrocities and irregularities committed by the police and officers of the State.

This Conference conveys its heart-felt sympathy to the many bereaved families, injured individuals and displaced persons whose houses and properties have been destroyed in the name of law and order. The Conference also wishes to be in a position to render some effective help to the people at Nimuchana in this misfortune.

[From Hindi]

Gandhiji aur Rajasthan, pp. 55-6

255. MESSAGE TO STATES PEOPLE'S CONFERENCE

[*December, 1925*][2]

Every individual can get rid of his bonds. If we understand this general rule and act on it, we can root out all misery. No tyrant can oppress a victim without his co-operation. How nice it would be if we could understand this.

[From Hindi]

Gandhiji aur Rajasthan, p. 56

[1] According to the source this resolution was drafted by Gandhiji for the States People's Conference held at Kanpur in December, 1925.

[2] As supplied in the source

256. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

December 1925

I wish to do something that will bring you peace. So write to me unreservedly, as unhesitatingly as a son to his father, a friend to his friend and a patient to his doctor. Ask me for anything. After all I am *bapu*, I am a friend and I certainly am a physician.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 83

257. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

[About *December 1925*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I am writing this much today just for the sake of writing. Look after your health. Give consolation to Ramdas. You two, brother and sister, should sing aloud *bhajans*. Recite Ramanama.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : S. N. 9299

258. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

[*1925*][2]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter. The newspapers alone are to blame for causing you distress. They do not follow my language and yet send some report or the other. What I intended as praise, they have reported as censure. I praised the members for cow-protection work and said that I would be powerless to do anything if I were not fullybacked up by the Marwaris. I do not need their treasures only; I also want their brains. In this strain I said that I had invited a Marwari brother to become the treasurer, not for his money, but for deriving maximum benefit from his service. In any case, I have never taken your refusal amiss nor did I speak at the meeting in that vein. I do not expect my friends to

[1] From the contents; *vide*"Letter to Vasumati Pandit", 14-12-1925.

[2] From the reference to the Deshbandhu Memorial

accede to every one of my requests. I could well appreciate your dissent.

I have taken in the same light your decision in respect of the Deshbandhu Memorial. It has not grieved me.

I shall discern when we meet the significance of what you have written to Pandit Jawaharlal about an All-India Memorial.

Jugal Kishoreji said you had not yet recovered completely. Perhaps you need some change in diet. He also said that your wife was still unwell. May God keep her calm.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[PS.]

I write with the left hand since the right pains.

From a copy of the Hindi original: C.W. 6119. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

259. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

[1925][1]

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I respect women who are simple, frank, humble, virtuous, firm, fearless and truthful. From the very beginning I have attributed to you all these virtues and that is why I have respected you. My love for you is that of a father for a daughter. But because of your age and your belonging to a rich family, I do not have the courage to use a salutation which I should like to and of which you are worthy. Since you ask me not to write *pujya*, then you are certainly all that is impliedby *chi*. From now on I shall use one of the two salutations and ultimately the one that fits better will last. And what comes from the heart would fit better. I have intentionally used the salutation *pujya* for widowed workers and I shall keep up the practice. I have always embraced Vasumati as one does a child whenever I have met her and therefore she has always been *chi*. to me.

I am glad that you went to Nainital. I hope you will stay there for some time. I should like to go there myself but can one always get

[1] From the contents is appears that the letter was written in 1925 when Gandhiji was touring Bengal and since he says here that he may have to be in Bengal the entire month of June, the letter may have been written in early June.

what one wants?

Do not be anxious about my health. Satisbabu carries a truck-load of baggage which is loaded onto to a special bogey arranged for the purpose. A doctor also travels with us. I normally get a few hours' rest also.

My remembrance to the children. All of June we shall be in Bengal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 32836

260. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

January 1, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

It is now morning of New Year's day. I reached here yesterday noon.

Bharucha told me that you were sad and moody. [He] could not make out the reason nor could I. I asked Jamnalalji. He told me the moodiness was probably due to something in connection with the examination of the spinning competition. Whatever the cause, you dare not be moody or morose. You must learn to rough it and get on under all circumstances. You and I and several others have embarked upon a work of service the equal of which I do not know in the whole world. The greater the service the greater the restraint, the greater the toleration the greater the suffering required. Nothing therefore can be allowed to ruffle our spirits. We must be able to get on with all temperaments: Please then let me have a line that you are yourself again. Do you know the song 'Cheer, boys, cheer, no more of idle sorrow'? You must read again and again the *Song Celestial* by Edwin Arnold.

I had a good mind to talk to you. Then I thought of taking you with me. To talk I had no time. I did not wish to take you with me from your work. I intended too to bring Dr. Suresh in touch with you again. His work appeals to me. His method has a place. But I wanted to discuss the whole thing with you. It could not be. Now you must come here whenever you can.

You should write what you like without the slightest hesitation. I am now fixed up here for one year.

Now about Hemprabha Devi. I had fairly long chats with her.

But I could see she did not open out her mind to me. She should come at the earliest possible time. If she needs separate cooking accommodation, I shall find it for her. A Bengali teacher is available. But if you can give her a good scholar for the boys, you may do so. Let her come whilst the weather is fairly cold. It has been. an exceptionally mild winter here—nothing compared to Cawnpore.

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

Your advertisement pamphlet I have read from cover to cover. It is very good. What is your sale of the travelling charkha?

From a photostat: G.N. 1557

261. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Friday [*January 1, 1926*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have both your letters. I did not know that you had relinquished charge[2] so I wired you. Your letter regarding the office matters has been forwarded to Chi. Jaisukhlal[3], so as to let him know what others have to say about this. Now that I have decided to stay in this place for one year, I shall be in a position to cope with these matters.

What you have decided for yourself is not quite correct. We can find some way out of your domestic problems, for, you shall have to come over here. Your presence is essential for the affairs of the Charkha Sangh[4]. Maganlal's seven-day fast is now inprogress. This is the third day. The reason, the . . . girls have told a lie. He is quite well, so there is nothing to worry about. You may come after his fast is over or now. I want you to do many things for me; so please do revise your plans.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7705. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] From the reference to Maganlal's fast
[2] As Secretary, Kathiawar Political conference
[3] Jaisukhlal Gandhi, Gandhiji's nephew
[4] All-India Spinners' Association

262. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

ASHRAM,
Friday [*January 1, 1926*][1]

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

Devdas is just now at Deolali nursing Mathuradas, but he has left with me a letter of yours to him containing a question to be answered. If a person who wears khadi exclusively and on all occasions is once in a way compelled, by force of circumstances, to use some other cloth, would he still be regarded a"habitual wearer of khadi"[2]? My answer is that he should undoubtedly be regarded a"habitual wearer"[3]. I have an impression, however, that I had already answered this question for you.

Was a settlement reached in the Sholapur dispute, or is it still hanging fire?

I am keeping well, and have almost regained the weight lost during the fast.

Someone on your behalf gave me a basket of fruit on my way to Kanpur.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4698. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

263. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Friday [*January 1, 1926*][4]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Your two letters to Mahadev have arrived only today. I see your despondency in them. But where is the cause for despondency? Pain may go quickly or it may take its time. You did well in having gone

[1] Friday following Gandhiji's return to the Ashram from Kanpur fell on this date.

[2] The source has these expressions in English.

[3] *ibid*

[4] The date has been inferred from the contents. Devdas Gandhi was to go to the addressee on Saturday, the 2nd January, 1926; *vide"* Speech at Wardha", 21-12-1925; also"Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", 2-1-1926. The Friday prior to this date was January 1.

there. Give up worrying about things around you. Do not worry even about yourself. All your knowledge will be in vain if you cannot do even this much.

You must not write letters yourself, but you can dictate. Devdas will be reaching there on the very day you receive this letter. I must have one post-card from Devdas every day.

Devdas will give you the rest of the news. Hence I am not writing more. He will be arriving by the Nagpur Mail.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

264. MESSAGE TO GRADUATES' ASSOCIATION

Posh Vad 3, January 2, 1926

I could deal with your letter only today. I wish the Association a success. My only advice is that the rules framed by the Association should be strictly observed. Many associations are formed but very few succeed. I wish yours would be one of the latter.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Sabarmati, Vol. IV, Nos. 5 & 6

265. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Saturday [*January 2, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter and the Municipality papers. But by the time this reaches you Devdas will have become an old resident of the place. Give up the idea of engaging a nurse. Make full use of the services of Devdas. He is a very good nurse. You must take it that anyone I send to you goes there to nurse you.

I understand about Ramdas. His ways are odd. I would not suggest anything to him. Try to satisfy him as much as possible. I

[1] The addressee received the letter on January 4, 1926.

know that he will not find the atmosphere at Amreli congenial at the moment. Even the least little conflict unsettles him.

Devdas will have come only after meeting Taramati. I had told him to see her. Do you need anybody else besides Devdas? Write to me if you do. I will send Ba herself if you wish. Ba will nurse you well. And she will feel quite at home with you.

I have written to you that you should ask for anything or any special help you may need.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

266. THE CONGRESS

The prophets of doom had been active about the Kanpur Congress. If Sarojini Devi became the President, they prophesied, she would have a tough time with the audience; there would be hardly any visitors at this session; few delegates would attend, etc., etc. But as things turned out, it cannot be said that the last Congress session was inferior to any. In some respects, it was even better than usual.

The general arrangements were better. Usually the delegates' chief complaint is about food. I heard, however, nothing but praise in this regard. Seldom in the past was the food better than it was this time. The delegates got as much milk, curds, *papad*[1], vegetables, and so on and as often as they wanted. The provisions, too, were of the best quality and service was very prompt. In fact, there were so many volunteers that no one had to ask for a helping. The cleanliness left nothing to be desired. I inspected the arrangements myself and found no ground for complaint. The credit for these excellent arrangements goes to Lala Fulchand.

The lodging arrangements were as good as the boarding. All the people were put up in tents. There was little danger of anyone catching cold. The sanitary arrangements were also excellent. Neat trenches had been dug and every seat curtained off. Volunteers always stood ready to spread earth after a latrine had been used. Bhangis had been engaged, but the volunteers did not feel the slightest aversion to

[1] A round, thin, dry cake made of the flour of pulses

do the work themselves. This branch of service was fittingly called"Sanitation and Bhangi Department". The badge supplied to every volunteer carried the pictures of a basket and a broom. It was only on the 29th that I could go out to inspect the arrangements, so that five days had already passed, but I found no unclean spot near the lavatories—there was no stench nor stagnant water anywhere. The Congress session was already over on the 29th, and the fact that there was no unclean spot even then shows how good the arrangements must have been.

There were about 800 men volunteers and 80 women volunteers. The latter were dressed in ochre-coloured saris and looked very smart in them.

A guide to the Congressnagar was also brought out. Round the Congress *pandal*, arrangements had been made for other conferences. Thirty such conferences were held.

The excellence of the arrangements was matched by the enthusiasm of the people. Tilaknagar overflowed with crowds. There was no space even to move. Every face was bright with joy and enthusiasm. The condition inside the *pandal* was the same as outside. On the first day it was crowded to overflowing. A fairly good number of English-speaking men and women had attended this session of the Congress, the largest section in this contingent of foreigners being from America.

Sarojini Devi discharged her duties ably and with a sweet temper and won the hearts of all. She worked with boundless energy and gave the most careful thought to everything. She kept the time-schedule, gave latitude where it was proper and displayed firmness where it was called for.

The President's speech was poetic. This was the shortest speech by a President. What need to praise the beauty of its English? Even in this short speech, no topic was left out. Original suggestions could not be expected in the speech. It was not Sarojini Devi's part to outline a new strategy. That was for Pandit Motilal to do.

And he did outline one. It is not for me to comment on it. I have never understood the Council-entry programme. I see in it no benefit to the people. But that is an old story. The majority of the English-educated class think that it would be to our advantage to enter the Councils and so the problem before a person in my position has been to lend what support I could to someone or the other. I did this

in Belgaum, then in Patna and last in Kanpur. The split in the Swaraj Party has pained me very much but whenever differences of opinion arise, such splits are inevitable. Through such trial-and-error methods, we shall some day reach our goal. So far as I can judge, we shall arrive at the stage we had reached in 1920, or something similar to that. Whether or not this happens, the expression of honest differences of opinion, whenever they exist, can do no harm to the country. The resolution adopted represents an important decision. It contains the seeds of the Councils being abandoned in future. The final result, of course, is in God's hands.

But the most important and urgent problem is that of Indians in South Africa. If even one of the courses suggested in the resolution on this subject is adopted, the problem facing our countrymen there will have been solved.

The resolution on the use of Hindi and Urdu, as far as possible, in the work of the Congress is of great significance. If it is respected by all Congressmen, the masses will come to take greater interest in Congress work.

The exhibition arrangements were as good as those for the Congress session. It seemed to me that in Kanpur these outdid those of previous years. The various sections were arranged with that of pure khadi in the centre. The exhibits in this section were so displayed as to enable every visitor to see the progress made by khadi during the past four years. What a contrast between the khadi produced in 1921 and that produced in 1925! After seeing this exhibition, nobody would say that the progress of khadi had not been really good. Every visitor would say that khadi did deserve the first place in the constructive programme.

The other sections in the exhibition were also interesting. Thousands of men and women went to see them. On several days the total number of visitors reached the figure of 12,000.

On the whole, the Reception Committee and Doctor Murarilal deserve compliments on the Congress session and other arrangements connected with it. The improvements from year to year in the arrangements for the Congress session is a further measure of the increasing capacity of the people for managing their affairs under swaraj.

The popular character of the Congress is to be judged not from the size of its. membership but from the people's enthusiasm at its

annual sessions. There was not the slightest waning in that enthusiasm at this year's session. Even those who watched the procession in honour of Sarojini Devi could see this. The thick crowds and the spontaneous decorations on the roads told their own tale, and this enthusiasm was evident right up to the last day.

Assam has bid for the honour of the next session. The province is in the extreme north-east of the country but its people are not the less enthusiastic. Besides, the word Congress has a magic of its own. No one need have misgivings about the growth of an organization which has lasted forty years. In its growth lies swaraj. May it, therefore, prosper! Victory to India!

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-1-1926

267. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

SABARMATI ,
January 3, 1926

DEAR GURUDEV,

I am thankful for your sweet letter. It has given me much relief.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2285 & 4630

268. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

Sunday [*January 3, 1926*][1]

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I had your letter. You need not be sorry about Martand's[2] failing. Very few boys have escaped it. We should remain watchful, and cleanse our own self, for our own sins are reflected in our children. I hope you are quite well.

Blessings from
BAPU

BHAI HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA
70, SARAFA, INDORE

From the Hindi original: C. W. 6056. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

[1] From the postmark
[2] Addressee's brother

269. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO MIRABEHN

January 4, 1926

You must not do that. You must take all the correction calmly and in a proper spirit. There was no question of conscience either. It was merely want of knowledge of due proportion. Nothing very strange in the strangest of surroundings you have put yourself in. Cheer up. No crying allowed.

From the original: C.W. 5450. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9452

270. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO MIRABEHN

January 4, 1926

But who turned you out? Why did you feel like having been turned out? Correction is not turning out, is it?

From the original: C.W. 5451. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9453

271. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Monday [*January 4, 1926*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

Chi. Maganlal is getting along well with his fast. There are no complications except general weakness. Ramdas is here in connection with [khadi work at] Amreli. If you will come over here you can guide me in this matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. NARANDAS KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI
OPPOSITE MIDDLE SCHOOL
NAVU PARU, RAJKOT

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7706. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] From the postmark

272. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Monday [*January 4, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your two letters. It is only proper that you should be a member of the Bombay Municipal Corporation. It would be a good sign if you were elected *in absentia.*

I have no doubt at all that you must take complete rest. There is no need for any other medicine. Right now, it would be well to avoid talk tending to cause excitement. What you need now is pure, quiet joy. I see from Devdas's letter that Taramati is in absolutely good health.

There was some little rain even here. Winter has been very mild this year.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Ramdas suddenly arrived here yesterday.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The addressee received this letter on January 5, 1926.

273. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Tuesday [*January 5, 1926*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

Your letter. Ramdas has arrived just in time; he was so scared.

It is good that you have taken up the study of Sanskrit. Now you should not discontinue it. I had fever but it went as soon as it came. What was there to write about? I am keeping very well. I had fever for three alternate days. And you see I am going to stay here for one year.

Manibehn (Vallabhbhai's [daughter]) has gone to Wardha where she will work as a teacher.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 603. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

274. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

[Before *January 6, 1926*][2]

CHI. MANI,

Jamnalalji writes that you have reached there (Wardha). Write to me regularly. Take good care of[3] Kamala and Madalasa[4]. Do I have to tell you anything regarding the rest of the class? Did you write to Devadhar a letter of thanks? If not, write one in Marathi.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I called on Nandubehn[5] the day I came. She is bearing it very well.

SMT. MANIBEHN
C|O SHETH JAMNALALJI
WARDHA (C. P.)

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-Manibehn Patelne, p. 33

[1] From the reference to arrival of Ramdas; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 4-1-1926.

[2] *Vide* the succeeding item.

[3] Jamnalal Bajaj's daughters

[4] *ibid*

275. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Wednesday, January 6, 1926

CHI. MANI,

I enclosed a letter for you in the envelope to Vinoba; you could not have got it as Vinoba is here. I got your letter yesterday. Teach Kamala whatever she likes. Get her to read one or two Hindi books. Teach her arithmetic in which she is very weak. She understands Gujarati. Let her take up any other subjects she likes. Read with her a little *Ramayana*. The main aim is to create in her a liking for study. Improve your Marathi reading and writing. Take a walk every day and be methodical in all your work.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-Manibehn Patelne, p. 34

276. CABLE TO C. F. ANDREWS[1]

[*on or after January 6, 1926*]

ANDREWS

CARE GOOL

CAPE TOWN

CERTAINLY GO ENGLAND IF YOU CONSIDER ADVISABLE. ANY CASE BETTER STAY TILL FATE KNOWN UNION PARLIAMENT.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 11925

277. INDULGENCE OR SELF-DENIAL[2]

It is not without sorrow that I have to announce to the numerous co-workers the suspension of my touring programme for about one year. At least upto 20th December next, I am not to stir out of the

[1] In reply to his cable of January 4, received on January 6, which read:"Cabinet decides fate Bill January fourteenth. Pressure needed now. Arriving Cape Town seventh possibly. Journey England soon advisable. Cable your opinion."

[2] A shorter article on this subject appeared in *Navajivan*, 3-1-1926.

Ashram, certainly not out of Ahmedabad, except for imperative reasons of health or some unforeseen event. This decision has been arrived at after consultation at Cawnpore with the principal co-workers who were there during the Congress Week. The reasons for the decision are chiefly three:

1. To give my tired limbs as much rest as is possible to give them. Dr. Ansari has sent me elaborate instructions forbidding even all avoidable mental toil.

2. To enable me to give personal attention to the Ashram. I was expected to do this when it was opened, but I have not been able to do so except for the first year of its existence.

3. To enable me to put the affairs of the A.I.S.A., satisfactory as they are, on a sound businesslike basis. This requires constant supervision and attention to details. This is possible only if I am available at all times to the organizing secretary.

Any one of these reasons is by itself sufficient to warrant the step I have taken. But the three combined make an overwhelming case for tying me down to the Ashram.

Probably the collections for the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial, i.e., for the A.I.S.A. will suffer. But it was thought advisable to take that risk. Co-workers will be expected to put forth much greater effort than hitherto. But my hope lies in friends sending their subscriptions without personal canvassing. Apart from the fact that the fund bears a great name, it is being raised for immediate use in carrying on khaddar work. Nearly ten lacs of rupees need to be spent now if the output is to be considerably increased and khaddar cheapened, or in other words if more idle hands are to be employed and more hungry mouths are to be fed. Though I never announced it, I do not mind confessing that my own desire was to collect no less than one crore of rupees for the Memorial. If ten lacs was to be the amount for the All-Bengal Memorial, surely ten times the amount was not too large for an All India Memorial. Again if ten lacs was not too much for a hospital, ten times as much is none too much for khaddar work which is designed to drive away the wolf from several million doors. Whether that is to remain a dream or to become a reality ten lacs should not be difficult to collect immediately. One lac has been promised by a friend of which Rs. 12,000 have already been paid. Sjt. Manilal Kothari is responsible for the announcement of another lac of which Rs. 25,000 have already been collected. Sjt. S. Srinivasa

Aiyangar has authorized me to announce his contribution as Rs. 10,000. I call upon the workers who are lovers of khadi to collect from their friends and send their collections to Sjt. Jamnalalji Bajaj, the Treasurer of the Memorial Fund.

But whether the Fund is collected or not the decision has been made. Man proposes and God disposes. When I left Bihar I had giventhe Bihari friends every hope that they might expect me, all being well, to finish the remainder of the Bihar tour during the early part of the year and if possible during this very month. When the decision to visit Cutch was arrived at, Mr. Dastane had taken from me the promise that I would tour in parts of Maharashtra soon after finishing the balance of the Bihar tour. Assam was to follow. And then was to follow the whole of the Southern peninsula. But my unexpected fast of seven days[1] upset the man-made apple-cart. The Ancient of Days has asserted Himself once more and without warning set aside the whole plan. The friends in Bihar, Maharashtra, Assam and the other provinces will appreciate my difficulty.

For me this year of grace is both an indulgence and a self-denial. It is an indulgence because I hope to fulfil the long-cherished desire of being in the midst of the boys and girls and the fellow-workers of the Ashram. It is a self-denial because it was a pleasure to me to be with so many friends in the different provinces and be the recipient of the affection of the masses between whom and myself there is a bond which defies description but is nevertheless felt alike by them and me. I see in the fellowship with them the God I adore. I derive from that fellowship all my consolation, all my hope and all the sustaining power I possess. If I had not realized that bond in South Africa, now fully thirty years ago, life would not be worth living for me. But I know that whether I live in the Ashram or whether in their midst, I work for them, think of them and pray for them. I want to live only for them and so for myself.

Young India, 7-1-1926

278. THE ANNUAL DEMONSTRATION

Only those who are devoid of all imagination could after witnessing the demonstration at Cawnpore during the Congress Week

[1] From November 22, 1925; *vide* "The Latest Fast", 30-11-1925.

say that the influence of the Congress was on the wane. The belittling process commenced with its birth. It has however survived forty summers and promises to survive many more.

The demonstration began with the dazzling splendour that greeted the President on her arrival at Cawnpore. The feeble voice of protest was hushed in the midst of the grateful shouts of thousands who had gathered to do honour to the first Indian woman who was to preside over the deliberations of the great national assembly. The roads were one vast mass of beaming human faces. Every balcony was occupied by the women of Cawnpore who were eager to see the face of Shrimati Sarojini Devi. The merchants vied with one another in making the decorations effective and striking. The Congress ground was packed to overflowing. The *pandal* was filled on the opening day. No session had so many European visitors as this. The delegates were attentive and yielded implicit obedience to the chair. The President by her tact, perseverance, punctuality and sweetness combined with firmness came up to all the expectations that were raised of her by friends and severely disappointed her critics who had prophesied a complete failure. Her address—the shortest yet written by any President of the Congress—was a prose-poem. In the brief space of twelve octavo pages she had summarized the struggles and the aspirations of the people in whose name she spoke. True, there was nothing new in the address. She had bargained to give nothing new. She had sketched no policy. That was left by design to the leader of the Swaraj Party, Pandit Motilal Nehru. Her virtue lay in her unobtrusiveness, in her impartiality, in her allowing herself to be led even while she was leading. The secret of her success lay in her womanliness which she let her people see in every act of hers.

Of the important resolutions nothing much need be said in these columns. They cover all the important matters that have agitated the country during the past twelve months. The South African resolution was the first in point of time and immediate importance. Whatever may be said to the contrary I hold that the proposed Bill is in breach of the Smuts-Gandhi Agreement of 1914. For the royal veto there are many precedents. If it may not be used under any circumstance whatsoever, it should be part of the royal instructions. If it may be used under certain circumstances, that circumstance will undoubtedly arise when and if the preposterous Bill passes the Union Legislature.

The resolution about the Congress franchise and the debate in

the Subjects Committee[1] demonstrate the growing popularity of khaddar. It is clear that the Swarajists may not leave khaddar and still retain their hold on the electorate. Indeed the tendency in the Subjects Committee was towards stiffening the khaddar condition. If it has the supreme economic and national value that is claimed for it, it is properly part of the franchise qualifications. One has a right to hope that the Congress having passed the resolution by an overwhelming majority, the members will loyally and conscientiously fulfil the condition imposed by themselves. No inquisition is necessary where members are willing to observe common honesty.

The Councils resolution is an elaborate affair. It is a clear notice to the Government and an equally clear indication to the electors as to what they are to expect from the Swaraj Party. The emphasis laid on civil disobedience is, in my opinion, quite appropriate. No nation can possibly march forward without a sanction to enforce its will. The reiteration of faith in civil disobedience means that the representatives of the nation have no faith in an armed rebellion. Civil disobedience may be a far cry. It may be nearer than many imagine. Time is irrelevant. Cultivation of the spirit of non-violent resistance is everything. So long therefore as the Congress believes in civil disobedience and its will remains unenforced, it must keep the former before the people and teach them that it is a complete and effective substitute for armed rebellion and that the latter is out of the question for Indian conditions and the former, perfectly possible if people or rather the volunteers could be persuaded to observe and enforce self-restraint under the gravest provocations.

So far as the remaining in or the going out of the Councils is concerned, Swarajists must be regarded best judges of their own position and the condition of the Councils. They are the experts and the others must not obstruct them if they will carry out the Patna Resolution now confirmed by the Congress.

Superficial observers may regard the split in the Swarajist camp as unfortunate. Unfortunate in a way it undoubtedly is. We would all like perfect agreement among us if such was possible. But surely it is not unfortunate that we should bravely and honestly confess our fundamental differences and work them out. It is the surest sign of growth. We will not attain swaraj by mechanical agreements which we

[1] *Vide*"Speech on Franchise Resolution, Subjects Committee Meeting, Kanpur", 24-12-1925.

do not mean. In a vast country like ours, there is room enough for many schools of thought. And so long as they respect one another and honestly push forward their views the people can only gain by their presentation. Forced suppression of one's views is a sign of decay and violence. I would warn the public therefore against being pessimistic over the so-called split in the Swarajists camp.

Then there are the resolutions about the Bengal Ordinance prisoners, the Gurdwara prisoners and the Burma measures aimed at the Indian settlers. They are all an indication of our present impotence and an additional count in the indictment against the Government.

The resolution about the use of Hindustani is a great advance in public opinion. It is undoubtedly cruel to the majority of members of the A.I.C.C. Or the delegates that our proceedings should be still largely conducted in English. We must arrive at a final decision some day. When we do, it must cause some inconvenience, some heart-burning for a time. But the sooner we begin toconduct our proceedings in Hindustani the better it will be for national growth.

Young India, 7-1-1926

279. NOTES

EXCELLENT ARRANGEMENTS

The Reception Committee deserves hearty congratulations on the excellent arrangements made for the accommodation and feeding of delegates. They have never been surpassed. Sanitation was also almost perfect. Dinners were served on a lavish scale. There was no waiting and no want. Lala Fulchand with his countless volunteers made an ideal host. Indeed the scale according to which delicacies were supplied was extravagant and difficult for poorer cities to copy. The exhibition too surpassed expectations. Pure khaddar was the centre among all the beautiful exhibits. The evolution of khaddar and the wheel was strikingly shown by a skilful arrangement of the exhibits. But a detailed description must be deferred to a future issue.

ANDREWS' ACTIVITIES

Mr. C. F. Andrews has been incessantly active ever since his arrival in South Africa. Besides sending cables to the Press, he sent regular cablegrams at Cawnpore during the Congress Week. In one of them he says:

> General Smuts declared at the Imperial Cabinet in 1917 following concerning domiciled Indians:"If any question proves difficult of treatment, we can discuss it in a friendly way, at this Council Chamber of Empire and try to find in consultation a solution and I am sure we shall ever find it."

The cable then proceeds,

> Seeing General Smuts made this offer, might it justify demanding suspension Bill pending Imperial consultation?

Many other things will justify suspension and many other remedies too would be justified to kill the Bill. But who will do it? Is the Imperial Government willing and anxious to try all the remedies possible to secure redress of the grave injustice which is impending? Will the Government of India force the hands of the Imperial Government? Can we force the hands of the Government of India?

Of the Congress resolution as cabled by Reuter Mr. Andrews says:

> Everyone here delighted Congress attitude.

In yet another he says Bishop Palmer let him preach before his congregation on the Indian question and that the impression created was satisfactory. The same cable also intimates that the Auxiliary European Committee that was formed at the time of the passive resistance movement is being resuscitated. Thus everything that a single human being can do to prevent the perpetration of the wrong is being done by Mr. Andrews in far-off South Africa.

BISHOP FISHER'S PAMPHLET

It will be remembered that Bishop Fisher of the American Mission recently visited South Africa. He contributed his impressions to the *National Christian Council Review*. The Associated Press, Calcutta has published it in pamphlet form at two annas. The statement is a marvellous condensation of the history of the Indian question in South Africa. In his preface the Bishop says:

> Its accuracy is vouched for, whilst the unjust humiliations to which Indians are subjected are understated rather than exaggerated.

I commend this pamphlet to everyone interested in this difficult problem.

Young India, 7-1-1926

280. MESSAGE TO" THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

SABARMATI,
January 9, 1926

My hearty greetings to Mr. Horniman. The Government deserves congratulations on redressing the grave wrong[1] done to this brave Englishman and us. May his work prosper! India needs at the present moment all the assistance that her friends can give.

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-1-1926

281. MESSAGE TO"KUMAR"[2]

Posh Vad 10, 1892 [*January 9, 1926*]

What else can I talk about to the boys and girls except the charkha? The readers of *Kumar,* should sympathize with the children who cannot get or read *Kumar* by prayerfully plying the charkha and doing sacrificial spinning for their sake. They would thus gain a glimpse of divine grace.

[From Gujarati]

Kumar, Posh, 1892

282. LETTER TO B. G. HORNIMAN

SABARMATI,
January 9, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Most welcome. What an agreeable surprise! I hope you are well and fit enough to fight as of yore.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 13-1-1926

[1] B. G. Horniman, editor of The *Bombay Chronicle,* had been deported on April 26, 1919; *vide"*Satyagraha Leaflet No. 7", 26-4-1919.

[2] A Gujarati monthly

283. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

Saturday [*January 9, 1926*][1]

BHAI DEVCHANDBHAI,

Your letter. I have now withdrawn from active politics. Then how can you have me for President? If you like you can have Jawaharlal Nehru.

Bhai Fulchand, Jaisukhlal, Ramdas are here. Narandas has been asked to come here. When he comes we can decide something about Amreli.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5708

284. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

January 9, 1926

BHAISHRI KAKA,

I have your letter. Somewhere in our system of education, we should, I am sure, find a place for English. If our contact with the West and with Western literature is worth having, just now we can best use the English language. This is why I give it a place in the high school curriculum. I have the same opinion of the *Pilgrim's Progress* that you have. But at the moment that was the easiest thing for me to offer. So I started it. Members of the Ashram had it more or less from me. If I had started something else, it would have been artificial. I thought of the *Gita* and the *Ramayana*. *I* am, however, not as well qualified to handle these. I can understand the words of the *Ramayana* with difficulty. Similarly I cannot also understand the words of the *Gita* as clearly as I wish to. My duty is to let all share whatever wealth [of knowledge] I have. I have only to see that it does not have any undesirable consequence. I accept your decision in principle; it seems, however, that it does not apply to our circumstances. And have I not said very clearly that my fair knowledge of the English language and my extensive dealings through that medium prove a sort of an obstacle for our simple Indian

[1] From the postmark

masses? But this is inevitable and it seems we must put up with it. I expect another letter from you. I have not yet been able to read your letter to the children. You should not at all hesitate to write such letters. I quite like the letter.

Vinoba, Appa are here.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12178

285. LETTER TO KAMALASHANKAR

January 9, 1926

BHAI KAMALASHANKAR,

Please excuse me for the delay in answering your questions.

1. It is my firm conviction that the spirit of untouchability is no more; only the practice persists. This conviction was further confirmed in Kutch.

2. I am not as much opposed to Panditji's[1] statements as you seem to be. I can understand the difference between being a member of the Skeen Committee[2] and being its secretary. But then I see no sense in getting into the legislatures and so taking over the administration is out of question.

3. I should be a sage if I could tell whether or not I have fulfilled my mission. I am also not in a position to judge whether my activities have helped or hindered the cause of morality.

4. Culture is the subjective essence of civilization as accepted by an individual or a society; morality is uniform at all places and at all times. I would keep at a respectable distance from one who makes no distinction between good and evil.

5. I think very little out of this was paid up.

6. The nation's morality will rise high if everyone kept as clean accounts as Vallabhbhai's. The purse will surely not add up to a million. I am certain to get it, I know.

7. I would run the Vidyapith even for a single deserving student and hope that ultimately its strength will increase. I would certainly call it a disgrace to close down the Vidyapith.

[1] Motilal Nehru's

[2] Also known as the Indian Sandhurst Committee, appointed in 1925, to consider the starting of a Military College in India. Sir Andrew Skeen was its Chairman.

8. I do not know about the administration of the Bombay Congress Committee.

9. I have great regard for Mashruwala's ideas. He is a saintly person. I read his observation on art.[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12177

286. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

ASHRAM,
Paush Krishna 10 [*January 9, 1926*][2]

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I have the letter sent with Chi. Martand. Everything possible will be done for Martand. A proper diet alone will restore your health. You should not mind a little delay in starting your work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 6057. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

287. SPARE ME

When I decided on voluntary retirement from active work, I excluded, whether out of ignorant attachment or fear, from the scope of my decision, though I personally wished it, a visit to Ahmedabad. If I make an exception in favour of it, I fear I might be prevented from doing the kind of service I wish to do by staying in the Ashram for one year. I encountered this danger only last week. The Ramakrishna Mission was celebrating its foundation day. I was invited to preside over the function. Since I had decided now to live in the Ashram all the time, how could I decline the invitation? If, on the other hand, I attended this function, why should I not attend many other functions on similar auspicious occasions which might be arranged in Ahmedabad? If I attended them, my purpose in retiring from active work in order to be at peace with myself would be defeated. Should Dr. Hariprasad ask me to give one day to every street in Ahmedabad and sweep it, I would certainly count that as fit work for me. If I undertook to do it, every day in the year would be occupied and then

[1] The source has here the entry,"Incomplete".
[2] As given by the addressee; *vide* also"Letter to Haribhau Upadhyaya", 3-1-1926

I would be where I was.

The friends who had come to invite me were convinced by this argument and gave me freedom. I expect similar consideration from every worker in the city. As the rest of the country is to forget me up to December 20, Ahmedabad should do so too. If permitted by Vallabhbhai, I want to be bold and include Ahmedabad too in the scope of my vow, so that I might have no temptation and no need to argue with anyone. Even if, however, Vallabhbhai cannot give me such freedom, I should like the citizens of Ahmedabad to spare me and not invite me to any function.

As I study the various activities of the Ashram and the work of the Spinning Association, I realize that, if I want to do complete justice to the Ashram, the Spinning Association, *Young India* and *Navajivan*, I shall have no time to spare for any other activity. If I can attend to this quiet work for a year, I am confident that my capacity for service will increase. I appeal to workers in Ahmedabad to understand my position and spare me during this year the necessity of having even to go to the city even on public work.

[PS.]

After I had written the note above, I had a discussion with Vallabhbhai and he gave his consent to my including Ahmedabad, too, in my vow. He also believes that if I really wished to have peace, my retirement from public life should mean retirement to the Ashram. I cannot, therefore, leave the Ashram to attend any function or participate in any activity outside it, even in Ahmedabad. If some unforeseen contingency arises and if it becomes necessary for me to leave Ahmedabad and go somewhere else, for the sake of my health, these would certainly be treated as exceptional circumstances.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-1-1926

288. KHADI IN MAHA-GUJARAT

I was often asked during my tour:"What work is Gujarat doing about khadi? How many people patronize it? How many have become members of the Spinning Association? Do they regularly give yarn? How much khadi do you produce in Gujarat? Do you produce fine khadi in your province?" These and many similar questions, people

ask me through varying motives. I cannot give satisfactory answers, since I do not see in Gujarat more people wearing khadi than in other provinces. As regards the manufacture of khadi, we are far behind others. The Spinning Association, too, has fewer members from Gujarat than one would expect. But Gujarat can, if it chooses, change all this. Gujarat can undertake to do enough spinning for the whole of the country, for it grows plenty of cotton. It has more money, in comparison with other provinces. It has commercial enterprise which is essential for khadi work. Gujarat has a fairly large number of experts in spinning. It can, therefore, take up spinning as a form of sacrifice and produce thousands of maunds of khadi which, for that very reason, would be cheap.

Boys and girls in Gujarat can contribute a great deal to this work.

In fact, Gujarat had come forward to win swaraj by its own efforts. There used to be competition between Bardoli and Anand, between Surat and Kheda districts. But today"Thou art in ruins, Surat, thy face all soiled with tears"—so may we lament again. And the Kheda of satyagraha days, Abbas Saheb's pride, where is it now? Those who have withdrawn themselves from activepolitical work, how can they forget Borsad? We can thus call to mind, and write about a great many brave things from the past, but to what purpose?

What is the position today?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-1-1926

289. GHOSTS AND SPIRITS

A gentleman has written to me a long letter, which he has summarized in the end. I give below a summary of his summary:

> If you believe in ghosts and spirits, kindly tell me how they may be warded off.
>
> If you believe that they do not exist, please account for the incidents I have described and resolve my doubts.
>
> I am an educated person with a modern outlook and do not believe in ghosts and spirits. But in my own house we have had experience of mischiefs of this kind for the past several years and so, not knowing what to do, I have written to you to

know the truth about these matters.

The correspondent has described some incidents of harassment to him and members of his family, but I do not think it necessary to reproduce them.

I cannot say whether ghosts and spirits exist or do not exist. I can only say that I have been living for many years as if they did not exist. I do not know of any instance in which persons who did not believe in their existence came to harm in any way. I have also observed that those who believe in their existence are sometimes harassed. It is best, therefore, to go by the saying,"One's own wish the ghost and one's own fear the witch."

Let us, however, assume for a moment that ghosts and spirits exist. Even then, they are a part of God's creation. The God who rules over us has also created these ghosts and spirits, and anyone who believes in God alone will worship no one else. He who serves God will serve no one else. For a believer in God, therefore, Rama is the only effective shield against ghosts and spirits, as He is his only sovereign support when he suffers at the hands of other human beings. The correspondent and members of his family should keep repeating *Ramanama* with full faith, and that will drive away all ghosts and spirits. Millions in this world do not believe in the existence of any such creatures and the latter seem powerless to harm them in any way. The correspondent actually writes that these spirits harass his father, but do not harass himself when he is away from the father. This fact itself suggests the remedy. The father seems to be afraid of ghosts and spirits and is, therefore, harassed by them much in the same we that a king can punish only those who fear the punishment. How can a king's power of punishing avail against one who is not deterred by it? Likewise, how can a ghost harass one who fears no ghost?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-1-1926

290. A HAND-SPUN STORY

Can there be a hand-spun story? Rajaji[1] has shown that there can be. He has written for *Young India* a story about yarn and has called it"A Hand-spun Story"[2]. His point is that he has not borrowed the story from any source, that it is not a mere fabrication but has been written out of his own experience. It is, therefore sacred like hand-spun Yarn, appeals to all interests but is, like life itself, essentially tragic, and so it can be called a handspun story. Hand-spun means made all by oneself. Here is a translation of the narrative.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-1-1926

291. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

SABARMATI,
Paush Krishna 12 [*January 11, 1926*][3]

BHAI RAMESHWARJI,

I have both your letters. You should repeat *Ramanama* in a detached spirit. You should not brood over your past sins but regard it as God's grace that you are free from them now and implore Him to keep you away from them in future.

You should engage yourself in some altruistic activity.

I have no doubt that the work of skinning and tanning is religious. This work cannot be carried on at your place. If you desire you can give some monetary help for cow-protection.

Finally you should study the *Ramayana* and such other works.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 162

[1] C Rajagopalachari

[2] Not reproduced here. The story which appeared in Young India, 7-1-1926, described the brave efforts of the poor spinners and weavers in Kaliyur, a village in Tamilnad, and their failure to satisfy the fastidious taste of the customers in Bombay.

[3] From the postmark

292. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Monday, January 11, 1926

CHI. MANI,

Your letters to me are packed with information. The letter to Bhai Devadhar is well written. I am sure he will like it.

You may get nervous there, being new to the place, but you must not lose heart. See that Kamala makes such progress as is possible. She will improve gradually. Engage her in talks. See if she will accompany you on your walks. Win her over with affection.

You have no experience of writing and teaching in Marathi, but you will learn it by practice. We were aware that in Wardha they speak Marathi. As regards Hindi, learn it by reading Hindi books at home; if necessary, you may ask someone to help you with it.

You should speak to others in a very gentle manner about khadi and be satisfied with such results as you are able to achieve. That is to say, always act in a spirit of detachment. To make effort is in our hands, not to command success. We should rest content after we have made the effort and should never acknowledge defeat. Ultimately you are sure to come over here for work.

Never mind if you are absent from Sabarmati just when I am here. We shall keep in touch through letters.

Preserve your health; and for this, be cheerful.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-Manibehn Patelne, p. 35

293. LETTER TO VITHTHALDAS JERAJANI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday[1], *January 11,1926*

BHAI VITHTHALDAS,

I have received a complaint that the khadi from Tirupur is deteriorating day by day and malpractices there are on the increase.

[1] Evidently a slip for"Monday"

You know everything about this khadi. So please let me know what your experience is.

I read your letter to Narandas and had a good laugh. I do think there is no truth whatever in the matter you talk about. And if there is, it can be considered a very good thing from a certain point of view.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9761

294. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Monday [*January 11, 1926*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have been eagerly waiting for you. I think you will certainly be here on the 16th. Bring your family along. For the present you will make suitable arrangements about your board. I am prepared even to put up a new structure for you. I would not inconvenience you in any way. I want to be here for one year, during which I desire your presence.

Of course, I have written to Jamnadas. But it seems he is out of his mind; he has lost the faculty of discretion. Well, he too has been asked to come here. Bring him along if you can persuade him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7707. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

295. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Monday [*January 11, 1926*][2]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Vinoba said you were afraid that the fasts around here would cause me anxiety. Far from being anxious, I was glad about them. Bhai Bhansali's fast was self-chosen; he is at present practising severe austerities. Bhai Kishorelal's was for purely personal reasons, to clear

[1] This letter appears to be in continuation of those of January 1 and 4 wherein Gandhiji had asked the addressee to come over.

[2] From the reference to Maganlal's fast

his heart of evil. Maganlal's was in the form of atonement and it was quite correct. . . .'s daughter had cheated him. For this he had no remedy but to suffer the pain himself. This brought about a good effect on that family. All three of them, Kishorelal, Bhansali and Maganlal are doing well. And I had no anxiety at all.

I am keeping quite well, and take four seers of milk, and also eight biscuits out of what I have received from Jamnabehn. I take regular walks. Hence you need not at all be concerned about me.

Herewith Chi. Mani's letter for you to go through; it need not be returned to me.

Have you not yet heard anything about Kamala's marriage?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2855

296. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

SABARMATI,
January 12, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to have your ink and yarn. The receipt you will get from the office. I wish every member of the Sangh will join the A.I.S.A.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. MOTILAL ROY
PRABARTAK SANGH
CHANDERNAGORE

From a photostat: G.N. 11024

297. LETTER TO KHWAJA ABDUL MAJID

January 12, 1926

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your pathetic letter.

I must not strive with you any longer. Much as it is against the grain, I must resign myself to your severing your official connection

with the Jamia and, what is worse, your rejoining the Bar. The idea of your having a debt of Rs. 6,000 is unbearable. And is it not tragic to think that you expect to wipe that huge debt in two or three years' work at the Bar? As if our poor countrymen were not sufficiently ground down under the heels of unscrupulous officials and lawyers, we their servants should also take part in the loot! But it cannot be otherwise. So I must shut my eyes and be party to one of the noblest of men doing the thing from which my whole soul recoils with horror.

Yes, you have my permission to leave the Jamia and rejoin the Bar. But some day I expect you to do what the Arabs of yore did or if it is the same thing to you, what your ancient countrymen did—leave all to serve humanity, i.e., God. I cannot conceive of the possibility of your always remaining in the life to which you would now return. But even if you did, you may believe me when I tell you that I shall love you all the same because you are honest and godfearing. I am sending your letter to Hakim Saheb[1] urging him to let you go.

Please remember me to Khurshed Begum who I hope is now quite well.

With love,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

KHWAJA SAHEB ABDUL MAJID
THE NATIONAL MUSLIM UNIVERSITY
DELHI

From the original: Khwaja Abdul Majid Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

298. A LETTER

SABARMATI,
January 12, 1926

DEAR SIR,

I have preserved your letter all these long days so as to enable me to reply when I get a little leisure.

I would like to say generally that I do not see myself in your presentation of me. As you have put the ideas, they have considerable

[1] Hakim Ajmal Khan

force.

I would now put them in my own way.

1. Art including music has its proper place in the spiritual evolution of man but there comes a time when he supersedes art that depends for its appreciation on sense perception. Thus art as I understand it to mean can never be an end in itself.

2. Just as one who perceives the endless beauty of the sky would need no canvas for his enjoyment, so one who can read the beauty of the sky within would want little need from the sky overhead. As a matter of fact, the three processes go on to gather. Truest inward joy is possible for one who is physically blind and deaf and dumb.

3. I do believe that complete annihilation of one's self—individuality, sensuality, personality—whatever you call it, is an absolute condition of perfect joy and peace. But here again what is individuality, personality, etc.? I draw no distinction between Buddhistic *nirvana* and *Brahma nirvana* of Shankara. But no doubt Shankara was right from his standpoint because he understood. Buddhistic *nirvana* as a mere emptiness. It is therefore highly likely that your definition of individuality is totally different from mine. Has an ocean drop an individuality of its own as apart from the ocean? Then a liberated soul has an individualityof its own. Consciousness of disease. But I must not go into deeper waters.

4. I do not present the charkha to all for their spiritual emancipation. But for me it is that, for the association I have built up round it, even as *Ramanama* which may mean nothing to a European was heavenly music for Tulsidas and his like.

I know how imperfect my answers are to your very sincere questions. You are at liberty if you like, but if you want my opinion, I would strongly dissuade you from publishing them. For one thing the answers are too concise to be understood. You might because of our previous discussion which may enable you to fill in the gaps.

From a photostat: S.N. 14080

299. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Tuesday [*January 12, 1926*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. I shall send this through Ramdas and save postage, and if I forget I shall send it by post.

You should come here whenever you feel like it. But since you have started your study of Sanskrit, you should make some progress. Of course, if you feel uncomfortable you can come over. No doubt Shanta is studying better here.

Your handwriting is not yet to my satisfaction, though, the improvement is quite marked. Perhaps it cannot improve further and so I have stopped reminding you. Any further improvements can come only by practice.

Green chillies too, you should know, are prohibited. Try to do without them.

The rest of the news from here you can have from Ramdas.

Moti's marriage will be solemnized here next Monday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 552. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

300. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

[About *1925/1926*][2]

CHI. VASUMATI,

Received your letter. It is natural that you should feel hurt. Do not worry. Try to convince Ramdas as best as you can. You remain there with a firm mind and take your treatment. Also carry on your studies.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : S. N. 9350

[1] From the reference to Moti's marriage which took place on January 18, 1926

[2] From the contents; *vide*"Letter to Vasumati Pandit", 14-12-1925 and"Letter to Vasumati Pandit", 12-1-1926.

301. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL. N. CHOKSI

Wednesday, January 13, 1926

BHAI NAJUKLAL,

Your letter. Lakshmidas and Moti have also read it. Moti talks of marrying you and none else, we all propose to encourage her. If she remains firm and does marry you, I should regard it an ideal marriage for this age. But we should let her think over it for a while, even if *vasantapanchami*[1] passes by. You should take care of your health. If you are all right do come over here; we shall look after you. I should like to have you here on Monday, but I do not insist if circumstances are not favourable. Let me share your thoughts. If you are unable to write, get someone to write to me from time to time.

God bless you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12107

302. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

[Before *January 14, 1926*][2]

BHAISHREE VALJI[3],

I heard you uttering discouraging words yesterday :"I have not completed any job so far." I did not expect to hear those words from you. I had imagined you to be a brave man. You have got to keep your word to the readers. There should be no difficulty at all about writing the review. You should not think of doing things just at the last moment. If you get any benefit from me, you must be prepared to bring out *Young India* in a creditable way. The best thing

[1] The traditional beginning of the vernal season which fell on January 18, 1926

[2] From the reference to"Maganlal's article on the *charkha*", presumably the one on *charkha* by Maganlal Gandhi which appeared in *Young India*, 14.1.1926. For other references pertaining to *Young India, vide*"Exercise the Copyright", 25-3-1926,"Letter to P. S. Varier", on or after 1-4-1926,"Letter to Mirza Kazim Ali", on or after 1-4-1926 and"Letter to K. Venkatesan", 15-4-1926.

[3] Valji G. Desai; inmate of Satyagraha Ashram; worked on the editorial staff of *Young India*.

would be to set everything on Monday and Tuesday only. Doing it from Sunday causesmuch inconvenience to the editor, and some matter may become useless. The matter for two or three columns should be set in advance and if you do not get anything from me by Sunday, you should start your work from Monday morning. If you follow this procedure, there would be no difficulty at all. Think over all this and do what you think correct. Write polite letters to those to whom you discontinue sending *Young India*.

Write something to this effect : As we do not [carry] advertisements and just charge enough to cover our expenses, we are obliged to curtail our exchange list.[1]

Maganlal's article on the *charkha* would be coming. Give a beautiful translation of it. Lakshmidas[2] has given the figures for the *charkha*. You can publish those figures also. You can also give the experience about proportional representation.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 11175. Courtesy : Valji G. Desai

303. THE CRIME OF CASTE

In South Africa it is the crime of colour and race for which we are being punished. In India we Hindus punish our co-religionists for the crime of caste. The fifth caste man the *Panchama*—is the greatest offender deserving the punishment of untouchability, unapproachability, invisibility and what not. An extraordinary case that was tried in a Madras Presidency court brings vividly to light the sad plight of our suppressed countrymen. A simple cleanly dressed *Panchama* entered a temple in a perfectly devotional spirit without the slightest intention of hurting anybody's feeling or insulting any religion. He had been in the habit of paying his respects at this temple every year though he did not enter it. But last year in his ecstatic mood he forgot himself and entered the temple. The priest in charge could not distinguish him from the others and therefore accepted his offering. But when he regained self-possession he was terrified to find himself in a prohibited place and ran away from the temple. But some who knew him caught him and handed him to the police. The temple

[1] This sentence is in English.

[2] Lakshmidas Asar

authorities when they discovered the crime had the temple duly purified. Then followed a trial. A Hindu magistrate convicted him and imposed a fine of Rs. 75 or one month's rigorous imprisonment for insulting his own religion! An appeal was filed. There was an elaborate argument over it. Judgment had to be reserved! And when conviction was set aside, it was not because the court held that the poor *Panchama* had a right to enter the temple but because the prosecution in the lower court had forgotten to prove the insult. This is no triumph of justice or truth or religion or morality.

The only consolation to be derived from the successful appeal is that the *Panchama* will not have to suffer imprisonment for having in his zeal for worship forgotten that he was a prohibited entrant. If however he or his fellow-*Panchamas* again dare to enter the temple, it is highly probable that they would be severely punished if they are not lynched by those who look down upon them with contempt.

It is a curious situation. We resent, and properly, the treatment meted out to our countrymen in South Africa. We are impatient to establish swaraj. But we Hindus refuse to see the incongruity in treating a fifth of our own co-religionists as worse than dogs. For dogs are not untouchables. Some of us nowadays even keep them as drawing-room pets.

What place shall the 'untouchables' occupy in our scheme of swaraj? If they are to be free from all special restraints and disabilities under swaraj, why can we not declare their freedom now? And if we are powerless today, shall we be less powerless under swaraj? We may shut our eyes and stuff our ears to these questions. But they are of the highest importance to the *Panchamas*. Surely, judgment will be pronounced against Hinduism, if we as a body do not rise as one man against this social and religious atrocity.

Much has no doubt been done to remove the evil. But it is all too little so long as criminal prosecutions for temple-entry are possible and so long as the suppressed classes continue to be denied the right of entering temples, using public wells, and sending their children freely to national schools. We must yield to them the same rights as we would have the Europeans concede to our countrymen in South Africa.

But this case is not without its relieving features. The quashing of the conviction is no doubt some consolation. But the best

consolation lies in the fact of so many *savarna* Hindus actively interesting themselves in the poor *Panchama's* behalf. The appeal would not have been noted, if someone had not gone to the accused's assistance. Not the least interesting feature of the case was the fact of C. Rajagopalachari arguing the appeal a fit application in my opinion of the principle of non-co-operation. Being in the court, when he got the opportunity, he would have been like a Pharisee if he had sat there stiff gloating over the sanctimonious satisfaction of non-co-operating whilst the accused could have been discharged by his intervention. The *Panchama* knew nothing of non-co-operation. He had appealed to avoid payment of fine or imprisonment. It is to be wished that every educated Hindu will constitute himself the untouchable's friend and regard it his duty to free him from the tyranny of custom masquerading under the name of religion. Not the entry of a *Panchama* into a temple but the brand of prohibition against him is an insult to religion and humanity.

Young India, 14-1-1926

304. NOTES

A WRONG REDRESSED

The Government of Bombay, and I suppose also the Government of India, may congratulate themselves on having though reluctantly redressed a grievous wrong done to a brave Englishman and to India. For they have summoned up sufficient courage not to prohibit Mr. Horniman's entry into India—the land of his love and labours. No one knows the real reason for Mr. Horniman's sudden and secret deportation. He had never been put on his trial, he was never given an opportunity of answering the charges brought against him. Such high-handed and arbitrary deportations bring vividly before the public eye the real nature of the despotic powers possessed and wielded by the Government of India. No one more eloquently pleaded for the abrogation of such powers as Mr. Horniman till he himself became a victim of such powers. I add my own humble quota to the expression of welcome extended to Mr. Horniman. His return brings to the forces fighting for the attainment of swaraj a strength and energy that must gladden the hearts of those who are engaged in that glorious struggle. May he have long life and health for the arduous labours that await him.

SOUTH AFRICA

Mr. Andrews is fighting the Indian battle in South Africa against heavy odds. The Government of India is satisfied that the Government of South Africa condescend to receive their representatives and even return at times farthings out of the pounds sterling the South Africans take away from their Indian proteges. It is from that Government that Mr. Andrews expects pressure enough to bring about at least a long enough postponement of the consideration of the anti-Asiatic measure so that there may be time for passions to cool and reason to have play. It is a matter only of a few days to know the worst. The Bill will be soon before the Union Parliament. If the Union Government propose to show a measure of courtesy to the Indian Government they will at least defer consideration of the Bill till the Government of India deputation have completed its investigations, returned to India, submitted its report to the Government and the latter have had time to make their representations to the Union Government. But the way things are being managed in South Africa, it is debatable whether the Union Government will show even the courteous consideration that one Government may expect from another.

BISHOP FISHER'S WARNING

Towards the close of his illuminating pamphlet Bishop Fisher administers a warning to the Union Government in these emphatic terms:[1]

> The problem is difficult . . . The proposed anti-Asiatic Bill is not a solution, but an irritant.... I sincerely trust ... the Union Parliament will recognize the impracticability and unwisdom of the present proposal. If I were a white citizen of South Africa I would regard the Bill as a direct attack upon the best interests of the white community, . . . Measures of repression and programmes of extermination have been proven by history to mean the decay of virtues and powers of the perpetrators rather than of the persecuted. Greece, Rome, Russia and many other examples may be cited....

A CAUSE OF PREJUDICE

Among the causes of anti-Indian prejudice in South Africa Bishop Fisher relates the following:[2]

> Still another fact is that the Indians do not drink. The liquor bill of the

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.
[2] *ibid*

white South African citizens is colossal. . . . The money which an Indian saves explains why he can sell his goods cheaper than the European. Gambling at the races and elsewhere, excessive sports, luxuries, inflated white wages, and other extravagances enter into the high cost of living among the whites, and the relatively lower cost of living among the browns.... the whites expect to have a standard of living which is far beyond that which prevails in their own home countries.

TRIBUTE TO SAROJINI DEVI

Writing from Phoenix Mr. Andrews says about the influence left behind her in South Africa by Shrimati Sarojini Devi:

> Mrs. Sarojini Naidu's visit has done one thing for which I bless her every day. She has finally cemented the Native cause with that of the Indian as one cause. She made an immense impression both on the Native and on the Coloured people and everywhere I find that this unity has been strengthened by her visit. The very publicity which attended her immensely attracted them and added to her popularity; but it was her genuine feeling of love for them that made them look to her almost as to a queen. She has also left a healthy spirit behind among the Indian leaders themselves. They are not likely now to separate their cause from that of the Natives at all. That danger is practically over at least as far as South Africa is concerned. But I am by no means sure yet about East Africa.

VAIKAM SATYAGRAHA

Hindu reformers who are intent on removal of untouchability should understand the implications of Vaikam Satyagraha and its results. The immediate goal of the satyagrahis was the opening of the roads surrounding the temple, not their entry into the latter. Their contention was that the roads should be opened to the so-called untouchables as they were to all other Hindus and even non-Hindus. That point has been completely gained. But whilst satyagraha was directed to the opening of roads, the ultimate aim of reformers is undoubtedly removal of every disability that 'the untouchables' are labouring under and which the other Hindus are not. It therefore includes access to temples, wells, schools, etc., to which other non-Brahmins are freely admitted. But for achieving these reforms much remains to be done before the method of direct action can be adopted. Satyagraha is never adopted abruptly and never till all other and milder methods have been tried. The reformers of the South have to cultivate public opinion in the matter of temple-entry, etc. This is moreover a disability not peculiar to the South but unfortunately and, to our shame it must be admitted, common, to more or less extent, to

Hinduism throughout India. I therefore welcome the decision of Sjt. Kellappen Nayar who was in charge of the camp at Vaikam to concentrate his effort on working among the unhappiest and the most suppressed among 'the untouchables', i.e., Puliyas whose very shadow defiles. It is a golden rule to follow out every direct action with constructive work, i.e., work of conservation. Reform has to be undertaken at both ends to make *savarnas* do their duty by the untouchables whom they have so cruelly suppressed and to help the latter to become more presentable and to shed habits for which they can in no way be held accountable but which nevertheless have to be given up if they are to occupy their proper place in the social scale.

FOR CONGRESS MEMBERS

Those who want to become spinning members of the Congress should remember that they have to pay their yarn subscriptions during the month if they intend to become or remain members. It is not enough that they are members of the A.I.S.A. Every member of the A.I.S.A. is not necessarily a member of the Congress. He or she has to fill in the Congress membership form as follows:

TO

THE SECRETARY,

ALL-INDIA SPINNERS ASSOCIATION,

(TECHNICAL DEPARTMENT) .

SIR,

I am/wish to become a member of the * Congress Committee. I accept the objects and methods of the Indian National Congress as laid down in Article I of the Congress Constitution. I am sending herewith (or have already sent as Class A/B member) 2,000 yards of yarn tolas in weight, spun by me, being my subscription to the National Congress for the year . My age is . My occupation is . My address is

Date Signature

* Give Name of Committee.

The form should be sent to the A.I.S.A. to entitle the sender to membership of the Congress. Members of A.I.S.A. need not send extra yarn provided they have sent self-spun yarn (at least 2,000 yards) for A.I.S.A. membership for the current calendar year.

Young India, 14-1-1926

305. "DASTURI" AND BOMBAY SWEEPERS

Papers have been sent to me in which I am reported to have said in 1918 among other things that 'the evidence and statements made (as to bribery euphemistically known as *dasturi* said to have been paid by the sweepers in the employ of the Municipal Corporation, Bombay) were such that no impartial person could accept them.' The papers also show that the present Municipal Commissioner has quoted the above statement in support of his judgment that no such *dasturi* is being paid by the employees. I have no recollection of what I said in 1918, but in my opinion it is hardly relevant or fair to quote testimony given seven years ago to refute fresh allegations of a similar nature. Assuming the accuracy of the report of my conversation with the Health Officer in 1918, it does not follow because a few witnesses whom I examined then were found to be unreliable that there was no bribery and corruption at the time or that the witnesses who may have recently tendered evidence are equally unreliable. I do know, moreover, that Mr. Thakkar whose ability for impartial judgment has been questioned and who has been accused of bias against public officers is utterly unworthy of such charges. We have few public workers of Mr. Thakkar's honesty or impartiality. He would not wilfully misjudge any person. For one thing he has no axe to grind, no wrong to conceal. So far as the charge of bribery is concerned I wish to place on record my opinion arrived at after seven years' observation that bribery is rampant in the Municipal Corporation as elsewhere. I am free also to confess that it is a most difficult charge to prove especially regarding the helpless 'untouchables'. If the Municipal Commissioner wishes to find out the truth let him do what Vikramaditya did, go in disguise and see whether he does not succeed in extracting ten rupee notes from these poor people for the *favour* of getting employment or an increase in pay. That the Commissioner will have to learn the language of the people and dress like his underlings is surely a matter of detail when he is bent upon pursuit of truth in the cause of humanity said to be oppressed under his regime.

Young India, 14-1-1926

306. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

Thursday, January 14, 1926

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL,

I have your letter of today. I am greatly relieved. Enclosed is a letter from Moti. I want you to come over here. Moti insists on *vasantapanchami*; wants to be with you through life and death. She wants to have the privilege of serving you; therefore she intends to marry you not if or when you recover. She desires to be offered to you even if you were an invalid. Bhai Lakshmidas, Velanbehn and I agree with her, so do not regard the wedding as postponed. If you wish it, it can be solemnized there; just wire to me. We shall perform the ceremony very quietly. I shall not cause you the least excitement, and shall not have many people to attend it.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12108

307. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

Friday, January 15, 1926

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have your letter. The papers sent by you are interesting. I have gone through them.

I am glad to know that you will become a member of the Charkha Sangh.

There are two prize essays[1] and they are both at present in Banaras, where the two examiners[2] are assessing them. I will arrange to get them and pass them on to you.

Reports have already reached me of the Maharaja of Mysore's love for the spinning-wheel.

If you keep up the practice of writing in Gujarati, the handwriting and language will both improve.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original. C.W. 4700. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

[1] On khadi

[2] S. V. Puntambekar, a professor at the Hindu University, Varanasi and N. S. Varadachari, a Congress worker of Tamilnad

308. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI PATEL

Maha Sud 1, 1982 January 15, 1926]

BHAI SHIVABHAI,

I have your letter. You cannot altogether forsake your wife. But you can observe *brahmacharya* if you desire to. Man can suppress his passions, nay he ought to. We do come across life-long celibates. Even married persons can observe *brahmacharya*.

You should regard your wife as a disciple and instruct her. Her talents may develop with efforts. You should not have intimacy with her. You should have separate bedrooms. In these circumstances you are not to blame if she goes astray. In case she does you can leave her for good.

I see nothing wrong in your intention to join the Charotar Board of Education. He who regards non-co-operation as dharma may not associate with it. You cannot stay at the Ashram, even if you belong to a non-co-operating institution. I believe all your questions are now answered. If you have any further queries do write to me again.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 405. Courtesy: Shivabhai Patel

309. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

Friday, January 15, 1926

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL,

I have your letter. We are all glad to know the contents. Now only a few days remain. If you can make it, please come on Sunday or Monday to take Moti's hand. If this involves any risk and if you agree to it, I may send Moti to you at Baroda, along with Panditji for performing the ceremonies and, of course, some of us, most probably, Lakshmidas, Velanbehn and Mahadev will go. If you feel that the mere excitement of marriage is not advisable for you at the moment do not hesitate to say so. Now the only thing to be considered is what is good for you. And now we are looking after Moti on your behalf. We all wish that *vasantapanchami* may not pass by, but we are more interested in your health. If *vasantapanchami is* missed, we shall give

May God grant you both long life and happiness, and may you serve the country and dharma.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12109

310. LETTER TO PHULSIMHA

Maha Sud 2 [*January 16, /926*][1]

BHAI PHULSIMHAJI,

I have your letter. I can very well see your point of view, but I think no purpose will be served by discussing the subject personally.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

BHAI PHULSIMHAJI
CHAROTAR KELAVANI MANDAL
ANAND

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 1294

311. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

Saturday, January 16, 1926

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL,

I have your letter. I handed over to Chi. Moti the letter to her, and also read to her the one to me. Herewith her reply. It is now for you to improve her slovenly handwriting and her language. The contents of the letter seem quite satisfactory; it is her own.

The marriage ceremony will start precisely at 3 o'clock on Monday afternoon. I shall be ready by then.

You can bring along anyone you want to. Let me know who are keen on observing caste restrictions.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12111

[1] From the postmark

312. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

ASHRAM,
Maha Sud 2 [*January 16, 1926*]

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL,

I have your letter. We expect you on Monday. Someone will go to the Ahmedabad station to receive you, and bring you by car so as to spare you the jolts. If you do not resist we are certainly going to marry you off, and then you can go if you are fit and want to return the same day; otherwise we can nurse you here. May God take care of you and bring you here hale and hearty.

I am very pleased with all that is happening.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

By the time you reach I shall be ready to end my silence. I shall adjust my period of silence to the arrival of your train so that I can speak when you come.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12112

313. THERE VITAL QUESTIONS[1]

A friend has asked me three questions in a most humble spirit:

1. You regard the four divisions of castes as based on birth. You also believe that a man's caste does not prevent him from doing the duties attaching to other castes and that any man, irrespective of his birth, may have the qualities of a Brahmin, or a Kshatriya or a Sudra. If this is the case, where is the use of maintaining this division, and consequently, an order of superiority and inferiority? Why should the accident of birth make a man a Brahmin or a Kshatriya or a Sudra? Why attach so much importance to birth?

2. You believe in *advaitism* (non-dualism), and you also say that the world has neither beginning nor end and is real. Neither are you a dualist, for you believe in the freedom of the individual *atman.* Would it be improper then to call you an *anekantavadi* or *syadvadi* (believer in the doctrine of the

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan,* 17-1-1926. This is a translation by Mahadev Desai.

manyness of reality).

3. You have often said that God is an impersonal, absolute Being, free from passions or attributes, which means that He is not the author of the universe nor does He sit in judgment over man's virtue and vice. And you talk of the will of God every now and then. How can a God without any attribute have a will, and how can you conform your will to His? Your *atman is* free to do whatever he likes. If he does not succeeds in doing it, it is the result of his past doings, God has nothing to do with it. And yet *you* cannot be talking of the will of God to beguile the common folk, for you are a satyagrahi. Why then this fatalism?

1. In accepting the fourfold division, I am simply accepting the laws of Nature, taking for granted what is inherent in human nature, and the law of heredity. We are born with some of the traits of our parents. The fact that a human being is born only in the human species shows that some characteristics, i.e., caste is determined by birth. There is scope enough for freedom of the will inasmuch as we can to a certain extent reform some of our inherited characteristics. It is not possible in one birth entirely to undo the results of our past doings, and in the light of it, it is in every way right and proper to regard him as a Brahmin who is born of Brahmin parents. A Brahmin may by doing the deeds of a Sudra become a Sudra in this very birth, but the world loses nothing in continuing to treat him as a Brahmin. Caste as it exists today is no doubt a travesty of the original fourfold division which only defined men's different callings. And this trifling with it has been its undoing. But how can I, for that reason, discard the law of Nature which I see being fulfilled at every step? I know that if I discard it, I would be rid of a lot of trouble. But that would be an idle short-cut. I have declared from the house-tops that a man's caste is no matter for pride, that no superiority attaches to any of the four divisions. A true Brahmin will feel it an honour to serve the lowliest of Sudras. In fact a Brahmin, to be a Brahmin, should have the qualities of a Kshatriya, a Vaisya and a Sudra plus his own. Only he should predominantly be a man of divine knowledge. But caste today is in the crucible, and only heaven knows, or perhaps the Brahmins know, the final result.

2. I am an *advaitist* and yet I can support *dvaitism* (dualism). The world is changing every moment, and is therefore unreal, it has no permanent existence. But though it is constantly changing, it has something about it which persists and it is therefore to that extent real.

I have therefore no objection to calling it real and unreal, and thus being called an *anekantavadi* or a *syadvadi*. But my *syadvada is* not the *syadvada* of the learned, it is peculiarly my own. I cannot engage in a debate with them. It has been my experience that I am always true from my point of view, and am often wrong from the point of view of my honest critics. I know that we are both right from our respective points of view. And this knowledge saves me from attributing motives to my opponents or critics. The seven blind men who gave seven different descriptions of the elephant were all right from their respective points of view, and wrong from the point of view of one another, and right and wrong from the point of view of the man who knew the elephant. I very much like this doctrine of the manyness of reality. It is this doctrine that has taught me to judge a Mussalman from his own standpoint and a Christian from his. Formerly I used to resent the ignorance of my opponents. Today I can love them because I am gifted with the eye to see myself as others see me and *vice versa.* I want to take the whole world in the embrace of my love. My *anekantavada is* the result of the twin doctrine of *Satya* and *Ahimsa.*

3. I talk of God exactly as I believe Him to be. Why should I beguile people into error and work my own perdition? I seek no reward from them. I believe God to be creative as well as non-creative. This too is the result of my acceptance of the doctrine of the manyness of reality. From the platform of the Jains I prove the non-creative aspect of God, and from that of Ramannuja the creative aspect. As a matter of fact, we are all thinking of the Unthinkable, describing the Indescribable, seeking to know the Unknown, and that is why our speech falters, is inadequate and even often contradictory. Then why do the Vedas describe *Brahman* as"not this","not this"? But if He or It is not this, He or It is. If we exist if our parents and their parents have existed, then it is proper to believe in the Parent of the whole creation. If He is not, we are nowhere. And that is why all of us with one voice call *one* God differently as Paramatma, Ishwara, Siva, Vishnu, Rama, Allah, Khuda, Dada Hormuzda, Jehovah, God, and an infinite variety of names. He is *one* and yet many; He is smaller than an atom, and bigger than the Himalayas; He is contained even in a drop of the ocean, and yet not even the seven seas can compass Him. Reason is powerless to know Him. He is beyond the reach or grasp of reason. But I need not labour the point. Faith is essential in this matter. My logic can make and unmake innumerable hypotheses. An atheist might floor me in a debate. But my faith runs so very much faster

than Any reason that I can challenge the whole world and say,"God is; was and ever shall be."

But those who want to deny His existence are at liberty to do so. He is merciful, and compassionate. He is not an earthly king needing an army to make us accept His sway. He allows us freedom, and yet His compassion commands obedience to His will. But if anyone of us disdain to bow to His will, He says: 'So be it. My sun will shine no less for these, my clouds will rain no less for these. I need not force thee to accept my sway.' Of such a God let the ignorant dispute the existence. I am one of the millions of wise men who believe Him and am never tired of bowing to Him and singing His glory

Young India, 21-1-1926

314. GURUKULS

The word"gurukul" has come to have a technical meaning and denotes a particular type of educational institution run by Arya Samajists. Referring to these gurukuls, a friend writes:[1]

To my knowledge I have no contempt for anybody, how then, could I have it for Arya Samajists? I have had occasions of contact with Arya Samajists and my connections with them continue right to this day. After the publication of the article containing my criticism, our relationship or mutual love has not become less warm. It is, therefore, a painful surprise to me that my article should have created a feeling of contempt in anyone's mind. My differences with Arya Samajists about certain activities of their are no reason why I should be blind to their other virtues or forget their service to the nation. They have infused a new spirit into the people. They have drawn attention to certain evils which have found their way into Hinduism. They have infused a new spirit into the people. They have drawn attention to certain evils which have found their way into Hinduism. They have displayed courage andattempted big tasks, have made a great contribution towards the education of girls, have worked for the welfare of untouchable communities and spread the study of Sanskrit and Hindi. Swami Dayanand resisted his parents with satyagraha right

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had praised the Arya Samajists' work for untouchable communities and said that Gandhiji's criticism of them, though prompted by his sincere regard for them, had been misunderstood by his followers.

from his childhood and taught the people the great lesson of *brahmacharya*; these facts will always be remembered with reverence. I know Vidyadevi's love for khadi. I am trying to send to her a lady who will teach weaving. My connection with the Kangri Gurukul is a longstanding one. I cannot forget that its inmates, inspired by Swamiji, did manual work and sent me money in South Africa. I am not unaware that the teachers there are lovers of khadi. If there was no mention of the Supa Gurukul in *Navajivan*, the reason was not indifference, it could certainly not be contempt. The responsibility for the omission must lie with Mahadev or with me. I know that I was not responsible. I believe it impossible that Mahadev has contempt for the gurukuls. But it is likely that flitting, flying from place to place in our tours like express trains, one may sometimes forget to mention an event. I believe Supa Gurukul to be a praiseworthy venture. I was impressed by the spirit and energy of its head. That is why I had agreed to visit the place. I could see that they were doing good work in the field of khadi. I am convinced that gurukuls, too, have been making a valuable contribution in the field of education and I wish prosperity to these institutions.

[From Gujarati]]

Navajivan, 17-1-1926

315. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[*January 17, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I do not believe that your illness is going to be as prolonged as the doctor says. But I have no doubt at all that you should stay there until you are fully cured. You will begin to get the real benefit of the climate there only now as it starts getting warm. Do not be impatient about getting up and walking around. It does not matter if it takes some time before you can walk about. It is best to be patient so long as the pain persists.

Also your diet should be such as will help in the movement of the bowels. Are you not permitted as yet to take fruit? It is necessary to take oranges. And when the Nasik grapes are available, you must have plenty of them.

[1] From *Bapuni Prasadi*; *vide*"Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", 17-1-1926.

I am very glad that Taramati will be arriving there on Tuesday. The child will be the chief gainer. Taramati should go out for walks every day.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I think your company will be enough for Devdas. Besides, many people will be visiting Deolali. Devdas will be able to cultivate their company. The patient need not worry about the nurse.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

316. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Maha Sud 4 [*January 18, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Congratulations on your being permitted to take walks. Now there should be no harm if slowly you do a little climbing. I am very happy that you have started walking just when Taramati is arriving there.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
WINDY HALL
NASIK ROAD
DEOLALI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The postmark bears the date January 19, 1926. *Maha Sud 4* corresponded to January 18.

317. SPEECH AT MARRIAGE CEREMONY[1]

January 18, 1926

We do two things on the occasion of a marriage here. We bless the couple on behalf of the Ashram and ponder over the propriety of participating in a function apparently opposed to the ideals of the Ashram.

In non-violence there is no room for force and so there should be, and there can be, no compulsion in the observance of vows. Myself and my companions have seen that it is easy to practise *brahmacharya*, once it is understood; but the understanding has to issue from the heart, not from the head. One cannot master it solely with the intellect. And so do the Shastras emphasize that only a rare individual can practise it in thought, word and deed.

Its practice becomes difficult for yet another reason. Our experiments here are opposed to the normal ways of the world. To keep the appearance of worldliness and yet to practise *brahmacharya*, this makes it all the more difficult. The Shastras do not seem to have laid much stress on restraining the palate; but if this can be achieved, *brahmachary* is much more easy. Restraining the palate is more difficult than practising *brahmacharya*. I have tried many devices and resigned myself to the conclusion. A man may restrict himself just to four items or to milk alone but all these restrictions are of no avail. Thereby he controls the senses but does not conquer them. He may smack his lips over a single item of food. I have known it myself. A single item can give all the tickle to the palate, the mouth waters all through the day, and we are aware of it. If one eats for the sake of nutrition only without delighting in its savour and without being a slave of the palate, that is the correct attitude. Very few people can achieve this state.

It is difficult to say how many of us practise this restraint and to what extent. We do claim, however, that we practise *brahmacharya*. How strange, then, that we celebrate a function opposed to it! We do not know whether it is *dharma* or *adharma*. I would translate"What to do and what not to do" of the Gita as"What is *dharma* and what is *adharma*".

[1] Of Najuklal Choksi and Moti, daughter of Lakshmidas Assar, at Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati

In my view, marriage is *dharma*. All worldly activities are intended for learning self-restraint. Our sense gratification should therefore be restricted to the indispensable. Where other people find pleasure, my inner self finds none. On such occasions I pray to God for deliverance. Even while eating, I remember defecation. The occasion of marriage should remind us of self-restraint. If desires cannot be conquered, they should be harnessed, that is, they should be directed to one object. Such restriction is better than promiscuity. The marriage vow repeatedly enjoins on the bridegroom not to go astray, leaving his wife. Moreover, this marriage ceremony has been performed with bare religious rites. There were no inducements, no dowry, no ornaments, nor any discord between the marriage parties. All this again teaches restraint. In these matters also we should seek and practise restraint. That is why all and sundry have not been invited to this function. It is the good fortune of the Ashram that it has had an opportunity to solemnize the marriage of persons who understand what restraint means and are resolved to practise it.

All others who wish to marry should frankly say so and put all inmates of the Ashram at ease. Let them not feel that the Ashram would come in their way.

[From Gujarati]

Raojibhai's Manuscript Diary. Courtesy: R. N. Patel

318. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Saturday [Before *January 19, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

There has been no letter from401 you but Devdas has written on your behalf. I am glad. The more y402ou rest the quicker you will recover. I shall be perfectly satisfied if Devdas keeps writing to me. I shall certainly want you to write when you are able to sit up and move about. Increase and decrease in pain are natural. You must only take care and see that you do not get fever. I like the change of diet that Devdas mentions. I consider raisins better than dried figs. And toast is better than biscuits.

[1] This letter appears to have been written before Taramati joined her husband at Deolali on January 19, 1926.

There is a letter from Nirmala today. I learn from it that Taramati and Dilip[1] are in good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

319. INTERVIEW TO LANGELOTH AND KELLY

[Before *21 January 21, 1926*][2]

Mrs. Langeloth and Mrs. Kelly, delegated personally to present to Gandhiji the resolution of invitation to visit America on behalf of the Fellowship of Faiths, League of Neighbours, and Union of East and West, visited him last week. They were evidently prepared for the reply, but the resolution had to be presented. Not without considerable hesitation said Mrs. Kelly:"Would you not visit America, Mr. Gandhi? We would very much like to hear from you your message. Money, I know, is no consideration to you, but I may say that your visit can help us to render you pecuniary assistance in your work here. There are private homes there ready to receive you and to look after you whilst you are there."

[GANDHIJI:] I know, I would be overwhelmed with affection if ever I went to America. But as I have already explained to other friends I cannot as yet think of going there, without having finished my work here. I must work away amongst my own people, and not swerve from my path. Dr. Ward writing to me the other day said he was entirely at one with me in thinking that my visit would not be of much use in the present circumstances. And don't you think he is right? I know crowds would gather around me to hear me, I would get receptions everywhere but beyond that my visit would have no other result.

[KELLY:] Don't you think, Mr. Gandhi, we are ready to receive your message? Look at the gathering under the auspices of the Fellowship of Faiths. No less than ten faiths were represented there, and when a lecture about you was broadcast millions listened to it with intense interest. Mr. John Haines Holmes also earnestly desires you to pay a visit. We are growing, and we would like to accelerate the growth.

I know you are growing. But a gentle, steady growth would be more enduring than growth induced by lecturing campaigns and

[1] Addressee's son

[2] From a report by Mahadev Desai

fireworks display. You must, at present, study my message through my writings and try to live up to it if it is acceptable to you. I could not hope to make you live up to it unless I have succeeded in making my own people do it. Every moment of my time is therefore usefully employed here and I would be doing violence to my inner being if I left my work and proceeded to America.

Mrs. Kelly and Mrs. Langeloth seemed to be convinced and they now turned to putting a question or two before they left."Mr. Gandhi, is it true that you are a reactionary? I have heard some of your own people say so."

What do they mean by 'reactionary'? If they mean that I am a civil resister and law-breaker I have been that all these years. If they mean that I have discarded all other methods and adopted non-violence, symbolized by the spinning-wheel, they are right.

Mrs. Kelly could not say, but I could well guess what was at the back of her mind from the questions that followed. In his remarkable autobiography, Henry Ford refers to a species of reformers whom he calls 'reactionary' meaning thereby those who want to go back to an old order of things. And Mrs. Kelly's next question was,"Is it true that you object to railways, steamships and other means of speedy locomotion?"

It is and it is not! You should really get the book in which I have expounded my views in this connection—*Indian Home Rule*. It is true in the sense that under ideal conditions we should not need these things. It is not true in the sense that in these days it is not easy to sever ourselves from those things. But is the world any the better for those quick instruments of locomotion? How do these instruments advance man's spiritual progress? Do they not in the last resort hamper it? And is there any limit to man's ambition? Once we were satisfied with travelling a few miles an hour, today we want to negotiate hundreds of miles in an hour, one day we might desire to fly through space. What will be the result? Chaos—we would be tumbling upon one another, we would be simply smothered.

But do masses desire these things?

They do. I have seen mobs getting almost mad on Sundays and holidays. In London a long unbreakable train of motor cars at every corner is quite a usual phenomenon. And what is all this worry and fateful hurry for? To what end? I tell you if by some sudden catastrophe all these instruments were to be destroyed I would not shed a single tear. I would say, it is a proper storm and a proper

cleansing.

But supposing you need to go to Calcutta, how would you go unless by train?

Certainly by train. But why should I need to go to Calcutta? Under ideal conditions, as I have said, I need not traverse those long distances, not at any rate in the shortest possible time. I shall explain myself. Today two good people come from America with a kind and loving message. But along with the two come two hundred with all sorts of motives. For aught we know a large number may be coming just in search of further avenues of exploitation. Is that the benefit of quick locomotion to India?

I see, but how can we get back to the ideal condition of things?

Not easily. It is an express moving at a terrific speed that we are in. We cannot all of a sudden jump out of it. We cannot go back to the ideal state all at a jump. We can look forward to reaching it some day.

In short, the reactionary turn, if at all it was, meant a return to common sense, meant a restoration of what appears to common sense to be a natural order as distinguished from the present unnatural order, in a word not everything overturned or everything petrified but everything restored to its proper place.

But I do not think the friends quite saw the drift of the argument. For they too were hurrying through space. They had to catch a train, and were afraid to get to the station too late!

Young India, 21-1-1926

320. IN DEFENCE OF UNAPPROACHABILITY

A Travancore correspondent writes:

> There seems to be a misunderstanding about the Brahmins and their customs or *acharas*. You praise ahimsa, but we the Brahmins are the only community that observe it as a religious function. Anyone who violates it is regarded as an outcaste by us. 'The very association with those who kill or eat flesh is considered by us as sinful. At the approach of the slaughterer, fisherman and toddy-extractor, as well as at the touch of the flesh-eater, wine-drinker, and the irreligious, our moral as well as the physical atmosphere becomes poisoned, *tapas* or religious merit diminishes, and pure magnetism becomes lost.
>
> This, we consider as pollution, and we have to bathe forthwith. It is by keeping up such rules that the Brahmins have been able to preserve their

hereditary virtues so long even though time and fortune have undergone many changes. If free communication with others be allowed without these restrictions, the Brahmin will gradually degrade himself to the lowest of the outcastes, indulge in the vices in private, and pretend to be pure trying at the same time to do away with the barriers of restrictions which give him much trouble in keeping his sins secret. We know that many of the nominal Brahmins of today are of this sort, and that they are moving heaven and earth to drag others to their degraded level.

In a place where people are grouped together into different communities according to their habits and notions of right and wrong (not as per colour, wealth or power as is wrongly followed in the West) and located in different centres, according to their professional, social and domestic conveniences, with perceptible demarcation lines as in our motherland, it is not possible for anyone to remain unobserved for long, if he changes his habits.

If on the contrary one is put up in the midst of slaughterers, meateaters and drunkards, it is impossible for him to maintain himself there, preserving his foreign virtues. Naturally, we seek such surroundings as suit our tastes. Therefore it is that the surroundings of a Brahmin's abode have also to be preserved physically, morally and religiously pure, free from the encroachment of the slaughterers, fishermen, toddy-extractors.

In India profession and the caste-system have been inseparably linked together, and it is therefore natural to believe a man belonging to a caste, to be invariably following that profession.

These are the grounds on which unapproachability and untouchability have been enjoined on us. These, as mentioned above, not only protect the purity of our line but also act as a direct social or religious punishment of excommunication on the wrongdoers, and indirectly induce them to give up their bad habits if they want free communication with us.

You may therefore publicly ask them to renounce their sins and to take to weaving and spinning along with the necessary religious observances of bathing regularly, fasting, prayer, etc., if they want to destroy their unapproachability in the course of a few years. They should not also associate with those who have not mended their old ways of living. This is the way sanctioned by the Shastras. Since there is no way of verifying the private sins or virtues of a man, it is useless to talk of the mental purities of one or the mental impurities of another. It is from public habits that we should judge a man's private nature. Therefore, anyone, who cannot publicly embrace your or our Mother's ahimsa dharma, or at least to the extent of slaughtering, fish or flesh-eating, cannot be considered fit to transcend their hereditary unapproachability. In fact this unapproachability and untouchability are

nothing but a practical means of preserving and spreading our ahimsa dharma.

Though the question raised by the correspondent has been often dealt with in these columns, it is perhaps necessary to re-expose the fallacy underlying the correspondent's argument. In the first place the claim advanced on behalf of the Brahmins as to vegetarianism is not wholly true. It is true only regarding the Brahminsof the South. But elsewhere they freely eat fish and in Bengal, Kashmir, etc., even meat. Moreover, in the South all meat-eaters and fish-eaters are not unapproachables. And even an 'unapproachable' who is severely pure is an outcaste, because he is born in a family unlawfully regarded as 'untouchable' or 'unapproachable'. Do not Brahmins brush shoulders with meat-eating non-Brahmins if they happen to be persons in authority? Do they not pay respect to the meat-eating Hindu royalty?

It is surprising and painful to find cultured men like the correspondent in their blind zeal defend an indefensible and tottering system, forgetting the obvious implications of their own argument. The correspondent strains at the *himsaic"*gnat" of meateating and swallows the trebly *himsaic* camel of deliberate suppression of millions of fellow-beings in order to preserve an imaginary purity. I suggest to the correspondent that a vegetarianism that demands for its protection a degrading excommunication of others is not worth preserving. Thus preserved it becomes a hothouse growth doomed to perish under the first blast of cold air. I treasure vegetarianism. I am convinced the Brahmins have gained spiritual advancement through their vegetarianism and other self imposed disciplinary restraints. But when they were at their height, they did not need protection for their purity from without. Every virtue loses its vitality when it becomes incapable of withstanding outside influences.

Moreover, it is too late in the day for Brahmins to claim protection of the type mentioned by the correspondent. Happily the number of Brahmins who not only disdain such protection but who are leading the reform movement at the peril of being persecuted is daily on the increase. And in that lies the best hope of the reform making rapid progress.

The correspondent wants me to preach purity among the suppressed classes. He is evidently no reader of *Young India* or he would have known that I never lose a single opportunity of preaching purity among them. I make him too a present of the information that they are responding to such effort in a most satisfactory manner. I

invite the correspondent to join the ranks of reformers who go in the midst of these long suffering men and women and work among them not as patrons but their true friends.

Young India, 21-1-1926

321. NOTES

BORODADA GONE

It is difficult to believe that Dwijendranath Tagore is no more. A wire from Shantiniketan gives me the sad news that Borodada known as Dwijendranath Tagore has found his rest. He was nearing ninety and yet he was so bright, so cheerful that one could never feel whilst in his presence that his days of earthly existence were numbered. Borodada was a distinguished member in that family of geniuses. Besides being a great scholar— as familiar with Sanskrit as he was with English—Barodada was a deeply religious man of broad sympathies. Whilst he held tenaciously to the teachings of the Upanishads, he was open to receive light from all the other scriptures of the world. He loved his country with the passion of a most devoted patriot. Yet his patriotism was not exclusive. He understood the spiritual beauty of non-violent non-co-operation, though he never failed to appreciate its political significance. He believed in the spinning-wheel with a full heart and had adopted khaddar even at his ripe age. He kept himself in closest touch with the current events with the ardour of a youth. Borodada's death means the withdrawal of a great sage, philosopher and patriot from our midst. I tender my condolences to the Poet and the members of the Ashram at Shantiniketan.

ALL-INDIA DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL

Sjt. Manilal Kothari is reaching Rangoon this week to collect funds on behalf of the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial, or in other words for the Khaddar Movement. He is also to collect from Kathiawaris for the budget of the Kathiawar Parishad which is principally khaddar work. Those Kathiawaris who would like to pay to the Deshbandhu Fund for khaddar work in Kathiawar only may so earmark their subscriptions. But I hope that there will be an adequate response to his appeal from those who revere the memory of the great patriot and also believe in khaddar.

EDUCATION IN BARODA

Whatever may be said against the absentee kingship in Baroda and the niggardly reform policy of the State, there is no doubt about the progress of literary education of that State, as evidenced from a little brochure published by the State Education Department on the golden jubilee of His Highness the Maharaja Saheb. Fifty years ago there were only two hundred elementary private schools with only 800 boys in them. Today there are 78 English institutions including a College teaching 14,425 pupils of whom 345 are girls. Vernacular institutions number 2,916 instructing 2,17,138 pupils of whom 67,384 are girls. These include 219 schools for suppressed classes. There are also 124 Urdu schools of which 26 are for girls. There are in these schools 6,693 pupils receiving instruction. All this is no doubt creditable. But the question arises whether this education answers the wants of the people. As in the rest of India so in Baroda, the population is predominantly agricultural. Do the children of these farmers me better farmers? Do they show moral and material improvement for the education they have received? Fifty years is a long enough time for showing results. I am afraid the answer to the inquiry will not be satisfactory. The farmers of Baroda are no happier, no better than their breathren elsewhere. They are as helpless as any in times of famine. The sanitation of their villages is as primitive as in the other parts of India. They do not know even the value of manufacturing their own cloth. Baroda possesses some of the richest lands in India. It should not have to export its raw cotton. It can easily become a self-contained State with a prosperous peasantry. But it is bedecked in foreign cloth—a visible sign of their poverty and degradation. Nor are they better off in the matter of drink. Probably they are worse. Baroda education is as much tainted with the drink revenue as British education. The children of the *Kaliparaj* are ruined by the drink demon in spite of the education they may receive. The fact is the education in Baroda is an almost slavish imitation of the British type. Higher education makes us foreigners in our country and the primary education being practically of no use in after life becomes almost useless. There is neither originality nor naturalness about it. It need not be at all original if it would only be aboriginal.

AN ADMIRABLE SPIRIT

A friend who was at the bedside of the Maharaja of Nattore

during his fatal illness thus describes the last scene:

> The Maharani is bearing up wonderfully. It does one a lot of good just to see her once! Such a sensible dignified dear little woman! For four days and nights, before the death she took her place at his bedside, did not stir; without food, without sleep, she nursed him. Did everything with her own hands. Chanted hymns in his ears at the last and closed his eyes with the last breath. She does not weep, nor does she let anybody else weep. She goes about the house, like a shadow, attending to all her duties! Such a dignified house of mourning I have never seen.

Such devotion, dignity and resignation are worthy of imitation. In Hindu households there is too much unseemly weeping and gnashing of teeth though our religious literature strictly forbids weeping over death. In many places weeping over the dead has become the fashion and it is simulated where it is not spontaneous. It is a barbarous Godless custom and should be prohibited. Those who have faith in God should welcome death as a deliverance. It is a change as certain as youth and old age and no more to be deplored than the latter.

STILL AT IT

The Secretary, Khilafat Committee, Nellore, wires:

> Nellore Hindu-Muslim tension strained relations. Reactionary Hindus carrying procession with music before mosques against *mamool* (custom). Mahomedans decided cow-sacrifice. Situation serious. Pray intervention.

It flatters my vanity to be asked to intervene although I have repeatedly declared that I exercise no influence over the fighting elements whose star seems just now to be in the ascendant. But my vanity can avail nothing for the cause of peace. I can only suggest to the parties the sane and civilized method of arbitration. But if that does not please them, the law of the stick is at their disposal.

Young India, 21-1-1926

322. UNINTENTIONAL OMISSION

A Bishanpur correspondent reminds me that contrary to my wont I omitted in my Bihar notes some time ago reference to the laying of the foundation-stone of the Dharampur Gandhi Vidyalaya. I hasten to repair the omission. I well remember the courtesy of the founders in not dragging me in my weak health to a distance of four or five miles to lay the foundation-stone. They were satisfied with having brought from Dharampur a brick for me to touch. I was told that self-sacrificing volunteers were devoting themselves to the work. The omission was purely unintentional. So many events were crowded in one single day and such things were repeated almost daily. It is no wonder if my notes written weekly omitted reference to several events, though in themselves, or at least for the persons concerned, of utmost importance. I hope that the school is now complete and that it is in working order.

Young India, 21-1-1926

323. STATEMENT ON GANDHI-SMUTS AGREEMENT

[*January 21, 1926*][1]

Mr. Gandhi has made the following statement regarding the Smuts-Gandhi Agreement of 1914:

Mr. Andrews has sent me a cable inviting me to make a statement on the Smuts-Gandhi Agreement as it has given rise to a controversy in South Africa. I observe too that two South African divines have supported my contention.

Let it be remembered that the Agreement is a matter of record. It closed a struggle that had lasted for close on eight years and covered many intermediate and interlocutory arrangements and agreements. Let it be also noted that the Government of India was not unconcerned with the Agreement. It supplemented the Indian Relief measure that was almost simultaneously passed. As is common in all such arrangements, the correspondence between the parties is previously seen and approved by them. So was this correspondence mutually seen and accepted. My letter to General Smuts refers to disabilities

[1] Released on this date by the Associated Press of India from Bombay

not covered by the Relief Act and expresses the hope that even those disabilities which were not then dealt with would be removed in the course of time. It is not to be supposed that after eight years of solid suffering, the Indian settlers were satisfied with an arrangement that might lead, not to a further amelioration of their status, but to their further degradation, ultimately resulting in extinction.

But I do not wish to labour the point. There is the Indian offer, the Congress offer to go to arbitration on the point. Let the Government of India ascertain for themselves the meaning of the Agreement and invite the Union Government to accept the principle of arbitration.

It is not for the first time that the South African Ministers have repudiated the arrangements and promises made by themselves. They repudiated the promise made to Mr. Gokhale about the £3 tax which, as a point of honour was added to the objects of the passive resistance struggle and which ultimately the Union Government had to repeal. So it is the old trick now repeated. It is a matter of honour for India to insist upon the fulfilment of the Agreement of 1914.

The Hindu, 22-1-1926

324. APPEAL TO TRAVANCORE GOVERNMENT

SABARMATI,

January 21, 1926

The Travancore Government is entitled to congratulations on the step they have taken regarding the use by the so-called untouchables of public roads round. But, it is by no means the maximum it could do. I do hope the Government and the Popular Assembly will have the courage to go to the logical extent and insist on throwing open to the untouchables all public institutions including temples on the same terms as the rest of the population.

M.K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 6-3-1926

325. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

January 21, 1926

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

I am glad you are taking Kamala with you. Yes, if both of you cannot, you at least should come here before you go. About the Deshbandhu Memorial, your letter to Jamnalalji will be enough. About A.I.S.A., you will remain Secretary but if an assistant is required, Shankerlal should have one. I cannot blame you for not preparing the chart You have not idled away your time. You should have clothes that would answer in Europe.

Yours

BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, p. 46

326. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Thursday [*January 21, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter and that of Devdas. Yes, by oranges I meant sweet lime. Now you can take even papaya. I cannot write to Devdas today. I forgot to write to you a couple of things that should please you. First, Ba said that she would be very happy to go there to nurse you. Secondly, she said last night:"Why don't you call Mathuradas and keep him here?" I told her that you could not bear the heat of this place. Of course the next fifteen days will be pleasant here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the postmark

327. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Thursday [*January 21, 1926*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I read your letter only on Tuesday; so I could not send for Rameshwarprasad, but yesterday he called on me along with Keshavdasji. I took them for a walk. I invited Rameshwar prasad to join the students in their prayer, and this he has started doing from today. I give them readings from *Bhaktarajani Yatra*[2].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2856

328. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Friday [*January 22, 1926*]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. You have additional company with the arrival of Taramati and Dilip. Dilip's presence should act as a tonic on you.

Ramdas's problem will not be solved by his going there. He may go there, if he wants. I am beseeching him to be calm.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

329. SPINNING-WHEEL v. MILL

A Hindi professor has written a long letter which, being of interest for Gujarati readers too, I summarize below:

> Do you intend to continue the spinning-wheel movement even after we have swaraj? Will not the number of Indian mills go up automatically then and, their products being cheap, will not the cause of the spinning-wheel suffer?

[1] From the postmark

[2] Gujarati translation of *Pilgrim's Progress*

> And finally, since these mills themselves will have accomplished the boycott of foreign cloth, will not your idea of ending hunger in the villages through the spinning-wheel remain a mere fancy? Or may it not happen that under swaraj we shall discover some other remedy for poverty? If so, why should you not devote your strenuous efforts to multiplying the number of mills in order to ensure the success of the boycott movement instead of to the spinning-wheel? If you agree that after we have swaraj the spinning-wheel movement is bound to stop, but think that it must continue meanwhile for ten or fifteen years, could you not have new mills set up during that period and ensure immediate boycott [of foreign cloth]?

The arguments advanced here have been answered some time or other in *Navajivan*. If, nevertheless, even a learned gentleman like this correspondent, a regular reader too of *Young India* and *Navajivan*, has still doubts in the matter, it may be worthwhile to try to answer his questions.

I am convinced that the spinning-wheel will stay even after we have won swaraj. The movement has its origin in the condition of villages. Even after swaraj, cultivators will need a subsidiary occupation and, in our country, spinning is the only possible occupation of the sort. It is not as if the moment we get swaraj new mills will spring up overnight like mushrooms after the rains. Setting up a mill requires capital, and those who put it up expect interest. For a mill we must have land, facilities of water, etc., and workers and machinery. These resources cannot be created as easily as spinning-wheels. If a sufficiently large number of people decide, they can produce one crore spinning-wheels in the country in one day; on the contrary, even if thirty crores wish it, they cannot set up a mill with thirty crore spindles in one day. Experience has proved positively that a spinning-wheel can produce nearly thesame amount of yarn in eight hours which one spindle produces in a mill. If, therefore, the Indian people choose, they can, in a few months, produce enough cloth for themselves with the help of spinning-wheels and handlooms. Given a little will and corresponding action, it is possible to bring about immediate boycott [of foreign cloth] with the help of the spinning-wheel, whereas it is not possible to do so with the help of mills, however much we may wish or try. Moreover, if we seek to effect the

boycott with the help of mills, we shall have for a long time to depend on foreign countries for two things for years to come we shall have to get the machinery and engineers from outside.

Again, the multiplication of mills can never end the hunger of the poor. If we cannot find today some other means of ending their poverty, we have no reason to believe that we shall discover it after we win swaraj. No one, so far, has even tried and demonstrated how to employ the other means which have been suggested in place of the spinning-wheel for ending mass hunger.

I am, therefore, of the view that nothing besides the spinning-wheel can satisfy the hunger of the crores in the country.

This being my unalterable view, there can be no question, as far as I am concerned, whether the spinning-wheel movement will succeed or fail. I have even stated my view that without boycott of foreign cloth there can be no swaraj for the millions. I am firm in this view of mine too. Hence, whether it takes one year or a hundred years for the spinning-wheel to become universal, it is the sovereign means of winning swaraj. I am, moreover, serving the untouchable communities through it. I am also making a great contribution towards Hindu-Muslim unity, since I appeal to Muslims, too, that they should take up ginning, carding, spinning and weaving. Setting up more mills will produce none of these benefits. The effort will have been worth-while only if it succeeds. It can yield no great benefit. In my view, boycott brought about by any sort of means can do no good. Only the boycott which has been brought about by the concerted efforts of millions and which has, in the process, satisfied their hunger, can be of immense benefit. Moreover, whether the spinning-wheel movement succeeds or not, it is without any flaw and that is why it can never fail.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-1-1926

330. LETTER TO KALYANJI DESAI

ASHRAM,
January 24, 192[*6*][1]

BHAI KALYANJI,

I wanted to write to you as soon as I had the news, but I just could not do it. And then I fell ill. All that is born is only destined to decay and die. Why then should we lament over it? It is natural that you should grieve for the death of a grownup daughter. But if we look deep into our grief we shall find there nothing but our selfishness and fear. There is selfishness in regarding her as belonging to us and since we ourselves do not want to die we are also frightened by other people's death. It is in the nature of the soul to be untouched by both [selfishness and fear]. But we mistake the body for the soul and therefore lament over one another's sorrows and go on feeding our fears.

May God grant you peace.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12179

331. LETTER TO A SOCIAL WORKER

NAVAJIVAN, SARANGPUR,
AHMEDABAD,
January 24, 1926

BHAISHRI . . . ,

I am injured and cannot write my own letters. I wanted to write to you three days ago, but could not owing to rush of work. This pressure is the main cause of my fever. At the moment I have no temperature; nor is it likely to rise. You must have learnt from her letter that . . . has gone to Sehore. In view of the telegram I thought she must leave for Sehore. It was obvious that we could not treat the telegram as a fake. I have had no letter from her yet. I met her quite often while she was here and also talked with her on several occasions. From all this I have reached the conclusion that a marriage would prove undesirable for both of you, besides it might become a

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's illness

hindrance to your work. She can think of nothing but marriage, and all because of her infatuation. She is a good woman, as simple as she is guileless. She has no urge to serve the country or the people. Her marrying cannot be regarded an ideal widow-marriage. A man likeyou can get along with a woman only if there is something extraordinary about her desire to marry at thirty. I find no such thing. I would therefore advise you to be firm and cure her of her infatuation. I had mistaken your disease for burns. It is not much if your friends expect you to set an example and forgo parenthood. After marriage I do not think you can escape it. I presume you will not debase yourself by resorting to contraceptives, once you start conjugal life. I am afraid a man with such ideas cannot work among women. Without marrying her you can render perfect service to her. You can regard her as your own sister, you may even support her and take as much work from her as she is capable of. We can have thousands of women as our mothers or sisters but if a number of them were to go crazy over us how many of them can we marry? And if it is . . . today, tomorrow some other woman may be drawn to you; what can we do then? Yes; one way there is. We may follow the doctrine of our age, or rather that of the West, viz., free love, i.e., licentiousness. I want you not to act without thinking.

Having considered all this you will do only what you deem correct. Many people seem to know about your proposed marriage, I do not like this. Even the women in the Ashram have come to know of it. And as Bhai Chhaganlal Joshi says, everyone in the college believes that your marriage has been solemnized in the Ashram itself.

I am going to read this letter to Bhai Kishorelal and ask him to write whatever he wants to.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12180

332. SOUTH AFRICAN QUESTION

I am sorry to say that Lord Reading's pronouncement on the acute position that has arisen in South Africa does not inspire me with hope. He may by some diplomatic stroke secure postponement of consideration of the Bill during the present session of the Union Parliament. But the grim fact that stares us in the face is that, as the recent cablegram shows, action is being taken already in South Africa as if the Bill had become the law of the land, and renewals of licenses are being refused. The principle of the measure is itself wrong. What appears to me Lord Reading is after is that he will secure some trifling alteration in the details but nothing in the substance of the Bill, the substance being the curtailment of the rights of the resident Indian population as they existed at the Settlement of 1914. The fulcrum of that Settlement of that long struggle was no more disabilities, but the steady improvement in the position of the resident population, after the fear of unrestricted immigration of Indians had been removed for all time. That fear was removed, not merely in 1914 but when Natal passed its Immigration Law and the Cape followed suit. There never was a large Indian population in the Transvaal. The Indian population in the Orange Free State was never anything to speak of. But under a popular government once you excite feelings you are bound to satisfy them in some shape or other. All the South African statesmen had excited the feelings of the people, which to be accurate they themselves shared without having studied the question. The Government having however allayed the fear by passing a very strict immigration restriction measure, the resident Indian population had every right to hope that their position would steadily improve in process of time. But evidently such was not to be the case and the history since 1914 is a history of a series of attacks upon the Indian position. If Lord Reading means to do his duty he has not merely to secure a postponement of the consideration of the measure but to insist upon at least a reversion to the position of 1914, bad as even that position would be. Let it not be said when the result of his negotiations is known that Lord Reading had secured nothing which might be considered substantial relief from the point of view of the settlers themselves.

Young India, 28-1-1926

333. KHADDAR PROPAGANDA

It is a sign of the times that some of the most cultured people are at the present moment engaged in khadi work, with a selflessness reminding one of the old traditions of this land when national or religious religious was rendered for the love of it. I am reminded of this fact by a letter from Satis Babu of Khadi Pratishthan. He tells me that Dr. Prafulla Ghosh is tirelessly going about Bengal, popularizing khadi by lectures arranged for him by Congress organizations, and by hawking khaddar, Bharucha-like, carrying pieces on his own devoted shoulders. Dr. Ghosh was one of the favourite pupils of Dr. Roy, held an appointment carrying Rs. 500 in the Mint. He is now taking no more than Rs. 30 and I have seen personally how he is living at the present moment. Nor is he the only person in Bengal, or for that matter in India, who is living like a beggar and serving the cause of the poor through the spinning-wheel There are many youths of great ability and education in several organizations in Bengal and outside Bengal, who have made khadi their principal, if not sole occupation, and who are doing it for a mere pittance. But since khadi means the service of millions of India's paupers it naturally demands the devotion of not several hundreds but tens of thousands of young men and women.

Young India, 28-1-1926

334. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM,

January 29, 1926

CHI. RAMDAS,

I recovered some strength today and so I write to you this, my first letter. The right hand will again have to be rested; hence I shall have mostly to dictate.

Mahadevbhai has kept you informed from time to time about my health. This time the fever was fairly high and quite prolonged. It has come down since four days ago. Milk too has been discontinued since four days ago; I had it last on Sunday, the next two days I was on water, honey and lemon juice. For the last two days I am taking oranges and grapes. I shall take milk from today. There is nothing to worry on my account.

How nice if you could say the same thing about yourself. It is in your own power to bring down your mental fever. Will you not do this? What precisely is it, after all? You must delve deep, search your heart and come to a decision. What can you have in Bombay or in Calcutta? What is worth having lies in your own heart. Explore it; it has hills and dales and infinite riches. This inexhaustible treasure will never diminish however much you may take from it. What does Amreli lack if only you control your mind? Having resolved to stay there, how can you now go back on it? You are wanted there; make it your sphere of triumph. I would not like it at all if you ran away from there defeated and beaten. Hence forward I shall unfailingly try to send the injections. Write to me daily.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12181

335. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN CHOKSI

Saturday, January 30, 1926

CHI. MOTI,

Now I get regular letters from you and am satisfied. My fever is gone; there is some weakness, but that too will go

We are all glad to learn that Najuklal is improving. Your nursing him with a pure heart will cure him entirely.

You seem to be studying well.

Your handwriting has to improve. You will have to write all your life. If you are neat and careful, your handwriting will improve at last.

You must not go on expecting letters from me. I write this with my left hand because the right one is aching.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12115

336. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Maha Vad 2 [*January 30, 1926*][1]

BHAI RAMESHWARJI,

I have your letters. A receipt has been sent to you for the amount which will be spent according to your instructions. Next time you want to send any money, please send it either by registered or insured packet. For your health, you should consult a specialist doctor or a *vaid* and the disease can most likely be cured if you follow his advice. Sprue is not an incurable disease. It is necessary to control your diet. *Ramanama* itself is an invaluable remedy for mental illness. You may find some difficulty in repeating that auspicious name but with constant and sincere efforts you will come to like it. We must not hanker after *preyas*[2] but only mind our *shreyas*[3]. And we should stick

[1] From the reference to addressee's health
[2] What is pleasant
[3] What is salutary

to it even though it may not be pleasant. There is no doubt that its ultimate outcome will certainly be very good.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 218

337. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Sunday [*January 31, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

None of you should worry about me. I have no fever now and I am gradually gaining strength. I shall not write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
WINDY HALL
NASIK ROAD
DEOLALI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the postmarks

338. ASHRAM TRUST-DEED[1]

February 2, 1926

Declaration of Trust, Rs. 2,75,000.

We, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and Maganlal Khushalchand Gandhi, both *Vanias* by caste, aged about 55 and 43 years respectively, by profession weavers and cultivators, both residing in Satyagraha Ashram, Vadaj, Taluk North Daskroi, District Ahmedabad, hereby declare as follows:

After our return to India from South Africa in 1915, we and our co-workers established on 25-5-1915 an institution named Satyagraha Ashram with the aim of carrying on activities of public service. The land and buildings shown in the accompanying schedule, of the value of about Rs. 2,75,000 (rupees two lac and seventy-five thousand only), which are the property of that institution, were purchased on its behalf in our names and they have been and are being used and managed under the direction of the heads of the institution in accordance with its aims and objects. We hereby declare these aims and also declare that the said properties are held in our names in our capacities as trustees of the institution and that we and our heirs and successors did not and do not have any personal right or share in them.

The aims for which the property of the"Satyagraha Ashram", mentioned in the schedule to this document, is being used are as under:

1. *Antyaja* uplift;
2. cultivation of cotton and development of the crafts connected with it, hand-ginning, carding, spinning and weaving;
3. to train workers for activities necessary for the moral, economic and political uplift of India;
4. to establish and run schools to impart education in letters and other training; and
5. to undertake other activities for public welfare such as cow-protection, improvement in the breed of cows, etc.

[1] Presented for registration by Gandhiji at the office of the Sub-Registrar, Ahmedabad, on February 12, 1926, between 11 a.m. and 12 noon, and registered under serial No. 722, in Book No. 1. G. V. Mavalankar and Vinoba Bhave signed as witnesses.

We hereby declare that the following persons have been appointed trustees for the management of the property mentioned in the accompanying Schedule A for the purposes stated above:

1. Shri Jamnalal Bajaj
2. Shri Revashankar Jagjivan Zaveri
3. Shri Mahadev Haribhai Desai
4. Shri Imamsaheb Abdul Kadar Bawazeer
5. Shri Chhaganlal Khushalchand Gandhi

We declare that the said trustees have the following rights and powers in respect of the afore-mentioned property:

1. To do anything or take any steps which may appear necessary from time to time in furtherance of the objects and aims of the Trust and to manage and use the property which is the subject of the Trust in any manner they may deem fit;
2. to sell or mortgage the property which is the subject of the Trust for furthering its aims;
3. to appoint, by a majority vote, new trustees to fill up vacancies among themselves;
4. to act with the concurrence of not less than three from among themselves;
5. to raise, by a majorit vote, the number of trustees by two if it appears necessary for them to do so.

The property described in schedule A is situated within the limits of villages in the registration District of Ahmedabad, Taluk Daskroi. It was previously in the names of the persons who sold it to us and has remained in our possession from the time that we purchased it on behalf of the afore-mentioned institution up to date. Particulars[1] of the property:

We have made the above declaration of our own See will, knowingly and in sound mind and it binds our heirs, successors, executors and assigness.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

MAGANLAL KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

From a copy of the registered document. 4 Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] Not reproduced here. The schedule gives particulars of 18 pieces of land; *vide* Appendix"Schedule 'A' Appended to Satyagraha Ashram Trust-Deed", after 10-2-1926.

339. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Wednesday, February 3, 1926

CHI. MANI,

Devdas is not here; he is still at Deolali. I am now in good health. There is still some weakness but it will not persist. I hope you are now well settled there. Let Kamala make as much progress as she can. Never worry about anything. I hope you keep good health. Take daily walks; Gangubai who is at the (Wardha) Ashram will perhaps go with you. Come here for Kamala's marriage, if you can. Write to me regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 36

340. TOTAL PROHIBITION

The Swaraj Party in Madras deserves the congratulations of all friends of the poor for having included total prohibition in their programme. Were it not for the very potential force of inertia we would long since have done away with this evil. It is sapping the vitality of the labouring classes, who need to be helped against themselves. There is no country in the world which is so well-fitted for immediate prohibition as India. Public opinion has always been on the right path. No referendum is necessary as it would be in European countries for the simple reason that in India the intellectual classes do not drink as in European countries. The Rev. W. L. Ferguson of Madras has brought out a pamphlet clearly showing the need for prohibition. Of the financial burden the reverend gentleman says:[1]

No country, however rich and prosperous, can really afford to drink, for drink brings nations to the verge of ruin and sometimes topples them over the brink. India is a poor country as yet. She is poor in her capital wealth; she is poor in education; she is poor in sanitation and public health; she is poor in housing, she is poor in agriculture and manufacturing, she is poor in means of communication in rural

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

areas.... India cannot afford the use of intoxicants. Financially the drain is too heavy. Just what the cost is in rupees we are unable to say; but some idea of it can be obtained from the revenues derived by the Government in the Excise Department I do not believe that we shall err very far if we . . . place the amount at Rs. 80,00,00,000. Now of this vast sum the greater part comes from the earnings of the labouring classes—the very people who need it most for promoting the welfare of themselves, their families and their communities. If we assume that three-fourths of the drink and drug bill of India is paid by the poor and the labouring classes, some Rs. 60,00,00,000 is the burden they are bearing. And what could be done towards putting India's poor on their feet, if this vast revenue annually were saved from intoxicants and used for home-building and nation-building enterprises ! . . .

The moral loss is even greater than the financial. Drinks and drugs degrade those who are addicted to them and those who traffic in them. The drunkard forgets the distinction between wife, mother and sister and indulges in crimes of which in his sober moments he will be ashamed. Anyone who has anything to do with labour knows to what create the labourers are reduced when they are under the satanic influence of drink. Nor are the other classes better off. I have known the captain of a ship forgetting himself in his drunken state. The ship had to be entrusted to the care of the chief officer. Barristers having drunk have been known to be rolling in gutters. Only, these better-placed men are protected by the police all over the world whereas the poor drunkard is punished for his poverty.

If drink in spite of its harmfulness was not a fashionable vice among Englishmen, we would not find it in the organized state we do in this pauper country. If we were not hypnotized we refuse to educate our children out of the proceeds of vice which the drink and the drug revenue undoubtedly H.

Mr. Ferguson suggests fresh taxation to replace this vice-begotten revenue. In my opinion no taxation is necessary, if only Government will reduce the frightful military expenditure not required for defence against aggression but minifestly imposed to suppress internal commotion. The demand therefore for prohibition must go hand in hand with the demand for a corresponding reduction in military expenditure. The missionary bodies if they will range themselves alongside of public opinion and will insist on prohibition, study the question of military expenditure, and if with are satisfied that much of the expenditure is a false fear of internal trouble, must demand reduction in military expenditure at least to the extent of the

drink and drug revenue.

The duty before the Swaraj and other political parties is quite clear. They owe it to the country to demand total and immediate prohibition with one voice. If the demand is not granted, the Swaraj Part has an additional count in the indictment against the Government. Prohibition, as Mr. C. Rajagopalachari has so aptly shown, is an item of first class political education of the masses. And it is one item on which all parties, all races and all denominations can be easily united.

Since writing the foregoing, I have seen the report of the proceedings of the prohibition Convention held at Delhi under the chairmanship of Dewan Bahadur M. Ramchandra Rao. The Convention has passed what I would call a third resolution. After avowing the imperative need for total prohibition it"urges upon the Government of India and the Local Governments to accept total prohibition of alcoholic liquor as the goal of their excise policy". This I suppose neither the Government of India nor the Local Governments would have any difficulty in accepting. Swaraj is the accepted goal of all parties including the Government of India, but it is the immediate thing for the Congress to attain, a distant goal for the Government to cherish, though unattainable. So will total prohibition be an unattainable goal with the Government. Quite in keeping with this resolution is the advice of the Convention to the Government to"afford adequate facilities for ascertaining the will of the people with regard to this question, the introduction of the local option laws being in the opinion of the Convention the best means of ascertaining thewishes of the people in this matter". As I have already stated, there is no question of ascertaining the wishes of the people, for they are already known. The question is one of the Government foregoing the drink and drug revenue. I wish the Convention had taken up a stronger, more enlightened and more consistent line of action. The Convention has now become a national prohibition party called the Prohibition League of India. Let me hope that this League will adopt a more forward policy and not treat total prohibition as a goal to be realized in the dim and distant future, but a national policy to be immediately adopted and enforced without the cumbersome process of taking a referendum.

Young India, 4-2-1926

341. NOTES

INDEFATIGABLE MR. ANDREWS

Whatever the fate of the anti-Indian measure of the Union Government, there is no doubt that Mr. Andrews' contribution to the solution of the problem will rank as the highest. His tireless energy, ceaseless watchfulness and gentle persuasive powers have brought us within hope of success. He himself though despondent in the beginning stages now holds out hope that the Bill is likely to be shelved at least for this session. He has been quietly interviewing editors and public men. He has been enlisting the sympathy of the clergy and drawing from them emphatic pronouncement against the measure. Thus he has shaken even South African European opinion that had ranged itself in favour of the measure. His deep study of the question has enabled him to show to the satisfaction of several leaders of public opinion in South Africa that the measure is a manifest breach of the Smuts—Gandhi Agreement. He has also brought together scattered Indian forces to focus themselves upon attacking the Bill. Mr. Andrews has thus made a very substantial addition to his many services to—India and humanity. No single living Englishman has done so much as Mr. Andrews to sweeten the relations between Englishmen and Indians. His one hope is to establish an indissoluble bond between the two peoples, a bond based upon mutual respect and absolute equality. May his dream be realized.

MIXED KHADI IS NO KHADI

A correspondent writes:

> In Palnad in Guntur District is being prepared a variety of so-called khadi with special designs in the border, called 'Kuppadam' border.
>
> The yarn used in the border is admittedly foreign. This is used as pure khadi and is being approved even by Mahatma Gandhi. Is this right?

This is certainly not right. I have never approved of any such thing. I consider it a fraud to describe such dhotis as pure khadi. The question was brought up even as early as l919 when mill-made dhotis with borders of foreign yarn were used and I know several friends were obliged to reject their dhotis because their borders were discovered to be made of foreign yarn. Such things appear small on the surface but they constitute a silent encroachment upon the reality.

One cannot therefore be too correct about such matters. The only thing I have countenanced is the activities of the ladies in Bombay, who do embroidery work upon whole pieces of khadi. For this embroidery. they are obliged to use foreign silk. But then, they do not cheat anybody. They want to avoid this foreign silken thread if they can get hand-spun. But so long as they cannot, in order to sell their khadi amongst fashionable people, they are obliged to give them some embroidery, and they tell people plainly who use their saris, to what extent the embroidery contains foreign yarn. But from embroidery on pure khadi to the use of foreign yarn in the preparation of khadi itself and calling the latter khadi, is a long and dangerous jump, which cannot be tolerated.

THE SPINNING WHEEL IN MYSORE

The Hindu publishes a long report of what it calls"a grand charkha demonstration and spinning competition" held recently at Bangalore under the auspices of its Spinners' Association. The chief event of this interesting and instructive function was the address delivered by the Chairman, Mr. Z. Mecci, the Director of Industries and Commerce, Mysore. Mr. Mecci gave an exhaustive, and, in my opinion, a convincing reply to the critics of the spinning-wheel. He insisted that the wheel was to be considered from the point of view 'of poverty and unemployment'.

He said:

> It was well known that more than 50 per cent of the population was engaged in agriculture and for about half the year they all remained idle. Not only this but the rainfall was so fitful and uncertain that famine conditions seemed to be a recurring factor every time.

And he showed that for this population the spinning-wheel was the only industry during its leisure hours. He added that but for the distortion and degeneration of the national taste, khaddar would make much greater headway than it had. Of the earning capacity of the wheel, Mr. Mecci said:

> It has been ascertained by careful calculation that a person by devoting 2_ hours a day to spinning could easily earn Rs. 2-8 a month, and taking the total number of persons on an average in a family to be 5, and 2 of these to take to spinning 2_ hours a day, the total extra income to the 'have-nots' in the State would amount to more than 50 lakhs of rupees a month, or 6 crores of rupees per year. Did their critics seriously ask them to throw away this sum by

abstaining from spinning? There was no doubt that the spinning industry had a great future before it and was sure to gain a great stimulus, if the educated, cultured and the wealthy classes were favourably disposed towards the use of khaddar.

Young India, 4-2-1926

342. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Thursday [*February 4, 1926*][2]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Though many were defeated you won the Municipal election. If you want me to congratulate you I hereby do so. It is surprising that Avantikabai lost.

My health is fine. I am also gaining strength. Hence there is no cause to worry about me.

Tell Taramati that she should write to me sometimes. How does she spend her days? Does she go for walks?

How much does Devdas Walk every day?

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WINDY HALL

NASIK ROAD

DEOLALI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

343. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Thursday [*February 4, 1926*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

Today I address this to you instead of to Ramdas. How does that lady's treatment work? Do you take any walks?

How does Kusum keep there? Does she continue her reading and writing? Does she have her *sitar* with her? How does she spend her time?

Does Shanta read anything? It will be good if you ask her to keep up her practice of writing.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. VASUMATI

KHADI KARYALAYA

AMRELI

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 469. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

344. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN CHOKSI

Saturday, February 6, 1926

CHI. MOTI,

I have never regarded or treated 'thee' as a stranger. In my letters I often address the older children as also the younger ones, as 'you'. There need be no difference between 'you' and 'thou' if there is none at heart. I certainly expect you to improve your handwriting.

Do ply the charkha regularly.

I shall have to glance through the book on duties of a householder.

You should write to me if you have not yet received your copy of *Ashram Samachar*.

I am glad that Najuklal is improving. Both of you may come when you want to.

[1] From the postmark

Gomatibehn is still bed-ridden. She takes some solid food but her health is not yet normal.

For the time being I have to write only with my left hand.

Blessings from

BAPU

SAU. SUKANYA NAJUKLAL CHOKSI
BHATIA SHERI
BARODA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12115-A

345. HINDUISM OF TODAY[1]

A correspondent styling himself '*Sanatani* Hindu' writes:[2]

> Hinduism of today presents many a curious anomaly. No one cares to study it, excepting perhaps some European missionaries . . . .
>
> There is no definite body of doctrines of practices which may be called *sanatana* and should be respected. . . .
>
> A Sudra's status in a province where the Brahmins eat meat or fish is different from that in any province where the Brahmins and *Vaishnavas* alike refrain from meat or fish. You have somewhere said:"If you have no objection to drinking clean water given by a Sudra, you should have none to drink it at the hands of an untouchable. . . . some Hindus have religious scruples against having water at the hands of meat-eaters, some against doing so at the hands of beef-eaters." . . . I wish you could call a meeting of the untouchables of the whole province and take promises from them to abstain from beef or carrion as a preliminary to their being taken into the Hindu fold.

The letter presents only one side of the case. There is reason for the correspondent's complaint. But Hinduism is a living organism liable to growth and decay, and subject to the laws of Nature. One and indivisible at the root, it has grown into a vast tree with innumerable branches. The changes in the seasons affect it. It has its autumn and summer, its winter and spring. The rains nourish and fructify it too. It is and is not based on scriptures. It does not derive its authority from one book. The Gita is universally accepted, but even then it only

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 7-2-1926. This is a translation by Mahadev Desai.

[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

shows the way. It has hardly any effect on custom. Hinduism is like the Ganges, pure and unsullied at its source, but taking in its course the impurities in the way. Even like the Ganges it is beneficent in its total effect. It takes a provincial form in every province, but the inner substance is retained everywhere. Custom is not religion. Custom may change, but religion will remain unaltered.

Purity of Hinduism depends on the self-restraint of its votaries Whenever their religion has been in danger, the Hindus have undergone rigorous penance, searched the causes of the danger and devised means for combating them. The Shastras are ever growing. The Vedas, Upanishads, *Smritis*, *Puranas* and *Itihasas* did not arise at one and the same time. Each grew out of the necessities of particular periods , and therefore they seem to conflict with one another. These books do not enunciate anew the eternal truths but show how these were practised at the time to which the books belong. A practice which was good enough in a particular period would, if blindly repeated in another, land people into the 'slough of despond'. Because the practice of animal-sacrifice obtained at one time, shall we revive it today? Because at one time, we used to eat beet shall we also do so now? Because at one time, we used to chop off the hands and the feet of thieves, shall we revive that barbarity today? Shall we revive polyandry? Shall we revive child-marriages? Because we discarded a section of humanity one day, shall we brand their descendants today as outcastes?

Hinduism abhors stagnation. Knowledge is limitless and so also the application of truth. Every day we add to our knowledge of the power of *atman*, and we keep on doing so. New experience will teach us new duties, but truth shall ever be the same. Who has ever known it in its entirety? The Vedas represent the truth, they are infinite. But who has known them in their entirety? What goes today by the name of the Vedas are not even a millionth part of not real Veda—the Book of Knowledge. And who knows the en ire meaning of even the few books that we have? Rather than wade through these infinite complications, our sages taught us to learn one thing:"As with the self, so with the Universe." It is not possible to scan the universe, as it is to scan the self. Know the self and you know the universe. But even knowledge of the self within presupposes a pure heart, which in its

turn depends on the practice of *yamas* and *niyamas*[1] —the cardinal and casual virtues.

This practice is not possible without God's grace which presupposes Faith and Devotion. This is why Tulsidas sang of the glory of *Ramanama*, that is why the author of the *Bhagavata* taught the *dwadashamantra* (*Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya*). To my mind he is a *sanatani* Hindu who can repeat this *mantra* from the heart. All else is a bottomless pit, as the sage Akho[2] has said.

But to come to the other part of the letter. The Europeans do study our manners and customs. But theirs is the study of a critic, not the study of a devotee. Their 'study, cannot teach me religion.

Boycott of beef-eaters may have been proper in the past It is improper and impossible today. If you want the so-called untouchables to give up beet you can do so only by means of love, only by quickening their intellects, not by despising them. Non-violent efforts to wean them away from their bad habit are going on, but Hinduism does not consist in eating and not-eating. Its kernel consists in right conduct, in correct observance of truth and non-violence. Many a man eating meat, but observing the cardinal virtues of compassion and truth, and living in the fear of God, is a better Hindu than a hypocrite who abstains from meat. And he whose eyes are opened to the truth of the violence in beef-eating or meat-eating and who has therefore rejected them, who loves 'both man and bird and beast' worthy of our adoration. He has seen and known God; he is His best devotee. He is the teacher of mankind.

Hinduism and all other religions are being weighed in the balance. Eternal truth is one. God also is one. Let every one of us steer clear of conflicting creeds and customs and follow the straight path of truth. Only then shall we be true Hindus. Many styling themselves *sanatanis* stalk the earth. Who knows how few of them will be chosen by God! God's grace shall descend on those Who do His will and wait upon Him, not on those who simply mutter"Ram Ram".

Young India, 8-4-1926

[1] *Yamas*, the cardinal virtues, according to Yoga Shashtra are: *ahimsa* (non-violence), *satya* (truth) *asteya* (non-stealing) *brahmacharya* (celibacy), *aparigraha* (non-possession); and the *niyamas* or the casual virtues are, according to the same authority: *shaucha* (bodily purity) *santosha* (contentment), *tapa* (forbearance), *swadhayaya* (study of scriptures), *Iswarapranidhana* (resignation to the Will of God).

[2] Akha Bhagat, a poet-seer of Gujarat

346. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

February 8, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

On this my silent day, I have a few minutes for writing to you. Arun has become chums with the boys and promises soon to pick up Gujarati but Hemprabha Devi is not happy. She appears to be homesick. She asked to leave. I reasoned with her but she spoke to Ba again saying everybody in Calcutta was pressing her to return. Her great anxiety is about yourself. She thinks you have lost the previous joy of life, you are now moody and over-anxious about khadi. If she is justified in wishing to go back I *know* that you will damage khadi by being over-anxious Everything must be done fueZeks HkwRok[1], I want your promise not to fret about khadi, no matter what happens to it. Who are we? God will surely make it prosper if it is a good thing. We are but instruments in His hands. We have deserved well if we keep pure and keep the door ever open for Him to enter. Let Him have the reins and drive us how He will.

I do not want you to disturb her. I simply pass on what I see so that you may tell me what to do and how to console her. Real consolation must come from you. I am ever on the watch but if there has been any neglect about her comforts and she has told you about them you will not hesitate to tell me everything.

With love,

BAPU

From a Photostat: S.N. 14081

[1] Being utterly unattached

347. TESTIMONIAL TO HASSANAND

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

Phalgun Shukla 9, 1982 [*February 8, 1926*]

Professor Hassanand had demonstrated his conjuring tricks before the inmates of the Ashram with a patriotic commentary running side by side.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a block of the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand in *Magician of Magicians*, p. 110

348. TELEGRAM TO SORABJI[1]

[On or after *February 8, 1926*][2]

SORABJI

SAVOY HOTEL

DELHI

BOTH BILLS INTRODUCE COLOUR BAR. MINES MATERIALLY NOT SO BAD AS ASIATIC. BOTH WORTHY RESISTANCE.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 11934

[1] In reply to the addressee's telegram of February 8 which read:"Personally feel passing of Mines and Works Amendment Bill worse than anti-Asiatic Bill. It establishes for the first time the statutory colour bar for which principle you fought. Are my conclusions correct? Please wire your views care Savoy Hotel. Love.

[2] From the postmark

349. LETTER TO NARGIS D. CAPTAIN

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

February 9, 1926

I shall be more prompt in my correspondence as I have from today got good shorthand assistance. It will delight your heart to see the way I am giving myself rest at the present moment. After the prayer, I sleep three times, remain in bed as much as possible; see very few people and write what is thought necessary for *Navajivan* and *Young India* and attend to the most pressing correspondence. No work after the evening prayer. I am slowly gathering strength. The weather is delightfully cool. There need therefore be no anxiety on my behalf.

I do wish you will close with the offer about Kashmere. You must really go there and put yourself right before you plunge into the work at Bombay. Do please therefore go to Kashmere as early as you can. It will gladden my heart to feel that you have permanently lost your headache and have become robust enough for the hard work that awaits you.

I am plotting so many things for you, Mithubehn and Jamnabehn, but it is not possible till you are restored.

The libel on Mira that I referred to was something that appeared in *The Sunday Chronicle* of London and was copied by the *Indian Daily Mail*. She gave an energetic and precise reply. Of course the word 'libel' is an exaggeration but I thought you had seen the effusion and you would understand what I meant.

Have you disposed of the khadi stuff that was left behind by me?

From a microfilm: S.N. 14082

350. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 9, 1926

MY DEAR C.R.,

Mahadev is not here. He has gone to attend a conference in Gujarat. I opened your letter to him. Subbiah has just commenced work, I shall therefore be able to attend to my correspondence better than I have been able to hitherto.

I am not taking quinine. Have you known a single positive cure through quinine? I took it for three or four days in small doses. There is no fever at the present moment. Dr. Kanuga is giving iron and arsenic injections one per week. He has given two. I do not know whether even these are of much use. But I am taking them in order to avoid argument and possible risks. At the present moment I am giving myself almost complete rest, sleeping plentifully during the day. Strength is coming to me gradually. The last fever has certainly undermined the constitution as nothing has since the appendicitis[1].

Jerajani's[2] advertisement you should not mind. He is advertising khadi in his own way.

What can I do about the National Medical College? Those who are in charge have their own way of doing things. I do not call it improper but I do not understand it. I dare not interfere. It would not be right for me to do so. I do not believe that any appeal to the Indian medical profession will bring the required financial assistance. The selflessness of us, educated men, has well-defined limits. There is a similar institution in Calcutta much older, by no means badly managed. It has to undergo the same financial difficulties. These institutions must plot in their own special way.

I have taken liberties with your latest article. You will see it and comment upon the change I have made.

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR
GANDHI ASHRAM
PUDUPALAYAM, TIRUCHENGODE

From a photostat: S.N. 14083

[1] Which was cured by appendectomy in Sassoon Hospital, Poona; *vide*"Interview to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 12-1-1924.

[2] The source has"Jheevara Jani's".

351. LETTER TO D. V. KALE

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

February 9, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Much as I should like to accommodate you this is my difficulty. At the present moment I am partially in a sick-bed. I shall not be able to keep you by my side in the Ashram. It is very difficult to satisfy any literary ambition or taste.

The Ashram is a place designed particularly for body-labour. You will not therefore be satisfied with constant body-labour such as attending to sanitation, weaving, spinning, carding, etc. And in no case will it be possible for me to take you except with the permission and at the desire of Professor Vijapurkar.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. D. V. KALE

SECRETARY, NUTAN MAHARASHTRA VIDYA PRASARAK MANDAL

TALEGAON (DABHADE)

From a microfilm: S.N. 14084

352. LETTER TO BHAGAT RAM

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

February 9, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your telegram to which I sent a telegraphic reply yesterday.

I value your anxiety on my behalf. I should also love to stay under your roof but I must resist the temptation. The weather during February and March is not oppressive at Sabarmati though it is not so bracing as at Jullunder. I must give these months to the Ashram. I am daily gathering strength and taking as much rest as is possible.

Dalhousie in April is an attractive proposition but I must postpone final decision till the middle of March. At the present moment Deolali is the objective. Punchgani has been also proposed and now proposals come from Sinhgarh and Almora. It is difficult for me to decide off-hand whose hospitality will be most beneficial from the health standpoint. At the same time I would not for one moment ask you to keep your place at Dalhousie in reserve for me. If any friend needs it meanwhile or you yourself need it, you will not hesitate to give it or make use of it. I must simply take my chance when the time for decision comes.

Yours sincerely,

RAIZADA BHAGAT RAM, BAR-AT-LAW
JULLUNDER CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 14085

353. LETTER TO K. SANTANAM

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

February 9, 1926

MY DEAR SANTANAM,

I sent you a telegraphic reply yesterday. It broke my heart to have to send you that reply but I did not want Krishna here when I cannot give her and the children any personal attention and when the Ashram is so fearfully crowded and is daily becoming more so owing to my presence.

Though I am attending to some work, most of my time I pass in bed. Mrs. Gandhi is at her wit's end. I should not forgive myself if Krishna came and was neglected or was crowded into a room. At the same time, this is her home and if she wants to come in spite of the warning let her come by all means and share the difficulties and troubles of the inmates of the Ashram.

I am not likely to leave for any hill-station before the end of March. I hope both of you are spinning.

Yours sincerely,

PANDIT K. SANTANAM

10, NISBET ROAD

LAHORE

From a photostat: S.N. 14086

354. LETTER TO K. VENKATAPPAYYA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

February 9, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Yes this last fever of mine has made me very weak. The climate at Sabarmati is at present quite cool and nice and I am giving myself ample rest. I do propose, if at all possible, when hot weather commences, to go out somewhere. Nothing is decided as to where I would go. But from all accounts I have of you, I fear that you are in no better condition, probably much worse. Are you yet troubled with domestic worries? I understood why you were unable to attend the Congress at Cawnpore.

I remember Hanumanta Rao having written to me some months ago about a friend. I suppose it is the one whom you mention in your letter. I have not since heard any further about him.

Do please tell me all about yourself and the activities in Andhra Desha.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA GARU
GUNTUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 14087

355. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

February 9, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your two notes with Hemaprabha Devi's note. The yarn you have sent is very fine indeed. It would be an achievement if you can get it woven.

Being prey to illness myself, now I suppose I cannot with much effect warn friends against getting ill. I can therefore only gently ask you to conserve your own. It would depress me to find your fine constitution broken down either under the weight of anxiety or overwork. You must be most careful and take rest where rest is needed.

This last fever of mine has left me much weaker than usual and I am therefore giving myself ample rest, confining work to only those things which are most needful, i.e., a little correspondence and a little editing.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

KHADI PRATISHTHAN

170, BOW BAZAR STREET

CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 14088

356. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Tuesday [*February 9, 1926*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Your letter. We shall decide about Manibehn when you come here.

Surely, my weight has gone up a little. I hope it will go up more this week. There is no cause for anxiety.

I have been receiving the oranges sent by you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2857

357. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[Before *February 10, 1926*][2]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. It is clear that you must take plenty of rest. So it will be good for you to pass your time in a leisurely way. If Taramati can form the habit of going for walks, she too can derive full benefit from her stay there.

I see that Nasik grapes are available. It would be good to include them in your diet. Milk, *chapati* and fruit would be the best diet for you. You can take grape juice with or without water if you find it troublesome to suck the grapes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the postmark

[2] The addressee received the letter on February 10, 1926.

358. CABLE TO NORTH AMERICAN NEWS ALLIANCE[1]

[*February 10, 1926*]

REGRET NO TIME FOR WRITING. HAVE NEVER WRITTEN FOR MONEY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 12463

359. LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENT, LEPER ASYLUM, PURULIA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

February 10, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

When I visited your Asylum you gave me the name of the oil that was injected for leprosy treatment. I do not know whether the oil injection is efficacious for white leprosy. A friend is showing signs of white leprosy. There is a big patch on the face near the lips. I shall be thankful if you will let me know whether the injectionyou are using can serve any purpose in this case. Doctors here are unable to do anything for the friend.

Yours sincerely,

THE SUPERINTENDENT
LEPER ASYLUM
PURULIA (BIHAR)

From a microfilm: S.N. 14091

[1] In reply to their cable of February 10, which read:"Would you write memoirs for American newspaper publication? Inform how many words, what price James Warton North American News Alliance. Cable address Nanewsal, Paris."

360. LETTER TO DHIRENDRANATH DAS GUPTA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 10, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The meeting of the A.I.S.A. comes off on the 26th instant when I presume your application will be before it. My cancellation of the touring programme has brought the finances of the Association to a standstill and they are much too low for the applications in hand. There may be therefore unavoidable difficulty in helping you.

I am slowly regaining lost strength.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. DHIRENDRANATH DAS GUPTA
VIDYASHRAM
KULANRA POST (SYLHET)

From a microfilm: S.N. 14089

361. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 10, 1926

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your letter and I have the parcel too from Menon. There are no directions in the parcel beyond saying that there is a powder as an opening medicine and the contents of the bottle are for malaria. So far as I am myself concerned at the present moment, I am free. If I get a renewal of the attack I do not know that I can take the medicine, for as you are aware, I can take only five ingredients during any 24 hours whether for food or for medicine, Most of these Ayurvedic medicines contain dozens of ingredients. Therefore, however useful they may be in themselves, for me they are perfectly useless. But so many people get malaria here and I would gladly try Menon's remedy if I get the directions. Please, therefore, ask him to send them to me and if he knows the ingredients, lie may give me an idea of them.

Now about Friendship. You have used the word 'friend' in three

different senses. If we have the capacity, we can all become friends as Jesus was. There, the word 'friend' means a kind helper. The friendship between ourselves and those who are superior to us is also a one-sided thing. A father is and should be his children's friend. There it becomes companionship with the good, *satsanga* as it is called in Sanskrit. What I hare written about is intimacy between two or more persons, where there is no secret and where mutual help is the consequence of, not a motive for, friendship. The motive is some indefinable attraction. It is this exclusive relationship which I have considered to be undesirable and antagonistic to communion with God.

Such was the friendship between the person I have described in the Autobiography[1] and myself.

Does not spinning naturally interest you? I should expect you, if you spin at all, to spin because you are interested in it. And if you are interested, you should master the mechanism and keep your instrument in perfect order as you will keep your stove in order if you are interested in cooking.

Spinning for me is an emblem of fellowship with the poorest of the land and its daily practice is a renewal of the bond between them and ourselves. Thus considered, it is for me a thing of beauty and joy for ever. I would rather to go without a meal. than without the wheel and I would like you to understand this great implication of the wheel. If you are to spin at all, I do not expect you to take up the wheel simply because I commend or the Congress recommends or because it is likely to be of economic value.

I am daily picking up strength little by little.

With love to you all,

Yours,

BAPU

MRS. ESTHER MENON

PORTO NOVO (S.I.R.)

From a photostat. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Pt. I, Ch. VI and VII; published in *Young India*, 21-1-1926 and 28-1-1926.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

A. I. C. C. RESOLUTIONS

THE FRANCHISE

A. In view of the fact that there is a demand from a considerable section in the Congress for a revision of the franchise and there is a general consensus of opinion that having regard to the present situation the franchise should be extended, the All-India Congress Committee resolves that Article VII of the Congress Constitution be repealed and replaced by the following:

Article VII. (i) Every person not disqualified under Article IV and paying a subscription of 4 annas per year in advance, or 2,000 yards of evenly spun yarn of his or her own spinning, shall be entitled to become a member of any primary organization controlled by a Provincial Congress Committee, provided that no person shall be a member of two parallel Congress organizations at one and the same time.

(ii) The yarn subscription mentioned in sub-section (i) shall be sent direct by the spinner to the Secretary, All-India Spinners' Association, or to any person nominated by the Secretary in this behalf, and a certificate from the Secretary, All-India Spinners' Association, to the effect that he has received 2,000 yards of evenly spun yarn of the holders' own spinning as his or her yearly subscription, shall entitle the holder to the membership mentioned in sub-section (i) hereof, provided that for the purpose of checking the accuracy of the returns made by the All-India Spinners' Association, the A. I. C. C., or any P. C. C., or any Sub-Committee thereunder shall have the right to inspect the accounts, the stock and the vouchers of the All-India Spinners' Association or any subordinate organization thereunder and provided further that in the event of any inaccuracy or error discovered by the inspecting body in the accounts, stock or vouchers examined, the certificates issued by the All-India Spinners' Association in respect of persons with reference to whose membership the accounts have been examined, shall be declared cancelled; provided that the All-India Spinners' Association or the person disqualified shall have the right of appeal to the Working Committee. Any person wishing to spin for the membership of the Congress may, if he or she desires, be supplied, upon due security, with cotton for spinning.

(iii) The yarn of the membership shall be reckoned from the 1st January to 31st December and there shall be no reduction in the subscription to be paid by members joining in the middle of the year.

(iv) No person shall be entitled to vote at the election of representatives or delegates of any Committee or sub-Committee or any Congress organization

whatsoever or to be elected as such, or to take part in any meeting of the Congress or any Congress organization, or any Committee or Sub-Committee thereof, if he has not complied with sub-section (i) hereof or does not wear hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar at political and Congress functions or while engaged in Congress business; the Congress expects Congressmen to wear khaddar also on all other occasions and in no case shall they wear or use foreign cloth.

(v) All the existing members at the end of the year shall be entitled to remain such up to the 31st January following although they may not have paid their subscription for the new year.

Saving Clause: sub-section (i) shall not affect the rights of those who have been already registered as members under the Article repealed provided their membership is otherwise in order, and provided further that those who shall have paid yarn subscription, whether of self-spun or hand-spun yarn up to September 1925, shall remain members for the current year though they may not pay any further yarn.

B. Whereas the Congress in its 39th Session held at Belgaum endorsed an agreement entered into between Mahatma Gandhi on the one hand and Deshbandhu C. R. Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru acting on behalf of the Swaraj Party on the other, whereby the Congress activity was restricted to the constructive programme mentioned therein and it was provided that "the work in connection with the Central and Provincial Legislatures should be carried on by the Swaraj Party on behalf of the Congress and as an integral part of the Congress organization and that for such work the Swaraj Party should make its own rules and administer its own funds" and;

Whereas subsequent events have shown that this restriction should not continue under the altered circumstances that face the country and that the Congress should henceforth be a predominantly political body;

It is resolved that the Congress do now take up and carry on all such political work as may be necessary in the interest of the country and for this purpose do employ the whole of the machinery and funds of Congress, save and except such funds and assets as are specially earmarked and such funds and assets as belong to the All-India Khaddar Board and Provincial Khaddar Boards, which shall be handed over with all existing financial obligations to the All-India Spinners' Association to be started by Mahatma Gandhi as an integral part of the Congress organization, but with independent existence and full powers to administer these other funds for the fulfilment of its object;

Provided that the work in the Indian and Provincial Legislatures shall be carried on in accordance with the policy and programme laid down by the Swaraj Party under the constitution framed by the Party and the rules made thereunder subject to such modifications made by the Congress as may be found necessary from time to time for the purpose of carrying out the said policy.

Young India, 1-10-1925

APPENDIX II

FROM EUROPE

Not only India but also the rest of the earth has heard your message of satyagraha and swadeshi, A great number of young people in Europe believe in your creed. They see in it a new attitude to political things put into action, of which till now they had only dreamed.

But also among the young people who are convinced of the truth of your message are many who dissent from some details of your demands on men which seem wrong to them. In their name is this letter written.

In answer to a question you declared on the 21st of March, 1921 that satyagraha demands absolute non-violence and that even a woman who is in danger of being violated must not defend herself with violence. On the other hand, it is known that you recommended the punishment of General Dyer by the English Government, which shows that you see the necessity for law guaranteed through violence. From this I can but conclude that you do not object to capital punishment and so do not condemn killing in general. You value life so low that you allow thousands of Indians to lose theirs for satyagraha and doubtless you know that the least interference with the life of men, imprisonment, is mainly based on the same principle as the strongest, killing, for in each case men are caused by an outside force to diverge from their dharma. A man who thinks logically knows that it is the same principle that causes his imprisonment for a few days or his execution and that the difference is only in the size not in the kind of interference. He knows, too, that a man who stands for punishment in general must not shrink from killing.

You see in non-co-operation not an ideal only but also a safe and quick way to freedom for India, a way possible only there where a whole population has to revolt against a government that has the force of arms. But when a whole State wants to get its rights from another State, then the principle of non-co-operation is powerless, for this other one may get a number of other States to form an alliance with it even when some of the other States remain neutral. Not until a real League of Nations exists, to which every State belongs, can non-co-operation become a real power, since no State can afford to be islolated from all the others. That is why we fight for the League of Nations, but that is also the reason why we try to retain a strong police force, lest internal revolts and disorder should make all foreign policy impossible. That is why we understand that other governments are doing what they forbade us to do: arming themselves in case of an attack by their enemies. They are, for the time being, obliged to do so, and we really ought to do the same if we don't want to be continually violated. We hope that you will see our point. If you do, we should be very much obliged to you if you would say so in answer to this letter, for it is necessary that the

youth of Europe learns your true attitude to these questions. But please do not think that we want you to forswear something that is one of the main points of your creed, satyagraha.

But we see satyagraha not in an absolute non-violence which never, nowhere, has been really carried out, even by you, or even by Christ himself who drove the usurers out of the temple. With us, satyagraha is the unreserved disposition to brotherhood and sacrifice which you are showing us so splendidly with the Indian people and we hope to be growing into the same state of mind, since it has been understood that a system may be wicked but never a whole class or a whole people (you wrote about this on the 13th of July 1921) and that one ought to feel pity but not hatred for the blind defenders of wickedness. Men who come to understand this are taking their first steps on the new way to brotherhood between all men and this way will lead to the goal, to the victory of truth, to satyagraha.We ask you, in your answer not only to advise us to fight for our country in the way we think right, but we would very much like to know, what you think to be right, especially how you justify an entire non-violence which we see as a resignation to all real fighting against wickedness and for this reason wicked in itself,—as we would call a policeman wicked who let a criminal escape unpunished.

Our conviction is that we ought to follow our own dharma first and before all that we ought to live the life designed for us by God, but that the right and the duty is given to us to interfere with the life of our fellow-men when they ask us to do so or when we see in such interference a way to fight a threatening evil for all the world. We believe that otherwise one is not right in interfering, for only God can see through the soul of men and judge what is the right way for men and we believe that there is no greater sacrilege to be found than to assume the place of God—which sacrilege we believe the English people to be guilty of, as they think to have the mission to interfere with people all over the world.

For this reason we don't understand how you can recommend to married people to deny themselves to each other without mutual agreement, for such an interference with the rights given by marriage can drive a man to crimes. You ought to advise divorce in those cases.

Please answer these our questions. We are so glad to have the model given by you that we want very much to be quite clear about the right way to live up to your standards.

Young India, 8-10-1925

APPENDIX III

EUROPEAN CIVILIZATION

Europe boasts of her civilization, her Christian civilization.

The triumphant career of the white race throughout the earth is the watchword of the time .

A triumphant career of the race—that is true. But of civilization, humanity, Christianity? Justice turns her face away and weeps.

Will you find a hell of racial hatred and inhumanity? Then go to Europe.

Look at the collective policy of the Christian Powers in China. First act: shameless extortion, exercised for ages by European profiteers. Second act: the enraged natives react by killing a German ambassador. Third act: Europe undertakes her "Hunnish crusade" under German lead and in the spirit of that watchword, which was ironically pronounced by the satirical paper *Simplicissimus* in an imagined speech of a German officer : 'Now I propose a toast to a vigorous propagation of the Gospel and a victorious walk over the Chinese swine-dogs (*schweinehunde*)!'

Too justly the Chinese have called us 'the red-haired barbarians' or 'red-haired devils'.

Let us now look at some species of the European Homo sapiens.

The Italians may deserve honourable mention, because Christianity caused them to give up their bestial baitings of wild beasts about 400 A.D. How unwillingly the ancient Romans gave up their *circenses* appears from a curious anecdote. A clergyman found it difficult to keep the converted away from the circus. Then he said; 'Dear Christians! You *must* avoid these bloody heathen plays. Then, in reward, you may hope that in heaven there may be a peep-hole through which you may regard the condemned sinners in the eternal fire of hell!' Indeed, a fine and noble 'Christian' idea!

To characterize the standard of the 'most Christian' nation of Spaniards, it is sufficient to mention the fact that the favourite play of the nation is till this day the bullfight. The national hero is the grand toreador—a cruel tormentor of animals.

France has created the hunting *parforce*.

England adheres to the same noble sport. Look at the illustrated papers published in honour of the Christmas, the Christian feast of peace and charity! During a dinner in Denmark, a Danish gentlemen by the way told an English lady that he had shot a fox. 'Good gracious! You don't say so! Shot a fox?' cried she immediately, seizing him by his arm. Then she turned him her back with contempt—for it was unworthy of a gentleman *not* to torment the poor animal to death! A Danish clergyman sailing on the Red Sea once witnessed the natives diving from the steamer for coins. But the English ladies were not content to see

them jump out from the deck; they ordered them to jump out from the tops of the masts, to make it more exciting! The opium war and the treatment of Ireland in past centuries are other proofs of English morals. Owing to the resistance of the English nation to conscription, England fortunately has avoided the use of forced cannon-food. But what was the munificently promised reward of the Indian volunteers in the Great War? It is sufficient to name Amritsar.

Germany has created the most brutal 'moral of masters' before the Bolshevism and the most systematic oppression of the nations 'of minor value' (*minderwertig*). The Pan-German programme of 1895 privileges the 'full Germans' to vote, to be elected for parliaments and offices, and to buy ground property. 'They willingly tolerate the foreigners in the country as exercisers of the *inferior bodily labour*.' A Danish surgeon as visitor in a German hospital once witnessed the transfer of living tissue from one body into another. As he wondered how it would be possible to obtain sufficient mass of tissue, the German professor answered : "*Wir haben ja Polen genug* (we have enough of Poles)." The Delbruck Law of 1912 enabled German emigrants to remain secretly citizens of the German Empire after they had officially obtained the citizenship of the unsuspecting foreign states—fine and noble means of creating thousands of underground agents of Pan-Germanism. Conscription procured the Germans millions of sons of the *minderwertig* nations to serve as cannon-food in their wars, while the relations of the victims were oppressed at home in the most brutal manner. 6,000 Danes from North Schlesvig were thus slaughtered in the Great War for a foreign and hated cause. Through the 'civil conscription', the Germans carried away thousands of Belgians into slavery; sometimes, these wretches were even forced to work within the line of fire.

Bolshevism is indebted to the great German Staff for the fortunate foundation of its rule. Pan-German methods of brutality and lie are unfortunately practised and even surpassed. We observe an element of Jewish fanaticism, which results in mere madness. We may here refer to the contents of a Bolshevist poem from the collection *Tsheks ulibajet*, published in 1922 by A. Saprudni: "You prefer to sing of love. I will teach you other songs, of blood, execution, and death. Enough of the gentle fragrance of lilacs! I prefer the flowers of murder. It is the highest delight to crucify the man who loves his neighbour. What a fun to cut a man to pieces. Look, how he quivers for fear, look at his convulsions while he is slowly strangled by the hangman. What a pleasure to inflict wounds. Listen to our sentence of death: a rope, a shot! A wall! Give fire!—And the grave is your fate."

Three points of European morals are emphasized, viz, the moral of masters, the policy of lie, and the policy of murder. In order to illustrate the European standard, I quote an address delivered by Professor Theol. Baumgarten in Kiel, 1915 (printed in *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 15th May, 1915).

The pious professor states that the Sermon on the Mount simply excludes war. But this rule is only meant for single persons. "The ethical system of the Sermon on the Mount represents another compartment of our moral life than our national standard. Its rules for the single soul are not broken, because we realize that it is not at the same time a law for our national and social life." The State, says Prof. B., is created by God and must be defended with the utmost energy. "It is a characteristic of the great nation that it uses the most extreme means, and even the war of aggression, in order to carry out its great aims." "We Germans feel obliged, not only to agree with the war, but also to lead it with the most absolute recklessness. He who has not in these days made up his mind to salute the destruction of Lusitania with jubilant applause and to rejoice at the formidable power of German arms is no right German."

Young India, 15-10-1925

APPENDIX IV

THE CULT OF THE CHARKHA

BY RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Acharya Prafulla Chandra Ray has marked me with his censure in printer's ink, for that I have been unable to display enthusiasm in the turning of the charkha. But, because it is impossible for him to be pitiless to me, even when awarding punishment, he has provided me with a companion in my ignominy in the illustrious person of Acharya Brajendra Nath Seal. That has taken away the pain of it, and also given me fresh proof of the eternal human truth, that we are in agreement with some people and with some others we are not. It only proves that while creating man's mind, God did not have for his model the spider mentality doomed to a perpetual conformity in its production of web and that it is an outrage upon human nature to force it through a mill and reduce it to some standardized commodity of uniform size and shape and purpose.

* * *

Our Shastras tell us that the divine *shakti* is many-sided, so that a host of different factors operate in the work of creation. In death these merge into sameness; for chaos alone is uniform. God has given to man the same many-sided *shakti*, for which reason the civilizations of his creation have their divine wealth of diversity. It is God's purpose that in the societies of man the various should be strung together into a garland of unity; while often the mortal providence of our public life, greedy for particular results, seeks to knead them all into a lump of uniformity. That is why we see in the concerns of this world so many identically-liveried, machine-made workers, so many marionettes pulled by the same string: and on the other hand, wherever the human spirit has not been reduced to the

coldness of collapse, we also see perpetual rebelliousness against this mechanical, mortar-pounded homogeneity.

If in any country we find no symptom of such rebellion, if we find its people submissively or contentedly prone on the dust, in dumb terrror of some master's bludgeon, or blind acceptance of some guru's injunction, then indeed should we know that for such a country, *in extremis*, it is high time to mourn.

In our country this ominous process of being levelled down into sameness has long been at work. Every individual of every caste has his function assigned to him, together with the obsession into which he has been hypnotized, that, since he is bound by some divine mandate, accepted by his first ancestor, it would be sinful for him to seek relief therefrom. This imitation of the social scheme of ant-life makes very easy the performance of petty routine duties, but specially difficult the attainment of manhood's estate. It imparts skill to the limbs of the man who is a bondsman, whose labour is drudgery; but it kills the mind of a man who is a doer, whose work is creation. So in India, during long ages past, we have the spectacle of only a repetition of that which has gone before.

* * *

It was while some of us were thinking of the ways and means of adopting this principle in our institution that I came across the book called "The National Being" written by that Irish idealist A .E., who has a rare combination in himself of poetry and practical wisdom. There I could see a great concrete realization of the co-operative living of my dreams. It became vividly clear to me what varied results could flow therefrom, how full the life of man could be made thereby. I could understand how great the concrete truth was in any plane of life, the truth that in separation is bondage, in union is liberation. It has been said in the Upanishad that Brahma is reason, Brahma is spirit, but Anna also is Brahma, which means that Food also represents an eternal truth, and therefore through it we may arrive at a great realization, if we travel along the true path.

* * *

It is extremely distasteful to me to have to differ from Mahatma Gandhi in regard to any matter of principle or method. Not that, from a higher standpoint, there is anything wrong in so doing; but my heart shrinks from it. For what could be a greater joy than to join hands in the field of work with one for whom one has such love and reverence? Nothing is more wonderful to me than Mahatmaji's great moral personality. In him divine Providence has given us a burning thunderbolt of *shakti*. May this *shakti* give power to India,—not overwhelm her,—that is my prayer! The difference in our standpoints and temperaments has made the Mahatma

look upon Rammohan Roy as a pigmy, while I revere him as a giant. The same difference makes the Mahatma's field of work one which my conscience cannot accept as its own. That is a regret which will abide with me always. It is, however, God's will that man's paths of endeavour shall be various, else why these differences of mentality?

How often have my personal feelings of regard strongly urged me to accept at Mahatma Gandhi's hands my enlistment as a follower of the charkha cult, but as often have my reason and conscience restrained me, lest I should be a party to the raising of the charkha to a higher place than is its due, thereby distracting attention from other more important factors in our task of all-round reconstruction. I feel sure that Mahatmaji himself will not fail to understand me, and keep for me the same forbearance which he has always had. Acharya Roy, I also believe, has respect for independence of opinion, even when unpopular; so that, although when carried away by the fervour of his own propaganda he may now and then give me a scolding, I doubt not he retains for me a soft corner in his heart. As for my countrymen, the public accustomed as they are to drown, under the facile flow of their minds, both past services and past disservices done to them, if today they cannot find it in their hearts to forgive, they will forget tomorrow. Even if they do not, —if for me their displeasure is fated to be permanent, then just as today I have Acharya Seal as my fellow-culprit, so tomorrow I may find at my side persons rejected by their own country whose radiance reveals the black unreality of any stigma of popular disapprobation.

The Modern Review, September, 1925

APPENDIX V

THE CANKER OF SUPERIORITY

1. Our Samiti aims at unity and regeneration of our community.
2. Your mission as we understand is threefold:
   (a) Introduction and spread of khaddar and charkha.
   (b) Hindu-Muslim unity.
   (c) Removal of untouchability.

The first two are common to all. We have come to you mainly in connection with the third item and beg leave to give you an idea as to how untouchability stands in the way of unification of the Hindus in Bengal.

3. In Bengal, Hindu Society may be principally grouped into two classes.

(i) *Jal acharaniya* (ii) *Anacharaniya*.

Group (i) consists of:

Brahmins
Baidyas
Kayasthas
Navashakas (meaning 9 or 10 castes)

Group (ii) :

Baishyashahas
Subarnabanikas (Goldsmiths)
Sutradharas (Carpenters)
Jogis (Weavers)
Sundis (Wine sellers)
Fishermen
Bhui Malis (Sweepers)
Dhopas (Washermen)
*Muchi*s or *Reshees* (Cobblers and Drummers)
Kapaliks
Namsudras, and others.

Some of these are classified as depressed classes by the Census authorities.

Of the first group the first three classes claim to dominate the rest of the Hindu Society and not only do they despise them (particularly those belonging to group (ii) at heart, but oppress them in various ways, e.g., (i) Freedom of worship in our access to public temples not allowed (ii) mess and hostel difficulties of the students of the 2nd group; (iii) entrance into hotels and sweetmeat shops resented.

In Bengal, those who are taking lead in the movement for removal of untouchability are not, in our opinion, adopting the right method and have not made any appreciable progress in this direction.

According to the census of 1921, of the total Hindu population of Bengal

numbering 2,09,40,000 and odd, the Brahmins (13,09,000, i.e., 17%) *Kayasthas* (12,97,000, i.e., 16%) and *Baidyas* (1,03,000, i.e., 1%) together count only 28,09,000[1] or thereabouts.

Baishyashaha community of East Bengal and Sylhet—one of the premier mercantile communities in Bengal—are mainly confined to parts of Mymensing, Pabna, Bogra, Rajshahi, Faridpur, Dacca, Noakhali, Chittagong, Tippera and Sylhet, the total population coming up to 3,60,000 i,e., 3 ½ % of the entire Hindu population of Bengal.

Literacy per *mille* among the *Baishyashahas* is 342; while that of

Baidyas	662	*Subarnabanik*	383
Brahmins	484	*Gandhabanik*	344
Kayasthas	413		

Literacy is much less amongst all other *Acharaniya* classes not to speak of those held *Anacharaniya*.

Our community does not lag behind others in founding and maintaining educational and charitable institutions, e.g. serveral colleges, many High and M.E. Schools and charitable despensaries and hopsitals, tanks, pucca wells, etc. besides private donations to institutions, educational, charitable and religious,

In point of manners, customs and hospitality this community yields to no other class. As regards female education, this community is by no means less advanced.

In spite of all these, we are treated as if we are outside the pale of Hindu society. And up till now no sincere attempt has been made to recognize our proper status in the Hindu community, although the members of these communities never keep aloof from taking part in all national movements. But for the social disabilities and difficulties attendant thereon, this community could be much more useful.

This community is quite distinct from the *Sundis*. Taking advantage of the fact that the *Sundis* also use the surname *Shaha*, the narrow-minded members of the Hindu society, envious of our prosperity, have been maliciously and falsely stigmatizing this community by classing them with the *Sundis* (liquor traders). We have, however, succeeded to a great extent to remove the mischievous and wrong notions created as above, establishing from history that this community belonging to *Baishya Barna* migrated from time to time for trading purposes from North Western India and settled in parts of East Bengal and Sylhet, and that, as this community could not shake off the Buddhistic influence as easily as the other classes when Brahminism revived, they were not given a proper place in the Hindu society and left in a despised condition.

[1] This appears to be a slip. The total should be 27,09,000.

For the purpose of ameliorating our condition and for having our proper status recognized, we have formed associations which are doing considerable work.

Total removal of untouchability is in the opinion of this community, essential to solidarity of the Hindus and, consequently, to Hindu-Muslim unity. We approach you, Mahatmaji, with the request that, in you public utterances, regarding untouchability, you will not lose sight of the peculiar features of the Hindu society in Bengal, as we have tried to give you an idea of; and we solicit your advice, as of one who is a born devotee to and fighter for the cause of the down-trodden, in our fight with the bureaucracy in the Hindu society.

Young India, 5-11-1925

APPENDIX VI

SPINNING IN AMERICA

The Revolution was a war of independence by independents; for aside from their pioneer daring and courage, faith, endurance and marksmanship, their main strength of preparedness lay in the fact that every home made its own food, drink, medicine, fuel, lighting, clothing and shelter. It was more effective than gun-powder.

In this winter climate without the handlooms and spinning-wheels, and the flax and sheep fold of every home, the American soldier would have died of exposure to the winter cold.

The wool and flax were raised and spun at home into thread and yarn, and knit into stockings, mittens, caps and blankets, or woven into clothing.

After the hard work of clearing trees and pulling stumps, as well as removing large stones, the flax and hemp patch was planted. This operation alone took all the energy that is consumed in several football games, with fewer fatalities.

Even the children were given a share in the work, as they had to weed the patch. The stalks were very tender when they first came up, and the children had to work bare-footed and step facing the wind, so if any plants were trodden down the wind would blow the fallen plant back into place.

* * *

Daughters' feet in those days were used to work the treadle, and often to rock a heavy wooden cradle, while mother churned the butter, and she was cheered with the thought that at night, she could put on a clean kerchief and adjust her curls, and go on spinning, but she would have help for the sweetheart would come after sunset when he had finished swingling the flax. She would spin until the clock reel ticked at rare and propitious moments, when it had counted the exact number of strands in a knot—usually forty. Then the spinner would stop and tie the knot while her companion would do what he could in those rare moments toward trying

another kind of knot, for according to a quaint old ballad, “He kissed Mistress Polly when the clock reel ticked”.

When the early American woman wished to spend the day in cheerful companionship, she would rise with the sun, do her household chores, then jump on horseback and with her flax wheel tied behind, and the baby under one arm, ride to her neighbour's home, sometimes at quite a distance from her home.

SPINNING TOURNAMENTS

In 1754, spinning exhibitions were held and on such occasions, ministers preached to the spinsters as they gathered with their wheels. One of these is described by an old antiquarian in a quaint way: “A number of respectable ladies of the town, met at sunrise with their wheels, to spend the day at the house of the Rev. Jedidiah Jewell, in the laudable design of a spinning match.

“At an hour before sunset, the ladies there appearing neatly dressed, principally in homespun, a polite and generous repast of American production was set for their entertainment. After which many being present of both sexes, Mr. Jewell delivered a profitable discourse from Romans xii, 2: ‘Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord’.”

Matters of church and patriotism were never far apart in New England, so when spinners gathered at New London, Newbury, Ipswich or Beverly, they always had a sermon, with an appropriate text. One favourite text was: “And all the women that were wise-hearted did spin with their hands.” Exodus xxxv, 25.

“Truly it was a pleasing sight; some spinning, some reeling, some carding cotton, some combing flax, as they were preached to,” said a contemporary writer.

* * *

In 1640 the courts of Massachusetts and Connecticut passed two orders directing the growth of flax, ascertaining what colonists were skilful in breaking, spinning, weaving, ordering that boys and girls be taught to spin, and offering a bounty for linen, grown, spun and woven in the colony.

Every family was ordered to spin so many pounds of flax a year, or to pay a fine. Prizes were offered for quantity and quality and societies were formed for promoting industry, and frugality by the rich and poor.

Benjamin Franklin wrote later in Poor Richard’s Almanac:

“Many estates are spent in the getting,
Since women for tea forsook spinning and knitting.”

The ‘all wool and a yard wide’ goods which we purchase so easily today meant the work of many weeks and months to the colonial dame.

Wool-spinning is one of the most flexible and alert series of movements imaginable and to its varied poises our grandmothers may owe part of the dignity of carriage that was so characteristic of them.

* * *

In the summer of 1775, Congress made a demand on the people, for 13,000 warm coats to be ready for the soldiers by cold weather.

There were no contractors then to supply cloth and garments, but throughout the country by hundreds of hearthstones, wool-wheels and hand-looms were started eagerly at work, and the order was filled by the work of patriotic women of America.

HEROES IN HOMESPUN

Washington's army was called "the Homespuns" in derision, but there was more in the name than they knew just then. As for women, they grew to love their looms as companions in the conflict, and they wove their prayers and love into the cloth.

In 1775, one of these patriotic women of Colchester, Coun, named Abigail Foote, wrote down her daily work in her diary, and here is sample of a day's work:

"Fixed gown for Prude, mended mother's riding-ho, spun short thread, fixed two gowns for Welch's girls, carded tow, spun linen, worked on cheese basket, hatchel'd flax with Hannah, (we did 51 pounds apiece), spooled a piece, milked the cows, spun the linen, did 50 knots, made a broom of Guinea wheat straw, spun thread to whiten, set a red dye, had two scholars from Mrs. Taylor's. I carded two pounds of whole wool, spun twine, scoured the pewter,"

* * *

The sound of the spinning-wheel, the song of the spinster, and the snapping of the clock reel, all have ceased. The thwack of the loom is heard only in the factory.

The spinning-wheel no longer hums in the house of the farmer but it has left a song in our hearts, so that for the sake of beauty alone, it is beginning to hum in the halls of learning.

Right here in the old Hampstead house atmosphere, the wheel is beginning to turn in Charter house, and the homelike art of weaving is being revived, and spinning contests take place at commencement, as the Priscillas of today seek their beloved wheels again.

Longfellow's poem "The Courtship of Miles Standish" has given us the words to the song of the spinning-wheel, and in this poem Priscilla shows the magic of the wheel in love:

"Straight up rose from her wheel the beautiful Puritan maiden.
Pleased with the praise of thrift from him whose praise was the sweetest:
Drew from the reel on the table, a snowy skein of her spinning,
Thus making an answer, meanwhile to the flattering praises of Alden;
'Come, you must not be idle if I am a pattern for housewives,

Show yourself equally worthy of being the model of husbands
Hold this skein on your hands, while I wind it, ready for knitting.'

* * *

Thus with a jest and a laugh, the skein on his hands she adjusted,
He sitting awkwardly there, with his arms extended before him,
She standing graceful, erect and winding the thread from his fingers,
Sometimes chiding a little his clumsy manner of holding,
Sometimes touching his hands, as she disentangled expertly
Twist or knot in the yarn, unawares for how could she help it?"

If one has any prejudice against Priscilla, let him read this peaceful poem, and catch the spirit of the spinning, and the homely sound of the humming.

Young India, 19-11-1925

1. SATYAGRAHA IN SOUTH AFRICA[1]

FOREWORD

Shri Valji Desai's translation has been revised by me, and I can assure the reader that the spirit of the original in Gujarati has been very faithfuly kept by the translator. The original chapters were all written by me from memory. They were written partly in the Yeravda jail and partly outside after my premature release. As the translator knew of this fact, he made a diligent study of the file of *Indian Opinion* and wherever he discovered slips of memory, he has not hesitated to make the necessary corrections. The reader will share my pleasure that in no relevant or material paricular has there been any slip. I need hardly mention that those who are following the weekly chapters of *My Experiments with Truth* cannot afford to miss these chapters on satyagraha, if they would follow in all its detail the working out of the search after Truth.

M. K. GANDHI

SABARMATI

26th April, 1928[2]

[1] Gandhiji started writing in Gujarati the historty of Satyagraha in South Africa on November 26, 1923, when he was in the Yeravda Central Jail; *vide* "Jail Diary, 1923." By the time he was released, on February 5, 1924, he had completed 30 chapters.

The chapters of *Dakshina Africana Satyagrahano Itihas*, as it was entitled, appeared serially in the issues of the *Navajivan*, beginning on April 13, 1924, and ending on November 22, 1925. The preface to the first part was written at Juhu, Bombay, on April 2, 1924; that to the second appeared in *Navajivan*, 5-7-1925. The work was published in book form in two parts in 1924 and 1925, with a dedication to Maganlal K. Gandhi.

The English translation by Valji G. Desai, which was seen and approved by Gandhiji, was published by S. Ganesan, Madras, in 1928. It carried only the preface to the first part of the Gujarati original. The translation carried a foreword by Gandhiji. A revised second edition was issued by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, in December 1950. The publishers brought out a third impression in August 1961.

The translator acknowledged having received helpful suggestions from Verrier Elwin, C. F. Andrews, Kaka Kalelkar and Abhechand G. Desai.

The text reproduced here is that of the third impression.

In the foot-notes, "source" stands for this third impression of the English translation, while "original" stands for the Gujarati original.

[2] Though the foreword bears this date, it is reproduced here and not placed in chronological order.

PREFACE

The satyagraha struggle of the Indians in South Africa lasted eight years. The term *satyagraha* was invented and employed in connection therewith. I had long entertained a desire to write a history of that struggle myself. Some things only I could write. Only the general who conducts a campaign can know the objective of each particular move. And as this was the first attempt to apply the principle of satyagraha to politics on a large scale, it is necessary any day that the public should have an idea of its development.

But today satyagraha has had ample scope in India. Here there has been an inevitable series of struggles beginning with the rather local question of the Viramgam customs.[1]

It was through the instrumentality of Bhai Motilal, the public-spirited good tailor of Wadhvan, that I became interested in the Viramgam question. I had just arrived from England and was proceeding to Saurashtra in the year 1915. I was travelling third class. At Wadhvan station Motilal came up to me with a small party. He gave me some account of the hardships inflicted on the people at Viramgam, and said: "Please do something to end this trouble. It will be doing an immense service to Saurashtra, the land of your birth." There was an expression of both compassion and firmness in his eyes.

"Are you ready to go to jail?" I asked.

"We are ready to march to the gallows," was the quick reply.

"Jail will do for me," I said. "But see that you do not leave me in the lurch."

"That only time can show," said Motilal.

I reached Rajkot, obtained detailed information and commenced correspondence with Government. In speeches at Bagasra and elsewhere, I dropped a hint that the people should be ready to offer satyagraha at Viramgam if necessary. The loyal C. I. D. brought these speeches to the notice of Government. In this they served Government and, unintentionally, served the people also. Finally, I had a talk with

[1] Customs duties were levied at Viramgam and elsewhere from persons entering British India from Kathiawar, ostensibly to prevent smuggling of goods from foreign countries. The customs cordon was abolished in November 1917; also, *An Autobiography*, Pt. V, Ch. III.

Lord Chelmsford on the matter. He promised abolition of the customs line and was as good as his word. I know others also tried for this. But I am strongly of opinion that the imminent possibility of satyagraha was the chief factor in obtaining the desired redress.

Then came the Indian Emigration Act. Great efforts were put forth to get indenture repealed. There was a considerable public agitation. The Bombay meeting fixed May 31, 1917, as the date from which onwards indentured labour should be stopped.[1] This is not the place for narrating how that particular date came to be selected. A deputation of ladies first waited upon the Viceroy in connection with this. I cannot help mentioning here the name of the high-souled sister, Mrs. Jaiji Petit. It was she who may be said to have organized this deputation. Here, too, success came merely through preparedness for satyagraha. But it is important to remember the distinction that in this case public agitation was also necessary. The stopping of indentured labour was very much more important than the abolition of the Viramgam customs. Lord Chelmsford committed a series of blunders beginning with the passing of the Rowlatt Act[2]. Still, I think, he was a wise ruler. But what Viceroy can escape for long the influence of the permanent officials of the Civil Service?

The third in order came the Champaran struggle[3], of which Rajendra Babu has written a detailed history. Here satyagraha had actually to be offered. Mere preparedness for it did not suffice, as powerful vested interests were arrayed in opposition. The peace maintained by the people of Champaran deserves to be placed on record. I can bear witness to the perfect non-violence of theleaders in thought, word and deed. Hence it was that this age-long abuse came to an end in six months.[4]

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Anti-Indenture Meeting, Bombay", February 9 & February 11, 1917.

[2] Passed on March 18, 1919, in the teeth of vehement popular opposition, this Act placed in the hands of the Executive vast emergency powers "for the purpose of dealing with anarchical and revolutionary movements". For details *vide* "Summary of Rowlatt Bills", Beore February 26, 1919 and "Congres Report on the Punjab Disorders - Chapter III - The Rowlatt Bills", Before March 25, 1920.

[3] Arising out of the hardships inflicted on the ryots by indigo planters

[4] The report of the Champaran Agrarian Enquiry Committee, in the deliberations of which Gandhiji had played a prominent part, was signed on October 3, 1917, and the necessary legislation giving effect to its recommendations followed shortly after.

The fourth struggle was that of the mill-hands of Ahmedabad.[1] Gujarat is perfectly familiar with its history. How peaceful the labourers were! As for the leaders, there can hardly be anything for me to say. Still I hold the victory in this case was not quite pure, as the fast I had to observe in order to sustain the labourers in their determination exercised indirect pressure upon the mill-owners. The fast was bound to influence them, as I enjoyed friendly relations with them. Still the moral of the fight is clear. If the labourers carry on their struggle peacefully, they must succeed and also win the hearts of their masters. They have not won their masters' hearts, as they were not innocent in thought, word and deed. They were non-violent in deed, which is certainly to their credit.

The fifth was the Kheda struggle. I cannot say that in this case all the local leaders of satyagraha parties adhered to the pure truth. Peace was certainly maintained. The non-violence of the peasantry, however, was only superficial, like that of the mill-hands. So we came out of the struggle with bare honour. However, there was a great awakening among the people. But Kheda had not fully grasped the lesson of non-violence; the mill-hands had not understood the true meaning of peace. The people had therefore to suffer. At the time of the Rowlatt Act satyagraha, I had to confess my Himalayan blunder, to fast myself and invite others to do so.[2]

The sixth was in connection with the Rowlatt Act. Therein our inherent shortcomings came to the surface. But the original foundation was well and truly laid. We admitted all our shortcomings and did penance for them. The Rowlatt Act was a dead letter even when it was promulgated, and that black act was finally even repealed. This struggle taught us a great lesson.

The seventh was the struggle to right the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and to win swaraj. It is still going on. And my confidence is unshaken that if a single satyagrahi holds out to the end, victory is absolutely certain.

But the present fight is epic in character. I have already described our course of unconscious preparation for it. When I took up the Viramgam question, little did I know that other fights were in store. And even about Viramgam I knew nothing when I was in South

[1] *Vide* Mahadev Desai, *A Righteous Struggle*, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting, Ahmedabad", April 14, 1919.

Africa. That is the beauty of satyagraha. It comes up to oneself; one has not to go out in search of it. This is a virtue inherent in the principle itself. A *dharma-yuddha,* in which there are no secrets to be guarded, no scope for cunning and no place for untruth, comes unsought; and a man of religion is ever ready for it. A struggle which has to be previously planned is not a righteous struggle. In 3 righteous struggle God Himself plans campaigns and conducts battles. A *dharma-yuddha* can be waged only in the name of God, and it is only when the satyagrahi feels quite helpless, is apparently on his last legs and finds utter darkness all around him, that God comes to the rescue. God helps when one feels oneself humbler than the very dust under one's feet. Only to the weak and help. less is divine succour vouchsafed.

We are yet to realize this truth, and so I think the history of Satyagraha in South Africa will be helpful to us.

The reader will note South African parallels for all our experiences in the present struggle to date. He will also see from this history that there is so far no ground whatever for despair in the fight that is going on. The only condition of victory is a tenacious adherence to our programme.

I am writing this preface at Juhu. I wrote the first thirty chapters of the history in Yeravda jail. Shri Indulal Yagnik was good enough to write to my dictation. The subsequent chapters I hope to write hereafter. I had no books of reference in jail. Nor do I propose to get them here. I have neither the time nor the inclination to write a regular detailed history. My only object in writing this book is that it may be helpful in our present struggle, and serve as a guide to any regular historian who may arise in the future. Although I am writing without books of reference at hand, I must ask the reader not to imagine that any single item in this volume is inaccurate or that there is the least exaggeration at any point.

M. K. GANDHI

JUHU[1]

Svt. 1980 Phalguna Vadi 13

2nd April, 1924

[1] The original adds here "Wednesday".

II[1]

The reader knows that, owing to my fast[2] and other things, I could not continue writing the history of satyagraha in South Africa. I take it up again with the current issue. I hope I shall now be able to complete it without impediments. From my reminiscences of that history I see that there is nothing in our present position which I had not encountered in South Africa on a smaller scale: in the beginning the same enthusiasm, the same unity, the same persistence; in the middle the same despondency, the same apathy, internecine strife, hatred, and so on; a handful of people who, despite this, had unwavering faith, determination, sacrifice, tolerance and who faced foreseen and unforeseen difficulties of many kinds. The final phase of India's battle is yet to arrive. I expect the repetition here of the experience I had of the final phase in South Africa. The reader will from now on have an account of the last phase of the struggle in South Africa. Therein he will see how help came unsought, how the people's enthusiasm rose spontaneously and how there was complete victory for the Indians.

Again, I am convinced that what happened in South Africa will also happen here, because I have unswerving faith in the power of self-sacrifice, truth and non-violence. I literally believe that before one wedded to truth stands all the wealth of the world; such a one feels the presence of God. I also literally believe that non-violence cannot tolerate the presence of animosity in its vicinity. I am a firm follower of the maxim: nothing is impossible for those who are prepared to suffer. I see such self-sacrifice, truth and non-violence in many workers. It has been my invariable experience that such sacrifices would never go in vain.

But some may contend that the complete victory in South Africa meant only that the Indians maintained their *status quo*. Those who say so are ignorant. Had the battle in South Africa not been fought, today Indians would have been driven out not only from South Africa, but also from all other British colonies and no one would have even taken notice of it. This answer cannot, however, be considered as adequate or satisfactory. It can also be argued that, if

[1] This is a rendering of the second part of the preface published in *Navajivan*, 5-7-1925. It appeared in the original Gujarati edition, but was omitted in the English translation issued in 1928.

[2] For 21 days from 17-9-1924 to 8-10-1924

there had been no satyagraha and if we had been satisfied with whatever we could secure through conciliatory means, the position would have been different from what it is today. Though there is no substance in this argument, where only arguments and guesswork are employed, who can say whose argument or whose guess is best? Everyone has a right to hazard guesses. The only unanswerable point is this: a thing secured by a particular weapon can be retained only by that weapon.

'Kaba robbed Arjuna, though the latter had the same bow and arrows [with which he had won victory in battles].'

Arjuna, who had defeated Lord Siva and had humbled the Kauravas' pride, could not overcome a band of robbers with his Gandiva bow and arrows when he was without a charioteer in the form of Lord Krishna! Similar is the predicament of the Indians resident in South Africa. They are still fighting. But if they let go the weapon of satyagraha with which they had won a victory, they will suffer defeat in the end. Satyagraha was their charioteer and that charioteer alone can help them.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

CHAPTER I

GEOGRAPHY

Africa is one of the biggest continents in the world. India is said to be not a country but a continent, but considering area alone, four or five Indias could be carved out of Africa. Africa is a peninsula like India; South Africa is thus mainly surrounded by the sea. There is a general impression that Africa is the hottest part of the earth, and in a sense this is true. The equator passes through the middle of Africa, and people in India cannot have any idea of the heat in countries situated along this line. The heat which we feel in the extreme south of India gives us some notion of it. But in South Africa there is nothing of that kind, as it is far away from the equator. The climate of many parts is so healthy and temperate that Europeans can settle there in comfort, while it is nearly impossible for them to settle in India. Moreover, there are in South Africa lands of great elevation like Tibet or Kashmir, but these do not attain a height of ten to fourteen thousand feet as in Tibet. Consequently, the climate is dry and cold enough to be endured, and some places in South Africa are highly recommended as sanatoria for consumptives. One of these is

Johannesburg, the golden city of South Africa. Only fifty years ago, the site on which it now stands was desolate and covered with dry grass. But when gold mines were discovered, houses began to be built one after another, as if by magic, and today there are many handsome and substantial buildings. The wealthy people of the place have got trees from the more fertile tracts of South Africa and from Europe, paying as much as a guinea for a tree, and have planted them there. A traveller ignorant of this previous history would imagine that these trees had been there for all time.

I do not propose to describe all the parts of South Africa, but will confine myself only to those which are connected with our subject-matter. One part of South Africa is under the Portuguese, and the rest under the British. The territory under the Portuguese is called Delagoa Bay, and this is the first South African port for steamers from India. As we proceed further south, we come to Natal, the first British Colony. Its chief seaport is called Port Natal, but we know it as Durban, under which name it is generally known all over South Africa. Durban is the largest city in Natal. The capital is Pietermaritzburg, situated inland at a distance of about sixty miles from Durban and at a height of about two thousand feet above sea-level. The climate of Durban is somewhat like that of Bombay, although rather colder. If we proceed further inland beyond Natal we reach the Transvaal, whose mines supply the world with the largest amount of gold. Some years ago diamond mines were also discovered, in one of which was the world's largest diamond. The Cullinan, so called after the name of the proprietor of the mine, weighed over 3,000 carats, or over $1\frac{1}{3}$ lb. avoirdupois, while the Kohinoor now weighs about 100 carats and the Orloff, one of the Russian crown jewels, about 200 carats.

But though Johannesburg is the centre of the gold-mining industry and has diamond mines in the neighbourhood, it is not the official capital of the Transvaal. The capital is Pretoria, at a distance of about thirty-six miles from Johannesburg. In Pretoria one chiefly finds officials and politicians and the population drawn by them. It is therefore a comparatively quiet place, while Johannesburg is full of bustle. As a visitor from a quiet village, or for the matter of that from a small town in India, to Bombay, would be confounded with the din and roar of the city, even so would a visitor from Pretoria be affected by Johannesburg. It would be no exaggeration to say that the citizens of Johannesburg do not walk but seem as if they ran. No one has the

leisure to look at anyone else, and everyone is apparently engrossed in thinking of how to amass the maximum wealth in the minimum oftime! If leaving the Transvaal we travel further inland towards the West, we come to Orange Free State or Orangia. Its capital is Bloemfontein, a very quiet and small town. There are no mines in Orangia like those in the Transvaal. A few hours' railway journey from here takes us to the boundary of the Cape Colony, the biggest of all the South African colonies. Its capital, which is also its largest seaport, is known as Cape Town and is situated on the Cape of Good Hope, so called by King John of Portugal, as after its discovery he hoped his people would be able to find a new and easier way of reaching India, the supreme object of the maritime expeditions of that age.[1] Over and above these four principal British colonies, there are several territories under British 'protection', inhabited by races which had migrated there before the appearance of Europeans on the scene.

The chief industry of South Africa is agriculture and for this it is pre-eminently fitted. Some parts of it are delightful and fertile. The principal grain is maize, which is grown without much labour and forms the staple food of the Negro inhabitants of South Africa. Wheat also is grown in some parts. South Africa is famous for its fruits. Natal cultivates many varieties of excellent bananas, pawpaws and pineapples, and that too in such abundance that they are available to the poorest of the poor. In Natal as well as in other colonies, oranges, peaches and apricots grow in such plenty that thousands get them in the country for the labour of gathering them. The Cape Colony is the land of grapes and plums. Hardly any other place grows such fine grapes, and during the season they can be had so cheap that even a poor man can have his fill. It is impossible that there should be no mangoes in places inhabited by Indians. Indians planted mango trees in South Africa and consequently mangoes also are available in considerable quantities. Some varieties of these can certainly compete with the best mangoes of Bombay. Vegetables also are extensively grown in that fertile country, and it may be said that almost all the

[1] The original here has instead: "Good Hope means auspicious expectation. While on his way from Portugal to discover India, Vasco da Gama had halted at this port and here he took heart that his desire would surely be fulfilled. Hence he named the place "Cape of Good Hope".

The error in the original has been corrected in the English translation. It was Diaz who discovered the Cape in 1657 and named it Cape of Storms. King John changed the name to Cape of Good Hope.

vegetables of India are grown there by Indians with a palate for home delicacies.

Cattle also are bred in considerable numbers. Cows and Oxen are better built and stronger than in India. I have been ashamed, and my heart has often bled, to find in India, which claims to protect the cow, many cows and oxen as emaciated as the people themselves. Although I have moved about over all parts of South Africa with open eyes, I do not remember to have seen a single emaciated cow or bull. Not only has Nature showered other gifts upon this country, but she has beautified it with a fine landscape.

The scenery of Durban is considered very beautiful, but that of Cape Town surpasses it. Cape Town is situated at the foot of the Table Mountain which is neither too high nor too low. A gifted lady who dotes on South Africa says in her poem about this mountain that no other gave her such a sense of the unique. There may be exaggeration in this. I think there it. But one of her points struck me as true. She says the Table Mountain stands in the position of a friend to the citizens of Cape Town. Not being too high, it does not inspire awe. People are not compelled to worship it from afar, but build their houses upon it and live there. And as it is just on the seashore, the sea always washes its foot with its clear waters. Young and old, men and women, fearlessly move about the whole mountain, which resounds every day with the voices of thousands. Its tall trees and flowers of fine fragrance and variegated hues impart such a charm to the mountain that one can never see too much of it, or move too much about it.

South Africa cannot boast of such mighty rivers as the Ganges or the Indus. The few that are there are comparatively small. The water of rivers cannot reach many places. No canals can be taken to the highlands. And how can there be canals in the absence of large rivers? Wherever there is a defeciency of surface water in south Africa, artesian wells are sunk, and water needed for irrigating fields is pumped up by windmills and steamengines. Agriculture receives much encouragement from Government. Government sends out agricultural experts to advise the cultivators, maintains model farms where experiments are carried on for their benefit, provides them with good cattle and seed, bores artesian wells for them at very little cost and permits them to repay this amount by instalments. Similarly Government erects barbed wire fences to protect

their fields.

As South Africa is to the south, and India to the north, of the equator, climatic conditions there are just the reverse of what they are here. The seasons occur in a reverse order. For example, while we have summer here, South Africa is passing through winter. Rainfall is uncertain and capricious. It may occur any time. The average annual rainfall rarely exceeds twenty inches.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY

The geographical divisions briefly noticed in the first chapter are not at all ancient. It has not been possible definitely to ascertain who were the inhabitants of South Africa in remote times. When the Europeans settled in South Africa, they found the Negroes there. These Negroes are supposed to have been the descendants of some of the slaves in America who managed to escape from their cruel bondage and migrated to Africa. They are divided into various tribes such as the Zulus, the Swazis, the Basutos, the Bechuanas, etc. They have a number of different languages. These Negroes must be regarded as the original inhabitants of South Africa. But South Africa is such a vast country that it can easily support twenty or thirty times its present population of Negroes. The distance between Cape Town and Durban is about eighteen hundred miles by rail; the distance by sea also is not less than one thousand miles. The combined area of these four colonies is 473,000 square miles. In 1914 the Negro population in this vast region was about five million, while the Europeans numbered about a million and a quarter.

Among the Negroes, the tallest and the most handsome are the Zulus. I have deliberately used the epithet ‘handsome, in connection with Negroes. A fair complexion and a pointed nose represent our ideal of beauty. If we discard this superstition for a moment, we feel that the Creator did not spare Himself in fashioning the Zulu to perfection. Men and women are both tall and broad-chested in proportion to their height. Their muscles are strong and well set. The calves of the legs and the arms are muscular and always well rounded. You will rarely find a man or woman walking with a stoop or with a hump back. The lips are certainly large and thick, but as they are in prefect symmetry with the entire physique, I for one would not say that they are unshapely. The eyes are round and bright. The nose is

flat and large, such as becomes a large face and the curled hair on the head sets off to advantage the Zulu's skin which is black and shining like ebony. If we ask a Zulu to which of the various races inhabiting South Africa he will award the palm for beauty, he will unhesitatingly decide in favour of his own people, and in this I would not see any want of judgment on his part. The physique of the Zulu is powerfully built and finely shaped by nature without any such effort as is made by Sandow and others in Europe in order to develop the muscles. It is a law of nature that the skin of races living near the equator should be black. And if we believe that there must be beauty in everything fashioned by nature, we would not only steer clear of all narrow and one-sided conceptions of beauty, but we in India would be free from the improper sense of shame and dislike which we feel for our own complexion. If it is anything but fair.

The Negroes live in round huts built of wattle and daub. The huts have a single round wall and are thatched with hay. A pillar inside supports the roof. A low entrance through which one can pass only by bending oneself is the only aperture for the passage of air. The entrance is rarely provided with a door. Like ourselves, the Negroes plaster the walls and the floor with earth and animal dung. It is said the Negroes cannot make anything square in shape. They have trained their eyes to see and make only round things. We never find nature drawing straight lines or rectilinear figures, and these innocent children of nature derive all their knowledge from their experience of her.

The furniture in the hut is in keeping with the simplicity of the place. There would be no room for tables, chairs, boxes and such other things, and even now these things are rarely seen in a hut. Before the advent of European civilization, the Negroes used to wear animal skins, which also served them as carpets, bedsheets and quilts. Nowadays they use blankets. Before British rule, men as well as women moved about almost in a state of nudity. Even now many do the same in the country. They cover the private parts with a piece of skin. Some dispense even with this. But let not anyone infer from this that these people cannot control their senses. Where a large society follows a particular custom, it is quite possible that the custom is harmless even if it seems highly improper to the members of another society. These Negroes have no time to be staring at one another. When Shukadeva passed by the side of women bathing in a state of nudity, so the author of the *Bhagavata*

tells us, his own mind was quite unruffled, nor were the women at all agitated or affected by a sense of shame. I do not think there is anything supernatural in this account. If in India today, there should be none who would be equally pure on a similar occasion, that does not set a limit to our striving after purity, but only argues our own degradation. It is only vanity which makes us look upon the Negroes as savages. They are not the barbarians we imagine them to be.

The law requires Negro women to cover themselves from the chest to the knees when they go to a town. They are thus obliged to wrap a piece of cloth round their body. Consequently pieces of that size command a large sale in South Africa, and thousands of such blankets or sheets are imported from Europe every year. The men are similarly required to cover themselves from the waist to the knees. Many, therefore, have taken to the practice of wearing second-hand clothing from Europe. Others wear a sort of knickers with a fastening tape. All these clothes are imported from Europe.

The staple food of the Negroes is maize, and meat when available. Fortunately, they know nothing about spices or condiments. If they find spices in their food, or even if it is coloured by turmeric, they turn up their noses at it, and those among them who are looked upon as quite uncivilized will not so much as touch it. It is no uncommon thing for a Zulu to take at a time one pound of boiled maize with a little salt. He is quite content to live upon porridge made from crushed mealies boiled in water. Whenever he can get meat, he eats it raw or cooked, boiled or roasted, with only salt. He does not mind taking the flesh of any animal.

The Negro languages are named after the various tribes. The art of writing was recently introduced by the Europeans. There is nothing like a Negro alphabet. The Bible and other books have now been printed in the Negro languages in Roman characters. The Zulu language is very sweet. Most words end with the sound of broad ‘a’ so the language sounds soft and pleasing to the ear. I have heard and read that there is both meaning and poetry in the words. Judging from the few words which I happened to pick up, I think this statement is just. There are for most of the places sweet and poetical Negro names whose European equivalents I have mentioned. I am sorry I do not remember them and so cannot present them here to the reader.

According to the Christian missionaries, the Negroes previously

had not, and have not now, any religion at all. But taking the word religion in a wide sense, we can say that the Negroes do believe in and worship a supreme Being beyond human comprehension. They fear this power too. They are dimly conscious of the fact that the dissolution of the body does not mean the utter annihilation of a person. If we acknowledge morality as the basis of religion, the Negroes being moral may be held even to be religious. They have a perfect grasp of the distinction between truth and falsehood. It is doubtful whether Europeans or ourselves practise truthfulness to the same extent as the Negroes in their primitive state do. They have no temples or anything else of that kind. There are many superstitions among them as among other races.

The reader will be surprised to learn that this race, which is second to none in the world in point of physical strength, is so timid that a Negro is afraid at the sight even of a European child. If someone aims a revolver at him, he will either flee or will be too stupefied to have the power even to move. There is certainly reason for this. The notion is firmly impressed on the Negro mind that it is only by some magic that a handful of Europeans have been able to subdue such a numerous and savage race as themselves. The Negro was well acquainted with the use of the spear, and the bow and arrows. Of these he has been deprived. He had never seen, never fired, a gun. No match is needed, nothing more has to be done beyond moving a finger and yet a small tube all at once emits a sound, a flash is seen, and a bullet wounds and causes the death of a person in an instant. This is something the Negro cannot understand. So he stands in mortal terror of those who wield such a weapon. He and his forefathers before him have seen that such bullets have taken the livesof many helpless and innocent Negroes. Many do not know even now how this happens.

Civilization' is gradually making headway among the Negroes. Pious missionaries deliver to them the message of Christ as they have understood it, open schools for them, and teach them how to read and write.[1] But many who, being illiterate and therefore strangers to civilization, were so far free from many vices, have now become corupt. Hardly any Negro who has come in contact with civilization has escaped the evil of drink. And when his powerful physique is

[1] The original has here: "As a result of their labours, there are now to be found a number of Negroes of character."

under the influence of liquor, he becomes perfectly insane and commits all manner of crimes. That civilization must lead to the multiplication of wants is as certain as that two and two make four. In order to increase the Negro's wants or to teach him the value of labour, a poll-tax and a hut tax have been imposed upon him. If these imposts were not levied, this race of agriculturists living on their farms would not enter mines hundreds of feet deep in order to extract gold or diamonds, and if their labour were not available for the mines, gold as well as diamonds would remain in the bowels of the earth. Likewise, the Europeans would find it difficult to get any servant, if no such tax was imposed. The result has been that thousands of Negro miners suffer, along with other diseases, from a kind of phthisis called "miners' phthisis". This is a fatal disease. Hardly any of those who fall into its clutches recover. The reader can easily imagine what self-restraint thousands of men living in mines away from their families can possibly exercise. They consequently fall easy victims to venereal disease. Not that thoughtful Europeans of South Africa are not alive to this serious question. Some of them definitely hold it can hardly be claimed that civilization has, all things considered, exercised a wholesome influence on this race. As for the evil effects, he who runs may read them.

About four hundred years ago the Dutch founded a settlement in this great country, then inhabited by such a simple and unsophisticated race. They kept slaves. Some Dutchmen from Java with their Malay slaves entered the country which we now know as Cape Colony. These Malays are Mussalmans. They have Dutch blood in their veins and inherit some of the qualities of the Dutch. They are found scattered throughout South Africa, but Cape Town is their stronghold. Some of them today are in the service of Europeans, while others follow independent avocations. Malay women are very industrious and intelligent. They are generally cleanly in their ways of living. They are experts in laundry work and sewing. The men carry on some petty trade. Many drive hackney carriages. Some have received higher English education. One of them is the well known Doctor Abdul Rahman of Cape Town. He was a member of the old Colonial legislature at Cape Town. Under the new constitution this right of entering the Parliament has been taken away.

While giving a description of the Dutch, I incidentally said something about the Malays. But let us now see how the Dutch progressed. The Dutch have been as skilful cultivators as

they have been brave soldiers. They saw that the country around them was highly suited for agriculture. They also saw that the 'natives' easily maintained themselves by working for only a short time during the year. Why should they not force these people to labour for them? The Dutch had guns. They were clever strategists. They knew how to tame human beings like other animals and they believed that their religion did not object to their doing so. In this way they commenced agriculture with the labour of the South African 'natives' with not a single doubt as to the morality of their action.

As the Dutch were in search of good lands for their own expansion, so were the English who also gradually arrived on the scene. The English and the Dutch were of course cousins. Their characters and ambitions were similar. Pots from the same pottery are often likely to clash against each other. So these two nations, while gradually advancing their respective interests and subduing the Negroes, came into collision. There were disputes and then battles between them. The English suffered a defeat at Majuba Hill. Majuba left a soreness which assumed a serious form and came to a head in the Boer War which lasted from 1899 to 1902. And when General Cronje surrendered, Lord Roberts was able to cable to Queen Victoria that Majuba had been avenged. But when this first collision occurred between the two nations previous to the Boer War, many of the Dutch were unwilling to remain under even the nominal authority of the British and 'trekked' into the unknown interior of South Africa. This was the genesis of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State.

These Dutch came to be known in South Africa as Boers. They have preserved their language by clinging to it as a child clings to its mother. They have an intense realization of the close relation between their language and their liberty. In spite of many attacks, they have preserved their mother tongue intact. The language assumed a new form suited to their genius. As they could not maintain very close relations with Holland, they began to speak a patois derived from the Dutch as the Prakrits are derived from Sanskrit. And not wishing to impose an unnecessary burden upon their children, they have given a permanent shape to this patois. It is called Taal. Their books are written in Taal, their children are educated through it, and Boer members of the Union Parliament make it a point to deliver their speeches in it. Since the formation of the Union, Taal or Dutch and English have been officially treated on a footing of equality

throughout South Africa, so much so that the Government Gaze-ttes and records of Parliament must be in both languages. The Boers are simple, frank and religious. They settle in the midst of extensive farms. We can have no idea of the extent of these farms. A farm with us means generally an acre or two, and sometimes even less. In South Africa a single farmer has hundreds or thousands of acres of land in his possession. He is not anxious to put all this under cultivation at once, and if anyone argues with him, he will say, 'let it lie fallow. Lands which now lie fallow will be cultivated by our children.'

Every Boer is a good fighter. However much the Boers may quarrel among themselves, their liberty is so dear to them that when it is in danger, all get ready and fight as one man. They do not need elaborate drilling, for fighting is a characteristic of the whole nation. General Smuts, General De Wet, and General Hertzog are all of them great lawyers, great farmers and equally great soldiers. General Botha had one farm of nine thousand acres. He was familiar with all the intricacies of agriculture. When he went to Europe in connection with negotiations for peace, it was said of him that there was hardly anyone in Europe who was as good a judge of sheep as he was. General Botha had succeeded the late President Kruger. His knowledge of English was excellent; yet when he met the King and ministers in England, he always preferred to talk in his own mother tongue. Who can say that this was not the proper thing to do? Why should he run the risk of committing a mistake in order to display his knowledge of English? Why should he allow his train of thought to be disturbed in the search for the right word? The British ministers might quite unintentionally employ some unfamiliar English idiom, he might not understand what they meant, be led into giving the wrong reply and get confused; and thus his cause would suffer. Why should he commit such a serious blunder?

Boer women are as brave and simple as the men. If the Boers shed their blood in the Boer War, they were able to offer this sacrifice owing to the courage of their womenfolk and the inspiration they received from them. The women were not afraid of widowhood and refused to waste a thought upon the future. I have stated above that the Boers are religious-minded Christians. But it cannot be said that they believe in the New Testament. As a matter of fact Europe does not believe in it; in Europe, however, they do claim to respect it, although only a few know and observe Christ's religion of peace. But as to the Boers, it may be said that they know the New Testament only

by name. They read the Old Testament with devotion and know by heart the descriptions of battles it contains. They fully accept Moses' doctrine of 'an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth', and they act accordingly.

Boer women understood that their religion required them to suffer in order to preserve their independence, and therefore patiently and cheerfully endured all hardships. Lord Kitchener left no stone unturned in order to break their spirit. He confined them in separate concentration camps, where they underwent indescribable sufferings.[1] They starved, they suffered biting cold and scorching heat. Sometimes a soldier intoxicated with liquor or maddened by passion might even assault these unprotected women. Still the brave Boer women did not flinch. And at last King Edward wrote to Lord Kitchener saying that he could not tolerate it, and that if it was the only means of reducing the Boers to submission, he would prefer any sort of peace to continuing the war in that fashion, and asking the General to bring the war to a speedy end.

When this cry of anguish reached England, the English people were deeply pained. They were full of admiration for the bravery of the Boers. The fact that such a small nationality should sustain a conflict with their world-wide empire was rankling in their minds. But when the cry of agony raised by the women in the concentration camps reached England not through themselves, not through their men,—they were fighting valiantly on the battlefield,—but through a few high-souled Englishmen and women who were then in South Africa, the English people began to relent. The late Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman read the mind of the English nation and raised his voice against the war. The late Mr. Stead publicly prayed and invited others to pray that God might decree the English a defeat in the war. This was a wonderful sight. Real suffering bravely borne melts even a heart of stone. Such is the potency of suffering or *tapas*. And there lies the key to satyagraha.

The result was that the Peace of Vereeniging was concluded,[2] and eventually all the four colonies of South Africa were united under one government. Although every Indian who reads newspapers

[1] By the end of the war in 1902, there were 200,000 people confined in concentration camps. Some 4,000 women and 16,000 children had lost their lives through disease and starvation.—Walker in *A History of South Africa*

[2] The treaty was signed at Pretoria on May 31, 1902.

knows about this peace, there are a few facts connectedwith it which perhaps are not within the knowledge of many. The Union did not immediately follow the peace, but each colony had its own legislature. The ministry was not fully responsible to the legislature. The Transvaal and the Free State were governed on Crown Colony lines. Generals Botha and Smuts were not the men to be satisfied with such restricted freedom. They kept aloof from the Legislative Council. They non-co-operated. They flatly refused to have anything to do with the Government. Lord Milner made a pungent speech, in the course of which he said that General Botha need not have attached so much importance to himself. The country's Government could well be carried on without him. Lord Milner thus decided to stage *Hamlet* without the Prince of Denmark.

I have written in unstinted praise of the bravery, the love of liberty and the self-sacrifice of the Boers. But I did not intend to convey the impression that there were no differences of opinion among them during their days of trial, or that there were no weak-kneed persons among them. Lord Milner succeeded in setting up a party among the Boers who were easy to satisfy, and persuaded himself to believe that he could make a success of the legislature with their assistance. Even a stage play cannot be managed without the hero; and an administrator in this matter-of-fact world who ignores the central figure in the situation he has to deal with and still expects to succeed can only be described as insane. Such indeed was the case of Lord Milner. It was said that though he indulged in bluff, he found it so difficult to govern the Transvaal and the Free State without the assistance of General Botha, that he was often seen in his garden in an anxious and excited state of mind. General Botha distinctly stated that by the Treaty of Vereeniging, as he understood it, the Boers were immediately entitled to complete internal autonomy. He added that, had that not been the case, he would never have signed the treaty. Lord Kitchener declared in reply that he had given no such pledge to General Botha. The Boers, he said, would be gradually granted full self-government as they proved their loyalty! Now who was to judge between these two? How could one expect General Botha to agree if arbitration was suggested? The decision arrived at in the matter by the Imperial Government of the time was very creditable to them. They conceded that the stronger party should accept the interpretation of the agreement put upon it by the other and weaker party. According to the principles of justice and truth, that is the correct canon of

interpretation. I may have meant to say anything, but I must concede that my speech or writing was intended to convey the meaning ascribed to it by my hearer or reader in so far as he is concerned. We often break this golden rule in our lives. Hence arise many of our disputes, and half-truth, which is worse than untruth, is made to do duty for truth.

Thus when truth—in the present case General Botha—fully triumphed, he set to work. All the colonies were eventually united, and South Africa obtained full self-government. Its flag is the Union Jack, it is shown in red on maps, and yet it is no exaggeration to say that South Africa is completely independent. The British Empire cannot receive a single farthing from South Africa without the consent of its Government. Not only that, but British ministers have conceded that if South Africa wishes to remove the Union Jack and to be independent even in name, there is nothing to prevent it from doing so. And if the Boers have so far not taken this step, there are strong reasons for it. For one thing, the Boer leaders are shrewd and sagacious men. They see nothing improper in maintaining with the British Empire a partnership in which they have nothing to lose. But there is another practical reason. In Natal the English preponderate, in Cape Colony there is a large population of Englishmen though they do not outnumber the Boers; in Johannesburg the English element is predominant. This being the case, if the Boers seek to establish an independent republic in South Africa, the result would be internecine strife and possibly a civil war. South Africa, therefore, continues to rank as a dominion of the British Empire.

The way in which the Constitution of the Union was framed is worthy of note. A National Convention, composed of delegates represenative of all parties appointed by the Colonial legislatures, unanimously prepared a draft Constitution and the British Parliament had to approve it in its entirety. A member of the House of Commons drew the attention of the House to a grammatical mistake and suggested that it should be rectified. The late Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, while rejecting the suggestion, observed that faultless grammar was not essential to carrying on a government, that the Constitution was framed as a result of negotiations between the British Cabinet and the ministers of South Africa and that they did not reserve even the right of correcting a grammatical error to the British Parliament. Consequently, the Constitution recast in the form of an Imperial bill passed through both Houses of Parliament, just as it was,

without the slightest alteration.

There is one more circumstance worthy of notice in this connection. There are some provisions in the Act of Union which may appear meaningless to the lay reader. They have led to a great increase in expenditure. This had not escaped the notice of the framers of the Constitution; but their object was not to attain perfection, but by compromise to arrive at an understanding and to make the Constitution a success. That is why the Union has four capitals, no colony being prepared to part with its own capital. Similarly, although the old colonial legislatures were abolished, provincial councils with subordinate and delegated functions were set up. And though governorships were abolished, officers corresponding to the rank of Governor and styled Provincial Administrators were appointed. Everyone knows that four local legislatures, four capitals and four Governors are unnecessary and serve for mere show. But the shrewd statesmen of South Africa did not object. The arrangement is showy and entails additional expenditure, but union was desirable and therefore the statesmen did what they thought fit, regardless of outside criticism and got their policy approved by the British Parliament.

I have endeavoured to sketch very briefly the history of South Africa, as without it, it appeared to me difficult to explain the inner meaning of the great satyagraha struggle. It now remains to be seen how the Indians came to this country and struggled against their adversities before the inauguration of satyagraha.

CHAPTER III

INDIANS ENTER SOUTH AFRICA

We saw in the preceding chapter how the English arrived. They settled in Natal, where they obtained some concessions from the Zulus. They observed that excellent sugarcane, tea and coffee could be grown in Natal. Thousands of labourers would be needed in order to grow such crops on a large scale, which was clearly beyond the capacity of a handful of colonists. They offered inducements and then threats to the Negroes in order to make them work but in vain, as slavery had been then abolished. The Negro is not used to hard work. He can easily maintain himself by working for six months in the year. Why then should he bind himself to an employer for a long term? The English settlers could make no progress at all with their plantations in the absence of a stable labour force. They therefore

opened negotiations with the Government of India and requestedtheir help for the supply of labour. That Government complied with their request, and the first batch of indentured labourers from India reached Natal on November 16, 1860, truly a fateful date for this history; had it not been for this, there would have been no Indians and therefore no satyagraha in South Africa, and this book would have remained unwritten.

In my opinion, the Government of India were not well advised in taking the action they did. The British officials in India consciously or unconsciously were partial to their brethren in Natal. It is true that as many terms as possible, purporting to safeguard the labourers' interests, were entered in the indentures. Fairly good arrangements were made for their board. But adequate consideration was not given to the question as to how these illiterate labourers who had gone to a distant land were to seek redress if they had any grievances. No thought was given to their religious needs or to the preservation of their morality. The British officials in India did not consider that although slavery had been abolished by law, employers could not be free from a desire to make slaves of their employees. They did not realize, as they ought to have realized, that the labourers who had gone to Natal would in fact become temporary slaves. The late Sir W. W. Hunter, who had deeply studied these labour conditions, used a remarkable phrase about them. Writing about the Indian labourers in Natal, he said that theirs was a state of semi-slavery. On another occasion, in the course of a letter, he described their condition as bordering on slavery. And tendering evidence before a commission in Natal, the most prominent European in that Colony, the late Mr. Harry Escombe, admitted as much. Testimony to the same effect can be readily gathered from the statements of leading Europeans in Natal. Most of these were incorporated in the memorials on the subject submitted to the Government of India. But the fates would have their course. And the steamer which carried those labourers to Natal carried with them the seed of the great satyagraha movement.

I have not the space here in the present volume to narrate how the labourers were deluded by Indian recruiting agents connected with Natal; how under the influence of such delusion they left the mother country; how their eyes were opened on reaching Natal, how still they continued to stay there; how others followed them; how they broke through all the restraints which religion or morality imposes, or to be more accurate, how these restraints

gave way, and how the very distinction between a marriedwoman and a concubine ceased to exist among these unfortunate people.[1]

When the news that indentured labourers had gone to Natal reached Mauritius, Indian traders having connection with such labourers were induced to follow them there. Thousands of Indians, labourers as well as traders, have settled in Mauritius, which is on the way to Natal from India. An Indian trader in Mauritius, the late Sheth Abubakar Amad, thought of opening a shop in Natal. The English in Natal had then no idea of what Indian traders were capable of, nor did they care. They had been able to raise very profitable crops of sugarcane, tea and coffee, with the assistance of indentured labour. They manufactured sugar, and in a surprisingly short time supplied South Africa with a modest quantity of sugar, tea and coffee. They made so much money that they built palatial mansions for themselves and turned a wilderness into a veritable garden. In such circumstances, they naturally did not mind an honest and plucky trader like Abubakar Sheth settling in their midst. Add to this that an Englishman actually joined him as partner. Abubakar Sheth carried on trade and purchased land, and the story of his prosperity reached Porbandar, his native place, and the country around. Other Memans consequently reached Natal. Bohras from Surat followed them. These traders needed accountants, and Hindu accountants from Gujarat and Saurashtra accompanied them

Two classes of Indians thus settled in Natal, first, free traders and their free servants, and second, indentured labourers. In course of time the indentured labourers had children. Although not bound to labour, these children were affected by several stringent provisions of the colonial law. How can the children of slaves escape the brand of slavery? The labourers went to Natal under indenture for a period of five years. They were under no obligation to labour after the expiry of that period, and were entitled to work as free labourers or trade in Natal, and settle there if they wished. Some elected to do so while others returned home. Those who remained in Natal came to be known as ‘Free Indians’. It is necessary to understand the peculiar position of this class. They were not admitted to all the rights enjoyed by the entirely free Indians of whom I have first spoken. For instance, they were required to obtain a pass if they wanted to go from one

[1] The original here explains how the agreement under which the laburers served in Natal became known as “indenture” and they as “indentured labourers”.

place to another, and if they married and desired the marriage to be recognized as valid in law, they were required to register it with an official known as Protector of Indian Immigrants. They were also subject to other severe restrictions.

The Indian traders saw that they could trade not only with indentured labourers and 'Free Indians' but with the Negroes as well. Indian merchants were a source of great convenience to the Negroes, who very much feared the European traders. The European trader wanted to trade with the Negro, but it would be too much for Negro customers to expect courtesy at his hands. They might think it a great good fortune if he gave them full consideration for their money. Some of them had bitter experiences. A man might purchase an article worth four shillings, place a sovereign on the counter, and receive four shillings as balance instead of sixteen, and sometimes even nothing whatever! If the poor Negro asked for the balance or showed how the amount paid him was less than his due, the reply would be gross abuse. He might thank his stars if things stopped there; otherwise the abuse would be reinforced by a blow or a kick. I do not mean to suggest that all English traders behaved like this. But it can safely be asserted that the number of such cases was fairly large. On the other hand, Indian traders had a good word for the Negroes and even joked with them. The simple Negro would like to enter the shop and handle and examine the goods he wanted to purchase. Indian traders permitted all this. It is true that in this they were not actuated by altruistic motives; it may have had something to do with their self-interest. The Indian might not miss the opportunity, if it offered, of cheating his Negro customer, but his courtesy made him popular with the Negroes. Moreover, the Negro never feared the Indian traders. On the other hand, cases have occurred in which an Indian tried to cheat Negroes, but on being detected, was roughly handled by them. And more often Negro customers have been heard to abuse Indian traders. Thus, so far as Indians and Negroes were concerned, it is the former who feared the latter. The result was that trade with Negroes proved very profitable to Indian traders. And the Negroes were to be found throughout South Africa.

There were Boer republics in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State during the eighties of the last century. I need scarcely say that in these republics the Negro had no power, it was all a white men's affair. Indian traders had heard that they could also trade with the Boers, who, being simple, frank and unassuming, would not think it below their dignity to deal with Indian traders. Several Indian traders therefore proceeded to the Transvaal and the Free State and opened shops there. As there were no railways there at the time, they earned

large profits. The expectations of the Indian traders were fulfilled and they carried on considerable trade with the Boers and the Negroes as customers. Similarly, several Indian traders went to the Cape Colony and began to earn fairly well. The Indians were thus distributed in small numbers in all the four colonies.

Abosolutely free Indians now number between forty and fifty thousand, while the 'Free Indians' so called, that is, the labourers who are freed from their indentures and their descendants, number about a hundred thousand.[1]

CHAPTER IV

A REVIEW OF THE GRIEVANCES

NATAL

The European planters of Natal wanted only slaves. They could not afford to have labourers who, after serving their term, would be free to compete with them to however small an extent. No doubt the indentured labourers had gone to Natal, as they had not been very successful in agriculture or other pursuits in India. But it is not to be supposed that they had no knowledge of agriculture or that they did not understand the value of land. They found that, if they grew only vegetables in Natal, they could earn good incomes, and that their earnings would be still better if they owned a small piece of land. Many, therefore, on the termination of their indentures, began to pursue some trade or other on a small scale. This was, on the whole, advantageous to the settlers in Natal. Various kinds of vegetables, which had not been grown before for want of a competent class of cultivators, now became available. Other kinds, which had been grown in small quantities, could now be had in abundance. The result was a fall in the prices of vegetables. But the European planters did not relish this new development. They felt they now had competitors in a field in which they believed they had a monopoly. A movement was, therefore, set on foot against these poor time-expired labourers. The reader will be surprised to learn that, while on the one hand the Europeans demanded more and more labourers and easily took in as many of them as went from India, on the other hand they started an agitation to harass ex-indentured labourers in a variety of ways. This was the reward for their skill and hard toil!

The movement assumed many forms. One set of agitators

[1] This paragraph is not in the original.

demanded that the labourers who completed their indentures should be sent back to India, and that, therefore, fresh labourers arriving in Natal from that time forward should have a new clause entered in their indentures, providing for their compulsory return to India at the expiration of their term of service unless they renewed their indentures. A second set advocated the imposition of a heavy annual capitation tax on the labourers who did not re-indenture themselves at the end of the first period of five years. Both, however, had the same object in view, namely, by hook or by crook to make it impossible for exindentured labourers to live as free men in Natal in any circumstances. This agitation attained such serious dimensions, that the Government of Natal appointed a commission[1]. As the demands of both these classes of agitators were quite unfair, and as the presence of the ex-indentured labourers was clearly beneficial to the entire population from an economic standpoint, the independent evidence recorded by the commission was against the agitators, who thus failed to achieve any tangible result for the time being. But as fire, although extinguished, leaves a trail behind it, the agitation created some impression on the Government of Natal. How could it be otherwise? The Government of Natal was friendly to the planters. It therefore communicated with the Government of India and laid before it the proposals of both the sets of agitators. But the Government of India could not all at once accept proposals which would reduce indentured labourers to perpetual slavery. One justification or excuse for sending labourers to such a far-off land under indenture was that the labourers, after completing the indentures, would become free to develop their powers fully and consequently improve their economic condition. As Natal then was still a Crown Colony, the Colonial Office was fully responsible for its government. Natal, therefore, could not look for help from that quarter either in satisfying its unjust demands. For this and similar reasons a movement was set on foot to attainresponsible government, which was eventually conferred on Natal in 1893. Natal now began to feel its strength. The Colonial Office too did not any longer find it difficult to accept whatever demands Natal might choose to make. Delegates from the new responsible Government of Natal came to India to confer with the Government of India. They proposed the imposition of an annual

[1] Indian Immigration Commission constituted under Justice Wragg in 1885; *vide* "The Indian Franchise - Part V", December 16, 1895.

poll-tax of twenty-five pounds, or three hundred and seventy-five rupees, on every Indian who had been freed from indenture. It was evident that no Indian labourer could pay such an exorbitant tax and live in Natal as a free man. Lord Elgin, the Governor-General of India, considered that the amount was excessive, and ultimately he accepted an annual poll-tax of three pounds. This was equivalent to nearly six months' earnings on the indenture scale. The tax was levied, not only on the labourer himself, but also upon his wife, his daughters aged thirteen years or upwards, and his sons aged sixteen years or upwards. There was hardly any labourer who had not a wife and a couple of children. Thus, as a general rule, every labourer was required to pay an annual tax of twelve pounds. It is impossible to describe the hardships that this tax entailed. Only those who actually underwent the hardships could realize them, and only those who witnessed their sufferings could have some idea of them. The Indians carried on a powerful agitation against this action of the Government of Natal. Memorials were submitted to the Imperial Government and the Government of India, but to no purpose except for a reduction in the amount of the tax. What could the poor labourers do or understand in this matter? The agitation on their behalf was carried on by the Indian traders, actuated by motives of patriotism or of philanthropy.

Free Indians fared no better. The European traders of Natal carried on a similar agitation against them for mainly the same reasons. Indian traders were well established. They acquired lands in good localities. As the number of freed labourers began to increase, there was a larger and larger demand for the class of goods required by them. Bags of rice were imported from India in their thousands and sold at a good profit. Naturally this trade was largely in the hands of Indians who had, besides, a fair share of the trade with Zulus. They thus became an eye-sore to petty European traders. Again, some Englishmen pointed out to the Indian traders that according to law they were entitled to vote in the elections for the Legislative Assembly of Natal and to stand as candidates for the same. Some Indians therefore got their names entered on the electoral roll. This made the European politicians of Natal join the ranks of anti-Indians. They doubted whether the Europeans could stand in competition with Indians if the Indians' prestige increased, and if their position was consolidated in Natal. The first step, therefore, taken by the responsible Government of Natal in connection with free Indians was that they decided to enact

a law, disfranchising all Asiatics save those who were then rightly contained in any voters' list. A bill[1] to that effect was first introduced in the Legislative Assembly of Natal in 1894. This was based on the principle of excluding Indians as Indians from the franchise, and was in Natal the first piece of legislation affecting them in which racial distinction was made. Indians resisted this measure. A memorial was prepared during one night and four hundred signatures were appended to it.[2] When the memorial was submitted to the Legislative Assembly of Natal, that body was startled. But the bill was passed all the same. A memorial[3] bearing ten thousand signatures[4] was submitted to Lord Ripon who was then Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Ten thousand signatures meant almost the total population at the time of free Indians in Natal. Lord Ripon disallowed the bill and declared that the British Empire could not agree to the establishment of a colour bar in legislation.[5] The reader will be in a position later on to appreciate how great was this victory for Indians. The Natal Government, therefore, brought forward another bill, removing racial distinction but indirectly disqualifying Indians. Indians protested against this as well but without success. This new bill was ambiguous in meaning. Indians were in a position to carry it finally to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council with a view to its interpretation; but they did not think it advisable to do so. I still think that they did the right thing in avoiding this endless litigation. It was no small thing that the colour bar was not allowed to be set up.

But the planters and the Government of Natal were not likely to stop there. To nip the political power of Indians in the bud was for them the indispensable first step; but the real point of their attack was Indian trade and free Indian immigration. They were uneasy at the thought of the Europeans in Natal being swamped if India with its teeming millions invaded Natal. The approximate population of Natal at the time was 400,000 Zulus and 40,000 Europeans as against 60,000 indentured, 10,000 ex-indentured and

[1] The Franchise Law Amendment Bill

[2] *Vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Assembly", June 28, 1894.

[3] For the text of the memorial, *vide* "Memorial to J. Chamberlain", May 22, 1896.

[4] Cf. *ibid*, where the figure mentioned is 9,000.

[5] The refusal of the Imperial Government to give assent to the Bill was conveyed to the Natal Government on September 12, 1895.

10,000 free Indians.[1] The Europeans had no solid grounds for their apprehensions, but it is impossible to convince by argument men who have been seized with vague terrors. As they were ignorant of the helpless condition of India and of the manners and customs of the Indian people, they were under the impression that the Indians were as adventurous and resourceful as themselves. They could scarcely be blamed if they thus created a bugbear of the vast population of India in comparison with their own small numbers. However that may be, the result of the successful opposition to the disfranchising bill was that in two other laws passed by the Natal Legislature it had to avoid racial distinction and to attain its end in an indirect manner. The position, therefore, was not as bad as it might have been. On this occasion too Indians offered a strenuous resistance, but in spite of this two laws were enacted.[2] One of these imposed severe restrictions on Indian trade and the other on Indian immigration in Natal. The substance of the first Act was that no one could trade without a licence issued by an official appointed in accordance with its provisions. In practice any European could get a licence while the Indian had to face no end of difficulty in the matter. He had to engage a lawyer and incur other expenditure. Those who could not afford it had to go without a Licence. The chief provision of the other Act was that only such immigrants as were able to pass the education test in a European language could enter the Colony. This closed the doors of Natal against crores of Indians. Lest I should inadvertently do the Government of Natal an injustice, I must state that the Act further provided that an Indian resident in Natal for three years before the passing of that Act might obtain a certificate of domicile enabling him to leave the Colony and return at any time with his wife and minor children without being required to pass the education test.

The indentured and free Indians in Natal were and still are subject to other disabilities, both legal and extra-legal, in additionto those described above. But I do not think it necessary to tax the reader with a recital of them. I propose to give such details only as are essential to a clear understanding of the subject. A history

[1] Cf. "Notes on the Indian Question", May 6, 1902, where the figures are "60,000 whites and an equal number of British Indian settlers".

[2] The Dealers' Licenses Act and the Immigration Restriction Act, 1897, *vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Assembly", March 26, 1897 and "Circular Letter", March 27, 1897.

of the condition of Indians in different parts of South Africa would take up much space. But that is beyond the scope of the present volume.

CHAPTER V

A REVIEW OF THE GRIEVANCES [CONTINUED]

THE TRANSVAAL AND OTHER COLONIES

As in Natal, so in the other colonies anti-Indian prejudice had more or less begun to grow even before 1880. Except in the Cape Colony, the general opinion held was that as labourers the Indians were all right, but it had become an axiom with many Europeans that the immigration of free Indians was purely a disadvantage to South Africa. The Transvaal was a republic. For Indians to declare their British citizenship before its President was only to invite ridicule. If they had any grievance, all they could do was to bring it to the notice of the British Agent at Pretoria. Still the wonder is that when the Transvaal came under the British flag, there was none from whom Indians could expect even such assistance as the Agent rendered when the Transvaal was independent. When during Lord Morley's tenure of the office of the Secretary of State for India, a deputation on behalf of the Indians waited upon him, he declared in so many words that, as the members of the deputation were aware, the Imperial Government could exercise but little control over self-governing dominions.[1] They could not dictate to them; they could plead, they could argue, they could press for the application of their principles. Indeed, in some instances they could more effectively remonstrate with foreign Powers, as they remonstrated with the Boer Republic, than with their own people in the colonies. The relations of the mother country with the colonies were in the nature of a silken tie which would snap with the slightest tension. As force was out of the question, he assured the deputation that he would do all he could by negotiations. When war was declared on the Transvaal, Lord Lansdowne, Lord Selborne and other British statesmen declared that the scandalous treatment accorded to theIndians by the South African Republic was one of the causes of the war.

[1] For the full report of the interview between the Indian deputation and Lord Morley, *vide* "Deputation to Morley", November 22, 1906 and "Deputation Notes - III", November 23, 1906.

Let us now see what sort of treatment this was. Indians first entered the Transvaal in 1881. The late Sheth Abubakar opened a shop in Pretoria and purchased land in one of its principal streets. Other traders followed in his wake. Their great success excited the jealousy of European traders who commenced an anti-Indian campaign in the newspapers, and submitted petitions to the Volksraad or Parliament, praying that Indians should be expelled and their trade stopped. The Europeans in this newly opened-up country had a boundless hunger for riches. They were almost strangers to the dictates of morality. Here are some statements they made in their petitions: "These Indians have no sense of human decency. They suffer from loathsome diseases. They consider every woman as their prey. They believe that women have no souls." These four sentences contain four lies. It would be easy to multiply such specimens. As were the Europeans, so were their representatives. Little did the Indian traders know what a sinister and unjust movement was being carried on against them. They did not read newspapers. The newspaper campaign and the petitions had the desired effect, and a bill was introduced in the Volksraad. The leading Indians were taken aback when they came to know how events had shaped themselves. They went to see President Kruger who did not so much as admit them into his house but made them stand in the courtyard. After hearing them for a while, he said, "You are the descendants of Ishmael and therefore from your very birth bound to slave for the descendants of Esau. As the descendants of Esau we cannot admit you to rights placing you on an equality with ourselves. You must rest content with what rights we grant to you." It cannot be said, that this reply from the President was inspired by malice or anger. President Kruger had been taught from his childhood the stories of the Old Testament, and he believed them to be true. How can we blame a man who gives candid expression to his opinions such as they are? Ignorance, however, is bound to do harm even when associated with candour, and the result was that in 1885 a very drastic law was rushed through the Volksraad, as if thousands of Indians were on the point of flooding the Transvaal. The British Agent was obliged to move in the matter at the instance of Indian leaders.[1] The question was finally carried to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.[2] In terms of this Law 3 of 1885

[1] *Vide* "Open Letter", before December 19, 1894.

[2] *Vide* "Petition to Lord Ripon", before May 5 1895.

every Indian settling in the Republic for the purpose of carrying on trade was required to register at a cost of twentyfive pounds subject to heavy penalties, and no Indian could hold an inch of land or enjoy the rights of citizenship. All this was so manifestly unjust that the Transvaal Government could not defend it in argument. There was a treaty subsisting between the Boers and the British known as the London Convention, Article XIV of which secured the rights of British subjects.[1] The British Government objected to the Law as being in contravention of that Article. The Boers urged in reply that the British Government had previously given their consent, whether express or implied, to the law in question.

A dispute thus arose between the British and the Boer Governments, and the matter was referred to arbitration. The arbitrator's award was unsatisfactory. He tried to please both parties. The Indians were therefore the losers. The only advantage they reaped, if advantage it can be called, was that they did not lose as much as they might have done otherwise. The Law was amended in 1886 in accordance with the arbitrator's award. The registration fee was reduced from twenty-five to three pounds. The clause which completely debarred Indians from holding landed property was removed, and it was provided, instead, that the Indians could own fixed property in such locations, wards and streets as were specially set apart for their residence by the Transvaal Government. This Government did not honestly carry out the terms of the amended clause, and withheld from Indians the right to purchase freehold land even in the locations.[2] In all towns inhabited by Indians, these locations were selected in dirty places situated far away from the towns where there was no water-supply, no lighting arrangement and no sanitary convenience to speak of. Thus the Indians became the Panchamas[3] of the Transvaal. It can be truly said that there is no difference between these locations and the untouchables' quarters in India. Just as the Hindus believe that touching Dhedhs or residence in their neighbourhood would lead to pollution, so did the Europeans in the Transvaal believe for all practical purposes that physical contact with the Indians or living near them would defile

[1] *Vide* "Notes on the Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa - The Transvaal or the South African Republic", September 22, 1896.

[2] *Vide* "The grievances of the British Indians in South Africa : An Appeal to the Indian Public - The Transvaal", August 14, 1896.

[3] The fifth caste among Hindus, traditionally regarded as untouchables

them. Again the Transvaal Government interpreted Law 3 of 1885 to mean that the Indians could trade, too, exclusively in the locations. The arbitrator had decided that the interpretation of the law rested with the ordinary tribunals of the Transvaal. The Indian traders were therefore in a very awkward condition. Still they managed to maintain their position fairly well by carrying on negotiations in one place, by having recourse to law courts in another, and by exerting what little influence they possessed in a third.[1] Such was the miserable and precarious position of Indians in the Transvaal at the outbreak of the Boer War.

We shall now turn to examine the position in the Free State. Hardly a dozen Indians had opened shops there when the Europeans started a powerful agitation. The Volksraad passed a stringent law and expelled all Indian traders from the Free State, awarding them nominal compensation. That law provided that no Indian could on any account hold fixed property or carry on mercantile or farming business or enjoy franchise rights in the Free State. With special permission an Indian could settle as a labourer or as a hotel waiter. But the authorities were not obliged to grant even this precious permission in every case. The result was that a respectable Indian could not live in the Free State even for a couple of days without great difficulty. At the time of the Boer War there were no Indians in the Free State except a few waiters.[2]

In the Cape Colony, too, there was some newspaper agitation against Indians, and the treatment to which they were subjected was not free from humiliating features. For example, Indian children could not attend public schools, etc., and Indian travellers could hardly secure accommodation in hotels. But there were no restrictions as to trade and the purchase of land for a long time.

There were reasons for this state of things. As we have already seen, there was a fair proportion of the Malays in the population of the Cape Colony in general and of Cape Town in particular. As the Malays are Mussalmans, they soon came in contact with their Indian co-religionists, and consequently with other Indians later on. Moreover, some Indian Mussalmans married Malay women.

[1] *Vide* "Notes on the Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa", September 22, 1896.

[2] *ibid*.

How could the Government of the Cape Colony legislate against the Malays? The Cape was their mother land, Dutchwas their mother tongue, they had been living with the Dutch from the very first and therefore largely imitated them in their ways of life. The Cape Colony, therefore, has been the least affected by colour prejudice.

Again as the Cape Colony was the oldest settlement and the chief centre of culture in South Africa, it produced sober, gentlemanly and large-hearted Europeans. In my opinion, there is no place on earth and no race which is not capable of producing the finest types of humanity, given suitable opportunities and education. It has been my good fortune to come across this class of people in all parts of South Africa. In the Cape Colony, however, the proportion of such persons was very much the larger. Perhaps the best known and the most learned among them is Mr. Merriman who was a member of the first and subsequent ministries that came to power after the grant of responsible government to the Cape Colony in 1872, was again the Premier in the last ministry when the Union was established in 1910, and was known as the Gladstone of South Africa. Then there are the Moltenos and the Schreiners. Sir John Molteno was the first Premier of the Colony in 1872. Mr. W.P. Schreiner was a wellknown advocate, for some time Attorney-General and later on Premier. His sister, Olive Schreiner, was a gifted lady popular in South Africa and well known wherever the English language is spoken. Ever since she wrote the book, she became famous as the authoress of *Dreams*. Her love for all mankind was unbounded. Love was written in her eyes. Although she belonged to such a distinguished family and was a learned lady, she was so simple in habits that she cleaned utensils in her house herself. Mr. Merriman, the Moltenos and the Schreiners had always espoused the cause of the Negroes. Whenever the rights of the Negroes were in danger, they stoutly stood up in their defence. They had kindly feelings for the Indians as well, though they made a distinction between Negroes and Indians. Their argument was that as the Negroes had been the inhabitants of South Africa long before the European settlers, the latter could not deprive them of their natural rights. But as for the Indians, it would not be unfair if laws calculated to remove the danger of their undue competition were enacted. All the same they had a warm corner in their hearts for Indians. When Gokhale went to South Africa, Mr. Schreiner presided over the Townhall meeting in Cape Town, where he was accorded his first public reception in that country. Mr. Merriman also treated him with great courtesy and

expressed his sympathy with the Indian cause. There were otherEuropeans of the type of Mr. Merriman. I have mentioned these well-known names as typical of their class. The newspapers in Cape Town, too, were less hostile to Indians than in other parts of South Africa.

While it is true that for these reasons there has always been less race hatred in the Cape Colony than in other parts, it is but natural that the anti-Indian feeling which constantly found expression in the other colonies also found its way to the Cape. There too two laws copied from Natal were passed, namely, the Immigration Restriction Act and the Dealers' Licenses Act.

It can be said that the door in South Africa, which was formerly wide open, had thus been almost closed against Indians at the time of the Boer War. In the Transvaal there was no restriction on immigration except the registration fee of three pounds. When Natal and the Cape Colony closed their ports to Indians, they had difficulty in landing on their way to the Transvaal which was in the interior. They could reach it *via* Delagoa Bay, a Portuguese port. But the Portuguese also more or less imitated the British. It must be mentioned that some stray Indians were able to find their way to the Transvaal *via* Natal or Delagoa Bay by suffering great hardships or by bribing port officers.

CHAPTER VI

A REVIEW OF THE EARLY STRUGGLE

While considering the position of Indians in the previous chapters, we have seen to some extent how they withstood the attacks made upon them. In order, however, to give an adequate idea of the origin of satyagraha, it is necessary to devote special space to the endeavours made with a view to defending Indian interests in the pre-satyagraha days.

Up till 1893 there were hardly any free and well-educated Indians in South Africa capable of espousing the Indian cause. English-knowing Indians were mostly clerks whose knowledge of English was only commensurate with the needs of their occupation and not adequate for drafting representations, and who, again, must give all their time to their employers. A second group of English-educated Indians was composed of such of them as were born in South Africa. They were mostly the descendants of indentured labourers, and if at all qualified for the work, were in Government

service as interpreters in law courts. Thus they were not in a positionto help the Indian cause beyond expressing their fellow-feeling.

Again, indentured and ex-indentured labourers hailed mainly from Uttar Pradesh and Madras State, while, as we have already seen, the Mussalmans, mostly traders, and the Hindus, mostly clerks, who chiefly represented the class of free Indians, belonged to Gujarat. Besides, there were a few Parsi traders and clerks, but the total population of Parsis in South Africa did not probably exceed thirty or forty souls. A fourth group among free Indians was composed of Sindhi traders. There were two hundred or more Sindhis in South Africa. Wherever the Sindhi has settled outside India he deals in 'fancy goods', namely, silks and brocades, carved boxes and other furniture made of ebony, sandalwood and ivory and similar goods. His customers are mainly Europeans.

Indentured labourers were called 'coolies' by the Europeans. A 'coolie' means a porter. The expression was used so extensively that the indentured labourers began to describe themselves as 'coolies'! Hundreds of Europeans called Indian lawyers and Indian traders 'coolie' lawyers and 'coolie' traders. There were some Europeans who were unable to perceive or believe that the name implied an insult, but many used it as a term of deliberate contempt. Free Indians, therefore, tried to differentiate themselves from the indentured labourers. For this and other reasons peculiar to conditions in India, a distinction was sought to be drawn in South Africa between indentured and freed labourers on the one hand and free Indians on the other.

Free Indians and especially the Mussalman traders undertook to resist the wrongs detailed above, but no direct attempt was made to seek the co-operation of the indentured and ex-indentured labourers. Probably it did not occur to anyone to enlist their support; if the idea did suggest itself to some, there was in their opinion the risk that matters might be made worse by their being allowed to join the movement. And as it was considered that the free traders were the chief target of attack, the measures for defence were limited to that class. It can be truly said that free Indians fought well against difficulties, seeing that they were thus seriously handicapped, that they were ignorant of English, and that they had had no experience of public work in India. They sought the help of European barristers, had petitions prepared, waited upon the authorities on some occasions

in deputation, and did what they could to mend matters. This was the state of things up till 1893.

It will be helpful to the reader to bear some important dates in mind. Before 1893 Indians had been hounded out of the Orange Free State. In the Transvaal, Law 3 of 1885 was in force. In Natal, measures, calculated to enable only indentured labourers to live in the colony and to turn out the rest, were under contemplation, and responsible government had been achieved to that end.

I left India for South Africa in April, 1893. I had no idea of the previous history of the Indian emigrants. I went there on a purely professional visit. A well-known firm of Porbandar Memans then carried on trade in Durban under the name and style of Dada Abdulla. An equally well-known and rival firm traded at Pretoria under the designation of Taib Haji Khanmamad[1]. Unfortunately, an important law-suit was pending between the rivals. A partner of the firm of Dada Abdulla who was in Porbandar thought that it would help their case if they engaged me and sent me to South Africa. I had been just called to the bar and was quite a novice in the profession, but he had no fear of my mishandling their case, as he did not want me to conduct the case in the court but only to instruct the able South African lawyers they had retained. I was fond of novel experiences. I loved to see fresh fields and pastures new. It was disgusting to have to give commission to those who brought me work. The atmosphere of intrigue in Saurashtra was choking to me. The engagement was only for one year. I did not see any objection to my accepting it. I had nothing to lose as Messrs Dada Abdulla expressed their willingness to pay my travelling expenses as well as the expenses that would be incurred in South Africa and a fee of one hundred and five pounds. This arrangement had been made through my elder brother, now deceased, who was as father to me. For me his will was a command. He liked the idea of my going to South Africa. So I reached Durban in May 1893.

Being a barrister-at-law, I was well dressed according to my lights and landed at Durban with a due sense of my importance. But I was soon disillusioned. The partner of Dada Abdulla who had engaged me had given me an account of what things were like in Natal. But what I saw there with my own eyes absolutely belied his misleading picture. My informant was, however, not to blame. He was

[1] Tayob Hajee Khan Mahomed

a frank, simple man, ignorant of the real state of affairs. He had no idea of the hardships to which Indians were subjected in Natal.Conditions which implied grave insult had not appeared to him in that light. I observed on the very first day that the Europeans meted out most insulting treatment to Indians.

I will not describe my bitter experience in the courts within a fortnight of my arrival, the hardships I encountered on railway trains, the thrashings I received on the way and the difficulty in and the practical impossibility of securing accommodation in hotels. Suffice it to say that all these experiences sank in me. I had gone there only for a single case prompted by self-interest and curiosity. During the first year, therefore, I was merely the witness and the victim of these wrongs. I then awoke to a sense of my duty. I saw that from the standpoint of self-interest South Africa was no good to me. Not only did I not desire but I had a positive aversion to earning money or sojourning in a country where I was insulted. I was on the horns of a dilemma. Two courses were open to me. I might either free myself from the contract with Messrs Dada Abdulla on the ground that circumstances had come to my knowledge which had not been disclosed to me before, and run back to India. Or I might bear all hardships and fulfil my engagement. I was pushed out of the train by a police constable at Maritzburg, and the train having left, was sitting in the waiting room, shivering in the bitter cold. I did not know where my luggage was, nor did I dare to inquire of anybody, lest I might be insulted and assaulted once again. Sleep was out of the question. Doubt took possession of my mind. Late at night, I came to the conclusion that to run back to India would be cowardly. I must accomplish what I had undertaken. I must reach Pretoria, without minding insults and even assaults. Pretoria was my goal. The case was being fought out there. I made up my mind to take some steps, if that was possible, side by side with my work. This resolution somewhat pacified and strengthened me but I did not get any sleep.

Next morning I wired to the firm of Dada Abdulla and to the General Manager of the Railway. Replies were received from Dada Abdulla and his partner Sheth Abdulla Haji Adam Jhaveri who was then in Natal took strong measures. They wired to their Indian agents in various places to look after me. They likewise saw the General Manager. The Indian traders of Maritzburg came to see me in response to the telegram received by the local agent. They tried to comfort me and told me that all of them had had the

same bitter experiences as myself, but they did not mind such things, being habituated to them. Trade and sensitiveness could ill go together. They had therefore made it a principle to pocket insults as they might pocket cash. They told me how Indians could not enter the railway station by the main gate and how difficult it was for them to purchase tickets. I left for Pretoria the same night. The Almighty Searcher of all hearts put my determination to a full test. I suffered further insults and received more beatings on my way to Pretoria. But all this only confirmed me in my determination.

Thus in 1893, I obtained full experience of the condition of Indians in South Africa. But I did nothing beyond occasionally talking with the Indians in Pretoria on the subject. It appeared to me that to look after the firm's case and to take up the question of the Indian grievances in South Africa at the same time was impossible. I could see that trying to do both would be to ruin both. 1894 was thus already upon us.[1] I returned to Durban and prepared to return to India. At the farewell entertainment held by Dada Abdulla, someone put a copy of the *Natal Mercury* in my hands. I read it and found that the detailed report of the proceedings of the Natal Legislative Assembly contained a few lines under the caption 'Indian Franchise'. The local Government was about to introduce a Bill to disfranchise Indians, which could only be the beginning of the end of what little rights they were then enjoying. The speeches made at the time left no doubt about the intention of the Government. I read the report to the traders and others present and explained the situation to them as best I could. I was not in possession of all the facts. I suggested that the Indians should strenuously resist this attack on their rights. They agreed but declared their inability to fight the battle themselves and urged me to stay on. I consented to stay a month or so longer by which time the struggle would be fought out. The same night I drew up a petition[2] to be presented to the Legislative Assembly. A telegram was sent to the Government requesting a delay of proceedings. A committee was appointed at once with Sheth Haji Adam[3] as chairman and the telegram was sent in his name. The further reading of the Bill was postponed for two days. That petition was the first ever sent by the Indians to a South African legislature. It did create an

[1] The original adds here, "and even the case came to a conclusion".
[2] For the text, *vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Assembly", June 28, 1894.
[3] Abdulla, Haji Adam

impression although it failed to defeat the Bill, the later history of which I have narrated in Chapter IV. This was the South African Indians' first experience of such agitation, and a new thrill of enthusiasm passed through the community. Meetings were held every day and more and more persons attended them. The requisite funds were over-subscribed. Many volunteers helped in preparing copies, securing signatures and similar work without any remuneration. There were others who both worked and subscribed to the funds. The descendants of the ex-indentured Indians joined the movement with alacrity. They knew English and wrote a fine hand. They did copying and other work ungrudgingly day and night. Within a month a memorial with ten thousand signatures was forwarded to Lord Ripon, and the immediate task I had set before myself was done.

I asked for leave to return home. But the agitation had aroused such keen interest among the Indians that they would not let me go. They said: "You yourself have explained to us that this is the first step taken with a view to our ultimate extinction. Who knows whether the Colonial Secretary will return a favourable reply to our memorial? You have witnessed our enthusiasm. We are willing and ready to work. We have funds too. But for want of a guide, what little has been done will go for nothing. We therefore think it is your duty to stay on." I also felt that it would be well if a permanent organization was formed to watch Indian interests. But where was I to live and how? They offered me a regular salary, but I expressly declined. One may not receive a large salary for public work. Besides I was a pioneer. According to my notions at the time, I thought I should live in a style usual for barristers and reflecting credit on the community, and that would mean great expense. It would be improper to depend for my maintenance upon a body whose activities would necessitate a public appeal for funds, and my power of workwould be thereby crippled. For this and similar reasons I flatly refused to accept remuneration for public work. But I suggested that I was prepared to stay if the principal traders among them could see their way to giving me legal work and giving me retainers for it beforehand. The retainers might be for a year. We might deal with each other for that period, examine the results, and then continue the arrangement if both parties were agreeable. This suggestion was cordially accepted by all.

I applied for admission as an advocate of the Supreme Court of Natal. The Natal Law Society opposed my application on the sole ground that the law did not contemplate that coloured barristers

should be placed on the roll. The late Mr. Escombe, the famous advocate, who was Attorney-General and afterwards also Premier of Natal, was my counsel. The prevailing practice for a long time was that the leading barrister should present such applications without any fees, and Mr. Escombe advocated my cause accordingly. He was also Senior Counsel for my employers. The Senior Court overruled the Law Society's objection, and granted my application. Thus the Law Society's opposition brought me into further prominence without their wishing it. The newspapers of South Africa ridiculed the Law Society and some of them even congratulated me.

The temporary committee was placed on a permanent footing. I had never attended a session of the Indian National Congress, but had read about it. I had seen Dadabhai, the Grand Old Man of India, and admired him. I was therefore a Congress devotee, and wished to popularize the name. Inexperienced as I was, I did not try to find out a new name. I was also afraid of committing a mistake. So I advised the Indians to call their organization the Natal Indian Congress. I laid before them very imperfectly what meagre knowledge I had of the Indian National Congress. Anyhow the Natal Indian Congress was founded about May[1] 1894.[2] There was this difference between the Indian and the Natal Congress, that the latter organization worked throughout the year and those who paid an annual subscription of at least three pounds were admitted to membership. Amounts exceeding that sum were gratefully received. Endeavours were made to obtain the maximum amount from each member. There were about half a dozen members who paid twenty-four pounds a year. There was a considerable number of those paying twelve pounds. About three hundred members were enrolled in a month. They included Hindus, Musalmans, Parsis and Christians, and came from all Indian States that were represented in Natal. The work proceeded with great vigour throughout the first year. The well-to-do traders went around far off villages in their own conveyances, enrolling new members and collecting subscriptions. Everybody did not pay for the mere asking. Some required to be persuaded. This persuasion was a sort of political training, and made people acquainted with the facts of the

[1] The original has: "Or June".

[2] Cf. "Report of the Natal Indian Congress", August, 1895, where the date given is 22nd August, 1894.

situation. Again, a meeting of the Congress was held at least once a month, when detailed accounts were presented and adopted. Current events were explained and recorded in the minute-book. Members asked various questions. Fresh subjects were considered. The advantage of all this was that those who never spoke at such meetings got accustomed to do so. The speeches again must be in proper form. All this was a novel experience. The community was deeply interested. In the meanwhile the welcome news came that Lord Ripon had disallowed the Disfranchising Bill, and this redoubled their zeal and self-confidence.

Side by side with external agitation, the question of internal improvement was also taken up. The Europeans throughout South Africa had been agitating against Indians on the ground of their ways of life. They always argued that the Indians were very dirty and close-fisted. They lived in the same place where they traded. Their houses were mere shanties. They would not spend money even on their own comforts. How could cleanly open handed Europeans with their multifarious wants compete in trade with such parsimonious and dirty people? Lectures were therefore delivered, debates held, and suggestions made at Congress meetings on subjects such as domestic sanitation, personal hygiene, the necessity of having separate buildings for houses and shops and, for well-to-do traders, of living in a style befitting their position. The proceedings were conducted in Gujarati.

The reader can see what an amount of practical and political education the Indians thus received. Under the auspices of the Congress, the Natal Indian Educational Association was formed for the benefit of the young Indians, who, being the children of ex-indentured labourers, were born in Natal and spoke English. Its members paid a nominal fee. The chief objects of the Association were to provide a meeting place for those youths, to create in them a love for the mother country and to give them general information about it. It was also intended to impress upon them that free Indians considered them as their own kith and kin, and to create respect for the latter in the minds of the former. The funds of the Congress were large enough to leave a surplus after defraying its expenses. This was devoted to the purchase of land which yields an income to the present day.

I have deliberately entered into all these details, for without them

the reader cannot realize how satyagraha spontaneously sprang into existence and how the Indians went through a natural course of preparation for it. I am compelled to omit the remarkable subsequent history of the Congress, how it was confronted with difficulties, how Government officials attacked and how it escaped scatheless from their attacks. But one fact must be placed on record. Steps were taken to save the community from the habit of exaggeration. Attempts were always made to draw their attention to their own shortcomings. Whatever force there was in the arguments of the Europeans was duly acknowledged. Every occasion, when it was possible to co-operate with the Europeans on terms of equality and consistent with self-respect was heartily availed of. The newspapers were supplied with as much information about the Indian movement as they could publish, and whenever Indians were unfairly attacked in the Press replies were sent to the newspapers concerned.

There was an organization[1] in the Transvaal similar to the Natal Indian Congress but quite independent of it. There were likewise differences in the constitutions of the two bodies into which we need not enter. There was a similar body in Cape Town as well, with a constitution different from that of the Natal Congress and the Transvaal Association. Still the activities of all the three bodies were nearly identical.

The Natal Congress completed its first year in the middle of 1895.[2] My work as an advocate met with the approval of my clients, and my stay in Natal was prolonged. In 1896 I went to India for six months with the leave of the community. I had hardly completed that period in India, when I received a cablegram from Natal asking me to return at once, and I did so. The events of 1896-97 demand a fresh chapter for their treatment.

CHAPTER VII

A REVIEW OF THE EARLY STRUGGLE (CONTINUED)

Thus the Natal Indian Congress was placed on a permanent footing. I spent nearly two years and a half in Natal, mostly doing political work. I then saw that if I was still to prolong my stay in South Africa, I must bring over my family from India. I likewise thought of making a brief sojourn in the homeland and of acquainting Indian leaders with the condition of Indian settlers in

[1] British Indian Association

[2] The original has here: “The year 1894 came to an end”.

Natal and other parts of South Africa. The Congress allowed me leave of absence for six months and the late Mr. Adamji Miyankhan, the well-known merchant of Natal, was appointed Secretary in my stead. He discharged his duties with great ability.

He had a fair knowledge of English, which had been greatly supplemented by use. He had studied Gujarati in the ordinary course. As he had mercantile dealings chiefly with the Zulus, he had acquired an intimate knowledge of the Zulu language and was well conversant with Zulu manners and customs. He was a man of a very quiet and amiable disposition. He was not given to much speech. I have entered into these details in order to show that for holding responsible positions, truthfulness, patience, tolerance, firmness, presence of mind, courage and common sense are far more essential qualifications than a knowledge of English or mere learning. Where these fine qualities are absent, the best literary attainments are of little use in public work.

I returned to India in the middle of the year 1896. As steamers from Natal were then more easily available for Calcutta than for Bombay, I went on board one bound for that city. For the indentured labourers were embarked from Calcutta or Madras. While proceeding to Bombay from Calcutta, I missed my train on the way and had to stop in Allahabad for a day. My work commenced there. I saw Mr. Chesney of the *Pioneer*. He talked with me courteously, but told me frankly that his sympathies were with the Colonials. He, however, promised that if I wrote anything, he would read it and notice it in his paper. This was good enough for me.

While in India, I wrote a pamphlet on the condition of Indians in South Africa.[1] It was noticed by almost all newspapers and it passed through two editions. Five thousand copies were distributed in various places in India. It was during this visit that I had the privilege of seeing Indian leaders, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, Justices Badruddin Tebji and Mahadev Govind Ranade and others in Bombay, and Lokamanya Tilak and his circle, Prof. Bhandarkar and Gopal Krishna Gokhale and his circle in Poona. I delivered speeches in Bombay, Poona and Madras.[2] I do not propose to deal with these events in

[1] *Vide* "The Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa : Appeal to the Indian Public", August 14, 1896 & "Notes on the Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa", September 22, 1896. The pamphlet later became known as the Green Pamphlet because of the colour of its cover.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Bombay", September 26, 1896, "Speech at Meeting, Madras", October 26, 1896 & "Speech at Public Meeting, Poona", November 16, 1896.

detail.

I cannot, however, resist the temptation of describing here a sacred reminiscence of Poona, although it is not strictly relevant to our subject. The Sarvajanik Sabha was controlled by the Lokamanya, while Shri Gokhale was connected with the Deccan Sabha.I first saw Tilak Maharaj. When I spoke to him about my intention to hold a meeting in Poona, he asked me if I had seen Gopalrao. I did not understand whom he meant. He therefore asked me again if I had seen Shri Gokhale and if I knew him.

"I have not yet seen him. I know him by name and mean to see him," I replied.

"You do not seem to be familiar with Indian politics," said the Lokamanya.

"I stayed in India only for a short time after my return from England, and had not then applied myself to political questions, as I thought it beyond my capacity," I said.

Lokamanya then said: "In that case I must give you some information. There are two parties in Poona, one represented by the Sarvajanik Sabha and the other by the Deccan Sabha."

I replied: "I know something about this matter."

Lokamanya: "It is easy to hold a meeting here. But it seems to me that you wish to lay your case before all the parties here and seek to enlist the support of all. I like your idea. But if a member of the Sarvajanik Sabha is selected to preside over your meeting, no member of the Deccan Sabha will attend it. Similarly, if a member of the Deccan Sabha were to preside, members of the Sarvajanik Sabha would absent themselves. You should therefore find out a non-partisan as chairman. I can only offer suggestions in the matter, and shall not be able to render any other assistance. Do you know Prof. Bhandarkar? Even if you do not know him, you should see him. He is considered a neutral. He does not take part in politics, but perhaps you can induce him to preside over your meeting. Speak to Shri Gokhale about this, and seek his advice too. In all probability he will give you the same advice. If a man of the position of Prof. Bhandarkar consents to preside, I am certain that both the parties will see to it that a good meeting is held. At any rate you can count upon our fullest help in the matter."

I then saw Gokhale. I have written elsewhere how I fell in love

with him at this very first sight.[1] The curious may look up the files of *Young India* or *Navajivan* for it. Gokhale liked the advice which Lokamanya had given me. Accordingly I paid my respects to the venerable Professor. He heard attentively the story of the Indian wrongs in Natal and said, "You see I rarely take part in public life. Then again, I am getting old. But what you have told me has stirred me deeply. I like your idea of seeking the co-operation of all parties. You are young and ignorant of political conditions in India. Tell the members of both the parties that I have agreed to your request. On an intimation from any of them that the meeting is to be held, I will certainly come and preside." A successful meeting was held in Poona. The leaders of both the parties attended and spoke in support of my cause.

I then went to Madras. There I saw Sir (then Mr. Justice) Subrahmanya Aiyar, Shri P. Anandacharlu, Shri G. Subrahmanyam, the then editor of *The Hindu,* Shri Parameshvaran Pillai, editor of *The Madras Standard,* Shri Bhashyam Iyengar, the famous advocate, Mr. Norton and others. A great meeting too was held. From Madras I went to Calcutta, where I saw Surendranath Banerji, Maharaja Jyotindra Mohan Tagore, the late Mr. Saunders, editor of *The Englishman,* and others.[2] While a meeting was being arranged in Calcutta, I received a cablegram from Natal asking me to return at once. This was in November 1896. I concluded that some movement hostile to the Indians must be on foot. I therefore left my work at Calcutta incomplete and went to Bombay, where I took the first available steamer with my family. s. s. *Courland* had been purchased by Messrs Dada Abdulla and represented one more enterprise of that very adventurous firm, namely, to run a steamer between Porbandar and Natal. The *Naderi,* a steamer of the Persian Steam Navigation Company, left Bombay for Natal immediately after The total number of passengers on the two steamers was about 800.

The agitation in India attained enough importance for the principal Indian newspapers to notice it in their columns and for

[1] *Vide* "A Confession of Faith", July 13, 1921. This appeared in the issue of *Young India,* 13-7-1921 and *Navajivan,* 21-7-1921.

[2] Gandhiji was interviewed by *The Statesman* and *The Englishman; vide* "Interview to *The Statesman*", November 10, 1896 & "Interview to *The Englishman*", on or before November 13, 1896.

Reuter to send cablegrams about it to England.[1] This I came to know on reaching Natal. Reuter's representative in England had sent a brief cablegram to South Africa, containing an exaggerated summary of my speeches in India. This is not an unusual experience. Such exaggeration is not always intentional. Very busy people with prejudices and prepossessions of their own read something superficially and then prepare a summary which is sometimespartly a product of imagination. This summary, again, is differently interpreted in different places. Distortion thus takes place without anyone intending it. This is the risk attending public activities and this is also their limitation. While in India I had criticized the Europeans of Natal. I had spoken very strongly against the £3 tax on indentured labourers. I had given a vivid account of the sufferings of an indentured labourer named Subrahmanyam who had been assaulted by his master, whose wounds I had seen and whose case was in my hands. When the Europeans in Natal read the distorted summary of my speeches, they were greatly exasperated against me. The remarkable fact, however, was that what I had written in Natal was more severe and detailed than what I wrote and spoke in India. My speeches in India were free from the slightest exaggeration. On the other hand, as I knew from experience that if we describe an event to a stranger, he sees more in it than what we intend to convey, I had deliberately described the South African situation in India less forcibly than the facts warranted. But very few Europeans would read what I wrote in Natal, and still fewer would care for it. The case, however, was obviously different with my speeches and writings in India. Thousands of Europeans would read Reuter's summaries. Moreover, a subject which is considered worthy of being communicated by cablegram becomes invested with an importance it does not intrinsically possess. The Europeans of Natal thought that my work in India carried the weight attributed to it by them and that therefore the system of indentured labour would perhaps come to an end, and hundreds of European planters would suffer in consequence. Besides, they felt blackened before India.

While the Europeans of Natal were thus in an excited state of mind, they heard that I was returning to Natal with my family per s. s. *Courland*, that it carried from 300 to 400 Indian passengers, and that

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies (Appendix Y)", March 15, 1897.

s. s. *Naderi* was also arriving at the same time with an equal number of Indians. This inflamed them all the more, and there was a great explosion of feeling. The Europeans of Natal held large meetings, which were attended by almost all the prominent members of their community. The Indian passengers in general and myself in particular came in for a great deal of severe criticism. The expected arrival of the *Courland* and the *Naderi* was represented as an 'invasion' of Natal. The speakers said that I had brought those 800 passengers to Natal and that this was my first step towards flooding Natal with free Indians. A unanimous resolution was passed that the passengers of both the steamers including myself should be prevented fromlanding in Natal. If the Government of Natal would not or could not prevent the passengers from landing, the committee appointed at the meeting was to take the law into their own hands and to prevent the Indians from landing by main force. Both the steamers reached Durban on the same day[1].

The reader will remember that bubonic plague made its first appearance in India in 1896. In their effort to prevent our landing the Government of Natal were hampered by legal difficulties as the Immigration Restriction Act had not yet come it being. Otherwise their sympathies were entirely with the Committee of Europeans referred to above. The late Mr. Escombe, a member of the Government, took a prominent part in the proceedings of that Committee. It was he who instigated them. There is a rule in force at all ports that if a case of contagious disease occurs on board a steamer, or if a steamer coming from an infected port it is detained in quarantine for a certain period. This restriction can be imposed only on sanitary grounds, and under orders from the Health Officer of the port. The Government of Natal abused their power by enforcing the above rule for political purposes. Although there was no contagious disease on board, both the steamers were detained far beyond the usual time-limit, for as many as twenty-three days. Meanwhile, the Committee of Europeans continued their activities. Messrs Dada Abdulla, who were the owners of the *Courland* and the agents for the *Naderi*, were subjected to a severe hectoring by them. Inducements were offered to them if they agreed to take back the passengers, and they were threatened with loss of business if they refused to do so. But the partners of the firm were no cowards. They said they did not care

[1] December 18, 1896

if they were ruined; they would fight to the bitter end but would not be coerced into committing the crime of sending away those helpless but innocent passengers; they were no strangers to patriotism. The old advocate of the firm, Mr. F. A. Laughton, K.C., was also a brave man.

As luck would have it, the late Shri Mansukhlal Hiralal Nazar, a Kayastha gentleman from Surat and a nephew of the late Mr. Justice Nanabhai Haridas, reached Africa about the same time. I did not know him, nor was I aware of his going.[1] I need scarcely say that I had no hand in bringing the passengers who arrived by the *Naderi* and the *Courland.* Most of them were old residents of South Africa. Many again were bound for the Transvaal. Threatening notices were served by the Committee of Europeans even upon these passengers. The captains of the steamers read them out to the passengers. The notices expressly stated that the Europeans of Natal were in a dangerous temper and said in effect that if in spite of the warning the Indian passengers attempted to land, the members of the Committee would attend at the port and push every Indian into the sea. I interpreted this notice to the passengers on the *Courland.* An English-knowing passenger on board the *Naderi* did the same for his fellow-passengers. The passengers on both the steamers flatly declined to go back and added that many of them were proceeding to the Transvaal, that some of the rest were old residents of Natal, that in any case everyone of them was legally entitled to land and that, the threats of the Committee notwithstanding, they were determined to land in order to test their right to do so.

The Government of Natal was at its wit's end. How long could an unjust restriction be enforced? Twenty-three days had passed already. Dada Abdulla did not flinch, nor did the passengers. The quarantine was thus lifted after 23 days and the steamers were permitted to steam into harbour. Meanwhile, Mr. Escombe pacified the excited Committee of Europeans. At a meeting which was held, he said, "The Europeans in Durban have displayed commendable unity and courage. You have done all you could. Government has also helped you. The Indians were detained for 23 days. You have given sufficient expression to your sentiments and your public spirit. That will make a profound impression on the Imperial Government. Your action has made the path of the Government of Natal easy. If you now

[1] Nazar was to become one of Gandhiji's trusted associates till his death in 1906; *vide* "Mansukhlal Hiralal Nazar", *Indian Opinion*, January 27, 1906.

prevent by force a single Indian passenger from landing, you will injure your own interests and place the Government in an awkward position. And even then you will not succeed in preventing the Indians from landing. The passengers are not at all to blame. There are women and children among them. When they embarked at Bombay, they had no idea of your feelings. I would therefore advise you to disperse and not to obstruct these people. I assure you, however, that the Government of Natal will obtain from the Legislative Council the requisite powers in order to restrict future immigration." This is only a summary of Mr. Escombe's speech. His audience was disappointed, but he had great influence over the Europeans of Natal. They dispersed in consequence of his advice and both the steamers came into port.

A message reached me from Mr. Escombe advising me not to land with the others but to wait until evening when he would send the Superintendent of Water Police to escort me home, and adding that my family were free to land at any time. This was not an order according to law, but was by way of advice to the captain not to allow me to land and of warning to me of the danger that was hanging over my head. The captain had not the power forcibly to prevent me from landing. But I came to the conclusion that I should accept this suggestion. I sent my family to the residence of my old friend and client, Parsi Rustomji, instead of to my own place, and told them that I would meet them there. When the passengers had disembarked, Mr. Laughton, counsel for Dada Abdulla and a personal friend of mine, came up and met me. He asked me why I had not yet landed. I told him about Mr. Escombe's letter. He said that he did not like the idea of my waiting till evening and then entering the city like a thief or offender, that if I was not afraid, I should accompany him there and then, and that we would walk to the town as if nothing had happened. I replied: "I do not think I am afraid. It is only a question of propriety whether or not I should accept Mr. Escombe's suggestion. And we should also consider whether the captain of the steamer is responsible in the matter." Mr. Laughton smiled and said: "What has Mr. Escombe done for you that you must needs heed his suggestion? And what reason have you to believe that he is actuated by kindliness and not by some ulterior motive? I know more than you what has happened in the town, and what hand Mr. Escombe had in the happenings there." I interrupted him with a shaking of the head. "We might assume," continued Mr. Laughton, "that he is actuated by the

best of motives. But I am positively of opinion that if you comply with his suggestion, you will stand humiliated. I would, therefore, advise you, if you are ready, to accompany me just now. The captain is our man, and his responsibility is our responsibility. He is accountable only to Dada Abdulla. I know what they will think of the matter, as they have displayed great courage in the present struggle." I replied: "Let us then go. I have no preparations to make. All I have to do is to put on my turban. Let us inform the captain and start". We took the captain's leave.

Mr. Laughton was an old and well-known advocate of Durban. I had come in intimate contact with him before I returnedto India. I used to consult him in difficult cases and often to engage him as my senior. He was a brave and powerfully-built man.

Our road lay through the principal street of Durban. It was about half past four in the evening when we started. The sky was slightly overcast and the sun was not to be seen. It would take a pedestrian at least one hour to reach Rustomji Sheth's place. The number of persons present about the wharf was not larger than what is to be usually seen there. As soon as we landed, some boys saw us.[1] As I was the only Indian who put on a turban of a particular type, they at once recognized me, began to shout 'Gandhi', 'Gandhi', 'Thrash him', 'Surround him', and came up towards us. Some began to throw pebbles at us. A few elderly Europeans joined the boys. Gradually the party of rioters began to grow. Mr. Laughton thought that there was danger in our going on foot. He therefore hailed a rickshaw. I had never sat in a rickshaw before, as it was thoroughly disgusting to me to sit in a vehicle pulled by human beings. But I then felt that it was my duty to use that vehicle. I have experienced five or seven times in my life that one whom God wishes to save cannot fall even if he will. If I did not fall I cannot take any credit for it to myself. These rickshaws are pulled by Zulus. The elderly Europeans and the boys threatened the rickshaw-puller that if he allowed me to sit in his rickshaw they would beat him and smash his rickshaw to pieces. The rickshaw boy, therefore, said 'Kha' (meaning 'no') and went away. I was thus spared the shame of a rickshaw ride.

We had no alternative now but to proceed to our destination on foot. A mob followed us. With every step we advanced, it grew larger

[1] The original has here: "There were no grown-ups among them at all."

and larger. The gathering was enormous when we reached West Street. A man of powerful build took hold of Mr. Laughton and tore him away from me. He was not therefore in a position to come up with me. The crowd began to abuse me and shower upon me stones and whatever else they could lay their hands on. They threw down my turban. Meanwhile a burly fellow came up to me, slapped me in the face and then kicked me. I was about to fall down unconscious when I held on to the railings of a house near by. I took breath for a while and when the fainting was over, proceeded on my way. I had almost given up the hope of reaching home alive. ButI remember well that even then my heart did not arraign my assailants.

While I was thus winding my way, the wife of the Superintendent of Police[1] at Durban was coming from the opposite direction. We knew each other well. She was a brave lady. Although the sky was cloudy and the sun about to set, she opened her sunshade for my protection and began to walk at my side. The Europeans would not insult a lady, especially the wife of the old and popular Superintendent of Police, nor would they hurt her. They must avoid injuring her while aiming blows at me. The injuries, therefore, which I received after she joined me were not serious. Meanwhile the Superintendent of Police came to know of the attack upon me and sent a party of constables for my protection. The police surrounded me. The Police Station was on our way. When we reached there I saw that the Superintendent of Police was waiting for us. He offered me asylum in the Police Station, but I declined the offer with thanks and said, "I must reach my destination. I have faith in the fair play of the citizens of Durban and in the righteousness of my own cause. I am thankful to you for sending the police party for my protection. Mrs. Alexander too has contributed to my safety."

I reached Rustomji's house without further trouble. It was nearly evening when I reached there. Dr. Dadibarjor, the medical officer of the *Courland,* who was with Rustomji Sheth, began to treat me. He examined my wounds. There were not many of them. One blind wound in particular was very painful. But I was not yet privileged to rest in peace. Thousands of Europeans gathered before Rustomji Sheth's house. After nightfall, hooligans also joined the crowd. The crowd sent word to Rustomji Sheth that if he did not hand

[1] R. C. Alexander; *vide* "Letter to R. C. Alexander", March 24, 1897.

me over to them, they would burn him and his house along with me. Rustomji Sheth was too good an Indian to be daunted. When Superintendent Alexander came to know how matters stood, he quietly joined the crowd with a number of detectives. He sent for a bench and stood upon it. Thus under the pretence of talking to the crowd he took possession of the entrance to Rustomji's house so that none could break and enter it. He had already posted detectives at proper places. Immediately on arrival, he had instructed a subordinate to disguise himself as an Indian trader by putting on Indian dress and painting his face, to see me and deliver tome the following message: "If you wish to save your friend, his guests and property, and your own family, I advise you to disguise yourself as an Indian constable, come out through Rustomji's godown, steal through the crowd with my man and reach the Police Station. A carriage is awaiting you at the corner of the street. This is the only way in which I can save you and others. The crowd is so excited that I am not in a position to control it. If you are not prompt in following my directions, I am afraid the crowd will raze Rustomji's house to the ground and it is impossible for me to imagine how many lives will be lost and how much property destroyed."

I gauged the situation at once. I quickly disguised myself as a constable and left Rustomji's house. The police officer and I reached the Police Station in safety. In the meantime Mr. Alexander was humouring the crowd by singing topical songs and talking to them. When he knew that I had reached the Police Station, he became serious and asked:

"What do you want?"

"We want Gandhi."

"What will you do with him?"

"We will burn him."

"What harm has he done to you?"

"He has vilified us in India and wants to flood Natal with Indians."

"What if he does not come out?"

"We will then burn this house."

"His wife and children are also there. There are other men and women besides. Would you not be ashamed of burning women and children?"

"The responsibility for that will rest with you. What can we do when you make us helpless in the matter? We do not wish to hurt anyone else. It would be enough if you hand over Gandhi to us. If you do not surrender the culprit, and if others are injured in our endeavour to capture him, would it be fair on your part to blame us?"

The Superintendent gently smiled and informed the crowd that I had left Rustomji's house, passed through their midst, and reached another place already. The crowd laughed loudly and shouted, "It is a lie, it is a lie".

The Superintendent said: "If you will not believe your old Superintendent of Police, please appoint a committee of three or four men from amongst you. Let others promise that they will not enter the house, and that if the committee fail to find Gandhi in the house, you will peacefully return to your homes. You got excited today and did not obey the police. That reflects discredit on you, not on the police. The police therefore played a trick on you; it removed your prey from your midst and you have lost the game. You certainly cannot blame the police for this. The police, whom you yourselves have appointed, have simply done their duty."

The Superintendent addressed the crowd with such suavity and determination, that they gave him the promise he had asked for. A committee was appointed. It searched Rustomji's house through and through, and reported to the crowd that the Superintendent was right and had beaten them in the game. The crowd was disappointed. But they kept their word and dispersed without committing any mischief. This happened on January 13, 1897.[1]

The same morning after the quarantine on the steamers had been removed, the reporter of a Durban newspaper had seen me on the steamer.[2] He had asked me everything. It was quite easy to dispose of the charges against me to his satisfaction. I showed to him in detail that I had not indulged in the least exaggeration. What I had done was only my duty. If I had failed to discharge it, I would be unworthy of the name of man. All this appeared in the newspapers the next day.

[1] The entire background to and the incidents relating to this episode were set down by Gandhiji on March 15, 1897; *vide* "Memorial to the Secretary of State for the Colonies; also An *Autobiography*, Pt. III, Ch. II & III.

[2] For a report of the interview, *vide* "Interview to *The Natal Advertiser*", January 13, 1897.

Sensible people among the Europeans admitted their mistake. The newspapers expressed their sympathy with the standpoint of the Europeans in Natal, but at the same time fully defended my action. This enhanced my reputation as well as the prestige of the Indian community. It was proved that the Indians, poor as they were, were no cowards and, that the Indian traders were prepared to fight for their self-respect and for their country regardless of loss.

Thus though the Indian community had to suffer hardship and though Dada Abdulla incurred big losses, the ultimate result, I believe, was entirely beneficial. The community had an opportunity of measuring their own strength and their self-confidence increased in consequence. I had a most valuable experience, and whenever I think of that day, I feel that God was preparing me for the practice of satyagraha.

The events in Natal had their repercussion in England. Mr. Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies, cabled to theGovernment of Natal asking them to prosecute my assailants and to see that justice was done to me.[1]

Mr. Escombe, who was Attorney-General with the Government of Natal, called me. He told me about Mr. Chamberlain's cable. He expressed his regret for the injuries I had sustained, and his pleasure that the consequences of the assault were not more serious. He added, "I can assure you that I did not at all intend that you or any other member of your community should be injured. As I feared that you might possibly be hurt, I sent you word to say that you should land at night. You did not like my suggestion. I do not wish to blame you in the least that you accepted Mr. Laughton's advice. You were perfectly entitled to do what you thought fit. The Government of Natal fully accepts Mr. Chamberlain's demand. We desire that the offenders should be brought to book. Can you identify any of your assailants?"

I replied: "I might perhaps be able to identify one or two of them. But I must say at once before this conversation proceeds that I have already made up my mind not to prosecute my assailants. I cannot see that they are at fault. What information they had, they had obtained from their leaders. It is too much to expect them to judge whether it was correct or otherwise. If all that they heard about me was

[1] Cf. *An Autobiography,* Pt. III, Ch. III.

true, it was natural for them to be excited and do something wrong in a fit of indignation. I would not blame them for it. Excited crowds have always tried to deal out justice in that manner. If anyone is to blame it is the Committee of Europeans, you yourself and therefore, the Government of Natal. Reuter might have cabled any distorted account. But when you knew that I was coming to Natal, it was your duty and the duty of the Committee to question me about the suspicions you entertained with regard to my activities in India, to hear what I had to say and then do what might appear proper in the circumstances. Now I cannot prosecute you or the Committee for the assault. And even if I could, I would not seek redress in a court of law. You took such steps as seemed advisable to you for safeguarding the interests of the Europeans of Natal. That is a political matter, and it remains for me to fight withyou in the political field and to convince you and the other Europeans that the Indians who constitute a large proportion of the population of the British Empire wish to preserve their self-respect and safeguard their rights without injuring the Europeans in the least."

Mr. Escombe said, "I quite understand what you say, and I appreciate it. I was not prepared to hear that you were not willing to prosecute your assailants. I would not have been displeased in the least had you prosecuted them. But since you have signified your determination not to prosecute, I do not hesitate to say not only that you have come to a right decision in the matter, but you will render further service to your community by your self-restraint. I must at the same time admit that your refusal to prosecute your assailants will save the Government of Natal from a most awkward position. If you so desire, the Government will see that your assailants are arrested, but it is scarcely necessary to tell you that it would irritate the Europeans and give rise to all manner of criticism, which no Government would relish. But if you have finally made up your mind not to prosecute, you should write to me a note signifying your intention to that effect. I cannot defend my Government merely by sending Mr. Chamberlain a summary of our conversation. I should cable to him a summary of your note. I am not, however, asking you to let me have the note just now. You had better consult your friends. Consult Mr. Laughton also. And if after such consultations you still adhere to your resolution not to prosecute, write to me. But your note should clearly state that you, on your own responsibility, refuse to prosecute your assailants. Then

only can I make use of it."

I said: "I had no idea that you had sent for me in this connection. I have not consulted anyone on the subject, nor do I wish to consult anyone now. When I decided to land and proceed with Mr. Laughton, I had made up my mind that I should not feel aggrieved in case I was injured. Prosecuting my assailants is therefore out of the question. This is a religious question with me, and I believe with you that I shall serve my community as well as myself by this act of self-restraint. I propose, therefore, to take all the responsibility on my shoulders and to give you the note you ask for here and now."

I then obtained some blank paper from him, wrote out the desired note and handed it over to him.

CHAPTER VIII

A REVIEW OF THE EARLY STRUGGLE (CONCLUDED)

THE WORK IN ENGLAND

The reader has seen in the previous chapters how the Indians tried to ameliorate their condition and enhanced their prestige. Side by side with the effort to develop strength from within they sought such assistance as they could from India and England. I have dealt to some extent with the activities in India. It now remains to note what steps were taken to enlist support from England. It was essential, in the first place, to establish relations with the British Committee of the Indian National Congress; weekly letters[1] with full particulars were therefore written to Dadabhai, the Grand Old Man of India, and to Sir William Wedderburn, the Chairman of the Committee and whenever there was an occasion to send copies of representations, a sum of at least 10 pounds was remitted as a contribution towards postal charges and the general expenditure of the Committee.

I shall here place on record a sacred reminiscence of Dadabhai Naoroji. He was not the chairman of the Committee. It seemed to us, however, that the proper course for us was to send money to him in the first instance which he might then forward to the Chairman on our behalf. But Dadabhai returned the very first instalment sent to him and suggested that we should remit money, and address communications, intended for the Committee directly to Sir William

[1] Perhaps the first of the periodical letters was written on July 5, 1894 Gandhiji maintained this practice for several years

Wedderburn. He himself would certainly render all possible assistance. But the prestige of the Committee increase only if we approached the Committee through Sir William. I also observed that Dadabhai, though far advanced in age, was very regular in his correspondence. Even when he had nothing particular to write about he would acknowledge receipt of letters by return of post with a word of encouragement thrown in. Even such letters he used to write personally, and kept copies of them in his tissue paper book.

I have shown in a previous chapter that although we had called our organization the 'Congress' we never intended to make our grievances a party question. We therefore corresponded with gentlemen belonging to other parties as well, with the full knowledge of Dadabhai. The most prominent among them were Sir Muncherjee Bhownuggree and Sir W. W. Hunter. Sir Muncherjee was then aMember of Parliament. His assistance was valuable, and he always used to favour us with important suggestions. But if there was anyone who had realized the importance of the Indian question in South Africa before the Indians themselves and accorded them valuable support, it was Sir William Wilson Hunter. He was editor of the Indian section of *The Times,* where he discussed our question in its true perspective, ever since we first addressed him in connection with it. He wrote personal letters to several gentlemen in support of our cause. He used to write to us almost every week when some important question was on the anvil. This is the purport of his very first letter: "I am sorry to read of the situation there. You have been conducting your struggle courteously, peacefully and without exaggeration. My sympathies are entirely with you on this question. I will do my best publicly as well as in private to see that justice is done to you. I am certain that we cannot yield even an inch of ground in this matter. Your demand being so reasonable, no impartial person would even suggest that you should moderate it." He reproduced the letter almost word for word in the first article he wrote for *The Times* on the question. His attitude remained the same throughout, and Lady Hunter wrote in the course of a letter that shortly before his death he had prepared an outline of a series of articles which he had planned on the Indian question.

I have mentioned the name of Shri Mansukhlal Nazar in the last chapter. This gentleman was deputed to England on behalf of the Indian community to explain the situation in detail. He was instructed to work with members of all parties, and during his stay in England he

kept in touch with Sir W. W. Hunter, Sir Muncherjee Bhownuggree and the British Committee of the Indian National Congress. He was likewise in touch with several retired officers of the Indian Civil Service, with the India Office and with the Colonial Office. Thus our endeavours were directed in all possible quarters. The result of all this evidently was that the condition of Indians overseas became a question of first-rate importance in the eyes of the Imperial Government. This fact reacted for good as well as for evil on the other colonies. That is to say, in all the colonies where Indians had settled, they awoke to the importance of their own position and the Europeans awoke to the danger which they thought the Indians were to their predominance.

CHAPTER IX

THE BOER WAR

The reader has seen in the previous chapters what was the condition of the Indians in South Africa at the outbreak of the Boer War and what were the steps taken so far in order to ameliorate it.

In 1899[1], Dr. Jameson carried out his raid on Johannesburg in pursuance of the conspiracy which he had entered into with the owners of the gold mines. The conspirators had expected that the Boer Government would come to know of the raid only after they had captured Johannesburg. Dr. Jameson and his associates badly blundered in this calculation of theirs. They fell into another error when they imagined that even in the event of the plot being discovered, untrained Boer farmers could do nothing against sharpshooters trained in Rhodesia. The raiders had likewise expected that a large majority of the population of Johannesburg would receive them with open arms. Here too the good Doctor was reckoning without his host. President Kruger had full information beforehand. With great deliberation, skill and secrecy he made preparations to meet Dr. Jameson and simultaneously arranged to arrest his fellow-conspirators. Dr. Jameson, therefore, was greeted by the Boers with gunfire before he had reached anywhere near Johannesburg. The Doctor's party was in no position to try conclusions with the army which faced them. Arrangements were similarly complete for preventing a rising in Johannesburg. None dared raise their heads and

[1] This should be 1895; *vide* Walker's *A History of South Africa*, p. 455.

the millionaires of Johannesburg were dumbfounded in consequence of President Kruger's action. The result of his excellent preparations was that the raid was disposed of with a minimum of loss in men as well as money.

Dr. Jameson and his friends, the owners of gold mines, were arrested and placed on their trial without delay. Some were sentenced to be hanged. Most of these convicts were millionaires; but the Imperial Government could do nothing for them, as they were guilty of a raid in broad daylight. President Kruger became an important man all at once. Mr. Chamberlain, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, sent a humble cablegram to him, and appealed to his sense of mercy on behalf of the convicted magnates. President Kruger was perfect master of his own game. He had no apprehension of his independence being challenged byany power in South Africa. The conspiracy of Dr. Jameson and his friends was a well-planned affair in their own eyes, but to President Kruger it seemed to be an act of insensate folly. He therefore complied with Mr. Chamberlain's humble request and not only did not enforce the sentence of death against any of the convicts, but granted them all full pardon and set them free.

But things could not go on like this for any length of time. President Kruger knew that the Jameson raid was only a minor symptom of a serious malady. It was impossible that the millionaires of Johannesburg should not endeavour to wipe out their disgrace by all means in their power. Again, nothing had been done to carry out the reforms for which the Jameson raid purported to have been organized. The millionaires, therefore, were not likely to hold their peace. Lord Milner, the British High Commissioner in South Africa, had full sympathy with their demands. Mr. Chamberlain, too, while expressing his appreciation of President Kruger's magnanimity towards the Jameson raiders, had drawn his attention to the necessity for reforms. Everyone believed that an appeal to the sword was inevitable. The demands of the Uitlanders were calculated in the end to extinguish Boer domination in the Transvaal. Both the parties were aware that the ultimate result would be war, and both were therefore preparing for it. The war of words which ensued was worthy of note. When President Kruger ordered out arms and ammunition, the British Agent warned him that the British would be compelled to bring troops into South Africa in self-defence. When British troops arrived in South Africa, President Kruger taunted the British and pushed forward

his preparations for war. Thus each side was protesting against the other's activities and strengthening its own preparations.

When President Kruger had completed his preparations, he saw that to delay any longer was to play into the hands of his enemies. The British had an inexhaustible supply of men and money. They could, therefore, afford to bide their time, gradually preparing for war and in the meantime ask President Kruger to redress the grievances of Uitlanders, and thus show to the world that they could not help waging war as he refused to grant redress. Then they would enter the war with such grand preparations that the Boers could not stand the shock and would have to accept British demands in a spirit of humiliation. Every Boer man between eighteen and sixty years in age was a skilled fighter. Boer women, too, were capable of fighting if they chose. National independence had with the Boers all the force of a religious principle. Such a brave people would not suffer humiliation even at the hands of a world empire.

President Kruger had already arrived at an understanding with the Orange Free State. Both the Boer republics followed an identical policy. President Kruger had not the slightest intention of accepting the British demands whether in full or even to the extent of satisfying the Uitlanders. Both the republics, therefore, thought that war being inevitable, for them to give any more time to the British was only to give them a chance of advancing their preparations. President Kruger thereupon delivered an ultimatum to Lord Milner, and at the same time mobilized troops on the frontiers of the Transvaal as well as the Free State. The result of such action was a foregone conclusion. A world empire like the British would not take a threat lying down. The time-limit laid down in the ultimatum expired and the Boers, advancing with lightning speed, laid siege to Ladysmith, Kimberley and Mafeking. This great war thus broke out in 1899. The reader will remember that one of the causes of the war alleged by the British was the treatment accorded to the Indians by the Boers.

The great question as to what the Indians in South Africa should do on this occasion now presented itself for solution. Among the Boers, the entire male population joined the war. Lawyers gave up their practice, farmers their farms, traders their trade, and servants left their service. The British in South Africa did not join the war in anything like the same proportion as the Boers. However, a large number of civilians in Cape Colony, Natal and Rhodesia enrolled

themselves as volunteers. Many distinguished English traders and lawyers followed suit. I now found very few lawyers in the court where I was practising as an advocate. Most of the senior members of the bar were engaged in war work. One of the charges laid against the Indians was that they went to South Africa only for money-grubbing and were merely a dead-weight upon the British. Like worms which settle inside wood and eat it up hollow, the Indians were in South Africa only to fatten themselves upon them. The Indians would not render them the slightest aid if the country was invaded or if their homes were raided. The British in such a case would have not only to defend themselves against the enemy but at the same time to protect the Indians. We Indians carefully considered this charge. All of us felt that this was a golden opportunity for us to prove that it was baseless. But on the other hand the following considerations were also urged by some:

"The British oppress us equally with the Boers. If we are subjected to hardships in the Transvaal, we are not very much better off in Natal or the Cape Colony. The difference, if any, is only one of degree. Again, we are more or less a community of slaves; knowing as we do that a small nation like the Boers is fighting for its very existence, why should we be instrumental in their destruction? Finally, from a practical point of view, no one will take it upon himself to predict a defeat for the Boers. And if they win, they will never fail to wreak vengeance upon us."

There was a powerful party among us which strongly advanced the above argument. I could understand it and allowed it due weight. However, it did not commend itself to me, and I refuted it to myself and to the community as follows:

"Our existence in South Africa is only in our capacity as British subjects. In every memorial we have presented, we have asserted our rights as such. We have been proud of our British citizenship, or have given our rulers and the world to believe that we are so proud. Our rulers profess to safeguard our rights because we are British subjects, and what little rights we still retain, we retain because we are British subjects. It would be unbecoming to our dignity as a nation to look on with folded hands at a time when ruin stares the British as well as ourselves in the face simply because they ill-treat us here. Any such criminal inaction could only aggravate our difficulties. If we miss this opportunity, which has come to us unsought, of proving the falsity of a charge which we believe to be false, we should stand self-

condemned, and it will be no matter for surprise if then the English treat us worse than before and sneer at us more than ever. The fault in such a case would lie entirely at our door. To say that the charges preferred against ourselves had no foundation in fact and were absolutely untenable, would only be to deceive ourselves. It is true that we are helots in the Empire, but so far we have tried to better our condition, continuing the while to remain in the Empire. That has been the policy of all our leaders in India, and ours too. And if we desire to win our freedom and achieve our welfare as members of the British Empire, here is a golden opportunity for us to do so by helping the British in the war by all the means at our disposal. It must largely be conceded that justice is on the side of the Boers. But every single subject of a state must not hope to enforce his private opinion in all cases. The authorities may not always be right, but so long as the subjects own allegiance to a state, it is their clear duty generally to accommodate themselves and to accord their support to acts of the state.

"Again, if any class among the subjects consider that the action of a government is immoral from a religious standpoint before they help or hinder it, they must endeavour fully and even at the risk of their lives to dissuade the Government from pursuing such a course. We have done nothing of the kind. Such a moral crisis is not present before us, and no one says that we wish to hold aloof from this war for any such universal and comprehensive reason. Our ordinary duty as subjects, therefore, is not to enter into the merits of the war, but, when war has actually broken out, to render such assistance as we possibly can. Finally, to suggest that in case the Boers won,—and a Boer victory was well within the range of possibility,—our last state would be worse than our first, and the Boers would exact frightful revenge, would be doing injustice to the chivalrous Boers as well as to ourselves. To waste the slightest thought upon such a contingency would only be a sign of our effeminacy and a reflection on our loyalty. Would an Englishman think for a moment what would happen to himself if the English lost the war? A man about to join a war cannot advance such an argument without forfeiting his manhood."

I advanced these arguments in 1899, and even today I do not see any reasons for modifying them. That is to say, if I had today the faith in the British Empire which I then entertained, and if I now cherished the hope, which I did at that time, of achieving our freedom under its aegis, I would advance the same arguments, word for word,

in South Africa, and, in similar circumstances, even in India. I heard many attempted refutations of these arguments in South Africa and subsequently in England. But I discovered no ground for changing my views. I know that my present opinions have no bearing on the subject of this volume, but there are two valid reasons why I have adverted to the matter here. I have, in the first place, no right to expect that the reader who takes up this book in a hurry will give it a patient and attentive perusal, and such a reader will find it difficult to reconcile the above views with my present activities. Secondly, the underlying principle in the above arguments is satyagraha, insistence on truth. That one should appear to be as one really is and should act accordingly, is not the last, but the first step to practical religion. The building up of a religious life is impossible without such a foundation.

To return to our narrative.

My arguments commended themselves to many. The reader must not suppose that I was the only one to advance them. Moreover, even before these views were set forth, there were many Indians who held that we should do our bit in the war. But now the practical question arose: Who would lend an ear to the weak voice of the Indians when there was raging this terrible whirlwind of war? What weight would this offer of help carry? None of us had ever wielded a weapon of war. Even the work performed by non-combatants in a war required training. None of us knew even how to march in step. It was no easy task to perform long marches with one's baggage on one's own shoulders. Again, the whites would treat us all as 'coolies', insult us and look down upon us. How was all this to be borne? And if we volunteered for service, how could we induce the Government to accept our offer? Finally we came to the conclusion that we should make earnest endeavours to get our offer accepted[1], that the experience of work would teach us to do more work, that if we had the will, God would grant us the ability to serve, that we need not worry how we could do the work entrusted but should train ourselves for it as best we might, and that having once decided to serve, we should cease to think of discriminating between dignified work and other and serve, putting up even with insults if it came to that.

We encountered formidable difficulties in getting our offer

[1] The offer of voluntary services was conveyed to the Colonial Secretary on October 19, 1899; though the Government welcomed the offer on October 23, the Indian Ambulance Corps could actually move to the front only on December 14.

favourably entertained. The story is interesting but this is not the place to detail it. Suffice it to say that the leaders among us received training in nursing the wounded and the sick, obtained medical certificates of physical fitness and sent a formal letter[1] to the Government. This letter and the eagerness we evinced to serve in whatever capacity the Government would accept us created a very good impression. The Government thanked us in reply but rejected our offer for the time being. Meanwhile the Boers continued to advance like a great flood, and it was feared that they might reach Durban. There were heaps of wounded and dead everywhere. We were continually renewing our offer, and sanction was given at last for the formation of an Indian Ambulance Corps.[2] We had expressed our willingness even to do sweepers' or scavengers' work in hospitals. No wonder, therefore, that the idea of an Ambulance Corps was perfectly welcome to us. Our offer had been made, in the first instance, in respect of free and ex-indentured Indians, but we had suggested the desirability of permitting the indentured Indians too to join the rest. As Government were then in need of as many men as they could get, they approached the employers of indentured labourers to allow their men to volunteer. Thus a large and splendid Corps composed of nearly eleven hundred Indians left Durban for the front. At the time of our departure, we received the congratulations and the blessings of Mr. Escombe,[3] whose name is already familiar to the reader and who was the head of the European volunteers in Natal.

All this was a complete revelation to the English newspapers. No one expected that the Indians would take any part in the war. An Englishman wrote in a leading newspaper a poem eulogistic of the Indians with the following line as a refrain: 'We are sons of the Empire after all.'

There were between three and four hundred ex-indentured Indians in the Corps, who had been recruited by the efforts of the free Indians. Of these, thirty-seven were looked upon as leaders, as the offer to Government had been sent under their signatures and as they had brought the others together. Among the leaders there were barristers and accountants, while the rest were either artisans such as

[1] *Vide* "The Indian Offer", October 19, 1899.

[2] For the functioning of the Ambulance Corps, *vide* "Indian Ambulance Corps", December 13, 1899.

[3] *Vide* "Indian Ambulance Corps", December 13, 1899.

masons or carpenters, or ordinary labourers. Hindus and Mussalmans, Madrasis and up-country men, all classes and creeds were well represented. There was hardly any trader in the Corps, but the traders subscribed considerable sums of money. The Corps had needs which were not adequately met by the military rations, and which, if satisfied, might provide them with some amenities in their hard camp life. The traders undertook to supply such comforts, and likewise rendered good assistance in entertaining the wounded in our charge with sweets, cigarettes and such other things. Whenever we camped near towns, the local traders did their best to look after us.

The indentured labourers, who joined this Corps, were under the charge of English overseers from their respective factories. But the work for them was the same as for ourselves and as we were all to live together, they were highly pleased at the prospect, and the management of the entire Corps naturally passed into our hands. Thus the whole Corps was described as the Indian Corps, and the community received the credit for its work. As a matter of fact the Indians were not entitled to the credit for the inclusion of indentured labourers in the Corps, which should rightly have gone to the planters. But there is no doubt that the free Indians, that is to say, the Indian community, deserved credit for the excellent management of the Corps when once it was formed and this was acknowledged by General Buller in his despatches.

Doctor Booth, under whom we had placed ourselves for training in first aid, joined the Corps in the capacity of Medical Superintendent. He was a pious clergyman, and though his work chiefly lay among the Indian Christians, he freely mixed with Indians of all denominations. Most of the thirty-seven leaders mentioned above had received their training at his hands.

There was a European Ambulance Corps as well as the Indian, and both worked side by side in the same place.

Our offer to Government was absolutely unconditional, but the letter by which they accepted it granted us immunity from service within the firing line. This meant that the permanent Ambulance Corps attached to the army was to bear far away the soldiers as they got wounded and leave them behind the army outside the line of fire. The temporary Ambulance Corps of Europeans as well as Indians was formed in view of the great effort which General Buller was to put forth for the relief of General White in Ladysmith and in which, it was

apprehended, there might be more wounded than could be dealt with by the permanent Corps. In the country where the armies were operating there were no made roads between the battlefield and the base hospital and it was therefore impossible to carry the wounded by means of ordinary transport. The base-hospital was always situated near a railway station and at a distance of between seven and twenty-five miles from the battlefield.

We soon got work and that too harder than we had expected. To carry the wounded seven or eight miles was part of our ordinary routine. But sometimes we had to carry badly wounded soldiers and officers over a distance of twenty-five miles. The march would commence at eight in the morning, medicines must be administered on the way, and we were required to reach the base-hospital at five. This was very hard work indeed. It was only once that we had to carry the wounded twenty-five miles in a single day. Again the British army met with reverse after reverse in the beginning of the war and large numbers were wounded. The officers therefore were compelled to give up their idea of not taking us within the firing line. But it must be stated that when such an emergency arose we were told that as the terms of our contract included immunity from such service, General Buller had no intention of forcing us to work under fire if we were not prepared to accept such risk, but if we undertook it voluntarily, it would be greatly appreciated. We were only too willing to enter thedanger zone and had never liked to remain outside. We therefore welcomed this opportunity. But none of us received a bullet wound or any other injury.

The Corps had many pleasant experiences into which I may not enter here.[1] It must however be placed on record that although our Corps, including the indentured labourers who might be supposed to be rather uncouth, often came in contact with the members of the temporary Ambulance Corps composed of Europeans as well as with the European soldiers, none of us felt that the Europeans treated us with contempt or even with discourtesy. The temporary corps was composed of South African Europeans, who had taken part in the anti-Indian agitation before the war. But the knowledge that the Indians, forgetful of their wrongs, were out to help them in the hour

[1]*Vide* "Indian Ambulance Corps in Natal", post March 14, 1900, "Indian Ambulance Corps", April 18, 1900 & "Speech at Calcutta Meeting", January 27, 1902.

of their need, had melted their hearts for the time being. I have stated already that our work was mentioned by General Buller in his despatches. War medals too were conferred on the thirty-seven leaders.

When General Buller's operations in connection with the relief of Ladysmith were over, that is in about two months' time, our Corps was disbanded as well as the European. The war continued long after this. We were always prepared to rejoin, and it was stated in the order disbanding our Corps that Government would certainly utilize our services if operations on a large scale were again necessary.

This contribution of the Indians in South Africa to the war was comparatively insignificant. They suffered hardly any loss of life. Yet even a sincere desire to be of help is bound to impress the other party, and is doubly appreciated when it is quite unexpected. Such fine feeling for the Indians lasted during the continuance of the war.

Before closing this chapter, I must place a noteworthy incident on record. Among those who were in Ladysmith when it was invested by the Boers, there were besides Englishmen a few stray Indian settlers. Some of these were traders, while the rest were indentured labourers, working on the railways or as servants to English gentlemen. One of whom was Parbhusingh. The officer in command at Ladysmith assigned various duties to every resident of the place. The most dangerous and most responsible work wasassigned to Parbhusingh who was a 'coolie'. On a hill near Ladysmith the Boers had stationed a pom-pom, whose operations destroyed many buildings and even occasioned some loss of life. An interval of a minute or two must pass before a shell which had been fired from the gun reached a distantobjective. If the besieged got even such a short notice, they could take cover before the shell dropped in the town and thus save themselves. Parbhusingh was to sit perched up in a tree, all the time that the gun was working, with his eyes fixed on the hill and to ring a bell the moment he observed a flash. On hearing the bell, the residents of Ladysmith instantly took cover and saved themselves from the deadly cannon ball whose approach was thus announced.

The officer in charge of Ladysmith, in eulogizing the invaluable services rendered by Parbhusingh, stated that he worked so zealously that not once had he failed to ring the bell. It need hardly be said that his own life was constantly in peril. The story of his bravery came to

be known in Natal and at last reached the ears of Lord Curzon, then Viceroy of India, who sent a Kashmir robe for presentation to Parbhusingh and wrote to the Natal Government, asking them to carry out the presentation ceremony with all possible publicity. This duty was assigned to the Mayor of Durban who held a public meeting in the Town Hall for the purpose. This incident has a twofold lesson for us. First, we should not despise any man, however humble or insignificant-looking he may be. Secondly, no matter how timid a man is, he is capable of the loftiest heroism when he is put to the test.

CHAPTER X

AFTER THE WAR

The most important phase of the war was over in 1900. Ladysmith, Kimberley and Mafeking had been relieved. General Cronje had surrendered at Paardeburg. Parts of the British colonies occupied by the Boers had been wrested from their hands and Lord Kitchener had conquered the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. Only guerilla warfare was left.

I thought that my work in South Africa was now over. I had stayed there six years instead of one month as originally intended. The outlines of the work before us were fairly fixed. Still I could not leave South Africa without the willing consent of the Indian community. I informed my colleagues that I intended taking up public work in India. I had learnt in South Africa the lesson of service instead of self-interest, and was longing for opportunities of such work. Shri Mansukhlal Nazar was there and so was Mr. Khan. Some Indian youths born and bred in South Africa had returned from England as barristers. In these circumstances it would not be improper if I returned to India. When I had urged all these arguments, I was permitted to return only on the condition that if an unexpected situation arose in South Africa requiring my presence there, the community might recall me any day and I should at once go back. They undertook in such a case to bear my travelling expenses and the expenses incurred during my stay in South Africa. I agreed to this arrangement and returned to India.

I decided to practise in Bombay as a barrister, primarily with a view to public work under the advice and guidance of Gokhale and secondarily in order to make a living for myself side by side with public work. I rented chambers accordingly and began to get some work. Thanks to my close connection with South Africa, clients who

had returned from that country alone gave me work which more than sufficed for my necessities. But peace was never to be my portion in this life. I had been in Bombay hardly three or four months when I received an urgent cablegram from South Africa stating that the situation there was serious, that Mr. Chamberlain was expected shortly, and that my presence was necessary.[1]

I wound up my Bombay office and house and started for South Africa by the first available steamer. This was near the end of 1902. I had returned to India towards the close of 1901 and had opened my office at Bombay about March 1902. The cablegram did not contain full details. I guessed that there was trouble in the Transvaal. But I went to South Africa without my family as I thought I would be able to return to India in four or six months. I was however simply amazed when I reached Durban and heard everything. Many of us had hoped that the position of Indians throughout South Africa would improve after the war. We did not anticipate trouble in the Transvaal and the Free State at any rate, as Lord Lansdowne, Lord Selborne and other high functionaries had declared when the war brokeoutthat the treatment accorded to the Indians by the Boers was one of the causes of the war. The British Agent at Pretoria hadoften told me that if the Transvaal became a British Colonyall the grievances under which the Indians laboured would be instantly redressed. The Europeans too believed that as the Transvaal was now under the British flag, the old laws of the Boer republic directed against the Indians could not be enforced. This principle was so widely accepted that the auctioneers who before the war did not accept bids from Indians for the purchase of land now openly accepted such bids. Many Indians thus purchased lands at public auctions, but when they tendered the deeds of transfer to the revenue officer for registration, the officer in charge refused to register the deeds quoting Act 3 of 1885! All this I learnt on landing at Durban. The leaders said that Mr. Chamberlain would first come to Durban and we must first acquaint him with the situation in Natal. This done, I was to follow him to the Transvaal.

A deputation waited upon Mr. Chamberlain in Natal.[2] He gave it a courteous hearing and promised to confer with the Natal Government on the subject of its representations. Personally I did not

[1] *Vide* "Letter to D. B. Shukla", November 8, 1902 & "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", November 14, 1902.

[2] The deputation, which was led by Gandhiji, submitted a petition to the Secretary of State; *vide* "Petition to Chamberlain", December 27, 1902.

expect that the laws which had been promulgated in Natal before the war would be modified very soon. These laws have already been described in a previous chapter.

As the reader is aware, any Indian could at any time enter the Transvaal before the war. I observed that this was not the case now any longer. The restrictions, however, equally applied to all—Europeans as well as Indians. The condition of the country was still such that if a large number of people entered the Transvaal all at once, there would not be sufficient food and clothing to go round, as all the shops had not reopened after the war. The goods stocked in the shops had been unceremoniously appropriated by the late Boer Government. I therefore thought that, if the restrictions were only temporary, there was no reason for apprehension. But then there was a difference in the procedure by which a European and an Indian could obtain a permit, and this afforded ground for misgiving and alarm. Permit offices were opened in the various ports of South Africa. For all practical purposes a European could obtain a permit for the mere asking, while an Asiatic Department was created in the Transvaal for dealing with Indians. The creation of this special department was a new departure. Indians were required to apply to the head of that department in the first instance. After he had granted their applications, they could generally obtain permits at Durban or any other port.

If I had to go through all these formalities, there was no hope of my getting a permit before Mr. Chamberlain left the Transvaal. The Indians in the Transvaal could not procure a permit for me. It was more than they could do. They had therefore relied upon my connections in Durban for obtaining a permit for me. I did not know the permit officer, but as I knew the Police Superintendent of Durban, I asked him to accompany me to the permit office. He consented and gave the necessary assurances. I obtained a permit on the strength of the fact that I had stayed in the Transvaal for a year in 1893 and thus reached Pretoria.

The atmosphere in Pretoria was decidedly ominous. I could see that the Asiatic Department was merely a frightful engine of oppression for the Indians. The officers in charge were some of the adventurers who had accompanied the army from India to South Africa during the war and had settled there in order to try their luck. Some of them were corrupt. Two officers were even prosecuted for bribery. The jury declared them not guilty, but as really there was no

doubt entertained as to their guilt, they were subsequently dismissed from service. Partiality was the order of the day. When a separate department is thus created and when restricting existing rights is the sole reason for its existence, officers are naturally inclined to devise fresh restrictions from time to time in order to justify their existence and in order to show that they are efficient in the discharge of their duties. This is exactly what happened in the present case.

I saw that I had to begin my work from the very beginning. The Asiatic Department could not at once make out how I had managed to enter the Transvaal. They did not venture to ask me directly. I imagine they thought me above smuggling myself into the country. They indirectly obtained information as to how I had secured a permit. A deputation from Pretoria prepared to wait upon Mr. Chamberlain. I drafted the memorial[1] for submission to him but the Asiatic Department excluded me from the deputation. It appeared to the Indian leaders that they should not see Mr. Chamberlain if I was prevented from going with them. But I did not countenance this idea. I said that I should not mind the insult to me and advised them to ignore it too. The memorial was there and it was essential that it should be presented to Mr. Chamberlain. Mr. George Godfrey, an Indian barrister, who was present at the time, was charged with the task of reading the memorial. The deputation waited upon Mr. Chamberlain. My name being mentioned in course of the interview, he said, "I have already seen Mr. Gandhi in Durban. I therefore refused to see him here, in order that I might learn about the situation in the Transvaal at first hand from local residents." In my view this remark only added fuel to the fire. Mr. Chamberlain spoke out as he had been tutored by the Asiatic Department, which thus tried to import into the Transvaal the atmosphere which pervades India. Everyone knows how British officers consider Bombay men as foreigners in, say, Champaran. At that rate how could I who lived in Durban know anything about the situation in the Transvaal? Thus did the Asiatic Department coach Mr. Chamberlain. Little did he know that I had lived in the Transvaal, and that even if I had not, I was fully conversant with the Indian situation there. There was only one pertinent question in the present case: Who possessed the best knowledge of the situation in the Transvaal? The Indians had already answered it for themselves by asking me to go there all the way from India. But it is no new experience to find that arguments based on reason do not always appeal to men in authority. Mr. Chamberlain was then so much under the influence of the men on the spot and so

[1] *Vide* "Address to Chamberlain", January 7, 1903.

anxious was he to humour the Europeans that there was little or no hope of his doing us justice. Still the deputation waited upon him, only in order that no legitimate step for obtaining redress might be omitted whether by oversight or through a sense of wounded self-respect.

I was now confronted by a dilemma even more difficult than the one which faced me in 1894. From one standpoint, it seemed I could return to India as soon as Mr. Chamberlain left South Africa. On the other hand I could clearly see that, if I returned with the vain fancy of serving on a larger field in India while I was fully aware of the great danger which stared the South African Indians in the face, the spirit of service which I had acquired would be stultified. I thought that even if that meant living in South Africa all my life, I must remain there until the gathering clouds were dispersed or until they broke upon and swept us all away, all our counteracting efforts notwithstanding. This is how I spoke to the Indian leaders. Now, as in 1894, I declared my intention to maintain myself by legal practice. As for the community, this was precisely what they wanted.

I soon applied for admission to practise in the Transvaal. There was some apprehension that the Law Society here too would oppose my application, but it proved groundless. I was enrolled as an attorney of the Supreme Court, and opened an office in Johannesburg. Of all places in the Transvaal, Johannesburg had the largest population of Indians and was therefore well suited for me to settle in, from the standpoint of public work as well as of my own maintenance. I was daily gaining bitter experience of the corruptness of the Asiatic Department, and the best efforts of the Transvaal British Indian Association were directed to finding a remedy for this disease. The repeal of Act 3 of 1885 now receded into the background as a distant objective. The immediate aim was limited to saving ourselves from the onrushing flood in the shape of this Asiatic Department. Indian deputations waited upon Lord Milner,[1] upon Lord Selborne who had come there, upon Sir Arthur Lawley who was the Lieutenant Governor of the Transvaal and who subsequently became Governor of Madras, and upon officers of lesser dignity. I often used to see Government officers. We obtained some slight relief here and there, but it was all patchwork. We used to receive some such satisfaction as is

[1] Gandhiji led one such deputation to Lord Milner; *vide* "The British Indian Association and Lord Milner", June 11, 1903.

experienced by a man who has been deprived of his all by robbers and who by beseeching the robbers induces them to return something of very small value. It was in consequence of this agitation that the officers whose dismissal I have referred to above were prosecuted. Our misgivings as regards the restrictions on Indian immigration proved correct. Permits were no longer required from Europeans, while they continued to be demanded from Indians. The late Boer Government never strictly enforced their drastic anti-Asiatic legislation not because they were generous but because their administration was lax. A good officer has not under the British Government as much scope for the exercise of his goodness as he had under the Boer regime. The British Constitution is old and stereotyped, and officers under it have to work like machines. Their liberty of action is restricted by a system of progressive checks. Under the British Constitution, therefore, if the policy of the Government is liberal, the subjects receive the utmost advantage of its liberality. On the other hand, if their policy is oppressive or niggardly, the subjects feel the maximum weight of their heavy hand. The reverse is the case under constitutions such as that of the late Boer republic. Whether or not the subjectsreap full advantage from a liberal law largely dependsupon the officers who are charged with its administration. Thus, when British power was established in the Transvaal, all laws adversely affecting the Indians began to be more and more strictly enforced day by day. Loopholes, wherever they existed, were carefully closed. We have already seen that the Asiatic Department was bound to be harsh in its operations. The repeal of the old laws was therefore out of the question. It only remained for the Indians to try and see how their rigours might be mitigated in practice.

One principle must be discussed sooner or later, and if we discuss it at this stage, it will perhaps facilitate an understanding of the Indian point of view and of the situation as it developed hereafter. Soon after the establishment of British rule in the Transvaal and the Free State, Lord Milner appointed a committee whose terms of reference were to prepare a list of such of the old laws of both the republics as placed restrictions on the liberty of the subject or were opposed to the spirit of the British Constitution. The anti-Indian laws could clearly have been included in this description. But Lord Milner's object in appointing the committee was not to redress the grievances of Indians but those of Britishers. He wanted to repeal at the earliest opportunity those laws which indirectly pressed hard upon

Britishers. The committee submitted their report in a very short time, and many acts, large and small, which affected Britishers prejudicially, were, it can be said, repealed by a stroke of the pen.

The same committee prepared a list of anti-Indian acts. These were published in the form of a book which served as a handy manual easily used or from our standpoint abused by the Asiatic Department. Now, if the anti-Indian laws did not mention the Indians by name and were not thus made expressly applicable to them alone but to all subjects, and if their enforcement had been left to the discretion of administrators, or had the laws imposed general restrictions which could have been enforced against Indians in a specially rigorous manner, the object of the legislators would all the same have been achieved by such laws, and yet the laws would have been general laws. None would have felt insulted by their enactment, and when the existing bitterness was softened by time, there would be no need to modify the laws, but only a more liberal administration of the laws would have sufficed to relieve the aggrieved community. Just as I have called laws of the second kind general laws, those of the first kind can be described as particular or racial, and establish what is known as the 'colour bar', as on the specific ground of colour they impose greater restrictions on members of the dark or brown races than on Europeans.

To take one instance from the laws which were already in force. The reader will remember that the first disfranchising Act which was enacted in Natal but was subsequently disallowed by the Imperial Government provided for the disqualification as voters of all Asiatics as such. Now if such a law were to be altered, public opinion should be so far educated that the majority be not only not hostile but actually friendly to Asiatics. The colour bar it set up could only be removed when such cordial feelings were established. This is an illustration of racial or class legislation. The Act referred to was withdrawn and a second Act was enacted in its place which nearly achieved an identical object yet was of a general nature, the sting of racial distinction being removed. The substance of one of its clauses is as follows: 'No person can be placed on the voters' roll in Natal who is a native of countries which have not hitherto possessed elective representative institutions based on the parliamentary franchise.' No reference is made here to Indians or Asiatics. The opinions of counsel could differ as to whether or not India possesses representative institutions based on the parliamentary franchise. But assuming for

the sake of argument that India did not in 1894 and does not even now enjoy the parliamentary franchise, no one can say off hand that the officer in charge of voters' lists in Natal has done an illegal act if he includes the names of Indians in the lists. There is always a general presumption in favour of the right of the subject. So long therefore as the government of the day does not become positively hostile, the names of Indians and others could be included in the electoral roll, the above law notwithstanding. That is to say, if the dislike for Indians became less marked and if the local Government was unwilling to injure the Indians, their names could be entered in the voters' lists without the slightest modification of the law. This is the advantage of a general law. Other instances of the same kind can be cited from among the laws in force in South Africa which have been referred to in previous chapters. The wise policy, therefore, is to enact as little class legislation as possible; and it would be wiser still to avoid it altogether. Once a law is enacted, many difficulties must be encountered before it can be reversed. It is only when public opinion is highly educated that the laws in force in a country can be repealed. A constitution under which laws are modified or repealed every now and then cannot be said to be stable or well organized.

We can now better appreciate the poison which was present in the anti-Asiatic laws in the Transvaal. They were all racial in character. The Asiatics as such could not vote; nor could they own land outside the locations set apart for them by the Government. The administrators could do nothing for the Indians so long as these laws were not removed from the statute-book. Lord Milner's committee could make a separate list of such laws only as were not general in character. Had they been general laws, all laws, enforced only against the Asiatics though not expressly directed against them, would have been repealed along with the rest. The officers in charge could never have argued their helplessness and said that they had no alternative but to enforce the laws so long as the new legislature did not abrogate them.

When these laws passed into the hands of the Asiatic Department, it began to enforce them strictly. If the laws were at all worthy of being enforced, Government must arm itself with further powers in order to close the loopholes intentionally kept or left by inadvertence in favour of Asiatics. This looks quite simple and straight. Either the laws are bad in which case they should be repealed, or they are proper in which case their deficiencies should be

remedied. The ministers had adopted the policy of enforcing the laws. The Indians had stood shoulder to shoulder with the British and risked their lives during the late war, but that was now a story three or four years old. The British Agent at Pretoria had put up a fight on behalf of the Indians, but that was during the old regime. The grievances of the Indians figured as one of the declared causes of the war, but that declaration was made by short-sighted statesmen who had no knowledge of local conditions. The local officials clearly observed that the anti-Asiatic laws enacted by the late Boer Government were neither adequately severe nor systematic. If the Indians could enter the Transvaal at will and carry on trade wherever they chose, British traders would suffer great loss. All these and similar arguments carried greater weight with the Europeans and their representatives in the ministry. They were all out to amass the maximum of wealth in the minimum of time; how could they stand the Indians becoming co-sharers with them? Hypocrisy pressed political theory into service in order to make out a plausible case. A barefaced selfish or mercantile argument would not satisfy the intelligent Europeans of South Africa. The human intellect delights in inventing specious arguments in order to support injustice itself, and the South African Europeans were no exception to this general rule. These were the arguments advanced by General Smuts and others:

"South Africa is a representative of Western civilization while India is the centre of Oriental culture. Thinkers of the present generation hold that these two civilizations cannot go together. If nations representing these rival cultures meet even in small groups, the result will only be an explosion. The West is opposed to simplicity, while Orientals consider that virtue to be of primary importance. How can these opposite views be reconciled? It is not the business of statesmen, practical men as they are, to adjudicate upon their relative merits. Western civilization may or may not be good, but Westerners wish to stick to it. They have made tireless endeavours to save that civilization. They have shed rivers of blood for its sake. They have suffered great hardships in its cause. It is therefore too late for them now to chalk out a new path for themselves. Thus considered, the Indian question cannot be resolved into one of trade jealousy or race hatred. The problem is simply one of preserving one's own civilization, that is of enjoying the supreme right of self-preservation and discharging the corresponding duty. Some public speakers may like to inflame the Europeans by finding fault with Indians, but

political thinkers believe and say that the very qualities of Indians count for defects in South Africa. The Indians are disliked in South Africa for their simplicity, patience, perserverance, frugality and otherworldliness. Westerners are enterprising, impatient, engrossed in multiplying their material wants and in satisfying them, fond of good cheer, anxious to save physical labour and prodigal in habits. They are therefore afraid that if thousands of Orientals settled in South Africa, the Westerners must go to the wall. Westerners in South Africa are not prepared to commit suicide and their leaders will not permit them to be reduced to such straits."

I believe I have impartially recapitulated the arguments urged by men of the highest character among the Europeans. I have characterized their arguments as pseudo-philosophical, but I do not thereby wish to suggest that they are groundless. From a practical point of view, that is to say, from the standpoint of immediate self-interest, they have much force. But from the philosophical point of view, they are hypocrisy pure and simple. In my humble opinion, no impartial person could accept such conclusions and no reformer would place his civilization in the position of helplessness in which those who urge these arguments have placed theirs. So far as I am aware, no Eastern thinker fears that if Western nations came in free contact with Orientals, Oriental culture would be swept away like sand by the onrushing tide of Western civilization. So far as I have a grasp of Eastern thought, it seems to me that Oriental civilization not only does not fear but would positively welcome free contact with Western civilization. If contrary instances can be met with in the East, they do not affect the principle I have laid down, for a number of illustrations can be cited in its support. However that may be, Western thinkers claim that the foundation of Western civilization is the predominance of might over right. Therefore it is that the protagonists of that civilization devote most of their time to the conservation of brute force. These thinkers likewise assert that the nations which do not increase their material wants are doomed to destruction. It is in pursuance of these principles that Western nations have settled in South Africa and subdued the numerically overwhelmingly superior races of South Africa. It is absurd to imagine that they would fear the harmless population of India. The best proof of the statement that the Europeans have nothing to fear from the Asiatics is provided by the fact that had the Indians continued to work in South Africa for all time as mere labourers, no agitation would have been started against

Indian immigration.

The only remaining factors are trade and colour. Thousands of Europeans have admitted in their writings that trade by Indians hits petty British traders hard, and that the dislike of the brown races has at present become part and parcel of the mentality of Europeans. Even in the United States of America, where the principle of statutory equality has been established, a man like Booker T. Washington[1] who has received the best Western education, is a Christian of high character and has fully assimilated Western civilization, was not considered fit for admission to the court of President Roosevelt and probably would not be so considered even today! The Negroes of the United States have accepted Western civilization. They have embraced Christianity. But the black pigment of their skin constitutes their crime, and if in the Northern States they are socially despised, they are lynched[2] in the Southern States on the slightest suspicion of wrongdoing.

The reader will thus see that there is not much substance in the 'philosophical' arguments discussed above. But he must not therefore conclude that all those who urge them do so in a hypocritical spirit. Many of them honestly hold these views to be sound. It is possible that if we were placed in their position, we too would advance similar arguments. We have a saying in India that as is a man's conduct such is his understanding. Who is there but has observed that our arguments are but a reflection of our mentality, and that if they do not commend themselves to others, we become dissatisfied, impatient and even indignant?

I have deliberately discussed this question with much minuteness, as I wish the reader to understand different points of view and in order that the reader who has so far not done so may acquire the habit of appreciating and respecting varieties of standpoint. Such large-mindedness and such patience are essential to the understanding of satyagraha and above all to its practice. Satyagraha is impossible in the absence of these qualities. I do not write this book merely for the writing of it. Nor is it my object to place one phase of the history of

[1] 1858-1915; Negro educationist and author; principal of Tuskegee Institute, Alabama, from 1881 till his death

[2] The original adds here: There is even a special name in South America for that principle of punishment which has passed into common parlance in English today as "Lynch law". "Lynch law" is that principle of meting out punishment which prescribes punishment before inquiry. It is so called from the name of the man who initiated this practice.

South Africa before the public. My object in writing the present volume is that the nation might know how satyagraha, for which I live, for which I desire to live and for which I believe I am equally prepared to die, originated and how it was practised on a large scale; and knowing this, it may understand and carry it out to the extent that it is willing and able to do so.

To resume our narrative. We have seen that the British administrators decided to prevent fresh Indian immigrants from entering the Transvaal, and to render the position of the old Indian settlers so uncomfortable that they would feel compelled to leave the country in sheer disgust, and even if they did not leave it, they would be reduced to a state bordering on serfdom. Some men looked upon as great statesmen in South Africa had declared more than once that they could afford to keep the Indians only as hewers of wood and drawers of water. On the staff of the Asiatic Department was, among others, Mr. Lionel Curtis, who is now known to fame as the missionary for diarchy in India. This young man, as he then was,[1] enjoyed the confidence of Lord Milner. He claimed to do everything according to scientific method, but he was capable of committing serious blunders. The Municipality of Johannesburg had suffered a loss of £14,000 in consequence of one such blunder committed by him. He suggested that if fresh Indian immigration was to be stopped, the first step to be taken to that end was the effective registration of the old Indian residents in South Africa. That done, no one could smuggle himself into the country by practising personation, and if anyone did, he could be easily detected. The permits which were issued to Indians after the establishment of British rule in the Transvaal contained the signature of the holder or his thumb-impression if he was illiterate. Later on someone suggested the inclusion, besides, of a photograph of the holder, and this suggestion was carried out by administrative action, legislation being unnecessary. The Indian leaders therefore did not come to know of this innovation at once. When, in course of time, these novel features came to their notice, they sent memorials to the authorities, and waited upon them in deputations on behalf of the community. The official argument was that Government could not permit Indians to enter the country without regulation of some sort, and that therefore all Indians should provide themselves with uniform permits containing such details as might render it impossible for

[1] The original adds: “in 1905-6”.

anyone but the rightful holders to enter the country. It was my opinion that although we were not bound by law to take out such permits, the Government could insist on requiring them so long as the Peace Preservation Ordinance was in force. The Peace Preservation Ordinance in South Africa was something like the Defence of India Act in India. Just as the Defence of India Act was kept on the statute-book in India longer than necessary in order to harass the people, so was this ordinance allowed to remain in force long after the necessity for it had passed in order to harass Indians in South Africa. As for the Europeans, it was a dead letter for all practical purposes. Now if permits must be taken out, they should contain some mark of identification. There was nothing wrong therefore that those who were illiterate should allow their thumb-impression to be taken. I did not at all like the inclusion of photographs in the permits. Mussalmans again had religious objections to such a course.

The final upshot of the negotiations between the Indian community and the authorities was that the Indians consented to change their permits for new ones and agreed that fresh Indian immigrants should take out permits in the new form. Although the Indians were not bound in law, they voluntarily agreed to reregistration in the hope that new restrictions might not be imposed upon them, it might be clear to all concerned that the Indians did not wish to bring in fresh immigrants by unfair means, and the Peace Preservation Ordinance might no longer be used to harass newcomers. Almost all Indians thus changed their old permits for new ones. This was no small thing. The community completed like one man with the greatest promptitude this re-registration, which they were not legally bound to carry out. This was a proof of their veracity, tact, large-mindedness, common sense and humility. It also showed that the community had no desire to violate in any way any law in force in the Transvaal. The Indians believed that if they behaved towards the Government with such courtesy, it would treat them well, show regard to them and conferfresh rights upon them. We shall see in the next chapter how the British Government in the Transvaal rewarded them for this great act of courtesy.

CHAPTER XI

THE REWARD OF GENTLENESS—THE BLACK ACT

The year 1906 was well under way when this re-registration was

completed.[1] I had re-entered the Transvaal in 1903 and opened my office in Johannesburg about the middle of that year. Two years had thus passed in merely resisting the inroads of the Asiatic Department. We all expected now that re-registration would satisfy the Government and confidently looked forward to a period of comparative peace for the community. But that was not to be. The reader has been already introduced to Mr. Lionel Curtis. This gentleman held that the Europeans had not attained their objective simply because the Indians changed their old permits for new certificates of registration. It was not enough in his eyes that great measures were achieved by mutual understanding. He was of opinion that these should have the force of law behind them, and that thus only could the principles underlying them be secured for all time. Mr. Curtis wanted some such restrictions to be placed upon Indians as would produce a striking impression all over South Africa and ultimately serve as a model for the other Dominions of the Empire to imitate. He would not consider the Transvaal to be safe so long as even a single point in South Africa was open to Indians. Again, re-registration by mutual consent was calculated to increase the prestige of the Indian community, while Mr. Curtis was keen upon lowering it. He would not care to carry Indian opinion with him but would frighten us into submission to external restrictions backed up by rigorous legal sanctions. He therefore drafted an Asiatic Bill and advised the Government that so long as his Bill was not passed, there was no provision in the laws already in force to prevent the Indians from surreptitiously entering the Transvaal or to remove unauthorized residents from the country. Mr. Curtis's arguments met with a ready response from the Government, and a draft Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance to be introduced into the Legislative Council was published in the Transvaal *Government Gazette*.

Before dealing with this Ordinance in detail, it would be well to dispose of an important event in a few words. As I was the author of the satyagraha movement, it is necessary to enable the reader fully to understand some events of my life. The Zulu 'rebellion' broke out in Natal just while attempts were thus being made to impose further disabilities upon Indians in the Transvaal. I doubted then and doubt even now if the outbreak could be described as a rebellion, but it has always been thus described in Natal. Now as in the Boer War, many

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", August 4, 1906, and *passim*.

European residents of Natal joined the army as volunteers. As I too was considered a resident of Natal, I thought I must do my bit in the war. With the community's permission, therefore, I made an offer[1] to the Government to raise a Stretcher-bearer Corps for service with the troops. The offer was accepted. I therefore broke up my Johannesburg home and sent my family to Phoenix in Natal where my co-workers had settled and from where *Indian Opinion* was published, I did not close the office as I knew I would not be away for long. I joined the army with a small corps of twenty or twenty-five men. Most of the provinces of India were represented even on this small body of men. The corps was on active service for a month. I have always been thankful to God for the work which then fell to our lot. We found that the wounded Zulus would have been left uncared for, if we had not attended to them. No European would help to dress their wounds. Dr. Savage, who was in charge of the ambulance, was himself a very humane person. It was no part of our duty to nurse the wounded after we had taken them to the hospital. But we had joined the war with a desire to do all we could, no matter whether it did or did not fall within the scope of our work. The good Doctor told us that he could not induce Europeans to nurse the Zulus, that it was beyond his power to compel them and that he would feel obliged if we undertook this mission of mercy. We were only too glad to do this. We had to cleanse the wounds of several Zulus which had not been attended to for as many as five or six days and were therefore stinking horribly. We liked the work. The Zulus could not talk to us, but from their gestures and the expression of their eyes they seemed to feel as if God had sent us to their succour. The work for which we had enlisted was fairly heavy, for sometimes during the month we had to perform a march of as many as forty miles a day.

The Corps was disbanded in a month. Its work was mentioned in desptaches.[2] Each member of the Corps was awarded the medal especially struck for the occasion. The Governor wrote a letter of thanks. The three sergeants of the Corps were Gujaratis: Shris Umiashankar Manchharam Shelat, Surendra Bapubhai Medh, and Harishankar Ishvar Joshi. All the three had a fine physique and

[1] *Vide* " Letter to Colonial Secretary", April 25, 1906.

[2] For a detailed account of the Corps' work, *vide* "Indian Stretcher-Bearer Corps", before July 19, 1906.

worked very hard. I cannot just now recall the names of the other Indians, but I well remember that one of these was a Pathan, who used to express his astonishment on finding us carrying as large a load as, and marching abreast of, himself. While I was working with the Corps, two ideas which had long been floating in my mind became firmly fixed. First, an aspirant after a life exclusively devoted to service must lead a life of celibacy.[1] Second, he must accept poverty as a constant companion through life. He may not take up any occupation which would prevent him or make him shrink from undertaking the lowliest of duties or largest risks. Letters and telegrams, asking me to proceed to the Transvaal at once, had poured in even while I was serving with the Corps. On return from the war, therefore, I just met the friends at Phoenix and at once reached Johannesburg. There I read the draft Ordinance referred to above. I took the Transvaal *Government Gazette Extraordinary* of August 22, 1906 in which the Ordinance was published, home from the office. I went up a hill near the house in the company of a friend and began to translate the draft Ordinance into Gujarati for *Indian Opinion*. I shuddered as I read the sections of the Ordinance one after another. I saw nothing in it except hatred of Indians. It seemed to me that if the Ordinance was passed and the Indians meekly accepted it, that would spell absolute ruin for the Indians in South Africa. I clearly saw that this was a question of life and death for them. I further saw that even in the case of memorials and representations proving fruitless, the community must not sit with folded hands. Better die than submit to such a law. But how were we to die? What should we dare and do so that there would be nothing before us except a choice of victory or death? An impenetrable wall was before me, as it were, and I could not see my way through it. I must acquaint the reader with the details of the proposed measure, which shocked me so violently. Here is a brief summary of it:

Every Indian, man, woman or child of eight years or upwards, entitled to reside in the Transvaal, must register his or her name with the Registrar of Asiatics and take out a certificate of registration. The applicants for registration must surrender their old permits to the Registrar and state in their applications their name, residence, caste, age, etc. The Registrar was to note down important marks of identification upon the applicant's person, and take his finger and

[1] Gandhiji deals at length with this genesis of his concept of *brahmacharya* in *An Autobiography*, Pt. IV, Ch. XXV.

thumb impressions. Every Indian who failed thus to apply for registration before a certain date was to forfeit his right of residence in the Transvaal. Failure to apply would be held to be an offence in law for which the defaulter could be fined, sent to prison or even deported within the discretion of the court. Parents must apply on behalf of their minor children and bring them to the Registrar in order to give their finger impressions, etc. In case of parents failing to discharge this responsibility laid upon them, the minor on attaining the age of sixteen years must discharge it himself, and if he defaulted, he made himself liable to the same punishments as could be awarded to his parents. The certificate of registration issued to an applicant must be produced before any police officer whenever and wherever he might be required to do so. Failure thus to produce the certificate would be held to be an offence for which the defaulter could be fined or sent to prison. Even a person walking on public thoroughfares could be required to produce his certificate. Police officers could enter private houses in order to inspect certificates. Indians entering the Transvaal from some place outside it must produce their certificates before the inspector on duty. Certificates must be produced on demand in courts which the holder attended on business, and in revenue offices which issued to him a trading or bicycle licence. That is to say, if an Indian wanted any Government office to do for him something within its competence, the officer could ask to see his certificate before granting his request. Refusal to produce the certificate or to supply such particulars or means of identification as might be prescribed by regulation would also be held to be an offence for which the person refusing could be fined or sent to prison.

I have never known legislation of this nature being directed against free men in any part of the world. I know that indentured Indians in Natal are subject to a drastic system of passes, but these poor fellows can hardly be classed as free men. However, even the laws to which they are subject are mild in comparison to the Ordinance outlined above and the penalties they impose are a mere fleabite when compared with the penalties laid down in the Ordinance.

A trader with assets running into lakhs could be deported and thus faced with utter ruin in virtue of the Ordinance. And the patient reader will see later on how persons were even deported for breaking some of its provisions. There are some drastic laws directed against criminal tribes in India, with which this Ordinance can be easily compared and will be found not to suffer by the comparison. The

giving of[1] finger prints, required by the Ordinance, was quite a novelty in South Africa. With a view to seeing some literature on the subject, I read a volume on finger impressions by Mr. Henry, a police officer, from which I gathered that finger prints were required by law only from criminals.[2] I was therefore shocked by this compulsory requirement regarding finger prints. Again, the registration of women and children under sixteen was proposed for the first time by this Ordinance.

The next day there was held a small meeting of leading Indians to whom I explained the Ordinance word by word. It shocked them as it had shocked me. One of them said in a fit of passion: "If anyone came forward to demand a certificate from my wife, I would shoot him on the spot and take the consequences." I quieted him, and addressing the meeting said: "This is a very serious crisis. If the Ordinance were passed and if we acquiesced in it, it would be imitated all over South Africa. As it seems to me, it is designed to strike at the very root of our existence in South Africa. It is not the last step, but the first step with a view to hounding us out of the country. We are therefore responsible for the safety, not only of the ten or fifteen thou sand Indians in the Transvaal but of the entire Indian community in South Africa. Again, if we fully understand all the implications of this legislation, we shall find that India's honour is in our keeping. For the Ordinance seeks to humiliate not only ourselves but also the motherland. The humiliation consists in the degradation of innocent men. No one will take it upon himself to say that we have done anything to deserve such legislation. We are innocent, and insult offered to a single innocent member of a nation is tantamount to insulting the nation as a whole. It will not, therefore, do to be hasty, impatient or angry. That cannot save us from this onslaught. But God will come to our help if we calmly think out and carry out in time measures of resistance, presenting a united front and bearing the hardships which such resistance brings in its train."[3] All present realized the seriousness of the situation and resolved to hold a public meeting at which a number of resolutions must be proposed and

[1] The original here has also: "all the ten".

[2] Gandhiji discussed this matter with Lord Elgin in November 1906; *vide* "Deputation to Lord Elgin", November 8, 1906 & "Those Finger-Impressions", March 9, 1907.

[3] In "Speech on the 'Black Cat' ", before September 9, 1906, this has been used as an item of text.

passed. A Jewish theatre was hired for the purpose.[1]

CHAPTER XII

THE ADVENT OF SATYAGRAHA

The meeting was duly held on September 11, 1906. It was attended by delegates from various places in the Transvaal. But I must confess that even I myself had not then understood all the implications of the resolutions I had helped to frame; nor had I gauged all the possible conclusions to which they might lead. The old Empire Theatre was packed from floor to ceiling. I could read in every face the expectation of something strange to be done or to happen. Mr. Abdul Gani, Chairman of the Transvaal British Indian Association, presided. He was one of the oldest Indian residents of the Transvaal, and partner and manager of the Johannesburg branch of the well-known firm of Mamad Kasam Kamrudin[2]. The most important among the resolutions passed by the meeting was the famous Fourth Resolution by which the Indians solemnly determined not to submit to the Ordinance in the event of its becoming law in the teeth of their opposition and to suffer all the penalties attaching to such non-submission.[3]

I fully explained this resolution to the meeting and received a patient hearing. The business of the meeting was conducted in Hindi or Gujarati; it was impossible therefore that anyone present should not follow the proceedings. For the Tamils and Telugus who did not know Hindi there were Tamil and Telugu speakers who fully explained everything in their respective languages. The resolution was duly proposed, seconded and supported by several speakers one of whom was Sheth Haji Habib. He too was a very old and experienced resident of South Africa and made an impassioned speech. He was deeply moved and went so far as to say that we must pass this resolution with God as witness and must never yield a cowardly submission to such degrading legislation. He then went on solemnly to declare in the name of God that he would never submit to that law, and advised all present to do likewise.

[1] The original has a paragraph here: "Now the reader will appreciate why the bill has been called the 'Black Act', the phrase used as the title to this chapter. I had not intended to use the adjective, but this name had become current in South Africa."

[2] Mahomed Kassim Camroodeen

[3] For the text of the resolution, *vide* "The Mass Meeting - Resolution IV", September 11, 1906.

Others also delivered powerful and angry speeches in supporting the resolution. When in the course of his speech Sheth Haji Habib came to the solemn declaration, I was at once startled and put on my guard. Only then did I fully realize my own responsibility and the responsibility of the community. The community had passed many a resolution before and amended such resolutions in the light of further reflection or fresh experience. There were cases in which resolutions passed had not been observed by all concerned. Amendments inresolutions and failure to observe resolutions on the part of persons agreeing thereto are ordinary experiences of public life all the world over. But no one ever imports the name of God into such resolutions. In the abstract there should not be any distinction between a resolution and an oath taken in the name of God. When an intelligent man makes a resolution deliberately he never swerves from it by a hair's breadth. With him his resolution carries as much weight as a declaration made with God as witness does. But the world takes no note of abstract principles and imagines an ordinary resolution and an oath in the name of God to be poles asunder. A man who makes an ordinary resolution is not ashamed of himself when he deviates from it, but a man who violates an oath administered to him is not only ashamed of himself but is also looked upon by society as a sinner. This imaginary distinction has struck such a deep root in the human mind that a person making a statement on oath before a judge is held to have committed an offence in law if the statement is proved to be false and receives drastic punishment.

Full of these thoughts as I was, possessing as I did much experience of solemn pledges, having profited by them, I was taken aback by Sheth Haji Habib's suggestion of an oath. I thought out the possible consequences of it in a moment. My perplexity gave place to enthusiasm. And although I had no intention of taking an oath or inviting others to do so, when I went to the meeting I warmly approved of the Sheth's suggestion. But at the same time it seemed to me that the people should be told of all the consequences and should have explained to them clearly the meaning of a pledge. And if even then they were prepared to pledge themselves, they should be encouraged to do so; otherwise, I must understand that they were not still ready to stand the final test. I therefore asked the President for permission to explain to the meeting the implications of Sheth Haji Habib's suggestion. The President readily granted it and I rose to address the meeting. I give below a summary of my remarks

just as I can recall them now:

"I wish to explain to this meeting that there is a vast difference between this resolution and every other resolution we have passed up to date and that there is a wide divergence also in the manner of making it. It is a very grave resolution we are making, as our existence in South Africa depends upon our fully observing it. The manner of making the resolution suggested by our friend is as much of a novelty as of a solemnity. I did not come to the meeting with a view to getting the resolution passed in that manner, which redounds to the credit of Sheth Haji Habib as well as it lays a burden of responsibility upon him. I tender my congratulations to him. I deeply appreciate his suggestion, but if you adopt it you too will share his responsibility. You must understand what is this responsibility, and as an adviser and servant of the community, it is my duty fully to explain it to you.

"We all believe in one and the same God, the differences of nomenclature in Hinduism and Islam notwithstanding. To pledge ourselves or to take an oath in the name of that God or with Him as witness is not something to be trifled with. If having taken such an oath we violate our pledge we are guilty before God and man. Personally I hold that a man who deliberately and intelligently takes a pledge and then breaks it forfeits his manhood. And just as a copper coin treated with mercury not only becomes valueless when detected but also makes its owner liable to punishment, in the same way a man who lightly pledges his word and then breaks it becomes a man of straw and fits himself for punishment here as well as hereafter. Sheth Haji Habib is proposing to administer an oath of a very serious character. There is no one in this meeting who can be classed as an infant or as wanting in understanding. You are all well advanced in age and have seen the world; many of you are delegates and have discharged responsibilities in a greater or lesser measure. No one present, therefore, can ever hope to excuse himself by saying that he did not know what he was about when he took the oath.

"I know that pledges and vows are, and should be, taken on rare occasions. A man who takes a vow every now and then is sure to stumble. But if I can imagine a crisis in the history of the Indian community of South Africa when it would be in the fitness of things to take pledges, that crisis is surely now. There is wisdom in taking serious steps with great caution and hesitation. But caution and hesitation have their limits, and we have now passed them. The Government has taken leave of all sense of decency. We would only

be betraying our unworthiness and cowardice, if we cannot stake our all in the face of the conflagration which envelopes us and sit watching it with folded hands. There is no doubt, therefore, that the present is a proper occasion for taking pledges. But every one of us must think out for himself if he has the will and the ability to pledge himself. Resolutions of this nature cannot be passed by a majority vote. Only those who take a pledge can be bound by it. This pledge must not be taken with a view to producing an effect on outsiders. No one should trouble to consider what impression it might have upon the Local Government, the Imperial Government, or the Government of India. Everyone must only search his own heart, and if the inner voice assures him that he has the requisite strength to carry himthrough, then only should he pledge himself and then only will his pledge bear fruit.

"A few words now as to the consequences. Hoping for the best, we may say that if a majority of the Indians pledge themselves to resistance and if all who take the pledge prove true to themselves, the Ordinance may not be passed and, if passed, may be soon repealed. It may be that we may not be called upon to suffer at all. But if on the one hand a man who takes a pledge must be a robust optimist, on the other hand he must be prepared for the worst. Therefore I want to give you an idea of the worst that might happen to us in the present struggle. Imagine that all of us present here numbering 3,000 at the most pledge ourselves. Imagine again that the remaining 10,000 Indians take no such pledge. We will only provoke ridicule in the beginning. Again, it is quite possible that in spite of the present warning some or many of those who pledge themselves may weaken at the very first trial. We may have to go to jail, where we may be insulted. We may have to go hungry and suffer extreme heat or cold. Hard labour may be imposed upon us. We may be flogged by rude warders. We may be fined heavily and our property may be attached and held up to auction if there are only a few resisters left. Opulent today, we may be reduced to abject poverty tomorrow.

We may be deported. Suffering from starvation and similar hardships in jail, some of us may fall ill and even die. In short, therefore, it is not at all impossible that we may have to endure every hardship that we can imagine, and wisdom lies in pledging ourselves on the understanding that we shall have to suffer all that and worse. If someone asks me when and how the struggle may end, I may say that if the entire community manfully stands the test, the end will be near. If many of us fall back under storm and stress, the struggle will be

prolonged. But I can boldly declare, and with certainty, that so long as there is even a handful of men true to their pledge, there can only be one end to the struggle, and that is victory.

"A word about my personal responsibility. If I am warning you of the risks attendant upon the pledge, I am at the same time inviting you to pledge yourselves, and I am fully conscious of my responsibility in the matter. It is possible that a majority of those present here may take the pledge in a fit of enthusiasm or indignation but may weaken under the ordeal, and only a handful may be left to face the final test. Even then there is only one course open to someone like me, to die but not to submit to the law. It is quite unlikely but even if everyone else flinched leaving me alone to face the music, I am confident that I would never violate my pledge. Please do not misunderstand me. I am not saying this out of vanity, but I wish to put you, especially the leaders upon the platform, on your guard. I wish respectfully to suggest it to you that if you have not the will or the ability to stand firm even when you are perfectly isolated, you must not only not take the pledge yourselves but you must declare your opposition before the resolution is put to the meeting and before its members begin to take pledges and you must not make yourselves parties to the resolution. Although we are going to take the pledge in a body, no one should imagine that default on the part of one or many can absolve the rest from their obligation. Everyone should fully realize his responsibility, then only pledge himself independently of others and understand that he himself must be true to his pledge even unto death, no matter what others do."[1]

I spoke to this effect and resumed my seat. The meeting heard me word by word in perfect quiet. Other leaders too spoke. All dwelt upon their own responsibility and the responsibility of the audience. The President rose. He too made the situation clear, and at last all present, standing with upraised hands, took an oath with God as witness not to submit to the Ordinance if it became law. I can never forget the scene which is present before my mind's eye as I write. The community's enthusiasm knew no bounds. The very next day there was some accident in the theatre in consequence of which it was wholly destroyed by fire. On the third day friends brought me the news of the fire and congratulated the community upon this good omen which signified to them that the Ordinance would meet the same fate as the theatre. I have never been influenced by such so-called signs and therefore did not attach any weight to the coincidence. I

[1] In "The Mass Meeting ", September 11, 1906, this has been used as an item of text.

have taken note of it here only as a demonstration of the community's courage and faith. The reader will find in the subsequent chapters many more proofs of these two high qualities of the people.

The workers did not let the grass grow under their feet after this great meeting. Meetings were held everywhere and pledges of resistance were taken in every place. The principal topic of discussion in *Indian Opinion* now was the Black Ordinance.

At the other end, steps were taken in order to meet the Local Government. A deputation waited upon Mr. Duncan, the Colonial Secretary, and told him among other things about the pledge.[1] Sheth Haji Habib, who was a member of the deputation, said, "I cannot possibly restrain myself if any officer comes and proceeds to take my wife's finger prints. I will kill him there and then and die myself." The Minister stared at the Sheth's face for a while and said, "Government are reconsidering the advisability of making the Ordinance applicable to women, and I can assure you at once that the clauses relating to women will be deleted. Government have understood your feeling in the matter and desire to respect it. But as for the other provisions, I am sorry to inform you that Government are and will remain adamant. General Botha wants you to agree to this legislation after due deliberation. Government deem it to be essential to the existence of the Europeans. They will certainly consider any suggestions about details which you may make consistently with the objects of the Ordinance, and my advice to the deputation is that your interest lies in agreeing to the legislation and proposing changes only as regards the details." I am leaving out here the particulars of the discussion with the Minister, as all those arguments have already been dealt with.

The arguments were just the same; there was only a difference in phraseology as they were set forth before the Minister. The deputation withdrew, after informing him that his advice notwithstanding, acquiescence in the proposed legislation was out of the question, and after thanking Government for their intention of exempting women from its provisions. It is difficult to say whether the exemption of women was the first fruit of the community's agitation, or whether the Government as an afterthought made a concession to practical considerations which Mr. Curtis had ruled out of his scientific

[1] A deputation had met Duncan on September 3

methods. Government claimed that they had decided to exempt women independently of the Indian agitation. Be that as it might, the community established to their own satisfaction a cause and effect relation between the agitation and the exemption and their fighting spirit rose accordingly.

None of us knew what name to give to our movement. I then used the term 'passive resistance' in describing it. I did not then quite understand the implications of 'passive resistance' as I called it. I only knew that some new principle had come into being. As the struggle advanced, the phrase 'passive resistance' gave rise to confusion and it appeared shameful to permit this great struggle to be known only by an English name. Again, that foreign phrase could hardly pass as current coin among the community. A small prize was therefore announced in *Indian Opinion* to be awarded to the reader who invented the best designation for our struggle.[1] We thus received a number of suggestions. The meaning of the struggle had been then fully discussed in *Indian Opinion* and the competitors for the prize had fairly sufficient material to serve as a basis for their exploration. Shri Maganlal Gandhi was one of the competitors and he suggested the word *sadagraha*, meaning 'firmness in a good cause'. I liked the word, but it did not fully represent the whole idea I wished it to connote. I therefore corrected it to 'satyagraha'. Truth *(satya)* implies love, and firmness *(agraha)* engenders and therefore serves as a synonym for force. I thus began to call the Indian movement 'satyagraha', that is to say, the Force which is born of Truth and Love or non-violence, and gave up the use of the phrase 'passive resistance', in connection with it, so much so that even in English writing we often avoided it and used instead the word 'satyagraha' itself or some other equivalent English phrase. This then was the genesis of the movement which came to be known as satyagraha, and of the word used as a designation for it. Before we proceed any further with our history we shall do well to grasp the difference between passive resistance and satyagraha, which is the subject of our next chapter.

[1] *Vide* "Some English Terms", December 28, 1907 & "Gujarati Equivalents for Passive Resistance, Etc.", March 7, 1908.

CHAPTER XIII

SATYAGRAHA *v.* PASSIVE RESISTANCE

As the movement advanced, Englishmen too began to watch it with interest. Although the English newspapers in the Transvaal generally wrote in support of the Europeans and of the Black Act, they willingly published contributions from well-known Indians. They also published Indian representations to Government in full or at least a summary of these, sometimes sent their reporters to important meetings of the Indians, and when such was not the case, made room for the brief reports we sent them.

These amenities were of course very useful to the community, and by and by some leading Europeans came to take interest in the movement as it progressed. One of these was Mr. Hosken, one of the magnates of Johannesburg. He had always been free from colour prejudice but his interest in the Indian question deepened after the starting of satyagraha. The Europeans of Germiston, which is something like a suburb of Johannesburg, expressed a desire to hear me. A meeting was held, and introducing me and the movement I stood for to the audience, Mr. Hosken[1] observed, "The Transvaal Indians have had recourse to passive resistance when all other means of securing redress proved to be of no avail. They do not enjoy the franchise. Numerically, they are only a few. They are weak and haveno arms. Therefore they have taken to passive resistance which is a weapon of the weak." These observations took me by surprise, and the speech which I was going to make took an altogether different complexion in consequence[2]. In contradicting Mr. Hosken, I defined our passive resistance as 'soul-force'. I saw at this meeting that a use of the phrase 'passive resistance' was apt to give rise to terrible misunderstanding. I will try to distinguish between passive resistance and soul-force by amplifying the argument which I made before that meeting so as to make things clearer.

I have no idea when the phrase 'passive resistance' was first used in English and by whom. But among the English people, whenever a small minority did not approve of some obnoxious piece

[1] The original has: "Mr. Hosken, who presided".

[2] The text of the speech is not available; *vide* "Speech at Germiston", June 7, 1909.

of legislation, instead of rising in rebellion they took the passive or milder step of not submitting to the law and inviting the penalties of such non-submission upon their heads. When the British Parliament passed the Education Act some years ago the Non-conformists offered passive resistance under the leadership of Dr. Clifford.[1] The great movement of the English women for the vote was also known as passive resistance. It was in view of these two cases that Mr. Hosken described passive resistance as a weapon of the weak or the voteless. Dr. Clifford and his friends had the vote, but as they were in a minority in the Parliament, they could not prevent the passage of the Education Act. That is to say, they were weak in numbers. Not that they were averse to the use of arms for the attainment of their aims, but they had no hope of succeeding by force of arms. And in a well-regulated State, recourse to arms every now and then in order to secure popular rights would defeat its own purpose. Again some of the Non-conformists would generally object to taking up arms even if it was a practical proposition. The suffragists had no franchise rights. They were weak in numbers as well as in physical force. Thus their case lent colour to Mr. Hosken's observations. The suffragist movement did not eschew the use of physical force. Some suffragists fired buildings and even assaulted men. I do not think they ever intended to kill anyone. But they did intend to thrash people when an opportunity occurred, and even thus to make things hot for them.

But brute force had absolutely no place in the Indian movement in any circumstance, and the reader will see, as we pro ceed, that no matter how badly they suffered, the satyagrahis never used physical force, and that too although there were occasions when they were in a position to use it effectively. Again, although the Indians had no franchise and were weak, these considerations had nothing to do with the organization of satyagraha. This is not to say that the Indians would have taken to satyagraha even if they had possessed arms or the franchise. Probably there would not have been any scope for satyagraha if they had the franchise. If they had arms, the opposite

[1] The Education Act of 1902 abolished school boards and transferred their functions to county councils with authority to charge the parishes for it. Dr. John Clifford and other non-conformists started passive resistance by refusing to pay the education rate to county councils.

party would have thought twice before antagonizing them. One can therefore understand that people who possess arms would have fewer occasions for offering satyagraha. My point is that I can definitely assert that in planning the Indian movement there never was the slightest thought given to the possibility or otherwise of offering armed resistance. Satyagraha is soul-force pure and simple, and whenever and to whatever extent there is room for the use of arms or physical force or brute force, there and to that extent is there so much less possibility for soul-force. These are purely antagonistic forces in my view, and I had full realization of this antagonism even at the time of the advent of satyagraha.

We will not stop here to consider whether these views are right or wrong. We are only concerned to note the distinction between passive resistance and satyagraha, and we have seen that there is a great and fundamental difference between the two. If without understanding this, those who call themselves either passive resisters or satyagrahis believe both to be one and the same thing, there would be injustice to both, leading to untoward consequences. The result of our using the phrase 'passive resistance' in South Africa was not that people admired us by ascribing to us the bravery and the self-sacrifice of the suffragists, but that we were mistaken to be a danger to person and property which the suffragists were, and even a generous friend like Mr. Hosken imagined us to be weak. The power of suggestion is such that a man at last becomes what he believes himself to be. If we continue to believe ourselves and let others believe that we are weak and therefore offer passive resistance, our resistance will never make us strong, and at the earliest opportunity we will give up passive resistance as a weapon of the weak. On the other hand if we are satyagrahis and offer satyagraha believing ourselves to be strong, two clear consequences result from it. Fostering the idea of strength, we grow stronger and stronger every day. With the increase in our strength, our satyagraha too becomes more effective and we would never be casting about for an opportunity to give it up. Again, there is no scope for love in passive resistance; on the other hand, not only has hatred no place in satyagraha, but it is a positive breach of its ruling principle. While in passive resistance there is a scope for the use of arms when a suitable occasion arrives, in satyagraha physical force is

forbidden even in the most favourable circumstances. Passive resistance is often looked upon as a preparation for the use of force, while satyagraha can never be utilized as such. Passive resistance may be offered side by side with the use of arms. Satyagraha and brute force, being each a negation of the other, can never go together. Satyagraha may be offered to one's nearest and dearest; passive resistance can never be offered to them unless of course they have ceased to be dear and become an object of hatred to us. In passive resistance there is always present an idea of harassing the other party and there is a simultaneous readiness to undergo any hardships entailed upon us by such activity; while in satyagraha there is not the remotest idea of injuring the opponent. Satyagraha postulates the conquest of the adversary by suffering in one's own person.

These are the distinctions between the two forces. But I do not wish to suggest that the merits or, if you like, the defects of passive resistance thus enumerated are to be seen in every movement which passes by that name. But it can be shown that these defects have been noticed in many cases of passive resistance. Jesus Christ indeed has been acclaimed as the prince of passive resisters but I submit in that case passive resistance must mean satyagraha and satyagraha alone. There are not many cases in history of passive resistance in that sense. One of these is that of the of Russia cited by Tolstoy. The phrase 'passive resistance' was not employed to denote the patient suffering of oppression by thousands of devout Christians in the early days of Christianity. I would therefore class them as satyagrahis. And if their conduct be described as passive resistance, passive resistance becomes synonymous with satyagraha. It has been my object in the present chapter to show that satyagraha is essentially different from what people generally mean in English by the phrase 'passive resistance'.

While enumerating the characteristics of passive resistance, I had to sound a note of warning in order to avoid injustice being done to those who had recourse to it. It is also necessary to point out that I do not claim for people calling themselves satyagrahis all the merits which I have described as being characteristic of satyagraha. I am not unaware of the fact that many a satyagrahi so called is an utter stranger to them. Many suppose satyagraha to be a weapon of the

weak. Others have said that it is a preparation for armed resistance. But I must repeat once more that it has not been my object to describe satyagrahis as they are but to set forth the implications of satyagraha and the characteristics of satyagrahis as they ought to be.

In a word, we had to invent a new term clearly to denote the movement of the Indians in the Transvaal and to prevent its being confused with passive resistance generally so called. I have tried to show in the present chapter the various principles which were then held to be a part and parcel of the connotation of that term.[1]

CHAPTER XIV

DEPUTATION TO ENGLAND

In the Transvaal itself we took all necessary measures for resisting the Black Act such as approaching the Local Government with memorials, etc. The Legislative Council deleted the clause affecting women, but the rest of the Ordinance was passed practically in the shape in which it was first drafted. The spirit of the community was then high and having closed its ranks it was unanimous in opposition to the Ordinance. No one therefore was despondent. We however still adhered to the resolution to exhaust all appropriate constitutional remedies in the first instance. The Transvaal was yet a Crown Colony, so that the Imperial Government was responsible for its legislation as well as its administration. Therefore, the royal assent to measures passed by its legislature was not a mere formality, but very often it might so happen that the King, as advised by his ministers, might withhold his assent to such measures if they were found to be in conflict with the spirit of the British Constitution. On the other hand, in the case of a colony enjoying responsible government, the royal assent to measures passed by its legislature is more often than not a matter of course.

I submitted to the community that if a deputation was to go to England, it was as well that they realized their responsibility in the matter still more fully, and with this end in view I placed three suggestions before our Association. First, although we had taken

[1] For a detailed discussion of passive resistance, *vide* "Hind Swaraj - Chapter XVII : Passive Resistance", November 22, 1909.

pledges at the meeting in the Empire Theatre,[1] we should once again obtain individual pledges from leading Indians, so that if they had given way to doubt or weakness, they would be found out. One of the reasons advanced by me in support of this suggestion was that if the deputation was backed up by satyagraha they would then have no fears and could boldly inform the Secretary of State for India and the Secretary of State for the Colonies about the resolution of the community. Secondly, arrangements for meeting the expenses of thedeputation must be made in advance. And thirdly, the maximum number of members should be fixed. I made this last suggestion in order to correct the current misapprehension that a large number of members would be able to put in more work, and to bring this idea into relief that the members should join the deputation not becauseit was an honour to them but with a single-minded devotion to the cause.[2] The three suggestions were accepted. Signatures were taken. Many signed the pledge, but still I saw even among those who had orally pledged themselves at the meeting, there were some who hesitated to sign it. When once a man has pledged himself he need not hesitate to pledge himself a hundred times. And yet it is no uncommon experience to find men weakening in regard to pledges deliberately taken and getting perplexed when asked to put down a verbal pledge in black and white. The necessary funds, too, were found. The greatest difficulty however was encountered in selecting the personnel of the deputation.[3] I was to go, but who would go with me? The Committee took much time in arriving at a decision. Many a night passed, and we had a full experience of the bad habits which are generally prevalent in associations. Some proposed to cut the Gordian knot by asking me to go alone, but I flatly declined. There was for all practical purposes no Hindu-Muslim problem in South Africa. But it could not be claimed that there were no differences between the two sections and if these differences never assumed an acute form, that may have been to some extent due to the peculiar conditions in South

[1] This was on September 11, 1906; for the text of the resolutions *vide* "the Mass Meeting", and for a report of the proceedings of the meeting, *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", September 22, 1906.

[2] The original adds here: "and also to save unnecessary expenditure".

[3] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter", September 25, 1906.

Africa, but was largely and definitely due to the leaders having worked with devotion and frankness and thus given a fine lead to the community. My advice was that there must be a Mussalman gentleman going with me, and that the personnel should be limited to two. But the Hindus at once said that as I represented the Indian community as a whole, there should be a representative of Hindu interests. Some even said that there should be one Konkani Mussalman, one Memon, one Patidar, one Anavala and so on. At last, all understood the real position, and only two of us, Mr. H. O. Ali and myself, were duly elected.

H. O. Ali could be considered a semi-Malay. His father was an Indian Mussalman and his mother a Malay. His mother tongue, we might say, was Dutch. But he had been so well educated in English that he could speak Dutch and English equally well. He had also cultivated the art of writing to the newspapers. He was a member of the Transvaal British Indian Association and he had long been taking part in public affairs. He spoke Hindustani, too, freely.

We set to work as soon as we reached England.[1] We got printed the memorial[2] to be submitted to the Secretary of State which we had drafted in the steamer on our way to England. Lord Elgin was Secretary of State for the Colonies and Lord (then Mr.) Morley, Secretary of State for India. We met Dadabhai and through him the British Committee of the Indian National Congress. We placed our case before it and signified our intention to seek the co-operation of all the parties, as advised by Dadabhai. The Committee approved of our policy. Similarly we met Sir Muncherji Bhownuggree, who also was of much help. He as well as Dadabhai advised us to secure the co-operation of some impartial and well-known Anglo-Indian who should introduce our deputation to Lord Elgin. Sir Muncherji suggested some names, too, one of which was that of Sir Lepel Griffln. Sir W. W. Hunter was now no longer alive; or else, on account of his deep knowledge of the condition of Indians in South Africa, he would have led the deputation himself or induced some influential member of the House of Lords to do so.

[1] On October 20, 1906. The Deputation was in England till December 1. For a record of its work.

[2] *Vide* "Representation to Lord Elgin", October 31, 1906.

We met Sir Lepel Griffin. He was opposed to current political movements in India, but he was much interested in this question and agreed to lead the deputation not for the sake of courtesy but for the justice and righteousness of our cause. He read all the papers and became familiar with the problem. We likewise interviewed other Anglo-Indians, Members of Parliament, and as many others of any importance as were within our reach. The deputation waited upon Lord Elgin who heard everything with attention, expressed his sympathy, referred to his own difficulties and yet promised to do for us all he could.[1] The same deputation met Mr. Morley who also declared his sympathy and whose observations in replying to the deputation I have already summarized.[2] Sir William Wedderburn was instrumental in calling a meeting of the Committee of the House of Commons for Indian Affairs in the drawing-room of the House and we placed our case before them too as best we could.[3] We met Mr. Redmond, the then leader of the Irish Party.[4] In short, we met asmany members of Parliament as we could, irrespective of the party to which they belonged. The British Committee of the Indian National Congress was of course very helpful. But according to English custom men belonging to a certain party and holding certain views only would join it, while there were many others who had nothing to do with the Committee but yet rendered us all possible assistance. We determined to organize a standing committee upon which all these could come together and thus be even more useful in watching over our interests and men of all parties liked our idea.

The burden of carrying on the work of an institution chiefly falls upon its secretary. The secretary should be such that not only does he have full faith in the aims and objects of the institution, but is able to devote nearly all his time to the achievement of these aims and has a great capacity for work. Mr. L. W. Ritch, who belonged to South Africa, was formerly articled to me and was now reading for the bar in London, satisfied all the requirements. He was there in England and was also desirous of taking up the work. We therefore ventured to

[1] For the Deputation's memorial dated November 8 and a report of the discussion that ensued, *vide* "Memorial to Lord Elgin"; Gandhiji submitted a further statement *vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Lord Elgin", November 20, 1906 & December 1, 1906.

[2] For details, *vide* "Deputation to Morley", November 22, 1906.

[3] *Vide* "Meeting at House of Commons", November 7, 1906

[4] The original adds here: "We had gone specially to see him also."

form the South Africa British Indian Committee.[1]

In England and other Western countries there is one, in my view, barbarous custom of inaugurating movements at dinners. The British Premier delivers in the Mansion House on the ninth of November an important speech in which he adumbrates his programme for the year and publishes his own forecast of the future, and which therefore attracts universal notice. Cabinet ministers among others are invited to dinner by the Lord Mayor of London, and when the dinner is over, bottles of wine are uncorked, all present drink to the health of the host and the guest, and speeches too are made while this merry business is in progress. The toast to the British Cabinet is proposed, and the Premier makes the important speech referred to in reply to it. And as in public, so in private, the person with whom some important conversations are to be held is, as a matter of custom, invited to dinner, and the topic of the day is broached either at or after dinner. We too had to observe this custom not once but quite a number of times, although of course we never touched meat or liquor. We thus invited our principal supporters to lunch. About a hundred covers were laid. The idea was to tender our thanks to our friends, to bid them good-bye and at the same time to constitute the Standing Committee. Here too, speeches[2] were made, as usual, after dinner, and the Committee was also organized. We thus obtained greater publicity for our movement.

After a stay in England of about six weeks we returned to South Africa. When we reached Madeira, we received a cablegram from Mr. Ritch to the effect that Lord Elgin had declared that he was unable without further consideration to advise His Majesty the King that the Transvaal Asiatic Ordinance should be brought into operation.[3] Our joy knew no bounds. The steamer took about a fortnight to reach Cape Town from Madeira and we had quite a good time of it during these days and built many castles in the air about the coming redress of many more grievances. But the ways of Providence are inscrutable. We shall see in the next chapter how the castles we had laboriously built toppled down and passed into nothingness.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dadabhai Naoroji", November 16, 1906; also "Deputation Notes - II (Permanent Committee)", November 17, 1906 and "Letter to Lord Reay (Enclosure)", November 24, 1906.

[2] For the text of Gandhiji's farewell address on November 29, 1906, *vide* "Speech at London Farewell".

[3] *Vide* "Deputation Notes - IV (Cablegram at Madeira)", before December 18, 1906

But I must place one or two sacred reminiscences on record before closing this chapter. We had utilized every single minute of our time in England. The sending of a large number of circulars, etc., could not be done single-handed, and we were sorely in need of outside help. Money indeed does bring us this kind of help, but my experience ranging over forty years has taught me that assistance thus purchased can never compare with purely voluntary service. Fortunately for us we had many volunteer helpers. Many an Indian youth who was in England for study surrounded us and some of them helped us day and night without any hope of reward or fame. I do not remember that any of them ever refused to do anything as being beneath his dignity, be it the writing of addresses or the fixing of stamps or the posting of letters. But there was an English friend named Simmonds who cast all these into the shade. Whom the gods love die young and so did this benevolent Englishman. I first met him in South Africa. He had been in India. When he was in Bombay in 1897, he moved fearlessly among the Indians affected by the plague and nursed them. It had become second nature with him not to be daunted by death when ministering to sufferers from infectious diseases. He was perfectly free from any race or colour prejudice. He was independent in temperament. He believed that truth is always with the minority. It was this belief of his which first drew him to me in Johannesburg, and he often humorously assured me that he would withdraw his support of me if he ever found me in a majority, as he was of opinion that truth itself is corrupted in the hands of a majority. He had read very widely. He was private secretary to Sir George Farrar, one of the millionaires of Johannesburg. He was an expert stenographer. He happened to be in England when we were there. I did not know where he was, but the noble Englishman found us out as our public work had secured for us newspaper advertisement. He expressed his willingness to do for us anything he could. “I will work as a servant if you like,” he said, “and if you need a stenographer, you know you can scarcely come across the like of me.” We were in need of both these kinds of help, and I am not exaggerating when I say that this Englishman toiled for us day and night without any payment. He was always on the typewriter till twelve or one o’clock at night. Simmonds would carry messages and post letters, always with a smile curling round his lips. His monthly income was about forty-five pounds, but he spent it all in helping his friends and others. He was about thirty years of age. He was unmarried and wanted to remain so

all his life. I pressed him hard to accept some payment, but he flatly refused and said, "I would be failing in my duty if I accepted any remuneration for this service."[1] I remember that on the last night he was awake till three o'clock while we were winding up our business and packing our things. He parted from us the next day after seeing us off on the steamer, and a sad parting it was. I have often experienced that benevolence is by no means peculiar to the brown skin.

For the benefit of young aspirants after public work I note down the fact that we were so punctilious in keeping the accounts of the deputation that we preserved even such trifling vouchers as the receipts for the money spent in the steamers on, say, soda water. Similarly we preserved the receipts for telegrams. I do not remember to have entered a single item under sundries when writing the detailed accounts. As a rule, sundries did not figure in our accounts at all, and if they did they were intended to cover a few pennies or shillings the manner of whose spending we could not recall at the time of writing the accounts at the end of the day.

I have clearly observed in this life the fact that we become trustees or responsible agents from the time that we reach years of discretion. So long as we are with our parents, we mustaccount to them for moneys or business they entrust to us. They may be sure of our rectitude and may not ask us for accounts, but that does not affect our responsibility. When one becomes an independent householder, there arises the responsibility to one's family. We are not the sole proprietors of our acquisitions; our family is a co-sharer of them along with ourselves. We must account for every single pie for their sake. If such is our responsibility in private life, in public life it is all the greater. I have observed that voluntary workers are apt to behave as if they were not bound to render a detailed account of the business or moneys with which they are entrusted because like Caesar's wife they are above suspicion. This is sheer nonsense, as the keeping of account has nothing whatever to do with trustworthiness or the reverse. Keeping of accounts is an independent duty, the performance of which is essential to clean work, and if the leading workers of the

[1] Cf. however, "Deputation Notes - IV (Thanks for Help)", before December 18, 1906, where Gandhiji says Simmonds did receive payment, though he did not work merely as a wage-earner.

institution which we voluntarily serve do not ask us for accounts out of a sense of false courtesy or fear, they too are equally to blame. If a paid servant is bound to account for work done and money spent by him, the volunteer is doubly bound to do so, for his very work is as a reward to him. This is a very important matter, and as I know that this is generally not sufficiently attended to in any institution, I have ventured to take up so much space here in adverting to the subject.

CHAPTER XV

CROOKED POLICY

As soon as we landed at Cape Town,[1] and more so when we reached Johannesburg, we saw that we had over-rated the Madeira cablegram. Mr. Ritch, who sent it, was not responsible for this. He cabled only what he had heard about the measure being disallowed. As we have already observed, the Transvaal was then, that is to say in 1906, a Crown Colony. Crown Colonies are represented in England by agents one of whose duties it is to instruct the Secretary of State for the Colonies in all matters affecting Colonial interests. The Transvaal was then represented by Sir Richard Solomon, the noted lawyer of South Africa. Lord Elgin had disallowed the Black Act in consultation with him. Responsible government was to be conferred on the Transvaal on January l, 1907. Lord Elgin therefore assured Sir Richard that, if an identical measure was passed by the Transvaal legislature constituted after the grant of responsible government, it would not be refused the royal assent. But so long as the Transvaal was a Crown Colony, the Imperial Government would be held directly responsible for such class legislation, and as racial discrimination was a departure from the fundamental principles of the British Empire, he could not but advise His Majesty to disallow the measure in question.

If the measure was to be thus disallowed only in name and if the Transvaal Europeans could at the same time have their own way, Sir Richard Solomon had no reason to object to such an excellent arrangement. I have characterized this as crooked policy, but I believe it could be given a still harsher name with perfect justice. The Imperial Government is directly responsible for the legislation of Crown Colonies, and there is no place in its constitution for discrimination on

[1] On December 18, 1906

the ground of race or colour. So far so good. One can also understand that the Imperial Government could not all at once disallow measures passed by the legislatures of Colonies enjoying responsible government. But to hold private conferences with Colonial agents and in advance to promise the royal assent to legislation which is in open violation of the Imperial Constitution,—what is this if it is not a breach of faith and an injustice to those whose rights are thus pilfered? Really speaking, Lord Elgin by his assurance encouraged the Transvaal Europeans in their anti-Indian activities. If he wanted to do this, he ought to have told the Indian deputation so in plain terms. As a matter of fact, the Empire cannot escape responsibility even for the legislation of Colonies enjoying responsible government. Even such Colonies are bound to accept the fundamental principles of the British Constitution. As for example, no such colony can revive the institution of legalized slavery. If Lord Elgin disallowed the Black Act because it was an improper piece of legislation, and he could disallow it only on this ground, it was his clear duty privately to have warned Sir Richard Solomon that the Transvaal could not enact such an iniquitous law after the grant of responsible government, and if it had any intention of doing so, the Imperial Government would be constrained to reconsider the advisability of granting it any such superior status. Or he should have told Sir Richard that responsible government could be conferred only on condition that the rights of the Indians were fully safeguarded. Instead of following such straightforward procedure, Lord Elgin made an outward show of friendliness to the Indians, while at the same time he really and secretly supported the Transvaal Government and encouraged it to pass once more the very law which he had himselfvetoed. This is not the only or the first case of such tortuous policy followed by the British Empire. Even an indifferent student of its history will easily recall similar incidents.

In Johannesburg, therefore, the sole topic of conversation was the trick played upon us by Lord Elgin and the Imperial Government. Our disappointment in South Africa was as deep as had been our joy in Madeira. Yet the immediate consequence of this deception was that the community became even more enthusiastic than before. Everyone said that we must never fear as our struggle was independent of any

help from the Imperial Government. We must look for assistance only to our own selves and to that God in Whose name we had pledged ourselves to resistance. And even crooked policy would in time turn straight if only we were true to ourselves.

Responsible government was established in the Transvaal. The first measure passed by the new Parliament was the budget; the second was the Asiatic Registration Act, which was, except for an alteration in the date specified in one of its clauses, which lapse of time made necessary, an exact replica of the original Ordinance, and was rushed through all its stages at a single sitting on March 21, 1907.[1] The disallowance of the Ordinance, therefore, was forgotten as if it was a dream. The Indians submitted memorials, etc., as usual, but who would listen to them? The Act was proclaimed to take effect from July 1, 1907, and Indians were called upon to apply for registration under it before July 31. The delay in enforcing the Act was due not to any desire to oblige the Indians, but to the exigencies of the case. Some time must elapse before the formal sanction of the Crown to the measure was signified, and the preparation of the forms set forth in schedules and the opening of permit offices at various centres would also take time. The delay[2] therefore was intended solely for the Transvaal Government's own convenience.

CHAPTER XVI

AHMAD MUHAMMAD KACHHALIA[3]

When the deputation was on its way to England, I happened to talk about the anti Asiatic legislation in the Transvaal with an Englishman who had settled in South Africa, and when I informed him of the object of our visit to England, he exclaimed, "I see you are going to London in order to get rid of the dog's collar." He thus compared the Transvaal permit to a dog's collar, but I did not quite understand then and cannot exactly tell while recording that incident even now, whether he thus intended to express his contempt for the

[1] Cf. "Johannesburg Letter", March 30, 1907 and "Mass Meeting of Transvaal Indians", April 6, 1907, where Gandhiji says that the Assembly passed it on the 20th and the Council on the 22nd after having postponed consideration of it for a night.

[2] The original adds here: "of five or six months".

[3] Also spelt 'Cachalia'

Indians and joy at their humiliation, or whether he only meant to show his strong feeling in the matter. According to the golden rule that a person's words must not be interpreted so as to do him an injustice, I take it that the gentleman used this graphic language only in order to evince his strong feeling. However that may be, on one side the Transvaal Government was preparing to throw the dog's collar on the Indians' necks, while on the other side the Indians were getting ready to put up a fight against the wicked policy of that Government and were concerting measures calculated to strengthen them in their resolution never to wear that collar. Of course, we were writing letters to friends in England as well as in India and trying thus to keep them in touch with the situation from day to day. But a satyagraha struggle depends but little upon help from outside, and it is only internal remedies that are effective. The leaders' time therefore was chiefly taken up with the endeavours to keep all the elements of the community up to the mark.

One important question before us was what agency we should use for carrying on the struggle. The Transvaal British Indian Association had a large membership. Satyagraha had not yet seen the light of day when it was established. The Association had resisted in the past, and must resist in the future, not one obnoxious law, but quite a host of them. Besides organizing resistance to obnoxious legislation, it had many other functions of a political and social nature to perform. Again all the members of the Association were not pledged to resist the Black Act through satyagraha. At the same time, we must take account of external risks to which the Association would be exposed in the event of its being identified with the satyagraha struggle. What if the Transvaal Government declared the struggle to be seditious and all institutions carrying it on as illegal bodies? What in such a case would be the position of members who were not satyagrahis? Andwhat about the funds which were contributed at a time when satyagraha was not so much as thought of? All these were weighty considerations. Lastly, the satyagrahis were strongly of opinion that they not only must not entertain any ill will against those who did not join the struggle whether for want of faith or weakness or any other reason whatever, but must maintain their present friendly relations with them unimpaired and even work side by side with them

in all other movements except the satyagraha struggle.

For all these reasons the community came to the conclusion that the satyagraha struggle should not be carried on through any of the existing oganizations. They might render all help in their power and resist the Black Act in every way open to them except that of satyagraha, for which a new body named the 'Passive Resistance Association' was started by the satyagrahis. The reader will see from this English name that the word satyagraha had not yet been invented when this new Association came into being. Time fully justified the wisdom of constituting a fresh body for the work, and the satyagraha movement might perhaps have suffered a set-back if any of the existing organizations had been mixed up with it. Numerous members joined this new Association, and the community furnished it funds too with a lavish hand.

My experience has taught me that no movement ever stops or languishes for want of funds. This does not mean that any temporal movement can go on without money, but it does mean that wherever it has good men and true at its helm, it is bound to attract to itself the requisite funds. On the other hand, I have also observed that a movement takes its downward course from the time that it is afflicted with a plethora of funds. When therefore a public institution is managed from the interests of investments, I dare not call it a sin but I do say that it is a highly improper procedure. The public should be the bank for all public institutions, which should not last a day longer than the public wish. An institution run with the interest of accumulated capital ceases to be amenable to public opinion and becomes autocratic and self-righteous. This is not the place to dwell upon the corruption of many a social and religious institution managed with permanent funds. The phenomenon is so common that he who runs may read it.

But we must return to our narrative. Lawyers and English-educated persons do not by any means enjoy a monopoly of hair-splitting. I saw that even the uneducated Indians in South Africa were quite capable of drawing minute distinctions and making fine arguments. Some argued that the pledge taken in the old Empire Theatre had been fulfilled as the old Ordinance was disallowed, and

those who had weakened since then took shelter under this plea. The argument was not quite devoid of force, yet it could not impress those whose resistance was not to the law as a law but to the vicious principle underlying it. All the same it was found necessary to re-administer the oath of resistance for safety's sake just to reinforce the awakening of the community and to probe the extent of its weakness if any. Meetings therefore were held in every place, where the situation was explained, the oath was administered afresh and the spirit of the community was found to be as high as ever.

Meanwhile, the fateful month of July was gradually drawing to an end, and on the last day of that month we had resolved to call a mass meeting of the Indians at Pretoria, the capital of the Transvaal. Delegates from other places besides were also invited to attend. The meeting was held in the open on the grounds of Pretoria mosque. After the inauguration of satyagraha our meetings were so largely attended that no building could accommodate them. The entire Indian population in the Transvaal did not exceed 13,000 souls, of whom over 10,000 lived in Johannesburg and Pretoria. An attendance at public meetings of two thousand from an aggregate population of ten thousand would be considered large and satisfactory in any part of the world. A movement of mass satyagraha is impossible on any other condition. Where the struggle is wholly dependent upon internal strength, it cannot go on at all without mass discipline. The workers therefore did not consider such large attendance as anything surprising. From the very first they had decided to hold public meetings only in the open so that expense was nearly avoided and none had to go back from the place of meeting disappointed for want of accommodation. All these meetings, again, were mostly very quiet. The audiences heard everything attentively. If those who were far away from the platform could not hear a speaker, they would ask him to speak louder. The reader scarcely needs to be told that there were no chairs at these meetings. Everyone sat on the ground. There was a very small platform designed to accommodate the chairman, the speaker and a couple of friends, and a small table and a few chairs or stools were placed upon it.

Mr. Yusuf Ismail Mian, acting chairman of the British Indian Association, presided over this meeting. As the time for issuing

permits under the Black Act was drawing nearer, the Indians were naturally anxious in spite of all their enthusiasm; but no less anxious than they were General Botha and General Smuts, all the might of the Transvaal Government at their back notwithstanding. No one would like to bend a whole community to his willby sheer force. General Botha therefore had sent Mr. William Hosken to this meeting to admonish us. The reader has already made this gentleman's acquaintance in a previous chapter. The meeting received him warmly, and he said, "You know I am your friend. I need scarcely say that my feelings in this matter are with you. If at all I could, I would gladly make your opponents accede to your demands. But you hardly need to be told about the general hostility of the Transvaal Europeans to your community. I am here at General Botha's instance. He has asked me to be the bearer of his message to this meeting. He entertains a feeling of respect for you and understands your sentiments, but he says he is helpless. All the Europeans in the Transvaal unanimously ask for such a law, and he himself is convinced of the necessity for it. The Indians know fully well how powerful the Transvaal Government is. The law has again been endorsed by the Imperial Government. The Indians have done all they could and have acquitted themselves like men. But now that their opposition has failed, and the law has been passed, the community must prove their loyalty and love of peace by submitting to it. General Smuts will carefully look into any representations you make suggesting minor changes in the regulations framed in virtue of the Registration Act. My own advice to you also is that you should comply with the General's message. I know that the Transvaal Government is firm regarding this law. To resist it will be to dash your head against a wall. I wish that your community may not be ruined in fruitless opposition or invite needless suffering on their heads." I translated the speech to the meeting word by word, and further put them on their guard on my own behalf.[1] Mr. Hosken retired amidst cheers.

It was now time for the Indian speakers to address the meeting.

[1] For Gandhiji's comments at the Pretoria meeting of July 31, 1907, *vide* "Speech at Pretoria"; for his further observations, *vide* "Mr. Hosken's 'Inevitable' ", August 10, 1907.

One of these speakers was the late Ahmad Muhammad Kachhalia the hero, not of this chapter alone, but of the present volume. I knew him only as a client and as an interpreter. He had never before then taken a leading part in public work. He had a working knowledge of English, which he had so far improved by practice that when he took his friends to English lawyers, he acted as interpreter himself. But interpretership was not a profession with him; he worked as interpreter only as a friend. He at first used to hawk piecegoods, and then to tradeon a small scale in partnership with his brother. He was a Surti Memon and enjoyed great reputation in his class. His knowledge of Gujarati was also limited but in this too he had greatly advanced, being schooled by experience. He had such sharp intelligence that he very easily grasped anything that was put to him. He solved legal difficulties with such facility as often astonished me. He would not hesitate to argue law even with lawyers, and very often his arguments were worthy of consideration by them.

I have never, whether in South Africa or in India, come across a man who could surpass Mr. Kachhalia in courage and steadfastness. He sacrificed his all for the community's sake. He was always a man of his word. He was a strict orthodox Mussalman, being one of the trustees of the Surti Memon mosque. But at the same time he looked upon Hindus and Mussalmans with an equal eye. I do not remember that he ever fanatically or improperly sided with Mussalmans as against Hindus. Perfectly fearless and impartial as he was, he never hesitated to point out their faults to Hindus as well as Mussalmans whenever he found it necessary. His simplicity and humility were worthy of imitation. My close contact with him for years leads me to hold firmly to the opinion that a community can rarely boast of having in their midst a man of the stamp of Mr. Kachhalia.

Mr. Kachhalia was one of the speakers at the meeting. He made a very short speech. He said, "Every Indian knows what the Black Act is and what it implies. I have heard Mr. Hosken attentively, and so have you. His speech has only confirmed me in my resolution. We know how powerful the Transvaal Government is. But it cannot do anything more than enact such a law. It will cast us into prison, confiscate our property, deport us or hang us. All this we will bear cheerfully, but we cannot simply put up with this law." I observed that, while saying this, Mr. Kachhalia was being deeply moved. His

face reddened, the veins on his neck and on his head were swollen with the blood coursing rapidly through them, his body was shaking, and moving the fingers of his right hand upon his throat, he thundered forth: "I swear in the name of God that I will be hanged but I will not submit to this law, and I hope that everyone present will do likewise." So saying he took his seat. As he moved his fingers on his throat, some of those seated on the platform smiled, and I remember that I joined them in their smile. I was rather doubtful whether Kachhalia Sheth would be able fully to translate his brave words into action. I am ashamed of this doubt now, and every time I think of it. Kachhaliaalways remained to the fore among the many Indians who observed their pledge to the letter in that great struggle without a moment's flinching.

The meeting cheered him as he spoke. Others then knew him very much better than I did, as many of them were personally familiar with this obscure hero. They knew that Kachhalia only says what he means and means what he says. There were other spirited speeches too. But I have singled out Kachhalia Sheth's for mention, as it proved to be a prophecy of his subsequent career. Not everyone of the spirited speakers stood the final test. This great man died in 1918, four years after the struggle was over, serving the community till the last.

I will close this chapter with a reminiscence of Kachhalia Sheth which may not find a place elsewhere. The reader later on will hear of Tolstoy Farm where lived a number of satyagrahi families. The Sheth sent his ten or twelve-year-old son Ali to be educated there as an example to others and in order that the boy might be brought up to a life of simplicity and service. It was due to the example he thus set that other Mussalmans likewise sent their boys to the Farm. Ali was a modest, bright, truthful and straightforward boy. God took him unto Himself before his father. If it had been given to him to live, I doubt not he would have turned out to be the worthy son of an excellent father.

CHAPTER XVII

A RIFT IN THE LUTE

The first of July 1907 arrived, and saw the opening of permit offices. The community had decided openly to picket each office, that is to say, to post volunteers on the roads leading there to, and these

volunteers were to warn weak-kneed Indians against the trap laid for them there. Volunteers were provided with badges and expressly instructed not to be impolite to any Indian taking out a permit. They must ask him his name, but if he refused to give it they must not on any account be violent or rude to him. To every Indian going to the permit office, they were to hand a printed paper detailing the injuries which submission to the Black Act would involve and explain what was written in it. They must behave towards the police too with due respect. If the police abused or thrashed them, they must suffer peacefully; if the ill-treatment by the police was insufferable they should leave the place. If the police arrested them, they should gladly surrender themselves. If some such incident occurred in Johannesburg, it should be brought to my notice. At other places thelocal secretaries were to be informed and asked for further instructions. Each party of pickets had a captain whose orders must be obeyed by the rest.

This was the community's first experience of that kind. All who were above the age of twelve were taken as pickets, so that there were many young men from 12 to 18 years of age enrolled as such. But not one was taken who was unknown to the local workers. Over and above all these precautions, people were informed, by announcements at every public meeting and otherwise, that, if anyone desirous of taking out a permit was afraid of the pickets, he could ask the workers to detail a volunteer to escort him to the permit office and back. Some did avail themselves of this offer.

The volunteers in every place worked with boundless enthusiasm, and were ever alert and wide awake in the performance of their duties. Generally speaking, there was not much molestation by the police. When sometimes there was such molestation, the volunteers quietly put up with it. They brought to bear upon their work quite an amount of humour, in which the police too sometimes joined. They devised various diversions in order to beguile their time. Some of them were once arrested on a charge of obstructing the public traffic. As non-co-operation did not form a part of the satyagraha struggle there, defence could be made in courts, though as a rule advocates for defence were not paid from public funds. The volunteers were declared innocent and acquitted by the court, which still further exalted their spirit.

Although the Indians who wanted to take out permits were thus

saved from rudeness or violence from the volunteers in public, I must admit that there arose a body of men in connection with the movement, who without becoming volunteers privately threatened those who would take out permits with violence or injury in other ways. This was a most painful development, and strong measures were adopted in order to stamp it out as soon as it was found out. The holding out of threats nearly ceased in consequence, though it was not quite rooted out. The threats left an impression behind them and, as I could see, thus far injured the cause. Those who were threatened instantly sought Government protection and got it. Poison was thus instilled into the community, and those who were weak already grew weaker still. The poison thus grew more virulent, as the weak are always apt to be revengeful.

These threats created but little impression; but the force of public opinion on the one hand, and on the other, the fear of one's name being known to the community through the presence of volunteers acted as powerful deterrents. I do not know a single Indian who held it proper to submit to the Black Act. Those who submitted did so out of an inability to suffer hardships or pecuniary losses, and were therefore ashamed of themselves. This sense of shame, as well as a fear of loss in trade following upon the displeasure of big Indian merchants, pressed heavily upon them, and some leading Indians found a way out of this twofold difficulty. They arranged with the permit office, that an officer should meet them in a private house after nine or ten o'clock at night and give them permits. They thought that in this case no one would know about their submission to the law for some time at least and that as they were leaders, others would follow suit, thus lightening their burden of shame. It did not matter if they were found out afterwards.

But the volunteers were so vigilant that the community was kept informed of what happened every moment. There would be some even in the permit office who might give such information to the satyagrahis. Others, again, though weak themselves would be unable to tolerate the idea of leaders thus disgracing themselves, and would inform the satyagrahis from an idea that they too could face the music if the leaders were firm. In this way the community once received information that certain men were going to take out permits in a certain shop on a certain night. The community therefore first tried to dissuade these men. The shop too was picketed. But human weakness

cannot be long suppressed. Some leading men took out permits in this way at ten or eleven o'clock at night, and there was a rift in the lute. The very next day their names were published by the community. But a sense of shame has its limits. Considerations of self-interest drive shame away and mislead men out of the strait and narrow path. By and by something like five hundred men took out permits. For some time[1] permits were issued, in private houses, but as the sense of shame wore out, some went publicly to the Asiatic office and obtained certificates of registration.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE FIRST SATYAGRAHI PRISONER

When the Asiatic Department found that, notwithstanding all their exertions, they could not get more than 500 Indians to register, they decided to arrest someone. In Germiston there lived many Indians, one of whom was Pandit Rama Sundara. This man had a brave look and was endowed with some gift of the gab. He knew a few Sanskrit verses by heart. Hailing from North India as he did, he naturally knew a few *dohas* and *chopais* from the Tulasi *Ramayana*, and owing to his designation Pandit, he also enjoyed some reputation among the people. He delivered a number of spirited speeches in various places. Some malevolent Indians in Germiston suggested to the Asiatic Department that many Indians there would take out permits if Rama Sundara was arrested, and the officers concerned could scarcely resist the temptation thus offered. So Rama Sundara was put under arrest, and this being the first case of its kind, the Government as well as the Indians were much agitated over it. Rama Sundara, who was till yesterday known only to the good people of Germiston, became in one moment famous all over South Africa. He became the cynosure of all eyes as if he were a great man put upon his trial. Government need not have taken, but it did take, special measures for the preservation of peace. In the Court too Rama Sundara was accorded due respect as no ordinary prisoner but a representative of his community. Eager Indian spectators filled the court-room. Rama Sundara was sentenced to a month's simple imprisonment, and kept in a separate cell in the European ward in the Johannesburg jail.[2] People were allowed to meet him freely. He was

[1] The original has: "For some days".

[2] *Vide* "Ram Sundar Pundit's Trial in Court", November 16, 1907.

permitted to receive food from outside, and was entertained every day with delicacies prepared on behalf of the community. He was provided with everything he wanted. The day on which he was sentenced was celebrated with great eclat. There was no trace of depression, but on the other hand there was exultation and rejoicing. Hundreds were ready to go to jail. The officers of the Asiatic Department were disappointed in their hope of a bumper crop of registrants. They did not get a single registrant even from Germiston. The only gainer was the Indian community.

The month was soon over. Rama Sundara was released and was taken in a procession to the place where a meeting had been arranged. Vigorous speeches were made. Rama Sundara was smothered with garlands of flowers. The volunteers held a feast in his honour, and hundreds of Indians envied Rama Sundara's luck and were sorry that they had not the chance of suffering imprisonment.

But Rama Sundara turned out to be a false coin.[1] There was no escape from the month's imprisonment, as his arrest came as a surprise. In jail he had enjoyed luxuries to which he had been a stranger outside. Still accustomed as he was to licence, and addicted as he was to bad habits, the loneliness and the restraints of jail life were too much for him. In spite of all the attention showered upon him by the jail authorities as well as by the community, jail appeared irksome to him and he bade a final good-bye to the Transvaal and to the movement. There are clever men in every community and in every movement and so there were in ours. These knew Rama Sundara through and through, but from an idea that even he might become an instrument of the community's providence, they never let me know his secret history until his bubble had finally burst. I subsequently found that he was an indentured labourer who had deserted before completing his term. There was nothing discreditable in his having been an indentured labourer. The reader will see towards the end how indentured labourers proved to be a most valuable acquisition to the movement, and what a large contribution they made towards winning the final victory. It was certainly wrong for him not to have finished his period of indenture.

I have thus detailed the whole history of Rama Sundara not in order to expose his faults, but to point a moral. The leaders of every

[1] *Vide* "Ram Sunder 'Pundit' ", January 4, 1908 and "Ram Sunder", before January 10, 1908.

clean movement are bound to see that they admit only clean fighters to it. But all their caution notwithstanding, undesirable elements cannot be kept out. And yet if the leaders are fearless and true, the entry of undesirable persons into the movement without their knowing them to be so does not ultimately harm the cause. When Rama Sundara was found out, he became a man of straw.[1] The community forgot him, but the movement gathered fresh strength even through him. The imprisonment suffered by him for the cause stood to our credit, the enthusiasm created by his trial came to stay, and profiting by his example, weaklings slipped away out of the movement of their own accord. There were some more cases of such weakness besidesthis but I do not propose to deal with them in any detail, as it would not serve any useful purpose. In order that the reader may appreciate the strength and the weakness of the community at their real worth, it will be enough to say that there was not one Rama Sundara but several and yet I observed that the movement reaped pure advantage from all of them.

Let not the reader point the finger of scorn at Rama Sundara. All men are imperfect, and when imperfection is observed in someone in a larger measure than in others, people are apt to blame him. But that is not fair. Rama Sundara did not become weak intentionally. Man can change his temperament, can control it, but cannot eradicate it. God has not given him so much liberty. If the leopard can change his spots then only can man modify the peculiarities of his spiritual constitution. Although Rama Sundara fled away, who can tell how[2] he might have repented of his weakness? Or rather was not his very flight a powerful proof of his repentance? There was no need for him to flee if he was shameless. He could have taken out a permit and steered clear of jail by submission to the Black Act. Further, if at all so minded, he could have become a tool of the Asiatic Department, misguided his friends and become *persona grata* with the Government. Why should we not judge him charitably and say that instead of doing anything of the kind, he, being ashamed of his weakness, hid his face from the community and even did it a service?

[1] The original adds here: "The poor man ceased to be a Pandit and remained merely Rama Sundara."

[2] The original has: "how much".

CHAPTER XIX

"INDIAN OPINION"

I propose to acquaint the reader with all the weapons, internal as well as external, employed in the satyagraha struggle and now therefore proceed to introduce to him *Indian Opinion*, a weekly journal which is published in South Africa to this very day. The credit for starting the first Indian-owned printing press in South Africa is due to a Gujarati gentleman, Shri Madanjit Vyavaharik. After he had conducted the press for a few years in the midst of difficulties, he thought of bringing out a newspaper too. He consulted the late Shri Mansukhlal Nazar and myself. The paper was issued from Durban.[1] Shri Mansukhlal Nazar volunteered to act as unpaid editor. From the very first the paper was conducted at a loss. At last we decided to purchase a farm, to settle upon it all the workers, who must constitute themselves into a sort of commonwealth, and publish the paper from the farm. The farm selected for the purpose is situated on a beautiful hill thirteen miles from Durban. The nearest railway station is at a distance of three miles from the farm[2] and is called Phoenix. The paper was and is called *Indian Opinion*. It was formerly published in English, Gujarati, Hindi and Tamil. But the Hindi and Tamil sections were eventually discontinued,[3] as the burden they imposed upon us seemed to be excessive; we would not find Tamil and Hindi writers willing to settle upon the farm and could not exercise a check upon them. The paper was thus being published in English and Gujarati when the satyagraha struggle commenced. Among the settlers on the farm were Gujaratis, North Indians and Tamilians as well as Englishmen. After the premature death of Mansukhlal Nazar, his place as editor was taken by an English friend, Herbert Kitchin. Then the post of editor was long filled by Mr. Henry S. L. Polak and during our incarceration the late Rev. Joseph Doke also acted as editor.

[1] The inaugural issue appeared on June 4, 1903; *vide* "Ourselves". Gandhiji took over complete responsibility for the journal in October 1904; *vide* "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", January 13, 1905.

[2] *Vide* "Ourselves", December 24, 1904.

[3] This was done in February 1906; *vide* "Letter to M. H. Nazar", January 5 1906 and "Our Tamil and Hindi Columns", February 3, 1906. Publication of news in Hindi and Tamil was however resumed in 1914, *vide* " Hindi and Tamil", December 31, 1913.

Through the medium of this paper we could very well disseminate the news of the week among the community. The English section kept those Indians informed about the movement who did not know Gujarati, and for Englishmen in India, England and South Africa, *Indian Opinion* served the purpose of a weekly newsletter. I believe that a struggle which chiefly relies upon internal strength can be carried on without a newspaper, but it is also my experience that we could not perhaps have educated the local Indian community, nor kept Indians all over the world in touch with the course of events in South Africa in any other way with the same ease and success as through *Indian Opinion*, which therefore was certainly a most useful and potent weapon in our struggle.

As the community was transformed in the course and as a result of the struggle, so was *Indian Opinion*. In the beginning we used to accept advertisements for it, and also execute job-work in the printing press. I observed that some of our best men had to be spared for this kind of work. If we did receive advertisements for publication, there was constant difficulty in deciding which toaccept and which to refuse. Again one would be inclined to refuse an objectionable advertisement, and yet be constrained to accept it, say because the advertiser was a leading member of the community and might take it ill if his advertisement was rejected. Some of the good workers had to be set apart for canvassing and realizing outstandings from advertisers, not to speak of the flattery which advertisers claimed as their due. Moreover, the view commended itself, that if the paper was conducted not because it yielded profit but purely with a view to service, the service should not be imposed upon the community by force but should be rendered only if the community wished. And the clearest proof of such wish would be forthcoming if they became subscribers in sufficiently large numbers to make the paper self-supporting. Finally it seemed that it was in every way better for all concerned that we should approach the generality of the community and explain to them the duty of keeping their newspaper going rather than set about to induce a few traders to place their advertisements with us in the name of service. On all these grounds we stopped advertisements in the paper, with the gratifying result that those who were at first engrossed in the advertisement department could now devote their labours to improving the paper. The community realized at once their proprietorship of *Indian Opinion* and their consequent responsibility for maintaining it. The workers were relieved of all

anxiety in that respect. Their only care now was to put their best work into the paper so long as the community wanted it, and they were not only not ashamed of requesting any Indian to subscribe to *Indian Opinion*, but thought it even their duty to do so. A change came over the internal strength and the character of the paper, and it became a force to reckon with. The number of subscribers which generally ranged between twelve and fifteen hundred increased day by day. The rates of subscription had to be raised and yet when the struggle was at its height, there were as many as 3,500 subscribers. The number of Indians who could read *Indian Opinion* in South Africa was at the outside 20,000, and therefore a circulation of over three thousand copies may be held to be quite satisfactory. The community had made the paper their own to such an extent that if copies did not reach Johannesburg at the expected time, I would be flooded with complaints about it. The paper generally reached Johannesburg on Sunday morning. I know of many whose first occupation after they received the paper would be to read the Gujarati section through from beginning to end. One of the company would read it, and the restwould surround him and listen. Not all who wanted to read the paper could afford to subscribe to it by themselves and some of them would therefore club together for the purpose.

Just as we stopped advertisements in the paper, we ceased to take job-work in the press,[1] and for nearly the same reasons. Compositors had now some time to spare, which was utilized in the publication of books. As here too there was no intention of reaping profits and as the books were printed only to help the struggle forward, they commanded good sales. Thus both the paper and the press made their contribution to the struggle, and as satyagraha gradually took root in the community, there was clearly visible a corresponding moral amelioration of the paper as well as of the press from the standpoint of satyagraha.[2]

[1] The decision to stop advertisements was taken in 1912 while job-work had been given up "many years" earlier; *vide* "Ourselves", September 14, 1912.

[2] For the identification of *Indian Opinion* with the Indian struggle in South Africa and the stresses it went through, *vide* for instance "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", November 27, 1909 and "Preface to 'Indian Home Rule' ", March 20, 1910.

CHAPTER XX

A SERIES OF ARRESTS

We have seen how the Government failed to reap any advantage from Rama Sundara's arrest. On the other hand they observed the spirit of the Indian community rising rapidly. The officers of the Asiatic Department were diligent readers of *Indian Opinion*. Secrecy had been deliberately ruled out of the movement. *Indian Opinion* was an open book to whoever wanted to gauge the strength and the weakness of the community, be he a friend, an enemy or a neutral. The workers had realized at the very outset that secrecy had no place in a movement where one could do no wrong, where there was no scope for duplicity or cunning, and where strength constituted the single guarantee of victory. The very interest of the community demanded that if the disease of weakness was to be eradicated, it must be first properly diagnosed and given due publicity. When the officers saw that this was the policy of *Indian Opinion,* the paper became for them a faithful mirror of the current history of the Indian community. They thus came to think the strength of the movement could not by any means be broken so long as certain leaders were at large. Some of the leading men were consequently served with a notice in the Christmas week of 1907 to appear before the Magistrate. It must be admitted that this was an act of courtesy on the part of the officers concerned. They could havearrested the leaders by warrant if they had chosen to do so. Instead they issued notices and this, besides being evidence of their courtesy, also showed their confidence that the leaders were willing and prepared to be arrested. Those who had thus been warned appeared before the Court on the date specified, Saturday, December 28, 1907, to show cause why, having failed to apply for registration as required by law, they should not be ordered to leave the Transvaal within a given period.[1]

One of these was one Mr. Quinn, the leader of the Chinese residents of Johannesburg, who numbered three to four hundred, and were either traders or farmers. India is noted for its agriculture, but I believe that we in India are not as far advanced in agriculture as the

[1] Among those who were thus tried were Gandhiji, P. K. Naidoo, C. M. Pillay, Thambi Naidoo, Karwa, Easton, Leung Quinn and John Fortoen, the last three being Chinese; *vide* " Trial at Johannesburg" and "Trial of P. K. Naidoo and Others", December 28, 1907.

Chinese are. The modern progress of agriculture in America and other countries defies description, but I consider it to be still in an experimental stage. China, on the other hand, is an old country like India and a comparison between India and China would be therefore fairly instructive. I observed the agricultural methods of the Chinese in Johannesburg and also talked with them on the subject, and this gave me the impression that the Chinese are more intelligent as well as diligent than we are. We often allow land to lie fallow thinking it is of no use, while the Chinese would grow good crops upon it, thanks to their minute knowledge of varying soils.

The Black Act applied to the Chinese as well as to the Indians whom they therefore joined in the satyagraha struggle. Still from first to last the activities of the two communities were not allowed to be mixed up. Each worked through its own independent organization. This arrangement produced the beneficent result that so long as both the communities stood to their guns, each would be a source of strength to the other. But if one of the two gave way, that could leave the morale of the other unaffected or at least the other would steer clear of the danger of a total collapse. Many of the Chinese eventually fell away as their leader played them false. He did not indeed submit to the obnoxious law, but one morning someone came and told me that the Chinese leader had fled away without handing over charge of the books and moneys of the Chinese Association in his possession. It is always difficult for followers to sustain a conflict in the absenceof their leader, and the shock is all the greater when the leader has disgraced himself. But when the arrests commenced, the Chinese were in high spirits. Hardly any of them had taken out a permit, and therefore their leader Mr. Quinn was warned to appear along with the Indians. For some time at any rate Mr. Quinn put in very useful work. I would like to introduce to the reader one out of the several leading Indians who constituted the first batch of prisoners, Shri Thambi Naidoo. Thambi Naidoo was a Tamilian born in Mauritius where his parents had migrated from Madras State. He was an ordinary trader. He had received practically no school education whatever. But a wide experience had been his schoolmaster. He spoke and wrote English very well, although his grammar was not perhaps free from faults. In the same way he had acquired a knowledge of Tamil. He understood and spoke Hindustani fairly well and he had some knowledge of Telugu too, though he did not know the alphabets of these languages.

Again, he had a very good knowledge of the Creole dialect current in Mauritius which is a sort of corrupt French, and he knew of course the language of the Negroes. A working knowledge of so many languages was not a rare accomplishment among the Indians of South Africa, hundreds of whom could claim a general acquaintance with all these languages. These men become such good linguists almost without effort. And that is because their brains are not fatigued by education received through the medium of a foreign tongue, their memory is sharp, and they acquire these different languages simply by talking with people who speak them and by observation. This does not involve any considerable strain on their brains but on the other hand the easy mental exercise leads to a natural development of their intellect. Such was the case with Thambi Naidoo. He had a very keen intelligence and could grasp new subjects very quickly. His everyday wit was astonishing. He had never seen India. Yet his love for the homeland knew no bounds. Patriotism ran through his very veins. His firmness was pictured on his face. He was very strongly built and possessed tireless energy. He shone equally whether he had to take the chair at meetings and lead them, or whether he had to do porter's work. He was not ashamed of carrying a load on the public roads. Night and day were the same to him when he set to work. And none was more ready than he to sacrifice his all for the sake of the community. If Thambi Naidoo had not been rash and if he had been free from anger, this brave man could easily have assumed theleadership of the community in the Transvaal in the absence of Kachhalia. His irritability had not still worked for evil while the Transvaal struggle lasted, and his invaluable qualities had shone forth like jewels. But, later on I heard that his anger and his rashness had proved to be his worst enemies, and eclipsed his good qualities. However that may be, the name of Thambi Naidoo must ever remain as one of the front rank in the history of satyagraha in South Africa.

The Magistrate conducted each case separately, and ordered all the accused to leave the Transvaal within forty-eight hours in some cases and seven or fourteen days in others. The time limit expired on January 10, 1908, and the same day we were called upon to attend court for sentence.[1]

None of us had to offer any defence. All were to plead guilty to the charge of disobeying the order to leave the Transvaal within the

[1] For a report of the trial, *vide* "Trial at Johannesburg", January 10, 1908.

stated period issued by the Magistrate on failure to satisfy him that they were lawful holders of certificates of registration.

I asked leave to make a short statement, and on its being granted, I said I thought there should be a distinction made between my case and those that were to follow. I had just heard from Pretoria that my compatriots there had been sentenced to three months' imprisonment with hard labour, and had been fined a heavy amount, in lieu of payment of which they would receive a further period of three months' hard labour. If these men had committed an offence, I had committed a greater offence and I therefore asked the Magistrate to impose upon me the heaviest penalty. The Magistrate, however, did not agree to my request and sentenced me to two months' simple imprisonment. I had some slight feeling of awkwardness due to the fact that I was standing as an accused in the very Court where I had often appeared as counsel. But I well remember that I considered the former role as far more honourable than the latter, and did not feel the slightest hesitation in entering the prisoner's box.

In the Court there were hundreds of Indians as well as brother members of the Bar in front of me. On the sentence being pronounced I was at once removed in custody and was then quite alone. The policeman asked me to sit on a bench kept there for prisoners, shut the door on me and went away. I was somewhat agitated and fell into deep thought. Home, the courts where I practised, the public meeting,—all these passed away like a dream, and I was now a prisoner. What would happen in two months? Would I have to serve the full term? If the people courted imprisonment in large numbers, as they had promised, there would be no question of serving the full sentence. But if they failed to fill the prisons, two months would be as tedious as an age. These thoughts passed through my mind in less than one hundredth of the time that it has taken me to dictate them. And they filled me with shame. How vain I was! I, who had asked the people to consider the prisons as His Majesty's hotels, the suffering consequent upon disobeying the Black Act as perfect bliss, and the sacrifice of one's all and of life itself in resisting it as supreme enjoyment! Where had all this knowledge vanished today? This second train of thought acted upon me as a bracing tonic, and I began to laugh at my own folly. I began to think what kind of imprisonment would be awarded to the others and whether they would be kept with me in the prison. But I was disturbed by the police

officer who opened the gate and asked me to follow him, which I did. He then made me go before him, following me himself, took me to the prisoners' closed van and asked me to take my seat in it. I was driven to Johannesburg jail.[1]

In jail I was asked to put off my own private clothing. I knew that convicts were made naked in jail. We had all decided as satyagrahis voluntarily to obey all jail regulations so long as they were not inconsistent with our self-respect or with our religious convictions. The clothes which were given to me to wear were very dirty. I did not like putting them on at all. It was not without pain that I reconciled myself to them from an idea that I must put up with some dirt. After the officers had recorded my name and address, I was taken to a large cell, and in a short time was joined by my compatriots who came laughing and told me how they had received the same sentence as myself, and what took place after I had been removed. I understood from them that when my case was over, the Indians, some of whom were excited, took out a procession with black flags in their hands. The police disturbed the procession and flogged some of its members. We were all happy at the thought that we were kept in the same jail and in the same cell.

The cell door was locked at 6 o'clock. The door was not made of bars but was quite solid, there being high up in the wall asmall aperture for ventilation, so that we felt as if we had been locked up in a safe. No wonder the jail authorities did not accord us the good treatment which they had meted out to Rama Sundara. As Rama Sundara was the first satyagrahi prisoner, the authorities had no idea how he should be treated. Our batch was fairly large and further arrests were in contemplation. We were therefore kept in the Negro ward. In South Africa only two classes of convicts are recognized, namely, Whites and Blacks, i.e., the Negroes, and the Indians were classed with Negroes.

The next morning we found that prisoners without hard labour had the right to keep on their own private clothing, and if they would not exercise this right, they were given special jail clothing assigned to that class of prisoners. We decided that it was not right to put on our own clothing and that it was appropriate to take the jail uniform, and

[1] For Gandhiji's experiences in Johannesburg jail, *vide* "My Gaol Experiences -I, II, III, IV", March 7, 21, 21, 28, 1908. In "My Experiences in Gaol-1", March 7, 1908, Gandhiji states that he was taken to jail in "a cab".

we informed the authorities accordingly. We were therefore given the clothes assigned to Negro convicts not punished with hard labour. But Negro prisoners sentenced to simple imprisonment are never numerous, and hence there was a shortage of simple imprisonment prisoners' clothing as soon as other Indians sentenced to simple imprisonment began to arrive! As the Indians did not wish to stand upon ceremony in this matter, they readily accepted clothing assigned to hard labour prisoners. Some of those who came in later preferred to keep on their own clothing rather than put on the uniform of the hard labour convicts. I thought this improper, but did not care to insist upon their following the correct procedure in the matter.

From the second or third day satyagrahi prisoners began to arrive in large numbers. They had all courted arrest and were most of them hawkers. In South Africa every hawker, Black or White, has to take out a licence, always to carry it with him and show it to the police when asked to do so. Nearly every day some policeman would ask to see the licences and arrest those who had none to show. The community had resolved to fill up the jail after our arrests. In this the hawkers took the lead. It was easy for them to get arrested. They had only to refuse to show their licences and that was enough to ensure their arrest. In this way the number of satyagrahi prisoners swelled to more than a hundred in one week. And as a few were sure to arrive every day, we received the daily budget of news without a newspaper. When satyagrahis began to be arrested in large numbers, they were sentenced to imprisonment with hard labour, either because the magistrates lost patience, or because, as we thought, they had received some such instructions from the Government. Even today, I think we were right in our conjecture, as, if we leave out the first few cases in which simple imprisonment was awarded, never afterwards throughout the long-drawn-out struggle was there pronounced a sentence of simple imprisonment, even women having been punished with hard labour. If all the magistrates had not received the same orders or instructions, and if yet by mere coincidence they sentenced all men and women at all times to hard labour, that must be held to be almost a miracle.

In Johannesburg jail prisoners not condemned to hard labour got 'mealie pap' in the morning. There was no salt in it, but each prisoner was given some salt separately. At noon the prisoners were given four ounces of rice, four ounces of bread, one ounce of ghee and a little salt, and in the evening 'mealie pap' and some vegetable,

chiefly potatoes of which two were given if they were small and only one if they were big in size. None of us were satisfied with this diet. The rice was cooked soft. We asked the prison medical officer for some condiments, and told him that condiments were allowed in jails in India. "This is not India," was the stern answer. "There is no question of taste about prison diet[1] and condiments therefore cannot be allowed." We asked for pulses on the ground that the regulation diet was lacking in muscle-building properties. "Prisoners must not indulge in arguments on medical grounds," replied the doctor. "You do get muscle-building food, as twice a week you are served boiled beans instead of maize." The doctor's argument was sound if the human stomach was capable of extracting the various elements out of various foods taken at various times in a week or fortnight. As a matter of fact he had no intention whatever of looking to our convenience. The Superintendent permitted us to cook our food ourselves. We elected Thambi Naidoo as our *chef*, and as such he had to fight many a battle on our behalf. If the vegetable ration issued was short in weight, he would insist on getting full weight.[2] On vegetable days which were two in a week we cooked twice and on other days only once, as we were allowed to cook other things for ourselves only for the noon-day meal. We were somewhat better off after we began to cook our own food.

But whether or not we succeeded in obtaining these conveniences, every one of us was firm in his resolution of passing his term in jail in perfect happiness and peace. The number of satyagrahi prisoners gradually rose to over 150. As we were all simple imprisonment convicts, we had no work to do except keeping the cells, etc., clean. We asked the Superintendent for work, and he replied: "I am sorry I cannot give you work, as, if I did, I should be held to have committed an offence. But you can devote as much time as you please to keeping the place clean." We asked for some such exercise as drill, as we had observed even the Negro prisoners with hard labour being drilled in addition to their usual work. The Superintendent replied, "If your warder has time and if he gives you drill, I will not object to it; but I will not require him to do it, as he is hard worked as it is, and your arrival in unexpectedly large numbers has made his work harder still." The warder was a good man and this qualified permission was quite enough for him. He began to drill us every morning with great interest. This drill must be performed in the small yard before our

[1] The original has: "no question of taste for a prisoner".

[2] This sentence is not to be found in the original.

cells and was therefore in the nature of a merry-go-round. When the warder finished the drill and went away, it was continued by a Pathan compatriot of ours named Nawabkhan, who made us all laugh with his quaint pronunciation of English words of command. He rendered 'Stand at ease' as 'sundlies'! We could not for the life of us understand what Hindustani word it was, but afterwards it dawned upon us that it was no Hindustani but only Nawabkhani English!

CHAPTER XXI

THE FIRST SETTLEMENT

We had thus been in jail for a fortnight, when fresh arrivals brought the news that there were going on some negotiations about a compromise with the Government. After two or three days[1] Mr. Albert Cartwright, editor of *The Transvaal Leader*, a Johannesburg daily, came to see me.

All the daily papers then conducted in Johannesburg were the property of one or another of the European owners of the gold mines, but except in cases where the interests of these magnates were at stake, the editors were unfettered in the expression of their own views on all public questions. Only very able and well-known men were selected as editors. For instance, the editor of *The Daily Star* had formerly been Private Secretary to Lord Milner, and later went to England to take Mr.Buckle's place as editor of *The Times*. Mr. Albert Cartwright of *The Transvaal Leader* was as broad-minded as he was able. He had almost always supported the Indian cause in his columns. He and I had become good friends. He saw General Smuts after I was sent to jail. General Smuts welcomed his mediation. Mr. Cartwright thereupon met the Indian leaders, who said, "We know nothing about legal technicalities, and cannot possibly talk about compromise so long as Gandhi is in prison. We desire settlement, but if Government wants it while our men are in jail, you should see Gandhi. We will ratify any arrangement which he accepts."

Mr. Cartwright thus came to see me and brought with him terms of settlement drafted or approved of by General Smuts. I did not like the vague language of the document, but was all the same prepared myself to put my signature to it with one alteration. However, I informed Mr. Cartwright that I could not sign it without consulting my fellow-prisoners, even if I took the consent of the Indians outside prison for granted.

[1] On January 21, 1908

The substance of the proposed settlement was that the Indians should register voluntarily and not under any law, that the details to be entered in the new certificates of registration should be settled by Government in consultation with the Indian community, and that if the majority of the Indians underwent voluntary registration, Government should repeal the Black Act and take steps with a view to legalizing the voluntary registration. The draft did not make quite clear the condition which required Government to repeal the Black Act. I therefore suggested a change calculated to place this beyond all doubt from my own standpoint.

Mr. Cartwright did not like even this little addition and said, "General Smuts considers this draft to be final. I have approved of it myself, and I can assure you that if you all undergo re-registration, the Black Act is bound to be repealed."

I replied, "Whether or not there is a settlement, we shall always be grateful to you for your kindness and help. I should not like to suggest a single unnecessary alteration in the draft. I do not object to such language as would uphold the prestige of Government. But where I myself am doubtful about the meaning, I must certainly suggest a change of language, and if there is to be a settlement after all, both the parties must have the right to alter the draft. General Smuts need not confront us with an ultimatum, saying that these terms are final. He has already aimed one pistol in the shape of the Black Act at the Indians. What can he hope to gain by aiming a second?"

Mr. Cartwright had nothing to say against this argument, and he promised to place my suggestion for the change before General Smuts.[1]

I consulted my fellow-prisoners. They too did not like the language, but agreed to the settlement if General Smuts would accept the draft with my amendment. New-comers to jail had brought a message from the leaders outside that I should accept any suitable compromise without waiting for their consent. I got Messrs Leung Quinn and Thambi Naidoo to sign the draft along with myself and handed it to Mr. Cartwright.[2]

The second or third day, on January 30, 1908, Mr. Vernon, the

[1] Gandhiji has elsewhere dealt with Cartwright's efforts for a settlement; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", February 8, 1908.

[2] For the text of the letter, *vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", January 28, 1908.

Superintendent of Police, Johannesburg, took me to Pretoria to meet General Smuts, with whom I had a good deal of talk. He told me what had passed between him and Mr. Cartwright. He congratulated me on the Indian community having remained firm even after my imprisonment, and said, "I could never entertain a dislike for your people. You know I too am a barrister. I had some Indian fellow-students in my time. But I must do my duty. The Europeans want this law, and you will agree with me that these are mostly not Boers but Englishmen. I accept the alteration you have suggested in the draft. I have consulted General Botha also, and I assure you that I will repeal the Asiatic Act as soon as most of you have undergone voluntary registration. When the bill legalizing such registration is drafted, I will send you a copy for your criticism. I do not wish there should be any recurrence of the trouble, and I wish to respect the feelings of your people."

So saying General Smuts rose. I asked him, "Where am I to go? And what about the other prisoners?"

The General laughed and said, "You are free this very moment. I am 'phoning to the prison officials to release the other prisoners tomorrow morning. But I must advise you not to go in for many meetings or demonstrations, as in that case Government will find itself in an awkward position."

I replied, "You may rest assured that there will not be a single meeting simply for the sake of it. But I will certainly have to hold meetings in order to explain to the community how the settlement was effected, what is its nature and scope, and how it has added to our responsibilities." "Of such meetings," said General Smuts, "you may have as many as you please. It is sufficient that you have understood what I desire in the matter."[1]

It was then about seven o'clock in the evening. I had not a single farthing in my pocket. The secretary to General Smuts gave me the railway fare to Johannesburg. There was no need to stop at Pretoria and announce the settlement to the Indians there. The leaders were all in Johannesburg, which was our headquarters. There was now only one more train for Johannesburg, and I was able to catch it.

[1] For another version of this conversation, *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", February 8, 1908.

CHAPTER XXII

OPPOSITION AND ASSAULT

I reached Johannesburg at about 9 p.m. and went direct to the Chairman, Sheth Yusuf Mian[1]. He knew that I had been taken to Pretoria, and was hence rather expecting me. Still it was a pleasant surprise for him and others to find me unaccompanied by a warder.[2] I suggested that a meeting should be called at once with such attendance as was possible at a very short notice. The Chairman and other friends agreed with me. As most of the Indians lived in the same quarter, it was not difficult to send round notice of the proposed meeting. The Chairman's house was near the mosque, and meetings were usually held on the grounds of the mosque. There was hence not much to be done by way of arrangement for the meeting. It was enough to have one light on the platform. The meeting was held that very night at about 11 or 12.[3] The audience numbered nearly a thousand, in spite of the shortness of the notice and the late hour.

Before the meeting was held, I had explained the terms of the settlement to the leaders present. A few opposed the settlement. But all of them understood the situation after they had heard me. Every one of them, however, was troubled by one doubt, 'What if General Smuts broke faith with us? The Black Act might not be enforced but it would always hang over our heads like the sword of Damocles. If in the meanwhile we registered voluntarily, we would have knowinglyplayed in the adversary's hands and surrendered the most powerful weapon in our possession for resisting the Act. The right order for the settlement was that the Act should be repealed first and then we should be called upon to register voluntarily.'

I liked this argument. I felt proud of the keen common sense and high courage of those who advanced it and saw that such was the stuff of which satyagrahis were made. In answer to that argument I observed: "It is an excellent argument and deserves serious consideration. There would be nothing like it if we registered

[1] Essop Mia

[2] A report in *The Transsaal Leader*, 31-1-1908, referring to Gandhiji's unexpected visit to Johannesburg, covered an interview with him on January 30; *vide* "Interview to *The Transvaal Leader*".

[3] For the text of Gandhiji's speech, *vide*, "Speech at Meeting of British Indian Association", January 31, 1908.

voluntarily only after the Act was repealed. But then it would not be in the nature of a compromise. Compromise means that both the parties make large concessions on all points except where a principle is involved. Our principle is that we would not submit to the Black Act, and therefore, would not, in virtue of it, do even such things as were otherwise unobjectionable; and to this principle we must adhere at all costs. The principle with the Government is that in order to prevent the illegal entry of Indians into the Transvaal, it must get many Indians to take out non-transferable permits with marks of identification and thus set the suspicions of the Europeans at rest and allay all their fears; and the Government can never give it up on its part. We have admitted this principle of the Government by our conduct up to date, and therefore even if we feel like resisting it we may not do so until we find fresh grounds for such a departure. Our struggle aimed not at the abrogation of this principle but at removing the stigma which the Black Act sought to attach to the community. If, therefore, we now utilize the new and powerful force which has sprung up in the community for gaining a fresh point, it would ill become us, who claim to be satyagrahis. Consequently, we cannot justly object to the present settlement. As for the argument that we must not surrender our weapons before the Act is repealed, it is easily answered. A satyagrahi bids goodbye to fear. He is therefore never afraid of trusting the opponent. Even if the opponent plays him false twenty times, the satyagrahi is ready to trust him for the twenty-first time, for an implicit trust in human nature is the very essence of his creed. Again, to say that in trusting the Government we play into its hands is to betray an ignorance of the principles of satyagraha. Suppose we register voluntarily, but the Government commits a breach of faith and fails to redeem its promise to repeal the Act. Could we not then resort to satyagraha? If we refused to show at the-proper time thecertificates of registration we take out, our registration would count for nothing, and Government could not distinguish between ourselves and the Indians who might enter the Transvaal surreptitiously. Therefore, whether there is or there is not any law in force, the Government cannot exercise control over us without our co-operation. The existence of a law means that if we refuse to accept the restriction sought to be imposed through it by the Government, we are liable to punishment, and generally it so happens that the fear of punishment leads men to submit to the restriction. But a satyagrahi differs from the generality of men in this, that if he submits to a restriction, he

submits voluntarily, not because he is afraid of punishment but because he thinks that such submission is essential to the common weal. And such is precisely our position regarding registration, which cannot be affected by any breach of faith, however flagrant, on the part of the Government. We are the creators of this position of ours, and we alone can change it. We are fearless and free, so long as we have the weapon of satyagraha in our hands. And if anyone thinks that the community may not be as strong afterwards as it is today, I should say that he is not a satyagrahi nor has he any understanding of satyagraha. That would mean that the present strength of the community is not real strength but is in the nature of a momentary effervescence or intoxication, and if that is so, we do not deserve to win, and the fruits of victory will slip out of our hands even if we win. Suppose the Government first abrogates the Act and we then register voluntarily. Suppose further that the Government afterwards enacts the same obnoxious law and compels the Indians to register. What can then prevent the Government from pursuing such a course of action? And if we are doubtful about our strength today, then too shall we be in an equally bad case. From whatever standpoint, therefore, we examine the settlement, it may be said that the community not only will not lose but will on the other hand gain by the compromise. And I am also of opinion that when our opponents recognize our humility and sense of justice, they would give up or at least mitigate their opposition."

I was thus able fully to satisfy the one or two of the small company who struck a discordant note, but I did not then even dream of the storm which was to break out at the midnight meeting. I explained all the terms of the settlement to the meeting and said: "The responsibility of the community is greatly enhanced by this settlement. We must register voluntarily in order to show that we do not intend to bring a single Indian into the Transvaal surreptitiously or by fraud. If any one of us fails to register, he will not be punished at present; but that can only mean that the community does not accept the settlement. It is necessary, indeed, that you must here raise your hands as a mark of your agreeing to the settlement, but that is not enough. As soon as the arrangements for fresh registration are completed, every one of us who raises his hand should take out a certificate of registration at once, and just as many

of you had volunteered before in order to explain to our compatriots why they should not register, even so should you now come forward to explain to the community why they must register. And it is only when we have thus worthily fulfilled our part that we shall reap the real fruit of our victory."

As soon as I finished my speech a Pathan friend stood up and greeted me with a volley of questions:

"Shall we have to give ten finger-prints under the settlement?"

"Yes and no. My own view of the matter is that all of us should give digit impressions without the least hesitation. But those who have any conscientious objection to giving them or think it to be derogatory to their self-respect will not be obliged to give those impressions."

"What will you do yourself?"

"I have decided to give ten finger-prints. It may not be for me not to give them myself while advising others to do so."

"You were writing a deal about the ten finger-prints. It was you who told us that they were required only from criminals. It was you who said that the struggle centred round the finger-prints. How does all that fit in with your attitude today?"

"Even now I fully adhere to everything that I have written before about finger-prints. Even now I say that in India fingerprints are required from criminal tribes. I have said before and say even now that it would be a sin in virtue of the Black Act to give even our signatures, not to talk of finger-prints. It is true that I have,—and I believe wisely,—laid great stress on this requisition of finger-prints. It was easier to rouse the community to a sense of the gravity of the situation by a reference to such a new and startling feature of the Act as the finger-prints than to minor items in which we had already yielded submission. And I saw from experience that the community grasped the situation at once. But circumstances have now changed. I say with all the force at my command, that what would have been a crime against the people yesterday is in the altered circumstances of today the hallmark of a gentleman. If you require me to salute you by force and if I submit to you, I will have demeaned myself in the eyes of the public and in your eyes as well as in my own. But if I of my own accord salute you as a brother or fellow-man, that evinces my humility and gentlemanliness, and it will be counted to me as righteousness before the Great White Throne. That is how I advise the

community to give the finger-prints."

"We have heard that you have betrayed the community and sold it to General Smuts for £15,000. We will never give the finger-prints nor allow others to do so. I swear with Allah as my witness that I will kill the man who takes the lead in applying for registration."

"I can understand the feelings of Pathan friends. I am sure that no one else[1] believes me to be capable of selling the community. I have already said that finger-prints will not be demanded from those who have sworn not to give them. I will render all possible help to any Pathan or any other person who wishes to register without giving finger-prints, and I assure him that he will get the certificate all right without violence being done to his conscience. I must confess, however, that I do not like the threat of death which the friend has held out. I also believe that one may not swear to kill another in the name of the Most High. I therefore take it that it is only in a momentary fit of passion that this friend has taken the oath. However that may be, whether or not he carries out his threat, as the principal party responsible for this settlement and as a servant of the community, it is my clear duty to take the lead in giving finger-prints, and I pray to God that He graciously permit me to do so. Death is the appointed end of all life. To die by the hand of a brother, rather than by disease or in some such way, cannot be for me a matter for sorrow. And if even in such a case I am free from the thoughts of anger or hatred against my assailant, I know that that will redound to my eternal welfare, and even the assailant will later on realize my perfect innocence."

It is perhaps necessary to explain why these questions were asked. Although there were not entertained any feelings of hatred against those who had submitted to the Black Act, their action had been condemned in plain and strong terms on the public platform as well as in *Indian Opinion*. Life with them therefore was anything but pleasant. They never imagined that the bulk of the community would stand to their guns and make such a display of strength as to bring' the Government to terms of compromise. But when over 150satyagrahis were already in prison and there was a talk about settlement, it was almost too much for the 'blacklegs' to bear, and there were among them some who even wished that there would be no

[1] This word is not to be found in the original,

settlement and would try to wreck it if it was effected.

There were only a few Pathans living in the Transvaal, their total number hardly exceeding fifty. Some of them had come over as soldiers during the Boer War and they had settled in the country like many other Indian as well as European soldiers. Some of them were even my clients, and I was familiar with them otherwise too. The Pathans are an unsophisticated and credulous race. Brave they are as a matter of course. To kill and get killed is an ordinary thing in their eyes, and if they are angry with anyone, they will thrash him and sometimes even kill him. And in this matter they are no respecters of persons. They will behave even to a blood-brother in an identical manner. Even though there were so few of them in the Transvaal, there would be a free fight whenever they quarrelled among themselves, and in such cases I had often to play the part of a peacemaker. A Pathan's anger becomes particularly uncontrollable when he has to deal with anyone whom he takes to be a traitor. When he seeks justice he seeks it only through personal violence. These Pathans fully participated in the satyagraha struggle; none of them had submitted to the Black Act. It was an easy thing to mislead them. It was quite possible to create a misunderstanding in their minds about the finger-prints and thus to inflame them. This single suggestion,—viz., why should I ask them to give finger-prints if I was not corrupt?—was enough to poison the Pathan's ears.

Again, there was another party in the Transvaal which comprised such Indians as had entered the Transvaal surreptitiously without a permit or were interested in bringing others there secretly either without a permit at all or with a false permit. This party too knew that the settlement would be detrimental to their interest. None had to produce his permit so long as the struggle lasted, and therefore this group could carry on their trade without fear and easily avoid going to jail during the struggle. The longer the struggle was protracted, the better for them. Thus this clique also could have instigated the Pathans. The reader will now see how the Pathans got excited thus all of a sudden.

The Pathan's questions, however, did not make any impression on the meeting. I had asked the meeting to vote on the settlement. The president and other leaders were firm. After this passage-at-arms with the Pathan, the president made a speech explainingthe nature of the settlement and dwelling upon the necessity for endorsing it, and

then proceeded to ascertain the sense of the meeting, which unanimously ratified the settlement with the exception of a couple of Pathans present.

I reached home at 2 or 3 a.m. Sleep was out of the question, as I had to rise early and go to the jail to get the others released. I reached the jail at 7 a.m. The Superintendent had received the necessary orders on the 'phone, and he was waiting for me. All the satyagrahi prisoners were released in the course of one hour. The chairman and other Indians were present to welcome them, and from jail all of us proceeded to the place of meeting where a second meeting was now held. That day and a couple of subsequent days were passed in feasting and educating the community on the settlement. With the lapse of time, if on the one hand the implications of the settlement became clearer, misunderstandings on the other hand also began to thicken. We have already discussed the chief causes of misunderstanding. Then again the letter we had written to General Smuts was open to misrepresentation. The difficulty I experienced in meeting the various objections which were thus raised was infinitely greater than what I had felt while the struggle was actually in progress. In the days of struggle, the only difficulties felt to crop up are in our relations with the adversary, and these are always easily overcome, for then all internecine strife and internal discord are either suspended altogether or, at least, they lose their prominence in face of the common danger. But when the fight is over, internal jealousies are again fully in play, and if the differences with the adversary have been amicably settled, many take to the easy and grateful task of picking holes in the settlement. And in a democratic body it is only in the fitness of things that one has to provide satisfactory answers for the questions of everyone, big and small. Even in offering battle to the adversary one does not learn the valuable lessons which come home to oneself while thus dealing with misunderstandings and strivings between friends. There is a sort of intoxication and exultation in fighting the adversary. But misunderstandings and differences between friends are rare phenomena and are therefore all the more painful. Yet it is only on such occasions that one's mettle is put to a real test. Such without any exception has been my experience and I believe that it is only when passing through such ordeals that I have made the largest gains in things of the spirit. Many who had not understood the real nature of the struggle while it was still going on understood it fully in the course of and after the settlement. Serious

opposition was confined to the Pathans and did not travel beyond them.

The Registrar of Asiatics was soon ready to issue registration certificates under the new voluntary arrangement. The form of the certificates was altogether changed, and had been settled in consultation with the satyagrahis.

On the morning of February 10, 1908, some of us got ready to go and take out certificates of registration. The supreme necessity of getting through the registration business with all possible expedition had been fully impressed on the community, and it had been agreed that the leaders should be the first to take out certificates on the first day, so as to break down shyness, to see if the officers concerned discharged their duties with courtesy and generally to have an eye over all the arrangements.

When I reached my office, which was also the office of the Satyagraha Association, I found Mir Alam and his companions standing outside the premises. Mir Alam was an old client of mine, and used to seek my advice in all his affairs. Many Pathans in the Transvaal employed labourers to manufacture straw or coir mattresses, which they sold at a good profit, and Mir Alam did the same. He was fully six feet in height and of a large and powerful build. Today for the first time I saw Mir Alam outside my office instead of inside it, and although his eyes met mine, he for the first time refrained from saluting me. But I saluted him and he saluted me in return. As usual I asked him, "How do you do?" and my impression is that he said he was all right. But he did not today wear his usual smile on the face. I noticed his angry eyes and made a mental note of the fact. I thought that something was going to happen. I entered the office. The Chairman Mr. Yusuf Mian and other friends arrived, and we set out for the Asiatic Office. Mir Alam and his companions followed us.

The Registration Office was at Von Brandis Square, less than a mile away from my office. On our way to it we had to pass through high roads. As we were going along Von Brandis Street, outside the premises of Messrs Arnot and Gibson, not more than three minutes' walk from the Registration Office, Mir Alam accosted me and asked me, "Where are you going?"

"I propose to take out a certificate of registration, giving the ten finger-prints," I replied. "If you will go with me, I will first get you a certificate, with an impression only of the two thumbs, and then I will

take one for myself, giving the finger-prints."

I had scarcely finished the last sentence when a heavy cudgel blow descended on my head from behind. I at once fainted with the words *He Rama* (O God!) on my lips, lay prostrate on the ground and had no notion of what followed. But Mir Alam and his companions gave me-more blows and kicks, some of which were warded off by Yusuf Mian and Thambi Naidoo with the result that they too became a target for attack in their turn. The noise attracted some European passers-by to the scene. Mir Alam and his companions fled but were caught by the Europeans. The police arrived in the meanwhile and took them in custody. I was picked up and carried into Mr. J. C. Gibson's private office. When I regained consciousness, I saw Mr. Doke bending over me. "How do you feel?" he asked me.

"I am all right," I replied, "but there is pain in the teeth and the ribs. Where is Mir Alam?"

"He has been arrested along with the rest."

"They should be released."

"That is all very well. But here you are in a stranger's office with your lip and cheek badly lacerated. The police are ready to take you to the hospital, but if you will go to my place, Mrs. Doke and I will minister to your comforts as best we can."

"Yes, please take me to your place. Thank the police for their offer but tell them that I prefer to go with you."

Mr. Chamney, the Registrar of Asiatics, too now arrived on the scene. I was taken in a carriage to this good clergyman's residence in Smit Street and a doctor was called in. Meanwhile I said to Mr. Chamney: "I wished to come to your office, give ten finger-prints and take out the first certificate of registration, but God willed it otherwise. However I have now to request you to bring the papers and allow me to register at once. I hope that you will not let anyone else register before me."

"Where is the hurry about it?" asked Mr. Chamney. "The doctor will be here soon. You please rest yourself and all will be well. I will issue certificates to others but keep your name at the head of the list."

"Not so," I replied. "I am pledged to take out the first certificate if I am alive and if it is acceptable to God. It is therefore that I insist upon the papers being brought here and now."

Upon this Mr. Chamney went away to bring the papers.

The next thing for me to do was to wire to the Attorney-General that I did not hold Mir Alam and others guilty for the assault committed upon me, that in any case I did not wish them to be prosecuted and that I hoped they would be discharged formy sake.[1] But the Europeans of Johannesburg addressed a strong letter to the Attorney-General saying that whatever views Gandhi might hold as regards the punishment of criminals, they could not be given effect to in South Africa. Gandhi himself might not take any steps, but the assault was committed not in a private place but on the high roads and was therefore a public offence. Several Englishmen too were in a position to tender evidence and the offenders must be prosecuted. Upon this the Attorney-General re-arrested Mir Alam and one of his companions who were sentenced to three months' hard labour. Only I was not summoned as a witness.

But let us return to the sick room. Dr. Thwaites came in while Mr. Chamney was still away. He examined me and stitched up the wounds in the cheek and on the upper lip. He prescribed some medicine to be applied to the ribs and enjoined silence upon me so long as the stitches were not removed. He restricted my diet to liquids only. He said that none of the injuries was serious, that I should be able to leave my bed and take up my ordinary activities in a week, but that I should be careful not to undertake much physical strain for two months more. So saying he left.

Thus speech was forbidden me, but I was still master of my hands. I addressed a short note as follows to the community through the Chairman and sent it for publication:

"I am well in the brotherly and sisterly hands of Mr. and Mrs. Doke. I hope to take up my duty shortly.

"Those who have committed the act did not know what they were doing.[2] They thought that I was doing what was wrong. They have had their redress in the only manner they know. I therefore request that no steps be taken against them.[3]

"Seeing that the assault was committed by a Mussalman or

[1] The original adds here: "As a result of this telegram Mir Alam and his companions were let off." The telegram, however, is not available.

[2] The original adds here: "I am not angry with them."

[3] The original adds here: "If the others remain calm, even this incident will prove profitable to us."

Mussalmans,[1] the Hindus might probably feel hurt. If so, they would put themselves in the wrong before the world and their Maker. Rather let the blood spilt today cement the two communities indissolubly—such is my heartfelt prayer. May God grant it.[2]

"Assault or no assault, my advice remains the same. The large majority of Asiatics ought to give finger-prints[3]. Those who have real conscientious scruples will be exempted by the Government. To ask for more would be to show ourselves as children.[4]

"The spirit of satyagraha rightly understood should make the people fear none and nothing but God. No cowardly fear therefore should deter the vast majority of sober-minded Indians from doing their duty. The promise of repeal of the Act against voluntary registration having been given, it is the sacred duty of every good Indian to help the Government and the Colony to the uttermost."[5]

Mr. Chamney returned with the papers and I gave my finger-prints but not without pain. I then saw that tears stood in Mr. Chamney's eyes. I had often to write bitterly against him, but this showed me how man's heart may be softened by events.

The reader will easily imagine that all this did not take more than a few minutes. Mr. Doke and his good wife were anxious that I should be perfectly at rest and peaceful, and were therefore pained to witness my mental activity after the assault. They were afraid that it might react in a manner prejudicial to my health. They, therefore, by making signs and similar devices, removed all persons from near my bed, and asked me not to write or do anything. I made a request in writing, that before and in order that I might lie down quietly, their daughter Olive, who was then only a little girl, should sing for me my

[1] *Indian Opinion*, 15-2-1908, where this note was first published, has "Mahomedan or Mahomedans" here. *Vide* "Letter to Friends", February 10, 1908.

[2] In place of this paragraph, the original has: "The Hindus should not harbour in their hearts the slightest anger. I wish that instead of this incident leading to bitterness between the Hindus and the Muslims, it should make for cordiality. This is what I ask of God."

[3] The original has: "ten finger-prints".

[4] Instead of this sentence the original has: "In that alone consist the welfare and protection of the poor."

[5] Instead of this paragraph, the original has: "If we are true satyagrahis, neither beating nor fear of future betrayal will deter us. I consider those who insist on not giving finger-prints as ignorant."

favourite English hymn, 'Lead, Kindly Light'.[1] Mr. Doke liked this very much and acceded to my request with a sweet smile. He called Olive by signs and asked her to stand at the door and sing the hymn in a low tone. The whole scene passes before my eyes as I dictate this, and the melodious voice of little Olive reverberates in my ears.[2]

I have included in this chapter much that I think and the reader too will think is irrelevant to my subject. Yet I cannot close this chapter without adding one reminiscence, too sacred to be omitted. How shall I describe the service rendered to me by the Doke family?

Mr. Joseph Doke was a Baptist minister then 46 years old and had been in New Zealand before he came to South Africa. Some six months before this assault, he came to my office and sent in his card. On seeing the word 'Reverend' before his name, I wrongly imagined that he had come, as some other clergymen did, to convert me to Christianity or to advise me to give up the struggle or perhaps to express patronizing sympathy with the movement. Mr. Doke entered, and we had not talked many minutes before I saw how sadly I had misjudged him and mentally apologized to him. I found him familiar with all the facts of the struggle which were published in newspapers. He said, "Please consider me as your friend in this struggle. I consider it my religious duty to render you such help as I can. If I have learnt any lesson from the life of Jesus, it is this that one should share and lighten the load of those who are heavily laden." We thus got acquainted with each other, and every day marked an advance in our mutual affection and intimacy. The name of Mr. Doke will often recur in the course of the present volume, but it was necessary to say a few words by way of introducing him to the reader before I describe the delicate attention I received at the hands of the Dokes.

Day and night one or other member of the family would be waiting upon me. The house became a sort of caravanserai so long as I stayed there. All classes of Indians flocked to the place to inquire after my health, and, when later permitted by the doctor, to see me—from the humble hawker basket in hand, with dirty clothes and dusty boots, right up to the Chairman of the Transvaal British Indian Association. Mr. Doke would receive all of them in his drawing-room

[1] The original adds here: "Many Gujaratis know the meaning of this hymn through Narasinhrao's translation of it."

[2] For an account of the assault and what followed, *vide* also "My Reward", February 22, 1908.

with uniform courtesy and consideration, and so long as I lived with the Dokes, all their time was occupied either with nursing me or with receiving the hundreds of people who looked in to see me. Even at night Mr. Doke would quietly peep twice or thrice into my room. While living under his hospitable roof, I never so much as felt that it was not my home, or that my nearest and dearest could have looked after me better than the Dokes.

And it must not be supposed that Mr. Doke had not to suffer for according public support to the Indians in their struggle and for harbouring me under his roof. Mr. Doke was in charge of a Baptist church, and depended for his livelihood upon a congregation of Europeans, not all of whom entertained liberal views and among whom dislike of the Indians was perhaps as general as among other Europeans. But Mr. Doke was unmoved by it. I had discussed this delicate subject with him in the very beginning of our acquaintance. And he said, "My dear friend, what do you think of the religion of Jesus? I claim to be a humble follower of Him who cheerfully mounted the Cross for the faith that was in Him, and whose love was as wide as the world. I must take a public part in your struggle if I am at all desirous of representing Christ to the Europeans who, you are afraid, will give me up as punishment for it. And I must not complain if they do thus give me up. My livelihood is indeed derived from them, but you certainly do not think that I am associated with them for living's sake, or that they are my cherishers. My cherisher is God; they are but the instruments of His almighty will. It is one of the unwritten conditions of my connection with them that none of them may interfere with my religious liberty. Please therefore stop worrying on my account. I am taking my place beside you in this struggle not to oblige the Indians but as a matter of duty. The fact, however, is that I have fully discussed this question with my dean. I gently informed him that if he did not approve of my relations with the Indians, he might permit me to retire and engage another minister instead. But he not only asked me not to trouble myself about it but even spoke some words of encouragement. Again, you must not imagine that all Europeans alike entertain hatred against your people. You can have no idea of the silent sympathy of many with your tribulations, and you will agree with me that I must know about it situated as I am."

After this clear explanation, I never referred to the subject again. And later on when Mr. Doke died in the pursuit of his holy calling in

Rhodesia, at a time when the satyagraha struggle was still in progress, the Baptists called a meeting in their church, to which they invited the late Mr. Kachhalia and other Indians as well as myself, and which they asked me to address. [1]About ten days afterwards I had recovered enough strength to move about fairly well, and I then took my leave of this godly family. The parting was a great wrench to me no less than to the Dokes.

CHAPTER XXIII

EUROPEAN SUPPORT

As the number of Europeans of position who actively sided with the Indians in their struggle was fairly large, it will not perhaps be out of place to introduce them here to the reader all at once, so that when their names occur later on in this narrative, they will not be strangers to him, and I shall not have to stop in the midst of the narrative in order to introduce them. The order in which the names have been arranged is not the order of the merit of service rendered, nor that of the public estimation in which the bearers of the names were held. I mention the friends in order of the time when I got acquainted with them and in connection with the various branches of the struggle where they helped the Indians.

The first name is that of Mr. Albert West, whose association with the community dated from before the struggle and whose association with me commenced earlier still. When I opened my office in Johannesburg my wife was not with me. The reader will remember that in 1903 I received a cable from South Africa and suddenly left India, expecting to return home within a year. Mr. West used to frequent the vegetarian restaurant in Johannesburg where I regularly had my meals both morning and evening, and we thus became acquainted with each other. He was then conducting a printing press in partnership with another European. In 1904 a virulent plague broke out among the Indians in Johannesburg. I was fully engaged in nursing the patients, and my visits to the restaurant became irregular. Even when I did go, I went there before the other guests in order to avoid any possible danger to them from their coming in contact with me. Mr. West became anxious when he did not find me there for two

[1] For the text of Gandhiji's address, *vide* "Speech at Memorial Service", August 24, 1913 and for obituary and notes on Doke, "The Late Mr. Joseph J, Doke", August 23, 1908.

days in succession as he had read in the papers that I was attending to the plague patients. The third day, at 6 o'clock in the morning when I was scarcely ready to go out I heard a knock at my door. When I opened it, I saw Mr. West with his beaming face.

"I am so glad to see you," he exclaimed. "I had been worrying about you, not finding you at the restaurant. Do tell me if I can do anything for you." "Will you nurse the patients?" I asked jocularly.

"Why not? I am quite ready."

Meanwhile I had thought out my plans and said, "No other answer could be expected of you, but there are already many helping with the nursing, and besides I propose to put you to still harder work. Madanjit is here on plague duty and there is no one to look after the *Indian Opinion* press. If you go to Durban and take charge of the press it will be really a great help. I cannot of course offer you any tempting terms. Ten pounds a month and half the profits if any is all that I can afford."

"That is rather a tough job. I must have my partner's permission, and then there are some dues to be collected. But never mind. Will you wait till evening for my final answer?"

"Yes, we meet in the park at 6 o'clock."

So we met. Mr. West had obtained his partner's permission. He entrusted me with the recovery of his dues, and left for Durban by the evening train the next day. In a month I had his report that not only was the press not profitable at all but it was actually a losing concern. There were large arrears to be collected but the books had been badly kept. Even the list of the names and addresses of subscribers was incomplete. There was also mismanagement in other respects. Mr. West did not write all this as a matter of complaint. As he did not care for profit he assured me that he would not give up what he had undertaken, but gave me clearly to understand that the paper would not be paying its way for a long time to come.

Shri Madanjit had come to Johannesburg to canvass subscribers for the paper as well as to confer with me as regards the management of the press. Every month I had to meet a small or large deficit, and I was therefore desirous of having a more definite idea of my possible liabilities. Madanjit had no experience of printing press business and I

had been thinking since the beginning that it would be well to associate a trained hand with him. The plague broke out in the meantime, and as Madanjit was just the man for such a crisis, I put him on to nursing. And I closed with West's unexpected offer and told him that he was to go not temporarily while the epidemic lasted but for good. Hence his report on the prospects of the paper just referred to.

The reader knows how at last both the paper and the press were removed to Phoenix, where West drew a monthly allowance of £3 instead of £10 as previously arranged. West was himself fully agreeable to all these changes. I never observed in him the leastanxiety as to how he would be able to maintain himself. I recognized in him a deeply religious spirit, although he was not a student of religion. He was a man of perfectly independent temperament. He would say what he thought of all things, and would not hesitate to call a spade a spade. He was quite simple in habits. He was unmarried when we first met, and I know that he lived a life of spotless purity. Some years later he went to England to see his parents and returned a married man. On my advice he brought with him his wife, mother-in-law and unmarried sister, who all lived in extreme simplicity and in every way fraternized with the Indians in Phoenix. Miss Ada West (or Devi Behn as we used to call her) is now 35 years old, is still unmarried and leads a most pious life. She too rendered to the pioneers at Phoenix services of no mean order. At one time or another she looked after the little children, taught them English, cooked in the common kitchen, swept the houses, kept accounts and did composing and other work in the press. Whatever task came to her she never hesitated to do it. She is not now in Phoenix, but that is because since my return to India the press has been unable to meet even her small personal expenditure. West's mother-in-law is now over eighty years old. She is a fine hand at sewing, and used to help the settlement with her skill in sewing. Everyone in Phoenix called her Granny and felt that she was really related so to them. I need scarcely say anything about Mrs. West. When many members of the Phoenix settlement were in jail, the Wests, along with Maganlal Gandhi, took over the whole management of the institution. West would see to the press and the paper, and in the absence of others and myself, dispatch

to Gokhale the cables which were to be sent from Durban. When even West was arrested (though he was soon released), Gokhale got nervous and sent over Andrews and Pearson.

Then there was Mr. Ritch, I have already written about him. He had joined my office before the struggle and proceeded to England to study for the bar with a view to filling my place when I was not available. He was the moving spirit of the South Africa British Indian Committee in London.

The third was Mr. Polak, whose acquaintance like that of West I casually made in the restaurant. He likewise left at once the sub-editorship of *The Transvaal Critic* to join the staff of *Indian Opinion*. Everyone knows how he went to India and to England in connection with the struggle. When Ritch went to England, I called Polak from Phoenix to Johannesburg, where he became myarticled clerk and then a full-fledged attorney. Later on he married. People in India are familiar with Mrs. Polak, who not only never came in her husband's way but was a perfect helpmate to him during the struggle. The Polaks did not see eye to eye with us in the Non-co-operation movement, but they are still serving India to the best of their ability.

The next was Mr. Hermann Kallenbach, whom too I came to know before the struggle. He is a German, and had it not been for the Great War, he would be in India today. He is a man of strong feelings, wide sympathies and childlike simplicity. He is an architect by profession, but there is no work, however lowly, which he would consider to be beneath his dignity. When I broke up my Johannesburg establishment, I lived with him but he would be hurt if I offered to pay him my share of the household expenses, and would plead that I was responsible for considerable savings in his domestic economy. This was indeed true. But this is not the place to describe my personal relations with European friends. When we thought of accommodating the families of satyagrahi prisoners in Johannesburg in one place, Kallenbach lent the use of his big farm[1] without any rent. But more of that later. When Gokhale came to Johannesburg, the community put him up at Kallenbach's cottage which the illustrious guest liked very much. Kallenbach went with me as far as Zanzibar to

[1] The original has: "his big 1100-acre farm".

see Gokhale off. He was arrested along with Polak and suffered imprisonment. Finally, when I left South Africa to see Gokhale in England, Kallenbach was with me. But when I returned to India, he was not permitted to go with me to India on account of the War. He was, like all other Germans, interned in England. When the War was over Kallenbach returned to Johannesburg and recommenced the practice of his profession.

Let me now introduce the reader to a noble girl—I mean Miss Sonja Schlesin. I cannot resist the temptation of placing here on record Gokhale's estimate of her character. He had a wonderful power of judging men. I went with him from Delagoa Bay to Zanzibar, and the voyage gave us a fine opportunity of quiet talks. Gokhale had come in contact with the Indian and European leaders in South Africa. And while minutely analysing for me the characters of the principal persons of the drama, I perfectly remember that he gave the pride of place among them all, Europeans as well as Indians, to Miss Schlesin: "I have rarely come across such purity, single-minded devotion to work and great determination as I have seen in Miss Schlesin. I was simply astonished how she had sacrificed her all for the Indian cause without expecting any reward whatever. And when you add to all this her great ability and energy, these qualities combine to make her a priceless asset to your movement. I need hardly say it and yet I say that you must cherish her." I had a Scottish girl, Miss Dick, working with me as steno-typist, who was the very picture of loyalty and purity.. Many a bitter experience has been my lot in life, but I have also had the good fortune to claim a large number of Europeans and Indians of high character as my associates. Miss Dick left me when she married, and then Mr. Kallenbach introduced Miss Schlesin to me and said, "This girl has been entrusted to me by her mother. She is clever and honest, but she is very mischievous and impetuous. Perhaps she is even insolent. You keep her if you can manage her. I do not place her with you for the mere pay." I was ready to allow £20 a month to a good steno-typist, but I had no idea of Miss Schlesin's ability. Mr. Kallenbach proposed that I should pay her £6 a month to begin with, and I readily agreed. Miss Schlesin soon made me familiar with the mischievous part of herself. But in a month's time she had achieved the conquest of my

heart. She was ready to work at all times whether by day or by night. There was nothing difficult or impossible for her. She was then only sixteen years of age, but she captivated my clients as well as the fellow-satyagrahis by her frankness and readiness to serve. This young girl soon constituted herself the watchman and warder of the morality not only of my office but of the whole movement. Whenever she was in doubt as to the ethical propriety of any proposed step, she would freely discuss it with me and not rest till she was convinced of it. When all the leaders except Sheth Kachhalia were in jail, Miss Schlesin had control of large funds and was in charge of the accounts. She handled workers of various temperaments. Even Sheth Kachhalia would have recourse to her and seek her advice. Mr. Doke was then in charge of *Indian Opinion*. But even he, hoary-headed veteran as he was, would get the articles he wrote for *Indian Opinion* passed by her! And he once told me, "If Miss Schlesin had not been there, I do not know how I could have satisfied even my own self with my work." I cannot sufficiently appreciate the value of her assistance, and very often I have accepted the corrections or additions she suggested knowing them to be appropriate. Pathans, Patels, ex-indentured men, Indians of all classes and ages surrounded her, sought her adviceand followed it. Europeans in South Africa would generally never travel in the same railway compartment as Indians, and in the Transvaal they are even prohibited from doing so.[1] Yet Miss Schlesin would deliberately sit in the third class compartment for Indians like other satyagrahis and even resist the guards who interfered with her. I feared and Miss Schlesin hoped that she might be arrested some day. But although the Transvaal Government were aware of her ability, her mastery over the 'strategy' of the movement, and the hold she had acquired over the satyagrahis, they adhered to the policy and the chivalry of not arresting her. Miss Schlesin never asked for or desired an increase in her monthly allowance of £6. I began giving her £10 when I came to know of some of her wants. This too she accepted with reluctance, and flatly declined to have anything more. "I do not need more, and if. I take anything in excess of my necessities, I will have betrayed the principle which has attracted me to you," she would say,

[1] The original adds: "Satyagrahis were to travel only third-class."

and silence me. The reader will perhaps ask what was Miss Schlesin's education. She had passed the Intermediate examination of the Cape University, and obtained first class diploma in shorthand, etc. She graduated after the struggle was over, and is now head mistress in a Government Girls' School in the Transvaal.

Herbert Kitchin was an English electrician with a heart pure as crystal. He worked with us during the Boer War and was for some time editor of *Indian Opinion*. He was a lifelong *brahmachari*.

The persons I have thus far mentioned were such as came in close contact with me. They could not be classed among the leading Europeans of the Transvaal. However, this latter class too was very largely helpful, and the most influential of such helpers was Mr. Hosken, ex-President of the Association of Chambers of Commerce of South Africa and a member of the Legislative Assembly of the Transvaal, whose acquaintance the reader has already made and who was Chairman of the Committee of European sympathizers with the satyagraha movement. When the movement was in full swing, direct communications between satyagrahis and the local Government were obviously out of the question, not because of any objection on principle on the part of the satyagrahis to deal directly with the Government but because the latter would naturally not confer with the breakers of its laws. And this Committee actedas mediator between the Indians and the Government.

I have already introduced Mr. Albert Cartwright to the reader. Then there was the Rev. Charles Phillips who joined and assisted us even as Mr. Doke did. Mr. Phillips had long been congregational minister in the Transvaal. His good wife too did us much service. A third clergyman who had given up orders to take up the editorship of the Bloemfontein daily, *The Friend*, and who supported the Indian cause in his paper in the teeth of European opposition was the Rev. Dewdney Drew, one of the best speakers in South Africa. A similarly spontaneous helper was Mr. Vere Stent, editor of *The Pretoria News*. A mass meeting of Europeans was once held in the Town Hall of Pretoria under the presidentship of the Mayor to condemn the Indian movement and to support the Black Act. Mr. Vere Stent alone stood up in opposition to the overwhelming majority of anti-Indians and

refused to sit down in spite of the president's orders. The Europeans threatened to lay hands on him, yet he stood unmoved and defiant like a lion, and the meeting dispersed at last without passing its resolution.

There were other Europeans whose names I could mention and who never missed an opportunity of doing us a good turn, although they did not formally join any association. But I propose to close this chapter with a few words about three ladies. One of these was Miss Hobhouse, the daughter of Lord Hobhouse, who at the time of the Boer War reached the Transvaal against the wishes of Lord Milner, and who single-handed moved among the Boer women, encouraged them and bade them stand firm when Lord Kitchner had set up his famous or rather infamous 'concentration camps' in the Transvaal and the Free State. She believed the English policy in respect of the Boer War to be totally unrighteous, and therefore like the late Mr. Stead she wished and prayed to God for England's defeat in the war. Having thus served the Boers, she was shocked to learn that the same Boers, who had only recently resisted injustice with all their might, were now led into doing injustice to the Indians through ignorant prejudice. The Boers looked up to her with great respect and affection. She was very intimate with General Botha, and did her best to commend to the Boers the policy of repealing the Black Act.

The second lady was Miss Olive Schreiner, to whom I have already referred in a previous chapter. The name Schreiner is one to conjure with in South Africa, so much so that when Miss Schreiner married, her husband adopted her name so that (I was told) her relation with the Schreiners might not be forgotten among the Europeans of South Africa. This was not due to any false pride, as Miss Schreiner was as simple in habits and humble in spirit as she was learned. I had the privilege of being familiar with her. She knew no difference between her Negro servants and herself. Authoress of *Dreams*[1] and many other works as she was, she never hesitated to cook, wash the pots or handle the broom. She held that far from affecting it adversely, such useful physical labour stimulated her literary ability and made for a sense of proportion and discrimination in thought and

[1] The original adds: "which, though prose, may be regarded as poetry."

language. This gifted lady lent to the Indian cause the whole weight of her influence over the Europeans of South Africa.

The third lady was Miss Molteno, an aged member of that ancient family of South Africa, who also did her best for the Indians.

The reader may ask what fruit all this sympathy of the Europeans bore. Well, this chapter has not been written to describe the practical consequences of their sympathy. The work detailed above of some of these friends bears witness to a portion of the result. The very nature of satyagraha is such that fruit of the movement is contained in the movement itself. Satyagraha is based on self-help, self-sacrifice and faith in God. One of my objects in enumerating the names of European helpers is to mark the satyagrahis' gratefulness to them. This history would be justly considered incomplete without such mention. I have not tried to make the list exhaustive, but have tendered the Indians' thanks to all in selecting a few for especial mention. Secondly, as a satyagrahi I hold to the faith that all activity pursued with a pure heart is bound to bear fruit, whether or not such fruit is visible to us. And last but not the least, I have tried to show that all truthful movements spontaneously attract to themselves all manner of pure and disinterested help. If it is not clear already, I should like to make it clear that no other effort whatever was made during the struggle to enlist European sympathy beyond the effort, if effort it can be called, involved in adherence to Truth and Truth alone. The European friends were attracted by the inherent power of the movement itself.

CHAPTER XXIV

FURTHER INTERNAL DIFFICULTIES

We have had some idea of our internal difficulties in Chapter XXII. When I was assaulted in Johannesburg, my family lived in Phoenix and were naturally anxious about me. But it was not possible for them to expend money on the journey from Phoenix to Johannesburg. It was therefore necessary for me to see them after my recovery.

I was often on the move between the Transvaal and Natal in connection with my work. From the letters of Natal friends I was

aware that in Natal too the settlement had been grossly misunderstood. And I had received a sheaf of correspondence addressed to *Indian Opinion* in which adverse criticism was passed on the settlement. Although the satyagraha struggle was still confined to the Transvaal Indians, we had to seek the support and enlist the sympathies of the Natal Indians also. The Transvaal struggle was not a mere local affair and the Indians in the Transvaal were really fighting the battle on behalf of all the Indians in South Africa. And therefore also I had to go to Durban and remove the misunderstandings prevalent there. So I took the first opportunity to run up to Durban.

A public meeting of the Indians was called in Durban. Some friends had warned me beforehand that I would be attacked at this meeting and that I should therefore not attend it at all or at least take steps for defending myself. But neither of the two courses was open to me. If a servant when called by his master fails to respond through fear, he forfeits his title to the name of servant. Nor does he deserve the name if he is afraid of the master's punishment. Service of the public for service's sake is like walking on the sword's edge. If a servant is ready enough for praise he may nots flee in the face of blame. I therefore presented myself at the meeting at the appointed time.[1] I explained to the meeting how the settlement had been effected, and also answered the questions put by the audience.

The meeting was held at about 8 o'clock in the evening. The proceedings were nearly over when a Pathan rushed to the platform with a big stick. The lights were put out at the same time. I grasped the situation at once. Sheth Daud Muhammad the chairman stood up on the chairman's table and tried to quell the disturbance. Some of those on the platform surrounded me to defend my person.[2] The friends who feared an assault had come to the place prepared for eventualities. One of them had a revolver in his pocket and he fired a blank shot. Meanwhile Parsi Rustomji who had noticed the gathering clouds went with all possible speed to the police station and informed Superintendent Alexander, who sent a police party. The

[1] On March 5, 1908. The text of the speech is not available.

[2] The original adds: "I had taken no steps to defend myself. But I realized that . . . "

police made a way for me through the crowd and took me to Parsi Rustomji's place.

The next day Parsi Rustomji brought all the Pathans of Durban together in the morning, and asked them to place before me all their complaints against me. I met them and tried to conciliate them, but with little success. They had a preconceived notion that I had betrayed the community, and until this poison was removed, it was useless reasoning with them. The canker of suspicion cannot be cured by arguments or explanations.

I left Durban for Phoenix the same day. The friends who had guarded me the previous night would not let me alone, and informed me that they intended to accompany me to Phoenix. I said, "I cannot prevent you if you will come in spite of me. But Phoenix is a jungle. And what will you do if we the only dwellers in it do not give you even food?" One of the friends replied, "That won't frighten us. We are well able to look after ourselves. And so long as we are a-soldiering, who is there to prevent us from robbing your pantry?" We thus made a merry party for Phoenix.

The leader of this self-appointed guard was Jack Moodaley, a Natal-born Tamilian well known among the Indians as a trained boxer. He and his companions believed that no man in South Africa, whether white or coloured, was a match for him in that branch of sport.

In South Africa I had for many years been in the habit of sleeping in the open at all times except when there was rain. I was not prepared now to change the habit, and the self-constituted guard decided to keep watch all night. Though I had tried to laugh these men out of their purpose, I must confess that I was weak enough to feel safer for their presence. I wonder if I could have slept with the same ease if the guard had not been there. I suppose I should have been startled by some noise or other. I believe that I have an unflinching faith in God. For many years I have accorded intellectual assent to the proposition that death is only a big change in life and nothing more, and should be welcome whenever it arrives. I have deliberately made a supreme attempt to cast out from my heart all fear whatsoever including the fear of death. Still I

remember occasions in my life when I have not rejoiced at the thought of approaching death as one might rejoice at the prospect of meeting a long-lost friend. Thus man often remains weak notwithstanding all his efforts to be strong, and knowledge which stops at the head and does not penetrate into the heart is of but little use in the critical times of living experience. Then again the strength of the spirit within mostly evaporates when a person gets and accepts support from outside. A satyagrahi must be always on his guard against such temptations.

While in Phoenix I did just one thing. I wrote a great deal with a view to removing misunderstandings about the compromise, including an imaginary dialogue[1] for *Indian Opinion* in which I disposed of in ample detail the objections advanced and criticisms passed against the settlement. I believe that this dialogue produced a good effect. It was found that the Transvaal Indians, whose misunderstanding of the settlement, if persistent, would have led to really disastrous results, did not long misunderstand it. It was only for the Transvaal Indians to accept or to reject the settlement. They were on their trial as I was on mine as their leader and servant. In the end there were hardly any Indians who had not registered themselves voluntarily. There was such a rush of the applicants for registration that the officers concerned were hard pressed with work, and in a very short time the Indians had fulfilled their part of the settlement. Even the Government had to admit this,[2] and I could see that the misunderstanding, though of an acute nature, was quite limited in its extent. There was no doubt a great deal of stir when some Pathans violently took the law into their own hands. But such violent stir, when analysed, often turns out to have no bottom at all and is equally often only temporary. And yet it is a power in the world today as we are apt to be unnerved in the face of violence. If, however, we calmly think about it we shall find that there is no reason for nervousness. Just suppose that Mir Alam and his friends, instead of only wounding, had actually destroyed my body.

[1] For the text of this, *vide* "A Dialogue on the Compromise", February 15, 1908.

[2] Speaking on August 21, 1908, in the Legislative Assembly, Smuts admitted that "practically every Asiatic in the country" had applied for voluntary registration. 9,158 applications had been received, 7,773 certificates had been issued, 1,214 applications had been rejected and 171 were still undecided. *Vide* Appendix "General Smuts' Speech in Legislative Assembly", August 21, 1908.

And suppose also that the community had deliberately remained calm and unperturbed, and forgiven the offenders perceiving that according to their lights they could not have behaved otherwise than they did. Far from injuring the community, such a noble attitude would have greatly benefited them. All misunderstanding would have disappeared, and Mir Alam and party would have had their eyes opened to the error of their ways. As for me, nothing better can happen to a satyagrahi than his meeting death all unsought in the very act of satyagraha, i.e., pursuing Truth. All these propositions are true only of a struggle like the satyagraha movement, where there is no room for hatred, where self-reliance is the order of the day, where no one has to look expectantly at another, where there are no leaders and hence no followers, or where all are leaders and all are followers, so that the death of a fighter, however eminent, makes not for slackness but on the other hand intensifies the struggle.

Such is the pure and essential nature of satyagraha, not realized in practice, because not every one of us has shed hatred. In actual practice the secret of satyagraha is not understood by all, and the many are apt unintelligently to follow the few. Again as Tolstoy observed, the Transvaal struggle was the first attempt at applying the principle of satyagraha to masses or bodies of men. I do not know any historical example of pure mass satyagraha. I cannot however formulate any definite opinion on the point, as my knowledge of history is limited. But as a matter of fact we have nothing to do with historical precedents. Granted the fundamental principles of satyagraha, it will be seen that the consequences I have described are bound to follow as the night the day. It will not do to dismiss such a valuable force with the remark that it is difficult or impossible of application. Brute force has been the ruling factor in the world for thousands of years, and mankind has been reaping its bitter harvest all along, as he who runs may read. There is little hope of anything good coming out of it in the future. If light can come out of darkness, then alone can love emerge from hatred.

CHAPTER XXV

GENERAL SMUTS' BREACH OF FAITH (?)

The reader has seen something of the internal difficulties, in describing which I had to draw largely upon my own life story, but that could not be avoided, as my own difficulties regarding satyagraha became equally the difficulties of the satyagrahis. We now return to

the external situation.

I am ashamed of writing the caption of this chapter as well as the chapter itself, for it deals with the obliquity of human nature. Already in 1908 General Smuts ranked as the ablest leader in South Africa, and today he takes a high place among the politicians of the British Empire, and even of the world. I have no doubt about his great abilities. General Smuts is as able a general and administrator as he is a lawyer. Many other politicians have come and gone in South Africa, but from 1907 up to date the reins of Government have practically been held throughout by this gentleman, and even today he holds a unique position in the country. It is now nine years since I left South Africa. I do not know what epithet the people of South Africa now bestow upon General Smuts. His Christian name is Jan, and South Africa used to call him 'slim Janny'.[1] Many English friends had asked me to beware of General Smuts,[2] as he was a very clever man and a trimmer, whose words were intelligible only to himself and often of a kind that either party could interpret them in a sense favourable to himself. Indeed on a suitable occasion he would lay aside the interpretations of both the parties, put a fresh interpretation upon them, carry it out and support it by such clever arguments that the parties for the time being would be led to imagine that they were wrong themselves and General Smuts was right in constructing the words as he did! As regards the events I am now going to describe, we believed and said, when they happened, that General Smuts had played us false. Even today I look upon the incident as a breach of faith from the Indian community's standpoint. However I have placed a mark of interrogation after the phrase, as in point of fact the General's action did not perhaps amount to an intentional breach of faith. It could not be described as breach of faith if the intention was absent. My experience of General Smuts in 1913-14 did not then seem bitter and does not seem so to me today, when I can think of the past events with a greater sense of detachment. It is quite possible that in behaving towards the Indians as he did in 1908 General Smuts was not guilty of a deliberate breach of faith.

[1] The original adds: "'Slim' here means 'one who slips or escapes', or 'one who defies capture'. An appropriate Gujarati word for it which fits in here is *khandho* (roguish) or if we use a favourable adjective it means in its opposite sense *chalak* (cunning)."

[2] The original adds: "who would not take long to go back upon his word."

These prefatory words were necessary in justice to General Smuts as well as in defence of the use of the phrase 'breach of faith' in connection with his name and of what I am going to say in the present chapter.

We have seen in the last chapter how the Indians registered voluntarily to the satisfaction of the Transvaal Government. The Government must now repeal the Black Act, and if they did, the satyagraha struggle would come to an end. This did not mean the end of the entire mass of anti-Indian legislation in the country or the redress of all the Indian grievances, for which the Indians must still continue their constitutional agitation. Satyagraha was directed solely to the scattering of the new and ominous cloud on the horizon in the shape of the Black Act which, if accepted by the Indians, would have humiliated them and prepared the way for their final extinction first in the Transvaal and then throughout South Africa. But instead of repealing the Black Act, General Smuts took a fresh step forward. He maintained the Black Act in the statute-book and introduced into the legislature a measure[1] validating the voluntary registrations effected and the certificates issued subsequent to the date fixed by the Government in terms of that Act, taking the holders of the voluntary registration certificates out of its operation, and making further provision for the registration of Asiatics. Thus there came into force two concurrent pieces of legislation with one and the same object, and freshly arriving Indians as well as even later applicants for registration were still subject to the Black Act.

I was astounded when I read the Bill. I did not know how I would face the community. Here was excellent food for the Pathan friend who had severely criticized me at the midnight meeting. But I must say that far from shaking it, this blow made my faith in satyagraha stronger than ever. I called a meeting of our Committee and explained the new situation to them. Some of the members tauntingly said, "There you are. We have often been telling you that you are very credulous, and believe in everything that anyone says. It would not matter much if you were so simple in your private affairs, but the community has to suffer for your credulity in public matters. It is very difficult now to rouse the same spirit as actuated our people before. You know what stuff we Indians are made of, men whose momentary enthusiasm must be taken at the flood. If you neglect the

[1] For the text of this Act, *vide* "New Bill", August 15, 1908.

temporary tide, you are done for."

There was no bitterness in these taunting words. Such things had been addressed to me on other occasions. I replied with a smile: "Well, what you call my credulity is part and parcel of myself. It is not credulity but trust, and it is the duty of everyone of us, yours as well as mine, to trust our fellow men. And even granting that it is really a defect with me, you must take me as you find me with my defects no less than with my qualities. But I cannot concede that the enthusiasm of the community is a mere temporary effervescence. You must remember that you, as well as I, are members of the community. I should consider it an insult if you thus characterized my enthusiasm. I take it that you too regard yourselves as exceptions to the general rule you seek to formulate. But if you don't, you do the community the injustice of imagining that others are as weak-kneed as yourselves. In great struggles like ours there is always an ebb and a flow. However clear may be your understanding with the adversary, what is there to prevent him from breaking faith? There are many among us who pass promissory notes to others. What can be clearer and more free from doubt than a man's putting his signature to a document? Yet suits must be filed against them; they will oppose the suits and offer all kinds of defence. At last there are decrees and writs of attachment which take a long time and cost great trouble to execute. Who can guarantee against the repetition of such flagrant behaviour? I would therefore advise you patiently to deal with the problem before us. We have to consider what we can do in case the struggle has to be resumed, that is to say, what each satyagrahi can do absolutely regardless of the conduct of others. Personally I am inclined to think that if only we are true to ourselves, others will not be found wanting, and even if they are inclined to weakness, they will be strengthened by our example."

I believe this was enough to conciliate the well-intentioned sceptics who were doubtful about the resumption of the struggle. About this time Mr. Kachhalia began to show his mettle and come to the front. On every point he would announce his considered opinion in the fewest words possible and then stick to it through thick and thin. I do not remember a single occasion on which he betrayed weakness or doubt about the final result. A time came when Yusuf Mian was not ready to continue at the helm in troubled waters. We all with one voice acclaimed Kachhalia as our captain and from that time

forward to the end he held unflinchingly to his responsible post. He fearlessly put up with hardships which would have daunted almost any other man in his place. As the struggle advanced, there came a stagewhen going to jail was a perfectly easy task for some and a means of getting well-earned rest, whereas it was infinitely more difficult to remain outside, minutely to look into all things, to make various arrangements and to deal with all sorts and conditions of men.

Later on the European creditors of Kachhalia caught him as in a noose. Many Indian traders are entirely dependent in their trade on European firms, which sell them lakhs of rupees worth of goods on credit on mere personal security. That Europeans should repose such trust in Indian traders is an excellent proof of the general honesty of Indian trade. Kachhalia likewise owed large sums to many European firms, which asked him at once to meet their dues, being instigated thereto directly or indirectly by the Government. The firms gave Kachhalia to understand that they would not press for immediate payment if he left the satyagraha movement. But if he did not, they were afraid of losing their money as he might be arrested any time by the Government, and therefore demanded immediate satisfaction in cash. Kachhalia bravely replied that his participation in the Indian struggle was his personal affair which had nothing to do with his trade. He considered that his religion, the honour of his community and his own self-respect were bound up with the struggle. He thanked his creditors for the support they had extended to him, but refused to attach any undue importance to that support or indeed to his trade. Their money was perfectly safe with him, and as long as he was alive he would repay them in full at any cost. But if anything happened to him, his stock as well as the book debts owing to him were at their disposal. He therefore wished that his creditors would continue to trust him, as before. This was a perfectly fair argument, and Kachhalia's firmness was an additional reason for his creditors to trust him but on this occasion it failed to impress them. We can rouse from his slumbers a man who is really asleep, but not him who only makes a pretence of sleep all the while that he is awake, and so it was with these European traders, whose sole object was to bring undue pressure to bear upon Kachhalia. Otherwise their money was perfectly safe. A meeting of the creditors was held in my office onJanuary 22, 1909.[1] I told them clearly that the pressure to which they were subjecting

[1] *Vide* "Representation at Meeting of Cachalia's Creditors", January 22, 1909.

Kachhalia was purely political and unworthy of merchants, and they were incensed at my remark. I showed them Kachhalia Sheth's balance-sheet and proved that they could have their 20s. in the pound. Again if the creditors wanted to sell the business to someone else, Kachhalia was ready to hand over the goods and the book debts to the purchaser. If this did not suit them, the creditors could take over the stock in Kachhalia's shop at cost price, and if any part of their dues still remained unsatisfied, they were free to take over book debts due to him sufficient to cover the deficit. The reader can see that in agreeing to this arrangement the European merchants had nothing to lose. I had on many previous occasions effected such arrangements with the creditors of some of my clients who were hard pressed. But the merchants at this juncture did not seek justice. They were out to bend Kachhalia. Kachhalia would not bend, bankruptcy proceedings were instituted against him, and he was declared an insolvent, though his estate showed a large excess of assets over liabilities.

Far from being a blot upon his escutcheon this insolvency was perfectly honourable to him. It enhanced his prestige among the community and all congratulated him upon his firmness and courage. But such heroism is rarely found. The man in the street cannot understand how insolvency can cease to be insolvency, cease to be a disgrace and become an honour and an ornament, but Kachhalia realized it at once. Many traders had submitted to the Black Act merely from a fear of insolvency. Kachhalia could have warded off the insolvency if he had wished, not by leaving the struggle,—that was out of the question,—but by borrowing from his many Indian friends who would have gladly helped him over the crisis. But it would not have been becoming in him to have saved his trade by such means. The danger of being any day clapped into jail he shared in common with all satyagrahis. It would therefore be hardly proper for him to borrow from a fellow-satyagrahi to pay his European creditors. But among his friends there were 'blacklegs' also whose help was available. Indeed one or two of them actually offered assistance. But to accept their offer would have been tantamount to an admission that there was wisdom in submitting to the obnoxious Act. We therefore decided to decline their proffered aid.

Again we thought that if Kachhalia allowed himself to be declared an insolvent, his insolvency would serve as a shield for others, for if not in all, at least in an overwhelmingly large majority of cases

of insolvency, the creditor stands to lose something. He is quite pleased if he realizes 10s. in the pound, and considers 15s. quite as good as 20s. in the pound. For big traders in South Africa generally reap a profit not of 6_ but of 25 per cent.They therefore consider 15s. as good as full payment. But as 20s. in the pound is hardly ever realized from a bankrupt's estate, creditors are not anxious to reduce their debtor to a state of insolvency. As soon, therefore, as Kachhalia was declared an insolvent, there was every likelihood that the European traders would cease to threaten other satyagrahi traders who were their debtors. And that was exactly what happened. The Europeans wanted to compel Kachhalia either to give up the struggle or else to pay them in full in cash. They failed to achieve either of these two objects, and the actual result was the very reverse of what they had expected. They were dumbfounded by this first case of a respectable Indian trader welcoming insolvency and were quiet ever afterwards. In a year's time the creditors realized 20s. in the pound from Kachhalia Sheth's stock-in-trade, and this was the first case in South Africa to my knowledge in which creditors were paid in full from the insolvent debtor's estate. Thus even while the struggle was in progress, Kachhalia commanded great respect among the European merchants, who showed their readiness to advance to him any amount of goods in spite of his leading the movement.. But Kachhalia was every day gaining in strength and in an intelligent appreciation of the struggle. No one could now tell how long the struggle would last. We had therefore resolved after the insolvency proceedings that the Sheth should not make any large commitments in trade during the continuance of the movement, but confine his operations within such moderate limits as would suffice to provide him with his daily bread. He therefore did not avail himself of the European merchants' offer.

I need scarcely say that all these incidents in the life of Kachhalia Sheth did not happen soon after the Committee meeting referred to above, but I have found place for them here in the shape of a connected narrative. Chronologically, Kachhalia became Chairman some time after the resumption of the struggle (September 10, 1908) and his insolvency came about five months later.

But to return to the Committee meeting. When the meeting was over, I wrote a letter[1] to General Smuts, saying that his new Bill

[1] The letter quoting extracts from Smuts' speech is not available.

constituted a breach of the compromise, and drawing his attention to the following passage in his Richmond speech[1] delivered within a week of the settlement:

The Indians' second contention was that they would never register until the law had been repealed....He had told them that the law would not be repealed so long as there was an Asiatic in the country who had not registered....Until every Indian in the country had registered the law would not be repealed.

Politicians do not reply at all to questions which land them in difficulty, or, if they do, they resort to circumlocution. General Smuts was a past master of this art. You may write to him as often as you please, you may make any number of speeches you like, but if he is unwilling to reply, nothing that you do can draw him out. The law of courtesy, which requires a gentleman to reply to letters received, could not bind General Smuts, and I did not receive any satisfactory reply to my letters.

I met Albert Cartwright who had been our mediator. He was deeply shocked and exclaimed, "Really I cannot understand this man at all. I perfectly remember that he promised to repeal the Asiatic Act. I will do my best, but you know that nothing can move General Smuts when he has once taken up a stand. Newspaper articles are as nothing to him. So I am afraid I may not be of much help to you." I also met Mr. Hosken who wrote to General Smuts but who received only a very unsatisfactory reply. I wrote articles in *Indian Opinion* under the caption of "Foul Play"[2], but what was that to the redoubtable General? One may apply any bitter epithets one likes to a philosopher or a heartless man but in vain. They will follow the even tenor of their way. I do not know which of these two appellations would fit General Smuts. I must admit that there is a sort of philosophy about his attitude. When I was corresponding with him and writing in the paper-against him, I remember I had taken General Smuts to be a heartless man. But this was only the beginning of the struggle, only its second year, while it was to last as long as eight years, in course of which I had many occasions of meeting him. From our subsequent

[1] For extracts from this speech, *vide* Appendix "General Smuts' Speech in Richmond", February 5, 1908.

[2] This is the title of a section in "Johannesburg Letter", May 16, 1908

talks I often felt that the general belief in South Africa about General Smuts' cunning did him perhaps less than justice. I am however sure of two things. First, he has some principles in politics which are not quite immoral. Secondly, there is room in his politics for cunning and on occasions for perversion of truth.

CHAPTER XXVI

RESUMPTION OF THE STRUGGLE

If on the one hand we were trying to induce General Smuts to fulfil his part of the settlement, we were on the other hand enthusiastically engaged in 'educating' the community. We found the people everywhere ready to resume the struggle and go to jail. Meetings were held in every place, where we explained the correspondence which was being carried on with the Government. The weekly diary[1] in *Indian Opinion* kept the Indians fully abreast of current events, and they were warned of the impending failure of the voluntary registration, and asked to hold themselves in readiness to burn the certificates if the Black Act was not repealed after all, and thus let the Government note that the community was fearless and firm and ready to go to prison. Certificates were collected from every place with a view to making a bonfire of them.

The Government bill we have referred to in the previous chapter was about to pass through the Legislature, to which a petition was presented on behalf of the Indians[2] but in vain. At last an 'ultimatum' was sent to the Government by the satyagrahis. The word was not the satyagrahis' but of General Smuts who thus chose to style the letter they had addressed to him signifying the determination of the community.[3] The General said, "The people who have offered such a threat to the Government have no idea of its power. I am only sorry that some agitators are trying to inflame poor Indians who will be ruined if they succumb to their blandishments." As the newspaper reporter wrote on this occasion, many members of the Transvaal Assembly reddened with rage at this 'ultimatum' and unanimously and enthusiastically passed the bill introduced by General Smuts.

[1] This appeared under the caption "Johannesburg Letter".

[2] *Vide* "Petition to Transvaal Legislative Assembly", August 13, 1908.

[3] The letter that Gandhiji has in mind here was perhaps that of August 14, 1908; *vide* "Letter to General Smuts".

The so-called ultimatum may be thus summarized: ‘The point of the agreement between the Indians and General Smuts clearly was that if the Indians registered voluntarily, he on his part should bring forward in the Legislature a bill to validate such registration and to repeal the Asiatic Act. It is well known that the Indians have registered voluntarily to the satisfaction of the Government, and therefore the Asiatic Act must be repealed. The community has sent many communications to General Smuts and taken allpossible legal steps to obtain redress but thus far to no purpose. At a time when the bill is passing through the Legislature, it is up to the leaders to apprise the Government of the discontent and strong feeling prevalent in the community. We regret to state that, if the Asiatic Act is not repealed in terms of the settlement and if Government’s decision to that effect is not communicated to the Indians before a specific date, the certificates collected by the Indians would be burnt, and they would humbly but firmly take the consequences.’

One reason why this letter was held to be an ultimatum was that it prescribed a time-limit for reply. Another reason was that the Europeans looked upon the Indians as savages. If the Europeans had considered the Indians to be their equals, they would have found this letter perfectly courteous and would have given it most serious consideration. But the fact that the Europeans thought Indians to be barbarians was a sufficient reason for the Indians to write such a letter. The Indians must either confess to their being barbarians and consent to be suppressed as such, or else they must take active steps in repudiation of the charge of barbarism. This letter was the first of such steps. If there had not been behind the letter an iron determination to act up to it; it would have been held an impertinence, and the Indians would have proved themselves to be a thoughtless and foolish race.

The reader will perhaps point out that the charge of barbarism was repudiated in 1906 when the satyagraha pledge was taken. And, if so, there was nothing new about this letter which might warrant my giving it so much importance and dating the denial of the charge from it. This is true so far as it goes; but on thinking a little more deeply, it will appear that the repudiation really began with this letter. It should be remembered that the satyagraha pledge came in almost by accident, and the subsequent imprisonments followed as an inevitable corollary. The community then gained largely in stature,

but unconsciously. But when this letter was written, there was a deliberate intention of claiming full knowledge and high prestige. Now as well as before the object aimed at was the repeal of the Black Act. But there was change in the style of language used, in the methods of work selected and in other things besides. When a slave salutes a master and a friend salutes a friend, the form is the same in either case, but there is a world of difference between the two, which enables the detached observer to recognize the slave and the friend at once.

There was much discussion among ourselves when the ultimatum was forwarded. Would not the demand for reply within a stated period be considered impudent? Might it not be that it would stiffen the Government and lead them to reject our terms which otherwise they might have accepted? Would it not be sufficient indirectly to announce the community's decision to the Government? After giving due weight to all these considerations we unanimously came to the conclusion that we must do what we thought to be right and proper for us to do. We must run the risk of being charged with discourtesy, as well as the risk of Government refusing in a huff what otherwise they might have granted. If we do not admit our inferiority as human beings in any sense whatever and if we believe that we possess the capacity for unlimited suffering for any length of time, we must adopt a straightforward course without hesitation.

The reader will perhaps see that there was some novelty and distinction about the step now taken, which had its reverberations in the Legislature and in European circles outside. Some congratulated the Indians on their courage while others got very angry, and asked for condign punishment to be awarded to the Indians for their insolence. Either section acknowledged the novelty of the Indians' fresh move by its conduct. This letter created greater stir than even the commencement of the satyagraha movement, which too was a novelty when it was started. The reason is obvious. When satyagraha was started, no one knew what the Indians were capable of, and therefore neither such a letter nor the language in which it was couched would have been fitting for that initial stage. But now the community had had its baptism of fire. Everyone had seen that the Indians had the capacity of suffering the hardships incidental to an attempt to get their wrongs righted, and therefore the language of the 'ultimatum' appeared in the light of a natural growth and not at all inappropriate

in the circumstances.

CHAPTER XXVII

A BONFIRE OF CERTIFICATES

The ultimatum was to expire on the same day that the new Asiatic Bill was to be carried through the Legislature. A meeting had been called some two hours after the expiry of the time-limit to perform the public ceremony of burning the certificates. The Satyagraha Committee thought that the meeting would not befruitless even if quite unexpectedly perhaps a favourable reply was received from the Government, as in that case the meeting couldbe utilized for announcing the Government's favourable decision to the community.

The Committee, however, believed that the Government would not reply to the ultimatum at all. We had all reached the place of meeting early, and arranged for the Government's reply by wire, if any, to be brought promptly to the meeting, which was held at four o'clock on the grounds[1] of the Hamidia Mosque at Johannesburg (August 16, 1908). Every inch of space available was taken up by Indians of all classes. The Negroes of South Africa take their meals in iron cauldrons resting on four legs. One such cauldron of the largest size available in the market had been requisitioned from an Indian trader's shop and set up on a platform in a corner of the grounds in order to burn the certificates.

As the business of the meeting was about to commence, a volunteer arrived on a cycle with a telegram from the Government in which they regretted the determination of the Indian community and announced their inability to change their line of action. The telegram was read out to the audience which received it with cheers, as if they were glad that the auspicious opportunity of burning the certificates did not after all slip out of their hands as it would have if the Government had complied with the demands formulated in the ultimatum. It is difficult to pronounce any categorical opinion on the propriety or the reverse of such a feeling of gladness without a knowledge of the motives which prompted each of the audience who greeted the Government reply with applause. This much however can be said, that these cheers were a happy sign of the enthusiasm of the meeting. The Indians had now some consciousness of their strength.

The meeting began. The chairman put the meeting on their

[1] The original has: "on the grounds as usual".

guard and explained the whole situation to them. Appropriate resolutions were adopted. I clearly detailed the various stages of the protracted negotiations and said, "If there is any Indian who has handed in his certificate to be burnt but wants it to be returned to him, let him step forward and have it. Merely burning the certificates is no crime, and will not enable those who court imprisonment to win it. By burning the certificates we only declare our solemn resolution never to submit to the Black Act and divest ourselves of the power of even showing the certificates. But it is open to anyone to take out a copy tomorrow of the certificate that may be burnt to ashes today, and if there are any persons here who contemplate such a cowardly act ordoubt their own ability to stand the ordeal, there is still time for them to have their certificates back, and these can be given back to them. No one need be ashamed of getting his certificate back just now, as in doing so he will be exhibiting a certain kind of courage. But it would be not only shameful but also detrimental to the best interests of the community to get a copy of the certificate afterwards. Again let us take note that this is going to be a protracted struggle. We know that some of us have fallen out of the marching army, and the burden of those who remain has been made heavier to that extent. I would advise you to ponder over all these considerations and only then to take the plunge proposed today."[1]

Even during my speech there were voices saying, "We do not want the certificates back, burn them." Finally I suggested that if anyone wanted to oppose the resolution, he should come forward, but no one stood up. Mir Alam too was present at this meeting. He announced that he had done wrong in assaulting me as he did and, to the great joy of the audience, handed his original certificate to be burnt, as he had not taken out a voluntary certificate. I took hold of his hand, pressed it with joy, and assured him once more that I had never harboured in my mind any resentment against him.

The Committee had already received upwards of 2,000 certificates to be burnt.[2] These were all thrown into the cauldron, saturated with paraffin and set ablaze by Mr. Yusuf Mian.[3] The whole

[1] For the text of the speech, *vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting", August 16, 1908.

[2] A report in *The Transvaal Leader* put the number at about 1,300 registration certificates and 500 trading licenses

[3] The original has "me" in place of Yusuf Mian.

assembly rose to their feet and made the place resound with the echoes of their continuous cheers during the burning process. Some of those who had still withheld their certificates brought them in numbers to the platform, and these too were consigned to the flames. When asked why he handed his certificate only at the last moment, one of these friends said that he did so as it was more appropriate and would create a greater impression on the onlookers. Another frankly admitted his want of courage and a feeling that the certificates might not be burnt after all. But he could not possibly withhold the certificate after he had seen the bonfire and gave it up, from an idea that the fate of all might well be his own fate too. Such frankness was a matter of frequent experience during the struggle.

The reporters of English newspapers present at the meeting were profoundly impressed with the whole scene and gave graphic descriptions of the meeting in their papers. A description of the meeting was sent to *The Daily Mail* (London) by its Johannesburg correspondent, in course of which he compared the act of the Indians in burning their certificates with that of the Boston Tea Party. I do not think this comparison did more than justice to the Indians, seeing that if the whole might of the British Empire was ranged against the hundreds of thousands of able Europeans in America, herein South Africa a helpless body of 13,000 Indians had challenged the powerful Government of the Transvaal. The Indians' only weapon was faith in the righteousness of their own cause and in God. There is no doubt that this weapon is all-sufficient and all-powerful for the devout, but so long as that is not the view of the man in the street, 13,000 unarmed Indians might appear insignificant before the well-armed Europeans of America. As God is the strength of the weak, it is as well that the world despises them.

CHAPTER XXVIII

CHARGE OF FORCING FRESH ISSUE

During the same year in which the Black Act was passed General Smuts carried through the Legislature another bill called the Transvaal Immigrants Restriction Bill (Act 15 of 1907)[1], which was ostensibly of general application but was chiefly aimed at the Indians. This Act generally followed the lines of similar legislation in Natal, but it treated as prohibited immigrants those who could pass education tests

[1] This came into force on January 1, 1908.

but were ineligible for registration under the Asiatic Act, and was thus indirectly made an instrument for preventing the entry of a single Indian newcomer.

It was absolutely essential for the Indians to resist this fresh inroad on their rights, but the question was whether it should be made a plank in the satyagraha struggle. The community was not bound as to when and regarding what subjects they should offer satyagraha, in deciding which question they must only not transgress the limits prescribed by wisdom and appreciation of their own capacity. Satyagraha offered on every occasion seasonable or otherwise would be corrupted into *duragraha*. And if anyone takes to satyagraha without having measured his own strength and afterwards sustains a defeat, he not only disgraces himself but also brings the matchless weapon of satyagraha into disrepute by his folly.

The Satyagraha Committee saw that the Indians' satyagraha was being offered only against the Black Act, and that if the Black Act was once repealed, the Immigration Restriction Act would lose the sting to which I have referred. Still if the Indians did not take any steps regarding the Immigration Act from an idea that a separate movement against it was unnecessary, their silence might be misconstrued as implying their consent to the total prohibition of Indian immigration in the future. The Immigration Act too must therefore be opposed, and the only question was: Should this also be included in the satyagraha struggle? The community's view was that it was their duty to include in the satyagraha any fresh attacks on their rights made while the struggle was in progress. If they did not feel strong enough to do so, that was altogether a different matter. The leaders came to the conclusion that their lack or deficiency of strength should not be made a pretext for letting the Immigration Act alone, and that therefore this Act too must be covered by the satyagraha struggle.

Correspondence was therefore carried on with the Government[1] on this subject. We could not thereby induce General Smuts to agree to a change in the law, but it provided him with a fresh handle for vilifying the community and, really speaking, myself. General Smuts knew that many more Europeans, besides those who were publicly helping us, were privately sympathetic to our movement, and he naturally wished that their sympathy should be alienated if possible.

[1] The original has: "Local Government".

He therefore charged me with raising a fresh point, and he told as well as wrote to our supporters that they did not know me as he did. If he yielded an inch, I would ask for an ell and therefore it was that he was not repealing the Asiatic Act. When satyagraha was started, there was no question whatever about fresh immigrants. Now when he was legislating to prevent the fresh entry of any more Indians in the interest of the Transvaal, there too I had threatened satyagraha. He could not any more put up with this 'cunning'. I might do my worst, and every Indian might be ruined, but he would not repeal the Asiatic Act, nor would the Transvaal Government give up the policy they had adopted regarding the Indians, and in this just attitude they were entitled to the support of all Europeans.

A little reflection will show how totally unjust and immoral this argument was. When there was nothing like the Immigrants Restriction Act at all in existence, how were the Indians or myself to oppose it? General Smuts talked glibly about his experience of what he called my 'cunning' and yet he could not cite a single case in point in support of his statement. And I do not remember to have ever resorted to cunning during all those years that I lived in South Africa. I may now go even farther and say without the least hesitation that I have never had recourse to cunning in all my life. I believe that cunning is not only morally wrong but also politically inexpedient, and have therefore always discountenanced its use even from the practical standpoint. It is hardly necessary for me to defend myself. I would even be ashamed of defending myself before the class of readers for whom this is written. If even now they have not seen that I am free from cunning, nothing that I could write in self-defence could convince them of that fact. I have penned these few sentences only with a view to giving the reader an idea of the difficulties which were encountered during the satyagraha struggle and of the imminent danger to the movement if the Indians even by a hair's breadth swerved from the strait and narrow path. The rope-dancer, balancing himself upon a rope suspended at a height of twenty feet, must concentrate his attention upon the rope, and the least little error in so doing means death for him, no matter on which side he falls. My eight years' experience of satyagraha in South Africa has taught me that a satyagrahi has to be if possible even more single-minded than the rope-dancer. The friends before whom General Smuts levelled this charge at me knew me well, and therefore the charge had an effect over them just the opposite of what General Smuts had desired. They

not only did not give me up or the movement but grew even more zealous in supporting us, and the Indians saw later on that they would have been in for no end of trouble if their satyagraha had not been extended to the Immigration Act also.

My experience has taught me that a law of progression applies to every righteous struggle. But in the case of satyagraha the law amounts to an axiom. As the Ganga advances, other streams flow into it, and hence at the mouth it grows so wide that neither bank is to be seen and a person sailingupon the river cannot make out where the river ends and the sea begins. So also as a satyagraha struggle progresses onward, many another element helps toswell its current, and there is a constant growth in the results to which it leads. This is really inevitable, and is bound up with the first principles of satyagraha. For in satyagraha the minimum is also the maximum, and as it is the irreducible minimum, there is no question of retreat, and the only movement possible is an advance. In other struggles, even when they are righteous, the demand is first pitched a little higher so as to admit of future reduction, and hence the law of progression does not apply to all of them without exception. But I must explain how the law of progression comes into play when the minimum is also the maximum as in satyagraha. The Ganga does not leave its course in search of tributaries. Even so does the satyagrahi not leave his path which is sharp as the sword's edge. But as the tributaries spontaneously join the Ganga as it advances, so it is with the river that is satyagraha. Seeing that the Immigration Act was included in the satyagraha, some Indians ignorant of the principles of satyagraha insisted upon the whole mass of the anti-Indian legislation in the Transvaal being similarly treated. Others again suggested a mobilization of Indians all over South Africa and the offering of satyagraha against all anti-Indian legislation in Natal, the Cape Colony, the Orange Free State, etc., while the Transvaal struggle was on. Both the suggestions involved a breach of principle. I distinctly said that it would be dishonest now, having seen the opportunity, to take up a position which was not in view when satyagraha was started. No matter how strong we were, the present struggle must close when the demands for which it was commenced were accepted. I am confident that if we had not adhered to this principle, instead of winning, we would not only have lost all along the line, but also forfeited the sympathy which had been enlisted in our favour. On the other hand if the adversary himself creates new difficulties for us

while the struggle is in progress, they become automatically included in it. A satyagrahi, without being false to his faith, cannot disregard new difficulties which confront him while he is pursuing his own course. The adversary is not a satyagrahi,—satyagraha against satyagraha is impossible,—and is not bound by any limit of maximum or minimum. He can therefore try if he wishes to frighten the satyagrahi by raising novel issues. But the satyagrahi has renounced all fear, tackles by satyagraha the later difficulties as well as the former and trusts that it will help him to hold his own against all odds. Therefore as a satyagraha struggle is prolonged, that is to say by the adversary, it is the adversary who stands to lose from his own standpoint, and it is the satyagrahi who stands to gain. We shall come across other illustrations of the working of this law in the later stages of this struggle.

CHAPTER XXIX

SORABJI SHAPURJI ADAJANIA

Now as satyagraha was made to embrace the Immigration Act as well, satyagrahis had to test the right of educated Indians to enter the Transvaal. The Committee decided that the test should not be made through any ordinary Indian. The idea was that some Indian, who did not come within the four corners of the definition of a prohibited immigrant in the new Act in so far as the definition was acceptable to the community, should enter the Transvaal and go to jail. We had thus to show that satyagraha is a force containing within itself seeds of progressive self-restraint. There was a section in the Act to the effect that any person who was not conversant with a European language should be treated as a prohibited immigrant. The Committee therefore proposed that some Indian who knew English but who had not been to the Transvaal before should enter the country. Several young Indians volunteered for the purpose, out of whom Sorabji Shapurji Adajania was selected.

Sorabji was a Parsi. There were not perhaps more than a hundred Parsis in the whole of South Africa. I held in South Africa the same views about the Parsis as I have expressed in India. There are not more than a hundred thousand Parsis in the world, and this alone speaks volumes for their high character that such a small community has long preserved its prestige, clung to its religion and proved itself second to none in the world in point of charity. But Sorabji turned out to be pure gold. I was but slightly acquainted with him

when he joined the struggle. His letters as regards participation in satyagraha left a good impression on me. As I am a lover of the great qualities of the Parsis, I was not and I am not unaware of some of their defects as a community. I was therefore doubtful whether Sorabji would be able to stand to his guns in critical times. But it was a rule with me not to attach any weight to my own doubts where the party concerned himself asserted the contrary. I therefore recommended to the Committee that they should take Sorabji at his word, and eventually Sorabji proved himself to be a first-class satyagrahi.[1] He not only was one of the satyagrahis who suffered the longest terms of imprisonment, but also made such deep study of the struggle that his views commanded respectful hearing from all. His advice always showed firmness, wisdom, charity and deliberation.He was slow to form an opinion as well as to change an opinion once formed. He was as much of an Indian as of a Parsi, and was quite free from the bane of narrow communalism. After the struggle was over Dr. Mehta[2] offered a scholarship in order to enable some good satyagrahi to proceed to England to study for the bar. I was charged-with the selection. There were two or three deserving candidates, but all the friends felt that there was none who could approach Sorabji in maturity of judgment and ripeness of wisdom, and he was selected accordingly. The idea was that on his return to South Africa he should take my place and serve the community. Sorabji went to England with the blessings of the community and was duly called to the bar. He had already come in contact with Gokhale in South Africa, and his relations with him became closer in England. Sorabji captivated Gokhale who asked him to join the Servants of India Society when he returned to India. Sorabji became extremely popular-among the students. He would share the sorrows of all, and his soul was not tarnished by the luxury and the artificiality in England. When he went to England, he was above thirty, and he had only a working knowledge of English. But difficulties vanish at the touch of man's perseverance. Sorabji lived the pure life of a student and passed his examinations. The bar examinations in my time were easy. Barristers nowadays have to study very much harder. But Sorabji knew not what it was to be defeated. When the ambulance corps was organized in England, he was one of the pioneers as also one of those

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Durban Farewell to Sorabji", June 16, 1911.
[2] Pranjivan Mehta

who remained in it till the last. This corps too had to offer satyagraha,[1] in which many members fell back but Sorabji was at the head of those who would not give in. Let me state in passing that this satyagraha of the ambulance corps was also crowned with victory.

After being called to the bar in England Sorabji returned to Johannesburg where he began to practise law as well as to serve the community. Every letter I received from South Africa was full of praise for Sorabji: 'He is as simple in habits as ever, and free from the slightest trace of vanity. He mixes with all, rich as well as poor.' But God seems to be as cruel as He is merciful. Sorabji caught a galloping phthisis and died in a few months, leaving the Indians whose love he had freshly acquired to mourn his loss. Thus within a very short period God bereft the community of two outstanding personalities, Kachhalia and Sorabji. If I were asked to choose between the two, Iwould be at a loss to decide. In fact, each was supreme in his own field. And Sorabji was as good an Indian as he was a good Parsi, even as Kachhalia was as good an Indian as he was a good Mussalman.

Thus, Sorabji entered the Transvaal, having previously informed the Government of his intention to test his right to remain in the country under the Immigrants Restriction Act. The Government were not at all prepared for this and could not at once decide what to do with Sorabji, who publicly crossed the border and entered the country.[2] The Immigration Restriction Officer knew him. Sorabji told him that he was deliberately entering the Transvaal for a test case, and asked him to examine him in English or to arrest him just as he pleased. The officer replied that there was no question of examining him as he was aware of his knowledge of English. He had no orders to arrest him. Sorabji might enter the country and the Government, if they wished, would arrest him where he went.

Thus contrary to our expectation Sorabji reached Johannesburg and we welcomed him in our midst. No one had hoped that the Government would permit him to proceed even an inch beyond the frontier station of Volksrust. Very often it so happens that when we take prompt steps deliberately and fearlessly, the government is not ready to oppose us. The reason for this lies in the very nature of

[1] For details, *vide* "Speech to Indian Field Ambulance Corps", October 1, 1914 and "Letter to C. Roberts", October 25, 1914.

[2] This was on June, 24, 1908; *vide* "Johannesburg Letter- Test Case", June 24, 1908.

Government. A Government officer does not ordinarily make his department so much his own as to arrange his ideas on every subject beforehand and make preparations accordingly. Again, the officer has not one but many things to attend to, and his mind is divided between them. Thirdly, the official suffers from the intoxication of power, is thus apt to be careless and believes that it is child's play for the authorities to deal with any movement whatever. On the other hand, the public worker knows his ideal as well as the means to achieve his end, and if he has definite plans, he is perfectly ready to carry them out, and his work is the only subject of his thoughts day and night. If, therefore, he takes the right steps with decision, he is always in advance of the government. Many movements fail, not because governments are endowed with extraordinary power but because the leaders are lacking in the qualities just referred to.

In short, whether through the negligence or the set design of the Government Sorabji reached as far as Johannesburg, and the local officer had neither any idea of his duty in a case likethis nor any instructions from his superiors on the point. Sorabji's arrival increased our enthusiasm, and some young men thought that the Government were defeated and would soon come to terms. They saw their mistake very soon, however. They even realized that a settlement could perhaps be purchased only by the self-sacrifice of many young men.

Sorabji informed the Police Superintendent, Johannesburg, about his arrival and let him know that he believed himself entitled to remain in the Transvaal in terms of the new Immigration Act, as he had ordinary knowledge of English, in respect of which he was ready to submit to an examination by the officer if he so desired. No reply to this letter was received, or rather the reply came after some days in the form of a summons.

Sorabji's case came before the Court on July 8, 1908.[1] The court-house was packed full of Indian spectators. Before the case began, we held a meeting of the Indians present on the grounds of the Court and Sorabji made a fighting speech, in which he announced his readiness to go to jail as often as necessary for victory and to brave all dangers and risks. In the meanwhile, I had got fairly familiar with

[1] For Gandhiji's comments on the test case, *vide* "Letter to *Indian Opinion*", July 4, 1908.

Sorabji and assured myself that he would do credit to the community. The Magistrate took up the case in due course. I defended Sorabji, and at once asked for his discharge on the ground of the summons being defective.[1] The Public Prosecutor also made an argument, but on the 9th the Court upheld my contention and discharged Sorabji who, however, immediately received warning to appear before the Court the next day, Friday, July 10, 1908.[2]

On the 10th, the Magistrate ordered Sorabji to leave the Transvaal within seven days.[3] After the Court's order was served upon him, Sorabji informed Superintendent J.A.G. Vernon that it was not his desire to leave. He was accordingly brought to theCourt once more, on the 20th, charged with failing to obey the Magistrate's order, and sentenced to a month's imprisonment with hard labour.[4] The Government, however, did not arrest the localIndians as they saw that the more arrests there were the higher did the Indians' spirit rise. Again, Indians were sometimes discharged thanks to legal technicalities in the cases instituted against them and this also served to redouble the ardour of the community. Government had carried through the Legislature all the laws they wanted. Many Indians had indeed burnt the certificates but they had proved their right to remain in the country by their registration. Government therefore saw no sense in prosecuting them simply to send them to jail, and thought that the workers would cool down finding no outlet for their energies in view of the masterly inactivity of the Government. But they were reckoning without their host. The Indians took fresh steps to test the Government's patience, which was soon exhausted.

CHAPTER XXX

SHETH DAUD MAHOMED AND OTHERS ENTER THE STRUGGLE

When the Indians saw through the Government's game of tiring them out by Fabian tactics they felt bound to take further steps. A

[1] *Vide* "Trial of Sorabji Shapurji- I", July 8, 1908.

[2] In place of the sentences "who however . . . with hard labour" in the following paragraph, the original has: "The community went mad with joy. One could even say that there was a good reason for it. How could the Government immediately issue another summons? It dared not do so. Therefore, Sorabji threw himself into public work. But that was not a deliverance for good."

[3] *Vide* "Trial of Sorabji Shapurji- II", July 10, 1908.

[4] *Vide* "Trial of Sorabji Shapurji- III", July 20, 1908 and "Sorabji Shapurji of Adajan", July 25, 1908.

satyagrahi is never tired so long as he has the capacity to suffer. The Indians were therefore in a position to upset the calculations of the Government.

There were several Indians in Natal who possessed ancient rights of domicile in the Transvaal. They had no need to enter the Transvaal for trade, but the community held that they had the right of entry. They also had some knowledge of English. Again there was no breach of the principles of satyagraha in educated Indians like Sorabji entering the Transvaal. We therefore decided that two classes of Indians should enter the Transvaal: first, those who had previously been domiciled in the country and, secondly, those who had received English education.

Of these Sheth Daud Mahomed and Parsi Rustomji were big traders, and Surendra Medh, Pragji Khandubhai Desai, Ratansi Mulji Sodha, Harilal Gandhi, and others were 'educated' men. Daud Sheth came in spite of his wife being dangerously ill.

Let me introduce Sheth Daud Mahomed to the reader. He was president of the Natal Indian Congress, and one of the oldestIndian traders that came to South Africa. He was a Sunni Vora from Surat. I have seen but few Indians in South Africa who equalled him in tact. He had excellent powers of understanding. He had not had much literary education but he spoke English and Dutch well. He was skilful in his business intercourse with Europeantraders. His liberality-was widely known. About fifty guests would dine with him everyday. He was one of the chief contributors to Indian collections. He had the priceless jewel of a son who far surpassed him in character. The boy's heart was pure as crystal. Daud Sheth never came in the way of his son's aspirations. Indeed it would be no exaggeration to say that the father almost worshipped the son. He wished that none of his own defects should reappear in the boy and had sent him to England for education. But Daud Sheth lost this treasure, of a son in his prime. Phthisis claimed Husen for its victim. This was a sore wound that never healed. With Husen died the high hopes which the Indians had cherished about him. He was a most truthful lad, and Hindu and Mussalman were to him as the left and the right eye. Even Daud Sheth is now no more with us. Who is there upon whom Death does not lay his hands?

I have already introduced Parsi Rustomji to the reader. The names of several other friends who joined this 'Asiatic invasion' must

have been left out as I am writing this without consulting any papers, and I hope they will excuse me for it. I am not writing these chapters to immortalize names but to explain the secret of satyagraha, and to show how it succeeded, what obstacles beset its path and how they were removed. Even where I have mentioned names I have done so in order to point out to the reader how men who might be considered illiterate distinguished themselves in South Africa; how Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis and Christians there worked harmoniously together and how traders, 'educated' men and others fulfilled their duty. Where a man of high merit has been mentioned, praise has been bestowed not upon him but only upon his merit.

When Daud Sheth thus arrived on the frontiers of the Transvaal with his satyagrahi 'army', the Government was ready to meet him. The Government would become an object of ridicule if it allowed such a large troop to enter the Transvaal, and was therefore bound to arrest them. So they were arrested, and on August 18, 1908, brought before the Magistrate who ordered them to leave the Transvaal within seven days. They disobeyed the order of course, were rearrested at Pretoria on the 28th and deported without trial. They re-entered the Transvaal on the 31st and finally on September 8 were sentenced at Volksrust to a fine of fifty pounds or three months' imprisonment with hard labour. Needless to say, they cheerfully elected to go to jail.[1]

The Transvaal Indians were now in high spirits. If they could not compel the release of their Natal compatriots, they must certainly share their imprisonment. They therefore cast about for means which would land them in jail. There were several ways in which they could have their heart's desire. If a domiciled Indian did not show his registration certificate, he would not be given a trading licence and it would be an offence on his part if he traded without a licence. Again one must show the certificate if one wanted to enter the Transvaal from Natal, and would be arrested if one had none to show. The certificates had already been burnt and the line was therefore clear. The Indians employed both these methods. Some began to hawk without a licence while others were arrested for not showing certificates upon entering the Transvaal.

The movement was now in full swing. Everyone was on his trial.

[1] *Vide* "Johannesburg Letter- Natal Businessmen's Activities", September 7, 1908.

Other Natal Indians followed Sheth Daud Mahomed's example. There were many arrests in Johannesburg also. Things came to such a pass that anyone who wished could get himself arrested. Jails began to be filled, 'invaders' from Natal getting three months and the Transvaal hawkers anything from four days to three months.

Among those who thus courted arrest was our 'Imam Saheb', Imam Abdul Kadar Bavazir, who was arrested for hawking without a licence and sentenced on July 21, 1908, to imprisonment for four days with hard labour. Imam Saheb's health was so delicate that people laughed when they heard of his courting arrest. Some people came to me and asked me not to take Imam Saheb for fear he might bring discredit upon the community. I disregarded this warning. It was none of my business to gauge the strength or weakness of Imam Saheb. Imam Saheb never walked barefooted, was fond of the good things of the earth, had a Malay wife, kept a well-furnished house and went about in a horse carriage. Very true, but who could read the depths of his mind? After he was released, Imam Saheb went to jail again, lived there as an ideal prisoner and took his meals after a spell of hard labour. At home he would have new dishes and delicacies every day; in jail he took mealie pap and thanked God for it. Not only was he not defeated, but he became simple in habits. As a prisoner he broke stones, worked as a sweeper and stood in a line with other prisoners. At Phoenix he fetched water and even set types in the press. Everyone at the Phoenix Ashram was bound to acquire the art of type-setting. Imam Saheb learnt type-setting to the best of his ability. Nowadays he is doing his bit in India.

But there were many such who experienced self-purification in jail.

Joseph Royeppen, barrister-at-law, a graduate of Cambridge University, had been born in Natal of parents who were indentured labourers, but had fully adopted the European style of living. He would not go barefooted even in his house, unlike Imam Saheb who must wash his feet before prayers and must also pray barefooted. Royeppen left his law books, took up a basket of vegetables and was arrested as an unlicensed hawker. He too suffered imprisonment. "But should I travel third class?" asked Royeppen. "If you travel first or second how can I ask any of the rest to travel third? Who in jail is going to recognize the barrister in you?" I replied, and that was enough to satisfy Royeppen.

Many lads sixteen years old went to jail. One Mohanlal Manji Ghelani was only fourteen.

The jail authorities left no stone unturned to harass the Indians, who were given scavenger's work, but they did it with a smile on their face. They were asked to break stones, and they broke stones with the name of Allah or Rama on their lips. They were made to dig tanks and put upon pick-axe work in stony ground. Their hands became hardened with the work. Some of them even fainted under unbearable hardships, but they did not know what it was to be beaten.

One must not suppose that there were no internal jealousies or quarrels in jail. Food constitutes the eternal apple of discord, but we successfully avoided bickerings even over food.

I too was arrested again. At one time there were as many as seventy-five Indian prisoners in Volksrust jail. We cooked our own food. I became the cook as only I could adjudicate on the conflicting claims to the ration supplied. Thanks to their love for me, my companions took without a murmur the half-cooked porridge I prepared without sugar.

Government thought that if they separated me from the other prisoners it might perhaps chasten me as well as the others.[1] They therefore took me to Pretoria jail where I was confined in a solitary cell reserved for dangerous prisoners. I was taken outonly twice a day for exercise. In Pretoria jail no ghee wasprovided to the Indians, unlike as in Volksrust. But I do not propose here to deal with our hardships in jail, for which the curiousmay turn to the account of my experiences of jail life in South Africa.

And yet the Indians would not take a defeat. Government were in a quandary. How many Indians could be sent to jail after all? And then it meant additional expenditure. The Government began to cast about for other means of dealing with the situation.

CHAPTER XXXI

DEPORTATIONS

The obnoxious Acts provided for three kinds of punishment, viz., fine, imprisonment and deportation. The courts were empowered simultaneously to award all the punishments, and all magistrates were given jurisdiction to impose the maximum penalties. At first

[1] The original adds: "They could not have a better opportunity to do so."

deportation[1] meant taking the 'culprit' into the limits of Natal, the Orange Free State or Portuguese East Africa beyond the Transvaal frontier and leaving him there. As for instance, the Indians who crossed over from Natal were taken beyond the limits of Volksrust station and there left to their own devices. Deportation of this kind was a farce pure and simple, as it involved only a little inconvenience, and instead of disheartening them it only encouraged the Indians still further.

The local Government therefore had to find out fresh means of harassing the Indians. The jails were already overcrowded. The Government thought that the Indians would be thoroughly demoralized and would surrender at discretion if they could be deported to India. There was some ground for this belief of the Government, who accordingly sent a large batch of Indians to India. These deportees suffered great hardships. They had nothing to eat except what Government chose to provide for them on the steamers, and all of them were sent as deck passengers. Again some of them had their landed as well as other property and their business in South Africa, many had their families there, while others were also in debt. Not many men would be ready to lose their all and turn into perfect bankrupts.

All this notwithstanding, many Indians remained perfectly firm. Many more however weakened and ceased to court arrest, although they did not weaken to the extent of getting duplicates of the burnt certificates. Some few were even terrorized into registering afresh.

Still there was a considerable number of stalwarts who were so brave that some of them, I believe, would have mounted the gallows with a smile on their face. And if they cared little for life, they cared still less for property.

But many of those who were deported to India were poor and simple folk who had joined the movement from mere faith. That these should be oppressed so heavily was almost too much to bear. However, it was difficult to see our way to assisting them. Our funds were meagre, and then there was the danger of losing the fight altogether if we proceeded to give monetary help. Not a single person was permitted to join the movement from pecuniary inducements; for

[1] This was under Section 6 of the new Immigration Act; *vide* "Extracts from Blue Book- De Villiers's Note on Immigration Act", March 7, 1908.

otherwise the movement would have been choked up by men coming in on the strength of such selfish hopes. We felt it was incumbent upon us, however, to help the deportees with our sympathies.

I have seen from experience that money cannot go as far as fellow-feeling, kind words and kind looks can. If a man who is eager to get riches gets riches from another but without sympathy, he will give him up in the long run. On the other hand, one who has been conquered by love is ready to encounter no end of difficulties with him who has given him his love.

We therefore resolved to do for the deportees all that kindness could do. We comforted them with the promise that proper arrangements would be made for them in India. The reader must remember that many of them were ex-indentured labourers, and had no relations in India. Some were even born in South Africa, and to all India was something like a strange land. It would be sheer cruelty if these helpless people upon being landed in India were left to shift for themselves. We therefore assured them that all suitable arrangements would be made for them in India.

But this was not enough. The deportees could not be comforted so long as someone was not sent with them to be their companion and guide. This was the first batch of deportees, and their steamer was to start in a few hours. There was not much time for making a selection. I thought of P. K. Naidoo, one of my co-workers, and asked him:

"Will you escort these poor brothers to India?"

"Why not?"

"But the steamer is starting just now."

"Let it."

"What about your clothes? And food?"

"As for clothes, the suit I have on will suffice, and I will get the food from the steamer all right."

This was a most agreeable surprise for me. The conversation took place at Parsi Rustomji's. There and then I procured some clothes and blankets for Naidoo and sent him on.

"Take care and look after these brothers on the way. See first to their comforts and then to your own. I am cabling to Shri Natesan at Madras, and you must follow his instructions."

"I will try to prove myself a true soldier." So saying P. K. Naidoo left for the pier. Victory must be certain with such valiant

fighters, I said to myself. Naidoo was born in South Africa and had never been to India before. I gave him a letter of recommendation to Shri Natesan and also sent a cablegram.

In those days Shri Natesan perhaps stood alone in India as a student of the grievances of Indians abroad, their valued helper, and a systematic and well-informed exponent of their case. I had regular correspondence with him.[1] When the deportees reached Madras, Shri Natesan rendered them full assistance. He found his task easier for the presence of an able man like Naidoo among the deportees. He made local collections and did not allow the deportees to feel for a moment that they had been deported.

These deportations by the Transvaal Government were as illegal as they were cruel.[2] People are generally unaware that governments often deliberately violate their own laws. In face of emergency there is no time for undertaking fresh legislation. Governments therefore break the laws and do what they please. Afterwards they either enact new laws or else make the people forget their breach of the law.

The Indians started a powerful agitation against this lawlessness of the local Government, which was adversely commented upon in India too so that the Government every day found it more and more difficult to deport poor Indians. The Indians took all possible legal steps and successfully appealed against the deportations, with the result that Government had to stop the practice of deporting to India.

But the policy of deportations was not without its effect upon the satyagrahi 'army'. Not all could overcome the fear of being deported to India. Many more fell away, and only the real fighters remained.

This was not the only step taken by the Government to break the spirit of the community. As I have stated in the last chapter, Government had done their utmost to harass the satyagrahi prisoners, who were put to all manner of tasks, including breaking stones. But that was not all. At first all prisoners were kept together. Now the Government adopted the policy of separating them, and accorded harsh treatment to them in every jail. Winter in the Transvaal is very severe; the cold is so bitter that one's hands are almost frozen while working in the morning. Winter therefore was a hard time for the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. A. Natesan", July 21, 1910 and December 9, 1910.

[2] The original adds: "Even the Government knew it."

prisoners, some of whom were kept in a road camp where no one could even go and see them. One of these prisoners was a young satyagrahi, eighteen years old, of the name of Swami Nagappan, who observed the jail rules and did the task entrusted to him. Early in the mornings he was taken to work on the roads where he contracted double pneumonia of which he died after he was released (July 7, 1909).[1] Nagappan's companions say that he thought of the struggle and the struggle alone till he breathed his last. He never repented having gone to jail and embraced death for his country's sake as he would embrace a friend. Nagappan was 'illiterate' according to our standards. He spoke English and Zulu from experience. Perhaps he also wrote broken English, but he was by no means an educated man. Still if we consider his fortitude, his patience, his patriotism, his firmness unto death, there is nothing left which we might desire him to possess. The satyagraha movement went on successfully though it was not joined by any highly educated men, but where would it have been without soldiers like Nagappan?

As Nagappan died of ill-treatment in jail, the hardships of deportation proved to be the death of Narayanaswami (October 16, 1910).[2] Still the community stood unmoved; only weaklings slipped away. But even the weaklings had done their best. Let us not despise them. Those who march forward are generally apt to look down upon those who fall back and to consider themselves very brave fellows, whereas often the facts are just the reverse. If a man who can afford to contribute fifty rupees subscribes only twenty-five and if he who can afford to pay only five rupees contributes that amount in full, he who gives five must be held to be a more generous donor than the other who gives five times as much. Yet very often he who contributes twenty-five is needlessly elated at the false notion of his superiority over the contributor of five rupees. In the same way, if a man who falls back through weakness has done his utmost, he is really superiorto another who leaves him behind but has not put his whole soul into the march. Therefore even those who slipped away when they found things too hot for them did render service to the community. A time now came when greater calls were made on our patience and courage. But the Transvaal Indians were not found

[1] *Vide* "Statement of the Transvaal Indian Case- Footnote to the Statement", July 16, 1909.

[2] *Vide* "Extract from Letter to S. A. B. I. Committee", after October 16, 1910.

wanting even so. The stalwarts who held to their posts were equal to the service required of them.

Thus day by day the trial grew more and more severe for the Indians. Government became more and more violent in proportion to the strength put forth by the community. There are always special prisons where dangerous prisoners or prisoners whom Government wants to bend are kept, and so there were in the Transvaal. One of these was the Diepkloof Convict Prison, where there was a harsh jailer, and where the labour exacted from prisoners was also hard. And yet there were Indians who successfully performed their allotted task. But though they were prepared to work, they would not put up with the insult offered to them by the jailer and therefore went on hunger-strike. They solemnly declared that they would take no food until either the jailer was removed from the prison, or else they themselves were transferred to another prison. This was a perfectly legitimate strike. The strikers were quite honest and not likely to take food secretly. The reader must remember that there was not much room in the Transvaal for such public agitation as a case of this nature would evoke in India. Again, jail regulations in the Transvaal were particularly drastic. Outsiders did not seek interviews with prisoners even on occasions of this nature. A satyagrahi, when once he found himself in jail, had generally to shift for himself. The struggle was on behalf of the poor and was conducted as a poor men's movement. And therefore the vow which these strikers took was fraught with great risk. However, they were firm and succeeded in getting themselves transferred to another prison after a seven days' fast. As hunger-strikes were a rarity in those days, these satyagrahis are entitled to special credit as pioneers (November, 1910).

CHAPTER XXXII

A SECOND DEPUTATION

Thus the satyagrahis were being imprisoned or deported. There was sometimes a lull and then a storm, but both the partieshad somewhat weakened. The Government saw that they could not hope to subdue the satyagrahi stalwarts by sending them to jail, and the policy of deportations had only put themselves in a false position. The Government also lost some cases which were taken to the courts. The Indians on their part were not in a position to put up a strong fight. There was not even a sufficient number of satyagrahis for the purpose. Some Indians were warweary, while others had become

entirely defeatist and therefore looked upon the staunch satyagrahis as so many fools. The 'fools' however knew themselves to be wise and had full faith in God, in their cause and in the righteousness of the means they had selected to promote it. They were confident that great is Truth and it shall prevail in the end.

Meanwhile, there was continuous movement in South African politics. The Boers and the British were anxious to secure a higher status by effecting a union of the various Colonies in the sub-continent. General Hertzog stood for a total breach of the British connection while others preferred to keep up a nominal association with the British Empire. Englishmen would never agree to a total secession, and any higher status in view could only be attained through the British Parliament. The Boers and the British in South Africa therefore decided that a deputation should visit England on their behalf and present their case before the British Cabinet.

The Indians observed that in case of a union of the Colonies their last state would be worse than their first. All the Colonies were ever desirous of suppressing the Indians, and it was clear in view of their anti-Indian tendency that it would go very hard with the community when they came closer together. In order that not a single avenue might remain unexplored, the Indians resolved to send once again a deputation to England, although there was every likelihood of their small voice being drowned in the loud roar of British and Boer lions. On this occasion Sheth Haji Habib, a Memon gentleman from Porbandar, was appointed as my colleague on the deputation. The Sheth carried on a long established trade in the Transvaal andwas a man of wide experience. He had not received English education, yet he easily understood English, Dutch, Zulu and other languages. His sympathies were with the satyagrahis but he could not be described as a full satyagrahi himself. Mr. Merriman, the veteran statesman of South Africa, was our fellow passenger on board s.s. *Kenilworth Castle*, which took us to England, leaving Cape Townon June 23, 1909. He was going with a view to the unificationof the Colonies. General Smuts and others were already in England. A separate deputation of the Indians in Natal also visited England about this time in connection with their special grievances.

At this time Lord Crewe was Secretary of State for the Colonies and Lord Morley Secretary of State for India. There were many discussions, and we interviewed a large number of people. There was

hardly a journalist or member of either House whom it was possible to meet but whom we did not meet. Lord Ampthill rendered us invaluable help. He used to meet Mr. Merriman, General Botha and others and at last he brought a message from the General. Said he: "General Botha appreciates your feelings in the matter, and is willing to grant your minor demands. But he is not ready to repeal the Asiatic Act or to amend the Immigrants Restriction Act. He also refuses to remove the colour bar which has been set up in the law of the land. To maintain the racial bar is a matter of principle with the General and even if he felt like doing away with it the South African Europeans would never listen to him. General Smuts is of the same mind as General Botha, and this is their final decision and final offer. If you ask for more you will only be inviting trouble for yourself as well as for your people. Therefore whatever you do, do it after giving due consideration to this attitude of the Boer leaders. General Botha has asked me to tell you this and give you an idea of your responsibility."

And after delivering the message Lord Ampthill said, "You see that General Botha concedes all your practical demands, and in this work-a-day world we must always give and take. We cannot have everything that we desire. I would therefore strongly advise you to close with this offer. If you wish to fight for principle's sake, you may do so later on. You and the Sheth think over this, and let me have your reply at your convenience."

Upon hearing this I looked to Sheth Haji Habib, who said, "Tell him from me that I accept General Botha's offer on behalf of the conciliation party. If he makes these concessions, we will be satisfied for the present and later on struggle for principle. I do not like the community to suffer any more. The party I represent constitutes the majority of the community, and it also holds the major portion of the community's wealth."

I translated the Sheth's sentences word by word, and then on behalf of the satyagrahis I said: "We are both highly obliged to youfor the trouble you have taken. My colleague is right when he says that he represents a numerically and financially stronger section. The Indians for whom I speak are comparatively poor and inferior in numbers, but they are resolute unto death. They are fighting not only for practical relief but for principle as well. If they must give up either of the two, they will jettison the former and fight for the latter. We

have an idea of General Botha's might, but we attach still greater weight to our pledge, and therefore we are ready to face the worst in the act of abiding by it. We will be patient in the confidence that if we stick to our solemn resolution, God in Whose name we have made it will see to its fulfilment.

"I can grasp your position fully. You have done much for us. We will not take it ill if you now withhold your support from a handful of satyagrahis. Nor will we forget the debt of gratitude under which you have laid us. But we trust that you will excuse us for our inability to accept your advice. You may certainly tell General Botha how the Sheth and myself have received his offer and inform him that the satyagrahis though in a minority will observe their pledge and hope in the end to soften his heart by their self-suffering and to induce him to repeal the Asiatic Act."

Lord Ampthill replied:

"You must not suppose that I will give you up. I too must play the gentleman's part. Englishmen are not willing at once to relinquish any task they have undertaken. Yours is a righteous struggle, and you are fighting with clean weapons. How can I possibly give you up? But you can realize my delicate position. The suffering, if any, must be borne by you alone, and therefore it is my duty to advise you to accept any settlement possible in the circumstances. But if you, who have to suffer, are prepared to undergo any amount of suffering for principle's sake, I must not only not come in your way but even congratulate you. I will therefore continue as President of your Committee and help you to the best of my ability. But you must remember that I am but a junior member of the House of Lords, and do not command much influence. However, you may rest assured that what little influence I possess will be continually exerted on your behalf."

We were both pleased to hear these words of encouragement.

One delightful feature of this interview has perhaps not escaped the reader.[1] As I have already observed Sheth Haji Habib and myself held divergent views, and yet there was such friendshipand mutual confidence between us, that the Sheth did not hesitate to communicate his difference of opinion through me. He relied upon me to present his case to Lord Ampthill all right.

[1] The original has: "has perhaps escaped the reader".

I will close this chapter with a not quite relevant paragraph. During my stay in England I had occasion to talk with many Indian anarchists. My booklet *Indian Home Rule*[1] written during my return voyage to South Africa on board s.s. *Kildonan Castle* (November, 1909) and published soon afterwards in *Indian Opinion*, had its birth from the necessity of having to meet their arguments as well as to solve the difficulties of Indians in South Africa who held similar views. I had also discussed the main points of the book with Lord Ampthill in order that he might not feel for one moment that I had misused his name and his help for my work in South Africa by suppressing my views.[2] This discussion with Lord Ampthill has always remained imprinted on my memory. He found time to meet me in spite of illness in his family and, although he did not agree with my views as expressed in *Hind Swaraj*, he accorded his support to our struggle till the last, and my relations with him were always cordial.

CHAPTER XXXIII

TOLSTOY FARM—I

The deputation which now returned from England did not bring good news. But I did not mind what conclusions the community would draw from our conversations with Lort Ampthill. I knew who would stand by us till the end. My ideas about satyagraha had now matured and I had realized its universality as well as its excellence. I was therefore perfectly at ease. Hind Swaraj was written in order to demonstrate the sublimity of satyagraha and that book is a true measure of my faith in its efficacy. I was perfectly indifferent to the numerical strength of the fighters on our side.

But I was not free from anxiety on the score of finance. It was indeed hard to prosecute a long, protracted struggle without funds. I did not realize then as clearly as I do now that a struggle can be carried on without funds, that money very often spoils a righteous fight and that God never gives a satyagrahi or *mumukshu*[3] anything beyond his strict needs. But I had faith in God Who did not even then desert me but raised me from the slough of despondency. If on the

[1] *Vide* "Hind Swaraj", November 22, 1909.

[2] For Gandhiji's letter conveying to Lord Ampthill his views on the nationalist movement, modern civilization, etc., *vide* "Letter to Lord Ampthill", October 30, 1909.

[3] Aspirant for *moksha* or liberation

one hand I had to tell the Indians on our landing in South Africa that our mission had failed, on the other hand God relieved me from the financial difficulty. As I set my foot in Cape Town I received a cable from England that Mr. (afterwards Sir) Ratanji Jamshedji Tata had given Rs. 25,000 to the satyagraha funds.[1] This sum amply sufficed for our immediate needs and we forged ahead.

But this or even the largest possible gift of money could not by itself help forward a satyagraha struggle, a fight on behalf of Truth consisting chiefly in self-purification and self-reliance. A satyagraha struggle is impossible without capital in the shape of character. As a splendid palace deserted by its inmates looks like a ruin, so does a man without character, all his material belongings notwithstanding. The satyagrahis now saw that no one could tell how long the struggle would last. On the one hand there were the Boer Generals determined not to yield even an inch of ground and on the other there was a handful of satyagrahis pledged to fight unto death or victory. It was like a war between ants and the elephant who could crush thousands of them under each of his feet. The satyagrahis could not impose a time limit upon their satyagraha. Whether it lasted one year or many, it was all the same to them. For them the struggle itself was victory. Fighting meant imprisonment or deportation for them. But what about their families in the meanwhile? No one would engage as an employee a man who was constantly going to jail and, when he was released, how was he to maintain himself as well as those dependent on him? Where was he to lodge and where was his house rent to come from? Even a satyagrahi may be excused if he feels troubled at heart from want of his daily bread. There cannot be many in the world who would fight the good fight in spite of being compelled to condemn their nearest and dearest to the same starvation which they suffered in their own person.

Till now the families of jail-going satyagrahis were maintained by a system of monthly allowances in cash according to their need.[2] It would not have done to grant an equal sum to all. A satyagrahi who had a family of five persons dependent upon him could not be placed on a par with another who was a *brahmachari*

[1] *Vide* "Cable to G. K. Gokhale" & "Interview to Cape Argus", November 30, 1909 and "Tata's Gift", December 11, 1909.

[2] The original adds: "A particle for the ant and a *haro* (weight equal to six maunds) for the elephant."

without any family responsibilities. Nor was it possible to recruit only *brahmacharis* for our 'army'. The principle generally observed was, that each family was asked to name the minimum amount adequate to its needs and was paid accordingly on trust. There was considerable room here for fraud, of which some rogues did not fail to take advantage. Others who were honest but who were accustomed to live in a particular style naturally expected such help as would enable them to keep it up. I saw that at this rate the movement could not be conducted for any length of time. There was always the risk of injustice being done to the deserving, and undue advantage being taken by the unscrupulous. There was only one solution for this difficulty, namely, that all the families should be kept at one place and should become members of a sort of co-operative commonwealth. Thus there would be no scope for fraud, nor would there be injustice to any. Public funds would be largely saved and the families of satyagrahis would be trained to live a new and simple life in harmony with one another. Indians belonging to various provinces and professing divers faiths would have an opportunity of living together.

But where was the place suitable for a settlement of this nature? To live in a city would have been like straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel. The house rent alone would perhaps amount to the same sum as the food bill, and it would not be easy to live a simple life amidst the varied distractions of a city. Again in a city it would be impossible to find a place where many families could prosecute some useful industry in their own homes. It was therefore clear that the place selected should be neither too far from nor too near a city. There was of course Phoenix, where *Indian Opinion* was being printed and where there was also some cultivation being carried on. Phoenix was also convenient in many other ways, but it was three hundred miles away from Johannesburg and to be reached by a journey of thirty hours. It was therefore difficult and expensive to take the families such a distance and bring them back again. Besides, the families would not be ready to leave their homes for such a far of place, and even if they were ready it seemed impossible to send them as well as the satyagrahi prisoners on their release.[1]

The place required then must be in the Transvaal and near

[1] A year later Gandhiji had to face the possibility of satyagrahis leaning such a settlement after the struggle; *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", March 9, 1911.

Johannesburg. Mr. Kallenbach, whose acquaintance the reader has already made, bought a farm of about 1,100 acres and gave the use of it to satyagrahis free of any rent or charge (May 30, 1910).[1] Upon the Farm there were nearly one thousand fruit-bearing trees and a small house at the foot of a hill with accommodation for half-a-dozen persons. Water was supplied from two wells as well as from a spring. The nearest railway station, Lawley, was about a mile from the farm and Johannesburg was twenty-one miles distant. We decided to build houses upon this farm and to invite the families of satyagrahis to settle there.

CHAPTER XXXIV

TOLSTOY FARM—II

Upon the Farm oranges, apricots and plums grew in such abundance that during the season the satyagrahis could have their fill of the fruits and yet have a surplus.

The spring was about 500 yards away from our quarters, and the water had to be fetched on carrying poles.

Here we insisted that we should not have any servants either for the household work or, as far as might be, even for the farming and building operations. Everything therefore from cooking to scavenging was done with our own hands. As regards accommodation for families, we resolved from the first that the men and women should be housed separately. The houses therefore were to be built in two separate blocks, each at some distance from the other. For the time it was considered sufficient to provide accommodation for ten women and sixty men. Then again we had to erect a house for Mr. Kallenbach and by its side a school house, as well as a workshop for carpentry, shoemaking, etc.

The settlers hailed from Gujarat, Tamilnad, Andhradesh and North India, and there were Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis and Christians among them. About forty of them were young men, two or three old men, five women and twenty to thirty children of whom four or five were girls.

The Christian and other women were meat-eaters. Mr. Kallenbach and I thought it desirable to exclude meat from the Farm. But how could we ask people who had no scruples in the matter, who had been habituated to taking meat since childhood and whowere

[1] For the letter making the offer and Gandhiji's reply, *vide* "Letter to H. Kallenbach", May 30, 1910 and "Kallenbach's Gift", June 11, 1910.

coming over here in their days of adversity, to give up meat even temporarily? But if they were given meat, would not that swell our cost of living? Again, should those who were accustomedto taking beef be given that too? How many separate kitchens must be run in that case? What was my duty on this point? Having been instrumental in giving monetary help to these families, I had already given my support to meat-eating as well as beef-eating. If I made a rule that meat-eaters should not be helped, I would have to prosecute the satyagraha struggle through vegetarians only, which was absurd as the movement had been organized on behalf of all classes of Indians. I did not take long clearly to visualize my duty in these circumstances. If the Christians and Mussalmans asked even for beef, that too must be provided for them. To refuse them admission to the Farm was absolutely out of the question.

But where love is, there God is also. The Mussalman friends had already granted me permission to have a purely vegetarian kitchen. I had now to approach Christian sisters whose husbands or sons were in jail. I had often come in such intimate contact with the Christian friends who were now in jail and who had on similar occasions consented to having a vegetarian dietary. But this was the first time that I had to deal at close quarters with their families in their absence. I represented to the sisters the difficulty of housing accommodation as well as of finance and my own deep-rooted sentiment in the matter. At the same time I assured them that even beef would be provied for them if they wanted it. The sisters kindly consented to have no meat, and the cooking department was placed in their charge. I with or without another man was detailed to assist them. My presence acted as a check upon petty bickerings. The food was to be the simplest possible. The time as well as the number of meals was fixed. There was to be one single kitchen, and all were to dine in a single row. Everyone was to see to the cleaning of his own dish and other things. The common pots were to be cleaned by different parties in turn. I must state that satyagrahis lived on Tolstoy Farm for a long time, but neither the women nor the men ever asked for meat.[1] Drink, smoking, etc., were of course totally prohibited.

As I have already stated, we wanted to be self-reliant as far as possible even in erecting buildings. Our architect was Mr.

[1] Even the children readily accepted this vegetarianism; *vide* An Autobiography, Pt. IV, Ch. XXXI.

Kallenbach of course, and he got hold of a European mason. A Gujarati carpenter, Narayandas Damania, volunteered his services free of charge and brought other carpenters to work at reduced rates. As regards unskilled labour, the settlers worked withtheir own hands. Some of us who had supple limbs literally worked wonders. A fine satyagrahi of the name of Vihari did half of the carpenter's work. The lion-like Thambi Naidoo was in charge of sanitation and marketing for which he had to go to Johannesburg.

One of the settlers was Pragji Khandubhai Desai who had never been accustomed to discomfort all his life, but who had here to put up with bitter cold, a hot sun and sharp rains. In the beginning we lived in tents for about two months while the buildings, were under construction. The structures were all of corrugated iron and therefore did not take long to raise. The timber too could be had ready made in all sizes required. All we had to do was to cut it to measure. There were not many doors or windows to be prepared. Hence it was that quite a number of buildings could be erected within such a short space of time. But all this labour was a heavy tax on Pragji's physical constitution. The work on the Farm was certainly harder than that in jail. One day Pragji actually fainted, thanks to fatigue and heat. But he was not the man to give in. He fully trained up his body here, and in the end he stood abreast as a good worker with the best of us.

Then there was Joseph Royeppen, a barrister free from a barrister's pride. He could not undertake very hard work. It was difficult for him to take down loads from the railway train and to haul them on to the cart, but he did it as best he could.

The weak became strong on Tolstoy Farm and labour proved to be a tonic for all.

Everyone had to go to Johannesburg on some errand or other. Children liked to go there just for the fun of it. I also had to go there on business. We therefore made a rule that we could go there by rail only on the public business of our little commonwealth, and then too travel third class. Anyone who wanted to go on a pleasure trip must go on foot, and carry home-made provisions with him. No one might spend anything on his food in the city. Had it not been for these drastic rules, the money saved by living in a rural locality would have been wasted in railway fares and city picnics. The provisions carried were of the simplest home-baked bread made from coarse wheat flour

ground at home from which the bran was not removed, groundnut butter also prepared at home, and home-made marmalade. We had purchased an iron hand-mill for grinding wheat. Groundnut butter was made by roasting and then grinding groundnuts, and was four times cheaper than ordinary butter. As for the oranges, we had plenty of them on the Farm. We scarcely used cow's milk on the Farm and generally managed with condensed milk.

But to return to the trips. Anyone who wished to go to Johannesburg went there on foot once or twice a week and returned the same day. As I have already stated, it was a journey of 21 miles and back. We saved hundreds of rupees by this one rule of going on foot, and those who thus went walking were much benefited. Some newly acquired the habit of walking. The general practice was that the sojourner should rise at two o'clock and start at half past two. He would reach Johannesburg in six to seven hours. The record for the minimum time taken on the journey was 4 hours 18 minutes.

The reader must not imagine that this discipline operated upon the settlers at all as a hardship. On the other hand it was accepted cheerfully. It would have been impossible to have a single settler if force had been employed. The youngsters thoroughly enjoyed the work on the Farm and the errands to the city. It was difficult to prevent them from playing their pranks while engaged in work. No more work was given to them than what they willingly and cheerfully rendered, and I never found that the work thus done was unsatisfactory either in quantity or in quality.

A paragraph may be devoted to our sanitary arrangements. In spite of the large number of settlers, one could not find refuse or dirt anywhere on the Farm. All rubbish was buried in trenches dug for the purpose. No water was permitted to be thrown on the roads. All waste water was collected in buckets and used to water the trees. Leavings of food and vegetable refuse were utilized as manure. A square pit one foot and a half deep was sunk near the house to receive the night-soil, which was fully covered with the excavated earth and which therefore did not give out any smell. There were no flies, and no one would imagine that night-soil had been buried there. We were thus not only spared a nuisance, but the source of possible nuisance was converted into invaluable manure for the Farm. If night-soil was properly utilized, we would get manure worth lakhs of rupees and also secure immunity from a number of diseases. By our bad habits we

spoil our sacred river banks and furnish excellent breeding grounds for flies with the result that the very flies which through our criminal negligence settle upon uncovered night-soil defile our bodies after we have bathed. A small spadeis the means of salvation from a great nuisance. Leaving night-soil, cleaning the nose or spitting on the road is a sin against God aswell as humanity, and betrays a sad want of consideration for others. The man who does not cover his waste deserves a heavy penalty even if he lives in a forest.

The work before us was to make the Farm a busy hive of industry, thus to save money and in the end to make the families self-supporting. If we achieved this goal, we could battle with the Transvaal Government for an indefinite period. We had to spend some money on shoes. The use of shoes in a hot climate is harmful, as all the perspiration is absorbed by the feet which thus grow tender. No socks were needed in the Transvaal as in India, but we thought that the feet must be protected against thorns, stones and the like. We therefore determined to learn to make sandals. There is at Mariann Hill near Pinetown a monastery of German Catholic monks called the Trappists, where industries of this nature are carried on. Mr. Kallenbach went there and acquired the art of making sandals. After he returned, he taught it to me and I in my turn to other workers. Thus several young men learnt how to manufacture sandals, and we commenced selling them to friends. I need scarcely say that many of my pupils easily surpassed me in the art. Another handicraft introduced was that of carpentry. Having founded a sort of village we needed all manner of things large and small from benches to boxes, and we made them all ourselves. The selfless carpenters already referred to helped us for several months. Mr. Kallenbach was the head of the carpentry department, and as such every moment gave us the evidence of his mastery and exactitude.

A school was indispensable for the youngsters and the children.[1] This was the most difficult of our tasks and we never achieved complete success in this matter till the very last. The burden of teaching work was largely borne by Mr. Kallenbach and myself.[2] The school could be held only after noon, when both of us were

[1] This was opened in June, 1910; *vide* "Johannesburg", June 27, 1910.

[2] Cf., "Public Letter to Ratan J. Tata", April 1, 1912, where Gandhiji mentions, Me&, Desai and later Jamnadas Gandhi as the people assisting him; *vide* also *An Autobiography*, Pt. IV. Ch. XXXII and XXXIII.

thoroughly exhausted by our morning labour, and so were our pupils. The teachers therefore would often be dozing as well as the taught. We would sprinkle water on the eyes, and by playing with the children try to pull them up and to pull up ourselves, but sometimes in vain. The body peremptorily demanded rest and would not take a denial. But this was only one and the leastof our many difficulties. For the classes were conducted inspite of these dozings. What were we to teach pupils who spoke one of the languages, Gujarati, Tamil or Telugu, and how? I was anxious to make these languages the medium of instruction. I knew a little Tamil but no Telugu. What could one teacher do in these circumstances? I tried to use some of the young men as teachers, but the experiment was not altogether a success. Pragji's services were of course requisitioned. Some of the youngsters were very mischievous and lazy and were always on bad terms with their books. A teacher could not expect to make much headway with such pupils. Again we could not be regular in our teaching. Business sometimes took Mr. Kallenbach as well as me to Johannesburg.

Religious teaching presented another tough problem.[1] I would like Mussalmans to read the Koran, and Parsis the Avesta. There was one Khoja child, whose father had laid upon me the responsibility of teaching him a small *pothi*[2] of that sect. I collected books bearing on Islam and Zoroastrianism. I wrote out the fundamental doctrines of Hinduism according to my lights,—I forget now whether it was for my own children or for the Tolstoy Farmers. If this document were now in my possession, I should have inserted it here as a landmark in my spiritual progress. But I have thrown away or burnt many such things in my life. I destroyed such papers, as I felt it was not necessary to preserve them or as the scope of my activities was extended. I am not sorry for this, as to have presented all of them would have been burdensome and expensive. I should have been compelled to keep cabinets and boxes, which would have been an eyesore to one who has taken the vow of poverty.

But this teaching experiment was not fruitless. The children were saved from the infection of intolerance, and learnt to view one another's religions and customs with a large-hearted charity. They learnt how to live together like blood-brothers. They imbibed the lessons of mutual service, courtesy and industry. And from what little

[1] *Vide* An Autobiography, Pt. IV, Ch. XXXIV.

[2] Book

I know about the later activities of some of the children on Tolstoy Farm, I am certain that the education which they received there has not been in vain. Even if imperfect, it was a thoughtful and religious experiment, and among the sweetest reminiscences of Tolstoy Farm, the reminiscences of this teaching experiment are no less sweet than the rest.

But another chapter must be devoted to these reminiscences.

CHAPTER XXXV

TOLSTOY FARM—III

In this chapter I propose to string together a number of Tolstoy Farm reminiscences which are rather disjointed and for which therefore I must crave the reader's indulgence.

A teacher hardly ever had to teach the kind of heterogeneous class that fell to my lot, containing as it did pupils of all ages and both the sexes, from boys and girls of about seven years of age to young men of twenty and young girls 12 or 13 years old. Some of the boys were wild and mischievous.

What was I to teach this ill-assorted group? How was I to be all things to all pupils? Again in what language should I talk to all of them? The Tamil and Telugu children knew their own mother tongue or English and a little Dutch. I could speak to them only in English. I divided the class into two sections, the Gujarati section to be talked to in Gujarati and the rest in English. As the principal part of the teaching, I arranged to tell or read to them some interesting stories. I also proposed to bring them into close mutual contact and to lead them to cultivate a spirit of friendship and service. Then there was to be imparted some general knowledge of history and geography and in some cases of arithmetic. Writing was also taught, and so were some *bhajans* which formed part of our prayers, and to which therefore I tried to attract the Tamil children as well.

The boys and girls met freely. My experiment of co-education on Tolstoy Farm was the most fearless of its type. I dare not today allow, or train children to enjoy, the liberty which I had granted the Tolstoy Farm class. I have often felt that my mind then used to be more innocent than it is now, and that was due perhaps to my ignorance. Since then I have had bitter experiences, and have sometimes burnt my fingers badly. Persons whom I took to be thoroughly innocent have turned out corrupt. I have observed the

roots of evil deep down in my own nature; and timidity has claimed me for its own.

I do not repent having made the experiment. My conscience bears witness that it did not do any harm. But as a child who has burnt himself with hot milk blows even into whey, my present attitude is one of extra caution.

A man cannot borrow faith or courage from others. The doubter is marked out for destruction, as the *Gita* puts it. My faith and courage were at their highest in Tolstoy Farm. I have been praying to God to permit me to re-attain that height, but theprayer has not yet been heard, for the number of such suppliants before the Great White Throne is legion. The only consolation is that God has as many ears as there are suppliants. I therefore repose full faith in Him and know that my prayer will be accepted when I have fitted myself for such grace.

This was my experiment. I sent the boys reputed to be mischievous and the innocent young girls to bathe in the same spot at the same time. I had fully explained the duty of self-restraint to the children, who were all familiar with my satyagraha doctrine. I knew, and so did the children, that I loved them with a mother's love. The reader will remember the spring at some distance from the kitchen. Was it folly to let the children meet there for bath and yet to expect them to be innocent? My eye always followed the girls as a mother's eye would follow a daughter. The time was fixed when all the boys and all the girls went together for a bath. There was an element of safety in the fact that they went in a body. Solitude was always avoided. Generally I also would be at the spring at the same time.

All of us slept in an open verandah. The boys and the girls would spread themselves around me. There was hardly a distance of three feet between any two beds. Some care was exercised in arranging the order of the beds, but any amount of such care would have been futile in the case of a wicked mind. I now see that God alone safeguarded the honour of these boys and girls. I made the experiment from a belief that boys and girls could thus live together without harm, and the parents with their boundless faith in me allowed me to make it.

One day one of the young men made fun of two girls, and the girls themselves or some child brought me the information. The news made me tremble. I made inquiries and found that the report was true.

I remonstrated with the young men, but that was not enough. I wished the two girls to have some sign on their person as a warning to every young man that no evil eye might be cast upon them, and as a lesson to every girl that no one dare assail their purity. The passionate Ravana could not so much as touch Sita with evil intent while Rama was thousands of miles away. What mark should the girls bear so as to give them a sense of security and at the same time to sterilize the sinner's eye? This question kept me awake for the night. In the morning I gently suggested to the girls that they might let me cut offtheir fine long hair. On the Farm we shaved and cut the hair of one another, and we therefore kept scissors and clipping machinesAt first the girls would not listen to me. I had already explained the situation to the elderly women who could not bear to think of my suggestion but yet quite understood my motive, and they to had finally accorded their support to me. They were both of them noble girls. One of them is—alas!—now no more. She was very bright and intelligent. The other is living and the mistress of a household of her own. They came round after all, and at once the very hand that is narrating this incident set to cut off their hair. And afterwards I analysed and explained my procedure before my class, with excellent results. I never heard of a joke again. The girls in question did not lose in any case, goodness knows how much they gained. I hoped the young men still remember this incident and keep their eyes from sin.

Experiments such as I have placed on record are not meant for imitation. Any teacher who imitated them would be incurring grave risk. I have here taken note of them only to show how far a man can go in certain circumstances and to stress the purity of the satyagraha struggle. This very purity was a guarantee of its victory. Before launching on such experiments a teacher has to be both father and mother to his pupils and to be prepared for all eventualities whatever, and only the hardest penance can fit him to conduct them.

This act of mine was not without its effect on the entire life of the settlers on the Farm. As we had intended to cut down expenses to the barest minimum, we changed our dress also. In the cities the Indian men including the satyagrahis put on European dress. Such elaborate clothing was not needed on the Farm. We had all become labourers and therefore put on labourers' dress but in the European style, *viz.*, working men's trousers and shirts, which were imitated from prisoners' uniform. We all used cheap trousers and shirts which could

be had ready-made out of coarse blue cloth. Most of the ladies were good hands at sewing and took charge of the tailoring department.

As for food we generally had rice, dal, vegetable and *rotlis*, with porridge occasionally added. All this was served in a singledish which was not really a dish, but a kind of bowl such as is supplied to prisoners in jail. We had made wooden spoons on the Farm ourselves. There were three meals in the day. We had bread and home-made wheaten "coffee"[1] at six o'clock in the morning, rice, dal and vegetable at eleven, and wheat pap and milk, or breadand "coffee" at half past five in the evening. After the eveningmeal we had prayers at seven or half past seven. At prayerswe sang *bhajans* and sometimes had readings from the *Ramayana* or books on Islam. The *bhajans* were in English, Hindi and Gujarati. Sometimes we had one *bhajan* from each of the three languages, and sometimes only one. Everyone retired at 9 o'clock.

Many observed the *Ekadashi* fast on the Farm. We were joined there by Shri P. K. Kotval who had much experience of fasting, and some of us followed him to keep the *chaturmas*. Ramzan also arrived in the meanwhile. There were Mussalman youngsters among us, and we felt we must encourage them to keep the fasts. We arranged for them to have meals in the evening as well as in the early morning. Porridge, etc., were prepared for them in the evening. There was no meat of course, nor did anyone ask for it. To keep the Mussalman friends company the rest of us had only one meal a day in the evening. As a rule we finished our evening meal before sunset; so the only difference was that the others finished their supper about when the Mussalman boys commenced theirs. These boys were so courteous that they did not put anyone to extra trouble although they were observing fasts, and the fact that the non-Muslim children supported them in the matter of fasting left a good impression on all. I do not remember that there ever was a quarrel, much less a split, between the Hindu and the Mussalman boys on the score of religion. On the other hand I know that although staunch in their own beliefs, they all treated one another with respect and assisted one another in their respective religious observances.[2]

[1] For a recipe of this wheaten "coffee", *vide* "General Knowledge About Health (-X)", March 8, 1913.

[2] For details, *vide* An Autobiography, Pt. IV, Ch. XXXI.

Although we were living far from the amenities of city life, we did not keep even the commonest appliances against the possible attacks of illness. I had in those days as much faith in the nature-cure of disease as I had in the innocence of children. I felt that there should not be disease as we lived a simple life, but if there was, I was confident of dealing with it. My booklet on health[1] is a note-book of my experiments and of my living faith in those days. I was proud enough to believe that illness for me was out of the question. I held that all kinds of diseases could be cured by earth and water treatment, fasting or changes in diet. There was not a single case of illness on the Farm in which we used drugs or called in a doctor. There was an oldman from North India 70 years of age who suffered from asthma and cough, but who was cured simply by changes in diet and water treatment. But I have now lost the courage, and in view of my two serious illnesses I feel that I have forfeited even the right to make such experiments.

Gokhale arrived[2] in South Africa while we were still living on the Farm. His tour must be described in another chapter, but I will place here on record a half-sweet, half-bitter reminiscence. The reader has now some idea of the sort of life we were leading. There was no cot on the Farm, but we borrowed one for Gokhale. There was no room where he could enjoy full privacy. For sitting accommodation we had nothing beyond the benches in our school. Even so, how could we resist the temptation of bringing Gokhale, in spite of his delicate health, to the Farm? And how could he help seeing it, either? I was foolish enough to imagine that Gokhale would be able to put up with a night's discomfort and to walk about a mile and a half from the station to the Farm. I had asked him beforehand, and he had agreed to everything without bestowing any thought upon it, thanks to his simplicity and overwhelming confidence in me. It rained that day, as fate would have it, and I was not in a position suddenly to make any special arrangement. I have never forgotten the trouble to which I put Gokhale that day in my ignorant affection. The hardship was too much for him to bear and he caught a chill. We could not take him to the kitchen and dining-hall. He had been put up in Mr. Kallenbach's

[1] This appeared as a series of articles in the Gujarati section of *Indian Opinion* under the title "General Knowledge about Health" from January 4, 1913 to March 29, 1913.

[2] This was in October, 1912.

room. His dinner would get cold while we brought it from the kitchen to his room. I prepared special soup, and Kotval special bread for him, but these could not be taken to him hot. We managed as best we could. Gokhale uttered not a syllable, but I understood from his face what a folly I had committed. When Gokhale came to know that all of us slept on the floor, he removed the cot which had been brought for him and had his own bed too spread on the floor. This whole night was a night of repentance for me. Gokhale had a rule in life which seemed to me a bad rule. He would not permit anyone except a servant to wait upon him. He had no servant with him during this tour. Mr. Kallenbach and I entreated him to let us massage his feet. But he would not let us even touch him, and half jocularly, half angrily said: "You all seem to think that you have been born to suffer hardships and discomforts, and people like myself have been born to be pampered by you. You must suffer today the punishment for thisextremism of yours. I will not let you even touch me. Do you think that you will go out to attend to nature's needs and at the same time keep a commode for me? I will bear any amount of hardship but I will humble your pride." These words were to us like a thunderbolt, and deeply grieved Mr. Kallenbach and me. The only consolation was that Gokhale wore a smile on his face all the while. Krishna no doubt was often deeply offended by Arjuna, "unknowing of His majesty and careless in the fondness of his love," but he soon forgot such incidents. Gokhale remembered only our will to serve, though he did not accord us the high privilege of serving him. The deeply affectionate letter he wrote me from Mombasa is still imprinted upon my heart. Gokhale bore everything cheerfully, but till the last never accepted the service which it was in our power to render. He had to take the food, etc., from our hands, but that he could not help.

The next morning he allowed no rest either to himself or to us. He corrected all his speeches which we proposed to publish in book-form. When he had to write anything, he was in the habit of walking to and fro and thinking it out. He had to write a small letter and I thought that he would soon have done with it. But no. As I twitted him upon it, he read me a little homily: "You do not know my ways of life. I will not do even the least little thing in a hurry. I will think about it and consider the central idea. I will next deliberate as to the language suited to the subject and then set to write. If everyone did as I do, what a huge saving of time would there be? And the nation would be saved from the avalanche of half-baked ideas which

now threaten to overwhelm her."

As the reminiscences of Tolstoy Farm would be incomplete without an account of Gokhale's visit thereto, so would they be if I omitted to say something about the character and conduct of Mr. Kallenbach. It was really a wonder how he lived on Tolstoy Farm among our people as if he were one of us. Gokhale was not the man to be attracted by ordinary things. But even he felt strongly drawn to the revolutionary change in Kallenbach's life. Kallenbach had been brought up in the lap of luxury and had never known what privation was. In fact, indulgence had been his religion. He had had his fill of all the pleasures of life, and he had never hesitated to secure for his comfort everything that money could buy.

It was no ordinary thing for such a man to live, move and have his being on Tolstoy Farm, and to become one with the Indian settlers. This was an agreeable surprise for the Indians. Some Europeans classed Kallenbach either as a fool or a lunatic, while others honoured him for his spirit of renunciation. Kallenbach never felt his renunciation to be painful. In fact he enjoyed it even more than he had enjoyed the pleasures of life before. He would be transported with rapture while describing the bliss of a simple life, and for a moment his hearers would be tempted to go in for it. He mixed so lovingly with the young as well as the old, that separation from him even for a short time left a clearly felt void in their lives. Mr. Kallenbach was very fond of fruit trees and therefore he reserved gardening as his own portfolio. Every morning he would engage children as well as grown-up people in tending the fruit trees. He would make them work hard, but he had such a cheerful temper and smiling face, that everyone loved to work with him. Whenever a party of tourists left the Farm for Johannesburg at 2 a.m., Mr. Kallenbach would always be one of them.

Mr. Kallenbach and I had frequent talks on religion, which usually centred on fundamentals like non-violence or love, truth and the like. When I said that it was a sin to kill snakes and such other animals, Mr. Kallenbach was shocked to hear it as my numerous other European friends had been. But in the end he admitted the truth of that principle in the abstract. At the very beginning of my intercourse with him, Mr. Kallenbach had seen the propriety and the duty of carrying out in practice every principle of which he was convinced intellectually, and therefore he had been able to effect momentous changes in his life without a moment's sitation.

Now if it was improper to kill serpents and the like, we must cultivate their friendship, thought Mr. Kallenbach. He therefore first collected books on snakes in order to identify different species of reptiles. He there read that not all snakes are poisonous and some of them actually serve as protectors of field-crops. He taught us all to recognize different kinds of snakes and at last tamed a huge cobra which was found on the Farm. Mr. Kallenbach fed it every day with his own hands. I gently argued with him: "Although you do all this in a friendly spirit, your friendliness may not be quite clear to the cobra, especially as your kindness is not unalloyed with fear. Neitheryou nor I have the courage to play with it if it was free, and what we should really cultivate is courage of that stamp. Thereforethough there is friendliness, there is not love in this act of taming the cobra. Our behaviour should be such that the cobra can see through it. We see every day that all animals grasp at once whetherthe other party loves or fears them. Again you do not think the cobra to be venomous, and have imprisoned it in order to study its ways and habits. This is a kind of self-indulgence for which there should be no room in the case of real friendship."

My argument appealed to Mr. Kallenbach, but he could not bring himself all at once to release the cobra. I did not exercise any pressure upon him. I too was taking interest in the life of the cobra, and the children, of course, enjoyed it immensely. No one was allowed to harass the cobra, which however was casting about for some means of escape. Whether the door of the cage was inadvertently left open, or whether the cobra managed to open it, in a couple of days Mr. Kallenbach found the cage empty as he one morning proceeded to call upon his friend. Mr. Kallenbach was glad of it and so was I. But thanks to this taming experiment, snakes became a frequent subject of our talk. Mr. Kallenbach brought to the Farm a poor and disabled German named Albrecht who was so hump-backed that he could not walk without supporting himself on a stick. Albrecht had boundless courage, and being an educated man, took deep interest in recondite problems. He too had become one with the Indian settlers and mixed freely with all. He began fearlessly to play with snakes. He would bring young snakes in his hand and let them play on his palm. If our stay on Tolstoy Farm had been further prolonged, goodness knows what would have been the upshot of Albrecht's adventures.

As a result of these experiments we did not fear snakes as much as we otherwise might have, but it must not be supposed that no one on the Farm feared serpents or that there was a total prohibition against killing them. To have a conviction that there is violence or sin in a certain course of conduct is one thing; to have the power of acting up to that conviction is quite another. A person who fears snakes and who is not ready to resign his own life cannot avoid killing snakes in case of emergency. I remember one such incident, which occurred on the Farm. The reader must already have seen that the Farm was pretty well infested with snakes. There was no human population on the Farm when we occupied it, and it had been in this deserted condition for some time. One day a snake was found in Mr. Kallenbach's own room at such a place that it seemed impossible to drive it away or to catch it. One of the students saw it, and calling me there, asked me what was to be done. He wanted my permission to kill it. He could have killed it without such permission, but the settlers, whether students or others,would not generally take such a step without consulting me. I saw that it was my duty to permit the student to kill the snake, and I permitted him. Even as I am writing this, I do not feel that I did anything wrong in granting the permission. I had not the courage to seize the serpent with the hand or otherwise to remove the danger to the settlers, and I have not cultivated such courage to this day.

Needless to say, there was on the Farm an ebb and flow of satyagrahis, some of whom would be expecting to go to prison while others had been released from it. Once it so happened that there arrived at the Farm two satyagrahis who had been released by the magistrate on personal recognizance and who had to attend the court the next day to receive the sentence. They were engrossed in talk, while time was up for the last train they must catch, and it was a question whether they would succeed in taking that train. They were both young men and good athletes. They ran for all they were worth along with some of us who wanted to see them off. While still on the way, I heard the whistle of the train as it steamed into the station. When there was a second whistle indicating its departure, we had, reached the precincts of the station. The young men increased their speed every moment, and I lagged behind them. The train started. Fortunately the station-master saw them running up and stopped the moving train, thus enabling them to take it after all. I tendered my thanks to the station-master when I reached the station. Two points

emerge out of this incident: first, the eagerness of the satyagrahis in seeking jail and in fulfilling their promises, and second, the sweet relations cultivated by the satyagrahis with the local officers. If the young men had missed that train, they could not have attended the court the next day. No surety had been required of them, nor had they been asked to deposit any money with the court. They had been released only on the word of gentlemen. The satyagrahis had acquired such prestige thatmagistrates did not think it necessary to ask them for bail as they were courting jail. The young satyagrahis therefore were deeply pained at the prospect of missing the train, and ran swift as the wind At the commencement of the struggle satyagrahis were somewhat harassed by officials, and the jail authorities in some places were unduly severe. But as the movement advanced, we found that the bitterness of the officials was softened and in some cases even changed to sweetness. And where there was long continued intercourse with them, they even began to assist us like the station-master

I have referred to. The reader must not imagine thatsatyagrahis bribed these officials in any shape or form in order to secure amenities from them. The satyagrahis never thought of purchasing such irregular facilities. But where facilities were offered through courtesy, they were freely accepted, and the satyagrahis had been enjoying such facilities in many places. If a station-master is ill-disposed, he can harass passengers in a variety of ways, keeping himself all the while within the four corners of the rules and regulations. No complaint can be preferred against such harassment. On the other hand if the official is well disposed, he can grant many facilities without violating the rules. All such facilities we had been able to secure from the stationmaster, Lawley,[1] and that because of the courtesy, the patience and the capacity for self-suffering of the satyagrahis.

It will not perhaps be amiss here to take note of an irrelevant incident. I have been fond for about the last thirty-five years of making experiments in dietetics from the religious, economic and hygienic standpoints. This predilection for food reform still persists. People around me would naturally be influenced by my experiments. Side by side with dietetics, I made experiments in treating diseases

[1] The original adds: “adjacent to the Farm”.

with natural curative agents only such as earth and water and without recourse to drugs. When I practised as a barrister, cordial relations were established with my clients so that we looked upon one another almost as members of the same family. The clients thereforemade me a partner in their joys and sorrows. Some of them sought my advice being familiar with my experiments in nature-cure. Stray patients of this class would sometimes arrive at Tolstoy Farm. One of these was Lutavan, an aged client who first came from North India as an indentured labourer. He was over seventy years old and suffered from chronic asthma and cough. He had given long trials to *vaidyas*' powders and doctors' mixtures. In those days I had boundless faith in the efficacy of my methods of curing disease, and therefore I agreed not indeed to treat him but to try my experiments upon him if he lived on the Farm and observed all my conditions. Lutavan complied with my conditions. One of these was thathe should give up tobacco to which he was strongly addicted. I made him fast for 24 hours. At noon everyday I commenced giving him a Kuhne bath in the sun, as the weather then was not extra warm. For food he had a little rice, some olive oil, honey, and along with honey, porridge and sweet oranges sometimes and at other times grapes and wheaten coffee. Salt and all condiments whatever were avoided. Lutavan slept in the same building as myself but in the inner apartment. For bed everyone was given two blankets, one for spreading and the other for covering purposes, and a wooden pillow. A week passed. There was an accession of energy in Lutavan's body. His asthma and cough gave less trouble, but he had more fits at night than by day. I suspected he was smoking secretly, and I asked him if he did. Lutavan said he did not. A couple of days passed and as still there was no improvement, I determined to watch Lutavan secretly. Everyone slept on the floor, and the place was full of snakes. Mr. Kallenbach had therefore given me an electric torch and kept one himself. I always slept with this torch by my side. One night I resolved to lie in the bed awake. My bed was spread on the verandah just near the door, and Lutavan slept inside but also near the door. Lutavan coughed at midnight, lighted a cigarette and began to smoke. I slowly went up to his bed and switched on the torch. Lutavan understood everything and became nervous. He ceased smoking, stood up and touched my feet. "I have done a great wrong," he said. "I will never smoke again henceforth. I have deceived you. Please excuse me." So saying he almost began to sob. I consoled him and said that it was in his interest not to smoke.

His cough should have been cured according to my calculations, and when I found that he was still suffering from it, I had suspected that he was smoking secretly. Lutavan gave up smoking. His asthma and cough grew less severe in two or three days, and in a month he was perfectly cured. He was now full of vigour and took his leave of us.[1]

The station-master's son, a child of two years, had an attack of typhoid. This gentleman too knew about my curative methods, and sought my advice. On the first day I gave the child no food at all, and from the second day onwards only half a banana well mashed with a spoonful of olive oil and a few drops of sweet orange juice. At night I applied a cold mud poultice to the child's abdomen, and in this case too my treatment was successful. It is possible that the doctor's diagnosis was wrong and it was not a case of typhoid.

I made many such experiments on the Farm, and I do not remember to have failed in even a single case. But today I would not venture to employ the same treatment. I would now shudder to have to give a banana and olive oil in a case of typhoid. In 1918 I had an attack of dysentery myself and I failed to cure it. And I cannot say to this very day, whether it is due to mywant of self-confidence or to the difference in climate that the same treatment which was effective in South Africa is not equally successful in India. But this I know that the home treatment of diseases and the simplicity of our life on Tolstoy Farm were responsible for a saving of at least two to three lakhs of public money. The settlers learned to look upon one another as members of the same family. The satyagrahis secured a pure place of refuge, little scope was left for dishonesty or hypocrisy and the wheat was separated from the tares. The dietetic experiments thus far detailed were made from a hygienic standpoint, but I conducted a most important experiment upon myself which was purely spiritual in its nature.

I had pondered deeply and read widely over the question whether as vegetarians we had any right to take milk. But when I was living on the Farm, some book or newspaper fell into my hands, in which I read about the inhuman treatment accorded to cows in Calcutta in order to extract the last drop of milk from them, and came across a description of the cruel and terrible process of *phuka*. I was

[1] For a reference to Lutavan, *vide* "Fragment of Letter", about October 2, 1911.

once discussing with Mr. Kallenbach the necessity for taking milk, and in course of the discussion, I told him about this horrible practice, pointed out several other spiritual advantages flowing from the rejection of milk, and observed that it was desirable to give up milk if it was possible. Mr. Kallenbach with his usual spirit of a knight-errant was ready at once to launch upon the experiment of doing without milk, as he highly approved of my observations. The same day both he and I gave up milk,[1] and in the end we came to restrict ourselves to a diet of fresh and dried fruit, having eschewed all cooked food as well. I may not here go into the later history of this experiment or tell how it ended, but I may say this, that during five years of a purely fruitarian life I never felt weak, nor did I suffer from any disease. Again during the same period I possessed the fullest capacity for bodily labour, so much so that one day I walked 55 miles on foot, and 40 miles was an ordinary day's journey for me. I am firmly of opinion that this experiment yielded excellent spiritual results. It has always been a matter of regret for me that I was compelled somewhat to modify my fruitarian diet, and if I were free from my political preoccupations, even at this age of my life and at a risk to my body I would revert to it today further to explore its spiritual possibilities. The lack of spiritual insight in doctors and *vaidyas* has also been an obstacle in my path.But I must now close this chapter of pleasant and important reminiscences. Such dangerous experiments could have their place only in a struggle of which self-purification was the very essence. Tolstoy Farm proved to be a centre of spiritual purification and penance for the final campaign. I have serious doubts as to whether the struggle could have been prosecuted for eight years, whether we could have secured larger funds, and whether the thousands of men who participated in the last phase of the struggle would have borne their share in it, if there had been no Tolstoy Farm. Tolstoy Farm was never placed in the limelight, yet an institution which deserved it attracted public sympathy to itself. The Indians saw that the Tolstoy Farmers were doing what they themselves were not prepared to do and what they looked upon in the light of hardship. This public confidence was a great asset to the movement when it was organized afresh on a large scale in 1913. One can never tell whether such assets give an account of themselves, and if yes, when. But I do not entertain, and would ask the reader not to entertain, a shadow of a

[1] Cf. *An Autobiography*, Pt. IV, Ch. XXX.

doubt that such latent assets do in God's good time become patent.

CHAPTER XXXVI

GOKHALE'S TOUR

Thus the satyagrahis were pursuing the even tenor of their life on Tolstoy Farm, and preparing for whatever the future had in store for them. They did not know, nor did they care, when the struggle would end. They were only under one pledge, namely, to refuse submission to the Black Act and to suffer whatever hardships were involved in such disobedience. For a fighter the fight itself is victory for he takes delight in it alone. And as it rests with him to prosecute the fight, he believes that victory or defeat, pleasure or pain, depends upon himself. There is no such word in his dictionary as pain or defeat. In the words of the *Gita* pleasure and pain, victory and defeat are the same to him.

Stray satyagrahis now and then went to jail. But when there was no occasion for going to jail, anyone who observed the external activities of the Farm could hardly believe that satyagrahis wereliving there or that they were preparing for a struggle. When a sceptic happened to visit the Farm, if a friend he would pity us, and if a critic he would censure us. 'These fellows,' he would remark, 'have grown lazy and are therefore eating the bread of idleness in this secluded spot. They are sick of going to jail and are therefore enjoying themselves in this fruit garden away from thedin and roar of cities.' How could it be explained to this critic that a satyagrahi cannot go to jail by violating the moral law, that his very peacefulness and self-restraint constitute his preparation for 'war', and that the satyagrahi, bestowing no thought on human help, relies upon God as his sole refuge? Finally there happened, or God brought to pass, events which no one had expected. Help also arrived which was equally unforeseen. The ordeal came all unexpected and in the end there was achieved a tangible victory which he who ran could read.

I had been requesting Gokhale and other leaders to go to South Africa and to study the condition of the Indian settlers on the spot. But I doubted whether any of them would really come over. Mr. Ritch had been trying to have some Indian leader visit the sub-continent. But who would dare to go when the struggle was at a very low ebb? Gokhale was in England in 1911 . He was a student of the struggle in South Africa. He had initiated debates in the Legislative Council of

India and moved a resolution (February 25, 1910) in favour of prohibiting the recruitment of indentured labour for Natal, which was carried.[1] I was in communication with him all along.[2] He conferred with the Secretary of State for India and informed him of his intention to proceed to South Africa and acquaint himself with the facts of the case at first hand. The minister approved of Gokhale's mission. Gokhale wrote to me asking me to arrange a programme for a six weeks' tour and indicating the latest date when he must leave South Africa. We were simply overjoyed. No Indian leader had been to South Africa before or for that matter to any other place outside India where Indians had emigrated, with a view to examining their condition. We therefore realized the importance of the visit of a great leader like Gokhale and determined to accord him a reception which even princes might envy and to take him to the principal cities of South Africa. Satyagrahis and other Indians alike cheerfully set about making grand preparations of welcome. Europeans were also invited to join and did generally jointhe reception. We also resolved that public meetings should be held in Town Halls wherever possible and the Mayor of the place should generally occupy the chair if he consented to do so. We undertook to decorate the principal stations on the railway line and succeeded in securing the necessary permission in most cases. Such permission is not usually granted. But our grand preparations impressed the authorities, who evinced as much sympathy in the matter as they could. For instance, in Johannesburg alone the decorations at Park Station took us about a fortnight, including as they did a large ornamental arch of welcome designed by Mr. Kallenbach.

In England itself Gokhale had a foretaste of what South Africa was like. The Secretary of State for India had informed the Union Government of Gokhale's high rank, his position in the empire, etc.

[1] For Gandhiji's comment on this resolution, *vide* "The Indian Council and Indentured Labour", March 5, 1910 and "The Johannesburg Municipality and Coloured People", March 5, 1910.

[2] Gandhiji pleaded that Gokhale's visit to South Africa would "bring the people here nearer to India, and it would give me the privilege of so nursing you or to restore you to health"; *vide* "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", October 30, 1911. The invitation was repeated on December 8, 1911. Gokhale announced his intention to visit South Africa in the summer of 1912. For letters relating to the Gokhale's tour, *vide* also "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", January 12, August 4, December 28, 1912 and Appendix "Gokhale's Letter to Gandhiji", July 27, 1912.

But who would think of booking his passage or reserving a good cabin for him? Gokhale had such delicate health that he needed a comfortable cabin where he could enjoy some privacy. The authorities of the Steamship Company roundly stated that there was no such cabin![1] I do not quite remember whether it was Gokhale or some friend of his who informed the India Office about this. A letter was addressed from the India Office to the directors of the Company and the best cabin was placed at Gokhale's disposal while none was available before! Good came out of this initial evil. The captain of the steamer received instructions to treat Gokhale well, and consequently he had a happy and peaceful voyage to South Africa. Gokhale was as jolly and humorous as he was serious. He participated in the various games and amusements on the steamer, and thus became very popular among his fellow passengers. The Union Government offered Gokhale their hospitality during his stay at Pretoria and placed the State railway saloon at his disposal. He consulted me on the point and then accepted the offer.

Gokhale landed at Cape Town on October 22, 1912. His health was very much more delicate than I had expected. Herestricted himself to a particular diet, and he could not endure much fatigue. The programme I had framed was much too heavy for him, and I therefore cut it down as far as possible. Gokhale was ready to go through the whole programme as it originally stood if no modification was possible. I deeply repentedof my folly in drawing up an onerous programme without consulting him. Some changes were made, but much had to be left as it was. I had not grasped the necessity of securing absolute privacy for Gokhale, and I had the greatest difficulty in securing it. Still I must in all humility state in the interests of truth that as I was fond of and proficient in waiting upon the sick and the elderly, I revised all the arrangements as soon as I had realized my folly so as to be able to give Gokhale great privacy and peace. I acted as his secretary throughout the tour. The volunteers, one of whom was Mr. Kallenbach, were wide awake, and I do not think Gokhale underwent any discomfort or hardship for want of

[1] The steamship company had refused to carry Gokhale unless he paid for a whole cabin, "since there might be no European passenger willing to share the apartment with him". *Vide* "Hon. Mr. Gokhale's Visit", October 5, 1912 and Appendix "Gokhale's Letter to Gandhiji", July 27, 1912.

help. It was clear that we should have a great meeting in Cape Town. I have already written about the Schreiners. I requested Senator W. P. Schreiner, the head of that illustrious family, to take the chair on the occasion and he was good enough to consent.[1] There was a big meeting attended by a large number of Indians and Europeans. Mr. Schreiner welcomed Gokhale in well-chosen words and expressed his sympathy with the Indians of South Africa. Gokhale made a speech, concise, full of sound judgment, firm but courteous, which pleased the Indians and fascinated the Europeans. In fact Gokhale won the hearts of the variegated people of South Africa on the very day that he set foot on South African soil.

From Cape Town Gokhale was to go to Johannesburg by a railway journey of two days. The Transvaal was the field of battle. As we went from Cape Town, the first large frontier station of the Transvaal was Klerksdorp. As each of these places had a considerable population of Indians, Gokhale had to stop and attend a meeting at Klerksdorp, as well as at the intermediate stations of Potchefstroom and Krugersdorp, between Klerksdorp and Johanneburg. He therefore left Klerksdorp by a special train. The Mayors of these places presided at the meetings, and at none of the stations did the train halt longer than one or two hours. The train reached Johannesburg punctually to the minute.[2] On the platform there was a dais specially erected for the occasion and covered with rich carpets. Along with other Europeans there was present Mr. Ellis, the Mayor of Johannesburg, who placedhis car at Gokhale's disposal during his stay in the Golden City. An address was presented to Gokhale on the station itself.[3] Addresses had of course been presented to him everywhere. The Johannesburg address was engraved on a solid heart-shaped plate of gold from the Rand mounted on Rhodesian teak. On the plate was a map of India and Ceylon and it was flanked

[1] Cf. "Speech at Cape Town Reception to Gokhale", October 22, 1912. Schreiner was perhaps present at the City Hall reception on October 22, but it was Harry Hands, the Mayor, who presided.

[2] On October 28, 1912; *vide* "British Indian Association's Address to Gokhale". Gandhiji does not here refer to another and prior reception to Gokhale on October 25 and a banquet on October 26 at Kimberley; *vide*, "Speech at Kimberley Meeting", and "Speech at Kimberley Banquet to Gokhale".

[3] This was from the British Indian Association. For this and other addresses, *vide* "British Indian Association's Address to Gokhale" and "Johannesburg Hindus' Address to Gokhale", October 28, 1912.

on either side by two gold tablets, one bearing an illustration of the Taj Mahal and the other a characteristic Indian scene. Indian scenes were also beautifully carved on the woodwork. Introducing all present to Gokhale, reading the address, the reply, and receiving other addresses which were taken as read,—all this did not take more than twenty minutes. The address was short enough to be read in five minutes. Gokhale's reply did not occupy more than another five minutes. The volunteers maintained such excellent order that there were no more persons on the platform than it was expected easily to accommodate. There was no noise. There was a huge crowd outside; yet no one was at all hampered in coming and going.

Gokhale was put up in a fine house belonging to Mr. Kallenbach, perched on a hill-top five miles from Johannesburg. Gokhale liked the place immensely as the scenery there was pleasant, the atmosphere soothing, and the house, though simple, was full of art. A special office was hired in the city for Gokhale to receive all visitors, where there were three rooms, a private chamber for Gokhale, a drawing room, and a waiting room for visitors. Gokhale was taken to make private calls upon some of the distinguished men in the city. A private meeting of leading Europeans was organized so as to give Gokhale a thorough understanding of their standpoint. Besides this a banquet was held in Gokhale's honour to which were invited 400 persons including about 150 Europeans.[1] Indians were admittedby tickets, costing a guinea each, an arrangement which enabledus to meet the expenses of the banquet. The menu was purely vegetarian and there were no wines. The cooking was attended to by volunteers. It is difficult to give an adequate idea of this here. Hindus and Mussalmans in South Africa do not observe restrictions as to interdining. But the vegetarians do not take meat. Some of the Indians were Christians, with whom I was as intimate as with the rest. These Christians are mostly the descendants of indenturedlabourers and many of them make their living by serving in hotels as waiters. It was with the assistance of these latter that culinary arrangements could be made on such a large scale with about 15 Items on the bill of fare. It was a novel and wonderful experience for the Europeans Of South Africa to fit at dinner with so many Indians at the same table, to have a

[1] Gandhiji proposed the toast at this banquet; *ibid*, "Speech at Johannesburg Banquet to Gokhale", October 31, 1912.

purely vegetarian menu and to do without wines altogether. For many of them all three features were new, while two features were new for all.

To this gathering Gokhale addressed his longest and most important speech in South Africa. In preparing this speech he subjected us to a very full examination. He declared that it had been his lifelong practice not to disregard the standpoint of local men and even to try to meet it as far as it was in his power, and therefore he asked me what I would like him to say from my own point of view. I was to put this on paper and undertake not to be offended even if he did not utilize a single word or idea from my draft, which should be neither too short nor too long, and yet which should not omit a single point of any consequence.[1] I may say at once that Gokhale did not make any use of my language at all. Indeed, I would never expect such a master of English language as Gokhale was to take up my phraseology. I cannot even say that Gokhale adopted my ideas. But as he acknowledged the importance of my views, I took it for granted that he must have somehow incorporated my ideas into his utterances. Indeed Gokhale's train of thought was such that one could never tell whether or not any room had there been allowed for one's own ideas. I listened to every speech made by Gokhale, but I do not remember a single occasion when I could have wished that he had not expressed a certain idea or had omitted a certain adjective. The clearness, firmness and urbanity of Gokhale's utterances flowed from his indefatigable labour and unswerving devotion to truth.

In Johannesburg we also had to hold a mass meeting of Indians only. I have always insisted on speaking either in the mother tongue or else in Hindustani, the lingua franca of India, and thanks to this insistence I have had much facility in establishingclose relations with the Indians in South Africa. I was therefore anxious that Gokhale too should speak to the Indians in Hindustani. I was aware of Gokhale's views on the subject. Broken Hindi would not do for him, and therefore he would speak either in Marathi or in English. It seemed artificial to him to speak in Marathi in South Africa and even

[1] The original adds: "Bearing all these conditions in mind, I had to prepare notes for him."

if he did speak in Marathi, his speech would have to be translated into Hindustani for the benefit of Gujarati and North Indian members of the audience. And that being so, where was the harm if he spoke in English? Fortunately for me, I had one argument which Gokhale would accept as conclusive in favour of his making a Marathi speech. There were many Konkani Mussalmans as well as a few Maharashtra Hindus in Johannesburg, all of whom were eager to hear Gokhale speak in Marathi, and who had asked me to request Gokhale to speak in their mother tongue. I told Gokhale that these friends would be highly pleased if he spoke in Marathi and I would translate his Marathi into Hindustani. Gokhale burst into laughter and said, "I have quite fathomed your knowledge of Hindustani, an accomplishment upon which you cannot exactly be congratulated. But now you propose to translate Marathi into Hindustani. May I know where you acquired such profound knowledge of Marathi?" I replied, "What is true of my Hindustani is equally true of my Marathi. I cannot speak a single word of Marathi, but I am confident of gathering the purport of your Marathi speech on a subject with which I am familiar. In any case, you will see that I do not misinterpret you to the people. There are others well versed in Marathi, who could act as your interpreters. But you will not perhaps approve of such arrangement. So please bear with me and do speak in Marathi. I too am desirous of hearing your Marathi speech in common with the Konkani friends." "You will always have your own way," said Gokhale. "And there is no help for me as I am here at your mercy." So saying Gokhale fell in with my suggestion, and from this point onwards right up to Zanzibar he always spoke in Marathi at similar meetings and I served as translator by special appointment to him. I do not know if I was able to bring Gokhale round to the view, that rather than speak in perfect idiomatic English it was more desirable to speak as far as may be in the mother tongue and even in broken ungrammatical Hindi. But I do know that if only to please me he spoke in Marathi in South Africa. After he had made some speeches, I could see that he too was gratified by the results of the experiment. Gokhale by his conduct on many occasions in South Africa showed that there was merit in pleasing one's followers in cases not involving

a question of principle.

CHAPTER XXXVII

GOKHALE'S TOUR (CONCLUDED)

After Johannesburg Gokhale visited Natal[1] and then proceeded to Pretoria, where he was put up by the Union Government at the Transvaal Hotel. Here he was to meet the ministers of the Government, including General Botha and General Smuts. It was my usual practice to inform Gokhale of all engagements fixed for the day, early in the morning or on the previous evening if he so desired. The coming interview with the Union ministers was a most important affair. We came to the conclusion that I should not go with Gokhale, nor indeed even offer to go. My presence would raise a sort of barrier between Gokhale and the ministers, who would be handicapped in speaking out without any reserve about what they considered to be the mistakes of the local Indians including my own. Then again they could not with an easy mind make any statement of future policy if they wished to make it. As for all these reasons Gokhale must go alone, it added largely to his burden of responsibility. What was to be done if Gokhale inadvertently committed some mistake of fact, or if he had nothing to say as regards some fact which had not been first brought to his notice, but which was first put to him by the ministers, or if he was called upon to accept some arrangement on behalf of the Indians in the absence of anyone of their responsible leaders? But Gokhale resolved this difficulty at once. He asked me to prepare a summary historical statement of the condition of the Indians up to date, and also to put down in writing how far they were prepared to go. And Gokhale said that he would admit his ignorance if anything outside this 'brief' cropped up at the interview, and ceased to worry. It now only remained for me to prepare the statement and for him to read it. However it was impossible for me to narrate the vicissitudes of the Indians' history in four Colonies ranging over a period of 18 years except bywriting ten or twenty pages at the least, and there was hardly any time left for Gokhale to look over it. Again there would be many questions he would like to put us after reading the paper. But Gokhale had an infinite capacity for taking pains as he had an exceptionally sharp memory. He kept himself and others[2] awake the whole

[1] The visit to Natal is not mentioned in the original.

[2] The original has in place of this word: "Polak and me".

night, posted himself fully on every point, and went over the whole ground again in order to make sure that he had rightly understood everything.[1] He was at last satisfied. As for me I never had any fears.

Gokhale's interview[2] with the ministers lasted for about two hours, and when he returned, he said, "You must return to India in a year. Everything has been settled. The Black Act will be repealed. The racial bar will be removed from the emigration law. The £53 tax will be abolished." "I doubt it very much," I replied. "You do not know the ministers as I do. Being an optimist myself, I love your optimism, but having suffered frequent disappointments, I am not as hopeful in the matter as you are. But I have no fears either. It is enough for me that you have obtained this undertaking from the ministers. It is my duty to fight it out only where it is necessary and to demonstrate that ours is a righteous struggle. The promise given to you will serve as a proof of the justice of our demands and will redouble our fighting spirit if it comes to fighting after all. But I do not think I can return to India in a year and before many more Indians have gone to jail."

Gokhale said: "What I have told you is bound to come to pass. General Botha promised me that the Black Act would be repealed and the £3 tax abolished. You must return to India within twelve months, and I will not have any of your excuses."[3]

During his visit to Natal, Gokhale came in contact with many Europeans in Durban, Maritzburg and other places. He also saw the diamond mines in Kimberley, where as well as at Durban public dinners were arranged[4] by the reception committees, and attended by many Europeans. Thus having achieved a conquest of Indian as well as European hearts, Gokhale left South Africa on November 17, 1912. At his wish Mr. Kallenbach and I accompanied him as far as Zanzibar. On the steamer we had arranged to have suitable food for him. On his way back to India he was given an ovation at Delagoa Bay, Inhambane, Zanzibar and other ports.

[1] The original adds: "He would communicate his thoughts to me."

[2] This was on November 14.

[3] The original adds: "The Johannesburg speech was made after the Pretoria interview."

[4] The original adds: "as in Johannesburg".

On the steamer our talks were confined to India or to the duty we owed to the motherland. Every word of Gokhale glowed with his tender feeling, truthfulness and patriotism. I observed that even in the games which he played on board the steamer Gokhale had a patriotic motive rather than the mere desire to amuse himself, and excellence was his aim there too.

On the steamer we had ample time to talk to our heart's content. In these conversations Gokhale prepared me for India. He analysed for me the characters of all the leaders in India and his analysis was so accurate that I have hardly perceived any difference between Gokhale's estimate and my own personal experience of them.

There are many sacred reminiscences of mine relating to Gokhale's tour in South Africa which could be set down here. But I must reluctantly check my pen as they are not relevant to a history of satyagraha. The parting at Zanzibar was deeply painful to Kallenbach and me, but remembering that the most intimate relations of mortal men must come to an end at last, we somehow reconciled ourselves, and hoped that Gokhale's prophecy would come true and both of us would be able to go to India in a year's time. But that was not to be.

However, Gokhale's visit to South Africa stiffened our resolution, and the implications and the importance of his tour were better understood when the struggle was renewed in an active form. If Gokhale had not come over to South Africa, if he had not seen the Union ministers, the abolition of the £3 tax could not have been made a plank in our platform.

If the satyagraha struggle had closed with the repeal of the Black Act, a fresh fight would have been necessary against the £3 tax, and not only would the Indians have come in for endless trouble, but it was doubtful whether they would have been ready so soon for a new and arduous campaign. It was incumbent upon the free Indians to have the tax abolished. All constitutional remedies to that end had been applied but in vain. The tax was being paid ever since 1895. But when a wrong, no matter how flagrant, has continued for a long period of time, people get habituated to it, and it becomes difficult to rouse them to a sense of their duty to resist it, and no less difficult to convince the world that it is a wrong at all. The undertaking given to Gokhale cleared the way for the satyagrahis. The Government must repeal the tax in terms of their promise, and if they did not, their breach of pledge would be a most cogent reason for continuing the

struggle. And this was exactly what happened. Not only did the Government not abolish the tax within a year, but they declared in so many words that it could not be removed at all.

Gokhale's tour thus not only helped us to make the £3 tax one of the targets of our satyagraha, but it led to his being recognized as a special authority on the South African question. His views on South Africa now carried greater weight, thanks to hispersonal knowledge of the Indians in South Africa, and he understood himself and could explain to India what steps the mother country ought to adopt. When the struggle was resumed, India rendered munificent help to the satyagraha funds and Lord Hardinge heartened the satyagrahis by expressing his 'deep and burning' sympathy for them (December 1913).[1] Messrs Andrews and Pearson came to South Africa from India.[2] All this would have been impossible without Gokhale's mission.

The breach of the ministers' pledge and its consequences will be the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

BREACH OF PLEDGE

In prosecuting the satyagraha struggle the Indians were very careful not to take a single step not warranted by their principles, and they always remembered that they should not take any illegitimate advantage over the Government. For instance, as the Black Act was restricted in its application to Indians in the Transvaal, only the Transvaal Indians were admitted as recruits in the struggle. Not only was there no attempt made to obtain recruits from Natal, the Cape Colony, etc., but offers from outside the Transvaal were politely refused. The struggle also was limited to a repeal of the Act in question. This limitation was understood neither by the Europeans nor by the Indians. In the early stages the Indians were every now and then asking for other grievances besides the Black Act to be covered by the struggle. I patiently explained to them that such extension would be a violation of the truth which could not be so much as thought of in a movement professing to abide by truth and truth

[1] For the text of the Viceroy's speech at Madras, actually delivered November 24, *vide* "Lord Hardinge's Speech", December 3, 1912.

[2] In January 1914

alone. In a pure fight the fighters would never go beyond the objective fixed when the fight began even if they received an accession to their strength in course of the fighting, and on the other hand they could not give up their objective if they found their strength dwindling away. This twofold principle was fully observed in South Africa. The strength of the community, upon which we counted in determining our goal at the commencement of the struggle, did not answer our expectations as we have already seen, and yet the handful of satyagrahis who remained stuck to their posts. Fighting thus single-handed in the face of oddswas comparatively easy, but it was more difficult, and called for the exercise of greater self-restraint, riot to enlarge one's objective when one had received large reinforcements. Such temptations often faced us in South Africa, but I can emphatically declare that we did not succumb to them in any single case. And therefore I have often said that a satyagrahi has a single objective from which he cannot recede and beyond which he cannot advance, which can in fact be neither augmented nor abridged. The world learns to apply to a man the standards which he applies to himself. When the Government saw that the satyagrahis claimed to follow these fine principles, they began to judge the conduct of the satyagrahis in the light of those principles, although they themselves were apparently not bound by any principle whatever, and several times charged the satyagrahis with a violation of their principles. Even a child can see that if fresh anti-Indian legislation was enacted after the Black Act, it must be included in the satyagraha programme. And yet when fresh restrictions were imposed on Indian immigration and necessitated an extension of our programme, the Government levelled against us the totally undeserved charge of raising fresh issues. If new restraints were placed on Indian newcomers, we must have the right to recruit them for the movement, and hence Sorabji and others entered the Transvaal, as we have already seen. Government could not tolerate this at all, but I had no difficulty in persuading impartial people about the propriety of the step. Another such occasion arose after Gokhale's departure. Gokhale supposed that the £3 tax would be taken off in a year[1] and the necessary legislation would be introduced in the next ensuing session of the Union Parliament. Instead of this, General Smuts from his seat in the House of Assembly said that as the

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Gladstone's Minutes on Meeting with Gokhale", November 16, 1912.

Europeans in Natal objected to the repeal of the tax, the Union Government were unable to pass legislation directing its removal, which however was not the case. The members from Natal by themselves could do nothing in a body upon which the four Colonies were represented. Again, General Smuts ought to have brought forward the necessary Bill in the Assembly on behalf of the Cabinet and then left the measure to its fate. But he did nothing of the kind, and provided us with the welcome opportunity of including the despicable impost as a cause of 'war'. There were two reasons for this. First, if in course of the struggle the Government made a promise and then went back upon it, the programme would naturally be extended so as to embrace such repudiation as well, and second, the breach of promise, made to such a representative of India as Gokhale was, was not only a personal insult to him but also to the whole of India, and as such could not be taken lying down. If there had been only one reason, namely, the first by itself, the satyagrahis, in case they felt themselves unequal to the task, could have been excused if they did not offer satyagraha against the £3 tax. But it was impossible to pocket an insult offered to the mother country, and therefore we felt the satyagrahis were bound to include the £3 tax in their programme, and when this tax thus fell within the scope of the struggle, the indentured Indians had an opportunity of participating in it. The reader must note that thus far this class had been kept out of the fray. This new orientation of our policy increased our burden of responsibility on the one hand, and on the other opened up a fresh field of recruitment for our 'army'.

Thus far, satyagraha had not been so much as mentioned among the indentured labourers; still less had they been educated to take part in it. Being illiterate, they could not read *Indian Opinion* or other newspapers. Yet I found that these poor folk were keen observers of the struggle and understood the movement, while some of them regretted their inability to join it. But when the Union ministers broke their pledged word, and repeal of the £3 tax was also included in our programme, I was not at all aware as to which of them would participate in the struggle.

I wrote to Gokhale about the breach of pledge, and he was deeply pained to hear of it. I asked him not to be anxious and assured him that we would fight unto death and wring a repeal of the tax out of the unwilling hands of the Transvaal Government. The idea,

however, of my returning to India in a year had to be abandoned, and it was impossible to say when I would be able to go.[1] Gokhale was nothing if not a man of figures. He asked me to let him know the maximum and the minimum strength of our army of peace, along with the names of the fighters. As far as I can now remember, I sent 65 or 66 names as the highest and 16 as the lowest number, and also informed Gokhale that I would not expect monetary assistance from India for such small numbers. I besought him to have no fears and not to put an undue strain upon his physical resources. I had learnt from newspapers and otherwise that after Gokhale returned to Bombay from South Africa, charges of weakness, etc., had been laid at his door. I therefore wished that Gokhale should not try to raise any funds for us in India.[2] But this was his stern answer: "We in India have some idea of our duty even as you understand your obligations in South Africa. We will not permit you to tell us what is or is not proper for us to do. I only desired to know the position in South Africa, but did not seek your advice as to what we may do." I grasped Gokhale's meaning, and never afterwards said or wrote a word on the subject. In the same letter he gave me consolation and caution. He was afraid in view of the breach of pledge that it would be a long protracted struggle, and he doubted how long a handful of men could continue to give battle to the insolent brute force of the Union Government. In South Africa we set about making our preparations. There could be no sitting at ease in the ensuing campaign. It was realized that we would be imprisoned for long terms. It was decided to close down Tolstoy Farm. Some families returned to their homes upon the release of the bread-winners. The rest mostly belonged to Phoenix, which therefore was pitched upon as the future base of operations for the satyagrahis. Another reason for preferring Phoenix was that, if the indentured labourers joined the struggle against the £3 tax, it would be more convenient to meet them from a place in Natal.

While preparations were still being made for resuming the struggle, a fresh grievance came into being, which afforded an opportunity even to women to do their bit in the struggle. Some brave women had already offered to participate, and when satyagrahis went to jail for hawking without a licence, their wives had expressed a desire to follow suit. But we did not then think it proper to send women to

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", February 14, 1913.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", April 19, 1913 and June 20, 1913.

jail in a foreign land. There seemed to be no adequate reason for sending them into the firing line, and I for my part could not summon courage enough to take them to the front. Another argument was, that it would be derogatory to our manhood if we sacrificed our women in resisting a law which was directed only against men. But an event now happened, which involved a special affront to women, and which therefore left no doubt in our minds as to the propriety of sacrificing them.

CHAPTER XXXIX

WHEN A MARRIAGE IS NOT A MARRIAGE

As if, unseen by anyone, God was preparing the ingredients for the Indians' victory and demonstrating still more clearly the injustice of the Europeans in South Africa, an event happened which none had expected. Many married men came to South Africa from India, while some Indians contracted marriages in South Africa itself. There is no law for the registration of ordinary marriages in India, and the religious ceremony suffices to confer validity upon them. The same custom ought to apply to Indians in South Africa as well and although Indians had settled in South Africa for the last forty years, the validity of marriages solemnized according to the rites of the various religions of India had never been called in question. But at this time there was a case in which Mr. Justice Searle of the Cape Supreme Court gave judgment on March 14, 1913, to the effect that all marriages were outside the pale of legal marriages in South Africa with the exception of such as were celebrated according to Christian rites and registered by the Registrar of Marriages.[1] This terrible judgment thus nullified in South Africa at a stroke of the pen all marriages celebrated according to the Hindu, Mussalman and Zoroastrian rites. The many married Indian women in South Africa in terms of this judgment ceased to rank as the wives of their husbands and were degraded to the rank of concubines, while their progeny were deprived of their right to inherit the parents' property. This was an insufferable situation for women no less than men, and the Indians in South Africa were deeply agitated.

[1] *Vide* "Attack on Indian Religions", March 22, 1913. For the text of the Searle judgment, *vide* Appendix "Text of the Searle Judgement", June 21, 1913.

According to my usual practice I wrote to the Government, asking them whether they agreed to the Searle judgment and whether, if the judge was right in interpreting it, they would amend the law so as to recognize the validity of Indian marriages consecrated according to the religious customs of the parties and recognized as legal in India. The Government were not then in a mood to listen and could not see their way to complying with my request.

The Satyagraha Association held a meeting to consider whether they should appeal against the Searle judgment, and came to the conclusion that no appeal was possible on a question of this nature. If there was to be an appeal, it must be preferred by Government, or if they so desired, by the Indians provided that the Government openly sided with them through their Attorney-General. To appeal when these conditions were not satisfied would be in a way tantamount to tolerating the invalidation of Indian marriages. Satyagraha would have to be resorted to even if such an appeal was made and if it was rejected. In these circumstances therefore it seemed best not to prefer any appeal against this unspeakable insult.

A crisis now arrived when there could not be any waiting for an auspicious day or hour. Patience was impossible in the face of this insult offered to our womanhood. We decided to offer stubborn satyagraha irrespective of the number of fighters. Not only could the women now be not prevented from joining the struggle, but we decided even to invite them to come into line along with the men. We first invited the sisters who had lived[1] on Tolstoy Farm. I found that they were only too glad to enter the struggle. I gave them an idea of the risks incidental to such participation I explained to them that they would have to put up with restraints in the matter of food, dress, and personal movements. I warned them that they might be given hard work in jail, made to wash clothes and even subjected to insult by the warders. But these sister were all brave and feared none of these things. One of them was pregnant while six of them had young babies in arms. But one and all were eager to join and I simply could not come in their way. These sister were with one exception all Tamilians. Here are their names:

1. Mrs. Thambi Naidoo, 2. Mrs. N. Pillay, 3. Mrs. K. Murugesa Pillay, 4. Mrs. A. Perumal Naidoo, 5. Mrs. P. K. Naidoo, 6. Mrs. K.

[1] The original has: “were living”.

Chinnaswami Pillay, 7. Mrs. N. S. Pillay, 8. Mrs. R. A. Mudalingam, 9. Mrs. Bhavani Dayal, 10. Miss Minachi Pillay 11. Miss Bakiam Murugesa Pillay

It is easy to get into prison by committing a crime but it is difficult to get in by being innocent. As the criminal seeks to escape arrest the police pursue and arrest him. But they lay their hands upon the innocent man who courts arrest of his own free will only when they cannot help it. The first attempts of these sister were not crowned with success. They entered the Transvaal at Vereeniging without permits but they were not arrested.[1] They took to hawking without a licence, but still the police ignored them. It now became a problem with the women how they should get arrested. There were not many men ready to go to jail and those who were ready could not easily have their wish.

We now decided to take a step which we had reserved till the last and which in the event fully answered our expectations. I had contemplated sacrificing all the settlers in Phoenix at acritical period. That was to be my final offering to the God of Truth. The settlers at Phoenix were mostly my close co-workers and relations. The idea was to send all of them to jail with the exception of a few who would be required for the conduct of *Indian Opinion* and of children below sixteen. This was the maximum of sacrifice open to me in the circumstances. The sixteen stalwarts to whom I had referred in writing to Gokhale were among the pioneers of the Phoenix settlement. It was proposed that these friends should cross over into the Transvaal and, as they crossed over, get arrested for entering the country without permits. We were afraid that Government would not arrest them if we made a previous announcement of our intention, and therefore we guarded it as a secret except from a couple of friends. When the pioneers entered the Transvaal, the police officer would ask them their names and addresses, and it was part of the programme not to supply this information as there was an apprehension that if their identity was disclosed, the police would come to know that they were my relations and therefore would not arrest them. Refusal to give name and address to an officer was also held to be a separate offence. While the Phoenix group entered the Transvaal, the sisters who had courted arrest in the Transvaal in vain were to enter Natal. As it was an

[1] In the original this sentence occurs after the one that follows.

offence to enter the Transvaal from Natal without a permit, it was equally an offence to enter Natal from the Transvaal. If the sisters were arrested upon entering Natal, well and good. But if they were not arrested, it was arranged that they should proceed to and post themselves at Newcastle, the great coal-mining centre in Natal, and advise the indentured Indian labourers there to go on strike. The mother tongue of the sisters was Tamil, and they could speak a little Hindustani besides. The majority of labourers on the coalmines hailed from Madras State and spoke Tamil or Telugu, though there were many from North India as well. If the labourers struck in response to the sisters' appeal, Government was bound to arrest them along with the labourers, who would thereby probably be fired with still greater enthusiasm. This was the strategy I thought out and unfolded before the Transvaal sisters.

I went to Phoenix, and talked to the settlers about my plans First of all I held a consultation with the sisters living there. I knew that the step of sending women to jail was fraught with serious risk. Most of the sisters in Phoenix spoke Gujarati. They had not had the training or experience of the Transvaal sisters. Moreover, most of them were related to me, and might think of going to jail only on account of my influence with them. If afterwards they flinched at the time of actual trial or could not stand the jail, they might be led to apologize, thus not only giving me a deep shock but also causing serious damage to the movement. I decided not to broach the subject to my wife as she could not say no to any proposal I made, and if she said yes, I would not know what value to attach to her assent, and as I knew that in a serious matter like this the husband should leave the wife to take what step she liked on her own initiative, and should not be offended at all even if she did not take any step whatever. I talked to the other sister who readily fell in with my proposal and expressed their readiness to go to jail. They assured me that they would compete their term in jail come what might. My wife overheard my conversation with the sisters, and addressing me, said, "I am sorry that you are not telling me about this. What defect is there in me which disqualifies me for jail? I also wish to take the path to which you are inviting the others." "You know I am the last person to cause you pain," I replied. There is no question of my distrusting you. I would be only too glad if you went to jail but it should not appear at all as if you went at my instance. In matters like this everyone should act relying solely upon one's own strength and courage. If I asked you,

you might be inclined to go just for the sake of complying with my request. And then if you began to tremble in the law court or were terrified by hardships in jail I could not find fault with you, but how would it stand with me? How could I then harbour you or look the world in the face? It is fears like these which have prevented me from asking you too to court jail." You may have nothing to do with me she said, "if being unable to stand jail I secure my release by an apology. If you can endure hardships and so can my boys, why cannot I? I am bound to join the struggle." "Then I am bound to admit you to it," said I. "You know my conditions and you know my temperament. Even now reconsider the matter if you like and if after mature thought you deliberately come to the conclusion not to join the movement, you are Free to withdraw. And you must understand that there is nothing to be ashamed of in changing your decision even now."

"I have nothing to think about. I am fully determined," she said.[1]

I suggested to the other settlers also that each should take his or her decision independently of all others. Again and again, and in a variety of ways I pressed this condition on their attention that none should fall away whether the struggle was short or long, whether the Phoenix settlement flourished or faded, and whether he or she kept good health or fell ill in jail. All were ready. The only member of the party from outside Phoenix was Rustomji Jivanji Ghorkhodu, from whom these conferences could not be concealed, and Kakaji, as he was affectionately called, was not the man to lag behind on an occasion like the present. He had already been to jail, but he insisted upon paying it another visit. The 'invading' party was composed of the following members:

1. Mrs. Kasturbai Gandhi, 2. Mrs. Jayakunvar Manilal Doctor, 3. Mrs. Kashi Chhaganlal Gandhi, 4. Mrs. Santok Maganlal Gandhi, 5. Parsi Rustomji Jivanji Ghorkhodu, 6. Chhaganlal Khushalchand Gandhi, 7. Ravjibhai Manibhai Patel, 8. Maganbhai Haribhai Patel, 9.

[1] *Indian Opinion* 1-10-1913, carried a report of the women's enthusiasm to join the menfolk in the struggle; *vide* "Conversation with Kasturba Gandhi", before April 19, 1913. The Transvaal women banded into an Association and represented to Government against the SearIe judgment; ibid., "Letter to Secretary of Interior", after May 7, 1913 and "Indian Women as Passive Resisters", May 10, 1913.

Solomon Royeppen, 10. Raju Govindu, 11. Ramdas Mohandas Gandhi, 12. Shivpujan Badri, 13. V. Govindarajulu, 14. Kuppuswami Moonlight Mudaliar, 15. Gokaldas Hansraj, and 16. Revashankar Ratansi Sodha.

The sequel must be taken up in a fresh chapter.

CHAPTER XL

WOMEN IN JAIL

These 'invaders' were to go to jail for crossing the border and entering the Transvaal without permits. The reader who has seen the list of their names will have observed, that if some of them were disclosed beforehand, the police might not perhaps arrest the persons bearing them. Such in fact had been the case with me. I was arrested twice or thrice but after this the police ceased to meddle with me at the border. No one was informed of this party having started and the news was of course withheld from the papers. Moreover the party had been instructed not to give their names even to the police and to state that they would disclose their identity in court.

The police were familiar with cases of this nature. After the Indians got into the habit of courting arrest, they would often not give their names just for the fun of the thing, and the police therefore did not notice anything strange about the behaviour of the Phoenix party, which was arrested accordingly. They were then tried and sentenced to three months' imprisonment with hard labour (September 23, 1913).

The sisters who had been disappointed in the Transvaal now entered Natal. but were not arrested for entering the country without permits. They therefore proceeded to Newcastle and set about their work according to the plans previously settled. Their influence spread like wildfire. The pathetic story of the wrongs heaped up by the £3 tax touched the labourers to the quick, and they went on strike. I received the news by wire and was as much perplexed as I was pleased. What was I to do? I was not prepared for this marvellous awakening. I had neither men nor the money which would enable me to cope with the work before me. But I visualized my duty very clearly. I must go to Newcastle and do what I could. I left at once to go there.[1]

Government could not now any longer leave the brave Transvaal sisters free to pursue their activities. They too were sentenced to

[1] Gandhiji visited Newcastle on October 17.

imprisonment for the same term—three months—and were kept in the same prison as the Phoenix party (October 21, 1913).

These events stirred the heart of the Indians not only in South Africa but also in the motherland to its very depths. Sir Pherozeshah had been so far indifferent. In 1901 he had strongly advised me not to go to South Africa. He held that nothing could be done for Indian emigrants beyond the seas so long as India had not achieved her own freedom, and he was little impressed with the satyagraha movement in its initial stages. But women in jail pleaded with him as nothing else could. As he himself put it in his Bombay Town Hall speech, his blood boiled at the thought of these women lying in jails herded with ordinary criminals and India could not sleep over the matter any longer.

The women's bravery was beyond words. They were all kept in Maritzburg jail, where they were considerably harassed. Their food was of the worst quality and they were given laundry work as their task. No food was permitted to be brought from outside till nearly the end of their term. One sister was under a religious vow to restrict herself to a particular diet. After great difficulty the jail authorities allowed her that diet, but the food supplied was unfit for human consumption. The sister badly needed olive oil. She did not get it at first, and when she got it, it was old and rancid. She offered to get it at her own expense but was told that jail was no hotel, and she must takewhat food was given her. When this sister was released she was a mere skeleton and her life was saved only by a great effort.

Another returned from jail with a fatal fever to which she succumbed within a few days of her release (February 22, 1914).[1] How can I forget her? Valliamma R. Munuswami Mudaliar was a young girl of Johannesburg only sixteen years of age. She was confined to bed when I saw her. As she was a tall girl, her emaciated body was a terrible thing to behold.

"Valliamma, you do not repent of your having gone to jail?" I asked.

"Repent? I am even now ready to go to jail again if I am

[1] *Vide* "Untimely Death of a Young Passive Resister", February 25, 1914, "Speech at Farewell Banquet", July 14, 1914, "Tribute to Passive Resistance Martyrs", July 15, 1914 and "Speech at London Reception", August 8, 1914.

arrested," said Valliamma.

"But what if it results in your death?" I pursued.

"I do not mind it. Who would not love to die for one's motherland?" was the reply.

Within a few days after this conversation Valliamma was no more with us in the flesh, but she left us the heritage of an immortal name. Condolence meetings were held at various places, and the Indians resolved to erect Valliamma Hall, to commemorate the supreme sacrifice of this daughter of India. Unfortunately the resolution has not still been translated into action.[1] There were many difficulties. The community was torn by internal dissensions; the principal workers left one after another. But whether or not a hall is built in stone and mortar, Valliamma's service is imperishable. She built her temple of service with her own hands, and her glorious image has a niche even now reserved for it in many a heart. And the name of Valliamma will live in the history of South African satyagraha as long as India lives.

It was an absolutely pure sacrifice that was offered by these sisters, who were innocent of legal technicalities, and many of whom had no idea of their country, their patriotism being based only upon faith. Some of them were illiterate and could not read the papers. But they knew that a mortal blow was being aimed at the Indians' honour, and their going to jail was a cry of agony and prayer offered from the-bottom of their heart, was in fact the purest of all sacrifices. Such heart prayer is always acceptable to God. Sacrifice is fruitful only to the extent that it is pure. God hungers after devotion in man. He is glad to accept the widow's mite offered with devotion, that is to say, without a selfish motive, and rewards it a hundred fold. The unsophisticated Sudama offered a handful of rice, but the small offering put an end to many years' want and starvation. The imprisonment of many might have been fruitless but the devoted sacrifice of a single pure soul could never go in vain. None can tell whose sacrifice in South Africa was acceptable to God, and hence bore fruit. But we do know that Valliamma's sacrifice bore fruit and so did the sacrifice of the other sisters.

[1] At Braamfontein cemetery, however, memorial tablets were raised on July 15, 1914, in honour of Valliamma and Nagappen; *vide* "Tribute to Passive Resistance Martyrs".

Souls without number spent themselves in the past, are spending themselves in the present and will spend themselves in the future in the service of country and humanity, and that is in the fitness of things as no one knows who is pure. But satyagrahis may rest assured, that even if there is only one among them who is pure as crystal, his sacrifice suffices to achieve the end in view. The world rests upon the bedrock of *satya* or truth. *Asatya* meaning untruth also means non-existent, and *satya* or truth also means that which is. If untruth does not so much as exist, its victory is out of the question. And truth being that which is can never be destroyed. This is the doctrine of satyagraha in a nutshell.

CHAPTER XLI

A STREAM OF LABOURERS

The women's imprisonment worked like a charm upon the labourers on the mines near Newcastle who downed their tools and entered the city in successive batches.[1] As soon as I received the news, I left Phoenix for Newcastle.

These labourers have no houses of their own. The mine-owners erect houses for them, set up lights upon their roads, and supply them with water, with the result that the labourers are reduced to a state of utter dependence. And as Tulsidas put it, a dependent cannot hope for happiness even in a dream.

The strikers brought quite a host of complaints to me. Some said the mine-owners had stopped their lights or their water, while others stated that they had thrown away the strikers' household chattels from their quarters. Saiyad Ibrahim, a Pathan, showed his back to me and said, "Look how severely they have thrashed me. I have let the rascals go for your sake, as such are yourorders; I am a Pathan, and Pathans never take but give a beating."

"Well done, brother," I replied. "I look upon such conduct alone as pure bravery. We will win through people of your type."

I thus congratulated him, but thought to myself that the strike could not continue if many received the same treatment as the Pathan had done. Leaving the question of flogging aside, there was not much room for complaint if the collieries cut off the lights, the water-supply

[1] Some 3,000 Indian miners from Newcastle, Canbrian and Durban Navigation Collieries struck work on October 20, 1913.

and other amenities enjoyed by the strikers. But whether or not complaint was justified, the strikers could not hold on in the circumstances, and I must find a way out of the difficulty, or else it was very much to be preferred that they should own themselves to be defeated and return to work at once rather than that they should resume work after a period of weary waiting. But defeatist counsel was not in my line. I therefore suggested that the only possible course was for the labourers to leave their masters' quarters, to fare forth in fact like pilgrims.

The labourers were not to be counted by tens but by hundreds. And their number might easily swell into thousands. How was I to house and feed this ever-growing multitude? I would not appeal to India for monetary help. The river of gold which later on flowed from the motherland had not yet started on its course. Indian traders were mortally afraid and not at all ready to help me publicly, as they had trading relations with the coal-owners and other Europeans. Whenever I went to Newcastle, I used to stop with them. But this time, as I would place them in an awkward position, I resolved to put up at another place.

As I have already stated, the Transvaal sisters were most of them Tamilians. They had taken up their quarters in Newcastle with Mr. D. Lazarus, a middle-class Christian Tamilian, who owned a small plot of land and a house consisting of two or three rooms. I also decided to put up with this family, who received me with open arms. The poor have no fears. My host belonged to a family of indentured labourers, and hence he or his relations would be liable to pay the £3 tax. No wonder he and his people would be familiar with the woes of indentured labourers and would therefore deeply sympathize with them. It has never been easy for friends to harbour me under their roof, but to receive me now was tantamount toinviting financial ruin upon one's head or perhaps even to facing imprisonment. Very few well-to-do traders would like to place themselves in a like predicament. I realized their limitations as well as my own, and therefore remained at a respectabledistance from them. Poor Lazarus would sacrificed some wages if it came to that. He would be willingly cast into prison, but how could he tolerate the wrongs heaped upon indentured labourers poorer even than himself? Lazarus saw that the Transvaal sisters who had been his guests went to the indentured labourers' succour and suffered imprisonment in the act of doing so.

He realized that he owed a debt of duty to the labourers too and therefore gave me shelter at his place. He not only sheltered me but he devoted his all to the cause. My stopping there converted his house into a caravanserai. All sort and conditions of men would come and go and the premises at all times would present the appearance of an ocean of heads. The kitchen fire would know no rest day and night. Mrs. Lazarus would drudge like a slave all day long, and yet her face as well as her husband's would always be lit up with a smile as with perpetual sunshine.

But Lazarus could not feed hundreds of labourers.[1] I suggested to the labourers that they should take it that their strike was to last for all time and leave the quarter; provided by their masters. They must sell such of their goods as could find a purchaser. The rest they must leave in their quarters. The coal-owners would not touch their belongings, but if with a view to wreaking further vengeance upon them they threw them away on the streets, the labourers must take that risk as well. When they came to me, they should bring nothing with them except their wearing apparel and blankets. I promised to live and have my meals with them so long as the strike lasted and so long as they were outside jail. They could sustain their strike and win a victory if and only if they came out on these conditions. Those who could not summon courage enough to take this line of action should return to work. None should despise or harass those who thus resumed their work. None of the labourers demurred to my conditions. From the very day that I made this announcement, there was a continuous stream of pilgrims who 'retired from the household life to the houseless one, along with their wives and children with bundles of clothes upon their heads.

I had no means of housing them; the sky was the only roof over their heads. Luckily for us the weather was favourable, there being neither rain nor cold. I was confident that the trader class would not fail to feed us. The traders of Newcastle suppliedcooking pots and bags of rice and dal. Other places also showered rice, dal, vegetables, condiments and other things upon us. Thecontributions exceeded my expectations. Not all were ready to go to jail, but all felt for the cause, and all were willing to bring their quota to the movement to the best of their ability. Those who could not give anything served as

[1] *Vide* "The Last Satyagraha Campaign: My Experience", after July 23, 1914.

volunteer workers. Well-known and intelligent volunteers were required to look after these obscure and uneducated men, and they were forthcoming. They rendered priceless help, and many of them were also arrested. Thus everyone did what he could, and smoothed our path.

There was a huge concourse of men, which was continuously receiving accessions. It was a dangerous if not an impossible task to keep them in one place and look after them while they had no employment. They were generally ignorant of the laws of sanitation. Some of them had been to jail for criminal offences such as murder, theft or adultery. But I did not consider myself fit to sit in judgment over the morality of the strikers. It would have been silly for me to attempt at distinguishing between the goats and the sheep. My business was only to conduct the strike, which could not be mixed up with any other reforming activity. I was indeed bound to see that the rules of morality were observed in the camp, but it was not for me to inquire into the antecedents of each striker. There were bound to be crimes if such a heterogeneous multitude was pinned down to one place without any work to do. The wonder was that the few days that we stopped here like that passed without any incident. All were quiet as if they had thoroughly grasped the gravity of the situation.

I thought out a solution of my problems. I must take this 'army' to the Transvaal and see them safely deposited in jail like the Phoenix party. The army should be divided into small batches, each of which should cross the border separately. But I dropped this last idea as soon as it was formed as it would have taken too long a time in its execution, and the successive imprisonment of small batches would not produce the normal effect of a mass movement.

The strength of the 'army' was about five thousand. I had not the money to pay the railway fare for such a large number ofpersons, and therefore they could not all be taken by rail. And if they were taken by rail, I would be without the means of putting their morale to the test. The Transvaal border is 36 miles from Newcastle. The border villages of Natal and the Transvaal are Charlestown and Volksrust, respectively. I finally decided to march on foot. I consulted the labourers who had their wivesand children with them and some of whom therefore hesitated to agree to my proposal. I had no alternative except to harden my heart, and declared that those who wished were free to return to the mines. But none of them would avail themselves

of this liberty. We decided that those who were disabled in their limbs should be sent by rail, and all able-bodied persons announced their readiness to go to Charlestown on foot. The march was to be accomplished in two days. In the end everyone was glad that the move was made. The labourers realized that it would be some relief to poor Lazarus and his family. The Europeans in Newcastle anticipated an outbreak of the plague, and were anxious to take all manner of steps in order to prevent it. By making a move we restored to them their peace of mind and also saved ourselves from the irksome measures to which they would have subjected us.[1]

While preparations for the march were on foot, I received an invitation to meet the coal-owners and I went to Durban. This conference and the events subsequent thereto will be considered in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XLII

THE CONFERENCE AND AFTER

At their invitation I saw the mine-owners in Durban. I observed that they were somewhat impressed by the strike, but I did not expect anything big to come out of the conference. The humility of a satyagrahi however knows no bounds. He does not let slip a single opportunity for settlement, and he does not mind if anyone therefore looks upon him as timid. The man who has faith in him and the strength which flows from faith does not care if he is looked down upon by others. He relies solely upon his internal strength. He is therefore courteous to all, and thus cultivates and enlists world opinion in favour of his own cause.

I therefore welcomed the coal-owners' invitation and when I met them, I saw that the atmosphere was surcharged with the heat and passion of the moment. Instead of hearing me explain the situation, their representative proceeded to cross-examine me. I gave him suitable answers.

"It is in your hands to bring the strike to an end," I said.

"We are not officials," was the reply.

"You can do a lot though you are not officials," I said. "Youcan fight the labourers' battle for them. If you ask the

[1] For an account of this satyagraha of indentured Indians, *vide* "The Last Satyagraha Campaign: My Experience", after July 23, 1914.

Government to take off the £3 tax, I do not think they will refuse to repeal it. You can also educate European opinion on the question."

"But what has the £3 tax to do with the strike? If the labourers have any grievance against the coal-owners, you approach them for redress in due form."

"I do not see that the labourers have any other weapon except a strike in their hands. The £3 tax too has been imposed in the interest of the mine-owners who want the labourers to work for them but do not wish that they should work as free men. If therefore the labourers strike work in order to secure a repeal of the £3 tax, I do not see that it involves any impropriety or injustice to the mine-owners."

"You will not then advise the labourers to return to work?"

"I am sorry I can't."

"Do you know what will be the consequences?"

"I know, I have a full sense of my responsibility."

"Yes, indeed. You have nothing to lose. But will you compensate the misguided labourers for the damage you will cause them?"

"The labourers have gone on strike after due deliberation, and with a full consciousness of the losses which would accrue to them. I cannot conceive a greater loss to a man than the loss of his self-respect, and it is a matter of deep satisfaction to me that the labourers have realized this fundamental principle."

And so on. I cannot now remember the whole of the conversation. I have put down in brief the points which I do remember.[1] I saw that the mine-owners understood the weakness of their case, for they had already put themselves in communication with the Government.

During my journey to Durban and back I saw that the strike and the peaceful behaviour of the strikers had produced an excellent impression upon the railway guards and others. I travelled in third class as usual, but even there the guard and other officers would surround me, make diligent inquiries and wish me success. They would provide me with various minor facilities. I scrupulously maintained the spotless purity of my relations with them. I did not

[1] *Vide* "Cable to G. A. Natesan", before October 25, 1913, "Statement to Chamber of Commerce", and "Interview to *The Natal Mercury*", October 25, 1913.

hold out any inducement to them for a single amenity. I was delighted if they were courteous of their own free will, but no attempt wasmade to purchase courtesy. These officers were astonished to findthat poor, illiterate and ignorant labourers made such asplendid display of firmness. Firmness and courage are qualitieswhich are bound to leave their impress even upon the adversary.

I returned to Newcastle. Labourers were still pouring in from all directions. I clearly explained the whole situation to the 'army'. I said they were still free to return to work if they wished. I told them about the threats held out by the coal-owners, and pictured before them the risks of the future. I pointed out that no one could tell them when the struggle would end. I described to the men the hardships of jail, and yet they would not flinch. They fearlessly replied that they would never be down-hearted so long as I was fighting by their side, and they asked me not to be anxious about them as they were inured to hardships.

It was now only left for us to march. The labourers were informed one evening that they were to commence the march early next morning (October 28, 1913), and the rules to be observed on the march were read out to them. It was no joke to control a multitude of five or six thousand men. I had no idea of the exact number, nor did I know their names or places of residence. I was merely content with as many of them as chose to remain. I could not afford to give anything on the road beyond a daily ration of one pound and a half of bread and an ounce of sugar to each 'soldier'. I planned to get something more from the Indian traders on the way. But if I failed they must rest content with bread and sugar. My experience of the Boer War and the Zulu 'rebellion' stood me in good stead on the present occasion. None of the 'invaders' was to keep with him any more clothes than necessary. None was to touch anyone's property on the way. They were to bear it patiently if any official or non official European met them and abused or even flogged them. They were to allow themselves to be arrested if the police offered to arrest them. The march must continue even if I was arrested. All these points were explained to the men and I also announced the names of those who should successively lead the 'army' in my place.

The men understood the instructions issued to them, and our caravan safely reached Charlestown, where the traders rendered us

great help. They gave us the use of their houses, and permitted us to make our cooking arrangements on the grounds of the mosque. The ration supplied on the march would be exhausted when camp was reached and therefore we were in need of cooking pots, which were cheerfully supplied by the traders. We had with us a plentiful store of rice, etc., to which also the traders contributed their share.

Charlestown was a small village with a population of hardly 1,000[1] souls, and could never accommodate the several thousands of pilgrims. Only women and children were lodged in houses. All the rest camped in-the open.

There are many sweet and some bitter reminiscences of our stay in Charlestown. The pleasant memories are connected with the sanitary department and the District Health Officer, Dr. Briscoe, who was rather alarmed at the phenomenal increase in the population, but who, instead of adopting any stringent measures, met me, made some suggestions and offered to help me. Europeans are careful and we are careless about three things, the purity of the water-supply and, keeping roads and sanitary conveniences clean. Dr. Briscoe asked me to see that no water was thrown on the roads and to prevent our men from dirtying the place or throwing away refuse promiscuously. He further suggested that the men should be confined to the area he assigned to us and that I should hold myself responsible for keeping that area clean. I thankfully accepted his suggestions and was then at perfect ease.

It was very difficult to have our people observe these rules. But the pilgrims and co-workers lightened my task. It has been my constant experience that much can be done if the servant actually serves and does not dictate to the people. If the servant puts in body-labour himself, others will follow in his wake. And such was my experience on the present occasion. My co-workers and I never hesitated to do sweeping, scavenging and similar work, with the result that others also took it up enthusiastically. In the absence of such sensible procedure it is no good issuing orders to others. All would assume leadership and dictate to others and there would be nothing done in the end. But where the leader himself becomes a servant, there are no rival claimants for leadership.

Of co-workers Kallenbach was already in Charlestown. And so

[1] The original has: “4,000 or 5,000”.

was Miss Schlesin, whose industry, accuracy and honesty were beyond all praise. Of the Indians I now remember the late Shri P. K. Naidoo and Shri Albert Christopher. There were others besides who worked hard and rendered valuable help.

The ration consisted of rice and dal. We had a large stock of vegetable, which could not be cooked separately for want of time and cooking pots and was therefore mixed with dal. The kitchen was active all the twenty-four hours, as hungry men would arriveat any time of the day or night. No labourers were to stopat Newcastle. All knew what way to go and therefore they would make for Charlestown directly they left the mines.

As I think of the patience and endurance of the men, I am overpowered by a sense of the greatness of God. I was the leader among the cooks. Sometimes there was too much wafer in the dal, at other times it was insufficiently cooked. The vegetable and even the rice was sometimes ill cooked. I have not seen many people in the world who would cheerfully gulp down such food. On the other hand, I have observed in the South African jails that even those who pass as well-educated men lose their temper if they are given food somewhat less than sufficient or ill cooked, or even if they get it a little late.

Serving the food was, if possible, even more difficult than cooking it and was in my sole charge. I shouldered the responsibility for the food being well or ill cooked. Even so it rested with me to satisfy all present by cutting down the individual ration when there was too little food and more than the expected number of diners. I can never forget the angry look which the sisters gave me for a moment when I gave them too little food and which was at once transformed into a smile as they understood the thanklessness of my self-chosen task. “I am helpless, I would say. “The quantity cooked is small, and as I have to feed many, I must divide it equally between them.” Upon this they would grasp the situation and go away smiling, saying that they were content.

Thus far I have dealt with the pleasant memories. As for unpleasant, I found that when the men had a little leisurethey occupied it with internal squabbles. What was worse, there were cases of adultery. There was terrible overcrowding andmen and women had to be kept together. Animal passion bows no shame. As soon as the cases occurred, I arrived on the scene. The guilty parties were abashed

and they were segregated. But who can say how many such cases occurred which never came to my knowledge? It is no use dwelling any further upon this topic, which I have brought in in order to show that everything was not in perfect order and that even when someone did go wrong there was no exhibition of insolence. On many similar occasions I have seen how well-behaved people become in a good atmosphere even when they are originally semi-barbarous and not over-observant of the dictates of morality, and it is more essential and profitable to realize this truth.

CHAPTER XLIII

CROSSING THE BORDER[1]

We have now arrived at the beginning of November 1913. But before we proceed, it will be well to take note of two events. Bai Fatma Mehtab of Durban could no longer be at peace when the Tamilian sisters received sentences of imprisonment in Newcastle She therefore left for Volksrust to court arrest along with her mother Hanifabai and seven-year-old son. Mother and daughter were arrested but the Government declined to arrest the boy. Fatma Bai was called upon to give her finger impressions at the charge office but she fearlessly refused to submit to the indignity. Eventually she and her mother were sent to prison for three months (October 13, 1913).[2]

The labourers' strike was in full swing at this time. Men as well as women were on the move between the mining district and Charlestown[3]. Of these, there were two women with their little ones one of whom died of exposure on the march. The other fell from the arms of its mother while she was crossing a spruit and was drowned. But the brave mothers refused to be dejected and continued their march. One of them said, "We must not pine for the dead who will not come back to us for all our sorrow. It is the living for whom we must work." I have often come across instances of such quiet heroism, sterling faith and saving knowledge among the poor.

The men and women in Charlestown held to their difficult post of duty in such a stoical spirit. For it was no mission of peace that took us to that border village. If anyone wanted peace, he had to search for it within. Outwardly the words 'there is no peace here' were

[1] The original adds: "Into the Transvaal".
[2] This sentence is not to be found in the original.
[3] These six words are not to be found in the original.

placarded everywhere, as it were. But it is in the midst of such storm that a devotee like Mirabai takes the cup of poison to her lips with cheerful equanimity, that Socrates quietly embraces death in his dark and solitary cell and initiates his friends and us into the mysterious doctrine that he who seeks peace must look for it within himself.

With such ineffable peace brooding over them the satyagrahis were living in their camp, careless[1] of what the morrow would bring.

I wrote to the Government,[2] that we did not propose to enter the Transvaal with a view to domicile, but as an effective protest against the ministers' breach of pledge and as a pure demonstration of our distress at the loss of our self-respect. Government would be relieving us of all anxiety if they were good enough to arrest us where we then were, that is in Charlestown. But if they did not arrest us, and if any of us surreptitiously entered the Transvaal, the responsibility would not be ours. There was no secrecy about our movement. None of us had a personal axe to grind. We would not like it if any of us secretly entered the Transvaal. But we could not hold ourselves responsible for the acts of any as we had to deal with thousands of unknown men and as we could not command any other sanction but that of love. Finally I assured the Government that if they repealed the £3 tax, the strike would be called off and the indentured labourers would return to work, as we would not ask them to join the general struggle directed against the rest of our grievances.

The position therefore was quite uncertain, and there was no knowing when the Government would arrest us. But at a crisis like this we could not await the reply of the Government for a number of days, but only for one or two returns of the post. We therefore decided to leave Charlestown and enter the Transvaal at once if the Government did not put us under arrest. If we were not arrested on the way, the 'army of peace' was to march twenty to twenty-four miles a day for eight days together, so as to reach Tolstoy Farm, and to stop there till the struggle was over and in the meanwhile to maintain themselves by working on the Farm. Mr. Kallenbach had made all the necessary arrangements. The idea was to construct mud huts with the help of the pilgrims themselves. So long as the huts were under construction, the

[1] The original has: "thinking".
[2] This letter is not available

old and the infirm should be accommodated in small tents, the able-bodied camping in the open. The only difficulty was that the rains were now about to set in, and everyone must have a shelter over his head while it rained. But Mr. Kallenbach was courageously confident of solving it somehow or other.

We also made other preparations for the march. The good Dr. Briscoe improvised a small medical chest for us,[1] and gaveus some instruments which even a layman like myself could handle. The chest was to be carried by hand as there was to be noconveyance with the pilgrims. We therefore carried with us theleast possible quantity of medicines, which would not enable us to treat even a hundred persons at the same time. But that did not matter as we proposed to encamp every day near some village, where we hoped to get the drugs of which we ran short, and as we were not taking with us any of the patients or disabled persons whom we had arranged to leave in the villages *en route*.

Bread and sugar constituted our sole ration, but how was a supply of bread to be ensured on the eight days' march? The bread must be distributed to the pilgrims every day and we could not hold any of it in stock. The only solution of this problem was that someone should supply us with bread at each stage. But who would be our provider? There were no Indian bakers at all. Again there could not be found a baker in each of the villages, which usually depended upon the cities for their supply of bread. The bread therefore must be supplied by some baker and sent by rail to the appointed station. Volksrust was about double the size of Charlestown, and a large European bakery there willingly contracted to supply bread at each place. The baker did not take advantage of our awkward plight to charge us higher than the market rates and supplied bread made of excellent flour. He sent it in time by rail, and the railway officials also Europeans, not only honestly delivered it to us, but they took good care of it in transit and gave us some special facilities. They knew that we harboured no enmity in our hearts, intended no harm to any living soul and sought redress only through self-suffering. The atmosphere around us was thus purified and continued to be pure. The feeling of love which is dormant though present in all mankind was roused into activity. Everyone realized that we are all brothers whether we are

[1] *Vide* "News of Struggle", before November 6, 1913.

ourselves Christians, Jews, Hindus, Mussalmans or anything else.

When all the preparations for the march were completed, I made one more effort to achieve a settlement. I had already sent letters and telegrams. I now decided to telephone even at the risk of my overtures being answered by an insult. From Charlestown I telephoned General Smuts in Pretoria. I called his secretary and said: "Tell General Smuts that I am fully prepared for the march. The Europeans in Volksrust are excited and perhaps likely to violate even the safety of our lives. They have certainly held out such a threat. I am sure that even the General would not wish any such untoward event to happen. If he promises to abolish the £3 tax, I will stop the march, as I will not break the law merely for the sake of breaking it but I will if I am driven to it by inexorable necessity. Will not the General accede to such a small request?" I received this reply within half a minute: "General Smuts will have nothing to do with you. You may do just as you please." With this the message closed.

I had fully expected this result, though I was not prepared for the curtness of the reply. I hoped for a civil answer, as my political relations with the General since the organization of satyagraha had now subsisted for six years. But as I would not be elated by his courtesy, I did not weaken in the face of his incivility. The strait and narrow path I had to tread was clear before me. The next day (November 6, 1913) at the appointed stroke of the hour (6.30) we offered prayers and commenced the march in the name of God. The pilgrim band was composed of 2,037 men, 127 women 57 children.[1]

CHAPTER XLIV

THE GREAT MARCH

The caravan of pilgrims thus started punctually at the appointed hour. There is a small spruit one mile from Charlestown, and as soon as one crosses it, one has entered Volksrust or the Transvaal. A small patrol of mounted policemen was on duty at the border gate. I went up to them, leaving instructions with the 'army' to cross over when I signalled to them. But while I was still talking with the police, the pilgrims made a sudden rush and crossed the border. The police surrounded them, but the surging multitude was not easy to control.

[1] Cf. "The Last Satyagraha Campaign: My Experience", after July 23, 1914, where the size of the party is put at 3,000.

The police had no intention of arresting us. I pacified the pilgrims and got them to arrange themselves in regular rows. Everything was in order in a few minutes and the march into the Transvaal began.

Two days before this the Europeans of Volksrust had held a meeting where they offered all manner of threats to the Indians. Some said that they would shoot the Indians if they entered the Transvaal. Mr. Kallenbach attended this meeting to reason withthe Europeans who were however not prepared to listen to himIndeed some of them even stood up to assault him. Mr. Kallenbach is an athlete, having received physical training at the hands of Sandow, and it was not easy to frighten him. One European challenged him to a duel. Mr. Kallenbach replied, "As I have accepted the religion of peace, I may not accept the challenge. Let him who will come and do his worst with me. But I will continue toclaim a hearing at this meeting. You have publicly invited all Europeans to attend, and I am here to inform you that not all Europeans are ready as you are to lay violent hands upon innocent men. There is one European who would like to inform you that the charges you level at the Indians are false. The Indians do not want what you imagine them to do. The Indians are not out to challenge your position as rulers. They do not wish to fight with you or to fill the country. They only seek justice pure and simple. They propose to enter the Transvaal not with a view to settling there, but only as an effective demonstration against the unjust tax which is levied on them. They are brave men. They will not injure you in person or in property, they will not fight with you, but enter the Transvaal they will, even in the face of your gunfire. They are not the men to beat a retreat from fear of your bullets or your spears. They propose to melt, and I know they will melt, your hearts by self-suffering. This is all I have to say. I have had my say and I believe that I have thus rendered you a service. Beware and save yourselves from perpetrating a wrong." With these words Mr. Kallenbach resumed his seat. The audience was rather abashed. The pugilist who had invited Mr. Kallenbach to single combat became his friend.

We had heard about this meeting and were prepared for any mischief by the Europeans in Volksrust. It was possible that the large number of policemen massed at the border was intended as a check upon them. However that may be, our procession passed through the place in peace. I do not remember that any European attempted even

a jest. All were out to witness this novel sight, while there was even a friendly twinkle in the eyes of some of them.

On the first day we were to stop for the night at Palmford about eight miles from Volksrust, and we reached the place at about 5 p.m. The pilgrims took their ration of bread and sugar, and spread themselves in the open air. Some were talking, while others were singing *bhajans*. Some of the women were thoroughly exhausted by the march. They had dared to carry their children in their arms, but it was impossible for them to proceed further. I therefore, according to my previous warning, kept them as lodgers with a good Indian shopkeeper who promised to send them to Tolstoy Farm if we were permitted to go there, and to their homes if we were arrested.

As the night advanced, all noises ceased and I too was preparing to retire when I heard a tread. I saw a European coming lantern in hand. I understood what it meant, but had no preparations to make. The police officer said,

"I have a warrant of arrest for you. I want to arrest you."

"When?" I asked.

" Immediately."

"Where will you take me?"

"To the adjoining railway station now, and to Volksrust when we get a train for it."

"I will go with you without informing[1] anyone, but I will leave some instructions with one of my co-workers."

"You may do so."

I roused P. K. Naidoo who was sleeping near me. I informed him about my arrest and asked him not to awake the pilgrims before morning. At daybreak they must regularly resume the march. The march would commence before sunrise, and when it was time for them to halt and get their rations, he must break to them the news of my arrest. He might inform anyone who inquired about me in the interval. If the pilgrims were arrested, they must allow themselves to be arrested. Otherwise they must continue the march according to the programme. Naidoo had no fears at all. I also told him what was to be done in case he himself was arrested. Mr. Kallenbach too was in

[1] The original has: "waking up".

Volksrust at the time.

I went with the police officer, and we took the train for Volksrust the next morning. I appeared before the Court in Volksrust, but the Public Prosecutor himself asked for a remand until the 14th as he was not ready with the evidence. The case was postponed accordingly. I applied for bail as I had over 2,000 men, 122 women and 50 children in my charge whom I should like to take on to their destination within the period of postponement. The Public Prosecutor opposed my application. But the Magistrate was helpless in the matter, as every prisoner not charged with a capital offence is in law entitled to be allowed to give bail for his appearance, and I could not be deprived of that right. He therefore released me on a bail of £50. Mr. Kallenbach had a car ready for me, and he took me at once to rejoin the 'invaders'. The special reporter of *The Transvaal Leader* wanted to go with us. We took him in the car, and he published at the time a vivid description of the case, the journey, and the meeting with the pilgrims, who received me with enthusiasm and were transported with joy.[1] Mr. Kallenbach at once returned to Volksrust, as hehad to look after the Indians stopping at Charlestown as well as the fresh arrivals there.

We continued the march, but it did not suit the Government to leave me in a state of freedom. I was therefore rearrested at Standerton on[2] the 8th. Standerton is comparatively a bigger place. There was something rather strange about the manner of my arrest here. I was distributing bread to the pilgrims. The Indian store-keepers at Standerton presented us with some tins of marmalade, and the distribution therefore took more time than usual. Meanwhile the Magistrate came and stood by my side. He waited till the distribution of rations was over, and then called me aside. I knew the gentleman, who, I thought, perhaps wanted to talk with me. He laughed and said, "You are my prisoner."

"It would seem I have received promotion in rank," I said, "as magistrates take the trouble to arrest me instead of mere police officials. But you will try me just now."

"Go with me," replied the Magistrate, "the Courts are still in

[1] For an account of the subsequent march, *vide* Appendix "The Great March", November 8, 1913.

[2] The original has: "The following day".

session."

I asked the pilgrims to continue their march, and then left with the Magistrate. As soon as I reached the court-room, I found that some of my co-workers had also been arrested. There were five of them there: P. K. Naidoo, Biharilal Maharaj, Ram Narayan Sinha, Raghu Narasu and Rahimkhan.

I was at once brought before the court and applied for remand and bail on the same grounds as in Volksrust. Here too the application was strongly opposed by the Public Prosecutor and here too I was released on my own recognizance of £50 and the case was remanded till the 21st.[1] The Indian traders had kept a carriage ready for me and I rejoined the pilgrims again when they had hardly proceeded three miles further. The pilgrims thought, and I thought too, that we might now perhaps reach Tolstoy Farm. But that was not to be. It was no small thing however that the invaders got accustomed to my being arrested. The five co-workers remained in jail.

CHAPTER XLV

ALL IN PRISON

We were now near Johannesburg. The reader will remember that the whole pilgrimage had been divided into eight stages. Thus far we had accomplished our marches exactly according to programmeand we now had four days' march in front of us. But our spirits rose from day to day, Government too got more and more anxious as to how they should deal with the Indian invasion. They would be charged with weakness and want of tact if they arrested us after we had reached our destination. If we were to be arrested, we must be arrested before we reached the promised land.

Government saw that my arrest did not dishearten or frighten the pilgrims, nor did it lead them to break the peace. If they took to rioting, Government would have an excellent opportunity of convicting them into food for gunpowder. Our firmness was very distressing to General Smuts, coupled as it was with peacefulness, and he even said as much. How long can you harass a peaceful man? How can you kill the voluntarily dead? There is no zest in killing one who welcomes death and therefore soldiers are keen upon seizing the enemy alive. If the mouse did not flee before the cat, the cat would be

[1] *Vide* "Application for Bail", November 8, 1913.

driven to seek another prey. If all lambs voluntarily lay with the lion, the lion would be compelled to give up feasting upon lambs. Great hunters would give up lion hunting if the lion took to non-resistance. Our Victory was implicit in our combination of the two qualities of non-violence and determination.

Gokhale desired by cable that polak should go to India and help him in placing the facts of the situation before the Indian and Imperial Governments.[1] Polak's temperament was such that would make himself useful wherever he went. He would be totally absorbed in whatever task he undertook. We were therefore preparing to send him to India. I wrote to him[2] that he could. But he would not leave without meeting me in person and taking full instructions from me. He therefore offered to come and see me during our march. I wired to him,[3] saying that he might come if he wished though he would be in so doing running the risk of arrest. Fighters never hesitate to incur necessary risks. It was a cardinal principle of the movement that everyone should be ready for arrest if Government extended their attentions to him, and should make all straightforward and moral efforts to get arrested until he overcame the reluctance of Government to lay hands-upon him. Polak therefore preferred to come even at the risk of being arrested.

Mrs. Polak joined us[4] on the 9th at Teakworth between Standerton and Greylingstad. We were in the midst of our con sultation and had nearly done with it. It was about 3 o'clock in the afternoon. Polak and I were walking at the head Or the whole body of pilgrims. Some of the co-workers were listening to our conversation. Polak was to take the evening train for Durban. But God does not always permit man to carry out his plans. Rama had to retire to the forest on the very day that was fixed for his coronation. While we were thus engaged in talking, a Cape cart came and stopped before us and from it alighted Mr. Chamney, Principal immigration officer of the Transvaal, and a police officer. They took me somewhat aside and one

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", June 20, 1913, "Cable to G. K. Gokhale", June 21, 1913 and "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", July 12, 1913.

[2] The letter is not available.

[3] The telegram is not available.

[4] The original has in place of the rest of the sentence: "when we had reached the vicinity of Heidelberg. Here he met us, having walked the distance from a nearby station."

of them said, “I arrest you.”

I was thus arrested thrice in four days.[1]

“What about the marchers?” I asked.

“ We shall see to that” was the answer.

I said nothing further.

The police officer permitted me only to inform the marchers of my arrest I asked Polak to assume charge of and go with the pilgrims. As I proceeded to ask them to keep the peace, etc., the officer interrupted me and said, “You are now a prisoner and cannot make any speeches.”

I understood my position, but it was needless. As soon as he stopped me from speaking, the officer ordered the driver to drive the cart away at full speed. In a moment the pilgrims passed out of my sight.

The officer knew that for the time being I was master of the situation, for trusting to our non-violence, he was alone in this desolate veld confronted by two thousand Indians. He also knew that I would have surrendered to him even if he had sent me a summons in writing. Such being the case, it was hardly necessary to remind me that I was a prisoner. And the advice which I would have given the pilgrims would served the Government purpose no less than our own. But how could an officer forgo an opportunity of exercising his brief authority? I must say, however, that many officers understood us better than this gentleman. They knew that not only had arrest no terrors for us but on the other hand we hailed it as the gateway of liberty. They therefore allowed us all legitimate freedom and thankfully sought our aid in conveniently and expeditiously effecting arrests. The readerwill come across apposite cases of both kinds in these pages.

I was taken to Greylingstad, and from Greylingstad *via* Balfour to Heidelberg where I passed the night.

The pilgrims with Polak as leader resumed their march and halted for the night at Greylingstad where they were met by Sheth Ahmad Muhammad Kachhalia and Sheth Ahmad Bhayat who had come to know that arrangements were complete for arresting the whole body of marchers. Polak therefore thought that when his

[1] *Vide* footnote to “Telegram to Minister of Interior”, November 7, 1913 and footnote to “Letter to Indians”, before November 11, 1913.

responsibility ceased in respect of the pilgrims upon their arrest, he could reach Durban even if a day later and take the steamer for India after all. But God had willed otherwise.

At about 9 o'clock in the morning on the 10th the pilgrims reached Balfour where three special trains were drawn up at the station to take them and deport them to Natal.[1] The pilgrims were there rather obstinate. They asked for me to be called and promised to let themselves be arrested and to board the trains if I advised them to that effect. This was a wrong attiitude. And the whole game must be spoiled and the movement must receive a set-back unless it was given up. Why should the pilgrims want me for going to jail? It would ill become soldiers to claim to elect their commanders or to insist upon their obeying only one of them. Mr. Chamney approached Mr. Polak and Kachhalia Sheth to help him in arresting[2] them. These friends encountered difficulty in explaining the situation to the marchers. They told them that jail was the pilgrims' goal and they should therefore appreciate the Government's action when they were ready to arrest them. Only thus could the satyagrahis show their quality and bring their struggle to a triumphant end. They must realize that no other procedure could have my approval. The pilgrims were brought round and all entrained peacefully.

I on my part was again hauled up before the Magistrate. I knew nothing of what transpired after I was separated from the pilgrims. I asked for a remand once again. I said that a remand had been granted by two courts, and that we had not now much to go to reach our destination. I therefore requested that either the Government should arrest the pilgrims or else I should be permitted to see them safe in Tolstoy Farm. The Magistrate did not comply with my request, but promised to forward it at once tothe Government. This time I was arrested on a warrant from Dundee where I was to be prosecuted on the principal charge of inducing indentured labourers to leave the province of Natal. I was therefore taken to Dundee by rail the same day.

Mr. Polak was not only not arrested at Balfour[3] but he was even

[1] In place of this sentence the original has: "Two special trains were waiting at Heidelberg to carry away the arrested men."

[2] The original has in place of this word: "explaining the position to".

[3] The original has: "Heidelberg".

thanked for the assistance he had rendered to the authorities. Mr. Chamney even said that the Government had no intention Of arresting him. But these were Mr. Chamney's own views or the views of the Government in so far as they were known to that officer. Government in fact would be changing their mind every now and then. And finally they reached the decision that Mr. Polak should not be allowed to sail for India and should be arrested along with Mr. Kallenbach who was working most energetically on behalf of the Indians. Mr. Polak therefore was arrested in Charlestown whilst waiting for the corridor train. Mr. Kallenbach was also arrested and both these friends were confined in Volksrust jail.[1]

I was tried in Dundee on the 11th and sentenced to nine months' imprisonment with hard labour.[2] I had still to take my second trial at Volksrust on the charge of aiding and abetting prohibited persons to enter the Transvaal. From Dundee I was therefore taken on the 13th to Volksrust where I was glad to meet Kallenbach and Polak in the jail.

I appeared before the Volksrust court on the 14th.[3] The beauty of it was that the charge was proved against me only by witnesses furnished by myself at Kromdraai. The police could have secured witnesses but with difficulty. They had therefore sought my aid in the matter. The courts here would not convict a prisoner merely upon hi pleading guilty.

This was arranged as regards me, but who would testify against Mr. Kallenbach and Mr. Polak? It was impossible to convict them in the absence of evidence, and it was also difficult at once to secure witnesses against them. Mr. Kallenbach intended toplead guilty as he wished to be with the pilgrims. But Mr. Polakwas bound for India, and was not deliberately courting jail at this moment. After a joint consultation therefore we three resolved that we should say neither yes nor no in case we wereasked whether Mr. Polak was guilty of the offence with which he was charged.

I provided the evidence for the Crown against Mr. Kallenbach

[1] For Polak's account of the circumstances of his arrest*vide* "Polak's Letter to Lord Ampthill", November 12, 1913.

[2] *Vide* "Trial at Dundee", November 11, 1913.

[3] *Vide*. "Trial at Volksrust", November 14, 1913.

and I appeared as witness against Mr. Polak. We did not wish that the cases should be protracted, and we therefore did our best to see that each case was disposed of within a day. The proceedings against me were completed on the 14th, against Kallenbach on the 15th and against Polak on the 17th, and the Magistrate passed sentences of three months' imprisonment on all three of us. We now thought we could live together in Volksrust jail for these three months. But the Government could not afford to allow it.

Meanwhile, we passed a few happy days in Volksrust jail, where new prisoners came every day and brought us news of what was happening outside. Among these satyagrahi prisoners there was one old man named Harbatsinh[1], who was about 75 years of age. Harbatsinh was not working on the mines. He had completed his indenture years ago and he was not therefore a striker. The Indians grew far more enthusiastic after my arrest, and many of them got arrested by crossing over from Natal into the Transvaal. Harbatsinh was one of these enthusiasts.

"Why are you in jail?" I asked Harbatsinh. "I have not invited old men like yourself to court jail."

"How could I help it," replied Harbatsinh, "when you, your wife and even your boys went to jail for our sake?"

"But you will not be able to endure the hardships of jail life. I would advise you to leave jail. Shall I arrange for your release?"

"No, please, I will never leave jail. I must die one of these days, and how happy should I be to die in jail!"

It was not for me to try to shake such determination which would not have been shaken even if I had tried. My head bent in reverence before this illiterate sage. Harbatsinh had his wish and he died in Durban jail on January 5, 1914. His body was with great honour cremated according to Hindu rites[2] in the presence of hundreds of Indians. There was not one but there were many like Harbatsinh in the satyagraha struggle. But the great good fortune of dying in jail was reserved for him alone and hencehe becomes entitled to honourable mention in the history of satyagraha

[1] Also spelt 'Hurbatsingh'. For Gandhiji's tribute to him, *vide* "Letter to *Indian Opinion*", after January 5, 1914 and "Immortal Hurbatsingh", January 7, 1914.

[2] These four words are not to be found in the original.

in South Africa.

Government would not like that men should thus be attracted to jail, nor did they appreciate the fact that prisoners upon their release should carry messages outside. They therefore decided to separate Kallenbach, Polak and me, send us away from Volksrust, and take me in particular to a place where no Indian could go and see me. I was sent accordingly to the jail in Bloemfontein, the capital of Orangia, where there were not more than 50 Indians, all of them serving as waiters in hotels. I was the only Indian prisoner there, the rest being Europeans and Negroes. I was not troubled at this isolation but hailed it as a blessing. There was no need now for me to keep my eyes or ears open, and I was glad that a novel experience was in store for me. Again, I never had had time for study for years together, particularly since 1893, and the prospect of uninterrupted study for a year filled me with joy.

I reached Bloemfontein jail where I had as much solitude as I could wish. There were many discomforts but they were all bearable, and I will not inflict a description of them upon the reader. But I must state that the medical officer of the jail became my friend. The jailer could think only of his own powers while the doctor was anxious to maintain the prisoners in their rights. In those days I was purely a fruitarian. I took neither milk nor ghee nor food grains. I lived upon a diet of bananas, tomatoes, raw groundnuts, limes and olive oil. It meant starvation for me if the supply of any one of these things was bad in quality. The doctor was therefore very careful in ordering them out, and he added almonds, walnuts and Brazil nuts to my diet. He inspected in person everything indented for me. There was not sufficient ventilation in the cell which was assigned to me. The doctor tried his best to have the cell doors kept open but in vain. The jailer threatened to resign if the doors were kept open. He was not a bad man, but he had been moving in a single rut from which he could not deviate. He had to deal with refractory prisoners, and if he discriminated in favour of a mild prisoner like myself, he would run the real risk of the turbulent prisoners getting the upper hand of him. I fully understood the jailer's standpoint, and in the disputes between the doctor and the jailer in respect of me, my sympathies were always with the jailer who was an experienced, straightforward man, seeing the way clear before him.

Mr. Kallenbach was taken to Pretoria jail and Mr. Polak to Germiston jail.

But the Government might have saved all this trouble. They were like Mrs. Partington trying to stem, mop in hand, the rising tide of the ocean. The Indian labourers of Natal were wide awake, and no power on earth could hold them in check.

CHAPTER XLVI

THE TEST

The jeweller rubs gold on the touchstone. If he is not still satisfied as to its purity, he puts it into the fire and hammers it so that the dross if any is removed and only pure gold remains. The Indians in South Africa passed through a similar test. They were hammered, and passed through fire and had the hall-mark attached to them only when they emerged unscathed through all the stages of examination.

The pilgrims were taken on special trains not for a picnic but for baptism through fire. On the way the Government did not care to arrange even to feed them and when they reached Natal, they were prosecuted and sent to jail straightaway. We expected and even desired as much. But the Government would have to incur additional expenditure and would appear to have played into the Indians' hands if they kept thousands of labourers in prison. And the coal mines would close down in the interval. If such a state of things lasted for any length of time, the Government would be compelled to repeal the £3 tax. They therefore struck out a new plan. Surrounding them with wire netting, the Government proclaimed the mine compounds as outstations to the Dundee and Newcastle jails and appointed the mine-owners' European staffs as the warders. In this way they forced the labourers underground against their will and the mines began to work once more. There is this difference between the status of a servant and that of a slave, that if a servant leaves his post, only a civil suit can be filed against him, whereas the slave who leaves his master can be brought back to work by main force. The labourers therefore were now reduced to slavery pure and simple.

But that was not enough. The labourers were brave men, and they flatly declined to work on the mines with the result that they were brutally whipped. The insolent men dressed in a brief authority over them kicked and abused them and heaped upon them other wrongs which have never been placed on record. But the poor labourers

patiently put up with all their tribulations. Cablegrams regarding these outrages were sent to India addressed to Gokhale who would inquire in his turn if he did not even for.

A day receive a fully detailed message. Gokhale broadcast the news from his sickbed, as he was seriously ill at the time. In spite of his illness, however, he insisted upon attending to the South African business himself and was at it at night no less than by day. Eventually all India was deeply stirred, and the South African question became the burning topic of the day.

It was then (December[1] 1913) that Lord Hardinge in Madras made his famous speech which created a stir in South Africa as well as in England. The Viceroy may not publicly criticize other members of the Empire, but Lord Hardinge not only passed severe criticism upon the Union Government, but he also wholeheartedly defended the action of the satyagrahis and supported their civil disobedience of unjust and invidious legislation. The conduct of Lord Hardinge came in for some adverse comment in England, but even then he did not repent but on the other hand asserted the perfect propriety of the step he had been driven to adopt. Lord Hardinge's firmness created a good impression all round.

Let us leave for the moment these brave but unhappy labourers confined to their mines, and consider the situation in other parts of Natal. The mines were situated in the north-west of Natal, but the largest number of Indian labourers was to be found employed on the north and the south coasts. I was fairly intimate with the labourers on the north coast, that is, in and about Phoenix, Verulam, Tongaat, etc., many of whom had served with me in the Boer War. I had not met the labourers on the south coast from Durban to Isipingo and Umzinto at such close quarters, and I had but few co-workers in those parts. But the news of the strike and the arrests spread everywhere at lightning speed, and thousands of labourers unexpectedly and spontaneously came out on the south as well as on the north coast. Some of them sold their household chattels from an impression that it would be a long-drawn-out struggle and they could not expect to be fed by others. When I went to jail, I had warned my co-workers against allowing any more labourers to go on strike. I hoped that a victory could be achieved only with the help of the miners. If all the

[1] Actually November 24, 1913

labourers,—there were about sixty thousand of them all told,—were called out it would be difficult to maintain them. We had not the means of taking so many on the march; we had neither the men to control them nor themoney to feed them, Moreover, with such a large body of men it would be impossible to prevent a breach of the peace.

But when the floodgates are opened, there is no checking the universal deluge. The labourers everywhere struck work of their own accord, and volunteers also posted themselves in the various places to look after them.

Government now adopted a policy of blood and iron. They prevented the labourers from striking by sheer force. Mounted military policemen chased the strikers and brought them back to their work. The slightest disturbance on the part of the labourers was answered by rifle fire. A body of strikers resisted the attempt to take them back to work. Some of them even threw stones. Fire was opened upon them, wounding many and killing some. But the labourers refused to be cowed down. The volunteers prevented a strike near Verulam with great difficulty. But all the labourers did not return to work. Some hid themselves for fear and did not go back.

One incident deserves to be placed on record. Many labourers came out in Verulam and would not return in spite of all the efforts of the authorities. General Lukin was present on the scene with his soldiers and was about to order his men to open fire. Brave Sorabji, son of the late Parsi Rustomji, then hardly 18 years of age, had reached here from Durban. He seized the reins of the General's horse and exclaimed, "You must not order firing. I undertake to induce my people peacefully to return to work." General Lukin was charmed with the young man's courage and gave him time to try his method of love. Sorabji reasoned with the labourers who came round and returned to their work. Thus a number of murders were prevented by the presence of mind, valour and loving kindness of one young man.

The reader must observe that this firing and the treatment accorded by the Government to the strikers on the coast were quite illegal. There was an appearance of legality about the Government's procedure in respect of the miners who were arrested not for going on strike but for entering the Transvaal without proper credentials. On the north and the south coast however the very act of striking work was treated as an offence not in virtue of any law but of the authority of the Government. Authority takes the place of law in the last resort.

There is a maxim in English law that the king can do no wrong. The convenience of the powers that be is the law in the final analysis. This objection is applicable to all governments alike. And as a matter of fact, it is not always objectionable thus to lay the ordinary law onthe shelf. Sometimes adherence to ordinary law is itself open to objection. When the authority charged with and pledged to the public good is threatened with destruction by the restraints imposed upon it, it is entitled in its discretion to disregard such restraints. But occasions of such a nature must always be rare. If the authority is in the habit of frequently exceeding the limits set? upon it, it cannot be beneficial to the common weal. In the case under consideration the authority had no reason whatever to act arbitrarily. The labourer has enjoyed the right to strike from time immemorial. The Government had sufficient material before them to know that the strikers were not bent upon mischief. At the most the strike was to result only in the repeal of the £3 tax. Only peaceful methods can be properly adopted against men of peace. Again the authority in South Africa was not pledged to the public good but existed for the exclusive benefit of the Europeans, being generally hostile to the Indians. And therefore the breach of all restraints on the part of such a partisan authority could never be proper or excusable.

Thus in my view there was here a sheer abuse of authority, which could never achieve the ends which it proposed to itself. There is sometimes a momentary success, but a permanent solution cannot be reached by such questionable methods. In South Africa the very £3 tax for bolstering up which the Government perpetrated all these outrages had to be abolished within six months of the firing. Pain is often thus the precursor of pleasure. The pain of the Indians in South Africa made itself heard everywhere. Indeed, I believe, that as every part has its place in a machine, every feature has its place in a movement of men, and as a machine is clogged by rust, dirt and the like, so is a movement hampered by a number of factors. We are merely the instruments of the Almighty Will and are therefore often ignorant of what helps us forward and what acts as an impediment. We must thus rest satisfied with a knowledge only of the means and, if these are pure, we can fearlessly leave the end to take care of itself.

I observed, in this struggle, that its end drew nearer as the distress of the fighters became more intense, and as the innocence of the distressed grew clearer. I also saw that, in such a pure, unarmed

and non-violent struggle, the very kind of material required for its prosecution, be it men, money or munitions, is forthcoming at the right moment. Many volunteers rendered spontaneous help, whom I do not know even to this day. Such workers are generally selfless and put in a sort of invisible service even in spite of themselves.No one takes note of them, no one awards them a certificate of merit. Some of them do not even know that their nameless but priceless unremembered acts of love do not escape the sleepless vigilance of the recording angel.

The Indians of South Africa successfully passed the test to which they were subjected. They entered the fire and emerged out of it unscathed. The beginning of the end of the struggle must be detailed in a separate chapter.

CHAPTER XLVII

THE BEGINING OF THE END

The reader has seen that the Indians exerted as much quiet strength as they could and more than could be expected of them. He has also seen that a very large majority of these passive resisters were poor, downtrodden men of whom no the could possibly be entertained. He will recall too that all the responsible workers or the Phoenix settlement with the exception of two or three were now in jail. Of the workers outside Phoenix the late Sheth Ahmed Muhammad Kachhalia was still at large, and so were Mr. West, Miss West and Maganlal Gandhi in Phoenix. Kachhalia Sheth exercised general supervision. Miss Schlesin kept all the Transvaal accounts and looked after the Indians who crossed the border. Mr. West was in charge of the English section of *Indian Opinion* and of the cable correspondence with Gokhale. At a ten like the present, when the situation assumed a new aspect every moment, correspondence by post was out of the question. Cablegrams had to be despatched, no shorter in length than letters, and the delicate responsibility regarding them was shouldered by Mr. West.

Like Newcastle in the mine area, Phoenix now became the centre of the strikers on the north coast and was visited by hundreds of them who came there to seek advice as well as shelter It therefore naturally attracted the attention of the Government, and the angry looks of the Europeans thereabouts. It became somewhat risky to live in Phoenix, and yet even children there accomplished dangerous tasks with courage. West was arrested in the meanwhile, though as a matter of

fact there was no reason for arresting him. Our understanding was, that West and Maganlal Gandhi should not only not try to be arrested, but on the other hand should, as far as possible, avoid any occasion for arrest, West had not therefore allowed any ground to arise for the Government to arrest him. But the Government could scarcely beexpected to consult the convenience of the satyagrahis, nor did they need to wait for some occasion to arise for arresting anyone whose freedom jarred upon their nerves. The authority's very desire take a step amply suffices as a reason for adopting it. As soon as the news of the arrest of West was cabled to Gokhale, he initiated the policy of sending out able men from India. When a meeting was held in Lahore in support of the satyagrahis of South Africa, Mr. C. F. Andrews gave away in their interest all the money in his possession, and ever since then Gokhale had had his eye upon him. No sooner, therefore, did he hear about West's arrest than he inquired of Andrews by wire if he was ready to proceed to South Africa at once. Andrews replied in the affirmative. His beloved friend Pearson also got ready to go the same moment and the two friends left India for South Africa by the first available steamer.[1]

But the struggle was now about to close. The Union Government had not the power to keep thousands of innocent men in jail. The Viceroy would not tolerate it and all the world was waiting to see what General Smuts would do. The Union Government now did what all governments similarly situated generally do. No inquiry was really needed. The wrong perpetrated was well known on all hands, and everyone realized that it must be redressed. General Smuts too saw that there had been injustice which called for remedy, but be was in the same predicament as a snake which has taken a rat in its mouth but can neither gulp it down nor cast it out. He must do justice, but he had lost the power of doing justice, as he had given the Europeans in South Africa to understand that he would not repeal the £3 tax nor carry out any other reform. And now he felt compelled to abolish the tax as well as to undertake other remedial legislation. States amenable to public opinion get out of such awkward positions by appointing a commission which conducts only a nominal inquiry, as as recommendations are a foregone conclusion. It is a general practice that the recommendations of such a commission should be accepted

[1] Some time before December 17 Gokhale had cabled Gandhiji about deputing them to visit South Africa to inquire into conditions there.

by the State, and therefore under the guise of carrying out the recommendations, governments give the justice which they have first refused. General Smuts appointed a commission[1] of three members,with which the Indians pledged themselves to have nothing to do so long as certain demands of theirs in respect of the commission were not granted by the Government.[2] One of these demands was, that the satyagrahi prisoners should be released, and another that the Indians should be represented on the commission by at least one member. To a certain extent the first demand was accepted by the commission itself which recommended to the Government "with a view to enabling the enquiry to be made as thorough as possible" that Mr. Kallenbach, Mr. Polak and I should be released unconditionally. The Government accepted this recommendation and released all three of us simultaneously (December 18, 1913) after an imprisonment of hardly six weeks. West who had been arrested was also released as Government had no case against him.

All these events transpired before the arrival of Andrews and Pearson whom I was thus able to welcome as they landed at Durban.[3] They were agreeably surprised to see me, as they knew nothing of the events which happened during their voyage. This was my first meeting with these noble Englishmen.

All three of us were disappointed upon our release. We knew nothing of the events outside. The news of the commission came to us as a surprise, but we saw that we could not co-operate with the commission in any shape or form.[4] We felt that the Indians should be certainly allowed to nominate at least one representative on the commission. We three, therefore, upon reaching Durban, addressed a letter to General Smuts on December 21, 1913 to this effect:

"We welcome the appointment of the commission, but we strongly object to the inclusion in it of Messrs Esselen and Wylie. We have nothing against them personally. They are well-known and able

[1] Set up on December 11, the Solomon Commission consisted of Sir William Solomon, chairman, Ewald Esselen and J. S. Wylie, members.

[2] Public meetings at Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, Maritzburg, Kimberley and Potchefstroom protested against the composition of the Commission.

[3] On January 2, 1914

[4] *Vide* "Speech at Johannesburg", December 18, 1013, "Speech at Durban", & "Interview to *The Natal Mercury*", December 20, 1913 and "Speech at Mass Meeting", December 21, 1913, for Gandhiji's speeches as well as his interview to *The Natal Mercury* stating the Indian stand in regard to the Commission.

citizens. But as both of them have often expressed their dislikefor the Indians, there is likelihood of their doing injustice without being conscious of it. Man cannot change his temperament all at once. It is against the laws of nature to suppose that these gentlemen will suddenly become different from what they are. However, we do not ask for their removal from the commission.We only suggest that some impartial men should be appointed in addition to them, and in this connection we would mention Sir James Rose Innes and the Hon'ble Mr. W. P. Schreiner, both of them well-known men noted for their sense of justice. Secondly, we request that all the satyagrahi prisoners should be released. If this is not done, it would be difficult for us to remain outside jail. There is no reason now for keeping the satyagrahis in jail any longer. Thirdly, if we tender evidence before the commission, we should be allowed to go to the mines and factories where the indentured labourers are at work. If these requests are not complied with, we are sorry that we shall have to explore fresh avenues for going to jail."[1]

General Smuts declined to appoint any more members on the commission, and stated that the commission was appointed not for the sake of any party but merely for the satisfaction of the Government.[2] Upon receiving this reply on December 24, we had no alternative but to prepare to go to jail. We therefore published a notification to the Indians that a party of Indians courting jail would commence their march from Durban on January l, 1914.[3]

But there was one sentence in General Smuts' reply[4], which prompted me to write to him again, and it was this: 'We haveappointed an impartial and judicial commission, and if while appointing it, we have not consulted the Indians, neither have we consulted the coal-owners or the sugar-planters.' I wrote privately to the General,[5]

[1] For the full text of this letter, *vide* "Letter to Minister of Interior", December 21, 1913. The despatch of the communication to the Government followed a mass meeting held the same day under the auspices of the Natal Indian Congress, Durban. *Vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting", December 21, 1913.

[2] For Government's reactions, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Minister of Interior", December 24, 1913 and "Governor-General's Cable to Colonial Office", December 22 & 23, 1913.

[3] The original adds: "We were released on December 18, 1913. We wrote this letter on December 21 and we received the General's reply on the 24th."

[4] Dated December 24, 1913; *vide* "Letter from Minister of Interior".

[5] No letter is available. There is however a telegram, dated December 25, 1913, in which Gandhiji sought an interview-with Smuts; *vide* "Telegram to Minister of Interior".

requesting to see him and place some facts before him if the Government were out to do justice. General Smuts granted my request for an interview, and the march was postponed for a few days accordingly.

When Gokhale heard that a fresh march was under contemplation, he sent a long cablegram, saying that such a step on our part would land Lord Hardinge and himself in an awkward position and strongly advising us to give up the march, end assist the commission by tendering evidence before it.[1]

We were on the horns of a dilemma. The Indians were pledged to a boycott of the commission if its personnel was not enlarged to their satisfaction. Lord Hardinge might be displeased, Gokhale might be pained, but how could we go back upon our pledged word) Mr. Andrews suggested to us the considerations of Gokhale's feelings, his delicate health and the shock which our decision was calculated to impart to him. But in fact these considerations were never absent from my mind. The leaders held a conference and finally reached the decision that the boycott must stand at any cost if more members were not co-opted to the commission. We therefore sent a long cablegram to Gokhale, at an expense of about a hundred pounds.[2] Andrews too concurred with the gist of our message which was to the following effect:

'We realize how you are pained, and would like to follow your advice at considerable sacrifice. Lord Hardinge has rendered priceless aid, which we wish we would continue to receive till the end. But we are anxious that you should understand our position. It is a question of thousands of men having taken a pledge to which no exception can be taken. Our entire struggle has ken built upon a foundation of pledges. Many of us would have fallen back today had it not been for the compelling force of our pledges. All moral bonds would be relaxed at once if thousands of men once proved false to their plighted word. The pledge was taken after full and mature

[1] Gandhiji had cabled Gokhale on December 22 and 23 about the worsening situation and the imminence of a fresh struggle; *vide* "Cable to G. K. Gokhale", December 22, 1913 and "Cable to G. K. Gokhale", December 23, 1913. For Gokhale's cables, *vide* footnote 1 to "Cable to G. K. Gokhale", December 23, 1913.

[2] *Vide* "Cable to G. K. Gokhale", December 29,1913, for the text of cable. The one summarized here is that dated December 24, "Cable to G. K. Gokhale"; also "Cable to G. K. Gokhale", December 25 & 26, 1913.

deliberation, and there is nothing immoral about it. The community has an unquestionable right to pledge itself to boycott. We wish that even you should advise that a pledge of this nature should not be broken but be observed inviolate by all, come what might. Please show this cable to Lord Hardinge. We wish you might not be placed in a false position. We have commenced this struggle with God as our witness and His help as our sole support. We desire and bespeak the assistance of elders as well as big men, and are glad when we get it. But whether or not such assistance is forthcoming, we are humbly of opinion that pledges must ever be scrupulously kept. We desire your support and your blessing in such observance.'

This cable, when it reached Gokhale, had an adverse effect upon his health, but he continued to help us with unabated or even greater zeal than before. He wired to Lord Hardinge on the matter but not only did he not throw us overboard, but on the other hand defended our standpoint. Lord Hardinge too remained unmoved.

I went to Pretoria with Andrews. Just at this time there was a great strike of the European employees of the Union railways, which made the position of the Government extremely delicate. I was called upon to commence the Indian march at such a fortunate juncture. But I declared that the Indians could not thus assist the railway strikers, as they were not out to harass the Government, their struggle being entirely different and differently conceived.[1] Even if we undertook the march, we would begin it at some other time when the railway trouble had ended. This decision of ours created a deep impression, and was cabled to England by Reuter. Lord Ampthill cabled his congratulations from England. English friends in South Africa too appreciated our decision. One of the secretaries of General Smuts jocularly said: "I do not like your people, and do not care to assist them at all. But what am I to do? You help us in our days of need. How can we lay hands upon you? I often wish you took to violence like the English strikers, and then we would know at once how to dispose of you. But you will not injure even the enemy. You desire victory by self-suffering alone and never transgress your self-imposed limits of courtesy and chivalry. And that is what reduces us to sheer helplessness." General Smuts also gave expression to similar sentiments.

[1] *Vide* "Interview to *Pretoria News*", January 9, 1914.

I need scarcely suggest to the reader that this was not the first incident of chivalrous consideration for others being shown by the satyagrahis. When the Indian labourers on the north coast went on strike, the planters at Mount Edgecombe would have been put to great losses if all the cane that had been cut was not brought to the mill and crushed. Twelve hundred[1] Indians therefore returned to work solely with a view to finishing this part of the work, and joined their compatriots only when it was finished. Again when the Indian employees of the Durban Municipality struck work, those whowere engaged in the sanitary services of the borough or as attendants upon the patients in hospitals were sent back, and they willingly returned to their duties. If the sanitary services were dislocated,and if there was no one to attend upon the patients in hospitals, there might be an outbreak of disease in the city and the sick would be deprived of medical aid, and no satyagrahi would wish for such consequences to ensure. Employees of this description were therefore exempted from the strike. In every step that he takes, the satyagrahi is bound to consider the position of his adversary.

I could see that the numerous cases of such chivalry left their invisible yet potent impress everywhere, enhanced the prestige of the Indians, and prepared a suitable atmosphere for a settlement.

CHAPTER XLVIII

THE PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT

The atmosphere was thus becoming favourable for a settlement.[2] Sir Benjamin Robertson, who had been sent by Lord Hardinge by a special steamer, was to arrive about the same time that Mr. Andrews and I went to Pretoria.[3] But we did not wait for him and set out as we had to reach Pretoria on the day fixed by General Smuts. There was no reason indeed to await his arrival, as the final result could only be commensurate with our strength.

[1] The original has: "Fifteen hundred".

[2] For Gandhiji's cable of December 29 to the Minister of Interior and the official reactions, which appeared to ease the situation, *vide* "Telegram to Minister of Interior and Appendix "Telegram from Minister of Interior", January 5, 1914, "Extract from Governor-General's Despatch", December 31, 1913.

[3] Gandhiji had promised Gokhale, on the latter's insistence, to put off the struggle till Robertson arrived in South Africa; *vide* "Cable to G. K. Gokhale", December 27, 1913; also Appendix "Viceroy's Telegram to G. K. Gokhale", December 28, 1913. Robertson arrived in Durban on January 11, 1914.

Mr. Andrews and I reached Pretoria. But I alone was to interview General Smuts. The General was preoccupied with the railways strike, which was so serious in nature that the Union Government had declared martial law. The European workmen not only demanded higher wages, but aimed at taking the reins of government into their hands. My first interview with the General was very short,[1] but I saw that he did not then ride the same high horse as he did before, when the Great March began. At that time the General would not so much as talk with me. The threat of satyagraha was the same then as it was now. Yet he had declined to enter into negotiations. But now he was ready to confer with me.The Indians had demanded that a member should be cot opted to the commission to represent Indian interests. But on this point General Smuts would not give in. "That cannot be done", said he, "as it would be derogatory to the Government's prestige, and I would be unable to carry out the desired reforms. You must understand that Mr. Esselen is our man, and would fall in with, not oppose, the Government's wishes as regards reform. Colonel Wylie is a man of position in Natal and might even be considered anti-Indian. If therefore even he agrees to a repeal of the £3 tax, the Government will have an easy task before them. Our troubles are manifold; we have not a moment to spare and therefore wish to set the Indian question at rest. We have decided to grant your demands, but for this we must have a recommendation from the commission. I understand your position too. You have solemnly declared that you will not lead evidence before it so long as there is no representative of the Indians sitting on the commission. I do not mind if you do not tender evidence, but you should not organize any active propaganda to prevent anyone who wishes to give evidence from doing so, and should suspend satyagraha in the interval. I believe that by so doing you will be serving your own interests as well as giving me a respite. As you will not tender evidence, you will not be able to prove your allegations as regards ill-treatment accorded to the Indian strikers. But that is for you to think over."

Such were the suggestions of General Smuts, which on the whole I was inclined to receive favourably. We had made many complaints about ill-treatment of strikers by soldiers and warders, but the difficulty was that we were precluded by a boycott of the commission from proving our allegations. There was a difference of opinion

[1] *Vide* "Interview with General Smuts", January 16, 1914.

among the Indians on this point. Some held that the charges levelled by the Indians against the soldiers must be proved, and therefore suggested that if the evidence could not be placed before the commission, we must challenge libel proceedings by publishing the authentic evidence in our possession. I disagreed with these friends. There was little likelihood of the commission giving a decision unfavourable to the Government. Challenging libel proceedings would land the community in endless trouble, and the net result would be the barren satisfaction of having proved the charges of ill-treatment. As a barrister, I was well aware of the difficulties of proving the truth of statements giving rise to libel proceedings. But my weightiest argument was that the satyagrahi is out to suffer. Even before satyagraha was started, the satyagrahis knew that they would have tosuffer even unto death, and they were ready to: undergo such suffering. Such being the case, there was no sense in proving now that they did suffer. A spirit of revenge being alien to satyagraha, it was best for a satyagrahi to hold his peace when he encountered extraordinary difficulties in proving the fact of his suffering. A satyagrahi fights only for essentials. The essential thing was that the obnoxious laws should be repealed or suitably amended, and when this was fairly within his grasp, he need not bother himself with other things. Again a satyagrahi's silence would at the time of settlement stand him in good stead in his resistance to unjust laws. With such arguments I was able to win over most of these friends who differed from me, and we decided to drop the idea of proving our allegations of ill-treatment.

CHAPTER XLIX

LETTERS EXCHANGED

Correspondence passed between General Smuts and myself, placing on record the agreement arrived at as the result of a number of interviews. My letter dated January 21, 1914 may be thus summarized:[1]

'We have conscientious scruples with regard to leading evidence before the commission as constituted at present. You appreciate these scruples and regard them as honourable, but are unable to alter your decision. As, however, you have accepted the principle of consultation

[1] For the full text of the letter, *vide* "Letter to Secretary for Interior", January 21, 1914.

with the Indians, I will advise my countrymen not to hamper the labours of the commission by any active propaganda, and not to render the position of the Government difficult by reviving passive resistance, pending the result of the commission and the introduction of legislation during the forthcoming session. It will further be possible for us to assist Sir Benjamin Robertson who has been deputed by the Viceroy.

'As to our allegations of ill-treatment during the progress of the Indian strike in Natal, the avenue of proving them through the commission is closed to us by our solemn declaration to have nothing to do with it. As satyagrahis we endeavour to avoid, as far as possible, any resentment of personal wrongs. But in order that our silence may not be mistaken, may I ask you to recognize our motive and reciprocate by not leading evidence of a negative character before the commission on the allegations in question? Suspension of satyagraha, moreover, carries with it a prayer for the release of satyagrahi prisoners.

'It might not be out of place here to recapitulate the points on which relief has been sought:

1. Repeal of the £3 tax;

2. Legalization of the marriages celebrated according to the rites of Hinduism, Islam, etc.;

3. The entry of educated Indians,

4. Alteration in the assurance as regards the Orange Free State;

5. An assurance that the existing laws especially affecting Indians will be administered justly, with due regard to vested rights.

'If you view my submission with favour, I shall be prepared to advise my countrymen in accordance with the tenor of this letter.'

General Smuts' reply of the same date was to this effect:[1]

'I regret but understand your inability to appear before the commission. I also recognize the motive which makes you unwilling to revive old sores by courting libel proceedings before another tribunal. The Government repudiates the charges of harsh action against the Indian strikers. But as you will not lead evidence in support of those allegations, it would be futile for the Government to

[1] For the text of this letter, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Minister of Interior", January 21, 1914.

lead rebutting evidence in vindication of the conduct of its officers. As regards the release of satyagrahi prisoners, the Government had already issued the necessary orders before your letter arrived. In regard to the grievances summarized at the end of your letter, the Government will await the recommendations of the commission before any action is taken.'

Mr. Andrews and I had had frequent interviews with General Smuts before these letters were exchanged.[1] But meanwhile Sir Benjamin Robertson too arrived at Pretoria. Sir Benjamin was looked upon as a popular official, and he brought a letter of recommendation from Gokhale, but I observed that he was not entirely free from the usual weakness of the English official. He had no sooner come than he began to create factions among the Indians and to bully the satyagrahis. My first meeting[2] with him in Pretoria did not prepossess me in his favour. I told him about the telegrams I had received informing me of his bullying procedure. I dealt with him, as indeed with everyone else, in a frank and straightforward manner, and we therefore became friends. But I have often seenthat officials are apt to bully those who will tamely submit to them, and will be correct with those who are correct themselves and will not be cowed down.

We thus reached a provisional agreement[3], and satyagraha was suspended for the last time. Many English friends were glad of this, and promised their assistance in the final settlement. It was rather difficult to get the Indians to endorse this agreement. No one would wish that enthusiasm which had arisen should be allowed to subside. Again, who ever would trust General Smuts? Some reminded me of the fiasco in 1908, and said, "General Smuts once played us false, often charged you with forcing fresh issues, and subjected the community to endless suffering. And yet what a pity that you have not learnt the necessary lesson of declining to trust him ! This man will betray you once again, and you will again propose to revive satyagraha. but who will then listen to you? Is it possible that men should every now and then go to jail, and be ready to be faced with failure each time? With a man like General Smuts settlement is

[1] *Vide* footnote 3 to "Cable to G. K. Gokhale", January 22, 1914.

[2] This was on January 2 l, 1914.

[3] For terms of this agreement, *vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting", January 25, 1914; and for the official view as to its implieations, *vide* Appendix "Extract from Governor-General's Despatch", January 22, 1914.

possible only if he actually delivers the goods. It is no use having his assurances. How can we any further trust a man who pledges his word and then breaks it?"

I knew that such arguments would be brought forward[1] and was not therefore surprised when they were. No matter how often a satyagrahi is betrayed, he will continue to repose his trust in the adversary so long as there are not cogent grounds for distrust. Pain to a satyagrahi is the same as pleasure. He will not therefore be misled by the mere fear of suffering into groundless distrust. On the other hand, relying as he does upon his own strength, he will not mind being betrayed by the adversary, will continue to trust in spite of frequent betrayals, and will believe that he thereby strengthens the forces of truth and brings victory nearer. Meetings[2] were therefore held in various places, and I was able at last to persuade the Indians to approve of the terms of the agreement. The Indians now came to a better understanding of the spirit of satyagraha. Mr. Andrews was the mediator and the witness in the present agreement, and then there was Sir Benjamin Robertson as representing the Government of India. There was therefore the least possible likelihood of the agreement being subsequently repudiated. If I had obstinately refused to accept theagreement, it would have become a count of indictment against the Indians, and the victory which was achieved in the next six months would have been beset with various obstacles. The author of the Sanskrit saying, 'Forgiveness is an ornament to the brave', drew upon his rich experience of satyagrahis never giving any one the least opportunity of finding fault with them. Distrust is a sign of weakness and satyagraha implies the banishment of all weakness and therefore of distrust, which is clearly out of place when the adversary is not to be destroyed but to be won over.

When the agreement was thus endorsed by the Indians, we had only to wait for the next session of the Union Parliament. Meanwhile the commission set to work. Only a very few witnesses appeared before it on behalf of the Indians, furnishing striking evidence of the great hold which the satyagrahis had acquired over the community. Sir Benjamin Robertson tried to induce many to tender evidence but failed except in the case of a few who were strongly opposed to

[1] The original adds: "from many quarters".

[2] For the report of a mass meeting held at Durban, *vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting", January 25, 1914.

satyagraha.[1] The boycott of the commission did not produce any bad effect. Its work was shortened and its report was published at once.[2] The commission strongly criticized the Indians for withholding their assistance and dismissed the charges of misbehaviour against the soldiers, but recommended compliance without delay with all the demands of the Indian community, such as for instance the repeal of the £3 tax and the validation of Indian marriages, and the grant of some trifling concessions in addition. Thus the report of the commission was favourable to the Indians as predicted by General Smuts. Mr. Andrews left for England and Sir Benjamin Robertson for India. We had received an assurance that the requisite legislation would be undertaken with a view to implementing the recommendations of the commission. What this legislation was and how it was brought forward will be considered in the next chapter.

CHAPTER L

THE END OF THE STRUGGLE

Within a short time of the issue of the report, the Government published in the official Gazette of the Union the Indians'Relief Bill[3] which was to effect a settlement of their long-standing dispute with the Indians; and I went at once to Cape Town where the Union Parliament sits. The Bill contained 9 sections and would take up only two columns of a paper like *Young India*. One part of it dealt with the question of Indian marriages and validated in South Africa the marriages which were held legal in India, except that if a man had more wives than one, only one of them would at any time be recognized as his legal wife in South Africa. The second part abolished the annual licence of £3 to be taken out by every indentured Indian labourer who failed to return to India and settled in the country as a free man on the completion of his indenture. The third part provided that the domicile certificates issued by the Government to Indians in Natal and bearing the thumb-impression of the holder of the permit should be recognized as conclusive evidence

[1] Gandhiji and his immediate colleague too refrained from appearing before the Commission; *vide* "Letter to Indian Grievances Commission", January 26, 1914.

[2] The Commission's report was submitted to Government on March 7 and to the South African Parliament; for extracts *vide* Appendix "Extracts from Solomon Commission Report", March 25, 1914.

[3] This was on May 27; for the text of the Indians' Relief Act as finally passed, *vide* Appendix "The Indians' Relief Act, 1914".

of the right of the holder to enter the Union As soon as his identity was established. There was a long and pleasant debate over the Bill in the Union Parliament.

Administrative matters which did not come under the Indians, Relief Bill were set led by correspondence between General Smuts and me, as for example, safeguarding the educated Indians' right of entry into the Cape Colony, allowing 'specially exempted' educated Indians to enter South Africa, the status of educated Indians who had entered South Africa within the last three years,[1] and permitting existing plural wives to join their husbands in South Africa. After dealing with all these points, General Smuts in his letter of June 30, 1914, added:

"With regard to the administration of existing laws, it has always been and will continue to be the desire of the Government to see that they are administered in a just manner and with due regard to vested rights.

I replied to the above letter[2] to this effect:

"I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of even date. I feel deeply grateful for the patience and courtesy which you showed during our discussions.

"The passing of the Indians' Relief Bill and this correspondence finally closed the satyagraha struggle which commenced in the September of 1906, and which to the Indian community cost much physical suffering and pecuniary loss and to the Government much anxious thought and consideration."As you are aware, some of my countrymen have wished me to go further. They are dissatisfied that the Trade Licence laws of the different provinces, the Transvaal Gold Law, the Transvaal Townships Act, the Transvaal Law 3 of 1885 have not been altered so as to give them full rights of residence, trade and ownership of land. Some of them are dissatisfied that full inter-provincial migration is not permitted, and some are dissatisfied that on the marriage question the Relief Bill goes no further than it does. They have asked me that all the above matters might be included in the satyagraha struggle. I have been unable to comply with their wishes. Whilst, therefore, they have not been included in the programme of satyagraha, it will not be denied that some day or other these matters will require further and sympathetic consideration by the

[1] The original has: before 1914".

[2] *Vide* "Letter to E. M. Gorges", June 30, 1914.

Government. Complete satisfaction cannot be expected until full civic rights have been conceded to the resident Indian population.

"I have told my countrymen that they will have to exercise patience, and by all honourable means at their disposal educate public opinion so as to enable the Government of the day to go further than the present correspondence does. I shall hope when the Europeans of South Africa fully appreciate the fact that now the importation of indentured labour from India is prohibited, and the Immigrants Regulation Act of last year has in practice all but stopped further free Indian immigration, and that my countrymen do not entertain any political ambition, they, the Europeans, will see the justice and indeed the necessity of my countrymen being granted the rights I have just referred to.

"Meanwhile, if the generous spirit that the Government have applied to the treatment of the problem during the past few months continues to be applied, as promised in your letter, in the administration of the existing laws, I am quite certain that the Indian community throughout the Union will be able to enjoy some measure of peace and never be a source of trouble to the Government."

CONCLUSION

Thus the great satyagraha struggle closed after eight years, and it appeared that the Indians in South Africa were now at peace. On July 18, 1914, I sailed for England, to meet Gokhale, on my way back to India, with mixed feelings of pleasure and regret,—pleasure because I was returning home after many years and eagerly looked forward to serving the country under Gokhale's guidance, regret because it was a great wrench for me to leave South Africa, whereI had passed twenty-one years of my life sharing to thefull in the sweets and bitters of human experience, and where I had realized my vocation in life.[1]

When one considers the painful contrast between the happy ending of the satyagraha struggle and the present condition of the Indians in South Africa, one feels for a moment as if all this suffering had gone for nothing, or is inclined to question the efficacy of satyagraha as a solvent of the problems of mankind. Let us here consider this point for a little while. There is a law of nature that a

[1] From July 1 to July 18, when Gandhiji embarked at Cape Town, were for him days of leave-taking.

thing can be retained by the same means by which it has been acquired. A thing acquired by violence can be retained by violence alone, while one acquired by truth can be retained only by truth. The Indians in South Africa, therefore, can ensure their safety today if they can wield the weapon of satyagraha. There are no such miraculous properties in satyagraha, that a thing acquired by truth could be retained even when truth was given up. It would not be desirable even if it was possible. If therefore the position of Indians in South Africa has now suffered deterioration, that argues the absence of satyagrahis among them. There is no question here of finding fault with the present generation of South African Indians, but of merely stating the facts of the case. Individuals or bodies of individuals cannot borrow from others qualities which they themselves do not possess. The satyagrahi veterans passed away one after another. Sorabji, Kachhalia, Thambi Naidoo, Parsi Rustomji and others are no more, and there are very few now who passed through the fire of satyagraha. The few that remain are still in the fighting line, and I have not a shadow of a doubt that they will be the saviours of the community on the day of its trial if the light of satyagraha is burning bright within them.

Finally, the reader of these pages has seen that had it not been for this great struggle[1] and for the untold sufferings which many Indians invited upon their devoted heads, the Indians today-would have been hounded out of South Africa. Nay, the victory achieved by Indians in South Africa more or less served as a shield for Indian emigrants in other parts of the British Empire, who, if they are suppressed, will be suppressed thanks to the absence of satyagrahaamong themselves, and to India's inability to protect them, and not because of any flaw in the weapon of satyagraha. I will consider myself amply repaid if I have in these pages demonstrated with some success that Satyagraha is a priceless and matchless weapon, and that those who wield it are Strangers to disappointment or defeat.

[1] Gandhiji wrote down, during the voyage to London, on his way home, an assessment of the satyagraha campaign in South Africa. This was later published in the Golden Number of *Indian Opinion,* 1914; *vide* "The Last Satyagraha Campaign : Preface", July 23, 1914 and "The Last Satyagraha Campaign : My Experience", after July 23, 1914; also Appendix for an editorial article in the Golden Number entitled "The Struggle and What It Has Meant", 1914.

2. NOTES

BREACH OF FAITH

The threatened Asiatic Bill is a breach of the Smuts-Gandhi agreement regarding the whole of South Africa, and it is a breach of faith also as regards Natal as brought out by Mr. Andrews in one of his letters to the Press in South Africa and reproduced in *Indian Opinion* just to hand. The following is the apposite extract:

> The Natal Government brought out under contract, from the year 1860 on- wards, the vast majority of Indians who landed in South Africa. It was agreed between the two Governments, before they left India, that if they fulfilled their five years' labour contract on the sugar plantations they should be given certain rights in Natal, including those of domicile together with open purchase of land and immovable property. The Natal Government, in its eagerness to get this indentured Indian labour, also agreed that Indian traders should be allowed to accompany the labourers as free Indians.
>
> These Indian labourers purchased those rights at a great cost. For the five years' indenture was accompanied by such grave moral evils, that it has now been entirely abandoned as a vicious labour system. The Natal Government, up to quite recent times, has endeavoured to observe faithfully its side of the contract. Section 148 of the South Africa Act makes it clear that agreements made by the Natal Colonial Government devolve upon the Union. (*Year Book*, p. 74)

ECONOMIC FALLACY

The same letter thus disposes of the economic argument often brought against the Indian settler:

> The Indian question itself is by no means so serious from an economic standpoint as people in South Africa have been led to think. Indeed, in reality, the solution has been already obtained, because the Indian competition is a diminishing and not an increasing factor. Yet even in a city like Durban where Indians are most numerous of all, the net increase in the value of properties held by Indians between 1921 and 1925 was only in round figures a quarter of a million while that of Europeans was four millions. Yet the Indian and European populations in Durban and suburbs are in the proportions of four to five. I have already stated, and would state again, that the census of 1921 showed a European increase of 39.8 per cent, while the Indian increase was

ony 6.1 per cent. Every year Indians in large numbers are leaving the country never to return. No more are allowed to come in. The Indian men inthe Union are greater in number than the women. Therefore the birthrate is not likely to be a high one. The whole number of Indians in the Union was only 161,000 in 1921. If there happen to be cases where Indian shops are increasing in number, I have seen with my own eyes other places where the decrease is equally marked. What cause is there, then, for any economic fear? The problem is easily able to solve itself, if only time is allowed; and in the increasing prosperity (which is certain to come with the improvement of trade) the shortage of labour will everywhere soon be felt and the majority of Indians, who still do useful and steady industrial and agricultural work, will all be needed. It seems indeed almost an absurd thing, at such a time, to be driving such a valuable labour asset out of the country.

Mr. Andrews could have added that in other parts of South Africa the Indian position is infinitely worse than in Durban. In the major part of the Union he is landles and is dependent purely on the goodwill of his European landlord. His only crime is that besides being a labourer he dares to engage in trade and eke out an honest living. Dispassionately examined, the cry against the Asiatic has no foundation save in an insensate colour prejudice and petty trade jealousy.

Young India, 11-2-1926

3. BUY KHADI WITH THE DIFFERENCE [1]

. . . Anyway you will see how much money third class travelling save and you can buy khadi with the difference.

This reminds me why I began this story. I was travelling third class. I was thinking what a beautiful song two beggar boys had just sung and what would happen to literature if ticket-collectors ruled these scamps out, when a gentleman, educated and clean, and occupying more than his share of the seat just like myself, sat up, and asked me "Would you mind if I asked you a question, sir?"

It was not one question, but many. I had to go for the hundredth time into the justifications for khadi. It was interesting and his doubts cleared my own

[1] From this article by C. Rajagopalachari, only the passage on which Gandhiji commented is reproduced here.

mind in a wonderful manner.

The editor having been for some years now a stranger to the delights and the difficulties of third class travelling is always glad to find space for well-spun stories about the people's travelling class, especially when they connect themselves with the people's Wheel of Fortune.

Young India, 11-2-1926

4. FROM SWEDEN

Thus writes a Swedish correspondent:

> It is a great joy to me to get your paper every week and it seems to me as if I stood in constant contact with you. I see that you answer in *Young India* questions from people in distant countries, and wonder if you will also answer questions from me. . . . Will you tell me in your paper if you still adhere to your first programme in all its parts? Papers say you have changed your opinions about several points, but you are as eager as ever for non-co-operation? In our biggest paper there has been an article about you and I translate on a separate paper the principal points. I think they prove a very great want of insight in India's present situation. People don't seem to understand that since the English have tried to trample out every aspect of greatness in the character of the masses they cannot in one day, month or year regain all they have lost. There must be a rebuilding *from where they stand.* It is slow work but what a glorious material to work upon!
>
> I wonder if I dare trouble you with answering in *Young India* what I translate from the article. I should like to enlighten the public about your real opinion. . . . I think spinning-wheel is a foundation on which India 's liberation, economic well-being and, as a product, spiritual "renaissance", is to be built.
>
> If I have been too presuming, I ask you to forgive me. We have in our Bible a sentence: "Love drives away fear" and I have loved India and its people for nearly forty years—that's my only excuse for writing to you as I do.

The following[1] is the extract translation sent by the correspondent:

> Gandhi embodies in his fanatical spiritual imperialism and his hatred to Western civilization the reactionary India. . . .

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

> We have shown how Gandhi, preaching the ideal of renunciation and the silent contemplation, at the same time carries on eager bread-winner politics and how his all-embracing agitation assumes just the order of things that he wants to do away with. A third contradiction shows itself in Gandhi's behaviour concerning the castes. Gandhi naturally strives for a social order suited for the economic ideal, the independence of the village community which he teaches. The old caste institution must consequ-ently have an absolute defender in Gandhi. But this is not the case. On several points, especially concerning the untouchables, Gandhi has declared an opi-nion different from the orthodox standpoint. He thus works to help the mod-ern time. It is clear that a movement so full of contradictions and strange things as the integral nationalisms and its last off-spring, Gandhism cannot produce anything of importance. The boycott against the legislative councils, the schools, law-courts and goods from the mills, has completely failed. . . .

As to the question embodied in the letter, I must repeat what I have said in these columns before that I retain my faith intact in the original programme of non-co-operation. I also feel that it has done a distinct service to national cause. The institutions attacked do not retain the glamour they had before. But I recognize that the reaction too has been great and that many of those who were concerned with the institutions in question have gone back to them. But I am confident that at the proper time the whole programme is bound to be revived, in a modified form it may be, but retaining its essential character. Meanwhile as a practical man I help my old comrades in very humble way I can without sacrificing my own principles or practice.

As for the extract from the Swedish newspaper, it betrays the usual ignorance of my motives and actions. I am not concerned with doing away with the railways. The spread of the spinning-wheel I hold to be quite consistent with the existence of the railways. The spinning-wheel is designed to revive the national cottage industry and thus bring about a natural and equitable distribution of the wealth derivable from the largest industry next only to agriculture and thereby stop the double evil of enforced idlenes and pauperism. Nor have I ever suggested or contemplated the turning out of the English from India. What I do contemplate is a radical change in the English outlook upon the Government of India. The present unnatural and degrading system of subtle slavery must be changed at any cost. There is no room for Englishmen as masters. There is room for them

if they will remain as friends and helpers. The writer of the article simply does not understand the grand implications of the removal of untouchability. He cannot per-ceive that its removal is calculated to purge Hinduism of greatest evil that has crept into it, without touching the great system of division of work. It is difficult, it must be admitted, for busy men looking at the great movement from a distance to observe the unfamiliar but vital core beneath the temporary but familiar crust overlaying it. It is difficult for them also not to mistake the husk for the kernel. The movement of non-violent non-co-operation has nothing in common with the historical struggles for freedom in the West. It is not based on brute force or hatred. It does not aim at destroying the tyrant. It is a movement of self-purification. It therefore seeks to convert the tyrant. It may fail because India may not be ready for mass non-violence. But it would be wrong to judge the movement by false standards. My own opinion is that the movement has in no way failed. Non-violence has found an abiding place in India's struggle for freedom. That the programme could not be finished in a year's time merely shows that the people could not cope with a mighty upheaval during such a short time. But it is a leaven which is silently but surely working its way among the masses.

Young India, 11-2-1926

5. TERMS OF PROHIBITION

The Government of Bombay has plainly told the Anjuman of Broach that if they want prohibition they must find fresh sources of revenue to replace the revenue derived from drink. In other words it is no concern of the Government to arrest the evil of drink. It is the duty of the reformer to supply the revenue lost by return to sobriety. Prohibitionists therefore, if they want early prohibition, will have to make up their minds as to their reply to H. E. the Governor of Bombay which represents in this case the policy of the Government of India. I hold it to be utterly unjust to further tax the already over-taxed taxpayer. Prohibition can only come by cutting down expenditure. The military budget is the item that easily admits of retrenchment. But whether this opinion is sound or not, prohibitionists have to formulate their policy as to the method of meeting the difficulty raised by the Governor of Bombay.

Young India, 11-2-1926

6. ABUSE OF POWER

Protests in India notwithstanding, the Union Parliament has passed the anti-colour legislation. This does not so materially affect Indian settlers as the natives of the soil. They and Asiatics are virtually debarred by this legislation from doing any work on the mines which Europeans can or will do. It is an unnecessary affront put upon Indians. For there are very few working on the mines. So far as the natives are concerned the legislation not only reduces their legal status but it also affects the material interest of thousands working on the mines. No wonder General Smuts uttered a grave note of waring against the legislation and likened it to a fire-brand thrown in a haystack. The Bill is a challenge to the Natives. Illiterate though they may be, they are as proud and sensitive as any people on earth. In their helplessness they may be unable to answer the challenge but there is no doubt that the Europeans of South Africa if they persist in their arrogant policy will have sown the seeds of their own destruction. It is stated that the Senate will reject the measure when it comes before it. It ought to But the same cable tells us that the existing Government have a majority in the combined Houses which they propose to use in order to carry out their purpose. If this temper continues, the anti-Asiatic measure which is agitating India at the present moment is not likely to be postponed as Mr. Andrews hopes it will. These measures really hang together and represent the settled policy of the present Union Government on the question of colour. Only the strongest attitude on the part of the government of India can bring about a reconsideration of that policy.

Young India, 11-2-1926

7. LETTER TO CLARA ALIAS

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 11, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter of 1st January last. It is quite true that what we want at the present moment is a living faith in the ultimate victory of truth in spite of all appearances to the contrary. And this faith is impossible unless one is prepared to regard suffering as the richest treasure of life.

Yours sincerely,

MADAM CLARA ALIAS
ROCHUSSTE, 3g
DUSSELDORF
(GERMANY)

From a photostat: S.N. 14092

8. LETTER TO ANUPAMA BANERJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 11, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I got your letter only yesterday and evidently Suprova was married on the 4th inst. However, nothing is lost as it was impossible for me to attend the wedding and my blessings are not too late. I wish both her and her husband all the happiness that they deserve and a long life of service to the motherland. I hope you are all keeping well.

Yours sincerely,

SHRIMATI ANUPAMA BANERJI
57 B, LINTON STREET
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 14093

9. LETTER TO BISHOP FISHER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 11, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter just before your departure for America where I hope you and Mrs. Fisher will have a good time.

I have no doubt that whatever the present result of the South African struggle, the seed sown by you and now being watered by Mr. Andrews will bear ample fruit in its own time. I cannot be dislodged from my faith in the ultimate triumph of truth which to my mind is the only thing that counts. The downs of life on the way to it will have been all forgotten when we have attained the summit.

Mrs. Fisher asked me for a message. I can only repeat what I have been saying to so many American friends who have been calling on me, namely, what is required most is serious and careful study of the Indian movement. What I see happening in America is distressful, either an exaggerated view of the movement or a belittling of it. Both are alike distrortions. I regard the movement to be one of permanent interest and fraught with very important consequences. It therefore needs a dilligent study, not a mere superficial newspaper glance. May your visit to America then result in the more accurate estimate of the movement in India.

Whenever you can come to the Ashram, you know you are sure of a welcome.

Yours sincerely,

BISHOP FISHER
150, FIFTH AVENUE
NEW YORK CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 14095

10. LETTER TO R. L. SUR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 11, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 28th ultimo. I have sent the message to Mrs. Fisher which I have incorporated in my letter to Bishop Fisher. I

thank you however for reminding me of my promise and the offer to send the message to Mrs. Fisher.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. L. SUR
SECRETARY TO BISHOP FISHER
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
3, MIDDLETON STREET
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 14094

11. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Thursday [*February 11, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have already started dictating English. From today I intend to dictate Gujarati also and manage it. If I do not do this, work will pile up or I shall not be able to rest. Your chest pain must have gone now. Until summer sets in, even this place is like a health resort. There is no end to the conveniences available. And I am able to take as much rest as I want. As far as possible I do not interfere with the other activities in the Ashram.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
WINDY HALL
NASIK ROAD
DEOLALI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

12. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SABARMATI,
Thursday [After *February 11, 1926*][2]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your telegram and letter[3]. I am glad that your mind is at peace. I can now hope that you will not fall into the snare of a second

[1] The postmark bears the date "February 12, 1926". The Thursday prior to this date was February 11.

[2] The addressee's wife died on the 11th of February, 1926.

[3] Presumably informing Gandhiji of his wife's death

marriage.

I do not see any possibility of my going to South Africa.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6121. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

13. LETTER TO ANTOINETTE MIRBEL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 12, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have been receiving your letters regularly. Please do not think that you are unworthy to be my disciple. I regard myself as too imperfect to have any disciples. Do not for one moment think that those who are living with me at the Ashram I regard as my disciples. They are all co-workers with me. I am in the position of an elder to them. And I am an elder because I may be considered to be more experienced then they are and my experience is at their disposal equally with theirs. There is no secret either about the royal road I told you of. The royal road is the doing of one's appointed duty to the best of one's ability and the dedication of all service to God. Work done in this fashion always clears difficulties in front of us and shows us also whenever we err. You should certainly continue the union amongst your friends of the little circle you have mentioned and my advice will be always at your disposal.

I hope you are at peace with yourself and your neighbours and in the enjoyment of good health.

Yours sincerely,

MADAM A. MIRBEL
100, RUE BRALE MAISON
LILLE
(FRANCE)

From a photostat: S.N. 14096

14. LETTER TO P. S. VARIER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 12, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The parcel I had four or five days before the receipt of the letter. I thank you for both.

I fear that for myself personally your medicine will be useless because I can take only one or two ingredients in any 24 hours, as I can take only five ingredients during that period whether in the shape of medicine or food. Thus if your pill contains more than one ingredient, I must not take it because I should then have no food.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. S. VARIER
ARYA VAIDYA SALA
KOTTAKAL
S. MALABAR

From a photostat: S.N. 14097

15. LETTER TO MAINA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 12, 1926

MY DEAR MAINA,

Owing to pressure of work and then my illness, I have not been able to write to you earlier. I am glad that Badar is married. Not because I consider that it was necessary for Badar to be married but because his mother desired it and Badar felt the call to obey his mother's wishes. I hope that Badar and his wife will have a long and happy life of service before them.

Badar is free to wear hand-spun silk if he wishes so, but I must own silk, for men at any rate, is most repugnant to my taste. But my taste need be no guidance for Badar or anybody else. He must consult his own taste and if silk-wear pleases him, he may wear it.

How are you getting on and what are you doing?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 14098

16. LETTER TO A FRIEND

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 12, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am obliged to dictate this because my right hand requires rest for too much writing. I am sorry that my letter of October last was miscarried. I do not know that anybody has

purposely withheld that letter from you. These postal miscarriages do take place. It is also probable that by this time you have received the lost letter. I am glad that my writings help you and comfort you. If there are any questions for me to answer, you will not hesitate to write them down.

I am not writing separately to your friend and husband. My son Devdas is just now away nursing a relation of mine. I am forwarding your letter to him.

I hope you are receiving *Young India* regularly. If not, please let me know. I am sending you specimen sheets in Urdu and Devanagari.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 14099

17. LETTER TO R. A. HUME

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 13, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter. I do have a vivid recollection of our meeting at the Prevention of Beggary Committee. You have certainly deserved the rest you are giving yourself by going to America. May you have nice time of it there.

I do not believe in Jesus Christ as the only son of God or God Incarnate but I entertain great regard for Him as a teacher of men. I have derived much comfort and happiness from a contemplation of His life and teachings as summarised in the Sermon on the Mount.

Yours sincerely,

REV. R. A. HUME
AMERICAN MARATHI MISSION
WAI
SATARA DISTRICT

From a photostat: S.N. 14100

18. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 13, 1926

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS,

I have your letter. I want you to continue to write to me regularly.

I agree that it is better for Guruji at the present moment not to

be in Calcutta. After all the climae in Calcutta is by no means ideal. His health is a paramount consideration, the completion of your book a subsidiary one and I certainly like the idea of your cooking also for him. A delicate and loving touch makes all the difference in the world when the cooking has to be done for a patient so responsive to enviroment as Guruji.

I am slowly gathering strength and giving myself complete rest Subbiah attends to all the English correspondence and Chandra Shankar now takes down Gujarati dictation. Presently I shall be dictating articles for *Young India* and *Navajivan.* Devdas is still at Deolali. Nobody has heard of Tulsi Maher for over 10 days now. Do you know where he is?

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 14101

19. LETTER TO SATYANANDA BOSE

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 13, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your very touching letter. But if I try to steal away on to the sea, the consequences that you fear are certain to happen. I have found it utterly impossible to keep any movement of mine a secret and on board I would find myself a prisoner or an animal on show. I must therefore try to go to some cool place where I can ward off visitors and get a little quiet. As it is I am regaining strength slowly. There need be therefore no anxiety.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SATYANANDA BOSE
2/8, DHARMATALA STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 14102

20. TRUTH v. *"BRAHMACHARYA"* [1]

A friend writes to Mahadev Desai:

> You will remember that in an article on *brahmacharya* published in *Navajivan* some time ago[2]—translated in *Young India* by you—Gandhiji

[1] The original Gujarati article appeared in *Navajivan,* 14-2-1926.
[2] *Vide* "Brahmacharya", May 25, 1924.

admitted that he still had bad dreams. The moment I read it I felt that such admissions could have no wholesome effect, and I came to know later that my fear was justified.

During our sojourn in England my friend and I kept our character unscathed in spite of temptations. We remained absolutely free from wine, woman and meat. But on reading Gandhiji's article one of the friends exclaimed to me in despair: 'If such is the case with Gandhiji even after his Herculean efforts, where are we? It is useless to attempt to observe *brahmacharya.* Gandhiji's confession has entirely changed my point of view. Take me to be lost from today.' Not without some hesitation I tried to reason with him: 'If the way is so difficult for men like Gandhiji, it is much more so for us, and we should therefore redouble our effort.'—the way Gandhiji or you would argue. But it was all in vain. A character that had been spotless so long was thus bespattered with mire. What would Gandhiji or you say if someone were to hold Gandhiji responsible for this fall?

As long as I had only one such instance in mind, I did not write to you. You would possibly have put me off by saying that it was an exceptional case. But there were more such instances and my fear has been more than justified.

I know that there are certain things which are quite easy for Gandhiji to achieve, and which are impossible for me. But by the grace of God, I can say that something which may be impossible for even Gandhiji may be possible for me. It is this consciousness, or pride that has saved me from a fall, though the admission above-mentioned has completely disturbed my sense of security.

Will you please invite Gandhiji's attention to this fact—especially when he is just in the midst of his autobiography?[1] It is certainly brave to say the truth and the naked truth, but the world and the readers of *Navajivan* and *Young India* will misunderstand him. I fear that one man's meat may be another man's poison.

The complaint does not come to me as a surprise. When Non-co-operation was in full swing, and when during the course of the struggle I confessed to an error of judgment a friend innocently wrote to me:

Even if it was error, you ought not to have confesed it. People ought to be encouraged to believe that there is at least one man who is infallible. You used to be looked upon as such. Your confession will now dishearten them.

This made me smile and also made me sad. I smiled at the correspondent's simpleness. But the very thought of encouraging

[1] This was being published weekly in *Navajivan* from 26-11-1925 and in *Young India* from 3-12-1925.

people to believe a fallible man to be infallible was more than I could bear.

A knowledge of one as he is can always do good to the people, never any harm. I firmly believe that my prompt con- fessions of my errors have been all to the good for them. For me at any rate they have been a blessing.

And I may say the same thing of my admission about the bad dreams. It would do the world a lot of harm if I claimed to be a perfect *brahmachari* without being one. For it would sully *brahmacharya* and dim the lustre of truth. How dare I undervalue *brahmacharya* by false pretences? I can see today that the means I suggest for the observance of *brahmacharya* are not adequate, are not found to be invariably efficacious, because I am not a perfect *brahmachari*. It would be an awful thing for the world to be allowed to believe that I was a perfect *brahmachari*, whilst I could not show the royal road to *brahmacharya*.

Why should it not be sufficient for the world to know that I am a genuine seeker, that I am wide awake, and that my striving is ceaseless and unbending? Why should not this knowledge be sufficient encouragement to others? It is wrong to deduce conclusions from false premises. It is wisest to draw them from things achieved. Why argue that because a man like me could not escape unclean thoughts, there is no hope for the rest? Why not rather argue that if a Gandhi who was once given to lust can today live as friend and brother to his wife and can look upon the fairest damsel as his sister or daughter, there is hope for the lowliest and the lost? If God was merciful to one who was so full of lust, certainly all the rest would have his mercy too!

The friends of the correspondent who were put back because of a knowledge of my imperfections had never gone forward at all. It was a false virtue that fell at the first blast. The truth and observance of *brahmacharya* and similar eternal principles do not depend on person imperfect as myself. They rest on the sure foundations of the penance of the many who strove for them and lived them in their fullness. When I have the fitness to stand alongside those perfect beings, there will be much more determination and force in my language than today. He whose thoughts do not wander and think evil, whose sleep knows no dreams and who can be wide awake even whilst asleep, is truly healthy. He does not need to take quinine. His incorruptible blood will have the inherent virtue of resisting all infections. It is for

such a perfectly healthy state of body, mind, and spirit that I am striving. This knows no defeat or failure. I invite the correspondent, his friends of little faith, and others to join me in that striving, and I wish that they may go forward even like the correspondent quicker than I. Let my example inspire those who are behind me with more confidence. All that I have achieved has been in spite of my weakness, in spite of my liability to passion,—and because of my ceaseless striving and infinite faith in God's grace.

No one need therefore despair. My Mahatmaship is worthless. It is due to my outward activities, due to my politics which is the least part of me and is therefore evanescent. What is of abiding worth is my insistence on truth, non-violence and *bramacharya* which is the real part of me. That permanent part of me however small, is not to be despised. It is my all. I prize even the failures and disillusionments which are but steps towards success.

Brahmacharya means not merely mechanical celibacy, but it means complete control over all the organs and senses enabling one to attain perfect freedom from all passion and hence from sin in thought, word and deed.[1]

Young India, 25-2-1926

21. KHADI IN GUJARAT

Bhai Lakshmidas sends the following report[2] on the khadi produced in Gujarat under the direction of the Khadi Association as also on other khadi the production of which is within its knowledge.

This report does not include the figures about khadi produced in Kathiawar. If we take them into account, the figure of total production would be still higher. These figures show that the khadi movement is alive and making progress, but they seem poor when we think of the goal we have in view. Even so, if these poor figures represent a vital seed and if that seed is watered properly, it will soon sprout into life. It is strange that the people of Kathlal do not buy

locally produced khadi at seven annas a yard, and prefer the so-called mill khadi. The facts should be ascertained through a careful inquiryand the disease cured. Khadi has a tonic effect but, like

[1] Translated from *Navajivan* by Mahadev Desai

[2] The report is not translated here.

nourishing food, it may not please one's taste; its savour lies in its tonic effect. Increased production of khadi will correspondingly increase the vitality of the country and, in any case, will not bring about indigestion.

To the workers in the field the immediate gain may seem too small, but, as a mango sapling yields thousands of mangoes when it grows into a tree, so a patient worker will certainly witness, in the long run, excellent results of his seemingly modest beginning.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 14-2-1926

22. LETTER TO JETHALAL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Sunday, Phalgun Sud 2 [*February 14, 1926*][1]

BHAI JETHALAL,

I have your letter. The trust-deed has to be made before anything else and this is only proper. If you have a makeshift priest the temple will ever remain makeshift. A nice temple comes only in the wake of a good priest. You should arrive at some final decision in consultation with Bhai Jagjivandas and let me know about it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 11135

23. INTERVIEW WITH SOUTH AFRICAN DEPUTATION

February 14, 1926

Messrs Godfrey, Pather, Mirza and Bhayat, of the South African Indian Deputation, arrived here last night, and saw Mr. Gandhi, this morning, at his Satyagraha Ashram. They discussed with him, for full three hours, the South African situation. Mr. Gandhi expressed his firm opinion that salvation was only possible if Indians in South Africa had faith in themselves, and a powerful spirit of self-sacrifice. He felt sure that even South Africa would have to submit to world

[1] From the reference to the Ashram trust-deed registered on February 12, 1926

opinion. Mr. Gandhi expressed his willingness to go to South Africa if a necessity arose, but reserved to himself the right to be the judge of that necessity.

The Hindu, 15-2-1926

24 LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Monday, February 15, 1926

CHI. MANI,

I have your card. It is time for the clearance. If you both[1] have arrived at some decision, act accordingly. Otherwise we shall all meet and decide what is to be done; I cannot reach a decision here in your absence. You may come now or with Jamnalalji later as it suits you in view of your work at Wardha.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro—4, p. 36

25. LETTER TO A SEEKER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 16, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is difficult to advise without seeing you. Generally speaking the following instructions may be carried out:

To sleep as far as possible in the open air and eat the lightest food, just enough for sustaining the body, never to overload the stomach, and avoid all condiments. If you take pulses at all take them sparingly. Do not take much any fatty or concentrated food. You should take easy exercise daily at least twice a day. Seek the company only of the good. In the absence of such company, read only clean literature. If your health has not much run down, take a cold bath daily. Keep your mind and body continually occupied. Retire to bed early and always get up at 4 o'clock in the morning. Study the

[1] Jamnalal Bajaj and the addressee

Bhagavad Gita, *Ramayana* or any other religious book in which you have an abiding faith and contemplate what is said therein. Having done these things, do not think of your marriage and you will find you will be making steady progress. It is in my opinion totally wrong to say that marriage is necessary to enable one to live a clean life.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 140103

26. LETTER TO S. R. SCOTT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 16, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. You will observe that I have simply relied on my memory of things which happened years ago. But my recollection is vivid. I am totally unable to say whether the thing related at the time in Rajkot was true or not and I have said so in the Chapter[2]. Have I not? The preacher near the High School corner still stands vividly before me harranguing the schoolboys and belittling Hinduism. But it is imposible for me to recall the name of the preacher. I do not think I knew it even when I heard him.

Do you want me to publish your letter in *Young India?* I shall gladly do so if you so desire.

I wish to add that my later experience does not improve the first experience. I have met thousands of Christian Indians. Many of them, if not a majority, I have found to be drinking and eating meat and wearing European clothes. When I have discussed these things with them, they have at least defended their meat eating and their European dress.

The attack upon Hinduism and its gods, I have heard since from many missionaries and read worse things in publications ofmissionary institutions. At the same time it is a pleasure to me to be able to testify that there is now-a-days and has been for some time a tendency towards toleration of other faiths and a wish on the part of some missionaries for Christian Indians to return to their ancestral simplicity

[1] *Vide* "Letter to S. R. Scott", 23-2-1926.
[2] X, "Glimpses of Religion", published in *Young India*, 11-2-1926

and not despise everything Indian.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 14104

27. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 17, 1926

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have your letter. I know that it is a matter of shame for me to have become ill. I am taking now double precautions. I shall leave no stone unturned to present myself in a fit condition at the end of the year. And, if you have any homoeopathic pills that will guarantee an absolute cure and turn me into a youth of 26 instead of an old man of 56, pass those pills on to me and I shall take as many as you want me to every day!

I am so glad Jawaharlal and Kamla are going and with them Swarup and Ranjit. I am not surprised at Krishna not wanting to be left behind. I do hope it will be possible to squeeze her in somehow or other so that she can have as much outing as possible. I expect great results from this trip, not only for Kamla but also for Jawaharlal.

Yes. I did take note of the fact that you were present at the Conference between the Viceroy and the leaders of the two Houses. I am glad that you were one of the party.

If all the Assembly Committees will have to be given up, I very much fear that the Skeen Committee[1] will have to be treated likewise, though the technical distinction that you point out is there, it will not be enough for our purpose. Though personally I dislike the idea of the Skeen Committee having to be given up by you, if it is good to come out of the Councils, it will be necessary to come out of the Skeen Committee.

I should be delighted if you could at all come even for a day during the month. As you thrive on difficulties, I hope that you are keeping perfectly fit and strong.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 14105

[1] Also known as the Indian Sandhurst Committee, appointed in 1925, to consider the starting of a Military College in India; Sir Andrew Skeen was its Chairman.

28. LETTER TO C. V. RANGAM CHETTY

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 17, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. Not every man who says I am a congressman or carries about him a Congress label is a Congressman, but he that carries out the behests of the Congress to the letter and in the spirit; and therefore he, in my opinion, is a Congressman who is an out and out believer in khaddar; who wears khaddar himself not as a makeshift or for show, but with sincerity; who believes in the removal of untouchability and freely associates with the so-called untouchables; who believes in inter-communal unity and translates his belief into practice whenever the occasion demands it; and who believes in the Congress creed of non-violence and truth.

Such a person should command the confidence and the vote, if they have no conscientious objections to voting, of all true Congressmen.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 17-3-1926

29. A LETTER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 17, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I wish your paper many happy returns and with those happy returns more insistence on khadi, removal of untouchability, inter-communal unity and strictest observance of Non-violence and Truth. I wonder if the youngster of five years is an object-lesson is Non-violence and Truth!

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 14107

[1] In this letter the addressee had asked Gandhiji as to whom he should help in the coming elections.

30. LETTER TO V. V. DASTANE

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 17, 1926

MY DEAR DASTANE,

I have your letter. Do you want me myself to send 28 letters to the gentlemen whose names you have sent to me or do you want me to send one letter addressed to Sjt. Sumant saying why I have not been able to come? Devdas is not with me. He is at Deolali nursing Mathuradas. It is quite a good idea for a party to tour in the districts which I was to visit and the party can take my message personally. I do not know when Manilal Kothari will return. Appa Saheb wrote to me and I have replied approving of his idea about the Khadi Exhibition. I do not anticipate any difficulty about the proposed grant of Rs. 300.

You can certainly come here to see me by appointment. I am doing a moderate amount of work. You can therefore come whenever you choose to. I await your reply before writing the letter suggested by you.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 14108

31. LETTER TO HAROLD MANN

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 17, 1926

DEAR SHRI HAROLD,

I thank you for your note. Do please come on Saturday next. 4 p.m. is the most suitable time for me but if that is not a convenient hour for you, 8 a.m. will equally suit me, also 3 p.m. Will you kindly let me know at what hour I may expect you?Your letter is dated 12th instant. It was received today and as I see not much time is left between now and the 20th instant I am sending also the following telegram:

"Thanks letter. 8 a.m. or 4 p.m. Saturday would suit."—

Yours sincerely,

From a micorfilm: S.N. 14109

32. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN CHOKSI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Wednesday, February 17, 1926

CHI. MOTI,

Your letter. Yesterday Najuklal alone wrote. It is good both of you saw Abbas Saheb. Your handwriting is not yet good enough. *Bharuch* could be read only with difficulty; the initial curve of the letter *bha* is broken. The letter *dhi* reads like a *chhi*. The distinction between *pa* and *ya* is not clear. I can cite a number of such instances.

The younger Lakshmi had gone to sleep, but she told me she was doing her hair. So with her consent today I cut her hair with my own hands; now her head looks quite nice and clean. She promises likewise to cleanse her heart.

Lakshmidas left for Vijapur yesterday. He will return today or tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

SAU. SUKANYABEHN
C/O SHRI NAJUKLAL CHOKSI
BHARUCH KELAVANI MANDAL
BROACH

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12116

33. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

Wednesday [*February 17, 1926*][1]

CHI. RAMDAS,

As for me, I am reciting *Ramanam*.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6849

[1] From the postmark in the original document in the National Archives

34. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
Wednesday [*February 17, 1926*][1]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your long letter, but you need not at all be sorry for having written a long letter. I have read it with great interest. You should stay there only on condition that your health improves, even if slowly. You should not be greedy to acquire knowledge of merely external things. It is desirable to be content with what one learns in the ordinary course of things. If we do not do that, so wide is the extent of such knowledge that it would take your whole life-time and you would be able to do no service, let alone realize the self.

Blessings from
BAPU

PRABHUDAS GANDHI
C/O SWAMI KUVALAYANAND
KUNJVAN
LONAVALA
(G.I.P.)

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33042

35. THE TOPIC OF THE HOUR

By the time this is before the public the majority of the South African deputation will be on the waters on their way back to SouthAfrica. Before sailing, Messrs Amod Bhayat, James Godfrey, Pather and Mirza paid me a visit and discussed the situation as it is developing from day to day. They expressed themselves satisfied with the splendid welcome extended to them wherever they went and the support received from all parties in India not excluding European Associations. But they were not, I am glad to say, deceived into any false sense of security by the support. They realized that India was willing but not equally able to help.

[1] The postal cancellation mark at Lonavala is dated February 18, 1926. Wednesday, however, was on 17th February.

The Colour Bar Bill is making steady progress. On principle, it is just as bad as the Asiatic measure and therefore just as open to objection as the latter. Its progress evidences the Union Government's intention and determination abut the Asiatic Bill. It is becoming daily clearer that the Union Government intend if possible to stiffen the measure rather than relax it. The proposed amendment of the Section 10 gives no relief worth the name and the inclusion of the Cape has roused against the Bill even a section of the South African Press so much that one paper goes so far as to insinuate that it is probably out of spite against Dr. Abdur Rahman's doings in India that the S. A. Government seek to include the Cape in the scope of the Bill. Let us hope that whatever else that Government may be guilty of, it is not guilty of the little- ness ascribed to it. Be that as it may, there is no doubt about the mind of that Government. It is this root-and-branch policy that the Indian settlers have to face and combat. They can do so successfully, if they have a strong backing from the Imperial and the Indian Governments. This they will not have. The Indian Government is a shadow of the Imperial. The latter is neither feared not respected by the present Union Government. On the contrary it fears the Union Government lest South Africa may secede from the Imperial partnership. It is the case of the tail wagging the dog. The Imperial Government would never assert itself against South Africa unless there was fear of losing India. The apparent collapse of non-co-operation has given the Imperial Government a new hope about India's helpless ness. At the crucial moment therefore the weight of authority will be thrown on the side of South Africa unless the unexpected hap-pens this side of the Indian Ocean. The ultimate passing of the Bill, even though it may be postponed for the present session, is thus assured.

What are then our countrymen in South Africa to do? There is nothing in the world like self-help. The world helps those who help themselves. Self-help in this case, as perhaps in every other, means self-suffering, self-suffering means satyagraha. When their honour is at stake, when their rights are being taken away, when their livelihood is threatened, they have the right and it becomes their duty to offer satyagraha. They offered it during 1907 and 1914 and won the support even of the Government of India, indeed the recognition of the Europeans and the Government of South Africa. They can do likewise again if they have the will and the courage to suffer for the common good.

That time is not yet. They must, as they are doing, exhaust every diplomatic remedy. They must await the result of the negotiations the

Government of India are carrying on with the Union Government. And when they have explored and tried every other available channel and failed to find a way out, the case for satyagraha is complete. Then it would be cowardice to flinch. And victory is a certainty. No power on earth can make a person do a thing against his will. Satyagraha is a direct result of the recognition of this great Law and is independent of numbers participating in it.

Terms of satyagraha are imperative, admitting of no exception. There should be no violence in any shape or form. There must be an irreducible minimum—a minimum that would commend itself to any reasonable and impartial judge. We may be justly entitled to many things but satyagraha is offered for things without which self-respect, or which is the same thing, honourable existence, is impossible.

They must count the cost. Satyagraha cannot be offered in bravado or as a mere trial. It is a measure of the depth of one's feeling. It is therefore offered because it becomes irresistible. No price is too dear to pay for it, i.e., truth. Success comes when it is least expected. It is undertaken not from a belief in human aid but it is based upon an unquenchable faith in God and His justice. And God is both gentle and hard. He tries us through and through to the last suffering point but He is so gentle as never to test us to the breaking point.

Young India, 18-2-1926

36. JAILS OR "HOSPITALS"?

Lord Lytton in recently speaking about jails to the Rotarians of Calcutta, said that just as we send our sick in body to hospitals and not to jails, so must we 'provide moral doctors and moral hospitals' for the sick in mind, i.e., criminals. His Excellency thus introduced his subject:

> The ideal I wish to set before me, stated in the briefest and simplest form, is just this—the substitution of reformation for retribution as the basis of our Penal Code. Punishment can instil fear and enforce habits—it cannot inspire goodness. As a means of moral regeneration, therefore, it is worse than useless and should be abandoned. A morality which is only enforced by pains and penalties is a false morality, and those who would secure the acceptance of moral standards should employ other methods.

Of the uses and limitations of punishments Lord Lytton said:

> Punishment, if resorted to at all, must always be aimed at teaching habits necessary for the well-being of the individual or discipline necessary to the well-being of a community. I do not say that punishment will always succeed; the form of punishment selected in any particular case may be well or badly suited for the attainment of its object. Again, I do not say that punishment is the only way of achieving this object. What I say is that those are the only objects which can be obtained by punishment. The one thing which can never be acquired by coercion is goodness or moral conduct. All punishment therefore which aims at correcting wickedness or teaching goodness is definitely mischievous. Goodness is a condition of mind as health is a condition of the body. Moral defects of character are no more to be cured by punishment than defects of the body. It may be necessary in the interest of health of a community forcibly to segregate a person with an infectious disease; it may be necessary on the same ground to segregate persons whose moral defects are a danger to society; but it would be just as senseless and mischievous to try to cure a man of scarlet fever by shutting him up with a number of persons suffering from measles, tuberculosis or leprosy, as it is to try to cure a man of stealing or cheating by shutting him up with other thieves and cheats.

After this pronouncement one would expect a description of prison reform being attempted or pending in Bengal. Instead, however, H. E. the Governor of Bengal quoted two instances of successful humanitarian effort in England and said:

> You may ask why I have chosen to speak to you about this subject. The reason is that this is work which no Government can do. Governments only hamper and spoil work of this kind by interference, it must be done by those who have the calling.

Having thus absolved his and all governments from responsibility for the much needed reform, he threw it on the broad and "idealistic" shoulders of the Rotarians present.

As an old and experienced prisoner, however, I believe that governments have to begin the reform Lord Lytton will have his hearers to undertake. Humanitarians can but supplement government efforts. As it is, the humanitarian, if he attempted anything, will first have to undo the mischief done in prisons where the environment hardens the criminal tendency, and in the case of innocent prisoners they learn how to commit crimes without being detected. I hold that humanitarian effort cannot cope with the evil wrought in the jails.

Lord Lytton must have recognized this patent fact when in his introduction he talked of substituting "reformation for retribution as the basis of our Penal Code". But evidently in winding up his speech he forgot that he had intended his Penal Code to be the basis of reform, and as he realized that he had no reform to show to the credit of his government, wound up by saying that it was no business of governments to attempt the reform.

If, as Lord Lytton correctly put it, punishment must be inflicted purely for protection of society, mere detention should be enough and that too only till the detenus can be fairly presumed to have been cured of their evil habits or securities are found for their good behaviour. There can be no difficulty about a scientific classification of prisoners, apportionment of work from a humanitarian standpoint, selection of better-class warders, abolition of the system of appointing prisoners as warders, and a host of other changes that one might easily suggest.

According to Lord Lytton's own standard, the detention of political prisoners without trial and their reported ill-treatment is wholly wrong. It is to be wished that His Excellency will apply his own admirable tests to the administration of his own jails, and there is no doubt that he will make startling discoveries in the shape of reforms that can be easily attempted by his government far more easily than anything that humanitarians can ever hope to attempt or achieve.

Young India, 18-2-1926

37. 5,000 MILES AWAY

The recent debate in the Assembly over the proposal to appoint two additional judges to the Privy Council for the purpose of hearing Indian appeals has revived the controversy about the location of this final court of appeal. If it were not for the hypnotism under which we are labouring we would see without effort the futility, the sinfulness, of going five thousand miles away to get (or buy?) justice. It is said that at that delightful distance the judges are able to decide cases with greater detachment and impartiality than they would if they had to hear appeals, say in Delhi. The moment the argument is examined it breaks down. Must the poor Londoners have their Privy Council in Delhi? And what should the French and the Americans do? Must the

French by arrangement have their final court of appeal in America and the Americans in France? What should we do if India was an independent country? Or is India an exceptional "case' requiring special favoured treatment giving the right of appeal in far off London? Let one quote in support of the seat of the Privy Council in London the case of the great Colonies. They retain the anachronism out of sentiment. And the movement is on foot in several Colonies to have their final courts of appeal in their own homes. The sentiment in India is the other way. A self-respecting India would never tolerate the location of her final court of appeal anywhere else but in India.

Young India, 18-2-1926

38. PROGRESS OF KHADI

The Secretary, A.I.S.A.[1], has received a letter from the Chittoor District Khadi Board giving valuable information about khadi made from self-spun yarn from September to December 1925. I take the following[2] from that letter:

The value of the information given in the foregoing lies in the fact that the self-spinners include lawyers, graduates, a Municipal Councillor, an M.L.C. and an M.L.A. who perhaps have their clothes made partly or wholly from self-spun yarn, not for the sake of saving money, but for love of the thing. Farmers such as Natha Patel whose story Mahadev Desai relates in another column spin and weave their own yarn predominantly for the sake of saving considerable expenses. As he himself says, his yearly expense for the family was no less than Rs. 250. Thus khadi has both an economic and a sentimental value, both to be equally cherished.

Whilst I can congratulate the organizers and the spinners on their energy and devotion, I am sorry I am unable to endorse the scheme that has been sketched by the correspondent in order to enourage self-spinning. He promises to give as present one towel to every spinner who spins at a recognized club for one hour every day for 30 days, and he promises further to weave the yarn free for those

[1] The All-India Spinners' Association
[2] Not reproduced here

spinners who spin for 90 days at the rate of one hour per day.

I think that if these promises are meant for the class of spinners mentioned in the letter reproduced by me, it is an undesirable temptation. M.L.Cs, M.L.A.s and lawyers may not have their yarn spun free of charge. The whole value of their work at the spinning-wheel is lost if they spin because there is a substantial prize to be obtained at the end of their spinning. Such men should spin for the love of it. The satisfaction of wearing cloth made out of yarn spun by themselves must be its own full reward. Prizes are meant for unwilling spinners. They may also be given to willing spinners who are needy and for whom every pice saved is so much added to their bread and butter.

The idea of giving self-spinners free slivers is really tentamount to encouraging beggary. Why should men who can afford have free slivers, when the yarn spun is to be their own property? Surely, it is enough that they get facilities for spinning and all the attention that may be necessary to make them accomplished spinners. Free slivers can only be given to paupers in order to enable them to earn a living and in order to encourage them to work, because idleness seems at the present moment to be spreading in the nation. What was at one time forced upon us is becoming a vice with us. Let it never be forgotten by khadi workers that the whole plan of khadi is based upon the supposition that there are millions of people living in utter starvationor semi-starvation, and they are so living for want of work either during the whole of the year or at least a third of the year. Therefore every rupee that is spent by Khadi Associations must, so far as it is possible, find its way directly into the pockets of these starving millions and even then not as a free gift but as an equivalent for some work done.

Young India, 18-2-1926

39. FROM BAD TO WORSE

The Hindu of Madras has the full text of the proposed amendment of the tenth section of the South African Asiatic Bill. I reproduce below the proposed amendment and the original section in parallel columns:

ORIGINAL SEC. 10, SUB-SEC. 2:	THE AMENDED SECTION
The Governor-General may by proclamation in the *Gazette* declare that from and after a date to be specified therein no member of any race indicated therein shall acquire immovable property or the lease or renewal of lease of immovable property in the Province of Natal, save in the coast belt as provided in subsection (2) of this section: Provided that nothing in this section contained shall be deemed to prohibit a renewal of a lease of immovable property held under written lease at the commencement of this Act.	The Governor-General may by proclamation in the *Gazette* declare that from and after a date therein sepecified not being earlier than the first day of August 1925, no person of any class indicated in such a proclamation shall, firstly, anywhere within the Union hire or take over, or, as lessee, renew the lease of any immovable property for a period exceeding 5 years, or, secondly, in the Cape of Good Hope and Natal, acquire any immovable property save for residential purposes in class residential area or for trading purposes in class trading area or for any purpose in class residential and trading area.

A glance even by a lay reader at the original section and the amendment would clearly show that the amendment is infinitely worse than the original. There is not therefore even an attempt at any compromise, but a defiance of Indian opinion, indeed even of the Government of India. This attitude of the Union Government is in keeping with the furious agitation which has been engineered against the Asiatics in South Africa.

Young India, 18-2-1926

40. LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENT, LEPER ASYLUM, PURULIA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Feburary 19, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your very prompt and exhaustive reply.[1] I am forwarding a copy of it to the friend who is ailing. He is a professor in a college and I know he will feel thankful for the pains you have taken.

Please remember me to Dr. Santra.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 14110

41. LETTER TO A. T. GIDWANI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 19, 1926

MY DEAR GIDWANI,

Here is the copy of the reply from Purulia. I am keeping the original for future use. I think it would be better to try the 2nd remedy. Mr. Sharpe's letter shows how little cause there is for worry. I hope you are otherwise keeping quite fit.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1.

From a microfilm: S.N. 14111

42. LETTER TO VINOBA BHAVE

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday, February 19, 1926

BHAI VINOBA,

If you too fall ill, how can we find fault with others? Now I need not blame myself. If a life celibate can claim the privilege of falling ill, how much more should one like me claim who am endeavouring to change the mould in which I have been cast? We must both deny ourselves this privilege. He alone is a real celibate who has an adamantine constitution. Is not illness, after all, a sign of some imbalance? I hope you have now recovered completely.

[1] To Gandhiji's letter dated 10-2-1926.

Write to me about Mama's Ashram. 160 yards of yarn are regularly credited to your account as you desired when you left. But from your letter to Purushottam, it would appear that some corrections have to be made. Your average will all the same remain 160. Hence I would not spoil the book by entering petty corrections.

Jamnalalji has arrived today. Kaka will most probably come today or on Sunday. Swami left with the threat of issuing a prohibitory order. If that order has been issued, Kaka will not come. At the moment Balkrishna is reading the *Ishopanishad* to the prayer /*meeting at 4 o'clock. You may come after the expiry of the time limit.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12182

43. LETTER TO SARDUL SINGH CAVEESAR [1]

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 20, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I am only now able to deal with the arrears of correspondence.

As you have seen, I have said nothing about the release of some of the Gurudwara under-trial prisoners. I know that it was risky because I do not know the under-currents.

The letter that you refer to in the last paragraph of your note of the 27th January I have not yet reached. I am having a search made.

I hope you will keep me informed of things which in your opinion I should know.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 14112

44. LETTER TO JIVANLAL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, Phagan Sud 9 [*February 20, 1926*][2]

BHAISHRI JIVANLAL,

I have got the letter written jointly by Ramjibhai and you as well as those written spearately. I must say I am in a way shocked by it. We

[1] The source does not mention the addresse's name. *Vide,* however, "Letter to Sardul Singh Caveesar", November 26, 1925.

[2] The year is inferred from the entry "Passed on by *Poojya* Bapu to file dated 25-4-1926" found on the letter from the addressee to which this letter is a reply.

do not quit our personal work; on the contrary we seek to accomplish it at any cost. We must have a similar attitude towards the philanthropic or religious work which we undertake. Neither of you can therefore throw away the responsibility just by saying so. You have undertaken the work on your own and if you now want to get out of it you can do so only after making proper alternative arrangements. I can understand the difficulty that you both face. I write this only to point out your duty. I had written a letter to you even before I got yours. I still mean what I have written in it. That centre is a liability of the Parishad or the Charkha Sangh or the Khadi Mandal. For the present I have shouldered the responsibility and loaned money from the Ashram. But you should not expect a public institution to return what you have put in. You can ask a public body to take up the responsibility of carrying on the work and insist that henceforth that body should raise its own funds. If eventually it is proposed to wind up the centre you should have the right of pre-emption, and if you do not exercise it, you should be given your share corresponding to your capital investment of Rs. 10,000. Your condition of withdrawing your capital after two years is, I think, not fair. I would not call it unfair if you want to fix a two-year limit to your annual subsidies. But I certainly expect both of you to continue your help to perpetuate the institution which you have nurtured as your own, as long as it functions smoothly. And now that you want to make your own business more paying, I think this centre should particularly benefit from the gain; in fact I may demand this. The Amreli Khadi Centre is the foremost institution of khadi work in Kathiawar. There is much effort behind it, quite an amount has been spent over it and the work can well be regarded as stabilized. There can be no doubt about its utility. With the closure of this centre khadi work in Kathiawar will suffer a major setback.

Let me know what decision you both take after considering all this.

As regards your donations I would advise you to send over the balance to me; I intend to spend it for the *Antyajas* or khadi work. As far as possible I shall certainly not spend it for the building. All the same, I wish you should not bind me regarding this. Since I do not go around myself, I wish to use the funds that are lying with you.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 10893

45. WIDOW REMARRIAGE

A widow writes:[1]

The letter does credit to the correspondent, but her argument does not solve the problem whether widows should have the freedom to remarry. When a child-widow is totally ignorant of any dharma, how can we expect her to understand the dharma of a widow? Living a life of dharma implies an understanding of what dharma means. Can we say that a child who simply does not understand the distinction between right and wrong is guilty of a falsehood? A child-widow of nine years does not understand the meaning of marriage, nor of widowhood. She is, as far as she is concerned, unmarried. How, then, can we say that she has become a widow? She was married by her parents, and it is they who think that she has become a widow? If, therefore, the widow's life earns merit for anyone, it does so for the parents. But can they really earn such merit at the sacrifice of a nine-year old girl? Even if they can, the problem of the girl's future is still with us. Let us suppose that she has grown into a young woman of twenty years. As she gradually came to understand things, she realized from the attitude of the people round her that she was regarded as a widow. But let us suppose she has not understood a widow's dharma, and also that, by the time she was twenty, the natural impulses had grown in her and become strong. What should she do now? She cannot say anything to her parents, for they have already decided that their daughter—a young woman now—was a widow and that marriage was out of the question for her.

This is only an imaginary instance. But there are many Hindu widows in the country, thousands of them, whom this description will fit. As we have seen, they earn merit for none by living as widows. Whom shall we hold responsible for the many sins into which these young women fall in yielding to desire? According to me, their parents certainly share in their sin; but the evil is a blot on Hinduism too, the latter loses its vitality day by day, and immorality flourishes in the nameof dharma. That is why, though I once held the same views as this sister, I have reluctantly come to the conclusion, through

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had said that she could not understand why Gandhiji advocated freedom for child-widows to remarry, since the life of self-denial which tradition required them to live helped to conquer passion and was, therefore, spiritually uplifting.

experience, that a child-widow who, on growing up to womanhood, may wish to marry, should have complete freedom, and be encouraged to do so; not only that, her parents should make every effort to get her suitably married. As things are, vices flourish in the name of virtue.

Even if, as suggested here, child-widows are remarried, pure widowhood will continue to adorn Hinduism. If a woman who has known conjugal love, on becoming a widow, deliberately refuses to marry again, her self-control will not have been imposed on her from outside. There is no power on earth which can tempt her to marry. Her freedom is for ever safe.

It is immoral to assume a spiritual union where there has been none. Such a union simply cannot exist between a child-husband and a child-wife. Savitri entered into a spiritual union, so did Sita and Damayanti. We cannot even imagine such women, should they become widows, ever marrying again. Ramabai Ranade lived such a pure life in her widowhood. Today, Vasantidevi[1] lives in this manner. Their virtuous life as widows ennobles the Hindu way of life, sanctifies it. Through the supposed widowhood of girls who are only children, Hindu society sinks lower day by day. Women who became widows after they had grown up into womanhood should, while they continue to live worthily as widows, come forward to help child-widows to remarry and to spread the reform among the Hindus. Other women who share the views of this correspondent should see their error in supposing that dharma can be preserved by perpetuating the misfortune of child-widows. I have been led to this conclusion, not by my sympathy for sufferings of child-widows, but by profounder considerations about dharma which guide my heart in this matter; and I have tried to explain them here.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-2-1926

46. SILENT SERVICE

That alone is true service which the world comes to know only through its results. A man or a woman dedicated to service never desires publicity for himself or herself. There are persons serving in this spirit at various places in the country. Khadi, too, along with other activities, gets the benefit of such service. Only recently I came to

[1] Wife of C. R. Das

know of one such instance from a letter. Very few people know that some women have been working in Bombay in the field of khadi. Several classes are being conducted under their guidance, and poor women are enabled to earn their livelihood. One such class is being run in the Seva Sadan and 55 girls work there. Another is run in the Congress House, with 65 girls. There are 35 girls in the class at the Saraswat Hall. There is one class in Mazgaon which is attended by Muslim girls. The latter does not mention their number. The classes in the Seva Sadan and Congress House are attended mostly by Parsi girls, and the one in Saraswat Hall by girls from Karnatak. Arrangements are now being made to conduct a class in Bhuleshwar for Gujarati girls. If such work is undertaken in other places too, how many more poor women could we not help with ease?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-2-1926

47. NOTE

"GANDHI SHIKSHANA[1]"

Shri Nagindas Amulakhrai published many years ago a book with this title, with 13 parts and over 2,000 pages. He has arranged in it, subject-wise, such of my writings as he could collect. I have looked through one or two parts and I can get from them an idea of the labour and care he has bestowed on the work. I think that the book will be a help to those who attach some value to my writings. Shri Nagindas did not want to make any profit, and has made none, by publishing this book. A large number of copies still lie unsold with him. The original price of the book was Rs. 8-10-0. He has now reduced it to Rs. 4-10-0 for general readers. But he is ready to send the book—all the 13 parts—to hostels, libraries, ashrams and such other public institutions, as also to poor students, on their sending Re. 1 for postage, Rs. 1-8-0 if in a foreign country. Those who would like to have my writings in book form may write to Shri Nagindas Amulakhrai at 6, Sukhadwala Building, Hornby Road, Fort, Bomaby-1.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-2-1926

[1] Teachings of Gandhiji

48. LETTER TO D. HANUMANTHARAO

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 21, 1926

MY DEAR HANUMANTHARAO,

I have now been given some of the old correspondence for disposal. In this file I find two letters from you which came in January. All these letters have been hitherto withheld from me owing to my illness and convalescence.

I have written to Krishna yesterday regarding the Ashram. Mr. Rustomjee being dead there is nothing coming to us from that source. The fund at the disposal of the All-India Spinners Association has also practically run out. Not therefore until further funds are collected will it be possible to send anything to Krishna. It is a pity but there is no help for it at the present moment.

You have written to me about two friends. I do not know what can be done for them just now. The Ashram is over-crowded at the present moment and I almost fear it will remain so whilst I am here. I am seriously thinking of putting up some more buildings and yet it is a matter for consideration whether it is worth while doing so if I am to remain a fixture at the Ashram only during this year. What is the use of building new rooms just for a temporary purpose? For immediately I am on the move, probably, the new-comers will go away. Will the friends then wait for this year? I know it is a long time but I do not [see] what else I can do. Do you suggest anything? I am not writing anything directly to them but leave you to do what is necessary.

Now about the diet. We, food reformers, have a way of arguing somewhat loosely. I do not think our observations about the [1] of salt on the system are really accurate or in any way complete. Not that doctors are much better but there are scientists amongst them who have undoubtedly made great researches and the testimony in favour of salt as a necessary article of diet is overwhelming. As it is not producing an evil effect on me, I do not feel justified in revising the advice of those doctors for whom I have very high regard. The spiritual value of abstaining from salt is undoubtedly great and on that account I do not feel inclined to write anything to correct what I had written in my booklet on diet. But as to its effect on the body, my view is shaken. If I was young, I would enforce the desire, such as never thought out in me [*sic*] to study medical science and then support the conclusions that we hold through that science. That, however, must be

[1] The source has a blank here.

left to the future reformer. Even as it is, I omit salt very often. But for religious abstention, you will have to give me more convincing arguments than you have done.

Your argument about the sea is surely wrong only because more than three-fourth of the globe is covered over with the unfathomable ocean and you will not gainsay the testimony of science that if we had no sea-water this globe would be uninhabitable. Take Africa—the whole of the belt near the sea which surrounds it on three sides is inhabited and the people are strong, healthy and robust.

I am glad you have silenced the Christian friend. It is sad to think that people unconsciously imagine things to have happened that suit their purpose. When are you going to become strong yourself?

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 14113

49. LETTER TO REV. CORNELIUS GREENWAY

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
(INDIA)
February 21, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. What I have given you at the top is my permanent address and any remittance you may send to that address will be duly received.

I appreciate your prayers and good wishes of all of which this country stands badly in need.

I do not keep any photograph of mine nor I have given a sitting for years. All the photographs therefore that you see are snapshots. I wish therefore you will not want one.

Yours sincerely,

REV. CORNELIUS GREENWAY
409, COHAMVET ST.
TAURTON MASS

From a microfilm: S. N. 14114

50. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN CHOKSI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Sunday, February 21, 1926

CHI. MOTI,

I have been getting your letters regularly. An occasional irregularity suggests the inconveniences of the household, some of

which are inevitable and some you can get over with firmness; this you must do. I still find your handwriting unsatisfactory. Of course I can see some effort in it, but unless you draw your letters like pictures with the help of a copy-book it is not going to improve. I want you to learn this from my experience. You have got to improve your hand. You must not fall ill, and I am hoping too for news of constant improvement in Najuklal's health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 12117

51. TELEGRAM TO SORABJEE

[*February 22, 1926*][1]

SORABJI
SAVOY HOTEL
DELHI

YOUR WIRE[2]. MY OPINION SUBJECT PROTEST AND PRESSING ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE. COMMUNITY SHOULD OFFER EVIDENCE ON PRINCIPLE.

GANDHI

From a Microfilm: S. N. 11939

52. LETTER TO S. R. SCOTT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 23, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have hitherto refrained from replying to your letter of the 17th instant in the hope that I would hear from you in reply to my letter[3] which I sent you to acknowledge yours of the 12th instant. I thank you for copies of your paper on Gujarati poetry. I like it very much.

[1] From the addressee's reply of February 23, acknowledging the receipt of it as on the preceding night.

[2] It read : "Pandit Motilal Nehru Maulana Mohomad Ali Mrs. Sarojini Naidu send following cable. 'South African community should not appear before select committee as party or offer evidence on their own behalf but should help Government of India deputation if asked in formulating Indian case on question of principle and procuring such evidence as necessary to elucidate principle alone avoiding all discussion or evidence on details and standing firmly on Round Table Conference.' Do you approve of this? Please reply immediately—Sorabjee Savoy Hotel."

[3] *Vide* "Letter to S. R. Scott", 16-2-1926.

In view of my last letter you will please tell me whether you want me to publish your letter[1] of the 12th instant. If you do, it will naturally have a foot-note[2] somewhat after the style of my last letter to you.

Yours sincerely,

REV. S. R. SCOTT
MISSION PRESS
SURAT

From a photostat: S. N. 14115

53. LETTER TO NAOROJI KHAMBHATTA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Tuesday [*February 23, 1926*][3]

BHAI NAOROJI KHAMBHATTA,

I have your letter. Please convey Blessings from us both on the occasion of Chi. Jal's navjot[4] ceremony.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 6582

54. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN CHOKSI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Tuesday, February 23, 1926

CHI. MOTI,

Your letter. It is not at all surprising that you remember the Ashram. But you should restrain the desire [to come here]; you will succeed if you try. You have got to forget about the Ashram. The Ashram is always with you so long as its spirit dwells in your heart. It is only his simple-mindedness that Najuklal should speak of leaving you at the Ashram. You should not take advan- tage of his simplicity. You should benefit from whatever good company you get there, the best of them all is Najuklal's, in his dual capacity of husband and

[1] *Vide* "A Repudiation", 4-3-1926.
[2] *Vide* "A Repudiation", 4-3-1926.
[3] From the source
[4] The sacred thread ceremony of the Parsis

patient. You should always open your mind to me as you did this time. I shall ask Velanbehn to write to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

SAU. SUKANYA NAJUKLAL CHOKSI
RASHTRIYA KELAVANI MANDAL
BROACH

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 12118

55. LETTER TO GOPABANDHU DAS

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 24, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I had correspondence with Lalaji about this. He too told that at the present moment he had sufficient funds at his disposal. I think that the balance of the last famine collection can be safely used for charkha work.

I am thinking of sending you an expert adviser of the type you want. It may take a little time to find out the proper man.

I hope you are yourself keeping good health. I am getting stronger day by day. Govindji has not written to me since the Cawnpore Congress. I do not know therefore at the present moment even where he is.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GOPABANDHU DAS
PURI

From a microfilm: S. N. 14116

56. LETTER TO SUHASINI DEVI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 24, 1926

MY DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I have to fall back upon dictation as my right hand requires rest and the left hand writing takes up too much time.

Thank you. I am slowly regaining lost strength. I must not give any translation rights as yet. So many publishing houses have written to me from the West and I really do not know what to do. I have no private interest in it and it is a novel experience for me to have to think of even receiving money for anything I have written. But as

offers are coming in I have suddenly developed greed and consistently with ensuring accuracy of translation, I want to get as much money as I can for the Spinners Association or some such activity of mine. You will therefore forgive me for not giving you an encouraging reply at the present moment.

I know all about your brother. I wish I could bring him back. But I have no power and as I do not deal with this Government, I cannot even negotiate. I wish we could put up a good fight again and get swaraj and get back all our countrymen who are being detained abroad merely for their love of their country.

By all means do come before you leave India.

Yours sincerely,

SRIMATI SUHASINI DEVI
KENNEDY STREET
LUS, MYLAPORE (MADRAS)

From a photostat: S. N. 14117

57. GIVE US COTTON

The following[1] is a vivid description of a visit paid to some of the spinning centres in Bihar by Sjt. Satish Chandra Das Gupta of Khadi Pratishthan. It shows in the clearest manner possible what spinning is doing for the humble folks of this greart land of ours. Millions of threads spun are like so many rays of sunshine brought into the frigid and dark dungeons miscalled homes of India. The title that Satish Babu has chosen for his description well fits it. This raw product goes to Manchester when our millions are ever crying "Give us cotton". Why? Deft fingers are ready to turn it into warmth-giving yarn for a few coppers but find it difficult to procure it. Thousands of bales of this beautiful stuff are being exported abroad in order to raise the dividends of the huge multi-millionaires who are engaged in exploiting the dumb millions of India. It is up to every lover of the land, at least to see to it that he takes his full share in supplying cotton to those whom Satish Babu has described. He can do it either by controlling such depots himself or sending his own subscription to the All India Spinners' Association which will do it for him. And he must be ready to make use of all the khaddar that can be woven out of yarn so spun. He or she may add as many other activities as he or she likes to this primary one.

Young India, 25-2-1926

[1] Not reproduced here

58. OUR HUMILIATION

Dr. Malan's proposal and its final acceptance by the Viceroy make up a bitter cup of humiliation for the nation. The Union Government has given a Select Committee that will take evidence on the principle as well as the details of the Asiatic Bill. Dr. Malan has hedged it in with four conditions: That the Paddison Deputation should be the only party to give evidence before this Committee on behalf of the Government of India; that there should be no other deputation, no "agitator"—this is Dr. Malan's own expression,—sent from India to supplement that evidence; that the Select Committee should report on or before the 1st of March and that the Bill should be taken up for final disposal during the present session of the Union Parliament.

In my opinion, not one of these conditions could be accepted by a free nation. The Paddison Deputation went only to collect facts, and not to negotiate. A far more important deputation would have gone if it had to negotiate and tender evidence. It is insulting to impose a condition that no other deputation should proceed to South Africa. It is still more insulting to insinuate that the Government of India could ever send an agitator to South Africa. The patronizing language used by Dr. Malan regarding the Paddison Deputation only adds injury to insult. The condition that the Select Committee should report before the 1st of March makes it hardly possible for the Government of India or the Indian settlers to collect and marshal all the evidence that can be tendered to show that the principle of the measure is contrary to the settlement of 1914.

The announcement, side by side with that of the appointment of the Select Committee, that the Bill is to be proceeded with during the current session of the Union Parliament, shows that the Union Government has made up its mind regarding what it intends to do and that the appointment of the Select Committee is merely an eye-wash designed to save the face of the Government of India and to hoodwink the world into believing that the Union Government wishes to do nothing unfair. From this so called concession of the Union Government, therefore, I have no hope of any satisfaction for the doomed settlers. That Government is conscious of its strength and is bent on using all that strength against the settlers. It seems clear that the Government of India will accept the finding of the Select Committee and leave the settlers to their own fate. India in her present state will probably be able to do nothing more than registering another more strong, emphatic and unanimous protest against the

action of the Union Government. What then will the settlers do? It is a question that they alone can answer.

Young India, 25-2-1926

59. A STUDENT'S QUESTIONS

A Christian Indian domiciled in Ceylon but at present studying in the United States writes:[1]

> . . . The magazines and papers here have so many different accounts about your actions that I am asking you for the true account for my own information and for that of my American friends.

Though some of the questions put have been already answered in these pages, they are of such general interest that they will bear repetition. His first quesstion is:

> What is your attitude towards the teachings of Jesus Christ?

They have an immense moral value for me, but I do not regard everything said in the Bible as the final word of God or exhaustive or even acceptable from the moral standpoint. I regard Jesus Christ as one of the greatest teachers of mankind, but I do not consider him to be the "only son of God". Many pasages in the Bible are mystical. For me "the letter killeth, the spirit giveth life" The second question is:

> Do you believe in caste? If so, what do you consider to be its value?

I do not believe in caste as it is at present constituted, but I do believe in the four fundamental divisions regulated according to the four principal occupations. The existing innumerable divisions with the attendant artificial restrictions and elaborate ceremonial are harmful to the growth of a religious spirit, as also to the social well-being of the Hindus and therefore also their neighbours. The third question is:

> Is it your desire that India should be given Dominion status within the British Empire or that she should be given full independence and sever all connection from Britain? If the latter is your desie, what system of government have you in view to take the place of the British system?

I should be quite satisfied with Dominion status within the British Empire, if it is a reality and not a sham. I have no desire to sever all connection with Britain for the sake of it; but if I had the power, I should without a moment's delay end the present unnatural

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

and false position as it interferes with the fullest growth of the nation. The only connection therefore with Britain that I would desire and value is that of an absolutely free and equal partnership at will. If, however, the connection is broken, India will naturally have a system of democratic government suited to the genius of the people. It will be shaped not according to one man's wishes but to those of a multitude. The fourth question is:

> What is your attitude towards the Indian States and their Rulers?

My attitude towards the Indian States and their Rulers is that of perfect friendship. I desire a radical reform in their constitution. The condition in many States is most deplorable, but reform has to come from within and it is a matter for adjustment between the Rulers and the subjects, save for such pressure as is bound to be exerted upon them by the expression of enlightened public opinion in their neighbourhood. The fifth question is:

> Do you favour the idea of a United States of India on the lines of the U.S.A.?

The analogy is dangerous. What seems to answer in the United States may not in India. But subject to that caution, I suppose the final constitution would be a free and healthy union amongst the different provinces to be formed on a linguistic basis. The sixth question is:

> Many articles in these papers here say that you have differed from Dr. Tagore in many matters and have been estranged from him. Is that true? If so, what matters have caused the disagreement?

I have not differed from Dr. Tagore in *many* matters. There are certainly differences of opinion between us in some matters. It would be strange if there were none. But there is not only not the slightest estrangement between us on that or any other account, but the most cordial relations have always existed and continue between us. Indeed the friendship between us is all the richer and truer for the intellectual differences between us. The seventh question is:

> What are you doing in India just now? Have you given up political leadership and politics?

At the present moment I am enjoying what may be called well-earned rest, and at the same time trying to develop the working of the All-India Spinners' Association which is at present the only all-India activity that engages my attention. My political leadership technically ended with the closing of the year for which I was President of the Congress, but in reality it ended with my incarceration. But I have not

given up politics in my sense of the term. I never was a politician in any other sense. My politics concern themselves with internal growth but being of a universal nature they re-act upon the external in a most effective manner. The eighth question is:

> I find a good deal of colour prejudice prevalent here, and at times we have to undergo many hardships on account of our colour. What would you advise me to do in such cases? Am I justified in writing home and telling them about it? Or am I justified in telling the United States people themselves whenever I get an invitation to speak in public?

My advice is: Having gone there live down the prejudice, but resist unto life wherever it hurts your self-respect in any shape or form. Hardships must be the lot of those who have to live in an uncongenial atmosphere and who will still retain their self-respect. You are certainly justified in writing about it anywhere so long as you do so without bitterness and without exaggeration. It would be the most proper thing to tell in a dignified manner the people of the United States of the hardships whenever you get an opportunity. The ninth question is:

> Would you please send me a small message for the students here? They are as a rule very fine men and are preparing to devote their lives to Y.M.C.A. work.

If you mean Indian students, my humble advice is: Express the best that is in you in that far off foreign land, so that your lives may be an example to your neighbours. Do not slavishly follow all that you see in the West. And as you seem to be speaking on behalf of Christian students, I feel tempted to quote from the Bible: "Seek thee first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and everything will be added unto you."

Young India, 25-2-1926

60. IN MITIGATION

I gladly publish the following from a German friend:

> Last year, you published in *Young India* several articles on or letters from Germany which needs must give wrong impressions as to the situation in our country. I intend to set right any false information about our country, though I am convinced you won't have got a contemptuous opinion concerning the German nation. I hope you will endorse a statement of C. F. Andrews writing to me on the 10th of July 1925: "I believe that India and Germany may meet on the basis of pure idealism: more closely than any other

nations of the world." And in all humility I should like to give some remarks[1], for your information, on the above mentioned articles.

The writer is right in feeling assured that I can have no contemptuous opinion about Germans or Germany. Who can dare? Germans are a great and brave people. Their industry, their scholarship, and their bravery command the admiration of the world. One hopes that they will lead the peace movement. They were defeated in the last War, not vanquished. All that is needed is a transmutation of their marvellous energy for the promotion of the progress of the world as a whole, rather than its application for their own as against that of the whole world. There are signs of that desirable change coming over them as over the other peoples of the earth.

Young India, 25-2-1926

61. LETTER TO K. SRINIVASAN

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 25, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am glad that the history of my life appeals to you and is helpful. I could endorse your opinion that these inner experiences of mine are far more valuable than the tremendous political activity in which I have found myself throughout my life. Such value as that activity possesses is derived from the inner experiences which I am endeavouring to recall and relate as accurately as it is possible for one to do. I am trying to bring out every weakness and to show also how the weakness was overcome.

I do hope that you will give more attention to your spinning than you seem to have done. As you are a scientist I need hardly draw your attention to the well-established experience of the world that whatever is worth doing, is worth doing as well as it is possible for us to do. Many of us who are spinning find it simple enough to spin 300 yards at least per hour provided the wheel is kept in order and the slivers are good. The highest speed attained is 900 yards per hour.

Yours sincerely,

K. SRINIVASAN
DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRICAL TECHNOLOGY
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE
HEBBAL, P. O. BANGALORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 14076

[1] Not reproduced here

62. LETTER TO C. SRINIVASA ROW

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 25, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You have put me a most difficult question: Whether asking for Government recognition or financial assistance from the government for your institution is a moral sin or not is a question solely for you or the management to decide. For one whom there is no consciousness of sin in a matter of this character there is no sin. A stranger's opinion therefore is of no value in determining the nature of the act proposed.

For my own self, if I were you, I could not possibly ask for Government recognition or assistance. And, if thereby the students desert me, I should not feel sorry[1] because of the consiousness of the rightness of my abstention. Whether your acceptance will be a political blunder or not is a question on which an outsider can give an opinion. In terms of the Congress resolutions and the present tendency of Congressmen in general, it will not be a political blunder. In the sense that an institution that has hitherto refused to bend before the storm might now feel impelled to bend, does really add to the already existing weakness. On the whole, however, you must regard my opinion as purely an academic opinion. You must therefore decide according to the inner promptings of your conscience and nobody would have the right to point the finger of scorn if you decide to take Government assistance. You must fearlessly do what you consider to be right.

Yours sincerely,

C. SRINIVASA ROW, ESQ.
ANDHRA JATHEEYA KALASALA
MASULIPATAM

From a photostat: S.N. 14118

[1] The source has : "should feel no sorry".

63. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Phalgun Sud 13, Thursday [*February 25, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter after many days. There has been no letter from Devdas either for the last four or five days. We are already convinced that you will need a long rest. Staying there, you may occasionally do something which you can do without risking your health. But give up the idea of Bombay altogether for the present. Undoubtedly, since Devdas is not here, Mahadev has to work more. But there is nothing remarkable in that. To serve only when it isconvenient is not a mark of friendship. If Mahadev cannot go there, he should face the inconvenience caused by Devdas's absence. So far as Devdas is concerned, he has nothing to lose if his stay there is prolonged. Self-development lies in service.

This letter should be considered incomplete. I felt sleepy after dictating this much.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

64. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Thursday [*February 25, 1926*][2]

BHAI DAHYABHAI,

I have gone through your articles on election of a chamar[3] to the municipal body. I am afraid their publication is likely to do more harm than good to the cause of the untouchables. I have therefore dropped the idea of publishing them. In my opinion the best remedy

[1] From *Bapuni Prasadi*
[2] From the postmark
[3] Member of the caste dealing in hides and skins

is to let the public fury subside gradually through silence and peace on your part. Please let me know if you have anything more to say in this regard.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

SHRI DAHYABHAI MANOHARDAS PATEL
DHOLKA

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2694. Courtesy: Dahyabhai Patel

65. LETTER TO PRATAPSIMHA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Phagan Sud 13, 1982 [*February 25, 1926*]

KUMARSHRI PRATAPSIMHAJI,

Shri Devchandbhai Parekh, Sheth Devidas Ghevaria and some others have come here. In consultation with them we have provisionally decided among ourselves that, if the State has no objection, the next year's session of the [Kathiawar] Political Conference be held at Porbunder. The main difficulty in holding it there this year is that I cannot attend it on account of my resolve[1]. And the gentlemen who have gathered here and myself are of the opinion that so long as the new form that the conference has adopted at its Bhavnagar session is not stabilized, my presence would prove helpful. I shall not hesitate to preside over the session if it helps the conference moving forward.

We have unanimously asked Sheth Devidas to accept the presidentship of the Reception Committee. First, the country is very much in need of workers. Sheth Devidas likes to work and also has faith in the wheel and khadi. This is why we chose him. Of course, under the rules the final decision rests with members of the Reception Committee. I have learnt from Devchandbhai that the Hon'ble Ranasaheb also has no objection to holding the session at Porbunder. All the same I shall be obliged if you will kindly ask the Hon'ble Ranasaheb to further clarify his attitude and let me know his views.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: Reel No. 20. Courtesy: Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, New Delhi

[1] To stay in the Ashram for one year

66. LETTER TO A. ARUNACHALAM PILLAI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 26, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your telegram as also your letter. Doctor Naidoo telegraphs to me emphatically denying that any violence was used by the satyagrahis. On the contrary, he complains of violence on the part[1] of those who oppose the use of public roads near temples by the so-called untouchables.

If you have any proof of violence used by satyagrahis, I would gladly enquire into it. Your letter consists merely of unsupported allegations. I am forwarding your letter to Doctor Naidoo however for reply.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. A. ARUNACHALAM PILLAI
SUCHINDRAM
NAGARCOIL POST
SOUTH TRAVANCORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 14074

67. LETTER TO DR. NAIDOO

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 25, 1926

DEAR DR. NAIDOO

Here is a letter from a *savarna* Hindu. I have written in reply saying that you totally deny any violence having been committed by any saytagrahi. Will you kindly let me have your reply to the allegations contained in the letter?

Yours sincerely,

DR. NAIDOO
NAGARCOIL
SOUTH TRAVANCORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 14075

[1] The source has: "violence from on the part"

68. DRAFT RESOLUTIONS ON N. W. F. PROVINCE [1]

[*February 27, 1926*]

(a) Resolved that any reforms or compromise that might be accepted by the Congress or Swaraj Party shall apply to the N.W.F. Province as an integral part of British India and in the same sense as to the regulation provinces.

(b) That no reform or compromise shall be accepted by the Congress or the Swaraj Party which does not apply to the N.W.F. Province as an integral part of British India and in the same sense as to the regulation provinces.

The Hindustan Times, 19-3-1926

69. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

[*February 27, 1926*]

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have shown you M.[2] Shaffi's letter. Please tell him and other Mohammedan friends that in my opinion it would be wrong for the Swarajists to support the tabled resolution about the N.W.F. Provinces. At the same time I should support any proposal to include these Provinces in any scheme of self-government that the Congress ultimately agrees to. To that end I have suggested to you two draft resolutions which I hope the Mussalman friends will accept. If no agreement can be reached I feel that your embargo upon voting by the Swarajist members is the only dignified course.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindustan Times, 19-3-1926

[1] In a statement, clarifying the attitude of the Swaraj Party on the North West Frontier resolution moved by Syed Murtuza Sahib Bahadur in the Central Assembly, Motilal Nehru released these for publication, stating that when he visited Gandhiji on 27th February at Sabarmati, "Mahatmaji dictated to me these resolutions. . . . and also gave me a letter in his own hand."

[2] Mahommad

70. LETTER TO S. GANESAN

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 27, 1926

DEAR MR. GANESAN,

I have your two letters. I understand your point of view. But you should also understand and appreciate mine.

Bapu has decided not to give permission regarding the *Autobiography* to anyone as it will require to be revised and even rewritten if necessary in the light of criticisms that may be made upon it. After it is revised we desire to publish it from the *Young India* office and strike a new departure. Bapu wants the thing to be done, if possible, in his presence and under his direct supervision which means that it cannot be entrusted to anyone else outside.

As regards translations also into foreign languages, the same remarks apply and to those that approach you for permission to translate, you should write in the terms of this letter.

Regarding foreign copyrights, Macmillan & Co. approached Bapu through Mr. John Haynes Holmes who cabled that they were prepared to offer suitable terms for an American-British copyright for the *Autobiography*. Having already cabled to Haynes an affirmative reply, he is helpless though he will make it a strict condition that we will supply them with the manuscript and that it shall in no case be tampered with. . . .

I have had a long talk with Bapu in the matter and I am writing this detailed letter after full consultation with him.

Yours sincerely,
MAHADEV DESAI

SJT. S. GANESAN
PYCROFTS ROAD
TRIPLICANE, MADRAS

From a photostat: G.N. 11445; also S.N. 32233

71. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 27, 1926

DEAD MR. NATESAN,

I must hasten to repair an error I have unconsciously made. I entirely misunderstood your telegram and so did Bapu and I wired to you in reply that you could certainly reproduce the *Autobiography*. I understood you to mean that you wanted to reproduce my translation of the *Autobiography* in the *Indian Review* but I hear that you are already making preparations for publishing it in book form. Please pardon me. Bapu has decided not to allow anyone to publish the *Autobiography* in book form as it will have to be entirely revised after it is once finished in *Young India*[1] and it might have to be rewritten in parts if necessary in the light of the criticisms that appear and will appear in the press. . . .

Yours sincerely,
MAHADEV DESAI

SJT. G. A. NATESAN
EDITOR, 'INDIAN REVIEW' G.T. MADRAS

From a photostat: G.N. 11446; also S.N. 32234

72. "SUTRA-YAJNA"[2]

Various are the forms which sacrifice takes; some are inspired by altruistic and some by selfish motives. Some hope to gain something for themselves by performing a sacrifice in which others suffer, while some others believe that one can perform a sacrifice only by oneself suffering, that is, through one's own labour. One such sacrifice was recently completed by Shri Zaverbhai, the head of the Kumar Mandir at Varad. Writing about it, he says:[3]

It is no ordinary thing to spin nearly 12 lakh yards of yarn in 12 months, that is, nearly 3,500 yards a day. For a person who maintains a speed of 400 yards an hour it takes between 8 and 9 hours to spin 3,500 yards. Devoted work at the wheel for so many hours a

[1] *An Autobiography or The Story of My Experiments with Truth* was serialized in *Young India* from November 29, 1925 to February 3, 1929.

[2] "Yarn-sacrifice"

[3] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent gave particulars of the quantity and the quality of yarn which he had, with the help of his wife and sister-in-law, produced in one year.

day and all through a whole year must be regarded as a *maha*-yajna[1]. "I am a seeker after self-realization", says Shri Zaverbhai in his letter. "and I would make any sacrifice in the world to achieve it". I compliment Shri Zaverbhai for his selfless work and wish that he will continue to perform such sacrifice. If, keeping this example before us, we give even half an hour every day to spinning, how much would the country benefit! In his letter Shri Zaverbhai has also corrected me in one particular. He says that in the note in *Navajivan* about his work last year it was stated that he had spun 3 lakh yards of yarn of 6 counts, wheras in fact it was of about 20 counts and weighed 18 seers. I regret the error.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-2-1926

73. ROYAL DISPLEASURE

The papers say that King George visited the Industrial Exhibition now being held in England. There, in a section exhibiting English-manufactured typewriters, he noticed a government employee typing letters on an American typewriter. The King was angry at this and asked why, if English-manufactured typewriters were in demand outside England, they in England used American typewriters. The officer-in-charge promised to inquire into the matter and tried to pacify the King. But the latter would not be pacified and said that he himself would inquire. The manufacturer of the English typewriter stated that, if his typewriters were introduced in government offices in England, he could certainly provide employment for one more person for every typewriter bought. Commenting on the incident, British newspapers say that, where the House of Commons has been helpless, the King's firmness and displeasure will have some effect.

We may perhaps feel that England, which exports her goods to all countries in the world, has no justification for resenting the use of American typewriters. If, however, we look at the matter from the King's point of view, his displeasure will seem justified. It was argued in defence that American typewriters were being used in government offices because of their superior quality. But the King, a shrewd man, saw that one should not reject a local product because a foreign article

[1] Great sacrifice

is better. Maybe it is, but the right place for it is the country of its manufacture. If we can, we may try to imitate it, but failing in that we should be satisfied with what we can manufacture. This argument must have immediately occurred to the King. Be that as it may, there is much that we can, if we would, learn from this incident. At the most a thousand American typewriters must be in government offices [in England]. If they are replaced by English manufactured typewriters, one thousand Britons could be employed as claimed by the manufacturer of the typewriters. In our country, however, if we show the same shrewdness and patriotism as King George did and are as much displeased with ourselves, we could feed not one thousand but crores of our starving countrymen. The thing with which we can do this is khadi. If, without making any special effort for the purpose, we effect some intelligent economy and start using khadi, merely through this change every man and woman would save for the country the equivalent of one person's earnings for a month. For, the average annual expenditure on cloth per head comes to Rs. 8, out of which not less than Rs. 5 is the cost of labour. Crores in our country do not get even that. The annual per capita income in India is put at Rs. 30. This was the estimate 30 years ago. Having regard to the rise in prices, the figure is put at Rs. 40 now. In that case, the figure of annual expenditure [on cloth] must also be raised correspondingly. There is no harm, therefore, in accepting the figure of Rs. 30 even for calculations today. But no matter what figure we accept, five rupees is certainly more than the average monthly earnings of one person. For doing all this good and earning the moral merit which accrues from it, people have only to change their ideas, or even less than that, their taste. English or mill-made cloth, pleasing to the eye and soft to the touch, will always be inferior to the khadi woven by the poor from yarn spun by the poor.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-2-1926

74. WHAT IS EDUCATION?

The English word 'education' etymologically means 'drawing out'. That means an endeavour to develop our latent talents. The same is the meaning of *kelavani*, the Gujarati word for education. When we say that we develop a certain thing, it does not mean that we change its kind or quality, but that we bring out the qualities latent in it. Hence

‘education‘ can also mean ‘unfoldment’.

In this sense, we cannot look upon knowledge of the alphabet as education This is true even if that knowledge gains us the M.A. degree or enables us to adorn the place of a Shastri[1] in some pathshala[2] with the requisite knowledge of Sanskrit. It may well be that the highest literary knowledge is a fine instrument for education or unfoldment, but it certainly does not itself constitute education.

True education is something different. Man is made of three constituents, the body, mind and spirit. Of them, spirit is the one permanent element in man. The body and the mind function on account of it. Hence we can call that education which reveals the qualities of spirit. That is why the seal of the Vidyapith carries the dictum ‘Education is that which leads to moksha[3]’

Education can also be understood in another sense; that is, whatever leads to a full or maximum development of all the three, the body, mind and spirit, may also be called education. The knowledge that is being imparted today may possibly develop the mind a little, but certainly it does not develop the body and spirit. I have a doubt about the development of the mind too, because it does not mean that the mind has developed if we have filled it with a lot of information. We cannot therefore say that we have educated our mind. A well-educated mind serves man in the desired manner. Our literate mind of today pulls us hither and thither. That is what a wild horse does. Only when a wild horse is broken in can we call it a trained horse. How many ‘educated’ young men of today are so trained?

Now let us examine our body. Are we supposed to cultivate the body by playing tennis, football or cricket for an hour every day? It does, certainly, build up the body. Like a wild horse, however, the body will be strong but not trained. A trained body is healthy, vigorous and sinewy. The hands and feet can do any desired work. A pickaxe, a shovel, a hammer, etc., are like ornaments to a trained hand and it can wield them. That hand can ply the spinning-wheel well as also the ring and the comb while the feet work a loom. A well trained body does not get tired in trudging 30 miles. It can scale mountains without getting breathless. Does the student acquire such physical culture? We can assert that modern curricula do not impart physical education in this sense.

[1] Teacher
[2] Indigenous school
[3] Freedom from phenomenal existence as the goal of life

The less said about the spirit the better. Only a seer or a seeker can enlighten the soul. Who will awaken that dormant spiritual energy in us all? Teachers can be had through an advertisement. Is there a column for spiritual quest in the testimonials which they have to produce? Even if there is one, what is its value? How can we get through advertisements teachers who are seekers after self-realization? And education without such enlightenment is like a wall without a foundation or, to employ an English saying, like a whited sepulchre. Inside it there is only a corpse eaten up or being eaten by insects.

It is and should be the ideal of the Gujarat Vidyapith to impart this three-fold education. Even if one young man or woman is brought up in conformity with this ideal, I shall regard the Vidyapith's existence as worth while.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, Education Supplement, 28-2-1926

75. SPEECH AT WEDDING, SABARMATI

February 28, 1926

I am happy that all of you, brothers and sisters, have taken the trouble to come all the way here to give your blessings to Rameshwar Prasad and Kamla[1], and I thank you for it. I thank you because you have shown that you do not consider this an ordinary wedding. Among Hindus there is a great deal of ostentation at weddings. There is singing, dancing, feasting and a variety of other diversions. The spiritual element, which indeed makes the ceremony meaningful, gets lost sight of. Money is spent on such a scale that, for poor people, getting married has become an arduous business. Many incur debts which they are unable to pay up in their lifetime. To expect that such marriages will enable the bride and the bridegroom to tread the path of dharma is mere wishful thinking. It is not easy to lead a life of self control after a ceremony in which there is so much pomp and so much evil which the parents on either side do all they can to foster. The ideal of this Ashram is the practice of *brahmacharya* even by married couples and some of us do follow this ideal. The children are also given instruction in *brahmacharya*. And yet a marriage takes place at the Ashram and under its auspices. Why? Well, we were faced

[1] Daughter of Jamnalal Bajaj

with a moral dilemma and this is what we did. Those who follow ahimsa use force against no one. Those among the Ashram inmates who cannot practise *brahmacharya* must therefore marry as a matter of duty. And why should we not bless them while do this duty? And why should we not, again, introduce an improved ritual? Indeed it is our duty to do so. When I reflected on the matter it was clear to me that all over India, indeed all over the world, the ritual of marriage includes an element of self-control. Marriage is not intended for satisfying lust. It is laid down in the *smritis* that couples who exercise self-control live in *brahmacharya*. I myself did not understand this for a long time. But after a great deal of thought I was able to grasp the truth of it. Those who cannot entirely destroy passion can at least keep it in check by leading a life of self-control. You all know my standing with Jamnalalji. We both decided that we should have this wedding performed in the simplest manner possible and at the least expense, and the ritual should be such as to impress upon both the young people the real meaning of marriage. It is not easy effectively to dispense with pomp, feasting and singing and dancing in a marriage ceremony. If wedding were to take place in Bombay it would be a lesson go the Marwari community and Jamnalalji's friends. It would help destroy the *adharma* that passes for reforms. It would be an example of what real dharma consists in. But I was afraid it might not be possible to have the ceremony performed as simply in Bombay as here. I shall not go into my reasons for that fear. So I rejected Wardha as well as Bombay as the venue. Then how to see the thing through? The wishes of Jamnalalji and his parents would not be enough. It was necessary also to consult RameshwarPrasad's people. God was, however, kind and Keshavdevji also agreed. The Marwari community has a lot of money and they spend it lavishly. So much, in fact, that the poorer sections find weddings a great strain and burden. There are floral decorations, feasting, lighting and dancing by professional dancers. I am not sure whether there is such dancing among the Marwaris but in Gujarat this is so among certain wealthy people. It has its effect on the Marwaris and on the entire Hindu society of which they are a part and even on Muslims and other communities. I concede that the effect on these latter communities is somewhat less. So you can imagine under what a great burden the rich have to labour. Of course, I have nothing to say about those among the rich who are solely given to amassing wealth and have, in their pride, forgotten God. The Marwaris have in spite of some prevalent

corrupt practices, they love dharma. I know this only too well. Every year they spend lacs of rupees for the sake of dharma. This too I know from experience. So we both decided that the marriage ceremony should take place in the simplest manner possible. It is thus we could meet the demands of both swartha[1] and *paramartha*[2]. *Swartha* consisted in thinking of the good of Jamnalalji and Keshavdevji, Rameshwar Prasad and Kamla, while *paramartha* lay in showing a path to others. There will be no singing and dancing. Only the barest ritual as sanctioned by religious usage will take place. You friends have been invited so that you will witness the ceremony, approve of it and pledge yourselves to follow the example. Maybe I am here mistaken and you may perhaps not like to follow this example. The few rich men who live in India do not make it a rich country. It is the country of the poor. In no other country in the world do so many people die of starvation or become diseased and dehumanized by perpetual hunger. In saying this I repeat the statements of historians, not Hindu or Muslim historians but historians belonging to the governing race. Even the millionaires of such a poor country have not the right to do a thing that would hurt the stomach of the poor. After all, the rich earn their wealth in India; they do not bring it from outside the country—though even then it would be sin to earn money through inflicting misery upon people in foreign countries. The millionaires and multi-millionaires living in India only make the poor poorer. There are seven lakh villages in India. Many of them are being slowly destroyed. Their blood is being sucked. The result is that many who cannot manage to get even one meal a day die of starvation. Human beings as well as cattle starve to death in this country. In the circumstances the rich must spend on themselves only as much money as is absolutely necessary according to dharma. The rest should be spent on the welfare of others, to the benefit of both the poor and the rich. If we view this wedding from this angle, it is an event worth emulating. It is no ordinary reform. Its roots go deep. Its result will also be good. If a poor man acts in this manner he can of course do so without effort but it will not have the same effect. Jamnalalji could have thrown away ten, twenty, even fifty thousand rupees. His fellow Marwaris would only have praised the splendour of the wedding. But though he had the money, he did not spend it. He

[1] Self-interest, one's own welfare
[2] Transcendent good; here altruism

gave up his right. The result of this is bound to be good. It is said in the *Gita* that what great men do others also do. It is a valid and proven dictum. I am obliged to you all and I again thank you. You will give your blessings to Rameshwar Prasad and Kamla. It will be good if others follow this example. If they do, it will be service to dharma and the country. I know both Rameshwar Prasad and Kamla are here. They both have mature understanding. Rameshwar Prasad certainly has it and Kamla too has reached the age when she is treated as a friend by her parents. They will both realize that with all the trouble that their parents have taken, with all the trouble all these people have taken to come here and witness this wedding, it is not to be taken as a licence for satisfying their lust. They must not become slaves to passion. All this is being done so that they may become an ideal couple, may dedicate themselves to a higher ideal. Even in *grihasthashrama* there is scope for conquering passion. Shastras of course say that union is permitted only when progeny is desired. We have forgotten this; and no one has reminded us of it. I wish to make it clear to Rameshwar Prasad that the wife is not the slave of the husband. She is his better half. She must be treated as a friend. Rameshwar Prasad must never even in his dream consider Kamla as a slave. Among Hindus there still are people who treat their wives as their property. These two young persons are entering a new life. I have said on a former occasion that marriage is a second birth. May this couple reach the ideal of Shiva-Parvati, Savitri-Satyavan and Sita-Rama. Hinduism gives such a high place to women that we say Sita-Rama not Rama-Sita; we say Radha-Krishna not Krishna-Radha. But for Sita no one would know Rama. No one would have heard the name of Satyavan if there had been no Savitri. The Pandavas would have remained unknown if there had been no Draupadi. We need not search for examples. I am sure that this event will bear good fruit, and I will have no occasion to regret my part in it. I have still some years to live and I would walk in fear of God. Whatever I do, I do after consulting my inner being. My inner being says that this will be an ideal couple and will give us no cause to repent. I now bless them both and wish them a long life. May they bring credit to their elders and may they support dharma and serve the country.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 4-3-1926

76. LETTER TO J. B. PETIT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 2, 1926

DEAR MR. PETIT,

I have your letter. I have received two cables almost in the same language as that of the cables received by you. I do not attach much importance to these cables. Hence it was that I did not forward them to you.

There is a great deal of bickering going on at present in South Africa amongst our countrymen. The community is cut up into so many groups. Mr. Andrews' presence there is a godsend.

The South African Indian Congress is an amalgamation of several associations. The Natal Indian Congress is a body representing a section of Indians in Natal. The British Indian Association is an association representing Transvaal Indians.

My advice at the present moment is that you should ignore the cables received and at the same time not pay the balance of the amount sanctioned till you have received a proper account regarding the Rs. 39,500 already paid.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 11944

77. LETTER TO LAJPAT RAI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 2, 1926

DEAR LALAJI,

You will forgive me for not replying to your letter earlier. The fact is that I am supposed to work only for a limited time every day and as Panditji[1] was here when your letter was received almost all the time at my disposal was given over to him. The correspondence was therefore held up.

Though your letter was marked private, I used my discretion and showed it to Panditji in order that I might discuss the various important matters to advantage. I felt that he should know your views whilst we were discussing subjects of common interest.

[1] Motilal Nehru

I sent you a telegram yesterday saying that it was not possible for me to give you a decision regarding the delegation to the International Labour Conference. I should have much hesitation about your acceptance of the delegation if the All-India Congress Committee embarked upon the modified Council boycott contemplated during the last session of the Congress.

All my views about what the A.I.C.C. should do at the present moment have been clearly put before Panditji. I do not therefore reiterate them here. Technically the delegation may not be coverd by the Congress resolution, but if you vacate your seats in the Councils, it seems to me to be hardly dignified to accept the delegation or any such nominations to Committees or Conferences in which the Government may be concerned. How nice it would have been, if you could possibly have come whilst Panditji was here!

I have watched with greatest pain the progress of the Frontier Province resolution. I have given my own opinion upon the matter to Panditji to be shown to all concerned.

Motilalji told me that there were no resignations except that one was threatened, one was compelled and one was withdrawn.

I am destroying your letter. Do please come even now whenever you get the time, but give yourself at least 2 or 3 days so that we might talk at leisure. And whether you go to the Labour Conference or not, it would certainly be nice if you had a voyage and rest in some quiet place pleasing to you. I do not find much in your idea of combining political work with rest and, as I do, you will throw yourself in the work and have no rest. If you go at all therefore there should be a sacred resolution extorted from you that you will not do any political work at all but merely rest and be thankful.

Yours sincerely,

LALA LAJPAT RAI

DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 19341

78. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Tuesday [*March 2, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. About you I have talked at length with Devdas also. Dr. Jivraj is of the opinion that you must now go to Panchgani. Deolali is not adequate for summer. So you must now get ready to go to Panchgani. The climate of Panchgani is of course considered better than that of Deolali. It will not be difficult to find accommodation there, will it? You must make up your mind to go there.

Chi. Dilip will have completely recovered by now. Is it compulsory to have children vaccinated against smallpox? Devdas is starting out today to come to you. But he says that you will have received this letter a few hours before his arrival, so it is going by post. Devdas is of course prepared to stay on there till you recover. He himself does not think that his progress will be stopped by doing that. I have never believed that anybody's progress can be stopped by his doing work of service. Studies, etc., are not ends but means, while service is an end in itself. No man has so far found his salvation through studies. Many have found, and are finding, their salvation through service. It is of course difficult to realize this and having realized it, to act on it. But then it is never easy to achieve *moksha*.

If I go to Sinhgadh, it will be around the 1st of April. Certainly not before that. I have learnt today that you have found the accommodation.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

79. LETTER TO A. A. PAUL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 3, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I should love to go to China but I do not know that I can be of much service to the Chinese friends. However,

[1] From *Bapuni Prasadi*

will you please let me know who Mr. T. Z. Koo is and where I am expected to go and how long I am expected to give to the proposed visit?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

A. A. PAUL, ESQ.
7, MILLER ROAD, KILPAUK
MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 11363

80. LETTER TO MOHAMMED SHAFEE

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 3, 1926

DEAR SHAFEE SAHEB,

I received your letter whilst Pandit Motilalji was here. I showed it to him and discussed it with him. I showed your letter also to Rajendra Babu. I have no doubt that the Frontier Province should have the same treatment as any other province but as Congressmen we may not ask for the extension of reforms which we condemn as wholly unsatisfactory and inadequate.

I have written to Motilalji a letter which he must have shown to you and other friends. It conveys fully my opinion about this unfortunate trouble.

Yours sincerely,

MAULANA MOHAMMED SHAFEE
DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 19342

81. LETTER TO GOPALDAS

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Wednesday, Phagan Vad 4 [*March 3, 1926*]

BHAI GOPALDAS,

I have your letter. Fasting is not a universal panacea. I am sure, it is by no means going to cure your disease now. Do not at all think that you are weak and a victim of bad habits. Be ever cheerful. You

should retire in time and get up early in the morning. You need not bother about your wife if she would not listen to you. If she is not amenable to gentle persuasion let her go her own way. If you do not deviate from your path nor start nagging, she may realize yours is the better way and may go with you. And do not take it to heart if she does not. Now, do we not remain calm when a sister, mother, a brother or a friend refuses to agree with us? It is our infatuation that we cannot have this attitude towards our wife. Rid yourself of this infatuation.

Keep your diet simple. Give up chillies and the like. If you are not used to cold water baths, cultivate this habit. And recite *Ramanama* with faith so as to be free from evil thoughts, bad dreams and the like. If possible carefully go through the eleventh chapter of the *Bhagavata* and meditate on it.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 10608

82. NOTES

FOR JUVENILES

Owing to the repeated requests of young friends under 18 years to become members of the All-India Spinners' Association, the Council has passed a resolution, at its last meeting, permitting boys and girls under 18 years who are habitual wearers of khaddar to become members upon sending 1,000 yards per month of their own spinning. The idea is to encourage boys and girls to cultivate regularity, and to establish a moral bond between themselves and the poorest in the land. And this inestimable advantage is gained apart from the art of spinning being a training for the eye and fingers.

Youths who wish to become members will be expected to spin daily for at least half an hour and if they will set apart a parcticular half-hour for the purpose, they will find that it will induce a regularity in all other studies and work that they may undertake. They will be expected to keep their wheels in perfect order, learn to repair them and learn also the art of carding and making their own slivers. All these processes take up very little time, that is, for those who love their work.For schoolboys and girls, I recommend not the spinning-wheel but the *takli.* It has been ascertained that the *takli* enables one easily to

spin 80 yards per hour. Spinning on the *takli* at the rate of half an hour daily gives one the required monthly subscription of 1,000 yards.

I hope therefore that many boys and girls will register themselves as members, subject to the permission of their parents or guardians. So far schools are concerned, it will be saving of postage if schoolmasters will take charge of the yarn that may be spun and make one parcel taking care to attach cards to the quantity spun by each boy or girl. The parcels should be addressed to the Director, Technical Department of the All-India Spinners' Association, Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati.

Juveniles or their guardians at the time of sending self-spun yarn should note the name, age, sex and address of the spinner, give also the number of yards and state that the spinner habitually wears hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar.

FOR SELF-SPINNERS

The Director of the Technical Department of the All-India Spinners' Association writes that members have been repeatedly writing for the return of their yarn for converting into khaddar for their personal use and offering to pay any reasonable price. The Secretary undertook to convert it into khadi and let them have it, provided that they did not mind the mixing of other hand-spun yarn if their own was not sufficient. But this proposal to mix it was not acceptable to the members inasmuch as they wanted the satisfaction of wearing clothes made out of yarn spun by themselves. It has not been possible to comply with the desire of the members, laudable though it is in many respects, because of the possibility of some returning the same yarn as subscription. For, it would not be possible for the Association to pick and choose, favour some members and condemn others. A way has therefore been now discovered of selling the yarn received to the subscribers by doing so after bleaching it. Bleaching will in no way damage the yarn. It will whiten it, and if anything make it a trifle stronger.

Those, therefore, who want their yarn back against payment can have it on application to the Director, Technical Department, or the Secretary of the All-India Spinners' Association. And those members who desire the return of their yarn will please take care to mark on the cards attached to their yarn in clear words "to be returned".

The department will not be able to send the yarn by V.P. post. I

therefore suggest, in order to avoid delay, that the senders deposit with the Director Rs. 5 when yarn will be returned immediately upon entry and examination and bleaching, unless the senders desire that sufficient quantity should be collected before the yarn is retuned.

ABOUT AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Several friends in India and outside have been writing, cabling and wiring to me for permission to publish in book-form the chapters that I am writing at present on "My Experiments with Truth". Whilst I have no objection to proprietors of newspapers and periodicals copying the chapters in their magazines or newspapers from time to time, I do not want to give permission for the publication of the chapters in book-form at the present stage. I have myself no idea when the story will be completed, and I would not like the chapters to be published in parts, and without undergoing a revision by me or under my direction.

Publishers will therefore kindly note that at the present moment I am not prepared to allow the chapters to be published or translated in book-form.

Young India, 4-3-1926

83. A REPUDIATION

Rev. H. R. Scott[1] at present stationed at Surat writes:[2]

I have been reading with much interest your "Story" in *Young India* . . . I was the only missionary in Rajkot during those years (from 1883 to 1897) . . . I certainly never preached "at a corner near the High School" . . . and I certainly never "poured abuse on Hindus and their gods" . . . During my time in Rajkot I baptised a number of Brahmins and Jain sadhus. They certainly had not to "eat beef and drink liquor", either at their baptism or at any other time.Though the preaching took place over forty years ago the painful memory of it is still vivid before me. What I have heard and read since has but confirmed that first impression. I have read several missionary publications and they are able to see only the dark side and paint it darker still. The famous hymn of Bishop Heber's—"Greenland's icy mountains'—is a clear libel on Indian humanity. I was favoured with

[1] This appears to be a slip for S. R. Scott.*Vide* "Letter to S. R. Scott", 23-2-1926.

[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

some literature evenat the Yeravda prison by well-meaning missionaries, which seemed to be written as if merely to belittle Hinduism. About beef-eating and wine-drinking at baptism I have merely stated what I heard and I have said as much in my writing. And whilst I accept Mr. Scott's repudiation I must say that though I have mixed freely among thousands of Christian Indians, I know very few who have scruples about eating beef or other flesh meats and drinking intoxicating liquors. When I have gently reasoned with them, they have quoted to me the celebrated verse "Call thou nothing unclean" as if it referred to eating and gave a licence for indulgence. I know that many Hindus eat meat, some eat even beef and drink wines. They are not converts. Converts are those who are "born again" or should be. A higher standard is expected of those who change their faith, if the change is a matter of the heart and not of convenience. But I must not enter into deeper waters. It is a matter of pleasure to me to be able to say that if I have had painful experiences of Christians and Christian missionaries I have pleasant ones also which I treasure. There is no doubt that among them the spirit of toleration is growing. Among individuals there is also a deeper study of Hinduism and other faiths and an appreciation of their beauties, and among some even an admission that the other great faiths of the world are not false. One is thankful for the growing liberal spirit but I have the conviction that much still remains to be done in that direction.

Young India, 4-3-1926

84. A CRY FOR COTTON

Babu Rajendra Prasad sends me the following letter:[1]

I have omitted from the letter the facts related by Satis Babu regarding the eagerness of the spinners to get their portion of cotton. Rajendra Babu adds that the majority of the spinners are Mussalman women. I wish he had given the number of the spinners among whom over Rs. 600 are being distributed weekly. But there is little difficulty in discovering the number as the average earning per week from the use of spare hours cannot be more than eight annas. Therefore at least 1,200 needy women are being served in only three centres. There are

[1] Not reproduced here

to my knowledge hundreds of such centres which can be opened if we have men and money. Unfortunately there is a dearth of both and more of men than of money. By judicious begging, money can be collected, but not equally easily workers of the right sort. But the facts that are being daily collected show that it is merely a question of time when hand-spinning must become universal. During the transition stage we must concentrate upon the centres that are already working and make them self-supporting and permanent by effective organization. The cry for cotton must be satisfied. And that can only be done by moneyed men coming out with donations in cash or kind. The All-India Deshbandhu Memorial is not being responded to, as it should, largely because collecting has been suspended. I hope however the information that Sjts. Rajagopalachari and Rajendra Babu have made available to us will be sufficient incentive to those who believe in the potency of the spinning-wheel to loosen their purse strings. To donate to the wheel is in my opinion an ideal form of charity, for it helps the poor without making them beggars and idlers and without robbing them of self-respect and at the same time is calculated to make India self-supporting in the matter of clothing and to save her the annual drain of nearly sixty crores of rupees.

Young India, 4-3-1926

85. 'MISSION TO THE WOMEN OF INDIA'

When I paid my humble tribute to the memory of the late Mrs. Ramabai Ranade, I had occasion to mention the great work of the Poona Seva Sadan Society of which Sjt. G. K. Devadhar is the soul. He has however sent me literature about the work of this society and asks me to review it in the hope that the readers of *Young India* might help the institution which has an annual income of nearly 2 lakhs but whose total expenditure is estimated at $2\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs. I rarely review the work of any institution which I do not know intimately. I cannot claim to know this great society intimately, but I do know Sjt. G. K. Devadhar intimately. We have political differences between us but they have never blinded me to his devotion to the country and his indefatigable energy which he has sustained now for nearly a generation. This is his own claim for the Seva Sadan Society's work:

> By gradual steps the Seva Sadan, Poona, has developed now into a big organization of the nature of a Mission to the women of India. It promotes, through a widespread network of its branches and other allied institutions,

education—literary, industrial, medical and musical in character, specially among poor and grown-up women of all castes and creeds in India.

The is how the origin of the institution is described:[1]

> While engaged in the famine relief campaign in the United Provinces in 1907-08, the conviction that was dawning in my mind grew deeper and stronger every day that India needed just as much an army of trained women workers in various fields of national advance for benefit to their sisters as she needed a band of devoted and trained men. . . . These meetings resulted in a resolve to undertake the education and training of half a dozen poor widows as social workers. Thus the small seed has steadily developed today into a mighty growth.

It has eight branches conducting 94 classes in which 1,234 girls and women drawn from all classes receive instruction. 48 is the percentage of widows attending these classes. It is interesting to note that there are 3 women belonging to the suppressed class. There are 8 Jews, 24 Christians and 7 Mohammedans. The percentage of non-Brahmins is 40. There are 270 women residing in the 13 hostels maintained by the society. There are 92 receiving nursing and medical education. It has turned out already 125 certified teachers, 42 fully qualified nurses, 31 midwives, 19 doctors, 17 matrons and governesses, 30 craft-mistresses and 9 music teachers. The institution is ever growing. It is the largest of its kind in India.

For an institution that caters for the needs of poor women it certainly lacks one thing: hand-spinning and use of khaddar. But there probably Sjt. Devadhar does not see eye to eye with me. I can bide my time, for time always runs with the poor who have or have to have inexhaustible patience, and since the General Secretary's heart is with the poor, he will not fail one day to recognize that if his hand of fellowship is to reach out to the poorest in the land, it will do so only through hand-spun yarn. To look at, it is a flimsy cotton thread but it is stout enough to bind all the millions of India together in its gentle and loving coil. No doubt, embroidery-work and such other things taught at the Seva Sadan are more paying than spinning but surely everything need not be reduced into rupees, annas, pies. The 1,234 girls and women can be induced to give to their less fortunate fellow-sisters half an hour of their time every day and they can well afford to wear and carry the weight of somewhat heavier khadi saris when they have the knowledge that these saris have helped to fill the hungry mouths of some of their unfortunate sisters.

Young India, 4-3-1926

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

86. IN ITS NAKEDNESS

The *Forward* of Calcutta has rendered a public service by publishing extracts from the Report of the Indian Jail Committee of 1919-20 being the evidence given by Lt. Colonel Mulvany on the treatment of State prisoners. It brings vividly to light the evil of the present system of Government in all its nakedness. It shows how the officials themselves are coached to do the wrong thing and thus corrupted and deprived of any sense of self-respect. Lt. Colonel Mulvany was Superintendent of the Alipore Central Jail at the time. I cull the following[1] from his statement:

> . . . I have been in charge of one or the other of the Calcutta jails since the very beginning of the anarchical movement. . . . And I cannot say less than that *my feelings were outraged by the cruelty of the treatment I was ordered and expected to carry out*. . . . I submitted a report . . . concerning two State prisoners in which I expressed my opinion that *the degree of confinement to which they were subjected was so severe as to be liable to injure their health, that the confinement was more stringently solitary than any solitary confinement imposed under the Prisons Act or under jail regulations both of which were limited strictly to seven days*. I submitted this report deliberately with intent to force a crisis which must result either in my removal (which I did not anticipate) or in some amelioration of the cruelties I was ordered to inflict. What was the result? My letter was returned to me with the request to reconsider it. . . .

The correspondence too referred to by Lt. Colonel Mulvany is reproduced by the *Forward*. I cannot resist the temptation to quote from the letter of the then Inspector General of Prisons who on receipt of the damning report from Lt. Colonel Mulvany asked him to reconsider it and suggested the falsehood he was to say in his revised report. Here is the relevant quotation:

> Please reconsider this letter. Remember it has to go to Simla and it will rouse the Olympian wrath. The degree of solitary confinement is dictated to us by the police need of separating these prisoners not only from other native prisoners but from each other. I think you might so far report that the prisoners are in solitary confinement and are permitted to exercise daily and that both are cheerful and the health of neither has suffered or words to that effect.

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

Upon the receipt of this letter Lt. Colonel Mulvany regretfully pocketed his pride and sent what he knew to be an untruthful report. How is it possible after this report to believe any at all coming from a Government source and intended to whitewash it? Nor is this an exceptional case. This cooking of reports and statements is a most usual thing with the Government as is known to everyone who has had anything to do with Government departments. Today everything has to be "edited" by superior officers.

Relatives of the brave men of Bengal who are being indefinitely detained without a trial have with difficulty come to know certain things about the prisoners, which have been given to the world and which go to show that they are being put to much unnecessary hardship. The allegations are generally denied and where a total denial is not possible, partial truth is admitted and the blame for what suffering is admitted is thrown on the prisoners.

When Sjt. Goswami succeeds in forcing a debate in the Assembly he is laughed at and told from the Government benches that Lt. Colonel Mulvany's statement was not accepted by the Committee. The Government entrenching itself behind a wall of lies and the force of its bayonets treats the complaints with contempt in the certain belief that the detention and ill-treatment of prisoners are necessary for the safety of the Englishmen it represents.

Bengal has declared a day of hartal by way of protest. The Government cares little about hartals of impotent people. It listens to no argument save that of force, whether of the sword or the soul. It knows and respects the former, it does not know the latter and therefore fears it. We have not the former. We thought we had the latter in 1921. But now—?

Young India, 4-3-1926

87. LETTER TO KATHERINE MAYO

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 4, 1926

DEAR FRIEND[1],

I have your letter of the 28th ultimo enclosing a letter from the Bishop of Calcutta.

[1] Author of *Mother India*

17th March will be a suitable day for me to receive you at 4 p.m. at the above address. The Ashram is about four miles from Ahmedabad. Most of the *gadiwallas* at the Station know the place.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

MISS KATHERINE MAYO
C/O THOMAS COOK & SONS
BOMBAY

From a copy: Katherine Mayo Papers. Courtesy: Yale University Library, New Haven, Connecticut, U.S.A.

88. LETTER TO HARIBHAU

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 4, 1926

DEAR HARIBHAU,

Maganlal has passed on your message to me. If an expert can be posted in Poona, he will be sent but I want to controvert your argument. We are not like Dunlops or Singers. We have not an unlimited capital to lose. We may not exploit in the sense that they do. We may not add thousand per cent to the cost at the base. Our methods therefore must be different from theirs. If we concentrate upon a central factory for turning out wheels and their parts, the movement is doomed to fail. On the contrary we must make the people self-reliant and therefore teach them to make their own wheels. This teaching of decentralization can only commence with the province and therefore you have to do what you are expecting Sabarmati to do, that is, the Central Board.

Maharashtra must train experts who will spread themselves in different parts and in their turn whilst helping the people will teach them. Those who believe in the wheel must not be satisfied with merely spinning yarn but must understand the mechanism of the wheel themselves, to be able to mend it, to replace parts, learn all the easy methods of making and adjusting holders, spindle, outfit, etc. What is in its nature easy we must not make difficult by telling people that they need to come to us for putting their wheels right when they get out of order. I therefore suggest to you that you now begin to make an effort to become self-reliant and self contained, getting from

here all the help you need in the process. We have now reached a stage in the career of khadi when it can go forward in leaps and bounds if only the few workers that we are would make ourselves experts in all its various branches—a consummation which really does not require either much time or extraordinary intelligence or ability. All that is required is sustained application.

Maganlal is dealing with the rest of your letter.

Yours,

From a microfilm: S. N. 19343

89. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Thursday [*March 4, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have received your letter. Devdas must have reached there. I am likely to go to Sinhgadh in the first week of April. But please do not think of coming to Kalyan. You will have reached Panchgani by the time I go to Sinhgadh itself? This is worth giving thought to. Dr. Jivraj has not chosen Sinhgadh for you because it is not possible to stay here long. And he thinks that going there for a short visit would involve a lot of strain. But where is the strain if you go up in a litter? Nevertheless, think about it when I go to Sinhgardh. Dilip will have fully recovered.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

90. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 5, 1926

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I received your note of the 1st. Though you have left a note for Dr. Mehta, I have also written to make assurance doubly sure. I hope Kamala kept excellent health on board. Did you all profit by the voyage? No time to say anything more.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

A Bunch of Old Letters, p. 46

[1] From the postmark

91. LETTER TO K. B. MENON

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 5, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Whilst I wish you every success in all your worthy endeavours, I must resist the temptation of becoming patron to your institution. I cannot recall a single instance in my life of having accepted that office in connection with an institution which I do not know personally and for which I have done no work or can do no work.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. K. B. MENON
SECRETARY
SONS OF BHARATH
P.O. BOX 477, BERKELEY, CALIF., U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N. 12423

92. LETTER TO ALICE MCKAY KELLY

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 5, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your good letter. Please tell the members of the League the best way of helping India is to engage in an accurate study of the Indian problem not from newspapers nor after the newspaper style but as diligent students from original sources with patient and prayerful effort.

Regarding your wish that I should visit America, I assure you I am equally eager but I must wait for the definite guidance of the inner voice.

In your previous letter you have asked me for a signed photograph. Did you know that I don't possess a single print myself. I had not given a sitting for the last ten years and even when I used to

give sittings I never got my own portraits. I am sorry therefore that I have to disappoint you.

Yours sincerely,

MISS ALICE MCKAY KELLY
1200, MADISON AVENUE
NEW YORK CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 12427

93. LETTER TO EDWIN M. STANDING

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 5, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter and the photograph. I was wondering where you were and whether you ever received my letter. I am having your name registered for *Young India*. I hope you will get it regularly.

Yes. I am taking rest for one year at the Ashram. It is not possible to say that I have retired from politics altogether for the year but my political activity is confined to whatever I can do from my place in the Ashram.

What photo did I promise you? If it was my own, I must have made some mistake for I thought you knew that I did not possess any myself. There are so-called portraits of mine which are sold in the bazaar. Surely you do not want that misprint.

I do not interest myself in the activities of the Theosophical Society.

I do not subscribe to the proposition that you seem to imply that good things require a library to explain them or that one needs numberless libraries to describe one's joy and satisfaction. On the contrary, I have known that where reasons are sound and pious they can be summed up in a few lines and joy which is real is either inexpressible or its expression often condensed in one word or a phrase. I would therefore still ask you, if you care to explain, the reasons that have led you to Catholicism and describe if you can the secret of the endless joy it has given you. I ask this question not for idle curiosity but in order to understand the meaning and the power of Roman Catholicism. I understand somewhat but sufficiently

enough for my purpose Judaism. I understand still more fully Protestantism; I understand Islam; I understand also Hinduism but though I had a few Roman Catholic friends, I have never been able to come near enough to them to understand Catholicism. The superficial distinctions between the two churches I do understand. What I want to reach is the heart of Catholicism. You can perhaps help me. Hence my question.

Mr. and Mrs. Ambalal often see me. So also the children. They are all grown. Mridula is almost a woman in wisdom. I shall be sending your letter to Saraladevi who I know delights to hear about you.

Yours sincerely,

EDWIN M. STANDING
SEFTON PLACE, ARUNDEL
SUSSEX, ENGLAND

From a photostat: S.N. 12438

94. LETTER TO M. MUJEEB

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 5, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am glad you are all fixed up in the Muslim University. I remember having heard from Zakir[1]. I expect great things from you as I know you through Hakim Saheb and Khwaja Saheb. I would certainly love to see you and talk to you and know you personally. The only way to do it is for you to come to Sabarmati. Can you come during this month? In April under doctor's advice I shall most probably be moving to a hill station.

Remember that Monday is my day of silence. Come here whenever you like and stay at Ashram.

Yours sincerely,

MAULANA M. MUJEEB
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY
KARAUL BAGH
DELHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 19344

[1] Zakir Hussain (b. 1897); third President of India

95. LETTER TO DR. PRATAP CHANDRA GUHA RAY

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 5, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Welcome! What a comedy of errors! I did not receive your telegram that you mention. I showed your telegram to several friends here and none of us could make out the place and all considered that it was some Kakori case prisoner wiring from U.P. It ought to have struck me that the province might be Bengal and that it must be you who had been discharged. Your letter now corrects the error.

Whenever you come to Sabarmati, I shall certainly examine you about your spinning capacity. I wonder if Mrs. Ray ever received my letter which I wrote to her after you were imprisoned.

When is Hemendra Babu's book to be published? I shall gladly write a few lines of preface if he or you will let me know when the book is likely to be published at the latest.

Yours sincerely,

DR. PRATAP CHANDRA GUHA RAY
38 A, KALIGHAT ROAD
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19345

96. LETTER TO J. V. BETHMANN

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 5, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. There have been many applications for translation of the autobiography I am writing but I have not yet given to anybody the exclusive right.

The lady from Copenhagen is free to translate it if she is content to do so without claiming an exclusive right.

I thank you and Mrs. Bethmann for your kind enquiry about my health which is progressing.

With regards to yourself and Mrs. Bethmann.

Yours sincerely,

REV. J. V. BETHMANN
20 MILLER ROAD, KILPAUK
MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 19346

97. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 5, 1926

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS,

I have your two letters. I know how Guruji feels about the present situation. The ways of God are inscrutable and I have no doubt that the cloud hanging over our heads will lift in its time. You can hasten it by prayerful work. I know also Guruji's anxiety about my health. So long as I am wanted in this body on this earth, it will remain intact. Ours is but to take what care we legitimately can and this I am doing.

I am glad that Guruji is again much better.

I was weigh yesterday and found to have gained 2 lbs. I am now 101 lbs. You shall certainly have Gujarati *Navajivan* from week to week. The current number I am sending now by a separate book post and for the future I am asking Swami to register your name.

Kamala's marriage went off quite nicely. There was no fuss and there was only religious ceremony. Pyarelal came yesterday. Devdas came over for a day. He went back on Tuesday to Deolali. Mathuradas is making steady though very slow progress. Satis Babu, his wife and his son Arun are here.

Yours,

SJT. KRISHNADAS
110, HAZRA ROAD
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19347

98. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 5, 1926

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

I have your telegram about your immediately sailing for England. It came upon me as a surprise as I knew nothing of your impending visit nor am I any better off now. However, on your return there will be sufficient still left of me as your patient for you to examine and tamper with.

But a telegram today says you are to be one of the Hindu-Moslem Committee now to be appointed. Does it mean that your departure is postponed or that the Committee is to carry on its work after your return? I have responded to Pandit Motilalji's imperative call but I am diffident about our ability to do anything.

Whenever you go my good wishes attend you. I hope Begum Ansari is much better now. I wonder how Hakimji is faring.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. M. A. ANSARI
DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 19348

99. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday [*March 5, 1926*][1]

BHAI DAHYABHAI,

I have your letter. I think it is not right to write about the Mamlatdar and the Collector. I shall include a note on Rampar. You convey Hirabhai's *namaskaras* with love and devotion and say at the same time that he does not observe his vow of spinning, though he has the leisure. How can such *namaskaras* be accepted? And what can we say about the love and regards of a person who cannot keep even a simple vow? Do tell him all this and write to me what he says.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[1] From the postmark

100. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Phalgun Vad 6, Friday [*March 5, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I understand about Dilip. I have an impression that there is a Hindu Sanatorium at Panchgani. You must write to Tairsee[2] and find out. Later even if there is no occasion to go there the information gathered will not be in vain. I am not personally fond of Panchgani. I would consider Deolali adequate. But right now we are under Dr. Mehta. Therefore, it would be proper to follow his instructions. If you have a quick recovery, it will be a relief.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

101. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
Phagun Vad 6, Friday [*March 5, 1926*][3]

CHI. PRABHUDAS[4],

I have your letter. Devdas, too, had paid a visit. According to the size of your body, your weight should not be less than 120 pounds. But as far as I am concerned, I do not lay emphasis on weight. You should have a well-built body. I had tried grape-seeds. I do not know whether they have any purgative value. I do not even know whether they have been analysed. However, powder of the seeds might be having the wave effect as sand. That is to say if a man takes two to four grains of sand, his intestines develop a kind of irritation because of which irritation, he passes stools. But this remedy should not be tried regularly. It might be effective if tried occasionally. But it will

[1] The addressee received this letter on March 6, 1926.

[2] Lakshmidas R. Tairsee

[3] From the combination of Gujarati day and month, the place-name and Friday, *Phagun Vad* 6 in 1926 corresponded to March 5 and was a Friday. The reference to Kuvalayanand also confirms the year as 1926; *Vide* "Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", March 27, 1926 and "Letter to Swami Kuvalayananda", September 18, 1926.

[4] The letter is in a different hand but the subscription is by Gandhiji.

definitely harm those who have delicate intestines. So, I do not recommend grape-seeds for you. You may try them if Kuvalayanandji knows of their analysis and if he knows from his personal experience of their having a light purgative value, and advises you to take them. But do tell him what I have written to you about the seeds. Tell him also that I feel they are best discarded if you can pass stools without them. Even after reading this, if he insists on your taking the seeds, try them by chewing them well. You will know their effect within two or three days. Beetroot contains a kind of sugar and, therefore, to some extent it is healthy. It has a purgative value too. Beetroot has to be boiled well. It is a false notion that the vegetables and fruits which are red in colour have rajoguna. Onions inspite of being pure white definitely have rajoguna. Tomatoes, melons, red grapes, in spite of being red are satvik. If those who practise yoga hold contrary views, I would like to know the reasons.

What is said about millet could possibly be true. The bad qualities it has are not due to its colour but due to certain substances it contains and the lack of certain others. A person who does not have sufficient physical exercise and has to do a lot of mental work, is not able to digest it. For that reason, it is considered to have rajoguna and wheat is said to be satvik.

Milk in comparison to meat is satvik. Compared to fruit, etc., it certainly has rajoguna. But do not go into such details. For you at the moment, milk, wheat, fruit and green vegetables are the things worth taking.

Do not hesitate to ask me any question you feel the need to ask. Sooner or later, I will certainly answer them. The best service you can render is to make yourself fit so that I can take any work I like from you. Improving health means achieving equilibrium of body, mind and spirit. If you feel like rendering more service, propagate khadi whenever you get an occasion. Persuade the non-wearers to wear it. Whenever it becomes necessary, do argue in its favour without getting excited. Do this work only if you can do it as fun. There is no need to ride two horses at a time. It is enough if you pay attention to your health. Though no community prayer is held there, you could drag along some worthy friends for the prayer. I am sure there is no difficulty in holding joint prayer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32949

102. LETTER TO M. K. ACHARYA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 6, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have now been able to go through your pamphlet. I must confess that it does not carry conviction. The statements you make about untouchability are wholly unsupported. The solution you suggest is no solution. Your meaning of prarabdha[1] is such that if it were true there would be no scope left for mutual help, and every atrocity on earth would be justifiable. And therefore all the declarations against Europeans of South Africa for their treatment of our countrymen would be found to be wholly wrong. Nor in my opinion have you presented the present movement against untouchability in a just manner.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. K. ACHARYA
10 D, QUEENSWAY
RAISINA, DELHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 19349

103. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, Phagan Vad 7, 1982 [*March 6, 1926*]

BHAI SHIVABHAI,

I could not attend to your letter earlier on account of my illness. If one regards non-co-operation as dharma then co-operation is sinful. Dharma is ever binding. The slightest violation of such a bond is sin. It would be an exaggeration to say that an institution can render no service to the counrty if it associates with the Government. But it is certainly true that the closer the association the less the service.

It is difficult to answer your last question offhand. I can explain if you see me in person. The usual time is 4 p.m. except on Monday. I do not think a husband observing *brahmacharya* must forsake his

[1] Pre-destiny

wife. Of course, he should steadfastly avoid all privacy with her.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 406. Courtesy: Shivabhai Patel

104. LETTER TO HARSUKHRAI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, Phagan Vad 7 [*March 6, 1926*]

BHAI HARSUKHARAI,

I have your letter. I can suggest a number of remedies if you can forget that you have qualified for the bar. But can I ask you to take up manual work? Will you be interested in spinning and carding yourself and getting others to do it? Can you derive the same satisfaction that a labourer does in earning his livelihood? All my remedies are as easy as they are hard. But write to me if you can live the life of a labourer.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 10609

105. WITH BARE RELIGIOUS RITES

Though the Satyagraha Ashram has kept before itself the ideal of inviolate celibacy, it recently celebrated some marriages; the events being of general interest, I have commented on them in *Navajivan*. I have discussed privately among friends how the Ashram which has accepted celibacy as its ideal can thus encourage marriages. However, a brief reply to the question for the benefit of readers who take interest in the activities of the Ashram will not be out of place.

If those who aspire to follow the ideal of *brahmacharya* accepted by the Satyagraha Ashram cannot even bear to see a wedding, I think, they will never be able to practise *brahmacharya* for their whole life. We all know the story of Rishyashrung[1]. If a person hankers after a thing from which he keeps himself away and still pretends that he is indifferent to it, his pretence will not succeed for

[1] In the *Ramayana*; a young ascetic, brought up without any acquaintance with women, was fascinated by the first woman he set eyes on.

long. He should, on the countrary, be ready to battle with the temptations which may occasionally face him. He whose mind wavers is no *brahmachari*; only that self-restraint which is exercised of one's own free will can endure. This is what Nishkulanand had in mind when he wrote in his poem: "Renunciation cannot last without detachment". One who feels joy in self-restraint and loves it will not be tempted by things which might violate his vow of self-restraint, but will remain indifferent to them.

Moreover, there are boys and girls in the Satyagraha Ashram and it cannot attempt to keep them unmarried against their will. It naturally becomes the Ashram's duty to help them to marry when they feel that they will not be able to observe *brahmacharya* throughout their lives. Moreover, the Ashram has a few well-wishers and its inmates feel bound to help in any way they can to make the weddings of these friends' sons and daughters model celebrations. It has been my view that, though arranged under the auspices of the Ashram, such weddings are not likely to harm its ideal of *brahmacharya*. Hence, instead of forbidding I have actually encouraged the Ashram to arrange them under its auspices. One such wedding of a girl brought up in the Ashram itself took place recently. Readers of *Navajivan* know Shri Lakshmidas Purushottam. His eldest daughter, Chi. Moti, was married about a month ago to Shri Najuklal Chokshi, a worker in the Broach Kelavani Mandal. The marriage was arranged without any stipulation of gifts from either side. I have been told that such marriages are rare in the Bhatia community. We may add that the marriage was the result of free choice by the bride and the bridegroom, for though the initiative was taken by the bride's parents the final decision was made by the parties themselves. The wedding was arranged only when both of them felt that they wished to be joined in holy wedlock. None except close friends were invited to the ceremony, either as guests in the party of the bride or the bridegroom or in any other capacity. The couple wore their usual khadi dress. They had, on their own, decided not to wear ornaments. Both of them kept a fast till the ceremony of joining their hands in marriage. The wedding cermony included nothing besides what was laid down in the ancient Shastras. The bridegroom had sent no gifts for the bride, for the latter's parents did not want any to be sent. Weddings like this where neither side is put to the expense of even five rupees and the occasion is regarded as an opportunity for the exercise of self-restraint are very rare in the country.

A marriage celebrated in this manner cannot be considered a licence for self-indulgence. The couple's married life will be a course of self-restraint, just as *brahmacharya* is. I know that expenditure on marriages among Bhatias is increasing day by day, since the community has plenty of money. The bride is, so to say, a commodity offered in sale, and this is done shamelessly since the practice is almost universal among them. A poor Bhatia, therefore, finds it extremely difficult to get a bride. I have given such publicity to this event in the hope that religious-minded Bhatia families will follow the example of the wedding here described.

Another wedding, of the same kind as the one described above if not exactly like it, was celebrated under the auspices of the Ashram on Sunday last. The parties were members of the Marwari community. Shri Jamnalal Bajaj gave in marriage his eldest daughter, Chi. Kamla, to Chi. Rameshwar Prasad, son of the late Shri Kanaiyalalji. Shri Rameshwar Prasad is studying in the Gujarat Vidyapith. The families of both the parties being rich, it was extremely difficult for them to have only the religious rites for the wedding and nothing else. I have not heard of any wedding among rich Marwari families celebrated with such simplicity. Ordinarily, the wedding would have been arranged at Wardha or in Bombay. Shri Jamnalalji wanted it to be solemnized without ostentation and with the minimum of expenditure, and wished at the same time that the ceremony should bring home to the brideand the bridegroom the significance of marriage, its essentially religious character, and also clearly explain to them their mutual obligations. Shri Jamnalalji and I felt that such a wedding could be celebrated only in the precincts of the Ashram. This religious reform, however, could not be carried out without the consent of the bridegroom and his family. But Shri Ramavallabhji and Shri Keshavdevji won over Shri Rameshwar Prasad's mother and other elders, and thus secured the consent of all.

For this wedding too, only the closest friends were invited. The usual invitation cards were not distributed. The dinner was also cut out. The custom of token gifts to the bride and the bride-groom was not followed. There was absolutely nothing besides the religious rites followed in ancient times. Both the bride and the bridegroom were dressed in khadi. At both weddings, the bridegroom and the bride made their vows to each other in their respective mother tongues at the

time of the saptapadi[1] in my presence and led by me.

Here are the *saptapadi* and the bridegroom's final vow.

"SAPTAPADI"

1. BRIDGEROOM: Take one step, that we may have strength of will. Help me to fulfil my vow.

BRIDE: In every worthy wish of yours, I shall be your help-mate.

2. BRIDEGROOM: Take the second step, that we may be filled with vigour. Help me to fulfil my vow.

BRIDE: In every worthy wish of yours, I shall be your helpmate.

3. BRIDGROOM: Take the third step, that we may live in ever increasing prosperity. Help me to fulfil my vow.

BRIDE: Your joys and sorrows I will share.

4. BRIDEGROOM: Take the fourth step, that we may be ever full of joy. Help me to fulfil my vow.

BRIDE: I will ever live devoted to you, speaking words of love and praying for your happiness.

5. BRIDEGROOM: Take the fifth step, that we may serve the people. Help me to fulfil my vow.

BRIDE: I will follow close behind you always and help you to keep your vow of serving the people.

6. BRIDEGROOM: Take the sixth step, that we may follow the niyamas[2] in life. Help me to fulfil my vow.

BRIDE: I will follow you in observing the yamas[3] and the *niyamas*.

7. BRIDEGROOM: Take the seventh step, that we may ever live as friends. Help me to fulfil my vow.

BRIDE: It is the fruit of my good deeds that I have you as my husband. You are my best friend, my highest guru and my sovereign lord.

BRIDE'S FATHER: Whatever duties you discharge as prescribed by

[1] The seven steps, the central and sacramentally and legally decisive part of the Hindu marriage ceremony

[2] Any voluntary or self-imposed religious observance, dependent on external conditions

[3] Any moral duty or religious observance; the *yamas* are usually said to be ten, but their names are given differently by different writers. They include celibacy, compassion, truth, charity, non-violence, etc.

dharma, do with this my daughter as your help-mate. Be faithful to her in your pursuit of dharma, *artha*[1] and *kama*[2] and never go astray.

BRIDEGROOM: I will not leave her, will not leave her, will not leave her.

Consider how much money would be saved, to what extent ostentation would be reduced, what trouble the bride, the bridegroom and the parents of both would be spared and how much the cause of dharma would be served if other rich Marwari families followed the pattern set by this wedding.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-3-1926

106. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Sunday [*March 7, 1926*][3]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. The money Iying in the bank is meant only for South India. In my opinion, the money should be sent to Rajagopalachari for helping the poor of the area.

My visit to Sinhgadh has now been postponed because there is no facility of a bungalow. Jamnalalji suggests Abu. And I am tryingto convince him that my health will be fine even here. Now let us see what happens.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
WINDY HALL
NASIK ROAD
DEOLALI (G.I.P.)

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Property, material success
[2] Worldly happiness
[3] From the postmark

107. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 9, 1926

DEAR MIRABAI,

I enclose herewith a copy of cable received from Johannesburg. I telegraphed the substance to Sorabji but I thought you should have the full text. I have replied 'Await decision Committee, Delhi'. This reply I have sent in continuation of my assurance to Sorabji that I shall not give any advice to the settlers in South Africa contrary to what the Committee that seems to have been formed there may say or do. My own opinion however remains unchanged that we are being ourselves in the wrong by absolutely refusing to give evidence even on the principle of the Bill. I have heard the objection namely that our people will not be able to stand the fire of cross-examination and that there is no Indian of sufficient calibre and experience in South Africa who can give evidence. The obvious answer is that no Indian need give evidence. As you will see the Select Committee has asked for a written representation which can be prepared and the Solicitor who may be engaged on our behalf may submit himself for cross examination. I know the difficulty of selecting such a Solicitor or Counsel, but it is not an impossible task. Adam Alexander would not make a bad representative. He is a fairly conscientious man and his sympathies are with us. It is possible to think of others who can also give evidence without compromising or selling the community. What I want to say is that though nothing may come out of the Select Committee, we should not leave it open to them to say that although we were given the opportunity we did not even lead evidence. Let it not be said that in 1914 I boycotted the Solomon Commission. I did so for the simple reason that the community had taken the solemn resolution that if the Government did not widen the terms of the Commission and appoint a representative on behalf of the community on the Commission it would be boycotted. Hence the adherence to the resolution. Even so it could be recalled that before even the Commission sat, I had come to an understanding with General Smuts that the Asiatic Act would be repealed and that General Smuts would require from the Commission a finding that would enable him to offer us an honourable settlement. This is a matter of partly of record [*sic*].

I hope you are keeping well and I wish you every success in the

delicate tasks which are just now engaging your attention.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

MRS. SAROJINI NAIDU
C/O V. J. PATEL
DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 11946

108. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Wednesday [March 10, 1926][1]

BHAI TULSI MAHER,

I have been getting your letters. Since your whereabouts were uncertain I did not write to you. I am keeping well. They are planning to go to the hills in April. Are rice and vegetables alone adequate for keeping up your bodily strength? You must not ruin your health. Nowadays the Ashram is full.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of Hindi: G.N. 6525

109. CABLE TO A. I. KAJEE [2]

[SABARMATI,
On or after *March 10, 1926*]

A. I. KAJEE
SOUTH AFRICAN CONGRESS
DURBAN

SENT OPINION DELHI COMMITTEE WEEK AGO.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 11947

[1] In the source someone has scribbled at the top "11-3-26" which is presumably the date of posting.

[2] In reply to his cable received on March 10, 1926 which was dated March 8, 1926 and read thus: "Please reply my cable twenty first February regarding giving evidence Select Committee. Conference meeting fourteenth Johannesburg."

110. ANDREWS' AGONY

The reader will like to share with me the following letter from Charlie Andrews, that noble-hearted Englishman who fights our battles whether in or outside India with a selflessness and devotion difficult to equal, impossible to surpass, often in the midst of misunderstanding. We shall probably never know what solace and strength his presence has meant to our countrymen in South Africa, in their hour of need. Here is his letter dated Cape Town, 23rd February, without the alteration or removal of a single word:[1]

> This has been a long-drawn agony such as I have never experienced hitherto, with its rises and falls, its hopes and crushing disappointments. There seemed to be for a time one of those sudden revolutions when all doors seemed open and it appeared possible that there might be a relenting and a realizing just as there was in 1914. I had two very long talks,—one with General Hertzog and one with Malan, both of them extremely earnest and as I felt sincere. It even seemed to me that their fundamental position was shaken and that there would be at least a long postponement. . . .
>
> But now it has all gone back again. The reaction began with the Colour Bar Bill. Nothing could have been more spiritually degrading than the scenes in Parliament—each side charging the other with hypocrisy. . . .
>
> . . . The scene at the First Reading was significant. Smuts and Smartt at Drummond Chaplin stayed away. The rest went almost frivolously to a Division—81 to 10 —the later merely being a handful of Cape members who have coloured voters to care for.
>
> It is a strange South Africa today. All the liberal element which you and I knew so well in 1914 seems to have vanished . . . .
>
> Manilal has been working so well and he has been feeling it all the more deeply than anyone else.

I do not share Mr. Andrews' gloomy forecast, not that I believe in the Imperial Government or the Government of India doing anything heroic. But I believe in the ultimate triumph of truth when it is embodied in brave souls and in the ability and willingness of Indian settlers to render a good account of themselves when the supreme moment comes. They have but to be prepared for voluntary and ennobling suffering in order to win. Compulsory and degrading suffering is provided for them in the laws against which they are fighting. Theirs is the choice.

Young India, 11-3-1926

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

111. STILL SHIRKING THE ISSUE

Another case like the one discussed in these pages recently has been decided in the South with reference to the vexed question of temple-entry by the so-called untouchables. One Murugesan, a Mala by caste, was tried before the Stationary Sub-Magistrate of Tirupathi for having ventured to enter a temple at Tiruchanur for the purpose of offering worship. The Lower Court regarded this entry as 'defilement with intent to insult the religion of a class' under section 295 of I.P.C. and fined the accused Rs. 75 or in default rigorous imprisonment for one month. Fortunately for the poor outcaste there were reformers who were interested in him. The case went in appeal. The appellate court sustained the appeal. I quote the following from the judgment.

> In the Lower Court 7 witnesses were examined for the prosecution. It is shown by their evidence that the appellant is a Mala by caste, that Malas are not allowed to enter the temple and that the entry of Malas into the temple is considered a defilement of it. It is shown also that appellant went into the temple to the *garbagudi* where caste Hindus alone may enter. He was then dressed properly and wearing marks of piety; the Archaka taking him for a caste Hindu, received his offering of cocoanuts and performed camphor *harathi* for him, for which service appellant paid the prescribed fee of four annas. After appellant departed the temple authorities found that he was a Mala and as the place of worship was considered defiled by his presence it became necessary to perform a purificatory ceremony.
>
> The first thing to consider is whether the prosecution evidence has made out the elements of the offence so as to warrant the framing of a charge. The fact of defilement of the place of worship by the entry therein of accused who is a Mala is sufficiently made out in the sense that a ritual impurity was caused thereby. But in addition it was necessary to show that the effect was an insult to the religion of any class of persons and that the accused intended such effect or knew of its possibility. The case for the prosecution does not seem to have been conducted with this point kept in view and it has not been elicited from any of the witnesses that accused's act was an insult to the religion of the witnesses or any class of persons leaving alone the question whether accused intended such insult or knew it to be likely. On account of this defect in the state of the prosecution evidence I think the conviction cannot stand. I do not think the case should be ordered to be retried.

Again the prosecutors, the judges and the deliverers of the poor despised men were his co-religionists—Hindus. Again the accused was happily saved from rigorous imprisonment (he could not pay the exorbitant fine I presume). But again the cause remains undecided. It was open to the Hindu judge to say that the entry into a Hindu temple

by a *Panchama* Hindu with the object of offering worship could not by any stretch of the meaning of the word 'insult' constitute an insult to the Hindu religion to which the accused claimed and was admitted to belong. It may have been improper in the estimation of some Hindus for the accused to enter the temple, it may have been contrary to custom, it may have been a hundred other things, but it was not an insult to the religion of any class such as to amount to a crime under the Indian Penal Code. It is worthy of note that the accused bore no visible marks of his despised birth. He was "dressed properly and wearing marks of piety". Indeed if these persecuted men choose to practise deception, it would be imposible to distinguish them from the rest. It is simple fanatical obstinacy to persist in persecuting men in the sacred name of religion. It is the persecutors who are unknowingly defiling their own religion by keeping out of public temples men who are at least as honourable as they claim to be themselves and are willing to abide by all the ceremonial rules observable by Hindus in general on such occasions. More than that no man has any right to impose or expect. The heart of man only God knows. An ill-dressed *Panchama* may have a much cleaner heart than a meticulously dressed high-caste Hindu.

Young India, 11-3-1926

112. NOTES

THE POET AND THE WHEEL

In spite of the weakness of body to which the Poet himself referred in his address at the Abhoy Ashram, it was a good thing for Dr. Suresh Bannerji, the manager of the Abhoy Ashram, at Comilla, to have drawn Dr. Tagore there. The reader knows that the Abhoy Ashram was established for the purpose of khaddar development. The Poet's acceptance of the address and such association as it may imply on his part with khaddar movement dispels, if any dispeller was necessary, the superstition that the Poet is against the spinning-wheel and the khaddar movement in every shape or form. In the epitome of his address published in the *Servant*, I find the following reference to the movement:

> The country is not one's own by mere accident of birth but becomes so by one's life's contribution. An animal has got its fur but man has got to spin and weave because what the animal has got, it has got once for all and ready-

made. It is for man to re-arrange and reshuffle for his purposes materials he finds placed before him.

But there are other pregnant facts in the address which are helpful to workers for swaraj. This is what the Poet has to say to us:

> That we were so long kept from realizing India in her true self is due to the fact that we have not by daily endeavour created her moment by moment making her healthful and fruitful.

Thus he adjures us each one individually to make daily endeavour if we are to gain swaraj. In the very next sentence he asks us "not to cherish the dream that swaraj can be ours by some extraneous happening".

The Poet adds:

> It can be ours in so far as we succeed in permeating our consciousness throughout the country by service.

He tells us also how to attain unity. "We could attain unity *only through* work." That is what the inmates of the Abhoy Ashram are actually doing. For, through their spinning they are helping Hindus, Mussalmans, in fact everybody, who needs help through that source. They are teaching untouchable boys and girls through their school and through it teach them to spin also. Through their dispensary they are giving relief to the ailing irrespective of race or religion. They need to preach no sermon on unity. They live it. This work inspires the Poet and he therefore proceeds to say:

> Life is an organic whole. It is the spirit that after all matters. It is not a fact that there is lack of strength in our arms. The fact is that our mind has not been awakened. . . . Our greatest fight here therefore is that against mental lethargy. The village is a living entity. You cannot neglect any one department of its life without injuring the other. We are to realize today the soul of our country as a great indivisible whole and likewise all our disabilities and miseries as one inter-related whole.

Referring to our failure the Poet truly says:

> Man's creation can be beautiful in so far as he has given himself to his work. The reason why our enterprises in this country fail so often is that we give only a portion of ourselves to the cause dear to our heart. We give with the right hand to steal back with the left.

WHY NOT VISIT AMERICA?

A correspondent writes:

> You are refusing invitations from America. Of course you know better than I whether the time is really opportune or not. Yet I cannot make out why you should not visit the New World. Your one and main ground is that you have not yet been completely successful in your own land amongst your own people. But success or failure should be judged by God alone. Do you mean to say that the movement of non-violence inaugurated by you has not yet been firmly established? Truth supports truth. Would you differ from me in holding that this movement requires a world-wide campaign? And America and India—should they not be alike to you in respect of truth and non-violence?
>
> I should cite one or two instances as well in this connection. Our Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (peace be on Him) did not, when necessary, hesitate to accept the help of His followers from Medina though outside Mecca, His own birth-place. More recently Swami Vivekanannda found a better field in America to proclaim his message to the world.
>
> And again, if to materialize [*sic*] the success of khaddar movement stands in your way, you know that you can collect funds from America. Why not make a condition (to yourself at least) that you must collect for khaddar from America this or that amount of rupees. "Give and take"must have its sway. If funds be sufficient at the back of khaddar movement, its popularity and success will not be long coming.

This is one out of many received by me pressing me to accept the invitation from America. My reason is simple. I have not enough self-confidence to warrant my going to America. I have no doubt that the movement of non-violence has come to stay. I have no doubt whatsoever about its final success; but I cannot give an ocular demonstration of the efficacy of non-violence. Till then, I feel that I must continue to preach from the narrower Indian platform. There is no analogy between the illustrations cited and my case. But in any case the Prophet and the Swami felt the call. I do not as yet.

The success of khaddar rests not merely upon sufficiency of funds. There are many factors whose co-ordination is necessary for the stabilization of khaddar. If ever I go to America, it will not be with the intention of collecting funds for any Indian movement with which I may be connected. India must shoulder her won burden and if America feels the call to help she would do so not on the principle of "give and take" but independently. My visit and America's help must each stand on its own merits.

A CORRECTION

A correspondent writes to say that the M.L.C. referred to in

Young India of 18-2-26 is not himself a self-spinner. His niece spins for him. I gladly make the correction. I printed the information as it came from an authoritative source. The khaddar movement and for that matter any movement can gain nothing by exaggeration. The slightest inaccuracy harms a pure movement. If M.L.C.s spin the fact may be advertised but the movement must continue in its purity whether M.L.C.s spin or not, whether many spin or a few only. If it has intrinsic value, i.e., if there are millions of starving people in India, if they are idling away at least a third of their time and if hand-spinning be the only occupation immediately available for such a vast mass of humanity, the cult will advance even if for the time being only one true man represents it. If the assumptions be wrong, the movement will perish even though the Viceroy may spin. Let every khadi worker then realize that this is a movement for the multitude of paupers of India and that for rapid advance it needs above all else the strictest accuracy of statement.

The Secretary who supplied the figures published writes to say that the prizes offered were not meant for rich men but that they were meant for those poor people who attend clubs regularly.

FOR JUVENILES

The following form[1] has been prepared by the Secretary of the All-India Spinners' Association which should be signed by the juveniles at the time of sending their first quota of yarn to the Director, Technical Department of the All-India Spinners' Association, Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati:

Every boy or girl who feels for the paupers of the land will consider it his or her duty and privilege to become a member of the Association.

Young India, 11-3-1926

113. NOTES

TO THOSE WISHING TO BE MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESS

For those wishing to be members of the Congress it is no longer enough to express the wish in the application form prescribed by the Spinners' Association or to write "A" or "B". A special application form has been prepared for membership of the Congress. Those who

[1] Not reproduced here. One hundred yards of yarn were to be sent by juveniles.

wish to be members of that organization should fill it in. But in addition to filling in this form they will have to tender 2,000 yards of yarn for this year (1926). Only then will they be issued the Congress certificate. If, for instance, a member of the spinners' Association who belongs to category "A" has tendered 3,000 yards of yarn for the period from October to December, he will not be issued the Congress certificate unless he sends 2,000 yards of yarn for January and February. If someone has sent yarn for January he cannot become a member of the Congress till he sends 1,000 yards for February. Similarly those members of category "B" who have sent 2,000 yards for October, November or December 1925 may become members of the Congress only on sending a further 2,000 yards.

[From Hindi]
Hindi Navajivan, 11-3-1926

114. LETTER TO P. S. R. CHOWDHURY

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 11, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter with enclosures. You have related in a telling manner a painful story. I am afraid not much will come out of the agitation contemplated by you. We have to develop real strength before relief can be had. However, I propose to deal with the matter in the pages of *Young India*.[1]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. S. R. CHOWDHURY
HON. SECRETARY
GLASGOW INDIAN UNION
C/O CLASGOW UNIVERSITY
GLASGOW

From a photostat: S.N. 12440

[1] *Vide* "Difference in Degree", 18-3-1926.

115. LETTER TO D. HANUMANTHARAO

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 11, 1926

MY DEAR HANUMANTHARAO,

I like your letters, the latest more especially, though I dissent entirely from several of your conclusions. I like your robust faith in the no-drug theory and I like also your insistence on my avoidance of all drugs under every conceivable circumstance, but experience has taught me that reformers develop a certain amount of intolerance and fanaticism which hinder the reform that they have so much at heart.

The evils that you recite about quinine, for instance, are evils that arise from taking large doses and for a prolonged period, whereas I took it in five-grain doses, never more than 10 grains in 24 hours, diluted in fresh lemon juice and plenty of water and mixed with soda bicarb. In all, I took not more than 30 grains spread over 5 days. Thus for 4 days I had only 5 grains per day. I have suffered from no visible evil effect and I was able to satisfy so many anxious friends and doctors who insisted on my taking 15-grain doses.

The indiscriminate attack upon quinine will prove futile because that is the one drug whose general potency for the temporary cure of malaria is not to be questioned. People won't be frightened by the possible evil effect of quinine if it produces the tangible present result of checking the ravages of malaria. The attack therefore must be a flank attack.

The reasons for my taking quinine were just the same as the reasons for undergoing the operation[1] when I was under restraint. If the restraint then induced me to give in, how much more the restraint of unadulterated love should have done in the latest instance? But nothing could either have induced me to undergo the operation at the Sassoon hospital if I had not been convinced that it was purely an echo of my own weakness. But that weakness is weakness of faith in the absolute efficacy of what you call "nature treatment". Even nature treatment is under exploration and is a growing thing. It has not yet reached that perfect stage when we can ensure absolute results. And if you have in mind something beyond nature treatment, that is faith in God and consequent absolute resignation; I own I have not yet

[1] In 1924; *vide* "Interview to V. S. Srinivas Sastri", January 12, 1924.

attained that stage. We can only come to it by painful effort. We cannot put it on like a garment, nor can one be argued into that absolute consciousness of the presence within us of the "All-Protecting Power."

I reason with you at length because I honour your sincerity, but I detect your growing impatience and intolerance which are calculated to hinder your progress as a nature-cure advocate. Do not again run away with the idea that all things that taste bitter are necessarily bad. Bitterness, sweetness, etc., are relative terms. Do you know that for some people sweetness in more nauseating than bitterness? Will you not subscribe to the statement that a regular use of sugar is more harmful than a regular use of the bitter *nim* leaf? And I am not at all sure that a person who will clean his teeth well with a brush made from *nim* tree will not keep his mouth in a nice and healthy condition. Or will you prescribe for the him a tea-spoonful of sugar powder to brush his teeth with?

Lastly on the principle of "physician, cure thyself" I must ask you to become strong and robust and to be an object-lesson and advertisement for nature-cure.

This letter is written not to discourage you from bombarding me. Only you must be prepared to receive counter-bombardments.

I wonder if you have received my letter written to you some days ago regarding those two friends who want to come to the Ashram and about the Ashram at Nellore. It was sent to you at Vizagapatam. You had then given no other address.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. D. HANUMANTHARAO
C/O D. V. RAMASWAMI IYER
VIZAGAPATAM

From a photostat: S.N. 19350

116. LETTER TO KELAPPAN

March 11, 1926

I have your letter[1]. I should like to find the help you require. I am now corresponding with Mr. Rajagopalachariar in connection with it. You will therefore hear from [me] again later.

From a microfilm: S.N. 19351

[1] Dated March 2, 1926. In this the addressee had asked Gandhiji to provide Rs. 600 for repair of a house.

117. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 11, 1926

MY DEAR C. R.,

No news from you since your last telegram. For fear you may not come, I send you the enclosed letter from Kelappan. What do you advise? If you think that this help should be given, please give out of the Travancore funds left with you.

When are you sending your next promised instalment?[1] Do not wait till the readers have forgotten all about the first.

Yours,

Encl. 2

SJT. C. RAJGOPALACHARIAR
GANDHI ASHRAM
THIRUCHENGODU

From a microfilm: S.N. 19351

118. LETTER TO SUNDER SWARUP

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 11, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You are at liberty to translate whatever you like from *Young India* but you may not publish anything under my authority because I cannot check your translations. Whatever therefore you do you must do on your sole responsibility and without mentioning my name in connection with your venture. All I can do is to remove any legal hindrance from your way and that is removed by this letter.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SUNDER SWARUP
LANDHANRA HOUSE
MEERUT CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 19352

[1] *Vide* "A Dull Dialogue", 18-3-1926.

119. A LETTER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 11, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I wish indeed that I could visit Europe and see so many of my unknown European friends. But for the time being, I feel I must not leave India. When I feel that the way is clear for me, I shall not hesitate to go to Europe. Till that time we must meet one another through correspondence. Nor will it be possible at the present moment to send Mr. Andrews or any other friends. Mr. Andrews is away in South Africa. He returns next month but the work here is already cut out[1] for him and it will keep him for several months.

There is no doubt about it that Tolstoy's writings had a powerful effect on me. He strengthened my love of non-violence. He enabled me to see things more clearly than I had done before. His manner of putting this is all his own. At the same time I know that there were fundamental differences betwen us and though they will abide, they are of little consequence compared with so many things for which I shall feel ever grateful to him. My patriotism is patent enough; my love for India is ever growing but it is derived from my religion and is therefore in no sense exclusive.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 19353

120. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 11, 1926

Here is another cable from South Africa. I wonder if you or Sorabji sent any reply to Kajee's first cable referred to in the accompanying. If nothing was sent do please send a satisfactory reply now.

The reply I have sent to the enclosed cable is as follows:

"Sent opinion Delhi Committee week ago."

Yours,

Encl. 1

From a photostat: S.N. 19354

[1] The source has: "cut up"

121. LETTER TO T. K. MADHAVAN

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 11, 1926

MY DEAR MADHAVAN,

I have your letter. I am glad of the settlement at Suchindram. Dr. Naidoo did telegraph to me about it and I wrote him in reply that I would not notice it in the pages of *Young India* till I had a full text of the settlement. I now see that it is all confidential. I suppose therefore I must say nothing about it.

I do not at all like the idea of your resigning the membership as a protest against the Dewan's ruling. If every member who considers some ruling to be unjust were to resign there would be no member left. We must not become judges in our own suits in the manner you have been. How do you know your interpretation is right and the Dewan's wrong? Of course, I know nothing of the merits but I know the principle on which resignation by way of protest can be tendered. The injustice of the ruling may be a cause for moving the adjournment of the house or making a simple statement and doing many other things, but surely not for resignation. I would like every act of yours to be well-considered and dignifed. Your responsibility is much greater than an ordinary member's because you are a representative of suppressed classes and unfortunately even an error of judgement on your part will be magnified whereas many stupidities on the part of ordinary members will be condoned.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. K. MADHAVAN
TRIVANDRUM LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY MEMBER
TRIVANDRUM

From a microfilm: S.N. 19355

122. LETTER TO SURESH BABU

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 11, 1926

DEAR SURESH BABU,

Your letter was received after I telegraphed to you. Lest you may not find time to come here, I want to say in reply to your letter that it was wrong on your part to have delayed completion of the contract form pending satisfaction.

Regarding the difficulties mentioned by you, I will still advise you to finish the contract before you ask the Secretary to consider the many points raised by you. I ask this because it was upon my own personal desire that money was sent to you without the conclusion of formalities. In the first instance it was a departure from the methods that a big corporation like the All-India Spinners' Association should really follow.

If you can possibly come here the majority of the things mentioned by you can be dealt with satisfactorily. I had expected from you a full description of the Poet's visit to the Ashram.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19356

123. MESSAGE TO "LIBERATOR"

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 11, 1926

The *Liberator* has an ambitious programme. If it succeeds in any single one of the items enumerated in the notice before me it will have earned the name Swami Shraddhanandji has chosen to give his latest creation.

The notice before me rightly places emphasis upon the work of liberating the suppressed classes but there are still more numerous classes held under suppression by our insane desire to clothe ourselves in foreign cloth. And they are not a fifth of the population of India but they are four-fifths and if the *Liberator* will liberate villages from the temptation of cities, I venture to suggest that the task is an impossibility without the spinning-wheel.

From a microfilm: S.N. 19357

124. LETTER TO CHUNILAL

ASHRAM
March 11, 1926

BHAI CHUNILALJI,

I have your letter; I have also gone through your scheme. I do not see any substance in it. Cow-slaughter goes on only in towns and there is only one way of checking it viz., to bid higher than the butchers at the sales. This is possible only if we realize expense on all the cows that we recover, which again is not possible unless we take to dairy farming and a matter of religion start trading in hides, etc., from carcasses. Since we escape beef-eating by taking cow's milk we regard it as sacred. In the same way since we thereby save the cattle from being butchered we should regard it our sacred duty to utilize their carcasses for hides, bones, etc. Now we find ourselves facing two things: one to seek the help of dairy and tanning technicians; second to disabuse the minds of the people and convince them that it is not only righteous but also religious to deal in hides, bones, etc., of dead animals. If my view is correct, we may run our *goshalas* and *pinjrapoles* on the model of dairies and tanneries.

The work of cow-protection has now become humdrum; the reason is that though we collect lacs of rupees under this pretext we have not been able in actual fact to save a single cow. On the contrary, cow-slaughter is on the increase since their prices have gone down owing to the lack of scientific knowledge of cow-protection.

You may read this to the convention if you wish to.

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 12398

125. MESSAGE TO THE "HINDUSTANI"

[*March 12, 1926*]

Whoever asks me for a message for his paper makes a serious mistake if he is not a lover of the spinning-wheel and khadi for I can think of nothing else much less can I write of anything else. All around me I see distress, dissensions, and defeats and consequent dejection. The one solace I find and therefore recommend is the spinning. It gives me peace and it gives me joy in the thought that through it I establish an indissoluble bond between the lowliest in the land and myself. Through the wheel and by my personal labour I add something to the desirable wealth of the country. I contribute my

quota however humble towards clothing the naked through it and I invite the poorest in the land to labour for their living rather than beg for it.

The wheel stands above all discord and differences. It is or should be the common property of every Indian. If then the *Hindustani* stands for the political uplift of the country and its readers appreciate its object, they cannot do better than give to the spinning-wheel at least half an hour per day and reject foreign or mill-made cloth and use only hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar and thus distribute whatever they pay for khaddar amongst the poorest in the land.

From a microfilm: S.N. 19358

126. LETTER TO SARDUL SINGH CAVEESAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 12, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your two letters. In answer to the general letter here is my article or message, whatever you may call it, for the *Hindustani*.

Your second letter makes painful reading. There is nothing to be done but to let the fury work itself out and if we who know the evil of these dissensions and self-seeking survive the shock all will be well.

They copy of your third letter is deeply interesting. Your jail experience is very useful. Your impressions of the things as you see them after your discharge from the prison provoke deep thinking. I agree with you that non-co-operation has not failed and that we have not seen the last of it. I agree also that swaraj is nearer than many may think. The whole thing resolves itself into conversion of the educated classes. This is bound to happen if some of us remain true as I know we will. The attitude of a staunch non-co-operationist like myself towards the Swarajists requires fairly elaborate argument. I shall not therefore deal with it here. Put in one sentence, I can say that my attitude is based upon the hope that most is to be expected from them in the way of a forward policy.

It is quite true that the spinning-wheel cannot be introduced as a subsidiary employment amongst those like the Punjab farmers whose time is almost fully occupied with more profitable concerns. But the middle class who have always ample time to waste if they feel for their

country as a whole should think of the millions of paupers and for their sake wear khaddar and spin for half an hour per day by way of example and encouragement if nothing else. Its greatest political value should not escape your keen penetrative intellect. It lies in the fact that millions who are today leading less than animal life will have an honourable occupation and a means of livelihood. Today they can be induced to do nothing whilst they are passive instruments of submission to any tyrant. And why does khaddar lose its political importance because I invited Lord Reading to use it? Will non-co-operation or civil disobedience lose their importance if I invited Lord Reading to take to either or both?

Lastly, civil revolution on a mass scale I hold to be an impossibility unless we acquire sufficient control and influence over the masses so as to ensure their abstention from disturbing the peace of the country by a violent demonstration. Every time in the past when I have called off Civil Resistance upon outbreak of violence, you will find that Congressmen had a hand in it and that therefore it had a political value. I should not hesitate to go forward even if there were a thousand eruptions in the country if I was sure that they had nothing to do with the political upheaval and that Congressmen had no hand in them directly or indirectly.

Regarding my health I am certainly weak but you have given me full credit by hoping that I know the value of my life much better than any of my admirers. I assure you that I shall try to conserve it to the best of my ability but old age will overtake the most careful men. On the whole I think that I am keeping very good health.

Yours sincerely,

SARDAR SARDUL SINGH CAVEESAR
LODGE LIBERTY
RAM GALI, LAHORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 19358

127. LETTER TO A SUBSCRIBER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 12, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

It is a novel suggestion of yours that you should send as subscription for *Young India* hand-spun yarn. There is no rule made in this connection and there is no facility in *Young India* office for receipt of yarn in lieu of subscription but if you send 50,000 yards of 20 counts evenly-spun, well-twisted yarn to my personal address, I shall see that it is accepted in lieu of subscription, that is to say, it will be taken by the Ashram and the money will be paid to the *Young India* Office. 50,000 yards of yarn is rather an over-estimate and not an under-estimate but it is not possible to put the exact estimate and receive the yarn. I shall have to get it examined and tested before acceptance. If you decide to send this yarn, please make it into proper strands of 500 yards each because if the yarn causes any difficulty in testing or counting it will not be accepted in lieu of subscription and it will have to be returned if you so desire against payment of postal charges.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19359

128. APPEAL FOR INDIAN ARTS AND CRAFTS

SABARMATI,
March 12, 1926

The Gujarat Vidyapith has a school of Indian Arts (nothing very ambitious as yet) attached to it. It is now intended to develop this department by adding a picture gallery and a museum of Indian arts and crafts. Prof. Malkani[1] is in charge of the organization of this work. The Vidyapith will be grateful for any help that may be given to Prof. Malkani by lovers of Indian arts and crafts.

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 19360

[1] N. R. Malkani, later member, Rajya Sabha

129. LETTER TO DEEPAK CHOUDHRI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 12, 1926

CHI. DEEPAK,

I have your letter. Now I am quite all right. Your handwriting has now much improved and your language too. Nowadays the Ashram is quite crowded.

If you are keen on military training, how can I stop you? Do as your mother says. My opinion in this regard differs from hers. I therefore do not want to confuse your mind. I only wish you well and prefer to remain silent.

I hope both of you are keeping well.

Blessings from
BAPU

3, SUNNY PARK
BALLYGUNG, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 19859

130. LETTER TO LALLUBHAI B. PATEL

ASHRAM,
Friday, March 12, 1926

BHAI LALLUBHAI,

I have your letter. I think it is barbarous to pierce a girl's ears or nose [for ornaments].

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

SHRI LALLUBHAI BAKORBHAI PATEL
NAPAD
TALUK ANAND

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19858

131. LETTER TO KASTURCHAND S. MARFATIA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday, March 12[1], *1926*

BHAISHRI KASTURCHAND,

I have your letter. I do not understand the marriage of Shri . . . and Smt. . . . . For my part I do not approve of widow marriages in general. I have on occasion explained through *Navajivan* the circumstances in which widow marriage may be desirable. I cannot go further than that. Moreover, I believe broadly in the *varnashrama dharma*[2]. From this point of view also the marriage does not commend itself to me. But I am absolutely not prepared to disucss it in public. I do not think such a discussion can any way serve public interest. And as long as I do not know what the couple have to say, I have no right, I think, to judge in this matter. I have therefore indicated to you my opinion in general, but certainly not for publication. I have mentioned certain aspects of this marriage whichappear improper to me on the face of it without closer consideration or examination.

SHRI KASTURCHAND SURCHAND MARFATIA
SABARKANTHA BOARDING HOUSE
MAMMADEVI, BOMBAY

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19860

132 LETTER TO ANANDAPRIYA

SABARMATI,
March 13, 1926

BHAI ANANDAPRIYAJI,

I have your letter. I have looked at the handbill; certainly it is obscene. But we had better take no notice of it. Such matters acquire some importance only when we give them any attention. And many people indulge in his kind of activity just to come into the limelight. Later, if necessary, I may explain a point or two.

KARELIBAG
BARODA

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 19861

[1] The original has 13 which, however, was not a Friday.

[2] The traditional fourfold structure of Hindu society and the four stages of individual life

133. LETTER TO SUKHDEV PRASAD SINHA

SABARMATI,
March 13, 1926

BHAI SHUKHDEV PRASAD SINHA,

Your letter. A vow applies to only good deeds. One does not resolve to do something wrong. If through ignorance one should make any such vow it is one's duty to break it. For instance if one had vowed to commit adultery, one should withdraw from it promptly, on coming to one's senses. If one does not, one sins.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 19862

134. DISTRUST, OR LEGITIMATE PRECAUTION?

A lover of the spinning-wheel writes in pain as follows:[1]

Personally I think there was nothing in the suggestion made by the Association which could pain anyone. The question how many members had asked for the return of their yarn is beside the point. The pertinent question is whether anyone had done so. The answer to this will be found in the note in *Navajivan*. If the yarn is not returned, how can any member then supply the same yarn again? If, however, we want to know reasons for distrust, there are plenty of them. The same yarn was given by many members again and again to get themselves enrolled as members of the Congress. Not only this, but even the Congress committee had openly used the same bundles over and over again. Taking certain precautions, however, does not imply distrust and should certainly not be understood in that light. It is not distrust of their children which prompts parents to place certain restrictions on them, but the knowledge of the laxity to which human nature is inclined in the absence of precautions. Following the same principle, institutions frame rules in the nature of restraints on their members for their protection and men and women impose restrictions on themselves which we know as vows, to save themselves from yielding to temptations. That people do not feel drawn to join the

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had expressed his pain at the note "For Self-spinners" in *Navajivan*, 7-3-1926; *vide* also "Notes", March 4, 1926, for its Young India version.

Association, this indeed is the real trouble. To say that they do not feel drawn is as much as to say that they do not believe, it can do any good. Were it not so, why should not thousands and hundreds of thousands of men and women contribute yarn for the selfless *yajna* which the Spinners'Association has organized? If, however, the people do not feel drawn to it, is that any reason why the organizers, too, should remain slack? Should they cheapen membership of the Association? We ought to get rid of the false notion that there is no gain in anything which does not fill one's pocket. If the members hold the Association in high esteem, sooner or later the world will accept it at their estimation, for the cause it serves is a sacred one. Just as, to a mother, her child is more beautiful than other children, so should an institution be dear to those who run it and to its thoughtful members, even if the world thinks little of them and, therefore, of theirinstitution. If the person who first repeated the name of Rama by way of prayer had felt ashamed of doing so or valued the name as merely helping him to get the pleasures of heaven, Rama would have been today no more than one among the thirty-three crores of gods. But that devotee of Rama linked the name with *moksha*, and the result has been that a good many people have attained *moksha* by uttering Rama's name in prayer. God is always at the service of his devotees; He is ever the Servant of His servants. He justifies the devotee's faith. What is true about God and His devotees is also true about an institution and its organizers. I hope, therefore, that my correspondent, a lover of the spinning-wheel, will forget his pain and be happy instead, that he will look upon the Spinners' Association as no ordinary institution and will be able to see, and will help others to see, that some effort is required to get back one's yarn from the Association. The value of his yarn, then, will rise in his eyes. Those who have money, therefore, and wish, to their great credit, to wear cloth woven from yarn spun by themselves, should welcome the restrictions laid down by the Secretary of the Production Section. I would, however, most certainly suggest that the members should welcome the yarn given to the All-India Spinners' Association being utilized for the benefit of the whole country. It would be more commendable on their part to look upon such yarn as an offering in a *yajna* and not to wish to have it returned.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-3-1926

135. HOW TO TACKLE EVIL CUSTOMS

A gentleman writes[1]:

The principle which we have applied to the system of British Government is applicable here also. If the people co-operate in order not to allow that system to continue, its foundation will go; it will crumble right today. Similarly, if one wishing to end the empire of evil customs offers non-co-operation that empire will certainly crack up. The question naturally arises as to what purpose will be served if only one person non-co-operates thus. One answer to this is that he who launches non-co-operation wins and becomes free from faults, and the empire is weakened to the extent of the loss of his co-operation. A house does not collapse if a single brick is removed, but everyone realizes that from the day the brick came off the house has certainly begun to get weakened. While it is difficult for the first brick to get loose, it is not so for the second brick to fall away or get removed. Every reform in the world has been initiated by the efforts of one man. Today even an appropriate atmosphere has been created in respect of evil customs like child-marriage, etc. Those who regard them as evil customs are lax only in regard to acting against them. If we today try to take an opinion poll, the majority will hold that customs like child-marriage and spending lavishly on marriages are evil and costly dresses of foreign material are reprehensible and evil. Majority opinion can be had against other such evil customs. Despite this, they have not disappeared because those who are oposed to them are truly speaking weak and, while they are brave in bragging, they are afraid to act. That cowardice will disappear only when a number of people refrain from attending such functions even by putting themselves to trouble.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-3-1926

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had asked how one could rid one's caste of customs like child-marriage, use of costly foreign dresses and lavish expenditure on marriages.

136. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 14, 1926

MY DEAR C. R.,

I have seen your telegram to Shankerlal as also your letter to Mahadev. It is a sad thing that Santanam has left you. The letter you sent me betrayed faulty reasoning. Is it not possible to show to him that he is altogether wrong in thinking that because he cannot do all things at the same time he should do none at all?

I wonder if you got absolution from attending at Patna. I hope you did but if you did not I hope you would be able to make time for passing through Sabarmati. Kripalani is going to Patna tomoroow and I have charged him to bring you here if you have come to Patna.

Anyway if you cannot come do tell me of all your difficulties in detail and tell me also whether I can be of any help in any way whatsoever. Tell me too whether you expect to be able to give any time whatsoever to touring during the year and if so how much and when. Do you want me to write to Santanam myself?

Yours,

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR
TIRUCHENGODU

From a photostat: S.N. 19361

137. LETTER TO RAJ BAHADUR

ASHRAM,
March 14, 1926

BHAISHRI,

Your letter. I am glad to note your love of khadi. Plying the *takli* costs nothing. I do believe some people are doing it in Patiala also. Those used to spinning on the wheel can learn to spin on the *takli* with little effort and by themselves.

You must have got the receipt for your money. Since it is no more necessary to send money to Utkal this amount has been

appropriated to khadi work. The purpose behind khaddar too is to help people who are similarly distressed.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SJT. RAJBAHADUR, RETIRED D. P. I.

PATIALA

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 19863

138. LETTER TO BRIJ KRISHNA CHANDIWALA

Sunday [*March*] *14* [*1926*][1]

BHAI BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. I can understand your grief. Some sorrows, only time can cure. We should therefore keep our peace meanwhile. If your resolve is firm, and since you have not yet chosen a field of work and a marriage is not likely to be proposed so long as you do not become self-supporting, you can very well persuade your mother and your elder brother telling them about your resolve firmly but with due humility. If your mind is still wavering and a desire for conjugal life lingers in your heart, the best course is to act according to the elders' advice. True, a well-to-do widower finds it difficult to avoid a second marriage. He alone might escape for whom a second marriage is very painful. I would advise you to think over it with a quiet mind and in solitude. You may then act as you are impelled. I can only show you how [to come to a decision]. While actually making a decision, you should put aside my advice as well as all other suggestions and follow fearlessly the dictates of your own heart. May God soon grant peace to your daughter.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2350

139. LETTER TO MANGALBHAI S. PANCHAL

March 14, 1926

BHAI MANGALBHAI,

I have your letter. Please excuse me for the delay in replying. For your sake I should like to read from *Bhaktarajni Yatra*[2] at half

[1] The month and the year are taken from a microfilm (S.N. 19866).

[2] Gujarati rendering of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*

past six, but I am helpless as this time does not suit some hundred men and women as well as the students. The ultimate purpose of all religious reading is to establish us in devotion to our duty. It does not matter if one who is aware of this misses such discourses. If you can come without any inconvenience it is well and good but it is not worth coming over at the cost of your work.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI M. SHANABHAI PANCHAL

LUNSAWADA, AHMEDABAD

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19865

140. LETTER TO AYODHYA PRASAD

ASHRAM,

March 14, 1926

BHAI AYODHYA PRASADJI,

I have your letter. I do not at present intend to get involved in the controversy whether a rise or fall in food-grain prices is in the interest of the farmer. But the spinning-wheel is in a way related to this question. With the progress of the wheel India's biggest industry can be revived and that again through the poor farmers. Thus in any event the charkha movement is in the best interests of the farmers. If it is a fact that for at least four months farmers remain idle then the movement which brings so much work must mean a rise in their earnings. Looking at the charkha movement from this angle, we shall realize that khaddar is not a matter merely of swadeshi but one of bringing a new industry into the farmer's household.

Yours,

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 19864

141. LETTER TO A. A. PAUL [1]

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 15, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Eight months is a long time for me to be away from India. I should undestand however the details of the programme and the nature of the work I would be expected to do. I should also like to know what place Chinese Christians occupy in the national movement and whether I will be expected to address only Christian audiences. I won't come to a hasty decision, and if I go at all the only inducement would be a prospect of serving China by inducing her to accept the message of non-violence for her freedom. To think the matter out clearly I think it is necessary for some representative Chinese to come here, discuss things with me and find out for themselves whether there is really one mind between them and me. I have no desire to go there for a mere spectacular demonstration.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 11365

142. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Monday [March 15, 1926][2]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

About Mussoorie I feel very bad today. I do not feel like going there or anywhere for that matter. I need no change of climate. I get all the rest I require and if I can attend to some work here, it will serve as therapy. I have several reasons for not leaving the Ashram. Leaving the Ashram might upset me. I want to be free, if you can release me with full understanding of the situation. I shall certainly go to Mussoorie if you think I must. But I write this because it is only proper, I think, to let you know the agony of my mind today. I shall also consult Shankerlal about this.

Satisbabu arrived yesterday. Dr. Suresh comes on Saturday.

Manibehn does not want to stay with you. She wants to improve her Gujarati. Even then Madalasa[3] should stay with Janakibehn[4]. If she

[1] In reply to his letter dated March 9, 1926 (S.N. 11364)
[2] The source bears the remark: "Replied by wire, 19-3-1926, Delhi."
[3] Addressee's daughter
[4] Addressee's wife

stays long at the Ashram, she will automatically pick up a lot.Take a close look at the Kanya Gurukul and write to me. Also let me know the number of girls in the institution.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2859

143. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL NANDLAL CHOKSI

Monday, March 15, 1926

BHAI NAJUKLAL,

I wanted to reply to your letter at leisure. Today is my silence day; so I can spare the time. I catch the meaning hidden in a certain statement in your letter. I can see that the reply cannot be just "what I please". I have always regarded you as Moti's teacher and you can prove one if you will restrain yourself. We have tyrannized much over the gentler sex. Now that they are trained to become free, they may go too far. But we should not be alarmed. Of course, you should be patient and help Moti see all this. I am ever ready to help you. I read her letters carefully and I too am pained. I see no love in her letters, nor even any interest. Moti writes just to be done with it. She would drop it if she could. Write to me, if you think it proper to release her from her vow. We must not force her to write. Even her handwriting shows no improvement.

I hope you are at peace. May you get completely well. I do not at all want to interfere in your domestic affairs. Whatever I have said so far, is in a friendly way. Do as you please.

You may read this letter to Moti. How can the child know my love?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12119

144. LETTER TO P. G. MALKANI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 16, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I have made careful enquiry and I can find no trace of the draft mentioned by you. It is evident that the draft has been miscarried somewhere. It is however fortunate that it has not been cashed by anybody. If you still desire to send the amount, please do so to the above address.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. G. MALKANI
HD. TOWN, MANGHA ASTAN, KARACHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 19362

145. INTERVIEW TO KATHERINE MAYO [1]

March 17, 1926

My message to America is simply the hum of this wheel. Letters and newspaper cuttings I get from America show that one set of people over-rates the results of Non-violent Non-co-operation and the other set onto only under-rates it but imputes all kinds of motives to those who are concerned with the movement. Don't exaggerate one way or the other. If therefore some earnest Americans will study the movement impartially and patiently then it is likely that the United States may know something of the movement which I do consider to be unique although I am the author of it. What I mean is that our movement is summed up in the spinning-wheel with all its implications. It is to me a substitute for gun-powder. For, it brings the message of self-reliance and hope to the millions of India. And when they are really awakened they would not need to lift their little finger in order to regain their freedom. The messge of the spinning-wheel is, really, to replace the spirit of exploitation by the spirit of service. The dominant note in the West is the note of exploitation. I have no desire

[1] Katherine Mayo in her letter dated 24-3-1926 says: "In accordance with the message received through your Secretary, I am mailing to you with this my transcribed notes of your statement on the 17th. I have left deliberate spaces where there is some doubt of some exact words. I shall of course greatly appreciate amplification or correction and return . . ." (S.N. 12449); *vide* also "Letter to Katherine Mayo", 9-4-1926.

that my country should copy the spirit of that note.

(As to the effects of multiplication of means of travel and transportation:)All that is coming to smother us, not to deliver us. I can only say I hope that we shall be spared that affliction. But it may be we shall have to drink the bitter cup. If we do not learn by the experience of the West, we may have to drink it. But I am leaving no stone unturned to avoid that catastrophe. The powers of the West, however much they have fought amongst themselves, have agreed on this: "Let us exploit the other Nations—Asia and Africa". They are keeping up to that agreement with extraordinary accuracy. Suppose we reciprocate. Suppose we learn all the tricks of our Western teachers—What will happen? A mightier copy of what happened in August 1914. It will come if Europe and America continue to say: "We shall be top dogs and you others shall be bottom dogs" and we do not learn the message of non-violence and understand that we have but to cease to buy from you what we do not need. Therefore in spite of all evidence to the contrary, I do my best not to co-operate with that spirit of exploitation. I decline to copy even though I am but one in three hundred millions. At least I shall die with the satisfaction of knowing I die in doing what my consience directs.

We can be exploited only with our own consent, whether forced or willing, conscious or unconscious, and only if we buy all sorts of attrac-tive things that Europe and America produce. Mainly clothing. This we can avoid because we have not yet quite lost the cunning of our hands. The task of so providing for our needs will prove no burden but can be met just as we eat and drink—a little at a time in the course of each day, during spare hours. There are many things today for which I am depen-dent on the West. When I am sure that I take only that is better done there and what is beneficent to me, it will be an honourable, free and mutually advantageous bargain. But what is now done is a bargain des-tructive to both sides. For exploitation is as bad for one as for the other.

I want this country to be spared Dyerism. That is, I do not want my country, when it has the power, to resort to frightfulness in order to impose her custom on others. Very often we have to learn by hard experience, but if I believe that every one of us had to go in a vicious circle and do just what every other has done, I should know that no progress is possible and should preach the doctrine of suicide. But we hope, and train our children in the hope, that they will avoid the

mistakes of their fathers. Indeed I see sings, very faint, but unmistakable, of a better day in the West. A tremendous movement is going on in the West today to retrace steps. There is much progress in the thought world, although little is as yet translated into action. But what the thinkers are thinking today, tomorrow will be action.

I have almost daily visits from Americans, not in idle curiosity, not in the spirit of "Let us see this animal in the Indian Zoo", but from real interest to know my ideas. Those who see the poverty of India and feel grieved should probe under the surface and find its real cause. It is not as if it were slowly decreasing. It is growing, in spite of hospitals, schools, metalled roads and railways. In spite of all these you find the people are being ground down as between two millstones. They live in enforced idleness. A century ago every cottage was able to replenish its resources by means of the spinning-wheel. Now every farmer, scratching the earth only a few inches deep with the wooden plough, works in the season of cultivation. But he cannot do much work in the other seasons of the year. What are he, his children and his women then to do? The women sat at the wheel in the old days and sang something not obscene—not trash—but a song to the Maker of us all. The children imbibed it and so this custom was handed down and the children had it, although they were without polish or literary education. But now it has all but died away. The mother is groaning under poverty, her spirit is darkened. She has no milk. As soon as the child is weaned, she has only gruel to give it, that ruins the intestines.

What am I to ask these millions to do? To migrate from their farms? To kill off their babies? Or shall I give them what occupation I can, to relieve their lot?

I take to them the gospel of hope—the spinning-wheel—saying, "I do this thing myself, side by side with you, and I give you coppers for your yarn. I take your yarn that you have spun in your own place, in your own time, at your own sweet will." She [the mother] listens with a little bit of hope in her eyes. At the end of five weeks during which she has had help and co-operation regularly, I find light in her eyes. "Now", she says, "I shall be able to get milk for my baby". Then if she can have this work regularly she re-establishes a happy home. Multiply that scene by three hundred millions and you have a fair picture of what I am hoping for.

The testimony of the English historian (official) Sir William

Hunter, first showed that the poverty of the masses is growing rather than decreasing. The villages I have visited show it. The East India Company records show it. In those days we were exporters not exploiters. We delivered our goods faithfully. We had no gun-boats to send for punishing those who would not buy our goods. We sent out the most wonderful fabrics the world has produced. We exported diamonds, gold, spices. We had our fair share of iron ore. We had indigenous and unfadable dyes. All that is now gone. Not to speak of Dacca muslin, which was mistaken for dew. I can't produce it today, but I hope to.

The East India Company came to buy, and remained to sell. It compelled us to cut off our thumbs. They stood over us and made us behave against our wills till thousands of us cut off our thumbs. This is no figment of my imagination but can be verified from the records of the East India Company. Do I lay the blame on Britain. Certainly I do! By means the foulest imaginable our trade was captured and then killed by them in order to make a market for their own goods. Practically at the point of the bayonet they forced us to work. For suppose I am tired of work—tired as we were tired till we cut off our thumbs to avoid being driven farther—is not that the pressure of the bayonet? This is the history of how our skill was lost.

You say that the spinning-wheel, a few generations ago a household tool in the West, has there also disappeared. But they of the West who spun and spin no more were free men and gave it up by choice. They had a substitute for the spinning-wheel. Here we have no substitute even now for the millions. If an Indian farmer wants to set up a soap factory or a basket factory, can he do it? Where can he sell his produce? But I am trying to induce the people to understand the secret of the wheel. Compulsion that comes from within is differnet from that which is superimposed upon you. I would teach my people to resist that outer compulsion, to the point of death.

There is difficulty in now reviving the art of spinning because the people have lost their liking for it. It is difficult to teach the habit of work to a people who have lost all hope and who have done no work for years and years. And our rich men think that they can redress all the wrongs they have done in amassing their riches by throwing a handful of rice in the faces of the poor. Whereby they only spoil them so that if I go afterwards with cotton in one hand and coppers in the other I suffer in consequence. And I can bring no

force to bear, I have no power of government at my back to compel them. So my task goes slowly. I have to plod. Yet thousands spin today who did not spin last year. My success when it comes will lead to the development of other home industries and in the meantime the central difficulty will be solved because the vast mass of our troubles proceeds from enforced idleness.

Untouchability can be cured by those who understand being true to themselves. You saw the squabble that arose in the Hindu Mahasabha. But untouchability is going in spite of all opposition, and going fast. It has degraded Indian humanity. The "untouchables" are treated as if less than beasts. Their very shadow defiles, in the name of God. I am as strong, or stronger, in denouncing untouchability as I am in denouncing British methods imposed on India. Untouchability for me is more insufferable than British rule. If Hinduism hugs untouchability, then Hinduism is dead and gone, in spite of the lofty message of the Upanishads and the *Gita*—as pure as crystal. But what is the teaching worth if their practice denies it.

QUESTION: Would not the young men be doing better service to the country if, instead of fighting for political advantage, they effaced themselves, went to the villages, and gave their lives to the people?

ANSWER: Surely. But that is a counsel of perfection. All the teaching that we have received in the Universities has made us clerks or platform orators. I never heard the word spinning-wheel in all my school days. I never had any teacher, Indian or English, who taught me to go to the villages. All their teaching was to aspire to government positions. To them the I.C.S. was almost a heaven-born thing, and the height of worldly ambition was to become a member of Council. Even today I am told I must go to the Council, to tell the Government the needs of the people and debate them on the floor of the House. No one says "Go to the villages". That movement has come in spite of the contrary teaching in schools. our young people have become dis-Indianized. They are unaccustomed to the life of the villages. There you have to live in insanitary conditions. If you won't take the spade and shovel in your own hands, you will die a miserable death from dirt and infecion. I have lost some of my own workers because of malaria although they knew the laws of health. The movement towards the villages has come but it is slow.

My desire is to destroy the present system of government but not to drive away the British people. I do not mean to say that the

British meant to do me harm. But self-deception is the most horrible crime of which human nature is capable. And the bayonet of the old days yet remains in some shape. I have rechristened it Dyerism. And I would like to see the Briton utterly gone except as he remains as India's employee, in India's pay. For this he might as well be a Frenchman, a German, or a Chinaman. The Briton has admirable qualities—because the is a human being. I would say the same of an Arab or a Negro from South Africa.

"Am I not afraid, once the British have gone, of internecine strife? Of the hordes of Afghanistan?" Yes, but these are possibilities that I would welcome. We are fighting today, but fighting in our hearts. The daggers are simply concealed. When the Wars of the Roses were going on, if the European powers had intervened to impose peace, where would Britian be today?

From a photostat: S.N. 12445

146. LETTER TO B. C. ROY

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 17, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am so glad that you are at last able to make a beginning with the Memorial Hospital. The date[1] is happily chosen. Please wish Basanti Devi many returns of the day and tell her that she is wanted for many a year to come, if only in order to make the Hospital which was so dear to her husband's heart a thorough success.

I should love to be with you at the opening ceremony but that for the reason you know I may not do. All my best wishes will be with you on the opening day.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN CH. ROY
CALCUTTA

Forward, 23-3-1926

[1] March 21, birthday of Basanti Devi, was the date for the opening ceremony of Chittaranjan Seva Sadan by Rabindranath Tagore.

147 LETTER TO DR. SATYAPAL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 17, 1926

DEAR DR. SATYAPAL,

Here is a message for 'Phulwari'.

The sooner the brave Sikhs put their house in order and thus prove their bravery the better it is for them and India. Bravery is simple, never complex. It is dignified, never shoddy. It is noble, never mean. It is ever forgiving, never revengeful. It ever sheds its protective fragrance about it, never strikes wherever it goes. It is a guarantee of peace[1] not of war. It is an epitome of concord, never spells discord. Do the Sikhs satisfy all these tests? If not, it is time they did. For, they are pledged to free not merely the Punjab Gurudwaras but the great Indian Gurudwara of swaraj.

Yours sincerely,

DR. SATYAPAL
BRADLAUGH HALL
LAHORE

From a photostat: S.N. 19363

148. LETTER TO BURRA SATYANARAYANA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 17, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I remember you well and I have pleasant recollections of my visit to your place. Please tell the friend in Burma that though I took the arsenic and iron injections, I retain the same views I have expressed in my writings about drugs and doctors. It is one thing to hold an ideal and another thing to live up to it. At the present moment friends insinuate that I am no longer master of my own body, that they and others are as much interested in it as I am and by their specious reasoning make me believe that I am one of the trustees for the up-keep of the body and thus entitled to pamper it. And so friends like the one in Burma rightly find an inconsistency between the ideal I have professed and the practice that I am now

[1] The source has "thieves" which appears to be a slip.

following. Tell the friend in Burma therefore that until he becomes a Mahatma like me, he must rigidly adhere to the resolution never to touch drugs and invite doctors and if he keeps to that narrow but straight path it will be well with him. Tell him also in secret that though I yielded to the blandishments of friends, I have not taken more than 30 grains of quinine in doses of 5 grains or even $2\frac{1}{2}$ each for five days and not more than 5 injections of arsenic and iron one per week.

I am afriad you are indulging in a vain hope that I shall fill in the blank after "But now!" I cannot do so until I see khadi becoming almost universal. Its success to that extent is the only demonstration of the middle class people having understood the secret of non-violence. When that event happens, I should be quite ready to fill in the blank.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. BURRA SATYANARAYANA
35, PETERS ROAD
MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 19364

149. LETTER TO URMILA DEVI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 17, 1926

MY DEAR SISTER,

I have your heart-rending letter. It seems you will never be free from troubles. I was wondering why I had not heard from you for such a long time as a letter was overdue from you.

You need evidently a prolonged stay in Kashmir. You invite me to Puri and you hold out the temptation that you will be with me all the time I am there. But I am not my own master in this matter. If I was, at the present moment I am enjoying so much rest and peace at the Ashram that I would like to leave it. Heat is no terror for me. I can sustain it well especially as I have no active work to do but Jamnalalji and Shankerlal Banker are my managers and I am under promise to them to go to a hill station. If sea-side would answer the purpose I have a place better even than Puri not known at all and it is only a few miles from my birthplace where I can get perfect quiet and rustic life without the insolent palaces that frown upon you in Puri and the

distressful sight of famine-stricken people who flock to the temple to get a handful of dirty rice from the pilgrims. Puri reminds me not of the holy associations it once had but of the degradation to which we have been reduced now. For, is it not now a sanatorium for the soldiers who are paid with our own money to suppress our liberty? Puri has no attraction for me. It makes me sad to think of it. And I felt miserable all the time I was there though friends had put me in a most comfortable place just facing the sea-side and were covering me with extraordinary kindness. But they had no remedy for the mental torture that I was going through as I contemplated the barracks and the misery of those starving Oriyans and the callous indifference of the moneyed people.

I can thoroughly understand the wonderful behaviour of your sister. I wish her all success in her defiance of drugs and doctors. I envy her courage. She will quit her body, even as the *Bhagavad Gita* describes, joyfully, i.e., even as an owner leaves his house which has given its use and is now about to crumble to pieces.

Yours sincerely,

SISTER URMILA DEVI
4 A., NAFAR KUNDU ROAD
CALCUTTA
C/O JUSTICE DAS
ALI MANZIL
PATNA[1]

From a photostat: S.N. 19365

150. LETTER TO DINSHA M. MUNSHI

ASHRAM,
March 17, 1926

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

I have your letter. What I said in the public meeting was in my public capacity. Thereby I do not commit myself. However, I do not remember having broken my promise which you mention. There must be some reason for [their] discontinuing your grant. I am sure it could not be just to spite you. And if there is any injustice in this matter, you can write to the Committee. As for a loan, I am helpless.

[1] This second address is in pencil.

I have not a single copper which I can call my own.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

SHRI DINSHA MANCHERJI MUNSHI
RASHTRIYA VINAY MANDIR
NADIAD

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19869

151. LETTER TO GANGARAM CHHATRALA

ASHRAM,
March 17, 1926

BHAI GANGARAM,

Your letter. It indicates that the residents of the said neighbourhood belong predominantly to the Kadva Patidar community and they also own the houses there. If it is so, since everyone has a right to privacy in his own residence, the Patidars too, I think, should enjoy it. The case of South Africa is different. In South Africa there is a move to ruin the local population by depriving them of their established rights. If I am making a mistake, if the Patidar community are tyrannizing over anyone, then your non-co-operation would be justified.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

SHRI GANGARAM KHODIDAS CHHATRALA
DARIAPUR, AHMEDABAD

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19870

152. NOTES

THE NATIONAL WEEK

The 6th and the 13th of April are never-to-be-forgotten days in our national life. The 6th of April, 1919 witnessed an unparalleled demonstration in which Hindus, Mussalmans and others joined freely. It was too a day of freedom for the suppressed classes. That day laid the foundation for true swadeshi. And it was the day when the whole country offered civil disobedience. The spirit of mass freedom and mass resistance was abroad.

The 13th April witnessed the Jallianwala massacre in which Hindu, Mussalman and Sikh blood mingled in one scarlet stream. A dungheap was turned in a day into a place of political pilgrimage for all India. It will remain that till India lives. Since that day many events have happened. Hope rose high in 1921 to be dashed seemingly to pieces the very moment it rose to the highest point. The tide has appeared to be ebbing ever since. We are passing through midnight gloom. Possibly we have not yet seen the worst.

But that sacred week is still our hope and therefore we must celebrate it even though we are rent in twain and the Government safely flouts national demands, be they ever so pressing and withal reasonable.

There is no perpetual night on God's earth. Ours too will have its ending. Only we must work for it. How to celebrate the week then? Not by hartal. Not yet by civil disobedience. We cannot proclaim or celebrate the unity of Hindus and non-Hindus, for we Hindus and Mussalmans distrust one another and seek to consolidate our strength and power rather through the Government favour than through mutual forbearance and help. That question must therefore for the time being be left to work itself out. Untouchability is slowly but surely dying. Khaddar alone lends itself to mass demonstration and mass effort. It is the platform on which all can work hand in hand. Sales can be organized. Voluntary spinning can be pushed. Collections can be made for the All-India Das Memorial Fund whose sole object is the promotion of the spinning-wheel and khaddar. There are no doubt many other ways of celebrating the national week. It is open to local workers to devise various ways. I can only think of things in which millions can take part, which remind us of those seven days and which can promote swaraj. I can think of nothing else that satisfies all the conditions so well as the spinning-whell.

Oh, that we can do one thing truly and well! It will rstore lost self-confidence and it will give us a strength that can carry all before it. The spinning-wheel is the one thing which men, women, boys and girls of all classes and religions can work. It is the one thing that can establish a link between the rich and the poor and it is the one thing that can bring a ray of sunshine into the dark and dilapidated dungeon of the half-starved peasantry. Let those who have faith in the wheel work to make khaddar more popular during the national week.

SPINNING IN MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS

In reply to circular letter of the Joint Secretary of the All-India Spinners' Association asking various Municipalities and District Boards to supply him with the progress made by hand-spinning in their schools, three letters have been so far received. One is from the Chairman, School Board, Ahmedabad Municipality. It is stated that:

> Two experts to train up spinning teachers for Municipal Girls' Schools were employed last year. The teachers underwent training for 6 months and it is now intended to introduce spinning as a compulsory subject in the Municipal Girls' School.

The Vice-Chairman of the Shahabad District Board says that eight primary schools had spinning introduced in 1925. Eight teachers of selected schools had special training in spinning and five wheels were supplied to each school. 139 boys of ages varying from 10 to 15 are now receiving instruction. The letter adds that "the work has been hitherto poor but better results are expected because the work has now become more systematized". The Board had spent up to 31st January last Rs. 274 out of Rs. 1,000 specially granted. According to the letter of the District Board of Basti:

> 15 boys spin regularly. 15 charkhas are at work. The average daily output is only one *chatak* (5 *tolas*); the yarn has been used for weaving *daris*[1]; only two have been completed and they are used in the school. Monthly expense is Rs. 20, being the salary of the teacher. The materials have cost up to now Rs. 81-2-0.

I trust that the other school Boards, if they have introduced hand-spinning in their curricula, will furnish information about whatever progress spinning might have made in their schools. I have already remarked in these pages that experience has shown that for shcool spinning, the *takli* is the most convenient and the most profitable implement for spinning. The teachers, for one thing, are able to control the *takli* spinning of hundreds of boys and girls at a time. This is impossible with the spinning-wheel.

AN INGENIOUS SUGGESTION

I have before me a letter from a satyagrahi prisoner who had over four years' experience of prison life. On his discharge I asked him to give me his experiences. In some respects his description is original. Instead of telling me all about the tyranny of the authorities

[1] Carpets

and the hardships of jail life he has given me the results of his own introspection. I cull from his letter the following two paragraphs:

> Often I think that every student after he finishes his studies should perforce be sent to jail for six months at least. This, in my opinion, would do greater good to our boys than the Continental tour does to English boys. Voluntary *tapasya* is very difficult these days, but we can have easily almost all the fruits of *tapasya* for our boys if we put them in jail just before they enter life. During six months, shut out from the world out-side, they will be able to digest what they have acquired in their schools and colleges and they will have some quiet to think seriously what use they should make of their attainments. It is not given to everybody outside the jail to think seriously; most of us live from hand to mouth as regards thought and action; our work is mostly based on impulse rather than thought. Why not let each of us go every year to jail, say for a month, and review the work done during the past year and prospect of work for the ensuing year?
>
> Another aspect of the jail life that drew my special attention was the way in which prisoners could live so cleanly, so economically, and so simply. But for corruption and the forced nature of confinement in prisons, these institutions could stand as models for our village and town folk who have to live on small wages.

Though there is from my point of view much left to be done in respect of sanitation in the prisons of India, I can corroborate the description given by my correspondent. Prison sanitation is certainly superior to the sanitation of our villages. In fact, it is want of sanitation which one regretfully observes in the villages, no matter in what part one visits them. Simialarly, simplicity of the jail dietary is also commendable and if the middle classes were to simplify their diet there will be an enormous saving in their wealth and heatlh.

The suggestion that the youth of the country should pass some time in the jails before embarking upon life and after finishing their scholastic career is certainly attractive, but how is it to be carried out? Unless a revival of civil disobedience gives the students a chance of seeking imprisonment, the only way for them to reproduce prison discipline is to bury themselves for a season at least in villages and there live the simple life of the villages minus their insanitation. They can become their own scavengers, as to an extent every prisoner must be.

NOT DESPONDENT

I would also share with the reader my correspondent's optimism in giving me his reflections upon the present condition of political India. He says:

> As regards "the things as I see them now", I am glad I do not feel as much disappointed as many of my friends do. I do not feel that non-co-operation has failed or that we have seen its last. I still believe that India will get swaraj in the near future and that the final victory is to be achieved through civil revolution. We may have to change our programme, but the salvation is to come through that source alone. I believe that the victory is to come to us in the near future. By near future, I do not mean one year, nor even five years, but certainly less than ten years, because, I find the heart of the people still sound. What is wrong is with those who have to give lead to the people. It is the educated classes to whom the common people generally look for guidance who have gone astray. If they could again realize their responsibilities, the masses would follow their footsteps as surely as the magnet follows the poles.

How nice it would be if all non-co-operators were to share this correspondent's faith in non-co-operation and civil disobedience! He who runs may see that though non-co-operation has not brought us swaraj in the tangible sense that the people undestand, it has revolutionized our political aspect; has brought into being mass consciousness which in my opinion nothing else could have done. And there is no doubt about it that whenever freedom comes, it will come through some application of non-co-operation including civil disobedience. For, inspite of whatever may be said to the contrary, the method of violence has no following worth the name especially among the masses, and no method for the attainment of swaraj can possibly succeed unless the masses also adopt it. If the definiton of swaraj includes the freedom not of a certain number of individuals or certain classes but of the whole of the masses of India, only non-co-operation and all that it means can regulate that mass consciousness which is absolutely necessary for democratic swaraj. Only non-violent, and therefore constructive, methods will weld the masses together and fire them with a national purpose and give them the desire and ability to achieve and defend national freedom.

ON KHADDAR

The correspondent favours me with his views on khaddar also. He says:

> I attach great importance to charkha and khaddar, but sorry I do not feel

very hopeful about them. And while I attach much importance to khaddar I do not attach as much importance to its political value as people generally used to do in 1921. I do not believe that English people rule India only in the interests of Lancashire. Other considerations play an equally important part. Your invitation to Lord Reading to use khaddar has still further reduced what little political value this item of the non-co-operation programme had before.

It is well that the correspondent grants the economic value of khaddar. I venture to suggest to him and to those who think with him that its political value springs from its economic value. A starving man thinks first of satisfying his hunger before anything else. The celebrated incident of a disciplined sage like Vishwamitra, whose austerities have hardly been matched, stooping even to steal forbidden food when he was famishing, shows the stress under which a starving man labours. He will sell his liberty and all for the sake of getting a morsel of food. Sailors struggling for want of food in mid-ocean have been known to resort to cannibalism in order to satisfy their hunger. Such is the position of millions of the people of India. For them liberty, God, and all such words are merely letters put together without the slightest meaning. They jar upon them. They will extend a welcome to any person who comes to them with a morsel of food. And if we want to give these people a sense of freedom we shall have to provide them with work which they can easily do in their desolate homes and which would give them at least the barest living. This can only be done by the spinning-wheel. And when they have become self-reliant and are able to support themselves, we are in a position to talk to them about freedem, about Congress etc. Those therefore, who bring them work and means of getting a crust of bread will be their deliverers and will be also the people who will make them hunger for liberty. Hence the political value of the spinning-wheel, apart from its further abilityto displace foreign cloth and thus remove the greatest temptation in the way of Englishmen to hold India even at the risk of having to repeat the Jallianwala massacre times without number.

And why should khaddar lose its political value because I invite Lord Reading to adopt it? Surely we have no quarrel with Englishmen as such. The method of non-co-operation is a method of conversion of Englishmen to thinking in terms of India. If they will respond to our dearest aspirations; if they will make common cause with us and wear khaddar; co-operate with us in making India dry and reducing the frightful military expenditure and are prepared to remain in India not on the strength of their bayonets but on that of our goodwill; will

they not be welcome co-workers in common cause? In my opinion the invitation to Englishmen to adopt khaddar and the spinning-wheel enhances their political value, while at the same time it robs them of the slightest trace of suspicion that there is in them any antagonism to Englishmen as such.

Young India, 18-3-1926

153. A DULL DIALOGUE

This is in continuation of "Buy Khadi with the Difference" in *Young India* of the 11th February. The heading has been chosen by C. Rajagopalachari. But the reader must judge for himself whether the dialogue is dull or interesting.[1]

Young India, 18-3-1926

154. DIFFERENCE IN DEGREE

The office-bearers of the Glasgow Indian Union have circulated a letter bringing to light the disabilities that have been imposed upon certain Indian residents in Glasgow. I take the following from the letter:

> The Home Secretary on 18th March, 1925, issued the order a copy of which is enclosed, directing the registration of "Alien Seamen". This order has been made applicable to Glasgow and District in Janu- ary of this year and the Police authorities here acting under the instruction of the Home Office have arbitrarily registered as Aliens the individuals whose names and addresses are given in the accompanying list. These individuals have all been in this country for periods of from three to fourteen years; they were born in India—majority in the Punjab—and are British subjects. Many of them were employed here during the War and are still employed as laboureres, others as pedlars and in isolated cases as seamen. They have all been quite peaceful and law-abiding citizens. It is the intention of the Home Secretary to register these men as "Alien Seamen" which they certainly are not, and it is very significant that in the identity books that have been issued to them their nationality and birth-place are left blank. We, Indians, consider that this action of the Home Office is the culmination of general policy of systematic exclusion of Indians which has developed in recent years. All Indians have on the ground of their nationality been refused admission to certain picture houses and some other

[1] With these introductory remarks was published a further very interesting dialogue on spinning and khadi work by C Rajagopalachari.

places of entertainment in Glasgow, "the most liberal city in Scotland"—an eloquent evidence of the gratitude of the people of this country for signal services rendered by Indians during Britain's time of greatest affliction and crisis recorded in the annals of history.

Attached to the letter is the text of the order issued over the signature of the Home Secretary. It is called special restriction of "Coloured Alien Seamen" order. The order refers to 63 men. All of them are Mussalmans with the possible exception of one name which reads like a Hindu name. The majority of them are described as pedlars; only two are described as seamen. The districts to which they belong are Mirpur and Jullundur principally. All without exception belong to the Punjab. Why these men should be called coloured and not Asiatic, it is difficult to guess. It is still more difficult to say why they are considered as aliens when they are manifestly British subjects.

The treatment itself that this registration implies, it is not difficult to understand. It is the same thing as in South Africa. The only difference is in degree and I doubt not that if a much larger number of Indians settle in the British Isles there will be a panic which will be followed by legislation. Not very long ago one read in the papers that Chinese washermen were almost lynched in Liverpool. Things are no better in America. I printed only the other day on the subject a letter from an Indian student in that Continent. I had recently a visit from an America-returned student. He is a cultured man speaking faultless English, having subdued manners. He gave me a painful picture of American prejudice against colour and left on me the impression that it was on the increase. The question therefore that is agitating South Africa is not a local one but it is a tremendous world problem. Whilst Asiatic races are held under subjection and are indifferent to their own welfare, it is easy enough to treat them as they are being treated, whether in England or in America or in Africa; for that matter in their own homes as in China and in India. But they will not long remain asleep. One can but hope therefore that their awakening may not lead to making confusion worse confounded and adding to the racial bitterness already existing. There is however no hope of avoiding the catastrophe unless the spirit of exploitation that at present dominates the nations of the West is transmuted into that of real helpful service, or unless the Asiatic and the African races understand that they cannot be exploited without their co-operation, to a large extent voluntary, and thus understanding, withdraw such co-operation. Take the present instance itself. These brave Punjabis need

not put up with the insult of submission to the racial discrimination which is sought to be imposed upon them. They need not stay where they are unwelcome visitors, or if they must stay, they need not submit to humiliating treatment and they should suffer the consequence of disobedience in the shape of imprisonment. It is often found that those against whom discrimination is made are in some measure, be it ever so slight, responsible for it. If such is the case with the Punjabis, they should remove every such excuse so that their cause may be found to be above reproach. If man, no matter what pigment he wears, will realize his status, he will discover that it is possible for him to stand erect even before a whole world in opposition.

In passing I would like to draw the attention of the framers of the general letter from which I have quoted, that whilst it is brief and otherwise admirable, it jars by reason of the emphasis laid by the writers upon "signal services rendered by Indians during Britain's time of greatest affliction and crisis recorded in the annals of history".

If India rendered willing service at the time of the War, its value is diminished by demanding gratitude, for it was rendered as a duty and "duty will be merit when debt becomes a donation." The fact however is that the service was not willingly rendered. Force or the threat of it was a po-tent consideration that prompted it. It is the prudential restraint of Eng-lishmen that they do not every time, on mention of these services, retort that we rendered them as *begar*[1] even as when officials on tour in the Indian villages impress labour. The people who were forced out of their homes in the Punjab to serve at the time of the War have little cause to be proud of their service, still less to evoke the gratitude of the British Government. The gratitude went to Sir Michael O'Dwyer who demanded and got his quota of recruits, cost what it might, from every district of the Punjab.

Young India, 18-3-1926

[1] Forced labour

155. LETTER TO DR. JOACHIM HENRY REINHOLD

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 18, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It pleases me to find that you have benefited by my writings. You are at liberty to translate any of the writings of *Young India*. There are German and French translations to be had in Europe and there is also an English edition published by Messrs S. Ganesan, Pycrofts Road, Triplicane, Madras.

Yours sincerely,

PROF. DR. JOACHIM HENRY REINHOLD
PROF. AT THE FREE UNIVERSITY LEAGUE
WARSAW, POLAND

From a photostat: S.N. 12446

156. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 18, 1926

MY DEAR C. R.,

Here is the correspondence between Kelappan and myself. I know all your difficulties. You will please tell me whatever burden you cannot shoulder. Your central work is to develop theAshram you have established, everything else is subsidiary. If, therefore, such responsibility as coming to a decision on matters I may refer to you and supervising such institutions that may be established as a result of the advice you may give are beyond your strength, you will not hesitate to say so, but if you can handle these things without disturbing the central work I like you to do, advise me about Kelappan as to this letter and the previous one.

Similarly I want you to advise me regarding the undisposed of South India Flood Relief Fund. Mathuradas has a respectable sum in his hands and so have I. What do you want done? We must come to quick decision. The different funds can be amalgamated and a trust created for the development of spinning and khaddar in the areas that were affected by flood. Other areas that are subjected to periodical famine and floods may also be included in the trust. But you may have some other suggestions to make.

Here is a letter from Kumar also. I have not replied to him and I do not want to before you tell me whether you can shoulder these burdens or not.

Yours,

Encls. 3

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR
GANDHI ASHRAM
TIRUCHENGODU

From a photostat: S.N. 19366

157. LETTER TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

ASHRAM,
March 18, 1926

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I have both your letters. I wanted to write to you when I got the second. I have been worried since you wrote to me about the *pinjrapole*. It is my constant desire that you should reach Deolali soon.

I had promptly gone through the article which you had left for me regarding the question of monkeys. In the article, as in your letter, you have offered no final solution of the problem. What we want now is a solution which is perfectly consistent with religion. Of course it will be implemented in course of time. How can we get over age-old sentiments unless we have very grave reasons? But we face now only the religious aspect of the problem. Let us not forget we have been ourselves promo-ting the multiplication of monkeys and now we are a passive witness to their destruction; (1) Englishmen and others destroying the monkeys that visit their neighbourhood, and (2) the export to foreign countries of live specimens for experiments while yet alive. And the third inconsistency is that we feel a secret joy at the fall in their number due to these two causes. What can we do in such circumstances? If we can free ourselves from the sin of destroying a few monkeys, it is perhaps our duty to do so; or as members of society, it may be our duty to remain passive witnesses to it. What is one's obligation towards the society of which one is a member? Solution of the monkey problem will cover that of the pigeons. I have no doubt we are deliberately promoting the breeding of pigeons. The *pinjrapole* is a modern institution. I do not think it functions with

enlightened compassion. It is like swallowing a camel and straining at a gnat. At the moment I am examining non-violence as a principle, and I have come to believe that, in the case of monkeys and the like, our attitude is governed solely by tradition; we pay no attention it seems, to their well-being. There is another question arising out of non-violence. In the event of violence to one's person, where may a non-violent aspirant draw the line?

I write all this for you to think over at leisure. I am in no hurry to have your answers. First think over them yourself, then discuss them with Nath[1] and let me know what conclusions you reach after these deliberations.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19871

158. LETTER TO MAUD CHEESMAN

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 19, 1926

MY DEAR MAUD,

Your 2nd letter is before me. How nice! The choice before me is either to dictate or if I want to write to postpone writing indefinitely. I am therefore dictating. My right hand requires rest. I can write with the left but it takes time.

Your letter reminds me of the long and delightful walks we three used to have in London in those old days. Please tell Mater I do often think of her and the treats she used to give me under her roof at the time whose memories I have just recalled. I expect your next letter to tell me that you are quite yourself again and entirely restored.

If I said nothing in my letter about Mrs. Gandhi it meant naturally that she was with me quite well and helping me. There is no danger of judicial or other separation between us if only because it is not permissible according to my code of ethics let alone Hinduism. Ramdas is helping me in the spinning-wheel work. None of the boys except Harilal is married. Ramdas was betrothed the other day. He may get married next year. So far as he knows his mind at the moment he does not want to be for two years.

[1] Kedarnath Kulkarni

Please tell Henry that if he has his copy of his collation of different texts of the English translation of the *Bhagavad Gita*, I would like him to send it to me by registered post. Somehow or other I have mislaid the copy that he gave me. I badly want therefore his copy. I shall get it copied and return it.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. MAUD CHEESMAN
15 C, THORNEY HEDGE ROAD
GUNNERSBURY
LONDON, W. 4

From a photostat: S.N. 12447

159. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

ASHRAM,
March 19, 1926

BHAI RAMESHWARJI,

Your letter. You need not be sorry. Having done your duty to the best of your ability, no more is necessary. I have no faith in visiting Dwarka and other places, but it does not follow that none else may have such faith. There is nothing wrong in visiting such places of pilgrimage with a clear conscience. So I suggested that you should take your wife and others to Dwarkaji. The final place of pilgrimage is of course one's own pure heart. Recitation of *Ramanama* is the only remedy for your mental agony.

Whom may we regard as untouchables? It is very sinful to regard anyone as untouchable by birth. He who has faith in his heart and is pure in body—what is the harm in his entering a temple? You should clear yourself of the blemish of untouchability. It is not proper for you to uphold untouchability.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

ADDRESS: DHULIA

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 19872

160. LETTER TO UMRAOSINGH

ASHRAM,
March 19, 1926

BHAI UMRAOSINGHJI,

Your letter. I have no money to offer you, and what you are interested in is not in my field.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 19875

161. LETTER TO PUNJA SHRAVAN

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 19, 1926

BHAISHRI PUNJA SHRAVAN,

I have your letter. How can I convince you I have no prejudice against Shivji? Nor do I regard myself as prejudiced. I am eager to know my mistake, admit it and make necessary amends, but then you or someone else for that matter should point it out to me. Bhai Shivji is himself responsible for whatever opinion I have formed. When I made inquiries about him that was out of my love for him and with his consent too. I admit I had no right to do so if he would not agree to it. Nor did the proposal for arbitration come from me. I had offered to talk to any person of Shivji's choice who could convince me about his innocence in some way. If ultimately an arbitration comes about that will be at Shivji's instance. If it is delayed, that again is due to him, or say due to Bhai Mavji. When the arbitration starts I shall certainly hand over your letter to them. I shall not with- hold anything from the arbitrators. This I promise. I admire your devotion to Shivji, and I can also appreciate your feelings. Believe me I am pained at your grief. But can I possibly force out of my mind something of which I am deeply convinced?

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19873

162. LETTER TO GIRDHARLAL

ASHRAM,
March 19, 1926

BHAI GIRDHARLAL,

I have your letter. One consolation is that there are at this very moment quite a few people in the world who are similarly situated.

(1) It is our environment rather than yourself that is to blame for your inability to put your spare time to good use. You must not resign yourself to it thinking it God's will. On the contrary, you should cultivate the strength to stand against the environment.

(2) I do not see anything wrong in your being happy with *Ramanama* instead of abandoning yourself to futile laments whenever you are helpless.

(3) There is nothing to regret if you cannot earn money. But if you fail to uphold your dharma that is a matter of regret; whether or not it is upheld is for you to decide.

(4) It is a serious blunder to believe that nocturnal discharge is more harmful than intercourse. Both cause debility and often the latter causes more. But we fail to see the harm in intercourse by reason of conventional approval, and since a night discharge upsets the mind we tend to magnify the harm. I suppose you know that in spite of having sexual intercourse one may suffer from nocturnal discharge. Therefore if you admit the merit of *brahmacharya* and intend to practise it, stick to it without grieving over discharges which occur in spite of your continued efforts to contrary. After you have practi sed *brahmacharya* for some time you will gain control over your mind. How long it will take, one cannot say, because everyone does not take the same time; one takes more or less time according to one's capacity. Some never obtain control over their thoughts; yet they get the certain fruit of *brahmacharya* observed in practice, so that they come to possess a physique which can check the mind with ease.

(5) In my opinion husband and wife do not have to obtain each other's consent for practising *brahmacharya*. It is desirable if both co-operate with each other to attain it, it is quite proper also to seek such co-operation. But whether or not one gets the other's consent, one who desires it should practise it and benefit from it. Mutual

consent is essential for intercourse, but no consent is necessary for abstention. A man who has intercourse with his wife without her consent is guilty of rape. He violates the law of God as well as man.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19874

163 LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

ASHARM, SABARMATI,
Saturday [*March 20, 1926*][1]

BHAI PARASRAM,

Your letter. Never mind if the post at the Vidyapith has been filled up. Even if you are late the other post will not be filled up. You can come even after finishing the work there. It is good that you are practising typewriting.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PARASRAM
'STREEDARPAN' KARYALAYA
CAWNPORE (U. P.)

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4961. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

164. LETTER TO NALINI R. SARKAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 20, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Better late than never. Your welcome letter with details has just been received. Dr. Bidhan anticipated you and sent me a brief note. You have filled in the details. I sent my message[2] in reply to Dr. Bidhan's letter. I need not therefore repeat it.

I hope that the institution[3] will grow day to day. Is there now

[1] From the postmark
[2] *Vide* "Letter to B. C. Roy", 17-3-1926.
[3] Chittaranjan Seva Sadan

any difficulty about operating upon the funds in the hands of Sir Rajendra Nath?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. NALINI R. SARKAR
6-A, CORPORATION STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 10702

165. LETTER TO LAJPAT RAI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 20, 1926

DEAR LALAJI,

I have your letter. You did not acknowledge receipt of my letter in reply to yours which I hope you duly received. I have been anxious for an acknowledgment in order to make myself sure that I had committed no breach of confidence in showing your letter to Motilalji.

Somehow or other my mental framework will not accommodate an European visit for the mere purpose of giving me rest. I can think of many such places in and about India. Ceylon or Burma for instance, if not Kashmir, as a matter of fact nothing will delight me more than to go to Kashmir or some inaccessible hill in the Himalayas. If, therefore, I go to Finland, it would have to be some substantial inducement. Coming in close touch with the world's students is undoubtedly attractive. Hence, it was that instead of final refusal as in the case of America, I gave an in-decisive answer about the Finland invitation. Since then it has not materialized any further. If the invitation is repeated, I shall deal with it on merits. But I assure you that there is no need for the change and rest as in your case. What shall I do if friends will exaggerate?

If, however, I do go to Finland, I would certainly be delighted to have you as guide, friend and philosopher. For, I know nothing of Europe except London and a few sea-side places in England and Paris whereas you have wandered all the world over.

When are you supposed to leave?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

LALA LAJPAT RAI
12, COURT STREET
LAHORE

From a photostat: S.N. 11339

166. LETTER TO C. RAMALINGA REDDY

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March, 20, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I had hoped in replying to your letter to be able to send you a handwritten note but it was not to be. Day after day I have postponed dictating my reply to find time for writing but the right hand being in need of rest and left-hand writing somewhat tedious especially when you are hard pressed for time, in order not to delay acknowledging your letter any longer, I am resorting to dictation.

I sympathize with you in your difficulty, but at the present moment who can resist the pressing storm? All therefore one can hope is that in the new situation no Non-co-operators may find themselves [*sic*]. They will acquit themselves with credit to the country. It will be something if you are able to retain khaddar and pervade the atmosphere around you with the mentality for which khaddar stands.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. RAMALINGA REDDY
CHITTOOR

From a microfilm: S.N. 19367

167. A LETTER

March 20, 1926

I have your letter. You say you like khaddar for a blouse; will you not now take to khadi saris also. How can a patriotic person come to have a taste for foreign cloth? If we love our country we should have a liking for indigenous goods. O ne who dislikes cloth woven by the poor Indian from his homespun yarn, how can such a one be regarded a true child of this land? I expect to hear from you next that you have given up foreign cloth and have taken to hand-spun khaddar.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19876

168. LETTER TO DHANJI

March 20, 1926

BHAISHRI DHANJI,

I have your letter which I read to *Gangaswarup*[1] Gangabehn and Bhaishri Lakshmidas. What I wrote about Behn Moti had been shown to Bhai Lakshmidas before it was published.[2] Both of them tell me that the practice of giving away a daughter for some consideration is not unknown in the Bhatia community. But this does not mean that every Bhatia family gives away their daughters only for a consideration. If receiving a consideration is a general practice I do not think I am guilty of exaggeration. You might be aware that, since girls are not easily available, many Bhatias get them from Hardwar. There too a payment has to be made. Recently I came across an instance of a respectable family getting a girl from Hardwar. She had to be paid for. This is a family with some education. We have grown rather intolerant of criticism, i.e., whether of persons or of our community. We should change our attitude and be glad if someone were to point out our shortcomings, whether in good faith or otherwise. Since my return home I have of course been in the company of Bhatias, all of whom informed me about the sale of brides and other practices. But if you still think that I am making some mistake, do write to me again. I do not at all like to find fault with an individual or a community, whether native or foreign, nor to discuss and much less to dwell upon such faults. I am eager to adore virtue. But it is not proper to shut our eyes or ears to failings which are manifest and resounding. Therefore, I speak about them whenever necessary with all possible restraint.

A wedding is no doubt an auspicious occasion but music, fun and the like, far from enhancing, reduce its sanctity. Auspicious means blissful. An auspicious occasion brings bliss only if we realize its religious significance and act upon it. Tulsidasji has not described weddings with a view to setting models for imitation. His object is not to describe marriages but to propound *moksha*. While doing this through poetry he has incidentally described popular practices. I am a worshipper of the *Ramayana*, i.e., not of its letter but of its spirit. Tulsidasji writes about many other things which we have ceased to

[1] An honorific prefixed to the name of a widow

[2] *Vide* "With Bare Religious Rites", 7-3-1926.

observe, in fact we cannot. He describes only contemporary customs and manners. But our worldly experience now is much wider than Tulsidasji's. And we can become true devotees of Tulsidas only when we assimilate his religious approach and with the advantage of our new experience, we introduce such changes in our social life as our times demand. Tulsidas, for instance, says that woman only deserves spanking. Now, do we believe this today? Marriage is intended to help us cultivate restraint and therefore, we should recall this implication of marriage from time to time. We omit to do this and so adultery, indulgence and the like are now on the increase. Marriage is thus reduced to mere gratification of animal desires. Thinking deeply over all this, we ought to get out of this state of things.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19877

169. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

Saturday, Chaitra Sud [*7*][1], *March 20, 1926*

BHAISHRI KAKA,

You wrote a letter, and then tried to withdraw it, but in vain. You have succeeded with your letter as much as Swami did in trying to stop you. You have been paid in your own coin. I found your interpretation rather far-fetched. When the seers proclaimed milk to be sacred and recommended it in place of meat they had in mind the beef-eating Hindus. They did not mean it for vegetarians. All these things are pure only in comparison with the other impure food. I take goat's milk not because I regard it as sacred, on the contrary I do regard it as impure; and whenever I take it I do so with conscious aversion, and yet I am ever afraid if I am not yielding somewhat to temptation. I have absolutely no doubt that milk cannot be our food whether we look at it from the point of view of dharma, or human anatomy or even biochemistry. And if I could resist the temptation to utilize some of my faculties, you will never see me taking goat's milk. I have no doubt man's ideal food is the ripe fruit of the forest cooked by Nature. But I have neither adequate knowledge of chemistry, or as much self-control as I would have, nor the desired patience. I cannot

[1] The source has 6 which however was neither a Saturday nor the 20th of March 1926.

be hypocritical and therefore support myself with goat's milk. However, like fasting, giving up of milk is also a possible aspect of my life. And once I develop absolute detachment to life no one can possibly stop me. If I could be stopped my detachment would not be absolute.

But when I give up even goat's milk, I would just the same uphold the sanctity of milk for the people. Since I recommend to the public buttons made from the bones of deceased cattle, will you ask me, who do not use buttons, to use them? When I ask mechanics to use the fat from non-butchered cattle for their machines, I hope you will not ask me to store one or two maunds of fat in the Ashram? Of course we all would appreciate the purity of the fat from deceased cattle in preference to that of the butchered ones.

If I were to feel that I cannot fully uphold the vow of non-violence by giving up cow's milk I would rather give up the vow because it would no more deserve that status.

If you still find any defect in this do write to me. If you think it is my delusion to give up cow's and buffalo's milk you ought to try and save me from it.

Today it has been decided that I should go to Mussoorie. Whether or not you come there, everything will be ready for you there, just the same.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19878

170. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS [1]

[*March 20, 1926*][2]

TO PRABHUDAS

What you write about my vow regarding a watch is embarrassing not because of the vow but because the mind is not yet trained in *aparigraha*[3]. But I know no other way of training the mind against possessiveness. If a person having any number of watches is indifferent over one of them, that certainly is no great merit in him. His indifference might be at the cost of some other person. If one is not worried about one's watch in spite of such a vow, and in spite of knowing that another cannot be had if this is lost, one has at least a

[1] This is added like a postscript to S.N. 19878-A, the preceding item.
[2] Same as of S.N. 19878
[3] Non-possession

remote chance of attaining *aparigraha*. Again, if a person who has a one-thing vow begins to feel jealous, that is no new failing in him; what was dormant, revives by contact. This then is the virtue of vows. When the mind is cleaned of one thing all the other filth also comes out. And if we succeed with one vow, there is a chance of all other uncleanliness being flushed out. He who has not taken a vow sincerely has taken no vow at all. He is a hypocrite. And we cannot judge the sincerity by the standards of the hypocrite.

* * * *[1]

Ayodhyakanda[2] is such that one is not tired of it after reading it a thousand times. The more you work on it, the more you will be rewarded.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19878-A

171. AN ANGUISHED CHARKHA DEVOTEE

The following letter in reply to the article "Distrust, or Legitimate Precaution?"[3] demonstrates how hard it is to follow dharma:[4]

I have already accepted the contention that it would be best not to return the yarn once deposited with the Spinners' Association, and it is desirable that no one should ask his yarn to be returned. But human nature is not cast in one pattern. And so it becomes necessary to make some concessions so long as they do not violate the principle and that is what has happened in this case.

The *Rentia-Premi's*[5] views on the Spinners' Association were not ignored by me. My only intention was to draw attention to the difficulties arising from what a simple reading of his article seemed to suggest. The Spinners' Association is, and is also not, an institution dedicated to a practical purpose. All may not accept it as a door leading to *moksha*; in fact, very few persons look upon it in that light.

[1] Asterisks as in the source

[2] The second book of the *Ramayana*

[3] Dated 14-3-1926

[4] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent was not convinced by Gandhiji's arguments in the article and had stated that the undesirable practices against which the Spinners' Association was obliged to take precautions were the consequences of spinning having been made a part of politics through the franchise clause of the Congress.

[5] A lover of the spinning-wheel

Most people accept khadi on economic grounds and join the Spinners' Association because they think that it can render good help in promo- ting the cause of khadi. It is the duty of the organizers to take proper precautions in regard to such members. The rules for general appli- cation should be judged not from the point of view of people who maintain the highest standard but from that of ordinary men and women. My remarks about "temptation" were intended to suggest that everyone should feel inspired to join institutions devoted wholly to public service. The two suggestions made by the *Rentia-Premi* for making the Spinners' Association a success are certainly very good. If all spin with the same diligence as he does and exert themselves to make it 100 per cent successful, the cause of khadi will make great strides. Likewise, it is also beyond doubt that if the Spinners' Association exercises the same care in rating, collecting and storing yarn which a jeweller does in rating and storing a diamond received by him, the khadi movement will make great progress.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-3-1926

172. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I have received from Shri Vasanji Jetsi Shah a gold ring with a diamond chain, on behalf of his mother Shrimati Jethibai, and from Shri Valji Kunvarji Shah a hooded ring with two tiny diamonds, to be used for any national work I may choose. I propose to utilize them in propagating khadi.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-3-1926

173. BENGAL'S DISTINCTION

Bengal is demonstrating her superiority over other provinces in the field of khadi as she has been doing in many other fields. Other provinces manufacture quite a good quantity of khadi; for the sale of their products, however, they depend not on themselves but mostly on demands from outside. Bengal, on the other hand, has from the very beginning preferred to follow the path of self-reliance. We see this practice not in one but in all khadi institutions. Bengal has not sent out a single yard of khadi for sale.

This example of Bengal deserves to be pondered over by

institutions in other provinces. There is no province as yet which produces enough khadi for its needs and, after it is sold, has still some surplus which it sends to other provinces. Before we reach that stage, we shall have to manufacture khadi worth crores of rupees annually. Since we wish to make the use of khadi universal, our aim should be to see that as a rule all the khadi produced is consumed locally. The efforts we make in this direction will hasten the universal adoption of khadi. An exception can be made to this rule only in favour of those provinces in which it is difficult to produce khadi, but there will be hardly any such province. The chief khadi producing regions are Tamil Nad, Andhra Pradesh, Punjab and Bihar. The bodies [connected with the manufacture of khadi] in these provinces depend very much on what they are able to send to other provinces. It is necessary to increase the local demands in all these regions. Other provinces which may find it necessary to obtain khadi from these centres will have no difficulty in getting their requirements, but efforts by provincial bodies to increase the local sale of khadi will result in a great increase in the production of khadi and in considerable saving in costs.

Bengal is showing us the way. First, the Khadi Pratishthan took a bold step and had a fairly large quantity of khadi produced. It is now carrying on propaganda work, with the help of magic lanterns and other aids, to sell that khadi. It also intends to try to raise the necessary funds for this purpose from within Bengal. Actually, the Pratishthan started its work with money obtained from local sources. If workers keep these three principles in view—local manufacture, local consumption and local help—in carrying on khadi work, khadi will spread rapidly and the costs will be kept down. In this, really, consists the value of khadi, its deeper significance. The basis of the movement is the belief that khadi meets the needs of the people. We should prove the truth of this at every step. If, in addition, we also obtain monetary help locally, the hundreds of thousands of one-anna coins received as contribution will add up to many lakhs of rupees. A crore of rupees donated by one person will not probably benefit the movement as much as contributions received in this manner.

It will take time to reach this ideal and there will also be difficulties in the way; if we lose sight of the ideal, however, the khadi movement will fail in its original purpose. In order that it should become a pure source of help for the poor, it is necessary to pay increasing attention to the three principles mentioned above. Till the time that we can follow them, we shall have to adopt other measures,

accept help from outside sources and the provinces will have to seek and give mutual co-operation. If, however, the khadi workers forget to keep their eyes fixed on our light-house, they will meet the fate of careless sailors. The example of Bengal reminds us of this lesson.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-3-1926

174. SOCIAL REFORM

Shri Jamnalalji's speech as President of the Agrawal Mahasabha deserves to be read and pondered over. He has displayed the greatest freedom and courage in it. If the Marwari community can follow Shri Jamnalalji's advice, it will lead in effecting essential social reforms as it leads in acquiring wealth. The reforms advocated by Shri Jamnalalji are equally necessary for the other castes among Hindus all over the country. Abuse of the pure weapon of boycott, dishonest and anti-national commercial practices, love of pleasure among the rich, adoption of western ways by women, child-marriages, heavy burden of marriage-expenses, proliferation of sub-castes, neglect of children's education, these and other evils prevail in some measure among Hindus everywhere. They not only sap our vitality, but obstruct our progress towards swaraj. In his speech, Jamnalalji laid the fullest stress on the eradication of these evils as also on the removal of untouchability, on khadi and on improving the methods we adopt for protecting the cow. Let us all hope that the Agrawal members present at the meeting will act on Jamnalalji's suggestions and facilitate the task of other Hindu communities.

[From Gujarai]

Navajivan, 21-3-1926

175. KHADI IN GUJARAT MONTH BY MONTH

The Gujarat Khadi Pracharak Mandal has issued a report on the production, sale, etc., of khadi for the month of *Magha*[1], from which we can form some idea of the progress of khadi in this province.[2]

This report is a summary of the figures received from 19 institutions. It does not include the figures of the four institutions affi-

[1] Month in the Hindu Calendar roughly corresponding to February

[2] The figures are not reproduced here.

liated to the Mandal, nor of those in Kathiawar. The figures reproduced above do not, therefore, give a complete idea of the total progress in Gujarat, but even as they are, they indicate some progress. It may seem negligible today. If, however, the pro gress is maintained, it is plain that khadi cannot but spread widely. Besides these figures, the Mandal has also published figures relating to the sale of spinning-wheels and accessories. I reproduce some of them:[1]

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 21-3-1926

176. LETTER TO MRS. HANUMANTHARAO

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 21, 1926

DEAR DAUGHTER,

You are as daughter to me as Hanumantharao was like son to me. In one of his letters he describes you as an exceptionally brave woman. I expect you to show that bravery at this time of the greatest sorrow that can befall a good wife. But if you feel with me that Hanumantharao though dead yet lives, you will turn that sorrow into joy by shouldering your husband's burdens and making him live through you. The consecration of widowhood in Hinduism means a living faith in the presistence of life after death.

If you can come to the Ashram and make it your home I shall rejoice. If you can make yourself comfortable here do not treat this as a mere courteous offer which cannot be accepted. On the contrary, I would treasure your presence if you could at all make up your mind to come. And it will give me joy to think that though we cannot have Hanumantharao any longer in body, we have this partner with us to represent him. I shall be glad to hear that you have not yielded to the barbarous exhibition of grief that is in vogue amongst us in flat contradiction to the dictates of religion.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. HANUMANTHARAO

From a microfilm: S.N. 19370

[1] The figures are not reproduced here.

177. LETTER TO D. V. RAMASWAMI[1]

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 21, 1926

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Make me partner in your overwhelming sorrow. I know what Hanumantharao meant to you. He wrote to me only not very long ago a letter merely regarding a meeting between you and a missionary friend and he described in that letter the great affection that subsisted between you two. I hope that you will not give way to grief but console his wife.

I do not know your whereabouts. I am therefore sending this letter to you through Krishna. You will read the letter to his wife and if she is at all willing to come to the Ashram, you will not hesitate to send her. God be with you.

Yours sincerely,

BROTHER OF
LATE HANUMANTHARAO

From a microfilm: S. N. 19368

178. LETTER TO C. V. KRISHNA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 21, 1926

MY DEAR KRISHNA,

I have your heart-rending telegram. It is difficult to believe it. I can understand your grief. Regard me as your equal partner in it. I expect full details of the tragedy from you and other friends. For Hanumantharao himself he had died well and we can only rejoice his constancy to his own ideal was indeed very great and he has sealed it with his death. May we all have the same loyalty to our own ideals. You must not become a slave to grief but you should transmute it into purest gold of redoubled energy and capacity to work in defiance of trials and difficulties. You must let me know all your dispositions.

Please see that the enclosed reaches its destination. One is for his wife and the other for his brother.

Yours sincerely,

Encls. 2

SJT. KRISHNA
NELLORE

From a microfilm: S. N. 19369

[1] *Vide* "Letter to D. V. Ramaswami", 3-4-1926.

179. LETTER TO DEVEDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Sunday, Chaitra Sud 8 [March 21, 1926]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your long awaited letter. You will be sorry to hear that Hanumantharao died yesterday at Vizagapattanam. His was, I think, a most noble death; he kept up his honour. But we feel the loss when we remember his qualities. Only about ten days back I had a long letter from him in which he gently rebuked me for having quinine, arsenic and iron injections.[1]

Kantilal has been sent to Amreli because of an insistent demand for him. So I expect Ramdas to come here now. I hope you meet Kishorelal quite often. Ask him if he got my letter addressed to Nasik. I hope Taramati and Dilip are doing well.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S. N. 19371

180. LETTER TO RAMA NARAYAN SINGH

ASHRAM,
March 21, 1926

BHAISHRI RAMNARAYANSINGH,

I have your letter; also the appeal. You say no work is being done in your district; the staff think they alone know everything but behave in a childish manner. What is the good of putting up a building when things stand thus? And how can I agree to it? A building by itself is no cure for childishness nor can it inspire a spirit of service. A building should come up only where the number of workers is increasing and they abide by the rules, inspire public confidence, enjoy mutual respect, and live in unity. I would certainly advise you not even to think of a building, until a good number of sincere workers come together.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S. N. 19879

[1] *Vide* "Letter to D. Hanumantharao", 11-3-1926.

181. LETTER TO CHUNILAL RANGWALA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Sunday, Chaitra Sud 8 [March 21, 1926]

BHAISHRI CHUNILAL,

Your letter. You cannot be held responsible when your niece is not wholly under your control. Hence it is enough to have made known your opposition and to have absented yourself from the wedding and other ceremonies.

The wedding ceremony performed at the Ashram certainly included other religious rites conducted by well-known priests from the respective provinces. But the other fanfare was omitted, and I do believe that all that is not necessary. The vow contained in the *saptapadi* ritual deserves to be known; so that was published.[1] I do not condsider it essential to go through the ritual of *vastu*[2] . I have no hopes that all people will give away all their belongings, none-the-less I do hold that those who do so are not wrong.

Your intention is laudable in suggesting that we should have a bigger size for *Navajivan* so that it can carry more matter and that the subscription should be raised if found necessary. But the suggestion cannot be implemented. I shall see if I can give more matter in each instalment of the autobiography.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S. N. 10850

[1] *Vide* "With Bare Religious Rites", 7-3-1926.
[2] Ceremony invoking the protection of gods for a newly-constructed building

182. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN CHOKSI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Sunday, Chaitra Sud 8 [March 21, 1926][1]

CHI. MOTI,

I have your letter. I understand what you say, but you should note my protests just the same. Children who love their elders maintain progress because they always strive to live up to their elders' expectations. It is one of the easiest things to delineate each letter with care. I might have had one or two letters in tolerable handwritng. And why can you not think of something to write about? Do you have to look aound for a subject when your want to write? So many things happen within twenty-four hours, about which you can write; also the many thoughts that pass through your mind. One can also mention the comings and goings of people. But if it is troublesome to write daily, you may write once a week, but on condition that the handwritng is nice and the details are covered. I only wanted to say that whatever your vow you should observe it with all your mind and heart; only then can it really be kept.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS]

Henceforth I shall write also to Bhai Najuklal[2] .

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 12120

183. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Sunday, Chaitra Sud 8 [March 21, 1926][3]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

A letter from you after many days, which I was waiting for all the time. All my time is now taken up, so I have little to write, which has made me lax. But I get a little anxious if I do not have any letter either from you or from Devdas. It is now clear that your health will improve only gradually. You should take rest there and not worry. It

[1] The year is determined by the reference to the addressee's vow to write to Gandhiji apparently after she left the Ashram to live with her husband.

[2] The postscript is in Gandhiji's hand.

[3] From the reference to the proposed stay in Mussoorie

has been decided that I go to Mussoorie in April. There will be room for a few people there Won't you come over if you are permitted? That might be better. Boarding facilities will, of course, be there.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S. N. 19372

184. SPEECH ON MUSIC, AHMEDABAD [1]

[March 21, 1926][2]

There is a famous classical saying which has now become a proverb that the man "that hath no music in himself" is either an ascetic or a beast. We are far from being ascetics, and to the extent that we are devoid of music we are near allied to beasts. To know music is to transfer it to life. The prevalent discord of today is an indication of our sad plight. There can be no swaraj where there is no harmony, no music.

Where there is discord and everyone striking his own tune, there is bad government or anarchy. Work for swaraj fails to appeal to us because we have no music in us. When we have millions of people singing together in harmony or taking God's name in unison, making one music, we shall have taken the first step to swaraj. If we cannot achieve this simple thing, how can we win swaraj?

We have free music classes in Ahmedabad for the last three years conducted by one who is an expert. And yet we have to be satisfied today with a roll-attendance of 10 and regular attendance of four. It is poor consolation indeed; but we live in hope and Dr. Hariprasad, who sees a ray of hope when he finds even one *pol* out of the hundreds in Ahmedabad clean and tidy, might well feel sastisfied that we have at least four regular music lovers.

Where there is filth and squalour and misery there can be no music. It implies an atmosphere quite the contrary. If we put a broad interpretation on music, i. e., if we mean by it union, concord, mutual help, it may be said that in no department of life can we dispense with it.

Music today has been regarded to mean the vocal effort of a

[1] This is Mahadev Desai's translation of Gandhiji's speech at the Second Annual Function of the National Music Association, Ahmedabad. It appeared in *Young India* under the caption "Music in Life"

[2] According to the Bombay Secret Abstracts, the function was held at the Ashram on this date.

singing girl. We fight shy of sending our sisters and daughters to music schools. There seems to be a superstition that their voice is best when it is devoid of sweetness. That explains why Dr. Hariprasad has had to express satisfaction with an attendance of ten students.

Music, truly speaking, is an ancient and sacred art. The hymns of *Samaveda* are a mine of music, and no *ayat* of the Koran can be recited unmusically. David's Psalms transport you to raptures and remind you of the hymns from *Samaveda*. Let us revive this art and patronize the school of music.

We see Hindu and Mussalman musicians sitting cheek by jowl and partaking in musical concerts. When shall we see the same fraternal union in other affairs of our life? We shall then have the name of Rama and Rahman simultaneously on our lips.

I am glad some of you here are patronizing music. If many more send their children to the music class it will be part of their contribution to national uplift.

But to go a step further. If we would see music in millions of our poor homes, we should all wear khadi and spin. The music we have had today was sweet indeed but it is a privilege of the favoured few. The music of the spinning-wheel can be a free gift to all and is therefore sweeter, It is the hope and solace and mainstay of the millions, and for me therefore the truly good music.

We shall consider music in a narrow sense to mean the ability to sing and play an instrument well while carrying a tune and marking the correct beats of time but, in its wider sense, that is to say that true music is created only when life is attuned to a single tune and a single time-beat. Music is born only where the strings of the heart are not out of tune. The experiment with music will be regarded as successful one when the crores of people in the entire country will start speaking with the same voice. In my opinion true music is implict in khadi and the spinning-wheel. So long as that has not been made explicit, the country is going to welcome anarchy or misrule and, it will continue to be in a state of bondage.[1]

Young India, 15-4-1926

[1] This paragraph is from *Gujarati*, 28-3-1926

185. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

ASHRAM,
Monday, March 22, 1926

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I had the telegram from Ghanshyamdas and you, and I have sent a reply to Ghanshyamdas. Shankarlal is the cause of it all. He is not very discreet. But let us say no more of it. You will find me ready when you are; but after the 31st.

Bhai Pyar Ali and Noorbano desire to spend the summer wherever I do. It will do if they can have a separate cottage or even a couple of rooms. They propose to live on their own. So you may now do whatever you think proper.

I am in quite good health. Here it is not exactly summer as yet; only today it may be said to be somewhat warm.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S. N. 19880

186. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Tuesday, Chaitra Sud 10 [March 21, 1926][1]

BHAI KAKA,

You must have had my letter. I have today two letters from you. I have already written to you that you should come to Mussoorie. But if we must suffer separation, we shall endure it. I mean to say that, if you find Sinhagarh very congenial and the peaceful atmosphere there very agreeable, you need not leave all that for the uncertainy [of Mussoorie] just to be with me. I cannot go where you are, because there is no room for me there, as you say. Wherever I go, I have to accommodate Pyar Ali and Noorbano. Like you, Gomatibehn also has been sent out, so there is one more condition, viz., to accommodate her. It is another thing if she does not come also. And now Mathuradas is the fourth person whom I must accommodate. His doctor has advised Mathuradas to leave Deolali. Therefore he will either go there or to Mussoorie. Even if you leave the place, the

[1] The year is inferred from the proposal to go Mussoorie.

bungalow can still be used since we are a large family. It is true that we would not have had to bother about its use if we had not rented it. Moreover, all arrangments about Mussoorie are finalized, telegrams have been despatched. It is not right to change that now. I know quite well that there will be no peace for me there. There may not be much difference between Panchgani and Mussoorie. Hindi makes a second difference regarding Panchgani. But you must know that I do not go there just for a change of climate, but to perform some duty. I tried hard not to go there. At the moment I have peace here. I have become intimately mixed up with the activities here, in which I am interested. *Bhaktaraj* [1] and the *Gita* have taken hold of me and they constitue the twin motive force for me. Moreover, it suits me that while at the Ashram I can do something without exerting myself. And I see that Ba too is quite pleased with this. For several such reasons as also because this place is very agreeable to my health, I am least anxious to go away; if still I do, it is only to please my guardians.

Now about your problem I would like you to leave your home and become absolutely free from any attachment. But Kaki[2] , I think, should sustain the least possible shock. You seem not to have conceived of Kaki's return, whereas I have. She may not come to see you as long as she intends to assert her marital status. However when she grows totally disinterested, she may herself come to see you. But in any case, she must have some accommodation here. You have given up this household; that is right. But the Ashram, i. e., you and I, have to arrange her lodging somewhere on the Ashram premises. If not the same house, some other, maybe the one under construction. However, that is a different matter. But you should never lose sight of this duty. I shall call Shankar and explain to him that he should cheerfully obey your command. For three or four days past I have been discussing with Ramniklal what Shankar should do. I for one have come to the conclusion that Shankar must stay with someone; and Ramniklal agrees with me. I remember your having told me to put him directly under Thakorebhai's care. I have therefore called for Thakorebhai's report on Shankar. This does not mean that there is some cause for worry on account of Shankar. But I see from his irregularity in attendance that Shankar is neither balanced nor industrious. If these failings are condoned, they may have further

[1] *Pilgrim's Progress*
[2] Addressee's wife

consequences. Hence I suggest that he should be looked after with greater care and encouraged to observe the rules.

I want to introduce these changes. I had no intention of writing all this, but since you have issued orders regarding Shankar I let you know what I am thinking about him.

From photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 19373

187. LETTER TO VEERSUT

ASHRAM,
March 23, 1926

BHAI VEERSUT,

I have your letter. You ask for details. It goes without saying that every boy should undertake a one-year vow. If this is not clear it may be added to the vow in so many words. Vows for grown-ups are also for the same duration. I think it quite proper for a person to preach and practise something that strikes him as a duty. We need teachers to keep the children on the right path. I do not see any impropriety in what Bhai Gopalrao is teaching the children.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

Dakshinamoorti
Bhavnagar

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19881

188. LETTER TO LALJI

ASHRAM,
March 23, 1926

BHAI LALJI,

Your letter. What you have heard about my vow is correct. Hence I shall have to rest satisfied, with no more than wishing your conference all success. I want every *Antyaja* to abstain from drinking and give up meat-eating; and also to resolve to wear khadi exclusively.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19882

189. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

ASHRAM SABARMATI,
Wednesday [*March 24, 1926*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. I have also got a letter from Hakimsaheb. The following telegram has been sent to him today:

"Thanks letter. Any arrangement you friends may make will suit."

Now whatever you decide will be final. You may, if you so desire, put me at any other place before I proceed to Mussoorie. As for me, I am prepared to go to Mussorie direct. It does not matter if it is too cold there; I can stand it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2860

190. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

ASHRAM SABARMATI,
March 24, 1926

I had your telegram but no acknowledgement of my letters. You would not want me to recommend in the pages of *Young India* which I may not myself approve of. This proposed collection for South Africa is, in my opinion, a mistake. I cannot understand the purpose. The fifty thousand rupees granted by the Imperial Citizenship Association surely ought to be enough and, necessity being shown, a further grant can be had from the Association. And as long as there is money in the Association for such purposes as the South African, I think it is wrong to ask the public to pay anything. Nor in my opinion is the position in any way changed from what it was at Cawnpore when I gave my opinion against an all India collection. I would gladly write if you or Sorabji can convince me.

I am glad you have been able to collect much yarn. I suppose I shall receive it in due course. More when we meet.

Yours,

From a photostat: S.N. 19378

[1] The year is inferred from the proposal to go to Mussoorie.

191. LETTER TO ABDUR REHMAN

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 24, 1926

BHAI ABDUR REHMAN,

Your letter. If you want to return to Hinduism you should send me further particulars; I can give an opinion only thereafter.

1. What is your present age?
2. Are your parents living?
3. When were you converted to Islam? How was the conversion brought about?
4. Have you studied the *Quraan-e-Sharif*?
5. Why do you now want to return to Hinduism?
6. Are you married?
7. Do you know any Muslim elders?

Regarding your studies you have to see Rajendrababu who looks after the management of the Vidyapith.

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 12044

192. LETTER TO SWAMI SHRADDHANAND

ASHRAM,
March 24, 1926

BHAISAHEB,

I have your letter. I have deliberately refrained from writing any-thing on Jallianwala Bagh. Soon after coming out of prison I had ex-pressed my opinion that for the present we should not set up any struc-ture. Such an edifice ought to be a memorial to the unity of the followers of different faiths such as Hindu, Muslim and the like. Today if we propose something it may become another bone of contention. I think the amount is safe. The site is kept clean and has grown into something like a park. In the present unhealthy atmosphere around us, I think it best to be satisfied with this much. You may please let me know your views. Why do you say this responsibility rests solely with Malaviyaji, Motilalji and myself? You cannot escape in this way. Your part is no less than that of anyone among us three. I hope you are doing well.

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 19377

193. LETTER TO ANANDLAL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

Wednesday, First Chaitra Sud 11 [*March 24, 1926*]

CHI. ANANDLAL,

Why should you write to me at all? I hear about you from stray visitors, and for a moment I am sad. It seems you make no payment towards the maintenance of Chi. Kashi and her children. And you do not, I hear, let her have even the rent which is due to her from the house which forms part of her own share. If so, it is a shame and regret. Let me know if you have anything to say to justify your stand.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19375

194. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

Wednesday, March 24, 1926

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I have your letter. You may do what is needed regarding Bhai Purushottam Joshi. In my opinion, [as] you say, the person who has been paid off and has left cannot be held responsible for the missing papers. Where can he search for the letters? It is another thing if you want to prepare a report regarding the missing papers.

Herewith Chi. Narandas's note about the Amreli office. As Narandas says, you have drawn more than the sanctioned amount, and you still continue to draw. If this is true, we cannot go on like this. Do not [ask] me to go beyond the fixed limit. You must send the figures regularly. You must not write out a *hundi* to Bombay without securing our permission. Jamnalalji enquired about the *hundi* which you issued this time, and I wired to him to honour it so that your credit may not be damaged. But you must not repeat this. Now-a- days it is risky to accept *hundis* on telegraphic intimation. There have been cases of embezzlement under cover of big names. Therefore businessmen do few cash transactions by telegrams these days. As per the agreement, you have to produce the khadi. You must bear in mind two things. You should not work beyond your capacity and oblige us to tell you [to stop]. You must not incur expenditure of a single pie more than

what has been agreed upon before me. Remember, without any doubt, that I have no inexhaustible source of funds. Not a pice has yet arrived from Rangoon. Whatever amount is handed over is at our risk and we have ventured on this enterprise solely relying on your efficiency and foresight.

I might, perhaps, leave for Mussoorie on the first of April. You should note that during my absence only such amount as I have permitted shall be drawn. So if there are any arrears of payment according to the previously laid down conditions, you may please point out my error and on my part I shall deal with them accordingly. Previous intimation must be furnished here regarding any *hundi* to be issued. It will be accepted on receipt of a letter to Jamnalalji from here. Consult Bhai Jagjivandas and let me know what is to be done about Gariadhar. Regarding Gariadhar I shall bank upon you primarily. You should discuss with Bhai Jagjivandas also about the sales at the Amreli Centre. I shall also write to him.

Ramdas may or may not stay there; you cannot leave Amreli at present. Why cannot Urmila and Bachu live here without you?

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19376

195. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Wednesday, March 24, 1926

CHI. KRISHNADAS,

I have your letter. Am I the one to write in English when it is left to me? I cannot think of replying in English if you wrote in Gujarati. Bhai Chandrashankar will make the corrections and send them over to you. This time you have given me Giridhar's complete address. I shall therefore send the letter to that address so as to reach there earlier. It seems you wanted it this way. I am inquiring why you do not get your *Navajivan*. Meanwhile it will be despatched today direct from here. What ever happened to Guruji again? The English-Gujarati dictionary is available. I shall procure a copy and send it to you. You must not remit its price. You can ask for other books or anything else. It has been decided that I go to Mussoorie in the beginning of the next month. Mahadev, Pyarelal and Subbiah will accompany me.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19379

196. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Wednesday [*March 24, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. It causes me anxiety. You must definitely prepare yourself for Mussoorie. It will not be a burden to me in any way. You will be looked after solely by Devdas. I have told Ghanshyamdas and Jamnalalji that I shall be having two patients with me. At that time I did not have you in mind. But that does not matter. I shall most probably be going only on the 1st. But even though I am in a great hurry, I am dictating this much so that you can take an early decision.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
WINDY HALL
NASIK ROAD
DEOLALI (G.I.P.)

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

197. NOTES

CHITTARANJAN SEVA SADAN

The hospital that was to be opened as an all-Bengal Memorial is at last opened in the ancestral property of the late Deshbandhu which he gave away to a trust. One of its objects was to establish a hospital for women. The readers are aware that nearly eight lacs of rupees were collected out of ten that the trustees had expected to be able to collect. Here are the particulars[2] sent to me by Sjt. Naliniranjan Sirkar, one of the trustees:

> The house has been completely repaired and renovated to suit the purposes of the hospital. Furniture and all hospital requisites have been bought. Doctors, nurses and a matron have been appointed and they have taken up their duties. . . .

[1] From the postmark
[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

> Mattresses, bed-covers, napkins, screens, cases, in fact all the necessary drapery has been made of khaddar procured from the Khadi Pratishthan.
>
> We have named the hospital "Chittaranjan Seva Sadan". We shall try our best to make the institution a success and we invoke your blessings. . . .

The hospital started under such auspices with fairly ample funds at its disposal should grow day by day and supply the need of the middle class women of Bengal. This hospital reminds us of the fact that social work was as dear to the Deshbandhu as political. When it was open to him to give away his properties for political work he deliberately chose to give them for social service in which women's service had a prominent part.

WILL IT BE WORKED?

The Kongu Velala Conference held at Pollachi, South India, passed the following resolution:

> This Conference urges that the girls and ladies of the Kongu Velala caste should consider hand-spinning as part of their caste industry and that all should wear khaddar clothing. It further believes that charkhas are the instruments that will drive away famine from the country.

I congratulate the Conference upon passing the resolution, but will it be accepted by those who are advised to take up hand-spinning as part of their caste industry? And will those who voted for khaddar-wear take to it? I suggest to the members of this Conference that unless men take to spinning themselves, they will find it difficult to persuade the women to do so. They will find it still more difficult to make the necessary improvements in the spinning-wheels or yarn unless there be sufficient men who will become experts in spinning and make such improvements as the local wheels are capable of being adapted to. Hand-spinning for progress depends more upon solid work than upon resolutions. In all constructive work resolutions have only limited use in the shape of a slight propaganda. It is only intelligent and sustained work that counts.

MONTHLY KHADI RETURNS

The following six provinces have sent in the figures, quoted against their names, of production and sale of khadi for the month of January:

	Production	Sale
Bihar	Rs. 16758	Rs. 15553
Utkal	” 3740	” 2213
Maharashtra	” 364	” 3329
Punjab	” 8998	” 8323
Karnatak	” 3349	” 3659
Gujarat	” 4502	” 9795

If the other khadi organizations would send their monthly returns in time to the All-India Spinners' Association, it would be possible to give a record of the progress of khadi from month to month. No better testimony could be given of the value of khadi than the returns of growing production and sale.

As Satis Babu, in his address at the exhibition held in Bihar under the auspices of its Vidyapith, has shown, every yard of khadi means so much money going directly into the pockets of the poor. And these poor people are those who are not reached in any other way, who have no other occupation and to whom even a pie is a welcome coin.

Young India, 25-3-1926

198. 'HE WON'T SPIN'

"Neither will he toil." If the writer of the following letter[1] had toiled enough to search the pages of *Young India*, he would have discovered that every one of the questions raised by him has been already dealt with. But on the principle that as often as error is repeated truth also must be retold, I hasten for the correspondent's sake and for the sake of those who may think like him to reply to the questions raised by him.

Surely, when Hindus have with a deliberate and conscious effort, not by way of policy but for self-purification, removed the taint of untouchability, that act will give the nation a new strength born of consciousness of having done the right thing and will therefore contribute to the attainment of swaraj. We are powerless today because we have lost the power of cohesion. When we learn to regard these five to six crores of outcastes as our own, we shall learn the rudiments of what it is to be one people. That one act of cleansing will probably

[1] Not reproduced here

solve also the Hindu-Muslim question. For in it too the corrosive poison of untouchability is consciously or unconsciously working its way. Hinduism must be poor stuff, if it requires to be protected by an artificial wall of untouchability.

If untouchability and caste are convertible terms, the sooner caste perishes the better for all concerned. But I am satisfied that caste if it is another word for *varna* is a healthy institution. The modern caste with its arrogant exclusiveness is as good as gone. The innumerable sub-divisions are destroying themselves with a rapidity of which we can have no conception.

But let me repeat for the thousandth time that I have not pleaded for inter-dining nor have I advocated forcible entry into temples. But I have said and I do repeat that temple-entry cannot be denied to these countrymen of ours. Time for satyagraha in the matter of temple-entry has not yet come.

It is our fault and shame that the suppressed classes are living outside towns and villages and that they are leading a wretched life. Even as we rightly charge the English rulers for our helplessness and lack of initiative and orginality, so let us admit the guilt of the high-caste Hindus in making the untouchables what they are today.

The writer seems to admit the necessity of giving these victims of our ignorance and superstition education both mundane and spiritual. How is that to be done unless we freely mix with them on terms of equality? Indeed we need more spiritual training than they do. And the Alpha of our spiritual training must begin by our coming down from our Himalayan height and feeling one with them.

The writer has likened Communists to the untouchables. This is pure confusion. The Communists are not born. The untouchables are. Communism is a creed. Untouchability is a disability imposed from without. As for me, I did not avoid the Communists during the Congress week. I saw them freely and had I the time, I would probably have gone to their meeting. They were free to join the Congress on compliance with its constitution. I support the cause of the un- touchables because I know that we have done them a grievous wrong. I should support the cause of the Communists, if it commended itself to me.

Lastly, as the correspondent believes in and wears khaddar, let him demonstrate his full faith by spinning and thus contributing to the output, be it ever so little and linking himself with the teeming millions.

Young India, 25-3-1926

199. A SERVANT OF INDIA

Hanumantharao, some time member of the Servants of India Society, is dead. He has died a martyr to his own ideals. He was a votary of the nature-cure cult. He did not believe in the use of drugs for curing the many ills that flesh is heir to. The only aid to nature he acknowledged was hydropathy according to the system of Louis Kuhne. His belief in the efficacy of this treatment bordered on religious faith. He dreamt of popularizing this method among the villagers. He practised what he preached. He was seriously ill a year ago. He underwent the water-treatment and was believed to be cured. He was convalescing at Vizagapatam and died on 20th instant. Up to the last moment he remained true to his faith. Only a few days before his death he wrote a long letter avowing his faith and gently rebuking me, a nature-cure believer like himself, for weakly taking quinine and submitting to iron and arsenic injections. He had expected more strength from me. In these days of contradiction between precept and practice, it is refreshing to find a man like Hanumantharao who would remain true to his faith even unto death. What if he was mistaken? He was a searcher after truth. We shall find it only by following what we hold to be true. Hanumantharao lives though dead, for he had realized the immortality of the spirit in the perishable body.

Hanumantharao was a patriot. He loved his country with a passion not to be surpassed. Yet there was no bitterness in him. Non-violence with him was a creed, not a mere policy. He was therefore on my unwritten list of civil resisters of the first grade. He had opened a little institution near Nellore where assisted by a band of co-workers, he was developing khaddar and serving the so-called untouchables living in their neighbourhood. The deceased leaves a widow who believed in her husband and who supported him in his adoption of a life of poverty and extreme simplicity.

Young India, 25-3-1926

200. 'EXERCISE THE COPYRIGHT'

A correspondent writes:

> Your permission to newspaper proprietors to copy, if they wish, the chapters of your autobiography seems to me to be prejudicial to the circulation of *Young India* as well as *Navajivan*. Having observed the commercial spirit in the newspaper world, I have arrived at the opinion that it is not right for you

> to permit the newspapers to copy those chapters. People will then for the purpose of reading the autobiography subscribe to *Young India* and *Navajivan* who are not now subscribers and read the other articles contained in them. Why lose this opporunity of broadcasting your message and why be a sharer in the sins of broadcasting liquor and other questionable advertisements such as French art, invigorating and vitalizing medicines, obscene books and "short stories"? This is not only my opinion but that of many readers of *Young India*.

Whilst I appreciate the benevolent motive underlying this advice, I cannot help saying that I am unconvinced of the soundness of the advice. I have never yet copyrighted any of my writings. Tempting offers have come to me no doubt in connection with the chapters of the autobiography, if such they may be called, and I am likely to succumb to the temptation for the sake of the cause I stand for. But even so, I dare not be exclusive. Writings in the journals which I have the privilege of editing must be common property. Copyright is not a natural thing. It is a modren institution, perhaps desirable to a certain extent. But I have no wish to inflate the circulation of *Young India* or *Navajivan* by forbidding newspapers to copy the chapters of the autobiography. The message I seek to deliver through the pages of *Young India* or *Navajivan* must stand on its own bottom and I am satisfied with the number of subscribers who buy these journals for the message that they stand for and not for any temporary interest that might be created in writings such as the autobiography. Nor am I able to subscribe to the opinion that by not availing myself of the statutory right of prohibiting the publication of anything I may write in the pages of these journals, I become a sharer in the sins of those newspaper proprietors who take in the advertisements referred to by the correspondent. I do not from the bottom of my heart detest these advertisements. I do hold that it is wrong to conduct newspapers by the aid of these immoral advertisements. I do believe that if advertisements should be taken at all there should be a rigid censorship instituted by newspaper proprietors and editors themselves and that only healthy advertisements should be taken. But I no more become a sharer in the crime of taking immoral advertisements by refraining from making use of the law of copyright, than I do by not walking to their offices and engaging the proprietors in a duel if they will not remove the offending advertisements. The evil of immoral advertisements is overtaking even what are known as the most respectable newspapers and magazines. That evil has to be combated

by refining the conscience of the newspaper proprietors and eidtors. That refinement can come not through the influence of an amateur editor like myself but it will come when their own conscience is roused to recognition of the growing evil or when it is superimposed upon them by a government representing the people and caring for the people's morals.

Young India, 25-3-1926

201. A TAMILNAD VILLAGE[1]

Soobri insisted on my going to Kalangal.

"It is a place you should see" said he. "You have seen and admired Anthipalayam. Kalangal is better than Anthipalayam."

Everybody is fond of Sjt. K. Subramaniam—for that is Soobri's true and full name—young and old, men and women dote on him. The secret is his childlike innocence and his spirit of service. He is a jewel of a young man. I would do anything if only to please Soobri. So I went to Kalangal. It is a village 13 miles from Coimbatore. . . .

The village was a marvel of cleanliness. . . . There were no street dogs, for nobody threw leaves or offal into the street. Everything went into the well-prepared manure-pit in the yard at the back of each house.

The inside of my host's house was a model of order and cleanliness. . . . Two beautiful spinning-wheels of generous size and in perfect running order, the spindles full of fresh-spun yarn, adorned the hall. The ladies of the house observed no oppressive reserve or purdaism of any kind. . . .

We went round to see other families. Every household has its charkha, and all in beautiful working order. They showed us everywhere the yarn they had spun and the clothes they had made.

This beautiful village of Kalangal was like a balm to a heart that was aching at the sight of hard-hearted indifference and Lancashire cloth all over the country. We were in front of the temple of Draupadi, and I told them to remember Draupadi's case. If India would place faith in God like Draupadi and accept the charkha re-presented to her by Gandhi, she could save herself from outrage and dishonour. Kalangal was a flower unplucked, casting its living fragrance all around. Let other villages copy the example. All honour to the youngmen, Soobri and his friends, who planted the seed in this fruitful

[1] From this article by C. Rajagopalachari, only excerpts are reproduced here along with Gandhiji's comments.

soil in 1924.—C.R.

Would that there were more villages like Kalangal. Here evidently sanitation has gone side by side with the progress of the wheel. Let workers elsewhere note.

Young India, 25-3-1926

202. LETTER TO PRATAPSIMHA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Thursday, Chaitra Sud 11 [*March 25, 1926*][1]

KUMARSHRI PRATAPSIMHAJI,

I had your letter dated March 3. I hear Rana Saheb is now back in Porbunder. Please send a reply to my letter now if you can do so.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19374

203. LETTER TO FULCHAND

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Thursday, Chaitra Sud 11 [*March 25, 1926*][2]

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I have your letter. How quickly you despair. I am an incorrigible optimist and I cannot help it. Where you see no hope at all, I see some. My faith is never disturbed. People from Bhavnagar may hurl all sorts of taunts at us, but we must not budge or be bullied. I am sure some khadi can always be sold in cities; but our activities should no doubt cover mostly the villages. I have no objection to your working on municipalities and similar bodies. But one person must not take up several jobs. I have found a field for myself. A political association must have a far-flung activity; khadi work alone is such an activity, or work among the *Antyajas*. Quite a few persons come forward to work in the municipalities. It is a good thing if they do it and with credit. But not many people are likely to take up the work of

[1] Gandhiji was in correspondence with the addressee in 1926 in connection with the holding of the Kathiawar Political Conference at Porbunder; *vide* "Letter to Pratapsimha", 25-2-1926.

[2] The year is determined by the reference to the Rana's return to Porbunder and the proposed meeting of the Kathiawar Political Conference there.

khadi and *Antyajas*. We alone have to make it respectable. And if we have the faith, why should we be stopped by public criticism? I am not convinced by your suggestion that we should stock cotton. Shambhushankar seems to have done it at Gariyadhar. I do not think there is anything wrong about it. People may be encouraged to store cotton, and we may get it carded and spun for them. But all this should be at their expense. Otherwise we fail to realize the significance of the khadi movement. The basic motive of the khadi movement is not boycott of foreign goods but providing work for the unemployed and freeing them, as far as we can, from hunger. Boycott may follow as a result of this. If we insist on making it an end in itself we shall fail. If unemployment and starvation in India were not linked together as cause and effect I would take my hands off the wheel.

We must proceed with this in view. Therefore our job is to make the poor produce khadi and sell it to the masses. Hence I do not feel concerned about the piling of khadi in Amreli; I should, if it were to be taken outside Kathiawar. But if it comes to a standstill I may be prepared even to export it out of the country, not to speak of Bombay and other places. I can therefore propose only one test. Whenever we produce khadi we should see whether or not we get it spun only by those poor people who do not have an alternative occupation, whether we offer them the approved rates and whether the yarn is spun diligently or reluctantly. If you are satisfied on these three counts you may let the work continue there.

People were mistaken if they had set high hopes on my statements regarding Gondal and Jamnagar. Let them by all means stick to the mistake in spite of their disillusionment. And what shall we do if they leave us? We can only try.

I am enclosing Dewansaheb's letter which you should keep with you. You need not return it to me. I hear that Rana Saheb has returned; so I shall send him a reminder today.

I hope to send within two months, i.e., in June, the five thousand rupees that I have promised to get for the *Antyaja* Ashram. I shall start from here in the beginning of April to return by the end of May and shall soon thereafter arrange for the Rs. 5,000. Will that be in time?

Read this letter to Devchandbhai. It is but right that the meeting should not be convened at Porbunder before getting Dewansaheb's reply. And now I think no part of your letter remains unanswered.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 19380

204. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

AHMEDABAD,
March 26, 1926

SETH JAMNALAL BAJAJ
KANKHAL

IF I AM TO FIX DATE I SHOULD SAY SOME TIME AFTER MIDDLE APRIL. WEATHER HERE UN-USUALLY COOL JUST NOW.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 47

205. LETTER TO JOS. E. DENNISON

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 26, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I regret to have to inform you that I do not keep any photograph of myself. And for many years now I have not even given a sitting to a photographer. There are however photographs sold in the bazaar. They are all snapshots. In my opinion they are all caricatures.

Yours sincerely,

JOS. E. DENNISON, ESQ.
DIRECTOR
TWO RIVERS BOYS' WORK ASSOCIATION
H. P. HAMILTON SCHOOL
TWO RIVERS, WISCONSIN
(UNITED STATES)

From a photostat: S.N. 12430

206. LETTER TO KATHERINE MAYO

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

March 26, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I was glad to receive your letter before you left and gladder still to see that you propose to [1] the whole matter. Verify for yourself the statement I made and then come to a judgment. That is precisely what I want American friends to do. To take nothing for granted, challenge every statement whether it comes from Indian source or European source and whether they are anti-Indian or pro-Indian, then come to a deliberate conclusion and act upon it.

I send you herewith the quotations from the books whose names you will find at the end of the quotations. If you still have any difficulty in getting hold of the books from which the quotations have been taken, do please let me know. I would want to add also that the statement about poverty of India does not rest merely upon the testimony of the late Sir William Wilson Hunter but it has been confirmed by subsequent observations made both by Indians and Europeans. If you want this information also substantiated by me, I shall be pleased to send you proofs. I also suggest to you a method that even a man in the street may adopt for verification.

1. Is it or is it not true that nearly 80 per cent of the population of India is agricultural and living in remote villages scattered over an area of 1,900 miles long and 1,500 miles broad?

2. Is it or is it not true that these peasants are living in small holdings and often as serfs of big zamindars?

3. Is it or is it not true that the vast majority of them have at least four idle months in the year?

4. Is it or is it not true that before the British rule these very people had hand-spinning and industry ancillary to agriculture which supplemented the slender income they had from agricultre?

5. Is it or is it not true that whilst hand-spinning has been entirely killed no other industry has taken its place?

If the answer to all these questions be in the affirmative, no matter what statements might be made by anybody, these agriculturists

[1] The source has a blank here.

must be poorer than they were before hand-spinning was destroyed. There are many other causes for the growing poverty of the masses but those that are implied in the questions are, I think, enough for the ordinary enquirer. I have suggested this line of enquiry to you so as to enable you to test the tragic truth of India's growing poverty in many ways.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 12451

207. LETTER TO AMULYA CHANDRA SEN

ASHRAMM SABARMATI,

March 26, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I do not claim that the whole truth has been revealed to me. But in so far as it has been a natural thing for me, I cannot recall the time in my life when I changed from untruth to truth. Please tell the lady missionary friend that during my Bengal tour, I visited several missionary institutions conducted by Englishmen. Some of them had nothing to do with hand-weaving or hand-spinning. She will be interested to know perhaps that I made it a point to visit the Government weaving Institute at Serampore and the Girls' school close by conducted by the Church of England Mission. If therefore I did not visit her carpet works, it could only be because of want of time.

I thank you for telling me that you are using nothing but khaddar.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. AMULYA CHANDRA SEN, M.A.
SENIOR LECTURER
LANGUAGE SCHOOL, QUEEN'S HILL
DARJEELING

From a microfilm: S.N. 19383

208. LETTER TO MOHAMMAD SHAFEE

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

March 26, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter together with your statement in reply to Panditji's. I share your grief. The whole thing is so sad. But I live in the hope based on God's promise that there is no such thing as eternal grief or eternal happiness in this world and that therefore every grief is followed by joy, if only one would wait and have faith. I have patience because I have faith and therefore refuse to weep over the tragedy going on [in] front of me.

Yours sincerely,

MOULVI MOHAMMAD SHAFEE
M.L.A.
5, WINDSOR PLACE
RAISINA
DELHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 19384

209 LETTER TO HAKIM AJMAL KHAN

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

March 26, 1926

DEAR HAKIM SAHEB,

You must pardon me for not writing to you in Urdu. My right hand is supposed to take rest from writing. To write in Urdu with the left hand is laborious task. And just now when I am supposed to do minimum of work, I do not want to give a lot of time to write to you in Urdu. Hence this dictated letter.

So you have been drawn into having to look after me as if you had not worries enough without this additional burden. I have your last tele-gram. Let me exaplain my own position. I am in no mood to leave the Ashram for a cooler place and therefore I am in no hurry to leave it. I am bound by promise to Jamnalalji and other friends that I should be ready at their instance to leave Sabarmati any day for a place to be appointed by them. But if I am to select the day of departure, I would like to leave when the Ashram school closes for a

brief vacation. I would not like to leave a 30 minutes' class I am taking and which is not tax on me. Moreover there are small things which I would like to finish before I go. Thirdly, and from the point of view of health, what is most important is that the weather here is delightfully cool. It is unusual for this part of India at this time of the year but copious rains having fallen in Marwar, they have made the atmosphere in Gujarat exceptionally cool. One needs to use blankets in the morning and throughout the day there is no oppressive heat. This kind of weather is likely to last for some time. It is therefore really speaking most agreeable for me at the present time. Even as I am dictaing this, a cold wind is blowing upon me. And I cannot imagine a better climate anywhere else. I am walking well at least an hour daily. I am eating well and speaking well. I am putting on weight at the rate of nearly one pound per week. I would therefore not like to leave the Ashram whilst these favourable circumstances last. Moreover, if it is at all possible, why not remove me when Mussoorie is a little warmer than it is today and then start for Mussoorie instead of taking an intermediate stage for a few days. All this might have been necessary if I was very delicate in health and could not bear the heat here. I am neither delicate nor is there any heat. Now, I leave the thing in the hands of friends who are for the moment controlling my movements.

With you, I suppose, you have little right to say what I should do and should not for for my health. For, you are much more delicate than I am. From all accounts that I have received, I perceive that you have lost almost all you have gained in Europe and that you are paying no attention to your health, will give yourself no rest, and will see friends and patients at all hours of the day, even night. Unless therefore you mend your ways, I propose not to listen to you at all in the matter of precaution about health. I am a follower of the motto "Physician cure thyself".

Won't I would [*sic*] like to unburden myself about the present position in our country. I am distraining [*sic*] myself. What is the use of idle paper discussion? I therefore watch, wait and pray and hope also that where we see darkness about us God is preparing to dispel that darkness.

Where is Khwaja? Has he left the Jamia and returned to his practice? Who is in charge of the institution now? Where is Shwaib? He has not acknowledged even Anasuya Bai's letter? I have not

written to him expecting him to write to me when he was free from the affairs of the delegation.

Yours sincerely,

HAKIMJI AJMAL KHAN SAHEB
DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 19385

210. LETTER TO MARIAM ISAAC

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 26, 1926

DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,

I have your letter. If you wish to serve the poor in the largest sense of the term, I can only suggest to you the introduction of the spinning-wheel and khaddar propaganda. It is difficult to work but you can touch the disease of poverty thereby. I am glad you propose to begin spinning. You should end with introducing it in every home as a measure of discipline and sacrifice and [to] the poor for wages. You can also adopt khaddar yourself and introduce it among your friends. This continuous identification with the poor will enable you to find out for yourself many other ways of serving them.

I am arranging to send you a free copy of *Young India*. I hope you will file it or pass it on to others who may care to read and who may not be able to buy it.

Yours sincerely,

SHRIMATI MARIAM ISAAC
C/O MR. A. M. PAUL
AREECKAL, MECKAVE
ANGAMALI
N. TRAVANCORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 19386

211. LETTER TO D. V. RAMASWAMI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

March 26, 1926

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your touching letter. I sent you a letter before receiving yours through Krishna. I sent one also addressed to Hanumantharao's wife. I had no doubt in my mind that Hanumantharao had died bravely. I expect you now so far as it is possible for you to continue Hanumantharao's work where he had left it. Let me know about yourself. What are you doing? I hope that all the members of the family are taking the event joyfully. It will be wrong to grieve over a death so brave as Hanumantharao's. Please send the second letter that I wrote to Hanumantharao to the friend at Rajahmundry and let me have his address also. I would like in so far as it is possible to put in more work for nature-cure than I have done hitherto. For, whilst Hanumantharao was alive, I felt that I need not meddle where he was specializing.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. D. V. RAMASWAMI
VIZAGAPATAM

From a microfilm: S.N. 19387

212. LETTER TO CHINESE FRIENDS[1]

March 26, 1926

I should get an invitation from the delegates. My message of peace has to be acceptable at least to my hosts if not to anyone else. In that case they should come and acquaint themselves with my point of view, after which I may think of going there.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 87

[1] Retranslated from a Gujarati translation. For Gandhiji's proposed visit to China, *vide* "Letter to A. A. Paul", dated March 3, May 9 and 30, 1926.

213. LETTER TO MITHABAI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

Friday, Chaitra Sud 12 [*March 26, 1926*][1]

GANGASWARUP BEHN MITHABAI,

I have your letter. I am pained at your grief. I am glad to see your devotion to Bhai Shivji. But what can I do if your letter fails to make any impression? Am I to blame if in spite of my best efforts I cannot see matters in the same light even if they are exactly as you describe them? I believe I was quite in my senses when Mavjibhai and others came here, whereas you think I talked nonsense. I still do believe that when I talked about my wife I neither criticized her nor did anything improper.

If there is to be an arbitration I shall certainly place your letter before them. You will be able to come in person and tell them whatever you want to.

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 19381 R

214. LETTER TO MAVJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

Friday, Chaitra Sud 12 [*March 26, 1926*][2]

BHAISHRI MAVJI,

I am being pressed in some quarters to throw light on the affair of Bhai Shivji. On the other hand Bhai Shivji's followers are naturally attacking me. I am in a fix. I can satisfy neither the followers nor the critics. Bhai. . .[3] writes an indignant letter alleging it was I who suggested an arbitration. I know nothing of the sort. If Bhai Shivji does not want it he may drop the arbitration. I shall be grateful to you if this little matter can be cleared soon. I shall not take long before the arbitration. I am ready for them at any time. If arbitration involves delay why can you not yourself make some inquiries and enlighten me re-garding the state of affairs? After all one purpose in having the arbitra-tion was of course to remove any suspicion under which I

[1] The year is determined from the reference to Shivji's case and the possibility of an arbitration.

[2] From the reference to Shivji's case and the proposed arbitration

[3] Name dropped in the source

might have been labouring. Why can you not take up this matter and dispose of it yourself? Do whatever you think proper. But please do put an end to this suspense. I am surely not going to lose my patience. How can I desire any injustice to Bhai Shivji? I only want this state of indecision to end.

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 19382 R

215. LETTER TO HERBERT ANDERSON[1]

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 27, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I send you herewith a list of the Secretaries of the Provincial Congress Committees and their addresses. It might be as well for you to send a direct question to every member of the Assembly and Local Councils asking whether he would support total prohibition. I wonder if you saw my note in *Young India*[2] upon the proceedings of the Prohibition League in Delhi. In it, I have endeavoured to show that your campaign is [3] unless you show how to raise the revenue and how to meet the deficit that may be at least temporarily caused by total prohibition. If you have not seen the number I shall gladly send you a copy of the same issue if available or at least a typed copy of the note.

Yours sincerely,

REV. HERBERT ANDERSON
59, KING'S ROAD
HOWRAH
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 12164

[1] In reply to a letter dated 19-3-1926 from Herbert Anderson, the Honorary General Secretary of the Prohibition League of India; the letter requested Gandhiji to use his "personal influence" in favour of their campaign for prohibition.

[2] *Vide* Vol. XXIX, "Total Prohibition", 4-2-1926.

[3] The source has a blank here.

216. LETTER TO FRIEDRICH HEILER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

March 27, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and the book for both of which I thank you. I am sorry I do not understand German myself but I shall try to understand your book through a friend.

I am afraid I cannot give you a satisfactory reply regarding Sadhu Sunder Singh. I had the pleasure of seeing him but once. At the request of a Christain friend I invited him to visit the Ashram and pass a few hours with us which he kindly did whilst on his way to Europe. But I made no enquiries about his experiences nor have I ever felt the call to make such enquiries since.

Yours sincerely,

FRIEDRICH HEILER, ESQ.
PROFESSOR OF COMPARATIVE RELIGION
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MARBURG

From a photostat: S.N. 12435

217. LETTER TO G. P. NAIR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

March 27, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry that you felt grieved over my not answering an open letter you wrote to me. I may however tell you that an open letter does not require to be noticed, or acknowledged. Open letters are written to public men to draw pointed attention to matters they cover. I sometimes take notice of such letters when I feel that I might serve the cause that might have been belittled or misrepresented in them. There was no desire to be discourteous. Your request this time is indeed delicate. How shall I give you guidance or inspiration when I do not know the policy of the paper you propose to publish? The very name that you have adopted certainly frightens me. Not that I do not appreciate republicanism but republic for India is, in my opinion, a meaningless term at the present moment. I know that opinions differ

in this matter but I must hold to my own. I am anxious to make common cause with the younger generation but I cannot see eye to eye with them. The utmost I can do is to keep myself in the background and let them learn by bitter experience what they refuse to learn from the experience of others.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. P. NAIR
EDITOR
"REPUBLIC"
MALL ROAD, CAWNPORE

From a photostat: S.N. 19388

218. LETTER TO MOHAMMED ALI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 27, 1926

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

A correspondent writes a bitter letter asking why he does not see your name figuring in the list weekly published in *Young India* of members of the All-India Spinners' Association. I also ask the same question. I did not know till the receipt of the letter that you had not sent a single month's subscription. If you tell me you are too worried or too busy, I am not prepared to accept the excuse. Either hand-spinning is a vital necessity and the Spinners'Association a proper body for its spread or the spinning-wheel is not a necessity and, if it is, the Association is not the proper body for its spread. In the first case, no excuse can be accepted from one in your position, not to remain in the Association. In the second case no excuse is necessary for going out of the Association but unequivocal condemnation is the right course. I know that you swear by the spinning-wheel. I know that you recognize that the Spinners' Association is the proper body and therefore it is that I would refuse to accept any excuse from you.

How are you keeping? I do not want to enquire how you are feeling regarding the country's position. It stares us in the face. Where is Shwaib? I am supposed to go to Mussoorie some time next month. If that event comes off, I expect to see you at the station when I pass through Delhi. And how is my reputed dicta- tor? And how is

Begum Saheba? I suppose she has been sending her yarn regularly. Why the girls should not do likewise I don't know.

Yours,

MAULANA MOHAMMED ALI
DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 19389

219. LETTER TO R. D. TATA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 27, 1926

DEAR MR. TATA,

You will perhaps recollect that you were good enough to tell me when I was at Jamshedpur that you would gladly give me as many spindles and *taklis* as I wanted not exceeding one lac. I think that was the number mentioned if my recollection serves me right. I had left it to Satish Babu to send the pattern according to which he wanted the spindles and *taklis* to be made. But I do not think that the thing materialized much beyond the conversation. At the present moment I am overwhelmed with demands for spindles and *taklis* and I am unable to cope with them. Could you give me the *taklis* and the spindles? Whilst I have reminded you of the conversation, I do not want you to go out of your way to give me these articles. I would like you to examine the thing as an independent proposition and if you feel that you could without much inconvenience or expense help this cottage industry movement to the extent I have suggested, I shall be obliged.

I have sent directly to Mr. Alexander a parcel containing specimens of spindles and *taklis*. There are four varieties and if you pro[pose] to supply these you will please fix the number to be supplied and I would have an equal proportion of each.

I may say that each spindle or *takli* costs us about two to two annas and six pies each. If, therefore, you give me lac for us it would amount to a donation of at least Rs. 12,500 and according to the advice at my disposal it will cost you nothing less than Rs. 3,000 in all.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19391

220. LETTER TO C. A. ALEXANDER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 27, 1926

DEAR MR. ALEXANDER,

I send you herewith a percel containing four specimens of spindles and *taklis*. You will recall the conversation during my visit to Jamshedpur that I had with Mr. Tata and at which you were present that your works should give me one lac of spindles and *taklis*. I do not see anything was done after the conversation. I have written to Mr. Tata to ask whether he would like to issue instructions for the supply of these articles. In order to save time and in anticipation of Mr. Tata's answer in the affirmative, I have sent you the parcel. Will you please then, if you get Mr. Tata's sanction, let me have these things as early as possible? I am overwhelmed with applications for these things and I have found it difficult to cope with the demand.

If the full one lac is to be given, I would like 25,000 in each of the four specimens. I need hardly say that they should be absolutely true. The slightest untrueness about these spindles makes them wobbly and it becomes difficult to work then with speed. The rims to the *taklis* need not be brass or gun-metal. Cast iron will serve just the same purpose.

Yours sincerely,

C. A. ALEXANDER, ESQ.
JAMSHEDPUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 19390

221. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

ASHRAM SABARMATI,
Saturday, Chaitra Sud 13 [*March 27, 1926*][1]

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL,

May all your noble efforts bear fruit. May you be completely free from disease.

How can I be pleased with Moti's request that she might write only one letter a week? But I think it is better to have nothing at all

[1] From the reference to Moti's promise to write to Gandhiji daily after her marriage.

than force her to write, because forced writing is likely to produce a general dislike for letters which will then defeat the very purpose of letter-writing. I shall of course continue to write letters. Who told you I did not approve of Moti's practice of writing out a gist of what she read? Well, I think I had praised the practice. I also faintly remember having written to Moti to prepare her gist better. Now, I think, Moti's week too is past. It is my experience that writing once a week is more difficult to remember than writing more frequently. But now let us see how Moti keeps up her practice. Please do not shame her into writing. It does not matter if she forgets; while yet forgetting, she may overcome her failing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12121

222. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

Saturday, Chaitra Sud 13 [*March 27, 1926*][1]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I saw your letter to Kashi. I can understand your eagerness to have her back. You had written to her about the cold which made her hesitate. Now she can leave as soon as you are ready. But no accommodation has been arranged yet, as I learned on enquiry today. They have yet to fill in the application form and other things. To whom is the application to be sent? We shall act promptly if you let us know the name and address of the person who is authorized to allot the accommodation. I had an impression that Swami had taken everything upon himself and all we have to do was to leave this place. You are not to bother yourself regarding this; I mean not at the cost of your health. Let us have as much information as you can send from there and the rest of it we shall manage here. You cannot at present leave Lonavla; that's quite right. How you came to have fever I shall know only when I get your letter. You should not panic when you get some temperature; I see signs of it in your letter.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19392

[1] The year is inferred from the combination of the day, the date and Gandhiji's staying at the Ashram.

223. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

Saturday, March 27, 1926

CHI. DEVDAS,

Your letters are getting more and more scarce. I hope you will not lapse ultimately into the practice of writing an annual Diwali letter. Ramdas and Jaisukhlal have come today. I have not been able to exchange more than a casual word with them. I may not perhaps go to Mussoorie before the 15th of April. I shall know more about this in a day or two when I get a telegram. Dr. Suresh Banerji of the Abhoy Ashram is at present here. He will stay till Tuesday.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19393

224. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

Saturday, Chaitra Sud 13 [*March 27, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. There can be no impertinence in what you write; what then have you to apologize for? I can under- stand your fears. I think we can easily make arrangements at Dharampur; but if you go to Dharampur why not to Panchgani? At Panchgani we can have Sir Prabhashanker's bungalow. He has left instructions to let me have it; so you can go there. Or you can go to Simhagad if you want to. There too the climate is cool. It was only with me that Jivraj himself stayed. If I can be accommodated where Kaka stays, you along with Taramati can certainly be accommodated. If you have a mind to go to Simhagad, Devdas will take a look at the place; he will also find out if this will cause any inconvenience to Kaka. If you do not want to go there, I may fix up Dharampur or Panchgani. When I say Dharampur, I mean Malbari's sanatorium. Mussoorie is not altogether out of my mind. I shall ask you to come only if I like it there.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19394

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's proposed stay at Mussoorie and the addressee's necessity of staying at a health resort

225. SOME QUESTIONS ON RELIGIOUS ISSUES [1]

A friend has asked me questions on some religious issues. I continually receive such questions, and feel some hesitation in answering them so often. But it does not seem proper not to answer them either, since I have thought about these matters and come to certain conclusions. I therefore answer the following questions to the best of my ability and understanding.

Q. What are your views about the *yajnas* which used to be performed in ancient times? Do such *yajnas* purify the air? Is there a place for them in our times? Some groups are reviving *yajnas*; will their revival be of any benefit?

Yajna is a beautiful and highly suggestive word. Its meaning, therefore, can change and expand with the growth of our knowledge and experience or with changing times. The word can be interpreted to mean worship, sacrifice or service of others. Understood in this sense, *yajna* always deserves to be revived. But the *yajnas* of various types, that is, rituals of various kinds described as *yajnas* in Shastras, do not deserve to be, and in fact cannot be, revived. Some of these rituals are harmful, and it is also doubtful whether in Vedic times they were understood inthe sense which we attach to them now. Whether or not this doubt is justified, some of these rituals are repugnant to our reason and moral sense. Anthropologists tell us that there were human sacrifice in old days. Can we conceive of such a sacrifice being performed now? Anyone who proposes to perform the horse-sacrifice would make himself an object of ridicule. We need not go into the question whether *yajnas* purify air, for it is irrelevant to ask, in connection with a religious ritual, whether it results in such a trivial benefit as the purification of air. Modern physical science can give us better help in that regard. The essen-tial principles of Shastras are one thing [and the practice based on them another]. The principles are the same at all times and in all places. But the practices based on them vary from age to age and country to country.

Q. It is generally believed that to be born as a human being is a rare privilege and that, therefore, we would occupy our time in singing praises of God. If we fail to make the right use of our present opportunity, we shall once again have to go through the cycle of births in 84 lakhs of different species. What is the truth in

[1] This was abridged and translated by Mahadev Desai and later published in *Young India*, 13-5-1926, under the sub-titles "Sacrifice, Old and New", "Place of Sanskrit", and "Self-help and Mutual Help"

this belief? Kabir also says in a song:

> Wake up, O brother, says Kabir,
> Else you are doomed to the round of eighty-four lakhs of births;
> You may be born a swine or a fowl,
> And will suffer their fate, my brother.
> What lesson should we learn from this?

I believe this to be quite true. One is born as a human being after going through the cycle of births in innumerable species, and *moksha* or complete deliverance from the pairs of opposites can be attainedonly through life in a human body. If in the ultimate analysis there is only one *atman*, its going through the cycle of countless species in the form of innumerable lives should not seem impossible or wonderful. Our reason, too, can accept the idea, and some persons even remember their past lives.

Q. Between a yogi rising to the state of *samadhi*[1] through *pranayama*[2] and one who acquires control of the senses, who attains higher spiritual good?

This question presupposes a contradiction between self-control and yoga. In truth, one of them is the cause of other; or, rather, they are complements of each other. *Samadhi* without self-control is no better than the sleep of Kumbhakarna[3]. Without *samadhi*, again, self-control is difficult to attain. *Samadhi*, in this context, should be understood ina wide sense, not inthe limited sense of the *Hathayogi's*[4] *samadhi*. In truth, this latter is not essential for attaining control of the senses. It may be a help, but in the present age ordinary *samadhi* is the best for us. Ordinary *samadhi* means the capacity to be absorbed in the chosen task. It should not be forgotton that yogic achievements are of no use if not accompanied by control of the senses.

Q. Suppose that a person believes in self-help, himself works in the fields and grows foodgrains for his use, makes with his own hands farm implements, like the plough, does the carpenter's work, weaves his own cloth, even builds his own house, in short produces by his own efforts everything which he requires and does not employ other's labour for that purpose. Would he be right or wrong to do this? What is your definition of a man of self-help?

[1] A state of thought-free awareness

[2] Breath-control

[3] In the *Ramayana*. He was Ravana's brother, and was asleep and awake by turns for six months at a stretch.

[4] A yogi who relies on certain physical techniques

Self-help means the ability to stand on one's own feet without help from others. This does not mean that one should be indifferent to such help, or decline it when offered or never desire it or ask for it. But a farmer who, though wanting and seeking others' help, can preserve his composure and self-respect when it is refused, is a man of self-help. A farmer who, though he can get others' help, himself attends to all the operations of tilling the land, sowing and reaping, himself makes the required implements, himself weaves cloth for his use from yarn spun by himself, stitches his own clothes, cooks his own food and labours to build a house for himself—such a farmer is either stupid or self-conceited or is just a savage. Self-help necessarily implies the *yajna* of bodily labour, which means that everyone should do such work to earn his livelihood. Any person, therefore, who works for eight hours in the fields is entitled to the services of a weaver, a carpenter, a blacksmith and a mason. It is his duty to seek their services, and he will get them easily enough. In return, carpenters, blacksmiths and other artisans get foodgrains produced by the farmer's labour. An eye which hopes to do without help from the hand does not practise self-help, it is just too proud. As the different limbs of our body practise self-help in regard to their own functions, and yet are of service to others because they help one another and dependent on others because they are helped by one another, so we, the thirty crore limbs of the body that is India, should follow the duty of self-help in our respective spheres of work and, to demonstrate that we are limbs of the same nation, exchange help with one another. Only then shall we have built up a nation and proved our claim to be patriots.

Q. For the purpose of marriage ceremonies, *sandhya*[1], *yajna* rituals and prayers, Sanskrit verses are used in our age. The verses are recited by the person officiating on these occasions and those who have engaged him join him in reciting the verses without understanding their meaning. Sanskrit is no longer our mother tongue. Many institutions ask the people to use that language for prayers, *sandhya*, *yajna* rituals, etc. But the people do not understand the language. How, then, can they concentrate attention on what is being recited? Sanskrit, moreover, is a difficult language. Learning the verses by heart and remembering their meanings seems to me, therefore, a double burden. When Sanskrit was people's mother tongue, all their work was done in it and that was but right. That is no longer the position now. It helps people to use their mother tongue for all their work, but our present practice is different. The religious ceremonies mentioned above are performed in Sanskrit among

[1] Morning and evening prayers

the general public.

My view is that Sanskrit should be used in all Hindu religious ceremonies. However good a translation, it cannot give us the meaning which lies in the sounds of certain words in the original. Moreover, by translating into regional languages, and remaining content with such translations, verses which belong to a language which has acquired a certain refinement over thousands of years and in which those verses have always been recited, we diminish the air of solemnity which attaches to them. But I have no doubt at all in my mind that the meaning of every verse and every step in the ceremony should be explained in their own language to the people for whose benefit they are being recited or performed. It is also my view that the education of every Hindu is incomplete without an elementary knowledge of Sanskrit. I simply cannot conceive the continued existence of Hinduism without a widespread knowledge of Sanskrit. The language has been made difficult by the type of curriculum we follow in teaching it, in itself it is not difficult at all. Even if it is, the practice of dharma is still more difficult and, therefore, to those who wish to follow it in life the means of doing so should seem easy, however difficult they may actually be.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-3-1926

226. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 28, 192[*6*][1]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. A telegram has just arrived from Jamnalal telling me that I may leave this place after the 16th of April. At present we have very nice weather here. The mornings are very cool and the afternoons too are not particularly warm.

Please believe me I would do my utmost if I could bring both the parties[2] together. But for the present the task seems to be beyond my capacity. Our differences with the Swaraj Party will persist. As observed by Maulana Mahomed Ali, leaving aside personalities, when

[1] This apparently is in reply to the addressee's letter to Gandhiji dated 24-3-1926. (S.N. 10857)

[2] Of Madan Mohan Malaviya and Motilal Nehru

we compare the two creeds, the Swaraj Party's creed is certainly more commendable, though both of them are inferior to non-co-operation.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: C. W. 6123. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

227. LETTER TO KUNVARJI V. MEHTA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

Sunday, Chaitra Sud 14 [*March 28, 1926*][1]

BHAISHRI KUNVARJI,

I had a letter recently from Bhai Kalyanji, telling me of the demise of Dahyabhai. He also describes Dahyabhai's condition and adds that you and your wife took it well. He writes too about the recitation from the *Gita* at that time. Since you could maintain a natural clam, I need not adivse you to have courage. But I must write this, if only to chasten your faith, that he who really believes in the reality of the soul will not fear nor be shaken by unexpected death. Those who pass away in the full bloom of their youth or even at a tender age also obey Nature's law. We are frightened because we do not know all her laws. But why not look at it this way. Dahyabhai's soul had no more use for that body and so this fell off. It is only proper to discard useless matter. This thought should help us overcome our grief. Our grief is reasonable only so far as the body had any use for us. But such grief is selfish. What selfish interest could a worker have? I want you all to know this truth, shed all your grief and resume your normal duties. If, even then you cannot overcome your grief, remember I share it with others. Let everyone share your grief. *Ramanama* will give you real peace.

I am not writing a separate letter to Bhai Kalyanji.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2715; also S.N. 10859

[1] Gandhiji did not go to the Ashram after 1930; hence the year.

228. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Sunday, March 28, 1926

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. It is certainly advisable as a general rule not to get a richly variegated cloth from Andhra. But if anyone asks for some special thing regardless of cost, you should get it at whatever price it is offered. Ultimately this money too goes into the weavers' pockets. But in every case we should get things without binding ourselves in any way. Bhai Karsandas has handed over the yarn you sent. Are all those women to be registered as members? A member has to sign the pledge and always use khadi. Please send me Nargisbehn's address. As for yourself, you should have patience and depend solely on nature. If you can cease to be anxious it is certainly well and good. Of the khadi you asked for we do not have much of the one of 36" width. Khadi of 27" width is available. I am sending it. Can 30"-32" width not serve your purpose? I am sending a sample of khadi of 36" width. Its price is annas 12 for bleached and annas 11.5 for unbleached. But never mind the price. To you I shall supply it only at the price you like. I am sending it with Bhai Karsandas and I have also asked him to get more for you if it is available in Bombay. I hope in Mahabaleshwar you have improved a lot. Do keep writing to me.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 10858-A

229. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN CHOKSI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Sunday, March 28, 1926

CHI. MOTI,

Your letter. You shall have to satisfy me about your handwriting. Sometimes it is moderately good, which only shows that efforts do improve it. A person's handwriting often reveals his conduct. In the present case I find much disorder. In spite of the same person writing with the same pen, some [letters] are large, some small, some scattered apart and some huddled up; there is no end of striking out and erasing. Your card contains 17 lines in all. If a person's Gujarati writing is such a mess, he cannot have my congratulations on

his excellence in English. If I were his instructor, I would strictly forbid him to write or read English.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12122

230. LETTER TO PHOOKEN

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 29, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Mr. Banker now tells me that for a long time a sum of Rs. 4,000 is due from you to the Khadi Board, now the All-India Spinners' Association. Every pie is at the present moment required to go through the Budget. Could you not now make this payment?

Yours sincrely,

SJT. PHOOKEN
ASSAM

Copy to the A.I.S.A. Office for information.

From a microfilm S.N. 11158

231. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SABARMATI,
March 29, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. I saw your telegram about Utkal. After going through the figures, I advised Shankerlal to authorize to give you Rs. 2,000-0-0. As you know, personally I am intensely dissatisfied with the Utkal management. We have spent a great deal on Utkal. The accounts sent by Niranjan Babu are not satisfactory in my opinion. One does not even know how much each office costs. It is impossible to make out from the accounts whether the sales are cash sales or credit. Please get from Niranjan Babu the following particulars:

(1) a. Names and qualifications of each worker and the wages paid to each,
   b. The station where each is posted,
   c. Whence payment is made for each centre,

(2) a. The sales in each centre,

b. Whether cash or credit,

c. When are book debts considered to be good, i.e., expected to be recovered?

d. What about the doubtful debts?

e. We should have the names and addresses of all the debtors to the extent of Rs. 37,000-0-0.

f. What is the base of classification of good, bad and doubtful debts?

(3) a. How many spinners and weavers are working through these organizations?

b. What are the wages paid to the spinners and the weavers?

c. Samples of khadi produced with their selling price,

d. How is the selling price arrived at?

And such further information you may require to be added as you consider necessary. And when all this information is available, it will be possible to decide whether further expenses should be incurred on behalf of this enterprise.

Yours,

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
CALCUTTA

Copy to the A.I.S.A. Office for information.

From a microfilm: S.N. 19395

232. LETTER TO PRABHALAKSHMI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Tuesday, Chaitra Vad 1 [*March 30, 1926*]

CHI. PRABHALAKSHMI,

I have your letter. I see nothing immodest in your letters; so you may write to me regularly. But I find in them much daydreaming, disquiet and confusion. It becomes difficult to guess what you wish to convey. I want you to overcome these shortcomings resolutely. Your letter seems to suggest that the life of a widow is ever miserable. But we have experience to the contrary. Child-widows are often miserable. No doubt about that. But I know many women who were widowed in childhood but have now grown up bearing their misfortune with

dignity. This should not be exceptional in Hindu society. A woman may have only one husband and a man only one wife; but there can be a number of brothers or sisters. Why do you not look for more brothers? Will you take no help? Moreover, when your only intention is to serve what help do you need? Surely you can render no less service by remaining at your own post. The position of a teacher is not inconsequential. You can impart as much [education] as you wish to the girls who come under your guidance. A person who has chosen service as her mission will surely find opportunities to serve at every step. I want you to rouse yourself from your slumbers.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 10848

233. LETTER TO JAMNADAS

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Tuesday, March 30, 1926

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I have your letter. I could deal myself with [the situation] regarding the school; you need not come here on that account. But you may make the trip if you need a personal assurance. I know Jhaveri Deepchand. I stayed at his place in England; I was not favourably impressed by him. But I feel that it is more relevant to ascertain the character of the young man himself who is being considered for betrothal. If he is all right, we can ignore his father. If Deepchand Jhaveri's son is a good lad, I see no serious fault in Deepchand Jhaveri as a father-in-law. My advice to Liladharbhai will, therefore, be that, rather than think about Deepchand Jhaveri, they should make enquiries about his son.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19396

234. LETTER TO KUNVARJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Tuesday, Chaitra Vad 1 [*March 30, 1926*]

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I have your letter. I had a letter from Chi. Bali too on the same subject. It is good you wrote frankly. I shall do whatever I can. I suggest that you too start writing to Rami. I have asked her also to write to you. And you should write at length about whatever failings you notice. I don't approve of the convention that a married couple may not write to each other while their elders are living. Indeed, in a HIndu family the training of a girl is completed only after her marriage. I could see from my experience that a husband who is indifferent to this training or neglects it out of passion, fails his own self, his wife and his dharma. Your correspondence can become a means of such training.

I am glad to learn that you are quite comfortbale there and in good health.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 19397

235. LETTER TO PRANJIVANDAS MEHTA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Tuesday, Chaitra Vad 1 [*March 30, 1926*][1]

BHAISHRI PRANJIVAN,

There has been no letter from you these many days, not even an acknowledgment of my letters. I do hope you have been getting them. I hear you are now keeping well; so I don't worry in spite of your silence.

Herewith Chi. Jeki's letter, as also Natesa Iyer's. Although I have been asked not to send you Bhai Manilal's reply, I am sending it since I think you ought to see it. You need not take notice of whatever Bhai Manilal writes, but we should consider what is the best thing to do about it. I think if we fix for him a monthly allowance, he could educate the children as he pleases.

I have now stopped writing with my right hand and since it takes

[1] From the reference to the proposed stay at Mussoorie

time to write with the left, I have been dictating my letters to save time. I am keeping all right. I shall most probably go to Mussoorie by the end of April.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 19398

236. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS

March 30, 1926

CHI. LAKSHMIDAS,

I am very glad that you are improving. Do not think of running away from the place before you have completely recovered.

Anandi has another attack. Whenever she has temperature it is very high. Today she has been given a castor-oil purgative; also three grains of quinine; and I have instructed Vallabhbhai to get a mixture from a doctor. When we get it, it will be continued according to your wish.

Mani mixes well with us. But I have not yet been able to remove that horrible nose-ring. The girl is very loving, she is also vivacious and she does talk a lot.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 19399

237. LETTER TO NIRBHAYRAM V. KANABAR

ASHRAM,

March 30, 1926

BHAI NIRBHAYRAM,

I have your letter. I have never known of any Vedic injunction regarding the piercing of the nose and ears. But even if such an injucntion is proved to be there I would still maintain that we can no more continue this practice than we can human sacrifice. I know of several men with their ears pierced who had developed hydrocele. And it is common knowledge that innumerable people who have not had their nose and ears pierced are free from it. And I also know that people have been cured of their hydrocele without having had their ears pierced. The statement you quote says that the custom of piercing ears seems to have been introduced from abroad. When we have faith in three persons who do not agree amongst themselves, either we

should rely on our own reason or we should follow the one in whom we have the greatest faith.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

NIRBHAYRAM VIJAYRAM KANABAR
AT SAMI, STATION HARIJ, NORTH GUJARAT

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19883

238. LETTER TO KANTILAL M. DALAL

ASHRAM,
March 30, 1926

BHAI KANTILAL,

I have your letter. I do believe that, having had a human life, a soul may be degraded to existence in lower species like animals, plants and so on.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

SHRI KANTILAL MOHANLAL DALAL
29, GHANCHINI POLE
AHMEDABAD

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19884

239. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
Tuesday [*March 30, 1926*][1]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

Because I saw nervousness in your letter, you need not conclude from it that you should try to write without being nervous. I would desire to see that nervousness when it is there. Therefore, do not make the least attempt to conceal it. I certainly saw more of it in your other letters. But, then, do I not know your nature? I myself am not therefore likely to be upset by your nervousness. But if I know, I can suggest some remedy. The only remedy just now is that Kashi should

[1] From the postmark

go there. She will go as soon as the arrangement for a house has been completed. I have been discussing the matter with Swami[1]. You yourself say in your letter that some difficulty has cropped up regarding the house. Even reading may be too much exertion for a man who is weak. For quite a few days, I was forbidden to read and, moreover, it is certainly bad if reading becomes an addiction. Hence, Balasaheb had forbidden reading. Therefore, do stop it. I am not going to Mussoorie before the middle of April at any rate[2]. Let us see what happens after that.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PRABHUDAS CHHAGANLAL GANDHI
PATTANI'S BUNGALOW
LONAVALA
(G-I-P)

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33043

240. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN CHOKSI

ASHRAM,
Wednedsay, March 31, 1926

CHI. MOTI,

This is the first letter of yours which I find in a good handwriting. Now, if I come across one not as good as this, shall I send it back? I am very pleased to hear that Najuklal has completely recovered. Do not think, just because I praised your handwrting that there is no more scope for improvement. But I can see lot of labour behind the handwriting in today's letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 12123

[1] Swami Anand

[2] On April 18, 1926, lots were drawn whether or not Gandhiji should go to Mussoorie for change of air. The lot was against Gandhiji's going.

241. LETTER TO ABDUL HUSAIN

ASHRAM,
March 31, 1926

BHAISHRI ABDUL HUSAIN,

I have your letter. You can yourself resolve the fix which you have got into. If you feel it your dharma to give up meat-eating you should firmly resist your mother's pressure. If the giving up of meat-eating is only an experiment, it would be wrong to hurt your mother for this.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19885

242. LETTER TO VASANJI

ASHRAM,
March 31, 1926

BHAI VASANJI,

I have your letter. Pure love knows no impatience. Pure love has nothing to do with the body but belongs to the soul. Love of the body in only lust which is of even less importance than the rules of caste. There can be no impediment in the path of spiritual love. But such love is austere and infinitely patient. What does it care if there is no union till death? Your first duty is to place your problem before your elders, listen to what they say and think over it. Finally, when your heart is cleansed by the observance of the prescribed disciplines, it will be your dharma to obey its call.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19886

243. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

[*March 1926*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I liked your letter. It is a sign of your having become my daughter. It contained nothing confidential. However, I have treated it as private.

You should know a trait of my nature. Since Ramdas is hurt I would write to him soothing letters even from my death-bed. But I do not place you in that category. I have hardly written a letter or two to Devdas who is in Deolali. When Mathuradas was ill and was feeling dreadfully put out, I used to send him at least a postcard from Wardha every day. I hardly write a letter a month to Manilal. But I knowyou do expect a letter. That is why I threw a hint in a letter to Ramdas. These days I am writing only a few unavoidable letters.

Come over if you don't like it there. What is the use of staying there if you remain unwell. I may have to go to a hill station in April, I have already agreed to do so.

Now, have you understood that you must write to me regularly even if I do not?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9351

[1] It is evident from the contents that the letter was written during the first quarter of the year 1926 when Devdas Gandhi was in Deolai nursing Mathuradas Trikumji; *vide* "Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", before 1-4-1926. In early April Devdas fell ill and was called away by Gandhiji. Also in 1926, it was proposed that Gandhiji should visit Mussoorie in April, but the visit was subsequently cancelled.

244. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

March 31, 1926

Tyaga-bhumi[1] is a very good name indeed. But these days performance hardly ever justifies the name. I hope *Tyaga-bhumi* will do its best to overcome this tendency. Then, in my view, for one who wishes to serve India, sacrifice in the present situation must begin with the charkha. I hope that *Tyaga-bhumi* will commence its sacrifice with the propagation of khadi.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Yuga ke Sansmarana, p. 114

245. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[Before *April 1, 1926*][2]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I shall see about Panchgani after I get your reply. If going to the Himalayas alone is considered necessary we may think of moving out. Otherwise I think it is better to to be somewhere near by. One drawback in going to a far-off place is that it will be difficult to have access to the doctors you know.

I did not know that Taramati was secreting no milk at all. I am sure if she gets into the habit of working milk will come. Lala Dhanpatrai, who has many years' experience, has expressed the view that cows that have gone dry breed and lactate more abundantly if put to draught work. Taramati must do as much work as she can. Grinding, I know, is best. Spinning certainly helps. Then there is of course walking. But that is not sufficient by itself.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

If Devdas can get away for four or five days, let him go to Lanoli.[3] Parbhudas has to be called here. He is not in a position to come alone.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Literally 'the land of sacrifice'. This was a Hindi monthly proposed to be brought out by the Sasta Sahitya Mandal from Ajmer

[2] The addressee received this letter on April 1, 1926.

[3] Devdas Gandhi had been suffering from jaundice *vide* Vol. XXX, pp. 251-2.

246. MY POLITICAL PROGRAMME

I gratefully reproduce the following letter received from American friends accompanying a gift of 145 dollars:

> The signers of the accompanying note are a group of Bostonians and two Westerners who owe you much. Accept the gift we venture to send a very inadequate expression of our will to ally ourselves with your work. Small as they are, for some of us the gifts have meant sacrifices. We should be glad to have the money used in that part of your work which most directly appeals to us, that is in the interests of the untouchables and of Hindu-Muslim unity. Dean Simonds and some of the other signers feel, like Professor Hocking, too little informed as to conditions in India to be quite ready to accept in full your political programme. We all, however, heartily wish to have a part in the work I have mentioned.
>
> God, who is with you, will surely bring to India the better day of which you are the prophet. Will you not pray sometimes for this America, no less in need of His help?

I have told them that in accordance with their wishes the amount would be evenly divided between the two activities. But on receiving the letter I could not help feeling sad that even among extremely sympathetic and cultured American friends the movement is so little understood. When, therefore, American friends visit me and ask me how they can help India, I tell them to study the movement not superficially, not from newspapers, not as globe-trotters in a hurry, but as serious students by accurate observation and by gleaning information from all sides and all parties.

My political programme is extremely simple. If the donors had added the spinning-wheel to untouchability and unity, they would have practically completed it. My opinion is becoming daily more and more confirmed that we shall achieve our real freedom only by effort from within, i.e., by self-purification and self-help, and therefore by the strictest adherence to truth and non-violence. Civil disobedience is no doubt there in the background. But civil disobedience asks for and needs not a single farthing for its support. It needs and asks for stout hearts with a faith that will not flinch from any danger and will shine the brightest in the face of severest trial. Civil disobedience is a terrifying synonym for suffering. But it is better often to understand the terrible nature of a thing if people will truly appreciate its benignant counterpart. Disobedience is a right that belongs to every human being and it becomes a sacred duty when it

springs from civility or, which is the same thing, love. The anti-untouchability reformers are offering civil disobedience against entrenched orthodoxy. Protagonists of Hindu-Muslim unity are resisting with their whole soul those who will divide classes and sects. Just as there may be this resistance against those who will hinder the removal of untouchability or promotion of unity, so must there be resistance against a rule that is stunting India's manhood. It is daily grinding down the starving millions of this vast country. Heedless of future consequences the rulers are pursuing a course of conduct regarding intoxicating drinks and drugs that must, if it remains unchecked, corrupt the toilers of the land and make posterity ashamed of us who are making use of this immoral source of revenue for educating our children. But the condition of this terrible resistance against orthodoxy, resistance against enemies of unity, and resistance against Government—is possible of fulfilment only by a strong, and if need be a long, course of self-purification and suffering.

Young India, 1-4-1926

247. GOLDEN SLIPPERS V. RAGS

> They are for religion when in rags and contempt: but I am for him when he walks in his golden slippers, in the sunshine, and with applause.

Thus ended Mr. By-Ends his oration in support of his theory that the priest and the trader may be considered honest, even whilst the one tempers the scriptures to suit his audience and the other tempers truth to win custom. Mr. By-Ends had the support of his distinguished friends Messrs Hold-the-World, Money-Love and others. Overwhelmed though Christian and Hopeful were by the orations of By-Ends and Company, they stood their ground and with the whole power of their being defended their faith in religion especially when it came it came in rags and contempt. They had before them the finished act of Faithful who never flinched though he was tortured to death by the inhabitants of the town of Vanity. Almost similarly did Sjt. Rajagopalachari defend patriotism in rags and in contempt at the Bihar Vidyapith Convocation. He said:

> This Vidyapith is alive by the strength and faith of a few faithful men. It is struggling hard for its existence. It cannot boast of the rich appointments and shining splendours of the universities and colleges of the Government. No wonder they are splendid and no wonder that our Vidyapith is like unto a rag as compared with the silken robes of royalty. But ours is a yellow rag that serves its purpose and

clothes the naked sannyasi; it is clean and it is dear to us.

No silken robes certainly, no golden slippers for the graduates of the Vidyapith, no shining metal chain for the Vice-Chancellor. He must bear the burden of the rough khaddar to be woven and spun by the hardened fingers of the toiling spinners and weavers and the graduates must be content to bear the burden of willing service of the masses if they are to live true to the motto of their University. They belong to a Civil Service at the end of which the only pension may be ever-recurring malaria, tuberculosis or some such disease, a mark of unremitting service in the swamps inhabited by the half-starved millions who are made to find the wherewithal to build New Delhi, to train soldiers for the suppresion of their liberty and to instruct in palatial buildings young men and even young women in the art of ruling these millions

The conductors of the Vidyapith had arranged a khaddar exhibition at the time of the annual ceremony. I gave last week extracts from the speech of Satis Babu who opened the Exhibition. This week I reproduce extracts from Sjt. Rajagopalachari's address. There is food enough in both for young India to ponder over and digest. These national institutions should exist even though professors and teachers have to live from hand to mouth and even though the pupils may be counted by the digits of one hand. Only the teachers and the pupils must be true to the incredibly simple ideals, viz., truth and non-violence expressed through the spinning-wheel, purification of Hinduism by removing the taint of untouchability, and consolidation of India by striving for the heart-unity of different sections professing different faiths or subfaiths. National education must therefore respond to these needs and aspirations. A national University that would tamper with the ideal for the sake of gaining numbers will have sold its heritage for a mess of pottage and will deserve to die. The Bihar Vidyapith has been holding on to the ideal in the face of tremendous odds. I know its struggles. Bihar is a poor country but that does not mean that it has not its rich zamindars or its quota of rich enterprising men from other provinces who are adding to their riches by their operations in Bihar. Let all these examine the claim of the Vidyapith as stated in the annual report read before the Convocation and help if they find the claim to be established and if they are of opinion that the ideal I have just named is an ideal worth

living for and dying for, an ideal which it would be well for the youth of the country to have instilled into their hearts.

Young India, 1-4-1926

248. BIHAR VIDYAPITH

I commend the following address[1] of Sjt. C. Rajagopalachari who was specially invited to speak to the students of the Vidyapith at its annual Convocation:

Young India, 1-4-1926

249. NOTES

BENGAL'S WORTHY EXAMPLE

I wonder whether khadi lovers have noticed the interesting fact that out of all the povinces, Bengal alone has steadily refused to depend upon customers outside Bengal for the sale of her khadi. Although her production has been uniformly progressive, she has sold all her khadi in Bengal. It is the most proper way of handing this great problem. Deshbandhu whilst he was in Darjeeling used to tell me that the hope of Bengal leading the way in the matter of khadi as in many other matters was very great because of the interest the middle class people took in public matters. He said that he expected to reach the masses through the middle class who will not only be the first wearers of khadi but who will also be his first voluntary spinners. And he expected khadi and the wheel to permeate the masses through the influence of the middle class. That phenomenon seems to be taking place in Bengal today on a larger scale than in any other province.

The two large khadi organizers—the Khadi Pratishthan and the Abhoy Ashram—have somehow or other set their face resolutely against sending their khadi outside Bengal for sale. The result is that they weave khadi according to the requirements of the middle class. Hence they are able to check themselves from time to time and are obliged to keep up a high level and their sales departments are as well organized as their production depots. I feel that if the workers all over India will copy the example of Bengal and organize themselves for local sales, much time and money will be saved and the progress of

[1] Not reproduced here

khadi will be much more rapid.

BEZVADA MUNICIPALITY AND KHADDAR

The following report[1] from the Bezwada Municipality will be read with interest:

This is a creditable record. The Municipality can easily quintuple the output of yarn by introducing the *takli* which leaves no room for excuse on the part of boards, teachers or pupils. The *takli* means practically no cost, no taking up of space, and no trouble of breakage of parts.

NOT AVAILABLE

A U.P. correspondent writes:

> I find here a great demand for khaddar among *vakils*. I sold some. They complained that they had no khaddar store in their town and told me they wanted to collect Rs. 5,000 and form a company.

I hope the proposed company will be floated. I had complaints of this nature during the Bihar tour. The reason why the country is not dotted with khadi stores is that there is as yet not enough demand for khadi to warrant such stores. Experience shows that when such stores are opened, and for want of regular propaganda fail to be self-supporting and are therefore closed after a time, the money invested is lost and the movement is lost and the movement is discredited. The better thing therefore is for the All-India Spinners' Association agents to keep in touch with khaddar lovers, advertise specimens and prices and periodically hawk khaddar in the likeliest place. When they find a place with a regular and large enough demand, they may advise local moneyed men to open khaddar store whose business will be to carry on regular propaganda.

EXHIBITIONS

Exhibitions if they can be periodically held in different places are likely to prove more effective. It is stated that those held recently at Delhi and Banaras were fairly successful. They need not cost much and might even be made self-supporting. It was no small gain for the respective committees to have had Lala Lajpatrai at Delhi and Acharya Dhruva at Banaras to open the exhibitions. They have, when they are well managed, a great educational value. They also provide a neutral platform for all parties and sections to work together for the common

[1] Not reproduced here

cause. I have not yet known a public man having any objection to khaddar as such on principle.

Young India, 1-4-1926

250. MESSAGE TO A MEETING[1] AT TRIVANDRUM

April 1, 1926

Reformers in Travancore have done good work for the eradication of untouchability. The more I think about this evil from the point of view of religion, the more I become convinced that untouchability is a blot on the fair face of Hinduism. I, therefore, hope that reformers will not rest in peace till the untouchables are permitted to enter every temple and join any school in exercise of the rights they have in common with other Hindus.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 11-4-1926

251. LETTER TO BOODHOO

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

April 1, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Whilst I wish success to your institution, I am afraid I must not allow my name to appear as patron. I never accept that honour when I can render no service and I frankly confess that I am unable to render any service to your institution even[2] to the extent of sending someone there. For, it is very difficult to persuade young men to go out when the energy and service of all who are willing are required in India itself.

Yours sincerely,

BOODHOO, ESQ.
PEN WINDSOR FOREST
WEST COAST DEMERARA
BRITISH GUIANA

From a photostat: S.N. 12455

[1] The meeting discussed a programme to secure temple entry for untouchables.

[2] The source has “not even”.

252. LETTER TO F. A. BUSH

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

April 1, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. It is perfectly true that very often things Indian are misreported and misrepresented. In the instance you have quoted, however, the President of the Congress is correctly reported. She did advocate a national militia.

As a reformer wanting the whole world to accept Non-violence as its final creed, I do not hesitate to appear on platforms where even direct violence may be preached. I no more indentify myself with that preaching than I identify myself with all the violence that goes on in the world being in it. I hold that it is enough if I dissociate myself from every form of violence, mentally and physically, and express my disapproval whenever the occasion requires it.

I do not know whether you know that the Congress creed is 'attainment of swaraj by peaceful and legitimate means'. Violence is therefore eschewed in its entirety in the national programme. But I must at the same own that it does not mean that on the Congress platform people may not advocate the formation of a national militia for purposes of defence. From my own standpoint, a national militia is not necessary but people who do not believe in Non-violence as their final creed cannot possibly be made non-violent. The spread of non-violence depends upon cultivation of public opinion. Personally I am satisfied that that spirit is daily growing in spite of appearances to the contrary.

Your sincerely,

A. BUSH, ESQ

MORDEN, SURREY

ENGLAND

From a photostat: S. N. 12456

253. LETTER TO PAUL LIND

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

April 1, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Have your interesting and instructive letter. Whilst I entirely agree with you that the meaning that a writer attaches to the words he uses should be clear to his readers, I know as a matter of fact that whatever failure attended Non-co-operation was not due to the people not understanding Non-violence and its implications. The reason was that though they knew it all, they were not able to act up to it.

Yours sincerely,

DR. PAUL LIND
HAMBURG
LUEBECKERSTRASSE
(GERMANY)

From a photostat: S.N. 12457

254. LETTER TO DUNICHAND

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

April 1, 1926

DEAR LALA DUNICHAND,

I have your letter. I would very gladly accept your kind invitation had I been a free agent but I am not. The whole of the arrangements for a change to a hill station have been taken over by Messrs Ghanshyamdas Birla and Jamnalalji Bajaj and I think that they have already arranged something in Mussoorie. You will therefore please excuse me. I hope that Mrs. Dunichand is keeping her promise about the spinning-wheel.

Yours sincerely,

LALA DUNICHAND
VAKIL
AMBALA CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 19402

255. LETTER TO S. P. ANDREWS-DUBE

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

April 1, 1926

MY DEAR DUBE,

I have your letter. I do not know where they are going to put me in Mussoorie. The whole arrangement is being made by Messrs Birla and Jamnalalji Bajaj. But I think that when I reach Mussoorie, I shall find you there, when you will tell me all about your sad experiences.

Ramdas has just come here from Amreli. I am showing your letter to him.

Yours sincerely,

S. P. ANDREWS-DUBE, ESQ.

SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY

LUCKNOW

From a microfilm: S.N. 19403

256. LETTER TO BINODE BEHARI DUTT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

April 1, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and your book on *Town Planning in Ancient India* for which I thank you.

I wish I could make a promise that I would read your book at an early date but it is really not possible. All my time is filled up with the immediate work before me. But I am going to keep your book in front of me so that whenever I can steal in a minute I could have an idea of its contents.

Yours sincerely,

PROF. BINODE BEHARI DUTT

4/1 A, BADHAPRASAD LANE

CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19404

257. LETTER TO JANG BAHADUR SINGH

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 1, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and the cutting. In my opinion it would be much better for you to see Lalaji and Pandit Santanam and make a public appeal in co-operation with them. I am quite certain that the institution should live but how to do it depends upon local circumstances. People would undoubtedly want to know what Lalaji and Pandit Santanam have to say.

Yours sincerely,

JANG BAHADUR SINGH, ESQ.
EDITOR, "NATION"
RAILWAY ROAD
LAHORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 19405

258. LETTER TO REV. JOHN M. DARLINGTON

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 1, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I remember our meeting.

The incident referred to by you has never happened. I do not know where the report occurs. Whilst I have the highest regard for the teachings of Jesus, I have never held the belief attributed to me.

Yours sincerely,

REV. JOHN M. DARLINGTON
14-2, SUDDER STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 19406

259. LETTER TO S. V. VENKATANARASAYYAN

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

April 1, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I do not think that it is necessary to forget one's own faith in order to be tolerant towards the rest. In fact, tolerance loses its value when one's own faith is forgotten. In my opinion, tolerance requires the same respect to be paid to another's faith as we claim for our own.

I am of opinion that God can be reached without a mediator.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. V. VENKATANARASAYYAN
7, MILLER ROAD
KILPAUK, MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 19407

260. LETTER TO KALISHANKER CHAKRAVARTI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

April 1, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter regarding "widow marriage". Don't you see the fallacy underlying your letter? Could you consider that to be marriage where the girl knows nothing about what a husband can be, perhaps, she has not even seen the man who is to be her partner in life and where they have not even lived together for one single night? I know nothing in Hinduism to warrant such a connection being accepted as marriage. Then again, what is the use of defending widowhood of girls of tender age under plea of advocating purity on the part of men? The latter should certainly be advocated but it cannot be used in order to cover the wrong heaped upon the fair sex. The sanctity of widowhood must be felt by the widow, cannot be imposed upon her. Divorce and other irregularities going on in the West have surely nothing to do with the very simple question of doing elementary justice to the thousands of our own sisters. Hinduism is in

grave danger of being undermined by our own fanaticism and the habit of defending every practice of Hinduism no matter how repugnant it may be to the moral sense of the world.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KALISHANKER CHAKRAVARTI
JYOTI, CHITTAGONG

From a photostat: S.N. 19408

261. LETTER TO SUDHANSHU KUMARI GHOSH

ASHRAM,
April 1, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is very sad to find that Sarat Babu is fasting. Somehow or other I think that it is quite wrong and I hope that long before this reaches you he has broken his fast.

Yours sincerely,

SHRIMATI SUDHANSHU KUMARI GHOSH
BARISAL

From a microfilm: S.N. 19887

262. LETTER TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

ASHRAM,
Thursday, Chaitra Vad 3 [*April 1, 1926*]

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I keep getting news about Gomati[1]. Why can you not have a curtain to ward off mosquitoes? It is surprising that you should lose appetite there. We do use a number of foreign articles; try lithia-water. Lithia-water is a mineral product. Borodada used it regularly. Andrews had strongly recommended it to me, but I did not try it, because I never felt the need. But it would be good if Gomati tries it. The loss of appe-tite must be due to the water. I have not forgotten the Nasik *pinjrapole* which you have mentioned. Its manager had seen me. I had no intention of opening a branch of the Satyagraha

[1] Wife of the addressee

Ashram, but Jamnalalji did suggest that we should acquire a plot in a healthy locality where ailing people could live and we did consider Nasik in this connection. If we keep only sick people in the place they will not be able to render such service. Therefore for the present we cannot busy ourselves with any other activity where we acquire a site.

I am certainly here till the 15th. The date of departure will be fixed for some date after that.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 19401

263. LETTER TO P. S. VARIER

[On or after *April 1, 1926*]

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter enclosing a copy of your *Ashtangashareer* for which I thank you. I should inform you that *Young India* is not a reviewing paper. Occasionally it notices books that are of superlative value and concern the subjects with which the writings in *Young India* are generally occupied.

Yours,

P. S. VARIER

KOTTAKKAI

From a microfilm: S.N. 19888

264. LETTER TO MIRZA KAZIM ALI

[On or after *April 1, 1926*]

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am getting quite well now. It is difficult for me to send *Young India* free. You should really go to some reading-room and read it there. There are thousands of poor students and it is beyond my capacity to supply them all free copies.

MIRZA KAZIM ALI

STUDENT

HYDERABAD

From a microfilm: S.N. 19889

APPENDICES

APPENDIX—I

PAGE'S PAMPHLET: INSTALMENTS IN "YOUNG INDIA"

S.No. TITLE DATES OF PUBLICATION

1. THE WHY OF IT November 26; December 10, 17 and 24, 1925; January 14 and 21, 1926.

2. ITS RAVAGES January 28 and February 4, 1926.

3. MORAL LOSSES OF THE WAR February 11 and 18, 1926.

4. CAN IT BE PREVENTED? February 25; March 4, 11, 18 and 25; April 1, 8 and 15, 1926.

5. THE WORLD WAR April 22, 29 and May 6,1926.

1.	Ranip	Government	361	11	13	22	0	0	A water drain	Road to Ranip	Bhalchnd house and also lands of Kuber Mhadeoji and others	Wasteland of village Vadaj	Maganlal K. Gandhi	
2.	,,	,,	362	10	18	14	0	0	,,	,,	,,	,,	,,	
3.	,,	,,	366	6	1	10	0	0	,,	,,	,,	,,	,,	
4.	Wadaj	,,	454	8	19	30	0	0	Wasteland under Survey no. 451	151	Boundary of village Ranip	455-453	,,	
5.	,,	,,	532	9	39	23	0	0	534	Wasteland	Wastelands of Survey Nos. 533 and 518	531	,,	
6.	,,	Service Inam	558	1	28	4	0	0	560	157	Lands of Leela Vetar and Punja Vetar	561	,,	
7.	,,	,,	559/2	1	28	4	0	0	560	157	Part of the same Survey Number	554	,,	
8.	,,	,,	558	0	1	0	2	0	561	Central Jail Road	557	561	,,	
9.	,,	Government	533	6	18	2 0	0	0	Manilal Shambhu's land	Government land	Weedy land	Kalidas Jiji's land	Mohandas K. Gandhi	
10	,,	,,	521	4	3	1	0	2	*A piece of land from Rastapur vilalge obtained in exchange*					
11.	,,	,,	522	9	23	4	14	3	,,	,,	,,	,,	,,	
12.	,,	Free Inam	560	2 Waste	13 14	5 1 4	9 1 8	0 0 0	Sabarmati River	559	553	551	,,	
13.	,,	Government	524	2	16	4	0	0	Road to Sabarmati Station	523	525	512	,,	
14.	,,	,,	561	6	7	15	0	0	Sabarmati River	Road to Sabarmati Station	559-560	562	,,	Four-room block; that-ched shed; manure pit; goshala and Maganlalbhai's house.
15.	,,	Inam	512	5	0	5 4 0 5	9 12 13 9	0 0 0 0	Road to Sabarmati	512	523	511	,,	Hostel, library and kitchen, teachers' quarter Nos. 1 & 2, gymnasium, well and hospital building; weaving shed, work-shop, 8-room block, well, Bapuji's house and latrine
16.	,,	,,	562	4 1 3	22 3 19	5 4 0 5	9 12 13 9	0 0 0 0	Sabarmati River	Road to Sabarmati Station	561	1 Acre 3 Gunthas of Acharya Mani-shankar's land from the saem Survery number.	, ,	
17.	,,	Service Inam	525	1	21	3	8	0	Road to Central Jail	522	Bileshwar Madhav's land	Manilal Pitambar's land	, ,	Imamsaheb's house
18.	,,	Government	523	9	7	2 3	0	0	524/525/526	522	527	513	,,	Weavers' and jamnalalji's house

1. LETTER TO SHAH JAMIL ALAM

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 2, 1926

I have your letter. A pure heart enable[s] one to find and see truth. Every one of us therefore must aim after purity of heart. All else follows as a matter of course.

From a photostat : S.N. 11057

2. LETTER TO A. JOSEPH

April 2, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter enclosing copies of your letters to *The Hindu* and to Mr. Satyamurti. I have also copies of *The Hindu* containing the advertisements referred to by you. I am entirely of opinion that advertisements about things injurious to the nation should not be taken by public journals at all but it is very difficult for me to interfere in such matters. I can only express my own opinion through the columns of *Young India* which I do from time to time. As you might have noticed, I had occasion to refer to this matter of immoral advertisements[1] only recently.

Yours sincerely,

A. JOSEPH, ESQ.
519, SILVER STREET
ST. THOMAS MOUNT
MADRAS

From a photostat : S.N. 12162

3. LETTER TO DIRENDRANATH DAS GUPTA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 2, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter with a report of khadi work. Satis Babu was

[1] *Vide* "Exercise the Copyright", 25-3-1926.

here recently, and I had a talk about you with him. He told me thet he was anxious to help you all he could. I have really no money apart from the Charkha Sangh fund that I can send you and the Charkha Sangh fund can only be utilized in the ordinary manner. I do hope therefore that you will write to Satis Babu and secure help you want through him.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. DIRENDRANATH DAS GUPTA
VIDYASHRAM
BEAMIBAZAR P. O.
SYLHET

From a microfilm : S.N. 19409

4. LETTER TO C. V. KRISHNA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 2, 1926

MY DEAR KRISHNA,

I hope you received my letter[1] about Hanumantharao which was written immediately after your telegram was received. I hope also that you received my telegram. Together with your letter, I sent a letter for Mrs. Hanumantharao and another for his brother. I am anxious to know whether they have been received. I now send you a letter which was addressed to Hanumantharao and which has been returned undelivered. I send it to you as it contains a reference to the Ashram. I am anxiously waiting for a letter from you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KRISHNA
NELLORE

From a microfilm : S.N. 19410

[1] Dated March 21, 1926

5. LETTER TO N. S. VARADACHARI AND S. V. PUNTAMBEKAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 2, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Your joint production[1] is now being revised and I am sorry to observe that there are too many defects in it. You have expected the proof-reader to find out books and the references you want quoted. How can the books be found? Where you have not given pages, how is one to find the quotations? Do you not think that the quotations should have been neatly copied out by yourself and references given? Nor have you supported all your statements with references in footnotes. Proper names have been written as if they were ordinary words. It is very difficult to trace all the names so written. The collection too seems to have been hastily done. The printing is almost held up on account of these defects. I do not know how I can cope with the difficulty that stares in the face. Where can I find the references? Can you suggest a way out of the difficulty? If one of you come here and fill in the gaps, it would expedite matters. Or if you wish, I could send a copy to one of you. The letter is posted to both of you at your respective addresses.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. S. VARADACHARI
ERODE
SJT. PUNTAMBEKAR
HINDU UNIVERSITY
BANARAS

From a microfilm : S.N. 19411

[1] *Hand Spinning and Hand Weaving—An Essay* by S. V. Puntambekar and N. S. Varadachari

6. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday [*April 2, 1926*][1]

BHAI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your letter. I note that the committee[2] meets here on the 13th at 2 o'clock. I shall be ready.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5711

7. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday [*April 2, 1926*][3]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your telegram. Surely it does not mean that your health has taken a turn for the worse?

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
WINDY HALL
NASIK ROAD
DEOLALI (G.I.P.)

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

8. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
Friday [*April 2, 1926*][4]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have just received a wire from Mathuradas saying that

[1] From the postmark
[2] Working Committee of the Kathiawar Political Conference
[3] From the postmark
[4] From the postmark. Also April 2 was a Friday.

Devdascannot be spared from Deolali. Mahadev tells me that Swami himself will be going there in a day or two. I will know more today. If he goes, he himself will bring you along with him. If he does not go, Pritamlal will go and bring you back with him. If neither of them is likely to go, I will send somebody from here.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PRABHUDAS GANDHI
PATTANI'S BUNGALOW
LONAVALA
(G.I.P)

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 33038

9. LETTER TO HERBERT ANDERSON[1]

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 3, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am enquiring about *Young India*. It is true that subscriptions are all reckoned from quarter to quarter or year to year. Otherwise, book-keeping becomes a most difficult thing. The proper way therefore is to subscribe from the 1st of March and to get the previous numbers commencing with the biographical chapters. I am sending herewith either a copy of my criticism on the Prohibition Convention or a copy of *Young India* containing the criticism if the latter is possible.

With reference to the last paragraph of your letter : In the prohibition campaign you refer to, picketing was the essence of that campaign. It was done under the most adverse circumstances including opposition, both silent and open, as you will have seen from the report of enquiry conducted in Assam by Mr. Andrews. The only lasting remedy is total prohibition because, the drunkard is a diseased man quite unable to help himself. Many of them would gladly welcome outside help in the shape of total prohibition. The two

[1] In reply to his letter dated 30-3-1926. Herein the addressee had request for a message for the first issue of his quarterly, *Prohibition*

things, therefore, have, in my opinion, to go side by side.

Yours sincerely,

Encl.

REV. HERBERT ANDERSON
59, KING'S ROAD
HOWRAH

From a photostat : S.N. 12166

10. LETTER TO L. GIBARTI [1]

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 3, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I appreciate the sentiment underlying your proposal. But I consider myself wholly unfit to shoulder the burden. My methods too of serving the oppressed people are so different from those generally accepted by Socialists and they are yet in the nature of an experiment. I therefore fight shy of belonging to any organization that I do not know thoroughly and that I cannot serve usefully.

Yours sincerely,

L. GIBARTI, ESQ.
SECRETARY
INDIAN DEPT.
LIGAGEGEN KOLONIALGREUEL UND
UNTERDRUCKUNG
BAMBERGER STR. 60
BERLIN, W, 50

From a photostat : S.N. 12458

11. LETTER TO HELENE HAUSSDING

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 3, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am glad that your persistence has been

[1] In reply to the request on behalf of the League against Cruelties and Suppression in the Colonies to include Gandhiji's name as the International Chairman for India. This League had its branches in many countries.

rewarded and that you will be soon in our midst. I am not going to discourage you any longer now, nor give you any warning. I am hoping that you will be able to retain your health here and that you will have no cause for disappointment. I shall try my best to make you comfortable and to keep you employed.

The specimen of wool of your own spinning that you have sent is quite good.

Yes, the name of the bank is "Bank of Baroda, Ahmedabad".

Do please bring your sewing machine as also your music and all the books of your library. You shall have all the necessary assistance for learning Hindustani.

Yours sincerely,

FRAULEIN HELENE HAUSSDING
26, LINDENBERGSTRASSE
WERNIG ROAD, a.HARZ

From a photostat : S.N. 12459

12. LETTER TO D. V. RAMASWAMI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 3, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I note that you have not yet received the letters[1] I sent to you and the widow through Krishna[2]. I have no doubt, that for the time being, at any rate, you must continue to earn and simplify as much as possible the lives of those who are dependent on you.

In the letter to the widow I have said that if she would come to the Ashram to be here, she will be welcome and the Ashram people will give her all the attention that is possible. Please understand that this is not a formal proposal. There should be therefore no hesitation about accepting it if it is at all possible.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mrs. Hanumantharao", 21-3-1926, and "Letter to D. V. Ramaswami", 21-3-1926.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to C. V. Krishna", 21-3-1926.

You do not want me to write the preface before seeing your book.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. D. V. RAMASWAMI
VIZAGAPATAM

From a microfilm : S.N. 19412

13. LETTER TO R. D. SUBRAMANIAM

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 3, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter as also the packet of yarn sent by you. The yarn is now being tested. I shall await further supply.

I hope my previous letter does not bear the interpretation that the count may not be above 20. The idea was not to have the count below 20. If what you have sent is uniformly 55, it would be all the more welcome on that account.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. D. SUBRAMANIAM
WEST SREERANGAPALAYAM ROAD EXTENSION
SALEM

From a microfilm : S.N. 19413

14. LETTER TO G. P. NAIR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 3, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You leave me more confused than I was before as to the meaning of the word "Republic". I notice that there is the widest possible difference between your views and mine. How can I then send you any note of encouragement?

I do not for one moment believe that the N.C.O.[1] movement has lost its charm nor am I at all convinced that the Bardoli decision was a blunder. And, I am more than ever convinced that those who care for

[1] Non-co-operation

the poor and who understand them cannot do better than concentrate the whole of their energy on the spread of the charkha and khaddar and boycott of foreign cloth.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. P. NAIR
EDITOR, "REPUBLIC"
MALL ROAD, CAWNPORE

From a microfilm : S.N. 19414

15. LETTER TO P. GOVINDAN KUTTI MENON

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 3, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Here are my answers :

1. I wish to see God face to face not as I would like to see Him but exactly as He is.

2. If the whole world becomes celibate in my sense, it will be transfigured into something infinitely superior to what it is today but there is not much chance, I fear, of the whole world taking to a life of complete self-restraint all of a sudden. There- fore we thus talk of *grahasthashrama*, the stage next to that of complete celibacy.

3. There is not much hope of my visiting Kerala in the near future. You are misinformed in thinking that purity amongst the untouchables and unapproachables is not preached. Not only is it preached but it is practised.

4. I do not desire total abolition of English but if you will think in terms of the millions of each province, you will find that for them English can never be the medium of instruction. Hindi should be the language of intercommunication between provinces and English should be the language of intercommunication between India and the World. It therefore comes third in point of time as also importance.

5. I do not think that there ever will be one religion in India or elsewhere. But there will be and should be sincere respect and toleration for one another's religion.

6. If everybody spins regularly there need be no surplus self-spun yarn but there will be enough for all and that with the least

possible trouble and expenditure that the world has ever conceived. And if there was a surplus, we could automatically reduce the time spent by each on spinning.

7. I have put nothing before the people which the most ordinary man cannot do. For instance, what is the difficulty in everyone handling a spinning-wheel, or giving up foreign cloth, or giving up drink, or in believing and in promoting Hindu-Muslim unity, or in regarding an untouchable as his own brother, or in learning Hindi in addition to his own language?

8. One's food should consist of grains, fruit, milk and the fewest condiments, if any at all. Much fat should be avoided. The quantity and quality should be regulated by actual and careful experiments.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. GOVINDAN KUTTI MENON
PANDARATHIL HOUSE
PUDUCODE
VIA OTTAPALAM
S. MALABAR

From a photostat : S.N. 19415

16. LETTER TO DHARMA VIR

ASHRAM,
April 3, 1926

BHAI DHARMAVIRJI,

Your letter. Concentration of mind can be attained only by constant practice.

1. Concentration can be practised by devoting ourselves to noble and desirable activities; for instance, some people busy themselves with nursing the sick, some in service of the *Antyajas*, some in plying the charkha and propagating khadi.

2. Some attain concentration by repetition of *Ramanama* with sincere faith, and some by yogic and the other methods.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI DHARMAVIR
VAIDIK PUSTAKALAYA
LAHORE ROAD, LAHORE

From a microfilm of the Hindi : S.N. 19894

17. LETTER TO RAMRISH THAKUR

ASHRAM,
April 3, 1926

SIR,

I have your letter. Maulana Shaukat Ali has sent in his yarn for a few months and we expect to have the arrears. Those who do not send in their yarn, whoever they may be, will not be eligible for membership. Maulana Mohamed Ali has sent no yarn, so he is obviously not a member.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI RAMRISH THAKUR
NO. 22, GOENKA LANE
BORA BAZAR, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm of the Hindi : S.N. 19895

18. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

April 3, 1926

CHI. MANILAL,

I read your letter to Ramdas; also Fatima's. And of course I had anticipated this; Jalbhai did give a hint. You are a free man; so I cannot force you to do anything. But I write to you as a friend.

What you desire is contrary to dharma. If you stick to Hinduism and Fatima follows Islam it will be like putting two swords in one sheath; or you both may lose your faith. And then what should be your children's faith? Whose influence are they to grow under? It is not dharma, but, only *adharma* if Fatima agrees to conversion just for marrying you. Faith is not a thing like a garment which can be changed to suit our convenience. For the sake of dharma a person shall forgo matrimony, forsake his home, why, even lay down his life; but for nothing may faith be given up. May not Fatima have meat at her father's? If she does not, she has as good as changed her religion.

Nor is it in the interests of our society to form this relationship. Your marriage will have a powerful impact on the Hindu-Muslim question. Intercommunal marriages are no solution to this problem. You cannot forget nor will society forget that you are my son.

If you enter into this relationship, you may not be able to render any service. I fear you may no more be the right person to run *Indian Opinion*.

It will be impossible for you, I think, after this to come and settle in India.

I cannot ask for Ba's permission. She will not give it. Her life will be embittered for ever.

In proposing this marriage you have thought only of momentary pleasure. You have not at all considered your ultimate happiness.

Pure love is as between brother and sister. Whereas here the main urge is carnal pleasure.

I want you to get out of your infatuation. As far as I understand, Ramdas and Devdas also have arrived independently at the same conclusion, as mine.

I could not embolden myself to discuss this with Ba.

May God show you the right path.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 1118. Courtesy : Sushilabehn Gandhi

19. LETTER TO MANSINGH JASRAJ

ASHRAM,
April 3, 1926

BHAISHRI MANSINGH,

Your letter. Your guess is correct. I have no daughter. And that woman has been playing the hoax everywhere. This has appeared

once in *Navajivan*; but I shall write again.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI MANSINGH JASRAJ
C/O SJT. SHAMALBHAI BABARBHAI
ADEN CAMP

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19890

20. LETTER TO NARBHERAM P. MEHTA

ASHRAM,
April 3, 1926

BHAI NARBHERAM POPATLAL,

I do not wish to write anything more than what I have already done about Swami Dayanand Sarasvati's book.

2. Menstruation is a monthly sickness demanding utmost peace and quiet for the woman, and a contact with a passionate man is horrible for her.

3. The same reason applies to a nursing mother and I believe it is a very good convention to have her confined for at least twenty days. But it is the other extreme to say that even kinswomen may not touch her.

4. To practise what we believe is what seems to me the correct meaning of *achara*.

5. It is not true that anyone in the Amreli centre is given more pay than he deserves, or that they are given more funds than their produce is worth.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI NARBHERAM POPATLAL MEHTA, RANSIKI
P.O. KUMBHAJINI DERDI (KATHIAWAR)

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19891

21. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL B. PATEL

ASHRAM,
April 3, 1926

BHAISHRI CHIMANLAL,

The best instruction can be imparted when one identifies oneself with the students. For this the teacher has to get fully conversant with the subject he teaches.

2. Out of the *Gita* and the *Ramayana*, read carefully, one can get everything.

3. As regards diet, wheat, milk and green vegetables should be enough for the most part. Spices and oil should be given up.

4. If you feel very hungry in the evening you may take a little milk and, if you find it heavy, you may have an orange, or some grapes or some such juicy fruit. You should take, as far as possible, long walks in the open air.

5. For purifying the heart and concentration of mind, reading of the above mentioned books and meditation on them, as also repetition of *Ramanama* while not busy with benevolent activities, are very helpful.

6. We should keep on trying and have faith that our efforts shall not go unrewarded.

7. The only means of self-realization is total annihilation of the sixfold passion.

Virtuous deeds will certainly bring you great peace.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI CHIMANLAL BHOGILAL PATEL
MAKANJI'S CHAWL
GHATKOPAR, BOMBAY

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19892

22. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

ASHRAM,
April 3, 1926

BHAI DAHYABHAI,

. . . .[1] You have searched your heart pretty well. You can devote yourself to the charkha; this can be a great social service. You will

[1] As in the source

attain contentment, I am sure, if you have this faith, and ultimately you will also see the good results. But perhaps you will set a limit to your patience. It is no patience which has an end. May you succeed in your resolve.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI DAHYABHAI MANORDAS PATEL

DHOLKA

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19893

23. LETTER TO A SISTER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, Chaitra Vad [5][1] [*April 3, 1926*]

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I share your grief. You may come here with your husband, or if you send your husband, I shall surely talk to him, try to bring him peace. He cannot stay here for long; within a few days I myself have to go to Mussoorie. So if both of you come here or your husband does, it should be immediately. Do not lose your faith and forbearance. Seek happiness in the midst of misery. You should not start from the wrong premise that you can never attain the strength of Savitri[2].

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19416

24. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, Chaitra Vad [5][3] [*April 3, 1926*]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your letter. Ramdas also showed [his] letter which he will reply himself. It is right that you decided to stay back. Siddaiya is

[1] The source has *Chaitra Vad* 6 which, however, was neither a Saturday nor the 3rd of April.

[2] A heroine in the *Mahabharata* who successfully strove with Death to regain her husband Satyawan

[3] The source has *Chaitra Vad* 6 which, however, was neither a Saturday nor the 3rd of April.

with Kaka; he has to return soon. Swami is therefore writing to him today. He shall get the letter on Monday so that by Tuesday or Wednesday Prabhudas should be here. What we can do about him will be discussed after Prabhudas's arrival. There is nothing seriously wrong with his health. A healthy person has only himself to blame if he is not fit there, and you cannot be included among the unhealthy. It is good that you started taking *neem* juice. One must not have the least mental worry. Helene Haussding, the German lady, wanted to come here. She has got her visa, so it seems she will be here in about a month or so. It looks as if she is Mirabai's double. Arrangements for accommodation at Panchgani are under way. I am not writing separately to Mathuradas.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19417

25. LETTER TO THAKORELAL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, Chaitra Vad [5][1]2 [*April 3, 1926*]

BHAI THAKORELAL,

I have your letter. I find it impossible to guide or advise you through letters. I certainly do not want you to stay here, giving up your studies. If you come here during your vacation, we can talk about this and, may be, you will get some consolation. Owing to certain difficulties we had to withdraw all stocks of silk from the Khadi Bhandars.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19418

26. THE NATIONAL WEEK

[*April 4, 1926*][2]

Let us not fritter away the precious time at our disposal. The week that will soon close upon us should be a week of deep heartsearching no matter to what faith we may belong. Let everyone ask himself or herself what he or she has done for the land of his or her birth. Swaraj is not to be had merely by making speeches or merely by entering Councils or writing essays on swaraj or even by

[1] The source has *Chaitra Vad* 6 which, however, was neither a Saturday nor the 3rd of April.

[2] *Vide* "Partial Fast During the Satyagraha Week", 4-4-1926.

editing newspapers, though all these things may help and some of them may be considered even necessary; but what is that which everyone can do without much effort and which would increase the wealth of India, which increases the powers of combination and organization and makes us feel akin to one another? The answer unhesitatingly is the spinning-wheel. Hence it is that I have recommended an intensive khaddar propaganda during the week. If therefore you have not already taken up some khaddar work, it is not yet too late. Every little thing helps. There is unsold khaddar everywhere in the chief centres, as for instance, Tamilnadu, Bihar, the Punjab, Gujarat and Bengal, etc. You need not think of any particular province. Wherever you are if you are not wearing khaddar invest in some now and you help to reduce the stock all over India. If you have enough khaddar and do not need to buy any more, but if you have money to spare send your donation to the All-India Spinners' Association and it will be used for khaddar production. If you have any minutes to spare, (and who has not?) give them to the spinning-wheel yourself and send the yarn to the Association. If you have any friends whom you can influence, ask them to do all or any of the things I have just mentioned. Remember that by contributing to khaddar work you associate yourself with the poor people, you assist the cause of swaraj and you take part in perpetuating Deshbandhu's memory.

Young India, 8-4-1926

27. ON "BRAHMACHARYA"[1]

I am being inundated with letters on *brahmacharya* and means to its attainment. Let me repeat in different language what I have already said or written on previous occasions. *Brahmacharya* is not mere mechanical celibacy, it means complete control over all the senses and freedom from lust in thought, word and deed. As such it is the royal road to self-realization or attainment of *Brahman*.

The ideal *brahmachari* had not to struggle with sensual desire or desire for procreation; it never troubles him at all. The whole world will be to him one vast family, he will centre all his ambition in relieving the misery of mankind and the desire for procreation will be

[1] The original Gujarati article appeared in *Navajivan*, 4-4-1926. The is a translation by Mahadev Desai.

to him as gall and wormwood. He who has realized the misery of mankind in all its magnitude will never be stirred by passion. He will instinctively know the fountain of strength in him, and he will ever persevere to keep it undefiled. His humble strength will command respect of the world, and he will wield an influence greater than that of the sceptred monarch.

But I am told that this is an impossible ideal, that I do not take count of the natural attraction between man and women. I refuse to believe that the sensual affinity referred to here can be at all regarded as natural; in that case the deluge would soon be over us. The natural affinity between man and woman is the attraction between brother and sister, mother and son, or father and daughter. It is that natural attraction that sustains the world. I should find it impossible to live, much less carry on my work, if I did not regard the whole of womankind as sisters, daughters or mothers. If I looked at them with lustful eyes, it would be the surest way to perdition.

Procreation is a natural phenomenon indeed, but within specific limits. A transgression of those limits imperils womankind, emasculates the race, induces disease, puts a premium on vice, and makes the world ungodly. A man in the grip of the sensual desire is a man without moorings. If such a one were to guide society, to flood it with his writings and men were to be swayed by them, where would society be? And yet we have the very thing happening today. Supposing a moth whirling round a light were to record the moments of its fleeting joy and we were to imitate it, regarding it as an exemplar, where would we be? No, I must declare with all the power I can command that sensual attraction even between husband and wife is unnatural. Marriage is meant to cleanse the hearts of the couple of sordid passions and take them nearer to God. Lustless love between husband and wife is not impossible. Man is not a brute. He has risen to a higher state after countless births in brute creation. He is born to stand, not to walk on all fours or crawl. Bestiality is as far removed from manhood, as matter from spirit.

In conclusion I shall summarize the means to its attainment.

The first step is the realization of its necessity.

The next is gradual control of the senses. A *brahmachari* must needs control his palate. He must eat to live, and not for enjoyment. He must see only clean things and close his eyes before anything unclean. It is thus a sign of polite breeding to walk with one's eyes

towards the goround and not wandering about from object to object. A *brahmachari* will likewise hear nothing obscene or unclean, smell no strong, stimulating, things. The smell of clean earth is far sweeter than the fragrance of artificial scents and essences. Let the aspirant to *brahmacharya* also keep his hands and feet engaged in all waking hours in healthful activity. Let him also fast occasionally.

The third step is to have clean companions—clean friends and clean books.

The last and not the least is prayer. Let him repeat *Ramanama* with all his heart regularly every day, and ask for divine grace.

None of these things are difficult for an average man or woman. they are simplicity itself. But their very simplicity is embarrassing. Where there is a will, the way is simple enough. Men have not the will for it and hence vainly grope. The fact that the world rests on the observance, more or less, of *brahmacharya* or restraint, means that it is necessary and practicable.

Young India, 29-4-1926

28. SATYAGRAHA WEEK

This week is drawing near. I suggest the best way, according to my lights, of observing it. Satyagraha is a great religious principle, and a universal one. It is to be found in all religions. No religion can live long without it. Satyagraha is the very basis of religion. It can never be employed without a well developed religious consciousness. Countless people now accept that we cannot get swaraj except through satyagraha, and also that we shall never win it with the help of the sword. But only a handful know how it can be employed.

I am firmly of the view that till we have imbibed the spirit of peace exemplified by the spinning-wheel, have placed our relations with the poor on a pure basis and given a place of honour to khadi we shall not be fit to employ satyagraha.

I, therefore, suggest that those who have any faith in khadi should observe the week by spending it in promoting the spread of khadi. There are several ways to do this.

1. One may spin, and also persuade others to spin, more yarn than at other times.
2. One may wear khadi and persuade others to do so.
3. Wherever stocks of khadi have accumulated, one may go

round selling it.

4. One may help, and persuade others to help, in the production of khadi.

5. One may contribute money, according to one's means, for khadi work.

This week should see all the accumulated stocks of khadi cleared.

If the people cannot do even this, what else can they achieve? Khadi work does not come in the way of other activities of public welfare, but supplements them; for the spread of khadi increases national wealth and the benefit of the increase naturally goes to the poor.

I, therefore, suggest that even those who wish to give something as charity should make a gift of khadi. And for those who have not yet given up using foreign cloth, can we hope that during this week they will take the pledge and start wearing khadi, and thereby contribute their share in the *swaraj-yajna*?

Those who have any doubts about khadi may put this question to themselves : "If not through khadi, through what other means can we win swaraj, and can I myself join in such activity?" I have put this question to myself time and again but have been able to think of no other activity. To those who think that khadi by itself will not bring swaraj, I may say that the question does not arise at all. There can be no swaraj without khadi, and in any case we shall lose nothing through it. Hence, whether we do other work or not, we should certainly help in promoting the spread of khadi.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-4-1926

29. PARTIAL FAST DURING THE SATYAGRAHA WEEK

I cannot summon the courage to suggest a partial fast on the 6th and the 13th during the Satyagraha Week. I did not, therefore, touch upon this point when I wrote the *Young India* article on this subject.[1] But those who aspire to swaraj of the spirit, wish to win swaraj through self-purification, will certainly observe partial fasts on these two days,

[1] *Vide* "The National Week", 4-4-1926.

search deep within themselves for their shortcomings and try to remove them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-4-1926

30. HILL TRIBES

Shri Amritlal Thakkar is adding glory to his *sannyasa*. Though he has not donned the ochre robe nor does he profess to be a sannyasi, the work he is doing, being entirely philanthropic, is such as would bcome a true sannyasi. He has grown old, but takes no rest nor gives any to others round him. When a wildfire of misery is raging, who can rest in peace? Only an idler can. Shri Amritlal has been a friend of the *Antyajas*, and now he is working hard to become a friend of the hill tribes. I hope that everyone will read and ponder over his touching articles[1].Those who have not yet read the article which appeared last week should read it forthwith. This week's article, too, should be read and thought over. We shall discuss later what contribution we can make to the programme of work suggested by Shri Amritlal, and how.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-4-1926

31. ALL-INDIA DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL

The following friends from Standerton, Transvaal, have sent their contribution to the fund for the Deshbandhu Memorial through Shri Dayal Naran.

	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
Shri Dayal Naran	10–0–0	Shri Vallabh Bhula	5–11–3
Shri Devchand Durlabh	2–2–0	Shri Nagin Narasinh	5– 0–0
Shri Dayaram Bhagwan	0–10–6	Shri Vallabh Bhagawan	0–15–0
Shri Uka Naran	1– 1–0	Shri Parbhu Harakha	1– 1–0

[1] "Our Ancient Tribes", *Navajivan*, 28-3-1926, and "Proselytization among Hill Tribes", *Navajivan*, 4-4-1926.

Shri Bhula Hira	3– 3–0	Shri Vashan Dahya	5– 5–0
	16–16–6		17–12–3
		Total	£ 34– 8–9

I hope that others too, will send their contributions for this cause.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-4-1926

32. MEMORIES OF SAINTS' LIVES

While thinking about how the Satyagraha Week should be celebrated, I came apon the following paragraph in Shri Kaka Kalelkar's article written for students. I reproduce it here for the benefit of readers of *Navajivan* : [1]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-4-1926

33. LETTER TO LAJPAT RAI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 4, 1926

DEAR LALAJI,

I have dealt with the matter I referred to in the enclosed cutting in the pages of *Young India*. Have you studied the question of total prohibition? What is at the back of this criminal apathy in the Punjab?

Yours sincerely,

LALA LAJPAT RAI
LAHORE

From a photostat : S.N. 19420

[1] The passage is not translated here. It describes how Eknath, a celebrated saint of Maharashtra, fed *Antyajas* with *shraddha* offerings and once saved a donkey's life by fetching water for it from a river.

34. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

AHRAM, SABARMATI,
Sunday, April 4, 1926

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Your letter. I sent you a telegram saying I can start on the 22nd. It is not convenient to leave earlier, and it is now cool rather than warm here. This time again I have gained half a pound; i.e., now it has gone up to 104 lbs. I am having plenty of rest. I have gone through your draft letter to Hakim Saheb; it is all right. Herewith I return it. Most probably I shall be accompanied by Pyarelal, Mahadev, Subbaiya, Pyar Ali, Noorbanobehn and their attendant. Pyar Ali intends to rent separate quarters and have his meals cooked for him. If it is not necessary for you at present to stay in Bombay, I would certainly like to have you with me in Mussoorie. If you are there we can certainly attend to some jobs. I do not wish to detain you, however, if your work requires you to go to Bombay or Calcutta. So it is for you to make the final decision after considering your convenience.

It seems you have been quite successful with the Gurukul. Rajagopalachari has enough worries regarding his own ashram, so he will have to return soon. Abbas Tyabji can be persuaded to undertake touring. Manilal has since returned from Rangoon but it seems he will not be ready to run around so soon. He will now have to give some time for railway workers which means he cannot tour for the present. He will leave this place on Tuesday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 2458

35. LETTER TO MILTON NEWBERRY FRANTZ

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 6, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am afraid it is not possible for me to subscribe to the creed you have sent me. The subscriber is made to believe that the highest manifestation of the unseen reality was Jesus Christ. In spite of all my efforts, I have not been able to feel the truth

of that statement. I have not been able to move beyond the belief that Jesus was one of the great teachers of mankind. Do you not think that religious unity is to be had not by a mechanical subscription and a common creed but by all respecting the creed of each other? In my opinion difference in creed there must be so long as there are different brains. But what does it matter if all these are. . .[1] upon the common path of love and mutual judgment.

I return the stamp kindly sent by you. It cannot be used in India.

Yours sincerely,

MILTON NEWBERRY FRANTZ, ESQ.

COLLEGEVILLE

From a photostat : S.N. 12461

36. LETTER TO G. K. DEVADHAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 6, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am glad you like my notes in *Young India*[2] about the work of the Seva Sadan. I shall certainly be delighted to visit the institution at Sholapur and make the acquaintance of your workers.

I hope to go away for a month to Mussoorie in the expectation of ridding myself of the weakness still left in me owing to the last attack of malaria.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. K. DEVADHAR

HON. ORGANIZER AND GENERAL SECRETARY

THE POONA SEVA SADAN SOCIETY

789-790, SADASHIV PETH

POONA CITY

From a microfilm : S.N. 19421

[1] The source has a blank here.
[2] *Vide* "Mission to the Women of India", 4-3-1926.

37. LETTER TO GREAVES COTTON AND COMPANY

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 6, 1926

GENTLEMEN,

A correspondent writes[1] to me to say that upon his applying for the post of a stenographer in your office, he was asked to present himself but as soon as he appeared before the Manager, he was told that he could not be employed unless he put away his khaddar clothes. These are the very words quoted by the correspondent : "Our principle is not to allow it in any of our offices and if you want to serve in European firms, this khaddar dress will not do."

MESSRS GREAVES COTTON & COMPANY

FORT

BOMBAY

As I have had chats with the Chairman of the European Association and several European merchants on this very point and as they repu-diated the suggestion that they would not allow their employees to wear khaddar dress, I hesitated to believe the information sent to me by my correspondent. I shall be obliged if you will kindly let me know whether there is any truth in the information sent to me by my correspondent.

Yours faithfully,

From a microfilm : S.N. 19422

38. LETTER TO VICE-CHAIRMAN, DISTRICT BOARD, PURI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 6, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I was interested in your letter to the Secretary, All-India Spinners' Association, regarding spinning in the girls' schools of your district. I feel tempted to suggest to you that you can save much of the money voted for spinning if instead of the charkhas you will have *taklis*. The Spinners' Association has now published an authorized *Takli Teacher* prepared by two experts. It gives fairly exhaustive information and hints on *takli*. The experience of the Association is that *takli* spinning is the best and the most efficient for

[1] *Vide* "For and against Khadi", 22-4-1926.

schools because in the schools the boys and girls can naturally give only a short time. The collective output is therefore greater through *takli* spinning than through the spinning-wheel for the simple reason that the *takli* spinning could be done by hundreds of children at the same time without requiring any extra space whatsoever. Moreover, the cost of a *takli* would be [a] few annas as against a few rupees for the spinning-wheel and the *takli* rarely goes out of order. It may be advisable for you to spend a little of the grant made by the Board for sending your teachers to Ahmedabad to watch the *takli* spinning that is being done in the schools here.

Yours sincerely,

THE VICE CHAIRMAN
THE DISTRICT BOARD
PURI

From a microfilm : S.N. 19423

39. LETTER TO P. S. S. RAMA IYER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 6, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry I have not been able to reach your letter earlier. You cannot find satisfaction from the spinning-wheel unless you associate the spinning-wheel with the poor people and believe it to be an instrument for alleviating their economic distress. Is there no satisfaction in helping the poor by labouring for them? There is a Latin proverb which means to labour is to pray, i.e., when you labour for others.

You ask me to whom to pray. The only Being to pray to is the Supreme Deity. We must have faith that He exists, if we are not satisfied with the ocular demonstration of the awe-inspiring phenomenon that goes on about us the whole of the 24 hours. There is undoubtedly an intelligence beyond it, that is God. But if the phenomenon is not convincing we must have faith based upon the experience of all the greatest teachers of mankind. It is that intelligence which hears our prayers and answers. Contemplate on that All-pervading essence when you are at the spinning-wheel and

then tell me whether it does not give you satisfaction.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. S. S. RAMA IYER
S. I. RY. AGENCY
COCHIN

From a microfilm : S.N. 19424

40. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 6, 1926

DEAR RAJENDRA BABU,

Please go through the portion marked about untouchability in the enclosed letter[1] and let me know what the truth is.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1 : That of Sjt. Rakhal Chandra Maity, Sadakat Ashram, Dighaghat P.O., Patna

BABU RAJENDRA PRASAD
MURAD PUR
PATNA

From a microfilm : S.N. 19425

41. LETTER TO RAKHAL CHANDRA MAITY

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 6, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. What you say about the classification as to dining at the Sadakat Ashram surprises me. I am sending your letter to Sjt. Rajendra Babu asking him to reply to it.

I agree with you that the prayer should be short, intelligible and that it should proceed from the heart. It should be addressed to the Supreme God and in a college or any such institution, it should be a

[1] Enclosure not in the source

prayer common to all.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RAKHAL CHANDRA MAITY
SADAKAT ASHRAM
DIGHAGHAT P.O.
PATNA

From a microfilm : S.N. 19426

42. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 6, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 16th February last. I did not understand from your cable that you intended it to be exclusively for *Unity*. This idea of exclusion regarding one's writings is new ill my life. Your cable about Macmillan Company's offer set me athinking and I felt that it might be as well to let them have the exclusive right of publishing the *Autobiography* in book form if the terms were satisfactory. I should simply put the whole of the proceeds for the development of khaddar.

When the time comes for publishing the chapters in book form, it may be syndicated as you suggest but before they are published in book form, the chapters will have to undergo a slight revision which is already being done and if the negotiations with Macmillan Company bear fruit, you will have the revised copy.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES, ESQ.
12 PARK AVENUE
34TH STREET, NEW YORK CITY

From a copy : S.N. 32319

43. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Tuesday, April 6, 1926

BHAI MURABBI MAMA,

I have your letter. You can come over if you can do so without

any difficulty. By the 10th Nanabhai too will return from Singhagarh. Bring with you the letter I wrote on what was talked over with Nanabhai. Swami is here. I shall ask him about Chhagan when I see him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3813

44. LETTER TO LALLU MORAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Tuesday, April 6, 1926

BAHI LALLU MORAR,

I have your letter. I am sorry to learn about your disunity. If only one of you will humble himself, follow the path of truth and engage in the service of others, the rest will readily gather round him. At the moment we are in no position to send anyone. However, if you wish to consult me please do so. Do you subscribe to *Navajivan*? If not, it is desirable that you become a subscriber. The subscription is sh. 10 a year.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati ; S.N. 19427

45. LETTER TO KHANDERIA

ASHRAM,
April 6, 1926

BHAI KHANDERIA,

. . .[1] Inmates of the Ashram or other persons eating at odd places should not take offence if you serve them in a separate row. And even if they take offence I do not think you are wrong in serving them apart. We should treat the *Antyajas* irrespective of their food habits just as we treat other communities, without inquiring what they eat or drink.

ANTYAJASHALA

LAKHTAR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19896

[1] As in the source

46. LETTER TO G.G. JOG

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 7, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The interesting cutting you have sent me appears to me to be perfectly hysterical. There were at that time 33 vegetarian restaurants. I do not know how many there [are] at the present moment. And so far as I am aware, people used to take the dishes the writer describes with great relish and profit to themselves. But then these are all matters of the mind. The sausages he describes with gusto create in me a nausea.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. G. JOG
MOTIMAHAL
CAWNPORE

From a microfilm : S.N. 19432

47. A LETTER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 7, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your welcome letter. I am at the Ashram in Sabarmati up to the 21st instant. Generally I am always available at 4 p.m. except on Mondays but I could give you an appointment for any other hour on those days. After 22nd, I shall be available in Mussoorie. Do please therefore make your choice.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 19433

48. LETTER TO AMRITLAL NANAVATI AND OTHERS

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Wednesday, April 7, 1926

BHAISHRI AMRITLAL AND OTHERS,

I have your letter. I never take up an activity of my own accord, nor do I think it proper to concern myself with any odd activity.

Regarding the Palitana affair I know the Sangh leaders are making some move; how can I interfere with it? In my opinion if you too have anything to say you had better say it through the leaders. This is not a movement wherein any *shravak* may start on a satyagraha on his own. Even if you think it has reached the stage for satyagraha, you should start it through the Sangh. Some time back some people had come to consult me about it. I explained all this to them.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 10871

49. LETTER TO SOMNATH PANCHAL

ASHRAM,
April 7, 1926

BHAI SOMNATH,

Your letter. I certainly think it right to render financial assistance to persons whose predicament is like that of the old persons you describe. It is society's duty to support invalids. It is, I think, irreligious to support the able-bodied without getting some work from them.

If abstention is not possible under the same roof, it is necessary to live separately. It is certainly not your duty to stay in the same house even if abstention is not possible.

From a microfilm of the Gujatati : S.N. 10872

50. LETTER TO PRANJIVAN K. DESAI

ASHRAM, SABARAMTI,
April 7, 1926

BHAISHRI PRANJIVAN,

A couple who, as you say, have given themselves up to indulgence do not observe the conjugal law. I have no hesitation in saying that they are worse than beasts. A girl of twelve or thirteen is absolutely unsuited to lead a conjugal life. It is a grievous sin to cohabit with her. I cannot imagine what you have written regarding a woman in menses. I cannot accept that the husband has a duty to sleep with her after the expiry of four days. I should think the husband is forbidden to touch her as long as the discharge continues. After the discharge stops, I see nothing wrong in their coming together if both of them desire progeny.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 12184

51. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

ASHRAM, SABARAMTI,
April 7, 1926

CHI. MANILAL,

I got the two letters sent direct by you. I got your contribution towards the Deshbandhu Memorial after I had written to you. I am surprised that you did not get a receipt. I hope to collect the receipt and post it along with this. I would then know the amount received.

Mr. Andrews should have come here by now. However, I have no telegram about his departure. There is no limit to the strain he is putting himself to. I have sent you another letter through Ramdas also. I expect a reply to it. Send a telegram if possible. Ask Shanti to write to me. I have written him a letter to which he has not replied. Is there no means of curing his asthma? What happened to the employees' demand for higher pay? Ramdas went recently to Amreli after a few days' stay here. Devdas is at Deolali looking after Mathuradas. But he is himself not quite well. There is no cause for anxiety.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19428

52. LETTER TO MATHURDAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARAMTI,
Wednesday, April 7, 1926

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. In his letter Devdas particularly asks for Pyarelal or Surendra. Therefore, I am sending Pyarelal today. Personally, however, I would suggest that Devdas should come over here after Rajagopalachari goes there and Pyarelal should for the present stay with you. You alone can say whether or not you find Pyarelal agreeable. A letter has been sent to Sir Prabhashanker regarding Panchagani; A reply is expected in a day or two.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19429

53. LETTER TO MANEKLAL

ASHRAM, SABARAMTI,
Wednesday, April 7, 1926

CHI. MANEKLAL,

Herewith Anandlal's reply to my letter regarding Vrajlal's share of the rent of the house at Rajkot.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19430

54. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM, SABARAMTI,
Wednesday, April 7, 1926

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your letter. Since you had such an illness, how well it would have been if you had informed me of it immediately. There was no need to hide it from me. I have often found that by this sort of false kindness people have been unkind to me. Jaundice can be cured very easily. For this there is no remedy like fasting. It soon subsides with fasting and flushing by drinking plenty of water, and the appetite is restored. I have never believed in the theory that a patient grows weaker by withstanding hunger or by fasting. If you must take buttermilk, all butter should be removed from it. Curds cannot be taken in any case. Rice is an un-necessary burden. I remember in the year 1896 I had a severe attack of jaundice. At that time I had trust in the prescriptions only of Manishankar Vaid. He had administered to me some mixture with sodium. . . .[1] the main treatment was, however, a fast. For about ten days I was allowed to have neither milk, nor buttermilk nor rice. These ten days I was allowed only some fresh fruits, i.e., oranges, grapes and sugarcane. No sugar. I did not have to lie down for a single day, and all the while I went about my business. At that time I used to move about quite a lot for the South African cause. I suggest you should come over here; you can soon recover with treatment. You may stay as long as Rajagopalachari is there. You may spend a day or two in talking to Pyarelal and introducing him to the job. I did not tell ba about this. But she came to know about it and now asks to send for you immediately. It seems Rajagopalachari has spoken to her to the same effect. Let me know your decision immediately.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 19431

55. LETTER TO RUSTOMJI D. BATLIWALA

ASHRAM,
April 7, 1926

BHAISHRI RUSTOMJI,

Your letter. If your report is correct, you had a right to mention any faults you found there. Smoking at the club cannot be

[1] The source has a blank here.

regarded a personal matter. From what you say I see no reason to apologize.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI RUSTOMJI D. BATLIWALA

HILL ROAD

BANDRA, BOMBAY

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19897

56. LETTER TO BECHAR BHANJI

April 7, 1926

BHAISHRI BECHAR BHANJI,

I have your letter. I do not think I have any previous letters. I am surprised that you did not get a reply. Herewith my answer to the questions you have raised in your latest letter.

The examples of Harishchandra and Shrigalsha Sheth are meant to emphasize that for preserving our dharma we should be prepared to sacrifice the dearest of our belongings. We must never let dharma perish. We are not obliged to believe in the historicity of either story; they are, however, quite plausible. The entire story should be read only in the context of the maxim that passion and godliness do not go together. We should reject a legend which does not fit into our code of conduct. We cannot compromise morality merely to support a legend.

Vendemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19898

57. LETTER TO A STUDENT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Wednesday, April 7, 1926

BHAI . . .[1],

I have your letter from which I learn that you have not at all lived with your wife. You were never intimate with her and yet, you

[1] Name dropped

are afraid, she is pregnant. And this worries you. But I see no cause for worry. If your wife is pregnant, you can put her aside not in hatred but with pity. She may, if she can, live with the man with whom she misbehaved and if that man is already married she may stay with her parents. To them you should convey the news gently but firmly.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 10853-A

58. OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED

You say that swaraj can only come to us as the result of a bloody battle in the bad old way or through spinning away for all we are worth in our village homes in the good new way of the Mahatma. This is only another instance of hypnosis by a catchword. What steps have been taken, by you or the others concerned, beyond mere repetition of the doctrine, to convince people that this spinning away (1) is possible, (2) is desirable, (3) will be effective? I have yet to see a plain, intelligible, fairly well-reasoned-out statement, answering doubts and questions as to (1) whether it is possible, in view of the rent and revenue laws, to retain and detain the needed cotton within the country, and in the hands of the right persons; (2) whether and how far it is desirable to do so, in view of the effects of such a step, upon the other industries which have grown up; (3) whether it will be effectual, and if so directly requiring other steps, and, if so, what steps, to bring about swaraj (whatever that might mean!). I have repeatedly tried to get leading exponents of the cult to thrash out the thing, pro and con in public print, or even private discussion, but have failed so far. Only once I had an opportunity of questioning the fountain-head of the doctrine himself, viz., Mahatmaji, and the opportunity was limited to putting only the question as to the possibility. He contented himself with simply saying, "Yes, it is possible." There were many other persons, and more important matters, to deal with; so my doubts and fears remained unallayed.

The preceding quotation is from an informing letter by Babu Bhagwandas to Maulana Mahomed Ali and published by him in the *Comrade*. Though it is to be found in an old issue (18th December last), I regret to say I saw it only during the current week. I may say at the outset that I do not remember the conversation referred to by Babu Bhagwandas. For me nothing in the political world is more important than the spinning-wheel. I can recall many occasions when I have postponed other matters to make room for a discussion on the spinning-wheel as central part of our economics or politics. But whatever fate overtook Babu Bhagwandas's question put to me when I

had the privilege of being his guest, the root questions raised by him must be answered. That the spinning-wheel is possible is being daily demonstrated with increasing force. Amid the many seeming impossibilities, e.g., Hindu-Muslim unity, the spinning-wheel alone is being demonstrated as a possibility, as witness the growing organizations in Tamilnad, Andhra, Karnatak, the Punjab, Bihar and Bengal, etc. If the organizations are not more numerous, it is because the workers are too few. There is no inherent impossibility in the wheel. It has been worked before with the greatest success. There are millions who can work it, who have the required leisure for it and who are in need of a cottage occupation.

That it is desirable may be proved from the mere fact that it is the best adapted for this vast country of seven hundred thousand villages.

No one can say with certainty whether it will be effective. If it is permissible to infer the experience being gained in the several provinces, it can be safely asserted that it is highly probable that it will be effective. It can even be boldly asserted that no other industry has as yet been proved to be as effective as the spinning-wheel for the purpose intended.

Babu Bhagwandas mentions the adverse effect of rent and revenue laws. He thereby draws attention to the difficulty, not the impossibility, of revival of the one national industry that gave the peasantry its staying power one century ago. Revenue and rent laws are not immutable. In so far as they interfere with the growth of the spinning industry, they must be altered."But" it will be said, "they cannot be altered without swaraj". The answer is that swaraj cannot be obtained without organizing spinning in spite of the laws. For the fight for swaraj means fighting difficulties however great they may be. Violence is the accepted, though barbarous, method of fighting. Organizing the spinning-wheel is the moral method of fighting for swaraj. Organizing the spinning-wheel is the easiest and the cheapest method of peacefully organizing the masses. Surely, if cotton can be exported thousands of miles away, there spun, brought back in the shape of yarn for sale to the very exporters, there should be no difficulty about shifting it, in India itself, a few miles away from the seat of its cultivation. There is no difficulty about a non-rice-growing province importing rice from the rice-growing province. Why should there be any in so handling cotton? The process is going on today.

Bihar has to import from Wardha or Cawnpore.

But, says Babu Bhagwandas, it may be undesirable "in view of the effects of such a step upon the other industries which have grown up". What other industries? And if they are adversely affected, shouldthat interfere with the prosecution of an industry which is as necessary to the national life as either lung is to the body? Should we be afraid to promote total prohibition because it must interfere with the established distilleries? Ormust a reformer be deterred from advoca-ting abstention from the opium habit for fear of harming the opium growers? Babu Bhagwandas cited the Champaran ryot who could not keep enough food grains for sustenance. That was because he had not enough for all his wants. If he had spun or if the taxation was light, he could have kept enough for his wants. He got partial relief by the removal of the burden of growing indigo compulsorily. He could still further better his condition if he would utilize his idle hours (he has many) by spinning unless he found a more profitable industry. But he will not spin, unless the educated class set the fashion and assure him that the wheel is not to be a nine days' wonder.

Babu Bhagwandas however exclaims :

> If to spin away is so easily possible, so desirable, so effective, there must after all be some reason why the three-hundred millions do not take to it at once, why the Congress membership has dwindled down to nine thousand odd.

Surely he knows many things "possible, desirable, and effective," not happening for want of will or effort. Universal education is"possible, desirable and effective" but people do not resort to it readily. And, it will require the energy of an army of trained workers to instil into the minds of the people the necessity of taking the trouble to be educated. Sanitary precautions are "possible, desirable and effective". But why do the villagers not take to them as soon as they are brought to their notice? The answer seems to be simple. Progress is slow. It is lame. It requires effort, organization, time and expense in exact proportion to its importance. The greatest stumbling block in the way of the more rapid progress of spinning, great as it is, is the disinclination or the inability of the cultured classes, the natural leaders of the people, to recognize the supreme place the spinning-wheel has in any scheme of national regeneration. The very simplicity of it seems to bewilder them.

Young India, 8-4-1926

59. NEED FOR CHARTS

A correspondent writes to say that instead of giving figures, in order to impress facts on the minds of the readers, charts should be given showing fluctuations in the production and sale of khadi. He rejects the forebodings of people who say that khadi is dying out but says that though they can be refuted by those who have read the annual report of the All-India Spinners' Association, but few have the patience to go through it. He says :

> People think that the more the khadi-cap-wearers, the greater the production and sale of khaddar. . . .[1]

The remarks of the correspondent are very true. Arrangements are being made to prepare a chart such as the correspondent suggests. Mean-while the figures given this week in C. R.'s note on Tamilnadu are eloquent enough to demonstrate the progress of khadi.

Young India, 8-4-1926

60. DOES INDIA WANT PROHIBITION?

Much has been made by the opponents of total prohibition in India of the speech of Mr. King, Financial Commissioner in the Punjab, who was reported to have said that the Local Option Act which was passed over a year ago in the Punjab has been a perfect failure. The Commissioner quotes in support of his statement the following facts:

That out of nearly 200 municipalities, district boards, etc., only 19 have asked to be empowered under the Act. Of the 19, only six took further steps. And in the six the referendum that was held had precious little support. At Rawalpindi for instance out of 7,000 voters, only six registered their votes. At Ludhiana out of 12,500 voters at the first referendum not one turned up. Of the other four only in one small town, that of Tohana, out of 1,052 voters, 802 voted for total prohibition.

Mr. King argued, as he would be entitled to argue if he was a stranger to India and Indian conditions, that there was no demand for total prohibition in the Punjab. Unfortunately for India the conditions are that people are apathetic even about things that concern them as a society. The methods adopted for referendum are new to them.

[1] The rest of the letter is not reproduced here.

Probably, the voters knew nothing of the fact that there was a referendum being taken about total prohibition. Mr. King must have known the fact which everyone knows who knows anything of India that the vast majority of the people of India do not drink and that drinking intoxicants is contrary to Islam and Hinduism. The inference therefore to be drawn from the so-called failure referred to by Mr. King is not that the Punjab is against total prohibition but that the Punjabis being themselves as a class teetotallers do not bother their heads about those who are ruining themselves through the drink curse. He is also entitled to draw the inference that the Municipal commissioners and the members of the local boards have been criminally negligent of their duties to the voters in this matter of great social importance. But to argue from the facts cited that Punjab is opposed to total prohibition is to throw dust in the eyes of strangers or ignorant people. That unfortunately is the way of the officials. Instead of looking at things impartially or from the popular stand-point, they constitute themselves pleaders for what the Government stands or for methods which the Gov-ernment may wish to defend at any cost. It is a well-known fact that the Hindus are against the slaughter of the cow and her progeny. Supposing there was a referendum taken precisely in the manner in which it was taken in the Punjab regarding drink and the millions of Hindus fail to register their vote, will anyone who knows Indian conditions argue therefrom, for one moment, that Hindus want slaughter houses where the sacred cow is done to death? The fact is that there is not that consciousness created amongst the people that is impatient of social wrong. It is no doubt a deplorable thing. It is being gradually mended. But it is a wicked thing to suppress facts which would warrant an inference totally different from the one that may, in the absence of those facts, be drawn from another set of facts. As the *Manchester Guardian* has mildly put it, the case against total prohibition in India is much weaker than the case against it in America or England where respectable people see nothing wrong or harmful in moderate drinking.

Young India, 8-4-1926

61. MESSAGE TO MYSORE LAWYERS' CONFERENCE, TUMKUR[1]

ASRAM, SABARMATI,
April 8, 1926

PRISEDENT
RECEPTION COMMITTEE
FOURTH MYSORE LAWYERS' CONFERENCE
TUMKUR

(I) HOPE (THE) LAWYERS IN CONFERENCE WILL APPRECIATE (THE) MESSAGE OF (THE) SPINNING- WHEEL AND ADOPT KHADDAR AND MAKE SOME RETURN TO THE POOR BY DEVOTING SOME TIME RELIGIOUSLY TO SPINNING AND PAY A PORTION OF THEIR INCOME TO (THE) DESH- BANDHU MEMORIAL FUND WHOSE OBJECT IS UNI-VERSALIZATION OF KHADDAR.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S. N. 19435

62. LETTER TO G. K. DEVADHAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 8, 1926

MY DEAR DEVADHAR,

I have your letter. Manorama talked to me about your letter last night and I told her that she was not only free to go but that Seva Sadan being an institution specially designed for women would probably more suit her requirements than the Ashram. She told me she would make her final decision in a day or two and let me know. I shall hand your letter to her and talk to her again. I knew that she was before, at the Seva Sadan. I was not really prepared to take her in if only because the Ashram is at present overcrowded and it is so difficult to look after young girls. But as she was insistent, I put her with Mrs. Gandhi. Her ambition to remain a maiden and lead a life of service attracted me.

You shall hear from me again after I have had a chat with her.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S. N. 19434

[1] This message is typed on a telegraphic form and the words in brackets were encircled for deletion.

63. FOREWORD

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 8, 1926

Hemendra Babu has asked me to write a foreward to his *Life of Deshbandhu.* Unfortunately I do not know Bengali. I had hoped to be able to have portions read to me but I have not been able to find the time to do so. Hemendra Babu was one of the devotees of Deshbandhu. I know his love and veneration for the departed leader. I have therefore no doubt that whatever he has said about Deshbandhu will be readable. Time cannot efface the memory of a man so great and good as Deshbandhu. It can only make it more hallowed. At this time of trial for the nation there is no Indian who does not feel the void created by his death. May Hemedra Babu's pages help us to realize our duty to the country for which Deshbandhu lived and died.

From a photostat: S. N. 19436

64. LETTER TO NAGJIBHAI

ASHRAM,
April 8, 1926

BHAI NAGJIBHAI,

I have your letter. If you regard Vishwamitra, Vasishtha and others as historical figures, it will be difficult to answer your questions. If you can look upon the *Ramayana* as a religious work and the legends of Vishwamitra, Parashurama and others as allegorical, you will be able yourself to understand their significance.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S. N. 19899

65. LETTER TO HARNARAYAN

[On or After *April 8, 1926*][1]

Your letter. If the friend you refer to really means to be saved, he must leave his present position, and should look for some job which will involve far less, if any, contact with women. Again his work should be such as would keep him physically occupied for the whole day. And privacy is of course out of the question.

In the case of the other friend, what the couple need is courage. Whenever they are referred to as barren, they shoud take it for a compliment. He who has a vow to observe and wants to know the *Brahman* does not care what the world says.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S. N. 12095

66. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SABARMATI,
April 9, 1926

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
WINDY HALL
DEVLALI

DEVDAS SHOULD SEE DALAL ON WAY HERE.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

67. LETTER TO KATHERINE MAYO

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 9, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I hope you received my previous letter[2] in reply to your enquiry

[1] This is written on a sheet from the addressee's letter dated *Adhik Cheitra Vad* 11, 82, to which this is the reply.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Katherine Mayo", 26-3-1926.

about the sources of my information on poverty of India.

I have now your second letter[1] enclosing copy of your notes[2] . I have tried to fill in the gaps left by you. I have been obliged to do the same somewhat hurriedly but I hope it will answer the purpose.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S. N. 12462

68. LETTER TO SARAT CHANDRA BOSE[3]

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 9, 1926

DEAR SARAT BABU,

Manilal Kothari has given your massage. I wish I could send you something stirring, something decisive and rapid in reply but I have no such thing in the present state of the country. Meetings and resolution of protests in the Councils have been overdone. We must do something tangible so that we can feel our power. I can think of nothing else therefore but boycott of foreign cloth which in its turn is impossible without khaddar and therefore for the ills including these wretched imprisonments, I have nothing but the charkha. But how can I convince the people that it is a sovereign remedy. My faith however in it remains undiminished. Day by day it increases. And therefore during the National Week we have some spinning-wheels going on the whole of the week, night and day at the Ashram. We are doing it with the implict faith that some day through it will rise a power that will enable us to realize our cherished desire.

I know that there is an alternative to the charkha and that is rowdyism. But I am useless at it and what is more, I have no faith in it. And as a practical man I know that our rowdyism is nothing compared to the rowdyism of the Government. I have therefore burnt my boats and staked my all on the charkha. I invite all who are troubled by this knowledge of the many woes of the nation to join me in the effort. Believe me it requires all the skill, all the discipline, all the organizing power that we can summon to its aid.

[1] Dated 24-3-1926.
[2] *Vide* "Interview to Katherine Mayo", 17-3-1926.
[3] This was reproduced in *Young India*, 22-4-1926.

I hope the *Forward* and the Memorial Hospital are doing well.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SARAT BOSE
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm : S. N. 19437

69. LETTER TO V. N. S. CHARY

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 9, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I too have seen many a lizard going for cockroaches and have watched cockroaches going for lasser forms but I have not felt called upon to prevent the operation of the law of the larger living on the smaller. I do not claim to penetrate into the awful mystery but from watching these very oprations, I learn that the law of the beast is not the law of the Man; that Man has by painful striving to surmount and survive the animal in him and from the tragedy of the *himsa* which is being acted around him he has to learn the supreme lesson of ahimsa for himself. Man must, therefore, if he is to realize his dignity and his own mission, cease to take part in the destruction and refuse to prey upon his weaker fellow creatures. He can only keep that as an ideal for himself and endeavour day after day to reach it. Complete success is possible only when he has attained *moksha*, a state in which the spirit becomes and remains independent of physical existence.

Yours sincerely,

SH. V. N. S. CHARY
7, HIGH ROAD
EGMORE

From a microfilm: S. N. 19438

70. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday [*April 9, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I notice that the illness of Devdas has made you anxious. But

[1] From the postmark

that is how life is. I have only today sent a telegram saying that Devdas should come here after consulting Dr. Dalal. I am convinced that he should return here. That is what Ba wants. Nevertheless, I sense from the letters of Devdas that he would rather that I did not send for him. I have explained to Pyarelal and Rajagopalachari what my own opinion is. Now you may do what you all think proper. The Panchgani matter will not be settled soon. The bungalow had been let out before Sir Prabhashankar Pattani received my letter. After June he will be willing and eager to give it for as long as we may want it. It can be arranged for you to be at Sinhgadh till June. Have you consulted Dr. Metha about that place?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

71. LETTER TO S. GOVINDASWAMI IYER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 10, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I should be sorry if the information you give me is found to be correct. I do not know the addresses of the gentlemen whose names you have given me, namely Messers K. S. Nambudripad and Velu Pillay, if the latter also was guilty of making speeches like the one attributed to Mr. Nambudripad. If you will give me their addresses, I shall certainly enquire.

I note what you say about your name not being disclosed.

Your sincerely,

SJT. S. GOVINDASWAMI IYER, B.A.B.L.
GOPI VILAS
PULIMUD
TRIVANDRUM

From a microfilm: S. N. 19439

72. LETTER TO HAKIM AJMAL KHAN

AHSRAM, SABARMATI,
April 10, 1926

DEAR HAKIMJI SAHEB,

I had your letter. I must not delay replying to it for the pleasure of enabling me to write in Urdu. Your letter makes painful reading. You are despondent. But you cannot afford to be. You and I want to see Hindus and Mussalmans shed the insanity and live together in peace and friendship. We must attend also the ceremony of establishing swaraj.

You should rejoice to think that I shall see you so often in Mussoorie. Will you not precede me and give yourself rest now. I wish I could compel you to take a vow not to leave Mussoorie for two months, even to go to Rangpur.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S. N. 19440

73. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 10, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

There is a letter from Mr. Chatterjee enclosing a cutting from *Welfare*. Do please answer the criticism in the Bengal Press and let me have a copy of your reply so as to enable me to make use of it for the columns of *Young India*. When you send me copy of your reply, please return the cuttings.

Yours sincerely,

Enc. 1 (to be returned)

From a microfilm: S. N. 19441

74. LETTER TO J. CHATTERJEE

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 10, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I have sent your letter and the cutting to Satis Babu, Dr. Ray's expert who is in charge of the relief depot. I know the working of the depot myself and I may inform you that there is no difficulty about answering the criticim even from the figures used in the *Welfare*. But I agree that it would be

more satisfactory to have an official refutation from those who are working the depot.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. J. CHATTERJEE
1, JOHNSTONGANJ
ALLAHABAD

From a microfilm: S. N. 19442

75. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 10, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter about Niranjan Babu. My letter[1] was not written to cast any reflection upon you at all. It was based purely on the last month's figures that were put before me. If I had the time to confer with Shankerlal and to look into all the papers, I would have found all the information that you say exists in the papers sent by you. But you know the difficult position I find myself in at present. I have no time for anything over and above every day's routine work and so I hastily dictated the letter asking for the information from Niranjan Babu as he could supply the information without having to refer to many papers. And I wrote to you because Niranjan Babu was at that time with you and thought would be with you till you received the letter or if he had gone you will forward the letter to him. I know nothing about how much you were to look after and how much you were not to look after. I think you got all the packets.

Niranjan Babu has now telegraphed that he is sending me all the information. I shall therefore wait for his letter. Meanwhile do I understand that if we pay Utkal Rs. 250 per month up to September, it will be self-supporting—that is the meaning I gather from your letter. And if such is the meaning, it is simple and Utkal will certainly have done wonderfully well.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S. N. 19443

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 29-3-1926.

76. LETTER TO JAGJIVANDAS

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, Chaitra Vad 1 [3] [1] *[April 10, 1926]*

BHAISHRI JAGJIVANDAS,

The delay was deliberate because I know you would still be on your pilgrimage and would not reach Amereli for some time. Today I am sending a *hundi* for Rs. 500 to the adress given by you.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 10865

77. LETTER TO GULABDAS

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, Chaitra Vad 1 [3][2] *April [10, 1926]*[2]

BHAI GULABADAS,

I have your letter. *Brahmacharya* can be observed by keeping good company, reading good books and repeating *Ramanama*. The mind and the body should not be idle for a single moment. You can certainly stick to the spinning-wheel if you want to. Your father can be persuaded by your humility. There is in Calcutta a college of indigenous medicine that has connection with the Government, but it is quite expensive. Likewise there is Tibbia College in Delhi, also equally expensive.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 10869

78. A RAY OF HOPE

Shri Dahyabhai writes from Dholka:[3]

This example is worthy of notice. Those who, though not poor, take up spinning and other connected work either through sympathy or patriotism deserve to be complimented on their spirit. I very much hope that Shri Dahyabhai will keep up his faith and continue his efforts for the progress of the spinning-wheel, and that the people of Rampar will go on doing the work which they have started and will not give any grounds to others to say of them, "Brave in the beginning, faint-hearted by and by." I find it necessary to utter this

[1] The source has *Chaitra Vad* 12 but Saturday was *Chaitra Vad* 13.

[2] Addressees letter is dated 6-4-1926.

[3] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had described how the farmers of Rampar had taken up khadi work and were doing it with enthusiasm.

caution because, in the very letter in which Dahyabhai has described the awakening in Rampar, he also writes:

> A friend had, of his own free will, taken the pledge of spinning regularly. He knows spinning, and has time for it too, but he has given it up through sheer lethargy.

We come across such instance all over the country. It is a matter for no little pain that people do not pause and reflect before taking a pledge and then fail to keep it. Such weaknesses of ours have sapped the foundation of dhrama and reduced the country to a state of slavery.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-4-1926

79. GURUKUL AND KHADI

Shri Jamnalalji writes from Hardwar:[1]

His list[2] contains contains forty names. I need not giveall the names here, but an analysis of the list will be found intresting. The first name it it is that of the Principal of the Gurukul; there are five teachers, seven fresh graduates, holding the degrees of *Snataka* or *Vedalankar* or *Vidyalankar*. There are five students from the fourteenth grade, seven from the thirteenth, four from the twelfth and five from the eleventh. The list contains the names of two women members of the Gurukul and three other women from Delhi—Shrimati Vidyavati Sethi (B.A.), Principal, Kanya Gurukul, and two teachers, Shrimati Sitadevi and Shrimati Chandravati.

The Khadi Inspector in the Punjab writes: [3]

I compliment these bodies.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-4-1926

80. "NIRAMISHAHAR" MEANS "ANNAHAR"

I have invited readers of *Navajivan* to suggest a simpler word for *niramishahar*[4] . Some readers do not like this word. In its place, they suggest *nirmansahar* or *amasahar*. But neither word seems acceptable. People who have never eaten meat in their lives do not like

[1] The extract is not translated here. The correspondent had described the keen interest which members of the Gurukul were taking in khadi activities.

[2] Of new members of the Spinners' Association enrolled by him.

[3] The extract is not translated here. The correspondent had reported that the Gurukul in Multan Cantonment and a Destitutes' Home in another place run by the Arya Samaj had started buying khadi for all their needs.

[4] Non-meat diet

to hear the word *mans*[1] . To such persons, an unafamiliar word would be more acceptable. As people shrink from uttering the very name of a thing which repels them, so they shrink form the word *mans* and, therefore, use the word *paramati* [2] instead. The phrase *zade javin* [3] sounds indecent, whereas *jungle javun* [4] sounds a little less offensive. Recently, the word *shauch* [5] has come into use in place of either. Following this principle, I have been using the word *niramishahar*. A friend has suggested *vanaspatyahar*[6] in preference to it. But this word does not seem simpler than the other one. Trying to find an alternative expression, I felt that *annahar*[7] would serve the purpose all right. This word does not cover milk. Strictly speaking, it does not cover even fruits. From another point of view, however, food includes milk and fruits. In the last resort, if we define the meaning which we attach to a word and, after a little use, can get that meaning accepted by others, we become entitled to use the word in the sense we have attached to it. Exercising that right, *Navajivan* will hencforth use the word *annahar* in place of *niramishahar* and to convey the meaning that that word does.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-4-1926

81. MISUNDERSTANDING

I observe that the misunderstanding occasioned by my visit to Kutch[8] still persists, and that Shri Manasingh Kachrabhai and Shri Manilal Kothari are being blamed. I, therefore, wish to state once again that, far from regretting my tour of Kutch, I look upon it as one of the precious experiences of my life. The Reception Committee did not commit and should not be blamed for the slight fault of omission. I found in Kuth the same love and enjoyed the same comforts which I have found and enjoyed in the other places. The Reception Committee had spared no pains to look after my convenience so that I

[1] Meat

[2] Literally, another's dust or clay; euphemistically meat

[3] To go for evacuation of bowels

[4] To go behind a bush

[5] Washing

[6] A diet of herbs

[7] A diet of boiled careals; Gandhiji suggested that this word should be made to singify vegetarian diet; another word, *shakahar*, has however, gained wider currency.

[8] In 1925 *vide* "Reminiscences of Kutch (-I)", 2-11-1925 and "Reminiscences of Kutch (-II)".

could rest. They left nothing undone so that I might get as much rest as possible. It was not Shri Manasingh who had originally extended the invitation to me. I also know that Shri Manilal was obliged at a later stage to join the others. In going to Kutch, I did nothing but follow my own nature. It was in my soul that I suffered during the tour. How does the Reception Committee deserve to be blamed if suprestitions have struck deep roots among the people? The hypocrisy and insincerity which I found in some villages were not a new experience to me. It is contrary to my nature to run away from a place where I find fanaticism among the Hindus. I regard it as my dharma to try to win over even fanatics with love. I have, therefore, no other feeling but that of satisfaction for my Kutch tour. I do not regard it as a failure at all. I came across selfless workers in Kutch as in other parts of the country. It was also a great pleasure to me to visit the places of their activities. It cannot be a ground of complaint that the contributions did not come up to my expectations. I have received in the past generous help from residents of Kutch for my activities. Why should one feel disappointed if one's expectations are occasionally not fulfilled? My only disappointment is at the thought that Hindus still regard the sin of untouchability as a virtuous practice. It was not a part of the work of the Reception Committee to try to soften the hard hearts of the people. It was my work. Workers invite me to their respective places for this purpose. If people's hearts have not softened, I must quarrel with myself. I am the cause of my disappointment on that score. But I am not such a simpleton that I would quarrel with myself. I quarrel with God. Why did he create me weak or deny power to my word so that I do not always succeed in softening people's hearts? Whom should I blame if Hindus do not give up the practice of untouchability, if Hindus and Muslims quarrel with each other and if all the Indians do not wear khadi? Hinduism shows only one remedy for this.

> Every time the gods were in distress, they called
>
> on the Dweller in the hearts of all;
>
> And He who is the support of the Earth, the
>
> Lord of Narasinh, rescued them from danger.

Vishwamitra performed *tapascharya*[1] so that he might become a *bramarshi*[2] , and Parvati in order to win Siva as husband. Likewise,

[1] Penance
[2] A *rishi* attaining *Brahman*

those who wish to serve their country or their dharma should do *tapascharya* for the purposes and not point to the weaknesses of the people. Not only was I not disappointed by my visit to Kutch but, as I promised at the time of leaving it, if the workers there continue their work and desire my presence, and if I can find the time, I will certainly go there again, will visit the areas which, not being easily accessible, were left out this time and call for an account from the residents of the places which I visited.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-4-1926

82. LETTER TO S. NAGASUNDARAM [1]

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 11, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I must not deal with the matter referred to you in the pages of *Young India*. I said all that had to be said on the incident in 1921. I am never in an uncompromising mood. Viceroy never made a single offer that could be accepted by any self-respecting person. When I advised the Ali Brothers to sign that famous document called apology, I went nearest the edge of weakness. But I do not regret it. That 'apology' did the Brothers and the nation much good.When their trial came it was an issue that was as hon-ourable to

[1] This was Gandhiji's reply to the addressee who had written to him about an article "The Change of Viceroys" in the *Indian Social Reformer* of April 3, which had stated; "Lord Reading hands over charge of the Viceroyalty to Lord Irwin today. The political situation today is quite calm, whereas when Lord Reading arrived in the country, it was highly charged with distrubance. The Non-co-operation movement was moving rapidly towards its zenith. Lord Reading, for several months after assuming charge of his high office, tried to come to an understanding with Mahatma Gandhi, but the latter was in an uncompromising mood. The prosecution of the Ali Brothers made conciliation impossible. The Prince of Wales was due to visit the country in a few months and the Viceroy strained every nerve to reach at least a temporary settlement in order to allow His Royal Highness' visit to pass off quietly. He offered a Round Table Conference to discuss the next step in political advance and, although the late Mr. C. R. Das, who was undergoing imprisonment for breach of the notification declaring the Congress volunteers to be unlawful body, counselled acceptance of the offer, Mr. Gandhi refused and great opportunity was lost. This seems to have convincd Lord Reading that the method of conciliation was not likely to succeed, and soon after the Prince left these shores, the Mahatma himself was prose-cuted and sent to jail."

them as it was dishonourable for the Government.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. NAGASUNDARAM
FIRST FLOOR
LAKSHMINIVAS BUILDING
NEAR KING'S CIRCLE
MATUNGA, BOMBAY

From a microfilm : S. N. 19444

83. LETTER TO RICHARD B. GREGG

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 11, 1926

MY DEAR GOVIND,

How funny I received your letter just after I had dictated my notes on your article on Machinery. Do no bother about the German book. You may return it. I shall get it translated if need be by someone else. The work you mention is far more important than translating those letters in the midst of difficulties that surround you.

I am glad you are doing gardening and cooking your own meals. When you get a little bit of leisure do give me an idea of the school there. The attendance, capacity of the boys, subjects being taught, etc., and tell me what we should adopt from that school.

I leave for Mussoorie on the 22nd instant. Mira is doing wonderfully well. Have you heard that during the Satyagraha Week there are five wheels going all day and night. It is a stirring sight. The daily output has at least quintupled I think. We shall have the accurate figures next week. Hence during the week Kanti did 4444 turns (equals 5925 yards) that means at least 14 hours work for the boy.

Yours,

RICHARD B. GREGG, ESQ.

From a photostat : S. N. 19445

84. LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 11, 1926

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

Our thoughts have certainly crossed one another. I was thinking of dictating a letter to you taking you to task for such a small quantity of so indifferenly spun yarn. But by anticipating my letter, you have deprived my rebuke of its sharpnness.

I heard about Mahomad Ali's difficulties. My heart is with him. My head rebels against him. He is so improvident and for want of method, of all the public workers, he, perhaps, takes the first rank.

Do please give a silent hour to the spinning-wheel, concentrating all your attention upon it. You cannot afford to neglect it. A correspondent wrote to me the other day taking me to task for the absence of any yarn contribution from you and Mahomad Ali. I wrote to the latter nearely a fortnight ago.

I shall look forward to meeting you on the 16th. I expect to see you hale and hearty.

I had recently a despondent letter from Hakim Saheb. When you reach Delhi, you must cheer him up. Where is Shwaib? Love to everybody in the office including yourself.

Yours,

From a photostat: S. N. 19446

85. LETTER TO PYARELAL NAYYAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 11, 1926

MY DEAR PYARELAL,

You should continue to write in Hindi. For saving time, I must dictate in English, at least today. I was never troubled about Devdas's illness. I am troubled about his suppression of it till it had gone too far. I am glad Mathuradas is so much better now. You must take good care of yourself, keep regular hours for your meals and for everything consistently with nursing the patient, if Mathuradas may be still described as a patient. Give me your day's routine. Give me also

the condition of Gomati Ben especially while Kishorelal is away.

Yours,

SJT. PYARELAL NAYYAR
C/O MATHURADAS TRIKUMJEE, ESQ.
WINDY HALL
DEOLALI
NASIK ROAD

From a photostat : S. N. 19447

86. LETTER TO A. IRBE

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 11, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I hardly think I shall have to go to Finland. But if I do, and if I have to pass through Latvia, I would certainly like to make the acquaintance of your father. You will watch the papers and if I do go, you will perhaps send me the necessary letter.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. A. IRBE
WEAVING SCHOOL
C. S. M.
MAYAVARAM

From a photostat : S. N. 19448

87. LETTER TO BAGALA PRASANNA GUHA ROY

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 11, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Please tell me why Prakash Babu was forced to resign the Secretaryship and where he is?

I understand your difficulty about the Tippera khadi. The only way to overcome that difficulty is to become weavers yourselves and to induce the middle-class people to spin for love. The yarn we may thus get can be added to the yarn that we may have to pay for. You

can then sell your khadi as cheap as Tippera khadi. I am aware that this is more easily said than done. But there is no short cut to solve these difficult problems. You may also try to find out tracts where cotton can be easily grown.

Lastly khadi cannot be worked in a district where there are no poor people having idle hours at their disposal. The whole scheme of khadi rests upon the supposition that there are millions of poor people in India who have no work during at least 4 months in the year. If your part of India has no such people, you need not worry about production of khaddar. You have then merely to sell khaddar that may be produced in less happy districts.

You should go to Satis Babu, confer with him, discuss everything and follow his advice.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. BAGALA PRASANNA GUHA ROY
SECRETARY, JATIYA SHIKSHAMUTH
LAKSHMIPUR, UPASHI P. O.
FARIDPUR (BENGAL)

88. MESSAGE ON JALLIANWALA BAGH[1]

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 11, 1926

Your Secertary has asked for a message for the 13th about Jallianwala Bagh. Here is the message:

The wanton massacre in Jallianwala Bagh that took place on the 13th day of April, 1919, is a perpetual reminder to us that it will recur as often as we attempt to lift up our heads and desire no longer to live in bondage. British rule is imposed on India not for India's service but for her exploitation. It is indeed to protect the commerce that is imposed upon India. The central item of that commerce is Manchester piece-goods. If we will avenge the humiliation of Jallianwala and the crawling[2] lane we must at least cease to wear foreign cloth and pledge ourselves to wear hand-spun khaddar. The former sterilizes British commerce, the latter binds us to the poor whom we have neglected all these long years. Though [we have] not been exploiters of the outside world, we have exploited the peasantry in order to have ease and comfort. If we refuse to discard foreign cloth, if we find khaddar too

[1] Read out by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, who was presiding over a public meeting in Marwadi Vidyalaya compound on 13th April under the auspices of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee

[2] *Vide* "Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.

uncomfortable, so far as I can see we must accommodate ourselves to perpetual slavery. All the reform that we may get will be turned [to] dust if we are afraid to sacrifice ease, comfort, and much more for the sake of the country.

Yours,

SRIMATI SAROJINI NAIDU
TAJMAHAL HOTEL
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S. N. 19450

89. LETTER TO G. K. DEVADHAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 11, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have now seen Manorama. She is writing to you. She speaks broken Gujarati and Hindustani and so far as I can gather from her, before she proceeds to Poona, she wants to be sure of her readmission to the Seva Sadan. She did't seem to relish the charge that she was unstable before.

Here, for the time being, she is learning weaving. She gives 4 hours to it. If she continues to weave for about a year and likes that work, she would be able to support herself without the slightest difficulty. But if she proves unsteady, she is not likely to learn weaving because it requires constant effort and much plodding.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. K. DEVADHAR
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S. N. 19451

90. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Sunday, April 11, 1926

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter, which explains quite a few things. I used to read newspaper reports of the riot. I am convinced that I at any rate connot stop the two communities fron quarrelling. I was therefore not upset by the Calcutta incident. But then I have also let it be known that

if the Hindus want to retaliate they should no more look upon ruthlessness as a vice; they should rather cultivate it, regarding it a virtue. And this seems to have happened in Calcutta. That you were impartial in offering protection to members of both the communities and that the Marwaries saved the life of some three hundred Muslims is a matter of pride for the Hindu community.

I congratulate you on your khadi vow and also those who persuaded you to take it. You will personally gain by this, and the public too will benefit by it. I shall leave for Mussoorie on the 22nd. I am keeping very fine health. Since we are observing the Satyagraha Week, I spin for two hours daily and we have in the Ashram five charkhas plying round the clock. I was very glad that you declined the title. For this you do not have to regard the Government an enemy nor condemn the title. As for me, I certainly look upon titles as bad in our present condition.

From the Hindi original: C. W. 6124. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

91. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN CHOKSI [1]

ASHRAM,
Sunday, Chaitra Vad 14 [*April 11, 1926*]

CHI. MOTI,

I have your letter, but I may say it is rather late this time. The handwriting is not as good as in your previous letter.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 12124

92. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN CHOKSI

Sunday, April 11, 1926

CHI. MOTI,

Now at last a letter form you. I always knew your ways and I had also spoken to Lakshmindas about my fears. There is a couplet in Sanskrit which says: A man of honour prefers death to disohonour[2] . A man of honour is one who cherishes self-respect. It is our appointed task to overcome temptation. How could you eat coal with the same

[1] In place of the subscription, the letter carries the note: Written by Mani on behalf of *Poojya* Bapuji."

[2] *Bhagavad Gita,* II, 34

mouth which had chewed betel? You should remember that your lapse will severely affect others. Think how it will pain your elders and know that you will have nothing left by way of self-respect. I believe the craze for jewels is only a cover for the desire for sensual pleasures. At the moment you may not see it but the snake is under the carpet. If it were not, the desire for jewels would never have arisen. Man devotes himself to learning and other activities lest he should fall into such temptations. Do you not want to serve the *Antyajas*? To wash the feel of the poor? Can these tasks be done with jewels on your person? I have only this advice. Cast off your temptation looking upon it as so much dirt. I have shown your letter to no one. I do not propose to read it even to Lakshmidas and have therefore destroyed it. I shall wait for your serious resolution. But if you cannot resolve do not at all deceive yourself. May God help you.

BAPU

[PS.]

Bhai Najuklal,

This covers everything. Time is running out, so I do not write separately to you.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 12125

93. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

April 12, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter about Assam. I see you and Shankerlal are not [at] one. The appointment of Rajendra Babu was my suggestion. I knew that the Assam workers were prejudiced against you, nothing could be spent there without some responsible party taking charge. I therefore suggested that Rajen Babu should report. I knew nothing of the previous day's conversation. I shall inquire when I see Shankerlal. I am just not writing this to tell you of the hand I had in appointing Rajen Babu. And I write so that to the extent that it is possible you may revise your view about Shankerlal. I am anxious that the Council should act as one man. I am aware of Shankerlal's limitations. He is

hasty, emotional, nervous, forgetful. But he has a heart of gold. He is an able organizer. He loves khadi. We must bear one another's burdens. I write this during the week of purification and on Monday. I want you to be perfect. But we cannot be anything mechanically. This must therefore be taken for what it is worth.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1558

94. LETTER TO K. T. PAUL[1]

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 13, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. When Mr. Buchman met me my inclination was all towards not attending the Convention; but I left it then an open question because of his insistance. Since then, I have not made much advance. But a few friends with whom I have discussed the thing favour the idea of my accepting the invitation. The motive is mixed. Probably, the stronger reason with them is that the voyage and outing may benefit me physically. With me the only determining factor should be whether I can render any service, in other words whether God wants me to go. I have no clear light. I propose therefore to leave it to you as a friend to decide. And in advising me or coming to a decision on my behalf you will naturally bear in mind all I am about to say.

You know my strange dress. It is not possible for me to alter it materially. I can make such alterations as would be required by the weather conditions. I do not know how far this consideration is lekely to weigh with you but I felt that you should know this.

If I am wanted for making speeches, I shall be useless. The only way I might be of service would be heart-to-heart conversations with the students. My real work consists in these conversations. Speech making I regard as the least important of my activities. I made this quite clear to Mr. Buchman.

[1] In repely to his letter dated 6-4-1926 requesting Gandhiji "to consider an invitation to the World Conference of the Young Men's Christian Association . . . to be held this coming August in Helsingfors, Finland," (S. N. 11341)

My food is also a bother. I am not merely a vegetarian but my dietary is restricted. The principal article of food is goat's milk. And if you have to arrange for the passage and so on, this very inconvenient detail has to be looked to.

If I am to go, there will be one companion, possibly two.

If you come to the conclusion that I should accept the invitation, please let me know when one has to start, how long will the Convention last, who is to arrange for the passports? Are there to be any conditions attached to the passports?

I am here up to the 22nd instant. I leave for Mussoorie on the 22nd. Please tell me who is this Central Committee that sends the invitation. Who is the President and who is the Secretary? Needless to say I shall make no statement to the Press about your letter. As a matter of fact I was disturbed even when I saw the first reference in the papers. I avoided the pressmen for some time. And I made the guarded statement that I did when I saw no escape from some statement.

From a photostat : S. N. 11342

95. LETTER TO MAHASUKH

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Tuesday, April 13, 1926

BHAISHRI MAHASUKH,

Your letter. I congratulate you on stating some of your doubts. But you should not resent the answers which you have asked for from the addressee; and never doubt his sincerity. Otherwise, we had better not write to a person whose word we doubt. Why do you say that what I wrote to you was so much jugglery of words? How do you say that I was on the look-out for swaraj or some such movement? Let me repeat to you that I gave you a well-considered answer and I believe every word of it. And I ask you to accept my word as the truth.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S. N. 10884

96. LETTER TO BHAGAWANDAS BRAHMACHARI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Tuesday, April 13, 1926

BHAI BHAGAWANDAS BRAHMACHARI,

I have your letter. I follow [what you say] regarding Sanskrit. I can think of nothing to say in the matter. "Vegetarian" is an imperfect expression because the ordinary Western vegetarians take milk and eggs; they do not take fish. They have therefore already coined a neologism, viz., VEM diet, i.e., vegetables, eggs and milk. Ordinary vegetarians do not take fish; they take onion. They do not make it a point to give up garlic. The expression "*sattvik*" [1] die will not do. Because those who take chillies cannot be regarded as *sattvik* eaters and many meat-eaters will take meat claiming it as *sattvik*. I have selected the expression *annahar* keeping in mind the special meaning of the word *anna*, which includes all that we eat barring meat, etc. Of course this definition too is rather wide, but I have found *annahar* better than all expressions I have come across till now.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 10885-A

97. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Tuesday, April 13, 1926

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. Bhai Bhansali told me that you had fever. Be careful. I see that the illness was not there before or during the holidays. I did guess you would need more money; if the need is not urgent we may discuss it when you come here. In the meanwhile I shall certainly talk to Kishorelal and others. Do not hesitate to write to me if there is any urgency.

I must continue to be silent about Shivjibhai of Madhada. I continue to get indignant letters from which I can imagine what must be going on. How can my silence be exploited? If I am not upset by their attempts at exploitation they, not I, will stand to lose. If you must

[1] Pure, clear

think of 'transmigration', try to think of it as blissful. We grieve only because of our ignorance and weakness.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S. N. 19452

98. LETTER TO NARGIS CAPTAIN

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 14, 1926

I was thankful to receive your letter and to hear that Perin was better and more cheerful. I wish she could have stayed longer with you. I am sure that fasting would be good for your headache. It is a superstition to think that lean people cannot fast.

I do not want you in Mussoorie. If you will only go to Kashmir even for two months, I am sure you will benefit by the visit. I am not likely to stay in Mussoorie beyond the middle of June if so much. Is Dr. Bahadurji still spinning ? When they do come please remember me to him and to Manekbai.

Yours,

MRS. NARGIS CAPTAIN
PUNCHGANI

From a microfilm : S. N. 19458

99. LETTER TO MOTILAL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Wednesday, April 14, 1926

BHAI MOTILAL,

I have your letter and Rs. 101 for khadi work. Thank you.

From a copy of the Gujarati : S. N. 19453-R

100. LETTER TO LABHSHANKAR MEHTA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Wednesday, April 14, 1926

BHAISHRI LABHSHANKAR,

1. The English maxim you quote applies generally in the case of ailments. One learns mostly from experience where to apply such maxims.

2. Never have I seen or heard of one becoming rich by sweating. There is however a saying that everyone should sweat to earn his livelihood.

3. I do not think it is right to say that the principles propounded in *Hind Swaraj* are not workable just because I cannot practise them perfectly. The maxim that you quote can certainly not apply to me, because not only do I refuse to excuse myself, but positively confess my shortcoming.

4. If you must make a distinction between a vow and a resolve, the vow is certainly worthier. It is a resolve that cannot be given up. A resolve that can be is worthless.

5. I do not understand your fifth question. Is there really any principle behind the Latin proverb you quote? What could it mean?

6. I cannot appreciate the relationship that you describe.

7. I regard the study of astronomy as essential.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 10883

101. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Wednesday, April 14, 1926

CHI. RAMDAS,

No letter from you after your last postcard. I may be said to have some leisure today because the Week is over. I have been, however, busy with the Committee meetings as soon as the Week was over. The Parishad Committee met yesterday; and again today. Now the Vidyapith Committee.

Devdas has arrived today; he had quite an attack of jaundice. He has gone very weak. One cannot bear to look at him, but the jaundice is now subsiding. His bowels are cleared; so he will get well in a short time. Pyarelal has been sent to Deolali. I intend to take Devdas to Mussoorie. I am eager to know what could be accomplished there during this Week. They have done a good job here. Kanti, Keshu, Krishnadas, the *Antyaja* student Keshavlal, Somabhai, Jaisimha and others spun for about ten hours daily and some of them for 22 hours, which means they slept hardly for an hour. In 22.5 hours Keshu spun 9119 *tars*, i.e., 12024 yards. This is very good speed. Keshu's yarn was 17 counts. Ba also spun quite a lot. One day Manu spun more

than a thousand [*tars*].

I hope you are well. Devchandbhai and others will most probably leave today.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S. N. 19454

102. LETTER TO PRATAPSIMHA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Wednesday, Second Chaitra Sud 2 [*April 14, 1926*][1]

KUMARSHRI PRATAPSIMHAJI,

The [Working] Committee of the Kathiawar Political Conference met today. I hoped to have the reply to my letter before this. But since I did not, I could not give satisfactory answers to the members of the Committee. I have to leave for Mussoorie on the 22nd. I shall be obliged if I can have your reply before I leave.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S. N. 19455

103. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Wednesday, April 14, 1926

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

The Parishad's [Working] Committee have resolved to take over the Amreli Centre, and they have further resolved to convert it into a trust. There was much discussion. Credit to the account of the Conference whatever commission falls due to Gariyadhar and panch Talawadi. Do not clear any dues in cash.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S. N. 19456

[1] From the reference to the meeting of the Kathiawar Political Conference and Gandhiji's proposed trip to Mussoorie

104. LETTER TO ADAMSALEH A. PATEL

ASHRAM,
April 14, 1926

BHAI ADAMSALEH ALIBHAI,

You have left me far behind. I have undertaken to reform a single person, and that is my own self. And I realize how difficult it is to reform him. Now, need I answer your questions?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SJT. A. A. PATEL
PANOLI
DISTRICT BROACH

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S. N. 19901

105. LETTER TO QUAYAM ALI M. SALEMWALA

ASHRAM,
April 14, 1926

BHAISHRI QUAYAM ALI,

I have your letter. The site of the Jallianwala Bagh was purchased with the help of the funds raised for the purpose. The site was cleared to make room for the park. No memorial has been raised because the circumstances in the country are not favourable.

How can we raise the edifice of freedom while we undermine its foundations? The trustees, I believe, fight shy of a memorial because they have this fear.

SHRI QUAYAM ALI MOHAMAD ALI SALEMWALA
C/O MOHAMAD ALI & SONS
SOMERSET STREET, CAMP
KARACHI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S. N. 19902

106. "THE TAKLI TEACHER"

This is the title of a booklet covering 80 pages issued by the All-India Spinners' Association, Ahmedabad, and prepared at its instance by Messrs Richard B. Gregg and Maganlal K. Gandhi. It contains 23 clear, well-thought-out illustrations showing the different forms of *takli* and the various positions in handling this simple little instrument of household use and national importance. It gives accurate hints on spinning by the *takli*, so that anybody who will read the booklet carefully can master the art of spinning by the *takli*. It also dwells upon the different uses to which the *takli* can be put and compares the advantages of the *takli* over the charkha in some instances. It also teaches how to make a *takli* and winds up with historical information about this instrument which enabled the spinners of Dacca to spin the finest yarn, the like of which no machine has yet been able to produce. There are valuable hints which are useful to the spinner both on the *takli* and on the charkha.

Of the educational value of the *takli*, the writers explain that it develops in the spinner patience, persistence, concentration, self-control, calmness, realization of importance and value of detail, ability to do more than one thing at a time, making one of them so habitual that its control and operation are almost unconscious, sensitiveness, sureness and delicacy of touch and of muscular control and co-ordination, realization of value of cumulative and sustained individual effort even though separate efforts be of short duration; thus a realization of the value of co-operative work, self-respect and self-reliance arising from recognition of one's ability to create something of economic value useful to oneself, to one's family, to the school and to the village, province or nation. There are several other values mentioned in this short chapter which the reader interested in the national spinning movement may see for himself in the book.

The publishers invite criticism of the book from those who are versed in the art of spinning on the *takli*, and they would welcome any suggestion, advice or information that may be sent to them so as to enable them to incorporate them in a future edition.

The book is being simultaneously published in Hindi with the same illustrations and the same get up. Whether in Hindi or English, the book can be had at the Ashram, Sabarmati, on payment of Rs. 7 including postage.

I hope that every *takli* teacher in municipal and national schools

where *takli* has been introduced will procure the book for his own guidance and that of his pupils.

Young India, 15-4-1926

107. PANDIT NEHRU AND KHADDAR

Pandit Motilalji has never been *persona grata* with *The Times of India*. The latest offence committed by him is that of hawking khaddar in Allahabad where only a few years ago he could hardly be seen going anywhere except in his grand motor car. But in the elegant language of the writer: "Even in India it must be recognized that Pandit Nehru is mak-ing an ass of himself." It is to be wished that many leaders will follow Panditji and earn the title that has been so courteously bestowed upon Panditji by *The Times of India*. It is generally time to rejoice when one receives a curse from opponents. Their praises should make one cautious. The Romans feared the Greeks especially when they brought gifts.

The *Times*' writer has out-done himself in showing his contempt for the Congress, khaddar and Congressmen. I must let the reader judge for himself. The writer says :

> The completeness of the Congress collapse, the utter futility of the so-called Congress creed, and the total absence among Congress supporters of a single reasonable political idea are illustrated by a telegram despatched in all earnestness from Allahabad.

The Writer then proceeds :

> If the British public learnt that Lord Birkenhead, wearing a Union Jack waistcoat, had been selling true blue Tory rosettes beneath the lions in Trafalgar Square, that Mr. Baldwin had been promoting Empire industries by hawking trays of British toys in Piccadilly, that Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, attired in corduroys and a muffler, had been disposing of red flags among the workers in Limehouse, or that the Clydeside Bolshevists had set up a stall on Clydeside for the sale of miniature sickles and hammers, the unanimous conclusion of all classes would be that their leaders had gone mad.

The inference naturally is that the distinguished hawkers of khaddar such as Pandit Nehru and Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar who accompanied him in his hawking have gone mad. The language used by the writer is not only insulting but it is also highly misleading. What possible comparison can there be between "true blue Tory rosettes" hawked by a British Tory and khaddar which, rightly or

wrongly, represents to thousands of Indians an emblem of a real bond between the classes and the masses? For only by khaddar the classes, through whom the British Government holds sway over the toiling dumb millions, could make some little return to the masses, for the bleeding process which the latter have to undergo in order to feed the British Government. The insult has been possible only because the fashion has been set by the Liberal politicians to belittle khadi and all it means. Who does not remember that at the time the War broke out, young and old, men and women, great and small, in fact all who were not enlisted or could not be enlisted as soldiers, were expected to sew, as a matter of fact did sew, garments for the wounded soldiers who were received in the various hospitals? People at that time vied with one another in doing this little service and those who did not know how to stitch were thankful if they received preliminary training from their neighbours. All distinctions were erased in the face of the awful calamity that had overtaken the British people. I make bold to say that if it was patriotic and necessary for everyone to do the sewing and hundreds of other odd jobs which in ordinary life they never did, it is a thousand times necessary and patriotic for every Indian to wear khaddar to the exclusion of all foreign cloth and thus find the only occupation, that is, of hand-spinning, which is possible for the millions of India to undertake.

We read in English books that when a movement is ridiculed by its opponents, it may be said to be making headway and when it excites the anger of their opponents, it is said to be producing the desired effect. If *The Times of India* at all represents British public opinion, khaddar is evidently producing the desired effect.

The writer of the article in question assures the readers that "the Allahabad public does not want the Congress grave-clothes", as he has called khaddar, "any more than they are wanted in any other part of India". If so it is difficult to understand all the contempt poured upon khaddar. But it is for the Congress leaders to prove that khaddar is not the "grave-clothes" of the Congress but that it establishes an unbreakable link between the Congress and the masses and thus makes the former more representative than it ever has been.

In fairness, however, to Europeans, let me say that in the venomous abuse of khaddar, *The Times of India* writer by no means represents the general European opinion. I know several Europeans in India who believe in the message of khaddar and some who use it themselves. Its message has even reached Europe. Here is a letter from

a professor from far-off Poland regarding khaddar :

> Do you not think it would be a good thing if an attempt were made to sell Indian tissues in Europe to friends of India? I might try on a small scale here if you send me tissues of your cloth with indication of prices in English currency and an English address to which the money could be sent. I think that even if the amount of sales would not be very great, it would be useful for propaganda and I hope that many people at least in Poland would be proud and happy to wear Indian cloth in order to show their sympathy with your work. . . This is perhaps the most efficient way to gain universal sympathy for the emancipation of India. I could not easily undertake to spin myself but I can undertake to go from house to house and encourage the buying of Indian cloth even if it is more expensive than our own products.

Young India, 15-4-1926

108. WHAT IS IT LIKE?

An Englishman writing to his relatives in London thus gives vent to his feelings after having been in New York for 48 hours:

> It is all quite true—skyscrapers, iced water, elevators express to the 25th floor, subways, Negroes; I never quite believed it before. But that's all I know. I have been here 48 hours—never such a 48 hours before —Ican't last much longer. I've been walked about, talked at, dined, lunched, theatred; I'm so tired, I can hardly see. Incredible, inconceivable. My timetable is arranged to the minute—I am telephoned to wherever I am to see that I am moving on the next engagement. By a subterfuge I have escaped. I am to go out to dinner in an hour or so. You must not expect anything more than postcards. It's very cold out-freezing-while it boils within. My head goes into solution in these temperatures.

Englishmen will sympathize with me when I say that I felt about as uncomfortable reaching London for the first time as the writer of the foregoing did on reaching New York. And I know that a villager going to Bombay feels similarly bewildered and lost in finding himself in the midst of the hubbub and bustle of Bombay.

Young India, 15-4-1926

109. NOTES

'THE MORALS OF MACHINERY'[1]

The Current Thought for February has reproduced Mr. Richard B. Gregg's letter to a friend on the "Morals of Machinery" Mr. Gregg is an ex-American lawyer with a wide experience of his own country. He has lived in the midst of the very things he describes in his letter and has at one time in his life contributed to their growth. He therefore writes with authority. He says :

> Most people accept mechanism for its immediatey results and are quite blind to the secondary results of slower growth. But these latter are the most important.

He then recounts in detail the evils of multiplication of mach-inery. He puts 'enormous concentration of material power and wealth in the hands of the few' first in the list. Mr. Gregg truly says :

> Machinery and modern industry have taken the money of millions of people and concentrated its management and control into relatively few hands and modern developments of banking and credit have concentrated the control of all the materials and factories and mills into still fewer hands.

Do we not see this process going on even in our own country at the cost of the millions who are being bled white in order to support huge industries thousands of miles away from their cottages? Mr. Gregg says :

> Probably the real, ultimate control of industry in Europe, America and most of Asia and Africa is concentrated in the hands of not over 1,500 men, perhaps fewer still.
>
> Such tremendous power is a temptation which human nature cannot withstand. It involves tyranny, vanity, pride, greed, selfishness, ruthless competition on the one side, loss of liberty, insecurity, fears, loss of self-reliance and of independence, degradation, poverty, loss of dignity and self-respect on the other.
>
> Deaths, maiming and crippling by industrial accidents far exceed corresponding injuries by war. Diseases and physical deterioration caused directly and indirectly by modern industry are appalling. For, it is industry that has caused the development of large cities with their smoke, dirt, noise, bad air, lack of sunshine and out-door life, slums, disease, prostitution, and

[1] Dictated on 11-4-1926; *vide* "Letter to Richard B. Gregg", 11-4-1926.

unnatural living.

The waste in advertisements is truly "appalling".

> The President of the British Incorporated Society of Advertisement Consultants recently estimated that the annual expenditure on advertisements for the British Isles alone is £ 175, 000, 000. ! ! !

Another striking feature is "parasitism"

> Man is made to obey the machine. The wealthy and middle classes become helpless and parasitic upon the working classes. And the latter become so specialized that they also become helpless. The ordinary city dweller cannot make his own clothing or produce or prepare his own food. The cities become parasitic upon the country. Industrial nations upon agricultural nations. Those who live in temperate climates are increasingly parasitic upon tropical peoples. Governments upon the peoples they govern. Armies upon civilians. People even become parasitic and passive in regard to their recreation and amusements. They want to *be* amused, insted of amusing themselves. They throng the cinemas and theatres and music halls. They watch others play cricket, etc.
>
> Along with this parasitism has come widespread irresponsibility. The industrial "magnate" or banker issues an order in Europe which affects vitally the lives of Negroes in Central Africa.

The consumers, too, fare no better. They too cease to feel the responsibility. Mr. Gregg exclaims :

> When I, seated in a restaurant in France, put some pepper in my soup, do I stop to think what poor coolie in Java, perchance, endured the hard-ship of gathering it, while subject to a fever, and perhaps to the indignities and brutality of harsh plantation supervision?

I must however resist the temptation to quote more from this instructive letter. I must ask the reader to see the original if the samples I have put before him have whetted his appetite for more. The reader must not think that Mr. Gregg is against all machinery. He is against its uncontrolled multiplication. He would regulate and restrain its use as we regulate or ought to regulate and curb our passions. That use of machinery is lawful which subserves the interests of all.

HOW TO HELP?

An Indian correspondent living in London writes :

> Every person asks me how people who live in America, Germany, France, Italy, as well as England can help the Indian cause? What can they do

to help us in our fight for swaraj? They ask further what can India teach the world? Has she any message to the people who are fighting? And, if so, what can she contribute towards creating world peace?

The first question is easily answered. If even God only helps those who help themselves, how would people, imperfect as they are, help one another unless they are prepared to help themselves? But after all there is something in creating a sane world opinion. There is no doubt that that opinion is daily growing in influence. The chapters, which I am reproducing[1] in a somewhat condensed form from Mr. Page's pamphlet, show clearly how people were led into error by mis-education. They were fed during the War on diabolical lies by their respective governments. I have therefore suggested to every European friend who has been good enough to visit the Ashram to study our movement, not from newspaper reports, which are ill-informed where they are not interested, but from original writings. It grieves me to have to say that the British Government agency, both public and secret, is spreading a wholly incorrect view of the situation. No Indian patriotic agency can possibly overtake the lies spread by this highly organized and lavishly paid secret service from whose attention even the great Poet[2] of Asia, indeed of the world, has not been free. It is only impartial and sober representatives of the respective European countries and America who can, if at all, controvert the statements that are being braoadcast on behalf of the British Government.

The second question is more difficult to answer.

If the question had been, what has India taught to the world, I could have referred the questioner to Max Muller's book *What Can India Teach Us?*. But the question here put is not in terms of the past of India but in terms of her present. I must then frankly confess that at the present moment India can teach the world little. She is trying to develop ability to vindicate her liberty by means strictly non-violent and truthful. Some of us who are in movement have an undying faith in those means, but it is not possible in an instant to transmit that faith to people outside India. It is not possible to say that that faith is even the common property of educated India. But there is no doubt that if India succeeds in regaining her liberty through non-violent means, she would have delivered her message to the others who are fighting

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 26-11-1925.

[2] Rabindranath Tagore

for it, and what is perhaps more, she would have made the largest contribution yet known to world peace.

MONTHLY KHADI RETURNS

The following[1] are the figures for production and sale, so far as available, of khadi during the month of January. I do hope that the other provinces or institutions which have not yet sent in their returns will do so without delay, so as to make the figures up to date.

The figures of Andhra are incomplete, only 25 out of 61 organi-zations having sent their reports to the provincial office. Bombay figures include only the sales of the Princess Street Khadi Bhandar, and the Charkha Sangh Bhandar, 14, Dadi Seth Agyari Lane, Kalba- devi Road, and of the Rashtriya Stree Sabha. The figures for the Sandhurst Road Khadi Bhandar are not available. The Bengal figures include those of the Khadi Pratishthan and of the Abhoy Ashram. The Tamilnad figures are complete and the sale figures have been corrected so as to avoid duplication due to sales to branch depots and the like. U.P. figures represent only those of the Gandhi Ashram, Banaras, and Cawnpore Bhandar. The Allahabad Bhandar figures are not available but its average sales amount to about Rs. 700 per month. In Delhi only the figures of Sjt. Chiranjilal Pyarelal, Hapur, are given, the figures of the Swaraj Ashram and the Khadi Bhandar of Sjt. Bishambhar Dayal being not yet available.

Young India, 15-4-1926

110. LETTER TO K. VENKATESAN

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 15, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Sorry, it is not possible to let you have *Young India* free of charge. But if you will send half the subscription, i.e., Rs. $2\frac{1}{2}$, I shall ask the Manager to send your Society a copy.

I am afraid none of my books has been printed in English at the Navajivan Press. They have all been published by different publishers.

[1] Not reproduced here

I shall therefore suggest your writing to them for free copies or at advantageous rates.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. VENKATESAN
HONORARY SECRETARY
ANDHRA DRAMATIC AND LITERARY SOCIETY
QUARTER NO. 9 M. ROAD
P. O. JAMSHEDPUR
(VIA) TATANAGAR, B. N. RY.

From a microfilm : S. N. 19457

111. LETTER TO S. NAGASUNDARAM

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 15, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You may make what use you like of my previous letter[1] to you.

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. S. NAGASUNDARAM
LAKSHMINIVAS BUILDING
MATUNGA

From the original : S. Nagasundaram Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

112. LETTER TO DHAN GOPAL MUKERJEE[2]

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 16, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I wrote to you at the address that was given by you. You are right in surmising that I do not encourage your coming

[1] Dated April 11, 1926 *vide* "Letter to S. Nagasundaram", 11-4-1926.

[2] In reply to the addressee's letter in which he wrote : "About three weeks ago I got your cablegram saying 'Await Letter'. I have not had any word from you since . . . I am afraid it brings me the word that I am not to see you—at lease not yet. . . why have they stopped sending me the paper ? . . . Will you kindly ask the manager to write me regarding my subscription? Let him send me your memoir from the first issue." (S. N. 12465)

specially for the purpose of gathering materials for writing the proposed biography.

I am writing to the Manager, *Young India*, to give him your instructions. Thank you. I am quite well. And the rest from constant travelling that I am giving myself is doing me a great deal of good.

Yours sincerely,

DHAN G. MUKERJEE
1904, TIMES BUILDING
TIMES SQUARE
NEW YORK CITY

From a photostat : S. N. 12465

113. LETTER TO GIR RAJ KISHORE

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 16, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I congratulate you on your decision not to re-marry.

I do not know that you will be happy here. This is a place where hard toil is required of every inmate. One has to commence with cleaning night-soil buckets, agricultural labour, etc., and end with becoming an expert carder, spinner and weaver. Of my own personal guidance you can have but little. If such life would suit you, it will be possible to take you as soon as the pressure which is great here at present is removed.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GIR RAJ KISHORE
C/O SJT. ANANDILALJI
STATION MASTER
MORAK, B. B. AND C. I. RY.

From a microfilm : S. N. 19459

114. LETTER TO G. K. DEVADHAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 16, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your two letters. I explained the contents to Manorama. She says she will wait for a reply from Mrs. Devadhar to whom at your instance she has written. She seems to be somewhat unwilling to move out. But if you or Mrs. Devadhar write to her probably she

would go to the Seva Sadan.

I know that she will never be able by remaining here to earn as much as she can by finishing the course there and I have told her so too. But probably being just now comfortable here she does not want to move out unless she has something definite from you for as soon as I mentioned your letters to her, she said she had not heard anything from you directly and that she was waiting for a reply from Mrs. Devadhar, who I hope is quite all right and who, you should tell her, is free to come to the Ashram as her own home whenever she feels inclined.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S. N. 19460

115. LETTER TO DR. SURESH CHANDRA BANNERJEE

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 16, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

The notice of the Abhoy Ashram prices had led to correspondence like the enclosed. Do you want to cater for orders from outside? If so, please correspond with the writer and let me know so that others who have written may be informed accordingly.

I hope that you were able to get the money in Bombay without any difficult.

Yours sincerely,

DR. SURESH CHANDRA BANNERJEE
ABHOY ASHRAM
COMILLA

From a microfilm : S. N. 19461

116. LETTER TO PYARELAL NAYYAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 16, 1926

MY DEAR PYARELAL,

I have your letter. All things considered, unless Dr. Mehta sends peremptory instructions perhaps it will be as well for Mathuradas to remain in Deolali. But if he himself has the wish and the energy, I know that Sinhgarh is an ideal place during May. He can have

absolutely separate accommodation there. He need not see anybody. There is perfect quiet, no dust and it is very cool there. The water is soft. Kaka has gained much by his having gone there. But the matter is purely for Mathuradas to decide.

Devdas is here now. He is quite alright. He has been taking milk. He looks very pale and weak but now that he is taking milk, he should be soon strong and fit. Motilalji will probably be here next week. I have gained one pound in weight during the week.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S. N. 19462

117. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

SABARMATI,
April 16, 1926

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

I have your telegram in reply to mine. I have accordingly telegraphed to Messrs Kelkar, Moonje and Aney. I add that I know nothing more of this proposed conference beyond a telegram received yesterday from Motilalji saying that he wanted this conference, that I should choose the dates and wire them to you which I did. Assuming that you knew all about it except for the dates. In accordance with your telegrams I have sent wires to the three friends giving Tuesday and Wednesday next. I am supposed to leave for Mussoorie on the 22nd. If these dates are not suitable and my presence is regarded necessary at the conference seeing that there will be but a few invited, perhaps it can take place at Mussoorie.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S. N. 19463

118. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday, April 16, 1926

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter and the cheque for Rs. 26,000. I shall answer your questions regarding the Hindu-Muslim riots, but the replies are not for the Press. I have told you that I have no influence at all now

over the Hindus, at any rate over that class among them which interests itself in these disturbances. My views, therefore, are misunderstood. Hence I believe that it is best for me to say nothing.

If the Government has banned processions and it is necessary to take out one on some religious occasion, I would think it right to do so despite the Government ban. But before starting the procession, I would apologize to the Muslims. If they do not respond even to such a courteous gesture, I should go ahead with the procession and submit to any violence on their part. If I do not have the strength for such non-violence, I should provide myself with means for fighting before taking out the procession.

I would not dismiss grooms and other Muslim servants merely because they are Muslims. But I would not retain a Muslim who was not sincere in his work or behaved rudely to me. I do not believe that the Muslims are more markedly ungrateful than members of any other community, but I have observed that they lose temper more quickly. It seems to me altogether wrong not to have a Muslim simply because he is a Muslim.

Those Hindus who do not approve of the non-violent way or are not equipped to follow it should acquire the strength to fight it out physically.

If the Government takes sides with the Muslims, Hindus need not worry on that account. They should not care for the Government. They should fend for themselves, relying on their own strength without seeking its favour. When the Hindus have cultivated sufficient courage for this, the Government will on its own maintain an impartial attitude, and the Muslims will not then look for its support. In seeking the Government's help, we neither serve our dharma nor give evidence of manhood. I would advise you to look at the matter dispassionately and go on with your work. That is in the best interests of the Hindus, the only way of serving Hinduism, as I can say from my long experience of not less than thiry-five years. I was very pleased with your calm and brave attitude during the riots. You should keep up that attitude and do what you think the situation calls for. If there is anything in my reply which is not clear to you, please do write to me again.

I propose to accept a part of the loan you have promised for the All-India Spinners' Association against the stocks in Bombay. The Association has two godowns in Bombay. If you wish, you may take possession of one of them and acquire sufficient stocks to cover the loan to be kept there. If you agree, we should like you to keep even

more so that we may be saved rent on one godown. In that case, it should be so arranged that we can draw from those stocks whenever we want to. There will be frequent additions to or withdrawal from the stocks which the Spinners' Association will maintain besides what is required by way of security, so that you will have to permit easy access to them.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 6125. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

119. LETTER TO MANILAL DOCTOR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday, April 16, 1926

BHAISHRI MANILAL,

I have your letter. I had certainly thought that I would succeed in persuading Jeki to give over custody of the children, but I realized later that I had over-estimated my influence. I can carry out only that arrangement on which both of you agree. My present effort, therefore, is limited to getting some help. I do not agree with your analysis at all. My experience is just to the contrary. Human failings and weaknesses are to be found everywhere. Some of the weaknesses of our people which you point out are the result of our slavery. And this slavery has not been our lot for only a generation or so. However, we need not enter into a discussion about that. You hold strong views on the subject and I know it is beyond me to change them. I only want that you should recover your equanimity and live in peace. I know that you have suffered much in your life.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S. N. 10888-A

120. LETTER TO JAYAKUNWAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday, April 16, 1926

CHI. JEKI,

I have your letter. I think I did what was necessary as soon as I received the letter from the Ceylonese friends. I did send the papers to Doctor, but I have not yet received his reply. I am writing again. I will

not fail to do my best. I am keeping well.

From a microfilm of the Gujrati : S. N. 10888-B

121. LETTER TO PRANJIVAN MEHTA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday, April 16, 1926

BHAISHRI PRANJIVAN,

I hope you got my earlier letter regarding Jeki. Herewith another. I have also had a letter from Shri Manilal to the same effect. Please decide soon about this matter. I have been awaiting your letter for a long time. I got detailed reports about your health. I will most probably leave for Mussoorie on the 22nd.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 19464

122. LETTER TO DAYALJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday, April 16, 1926

BHAISHRI DAYALJI,

I see from your letter that a meeting is soon to be held of all those who contribute funds for the Vinay Mandir at Surat. Kindly give them the following message on my behalf.

The Mandir's [Managing] Committee has resolved to entrust its administration to me for its better working and for the implementation of the principles on which it was intended to run. I too, have agreed to take over the administration, and am making arrangements to get a special committee formed for the purpose in consultation with Vallabhbhai. Everyone knows that I am not in a position personally to look after the running of the Mandir. It is, therefore, necessary to have some such agency as a committee. I have written to Shri Narahari to accept its principalship till some other arrangement can be made. I am discussing with the President, Shri Nrisimhaprasad what to do next. I hope that our friends will continue to pay the contributions as resolved by them in the year [19]20. I need not say that arrangements will be made to maintain full accounts of the administration of the school.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S. N. 19465

123. LETTER TO R. S. IYER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 17, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter as also the yarn packet. The manager of the Weaving Department tells me that it will take about one month before the yarn can be woven. This department always remains crowded and orders received from outside have to take their turn.

The charge of weaving cloth of 50" width is annas $6\frac{1}{2}$ per yard. After receipt of your reply the order will be put in turn.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. S. IYER
C/O "THE TIMES OF INDIA"
BOMBAY

From a microflim : S. N. 19471

124. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 17, 1926

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS,

I was wondering why you were silent all these days. Now I know. Nothing exciting to report from here. Devdas was suffering from jaundice; therefore, he has come here and Pyarelal has gone to take his place at Deolali. Prabhudas has returned from Lonavala. He still needs careful attention. Devdas is much better now but he is very much pulled down. Jamna Behn has just come in today with Eshwant Prasad. Mira is getting on quite well. She is doing her Hindi regularly with Surendra. I hope you are getting *Young India* and *Navajivan* regularly.

Yours,

SJT. KRISHNADAS
DARBHANGA

From a microfilm : S. N. 19472

125. LETTER TO N. C. KELKAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 17, 1926

DEAR MR. KELKAR,

I have your wire in reply to which I have sent the following:

"Do come. Man proposes God disposes."

I had no idea of this informal conference. Panditji telegraphed to me saying I should fix dates convenient for me before leaving for Mussoorie and inform him and Mr. Jayakar of the dates. I wired accordingly to both of them and Mr. Jayakar of the dates. I wired accordingly to both of them and Mr. Jayakar wired to me saying he would come but that I should send my own wires to you, Dr. Moonje, and Mr. Aney which I did. Whether the conference will be fruitful or not will depend on the mode that guides us all when we meet. I have not heard from Panditji as to what he proposes to do or what he expects, or on what basis he has decided this informal conference.

I have just now received wires from Dr. Moonje and Mr. Aney that they will attend. Mr. Aney's says that friends in Bengal and elsewhere should also be invited. But I presume Panditji has issued invitations himself.

Hoping to have the pleasure of meeting you on Tuesday.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. C. KELKAR
"KESARI" OFFICE
POONA

From a photostat : S. N. 19474

126. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA MUKERJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 17, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I was so delighted to receive your long letter and another from Krishna. I shall read the pamphlet you have sent me and let you have my opinion on it.

I hope that this visit to Darbhanga will restore you completely. Yes, the Hindu-Muslim question has to solve itself. God's ways are

inscrutable and I believe in complete non-interference where there is no definite light from within.

I expect to leave for Mussoorie on the 22nd instant.

Yours sincerely,

From microfilm : S. N. 19475

127. LETTER TO GOVINDJI PITAMBER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, April 17, 1926

BHAI GOVINDJI PITAMBER,

I have your letter. All the steps in the ceremony besides *Saptapadi*, from the installation of Ganesh to the Vedic sacrifice, were performed in the Ashram precincts, in fact on the Ashram lawns. I think it will be difficult to send Shastriji from here. See if you can make arrangements at Morvi. If you don't succeed, you may write to me. I shall then try my best. I do not have with me a printed copy of all the ritual [verses] which formed part of the ceremony performed here. I propose to get them printed. But that will take some time. Please explain this patiently to the visitors from Maliya. I shall be able to send you the verses used in the ceremony here, in case any Brahmin there comes forward to officiate.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 10889

128. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, April 17, 1926

BHAI NAJUKLAL,

Please treat this letter as meant for you both. I was, and am still, so busy that I am surprised I could dictate even a couple of lines.[1] But I remembered the saying "Rather than have no uncle at all, it is better to have someone whom one may call uncle." I contented myself with two lines. That apart, when I think of Moti's nature and the line and a half she has written, surely I must regard my two lines more than sufficient ! And you gave her a new name, more pompous than the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Motibehn Choksi", 11-4-1926.

one she boasted. When Sukanya[1] wrote letters, even grown-up and experienced men and women must have found something to learn from them. When may I expect similar letters from this Sukanya ? Well, you two may think over this and let me know. Does your recovery mean you are restored to perfect health? See that you always remain as fit as you are now. It seems we shall be leaving for Mussoorie on the 22nd. Lakshmidas is touring Kathiawar. He will be here on the 20th and most probably will accompany me. Moti seems to be doing rather well at her English. I guess this from her handwriting. But tell her that her Gujarati handwriting is still far from being as neat as well-strung pearls[2].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 12126

129. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, April 17, 1926

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

Read the enclosed letter. If you need any hand there, take up Vallabhji. I have known him a little and perhaps you also know him. I think Ramdas knows him. You need not take him up just to employ him. You may engage him only if you need a hand and find Vallabhji suitable. If you decide to appoint him, please write to him directly and also drop a line to me.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S. N. 19466

130. LETTER TO MANU

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, April 17, 1926

CHI. MANU[3],

I learnt that you were very ill. Since then I have been keeping

[1] A young princess who volunteered to marry the old and infirm *rishi* Chyavan
[2] Literally, "Moti" means a pearl.
[3] Son of Prof. Trivedi; *vide* "Its Meaning", 27-5-1926

myself informed about your health through visitors. I was recently told by Swami Anand that you are now almost normal, and have learnt it again today from Shri Chandrakant's letter. I have not forgotten your many services to me when I was in hospital nor your majestic gait, nor your ever-smiling face. May God restore you to complete health and grant you a long life dedicated to the service of the country.

From the microfilm of the Gujarati : S. N. 19468

131. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, April 17, 1926

BHAISHRI CHANDRAKANT,

I got your letter, as also the cheque for Rs. 500. I was glad to hear that my argument had appealed to mother. I shall utilize the amount only to help victims of famine who can do a little work. I had learnt that Chi. Manu was better now. I inquire after him every time I have visitors from that side. Since you have specially written about him, I enclose a letter for him. Please pass it on to him.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S. N. 19467

132. LETTER TO PRABHALAKSHMI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, April 17, 1926

CHI. PRABHALAKSHMI,

I got your letter giving the story of your life. I could read it to the end only yesterday. I got your second letter today. Your story is distressing. I shall use the information on suitable occasions, leaving out the names of places and persons. I think we should keep ourselves within the limits of the four *varnas*, except when there are reasons to the contrary. There will be no possibility of love springing up between a man and a woman if from the very beginning their emotions are so trained that they learn to regard such love as forbidden, as, for instance, brother and sister. We may think of God as either a Being or as Formless Essence. I think we may meditate upon the Formless

Essence as *satchidanand*[1]. *Phalannahar*[2] would be a rather difficult and pretentious phrase. The best way is to take cooked grain to include fruit. I should like you to be perfectly self-composed.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19469

133. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, April 17, 1926

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. You will need time to recover enough strength. It will be some time before you are able to lift Dilip and yet feel no strain. We have decided to go to Mussoorie by the metregauge line. I think I must resist for the time being my desire to see you. Not only will it take more time to go *via* Bombay, but there would be other difficulties too. If I stay with you, I would not leave in a day. On my way back, I am think- ing of returning to the Ashram *via* Deolali, if you are there then. After my talk with Devdas, I have concluded that you will stay on at Deolali. I would certainly be happy if you took courage and came to Mussoorie. I know it would be rather difficult to have Taramati with you there. But I will write to you again after I reach Mussoorie and see how things there are. If, however, you can consider going to Mussoorie independently of me, you will be very welcome, and in that case it is not at all necessary for you to wait for my decision. Jamnalalji comes here tomorrow. I intend to discuss this matter with him too. In case you decide to come, there is no need for you to bring along your cook and other servants. You need not be scared of the hospital at Juhu. The decision to leave this place on the 22nd stands for the present. Motilalji, Jayakar and others are holding their discussions here on Tuesday and Wednesday. I cannot tell if this will delay my departure.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S. N. 19470

[1] Absolute existence, consciousness and bliss
[2] Diet of fruit and grain

134. MY "KAMADHENU"[1]

I know that I have been ridiculed by some people for calling the spinning-wheel a gateway to my salvation. But even so may, a person who makes himself a little ball of clay, gives to it the imposing name of Parthiweshwar Chintamani and concentrates on it all the faculties of his being in the hope of "seeing God face to face" by that means, be sneered at those who do not share his faith in the life-giving power of his image. But would he, madly bent as he is on attaining self-realization, give up his worship on this account? No. On the contrary he will strive on without flagging till success crowns his efforts, as in the end it must, while his detractors will only be the worse off for their gibes. Similarly, if my conception of the spinning-wheel comes from a pure heart, it will become to me the means of my salvation. A faithful Hindu's ears will automatically turn to the direction where *Ramanama* is being repeated, and for the time being all the evil passions will subside in him. What does it matter if the repetition of that divine name fails to produce any impression on others? A Hindu may not be in the least affected by the cry of *Allah-o-Akbar*, but a Mussalman is roused by it. Similarly, a pious Englishman, the moment he is reminded of the presence within him of God, will be able to restrain his passions and compose him- self for the time being. As is the spirit behind worship, so is the fruit thereof.

It follows then that even if the spinning-wheel be in itself nothing, and the virtues that I have attributed to it exist only in my imagination, it will still prove at least to me my *Kamadhenu*, i.e., Cow of Plenty. I think of the poor of India every time that I draw a thread on the wheel. The poor of India today have lost faith in God, more so in the middle classes or the rich. For a person suffering from the pangs of hunger, and desiring nothing but to fill his belly, his belly is his God. To him anyone who gives him bread is his Master. Through him he may even see God. To give alms to such persons, who are sound in all their limbs, is to debase oneself and them. What they need is some kind of occupation, and the occupation that will give employment to millions can only be hand-spinning. But I can instill my faith in the potency of hand-spinning in the minds of the toilers of India not by making speeches but only by spinning myself. Therefore, I have described my spinning as a penance or sacrament.

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 18-4-1926. This is an translation by Mahadev Desai.

And, since I believe that where there is pure and active love for the poor there is God also, I see God in every thread that I draw on the spinning-wheel.

WHY SHOULD YOU SPIN?

So much for *my* conception of the spinning-wheel. If you can accept my viewpoint, then nothing more remains to be desired. But it is likely that it may not be acceptable to you. Even then there is a host of reasons why you should spin. I give below only a few of them :

1. You can make others spin only if you spin yourself.

2. You can, by yourself spinning and giving your yarn to the All-India Spinners' Association, in the end help to make possible a reduction in the prices of khadi.

3. By learning to spin, you can now or at any future time, whenever you may wish, help the propaganda of spinning. Experience has shown that those who are ignorant even of the alpha and omega of the art of spinning are of no use for such work.

4. If you will yourself spin, the quality of spinning will improve. Those who spin for wages must naturally be impatient. They will continue to spin the count that they are accustomed to. The task of imroving the count of yarn essentially belongs to the research worker, the lover of spinning. This has been proved by experience. If there had not arisen a class of spinners, including both men and women, who spin purely out of a spirit of service the amazing progress that has been achieved in the quality of yarn would not have been possible.

5. If you spin, your talents can be utilized in effecting improvements in the mechanism of the spinning-wheel. All the improvements that have been made in the mechanism of the spinning-wheel and the speed of spinning up till now are solely due to the efforts of those devoted workers who spin for sacrifice.

6. The ancient art of India is today gradually suffering extinction. Its revival to a very large extent depends on the revival of hand-spinning. That there is art in spinning, those who have practised it as a sacrament know well enough. During the Satyagraha Week, the spinners would not tire of spinning at all. Of course, one of the reasons why they did not feel any weariness was certainly the spirit in which they had undertaken it. But, if there were no art in spinning, if there were no music in it, it would have become impossible for those young men who span for twenty-two and a half hours out of twenty-

four. It should be borne in mind in this connection that these spinners were not induced to the effort by hope of gaining any prize. The spinning was its own reward.

7. In our country manual labour is regarded as a low occupation. Our poets have gone so far as to describe the happy rich as never having to touch mother earth at all, so much so that hair begins to grow on the soles of their feet! Thus the highest function (body labour) to which a man is born and with which, the sages tell us, Brahma created him, we have in fact looked down upon as something mean and degrading. We should spin therefore if only to guard against the pernicious tendency of regarding the toilers as being low in the social scale. Spinning is therefore as obligatory on the prince as on the peasant.

TO THE JUVENILES

All the foregoing reasons apply to you irrespective of the sex to which you belong. But there are some additional reasons why you in particular should spin. It is to these that I now want to draw your attention :

1. How nice it would be for you to labour for the poor from your childhood : spinning will nourish your sense of philanthropy in the right way.

2. If you do your spinning at a fixed time every day you will develop in you the sense of regularity. For, if you are regu- lar in spinning, you will try to be regular in other things also, and it is the universal experience that a boy with regular habits does twice the amount of work that a boy does who works irregu- larly.

3. It will develop your sense of tidiness; for, without tidiness, good yarn cannot be spun at all. You will have to keep your slivers clean, your hands likewise clean and free from perspiration. You will have to see also that the place around you is free from dust, etc. After spinning you will have to wind your yarn tidily on the winding frame, then carefully spray it and finally make it into a neat fine hank.

4. It will enable you to learn how to effect repairs in a simple machine. Ordinarily boys and girls of India are not given this training. If you are lazy and get your servant or some older relative to clean your wheel for you, you will miss this training; but I have taken it for granted that every child who sends or will send his yarn to the All-India Spinners' Association is fond of his wheel. Besides, a boy who does his spinning with interest will master all the details about the

various parts of his spinning-wheel. A carpenter always cleans his own tools. And, just as a carpenter who does not know how to clean his own tools can hardly be ranked as a carpenter, similarly, a boy who cannot prepare his own *mal* (winding string), make his own *sari* (composition applied to the spindle where the *mal* touches it) or prepare his spindle-holders, can hardly be called a spinner; he is only the travesty of a spinner.

Young India, 20-5-1926

135. NOTES

"PRANA-PRATISHTHA" INTO THE BHILS

Shri Amritlal proposes once again to hold a fair for the Bhils[1] on the forthcoming Rama-navami[2] day. On that occasion a temple to Ramachandra is to be declared open, that is, there will be *prana-pratishtha*[3] into the idol of Rama. Why may we not call it *prana-pratishtha* into the Bhils? Shri Amritlal has shown us our duty towards them. We hardly ever accept them as human beings. The Government has also classified them as a scheduled tribe. Thus neither society nor the Government takes interest in them. These so-called uncivilized communities are bound to attract the attention of the missionaries, for it is the latter's duty to get recruits for the Christian Army. I do not regard such proselytization as a real service to dharma. But how can we blame the missionaries, if the Hindus take no interest in the Bhils? For to them anyone who is brought into the Chris-tian fold, no matter how, has become a Christian, has entered a new life and become civilized. If, as a result of such conversion, the converts rise spiritually or morally, I personally would have nothing to say against their conversion. But I do not think that this is what happens. I, there-fore, say that the *prana-pratishtha* into the idol in this temple will in fact be *prana-pratishtha* into the Bhils themselves, for I suppose that they will from that time onwards understand the holy power of the name Rama, will feel God's presence and resolve to give up eating meat and drinking and be filled with new life. The building of the temple, however, is but the beginning of our service to them, not its end. There are many things we can do to serve them; but workers are few,

[1] A tribe in Western and Central India
[2] Birth-anniversary of Rama
[3] Invocation of life

and that is our misfortune.

HARDSHIP SUFFERED BY A WORKER SERVING "ANTYAJAS"

A worker serving *Antayajas* writes :[1]

This is no ordinary problem for him. We cannot compliment the young man enough for his determination. If he remains firm in his decision and exercises self-control, God Himself will help him in his difficulty. Only if we emerge successful from such ordeals do we prove our sincerity in practising dharma and preserving it.

The correspondent seems to belong to the Vaisya class. It is our good fortune that workers serving the cause of *Antyajas* come mostly from the higher castes. *Varnashrama* is a part of dharma, but not so the hundreds of sub-divisions of communities which exist today. They are merely a matter of custom, and the custom has proved harmful in many ways. Custom can be, ought to be, reformed. If the correspondent does in fact belong to the Vaisya class, and if he shows courage enough to look for a partner outside the particular sub-caste to which he belongs, he will have a large field to choose from. It is very necessary that people should follow a new custom and enter into marriage alliances among the sub-divisions of the major castes of Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras. That is, marriages should be permitted in cricles among which, under the rules of *Varnashrama* inter-dining is permitted. This worker should acquaint the *mahajan*[2] his sub-caste with his story and his abilities. If he receives no help from that quarter, he should not give way to despair or get angry but should narrate the same facts to the *mahajan* of all Vaisya communities in Gujarat and seek their help. If he has any worth in him, I am confident that he will not be forced to violate any reasonable social restriction but will get the help he needs.

This and all other public workers in a similar predicament should be very careful that, if they are engaged in the service of *Antyajas* or in any other service in a purely religious spirit, no matter what they have to put up with, they should never resort to untruth or get angry, that is, commit violence. If they adhere to truth and observe such limited non-violence, they will win credit for themselves and bring glory to their dharma and their country, and will be able to

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had described his difficulty in finding a life partner for him because he was working among *Antayajas*.

[2] Traditional representative body looking after the affairs of a community or a professional or business group.

solve the problem at the cost of minimum of suffering. This worker, therefore, should publish the facts of his case without any exaggeration.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-4-1926

136. ASSORTED QUESTIONS[—I][1]

MAY A VOW BE VIOLATED?

A gentleman writes :[2]

A vow can always be taken in regard to a good thing. There can never be a pledge to do an evil act. If anyone takes such a vow through ignorance, it becomes his duty to break it. For example, if a man takes a vow to act immorally, his awakening and his purification lie in his renouncing such a pledge. It is a sin to observe it.

TO REMEARRY OR PARTICIPATE IN NATIONAL SERVICE

A perplexed gentleman writes :[3]

There are some ailments for which time itself provides remedies. In the meantime, we should be at peace with ourselves. If your decision is unalterable and if you are determined not to marry until you have chosen your field of work and made arrangements for earning your living, you should politely and firmly inform your elders of your decision. They will be pleased. If your mind is not made up to that extent and deep within you there is a desire to get married, it is good to listen to your elders. There is no doubt that it is difficult for a widower of a wealthy family to avoid remarriage. He alone can avoid it to whom remarriage is like a blow on the head.

Hence my advice is that you should sit in a solitary place and

[1] These appeared in five instalments in *Navajivan* on March 21 and 28 and April 4, 11 and 18, and have been placed together under the date of the last instalment. In his introductory note, Mahadev Desai writes : "The questions have been taken from Gandhiji's mail. The gist of the questions is given in my words, the replies in Gandhiji's own words."

[2] The correspondent had asked whether it would be proper to violate a pledge which one had taken in a moment of mental weakness or if he discovered after a few days of observing it that he had committed a mistake in taking it.

[3] The correspondent had asked for advice whether he should remarry in accordance with the wishes of his elders or engage himself in national service.

think with a calm mind, and thereafter act in accordance with the response you get from your heart. I can merely point out the way. When taking a decision, you should fearlessly follow the dictates of your conscience regardless of the advice given by me or by others.

SHOULD THE NOSE AND EARS BE PIERCED?

I regard it as barbarous to pierce any part of a young girl's body.

WHO SHOULD BE GIVEN A REPLY?

A gentleman writes:[1]

I have gone through the handbill. There is no doubt that it is highly obnoxious. However, my advice is that no thought whatever should given to it. Such matters receive some importance if they are replied to. And such statements are made merely in order to gain publicity. If I consider it proper to clarify anything, I shall do so when an occasion arises.

TO A LAWYER[2]

I have received your letter. Many remedies can be sug- gested to you if only you forget the fact that you have become a lawyer. But can you be asked to undertake mannual labour? You your-self can spin, make others spin, card and make others earn; will you be interested in such activities? Will you be satisfied with earning a living in the same way as a labourer? All my remedies are as simple as they are difficult. However, write to me if you can live the life of a labourer.

TO A PATIENT[3]

It is difficult to advise you without seeing you. But I can, at any rate, make the following suggestions, many of which you will be able to put into practice :

As far as possible, try to remain in fresh air. Take the lightest possible diet, just enough to keep the body functioning but not enough to stuff your stomach. Give up all spices. If you do have to take any dal, eat a very small quantity of it. Give up altogether all

[1] The correspondent had sent a handbill in which certain statements made by Gandhiji had been misinterpreted and had said that someone would be considerably harmed if Gandhiji did not reply to it.

[2] A qualified lawyer had become ill, could not earn his living, felt helpless and asked Gandhiji to guide him.

[3] The correspondent, a student, had ruined his health through bad habits, and asked for Gandhiji's advice.

fatty, fried and indigestible food. Take a little regular light exercise every morning and evening.

Keep good company only. By good company I mean the company of noble men and good books and by good books I mean clean books.

If you have not become physically very weak, you should bathe in cold water every day.

Keep your mind and body engaged in good work during all waking hours.

Go to bed early and leave your bed at four o'clock every morning. At this hour, read and reflect upon the *Bhagavad Gita* or the *Ramayana* or any such book in which you have unwavering faith.

Do this much and completely give up the idea of marriage. It is totally erroneous to believe that marriage is essential for the purpose of leading a pure life.

YARN BY WAY OF SUBSCRIPTION

Your suggestion that yarn spun by you should be accepted as subscription for *Young India* is indeed novel. No rule has been laid down in this matter and there are no arrangements in the office of *Young India* to receive yarn by way of subscription. How- ever, if you send me 50,000 yards of well-twisted yarn of twenty counts, I shall request the manager of *Young India* to accept it in place of subscription, that is, the Ashram will purchase it and remit the amount to the office of *Young India*. The rate of 50,000 yards is more than the price and not less, but it is not possible to decide upon taking yarn worth exactly five rupees.

The yarn has to be examined and tested, only then can it be accepted. If you decide to send yarn, please send it in hanks of 500 yards each, because if there is any difficulty in counting and testing it, it will not be accepted in lieu of subscription, but if you so desire, it will be returned to you at your own expense.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-3-1926

137. ASSORTED QUESTIONS[—II]

USE QUININE REGULARLY![1]

I do not take quinine now. Have you had it proved that a man has got rid of malaria permanently through quinine or do you know of any such instance? During fever, I had taken quinine in small doses for three or four days. Now of course the fever has left me. The doctor gave a few injections too. I did not know to what extent they would benefit me. But instead of having a long argument, I took them.

WHY DID I TAKE QUININE?[2]

The bad effects of quinine that you have enumerated result from large doses taken over a long time. As a matter of fact, I had taken it only in doses of five grains each and never more than ten grains a day. This too I took dissolved in lemon juice, soda and water. I certainly did not take more than thirty grains in the course of five days. On four days I took only five grains a day. After taking this much of quinine, I experienced no bad effects and, what is more, I was able to please many friends and doctors who urged me to take doses of fifteen grains.

Moreover, one should not thus blindly oppose quinine, as its usefulness as a means of saving oneself from malaria even for a short spell is obvious. If the people save themselves for the time being from the terrible effects of malaria they do not bother about the evil effects which may make their appearance later. Hence the attack must be direct and it must be established that there is no benefit at all from quinine.

I took quinine for the same reasons for which I had undergone an operation[3] while I was in jail. I had to undergo the operation under pressure of the jail authorities. Then imagine what must have been the extent of the pressure exerted by friends' love while taking quinine. But this much is true that had I not been convinced that my consenting to the operation was the result of my weakness, I would not have had even the operation. But that weakness has resulted from an

[1] A friend had advised Gandhiji to keep on taking quinine regularly even after his illness was over as the germs of malaria could be killed that way alone.

[2] Another friend, a champion of nature cure, felt deeply hurt that Gandhiji had taken quinine.

[3] *Vide* "Interview to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 12-1-1924.

imperfect faith in what you call nature cure. Moreover, the method of that treatment has certainly not been perfected. If you have anything in mind besides nature cure, it is faith in God and hence the feeling that whatever happens should be witnessed and borne. I have not yet reached that state. One can go in that direction only through effort. We cannot attain this thing like clothes which we can put on when we wish, nor can we have the assurance through argument that the Protector of the world always protects us. It can only be had through *darshan*.

ANOTHER CLARIFICATION[1]

Please tell the friend from Burma that though I had taken injections of iron and arsenic, I still wish to stick to my views indicated in my article on medicines and doctors. It is one thing to have an ideal and another to be able to observe it. Today my friends say that I have no authority over my body at all, that it belongs to the nation, that they and the others have as much right as I have to take interest in its well-being, and convince me by their beautiful argument that I am merely a trustee for the protection of my body, and that I have a right to cherish it. Therefore, if friends like the one from Burma see a contradiction between my ideal and my conduct, you should tell them that until they become mahatmas like me, they should firmly stick to the resolve not to touch medicines and to call in doctors. And if they stick to that straight and difficult path, they will ensure their welfare. Tell them in private even this that though I have acceded to my friends' plea, I have taken only thirty grains of quinine in five days and only five injections in five weeks.

YOU LIKE A BLOUSE BUT NOT A SARI[2]

Your letter to hand. Since you like blouses made of khadi, will you not now pass on to saris? Why do native people develop a fascination for foreign clothes? If our country is dear to us, we ought to like its products. Can one who does not like cloth woven and spun by the hands of the poor people of India be regarded as the offspring of India?

[1] This was in reply to yet another friend.

[2] A young lady had written that she liked wearing a blouse made of khadi, but not a sari of the same material.

WHERE SHOULD A KHADI BHAVAN BE BUILT?[1]

Your letter to hand as also the appeal. You say that no work is being done in your district, that the workers regard themselves as all-knowing and act foolishly. What is the use of constructing a building in these circumstances? How can I consent to it? Will people be less foolish after the construction of a building? Or will they acquire the urge for service? A Bhavan must be constructed where the number of workers is increasing, all the rules are being observed, all the workers enjoy the confidence of the people, there is mutual trust among all, and all live unitedly. My clear advice to you is that until efficient workers join together, you do not even think of having a Bhavan.

GOING TO PURI FOR A CHANGE OF AIR[2]

If it is only going to the seaside for a change of air, why should I go to Puri? Shall I not go to a small hamlet which is near my birth-place? In Puri the bungalows frown on the one hand and, on the other hand, the famine-stricken people swarm the temple for a handful of dirty rice from the pilgrims. How can Puri give me the peace and the benefit of rural life which I get nearer home? It is not only that Puri reminds me of our terrible degradation today as well as sacred events of former times, but is has now become the health resort of soldiers who are paid by us to suppress our freedom. All these thoughts make me sad. When I was there, though my friends had placed me in an attractive spot on the seashore and had overwhlemed me with love, I was not at home there. How could they devise a remedy for the mental affliction which I suffered from thoughts of the soldiers' barracks there, and of those Oriyas dying of hunger amid the hard-hearted rich of that place?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-3-1926

138. ASSORTED QUESTIONS[—III]

A LAWYER'S DILEMMA

There is nothing wrong in living happily by taking the name of Rama. If one cannot earn wealth, it is nothing to grieve over. You alone can know whether you are able to practise your dharma or not. What you have said about the camel forcing its way in while you are

[1] While complaining of the slow progress of khadi, the secretary of a district committee had asked Gandhiji to get Rs. 5,000 from the Khadi Board for a Khadi Bhavan building for his district.

[2] This is in reply to a sister who had invited Gandhiji to Jagannathpuri for a change of air.

trying to drive away the goat is not applicable here. It is a grave error to suppose that nocturnal dischagres are more enfeebling than the sexual act. Both of these lead to loss of vigour; very often the sexual act causes greater debility. But through force of tradition we are not able to recognize the enjoyment of sex and nocturnal discharge gives us a mental shock. Hence we believe that we have become more enfeebled than we actually have been. Perhaps it has not escaped your attention that such involuntary discharges can take place even while one continues to indulge in the sexual act. Therefore, if you accept the value of celibacy and cherish the desire to practise it, you should continue its practice without worrying about the discharges which take place despite continuous effort to check them. It is difficult to say when you will gain control over your mind after putting *brahmacharya* into actual practice for a length of time, as there is no uniform time limit for all persons. A longer or shorter period of time must elapse according to the capacity of each individual. Some persons cannot gain this control throughout their lives; nevertheless they certainly reap the invaluable fruit of *brahmacharya* which they have practised in their conduct and they become masters in future of bodies which are able to control their minds.

In my opinion, it is not necessary for a husband to seek his wife's consent for the practice of *brahmacharya*, nor is it *vice versa*. It is desirable that the two should assist each other in this matter. It is proper to attempt to get this co-operation. But regardless of whether this consent is obtained or not, the one who desires it should practise it and both would reap its benefits. Consent may not be necessary for eschewing union, but consent of both is necessary for union. The man who indulges in the sexual act without his wife's consent is guilty of the sin of using force. He violates the laws of both God and the world.

PIERCING NOSE AND EARS A RITE ENJOINED BY SHASTRAS!

I have not not heard of the Vedic ritual of having the nose and the ears pierced. But even if it is proved that it is a Vedic rite, I would say that this should not be done, just as human sacrifices cannot be offered today. I know of many men who suffered from hydrocele although their ears had been pierced. Innumerable men who had [not] had their noses or ears pierced have remained free from this complaint. This is a well-known fact. Further I also know that hydrocele has been cured without resorting to the piercing of ears. The sentence that you have quoted from a doctor states that it seems that this practice had been recently introduced. When we have faith in three individuals, and when they differ in their views, we should either

exercise our own judgment or follow the one in whom we have the greatest faith.

BIRTH IN LOWER SPECIES

It is indeed my belief that the soul after having been born in the human form can so degrade itself as to be born even in the form of an animal or plant.

LOVE OR DHARMA?[1]

You alone can resolve the dilemma which faces you. If you feel that renouncing a meat diet is the dharma for you, you should firmly refuse to yield to your mother's love. If doing so is merely a kind of experiment, hurting your mother's feelings will be regarded as a sin.

LOVERS' PROBLEM[2]

Where there is pure love, there is no room for impatience. Such love cannot be physical but only spiritual. Physical love is nothing but lust. Restrictions of caste are more important than this. Spiritual love will brook no barriers. But that love involves *tapascharya* and so great is the patience required, that it does not matter even if the separation lasts until death. Your first task is to put your problem before your elders and listen to them and think over what they say. Finally, your dharma is to listen to the dictates of your own conscience after purifying it through the observance of self-control.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-4-1926

139. ASSORTED QUESTIONS[—IV]

"SHRADDHA" AND LIBERATION

I maintain an attitude of neutrality towards *shraddha*. If it does have any spiritual utility, I do not know it. I do not understand too how a departed person is benefited through *shraddha*. A sort of religious sentiment may grow by immersing the ashes of the dead in the Ganga, but if there is any other advantage in doing so, I am ignorant of that too.

In my opinion, the story of king Sagar is an allegory, it is not a

[1] The correspondent, a Muslim youth, abhorred meat but did not wish to displease his mother who wanted him to take it.

[2] The correspondents—a young man and a woman belonging to different castes—were in love and wished to get married, but without displeasing their elders.

historical tale. What I said in regard to repeating the name of Narayana is said with the intention of increasing one's faith. I cannot be convinced of the truth of the story that a person who repeats that *mantra* without understanding its meaning, simply because his son's name happens to be Narayana, would attain liberation; but if anyone in whose heart Narayana dwells repeats this *mantra*, he will certainly attain *moksha* because of it.

DHARMA OF MARRIED PEOPLE[1]

The couple who you say overindulge in the gratification of their desires do not practise the dharma of husband and wife. I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that such persons are even worse than animals. A girl of twelve or thirteen is incapable of observing the dharma of a wife. He who maintains sexual intercourse with her is guilty of a grave sin.

I did not know the fact that you have mentioned about a woman who is in her menses. I cannot accept the dharma that after four days she must have intercourse with a man. So long as the menstrual flow continues, I regard her touch as some- thing that a husband must renounce. After it has ceased, I do not see any harm in their union if both of them desire to have children.

A WOMAN DURING HER MENSTRUAL PERIOD AND ONE WHO HAS JUST DELIVERED A CHILD

The menstrual period is a monthly ailment for women. During this, the patient requires a great deal of peace, and association with a lustful man is dangerous to her.

The same rule applies to a woman who has just delivered a child and she is given rest for at least twenty days. I believe that this is a very good practice. But it is going too far when even female relatives are not allowed to come into physical contact with her.

A TEACHER'S QUESTIONS[2]

1. You can teach best by identifying yourself with your

[1] The correspondent had written about the absence of self-control among married people and asked Gandhiji to remove the false belief that the sexual act was a duty.

[2] Briefly, they were: 1. How to teach in the best possible manner? 2. What should be read for one's ultimate good? 3. What is the best diet? 4. Tea used to give me headache, so I gave it up and started missing one meal. Why is it that whereas I feel hungry in the evening, I feel heavy in the morning? 5. What are the ways of attaining concentration? 6. If you have not been able to hear the inner voice, how then can I hear it? 7. How does one get a glimpse of God? 8. Can one find peace through activity?

students. In order to do so, the teacher must prepare himself fully in the subject he has to teach.

2. If you read the *Gita* and the *Ramayana* and reflect on them, you will get all you need.

3. Wheat, milk and green vegetables should suffice mostly as diet. It is essential to give up spices and oil.

4. You should drink a little milk in the evening if you feel very hungry and, in case you cannot digest it, take an orange, grapes or some such raw fruit. You should vigorously walk as much as possible in the open air, morning and evening.

5. In order to purify one's heart and attain concentration, it is very helpful to read and reflect upon the above books and to repeat the name of Rama when one is not engaged in any good work.

6. We should continue to make efforts and have faith that these efforts must produce results.

7. The total destruction of passions and emotions is the only way to catch a glimpse of the Self.

8. The highest degree of peace can certainly be attained through noble activity.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-4-1926

140. ASSORTED QUESTIONS[–V]

WHAT THEN SHALL WE DO?[1]

Shri Manilal Kothari gave me your message. How nice it would be if I could give something inspiring and definite and working at lightning speed! But in the conditions of today I have nothing of that kind to offer. There have been many meetings, resolutions and motions opposing such imprisonments in the Legislative Assembly. Now we must do something in which we can feel our strength. Therefore nothing else than boycott of foreign cloth occurs to me and

[1] Sarat Chandra Bose, brother of Subhas Chandra Bose, who was held in Mandalay Prison, though innocent, had asked whether they could do nothing to get him released, as all constitutional methods had failed to secure freedom for such prisoners. Gandhiji sent him this message.

that boycott is impossible of achievement without khadi.

In effect, nothing but the spinning-wheel strikes me as a remedy against all our ills like imprisonment, etc. But how can I convince the people that it is an unfailing remedy? I must say that my faith in it is immutable, it increases with every passing day. Hence we plied the spinning-wheel day and night for seven days during the National Week and did so with the confidence that some day we shall derive such strength from the spinning-wheel that through it we shall be able some day to realize our heart's desire.

Of course, apart from the spinning-wheel, there is another way and that is the way of violence. But I am not capable of it and, what is more, I have no faith in it. Moreover, since I am a man of practical sense, I know that our violence will be nothing compared to the violence of the Government. Hence I have given up all other remedies and have put out to sea trusting to the boat of my spinning-wheel. I invite all those who like you feel confused to come and sit with me in my boat. Have firm faith in my assurance that this boat will definitely take us to the other shore, but it will need all our strength, organizational power and discipline to row it across.

JALLIANWALA BAGH[1]

The site was purchased out of the money collected for the Jallianwala Bagh. The ground has been cleared. A garden has been laid out. No temple has been built as conditions in India are unfavourable at present. When we are destroying the foundation for our freedom, how can we erect a grand temple upon it? I believe the trustees hesitate to build any temple at all because of thoughts like these.

A careful account is maintained of the money left after the purchase of the land and the details of the account are being regularly sent to the trustees from time to time through the secretary and are also published.

NON-VIOLENCE[2]

Have I not seen such violence being committed? Very often I

[1] A correspondent had asked Gandhiji what had been done with the funds collected for the Jallianwala Bagh Memorial.

[2] A correspondent observed that he often saw small creatures swallowing one another, a lizard catching insects and a cat catching birds, and had asked whether he could be just a passive witness or kill the potential killer and prevent violence.

have seen a lizard hunting a cockroach and the latter hunting other insects. But I have never considered it my duty to oppose the law of the animal world—"An insect sustains an insect's life"[1]. I do not profess to unravel the dark mysteries of God, but seeing such violence often, I feel that the law of animals and of the lower orders of creation is not the law of man. Man has to make a determined effort to conquer and kill the animal within him and thus keep alive his soul. We have to learn the great magical formula of non-violence out of the conflagration of violence raging around us. Therefore, if man realizes his own dignity and understands his life-work, he should himself refrain from participating in violence and prevent inferior creatures as also animals under his control from tormenting one another. He can maintain that ideal only as far as he himself is concerned and if nothing else is possible, he can at any rate refrain from tormenting his brethren who are weaker than himself. And even to maintain that ideal fully, he will certainly have to keep up his endeavours day and night unceasingly. Then will he be able some day to reach it. Full success will only come when man attains *moksha* and wins release from all the limitations to which the body is heir.

PRINCIPLES AND VOWS[2]

Even if I am not able fully to implement the ideas expressed in *Hind Swaraj*, I think there is nothing wrong in claiming that those ideas are correct. The maxim you quote can certainly not be applied to me because I do not excuse myself but wholly acknowledge my fault.

Where a distinction is made between making a resolve and taking a vow, only taking a vow is worth while. A resolve which can be broken cannot be regarded as a resolve. It has no value at all.

CONCENTRATION[3]

Concentration of mind can be brought about by practice. One can practise concentration by losing oneself in good and desirable activity. As for example, with single-minded devotion, someone serves

[1] A Sanskrit saying

[2] A correspondent had asked that since Gandhiji himself was not able to observe the principles laid down by him in his book, *Hind Swaraj*, in regard to railways, milk and medicines, why he should insist on sticking to them. Further, he had also asked if it was not enough if one made a resolve to do something; was it necessary to take a vow?

[3] A correspondent had asked for some ways of achieving concentration of mind.

a patient, someone serves the *Antyajas*, another plies the spinning-wheel and yet another propagates khadi. One can achieve cocentration of mind by repeating *Ramanama* with faith.

MONOPOLY OF REFORM[1]

You have of course floored me. I have undertaken the monopoly only of improving one person and that is myself. And I know how difficult it is to improve that person. Now need I answer your questions?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-4-1926

141. STATEMENT ON POSTPONEMENT OF MUSSOORIE VISIT

AHMEDABAD,
April 18, 1926

Jamnalalji and friends who were interested in sending me to a hill station, having observed the progress I have made in regaining my old strength since my last illness and knowing also my own intentions, have decided not to press me to go to Mussoorie as has been announced already, unless there is any danger of a relapse.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-4-1926

142. LETTER TO GANDHI ASHRAM, BANARAS

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 19, 1926

DEAR FRIENDS,

I had hoped to be able to disengage Kripalaniji from the Vidyapith work and restore him wholly to you. But we have all felt helpless. It is not possible to spare him for the time being. It may be impossible to free him for two years. In our national life, two years is a long time whilst we are all impatient, quite naturally, to regain our

[1] A Muslim had argued that since Gandhiji had said somewhere that a man's soul might go into an animal's womb; would they not be worshipping a sinner by worshipping a cow since his soul might have gone into her womb? He had requested Gandhiji for a reply as in his opinion the latter had taken up the monopoly of improving the universe.

freedom. I give you my assurance that if an opportunity occurs to free Kripalaniji earlier, I shall do so with all my heart, for, I know how valuable your work is and how necessary it is for him to be continually in your midst if your labours are to bear much ampler fruit than hitherto. I hope therefore you will make the path far smooth for Kripalaniji in order to enable him to organize the work here.

Yours sincerely,

GANDHI ASHRAM

BENARES

From a photostat : S.N. 19476

143. LETTER TO WILLIAM DOULL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 19, 1926

DEAR MR. DOULL,

Sorabji has seen me regarding his difficulties. As you know he is heavily in debt. He wants assistance from his father's estates by way of loan without interest but with full security. The security he will describe himself. Sorabji tells me and I believe him that his father would have discharged his debt if he was alive and if Sorabji had decided to marry. He tells me that Mr. Rustomjee actually made that promise some time before his death, so anxious he was for him to be married. Sorabji has been now engaged and he has wisely deferred the marriage till he is free from his debts.

I observe that under a section of the trust deed, the trustees are empowered to remit to me such sums as they may deem necessary to be utilized by me as I choose. I have not studied the deed carefully nor do I regard myself competent to judge whether I can legally make use of the funds placed at my disposal under the trust and as proposed. But if in your opinion I can legally do so and majority of the trustees would approve of it, I would not only be prepared but would like to accommodate Sorabji, for I know his father would like me to do so if he was alive.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 19477

144. LETTER TO A TRUSTEE FOR PARSI RUSTOMJEE

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 19, 1926

You rerely write to me but as I also do likewise I suppose I must not complain. I was happy to hear personally from Sorabji all the good news about you and your business.

This is written to tell you that I would like to help Sorabji in the manner proposed by him if it is at all possible. You will see from a copy of my letter to Mr. Doull what is proposed. Please see if the thing can be at all done.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 19477

145. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

[*April 19, 1926*][1]

SHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I hear from Shri Fulchand that your elder[2] brother passed away. Need I offer condolences? We naturally desire our near and dear ones to be with us for ever. But are our wishes ever fulfilled? Besides, if only we can leave off being selfish we would see that we have no reason to grieve over death, which is inevitable and also life-giving. I know you do not need to be taught this truth. But I think I may remind you of it at this hour.

There has been no reply from Porbandar.

I have given up the idea of going to Mussoorie.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5709

[1] From a postmark
[2] Not the elder but the younger brother, Hemchand

146. LETTER TO SIR HENRY LAWRENCE[1]

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
AHMEDABAD,
April 20, 1926

DEAR SIR HENRY LAWRENCE,

I am much obliged to you for your letter of the 16th instant. If there is no hurry about our meeting, I would wait on you when the season is over and you have normally returned to Poona or Bombay. But in no case could I think of troubling you to come down to Poona, especially for a talk. If therefore you think that we should meet early, I should leave here on the 6th May and reach there as early as the railway and the motor service will bring me. Having never been to Mahabaleshwar, I do not know the time-table.

I need hardly add that I could not in any way be identified with the Royal Commission on Agriculture. Apart from my strong views about the system of Government, I lost my faith in Commissions long ago.

I remain,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Halifax Papers. Courtesy : India Office Records

147. LETTER TO D. V. RAMASWAMI

ASHRAM SABARMATI,
April 20, 1926

MY DEAR RAMASWAMI,

I have your notes on Hanumantharao's life. They are interesting but they must not be published and in no case can I write a preface to a thing which contains a criticism of or an attack against the Servants of India Society. My advice to you is not to publish anything at all unless you can bring out something readable about Hanumantharao without introducing any controversial matters. It would be better not

[1] This is an enclosure to a letter, dated 22-4-1926, from Sir Henry Lawrence, Governor of Bombay, to the Viceroy, Lord Irwin. Sir Henry had invited Royal Commission on Agriculture, and offered to come to Poona if this suited Gandhiji better.

to publish anything at all or be satisfied with a newspaper article. If you wish the copy you have sent me to be returned, you shall kindly ask for it and I shall kindly return the same.

Yours sincerely

SJT. D. V. RAMASWAMI

VIZAGAPATAM

From a microfilm : S.N. 19478

148. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 20, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your two letters. I note what you say about Utkal. I am now going through the papers Niranjan Babu has sent me.

Your Patna visit I regard as quite a success. Even from the point of view of collections, it is the small collections which will be our mainstay in the long run. Hundred rupees therefore is a good beginning.

I never mentioned to you that I got your impromptu bow made in the train with which you carded your cotton for the *takli*. It is a good contrivance. The beauty of hand-spinning lies in our ability to use trifles as our instruments. That is more suited to the genius of our nation. The art in them is in the brain and in the hand, never in the instrument.

How is Hemaprabhadevi? Is she keeping well? Does she ever think of the Ashram? My visit to Mussoorie is cancelled. Jamnalalji was not sure that he was quite right in taking me away. I myself never [felt] the need. On the contrary [I] felt that my running to Mussoorie was not in keeping with my life-view. And as nobody could say profitably what was the correct thing, toss was decided upon. The result was against Mussoorie. So it stands finally cancelled, unless a crisis overtakes me, though my view would still remain unchanged that I must mend my body in Sabarmati or if God wills otherwise then end it here.

Yours,

From a photostat : S.N. 19479

149. LETTER TO S. V. PHADNIS

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 20, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I shall do what I can in connection with your letter. Though I do not wish to enter into any newspaper controversy, I do not at all subscribe to the charge that I have stood in the way of compromise. Regarding khadi my own personal opinion is that the khadi obligation should on no account be waived but there too mine is only one vote.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. V. PHADNIS
423, WALKESHWAR ROAD
BOMBAY-6

From a microfilm : S.N. 19480

150. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Tuesday, Chaitra Sud 8 [*April 20, 1926*][1]

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I had offered to send you khadi at a loss, if necessary. If, therefore, you felt that Bombay khadi was rather costly I would have paid part of the bill. Enclosed is another bill for the khadi sent to you from the Ashram. Have you any complaint against that khadi? You may always take it that if any article received from the Ashram does not answer to your requirement or is costly, it can most certainly be returned. Even if you have accepted it, you should let me know in case you notice any defect in it.

You must have seen in the papers that my trip to Mussoorie as been cancelled. The National Council of Women must obtain a first class testimonial. Neither you nor I can be satisfied with a second class. Please send no honey for the present. Perhaps I myself may have to go to Mahabaleshwar for two or three days. I shall let you know if this is decided. Kindly mention it to no one now. Yes, you are right, strawberries cannot arrive here safely all this distance. You should improve your health to very much better than it is now.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 10890

[1] The year is inferred from the mention of cancellation of trip to Mussoorie.

151. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Tuesday, Chaitra Sud 8 [*April 20, 1926*]

BHAISHRI KAKA,

I got one-half of your letter, that is the one giving news of your health; the other half, I believe, is to follow. Since I have not written to you for quite a few days, I think I should dictate something just now.

If the doctor has specially recommended olive oil I do not wish to argue against it; otherwise I think it would be best to give it up. The olive oil which I get locally did not agree with me at all. I don't mean olive oil produced in India; the country does not produce any. That which we get here is imported from Italy or Spain and it is rarely fresh. Besides, it is also found that oil and ghee do not require the same length of time for digestion and also that the processes through which they are digested are different from each other. It may, therefore, be better to discontinue olive oil. Indeed, what you say about a *vaid's* drugs is true. It is a kind of quick remedy. It seems you use the language of Sidney Smith when you say that Dr. Talwalkar has not received respect "from us". By "us" you mean both the writer and the person addressed, don't you? Or do you mean "you"? If all you mean is that he has not received due respect from me, you have needlessly dragged in Sidney Smith. Well, I plead guilty to the charge, my reason being that I have great respect for Dr. Talwalkar himself, but not for his knowledge. I have, therefore, called Kanuga every time. Between the two I would place my life in Kanuga's, hands. Dr. Talwalkar has gone crazy over "tubercle", as I have over the spinning-wheel. He sees tuberculosis in everyone. And I do not know why, but I simply cannot put faith in his injections. He has read extensively in medical science but I always felt that he has not digested what he has read. What should I do in these circumstances? He was here about ten days ago, when I expressed to him my lack of faith in his approach. He promises to convert me if I give him sufficient time. But how can I spare all that time? So maybe, I ought to give up my scepticism. But the truth is that I have little faith in doctors as such, i.e., in the medical profession itself, and my distrust is daily increasing. They fail to discover the right remedies because they hunt for the laws of the body without any reference to the soul.

My trip to Mussoorie had to be cancelled. We drew lots the day before yesterday. Jamnalalji was not enthusiastic about taking me

there. So we had to draw lots. Personally, I never believed that it was necessary for me to go to Mussoorie. How would I, then, decide on my own to go? And Jamnalalji was not prepared to take the responsibility. And I have always welcomed the idea that, in matters which do not involve a question of principle and when we cannot decide one way or the other, we may throw lots to know God's will.

Nanabhai has decided that Shankar should leave for Bhavnagar, latest on June 1. Swami is thinking about Bal. Chandrashankar just spoke to me about your letter to Bal. We can, therefore, decide only after discussing the matter with Swami.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

As regards cow's milk, I want to write not a letter but a book for you.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 19481

152. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Tuesday, April 20, 1926

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

Here is the letter from Diwan Saheb. It is now for him to decide when he will come. I suggest that you should yourself go over to Porbandar. You may tell him that you have read the accompanying letter. And since you will see him personally, I do not write to acknowledge the enclosed letter. Your going there in person will be as good as my doing so.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19482

153. LETTER TO PROFULLA CHANDRA MITRA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 21, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is a fact that in Dacca against a foreign mosquito-net I have no knowledge that a khaddar mosquito-net was rejected by any of my companions. I personally do not object to a

foreign mosquito-net because I do not regard it as an article of clothing even as I do not object to a foreign umbrella though I should try to dispense with both and procure home-made articles. But the discarding of anything but foreign cloth is not a matter of religion with me. And I regard discarding of foreign cloth as a matter of religion because in my opinion foreign cloth is the supreme sign of our bondage. It is totally wrong to suggest that my companions do not allow poor people to see me, because I know myself that I was constantly surrounded by poor people all the time I was in Dacca.

I still believe as firmly as ever in all the boycotts of 1920 and 1921. The Congress has relaxed them as the Congress has a perfect right to do. Everyone who non-co-operated did so because he believed in its utility. Sacrifice is an indispensable condition of non-co-operation.

I am aware that many students, many lawyers and many others have suffered. That sufering has done them and the nation much good. Every non-co-operating student has plenty of scope for national service if he will but do it. A right use of charkha will certainly give him all his wants but he who does not believe in charkha may take up any other national service that commends itself to him.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. PROFULLA CHANDRA MITRA
NATIONAL MEDICAL INSTITUTE
DACCA

From a photostat : SN. 19483

154. LETTER TO S. MEHTAH

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 21, 1926

DEAR SIR,

You have enquired of me whether your brother Sheikh Amir Khan was a fellow passenger with me in 1896 on board s. s. *Courland* when I returned from India to Natal during that year. I have to state in

reply that your said brother was a fellow passenger with me during that year.

Yours truly,

S. MEHTAH, ESQ.
222, GREY STREET
DURBAN

From a microfilm : S.N. 19484

155. LETTER TO B. SUBBA RAO

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 21, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Will you please answer the following questions? Are you married? If so, have you children? Do you want to live here alone? Can you do bodily labour? Are you keeping good health? Apart from your medical diploma, do you regard yourself as an all-round good physician? What is the meaning of describing yourself as 'Ophthalmic Surgeon'? Have you special qualifications in that direction?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. B. SUBBA RAO
OPHTHALMIC SURGEON
86, PILLAYER KOIL ST
TRIPLICANE, MADRAS

From a microfilm : S.N. 19485

156. WARNING TO YARN COLLECTORS

Much of the yarn that is delivered to the All-India Spinners' Association as subscription is collected by local volunteer collectors. Thereby much time, energy and expense are saved. But the collectors should be good spinners themselves. They must be able to distinguish good yarn from bad and know the different counts. For the value of the yarn can be immediately increased if the collectors know how to judge yarn and take the trouble of examining it before accepting it from subscribers. They have to take only such yarn as is evenly spun and made into standard strands, i.e., 4 ft. in length. The greater the

attention paid to these details, the greater the chance of producing stronger khadi at cheaper rates. The spinners should bear in mind that the better they spin, the larger is their subscription to the Association. That is the beauty of having subscriptions in yarn. If collectors and subscribing spinners do their work carefully, they can double the value of subscription whilst it will mean no more work for the collectors or the spinners and certainly no more expense. Whereas, if the yarn is spun anyhow or packed anyhow, it throws a useless burden upon the Spinners' Association and means avoidable waste of national energy and capital.

Young India, 22-4-1926

157. WHAT TO DO

Sjt. Sarat Chandra Bose sent me a message through Sjt. Manilal Kothari asking me to give some guidance as to what should be done or what Bengal in particular should do to secure the freedom of those who, without trial, without even being informed of the wrong they are supposed to have done, are kept under detention and treated as felons. It is not the freedom of our countrymen that Sjt. Bose wants, so much as a tangible and effective demonstration of the nation's sympathy for them. To him, rightly, the honour of Bengal, if not of India, is at stake so long as these brave patriots are kept under duress. I had no better reply to send him than the following.[1] I publish it because Sjt. Bose desired its publication.

Young India, 22-4-1926

158. DRUGS, DRINK AND DEVIL

Drugs and drink are the two arms of the devil with which he strikes his helpless slaves into stupefaction and intoxication. And according to an illuminating article[2] in *The Survey* on the two Opium Conferences at Geneva, opium, the chief among the drugs, "won". The writer says :

> Out of all the marching and counter-marching, the drawing of swords and putting up them again, the rumours of defeats and famous victories, the traffic

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sarat Chandra Bose", 9-4-1926 and "Assorted Questions [—V]", 18-4-1926, sub-title, "What then Shall We Do?".

[2] Of which only excerpts are reproduced here

> in opium and other narcotic drugs has gained a new lease of life.

In the midst of confusion and chaos caused by the bewildering reports on behalf of the different nations, the writer says :

> The only people concerned who knew precisely what they wanted and did not want, and who were quite clear about and content with what they got, were those who in one way or another make profit out of the traffic in narcotics.

The writer adds :

> Especially during the World War, the campaign has been going almost by default. . . . Indeed, the War itself materially aggravated the evil. The widespread use of morphine and cocaine in the armies as anodynes against human agony, and to some extent as a means of mental relief from the deadly despairs and fears, disgusts and monotonies of war, turned loose at the end in many countries a considerable army of uncured and more or less incurable addicts to continue and spread their addiction. For, one of the awful concomitants of this vice is a kind of perverted missionary impulse to propagate itself by making new addicts.

This is one of the most deadly by-products of the late War. If it has destroyed millions of lives, it has also hastened the soul-deadening process. But Mr. Gavit, the writer, shows that during the thirteen years since the international agreement was registered in the Hague Convention "the character of the problem has changed greatly". Mr. Gavit can only speak from the European standpoint. Therefore, he says :

> The evil is no longer an exotic affair of the Far East, of the eating, drinking and smoking of the raw and prepared opium after the time-entrenched fashions of India, China and other oriental regions.

It has now resolved itself into the use

> of the more concentrated and far more injurious forms in the *highpower drugs*, manufactured in the expensively-equipped and scientifically-operated pharmaceutical laboratories of the lands which call themselves "civilized". Whereas in the former time the opium and the opium-habits of the Far East were creeping out into the West, now the flow is the other way. And that is not all : These drugs are equally deadly, and spreading ominously, in the countries where they are made, and across their borders to their neighbours. . . . The threat is against the welfare of all mankind. To this devil a white addict is as useful as a black or yellow; . . . His is a domain upon which the sun never sets.

The writer then touches "the heart of the evil" which is in "the *excess of production*" beyond the very legitimate needs of medicine and science. . . .

Thus the world's production of narcotics is more than ten times the most extravagant estimate of the world's legitimate needs.

The writer shows that none of the great powers including America and Great Britain has seriously tackled the problem. He charges them with having broken the promise made under Article 9 of the Hague Convention—"to limit the manufacture of these substances to the *bona fide* needs of medicine and science." He deplores that these civilized nations have failed not merely to check the over-production of raw and prepared opium but have failed to check even the manufacture of the deadly drugs in the huge laboratories which are subject to licence and inspection and whose control is the easiest thing possible if there is only the will.

The readers who have studied the Assam Opium Report prepared at the instance of the Congress by Mr. Andrews' labours know the evil wrought by the opium-habit. They also know how the Government has failed egregiously to deal with the growing evil and how they have thwarted the efforts of reformers who tried to deal with it. It therefore did one's soul good to find that during the National Week, speakers at public meetings insisted upon the total prohibition of intoxicating drinks and drugs. It is a reform that is overdue. And, if it is at all worth going to the Councils, this total prohibition must be made a prominent plank in the electroral compaign. Every member must be pledged not merely to support but to initiate and pursue the total prohibition campaign, the only way to bring about total prohibition being to cut out from the military expenditure a portion equivalent to the revenue derived from this immoral source. The demand therefore for total prohibition must go hand in hand with the demand for reduction in the military expenditure. Nor must the solution be delayed by plans of taking referendums. In India there can be no reason for any referendum because drink and drug-habits are universally recognized as a vice. Drink is not a fashion in India as it is in the West. To talk therefore of a referendum in India is to trifle with the problem.

Young India, 22-4-1926

159. NOTES

JALLIANWALA BAGH

A Karachi correspondent writes :

You collected lacs for Jallianwala Bagh Memorial years ago. I was told that there would be a school building erected there. Can you now tell me what has happened to the fund? Has that site been bought at all? When will the temple of freedom be built there?

I was not prepared for the exhibition of ignorance which the foregoing questions betray. The writer should have known that the site where the massacre of the 13th April, 1919 took place was bought immediately after sufficient funds were collected. The site has been cleaned of all the rubbish heaps, levelled and there is to be seen a beautiful lawn there. A care-taker is in charge of it. The balance is deposited in trustworthy banks and interest accumulates year by year. It has not been possible to build anything upon it for the simple reason that there can be no temple of freedom built of bricks and mortar whilst we, Hindus and Mussalmans, are trying to cut each others' throats and undermining the very foundations of freedom. Monument, when it is erected, has to be a monument to commemorate the unity of all races and religions represented in India. It will be, when it comes, a demonstration of the people of India to vindicate their liberty and honour in the face of all odds. At the present moment if an attempt was made to erect a building, I doubt not that it will be an additional ground for cleavage instead of being used by all for binding us firmer together.

FEBRUARY RETURNS

The returns of production and sale of khadi for the month of February in several provinces are as follows :[1]

The figures of Andhra are as usual incomlete, only 16 organizations having sent their report to the Provincial Office. The Bengal figures are those of the Pratishthan only, the figures of the Abhoy Ashram not having been received. Bombay is complete except for the Sandhurst Road Bhandar. In Delhi only the Hapur figures are given. Punjab and Tamil Nadu are complete and their sale figures have been corrected so as to avoid duplication. In Northern Maharashtra only the figures of the Jalgaon and Wardha Bhandar are given; and in Central Maharashtra only that of the Poona Bhandar.

The position in Februray is very much the same both, as regards production and sale as in the previous month except in the case of Bombay which shows a large decrease in sales from Rs. 41,448 to Rs. 26,029. As compared with the figure for the corresponding month of

[1] Not reproduced here

the previous year, this year shows a notable increase especially in production. The production figures of some of the important provinces are as under:[1]

In sales, while Punjab and Utkal figures are very nearly the same as in the previous year, Bombay shows a decrease; but in Bengal, Bihar and Tamil Nadu the figures disclose remarkable progress. The figures are given below :[2]

I reiterate the hope that those centres that have not yet begun to send their returns regularly will do so without delay so as to enable the All-India Spinners' Association to publish as accurate returns as possible.

The growing decrease in the sales in Bombay compared to the increase in the other provinces requires careful study. There was a time when Bombay was the largest feeder for all khadi produced in India. It still retains an honourable position and second only to Tamil Nadu. The figures for Bombay are nothing compared to previous years—Rs. 44,220 against Rs. 26,029 during the February of this year, whereas Tamil Nadu shows Rs. 53,512 this year against Rs. 34,825 last year.

ORGANIZING KHADDAR SALES

It is astonishing the way the khaddar propaganda is evok- ing the faculties of the workers in all directions. Merely production is not enough. The quality must progressively increase. The cost of production has to be regulated and the sales must keep pace with production. Khadi Pratishthan is showing the way. I have already remarked[3] upon the manner in which Bengal is trying to use up its own production locally. From January to 17th March, the Pratishthan workers sold by hawking Rs. 25,000 worth of khadi in 41 places in 14 districts. The workers have mapped out an all-Bengal tour which they hope to be able to finish within a few months. There will, therefore, be presently no over-production but an under-production. And, it will be possible to say that if more capital can be invested, more khaddar can be produced and sold. It will be an ideal condition when not only our sales are effected locally but financial help too is likewise raised. And it is bound to come, for sales must familiarize a large number of middleclass people with khadi; and when they begin to take a lively

[1] Not reproduced here
[2] *ibid*
[3] *Vide* "Notes", 1-4-1926, sub-title, "Bengal's Worthy Example".

interest in it, they will naturally find the necessary capital without any difficulty.

Young India, 22-4-1926

160. FOR AND AGAINST KHADI

AGAINST KHADI

A correspondent writes a Gujarati letter of which the following is a free rendering :

> I am a stenographer. I applied in reply to an advertisement by a well-known European firm for the post of a stenographer at its office and I received a reply asking me to report myself at their office. As soon as I was ushered into the presence of the manager, he scanned my dress and seeing that it was all pure khadi said, 'You are no use. Don't you know that those who wear khadi dress need not expect any employment in European firms?' And with this he dismissed me leaving me to wonder what connection my dress had with my ability to take down correct notes. I returned home feeling thankful that I had the courage to withstand the temptation of giving up my khadi dress for the sake of a comfortable employment. I hope that God will sustain that courage and that even when I am sorely tried, I shall not give up khadi which I know binds me to the poor of the land. I send you this information in order that it may serve as a warning to others against relying upon getting employment in European firms except on humiliating terms.

I congratulate the young stenographer upon his self-sacrifice and join my hope with his that God will sustain his courage even though he might have a series of disappointments when he tries to get employed as a stenographer.

FOR KHADI

But all European employers are not cast in the same mould. When I was in Calcutta last year, I came in touch with many European mer-chants and some of the leading ones amongst them not only had no ob-jection to their employees wearing khadi dress but they avowed sympathy with the khadi movement and appreciated the sentiment that requires Indians and, indeed, those who make fortunes in India, to use cloth spun and woven by the toiling millions. Here is a letter from an Indian employee which the readers of *Young India* will read with

pleasure :[1]

I congratulate the European firm upon their breadth of vision for it was no doubt something for them not to be carried away by prejudice when Non-co-operation was at its height and when khadi dress was mixed up by so many Europeans with violent intentions.

Young India, 22-4-1926

161. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Thursday, Second Chaitra Sud 10 [*April 22, 1926*][2]

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL,

I have your letter. I will not let Moti disappoint me. I will shake her lethargy out of her. If she does not respond to my persuasion, I will leave her to you, a teacher, to do what you can, I shall then have to put a cane in your hand. If it does not work, I know of the spiked goads they use in your own district when driving bullocks. I will present some of these to you. Moti must be made to shake off her slackness and improve her handwriting. Her handwriting in her letter to Lakshmi looked very much like the crawling of a fly. Is this the example an elder sister should set to her younger one? How can we let her do that? Well, I close that chapter here.

Now that I am not going to Mussoorie, Velanbehn has for the time being discontinued her frequent tours. Anandi, too, has fallen ill. That is another reason why I cannot leave. Lakshmidas arrived only the day before yesterday. If possible, therefore, you should both come here; alternatively, if you can do without Moti, send her just now and you may come later. Or you may come when you are free. Do what suits you best. It was welcome news to me that you had recovered. So much for the present. This letter is for both of you.

With blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of Gujarati : S.N. 12127

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent, a stenographer, stated that despite his wearing khadi, his European employers had not only not objected to his dress but had given him increments and promotions.

[2] Year inferred from the reference to the cancellation of Mussoorie visit

162. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Chaitra Sud 10 [*April 22, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

There has been no letter from you recently. I had instructed Mahadev to inform you that my visit to Mussoorie had been cancelled. In case I go to Mahabaleshwar, I hope to spend a couple of days with you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

163. INTERVIEW ON AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION

AHMEDABAD,
April 22, 1926

Interviewed by a Press representative in connection with the invitation sent to him to meet His Excellency the Governor, Mr. Gandhi said :

I have not much to say, because I have not studied the scope of the Royal Commission, nor have I interested myself in it. Being a confirmed Non-co-operator, I naturally take little or no interest in the doings of the many Commissions and Committees appointed by the Government. In agriculture itself, I am certainly interested, so much so that I delight in calling myself a farmer without knowing much of farming; and, if His Excellency the Acting Governor invites me to an informal discussion on matters agricultural, I shall certainly place my views before him.

The Hindu, 23-4-1926

[1] The postmark bears the date April 24, 1926. *Chaitra Sud 10* (intercalated) corresponds to April 22.

164. LETTER TO FRED CAMPBELL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 23, 1926

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,

I have your letter. Much as I would like to accommodate you, you have asked me to do almost the impossible. I cannot get a sixteen year lad to write to you in English for the simple reason that his mother tongue would be an Indian language. Spanish is out of question. No doubt there are some Anglicized Indian families where English is taught from infancy. But in order to get one such boy I shall have to hawk your letter about from place to place which I am sure you would not want or expect me to do. But if you want to open correspondence with a grown-up person who can write with the freshness of youth, I might succeed.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

FRED CAMPBELL, ESQ.
7701 MAIN ST.
KANSAS CITY, MO., U.S.A.

From a photostat : S.N. 12444

165. LETTER TO ROMAIN ROLLAND

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 23, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

This is to introduce to you one of my dearest co-workers and friends Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who has gone there with his wife. She is suffering from tuberculosis. Naturally my friend would like to make your acquaintance and pay his respects to you. I know that you will befriend him and his wife.

Mirabai, as we call Miss Slade here, is getting on very well and is quite happy. We often think of you and talk about you and the possibility of your visiting India at the end of the year. I wonder if

your health can bear the strain of the visit.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MONSIEUR ROMAIN ROLLAND
VILLA OLGA
VILLENGUVE
(VAND)
SWITZERLAND

From a photostat : S.N. 12467

166. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 23, 1926

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have been thinking of writing to you every week and every week I have failed. I must not let this week, however, pass by. I have had the latest news about you from Father while he was here with the Responsivists. You will have seen the agreement[1] that has been arrived at.

Hindus and Muslims are going more and more away from each other. But this thing does not disturb me. Somehow or other, I feel that the separation is growing in order only to bring them all closer later on.

I do hope Kamala is benefiting.

Yours,

BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, p. 46

167. CIRCULAR LETTER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 23, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Time has arrived to work the Hindi Prachar Office in the Southern presidency as a matter of trust and, after consulting with

[1] *Vide* Appendix "The Sabarmati Pact", April and May, 1926.

Pandit Harihara Sharma, I have come to the conclusion that the trustees should include some lovers of Hindi in that Presidency also. The following are the names I propose :

Sjt. S. Srinivasa Iyengar
„ Konda Venkatappayya Garu
„ C. Rajagapalachariar
Seth Jamnalal Bajaj
Sjt. Harihara Sharma
„ Hrishikesha Sharma
„ Satyanarayana

and a nominee of the Sahitya Sammelan if they desire a name to be added. I hope that you have no objection to your name being included in the trust.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 19490

168. LETTER TO GENERAL SECRETARY, HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN

SABARMATI,
April 23, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I did get your telegram, and had also sent a reply. I had hoped that someone would come over on behalf of the Sammelan. Pandit Harihara Sharma is here since a couple of days ago. Afte discussing the matter with him I have come to the conclusion that we should form a trust for propagating Hindi in the South and hand over the organizational control of the work entirely to it. This will end the present state of indecision and inspire the workers to more energetic effort. I have addressed a letter[1] proposing this, a copy of which is enclosed for you. I want your opinion on what I have proposed. If it is necessary to discuss the matter with me, either come over yourself or send somebody. My trip to Mussoorie has been abandoned.

Yours,

GENERAL SECRETARY
HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN
PRAYAG

From a microfilm of the Hindi : S.N. 19492

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

169. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 23, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Here is an article by Miss Rasengren. She has sent it to me for *Young India*. I am disinclined to publish it and rake up an old controversy[1] about which almost every Indian has made up his mind. The writer says that if I would not take it, I should send it to you for publication in *Indian Review*. Probably you know the writer.

I had a typed copy made of it which I am sending you.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 3 sheets

SJT. G. A. NATESAN
EDITOR
"INDIAN REVIEW"
G. T. MADRAS

From a microfilm : S.N. 19486

170. LETTER TO ADA RASENGREN

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 23, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I must not publish the article you have sent me. Almost every Indian believes that England was in the wrong and responsible for the calamitous War. I do not now wish to rake up an old controversy without any occasion for it.

As desired I have sent a copy of your essay to Mr. Natesan, Madras. I have given your card to the Manager of *Young India*.

Yours sincerely,

MISS ADA RASENGREN
RO, LIDINGO VILLASTAD

From a photostat : S.N. 12466

[1] *Vide* the succeeding item.

171. LETTER TO MAULANA SHAUKAT ALI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 23, 1926

DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

I do hope you will forgive me for not having come to Delhi. But I felt and both Panditji and Mrs. Naidu agreed that I should not be made to leave Ahmedabad contrary to the resolution of Cawnpore.

You have seen my letter to Hakimji. That was the best advice I could give. I hope everything has gone well.

Your charkha was repaired. It went yesterday with Yeshwant Prasad to Bombay and will be delivered to you.

Yours,

MAULANA SHAUKAT ALI
DELHI

From a photostat : S.N. 19488

172. LETTER TO N. S. VARADACHARI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 23, 1926

MY DEAR VARADACHARI,

I had your letter. I enclose herewith a copy of a letter written to Ganesan. You may apply your mind separately to the proposal. Of course the proposal is useless if you cannot be in Madras. I have made the proposal so as to enable you to be nearest to your centre of activity. I do not want to drag you all the way here if it is at all possible.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1
SJT. N. S. VARADACHARI
ERODE

From a microfilm : S.N. 19489

173. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SABARMATI,
April 23, 1926

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. We know of course that your lungs will mend only gradually. In one way this enforced rest is welcome. You are making good use of it. No programme has been fixed for Devdas. But I do not wish to send him there till he is fully restored to health. I hope Pyarelal is suitable company for you. Let me know if there is any inconvenience. I was planning to visit Deolali if I had to go to Mahabaleshwar. But now that cannot be because I am not going to Mahabaleshwar. The Governor has written to say that it will be all right if I meet him when he comes down in June.

You would be seeing the telegram about Finland in the newspapers.[1] I have not received any letter so far. I do not at all feel inclined to go. I do not like to leave the Ashram even for an hour. For the last three or four days I have been wanting to go to Ambalalbhai's place to inquire about Saralabehn's health. But the important question is where to find the time outside of what is reserved for walks. I shall be going there no doubt, but only as a matter of duty.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

174. LETTER TO JACOB HIEBLE

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 23, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. If it is a question of publication of *My Experiments with Truth* in a magazine, there is no difficulty. But if it is a matter of publication in book form, Mr. Roniger[2] in already in

[1] It had been mooted that Gandhiji should visit Finland to attend the World Conference of the Young Men's Christian Association which was to be held in August. 1926 in Helsingfors; *vide* "Letter to Lajpat Rai", 20-3-1926 and "Letter to K. T. Paul", 13-4-1926.

[2] Emil Roniger

correspondence with me in the matter. And in any case it will take some time before the story is completed.

I am deeply interested in the German youth movement for I expect a great deal from the enterprising, brave and self-sacrificing young men and young women of Germany.

Yours sincerely,

JACOB HIEBLE, ESQ.
549 W. NORTH AVE.
AP, F, CHICAGO
U.S.A.

From a copy : S.N. 32248

175. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SABARMATI,
April 23, 1926

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Anna[1] has come here, and is leaving again today. The dis- pute with the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan is going on. I have now decided that we should have a trust for this purpose too. I have addressed a letter[2] about this, a copy of which will be handed over to you by Anna. You can make any suggestions about trustees which you may like to. I have proposed that the trustees will include, besides others, three workers actively engaged in propagating Hindi; I think that will be necessary. They will be persons who have dedicated their lives to the cause, and it will be proper, therefore, to include them among the trustees. Please decide in consultation with Anna in what instalments you will pay the sum which you assured him that you would pay. That will make things easy for him, and you, too, will have the matter off your mind. He will get the amounts regularly on the dates fixed. You may ask him about the accounts if you wish to. I will not myself be looking into them. Anna will place before you his scheme for getting the accounts audited. I am still thinking about the bigger trust. I also think it absolutely necessary that we should regularly publish the accounts of all funds being managed by us. Till now I did not insist on this being done out of my anxiety to

[1] Harihara Sharma
[2] *Vide* "Circular letter", 23-4-1926

economize expenses. I know that, in spite of the practice of publishing accounts, there can be malpractices and, therefore, we place our trust entirely on the integrity of our workers. All the same, we should avail ourselves of the advantage of safety which the practice of publishing accounts offers. There are a number of small trusts, the names of all of which I, too, do not remember. I always feel that it would have been very much better if all these things had been published at the right time. But now at any rate we shall publish them.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19491

176. STATEMENT ON SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN PROBLEM

AHMEDABAD,
April 24, 1926

Mr. Gandhi has issued the following statement to the Associated Press on the latest announcement regarding acceptance by the Union Government of the offer of the Government of India for a conference to arrive at an amicable solution of the Indian Problem :

The news from South Africa is certainly welcome. It enables Indian settlers to have a breathing time and upon this happy result all parties, the Union Government, the Government of India and the settlers, may congratulate themselves. In my opinion the real credit belongs to Mr. C.F. Andrews without whose incessant energy, prayerful watchfulness and detailed study of the situation, combined with rare faith in the cause he was espousing, this happy result could not have been obtained.

If the Union Government's proviso is honestly meant, its acceptance by the Government of India does not much matter. The Union Government is undoubtedly entitled to safeguard what they call Western standard of life by just and legitimate means and the only just and legitimate means that can be accepted are sanitary and economic laws. Thus, for instance, Indian lawyers must compete with European lawyers on equal terms and so far as I am aware no Indian lawyer does otherwise. But I have discovered that there is discrimination used even against them. I believe the Paddison Deputation, which, in spite of my non-co-operation I am free to confess, has deserved well, made the discovery that even in the Supreme Court clerks who appear before the Registrar on business must not be wearers of any but white skin. If

that is called safeguarding Western standards of life by just and legitimate means the proviso is dangerous. But I am an optimist. I shall take the proviso at its face value and if the Government of India will insist upon its being strictly interpreted all will be well. I hope that neither the Government of India nor the public will relax their watchfulness if a final and honourable settlement is to be secured.

Now that there is to be a conference, India has the right to hope that all questions that arise out of the Bill will be examined and dealt with in a just manner. The Indian settlers have nothing to fear from a most searching enquiry into the question and I make bold to say that at the end of the enquiry it will be found that the only crime that can be proved against them is that they are Asiatics and have a skin which has all shades of colour.

The economic question was laid at rest when in 1914 all fear of unrestricted emigration from India to South Africa was absolutely laid at rest. The figures produced before the Select Committee have conclusively proved that the numerical strength of Indian settlers is on the decrease whereas that of the white settlers is on the increase. There is no comparison between the insignificant value of Indian holdings and the extraordinary increase in the value of European holdings. Indian trade licences every-where are also dwindling.

If only South African statesmen will face facts squarely it will be found that there is no case against the Indian settlers. But at the present moment I want neither to anticipate nor to criticize. I have nothing but a feeling of relief and thankfulness. I tender my congratulations to General Hertzog and Dr. Malan upon their having risen to the occasion.

Forward, 25-4-1926

177. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 24, 1926

MY DEAR BHRRR[1],

I have your letter. Though life there seems to be dead, you have gone with the soul of a youth to resurrect the dead, and your optimism will infect Ramdas. I do not care how much you sell. I

[1] This was a form of greeting used by Gandhiji and the addressee for each other.

simply marvel at the manner in which you have responded and in which you are toiling there in midsummer. May God bless you and your effort. The proposed visit to Mussoorie was cancelled in answer to the chit that was drawn. When there is no principle at stake and when it is difficult to decide, I find God's answer through drawing chits and it has proved for me a most valuable time and trouble-saver.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

ABBAS TYABJI, ESQ.
RASHTRIYA SHALA
WADHWAN CITY

From a photostat : S.N. 9553

178. LETTER TO AKSEL F. KNUDSEN

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 24, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I remember your visit. If you want to translate *The Story of My Experiments with Truth* for a maga- zine, you may do so without any difficulty but if you wish to bring out the same in book-form it is a matter somewhat diffi- cult because the MacMillan Company is negotiating for the full copyright and, in any case, there is no hurry about it for it will take some time before the story can be finished.

Yours sincerely,

AKSEL F. KNUDSEN, ESQ.
SHANTI GEHA
KODAIKANAL
MADRAS DISTRICT

From a microfilm : S.N. 19495

179. LETTER TO C. V. KRISHNA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 24, 1926

MY DEAR KRISHNA,

I had your previous letters. And as you told me in one of them that you would write again, I did not acknowledge them.

I had the letter in answer to my letter to the late Hanumantharao regarding the tuberculosis patient. As he was not ready to go, I did not consider it necessary to write to you merely to tell you that much.

I understand your programme. In my opinion, you are too few workers to warrant the ambitious programme you have drawn up. I therefore advice you to move cautiously. How many workers are you there now? What about the Rs. 3,000 you say you have from Rustomjee's funds? Can you not use them? In any case, I would like you to put yourself in communication with the agent of the All-India Spinners' Association. Let him visit your place and you may send your application through the agent if he will back it. It will be then perhaps easy for me to get the money you require.

Give in that application the fullest details, your requirements, your prospects and the number of workers you have, etc. Meanwhile push further your collection of ten thousand, for, if you make progress in that direction, it would enable me the better to get the extra help you want. Am I now clear?

You tell me, the diet of the inmates cost Rs. 6 per month. Please send me the diet scale with the ruling prices. By the scale, I mean how much and what is allowed to each inmate.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. V. KRISHNA
NELLORE

From a microfilm : S.N. 19496

180. LETTER TO G. STANLEY JONES

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 24, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and one copy, not two, of your paper.

Is it a weekly or a monthly? I do not find the information in the copy before me. I shall send you something as soon as I have a little leisure but after I have heard from you in reply to this.

I was going to Mussoorie but the friends who were interested in sending me there have relaxed the pressure and let me stay at the Ashram. I shall await your arrival at the Ashram and look forward to your stay in our midst be it ever so short. Did you not tell me you had lived at the Ashram before for a day or two? If, for any reason

whatesover, I am away from the Ashram in July, I hope you will still come. There is just a slight probability of my going to Finland for the World Students' Conference. I say only a slight probability because the matter has not progressed beyond the conversation stage.

Yours sincerely,

G. STANLEY JONES, ESQ.

SITAPUR, U.P.

From a microfilm : S.N. 19497

181. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA MUKERJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 24, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have now read the pamphlet signed by Miss Edger and other friends. It is quite unexceptionable. But I doubt the utility of an organization for the education of public opinion by various kinds of propaganda "for eradicating war". That propaganda has really no meaning in our country at the present moment.

I have had repeated letters from America from the Fellowship of Reonciliation. I am in correspondence with them still but I have not joined them as it seems to me to be a mockery for me to join. May a mouse with any propriety join the organization run by cats for the purpose of stopping war on mice? It is therefore enough for us to realize our status and "pray in secret" for peace on earth.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 19498

182. LETTER TO K. T. MATHEW

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 24, 1926

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your interesting letter. I am quite sure that you cannot amend your resolution in the manner suggested by the president because it is the Devaswom roads which you want to throw open to all castes and creeds without let or hindrance. Can you not move a resolution for removing or amending the prohibitory rule itself? If the

resolution cannot be moved and if you can get other supporters you may resign in a body by way of protest and seek re-election educating public opinion all the while. You should promote also a petition to the Government for throwing open the roads. And, if you have some brave and self-sacrificing men who do not belong to the so-called untouchable group, they should escort the latter through the roads and face the consequence. That you should do only if the opinion of caste Hindus is overwhelmingly in your favour. If it is not in your favour, and if you have men who will delight in endless suffering, you may still offer satyagraha. If that measure of self-sacrifice is not possible or if non-violence on the part of reformers cannot be ensured, you should be satisfied with quiet work amongst the untouchables and raising their status by helping to raise the level of character amongst them.

Yours sincerely,

K. T. MATHEW, ESQ.
MEMBER, LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
COCHIN STATE
COCHIN

From a microfilm : S.N. 19499

183. LETTER TO SHANKARAN NAMBUDRIPAD

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 24, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

There is a serious complaint against you that at a meeting the other day regarding the removal of untouchability, you made a speech at Trivandrum where you incited to violence and said that nothing but violence would teach the opponents of reforms. I have in my possession extracts from your speech which I under-stand has been taken down verbatim. I shall thank you to let me know whether there is any truth in this report.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SHANKARAN NAMBUDRIPAD
KOPRATTU ILLAM
KOTTAYAM
NORTH TRAVANCORE

From a microfilm : S.N. 19500

184. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 24, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter about Prem Maha Vidyalaya. I had a chat with Prof. A. T. Gidwani whom I suppose you know well. He will require Rs. 250 per month. If you want him, of course, details will have to be fixed. You will let me know at an early date whether Professor Gidwani will suit.

Yours sincerely,

LALA SHANKERLAL
DELHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 19501

185. LETTER TO RAM DATTA CHOPRA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 24, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am myself totally against vaccination. But this is a matter in which everybody must decide for himself and not merely copy the views of others; for, after all it may sometimes become a question of life and death. It is impossible to assert positively that no one has been saved from an attack of small pox or worse by being vaccinated. He, therefore, who refrains from vannination, does so with the full knowledge that he runs the risk of himself and his children being disfigured by small pox and even meeting death. At the same time, this is true that vaccination does not afford an absolute gurantee against small pox. Therefore those only will not be vaccinated who hold the body subservient to the soul and have an inner conviction that vaccination is hurtful for the soul.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RAM DATTA CHOPRA
HEAD MASTER
D. B. SCHOOL, JANAURI
DT. HOSHIARPUR (PUNJAB)

From a photostat : S.N. 19502

186. LETTER TO ZAFARULMULK

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 24, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your lucid letter. The question you have put is really difficult to answer. But this is one of those questions which everyone must answer for himself. So far as the Congress is concerned you have absolute liberty of action. But with those with whom non-co-operation has almost become a creed, there is no guidance but that of the inner voice. If you ask me what I would do myself, I can only say that I could not work in a body in which the Governor is ex-officio patron and in which the Chairman and the Secretary are also officials as such.

Yours sincerely,

ZAFARULMULK, ESQ.
LUCKNOW

From a photostat: S. N. 19503

187. LETTER TO AMULYA CHANDRA SEN

ASHRAM SABARMATI,
April 24, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and thank you for your good wishes.

The way you have put my position very nearly takes my breath away. For, you say, "it is quite clear you have never changed from untruth to truth." The statment is both true and untrue. There was no occasion for me to make a consious effort to speak the truth or to be able to appreciate truth. But interpreting truth in its broadest sense, I must confess that I am still filled with untruth and am ever striving to rid myself of it. Therefore, I can fully endorse the latter portion of the sentence from which I have quoted; for, I see truth every day clearer and clerer. The process through which the soul has been passing is an effort of the heart. The intellect has been hooked to its service by prayer, meditation and constant watchfulness which are essentially matters of the heart and which have been the predominant factors that have contributed to the growing revelation of truth. I have never felt that whatever knowledge has been gained was imposed from without

but that it has come from within. It has been an unfolding, drawing out or perhaps better still removing the hard and ugly crusts that overlay the truth that is within us. In other words, the process has been one of self-purification.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. AMULYA CHANDRA SEN
LANGUAGE SCHOOL
QUEEN'S HILL
DARJEELING

From a photostat: S. N. 19504

188. LETTER TO SOMNATH

ASHRAM,
April 24, 1926

BHAI SOMNATH,

I have your letter. You have asked enough questions. May I now request you to restrain yourself? Questions relating to the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, idolatry, etc., are occasionally discussed in *Navajivan*. If you read those articles carefully, you will find your questions answered.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S. N. 19903

189. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM M. SHETH

April 24, 1926

BHAISHRI PURUSHOTTAM,

The present state of Hindu society makes one feel sad, but, being an optimist, I have hopes for the future. The easiest way to effect a reform in this matter is that the parents of a child-widow should themselves arrange her remarriage. Meanwhile, social reformers should carry on necessary propaganda through speeches, writings and such other means, observing certain limits. I do not look upon the second marriage of a child-widow as remarriage. Child-marriage could not be sanctioned by scriptures, and a marriage not so sanctioned cannot be regarded as a duly solemnized marriage. I have no doubt that marriage would improve the condition of child-widows. It certainly cannot lead to immorality. Immorality is increasing

because such girls are forced to remain widows. In order to encourage ideal marriages, we should refuse to associate ourselves with uncivilized marriages and offer our help whenever marriages of the former kind are celebrated. If the bride and the groom are both 20 years old or the groom is 30, I would not regard it as an ill-matched union. The ideal education for a woman would be that which, besides giving her a knowledge of the letters, made her a better wife and in case she became a widow, would enable her to support herself. I do not approve of marriages outside *varnashrama*. There can be only four castes. I would not encourage the remarriage of a woman who becomes a widow after she has grown up in years.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

SHRI PURUSHOTTAM MULJI SHETH

VOKALA PHALIYA, BHUJ

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19904

190. LETTER TO AMRITLAL BAHECHARDAS

April 24, 1926

BHAISHRI AMRITLAL,

I had got my life insured in the year 1902, I let it lapse in the year 1903 or 1904, forfeiting the premia already paid up.

(2) It is my belief that getting one's life insured betrays a measure of lack of faith in God.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI AMRITLAL BAHECHARDAS

KELAPEETH BAZAAR

BROACH

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19905

191. LETTER TO DUNGARSEY KACHARA

ASHRAM,

April 24, 1926

BHAISHRI DUNGARSEY KACHARA,

I have your letter.

I think you should not mind if your parents suffer, nor should

you give up your resolve or forsake your dharma while trying to win them over through persuasion. Your parents' grief which is due solely to ignorance will subside in course of time but the guilt of betraying one's pledge can never be undone. You should make your life pure day by day to bring peace to your parents, and serve them in all possible ways. They will soon realize then that you do the work which you have undertaken because you regard it as your dharma.

(2) Borodada's assertion may be true. There is no reason why we cannot win liberation from the body during this very existence. If there were, it would prove that the power of the *atman* had limits to it. At the most we can say that liberation while yet alive and in this body is so difficult as to be almost impossible.

(3) It is altogether wrong that cattle should be allowed to consume night-soil. The milk of a cow which consumes excreta cannot be good. If people think and follow dharma, they would stop easing themselves in the streets. All night-soil must be used for preparing manure.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

SHRI DUNGARSEY KACHARA

BAMBHDAI, P.O. KUTCH BADA

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19906

192. LETTER TO AMRITLAL THAKKAR

ASHRAM,
April 24, 1926

BHAISHRI AMRITLAL,

Since you spoke to me I have been thinking over the subject. The more I think, the more I feel convinced that you should not take up that work. I see in the idea excessive attachment to work on your part. I should not like you to take it up even if you are thinking of doing it in the manner suggested by me. Even if you have the energy to apply your mind to new problems, and you are bound to have it since you regard yourself as a young man, you should utilize it in giving more thought to the two missions of your life, the service of *Antyajas* and Bhils; you will even then be short of time. These two tasks can do with the life-long services not of yourself alone but of

many like you. There is and I think there ought to be, a limit to the desire to do good. If we go looking for suffering in the world, we shall find that there is no end to it. We shall discover something to reform at every step. But surely God has not laid on us the burden of ending all that suffering. If he has, then he has also taught us the secret of carrying it; and it is that from out of the great heap of suffering we should pick up one clod of earth. If we resolve to do all we can to end that suffering and firmly refuse to take up any other task, we shall have carried the load of the entire hill. If I have succeeded in impressing this very simple truth upon your mind, I would ask you to promise me that you will not take up any other work besides your two missions even for the kingdom of the earth. And then if you ever feel that those two tasks do not absorb all your time, please come to me. I promise to show to you then that there was in those very fields much that you had omitted to do.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

BHIL SEVA MANDAL,

DOHAD

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19907

193. LETTER TO RAMU THAKKAR

ASHRAM,

April 24, 1926

BHAISHRI RAMU,

I have your letter. You have described me as the creator of a new age and asked my advice. But after describing me thus you have immediately proceeded to demolish that image; while seeking my advice, you yourself have given me some. A person who goes to a medical man who has but one remedy for all diseases, and asks for one other than that, can only be said to be pulling his leg. Don't you think you have done something like that? Moreover, this is your estimate of the achievement of the creator of an age : "In your unfruitful effort to win swaraj, you have wasted many years and much money and energy." Tell me now, what sort of peace of mind do you hope to learn from a creator of an age such as this? You may dislike the charkha, but why malign *Ramanama*? If you only keep repeating that name, all the girls and women who haunt your imagination will

win their freedom. You seem to think that *Ramanama* is for the passionless; what has such a person to do with *Ramanama*? It was a person troubled by lustful thoughts who discovered the power of that name, and it was because I used it to quench the fire of passion in me and found it effective that I have been recommending it to men and women who are troubled in the same way.

There are not as many unhappy women and girls as you think there are. The unhappy ones can, if they choose, take the help of the law. Yes, it is certainly true that these women are not conscious of their rights, and those who are do not have the strength to assert them. The remedy is simply the spread of true education. True education means building of character, and that is not possible without *Ramanama*. Moreover, such unhappy women are generally without any means and, if they wish to preserve their virtue, the charkha is the only means for them. These are some of the reasons why for me learning begins with these two, [*Ramanama* and charkha]. But how can I expect you to approve of my ideas? So you will have to look elsewhere for a remedy for the suffering which you think exists. If you fail in your search, you may come to me. My faith and patience are inexhaustible, and I will, therefore, wait for you quietly.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI RAMU PARMANAND THAKKAR

SHAMALDAS COLLEGE

BHAVNAGAR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19908

194. PREJUDICE AGAINST KHADI

I complient this patriotic youth[1] on his determination and sacrifice, and hope that he will keep up his attitude, will not, in future too, be tempted by higher salary or go back on his pledge or change his dress. If even at this hour khadi can be insulted, more than the British, we are to blame. British firms get any number of young men

[1] His letter, not translated here, describes how he had sacrificed his education for the national cause and always wore khadi. He was afterwards selected for appointment as shorthand typist in a British firm but, on his presenting himself for duty, was turned away because of his khadi dress. *Vide* "For and against Khadi", 22-4-1926.

who are ready to serve them on their terms, and those people are not worried and can afford to behave as they like. If everyone understood the value of khadi and was ready to make some little sacrifice for the sake of the country, the prejudice against khadi would disappear immediately.

HOW A "SANATANI" MAY ACT

A learned and orthodox Hindu, who subscribes himself as "A Santani Hindu", writes :[1]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-4-1926

195. ABOLISH MARRIAGE ![2]

A correspondent, whom I know well, raises an issue, I take it, for purely academic interest, because I know the views he has set out are not his. 'Is not our present-day morality unnatural?' he asks. If it was natural it should have been the same everywhere in all ages, but every race and community seems to have its own peculiar marriage laws and in enforcing them men have made themselves worse than beasts. For diseases which are unknown amongst animals are quite common amongst men; infanticide, abortions, child-marriages, which are impossible in the brute creation, are the curse of the society that holds up marriage as a sacrament, and no end of evil results have sprung from what we uphold as laws of morality. And the miserable condition of Hindu widows—what is it due to, but to the existing marriage laws? Why not go back to nature, and take a leaf out of the book of the brute creation?

I do not know whether the advocates of free love in the West resort to the argument summarized above or have any stronger reasons to put forth, but I am sure that the tendency to regard the marriage bond as barbarous is distinctly Western. If the argument is also borrowed from the West, there is no difficulty about meeting it.

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had quoted, in connection with the temple-entry movement in the South, a Sanskrit stanza which said that one need not take a bath after touching a Chandala waiting outside a temple to have a glimpse of the deity's image.

[2] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 25-4-1926. This is a condensed translation by Mahadev Desai.

It is a mistake to institute a comparison between man and the brute and it is this comparison that vitiates the whole argument. For man is higher than the brute in his moral instincts and moral institutions. The law of nature as applied to the one is different from the law of nature as applied to the other. Man has reason, discrimination, and free will such as it is. The brute has no such thing. It is not a free agent, and knows no distinction between virtue and vice, good and evil. Man, being a free agent, knows these distinctions, and when he follows his higher nature shows himself far superior to the brute, but when he folows his baser nature, can show himself lower than the brute. Even the races regarded as the most uncivilized on earth accept some restriction on sexual relations. If it be said that the restriction is itself barbarous, then freedom from all restraints should be the law of man. If all men were to act according to this lawless law, there would be perfect chaos within twenty-four hours. Man being by nature more passionate than the brute, the moment all restraint is withdrawn, the lava of unbridled passion would overspread the whole earth and destroy mankind. Man is superior to the brute inasmuch as he is capable of self-restraint and sacrifice, of which the brute is incapable.

Some of the diseases that are so common at the present day are the result of infringement of marriage laws. I should like to know a single instance of a man strictly observing the restraint of the marriage bond having suffered from the diseases the correspondent has in mind. Infanticide, child-marriage and the like are also the result of the breach of marriage laws. For the law lays down that a man or woman shall choose a mate only when he or she has come of age, is healthy, and capable of restraint, and desires to have progeny. Those who strictly obey this law, and regard the marriage bond as a sacrament, have never an occasion to be unhappy or miserable. Where marriage is a sacrament, the union is not the union of bodies but the union of souls indissoluble even by the death of either party. Where there is a true union of souls, the remarriage of a widow or widower is unthinkable, improper and wrong. Marriages, where the true law of marriage is ignored, do not deserve the name. If we have very few true marriages nowadays, it is not the institution of marriage that is to blame, but the prevailing form of it, which should be reformed.

The correspondent contends that marriage is no moral or religious bond but a custom, and a custom which is opposed to religion and mora-lity, and hence deserves to be abolished. I submit

that marriage is a fence that protects religion. If the fence were to be destroyed religion would go to pieces. The foundation of religion is restraint and marriage is nothing but restraint. The man who knows no restraint has no hope of self-realization. I confess it may be dificult to prove the necessity of restraint to an atheist or a materialist. But he who knows the perishable nature of flesh from the imperishable nature of the spirit instinctively knows that self-realization is impossible without self-discipline and self-restraint. The body may either be a play-ground of passion or a temple of self-realization. If it is the latter, there is no room there for liberatinism. The spirit needs must curb the flesh every moment.

Woman will be the apple of discord where the marriage bond is loose, where there is no observance of the law of restraint. If men were as unrestrained as the brutes they would straightway take the road to destruction. I am firmly of opinion that all the evils that the correspondent complains of can be eradicated not by abolishing marriage but by a systematic understanding and observance of the law of marriage.

I agree that whereas amongst some communities marriage is permitted amongst very near relations, it is prohibited among other communities, that whereas some communities forbid polygamy some permit it. Whilst one would wish that there was a uniform moral law accepted by all communities, the diversity does not point to the necessity of abolishing all restraint. As we grow wise in experience our morality will gain in uniformity. Even today the moral sense of the world holds up monogamy as the highest ideal and no religion makes polygamy obligatory. The ideal remains unaffected by the relaxation of practice according to time and place.

I need not reiterate my views regarding remarriage of widows, as I consider remarriage of virgin widows not only desirable but the bounden duty of all parents who happen to have such widowed daughters.

Young India, 3-6-1926

196. LETTER TO AHMED MIYAN

April 25, 1926

BHAI AHMED MIYAN,

I have your letter.

1-2. In my opnion, my efforts for Hindu-Muslim unity have not been fruitless. However much the two communities may be estranged at present, I think ultimately they will have to [come together][1].

3. Unity is certainly essential for the solution of the country's problems.

4. Money can be spent only for the cause for which it was collected.

5. I have not been able to discover the reasons for the painful incidents at Calcutta. I put little trust in newspaper reports. The Arya Samaj, I believe, used to take out processions formerly too.

6. I think it would be betraying lack of faith in God even to speculate whether or not the results would have been better if I had adopted some other way.

7. It is, I know, for God to worry who will take my place, why then should I worry about it?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19909

197. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

ASHRAM,
April 25, 1926

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. The Governor has replied that it is not necessary for me to go there at present. It will do if I see him in June after he comes down; so we are free from the bother of having to go to Mahabaleshwar.

I did make some mention to Lalaji about his grievance but he refused to admit to me that he had any. Since we know the trouble, we will certainly apply the remedy when he is here.

I will speak to Motilalji when there is an opportunity to do so. I am sure there will be no difficulty in regard to that matter.

I do not feel like sending away Devdas from here just now. It would be better if he leaves only after he has completely recovered his health. Moreover, if I am required to go to Europe I shall have to

[1]' Fight it out' in the source

think what I should do and whom I should take with me. My present intention is that Mahadev and Devdas should accompany me. For this reason, too, it is better that Devdas should stay here for the present. If at all we decide to go, we shall be leaving at the beginning of July. I have received no reply as yet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 2861

198. LETTER TO NAGINDAS

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Sunday, April 25, 1926

BHAISHRI NAGINDAS,

Read the enclosed postcard and let me know what you wrote to him. If this gentleman had ordered books as per the announcement in *Navajivan*, I think you should have sent them. . . . Let me also know how many orders you have received to date on cash payment.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19506

199. LETTER TO GULABDAS LALJI[1]

ASHRAM,
April 25, 1926

BHAISHRI GULABDAS,

1. There cannot be any difficulty in studying at home any of the subjects[2] you have mentioned.

2. It is for the person concerned to see that his work in the profession does not kill his better feelings. I certainly rate these professions[3] inferior to agriculture and other manual work.

3. For the practice of *brahmacharya*, one's diet should be simple and light; spices and stimulating foods should be avoided.

4. There is certainly some meaning in the distinction which is made, from the point of view of non-violence, between greens and pulses. At the present time, however, dharma is restricted to making

[1] This was in response to two sets of questions by the addressee.
[2] Engineering, medicine and homoeopathy
[3] *ibid*.

such distinctions and, therefore, this one has become unprofitable.

5. So long as women are, and believe that they are, dependent, people see nothing wrong in their having to submit to more restrictions than men.

1. I do not think that dharma requires a wife to do everything her husband does.

2. A husband may not force his wife to wear khadi, but may persuade her to do so only with the power of his love.

3. Both the son and his wife should insist on wearing khadi, but so long as the father requires their services they should not leave his house.

4. To me it seems altogether wrong that a man should take a second wife, with or without the first wife's consent. In my opinion, a man may not marry again even if his wife has borne him no children.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19910

200. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

April 26, 1926

I do not feel like going there at all. I do not like to leave the Ashram even for an hour.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi p. 87

201. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

ASHRAM,
Monday, April 26, 1926

BHAISHRI KAKA,

I have your letters. I shall certainly answer your question about cow's milk, but not today.

When asked about the new almanac Swami said that he did not understand the problem. I at any rate do not. Explain it to us after you get well and revise the almanac. Can we, however, introduce any changes without first discussing them at length in *Navajivan*? I have not yet been able to understand the significance of the proposed changes. Shri Harihar is expected here in a few days; I shall try to

understand it from him . . . . [1]

My Mussoorie trip is off for ever. The meeting with the Governor will also take place either in Poona or Bombay, in June. At present the air is thick with talk about a trip to Fin- land. I have not yet received the final reply. I still think that they will not agree to my condition regarding my dress. If the journey is finally decided upon, I shall be away for not less than three months.

More in my next.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S. N. 19911

202. LETTER TO CHANDRASHANKAR PANDYA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

Monday, April 26, 1926

BHAISHRI CHANDRASHANKAR,

I was glad to have your letter.

Who gave you the right to fall ill again? How if you return it to the person who gave it to you? Or is it that, in this age of freedom, we may not give up any rights which we have once secured?

Believe me I am making my humble efforts as you desire. I believe in every word of the last line in the verse quoted by you. "Though outwardly following different paths, may we be one in heart."

Motilalji is also working towards the same end, but how can we have unity when the hearts are divided? Difference in ideology may also keep the hearts divided. It would be good to have only two parties, the Government and the people; but I do not think this possible at present. When our hearts feel in that way, nothing more remains to be done. It should be our ceaseless efforts to bring about what is lacking now.

If you come to Ahmedabad and stay here for a couple of days,

[1] As in the source

we shall discuss this at length.

Vandemataran from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI CHANDRASHANKAR PANDYA
HIGH COURT PLEADER
CHINA BAGH, GIRGAON
BOMBAY

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S. N. 19912

203. LETTER TO S. GANESAN

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 27, 1926

MY DEAR GANESAN,

I have your telegram. I send you a copy of the essay[1] so far as it has been typed. It will cover in all 100 pages. This ought to enable you to give me your exact quotation. The original intention was to publish through the *Navajivan* office. As Varadachari is in Madras and as I learn that probably the essay can be printed cheaper in Madras, I thought I would first have the quotation from you before deciding to give it to *Navajivan*.

The required paper has alreday been bought for the book. If therefore you are to print the essay the paper will have to be transferred to you. So you may give me your quotation without the cost of the the paper for 2,000 copies. And you will give me the exact date of delivery of copies after the thing is put into your hands.

It will be necessary for me to consult also Varadachari whether he can stay in Madras and do it on his own responsibility. In order to expedite matters you will perhaps see or correspond with Varadachari also.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 19507

[1] *Hand-spinning and Hand-weaving—An Essay* by S. V. Puntambekar and N. S. Varadachari

204. LETTER TO S. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 27, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your telegram. I saw your interview only yesterday. I expect you in Sabarmati at the time of the A.I.C.C. meeting.

I fully appreciate your position and difficulty. The only part that I played then and should play now is to act as a peacemaker. I am not interested in the Councils at all. I may be regarded as a disinterested party. That is about all that can be said of myself.

The more I study the Councils' work, the effect of entry into the Councils upon public life, its repercussion upon the Hindu-Muslim question, the more convinced I become not only of the futility but of the inadvisability of Council-entry. I would welcome the day when at least a few of the comrades of 1920 leave the Councils to their fate and work if they like at the charkha programme or any other thing they wish. I have not a shadow of doubt that they will be the reserve force ready for mobilization when the time for battle comes. However, that is my view. For the present, I bottle it up and keep it to myself except when I share it with friends like you. The time for its public ventilation is not yet come. I should simply add one more to the already existing disturbing factors without doing the slightest good. This, therefore, is only for your eyes. More when we meet.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. SRINIVASA IYENGAR
AMJAD BAGH
MYLAPORE, MADRAS

From a photostat: S. N. 19508

205. LETTER TO DR. MANEKBAI BAHADURAJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 27, 1926

DEAR MANEKBAI,

I have your welcome letter. I was delighted to receive it. I would certainly have stayed with you had I gone to Mahabaleshwar, even if it was for only a day but I am not called upon now to go to

Mahabaleshwar. I had asked the Governor to postpone the interview till he came down from the hills after the season and he has agreed. It means for me a saving of a few days though at the same time a deprivation of the pleasure of meeting you and Mr. Bahadurji.

I had a reminder from him that he was not a doctor but as I knew you before I knew him, evidently in the hurry of dictating I forgot the distinction. I do not tender my apologies, for, I see no harm in the husband of a doctress also being called a doctor by way of courtesy.

Do you remember the singlets you sent me? And, do you also remember that you owe me more? I shan't call upon you to fulfil the promise as I cannot need them in this boiling heat. But I send the reminder so that I can fall back upon your promise whenever I need them.

With regards to you all,

Yours sincerely,

DR. MANEKBAI BAHADURJI
COMRA HALL
PANCHGANI

From a photostat : S.N. 19509

206. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Chaitra Poornima [*April 27, 1926*]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. I enclose for your knowledge the receipt received from Jamnalalji's office for that part of the amount of your cheque which was intended as your contribution to the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. I learn for the first time that receipts are issued after deducting draft charges.

What more may I say about the Hindu-Muslim fighting? I fully understand what is best for us, but I also know that anything I say at present will just be a cry in the wilderness. Who can drive away a fly sitting on honey? Who can stop the moth from circling round the flame?

I have been reaping a great many benefits from the decision not to go to Mussoorie. Why did you send a telegram from Delhi asking

me to go when you had already given your opinion here? But who can destroy him whom God protects?

I do not know my own mind in regard to the visit to Finland. I have sound reasons both for and against going there, and because I could not decide either way, I told those who had invited me that I would accept their invitation on certain conditions; if they agree to have me on those conditions, I would conclude that it was necessary that I should go.

We shall see what happens at the All-India Congress Committee meeting.

I want Shri Jugalkishore's consent in regard to the Chinese student, since he takes special interest in such matters. I wrote to him remembering what he had said to me. In matters which lie outside my own sphere, I act only if I get the help of friends who would know. I do not want to add unnecessarily to the burdens you shoulder for my sake. As long as you brothers have separate accounts, I too shall deal with each of you individually. Kindly therefore, let me know what Shri Jugalkishore would like me to do.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original : C.W. 6125a. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

207. LETTER TO JUGALKISHORE BIRLA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Wednesday, April 28, 1926

BHAI JUGALKISHOREJI,

I got your letter today. I will send the money for the girl. At present the Chinese student seems to possess all fine qualities of character. At his own request, he has been given an Indian name. We call him Shanti.

Though the present strife between Hindus and Muslims is painful, I see a ray of peace shining through it. I always pray to God that we may not forget our dharma.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From the Hindi ogirinal : C.W. 6126. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

208. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Wednesday [*April 28, 1926*][1]

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your letter. What you have written to the Dewan Saheb[2] is all right. I shall let you know if [it] does not arrive in about eight days.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5706

209. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Wednesday, April 28, 1926

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL,

This letter too, though addressed to you, is meant for both of you. Husband and wife both have the right to use, if necessary, a goad or a stick against the other partner; only, the goad should be of the satyagrahi type, like that satyagrahi abuse. As for Moti, I warn her that I will use nothing but the goad to drive out her laziness and improve her handwriting. She is welcome to leave the Ashram in fear at the prospect. And when she leaves where else but to you will she go? There is certainly some resemblance between the jealous and the godfearing. The actions of either are amusing, and both pin their faith in the unknown. He must be a proud man or a fool who wastes the divine gift of time in thinking over matters on which no one can come to a definite conclusion or which do not involve any issue of principle. I am not a fool nor a proud man; I am godfearing, so I saved time by drawing lots to avoid argument among friends. What difference would it make if I went to Mussoorie? Or, if I did not go? To live in India and to hanker after cool places all the year round is as silly as to live in a river and make the crocodile your enemy.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. NAJUKLAL NANDLAL CHOKSI
RASHTRIYA KELAVANI MANDAL
BROACH

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 12127-A

[1] From the postmark
[2] *ibid*

210. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Wednesday [*April 28, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. Now you have got to leave Deolali. Since so many doctors have given the same advice, it is best to leave. Sinhgadh is far better than Matheran. It is best for you to go there. You can stay there till the first week of June. In June even Deolali will be cool. But by then, there will be no difficulty about getting the bungalow at Panchgani. So you will be able to stay wherever youwish. But the best thing is to decide quickly and go to Sinhgadh. Pyarelal is silent for the present.

Blessings from
BAPU

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
WINDY HALL
NASIK ROAD
DEOLALI (G.I.P)

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

211. SOUTH AFRICA

The Government of India has every reason to congratulate itself upon the diplomatic victory it has gained in South Africa. I have shown elsewhere[2] that nothing could have been done in South Africa but for the extraordinary faith and labours of C. F. Andrews. Nevertheless had the Government of India been at all remiss in its prosecution of the Indian claim, the Areas Reservation Bill would certainly have been passed by the Union Parliament. It is a great gain that the Bill has been postponed and a conference agreed upon.

But there is a fly in the ointment. The Union Government's condition and its acceptance by the Government of India that the resolution must "safeguard Western standards of life by just and legitimate means" may make an equitable solution impossible. What

[1] From the postmark
[2] *Vide* "Statement on South African Indian Problem", 24-4-1926.

is the meaning of "safeguarding Western standards of life" or of "just and legitimate means"? The safeguard may mean, for instance, that the indentured Indian working on the plantations and getting perhaps 30 shillings per month should live like the European artisan in a five-roomed brick-built cottage and wear the European costume from top to toe and eat European food; and "just and legitimate means" may be compulsory deportation of those indentured Indians who do not conform to the impossible safeguard; or "safeguarding by just and legitimate means" may mean reasonable sanitary and economic laws of common applicability ensuring on the part of all a standard of life in keeping with sanitary and hygienic requirements and regulation of all business in conformity to the European standard. Indians would have and should have no objection to the latter interpretation. Never have objections been raised to general sanitary or economic requirements.

But the correspondence just published enables me to understand what the Union Government will want. That Government wants repatriation, not reformation. It would not be party to the holding of a conference if the Government of India would not consent to that question being favourably considered at the Con- ference. Lord Reading cleverly got out of the difficulty by saying he had no objection to voluntary repatriation as limited by the Indian Relief Act being discussed. The Union Government could not very well insist upon the precise terms of repatriation being previously accepted. They therefore discovered the new formula of conformity to "Western standards of life". On the face of it, the condition is harmless enough. But it can be made to cover, as I have shown, impossibilities. Much will therefore depend upon what mentalities both parties bring to the Conference and what strength the Government of India shows. Hitherto it has surrendered the Indian claim every time there has been a tussle and has claimed it as a virtue that it has not yielded all the Union Government has aimed at. This is as much as to say that the judge in a cause did not permit the thief to retain all he had stolen. It must never be forgotten that every time the South African Government has admittedly without just cause sought to deprive the Indian settler of his just rights as a peaceful citizen of South Africa. The Government of India to be true to its trust should therefore have been able to show a record at each tussle of recovery of lost ground. The fact however is that had not the settlers in 1907 taken the law, as it were, into their own hands, they would have lost all, the

Government of India being privy to it. For the Indian and the Imperial Governments had already consented in 1907 to the brutal Asiatic Act—the same that was in 1906 vetoed by Lord Elgin, the then Secretary of State for the Colonies. Though, therefore, the postponement of the Bill and the Conference is a tremendous step gained in the present campaign, if the Government of India weaken in the final heat, the present advantage will be counted as a wasted effort.

The public has thus as great need to be watchful as ever if the advantage is not to be lost. The breathing time must be fully utilized for a close study of the problem and for elucidating the fact that the only crime provable against the Indian settler is his Asiatic birth and the possession of a coloured pigment. It is statutory crime. For, the South African constitution in effect says : "There shall be no equality between whites on the one hand, and coloured and asiatic races on the other." South Africa believes as much in hereditary caste as we do in India.

Lastly, I must not omit to reiterate the opinion given in these columns that the salvation of the settlers lies finally in their own hands. The Government of India, public opinion, and even the Union Government and the white people of South Africa will help them if they will help themselves. Let them remove the slightest cause of complaint against them whether on grounds of hygience or economics. In all things not immoral let them do "in Rome as Romans do". Let them be and remain absolutely united. And above all let them be resolute in suffering for the common good.

Young India, 29-4-1926

212. MARCH FIGURES

The returns of production and sale of khadi for the month of March in several provinces are as follows :[1]

The figures of Karnatak are incomplete. There is no noticeable change in the position from February except in the sales of S. Maharashtra, Bombay and Utkal which show an increase over the February figures. The comparatively large sales in S. Maharashtra are due to the fact that the figure includes the sales effected in the khadi exhibitions that are being organized by Mr. Patwardhan.

[1] Not reproduced here

As compared with the figures for the corresponding month last year wherever figures for comparison are available there is a general increase both in production and sales. The comparative figures are given below :[1]

The Tamilnad sale figure for the month of March 1925 is exceptional, owing to Mr. Bharucha's hawking tour.

Young India, 29-4-1926

213. NOT QUANTITY BUT QUALITY

Times without number have I been asked : "What can be done if we are so few. See how few spinners we have in the Spinners' Association? how few civil resisters? How few pucka non-co-operators? How few prohibitionists?" All this is, alas, too true. But when we come to think of it, what is there in numbers? The more relevant question is, how many true spinners, true civil resisters, true non-co-operators, true prohibitionists are there in the country? It is character, determination, and courage that will count in the end. And I wish I could say that we have 4,000 true spinners. What is a true spinner? A true spinner is not one who merely spins. In that case we have not four thousand but probably four hundred thousand spinners. It is not enough to spin. It is necessary to spin even a strong yarn regularly for the sake of India's paupers. Spinning, therefore, must not be a task but it must be a pleasure. It is not enough to belong to the Association but it is necessary to invite others to do likewise. And a true spinner revolutionizes his life. He therefore understands the gospel of simplicity, appreciates the dignity of body-labour, recognizes that the greatest need of India is self-reliance and therefore work for the millions in their own homes which they can do with the simplest tools.

One is told that the revolution in Japan was brought about not through thousands of men but at the head of it were only 12 men who fired the zeal of fifty-five. And, probably, amongst these 12 was only one man who was the author of the whole plan. If a true beginning is made the rest is simple. We therefore arrive at the astonishing conclusion, which is none the less true, that one true man is enough for any reform no matter how impossible it may appear in the beginning. Ridicule, contempt and death may be and often is the

[1] Not reproduced here

reward of such a man. But though he may die, the reforms survive and prosper. He ensures their stability with his blood. I wish, therefore, that workers will think less of numbers irrespective of strength but more of the strength of the few. It is depth more than the width that is wanted. If we lay a stable foundation, posterity will be able to erect a solid structure upon it, whereas, if the foundation is built of sand, there will be no work for posterity except to dig out the sand to lay the foundation anew.

Young India, 29-4-1926

214. NOTES

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

I received the following cablegram from the Secretary, South African Indian Congress, Durban, before the decision of the South African Government was known :

> Congress meeting assembled tender you grateful thanks for sending Mr. Andrews to South Africa, who nobly and strenuously worked bringing great change feeling both communities. May he enjoy long life, continue his noble work cause of humanity.

I have withheld from the public similar cablegrams received during Mr. Andrews' strenuous tour in South Africa but I felt I could no longer withhold the foregoing especially in view of the results attained. I am aware that the services of this selfless Englishman have not been always properly understood. He is no diplomat and therefore he sends cablegrams faithfully recording opinion and feelings from day to day. He is therefore at times despondent, at times optimistic, but if one were patiently to collect all the cablegrams that he has been sending during the past few months, one would trace in them all a never-to-be-missed ring of hope when to the sceptic there was no ground for hope. His last cable to me on the eve of his departure from South Africa told me not to lose hope because he was hopeful. If he had faith in the righteousness of the Indian cause, he had faith also in the South African statesmen. Andrews is a humanitarian, pure and simple, and therefore he trusts everybody. The whole world is free to deceive him and he would still say "Humanity! With all thy faults I love thee still". And this love of his enables him to surmount all barriers and cut his way straight to the hearts of people. He made himself heard in South Africa where, perhaps, others would have been hissed. He paved the way for the Paddison deputation.

The mention of the Paddison deputation enables me to add the testimony I have received from South Africa to the one that Sjt. C Rajagopalachariar gave in favour of Mr. Paddison when the deputation left. This is what a correspondent has written from South Africa :

> He is an Englishman by birth and an Indian in outlook. In fact, I see no difference between him and Mr. Andrews. It is a surprise that man of his talents should have risen no higher than the Labour Commissionership of Madras. Whether his strong Indian sympathies are responsible for this is more than I know at present.

All accounts received by me show that the members of the deputation discharged their trust faithfully and well. But even this deputation could not have done half as well as they did, without the spade work that was done by Andrews and the incessant toil put by him into it.

IN THE GRIP OF UNTOUCHABILITY

We have heard much about untouchability and unapproachability of Travancore because there was satyagraha there. The lamp of suffering brought the Travancore dirt to light but it seems that there is much more of it in Cochin than in Tranvancore. There the repeated attempts to bring even a resolution before the Cochin Legislative Assembly asking the Cochin state to remove the ban on the use of public roads by untouchables was disallowed.

An assiduous member enquired in the Cochin Legislative Assembly : "How many tanks and wells maintained by Government or Municipal funds were closed to untouchables?" The reply was that 61 tanks and 123 wells were so closed. It would have been interesting if a supplementary question had been asked to elicit how many wells and tanks were accessible to untouchables.

Another question asked was : "On what ground was the use of certain roads constructed and maintained by the Public Works Department prohibited to untouchables," euphemistically called by the questioner "non-Hindus"? Reasons given without any sense of shame on behalf of the Cochin Government were : "The roads are in close proximity to temples and palace. There cannot be a sudden break with the past. Long-standing customs have to be respected". The reader must note the word "palace". One may suppose, therefore, that the *Panchama* has no right of personal petition, for, he cannot traverse roads near the palace, much less can he enter them. The officials who gave the heartless answer are able, educated and

cultured men, in other walks of life even liberal minded; but they justify a cruel, heartless and irreligious custom on the grounds of antiquity.

One learns in law books that crimes and immoralities do not enjoy the benefit of prescription. Their antiquity cannot make them respectable. But it is evidently otherwise in the Cochin State. Who can deny that the custom of untouchability is immoral, barbarous and cruel? Thus the laws of Chohin State are in a way much worse than those of South Africa. The common law of South Africa refuses to admit equality between white and Coloured races. The common law of Cochin bases inequality on birth in a particular group. But the incidence of inequality in Cochin is infinitely more inhuman than in South Africa for, an untouchable in Cochin is deprived of more human rights than the Coloured man in South Africa. There is no such thing as unapproachability or invisibility in South Africa. I have no desire to single out Cochin for its disgraceful treatment of untouchables; for, it is still unfortunately common to Hindus all over India more or less. But, in Cochin, besides the so-called sanction of religion, untouchability has the sanction of the State. Mere levelling up of public opinion, therefore, can be of no avail in Cochin unless it becomes so strong as to compel the state to abolish the barbarous custom.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

The Manager of the Technical Department of the All-India Spinners' Association has handed me the following names[1] of spinners who have sent in their yarn regularly, whose counts are over 25 and whose strands are well and neatly made :

It will be observed that in this list the first place is given to the spinner who has spun 46 counts. The highest count comes last but one. Aparna Devi who at a time occupied the first place stands 19th on the list in spite of her 113 counts. This is the note that accompanies the list :

> These yarns have been singled out for neatness and evenness. But even the best does not come up to the mill yarn standard.

It is therefore not without difficulty that these fine counts can be woven. The foregoing list therefore has been published more for the encouragement of these very spinners than as an example for others

[1] Not reproduced here

to copy. As these spinners have been sending in their quota more regularly and have shown considerable industry they are urged to put greater art into their work so that they may draw stronger threads than they have done hitherto.

Experiments are now being made by Sjt. Laxmidas Purshottam to demonstrate that given good cotton and good carding, it is possible to draw fine thread that would beat the strongest mill yarn of the same count. I hope to publish the results of his experiments at an early date. Meanwhile let the 27 spinners make their own experiments and send stronger yarn than they have been sending. I hope they realize that the twist should be given as they draw the yarn and not at the end of every draw and that the yarn should be sprayed and allowed to absorb the moisture before it is taken off the winder.

TOTAL PROHIBITION

A correspondent writes :[1]

I congratulate the villagers on the closing of their liquor shops. But if there had been a referendum probably very few, as in the Punjab, would have taken the trouble of registering their votes unless there had been personal canvassing.

Young India, 29-4-1926

215. THE BENGAL RELIEF COMMITTEE

A correspondent sends me a cutting from *Welfare* commenting upon the operations of the Bengal Relief Committee. The article reviews the report of the Committee. The correspondent says :

> As it seriously questions the utility of khaddar organizations as relief measures, I would beg you to request Sir P. C. Ray or the Khadi Pratishthan to offer their explanation with facts and figures. I might add that I am a habitual wearer of khadi though I am sorry I am not a self-spinner; some of the ladies of my family are. I mention this to assure you that I am not prejudiced against khaddar.

But the explanation was unnecessary. Anything mentioned in Sjt. Ramananda Chatterjee's magazine would naturally command weight and deserve attention. I therefore immediately passed the cutting and the letter on to Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta and he has

[1] The letter, not reproduced here, stated that the closure of drink shops in villages—Illur Kallamadi, Tarimela—had led to rejoicings by the villagers.

promptly sent the following[1] signed by Dr. Ray and himself. I need not reproduce the *Welfare* article as the crux of the *Welfare* objections is summarized in Dr. Ray's reply.

Young India, 29-4-1926

216. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 30, 1926

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND BHRRR,

I have your letter full of youthful zeal. Some people grow older with years. You are reversing the process. I envy you and I shall now have to tell the people the whiter your beard the younger you are becoming. May the process continue for a long time to come.

By way of change and in order to compare notes, if you feel like it by all means come for the All-India Congress Committee seeing that you are so near. You may suspend your tour for two or three days.

I hope what you say about Ramdas is really true. I know that he is a fine nurse and has a faculty for serving elderly, I beg your pardon, in your case, young people like yourself.

The hot weather has now commenced here in right earnest.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S. N. 9554

217. LETTER TO PYARELAL NAYYAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 30, 1926

MY DEAR PYARELAL,

I have not heard from you at all. You must not keep me in suspense. How is your health and how do you pass your time?

Regarding the spinning essay, I am in correspondence with Varadachari and Ganesan. Hence I have not sent the thing to you. But I will, after the fully copy is made. Subbiah is now at it.

[1] Not reproduced here

I have heard from Mathuradas. Between Sinhgarh and Matheran, I prefer Sinhgarh. In any case, Mr. Ambalal is not here. If necessary I could certainly find out his address and telegraph to see whether his bungalow is available. If, therefore, Dr. Mehta advises Matheran and if Mr. Ambalal's bungalow is required you will consult Mathuradas and telegraph to me.

Yours,

From a microfilm : S. N. 19510

218. LETTER TO URMILA DEVI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 30, 1926

MY DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. You need not worry about my health. I gained one pound during the last week. The heat does not trouble me though at the present moment we are certainly boiling.

I am delighted with your description of your hospital. I was a little uneasy over the delay. When you meet Dr. Bidhan[1] do please give him my regards and congratulations. I am glad you are taking so much interest in it. It would be a fine thing if you can attach yourself to the hospital. It is worth doing. When many things will have been forgotten this memorial will be remembered. The memory of him will grow if the institution becomes a living force in the life of Calcutta.

I would not tempt you to come to Sabarmati for the A.I.C.C. meeting. I hardly think you could bear the dry heat of this place but it will be perfect during the Puja holidays when the rains will be in full swing; you could then stay as long as you like and if your presence is not required there you could stay till it is time to go to Assam.

Yours,

From a photostat : S. N. 19511

219. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 30, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter as also the book on Buddhism with the pages marked with exceptional care and neatness which are all your own. I

[1] Dr. B. C. Roy

read these pages through the very day I received the book, if only in appreciation of the exact manner in which you had tied the pages for me.

You have not yet told me anything about Hemaprabhadevi. I wonder.

Yours,

From a microfilm : S. N. 19512

220. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 30, 1926

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your letter. I do feel disturbed about your health. You must regain your original freshness and strength. When do you expect your sickness ?

I am sorry to hear about the disorganization of Miss Peterson's school. I have not received any yarn yet from the girls referred to by you. You can have as much khaddar rags as you want and soft used khaddar.[1] If you tell me what length you require I shall see to it being sent. It is difficult to fix any price for used khaddar. You will therefore either send what you can or not at all. You will not stint yourself in anything for the sake of paying for the khaddar that you may order nor will you on this account hesitate to ask for the exact quantity you want.

I am glad that Menon is helping poor patients in the way he is do-ing. What does it matter so long as you make both ends meet and it need not matter even if one cannot make both ends meet in acts of service.

Andrews reaches Bombay tomorrow.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat : Courtesy : National Archives of India; also *My Dear Child,* p. 80

[1] For nappies for the baby

221. LETTER TO G. K. DEVADHAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 30, 1926

MY DEAR DEVADHAR,

I hope Manorama reached the Seva Sadan in safety. She left here on Sunday last. She was given Rs. 10 for her fare by the Manager who did not know that she has received already her fare up to Bombay from Jamnalalji. You will please therefore find out from her what she did with the Rs. 6 odd she received from Seth Jamnalalji for her fare up to Bombay when she contemplated returning there. The money should be recovered from her if she still has the amount and may be kept by you for the Seva Sadan.

I would certainly love to discuss with you the co-operative movement and understand its real usefulness. I discussed it with the Registrar or Assistant Registrar in Bihar and with several other friends connected with the co-operative movement but find its usefulness up to a certain limit. Beyond that they have not been able to convince me of its national value as it is being conducted today.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S. N. 19513

222. LETTER TO BHUKANSHARAN

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday, April 30, 1926

BHAI BHUKANSHARANJI,

I have your letter and the hundred rupee currency note sent with it. I intend to utilize the amount on charkha and khadi work, for by that means we can serve the largest number of the poor.

From a microfilm of the Hindi : S. N. 19515

223. LETTER TO NAGARDAS LALLUBHAI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 30, 1926

BHAISHRI NAGARDAS,

I had your letter. In Wadhwan we offer far higher rates than those prevailing in Kathiawar and Gariyadhar. This makes the khadi expensive. From your report and from my talk with Fulchand, I see that the women who have been spinning are not without any means of living or without occupation. Perhaps they spin in response to our appeal and because they realize that it is for the good of the country. The charkha movement was not conceived with such people in view. The assumption underlying it was that in India millions of men and women are half-starved and, though able-bodied, are idle for want of work. The central idea of the spinning movement is to get such people to spin and then sell the khadi made from the yarn produced by them. The khadi produced in Wadhwan does not serve this aim. That is what I feel. If I am right, I think we should stop our work in Wadhwan. In case we have to do this the khadi that is stocked there can be disposed of. We may continue it provided we get women who will spin for a little amount at the end of the day, carders who will do the carding at the rate of two and a half rupees and weavers who will accept wages at rates prevailing elsewhere. Otherwise we should stop it. Discuss this suggestion with other workers and let me know what you think.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S. N. 10879

224. LETTER TO HASAM HIRJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday, April 30, 1926

BHAISHRI HASAM HIRJI,

Now I have another letter from you before I could reply to your first. I will answer the main question in your first letter through *Navajivan* when I get time. I will reply to your second letter here.

Aparigraha is an ideal condition. It can be said that an ideal is never realized perfectly. But we should not lower our ideal on this account. No one has ever been able to draw the ideal straight line of geometry but we may not, for that reason, change its definition. If we draw a straight line, keeping the ideal one in our view, we shall

succeed in drawing a line which will serve our purpose. But if we modify the definition, we will be like a boat without the rudder. There is nothing wrong with money as a piece of metal; evil comes through its use. Keeping this in mind, we should sincerely try to realize the ideal of *aparigraha* as best as we can. Let us now examine the instances which you have imagined. The world will lose nothing if the rich give up their wealth voluntarily; on the contrary, it will benefit by their action, because a new and powerful force is generated as a result of a sincere act of *aparigraha*. No one can act in such matters mechanically. He alone who feels a spontaneous urge in his heart will act, and will deserve credit for his action. There is no danger or possibility of the entire world acting upon the ideal of *aparigraha*. But assuming that it does, I have no doubt that it will find no difficulty in maintaining itself. There are people in this world who do not stock anything to meet their needs even for one day. You need not believe that such persons would starve if there were not in the world other people whe stored things.

Just as in the law enforced by governments a crime does not cease to be a crime for being committed unintentionally, so also a violation of divine law committted in ignorance does not cease to be a violation. Adultery committed under the influence of alcohol is none the less the same. "To ask for forgiveness" and "to receive forgiveness" are beautiful ideas. I act on both the principles. But I have always believed that forgiveness in this sense does not mean what is commonly understood by it. A sincere desire to be forgiven increases our humility; we are able to see our weakness, and this knowledge gives us the strength to be good. Hindus, Muslims, Christians, and others have employed innumerable epithets to describe God but they are all products of our own imagination. God is without attributes and beyond all qualification. But again I am speaking about the ideal; if, however, we do not understand the ideal and seriously believe that God is subject to all the epithets with which we describe Him, He would be like us, an embodiment of errors. We should, therefore, know Him as stainless and without form, and then we may heap on Him as many epithets as we choose, for that is the only language which He has given us. Apart from this, we cannot escape the fruits of our action. This is the universal law and therein lies His mercy. This world would not endure even for one moment if He were to keep amending His laws and commandments, as we do either to favour some or correct an error which might have been noticed. The

Reality which we call God is a mysterious, indescribable and unique power. If we cannot comprehend Him with our mind, how can our poor speech describe Him ?

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 10902

225. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday, April 30, 1926

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I have your letter. I am sending Chi. Maganlal's criticism for your information. I see that Abbas Saheb is doing fine work. What shall I write to Ramjibhai about the car? I understand from what you say in your letter that for the present you want him to keep the car as it is.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S. N. 19516

226. LETTER TO NAGINDAS

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday, April 30, 1926

BHAISHRI NAGINDAS,

I had sent your letter to Bhai Darshansingh. I am sending his reply for your information along with the stamps received with it. I have advised him that, if he thinks the books are useful, he should order them and remit the money for them.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S. N. 19517

227. LETTER TO NIRMALA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday, April 30, 1926

CHI. NIRMALA,

I have your letter. I am keeping well. I dictate my letters to save time and because my handwriting is bad. I have been gaining weight. Yesterday was the day for taking my weight. It was 105. Aunt has no reason at all to feel embarrassed. Since you desire, I will not read this letter to Kaku, though I would very much love to. I have put a limit for rent, at Rs. 10.

I am writing to Jamnadas about *takli* and charkha. He will send you slivers and you should return to him the yarn produced, as he has to keep an account of all the cotton. You need not dispose of the mount for your machine because it is broken; it can be repaired at a little cost. Rami, Kanti and others are all doing very well. Rasik has gone to Abu. Mathuradas is all right, more or less. Devdas is here at present.

From a copy of the Gujarati : S. N. 19518

228. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday, [*April 30, 1926*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have curtailed even the little writing I used to do with my own hand and, as far as possible, I dictate. So this, too, I am dictating. I see from Jaisukhlal's[2] letter that both you and Kusum were laid down with illness. I suggest that both of you now come here. I have written to Jaisukhlal too, suggesting this. I am well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 599. Courtest : Vasumati Pandit

229. MESSAGE FOR "FREEDOM"

May 1, 1926

'Freedom' is an attractive name to give to a newspaper. But it is a much abused term. When a slave-holder talks of freedom, we know that it means freedom to use his slave as he chooses without let or hindrance. A drunkard's freedom means ability to drink on till he is bereft of his sense and a long time after. Whose and what freedom will this paper stand for is a relevant question. The fact that it is Pandit Motilalji's creation itself is one assurance that freedom means the freedom of the masses. And freedom of the masses means their ability to cope and do away with the condition of semi-starvation in which millions of them are living. This aspect of freedom appeals to me the most at the present moment; because freedom of the masses

[1] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Vasumati Pandit", 9-5-1926.
[2] Jaisukhlal Gandhi

automatically involves freedom of the untouchables and freedom of people belonging to different religions to follow out their religious convictions without let or hindrance from anybody. And, freedom of the masses in the manner I have explained is an utter impossibility without the revival of hand-spinning and therefore intensive khaddar propaganda as a central fact.

Let me hope that *Freedom* will in season and out of season impress upon its readers the national importance of this central fact of the life of the masses with whom, if we want swaraj, we must identify ourselves.

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 19523

230. LETTER TO SRI PRAKASA

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 1, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have not been able to reach your letter till now. Here is my article[1] if it may be so called for *Freedom*.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SRI PRAKASA
SEVASHRAMA
BENARES CANTT.

From a microfilm : S.N. 19523

231. MESSAGE ON ANDREWS'S RETURN FROM SOUTH AFRICA

[*May 1, 1926*][2]

The best welcome that we can give to Mr. Andrews and the one he will appreciate most is to make a fixed determination to vindicate India's honour by insisting on and securing the just rights of the settlers. This can only be done if we emulate Mr. Andrews's immense

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] C. F. Andrews arrived in Bombay on this date.

energy, studiousness, indomitable courage, unfaltering hope and living faith in God and his humanity.

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-5-1926

232. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 1, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

Chhotalalji is coming to you. His nerves are high strung through excessive work and he has made drastic experiments in reducing food to its simplest and most economic terms. The result is that his health is much impaired. He is in love with you. He wants to study your organization and wants to do some easy work which can almost be termed recreation. He has an idea that he will be more useful for my personal service if he learns shorthand and typewriting. I have told him I do not think so especially now that I have Subbiah with me. I would not think of using Chhotalalji as a shorthand reporter and typist when I know that he is a khadi expert in many of its branches. But he is an absolutely free agent. To learn shorthand is no sin and if he wants to learn it and typing, he shall do so.

You will therefore discuss with him freely the manner in which he should pass two or three months there and do the needful. You know that he is a silent bird. Therefore you will have to draw him out and cheer him up. The act of cheering him up will have its reaction upon you which I would like.

Give me your impressions of this horrible rioting in Calcutta.

Yours,

From a microfilm : S.N. 19521

233. DRAFT AGREEMENT FOR LOANS FROM ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION

[*May 1, 1926*][1]

I, in my capacity as the sole proprietor of the Pravartak Sangh in Chandranagar and elsewhere in accordance with the schedule hereto

[1] *Vide* the succeeding two items.

annexed, hereby acknowledge having received from the All-India Spinners' Association, Ahmedabad, the sum of Rs. 6000/- (Rupees six thousand only) in cash as a loan pay- able in five years after the date hereof at the office of the Khadi Pratishthan, 170, Bow Bazaar Road, Calcutta, or any other place that may be appointed by you from time to time.

The loan shall bear interest at one per cent per annum payable quarterly at the above office or any other office that may be appointed by you from time to time.

The receipt of the principal or the interest by your agent, Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta of the said Khadi Pratishthan, or any other person appointed by you in writing from time to time shall be sufficient proof of payment of principal or interest.

The conditions of the said loan are :

(1) That the money received shall be used for the production of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar in Bengal.

(2) The selling prices of khaddar shall be not more than the cost price up to weaving plus $6\frac{1}{2}$ % for the expenses of management.

(3) The Pravartak Sangh shall not directly or indirectly deal in what is known as half-khadi, that is, cloth in which mill spun yarn has been used or which is machine-woven or cloth manufactured in Indian or foreign mills.

(4) The Pravartak Sangh shall not raise any other loan on mortgage of the scheduled property without the previous written consent of the Association.

(5) The Pravartak Sangh shall keep a proper account of all the hand-spinning and khaddar transactions and its central and branch depots in connection with khaddar production shall be open to inspection by the nominee or nominees of the Association during office hours and the Pravartak Sangh shall render to the Secretary, All-India Spinners' Association, Ahmedabad, quarterly accounts of all its khaddar transactions.

(6) In the event of a breach by the Pravartak Sangh of any of the foregoing conditions, it shall be open to the All-India Association to declare the loan payable on demand. The Association shall be the sole judge of the breach of the said conditions.

From a microfilm : S.N. 11174

234. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 1, 1926

DEAR MOTIBABU,

I have your letter. There has been some delay as Mr. Banker is not in Sabarmati.

Here is a document[1] to be signed by you. The document should be signed by you in the presence of two witnesses and it should be witnessed also by a Magistrate in Chandranagar. If you will kindly send the document duly executed so Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta, he has instructions to pay you Rs. 6,000/- against delivery of the document. Instructions are being sent to the Treasurer to send him the money by the same post that will carry this letter.

I need hardly tell you that the conditions that have been incorporated in the accompanying document are the conditons to be found in all the documents held by the Association. What is more, some definite security has also been taken from the other organizations to which loans have been given. The last condition has been waived in your case because yours is a big organization and the loan is comparatively small.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 11173

235. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 1, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

Shankerlal is not here at the present moment. Pravartak Sangh's affair has been hanging fire for some time and they are naturally pressing for the loan. I have therefore concocted a document of which I send you a copy herewith as also a copy of my letter to Moti Babu[2].

Rs. 6,000/- is being sent to you. Please pay the amount upon delivery of the document duly signed by Moti Babu.

Encs. 2

Yours,

From a microfilm : S.N. 11174

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Motilal Roy

236. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA GARU

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 1, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your letters including the one under reply with reference to the complaint from the ladies of Bombay regarding the prices of fine Andhra khaddar. I forwarded the whole of the correspondence to these sisters. They now understand the position. I wanted to give them an authoritative information from you so as to enable them to take such action as they may choose.

I share your misgivings about the compromise and the present situation generally. But I have full faith that sooner or later things will right themselves. In the compromise I have simply acted as peace-maker. I cannot reconcile myself to Council-entry. As time passes I feel more and more convinced that some of our troubles are due to the Council-entry. So long as non-co-operators refrained from going to the Councils it was possible to keep the mass from that pernicious influence but now that non-co-operators have tasted the forbidden fruit, they are naturally taking a portion of the mass within the zone of that influence. We may not grumble at all these things. They are a result of the process of purification. It would be enough if the few who are still out remain so not out of fashion but out of conviction.

I hope you are keeping good health. Are you taking any active part in the constructive portion of the Congress programme?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA GARU
SESHAMMA'S CHOULTRY
BENGALORE CITY

From a microfilm : S.N. 19524

237. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday [*May 1, 1926*][1]

BHAI RAMESHWARJI,

I have your letter. I will get the Rs. 50. It is difficult to cure your

[1] From the postmark

physical ailment till your mental illness is cured. You might possibly benefit by living in a quiet place for some time. And of course there is *Ramanama*.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 163

238. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday [*May 1, 1926*][1]

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your letter. Do get a plan of the building[2] prepared and write to Thakore Saheb[3]. If we get his permission we can at least have the foundation laid. May we not use on this the funds collected for the Mansukhlal memorial?

BAPU

[PS.]

There is no news yet from Porbandar. It would be good if you make a trip there.[4]

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5707

239. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, May 1, 1926

LEARNED FRIEND,

I was very happy to read your letter. I had not thought that your hand had become steady and that you could write. Yesterday I had the telegram as requested by me and today I get a letter in your own hand. I hope I shall continue to get a letter or a postcard daily for some days. The diet is excellent. I hope the milk is not boiled thick; after a fast, one should never take such milk. The use of soda helps. I am eager to see you when you are well enough to move about to hear

[1] From the postmark
[2] Of a National School
[3] Lakhajiraj, Prince of Rajkot
[4] The postcript is in Gandhiji's hand.

from you this story of atonement.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19519

240. LETTER TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, Chaitra Vad 4 [*May 1, 1926*][1]

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I have your letter. You unnecessarily reporach yourself. I do not give my reasons, but tell you my decision that you should not go elsewhere, but come straight here along with Shri . . .'s[2] daughter and all the children. It is all right if Gomati is responding to the *vaid's* treatment there; otherwise my own wish is that you should give up the idea of going for a change of air, stop even the *vaid's* treatment and live here, whatever the climate. I had given up all thought of medicine for Gomati when we tried fasting. We have tried the best remedy. Now we should, I feel, leave the matter entirely to God. However, if you feel inclined to stay for a month in Dumas, you may certainly go. In your present circumstances, I think it would be best for you to accept Balubhai as your cook for whatever he is worth. But he should be given to understand that after entrusting the children to you he must not disturb the arrangement. A "curator bonis" will have to be appointed for the two brothers. I think we may appoint Jamnalalji. You must have heard in detail why the trip to Mussoorie was cancelled. I knew that the decision would please Nath. This is the position about Finland : There students from the whole world. . . .[3]

From a copy of the Gujarati : S.N. 19520

241. LETTER TO NARGIS CAPTAIN

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 1, 1926

I have your letter. You have learnt now all about my cancellation of the Mussoorie visit and not going to Mahab[a]leshwar. I wrote to the Governor that it will be more convenient for me to meet

[1] From the reference to the cancellation of Gandhiji's trip to Mussoorie and the talk about one to Finland
[2] Omission as in the source
[3] As in the source

him at Poona or Bomaby. He has therefore postponed the meeting till he comes down from the hills. I am glad of the saving of time and trouble, but I am certainly sorry that I shall not see you and Mithubehn for some time now. I would also [have] loved to have met Manekbai and Mr. Bahadurji. I beg his pardon for calling him doctor which I did absent-mindedly.

Mithubehn tells me you are not still looking as well as you should. I wish you could still go to Kashmir.

Up to very recently the weather here has been delightfully cool and we were all getting anxious because such cool weather was no preparation for the rains. We are now having real hot weather and therefore everybody is glad. For, if this hot spell continues, one may look forward to early rains in June.

PS.

The foregoing was dictated yesterday. Today I have a letter from Mathuradas, who is you are aware in Deolali, saying that Dr. Mehta wants him to go to Panchgani. He thinks Deolali too hot in May and part of June till the rains set in. He rejects the idea of Matheran or Sinhgarh. I tried to get for him Sir Prabhashanker Pattani's house but it is not available till June. Can you yourself or through your friend find out whether it is possible to secure something for Mathuradas for a month or five or six weeks? He must shift to Panchgani if it is possible at the earliest opportunity. Of course, Mathuradas will pay the rent. If you have anything in view, please telegraph to Mathuradas, Windy Hall, Deolali, and write to me.

Yours,

From a microfilm : S.N. 19522

242. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday [*May 1, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. You must now go only to Panchgani. I am having the matter arranged through Nargisbehn.[2] You must stay there for a month even if you have to pay rent. Later you can shift to

[1] From the postmark
[2] Nargis Captain; *vide* "Letter to Nargis Captain", 1-5-1926.

Pattani Saheb's bungalow. The bungalow will definitely be available in June. As your substitute Devdas left for Bombay last night to receive Andrews.[1] He will be back on Monday. He asked my permission to pay you a flying visit but I refused. He is still physically very weak. His eyes are not clear. It is better that he moves about after he has regained strength.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
WINDY HALL
NASIK ROAD
DEOLALI (G.I.P.)

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

243. LETTER TO RAMKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday [*May 1, 1926*][2]

BHAI RAMKRISHNAJI[3],

Brijkrishna gave me news of the passing of your elder daughter. I was grieved. May God grant you and your mother peace.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

SHRI RAMKRISHNAJI
C/O SHRI BRIJKRISHNA
KATRA KHUSHALRAI
SHRI NIVAS
DELHI

From the Hindi original: Brijkrishna Chandiwala Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

[1] For Gandhiji's message on C. F. Andrew's return from South Africa on May 1, 1926, *vide* "Message on Andrews' Return from South Africa", 1-5-1926.

[2] From the postmark

[3] Brother of Brijkrishna Chandiwala

244. NOTES

ONCE BITTEN TWICE SHY

The public have had such bitter experience of the bureaucracy that if they hear of anyone, who has shown a spirit of independence till now, calling on any member of the bureaucracy, they fear the worst or feel suspicious about him. Ever since it appeared in the papers that the Governor of Bombay intended to invite me for a discussion about the Agriculture Commission which has been appointed, I have been flooded with letters of all kinds, including letters of warning. One correspondent asks what I hoped to gain by meeting the Governor, and cautions me saying that the latter would try to throw dust into my eyes, would lay a trap for me and deceive me. If, however, we aspire to win swaraj, it will not help to be afraid or be suspicious in this manner. We are perfectly right in refusing to accept any favours from an official, to be obliged by any of them or to accept service under them. That is part of non-co-operation. But it would not be right to be afraid of meeting any of them. Why should a man who knows his duty be afraid of anything? Again, what reason for fear has one who seeks no personal gain, who has, in other words, unshakable faith in non-co-operation? Moreover, anyone who wishes to achieve his end through non-violence would never miss any opportunity of meeting an official in an open and proper manner. My non-co-operation is not with individuals, it is with their actions. The way of non-violence means the way of love. If I wish to follow it, I should welcome every opportunity of meeting my opponent, for it is my duty to change his manner of acting, and that too not through force but by persuasion, by pleading with him or by self-suffering, that is, by resorting to satyagraha. Should, therefore, His Excellency invite me, I would regard it as my duty to meet him and, being quite clear about my principles and knowing my duty, I would have no fear of yielding to any temptation or walking into a trap. Even at the time when I met Lord Reading, some friends had expressed the same fear that my correspon- dent has done on this occasion. But I believe that I did right to meet him, and that my meeting did no harm to the national cause. To me, personally, it brought nothing but gain since I could form a correct estimate of him, and can now say that I let go no real opportunity, through pride or weakness, of arriving at a settlement. On this occasion, too, I expect nothing but gain from a meeting with the Governor. I shall be able to place my views before

him, will see and correct any error there may be in my line of reasoning and will know his views about agriculture. His Excellency certainly knows that I am a non-co-operator, that I have no faith in commissions and can take no part in their work. All this is public knowledge. If, therefore, I am invited to meet the Governor, no one need have any fears on my account.

TO WORKERS IN THE CAUSE OF COW-PROTECTION

As there are some who entertain fears about the possible consequences of my meeting the Governor, there are others, too, who hanker after some gain from it. I have received a letter and a telegram suggesting that I should tell the Governor about the loss to agriculture through the export and slaughter of cattle. I wish to tell those workers in the cause of cow-protection that, even if I had an opportunity to discuss this subject with the Governor, I would most certainly not do what they wish me to do. I see one great weakness in these workers, namely, that they do not make a patient and scientific study of this problem. Shri Valji Desai has undertaken a careful study of the reasons for the destruction of the cattle-wealth of the country. His articles on the subject have been appearing regularly in *Young India* and *Navajivan*. One will understand the causes of the miserable condition of the cattle even from these articles. Though I believe that the Government can do a great deal in this field, there is much which the people, too, can do. And so long as the people have not become alive to their responsibility in this matter and public opinion has not been educated, the cattle-wealth cannot be saved from destruction, no matter what laws the Government makes. The problem involves difficult economic and ethical issues. But one would think that we could spare no time to reflect even for a moment on what economics and ethics have to tell us about cattle, such is our pathetic condition. Thanks to fanaticism, we have lost the true sense of dharma and we are too lethargic to study economics. Merely telling beads to the name of Mother Cow will help us to serve neither her nor Mother India. We can serve her and her progeny and, by protecting her, serve ourselves only by understanding the meaning of cow-worship and taking measures accordingly. I suggest to my correspondents to reflect over the articles on this subject which appear in this paper from time to time. They may point out any error of logic or facts, which they may see; if they see none, they should follow the suggestions made in them.

SURAT VINAY MANDIR

A friend has written to me making some complaints against the Rashtriya Vinay Mandir[1], at Surat, the reason for writing to me being that he has heard a rumour to the effect that the control and management of the Mandir are to be handed over to me. Instead of discussing the complaints, let me state the existing position. I have known Shri Dayalji and Shri Kalyanji for the past ten years. When they told me on behalf of the Committee that the only way to bring order in the affairs of the Mandir was to hand over control to me, I thought it necessary that I should accept the responsibility. My correspondent suggests that control has been handed over to me at a time when the Mandir is on its last legs, so that the responsibility for its death may be mine. Even if that be so, how can I refuse to share, wherever I can, the responsibility of co-workers? When agreeing to take over control of the Mandir, I made it plain that I shall do nothing without Vallabhbhai's advice and take no step which would not be subject to the general supervision of the Vidyapith. This condition was accepted by the two friends, Dayalji and Kalyanji. I now intend to discuss with Vallabhbhai the question of seeting up a Trust for the Mandir. Meanwhile, with the consent of Shri Nrisinhprasad, *Kulanayaka* of the Mandir, I have provisionally appointed Shri Narahari Parikh as its *Acharya*, and given him the authority to introduce any changes in the running of the institution which he may find necessary and increase or reduce the teaching staff. The Mandir which was run in the Patidar Ashram has been merged with the school in Gopipura. This step, it is hoped, will enable the authorities to retrench six posts of teachers. Any changes in the curriculum which are found necessary will also be introduced. When the Mandir reopens after the holidays, Shri Nrisinhprasad intends to visit it and observe the conditions. Moreover, though it is true that control has been handed over to me, this does not mean that Shri Dayalji and Shri Kalyanji will cease to take further interest in the Mandir. Not only will they not do this, but on the contrary they will be my hands and feet in the task entrusted to me. I, therefore, hope that the merchants who have been contri- buting towards the expenses of the school will continue their

[1] National Primary School

contributions according to their promise. The accounts of the school will be published regularly with the necessary audit reports.

TO N. A. P.

To me your question itself seems to spring from morbidity. The instances from British life which I mentioned had no connection with the point whether or not the people there live a luxurious life; it is all a matter of custom. When a person living in a hot country goes to a cold country, he has to exercise greater care to protect himself against the cold than the residents of the country need do; in the same way I believe it very necessary for Indian youths to exercise special care [when they go to England]. It was not my intention to suggest that all or most young men in England remain perfectly pure; all that I wished to suggest was that some of the freedom which people take in England may be harmless. If we take that freedom, we would sully our purity. The moral laxity which we find among the young in England is the effect, not of the limited freedom which I have described, but of other factors which are easy to appreciate. A person who keeps away from drinks because he understands the evil of drinking is not a coward but a wise man, that is, a man of discrimination. Evil desires spring from inner darkness, from lack of discrimination and ignorance of the true end of human life. The suggestions which I have made for being able to observe *brahmacharya* are not copy-book maxims or the result of ingenious guesswork; they represent my own experience, and that of others too, over a long period of time. I would, therefore, advise you not to dismiss Chapter XIX of *An Autobiography* without trying to understand it properly. I know lustful persons who are vegetarians on principle, who wear only a khadi shirt and cap and live an outwardly simple life but dwell in their minds on pleasures and luxuries, and I also know real *brahmacharis* who, following the practice in their country, eat meat and have always dressed themselves in coat and trousers. The main thing is to be simple in one's thoughts. If a man harbours the violence of meat-eating in his thoughts and his mind dwells on the pleasures of a grand palace, do not believe, merely because his body lives on fruits and is covered merely with a bit of blanket, that he lives or can live a blameless life. Anyone who wants to live a life untroubled by impure desires or to acquire such purity must always remain vigilant.

You seem to confuse the caution of a vigilant person with cowardice. If so, you are in the grip of a terrible error. Please wake up.

A CAUTION

A newspaper correspondent informs me from Aden that a woman known by the name of Benibai has arrived there and has been cheating credulous people by posing as my daughter. A similar thing had happened in Rangoon and Mombasa, and it seems this same woman had gone to those places. I cautioned people some time ago that I have no daughter, and that I have not authorized anyone to collect money in my name.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-5-1926

245. KHADI IN KATHIAWAR

The reader will find in this issue nearly the whole of the Report sent in by Shri Lakshmidas after inspecting the work of the three khadi centres in Kathiawar.

The Khadi Karyalaya in Amreli has been taken over by the Kathiawar Political Conference. I intend to publish its accounts shortly in *Navajivan*. Just now I only wish to draw attention to Shri Lakshmidas's Report.

The reader will observe that it is only in place where famine conditions prevail that khadi is produced by paying spinners. We shall not discuss at the moment whether the khadi so produced turns out to be cheaper or dearer [than that manufactured from yarn spun by amateurs]. It will suffice to admit at present that, though the quality of khadi is very much better than what it used to be, it will not prove as strong as mill khadi of the same count. Even so, no one should feel any doubt, after reading this Report that residents of Kathiawar should always prefer khadi produced in Kathiawar. If what is stated in the Report is true, people who wear such khadi are helping victims of famine. It is very much better to make them self-supporting than to help them with free doles. There can be no argument about this. Moreover, everyone cannot afford to contribute money for free doles, but certainly every person of ordinary means can afford to help by purchasing khadi, which costs more than other cloth, and making up for the loss by economizing in other matters.

I, therefore, hope that the people of Kathiawar will welcome the present sale-tour of Abbas Saheb among them. From a report which I have received from Wadhwan, I see that he was enthusiastically welcomed by the residents of the place, and that there was no one who did not show him due respect. I hope that, as his tour progresses, he

will get more and more encouragement.

The suggestion to khadi workers in Lakshmidas's Report deserves attention. Water flows into the public trough only in proportion to the quantity in the well. Workers will be able to inspire faith in others only in the measure that they themselves have it, and the strength which they lack in themselves they will not be able to draw from others. If the women who spin also learn carding, they will earn twice as much and the public will get better yarn. They can earn money by carding, which they do not at present. As long as the workers themselves are not proficient in carding, they cannot inspire enthusiasm for carding among the women who spin, let alone being able to teach them the art.

The suggestion about testing the strength of yarn deserves the same attention as that about carding. This is necessary to ensure the strength of the yarn. If the quality of yarn is carefully maintained, khadi will become cheaper. That is, with the same rates of payment as at present, there will be improvement in regard to quality and price. In big factories, they are able to increase the profits, without raising the prices of the products, merely by skilful management. In our innumerable factories—for every hut is a spinning-mill—let the workers increase their earnings through improved efficiency and also reduce the burden on the people. In those big factories, what with the innumerable financial manipulations and changes in the exchange-rate which they resort to and which result in crores of rupees changing hands, the workers are always exploited. In our factories, improved efficiency will not mean large sums changing hands in this manner but will generate, rather, a spirit of equality and promote the welfare of the workers in corresponding measure. These happy results depend on the spirit of self-sacrifice, efficiency, perseverance, humility and energy which khadi workers may be able to display.

Let nobody draw the conclusion from my observations or Shri Lakshmidas's Report that the work done so far has been wasted or that it was not done properly. What we both mean is that our work is so well organized now that we are in a position to take a step forward. It is our duty to see that, with experience, our work goes on improving. There is no doubt that, relatively speaking, khadi has made excellent progress. Now the consumers need to satisfy themselves only whether

1 khadi workers are honest and hard-working;
2 the money which they pay for khadi goes into the pockets

of the poor;

3 the women who spin are really helped;

4 it is a fact that they would not be able to make both ends meet if they did not get spinning-work; and

5 it is a fact that they have no other more remunerative work.

If the replies to these questions are in the affirmative, the people of Kathiawar should, without considering whether khadi is cheap or costly, see that the khadi produced in Kathiawar does not remain unsold.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-5-1926

246. ABOUT MILL-WORKERS

The movement among the mill-workers in Ahmedabad against the drink-evil is proceeding very well at present. All people may not know that in America, where only a few years ago every worker used to drink, they have stopped drinking for some years now. Their paper has published the following information.

Millions of rail-road workers have, in their Union meetings, welcomed prohibition and recounted their experience that drinking turns good citizens and workers into bad ones and good husbands into cruel ones. They have also declared that, had the workers continued to drink, the hundreds of workers' banks which have been formed and in which millions of their dollars are deposited would never have come into existence. The Secretary of their Union has stated that during the last four years Labour Unions in America have been rapidly throwing up honest and able leaders.

If the mill-workers in Ahmedabad also realize the sin of drinking and understand that liquor is a poison and give it up, one can easily imagine the improvement in their condition which will follow.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-5-1926

247. LETTER TO ROMAIN ROLLAND

May 22, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have before me a translation by Mira of your kind and

touching letter of 17th February last. I have been anticipating your permission to make cautious use of portions of that letter without mentioning your name.

I am glad you think with me that the proper course for me was not to come to Europe this year.

With reference to India being heard in Europe, I hold the view that India will not be heard in Europe or the West Until she has suffered more, and on a more extensive scale than hitherto. Hers will be a voice in the wilderness at the present moment. And I feel even the hired, and in some cases bribed, journalists of Europe will shudder to take as gospel truth all the manifest and one-sided exaggerations and falsehoods circulated by the B.G.[1] if India is not represented. I feel too that this non-violent battle does not need the same kind of propaganda that a battle based on violence would. Thirdly there is the practical difficulty that you mention of finding one who can be at all heard. The only person I have in view for the moment is Andrews, since the Poet[2] is unavailable. Andrews will certainly be heard in the quarters that matter.

I hope you are keeping well and that God will permit you to hold out till the battle is fairly over in India.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gleanings, pp. 6-7

248. A LETTER

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 3, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have had your letter for a long time with me. But I have not been able to reach your letter earlier.

Your letter of the 29th ultimo puts me in mind that I must now hasten to reply to you. I am afraid that the Ashram life will not suit you. It is all hard work commencing with cleaning closet buckets and ending with agriculture, cooking, etc. There is little time left for literary pursuits. From all I can understand of your life, it appears to

[1] British Government
[2] Rabindranath Tagore

me that you would hardly be able to stand the life and atmosphere at the Ashram. I therefore suggest to you that if you still feel that you should come and stay at the Ashram, you may pay a preliminary visit to see things for yourself and then decide.

There is another difficulty also. At the present moment the Ashram is over-crowded. I have no room, therefore, to spare. I could not therefore give you even the privacy that you perhaps want and I would like to proivde. If in spite of. . . .[1]

From a microfilm : S.N. 19525

249. LETTER TO D. VENKATA RAO

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 3, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter as also Krishnabai's. I understand the position and appreciate it. I quite agree with you and Krishnabai that her talent for painting should be developed. I therefore quite understand her desire to stay with you and go on with her painting work. I would like to have some photographic specimens of her work.

I am not writing to her separately. Do please keep me informed of her progress from time to time.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. D. VENKATA RAO
DAMERLA HOUSE
RAJAHMUNDRY

From a microfilm : S.N. 19526

250. LETTER TO S. SADANAND

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 3, 1926

MY DEAR SADANAND,

So you have got your agency after all. Let your correspondent come like the Associated Press Correspondent and pick up what information he can. As there is so little for me to communicate, what can poor Mahadev or Subbiah or Pyarelal give you? I could certainly send you wires about khaddar from day to day but that will be just the

[1] Incomplete in the source

thing to kill your agency and you will soon ask me to stop sending those wires. Happily the khaddar movement does not depend so much on dissemination of news about it as on organized distribution of spinning-wheels and collection of yarn and manufacture and sale of khaddar.

I do not know what difficulties there are in the way of your correspondent receiving copies of *Young India* on Wednesday evening. There should be no difficulty. However, I shall see Swami and let you know.

I hope that in your office everybody is clad in khaddar.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. SADANAND

From a microfilm : S.N. 19527

251. LETTER TO R. D. SUBRAMANIAM

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 3, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your postcard. It is not the quantity of time that you will give to the spinning that counts. It is the feeling behind that you would get your *Young India* by your labour that appealed to me. I therefore propose to send you *Young India* as soon as you have furnished 50,000 yards.

The yarn would still be national property because it was my intention to give the yarn to the Spinners' Association or the Satyagraha Ashram and take from them subscription on your behalf for *Young India*. There is no occasion for you, therefore, to feel conscience pricks because you will be getting after so many hours of labour *Young India* for one year.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. D. SUBRAMANIAM
WEST SRIRANGAPATANAM ROAD
EXTENSION, SALEM

From a microfilm : S.N. 19528

252. LETTER TO UDIT MISHRA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Tuesday, May 4, 1926

BHAI UDIT MISHRAJI,

I got your letter several months ago, but I could not reply to it immediately. We may not despise in our heart persons whom we regard as bad men, but we need not seek their acquaintance either, unless there is some reason. That is, we may have contact with them only if we get an opportunity to do them good. It is more difficult to become a guardian of children than of grown-up students. When a father leaves his children to our care, we assume a great responsibility. It is, therefore, necessary that we love the children as much as their father does. But a father's love is apt to be unthinking attachment, whereas a guardian's should be completely unselfish and pure. Moreover, since children are quick to imitate what others do, we should show in our conduct all those virtues which we want them to cultivate. From this point of view, a guardian should particularly observe *brahmacharya*, follow truth and non-violence and display fearlessness, courage, magnanimity, humility and so on.

From a microfilm of the Hindi : S.N. 19529

253. THE CONGRESS RESOLUTION ON SOUTH AFRICA

May 5, 1926

The All-India Congress Committee met at Ahmedabad on 5th May and passed the following resolution prepared by Mr. Gandhi on the South African situation :

The All-India Congress Committee congratulates the Government of India and the Union Government upon the postponement of the Class Areas Reservation Bill pending the deliberations of a Conference between the two Governments.

The All-India Congress Committee further congratulates the South African Indian Deputation and the Indian settlers on the happy result of their efforts.

The All-India Congress Committee tenders its respectful thanks to Mr. C. F. Andrews for his great sacrifices and for his energy and undying hope and faith, without which the result, so far achieved, would have been impossible.

The All-India Congress Committee, while noting the results of

the Government of India's negotiations so far, warns the public against slackening the efforts on behalf of the Indian settlers of South Africa, and hope that they will not rest until the position of the settlers is placed on an honourable and satisfactory basis.

The President is authorized to send the message of congratulation to the Union Government.

The Indian Review, May 1926, p. 340

254. LETTER TO PARAMANAND K. KAPADIA

Wednesday [*May 5, 1926*][1]

BHAISHREE PARAMANAND,

I have read all your letters carefully. I shall try to deal with some of your questions in *Navajivan*. I want to write much more but I have to control myself.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

BHAISHREE PARAMANAND KUNVERJI

BHAVNAGAR

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 11586

255. NOTES

PROHIBITION AND MADRAS GOVERNMENT

Sjt. C. Rajagopalachari has unearthed a Government order which is simplicity itself but which conveys a world of meaning. In a note accompanying a copy of the order Sjt. Rajagopalachari writes to the press :

> Among the many post-Reform additions to our recurring charges are the new Health Officers and their staff. They are expected to educate the people about cholera, malaria, etc.

Some of the members of the staff seem to have enquired whether they should carry on propaganda against the drink habit also and the laconic reply received was :

> The Government consider that the Public Health staff should not carry on anti-drink propaganda.

[1] From the postmark

It is to be noted here that there is no reason assigned for the ban on anti-drink propaganda. On the contrary, one would expect explicit instructions to these conservators of health to instruct the people about the evil effects of drink on the body under a popular Government. They would be required to tell the people how deadly the effect of alcohol is upon the human body and show by magic lantern slides in a graphic manner the ruin that alcohol brings wherever it finds a place. But it is madness to expect the existing Government to do any such thing. One may as well expect the keeper of a public house to warn its visitors against running into the death-trap. Is not the Government the keeper of all the public houses of India? It is the 25 crores revenue that enables us to give University education to our children. It enables the Government to impose *pax Britannica* upon us. Not till the people realize their duty and develop strength to resist the Government in its pro-drink policy will it be possible to have a dry India.

PROHIBITION IN AMERICA

One hears so much about prohibition being a failure in America that it is refreshing to find references which prove the contrary. The cuttings that a correspondent has sent show that delegates to the Middle-West Students' Conference representing 1,23,000 college students in the South-East and Middle-West of America passed resolutions opposing liquor drinking by students.

The February issue of the journal of the Locomotive Engineers contains the following :[1]

> The railorad brotherhoods as well as hundreds of thousands of sober, industrious working men in the American Federation of Labour are opposed to drink because they know it never made any man a better citizen, a better worker, or a better husband or father. We do not believe the remarkable growth of labour co-operative banks in this country would have been possible if the working men were still putting their savings over the bar. We are further convinced that the progress of the American labour movement depends upon leaders with clear, cool heads and not upon those whose brains are addled by alcohol. Perhaps it is worth noting that the leaders of British labour, who have made much substantial progress economically, and politically, since the War, are overwhelmingly dry. . . .

It is not my purpose to make the reader believe that

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

prohibition in America has been wholly successful. I have read enough literature on the gigantic experiment to know that there is another side to the picture. But allowing for all the exaggerations on either side, there is little doubt that prohibition has been a great boon to that wonderful people. It is yet too early to state results with certainty. The problem is much simpler in India, if only we have all the bars and distilleries closed.

CHARKHA IN ANDHRA SCHOOLS

Here is an extract[1] from the report prepared by the Bhumavaram Taluk Board, West Godavari District :

A report[2] from Tirupati Municipal Council shows figures of spinning in its schools.

I would like to draw the attention of the teachers and organizers of spinning in schools that it is in every way better to introduce *taklis* instead of the spinning-wheels. For co-operative spinning in schools *takli* will be found to be more efficacious, more economical and more productive in the end.

Young India, 6-5-1926

256. FROM FAR-OFF AMERICA

Some time ago I answered some questions[3] put by a correspondent in America. He now returns to the charge and puts several further questions, the first being :

> What good is that brave and fearless mentality when it cannot save the things you love? You may not be afraid to die, but what is it that will keep a band of robbers from taking away from you what you cherish if you are going to remain non-violent to the end. If the victims of a robber do not offer violent resistance it is so much easrie for the robber to loot them. Robbery has been going on and it will go on in the world till the victims are easy. The strong will rob the weak, resistance or no resistance. To be weak is a sin. Not to prepare by all means to get rid of this wekness is a crime.

The writer forgets that retaliation does not always succeed. The robber is likely, if stronger, to defeat the protector and vent his wrath, kindled by the resistance received, on the unfortunate victim whose

[1] Not reproduced here
[2] *ibid*.
[3] *Vide* "A Student's Questions", 25-2-1926.

plight would therefore be the worse for the resistance offered on her behalf. It is true that the protector will have the satisfaction of having done his best for his charge. But the same satisfaction will be available to the non-violent protector. For, he too will die in the attempt to rescue the victim. What is more, he will have the additional satisfaction of having tried to soften the heart of the robber by his pleading. The writer's difficulty arises from the fact of his having assumed that the non-violent protector is to be a mere passive helpless spectator of the robbery. As a matter of fact, however, in my scheme, love is presumed to be a more active and potent force than brute force. He who has not the love and remains passive is a coward. He is neither man nor brute. He has proved himself unfit to protect.

The writer obviously cannot realize, as I have done, the tremendous power that non-violent resistance has over one's adversary. Non-violent resistance is the resistance of one will against another. That resistance is possible only when it is freed from reliance on brute force. Reliance on brute force as a rule presupposes surrender when that force is exhausted. Does the writer know that a woman with a determined will can successfully resist her ravisher however powerful he may be?

I admit that the strong will rob the weak and that it is sin to be weak. But this is said of the soul in man, not of the body. If it be said of the body, we could never be free from the sin of weakness. But the strength of soul can defy a whole world in arms against it. This strength is open to the weakest in body. A weak-willed Zulu, though strong as a giant in body, surrenders to a little white child. Who has not seen strong- bodied bullies surrendering helplessly to their frail mothers? Love con-quers the brute in the son. The law that subsists between mother and son is universal in its application. Nor need love be reciprocal. It is its own reward. Many a mother has tamed by her love her erring defiant children. Let us all prepare to get rid of the weakness of love. There is chance of success there. For rivalry in loving is conductive to health. The world has been trying all these ages to become strong in the wielding of brute force and it has miserably failed. Rivarly in generating brute force is race suicide.

The writer adds :

> The British rulers seem to have as much soul-force as you have, but they have military force and practical knowledge of human nature besides. The result is obvious.

Military force is inconsistent with soul-force. Frightfulness, exploitation of the weak, immoral gains, insatiable pursuit after enjoyments of the flesh are utterly inconsistent with soul-force. The soul-force that the British rulers have is therefore subservient to the brute force if it is not asleep altogether.

The writer then puts the eternal conundrum:

> There are certain greedy persons in the world and they are doing mischief. They have power in their hands. They may be mad, but they are doing harm nevertheless. It will not do for us to stand by with folded hands and let them go on with their devilish work. We must take the power away from them even at the cost of non-violence, so that they may not do any more harm.

History teaches one that those who have, no doubt with honest motives, ousted the greedy by using brute force against them have in their turn become a prey to the disease of the conquered. If it be better to be slaves than slave-drivers, if this is no mere copybook maxim, we can easily afford to let the slave-drivers do their worst, whilst, being weary of the brutal tug of war, so unbefitting our human nature, we try to explore the possibilities of matching the brute force of the greedy exploiters and the like with soul-force.

But the writer is met with this difficulty at the threshold of the experiment :

> Mahatmaji, you admit that the people of India have not followed your creed. You do not seem to realize the cause of it. The truth is that the average person is not a Mahatma. History proves this fact beyond doubt. There have been a few Mahatmas in India and elsewhere. These are exceptions. And the exceptions only prove the rule. You must not base your actions on the exceptions.

It is curious how we delude ourselves. We fancy that one can make the perishable body impregnable and we think it impossible to evoke the hidden powers of the soul. Well, I am engaged in trying to show, if I have any of these powers, that I am as frail a mortal as any of us and that I never had anything extraordinary about me nor have any now. I claim to be a simple individual liable to err like any other fellow mortal. I own, however, that I have humility enough in me to confess my effors and to retrace my steps. I own that I have an immovable faith in God and His goodness and unconsumable passion for truth and love. But is that not what every person has latent in him? If we are to make progress, we must not repeat history but make new history. We must add to the inheritance left by our ancestors. If we

may make new discoveries and inventions in phenomenal world, must we declare out Bankruptcy in the spititual domain? Is it impossible to multiply the exceptions so as to make them the rule? Must man always be brute first and man after, if at all?

Young India, 6-5-1926

257. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Thursday, May 6, 1926

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

I read your letter to me and the one to Shankarrao. I am sure your rule about eating salt-free food is not for all time. Its significance lies in that it reduces the keenness of the palate. This is the main point to bear in mind, and, therefore, as a guest at someone's place you may accept whatever simple food is offered. You may leave aside any item on the menu, with or without salt, which is not acceptable to you. But the three items—milk, boiled rice and chapatties—can be had anywhere. You may leave aside curry or vegetables which contain chillies and spices. Where hand- ground flour is not available, you may use mill-ground flour without any hesitation. When the road surface is very hot and in a place strewn with thorns, you should certainly use shoes, which in fact are called *kantarakhan*[1] or *pagarakhan*[2]. You should not hesitate to write to me whenever you are faced with such conflicts of duties. Take very good care of your health.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 19532

258. LETTER TO CHHOTALAL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Thursday, May 6, 1926

CHI. CHHOTALAL,

I got your letter written from Jaipur. I had earlier letter too. I intended to write to you after you had reached Calcutta, but your letter from Jaipur impels me to write today. I do not at all like your

[1] Protection against thorns
[2] Protection for feet

manner of counting the cost of the thing. We must be very careful but we should not overdo it. If you go to some place for a cure of your mental or physical illness, you can certainly charge the expense to the Ashram's account. Why do you at all keep any money as yours? Which is better, that you should surrender your all or that you should retain a little of "I"and "mine"? And just as the Ashram should bear the expenses when you go out elsewhere, similarly it should pay for the lessons you take in shorthand. Satis Babu will certainly pay you for any work you do, but it is better that you should work without expecting payment and also learn shorthand without paying. Rather than raise such fine issues, it is more necessary that you learn to determine with the utmost care what your duty is and then have no doubts and hesitations about it in your mind. Anyone who goes too deep into things, as you do, gets lost in mazes and is unable to see his plain duty which stands before him as unmistakable as a hill. Write to me regularly. You left for Prayag, and Bhuvarji came here.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19533

259. LETTER TO MADANMOHAN SHARMA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday, May 7, 1926

DEAR SIR,

Your letter. The Tilak Fund came to about a crore of rupees. Its accounts appeared in all the papers. Its report has also been published in book form and is available at the Congress office. A major portion of the sum has already been spent, chiefly on national schools, removal of untouchability and khadi work.

(2) In my opinion, a leader should not travel first or second class if his health can stand the strain of third class travel.

(3) I certainly believe that Hindu-Muslim unity is possible, for unity is in human nature. Even if neither Hindus nor Muslims make efforts to bring it about, time does its work.

(4) Those whose economic condition is not good may adopt still greater simplicity in their lives and consume less khadi; in this manner a non-co-operator should, in the present circumstances, put up with hardships but be faithful to his chosen dharma.

From a photostat of the Hindi : S.N. 10899

260. LETTER TO FULCHAND

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday, May 7, 1926

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I got your postcard. I don't think it was a virtue in Bhai Shivlal that he should be suffering from piles and yet not give so much as a hint to anyone. I would rather blame him for not doing so. He cannot now carry on his work of service. No one can say how long he will be in bed; besides, the illness will mean expenditure which could have been avoided. But who can make Shivlal see reason? You should now immediately take whatever measures are necessary to get him cured.

I follow what you say regarding the Wadhwan Udyogalaya[1]. Your letter seems to suggest that I have been unfair in forming my opinion about Wadhwan and that I am partial to the Amreli Centre in supporting it, and that too is a form of injustice. How can I convince you that I am neither partial towards the one nor hostile to the other? I am partial only to khadi. After inspecting the Amreli Centre personally and also through others' eyes I came to the conclusion that it did not deserve to be closed. I had not examined the Wadhwan centre, nor did I think it necessary to look into its working, as I had confidence in your ability and used to get regular reports about it from Devchandbhai. I thought about the Centre only when the problem of selling khadi arose. And when you showed me the accounts in the course of my inquiry, I was startled. If it is a fact that in Wadhwan you offer higher rates for spinning, weaving and carding, is it [worthwhile] to continue to run the Centre?

I apply one ccriterion to khadi activity at all places. Are the women who will be spinning starving for want of employment? If so, and if, to our good fortune, they agree to spin, we may start khadi work in that place. Provided workers were available in sufficient number, I

[1] Industrial Centre

would try to maintain all those centres in Kathiawar which satisfied this principle. Write to me if you have anything to say after this explanation, and try to convince me. I yearn for testimonials from my co-workers certifying to my impartiality. I regard you as one such co-worker. I, too, will not give up the effort to convince you.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 19534

261. LETTER TO RAM DATTA CHOPRA

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 8, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I do not think that the vaccine is obtained by killing cows. But I believe that it requires torturing them.

The rules of the Ashram[1] are appended to Mr. Natesan's publication. All the copies have been distributed. A new edition is contemplated but it would be some time before it is published.

I am afraid I would not be able to take charge of your daughter as I have no arrangements for receiving girls who are not accompanied by their parents. And your son is in any event too young to be admitted.

With reference to the construction of cobbler's huts I would ask you to approach the President of the Provincial Congress Committee.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 19540

262. LETTER TO MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 8, 1926

DEAR MAULANA SAHEB,

I have your telegram. It was received after the All-India Congress Committee session was over. But do you think that any purpose can be served by calling a special session of the Congress? It can be of use only when there is a policy or programme that requires confirmation by it. But unfortunately we have neither policy nor programme. On the

[1] *Vide* "Draft Constitution for the Ashram", before 20-5-1915.

contrary, the tallest among us distrust one another and even where there is no distrust there is no agreement as to facts or opinion.

In the circumstances a Congress session can only accentuate the existing depression. It seems to me that time alone can solve the difficulty which seems to baffle us.

I wish that it was possible for us at least to devise means of ascertaining the causes and of defining the results of each riot. But it seems that we have become incapacitated even for this very simple work.

Yours sincerely,

MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD

CALCUTTA

From a photostat : S.N. 19541

263. LETTER TO KUSUM AND DHIRU

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 8, 1926

CHI. KUSUM AND DHIRU,

I have your letter. I do not want to apportion blame for what has happened. I only wish that you should now take full advantage of the free time you will get there, and in this manner you should make your influence felt in the neighbourhood by being more regular in your daily work of spinning, etc., and strengthen your resolves. Keep writing to me. I see your handwriting still needs much improvement. Dhiru's especially is extremely poor. I shall forget my grief over Dhiru's going away to Bombay if he religiously follows there all his vows. Tell Bhanumati that, if she starts spinning regularly and forms the habit of getting up at four, I will think that letting both of you go to Bombay has been of great value. Devdas is there; he is to be operated upon, and is along with Ba and Mahadev. You must have heard about all this.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19535

264. LETTER TO JAYA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, May 8, 1926

CHI. JAYA,

One benefit has certainly followed from Kusum and Dhiru going

there; I have had a letter from you. I did not know that your handwriting was so laboured; it can certainly be improved. Please see that the children keep all the rules. I shall then forget my grief over their going from here. Please let me know how Dr. Prabhudas is keeping. You will know the rest from the letter to Kusum and Dhiru.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19536

265. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, May 8, 1926

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter; also the honey. It looks that after all I shall have to go to Mahabaleshwar. There is a letter today from Sir Chunilal Mehta. It seems to have been written at the instance of the Governor himself. He has invited me in his letter to stay with him. I think I should accept the invitation. Most probably I shall start from here as early as next Thursday. Personally, I would have liked to stay either with you or with Nargisbehn, but every time we must consider what our duty requires of us.

MITHUBEHN
FOUNTAIN HOUSE
MAHABALESHWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 19537

266. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday [*May 8, 1926*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

It seems at last that I shall have to go to Mahabaleshwar. There is a letter today from Sir Chunilal Mehta. He has written it at the instance of the Governor himself, and suggests that I should meet the Governor in Mahabaleshwar itself. He has also invited me to stay with him while there, and pressed me to accept the invitation. I intend, therefore, to start from here on Thursday. Devdas's operation will have been over by then. I expect a telegram today. Now we shall not have to arrange for a bunga-low for our stay in Mahabaleshwar. Think over and decide what arrange-ments we should make for a car and whether you will accompany me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 2862

267. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, Chaitra Vad 11, May 8, 1926

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

One of your questions remains to be answered. You wanted to know whether you could spend anything for helping the poor women who spin. You can spend about Rs. 100 for the purpose. Please let me know how you intend to utilize the amount. Within this limit, write to the Ashram for the amount which you spend.

I send with this the results of the tests carried out by Shri Lakshmidas as to the quality of the yarn. You will see from them that it is very necessary to pay attention to improving it. In Shri Lakshmidas's view, the strength ought not to be below 50%. Why could they not supply moistened yarn if they keep it with them for eight days? In this weather, moistened yarn dries up within two or three hours.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19538

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

268. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, May 8, 1926

BHAI KAKA,

I have to further postpone the writing of the book for you, because, if I do not write a letter to you under the excuse that I am to write a book for you, I am afraid I may write neither. I had thought that I would write out the book soon so that I need not write the letter. But the Congress Committee took up practically my three full days, with the result that the Girnar of work has now become the Himalayas. On top of this, I see from today's mail that I shall have to go to Mahabaleshwar. Nothing is likely to come out of the visit, but courtesy requires that I should go; let the outcome be what it will.

I have never felt that the inmates of the Ashram are indifferent to Dr. Talwalkar, but it may be that my indifference, if it can be called so, has been reflected in their attitude.

If you have been using olive oil as a substitute for cod-liver oil, [by all means] go on with it. Some regard it as superior to cod-liver oil. Shri Bhansali had used this same thing in jail.

My habit of drawing lots has absolutely no relation with your "examination as of a bride's qualities". The poor little piece of paper cannot bear all that burden. There is no attempt in it to win over the gods; on the contrary, there is a sort of indifference about lots. In cases in which we need not tax our reason, in which we are indifferent to either of the alternative courses and yet must adopt one of them, and none of our good friends is prepared to take a decision for us, I think it is an excellent practice to seek the good offices our friend, the lot. This saves time and also spares us the burden on our mind. In matters of principle, drawing lots is an immoral solution.

You cannot draw lots whether or not you should steal. But is it not better to draw lots rather than go on debating whether or not to go out for a walk with A, citing reasons from Vedas and other holy books for and against? If we try to consult the inner voice in such matters, the latter would lose all its value; a child like Rasik might excuse himself from doing any work by pleading his inner voice! Have we not known instances of such abuse of the plea of inner voice during the non-co-operation movement? Suppose *tandaljo* and *methi* are both permissible items of diet, both are easily available but only one of them

is to be purchased, and suppose further that we cannot make up our mind immediately, would it not, in such circumstances, be better to draw lots and be indifferent to the result, rather than make it a matter of conscience?

I shall see about Shri Harihar when he comes here. Shri Narahari had thought of getting Harihar to open a nursery school in Surat. If the people of Surat are ready to have such a school and collect a big amount they are certainly welcome to start it, but we cannot try the experiment on behalf of the Vidyapith. I remember having been told by Shri. . .[1] as early as when I was in jail that Shri . . .[2] had gone romantic. He had shown me an indecent poem signed . . .[3], when I asked who this . . .[4] was, I think he said it was . . .[5] of the Ashram. But may be, I am mistaken. It may not have been . . .[6] but someone else who told me this. We shall have to think about the matter when . . .[7] is here.

Nothing has yet been decided about [my visit to] Europe. Yes, Swami too had expressed to me his disagreement. The Ame- rican tour would have only meant addressing thousands of people; going to Finland means attending a convention of student-delegates from all over the world. There is a great difference between the two propositions. Moreover, in America I was supposed to give to the people India's message; though there was no message to give. In this case the idea is that I should establish a spiritual bond with students. There is no question of delivering a message. These are the reasons why the idea of going to Finland is tempting me, though, of course, there are some misgivings in my mind. That is why I have thrown on K. T. Paul the responsibility of arranging my visit after telling them of my conditions. He, too, instead of accepting the responsibility, has passed on my letter to Geneva. If they will keep the invitation open, can we say it is God's wish that I should go? Personally I will certainly believe so.

I am convinced that Uttamchand will have nowhere else the facilities which he enjoys here. And now we have started a course of injections by Dr. Talwalkar. He is keeping well enough.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 19539

[1] to names omitted

269. SERVICE OF THE CITY

To everyone who wishes to serve his city I would recommend a perusal of Dr. Hariprasad's account[1] of the seven-month-long efforts to keep the city of Ahmedabad clean and bright. Those who do not know how to serve their own city can never serve their country. The good work done in these seven months by people who believed that selfless service is its own reward could not have been done by the municipality of the city even at a cost of thousands of rupees. This effort to keep the city clean is an example of co-operation between a municipality and the citizens, and if the rich do not co-operate, what has been already achieved is likely to be wasted. It is possible to raise the necessary funds to make Ahmedabad a model of cleanliness. Most of the suggestions made by Dr. Hariprasad cannot be carried out without the help of the wealthy citizens. The money given for this work will bring a handsome return, for if the city has a sufficient number of open gounds with trees in them, if the old ruins and dirty sights are removed and stinking lavatories are seen no more, the health of the citizens will improve considerably and the price of the land will also appreciate. The citizens can insist that the expenditure should be incurred under their own supervision. Hence the money given for this work will not be a gift but will be an instance of economic foresight.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-5-1926

270. NOTES

REFORMS AMONG "PATANWADIAS"[2]

The reforms introduced among *Patanwadias* show how much work can be done if we cultivate close contacts with the countless people in the country who are looked upon as poor and backward, and they also make clear to us what kind of preparation is necessary to enable us to do such solid service. We can see from the work done by Bhai Ravishankar that for this purpose a love for the people, a well trained body and fearlessness are far more necessary than knowledge of

[1] An article, 'Cleaning the City', by Hariprasad Vrajraj Desai in *Navajivan*, 9-5-1926

[2] This note is a comment on a report by Mohanlal Pandya of work among *Patanwadias*, a backward community in Gujarat.

letters, proficiency in English or a university degree.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-5-1926

271. LETTER TO A. A. PAUL[1]

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 9, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is a most difficult thing for me to make fixed appointments one year in advance. I can only therefore say that I would be prepared tentatively to accept the invitation. It may be necessary to shorten the programme and it may be also that I may be so absorbed in Indian affairs at the time that I might not be able to move out of India. I wonder if with the uncertainty attaching to my acceptance the associations concerned will care to send me the invitation.

Please also tell the friends that if I go out at all, I shall be accompanied by two companions.

Your colleague Mr. Maccune will be welcome at the Ashram in the beginning of June.

Yours sincerely,

A. A. PAUL, ESQ.[2]
7, MILLER ROAD
KILPAUK, MADRAS

From a photostat : S.N. 11370

[1] In reply to his letter dated 4-5-1926 wherein he wrote : ". . . I have got a reply from Mr. T. Z. Koo of China describing the purpose, programme, dates and scope of the visit that they are anxious to have from you . . . ."

[2] General Secretary', Students' Christian Association of India, Burma and Ceylon (S.N. 11369)

272. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 9, 1926

DEAR MOTIBABU,

I hope you received my letter with reference to the loan. Please make the followingcorrections in the agreement[1] to be signed by you :

The interest should not be one per cent per annum but one per thousand per annum.

The interest is intended to be purely nominal. And, where the following sentence occurs—"the selling price of khadi . . . up to weaving plus $6\frac{1}{4}$ % for the expenses of management"—please say "the sale price of khaddar shall not be above the rates fixed by the Association from time to time".

This improvement is intended to make the position of the khadi organizations more elastic than it[2] otherwise would be. These are the conditions embodied in the loan agreements. When I prepared the draft for you Mr. Banker was away and I had not the Association model before me. On his return he drew my attention to these discrepancies. Kindly excuse me.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 19542

273. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Sunday [*May 9, 1926*][3]

BHAI RAMESHWARJI,

I have your letter. When I advise you to live in "solitude" I mean that you should live away from your wife. It would do you good to go to Nasik and retire to a secluded spot. After winter sets in,

[1] *Vide* "Draft Agreement for Loans from All-India Spinners' Association", 1-5-1926.

[2] The source has "they".

[3] From the postmark

you can stay even in the Ashram.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 163-A

274. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Sunday [*May 9, 1926*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. This time your handwriting can be described as good. When you are here, I will certainly put you up, if not in your old room, in the room adjoining Mirabai's. I shall have to go to Mahabaleshwar for two or three days. Devdas is suffering from appendicitis, and so I have sent him to Bombay for an operation. It must have been over today. Ba and Mahadev have gone with him. The report in the Press which you read, that I was to leave for Mahabaleshwar on the 6th, was not correct. Ramdas must be in Mahuva just now.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. VASUMATIBEHN DHIMATRAI NAVALRAM
KELAPEETH

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 470. Courtesy : Vasumati Pandit

275. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Sunday, May 9, 1926

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. I expect a telegram from you this evening. I am not at all worried. Tell Ba that Rami's daughter is quite all right. I had got Ba's message. Manibehn and the younger Kashi do the cooking. Kumibehn, Rami's aunt, arrived here today. Kanti and Manu had been to the station to receive her. Ba should not worry on our account.

[1] From the reference to Devdas's illness and Gandhiji's trip to Mussoorie

Rameshwarprasad, his mother and others arrived yesterday, and are leaving for that side today. You must have got my letter in which I told you about my going to Mahabaleshwar. I take it that Mahadev will remain there for the time being. He should write to me if he wants me to fetch anything for him from here. I think we shall have to take with us some extra covering for nights. It seems that we shall have to stay in Mahabaleshwar for three days, viz., Saturday, Sunday and Monday. I have also been thinking that, leaving there on Tuesday morning, we should look up Kaka in Sinhgarh and, if possible, make a trip to Deolali as well. This may take up two more days. If we start on Tuesday morning we can reach Sinhgarh at about 10 or 11, and I am thinking that we may then go to Deolali if we can come down the same evening. But I may even drop the visit to Deolali if Mahadev thinks that it is not very necessary to go, because I also feel there is no point in going to Deolali unless we can stay there for a couple of days. Just now I shall write nothing about this to Mathuradas. I have decided to be guided by Mahadev's advice. Will you yourself arrange for a car from Poona? A train for Poona leaves [Bombay] at 10-30 a.m. If that is so, I think it will be best to catch that train, after seeing Devdas, and reach Mahabaleshwar the same night. I think it would be better to arrange for two cars from Poona.

I had just now a trunk-call from Vallabhbhai about the operation. God be praised for His mercy!

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 2683

276. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Sunday, May 9, 1926

CHI. DEVDAS,

I got today all your letters, all the three. I do not understand how this has happened. By the time you get this letter it will be more than twenty-four hours since the operation, and you will be chatting happily with friends. I do not now feel worried at any time. I have never felt frightened by an operation, though I once witnessed an operation which resulted in the patient's death. But I could see that it was all due to the doctor's absolute incompetence. This happened in

Johannesburg. Kumi has come here today. She was certain that Ba would be here. Panditji has arrived today, and so the Ashram is again becoming full. I am not giving other news in this letter to you; I am writing about it to Jamnalalji. I advise you to employ this enforced leisure for looking within. I shall see him most probably on Friday.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 19543

277. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Monday, May 10, 1926

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter and Mahadev's. I am not at all worried, nor was I before. There is always some risk in chloroform, but then such risk is present in every operation. Tell Devdas not to be nervous if the pain continues; some patients feel it, but only for a couple of days. By the time you get this letter, the pain must have disappeared completely.

I got the translation sent by Mahadev. With this and with the translation from Valji, I have by now (half past two) matter for seventeen columns ready. So I have sat down to write this letter. I do not think you need postpone your Indore visit. Nothing will be accomplished at Mahabaleshwar, whereas there is much to do at Indore. I have not decided whom I should ask here to accompany me. There will be one person, and most probably it will be Subbiah.

I shall arrive there in the first train. Take me to Revashankarbhai's. If Devdas is better, I shall go to see him after I have had my bath and lunch; otherwise I will go directly from the station. We must leave for Poona the same day. That will be no trouble to me. I intend to reach Mahabaleshwar the same evening, i.e., at nine on Friday. Please inform Revashankarbhai.

It is all right that you know Mehta, but it would have been better if you had not written to him for a car. It will not look well if he makes any arrangements on behalf of the Government. But please do not alter the arrangements.

You will see that, if we reach Mahabaleshwar on Friday, we shall have only two days to meet the Governor. We must leave the place on Tuesday morning.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 2864

278. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[*May 10, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. Mahadev also wrote after meeting you. My programme of going to Mahabaleshwar stands. Most probably I shall start from here on Thursday. As for paying or not paying you a visit, I propose to go by what Mahadev says. It takes a day to reach there. Now that Mahadev has seen you, I do not have to visit you merely for the sake of courtesy. Let me know your own inmost desire. I shall get the reply only at Bombay. Write at Jamnalalji's address. Of course I shall be putting up at Revashankarbhai's house. Ask Pyarelal to write to me. At Mahabaleshwar address letters to Sir Chunilal Mehta's place. As for Devdas, I shall send him where the doctor advises.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS
WINDY HALL
NASIK ROAD
DEOLALI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

279. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Silence Day [*May 10, 1926*][2]

CHI. ANASUABEHN,

I have your letter. You worry about me needlessly. Were it necessary for me to go I would never have posted the letter. There is nothing wrong with my health. I rest a great deal and do not like to leave the Ashram. So the Ashram appears to suit me very well. You should not worry on my account. It was necessary for you to go. You will surely admit that your health is more delicate than mine. So do not brood over why I did not go and you went instead.

I am leaving for Mahabaleshwar on Thursday as the Governor

[1] From the postmark

[2] From the reference to Devdas who was operated upon for appendicitis on May 9, 1926

has again asked that I should go there. I shall stay for three days. While returning I may perhaps spend a day calling on Kaka and Mathuradas. I have not decided yet. Dalal diagnosed that Devdas had appendicitis and advised operation for which I gave my consent. The operation was successfully performed yesterday. Ba and Mahadev have gone there. Jamnalal was already there.

It is quite hot here. Nothing has been decided about Finland so far.[1] I will let you know as soon as I receive confirmed intimation. There is certainly no likelihood of my going before July.

Is sister-in-law fully recovered?

Did you have a *darshan* of Dhaulagiri?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32784

280. LETTER TO K. SANTANAM

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 11, 1926

MY DEAR SANTANAM,

Rajagopalachari discussed with me your difficulties when he was at the Ashram. I sympathize with you. But it is difficult to conform to an absolute rule of conduct. Whilst it is proper to exact the uttermost from oneself, to refuse to serve till one had attained the ideal height would be to cut off the possibility of reaching that height. We rise only by actual service and by taking the risk of making mistakes whilst we are serving. Not one of us is perfect. Not one of us is able to realize the whole of our spiritual ambition. All the same, in the humblest manner possible we have to continue to serve and hope that through that service we may some day realize that ambition. If we all refuse to serve, until we attain perfection, there will be no service. The fact is that perfection is attained through service. If you were to say we must not take or accept power till we are perfect, I should entirely agree with you. And, therefore, it is best never to take any power, and, when it is thrust upon us to use it for service only. I hope therefore that, in spite of the weaknesses that you may detect in yourself, you will not refuse to render khadi service so long as the weaknesses do not interfere with that

[1] Gandhiji finally declined the invitation.

service. Thus a man who has the weakness of dishonesty or drunknesses or the like is naturally unfit for that service. But a man who in spite of strenuous effort is unable (say) to regulate himself with his wife as if he was her brother is not unfit for service. I hope I have made myself quite clear and that you will return to the khadi work you love and do so well.

Yours sincerely

SJT. K. SANTANAM
KUMMUTTI THIDAL
TANJORE DT.

From a microfilm : S.N. 19545

281. LETTER TO SARADINDU B. BANERJI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 11, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is not clear to me what you really desire. Do you want to stay with me for a little time? And, if so, what do you want to do? Mine as you know is an extremely busy life. I have hardly time to talk to people. And I rarely do so except for purposes of my own. If, therefore, one comes to me he is immediately put upon some useful work and he commences with the cleansing of water-closets, etc., and spinning as a matter of course.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SARADINDU B. BANERJI
13, EDMONSTONE ROAD
ALLAHABAD

From a microfilm : S.N. 19546

282. LETTER TO C. V. KRISHNA

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 11, 1926

MY DEAR KRISHNA,

I have your letter. Even for the Rustomjee Bhavan, let the recommendation come through the agency of A.I.S.A.

Your diet scale is good if you get sufficient butter-milk during the month. Who gives it to you free? Is it customary in Andhra Desh for butter-milk to be given freely? Do you have to beg for it? Or is it sent to you? Please describe to me more fully the fruits you get for one rupee per month. Your scale should be scientifically drawn. And a scientific scale gives both the weight and price of all the foodstuffs taken. You cannot be always taking one rupee and four annas worth of rice even when the price of rice has doubled, as it sometimes is. Of the staples you have to take the same quantity irrespective of price. Therefore, I would like you to give me the exact quantity taken including those things which come to you free of charge and you should put down the prices of such things also as you get free.

I want to publish the scale of diet taken in the various institutions so as to guide workers. And let there be no et ceteras. You have "salt, etc.". Instead of that you should say salt, turmeric, ginger or whatever spices, if any, you are taking.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 19547

283. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 11, 1926

I have your two letters. I enclose herewith Kelappan's letter. What you have done is quite right. He must render an account of his work to you from time to time.

I am writing to Santanam. Herewith a copy of my letter[1] to him. About Ramanathan, I shall discuss with Shankerlal. I do not apprehend any difficulty.

Can't very well draw lots about Finland. And, even if I do, it is too late now. But I share your misgivings. I have prescribed my terms and if they have me in spite of them there may be something in the visit.

You will be ready in June, won't you, for touring even if you have to have somebody from here temporarily. How would Chhotalal suit you? He cannot be there for a long time. But it would be possible to induce him to come there willingly for two or three months if he can be of any assistance and give you some relief.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to K. Santanam", 11-5-1926.

I have now seen Shankerlal. He thinks that if Ramanathan's salary is raised to Rs. 150 there is bound to be pressure from others for raising their salary. It is a risky thing for a public and universal body like the Charkha Sangh to depart from fixed rules. At the same time, I see your or rather Ramanathan's difficulty. My suggestion, therefore, is that so long as it is absolutely necessary, you should pay Ramanathan from the Seva Sangh. For this, perhaps, Jamnalalji will have to be consulted which you should do or if you want me to I will. If the thing can be postponed you should come here at the time of commencing your tour and discuss with Shankerlal. I take it that Ramanathan will not insist upon the increase coming from the A.I.S.A.

Yours,

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR
GANDHI ASHRAM
TIRUCHENGODU

From a photostat : S.N. 19548

284. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Tuesday, May 11, 1926

BHAISHRI KAKA,

I got your second letter about mother goat. If, now, I myself come to Sinhgarh, instead of sending you a book there, I will make nothing but speeches. We need not now leave this place on Thursday and reach Mahabaleshwar on Friday, because the next week suits the Governor better. When I shall be able to leave, I can say only after some time. Even apart from the visit to Mahabaleshwar, Devdas has been operated upon and I must see him. Since Bombay is on the way, I may even start earlier for his sake. That will depend upon Devdas's wishes.

I agree with every word of what you say about books worth translating. My inquiry was only in connection with Jamnadas Memorial Series. Neither Shankerlal nor Swami has the list which you prepared. Of course we should get the translation done only by competent men. The books too should be such as would meet some immediate needs of the people and should be easy to follow. In your letter you have

explored a whole ocean of books. But all we have to consider at present is what books we should select for this series. Please, therefore, think about that.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 19531

285. LETTER TO HORACE GREEN

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 12, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 13th April last. I believe I had a prepaid cable from Paris to which I sent a reply. I cannot recall any prepaid cable from you from New York.

I would have gladly lent you a copy of my autobiography if I had it. But chapters are written from week to week. What has been written has already been published. If you do not subscribe to *Young India* you can get a loan of it from Dr. Holmes.

What should be done when the whole of the *Autobiography* is written for its publication in book form has not yet been decided. Dr. Holmes, I understand, is in correspondence with the Macmillans.

Yours sincerely,

HORACE GREEN, ESQ.
PRESIDENT
DUFFIELD & COMPANY
211 EAST 19TH STREET
NEW YORK

From a copy: S.N. 32239

286. LETTER TO HELENE ALPERS HAHN

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 12, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 19th April last[1]. I have not yet

[1] In which the addressee had sought Gandhiji's permission for translating his *Autobiography* into German and to have it printed in Germany

decided what is to be done to the *Autobiography* for its publication in book form in European languages after its completion. At the present moment it is being published in several magazines for which I have given free permission. But beyond that I am unable to go at present.

Yours sincerely,

HELENE ALPERS HAHN
HEILBRONN AM NECKAR
GERMANY

From a copy: S.N. 32250

287. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

ASHRAM,
Wednesday [*May 12, 1926*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your letter. I also got a telegram from Jamnalalji. A telegram from Sir Chunilal has just been received. The Governor will see us on Tuesday. I am, therefore, sending a wire that I shall start tomorrow. I will take the first train. We shall fix up the rest of the programme after I reach there. I would prefer that we leave for Deolali on Friday itself in the evening and return to Bombay on Sunday morning. We may then spend Sunday and Monday in Bombay and finish the work for *Young India* and *Navajivan* till the usual period of my vow of silence on Monday is over. I should break my silence on Monday evening and leave for Poona, from where I can immediately take the train to Mahabaleshwar. We can have our wash and lunch in Mahabaleshwar itself. This will impose the least strain on us. But you should, all of you, consult among yourselves about any changes which may seem necessary in this programme; we will alter it accordingly after I arrive there. We should stay in Mahabaleshwar on Tuesday and Wednesday and leave there on Thursday morning. On our way we should cover Sinhgarh; we should start descending immediately after sunset and take the train from Poona so as to reach Bombay the following morning, and Ahmedabad on Saturday morning. As far as I can see, we cannot save a single day from this programme. We must reserve two days for Mahabaleshwar. We can, if we wish, spend Monday in Mahabaleshwar. But it seems best that we should

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's visit to Mahabaleshwar and to Devdas

spend Sunday and Monday with Devdas. Or, we can spare one day more for Mathuradas. In any case, we should spend Monday in Bombay.

I think I have nothing to add. Oh yes, I forgot one thing. I have yielded to Kumi's repeated requests and Kanti, Rasik and Minu are leaving for Rajkot tomorrow. My conditon is that they too should be sent back on Friday. On asking the children, I could see that they wished to go and so I thought it best to let them go.

Ramniklal has started a ten-day fast from today, the reason merely being his own several years old, strong wish to do so. So now Bhansali has a companion during the last days of his fast. The latter is going on very well with his fast. Today is the twelfth day, but he does not show in any way that he has been fasting. There is no observable effect even on his face. He sleeps quite soundly. He takes enemas, and that ensures bowel movement. Drinks plenty of water. He himself reads for an hour every day, and also gets others to read a little from religious books.

Since Devdas is all right, . . .[1] can now come away. Rami, being alone, is likely to feel a little, though of course Mani, Radha and others look after her with great care. I propose to bring Subbiah along with me.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 19494

288. LETTER TO THE SECRETARY, A.I.S.A.

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 12, 1926

THE SECRETARY
A.I.S.A.
AHMEDABAD

DEAR SIR,

Ref. Your No. 2743 of the 8th instant

With reference to the application of the Abhoy Ashram authorities for permission to borrow on personal security up to Rs. 20,000/- I am of opinion that this permission should be granted provided that the money is to be used for advancing the object of the Ashram.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 11177

[1] As in the source

289. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 12, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I want an accurate reading of the Calcutta riots from your pen. I wonder if Chhotalal gave you my letter and how he is doing? Any way, I am delighted that you have changed your food and are taking more nourshing things. Do please continue. It will be criminal if you weaken your body or become ill. A few rupees spent in getting proper nourishment will be well spent. I know that you are not the man to eat for pleasure, but when things are required to sustain life they must be procured.

Hemaprabha Devi wrote to me a laconic letter from which I could understand nothing. Tell her it will not do. She must tell me fully about all her mental struggles, hopes and fears, likes and dislikes.

Yours,

BAPU

From a microfilm : S.N. 19550

290. LETTER TO LUCIEN JACQUIN[1]

May 12 [*1926*]

I would suggest to you to make a careful study of my writings before you take any step whatsoever.

From a photostat : S.N. 12416

291. LETTER TO J. LYLE TELFORD[2]

May 12 [*1926*]

If you will kindly send me your magazine I shall see whether I can send you anything to fit in with it.

From a photostat : S.N. 12432

[1] This is handwritten draft on a letter dated 6-4-1926 from the addressee in French. (S.N. 12416)

[2] In reply to the addressee's letter dated 25-2-1926 requesting for an article for *The International Forum*, a monthly magzine for the promotion of social progress

292. LETTER TO E. H. JAMES

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 12, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is difficult for me at the present moment to find time to read literature with which friends overwhelm me.

You ask me to differentiate between *Advaitism* and *Dwaitism*. The former derived evidence from God who alone exists and therefore, contemplates identity between God and His creation. The latter attempts to show that the two can be never one.

Yours sincerely,

E. H. JAMES, ESQ.
CONCORD MASS, U.S.A.

From a photostat : S.N. 12434

293. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 12, 1926

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS,

I had your telegram. Till it was received, we did not know that it was on father's account that Hardayal Babu had started fasting. He had written to me and asked me for blessing. I had not the heart to refuse it. But after receipt of your telegram, I was watchful. I have now received a telegram saying that the fast is broken, some people of Chandpur having guaranteed the expenses of the school building.

I have been waiting for your letter which has not yet arrived. How is Guruji getting on and how are you faring? Did I tell you that Pyarelal was with Mathuradas? Devdas is suffering from jaundice. Having been brought back, he underwent an operation on Sunday for appendicitis. Ba and Mahadev are there in Bombay. Devdas is doing quite all right. I am likely to see him on my way to Mahabaleshwar where I am going to meet the Governor to discuss agricultural matters at his instance.

Yours,

From a microfilm : S.N. 19549

294. LETTER TO SEWA RAM

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 12, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Fearlessness comes out of a living faith in the existence of the soul apart from the body and its persistence after the dissolution of the body. And this is attained by a continuous realization of the futility of all worldly ambition.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SEWA RAM
22, JAIL ROAD
LAHORE

From a photostat : S. N. 19551

295. LETTER TO CHHOTELAL

ASHRAM,
Wednesday, May 12, 1926

CHI. CHHOTELAL,

I have your letter. Remember your promise to me, that during your retirement into the country you will build up very good health, and you cannot do that unless you cheer up. You must unhesitatingly and in good quantity take milk, curds or any other articles which agree with you. For the present, you should pay attention to building up fine health, and may at the same time do what work you can. I know that you would have felt happier if Vinoba could have been with you at this time. But now you should carry on Vinoba's work "as well as you can". How much happier I would be if I did not have to qualify the statement with "as well as you can"! It is up to you to make that possible. I am writing to Rajaji. He will certainly have you. He is certain to come here by the 15th of June. It is not so very far off from now, and so I believe he will decide only after he arrives here. Just the same I shall see what he says. You should always let me have a complete picture of the state of your mind.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19553

296. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Wednesday [*May 12, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. There is no need at all to send Pyarelal to Bombay. Devdas is much better now. Even otherwise, such changes cannot be allowed. I am leaving here tomorrow, that is, on Thursday. On Friday I shall spend the day in Bombay and board the night train for Nasik, arriving at Deolali in the morning. I shall let you know if there is any change in the programme after going to Bombay. I shall spend the whole day at Deolali and return to Bombay by train the same night. After spending Sunday and Monday in Bombay I shall leave for Mahabaleshwar on Monday night and reach there on Tuesday morning. The rest at Mahabaleshwar.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
WINDY HALL
NASIK ROAD
DEOLALI (G.I.P.)

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

297. A DIEHARD

Prejudices die hard. Though the atrocious injustice done by the Hindus to the suppressed classes is admitted generally by even the orthodox Hindu society, there are men, otherwise liberal-minded, so blinded by prejudice that they see no injustice in the treatment meted out to our suppressed countrymen. Thus a correspondent writes :[2]

> . . . I do not agree with people who say that the untouchables are oppressed and suppressed. . . . I am afraid that your mission to elevate them, to place them on an equal footing with other communities of the country, is doomed to failure. Personally, though I feel that much should be done to elevate them

[1] From the postmark
[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

socially, it cannot be done as if by magic in a single day. Millions of money will have to be spent to educate them, to free them from economic distress, to persuade them to abandon the vices of drinking and killing cows and eating dead animals. . . .

Degradation lies in not touching the "untouchable". What though a man drinks, kills cows and eats carrion? He is no doubt an evil-doer, though no greater than the one who commits secret and more deadly sins. But he is not to be treated as an untouchable even as society does not treat the secret sinner as one. Sinners are not to be despised, but pitied and helped to rid themselves of their sinfulness. The existence of untouchability among Hindus is a denial of the doctrine of ahimsa on which we pride ourselves. We are responsible for the evils among the "untouchables", of which the writer complains. What have we done to wean them from their ways? Do we not spend a fortune to reform members of our own families? Are the untouchables not members of the great Hindu family ? Indeed, Hinduism teaches us to regard the whole of humanity as one indivisible and undivided family and holds each one of us responsible for the misdeeds of all. But if it is not possible to act up to the grand doctrine for its vastness, let us at least understand the unity of the "untouchables" with us since we regard them as Hindus.

And what is worse, eating carrion or thinking carrion? We daily create, harbour and nourish millions of untouchable thoughts. Let us shed them, for they are the true untouchables deserving to be hated and cast out. And let us do penance for our past in- justice towards the "untouchable" brothers by lovingly embracing them. The correspondent does not question the duty of serving the untouchables. How are we to serve them if their very sight offends and pollutes us?

Young India, 13-5-1926

298. FURTHER MARCH FIGURES

Here are the figures[1] of production and sale of khadi for the month of March from some centres. I hope that all those who are not yet regularly sending their returns would begin to do so.

The Andhra figures are as usual incomplete. Bengal figures included those of the Khadi Pratishthan, Abhoy Ashram, and Arambagh

[1] Not reproduced here

Khadi Kendra.

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

The Abhoy Ashram authorities have sent the following comparative figures[1] of khadi production and sales under its aegis :

Thus it will be seen that in 1925-26, the quarterly production in the Abhoy Ashram was 25 times as much as during the corresponding period in 1923-24. This is a remarkable rise. I would ask all the chief khadi organizations in India to favour me with similar comparative statistics. If they show a rise at all like the Abhoy Ashram, they will be a complete answer to those who tell us that khadi has progressively gone down instead of rising during the past five years. Progressive figures like those of the Abhoy Ashram should hearten khadi workers for greater effort. For the work before them is not to manufacture khadi worth lacs. They have to manufacture crores of rupees worth of khadi.

Young India, 13-5-1926

299. THE CATTLE PROBLEM

Some months ago the Collector of Ganjam Mr. A. Galletti sent me a sheet, being a reprint of his notes contibuted to *The Statesman*, in which he gave his opinion based on his Italian expe- riences, (1) that the agriculture of India depended upon good cattle, (2) that the cattle of India were ill-kept and therefore worse than elsewhere, (3) that they could be improved only by India *growing cattle crop instead of merely depending on common pastures*, and (4) that by the system of rotation cattle crop could be grown side by side with food grains without diminishing the returns of the latter.

I had difficulty in applying the Italian conditions to the Indian inasmuch as we have small holidings even as little as two acres and sometimes even less. To my objection which I conveyed to him, Mr. Galletti sent me the following reply[2] :

> Many thanks for yours of the 26th February, received today in my camp in my Agency hills. I will reply[3] to your objection from experience.

The appeal of the crores of India's cattle lies not to me alone, but to every Indian who can think for himself, more especially perhaps to

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] Only an extract is reproduced here.

[3] Not reproduced here

every Hindu who prides himself on being the special protector of the cow. I hope that the readers have been perusing the carefully prepared notes by Sjt. V. G. Desai on the slaughter of India's cattle. They give a graphic description of the condition of the cattle in the cities of India. Mr. Galletti paints the condition of farm cattle and prescribes in detail the remedy for improving them. The question of improving the breed of cattle and preserving them is a question as well of first rate economics as of religion. How far Mr. Galletti's remedy is applicable to Indian conditions, I do not know. Practical farmers alone can give an authoritative opinion. But one difficulty is obvious. Millions of farmers are too ignorant to adopt new and revolutionary methods. Assuming the truth of Mr. Galletti's prescription, its application depends upon the agricultural education of the large mass of Indian humanity. But those who know anything of agriculture and who have a patch of land under cultivation should try Mr. Galletti's remedy and publish results. For such, I give below the relevant extracts[1] from the sheet sent by Mr. Galletti :

Young India, 13-5-1926

300. NOTES

KHADI DURING NATIONAL WEEK

The All-India Spinners' Association has received certain re- ports of khadi work during the National Week according to which in Banaras Babu Shiva Prasad Gupta who organized volun- teers for the sale of khadi, in Banaras sold nerely Rs. 2,000 worth of khadi : at Allahabad, over Rs. 1,200; at Ghazipur, over Rs. 160; and at Banda nearly Rs. 1,000 worth of khadi was sold. The result was that there was hardly any local khadi left in the U.P. In the Punjab, great enthusiasm was shown. Rs. 11,000 worth of khadi was disposed of. Many leaders went about hawking khadi. In Tamilnad, the sales in all depots amounted to Rs. 18,622-11-11.

I wish that the other khadi centres throughout India would send their reports. There is nothing starling about these figures, but they show that if only leading men and women will work in their own centres steadilly, all the khadi that can be produced can be disposed of without the slightest difficulty in the province of production and that

[1] Not reproduced here

there need be no check put upon the manufacture of good khadi for want of custom. Manufacture requires skill and sustained effort. Sale requires prestige and pushfulness. Sales therefore can be best effected by volunteers of recognized status giving a portion of their time during certain months in the year.

TO S. L. R.

I wish, instead of filling eight sides of a thin notepaper, you had written on one side of your notepaper so as to make your writing legible. You could have condensed your statement to a fourth of its size.

I suggest to you that remembrance of a bad deed does not mean hatred of the evil-doer. I do not forget "the atrocities" committed by many of my friends and relatives, but I am not aware of the slightest hatred against them. On the contrary, I love them in spite of their "atrocities". But it would be wrong for me to support evil-doing friends or relatives. Similarly would it be wrong for the nation to support a servant who has been guilty of atrocities such as General Dyer was. Absence of hatred does not and must not mean the screening of the guilty. You infer without any authority that my severe condemnation of the sin of Jallianwala includes condemnation of the whole of the British race. I must ask you to search the file of *Young India* and you will discover that I have done the opposite of what you attribute to me.

Young India, 13-5-1926

301. I. L. P. AND INDIA

The report of the Indian Advisory Committee of the Independent Labour Party on the condition of India is an ably written document. It is a severe condemnation of the British Administration. It has among others paragraphs on the so-called reforms, on the power of the Civil Service, on communal favouritism, on the judiciary and the so-called Indian navy.

The paragraph on education bears reproduction :[1]

Of the general poverty the report says :[2]

From the paragraphs on the agricultural conditions, I cull the

[1] Not reproduced here
[2] *ibid.*

following:[1]

There are interesting paragraphs in the section devoted to industrial conditions. But I must refer the reader for the rest of the interesting information to the report itself which is issued by the I.L.P. for 6d. at 14, Great George Street, London, S.W.

Young India, 13-5-1926

302. LETTER TO CHHOTALAL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Thursday, May 13, 1926

CHI. CHHOTALAL,

I have your letter. You too must have received my telegram. It is best that at present you stay there and study everything carefully; in any case, now that you are there I think you should spend some time acquainting yourself with the position. . . .[2] of affairs there. The ideas which have recently occurred to you will also mature while you are there. The Ashram needs everyone but is dependent on none. That should be the attitude of the inmates, too, towards the Ashram. They must feel the need to remain in the Ashram, but at the same time they ought to be fearless. The inmates must certainly want to remain in the Ashram as long as it encourages the spirit of self-confidence in them, but should leave it the moment they feel that it obstructs their spiritual development. Thus, in retaining you in the Ashram I think I am serving both you and the Ashram. So you need not at all think that I want to keep you in the Ashram solely for your good, irrespective of whether your presence serves or harms the Ashram. I request you once again to stop thinking too much. I hope you got my last letter. Reflect over it and stop worrying.

You must have learnt that Devdas has been operated upon for appendicitis. The operation was performed on Sunday. I learn from his letter today that he is quite well. He will soon be discharged from the hospital. Ba, Mahadev and Jamnalalji are with him. I am leaving for Mahabaleshwar today to see the Governor there. I shall certainly see Devdas on my way.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 19505

[1] Not reproduced here
[2] As in the source

303. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Thursday, Vaishakh Sud 2 [*May 13, 1926*][1]

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I have written an article[2] on the Centre for the next issue of *Navajivan*; please go through it and let me know if I have omitted anything. These days I find in your letters a mixture of sadness, impatience and despair. I also see that you did not like Shri Lakshmidas's criticism. But there is no reason for you to feel sad or give way to despair. And one must not be impatient of criticism. It is not always that a critic can do well what he criticizes in others. It is your duty to accept and use as much from the criticism as you can. You should let Lakshmidas know and have a discussion with him about what you cannot. If you do this, you may learn something. The present widespread demand for khadi is the result of a sentiment. It is your duty to nurse and strengthen this sentiment. If you work from there in a spirit of self-sacrifice, you will be able to get more work done and also improve the quality of yarn and khadi. It is only by improving their quality that you can nurse and strengthen the love for khadi. You ask for some person to examine the quality of khadi produced by families which had kept back some cotton from their crop. Where can I find such a person? I explained to you, when you were here, that you should cut out a strip three to four inches wide, from every piece woven and send the strips here, so that every roll can be examined. Both the rolls and the strips should be numbered, so that whenever a strip is rejected the corresponding roll can be promptly identified. This will consume some time; but I think that is inevitable. If people get a return for their money, why should they lose faith in khadi? If you cannot do this, I can only tell you that you may pay only for such khadi about the quality of which you feel sure. There should be no difficulty in doing this if the payment is to be made at one place. When payments are to be made at several places, inspection of the material should be carried out at one place; otherwise this arrangement will not work. You may do

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's trip to Mahabaleshwar and Devdas' hospitalization

[2] *Vide* "My Notes", 16-5-1926

whatever you think best in the circumstances there. I am leaving for Mahabaleshwar today. I expect to return here on Saturday the 22nd. I shall receive lettes in Bombay up to Monday. Perhaps you know that Devdas is in a hospital. Kusum and Dhiru, too, are in Bombay. They wanted to be with Jaya during the time [that Devdas was in hospital].

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S. N. 19554

304. STATEMENT ON COLOUR BAR BILL

May 14, 1926

Mahatma Gandhi who arrived in Bombay on Friday morning was met on the train by an Associated Press representative who showed him a message from Cape Town that the Colour Bar Bill has been passed. Gandhiji received the news with pain [and said]:

I am sorry to learn the news that the Bill has been passed by the joint session of the two Houses of the Union Parliament. I had hoped with Mr. Andrews that better counsels would prevail and that the Bill would be rejected. Theoretically speaking, this Colour Bar Bill is worse than the Class Areas Reservation Bill over which there is to be a round table conference. One had wished that the spirrit of justice that actuated the Union Government to postpone the passing of one bill would induce them not to force the passage of the other. The acrimonious debate that took place over the passage of the Colour Bar Bill makes one suspicious as to the fate of Class Areas Reservation Bill. The duty of the Governor General of South Africa, in my opinion, is quite clear. His assent to this cruel Bill should be refused especially in view of the fact that General Smuts backed, as he was, by many other South African leaders put up such a strong opposition against it. The Colour Bar Bill, if it becomes a law of the Union, will set up the whole of the native population of South Africa against the white settlers. I regard it as an act of suicide on their part.

The Bombay Chronicle, 15-5-1926

305. MESSAGE TO BHAVNAGAR STATE PEOPLE'S CONFERENCE

[Before *May 15, 1926*][1]

The Conference has honoured itself in getting Mr. Amritlal

[1] Read at the Conference on May 15

Thakkar, the champion of the Bhils and the *Antyajas*, as its president. I hope that khaddar will have its proper place in such a conference, khaddar whereby thousands of untouchables earn their honest livelihood and by which innumerable hungry sisters earn an honest anna protecting their womanhood. I also hope that the curse of untouchability which has crept into Hindu soceity would be removed.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-5-1926

306. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Saturday [*May 15, 1926*][1]

I am writing this at Deolali. The programme is materially altered. I hope Krishnadas told you.

Mahabaleshwar—Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. Hope to leave M. Wednesday, reach Bombay on Thursday and Ashram on Friday. But may not reach till Saturday. Hope you are at peace with yourself. The weather at Deolali is quite good.

With love,

BAPU

[PS.]

Krishnadas will tell you where to address letters.

BAPU

From the original : C. W. 5184. Courtesy : Mirabehn

307. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

DEOLALI,
May 15, 1926

CHI. MIRA,

I wrote a p.c. today in time for the post. This I am writing to post at Bombay for which I am leaving presently.

Your Hindi letter is very well written. Not *hasptal*[2] *se*[3] *chhodega*[4] but *chhutega*[5]. *Chhodega* is transitive and so you drop the

[1] From the postmark
[2] Hospital
[3] From
[4] Will leave
[5] Will be discharged

case ending "*se*" but keep it before *chhutega* which is intransitive.

I knew you were feeling the separation. You will get over it because it has got to be got over. The few days' separation is a preparation for the longer that death brings. In fact the separation is only superficial. Death brings us nearer. Is not the body a bar—if it is also an introduction?

Devdas was quite well and cheerful. Mathuradas too is much better. I am to try to find out a place for him at Panchagani.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

The chapter of *Autobiography* will be posted at the same time as this. You will correct it as you like and give to Swami. The typed copy contains my corrections. I shall try to send you the original too.

BAPU

From the original : C. W. 5185. Courtesy : Mirabehn

308. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

DEOLALI,
May 15, 1926

CHI. MANI,

I could persuade Ba [to go]. However, she refuses to go there before Tuesday and will reach there on Wednesday. Tell Surajbehn about it. I hope your wards give you satisfaction. Learn to be a good mixer. Do try to bring Nandubehn to the Ashram. Krishnadas must have told you about the change in the programme.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4 : Manibehn Patelne, p. 37

309. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

Saturday [*May 15, 1926*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

I got your letter at Deolali. I am here to see Chi. Mathuradas on my way to Mahabaleshwar. It seems to me that you are not gaining strength fast enough. I am anxious to know your weight. You can have only cow's or goat's milk, and that again after heating it with half an ounce of water. It must not be boiled for any length of time. I hope to return to the Ashram from Mahabaleshwar on Saturday. I shall reach there tomorrow.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 3199. Courtesy : Mahesh A. Pattani

310. COBWEBS OF IGNORANCE[2]

An English writer has observed that in vindicating truth there is far more labour in disentangling the knots of ignorance than in propounding the truth itself. Truth is by nature self-evident. As soon as you remove the cobwebs of ignorance that surround it, it shines clear. That is just the sort of handicap under which the simple and straight movement of the spinning-wheel is labouring today. It is expected to fulfil conditions which no one ever claimed it to fulfil, and when it fails to do so, the blame is laid at its door rather than at the critic's! A capital illustration of this is afforded by some paragraphs sent by a lover of khadi, the substance of which is :

(1) Now that you have begun to claim the spinning-wheel as a universal provider, it has simply filled us with disgust. And, so, today, we, the intelligentsia, repudiate you and your spinning-wheel alike.

(2) It may be possible to introduce hand-spinning in small villages and if you confined yourself simply to that, nobody would criticize you and you might even get some sympathy.

(3) But when you try to make out that even spiritual salvation

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's visit to Mahabaleshwar

[2] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 16-5-1926. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

can come through the spinning-wheel you make yourself ridiculous. But you being a 'great' man, it is just possible that some simple-minded people may swallow whatever you say. The educated are not going to stand your nonsense any more; because you have now cast all moderation to the winds, and particularly since your voluntary retirement, you have not hesitated to prescribe the spinning-wheel to everybody and for every conceivable object under heaven. Does one want to observe *brahmacharya* ? Let him take to the spinning-wheel. Do you want to secure the release of the innocent Bengal patriots who are in jail ?—Ply the wheel. Do you want to ameliorate the economic condition of India? Why then,—the wheel again ! Not only this, you have even offered the spinning-wheel to veteran soldiers fit to wield the sword and the spear. The wonder is that you do not perceive the utter madness of all this.

(4) What would it matter to Britain if India ceased to purchase sixty crore rupees worth of cloth from her? Do you suppose that would make her abdicate her political power in India? See, how woefully mistaken you are in declaring that there is no political programme more valuable than hand-spinning.

(5) You have yet to prove that the spinning-wheel can solve even the bread problem for the masses. The harm that has resulted from it, on the other hand, is quite apparent. Just think of the khadi shops that have come to grief already!

(6) You even seem to suggest that other industrial activities should be dropped for the sake of hand-spinning.

I have condensed the objections in my own words. I do not think that I have thereby done the writer any injustice. On the contrary, I have erred, if at all, in removing or toning down the bitterness of his writing. An embittered patriot has a right to employ harsh language towards a person who has come to be dubbed a 'Mahatma'. For it enables him to mollify, to some extent at least, his rising anger over the spectacle of destitution that his country presents on the one hand and its utter helplessness to remedy it on the other. My duty is not to advertise his anger but to try, if it is at all possible, to remove the confusion engendered by that anger.

To proceed now to the examination of the six points of the correspondent :

(1) A UNIVERSAL PROVIDER ?—I have never tried to make anyone regard the spinning-wheel as his *kamadhenu*[1] or universal provider; I have certainly regarded it as my *kamadhenu* and in this I have done nothing more than what crores of Hindus in India are today doing, when they take up a little bit of clay, mould it into a small oval ball, mentally invest it with the Divine presenece and make it their *kamadhenu* by offering up their entire being to it. They do not ask their neigh- bours to worship it; on the contrary after their worship is over, they consign that sacred ball of clay to the waters. Why should then the intelligentsia feel disgusted if, with crores of my fellows, I lose my head and make the spinning-wheel my *kamadhenu* ? May I not expect a measure of toleration from them ? But as a matter of fact the intelligentsia as a body have not given me the go-by yet. To believe or give others to believe, therefore, that all the intelligentsia are disgusted because a few are, is hardly proper. But supposing, for the time being, that all of them do actually abandon me altogether, then, if my faith is inviolate, as all true faith must be, it will simply blaze forth and burn all the brighter for that reason. When in 1908[2], on board the *Kildonan Castle*, I declared my faith in the spinning-wheel in the pages of the *Hind Swaraj* (*Indian Home Rule*), I stood absolutely alone. Will, then, my God who guided my pen into making that declaration of faith at that time, abandon me, when it is put on its trial?

(2) SPIN FOR SACRIFICE—It is in the villages only that the spinning-wheel is largely meant to be introduced, and it is just there that it is at present going on. And if today I beg for sympathy and support, it is for its revival in our villages. Again it is just for this that I have to canvass the sympathy of the educated class. For, just as if we want to teach our villagers who are ignorant how to protect themselves against the ravages of malaria and such other diseases, some people from the educated and middle class will first have to become adepts in the knowledge of the sanitary measures necessary to extirpate these diseases and to observe the rules themselves, similarly it is only when some of us learn spinning and practise it ceaselessly ourselves that we shall be able to teach it to our villagers and overcome their apathy by our personal example. And it goes without saying that unless we use the khadi that they produce the spinning-wheel cannot live. My appeal to the people who live in the cities, therefore, is to spin for sacrifice, while their

[1] A mythical cow that gave whatever one asked for

[2] Actually 1909; *Vide* "Hind Swaraj", after 25-12-1909.

brethren in the villages do it for reward. The thing is simplicity itself. If only we get at the heart of it, we will find that it hardly affords any room for criticism.

(3) I SPEAK FROM EXPERIENCE—I do regard the spinning-wheel as a gateway to *my* spiritual salvation, but I recommend it to others only as a powerful weapon for the attainment of swaraj and the amelioration of the economic condition of the country. To those also who aspire to observe *brahmacharya*, I do present the spinning-wheel. It is not a thing to be despised, for it is experience here that speaks. A person who wants to subdue his passions has need to be calm. All commotion within him ought to cease; and so quiet and gentle is the motion of the spinning-wheel, that it has been known to still the passions of those who have turned it in the fulness of faith. I have been able to compose my anger by turning it, and I can adduce similar testimony of several other *brahmacharis*. Of course it would be quite easy to laugh down all such persons as fools and nincompoops, but it would not be found to be cheap in the end. For the scoffer in a fit of anger loses a beautiful means wherewith to compose his passions and attain vigour and strength. I therefore particularly recommend to every young man and young woman who reads these lines to give the spinning-wheel a trial. They will find that shortly after they sit down to spin, their passions begin to subside. I do not mean to say that they would remain calm for all the rest of the day even after the spinning is discontinued; for, human passions are fleeter even than the wind and to subdue them completely requires no end of patience. All that I claim is that in the spinning-wheel they will find a powerful means of cultivating steadiness. But then, someone will ask, why do not I recommend the far more poetical rosary, if that is the purpose which it is intended to subserve? My reply to this is that the spinning-wheel possesses some virtues in addition to those it has in common with the rosary. I have not prescribed it for a recluse living in a state of nature in a cave of the Himalayas and subsisting on the herbs and roots of the forest. I have placed it only before such countless persons like myself who, while living in the work-a-day world, are anxious to serve the country and to practise *brahmacharya* simultaneously.

And as for ridiculing my suggestion to ply the spinning-wheel for securing the release of the Bengal prisoners, it only comes to this

that we are not prepared to stir ourselves a single inch to secure their release. For the spinning-wheel here means the boycott of all foreign cloth. And what a compelling force that has and how we are at present unable to develop any other kind of force, we shall presently see as we proceed with our examination of the other points that follow. My presenting the spinning-wheel even to veteran soldiers fit to wield the lance and the sword, therefore, is not a sign of madness but a hall-mark of knowledge—a knowledge not derived merely from book-learning but from the plenitude of experience.

(4) WHY IT IS THE ONLY POLITICAL PROGRAMME—The question as to what loss would the British suffer if India stopped purchasing her sixty crore rupees worth of cloth from them is quite out of place. Our duty is simply to see whether and if so, how far it would profit us. The stopping of the purchase of sixty crores worth of foreign cloth would, in the first place, mean the saving of so much money to the crores of Indian homes. In ohter words it would mean so much addition to their income. Then, it would spell the creation of so much fresh industry, the organization of crores into a joint co-operative effort, the conservation and utilization of the energy of the millions and the dedication of crores of lives to the service of the motherland. The carrying out of such a gigantic task would, further, give us a realization of our own strength. It would mean our acquiring a thorough mastery of the details and innumerable knotty problems which it presents, e.g., learning to keep account of every pie, learning to live in the villages in sanitary and healthy conditions, remov-ing the difficulties that block the way and so on. For, unless we learn all this, we would not be able to accomplish this task. The spinning-wheel, then, provides us with a means for generating this capacity in us. So long, therefore, as one has not grasped the inner meaning of the wheel, one may ridicule it, but when once the grand meaning is understood it would become simply impossible to tear oneself away from it.

Again, the British are an intelligent people. The officials are a wise and shrewd lot. I know this. That is why I present the spinning-wheel to my people. We cannot overreach the British by the glibness of our tongue or by the power of our pen. Our threats they have grown quite accustomed to, while as for our physical prowess it can avail us but little against their bombs rained down from the aeroplanes. But these people understand and respect patience, perseverance, determination and capacity for organization. Cloth represents the biggest item of their trade. The accomplishment of its boycott by us would awaken them to

a sense of our strength. They are not holding India merely to feed their pride; nor is it by mere force of arms, but it is by tact and cunning that their rule over us is maintained. When their trade is made to rest on our untramelled free will, their rule also will undergo a similar transformation. Today both are being imposed on us against our will. If we succeed in shaping one of them according to our will, the other will automatically follow suit. But it is easy enough to understand that while their trade relations with us remain unchanged, no change in the political relationship is possible.

I may repeat that I would today discard the spinning-wheel if someone shows a better and more universal political programme than hand-spinning. But up to this time I have found none, I have been shown none. I am anxious to know if there is any.

(5) HOW IT SOLVES THE BREAD PROBLEM—That the spinning-wheel can solve our bread problem hardly needs to be proved to a reader of the *Navajivan*. The figures published about various khadi organizations would show that thousands of poor women are today eking out their living by spinning. Nobody has yet denied that the spinning-wheel can bring the spinner at least an anna a day. And there are crores of people in India who hardly earn even a pice a day. So long as things stand thus, it is hardly necessary to point out the close relation that exists between the spinning-wheel and the bread problem.

As for the charge that the spinning-wheel has done harm to the country it is up to those who level it to prove it. This activity is by its very nature such that there can be no waste of effort in it. Nothing can interrupt its continuity and even a little exercise of it saves one from mighty evils. What does it matter if some khadi shops came to an end? That phenomenon is common to every trade. The money invested in them has at least remained in the country, while the experi-ence gained through it has enabled us to make further progress. Besi-des, if some of the shops had to close down, instances can be cited of many more, better organized shops that have grown up in their place.

(6) SUPPLEMENTS, DOES NOT REPLACE—I have not contemplated, much less advised, the abandonment of a single healthy, life-giving industrial activity for the sake of hand-spinning. The entire foundation of the spinning-wheel rests on the fact that there are crores of semi-unemployed people in India. And I should admit that if there were none s uch there would be no room for the spinning-wheel. But as a matter of fact everybody who has been to our villages knows that

they have months of idleness which may prove their ruin. Even my appeal to the middle class people to spin for sacrifice is with reference to their spare hours. The spinning-wheel movement is destructive of no enterprise whatever. It is a life-giving activity. And that is why I have called it *Annapurna* [1] or *the butter for bread* or the replenisher.

Young India, 27-5-1926

311. MY NOTES

AMRELI KHADI CENTRE

This Centre was started by Shri Chitalia at the very beginning of the khadi movement. Thereafter Shri Amritlal Thakkar took it over and expanded its work considerably. As everyone was inex-perienced at that time, loss was inevitable. The results, however, were beneficial on the whole for, besides our gaining experience, some poor women got a little help. Shri Jivanlal and Ramji Hansraj also came to take interest in its activities. The former invested some money in it, and Ramjibhai took over as its Manager. He engaged Shri Jaisukhlal's services. They made a hand-press for yarn and started preserving it in the form of bales. They then established branches around Amreli in places where poverty was rampant and good workers were available, and brought about improvement in the quality of the yarn and the khadi. Previsously, yarn of three counts was used for weaving, whereas now yarn of eight counts is used and this yarn is stronger than three-count yarn. With the beginning of this year the Centre entered the fourth stage in its growth, that is, Shri Jivanlal and Shri Ramji asked me to relieve them of the responsibility of running thus Centre and expressed their wish that some institution should take over its management. Shri Ramji pleaded his failing health and Shri Jivanlal wished to be free so that he might be able to help in his own business. The management of this Centre, therefore has been taken over on my advice by the Kathiawar Political Conference, and it will shortly be handed over to trustees appointed by the Conference so that the Centre may be run properly. The amount of ten thousand rupees invested by Shri Jivanlal in this Centre remains with it. Besides this, the amount of five thousand rupees contributed by him to the purse is also invested in the Centre in accordance with his wishes. He is also giving a grant of two thousand rupees annually, and this he will continue for three years. The following

[1] Provider of food—consort of Siva—worshipped as the giver of plenty

plan has been drawn up for the present year.

There was a stock of old cotton and yarn weighing approximately 430 maunds. Cotton weighing 850 maunds has been purchased at the new, that is, cheaper rate. All the cotton will be spun, but at the end of the year 350 maunds of yarn will remain on hand, unwoven. For this programme to be fulfilled the following amounts of money will have to reach homes of the poor by the end of the year.

Rs. 2,000 for carders

Rs. 1,000 for women preparing slivers

Rs. 8,000 for spinning (distributed among 1,000 women)

Rs. 14,000 for weaving and bleaching

The Centre has four branches : at Chalala, Bagasara, Chittal and Babara. At the last place, work is done on a commission basis. In all, 17 persons work there, including a cook and a peon. The highest salary paid is Rs. 70 and next in order are Rs. 50 and Rs. 35. Five persons get Rs. 30 each. Then there is one man get- ting Rs. 25, two getting Rs. 20 each, two others getting Rs. 18 each, one getting Rs. 15, two others Rs. 12 each, and one more person getting Rs. 10. The monthly salary-bill comes to Rs. 455. Add to this Rs. 70 as rent, Rs. 55 travelling expenses and Rs. 10 postage, making a total of Rs. 590. The expenses incurred at the villages of Babara, Gariyadhar and Panch Talavada, where work is done on commission basis, come to about Rs. 50 a month.

We shall now examine the costs. The old stock of cotton weighing 430 maunds was purchased at the rate of Rs. 22 per maund and the 850 maunds of new cotton at the rate of Rs. 13 per maund. The cost of cotton, therefore, comes to about Rs. 16 per maund. Hence :

	40 seers of cotton	Cost	Rs. 16
Less	6 seers loss in carding	Cost of carding it . .	Rs. 3
	34 seers of slivers	Cost	Rs. 19
Less	1 seers lost in spinning	Cost of spinning .	Rs. $7\frac{1}{2}$
	33 seers of yarn	Cost	Rs. $26\frac{1}{2}$
Less	2 seers lost while weaving	Cost of weaving .	Rs. 10
	31 seers, balance; cloth	from it, 88 yeds.	Rs. $36\frac{1}{2}$

This comes to $6\frac{1}{2}$ annas per yard (of unbleached khadi; width 28 inches).

Expenses on management have not been counted in working out this figure. The payment for carding is not always Rs. 3. It varies bet-

ween Rs. $2\frac{1}{2}$ and Rs. 3. Payment is at the rate of Rs. 3 only if the carding is of the highest quality. The rate of payment for spinning is 2 paise per count, and the Rs. $7\frac{1}{2}$ counted here is for yarn of seven counts. These rates, therefore, should be considered as approximate. The price at which the khadi is sold includes half an anna per yard added to the cost as worked out above, but that is not sufficient to defray the expenses on manage-ment. Shri Jivanlal's grant will be utilized to meet this loss and any other loss which may occur will be met from the general collections made. But the aim is to see that management expenses do not exceed one anna per rupee. This ideal, however, has not been realized any- where in the country. But, as we gain experience, the workers become more efficient and the quality of spinning improves, the expenses on management will come down. The position today is not what it was four years ago. The point which anyone who buys khadi should note is this, that deducting the half anna per yard for management expenses, the rest of the price they pay for khadi, i.e., $6\frac{1}{2}$ annas per yard, goes into the pockets of the cultivators and the persons engaged in carding, spinning and weaving. If, even from this, we deduct the cost of cotton, the wages paid for carding, spinning and weaving come to one and a quarter times the cost of cotton. The reason for calling attention to all this is to tell the consumer who buys khadi that, if indigenous cotton is used in manufacturing all the cloth we require, not only will the cost of cotton be paid to our cultivators but the balance of the price paid by him will also go into the pockets of our workers. On the other hand, those who purchase foreign cloth send the money outside, and those who purchase mill cloth help to make the rich richer. The worker gets at the most one pice for every yard.

The reader will now appreciate Abbas Sahib's motive in undertaking a sale-tour of Kathiawar in such a hot season, and the reason why people should buy all the khadi he has. The women who are engaged in spinning have no other work or source of income, and the few pice they earn daily go a long way to help them. The purchaser of this khadi, therefore, helps these sisters and, along with them, those poor people who are engaged in weaving and carding, by providing them work.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-5-1926

312. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 16, 1926

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I had your telegram about Devdas. Dr. Dalal suspected appendicitis and advised operation. I had no hesitation in agreeing and so the operation was performed in the presence of Jamnalalji and Mahadev. I was not present but I saw him on Thursday on my way to Mahabaleshwar and Deolali where I went to see Mathuradas who is ailing. Devdas is doing quite well and expects to be discharged about the 25th instant. There is no cause for the slightest anxiety. I am dictating this at Mahabaleshwar which I reached this afternoon at about 5 o'clock. I am to see the Governor on Tuesday[1].

Here is a copy of the letter[2] from Vithalbhai. He came to the Ashram after writing the letter. I told him about the conver- sation we had about the Speaker's salary. He told me that he knew nothing of any arrangement for giving half or any portion of the salary to the party funds. I thereupon told him that I must consult you before accepting the cheque. Will you please tell me what is to be done ?

Sir Chunilal Mehta[3] told me as we were walking that you had decided not to go to England but to take rest at a hill-side station leaving the leadership of the party to Mr. Iyengar[4]. Are you not going to England?

Yours sincerely,

PANDIT MOTILALJI NEHRU
ANAND BHAVAN
ALLAHABAD

From a photostat : S. N. 11312

313. LETTER TO HARIBHAU G. PHATAK

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 17, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I hope to be in Poona Wednesday morning and drive straight to

[1] May 18, 1926; another meeting was fixed for the 19th.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Vithalbhai Patel's Letter to Gandhiji", 10-5-1926.

[3] Member, Executive Council of Bombay; Gandhiji stayed with him at Mahabaleshwar.

[4] S. Srinivasa Iyengar

Sinhgarh to see Kaka. I return in the evening and we should meet at Professor Trivedi's house where I want to go to see his son. I leave the same night for Bombay.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. HARIBHAU GANESH PHATAK
341, SADASHIV PETH
POONA CITY

From the original : C. W. 2800. Courtesy : Haribhau Phatak

314. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 17, 1926

DEAR LALA SHANKERLAL

I had your letter. I am glad Sjt. Gidwani[1] has been appointed Principal of the Prem Maha Vidyalaya. He has given me a copy of your letter to him. I shall gladly go through your rules[2] and make such suggestions as I think necessary.

I shall write to Dr. Ray after I know what is really required. It will be perhaps, better to postpone the matter of writing to Dr. Ray till after Acharya Gidwani is there and has considered what should be done.

Yours sincerely,

LALA SHANKERLAL
DELHI

[ENCLOSURE]

1. Spinning-wheel may have as many spindles as can be worked by one person with or without the help of the feet.
2. It should yield per hour at least 3,000 yards of even well-twisted yarn of not less than 10 counts from hand-carded slivers.
3. It should cost not more than £4, i.e., Rs. 60.
4. It should be portable.
5. Broken parts should be capable of being easily mended or at least easily procurable.
6. In careful hands it should work smoothly at the rate of 8 hours per day for full one year without requiring repairs.

[1] A. T. Gidwani
[2] Presumably the enclosure found in the source

7. The operator should do with his hands and feet what an ordinary man or woman may be expected to learn to do inside of a week.
8. No more energy should be required to work the machine than is needed for working a sewing machine.

From a microfilm : S. N. 19556

315. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

MAHABALESHWAR,
Monday [*May 17, 1926*][1]

CHI. RAMDAS,

I got your letter here. I read your letter to Devdas in Bombay. When will you get over your sense of despondency? Devdas is quite well. Today is Monday. I think I will be able to return by Wednesday. Have you received all the amount in cash? Let me know how much the total amount came to. I think the money received on account of khadi should be credited to the Ashram. The account will be kept more strictly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

316. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 18, 1926

CHI. MIRA,

I had your letter. Not *Main yeh* (*iss*)[2] *vakt ka aisa upayog karenge* but *Main iss vakt ka aisa upayog karungi*.[3] The verbal ending must be feminine.

I am writing this at night just before retiring. Therefore I must be brief. Nargis was here. She is looking better. The place is no doubt

[1] Inferred from 'Mahabaleshwar'and 'Monday' in the date-line; Gandhiji was at Mahabaleshwar from May 16 to 20 in the year 1926 and Monday was on 17. He had gone there at the request of the Governor of Bombay to discuss with him the question of the Agricultural Commission appointed by the British Government on March 31 of that year.

[2] Gandhiji corrected "*yeh*" into "*iss*".

[3] This is in Devanagri script. It meand : "I shall use this time in this way."

cool but not cold.

With love,

BAPU

[PS.]

Please give the accompanying to Manibehn.

From the original : C. W. 5186. Courtesy : Mirabehn

317. PUNJAB COMPARATIVE FIGURES

I am enabled this week to give the following comparative tables[1] of production and sale of khadi in the Punjab :

Though the figures do not show the rise as in the Abhoy Ashram, the figures are nearly twice as much as in 1923-24 or 1924-25 during the corresponding period. This is no sign of khadi losing ground in the Punjab.

Young India, 20-5-1926

318. WAR OR PEACE

It was not without purpose that I reproduced the main parts of Mr. Page's very able pamphlet on the World War.[2] I hope that the reader followed them with the care and attention the chapters deserved. Mr. Page has proved conclusively that both the parties were equally to blame and that both resorted to barbarous and inhuman practices. We did not need Mr. Page's help to learn that no war of which history has any record took so many lives as this did. Moral loss was greater still. Poisonous forces destructive of the soul (lying and deception) were brought to perfection as much as the forces destructive of the body. The moral results have been as terrible as the physical. It is yet too early to measure the effect on mankind of the collapse of the sexual morality brought about by the War. Vice has usurped the throne of virtue. The brute in man has for the time being gained supremacy.

The after-effects are, perhaps, more terrible than the actual and immediate effects. There is no stability about the government of any single State of Europe. No class is satisfied with its own condition.

[1] Not reproduced here. These were for 1922-23 to 1925-26.

[2] *Vide* "Notes", 26-11-1925.

Each wants to better it at the expense of the rest. War between the States has now become a war within each State.

India has to make her choice. She may try, if she wishes, the way of war and sink lower than she has. In the Hindu-Muslim quarrel, she seems to be taking her first lesson in the art of war. If India can possibly gain her freedom by war, her state will be no better and will be, probably, much worse than that of France or England. Paste examples have become obsolete. Not even Japan's comparative progress can be any guide. For,"the science" or war has made much greater "progress" since the Russo-Japanese war. Its result can only be studied in the present condition of Europe. We can safely say that if India throws off the British yoke by the way of war, she must go through the state Mr. Page has graphically described.

But the way of peace is open to her. Her freedom is assured if she has patience. That way will be found to be the shortest even though it may appear to be the longest to our impatient nature. The way of peace insures internal growth and stability. We reject it because we fancy that it involves submission to the will of the ruler who has imposed himself upon us. But the moment we realize that the imposition is only so-called and that through our unwillingness to suffer loss of life or property, we are party to the imposition, all we need do is to change that negative attitude of passive endorsement. The suffering to be undergone by the change will be nothing compared to the physical suffering and the moral loss we must incur in trying the way of war. And the sufferings of war harm both the parties. The sufferings in following the way of peace must benefit both. They will be like the pleasurable travail of a new birth.

Let us not be misled by a hasty generalization of the events of 1920-21. Great as the achievement of that brilliant period was, it was nothing compared to what it might have been, had we been true and had faith. Violence was in the breasts of many of us whilst with our lips we paid homage to non-violence. And, though we were thus false to our creed, so far as we had accepted it, we blamed it and lost faith instead of blaming and correcting ourselves. Chauri Chaura was a symptom of the disease that was poisoning us. Ours was claimed to be a peaceful, non-violent way. We could not sustain the claim in its fulness. The 'enemy's' taunts we need not mind. They saw vilolence within.

The way of peace is the way of truth. Truthfulness is even more

important than peacefulness. Indeed, lying is the mother of violence. A truthful man cannot long remain violent. He will perceive in the course of his search that he has no need to be violent and he will further discover that so long as there is the slightest trace of violence in him, he will fail to find the truth he is searching.

There is no half way between truth and non-violence on the one hand and untruth and violence on the other. We may never be strong enough to be entirely non-violent in thought, word and deed. But we must keep non-violence as our goal and make steady progress towards it. The attainment of freedom, whether for a man, a nation or the world, must be in exact proportion to the attainment of non-violence as the only method of achieving real freedom, keep the lamp of non-violence burning bright in the midst of the present impenetrable gloom. The truth of a few will count, the untruth of millions will vanish even like chaff before a whiff of wind.

Young India, 20-5-1926

319. A GOOD EXAMPLE

The Secretary, A.I.S.A.[1], has received the information that the Allahabad Municipal Board has adopted a resolution removing octroi duty on hand-spun yarn and khadi. I congratulate the Board on its patriotic decision which I hope other Municipalities will copy.

Young India, 20-5-1926

320. NOTES

INDIANS IN AUSTRALIA

An Indian settler of Australia says in the course of a letter[2]:

The correspondent sends too the original letter received by him in reply to his mining application from the Registrar, Mines Department, which I copy below:

> With reference to your letter of the 31st ultimo, I would advise you that we are unable to issue Miners' Rights to persons of Indian race.

[1] All-India Spinners' Association

[2] Not reproduced here; the correspondent said that a coloured person could get no employment in Australia, even if he were a very good engineer and could hold a piece of land, if at all, only in the name of a white trustee.

This letter is an eye-opener. It was thought that in Australia there was no racial discrimination against those Asiatics who had settled there. But the correspondent's letter, fortified as it is with an original letter from the Mines Department, leaves no room for doubt.

TWO ANGLES OF VISION

The deciding reason why with all the will in the world Europeans and Indians do not have hearty communion as a class is because we have different angles of vision. We say that reforms are inadequate, that the educated classes can best represent the masses and that we are one nation though differing in language and religion. It is not to the purpose just now to prove the assertions. It is enough to state that educated India honestly holds the views set forth above.

But the European view honestly held is set forth in the briefest and the boldest manner in manifesto[1] addressed by the European Association to every European in India:

How is it possible for the two to meet for common action in frank and free fellowship when the two stand as poles asunder in thought and aspirations as the manifesto clearly shows? A mere make-believe association or co-operation can only debase both, for they meet with mental reservations and mutual distrust. The situation is tragic; but ture. To end the tragedy, the first essential is to realize the truth of it. Union is desirable, it must come, but it will come only when we have begun to think the same thing. And that will come when we Indians show our earnestness and prove our belief in a common nationality and capacity for representing the masses by acting as one nation and suffering for the masses.

Young India, 20-5-1926

321. KHADI GRAPHS

The following graphs[2] showing the comparative progress of khadi during 1924-25 and 1925-26 during the months October to March in Tamil Nadu cannot fail to interest the reader.

Young India., 20-5-1926

[1] Not reproduced here; it said that the Europeans opposed the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms because the Indians were not a nation and the intelli- gentsia did not represent the masses which had never demanded representative government.

[2] Not reproduced here

322. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, May 22, 1926

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I had been to Mahabaleshwar to see the Governor, from where I have returned today. I got your letter before I had left Mahabale-shwar. The Governor and I practically talked about nothing but the spinning-wheel movements. Devdas is quite well; he will leave the hospital in a few days. Kusum and Dhiru are still with Jaya. I met them too. They will leave Bombay on the 25th. I had also been to Deolali to see Mathuradas. His health may be described as fairly good. I met there Prabhudas and Vijaya, too. Prabhudas seems to have improved. He is under the treatment of some *vaid.*

Is the fine yarn which you have with you also strong enough? If it is, can you arrange to get it woven by Wanjas? At Bagasra these people weave khadi out of very fine yarn. Formerly, they would not touch mill-yarn at all. Do you know that in the year 1915 we made special arrangements with them and had khadi woven out of such fine yarn? The Marwari teacher's father in Amreli may also weave khadi out of fine yarn. The first thing to ascertain, therefore, is whether or not the yarn is strong. I shall think about this matter, whether the weaving can be done here. I do not know what happened about the strips of khadi from Gariyadhar. In any case, I think it will be better if you can collect such strips. If people hesitate to give them, cannot you convince them that it is very necessary to have all the samples tested by one expert to ascertain whether both the warp and the woof in every sample are hand-spun, and therefore, strips have to be sent [to Ahmedabad]? If, however, sending strips is impossible, you may get the samples tested there with the help of any person selected by you and pay everyone as soon as his material is tested.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S. N. 19555

323. LETTER TO CHANDULAL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, Vaisakh Sud 10[1], *May 22, 1926*

BHAISHRI CHANDULAL,

I got your letter. I congratulate you on your decision to marry Chi. Kamla outside the circle prescribed by your community even in opposition to the wishes of the latter. I pray that the wedding celebration may be successful, that the husband and the wife live long and always lead an ideal life which others might emulate.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S. N. 19557

324. MY NOTES

"VEGETABLE GHEE"

Nowadays misuse of names has been on the incerease. Only cloth woven by hand from hand-spun yarn can be called khadi, but the mills give to the thick cloth produced by them the name of khadi. Again, some cheat the people by giving the name partial khadi to cloth woven by hand from mill-spun yarn. The same practice is followed in regard to ghee. Ghee is in fact a product made from milk; still there is now a new product called "vegetable ghee". Coconut oil does not become ghee by merely calling it "vegetable ghee", nor can it have the properties of ghee. Nowadays such synthetic ghee is being improted in large quantities. It is well packed and appears just like ghee; hence simple-minded people buy it. Moreover, since fat is sold under the name of ghee or because it is mixed with ghee, many people use "vegetable ghee", being afraid of using ghee.

I shall not only use but even propagate vegetable ghee if a vegetable produce possessing the same properties as ghee is available. I find fault with the use of ghee. But I cannot disregard its good properties. It has not so far been possible to extract a product from vegetables which will serve as a substitute for ghee. Therefore, the product which is being sold as vegetable ghee has to be rejected on two counts : one, it is not ghee and two, it does not contain the properties of ghee. Thirdly, the harm done is that today we use many foreign products and we have now unwillingly started using one more foreign product, much to our detriment. Therefore, everyone using "vegetable

[1] The source has 11 which, however, was a Sunday.

ghee" should beware and give up its use.

HIGH OR LOW?

A newspaper correspondent writes :[1]

This is a difficult question. But from the point of ahimsa, there can be only one reply and that is that one who inflicts pain on small creatures for a selfish purpose also becomes low himself. Man is a mixture of humility and greatness. His greatness lies in his ability to be humble. If he does not have the capacity to be humble, he cannot be considered to be great. Then there will be no scope whatever for rising high. Therefore it is said that one who does not harm other creatures for achieving his own ends and is ready to suffer pain for the sake of all living beings is alone fit to attain the vision of the self.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-5-1926

325. SOCIETIES FOR COW-PROTECTION

Bhai Jivraj Nenshi writes as follows :[2]

This is not a new suggestion. The All-India Goraksha Mandal has been established just for this purpose. But as I get more experience I realize the difficulties in the way of bringing all such societies together under one body and a common set of rules. I have asked for full details from as many societies as have sent their names and addresses. But very few of them have supplied the information asked for. It is not that they do not wish to send particulars, but probably lethargy or indifference or a feeling of shame prevents them from replying. The shame is on the score of lack of proper management, for I have seen institutions which were not properly managed and did not maintain proper accounts. At many places the people who run these institutions are so ill-educated that they simply cannot furnish the information asked for. It is said that

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had asked how man who tormented other creatures to achieve his selfish ends could be considered higher than other creatures.

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had suggested that the various bodies in the country for the protection of weak and infirm cattle should unite to form an all-India body and formulate a plan whereby they would maintain healthy cattle, supply pure milk to the people and from the income so derived look after weak and infirm cattle.

there are some 1,500 *goshalas* is India. If they are all properly managed and turned into dairies, there is no doubt at all that the problem of protecting the cows will be then very easy to solve. But what is the way to bring this about? Who will bell the cat? I will only say this, that it is necessary to infuse life into all these institutions. It is difficult to frame rules for them unless they work as model dairies and leather work-shops. The All-India Goraksha Mandal has not been indifferent to this task. Efforts are being made to plan a dairy with Sir Harold Mann's help; and similarly plans for a leather work-shop are also being drawn up. Such experiments for the purpose of cow-protection being new, plans for them cannot be prepared immediately. The articles written by Shri Valji Desai[1] and Mr. Galletti show that India stands lowest in regard to treatment of cattle. How can we, then, get experts in dairy science and leather work so easily?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-5-1926

326. TELEGRAM TO K. T. PAUL

May 23, 1926

YOUR WIRE. WROTE FULLY SATURDAY. VIEW DIFFICULTIES FINANCIAL OTHERS MENTIONED YOUR LETTER SUGGEST CANCELLATION INVITATION.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 11347

327. LETTER TO K. T. PAUL

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 23, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I have not telegraphed to you because your letter do [es] not lend itself to a brief telegram. From your letter I gather that this proposed visit of mine is causing you a great deal of trouble and worry. Please do not worry over this thing. Do not in any way consider that because you have been the vehicle for

[1] Published in *Young India* from 14-1-1926 to 8-7-1926

conveying the invitation to me you must make it a certainty. You and I must look at this thing with complete detachment and undertake the mission only if the hand of God appears to be in it in the clearest manner possible. If then there is any question of forcing the pace you may retrace your step and dimiss the invitation from your mind as if it had never been sent.

You mention the finance. That must be a consideration for the Central Council, not for you and me unless you are supposed to find the wherewithal. I would have gladly begged the necessary funds from a friend if it was thought necessary. But I hold it to be wrong on principle, for those who invite me should bear the cost.

Again, as far as I am concerned I could go with just as much comfort in 3rd class as I would in 1st class. Given cleanliness and sufficient privacy and protection against bad weather, I would prefer deck to saloon passage. On my return from South Africa I took a 3rd class ticket from Cape Town to London and was none the worse for it. There was no deck passage available. But in the present case I suppose nothing but the saloon is to be thought of as a matter of show. But if the Central Committee undertook to carry me as a 3rd class passenger I should not regard it as an insult in any shape or form but the whole thing must be done by the Central Council or by those who are responsible for the invitation without any interference or prompting on my part.

So far as goat's milk is concerned I would not think of you or any of my companions being responsible for milking or keeping goats. It must be left to the steamship company. The managers must make what arrangements they choose. It is no easy matter for passengers to control such things on steamer. What would one do when there is a storm or if the goats die. Such things are always best left to the steamship owners. They know how to manage them.

My companions would be two—Mahadev Desai and Devdas Gandhi, my youngest son. At first I had intended to take only one but I feel that in the present state of my physical condition and public engagements which I must carry out whether I am stationary or not these two assistants are necessary. I should consider it a privilege to have you also as a helper but I am afraid you could not take the place of either Mahadev Desai or Devdas. What class they should travel is not a matter of any moment but if they are to travel by a class lower to mine there must be an arrangment with steamship owners so as to enable me

to have access to them all the time I want them for my assistance. Needless to say both are vegetarians.

I suppose you remember what I stated in my first letter to you that passports and everything else will have to be managed by the inviting party.

I now conclude as I began and repeat that all things considered it would be better for you to drop the idea of my visit to Finland.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 11346

328. MESSAGE TO NON-BRAHMINS

SABARMATI,
May 23, 1926

If non-Brahmins will only think more of the poorest people of the land and therefore of the charkha and khadi rather than of political progress through the instrumentaily of the existing Government, they will better their condition and that of the whole of India to that extent.

From a microfilm : S.N. 19569

329. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 23, 1926

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I knew that you would take the blow—for such it is from a worldly standpoint—bravely. I do believe that truly speaking we can say that God had no more work for Shums Tyabji in the body that is now lying peacefully in the grave and fast being reduced to dust. If you had no faith in God and no faith in the persistence of the soul after the dissolution of the body and you refused to shed tears, you would be considered callous. But as I know that you have faith in the persistence of the soul and in the Divinity that permeates the universe your refusal to give way to grief is a sign of resignation to the will of God and an appreciation of the true nature of death.

Jamnalalji is still in Bombay and you can see him yourself. I shall write to him. Do you know that Devdas is in Sir Harikisendas Hospital?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

ABBAS TYABJI, ESQ.
C/O M. B. TYABJI
FRENCH ROAD, CHAUPATTI
BOMBAY

From a photostat : S.N. 9555

330. LETTER TO A. T. GIDWANI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 23, 1926

MY DEAR GIDWANI,

I had hour postcard. I cannot understand why you did not receive my letter sent to you to Abu. It was. . . .[1] who took the letter. However it does not matter much now. I shall be interested to know what you saw at Kanodar. I know that there is a great deal of weaving going on there. But it is all from machine-spun yarn whether foreign or swadeshi.

I arrived from Mahabaleshwar yesterday. I had no talk with Governor except about the charkha.

Herewith the letter from Lala Shankarlal. There seems to be enormous scope for improvement and expansion of the Vidyalaya. When the papers come you and I must put our heads together before you go away and frame something. I knew that the institution had a large income. But I never knew that it was so large as is mentioned by Lala Shankerlal. I shall look to you to make this old institution a thorough success.

Yours sincerey,

SJT. A. T. GIDWANI

From a microfilm : S. N. 11263

[1] Blank as in the source

331. LETTER TO EDWIN M. STANDING

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 23, 1926

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your second letter. I do not say anything about your first because I had not yet had the time to study it which I propose to find time to do in a few days. You may depend upon my giving it the attention the efforts you have made in writing do [wn] your thought for me deserve.

I thank you for the book and the beautiful photograph you have sent me. About photographs from me I do not possess any and I have to hunt for them. I have now even forgotten what photographs you asked for. May I trouble you to tell me again?

Yes. Motah Bahen is as faithful in her work as ever and her work is prospering. She puts all her life into it and it is like the leaven that raises it all and works into [*sic*]. She is at present at Darjeeling with Mr. and Mrs. Ambalal. She was disinclined to go but it was necessary for her.

I am almost inclined to think that I am not going to Finland but I shall know definitely during the next fortnight. If I do go I shall be leaving in the beginning of July.

Yours sincerely,

EDWIN M. STANDING, ESQ.
SEFTON PLACE
ARUNDEL, SUSSEX
ENGLAND

From a photostat : S. N. 12474

332. LETTER TO R. B. GREGG

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 23, 1926

MY DEAR GOVIND,

I have your deeply interesting letter for which I am thankful. I now understand the school and its purpose. Is it Sunderam of

Coimbatore? If so, please congratulate him and also ascertain from him how he managed to gravitate there. He must be there with his wife. If so, what is she doing?

I know that Stokes is doing great and good work and gives his all to it. How I should love to convince him that he does not need Government recognition for his school. There must be some method of enabling the boys to earn their own living without the Government patronage. The path is not easy but it is the only one that he or shall I say we must tread. However I must not criticize. He must work by the light of his own conscience even though to an outsider he may seem to be erring.

If I go to Finaland at all, I shall bear in mind all your caution and take with me a wardrobe full of warm clothing and I promise, if I feel the cold so much, to wrap myself out of recognition. If I go to Finland I shall see that all the notes that are taken you receive a copy of. Meanwhile send me all the questions that arose in your mind.

The path of ahimsa, I know, is thorny. At every step the thorns prick and sometimes bleed one.

I was out for nearely a week passing a few hours with the Governor at Mahabaleshwar trying to persuade him that the only recommendation that the Royal Commission on Agriculture can make is to popularize the charkha and assure the masses that all the yarn that they can spin will be taken up by the Government and woven for the people.

With love to you all including the baby with kiss added for it.

I do not know whether it is he or she.

Yours sincerely.

R. B. GREGG, ESQ.
C/O S. E. STOKES, ESQ.
KOTAGARH, SIMLA HILLS

From a photostat: S. N. 19561

333. LETTER TO P. N. RAJAMANICKAM CHETTIYAR

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 23, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and the parcel of khadi for which I thank you.

If you persist long enough you will find that you have all the assistance you need. Your yarn is not as even as it might be nor as strong. You must attempt to spin better.

Your weaving is also not close enough but all these things are merely a matter of practice and practice will make you perfect.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. N. RAJAMANICKAM CHETTIYAR
BHARATHA KHADDAR PRACHAR SALA
TIYAGADURGAN (S. A. DIST.)

From a microfilm: S. N. 19562

334. LETTER TO G. K. DEVADHAR

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 23, 1926

MY DEAR DEVADHAR,

I have your letter. It will be pleasure to meet you whenever you can come. And when you do come of course you will stay at the Ashram. I know that you are not likely to come here before the rains have probably set in. At the present moment we are boiling here. I don't want you to find yourself in the oven with us.

I hope Mrs. Devadhar is better now. She must come next winter to the Ashram and pass a few days here.

When you return you will send me a report about Manorama.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. K. DEVADHAR
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S. N. 19563

335. LETTER TO S. G. VAZE

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 23, 1926

DEAR VAZE,

I have your letter. I am glad you have been chosen to be the bearer of Dr. Norman Ley's beautiful letter to me. There was

certainly no occasion for any apology whatsover. Where there is frankness and honesty resentment is impossible. I hope to send a reply to Dr. Ley by the next mail.

Yours sincerely

From a microfilm: S. N 19564

336. LETTER TO A. L. NAIR

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 23, 1926

DEAR DR. NAIR,

I thank you for your letter of the 19th instant. For the reasons explained to you I am unable to stay in Bombay up to the 26th instant for the ceremony. I hope the function will be successful and that the original intention of the founders will be realized.

Yours sincerely

DR. A. L. NAIR
MESSRS N. POWELL & CO.
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S. N. 19565

337. LETTER TO M. R. HAVELIVALLA

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 23, 1926

MY DEAR FREIND,

I have your letter. I send you my autograph in your album. But I would like to tell you that as a rule I do not give my autograph where my young friends do not promise to wear khaddar and spin for at least half an hour per day in the name and for the sake of the poor people of India. I understand your difficulty about wearing khaddar. Have you the same difficulty about spinning also?

I am glad that Mr. Morris is the brother to the Secretary to Dr. Rabindranath Tagore. I congratulate you upon your vegetarianism and upon your reverence for Dr. Besant. She has worked for India as very few born Indians have done.

Yours sincerely,

M. R. HAVELIVALLA
GOPIPURA
SURAT

From a photostat: S. N. 19566

338. LETTER TO INDRA VIDYALANKAR

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 23, 1926

MY DEAR INDRA,

I have your letter. I am replying to you in English as you have chosen to write to me in English. But why in English? My promise of swaraj in 1921 was conditional.[1] The condition was absolute acceptance of non-violent non-co-operation by the people at large. At Viramgam, Bombay[2] and Chauri Chaura[3] these conditions were broken not by the masses but by live Congressmen. If I am silent about what is called the political aspect of the situation I am silent because through my silence I am preaching non-violence. I cannot say anything useful on the many controversial questions that are troubling the country today. And If I am harping upon the charkha in season and out of season again it is because the charkha to me represents non-violence in a concrete shape, for, non-violence is action in the correct sense of the term whereas violence is bad action or in action.[4] If people want swaraj through non-violence means they can attain it by complete exclusion of foreign cloth and through the charkha and all it means. During the year of grace 1921, I had the hope that we should achieve boycott of foreign cloth by a sudden and simultaneous manifestation of the charkha spirit on the part of the people. That was not to be. And now we have to build the charkha atmosphere among the people. I do not think it will be so long as you imagine before the charkha becomes universal. But even if it does, thinking non-violence I cannot think of any other instrument or activity.

I see you expect a public reply to your question. Do you really want a public reply? I am more anxious to convince you of the soundnes of my position than to discuss with others or in *Young India* the question raised by you.

Yours sincerely

SJT. INDRA VIDYALANKAR,
SARGODA

From a photostat: S. N. 19567

[1] *Vide* "Swaraj in One Year", 22-9-1920.
[2] *Vide* "A Deep Stain", 18-11-1921.
[3] *Vide* "Letters to Members of Working Committee", 8-2-1922.
[4] The source has: "violence is or bad action inaction".

339. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

May 23, 1926

Here is a letter from Santanam in reply to mine. I shall no longer strive with him but wish him every success in his struggle. His is a very good letter.

I saw your letter to Jamnalalji yesterday in Bombay. I hope you have already got rid of pleurisy. With proper care this is a complaint that can be brought under subjection without difficulty. Where do you think your tour should commence? If it is to be in the Southern Presidency and if you do not propose to come to Ahmedabad before commencing the tour, Jamnalalji told me he would join you wherever you want him to. If, however, you consider that the Southern Presidency should for the time being be left alone, some other province can be selected. The selection will then be made here. If it will be too late for your letter to reach here you will telegraph your intentions. In no case will you think of commencing the tour, if you have not got rid of your pleurisy entirely, because more travelling is likely to do some good. Travelling in the monsoon has its danger for a pleurisy patient.

I need not entertain you with a description of my talks with the Governor. You may know in one sentence that I began the talk and ended it with the charkha. And for the 2nd interview, like the good advertising agent I am, I took with me Mithubai's khaddar saris to demonstrate to the Governor and his wife the possibilities of Andhra khadi. The Governor listened to all I had to say about the spinning-wheel with great attention but, if you ask me how much he was impressed I cannot say.

I saw Mathuradas, Kaka, Devdas and Behram Khambhatta. My rapid wandering was worth while if only to see these precious petients. Devdas is all right and much healthier looking than he was while he was admitted to the Hospital. Kaka has made splendid progress but he must cover still more ground. Mathuradas is better than he was but he cannot be said to be out of wood entirely. Not that there is any danger imminent but he has to take extraordinary care of himself. Behram Khambhatta has some intestinal growth. You may not know him. He is one of the devoted, selfless and silent workers always deliberately putting himself in the background. And his wife is equally good, an incarnation of Sita.

If it will serve as any stimulation for you to become stronger I present you with the information that ten to one I shall not be going to Finland, for, Paul seems to have put his foot into it. Any way he is at sea and does no know how to manage me or my travelling. He offers to milk the she-goat, evidently thinking that it would be the buisness of my attendants to perform the ceremony from day to day. However the thing will be finally decided within the next fortnight at the most.

Yours,

From a photostat: S. N. 19568

340. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 23, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. I have a long letter at last from Hema Prabha Devi. It seems to me that she is living at Sodepur under most trying circumstances. She must not do it at the sacrifice of her health. If the climate there is malarial you must find out some other way of building the workshop than by putting Hema Prabha Devi there and making her the first victim. Your own body should also be kept up to the mark which Hema Prabha Devi thinks is not being done.

Nirmal Kumar has done well. I am writing to him. If you can get something from Lalgola it will be good help. I am told that Chhotalal has now left you. I do not think he will stop there long.

Yours,

From a microfilm: S. N. 19570

341. LETTER TO KONDIPARTY PANNIAH

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 23, 1926

DEAR PANNIAH,

I have your letter. You should not have sent your applications to me directly. It means a great deal of delay. However now that you have sent it, it will be dealt with in due course.

Where are you staying yourself? Are you now any longer connected with the Pinakini Ashram? If not, what are you doing? Who is to take charge of the weaving school? And how do you propose to teach in one year? What will you do after one year?

Yours sincerely

SJT. KONDIPARTY PANNIAH
C/O MADUM VENKAIAH CHETTY GARU
KURNOOL

From a microfilm: S. N. 19571

342. LETTER TO G. M. NALAVADE

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 23, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Here is my message in reply to your circular letter.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

SJT. G. M. NALAVADE
"SANGRAM" OFFICE
SHANIWAR PETH
POONA CITY

From a copy : S. N. 19573-R

343. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Sunday, May 23, 1926

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I got your letter. I have sent to Jamnalal a copy of your letter about the loan for khadi work promised by you. I was shocked by the Sabarmati agreement; I have still not been able to make anything of it. I fully understand the issue involved in the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity, but I am helpless. I do not yield to despair because I cannot give up my faith. Of one thing I am sure, that Hinduism cannot be saved in the way in which it is sought to save it today. But I have full faith in the truth of "*Nirbalke bal Ram*"[1] , and so live in complete peace of mind.

Yours

MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: C. W. 6126. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

344. LETTER TO HEMA PRABHA DAS GUPTA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Sunday, May 23, 1926

DEAR SISTER ,

Your letter this time made me very happy. You do not say anything about your pleasant or unpleasant experiences at the Ashram. I know that there is hard work at Sodepur, and I have written to Satis about that. On no account, however, should you stay there at the cost of your health. You should not draw a single pice from the amount kept in the bank. I do know that khadi work cannot be done without hardship voluntarily suffered, but such hardship should be within one's capacity. May God grant both of you peace and strength.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindu: G. N. 1647

[1] "Rama is the strength of the helpless", the first line of a Hindi devotional song by Surdas.

345. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Sunday [*May 23, 1926*][1]

BHAISHRI BEHRAMJI,

I have your letter. It was my duty to have gone to you. I have started reading Mrs. Eddy's book. I will certainly write to you after I have finished it. But meanwhile I would suggest to you that you should consult a doctor or a *vaid* for general advice and use ordinary medicines, and take the utmost care of your health. There is no sin in taking proper care of one's health, but it is a great sin to forsake one's dharma for the sake of one's body. We should treat the body as the field in which the *atman* strives and wins its liberation, and take every innocent measure to preserve it. Please write to me from time to time and keep me informed about your health. Convey my blessings to Tehminabehn.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA
275 HORNBY ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 4363. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

346. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Sunday, May 23, 1926

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Abbas Tyabji writes to me to remind you lest you forget about his accommodation when you go to Mussoorie. If you are still in Bombay, please call on him to offer your condolences[2]. His addres is as follows:

C/o M. B. Tyabji

French Road, Chowpatti.

[1] From the postmark
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Abbas Tyabji", 23-5-1926.

He has the light of knowledge in him. In reply to my telegram, he tells me that he was not at all shocked by the death.

The operation on Lalji took very little time, and seems to have been quit successful. Plesse get the final figure for the Deshbandhu Fund determined.

Yours

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 2865

347. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Sunday, May 23, 1926

CHI. DEVEDAS,

I have your letter, as also Girdhari's. I was really very happy that the operation on Lalji was over in a very short time. I shall expect a letter tomorrow giving more news about him. I am very glad that he is in the room next to yours. For one thing, we shall occupy less space in the hospital; there will be, moreover, less trouble for those people and the two of you feel cheered by being near each other. All this should please you. I have returned without anxiety on your account, but I have realized that, even after having completely recovered, you will have to take good care of yourself. There will beno danger for you provided you take the necessary precautions. I am sure I shall hear from you regularly. Send away Keshu to accompany Kusum and Dhiru on the 25th. But you may detain him if you still need him. Kusum and Dhiru may leave if they get some other escort or may stay on up to 31st. The school reopens on the 1st, at 7 a.m.; it will do if they are present at that time. Kanti and Rasik have arrived today.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19558

348. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

May 24, 1926

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I could never guess the reason you give me for cancelling your passage. But having known the reason, I don't regret the cancellation. Krishna having gone to Jawahar relieves you of all anxiety. I know that you will get from your chamber practice all you need and more.

I have not yet had your dictated letter. I can wait for it. All I can report to you about Mahabaleshwar is that I had pleasant three hours with the Governor. We talked mostly about the spinning-wheel and somewhat about the cattle of India. If there was anything more behind this interview, I did not fathom it. Nor did I try to.

Devdas expects to be discharged in a week's time and is likely to go to Mussoorie for convalescene.

There is nothing yet decided about Finland. The odds are that I am not going. I should know in a week's time.

Yours sincerey,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 19574

349. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

SABARMATI,
May 24, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your second letter. Thank you. Devdas is quite all right. He had his father's fashionable disease—appendicitis. He expects to be discharged in a few days.

Do please give me your suggestions for a solution of the H.M. problem. I must own I have despaired for the time being. Hakimji[1] never came here.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Hakim Ajmal Khan", 10-4-1926.

[PS.]

Nothing of importance at Mahabaleshwar. Spinning-wheel of course.

From the original: C. Vijayaraghavachariar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

350. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Tuesday [*May 25, 1926*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I got your two letter together today. Your second letter is rather disturbing, but such ups and down are nothing unusual and I am not wor-ried. It seems now that Shri Lalji and you will be discharged at the same time. Whatever that be, I should continue to get detailed news, shouldn't I? There was a telegram today about Finland, saying that the Geneva Committee have accepted my terms. Even then, pending a reply to my letter, I will not proceed on the assumption that I am going though now it does seem to me that I shall be going. Even if I go, it is best that you spend a few days with Jamnalalji in Mussoorie. I have already written about Keshu yesterday. [He] should bring along Kusum and Dhiru too. Ramdas is in Morvi today; and will reach Rajkot tomorrow. Bhansali's fast ended today at half past ten. He is so fit no one would believe that has been fasting for twenty-five days. He has lost sixteen pounds in weight which I think is not much.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 19493

351. LETTER TO MOOSHANKAR

ASHRAM,
May 26, 1926

BHAISHRI MOOLSHANKAR,

I have your letter.

Would you have anything further to say if the facts are as reported by the A.I.S.A. in their reply to you?

I shall write to Bhai Kotak, if necessary, after I have your

[1] The 12th day of Bhansali's fast fell on May 12, 1926; *vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 12-5-1926.

reply.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19575

352. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM,
Wednesday, May 26, 1926

CHI. DEVDAS,

I got your letter, and also Lalji's. Yesterday I dictated my letter in a hurry, and so one thing was left out. The faintness that you felt when you tried to stand up was not weakness, it was the result of your not having had the practice of standing and walking for some time. Perhaps you may not remember that, when Colonel Maddock permitted me to walk to the lavatory during daytime, he warned me that my legs might tremble and I might feel giddy, but told me not to be alarmed on that account. After you have walked once or twice with some support, you will get back the ability to walk. Hence I am not in the least wor-ried because of your having felt giddy when you tried to stand up. But I also see that your wound has not completely healed; this is a common enough experience in such operations. No doctor can understand all the facts about the condition of the patient's body, and, therefore, some complication always develops after an operation, but it can be easily cured. The only thing is that the period of your convalescence is becoming a little too long.I have now concluded that Lalji and you will be discharged at about the same time. This, I think, sould please you, though what you wanted was that you should get well but should have the privilege of staying on for Lalji's sake. It seems that you will not have that privilege. If,however, all our wishes were granted, would not the world perish? As against one good wish, based on regard for truth, entertained by one person, how many wicked wishes, based on disregard for truth, would there be entertained by others?

Yesterday I got a telegram from Paul, and there was second one today. He informs that he has collected Rs. 6,000 and hopes that I will not think it necessary to cancel the trip. I will wait for a reply to my letter, but it seems to me that we shall have to go. By not going, we may perhaps put Mr. Paul in an embarrassing position.

I was glad to read all that you write about Dr. Dalal's kindness. I was glad that Abbas Saheb went and saw you; the man's courage is

boundless. Keshu has stayed back, and is bound to be of some help to you.

It will do if he arrives here on the 29th.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 19552

353. QUARTERLY FIGURES

The All-India Spinners' Association has received from most provinces quarterly returns of production and sale of khadi between January and March 1926. I give the figures[1] below :

The Andhra figures give no indication of the extent of the work that is being done. In spite of several reminders full reports from that province are not available. The Karnatak figures also are largly incomplete. The figures[2] for comparison with the corresponding quarter of the last year are available in the case of the following provinces and it will be seen that all the provinces except Bombay show larger figures this year.

The higher figure for the Punjab sales last year is only apparent because the sales this year are given net while the figure of last year includes inter-sales between branches. Burma and Utkal sales show a slight decrease.

The figures are an under-statement for every province, more espe-cially for Andhra Desha. I once more urge the workers in every province to be prompt in their returns. If the All-India Spinners' Association is to become an efficient organization covering every village of India, it must have the disciplined and intelligent co-operation of all its workers.

Young India, 27-5-1926

354. ITS MEANING

On my return from Mahabaleshwar I was waylaid, though by previous appointment, by fellow non-co-operators. I had limited myself strictly to visiting patients during this unexpected visit to His Excellency the Acting Governor at Mahabaleshwar. And so before reaching Poona station I had arranged just to go to Prof. Trivedi's house to see my young friend Manu who among others had been to

[1] Not reproduced here
[2] *ibid.*

me at the Sassoon Hospital in Poona in 1924 an angel of mercy. It was during this visit that I had to divide my time between Manu and the non-co-operators. The latter had the lion's share of it. Manu disengaged me in a few minutes. I envied him as a patient. For though he has been laid up in bed for over six mon-ths, I found him quite cheerful and resigned. I had therefore no compunc-tion about leaving him for a chat with the non-co-operating friends.

"How can you go to the Governor and call yourself a non-co-operator?" was the question with which I was greeted.

"I knew what your ailment was, " said I. "I shall answer all your questions fully, but on condition that nothing of what I say is to be published by you. If I find it advisable I shall deal with the matter in the pages of *Young India*."

"Yes, we won't publish anything and shall be satisfied if you will answer our questions in *Young India*. Not that I have any doub about the propriety of your action," added the questioner, "but I represent a large number of non-co-operators whom you often confound by your unexpectted acts."

Well, then, let me have all your question and I shall endea- vour to answer them though I confess that it will be all a waste of time. For I feel that time is past for explanations and persuasion. Non-co-operators must instinctively know that I not likely to do anything contrary to our code. And if I do,—for I admit I am lible to err,—they must disown me and remain firm in their own convictions. They may have derived their non-co-operation from me but if they have assimilated it, their convictions must not depend upon mine. It must be independent of me and my weaknesses and errors. If I turn traitor, or to put it mildly, if I alter my opinion, they must be ready to denounce me and still abide by their own convictions. That is why I say that our conversation will be a waste of national time.

Convinced non-co-operators know their task. Let them fulfil it. But let me have your questions. "

It has been suggested in Bombay that you went to the Governor uninvited, in fact you forced yourself upon his attention. If so, was it not co-operation even without response? What could you have to do with the Governor, I wonder?"

My answer is that I am quite capable even of forcing myself upon the attention of my opponent when I have strength. I did so in South Africa. I sought interviews after inerviews with General Smuts

when I knew that I was ready for battle. I pleaded with him to avoid the untold hardships that the Indian settlers must suffer, if the great historic march[1] had to be undertaken. It is true that he in his haughtiness turned a deaf ear; but I lost nothing. I gained added strength by my humility. So would I do in India when we are strong enough to put up a real fight for freedom. Remember that ours is a non-violent struggle. It presupposes humility. It is a truthful struggle and consiousness of truth should give us firmness. We are not out to destroy men. We own no enemy. We have no ill-will against a single soul on earth. We mean to covert by our suffering. I do not despair of converting the hardest-hearted or the most selfish Englishman. Every opportunity of meeting him is therefore welcome to me.

Let me distinguish. Non-violent non-co-operation means renuncia-tion of the benefits of a system with which we non-co-operate. We therefore renounce the benefits of schools, courts, titles, legislatures and offices set up under the system. The most extensive and permanent part of our non-co-operation consists in the renunciation of foreign cloth which is the foundation for the vicious system that is crushing us to dust. It is possible to think of other items of non-co-operation. But owing to our weakness or want of ability, we have restricted ourselves to these items only. If then I go to any official for the purpose of seeking the benefits above-named, I co-operate. Whereas if I go to the meanest official for the purpose of converting him, say to khaddar, or weaning him from his service or persuading him to withdraw his children from Government schools, I fulfil my duty as a non-co-operator. I should fail if I did not go to him with that definite and direct purpose.

Now for the case in point. I went to the Acting Governor at his instance. He wrote to me not as Governor nor for any purpose connected with his office as Governor. He invited me to go to Mahabaleshwar to discuss with him agricultural matters. As I explained some time ago in the pages of *Navajivan*, I told him that I could not be identified with the Royal Commission in any way, that I was still confirmed in my views on non-co-operation and generally had no faith in Commisions. I added further that it would suit me to see him when he descened to the plains. His Excellency therefore wrote saying it would suit him to meet me in June. But susbequently he changed his

[1] On November 6, 1913, against the £3 tax; *vide* "Telegram to Minister of Interior", 7-11-1913.

mind and sent a message that it would suit him better if I could go to Mahabaleshwar. I had no hesitation in going there. We had two very pleasant and long talks. And you are entitled to guess (and that correctly) that our talk revolved round the charkha. That was the central theme. And I could not discuss agriculture without discussing the terrific cattle problem!

I have given but a brief summary of the pleasant conversation I had with the No-change friend. In parts I have amplified my answer in order to make it more intelligible to the general reader.

There were many other points discussed, of which I must mention one or two. I was asked to give my opinion on the Sabarmati pact. I refused to say anything for publication. I must not add to the existing bitterness into the controversy. I can say nothing that would bring the parties together. They are all my co-workers. They are all patriots. The quarrel is purely domestic. It behoves me as a humble servant of the country to be silent where speech is useless. I prefer therefore to wait and pray. I was told that I was misrepresented. I must own that I have studiously avoided reading the literature about the pact. I am used to misrepresentation all my life. It is the lot of every public worker. He has to have a tough hide. Life would be burdensome if every misrepresentation had to be answered and cleared. It is a rule of life with me never to explain misrepresen-tations except when the cause requires correction. This rule has saved much time and worry.

"But what should we do when all accept offices and what should we do at the forthcoming elections?" was the last question. My answer was:

When the acceeptance of office by all parties becomes a settled fact I presume those who have conscientious scruples will refrain from voting altogether. At the forthcoming elections, too, those who have conscientious objections will refrain. The others will naturally follow the Congress lead and vote as the Congress directs. I have given my definition of a Congressman already in these pages. Not every man who says, "I am a Congressman" is such, but only he who does the will of the Congress.

Young India, 27-5-1926

355. SPINNING AN ART

A Madras Inspectress of Education has pronounced sentence

against the spinning-wheel for Brahmin girls. This judgment of hers has given rise to criticism against the lady. If the charkha is good enough for non-Brahmin girls why not, it is argued, for Brahmin girls? The question is apposite when caste arrogance is being levelled to the ground. Moreover the Inspectress evidently does not know that the finest yarn is spun by Brahmin girls and that in many Brahmin families the tradition of spinning for the sacred thread is still kept up.

But a side question has arisen out of the criticism of the Inspectress. Is spinning an art? Is it not a humdrum monotonous process likely to weary the children? Well all the evidence hitherto collected goes to show that spinning is an elegant art and the process itself is extremely pleasant. No mechanical pull is enough to draw the various counts. And those who do spinning as an art know the pleasure they derive when the fingers and the eyes infallibly guide the required count. Art to be art must soothe. I reproduced over a year ago the testimony of Sir Prabhashankar Pattani to show how after the day's trying work he went to the charkha for soothing his nerves and giving him undisturbed sleep. I extract the following passage from the letter of a friend who found solace for her shattered nerves in spinning:

> When . . . .I hastened to my room and then in the dark struggled with an anguish which rent me from top to toe, I prayed and strove for some time and then turned to the spinning-wheel and found in it a magical comfort. The quiet regular motion of its rhythm immediately steadied me and the thought of its service brought me nearer to God.

This is not the solitary experience of one or two but many spinners. It is however no use saying that spinning will be pleasurable to all because it has been the joy of many. Painting is acknowledged to be an exquisite art. But it is not everybody who takes to it.

Young India, 27-5-1926

356. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI[1]

Thursday [May 27, 1926]

CHI. DEVDAS,

Once again I have been acting as a tyrant to you as if I could not tolerate anybody being healthy. I cannot write long letters to you because I do not get a single minute free.

I have been thinking whom I can send over to you. We may certainly like that that person should accompany you to the Himalayas, but have we any right to spend money in that manner? You should certainly go. I shall send someone to help you there. Leave the choice to me.

I see that Surendra cannot leave now. You may take Brijkishan with you if he agrees. You will certainly get some company during the journey when you start from there.

Your long letters seem too short to me.

I have not yet been able to decide about the trip to Europe. At present I am waiting for a letter or telegram from Rolland. Raja is of the view that if I go, I must take you with me. Would you like to go?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 2043

357. LETTER TO RAJARAM

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Thursday, May 27, 1926

BHAI RAJARAM,

I have your letter. Your son will require two years for the training which you want him to have, provided he is hard-working. In less time than that, one can learn the elementary principles of spinning and weaving, but experience has shown that this is not enough. If persons with inadequate practice settle in villages, they may come to feel disappointed. The monthly expenses will probably come to Rs. 15. If you wish to send Surendrarai, write either to me or the Manager so that we may arrange about his board and lodging before asking him

[1] This forms one of a series of letters to Devdas during his illness.

to come over. At present the Ashram is pretty full and it may, therefore, take some time before he can be admitted.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S. N. 12186

358. LETTER TO DEVA PRASAD SARVADHIKARY

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May, 28, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter. The deputation certainly did its part well and it now remains for us here to continue the good work done by you and your colleagues.

Yes, without Mr. Andrews' incessant work and undying faith nothing could have been done. At the present moment I am doing little more than watching and keeping in touch with all that is going on here and in South Africa.

My son wrote to me saying that he had the privilege of meeting you and he expressed his sorrow that you were unable to visit the the settlement[1] at Phoenix.

Yours sincerely,

SIR DEVA PRASAD SARVADHIKARY
20, SURI LANE,
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S. N. 11958 (a)

359. LETTER TO SYED RAZA ALI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 28, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I write this to thank you for the letter that you wrote to me from South Africa enclosing a copy of the Memorandum of your evidence. I congratulate you and your deputation upon the success that attained your efforts.

Without mentioning your name I made use of your tribute to Mr.

[1] Founded by Gandhiji in South Africa in 1904.

Paddison in my weekly notes in *Young India*.[1]

I hope you enjoyed your South African visit.

Yours sincerely,

HON. SYED RAZA ALI
AT INVERARM
SIMLA

From a microfilm: S. N. 11959

360. LETTER TO DR. NORMAN LEYS

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 28, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 26th ultimo forwarded through Mr. Vaze.[2] I thank you for that latter. I appreciate it for I know that it is only by a frank exchange of views that we come nearer one another. For me the word 'political' is inclusive. I do not divide different activities—political, social, religious, economical—into water-tight compartments. I look upon them all as one indivisible whole each running into the rest and affected by the rest. I also believe with you that our political freedon properly so called will depend upon our ability to solve many of our domestic problems such as the communal trouble. In other words, it will depend upon internal reforms. The outward will be merely therefore a symptom of the inward. I do not at all hold that this communal problem is insoluble. It seems to defy human effort for the time being. But I have the fullest faith in our ability finally to solve it. It may be of course that before we reach a solution there will be bloody fights between the two. In spite of all efforts sometimes they become as it were unavoidable.

I would however like to add a word of caution against thinking, if you did think, that these communal troubles are not due to our dependence upon the British rule. It is my conviction that rule is based upon the policy of 'divide and rule' which policy sometimes English officials have been frank enough to admit. If the Government chose, it can certainly contribute much to a speedy and permanent solution.

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 29-4-1926, sub-title, "The Good Samaritan".
[2] *Vide* "Letter to S. G. Vaze", 23-5-1926.

But if I mention this I do so not to excuse our inability to solve the problem without the help of the rulers, but I mention it to explain our difficulty.

Yours second point is too difficult for me to pronounce an opinion upon. I am not an attentive student of European politics or European history to be able to draw the distinction that you do between the European States where Roman Catholicism is predominant and where Protestantism is predominant. And, for the reason I would prefer to hold silence upon the third point which is equally intresting as the second. There is no doubt that mankind is affected largely by the way it looks upon God. So far as India is concered the vast majority think of God as the Monitor within each one of us. Even the illiterate masses know that God is only one, that He is all-pervading, and, therefore, is the witness of all our actions.

If you wish to elucidate further the two points of your letter which at present I understand but partialy and if you can find time, I shall read your elucidation with all the attention I am able to give to it. And I know that I shall profit by it.

Yours sincerey,

DR. NORMAN LEYS
BRAILSFORD
NEAR DERBY
ENGLAND

From a photostat: S. N. 12468

361. LETTER TO S. ARUNACHALAM

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 28, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is good that you are sending a small contribution to the All-India Spinners' Association. Since you are so weak there is certainly no occasion for you to spin.

The rules of the Satyagraha Ashram are published as appendix to Mr. Nateson's book of my speeches and writings.[1] A new edition will be prepared shortly.

[1] *Vide* "Draft Constitution for the Ashram", before 20-5-1915.

I think that unless you are a man of invicible faith in God and his healing mercy, you should not hesitate to receive the advice of physicians or take mild treatment.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. ARUNACHALAM
951, WEAVER STREET
ALANTHUR, ST. THOMAS MOUNT
MADRAS

From a microfilm: S. N. 19576

362. LETTER TO DR. MANEKBAI BAHADURJI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 28, 1926

I was pleased to receive your letter. I shall ask the Khadi Pratishthan to send you a charkha like mine. Where do you want it sent, Panchgani or Bombay? I shall write to the Pratishthan after hearing from you. And if you are in a hurry you will write yourself. The address of the Khadi Pratishthan is 170, Bow Bazar Street, Calcutta.

When you mention the fruit that will grow in your ground at Panchgani you make my mouth water. Of course during this visit of mine I was not able to contempalate all the beautiful views around Mahabaleshwar and Panchgani. That one can see only when one has leisure.

With love to you all,

Yours,

DR. MRS. BAHADURJI
OMRA HALL
PANCHGANI

From a microfilm: S. N. 19577

363. LETTER TO G. R. S. RAO

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 28, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

This is my message for your paper:

"I hope that this paper stands for the Spinning Wheel and all the two things[1] imply."

As the exchange list of *Young India* has grown out of all proportion and as it has only a limited circulation nowdays, it is difficult to send you *Young India* in exchange for your paper. Will you not secure a copy a *Young India* from some friends in Bangalore so that I may be saved so much expense.

You need not send your paper if only because the editing of *Young India* does not depend upon exchanges, for it is hardly a newspaper.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. R. S. RAO
EDITOR IN CHIEF
"PRAJA MITRA"
KAMALA VILAS
COTTONPET
BANGALORE

From a microfilm: S. N. 19578

364. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 28, 1926

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS,

I have your two letters. The long statements about Hardayal Babu followed me to Mahabaleshwar. It was then put among my jacket which I was not able even to look at in Mahabaleshwar. I reached these papers only yesterday but I have not yet been able to go through the statement which I shall do in a day or two. But I think I have told

[1] "Two things" stand for *Praja Mitra* ('friend of the people') and the Spinning Wheel (also 'friend of the people').

you that had I known that the complaint was about your father, I would not have sent the telegram without first referring the matter to you. I suppose you want my opinion for your satisfaction which I shall give gladly. You have sent me two copies of the same letter about yourself.

I am sending you Rs. 100 by insured post today. You will tell me if you need more. Mahadev was asking me only the other day whether you were likely to return in the early future. And I told him I thought that from all the accounts you had sent me about Guruji your place was more near him than me. And even now you will not leave him unless you yourself feel absolutely sure that he could be safely left. If, however, you can come it will be quite handy because at the present moment both Pyarelal and Devdas are away. But there is another question to be considered. What if I go at all it will be on the 1st of July that is the day the last steamer that can enable me to reach Finland in time leaves Bombay docks. The matter will be decided probably by the end of this week, certainly by the end of next. If I must go I propose to take Mahadev and Devdas with me. There will be a lot of work left behind to be done. But whether you would come down for that work and leave Guruji is a question I feel for separate consideration. In every case Guruji's health should have the paramount consideration with you.

Devdas is going on all right though he is still in the hospital. He is likely to be discharged inside of a week. Lalji has undergone an operation and occupies the same room as Devdas. These two patients are in Sir Harikisendas Hospital. Yeshwant Prasad also has been ailing. Several minor operations have been performed on him. He had guinea-worms.

I am sorry to hear that your sister has become widowed. Do please convey my sympathies to her. I am carefully going through all the cuttings that Guruji sends me. Some of them are valuable. I had never seen "Muhamed's treaty" before. I knew that his successors had entered into a treaty of that character with the Cristians and the Jews.

Yours sincerely

From a photostat : S. N. 19579

365. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 28, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your kind letter of the 14th April last. I am surprised at

your not receiving my cable which I sent you on the 16th February last giving you an affirmative reply. I have not assigned copyright to anybody as yet because I have been in correspondence with you and because you cabled to me that you were in correspondence with the Macmillans. If the English-speaking public outside India is sufficiently interested in these chapters I do not mind selling the copyright though I have never done it before. The idea of making anything out of my writings has been always repugnant to me. But your cable tempted me and I felt that there might be no harm in my getting money for the copyright and using it for the charkha propaganda or the uplift of the suppressed classes. And I felt that if the chapters were published by a house of known standing the message contained in the chapters might reach a wider public. You may please therefore continue your negotiations whether for copyright in America or for both America and Europe. I have several letters from German and other friends for copyright in their respective states but to all I have sent a reply saying that they should wait.

Meanwhile as I am receiving repeated applications for back numbers of *Young India* containing the chapters, I am arranging to issue the first part in book form so as to satisfy this demand.

Yours sincerely,

DR. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

THE COMMUNITY CHURCH

12 PARK AVENUE

NEW YORK CITY

(U.S.A.)

From a copy: S.N. 32220

366. LETTER TO SARDUL SINGH CAVEESAR

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 29, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have a small sum (Rs. 51) lying with me for some time for the Akalis. Will you please make what use you like for helping some deserving Akali?

Yours sincerely,

SIRDAR SARDUL SINGH CAVESSAR

LODGE LIBERTY

RAMGALI

LAHORE

From a microfilm: S. N. 19582

367. LETTER TO D. V. RAMA RAO

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 29, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I think that you should try to persuade your parents to let you go to Shantiniketan. But till you have obtained their permission it will be better for you to remain where you are and retain your peace. There should be satisfaction in your agreeing to the wishes of your parents however unpleasant that may be. Disobedience of parents' wishes is justified when obedience will be a moral breach. The same things applies to swimming. You should reason with your parents and get their permision to learn swimming. If they supervised your swimming probably they would not be afraid.

It is necessary to declare one's deceptions to those whom one has deceived. It is a cleansing process. The shock received by the parents by confession would be a momentary one. The reason for confession of sin is precisely the reason that requires us to rub and clean a dirty surface. What scrubbing and washing is for removing

dirt on a material body, confession is for removing dirt on the spiritual plane.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. D. V. RAMA RAO
DIGAMARTI HOUSE
BERHAMPORE
GANJAM DT.

From a microfilm: S. N. 19580

368. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 29, 1926

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS,

I have now carefully read your long letter. According to the facts stated by you, father cannot be held blamed in any shape or form. Do you want me to write to Hardayal Babu anything about this unfortunate matter? If you do, I shall gladly write to him.

It appears to me now that the Finland invitation will be cancelled. I have suggested so to Mr. K. T. Paul because of his own difficulties.[1] I shall hear from him next week.

Yours sincerely

SJT. KRISHNADAS
C/O S. C. GUHA
DARBHANGA

From a photostat: S. N. 19581

369. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 29, 1926

I am so delighted that you are in "excellent health". Shankerlal must have written to you. But, in any case, I expect you to report yourself at the Ashram on the 15th June. Whilst you are touring certainly leave Lakshmi here.

Chhotalal is just now travelling here, there and everywhere. He

[1] *Vide* "Letter to K. T. Paul", 23-5-1926.

has got the blues. He went to Khadi Pratishthan and passed a few days with Satis Babu. He is now in Wardha. I suggested that he should stay with you for some months and help you in your work. He was not inclined to do so because he said he would gladly render personal service if you need it but otherwise he did not know that he will feel comfortable. Now, however, he writes asking me if you will have him. He still harps on personal services. But whatever he does, whether he helpes you in the khadi work or whether he becomes your cook, waiter and sanitary attendant or whether he weaves your khadi, I suggest your having him on his terms. And if you find him moody you may ask me to withdraw him. If he wishes to tour with you let him do that. But you know him best. Are you prepared to have him? Or will you rather discuss the thing when you are here?

Your curse on the Finland visit is likely to bear fruit; for, a letter I have written to K. T. Paul seems to have put him in a fix. I have told him that he must look upon this proposed visit with complete detachment.[1] But it appears to me that he has prompted the invitation and that the World Committee of the Y. M. C. A. is a passive instrument in his hands. However, I shall know my fate inside of a week now.

We are boiling here at the present moment but I hope you will send us rain before you come.

Yours,

From a photostat: S. N. 19586

370. DRAFT HOUSING SCHEME FOR MILL-WORKERS[2]

The additional sums that may be received, if the demand for increase in wages is conceded, should be utilized for one year to implement a housing scheme for workers. Under this scheme, it is intended to build houses for workers, which would meet the health requirements of the workers, and provide them necessary amenities and yet not be beyond the means of the ordinary working man.

In every locality with houses built under this scheme, every provision will be made to meet the common needs of the workers living

[1] *Vide* "Letter to K. T. Paul", 23-5-1926.

[2] The scheme was formulated to suggest the right manner of utilizing the additional wages which the workers of Ahmedabad might get if the 15 percent cut effected in 1923 was restored. Only the chief clauses of the scheme were reproduced in the source.

there and provide them other facilities. These will include, funds permitting, schools, gardens, halls with facilities for playing games, libraries, shops and dispensaries.

A committee consisting of representative of the Labour Union and the the Millowners' Association—the former being in a majority—will implement this scheme in accordance with the conditions of the Trust, will look after the properties and manage the fund. The management of the properties will be with the Labour Union. All workers employed in the mills during the current year and entitled to an increase in their wages will be regarded as joint owners of the funds of the Trust and the property purchased with that money. The share of each worker in the property will be in proportion to his contrbution to the fund. Each such worker who is a joint owner of the property will be given a share certificate. Shareholders will not be permitted to sell or mortgage their shares to any person or body other than the Trust except in accordance with the conditions to be laid down by the Trust. Houses will be allotted to workers on the results of lots drawn for the purpose. The claims of shareholders will receive priority. The decision to implement this scheme will be taken after obtaining in writing the votes of workers in every department and ascertaining whether there is a two-thirds majority in favour of it.

If it is decided to utilize the increased quantum of wages in this manner, no demand for a further increase in wages will be made for a period of one year thereafter, and if, in violation of this condition, any workers go on strike for increase in wages, such workers will not be entitled to take benefit of this scheme for a period to be decided by the Trustees.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 30-5-1926

371. NOTES

PRAGJI DESAI

Shri Pragati Khandubhai Desai, who was sentenced to two years' imprisonment for his articles in *Navayuga*, was released from Sabarmati Jail on the 22nd of this month. Though in the beginning

he was much harassed by the authorities, he passed the later part of his term, specially after he had been transferred to Karachi, in great peace and comfort, with the result that he is now in excellent health. While in jail, he also got plenty of time to read and think quietly. At present, he has gone to Surat to meet his wife, and also Shri Kalyanji and other co-workers to consult them on what work he should take up now.

REQUEST FROM EAST AFRICA

A young man from Nairobi writes:[1]

I congratulate this team of young men. If their monthly is being started for the sole purpose of public service, I wish it all success. I welcome his remark about people who wear khadi. The correspondent understands my love for khadi, but not the reasoning which inspires this love. I, therefore, welcome this opportunity to explain that reasoning. He may be surprised to learn that I do not recommend khadi for improving the conditions of Indians in East Afria; even if I did, out of blind attachment for khadi, I would have to use the word 'khadi' in an absolutely diffrent and a much wider sense. But I have no such attachment and, therefore, I can safely say that khadi is almost useless in fighting the hardships of our people in East Africa. I would not advise people living near the North Pole to use the spinning wheel. If our countrymen in East Africa occasion-ally used khadi, that would certainly be a good thing, for they would show thereby their appreciation of the circumstances in India. But there is no doubt that, for improving their own lot, what they need to do is to become united. That would be only the first step; and it would not be enough. Indians there are accused of being dirty, and there is a good measure of truth in the charge. They must give up their dirty habits. There is some truth in the other charge too, that they are miserely. Miserliness here means excessive economy in our way of living. In a foreign country we cannot afford to have the same room to serve us as a shop, as living room and as kitchen. There we earn more and it is necessary, therefore, to adopt a higher standard of living. If we do not, we may be justly charged with unfair competition. The other tradesmen will certainly not like one who, in disregard of accepted buisness standards, lives in extreme want and brings down the market prices. We should not give any such cause for complaint and jealousy.

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had requested Gandhiji for a message for a monthly which the association of Indian youths there wished to start.

The Indians in East Afria should also take suitable measures to spread education in their midst. It is beyond doubt that, if their children grow up without education, they would not be able to compete with the British population there. If, moreover, there is any truth in what I have heard, that the Indians in East Africa, instead of emulating the virtues of the British, have freely taken to their vices, such as drinking and immorality, they would do well to keep aloof from these. Finally, in order to live there with self-respect they should cultivate strength for satyagraha, that is, for the utmost suffering in the cause of public welfare. Provided they do this, they would deserve little blame for not wearing khadi. Without wearing khadi, they will have done their duty of preserving their self-respect.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-5-1926

372. NON-CO-OPERATION AND EDUCATION[1]

A reader of *Navajivan* writes as follows:[2]

Personally, I have not become lukewarm in the slightest degree about any aspect of non-co-operation. My views about education remain what they were in 1920-21, and could I but persuade the students or their guardians, not a single student would remain in the Government schools. If I do not discuss this matter in the *Navajivan* as frequently as I used to do, it is because the time is past for delivering speeches or writing articles in order to get the schools vacated. What we have to do now is to strentgthen the schools which have held on unflinchingly to the principles of non-co-operation. It pains me to have to admit that, unlike the khadi movement, that of national education is not showing progress. Indeed, as far as the number of schools and that of students are concerned, the movement is on the ebb. I do not hesitate to comment on this fact when the

[1] *Vide* also "National Education", 3-6-1926

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had asked Gandhiji what truth there was in the general impression that he had become less rigid in his views about non-co-operation in the field of education, and whether, in view of the slackening of public interest in national education, it would not be wise to give up policy of non-co-operation in this field and make the best use of academic talent in Gujarat by co-operating with the Government in the new university which it proposed to establish.

occasion demands, but I see no need to do that every day. The fact of the ebb does not make me lose heart about the future. If we do not give up faith, this ebb is bound to be followed by a full tide. I am quite confident that, if the schools which have held fast to non-co-operation continue to do so sincerely and do not compromise in regard to any of the basic principles of non-co-operation, the results will be good. I know that the Proprietary High School is in serious difficulty. Some of the teachers and a good many students have left it. But why should that matter? We have to carry on the work of non-co-operation neither in a spirit of impulsive imitation nor as a "policy" or useful expedient. Those who have remained faithful to non-co-operation rely on their own strength and have confidence in themselves. Quite possibly they may yet have to pass through trying times. If they have to, I hope that like gold which, when heated, shines brighter still, the non-co-operators will come out brighter from the test. Those alone will be true non-co-operators who hold out till the end. Whether there is only one such non-co-operator or there are many, it is he or they who will win swaraj for the country. What Sardar Sardul Singh said recently in a speech in the Punjab is true. There can be no co-operation between a tiger and a lamb. There can be real co-operation only between equals. In the existing circumstances, to describe any association between the Government and the people as co-operation is a misuse of the word "co-operation" When we are strong enough to get our terms accepted, co-operation will follow as a matter of course and that will be real co-operation.

But the fact that misunderstandings about non-co-operation continue to prevail indicates that we still do not know the real nature of the movement. Our non-co-operation is not satanic or violent, uncivil or malicious. In peaceful non-co-operation, there is no room for contempt for anyone. Non-co-operation will in no way be discredited if Shri Anandashanker's[1] knowledge and ability are utilized for the benefit of the Vidyapith. We have not co-operated with the Government in any way by making him Chairman of the Commission for the Vidyapith. On the contrary, the latter has not only honoured itself by inviting him to be the Chairman, but has demonstrated the true nature of non-co-operation, for non-violent non-co-operation bears no ill-will towards individuals. We may certainly take advantage of the virtue even of a Viceroy as a human being, provided that in doing so

[1] A. B. Dhruva, Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Benares Hindu University

we do not avail ourselves of his official position; if we refuse to take such advantage, we would show ourselves stupid non-co-operators.

In running an institution like the Vidyapith, we are not wasting public money but are putting it to quite good use. We are not here looking at the matter from the point of view of those who look upon non-co-operation as sin. Those who contributed money for the Vidyapith believe in the principles of non-co-operation. Their money is not wasted if it is used for carrying on this great experiment in the field of education; it is true, of course, that as the numbers diminish, the organizers, the teachers and the students should show correspondinlgy greater strength of character. Only then will public money have been well used. If the university to be established by the Government draws away our teachers, I would conclude that they did not have sincere faith in non-co-operation. The establishment of that university should have the effect of increasing our devotion to duty. It may well be attractive from the point of view of money and prestige, but I know it will not lead us to swaraj. Here, on the other hand, the teachers may have to put up with poverty and ridicule, but I cannot give up my faith that through it we are advancing step by step towards our goal of swaraj.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-5-1926

373. THE SPINNING-WHEEL IN GUJARAT

The reader will find elsewhere in this issue some information collected by Shri Lakshmidas concerning the progress of spinning in Gujarat. We can see from it that even in big cities like Ahmedabad and Nadiad spinning has been adotped only by a few isolated individuals. We must admit that it has a very limited field, but we can see that for those women who do spinning it is the only work they can take up. No effort is made to induce a woman to take up spinning if she can earn more through some other work. The spinning-wheel has a place in our life which nothing else can fill. It has been conceived only for those people who have no other honest means of livelihood, but in a vast and thickly populated country like India spinning is the only work which crores can take up. If people can be found to ply it for money even in cities like Ahmedabad and Nadiad, we can easily imagine how useful it can prove in the villages. If we do not hear the sweet music of

this *annapurna*, the spinning-wheel, in the homes of the poor, it is for lack of sufficient number of dedicated, self-sacrificing and intelligent workers.

There is, of course, the other equally strong reason for this state of affairs, namely, that very little khadi is used in Gujarat. It will come to be universally used, like wheat and ghee, and all the khadi produced will be sold out, when national consciousness has fully developed in us. We have not yet entered the homes of the poor in Gujarat, have not qualified ourselves nor do we feel the desire to do so. When we really feel a new life in us, large numbers of young men will come forward to go into villages and serve the people, and they will take pride in living on the modest return they will get from such service.

[From Guajarati]

Navajivan, 30-5-1926

374. LETTER TO S. G. VAZE

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 30, 1926

MY DEAR VAZE,

I have your circular letter about the Society's publications. I have just heard that Sastri is there. But as the matter contained in my letter to him is urgent lest he might not be there I send you herewith a copy. And if my offer is at all considered possible of acceptance you will be at liberty yourself to come and take up your abode in the Ashram and bring with you as many as you like and edit the paper from the Ashram till the press is re-established in Poona.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S. N. 10912

375. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 30, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

As I did not know your whereabouts, being still unrepentant in spite of your rebuke about my neglect of newspaper reading, I wrote to Devadhar expressing my distress over the terrible fire which has reduced to ashes the press owned by the Soceity. I have therein offered to render such service as I am capable of in connection with your publications. I have now before me a circular letter from Vaze asking me to announce the fact that, till new arrangements are made, *The Servant of India* and the *Dnyan Prakash* cannot be published.

I understand you are already in Poona. Though I have not consulted Swami, I feel certain that we could print for you*The Servant of India* here without much difficulty. Do please make use of this humble offer if it is practicable. Its acceptance, I need hardly assure you, will give me the greatest pleasure. For, though technically I am not one of you, I have ever regarded myself as one of you in spirit and that in spite of fundamental difference between you and myself on many matters of importance to the country.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S. N. 10913

376. LETTER TO K. T. PAUL[1]

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 30, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Mr. Andrews has been with me for the last three days. He has read the whole of the correspondence between us and we have both come to the conclusion that the invitation should be finally accepted which I do hereby though not without a great deal of hesitation and reluctance. The hesitation and reluctance proceed from my diffidence. I did not know that it is worth while undergoing all the

[1] This letter was dictaed at 3 p.m. but not sent. According to the secretary's note, Gandhiji "revised his decision after praying in solitude" For Gandhiji's final reply, *vide*" Telegram to K. T. Paul", 31-5-1926.

expense of taking me and my companions to Finland. But it is not given to man to know God's purpose. And I simply derive satisfaction from the knowledge that I have in no way forced the pace or even wanted to go to Finland. You will now make what arrangements you like.

I see you will be taking return passages, and you contemplate the same between London and Helsingfors. I must, however, say that if I receive invitations to go to other places in Europe, I want to hold myself free to accept them. In that event, it might not be advisable to take a return passage from London to Helsingfors. I am bound in any case to go to Geneva to see M. Romain Rolland. My return therefore may not be absolutely by the same route in Europe.

So far as the passport is concerned you will please bear this in mind and not accept any conditions as to the time or places I might visit.

You will keep me informed from time to time as to what progress you are making. Of course, I should be delighted if you could, instead of going by the 15th June, go with me by the boat that leaves on the 1st of July.

I do not think that there can be any difficulty about procuring goat's milk in Europe. Moreover it can be condensed, evaportated or sterilized. Evaporated milk is undoubtedly the best to keep. It is absolutely reduced to powder.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S. N. 11352

377. LETTER TO K. T. PAUL[1]

May 30, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Mr. Andrews has been here for the last three days. He also has read your letter and the rest of the correspondence between us. After deep and prayerful consideration we have both come to the conclusion that the invitation should be cancelled or that I should decide not to go to Finland. It seems to me that the invitation is in substance from you and from the World's Committee only in form.

[1] This letter, dictated at 4 p.m., bears the entry, "Not send/held over."

And yet if I went, I will be said to be going in response not to your invitation but to that of the World Committee. I feel that it would be a wrong thing for both you *and* me or at any rate for me. I feel that if it is the World Committee that invites me then, it is that Committee which should bear the financial burden. Whereas in this case the financial burden has to be borne by you. It therefore appears to amount to a forcing of the position. I therefore strongly advise you to forget the invitation, and drop the matter altogether. I would ask you therefore to treat this matter as closed unless you find that by my not going you will be in any way compromised or embarrassed. If you are in any way embarrassed or compromised I shall gladly reconsider the position. But if it has to be reconsidered and if it is possible for you to move out will it not be better for you to come down to the Ashram so that we might thrash out the whole matter.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S. N. 11353

378. LETTER TO A. A. PAUL

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 30, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter enclosing copy of a letter from China. I think I have already told you that if no local circumstances prevent me, I would be prepared to visit China next year in accordance with the desire of the Chinese friends.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S. N. 11372

379. LETTER TO A. I. KAJEE

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 30, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 24th April last with all the enclosures mentioned therein. I have also your cable just received. I have had long talks with Mr. Andrews who is, even as I am writing this here at the Ashram, living with me. The victory is great but much work still

remains to be done, in fact more than has been done already, because, the work hitherto done was one of necessary destruction; the work of construction must now begin.

You have raised three points in your cable. So far as I can see there will be no direct participation by the Congress in the Round Table Conference. But the Congress must have a hearing. The Conference itself, I imagine, will be between the representatives of the two Governments. But Mr. Andrews and others are watching carefully and whatever can be done will certainly be done. If any step has to be taken on your side, you will be duly advised.

It is a very good idea to hold the annual Congress in Johannesburg. Your resolutions must concentrate on fundamental points to be dealt with by the Conference and should be plain. Your resolutions should be moderate, firm, brief, telling and to the point.

After the Colour Bar Bill I have expressed myself in the strongest terms. All parties have also taken action. Mr. Andrews has seen the Viceroy but I very much fear that the Bill itself will receive the Royal assent. What will happen is that at least for the time being it will not be applied to Indian settlers and may never be applied at any time if we are strong, united and moderate.

Yours sincerely,

A. I. KAJEE, ESQ.
HON. GENERAL SECRETARY
SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN CONGRESS
175, GREY STREET
DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA

From a microfilm : S. N. 11960

380. LETTER TO MAHADEO V. PANDLORKAR

May 30, 1926

So far as I know *Jiwatma* is to *Paramatma* what a drop is to the ocean. And even as the properties of a drop are identical with those of the ocean, the properties of *Jiwatma* are identical with those of *Paramatma*.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S. N. 19584

381. LETTER TO C. LAKSHMI NARASIMHAN

[*May 30, 1926*][1]

In my opinion eggs cannot be classed as a vegetarian diet. But there is certainly not the same *himsa* in taking eggs as in taking meat.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S. N. 19585

382. LETTER TO V. M. TARKUNDE

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 30, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I quite agree with you there would be always parties so long as there are differences in viewpoints and I also agree with you that [there should be] no jealousies and no mutual recrimination but that each should tolerate the rest.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. V. M. TARKUNDE
SASVAD
POONA DT.

From a microfilm : S. N. 19583

383. LETTER TO TEHMINA KHAMBHATTA

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Sunday, [*May 30, 1926*][2]

DEAR SISTERS,

I have your letter. You are making too much of my having climbed three flights of stairs to see you. If we do not do this for one another, we might as well have not lived. I should very much like to bring peace of mind to Behramji, if any words of mine can give it. Happiness and suffering are inescapable in this life. We prove our

[1] The date is noted on the letter (S. N. 19585) dated 9-5-1926 from the addressee.

[2] Date inferred from the reference to Mrs. Eddy's book and to the illness of the addressee's husband. *Vide* "Letter to Behramji Khambhatta", 23-5-1926.

humanity only by enduring our lot in patience. I shall certainly write and give my opinion after I have read Mrs. Eddy's book. But I strongly urge Behramji not to stop using needful medicines meanwhile.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 4364. Courtesy : Tehmina Khambhatta

384. LETTER TO HARILAL

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Sunday, May 30, 1926

BHAI HARILAL,

It is certainly not possible to reply to your letter through *Navajivan*. I am sure that the educational and other reforms which you advocate will not come about at the present time. All of them may be indications of an attitude of tolerance, but they cannot create such an attitude. At present it will be more than enough if though going our separate ways, we live in peace with each other. I cannot think just now how inter-marriages will ever become possible. How can we have a family in which one member is a vegetarian and another a non-vegetarian? In which tradition will the children of such a couple be brought up? Problem alliances of this kind will raise many other issues besides these. Any attempt at this time to persuade people to act upon your suggestions will furnish one more ground for opposition or make the achievement of political unity impossible. How unwise it is to imagine a connection between political unity and other issues where none exists!

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S. N. 19588

385. TELEGRAM TO K. T. PAUL

May 31, 1926

PAUL
THOTTAM
SALEM

YOUR LETTER MAKES CLEAR INVITATION THOUGH FORMALLY FROM

COMMITTEE REALLY FROM YOU. THINK IT WRONG LET WORLD KNOW INVITATION FROM COMMITTEE. STRONGLY SUGGESTDROPPING VISIT. AM PREPARED RECONSIDER DECISION IF LIKELY EMBAR- RASS OR COMPROMISE YOU. IF RECONSIDERATION DESIRED SUGGEST YOUR COMING SABARMATI IF AT ALL POSSIBLE FOR FULL DISCUSSION.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S. N. 11354

386. LETTER TO WILHELM WARTENBERG

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 31, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I fully appreciate your struggle. But I have no doubt that if the humiliations you may be suffering purify you, they may to that extent and only to that extent benefit your fellows. My non-resistance is activized resistance in a different plane. Non-resistance to evil does not mean absence of any resistance whatsoever but it means not resisting[1] evil with evil but with good. Resistance, therefore, is transferred to a higher and absolutely effective plane.

Capitalism, therefore, is to be resisted not with the ways open[2] to capitalism but with absolutely new weapons. If only employees will realize the power within them, they will not, as they do today, merely change the form but they will radically change the substance. And for this desirable reform the power comes from within. One does not need to wait till the rest have made the commencement. One persom making the beginning will in the end be enough to destroy the system. But I am free to confess that in the intervening period, one may have to put up with estrangement and much worse, which, however, is the lot of almost every reformer.

Yours sincerely,

WILHELM WARTENBERG, ESQ.
HAMBURG 23
BITTERSTR 134 II
GERMANY

From a photostat: S. N. 12471

[1] The source has “resistance”.
[2] The source has “opened”.

387. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
Thursday [Before *June 1,1926*][1]

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your postcard. I never got Manilal's letter. I do not know to what address you forwarded it. Do come over here when your khadi work there is over. Since you have given your address as C/o Post-Office I have addressed the letter accordingly. It is likely that I may go to Finland. If I go, I will have to start on July 1. I am thinking of taking Mahadev and Devdas with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

388. LETTER TO DINSHA MANCHERJI MUNSHI

ASHRAM,
June 1, 1926

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

It is not as easy as you suppose to come across a right guru[2] . I am on the look out for such a perfect being. I would not find him without undertaking rigorous penance and without myself getting nearer to perfection. A person in search of a guru is vigilant and in the process acquires merit. So I go along unperturbed. It is by God's grace that one is blessed with a guru. Therefore, I shall get a guru at the time and place that I come to deserve one. In the meanwhile I always pay my obeisance to the guru I am yet to see.

Vandemataran from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S. N. 19913

[1] From the reference to the proposed visit to Finland; *vide* footnote to the following item. Gandhiji was invited in this year to address the Young Men's Christian Association at Finland.

[2] Preceptor

389. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL A. GANDHI

ASHRAM,
June 1, 1926

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I have your letter. It reached me late because Krishnalal is ill. Noted about the weaving school. Where do you propose to start it? How much will it cost? I shall think about a programme for the next year. In connection with the temple do you presume that the *Antyajas* can never refuse to serve Brahmins or the [other] higher castes, i.e., cannot go on a strike? In the present case you gave them the right advice. They have not yet acquired the strength to strike work; they are not yet pure enough to offer satyagraha. But, may be, some day they will have to do it. Please keep in touch with the temple and take interest in its progress.

What happened to Umiya[1] ? Where is she? It looks as if Devdas and his companion Lalji would go only to Mussoorie.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S. N. 19914

[1] Addressee's daughter

390. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
Tuesday [*June 1, 1926*][1]

CHI. RAMDAS,

Manilal has given me all the information about you. It is his impression that you have been doing excellent work. I hope you are keeping quite fit. Do not be lazy and do not forget to write to me. The visit to Finland may be taken to be as good as cancelled. When do you intend to come over here?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

391. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

THE ASHRAM, SABARATI
June 2, 1926

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

I have your letter[2] . I am disinclined even to write as much as I have about the Pact[3] . You won't find me writing or doing anything further. I have no desire whatsover to intrevene except to bring about

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's Finland tour being "as good as cancelled", letters written by Gandhiji on June 3, 1926, state that his chances of going to Finland are "99 to 1". The tour was finally cancelled on June 6. The letter was obviously written on a Tuesday prior to this date, i.e., on June 1.

[2] Dated 28-5-1926, wherein he wrote: ". . .What makes me write this letter to you is a remark which you are reported to have made in your interview, asking people to support Congress candidates, presumably as against their rivals. This, you will allow me to say, is unjust and unfair to many Responsivists. You know that we Responsivists have beeen all along Congressmen . . . Any word proceeding from your lips, calculated to influence the voter, are likely to cause grave harm and deflect the natural course of the next elections.

". . . If the two wings in the Congress must fight, as seems to be in evitable. . . let us decide to make that fight as clean and decent as we can. Don't you think that, from this point of view, any remarks of yours of the nature reported in today's papers, and calculated to influence the opinion of the voter, are undesirable? . . . If you must step into the contest at all, please do so only as a peacemaker and not as a partisan. . ." (S. N. 11314)

[3] The Sabarmati Pact between the Swarajists and the Responsive Co-operationists; *vide* Appendix "The Sabarmati Pact", April and May, 1926.

peace. The whole of this quarrel is so painful to me.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S. N. 11317

392. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 2, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and wire[1] . I have now discovered the "Nortan Conversation". Devdas not being here there was some delay. I am now sending it by registered post.

I am also asking the manager, *Young India* Office, to do the needful. Back numbers are difficult to supply. Because of the autobiography they are almost exhausted but I am having the first part published in book-form. If, therefore, back numbers are missing, I am afraid you will have to wait for some time. I don't know what the real position is at the press.

The Pact[2] and the dissolution are things of the past. Let the dead past bury itself. In any event, I do not worry myself about it.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR
FAIRY FALLS VIEW
KODAIKANAL OBSERVATORY

From a photostat: S. N. 12051

393. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Wednesday, June 2, 1926

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL,

I have your letter. As soon as I came out after my bath I learnt that you had come and gone. You did well in not waiting for long. I am glad that Moti likes to stay with you only and neither this place nor

[1] Dated 11-5-1926
[2] *Vide* Appendix "The Sabarmati Pact", April and May, 1926.

any other would suit her. But that is only on one condition, namely, since Moti has ceased to be Moti and become Sukanya, she should become industrious and write letters like pearls. She has already consented to do this. Have you again started on a course of injections? You should completely recoup your health; that is my constant prayer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 12128

394. ALL-INDIA COW-PROTECTION ASSOCIATION

The Secretary acknowledges further receipt of yarn as under:

MEMBERS' SUBSCRIPTIONS[1]

Nos.4, 6, 8, 9, 32, and 33 have advanced their totals to 22,000, 24,000, 12,400, 11,000, 24,000, and 24,000 yards respectively.

DONATIONS[2]

Cash subscriptions and donations amount to Rs. 6, 100-15-0 whereas proceeds of the sale of yarn subscriptions and donations amount to Rs. 26-6-6. Those who send in hand-spun yarn as their donations will please not that if they will put more attention and skill into their work for the same amount of labour spent they will perhaps double the value of their subscriptions. The yarn received is very indifferently spun. Some of it is really not capable of bearing any price in the market because it cannot be woven into khadi. It can only be used for ropes or at best for carpets. And yarn so indifferently spun fetches only a nominal price. Therefore those who have been sending their donations or subscriptions in yarn for the All-India Cow Protection Association will please bear in mind that any indifference in spinning means so much less for the cow.

Young India, 3-6-1926

[1] not reproduced here
[2] *ibid.*

395. THE BAR SINISTER

Lord Birkenhead has spoken on the Colour Bar Bill of South Africa and he has blessed it. I hold to my opinion that as a piece of racial legis-lation it is worse than the Class Areas Reservation Bill which awaits discussion at the forthcoming Conference. It may not be put into operati-on against Asiatics for the time being or at all. It may not be enforced ha-rshly against the Native population. But the objection against that mea-sure is based upon a fundamental principle and upon the vast possibilities of mischief it contains. It is no wonder, therefore, that the Indian settlers are agitated and that Mr. Andrews has spoken strongly upon it. The settlers must continue their agitation against the Bill with vigour and prepare their case for presentation to the Conference. No presentation can avoid reference to the Colour Bar Bill. For the one reflects the policy of the other. The Colour Bar Bill is an indication of the designs of the Union Government in respect of Natives and Indian settlers. And the Class Areas Reservation Bill must be examined in the light of the Government policy on the Colour Bar Bill. The postponement of the former does not mean any change of policy. It may well mean only postponement of the agony. It is therefore necessary for all who are interested in this thorny question not to relax vigilance. What has been done hitherto was work of destruction. The more difficult work of construction has now begun. Much will depend upon the attitude of the Government of India. They control the situation if the settlers are weak. When the latter are strong they can mould their own destiny.

But I am sorry to note that the Hon. Syed Raza Ali considers that there should be no protest in India against the Colour Bar Bill. Though he commences his statement by saying that it is not a legislative measure against Indians, 'he is forced to admit that the Union Government will under the Bill have the power to extend such prohibition to our people if it deems it necessary'. Why is he then surprised at Mr. Andrews' opposition? The Syed Saheb should also know that the Indian settlers in South Africa are much agitated over the Bill. In a cable just received, the Secretary of the South African Indian Congress says: 'Trust strong action taken by you on Colour Bar Bill which has not yet received the Royal assent.' Mr. Andrews is bound to

object to this inhuman legislation which is principally aimed at Natives of South Africa, if he may be expected to raise his voice on behalf of us Indains. He has merged himself in us as a citizen of the world, not for any special virtues of our own. But the reason for his intervention is not the point at issue. The point at issue raised by the Syed Saheb is whether we here should oppose the Bill or not. Well, we have always opposed it. The settlers have always opposed it. And there is no burden on us, now that the Conference is agreed upon not to oppose the Bill. There was—could be—no tacit understanding not to oppose it. We may distinguish as we have distinguished between the two measures. The Colour Bar Bill is not so deadly in its *effect* against us as the Class Areas Reservation Bill. And therefore it was that greater stress was put upon the latter by the Indian deputation and the public. But the opposition to the former cannot be abated because the latter has been postponed.

Nor are the honesty and good intentions of General Hertzok relevant to the discussion. General Hertzog is not the autocrat of South Africa. He is no permanent head. He may find himself tomorrow in the same place[1] that General Smuts occupies today. It is only the written undertaking of the Government that can be taken into account, though we have found to our cost that even written undertakings may be thrown on the scrapheap when occasion requires the performance. The coming Conference cannot be endangered because we oppose a measure which it is our duty to oppose. In order to ensure a peaceful atmosphere at the Conference all that is necessary is for us not to impute motives, not to exaggerate and not to use harsh language in discussing subjects, however painful they may be. To go beyond is to surrender the right of free and just criticism and judgment. To do so would be to pay a price out of all proportion to the result sought to be achieved.

Young India, 3-6-1926

396. NATIONAL EDUCATION[2]

A Gujarati correspondent has raised certain questions about

[1] Among the opposition
[2] *Vide* also "Non-co-operation and Education", 30-5-1926.

national education. Some of them are summarized below:

> Since some of the staunchest supporters of non-co-operation have lost faith in it and since the numbers attending national institutions are dwindling, what is the use of holding on to these tottering schools and colleges and wasting good money after bad institutions?

My believing eye detects a flaw in this argument. My faith in non-co-operation remaining as staunch as ever, I can find it possible to reconcile myself to the existing national institutions even though the attendance may be reduced to half a dozen. For the half a dozen will be the makers of swaraj whenever it comes. When virgins are required to perform certain sacred ceremonies, others are not accepted as substitute if no virgin is found. And even one virgin if found is enough to save the situation. So will it be with the planting of the swaraj flag-post. The flags will be unfurled with the unsullied hands of those, be they ever so few, who have remained true to their creed.

I do not therefore regard it as waste of money to continue the national institutions. They are so many oases in the desert. They give the water of life to the souls thirsting for freedom. In writing this I cast no reflection upon those who attend or otherwise support Government schools. They are entitled to hold the view if they choose that theirs is the only way or also a way to freedom. National institutions are meant for those whose thirst for freedom is not satisfied by the ones managed or patronized by the Government. Few as they are, insignificant though they may appear, they supply a felt want and contain in them the seeds, as it appears to non-co-operators, of true and lasting freedom.

The final success of these institutions depends upon the worth of the teachers. "But they are deserting the national schools and colleges," says the critic. So some of them are. It tries the faith of the survivors. Have they the courage to stand alone? Are there enough monied men to support the surviving national institutions? On the correct answer to these questions depends the future of the national institutions and with them the freedom of the country, and so far as I can judge, there are teachers enough to stand the severest test and there are monied men enough to support them. I know no organization that has died for want of funds. Organizations die always for want of men, i. e., honesty, efficiency and selfsacrifice. And it is my certain knowledge that where there are teachers, pupils are not wanting.

But the pupils have perhaps the largest share of responsibility on

their shoulders. The future depends upon their ability, integrity, application, and patriotism. The teachers cannot give what the pupils have not. The teachers can help to 'draw out' in the pupils what they have. If it were otherwise, if the teachers were capable of putting something into their pupils, all the latter receiving instruction under them will be alike, whereas we know as a matter of fact that no two pupils have been yet known to be alike. The pupils must therefore have initiative. They must cease to be mere imitators. They must learn to think and act for themselves and yet be thoroughly obedient and disciplined. The highest form of freedom carries with it the greatest measure of discipline and humilty. Freedom that comes from discipline and humility cannot be denied; unbridled licence is a sign of vulgarity injurious alike to self and one's neighbours.

Young India, 3-6-1926

397. NOTES

SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY'S LOSS

I have received the following[1] from the Servants of India Society for publication :

I have not the slightest doubt that not only will the subscribers excuse the unavoidable intrerruption in the publication of the two journals, but that the Society will have the fullest sympathy of the subscribers and numerous other friends like myself in the great loss that the Society, or rather the public, have suffered by the destruction of the two presses. I hope that the publication of the *Servant of India* and the *Dnyan Prakash* will be soon resumed.

PATRIOTISM *v.* CAPITALISM

These two "isms" are no doubt contradictory or have been so hitherto. But capital is totally different from capitalism and the capitalist from both. Capital is necessary for all enterprise. Labour itself may be described as a kind of capital. But even in the narrower sense of money, some capital, be it ever so little, is necessary even for labour's enterprise. Therefore there is no contradiction between capital and patriotism. A capitalist may or may not be patriotic. Khan Bahadur Mohiuddin Ahmed, Registrar of Co-operative Societies in Bihar, has pointed out a patriotic way to the capitalist. *The Times of India* says :

On the occasion of the opening ceremony of the new building of the Motihari Central Co-operative Bank, the Khan Bahadur, in his speech, distinguished harmful from useful capitalism. He suggested that industrial activities should be divided into two classes, one to be taken up by the capitalists and the other to be taken up on

[1] Statement on the fire which had destroyed the two presses where the Society's journals were being printed

> co-operative lines for the benefit of 90 per cent of the population in India. Any industry based on agricultural produce such as cotton, sugar, oil-seeds, wheat, etc., should be on a co-operative basis so that the producers could secure the best value for their outturn. All sorts of mining and iron works, leather and other large-scale industries, which do not exploit the agriculturists, should be left to the capitalists so that they may also use their capital for more production of wealth in the country rather than forexploiting the farmers and thereby sapping the very source of wealth in India.

If the capitalists would follow the Khan Bahadur's advice and restrict the use of their capital for purposes beneficial alike to the masses as also themselves, India's poverty would soon be a thing of the past. In the Khan Bahadur's opinion :

> Jute mills, sugar mills, cotton mills are all meant to exploit the agriculturists and these exploited men are driven into the factories to work like slaves. The jute millowners of Bengal did not show the least concern for the Bengal jute-growers during the War when foreign export was closed. . . . The result of this exploitation was that the jute-growers were reduced to poverty and jute millowners realized cent per cent dividends.

RESOURCEFULNESS

The manager of the Satyagraha Ashram tells me that he has more orders than he can cope with for *taklis*. It is a healthy sign that so many people want *taklis*. But if spinning is, and it is, an art, it must evoke one's resourcefulness. It is not possible to supply millions of *taklis* in one centre. The virtue of spinning lies in its capacity to be independent of central help. The aim of the All-India Spinners' Association is to de-centralize everything at the earliest possible moment. *Taklis* are being manufactured at the Ashram for those who need inducement to make the effort. But it is an insturment that can be and should be made by every-one for himself. A simple piece of dried bamboo, a piece of broken slate, a knife, a little hammer, a small file, and if possible a compass, is all that is necessary to make first class *taklis* at one pice each. A bamboo *takli* can be made inside of half an hour and gives just as good work as the steel instrument. Those who will master the art must be resourceful. Let us remember that spinning is the poor man's art. It is his solace. The tools also of that art must be within easy reach of the poorest. Let each boy and girl be therefore taught to make the *takli* himself or herself. They will take pleasure in making their own *taklis* and greater pleasure than hitherto in spinning with *taklis* made by themselves.

GOOD AND BAD

The Vice-Chairman of the Berhampur Municipal Council says in his letter to the All-India Spinners' Association :

> Only boys' schools have been supplied with 54 charkhas. Ten *tolas* of yarn is being spun per month. Rs. 15 a month is paid to the spinning instructor. One period of 40 minutes is allotted for spinning in each school per day.

This is good in so far that the wheel has found a place in the boys' schools under the Berhampur Municipal Council. But it is bad in that the output of yarn is too poor for the number of the wheels. A boy can easily spin half a *tola* of 10 counts per half-hour. That means 27 *tolas* per day from 54 wheels. And that would be 675 *tolas* per month of twenty-five working days. A spinning insturctor who is satisfied with only 10 *tolas* per month out of 54 wheels does not deserve to draw Rs. 15 per month of national money. I hope that there is some mistake in the figures sent. For ten *tolas* per month would be too little even for one wheel. The wheels are not ornamental furniture. They are wealth-producing machines. And it is up to the keepers to see that thay are not left idle. Every spinning instructor should deem it a point of honour to earn his wages by ensuring production enough to pay them. And this he can do easily when he has a large class and he does not mind himself carding and making slivers for the boys. It is the best way of interesting and instructing his pupils in the art of spinning. Let it be remembered that spinning includes carding and ginning. And carding and ginning are processes that fetch more money per day than spinning.

APRIL FIGURES

The following are the figures[1] for production and sale of khadi during the month of April :

The Andhra figures are incomplete and to some extent even the Karnatak figures. The Bombay figure includes only those of All-India Khadi Bhandar, Charkhasangh Bhandar and the Sandhurst Road Khadi Shop. I do wish we could make the figures complete for all the provinces.

Young India, 3-6-1926

[1] Not reproduced here

398. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU[1]

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 3, 1926

DEAR MOTILALJI,

Here is a copy of Vithalbhai's reply[2] to a copy of your letter which I sent him.

I hope you are gaining by your stay in Mussoorie.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

PANDIT MOTILALJI NEHRU
MUSSOORIE

From a photostat : S.N. 11318

399. LETTER TO V. J. PATEL

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 3, 1926

DEAR VITTHALBHAI,

I have your letter[3]. I am again sending a copy of your letter to Motilalji. I want to be quite clear as to the course to be adopted before I announce your gift in the press.

I have told Devdas that he is a free agent. I think that he will be discharged from the Hospital today and is likely to go to Mussoorie to join Jamnalalji. I suppose Simla atmosphere is too strong for him.

99 chances to one I am not going to Finland.

More later.

Yours sincerely,

HON. V. J. PATEL
SUKHDALE
SIMLA

From a photostat : S.N. 11319

[1] In reply to the addressee's letter dated 22-5-1926 (S.N. 11313)
[2] Dated 1-6-1926 (S.N. 11316)
[3] Dated 1-6-1926 (S.N. 11316)

400. LETTER TO URMILA DEVI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 3, 1926

MY DEAR SISTER,

You have sent me a doleful letter. I am glad however that ailing sister has passed away. She must have suffered tortures during her last months. But you shock me by the news you give me about the rest of the family. I do wish that Mr. Das will go to England and have prolonged rest. I am writing to Basanti Devi as also to Mr. Das. What is the matter with Bhaskar? How is Bhombol getting on? May God give you the peace of mind that you need so much at this time of toil and anxiety. Do keep me informed from time to time.

99 chances to one I am not going to Finland. Perhaps you know that Devdas underwent an operation for appendicitis. He is quite all right now. Probably, he is being discharged today. He will go to Mussoorie for convalescence. Jamnalalji is staying in Mussoorie. He will join him there. How is the Hospital getting on?

SRIMATI URMILA DEVI

From a photostat : S.N. 19591

401. LETTER TO JUSTICE P. R. DAS

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 3, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I was shocked to hear from Urmila Devi that you had very serious heart trouble. I hope however that the worst is over and that you are quite yourself again. Urmila Devi tells me you have been strongly advised to go to England and take some rest there. Whether you go to England or not, or elsewhere, I do hope you will take rest for a long time and avoid all anxiety and strain.

Yours sincerely,

JUSTICE P. R. DAS
PATNA

From a photostat : S.N. 19587

402. LETTER TO BASANTI DEVI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 3, 1926

MY DEAR SISTER,

Urmila Devi gives me a chapter of sorrows. She tells me that Justice Das had serious heart trouble, that Mony is ailing and losing strength and that Bhaskar is dangerously ill. You know that my sympathies are all with you. What is the matter with Bhaskar? Do please let me have a line.

How are you yourself keeping? Do tell me everything about Bhombol. I take it Baby is there and I hope that she is preserving her philosophic firmness.

From a photostat : S.N. 19589

403. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 3, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

Mr. Muhen Hasan Chaman of Kaira, Kutch, tells me that he has applied to you for some time now for the Pratishthan travelling charkha to be sent to him by value payable post. He has not received the same yet. Will you please attend? If you cannot trace his letter you may regard this as the letter of application and send. No further address beyond what I have given is necessary.

You will tell me in due course what was the final result of your effort with Mr. Birla.

Yours,

From a microfilm : S.N. 19590

404. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 3, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I could not trace your previous letter. If you will kindly write to me again putting the questions that you did in your previous letters, I shall try to answer your questions.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. ANAND T. HINGORANI
C/O SJT. GOBINDSING A. ISRANI
NEAR GHAR CANAL
LARKANA
SIND

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

405. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Thursday, June 3, 1926

BHAI BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter today. I am sorry and surprised. There was a letter and a telegram from you regarding Devdas. The telegram was replied to by wire, and I asked Mahadev to inform [you] about Devdas's condition. I do not remember any other correspondence nor am I displeased with anything you did. Surely there ought to be some reason for displeasure and you have given me none. I have told you and I repeat that you may come to the Ashram whenever you please.

Devdas will be discharged from the hospital by tomorrow, and will straightway proceed to Mussoorie. If you are still there you can see him on his way to Mussoorie, as he will certainly inform you. You need not delay coming here just in order to see Devdas. My visit to Finland is 99 per cent cancelled.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 2352

406. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Thursday [*June 3, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have not been able to write to you at all of late. But I have been doing what needs to be done. Your health will of course improve there gradually. But it would be best to go to Panchgani. Pattani has written me a very kind letter saying that I should have no hesitation at all in using his bungalow in July. Still I feel that we should not use his bungalow for too long. Hence, I have declined his offer. I have decided not to go to Finland. I have kept only one option open, that is, I will go if by my not going Mr. Paul[2], who sent the invitation, is embarrassed in any way. But I see no reason why he should be. Therefore, you call take it that I shall not be going. I do wish this to be my last letter to you at Deolali. Swami is a fast worker and so I do not think the matter will take too long.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: Pyarel al Papers . Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y. Courte sy: Belade vi Nayyar and Dr. Sushil a Nayyar

407. LETTER TO JAYANTILAL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Thursday, June 3, 1926

BHAISHRI JAYANTILAL,

I have your letter. I do not know if you interpret a love-marriage in a way contrary to mine. But I would regard as desirable a marriage between a man and woman who have maintained pure relations and wish to be united in wedlock, when the union does not involve a breach of propriety. I cannot understand how in the case of a true love-marriage one partner can after the other's death ever think at all of remarriage. But I do believe that we should not oppose a virgin widow desiring to marry. I would regard the intermingling of

[1] From the postmark
[2] K. T. Paul; *vide* "Letter to K. T. Paul", 30-5-1926.

the four *varnas* as needless and undesirable as also marriages within the *gotra*, the principle being that there cannot be too much circumscription in regard to marriage.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 19592

408. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 4, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It was certainly very good and generous on the part of Mr. Kelkar to offer the use of the Kesari and the Mahratta presses. You will please ask someone to pass on to me any appeal that you may make for funds and I shall try to do what I can as a matter of simple duty.

Yours sincerely,

RT. HON. V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
POONA CITY

From a photostat : S.N. 12052

409. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 4, 1926

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have your two letters. You have given me a full budget of family news which I appreciate although the news is all about illnesses. Of Maud's illness, I knew all from her own letter and also Matar's. I hope they are both now well and strong. With Millie it is her courage which keeps her up and I know that it will stand her in good stead for many a year to come. Please tell Waldo not to keep me in suspense for a long time but make some time if he cannot find it for giving me a long letter. He must write to me as to an old friend and bed-fellow, not a stranger whom he knows only by name. The intricacies of his examinations, I do not understand. But I know that he can give a good account of himself being your son.

Devdas evidently got jealous of Maud. He too therefore developed appendicitis, underwent an operation on the other day and was discharged as cured yesterday. Miss Slade, otherwise Mirabai, is standing this hot season exceedingly well. She has become a very good spinner. She cards her own cotton. Andrews has been with us for the last five or six days. He will probably leave tomorrow for Kotgarh where he is going to see Stokes. Ramdas is hawking khadi and seems to like it well.

I was delighted to receive to your copy of the *Bhagavad Gita* translations. I note your careful instructions. I am keeping it under lock and key. You will have the book back sent duly insured as soon as I have made a copy.

99 to one I am not going to Finland. But if I do go and if I come to London naturally I shall stay with you unless you wanted me to stay elsewhere for public or other reasons.

Yours sincerely,

HENRY S. L. POLAK, ESQ.
42. 47 & 48, DANES INN HOUSE
265, STRAND, LONDON, W. C. 2.

From a photostat: S. N. 19593

410. LETTER TO S. SHANKER

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 4, 1926,

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You can simplify your life by reducing your wants consistently with the retention of your health. You can simplify your dress. You can cultivate the habit of going to bed earlier, getting up at four o'clock in the morning, offering prayers just before retiring to bed and after rising from it. You can spin regularly for at least half an hour a day. Study Hindi and Sanskrit and read clean literature. Spinning includeds carding and ginning. You can

befriend the so-called untouchables.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. SHANKER
NO. 3 TOP FLOOR
NARAYAN BUILDING
NIAGAM ROAD
DADAR, BOMBAY NO. 14

From a microfilm: S. N. 19594

411. LETTER TO NAMUDURY VENKATRAO

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 4, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am sorry to hear of your loss. I am quite clear in my mind that you should not think of remarrying in any circumstance whatsoever. And, if you remain firm in your resolve, God will give you strength to resist any temptation that might come in your way to remarry.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. NAMUDURY VENKATRAO
BHATNAVILLE
AMALAPURAM TALUQ
GODAVARI DT.

From a microfilm: S. N. 19595

412. LETTER TO A MUSLIM LEADER

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 4, 1926

BHAISAHEB,

For many days now I have been thinking of writing to you. I had no intention of writing in English , and have none now. I wanted to write at length, and it is hard for me to write such a long letter in the Urdu script. This I am getting written in the Urdu Script by a brother of an Ashram inmate. I have your message from Brother Andrews. I wanted to write to you even before I got the message, in

fact since the time Alibhai went to Mecca. Regarding the Hindu-Muslim question I have deliberately refrained form saying anything. What can I write? To whom can I tell the tale of my woe? I know very well that I have no influence whatsoever over the quarrelling elements. Bhai Shaukat Ali and Manzur Ali spoke to me at length about your grief, and I have also been given to understand that you were rather pained at my silence. Since I am unable to bring about a compromise what is the good of my writing? I cannot bring myself to believe the various Press reports. I am asked to make a public statement that Malaviyaji and others are enemies of the Muslims, the Hindus ask me to make a similar statement regarding the Muslim leaders. How can I write something which I do not believe? I cannot accept that Malaviyaji and others are enemies of the Muslims; this does not however mean I approve of everything they do. Nor can I agree to calling Mahomed Ali an enemy of the Hindus. In his case, too, I do not approve of all he does. I am asked to state my opinion regarding the Calcutta affair.[1] What opinion can I give out? I have no occult power by which to know who started the trouble in Calcutta and whose crime was heavier. But I do know that the parties are both prejudiced against each other, they look only for each other's faults and have lost mutual trust. In the circumstances there is no other way for a person like me but to keep my peace. I cannot tolerate the killing of even a single Muslim or Hindu or for that matter of any human being. Nor can I tolerate the destruction of a mosque or a temple or a church. It is my belief that the same God that dwells in the heart of a Hindu is enshrined in the heart of every other person. And I also believe that a temple belongs to God as much as a mosque. I can never agree to the rule of blood for blood and temple for a mosque. But who listens to me? It is my firm belief, however, that God does not approve of this rule of blood and temple for a mosque. A day will come when Hindus and Muslims will own their guilt, feel sorry for their behaviour and unite with each other. This is the culmination that I wish to witness in my life-time. And I always pray to God to recall me from this world if I am not to see the light of that day. My desire to live springs solely from this hope. And I want you

[1] here were two outbursts of communal rioting in Calcutta during April and May 1926.

too to cherish this hope with me and never despair.

Brother Andrews tells me about your proposal that Brother Stokes and he should invite, on their own, a few Hindus and Muslims and attempt a reconciliation. I am afraid their efforts cannot achieve this task. Nor is the time ripe to bring the Hindus and Muslims together in this way. You alone can bring them together when the time comes. Those Muslims who are regarded as enemies of the Hindus as well as those Hindus that are supposed to be Muslim-haters must also be invited to this conference. What good can mere discussions bring when there is mutual mistrust and when people speak one thing and think another in their hearts?

I hope you are in Mussoorie and keeping well.

From a photostat of the Urdu (Devanagari script): S. N. 11069

413. LETTER TO A. S. DAVID

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 5, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am not going to Finland. You may come to see me any time you like. But your letter under reply frigh-tens me a bit. Your desire to accompany me to Finland and to have letters of introduction do not show an attitude of satisfaction withmere bread-labour. And what I want this Ashram to stand for is bread-labour. However, you may come whenever you like to see things for yourself. I would only ask you not to make any final disposals so that you might not feel depressed if the Ashram proves disappointing for you because the very first thing you will commence with here would be the scavenging work and processes connected with cotton.

Yours sincerely,

A. S. DAVID, ESQ.
CIVIL LINES
SITAPUR, OUDH[1]

From a photostat: S. N. 10917

[1] Now a part of Uttar Pradesh

414. LETTER TO PERIN CAPTAIN

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 5, 1926

I have neglected your letter for a few days. Please give me some more particulars about the Him..[1] School, Matunga. What is the attendance? How did it come under the protection of the Stree Sabha? Who is on the committee that is looking after the School? How many teachers are there? Who is the headmaster? Are there any girls in the school? And are the children doing any spinning? If so, what is the monthly output? Do they have the *takli* or the wheel? And please Add such other information as you may think necessary.

You may treat the Finland visit as off. Mr. Andrews will be leaving probably today for Delhi.

Yours.

MRS. PERIN CAPTAIN
ISLAM CLUB BUILDING
CHAUPATI
[BOMBAY]

From a microfilm: S. N. 19596

415. LETTER TO PRANJIVANDAS J. MEHTA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 5, 1926

BHAISHRI PRANJIVAN,

Chi. Jeki's[2] letter is sent with this. I do not understand all she writes. Whatever may be her faults you must not keep her wihout a letter. That is what I feel.

My trip to Finland is as good as cancelled. Write to me about your health. I am in excellent health. I had a letter from Ratilal[3] today, which is also sent herewith. I fear that he might not come

[1] The source has a blank here.
[2] Addressee's daughter
[3] Addressee's son

here. He would feel some kind of restraint here. As he would not come here, so would he not go to Manilal either. Even then I would keep on writing to him.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 19597

416. LETTER TO JAYAKUNWAR MANILAL DOCTOR

ASHRAM,
June 5, 1926,

CHI. JEKI,

Received your letter. I am sending it to Doctor[1]. I shall write to you on hearing from him. The money which I have asked to be sent to you has nothing to do with the school work. I will send that letter to you, if I have not torn it up. I shall look for it and, if it is there, shall send it to you. Even now Doctor's health can't be considered good. He stammers a little and can hardly sign his name. A mere look at his face does not reveal any illness. These are the news. It is pointless, in my view, for Bhai Manilal to strive to get into the Council. Nor do I see any gain in going out of India. I consider it right to settle down here and bear all the hardships that come his way. Why suppose that hardships will be his lot for ever?

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S. N. 19598

417. LETTER TO AMRITLAL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 5, 1926,

BHAISHRI AMRITLAL,

Your letter. You should write to your sister's husband and her father-in-law saying that you could not send her to them and infrom them of all the hardships faced by her. Before you do this, you have to ascertain from her what she really wishes to do, because she may have run away impulsively and might repent it later or she might become a victim of passion and do some thing wrong. It would perhaps be better if she realizes all this and returns to her husband and submits to all hardships that may befall her. Thus no definite answer can be given to your question because you alone can take a right

[1] Addresses's father

decision since you know the temperament of your sister, her husband and his parents. I can only say that if your sister does not want to go to her husband's people you must stand by her. You may not compel her to return there.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S. N. 19599

418. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS PURUSHOTTAM ASAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 5, 1926,

CHI. LAKSHMIDAS,

It is good that you left immediately. This time you looked so weak that I could not bear the sight. True economy consists in resting for a month or two, recouping your health and then plunging into work. Write to me regularly about your health. Walk as much as your physique will permit. Only yesterday I heard that M. . . does not play fair with Gokibehn and has fallen into stealing. I had strongly disapproved of her staying there. So I advised Velabehn to go to Bombay at the earliest and bring the girl back. Gokibehn is willing to send her back.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 19600

419. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 5, 1926

CHI. JAMNALAL,

You must have got the telegram I sent you yesterday. Lakshmidas must have settled down there. His health would not rally here. He cannot do without work. I have therefore decided to send him to you so that he may rest along with Devdas. I have come to the conclusion that there is no point in keeping Lakshmidas here no matter how long Devdas stays there. There must be plenty of doctors in Mussoorie. If you feel that Lakshmidas must consult one, let him do so.

You must have learnt that Girdhari has been operated on for fistula. I believe he will get much relief. It is good that he was operated on in time.

The visit to Finland has almost been called off. It is a different matter if I have to reconsider this because of the embarrassment it may cause to Mr. Paul. But the chances of such reconsideration are one in a hundred. I believe you will arrive by the 22nd at the latest. If no one there is put to any inconvenience it is good that Lakshmidas stays there for quite some time. It is absolutely necessary that he recovers completely.

420. LOSS SUFFERED BY SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY

A terrible fire broke out last week in the historic Kibewada area in Poona and two printing presses, Dnyan Prakash and Aryabhooshan, owned by the Servants of India Society, were completely destroyed. This is a loss to the people as much as to the Society. Dnyan Prakash was a press as old as eighty years and the names of leaders like Chiplunkar, Agarkar and Lokmanya Tilak were associated with the Aryabhooshan Press, through which they had all started their public work. We may, therefore, say that the fire has destroyed two priceless memorials. Among other things, many valuable books, manuscripts of books and some considerable literature collected for a biography of the late Gokhale were lost in this fire.

The immediate effect of this loss will be that two journals, *Servant of India* and *Dnyan Prakash* will not come out for some time. We may hope that readers will not mind this, and will also show their full sympathy for the Society by offering as much help as they can. We are glad to note in this connection that workers of both the presses have forgone their claim to bonus amounting to as much as eight thousand rupees, and that many other presses have come forward to offer immediate help to the Society.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-6-1926

421. PROBLEM OF NON-VIOLENCE

A gentleman writes as follows :[1]

Such questions are frequently raised. They cannot be brushed aside, either, as being trivial. These problems have been discussed both in the West and the East in books dealing with the deeper meaning of life. In my humble view, there is only one solution to these problems, since they all arise from the same cause. The actions mentioned above certainly involve violence, for every motion or action involves it and, therefore, no action is altogether innocent. The difference between one action and another lies only in the degree of violence involved in either. The very association of the *atman* with the body rests on violence. Every sin is a form of violence, and complete freedom from sin is possible only with the deliverance of the *atman* from the body. A human being, therefore, may keep perfect non-violence as his or her ideal and strive to follow it as completely as possible. But no matter how near it he reaches, he will find some degree of violence unavoidable, in breathing or eating, for instance. There is life in each grain which we consume. When, therefore, we adopt a vegetarian diet and abstain from non-vegetarian food we cannot claim that we completely avoid violence. But we prefer the former and regard the violence involved in it as inescapable. This is why eating for pleasure must never be indulged in. We should eat only in order that we may live, and should live only to realize the self. If our living for this purpose involves any violence, we may be a party to it as being unable to escape it. We can now see that if, in spite of all our precautions, there are germs in the water and bugs [in the furniture], we may do whatever we find necessary to get rid of them. I do not believe that it is a divine law that everyone should act in the same way at certain times and in certain circumstances. Non-violence is a quality of the heart. Whether there is violence or non-violence in our actions can be judged only by reference to the spirit behind them. Everyone, therefore, who regards the observance of non-violence as a moral duty should guide his actions by the principle stated above. I know that there is a flaw in this reply. One may commit violence as much as one chooses and then, deceiving oneself and the world, justify one's actions with the plea of their being unvaoidable. This

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had asked for Gandhiji's views about the impossibility of observing perfect non-violence in practical life, since destruction of insects could never be completely avoided.

article is not meant for such persons. It is addressed only to those who believe in the principle of non-violence and are assailed by moral doubts from time to time. Such persons will commit even unavoidable violence most hesitatingly, and limit, not expand, the scope of their activities, so much so that they will not use any of their powers for selfish ends. They will use all their energies for public service, dedicating to God everything they do. All the gifts and abilities of a good man, that is, a non-violent, compassionate man, are for service to others. There is violence always in the attachment to one's ego. When doing anything, one must ask oneself this question : "Is my action inspired by egoistic attachment?" If there is no such attachment, then there is no violence.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-6-1926

422. NOTES

A COMPLAINT

A gentleman writes as follows :[1]

If the friend who makes this complaint had been reading his *Navajivan* carefully, he would not have found it necessary to complain as he has done. He has requested a reply in the columns of *Navajivan*. *Young India* acknowledges the subscription or contribution from every member by name, and a summary is published in *Navajivan* from time to time. From that everyone can know the number of members in the Spinners' Association. Detailed information about its working is also published occasionally in *Navajivan*. Still, I think it necessary to explain some points here. The Association's office has not yet received yarn in such quantity that it can directly help to reduce the price of khadi; but indirectly the yarn received has had so great an effect that throughout the country the quality of yarn which the Association gets people to spin for payment of has improved. The yarn which is received as voluntary gift from members has proved extremely useful as a means of testing the other yarn received. The yarn which is received as voluntary gift from members has proved extremely useful as a means of testing the

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent wanted to know full particulars of the financial position of the Spinners' Association.

other yarn received and keeping a check on its quality. But the quantity of such yarn received as gift by the Spinners' Association is so little, relatively speaking, that the khadi made from it will reach a very small number. That is why the khadi made from it has had to be mixed with that made from other yarn; not a single piece of it has been given away to any member of the office staff. The members pay for the khadi which they require, and some of them get it woven from yarn spun by themselves. If those who spin voluntarily keep with themselves the yarn which they have spun, get it woven and gift the cloth to someone without giving publicity to their act, then the purpose which can be served by an organized action will suffer or be defeated altogether, and the effort being made to improve the quality of yarn will have to be given up. The office expenses of the Association do not exceed its income. When they do, I myself would dissolve it or leave it. I must admit, though, that the expenses cannot be met from the quantity of yarn it receives as gift. The balance is met from other contributions in cash. If, however, the membership of the Association increases from the present number of four thousand to four crores, the expenses of the office can be met from the yarn contributed by them. Hundreds of young men would then earn their livelihood by working in the office and the increase in the number would also have considerable and direct effect on the price of khadi.

IS THIS THE RIGHT METHOD OF COW-PROTECTION?

A worker in the cause of cow-protection writes as follows :[1]

This is a sorry state of affairs. Probably similar conditions prevail in many other *goshals*. One thousand five hundred *goshalas* is not a small number. If all of them are run well and there is one common organization for them, they can maintain thousands of cattle-heads and increase the national wealth to the tune of crores of rupees, and we would discover the best method of cow-protection. There ought not to be a loss of Rs. 11,000 in the *goshala* referred to by the correspondent. Not a single calf ought to be given away as a gift. If this same *goshala* were turned into a model dairy, the people of the village would get milk and ghee at a low price, and if, at the

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had visited *goshala* and described the uneconomic way in which it was run.

same time, a tannery were also started side by side, the people would get shoes and other needed articles of leather. As things are, in spite of good money being spent, not a single cow is saved from the slaughter-house. In this way, the work of *goshalas* is becoming very limited in its scope. Running a *goshala* has come to mean looking after infirm cattle in a perfunctory manner.

If we wish to start a business, we would engage efficient workers and pay them. If the business was running at a loss, we would try to find out the reasons, would effect some improvement every day and not rest till we had succeeded in stopping the loss. The aim in running a *goshala* is not merely to provide a small shed for cattle; it is to discharge the sacred duty of cow-protection. But we get this work done mostly through inexperienced men who do it in their spare time. Such persons deceive themselves and believe that they are doing some service; those who give the money deceive themselves by believing that the cause of cow-protection is served, and in this way hundreds of thousands of rupees are thrown away in the name of religion. If my correspondent had furnished the following particulars, I would have made further inquiries concerning the *goshala*.

(1) The number of infirm cattle.

(2) The number of milch cows and buffaloes.

(3) The daily yield of milk.

(4) The number of calves—male and female.

(5) The number of bullocks and he-buffaloes.

(6) The area of land.

(7) Is the *goshala* located in the village or away from it?

(8) The number of deaths among the cattle.

(9) Arrangements for disposal of cattle which die.

PERPETRATING "ADHARMA" IN THE NAME OF DHARMA

Shri Rameshwardas Birla donated Rs. 2,500 for a temple for *Antyajas* at Amreli and a beautiful temple was erected. An image of Lord Lakshminarayana was installed in the temple and it was duly opened to the public. The report of this event which I have received contains the following information.

The Brahmins cruelly harassed the priest who officiated at the

cere-mony, though the gentleman on whose behalf they performed it did not belong to the untouchable class. At the time of this ceremony for the opening of a temple for *Antyajas*, the latter were made to sit in a separate enclosure. Even the gifts offered to the priest did not come from *Antyajas* nor the money with which the temple was erected. The only reason, therefore, for punishing the priest was that the temple was for the use of *Antyajas*. For this offence, he had to get his moustaches shaved off and to perform atonement.

I cannot compliment the priest for thus forgetting his self-respect. If the ceremony of invoking the presence of God in the image was sacred act, the subsequent atonement was not atonement, but an act of sin. Even if the priest was afterwards boycotted by his community, what would he have lost in consequence? No one need be afraid now of the bogey of expulsion from one's community. Those who have courageously let themselves be boycotted have not only suffered nothing thereby but have actually found themselves free from unnecessary bonds. Says Brahmanand[1] :

Embark not on a venture without knowing;
Having gone to the field of battle, yield not to fear;
He who rushes to the field, courage on his face,
And then flees from battle,
What good his living, carrying his lustreless face among men?

How true are these words in the present case? I had not expected that the Brahmins of a progressive town like Amreli would display so much ignorance, such fanaticism.

If some Brahmins of Amreli disgraced Hinduism in this manner, there were also some who brought credit to it, for at the time of the installation of the image Hindus from all communities had attended the function. There were Brahmins, Vanias, Luhars, Sutars, Kanbis and others. There were some officials too. Other people, besides *Antyajas*, are also seen benefiting from this temple built specially for the latter. Some Brahmins have even agreed to read the *Bhagavata* and other holy books in the temple. It remains to be seen what effect that boycott has on these other Brahmins.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-6-1926

[1] A Gujarati poet

423. LETTER TO K. T. PAUL

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 6, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and the original letters from the Committee of arrangements. The letters make it clear to me that the idea of invitation was prompted by you out of your great goodwill towards me and your exaggerated notion of my influence over people especially the young mind. But I feel more than ever convinced that the time is not yet for me to leave India on such pretext as is furnished by the correspondence before me. The call to go out of India for service has got to be pressing and overwhelming. The correspondence is really a response to your desire for my presence at the deliberations at Helsingfors. But I know my own limitations and recognize the difficulties in the way of my message going straight home. If there is any power in my message it would be felt without the physical contact.

I know that my decision will disappoint you but it has been my lot in life to disappoint loving friends. But I know that these disappointments have done good rather than harm. You will please forgive me for all the trouble that you have been put to on my account and ask for forgivness from friends at Helsingfors who might have expected my presence there. Needless to say my prayers will attend your deliberations and my best wishes accompany you on your voyage.

I return the original letters.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 11357

424. LETTER TO V. SUNDARAM

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 6, 1926

MY DEAR SUNDRAM,

It was a joy to receive your letter, for, I have often thought of you and a greater joy still to find that you were helping Mr. Stokes. What about the hereditary village wardenship? Who is taking your place? I hope that your eyes will be completely cured by your stay on the hills.

Your Hindi writing is very good. It is better than my Tamil speech but it admits of much improvement. Your own name is not correctly spelt. The words of the hymn you have copied are beautiful. I am not writing separately to Savitri. Hers also is a good effort. But she must do much better.

Devdas is quite all right. He was discharged three days ago from the Hospital.

Yours,

SJT. V. SUNDARAM
C/O S. E. STOKES, ESQ.
KOTGARH
SIMLA HILLS

From a microfilm : S.N. 19602

425. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN CHOKSI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Sunday [*June 6, 1926*][1]

CHI. MOTI,

I have your letter. The handwriting can this time be said to be good. If you make it a habit to write something regularly, however little it may be, your handwriting will improve. To a question similar to the one you have asked a reply is given in the current issue of *Navajivan*. Is there no middle way betwen killing of bugs and breeding them? We are not bound to do the latter, but we have no right to kill them. So we may pick them up and leave them at a

[1] From the postmark

distance. I shall hand over your letter itself to Manibehn. I have sent Laxmidas to Mussoorie as soon as he arrived here. In order to fetch Mani, Velabehn left for Bombay with Ramdas who was also going there. On her way back she will stay for a day with you. Manibehn says that the book sent for her has not reached her yet.

Blessings from

BAPU

SUKANYA NAJUKLAL CHOKSI
RASHTRIYA KELAVANI MANDAL
BROACH

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 12128-A

426. TELEGRAM TO K. T. PAUL

June 7, 1926

K. T. PAUL
THOTTAM
SALEM

THANKS LETTER. AFTER CAREFUL PRAYERFUL CONSIDERATION MY FINAL CONCLUSION IS NOT TO GO FINLAND

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 11358

427. LETTER TO DR. B. S. MOONJE

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 7, 1926

DEAR DR. MOONJE,

I have your letter. You have certainly given me a common ground for action. But the whole conception being yours, how shall I get it executed by others? If you write something to make the learning of grammar easy and do not preach there through your philosophy, and the text is passed by other Sanskritists, I shall undertake to get it printed and circulated at cost price. Or if you know anyone who has understood your ideas and will write the grammar but will require financial assistance, I shall apply to him and try to secure his services. In any case what little is possible is being done through the Gujarat Vidyapith. But I own that it is nothing compared to what

can be accomplished if Sanskrit study can be made demonstrably easy. Personally I consider it to be easy enough. It would not increase the tremendous strain put upon our poor nerves by the unnatural English study. I call the present English study unnatural because it displaces the vernacular.

Yours sincerely

From a photostat: S. N. 19603

428. INTERVIEW ON COLOUR BAR BILL

AHMEDABAD,
[On or before *June 8, 1926*][1]

Interviewed regarding the recent *communique*[2] of the Government of India on the Colour Bar Bill, Mahatma Gandhi said:

The assurance given in the *communique* in my opinion takes us no further than we were before it. The Union Government have indeed repeatedly said that they have no present intention of extending the scope of the Bill beyond the position that existed prior to the judgment in Rex v. Hildick Smith. Opponents of the Bill, however, attack it on the principle that the enabling powers under it go much beyond the position anterior to the judgment and that it can be made applicable not merely to the natives of the soil but to Indians also. Nor is it possible to derive any comfort from the fact that when the scope of the Regulations to be framed thereunder is extended, all parties in the Union will be enabled to make representations. The Bill does not take away the right of petition, and one knows by this time the fact of the representations by parties without power to enforce their will. I wonder if this assurance means that the party without the Union, namely the Government of India, will have no right of representation.

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-6-1926

[1] From the correspondent's date line
[2] *Vide* "Valueless Assurance", 10-6-1926.

429. LETTER TO JANAKDHARI PRASAD

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 8, 1926

DEAR JANAKDHARI BABU,

I was delighted to receive your letter after such a prolonged interval. I note the difficulties the school is going through. Faith has no limitation of time. That which is limited by time is not faith at all. If therefore you have bondless faith in your mission, I have not a shadow of doubt that it will succeed, the cause being right.

With reference to the two difficulties my prescription is the same. At the present moment, the atmosphere has become so impure that I cannot advise the formaiton of any new party or group. Those of us who do not believe in aggressiveness with regard to Hindu-Muslim unity, and do not believe in Council-entry in any shape or form must each one remain true to our ideal. We do not need any organization to keep up our spirits. Those who need that outward help are wanting in deep conviction and I am anxious that only those who have deep and abiding conviction should remain out. For, it may be that there are still greater trials in store for us. Those, therefore, who have weak faith will then succumb. It will be the indomitable remnant that will carry the day in the end, because, I see no freedom expect through non-co-operation. My faith in it is growing with time.

I hope you are keeping excellent health.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. JANAKDHARI PRASAD
SHRI GANDHI VIDYALAYA
P. O. HAJIPUR
DT. MUZAFFARPUR

From a photostat: G. N. 50; also S. N. 19604

430. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 8, 1926

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Certainly write for *The Bombay Chronicle*. I share your view for the most part. But education may not be the only remedy. If it is the only remedy unity must wait for a long time.

What is needed is the education of the heart. After all, in my opinion, the hands that fight may be the hands of the goondas but the brains behind them are the brains of educated Hindus and Mussalmans. If that education is to be multiplied, heaven help Hindusthan. But there can be no harm whatsoever in your writing for the paper. And, there certainly will be no harm if you do not write at all. You may let things simmer down a bit. There is no room for the time being for any solution except that of the cock fight.

Ramdas was here for a day. He went over to Bombay to see Devdas and threatens to get down at Baroda on his return to see you and pay his respects.

He says, but for you, he could have done nothing for the sale of his khadi. A white beard has its charm all its own.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S. N. 9556

431. LETTER TO RUTH S. ALEXANDER

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 8, 1926

DEAR SISTER,

Mr. Andrews has brought me your precious letter. It revives old and sacred memories. Kallenbach[1] has not yet come to me though he is threatening always. I dare say one fine morning I shall find a cable from him saying he has started.

Do you ever see *Young India*? I call it my weekly letter tofriends. Please remember me to Mr. Alexander. Mr. Andrews has told me how helpful he was in his mission.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. RUTH S. ALEXANDER
HEILBRON
LEIGHTON ROAD
ST. JAMES, C.P.

From a photostat : S.N. 10766

[1] A German architect, devoted friend and co-worker of Gandhiji in South Africa

432. LETTER TO PYARELAL NAYYAR

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 8, 1926

MY DEAR PYARELAL,

You have been silent of late. I am sending by registered post one copy of the spinning essay and the notes you have left here. I want you to go through the copy as quickly as you can, making your corrections in the body of the essay.

It is finally settled that I am not going to Finland. I hope you are keeping good health and daily improving as you must. Chhotalal has returned after his wanderings. He is not yet quite himself.

Yours,

From a microfilm : S.N. 19605

433. LETTER TO H. K. VEERANNA GOWDH

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 8, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

No permission is necessary for dedicating your work to me. But if you do dedicate it to me please do not say that you have obtained my permission. I cannot give it without reading the book and if you send it to me, I should have no time to read it.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. H. K. VEERANNA GOWDH
CHANNAPATNA

From a microfilm : S.N. 19606

434. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Tuesday, June 8, 1926

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. So far Khadi Pratishthan has been given not less than Rs. 70,000 through the Charkha Sangh. As far as I

remember Rs. 25,000 have been given to Abhoy Ashram and Rs. 6,000 to the Pravartak Sangh. Many small sums have also been paid. All that would approximately amount to Rupees one and a quarter lakh. Even more would be granted to Bengal. I know the need of Khadi Pratishthan is great. Satis Babu wants to enlarge his activities considerably and I would like him to. But there is very little money with the Charkha Sangh today. So whatever is possible through the Charkha Sangh will be done, but do give to Satis Babu as much as you can.

What shall I say about the Councils? There are fundamental differences between me and Malaviyaji on this subject. I can only say that if you believe that your entering the Council would benefit the people you should definitely do so. Opposition to the Swaraj Party and the temptation of gaining political education are both irrelevant from the moral angle. If you have a feeling that you have vowed in my presence not to enter the Council get rid of that impression. No such restraint was accepted categorically. You should feel free from any obligation and decide your stand about going to the Council from a moral standpoint, that is, with public service in view.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original : C.W. 6128. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

435. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Tuesday, June 8, 1926

BHAI SHANTIKUMAR,

I have read your letter to Mahadev. When you sent me mangoes on your birthday, you should have asked for blessings, at any rate, though as a matter of fact you have them always. Do tell me why you have given up mangoes for the last seven years. May God grant you a long life.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 4702. Courtesy : Shantikumar Morarji

436. LETTER TO RAI PRABHUDAS BHIKHABHAI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Tuesday, June 8, 1926

BHAI PRABHUDAS,

I have your detailed letter. You did well to write. Your argument is perfect, but it is my experience and also that of persons who have tried *pranayam* and other methods that *brahmacharya* cannot be observed merely with the help of *pranayam*. But I believe *pranayam*, etc., help those who have acquired control over their mind. We come across very few people who have made a deep study of the yoga from this point of view and have tried yogic methods. If one takes only one meal a day, I have nothing to say. But if one consumes at one sitting a quantity of food equal to three meals, that will not help him in *brahmacharya*. This is a violation of it and it damages one's health. There are two opinions and I have my own doubts regarding the need of nutritious diet for the observance of *brahmacharya*. But I do not want you to change your method if it greatly helps you in the observance of *brahmacharya*, if it keeps up your spiritual progress and all your senses are brought under control. You should try your own method and effect such changes as your experience may dictate. And if you succeed so that even your mind is not disturbed by passions the world will stand to gain by your experiment. Remember that *brahmacharya* implies control of all the senses in respect of thought, speech and action. According to this definition if you have a lustful eye or an evil thought or there is a discharge even in dream *brahmacharya* would be violated.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 12187

437. LETTER TO PERIN CAPTAIN

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 9, 1926

I take it that you will be in Bombay during the whole of this month. I think I told you that a German sister was coming to me. Her name is Helene Haussding. She is expected on the 25th instant by the *Razmak*. Will you please meet her and take her home and send her the same day to Sabarmati, and wire to me by what train she leaves. You will please tell me if you are not likely to be in Bombay on that date or if it will be impossible for you to go and meet her on board.

Have Nurgisbehn and Mithubehn returned? And, if they have, how are they doing?

Yours,

From a microfilm : S.N. 19610

438. NOTES

SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY

In the note issued by the Society upon the loss suffered by it owing to the recent fire nothing so much stirs one as the offer of the employees of the press. It is evidence of the scrupulous care with which the Society has dealt by its employees. Unless the latter felt the loss to be personal, they would not make the self-sacrificing and handsome offer that they have made of forgoing half the bonus and offering to work without extra pay for ten instead of eight hours a day and the printer himself offering to work for six months without any pay whatsoever. Both the Society and the employees deserve heartiest congratulations for this spirit of comradeship existing between what may be called Capital and Labour. This expression of the excellent spirit is no small compensation for the tremendous losses the Society has suffered.

The loss of the valuable manuscripts containing Gokhale's life and the files of the *Dnyan Prakash* for the last eighty years is indeed irreparable. But it is only in this manner that Nature gives us rude shocks and reminds us that there is nothing permanent, nothing ever-lasting except God himself; and that therefore ours is but honourably

and humbly to labour only to do His will irrespective of consequences.

The members of the Society are now manfully striving to restart without avoidable delay the interrupted activities. The question is how will the public help. Assurances have been given from many parts of India. It is to be hoped that the assurances will be translated into action without delay and without fuss. However much one may differ from the politics of the Society, there is no denying the honest and self-sacrificing labours of its members, there is no denying their patriotism. It stands unique in its great social activities no less valuable than the political. I hope that the readers of *Young India* will show their appreciation of the many services of the Society, and their toleration where they differ from the Society's politics, by sending in their subscriptions in response to its appeal.

SPINNING-WHEEL IN MYSORE

In his speech[1] at the District Conference, the Deputy Commissioner and the President of the District Board of Mysore presented spinning as a useful subsidiary occupation, and as pre-eminetly suited in poor families to supplement the family income, and thus exhorted the local bodies and public-spirited people to take it up in right earnest :

> To secure increased popularity and to ensure its general adoption by the people . . . it is necessary that the leaders in each village, the *Yejmans* the *Sahukars*, the *Budhivantas* should take to it. . . . I appeal to all Municipal Councils, Panchayats, and Village Committees, Co-operative Societies and other Associations to stock and sell charkha to the local people, and secure at least one trained weaver for their town or village, provide him with a loom, and get woven into *dupaties* and towels all the yarn locally spun by people who could not drive any other trade or calling owing to age, infirmity, disease or lack of occupation. . . . The District Board hopes to be able to take full advantage in the coming year of the recent order of Government promising to meet half the cost of demonstrations and competitions arranged for weaving and spinning. . . .

Here at least there is an official recognition of the spinning-wheel. The more the possibilities of this simple instrument are known, the greater will be its hold upon the people.

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

SPINNING FOR FAMINE RELIEF

The Kathiawar Rajkiya Parishad is nursing a khadi centre in Kathiawar in and near Amreli by way of famine relief. Though there is no actual famine there, for want of sufficient rain the cultivation has been below par for three successive years, the result being that many cultivators are living from hand to mouth. It is in this centre that nearly a thousand farmers' wives are supplementing their poor resources with wages earned from hand-spinning. Instead of these women remaining in idleness and in a state of semi-starvation, they are earning from anything between one to three rupees per month according to the time they are able or willing to give to spinning. Incidentally this work furnishes occupation for carders, weavers and washermen. The difficulty however had to be confronted of selling khadi so made. Mr. Abbas Tyabji came to the rescue and he, assisted by Sjts. Amritlal Seth and Ramdas Gandhi, toured in parts of Kathiawar for the purpose of hawking the khadi. It was not possible to sell it as cheap as khadi produced in some parts of India where carders, weavers, washermen and even spinners do not demand or receive the same wage as those in Kathiawar. But Mr. Abbas Tyabji was able successfully to appeal to local patriotism for the disposal of his khadi. And he tells me that nowhere was he put off by people, but, as soon as they understood what this khadi meant, they took all that he had to offer. This khadi, as all other khadi, has had an interesting history. Its price has gone down in the same proportion as it has risen in quality. And yet there is plenty of room for improvement in the quality of khadi and decline of its prices. The decline in prices and progress in improvement depend upon steady improvement in carding and spinning upon which increasingly great attention is being bestowed. But the chief points to be noticed in this connection are that khadi has been the means of giving work and wages to poor women who would have been without either but for khadi and that there is unlimited scope for this work provided demand for khadi can be kept up.

PERIPATETIC KHADI EXHIBITION

Khadi workers all the country over are discovering the great utility of khadi exhibitions in popularizing and demonstrating the various processes connected with cotton till it becomes khadi on the weavers' loom. Recently a peripatetic exhibition was organized in the district of Ratnagiri. It covered eight villages. In all these places

demonstrations were given in hand-ginning, carding, spinning on the wheel as well as the *takli*, and methods of testing the strength of yarn. There were exhibited samples of indigenous dyes, yarn spun by leaders, khadi of various grades and a small assortment of other swadeshi goods. Whilst the exhibition was on, in the respective villages, hawking too was resorted to. There was a reading-room improvised which furnished literature on khadi. There was a magic-lantern demonstration. Singing parties gave songs and *bhajans*[1]. People were encouraged and enabled to subscribe to the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial [Fund] and addresses on khadi were delivered by well-known speakers. The whole thing was organized in an efficient and inexpensive manner. The expenses amounted to Rs. 622-9-11. And these were partly covered by profits made on the khadi sales. There is no doubt that such exhibitions have a great educative value and further experience and consequent improvements may make them self-supporting.

Young India, 10-6-1926

439. KHADI PROGRESS

Here is a graph[2] illustrating three years' production and sale by the Khadi Pratishthan. The reader can see at a glance the enormous progress made by the Prathisthan as well in production as in sale.

Young India, 10-6-1926

440. VALUELESS ASSURANCE

The Union Government have, the Government of India tell the public in a *communique*, given the assurance that

> there is no present intention on the part of the Union Government of extending the regulations beyond the position as it existed prior to the judgment of the Transvaal Provincial Division of the Supreme Court in the case, Rex *v.* Hildick Smith, when it was held that certain regulations with reference to miners and works, which have actually been in force in South Africa since 1911 and in certain provinces for many years before that date, were not valid under the sections of the Act in terms of which they were promulgated.

[1] Devotional songs
[2] Not reproduced here

The *communique* further states :

> that the Government of India have also been assured that should any such extension of the scope of these regulations be contemplated in future, every reasonable opportunity will be given to all parties in the Union interested in the matter to make representations.

I hold these two assurances to be simple camouflage. For the Union Government, in reply to questions in the Union House of Assembly, have been repeatedly saying the same thing that they have now told the Government of India, namely, that they had no present intention of exceeding the scope of the regulations beyond the position that existed prior to the judgment in question. The sting of the new Bill lies in its enabling powers. It is like the sword of Damocles hanging over the heads of both the Natives of South Africa and the Indian settlers, for, it can be made applicable to the latter precisely as the former. The Bill is, therefore, as insulting as it can possibly be made. Only it does not affect the material interests of the Indians as much as the Class Areas Bill, not because of any goodwill on the part of the Union Government, but because Indians as a rule do not take to labour, skilled or unskilled, of the kind contemplated under the Colour Bar Bill. They are better touched materially through their trade and through restriction of residential rights. And this is sought to be accomplished by the Class Areas Bill which is to be considered by the Round Table Conference. The Colour Bar Bill shows the mentality of the Union Government and as *The Times of India* correspondent very properly says in effect the acceptance by the Union Government of the proposal for a Round Table Conference is a mere courteous gesture. It is not to be interpreted to mean a change in the Union Government's angle of vision. And this deduction is further strengthened by the later information that in adumbrating his native policy, General Hertzog has made it clear that, whilst he is prepared to allow limited representation in the Union Parliament to the Natives and to the Coloured people, he will not allow any whatsoever to the Indian. The result which *The Times of India* correspondent rightly deduces is that the Indian, in the estimation of General Hertzog, stands infinitely lower than the Native. In fact, he is to be tolerated till he can be effaced from South Africa as a necessary evil. The Colour Bar Bill therefore cannot be isolated from the different Acts of the Union Government. It forms part of its settled policy and furnishes the key to it.

Nor is the second assurance given by the Union Government of the slightest value. Is it any new right that they have conceded when they say that when the scope of the regulations is extended every reasonable opportunity will be given to all parties in the Union, interested in the matter, to make representations specially when it is known to them that representations of Indians carry no voting force behind them? And, if the qualifying phrase in the *communique* means that parties outside the Union, that is, the Government of India or the Imperial Government will not be allowed even to make representations, surely the assurance is worse than useless, because, it is a restriction of which the announcement has been made and not a concession.

Young India, 10-6-1926

441. WHAT IS PRAYER?

A medical graduate asks :

> What is the best form of prayer? How much time should be spent at it? In my opinion to do justice is the best form of prayer and one who is sincere about doing justice to all does not need to do any more praying. Some people spend a long time over *Sandhya*[1] and 95% of them do not understand the meaning of what they say. In my opinion prayer should be said in one's mother tongue. It alone can affect the soul best. I should say that a sincere prayer for one minute is enough. It should suffice to promise God not to sin.

Prayer means asking God for something in a reverent attitude. But the word is used also to denote any devotional act. Worship is a better term to use for what the correspondent has in mind. But definition apart, what is it that millions of Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians and Jews and others do every day during the time set apart for the adoration of the Maker? It seems to me that it is a yearning of the heart to be one with the Maker, an invocation for His blessing. It is in this case the attitute that matters, not words uttered or muttered. And often the association of words that have been handed down from ancient times has an effect which in their rendering into one's mother tongue they will lose altogether. Thus the *Gayatri* translated and recited in, say, Gujarati, will not have the same effect as the original. The utterance of the word 'Rama' will instantaneoulsy affect millions of Hindus, when the word 'God', although they may

[1] Ritual prayer to Sun God

understand the meaning, will leave them untouched. Words after all acquire a power by long usage and sacredness associated with their use. There is much therefore to be said for the retention of the old Sanskrit formulae for the most prevalent *mantras* or verses. That the meaning of them should be properly understood goes without saying.

There can be no fixed rule laid down as to the time these devotional acts should take. It depends upon individual temperament. These are precious moments in one's daily life. The exercises are intended to sober and humble us and enable us to realize that nothing happens without His will and that we are but 'clay in the hands of the Potter'. These are moments when one reviews one's immediate past, confesses one's weakness, asks for forgiveness and strength to be and do better. One minute may be enough for some, twenty-four hours may be too little for others. For those who are filled with the presence of God in them, to labour is to pray. Their life is one continuous prayer or act of worship. For us ordinary mortals there must be a middle path between these two extremes. We are not so exalted as to be able to say that all our acts are a dedication, nor perhaps are we so for gone as to be living purely for self. Hence have all religions set apart times for general devotion. Unfortunately these have nowadays become merely mechanical and formal, where they are not hypocritical. What is necessary therefore is the correct attitude to accompany these devotions.

For definte personal prayer in the sense of asking God for something, it should certainly be in one's own tongue. Nothing can be grander than to ask God to make us act justly towards everything that lives.

Young India, 10-6-1926

442. CO-OPERATION IN SPINNING

A dear friend asks me to answer the question that has occurred to him and his other friends.

> Is there co-operation in spinning? Does it not rather make people purely individualistic, self-centred and keep them separate from one another even as so many pebbles?

The briefest and the most decisive answer I can give is : "Go,

watch any well-organized spinning centre and test the thing for yourself. You will then discover that spinning cannot succeed without co-operation."

But brief though this answer is, it is, I know, useless for those (and they are the majority) who cannot or will not make the time for paying such a visit. I must therefore try to convince by describing such a centre in the best way I can.

In speaking to a co-operative society in Madras last year, I said that through hand-spinning I was trying to found the largest co-operative society known to the world. This is not an untrue claim. It may be ambitious. It is not untrue because hand-spinning cannot serve the purpose for which it is intended unless millions actually co-operate in it.

The purpose is to drive away enforced idleness and pauperism which is the result mainly of that idleness in India. This purpose, it will be admitted, is grand enough. The effort must be correspondinlgy great.

There must be co-operation from the very commencement. If spinning makes one self-reliant it also enables one to understand the necessity of interdependence almost at every step. An ordinary spinner must find a ready market for her surplus yarn. She cannot weave it. There can be no market for her yarn without the co-operation of a large number of people. Just as our agriculture is possible only because there is co-operation, be it ever so little, of millions in regard to the cultivation and disposal of the produce, so will spinning be successful only if there is co-operation on an equally large scale.

Take the working of any typical centre. At the central office is collected seed cootton for spinners. The cotton is ginned by ginners perhaps at the centre. It is distributed then among carders who re-deliver it in the shape of slivers. These are now ready to be distributed among the spinners who bring their yarn from week to week and take away fresh slivers and their wages in return. The yarn thus received is given to weavers to weave and received back for sale in the shape of khaddar. This latter must now be sold to the wearers—the general public. Thus the centre office has to be in constant living human touch with a very large number of people irrespective of caste, colour or creed. For the centre has no dividends to make, has no exclusive

care but the care of the most needy. The centre to be useful must keep itself clean in every sense of the term. The bond between it and the component parts of the vast organization is purely spiritual or moral. A spinning centre therefore is a co-operative society whose members are ginners, carders, spinners, weavers and buyers—all tied together by a common bond, mutual goodwill and service. In this society the course of every piece can be traced almost with certainty as it floats to and fro. And as these centres grow and draw the youth of the country who have the fire of patriotism burning brightly in their hearts and whose purity will stand the strain of all temptation, they will, they must, become centres for radiating elementary knowledge in hygiene, sanitation, domestic treatment of simple diseases among the villagers and education among their children suited to their needs. That time is not yet. The begin-ning indeed has been made. But the movement can grow only slowly. It is not possible to show substantial results till khadi has become a salable article in the bazaar like ghee or, better still, postage stamp. For the present a vast amount of energy has to be spent in educating the people to buy khadi in the place of any other cloth even as a child would eat and bless the rice cooked by its mother without stopping to think of the quality or the price of the rice so cooked. If it did, it would find that the rice cooked by the mother was far too dear for the labour and the love spent upon the working. And so will it be with khadi one day, when the children of mother Hind wake from their deep sleep and realize that yarn spun and worked by the hands of her daughters and sons can never be too dear for her crores of children. When this simple truth dawns upon us, spinning centres will multiply a hundredfold, a ray of hope will penetrate the dark Indian cottages and that hope will be the surest foundation for the freedom we want but do not know how to achieve.

Young India, 10-6-1926

443. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Thursday [*June 10, 1926*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Your Letter. I wish you could make a long stay there and build up your body getting away from it all. There must be no more fits of giddiness. The real remedy for it is, mainly, open air and exercise. You must take a ten-mile walk daily. I should not think that is at all too much. The Charkha Sangh committee meets on the 26th; you do not therefore have to come here till then. It would be better if you resisted the temptation to stay in Delhi and at the Rampura Ashram for the present. I want you to spend as much time in Mussoorie as possible. Ask Lakshmidas to write to me from time to time. He should improve his health a lot. Velabehn will arrive here this evening along with Mani.

Blessings from
BAPU

JAMNALAL BAJAJ
NARAYAN NIWAS
MUSSOORIE, U.P.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 2866

444. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS DUPTA

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 11, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. I must not argue with you, for, your reasoning is perfect. Khadi work requires *tapasya*. You are bent upon it. I can therefore say, may God help you.

If Hema Prabha Devi surrenders everything of her own accord and if she can bask in the sunshine of freedom from all possessions, I should naturally feel delighted. I have simply uttered a note of warning as a friend. But you will both do as the spirit guides you.

[1] From the postmark

The meeting is postponed to the 26th instant to enable everyone to be in his place on the 21st instant which is the Id day. I shall expect you on or before 26th.

You must have received my letter about a travelling charkha for Mr. Muhammad[1] Hassan Chaman of Kera, Cutch. If not, please send one to him by V.P.P.

Mr. Birla has written to me of what he has done. It is good that you have enlisted his interest. I have written to him[2] at length and asked him to give all the help he can to the Pratishthan.

Yours,

From a microfilm : S. N. 11182

445. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 11, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your circular letter. You might have noticed a paragraph in the current number of *Young India* about the Society's loss. I am thinking out to whom I should make the appeal. Is Malaviyaji approaching anybody to your knowledge? There are monied men whom both he and I can approach. But, I know that he can approach them with greater confidence and greater effect. Has anyone approached Mr. Ambalal Sarabhai? To Jamnalalji I shall be writing. He is in a somewhat peculiar position just now. He has ceased to multiply his earnings and has almost ear-marked the profits he is making. I know that there is still a reserve. I fancy that he will send something, but nothing like what I would like him or ask him to send if he was his former self.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S. N. 12059

[1] 'Muhen' in "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 3-6-1926
[2] *Vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 8-6-1926

446. LETTER TO AMIYA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 11, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I was simply wondering whether my letter had miscarried. I now understand the sad reasons for the delay in acknowledging my letter. You have not yet mentioned to me the calamity that has befallen you. How can I help you to find peace? It can only come from within and by waiting upon God and trusting Him with implicit faith. No man need ever feel lonely who feels the living presence of God near him and in him. Whatever peace I have found, has been found by increasing faith in the hand of God being in everything. Calamities then cease to be calamities. They test our faith and steadfastness. May you also find your peace in the midst of seeming strife.

Yours sincerely,

AMIYA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTI, ESQ.
TIRTHA NIBAS, PURI

From a photostat : S. N. 12060

447. LETTER TO EMIL RONIGER

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 11, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The idea of making any money out of my writings even for a charitable purpose is quite foreign to me. Up to now I have avoided all such temptation. This time the temptation has come in a double manner. Mr. Holmes was the first tempter and he suggested that unless some notable publisher had the copyright, it would not be possible to circulate the *Experiments with Truth* as much as it is desirable and he added that the copyright would bring me a respectable sum for many of my public undertakings. I have therefore allowed Mr. Holmes to deal with the Macmillans. I have heard nothing further from him. I have really no terms. I can only give you this assurance that I shall not close with the Macmillans till I have corresponded with you. I shall endeavour also at least to give you the

rights over the German translation. You may let me know what terms it is possible for you to offer consistently with all your obligations.

Yours sincerely,

EMIL RONIGER, ESQ.

RHEIN FELDEN

From a copy: S.N. 32243

448. LETTER TO JETHALAL H. JOSHI

June 11, 1926

If Bhai Nriprasad does not need you and Jamnadas wants you, then settle down there. Where can I find a better educational field for you than this? Whatever I teach you is bound to be uninteresting from the modern viewpoint.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 10922

449. LETTER TO FULCHAND KASTURCHAND SHAH[1]

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday, June 11, 1926

BHAI FULCHAND,

Your letter. You may perhaps like to file Jamnadas's postcard; hence I am returning it to you. I have written to him that he should have asked me for money. Because of our difficult [financial] position you do not have the means to offer the money. Most probably I have written to you that my going to Finland has been cancelled. I have also replied to Devchandbhai. Today there is a letter from the Dewan. I have sent that also to Devchandbhai. In reply he writes that he would come by the end of the month. I have received the report and shall go through it. Fixing the date of the conference has been delayed and that troubles me too. But I am a bird with my wings clipped; so in every such case my inclination is to wait. It is perfectly true that Manilal has deposited a sum of Rs. 32,000 with Revashankerbhai, but we are not in a position to use it yet.

[1] For other letters to the addressee, *vide* "Letter to Fulchand", 25-3-1926 and 7-5-1926.

A letter of authority for Manilal is still to come. He told me on his return from Rajkot that it would come in a short time. On receiving this amount, whether my finances allow it or not, I shall definitely pay off the sums for which I have committed myself. I have talked to Vallabhbhai about the school at Rajkot. Whenever you need anything, please do ask for it. I am prepared to provide the cotton for the training of *Antyaja* teachers at Rajkot, Jetpur and other places. Bhai Balwantrai has arrived. I have asked him to keep Rs. 100 for the sale of khadi. And for making payments to the weavers he may ask for more as the need arises. I am having a talk about Gariyadhar with Bhai Shambhushanker who is here today. I have found that he is getting the work done very economically. It seems to me Gariyadhar work is the least expensive of all. Bhai Balwantrai said that Mulchandbhai needed Rs. 500 for the *Antyaja* Ashram, which has been paid to him on his personal security. All your queries have now been answered.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 10923

450. LETTER TO CHUNILAL D. GANDHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 11, 1926

BHAISHRI CHUNILAL,

I have your letter as well as the *hundi* from your friend. I intend to use the money for propagating khadi.

SJT. C. D. GANDHI
C/O TATA MILLS (LTD.)
BOMBAY HOUSE, BRUCE STREET
FORT, BOMBAY

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19611

451. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday, June 11, 1926

BHAI DEVCHANDBHAI,

Here is a letter from the Dewan. Now we have to wait for the rest of this month at any rate.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19612

452. LETTER TO KANTILAL H. PAREKH

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 11, 1926

BHAISHRI KANTILAL,

I have your letter and it is quite to the point. You did well in writing. If you still have anything to ask do write to me without hesitation. The responsibility concerning khadi that rests on you and on others like you cannot be taken away, until we get men who will put less responsibility on others or who have the same capacity as yourself and until they are able to carry on khadi work by themselves. Along with the spread of the khadi movement we also exhort people to lead a simple life. Until we give up some of our undesirable habits khadi work cannot gain momentum.

If to make khadi a practical proposition is interpreted to mean that it should compete with mill-made cloth, I think that is almost impossible. Dharma need never enter into such competition. Millowners may give away their cloth gratis just to kill khadi, but can we do the same with khadi? There certainly is competition in trade when commodities are offered, [virtually] for nothing. I am willing to listen to all critism of the work there. And I am eager to remove all recognizable faults. If it is said that since the workers are my own men the demands of that centre are readily conceded, the complaint is entirely baseless. I know it, because it is contrary to my nature to do so. Of course, one thing is certain I am entirely useless where I cannot trust people. I shall be glad if you let me know why you regard the complaint as reasonable.

I am not at all perturbed by the way Ramdas has now been selling khadi. It cannot be said that he compels people to buy khadi. But one can certainly say that they buy it owing to a sense of shame

or out of a desire to help others. I see nothing wrong in it. Only thus can the spread of khadi be initiated. The over-all expense on khadi is much more than the artisans' wages, hence it is our duty to effect as much economy as possible. That depends on the spirit of sacrifice and the efficiency of the workers. I believe this improvement is coming gradually. But please make whatever suggestions you can in this regard. We shall certainly implement as many of them as possible.

Now about you. If I know why you have lost faith in the khadi movement, I can find a remedy. We must promote the desire to work without remuneration. But how many people will do that? Before you do what you like, there is need to assume a big responsibility, you may certainly stay in the Ashram as long as you consider it necessary. The Ashram made you what you are and its reward therefore is your character. Always guard it. Make it nobler every day. That itself is the return. How long you can serve by living in the Ashram depends perhaps on your own convenience. One can free oneself of worries on one's own. If freedom from worry depended upon another's convenience, it could never be had. When the season there is over, do come here. Before that if you have anything particular to say, do write to me. If the answer I have given is not complete, please let me know.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 10927

453. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 12, 1926

I have your letter. You will have misfortune. But there is as much connection between your being in Tiruchengodu and the water scarcity as there is between Z—a newcomer—being in the same district and the scarcity. Those who charge you with rivalry unconsciously give your presence an importance you did not deserve. But as there is not much danger of your becoming inflated, let those good people who so charge you have all the pleasure they can derive from their belief.

The Finland idea is dead and decently buried. Dr. Dalal has suspected Hydrocele in Devdas. Even if it requires an operation it would be a minor thing. I certainly don't worry about it, perhaps,

because I don't dread the knife so much as I[1] dread drug-taking.

Poor Santanam! It almost appears as if we in India have more than our share of domestic troubles. And in India the Southern Presidency seems to take the first place.

I shall speak to Shankerlal about the arrangements of the tour.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 10929

454. LETTER TO FENNER BROCKWAY

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 12, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your cable. I am so sorry you had to go to the expense of cabling me. Newspaper correspondents will publish things without verification. There was a talk about my going to Finland. But it was announced in the newspaper that everything was arranged, whereas, nothing was certain. The final decision come to was that I hould not go to Finland. Had I gone, Iwould certainly have accepted your invitation. As it was, I had to send you the following cablegram which I hope you duly received.

"Thanks, not going Europe."

Yours sincerely,

FENNER BROCKWAY, ESQ.
INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY
13, GREAT GEORGE STREET
LONDON S. W. 1

From a photostat : S.N. 11361

[1] The source has "a" in place of the words "as I".

455. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA GARU

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 12, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

What a sad letter you have sent me. I appreciate the confidence you have given me. After all it is these domestic troubles which enrich one's life, for, they enable us to realize the vanity of wordly pomp, worldly riches and worldly happiness and enable us also to realize the true beauty of ahimsa, otherwise, love of the purest type.

I am glad both your wife and daughter are improving. I hope that the improvement will be continuous and permanent.

Yes, Devdas had an operation. He was dischaged last week and is now taking his convalescence with Jamnalalji at Mussoorie. I am not going to Finland. There was a talk about my going. But I decided not to go.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 19616

456. LETTER TO C. V. KRISHNA

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 12, 1926

MY DEAR KRISHNA,

I have your letter. This is my message for the Conference:

I wish the Conference every success. The fact of its being held on the Pinakini Satyagraha Ashram grounds is a tribute to the memory of the late Hanumantha Rao who devoted his life selflessly to the national cause. I hope that the various conferences, being held there will emphasize the necessity of hand-spinning and khaddar and that the black taint of untouchability that I discovered when I was in that district will be removed as a result of the effort of the Conference.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S. N. 19617

457. LETTER TO "FORWARD"

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 12, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Here is the best reminiscence I can give you of Deshbandhu for your special number :

'Throughout my privileged stay with Deshbandhu at Darjeeling during the closing days of his earthly life, I found that, ill as he was, the bulk of his time was devoted to the thought of his country. Even whilst he had fever on he would discuss with me the future plans that he had laid down for his country's uplift. I often ask myself whether we are doing anything or enough to have deserved such a man as Deshbandhu.'

Yours sincerely,

THE EDITOR
"FORWARD"
19, BRITISH INDIAN ST.
CALCUTTA

From a photostat : S.N. 19618

458. LETTER TO GANGABEHN MAJMUDAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, June 12, 1926

RESPECTED GANGABEHN,

Your letter. What can I do if you distrust persons who stay with me? I can't agree upon the prices, etc., of two years ago. I can pay you only at present rates. Over and above that, I shall try to pay you as much as I can. I only want you to appoint someone you trust to sit with a person nominated by me. Both of them may fix the prices according to existing conditions and I am prepared to pay them. I would request you to settle this matter urgently.

BAPU

SMT. GANGABEHN MAJMUDAR
NAGARWADA, RICHEY ROAD
AHMEDABAD

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 10942

459. LETTER TO MULSHANKER KANJI BHATT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, June 12, 1926

BHAISHRI MULSHANKER,

I could make out nothing from your letter. I can intervene only if there is a debt due to you in law or in equity. I find neither in this case.

SJT. MULSHANKER KANJI BHATT
KALBADEVI, NEW MARKET, ROOM NO. 27
BOMBAY-2

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19613

460. LETTER TO SOMNATH PURUSHOTTAM

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, June 12, 1926

BHAI SOMNATH,

I have your letter. In my view the primary rules to be observed by all are truth and non-violence. And I believe that one who does not control his palate can observe neither rule. The practice of some yoga would, I imagine, be necessary for successfully observing these rules.

SJT. SOMNATH PURUSHOTTAM
BHANGWADI THEATRE
BOMBAY-2

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19614

461. LETTER TO JAGJIVANDAS NARANDAS MEHTA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, June 12, 1926

BHAISHRI JAGJIVANDAS,

Bhai Shambhushanker has arrived here. I discussed everything with him. Just now he has asked for Rs. 300. A *hundi* for the amount is sent herewith. Some of the debts are small, which he says he would pay off. I have found a debt of Rs. 1,300 from you. Bhai Shambhushanker has also told me that you intend to take interest on that amount. I feel that you cannot charge interest on money [lent for]

public causes. Bhai Shambhushanker says that you constantly complain that you get no money from me, and you have to spend your own money. I remember no occasion of with holding money without reason. Some delay might have been caused in understanding things; but for that, there was no delay whatever. Even if I have unreasonably delayed payment, you must never give your money and, if you do, you should not charge interest. I am prepared to pay off the money on behalf of the Parishad, when the question of interest is sorted out. Bhai Shambhushanker's salary was also discussed. He should take Rs. 50 up to July and then Rs. 25. Bhai Shambhu-shanker would think it over and write to me. He deserves much more but he has told me of his desire to lead a selfless life and his resolve to take nothing for public service as far as possible. Hence I suggested Rs. 25.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 19615

462. WHAT IS NATURAL?[1]

No word seems to be more abused today than the word 'natural'. For instance, a correspondent writes, "as eating and drinking are natural to man, even so is anger." Another seems to argue : "The sexual function is as natural as the other functions of the body. Were it not so, God would not have endowed it to man. If it was not our duty to curse the wicked and to bless the good, why should we have been endowed with the faculty of cursing and blessing? May it not be our duty to develop all our faculties to perfection? And thus *himsa* would appear to be as much one's dharma as ahimsa. In short virtue and vice are figments of our imagination. Your ahimsa is a sign of weakness, inasmuch as it expresses only one side of our nature. Rather than regard it as the highest religion, why should we not regard it as the highest irreligion? *Ahimsa Paramo Dharmah* was orginally *Ahimsa Paramo Adharmah*- the negative prefix *a* (not) having somehow dropped out, or been rubbed out by some enemy of mankind. For on many occasions, *ahimsa* can be demonstrated to be the highest irreligion." This is not one man's argument, I have boiled down and put together the arguments of many. The theoryabout the negative *a* in *ahimsa*[2] being

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 13-6-1926. This is a translation by Mahadev Desai.

[2] Slip for *adharma*

dropped was propounded by an old barrister friend, and he did so in all seriousness. Indeed if we were to put man in the same category as the brute, many things could be proved to come under the description 'natural'. But if they belong to two different species, not everything that is natural to the brute is natural to man. "Progress is man's distinction, man's alone, not beast's." Man has discrimination and reason. Man does not live by bread alone, as the brute does. He uses his reason to worship God and to know Him, and regards the attainment of that knowledge as the *summum bonum* of life. The desire to worship God is inconceivable in the brute, while man can voluntarily worship even Satan. It must therefore be, and is, man's nature to know and find God. When he worships Satan, he acts contrary to his nature. Of course, I will not carry conviction to one who makes no distinction bet-ween man and the brute. To him virtue and vice are convertible terms. While to the man whose end and aim is realization of God, even the functions of eating and drinking can be natural only within certain limits. For having knowledge of God as his end, he will not eat or drink for the sake of enjoyment but solely for sustaining the body. Restraint and renunciation will therefore always be his watchwords even in respect of these functions.

And if it is man's nature to know and find God, sexual indulgence should be contrary to his nature, and complete renunciation of it will accord best with his mission. For realization of God is impossible with-out complete renunciation of the sexual desire. It is not man's duty to develop all his faculties to perfection; his duty is to develop all his Godward faculties to perfection and to suppress completely those of a contrary tendency.

Anyone blessed with choice or free will to accept and reject cannot but distinguish between good and evil, virtue and vice. For these mean in other words nothing but things to be accepted and things to be rejected. Thus robbing someone of his property is a thing to be rejected, hence bad or sinful. We have within us both good and bad desires. It is our duty to cultivate the former and to suppress or eradicate the latter, and if we fail therein we should remain brutes though born men. Birth as a human being is therefore declared by all religions as a rare privilege—a state of probation. And Hinduism says that if we are weighed and found wanting we should have to be reborn as beasts.

The world is full of *himsa* and nature does appear to be 'red in tooth and claw'. But if we bear in mind that man is higher than the brute, then is man superior to that Nature. If man has a divine mission to fulfil, a mission that becomes him, it is that of ahimsa. Standing as he does in the midst of *himsa*, he can retire into the innermost depths of his heart and declare to the world around him that his mission in this world of *himsa* is ahimsa, and only to the extent that he practises it does he adorn his kind. Man's nature then is not *himsa*, but ahimsa, for he can speak from experience, his innermost conviction, that he is not the body but *atman*, and that he may use the body only with a view to expressing the *atman*, only with a view to self-realization. And from that experience he evolves the ethics of subduing desire, anger, ignorance, malice and other passions, puts forth his best effort to achieve the end and finally attains complete success. Only when his efforts reach that consummation can be said to have fulfilled himself, to have acted according to his nature. Conquest of one's passions therefore is not superhuman, but human, and observance of ahimsa is heroism of the highest type, with no room therein for cowardice or weakness.

Young India, 24-6-1926

463. MAHUDHA KHADI CENTRE

I give below some facts from the report of this Centre which Shri Mohanlal Pandya has sent to me.

The Centre provides spinning work to 261 women, of whom 236 are Muslims. The rest belong to the Brahmin, Vania and Barot communities. The number of spinners is increasing day by day. This work is a great help to them, as they would not go out of their homes to do any other work. The Muslim women call the spinning-wheel the glory of the housewife.

As a result of this activity, three persons are employed in carding and five women in making slivers. Eight looms are operating.

The quantity of yarn produced is 20 maunds a month. Previously, they spun yarn of 6 counts, but now the Centre does not want them to spin yarn of less than 10 counts and does not, therefore, pay less than 5 annas per pound. That comes to Rs. $12\frac{1}{2}$ per maund, the total for 20 maunds being Rs. 246. This means an average earning of less than a rupee for every woman who spins. Shri Mohanlal,

however, tells me that it is probably one and a half rupees. If he is right, then either the number of spinners is smaller or the yarn spun is of a higher count.

From this quantity of yarn they weave every month 65 pieces of khadi, each of 18 yds. length and 27 inches width. They make from these pieces towels of $1\frac{1}{2}$ yds. length and 22 inches width, and small square hand-kerchiefs. Most of this khadi is sold in Bombay. From Magashar[1] to Vaishakh[2], khadi worth Rs. 1,294 was sold locally. The Centre now has stocks of khadi brought from other sources too. Their sale during the last three months amounted to Rs. 842. The selling price of the khadi is fixed at 20 per cent less than the cost price. The Centre has a staff of six persons.

I commend to this Centre and others like it the example of Bengal. There all khadi is produced for local consumption and, therefore, every effort is made to meet local needs. The result is that a large quantity of fine khadi with greater width is produced, and the production of such khadi is increasing day by day. If, in this manner, we work to meet local needs, we get opportunities of coming into contact with people belonging to all classes of society and are able to serve them, and at the same time the consumption of khadi will also spread to larger numbers. If we adopt this method of promoting the use of khadi, a good many problems will be solved automatically and by and by we shall advance not in arithmetical progression but in geometrical progression.

If the same attention were paid to improving the strength of the yarn as is paid to its fineness, every weaver would agree to weave that yarn. Experience tells us that if we wish to improve the quality of yarn, the spinner should himself or herself prepare the slivers. It need not be pointed out that this will add to the earnings of the spinners.

Another suggestion which I should like to make to workers is that they should go to villages in the interior and acquaint themselves with the conditions there. They should study the conditions of the poor in those villages and examine the possibility of introducing the spinning-wheel among them. I know that it is very difficult for people like us, brought up in modern conditions, to go and live in

[1] Names of months in the Indian calendar, corresponding roughly to November-December and April-May

[2] *ibid.*

places far removed from any railway station. Once we are there, we cannot leave as often as we might want. However, it is in these villages that real work awaits us, and eventually we shall be forced to go to them. There are more than 7,000 railway stations to serve seven lakh villages, and, if the Government's tax collectors can reach them, why should not servants of the country go there to give the people a return for the taxes which they pay? It should not be forgotten that the people who collect the taxes as also those who benefit from them directly or indirectly are from among our own middle class.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-6-1926

464. WHAT PROVISION SHOULD BE MADE FOR DISABLED CATTLE?

A gentleman devoted to cow-protection writes :[1]

Those who have read my articles [on the subject of cow-protection] cannot be in doubt about my views on this point, for I cannot even for a moment entertain the idea that disabled cattle should be left uncared for. I believe it to be the duty of all of us to look after such cattle. But I have often pointed out that kindness to animals does not mean merely this. Cow-protection has a wide connotation, and we do not discharge our duty to cows and buffaloes fully by merely looking after disabled cattle. Cow-protection means preventing, in a manner consistent with dharma, that is, without doing anyone harm, the unnecessary slaughter of cattle which is going on at present. Today, either through ignorance or fanaticism, we have given cow-protection an extremely narrow meaning. That is why we helplessly witness or tolerate the unnecessary slaughter of cows before our very eyes. With a little intelligence, some self-sacrifice and a measure of practical knowledge, we can save countless cows and buffaloes and thereby preserve the wealth of the country. An attempt is being made in these pages to explain this. This way of protecting cattle will necessarily ensure the protection of disabled and infirm cattle. At present, such cattle are a burden on us, and therefore, one might even say that they are not protected in the right manner. I am

[1] The letter is not translated here. While generally approving of Gandhiji's views, the correspondent wanted to know what provisions he would recommend for disabled cattle if the existing *goshalas* were turned into dairies as advised by him.

convinced that, when we have solved the problem of cow-protection in an intelligent manner, we shall be able to take excellent care of infirm and disabled cattle.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-6-1926

465. LETTER TO N. S. VARADACHARI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 13, 1926

MY DEAR VARADACHARI,

Your letter stuns me. Unless you have lost faith in the virtue of khadi how can you possibly want to leave khadi work? I had hoped that you were the last person in the world to think of deserting khadi. I can understand your difficulties. But does not success in any enterprise mean capacity for overcoming difficulties no matter however great they may be? If you cannot possibly do with the salary you are getting, you must let me know what you need. If the salary cannot be paid out of the Charkha Fund, some extra work might be found for you. "Where there is a will there is a way". The only thing needful is that there should be a determination not to desert khadi no matter what it costs. But, if your faith in khadi has slackened, you should tell me so. I have warned friends repeatedly that if in their experience they find khadi to be an impracticable proposition, they must not hesitate to say so first to me if they will and then to the public. I have no desire to bolster up a wrong cause no matter what grief it may give to me personally. As a matter of fact it will be no grief to me but unmixed joy to discover my error. No friend therefore need spare me when he finds that my faith in khadi is like building castles in the air. But, if your faith is as green as when you wrote your essay then you dare not desert khadi. If necessary, you can come and discuss things personally with me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. S. VARADACHARI
ERODE

From a microfilm : S.N. 11184

466. LETTER TO V. LAWRENCE

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 13, 1926

MY DEAR LAWRENCE,

I was delighted to receive your full letter after so many months or is it years? I did know that one of your sons was in Jaffna. How strange however that he should never write to me? I suppose you are now rich enough to let him even pay a visit to me. Let him come. I will give him some lessons in spinning and he will also see something of real Indian life.

Yes. I would love to listen to the music of your daughters. Ramdas is just now with me. He is engaged in doing khaddar work. He will be leaving me for his headquarters in a few days. Devdas had an operation for appendicitis and he is now taking his convalescence with a friend at a hill station. Chhaganlal and Maganlal are here with their families. Jamnadas, the third brother whom you know, is in charge of a national school at Rajkot. Mrs. Naidu is touring through India. Mr. Andrews has gone to his friend Mr. Stokes who is living near Simla. This finishes the news of those whom you know. I am keeping well and passing my time principally in editing the two newspapers.

With love to you all.

Yours sincerely,

V. LAWRENCE, ESQ.
19, FOUNDRY LANE
DURBAN, S. AFRICA

From a photostat : S.N. 19619

467. LETTER TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Sunday, June 13, 1926

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I got your letter. As for my message, it was on these lines : If you can free yourself occasionally for short intervals, you may be able to do some work as a supervisor and earn something. This suggestion was made in the belief that Balubhai would not be willing

at present to allow you to come to the Ashram. I knew well that you would not like the suggestion and even said so to Nanabhai. But I thought you might perhaps accept a supervisor's job for a short time as the work is, I think, lighter and while doing it you can stay in Bombay. I would certainly like your coming, if you can, to the Ashram and, if your health permits, your taking up lessons in weaving. What you say about the students is right. I would recommend it to them and would talk about women occasionally.

How long would Girdhari have to be there?

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 19620

468. LETTER TO KASAMALI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Sunday, June 13, 1926

BHAISHRI KASAMALI,

Your letter. God is one. I do not understand your difficulty in conceivign Him as formless. That which has a form cannot be all-pervading, it needs must be the subtlest. It can therefore be only formless. All must admit the need for a guru but one may not hastily accept someone as a guru. In this age to seek a guru is to believe in one, because to acquire a perfect guide one must perfectly qualify oneslef. Moreover if we regard all faiths as true there is no need for us to relinquish our faith or make others change theirs, since all can adopt whatever satisfies them from all the religions.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 10932

469. MESSAGE TO THE STUDENTS

The Gujarati Mahavidyalaya opened, after the last summer vacation, on June 14th, with an address from Gandhiji which, it being his day of silence, was read for him. The following is the translation :

1921 and 1926—What a difference?

Please do not think that I am striking a melancholy note. We are not going back, our country is not going back. We have gone five years nearer swaraj and there can be no doubt about it. If someone says that it was very nearly achieved in 1921 and today it is far away—no one knows how far—do not believe it. Prayerful, well-meaning effort never goes in vain, and man's success lies only in such an effort. The result is in His hands.

Strength of numbers is the delight of the timid. The valiant of spirit glory in fighting alone. And you are all here to cultivate that valour of the spirit. Be you one or many, this valour is the only true valour, all else is false. And the valour of the spirit cannot be achieved without Sacrifice, Determination, Faith and Humility.

We have built our Vidyalaya on the foundation of self-purification. Non-violent non-co-operation is one aspect of it. The 'non' means renunciation of violence and all that stands for it, i.e., all Government control. But so long as we do not co-operate with our 'untouchable' brethren, so long as there is no heart-unity between men of different faiths, so long as we do not co-operate with the millions of our countrymen by according to the spinning-wheel and khaddar the sacred place they deserve, the negative prefix is entirely nugatory. That non-co-operation will not be based on ahimsa, but *himsa*, i.e., hatred. A negative injunction without a positive obligation is like body without soul, worthy to be consigned to the flames. There are 7,000 railway station for the 7,00,000 villages of India. We do not even claim to know these 7,000 villages. We know only through history the condition of villages not within easy reach of railway stations. The only loving tie of service that can bind the villagers to us is the spinning-wheel. Those who have not yet understood this basic truth are in this institution to no purpose. The education is not 'national' that takes no count of the starving millions of India and that devises no means for their relief. Government contact with the villages ends with the collection of revenue. Our contact with them begins with their service through the spinning-wheel, but it does not

end there. The spinning-wheel is the centre of that service. If you spend your next vacation in some far-off village in the interior you will see the truth of my remark. You will find the people cheerless and fear-stricken. You will find houses in ruins. You will look in vain for any sanitary or hygienic conditions. You will find the cattle in a miserable way, and yet you will see idleness stalking there. The people will tell you of the spinning-wheel having been in their homes long ago, but today they will entertain no talk of it or of any other cottage industry. They have no hope left in them. They live, for they cannot die at will. They will spin only if *you* spin. Even if a hundred out of a population of 300 in a village spin, you assure them of an additional income of Rs. 1,800 a year. You can lay the foundation of solid reform on this income in every village. It is easy I know to say this, but difficult to do. Faith can make it easy. 'I am alone, how can I reach seven hundred thousand villages?'—This is the argument that pride whispers to us. Start with the faith that if you fix yourself up in one single village and succeed, the rest will follow. Progress is then assured. The Vidyalaya wants to make you workers of that type. If it is a cheerless job, the Vidyalaya is indeed cheerless and fit to be deserted.

You will see that we open this term with a few changes in our staff. Acharya Gidwani whose sacrifice rendered the opening of this College possible, and who won the affection of students, has at my instance accepted the office of Principalship of Prem Maha Vidyalaya, Brindaban. I know that students were agitated over this. I congratulate them on their devotion to their Principal. I give you today the consolation that I gave the students that saw me the other day. We have to put up with these partings. We can but treasure the good things of our loved ones and follow them. Rest assured that we have done everything in the interests of the College. Fortunately we have Sjt. Nrisinhaprasad to serve us as Vice-Chancellor. He has lived with students for years and he often comes in contact with you. Trust yourselves to him. My doors are always open for every one of you. It has been a constant source of sorrow to me that I have not been able to come as closely in contact with you as I have wished.

Professors Athavale, Dalal, Mazumdar and Shah have left the College. Their resignations were unavoidable. It is to be regretted that we shall no more have the benefit of their scholarship. But in their stead we have as Professors Sjts. Kikubhai, Jinabhai Desai, Nagindas, Gopaldas and Gandhi.They are all ex-students of the Vidyalaya and

well may we take a pardonable pride in the fact. Let their industrious scholarship be a source of honour to us. May God bless you with long life for the selfless service of the country.

Young India, 17-6-1926

470. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Tuesday [*June 15, 1926*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

There has been no letter from any of you today. I certainly hoped for one from Devdas. There is no harm if you cannot come on the 26th. But that should be only on health grounds. Bhai Amritlal Sheth[2] has sent me a list today. You may take it that when you come here you will have to spend three or four days in Kathiawar.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photos tat of the Gujara ti: G.N. 2867

471. LETTER TO GANGABEHN MAJMUDAR

Jeth Sud 5, 1982 [*June 15, 1926*]

RESPECTED GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. I find that I have not been able to persuade you. I am helpless since you would neither accept my suggestion for arbitration nor let the man sent by me inspect the goods. I am in no wise bound to buy the goods, as you seem to think. It is my duty to save the Rs. 10,000 which I have given to you. This is my last request to you. If you agree to nothing, I would be driven in desperation to approach a lawyer.

BAPU

From a microf ilm of the Gujara ti: S.N. 10942

[1] The letter was evidently a sequel to the letter dated June 10; *vide* "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 10-6-1926. The addressee's reply bears the date June 18, 1926.

[2] Gujarati journalist and public worker, one of the leaders of Kathiawar Political Conference

472. LETTER TO MULCHAND UTTAMBHAI PAREKH

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Tuesday, June 15, 1926

BHAISHRI MULCHAND,

I have your letter. I have made a minor change in your draft. In case the Ashram is closed down, it is not clear what would happen to the buildings. Would the buildings lapse to the Durbar along with the land? If there is any such idea, it should be removed. In such a contingency, the value of the buildings should be assessed by an arbitrator and we should get back half of it. The names of the trustees are all right, I return the drafts sent by you.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 12189

473. TELEGRAM TO DR. SUNDRI MOHAN DAS[1]

[On or before *June 16, 1926*]

WISH FUNCTION EVERY SUCCESS.

GANDHI

Forward, 16-7-1926

474. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 16, 1926

DEAR FRIEND

I have your letter.[2] I am moving in the matter. Only my capacity for collecting monies has suffered a check which, on occasions such

[1] This was sent on the first death anniversary of C. R. Das which was being observed as Chittaranjan Hospital Day.

[2] In regard to the destruction by fire of the Servants of India Society printing presses at Poona, Gandhiji had written to Sastri on May 30, June 4 and June 11; *vide* "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 30-5-1926, "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 4-6-1926 and "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 11-6-1926.

as this loss to the Society, I somewhat deplore.

I am glad you have written to Seth Ambalal[1]. I am also writing to him. Jamnalalji[2] is due here very shortly. I therefore do not propose to write to him.

Yours sincerely,

RT. HON. V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
DECCAN GYMKHANA P.O.
POONA CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 10936

475. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 16, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[3] for which I thank you. Hakim Saheb[4] has not yet written to me. There is a letter due from him to me apart from his promise to you to write to me. You are quite right in saying that I should be bored by any discussion on political matters, for there is nothing new to be said upon them. I cannot possibly enthuse over Councils. My politics are confined to the spinning-wheel, the removal of untouchability and the prayers for Hindu-Muslim unity, etc. These three absorb the whole of my time and attention. What is the use of my interesting [myself] in things which I cannot appreciate, which I do not understand and which even repel me? So you will see, it is not you who bore me. Come and talk to me on the usefulness of the spinning-wheel, on the ways of spreading its message of hope, instruct me on the technique of the art and you will never weary me with your talk. If you ask me to listen to the respective merits

[1] Ambalal Sarabhai, Ahmedabad textile magnate
[2] Jamnalal Bajaj
[3] This is not available.
[4] Hakim Ajmal Khan

of different Council parties or candidates, then, I should be aslittle eager to discuss those things as I would to discuss the claims of rival jockeys.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR
FAIRY FALLS VIEW
KODAIKANAL OBSERVATORY
S. INDIA

From a photostat: S.N. 10938

476. LETTER TO GIRDHARILAL

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 16, 1926

DEAR LALA GIRDHARILAL

I have your letter[1] with the instructive enclosure[2]. I have read both carefully. About the enclosure, I can say nothing. The points raised in your letter: By all means try to bridge the gulf that at the present moment seems to be widening between the two parties—Hindus and Mussalmans. But I adhere to my opinion that no real solution is to come at the present moment out of any effort. I see distrust everywhere. Some more fighting is unfortunately in store for us before a peaceful atmosphere is created. When each party expects to humble the other, peace is impossible. It is more over my firm conviction that this exaggerated importance we are giving to the Councils out of all proportion to their usefulness, if there ever was any, is keeping us apart. Everyone who remains outside the Councils thinks that he is losing something. And, what is true of individuals is true of communities and, therefore, there is a mad rush over getting as much representation as possible and then getting in as many men as possible with a communal taint. If you can see any good out of effort made in an atmosphere such as this, I can but admire your zeal and credulity. But I cannot enthuse over any such effort. I am sorry I cannot send you a more hopeful or rather less discouraging letter.

[1] Dated June 12, this had referred to the writer's negotiations with the Muslims for communal peace in Lahore and sought Gandhiji's advice and suggestions (S.N. 11070).

[2] A long statement on the communal problem dated June 11, addressed to Motilal Nehru (S.N. 11070)

I shall be more at home in advising about anything you might have to say on Jallianwala Bagh.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

LALA GIRDHARILAL
CHAMBERLAIN ROAD
LAHORE

From a photostat: S.N. 11071

477. LETTER TO ASSISTANT EDITOR, "THE PEOPLE"

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 16, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

You ask me whether I see *The People* sometimes. I wish I could say yes to your question. But the fact is that I rarely see weekly newspapers. I glance at one or two dailies but most of my reading of newspapers and magazines I am obliged to do through deputy.

You further ask me for birthday greetings. These I send you most heartily and wish this offspring of Lalaji's[2] many happy returns of the day.

Yours sincerely,

THE ASSISTANT EDITOR
"THE PEOPLE"
12, COURT ROAD
LAHORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 19621

[1] Girdharilal had said he would write soon in regard to the Jallianwala Bagh memorial.

[2] Lajpat Rai

478. LETTER TO MOHMED HASAM CHAMAN

THE ASHRAM,
June 16, 1926

BHAISHRI MOHMED HASAM CHAMAN,

One who has a perfect understanding of ahimsa, who has gained spiritual knowledge, and is filled to the brim with compassion can certainly shed the turbulent body by forsaking food, drink, and so on while chanting the name of Rama. You have done a very good thing indeed in giving away five fields for the welfare of cattle.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm the Gujarati: S.N. 19916

479. LETTER TO HASAN ALI

ASHRAM,
June 16, 1926

BHAISHRI HASAN ALI,

. . .[1] Among the principal fruits I took were bananas, dates, tomatoes, groundnuts and lemons. The spiritual outcome of it was this: it was then that, in all my life and in respect of all things, I found myself almost free from passion. I had to introduce changes in my diet in England when I developed intense pain in my ribs.[2] I had only myself to blame for this pain. And then I came to India and again, because of my own fault, I was afflicted with acute dysentery.[3] After this I could not recover my health no matter what means I tried. So I started taking goat's milk which I continue up to this day.[4] I would always feel sorry for having done so, but I had a desire to live for the sake of the work I was doing and it persists even now. Yielding to that desire I started taking milk which I still continue. Doctors in their

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] This was in 1914, when Gandhiji was in England *en route* to India, and suffered from pleurisy.

[3] In 1918.

[4] *Ibid*.

researches think only of the body hence some or many of their experiments tend to kill the soul. . . .

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19917

480. NOTES

DESHBANDHU

Today[1] is the first anniversary of Deshbandhu's death. He died in harness, full of glory because full of faith. He believed in himself, in his country, because he believed in God; Up to the very last day he thought not of himself but of his country. He died for an ideal and he lives today through his ideal because it survives him. The dissensions in Bengal and the fratricidal war that is going on in India are indeed a negation of his ideal. But this aberration I hold to be merely a passing phase in working out the ideal. In the course of self-purification, we are bound to come upon steep rocks and deep ravines. We must bridge our way over the ravines and cut it through the rocks. And I have full faith that we shall overcome our difficulties. They are costing us dear. They may cost us dearer still. But no price will be greater for working out our own salvation for which Lokamanya, Deshbandhu and their predecessors lived and died.

THE POSITION OF NON-CO-OPERATORS

A friend asks:

> In the midst of so many parties in the country we hardly see where to set our feet. When so many parties are being formed, is it not desirable that those few who still believe in the boycott of Councils, Hindu-Muslim unity, etc., should consolidate their forces and re-declare their ideals? We are being accused of having turned our backs on swaraj and our creed of non-violence is being openly sneered at. At every step we are being taunted that we are wasting our time and energy. I admit that one need not be disturbed by taunts, but it does appear desirable to organize ourselves and call upon those who are of our way of thinking to join us. How long are we to have patience? How long must our faith be tried?

If patience is worth anything, it must endure to the end of time.

[1] June 16, 1926

And a living faith will last in the midst of the blackest storm. Non-violence acts in a manner contrary to violence. I cannot advise the formation of an additional party. Non-violent non-co-operation can and must stand without an organized party. Non-violent non-co-operation is on its trial. Let each one who has faith in boycott of Councils, law-courts, etc., stand firm even though he may be alone in his own district. Khaddar and national schools should satisfy everyone who wants an occupation. The facts and figures I am reproducing from week to week from reports received from various khadi centres must convince the most sceptical of the progress that khadi is making, surely though slowly. And the progress that is now being made is not due to any momentary enthusiasm but it is due to a reasoned faith in khadi. If non-co-operators have faith in non-violent non-co-operation they will know that it is not dead but it is very much alive and that it will give a good account of itself when the darkest cloud threatens the horizon. It will be found then to be the one sheet-anchor of India's hope.

IN SEARCH OF GURU

As a result of my statement in Chapter I, Part II of *My Experiments with Truth*[1], that I was still in search of a guru, numerous correspondents, Hindus, Mussalmans and Christians, have favoured me with long letters telling me how to find a guru. More letters are still coming in. Some tell me actually where to go and whom to see. Some refer me to certain literature. I am grateful to all these correspondents for their solicitude for my welfare. But let them and others realize that my difficulty is fundamental. Nor does it trouble me. It is fundamental because my conception of a guru is perhaps not of the ordinary. Nothing but perfection will satisfy me. I am in search of one who, though in the flesh, is incorruptible and unmoved by passion, free from the pairs of opposites, who is truth and ahimsa incarnate and who will therefore fear none and be feared by none. Everyone gets the guru he deserves and strives for. The difficulty of finding the guru I want is thus obvious. But it does not worry me; for it follows from what I have said, that I must try to perfect myself before I meet the guru in theflesh. Till then I must contemplate him in the spirit. My success lies in my continuous, humble, truthful striving. I *know* the

[1] Gandhiji's autobiography started appearing serially in *Young India*, 3-12-1925.

path. It is straight and narrow. It is like the edge of a sword. I rejoice to walk on it. I weep when I slip. God's word is: 'He who strives never perishes.' I have implicit faith in that promise. Though therefore from my weakness I fail a thousand times, I will not lose faith but hope that I shall see the Light when the flesh has been brought under perfect subjection as some day it must. I wonder if the kind correspondents will now understand my position and cease to worry about me but join me in the search, unless they are satisfied that they have found Him.

FOR MANAGERS OF "GAUSHALAS"

The Secretary of the All-India Cow-Protection Association circulated some time ago among the managers of all known *gaushalas* and *pinjrapoles* a set of questions asking for information. Very poor response has been made to the request hitherto. Lists have been printed and they can now be supplied on application to the Secretary, All-India Cow-Protection Association, Sabarmati. Chaunde Maharaj has undertaken to visit the majority of *gaushalas* in Maharashtra and get the information personally from the managers on behalf of the Association. I trust that the managers in these places will give him all the information required. I need hardly say that the A.I.C.P.A. has no desire whatsoever to acquire ownership of or control over any of these *gaushalas*. The desire is merely to collect information, tabulate and publish it for the guidance of all trustees and managers of such institutions and to assist them with advice. It is open to them, if they so wish, to be affiliated to the Association and receive its guidance and the benefit of the assistance of experts whose services the Association hopes to be able to secure at an early date. But whether any of these institutions is affiliated or not, it will be the duty of the Association to give all, the information in its possession to these societies. It is hardly necessary to state that co-ordination of effort on the part of nearly 1,500 *gaushalas* and their efficient management must result in the saving of many more cattle than are now saved. Affiliation would no doubt carry some responsibility on the part of those who seek affiliation. In their own interest they will be bound by rules made for their management and they will have to give a percentage of their income to the central Association. But it is entirely optional for every institution to seek or not to seek affiliation. The object of this note is merely to seek information.

SOUTH AFRICAN LEGISLATION

If anything is needed to emphasize the meaning of the warning issued by Mr. Andrews and myself, here is an extract from a South African letter:

> I feel that through the passage of the Colour Bar Bill the Government is not keeping its word with the Indian Government and the community, especially when on the top of this comes the Natal Educational Ordinance which, if passed, will mean the negation of educational rights we have, little as they are at present. In the direction of economics we see joint Councils raised under the Union Conciliation Act of 1921 in industries like furniture, printing, building, etc.—in which thousands of Indians are involved, without the Indian employees and employers being allowed to become members of the Trade Unions or Masters' Union who negotiate on behalf of the employees and employers and who go to make up the joint Councils who prepare the schedules or wages and other benefits; or, either allowed a voice in the joint Councils. Of course we have no objection to legislation aimed at bettering the conditions of workers, but at the same time what we do object to is that it is not fair to Indian employees and employers that schedules of wages be prepared which they have to abide by in which they have had no voice and the effect of it all is the annihilation of both the Indian employer and employees.

It shows as clearly as day-light which way the wind is blowing. The Class Areas Bill, because so much opposition was raised against it, has been postponed hut the policy underlying it is being pursued by the Union Government in a thousand other ways as instanced by the correspondent. It is impossible therefore to be too watchful about the way things are shaping in South Africa.

APRIL FIGURES

The following further figures show the progress of khadi in April last more accurately, covering as they do the provinces of Bengal and Gujarat:

	Production	Sale
Bengal	Rs. 34,670-0-0	Rs. 34,470-0-0
Gujarat	Rs. 9,735-0-0	Rs. 17,052-0-0
Total	Rs. 44,405 0-0	Rs. 51,522 0-0

Total for other provinces as per previous reports

Rs. 92,542-0-0 Rs. 2,09,088-0-0

Grand Total Rs. 1,36,947-0-0 Rs. 2,60,610-0-0

Young India, 17-6-1926

481. SOME KNOTTY POINTS

A medical friend from far-off Burma writes:

> Why do you emphasize khaddar and not swadeshi? Is not swadeshi the principle and khaddar a mere detail?

I do not regard khaddar to be a detail. Swadeshi is a theoretical term. Khaddar is the concrete and central fact of swadeshi. Swadeshi without khaddar is like the body without life, fit only to receive a decent burial or cremation. The only swadeshi cloth is khaddar. If one is to interpret swadeshi in the language of and in terms of the millions of this country, khaddar is a substantial thing in swadeshi like the air we breathe. The test of swadeshi is not the universality of the use of an article which goes under the name of swadeshi, but the universality of participation in the production or manufacture of such article. Thus considered, mill-made cloth is swadeshi only in a restricted sense. For, in its manufacture only an infinitesimal number of India's millions can take part. But in the manufacture of khaddar millions can take part. The more the merrier. Khaddar, in my opinion, is bound up the welfare of millions of human beings. Khaddar is, therefore, the largest part of swadeshi and it is the only true demonstration of it. All else follows from it. India can live even if we do not use brass buttons or tooth-picks made in India. But India cannot live if we refuse to manufacture and wear khaddar. Khaddar will cease to have this paramount importance when a more profitable employment is discovered for the idle hours of India's millions.

But says the Doctor:

> Good khaddar is costly and the ordinary variety is ugly.

I deny that any khaddar is ugly. Want of the dead-sameness of a machine-made article is not a sign of ugliness, but it is a sign of life, even as absence of sameness in the millions of leaves of a tree is no sign of its ugliness. As a matter of fact, it is the variety about the leaves which gives a tree its life-like beauty. I can picture a machine-made tree whose every leaf would be absolutely the same

size. It would look a ghastly thing, because we have not yet ceased to love the living tree. And, why should the cost of khaddar, good or bad, worry us if every penny we pay for it goes directly into the pockets of the starving millions? My experience is that in the majority of cases where people have taken to khaddar they have revised their tastes about dress. Though khaddar may be dearer yard per yard than the same quality of Manchester calico, the rejection of superfluous clothing more than balances the extra cost. Those who wish to wear fine khaddar can now obtain it at all the principal khadi centres.

The medical friend next questions the desirability of spinning and gravely suggests that if everybody would spin, the poor people who depend upon spinning for their livelihood would be losers. He forgets that those who are called upon to spin by way of sacrifice promote the khaddar atmosphere and make it possible to render spinning easier and by small inventions and discoveries make it more profitable. The wages of professional spinners cannot suffer in any way whatsoever by sacrificial spinning.

The friend then asks:

> Should doctors cease to prescribe foreign drugs and instead learn the use of Ayurvedic and Unani drugs?

I have never considered the exclusion of everything foreign under every conceivable circumstance as part of swadeshi. The broad definition of swadeshi is the use of all home-made things to the exclusion of foreign things in so far as such use is necessary for the protection of home-industry more especially those industries without which India will become pauperized. In my opinion, therefore, swadeshi which excludes the use of everything foreign, because it is foreign, no matter how beneficial it may be, and irrespective of the fact that it impoverishes nobody, is a narrow interpretation of swadeshi. Foreign drugs therefore, where they are highly efficacious and not otherwise objectionable, I should use without the slightest hesitation; that is, if I did not object to drugs altogether. But there is no doubt that there is among many medical men with Western diplomas a fashion, altogether harmful, of decrying Ayurvedic and Unani drugs, some of which are indeed of great potency and cheap withal. Any movement therefore on the part of those who have received a training in Western medicine to explore the possibilities of Ayurvedic and Unani systems would be most welcome and desirable.

The last question that this friend asks has been repeatedly

answered in these pages: "Are you against all machinery?" Myanswer is emphatically, "No". But, I am against its indiscriminate multiplication. I refuse to be dazzled by the seeming triumph of machinery. I am uncompromisingly against all destructive machinery. But simple tools and instruments and such machinery as save individual labour and lighten the burden of the millions of cottagers I should welcome.

Young India, 17-6-1926

482. FOR MANAGERS OF KHADI CENTRES

Readers must have noticed the interesting information I have been recently publishing about different khadi centres. I am now tempted to ask all khadi centres to send me the following particulars:

(1) Number of spinners supported, with sex, religion and, if possible, age. Wages paid to them. Their average monthly earnings from spinning. Count spun. Monthly output of yarn received. Number of villages served.

(2) If the cotton is hand-ginned, the quantity ginned and the rate paid. The number of ginners employed. Their total earnings.

(3) If carding is done by professional carders, the number of carders and sliver-makers employed. The rate of wages paid to each. The total amount paid to them per month.

(4) Number of weavers employed. The rate paid to them and total earned by them. The total output of khadi in yards, with width and in weight.

(5) Cost of khadi up to weaving. Sale price. The total of local sales. Other sales.

(6) Establishment charges. Number of men and women, paid or volunteers, working in connection with the centre.

I hope that all the superintendents who see this paragraph will kindly send me their returns. I would also add that these managers would add any further any new particulars that they may consider to be of interest to the movement.

Young India, 17-6-1926

483. KHADDAR IN NILGIRI DISTRICT

Khaddar is being hawked in the Nilgiri District, a wealthy landlord having placed at the disposal of the khaddar workers his bungalow for storing khadi and for their residence during their tour. It appears that there was an exhibition at the Government Botanical Gardens under the aegis of the Nilgiri Agri-Horticultural Society. An application was made for exhibiting khaddar and spinning-wheels there. The Secretary replied that the exhibits could not be allowed for want of space although it is stated that the Secretary assured the public that exhibits of any kind, although not for competition, were invited for giving added strength to the show.

I publish this information as it is received though it seemed difficult to believe that any Secretary would be guilty of such childishness as to refuse khadi exhibits in spite of the open invitation referred to. I shall be glad to publish any explanation that the Secretary may have to offer, if he cares to, for the conduct ascribed to him.

Young India, 17-6-1926

484. CATTLE WEALTH

The reader who has been following Sjt. V. G. Desai's writings about the cow could not have failed to notice the fact that in no other country in the world save India are cattle a burden on the land or its people. It may be said that the slaughter of cattle is not only not repugnant to the vast majority of people in other lands but they deliberately kill out superfluous cattle. One may even go further and say that in such countries there is no such thing as superfluous cattle, because cattle are actually bred for slaughter. In this argument there is no doubt considerable force. But all the writings in these pages are devoted to showing that, although the vast majority of people in India will not slaughter cattle for food, by judicious management, her cattle need not become a burden on the land and that their slaughter can be made so dear as to enable only those people to slaughter who will do so for luxury or in the name of religion. The aim of *Young India* writings is to show that cattle at thepresent moment go to the slaughter-houses because of our criminal negligence and want of proper knowledge. It is further to show that the saving of an enormous number of cattle is more a problem of economics than

religion; or rather to show that there is no conflict between religion and economics. Indeed, I have myself gone further and stated that a religion which is in conflict with fundamental economics is bad, and that, in the reverse way, economics that are in conflict with fundamental religion are also equally bad.

From the Western countries we can learn a great deal about cattle economics apart from their slaughter for food. If the nation, or say Hindus, would forego profits from cattle-keeping, the self-denial would be enough to keep cattle during the natural term of their lives even after they cease to give us a return in the shape of milk or labour. The following passages[1] from the introduction to Henry and Morrisson's treatise on *Feeds and Feeding* show how they regard cattle wealth in America.

Young India, 17-6-1926

485. HAWKING KHADI

Praiseworthy efforts are being made in, all important khadi centres to create a local market for khadi manufactured in those centres. I take the following extracts[2] from a report of hawking activities in Tamil Nad for a period covering l_ years ending last March.

The following extracts from the Andhra report give the experiences of hawkers in that province. The report covers a period of ten months.[3]

Young India, 17-6-1926

[1] The extracts, not reproduced here, gave details of many by-products of animal husbandry useful to man.

[2] The report, not reproduced here, furnished details of khadi sales by hawkers in urban and rural areas and stressed the need for better propaganda in villages.

[3] *ibid*

486. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Thursday, Jeth Sud 7 [*June 17, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I had Pyarelal's letter yesterday in which he informed me of Dr. Mehta's opinion. Appendicitis is something new but I am not particularly worried. It is sufficient if you follow the doctor's instructions. I think the climate of the place will suit you. There is no doubt that you will have to take complete rest. From your future letters I shall expect to know whether the climate suits you or not. I did not know that Matheran and Panchgani were at the same height. I still think that Panchgani is higher. But we do not have to make the comparison now.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
HOMI VILLA
PANCHGANI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

487. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
June 18, 1926

CHI. PARASRAM,

I would now like to know when you can come. Wire me the final date. I want to utilize you for *Hindi Navajivan* and work should be done with expedition.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI PARASRAMJI
THE "MALAVA MAYUR" OFFICE
AJMER

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 6100. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

[1] From the postmark

488. LETTER TO KISHENSINGH CHAVDA

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
Jeth Sud 8, 1982 [June 18, 1926]

BHAISHRI KISHENSINGH[1],

It is good that you wrote to me. The letter was left in the diary and, as soon as you left, I got busy with other matters. I could never get away from them and remember it. Please pardon me.

I enclose a few scribbled sheets[2].

From a microfilm Of the Gujarati: S.N. 19400

489. LETTER TO FULSINGH

SABARMATI,
Jeth Sud 8, 1982 [*June 18, 1926*][3]

BHAISHRI FULSINGHJI,

I have your letter, and I congratulate as well as thank you. I find your criticism entirely valid. The thing is that enough money is not spent on the job of correcting spellings at the Navajivan Prakashan Mandir. In our efforts to bring out cheap publications, such mistakes as you point out have crept in. I do not write this in self-defence but to stress the faults, because I feel that books published by the Navajivan Prakashan Mandir should be flawless. I shall discuss this in detail with Swami. Please send a list of all the mistakes you have noted down.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

BHAISHRI FULSINGHJI
C/O CHAROTAR KELAVANI MANDAL
ANAND

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 288

[1] Gujarati writer and social worker
[2] These are not available.
[3] The postmark reads: “20-6-26, Ahmedabad”.

490. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
Friday, Jeth Sud 8 [*June 18, 1926*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

It would appear that you have taken a vow not to write. In Bombay the rule was well observed, but from Mussoorie one letter has been received for the whole Ashram. Eschew laziness. If Jamnadasji cannot come here on the 26th,[2] he should not worry. His health is also somewhat indifferent. It is therefore imperative that he should get perfectly fit. Aren't Lalji's [wounds] completely healed yet?

Mathuradas has now got wed to Panchgani.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19622

491. MESSAGE TO NELLORE ADI-ANDHRA CONFERENCE[3]

[Before *June 19, 1926*]

This is my message for the conference. I wish the conference every success. The fact of its being held on the Pallipad Satyagraha Ashram grounds is a tribute to the memory of the late D. Hanumantha Row who devoted his life selflessly to the national cause.

I hope that the various conferences being held there will emphasize the necessity of hand-spinning and khaddar and that the black paint of untouchability that I discovered when I was in that district will be removed as a result of the efforts of the conference.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 21-6-1926

[1] The reference to the addressee and Lalji convalescing at Mussoorie suggests that the letter was written in 1926.

[2] For a meeting of the All-India Spinners' Association

[3] This was sent to the secretary of the Pallipad Satyagraha Ashram where the conference was held on June 19, 1926, under the presidentship of Harala Devendrudu, M.L.C., D. K. Nageswara Rao Pantulu read out the message.

492. LETTER TO BIRENDRANATH SEN GUPTA

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 19, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. In my opinion, attainment of divine knowledge is impossible so long as there is any lustfulness in man. A partner who is absolutely sure of his ground is not obliged to yield to another. I hold mutual consent to be absolutely necessary. I do recommend complete abstention for national workers. But I know that this is a counsel of perfection and each one must decide for himself and according to his ability.

Where one is doing one's best even in the midst of chaos and confusion, there is no cause for disappointment. If boys want technical training, they should have either carpentry or smithy, not an elaborate workshop fashioned after the European style but they should work under an ordinary carpenter or smith and when they have mastered their art, they will take up to European developments and assimilate what is necessary. This becomes cheap and effective.

I think that you should confine yourself to the work immediately before us. Mass education will come naturally out of any honest and concentrated activity.

There is no trouble in the Gujarat Vidyapith except that some professors who are really no non-co-operators even so far as educational work is concerned had to resign.

I am sorry to hear about what you say of Babu Ramdas Gour. By every kindly act we should all discourage him from his explorations.

Yours sincerely,

BABU BIRENDRANATH SEN GUPTA
THE BIHAR VIDYAPITH
P.O. DIGHAGHAT
PATNA

From a microfilm: S.N. 10943

493. LETTER TO A. S. DAVID

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 19, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[1] I understand what you mean. But I must confess that I still less like your latest letter. But I don't propose to argue. I repeat my advice that it will be better for you to come here and see things for yourself before you take any further step whatsover.

Yours sincerely,

A. S. DAVID, ESQ.
71, DILKUSHA
LUCKNOW

From a photostat: S.N. 10944

494. LETTER TO S. RAMANATHAN

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 19, 1926

MY DEAR RAMANATHAN,

I have seen the letter Maganlalji has written to you. I am receiving bitter complaints about deterioration of the quality of Tamil Nad khadi. This deterioration must be stopped at any cost and I think that a public statement is necessary to admit and explain the existing deterioration if you accept the verdict pronounced by so many people. I translate for your benefit a paragraph from Jerajani's[2] letter to me whom I referred the complaint for my guidance. He says:

> The goodness that one noticed in Tirupur Khadi before is certainly not to be found now. But during the current year there is a little improvement. The khadi organization in Tirupur has

[1] David had written to Gandhiji, on June 10, in regard to his interest in bread-labour and his desire to join the Ashram. He had expressed his intention to dissociate from Missionary activity and sought Gandhiji's help and guidance. (S.N. 10917.) *Vide* also "Letter to A. S. David", 5-6-1926.

[2] Vithal Jerajani, a prominent constructive worker, connected with the All-India Spinners' Association

endeavoured to remedy the glaring defects this year. But there is room for more improvements. They have standardized ten strands to a quarter of an inch for the warp. But they have not set a standard for the woof. And, therefore, the weavers put as many or as few strands in the woof as they like. The tendency, therefore, is for the khadi to be loose and weak.

Please investigate and let me know accurately if you admit deterioration. If so, how far has it gone, what steps can be taken to remedy the evil and how did the deterioration set in and who is responsible for it?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. RAMANATHAN
SECRETARY
ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION
(TAMIL NAD BRANCH)
ERODE

From a microfilm: S.N. 11191

495. LETTER TO G. RAJAGOPALACHARI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 19, 1926

I send you herewith a copy of my letter to Ramanathan.[1] You will do, I know, whatever is possible.

I expect you here at the end of the month.

Yours sincerely,

ENCL. 1

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR
GANDHIASHRAM
PUDUPPALAYAM
TIRUCHENGODU

From a microfilm: S.N. 11190

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

496. LETTER TO D. N. BAHADURJI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 19, 1926

DEAR FRIEND

Nurgisben sent me your yarn for examination. It was not bad at all. The strength was nearly 50 and evenness over 40. This is an extremely good record for a beginner and for one who has not sat at the wheel for hours at a time. What I would like you to aim at is 70 marks for strength and over 45 for evenness. The highest yet obtained is 79 and 49, respectively.

I hope Mrs. Bahadurji is keeping all right. She owes me a letter.

Yours sincerely,

D. N. BAHADURJI, ESQ.
RIDGE ROAD
MALABAR HILL P.O.
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 19623

497. LETTER TO SANTISUDHA GHOSH

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 19, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Surely it is not too late for a girl of 19 to change her mode of life and to obtain self-control. As a matter of fact, it is never too late to do either of these two things. The only thing needful is perfect faith in God and waiting upon Him to make the necessary change.

I do believe that mind has much to do with the body. If you have got any constitutional diseases, you should medically treat them,

and if you are merely weak in body because of the weakness of mind, faith in God and His power to make us better should restore you.

Yours sincerely,

SRIMATI SANTISUDHA GHOSH
C/O MR. K. N. GHOSH, M.A.
ALIKONDA (BARISAL)

From a photostat S.N. 19624

498. LETTER TO GANGABEHN MAJMUDAR

June 19, 1926

POOJYA GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. Your allegations are such as do not deserve to be answered, so also your language. But since you agree to the appointment of an arbitrator, we must appoint one. But I can see that making the *panchanama*[1] is itself going to be a problem. However if you get a *panchanama* made, send it to me so that I shall be able to think over it. But I feel you must consult a lawyer about all this.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S. N. 10942

499. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 19, 1926

DEAR MOTI BABU,

I have your letter. I do hope that your khadi work is making steady progress. Do please keep me informed of the happenings from time to time.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

BABU MOTILAL ROY
PRABARTAK SANGH
CHANDRANAGAR
BENGAL

From a photostat: G.N. 11026

[1] A written statement announcing the appointment of an arbitrator or arbitrators and terms of reference

500. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Jyaistha Shukla 9 [*June 19, 1926*][1]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Of course you know about the loss incurred by the Servants of India Society. In this connection Srinivasa Sastri has asked me also to go round with a begging bowl. He has a right to ask me. I have already written in *Young India*, but Sastriji desires that I should write to my friends also. Although I do not approve of the political activities of the Society, I cannot forget the honesty, patriotism and sacrifice of its members and therefore I look upon it as a duty of every patriot to support and sustain it. If you hold the same opinion, do send some donation and, if possible, ask your other friends also to give something.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6129. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

501. MISCELLANEOUS

COMMUNITY DINNER AFTER A DEATH

A gentleman writes as follows, expressing his feelings about my describing the custom of giving a community dinner after a death as uncivilized:[2]

I have stated so often that all that is written in Sanskrit should not be regarded as holy scriptures. Nor should everything which we find written in the *Manusmriti* and other authoritative works be accepted as coming from the pen of the original authors of the works, or, even if that is so, as having literal authority at the present day. I do nothing of the sort. Certain principles are*sanatana*[3], and people who

[1] In 1926 two presses of the Servants of India Society were destroyed by the fire. The reference to the loss indicates that the letter was written in that year; *vide* "Servants of India Society's Relief Fund", 24-6-1926.

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had asked Gandhiji how, calling himself a *sanatani* Hindu, he could denounce the practice of community dinners after a death, which was enjoined by the Shastras.

[3] Eternal

believe in them are sanatanis; but we need not believe that the practices which were enjoined in certain ages on the basis of those principles are valid in other ages too. Customs and practices change with place, time and circumstances. The practice of giving a community dinner after someone's death may have had some meaning in old days, but in modern times our reason cannot accept it. Faith has no place in a sphere in which we can exercise our reason. Faith has meaning only in relation to what is above reason. In this case, our reason tells us that giving a community dinner after a death is not a part of dharma. Our experience of the world also tells us that no other religion enjoins or sanctions such a practice. We should therefore, have much stronger reason than the authority of Sanskrit verses to accept such dinners as enjoined in Hinduism. They are not at all consistent with the principles taught by the holy books of Hinduism or, for that matter, by the holy books of any other religion. We can see with our own eyes the harm they do. Against this evidence of direct observation, what weight can we attach to Sanskrit verses. Neither our reason nor our heart nor our knowledge of other countries of the world justifies the practice of giving community dinners after a death. I have no better reason than this, and no one need be expected to have, for believing that such dinners are uncivilized. As those who believe that everything old is bad are wrong, so also are those who believe that it is good. Whether old or new, everything should be tested on the anvil of reason, and anything which does not stand the test should be rejected.

LIQUOR SHOPS AND PARSIS

A Parsi gentleman writes to say:[1]

This correspondent has provided me a double opportunity, for though I write very little these days against the evil of drink my conviction has not become less strong. I have now an opportunity of showing this, and I can also, at the same time, remove a misundersta-nding. Let us deal with the second point first. I have never said that only Parsis should stop running liquor-booths. My view is that all communities should forgo the financial benefit which the liquor trade may bring. There are many other means of honest livelihood, against which no

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had requested Gandhiji to state his view about the general impression among Parsis that, whereas he pleaded with them to stop running liquor-booths, he made no such appeal to Hindus, some of whom took over booths given up by Parsis.

one can raise any objection. I cannot but feel sorry when I see anyone leaving these and taking up liquor trade. If I had power in my hands, not a single liquor shop would remain in the country. There is no such thing as the right of drinking and, therefore, there would be no question of depriving people of a legitimate right. Selling liquor should be as much a crime as stealing. If I have addressed my appeal to Parsis, that is because they are more enlightened than others and I expect more from them. I cannot, however, approve of anyone, whether he is a high-caste Hindu or a low-caste Hindu or belongs to some other community, carrying on liquor trade. Let us take up the first question. I still hold, in their entirety, the views about the evil of drinking which I expressed in 1920-21. The more I think and observe, the more terrible the harm done by the evil of drinking appears to me. Some crimes are wholly the result of drinking. I am, therefore, impatient to take every possible legitimate measure to abolish this evil. But our helplessness is so great that we cannot quickly carry out even such a beneficial programme as prohibition. If I could teach people to adhere to non-violence, I would once again start the movement of picketing liquor shops. But it seems today that we worship only the power of the sword. In such circumst-ances, I do not have the courage to advocate any strong measure.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-6-1926

502. KHADI IN SURAT

Tours for the sale of khadi, wherever they were undertaken, seem to have been successful. Shri Bharucha writes to say:[1]

I am quite sure that such tours would succeed in other places as this one has done in Surat. All that is required is hard work and tact.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-6-1926

[1] The extract is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that during a tour of three and a half days he had sold khadi worth Rs. 2,800.

503. THE WHEEL OF " YAJNA" IN NEPAL

If the spinning-wheel is a means of *yajna* in this age and this country, and if *yajna* (sacrifice) has a place among all people and all religions, there is no harm in describing it as the wheel of *yajna*. This name occurred to me without any effort on my part when I read the following letter. Its author[1], who comes from Nepal, is an inmate of the Ashram. He had to go through much suffering to be able to join the Ashram. He decided to master the science of the spinning-wheel and popularize it among the poor in Nepal. It is now three months since he returned to Nepal, and he has written a letter in Hindi giving an account of his work there during this period. The following is a translation of it:[2]

This is an example of work worth emulating by every lover of the spinning-wheel. This khadi-worker has the capacity for self-sacrifice, determination, knowledge of the science of spinning, discrimination and humility. Anyone who has these virtues will come by other wealth easily enough.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-6-1926

504. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 20, 1926

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS,

I have your letter at last after having waited for it for a long time. The decision not to go to Finland has certainly given me immense relief and satisfaction.[3] The temptation to go was strong but I felt that the invitation was not of the character that would move me from India. If I had gone at all, I would have gone not to

[1] Tulsi Maher

[2] The letter is not translated here.

[3] On April 6, 1926, K. T. Paul had conveyed to Gandhiji an invitation to attend the World Conference of Young Men's Christian Association at Helsingfors, Finland, in August 1926. After considerable correspondence, Gandhiji ultimately declined. *Vide* "Letter to K. T. Paul", 7-6-1926.

deliver any political message but to come in contact with the student world and talk to them about the purity of personal life. It was that aspect of it which first tempted me. But when I discovered that the invitation was prompted and not spontaneous I felt that there was no call. I entirely endorse Guruji's opinion that if one has no influence in one's own surroundings, one cannot gain it by going out of them but by success without, gain influence within.

For personal reasons I am certainly sorry that you are not returning to me for the time being. But I approve your decision to remain there to serve Guruji and to be at your mother's call whenever she requires your presence. You will send for more money without hesitation whenever you require it.

I am keeping good health. Devdas is taking his convalescence with Lalji in Mussoorie. Jamnalalji and Laxmidasbhai are also there. Jamnalalji probably returns here on the 26th. I had seen the *Indian Review* verse. Are you now much stronger than you were? I suppose you know that Tulsi Maher is doing extremely well in Nepal. Pyarelal is still with Mathuradas who has gone to Panchgani on Doctor Mehta's advice.

Yours,

SJT. KRISHNADAS
C/O S. C. GUHA, ESQ.
DARBHANGA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19625

505. LETTER TO TULSIDAS

THE ASHRAM,
Monday, June 21, 1926

BHAISHRI TULSIDAS,

Girdhari writes that he, too, has now been discharged [from the hospital]. So I feel like writing something to you. Shall I thank you? I know that none of us deserved the affection you have shown to my friends. How can I repay such affection? It would be some sort of compensation if these youths and myself devote our whole life to the

service of the country. May God bless you.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

SIR HARKISHANDAS HOSPITAL

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19918

506. LETTER TO DR. DALAL

THE ASHRAM,
Monday, June 21, 1926

BHAISHRI

Girdhari writes today that he has been discharged [from the hospital]. May I then write a word of thanks? I know writing minimizes the value. You and I are both busy. Your time should not be wasted. These youths and I can perhaps repay your services to some extent by devoting ourselves to the service of the country. Devdas has said a lot about your simplicity and I am very happy to hear it all.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

DR. DALAL
CHOWPATTY
BOMBAY

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19919

507. LETTER TO PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 22, 1926

DEAR DR. PATTABHI,

You know that all my sympathies are with you in your great sorrow.[1] I never knew anything about Sudakshina's death. Though I

[1] While replying to a postcard from Gandhiji, Sitaramayya had written of the death of his eight-year-old daughter and recalled how, when only three years old, she had given away her bangles for Gandhiji's work (S.N. 10935).

cannot recall her features, I well remember her having parted with her bangles with the greatest cheerfulness. Do please come and pass some time with us in the Ashram whenever you can.

Now about Keshu. I did not write on behalf of Maganlal.[1] As Keshu is just now acting as one of the nurses for me, he takes me in his confidence. I do not know that Maganlal even now knows that I am in correspondence with you about him. Not that he need not know it; but we all remain so busy that, when we do talk, we talk only about things necessary. And as I have nothing to consult him about in the matter of Keshu's education, I have not discussed with him the plans I am maturing. However, he does know that Keshu wants to increase his knowledge of mechanical engineering. Is there a technical institute in the Mysore State? And, if there is, do you know anything about it? And do you claim yours to be the best in India? Please complete the information by telling me whether you have any such thing as terms during the year or are you open all the year round to receive pupils whenever they come?

Yours sincerely,

DR. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA
MASULIPATAM

From a photostat: S.N. 10949

508. LETTER TO N. S. VARADACHARI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 22, 1926

MY DEAR VARADACHARI,

Your letter has much relieved me. I know that your resolution will remove all your difficulties. The question of increment is a mere detail. You will not be alarmed at the manner in which I have discussed the problem arising from letters like yours. There has been a crop of such letters recently from several parts of India. I thought,

[1] Sitaramayya had mistaken Gandhiji's query regarding technical education as being intended for Maganlal Gandhi, and had praised the latter's "incipient genius" which would benefit by workshop experience. *Vide* "Letter to Satish Chandra Das Gupta", 22-6-1926.

therefore, that I would gently discuss the problem in the pages of *Young India*.

I have seen C.R.'s[1] letter to you. I saw it only yesterday, Shankerlal being in Bombay. The thought never grasped my mind that Ramanathan's case and the increase given to him had anything to do with you. On the contrary, Shankerlal told me that your pecuniary difficulty arose, or at least came to his notice, earlier than Ramanathan's. And in any case, I have too great regard for you even to suspect that you would want to take an improper advantage of any situation.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. S. VARADACHARI

From a microfilm: S.N. 11194

509. A LETTER[2]

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 22, 1926

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Why do you say that I am seemingly or otherwise indifferent towards you or your cause? I have mentioned to you my difficulty. I cannot make any dispositions without the assistance of ordinary channels created by the Charkha Sangh. If I make personal dispositions of the Charkha Sangh funds, the whole organization will break down. I am, therefore, pleading with you not to distrust Satis Babu, but do as he wishes you to do and you will find that, in the end, you will get all the facilities you need. Why do you distrust Satis Babu? The two letters you have sent me are plain enough. But if you cannot hit it off with him, join the Abhoy Ashram. If we are to make khadi a great success that it should become in the near future, we must learn to work in co-operation, subordinate our own views, inclinations and our pride. Differences of principle are few and far between. In your own case, after all there is no principle at stake. You may consider your way of khadi work to be superior to that suggested by another. Surely that is no cause for heart burning or even dispute, except by your. . . .

From a copy: S. N. 11195R

[1] C. Rajagopalachari
[2] Addressee not known

510. LETTER TO MOHAMMAD SHAFEE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 22, 1926

DEAR SHAFEE SAHIB,

I was delighted to receive your long, interesting and hopeful letter.[1] I have been following your doings in Bihar. It is a move in the right direction. Some of the statements you make in your letter are painful reading. I should be deeply hurt to find that Hindus had the designs upon the Mussalmans that you describe in your letter.[2]

I take it I have your permission to discuss your letter with Rajendrababu.

For myself, you will find me coming out of my shell the moment I see that God wanted me to do so. For the present my action lies in seeming inaction.

Yours sincerely,

MOHAMMAD SHAFEE, ESQ.
OF MUZAFFARPUR
BIHAR SHARIF

From a photostat: S.N. 11073

[1] In this Mohammad Shafee, who recalled having met Gandhiji at Ahmedabad on May 5 and 6, spoke of his endeavours "to bring about some understanding between the Hindu and Muslim workers of my Province" and of a conference of Hindu-Muslim unity workers held at Chapra on June 8, 9 and 10. A joint Hindu-Muslim deputation had toured the Province "to carry the message of peace to the masses". Shafee had stressed in his letter that it was time "to pursue the work of reconciliation with greater vigour, in a larger area and with bigger personalities" (S.N. 11073).

[2] Shafee had alleged that some Congress workers considered that in Bihar the Hindus, by virtue of their superior numbers, could retaliate against the Muslims for wrongs done to the Hindus in other Provinces.

511. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI ,
June 22, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

There are two things in which I want your help outside the khadi work. Keshu, as you are aware, is a born mechanic. He wants to make further progress. That he thinks he can only do by being in some mechanical engineering institution or shop. I would like to satisfy his ambition. But I do not know where he could be put. I have sent for the syllabus from the Andhra National Institute at Masulipatam,[1] which I have got. But I know that you can give me the best advice in this matter. That is one thing.

The second is the soap question. As the colony here is growing in extent, the expense of soap increases. A cake of soap for the body costs 4 to 6 annas. Washing soap a cake two annas. Is there not a cheaper way of cleaning our bodies and our clothes if one wants to use something more than water? If you give me a simple recipe, I shall certainly make the soap at the Ashram if that proves cheaper. Having manufactured so much soap, you can perhaps tell me what to do. I want a prescription something after Dr. Ray's style. You may remember what he said about tooth powders. He said: "the Bengal Chemical Works tooth powder was for fools, but chalk or powdered coal was the best powder for wise men like himself." Is there any such simple soap prescription for wise men?

I observe Hemaprabhadevi has ordered 12 copies of *Ashram Bhajanavali*. The last edition is almost all exhausted and I have discovered many typographical errors in it. It is the most popular publication of the Navajivan Printing Press. The edition is now being carefully revised by a committee and I hope that in a short time a faultless edition will be published when she can have as many copies as she likes.

I do not mind your not coming if you are wanted for your work there. I shan't strive with you about your personal finance. I am

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Pattabhi Sitaramayya", 22-6-1926.

satisfied so long as both of you keep perfect health and perfect temper.

Yours,

SJT. SATIS CH. DAS GUPTA
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
170, BOW BAZAAR ST.
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 19630

512. LETTER TO MRS. PERIN CAPTAIN[1]

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 22, 1926

You do remember Miss Haussding. Don't you? You will meet her on Friday. I had expected a letter last week. But none came. Her main letters have, however, begun to arrive. She is therefore likely to come by the boat (*Razmak*) mentioned by her. And if she has arrived, please telegraph to me so that I can send someone to meet her at Ahmedabad station.

Yours,

MRS. PERIN CAPTAIN
ISLAM CLUB BUILDINGS
CHAUPATI
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 19631

513. LETTER TO K. T. MATHEW

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 22, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I think that even if you alone resign and seek re-election, it would be some education for the people. Satyagraha on

[1] Grand-daughter of Dadabhai Naoroji

your part would certainly be out of place.

Whilst generally speaking practice of law is not an ennobling task, it is not difficult to retain one's principles and earn a livelihood from the practice of that profession. I think it will be difficult to find support such as you require from any public institution, and it will be a pity not to utilize the legal ability you have acquired in maintaining yourself. I have no doubt that in Cochin itself there is great scope for men like you for doing public service.

Yours sincerely,

K. T. MATHEW, ESQ.
MEMBER LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
KUNNAMKULAM
COCHIN STATE

From a microfilm: S.N. 11226

514. LETTER TO V. V. DASTANE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 22, 1926

MY DEAR DASTANE,

I have your letter. The meeting of the Council is on the 26th, not 22nd. It is not the first meeting of the Council. Several meetings have taken place.

Is your reminding about 2,000 yards a wish for alteration in the rule? If it is, I am afraid we must not touch the rules as yet, though I hold the same opinion as you that it would be better if we have 2,000 and regular half hour per day. I am afraid many membersare in arrears. Unsteadiness is the bane of our life.

Though I have not answered your query about the loan of Rs. 500, it is not as if I have not enquired about it. I understand from Shankerlal that Jamnalalji would not like to divert the use of the fund. You should write to him. He is likely to be here on the 26th instant.

Yours,

SJT. V. V. DASTANE
JALGAON

From a microfilm: S.N. 11192

515. LETTER TO TIRATHRAM TANEJA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 22, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I suppose not much skill is required for the use of foreign dyes. Is it not a fact that one cause of their popularity and superiority is the facility with which foreign dyes can be handled? Those, therefore, who want to use foreign dyes are using them. But a body like the All-India Spinners' Association can make researches only in indigenous dyes. The utmost it can do is not to boycott foreign dyes.

I agree with you that for hand-spinning to become more widespread, the quality of yarn should be improved both in strength and evenness. About the comparative merits of hand-weaving, I am afraid hand-weaving will not work among millions, if only because it is not available for millions. And it is too complicated for millions to learn. Hand-spinning is the only thing that everybody can do. Therefore, our concentration must be on that and that alone.

Your sincerely,

SJT. TIRATHRAM

From a copy: S.N. 11193

516. LETTER TO BHUPENDRA NARAYAN SEN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 22, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am glad you are going back to Arambagh, You must develop the power of resisting malaria. I know nothing about the resignation of Tarini Babu. I shall enquire. But supposing that he accepts the inspectorship and you do something else, who will do the actual work in Arambagh? It seems to me to be a wrong method of going about the work, if it is a matter of finding maintenance, otherwise why not belong to the Khadi Pratishthan and work Arambagh under Khadi Pratishthan? And if you do not care for Khadi Pratishthan, why not belong to the Abhoy Ashram? And if you are to take a course of medicine, the question again arises who will work Arambagh? My impression is that you should be where your work is or else you will make no headway. It may be however that I have not yet grasped the meaning of what you have described in your letter. You will then explain.

I hope Profulla has now got rid of his eye trouble. I have not a shadow of doubt that the time is coming when the country will learn that there is no work but the work of construction. It opens up such illimitable scope for solid work. What does it matter whether along those lines we get swaraj today or tomorrow? I know that it is the shortest cut,

I must not be tempted to move out of Sabarmati during this year. God will open a way for me next year.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. BHUPENDRA NARAYAN SEN
23, NANDARAM SEN STREET
POST HATKHOLA
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 11196

517. LETTER TO CHAMPABEHN MEHTA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Tuesday[1]*, Jeth Sud 11, June 22, 1926*

CHI. CHAMPA[2],

I have your letter. Much time has passed since I have had news of the children's health. Bhai Manilal is in Ahmedabad. He spoke of having got your letter. I write this letter to express the hope I have in you. I hear that Chi. Ratilal is extravagant with his money. Now he has asked for money from me. I have written to him saying that I can give him nothing without Doctor's permission. I don't know whether you get a chance to read the letters I write to him. I take it that you do. What I expect you to do is not to let Ratilal spend money unnecessarily. Keep a proper account or make him do it. I expect you to gain a hold over Ratilal by your self-control and strength of character so that he might mend. This work, I think, is not beyond the capacity of a virtuous woman. No one can deal with the mental infirmity of Ratilal but you, if you wish, can certainly do that. You have given me that hope.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19626

518. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Tuesday, June 22, 1926

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Received your letter. It is good that you have taken a bungalow. There was another letter from Sir Prabhashanker Pattani saying that we should not hesitate to keep his bungalow. But I feel that we should not keep it too long. It is good that you intend to go to Matheran. But if you notice strikingly good results in Panchgani, I think, you should not move from there. One prefers Panchgani because of its altitude. In

[1] The source has Tuesday; however, in 1926 *Jeth Sud* 11 fell on Monday.
[2] Daughter-in-law of Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta

Matheran you can get cool air but you cannot have the height—that is its defect. But why talk now about what would arise after September? In Bombay you won't need the help of anyone—would you? After going to Panchgani if you need Mahadev, write to me. Panchgani is a big town. Facilities for shopping, etc., are as good as at Deolali. So Pyarelal would have no difficulties there.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19628

519. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Tuesday [*June 22, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I had no doubt at all that the climate there would suit you. All of you will enjoy it during the rains. On my inquiring many people told me that water evaporates there as fast as it rains. Where there is moisture, there is danger. Girdhari was discharged from the hospital the day before yesterday.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
HOMI VILLA
PANCHGANI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

520. LETTER TO DUDABHAI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Tuesday, June 22, 1926

BHAI DUDABHAI,

I have your letter. Write to Bhai Balwantrai saying that you have not received your salary yet. It is necessary that you keep on writing to him about all the difficulties you have. He too has suggested it. I was very happy at your decision not to leave the school at any cost. I had a talk with Bhai Balwantrai about your salary. Most probably you

[1] From the postmark

will have no difficulty now. Write to me promptly when Lakshmi's clothes are torn and, if the new ones are to be stitched here, send me her measurements also.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19629

521. LETTER TO VISHNU KARANDIKAR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 23, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter with enclosures. The letters are of no use to me, for, as you know, *Young India* is not a newspaper. It is, as a friend has aptly said, a viewspaper. I could not, therefore, take in your notes unless I alter the whole scope of the paper which I must not do.

I am asking the manager of the Satyagraha Ashram to send you some Ashram photographs if there are any available. You need not worry about paying for them. All the recent photographs of mine that you may have seen are snapshots taken unawares, for, for the last ten years, I have not given a sitting to any photographer.

I shall see to it that you get a complimentary copy of *Young India* regularly. My articles are always written on almost the last day possible for going to print and the date of publication is so arranged as to catch the European mail of the same week. Therefore it is not possible to send you an advance copy of my articles.

VISHNU KARANDIKAR
61, FLEET STREET
LONDON E.C. 4

From a photostat: S.N. 10773

522. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI ,
June 23, 1926

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your letter. Now you know everything about the much talked of visit to Finland. I felt that the time had not yet arrived for going. I could see no clear definite light. Undoubtedly, had I gone to Finland, I would have gone to Denmark also. I had made that definite promise to Anne Marie and I would have loved to have seen your own home. But that was not to be.

Mirabai is doing quite well and she is standing the heat wonderfully well. I am glad you have a helper. You have not yet told me what sort and what quantity of old khaddar is to be sent to you. But Maganlal has made a parcel. It is being despatched today to the address given by you at 'Craiglea' I suppose 'Craiglea' is the name of the cottage in Kodaikanal. It is quite like Menon that he should be devoting himself to the care of the sick. You refer to Rs. 10/-. Nothing has been received here as yet. Nothing need be sent.

Yours,
BAPU

MRS. ESTHER MENON
'CRAIGLEA'
KODAIKANAL

From a photostat of the original in N. A. I.; also *My Dear Child,* p. 81

523. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 23, 1926

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

It was sweet of you to have sent me those Tamil hymns so as to reach me on my silence day and the date; it was quite easy reading for

me and your translation was a great help. It is like paraphrase of verses from the *Bhagavad Gita* or from the Bible.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3192

524. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

SABARMATI ASHRAM,

Jeth Sud 13, 1982, June 23, 1926

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL,

I have your letter. I do hope you realize that my last letter to you and Moti[1] remains unanswered. *Ashram Samachar* was not published last week owing to Maganlal's illness. Most probably it will come out this week. I get news from Bhai Lakshmidas almost daily. Only today there has been no letter from him. He is keeping good health. He does not get fever there. He also does a lot of walking. Anandi had fever for two days. Now she is all right. Tell Moti to shed laziness and write a letter.

Everyone is awaiting the rains now.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL
SEVASHRAM
BROACH

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12129

525. LETTER TO JAGJIVAN

SABARMATI ASHRAM,

Jeth Sud 13, 1982, June 23, 1926

BHAI JAGJIVAN,

Your letter. You should not leave your present school in a hurry. Moreover, I will have to ask Amritlal Sheth before taking you

[1] Wife of the addressee and daughter of Laxmidas Asar

elsewhere. My advice to you is, tell him about all your difficulties and stay where you are.

C/O ANTYAJA SHALA
RANPUR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19633

526. LETTER TO SHAMBHUSHANKER

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
Jeth Sud 13, 1982, June 23, 1926

BHAISHRI SHAMBHUSHANKER[1],

I had your letter. I accept and applaud your decision about salary. You will draw Rs. 50 p.m. up to the month of July, so the change will take effect from August onwards. I have not yet received Bhai Jagjivandas's letter. You have not sent me the copy of the agreement which has been sent to you for your signature; but from what you write I can see no objection to including the immovable property if you wish to bind yourself. As I see it, the responsibility for paying the damages will arise only for losses caused by your carelessness; not for other losses. I also agree with you that there should be a worker to help you. We should think over the conditions on which such a man should be engaged. Let us hope that by the grace of God it would rain. Think about and write to me of all the jobs that are usually done during the rainy season and others that could be done. It is better if you have a talk about khadi with Maneklal and Chhaganlal. How much of such khadi could they have with them? We have to think about it if it is much. The khadi that Bhai Vajeshanker sells, in whose name does he get it made? How much khadi has he got woven? Isn't he in Hanod on behalf of the State? There is only one principle underlying the khadi activity. In India crores of people do not have any occupation except agriculture. Sufficient livelihood for the crores cannot be obtained from agriculture alone. Similarly, agriculture can't take up their whole time. They must have some other occupation and that is hand-spinning. So we are propagating it everywhere. Khadi produced

[1] A khadi worker of Gariyadhar in Saurashtra

from hand-spun yarn is thus a means of propagating spinning. We endure the various fraudulent practices of [some] spinners, ginners and weavers, etc., but when we come to a stage when we can't bear such practices, we stop taking work from them. The way you have suggested is the only way to make them guileless. That is, we should ourselves become guileless, pure, selfless and hardworking.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19634

527. LETTER TO NANABHAI BHATT

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
Jeth Sud 13, 1982, June 23, 1926

BHAISHRI NANABHAI,

I send herewith Bhai Gokulbhai's letter. I understand nothing in it. When Vallabhbhai comes, I will talk about it. Let me know what is your opinion. Can we, even if we want to, give our permission without a meeting of the committee?

C/O RASHTRIYA SHALA
BOMBAY

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19635

528. CHARKHA IN OTHER LANDS

Sjt. C. Balaji Rao of Coimbatore has circulated printed extracts collected with much labour from 'Peoples of All Nations' showing what place the ancient wheel occupies in the homes of other peoples. I reproduce them below slightly abridged:[1]

Only those who are obsessed with prejudice will refuse to see the potency of the wheel in the foregoing extracts, assuming, ofcourse, that the statements made in the original compilation are true. The greatest obsession is the poor wage earned by the spinner. If we would but get out of ourselves for a while and step into the shoes of the famishing millions, we would at once discover that what appears trifling to us is a fortune for them. We would further discover that millions can add only a few pice to their daily income which, as it is, is

[1] These are not reproduced here. They dealt with the position of the spinning industry in various countries of Africa, Europe, Asia and South America.

no more than a few pice. It is at the most Rs. 40 per year, i.e., say 7 pice per day.

Young India, 24-6-1926

529. SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY'S RELIEF FUND

I gladly publish the following appeal to the public made by Sjt. Sastri:

> The Servants of India Society have sustained a terrible loss by the fire which brought to ruin the Arya Bhushan Press and the Dnyan Prakash Press. These had been built up with great patience and foresight by Mr. Gokhale, who knew the mutations of public support and desired to provide for the Society a constant source of income. Deprived of their mainstay, the members of the Society cannot but turn in their distress to their countrymen for that prompt and generous help in money which alone can put them back in their former position and enable them to resume their career of service to the public. I have already appealed to personal friends through private letters, and I wish by this means to reach the wider pubic who are interested in the Society and its work. Sympathy and help are flowing in from all sides, and our hearts have been gladdened beyond measure by the spontaneous expressions of goodwill received from those who are not in habitual agreement with us on public matters. As I said on another occasion, it seems as though the essential kindliness of human nature, being so often forced out of its natural current by conflict of interests, were only waiting for a pretext to come back to its own channel.
>
> We calculate that two lakhs of rupees would be required to enable us to make a fresh start. The sum is large, and there is depression all round. Still my colleague and I have every confidence that in a few months' time we shall get what we want. Our members will go round to various places, but they are not many and cannot be everywhere. We look to our associates and sympathizers in all parts of the country for active help. We beg them to respond to this appeal as though it had been made to them individually and in person. No amount is so small but it will be welcome; in fact small reflection that we are known and appreciated by a wide circle of those whom we seek to serve.

The total amount collected at the time of circulation of the appeal amounted to over Rs. 26,000. I hope that the whole of the two lacs required to set the two presses and the papers going will have been subscribed by the time these lines appear in print. The true

insurance for public concerns like the Servants of India Society is public goodwill reduced to concrete terms.

Young India, 24-6-1926

530. SACRIFICE

I have before me several letters from young men complaining that they have so many family burdens that the poor salary they get from public work is totally inadequate for their wants. One therefore says he must give up public work and go to Europe by raising a loan or securing a gift and increase his earning capacity; another is in search of a paying job; yet another wants a capital to start a paying business. Everyone of these young men is a sound, honest and self-sacrificing worker. But a reaction has set in. Family requirements have increased. Khadi or national education does not satisfy them. They do not desire to be a burden upon public service by asking for an increase. But the logical outcome of this attitude of mind must mean, if it becomes at all general, either stoppage of the public service which depends upon the labours of such men and women, or a general indefinite increase which in its turn must bring about the same undesirable result.

It was because this process of multiplication of wants out of proportion to our surroundings was discovered to be going on with increasing velocity that non-co-operation was conceived. And thus conceived it was not non-co-operation with persons, but with an attitude that was responsible for the system which had seized us in its serpentine coils and which was reducing us to dust. The system had raised the standard of living among us, its creatures, wholly unwarranted by the general condition of the country. And since India did not live upon exploitation of other peoples, the expansion of the middle class who were also the middle-men meant extinction of the lowest strata. Hence the smallest villages were dying out through sheer exhaustion. This was all plain to many of us in 1920. The arresting movement is yet in its infancy. Let us not hinder it by any hasty action.

This artificial increase in our wants has been felt more severely than it otherwise would have been, because of the persistence of the family system which the Western method is ill-designed to support. The joint system having become wooden, its evils have become

accentuated, its sweet graces have disappeared. Thus, evil has been added to evil.

Our self-sacrifice must, therefore, be in terms of the requirements of the country. The reforms required are more from within than from without. A perfect constitution superimposed upon a rotten internal condition will be like a whited sepulchre.

The process of self-purification must therefore be completed. The spirit of self-sacrifice must be extended. Great as the sacrifice has been, it is nothing compared to the demands made upon us by the country. We dare not support able-bodied members of the family—men or women—who will not work. We may not contribute a single pice towards the expenses of conforming to meaningless or superstitious customs, such as caste-dinners, or towards forming expensive marriage connections. Every marriage and every death brings an unnecessary, cruel burden upon the head of the family. We must refuse to regard such acts of self-denial as self-sacrifice. They are evils to be counteracted with courage and resolution.

There is too, for us, the inordinately expensive education. When it is difficult for millions even to make the two ends meet, when millions are dying of starvation, it is monstrous to think of giving our relatives a costly education. Expansion of the mind will come from hard experience, not necessarily in the college or the school-room. When some of us deny ourselves and ours the so-called higher education, we shall find true means of giving and receiving a really high education. Is there not, may there not be, a way of each boy paying for his own education? There may be no such way. Whether there is or there is not such a way is irrelevant. But there is no doubt that when we deny ourselves the way of expensive education seeing that aspiration after higher education is a laudable end, we shall find out a way of fulfilling it more in accord with our surroundings. The golden rule to apply in all such cases is resolutely to refuse to have what millions cannot. This ability to refuse will not descend upon us all of a sudden. The first thing is to cultivate the mental attitude that will not have possessions or facilities denied to millions, and the next immediate thing is to re-arrange our lives as fast as possible in accordance with that mentality.

Without a large, very large, army of such self-sacrificing and determined workers, real progress of the masses, I hold, to be an impossibility. And without that progress, there is no such thing as

swaraj. Progress towards swaraj will be in exact proportion to the increase in the number of workers who will dare to sacrifice their all for the cause of the poor.

Young India, 24-6-1926

531. 'MAHATMAJI'S ORDER'

A teacher writes:

> There is a small group of boys of our school in . . . who have been regularly sending 1,000 yards of self-spun yarn to the A.I.S.A. for some months, and they have been doing this little service merely on account of intense love for you. If anyone asks them the reason for their spinning, they reply: 'It is Mahatmaji's order. It has got to be obeyed.' I think such mentality on the part of little boys is to be encouraged in every way. Slave mentality is something quite different from the spirit of hero-worship or implicit obedience. These boys are now anxious to get some message from you in your own handwriting for their inspiration. I am sure their request will be complied with.

I do not know whether the mentality betrayed by this letter is hero-worship or blind worship. I can conceive occasions when implicit obedience without waiting for reasoning out causes is a necessity. It is essentially the quality of a soldier. And no nation can make substantial progress without the possession of that quality by a vast number of its people. But occasions for such obedience are and must be rare in any well-ordered society. The worst thing that can happen to boys in a school is to have to render blind obedience to everything that the teacher says. On the contrary, if teachers are to stimulate the reasoning faculty of boys and girls under their care, they would continuously tax their reason and make them think for themselves. Faith only begins where reason stops. But there are very few actions in the world for which reasonable justification cannot be found. A teacher would not tolerate from his pupils, who were asked to account for drinking boiled and filtered water in a locality where the quality of well-water was suspected, an answer to the effect that such were the orders of a mahatma. And if it be wrong to admit such an answer, in the supposed case, it is surely wrong to approve of the justification for spinning that the boys of the school in question have given for their spinning. When I am dislodged from my mahatmaship in that school, as I have certainly been dislodged in several homes to my

knowledge (for some of my correspondents have been gracious enough to inform me of their lost love), I am afraid the spinning-wheel will be destroyed. Surely, a cause is often greater than the man. Certainly, the spinning-wheel is greater than myself. I should be exceedingly sorry to find, when the hero-worship of me is destroyed, because of some fatuous mistakes that I may commit or because people are enraged against me for some cause or other, that the good cause of the spinning-wheel had to suffer. It is therefore infinitely better that the pupils should reason out for themselves all the things that are capable of being so treated. The spinning-wheel is essentially a thing for reasoning out. With it, in my opinion, is mixed up the well-being of the whole mass of Indian humanity. Pupils should, therefore, learn something about the deep poverty of the masses. They should have an ocular demonstration of some villages that are crumbling down to pieces. They should know the population of India. They should know the vast extent of this peninsula and they should know what it is that all the many millions can do to add to their scanty resources. They should learn to identify themselves with the poor and the downtrodden in the land. They should be taught to deny themselves, so far as possible, things that the poorest cannot have. Then they will understand the virtue of spinning. It will then survive any shock including disillusionment about myself. The cause of the spinning-wheel is too great and too good to have to rest on mere hero-worship. It lends itself to scientific economic treatment.

I know that there is among us a great deal of blind hero-worship such as this correspondent has described, and I hope that the teachers of national schools will take note of the warning I have uttered and prevent their pupils from lazily basing their actions upon statements, without testing, of men reputed to be great.

Young India, 24-6-1926

532. FOR A.I.S.A. MEMBERS

The managers of Khadi Bhandar, Princess Street, Bombay, and of The A.I. Charkha Sangh Khadi Bhandar, 14, Dadi Sheth, Agyari Lane, Kalbadevi Road, Bombay, inform me that on sending them their certificates of memberships the members of the A.I.S.A. can become members without payment of these Bhandars and get all the concessions allowed to the paying members including all their circulars and a rebate on purchases. They further announce that,

during the month of July there will be sales in both the stores at reduced rates. The prices will be invariably reduced by 6_ per cent but on some special goods the reduction will be 25 per cent and in some cases even 50 per cent. The reduced rates will last till the end of the next month.

Young India, 24-6-1926

533. NOTES

VILLAGE ORGANIZATION

Professor Narayandas Malkani's notes on his recent tour in Bardoli Taluka are both interesting and instructive. The reader will find there a brief account of an experiment in village work that has been going on in that Taluka amongst the backward classes since 1921 when the wave of temperance reform swept through the land. Here in this small tract the introduction of the wheel is bringing about a slow but steady revolution in the life of the simple dwellers. But for the charkha, temperance workers could not have had any footing in these villages. Nor could they have produced any impression whatsoever upon the villagers, if they had not come in touch with the people in many other ways and found a profitable employment for occupying every idle moment of theirs. The workers have been able to divert the minds of villagers from drink and interest them in spinning. Effort is being made to educate the children of these people. The education that is being given them is by no means of the orthodox type. It fits in with their surroundings and is intended to draw out all their faculties. The idea being not to manufacture clerks but to make citizens of the children, well able to take care of themselves and well able to preserve intact their hereditary occupation, namely, agriculture, spinning, weaving, etc. But the experiment is still in its infancy. The child is father to the man. And even in this infant stage of the experiment everything that has gone on hitherto gives promise of a brilliant future. For, with the introduction of hand-spinning, the trades necessary for sustaining it are also being gradually revived amongst the people. It is not too much to hope that this revolution that is going on amongst the people may enable them to get rid of, what Professor Malkani calls, 'the native bureaucracy' and that not by violent but by strictly non-violent means, means that are calculated to convert not to coerce 'the native bureaucracy'. For,

the people simply need to be independent of both the money-lender and the publican, of the first by ceasing to want credit and of the second by ceasing to drink.

A TRAVESTY

'The voluntary repatriation' described by Dr. Malan, the Union Minister[1], is anything but voluntary. It is stimulated, aided or induced. And if the process continues unchecked, it may presently become compulsory. A large number of men repatriated are said to be colonial-born. No colonial-born Indian to whom India is only a geographical expression will voluntarily repatriate himself. Again it is not voluntary repatriation when an agency is set up, probably paid by results, to collect repatriation recruits and when these recruits are detained in compounds pending repatriation. It seems to me that this detention in compounds is likely to be declared illegal if it is tested in a court of law. For detention without a guard would be useless. And placing a guard over free and innocent men would amount to wrongful confinement. I know of no regulation in 1914 that permitted the Government to detain such men in guarded camps. If repatriation is to be voluntary it must be free from the pestering attention of recruiting agents and there should be no detention in depots or camps.

THE TRUE GURU

In confirmation of my note on the definition of a guru, a correspondent sends the following interesting information:

> In connection with your definition of a guru, I am reminded of the beautiful lines of the poet-saint Ramadas. He said:
>
> विवेका ऐसा गुरू। चिन्ता ऐसा शिष्थ चतुरू ।
> जीवा ऐसा मित्र उदारू । भुवनत्रथीं पिलेना॥
>
> 'You cannot find a better guru than *viveka* or the power of discriminating from untruth, right from wrong or good from evil. There is no better disciple than *chitta* or mind, and no nobler friend than one's *jeeva* or soul.' In fact, Ramadas points out that man need not go outside himself in search of a guru. 'Be guided by your power of discrimination, derived from your implicit faith in God, keep your mind under control of such a power and nobly sacrifice the self.' This in essence is the advice of the Maharashtrian saint.

Young India, 24-6-1926

[1] Of South Africa

534. TO READERS OF " HINDI NAVAJIVAN"

It has ever been a matter of sorrow to me that I am not able to write for *Hindi Navajivan* or look after it. After Shri Haribhau Upadhyaya was posted for khadi work, I have received several complaints regarding the language of *Hindi Navajivan.* It is said that the quality of the language has deteriorated, that there are grammatical errors and that the idiom has a foreign ring. It is also said that sometimes the meaning conveyed is just the opposite of what is intended. All this may be true. Although the translators do their work with devotion and industry, it may well be that they, being Gujaratis, make mistakes. I am looking for a person who knows Hindi. I hope, when I find one, the chances of error will be fewer. At the same time, it may be appropriate to point out that, after all, *Hindi Navajivan* carries only translations. Of course, I shall do my best to see that the meaning is not distorted. The truth, however, remains that I have not the ability to bring out *Navajivan* in Hindi. I have neither the time to manage its affairs nor the requisite knowledge of Hindi. I agreed to bring out *Hindi Navajivan* on the insistence of friends and out of a desire that those who know only Hindi should not remain unacquainted with my ideas. This work can be continued if readers will help. They can help in two ways: (1) they can point out the errors, and (2) they can refuse to buy the paper when the errors become too many to put up with. *Navajivan* is not published out of any financial motive. It is brought out solely to advance the general good. If, owing to faults of language or some other reason, it cannot serve the purpose for which it is intended, it will be our duty to close it down.

All the translations carried in this issue are by persons whose mother tongue is Hindi.

Readers will oblige me by pointing out errors in this issue.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 24-6-1926

535. LETTER TO DEVI WEST

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 24, 1926

MY DEAR DEVI[1],

So you are an orphan now. And yet, why an orphan! Father had died full of years and contentment that he lived a life of godliness and was liked by those who knew him. I hope, therefore, that you and other members of the family have not given way to grief. What a beautiful motto on the tomb-stone: To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die.

Yes. Indeed, India is today cut up into two owing to these mad riots. God's ways are inscrutable. I am hoping that the fighters will be soon exhausted. It is simple madness that gives rise to these fights.

We are keeping fairly well. I say fairly well because Radha and Rukhi are just now ill. They have malaria. Devdas has undergone an operation for appendicitis. He is convalescing now. Manilal is still in phoenix. Ramdas is doing khadi work. Have not seen Bhai Kotwal for many months now.

Did I tell you that I had an English friend living in the Ashram? Her name is Miss Slade. We have given her an Indian name, Mirabai. A German lady is coming probably this week.

Yours,

DEVI
23, GEORGE STREET
LOUTH, LINC.
ENGLAND

From a photostat: S.N. 19639

[1] Sister of Albert West, Gandhiji's associate in South Africa

536. LETTER TO REV. WILLIAM PATON

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 24, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I had indeed said that if the way was open for me, I would go to Helsingfors. But I was eventuated [*sic*] that it was not. Had I gone to Finland, I would have visited England also. There were so many invitations from kind friends, yours being the last amongst them.

I am glad to know that the new Viceroy desires to do what is right and that he is moved by religious conviction.

Yes. Indeed Andrews did exceedingly well in South Africa. But for his labours there would have been no Conference.

With regards to you and Mrs. Paton,

Yours sincerely,

REV. WILLIAM PATON, M.A.
1, WORLEY ROAD
St. ALBANS
(ENGLAND)

From a photostat: S.N. 10775

537. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 24, 1926

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

Absence of any letter from you except the one you wrote from Simla means, I hope, that you are enjoying your stay with Stokes. I hope that the visit has given you rest and peace.

Shankerlal told me that you were grieved over my chafing you about your Christian partiality. But I hope that you have got over the grief and turned the incident to one of joy. Is it not a matter of joy that you should have friends who will not always be serious with you?

I am so glad I had not gone to Finland. I have received several letters of congratulations on my decision not to go. Amongst these

was a Punjabi Christian friend who came here and passed a night before going to Helsingfors. He has gone as a delegate.

Happenings in South Africa do not give one much hope of a satisfactory conclusion to the deliberations of the Round Table Conference.[1]

If you receive this in Kotgarh, please give my love to Stokes and Mrs. Stokes and Gregg[2].

Yours,

REV. C. F. ANDREWS
C/O S. E. STOKES, ESQ.
KOTGARH, SIMLA HILLS

From a photostat: S.N. 19640

538. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS P. ASAR

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
Jeth Sud 14, 1982, June 24, 1926

CHI. LAKSHMIDAS,

I have your letter. I have written to you about Anandi[3]. Dr. Kanuga was called in. He wanted to administer quinine. He had said that he would himself send the medicine. She remains very restless these days; so I have not insisted on getting the medicine from him. Chhaganlal went to his place once, but could not find him. So quinine is being given regularly from here. At the moment the fever has subsided. Quinine will be continued for some time. What you write about a bath is right. I will see that she remains particularly careful about it. There has not been a drop of rain here. Its failure is causing apprehension.

Radha[4], Rukhi[5] and Kusum[6] are down with fever. Kusum has been keeping indifferent health ever since she came from Bombay.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19636

[1] A Round Table Conference on the position of Indians in South Africa was to be held in Cape Town. *Vide* "That Round Table Conference", 22-7-1926.

[2] Richard B. Gregg

[3] Daughter of the addressee

[4] Daughter of Maganlal Gandhi

[5] *ibid*

539. LETTER TO PRABHALAKSHMI

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
Jeth Sud 14, 1982, June 24, 1926

CHI. PRABHALAKSHMI,

Your letter. In accordance with your wishes, I would not use your letter without your permission. If people gossip, how can we muzzle them? We should be amused if we are accused when we are innocent. When we are in the wrong, however harsh others may be towards us, we ought to be more severe with ourselves; then we won't find their harshness unbearable. Since God is all-pervading, without attributes and without form, we should instal Him in our hearts and meditate on Him. All of us—whether great or small, good or bad, intelligent or dull and so on—are what we are by virtue of our past deeds. To enquire who have done worthy deeds and why we have become as noble as we are, and so on, is to lay claim to godlike perfection and, in all this arrogance, the question is never answered. Thus, faith comes when reason fails. Your duty just now is to become tranquil, forget all that has happened and fulfil your function in radiant perfection.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19637

540. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

SABARMATI,
Thursday, Jeth Sud 14 [*June 24, 1926*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

Your letter. I saw [your] letter to Mahadev. My rebuke had been issued by then. From my reference to compound interest you would have guessed that. I had got your letter on the way. Girdhari has been discharged from the hospital, but his health does not appear very good. He is expected here now. Jamnalalji would also arrive at about the same time. After that I would think things over and, if there is any need, I would send him there. I wrote letters to Dr. Dalal and Bhai Tulsidas soon after Girdhari's discharge. I wrote to them that it was only by dedicating ourselves to the country's service that we could

[1] The reference to Girdhari's discharge from the hospital suggests that the letter was written in 1926; *vide* "Letter to Tulsidas", 21-6-1926.

discharge to some extent the debt we owe them. Dr. Dalal has replied. Herewith I send you his letter.

From a photostat of the Gujarati S.N. 19638

541. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SABARMATI,
June 25, 1926

MATHURADAS
HOMIVILLA PANCHGANI

PYARELAL MUST NOT COME. 'NAVAJIVAN'[1] ARRANGED. WRITING.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

542. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday [*June 25, 1926*][2]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your telegram. It surprised me. I learnt about the matter when Mahadev told me. In his letter to Pyarelal he wrote a sentence in jest. Mahadev thinks your telegram is the result of that. Please do not think that Pyarelal is particularly needed for the work. It is true that, as is my nature, I do make use of people who are there, according to their qualifications. But that does not mean that Pyarelal should come here. I have made arrangements here for the *Hindi Navajivan.* If I need more help, I shall have Pyarelal send translations from there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Hindi Navajivan*; *vide* the following item.

[2] The date has been inferred from the contents; *vide* the preceding item.

543. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Friday [*June 25, 1926*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

Along with this I send you Bhai Tulsidas's letter. Velabehn[2] is indisposed since last night. Her old ailment has recurred while she was in Bombay. Tell Bhai Laxmidas that there is nothing to worry about. Rajendrababu has arrived and would stay here up to the 29th or 30th. He has come here for a meeting of the Charkha Sangh. It will meet tomorrow. The German lady[3] is expected here tomorrow. There is a letter from Kishorelal saying that Girdhari would arrive here tomorrow. He cannot be said to have completely recovered.

From a photostat Of the Gujarati: S.N. 19641

544. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN CHOKSI

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
Saturday, Jeth Vad 1, 1982, June 26, 1926

CHI. MOTI,

At last, after many days and that too on reminding you, I do have a letter from you. Will this laziness ever go? Anandi had fever and it has now subsided. Velabehn also had fever for the last few days. She is better today. Radha and Kusum are still in bed.

Have you maintained the habit of reading or have you now given it up owing to laziness? Can I ask about the spinning?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12133

[1] The reference in the letter to a meeting of the Charkha Sangh, All-India Spinners' Association, which was held on June 26, 1926 suggests this date.

[2] Wife of Laxmidas Asar

[3] Miss Haussding

545. LETTER TO GOKALDAS H. THAKKAR

THE ASHRAM,
June 26, 1926

BHAISHRI GOKALDAS,

Your letter. I have nothing to write on except the charkha and allied subjects. I have never seen your paper. And I do not like to write for a paper I know nothing about. Please therefore excuse me.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI GOKALDAS HIRAJI THAKKAR
SECRETARY, "SEVAK MANDAL"
SEVAK MANDAL KARYALAYA
OPPOSITE POST OFFICE
JAMNAGAR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19921

546. POSSESSED BY GHOST OF SUSPICION

"A Passenger" has written the following letter without giving his name.[1] Such letters do not deserve any notice. One does not know, however, how many workers may be victims of such suspicions. The issues raised in the letter are worthy of attention. I made inquiries immediately on receiving the letter, and discovered that the facts of the case are quite different from what they are represented to be by "A Passenger". The person against whom these allegations are made is engaged in work which he simply could not have carried on if he travelled without paying proper fare as he is stated in this letter to havedone. He is, moreover, being watched by railway officials. If he were even once caught travelling without a proper ticket, his career of public service would come to an immediate end. He generally travels third class, but a friend had bought for him a second-class ticket from Morbi and so he had taken a seat in that compartment. From Muli, he changed into a third-class compartment for a short distance because he wanted to be with a friend who was travelling in that compartment.

[1] The letter is not translated here. It stated that a leading worker in Saurashtra had been travelling by railway without paying the proper fare.

The worker has still with him the number on the second-class ticket which he held. Normally, no one preserves the number on a railway ticket but, as mentioned above, railway officials are a little too kindly disposed to him and ask him frequently to show his ticket. He also, therefore, has made it a practice to note down the number on his ticket. It does not appear that "A Passenger" had taken the trouble to examine the ticket himself or ask the worker for his explanation. So much about the facts of this case.

The complaint made in this letter should give every public worker reason for pride, and also teach him to be vigilant. It should give reason for pride because it shows that people expect to see perfection in workers who wear khadi, and it teaches him the need for vigilance because a worker wearing khadi must avoid any lapse. It should, however, be admitted that many self-seeking "workers" have exploited the khadi dress. Wearing khadi and having made people believe that they were men of self-sacrifice, such workers deceive society and refuse to make any amends. Such khadi-wearers disgrace khadi.

It is a perfectly legitimate assumption that anyone who cheats the railway company in the matter of fare will ultimately plunder the country, too, for his own gain. And yet many people think that it is not wrong to cheat the railway company and to travel by a higher class on a lower-class ticket. It is desirable that people who wear khadi and others engaged in national work keep away from such dishonesty. People, too, should understand that all persons who wear khadi are not saints, and those who do not wear it are not wicked men. Anybody, irrespective of whether he is a good man or a bad man, is free to adopt khadi as his dress. If others look upon khadi as sacred and feel themselves sanctified by wearing it, that is their special faith and does them honour. But this special faith of theirs does not concern the world. It is but right that people in the world should trust a person only after he has been put to the test.

In conclusion, I should like everyone to know that I have no disciple, or rather that I have only one, myself. All my time is taken up in teaching myself, and so I need no other disciple.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-6-1926

547. NOTES

SPINNING IN SANSOLI[1]

Sansoli is a village in the Kalol taluka of Panch Mahals district. Shri Ranchhoddas Shah has sent some interesting information about the spinning activity there, which I reproduce below:[2]

The number of spinning-wheels is not large enough to be remarkable, but the quantity of yarn produced on each wheel is quite good. But the most interesting particular mentioned in this report is that the spinner himself or herself cards the cotton and makes the slivers. It is essential that this improvement in the method of work should, wherever possible, be adopted forthwith. Carding is an easy operation, and those who card their own cotton can spin better and finer yarn and produce more of it in the same time, whereas it is difficult to spin to one's satisfaction if the carding has been done by a hired carder. Another point worth noting here is that the cultivator who gins the cotton grown by himself increases his earning considerably. The practice of ginning cotton at home can be revived only if the spinning is also done at home. Thus the revival of hand-spinning will automatically bring about the revival of many other industries which have disappeared, and enable an intelligent cultivator to add considerably to his income.

SELF-PURIFICATION AMONG CHODHRAS[3]

Shri Narayan Malkani, a professor in the Gujarat Mahavidyalaya, had recently been to the parts around Vedchhi in Bardoli taluka and saw the work being done among the Chodhras there. He has sent a report of his observations for *Young India* of which I give here only the gist, since many points mentioned in the original are meant for readers outside Gujarat. In 1921 a good many villages had got rid of the evil of drink. Afterwards, a good number had started drinking again. The enduring work which is now being done there, thanks to some workers having settled for good in the area, is interesting to observe. Shri Narayan Malkani is reporting only about the "clean" villages, clean in respect of drinking.

[1] The name, Sanosali, as originally spelt, was corrected in a note in *Navajivan*, 11-7-1926.

[2] The letter is not translated here.

[3] A scheduled tribe in South Gujarat

The Chodhras rank high among the Kaliparaj[1] communities. They till their own land; but, thanks to their addiction to drinking, the owners of liquor shops and money lenders in the area have become their masters and function as the "local" Government of the area. Those among them who succeed in freeing themselves from the grip of this "local" Government may be said to have won swaraj.

The Vedchhi Ashram[2] has strengthened the anti-drink movement through sound work in the field of khadi. Four hundred spinning-wheels are in commission at present, which means that 800 persons spin on them daily. There are more men than women among them. In the first[3] year 500 lbs. of yarn was spun; last[4] year, the quantity rose to 16,000 lbs. This gave about 4,000 square yards of khadi. The people stock the required cotton from what they grow in their own fields, card it themselves and then spin. The yarn is woven into cloth in Vedchhi itself by Chodhra boys. The charge for weaving is only two annas a yard but the weaver gets some other help in addition to his wages. In some villages, this activity has provided work to carpenters too, and as a result people can have a fairly good spinning-wheel for Rs. 2. In this way, the people who wear khadi spend only two annas for every yard they use; and, where previously no supplementary occupation existed, two such occupations, weaving and carpentry, have come into existence.

When I visited the area two years ago, I asked the people how much they got through the spinning-wheel every year. An old man replied with evident pleasure that they got ten rupees. Shri Narayan Malkani gives detailed figures now. A Chodhra family requires 34 yds. of cloth in a year—10 yds. for children and 24 yds. for the husband and the wife. The family gets these 34 yards for Rs. 4_, whereas previously when they bought their requirements in the market they had to pay Rs. 22 for the same quantity. Thus a family producing its own cloth saves Rs. 17_. It is true, of course, that this does not take into account the cost of cotton. What would a poor Chodhra get for that cotton if he sold it in the market? Seven rupees for 14 lbs. The net saving, therefore, comes to Rs. 11. To them this is

[1] Scheduled tribes in Gujarat; literally, dark-skinned people

[2] The Ashram at Vedchhi, a village in the Surat district of Gujarat, managed by Jugatram Dave

[3] The words "first year" and "last year" were corrected in *Navajivan*, 11-7-1926.

[4] *ibid*

a big enough saving. It is not as if all the families keep back the 14 lbs. of cotton which they would require and spin it into yarn, but we may say that a movement in the direction has started.

REFORMING VILLAGE LIFE

We saw above that with the help of the spinning-wheel a slow but steady change is being brought about in the lives of the poor Chodhras. Without the aid of the spinning-wheel, the workers could not have come into contact with the village people merely by making speeches against the evil of drinking. If, moreover, they had not shown to the latter a profitable way of spending the whole of their spare time, what effect could they have produced by their propaganda work? The workers stopped the village people from drinking and placed the spinning-wheel in their hands. They started schools for children, schools, moreover, in which the pupils do not receive the kind of clerk-making education which other schools impart but get education which will help them to be good farmers, spinners and weavers and live as useful members of society. The experiment is still in its initial stage; but the present ways of a child can tell us a little what he will be like when he grows up, and we can, therefore, hope from what has been achieved so far that we shall get excellent results in course of time. For, along with spinning, other occupations connected with it are also being revived. We may hope that, as a result of the work which is being done, the people will become free from the grip of what Prof. Malkani calls the "local" Government of the area, and that not by throwing off its yoke through force but by awakening the conscience of the present masters and bringing about a change of heart in them. This will happen because, once people learn to give all their time to work and stop borrowing money from professional money-lenders and patronizing the liquor shops, they are bound to become free from the grip of either.

A CORRECTION

Referring to the "Note" in the *Navajivan* of June 13, about the Mahudha khadi centre, a gentleman writes as follows:[1]

If we had many more such readers who read their *Navajivan* carefully and drew attention to errors, in a short time the paperwould

[1] The letter is not translated here. For the "Note", *vide* "Mahudha Khadi Centre", 13-6-1926.

be free from errors. It is certainly my own ambition that the paper should contain no error of fact, should use no improper word or be faulty in language. I know, however, that faults of language occur. Errors of fact creep in sometimes through inadvertence. The only claim I can make is that the language of the paper is restrained. As regards errors of fact, we need the help of readers. To prevent faults of language, the press should have more efficient workers and those who write for *Navajivan* should be studious of their language. I am not well equipped in regard to any of these, but despite these handicaps the desire to continue *Navajivan* is strong. Those readers of the paper, therefore, who love it have no option but to bear for the present with the errors which occur.

The correspondent is certainly right in regard to the error in multiplication pointed out by him. Asked about the quantity of yarn produced from 20 maunds of yarn, Shri Mohanlal Pandya explains:

> The statements that 20 maunds of yarn was produced and 65 pieces of khadi were woven in [the month of] *Vaishakh* does not mean that all the 20 maunds of yarn was used for producing the 65 pieces. For 65 pieces, at the most 11 maunds of yarn would be required. The rest remained in balance. The quantity of yarn left in balance varies from month to month, depending on the number of weavers who work during the month.

I need not suggest to friends who send reports that they should bear in mind that *Navajivan* has readers who read the paper with attention and, therefore, should work out their figures carefully and supply full details.

TRUE GURU

A gentleman writes as follows in support of my note explaining the qualities of a true guru:[1]

Ramdas Swami has actually said in so many words that man need not search for any guru outside of himself; that one should follow the path indicated by one's own sense of discrimination born of one's faith in God, be guided by that sense of discrimination and always work in a spirit of sacrifice. That saint of Maharashtra has said in these few words all that needs to be said.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-6-1926

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 17-6-1926, under the sub-title, "In Search of a Guru", and "Notes", 24-6-l926, under the sub-title, "The True Guru".

548. LETTER TO G. D. CHATTERJEE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 27, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter drawing my attention to Mr. Spender's article.[1] I am inclined to deal with the portion quoted by you in the pages of *Young India*.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. G. D. CHATTERJEE
LAHORE

From the original: C.W. 7740; also G.N. 8778. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

549. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI ,
June 27, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Mr. Muggeridge[3] will be quite welcome whenever he comes.

I wish I could see eye to eye with you in regard to the temple. But unfortunately, I cannot enthuse over it. My temple today is the spinning-wheel through which I see the possibility of bringing a ray of hope to the crumbling cottages of India.

I thank you for your enquiry about Devdas. He is convalescing

[1] Gandhiji discussed portions from Spender's article in *Young India*; *vide* "Colour Bar *v.* Swadeshi", 1-7-1926.

[2] This letter was returned by the Dead Letter Office.

[3] Malcolm Muggeridge Union Christian College, Alwaye, whose speech on "Nationalism and Christianity" Gandhiji published in *Young India*, 22-7-1926. *Vide* "Letter to C. Vijayaraghavachariar", 9-7-1926.

at Mussoorie with a friend.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR
KODAIKANAL

From a photostat: S.N. 12061

550. LETTER TO S. SHANKER

THE ASHRAM
SABARMATI,
June 27, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I still think that you ought not to leave your job and come to me. It is much better that you follow out in Bombay the rules of life at the Ashram. Surely there should be no difficulty about your learning Hindi and Sanskrit in Bombay. There are so many classes. There is a free Sanskrit class conducted in Kalbadevi Road[1] by Narahari Shastri. It should be easier for you to go to some one to teach you Hindi.

If you will go to the untouchable quarters in Madugaum, you will have no difficulty in knowing untouchables from touchables. There is in Matunga[2] a school conducted for untouchables. You can devote some time to that school if you choose to do so. And where you cannot do any personal work for them, and if you have even a few pice to spare, you may set aside that amount and give to those who are working for the so-called untouchables.

Yours sincerely,

S. SHANKER, ESQ.
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 19642

[1] In Bombay
[2] Suburb in Bombay

551. LETTER TO D. N. BAHADURJI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 27, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. 50 strength means half of what it should be. And strength means the quality of twist. A properly twisted thread will stand the strain of a standard weight and still not break and that standard means 100 marks. But if it stands only half of that weight, it would be 50 marks. But 50 strength is really not good enough for the weaver. Mill yarn too rarely attains 100 marks. But 70 marks would be creditable and it will offer no difficulty to the weaver in weaving. 50 is the standard mark for evenness of thread. When a well-twisted thread is not even, it snaps as it passes through the apparatus which is meant for receiving hundreds of threads called warp which give us the width of cloth. If the thread is uneven, it breaks from time to time. The more even the yarn, therefore, the better it is for weaving; hence the necessity for obtaining at least 45 marks for evenness. Constant looking at the strand after the spinning is finished enables one to gauge the evenness, and the actual breaking of the yarn in order to gauge the strength enables one to arrive roughly at the possible strength. And when you get your yarn tested from time to time, you are in a position to make the necessary improvements which come by careful progress. I hope I am now clear. I felt so thankful and delighted that you are taking so much interest in this poor man's work. What a silent revolution it would mean in our life if we could identify ourselves with the poorest of our people in a practical manner such as the spinning-wheel presents!

Your sincerely,

D. N. BAHADURJI, ESQ.
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 19643

552. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI MEHTA

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
Jeth Vad 2, 1982 [*June 27, 1926*]

BHAISHRI BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. Why do you suppose that I am prejudiced against you? Because I cannot accept your argument it does not mean that I am prejudiced against you. It is not my experience that I could refrain from sensual pleasures because I am married. How can I then accept this position? Among my friends there are a number of life-long celebates, men as well as women. Then how can I entertain any doubt?

About God I shall write in *Navajivan* when I have the time. I say when I have the time because the question you ask has been asked often and there will be nothing new in my reply; but I shall try to take it up for your sake. I have never had any doubts about your honesty.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

SHRI BHAGWANJI ANUPCHAND MEHTA
SADAR
RAJKOT

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 19924

553. LETTER TO LAXMIDAS P. ASAR

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
Jeth Vad 2, 1982, June 27, 1926

CHI. LAXMIDAS,

I get your letters regularly. Valabehn is better but I find she has to be nursed with utmost care. Anandi has started running. Mani has donated her nose-ring to me and has also got her gold necklace snapped up by me. It has been resolved that the price of khadi made through the Charkha Sangh could be put up by 6_ p.c. to 12_ p.c. to meet the cost of establishment and distribution. It has also been decided that before implementing this resolution the views of all the agents should be ascertained. It is very good that you do a lot of walking. Do not be in the least hurry to come over here. I

wouldnot be satisfied even with 83 p.c. strength in the yarn. My intention is to get 100 p.c. but I do not know where the difficulty lies. If the strength is 100 p.c. the evenness of the yarn also, I am sure, would be 100 p.c. I believe it is so because I find that the evenness of my yarn improves with the strength.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 19645

554. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

SABARMATI,
Jeth Vad 2, 1982, June 27, 1926

CHI. DEVDAS,

Your letter. You did not write to me what work you had at Motilalji's. Whatever it might have been, I am happy that you had a chance to serve him. I can also say that it is not worth coming here now. It has been very hot. It did rain yesterday, so it may get a little cool. It is very sultry today, it could not but be because people were dying not to speak of animals—for want of rain. And even now we need plenty of rain.

Rajendrababu is leaving just now. In the current issue of *Hindi Navajivan*, he has had a good share. It is good that all three of you do a lot of walking. I wish you to return only after gaining good strength. Khadi is bound to command respect as long as there are a few khadi-wearers at any rate who selflessly devote themselves to social service. I have not read a single book of Hardy's. He was or is a good novelist—that's all I know about him. I could not get thoroughly acquainted with that German lady as I am very busy with my work. I intended to see her today, but could not.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 19646

555. LETTER TO RAI PRABHUDAS BHIKHABHAI

ASHRAM,
June 27, 1926

BHAISHRI PRABHUDAS,

Your letter. You should write without reserve whatever you wish to and I shall answer as far as I can. Whatever the *Gita* says about the practice of yoga is only commendatory. It does not propose to teach any of the exercises. These should be learnt from a proper person. I myself do not know their sequence. I cited the example of friends who have practised *pranayama*[1]. If one could attain *brahmacharya* merely through *pranayama*, a great problem would be solved but thereby *brahmacharya* would come to lose much of its importance. I do hold that *pranayama* and such other exercises make the observance of *brahmacharya* easier for the aspirant. I may even put someone from amongst the *brahmacharis* staying with me under those who have experience. You must not interpret what I say to mean that I want you to give up your studies. Indeed I wish you all success in them.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

SJT. RAI PRABHUDAS BHIKHABHAI
KATHANA LOT
POST KATHLAL
Via NADIAD

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19922

[1] Breath regulation

556. LETTER TO BASANTI DEVI DAS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 29, 1926

MY DEAR SISTER,

I hope you received my telegram[1] about Bhomble. I do not know what to say or how to console. When I think about poor Sujata and you, the whole picture of sorrow rises before me. I can only hope that your innate bravery is not only keeping you up, but is proving a tower of strength to Sujata and all other members of the family surrounding you at the present moment. Do let me have a line if you can.

Yours,

SHRIMATI BASANTI DEVI DAS
C/O SUDHIR ROY
2 BELTOLA ROAD
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 19644

557. LETTER TO NARANDAS ANANDJI

ASHRAM,
June 29, 1926

BHAISHRI NARANDAS,

Today Prof. Gidwani gave me the shocking news that the vine whose grapes you send me with such love is treated with specially slaughtered goat's blood, or the blood brought from the slaughterhouse to feed the roots of the plant. He said that Bhai Ranchhoddas gave him the news and Bhai Ranchhoddas himself brings the grapes from the orchard. I cannot credit this story. It seems there is some misunderstanding somewhere, but since the doubt has arisen, it should be resolved. I thought of sending you a wire, but am writing this

[1] This is not available. *Vide* "Letter to Urmila Devi", 30-6-1926.

instead, seeking explicit clarification. But do reply to me by wire. If the tale is true, please stop sending me the grapes.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAISHRI NARANDAS ANANDJI
KARACHI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19923

558. LETTER TO MOTILAL

ASHRAM,
June 29, 1926

BHAISHRI MOTILAL,

Your letter. A man who sets out to find the right guru, should, I believe, become free himself from faults and passions. Being free from faults and passions does not mean being absolutely perfect. It is only modest to feel the need for a guru. A guru need not necessarily be a living person. Even today I regard as my guides some who, though not yet perfect, have reached a high stage [of spiritual development]. There is no point in trying to know the difference between a perfect man and God. Since it is impossible to get a perfect answer, one must find a reply through one's own experience.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SJT. MOTILAL
C/O MESSRS KUNVERJI UMARSHI & CO.
COOPERGANJ
KANPUR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19925

559. LETTER TO URMILLA DEVI[1]

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 30, 1926

I have your letter[2]. Since then I have also learnt about Bhomble's death. Though it is a very severe blow, perhaps, it is well that he has passed out of the present body. I do not know how Sujata is bearing her grief. You will tell me all about the last moments of the boy. He had many faults, but he had also a nobility about him which was most charming. But he had lost the power of struggling against the devil within him.

The Bengal politics make me sad and miserable when I think of them.[3] It is difficult to follow the intricacies from this distance. How is it that Das's most trusted men have seceded? I almost feel that it would have been better if you had stood aloof from the quarrel. But, of course, you being on the spot should know best.

The death of Deghapatia[4] is also a sad business. I remember having met him at Darjeeling. You know when. Having such a slight acquaintance, I have not written to his family. But you will please convey my condolence if you think fit. And, the son, what about him?[5] A terrible tragedy. One feels absolutely helpless when one contemplates such things over which there is no control.

Yes, Devdas is quite all right and he is at Mussoorie, convalescing with Jamnalalji's friends. We have now a German lady as an addition to the Ashram. I do not know how she will fare; it is yet too early to say.

Yours,

From a photostat: S.N. 10954

[1] C. R. Das's sister

[2] Dated June 21, 1926

[3] Urmila Devi had written, *inter alia*, of the "constant quarrelling" between the Sengupta group and the so-called aristocratic group in the Congress, consisting of such leaders as T. C. Goswami, N. R. Sarkar, S. C. Bose, and Dr. B. C. Roy, and had reported that the aristocratic group had deserted the Congress altogether and aligned itself with mischievous elements (S.N. 10946).

[4] The Raja of Deghapatia

[5] Urmila Devi had written that the twenty-eight-year-old son of the Raja lay seriously ill and dying.

560. LETTER TO IGNATIUS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 30, 1926

MY DEAR IGNATIUS,

I have your letter and the book. Please thank your friend on my behalf for having sent the book. I am returning it to you as I have read the book and I have also a copy of it. I read it in the Yeravda jail and a copy was presented to me by a well-known Catholic friend, I think, in Dehra Dun. I like the book for the charming simplicity with which the saintly girl has described her life, her hopes and her aspirations. The supernatural part of it had no appeal for me. The persistency with which she secured admission to the Convent commanded my respect and admiration. The purity of her character was worthy of adoration. Her rigorous self-examination was inspiring. The canonization, etc., did not interest me.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 11198

561. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 30, 1926

MY DEAR C. R.,

I have your letter about Tirupur khadi. The complaint is not about seasonal khadi. The comparison has been set up between last year's and this year's production. And the correspondent, who was himself a lover of khadi and an admirer of Tirupur khadi, contends that it has been progressively deteriorating. And as you see, Jerajani endorses the verdict up to a point. Whether a public statement is made or not, I think a more thorough investigation is necessary. If the hot season causes deterioration, we must either find out ways and means of combating the evils of heat or we must frankly tell the public that they must expect two qualities according to the seasons and, therefore, also two prices.

With reference to your tour, I have well-nigh despaired of any tour coming forth during the year through no fault of anybody. It is difficult to get you all ready at the same time. And you will insist upon having some unavoidable thing at the last moment and postpone your departure which is the conjuction of your stars. I would suggest complete cancellation of touring unless you have courage enough to go out even single. Manilal is not available till the first of September. He has been postponing the work of his Railway Association from time to time and I cannot put any pressure upon him when he pleads the cause of his association. Jamnalalji never cancels a programme, he accepts, but it is unjust to him and unjust to the cause to bind him to a programme which is not irrevocable. I have therefore freed him from all obligations. He will join you when you are ready if he at all can. Nobody wants to tour without you. You are therefore the central figure. Seeing that your own movements are erratic and beyond your control, the only thing to do is for you to say when you will move out and such men as can be got together will form the company. And if you have not the heart to undertake the job on these conditions, by all means give up the idea of touring this year, only remember this much that the Maharashtra tour has been fixed up after your definite instructions. But if these instructions were conditional upon Manilal Kothari and Jamnalalji joining you, let the Maharashtra tour also be cancelled. Please wire to me your decision. And do not hesitate to say no if the touring is really beyond you, whether on account of your difficulties at Tiruchengodu or any other. It is no use trusting to chance.

Devdas is still at Mussoorie. He is gathering strength and helping Punditji[1]. In what way, he does not state. Laxmidas and Lalji are with him. Jamnalalji was here. He has gone for a few days to Ranpur to examine Amritlal Seth's undertaking. Rajendra Babu left yesterday. Pyarelal is still with Mathuradas who, as you know, has gone to Panchgani, and is rendering invaluable help to Mathuradas. I have now a German lady. She came here on Saturday. Thus the Ashram is fairly full. Chhotalal has now calmed down and is trying to specialize in spinning and weaving, etc. There is no question therefore now of his travelling with you or coming to you.

Yours,

From a copy: S.N. 11199

[1] Motilal Nehru

562. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 30, 1926

I have your postcard. It is surprising how you managed to get ill somehow or other. Instead of having a good and quiet time at Kotgarh, you must have blood-poisoning[1].

I wrote a long letter some days ago to the Kotgarh address. Do please let me know fully how you are keeping. Do come here if you at all feel like it. And you know you will have all the nursing that you can possibly desire or need.

Yours,

From a photostat: S.N. 19647

563. LETTER TO ANIL KUMAR MITRA

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 30, 1926

MY DEAR ANIL,

I have your letter. I am sorry that you are unable to go back to Santiniketan. You will let me know how you finally fix yourself up. I would like you not to publish the autobiography just now. Because I am revising the first part with a view to publishing it in book form in English. As soon as it is revised and published you shall have a copy when you can make the necessary corrections and publish the translations. But before you do so, I would like you to send the manuscript for Mahadev to see. As you know, Mahadev knows Bengali.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy : S.N. 32253

[1] Caused by insect bite

564. A.I.C.P.A. BALANCE-SHEET

The following is the balance-sheet of the A.-I. Cow-Protection Association ending 30th April 1926:[1]

It will be noted that the proceeds of the sale of yarn have been very poor because the yarn was mostly bad.[2] If the subscribers will improve the quality of their yarn, they will without extra trouble or expense to themselves increase the amount paid by them.

Young India, 1-7-1926

565. COLOUR BAR v. *SWADESHI*

Thus writes Mr. Spender:

> Gandhi would keep out European goods; the South Africans would go a step further and keep out the Indians. Swadeshi and Colour Bar Bills are the obverse and reverse of the same idea; both follow from the despairing thought that East and West cannot intermingle without destroying each other's characteristic ways of life. Gandhi, the saint, is full of benevolence, and I listened to him while he earnestly disclaimed all sympathy with violent or anarchical ways of changing any existing order. Yet, as he discoursed on the ravages which Western industrialism had wrought in the Indian village, I had the feeling that, if he were Emperor of India invested with plenary powers the regulations that he would make for the admission of Europeans and their settlement in India might not greatly differ from those which the South Africans are attempting to impose on Indians in South Africa today. I have a very real respect for Mr. Gandhi, and I am, of course, aware that the last thing that he desires is to afford excuses for either form of intolerance. It is nevertheless true that 'Swadeshi' and 'Colour Bar' belong to the same spiritual family.[3]

This paragraph from Mr. Spender's article furnishes an extraordinary study in what Tolstoy would call hypnotism. Under the hypnotic influence of the standardized thought of the English official in India, Mr. Spender is unable to see any difference between the Colour Bar Bills of South Africa and the Indian swadeshi in terms of

[1] The accounts are not reproduced here.

[2] This was only Rs. 26 and odd out of receipts totalling a little over Rs. 6,154.

[3] This was evidently the portion of Spender's article quoted by G. D. Chatterjee in his letter to Gandhiji; *vide* "Letter to G. D. Chatterjee", 27-6-1926

khaddar. Mr. Spender is an honest Liberal. He has some sympathy for Indian aspirations. But he cannot escape the influence of his immediate surroundings. What is true of him is no doubt true of every one of us. Hence the necessity for non-co-operation. When the surroundings are vicious, we must cut ourselves off from contact with those surroundings, in so far at least as our contact is voluntary.

But whether Mr. Spender's extraordinary proposition is an outcome of the hypnotic influence of his surroundings or whether it is really his own original idea, let us examine it. The Colour Bar Bill is aimed at men, not at measures. Swadeshi is aimed at measures only.Colour Bar is indiscriminately against a man's race or colour. Swadeshi knows no such distinction. The upholders of the Colour Bar would carry out their purpose even violently, if necessary. Swadeshi eschews all form of violence, even mental. The Colour Bar has no reason behind it. Swadeshi, in the form of khaddar, is a scientific formula supported by reason all along the line. Under the Colour Bar every Indian, no matter what educational qualifications he may possess, even though he may be thoroughly Westernized, is an undesirable person in the estimation of the Europeans of South Africa. The Colour Bar Bills are violent in purpose, for, they would keep the natives of the soil and the Asiatic settlers for ever as unskilled labourers and will not allow them to rise above that status. The Colour Bar Bills are intended to do, under the name of civilization and for its protection, perhaps, in a more virulent form, what has been done in the name of Hinduism by Hindus to the so-called untouchables. But it is worthy of note that untouchability, whatever may be said to the contrary, is fast dying in India. Those who are devoting themselves to the removal of untouchability are also those who are enthusiastically advocating the universalization of the spinning-wheel. Untouchability is admitted to be an evil. The Colour Bar is being raised almost to the status of a religion in South Africa. The Colour Bar Bills would harm, and deprive of their possessions innocent men and women without any just cause. Whereas swadeshi is intended to harm not one single soul, it seeks to return to the poorest of the land what has been taken away from them almost by force. The Colour Bar Bills are exclusive. Swadeshi is never exclusive in the sense in which the colour Bar Bills are. Swadeshi has no sympathy with the formula that East and West can never intermingle. Swadeshi does not banish all foreign or European goods, nor all machine-made goods, nor for that matter does swadeshi tolerate all home-made goods. Swadeshi admits of and

welcomes the introduction of all foreign goods that cannot or need not be manufactured in India and that would benefit her people. Thus swadeshi admits all foreign books containing pure literature, all foreign watches, foreign needles, foreign sewing machines, foreign pins. But swadeshi excludes all intoxicating drinks and drugs even though they may be manufactured in India. Swadeshi concentrates itself upon the spinning-wheel and khaddar, to the exclusion of all foreign cloth and even cloth manufactured in the mills of India, for the very simple, sufficient, satisfying and moral reason that the destruction of the spinning-wheel has meant the destruction of the only supplementary industry of India for the millions of its peasants without furnishing any substitute. Thus, swadeshi in the form of khaddar and the spinning-wheel is a paramount necessity for the very existence of the millions of her paupers. Whereas the Colour Bar Bills are a response to the greed of a handful of Europeans who are, after all, exploiting the resources of a land which belongs not to them, but to the original inhabitants of South Africa. The Colour Bar Bills have, therefore, no moral foundation whatsoever so far as I can see. The exclusion or the extinction of the Asiatic settlers of South Africa is in no way required, can in no way be proved to be necessary, for the existence of the South African Europeans. Still less can the suppression of the original inhabitants of South Africa be defended on any single moral ground. It is, therefore, painfully surprising to find a person of Mr. Spender's experience and attainments putting the highly moral swadeshi in the form of khaddar in the same category as the Colour Bar Bills. They do not belong to one family, let alone spiritual, but they belong to absolutely different families as different as the North Pole is from the South.

Mr. Spender speculates upon what I would do if I were 'Emperor of India invested with plenary powers'. Perhaps I can speculate with greater authority. If I were Emperor of India, I would extend the hand of fellowship to the whole of the world irrespective of caste, colour or creed, for, I claim the whole of mankind to be the children of one God, having absolutely the same capacity for self-realization as the tallest amongst them. I would disband practically the whole of the army of occupation in India, retaining only such police as may be necessary for the protection of her citizens against thieves and robbers. I would not bribe the Frontier tribes as they are being bribed today. But I would cultivate the friendliest relations with them and to that end send out reformers amongst them

in order to find out the ways or means of providing useful occupation for them. I would guarantee the fullest protection for every European living in India and all honest European enterprises. I would impose a prohibitive tariff on all foreign cloth so as to exclude it entirely from India and bring khaddar under State control, so as to enable every villager who chooses to spin, feel that the products of his or her spinning-wheel would be taken up. I would prohibit the importation of intoxicating liquors and close down every distillery, confining the manufacture of alcohol and opium for proved medical necessity. I would guarantee full protection to all forms of religious worship, save what is repugnant to the moral sense of mankind. I would throw open to the so-called untouchables every public temple and public school to which all other Hindus have right of admission. I would summon the representative of both the Hindus and Mussalmans, search their pockets and deprive them of all eatables and of all lethal weapons, if they have any, and lock them together in one room and open it only after they have settled their quarrels. There are of course many other things that I would do if I were Emperor of India. But since there is little chance of my being one, the foregoing is enough as a fair sample of what one who is mis-called a visionary, but whoconsiders himself a practical man, understanding the wants of the poorest people, would do if he had the power.

Young India, 1-7-1926

566. 'TOWARDS MORAL BANKRUPTCY'-I

Kind friends continue to send me cuttings from Indian newspapers approvingly dealing with the question of birth-control by the use of contraceptives. My correspondence with young men on their private conduct is increasing. I am able to discuss in these pages only an infinitesimal portion of the questions raised by my correspondents. American friends send me literature on the subject and some are even angry with me for having expressed an opinion against the use of contraceptives. They deplore that, an advanced reformer in many ways, I should be medieval in my views about birth-control. I find too that the advocates of the use of contraceptives number among them some of the soberest of men and women of all lands.

I therefore thought that there must be something very decisive

in favour of the methods advocated and felt too that I should say on the subject more than I have done. Whilst I was thinking of the problem and of the question of reading the literature on the subject, a book called *Towards Moral Bankruptcy* was placed in my hands for reading. It deals with this very subject and, as it appears to me, in a perfectly scientific manner. The original is in French by M. Paul Bureau and is entitled *L' Indiscipline des Moeurs*[1] which literally means "the indiscipline of morals". The translation is published by Constable Company and has an introduction by Dr. Mary Scharlieb, C.B.E., M.D., M.S. (Lond.). It covers 538 pages in 15 chapters.

Having read the book, I felt that, before I summarized the author's views, I must in justice to the cause read the standard literature in favour of the methods advocated. I consequently borrowed from the Servants of India Society such literature as they had on the subject. They have very kindly lent me some of the books in their possession. . . . Kaka Kalelkar who is studying the subject has given me Havelock Ellis's volume specially bearing on the subject and a friend has sent me the special number of *The Practitioner* in which is collected some valuable medical opinion from well-known practitioners.

My purpose in collecting literature on the subject was to test the accuracy, so far as a layman could, of M. Bureau's conclusions. One often finds that there are two sides to questions even when scientists discuss them and that there is much to be said for either side. I was anxious, therefore, to know the viewpoints, of the advocates of contraceptives before I introduced to the reader M. Bureau's volume. I have come to the deliberate conclusion that so far at least as India is concerned, there is no case for the use of contraceptives. Those who advocate their use for Indian conditions either do not know them or choose to ignore them. But if it can be proved that the methods advocated are harmful even in the West, it would be unnecessary to examine the special Indian conditions.

Let us therefore see what M. Bureau has to say. His studies are confined to France. But France means much. It is considered to be [one of] the most advanced countries in the world and, if the methods have failed in France, they are not likely to succeed elsewhere.

Opinions may differ as to the meaning of the word 'failure'. I must therefore define the word as it is here meant. The methods must be proved to have failed if it can be shown that moral bonds have

loosened, licentiousness has increased, and, instead of the check having been exercised by men and women for purposes of health and economic limitation of families only, it has been used principally for feeding animal passions. This is the moderate position. The extreme moral position condemns the use of contraceptives under every conceivable circumstance, it being contended that it is not necessary for man or woman to satisfy the sexual instinct except when the act is meant for race reproduction, even as it is not necessary for man or woman to eat except for sustaining the body. There is also the third position. There is a class of men who contend that there is no such thing as morality or that if there is, it consists not in exercising restraint but in indulgence of every form of animal appetite, so long as it does not so impair the constitution as to render it unfit for the very indulgence which is its object. For this extreme position, I do not suppose, M. Bureau has written his volume. For, M. Bureau concludes his books by quoting Tom Mann's saying: 'The future is for the nations who are chaste'.

In the first part of his book, M. Bureau has collected facts which make most dismal reading. It shows how vast organizations have sprung up in France which merely pander to man's basest tastes. Even the one claim of advocates of contraceptives that abortions must disappear with the use of these methods cannot be sustained. 'It is certain', says M. Bureau, 'that during the twenty-five years that have especially seen the increase in France of anti-conceptionist methods, the number of criminal abortions has not become less.' M. Bureau is of opinion that abortions are on the increase. He puts down the figure at anything between 2,75,000 and 3,25,000 per year. Public opinion does not look upon them with the horror that it did years ago.

Young India, 1-7-1926

567. NOTES

KHADDAR EXHIBITIONS IN BIHAR

I have before me a fairly long report of the Khaddar Exhibitions that have been recently held in Bihar. The inspiration to hold these exhibitions was derived by Babu Rajendra Prasad from such an exhibition held by the All-India Agrawala Maha Sabha at Delhi during the year. The first such exhibition in Bihar was opened by Babu Satis Chandra Das Gupta of Khadi Pratishthan, Calcutta. And

as it proved successful, similar exhibitions were continued to be held in various parts of Bihar. The first exhibition was held on the grounds of Bihar Vidyapith on the banks of the Ganges, some three miles from Patna. The second was held in the Bihar Young Men's Institute and it was opened by Sadhu Vaswani of Sind. The third was held at Arrah and the fourth at Muzaffarpur and was opened by Maulvi Saheb Muhammad Shaffee. The fifth was held at Chupra[1] and was opened by Maulana Mazhar-ul-Haque. The sixth was held at Mairnea, a small village in the district of Chupra and the seventh and the last mentioned in the report was held at Gaya on the 11th instant. The highest attendance was at Gaya, in spite of terrible heat. It totalled 7,000. There was a large number of ladies included in the number. The least attendance was 2,000. The report goes on to state:

> These exhibitions are being visited by Congressmen, non-Congressmen, Government officials, Zamindars, lawyers, big and small merchants, and in some cases even Europeans. The exhibition at Mairnea was visited by crowds of simple villagers, rather than middle-class men.

The khadi sales averaged over a thousand each, the lowest being Rs. 400 at Mairnea, and the highest being Rs. 2,000 at Gaya. The report says:

> In these exhibitions all discord and disunion between Hindus and Mussalmans or political leaders holding different views was absent.

The methods adopted are:

> We approach at every place some prominent person and request him to organize a khadi exhibition. We secure an influential man to open it. Invitation cards are issued to prominent people. The exhibition is advertised by means of notices, placards, etc. In the evenings, during the exhibition time, magic lantern lectures are given illustrating the khadi movement. Crowds are attracted to these lectures. After the exhibition is over, khadi is hawked in the places where it is held. We propose to continue to hold these exhibitions and expect to clear off our stock which amounts to Rs. 80,000.

I observe from this report that noted men conducted the sales and hawking at these exhibitions.

PROFESSOR PRESENTED WITH KHADDAR

Quite recently, the students of the economic department of the Patna College presented Professor Hamilton on his retirement with a

[1] Also spelt as 'Chapra'

piece of khaddar of local manufacture with the following remarks by their spokesman as quoted in *The Searchlight*:

> Sir, I know you to be a devout follower of the late Prof. Marshall who lays down the basic concept of all his works on economics: 'It is on the one side a study of wealth, on the other and more important side, a part of the study of man.' And for you we cannot choose a better present than a piece of khadi, from start to finish, a Bihar product, made of the indigenous Kukti cotton. It lays bare to you, Sir, not only the economic endeavours of our country but the very heart of our nation. On the side of wealth-production it represents that part of it which goes to increase the poor man's mite, and on its human side, represents the country's struggle to provide food for the famished and to clothe the shame of the naked.

It is to be wished that all the students whether of Government college or other will appreciate the economics of khaddar as the Patna College students have done and will follow their example whenever they have any occasion to make presentations.

KHADDAR IN MYSORE

A correspondent writes:

> Some khaddar lovers of Mysore have started a co-operative society in Mysore town since July 1925. Not much khaddar is yet locally produced. The organizers therefore secure khaddar from Andhra, Tamil Nadu and Karnatak. The Society intends to increase its capital. At present they have 365 shares of Rs. 10 each. The shareholders are required to pay Re. 1 per month on each allotted share. But some have paid the whole amount. There are 103 members of the society. The shop purchases locally spun yarn at the rate of Rs. 12 per pound. It is then locally woven. The society is spending only Rs. 32 per month for the establishment and other charges. The paid-up capital between July 1925 and May last was Rs. 2,036. Khaddar purchased was Rs. 8,365. Khaddar sold was Rs. 8,088.

This is no doubt an unpretentious beginning for a town like Mysore. But if the example is copied by other towns and if the management is able and honest there is no doubt that there is a great future for khaddar in Mysore.

WHO CAN AFFILIATE?

A question has been asked what are the terms of affiliation for *goshalas* to All-India Cow-Protection Association. No rules have yet been passed by the Committee. But I adopt the suggestions of Chaunde Maharaj that it should be one per cent of the net income of

the society seeking affiliation. Full particulars should be supplied at the time of affiliation and the applicant society should be prepared to endorse the objects of the Association and submit to inspection and audit by the Association. The affiliated institution or society shall have the right to have the advice of the experts of the Association and free use of the literature at its disposal and such other guidance as may be in its power to render. These rules will naturally be subject to the sanction of the Committee of the A.-I. Cow-Protection Association. I would welcome suggestions before the rules are placed before the Committee.

Young India, 1-7-1926

568. ALL-INDIA DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL

A correspondent draws my attention to the fact that the acknowledgments of amounts received on behalf of the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund have been loosely dealt with in *Young India* in that there has been no continuity. This is true because as intimations were received either from the Secretary or the Treasurer I passed on the memoranda without checking and without examining the last totals. The correspondent is therefore unable to know whether the monies paid by himself have been actually credited to the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund or not. Upon receipt of this letter, I corresponded[1] with the Treasurer and secured a copy of the full list of subscribers to date. In order to avoid any confusion and error and so as to enable every subscriber to find out for himself whether his subscription has or has not been received, I am publishing the full list[2]. I am unable to give the whole list in one issue, if only because the second part of the list is still under examination.

I need hardly assure the reader that the funds at the Treasurer's office are most jealously kept and they are banked as soon as they are received. The confusion has arisen not owing to faulty or careless book-keeping, but owing to omission to publish *all* lists received at the *Young India* office. I shall be thankful if subscribers will look up the list that is being now published and call my attention to any omission they may discover.

Young India, 1-7-1926

[1] This letter is not available.

[2] Not reproduced here

569. LETTER TO SHEWAKRAM KARAMCHAND

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 2, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is perfectly possible to completely stop involuntary night discharges. I have not entirely succeeded, but I know that it is perfectly possible. I have been free often for months and months. And I recall even a time when I was free for over a year. Why that long spell of freedom was broken is a long story. The discharges are neither natural nor beneficial for health. They are an interruption to the full development of health and, when one's mind has become absolutely free from passion of every kind, night discharges are an impossibility. It is a state attainable by all. But it is attained by sustained and even painful effort.

I have your second letter also which I might deal with later in the pages of *Young India*.[1] I have always wanted to give yourboys a letter in my own handwriting, but something or other has come in the way. Here are a few lines now.[2]

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

SJT. SHEWAKRAM KARAMCHAND
TEACHER
M. A. V. SCHOOL
OLD SUKKUR
(SIND)

From a microfilm: S.N. 19648

[1] It is not clear what the addressee's second letter was about; *vide*, however, "Conservation of Vital Energy", 2-9-1926.

[2] The enclosure is not available.

570. LETTER TO SATCOWRIPATI ROY

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI ,
July 2, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your telegram, but such news as you have given me always travels fast. I got the news of Bhomble's death twenty-four hours before your telegram. I telegraphed to Sudhir and wrote also to Basanti Devi giving such comfort as was possible.

I hope you are keeping well and that things in Bengal are shaping themselves right.

Yours sincerely,

BA[B]U SATCOWRIPATI ROY
BHAWANIPUR
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19649

571. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR.

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Friday [*July 2, 1926*][1]

BHAI RAMESHWARJI,

Your letter. As for God, He is always testing us. What does it matter if a whole lifetime is spent in repeating *Ramanama*. We should repeat *Ramanama* with faith that it is the best remedy.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 164

[1] From the postmark

572. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

THE ASHRAM,
July 2, 1926

BHAISHRI KAKA,

Both your letters to hand. Much of what you write is due, I see, to your misunderstanding. I am not backing out at all. Only I would not be on the committee which I do regard as right. All the rules are framed by the committee. Even in the matter of selecting a name, do not accept my suggestion only. I do not think there are more men on the committee than are needed. Nowadays Mama[1] and Narahari[2] do not come here at all. There is at present such an understanding with Vinoba that every three months he should come and stay here for quite some time. I have asked for a copy of the rules being sent to Mama, Narahari and Appa[3].

As the principles were laid down at the time of the founding of the Ashram[4] they are not mentioned in these rules. Panditji[5] and Chhaganlal Joshi[6] can both be on the committee. They do not wish to be there I rather liked their plea. They are neither particularly enthusiastic nor indifferent about the committee. I regard the committee as absolutely necessary. It is indeed my aim not to tie down the committee here and now with too many rules.

I believe we cannot yet interest ourselves in the affairs of the families. One who has lived in the Ashram for five years and studiously endeavours to observe its rules can become a member of the managing committee. The committee of course has overall control of all the departments.

If your interpretation of the rules is correct they will have to be amended.

I have conceived of the school as an autonomous body within the Ashram itself. The managing committee is not intended to acquire some prerogatives for its members. Living in the Ashram and leading

[1] Vaman Laxman Phadke
[2] Narahari D. Parikh
[3] Appa Saheb Patwardhan
[4] In 1915
[5] Presumably, Narayan Moreshwar Khare
[6] Head Master of the Ashram school.

a similar life [elsewhere] I regard as one and the same.

I did know your opinion on the question of prayer, but I did not send you my comments. All the aspects had been discussed here, so I presumed you must have inferred my opinion from it. There was an open discussion and I had discussed the matter specially with Mahadev. Had I found a difference of principle in the opinion you held, I would have joined issue with you.

From my standpoint, I do not agree that there is any divergence between us in regard to the ideals of the Ashram school. The reason why you think there is, is that you do not fully understand that I am an *anekantavadin*[1]. I am quite convinced that we are at present in no position to take pupils from outside; besides we are trying new experiments every day. It is certainly desirable to make experiments, but we cannot involve outsiders even if we try to. Fortunately they are not so simple-minded as to get themselves readily involved. People all over the world act in accordance with current traditions and that is only right. We are either too advanced or too backward for many to keep us company. I believe, nowhere else in India is the educational field so wide as ours, because we deal with children and also with their parents. We may not perhaps be in a position to cope with that field, but what I say is true. What does it matter if people from outside compare our school with Ambalalbhai's? Should we not be guided by our own conscience? Certainly we have no wish to boycott anyone. Tulsidas, the *Antyaja*, would have a place right here.

The object in having you on the committee is clear enough, viz., that all may feel the need to consult you while you are at the Ashram. Let us assume that perhaps Maganlal may not feel that way. Is that any reason why you should hesitate? If my idea of the committee is correct, Mahadev, Kishorelal and Maganlal cannot by themselves carry the burden.

The ideal before the school would be to discover through experiments what national education is and for the teachers to consider themselves as pupils because they are seekers, too, groping for their ideal. I place you and myself in the same category. The idea you have in regard to khadi is equally true in regard to education.

What you have yet to do is this. Return the rules after adding to or deleting from them. There may possibly be an error in

[1] In Jainism one who looks at things from various points of view

incorporating into the rules that part of your criticism which all accept. Therefore I want you to translate your own criticism into the rules, so that it will be easy for everyone to understand it. Else we would all be trying to interpret them in our own way.

You write nothing about your health. Let me know about the weather there. Shanker has written many letters to you. Now what about his complaint that you have not replied to them?

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. KAKASAHEB
YEOTMAL

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19926

573. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday [*July 2, 1926*][1]

CHI MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. You are bound to gain weight in that climate. The stomach trouble should not persist now. What is your body temperature now? There is quite a crowd at the Ashram at present. A lady[2] who was to come from Germany has already arrived.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
HOMI VILLA
PANCHGANI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The postmark bears the date July 3, 1926. The Friday preceding that date was July 2.

[2] Helene Haussding

574. LETTER TO V. R. KOTHARI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 3, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[1] Jamnalalji is now here. I have discussed the thing with him. His opinion is that your institution is good so far as it goes. It is an ordinary type of boarding house looking after about 25 boys belonging to the depressed classes. The funds which friends place at my disposal for this work are limited. Several institutions, some better carrying out the purpose I and those who are associated with me have in view, are being supported. To pay you Rs. 10,000/- would be to pay practically the whole of the expense of the building. When you embarked upon the scheme, you had not any help through me in view. It seems to me that you should exert yourself to approach others who are also interested in such work and enlist their support. It is not right for me to burden the trust at my disposal with a single heavy item. It seems to me that Rs. 5,000/- can be more usefully employed for the same cause by distributing the same amongst several equally needy and equally efficient institutions. I have shownthis letter to Jamnalalji who is as much interested in the welfare of the depressed classes as I am and who helps me in raising funds for such purpose.[2]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. V. R. KOTHARI
POONA CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 11127

[1] On March 9, 1926, Kothari had referred to a grant of Rs. 5,000 Gandhiji gave him for a Depressed Classes Hostel, at Bari, in Sholapur District and renewed his request for a further grant. Jamnalal Bajaj paid a visit to the institution (S.N. 11120). On June 28, Kothari wrote reminding Gandhiji of his request for the grant (S.N. 11188).

[2] In reply to this, Kothari wrote again on July 5 (S.N. 11128).

575. LETTER TO SHALIGRAM SHASTRI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 3, 1926

BHAI SHALIGRAM SHASTRI,

Your letter to hand. Also received your telegram. You must have got my telegram informing you that Harihar Sharma was going back and that you might fix any date after August 16. I can well understand the reason for your not coming at this time.

I send you a copy of the scheme which Pandit Harihar Sharma has drawn up in consultation with the local workers. Please study it and place it before the committee if necessary, and obtain their opinion also on this.

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 19650

576. KHADI WORK IN GARIADHAR

Shri Shambhushanker has been working in Gariadhar on behalf of the Conference[1]. His record of work is noteworthy. He persuaded 1,l00 families in 41 villages around Gariadhar to stock cotton and helped them with all facilities up to the stage of weaving. Approximately 3,000 maunds of cotton has been stocked, out of which 800 maunds was ginned on hand-wheels. There is a cess on carding in this region, but those who carded this cotton for being turned into slivers were exempted from this cess. Out of all these families, only 112 families availed themselves of the assistance offered by the conference in terms of its resolutions on the subject, namely, one-half the expenditure incurred oncarding and weaving. Till now, only Rs. 164 have been spent on this account. As near-famine conditions prevailed in this area, cheap slivers were also supplied. About 8 maunds of slivers were sold to nearly 50 families, at the rate of 6 annas a pound, and most of this was used for making women's garments. It is estimated that no more than Rs. 50 would have to be set aside for this purpose. In addition to this, because of the famine conditions, cotton was also purchased from the market and got spun

[1] Kathiawar Political Conference

into yarn on payment, with a view to having it woven into cloth. So far, 295 maunds of cotton have been ginned, and made into slivers in the Centre itself. The quantity is in the process of being spun and woven into cloth. The cost of ginning came to Rs. 110. The cotton-pods yielded 93_ maunds of cottonwool and 190 maunds of cotton-seeds. The yarn being spun is of 4 to 8 counts. The rate of payment for spinning is five pies per count. The rate for carding and making slivers is Rs. 2-12-0 per pound, and for weaving it is Rs. 8. The khadi woven is of 24 inches to 27 inches width, and one maund of khadi measures between 110 and 115 yards in length. Shri Shambhushanker tries to get all the khadi produced sold locally. He has so far sold 962 yards of khadi at the rate of 17 annas for 3_ yards, which comes nearly to 5 annas a yard. A maund of yarn is woven into cloth every day. Moreover khadi is woven in this area for the Amreli Khadi Centre too. This khadi measures 30 inches in width. The work in this centre is being done efficiently and economically, and the chief reason for this seems to be that Shri Shambhushankerbhai mixes with and maintains close contacts with each spinner, carder and weaver. My object in publishing the figures which I receive from the various centres is that they may learn and derive inspiration from one another. Healthy and pleasant competition amongst the various centres should be welcome. The field of work is so large that it offers scope for sacrifice for thousands of voluntary workers and can help thousands of others to make a living. Those, moreover, who become interested in this work and realize that village life can have the beauty of poetry can derive the utmost happiness from it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-7-1926

577. RESTRICTIONS ON WOMEN IN MENSES

A widow writes as follows:

> I am told that a woman in menses should not touch books, paper, pencil, slate and such other things connected with learning. Do you also believe in this?

Such a question can be asked only in a wretched country like India which is disgraced by foolish notions about touching and not touching things. Some of the rules forbidding such a woman to touch a particular thing can be justified on grounds of health and morality. During that period, the woman is unfit to do hard work. It is very

necessary that she should remain undisturbed by sex desire. A married woman should altogether avoid the company of her husband, and rest is very necessary for her, but it is not only not improper for her to read good books or to study but, on the contrary, I believe that it is desirable and necessary that she should do so. We can think of a number of household chores which such a woman can do with comfort and with little exertion.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-7-1926

578. GUJARAT KHADI PRACHARAK MANDAL

According to the accounts for the second *Chaitra*[1] received from the Gujarat Khadi Mandal, 3,854 square yards of khadi was woven in fifteen different centres out of yarn spun personally by people who got it woven. One of the centres wove 410 square yards of khadi from ready yarn and 3,348 sq. yards of khadi for sale was woven in ten centres. A subsidy of Rs. 1,433 at the rate of _ an anna a *vishi*[2] per yard was given to fifteen centres. Khadi worth Rs. 7,580 was sold through eleven stores. The total number of workers in the various centres was 41. Besides, there were 15 carders, 117 weavers, 172 persons spinning for themselves and 683 spinning for wages. The figures of work for a period of eleven months are as follows: Khadi woven out of yarn spun by the persons who had it woven, 35,033 sq. yards; khadi made from ready-made yarn, 7,756 sq. yards; khadi for sale, both spinning and weaving done through the centres, 20,595 sq. yards; a subsidy of Rs. 10,584 at the rate of half an anna; the sale of khadi through the various stores, Rs. 80,063. These figures do not include those relating to centres in Kathiawar. During the second *Chaitra*, the Mandal sold 19 spinning-wheels, 50 *taklis*[3], 32 spindles, 105 Ib. of slivers, 40 lb. of yarn, 60 bows for carding, 29 charkhas and 56 aterans[4]. In the figures above, annas and fractions have been left out. These statistic may seem ludicrous in the context of our aim of bringing about boycott of foreign cloth, but, as a

[1] A month in the Hindu calendar, roughly corresponding to March-April; in this year there was an extra, i.e., second *Chaitra*.

[2] A unit of a warp comprising twenty threads

[3] Spindles worked with hand

[4] Wooden gadgets on which yarn is wound off a spindle

measure of the progress of khadi itself, of the help given to the poor and from the standpoint of middle-class men and women who wish to earn their living through voluntary service, they are not ludicrous but heartening. As our capacity for work improves and workers acquire self-confidence, khadi will make even faster progress. Anyone who takes the trouble to think cannot but see that, if there is any work which can become universal in the country, it is that connected with the production of khadi.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-7-1926

579. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

[SABARMATI],
Monday [*July 5, 1926*][1]

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

I have your welcome letter. So you will give me a Tamil lesson and something noble every Monday. I understand all the Tamil you have given me, of course with your careful notes.

Love to you all. I have mentioned your proposal to Devdas. But I do not think, he will come. He is all right now.

Yours,
BAPU

SUNDARAM
C/O MRS. STOKES
KOTGARH
Via SIMLA

From a photostat: G.N. 3182

[1] From the postmark

580. LETTER TO THE EDITOR "HINDOO"

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 5, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Here is my article[1] for the *Hindoo* if it may be so called.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

THE EDITOR
Hindoo
SIND (HYDERABAD)

From a microfilm: S.N. l9652

581. MESSAGE FOR "HINDOO"

July 5, 1926

I must not be tired of repeating what I found to be a fundamental truth for India's freedom. I can therefore commend to the readers of *Hindoo* the spinning-wheel and khaddar. I know how severely Sind has proved disappointing, but I know that the time is coming when Sind will also respond.

From a microfilm: S.N. 19652

582. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

July 5, 1926

CHI. MANILAL,

Your letters to hand. I expect there would be no hitch in arranging your marriage when you come here. Certainly nothing can be *finalized* before your arrival. If you must marry, you must restrain your extravagance. Everyone coming from there complains of this.

I find your explanation inadequate. But you will always be what you are. I do not want to control you. I shall be content with whatever

[1] *Vide* the succeeding item.

you let me know.

The books you ordered have been dispatched. Please remit their cost immediately. The Ashram can grant no credit, because it has no private sources of income. I hope this is quite clear.

I learn now for the first time that Shanti does not satisfy you. I am glad however to learn that Dahyo does.

Please send me the old book of newspaper cuttings maintained by me. There are also a number of books which are of no use there; you had better send them here or bring them with you.

Devdas is quite well. He is enjoying the climate of Mussoorie. Ramdas is in Amreli.

What is one to write about Harilal[1]? Rami[2] is in the Ashram.

You do not seem to have made use of the many articles which Mahadevbhai sent you. Of course, that does not matter. An editor ought to have the right to decide what he will accept and what he will not. But should he not write even a letter of thanks or an acknowledgment?

When you come, be armed with a notice to me: 'Marry me off in fifteen days' time; I must take the next steamer.'

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1118. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi; also G.N. 4705

583. LETTER TO TEHMINA KHAMBHATTA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Tuesday [*July 6, 1926*][3]

DEAR SISTER,

Your letter to hand. I was certainly expecting it. Every time I take up Mrs. Eddy's[4] book, I do remember Bhai Khambhatta. I

[1] Gandhiji's eldest son
[2] Daughter of Harilal
[3] From the postmark
[4] Mary Baker Eddy (1821-1910), author of *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* (1875)

am very glad to learn he is recovering. How can we get tired of diet or a medicine which proves beneficial to us? I have certainly not forgotten about sending my opinion of Mrs. Eddy's book. But sincethere is no urgency about it, I give it only such time as I can spare from my other occupations.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. TEHMINA BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA
275, HORNBY ROAD
FORT
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 4362. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

584. A MESSAGE[1]

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 7, 1926

The greatest contribution that India can render to the sum of human happiness is to attain her freedom by peaceful and truthful means. Whether such a thing will ever come to pass is more than one can say. Indeed, appearances would contradict any such belief. Nevertheless, my faith in the future of humanity is so great that I cannot but hold any other belief than that India will gain her freedom only through peaceful and truthful means and no other. May all, therefore, who share my belief help India towards that supreme consummation.

From a photostat: S.N. 19656 a

585. LETTER TO NURGIS CAPTAIN[2]

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 7, 1926

I had your long letter. After you were twelve hours away from Aden, your criticism about the young men you saw on board is true though painful. This cow-protection cry on the part of many educated

[1] It is not known to whom this message was sent.
[2] Grand-daughter of Dadabhai Naoroji

Hindus is a false cry. But, after all, they are but a drop in the ocean of Hindu humanity and against these few beef-eaters, there are millionswho would rather die than touch beef and its restraint to be treasured, for our upward growth depends upon our self-restraint.

Poor Yeshwantprasad is still suffering. The guinea worms have not left him entirely. He is at Bhavnagar undergoing treatment from his own *hakim*. Jamnabehn is also there. Mira is getting on quite all right. And, now we have the German sister who was expected to come. She too has made herself at home. I am quite well. Devdas is at Mussoorie. You know that he had an operation for appendicitis. He is quite all right now. You must be thoroughly restored before you return.

Mr. Bahadurji's yarn that you sent me for testing was not bad at all. His test gave nearly 50 per cent. 60 per cent is really required for weaving purposes. We are at present concentrating upon increasing the strength of the yarn instead of the speed and the same has reached up to 90 per cent. Probably, at the end of the month someone may reach 100 per cent.

Yours,

NURGISBEHN

GENEVA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19653

586. LETTER TO A. T. GIDWANI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 7, 1926

MY DEAR GIDWANI,

I hope you are going on well in your new surroundings.

You will be interested to know that I wrote to Narayandas the same day that you gave me the information about grapes and asked him to telegraph to me.[1] He telegraphed saying that he was replying my letter. I immediately came to the conclusion that the worst you have told me was true. The promised reply has not yet been received. Meanwhile Hatham sent another telegram stating the whole information will be given to me if I promise not to fast. Poor simple

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Anandji", 29-6-1926.

Hatham, as if by his telegram he has not told me all I did know. I gave up the grapes immediately I got the telegram from Narayandas.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19654

587. LETTER TO V. B. TYAR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 7, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your article on '*Sandhya* Prayer'. It is interesting, but not required for the readers of *Young India*. They will not understand it. The prayer that the readers of *Young India* find emphasized is the prayer of the heart.

I return the article. You may need it. I hope you are succeeding with your charkha.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. V. B. TYAR
MILITARY ACCOUNTS
MAYMYO
(BURMA)

From a microfilm: S.N. 19655

588. LETTER TO BHUPENDRA NARAYAN SEN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 7, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I now understand somewhat better your plans. But tell me wherein you differ from Khadi Pratishthan and Abhoy Ashram in your plans to develop some of the items of constructive programme on your own lines.

The only suggestion I have about malaria is its prevention. There is no certainty about it. But I feel that if a person keeps his body pure and unlogged and takes the ordinary precautions about pure water and pure food, he is not likely to be troubled by malaria.

You ask me to tell you all about my health. There is, however, nothing to tell because it seems to be quite all right for the moment.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm S.N. 19656

589. LETTER TO MISS KATHERINE MAYO

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 7, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your second letter.[1] The notes were duly corrected, amplified and posted to you. I hope you have received them. If they have gone astray, please let me know. I believe that the original is not yet destroyed. If they have not been received by you, let me inform you that they were amplified as they were sent by you. You will therefore kindly wait for the amplified copy if you have not received it already.

Yours sincerely,

MISS KATHERINE MAYO
BEDFORD HILLS
NEW YORK (U. S. A.)

From 3 photostat: S.N. 10778

590. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
July 7, 1926

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

For a long time I have kept with me a letter from a weaver of the Dhed caste only with a view to sending you an excerpt from it. In

[1] Writing this on May 26, Katherine Mayo had acknowledged Gandhiji's letter of April 9 with enclosures, pointing out that his secretary had overlooked returning her notes of the talk Gandhiji gave her and her friends. She wanted either that they should be returned to her corrected, amplified, etc., or that Gandhiji should confirm that they were correct (S.N. 10754).

your present state of health, I am afraid, I ought not to write this to you, but since you have not relinquished charge of the State's administration, a petition from the poor may reach you. This man writes:[1]

I do not know how dead cattle are disposed of in Bhavnagar. please get information on this point and do what is proper. Why does not the State itself set up a tannery to handle all the dead cattle? In fact why should not the State also run an ideal dairy and supply pure milk at low price to children?

SIR PRABHASHANKER PATTANI
BHAVNAGAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 19657

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had complained against the indiscriminate slaughter of animals by a person to whom the Bhavnagar State had granted the monopoly of disposing of dead cattle.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

VITHALBHAI PATEL'S LETTER TO GANDHIJI

BOMBAY,
May 10, 1926

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

When I accepted the office of President of the Legislative Assembly I had made a resolution within myself that I would devote the savings from my salary towards the furtherance of some object calculated to promote the national welfare. It was not possible for me for various reasons to save anything worth the name within the first six months. Since the last month, however, I am glad to say that I am quite out of the woods, and can, and do, save a substantial amount. I find that, on an average, I require Rs. 2,000 per month for my expenses. The amount of my net salary, excluding income-tax, is Rs. 3,625. I propose, therefore, to set apart Rs. 1,625 per month, beginning from the last month, to be utilized hereafter in such manner and for such purpose as you may approve. I have, of course, some ideas in the matter, and I will in due course discuss them with you. But whether you agree with me in those ideas or not, the amount is at your disposal.

I enclose herewith a cheque for Rs. 1,625 for the month of April.

I trust you will not decline to take this responsibility.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
V. J. PATEL

Vithalbhai Patel—Life and Times—II. P. 669

APPENDIX II

I. THE SABARMATI PACT[1]

The conference convened at the instance of Pandit Motilal Nehru was held at Sabarmati Ashram, Ahmedabad, on the 20th and 21st. . . Telegrams and letters were received. . . including one from Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya which contained suggestions about bringing all Indian political parties on a common platform in a united Congress.

The conference adopted the following agreement, as embodying its decision on points specifically discussed :

[1] This appeared under the title "Swarajists and Responsivists : The Ahmedabad Compromise".

It is hereby agreed between the undersigned, subject to the confirmation of the All-India Congress Committee, that the response made by the Government shall for purposes of Clauses (a) and (b) of the resolution II-B (4) of the All-India Congress Committee, dated March 6 and 7, 1926, be considered satisfactory in the provinces, if the power, responsibility and initiative necessary for the effective discharge of their duties are secured to ministers and the sufficiency of such power, responsibility and initiative, in each province, shall be decided in the first instance by Congress members of the Legislative Council of the Province, subject to confirmation by a Committee consisting of Pandit Motilal Nehru and Mr. M. R. Jayakar.

It is further agreed that the said Committee will decide all disputes in the Congress provinces of the Bombay Maharashtra, Bihar and the C.P. Marathi. This agreement has been subscribed to by the undersigned in their individual capacities, and it will be submitted for ratification to the executive of the Swaraj and Responsive Co-operation Parties. It will be placed for ratification before the All-India Congress Committee at a meeting which is being convened on May 5 and 6 next, at Sabarmati.

The compormise is signed by Sarojini Naidu, Motilal Nehru, Lajpat Rai, M. R. Jayakar, N. C. Kelkar, B. S. Moonje, M. S. Aney, D. V. Gokhale, G. A. Ogale at Sabarmati, April 21, 1926.

II. A. I. C. C.'s Delhi Resolution

The Clauses of Resolution II-B(4) of the A.I.C.C. meeting at Delhi referred to in the agreement state that Congressmen shall

(a) refuse to accept offices in the gift of the Government until, in the opinion of the Congress, a satisfactory response is made by the Government;

(b) refuse supplies and throw out budgets until such response is made by the Government, except when the Working Committee instructs otherwise.

III. Responsivists' Akola Manifesto

The Responsive Co-operationist Party manifesto, issued at the Akola Conference in February last, declared regarding their Council programme :

We believe that no programme of bringing about constitutional dead-lock by resorting to the policy of uniform, continuous and consistent obstruction can be successful unless tried on a large scale, and backed by some sanctions behind the same.

We believe that the best course under the present circumstances is that of Responsive Co-operation, which means working the Reforms, unsatisfactory, disappointing and inadequate as they are, for all they are worth; and using the same for accelerating the grant of full responsible Government and also for creating, in the meanwhile, opportunities for the people for advancing their interests and strenghtening their power and resistance to injustice and misrule.

The policy of working the Reforms necessarily includes the capture of all places of power, responsibility and initative which are open to election by, or are otherwise responsible to, the party within the legislature, subject to such conditions with regard to policy, programme and kindred matters as may seem desirable to impose from time to time.[1]

IV. The Breakdown of the Pact

At the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee at Ahmedabad on the 4th May, Pandit Motilal announced that, owing to irreconcilable differences between the signatories of the Sabarmati Pact regarding the interpretation of its terms, the negotiations that he had been for the past few days carrying on with the Responsivists had broken down, and the Pact had, therefore, fallen through and was non-existent. A letter from the Responsivists was read by the Secretary confirming in the main Pandit Motilal's statement.

V. Motilal's Substitute Formula

The following is the text of the substitute formula which was handed to the Responsivists leaders on the 4th morning :

Having regard to the fact that doubts and differences have arisen as to the true interpretation of the agreement arrived at between Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Messrs Lajpat Rai, M. S. Aney, M. R. Jayakar, N. C. Kelkar, G. A. Ogale and Pandit Motilal Nehru at Sabarmati on the 21st April, 1926, this meeting of the All-India Congress Committee, while fully agreeing with the principles, policy and programme laid down in resolution 7 of the Cawnpore Congress and resolution 2(b) of the All-India Congress Committee passed at Delhi on 6th and 7th March, 1926, and fully believing that dyarchy in any form or shape is wholly unworkable in the best of conditions, is of opinion that with a view to remove all doubts and differences and to put the true issue before the country, it is expedient to state clearly what shall constitute the statisfactory response referred to in the said resolution.

It is, therefore, hereby resolved :

That the acceptance by the Government of the principle underlying the resolution passed by the Assembly on the 8th February, 1925, shall constitute a satisfactory response by the Government to the national demand for full responsible Government, and the immediate adoption by the Government of the various steps mentioned in the resolution of the Assembly passed on the 8th September, 1925, shall for the present be taken to be a sufficient compliance with the said principle.

(2) That if Responsible Government in the fullest sense is guaranteed by the Government to come automatically in the near future by the adoption of steps other

[1] Parts I, II and III are reproduced from the *Indian Review*, April, 1926, and Parts IV, V and VI from the issue of May, 1926.

than those mentioned in the resolution of the Assembly passed on the 8th September, 1925, and if, in the meantime, substantially full Responsible Government in the provinces is granted, the response so made by the Government shall be considered sufficient in the provinces for the purpose of accepting ministerships and considering the provincial budgets on their merits, provided that no such response shall be considered adequate unless it includes :

(a) The release or trial according to law of all political prisoners who are at present datained without being convicted by a duly constituted court.

(b) The repeal of all repressive laws.

(c) The removal of all disqualifications now imposed on persons who have served the sentences passed on them, from standing for election to elected bodies in the country.

(d) The abolition of non-official nominations to membership of Council and throwing open the seats of nominated non-official members to election by the general electorate.

(3) That the adequacy of any action by the Government in any province as is referred to in resolution 2 shall on the recommendation of the Congress members of the Legislative Council of that province be decided by the Working Committee.

VI. Responsivists' Disapproval

In their reply, Mr. Jayakar and his colleagues pointed out :

We have carefully considered the draft which we regarded as a travesty of the Pact and a complete repudiation of the same. We think that the draft furnishes no common ground on which we could profitably meet and discuss. Under the circumstances, we are of opinion that no useful purpose will be served by our attending the Working Committee's meeting this morning, and we have, therefore, decided not to attend the same. We feel that we need not have been dragged all the way to Ahmedabad from our distant homes to be made sport of in the manner the draft proposes to do.

The Indian Review, April and May, 1926

1. NOTES

SERVANTS OF INDIA FIRE RELIEF

Contributions made in answer to the appeal of the Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri total nearly Rs. 50,000. It should be remembered that two lacs at least are wanted to enable the Society to make a fresh start in respect of the interrupted activities. The weekly organ, *The Servant of India*, is being brought out under difficulties. It is to be hoped that the whole amount will be subscribed without delay irrespective of one's politics.

LIMITED SACRIFICE

An ex-principal of a national college, a master of arts, writes:

> Your article on sacrifice[1] is nearly heart-rending. You seem to be expecting more sacrifice from those who are willing and have already done their best, and do not seem to take to task those pretending followers who have the effrontery of exploiting the national movement for their personal benefit. It would be doing greater service to the motherland if you try to get hold of rich people who will swear by you to maintain six good workers each who will take up village organization.

I have singled out the foregoing sentences from a longish letter. In the first instance, there can be no limit to one's sacrifice. A sacrifice that calculates and bargains is hardly a sacrifice. I have asked for no more than what has been given in other parts of the world where people have regained or retained their freedom; nor are instances of such uttermost sacrifice lacking even in our country. That sacrifice comes from deep conviction and it is deep conviction that is just now wanted in the country.

In the second instance, one does not ask or expect anything from pretended followers. The prevalent law throughout the world seems to be for those who give to give more and more. They do so, not under compulsion, but voluntarily and joyfully. And, at the end of the giving, they regret that they have not more to give.

In the third place, I do not know a single honest, industrious and intelligent worker who is starving for want of work. The difficulty occurs when the worker dictates terms or has requirements which, if he

[1] *Vide* "Sacrifice", 24-6-1926.

declined to be bound by custom or sentiment, would have no existence whatsoever. After all, it is the few patriotic rich men in the country who are financing several public movements. My own experience is that money enough has always been found wherever a just cause has been discovered to be backed by honest and able workers. Young workers are more and more devoting themselves daily to village work, but ten times as many workers are required. There is no dearth of money or work. But there is dearth of men who are satisfied with a modest salary in keeping with the conditions of the country. To mention only those activities which come under my direct observation and general control, there are khadi work, untouchability, national education, dairy work, tannery, etc.

FROM THE FRYING PAN

The draft rules published by the Madras Government about spinning in primary schools show what can happen even under 'responsible' government when the government may afford to ignore public opinion. What response can a government that is, say, dependent upon the votes of zamindars make to their voteless ryots? When, therefore, there is only a caricature of responsible government, things can be much worse than under a frankly and purely autocratic government. The latter, not depending upon the votes of any class, can afford to be impartial to all. The former dare not.

The draft rules are naturally from the Education Minister who is considered to be responsible to the people, i.e., the select electorate. But, having no knowledge evidently of rural conditions, he thinks that instruction in hand-spinning in primary schools is unnecessary. Instead, therefore, of frankly putting a ban upon it, he seeks to circumvent it by ruling that "practical instruction should not be introduced in standards below the fourth without the previous approval of the Director of Public Instruction," that it should "ordinarily have reference to the chief occupations or industries of the locality or the class of pupils," and that "spinning by itself without provision for weaving should not form a subject for such institution". The last condition is enough to keep out spinning from the average primary school, if only because hardly a primary school can afford the expense of a weaving instructor and the floor space required for setting up a loom. Indeed, even the spinning-wheel has by experience been found to be too expensive and too large for the average school. The All-India Spinners' Association is, therefore, advising all schoolmasters and

municipal councils to introduce the *takli* which is inexpensive, handy, requires no floor space to keep and does not easily go out of order. It is surprising too that neither the Minister nor his advisers seem to realize that hand-spinning cannot be and must not be put on a level with the other occupations. As Sjt. C. Rajagopalachari points out in his appeal to local bodies in the Madras Presidency, it is pre-eminently a universal national occupation which, having all but died, needs to be revived and popularized. It would be a useless waste of time and money to teach in primary schools living occupations which children can learn much better and much more quickly from their parents than from theoretical and indifferent teachers. I am glad, therefore, that the Chittoor District Education Council has voted against the draft rules and hope that the other bodies will follow suit.

Young India, 8-7-1926

2. 'MORE ANIMAL THAN HUMAN'

A medical correspondent referring to the article 'What is Natural?'[1] in *Young India* of the 24th ultimo writes:

> It is only in the mass that the people's instinct of violence is aroused. It is almost impossible to prevent the use of physical force under such circumstances and I wonder if it is altogether desirable to discourage it. It is positively against man's nature. Man is animal first and human afterwards. Just think of the ancestor of the Australian savage and his times when there was no art, no literature, no science, and when man was a hunter and communicated with his fellows by means of gestures. Our ethical code is a thin veneer and the passions of the brute are still lurking within us. It is not natural to man to find and know God, much less to worship him. In an individual naturally brought up, educated in an unbiassed and non-theological atmosphere, the idea ofworshipping God will be quite unnatural. Millions of educated adults in the world never enter a church, mosque or temple. God-worship is an acquired habit. The question of virtue and vice has nothing to do with God. Morality arises from the necessities of group life, and it has its sanctions in the social needs of man rather than in a capricious divine will. Man is not made in the image of God; it is God who is made in the image of man. Your moral code would not be debased if you regarded the ape as your remote cousin. Eating, drinking, and sexual gratification are absolutely natural to man. There are

[1] *Vide* "What is Natural?", 13-6-1926.

limits of course, but they are perfectly physiological and partly conventional. How can you preach this doctrine of complete renunciation of sexual desire? Don't you think that we cannot possibly attain complete renunciation of the desire except through an exhaustive fulfilment of it? You say, 'Man's nature is not *himsa* but ahimsa.' But even your own programme of the boycott of the British goods, if it had been successful, could have resulted in nothing but violence to the British workers. Starving a man is as much violence as hitting him with a lathi. Your soul-force or love force is a figment of imagination. Ahimsa is the creed of civilization, but is not man's nature.

I have very much condensed the medical practitioner's letter. The confidence with which it is written takes one's breath away. And yet the correspondent, who appears to be a practitioner of long standing and who has an English degree, represents a large number of educated men. I must confess, however, that he does not convince me. Let us examine his arguments. He says that non-violence cannot be attained by the mass of people. And, yet, we find that the general work of mankind is being carried on from day to day by the mass of people acting in harmony as if by instinct. If they were instinctively violent, the world would end in no time. They remain peaceful naturally and without any police or other compulsion. It is when the mass mind is unnaturally influenced by wicked men that the mass of mankind commit violence. But they forget it as quickly as they commit it, because they return to their peaceful nature immediately the evil influence of the directing mind is removed.

Hitherto, one has been taught to believe that a species is recognized and differentiated from the rest by its special characteristics. Therefore, it would be wrong, I presume, to say that a horse is animal first and horse after. He shares something in common with the other animals, but he dare not shed his horseliness and yet remain an animal. Having lost his special virtue, he loses also his general status. Similarly, if a man lost his status as man and began to grow a tail and walk on all fours, lost the use of his hands, and, more than that, lost the use of his reason, would he not lose with the loss of his status as man his status also as animal? Neither the ox nor the ass, neither the sheep nor the goat will claim his as theirs. I would suggest to the medical friend that man can be classed as animal only so long as he retains his humanity.

Neither is there any force in referring me to the Australian savage. Even that Australian savage was fundamentally different from

the brute, because the brute always will remain brute, whereas the savage has in him the capacity for developing to the fullest height attainable by man. We need not go to the Australian savage. Our Indian ancestors also were at one time, it will hardly be disputed, just as good and noble savages as the Australians. I entirely endorse the remark of the correspondent that even in our so-called civilized state, we are not far removed from savages. But he is willing to allow that at least we, the civilized descendants of our savage ancestors, may be differentiated from the brute creation. It is natural for the brute to be brutal. We would resent the adjective if it was applied to us.

The corespondent apologizes for suggesting that I might regard myself as a 'remote cousin of the ape'. The truth is that my ethics not only permit me to claim but require me to own kinship with not merely the ape but the horse and the sheep, the lion and the leopard, the snake and the scorpion. Not so need these kinsfolk regard themselves. The hard ethics which rule my life, and I hold ought to rule that of every man and woman, impose this unilateral obligation upon us. And it is so imposed because man alone is made in the image of God. That some of us do not recognize that status of ours makes no difference, except that then we do not get the benefit of the status, even as a lion brought up in the company of sheep, may not know his own status and, therefore, does not receive its benefits; but it belongs to him, nevertheless, and the moment he realizes it, he begins to exercise his dominion over the sheep. But no sheep masquerading as a lion can ever attain the leonine status. And to prove the proposition that man is made in the image of God, it is surely unnecessary to show that all men admittedly exhibit that image in their own persons. It is enough to show that one man at least has done so. And, will it be denied that the great religious teachers of mankind have exhibited the image of God in their own persons?

But, of course, my correspondent even contends that it is not natural to man to find and know God and; therefore, he says 'man makes God in his own image'. All I can say is that the whole of the evidence hitherto produced by travellers controvert this astounding proposition. It is being more and more demonstrated that it is the worship of God, be it in the crudest manner possible, which distinguishes man from the brute. It is the possession of that additional quality which gives him such enormous hold upon God's creation. It is wholly irrelevant to show that millions of educated people never

enter a church, mosque or temple. Such entry is neither natural nor indispensable for the worship of God. Those even who bow their heads before stocks and stones, who believe in incantations or ghosts, acknowledge a power above and beyond them. It is true that this form of worship is savage, very crude; nevertheless, it is worship of God. Gold is still gold though in its crudest state. It merely awaits refinement to be treated as gold even by the ignorant. No amount of refinement will turn iron ore into gold. Refined worship is doubtless due to the effort of man. Crude worship is as old as Adam, and, as natural to him as eating and drinking, if not more natural. A man may live without eating for days on end, he does not live without worship for a single minute. He may not acknowledge the fact as many an ignorant man may not acknowledge the possession of lungs or the fact of the circulation of blood.

The correspondent puts sexual gratification on a level with eating and drinking. If he had read my article carefully he would have avoided the confusion of thought that one traces in the thing quoted by him. What I have said and repeat is that eating for pleasure, for the gratification, of the palate, is not natural to men. But eating to live is natural. And so is the sexual act, but not gratification, for the sake of perpetuation of the species, natural to man.

I fear I shall preach to the end of my days complete renunciation of sexual desire. And this correspondent is the first medical man to tell me that such renunciation is not possible except through 'our exhaustive fulfilment of the sexual desire'. On the contrary, medical authorities tell me that 'an exhaustive *fulfilment* leads not to renunciation, but to ruinous imbecility. Complete renunciation of the desire no doubt requires an effort, but is it not worth the prize? If a lifetime may be devoted to the exploration of the properties of sound or light and heat, which after all only show us the phenomenal world to advantage, is it too much to expect an equal effort to attain complete renunciation which leads to self-realization, or, in other words, to a certain knowledge of God?

And one who is fairly on the road to renunciation will not need to be told that *ahimsa* (love), not *himsa* (hate), rules man, I was almost about to say, the world. Illustrations that the correspondent gives to prove my own *himsa* betrays his ignorance of my writings. The ignorance, of course, does not matter, because., no one need read *Young India*. But ignorance of a man's views is unpardonable when

one ventures to criticize them. I have advocated boycott only *foreign cloth* and there is no violence done to the British workers who may be thrown out of employment because of the boycott of cloth manufactured by them, for the simple reason that purchase of foreign cloth is not an obligation undertaken by India. Violence is all the other way. It is done to India in the name and on behalf of British workers by imposing British cloth upon India. A drunkard does no violence to the owner of a drink-shop when he becomes a teetotaller. He serves both the publican and himself. And so will India serve both the foreigners and herself, when she ceases to buy foreign cloth. Foreign workmen will not starve, but will find better employment. And if they will voluntarily give up manufacturing cloth for India, they will have taken part in a great humanitarian movement.

Young India, 8-7-1926

3. 'TOWARDS MORAL BANKRUPTCY'-II

"In the wake of abortion," says M. Bureau, "come infanticide, incest, and crimes that outrage nature. There is nothing special to say about the first, except that the crime has become more frequent in spite of all the facilities offered to unmarried mothers and of the extension of anti-conceptionist practices and abortion. It no longer arouses the same reprobation among so-called 'respectable' people and juries usually return a verdict of 'not guilty'."

M. Bureau devotes a full section to the growth of pornographic literature. He defines it

as the exploitation, with an erotic or obscene intention, of the resources which literature, the drama, and place pictures at men's disposal for their mental refreshment and repose.

And he adds:

In every branch of its business it has secured markets, the extent of which may be gauged by the ingenuity and excellent commercial organization of the directors, the enormous amount of capital, the unexampled perfection of the methods employed . . . The impression has been so strong and so unique that the whole psychological life of the individual is affected by it, a sort of secondary sexual life, which exists wholly in the imagination, is created.

M. Bureau then quotes this pathetic paragraph from M. Ruvsen:

All pornographic and sadistic literature secures in this psychological law the most powerful enticement which it exerts over an innumerable number of readers, and the flourishing circulation of this literature shows beyond dispute that those who live a secondary sexual life through their imagination

> are legion, not to mention those in lunatic asylums —especially in a period like our own, when the abuse of newspapers and books creates around all consciences what W. James calls ‘a plurality of under-universe’, in which each can lose himself, and forget along with himself the duties of the present hour.

These disastrous consequences, it should never be forgotten, are a direct result of one single fundamental error, namely, that sexual indulgence for its own sake is a human necessity and that without it neither man nor woman reaches their full growth. Immediately a person becomes possessed of such an idea and begins to look upon what in his estimation was one time a vice as a virtue, there is no end to the multiplication of devices that would excite animal passions and help him to indulge in them.

M. Bureau then gives chapter and verse to show how the daily press, the magazine, the pamphlet, the novel, the photograph and the theatre increasingly pander to and provide for this debasing taste.

But the reference hitherto has been to the decay of morals amongst unmarried people. M. Bureau next proceeds to show the measure of moral indiscipline in the married state. He says:

> Among the aristocracy, the middle class, and the peasants vanity and avarice are responsible for a vast number of marriages. . . . marriage is entered upon also to obtain an advantageous post to join two properties, especially two landed estates, to regularize a former connection or to legitimatize a natural child; to provide unfailing and devoted attentions for a man’s rheumatics and old age, to be able to choose the place of his garrison at the time of conscription,
>
> also
>
> to put an end to a life of vice, of which they are beginning to weary and to substitute another form of sexual life.

M. Bureau then cites facts and figures to show that these marriages, instead of reducing licentiousness actually promote it. This degradation has been immensely helped by the so-called scientificor mechanical inventions designed to restrict the effect of the sexual act without interfering with the act itself. I must pass by the painful paragraphs regarding the increase in adultery and startling figures regarding judicial separations and divorces which, during the last twenty years, have more than doubled themselves. I can also make only a passing reference to the extension of unrestricted freedom for indulgence to the female sex on the principle of ‘the same moral standard for the two sexes’. The perfection of the anti-conceptional practices and the methods of bringing about abortion have led to the emancipation of either sex from all moral restraint. No wonder marriage itself is laughed at. Here is a passage M. Bureau quotes from a popular author:

> Marriage is always according to my judgment one of the most barbarous institutions ever imagined. I have no doubt that it will be abolished

> if the human race makes any progress towards justice and reason. . . . But men are too gross and women too cowardly to demand a nobler law than that which rules them.

The results of the practices referred to by M. Bureau and of the theories by which the practices are justified are minutely examined. He explains:

> We are, then, being carried away by the movement of moral indiscipline towards new destinies. What are they? Is the future that opens before us one of progress and light, of beauty and growing spirituality, or of retrogression and darkness, of deformity and animalism that is ever demanding more? Is the indiscipline which has been established one of those fruitful revolts against antiquated rules, one of those beneficent rebellions which posterity remembers with gratitude because they were, at certain epochs, the necessary preliminary to its progress and the rise, or is it not rather the old Adam which rises up within us against the rules whose cry strictness is indispensable if we are to withstand the thrust of its bestial appeal? Are we face to face with an evil revolt against the discipline of safety and life?

Then M. Bureau cites overwhelming testimony to show that hitherto the results have been disastrous in every respect. They threaten life itself.

Young India, 8-7-1926

4. LETTER TO P. R. LELE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI ,
July 8, 1926

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[1] I understand all you say, appreciate it too, but, you cannot realize my helplessness. Just for the present moment, I am not despondent. I feel certain that things will be better, but, at the present moment, the fury, I fear, must be allowed to spend itself. Anyway, the remedies that I have for the disease are useless for the time being. I know that evil-doers are having full scope and that the poison is saturating even young minds. It all seems inevitable. Of course, do not think that because I do not write or speak, I am doing nothing.

[1] In this Lele had described how a few Hindus abused some Muslim boys for teasing a bull. He believed that Hindus had no right to demand the stoppage of cow-slaughter and that their agitation had to be ckecked.

I hope Delhi agrees both with you and Mrs. Lele. I am glad you wrote to me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. PURUSHOTTAM RAMACHANDRA LELE
3008, BURN BASTION ROAD
DELHI

From a Photostat: S.N. 11076

5. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI ,
July 8, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Enclosed[1] is from Mr. Ambalal sent to me in reply to my letter[2]. Jamnalalji told me that he sent you all it was possible for him to send. I have heard nothing yet from Mr. Birla. I notice subscriptions are coming in slowly.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. One letter and one cheque for Rs. 200/-

From a microfilm: S.N. 19658

6. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 8, 1926

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS,

Your letter makes me sad. I do hope that these troubles that face you just now will soon be over, that Guruji will soon be himself again and that your father will regain his strength. But I quite recognize that you must be for the time being by the side of those who are ailing.

I want you not to go into the question of the propriety of asking for financial assistance. After all I am disbursing trust funds. And, I have not made them without careful thought. I shall be able to defend

[1] This is presumably the cheque which Ambalal Sarabhai sent on June 27, in response to Gandhiji's appeal for a contribution to the Servants of India Society Relief Fund (S.N. 10953). *Vide* "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 16-6-1926.

[2] This is not available.

before God and man the assistance that I might be able to send you. You must not therefore hesitate to tell me what you need. Guruji will, I know, support me in this thing.

I would certainly suggest his going to Calcutta if Calcutta climate suits him better. After all he can find his peace even in Calcutta if he must be there for the sake of his health. It would be otherwise, perhaps, if he was not a Calcutta man and had not passed years there. But, he knows best where he should be. There is no place I know yet where only dead-cattle-hide shoes can be guaranteed. Ours will be the first workshop of the kind when it is opened. I am trying to expedite it, but I am so helpless for want of experts.

The German sister who wrote 18 months ago is now here and almost acclimatized. She is very simple and good-hearted. She makes friends with everybody. Mr. Stanley Jones[1] is also here passing a week. Thus the Ashram is fairly full. There are some other new men also whom you do not know.

Yes, Tulsi Maher is doing wonderfully good work.

Yours.,

From a photostat of a copy: S.N. 19659

7. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Thursday, July 8, 1926

DEAR SIR,

I have your letter. I wanted you to shake off your burden of administration for a few days. If that happens, I believe your health will improve speedily. Now we can say there has been some rain here. The sky continues overcast. Hence as you have stirred out already, I see no difficulty in your coming over here. Moreover, there can be no great difference between the climate of Dhrangadhra and that of Ahmedabad. Therefore, do come if you can. I shall then be able to know something at any rate about your health. And if you permit me to do some simple experiments, we may try such changes of diet as would suit you. And I hope you will not bring with you any petitioner

[1] E. Stanley Jones, American missionary, author of *The Christ of the Indian Road*, etc.

here. But I will lay down no conditions for your coming here. Come here then on your own terms. But please do come.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5888

8. LETTER TO LALCHAND JAYCHAND VORA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
[*July 8, 1926*][1]

BHAI LALCHAND,

Your letter. At this crucial stage in khadi [work] I cannot advise unattached persons to run a risk and maintain themselves on khadi bhandars alone. They should join the stores run by the Charkha sangh or some other public organization. Many khadi lovers are doing this today.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

LALCHAND JAYCHAND VORA
SAURASHTRA KHADI BHANDAR
49, EZRA STREET CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 7752. Courtesy: L. J. Vora

9. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN CHOKSI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Thursday, July 8,1926

CHI. MOTI,

Your letter to hand. I try to derive at least some consolation from the fact that you confess your indolence. Two things are essential for health—regular sleep and only such food and as much of it as you can digest. There ought to be regular evacuation. I learn that without this the Italian pill is ineffective. For if the bowel movement is regular what does it matter if one takes the pill or not? But it is good to take it. There should be as much physical exercise as the body can stand. Do you still read as you used to?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12130

[1] From the postmark

10. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

THE ASHRAM,
July 8, 1926

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I have your short and succinct but frightening letter. But I have already made it clear to you that I would not care for such a letter. You know that I was getting ready to relieve you at the time you sent me your last ultimatum. Now I do not at all propose to do so. One who takes up a responsibility should sacrifice even his life for it. That is the way for individuals and even nations to rise. Pampering spoils them both. On what considerations have you just engaged that new man Jethalal? How many of your resolves should I remind you of? How long should I treat you as a child? I want no more letters like the one I am replying to. You must stick where you are until I myself transfer you. We cannot have in this world all that we wish for. But we must put up with the circumstances in which we find ourselves. In a way, none of us deserves his position but from another point of view, it can be said that those who devote themselves to their jobs come to deserve their positions. Only they are worthless who though knowing their duty do not wish to fulfil it and deliberately spoil the work allotted to them. Surely you are not one of them. Then what is the sense in constantly pointing your pistol at me? Therefore there is only one order for you: stay put where you are, suffer any amount of privation and stick to your duty.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19927

11. LETTER TO MRS. R. ARMSTRONG AND MRS. P. R. HOWARD

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI ,
July 9, 1926

DEAR FRIEND[S],

I have your letter.[1] Truth is not so simple as it appears to you.

[1] In a letter of February 20, l926, Mrs. Armstrong and Mrs. Howard had

You know the story of the elephant and seven blind men who actually touched him. They all touched him at different parts. Their descriptions therefore differed from one another. They were all true from their own points of view and yet each appeared to be untrue from the points of view of the rest. The truth was beyond all the seven. We are all, you will perhaps agree, in the position of these seven sincere observers. And we are blind as they are blind. We must therefore be content with believing the truth as it appears to us. The authenticity and the interpretation of the Biblical record is a thing you will not want me to discuss.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. ROBT. ARMSTRONG

MRS. PAUL R. HOWARD

2293 E PROSPECT 5

KEWANEE, ILLINOIS

U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N. 10779

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written: "Since we believe that you consider truthfulness as a necessary characteristic of a good man, we wish to call your attention to the fact that Christ said 'I and my Father are one' (John, 10: 30) and He told the Samaritan woman at the well that He was the looked-for Messiah (John, 4: 25,26). So it seems to us that unless you want an untruthful person for an example, you must either accept Him for what He claimed to be or throw Him out entirely as an untruthful impostor." They stated that they were praying daily asking God to reveal Jesue Christ, the Saviour Of the World, to him until they read in the papers or heard from him that he had found "Him who is life eternal" (S.N. 10743).

12. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR,

THE ASHRAM,
July 9, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Though you have asked me not to write to you if I could not endorse your suggestion about the temple, I cannot help writing a line to tell you that I have discussed it with nobody.[1] Anasuyabai is like a member of the family. She comes and consults me about everything. She did mention the thing and I discussed it with her. But, you may not know that she herself can give nothing even if she wishes to. And she never interferes with her brother's dispositions.

About Mr. Muggeridge, I think I have written to you saying that he will be welcome whenever he comes.[2] I had a note from him also regarding a lecture[3] delivered by him at the Christian College, Alwaye.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR
FAIRY FALLS VIEW
KODAIKANAL OBSERVATORY P.O.

From a Photostat: S.N. 10959

13. A LETTER

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Friday, 9, 1926

DEAR FRIEND[4],

I have your letter. You have my full sympathy. If the facts are as you mention, it is certainly sad. Your proposal to go to Germany to

[1] Vijayaraghavachariar had complained, in his letter of July 8, (S.N. 10955), of Gandhiji's failure to bless his efforts to construct a temple for the villagers and to ask some of his "capable and willing supporters" to help the cause.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to C. Vijayaraghavachariar", 27-6-l926.

[3] The text of this, entitled "Nationalism and Christianity", was published in *Young India*, 22-7-1926.

[4] The addressee's identity is not known; but it is likely that he was the 'student in a national college' Gandhiji mentions in "Students and non-co-operation", 15-7-1926.

finish your studies, I am afraid, I cannot endorse apart from the fact that I can give you any pecuniary assistance. Students who have non-co-operated need not think only of the medical professions or those things which are generally learnt in the colleges. If they have acquired the real spirit of independence and self-reliance, they would learn many things which are to be learnt from our own countrymen and outside schools and colleges; in other words, we must learn to work with our own hands and feet. We can learn this in our own country from our own artisans and outside schools and colleges.

So far as veterinary education is concerned, we must be satisfied with what we can get at the present moment from national institutions.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19660

14. LETTER TO PAUL SANDEGREN

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 9, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I shall be prepared to give the publishing house you mention the right of publication of the autobiography that is now being published in *Young India*. The first part of it will be presently published in India in a revised condition. Will the publishers want to publish the translation of the first part? And, if so, will they mention the terms they desire to offer for the Swedish edition?

Yours sincerely,

REV. PAUL SANDEGREN
CHURCH OF SWEDEN MISSION
KUNGSTENSGATAN 5
STOCKHOLM

From a copy: S.N. 32257

15. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 9, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter with a copy of the terms from the Macmillan Company. The offer seems to me to be incomplete. Will you please

secure answers to the following questions?

1. The publishers want the right to publish the English edition only and that in America?

2. The first part is being published presently in India in book form. The Macmillan Company, I imagine, will publish after the autobiography is complete or do they want [to] publish in parts?

3. They do not want to control the translation rights?

4. How will they fix the price?

5. What is the method of determining the sales?

6. How will the payment be made on the sale?

Yours sincerely,

REVEREND HOLMES
NEW YORK CITY

From a copy: S.N. 32224

16. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday [*July 9, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I am very happy that your temperature is now under control. I hope you have made it a rule to keep to your bed when it is raining. Even a slight pain in the stomach is not good. Have you not come across a good doctor there? If not, send all details to Dr. Mehta and have him prescribe treatment. What is the situation about fruit there? Do you get good milk? Persuade Taramati to write to me. She should go for a walk even when it is raining a little. She can carry an umbrella. I shall consider it sinful if she does not gain in physical strength in that climate.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
HOMI VILLA
PANCHGANI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy. Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the postmark

17. LETTER TO PYARELAL NAYYAR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Friday, July 9, 1926

CHI. PYARELAL,

I always intend to write to you but fail to do so. Of course, you would never assume that my not writing is due to indifference. Mathuradas gives you an excellent certificate. But the real certificate must come from me. And you will get my certificate only when Mathuradas grows as strong as a horse and your health improves so that when you return here I have no worry on your account. Just as you had undertaken to translate from Gujarati into English, now you should do so from English and Gujarati into Hindi and send it to me; for the present, only for me to see it.

How much do you walk about there? Compare the markets at Deolali and Panchgani. Likewise, compare the people of Panchgani and Deolali. There are four or five high schools in Panchgani. Visit all of them and learn something from them. Also study the present circumstances of the Gujarati high school recently started there. You must be getting news of the people coming here. The German lady is very courteous and goodnatured. Krishnadas is happy at present. Satis Babu and his father are quite ill. They remain moody and hence we have to consider whether they should stay where they are, i.e., in Chandpur, or go to Darbhanga. Write to Krishnadas. His address is: C/o S. C. Guha, Darbhanga.

I have received an essay from you which I have not yet been able to go through.

From a photostat of a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 12196

18. LETTER TO KANTILAL

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI ,
Friday, July 9, 1926

BHAI KANTILAL,

Your three letters to hand. From the last one I see you have had heavy rains there. The first showers here were quite heavy and we had

even two floods.

About your conflicting loyalties I would say that you should endure the pain that your mother is experiencing, regarding it as unavoidable. It is my experience that in the face of their parents' opposition to any good venture if the children remain as firm as they are humble, their parents give up their opposition. Their opposition as well as their unhappiness increases only when the children waver and the parents hope they will succumb to parental love. Hence if you have not the least doubt about your step and if you are equally confident about your capacity, you should tell your mother of your decision and shake off all anxiety. Ask me anything further if you have to.

Personally, I do not at all believe khadi will benefit by the publication of its statistics, etc. Nor do I believe that the economy effected at Gariadhar can be practised everywhere. But the work at Gariadhar certainly deserves notice. I noticed two specialities at Gariadhar. One, that all who spin, weave and card are under Shambhu-shanker's personal supervision. Two, that he himself knows these artisans and those who work along with them and has won their love. He is able to get much of his work done directly. Not everyone can accomplish all this. Others should learn as much from this as they can. It is enough if no cause is provided for the criticism of the Amreli centre. I believe it is easy to meet criticism actuated either by ignor-ance or prejudice. I know it well and I quite appreciate that the present sale of khadi is due to Abbas Saheb's presence. Once people begin to buy khadi as a matter of duty, it will not take time to spread. It is enough for the present if we diligently and by every possible effort increase the production of khadi and also improve its quality. A sense of duty can be born only out of this.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19661

19. LETTER TO NANABHAI BHATT

THE ASHRAM

SABARMATI,

Friday, July 9, 1926

BHAISHRI NANABHAI,

I enclose herewith a list of books which are to be translated. Bhai Munikumar may choose whatever book he likes. I have

forgotten the rate of payment. We should have a uniform rate. He should deliver the translation to us within the stipulated period. All the rights must be ours. You do know that Kaka is the editor of this series; payment will, therefore, be made after his approval. Please let me know if you consider any changes desirable in these terms. Also let me know if any additions are to be made to them. You should obtain the consent of Shankerlal and Kaka before finally making any agreement, because I have not gone into all details and there is every possibility of my committing an error.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19662

20. MESSAGE TO "NAYAK"

[On or before *July 10, 1926*]

Those wishing to revere Deshbandhu's memory cannot do better than popularize charkha and khadi, and thus secure the boycott of foreign cloth.[1]

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-7-1926

21. LETTER TO V. R. KOTHARI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI ,
July 10, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[2] I appreciate what you say. I enclose herewith

[1] According to a Free Press report, published in the *Bombay Chronicle,* this message was sent to *Nayak*, a Bengali paper, for its Deshbandhu Number which was published on July 11, 1926.

[2] Of July 5 (S.N. 11128). In it the addressee had explained that, on the basis of the earlier grant of Rs. 5,000, he had hoped to receive an equal amount again and incurred expenditure which he was finding it difficult to meet. He proposed now to ask for only Rs. 2,500 and would raise the rest himself. He offered to send a letter of assurance not to collect more funds for capital expenditure from his trustees (S.N. 11128-M).

a cheque upon Jamnalalji for Rs. 2,500/-. You will please let me have the promised letter in due course.[1]

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1 Hundi

SJT. V. R. KOTHARI
SHUKRAWAR PATH
POONA CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 11129

22. LETTER TO A. A. PAUL

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 10, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter about the proposed China visit.[2] So far as it is humanly possible, I shall certainly visit China next year if I am really wanted there, that is, if a satisfactory invitation comes. But, with my varied activities, one can never say with certainty of things that are to happen twelve months hence. That is the only reason for my cautious reply. Circumstances beyond my control may make it impossible to leave India.

If they want me this year, now that I have not gone to Finland,[3] it

[1] Kothari sent this letter of assurance on August 6 as directed by Harold H. Mann, one of the trustees (S.N. 11132-4).

[2] On February 24, 1926 A. A. Paul had written to Gandhiji inviting him on behalf of the Student Christian Association of India, Burma and Ceylon, to visit China (S.N. 11362). On March 3 Gandhiji replied (S.N. 11363). To a further letter from Paul on March 9 (S.N. 11364) Gandhiji replied on March 15 (S.N. 11365). Paul had acknowledged Gandhiji's letter on March 26 (S.N. 11366). On May 4 he had forwarded to Gandhi copies of two letters which T. Z. Koo, a Chinese intellectual had written to Paul explaining the aim, scope etc." of Gandhiji"s proposed visit to China (S.N. 11367-9). On May 9, Gandhiji wrote to Paul tentatively accepting the invitation (S.N. 11370). On May 30 he replied to Paul's further letter of May 24 (S.N. 11371) conveying more Chinese suggestions regarding the visit (S.N. 11372).

Paul wrote again on July 6 (S.N. 11374), forwarding the copy of a letter from Koo dated June 4 (S.N. 11373) and observing: "I wish it were possible for you to give them a more certain answer about the possibility of your visit in 1927" (S.N. 11374).

[3] This was in connection with a World Conference of Young Men's Christian Associations at Helsingfors, which Gandhiji had finally declined to attend.

is easier to be more definite. But, then, this year can only be a hurried visit. I must return in time for the Congress. I would therefore advise our Chinese friends to take the little risk of my inability to go next year and not think of this year. But they are the best judges.

Yours sincerely,

A. A. PAUL, ESQ.
SCAIBAC
KILPAUK
MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 11375

23. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 10, 1926

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

Mr. Bharucha was here a few days ago and we talked about you. To my surprise, he told me that you somehow or other had felt that you did not count with me and that I was always cool towards you. He gave me his permission to mention this matter to you. I cannot recall a single instance when I have either been cool or unmindful of you or your work. On the contrary, ever since I had the pleasure of knowing you, I have valued your great ability, integrity, your patriotism and your gentlemanliness. Our differences of opinion have made not the slightest difference in the estimation in which I have held you. Please, therefore, disabuse your mind of any such feeling that Mr. Bharucha reports you to have expressed to him. I wanted to write this letter immediately after Mr. Bharucha left, but my numerous preoccupations have prevented me from doing so.

I hope that you are keeping well. If what the newspapers report of you about the offer of judgeship to you and your refusal is true, it is only what I. . . .[1]

From a photostat: S.N. 19663

[1] As is the source

24. LETTER TO GOPALDAS MAKANDAS

THE ASHRAM,
July 10, 1926

Your letter to hand. I for one feel that the idol should be installed at some other place. Excuse me for the delay in replying to you.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 10914

25. HOW SHOULD SPINNING BE DONE?

A gentleman has sent yarn which is untidy, badly spun, badly rolled. He has not measured its length and he writes:

> As you want many voluntary spinners for the Spinners' Association, I too wish to spin. Kindly let me know the length of the yarn I am sending; if it is too little, I will make up the deficiency. Slivers are not easy to get here; could you send me some?

Suppose we did not make our own chapatis in the country but ate delicate, beautifully shaped and coloured, artistically made chapatis imported from Japan. Suppose, further, that someone with a little foresight saw in this practice the ruin of the country and, since we had forgotten how to prepare and bake chapatis, he suggested a chapati-*yajna* and appealed to all to send their contribution towards it. If, now, some patriot, bursting with enthusiasm, obtained a roll of dough from someone and sent me triangular, half-done, half-burnt chapatis soiled in transit, together with a note which read: "In response to your appeal for chapati-*yajna* I, too, have decided to contribute to it. I am sending a few today; please count them and let me know if they are too few, so that I may send more. Rolls of dough are not easy to get here, could you send me some?" If anyone wishing to join the chapati-*yajna* wrote to me to this effect, those who knew anything about making chapatis would all laugh at him and say that the gentleman no doubt loved India but did not know how to show his love in action. Everyone, I am sure, can see the point of what it say about chapati-*yajna*, but all will not immediately see that the gentleman who sent his contribution towards the spinning-*yajna* has acted exactly as our imaginary volunteer for chapati-*yajna*. This is a sign of want of thought resulting from a mental habit of long standing. We have forgotten all about the spinning-wheel, so that,

while we all see that, if we forget the art of making chapatis, we would starve, we do not see as readily that we are starving today because we have given up the spinning-wheel.

That is the truth. Spinning does not mean drawing out bits of yarn of any sort as if we were merely playing at spinning. Spinning in fact, means learning all the preliminary processes—sitting down properly, with a mind completely at rest, and spinning daily for a fixed number of hours good, uniform and well-twisted yarn, spraying it, measuring its length and taking its weight, rolling it neatly, and, if it is to be sent out to some other place, packing it carefully and sticking a label on it with details of the variety of cotton used, the count, the length and weight of the yarn, and tying a tag on it with particulars of the contributor's name and address in clear handwriting; when all this is done, one will have completed the spinning-*yajna* for the day. Two essential processes, ginning and carding, precede spinning. In the analogy between spinning-*yajna* and chapati-*yajna*, ginning corresponds to milling the wheat—and one may not mind where this is rare—and carding to kneading the flour and making rolls. Just as we may not have rolls made from dough at any place we choose but should make them on the spot where the chapatis are being prepared, so carding also should be done at the place where the spinning is done. The only latitude which may be permitted is that in a family one person makes the dough and the rolls, while others make and bake the chapatis. If they go beyond this, the chapatis would be spoiled and the chapati-*yajna* ruined. Similarly, carding may be done, for the sake of convenience, by one person at the same place where others are doing spinning. If they go beyond this, the yarn would be spoiled and the spinning-*yajna*, too, would be ruined. Carding is a very easy process, and the carding-bow can be easily made and is available too. At any place where bamboo is easily available, a carding-bow for use at home can be made in no time. However one for whom the spinning-*yajna* has not become a passion may buy a bow for one's use, but every spinner must learn carding. Carding, I need not add, includes the making of slivers from the cotton carded. Such cotton corresponds to the dough and the slivers to rolls. All others whose attitude to spinning has been like that of the correspondent above will, I trust, understand henceforth what spinning means.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-7-1926

26. A LETTER[1]

July 11, 1926

I have your letter and the newspaper cuttings for which I thank you. You have certainly reversed the ordinary order. People first do some good work and then do some good writing. You evidently propose to qualify as a good writer and then a good worker. The experiment would be interesting.

M. K. G.

From a copy: S.N. 19930

27. LETTER TO D. B. KHOJA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 11, 1926

BHAISHRI DHARAMSHI BHANJI,

It is only today[2] I am able to answer your tenacious questions. It is not right, I think, to discuss so many questions in *Navajivan.* I am quite pleased with your questions. I now answer them one by one.

One who is ready to immolate himself for the sake of truth should not bother about protecting his body, but he should do so to the extent necessary for the purpose of realizing truth. I do not think it wrong to take the weight of the body, and so on, with a view to studying the physical effects of a fast undertaken for a moral purpose. But it is possible that in so doing one may succumb to temptation. God alone knows whether I have ever fallen a prey to temptation. My renunciation of activities is only in the interest of health. If it is incorrect to call it renunciation of activities where a person has limited his activities to a certain field, let us call it limitation of sphere. This limitation is not based on moralconsiderations; hence there is no room for any illusion either gross or subtle.

We cannot know the outcome of many things, and yet we experiment with them; so too with diet. Even from the point of view of abstention there is full scope for discrimination in regard to diet.

My service to India includes service to all creatures, because

[1] The identity of the addressee, who was in Ceylon, is not known.
[2] Gandhiji had received from the addressee a letter dated May 21, 1926.

mine is a non-violent service. One who serves another selflessly and without any attachment serves all.

It is not for me to permit anyone to fight. I would only show to those who want to fight what, I think, their duty is. I agree, one gets results according to one's *prarabdha*[1] but as we cannot peep into the future, let us put forth our best efforts regardless of results. When the rule of the just prevails, it would be my duty to earn my living and be a burden to none. I know of no religion which cannot be put into practice.

Instead of modifying dharma to suit the ways of the world, why not change these to conform to dharma? All practices that are contrary to dharma deserve to be abjured. What I regard as the truth is not dependent on its acceptance as such by the world. That alone I believe [as truth] which I have experienced myself. A Shastra which condones *adharma* while upholding dharma is to that extent unworthy of honour.

I believe some rare persons can know the nature of the universe and of its Ruler; but none can describe it. That being so, I think, theological differences will persist.

If a man who has many wives frees himself of passions, etc., and regards them all as his mothers or sisters, he can certainly qualify himself for *moksha*.

The passion that dwells in the senses is contrary to human nature and should therefore be abandoned. Man and woman are both born free. Hence when one is overwhelmed by passion and loses oneself, what else shall we call it if not going astray? If a man and his wife cannot get on after marriage, is that reason enough for a divorce? The bond between father and son does not come to an end on account of disagreement; I regard the bond between husband and wife as similar. If they cannot see eye to eye, they may well have recourse to non-co-operation. But once the marital bond has been established, it can never be dharma to act contrary to it. That a man may indulge in sex pleasures with one woman and none other and that too for the sake ofprogeny and similarly a woman with one man is, I believe, the farthest limit that he or she can have.

Time goes on doing its work. Our manliness lies in foreseeing its changes and putting in the right efforts.

[1] Fruits of accumulated deeds of previous births

It is quite possible that those whom we regard as having attained *moksha* might not in fact have attained it. But those who have really attained *moksha* are a manifestation of God Himself, because they cannot be thought of as apart from Him. I am not able to understand your next question. I am against *purdah* for women because it shows man's meanness and his oppression of the weaker sex. It is quite possible that the steps I take or advocate may in future prove disastrous instead of being beneficial. Of course my own conviction is that each and every step of mine will turn out to be beneficial in the end. If I do not have this faith I shall be doing offence to my truth and I should as well end my life. For, even if I may choose to be quiet I would still go on seeing visions of many worlds. In prophet Mohammed's life, we come across many acts of kindness. I do not know if Lord Mahavir has laid down two distinct standards—one for dharma and the other for worldly life. So far as I understand Jainism, I think it has no such compartments. Passages which are apparently suggestive of different standards can be interpreted to agree with what I say; for example, the *mahavrat*[1] and *Anuvrat*[2]. Religion exhorts us all clearly to follow only the *Mahavrat;* but if we cannot do it, we should at least follow the *Anuvrat* instead of resigning ourselves to a life of sin.

A gun manufacturer is certainly responsible for the destruction caused by the guns he makes. The object of a man's life is said to be realization of the self. A convention which runs counter to human nature certainly deserves to be broken. Even otherwise it is bound to go. If an infant tries to hold a fire-brand, its parents and the world have a right to check it. Nobody has any further right.

Since God has not endowed man with the power of creating even a single life, how at all can he have the right to inflict capital punishment? I have remained absolutely free from the habit of masturbation. Even today I am not able to understand it. I shudder at the thought of it. I have no doubt whatever that a man who practises it would become weak in body and mind. I know of manysuch cases. The remedy for it is that those who wish to reform themselves should shun solitude and as far as possible keep both their hands as well as

[1] Literally, major vows in Jainism, ahimsa, *satya, asteya, brahmacharya, aparigraha*, practised by ascetics

[2] Literally, minor vows in Jainism, those practised by householders

their body busy. They should take *sattvika*[1] food, which is easy to digest, go for walks in the open air and repeat *Ramanama*.

Marriage is no remedy for bad habits. A child of five, seven or ten years contracts a bad habit; is it due to want of the married state? Wherever I go, I see immeasurable unhappiness caused by child-marriages. I have known no benefit flowing from child-marriages.

I return your questions as they would help you understand my answers.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 19833

28. LETTER TO NAUTAMLAL M. KHANDERIA

THE ASHRAM,
July 11, 1926

Your letter.[2] If you find the Gujarati [original] interesting enough, take it from me that Mahadev's English rendering is highly spoken of by many who know English well. Hence I see no need to make any change.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 10941

29. LETTER TO AMBALAL SARABHAI

THE ASHRAM,
July 11, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your long letter. I read the whole of it with care. I am glad that you wrote it. I liked it very much, since you have poured out your heart in it. I take it, moreover, as a sign of friendship that you took all this trouble to arrange your ideas and put them compactly before me. I, therefore, welcome your letter from every point of view.

[1] Pure and wholesome

[2] The addressee had suggested in his letter of June 18, 1926 that the English rendering of Gandhiji's autobiography which was being serially published in *Young India* had better be done by Valji Govindji Desai.

I am replying in Gujarati, since I shall never have the courage to write to a Gujarati in English, and I am dictating the letter since otherwise you would find difficulty in reading my handwriting and I would be going against doctors' advice that I should do as little writing as possible with my hand. Please rest assured that the views I had formed about you long ago remain unaltered. You have not changed; if anyone, I have changed, though I think I too have not. How could all that was in me come out at one time, without the circumstances to draw it out? Circumstances made me a non-co-operator. To others, that may appear as a change in me. But so far as I am concerned, I was being true to myself and, therefore, my non-co-operation was but a manifestation of my real self in relation to particular circumstances. One may see me bare-bodied in summer and wrapped up in clothes in winter and might think that I had changed. The truth is that I have not changed at all. I merely responded in the appropriate manner to changed circumstances. However, no matter what differences of opinion arise between us, I shall always feel the attraction of your virtues which first drew me towards you.

From some of my actions you have reached the conclusion that I would use any means to gain my end. It is absolutely against my nature to act in that manner. I have stated time and again, and proved through my actions, that I believe means and ends to be intimately inter-connected. That is, a good end can never be achieved through bad means. I had given the most careful thought to the problem of the Khilafat before making the cause my own. If I had not believed in its justice, I would never have lent my support to the Muslims. This of course does not mean that it was, or is, necessary for me, for the sakeof my dharma, to support the Khilafat movement, but I certainly held, and I still hold, that the Muslim claim was just from their own point of view and that, from the standpoint of morality, there was nothing objectionable in it. I, therefore, believed it to be the moral duty of every Hindu to stand by them in their suffering. I still cling to these views and do not repent having helped the Muslims in their fight for the Khilafat. Nor do I believe that Hindus have suffered by having helped them. I think in the same way about non-co-operation. It is a great principle. We do not yet understand its full significance. If, however, we are ever to see an era of peace, it will be through non-violent non-co-operation. I have not relaxed my non-co-operation in any particular. Even during the days of the non-co-operation

movement, I used to meet the Governor, as I did this time[1]. Even at that time I used to get documents registered, as I do now, and likewise used to advise a court suit against those who misappropriated Congress funds just as I do now. The reason is that non-co-operation was and is, limited in its application. The fact that perfect non-violence is impossible to practise while one lives in this body does not vitiate the principle itself. And so about non-co-operation. I have never felt ashamed in admitting my errors, and if I believed that the non-co-operation movement was a mistake and that it has failed, I would follow Mr. Roy's advice and certainly proclaim my errors publicly. I am, however, convinced that that movement has done the country untold good and that, if we look deep, it has not failed. It is true that we have not won swaraj in the sense of political power, but I attach little value to this fact. That people's ideas have changed, that they have become more critical and have acquired courage, is no small gain. The value of the movement will be appreciated in the future. Being too near it as yet, we cannot judge it aright, This being my view, what am I to confess in public? It is of course possible that my view is wrong. But so long as I am myself not convinced of the error of my view, how can I, if I love truth, admit any error? I aim at self-purification even through my political activities; I wish to follow dharma through them, and everyone's dharma is but what he can see for himself. No one has yet discovered absolute dharma which everyone will recognize to be so. Such dharma is beyond our power to understand and explain. Each one of us has but a glimpse of it, and describes it in his own way. Our power is limited to the choice ofmeans and I, therefore, believe that our success lies in preserving the purity of our means.

About the Congress, too, I feel that you are labouring under a misapprehension. It is not for one person to decide who should and who should not remain in it. If I could mould the Congress according to my ideas, it would be a different body. Moreover, if the Congress were controlled by one person and public opinion was ignored, it would be not a popular body but a one man show. There is much else I should like to write. It is possible to reply to your arguments about the other issues which you have raised. I have picked up only the more important points and tried to meet your arguments. Even so, I shall not be dogmatic and do not assert that I am right and you are

[1] Gandhiji met the Governor of Bomay on May 18, 1926 in connection with the Royal Agricultural Commission.

wrong. We can both be right, each from his own point of view. If we claim to follow the path of truth, how can we say today who is right in an absolute sense? The future alone will show who is right; but one thing I have learnt from my varied experience of life, and that is that, though all of us cannot be of the same view, we can learn to tolerate one anther's views. If we do so and if we discuss our views with one another, we can remove all the misunderstandings which may have arisen. It is for this reason that I have valued your letter and felt prompted to reply to it.

I read your letter to Sastri[1]. It did not please me as much as your letter to me did. I feel that it would have been better if you had not written as you have done at this time when he is in difficulty and that too in reply to a request from him. I have passed on to him the cheque which you sent to me, and have made no mention of the copy of your letter to him which you have sent to me. If I had known that you held the view about the society[2] which you have expressed, I would not have written to you for help. I value the gift you have made though holding the views which you do, and did not, therefore, hesitate to send on your cheque to Sastri. Your letter to Sastri, too, seems to me to have been written with the best of motives.

SHRI AMBALAL SARABHAI
MALDEN HOUSE
MARINE LINES
BOMBAY

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19928

30. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[3]

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 12, 1926

I have your letter. You will have misfortune. But there is as much connection between your being in Tiruchengodu and the water scarcity as there is between Z—a new comer—being in the same

[1] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri
[2] Servants of lndia Society
[3] This item may be treated as omitted as it appears in Vol. XXX under June 12, 1926, the correct date.

district and the scarcity. Those who charge you with rivalry unconsciously give your presence an importance you did not deserve. But as there is not much danger of your becoming inflated, let those good people who so charge you have all the pleasure they can derive from their belief.

The Finland idea is dead and recently buried. Dr. Dalal has suspected hydrocele in Devdas. Even if it requires an operation it would be a minor thing. I certainly don't worry about it, perhaps, because I don't dread the knife so much as dread drug-taking.

Poor Santanam! It almost appears as if we in India have more than our share of domestic troubles. And in India the Southern Presidency seems to take the first place.

I shall speak to Shankerlal about the arrangements of the tour.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
GANDHIASHRAM
TIRUCHENGODU

From a photostat: S.N. 10929

31. LETTER TO PARAMANAND K. KAPADIA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Tuesday [*July 13, 1926*][1]

BHAISHRI PARAMANAND,

I have your letter. Your contention is over the literal meaning. I meant "natural" in its generally accepted sense. There is no difficulty in accepting your meaning of the term. My argument however stands. Only it will have to be presented in a different way. If you consider the examples I have cited, I am sure you will not think my position mistaken. I see nothing wrong in the view you take. After all we both mean that one should not be licentious but exercise self-control. And if one is licentious by nature it is one's duty to change that nature.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

SHRI PARAMANAND KUNVERJI
137 SHARIF BAZAR
BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 1]591

[1] From the postmark

32. LETTER TO BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Tuesday [*July 13, 1926*]

BHAI BANARASIDASJI,

Your letter to hand. I believe no Indians from Natal now go to British Guiana. And there are no respectable Indians among those who do. I am still in correspondence with the Indians in South Africa. What more should I do? I am looking forward to your other letter as mentioned in your letter.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

SJT. BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI
FEROZABAD
(U. P.)

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2570

33. MESSAGE TO "THE SEARCHLIGHT"

[On or before *July 14, 1926*][1]

If I direct the searchlight on to the present discontent and want to find a remedy for it, I discover the spinning-wheel. Those who take it up seriously will find that their passions cool down and that they are adding something substantial to the swaraj edifice that is being built up.

M. K. GANDHI

The Searchlight, Anniversary Number, 1926

34. A LETTER[2]

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 14, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I do not know exactly what you really want to organize. If you have a poor population that has leisure during the

[1] The Anniversary Number of *The Searchlight* was published on 14-7-1926.

[2] It is likely that the letter was addressed to the Manager of Balaramapuram Ashram.

year which is not otherwise occupied, you want a scheme for providing them with spinning work. Or, in order to popularize khaddar amongst the middle class and in order ultimately to cheapen khaddar by voluntary spinning, you may wish to organize a voluntary spinners' association; or you may want to do both. Further, besides spinning-wheels, you want some facility for maintaining them when they go out of order. You need slivers and, therefore, the assistance of carders. And, if you have cotton growing near you, you will want to gin your own cotton and, therefore, you would require hand-ginning apparatus. One carder can feed ten spinners each 100 *tolas* and one ginning apparatus can feed 6 middle-sized bows, 2_ lbs. cotton. A hand-ginning apparatus costs Rs. 7/-. A middle-sized carding-bow costs Rs. 5/-. Both these things can be and should be locally made. I would also suggest your opening a small khaddar store, if there are at least 400 subscribers who would purchase khaddar for a minimum sum of Rs. 10 per year. The Rs. 10 should be deposited beforehand. If this can be done, in the store you can have a spinner, carder and ginner to demonstrate the three processes for voluntary spinners. Every voluntary spinner should be able to do his own carding. For paid spinners the custom in every part of India varies. Some spinners require slivers, i.e., carded cotton rolled into strips for spinners to work with, and in some other parts, the spinners do their own carding and take away cotton.

It is difficult for me to send a demonstrator from here. I would suggest your putting yourself in touch with Mr. Ramanathan who is the agent of the All-India Spinners' Association in Tamilnadu. His full name and address is Sjt. S. Ramanathan, All-India Spinners' Association (Tamilnadu Branch), Erode.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19664

35. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 14, 1926

I have your two telegrams. I knew that some such hitch will come in the way of your coming here although your telegram received yesterday was absolutely emphatic. I thought that you were

coming for some other tour or merely to pass a few days here. But Dastane, I know, had lost all heart. He has been so often put off and he had built this time upon all of you going. He wants either all or none. Hence, I suppose his telegram to you. It really cannot be helped.

Manilal and Jamnalalji have agreed to hold themselves free in September and, if you can also be definitely free then, you may undertake a tour or two during this year. But, if you cannot be free in September, I have reconciled myself to no tours during this year. If we can organize what we have on a sound businesslike basis, it will be sufficient compensation for no tours. I have therefore sent you a wire[1] today advising development of your own special work. After all, it takes all your energy.

Here is a letter from the manager of Balaramapuram Ashram and a copy of my reply[2] to him which speaks for itself. Please do whatever is necessary and if you know the manager, correspond with him before he writes to you.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1 (4 sheets)

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
GANDHIASHRAM
TIRUCHENGODU

From a photostat: S.N. 19665

36. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Wednesday, July 14, 1926

BHAISHRI SHANKERLAL,

I asked Gulzarilal[3] yesterday to write to you and also sent a telegram to Rajagopalchari. I had his wire today, which I enclose. The reply is on the back. It is certain, then, that he will not come on the

[1] This is not available.
[2] Presumably the preceding item.
[3] Gulzarilal Nanda, then secretary of Ahmedabad Labour Union, later, minister in the Union Government

16th. If you can think of any other arrangement, write to Rajagopalachari as may seem best to you.

We are having excellent rains here. I am keeping good health.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12197

37. A GREAT HEART

Newspapers tell us that Miss Emily Hobhouse is no more. She was one of the noblest and bravest of women. She worked without ever thinking of any reward. Hers was service of humanity dedicated to God. She belonged to a noble English family. She loved her country and because she loved it, she could not tolerate any injustice done by it. She realized the atrocity of the Boer War. She thought England was wholly in the wrong. She denounced the war in burning language at a time when England was mad on it. She went to South Africa and her whole soul rose against the barbarity of the concentration camps which Lord Kitchener thought were necessary if the war was to be won. It was then that William Stead led prayers for English reverses. Emily Hobhouse, frail as her body was, went again to South Africa at great personal risk to court insults and worse. She was imprisoned and sent back. She bore it all with the courage of a true heroine. she steeled the hearts of Boer women and told them never to lose hope. She told them that though England had gone mad, there were Englishmen and English women whose sympathies were with the Boers and that some day their voice would be heard. And so it was. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman swept the board at the general-election of 1906 and made to the wronged Boers such reparation as was possible.

It was after the war and when satyagraha was going on that I had the privilege of being known to Miss Hobhouse. The acquaintance ripened into a life-long friendship. She played no mean part at the settlement of 1914. She was General Botha's guest. Now General Botha had uniformly repelled my advances for an interview. Every time he referred me to the Home Minister. But Miss Hobhouse insisted on General Botha seeing me. And so she arranged for a meeting between the General, his wife and herself and me at the General's residence in Cape Town. Hers was a name to conjure with among the Boers. And she made my way smooth among them by throwing in the whole weight of her influence with the Indian cause.

When I came to India and the Rowlatt Act agitation was going on, she wrote saying that I must end my life in prison if not on the gallows and that she did not deplore it. She herself had full strength for such sacrifice. It was an article of faith with her that no cause prospered without the sacrifice of its votaries. Only last year she wrote to me saying that she was in active correspondence with her friend General Hertzog about the Indian cause in South Africa, asked me not to feel bitter against him and told me to tell her what I expected of General Hertzog. Let the women of India treasure the memory of this great English woman. She never married. Her life was pure as crystal. She gave herself to God's service. Physically she was a perfect wreck. She was paralytic. But in that weak and diseased body she had a soul that could defy the might of kings and emperors with their armies. She feared no man because she feared God only.

Young India, 15-7-1926

38. STUDENTS AND NON-CO-OPERATION

A student in a national college has written a long letter of which I give the substance as follows:

> You are aware that in the year 1920 many students all over India left Government-controlled institutions. Several national institutions were started. Some have already gone under. The one that I know is a poor affair. It may be called a foreign imitation under national control minus discipline. Many of our teachers do not know the distinction between khaddar and foreign or mill-made cloth. They dress likeSahebs and though themselves dressed in foreign cloth would not mind talking to us about swadeshi. They remind one of drunkards advising others to give up liquor. They talk of the spirit of sacrifice and the value of joining national institutions when they send their own sons or other relatives to Government-controlled schools or colleges. In fact, there is very little love lost between them and us. Do you wonder at many students having gone back to Government institutions? A few of us however still remain out. But how long can we do so? I would like to prosecute my studies in Germany, but my pecuniary circumstances do not allow me to do so. Can you not send me to the Berlin or any other European University?

The writer has given me his own full name and the name of the institution and all other available particulars. I have purposely refrained from giving the name of the institution and further particulars. For, I do not know enough of it and I could not be party to the specific condemnation of any institution without having studied it. Public purpose is sufficiently served by publishing the general complaint so that those institutions to which the complaint may be applicable may examine themselves and remove all cause of complaint. There is no doubt that in several national institutions things have not been as they should have been and that the professors or teachers have not conformed to the elementary requirements of the Congress programme in so far as it is applicable to national institutions. Teachers who themselves do not believe in non-violence or truth or non-co-operation cannot impart to their students the spirit of any of these things. If they send their children to Government schools, they may not expect to enthuse their pupils over national institutions. Nor may they expect to infect their pupils with love of the charkha or khaddar, if they will not spin themselves or wear khaddar. It is hardly necessary to remark that all national institutions do not deserve the description that the writer gives of the one to which he has belonged. But, the point I desire to emphasize in connection with this letter is that there should be no sorrow felt over one's sacrifice. That sacrifice which causes pain loses its sacred character and will break down under stress. One gives up things that one considers to be injurious and therefore there should be pleasure attendant upon the giving up. Whether the substitute is effective or not is a different question altogether. If the substitute is effective, it is no doubt well, but it is well also even if the substitute is ineffective. It must lead to an effort to procure a better substitute, but surely not to a return to what has been given up after full knowledge and experience of its harmful character. This hankering after going to Berlin or to some other European University is not a sign of the spirit of non-co-operation. It is on par with substituting Japanese cloth for the English manufacture. We give up English cloth not because it is English, but because it robs the poor of their hereditary employment and therefore makes them poorer still. The Japanese substitute robs the poor no less than the English cloth. Similarly, we give up Government institutions because of their harmful character. We may not therefore reproduce the same thing under a different name and hug to ourselves the belief that we are non-co-operators. Non-co-operation means co-operation with all

that is best in the Indian spirit. We cannot cultivate that taste by being in Berlin. It is in India that all our experiments must be made. Till at least we arrive at a complete and effective substitute, the first step, it is quite plain, must be the giving up of Government institutions. Those students there fore who took that step did well if they understood what they were doing. And only the sacrifice of such students will be of increasing benefit to the country as time passes. But those who are repenting or dissatisfied with their own lot should certainly have no hesitation in going back to Government institutions. After all it is a conflict of ideal and if the ideal that non-co-operation stands for is good and is congenial to the Indian soil, it will triumph over every conceivable obstacle.

Young India, 15-7-1926

39. 'TOWARDS MORAL BANKRUPTCY'-III

It is one thing when married people regulate, so far as it is humanly possible, the number of their progeny by moral restraint, and totally another when they do so in spite of sexual indulgence and by means adopted to obviate the result of such indulgence. In the one case, the people gain in every respect. In the other there is nothing but harm. M. Bureau has produced figures and diagrams to show that the increasing use of contraceptives for the purpose of giving free-play to animal passions and yet obviating the natural results of such indulgence has resulted in the birth-rate being much lower than the death-rate, not in Paris only, but in the whole of France. Out of 87 areas into which France is divided, in 68 the birth-rate is lower than the deathrate. In one case, i.e., Lot, deaths were 162 against 100 births. The next comes Tarn-et-Garonne with 156 deaths against l00 births. Even out of 19 areas where the birth rate is higher than the death rate, the difference is negligible in several cases. In ten areas alone is there an effective difference. The lowest death rate, that is 72 against l00 births, occurs in Morbihan and Pas-de-Calais. M. Bureau shows that this process of depopulation, which he calls 'voluntary death', has not yet been arrested.

M. Bureau then examines the condition of French Provinces in detail and he quotes the following paragraph from M. Gide written in l914, about Normandy:

> Normandy has lost in the course of 50 years more than 300,000

inhabitants, that is to say, a population equal to that of the whole department of the Orne. Every 20 years she now loses the equivalent of a department, and as she includes but five, a century will be enough to see her fat meadows empty of Frenchmen—I say advisedly of Frenchmen, for assuredly others will come to occupy them, and it would be a pity were it otherwise. Germans work the iron mines round Caen, and for the first time, only yesterday, a vanguard of Chinese labourers landed where William the Conqueror set sail for England.

And M. Bureau adds by way of comment on the paragraph,

How many other provinces are in no better condition!

He then goes on to show that this deterioration in population has inevitably led to the deterioration in the military strength of the nation. He believes that the cessation of emigration from France is also due to the same cause. He then traces to the same cause the decay of French communal expansion, the decay of French commerce and the French language and culture.

M. Bureau then asks:

Are the French people who have rejected the ancient sexual discipline more advanced in securing happiness, material prosperity, physical health, and in intellectual culture?

He answers:

With regard to the improvement in health, a few words will suffice. However strong our wish to answer all objections methodically, it is all the same very difficult to take seriously the assertion that sexual emancipation, would tend to strengthen one's body and improve one's health. On every side one hears of the diminished vigour of both, young people and adults. Before the war the military authorities had to lower, time after time, the physical standard of the recruits, and the power of endurance has seriously diminished throughout the whole nation. Doubtless it would be unjust to maintain that lack of moral discipline is alone responsible for this decline, but it has a large share in it, together with alcoholism, insanitary housing, etc.; and if we look closely we shall easily discover that this indiscipline and the sentiments which perpetuate it are the strongest allies of these other scourges. . . . The frightful extension of venereal diseases has done incalculable injury to the public health.

M. Bureau even disputes the theory advanced by Neo-Malthusians that the wealth of individuals in a society which regulates its births increases in proportion to the restriction it imposes upon them, and fortifies his answer by comparing the favourable German

birth-rate and her increasing material prosperity with the decreasing birth-rate of France side by side with its decreasing wealth. Nor has the phenomenal expansion of German trade, M. Bureau contends, been attained at the cost of the German workmen more than elsewhere. He quotes M. Rossignol:

> People died of hunger in Germany when she had but 41,000,000 inhabitants: they have become richer and richer since she numbered 68,000,000.

And adds:

> These people, who are by no means ascetic, found it possible to place annually in the savings-banks sums which in 1911 amounted to 22,000 million francs; while in 1895 the deposits only reached 8,000 millions, an increase of 850 millions a year.

The following paragraph which M. Bureau writes after describing the technical progress of Germans about the general culture will be read with much interest:

> Without being initiated into the depths of sociology one can have no doubt of it, for it is quite evident, that such technical progress would have been impossible had not workmen of a more refined type, foreman more highly educated perfectly trained engineers been found. . . . The Industrial schools are of three kinds: professional, numbering over 500, with 70,000 pupils; technical, still more numerous, and some of them with over 1,000 pupils; lastly, the colleges devoted to higher instruction with their 15,000 pupils, which confer, like the Universities, the envied title of doctor . . . 365 commercial schools attract 31,000 pupils and in innumerable schools courses of agriculture give instruction to over 90,000. What, compared with these 400,000 pupils in the different lines of the production of wealth, are the 35,000 pupils of our professional courses, and why, since l,770,000 of our people, of whom 779,798 are below eighteen years of age, live by the cultivation of the soil, are there but 3,225 pupils in our special schools of agriculture?

M. Bureau is careful enough to note that all this phenomenal rise of Germany is not entirely due to the surplus of births over deaths, but he does contend with justice that, given other favourable conditions, a preponderating birth rate is an indispensable condition of national growth. Indeed, the proposition he has set forth to prove is that a growing birth rate is in no way inconsistent with great material prosperity and moral progress. We in India are not in the position of France so far as our birth rate is concerned. But it may be said that the

preponderating birth rate in India, unlike as in Germany, is no advantage to our national growth. But I must not anticipate the chapter that will have to be set apart for a consideration of Indian conditions in the light of M. Bureau's facts and figures and conclusions.

After dealing with an examination of German conditions where birth rate preponderates the death rate, M. Bureau says:

> Are we not aware that France occupies the fourth place–and that a very long way below the third–in regard to the total sum of national wealth? France has an annual revenue from her investments of 25,000 million francs, while the Germans are drawing from their investments a revenue estimated at 50,000 million francs.... Our national soil has suffered in thirty five years, from 1879 to 1914, a depreciation of 40,000 million Francs, and is worth only 52,000 instead of 92,000 millions! Whole departments of the country lack men to work the soil, and there are districts where one sees scarcely any but old men.

He adds that:

> Moral indiscipline and systematic sterility means the diminution of natural abilities in the community, and the undisputed predominance of the old men in social life. . . . In France, there are but 170 children and young people to every 1,000 inhabitants, while, in Germany, there are 220, in England, 210. . . . The proportion of the old is greater than it should be and the others who are prematurely aged through moral indiscipline and voluntary sterility share in all the senile fears of a debilitated race.

The author then observes

> We know that the immense majority of French people are indifferent to this domestic position (slack morals) of their rulers, thanks to the convenient theory of the 'wall round private life'.

And he quotes with sorrow the following observation of M. Leopold Monod:

> It is a fine thing to go to war in order to cast down infamous abuses, and to break the chains of those who we suffer from them. But how about men whose fears have not known how to guard their consciences from enticements; men whose courage is at the mercy of a caress or a fit of sulks; . . . men who with no shame, perhaps glorying in the exploit, repudiate the vow which in a joyous and solemn hour they made to the wife of their youth; men who burden their home with the tyranny of an exaggerated and selfish egotism—how can such men be liberators?

The author then sums up:

Thus, whichever way we turn, we always find that the various forms of our moral indiscipline have caused serious hurt to the individual, the family, and society at large, and have inflicted on us suffering which is literally inexpressible. The licentious conduct of our young people, prostitution, pornography, and marriages for money, vanity or luxury, adultery and divorce, voluntary sterility and abortion, have debilitated the nation and stopped its increase; the individual has been unable to conserve his energies, and the quality of the new growth has diminished simultaneously with its quantity. 'Fewer births and more fine men" was the watch word, which had something enticing about it for those who, shut up in their materialistic conception of individual and social life, thought they could assimilate the breeding of men to that of sheep or horses. As Auguste Comte said with stinging force, these pretended physians of our social ills would have done better to become veterinary surgeons, incapable as they always were of comprehending the infinite complexity of the psychology both of the individual and of the society.

The truth is that of all the attitudes which a man adopts, of all the decisions, at which he arrives, of all the habits which he contracts, there is none which exerts over his personal and social life an influence comparable to that exerted by his attitudes, his decisions, and his habits with regard to the appeals of the sexual appetite. Whether he resists and controls them, or whether he yields and allows himself to be controlled by them, the most remote regions of social life will experience the echo of his action, since nature has ordained that the most hidden and intimate action should produce infinite repercussions.

Thanks to this very mystery, we like to persuade ourselves, when we violate in any way the moral discipline, that our misdeed will have no grievous consequence. As to ourselves, in the first place, we are satisfied, since our own interest or pleasure has been the motive of our action; as to society at large, we think it is so high above our modest selves that it will not even notice our misdeeds; and, above all, we secretly hope that "the others" will have the sense to remain devout and virtuous. The worst of it is that this cowardly calculation almost succeeds while our conduct is as yet an abnormal and exceptional act; then, proud of our success, we persevere in our attitude, and when there is occasion we come—and this is our supreme punishment–to believe it lawful.

But a day comes when the example given by this conduct involves other defections; each of our evil deeds has the result of making more difficult and more heroic that attachment to virtue which we have counted on in "the

others", and our neighbour, tired of being duped, is now in a hurry to imitate us. That day the downfall begins and each can estimate at once the consequences of his misdeeds and the extent of his res-ponsibilities. . . .

The secret act has come out of the hiding-place in which we thought it was confined. Endowed in its own way with a kind of immaterial radio-activity, it has run through all sections; all suffer from the fault of each, action, like the wavelets spreading from an eddy, makes itself felt in the most romote regions of the general social life. . . .

Moral indiscipline at once dries up the fountains of the race, and hastens the wear and tear of the adults whom it debilitates both morally and physically.

Young India, 15-7-1926

40. A GREAT PATRIOT

The unexpected and premature death of Umar Sobhani removes from our midst a patriot and worker of the front rank. There was a time when Mr. Umar Sobhani's word was law in Bombay. There was not a public popular movement in Bombay in which, before misfortune overtook him, Umar Sobhani was not the man behind the scene. He was no speaker. He detested public speaking. He never appeared on the stage. He was the stage manager. His popularity among fellow merchants was very great. His judgment was as a rule sound and quick. He was generous to a fault. He distributed his charities among both the deserving and the undeserving. There was hardly a popular movement that did not receive largely from his ample purse. He spent as he earned. Umar Sobhani was extreme in everything. His extremism in speculation proved his economic ruin. He doubled his wealth in a month and he became a pauper the next month. He stood his losses bravely but his proud nature would not permit him to do public work when he lost his millions. He would not accept the middle rank. He would retire if he could not top the donation lists. And so he disappeared from public life as soon as he became a poor man. Whenever and wherever there is mention of public workers and public work, it would be impossible not to think of Umar Sobhani and his patriotic services. His life is at once an inspiration and a warning to rich young men. His zealous work as apatriot is an inspiration. His life shows us that possession of riches is not inconsistent with that of abilities and their dedication to public

service. It is a warning to rich young men who would be reckless in ambition. Umar Sobhani was no stupid speculator. Many lost when he lost. There is perhaps nothing to be said against his great cotton purchases which brought him down. But why did he speculate at all? He was already a prince among merchants. As a patriot, it was his duty to restrain his ambition. His life and his name were a trust for the public. And there was need for him to be extra cautious. I know the maxim *De Mortuis nil nisi bonum.* I know also that what I am saying is all wisdom after the event. But I do not criticize to find fault. I do so to profit by the lesson that this patriot's life teaches us. And wisdom after the event is a legitimate virtue for posterity to treasure. We must learn even from one another's errors. We should all be as Umar Sobhani in burning love for the country, in giving well and much for it, if we have riches, in knowing no communal bias or distinction and we must also, if we will, learn to avoid his recklessness and thus deserve the heritage he has bequeathed to us.

I tender my condolences to his aged father and his family.

Young India, 15-7-1926

41. NON-VIOLENCE—THE GREATEST FORCE[1]

[*July 15, 1926*][2]

Non-violence is the greatest force man has been endowed with. Truth is the only goal he has. For God is none other than Truth. But Truth cannot be, never will be, reached except through non-violence.

That which distinguishes man from all other animals is his capacity to be non-violent. And he fulfils his mission only to the extent that he is non-violent and no more. He has no doubt many other gifts. But if they do not subserve the main purpose—the development of the spirit of non-violence in him—they but drag him down lower than the brute, a status from which he has only just emerged.

The cry for peace will be a cry in the wilderness, so long as the spirit of non-violence does not dominate millions of men and women.

An armed conflict between nations horrifies us. But the economic war is no better than an armed conflict. This is like a

[1] This was reproduced in *The Hindu* from the October issue of *World Tomorrow.*

[2] The article was sent with the succeeding item.

surgical operation. An economic war is prolonged torture. And its ravages are no less terrible than those depicted in the literature on war properly so called. We think nothing of the other because we are used to its deadly effects.

Many of us in India shudder to see blood spilled. Many of us resent cow-slaughter, but we think nothing of the slow torture through which by our greed we put our people and cattle. But because we are used to this lingering death, we think no more about it.

The movement against war is sound. I pray for its success. But I cannot help the gnawing fear that the movement will fail, if it does not touch the root of all evil—man's greed.

Will America, England and the other great nations of the West continue to exploit the so-called weaker or uncivilized races and hope to attain peace that the whole world is pining for? Or will Americans continue to prey upon one another, have commercial rivalries and yet expect to dictate peace to the world?

Not till the spirit is changed can the form be altered. The form is merely an expression of the spirit within. We may succeed in seemingly altering the form but the alteration will be a mere make-believe if the spirit within remains unalterable. A whited sepulchre still conceals beneath it the rotting flesh and bone.

Far be it from me to discount or under-rate the great effort that is being made in the West to kill the war-spirit. Mine is merely a word of caution as from a fellow-seeker who has been striving in his own humble manner after the same thing, may be in a different way, no doubt on a much smaller scale. But if the experiment demonstrably succeeds on the smaller field and, if those who are working on the larger field have not overtaken me, it will at least pave the way for a similar experiment on a large field.

I observe in the limited field in which I find myself, that unless I can reach the hearts of men and women, I am able to do nothing. I observe further that so long as the spirit of hate persists in some shape or other, it is impossible to establish peace or to gain our freedom by peaceful effort. We cannot love one another, if we hate English-men. We cannot love the Japanese and hate Englishmen. We must either let the Law of Love rule us through and through or not at all. Love among ourselves based on hatred of others breaksdown under the slightest pressure. The fact is such love is never real love. It is an armed peace. And so it will be in this great movement in the West

against war. War will only be stopped when the conscience of mankind has become sufficiently elevated to recognize the undisputed supremacy of the Law of Love in all the walks of life. Some say this will never come to pass. I shall retain the faith till the end of my earthly existence that it shall come to pass.

The Hindu, 8-11-1926

42. LETTER TO KIRBY PAGE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 15, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

With reference to your letter of the 5th May and in continuation of my cable[1] dated 9th June, I send you now my article[2] on non-violence.

You want 2,500 words from me. I have no time to think out anything so big. You will therefore please forgive me for sending you what little I have been able to put together. But, as I [am] sending you my contribution fairly in advance of the time given by you, I hope you will not be inconvenienced by the shortness of my article. Even as it is, what I have given you does not satisfy me. If I could, I would condense it still further.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1 (in 3 sheets)

KIRBY PAGE, ESQ.
EDITOR OF THE "WORLD TOMORROW"
347, MADISON AVENUE
NEW YORK
U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N. 10781

[1] This is not available
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

43. LETTER TO KURUR NILAKANTAN NAMBUDRIPAD

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI ,
July 15, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and the paper prepared by you. Do you not read *Young India?* It gives facts and figures showing the progress of khadi during the last five years. If you will only take up your *Young India* file for the current year, you will find all figures there. To collect all the statistics from the pages of *Young India* here would be to put an extra tax on the energies of those who have little time to spare from their daily labour.

The experiment that is being scientifically conducted in schools is the one in the 24 schools conducted under superintendence of Shrimati Anasuya Bai. These schools have an attendance of 1600 boys and girls. Spinning is all done by the *takli.* Though all the teachers of the schools know spinning on the *takli* they are obliged to spin as well as the children. A fixed time is set apart for spinning by them. And the yarn so spun is turned out into khadi which in many cases is used by the children themselves.

Experience has taught us that *takli* is the best thing to be introduced in schools. It is handy. It does not go out of order. It is cheap, occupies no room and thousands can spin at the same time; and, whilst the output per hour on a single *takli* is much less than on the spinning-wheel, the collective result of *takli*-spinning in schools is much greater than that of the spinning wheel for the simple reason that it is impossible to make all the boys to spin on the wheel at the same time. There can only be a limited number of wheels supplied in a school.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KURUR NILAKANTAN NAMBUDRIPAD
TRICHUR
(COCHIN STATE)

From a microfilm: S.N. 11201

44. LETTER TO SALIVATEESWARAN

[*July 15, 1926*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[2] I do not think there is anything new in the solution proposed by you.

Yours sincerely,

[SALIVATEESWARAN
73. ISSAJI ST.
NEAR RAMA MANDIR
VADGADI
BOMBAY NO. 3]

From a photostat: S.N. 11078

45. LETTER TO B. G. HORNIMAN

THE ASHRAM
SABARMATI,
July 15, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[3] I was obliged to send you the telegram[4] if only because I am under a vow not to go out of Ahmedabad or undertake any public function except for unforseen events ofor reasons of health. You will appreciate my position and forgive me.[5]

Yours sincerely,

B. G. HORNIMAN, ESQ.
"THE INDIAN NATIONAL HERALD"
NAVSARI BUILDING
HORNBY ROAD
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 10962

[1] The letter from Salivateeswaran, dated July 14, 1926, was received on July 15, as per note scribbled on it. The reply, presumably, was written the same day.

[2] Forwarding a few lines on what struck him as a solution of the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity, Salivateeswaran sought Gandhiji's candid opinion about it as that would encourage him to study such problems and find out solutions.

[3] Writing on July 13, Horniman had urged Gandhiji to preside over a meeting on July 19 to honour the memory of Umar Sobhani (S.N. 10960).

[4] This is not available.

[5] Horniman wrote again pressing Gandhiji to reconsider the matter; *vide* "Letter to B. G. Horniman", 17-7-1926.

46. LETTER TO A. T. GIDWANI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 15, 1926

MY DEAR GIDWANI,

I have your letter and I had the spindle also. I have written to the Vice-Principal about the spindles. They are not up to the standard. If standard spindles can be made there, it will be a great relief.

I am glad you are introducing spinning there. All your staff should learn to spin on *takli.* No one can teach these boys better than they. If you do require an instructor, write to Babu Brij Kishen, Krishna Nivas, Katra Khushal Rai, Delhi, and I am sure he will come and help you. He is an enthusiast. Probably you know him. He is a very good man and he would gladly come for a few days. Of course, you will insist upon the boys carding their own cotton and making their slivers. Carding must go hand in hand with spinning.

You have asked me a question about food. I think that the physiological results of food are a consequence and not a cause for the avoidance of animal food. For, even if it could be proved that there is no physiological evil effect from taking animal food, it will still be banned on the principle of ahimsa.

I hope you have got Naraharibhai's[1] report by this time.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. A. T. GIDWANI
PREM MAHA VIDYALAYA
BRINDABAN

From a microfilm: S.N. 11267

47. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 15, 1926

DEAR MOTI BABU,

I had your letter. I am distressed to find that there was fire in

[1] Narahari Parikh

your khadi depots. I hope that it has not caused much disruption of work.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

BABU MOTILAL ROY
PRABARTAK SANGH
CHANDRANAGAR
BENGAL

From a photostat: G.N. 11027

48. LETTER TO DEVRATNA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI ,
July 15, 1926

BHAI DEVRATNAJI,

Your letter to hand. I think a lot about the Hindu-Muslim problem but I know that at this moment, it is useless for me to say anything. Rest assured that when I see I can do something I shall certainly place the remedy before the people. This I do know that Hinduism shall never be saved without *tapascharya.* I am giving it due thought and taking necessary action.

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 12200

49. LETTER TO B. B. MANIAR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Thursday, July 15, 1926

BHAI BALWANTRAI,

It seems you are rolling in wealth. It also seems that you are not able to come to a decision. Copies of the Ashram rules are exhausted, but the daily routine is as under:

Rising at 4 o'clock. Attending prayers till five. Private studies till 6. Those who cook their own meals do so at this hour. At seven commences work in which everyone joins. It includes cleaning latrines, spinning, weaving, sweeping roads, cooking and numerous

other similar activities. Lunch bell at half past ten. Everyone finishes his lunch before twelve, when work is resumed and it goes on up to half past four. Cooking and meals again between half past four and seven. Prayers a second time, starting at seven and going on up to eight. Then one hour for study and reflection. Retiring for the day at nine. Those who live in the Ashram should strive to observe, in thought, word and deed, the vows of truth, non-violence, non-possession, non-stealing, *brahmacharya*, etc. They should observe the vow of wearing khadi, spin for at least half an hour daily by way of *yajna*, refrain from the practice of untouchability as contrary to dharma, and so on.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 12198

50. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 15, 1926

BHAI HARIBHAU,

Herewith a letter from Pyarelal, a teacher. Please find out how far what he says is true and let me know.

I had received your letter from Ujjain. I had written to the Dewan of Mysore for his approval, which he has accorded. Shall I send the report to you? Or to Pustakeji?

Chi. Martand must have written to you yesterday. Do not worry on his account.

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 12201

51. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Thursday, July 15, 1926

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

I got your letter. I very much appreciate your resolve to make khadi the centre of your activities and to impart education too through it. If I receive from you any information about khadi, which may be of general use, I will certainly publish it in *Navajivan*.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI MOOLCHAND, TEACHER
MONPUR (CENTRAL INDIA)

From a copy of the Hindi: Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

52. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 16, 1926

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your letter. Why must you enter into all the explanation in respect of Rs. 10/-? I would be grieved if you pinch yourself for sending me Rs. 10/- or anything. As there was a question in the Ashram as to whether the money was received or not and whether, if it was received, it was mislaid, I told you about it. But, it would please me better if you will keep the khaddar and not think of paying for it. After all, what has been sent to you is second-hand khaddar fromold stock belonging to the members of the Ashram. Nor need you hesitate to ask for more if you want more.

I am delighted to hear of the progress made by Nani[1]. It would be an achievement if she speaks three languages equally well when she grows up. I suppose, the strong will she inherits from her mother and gentleness from her father, or, will you say *vice versa?*

It is too early to think of what I shall do next year. But, if I do come to the South, I would love to go to Porto Novo.

With love to you all,

Yours
BAPU

MRS.ESTHER MENON
(PORTO NOVO)
S. I. R.

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child,* p. 82

53. LETTER TO ZAFARULMULK ALAVI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 16, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I note what you say about your coming to the

[1] Esther Menon's daughter

Ashram.

In my opinion, the scheme you have sent me shows the academy to be a demi-official institution. But, really speaking, you should be best judge of what you should do. In your place I would not join such [an] institution, however beneficial it may be. The secret of our non-co-operation is to renounce the benefits of the system, which we need not receive. Even of the benefits which we voluntarily receive, we picked out some when we embarked upon non-co- operation. Educational institutions were one such thing. But, in the present state of things, when non-co-operation is confined only to individuals every one must really decide for himself. And, where his conscience does not prick, he should unhesitatingly give up non-co- operation.

If I could enthuse every single Swarajist to leave the Councils, I would exert all my influence in that direction and I know it will do a great deal of good. Similarly, No-changers who resume practice in courts or places in senates are no No-changers. But, I want you not to make of Non-co-operation a fetish. Nor to depend upon a *Fatwa* from any authority however much you may esteem it. Test every single action of yours on the anvil of your conscience and unhesitatingly adopt what your conscience approves of.

Yours sincerely

ZAFARULMULK ALAVI, ESQ.
LUCKNOW

From a microfilm: S.N. 11077-a

54. LETTER TO D. N. BAHADURJI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI ,
July 16, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I have nothing like a guide that would tell you how to arrive at the required strength. But the easiest method of testing the strength of the twist is to make your cone as you are spinning as tight as possible. Now a tight core is an impossibility if the yarn so spun is not strong enough to bear the strain. It is hardly necessary to count the revolutions. After testing the yarn in the manner I have suggested, you will instinctively spin strong yarn. No

doubt revolutions increase a spinner's speed, not necessarily the strength of his yarn. The strength depends upon the deliberation and the tension with which you draw the thread. And the twist is given as it is drawn. A final turn or two of the wheel finishes the twist, before you wind the yarn round the spindle.

The eye is the only guide to evenness. Fineness depends upon the fineness of the spindle and the staple of cotton, as also the manner in which slivers are made.

As you are doing your spinning with scientific precision, I would suggest your learning carding. Carding is, in my opinion, a fine occupation, though strenuous.

Your account of how you came to spin is deeply interesting. Whatever your ulterior object, what prompts you to spin should be all-suffering for everybody. I am glad too that you appreciate the economic value of the spinning-wheel for the dumb millions. You will not hesitate to send me your yarn for testing whenever you feel inclined.

Yours sincerely,

D. N. BAHADURJI, ESQ.
MALABAR HILL P.O.
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 19667

55. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Friday, Asadha Sud 6, July 16, 1926

CHI. JAMNALAL,

The land in the possession of Joshi Girijashanker which we had been thinking of acquiring must have been purchased today. The total area is 19 *vighas*[1], from which he will retain one *vigha* at the extreme end. Land measuring 18 *vighas* and the buildings will be bought for a total of Rs. 21,000. The owner or his tenant, whoever lives there, will be entitled to draw water from our well. This right will cease if he sells that one *vigha*. When he sells it, we shall have the right of pre-emption

[1] A measure of land equal to about $^1/_3$ acre

at a price to be fixed by a *panch*[1]. We have to pay Rs. 5,000 just now as guarantee money and shall have to pay the remaining 16,000 within one month. The name of the person in whose name the land will be registered is not being entered [in the sale-deed]. I can think of three possibilities: 1) in the name of the Ashram; 2) for cow-protection activities; 3) in your name. If you wish to buy it in your name, you may. Personally, I am inclined to buy it in the name of the Ashram and use it, if necessary, for setting up a dairy or a tannery. Alternatively, we may set up the dairy and the tannery on some other plot of the Ashram land and use this land for agriculture and residential buildings. We are very much short of buildings just now. Whatever the purpose for which we buy the land, you will have to arrange for the money there.

If necessary, you may also see Jugalkishorji and Ghanshyamdasji in this connection. I think we shall have to start constructing a few more buildings as soon as the rains are over. Please wire to me what is to be done about the money and in whose name the document should be registered. We have had fine rains here. The river is in flood almost every day.

The Hindu-Muslim quarrel is growing there from day to day. Try if you can discover the cause. Write to me in detail.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2868; also S.N. 12202

56. LETTER TO MOHANLAL PANDYA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Friday, July 16, 1926

BHAISHRI MOHANLAL PANDYA,

I have your letter. Have you been to Sunav, or are you yet to visit it? I showed your letter to Vallabhai. He did not know what he could do. I am glad that you wrote about the potters. We can do two things just now, though we have lost our old enthusiasm. One, we can teach potters to have a sense of fairness and to be independent-minded. Since they do not render forced labour any longer, they should expect no favours. They should not have supplied the earth when asked by a private individual. I think he could ask, as a matter of

[1] Arbitrator or board of arbitrators

right, to be supplied earth only for the purpose of making tiles. In this matter, therefore, the potters should fully preserve their self-respect. They should be educated to preserve their self-respect. I think it is necessary for them to take permission to dig for earth. If any person could dig anywhere, field after field would be ruined.

Secondly, we should not look upon officials as our enemies. We should not shrink from discussing matters with them as friends. I see no harm in trying to reason with them when rank injustice is being done. Even if we wish to resort to satyagraha, our first step should be to reason with them. Moreover, the poor potters are surely not non-co-operators. There is nothing wrong, therefore, in approaching officials to discuss matters with them on their behalf. Not only so, it may even be our moral duty to some extent and in certain circumstances to try to reason with them. Think over all this and do what you think best.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12203

57. LETTER TO ADAM SALEHALIBHAI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 16, 1926

BHAISHRI ADAM SALEHALIBHAI,

I have your letter. I look upon all scriptures as the inspired speech of holy men, and regard the Koran, too, in the same light. I try to understand the spirit of every religious book without clinging to the literal meaning of its words. I look upon Hazarat Mahomed as one among several prophets. I should like to see a guru who was actually alive today. I have no means of knowing with certainty that my ideas are always good. I am but a humble creature taking every step with fear in my heart. I certainly do not believe that my life will have been wasted if I do not come across a guru before I die. My duty is to work; the fruit is in God's hands to give, I am not looking for a guru in order that he may resolve my doubts. I welcome being the slave of a good man because it would make me happy. The whole country is not against the spinning-wheel, and even if it were I would cling to it so long as my inner voice told me that I should.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19931

58. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday [*July 16, 1927*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. You have done well in writing to Dr. Chandulal. Your stomachache has got to go.

I am of course well. I suffered from migraine for a few days. It was cured by application of mud-packs. If Taramati has not yet written me a letter, tell her that I am waiting.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
HOMI VILLA
PANCHGANI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

59. LETTER TO B. G. HORNIMAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 17, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter as also your telegram.[2] As the telegram was received too late for telegraphic reply to reach you in time, I am sending you my reply by post. I am extremely sorry to have to disappoint you and so many friends and co-workers. Is death of the dearest ones ever an unforeseen event? As a matter of fact, when I took this resolution in the presence of Mrs. Naidu, Punditji and other friends, I rehearsed the circumstances which could be interpreted to mean unforeseen, and I equally said to myself that meetings of condolences about departed friends should not draw me out of my

[1] From the postmarks

[2] Acknowledging Gandhiji's telegram and letter of July 15, Horniman had hoped that Gandhiji would agree that Umar Sobhani's death was an unforeseen event, and had added: "My co-secretaries, Jamnadas, Shankerlal, Tairsee, Nariman all join with me in pressing our request to you to come to the utmost" (S.N. 10963).

seclusion. It is very difficult to draw the line when you once begin to relax a self-imposed restriction. Surely, Umar began his work for the country long before I came to India. A meeting held to honour his memory needs no support from me to become successful. I am anxious for you to see my viewpoint and sympathize with me.

Kindly excuse.

Yours sincerely,

B. G. HORNIMAN

BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 10964

60. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN CHOKSI

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Saturday, July 17, 1926

CHI. MOTI,

I have your postcard. Recovering lost health is also work. But a person who is lethargic by nature will be lethargic in improving his or her health as well. I hope you do not behave in that manner. You should take every care and recoup your health soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12131

61. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Saturday, Asadha Sud 7, July 17, 1926

BHAISHRI SHANKERLAL,

I have your letter. I think we shall have to do without getting the document registered. The things which they want to be omitted are essential aspects of our work and we cannot at all leave them out, for the words in question are part of the congress resolution. All the same, I am of the view that the meaning which Bhulabhai and others read is not correct. Suppose the words were "*the organization*[1] of this

[1] Gandhiji has used the English expressions.

Government" instead of "*the Congress Organization.*" [1] All bodies doing philanthropic work are a part of that organisation and can still be registered. I cannot then understand why a body which is a part of the Congress and is mainly engaged in philanthropic work cannot be registered. But Can we ever hope to convince Government officials with arguments? Shri Narandas saw me, too, yesterday about the problem of the office. His argument was that almost all the expenditure being incurred now was so much waste of money. But we need not at all be in a hurry when only four or five days are left now. We will discuss the matter at leisure and decide.

There was another telegram, followed by a letter, from Horniman about a public meeting in connection with Sobhani[3]. I am again replying "No". I was having a headache for the past two or three days. It has disappeared completely now. Even when it was there, it was nothing much to speak of.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12204

62. LETTER TO GULBAI AND SHIRINBAI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Saturday, Asadha Sud 7, July 17, 1926

DEAR SISTERS,

I have your letter. The chief things by way of preparation for living in the Ashram are cultivating simplicity in food and dress, cultivating a liking for physical labour, spinning regularly every day, learning to card, and making an earnest effort to follow truth and non-violence and observe *brahmacharya,* etc. One should not feel disgust even in cleaning a latrine, but regard it as one's dharma to do so.

GULBAI & SHIRINBAI BEHRAMJI KARADIA
NAVSARI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 12205

[1] The source has "Bhai".

63. A DIFFICULT QUESTION

A teacher asks:[1]

I venture to answer this question because I am myself a sort of teacher and because I have carried out, and am still carrying out, several experiments in that field. This question has been raised by a fellow-teacher. This and similar other questions have been pending with me for a long time now. The friend in question does not insist on the reply being given through *Navajivan.* Considering, however, that a number of teachers seek help from me in solving such difficulties, and some of them may find guidance from my ideas on this subject, I have thought it fit to answer it through *Navajivan*.

Personally, I believe in the *Puranas* as sacred books and also in gods and goddesses. But I do not believe in them in the same way as the interpreters of the *Puranas* do and want others to do. I know too that I do not believe in them as society in general does at present. I do not believe that gods like Indra, Varuna, and others reside in the sky and that they are separate individuals, or even that goddesses like Saraswati and others are separate entities. But I certainly believe that gods and goddesses represent the various powers. Their descriptions are sheer poetry. There is a place for poetry in religion. The Hindu religion has lent to everything that we believe in a scriptural form. In a way, all those who believe that God has innumerable powers may be said to believe in gods and goddesses. Just as God has innumerable powers, He has innumerable forms also. One should worship Him by the name and in the form one likes. I do not think there is anything wrong in that. Whenever and wherever necessary, the symbols and metaphors may be explained and their inner meaning made clear to the children. I for one would not feel any hesitation in doing so. I have not known any harmful result flowing from this. I would certainly not lead the children in any wrong direction. I find no difficulty in accepting that the Himalayas are God Siva and that the Ganga, in the form of Parvati, rises and flows from his matted hair. Not only that, these ideas strengthen my belief in God and it enables

[1] The questions are not translated here. They are related to the symbolism behind the Puranic stories of gods and goddesses and the attitude which teachers should adopt in regard to these legends.

me to understand better that everything is pervaded by God. One may interpret stories like the churning of the ocean and so on in the way one likes. Care should, however, be taken to see that the interpretation offered helps in inculcating good morals and noble conduct. Scholars have indeed offered such interpretations according to their intelligence. But it is not to be supposed that these are the only interpretations possible. Just as there is a process of development in man, even so there is a process of development in the meaning of words and sentences. As our intelligence and heart develop, the meaning of words and sentences must also develop and so it does. Where people limit the meaning within narrow confines and build walls all round, it cannot but decay and deteriorate. The meaning and its interpreter both develop together. And everybody will continue, according to his feeling, to draw his own meaning. Those whose minds are impure will see in the *Bhagavata* the delineation of promiscuity, while it was only a vision of the *atman* alone that Ekanath could get out of it. I firmly believe that the author of the *Bhagavata* did not write it to encourage promiscuity. But if those of the present day find in it anything repugnant to their moral sense, they should certainly reject it. To believe that all that is in print—especially if it is in Sanskrit—is true religion is nothing but blind superstition or stupidity.

Therefore, I know but one golden rule by which to solve this problem and I place it before teachers: We must reject everything—be it in the Vedas, the *Puranas,* or any other religious book—that is in our view inconsistent with truth, or is likely to encourage vice. I may mention here an experience that I had while in jail. I had often heard people praising the *Gita-Govinda* of Jayadeva. I wished to read it some day. This poem might have provided enjoyment to many, but for me its reading proved a torture. I did read it but its description pained me. I would not at all hesitate to admit that the fault might have been entirely mine. But I have stated my position merely for the satisfaction of the reader. Since the *Gita-Govinda* did not produce a good effect on my mind, it became unreadable for me and I could reject it because I had my own independent standard to go by in such circumstances. Only those things are to be deemed religiously instructive which make for the elimination of evil thoughts and for the lessening of passions like hatred, only those things whose study would make one stick to truth even when mounting the gallows. The *Gita-Govinda* did not pass this test and therefore it became for me a book to be rejected.

There are today amongst us a number of youths and even old people who think that a thing is worth doing merely because it has been laid down in the Shastras. This will easily lead to our moral degradation. We do not even know what exactly can be called the Shastras. If we believe that whatever goes on in the name of the Shastras is dharma and carry on accordingly, it is bound to lead to undesirable results. Take *Manusmriti* only, for example, I do not know which of its verses are genuine and which are interpolations. But there are quite a few which cannot be defended as religious in their import. We must reject such verses. I am a great admirer of Tulsidas. And I consider the *Ramayana* to be the greatest work. But I cannot subscribe to the idea contained in the couplet: "The drum, the village-fool, the Sudras, animals, women—all these are fit to be beaten." Because Tulsidas, influenced by the ideas prevalent in his time, has expressed this view, it would not be just for me to take to beating the so-called Sudras or my wife or even the animals whenever I find them not submitting to my control.

Now I think that the answer to the question raised above becomes clear. I do not see the slightest difficulty in narrating the story of the gods and goddesses to the extent that it helps in promoting good conduct. I do not say that if the symbol is laid bare and the inner meaning brought out, the children lose interest in the stories. Assuming, however, that they do lose interest, I cannot approve of the practice of sustaining interest at the cost of truth. We should place before children whatever *rasa* there is in truth. It is my experience that this *rasa* can be expressed and communicated. First the children must be told clearly that there has never yet been in the world a ten-headed demon and that there is no possibility of one occurring hereafter. When this has been made clear, it will be no repudiation of truth or loss of interest if we narrate the story of Ravana as if he really did once exist. The children do understand that the ten-headed monster Ravana is no other than the evil desires inside us which have not only ten but a thousand heads. In *Aesop's Fables* birds and animals speak. The children know that birds and animals cannot speak and yet their delight in his stories is not one whit the less on that account.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-7-1926

64. QUALITY AND STRENGTH OF YARN

I have stated before that just as, in respect of yarn count we have progressed from three to eighty, and in respect of spinning speed from 200 yards to 800 yards an hour, and are also better now at preparing skeins of the yarn spun, so it is essential to improve the strength and texture of the yarn. With improvement in yarn strength and texture, weaving would become easier and, therefore, cheaper. We must improve in these respects so far, at any rate, that weavers will buy hand-spun as readily as they buy mill-made yarn. Our ideal should be to make hand-spun yarn more even in texture and more durable than mill-yarn. With this end in view experiments are at present being carried out in Gujarat to improve the quality of yarn, and in quite a short time some of us have achieved near perfection in regard to both texture and strength.

I have received figures regarding the quality of yarn from eight institutions producing khadi with aid from the Gujarat Khadi Pracharak Mandal. The yarn received by the Mandal was from voluntary spinners who spin in the spirit of a *yajna*.[1] I have with me a statement showing the quality of yarn contributed by 71 persons belonging to Kathlal, Nadiad, Dharmaj, Bhadran, Napad, Varad, Sarbhon and Ahmedabad. All of them seem to have used slivers made from cotton carded with a big carding-bow. The varieties of cotton used were *vankad, goji, deshi* of Nadiad, *Bardoli* and *Surati.* The highest level attained by any of the samples in respect of strength was found to be 52_ degrees. Some fell to as low a figure as 15, and the highest average figure in this respect was that of Ahmedabad, 42. None of the 71 spinners reached a figure higher than 52_. Most of them, in fact, are below 40. This degree of strength is very low. It is very difficult to weave yarn of less than 50 degrees in strength. Sixty degrees should be the minimum, and 70 should be regarded as normal. The average in respect of texture comes to 42_, and the maximum goes up to 50, which is nearly the highest possible. This degree of evenness of texture is quite good. The lowest figure for texture was found to be 13, which is low indeed. It should never fall below 40, for it is extremely difficult to weave yarn of that degree of texture, indifferently thick and thin. Only rope can be made out of such yarn.

[1] *Vide* "A Correction," 1-8-1926.

The experiment carried out in Gujarat has resulted in the strength of yarn reaching the figure 104, which is higher than that of the strongest mill-yarn. The details of this experiment will be published in a short time. Meanwhile, however, all those doing sacrificial spinning should remember that it is essential to pay great attention to improving the quality of yarn. Anyone who is anxious to effect such improvement must keep two things in mind. In the first place, one should not at present think of rejoining the broken thread. When both the hands work in unison, the thread will never break; in any case, it is essential, if the quality of yarn is to improve, that the broken thread should be removed. If the hank is rolled tight, the strength of the yarn will be known, because the stretching of the yarn in tight rolling necessarily tests the strength of the yarn. If the thread breaks while stretching, it may be assumed that it has not been well twisted. The yarn wound on the reel should never be removed from it without first blowing water-spray on it. After the spraying it should be allowed to dry, so that the moisture is absorbed by the yarn and strengthens it. This blowing moistens every fibre in the thread. Uneven spraying will not serve the purpose. The yarn should be properly moistened. Perhaps the best way of ensuring this is to wind the yarn on a separate reel and dip the latter into water and let it remain in water till the yarn is moistened, that is, for two or three minutes. Anyone who can think of other easier methods may certainly try them. The main point which I have explained should, however, be borne in mind. I hope that no one will at any rate try the experiment of removing the yarn from the reel and dipping it into water, for if the yarn is removed from the reel without being sprayed, it may become looser in twist, and the loss cannot be repaired by blowing water-spray into the yarn afterwards. The blowing is intended to make the twist strong enough so that it will last, and this can be done only by doing the blowing while the yarn is on the reel.

Finally, let all those who do sacrificial spinning remember that on their efficiency depends improvement in the quality of yarn spun by others who work for wages and that improvement in the quality of their yarn will mean increased earnings for these others.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-7-1926

65. NOTES

STOCKING OF COTTON IN PANCHTALAVADA

Sarvashri Chhaganlal and Maneklal are working in Panchtalavada on behalf of the Kathiawar Political Conference. They have sent the following account of the work done: Their work is spread over 32 villages, in which 745 maunds of cotton was stocked. Out of this, 216 maunds of cotton was ginned by hand and 529 in the factories. From this, 2681 *vejans*[1] of cloth was woven, that is, 53,620 yards of khadi was produced: Even now a subsidy of Rs. 20 had to be given. Many of them worked efficiently and economically and did not need help. Apart from this, 2,588 yards of khadi was produced from yarn spun and woven for payment. The quantity of cotton mentioned above was stocked by 640 families. The stocking of this gave work to 20 carders and 100 weavers. The carders received about Rs. 1,200 and the weavers Rs. 4,000. The sums were paid by the cultivators them selves. Out of the 640 families, only seven[2] families availed themselves of the help provided. Commenting on this, the two workers say that the success of our work depends on inducing cultivators to stock cotton, for in this way we get a real idea of thepoverty of our country. We realize, they say, that our real work lies in villages, and that while doing this work we can also do other social work among the villagers. By popularizing the use of the spinning-wheel we can convince people what a terrible disease their idleness is. Wherever the volunteers work in a spirit of service, they succeed in creating a sense of brotherhood among the people. And the difficulty of selling khadi, they point out, is avoided by following the method of getting people to stock their own cotton [and produce khadi for their needs].

Apart from this work of persuading people to stock cotton, these brothers got 100 women to work for wages. The rate of payment was 6 pies per count. Each woman earned between Rs. 2-8 as. per mound and Rs. 3 a month. They spun yarn of 4 to 8 counts. Two carders worked for supplying the slivers required by these women. Twenty weavers were at work weaving the yarn produced. The rate of payment for carding was Rs. 2-10 as. per maund. The weavers were paid Rs. 8 per maund of khadi of between 24 and 27 inches in width and Rs. 10 per maund for khadi of 30 inches width. They were paid

[1] Pieces of 20 yards each

[2] 74 the original; the error was corrected in the following issue of *Navajivan*.

Rs. 12[1] for one maund of turban cloth of 16 inches width, the length of each piece being about 10 yards. Thus Rs. 185-8-0 were spent on weaving and Rs. 65-4-0 on carding, Rs. 232-8-0 on weaving and Rs. 4-0-0 on ginning, the total being Rs. 487-4-0.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-7-1926

66. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Monday, July [*19*][2]*, 1926*

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your telegram, and so am addressing this letter to you at Banaras. I wrote a letter last week and addressed it to you at Calcutta. We have purchased Girjashanker Joshi's land for Rs. 21,000. We shall have to spend another Rs. 1,000 on miscellaneous items. The total area of the land is 19 vighas, out of which the owner will keep one *vigha* for himself. We have paid Rs. 5,000 as earnest money. We have to pay the balance of Rs. 16,000 within a month. The question now is, in whose name should we get the land registered? In your name, or that of the Ashram, or of an institution for cow-protection? I think we should buy it in the name of the Ashram and then use it for any purpose we choose. I should, however, like to respect your wishes in this matter. The land may be purchased in any name, but the money will have to be found by you. You may, if you wish to, discuss the matter with the Birla brothers. Wire to me what we should do. I have promised to pay the money as soon as possible. Kindly, therefore, arrange for that too as early as you can.

Janakibehn[3] feels a little nervous on hearing about the riots in Calcutta. I have reassured her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2869

[1] Rs. 6 in the original; the error was corrected in the following issue of *Navajivan.*

[2] The letter appears to have been written son after the one dated July 16 to the addressee.

[3] Addressee's wife

67. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI MANORDAS PATEL

Monday [*July 19, 1926*][1]

BHAISHRI DAHYABHAI,

It was only yesterday that I read your letter. You should improve your health very soon. Whether we are alone or have a life-partner, we should have the strength to work in every condition in which we find ourselves. It is only when we stick to one task with determination that our efforts bear fruit. You should never accept defeat.

Vandemataram from

BHAISHRI DAHYABHAI MANORDAS PATEL MOHANDAS
VAIDYA JAISHANKAR LILADHAR'S DISPENSARY
AHMEDABAD

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2696. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

68. LETTER TO CHAMAN KAVI

THE ASHRAM,
Monday, July 19, 1926

BHAISHRI CHAMAN,

The yarn spun by you is good enough. You should learn carding too. Cling to khadi now.

There is no counting my weaknesses.

Yes, I may say that there was a time when I was pleased by public honour.

There have been more occasions than one in my life when I was overcome with desire in the presence of a woman other than my wife.

There is only one way to keep the mind free from evil thoughts. We should cry and pray to God for help so that we may have only good thoughts. Do you cry any time when praying for things? The manner of begging makes a difference. There is a manner of doing it which must be answered.

Blessings from
BAPU

KERA, CUTCH

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19932

[1] From the postmark

69. LETTER TO NANABHAI BHATT

THE ASHRAM,
Monday, July 19, 1926

BHAI NANABHAI,

Your letter is an exercise for me. Narahari has quoted to you from Shri Mahadev's reply to his letter. Narahari had said that neither pupils nor parents cared for our education and that by and by all of them would join Government schools, that they did not seem keen on wearing khadi or enthusiastic about our aims. My reply to this argument was that, if in any school pupils refused to abide by our rules, they should leave it. The rules include wearing of khadi, observance of the practice of untouchability, etc. I had these circumstances in mind when I asked Mahadev to write and say that Narahari had remained in Surat of his own free will. I had askedfor his services for only three or four months. I know Narahari's unsteady nature. Following the principle that one's own sphere of work, though small, is good for one's spiritual development, I said that Sarbhon[1] was the right place for him, but that, if he preferred, he could remain in Surat. After this, my responsibility was over. I do not order, I only advise. I have left it to you to order. I explained what I would do if I were a teacher. Others may follow that course and do the best they can, or do nothing if they can do no more. I have done my duty in offering the bride to the groom at the wedding; it is none of my business to run the house for her. As the bride's father, however, I may certainly advise her from time to time. But I have understood the difference between your point of view and mine. You believe in national education plus khadi, etc. I say that national education itself means khadi and the other things. This is for the first time that you have mentioned this difference. What you understand by national education, apart from these three things, you may explain to me when you are here. Or you may write to me about it.

I would not adopt the method of the missionaries nor that which is supposed to be followed in Islam. Our religion teaches me a third way. I would show the article I offered and state its price, leaving it to the people to buy it at that price. This course decides the question of fitness, and the foundation remains firmly that of truth. The measure of my right angle does not vary according to circumstances;

[1] A village in Surat district where a small Ashram was established

if, however, people cannot fit themselves in it, the fault is not mine, nor with the right angle nor with those people. But all this is neither here nor there. Consider my views, but decide for yourself and act accordingly. If Narahari wishes, he can remain in Surat. You may insist on khadi to the limit you and he think best. My views will remain what they are, till you can change them.

Mama is wonderful. Write and explain to him that in a sense the issue is, and in a sense it is not, one between agriculture and other work. I can have no prejudice against agriculture. But I do not look upon agriculture as a necessary part of our service of the *Antyajas*, and so I cannot but feel when even one pice has to be spent on agriculture, since in spending it we leave our sphere of work.

BAPU

[PS.]

If the handwriting is illegible, send for me to help you read it when airplanes come into use. You can send this letter to Narahari. To Mama, only this paragraph.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19933

70. LETTER TO K. RAJAGOPALACHARI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 20, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I understand your difficulty. At the present moment the Ashram is crowded. But if you can put up with inconvenience, do please come whenever you like and remain as long as you like.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI K. RAJAGOPALACHARI
SECRETARY, CHITTOOR D.C.C
TIRUPATI

From a photostat: G.N. 5669

71. LETTER TO C. V. RENGANCHETTY

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 20, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have the spinning-wheel and your bill. In accordance with the terms of my first letter to you, asking for the charkha, I shall have to return it. But, before I do so, I want to give you my views upon it so as not to do you an injustice.

The charkha is a flimsy thing. The woodwork is all right, but the wire spokes and the wire stays are perfectly useless because they are not of steel. The wires easily bend under the slightest pressure whereas, in the Khadi Charkha, they are all steel wires. The axle does not lie evenly on the poles. The result is that the wheel-string stays not in the centre, but on one side of the wheel. The spindle isperfectly useless, because instead of sloping away from one end, it is a straight pointed wire on either end. You cannot spin on it easily. The pulley is perfectly useless. There is no handle-rod provided. The spinning-wheel, therefore, that you have sent me is not only not superior to the Khadi Pratishthan [one] as you claimed, but it is altogether inferior to it. I had sent for your charkha in order to test its quality, because the price you quoted was surprisingly low. The price of the Khadi Pratishthan Charkha was fixed in consultation with me after much deliberation and after arriving at the net cost. You have no notion how much it costs when the details about fittings are to be made scrupulously correct as they are in the Khadi Pratishthan Charkha. Every part is tested before it is sent out. It is evident to me that you do not yourself handle spinning-wheels, one could be easily deceived by a superficial similarity.

You will now tell me what to do with your charkha. I do not want you to be out of pocket by a single pice. I will, therefore, gladly send the charkha back to you. But if you want me to send it somewhere else, I shall gladly do so at my cost. Or, if you want me to try this charkha in any other manner, I would gladly do so. And, if it can at all prove satisfactory, I should keep it and discharge your bill.

Yours sincerely,

C. V. RENGANCHETTY
NARAYANAVARAM

From a microfilm: S.N. 11204

72. LETTER TO SIR HAROLD MANN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 20, 1926

MY DEAR SIR HAROLD MANN,

I thank you for your letter[1] inviting me to demonstrate hand-spinning at the forthcoming exhibition in Poona. I should love to do so, but for two reasons. Up to the 20th of December, I am under avow not to leave Ahmedabad except upon some pressing unforeseen public call or for reasons of health. Secondly, I want to move slowly and, therefore, I do not want to identity myself so much with functions which, though they may be unofficial, may have an official colouring or patronage. It is more truthful for me to do so so long as I suspect the existing system as an evil. I know I can write thus freely and frankly to you without being considered in any way discourteous.

You will find, however, that the party of demonstrators that will be sent to you will be thoroughly effective and the demonstration itself will be given in a scientific manner. Because we are experimenting upon this in a scientific manner, not one of the principal workers has[2] any preconceived notions or prejudice one way or the other. It is because we feel that the charkha is the one thing that can save the sinking peasantry from extinction that we are devoting all our energy to its improvement and success.

I have been brooding over the Dairy scheme that you have kindly sent me. There seems to be no land near Ahmedabad that I can get, but if you could send the expert you have in view, he will see the land near the Ashram that we have got and, if he thinks that a Dairy could be established here on an unambitious scale, a portion of the land can be set apart for the purpose. And, if that proves unsatisfactory, I must confer with him about securing a plot of land some distance from Ahmedabad. I am running a little Dairy here myself. Perhaps, it may be extended. Nothing, however, can be done without a personal conversation with one who knows all about dairying.

Yours sincerely,

SIR HAROLD MANN
DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE
B. P., POONA

From a microfilm: S.N. 11205

[1] Writing on July 14, Mann had considered a spinning demonstration by Gandhiji "the most effective means of pushing the use of hand-spinning by the rural classes that could be devised" (S.N. 11200).

[2] The source has "have".

73. LETTER TO URMILA DEVI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 20, 1926

MY DEAR SISTER,

I have your very full but heart-rending letter. Though you have written that letter hurriedly and whilst your brain was in a whirl, it is perfectly coherent and without a single slip. It grieves me to learn that Basanti Devi has ill stood the strain of Bhomble's death. Coming so soon on top of Deshbandhu's death and with the illness of Mona and Baby, no wonder she has broken down. But, I do hope that she has now recovered from the shock and has somewhat reconciled herself to God's will.

I am glad to hear that Sujata has risen to the occasion and that she is bearing her grief bravely. Do ask her to drop me a line. How I wish I was there at this juncture. But that cannot be. May God comfort you all.

Yours,

SHRIMATI URMILA DEVI
4A NAFARKUNDU ROAD
KALIGHAT
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 19668

74. LETTER TO BASANTI DEVI DAS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI ,
July 20, 1926

MY DEAR SISTER,

You never write to me and I must not expect you to write to me in your present state. Urmila Devi has just sent me a long letter describing your grief and telling me how you have broken down this time. I do not wonder at it. Mona and Baby ill and Bhomble passing away so suddenly and so tragically. Enough to break the stoutest heart. But I know that you will soon recover from the shock, if not for your sake, for the sake of those whom Bhomble has left behind him.

Please pass the accompanying[1] on to Sujata. I hope Mona and her child are quite all right, and that Baby has recovered completely. I take it that Bhasker is his own self again.

Yours,

SHRIMATI BASANTI DEVI
CALCUTTA

Form a photostat: S.N. 19669

75. LETTER TO SUJATA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 20, 1926

MY DEAR SUJATA,

Urmila Devi tells me that you are bearing your grief bravely. I know you are a good girl. Do give me a line to tell me how you are feeling. May God be with you.

Yours,

SRIMATI SUJATA,
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 19669

76. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 20, 1926

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I was reading up your article on the coming conference in South Africa for *Young India* yesterday and I felt that the article was not well-considered. You have evidently felt it yourself and so, in order to tone down the impression left on your readers, you have added six lines in your own hand. But that has merely made the position worse. Your theme is that the cause of prejudice in South Africa is solely colour. If you will review the whole of

[1] *Vide* the succeding item.

your experience, you will find that this is only half-truth. If it was the whole truth, Round Table Conference would be no remedyfor it. We must then, whilst there is yet time, clear every Indian from South Africa. It is due to the whites and it is due to ourselves. If the sayings that you have quoted of two Europeans are the typical and almost universal sentiment amongst the average white man in South Africa, is it right to resist that sentiment? Can the Government, no matter how powerful it may be, do otherwise than pass progressively drastic legislation? The sentiment may be altogether bad. But, can a man overcome his prejudice? And, if the average. white man in South Africa, more especially in Natal as you say, has that prejudice, isn't it the duty of those like you and me who want to serve truth before anything else to face that fact squarely in the face and pave the way for a dignified and honourable withdrawal of every single Indian from South Africa? If I was convinced, as you are convinced, of this colour prejudice, I would certainly advocate withdrawal even if mine was the only voice. But, of course, I do not share your conclusions. In the first instance, I do not regard human nature in South Africa to be so badly debased. I think that the prejudice is very much mixed. As a matter of fact, if the prejudice was as great as you imagine, the Europeans would make it so hot for Indians that they could not possibly live there for a single minute. No legislation would be needed for that purpose. Remember that even now Indian trade is dependent upon European patronage. The colour prejudice is no doubt universal in social life. That is a barrier which time alone will break. No legislation is necessary for breaking that barrier. For that matter that barrier is far worse, perhaps, here than in South Africa. But I do not want to carry the argument any further. All I want to say is you should put a curb upon your pen, for, anything you write must have and has its effect. This article of yours is so terrible. I return it to you so that you can refresh your memory. If I am wrong, you will correct me. I have suppressed also the article you sent me on 'Opium'; That article was too hurriedly written to be of any value. It was too scrappy, did not even give sufficient information. But both these articles indicate extreme fatigue of mind. Will you not restrain yourself a bit, or, do you think that it is God's call that your pen must be ever running? Gregg has summed up this writing disease of yours in one single line. He says, 'The insect bite poisoning was a godsend for you, because, it obliged you to put away your pen.' Anyway, I absolve you from all obligation to write for *Young India* till you have

had some rest. And, if you want such discharge from the other newspapers, I undertake to procure it for you. And I give you my assurance that the world will not go to pieces for the suspension of your writings, because, there is hardly a paper I am opening in which I do not see long articles from you on the same subject. If they cannot exist without you, let them die. I feel grieved to find that you must be continually writing when there is no necessity for it.

With deep love.

Yours,

REV. C. F. ANDREWS
SANTINIKETAN

From a photostat: S.N. 19670

77. LETTER TO A. M. SIMPSON

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 20, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter with prospectus. The object of the syndicate seems to me to be only to buy out the oil seeds. It is not stated anywhere who are the promoters of this effort, who has laid out funds for the initial cost. Unless I have more accurate information, it is not possible for me to express any opinion.

Yours sincerely,

A. M. SIMPSON, ESQ.
SECRETARY
CO-OPERATIVE VEGETABLE OIL SYNDICATE LTD.
INDORE, C. I.

From a microfilm: S.N. 19671

78. LETTER TO PARAMANAND KUNVARJI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Tuesday, Asadha Sud 10, July 20, 1926

BHAISHRI PARAMANAND,

I have your letter. I understand your point about the use of

words and am well aware of the value of precision. The use of the same word in different senses leads to a good deal of misunderstanding, but I think it is not difficult to understand the general purport of my writings.

In regard to Madhuri, you are to blame. Having placed our children in a certain atmosphere, is it not surprising indeed that we believe or wish that they will remain untouched by it? I come across instances of this everywhere. You should now remove Madhuri and place her in an atmosphere of simplicity, if you do not wish her to become fashion-loving. But to keep her where she is and then insist that she should not wear foreign cloth has a strong smell of coercion about it.

On the issue of principle which you have raised in connection with Madhuri, my view is that parents should exercise control over children. We cannot let them do everything they will. Our wisdom lies in keeping them under control with the least restraint over them. If a child runs in the direction of a well, or wants to eat a rich and stimulating preparation or would indulge in overeating, if it asks for *bhajiyan*[1] and *puri*[2] when it is running a temperature—in all such instances we should resist the child's wish. This is also true about matters involving moral principles.

But the problem of husband and wife is on a different footing, and an extremely difficult one to solve. What happens when, in a non-vegetarian family, the husband becomes a vegetarian as a matter of religious principle? Should the wife follow, against her will, what the husband has accepted as his dharma? I think that the husband, if he has overcome his lust, should maintain an attitude of detachment and even help the wife to have her non-vegetarian food. If the wife cannot go out to buy such food for herself and if the husband, though still not free from lust, has given up meat-eating, etc., as a matter of religious principle, the latter may, because he has not been able to impose discipline over himself in regard to the first matter, cut offrelations with his wife and provide her with money to enable her to live apart from him. If she wants to marry some other person belonging to their own religion, the husband should not oppose her but, on the contrary, help her. This is what my creed of non-violence suggests to me. Such a course of action will satisfy many principles

[1] Fried preparations
[2] *ibid*

simultaneously, but we can deduce all of them from the principle of non-violence.

It is now easy to see how a husband, who has adopted khadi as a matter of religious principle, should act towards his wife who does not follow him. This is not the end of the matter, though. In Hindu society, the husband is regarded as his wife's friend, and also as her teacher and guardian. If he understands his duty in that capacity, his duty as a husband which I have explained above will have to be modified somewhat. But I need not enter into a discussion of that.

PS.

I have put the matter so briefly here that I should not like public use to be made of this letter.

SHRI PARAMANAND KUNVARJI
137, SHARAF BAZAAR
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 10966

79. LETTER TO SAIYID HAIDAR RIZA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 21, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[1] What I said on my release from prison is embedded in a signed document of which I send you a copy.[2] Ihad indeed flattered myself with the hope that my release from prison would bring about unity. But my hope was dashed to pieces. Whilst I

[1] Riza had referred in his letter of June 30 to reports in the English Press of sanguinary Hindu-Muslim conflicts in India. "I have also noticed that the commencement of these feuds synchronises with your imprisonment, and I had hoped that with your restoration to liberty, these unfortunate conflicts would come to a stop. They are however still continuing undeterred."

[2] Riza had further observed: "On your release, the papers in this country accredited you with an opinion, which they avowed you made in public, that the feelings were so high between the two factions that the only solution would be a pitched battle between the two which could exhaust their anger and settle their minds. I trust this statement imputed to you is not entirely true" (S.N. 11074). The "signed document" is the "Letter to Mahomed Ali", 7-2-1924, which Gandhiji had intended to be "a message to his countrymen on his release".

quite agree with you that the fault lies with us, I have not a shadow of a doubt that the foreign power takes advantage of our weaknesses and trades upon them. You ask me to do something. I am doing all I possibly can. But I feel my utter helplessness and worthlessness. The remedy that I have is not acceptable to either party. I am, therefore, watching, waiting and praying. I have no doubt that some day better counsels will prevail.

Yours sincerely,

SAIYID HAIDAR RIZA, ESQ.
9, WYKEHAM ROAD
HASTINGS

From a photostat: S.N. 11082

80. LETTER TO R. B. GREGG

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 21, 1926

MY DEAR GOVIND,

I have your letter. If I was a believer in miracles, I would say that my not going to Finland was a miracle. I had actually dictated a letter and telegram of final acceptance and the mere accident of my having gone to the 'Library' and a flash light perception altered the whole situation within five minutes.

I am certainly eager to go to China if I find the way clearly open, but not for the reasons you mention. I do not believe in imported credit and, therefore, I do not think that my way in India will be smoother if the Chinese accepted it; nor am I in any way hopeful of their acceptance. What attracts me to China is identity of status in that both are nations under foreign domination. I came in very intimate contact with the Chinese colony in the Transvaal. And, as a matter of fact, I believe that whilst I would have readily got in Finland intellectual assent to the doctrine of ahimsa, I shall find it terribly difficult to secure that assent from the Chinese, whether cultured or uncultured. But that does not worry me as it does not worry me here whether people accept ahimsa or not, What I am afraid of about Europe and America is patronage. I entertain no such fear about China. You will detect here in me a subtle pride and, if you do, you will not be far wrong. But there it is.

I think that some friend did send me the book called *The Arm of*

God. I do not think I read it carefully. But, since you think so highly about it, I shall ask our librarian to search it out and give it to me.

By all means put into shape your economic arguments about khaddar before you write on ahimsa.[1] Whenever you send me questions, I shall try to deal with them.

I must not stir out of Sabarmati at the present moment. I am keeping well. I am trying the experiment of living on fruit alone. This is the 9th day. I am not feeling weak. I do not expect to be able to retain my strength indefinitely on fruit alone. I have commenced the experiment to avoid constipation. I am continuing it for pleasure. I should love to drop milk any time. My food just now is grapes and mangoes.

Please tell Sundaram I have got his beautiful weekly gift and tell him not to worry if he miss a week.

With love to you all.

Yours sincerely,

R. B. GREGG, ESQ.
C/O S. E. STOKES, ESQ.
KOTGARH
SIMLA HILLS

From a photostat: S.N. 19672

81. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 21, 1926

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I got the letter which you wrote in June concerning the Khadi Pratishthan. I thought I had replied to it. I had nothing to say about what you did. Whatever help you can give to it cannot but have my approval. I can say with confidence that those who are in charge of the khadi activity in Bengal have been conducting it with selflessness, sincerity and dexterity. I send with this an account of all the sums spent in Bengal through the All-India Spinners' Association. I gather from newspapers that Hindu-Muslim dissensions are spreading there day by day, but I no longer feel shocked by such news and my faith remains unshaken that out of this very state of things will come a day,

[1] Gregg later wrote *The Economics of Khaddar* and *The Power of Non-violence.*

and that very soon, when the two communities will be united. Have you been able to understand why such riots are more frequent in Bengal?

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6130. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

82. LETTER TO BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Wednesday, Asadha Sud 11 [*July 21, 1926*][1]

BHAI BANARASIDAS,

I have your letter. The best policy at the present time seems to be to keep aloof from all parties. I was pained, but not surprised, by the bitter experience in regard to the emigrants section. I simply cannot regret having undertaken such an experiment. We can gain no experience without experimenting and every moment I feel the truth of the remark of mine which you have quoted. You are also rightwhen you say that officials of the Congress should not be blamed for the failure of this section. The case of Dr. Sudhindra Bose is an unhappy one.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

SHRI BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI
FEROZABAD
(U.P.)

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2567

83. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Wednesday, Asadha Sud 11 [*July 21, I926*][2]

BHAI NAJUKLAL,

I have your letter, and Moti's too. Moti seems to think that she has taken proper care of her health by not neglecting her medicine,

[1] From the postmark
[2] *ibid*

whereas medicine is the least part of the business. Illness is caused by violation of rules of diet, exercise, rest, etc. Being careful about health means cheerfully observing these rules, and braking them is to be guilty of extreme lethargy. Explain this to her.

I look upon Hindu-Muslim riots as a kind of surgical operation. It would have been excellent if we could have avoided it, but evidently we have been suffering from inflammation of this particular limb and the condition was no longer curable by bandaging the part. When this rioting is over, one day we shall certainly become united. And if this society is much too decayed to last, let it perish. In any case the present condition is not worse than the profound darkness in which it was slumbering.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 2132; also S.N. 19934

84. LETTER TO REVASHANKER J. JHAVERI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Wednesday, Asadha Sud 11, July 21, 1926

RESPECTED REVASHANKERBHAI,

I have your letter. It is quite necessary to be firm with Ratilal[1]. I have already let him know that he will not get a single pie unless he gives an account of the money spent. We should get the Doctor's figure directly. I have written to Champa[2], too, about the extravagant spending but she has not replied. I am awaiting her arrival here.

The day before yesterday, Punjabhai[3] felt giddy and fainted. He is not in a condition now to go anywhere. It seems you have written to him asking him to go there in connection with the affairs of the firm of Chhaganlal Mansukhlal. I think it would be best not to trouble him about that matter any further. He wants you to solve the problem as best as you can there, and to me also that seems the right course.

It is clear that you should go to a cool place every summer.

LABURNUM ROAD
GAMDEVI
BOMBAY

From a photostat Of the Gujarati: S.N. 12208

[1] Ratilal Pranjivandas Mehta, addressee's nephew
[2] Wife of Ratilal
[3] Punjabhai Hirachand Shah of Ahmedabad

85. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS BHIKHABHAI

SABARMATI,
July 21, 1926

DEAR SHRI PRABHUDAS BHIKHABHAI,

I have your letter. I believe it is possible to conserve the vital fluid by learning to control one's breath, but that does not solve the problem of *brahmacharya*. *Brahmacharya* means control of all the senses. Perhaps you do not know that medical scientists in this ageperform a surgical operation which prevents the emission of the vital fluid; would you call a person so operated upon a *brahmachari*? A shastri explained to me the meaning of conservation of the vital fluid, and said that in Sanskrit the phrase *viryanigraha* has reference to the sublimation of the vital fluid so that it flows upwards. And then he told me that Krishna whose doings are described by the author of the *Bhagavata* was a person in whom the vital fluid was sublimated in this manner, and so he was free to have relations with any number of women. Are you prepared to look upon such a person as a *brahmachari*? You will now see that the *brahmacharya* achieved through mere breath control is of little value. The real value of *brahmacharya* lies in the expenditure of the great energy required for mastering the senses; when, through such expenditure, the senses become *atman*-oriented, the power which is generated by the effort can pervade the entire universe. It is my unshakable conviction that such cannot be achieved by methods of purely external control. In the second chapter [of the *Gita*][1], Shri Krishna, who had the wisdom of experience, says that fasting may calm a man's desires, but that his pleasure in objects of the senses does not disappear completely. It disappears only when he has realized God, and he will have to strive during life after life before he realizes God. Remember what Shankaracharya said in this connection. If a man, sitting on the shore, attempts the impossible task of emptying the sea by taking out the water drop by drop, on a blade of grass, he may, if he has the necessary patience and if he can find an empty hollow large enough, succeed in transferring the water after millions Of years the number of which can be calculated arithmetically; to realize God requires more patience than this, and, according to the Lord, achieving *brahmacharya* means realizing God. Please understand that in saying all this I

[1] II. 59

am not at all underestimating the value of breath-control. I believe it to be an aid in our effort, but by itself it is not enough. It can be a stage, and not a very advanced one at that, in the difficult journey towards the goal of *brahmacharya.* My only complaint against you is that you seem to attach more importance to it than it deserves.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

KATHLAL

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19935

86. NATIONALISM AND CHRISTIANITY

The following is a condensation of a speech[1] delivered by Mr. Malcolm Muggeridge of Union Christian College, Alwaye, and sent to me for publication. The speech is useful as showing the growing national consciousness among Christian Indians. The wonder is that the process has been so long delayed. How any man of religion can help being in sympathy with the strivings of his nearest neighbours passes comprehension. Internationalism presupposes nationalism—not the narrow, selfish, greedy spirit that often passes under the name of nationalism, but the nationalism that, whilst it insists upon its own freedom and growth, will disdain to attain them at the expense of other nations.

Young India, 22-7-1926

87. THAT ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

So it has been announced that the forthcoming Conference on the position of Indians in South Africa is to take place in Cape Town and that a Commission from South Africa is likely to visit India in order to study Indian conditions. The Commission is to include Dr. Malan the present Secretary for the Interior and Mr. Duncan an ex-Secretary.

This is all to the good.

It is good that the Conference is to take place in South Africa. The Union Government being a wholly responsible government must have in all its undertakings the backing of public opinion in a sense in

[1] Not reproduced here

which the Indian Government has never felt itself under the necessity of having. Moreover no public opinion needs to be created in India in favour of the Indian claim. It is there already. In South Africa, too much cannot be done to educate European opinion on the absolute justice of the Indian claim. If, therefore, the Union Government means well and the selection of Indian representatives is wisely made, apart from the value of its deliberations, the Conference can be a means of directing European opinion in the right channel.

It is well also that a Commission from South Africa is to visit India. It will gather impressions which only a personal visit canmake. No amount of reading literature or meeting representatives can possibly make up for local inspection and seeing the people themselves face to face.

It is well also that the Commission is to include top men who are supposed to have studied the question. Our case is so just that the more it is studied, the better it is for us. We have nothing to lose by the closest examination and the widest publicity. The more South Africans visit us, the better for us. The greatest stumbling-block in the way of a settlement is the ignorance, on the Indian question, of the best among South Africans. They merely know the demand of the interested white traders. They know little of the Indian side. If the Conference results in a serious study of the question, the bogey of an Indian invasion or even the competition of those Indians who are already settled there will disappear in a moment.

There is the other side to the picture. General Hertzog's speeches are disturbing. I do not conceive the possibility of justice being done to Indians, if none is rendered to the natives of the soil. The mentality is the same in respect of Indians as of the natives. Indeed, it is much worse regarding Indians. Natives, it is said, have a claim upon the consideration of the whites; Indians are mere interlopers. Of course, it is forgotten that Indians were enticed in the first instance to go to South Africa to labour for the Whites and that they were promised permanent settlement under advantageous terms. The point, however, just now is not what they were promised, but what is the mentality of the Whites towards the Indian settlers. And it being one of greater hostility towards them, justice to them is not to be expected if injustice is done to the Natives. To reduce it to the lowest terms, the wish to see justice done to the Natives is based upon selfish considerations. If we go a little deeper, we shall discover that justice

can never be purchased at the expense of another. When the seer prayed 'may all people be happy', he intuitively perceived a scientific truth.

Young India, 22-7-1926

88. 'TOWARDS MORAL BANKRUPTCY'–IV

Having dealt with the indiscipline of morals and its aggravation by the use of contraceptives and its terrible results, the author[1] proceeds to examine the remedies. I must pass over the portions that deal with legislative measures, their necessity and yet utter inefficiency. He then discusses the necessity, by a careful education of public opinion of the duty of chastity for the married, the duty of marriage for that vast mass of mankind that cannot for ever restrain their animal passions, the duty, having once married, of conjugal fidelity and the duty of continence in marriage. He examines the argument against chastity that its

> precept is against the physiological nature of man and woman and injurious to the happy equilibrium of their health.

that it is

> an intolerable attack on the freedom and autonomy of the individual, his right to happiness and to live his life is his own way.

The author contests the doctrine that 'the organ of generation is like the rest' requiring satisfaction. He says,

> If it were an organ like the others, how could we explain the absolute inhibitory power which the will possesses over it? Or the fact that the awakening of sensuality, which pharisaism calls the sexual necessity, is the result of the innumerable excitements which our civilization provides for young boys and girls several years before normal adult age?

I cannot resist the temptation of copying the following valuable medical testimony collected in the book in support of the proposition that self-restraint is not only not harmful but necessary for the promotion of health and perfectly possible:

> "The sexual instinct," says Esterlen, professor at Tubigen University, "is not so blindly all-powerful that it cannot be controlled, and even subjugated entirely, by moral strength and reason. The young man, like the young woman, should learn to control himself until the proper time. He must

[1] M. Bureau

know that robust health and ever renewed vigour will be the reward of this voluntary sacrifice.

"One cannot repeat too often that abstinence and the most absolute purity are perfectly compatible with the laws of physiology and morality, and that sexual indulgence is no more justified by physiology and psychology than by morality and religion."

"The example of the best and noblest among men," says Sir Lionel Beale, professor at the Royal College in London, "has at times proved that the most imperious of instincts can be effectively resisted by a strong and serious will, and by sufficient care as to manner of life and occupation. Sexual abstinence has never yet hurt any man when it has been observed, not only through exterior restrictive causes" but as a voluntary rule of conduct. Virginity, in fine, is not too hard to observe" provided that it is the physical expression of a certain state of mind. . . . Chastity implies not only continence, but also purity of sentiments, the energy which is the result of deep convictions."

"Every kind of nervous activity," says the Swiss psychologist Forel, who discusses sexual anomalies with a moderation equal to his knowledge, "is increased and strengthened by exercise. On the other hand, inactivity in a particular region reduces the effects of the exciting causes which correspond to it.

"All causes of sexual disturbance increase the intensity of desire. By avoiding these provocations it becomes less sensitive" and the desire gradually diminishes. The idea is current among young people that continence is something abnormal and impossible, and yet the many who observe it prove that chastity can be practised without prejudice to the health ."

"I know," says Ribbing, "a number of men of 25, 30, and older than that, who have observed perfect continence, or who when they married had done so up to that time. Such cases are not rare; only they don't advertise themselves.

"I have received many confidences from students, healthy both in body and mind" who have remonstrated with me for not having sufficiently insisted on the ease with which sensual desires can be ruled."

"Before marriage, absolute continence can and ought to be observed by young men," says Dr. Acton. "Chastity no more injures the body than the soul," declares Sir James Paget, Physician to the English Court; "Discipline is better than any other line of conduct."

"It is a singularly false notion," writes Dr. E. Perier, "and one which

must be fought against, since it besets not only the children's mind, but that of the fathers as well: the notion of imaginary dangers in absolute continence. Virginity is a physical, moral, and intellectual safeguard to young men."

"Continence," says Sir Andrew Clarke, "does no harm, it does not hinder development, it increases energy and enlivens perception.Incontinence weakens self-control, creates habits of slackness, dulls and degrades the whole being, and lays it open to diseases which can be transmitted to several generations. To say that incontinence is necessary to the health of young men is not only an error, but a cruelty. It is at once false and hurtful."

"The evils of incontinence are well-known and undisputed," writes Dr. Surbled: "those produced by continence are imaginary; what proves this is the fact of the many learned and voluminous works devoted to the explanation of the former, while the latter still await their historian. As to these latter there are but vague assertions, which hide themselves, for very shame, in mere talk, but which will not endure the daylight."

"I have never seen," writes Dr. Montegazza in *La Physiologie de l'amour,* "a disease produced by chastity.... All men, and especially young men, can experience the immediate benefits of chastity."

Dr. Dubois, the famous professor of neuropathology at Berne, affirms that "there are more victims of neurasthenia among those who give free rein to their sensuality than among those who know how to escape from the yoke of mere animalism"; and his witness is fully confirmed by that of Dr. Fere, Physician at the Bicetre Hospital, who testifies that those who are capable of psychic chastity can maintain their continence without any fear of their health, which does not depend on the satisfaction of the sexual instinct.

" There has been unfitting and light talk," writes Professor Alfred Fournier, "about the dangers of continence for the young men. I can assure you that if these dangers exist I know nothing about them, and that as a physician I am still without proof of their existence, though I have had every opportunity in the way of subjects under my professional observation.

"Besides this, as physiologist I will add that true virility is not attained before the age of twenty-one, or thereabouts, and the sexual necessity does not obtrude itself before that period, especially if unhealthy excitements have not aroused it prematurely. Sexual precocity is merely artificial, and is most often the result of ill-directed upbringing.

"In any case, be sure that danger of this kind lies far less in restraining than in anticipating the natural tendency; you know what I mean."

Lastly, after these most authoritative testimonies, to which it be easy

to add many others, let us quote the resolution unanimously voted at Brussels in 1902 by the 102 members present at the second General Congress of the International Conference of Sanitary and Moral Prophylaxis, a congress which assembled together the most competent authorities on the subject throughout the world: "Young men must above all be taught that chastity and continence are not only not harmful, but also that these virtues are among those to be most earnestly recommended from the purely medical and hygienic standpoint."

There was also a unanimous declaration issued by the professors of the Medical Faculty of Christian University, a few years ago: "The assertion that a chaste life will be prejudicial to the health rests, according to our unanimous experience" on no foundation. We have no knowledge of any harm resulting from a pure and moral life."

The case has, therefore, been heard, and sociologists and moralists can repeat with M. Ruysen this elementary and physiological truth, "that the sexual appetite does not need, like the requirements of aliment and exercise, a minimum of necessary satisfaction. It is a fact that man or woman can lead a chaste life without experiencing, except in the case of a few abnormal subjects, serious disturbance or even painful inconvenience. It has been said and cannot be too often repeated, since such an elementary truth can be so widely disregarded—that no disease ever comes through continence to normal subjects, who form the immense majority while many diseases, very well known and very serious, are the results of incontinence. Nature has provided in the most simple and infallible way for the excess of nutrition which is represented by the seminal fluid and the menstrual flux."

Dr. Viry is therefore right in denying that the question is one of a true instinct or a real need: "Everyone knows what it would cost him not to satisfy the need of nourishment or to suppress respiration, but no one quotes any pathological consequences, either acute or chronic, as having followed either temporary or absolute continence. . . . In normal life we see the example of chaste men who are neither less virile in character, nor less energetic in will, nor less robust, than others, nor less fitted to become fathers if they marry. . . . A need which can be subject to such variations, an instinct which accommodates itself so well to lack of satisfaction, is neither a need nor an instinct."

Sexual relationship is far from answering to any physiological need of the growing boy; quite the contrary, it is perfect chastity which is sternly required by the exigencies of his normal growth and development, and those who violate it cause irreparable injury to their health. The attainment of

puberty is accompanied by great changes, a veritable disturbance of various functions, and a general development. The adolescent boy needs all his vital strength, for during this period there is often a weakening of the resistance to sickness: disease and mortality are higher than in the earlier period . . . The long work of general growth" of organic evolution, that whole series of physical and psychic changes, at the end of which the child becomes a man, involves a toilsome effort of nature. At that moment, all over-driving is dangerous, but especially the premature exercise of the sexual function.

Young India, 22-7-1926

89. HAND-SPINNING IN COCHIN

The Cochin Legislative Council passed a resolution last year recommending introduction of hand-spinning in the State schools. The resolution was carried and accepted by the Government. But, so far, evidently, nothing seems to have been done by the Education Department. I understand that this resolution will be the subject matter of discussion in the forthcoming session of the Cochin Legislative Council. It is to be hoped that some practical action will be taken upon the resolution or the resolution be rescinded. It is no use Legislative bodies passing resolutions and Governments accepting them if they are not meant to be carried out. Hand-spinning is one of those things which require constant and continuous effort, watching, organizing and experimenting. And those who introduce a hand-spinning resolution have to shape policy, suggest schemes and even assist in working them. Cochin, it seems, has 2 colleges, 35 high schools, 78 lower secondary schools, 369 State or State-aided primary schools, 289 unaided schools, 20 industrial schools, 13 night schools and 4 special schools instructing 1,08,150 boys and girls. Here there is much scope for popularizing spinning on a systematic scale.

Young India, 22-7-1926

90. LETTER TO NORMAN LEYS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 23, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I am obliged to you for your letter.[1] I would like you hence-forward not to apologize for anything that you may say. I give

[1] For the text of this letter dated June 29, 1926, *vide* Appendix "Letter to Norman Leys", 29-6-1926.

you my assurance that I shall not misunderstand you.

The proof you have sent me I had in book form from some friend in London. It is a good and well-reasoned paper. l dealt with it at length in the pages of *Young India* sometime ago.

Now for your question. The position in India at the present moment is, in my opinion, only seemingly hopeless. And, it is hopeless not because the different parties have no coherent programme, but because no party has got the force of arms or any other at its back to vindicate its policy if the Government reject it as it has repeatedly rejected every party's programme. Let me remind you that the differences between the parties here, so far as the demands are concerned, are not of principles but of experience. If the Liberal Party pitches its demands low, it does so not because more cannot be digested, but because more cannot be obtained. But, if the Government were to grant all the demands of say the Swaraj Party, the other parties would join. This I say, apart, of course, from the communal trouble, of which I write later. Therefore, if the Independent Labour Party confers with the most forward party in India and evolves a constitution which is accepted by the Parliament, you will find all parties acclaiming it. So, if I were you and if I was called upon to guide or lead the Independent Labour Party, I would go to India, find out the forward party, confer with its leaders and then evolve a programme by which I would stick through thick and thin.

But the communal trouble does block the way. And again thinking in your terms, I would reason thus: 'These Indians —Hindus and Mussalmans—are fighting like cats and dogs amongst themselves, but they have neither the means nor the courage of fighting against my country which has wronged them in the past and which is still wronging them. I don't want to be a party to that wrong any longer. They will fight. That fight must end soon, if my country will not aggravate it and prolong it either consciously or unconsciously. I must have no communalism on Statute book. I would provide for all parties equal opportunities and I would have preference in education for weaker parties whether in numbers or otherwise. I would therefore make statutory provision for such preferential education. If you approach the question with this mentality, you will not need agreement amongst all parties about communal representation, but you will deal with it along lines of substantial justice. This seems to me to be the only way of evolving a constitution in the present disturbed

state of things.

Then there remains your last question. I do indeed think that the authorities are partly responsible for the communal dissensions. I know that primarily the fault is ours. If we were not disposed to quarrel, no outside power on earth could make us. But, when an outside power whose strength lies in our weakness notices our dissensions, it takes advantage of them consciously or unconsciously. Everyone in India knows this and feels the effect of it also. Some honest British officials have not hesitated to make the admission before me and some have unguardedly betrayed themselves by making inconvenient admissions or remarks. But I must not labour this point. I am well aware that you can do nothing to remedy this evil even if you believed in it. The remedy lies entirely in our own hands. All that you can do is to give us, if you are in power, a good and workable constitution. But you will certainly not be able to control your agents here. The agents themselves know that they are agents only in name but in reality they are principals. I have before now described the Civil Service as a gigantic and most powerful secret corporation that the world has. Like the Masonic Brotherhood, it has got its signs and its unwritten language through which it corresponds with its members. Nor need this surprise anybody. It is impossible, without resort to dubious methods, for one hundred thousand men to live in the midst of three hundred million human beings and impose their rule and trade upon them against their will.

I think I have covered the full ground of your letter. I hope I am intelligible. I may not convince you of the positions I have taken up. I would gladly argue further, if you wish me to.

I thank you for the most careful and sympathetic manner in which you are approaching this important question which is one of life and death to us.[1]

Yours sincerely,

DR. NORMAN LEYS
BRAILSFORD
NEAR DERBY

From a photostat: S.N. 12169

[1] Dr. Norman Leys replied to this letter on August 9 (S.N. 12170; *vide* Appendix "Letter to Norman Leys", 9-8-1926.

91. LETTER TO E. STANLEY JONES

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 23, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter with your interesting notes for which I thank you. We were all so happy to have you in our midst. I only wish you could have stayed longer with us. Then, perhaps, you would have toned down some of the remarks you have made about the Ashram and revised your criticism about its becoming self-supporting. To make it self-supporting is not our aim so long as we undertake public education in the matter of the spinning-wheel, untouchability, etc.

The suggestion to build a pigeon loft was made by another friend also. We did not take it up because it was suggested that it would simply attract more pigeons without relieving us of their presence in the roof of our cottages. Have you tried the thing yourself with success?

I shall endeavour to go through the *Science of Power* which you have so kindly ordered for me.

I have developed the greatest disinclination for writing anything whatsoever. If I could suspend the papers I am editing, I would even do that. But it is a self-imposed task which I dare not shirk. You will, therefore, excuse me at least for the present if I do not write for the *Fellowship of the Friends of Jesus.*

Yours sincerely

E. STANLEY JONES, ESQ.
SITAPUR, U. P.

From a photostat: S.N. 19673

92. LETTER TO A. B. GODREJ

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Friday, Asadha Sud 13, July 23, 1926

BHAISHRI GODREJ,

I have your letter. The letter about the loss of which I wrote to you was mislaid here. After it was finished the address was not entered

and so the typist put it among unused postcards. I think it altogether improper that public money should be deposited in a Government bank. However, we have at present no facility of depositing our money in a place where it would be safe and yet beyond the control of the Government. Let us remember that we are not complete non-co-operators. We have non-co-operated only in spheres in which non-co-operation is possible. If we wish to have no connection with banks which are subject to Government's control, we should have nothing to do with currency. The truth is that, under an unjust Government, possession of money is a crime, but we remain committing it as it is inescapable.

SHRI A. B. GODREJ
NEAR GAS COMPANY
THE SAFE FACTORY
PAREL,
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12209

93. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS P. ASAR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Friday, Asadha Sud 13 [*July 23, 1926*][1]

CHI. LAKSHMIDAS,

You must have got my letter in which I wrote to you about Ramji. I send with this the reply I have received in the matter from Khushalbhai. After reading it, I have written to Ramji and advised him to be patient and, if necessary, to have an additional lavatory constructed. I get your letters regularly. I liked the argument you advanced to Ghanshyamdas. I cannot see how it can be improved upon. I will collect and send to you the information you have asked for respecting cotton. Your first article will appear in this week's issue of *Navajivan.* As you will see, I have omitted from it two short paragraphs and also made a minor correction.

JAYAJIRAO COTTON MILL
GWALIOR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12210

[1] The article by the addressee, referred to in the letter, appeared in *Navajivan*, 25-7-1926.

94. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI SHAH

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 23, 1926

BHAI PUNJABHAI,

I wrote to Revashankerbhai on receipt of your message. I enclose with this his reply. When you are strong enough and can have someone to accompany you, you may go to Bombay for a day or two. I hope you are all right now.

SHRI PUNJABHAI HIRACHAND SHAH
OPPOSITE VIRCHAND DEEPCHAND LIBRARY
MANEKCHOWK
AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12211

95. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday, Ahsadh Sud 13 [*July 23, 1926*][2]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. Now that the fever has subsided you are bound to gain weight at Panchgani. It is my belief that respiratory trouble is connected with diet. It is good that you intend to see the local physician. I have long forgotten about my headaches.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
HOMI VILLA
PANCHGANI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

96. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Friday, July [*23*][1], *1926*

BHAISHRI MAMA[2],

It seems that *Antyajas* have been experiencing difficulty in visiting Dakor. I have even got copy of a notice served on them. They were permitted till now to have *darshan* from a distance, but they say that even that privilege is withheld from them now. If we take any public step, the *Antyajas* may be subjected to greater harassment. You should, therefore, go to Dakor, since you are near the place. I should like you to find out the real position and see the Secretary of the Municipality and so on. The *Antyaja* priest there is called Sadhu Fakirdas. It seems he has built a small dharmashala, but Fakirdas says that they put difficulties in the way of *Antyajas* using that also.

I have cut the towel into two pieces and use them alternately.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3814

97. LETTER TO GOPALRAO KULKARNI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Saturday, Asadha, Sud 14, July 24, 1926

BHAISHRI GOPALRAO,

I got a letter from you after a long interval. I was happy. Your decision to save money and use it as you intend to is worthy of you. Your diet, too, is right one. I can suggest no improvement in it. I agree with you that we cannot put more pressure for the use of khadi than is being done. Tell the students that I expect the alumni of Dakshinamurti to be perfect devotees of khadi and set an example to pupils in other schools. Anyone who fails, through carelessness, to bring his share of yarn should atone for his lapse by giving twice as

[1] The date noted on the letter is July 25; Friday however fell on July 23.

[2] Vithal Lakshman Phadke, Manager of the Antyaja Ashram at Godhra in Gujarat

much. If anyone refuses to do this, reason gently with him. I don't think it is necessary to do more than that. If you feel like travelling, you need not suppress the desire, but it is not necessary either to spend money for that purpose. The man who travels by rail observes not more, but less, than the one who travels on foot. The reason which you have advanced for my undertaking a tour does not justify any expenditure at all. I am sure you know that Surendra toured on foot for a whole year, going as far as Uttarkashi. This is not to suggest that you should never travel by rail. You may certainly do that. Personally, I think that those who have adopted khadi as a matter of principle should not wear foreign cloth even when acting on the stage and even though such cloth might be offered them as a gift. By wearing such cloth, they increase its importance. The use of foreign cloth for costumes on the stage implies that there is one occasion on which its use is absolutely necessary. Those who go to theatres are generally pleasure-loving people. More likely than not, they have never heard about khadi. By using foreign cloth for the purpose of costumes, we miss the only opportunity of awakening love of khadi in such persons. You may certainly stay there as long as it suits you. I am glad that you wrote to me.

SHRI G. KULKARNI
DAKSHINAMURTI
BHAVNAGAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12213

98. LETTER TO MAGANLAL SUNDERJI

THE ASHRAM,
July 24, 1926

BHAISHRI MAGANLAL SUNDERJI,

I got your letter. I think that in any temple which we may visit, we should perform worship which is in harmony with the atmosphere of the place. It seems to me improper, therefore, to see Mahadev in the image of Krishna in a temple dedicated to His worship.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

C/O SHRI DHIRAJLAL LAKSHMICHAND CHOKSI
MANDAVI CHOWK
RAJKOT

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19936

99. LETTER TO VITHALBHAI J. PATEL

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 25, 1926

DEAR VITHALBHAI,

I have your letters with cheques in all amounting to Rs. 7,575, being a portion of your three months' salary as the Speaker of the Assembly together with the balance of the purse of Rs. 5,000 presented to you.[1] You have asked me to spend the amount for 'an object calculated to promote the national welfare in such manner as I may approve'. Since writing that letter, you have discussed with me personally your views about the use of your handsome donation. I have been taxing myself as to what I should really do, and I have finally come to the decision to let the amount-accumulate for the present. And I am therefore depositing the money in the agency account of the Ashram for six months certainly, so as to get a fair interest. And as soon as party feeling has eased, I propose to invite the co-operation of a few mutual friends and then in consultation with you and them to use the money for some commendable national purpose.

Meanwhile, I tender my congratulations for the generous spirit which has actuated you in parting with a large portion of your salary for a public object. Let me hope that your example will prove infectious.

Yours sincerely
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. VITHALBHAI J. PATEL
SUKHADELE
SIMLA

From a photostat: S.N. 11321; also *Young India* 17-3-1927

100. LETTER TO VITHALBHAI J. PATEL

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 25, 1926

DEAR VITHALBHAI,

Almost every day I have been obliged to put off this enclosed little letter[2]. Something or other has come in to postpone it. If you

[1] For earlier correspondence on the subject.
[2] *Vide* the precceding item.

approve of the tenor of the letter, please telegraph and I shall publish copies of your first letter and mine. If you have any alterations to suggest, absence of any telegram from you I shall regard as a warning not to publish the correspondence and shall await your suggestions.

Yours sincerely

SJT. VITHALBHAI PATEL
SIMLA

From a photostat: S.N. 11322

101. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Asadha Sud 15, 1982 [*July 25, 1926*]

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your letter. My impression is that no letter of yours has remained unanswered. Maybe I have not replied to your last letter, I am not sure if I did. But I am under the impression that I replied to that letter too. I have fully understood what you say about agriculture. I do not mean that every rich man ill-treats his labourers. What you have observed in Kathiawar is certainly found in many other places, too, but the vast majority carry on their farming in the manner I have described. That of course does not mean that in agriculture the labourer cannot but be exploited. A well-informed cultivator who has had long experience of farming can successfully carry on and earn enough for his purpose, even if he pays his labourers generously. I think that such a person would need adequate capital; that has been my experience and others' too.

Send me as soon as you can all the information in regard to khadi which I have requested people through *Navajivan* to supply to me. Send me a short note on your own experiences.

Harilal has been here for the last three days. It is not certain at the moment how long he will remain. Have you signed the document respecting the house in Rajkot? If you have not signed it already, consult me before you do. It seems to me that your aunt's position needs to be strengthened still further. If that has been done, there is no harm in your signing the document.

Pattani Saheb was here for four or five days and left the day before yesterday.

SHRI RAMDAS GANDHI
KHADI KARYALAYA
AMRELI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12214

102. LETTER TO KAKU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 25, 1926

CHI. KAKU,

At last Harilal has arrived here. I had got your telegram. I had expected that I would be informed when he was likely to arrive. I did not send anyone to the station on Tuesday. No one was expecting Harilal when he arrived. I continue to get letters from aunt telling me of her anxieties. She does not trust you. She wants some definite arrangement to be made. I, therefore, think that you should put out the rent at interest and arrange the interest to be paid to her. This will be a convenient arrangement for all you brothers and will also reassure aunt. Alternatively, take a house on long lease in her name and let her live in it. Adopt whichever course you like, but I want you to do something to relieve her anxieties. It was only from Harilal that I knew that you had been here and stayed with Jivanlal.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12215

103. LETTER TO BALVANTRAI B. MANIYAR

THE ASHRAM
SABARMATI,
Asadha Sud 15, July 25, 1926

BHAISHRI BALVANTRAI,

I have your letter.

I understand your position better now. First of all, you should explain everything clearly to your brother and wife, though, before you do that, you should visit the Ashram and acquaint yourself with the conditions here. The Ashram is open to Bhangis. Just now, there are two *Antyaja* children living in it, and all the inmates have their

meals together. The *Antyaja* children are permitted to enter the kitchen and also help in the cooking. Everyone cleans his own lavatory; that is, no inmate can refuse to do this work. The inmates spend most of their time in body labour. All this may be acceptableto you, but you should also ascertain whether it will be acceptable to your brother and wife. Even if they say that it will be, you should take no step till you have observed the conditions for yourself and have had some experience of living here.

I have also observed that people who cannot preserve cleanliness in unclean surroundings do not do much better even when they go to live in what they suppose to be clean surroundings. The saying, "If we ourselves are good, the whole world is good"; is worth pondering over. Do not, therefore, assume that you will be safe once you are here, nor that everyone who lives here is or has become pure. In every house, the oven is made of earth.[1] All that can be said about this place is that some of the inmates are striving hard for self-purification.

SHRI BALVANTRAI BHAGVANJI MANIYAR

NAGAR CHAKLA

JAMNAGAR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S. N. 12216

104. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
July 25, 1926

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Herewith the statement that should have accompanied the letter sent to you the other day.

As regards your earlier letter about the Khadi Pratishan, Bapu says it really contains nothing that calls for his comment. He agrees with you that one must not mix business and philanthropy. He says the only way you could help them would be to advance them a loan of Rs. 30,000/- to be paid back in January next.

Yours,
MAHADEV DESAI

[From Hindi]

Bapuni Prem Prasadi, p. 54

[1] A Gujarati saying

105. LETTER TO A. I. KAJEE

THE ASHRAM
SABARMATI
July 26, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am exceedingly sorry that the letter addressed to you which was rather important went to Germany and that the German letter was sent to you. The only reparation I can now make is to send you a copy of my letter[1], which happily I possess.

I have read your letter to Mr. Andrews. Mr. Andrews will be in South Africa some time in October, I hope. I know you are having an anxious time. Everything that is humanly possible is being done here. But, as you have rightly pointed out in your letter to Mr. Andrews, we are ourselves to blame. I am still, however, hoping thatsomething good will turn out as a result of the forthcoming Conference.

Yours sincerely,

A. I. KAJEE, ESQ.
GENERAL SECRETARY
S.A.I. CONGRESS
175, GREY STREET
DURBAN

From a microfilm: S.N. 12017

106. LETTER TO G. N. KANITKAR

Monday [*July 26, 1926*]

BHAI KANITKAR,

Herewith my message. I do not have time to write more.

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

You have not mentioned your address in the *Swavalamban.*

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 958. Courtesy: G. N. Kanitkar

[1] This is not available

107. MESSAGE TO MAHARASHTRA[1]

SABARMATI,
Monday, Asadha Krishna 1 [*July 26, 1926*]

I can never give up the hopes I cherish of Maharashtra and Maharashtrians. The Maharashtra which has always taught the motherland the lessons of self-sacrifice and learning will never be indifferent to the poor man's charkha and khadi. I have said that in the *mantra*[2] "swaraj is my birth-right", which the Lokamanya taught the country, he supplied the first half of the *shloka*[3], and that I supplied the second half by saying that the charkha and khadi are the means of winning swaraj. When will Maharashtra take the first place among those who accept this means?

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 960. Courtesy: G. N. Kanitkar

108. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[After *July 26, 1926*][4]

CHI. NARANDAS,

Call back from Bhai Shambhushanker all of my letters. From the quotation, it is clear that I had in mind the salary due to him in the past. I could not have given him a permanent guarantee of salary to be paid to him in future. If he is just unable to do any work in Gariyadhar, it means he is asking for a salary for doing nothing. That cannot be done. You may now do what you think proper after inspecting the work. If the work at Gariyadhar seems to you to be useless, pay off the men what you think reasonable and stop the work. If you wish, you may send Bhai Shambhushanker a copy of this letter. I had seriously warned Balwantrai about the note of Rs. 500, but as he is still unable to pay, I do not feel like sending him any more money.

[1] The occasion for this message appears to have been the death anniversary of Lokamanya Tilak. An English version appeared in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 2-8-1926.

[2] A sacred formula

[3] Couplet or stanza in Sanskrit

[4] Shambhushanker was doing khadi work at Gariyadhar in Saurashtra up to July 26, 1926; *vide* "Letter to Shambhushankar", 29-7-1926.

However, taking it that his note is not connected with the Panch Talavadi[1], it seems all right to send him the Rs. 100 he has asked for. That is, send it if you are satisfied with the work at Panch Talavadi.

Nothing need be sent to Vajeshanker so long as you or somebody else has not examined his work. Whatever amount you consider reasonable to send, draw it from the Ashram account even if there are no surplus funds in it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33867

109. LETTER TO GANGADHARRAO DESHPANDE

THE ASHRAM
SABARMATI,
July 27, 1926

MY DEAR GANGADHARRAO,

I have your very full letter about your activities. I trace in that letter signs of both hope and despair. There is no cause whatsoever for despair. If our experiment is thorough, i.e., only in accordance with the fundamentals, there never need be the slightest cause for despair.

Idleness has taken possession of the poor, because they have lost all interest in living. They will begin to take interest only after we have worked in their midst for [a] sufficiently long time. We may wait for full effect even for ages if we are satisfied that our way is the only way of solving the problem of the masses. It is because of our unbelief and impatience that often we run from remedy to remedy, nothing takes root and the position goes from bad to worse.

About the disinclination of the weavers to weave hand-spun yarn, there are two reasons. One is that our yarn is not as strong as mill yarn and the other is [that] the weavers are not satisfied that hand-weaving has come to stay. Time will give them the necessary faith and our application must improve the quality of the yarn. Day after day, we must insist upon the spinners giving us better yarn. We have to examine their spinning-wheels correct their defects so as to enable the spinners to draw better yarn with greater rapidity. Within

[1] Another khadi center in Saurashtra

limits our wheels do admit of improvement.

We in the Ashram are carrying on experiments in improving the quality of yarn. We are testing it from fortnight to fortnight and the improvement made is really wonderful. I hope to publish figures about it.

I am going to make guarded and limited use of the information given by you in the pages of *Young India*. You will see the table that is being published this week. I would like you to supply me with the information in accordance with the table. I would like to make that table exhaustive, giving details of every khadi-producing organization.[1]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GANGADHARRAO DESHPANDE

BELGAUM

From a microfilm: S.N. 11209

110. LETTER TO SURESH CHANDRA BANERJI

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

July 27, 1926

DEAR SURESH BABU,

I had your letter regarding the bank loan, I never received any letter mentioning the conditions proposed by the bank. I shall await the draft agreement with the bank. I take it that you will not close without the papers being first approved by the association. There will be no difficulty about the approval, but formal approval should be taken.

[1] Replying to this on August 4, the addressee wrote to dispel any impression that he despaired of his work, that he was convinced of theirs being the only way to solve the problem of the 'masses', that he would persist patiently in his work and carry out Gandhiji's suggestions (S.N. 11217).

I want you to furnish me with information in accordance with the table you will see published in *Young India* this week. That table will be a mine of information for khadi-lovers and khadi-scoffers if all the organizations send the information required.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 11210

111. LETTER TO JANAKDHARI PRASAD

Tuesday [*July 27, 1926*][2]

DEAR JANAKDHARI BABU,

How should I forget you? Your letter though saddening is welcome. I shall deal with it in *Y.I.* Meanwhile consult Rajendra Babu and, if you find that you cannot usefully carry out the constructive programme, you may resign in a body. But this means that you will work away at the Congress organization whether you are one or many but only non-violently and truthfully. If you do not understand this and if time presses, elect your office-bearers. There is always time for resigning, if you cannot work satisfactorily. Let nothing be done in a hurry.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 59

112. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Asadha Vad 2, 1982 [July *27, 1926*][3]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Please remember that the 15th is the last date for paying the money to Girjashankar Joshi. I should get the sum before that date.

[1] A copy of this letter was sent to the All-India Spinners' Association.

[2] This letter was acknowledged by the addressee on August 1, 1926. The preceding Tuesday was July 27.

[3] *Asadha Vad* 2 was a *kshaya,* i.e., lapsed date. July 27 corresponds to *Asadha* Vad 3.

Yesterday, Lala Shyamlal of Hissar arrived with his wife. At the moment, 'there is no room in the Ashram in which the husband and the wife could be put up. The latter, therefore, has been accommodated in the room occupied by Janakidevi. The Lala seems to be well acquainted with you. Om took ill, and so she came down here. She is quite well now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2870

113. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI ,

Tuesday, Asadha Vad [*3*][1] *July 27, 1926*

DEAR FRIEND,

I hope you are keeping fit. Do not make any changes in your diet. Those two volumes seem to have been carried away in your luggage when you left. If you find them there, kindly return them after you have read them. They belong to two different friends.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3205. Courtesy: Mahesh P. Pattani; also G.N. 5889

114. LETTER TO JAGJIVAN TALEKCHAND DURBARI

July 27, 1926

Do you have any evidence to prove that the statement in the leaflets about the *mahajan*[2] having taken offence is correct? Do you have the original articles? If you have, kindly send them to me to read.

The agitation in regard to liquor-booths should be carried on in

[1] The source has 2.

[2] Representative body managing the affairs of a community or professional or business group. The addressee's letter to Gandhiji dated July 22, 1926 referred to two leaflets about the mahajan of Mangrol in Saurashtra.

two ways: first, by appealing to the Durbar and secondly, by doing propaganda among the drink-addicts. You should plead with them earnestly You should find out why people drink. You should mix with them and take interest in their lives. For this we require voluntary workers who are men of character.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 10970

115. LETTER TO RAMANLAL BHOGILAL CHINAI

ASHRAM,
July 27, 1926

BHAISHRI RAMANLAL,

I have your letter. If I go to China, I can stay only where my hosts put me up. You can certainly use khadi even there, if you wish to. If you cannot wear it when you go out, you can freely wear it at home and use it for other household purposes.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 12192

116. LETTER TO NANABHAI BHATT

ASHRAM
July, 27, 1926

BHAISHRI NANABHAI,

I send with this a letter for your information and entertainment. I have given a suitable reply. Please return the letter, as I intend to answer some of the questions through *Navajivan* too.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12219

117. LETTER TO ANANDANAND

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 27, 1926

BHAISHREE ANANDANAND,

Enclosed is a letter from Venilal. Fix up an appointment with him on Saturday or Sunday, according to your convenience, so that

the issue may be settled once for all. His suggestion that a copy of all entries in his account with us should be kept ready seems to me quite proper. Sunday 3 p.m. would be more convenient for me.

SHRI SWAMI

NAVAJIVAN KARYALAYA

AHMEDABAD

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 12222

118. LETTER TO VIRASUTA TRIBHUVAN

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

Tuesday, Asadha Vad [*3*][1], *July 27, 1926*

BHAISHRI VIRASUTA,

I have your letter. You are right when you say that the Mahavidyalaya has not yet reached a position where it can train workers for villages. We have still not been able to decide what changes to introduce which the students will welcome. I think we have made no mistake in appointing the[2] as teachers in the college. They do not find themselves in as miserable a condition as you think. I know that a *snataka* of even an ordinary calibre is able to earn enough for his living. My replies are always, from my point of view, practicable, but I can understand that they may not appeal to all. What else can a believer in the reality of soul-force say? If the students in hostels are pleasure-loving, who is to blame for that? What can the teachers do in that matter? It is for the students themselves to change their way of living. About reading the *Gita*, the Ramayana and other such books to children, my view differs from yours, and so I am helpless.

Henceforward, I intend to visit the Mahavidyalaya every Saturday. And there you may put to me any questions you like.

SHRI VIRASUTA TRIBHUVAN

GUJARAT VIDYAPITH

USMANPURA

AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12223

[1] The source has 2 but in the year 1926 *Asadha Vad* 2 had lapsed (*kshaya*) and Tuesday fell on *Asadha Vat* 3.

[2] Graduates of Gujarat Vidyapith

119. LETTER TO CHHOTALAL M. KAMDAR

THE ASHRAM,
July 27, 1926

BHAISHRI CHHOTALAL,

I have your letter. The present riots serve the cause of neither religion. So long as the two communities completely distrust each other, your plan of work will not succeed. It is a difficult job to persuade the sadhus to take up active work. No improvement can come so long as the prevailing idea—that giving alms to any beggar who comes along is an act of virtue—does not change. Such a change can come about only in the course of time. What I meant to say, and would say, was "things which we cannot, and need not produce, and against the import of which there can be no objection". Hence, cod-liver oil, wine, etc., are forbidden articles according to me, irrespective of whether they are produced or manufactured abroad or here. I do not object to the use of fat for lubricating machines.

Vandematram from
MOHANDAS

SHRI CHHOTALAL MOHANLAL KAMDAR
POST BOX NO. 389
RANGOON

From a microfilm of the Gujarat: S.N. 19937

120. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 28, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter with the valuable recipes for making soap.

I did get a letter from Hemaprabha Devi four days ago. I have not yet been able to reach my Hindi correspondence. As almost all my writing is done by dictation, sometimes one or-the other lags behind. She must not get fever and must get rid of her boils. What can be the cause for the latter?

Utkal work is not being conducted from the Secretary's Office. Narayandas was attending to the extension of the correspondence that

I entered upon in the first instance, which you will remember. But Narayandas has gone to Bombay to take stock of the two Bombay stores. As soon as he returns, I shall make further enquiries about it. In no case need there be any formal intimation because there is no question of taking Utkal responsibility off your shoulders.

Have the riots affected the sales all over Bengal, or is the effect confined only to Calcutta? When you have leisure, I would like you to give me your reading of the situation. What is at the bottom of the terrible mischief?

Yours,

BAPU

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 1560

121. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

July 28, 1926

MY DEAR SUNDRAM,

I have your weekly gift. Savitri must write from time to time and let me mark her progress in Hindi. Of course you are an "old boy". I shall look forward to your coming during the cold weather.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3195

122. LETTER TO DR. MURARILAL

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

July 28, 1926

DEAR DR. MURARILAL,

Miss Mithubehn Petit of the Rashtriya Stree Mandal of Bombay tells me that she sent on terms [*sic*] khadi fancy goods for sale at the Exhibition during the Congress Week. She has been writing

repeatedly rendering accounts but no reply has been received by her. Will you kindly attend to this matter? She ought not to be kept without funds indefinitely.

This association is run by philanthrophic ladies. No profits are made by them and every pice goes into the hands of the poor women who are working at producing fancy designs, etc. Apart, however, from the fact that this is a purely philanthropic work, we should not ourselves be unbusinesslike and not carry out obligations. I understand that the whole of the contract between the Stree Mandal and the Exhibition Committee is reduced to writing.

Yours sincerely,

DR. MURARILAL

CAWNPORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 11211

123. LETTER TO W. H. WISER

THE SABARMATI,
July 28, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Though I know Olive Schreiner extremely well, I am sorry to confess that I do not know anything of what Mr. Teo Schreiner wrote about her. But now that you have mentioned this work, I am writing to a friend in South Africa to enquire and send.

Yours sincerely,

W. H. WISER, ESQ. MAINPURI
U.P.

From a microfilm: S.N. 19674

124. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI ,
July 28, 1926

I am glad you agree with me about your South African article.[1] I did not want to weary you with your opium article, because there was

[1] The reference is to Gandhiji's observations in his letter to the addressee dated July 20.

nothing wrong with it as the South African.

I am sure this rest from constant mental toil of writing will do you much good. We shall all be looking forward to your coming here in September. Devdas is still in Mussoorie where he is doing well and is also helping Punditji.

Yours,

REV. C. F. ANDREWS

SHANTINIKETAN

From a photostat: S.N. 19675

125. LETTER TO SIR HAROLD MANN

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

July 28, 1926

MY DEAR SIR HAROLD MANN,

There is, I observe, a technological laboratory at Matunga under your charge. Will you kindly send me a note of introduction to the Superintendent of the laboratory for our manager, Maganlal K. Gandhi, who is a cousin of mine. He would liketo go there and study the different instruments for testing cotton, yarn, etc.

Yours sincerely,

SIR HAROLD MANN

DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE

B.P., POONA

From a photostat: S.N. 19676

126. LETTER TO HEMAPRABHADEVI DAS GUPTA

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Wednesday, Asadha Krishna 4 [*July 28, 1926*]

DEAR SISTER,

I got your letter four days ago. I was much concerned to read that you were having fever and had an attack of chicken-pox. I hope you are all right now.

I love teaching people to spin, but I fear that, if you go on

working all the time beyond your capacity, you will continue to lose strength. My condition with you, therefore, is that you should work only as much as you can while taking due care of your health. The substance of what I have been saying on the Gita in my discourses is likely to be published in Hindi, sooner or later. But that will take some time. We should never forget that it is our dharma to take proper care of our body.

BAPU

SMT. HEMAPRABHADEVI

CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1648; also S.N. 12224

127. LETTER TO PANACHAND SHAH

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Wednesday, Asadha Vad 4, July 28, 1926

BHAISHRI PANACHAND,

I have your letter. The receipt for the contribution towards cow-protection work is enclosed. The names of the contributors have already been published in *Navajivan.* I was happy to learn about the conditions there. It would be very good if we could persuade people to take up spinning again.

If anything has been published about standards in national schools, I shall send you the literature. I shall also send you the list of text-books if any such list has been prepared. People should learn to make slivers there. Bhagavanji knows the process very well. You may take his help. If you cannot get there khadi made from hand-spun yarn, you should order it from here.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 10972-a

128. LETTER TO A. B. GODREJ

THE ASHRAM,

July 28, 1926

BHAISHRI GODREJ,

I have your letter. Generally, trust funds are not used for advancing loans to private parties. As a trustee, Jamnalalji cannot advance loans from the trust fund in the way he might as a private

individual to another individual, and that only to a friend. This is but right, as the experience of the world tells us. A donor must not regret, when in need of money, that he cannot draw upon the amount which he has given as donation. He should not even wish that he might be able to do so.

Vandematram from

MOHANDAS

NEAR GAS COMPANY
SAFE FACTORY
PAREL
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujaratis S.N. 12217

129. THE HYDRA-HEADED MONSTER

A friend has sent me a gist of what appears in the Southern vernacular press from the pen of a learned Pundit. He summarizes the Pundit's plea for untouchability in this fashion:

(1) The fact that once Adi-Shankara asked a *Chandala* to be aloof from him, and the fact that Trishanku when he was condemned to be a *Chandala was* shunned by all people, prove that untouchability is not of recent growth.

(2) The *Chandalas* are the outcastes of the Aryan society.

(3) The untouchables themselves are not free from the sin of untouchability.

(4) The untouchables are so because they kill animals and because they have constantly to do with flesh, blood, bones and night-soil.

(5) The untouchables must be isolated even as slaughter-houses, toddy-shops and houses of ill fame are or should be.

(6) It should be enough that untouchables are not denied the privileges of the other world.

(7) A Gandhi may touch these people, but so can he fast. We may neither fast nor touch the untouchables.

(8) Untouchability is a necessity for man's growth.

(9) Man has magnetic powers about him. This *sakti is* like milk. It will be damaged by improper contacts. If one can keep musk and onion together, one may mix Brahmans and untouchables.

These are the chief points summarized by the correspondent. Untouchability is a hydra-headed monster. It is therefore necessary,

each time the monster lifts its head, to deal with it. The stories told in the *Puranas* are some of them most dangerous if we do not know their bearing on the present conditions. The Shastras would be death-traps if we were to regulate our conduct according to every detail given in them or according to that of the characters therein described. They help us only to define and argue out fundamental principles. If some well-known character in religious books sinned against God or man, is that a warrant for our repeating the sin? It is enough for us to be told, once for all, [that] *Truth* is the only thing that matters in the world, that *Truth is* God. It is irrelevant to be told that even Yudhishthira was betrayed into an untruth. It is more relevant for US to know that when he spoke an untruth, he had to suffer for it that very moment and that his great name in no way protected him from punishment. Similarly, it is irrelevant for us to be told that Adi-Shankara avoided a *Chandala*. It is enough for us to know that a religion that teaches us to treat all that lives as we treat ourselves cannot possibly countenance the inhuman treatment of a single creature, let alone a whole class of perfectly innocent human beings. Moreover, we have not even all the facts before us to judge what Adi-Shankara did or did not do. Still less do we know the meaning of the word *Chandala* where it occurs. It has admittedly many meanings, one of which is a sinner. But if all sinners are to be regarded as untouchables, it is very much to be feared that we should all, not excluding the Pundit himself, be under the ban of untouchability. That untouchability is an old institution, nobody has ever denied. But, if it is an evil, it cannot be defended on the ground of its antiquity.

If the untouchables are the outcastes of the Aryan society, so much the worse for that society. And, if the Aryans at some stage in their progress regarded a certain class of people as outcastes by way of punishment, there is no reason why that punishment should descend upon their progeny irrespective of the causes for which their ancestors were punished.

That there is untouchability even amongst untouchables merely demonstrates that that evil cannot be confined and that its deadening effect is all-pervading. The existence of untouchability amongst untouchables is an additional reason for cultured Hindu society to rid itself of the curse with the quickest despatch.

If the untouchables are so because they kill animals and because

they have to do with flesh, blood, bones and night-soil, every nurse and every doctor should become an untouchable and so should Christians, Mussalmans and all so-called high-class Hindus who kill animals for food or sacrifice.

The argument that because slaughter-houses, toddy-shops, and houses of ill fame are or should be isolated, untouchables should likewise be isolated betrays gross prejudice. Slaughter-houses and toddy-shops are and should be isolated. But neither butchers nor publicans are isolated. Prostitutes should be isolated because their occupation is revolting and detrimental to the well-being of society. Whereas the occupation of 'untouchables' is not only desirable but a necessity for the well-being of the society.

To say that 'untouchables' are not denied privileges of the other world is the acme of insolence. If it was possible to deny them the privileges of the other world, it is highly likely that the defenders of the monster would isolate them even in the other world.

It is throwing dust in the eyes of the people to say that 'a Gandhi may touch the "untouchables", not so other people,' as if the touching and service of 'untouchables' was so injurious as to require for it men specially proof against untouchable germs. Heaven only knows what punishment is in store for Mussalmans, Christians and others who do not believe in untouchability.

The plea of animal magnetism is altogether overdone. The high-class men are not all sweet-smelling like musk, nor are untouchables foul-smelling like onion. There are thousands of untouchables who are any day infinitely superior to the so-called high-class people.

It is painful to discover that even after five years of continuous propaganda against untouchability, there are learned people enough found to support such an immoral and evil custom. That belief in untouchability can co-exist with learning in the same person adds no status to untouchability, but makes one despair of mere learning being any aid to Character or sanity.

Young India, 29-7-1926

130. REASON v. *AUTHORITY*

The teacher who taught his pupils to spin because it was "Mahatmaji's order" writes:

On reading your article on "Mahatmaji's order" in Young *India* dated 24th June 1926, the following doubts have arisen in my mind:

You assign a great place to reason. Have you not also written in the pages of *Young India* or *Navajivan* that reason is like the King of England entirely in the hands of its ministers the senses. Does not man often reason in the direction the senses guide him? How then can you take reason to be the guide? Have you not said that argument follows conviction? If then one has not the heart to spin one will find reasons against spinning. How far is it advisable to tax the reason of little children? That great educational reformer Rousseau said that childhood was the sleep of reason. He therefore advocated merely the teaching of good habits during that age. And surely to teach children to obey the orders of a Mahatma especially when they involve physical labour is to cultivate a good habit. When the children grow up, they will find out the reasons for spinning. But is it wrong till then to inculcate that spirit of 'blind hero-worship' as you prefer to call it? Have we not made a fetish of reason in these day? For simple little things we undergo long and laborious processes of reasoning and do not even then feel satisfied. Reason, no doubt, has its place, but, surely much below the rank that we now give it.

It is wrong to quote a person against himself unless one is sure of what he has said and under what circumstances. All the statements the correspondent ascribes to me have undoubtedly been made by me at some time or other, but under totally different circumstances. Where it is perfectly possible to reason out a thing to the satisfaction even of children, there is no occasion for quoting authority and asking them to obey it. Very often it is a misleading process. Everyone has his likes and dislikes. And when a man has begun to believe in a hero, he gives his reason the go-by and makes of his hero a fetish. This, I consider, is blind heroworship. Hero-worship is a fine quality. No nation or individual can make progress who has no hero for their model. The hero serves as an inspiration. He makes action possible which, in our weakness, is otherwise impossible. He helps us out of the Slough of Despond. The memory of his deeds enables us to go through endless sacrifice. But, he must not be allowed to warp our judgment and paralyse our reason. The sayings and actions of the tallest among us must bear a most searching scrutiny, for, heroes are mortals. They are as liable to mistakes as the weakest among us. Their strength lies in their decision and power for action. They are therefore terrible when they make mistakes. They bring woe to the man or the nation that go in for blind hero-worship and slavishly accept all the

acts and sayings of their heroes without question. Blind hero-worship is, therefore, worse than blind worship of reason. Indeed, blind worship of reason is a misnomer.

But the correspondent's warning about reason serves one useful purpose. Seeing that reason in the vast majority of cases is the only guide to conduct, we must have for her pure and obedient ministers. The senses must therefore be brought under control and subjected to the severest discipline so that they may be willing instruments in the hands of reason instead of reason being their helpless slave.

The reason of little children is, no doubt, asleep, but, a vigilant teacher would gently coax it and, waking it, teach the children habits of discipline so that their reason, being freed from the control of their senses, would become from the very child. hood their guide. It is no discipline to tell the children to follow a hero. No habit is cultivated thereby. The children who are taught to slavishly do things become sluggish. And if perchance another schoolmaster displaces from the throne of their hearts the hero, presented to them by his predecessor, they are likely to become unhinged and useless in after-life. Whereas, If from the very commencement whatever is placed before them is reasoned out for them, and then examples of great men having done noble deeds placed before them to strengthen their resolve or support their reason, they are likely to develop into strong hardy citizens who, under difficult circumstances, will be able to render a good amount of themselves.

Young India, 29-7-1926

131. THE ALL-INDIA TILAK MEMORIAL FUND

The Honorary Treasurers have issued an exhaustive statement of the All-India Tilak Memorial Fund up to the end of 30th September, 1925. The statement is audited by Messrs Dalal and Shah. The auditors who are Incorporated Accountants (London) state:

> We visited all the Provincial Committees except the C.P. (Hindustani), C.P. (Marathi), Berar, Burma and Assam Committees. Although we visited the Kerala Provincial Committee, the Accounts being not ready at the time of our visit, we could not examine same. The Accounts, however, of the C.P. (Hindustani), Berar, Assam and Burma Provincial Congress Committees have been forwarded by the Secretaries duly audited by the auditors to these Committees and are annexed herewith.

We have verified the Investments and Securities on hand. We could not however verify the cash on hand as we visited the centres some time after the close of the year.

It will be seen that this year also many Committees have failed to prepare Balance Sheets and Income and Expenditure Accounts, and have submitted only Receipts and Disbursements Statements. In many cases we found that, as no balances of A sets and Liabilities from previous periods are being brought forward, it was not possible for Balance Sheets to be prepared. Receipts and Disbursements Statements would not in the absence of Balance Sheets show the state of affairs of Committees from year to year. Assets are likely to be lost sight of this way.

Khadi Departments, according to a resolution of the All-lndia Congress Committee, have been separated in some cases. In the case of other Committees they will be, we are informed, transferred this year to the Provincial Bodies of the All-lndia Spinners' Association.

Large amounts have been invested in the Khadi Departments of the various Committees, but we find that a considerable part of these amounts is irrecoverable and does not represent anything in the form of Assets or Stock in hand. These amounts or the part of amounts not represented by any realizable Assets and irrecoverable should be written off. In this connection we did draw the attention of the Committees concerned at the time of our visit.

Also, advances to workers and District Committees which are not recoverable or are by way of allowances not repayable should be written off to revenue, and not shown as Assets, as is done in several cases.

A combined statement showing Receipts and Disbursements of all the Provincial Committees has been prepared by the All-lndia Treasurer's office and is included herein.

As to the system of Accounts we intend addressing a Separate letter, and hope that the suggestions made will be carried out from the current year.

The present statement is quite apart from the statement previously issued of the Tilak Memorial Fund from its foundation. The present statement brings up the accounts to-date not only [those] In charge of the All-India Congress Committee but also [those] of the Provincial Congress Committees. The Balance Sheet gives the position up to 30th November 1925.

It is to be hoped that the instructions of the auditors will be carried out by the Provincial Committees. Nothing can more secure the stability of the Congress Organization than the accuracy with

which the finances are kept by the Central as well as the Provincial offices. There are, in the statement which contains 64 foolscap folios, accurately kept and certified Accounts by various Provincial Congress Committees. Those who are interested in the Congress finances cannot do better than to secure a copy from Sjt. Revashanker Jagjivan Zaveri, Hon. Treasurer, A.I.C.C., Zaveri Bazar, Bombay by sending two annas postal stamp per copy.

Young India, 29-7-1926

132. 'TOWARDS MORAL BANKRUPTCY'-V

After dealing with the physiological benefit of chastity, M. Bureau quotes the following passage from Professor Montegazza on its moral and intellectual advantages:

> "All men, and young men in particular, can experience the immediate benefit of chastity. The memory is quiet and tenacious, the brain lively and fertile, the will energetic, the whole character gains a strength of which libertines have no conception; no prism shows us our surroundings under such heavenly colours as that of chastity, which lights up with its rays the least objects in the universe, and transports us into the purest joys of an abiding happiness that knows neither shadow nor decline." And the author adds: "The joy, the cordial merriment, the sunny confidence of vigorous young men who have remained chaste . . . are an eloquent contrast to the restless obsessions and feverish excitement of their companions who are slaves to the demands of sensuality." He then compares the benefits of chastity with 'the miserable consequences of lust and debauchery'. "No disease," the author states, "could ever be quoted as the result of continence; who is not aware of the frightful diseases of which moral indiscipline is the source?" "The body . . . finds itself converted into an indescribable state of rottenness. . . . Nor can we forget the worse defilement of imagination, heart and understanding. On every side we hear complaint of the lowering of the character, the unbridled lust of youth, the overflowing of selfishness."

So much for the so-called necessity of sexual indulgence and the consequent liberty taken by the youth before marriage. The protagonists of the doctrine of such indulgence further contend that restraint of the sexual passion is a restraint upon 'the freedom to dispose of one's body'. The author shows by elaborate argument that restraint on individual freedom in the matter of sexual indulgence is a sociological and psychological necessity. The author says,

In the eyes of sociologists, social life is nothing but a net-work of multiform relations, nothing but an interlacing of actions and reactions, in the midst of which an activity, isolated and really separated from the rest, is unthinkable. On whatever step we resolve, whatever action we attempt, solidarity unites our resolution and our action to those of our brothers; and not even our most secret thought or most fugitive wish fails of an echo so distant that the mind is for ever incapable of measuring the distance. The social quality is not, in man, an adventitious or merelyaccessory quality: it is immanent, part of his humanity itself; he is a social being because he is a man. There is no other field of our activity so truly our own: physiology and morality, economics and politics, the intellectual and aesthetic domains, the religious and the social, are all conditioned by a universal system of mysterious bonds and undefined relations. The bond is so firm, the net so closely meshed, that sometimes the sociologist stands in real trouble before this immensity which unfolds itself before him, across all time and space; he measures in one glance how great, under certain circumstances, is the responsibility of the individual, and how he risks becoming petty by a liberty which some social circles might be tempted to grant him.

The author further says,

If we can say that under certain circumstances I am not at liberty to spit in the street . . . how can I claim the much more important right of disposing of my sexual energy as I like? Does that energy by a unique privilege escape the universal law of solidarity? Who does not see, on the contrary, that the sovereign importance of the function only increases the social reaction of the individual acts? Look at this young man and this girl who have just established that false union of which the reader knows the character; they are persuaded that the agreement concerns nobody but themselves. They shut themselves up in their independence, and pretend to believe that their intimate and secret action has no interest for society and is altogether beyond its control. A childish illusion! The social solidarity which unites the people of one nation, and, beyond the individual nations, all humanity, finds no difficulty in passing through all walls, even those of the secret chambers, and a terrible interrelation joins that supposed private action to the most distant series of actions in that social life which it helps to disorganize. Whether he wills it or not, every individual who asserts his right to temporary or sterile sexual relations, who claims the liberty to use the reproductive energy with which he is endowed merely for his own enjoyments, spreads in society the germs of division and disorder. All, deformed as they are by our selfishness and our disloyalties, our social institutions still take for granted that the

individual will accept with goodwill the obligations inherent in the satisfaction of the reproductive appetite. It is by discounting this acceptance that society has built up its countless mechanisms of labour and property, of wages and inheritance, of taxation and military service, of the right of parliamentary suffrage and civil liberties. By his refusal to: take his share the individual disorganizes everything at one stroke, he violates the social pact in its very essence, and while he makes the burden heavier on others' shoulder, he is no better thanan exploiter and a parasite, a thief and a swindler. We are responsible in the face of society for our physiological energy, as for all our energies, and, it might be said, even more than for all the others, since a society unarmed and almost wholly without external pressure, is obliged to remit to our goodwill the care to use that energy judiciously, and conformably to the social good.

The author is equally strong on the psychological ground:

It was said long ago that liberty is in appearance an alleviation, in reality a burden. That is precisely its grandeur. Liberty binds and compels; it increases the sum of the efforts which each is bound to make. The individual desires to be free, he is all inflamed with the longing to realize himself in the expansion of his autonomy. The programme seems simple enough, and yet his first experiences are enough to show him its painful complexity. It is in vain that unity is the dominating characteristic of our nature and our moral life, we feel within us various and contradictory impulses; in each of them we are conscious of ourselves, and yet everything proves to us that we must choose between them. You say, young man, that you wish to live your own life, to realize yourself, we ask with the great pedagogue, Foerster: Which is the better part, that which has its seat in the centre of your intellectual force, or that which occupies the lowest, the sensual, part of your nature? If it is true that progress in the individual and in society consists in a growing spiritualization and in the ever more complete mastery of spirit over matter, the choice cannot be doubtful, but there must still be energy to act, and the undertaking is not an easy one. Perhaps you will reply: But I do not choose. I wish to realize my being in one harmonious and organized whole. Very well; but take care this very resolution is a choice, for harmony is only established at the cost of strife. *Sterbe und Wade,* die and become, said Goethe, and the words are but the echo of others spoken nineteen centuries ago by Christ, "Amen, I say to you, unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, it remaineth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

"We wish to be men—an easy thing to say," writes Mr. Gabriel Seailles, "but the right turns into duty, stern duty, in which no one does not

fail more or less; we wish to be free, we announce it with a menacing air; if we call liberty doing as we like, the slavery of instinct; we need not be so proud of it; if we are speaking of the true liberty, let us gird up our loins and prepare ourselves for the unending fight. We talk about our unity, our identity, our liberty, and proudly conclude that we are immortal sons of God. Alas! if we only try to seize this Self, it escapes our grasp, it resolves itself into a multitude of incoherent beings which deny each other, it is rent by contradictory desires which in turn constitute itself, it is wholly (its own.essential being excepted) the prejudice to which it submits, the objects which tempt it; its pretended liberty is nothing but a slavery which does not feel, so does not resist.

"While continence is a virtue full of repose, incontinence opens the door to an unknown guest who may become formidable. The revelation of passion, which is troublesome at any age, may become in youth the signal of a radical perversion, we would say of an irreparable disturbance of the balance of the will and the senses. The boy who has contact for the first time with any woman whatsoever, as a passing encounter, is really playing with his physical, intellectual, and moral life; he does not know but it will be the same tomorrow in the family, at work, in social life; he does not know how the sensual revelation will come back to haunt him, what servitude without hope may represent the too exact term of "mastery"; and we know of more than one life ruined after a beginning of richest promise, the first disappointments of which dated from the first moral fall.

"The celebrated verses of the poet echo these remarks of the philosopher:

Man's virgin soul is as a vessel deep;

If the first drops inpoured should tainted be.

Across the soul all ocean's waves may sweep,

Yet fail that vast abyss from stain to free.

And, not less, this advice of the great British physiologist, John G. M. Kendrick, Professor of Physiology at Glasgow University:

"The illicit satisfaction of nascent passion is not only a moral fault, it is a terrible injury to the body. The new need becomes a tyrant if yielded to; a guilty complacency will listen to it, and make it more imperious; every fresh act will forge a new link in the chain of habit.

"Many have no longer strength to break it, and helplessly end in physical and intellectual ruin, slaves of a habit contracted often through ignorance rather than perversity. The best safeguard consists in cultivating

within oneself purity of thought and discipline of one's whole being."

M. Bureau adds to the foregoing the following from Dr. Franck:

"As to sexual desire, we assert that the intelligence and the will have absolute control over it. It is necessary to employ the term *sexual desire,* not *need,* for there is no question of a function, the non-accomplishment of which is incompatible wish existence. Really, it is not a need at all; but many men are persuaded that it is. The interpretation they give to the desires makes them look on co-habitation as absolutely necessary. Now we cannot look on the sexual act as resulting from senile and passive obedience to natural laws; we are, on the contrary, concerned with a voluntary act, following on a determination or an acquiescence, often

premeditated and prepared for."

Young India, 29-7-1926

133. REWARD OF EARNESTNESS

The head master of the national school, Dondaicha, West Khandesh, writes:[1]

This report shows clearly what earnestness can do. The school with 150 students was no more national than any other school would be on the mere ground of not being under the Government. A school to be national must satisfy the definition given by the Congress. In accordance with it, among other things, it must have spinning in it and the boys and girls must wear khadi. They must also have Hindi as their second language. But many schools are falsely called national although they do not carry out any of the conditions laid down by the Congress. The head master therefore deserves congratulations for his having introduced spinning and khadi. I hope that the school board will support his effort. He will bear in mind the fact that spinning to be successful must include carding by the boys. Unless they know all the preceding processes, they cannot be called spinners in the true sense.

Young India, 29-7-1926

[1] This is not reproduced here. The correspondent had given an account of his success in popularizing *takli*-spinning among the students and teachers of the school who had lost all interest in it.

134. NOTES

TO 'SOME BENGALI LADIES'

If you had given me your names and addresses, I would have sent you a full and prompt reply. You ask me to deal with a most delicate matter in the pages of *Young India*. I am sorry, I cannot do so. If the facts are as you have stated, there is, no doubt, something radically wrong somewhere. You have evidently written from hearsay. You should have supplied me with facts and given me your addresses so as to enable me to correspond with you and gain supplementary information. I invite you, still to do so.

INDUSTRIOUS SPINNING

A correspondent writes saying that a trader's wife in Pachora (Maharashtra) spun 34 Ibs. of yarn in 9 months, spinning at the rate of 5 hours per day in addition to doing all her household work. The count spun was between 7 and 8. Carding was done by the husband. His yearly expense for clothing was Rs. 150; whereas, after the introduction of spinning in the household, it has gone down to Rs. 50. This is evidently due to getting rid of superfluous clothing.

WHY HE SPINS

A lawyer friend, whom I congratulated upon the evenness of his yarn, although he is a novice in spinning, writes:

> Let me not leave you under the impression that I have taken to spinning from any patriotic or philanthrophic motives. Seeing. . . spinning constantly at . . . in 1925, I started doing it with, as we lawyers usually say, entirely an ulterior object. I regret to say I failed to achieve it and I am convinced that however long I may continue to spin I shall not gain my object in the future. But from the day I started spinning, I have acquired a great liking for it. I find it is a real sedative for a troubled mind and I have therefore continued it and will continue it And as I do note like to sin just mechanically and aimlessly, I am troublng you to help me to improve my production. may I add that I have always looked upon your advocacy of the charkha as the only means, both practical and cheap, of raising our helples masses from their present deplorable condition? preceding Tuesday was July ue it. And as I do not like to spin just mechanically and aimlessly, I am troubling you to help me to improve my production. May I add that I have always looked upon your

advocacy of the charkha as the only means, both practical and cheap, of raising our helpless masses from their present deplorable condition?

Young India, 29-7-1926

135. LETTER TO PAN-ASIATIC SOCIETY PEKING

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 29, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Whilst doing whatever I can to promote brotherly feelings amongst all the different nations, I am chary of belonging to any association which I do not know intimately. An Asiatic Federation will be a federation of one physically strong race and other physically weak races. Much though there is to admire in the Japanese progress, you will pardon me for saying that I am not enamoured of it. I am engaged in demonstrating that it is possibleto overcome the excesses of physical strength by matching against it, if such a conjunction of ideas is permissible, spiritual strength. You will, therefore, please excuse me for not joining your movement.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

PAN-ASIATIC SOCIETY
70, EAST 488
PEKING

From a photostat: S.N. 10786

136. LETTER TO H. KALLENBACAH

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
JULY 29, 1926

Of course you rarely write to me and I do likewise. I always expect to see you in person almost every mail since someone or other continues to tell me you are coming. I am expecting you to falsify the proverb that threatening clouds never rain.

I write this letter, however, to ask you to procure for me two

copies of a book written by Teo Schreiner giving an account of Olive Schreiner. An English friend, thinking that I would know all about this work, asks me if I know it and if I can procure it for him. I was ashamed to tell him that I knew nothing about the work, but have promised to enquire about it and naturally thought of you.

I am immersed in my own work. At the present moment it is all in the Ashram and about the Ashram. I take three classes daily on *Bhagavad Gita* and *Ramayana*. The work pleases me. Spinning, of course, is done with religious punctuality and the balance of the time is used to editing the two papers and attending to correspondents. We have now established a council for the management of the Ashram. This takes up a vast amount of time.

Yours sincerely,

KALLENBACH
DURBAN

From a photostat: S.N. 10789

137. LETTER TO DHAN GOPAL MUKERJI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 29, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[1] You will have noticed that after all I did not because I could not visit Helsingfors.

The first part of the Autobiography will be presently published in book form at the Navajivan Press. I have no idea that there will be any very large demand for the Autobiography and I had still less idea of any Western publisher wanting to publish the book. Several who are unknown to me have asked me for the copyright. But I have informed them all that I am not yet ready. Rev. Holmes is in correspondence with me about the American copyright. But nothing is yet decided.

[1] Mukerji had acknowledged having received in America an earlier letter of Gandhiji's and had expressed pleasure at Gandhiji's proposed visit to Europe Also, having seen the serialization of the Autobiography in Young India, he had hoped that it would soon appear in book form and suggested that its publication abroad should be entrusted to an enterprising firm like Routledge of England and Dutton or Century or Scribner in the U.S.A.

I think prayer and meditation are of the utmost importance.[1] The two things I do not treat separately. I can go without food but not without prayer. Probably, our conceptions of prayer are different. The prayer that we offer at the Ashram consists in reciting hymns, etc. There is nothing in it analogous to the Christian prayers in which people ask for definite things. The prayer is meant for daily purification. It is to the heart and mind what a daily bath is to the body.

Yours sincerely,

DHAN GOPAL MUKERJI, ESQ.
NATIONAL CITY BANK OF N. Y.
41 BLVD. HAUSSMANN
PARIS
FRANCE

From a photostat: S.N. 10790

138. LETTER TO H. S. WALDO POLAK

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 29, 1926

MY DEAR WALDO,

I was delighted to receive your letter.[2] You have grown so much in size and wisdom and, perhaps, it is not proper for me to remind you that as [a] little child you were my bed-fellow.

Your activities are certainly imperial.[3] Your account of the British Fascists is very interesting. How it would have been if you had chosen another work to describe your activities since you do not desire to [be] identified with Fascism in Italy.

[1] This had reference to Mukerji's query on the need for meditation and prayer in daily life; he himself felt that, to ensure the maximum result of work purity of thought was essential (S.N. 10790).

[2] Waldo, Henry Polak's son, had written on July 1 (S.N. 10777).

[3] Waldo was studying at the London School of Economics and the Middle Temple, and was taking active interest in a "Federation of British Youth" which aimed at the creation of peace through mutual understanding. He as also a member of the "British Fascists" an organization, he explained, different from the National Fascists in Britain. The body stood {or unity at home and in the Empire.

Your estimate of the modern voter is very correct.[1] But my experience of the educated voter whom you will have in the place of the present type is no more hopeful. Even barristers take their politics from the favourite newspaper. The root of the evil lies in the corruption of our hearts, not necessarily in the limitations of our intellect. But, I must not argue with you. However I send you all my good wishes. I wish you a long and healthy life of usefulness.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

H. S. WALDO POLAK, ESQ.
33, MOWBRAY ROAD, BRONDESBURY
LONDON N.W.

From a photostat S.N. 10791

139. LETTER TO E. C. CARTER

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 29, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 23rd June last. I know that my inability to visit Helsingfors was a severe disappointment to many friends. It was not less to me. But somehow or other the inner voice within me told me I must not go.

When Miss Nellie Lee Holt[2] comes to India, I shall be delighted to meet her. If she comes during the year there is no difficulty because I do not propose to move out of Sabarmati till the 20th December next and, if the simple life at the Ashram is not too trying to her, she will of course stay at the Ashram. If she wishes she may make use of the Ashram address for receiving all her letters.

Yours sincerely,

E. C. CARTER, ESQ.
129, EAST 52ND STREET
NEW YORK (U.S.A.)

From a photostat: S.N. 10792

[1] Waldo had written; "Democracy seems to be rather stupid for the average man in the street has neither the time not the inclination to study the important problems of the day. Most of his ideas are given to him readymade by his daily paper....."

[2] Of Stephen's College, Columbia

140. LETTER TO MRS. MAUD CHEESMAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 29, 1926

MY DEAR MAUD,

I have your 2nd letter[1] before me. I assure you, I detest typewriters. I would love to do all my correspondence in my own hand. But, I have made a choice of the lesser evil. I am trying to conserve all the strength I can and this I do by dictating what one might call even love letters. You don't generally rebuke friends through dictated letters, but I do even that. Not much fear of my rebuking you. You need not therefore feel nervous.

I did meet Miss Nora Karn.[2] We had a free long chat. I do not think that she mentioned you to me though I am not quite sure.

I hope you are now quite strong and thoroughly restored.

With love to you both.

Yours,

MRS. MAUD CHEESMAN

From a photostat: S.N. 10793

141. LETTER TO S. P. MENON

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI ,
July 29, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You will not ask me to give you anything long. I have little leisure to spare from the work before me. All that I can say in appreciation of the work of H. H. Shri Narayanaguruswami is to wish it every success. Whoever lays the axe at the root of the cursed tree of untouchability thus renders a great service not merely to Hinduism but to humanity. And I know too that nobody can better

[1] Writing on June 18, Maud had hoped Gandhiji would be able to answer in his own handwriting once again, though she "would rather have a typewritten letter than none at all" (S.N. 10769).

[2] Maud had referred to her as a friend, and had inquired about her.

perform the task than the Thiyas themselves. For, after all, everyone's salvation depends upon himself, and, what is true for an individual is equally true of communities.

Yours sincerely,

S. P. MENON, ESQ.
EDITOR,
"THE SNEHITHAN"
P. O. VADAKANCHERY
(COCHIN STATE)

From a photostat: S.N. 11131

142. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR ABHECHAND

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI ,
Thursday, Asadha Vad 5, July 29, 1926

BHAI PRABHASHANKAR,

I have your letter. That you put up with your father's misbehaviour twice does not mean that you voluntarily submitted to suffering. Submitting to suffering does not mean condoning a misdeed. If you had not condoned his misbehaviour on the very first occasion, the unhappy result would not have followed. There are two ways of opposing misconduct, a non-violent way and a violent way. The method of non-co-operation which you have adopted on the third occasion seems perfectly right to me. You not be afraid of criticism by society. However, it would not be right to conceal the reason for living separately from your father; there is no need to proclaim his misdeed from the housetops, but it is not necessary, either, to conceal anything from fear of public scandal. When we act out of regard for dharma, we should not feel any such shame. You did right in sending your name, otherwise I would have not been able to reply to you. I have destroyed your letter.

SHRI PRABHASHANKAR ABHECHAND
CLERK, GONDAL RAILWAY
RUNNING ROAD
JETALSAR JUNCTION

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 12225

143. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI H. SHAH

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Thursday, July 29, 1926

BHAI PUNJABHAI,

I send two letters with this. I can understand nothing in this matter. If you are well enough, come over some time. If you cannot do that and if you write to me, I shall send Chhaganlal or, if necessary, I shall come myself.

SHRI PUNJABHAI HIRACHAND
C/O SHOP OF SHAH KACHRABHAI
MANEKCHAWK
AHMEDABAD

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 12226

144. LETTER TO SHAMBHUSHANKAR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Thursday, Asadha Vad 5, July 29, 1926

BHAI SHAMBHUSHANKAR,

I send with this a draft for Rs 150. Please do not make it a practice to ask for a reply, as you did this time, by return of post. A speculator may be in financial difficulties any hour and out of them the next, but one who runs a regular business can judge in advance when he will need money. What did you do about the interest on the loan received through Shri Jagjivandas? I shall send a draft on Bhavnagar if I can get one, otherwise it will be on Bombay. Sending cash is a bother. You will have to make a particular effort if you wish to sell Khadi. One needs to have special qualifications for the job. A weaver who has used mill-yarn should be paid nothing; for our purposes, the piece will be of no use. In such cases, we should be satisfied if we get back our yarn. If you know the weaver, you and he, or, more particularly you alone, may undertake a fast, provided you can do so without anger in your heart. But it would not be wrong if you do not do that. A fast is not a remedy in every situation. It is only one of the many ways available for self-purification. The highest

satisfied if we get back our yarn. If you know the weaver, you and he, or, more particularly you alone, may undertake a fast, provided you can do so without anger in your heart. But it would not be wrong if you do not do that. A fast is not a remedy in every situation. It is only one of the many ways available for self-purification. The highest degree of purity is achieved only by gaining control over one's thoughts. In the final analysis, such purity is the only true purity.

SHAMBHUSHANKAR
KHADI KARYALAYA
GARIYADHAR
KATHIAWAR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 12227

145. LETTER TO G. N. KANITKAR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 30, 1926

MY DEAR KANITKAR,

I have your letter. I have not seen the 6th and 7th numbers of *Swavalamban* (स्वावलंबन) I suppose the paper goes to the Navajivan office. It would be perhaps better to send the papers here. The papers that go directly to the Navajivan office do not come here unless I specially send for them.

I looked for the *Swavalamban* address on the covering sheet and on the last sheet. Not finding it there, I thought it was not given. I now see that it is given among the advertisement sheets where one would never look. I suppose the recent numbers do not contain advertisements at all. But I have not got those numbers. What I have on my desk is what you gave me in Poona.

I have meant what I have said in my message to you.[1] I can therefore fully reciprocate your hope that, in spite of all odds against you, you will succeed in making the message of khaddar acceptable to Maharashtra.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[1] *Vide* "Message to Maharashtra", 26-7-1926.

146. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 30, 1926

DEAR MOTI BABU,

I have your letter and the figures of khadi production and sale in yards. Will you please see to the information asked for by me in the pages of *Young India* being supplied about spinners, etc. You will find the items of information required in the *Young India* issued on. . . .[1]

Do also please tell me whether all the workers of the Sangh regularly wear khaddar and do sacrificial spinning for at least half an hour per day and, if so, do you keep any record of their production? Do you test the strength of yarn from time to time? Are the wheels of the voluntary spinners kept in perfect order? Do you manufacture your own wheels? Are the members of the Sangh, members of the All-India Spinners' Association?

Yours sincerely,

BABU MOTI LAL ROY
PRABARTAK SANGH
CHANDERNAGORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 11213

147. LETTER TO A. T. GIDWANI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 30, 1926

MY DEAR GIDWANI,

I have your letter.[2] A sample spindle has now been sent to you. I do hope that the workshop will be able to turn out spindles according to the sample.

[1] The date of the issue, which was evidently intended to be filled ill the original, was 17-6-1924.

[2] This was dated July 22 (S.N. 11268). On July 10" the Vice-principal of the Prem Vidyalaya had sent Gandhiji under instructions from Gidwani, samples of spindles proposed to be manufactured.

I have now been receiving from all quarters literature on manure, not merely for grapes but for other things too. So, what your friend will send me will be an addition.[1]

For teaching spinning and weaving, I can send you an excellent Hindi lad[2] belonging to the U.P. He is practically illiterate. But, he is painstaking, wants to learn Hindi more fully than he knows it and wants to learn Arithmetic also. If he can join some class there for two hours, he will be satisfied. You won't have to pay anything for him beyond his living expenses, and his fare there and back. If you think that I may send him, he will be sent immediately. He knows carding, spinning and weaving and has been often sent as a demonstrator.

Do please tell Gangabehn to write to me and make good her threat. When she has completed her course in Geography and History, etc., she may come here to have the finishing touch by becoming an accomplished carder, spinner, etc., so as to enable her to take up village reconstruction if she Will throw in her lot with the millions.

Yours sincerely,

ACHARYA A. T. GIDWANI
PREM MAHA VIDYALAYA
BRINDABAN

From a microfilm: S.N. 11269

148. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA MUKERJEE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI ,
July 30, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I am delighted to receive your letter. I am glad to learn you are better than hitherto. You will please keep Krishnadas with you till you are so far restored as not to require any assistance whatsoever.

I have got a book by Dr. Mary Stopes[3]. The article therefore that you have sent me furnishes good commentary on her work. Indeed, marriage seems to have lost all sanctity in the West and the looseness in sexual relations is invading this poor land also. I shall try

[1] Gidwani had written to a friend in Hyderabad to send Gandhiji a sample of the grapes he was producing in his vineyard and also information about the manure he was using.

[2] Gidwani had asked for a teacher.

[3] Dr. Marie Stopes, author of Ideal Marriage

to secure from Mr. Ganesan the books you have mentioned. am likely to attend the Congress at Gauhati. But nothing is yet certain about my movements after the year of rest from travelling is over.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA MUKERJEE
C/O S. C. GUHA, ESQ.
DARBHANGA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19677

149. LETTER TO S. H. THATTE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 30, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Your first letter was duly received, but it was handed over to me only last week in the ordinary course. I have made, you will see from *Young India*, full use of the information given by you.[1] I do not need to write anything more about the conductof the National school under your charge. If you continue your work in a methodical manner, it is bound to have its effect.

I am unable to make any suggestions about your diet. You will be your own guide in that respect. You will know exactly what is necessary. You may reduce the quantity, restrict the variety and change it so long as your constitution responds to it without being injured. I have not succeeded in a remarkable degree in my experiments upon myself or others in the avoidance of milk. I therefore advise you, if you make dietetic experiments without milk and its products, to act cautiously. The condition of your bowels and the general tone of the system will tell you what effect is produced by abstinence from milk upon your constitution.[2] . . . the food you are taking is enough and contains the necessary natritious elements.

Yours sincerely,

S. H. THATTE ESQ.
HEAD MASTER
NATIONAL SCHOOL
DONDAICHA
T. V. RY.

From a photostat: S.N. 19678

[1] *Vide* "Reward of Earnestness", 29-7-1926.

[2] It is blank here in the source.

150. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Asadha Vad 6 [*July 30, 1926*][1]

CHI, JAMNALAL,

I read your letter to Devdas. I did not expect the cloud which is now threatening you, but 1 welcome it all the same. This is the only way in which one's love for dharma is tested. Send me the charge-sheet against you when you get it. I will draft a reply. You may make any changes you like in it, our only aim being that we should maintain the utmost civility. A community has the right to expel from its fold any member who acts against its rules. There is nothing in all your actions for which you need feel ashamed or sorry. Certainly, your influence in the community will diminish, and so will your capacity for getting wealth. I don't see anything to worry about in this. You should not mind even if you have to take to begging. If we can preserve our dharma, we should welcome being reduced to such a plight. When ultimately the members of your community recognize your love for dharma and your respect for the community, they themselves will become humble. We must bring about reforms in the affairs of communities, and by acting in this manner you will easily succeed in doing that in your community.

You should send immediately Rs. 8,000 more to enable Anna to buy a press. He was here. I think we should provide him with the necessary means. If Ghanshyamdas has not returned the sum of Rs. 5,000, please remind him. If you get it, you may send that and another Rs. 3,000, which should be deducted from the money payable in the next month.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2871

151. LETTER TO NANABHAI BHATT

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Friday, Asadha Vad 6, July 30, 1926

BHAI NANABHAI,

I send you with this, for your information, a letter which Mohanlal Pandya has received. It is not necessary to return it to me. If

[1] The reference in the letter to the addressee's excommunication suggests that the letter was written in 1926.

what it says is a fact and we have received any request for a grant, we should make everything clear before paying it.

DAKSHINAMURTI

BHAVNAGAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12228

152. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

THE ASHRAM,
Friday, Asadha Vad 6, July 30, 1926

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have committed an offence against you. You sent me some months ago a draft of "An Appeal to Vanik Friends", and I had agreed to go through it. But one thing after another turned up and I was not able to read it. While looking through my papers today, I found this draft. I have gone through it. I found nothing in it which needs revision. I am entirely with you in this movement. I have already given you my advice, that you should see the elders in every branch of the community and try to secure their signatures. But I have no doubt that, even if we fail in getting such signatures and only a handful from among the members of the various branches give their support, the movement is worth carrying on. Let me know when you have obtained a few signatures on the leaflet. After I hear from you, I will write a note on the subject in *Navajivan.* I am sure you will not follow my example in the offence I have committed against you by not returning the draft soon enough. Moreover, you do not have my excuses for not being prompt.

BAPU

SHRI DEVCHAND UTTAMCHAND PAREKH

JETPUR

KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12229

153. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Ashadh Vad 6, Friday [*July 30, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. If the place suits you we shall look for cheaper lodgings where you can stay for a longer period next year.

[1] From the postmark

This you must resolve that you will avoid all entanglements till you have fully recovered. I shall also be happy if you can be freed from dependence on drugs. Some cure should be found for your respiratory trouble. What does the doctor say could be the cause of it? At last I had Taramati's letter. I shall reply to her later.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
HOMI VILLA
PANCHGANI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

154. LETTER TO SAJJADIN MIRZA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
July 31, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and a copy of your Primer for infants for which I thank you. I have gone through your Primer with considerable interest. I hold strong views about juvenile literature. In my opinion, your Primer does not exhibit any special feature except its good paper and coastlines. I have seen most of the Urdu Primers that are available in India. They are all more or less good, and to a certain extent, carry out your ideas. But they are better in that they are not so expensive as yours. It. should be remembered that ours is almost the poorest country in the world. You cannot afford Primers at four annas per copy. My own opinion is that the smaller a Primer, the better.

Little children do not need the assistance of books so much as they need the assistance of teachers. But, as we do not have many trained teachers, Primers should be so conceived as to assist teachers rather than children. A revolution in thought is required to frame a Primer-of that character and, then too, a suitable Primer of that character can only come from the pen of an experienced teacher. My advice to you, therefore, is really that you should study this important question of juvenile literature afresh and if you have the attainments,

write a book which will be universally accepted as an original contribution to the methods of teaching children of a country so vast and so poor as ours. Expensive European models can, therefore, serve little purpose in this connection.

Yours sincerely,

SAJJADIN MIRZA, ESQ., M.A. (CANTAB.)
DIVL. INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS
GULBARGA (DECCAN)

From a photostat: S.N. 10973

155. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Saturday, Asadha Vad 7 [*July 31, 1926*][1]

BHAISHRI BEHRAMHI,

I got your letter. I was very happy indeed to read about the improvement in your health. Please write to me once again before you leave for Bombay.

Blessings to both of you from

BAPU

SHRIYUT BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA
8, NAPIER ROAD
CAMP
POONA

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 4364. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta; also G.N. 6586

156. LETTER TO FULCHAND SHAH

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Saturday, Asadha Vad 7, July 31, 1926

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I enclose with this a letter from Mulchandbhai. I had understood

[1] From the postmark

from you that we had enough money for the present for our work among the Antyajas. Please pay, if you can, the money mentioned in the accompanying letter.

SHRI FULCHAND KASTURCHAND SHAH
NATIONAL SCHOOL
WADHWAN

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 12230

157. LETTER TO GORDHANBHAI M. PATEL

THE ASHRAM,
July 31, 1926

BHAISHRI GORDHANBHAI,

I have your letter. I do write occasionally about Patidar. I do not look upon the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* as historical narratives. I have not attained self-realization. If it is true that my influence over the people has declined, I do not know the reason. I would attain self-realization on this very day if I were totally free from attachment to the ego. I cannot go into *samadhi*[1]. I do not know what will happen even tomorrow, let alone in 1930.

Vandemataram from

GORDHANBHAI MOTIBHAI
JOGIDAS VITHAL'S POLE
BARODA

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19938

158. SIGNIFICANCE OF VOWS

A student writes:[2]

Everyone is impelled sometimes to ask this question. Nevertheless it is based on a misunderstanding. A vow has the effect of raising us exactly because, in spite of it, there is a chance of our falling. If there was no such danger, there would be no scope for striving. A vow serves the same purpose as a lighthouse does.

[1] Last stage of meditation

[2] The letter is not translated here. Stating that he lacked firmness of mind, the correspondent had asked Gandhiji if there was any way by following which he would always be able to keep a vow.

If we keep our eyes fixed on it, we shall come safe through any storm. The lighthouse itself cannot quieten the storm, yet it guides sailors caught in a storm and helps them to fight it, even so a vow is a kind of powerful force which saves a human being from the innumerable waves raging in the heart. This being the case, no way has been found, or is likely to be found, by following which a person taking a vow can be assured that he will never fall. And this is as it should be; otherwise the moral injunctions about truth and so on will lose the great value which is attached to them. One has to exert oneself so much to acquire ordinary knowledge or raise a few lakhs of rupees for a fund. There are many who do not mind risking their lives merely to be able to see a lifeless spot like the North Pole. Why should we, then, wonder or be unhappy if we have to put in a thousand times more difficult effort in order to conquer our powerful foes such as anger, malice and so on. Our success lies in the very struggle for this deathless glory. The effort itself is victory. If those who sail to the North Pole fail in their object, their effort may be considered to have been wasted, but every effort we make in our life to conquer these foes) attachment and aversion will have taken us forward. Thus, no effort, however slight, towards such an end is ever wasted that is the Lord's assurance.[1]

The only encouragement, therefore, which I can give this student is that he should go on striving and never lose heart. He should never abandon the vow. He should banish from his dictionary the word "impossible". If he forgets his vow at any time, he should do *prayaschitta*[2] and remind himself of the vow. Every time he violates it, he should start again, and have complete confidence that he is bound at last to succeed. No man of spiritual illumination has ever told us of his experience that untruth had ever triumphed; on the contrary every such person has unanimously proclaimed most emphatically his experience that in the end truth triumphs. We should keep the experience of these persons in mind, and entertain no doubts of any kind when striving for a good end or be afraid to take a vow with a virtuous aim. Pandit Rambhuj Datt Chaudhari has left us a poem in Punjabi with the following refrain:

"Never accept defeat, though you lose your life."

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-8-1926

[1] Bhagavad Gita, II, 40

[2] Atonement

159. A CALF BEING SACRIFICED

A reader of Navajivan writes:[1]

The writer has given his name and address. But I cannot stop the marriage. I got the letter last week only. I do not know the groom or the girl or any of the others concerned. I have never been to that village. Whether it is my timidity or discrimination, I did not have the courage to interfere in this affair, though, believing the report to be true, I did feel I should go to the village and get in touch with the old man and dissuade him or plead with the girl's relatives. But I could not summon the courage needed. I, therefore, give the particulars of the case, omitting names, and should be satisfied if, reading this, people desist from such a terrible step in future.

What other reason than sensuality can there be behind such a marriage? Dharma enjoins that one should not marry more than once. A married woman who becomes a widow has, if she belongs to one of the so-called upper castes, to remain unmarried for the rest of her life, though she may have been a mere girl when she became a widow. But a man, no matter how old, can marry a girl of tender age; such is the intolerable, the painful position ! If there is any justification for the existence of the caste system, it should be in its ability to make such a state of affairs impossible. If the *mahajans* or the young men in the communities show courage, such unhappy situations would never arise, should never arise. Unfortunately, however, the *mahajans* have forgotten their duty. Instead of acting as the guardians of the good name of their communities, they seem often to be its enemies. Instead of being moved by a spirit of service or concern for others' good, their members often betray selfish attitudes. Where there are no selfish motives and there is a genuine desire to do good, courage is lacking. The truth is that the future of the different communities, and of the country itself, depends wholly on the youth. If they realize their duty and act in accordance with it, they can do much and make such unbecoming unions impossible. For this, hardly anything more than educating public opinion needs to be done. When that is done, oldmen will not have the courage to come forward to marry, nor will parents and guardians have the courage to ruin the lives of their daughters or wards.

It is amusing when old men who get married to young girls talk

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had reported that a girl of 12 was to be married to a man aged 55 in a few days, and requested Gandhiji to use his influence to stop the marriage.

about protecting religion or cow-protection or non-violence. To leave aside such ordinary but urgent reforms and indulge in big talk about swaraj and so on sounds fantastic. Those who are eager for swaraj ought to have the strength to eradicate social evils. The strength to win swaraj will be a sign of our good health, and no one can be considered healthy if even one limb of his is diseased. Every young man and every well-wisher of the country should bear this in mind.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-8-1926

160. A CORRECTION

In the article captioned "Quality and Strength of Yam" which appeared in *Navajivan* of July 18, it was stated in the second paragraph that "the yarn received by the Mandal was from voluntary spinners". I had concluded this from the leaflet which I had received, but now I have come to know that the details given related to yarn produced by wage-earners and not by voluntary spinners. The reason why it is considered necessary to correct this misstatement is the fact that the yarn spun by wage-earners is inferior in quality almost everywhere. There has been unexpected improvement only in the quality of yarn produced by voluntary spinners, and that is but natural. These spinners have a certain aim in spinning. They feel sympathy for the poor, and that is why they take care to improve the quality of their yarn day by day. Wage-earners, on the other hand, neither have the foresight to understand their own interest nor the intelligence to learn the art of improving the quality and strength of yarn. And, therefore, though they have been spinning for many years now, it will be a long time before they show improvement in their work. Voluntary spinners, on the other hand, started spinning only recently, and yet they can make rapid progress if they but choose. This is the great value of voluntary spinning and an argument to prove its necessity.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-8-1926

161. MENDICANT SADHUS

The term "mendicant" would perhaps be considered derogatory to the sadhus. But in this age sadhus mean men in ochre robes, no matter whether their hearts are of that colour, whether

straightforward or crooked. Really speaking a sadhu means a person with a heart which is *sadhu,* pure. But we hardly ever know such sadhus, whereas we come across ochre-robed sadhus, and some who are the opposite of sadhus, even begging on the streets. I have, therefore, used the term "mendicant"' to describe them. A friend writes about them:[1]

This is an excellent suggestion. But who will respond to it? To introduce the spinning-wheel amongst mendicant sadhus is much more difficult than to introduce it among the poor. It requires changing the religious beliefs of the people. Today the well-to-do believe that when they have put some money in the bag of the poor they have done a charitable deed, something meritorious. Who will explain to them that by doing this they do not serve but harm those whom they want to help, that, in the name of dharma, they support evil and encourage hypocrisy? If the fifty-six lakh mendicant sadhus in the country should be inspired with the spirit of service and decide to maintain themselves by working, the country would get an efficient army of volunteers. It is almost impossible to explain this to the ochre-robed sadhus who go about. There are three types of characters among them. A large majority of them are impostors who want a well-fed do-nothing life. The second type are stupid people who believe that ochre robes and work go ill together. The third type, which is a very small group, are men of genuine renunciation, but they are so bound by tradition that they feel that a sannyasi cannot work even to serve others. If this small group realize the importance of working, realize that, whatever may have been the practice in the past, in the present age it is necessary for sannyasis to work, as an example to other people if for no other reason, we can manage the other two groups easily enough. But it is very difficult to convince them of this point of view. We shall succeed in the task if we work in patience; the sannyasis will understand the truth only through experience, thatis, when the spinning-wheel comes to enjoy sovereignty in the country the sannyasis will submit to its rule. Sovereignty of the spinning-wheel means the sovereignty of love, and that means an awakening of the religious spirit. When such an awakening takes place, this small group of sannyasis will not fail to recognize it.

It is, moreover, as difficult to convince the rich as it is to

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had suggested that Gandhiji should invite mendicant sadhus to take up spinning.

convince the sannyasis. If the former understand their dharma and stop encouraging idleness, give work and not food, to those who beg, the empire of the spinning-wheel would be established right now. But can we expect this from the rich? The rich themselves are, by and large, somewhat at lazy; at any rate they encourage laziness. Whether they know it or not, their cannot but encourage idle beggars. Hence, though the correspondent has made a good suggestion, he has not thought how difficult it would be to carry it out. I do not mean that we should make no effort in that direction because of the difficulty. We should indeed go on working. Every wealthy person understanding this point and deciding to stop giving alms to the lazy, every mendicant sadhu who is not disabled taking a vow not to cat without working, benefits the country. Wherever, therefore, something can be done in this direction, an attempt should be made. All that I mean is that if we keep the difficulties in mind, we shall not be discouraged and will not conclude, when we fail to get immediate results, that our methods are wrong.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-8-1926

162. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

August 1, 1926

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

Your letter relieves me. I do not know if in some sense it may be right to say that you do not count with me in the same way that Motilalji does because of the following he has. But, if it is true in any sense, I can only say that it is a human feeling which I have not yet overcome because I am unconscious of it. I think I can say without fear of contradiction that no [one] has counted with me merely because of his following. I have cultivated aloofness from the influence of numbers because of my special conceptionof service.

However, it is enough consolation for me to know that you have never detected the slightest coolness towards you in my conduct.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. M. R. JAYAKAR
391 THAKURDWAR
BOMBAY-2

From a photostat: S.N. 11325

163. LETTER TO V. J. PATEL

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 1, 1926

DEAR VITHALBHAI,

I have your letter[2] and further cheque for Rs. 1,625.

In the circumstances mentioned by you, I shall refrain from publishing the correspondence. It may be published later as you suggest when the heat of the elections is over. When the timefor

[1] Acknowledging Gandhiji's letter of July 10" and referring to a remark of B F. Bharucha, Jayakar had written on July 27: "l never remarked to him that you had grown cool towards me. I have never experienced any coolness but the warmest behaviour whenever we have met. I do certainly feel that, not having the political following of Das or Motilal" I do not count with you in that sense, notwithstanding the personal tenderness which has always existed between us. But is this not only stating the truth?" (S.N. 11323)

[2] Vithalbhai Patel acknowledged receipt of Gandhiji's letters of July 25 on July 28. He observed that he proposed to seek re-election to the Assembly, on the expiration of his current term, "with a view to enable the Assembly to establish a convention similar to the one which obtains in the United Kingdom. If the Assembly chooses to re-elect me, I propose to continue the same arrangement regarding my contribution from my salary for a period of three years. I am not sure about the wisdom of publishing our correspondence at this stage. Such publication, I am afraid, is bound to be construed in some quarters, as an attempt on my part to influence the election in my favour. You are probably aware that I am, unfortunately, not without mean political rivals who are always ready to twist and turn anything that they can get hold of to my prejudice" regardless of the effect of such a course on national interests. Don't you think that in the circumstances it is better to delay the publication of the correspondence till January next when the election will be over, and it will be definitely known whether I am out of office or whether a term of three years is ensured to me? There will not then be the slightest objections to the publication of the correspondence at that stage. If you, however, do not agree with this view, I shall return the draft reply with one or two small alterations" which I propose to suggest for your consideration. . ." (S.N. 11324).

publication is ripe, you will send me the draft duly corrected or perhaps new circumstances will then have arisen for a new draft.

Yours sincerely,

HON'BLE V. J. PATEL
"SUKHDALE"
SIMLA

From a photostat: S.N. 11326

164. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Sunday, Asadha Vad 8, August 1, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I send with this a telegram for you received here. For a moment I thought of opening the envelope and relaying the message by telegram, but then I felt that a telegram from a person who did not know that you had already left this place was not likely to contain anything very important.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

SIR PRABHASHANKER
PATTANI
PORBANDAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3204. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani; also S.N. 12231 and G.N. 5890

165. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Sunday, Asadha Krishna 8, August [1][1], 1926

BHAI VITHALDAS,

I have your letter. I return the two letters from Tirupur. It is not necessary to have them copied. You may write to me even

[1] The source has 3, but Sunday, *Asadha* Krishna 8, fell on August 1.

when you go to Tirupur, and I will write there. When you are there, go into full details. It is our good fortune that this year's sales will not be less than last year's.

SHRI VITHALDAS JERAJANI

MANAGER, KHADI BHANDAR

PRINCESS STREET

BOMBAY

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 12234

166. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Sunday, Asadha Krishna 8, August 1 [*1926*][1]

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I had your two letters yesterday and one today. Do not worry over Martand. I had read the letters to Martand and Ramaniklal. They were both all right. There is no need to return the Mysore report[2] to me. I have another copy. The one you have sent, after correcting the Hindi would be very useful. Keep sending me such [corrections] whenever you get time. Devdas must be at Mussoorie these days. I have asked him to stay there as long as he wishes. He needed peace and rest and now he has both.

I have not encouraged Visveshwar Birlaji to come here. I advised him to seek solitude and do introspection.

Blessings from

BAPU

HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

KHADI BHANPAR

AJMER

From the Hindi original: C.W. 7704. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

[1] From the postmark

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Haribhau Upadhyaya", 15-7-1926.

167. LETTER TO M. L. GUPTA

August 1, 1926

BHAISHRI,

I got your questions. I think it unnecessary to discuss such questions in *Navajivan*. There is certainly life in every plant. Since plants are for man's use, we may use twigs for brushing teeth so long as we also eat vegetable foods. When we commit so much needless violence, why should we raise such fine issues and muddle our minds?

M. L. GUPTA

AJMER

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 19939

168. MESSAGE TO JAIN VOLUNTEERS' CONFERENCE[1]

August 2, 1926

I do hold certain views about the Shatrunjaya award[2], but I have purposely remained silent on the subject in the interest of both the parties and do not mean to break my silence.

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-8-1926

169. LETTER TO KHWAJA

August 2, 1926

KHWAJA,

I have your letter. I had written to you specially to tell you that if you thought that the book you wrote did no good to Islam, you had better withdraw it—not for my sake or for the sake of anyone else. I do not know if the Arya Samajists aretrying to convert some prominent Muslims. One nowadays hears all sorts of things, which have neither head nor tail.

Yours,

GANDHI

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary, p. 257. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] The message was read out at the Bharatiya Jain Swayamsevak Conference held at Bombay, under the Chairmanship of Amritlal Kalidas Sheth.

[2] This was given in a dispute between Palitana Darbar and the Jain community on the question of an annual pilgrimage or protection talc to be paid to the Darbar regarding the Shatrunjaya Shrine. The award given by C. C. Watson went against the Jains.

170. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL P. NANAVATI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Tuesday, Asadha Vad 10, August 3, 1926

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. For the present, I am having your amount credited to the scholarship account. I am sure we shall get someone with those qualifications.

SHRI CHHAGANLAL P. NANAVATI
NAVASARI BUILDING
HORNBY ROAD
FORT
BOMBAY

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 122232

171. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI ,
Tuesday, Asadha Vad 10, August 3, 1926

CHI. DEVDAS,

I got your letter. I don't know when Dr. Ansari is likely to come here. His speech was reported in the papers and I read it. I think the speech was an emotional outburst. I have no doubt at all about his noble views. But he cannot devote himself whole-heartedly to anything except his professional work. Similar is the case with Hakim Saheb. His heart is in the right place, but he lacks the strength to sacrifice everything for the sake of the cause. Maualana Abul Kalam Azad is indeed a Maulana. I do not set much value on the manifesto. A mere seven hundred cannot help our cause. In a situation in which the truth cannot come out, what can we hope from goodness? One cannot take interest in parliamentary activities and also work for Hindu-Muslim unity, for the two are incompatible with each other. I certainly do not want that the Maharaja or the Maharani of Nabha should do only one thing, spin on the charkha, but I think that, if they are at all likely to take up such work, it would be better and easier to teach them to spin on the *takli.* If afterwards he gives up the *takli,* we would not feel hurt, but we would if he gave up the charkha. If you

think differently, however, let me know; I will send you a charkha.

The present political atmosphere is quite disgusting. Mithubehn[1] herself had asked me to send khadi to her place. You will easily be able to sell that quantity. I know what prices she will pay for the different varieties of khadi.

I have already written to you about your coming here. I certainly think you should. But I will not object if you decide to stay on there for some time longer. It is a wrong idea that there is no work to be done here. There is so much of it indeed that the workers are never free. All the same, if it is necessary also for the sake of your health to stay on there, you may certainly do so. I had a letter from Vithalbhai. In that at any rate he says that, if you do not go there, he will reconcile himself to your decision.

SHRI DEVDAS GANDHI
THE OAKS
MUSSOORIE, U. P.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12233

172. LETTER TO MOHANLAL PANDYA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Tuesday, Asadha Vad 10, August 3, 1926

BHAISHRI MOHANLAL,

We have no other yardstick with which to judge the state of national awakening except the quantity of khadi produced, the number of *Antyajas* educated and the number of Hindus and Muslims who live in mutual amity. The figures for each province should be added up and the sum will indicate the position there. If we are sincerely working for these three causes, it does not matter that the bureaucracy seems at present to become more arrogant. Though the people may seem to have become dispirited those who are working to strengthen the three movements I have mentioned may rest fully confident that all will end well. There are of course other fields of work too, such as municipalities, local boards, public meetings, councils, etc. Let those who prefer to work in them do so. Why should we envy them? Who prevents anyone from taking up such work? Why

[1] Mithubehn Petit

should we be angry with them? Everyone works according to his own lights. If we, on our part, go on silently with our work and make progress in it, the atmosphere will be cleansed by and by. Theswarajist horse is still prancing about all over the place, and we get trampled upon now and then. When it finally allows itself to be tied to its tether, we shall be more at ease. We should certainly hold khadi exhibitions and conduct similar activities. We should have faith that we shall gradually succeed in them. Shri Lakshmidas[1] has dedicated himself in all sincerity to the cause of khadi and is working in the field according to his lights and to the best of his ability. Let the fruit of his effort be what it may. If, instead of thinking about the whole of Gujarat or of India, each of us pays attention to his own small sphere of work and attains perfection in it, work in the other spheres is bound to show equal perfection.

And now about national schools. If you are a practical man, am I less of one? The suggestion which I have made is also practical. If the pupils always lord it over us, the parents send their children as a matter of favour to us and plainly refuse to pay their fees, if the entire expenditure is met from voluntary contributions so that in effect a farce is kept up. Rather than all this, is it not more practical that we should free ourselves from slavery to the pupils, decline to accept parents' favour, abandon the make-believe and spend the time in teaching a smaller number who are keen on learning? Let the teachers go round for *madhukari*[2] and the rest may be engaged in other productive activities. The example of the man bitten by a snake will not apply here. In that example, there is every hope of space being available. In our case, on the other hand, there is hardly anything of the genuine national spirit. Why should we deceive ourselves?

The real point in all these arguments is this—how much faith do we have in our ideas?

SHRI MOHANLAL K. PANDYA

KHADI KARYALAYA

MAHUDHA

Via NADIAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12235

[1] Lakshmidas P. Asar

[2] Collecting alms from door to door; literally, collection of honey by bees moving from flower to flower

173. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[On or after *August 3, 1926*][1]

ALREADY DECIDED SEND 5000 UTKAL BUT DO RAISE MONEY FOR GENERAL KHADI WORK

From a copy: S.N. 11216

174. LETTER TO K. NATARAJAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 4, 1926

DEAR MR. NATARAJAN,

I have your letter. The cutting you have sent me is substantially correct. Vithalbhai has been sending me over Rs. 1,600 per month for the last three or four months. I have been considering with him the advisability of publishing the news. But, he thinks that it should not be published till after the elections. The reasons given by him are sound and I have therefore refrained from publishing his letter and my reply. For your own information I may state that I am not going to make use of the money on my own responsibility. But as soon as the heat of party strife is over, I propose to invite the co-operation of several leaders upon choosing the best way of utilizing Vithalbhai's handsome gift. He has sent me the unspent portion of the national purse presented to him. You will please treat this matter as absolutely confidential. Or, if you feel that you should publish something saying that The *Hindu* has a paragraph on the matter, you may correspond with Vithalbhai himself.

So far as the establishment of a Supreme Court is concerned,[2] I have been following the controversy. I gathered together the papers with a view to writing upon it for *Young India* and then I decided not

[1] This was in reply to a telegram by Jamnalal dated August 3 which said: Discussed Orissa work with Satis Babu Niranjan Patnayak. Work suffering want of money shall try realize money and hand over to Satis Babu if you permit.

[2] What follows also constituted Gandhiji's observations, when invited by the *Indian Daily Mail* to express his views on the subject, and were published by that paper on August 5. They were also reproduced in *The Hindustan* Times, 7-8-1926 and *The Leader*, 12-8-1926.

to write anything I will now reconsider the thing. The objections raised by distinguished lawyers have made absolutely no appeal to me. Indeed it has been a painful surprise to me to observe the opposition to Sir Hari Singh's[1] very mild and very innocent proposal. But we have lost all confidence in ourselves. I have some little experience of Privy Council cases. And, it is my firm belief that the members of the Privy Council are not free from political bias and on highly intricate matters of custom, in spite of all their labours they often make egregious blunders.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. NATARAJAN
EDITOR,
"INDIAN DAILY MAIL"
FORT
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 10974

175. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Wednesday, Asadha Vad 11 [*August 4, 1926*][2]

DEAR FRIEND,

I got your letter sent with Nanabhai. If you can live only on milk, by all means do that, but the milk should be fresh and unboiled. I did make the experiment in jail, and would have found no difficulty in living on milk alone. But the stomach had been used to fruitfor 30 years and so I lost three pounds in a week. I was, therefore, forced to start eating fruit again. You may live on milk alone if you don't require fruit and if you get regular motions without having to take medicines for the purpose.

I got the books you returned. I had asked you to send them back only after you had read them. I am strongly of the view that you should not change your diet even when you go to England. I am sure that if you stick to milk and such fruits as you can digest, you will

[1] Hari Singh Gour

[2] Reference to the two books returned to Gandhiji suggests that the letter was written after Gandhiji's latter to the addressee dated 27-7-26.

have a new body. If you can spend a few days here before leaving for England, please do. I certainly know that you cannot be happy if you don't have to rush from one place to another. That is unavoidable in your profession. Your suggestion about the Congress President is perfectly right, but there are many complications about it. At present, I do not interfere in any matter, though of course I am not prevented from making suggestions from here.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

SIR PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

ANANTWADI

BHAVNAGAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3205. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

176. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Wednesday, Asadha Vad 11, August 4, 1926

BHAISHRI KAKA,

I have your letter I will publish the article[1] which you have sent to Mahadev. I intend to add" nearly" in the last sentence.[2] Foreign cloth should never be used at all, but in cities the use of motor transport may not be an evil, it may be good. If, for instance, there is a fire at a far end of the town, a motor lorry may be more useful in reaching the place. Or, when we see in Calcutta, and even in Bombay, draught animals made to haul excessive loads during the fiercenoon-day heat, the advantage of motor transport becomes plain enough. Moreover in an age of railways and cities, we can change things only if we oppose the very existence of cities, if we can at all do so.

And now about collective farming. That human civilization was due to agriculture is a relative truth; in other words, man advanced from the hunter's stage to the agricultural stage. The next stage, now, is not that of collective farms but of orchards. There will be even

[1] *Vide*" Bullock *v.* Car", 8-8-1926.

[2] After adding" nearly" the last sentence read: ''It will be good indeed if we come to believe that, in fact, the use of the motor-car is *nearly* as undesirable as the use of foreign cloth."

greater stability when we arrive at that stage. Our relations with the world will become purer than at present, and people will have to labour much less in growing fruit trees than they do in agriculture and they would have some peace too. Moreover, as vegetarian food is spiritually beneficial, compared with flesh food, so fruit diet will be still more beneficial. Trees, again, make rainfall more regular and are also more independent of rains than grain fields. Thus fruit diet has numerous economic, political and spiritual benefits. But I am afraid we shall not have the privilege of introducing this reform, though of course I have still not given up hope completely. If I meet a chemist with a spiritual vision, I would immediately resume the experiment which I had to abandon. If you can interest that Lonavala doctor, he may perhaps carry out experiments.

I understand what you say about your health. Try one thing more in your diet experiments. You may drink fresh milk of cow or buffalo, if you can be sure of proper cleanliness having been observed in milking. You should watch the effect. If it is beneficial, you may continue taking the milk. The *vaid* says that the body gets the finest vitamins from such milk, which are destroyed when the milk is heated. These vitamins are considered essential for health. One doctor Talwalkar has done a good study of this subject. If necessary, you may correspond with him. My health has not suffered at all. I tried to live only on fruit, but resumed milk because I found that I was losing weight. The fruits contained no seeds, of course.

I don't remember anything about the three stories. If you help me, I may be able to refresh my memory and try to read them. Left to myself, I am not likely to have the courage or enthusiasm to take up anything to read.

SHRI KAKA SAHEB KALELKAR

SWAVALAMBAN PATHSHALA

CHINCHVAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 12236

177. LETTER TO RAMANIYARAM G. TRIPATHI

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Wednesday, Asadha Vad 11, August 4, 1926

BHAISHRI RAMANIYARAM,

I have your letter. I knew Vibhakar so little that I don't think I can send any reminiscences of him which may be useful to you. I remember nothing about him except his cheerful nature.

I keep good health. At the moment I cannot think of any circumstance which may take me out of Ahmedabad before 20th December. In case, however, I go to Bombay for a day or two, you may certainly ask me to spare time for your Association. It is not at all true that I have started teaching the Bible in the Vidyapith. How can I help if the papers do not leave me alone? They do not let me do anything in peace. If my peace of mind depended on external circumstances, they would have driven me mad long ago. I asked the students to choose in what manner they would like me to spend one hour with them every week. They have decided to put questions to me every Saturday. If any time was left after answering their questions, I might read the New Testament with them. On the first Saturday, the one hour was over before all the questions could be answered. I don't know what will happen next time. Apart from this, I should certainly like the students to learn to think about religious issues. All possible efforts are being made towards that end. It was only yesterday I got the report of the committee appointed to inquire into the running of the Vidyapith. I shall, now, consider what to do with it. Most probably, it will be published in a few days.[1] What can I write for *Samalochak*, which would satisfy you and its readers? Anything I write will be about spinning. If I range further afield, I may write a little about *Antyajas.* What use will such, an article be to you these days? The poor *Antyaja* is making very, very slow progress, at a snail's pace, so to say. One day I am sure, he willcease to be" poor", and that will be the right time for you to ask for an article from me.

SHRI RAMANIYARAM GOVARDHANRAM TRIPATHI
DR. PAI BUILDING
SANDHURST ROAD
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12237

178. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

August 4, 1926

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

I have your letter. I can give only one reply in regard to the

[1] The report of the Inquiry committee headed by Anandshankar Dhruva was published in *Navajivan* on August 15, 1926.

Hindu-Muslim problem. Hindus should bear patiently every form of suffering. This does not, of course, mean that they should forsake their dharma. Employ all your spare time in spinning.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ
SIKAR

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 19940

179. KHADI IN KARNATAK

Sjt. Gangadharrao Deshpande sends me regarding his khaddar activities a letter which I condense below:[1]

The problem of inducing paid spinners to improve their yarn and weavers to take up hand-spun yarn is causing difficulty everywhere. Patience and perseverance combined with acquisition of scientific knowledge about the methods of improving handspun yarn is the only remedy. Weavers will readily take up hand-spun yarn if it is even, strong and properly hanked. They have no time for thinking of patriotism, all of their time being used up in keeping the wolf from the door. They, therefore, seek the easiestwork. And unless we make weaving of hand-spun yarn as easy as that of mill-spun, we must not expect many weavers to take it up. The secret, therefore, lies in hand-spun yarn being improved in quality. And, this is only possible, when we have an army of expert voluntary spinners who know all about spinning, who know a good spinning-wheel from bad, and who, having love for the semi-starved spinners, will go to them, patiently reason with them and finally steel into their hearts, so as to induce the spinners to make the necessary improvement in their wheels and understand the method of drawing finer, stronger and more even yarn. The thing is difficult. It is not impossible. But, the difficulty of the task and the extent it covers make it a matter of first-class national importance. And, as it admits of immediate returns, and therefore its accomplishment is within reach, it does not need unlimited capital.

Young India, 5-8-1926

[1] The letter is not given here. Gangadharrao Deshpande had written in detail about the progress of khadi work, at a centre 18 miles from Belgaum where spinners and weavers from the agricultural class worked during their leisure hours.

180. 'TOWARDS MORAL BANKRUPTCY'-VI

After having insisted on chastity before and during marriage and shown by overwhelming proof that not only is self-restraint not impossible, not harmful, but perfectly possible and wholly beneficial both to the mind and the body, M. Bureau devotes a chapter to the value and possibility of perpetual continence. The following opening paragraph is worth reproducing:

> In the first rank of these liberators, these heroes of the true sexual emancipation, it is only right to name the young men and women who, the better to devote themselves to the service of a great cause, choose to remain all their life in chastity, and renounce the joys of marriage. The reasons for their resolve vary according to circumstances: one feels it a duty to remain with an infirm father or mother; another takes the place, to orphaned brother and sisters, of the departed parents; another desires to devote himself or herself entirely to the service of science or art, of the poor or the sick, or to a work of moral education or of prayer. Similarly, the merit of the voluntary sacrifice may be greater or less; some, thanks to the benefits of a wise protective education and the practice of a good moral hygiene, are almost without sensual temptations; other, more advanced in the path of virtue, have succeeded, it may be at the cost of sharp conflicts of which they alone know the hardness, in mastering the beast and taming the flesh. On any supposition, the final resolve is the same: the men and women have been led to think that the best way for them to serve is not to marry; and they have entered into an engagement, it may be with themselves, it may be with God, to remain in the perfect chastity of the celibate life. However definite and undoubted may be the duty of marriage, as we shall see under certain circumstances, all these resolutions are legitimate, because they are inspired by a noble and generous purpose." Painting is a jealous mistress who suffers no rival," replied Michael Angelo when marriage was suggested to him; and how many after him have had a like experience!

I can corroborate this testimony from the experience of European friends of almost every description given by M. Bureau, friends who exercised perpetual restraint. It is only in India that from childhood we must hear of marriages. Parents have no other thought, no other ambition save that of seeing their children well married and provided for. The one thing brings premature decay of mind and body and the other induces idleness and often makes of one a parasite; We exaggerate the difficulty of chastity and voluntary poverty and impute extraordinary merit to them, reserve them for

mahatmas and yogis and rule the latter out of ordinary life, forgetting that real mahatmaship and yoga are unthinkable in a society where the ordinary level is brought down to the mudbank. On the principle that evil, like the hare, travels faster than good which like the tortoise, though steady, goes slow, voluptuousness of the West comes to us with lightning speed and with all its variegated enchantment dazzles and blinds us to the realities of life. We are almost ashamed of chastity and are in danger of looking upon self-imposed poverty as a crime in the fate of the Western splendour that descends upon us from minute to minute through the cable and day to day through the steamers that discharge their cargo on our shores. But the West is not wholly what we see in India. Even as the South African Whites ill-judge us when they judge us through the Indian settlers, so shall we ill-judge the West through the human and the other western cargo that delivers itself to us every day. There is in the West a small but inexhaustible reservoir of purity and strength which those who have eyes of penetration may see beneath the deceptive surface. Throughout the European desert there are oases from which those who will may drink the purest water of life. Chastity and voluntary poverty are adopted without brag, without bluster, and in all humility by hundreds of men and women, often for no other than the allsufficing cause of service of some dear one or of the country. We often prate about spirituality as if it had nothing to do with the ordinary affairs of life and had been reserved for anchoriteslost in the Himalayan forests or concealed in some inaccessible Himalayan cave. Spirituality that has no bearing on and produces no effect on everyday life is 'an airy nothing'. Let young men and women for whose sake *Young India* is written from week to week know that it is their duty if they would purify the atmosphere about them and shed their weakness, to be and remain chaste and know too that it is not so difficult as they have been taught to imagine.

Let us further listen to M. Bureau:

> In proportion as it (modern sociology) follows the evolution of our manners, and as methodical study digs more deeply the soil of social realities, the better is the value perceived of the help which the practice of perpetual chastity brings to the great work of the discipline of the senses. . . . If marriage is the normal state of life for the immense majority of people, it cannot be that all can, or ought to marry. Even putting aside the exceptional vocations of which we have just spoken, there are at least three classes of celibates who cannot be blamed for not being married: the young people of both sexes who

for professional or economic reasons think it a duty to defer their marriage; the people who are involuntarily condemned to celibacy because they cannot find a suitable partner; finally, those who ought to abstain from marriage in consequence of their physiological defects that could be transmitted, and in some who are strictly bound to renounce all idea of it. Is it not evident, then, that the renunciation made by these people, doubly necessary both for their own happiness and the interests of society, will be rendered so much the less painful and so much the more cheerful, because they will find beside them others who, in full possession of their physical and intellectual vigour and sometimes with abundant means have declared their firm resolution to remain celibate all their lives? These voluntary and choice celibates, who have willed to consecrate themselves to God without reserve, to prayer and to the training of the souls, declare that in their eyes celibacy, far from being a reduced condition of life, is on the contrary a superior state, in which man asserts, in its plenitude, the mastery of the will over instinct.

The author says:

To young people of both the sexes, who are still too young to marry perpetual cilibacy shows that it is possible to pass one's youth chastely; to the married it recalls the duty which lies upon them to maintain exact discipline in their conjugal discipline and never to allow a consideration of self-interest however legitimate it be in itself, to prevail over the higher demands of moral generosity.

Foerster says:

The vow of the voluntary celibate far from degrading marriage, is on the contrary the best support of the sanctity of the conjugal bond, since it represents in a concrete form man's freedom in the face of the pressure of his nature. It acts like a conscience with regard to passing whims and sensual assault. Celibacy is also a protection to marriage in the sense that its existence prevents married people from looking upon themselves in their mutual relations as mere slaves to obscure natural forces, and it leads them to take openly in the face of nature, the position of free beings who are capable of mastery. Those who scoff at perpetual celibacy as unnatural or impossible do not know really what they are doing. They fail to see that the line of thought which makes them talk as they do must necessarily lead, by strict logic, to prostitution and polygamy. If the demand of nature is irresistible, how can a chaste life be required of married people? And lastly, they forget the great number of marriages in which, it may be for several months or years, or even for life, one of the spouses is condemned to a real celibacy by the sickness or other disability of the partner. For this reason alone, true monogamy rises or falls with the esteem that is paid to celibacy.

Young India, 5-8-1926

181. ENFORCED WIDOWHOOD

Sir Ganga Ram has published a valuable table giving the number of widows throughout India with subsidiary tables for each province. The tables should be in the hands of every reformer.

Not many will agree with Sir Ganga Ram about the order, in which, according to him, reform should proceed. He gives the order thus:

1st. Social Reformation.

2nd. Economic Reformation.

3rd. Swaraj or Political Emancipation.

Not so thought Sir Ganga Ram's predecessors every whit as keen social reformers as himself. Ranade, Gokhale, Chandavarkar considered swaraj to be as important as social reform. Lokamanya Tilak felt no less for social reform. But he and his perdecessors recognized and realized the necessity of all branches of reform proceeding side by side. Indeed Lokamanya and Gokhale considered political reform to be of greater urgency than the other. They held that our political serfdom incapacitated us for any other work.

The fact is that political emancipation means the rise of mass consciousness. It cannot come without affecting all the branches of national activity. Every reform means an awakening. Once truly awakened the nation will not be satisfied with reform only in one department of life. All movements must therefore proceed, everyone proceeding simultaneously.

But one need not quarrel[1] with Sir Ganga Ram about his arrangement of the order of the needed reform. One cannot but acknowledge his zeal for social reform even though one may not agree with his political or economic panaceas. The figures he has given us are truly appalling." Who will not weep", he asks," over the figures which show the misery caused by child marriages and enforced widowhood?" Here are the figures of Hindu widows according to the census of 1921:

Widows of ages up to 5	11,892
Widows from 5 to 10	85,037

[1] The original had 'one did not quarrel' an error; *vide"* Corrections", 12-8-1926.

Widows from 10 to 15	2,32,147
	3,29,076

The figures are also given for the two previous censuses. The total of 1921 is a triple higher than for the two decades. The widows of the other classes are also given. They only demonstrate still further the enormity of the wrong done to the Hindu girl widows. We cry out for cow-protection in the name of religion, but we refuse protection to the human cow in the shape of the girl widow. We would resent[1] force in religion. But in the name of religion we force widowhood upon our three lacs of girl widows who could not understand the import of the marriage ceremony. To force widowhood upon little girls is a brutal crime for which we Hindus are daily paying dearly. If our conscience was truly awakened there would be no marriage before 15, let alone widowhood, and we would declare that these three lacs of girls were never religiously married. There is no warrant in any Shastra for such widowhood. Voluntary widowhood consciously adopted by a woman who has felt the affection of a partner adds grace and dignity to life, sanctifies the home and uplifts religion itself. Widowhood imposed by religion or custom is an unbearable yoke and defiles the home by secret vice and degrades religion.

And does not this Hindu widowhood stink in one's nostrils when one thinks of old and diseased men over 50 taking or rather purchasing girl wives sometimes one on the top of another? So long as we have thousands of widows in our midst we are sitting on a mine which may explode at any moment. If we would be pure, if we would save Hinduism, we must rid ourselves of this poison of enforced widowhood. The reform must begin by those who have girl widows taking courage in both their hands and seeing that the child widows in their charge are duly and well married—not re-married. They were never really married.

Young India, 5-8-1926

182. SPINNING IN SCHOOLS

The following information about spinning in the municipal schools of Banaras will be read with interest:

[1] The source had 'we would resort', an error; *vide*" Corrections", 12-8-1926.

No. of schools	34	
No. of teachers	175	
No. of pupils	4,000	
No. of teachers who have received instruction in carding and spinning		All
No. of pupils who have received instruction in carding and spinning		578
Average No. of spinning wheels per school		10
Present average monthly out put of yarn		30 seers
Average count of yarn		10
Total quantity of cloth woven from the yarn		1,000 yards
Total output of yarn from the commencement		4 mds.
Year of introduction of spinning in the schools		1924
Total expenses incurred so far:		
(a) Cotton	Rs.	747
(b) Charkhas	,,	1,500
(c) Repair of charkhas	,,	50
(d) Contingency	,,	63 per month
(e) Other special expenses	Rs.	40 per month
(f) Inspection	,,	39 ,,

The total output of yarn from the commencement to date cannot be said to be very great. 10 wheels per school cannot be expected to give much for the simple reason that they are too few to be shared by all the children every day. I would, therefore, commend to the Municipality the introduction of the *takli* and it will be found that the output can be easily trebled without any substantial increase in the expenses. There would be no repairs required and every rupee saved. Every minute utilized will be so much added to the income. The Banaras Municipality has led the way in hand-spinning. I hope that it will not hesitate to introduce a reform which experience has proved is most desirable so far as schools are concerned.

Young India, 5-8-1926

183. LETTER TO DHIRENDRA CHANDRA LATIRY

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 5, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Here are my answers to your questions:

(1) The aim of life should be self-purification.

(2) The voidness of life is removed by filling it with self-less service.

(3) Every wrong must carry its penalty. But when a person attains sinlessness, there is no consciousness of penalty because there is no consciousness of person sinned. You have to cease to think of the girl you have wronged and, that you will do when you appreciate the measure of the wrong and understand that she must be in the place of a blood-sister.

(4) In any case, there must be no thought of marriage so long as you think of the girl.

(5) Selfishness can only be removed by devoted service of others without any expectations of reward.

(6) Animal passion can be restrained by realizing that we are men and not brutes. We are men destined to control our passions because we have outlived the mere animal life.

(7) Concentration comes by devoting oneself to some single pure act of service.

(8) One can learn to endure sorrows and [mis]fortunes by realizing that these are the common lot of all mortals. The wonder is that we have few[er] than many others.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. DHIRENDRA CHANDRA LATIRY
C/O SAILENDRA NATH LATIRY, ESQ.
PRESIDENCY JAIL
ALIPUR P. O.
(24 PARGANAS)

From a photostat: S.N. 10975

184. LETTER TO BACHHARAJ JAMNALAL

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Asadha Vad 12, 1982 [*August 5, 1926*]

SHETH BACHHARAJ JAMNALALJI,

I got your letter and the cheque for Rs. 5,000 accompanying it. The receipt is enclosed. Your draft of the receipt for the money received from Rangoon is all right. Kindly write out the receipt accordingly and send it. I am returning the draft herewith.

In the note which you may prepare for publication in *Young India* please also include the list which you sent to me.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

SHETH BACHHARAJ JAMNALALJI
KALBADEVI
BOMBAY

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 12939

185. LETTER TO P. V. SHUKLA

THE ASHRAM,
August 5, 1926

BHAISHRI PRADYUMNARAI,

I have your letter. My position is very unhappy. It is next to impossible to promise a person that his letter will not be read by anyone. My correspondence is so vast, numerous that I can give no such promise. All that I can say, therefore, is that no one will see your letter except those who handle letters addressed to me. I can say this because I always destroy letters like yours. Were it not so, I would not be able to promise even that. Most of my letters, too, I am obliged to dictate.

Vandemataram from
M. GANDHI

SHRI P. V. SHUKLA
WADEKAR BUILDING, ROOM NO. 31
DECCAN GYMKHANA, POONA

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19941

186. LETTER TO G. SITARAMA SASTRY

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 6, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Mr. Banker tells me that he has been writing to you repeatedly for figures for the province and suck other information as it is necessary to complete the record of khadi work throughout India. But he tells me that he is not able to get complete figures from Andhra. I wish you could attend to this matter and have the figures completed and sent.

You will see the table I have published in *Young India*. I want to make that table exhaustive. But I cannot do it if principal centres will not supply me the information. Will you please tell me what difficulty there is in preparing and supplying the figures?

Yours sincerely,

G. SITARAM SASTRY
GUNTUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 11219

187. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 6, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have seen the correspondence about Utkal. As soon as Niranjan Babu's letter was received arrangements were made to send him Rs. 5,000.[1] He must have now got them already. You are certainly not relieved of your charge about Utkal. What did happen was that as a result of the papers sent by Niranjan Babu, I asked Narayandas to carry on correspondence with him so as to elucidate further facts and learn more about the position. But there is no question of managing Utkal directly from here. When he returns, I may write further in the matter. Meanwhile, I remember one condition of his which appealed to me. Now that the Utkal work is our concern, there need be no

[1] *Vide*" Telegram to Jamnalal Bajaj", on or after 3-8-1926.

special inspector to report upon the Utkal work. Niranjan Babu himself is our man.

Mr. Mavalankar, our pleader, says that the cessation of Sir P. C. Ray's Trust-deed is no security unless the shares included in the trust-deed are also ceded. As a matter of form, I think Mr. Mavalankar is right and, seeing that the security is given, it should be complete. Will there be any difficulty about getting possession of the shares? I enclose a copy of Mr. Mavalankar's letter[1] for your information.

You will see the statistics published in the current issue of *Young India.* Do please ask someone to prepare a table for me for Khadi Pratishthan work.

How is Hemaprabha Devi now?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

KHADI PRATISHTHAN

170, BOW BAZAAR STREET

CALCUTTA

PS.

I saw from a copy of your letter to the Association that you have got Rs. 5,000 at 6 % and another Rs. 5,000 at 12 % interest. I hope this is sound business. I have warned you that for a public worker, who works with sufficient detachment to raise a private loan, more particularly to pay interest, is a dangerous pastime. But you know best what to do and what to avoid.

From a microfilm: S.N. 11220

188. LETTER TO GANGA BEHN

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

August 6, 1926

MY DEAR SISTER,

I see you have begun to write English though not Gujarati. Why do you say," how can my husband teach little children?" Is it not a privilege to teach them? And, you will render clean and sanitary what

[1] This is not available.

is now dirty and insanitary. I understand your attachment for Ahmedabad. But I do not want you to give up the struggle there. And, having given this caution, I can say: Come whenever you wish and regard this as your home.

Yours sincerely,

SHRIMATI GANGA BEN
C/O ACHARYA GIDWANI
BRNDABAN

From a microfilm: S.N. 11270

189. LETTER TO A. T. GIDWANI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 6, 1926

MY DEAR GIDWANI,

I have your letter. The spindles also have now been received. The spindles are not good. They bend at the end under the slightest pressure. It is such a delicate thing that even whilst filing, it becomes heated and it requires, therefore, cooling from time to time. I hope you have not got the specimen spindles. It will be a great thing if the workshop there can turn out such spindles. There are pending orders for several thousands. The specimens you have sent are also not true. If a spindle is not absolutely correct, it wobbles as it revolves and wobbling is fatal to good spinning.

I send a specimen of *takli* also with Bharat, the young man, who will be sent as early as possible.

Yours sincerely,

ACHARYA A. T. GIDWANI
PRINCIPAL,
PREM MAHA VIDYALAYA
BRINDABAN

From a microfilm: S.N. 11271

190. LETTER TO CHHOTALAL GANDHI

THE ASHRAM,
August 6, 1926

BHAISHRI CHHOTALAL,

I have your letter. Sometimes it is difficult to know one's dharma. After becoming member of the managing committee of a bank, you can do nothing outside rules and regulations of the bank. I am sure there is no rule, there cannot be any, that money cannot be advanced to a person following a particular profession or belonging to a particular faith. What has occurred suggests, however, that you should not be member of an institution like a bank. If you are, you certainly share in the wrongs committed in its running. My view isthat, so long as you are member of a bank, you should think only of the safety of the bank's money in casting your vote without taking into account the religion and profession of the applicant.

Vandemataram from

M

SHRI CHHOTALAL GHELABHAI GANDHI
ANKLESHVAR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19943

191. LETTER TO NANABHAI BHATT

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Friday, Asadha Vad 13 [*August 6, 1926*][1]

BHAISHRI NANABHAI,

This is not Monday so that you can have a letter written in my own hand. Credit to my account the time you would save in reading the letter; I had stated, in your own words, a distinction made by you. Even if you make it, I have no fear that you will neglect my work. For the work of the Vidyapith is not mine alone; it is as much the work of you all as it is mine. The sum of the efforts of us all, whatever it comes

[1] Reference in the letter to Narahari Parikh's going to Surat suggests that the letter was written in 1926.

to, should be offered up to the Lord. I don't see any difference in the new solution which you now suggest. I fully endorse your view that a teacher can propagate spinning only in his capacity as teacher. You may look upon khadi and the allied activities as the beginning of education; its end is reached only when we attain *moksha*[1].

I was the person who suggested that Narahari[2] should go to Surat and it was he who had asked that a limit be set for the period of his stay there. If now he decides to stay on, not because I want him to do so but of his own free will, and identifies himself with the school, I will not oppose him at all. My opposition is because of his restlessness. He soon tires of anything which he takes up, if hiswork does not yield tangible results. We should not, because he is tired of it, let him give up the work[3] in Sarbhon. Narahari is free to do what he thinks best after taking into consideration all these factors. It has not occurred to me even in my dreams that he should not remain in charge of the school at Surat. I merely wish that he should not fail in his dharma.

DAKSHINAMURTI—BHAVNAGAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12212

192. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

Ashadh Vad 13, Friday [*August 6, 1926*][4]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. Your idea of paying a visit to Bombay in September appears inverted thinking to me. Instead, why doesn't Dr. Jivraj go there when he has the time? I think it is desirable not to take any risk when you have improved so much. Pyarelal, like Cassius, thinks too much. Hence it will be difficult for him to acquire a pink complexion. It is enough if he can keep himself fit. I know this is the best season in Panchgani. Let Pyarelal benefit from it as much as he can. I have not forgotten Taramati's letter. But why should I not

[1] Deliverance from phenomenal existence

[2] Narahari Parikh; he was asked to work as head master of the national school at Surat.

[3] Of the Swarajya Ashram at Sarbhon, a village of the Surat district in Gujarat

[4] From the postmark

avenge myself on her for having been made to wait so long for her letter?

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
HOMI VILLA
PANCHGANI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

193. LETTER TO RAMANAND

THE ASHRAM,
August 6, 1926

BHAI RAMANANDJI,

I have your letter. What help can I give you in your work for the uplift of the depressed classes? In what way can I help one who enjoys the patronage of Swamiji[1] himself? The persons whom I approach for help in the cause of the depressed classes are the same to whom Swamiji goes. What more can my commendation to Jugal Kishoreji[2] do? Your leaflet is much too vague from the point of view of *Young India*.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

SHRI RAMANANDJI
DALITODDHAR SABHA
DELHI

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 19942-a

194. LETTER TO DEBENDRA NATH MAITRA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 7, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The word khaddar certainly does not include all other home industry. But it is not antagonistic to them. Spinning by way of sacrifice is undoubtedly necessary for everyone, no matter

[1] Swami Shraddhanand
[2] Jugal Kishore Birla

what cottage industry he might have taken up. A man who uses his leisure time in spinning by way of sacrifice certainly does better than the one who uses that time for engaging in an industry which gives him more money, because, in the latter case there is no sacrifice and, therefore, no identification with the poor.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. DEBENDRA NATH MAITRA
25, BARAKUTHI ROAD, KHAGRA
DT. MURSHIDABAD

From a microfilm: S.N. 11221

195. LETTER TO PRABHA SHANKAR PATTANI

THE ASHRAM.
SABARMATI,
Saturday, Asadha Vad 14 [*August 7, 1926*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. If you carry sterilized milk with you and see that it is kept in the ice-chamber, I am sure it will not go bad. Moreover, the ship will be stopping at ports on the way. You can get a fresh stock of milk at every such port. The ship authorities will certainly let you carry two or three goats. In some ships they carry even cows. When the proposal of my visit to Finland was being considered,[2] we had certainly thought of taking goats. Besides, you get Nestles' condensed milk, both sweet and plain. You can live even on that. Failing every-thing else, there is Horlicks' malted milk, which is but dried milk. It is available in the form of powder and can safely be taken in place of fresh milk. Besides, the worst coming to the worst, if the goat dies one day through an accident, the Horlicks bottle breaks and the contents of the Nestle tin turn out to be bad, you can certainly live on fruit on that day. If somehow you can keep up this regimen, I have no doubt that your health will be completely restored. We can discuss this further if you can break journey and see me on your way [to Bombay].

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3206. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani; also G.N. 5892

[1] From the postmark

[2] In April 1926 Gandhiji had received an invitation to attend the World Students' Conference which was to be held in Finland in August 1926. In June 1926 Gandhiji had to decline this invitation formerly accepted by him.

196. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Saturday, Asadha, Vad 14, August 7, 1926

BHAI FULCHAND,

I have your letter. I send with this a draft for Rs. 500 for the national school. I am sending another for Rs. 300 to Mulchandbhai also. I had lost some weight because I had given up milk. Now that I have resumed it, the weight is slowly increasing. I have gained one and a quarter pounds in the past seven days.

If the conference is arranged on a Friday and Saturday during February, it would suit me; it would not be inconvenient to me even if it is held on a Wednesday.

SHRI FULCHAND K. SHAH
NATIONAL SCHOOL
WADHWAN

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 12241

197. LETTER TO MULCHAND U. PAREKH

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Saturday, Asadha Vad 14; August 7, 1926

BHAI MULCHANDBHAI,

Shri Fulchand tells me in his letter that you have Rs. 200 with you. You may spend it. I send with this a draft for Rs. 300.

SHRI MULCHAND U. PAREKH
VARTEJ
KATHIAWAR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 12242

198. LETTER TO RAMESHWAR

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Saturday, Asadha Krishnapaksha 14 [*August 7, 1926*][1]

BHAI RAMESHWARJI,

I have your letter. I did not decide on my own to teach the Bible to the boys. They themselves wanted it. Those who claim to follow the *sanatana*[2] dharma should not be ignorant of other religions. By studying other faiths, we only serve the cause of religion. We should not be afraid of such study.

As far as possible, you should avoid going to court. If you have no charkha, then use a *takli.*

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 165

199. LETTER TO JUGAL KISHORE BIRLA[3]

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Tuesday, August 7, 1926

BHAISHRI JUGAL KISHORE,

I have your letter. You will have seen what I have said about the Bible in *Young India*. You ought to be satisfied. I have also seen what is said in the *Vishwamitra*. I shall only say that if the children have to be taught the Bible, it had better be done by me. If they are taught by me they shall get but one thing, viz., *Ramanama,* which is the essence of all religions. If people abuse what I say or do, it cannot harm me or my principles. How can truth be abused? Its abuse turns into its right use. That is why truth is given the highest place in the Upanishads. It is called God. If you are still not satisfied, do write again.

SRI JUGAL KISHORE BIRLA

SABZIMANDI, DELHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 12269

[1] From the postmark

[2] Eternal

[3] This item may be treated as omitted.

200. BULLOCK v. CAR

Kaka Saheb writes:[1]

Kaka Saheb's argument deserves serious attention, especially these days when, almost every week, *Navajivan* carries an article on the best means of protecting cows. Just as, if we stop consuming milk, however hard we strike in the cause of cow-protection, people will never respond to our efforts, so also, if we stop utilizing the services of bullocks for agricultural and other purposes, it will be impossible to protect them. No person in this world has found it possible to maintain something which is a source of constant economic loss. That is why I have many times suggested that if dharma and economic interests cannot be reconciled, either the conception of that dharma is false or the economic interest takes the form of unmitigated selfishness, and does not aim at collective welfare. True dharma always promotes legitimate economic pursuits. For imperfect man, this is a fine test of whether what purports to be dharma is true dharma. In big cities cows and buffaloes have become a burden from the point of view of general economy and that is why their slaughter is increasing day by day. If we do not know the right use of cows and buffaloes in big cities, do what we will, we shall never be able to save them—let no one have any doubt about this. At the moment it seems that we have reached a stage when we simply cannot do without railways. If, however, we realize that railways have not been on the whole a blessing to the country we can restrict their use when we get power. Similarly, even if we cannot banish the motor-car altogether, we must limit the sphere of its use. Everyone should feel that we simply cannot have our fields ploughed by machine and leave the bullocks entirely at the mercy of human beings. The economic structure of the country will be worthy of our admiration and will endure only if it is in keeping with the conditions in the country. Our wisdom and our culture will be judged from our ability to plan an economy which takes into account the conditions prevailing in the country.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-8-1926

[1] Not translated here. Kaka Kalelkar had argued that the increasing use of the motor-car held a threat to the village economy, since it would deprive cultivators of the extra income earned by bullocks by transporting goods. *Vide* also" Letter to D. B. Kalelkar", 4-8- 1926.

201. NATIONAL SCHOOLS

An experienced worker writes:[1]

Let us first examine the analogy of the snake-bite before considering the argument advanced. An analogy is always a little dangerous because two things are rarely, if ever, similar in all respects. And if there is absence of similarity in the essentials, the analogy cannot hold and becomes misleading. In snake-bite, there is hope of revival, the doctor has not declared the person dead; and if the body is cremated there can be no question of removing the poison. Therefore it is sometimes considered advisable to keep the body for two or three days for we do not have the power to recreate a body which has been burnt. But in the case of the so-called national school which I want should either be reformed or closed down, there will not be any of these three considerations to be taken into account, that is to say, there will be no possibility of its acquiring a national character. It is desirable that a school which has been pronounced dead after examination by a doctor and which being the creation of man can be revived, should be closed down. The continuance of these schools results in the spread of falsehood among us; money collected in the name of national schools is spent on these pseudo-national schools which is a betrayal of the trust of the donors; and the true national schools suffer in the estimation of the people because they are led to judge them from what they see in these pseudo-national schools. Those who collect funds for them lose their credit and money being received in the name of national schools stops coming in. If there are to be such undesirable results, it is better to take up a real national school, however small, and concentrate all our attention on it to make it a success. It would behove us and there will be truth and practical sense in it. Just as no construction work is possible out of bricks made of sand spice together somehow, and if we continue with it there is greater burden and loss, an increase in the number of these so-called national schools merely adds to our burden and harms our cause. In the event of tide we can easily multiply the number of national schools even if there is only one true national school. But to produce anything good from a large number of schools national in name only

[1]The letter is not translated here. The correspondent, while agreeing that the national schools which fell short of the ideal should be closed down, had argued that they should not be closed down merely on account of the hostility of parents.

is an utter impossibility. Not only that, if the need for national schools does arise at some future date, the first thing we shall have to do then will be to try to put an end to these pseudo-national schools.

Therefore where either the parents or the teachers are opposed to the national ideal, the national school should certainly be closed down. Where the parents are fired by national ideals and prove their feelings by giving adequate donations for the support of national schools, and, where the teachers being themselves believers in the national ideal are ceaselessly striving to enforce it, I can understand a relaxation of the discipline if the scholars are lukewarm about the ideal. In such a case, it may be necessary to continue the school. For we may hope some day to influence the scholars. But at the time of writing these lines, I can think of no such school.[1]

My own experience is that where the national ideal is found wanting, the fault lies at the door of the teacher. The instance quoted is that of a school where the teachers are enthusiastic, the pupils indifferent and the parents hostile. Where the parents object to their children learning hand-spinning and wearing khadi and threaten to withdraw their children if untouchable children are admitted, I see nothing but waste of the people's time and loss of self-respect for a teacher to carry on his work. If we conduct national schools in spite of the opposition of parents, we would be guilty of the same fault that we impute to the Christian missionaries. We have no right to impart instruction to children against the wish of their parents and to create family dissensions. Those pupils who are over 16 years of age and who understand their interest, who are capable of suffering hardships, do not stand in need of protection: They have become self-reliant. For such, wherever necessary, we should open schools and undoubtedly conduct the existing ones. But do we have such pupils anywhere in India? How many are they? And where are the schools in which there are students who can be likened to godly, fearless, long-suffering and yet wise and respectful Prahlad? When myriads of such scholars are produced, India will overflow with new life and no one will want to know where swaraj is.

And in order to produce a harvest of such scholars, we need to conduct only true national schools even though they may have only a few scholars. Where parents feel that they are obliging the teachers by

[1] This paragraph is taken from *Young India*, 2-9-1926.

sending their children to a national school, the pupils lord it over the teachers, and where the threat is held out directly or indirectly that if no assistance is rendered they will side with the Government, we must assure that there is no national school and we ought to close down a school which is run only in name. We have now understood what non-co-operation is. We are in a position to appraise its value. The people are not ignorant of its dangers. And, therefore, the way of non-co-operating schools is clear. Let us never deceive ourselves. Let us take the ups and downs in our stride and let us continue our work remaining firm in all faith and all will be well in the end.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-8-1926

202. PRINCIPAL DHRUVA AND NATIONAL EDUCATION

Principal Anandshankar writes as follows:[1]

When I read the letter in question I certainly did not feel that it in any way accused Principal Dhruva or Acharya Gidwani[2] of being against national education. To other readers who do not know them, however, it may suggest a meaning which it did not to me because I knew them well. Anandshankarbhai's letter was thus really called for. His happy and close association with the Vidyapith and the fact of his having accepted the chairmanship of the Vidyapith Enquiry Committee are enough evidence of his sympathy for the ideals of national education. As for Acharya Gidwani, he was himself Principal of the national college. The love and affection for him which the students displayed at the time of his leaving[3] the Vidyapith and the speedy collection by them of Rs. 1,500 for a scholarship for encouraging *Antyaja* uplift work, which was to be named after him in order to keep alive the memory of his association with the Vidyapith are irrefutable evidence of his faith in national education.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-8-1926

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had referred to a letter from" A Non-co-operating Father" published in *Navajivan*" 18-7-1926, which seemed to suggest that he was opposed to national education.

[2] A. T. Gidwani

[3] Early in 1926

203. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 8, 1926

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your letter. At least at the top of it you have my own writing and, for the time being it should be enough. I too detest the typewriter. I have a horror of it, but I survive it as I survive many things which do not do lasting harm. If someone dispossessed me of the typewriter, I should not shed a single tear, but, as it is there, I make use of it and, even believe that some time is being savedfor more useful work. But, even in this belief, I may be totally wrong. It is so difficult to rise superior to one's surroundings always.

Evidently Anne Marie is doing great and good work. Prejudices die hard! But, wherever there is earnestness, there is no difficulty about breaking down the hardest prejudices.

It will be a nice thing when Menon has his own hospital. Mirabehn wanted to go through 7 days' fast as a spiritual experience. She completed it this morning and broke it on fruit juice. She took the fast extremely well though she has lost ten pounds in seven days. But that of course is nothing

I do not expect much from the Viceroy. He may be well meaning, but mere good intentions count for little. But as you have very properly guessed, I can only say, whether it takes long or short, salvation must come only through ourselves.

Yours,
BAPU

MRS. ESTHER MENON
PORTO NOVO

From a photostat: Courtesy: National Archives of India; also *My Dear Child,* p. 83

204. LETTER TO PARASRAM

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Sunday, Asadha 11, August 8, 1926

BHAI PARASRAMJI,

I got your letter, which made rather painful reading. It is true indeed that the programme of Council entry has resulted in bitter

quarrelling. But why should those who take no interest whatsoever in Councils feel unhappy about the matter? If we go on doing our best, truth is bound to triumph ultimately. The present is a difficult time, but we should not make ourselves unhappy about it if we are to retain our peace of mind.

SHRI PARASRAMJI

C/O CONGRESS COMMITTEE

BRADLAUGH HALL

LAHORE

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 12244

205. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Tuesday, Sravana Shukla 2, August 10, 1926

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter, why this continued illness? You should take immediate measures and get cured. Jamnalalji is coming here to improve his health. When he is here, I will see what the matter is with him. If you, too, come and stay here just for a few days, I may have some idea of your health. What should I say about your latest donation? I am simply filled with wonder. I understand what you say about Rs. 70,000[1]. I will make every effort through the Spinners' Association to return it. I have taken it that I do not have to worry about the sum of Rs. 30,000, which you have advanced to Satis Babu[2]. I had followed your argument about the Assembly. You must have got my reply to that letter. Shastriji wrote to me about the reply you gave him. I am both pained and surprised by what you say about the cause of the Calcutta riot. I was very pleased by Malaviyaji's letter and the subsequent developments, too, were very good. I have decided to write on the subject.

SHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI BIRLA

SABZIMANDI

DELHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 12245

[1] Received by Khadi Pratishthan in Bengal through the All-India Spinners' Association

[2] Who founded and managed Khadi Pratishthan

206. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Tuesday, Sravana Sud 2 [*August 10, 1926*]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter, and also Ghanshyamdas's. And your telegram too. It was good that you went to Sikar. Please see that now you do not change your mind about coming here direct from there. Ghanshyamdas tells me that your health, too, is none too good. I was alarmed by the news.

More when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2872

207. LETTER TO CHANDULAL DESAI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Wednesday, Sravana Sud 3, August 11, 1926

BHAISHRI CHANDULAL,

I have your letter. I can understand your difficulty. You need not feel embarrassed in writing about it to me. From where can I get the money to send to you? I am sure you will understand that I have no money with myself, and I should also like you to believe that my ability to get money from others is greatly limited. I understand that you want a loan. If so, why not raise the money on the security of the buildings you have constructed? That seems to me the easiest way.

DR. CHANDULAL MANILAL DESAI
C/O MESSRS VAKIL BROTHERS
MANIA BHUTAN, LABURNUM ROAD
GAMDEVI, BOMBAY

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 12246

208. JUSTICE FROM SIX THOUSAND MILES

No conquest by force of arms is worth treasuring if it is not followed by cultural conquest, if the conquered do not hug their

chains and regard the conqueror as their benefactor. The different forts of India are no doubt a continuous reminder of the British might. But the silent conquest of the mind of educated India is a surer guarantee of British stability than the formidable forts, i.e., if the opinion expressed by the distinguished lawyers in *Indian Daily Mail* on the very modest proposal of Sir Hari Singh Gour for the establishment of a Supreme Court at Delhi is an index of that mind. For, these eminent lawyers regard the proposal as premature, in that judgments of the Privy Council sitting six thousand miles away from India would command, in their opinion, greater respect and ensure greater impartiality. This amazing opinion, I venture to say, has no foundation in fact. But distance lends enchantment to the scene. Members of the Privy Council are, after all, human beings. They have been found to betray political bias. Their decisions in cases involving questions of custom are often distortions of the reality, not because they are perverse, but because it is not possible for mortals to know everything. A less trained lawyer having a direct knowledge of a local custom is better able to appraise evidence on it than those who, no matter what their attainments are, know nothing of local conditions.

The distinguished lawyers moreover state that expenses will not be less because the final court of appeal is brought down to Delhi. It does not say much for the patriotism of these eminent gentlemen, if they mean that the fees should be on the same scale in poor India as in rich England. A Scotch friend once told me that Englishmen were probably the most extravagant in the world in their tastes and requirements. He told me that hospitals in Scotland were far less expensively fitted than in England, though they were in no way inferior in usefulness to those in England. Or does a legal argument increase in weight with an increase in the fees charged?

The third argument pressed into service in order to oppose the proposed change is that Indian judges will not command the same weight as the wigged ones in White Hall. If this was not an argument advanced by distinguished lawyers, it would be laughed out. Is respect for judgments commended by their impartiality, or thelocation, or the birth, or the colour of the skin, of judges? And if it is the seat or the birth or the pigment that determines the weight to be attached to judges' decisions, is it not high time that the superstition was removed by removing the seat and appointing judges of Indian birth? Or does the argument presuppose partiality on the part of

judges of Indian birth? One does sometimes hear of poor people under stress of ignorance desiring an English Collector in the place of an Indian. But greater fearlessness and sanity are surely to be expected of experienced lawyers.

But while, in my humble opinion, none of the three arguments advanced against the proposal has any force, the deciding reason for having our Supreme Court in India is that our self-respect demands it. Just as we cannot breathe with other's lungs, be they ever so much more powerful, so may we not borrow or buy justice from England. We must take pride in being satisfied with the work our own judges may give us. Trials by jury often result, all over the world, in defeating justice. But people everywhere gladly submit to the drawback for the sake of the more important result of the cultivation of an independent spirit among people and the justifiable sentiment of being judged by one's own peers. But sentiment is at a discount in legal circles. And yet it is sentiment that rules the world. Economics and every other consideration is often flung to the winds when sentiment predominates. Sentiment can be and must be regulated. It cannot be, ought never to be, eradicated. If it is not wrong to cherish patriotic feeling, it is surely not wrong to remove the final court of appeal to Delhi. Just as good government is no substitute for self-government, good justice, if foreign, is no substitute for homemade justice.

Young India, 12-8-1926

209. CORRECTIONS

I am aware of weak and faulty proof-reading and printing of *Young India*. But consistently with the desire of co-workers to save expenses, every effort is being made to avoid mistakes. But I am sorry to have to state that last week two grievous blunders crept into the article on" Enforced Widowhood".

In paragraph 5," But one did not quarrel"' should read" But one need not quarrel". In the last paragraph in the first column in the 5th line from the bottom on reads" We would resort to force inreligion" It should read" We would resent force in religion". I would not have noticed these errors if I did not know that there were many readers who filed their copies and earnestly studied *Young India* writings.

Young India, 12-8-1926

The chapter on perpetual continence is followed by chapters on the duty and indissolubility of marriage. Whilst the author contends that perpetual continence is the highest state, it is not possible for the multitude for whom marriage must be regarded as a duty. He shows if the function and limitations of marriage are rightly understood, there never can be any advocacy of contraceptives. It is the wrong moral training that has brought about the prevalent moral indiscipline. Having dealt with the opinion of 'advanced' writers ridiculing marriage the author says:

> Happily for future generations, this opinion of pseudo moralists and of writers who are often utterly lacking in moral sense, and equally so sometimes in the real literary spirit, is very far from being that of the true psychologists and sociologists of our time; and in nothing is the rupture more complete between the noisy world of the press, the novel, and the stage, and that other world where thought is cultivated, and the mysterious elements of our psychological and social life are studied in detail.

M. Bureau rejects the argument of free love. He holds that" marriage is the union of man and woman, the association for life, the communication of divine and human rights of law". Marriage is not a ''mere civil contract" but a sacrament, a ''moral obligation". It has succeeded in" making the gorilla stand erect".

> It is a great mistake to imagine that everything is permissible to those lawfully married and even supposing that husband and wife ordinarily respect the moral law as to transmission of life, it is untrue that it is lawful to *add* other modes of sexual intercourse which please them. This prohibition is as much in their interest as in that of society of which their marriage ought to be the maintenance and development.

The author holds that:

> The ever renewed opportunities of deviation from strict discipline which marriage affords to the sexual instinct are a constant menace to true love. This peril can only be exorcised by watchfulness to keep the satisfaction of the sexual appetite within the limits defined by the very ends of marriage." It is always dangerous," says St. Francis of Sales, ''to take to violent medicines since if one takes more than should be taken, or if they are not well made up, much harm is done; marriage has been blessed and ordained partly as a remedy for concupiscence, and it is undoubtedly a very good remedy, but all the same a violent one, and consequently very dangerous if not discreetly used.

The author then combats the theory of individual liberty to contract or break the marriage bond at will or to live frankly a life of indulgence without its consequent obligation. He insists on monogamy and says:

> It is untrue that the individual is at liberty to contract marriage or to remain in selfish celibacy, as he pleases; still less are duly married people free to agree together to the rupture of their union. Their freedom is shown when they choose each other, and each is bound to choose only with full knowledge, after careful thought, the one with whom he believes he can assume the responsibilities of the new life he is entering. But as soon as the marriage has been accomplished and consummated, the act performed involves, far away and in all directions, incalculable consequences which extend infinitely beyond the two persons' who have brought them about. These consequences may be unperceived, in a time of anarchic individualism such as ours, by the spouses themselves, but their importance is certified by the grave sufferings which come upon the whole body social, as soon as the stability of the home is shaken, as soon as the variable caprice of the sensual appetite takes the place of the beneficent discipline of the positive monogamic union. To one who is conscious of these indefinitely extended repercussions and these subtle connections, it matters little to know that, since all human institutions are subject to the universal law of evolution, that of marriage must certainly, like all the rest, undergo in its turn necessary transformations, since there can be no doubt that progress in this direction can only take the form of eventually drawing more closely the marriage bond. The attacks now made on the rule of the indissolubility of marriage" when divorce is asked for by mutual consent" will only bring into more prominent relief the social value of a rule against which protest is made, and as the years roll by this rule, which for some centuries, when its social value could not yet be appreciated, was simply a prescription of religious discipline, will appear more and more as a principle as beneficial to the individual as it is salutary for society at large.
>
> The rule of indissolubility is not an arbitrary adornment; on the contrary, it is bound up with the most delicate mechanism of the individualand collective social life; and since people talk about evolution, they should ask on what condition this indefinite progress of the race which all agree to desire, is possible. The deepening of the sense of responsibility, the training of the individual towards autonomous discipline willingly consented to, the growth of patience and charity, the control of selfishness, the maintenance of the emotional life against the elements that make for dissolution and the impulse of passing caprice—all these are dements in man's interior life which we are entitled to consider the absolute and permanent conditions of all higher social

culture, and on this account exempt from all such disorder as might result from a serious change in economic conditions. To tell the truth, economic progress is itself closely bound up with general social progress, for economic security and success depend in the long run on the sincerity and loyalty of our social co-operation. Every economic modification which ignores these fundamental conditions is self-condemned. If we wish, therefore, to take up the study, at once both moral and social, of the absolute value of the various methods of sexual relations, the following question is decisive: What method is the best adapted to the deepening and strengthening of our whole social life? Which is the most capable, at the different periods of life, of developing to the utmost the sense of responsibility, self-abnegation and sacrifice, of most effectively restraining undisciplined selfishness and capricious frivolity? When the matter is viewed from this standpoint, there is not the slightest doubt that monogamy, because of its social and educative value, must form part of the permanent heritage of all more advanced civilizations; and true progress will draw more closely, rather than relax, the marriage bond. . . . The family is the center of all human preparation for the social life, that is to say, all preparation for responsibility, sympathy, self-control, mutual tolerance, and reciprocal training. And the family only fills this central place because it lasts all through life and is indissoluble, and because, thanks to this permanence, the common family life becomes deeper, more stable, more adapted to men's mutual intercourse than any other. It may be said that monogamic marriage is the conscience of all human social life.

He quotes Auguste Comte:" Our hearts are so changeable that society must intervene to hold in check the vacillation and caprices which would otherwise drag down human existence to be nothing but a series of nonworthy and pointless experiences. Satisfaction of lust is never the end of marriage."

"A fiction," writes Dr. Toulouse," which often hinders the happiness of married people, is that the instinct of love is a tyrant and must be satisfied at any price . . . Now the very characteristic quality of man, and the apparent end of his evolution" is an ever growing independence of his appetites. The child learns to master his coarser needs, and the adult to overcome his passions. This scheme of all good upbringing is not chimerical, nor something outside practical life for the end of our nature is precisely to be subject, in great degree, to the personal tendencies which constitute our will. What one shelters behind as 'temperament' is usually nothing but weakness. The man who is really strong knows how to use his powers at the right time."

Young India, 12-8-1926

211. TRIUMPH OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

Pundit Malaviyaji's triumph is a national victory. Disrupted and demoralized though we are at the present moment, Punditji has shown that there is still courage left in us to defy the might of the mightiest empire. To have issued notice light-heartedly against one of the oldest and most respected and best-known of India's public servants was an insolent exhibition of power. Let us assume for the moment that the Government had sufficient grounds for fearing Pundit Malaviyaji's presence in Calcutta at a time when they were trying to bring about peace. It was still wrong to have dealt summarily with a man of Punditji's position in the Indian world. It would not have derogated from the Acting Governor's dignity if he had written a private note to punditiji or if he had invited him for a conference and placed before him the evidence in his possession and told him to absent himself in the interests of peace which Panditji claimed to desire as much as the Governor himself. In every one of his public speeches Punditji has put emphasis upon the desirability of peace. But the Government is too disdainful of public opinion even to think of any such courteous action. It expected Punditji and Dr. Moonje to take the order with due and humble submission. The Government evidently expected that non-co-operation was dead, that civil disobedience died even before non-co-operation and was decently buried at Bardoli, and that the Congress resolutions on civil disobedience were all idle threats. The Bengal Government has now discovered its mistake. Punditji's letter is a lesson in self-restraint combined with firmness. His following up the letter with action, his refusal to see the Magistrate and his triumphant entry into Calcutta, his advice to the people not to lose their heads, not to demonstrate, and his quiet continuance of his programme as if nothing had happened, furnish an object lesson in perfect civil disobedience. It is to be hoped that the Government will understand that civil disobedience has come to stay and when occasion demands it, there will be more than one person in the country to adopt it.

Both Hindus and Mussalmans will commit a serious blunder if we consider that the serving of notice on Punditji and Dr. Moonje was an anti-Hindu and pro-Mahommedan act. With the Government all is grist that comes to its mill. If today it is a distinguished Hindu who has been served with a notice, it will be tomorrow an equally distinguished Mussalman to receive the same attention if the Government desires it for its own end. Nobody is deceived by the declaration that the

Government sincerely wants peace between the communities. I venture to suggest that a real desire for peace between Hindus and Mussalmans is wholly inconsistent with the desire to retain British rule in India by force of arms. When British officials begin the work of peace between these two branches of the Indian family, they will have begun to live in India on sufferance. After all, the discovery that India is governed by the 'divide and rule' policy was made, in the first instance, not by an Indian but, if I am not mistaken, by an Englishman. It was either the late Allen Octavius Hume or George Yule who taught us to believe that the Empire was based upon a policy of divide and rule. Nor need we be surprised at or resent it. Imperial Rome did no otherwise. British did no otherwise with the Boers. By a system of favouritism it sought to divide the Boer ranks. The Government of India is based upon distrust. Distrust involves favouritism and favouritism must breed division. There are frank Englishmen enough who have owned this fact. No serious student of Indian history can help rejecting the recent declarations about peace on the part of the Viceroy or the Governors. I am prepared to believe that His Excellency the Viceroy is sincere in his declaration. It is not necessary for one to impute dishonesty to the high officials, if one is to ascribe the policy of 'divide and rule' to the Government. The division policy need not be always conscious and deliberate. Mussalmans against Hindus, non-Brahmins against Brahmins, Sikhs against both, Gurkhas against all the three, this game of permutation and combination has gone on ever since the advent of British rule, and will continue so long as the Government considers its interests so be antagonistic to those of the people or its existence to be against the desire of the people. Hence it is that swaraj is a vital necessity for national growth. Hence it is that Mrs. Besant has stated not without much force that Hindu-Muslim unity is almost an impossibility without swaraj. And unfortunately we are having it demonstrated to us daily that swaraj is an equal impossibility without Hindu-Muslim unity. I am however optimistic enough to believe that the unity will come in spite of ourselves because, I implicitly believe in Lokamanya's motto" Swaraj is my birthright and I shall have it." Where man's effort may fail, God's will succeed, and His Government is not based upon 'divide and rule' policy.

Young India, 12-8-1926

212. PIONEER IN NATIONAL EDUCATION

Professor Bijapurkar whose death was announced last week was one of the pioneers of national education. He may be said to have given his whole life to national education. He suffered much for it. He was the soul of the institution at Talegaon. He laboured to give the students text books in Marathi. He abhorred cant, humbug and untruth. He was, like all Maharashtra workers, an embodiment of simplicity. He was adored by his pupils whom he loved as a father loves his children. I tender my condolences to the members of the deceased's family and to those devoted followers whom he has left behind him.

Young India, 12-8-1926

213. HAS NON-VIOLENCE LIMITS?

The following is an extract from a detailed letter[1] from a correspondent who gives his full name and address:

> You may know what is happening to Congress workers in Madras. During the last two days, the Justice Party men have excelled themselves in their abominations. Mr. . . . accompanied by Mr. . . . was conversing votes for Mr. . . . the Congress candidate. A group of Justice men who kept following Mr. . . . and others when they came near the Justice candidate's house suddenly surrounded the Congress workers and spat upon . . . and . . .'s faces. . . . The object of addressing you these few words is to ask you to enunciate your theory of non-violence with reference to what a Congressman should do under circumstances of such grave indignity and insult. . . . The provocation is increasing every day, and it may not be possible for Congress workers to restrain the youthful followers from taking the law into their own hands. Therefore may I ask you to state if private defence is compatible with non-violence and with what qualifications it should be exercised? . . . One reason why I request you to publish your opinion as early as you possibly can is that we are told that the Justice Party is experimenting with hooligan tactics to see if it succeeds, so that they might systematize it into a regular art of political warfare against the Congress in the coming Council and Assembly elections in November.

I have purposely erased names of men and places; for, their discovery is not required for my purpose. Time for expedient

[1] Only excerpts from the passage quoted are reproduced here.

non-violence passed away long ago. Those who cannot be non-violent at heart are under no obligation to be non-violent under the circumstances mentioned by the correspondent. Though non-violence is the creed of the Congress, nobody now refers to the creed for being or remaining non-violent. Every Congressman who is non-violent is so because he cannot be otherwise. My advice therefore emphatically is that no one need refer to me or any other Congressmen for advice in the matter of non-violence. Everyone must act on his own responsibility, and interpret the Congress creed to the best of his ability and belief. I have often noticed that weak people have taken shelter under the Congress creed or under my advice, when they have simply by reason of their cowardice been unable to defend their own honour or that of those who were entrusted to their care. I recall the incident that happened near Bettiah when non-co-operation was at its height. Some villagers were looted. They had fled leaving their wives, children and belongings to the mercy of the looters. When I rebuked them for their cowardice in thus neglecting their charge, they shamelessly pleaded non-violence. I publicly denounced their conduct and said that my non-violence fully accommodated violence offered by those who did not feel non-violence and who had in their keeping the honour of their womenfolk and little children. Non-violence is not a cover for cowardice, but it is the supreme virtue of the brave. Exercise of non-violence requires far greater bravery than that of swordsmanship. Cowardice is wholly inconsistent with non-violence. Translation from swordsmanship to non-violence is possible and at times even an easy stage. Non-violence, therefore, presupposes ability to strike. It is a conscious deliberate restraint put upon one's desire for vengeance. But vengeance is any day superior to passive, effeminate and helpless submission. Forgiveness is higher still. Vengeance too is weakness. The desire for vengeance comes out of fear of harm, imaginary or real. A dog barks and bites when he fears. A man who fears no one on earth would consider it too troublesome even to summon up anger against one who is vainly trying to injure him. The sun does not wreak vengeance upon little children who throw dust at him. They only harm themselves in the act.

I do not know whether the statements made by the correspondent about the misdeeds of the Justice Party men are true. Perhaps, there is another side to the story. But, assuming the truth of the statements, I can only congratulate those who were spat upon, or assaulted or had night-soil thrown upon them. No injury has

happened to them if they had the courage to suffer the insult without even mental retaliation. But, it was wholly wrong on their part to suffer it, if they felt irritated, but refrained out of expedience from retaliating. A sense of self-respect disdains all expedience. But I wonder what kind of punishment could be meted out by distinguished Congressmen who, as the correspondent states, were too numerous for the few hooligans of the Justice Party. Were they to return night-soil with night-soil, spitting with spitting, and abuse with abuse? Or, would the self-respect of this numerous party be better consulted by ignoring the few hooligans? When non-co-operation was the fashion, I know what was done to hooligans who tried to disturb meetings. They were held down by volunteers who caused them no hurt, but, if they continued to howl, their howling was ignored. I know that even in those days, in several cases the law of non-violence was broken and any man who dared to disturb the meetings or put in a word of opposition was howled down by the violent majority or, some times, even roughly handled to the discredit of the majority and the movement which they so thoughtlessly betrayed and misrepresented. I suggest also to this Congressman and to those whom he may represent that, if the object is to win over the Justice Party or any other party to the Congress, then, they should be treated gently even though they may act harshly. If it is to suppress all opponents, then, double retaliation or Dyerism is the chosen remedy. Whether that can bring us any nearer swaraj is, of course, another question.

But all my advice is useless where conviction is wanting. Let every Congressman, therefore, weigh all the pros and cons, then make his definite choice and act accordingly, irrespective of consequences. He will then have acted truly even though it may be mistakenly. A thousand mistakes unconsciously made are better than the most scrupulously correct conduct without conviction behind to back it. It is like a whited sepulchre. Above all, we must be true to ourselves if we will be true to the country and lead it to its chosen goal. Let there be no cant about non-violence. It is not like a garment to be put onand off at will. Its seat is in the heart and it must be an inseparable part of our very being.

Young India, 12-8-1926

214. LETTER TO R. A. ADAMS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 12, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter[1] of the 6th August. I have now enquired. It is not possible to certify that the students of the National College cannot afford to buy. But I sent a messenger yesterday to find out how many students would care to buy copies at reduced charges. I got 40 applications. If you will kindly tell me what it would cost the students to get the copies, I would be able to tell you whether they will have them at the price or not. I am inclined to think that it would be better for them to possess the whole of the Bible and not merely the New Testament. I think you have in stock a cheap edition of the whole Bible. Of course, it is the English text that they would want.

Yours sincerely,

R. A. ADAMS, ESQ.
SECRETARY
BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY
170, HORNBY ROAD, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 10980

215. LETTER TO A. T. GIDWANI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 12, 1926

MY DEAR GIDWANI,

Bharat, the spinning teacher, went to you yesterday. I hope he has reached you safely.[2] Bharat is the name he has assumed for the qualities of Bharat of Tulsidas's *Ramayana* which qualities he wants

[1] R. A. Adams had referred in this to having received a request from a student of the National College for a free copy of the New Testament, and enclosed his reply (S.N. 10977) to him. He had added that if a list of other students desiring to have complimentary copies were sent to him, he would be glad to send them too (S.N. 10976).

[2] *Vide*" Letter to K T. Gidwani", 6-8-1926.

to cultivate for himself. I hope you will find him quite competent and industrious. He has been complaining about some defect in his eyesight. He was examined by a doctor before he was sent to you and the doctor said that there was nothing wrong with his eyes but, in case he complains about anything in his eyes, you would know what to do. Bharat will give you a *takli*. A spindle was sent some time ago. Let your people make a third attempt and make the thing we want.

You do not want me to deal with the difficulty about the prayer that Roy has raised.

No teacher is available at the present moment such as is required by the people of Stanger. I return that letter lest you might want it.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 11272

216. LETTER TO MRS. A. SEN AND MISS P. BOSE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 12, 1926

DEAR SISTERS,

I am thankful for your letter[1]. Beyond knowing the general trend of the tragic events in Pabna and elsewhere; I know nothing.[2] I do not read newspaper reports because I distrust them. I would, therefore, feel grateful to you if you could send me authentic information that may be in your possession.

The question you want me to answer in the pages of *Young India* is rather delicate.[3] I am not sure that I shall serve the cause you and I have at heart by a public discussion of a delicate question. The information I have gathered from trustworthy friends goes to show

[1] This was dated August 4, 1926. It furnished the correspondents' address as suggested by Gandhiji; *vide*" Notes", 29-7-1926, sub-title," To 'Some Bengali Ladies'" .

[2] The correspondents had referred to outrages against Hindu women by Muslim rowdies in Bengal villages and recalled a remark, which they said, was once made by Ramananda Chatterji, editor of *Modern Review*, in his Bengal journal, *Prabasi*, that he wondered why Gandhiji said nothing about the persecuted women of Bengal, though he had stayed and travelled through Bengal for a long time (S. N. 12378)

[3] The question was" What should women do when such events were going to take place and whether they should not take to physical exercise from the very childhood and be taught to defend themselves against such villains."

that wherever violence has occurred, it was due to the cowardice of men rather than the inability of the women to protect their honour by physical resistance. I question the advisability of the formation of an association such as you suggest, not because it is sinful for a woman to use the dagger or the pistol when she knows not any other method, but because in the vast majority of cases such self-defence proves worse than useless and because it will take generations before our women take to the dagger or the pistol in any appreciable number. Perhaps, the quicker method is for women to shame men into performing their primary duty of protecting their womenfolk at all costs. But, before any step can be taken, you must have incontrovertible facts before you. Is the disease general? How many cases of real violence have happened, say, during the past six months? Was it impossible in every case for men to protect the victims? What is the precise method adopted by the miscreants to secure their victims? I hope you would not take a single step without knowing the full facts, and without reasonable hope of securing acceptance of the methods that you may suggest for meeting the evil.

Yours sincerely,

MRS A. SEN
MISS P. BOSE
C/O RAJ KUMAR SEN
DINANATH SEN'S LANE
GANDARIA
P. O. FARIDABAD
DACCA

From a photostat S. N. 12378

217. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Thursday, Sravana Shuklapaksha 4, August 12, 1926

BHAI NAJUKLAL,

You must have now returned to Bombay. Velanbehn is yearning to see Moti. If possible, please send her for a few days. If, however, that is not possible, please do not at all hesitate to say so.

I hope you are in good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12134

218. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN CHOKSI

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Thursday, Sravana Shukla 4, August [*12,*][1] *1926*

CHI. MOTI,

Velanbehn is yearning to see you. If, therefore you can come, that is, if you can easily get permission to do so, you should come. It will still be a few days before Lakshmidas comes here I hope you are all right now. How can I now expect a letter from you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12135

219. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

SABARMATI,

August 12, 1926

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I send with this a letter from Maneklal. If you think that Ramdas should go, as suggested in it, please write to him and tell him so. I have written to him and asked him to follow your instructions. You may now do what you think best.

BAPU

FULCHAND KASTURCHAND SHAH
WADHWAN

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 12247

220. LETTER TO GOKULBHAI D. BHATT

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Thursday, Sravana Sud 4, August 12, 1926

BHAISHRI GOKULBHAI,

I have your letter. I read two or three times that paragraph referred to by you. I do not understand why the friend declines to pay you any contribution. Which remark of mine has he interpreted to mean that your school should be closed? Is it true of your school that

[1]The source has 13, but *Sravana Shukla* 4 fell on Thursday, August 12.

parents and teachers are inspired by the national spirit but the pupils are indifferent? I don't think it is. Does it happen anywhere that parents and teachers want their children and pupils always to wear khadi but the latter refuse to do so? Do not the pupils in your school wear khadi? If I have understood you correctly, a large majority of them do. How, then, can the paragraph in question apply to you? If the pupils do not in fact wear khadi, then it may be said that your school does not belong to the type I have supposed. In that case, too, it should be continued, according to that paragraph. Is this not quite clear? You can make any use you like of this letter. Do you still think that it is necessary for me to write on this subject? If you think it is, kindly explain to me why.

BAPU

SHRI GOKULBHAI DOLATRAM BHATT

BOMBAY

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 12248

221. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Thursday, Sravana Sud 4, August 12, 1926

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your letter. I acted upon your telegram as soon as I could. You must have got the spinning-wheel by now. I forgot to give instructions about slivers, and they may not have been packed. There can be no comparison between Mrs. Besant and the Maharani[1]. I have done no injustice to the latter. Mrs. Besant is a public figure and, if she bought a spinning-wheel, she would do so because she understood its value. On the other hand the Maharani, even if she took up spinning, would do so as an amusement. Impartiality does not rule out discrimination. I have explained only one reason. You yourself have given a second reason in your letter, in your description of the Maharaja. I know much about him. His life is none too pure, and he has an extremely unsteady mind. He is not at all dependable. He hopes to get something done through me, and I am not in a position to satisfy his hope. I smell this hope even in his readiness to start

[1] The queen of the then princely State of Nabha in the Punjab

spinning. I have, therefore, cautioned you and left it to you to decide what is best for you to do, so that you may not do the slightest injustice to the Maharaja.

I understand your reason for wishing to stay on there. Stay on by all means, and come here only when you are quite strong again. You may go to Simla any time you wish to, but, whether you are in Simla or Mussoorie, you should always carry on public work. Only in this way will you succeed in promoting the sale of khadi. And see that you attend to everything yourself. I have suggested to Chhaganlal[1] that he should reserve for you the khadi which in your letter you have asked him to send to you. In view of what I have written to you in this letter, to which place do you now want the khadi to be despatched?

Pyarelal has written to Mahadev what he wrote to you. Arrangements will now be made to send the money from here. Harilal is still here. Balibehn[2] comes occasionally.

BAPU

CHI. DEVDAS GANDHI

THE OAKS

MUSSOORIE

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12243

222. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Sravana Shukla 4 [*August 12, 1926*][3]

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. Well do I know that no one except Malaviyaji and Shraddhanandji can bring about Hindu-Muslim unity. l wish to be no more than an advisor and help, if I can, to settle small points of dispute. My work is a Bhangi's, to clean and try to keep clean things. When the time for a settlement comes, the approval of Malaviyaji and others will certainly be essential.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6131 Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Chhaganlal Gandhi

[2] Harilal's sister-in-law

[3] Reference in the letter to Gandhiji's desire to play the role of just an adviser in regard to the Hindu-Muslim tension suggests that the letter was written in 1926.

223. LETTER TO ANANT MEHTA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 13, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and the crossed Postal Order payable at Ahmedabad for 20 shillings for the inauguration of a fund for starting satyagraha in accordance with the suggestions made by you. I may deal with your letter in some shape or form in the pages of *Young India*. But let me tell you here that your letter is written in ignorance of the situation as it exists here at the present moment. Your Postal Order as it was made payable in Ahmedabad, I have been obliged to cash, but, as I am unable to start satyagraha at the present moment and as I am unable to start the fund suggested by you, will you kindly tell me what you would have me do with the proceeds of the Postal Order?

Yours sincerely,

ANANT MEHTA, ESQ.
BRITISH INDIAN UNION
10, GROSVENOR GARDENS
LONDON S.W.

From a photostat: S.N. 10799

224. LETTER TO JANAKDHARI PRASAD

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 13, 1926

DEAR JANAKDHARI BABU,

I have your letter. I have somewhat studied the question now being expounded by Dr. Besant.[1] I have not been able to enthuse about it. Everyone has to earn his own salvation. I did come in touch

[1] Writing on August l, Janakdhari Prasad had referred, *inter alia*, to a statement by Dr. Annie Besant regarding the reappearance of Jesus Christ, and asked Gandhiji to study the question and give his personal views (S.N. I1215).

with the gentleman at Pabna.[1] He created little impression on me and, after Deshbandhu's death, so far as I am aware, he has not carried out the promise made to Deshbandhu.

In a place like yours where you are living as one family,[2] it is impossible to separate the Mussalman teacher from the Hindus and ask him to dine apart from us.

I hope you are keeping excellent health.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. JANAKDHARI PRASAD
GANDHI VIDYALAYA
P.O. HAJIPUR
DT. MUZAFFARPUR

From a photostat: S.N. 11223

225. LETTER TO PROFULLA CHANDRA SEN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 13, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter which I like very much. Whilst I can entirely approve of your method of work, I can equally well endorse the methods adopted by the Khadi Pratishthan and the Abhoy Ashram. Each has its place. Khadi Pratishthan work is surely not exploitation. Exploitation of whom by whom? Not of the women who are able, because of the Pratishthan having created a market, to sell their yarn in ever-increasing quantity and not by Khadi Pratishthan, for, it makes no profits for shareholders or directors. On the contrary, several of its members are giving of their very best to the Khadi Pratishthan and, this work as surely makes for swaraj as yours, if only because vast production and sale of khadi makes boycott of foreign cloth possible within a measurable distance of time. It is wrong to suggest that the Khadi Pratishthan workers do not come in touch with the spinners. It would be right if you said that they do not come in as close touch as you do. But, that merely means that you are working for depth, Khadi

[1] C. R. Das had referred Gandhiji to a 'guru' at Pabna.

[2] The reference was to teachers of different communities working in the Vidyalaya at Hajipur.

Pratishthan is working for extent. Both the activities are necessary and complimentary one of the other.

Abhoy Ashram stands midway between the two and thus all these three efforts if they could be joined, co-ordinated and regularized, the work will be much better. All therefore I advise you to do is not to abandon your admirable programme, but on the strength of that programme to secure the assistance and approval of the Bengal Agent of the All-India Spinners' Association. You need not be merged in either of these institutions, if you do not wish.

Yours sincerely,

BABU PROFULLA CHANDRA SEN

DUADONDA KHADI KENDRA

P.O. MOYAL BANDIPUR

DT. HOOGHLY

From a microfilm: S.N. 11224

226. LETTER TO BHUPENDRA NARAYAN SEN

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

August 13, 1926

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I return the two original letters from Rev. Kitchen and enclose herewith a copy of my reply[1] to Profulla's letter.

With reference to the Rs. 500, I ask you to see Satis Babu, explain the position to him and get him to endorse your application which you should make to the All-India Spinners' Association. There would then be no difficulty in getting the application granted.[2]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. BHUPENDRA NARAYAN SEN

23, MANDARAM SEN STREET

HATKOLA P.O.

CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 11225

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Sen replied on August 17 forwarding his application and requesting that the money be sent to him directly (S.N. 11227).

227. LETTER TO A. RAMAN PILLAI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 13, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. I regret the delay in replying. Because of neglect in my office the matter has been overlooked. I have now sent the following cablegram:

"Nothing yet possible regarding autobiography."

As you have well said there is no question of giving the rights before the *Autobiography* is finished. Mr. Natesan is not publishing it in book form. But I am having the first part published at the Navajivan Press. I am considering several applications received from Europe and America with regard to copyright in the Western countries.

Yours sincerely,

A. RAMAN PILLAI, ESQ.
POSTFACH 102
GOETTINGEN

From a photostat: G.N. 11473; also S.N. 32260

228. LETTER TO SIR GANGA RAM

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 14, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

You will see the use I have made of your pamphlet of statistics regarding widows.[2] A correspondent has asked me to enquire whether your statistics are confined only to widows among classesin which re-marriage is prohibited. It is a good point to be cleared.

Yours sincerely,

SIR GANGA RAM, KT., C. I. E., M. V. O.
ARMADALE COTTAGE
SIMLA E.

From a photostat: S.N. 10982

[1] Dated April 12, 1926, in which the addressee had sought the copyright for a German edition of the *Autobiography*

[2] *Vide*" Enforced Widowhood", 5-8-1926

229. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SABARMATI, ASHRAM,
Shravan Sud 7, 1982, August 15, 1926

CHI. TARAMATI,

Though at last after many days I have your letter there is nothing in it. You have not even said what Rohit[1] is doing and how he is getting on. Do you go out for walks there? You must walk a lot and do physical exercise and build up your health. You must also read a little.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

230. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Shravan Sud 7, 1982 [*August 15, 1926*]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I hope you are now completely rid of your pain. Do you have an alternative in mind when you have to vacate the bungalow? Devdas is still at Mussoorie. He wants to stay there a little longer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

231. LETTER TO DR. MURARILAL

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 17, 1926

DEAR DR. MURARILAL,

I am still without an acknowledgement of my letter regarding the money owing by the Exhibition Committee to the Rashtriya Stree Sabha in Bombay. I have now another complaint from Mr. Kotak that

[1] Gandhiji mistakenly thought that was the name of the addressee's son, Dilip.

monies are owing to him and he says he does not even get acknowledgement of registered letters. What is this neglect due to? Is there no one winding up the affairs of the Congress and attend[ing] to the absolutely necessary correspondence? Do please steal in a few moments to attend to these little details.

Yours sincerely,

DR. MURARILAL

CAWNPORE

From a copy: S.N. 11226

232. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

August 17, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter.[1] I do not think Mr. Mavalankar says it is better not to have this security, if the shares can be transferred. In any event nothing more is necessary to be done beyond transferring the shares if that is possible. If for any reason you think that it is not possible, your other suggestion may be adopted.

Do what you like with Sodepur and Hemaprabhadevi's money. I have only the inflexible condition, that the giving on the part of Hemaprabhadevi must be an irresistible thing.

There is something wrong as long as you feel worried. She cannot be cheerful and happy if you are not. I would, therefore, plead with you to go slowly. Do not force matters. Let there be complete assimilation before taking in a fresh dose.

Yes, indeed, I have read Tolstoy's" How Much Land a Man Needs" many times over. Years ago I translated it in *Indian Opinion* and it was published in pamphlet form. If Tolstoy had known much of cremation, he would even have allowed much less space and, if the body were to receive scientific treatment of reduction, it would be resolved into the five elements and then no space at all would be required. And that is precisely what our mental state should be. In practice we will always fall short of the theory. But any little

[1] This was evidently in reply to Gandhiji's letter of August 6.

possession we may keep would then be irksome. We would recognize it as our limitation and not as our right. And, therefore, if suddenly we are deprived of it, we should feel as if so much burden was taken off our shoulders and so finally we should feel even when the body of ours is taken away. Beyond all your sacrifices, therefore, I want perfect equanimity and cheerfulness. The greater the detachment with which you organize khadi work the more prosperous it will be.

Are you coming for the 27th? If you want to be released from the Utkal responsibility, I shall certainly release you. I am anxious to ease your burden as much as is possible.

Herewith a letter from Calcutta with a copy of my reply.[1] You will please let me know what is it all about.

Yours,

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 11228

233. LETTER TO R. A. ADAMS

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

August 18, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 13th instant.[2] Will you kindly send the copies as follows:

Reduced	Price Rs. 1-8-0 each	3 copies
,,	Price Re. 1-0-0 each	23 ,,
,,	Price Re. 0-8-0 each	3 ,,

In all 33 copies are required instead of 40. The four copies you have already sent on approval will, therefore, make 33.

I enclose herewith cheque for Rs. 32-12-0 upon. . . .[3] I have assumed that you have quoted prices inclusive of postage. But if I am

[1] The reference is probably to" Letter to Bhupendra Narayan Sen", 13-8-1926

[2] Adams had sent some specimens of different editions of the Bible and a price list and offered to send free copies to students too poor to buy them (S.N. 10981).

[3] The blank space in the source is evidently for the name of the bank.

mistaken, you will let me know the postage to be sent.

I suggest your sending seven more one-rupee copies on credit to be returned if they are not wanted.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 10983

234. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Wednesday, Sravana Sud 10, August 18, 1926

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I gather from the papers that many Hindus suffered losses in the serious riots between Hindus and Muslims which occurred in Pabna. Mrs. Naidu[1] wants to have the money which is lying with you and to use it to help these people. My own view is that the fund is for the purpose of providing relief to victims of floods and other calamities. Pabna's case being of a different character, a separate collection should be made for it. However, the fund can certainly be used for any other purpose after consulting the donors.

I hope the heavy rains are not affecting your health. This year the rains are very good in every part.

SHRI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
HOMI VILLA
PANCHGANI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 11250

235. LETTER TO ABBAS A. BANPARI

THE ASHRAM,
August 18, 1926

BHAISHRI ABBAS ABDULLABHAI,

The term" ghee" is used to denote the article made from the milk of only cows and buffaloes. The oil obtained from other sources cannot be described as ghee. This was all that I meant. The material

[1] Sarojini Naidu

from those other sources is known as *tel,* and I would see no harm in people using it in the full knowledge that its properties are different from those of ghee. In any case, its use cannot be opposed on religious grounds. Personally, I do not regard contact with a woman in menses as forbidden, nor regard it as objectionable to eat food cooked by her, but the attitude of those who do regard these things as wrong can be justified on hygienic grounds. It is difficult to say how far the religious point of view can help us in this matter, for the various religions hold different beliefs about it.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

SHRI ABBAS ABDULLABHAI BANPARI

SHAHADA, KHANDESH

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19944

236. LETTER TO BHAGIRATH KANODIA

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Wednesday, Sravana Shukla 10, August 18, 1926

BHAI BHAGIRATHJI,

I enclose a receipt for the amount of Rs. 5,000 which you sent at the request of Jamnalalji. I thank you for the sum.

SHRI BHAGIRATHJI KANODIA

C/O BIRLA BROTHERS, LTD.

137, CANNING STREET

CALCUTTA

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 12249

237. LETTER TO NARAYANDAS BAJORIA

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Wednesday, Sravana Shukla 10, August 18, 1926

BHAISHRI NARAYANDASJI,

I thank you for the draft for Rs. 5,000 which you sent at the

request of Jamnalalji. The money will be spent in meeting the expenses on a building for the Ashram.

SHRI NARAYANDASJI BAJORIA

117, HARRISON ROAD

CALCUTTA

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 12251

238. 'TOWARDS MORAL BANKRUPTCY'-VIII

It is now time to conclude this series of articles. It is not necessary to pursue M. Bureau in his examination of the doctrine of Malthus who startled his generation by his theory of over population and his advocacy of birth-control if the human species was not to be extinct. Malthus, however, advocated continence, whereas Neo-Malthusianism advocates not restraint but the use of chemical and mechanical means to avoid the consequences of animal indulgence. M. Bureau heartily accepts the doctrine of birth-control by moral means, i.e., self-restraint, and, as we have seen, rejects and vigorously condemns the use of chemical or mechanical means. The author then examines the condition of working classes and the proportion of birth among them and finally closes the book by examining the means of checking the practice of grossest immoralities under the name of individual freedom and even humanity. He suggests organized attempt to guide and regulate the public opinion and advocates State interference, but finally relies upon quickening of the religious life. Moral bankruptcy cannot be met or arrested by ordinary methods, most certainly not when immorality is claimed as a virtue and morality condemned as a weakness, superstition or even immorality. For many advocates of contraceptives do indeed condemn continence as unnecessary and even harmful. In this state of things religious aid is the only effective check upon licensed vice. Religion here may not be taken in its narrow, parochial sense. True religion is the greatest disturbing factor in life, whether individual or collective. A religious awakening constitutes a revolution, a transformation, a regeneration. And nothing but some such dynamic force can positively prevent the moral catastrophe towards which, in M. Bureau's estimation, France seems to be moving.

But we must here leave the author and his book; French conditions are not Indian conditions. Ours is a somewhat different

problem. Contraceptives are not universal in India. Their use has hardly touched the educated classes. The use of contraceptives in India is, in my opinion, unwarranted by any single condition that can be named. Do middle class parents suffer from too many children? Individual instances will not suffice to make out a case for excessive birth rate among the middle classes. The cases in India where I haveobserved the advocacy of these methods are those of widows and young wives. Thus in the one case it is illegitimate birth that is to be avoided, not the secret intercourse. In the other, it is again pregnancy that is to be feared, and not the rape, of a girl of tender age. Then there remains the class of diseased weak effeminate young men who would indulge in excesses with their own wives or others' wives and would avoid the consequences of acts which they know to be sinful. The cases of men or women in full vigour of life desiring intercourse and yet wishing to avoid the burden of children are, I make bold to say, rare in this ocean of Indian humanity. Let them not parade their cases to justify and advocate a practice that in India, if it became general, is bound to ruin the youth of the country. A highly artificial education has robbed the nation's youth of physical and mental vigour. We are offspring in many cases of child-marriages. Our disregard of the laws of health and sanitation has undermined our bodies. Our wrong and deficient dietary composed of corroding spices has produced a collapse of the digestive apparatus. We need, not lessons in the use of contraceptives and helps to our being able to satisfy our animal appetite, but continuous lessons to restrain that appetite, in many cases even to the extent of absolute continence. We need to be taught by precept and example that continence is perfectly possible and imperatively necessary if we are not to remain mentally and physically weak. We need to be told from the housetop that if we will not be a nation of manikins, we must conserve and add to the limited vital energy we are daily dissipating. Our young widows need to be told not to sin secretly but come out boldly and openly to demand marriage which is their right as much as that of young widowers. We need to cultivate public opinion that shall make child-marriages impossible. The vacillation, and the disinclination to do hard and sustained work, the physical inability to perform strenuous labours, collapses of enterprises brilliantly begun, the want of originality, one notices so often, are due largely to excessive indulgence. I hope young men do not deceive themselves into the belief that, when there is no procreation, the mere indulgence does not matter, does not

weaken. Indeed the sexual act, with the unnatural safeguard against procreation, is likely to be far more exhausting than such act performed with a full sense of the responsibility attached to it.

> The mind is its own place, and in itself
> Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.

If we begin to believe that indulgence in animal passion is necessary, harmless and sinless, we shall want to give reins to it and shall be powerless to resist it. Whereas, if we educate ourselves to believe that such indulgence is harmful, sinful, unnecessary and can be controlled, we shall discover that self-restraint is perfectly possible. Let us beware of the strong wine of libertinism that the intoxicated West sends us under the guise of new truth and so-called human freedom. Let us, on the contrary, listen to the sober voice from the West, that through the rich experience of its wise men at times percolates to us, i.e., if we have outgrown the ancient wisdom of our forefathers.

Charlie Andrews has sent me an informing article on" Generation and Regeneration" written by William Loftus Hare and printed in *The Open Court* (March 1926). It is a closely-reasoned scientific essay. He shows that all bodies perform two functions: 'namely, internal reproduction for the building up of the body and external reproduction for the continuance of the species.' These processes he names regeneration and generation, respectively.

> The regenerative process—internal reproduction—is fundamental for the individual and, therefore, necessary and primary; 'the generative process is due to a superfluity of cells and is therefore secondary .... The law of life, then, at this level is to feed the germ cells, firstly, for regeneration, and, secondly, for generation. In case of deficiency, regeneration must take the first place and generation be suspended. Thus, we may learn the origin of the suspension of reproduction and follow it to its later phases of human continence and asceticism generally. Inner re-production can never be suspended except at the cost of death, the normal origin of which is thus also discerned.

After describing the biological process of regeneration the writer states:

> Among civilized human beings sexual intercourse is practised vastly more than is necessary for the production of the next generation and is carried on at the expense of internal reproduction, bringing disease, death and more in its train.

No one who knows anything of Hindu philosophy can have difficulty in following this paragraph from Mr. Hare's essay:

> The process of regeneration is not and cannot be mechanistic in character, but like the primitive fission, is vitalistic. That is to say, it exhibits intelligence and will. To suppose that life separates differentiates and segregates by a process that is purely mechanistic is inconceivable. True, these fundamental processes are so far removed from our present consciousness as to seem to be uncontrolled by the human or animal will. But a moment's reflection will show that just as the will of the fully developed human being directs his external movements and actions in accordance with the guidance of the intellect—this, indeed, being its function so the earlier processes of the gradual organization of the body must, within the limits provided by environment be allowed to be directed by a kind of will guided by a kind of intelligence. This is now known to psychologists as" the unconscious." It is a part of ourself, disconnected from our normal daily thinking, but intensely awake and regard in regard to its own functions—so much so that it never for a moment subsides into sleep as the consciousness does.

Who can measure the almost irreparable harm done to the unconscious and more permanent part of our being by the sexual act indulged for its own sake?

> The nemesis of reproduction is death. The sexual act is essentially katabolic (or a movement towards death) in the male and in parturition of the offspring it is katabolic for the female.

Hence the writer contends:

> Virility, vitality and immunity from disease are the normal lot of nearly or quite continent persons. Withdrawal of germ cells from their upward regenerative course for generative or merely indulgent purposes deprives the organs of their replenishing stock of life, to their cost slowly and ultimately. It is these physical facts which constitute the basis of a personal sexual ethic, counselling moderation, if not restraint—at any rate, explaining the origin of restraint.

The author, as can be easily imagined, is opposed to birth-control by chemical and mechanical means. He says:

> It removes all prudential motives for self-restraint and makes it possible for sexual indulgence in marriage to be limited only by the diminution of desire or the advance of old age. Apart from this, however, it inevitably has an influence outside the marriage relation. It opens the door for irregular, promiscuous and unfruitful unions, which from the point of view of modern industry, sociology and politics, are full of danger. I cannot go into these

here. It is sufficient to say that by contraception, inordinate sexual indulgence both in and out of marriage is facilitated and, if I am right in my foregoing physiological arguments, evil must come to both individuals and the race.

Let the Indian youth treasure in their hearts the quotation with which M. Bureau's book ends:

The future is for the nations who are chaste.

Young India, 19-8-1926

239. CORRECTION

Professor Malkani draws my attention to two 'sad misprints' in his last article last week. In the third paragraph of the second column 'quickly' should have been 'quietly' and 'clever' should have been 'clear'.[1]

Young India, 19-8-1926

240. SUPPRESSED HUMANITY

The untouchable is not the only portion of suppressed humanity! The young widow in Hindu society is no less so. A correspondent from Bengal writes:

There is no restriction among Muslims about widow remarriage, but there is provision for a man to marry up to four wives and as a matter of fact many Muslims have more than one wife. So none of the Muslim male population remains unmarried. Is it not therefore true that where there is no restriction against widow remarriage the number of females is much in excess of males? In other words is it not true that in the communities in which widow remarriage is allowed, polygamy should also be allowed?

If widow remarriage is made common among Hindus, will not young widows induce young men to marry them and make it difficult, rather impossible, to find out bridegrooms for unmarried girls?

Will not unmarried girls then commit all the sins which are committed or are presumed to be committed by widows, if there be no provision to keep more than one wife by a Hindu?

I refrain from reminding you of the love *(prem)*, the saintly *grahastha*[2]

[1] The reference is to N. R. Malkani's article" The Agricultural Condition of Bardoli Taluka", published in *Young India*, 12-8-1926.

[2] Household

life, the *pativrata* dharma[1] and such other things which should be taken into consideration in recommending widow remarriage.

In his zeal to prevent widows from remarrying, the correspondent has ignored many things. Mussalmans have, indeed, the right to take more than one wife but the vast majority of them have only one wife. The correspondent does not seem to know that, unfortunately, there is no prohibition against Polygamy in Hinduism. Hindus in highest circles have been known to marry more than one wife. Many princes marry an unlimited number. The correspondent further forgets the fact that it is only among the so-called higher classes that widow remarriage is prohibited. Among the vast majority belonging to the fourth division, widows freely remarry, but no untoward consequences have taken place. Though free to take more wives than one, they are as a rule satisfied with one companion at a time.

The suggestion that young widows will take up all young men and leave none for unmarried girls betrays a woeful want of sense of proportion. The excessive anxiety for the chastity of young girls betrays an unhealthy mind. The limited number of widows remarrying can never leave a large number of young girls unmarried. And in any event, if ever such a problem arose it would be found to be due to the early marriages that take place today. The remedy in anticipation is to prevent early marriages.

Of the love, the sanctity of *grahastha* life, etc., where there is a widow of tender age, the less said the better.

But the correspondent has missed the whole of my point. I have never advocated widow remarriage on a wholesale scale. The statistics collected by Sir Ganga Ram and summarized in these pages deal with widows up to 15 years only. These poor, wretched beings know-nothing of *Pativrata* dharma. They are strangers to love. The truer statement would be to say that these girls were never married at all. If marriage is, as it ought to be, a sacrament, an entrance into a new life, the girls to be married should be fully developed, should have some hand in the choice of companions for life' and should know the consequences of their acts. It is a crime against God and man to call the union of the children a married state and then to decree widowhood for a girl whose so-called husband is dead.

I do believe that a real Hindu widow is a treasure. She is one of

[1] Loyalty to one's husband

the gifts of Hinduism to humanity. Ramabai Ranade was such a gift. But the existence of girl widows is a blot upon Hinduism for which the existence of a Ramabai is no atonement.

Young India, 19-8-1926

241. NOTES

THE WHEEL IN MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS

There are 108 girls and 41 boys spinning in the schools under the Lucknow Municipal Board. There are 93 wheels in the girls' schools and 15 in the boys' schools. The former spin 27 *tolas* and the latter 4 *tolas* per month. Each wheel costs the municipality Rs. 2 per month. The Superintendent of Education considers the progress 'quite satisfactory beginning to start with, though not very encouraging'. It can be considered satisfactory only in the sense that it may be better than nothing. But in my opinion the output of yarn is ridiculously small and the expense per charkha is monstrously large. Indeed there should be hardly any, apart from the initial outlay. Nothing is stated as to the quality of yarn. I must repeat what I have said before. The *takli* is the thing for schools and it should be only introduced when the existing staff has learnt carding and spinning. Spinning in schools can never become a success unless the teachers realize its national importance, take pleasure in it, and by their own zeal make it interesting for the pupils.

BIHAR KHADI EXHIBITION

The khadi exhibitions in Bihar continue to prosper and attract increasing attention. The month of July began with an exhibition at Bettiah. It was opened by Mr. Prior, the manager of the Raj. The assistant manager Mr. Wylde and the S.D.O. were present at the opening ceremony. Mr. Prior did not think that ''any Englishman ever considered khaddar as a poor thing," but he said," it should be carried on as a home industry". The sales effected were Rs. 1,304-12-3. The second exhibition was held at Motihari. The Rev. J. Z. Hodge performed the opening ceremony. He had three reasons for supporting the khaddar movement: First," Support home industry"; second khaddar had sentiment and love behind it; third, khaddar gave food to the poor. The sales in Motihari amounted to Rs. 1,162-8-9. The third exhibition was held at Laheria serai, Darbhanga. Babu

Rajendra Prasad performed the opening ceremony. The sales amounted to Rs. 1,445-15-6. The fourth and the last exhibition of the month was at Debghar. Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj opened the exhibition. The sales came to Rs. 1,359-3-6.

Young India, 19-8-1926

242. TO READERS OF" NAVAJIVAN"

Today *Hindi Navajivan* enters its sixth year. Although it is running at a loss, it is being continued by the love of friends. I have read what Jamnalalji has written. If *Hindi Navajivan* serves a purpose, it must go on ; but it must then be self-supporting. I appeal to the readers to make sure that the paper does not have to depend on the charity of friends.

There used to be errors of language in *Hindi Navajivan.* I think they have now been done away with. Two Hindi lovers from North India do the translation for *Hindi Navajivan.* The risk of errors has, therefore, considerably lessened. The readers on their part will no doubt fulfil their duty during this year.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 19-8-1926

243. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI

THE ASHRAM,
Thursday, August 19, 1926

BHAISHRI PUNJABHAI,

I have gone through the translation of *Manache Shloka*[1] fairly carefully. I felt that it contained quite a few errors. It was beyond my capacity to examine it very closely. Besides, my knowledge of Marathi is not much. I would, therefore, advise you to get it thoroughly revised by a scholar who knows both Marathi and Gujarati.

SJT. PUNJABHAI
ASHRAM

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 12253

[1] A didactic long verse by the seventeenth-century Maharashtra saint Ramdas

244. LETTER TO RUSTOMJEE WACHHA GANDHI

[THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,]
Thursday, Sravana Sud 11, August 19, 1926

BHAISHRI RUSTOMJEE WACHHA GANDHI,

I received both your letters. Your request was one which I simply could not refuse, and so I send with this something, much too short though it is, which I have been able to write out.

SHRI R. WACHHA GANDHI
"SANJ VARTMAN" OFFICE
PERAJ BUILDING, FORT, BOMBAY

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 12252

245. TELEGRAM TO DR. SATYAPAL

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 20, 1926

SATYAPAL
CONGRESS

MESSAGE LET ALL FOLLOW KRISHNA IN DOING DUTY.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 12256

246. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU

August 20, 1926

PANDIT NEHRU
ALLAHABAD

DID NOT EVEN KNOW GHANSHYAMDAS CANDIDATURE GORAKHPUR. THERE MUST BE SOME MISTAKE.[1]

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 11327

[1] This was in reply to Motilal Nehru's telegram of August 19, 1926 which read: Ghanshyamdas Birla's workers representing that you approve his candidature Assembly Benares Gorakhpur division from which Sriprakasa already nominated and approved by Working Committee as Congress candidate. Please authorize contradiction. *Vide* also" Letter to G. D. Birla," 20-8-1926.

247. LETTER TO MUTHUSAMY MUDALY

August 20, 1926

With reference to your letter of the 17th July, I have now made the fullest enquiry and I have come to the conclusion that Mr. Kotak is not to blame.[1]

From a microfilm: S.N. 11203

248. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 20, 1926

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your letter. I did not misunderstand your remark about typewriters. On the contrary, I liked it.

The literal meaning of an 'ashram' is an abode, but the associations about the ashram are these: It should be simple. It should not be merely a teaching institution. It should contain predominantly those who are pledged to perpetual continence. It should have associations of sannyasa, meaning detachment from the world. It should, therefore, be a voluntarily poor organization. There should, therefore, be rigid simplicity about it. Its object must invariably be formation of character with a view to self-realization. The idea of master and servant is wholly repugnant to such an institution. All men and women in an ashram are expected to do bodily labour and all enjoy an equal status. The idea of superiority has no place in it. The head of an ashram is in the place of a parent and he is expected to regard the rest as his own children. I wonder if I have now given you fairly the characteristics of an ashram.

It grieves me whenever I find that a medical man is weak or ailing. It is a perpetual reminder to us that medicine is such an incomplete, such an unreliable, and such an empirical science. If we think about it with sufficient detachment, we would at once realize its inherent weakness by understanding that there is no such thing as an absolute cure. The most potent drugs admit of innumerable exceptions. The most successful operation leaves literally and in the

[1] The context is not ascertainable.

spirit a scar behind. It would certainly be a good thing, if you could hasten your departure for Denmark. Change of climate will be the best cure.

What you say about fasting is quite true. It has no absolute value and it certainly does not produce the slightest spiritual effect if the motive behind it is not really spiritual. Fasting with a mixed motive ends with purely material results. But fasting for the sake of unfoldment of the spirit is a discipline I hold to be absolutely necessary at some stage or other in the evolution of an individual. I always considered Protestantism to be deficient in this particular. Every other religion of any importance appreciates the spiritual value of fasting. Crucifixion of the flesh is a meaningless term unless one goes voluntarily through pangs of hunger. For one thing, identification with the starving poor is a meaningless term without the experience behind. But I quite agree that even an eighty days' fast may fail to rid a person of pride, selfishness, ambitions and the like. Fasting is merely a prop. But as a prop to a tottering structure is of inestimable value, so is the prop of fasting of inestimable value for a struggling soul.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child,* PP. 84-5

249. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Friday, Sravana Shukla 12, August 20, 1926

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I enclose a telegram from Motilalji. The reply[1] which I have sent to him is on the back of the same sheet. I have also sent you a wire as under:

> Motilalji wires I approve your candidature Assembly Gorakhpur. Have replied know nothing about your candidature. There must be some mistake. Do you know anything about alleged representation.

What can all this mean? I am awaiting your reply.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[1] *Vide*" Telegram to Motilal Nehru" 20-8-1926.

[PS.]

I hope you are keeping good health.

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6133. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

250. LETTER TO REHANA TYABJI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 21, 1926

DEAR SISTER[1],

It was a delight to receive your letter, it would seem, after ages. Do you want me to write to Sir Henry Lawrence directly or to prepare a note for you which you can send? Whilst your answer is quite good, he must have all the satisfaction that one can give him in the way of statistics. After all the trouble one may take, it is just possible what may appear to us to be solid and tangible may not appear so to him. But that does not matter as the inspirer of *The Song Celestial*[2] would say. We must act with detachment and leave the results to God.

I observe that, as behoves a good girl, your postscript is as long as your letter and, perhaps, more important. Please tell the sceptical sister that the revival of the spinning-wheel has actually rescued from destruction many arts and crafts. Does she think that there was no art in India before we received silk thread from China and Paris which we began doing only a hundred years ago or less? When spinning and waving were at their height, we were in possession of the highest art and all the art on fabric one sees now is a copy of the Indian original. Personally, I do not mind the use of Chinese silk for embroidery. But those who are afraid of art destruction may use as much as they like of Chinese thread so long as the background is hand-spun khaddar. No amount of travelling and appeals to newspapers, etc., can possibly rescue Indian art from destruction if we cannot rescue ourselves as a nation from destruction. Revival of Indian art will only come when we develop love enough for our country to enable us to cling to one another and sink our differences and to sacrifice our all for the sake of the country. The best way, therefore, to preserve and revive the Indian art is for us to become sufficiently Indian ourselves. But all this

[1] The source has this in Arabic script.
[2] Edwin 'Arnold's English version of the *Bhagavad Gita*

I don't need to say to you. You are saturated with the national spirit. May God give you long life and health for exhibiting that spirit as occasion demands. Those who love to do certain things end by doing those things, and if you are longing to meet Miss Shade whom we call Mirabai and still more to sing to me some of your new *bhajans* then you will end by coming here at the earliest opportunity.

With love to you all,

Yours,

BAPU

MISS REHANA TYABJI

CAMP, BARODA

From a photostat: S.N. 9600

251. MY NOTES

NATIONAL SCHOOLS

There seems to be some misunderstanding regarding the article in which I wrote about National Schools in the *Navajivan* of August 8. The Principal of the Rashtriya Vinay Mandir in Bombay has written to me as follows:

> You have given it as your opinion in that article that national schools should be closed now, and so one of the donors of the Vinay Mandir says that he need give us nothing now.

The passage which has been thus misunderstood read as follows:

> Where the parents are fired by national ideals and prove their adhesion by giving adequate donations for the support of national schools, and, where the teachers being themselves believers in the national ideal are ceaselessly striving to enforce it, I can understand a relaxation of the discipline if the scholars are lukewarm about the ideal. In such a case, it may be necessary to continue the school. For we may hope some day to influence the scholars. But at the time of writing these lines, I can think of no such school.[1]

The last sentence of this paragraph has been misunderstood. It has been taken to mean that I do not regard any of the national schools fit enough to be continued. There is another sentence in that paragraph, the first one, which states what type of school should be closed down:

[1] Theis paragraph is taken from *Young India*, 2-9-1926.

Where either the parents or the teachers are opposed to the national ideal, the school should certainly be closed.[1]

In the case of the Vinay Mandir in Bombay, as in the case of many other such schools, we know that the parents and teachers are in agreement with the ideals of national education. They want national schools to be run in accordance with the ideal of national education as defined by the Congress. Schools which are so run need not be closed down. The sentences which followed were intended to point out that in such cases it would not be wrong, even if the pupils obstinately refused to wear khadi and fulfil other conditions, to keep the schools going and so give the pupils an opportunity to change. I stated at the conclusion of the paragraph," I can think of no such school." What I meant was that, if there were any national schools where both the parents and the teachers were in agreement with its ideals and active in promoting them and yet the pupils obstinately disregarded the rules about khadi, etc., I should certainly like to know their names. As regards the Rashtriya Vinay Mandir in Bombay, my impression is that there even the pupils are filled with the national spirit and wear khadi and spin. There can be no question of closing down such a school. I hope that generous-hearted men will continue to help such schools.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-8-1926

252. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Sravana Shukla 14, 1982 [*August 22, 1926*]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have already written to you about the German lady here. This warm weather does not suit her, and so I wish to send her for a month to some cool place. I have written to Devdas[2] and Stokes[3] to know if they can help. If you have room in your bungalow, I think of sending her there. She will not be a burden to anyone. She is a very simple

[1] *ibid*.

[2] Devdas Gandhi was then at Mussoorie.

[3] He was running a school at Kotgarh near Simla.

lady, with a fine sense of humour and quite good-natured. If you can accommodate her, please send a wire. I intend to let her start from here on Thursday.

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

HOMI VILLA

PANCHGANI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 12255

253. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS P. ASAR

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Tuesday, Sravana Vad 1 [*August 24, 1926*][1]

CHI. LAKSHMIDAS,

I have your letter. I will go through the article about Mahudha and then publish it. It surprises me why you have still not recovered your health completely. I wish to see you fresh-looking and with some flesh on your body. If it is only towards the end of the English month that you can come, I should like you to come six days earlier; for Moti is here at present, and she ought to leave this place very soon and go to her husband. That is the drift of Najuklal's letter. Velanbehn, of course, wishes that she should stay on and spend even the month of *Bhadarva* here, or at any rate till you arrive. But I feel that Moti's duty is to leave for Broach or Baroda at the earliest opportunity. Besides, if you are here, it will help both Velanbehn and me in the treatment which I am trying just now on her.

Gangabehn's problem is practically solved. We have got possession of the house in Vijapur, and the necessary things have also been purchased. A little more remains to be done though, thanks to my having trusted things to others.

I wish to discuss with you a little further your letter to Maganlal about cotton. I could not follow it completely. About other matters, when we meet.

SJT. LAKSHMIDAS PURUSHOTTAM

JAYAJIRAO COTTON MILLS

GWALIOR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12258

[1] The addressee's article about Mhuadha referred to in the letter was published in November 1926. In 1926 *Sravana Vad* I fell on August 24.

254. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Shravan Vad 1, Tuesday [*August 24, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. You must have received my letter of yesterday about Miss Haussding.[2] Pattani Saheb's bungalow can certainly be rented. And if no other place is available, I should not hesitate to ask him for the bungalow.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
HOMI VILLA
PANCHGANI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

255. LETTER TO AVANTIKABAI GOKHALE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Wednesday, Sravana Vad 2 [*August 25, 1926*]

DEAR SISTER,

Read the accompanying letter and return it, along with the reply. I hope both you and Shri Gokhale are keeping well.

I suppose you know that Devdas is at present in Simla.

SMT. AVANTIKABAI GOKHALE
ATMARAM MANSION
GIRGAUM
BOMBAY

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 12257

[1] From the postmark

[2] Gandhiji had asked the addressee if he could accommodate Helene Haussding in his bungalow; *vide*" Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", 22-8-1926.

256. LETTER TO NANABHAI BHATT

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Wednesday, Sravana Vad 2, August 25, 1926

BHAISHRI NANABHAI,

I got your letter and telegram. I hope Chi. Vidyut is all right now. I shall keep quiet till Vithalrai is here.

Ramnarayan[1] told me yesterday that Ballubhai[2] and Diwan[3] had decided to seek recognition[4] by the Government. I asked him thereupon to start immediately in the Vidyapith itself a class for such of the pupils in the seventh standard who may wish to join it. We shall of course have to obtain afterwards the committee's permission for that. I have asked Ramnarayan not to incur any expenditure meanwhile. It has been decided that the pupils who may join the class should be accommodated in the Mahavidyalaya building. If you can, come over for a while and examine the position.

Herewith a cutting which someone sent to me with a request that I should forward it to you. I do not believe that you have said or believed anything of the kind hinted at in it.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12259

257. NOTES

A WISE STEP

The manager of the khadi store conducted in the office of the Pranidaya Dhyanpracharak Sangh, Davengere, Mysore, reports that the municipal council of that place has removed the octroi duty imposed on imports of khadi. This is an example to be copied by every municipality. It is the least that municipalities can do for the revival of the ancient industry. Let me repeat for the thousandth time that khadi means cloth woven on a handloom out of hand-spun yarn.

GUJARAT FIGURES

The following figures bring the production and sale of khadi in Gujarat to the end of June:

[1] Ramnarayan V. Pathak, an educationist, scholar and critic of Gujarat
[2] Ballubhai P. Thakore
[3] Jivanlal Diwan
[4] For their Proprietary High School at Ahmedabad

	Production	Sale
Gujarat	Rs. 8,149	Rs. 9,647
Total of previous report as published in *Young India* of 5th inst.	Rs. 1,43,293	Rs. 1,98,857
Total up to end of June.	Rs. 1,51,442	Rs. 2,08,504

Young India, 26-8-1926

258. TELLTALE FIGURES

The following summary of the membership of the All-India Spinners' Association of the 'A' class cannot fail to attract the attention of the readers, especially of the members themselves.

	Province	Enrolled Members	Full Subscribers	Percentage
1.	Ajmer	17	7	41
2.	Andhra	455	109	24
3.	Assam	155	2	1
4.	Bihar	227	61	27
5.	Bengal	549	178	33
6.	Berar	18	14	78
7.	Burma	6	5	83
8.	C.P. Hindi	47	26	55
9.	C.P. Marathi	67	47	70
10.	Bombay	80	44	55
11.	Delhi	21	6	29
12.	Gujarat	467	282	60
13.	Karnatak	176	61	35
14.	Kerala	61	21	34
15.	Maharashtra	237	89	38
16.	Punjab	68	23	34
17.	Sind	44	20	45
18.	Tamil Nadu	501	160	32
19.	U.P.	150	61	41
20.	Utkal	33	15	45
		3,379	1,231	36

As against 3,379 persons who enrolled themselves as members only 1,231, i.e., 36 per cent have paid their quota of yarn to date. Assam with only l p.c. full subscribers comes by far the last on the list. Andhra is the next offender with 24 p.c. Burma tops the list wth 83 p.c., but it is no wonder since it had only 6 members to start with.

These figures show that people do not like regularity, they do not like to work steadily for the country. The spirit of sustained sacrifice is lacking. No one need imagine that with monetary subscriptions the conditions will be much better. Where is the public worker who has had no painful experience of arrears? I remember the complaints of old Congress Secretaries when the A.I.C.C. subscription used to be a lump sum. Negligence is ingrained among many workers. Public work has not yet risen from the status of a pastime or patronage to that of a primary duty. And yet for one who desires a healthy social and public life, public service is as much a duty as is service done to oneself or to one's family. May not the ancient five sacrifices be renamed sacrifice for self, family, village, nation and humanity? That life only is worth living in which there is a harmonious correlation, no antagonism, among the several sacrifices. The spinning subscription is a national sacrifice of the lightest measure, not in conflict with the requirements of humanity, and certainly not in conflict with those of the village, family or the individual.

For me, therefore, the lesson that this study in figures teaches is not one of despair, nor of revising the nature of the subscription or the method of paying it. The more I study the spinning movement, the more convinced I become of the soundness of requiring and giving steady daily labour of half an hour at least at the spinning-wheel and of keeping up the present rate of subscription. Even if the 1,231 members keep up the regular supply, without fuss, without interruption, the discipline will revolutionize their lives and the subscribers will be found to be fit instruments for national service when the supreme test comes, as it must some day.

The largest number of steady workers is derived today from this body of regular spinners. The statistics I am collecting and publishing, as regularly as I can get them, must open the eyes of all unbiased thinkers to the usefulness of the only immediate remedy for the growing distress of the poor millions and to the only real link between the cultured few and the starving many. Babu Rajendra Prasad has well said in his eloquent defence of khaddar:

But people may say why should we pay this higher price? What after all is the good of reviving this dead industry? Only those can put this question who have not sufficiently realized the grinding poverty of the masses of the people of this country. All *a priori* economics is mute in the appalling presence of this chill penury which freezes the genial current of the soul. I will give only one figure which is a rough figure but which is none the less reliable. In 1922, we distributed no less than Rs. 26,000 by way of wages to weavers and spinners. In 1925 we paid no less than Rs. 46,000 out of which Rs. 28,000 was paid to spinners alone—spinners who could not have earned anything if they did not spin. These figures relate only to the organization under the direct control of the Congress in this province. They do not include the figures of the Gandhi Kutir whose work until recently was even more extensive than that of the Congress Khaddar Bhandar. I ask in all solemnity what other organization is there in this province which can afford to distribute over a lakh to people who would otherwise earn nothing and to whom it gives what it gives not by way of charity but as wages honestly earned? Khaddar is really a life-giving industry and to revive it is to furnish food to countless starving persons. It blesses those who give and those who receive it, as it is not mere charity, and creates in the recipient a sense of self-respect while at the same time making the distributor humble.

And what is true of Bihar is true of every province.

The A.I.S.A. is operating with over Rs. 18,00,000 throughout the whole of India. The bulk of the returns goes directly into the pockets of those who would otherwise be workless.

Let the sceptics peruse the figures. If they have better use for the money, better employment for the workless paupers, let them say so. If not, it is up to them to lend a helping hand to this great and growing movement which is as much moral and economic as it is political. Its moral and economic effect is immediate and tangible, its political effect is distant and derivable from the first two, not independent of them.

Let those who are in arrears beware! At the end of the year, they will find their names struck off, if they do not wake up and spin and send the yarn they have hitherto neglected to Spin and send. Debts of honour have priority over those enforceable in a court of law. The spinning subscription is a national debt of honour.

Young India, 26-8-1926

259. CURSE OF CHILD MARRIAGE

Mrs. Margaret E. Cousins has sent me notes of a tragic case that appears to have just occurred in Madras and has arisen out of a child marriage, the girl being 13 years and the 'husband' 26. Hardly had the pair lived together for 13 days when the girl died of burning. The jury have found that she committed suicide owing to the unbearable and inhuman solicitations of the so-called husband. The dying deposition of the girl would go to show that the 'husband' had set fire to her clothes. Passion knows no prudence, no pity.

But how the girl died is beside the point. The indisputable facts are:

(1) that the girl was married when she was only 13;

(2) that she had no sexual desire inasmuch as she resisted the advances of the 'husband';

(3) that the 'husband' did make cruel advances;

(4) and that she is now no more.

It is irreligion, not religion, to give religious sanction to a brutal custom. The *smritis* bristle with contradictions. The only reasonable deduction to be drawn from the contradictions is that the texts that may be contrary to known and accepted morality, more especially, to the moral precepts enjoined in the *smritis* themselves, must be rejected as interpolations. Inspiring verses on self-restraint could not be written at the same time and by the same pen that wrote the verses encouraging the brute in man. Only a man innocent of self-restraint and steeped in vice could call it a sin not to marry a girl before she reached the age of monthly periods. It should be held sinful to marry a girl for several years after the periods begin. There cannot be even the thought of marriage before the periods begin. A girl is no more fit to bear children on beginning the periods than a lad is to procreate as soon as he grows the first hair on his upper lip.

The custom of child marriage is a moral as well as a physical evil. For it undermines our morals and induces physical degeneration. By countenancing such customs we recede from God as well as swaraj. A man who has no thought of the tender age of a girl has none of God. And undergrown men have no capacity for fighting battles of freedom or, having gained it, of retaining it. Fight for swaraj means not mere political awakening but an all-round awakening—social, educational, moral, economic and political.

Legislation is being promoted to raise the age of consent. It may be good for bringing a minority to book. But it is not legislation that will cure a popular evil, it is enlightened public opinion that can do it. I am not opposed to legislation in such matters but I do lay greater stress on cultivation of public opinion. The Madras case would have been impossible if there had been a living public opinion against child marriages. The young man in question is not an illiterate labourer but an intelligent educated typist. It would have been impossible for him to marry or touch the girl if public opinion had been against the marriage or the consummation of the marriage of girls of tender age. Ordinarily, a girl under 18 years should never be given in marriage.

Young India, 26-8-1926

260. NOTES

PANDIT MALAVIYAJI AND THE BENGAL GOVERNMENT

The Government of Bengal may well congratulate itself upon the courage it has shown in retracing its steps and dropping the proceedings against Pandit Malaviyaji and Dr. Moonje for their civil disobedience.[1] But one could wish that there was grace about the withdrawal of these proceedings. The Standing Counsel for the Government of Bengal made a statement which, I think, was highly offensive. There is no regret shown on behalf of the Government, no apology offered to the distinguished patriots, but, on the contrary, a veiled suggestion that there was possibly some connection between Panditji's presence in Calcutta and the riots that took place although the Standing Counsel is obliged to admit that there was nothing offensive or provocative in Panditji's speech on the strength of which the prohibition order was taken out. Surely, it was up to the officials who took the proceedings to see the full text of the speech before applying for an order under Section 144, especially when the order was to be against persons so well-known in public life as Pandit Malaviyaji and Dr. Moonje. If it was a private party that had acted so hastily as the Government of Bengal seem to have done in this case, that party would have rendered itself liable to an action for damages. If public opinion was well organized and strong, it could bring to

[1] *Vide*" Triumph of Civil Disobedience" 12-8-1926.

book a Government that acted so rashly and recklessly as the Bengal Government have done. In the face of that proceedings is it any wonder that complaint is often heard that proceedings are often thoughtlessly, hastily, and sometimes even vindictively, taken against innocent persons in virtue of arbitrary powers taken by the Government under laws in the framing of which they have had the most part?

'SQUEEZING OUT'

A letter from South Africa states:

> The policy of squeezing out or" civilizing labour" in all Government Departments is proceeding apace and in the Railway Department at Pietermaritzburg and Ladysmith hundreds of Indians have been given notice, in some cases of thirteen days only, to transfer to Durban or get out of the service. This is being done with people who have given 25 to 30 years to the service at one and the same place. To these poor illiterate people who have given the best part of their lives to the services, a transfer is a change to a new world and I am made to understand that in a Large number of cases they are leaving the service and getting repatriated to India.

The alternative of transfer to Durban is really no alternative to leaving the service. And those who do go to Durban must ultimately come under the ban when the 'civilizing' process reaches Durban. What hurts one however is not the notices but the indecent hurry with which the policy of extirpation of the Asiatic is being pursued in spite of the fact that very soon a conference is to sit to consider the question of the status of Asiatics in South Africa. But let us wait, prepare the atmosphere for the coming South African deputation and hope for the best.

THE COLOUR BAR BILL

The following letter from the Department of Mines and Industries, South Africa, to the local Indian Congress is the finish to the Colour Bar Bill:

> With reference to your telegram dated the 14th instant addressed to His Excellency the Governor-General regarding the Mines and Works Act Amendment Bill, I am directed to inform you that it is the intention of the Government in due course to consider the issue of regulations to restore at all events the *status quo* as it existed before the Courts declared certain regulations *ultra vires.* This is necessary in the interests of health and safety.
>
> There is no present intention of extending the regulations beyond the

position as it existed prior to the Court's judgment. Should any such extension be contemplated in the future every reasonable opportunity will be given to all parties in the Union interested in the matter to make representations.

In the circumstances no good purpose would appear to be served by granting the interview proposed.

It means no relief to the community except that no drastic measures are to be immediately taken. It contains no guarantee that no such steps will be taken in future. On the contrary, the community has been gently prepared for its enforcement. As I have remarked before, a bad law is bad, whether it is immediately enforced or hung like the sword of Damocles over the heads of those affected by it.

ITS AWFUL CONSEQUENCES

A correspondent sends me a long article on child marriage and enforced widowhood in Bengal. He says:

> You are surely aware that the condition of Hindu society in other provinces is no better, if not worse, than that prevailing in Bengal. Early marriage and girl widowhood exist in a specially virulent form amongst the depressed classes of Hindu society. In Bengal it is very frequent amongst Dam, Chamar, Namasudra, Kaibarta (fishermen) classes. These people on the other hand form the bulk of Hindu population in Bengal. I wish I had time and opportunity to study and prepare similar figures for other provinces.

The article bristles with figures which are in the main included in the summary which I reproduced a fortnight ago fromSir Gangaram's statistics.[1] The following conclusions drawn by the writer are interesting and instructive:

i. It is sapping the vitality of thousands of our promising boys and girls on whom the future of our society entirely rests.

ii. It is bringing into existence every year thousands of weaklings both boys and girls—who are born of immature parenthood.

iii. It is a very fruitful source of appalling child mortality and stillbirths that now prevail in our society.

iv. It is bringing into existence thousands of girl widows every year who in their turn are a source of corruption and dangerous infection to the society.

v. It is a very important cause of the gradual and steady decline of Hindu society in point of (1) number, (2) physical strength and courage and (3) morality.

Young India, 26-8-1926

[1] *Vide*" Enforced Widowhood", 5-8-1926.

261. 'WHY ONLY YOURS?'

Lala Shamal of Hissar writes:

Some time ago I read an article by you in *Young India*[1] headed" The Cobwebs of Ignorance". In this article you said *inter alia* that the spinning wheel was necessary for the economic salvation of India and that therefore it was necessary that every Indian worked it either by way of sacrifice or otherwise. You also said there that it was the gateway of spiritual salvation for yourself. But why for yourself only? Let us examine this proposition in the light of two great civilizations of the earth, viz., that of the East (Aryan) and that of the West (Grecian). Excepting perhaps Kabir and Nanak, the two great *rishis* of India in the middle ages, who have gone much higher and have symbolized the charkha with the great force of the universe (cosmic energy, life or *Prana*) every *rishi* in India either in the middle ages or in ancient times has pointed out that the charkha was the gateway to woman's salvation.

The Upanishads say that the Lord of Creation desiring the creation produced at first a pair—life and food—and with these two forces He created the sun and the moon as life and food respectively and so on till the whole creation was made. Man and woman were produced as life and food, respectively. These two forces united together made the whole (world). The following Vedic *Mantra* is recited just before *homa* and *saptapadi*: ॐ या अकृंतन्नचयन या अतन्वतयाश्च देवी स्तन्त् अमी तो ततन्न्य । ता स्तवा देवी रजरसे सवयववायुश्च यतीदम परीघत स्वात: ॥

"O bride! look here, I have brought these clothes for you. These are sacred clothes made by *devis* (women) of my country by carding the cotton and by spinning and weaving with their own hands. Wear these with faith and get yourself entitled to perform the *yajna* with me. I pray that the same *devis* may continue to supply you with such clothes and may continue to wear them for lifelong years.

Thus according to the ancient Aryan philosophy one who has not understood the charkha cannot understand his self or the universe and cannot realize *Brahman* just as one who has not understood *vyashti* (individual) can never realize *samashti* (whole). Now let us see what the Western (Greek) civilization, of which Christianity and Islam are but later developments, says in this matter. Everyone knows the lines:" When Adam delved and Eve span who was then the gentleman?" According to this the duty of the husband was to till the ground and that of the wife was to spin and weave.

[1] Dated 27-5-26; *Vide"* Cobwebs of Ignorance", 16-5-1926.

Wife comes from a root meaning to weave just as the name Uma, the consort of Shiva, means in Sanskrit one who weaves. Thus the Western philosophy regarding charkha seems also to take us to the same idea as the Aryan philosophy. Now nationality is the outcome of two forces united together, viz, politics and religion. One is nothing without the other. While the former is the establishment of a spirit of equality outside, the latter is the realization of the spirit of oneness within. Economic salvation as a branch of politics can do no good unless it is joined with the other force of religion.

I wish I could say with my correspondent that the charkha is the gateway to the salvation of all. But he must recognize my limitations. I have to write as well for sceptics as for believers. The authorities and arguments addressed by Lala Shamlal will not, I fear, appeal to the sceptic. The latter will say and from his standpoint correctly, that the texts in support of the religious value of the charkha are produced from an outworn civilization. He will argue that if a *rishi* were to write the Vedas today, he will draw his spiritual illustrations from the steam engine or, better still, the electric motor, the wireless and the like and the *rishi* of the future will think nothing of wireless and even the aeroplanes. His spiritual vocabulary will with the etheric doubles and thought waves cutting through space in fractions of time denoted by specially invented words representing perhaps a thousandth part of a second. The spiritual value of the charkha can only appeal to those who believe with me that this civilization denoted by all insane rush after destroying the limitations of space imposed upon man by nature are coming to an end, even as possibly mightier civilizations based upon attempts to find happiness in multiplicity of material pursuits and comforts have perished. If Lala Shamlal takes the spiritual message of the charkha to the villages, he will not need my authority. For, I have derived mine from them.

Young India, 26-8-1926

262. LETTER TO ALI HASAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 26, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Of course, I remember you well and your

hospitality. I must, however, confess that I do not at all like your manifesto. You have made communalism as the pivot of your appeal and you are looking to the Hindu voters to vote for you not because of your superior ability and other qualifications but solely on the ground of your being a Mussalman. I feel that you have struck the wrong note. If you had, on the contrary, recited your better qualifications, if you claim them, and added the hope that your being a Mussalman will not be regarded as a disqualification by the Hindu voters, from my point of view, your manifesto would have been unexceptionable. As it is on the merits, I am obliged to give you a hostile opinion. But in any case, even if your manifesto had been unexceptionable, being an avowed non-co-operator, I cannot have given you anything whatsoever by way of endorsement for publication.

Yours sincerely,

ALI HASSAN, ESQ.
BARRISTER-AT-LAW
BANK ROAD
PATNA

From a microfilm: S. N. 11083

263. LETTER TO R. A. ADAMS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 26, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I waited all these days for actually receiving the parcel of the Bible copies[1] before acknowledging your letter which I received duly last week. The parcel has not yet come forward and the students will have probably to be without their copy even next Saturday. I now see that you have sent the parcel by goods [train] and the goods parcels sometimes take even as much as a month. When the parcel comes, I shall take care of the extra seven copies.

Yours sincerely,

R. A. ADAMS, ESQ.,
SECRETARY
BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY
(BOMBAY AUXILIARY)
166-170, HORNBY ROAD
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 10987

[1] *Vide*" Letter to R. A. Adams", 18-8-1926

264. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Friday, Sravana Krishna 4, August 27, 1926

BHAI TULSI MAHER,

I feel happy whenever I get a letter from you. You are doing very good work. Send me a few pieces by way of samples from the varieties of cloth being woven there. What does a charkha cost there? From where do you get the wood? Is the spindle made locally? If yes, what does it cost? How many charkhas are plying? What is the rate of payment for spinning? What is the count of the yarn? If you have not introduced the practice of testing the strength of the yarn, you should do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6526

265. LETTER TO MARICHI

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Friday, Sravana Vad 4, August 27, 1926

BHAISHRI MARICHI,

I got your letter. You may have been satisfied with your stay in the Ashram, but I was not. I cannot bear the thought that anyone staying here as a guest should fall ill. If I had known [about your illness] earlier, I would have taken all measures which would have satisfied me at any rate. I believe that we should be able to adjust ourselves to any climate. I had assumed that you would be able to do so. Now I will see what I can do when you are here again.

What you write about the spinning-wheel is quite correct. The reasons for the movement deserve to be closely examined.

SHRI MARICHI

SYT. H. P. MORRIS

61, COWASJI PATEL ROAD

FORT

BOMBAY

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 12260

266. LETTER TO NANABHAI BHATT

THE ASHRAM,

Friday, Sravana Vad 4, August 27, 1926

BHAISHRI NANABHAI,

I have gone through the text-books. I think I read *Madhpudo*[1] with sufficient care. I had hoped that I would find myself interested and absorbed while reading these books, but I was not. I felt like criticizing all the time. When I came to the lesson on Ali, I became serious. I felt that it might be a fine piece of writing, but as it is it would certainly not please Muslims. I think that many of the lessons require to be reconsidered and revised. If you wish, we will discuss this further when we meet. My view may possibly be wrong. There may be some other point of view from which the very same book may be interesting. I can today read with interest the Upanishads which formerly used to send me to sleep. The principal writers are all of them experienced men. I feel unhappy why, even then, I do not appreciate the lessons. All the same, I must say, must not I, what I feel?

BAPU

SHRI DAKSHINAMOORTI BHAVAN

BHAVNAGAR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19945; also 12261

267. LETTER TO JAGJIVANDAS NARANDAS MEHTA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

Shravan Vad 4, Friday [*August 27, 1926*][2]

BHAISHRI JAGJIVANDAS,

I have your letter. I am enclosing herewith three drafts for the sums of Rs. 400/-, Rs. 300/-, and Rs. 300/-, totalling Rs. 1000/-. It seems to me that Trivenibehn has got to put up with the loss of

[1] Manuscript magazine of the national school at Sabarmati Ashram

[2] The year has been inferred from the contents. In 1926 *Shravan Vad 4* corresponded to August 27.

interest. The following books can be useful to some extent in the matter of the municipality. . . .[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 10606

268. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Friday [*August 27, 1926*][2]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your telegram and letter. There is no question of my being hurt because you have said no. My duty was to ask you and your duty was to say no under the conditions obtaining there.

Pattani Saheb came yesterday. I have requested him to make his bungalow available. If no other bungalow is available we shall take his. I shall see whether or not he will take rent. I told him that in case no other bungalow was available we intended to have his bungalow as there was no other alternative. I asked him frankly whether or not he would take rent. He said he would like to take rent as otherwise the place could not be maintained.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
HOMI VILLA
PANCHGANI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

269. LETTER TO G. SITARAM SASTRY

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 28, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your long letter. It makes painful reading. If the workers do not respond to you (as according to your letter evidently they do

[1] The letter is incomplete; *vide*" Letter to jagjivandas Narandas Mehta", 12-6-1926.

[2] From the postmark

not), is it any use in continuing the agency? What is the use of shutting our eyes to facts? And, if the workers will not respond to you or Deshbhakta Venkatappayya, does it also not follow that they will respond to nobody? It seems to me that in the circumstances it will be as well to close the agency. But, that does not mean stopping all organized khadi work in Andhra Desh. But it does mean recognizing the truth of the situation and bowing to it. You will then gather together those few workers, if there are any, who will be absolutely loyal to you and you will develop khadi with their aid. Independent organizations will still continue and they may do what they like. By being thus truthful and recognizing our limitations, we shall be able some day to overcome them and expand as we ought to.

This is my own personal opinion given without reference to the Council. First of all, I would like to know your own views before taking any action through the All-India Spinners' Association.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. SITARAM SASTRY,
ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION
(ANDHRA BRANCH)
GUNTUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 11232

270. LETTER TO AVADHNANDAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 28, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I think you are taking an unduly pessimistic view about Hindi Prachar work. Those who are actually doing the teaching work should continue to perform their duty in full confidence that duty heartily and self-sacrificingly performed must bear ample fruit in due course.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 11297

271. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 29, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

Here is another letter of the type I sent you before.

Mr. Bharucha has told me all about you. He wanted me to send you some money. I wish I could do so. But it is not possible.

Mr. Birla has offered to loan Rs. 70,000 for one year certainly without interest and without security to the Association. But, I feel that unless we have a reserve in the Association coffers or at least that amount, we must not make use of the loan. We considered the matter yesterday in the Council and others also agreed. Have you any opinion about this?

I hope both you and Hemaprabha Devi are doing quite all right.

Yours,

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
170, BOW BAZAAR STREET
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S. N. 11234

272. LETTER TO REHANA TYABJI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
August 29, 1926

MY DEAR REHANA,

I have now secured both your letter and postcard. Both the letter and the postcard I got only yesterday. You have addressed the postcard at Ahmedabad. So it came redirected from Ahmedabad a day late. The letter remained on the office board for some time as unclaimed because of the Urdu writing on the envelope which nobody understood. You wrote my name in English but the receiver thought that the Urdu name belonged to someone else in the Ashram. It was

only on a searching enquiry that the letter was traced on the office board outside. Of course, the moral of it is that every one of us should know both Devnagari and Persian scripts. Till then, these mistakes and delays will continue.

I shall now deal with Sir Henry Lawrence directly and send him the information he requires.[1]

The battle over China silk has now to be postponed to another day when all of you come again to the Ashram. You should understand that I did not have enough of your *bhajans* when you were here. You have, therefore, to come, if for nothing else, for giving me more *bhajans*. You must become better and stronger. Mirabai has told me all about your conversation with her. You shall certainly come and stay as long as you can and as often as you like. If you will only make yourself at home here and express all your needs every endeavour will be made to supply them.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

MISS REHANA TYABJI

CAMP, BARODA

From a photostat: S.N. 9601

273. LETTER TO MRS. STANLEY JONES

THE ASHRAM, SABARAMATI,
August 29, 1926

DEAR FRIEND[2],

I have your letter. I shall try to write out the pamphlet you want[3]. But you will forgive me if I take time over it.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : C. W. 11341. Courtesy : Mrs. Eunice Jones Mathew

[1] *Vide*" Letter to Rehana Tyabji", 21-8-1926

[2] Wife of Rev. E. Stanley Jones, American missionary, author of *The Christ of the Indian Road,* etc.

[3] *Vide* also" Letter to Rev. Stanley Jones", 22-5-1927.

274. LETTER TO SHAMBHUSHANKER

THE ASHRAM,
Monday, August 30, 1926

BHAI SHAMBHUSHANKER,

I have your letter.

Your diet should contain some greens. You should grow them in your own backyard. Pickles are not at all necessary, but may be somewhat useful in summer as a method of preserving greens. If they are to be harmless, they should contain no mustard or chillies or oil. Vinegar can be used as a preservative in pickles.

I have not altered the views expressed in my book[1]; but, not being able to think of a substitute for milk in our country, I have been forced to include it. I have also observed that the oils available here do not suit delicate stomachs, and, therefore, I generally advise people to avoid them. Salt is not essential. In fact, from the point of view of *brahmacharya* giving up salt is beneficial. As a medicine, it has many uses. When I fast I always mix some salt in the water which I drink.

Whey made from mildly fermented curds is quite all right as a substitute for milk. There is no harm in removing all the butter from the whey. On the contrary, it helps.

About the quantity or food no absolute standard can be laid down. Everyone should fix his own standard on the basis of his experience. Wheat, mill, one green and a lemon—nothing else is required. The sugar present in wheat 'and milk is enough for our purpose.

I think this covers all your questions. Till you have recovered complete strength and get normal motions, live only on milk and grapes or whey and grapes. After the fast is ended it is necessary in every case to have an enema to ensure bowel movement. If you do not start getting normal motions in two or three days, you should take a little castor oil.

Blessings from
BAPU

KHADI KARYALAYA
GARIYADHAR
KATHIAWAR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19946

[1] Presumably, *Arogya Vishe Samanya Jnan*, a Gujarati book.

275. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Monday [*August 30, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. We knew what Dr. Jivraj would recommend. I have already written to you that I have talked to Pattani Saheb about the bungalow to be given to you. I think we shall get the bungalow.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I wrote Rohit not in joke but by mistake. Somehow I had a notion that because of Taramati you had named the child Rohit. Let him have both the names.

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

HOMI VILLA

PANCHGANI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

276. LETTER TO SURESH CHANDRA BANERJI

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

September 1, 1926

DEAR SURESH BABU,

I have your letter.[2] Mr. Birla has now altered his mind and he has written to me saying that he is prepared to advance money without interest for one year on the undertaking of the Association to return the loan on the due date. This has placed me in a difficulty because that means that the Association should take such securities as are enforceable and absolutely adequate. My own intention, therefore, is

[1] From the postmark

[2] Acknowledging on August 28 Gandhiji's letter of August 21, Banerji had written that he did not meet Birla in Calcutta but hoped that the latter would agree to advance the loan free of interest, or else they would have to mortgage their stock to the Comilla Union Bank (S. N. 11233).

not to make use of Mr. Birla's offer. If at the end of the year, you must borrow from the bank to refund his loan, is it worth while going to the trouble of finding securities for one year, if the same ceremony is to be performed at the end of one year? After all, you will save only Rs. 1,800/- in one year. And my advice, therefore, is not to trouble about this loan and do what you like with the bank. But, if you insist upon making use of Mr. Birla's money, please let me know whose guarantees are to be, and what their status is.

Yours sincerely,

SURESH CHANDRA BANERJI
KHADDAR DEPT.
ABHOY ASHRAM
COMILLA

From a microfilm: S.N. 11235

277. LETTER TO S. E. STOKES

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 1, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I quite appreciate the difficulty in your taking Miss Haussding. She has now gone to Mussoorie. She will be there for some time with Devdas.

Of course, I am longing to be with you and pass even if it is only for a few days. When that time will come I do not know. I am watching with considerable interest your experiment amongst the hill folks.

With love to you all.

Yours sincerely,

S. E. STOKES, ESQ.
KOTGARH
SIMLA HILLS

From a photostat: S.N. 19679

278. LETTER TO B. S. T. SWAMI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 1, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is hardly necessary for one to come to Sabarmati to lead a pure and simple life. Everyone can do that in his own home, thus, you can certainly refuse to marry, you need not eat any but the simplest food, you can cultivate the habit of retiring to bed early and getting up early in the morning and beginning the day with thanksgiving to the Almighty. You are already treating the untouchables as your very own. You can join a Hindi class there conducted by the Hindi Prachar office in Triplicane and you can certainly learn how to spin and adopt khaddar for your dress. No great effort is required to practise truth and charity in thought, word and deed.

Yours sincerely,

B. S. T. SWAMI
3/7 CAR STREET
TRIPLICANE
MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 19680

279. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

September 1, 1926

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. I have also read the reply sent by your secretary. You need do nothing more. Have you improved in health? Jamnalalji is here at present.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

SJT. GHANSHYAMDASJI BIRLA
PILANI
RAJPUTANA

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6134. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

280. TELEGRAM TO HARIHAR SHARMA

[On or after *September 1, 1926*][1]

SAMMELAN READY. COME HERE ABOUT TUESDAY. ARE YOU FREE.

From a microfilm S.N. 11298

281. NOTES

A GREAT INDUSTRIALIST

The death of Mr. Ratan Tata removes from our midst a great industrialist. Jamshedpur is the greatest Indian enterprise of the greatest Indian firm. The late Mr. Ratan Tata was a noted member of the great house of the Tatas. I had the honour of coming in close contact with him when he invited me to visit Jamshedpur in connection with some trouble with his employees. It was an agreeable surprise to me to find him full of sympathy for his employees and ready to concede everything that could be legitimately urged on their behalf. He created in my mind the impression of being a just and generous employer. His solicitude for the prosperity of the industry seemed to me to be independent of the added wealth it might bring to the distinguished house. I tender my condolences to the members of the deceased's family.

WHY OBLIGED?

A correspondent justifying the weakness of his yarn says:" We are obliged to buy waste cotton in the market at almost the same price as good cotton." Why obliged? Surely, if good cotton is not available at a particular place, it should be procured from places where it is available. Bengal, Bihar and Orissa get their good cotton from Wardha. Manchester gets its supplies from India, Uganda, Egypt and America. Why cannot the correspondent get his from a neighbouring district or province? There is no excuse for members of the All-India Spinners' Association to spin bad yarn. An English proverb has it that things that are worth doing are worth doing well. Love of khadi must not be exhausted with the mere spinning. It is but a stepping-stone to the mastery of the art and of its economics.

RECRUITING EVIL

A correspondent from Sirsi (Canara) writes:

[1] This was in reply to the telegram dated September 1, reading:" Reaching about Tuesday wire Harihar Sharma your convenience."

> An agent of the Assam Tea Planters intends to start a depot to canvass coolies for the plantation. He does not want Mussalman coolies for they are not obedient. He wants only Hindus who are docile. He offers Rs. 15 for every coolie registered. Is it not possible to stop the evil? There are so many misrepresentations.

The evil is no doubt great. Assam is not a depopulated place. There is something wrong if labourers have to be taken all the way from Canara to Assam. It is impossible for the simple Canarese villagers to know the conditions in the Assam plantations. Freedom of contract is lost as soon as a tout intervenes whose business it is to get labour somehow or other. Let all the Canarese go to Assam if *they* wish and if they are not to displace the Assamese. But in the present case, if the facts be as stated by the correspondent, there can be no question of *wish* on the part of the Canarese and no outsider can go to Assam without displacing an Assamese. Tea plantations of Assam must be worked, if they are at all worked, by indigenous labour so long as there are poor people in Assam who are without employment.

My correspondent asks me to suggest remedies to avert the evil of recruiting. Public opinion is the most effective remedy. Let the correspondent collect sufficient workers who will make it their business during their spare hours to visit the neighbouring villages and warn the villagers against falling into traps laid for them. Someone among these workers should try to study conditions of labour in Assam either by a personal visit or from literature published on the subject.

"THE ORDER OF HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY"

Begum Mohamed Zahiuddin Meccai recently delivered an address before the Women's Sarda Association at Bangalore. A correspondent has favoured me with a copy of her interesting speech from which I take the following:[1]

The sentiments are admirable but there seems to be no atmosphere for the formation of the Order suggested by the worthy lady.

Young India, 2-9-1926

[1] The extract, not reproduced here, reported the speaker's remarks that service in the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity was the most sacred form of social service, that God of the Hindus and the Muslims was one, that it was 'foolish, if not mad" for Hindus and Muslims to fight and called for the setting up of the 'Sacred Order of Hindu-Muslim Unity', the members of which would work to save people of the rival communities during trouble.

282. NATIONAL SCHOOLS

A Sholapur correspondent informs me that a translation has appeared in the press of an article[1] I wrote in *Navajivan* (8th August last). It is said to attribute to me the opinion that I know of no school which fulfils the requirements of the definition of national educational institutions given by the Congress at Belgaum. He adds that the translation is likely to damage even *bona-fide* national schools if it goes unchallenged. I am sorry I have not seen the translation. But I know that I have never given the opinion attributed to me. On the contrary, I do know some national schools that do fulfil the requirements.

I give below a translation of the paragraph referred to by the correspondent:

> Therefore where either the parents or the teachers are opposed to the national ideal, the school should certainly be closed. Where the parents are fired by national ideals and prove their adhesion by giving adequate donations for the support of national schools, and, where the teachers being themselves believers in the national ideal are ceaselessly striving to enforce it, I can understand a relaxation of the discipline if the scholars are lukewarm about the ideal. In such a case, it may be necessary to continue the school. For we may hope some day to influence the scholars. But at the time of writing these lines, I can think of no such school.

In my opinion, the last sentence is clear and unequivocal. 'Such school' manifestly refers to schools that may have believing parents and teachers and lukewarm pupils. Even at the moment of writing this note, I can recall no such school. But if there is a national school where, in spite of teachers' efforts and parents' concrete concurrence, in the shape of donations, the scholars do not carry out the ideal, my advice would be, as it is according to the paragraph quoted, not to close such a school, but to continue it for further effort. The same idea is amplified in the succeeding paragraph which therefore will bear translation. It is:

> My own experience is that where the national ideal is found dormant, the fault lies at the door of teachers. The instance quoted is that of a school where the teachers are enthusiastic, the pupils indifferent and the parents hostile, Where parents object to their children learning hand-spinning and

[1] *Vide*" National Schools", 8-8-1926.

weaving[1] khadi, and threaten to withdraw their children if 'untouchable' children are admitted, it is inconsistent with his self-respect for a teacher to hold on to the institution and persist in conducting it in the teeth of opposition from parents. It would be a waste of national time. If we conduct national institutions in spite of the opposition of parents interested in them, we should be guilty of the same fault we impute to the missionaries. We have no right to give instruction to children against the wish of their parents and thus create family dissensions. Those who are over 16 years and who understand their interest, who are capable of suffering hardship, are not in need of protection. They are self-reliant. For such, wherever necessary, we should open and undoubtedly conduct educational institutions. But, where and how many are such students throughout India? Where are the schools in which there are students who can be likened to godly, fearless, long-suffering and yet wise and respectful Prahlad? When we have numerous scholars of that description, we shall see new life everywhere and no one will want to know where is swaraj. And, in order to bring into being such scholars, we need to conduct purest national schools even though there may be only very few scholars in them. Where parents become patrons, scholars lord it over the teachers, and where the threat is held out directly or indirectly that if Congress assistance is not rendered the school will go under Government protection, there is no national school and the sooner such a school is closed the better. We understand now what non-co-operation is. We are in a position to appraise its value. We know its dangers. And, therefore, the way of non-co-operating schools is clear. Let us not deceive ourselves. Let us remain unmoved by ups and downs and let us who have faith continue our work and all will be well.

Young India, 2-9-1926

283. WIDOW REMARRIAGE

A correspondent pertinently asks whether Sir Ganga Ram's statistics regarding Hindu widows refer to all Hindu widows or only to those whom custom prohibits from marrying. On referring the

[1] The Gujarati original in *Navajivan*, 8-8-1926, however, has" wearing".

inquiry to Sir Ganga Ram, I learn that his" statistics are not confined to classes in which widow remarriage is prohibited, they contain Hindu widows of all classes". Sir Ganga Ram adds:

> Moreover, it was no good to give figures of such classes only. We all know that Mussalmans and Christians can remarry, yet there are widows amongst them who will remarry sooner or later. It is the *ban* on Hindu widows which I wish to remove. I don't want to force every widow to remarry.

This is no doubt good. But the ban in Hinduism is confined only to the classes which come within the prohibited zone. Outside the zone Hindu widows marry almost as freely as Mussalman and Christian widows, though to be fair to the latter, it must be mentioned that all Mussalman and Christian widows do not remarry 'sooner or later'. There are many who do not from choice. There is no doubt, however, that a tendency exists even outside the prohibited zone to slavishly copy the so-called higher classes and to keep young widows unmarried. But so long as we have not fuller statistics, it is not possible accurately to gauge the magnitude of the evil wrought by the custom of prohibiting widows from remarrying. It is to be hoped that Sir Ganga Ram's and other associations that have specialized in this matter will collect and publish the required statistics. It should be possible to know the number of Hindu widows, say under twenty years, among the prohibited classes.

Let not my correspondent whose question was prompted probably by a desire to justify the ban and those who think with him disregard the evil of young widows being prohibited from marrying. If there be even one child widow, the wrong demands redress.

Young India, 2-9-1926

284. CRIME OF READING BIBLE

Several correspondents have written to me taking me to task for reading the New Testament to the students of the Gujarat National College. One of them asks:

> Will you please say why you are reading the Bible to the students of the Gujarat National College? Is there nothing useful in our literature? Is the Gita less to you than the Bible? You are never tired of saying that you are a staunch *Sanatani* Hindu. Have you not now been found out as a Christian in secret? You may say a man does not become a Christian by reading the Bible. But is not reading the Bible to the boys a way of converting them to Christianity? Can the boys remain uninfluenced by the Bible reading? Are they not likely to become Christians by reading the Bible? What is there specially in the Bible that is not to be found in our sacred books? I do hope you will give an adequate

reply and give preference to the Vedas over the Bible.

I am afraid I cannot comply with the last request of my correspondent. I must give preference to that which the boys lawfully want over what I or others may desire. When they invited me to give them an hour per week, I gave them the choice between reading the *Gita,* Tulsidas's *Ramayana,* and answering questions. By a majority of votes, they decided to have the New Testament and questions and answers. In my opinion, the boys were entitled to make that choice. They have every right to read the Bible or to have it read to them. I offered to read the *Gita* or the *Ramayana* as I am reading both at the Ashram to the inmates and as therefore the reading of either at the National College would have involved the least strain and the least preparation. But the boys of the College probably thought they could read the other books through others but they would have from me my interpretation of the New Testament as they knew that I had made a fair study of it.

I hold that it is the duty of every cultured man or woman to read sympathetically the scriptures of the world. If we are to respect others religions as we would have them to respect our own, a friendly study of the world's religions is a sacred duty. We need not dread, upon our grown-up children, the influence of scriptures other than our own. We liberalize their outlook upon life by encouraging them to study freely all that is clean. Fear there would be when someone reads his own scriptures to young people with the intention secretly or openly of converting them. He must then be biased in favour of his own scriptures. For myself, I regard my study of and reverence for the Bible, the Koran, and the other scriptures to be wholly consistent with my claim to be a staunch *sanatani* Hindu. He is no *sanatani* Hindu who is narrow, bigotted, and considers evil to be good if it has the sanction of antiquity and is to be found supported in any Sanskrit book. I claim to be a staunch *sanatani* Hindu because, though I reject all that offends my moral sense, I find the Hindu scriptures to satisfy the needs of the soul. My respectful study of other religions has not abated my reverence for or my faith in the Hindu scriptures. They have indeed left their deep mark upon my understanding of the Hindu scriptures. They have broadened my view of life. They have enabled me to understand more clearly many an obscure passage in the Hindu scriptures.

The charge of being a Christian in secret is not new. It is both a libel and a compliment—a libel because there are men who can believe me to be capable of being secretly anything, i.e., for fear of

being that openly. There is nothing in the world that would keep me from professing Christianity or any other faith the moment I felt the truth of and the need for it. Where there is fear there is no religion. The charge is a compliment in that it is a reluctant acknowledgment of my capacity for appreciating the beauties of Christianity. Let me own this. If I could call myself, say, a Christian, or a Mussalman, with my own interpretation of the Bible or the Koran, I should not hesitate to call myself either. For then Hindu, Christian and Mussalman would be synonymous terms. I do believe that in the other world there are neither Hindus, nor Christians, nor Mussalmans. There all are judged not according to their labels or professions but according to their actions irrespective of their professions. During our earthly existence there will always be these labels. I therefore prefer to retain the label of my forefathers so long as it does not cramp my growth and does not debar me from assimilating all that is good anywhere else.

The hypersensitiveness that my correspondents have betrayed is but an indication of the intensity of the wave of intoleration that is swooping through this unhappy land. Let those who can, remain unmoved by it.

Young India, 2-9-1926

285. A HEROIC SACRIFICE

A Travancore correspondent sends me the following story of noble self-sacrifice that has come under his observation:[1]

I tender my congratulations to Kannad Krishna Aiyer for his noble sacrifice. He reminds one of the heroes of the days of the *Mahabharata* who thought nothing of putting their lives in peril for the love of humanity.

Young India, 2-9-1926

286. CONSERVATION OF VITAL ENERGY

Readers of *Young India* will excuse me for discussing in public delicate problems I would fain discuss only in private. But the

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had narrated how a person, who had been influenced by non-co-operation, gave his flesh in a surgical operation to save a man who had been badly injured by a fall from an elephant who had run amuck.

literature I have felt compelled to glance through and the copious correspondence my review of M. Bureau's book has given rise to demand a public discussion of a question which is of paramount interest to society. A Malabar correspondent writes:

> In your review of Monsieur Bureau's book it is stated that there is no case on record of celibacy or long abstention producing any evil effects on us. In my own case, however, three weeks seem to be the utmost limit of beneficial abstention. At the end of that period I usually feel a heaviness of body, a restlessness both of body and mind, leading to bad temper. Relief is obtained either by normal coitus or nature herself coming to the rescue by an involuntary discharge. Far from feeling weak or nervous, I become the next morning calm and light and am able to proceed to my work with added gusto.
>
> A friend of mine, however, developed distinctly injurious symptoms by abstention. He is about 32 years of age, a strict vegetarian and a very religious person. He is absolutely free from any vicious habits of body or mind. Yet he was having till two years ago, when he married, copious discharges at night followed by weakness of body and depression of spirits. Lately he developed excruciating pain in the abdominal region. On the advice of an Ayurvedic doctor he married and is now cured.
>
> I am intellectually convinced of the superiority of celibacy on which all our ancient Shastras agree. But the experiences I have quoted above make it clear that we are not able to absorb in our system the highly vital secretion of the testes which consequently becomes a toxic product. I humbly request you, therefore, to publish, for the benefit of people like me who have no doubt as to the importance of chastity and abstention, in *Young India,* any device, such as the *asanas* of *Hatha Yoga,* which will enable us to assimilate and absorb the vital product in our system.

The instances quoted by the correspondent are typical. In several such cases I have observed hasty generalizations from insufficient data. Ability to retain and assimilate the vital fluid is a matter of long training. It must be so, as it gives a strength to body and mind such as no other process does with equal effect. Drugs and mechanical contrivances may keep the body in a tolerable condition but they sap the mind and make it too weak to resist the play of a multitude of passions which like so many deadly foes surround every human being.

Too often do we expect results in spite of practices which are calculated to retard, if not to defeat, them. The common mode of life is shaped to minister to our passions. Our food, our literature, our

amusements, our business hours are all regulated so as to excite and feed our animal passions. The vast majority of us want to marry, to have children and generally to enjoy ourselves, be it ever so moderately. It will be so more or less to the end of time.

But there are, as there always have been, exceptions to the general rule. Men have wanted to live a life wholly dedicated to the service of humanity which is the same thing as saying 'to God'. They will not divide their time between the rearing of a special family and the tending of the general human family. Necessarily, such men and women cannot afford to live the general life which is designed to promote the special, individual interest. Those who will be celibates for the sake of God need to renounce the laxities of life and find their enjoyment in its austere rigours. They may be 'in the world' but not 'of it'. Their food, their business, their hours of business, their recreations, their literature, their outlook upon life must, therefore, be different from the general.

It is now time to inquire whether the correspondent and his friend *desired* to live the life of complete abstention and whether they modelled it accordingly. If not, it is not difficult tounderstand the relief that the relaxation brought in the first case and the weakness that supervened in the second case. Marriage no doubt was the remedy in that second case, as in the vast majority of cases marriage is the most natural and desirable state when one finds oneself even against one's will living the married life in one's daily thought. The potency of thought unsuppressed but unembodied is far greater than that of thought embodied, that is, translated into action. And, when the action is brought under due control, it reacts upon and regulates the thought itself. Thought thus translated into action becomes a prisoner and is brought under subjection. Thus considered, marriage too is a mode of restraint.

I must not undertake in the course of a newspaper article to give detailed instructions for the guidance of those who desire to live a life of ordered restraint. I must refer them to my *Guide to Health*[1] written years ago with that end in view. It does need revision in certain parts in the light of fresh experiences, but there is nothing in the book which I would withdraw. General directions, however, may be safely reiterated here:

[1] This was based on a series of articles published in 1913 under the title"General Knowledge about Health".

l. Eat moderately always leaving the dining-room with a feeling of pleasant hunger.

2. Highly spiced and fatty vegetarian foods must be avoided. Separate fat is wholly unnecessary when an adequate supply of milk is available. Little food suffices when there is little vital waste.

3. Both the body and the mind must be constantly occupied in clean pursuits.

4. Early to bed and early to rise is a necessity.

5. Above all a life of restraint presupposes an intense living desire for reunion with God. When there is heart perception of this central fact, there will be continuously increasing reliance upon God to keep His instrument pure and in order. The *Gita* says:"Passions return again and again in spite of fasting but even the desire ceases when the Divine is seen."[1] This is literally true.

The correspondent refers to *asana* and *pranayama*[2]. I believe that they have an important place in the practice of restraint. But my own experiences in this direction, I am sorry to say, are not worth recording. There is, to my knowledge, little literature on the subject that is based on present experience. But it is a field worthy of exploration. I would, however, warn the inexperienced reader from trying it or accepting the directions of the next *Hatha Yogi* he may meet with. Let him be sure that an abstemious and godly life is wholly sufficient to achieve the much to be desired restraint.

Young India, 2-9-1926

287. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS BHIKHABHAI

September 2, 1926

BHAISHRI PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. You may rest assured that I do not belittle *pranayama*. But what can be achieved through *pranayama* can also be achieved through other means and, therefore, I do not look upon it as indispensable. While *pranayama* is extremely difficult to master, other means can be easily cultivated by all men, and I think it is more beneficial to employ them particularly in this age. *Pranayama* may help in observing celibacy, but I am afraid that by itself it does not

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II, 59

[2] Breath-control, a technique in yoga

dry up our pleasure in objects of sense. This is the main point. You yourself have been practising *pranayama*. When you have achieved good success in it, come and discuss the matter with me again. I should certainly like to know persons who have succeeded in the practice of *pranayama*. Kakasaheb Kalelkar, who is an inmate of the Ashram but who lives elsewhere at present because of his illness, has had good practice in *pranayama*. After he has recovered his health, please do correspond with him or see him when you are here. He will be back here, most probably by the time of Diwali. I do not give his address, since it is essential that his correspondence should be severely restricted at present. Then there is Vinoba who lives in Wardha. His address is: Satyagraha Ashram, Wardha. You may certainly write to him. You will probably hear what his experience has been.

RAI PRABHUDAS BHIKHABHAI

AT & P.O. KATHANA LOT

Via NADIAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12262

288. LETTER TO SWAMI RAGHAVANANDA

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

September 3, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[1] I suppose by conquest of sleep you mean its regulation and not complete giving up of sleep. For myself, I take and need at least six hours' sleep during 24 hours. It is true that I take my sleep very lightly. But, if I do not take this minimum quantity, both body and mind suffer. Complete eradication of sex desire I hold to be a possibility and an advantage. Complete cessation of sleep I do not

[1] Swami Raghavananda in his letter of July 24 (S.N. 10782) had stated that he was familiar with Gandhiji's ideas on 'self-conquest' and 'conquest of the sense of taste and sex desire', but that he wanted to know Gandhiji's views on 'conquest of sleep', having heard that he was a 'spare sleeper' and one who could, on waking at will, attend to worship or to writing.

regard as possible or desirable. Control over sleep is attained by light diet and freedom from exhausting physical exertion.

Yours sincerely,

SWAMI RAGHAVANANDA
VEDANTA SOCIETY
24 WEST, 71ST STREET
NEW YORK CITY
(U. S. A)

From a photostat: S.N. 10807

289. LETTER TO NORMAN LEYS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 3, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your latest letter[1]. You may certainly share all my letters with any friend you like subject to the proviso that they do not find their way to the Press. Not that I mind it, but it can do no good whatsoever and may possibly do harm to the cause both you and I are trying to serve.

I do not share your fear that the Mussalmans will fight any just solution. It will, however, very largely depend upon Hindu prudence, Hindu moderation and absolute fairplay. Why do you say that Islam and democracy are incompatible? On the contrary, were not the early Califs among the most democratic sovereigns the world has ever seen? But a clash of arms will not move me. Any real movement for freedom is like new birth and all its attendant travail. If we have to go through a purgatory, we must face it for the priceless boon. As a matter of fact, that clash is now taking place on a miniature scale and it may be found to be sufficient for teaching wisdom to both the parties. Already innocent blood has been spilt by the gallon.

By preference in education, I mean every backward section should be specially encouraged by special grants of scholarships. It would be the inevitable duty of the state, if it is to represent all classes, to begin with the weakest. To spend freely upon the real education of

[1] *Vide* Appendix"Letter from Norman Leys", 9-8-1926.

the backward classes will be ultimately to provide the safest cure for discontent. I know that the present discontent on the part of either side comes from consciousness of weakness. Hindus feel their weakness in physical strength and endurance. Mussalmans feel their weakness in education and earthly possessions. So, I look upon the present feud between the two as a healthy sign in a way. It is really unconsciously a battle for freedom. It was possible for them to have avoided this if they could have assimilated the programme of 1920. But the energy and the national consciousness that were called into being in 1920 could not possibly remain dormant and, as they could not find their way in a healthy channel, they have taken the unhealthy course of internecine bloody feud. I have not a shadow of doubt that, at the end of it, we shall feel stronger and purer because there are people who do not want this feud, who believe in non-violence as the final rock and who have not lost their heads during the turmoil.

The fear expressed by you in your final paragraph is certainly not groundless. But is it any wonder our administrative limb has atrophied? Many mount the clerical posts—they are nothing more—through flattery and the like. It would be therefore no wonder to me if, in the beginning stages of the experiment, we choose wrong men to represent us. In that case, history would be merely repeating itself. But even that should not frighten a reformer, You cannot wrap yourself in cotton wool and fight freedom's battle. Nor need the spectre of the I.C.S. men refusing to work frighten one. But, in spite of my strong indictment of the I.C.S. men, I have sufficient faith in their good nature as men having the upper hand when the demoralizing artificial prestige and protection these estimable men enjoy have been removed.[1]

Always at your service,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. NORMAN LEYS
BRAILSFORD
NEAR DERBY

From a photostat: S.N. 12171

[1] Dr. Norman Leys replied to the letter on September 20; *vide* "Letter from Norman Leys", 20-9-1926.

290. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Saturday, Sravana Vad 13, September 4, 1926

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your letter. The description of"sparrow" is very good. I would let him know nothing about the things you mention. You have, however, put me on my guard and so there need be no fear. He has the weakness which you mention, but it will soon pass. His virtues are enduring. He is full of compassion and good-natured beyond measure. Intolerance is a form of pride. But these weaknesses seem trivial beside his virtues. Since he is under your charge, I do not worry. I am sure you have seen his letter to me. It is beautiful.

I remember to have written one letter to the Maharaja of Nabha. But now I will reply to his letter, and will send you a copy of the reply. The parcel containing spindles, etc., was dispatched to you on August 9. It was registered. It is strange that you have not received it. I have asked them to make inquiries at this end. Please inquire there, too.

I am not losing weight at such a rate. It stands at about 99. I believe I am in very good health. There must be many rulers worse than the Maharaja of Nabha. I believe that there are some. To be sure his oppression was not a little. I believe, however, that the Government did not depose him for his faults though. I also believe that it would not have been able to do so if he had been free from them. I have nothing else against him; only, I cannot support and help him in his agitation.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12263

291. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Saturday [*September 4, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I am inquiring about Pattani Saheb's bungalow. I am hoping to get it if it has not been given to [the Thakore

[1] From the postmark

Saheb of] Limbdi. I think it will be all right if we have it up to the end of February. At the approach of the season it can be vacated.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
HOMI VILLA
PANCHGANI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

292. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

September 5, 1926

DEAR MOTI BABU,

I have your letter and report.

It is surprising how troubles after troubles overcome you.

I am asking the manager to book the Sangha for a complimentary copy of *Young India*.

I do hope that your yarn will improve in quality. You know that we have now introduced the practice of testing the strength and the count of yarn.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 11029

293. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Sunday, Sravana Krishna 14, September 5, 1926

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I got your letter and the cutting, so I do not think about the matter at all. The present political atmosphere stinks in my nostrils.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6135. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

294. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Sunday, Sravana Vad 14, September 5, 1926

BHAISHRI KAKA,

I got your letter in which you discuss the question of the sacred thread. I do not want people who wear it to discard it, nor am I particular that they should continue to wear it. In this age, it does not have even as much value as a simple piece of thread. Moreover, my present state of mind is such that, till Sudras and *Antyajas* are permitted to wear it, I cannot but feel aversion to it. But, then, why should we thoughtlessly and without reason burden the Sudras and the *Antyajas* with the responsibility of wearing it? I do not see any good coming out of a public discussion of this subject at present. But we will think more about it when you are here.

I cannot say that your health has become really fine now. Personally, I don't see much difference between Sonegarh and Ahmedabad. About this, too, we will think together when you are here. Very much more than medicine, I believe that climate and finding out by experiment the right kind of diet help.

All of us were about to be drowned in the river today. We had a rehearsal too. But now only the comedy of it remains. How this happened is a long story, but someone or other is bound to write to you and tell it.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12264

295. LETTER TO BALWANTRAI PAREKH

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Sunday, Sravana Vad 14, September 5, 1926

BHAISHRI BALWANTRAI,

I have your letter. I send herewith a *hundi*[1] for Rs. 300 for the work in Panch Talavada. Kindly send a receipt. And send an account every month to Fulchand, with a copy of the same to me.

SJT. BALWANTRAI GOKALDAS PAREKH
BHAVNAGAR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 12265

[1] Indigenous bill of exchange

296. LETTER TO S. R. DESHPANDE

September 6, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

My heart goes out to you. In a case like yours God alone can help. Whether we believe in Him or not does not much matter as ignorance of law does not save us from its sanctions. God is the supremest law.

I suggest to you that the purpose of our being is to know ourselves. The way to know oneself lies through service of all that lives. And we cannot serve humanity without sacrificing ourselves. Self sacrifice is therefore the highest law for us.

Yours sincerely,

M . K. GANDHI

SJT. S R. DESHPANDE
DONGRE MANSIONS
CHIKHALWADI
BOMBAY- 7

From a copy: S.N. 19947

297. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

September 7, 1926

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

I am having your weekly gifts regularly. Many thanks.

Yours

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3176

298. LETTER TO JUGAL KISHORE BIRLA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Tuesday, Sravana Amavasya [*September 7, 1926*][1]

BHAISHRI JUGAL KISHOREJI,

I have your letter. You must have read what I wrote about the Bible in *Young India*.[2] I think it should satisfy you. I have also glanced through what has appeared in *Vishwamitra*. I wish only to add

[1] Gandhiji's article"Crime of Reading Bible" appeared in *Young India*, 2-9-1926

[2] *ibid*.

that, if the children must learn about the Bible, it is better that they learn it through me. Learning it through me, they can learn but one thing, the quintessence of all religions, namely, *Ramanama*. If others made improper use of my writings or activities, that can do no harm either to me or to my principles. How can truth be misused? Any attempt to do so will have only the opposite effect. That is why truth is given the highest place in the Upanishads and other scriptures and has been described as God. If you are still not satisfied, please write to me again.

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 12269

299. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI
Tuesday, Sravana Amavasya, September 7, 1926

BHAI RAJENDRABABU,

It is only today I could read the enclosed letter. I have also written to the student and asked him to see you.

BABU RAJENDRA PRASAD
CONGRESS OFFICE
MURADPORE
PATNA

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 12272

300. LETTER TO LALJI NARANJI

SABARMATI,
Sravana Vad 0[1]*, 1982* [*September 7, 1926*]

SHRIYUT BHAISHRI LALJI NARANJI[2],

I have your letter. If there was any possibility of some useful purpose being served by my going there, I would not in the least hesitate to accept your invitation, for I would look upon the arrival of a deputation[3] from South Africa as an unusual event and would not

[1] *Amavasya*, the new moon day

[2] Then President of the Indian Merchants' Chamber, Bombay

[3] Parliamentary delegation of eight members sent by the Union Government of South Africa at the invitation of the Government of India. The delegation arrived in India on September 18, 1926 and returned to South Africa on October 13, 1926.

regard my going to Bombay as a violation of my vow. I doubt, however, the propriety of my attending your function. The gentlemen who are arriving are shrewd men and of an independent temper. There can be no serious discussion of the South Africa problem at a reception[1]. The reception may possibly have some tangible effect on them, but from that point of view my presence at the function, I think, can serve no purpose at all. It is likely that they wish to see me. I will certainly find out whether they do. I know their leader[2] well, and therefore everything which should be done by me will be done. I don't think my going there will serve any particular purpose. I have come to this conclusion after an objective consideration of the matter. If, however, you or Sir Purushottamdas[3] have some special reason to consider my presence essential, I will certainly come.

My talk with Sir Henry Lawrence[4] did not relate to the deputation; it was about the commission on agriculture.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

BHAISHRI LALJI NARANJI
EWART HOUSE
TAMARIND LANE
FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12267

301. LETTER TO REVASHANKER JHAVERI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Sravana Vadi 0, 1982 [*September 7, 1926*]

RESPECTED REVASHANKERBHAI,

I have your letter. Sheth Lalji Naranji also wrote to me directly, and I have replied[5] to him saying that my going to Bombay is likely to serve no useful purpose. If it is necessary for me to see them, the meeting will have to be specially fixed, and I will certainly take steps

[1] The garden party by the addressee on September 19, 1926 at Bikaner House in Bombay
[2] F. W. Beyers, then Minister of Mines and Industries
[3] Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas
[4] Then Governor of Bombay
[5] *Vide* the preceding item.

to have one arranged. If they wish to see me, I will arrange a meeting at any convenient place. I have, however, left the responsibility for the final decision to Lalji Sheth and Purushottamdas. If they think that I must go, I will go. It is advisable that no decision should be taken in a hurry.

Chi. Jamnadas had been feeling uneasy for the past many months, but I used to reassure him and persuade him to carry on. In the end, when I took no notice of his letters, he took prompt steps to carry out his decision. I sent for him, and he has been here. He gave three reasons for leaving:

(1) Self-assumed unworthiness as teacher;

(2) Throat trouble, which makes it difficult for him to speak;

(3) Lack of faith in spinning as *yajna*, though he unreservedly believes in khadi.

The last two reasons appear sufficient to me for letting him go. If he experiences difficulty in speaking, he certainly cannot teach; and if he does not appreciate the value of spinning in the spirit of service, he can have no influence on the pupils. I have now written to Nanabhai and asked him so visit Rajkot and inspect the school there—he is the head of this Dakshinamurti[1] and Vice-Chancellor of the Vidyapith. You need not resign from the Committee in a hurry. I will write more about this after discussing the matter with Nanabhai.

The more I see of Ratilal[2] the more I notice his straightforward nature and his simplicity. I have observed that it is Champa[3] who is extravagant. Just now they have both gone to Manilal Kothari's. Champa wishes to stay on there till the *Paryushana*[4] holidays. Ratilal has not yet decided what he will do.

I am writing to Doctor[5] about Jeki[6]. I will write to you again after I have his reply.

Ratilal has returned today.

Respectful greetings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1280

[1] An educational institution at Bhavnagar, in Saurashtra
[2] Ratilal Mehta
[3] Wife of Ratilal Mehta
[4] Holy days observed by the followers of Jainism
[5] Pranjivandas Mehta
[6] Daughter of Pranjivandas Mehta

302. LETTER TO N. H. BELGAUMWALA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Tuesday, Sravana Amas, September 7, 1926

BHAISHRI NAOROJI BELGAUMWALA,

I have your letter. I read the letter in the *Chronicle.* I don't believe at all that my coming out will do any good. I think I am doing real service by my silence. Sometimes an intelligent *vaid* simply lets a patient alone. I look upon myself as such a *vaid*. I know my patient, and so have left him alone. I will certainly like your offering the *Chronicle* to the highest bidder. But no one will buy it. The best thing is that you yourself should issue debentures and take it over.

SJT. N. H. BELGAUMWALA
237, FRERE ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12268

303. LETTER TO KALURAM BAJORIA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Tuesday, Sravana Amas, September 7, 1926

BHAISHRI KALURAM,

I have your letter. If you are firm in your decision not to marry again, if that is what your conscience tells you, you should categorically make it public. I have no doubt at all about this. The condition of the country certainly makes me unhappy, but sometimes even silence is a form of action. I am sure that my silence is.

SJT. KALURAM BAJORIA
C/O JIVRAJ RAMKRISHANDAS
NO. 26/1, ARMENIAN STREET
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 12270

304. LETTER TO NANABHAI BHATT

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Tuesday, Sravana Amas, September 7, 1926

BHAISHRI NANABHAI,

I send with this copy of a letter from Punjabhai. We have entrusted the arrangement about"Bhagvati Sutra" to the Puratattva Mandali, and we should—should we not?—accept the arrangement it makes. Something will certainly have to be done about this. Please do whatever is necessary.

SHRI NARSINHPRASAD BHATT
DAKSHINAMURTI
BHAVNAGAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12271

305. MESSAGE TO BHAVANIDAYAL

Tuesday [*September 7, 1926*][1]

The aim in running the Pravasi Bhavan is to start a library for immigrants. I hope that it will have books which meet their needs. Nowadays people keep all kinds of books, good and bad, in libraries. I trust that this library will have no bad books.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8654. Courtesy: Vishnudayal

306. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Shravana Amavasya, Tuesday, September 7, 1926

BHAI BENARSIDASJI,

I have your letter. As of now there is nothing left for you to do.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

[1] The addressee replied to the message on September 9. The preceding Tuesday was September 7.

[PS.]

Yes, there is Vaze[1]. At the moment he too has no work. I shall plead for him. It will do if the two of you come. If you want to ask Devdas, do so, but I think, knowing his limitations, he will not come.

From the Hindi original : Benarsidas Chaturvedi Papers. Courtesy : National Archives of India

307. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL KRISHNALAL MEHTA

[On or after *September 7, 1926*][2]

BHAISHRI JAISUKHLAL[3],

I have your letter. Now at last I have some peace. I have made no attempt at all to understand the currency problem.[4] I live from moment to moment, submit to the pressure of the moment and become engrossed in whatever it forces on me. For the time being I have escaped from the pressure of the currency problem.

I have written to Lalji Sheth about the deputation from South Africa and am awaiting his reply.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12240

308. ACTION IN INACTION[5]

[*September 8, 1926*]

Nothing would have pleased me better than to have responded to the public appeal[6] made by Dr. Syed Mahmood and other friends if it was at all possible or in my opinion advisable to

[1] S. G. Vaze

[2] The letter to Sheth Lalji Naranji, referred to in this letter, was written on September 7, 1926.

[3] Secretary of the Indian Merchants' Chamber, Bombay. He had an interview with Gandhiji on August 17, 1926 in connection with the report of the Royal Commission on Indian Currency.

[4] The report of the Commission was published in August 1926; an agitation was organized against its recommendation to fix the value of the rupee at 1s. 6d.

[5] Asked in an interview by the Associated Press at Ahmedabad on September 8, what was his reply to the open letter of Dr. Mahmud and others inviting him to resume public life and call a representative conference, Gandhiji referred to this article as his answer. The gist of it, according to the Associated Press report, was"that he was unable to respond to the appeal in the manner suggested by the signatories".

[6] *Vide*"(An Appeal)"6-9-1926.

do so. The signatories are mistaken in thinking that I have gone into retirement. I have imposed upon myself a year's abstention from all avoidable public engagements. The year is fast drawing to a close. The reasons for abstention were fully stated at the time. My health and the requirements of the Ashram necessitated restfrom toilsome travelling and taxing public engagements. If I have not interfered in the Council matters, it is because I have, perhaps, no aptitude for them—certainly, I have no faith in the Councils giving us swaraj. I have ceased to meddle in Hindu-Muslim quarrels because my meddling at this juncture, I am convinced, can only do harm. Then there remain untouchability, national educational institutions and the spinning-wheel. To these I am giving all the attention I am capable of giving.

Therefore, I venture to suggest to the friends that what to them appears to be my inaction is really concentrated action.

I do not in the least share their pessimism. The Hindu-Muslim quarrels are in a way, unknown to us, a fight for swaraj. Each party is conscious of its impending coming. Each wants to be found ready and fit for swaraj when it comes. Hindus think that they are physically weaker than the Mussalmans. The latter consider them-selves to be weak in educational and earthly equipment. They are now doing what all weak bodies have done hitherto. This fighting therefore, however unfortunate it may be, is a sign of growth. It is like the Wars of the Roses. Out of it will rise a mighty nation. A better than the bloody way was opened out to us in 1920, but we could not assimilate it. But even a bloody way is better than utter helplessness and unmanliness.

Even the ugly duel between Motilalji and Lalaji is part of the same struggle. Let the enemies of India's freedom gloat over their differences. These patriots will be working under the same flag long before the gloating is over. They are both lovers of their country. Lalaji sees no escape from communalism. Panditji cannot brook even the thought of it. Who shall say that only one is right? Both attitudes are a response to the prevailing atmosphere. Lalaji who was born to public life with swaraj on his lips is no hater of it now. He proposes to mount to it through communalism which he considers to be an inevitable stage in our evolution. Panditji thinks that communalism blocks the way and he therefore proposes to ignore it even as auto-suggestionists ignore disease seeing that health, not 'illth', is the law of life. The nation can ill afford to do without Sir Abdur Rahim as

without Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan. Sir Abdur Rahim, who wrote the weighty minute with Gokhale on the Islington Commission, is no enemy of his country. Who shall blame him if he thinks that the country cannot progress without the Mussalmans competing with the Hindus on equal terms? He may be wrong in his methods. But he is none-the-less a lover of freedom. Whilst, therefore, I can make room in my mind for all these various schools of thought, for me there is only one way. I have no faith in communalism even as a stage, or perhaps, better still, I have no fitness for work on that stage. I must, therefore, hold myself in reserve till the storm is over and the work of rebuilding has commenced.

I can but watch from a safe distance the struggle that goes on in the Councils. I honour those who have faith in them for prosecuting the programme with zeal.

It is educated India which is split up into parties. I confess my incompetence to bring these parties together. Their method is not my method. I am trying to work from bottom upward. To an onlooker, it is exasperatingly slow work. They are working from top downward—a process more difficult and complicated than the former. The millions for whom the signatories have claimed to write are uninterested in the party complications which are above their heads.

For them there is only the spinning-wheel. To paraphrase a celebrated proverb the wheels of God spin slowly but most effectively. I am engaged in attending to these tiny wheels of God. Let the signatories and the others who care note that they are ceaselessly moving. Their efficiency is daily and visibly growing. And when the storm is blown over, the parties are united, Hindus, Mussalmans, Brahmins, non-Brahmins, the suppressors and the suppressed have joined hands, they will find that the country has been prepared by silent hands for effecting not a punitive and violent boycott,. but a health-giving, non-violent, constructive boycott of foreign cloth. The nation must exhibit some universal strength and power, be they ever so little. That is this boycott of foreign cloth.

The signatories regard themselves as my followers. I invite them to follow the lead of the charkha. I have not ceased to lead that little, simple wheel which daily hums to me the distress of the masses. For better or for worse, I have staked my all on the charkha, for it represents to me *Daridranarayana,* God of and in the poor and in the downtrodden.

Young India, 9-9-1926

309. LETTER TO KRISHNAKANT MALAVIYA

Bhadra Shukla 1, 1982 [*September 8, 1926*]

I got your telegram. Here is my article.

There was an innocent girl. After listening to speeches by several speakers, she went to her mother and said:"Look, mother, what nonsense these mad folk are talking! I only wish to listen to the sweet music of my charkha. I don't want this madness." Listening to the speeches of our orators and reading what our newspapermen write, my plight is like this girl's.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

BHAI KRISHNAKANT MALAVIYA,
ABHYUDAYA PRESS, ALLAHABAD

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 19949

310. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Wednesday, Bhadra Sud 1 [*September 8, 1926*][1]

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. The parcel will follow. You have sent quite a good quantity of grape-juice. Devdas has gone to Mussoorie and is there now. He must have got the parcel which you sent, for he says in his letter that he has received another parcel from you. I have been able to sell 72 pieces out of the stock with me. I have kept the articles to show them to people and have made no special effort to sell them. As you seem to be hard up for cash, I send a draft for Rs. 300; the sum is against the whole stock and does not represent the exact amount of the proceeds from the articles sold. If the costlier material lying with me cannot be sold, I will return it to you and ask you to send me material for the same amount which can be sold. I will not ask you to return its price. I will include the frocks in the list of the stock when they are received. You must have of course included their

[1] Reference in the letter to Devdas being in Mussoorie indicates that the letter was written in 1926.

price in your account. I am afraid the theft of Rs. 325 will be a further strain on your slender resources. It is vain to hope that the thief will be caught.

SHRI MITHUBEHN PETIT
PARK HOUSE
COLABA
BOMBAY

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 10607

311. LETTER TO THAKOREDAS SUKHADIA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Wednesday, Bhadra Sud 1, September 8, 1926

BHAISHRI THAKOREDAS,

I got your letter. I have no right at all to say that what you say is wrong. But, as your well-wisher, I should like to caution you. Two kinds of powers are working in every one of us—one visible and the other invisible. The latter is far stronger. It may be a holy power, but it can also be an evil power. Govardhanbhai[1] has graphically represented in *Sarasvatichandra* the working of these powers. The visible power working in Kumud[2] kept her attached to Pramaddhan[3] and the invisible power drew her to Sarasvatichandra[4]. All reverence to that person, the invisible power in whom is a holy power and controls the visible power. Who can see anything to blame in either of you if the two powers work in such harmony in you both? The only proper wish for a human being to cherish for the succeeding life is that one should merge into God. If that wish is fulfilled, one will be united with one's father, mother, brother, sister and all other dear ones.

P. THAKOREDAS SUKHADIA
KINARI BAZAR
SURAT

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12273

[1] 1855-1907; an eminent Gujarati writer whose epic novel, *Sarasvatichandra*, published in four parts between 1887 and 1901 tells the story of the birth of modern Gujarat

[2] Heroine of the novel

[3] Her husband

[4] To whom Kumud was first engaged. He left his parents' home and, when he remained untraced for a few months, Kumud was married to Pramaddhan.

312. LETTER TO PYARELAL NAYYAR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Wednesday, Bhadra Sud 1 [*September 8, 1926*][1]

CHI. PYARELAL,

I got your long letter. I understand your dilemma. It had all along been my desire to see that there was no excess of anything. Even excess of hesitation may sometimes appear as a sign of incivility. Now that you have adopted a particular manner, I don't see any need for you to change it. If you try, that may even give a shock to Mathuradas[2]. You should, therefore, go on as at present. Write to me when you run short of money. I hope you got the khadi. I suppose that the article is ready now. See that you improve your health. Keep writing to me.

PYARELALJI
HOMI VILLA
PANCHGANI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12274

313. LETTER TO CHHOTALAL TEJPAL

Bhadra Sud 1, 1982, September 8, 1926

BHAISHRI CHHOTALAL TEJPAL,

I do not see any connection between the evil of untouchability and the question whether dead bodies should be carried on shoulders or in a cart. I do not wish to make a will to oblige people, after my death, to have my body carried in a cart, for I see a sort of egotism in the idea. Moreover, if they cremate my body on the Ashram premises, I would rather that they carried it on a few bamboo poles on shoulders or with hands. I don't feel that it is a matter of dharma to insist on dead bodies being carried in carts. I fully accept, however, the necessity and propriety of carrying them in that manner in certain circumstances.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19948

[1] The addressee stayed at Panchgani in 1926.
[2] Mathuradas Trikumji with whom the addressee stayed at Panchgani

314. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Bhadrapad Sud 1, Wednesday [*September 8, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I have written to Lady Pattani to give us the bungalow till February. In the season, they may not even rent it out but they would like to have possession of it to accommodate various people. That is my feeling. By February your health will have sufficiently improved so that if you cannot remain in Panchgani, you can put up with the strain of going to some other hill resort. You can go to Sinhgadh at that time. And if we think of distant places, you can also go to Almora, Mussoorie, Kasauli, etc.

Blessings from
BAPU

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI, ESQ.
HOMI VILLA
PANCHGANI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

315. PLIGHT OF SCHOOL CHILDREN

One who knows what she is writing about says:

> Until our boys learn to conserve their vital forces India will never have the men she should have. For nearly 17 years I have had charge of boys' schools in India. It is appalling to see the number of boys—Hindu, Mahommedan and Christian—who begin school life full of energy and enthusiasm and hope and end in physical wrecks. In literally hundreds of cases, I have traced this directly to self-abuse, sodomy or early marriage. I have today the names of 42 boys guilty of sodomy and not a boy is over 13 years of age. Masters and house fathers will deny that the conditions exist but if the right tactics are used the trouble will be discovered and nearly always the boys will confess. A large per cent of the boys confess to having been taught by men—often their own relatives.

This is no fanciful picture. It is truth suppressed by many

[1] From the postmark

schoolmasters who know. I have known it before. It was first brought to my notice by a Delhi schoolmaster now nearly eight years ago. But I have kept silent, merely discussing with individuals the remedies. The mischief is not confined to India. But it comes upon India with deadlier effect because of the curse of child marriage. A public discussion of this very difficult and delicate subject has become necessary, because one sees in respectable newspapers the sexual passion discussed with a freedom that would not have been possible a few years back.

The fashion of regarding the sexual act as natural, necessary, moral and conducive to mental and physical health has accentuated the evil. The advocacy by the cultured men of the free use of contraceptives has created an atmosphere favouring the growth of the sexual microbe. The tender and receptive minds of youngsters draw the hasty deductions favouring and justifying their unlawful and destructive desires and the parents and the teachers exhibit a sad, almost criminal, indifference and tolerance in respect of the deadly vice. Short of complete purification of the social environment, nothing, in my opinion, will stop the evil. The unconscious and subtle effect of an atmosphere charged with sexuality cannot but react upon the minds of the school-going youth of the country. The surroundings of the city life, the literature, the drama, the cinema, the household appointments, various social ceremonies do but to point one thing the promotion of the sexual passion. It is impossible for little children already conscious of the beast within to resist the pressure exerted by these influences. Palliatives will not answer. The reformation must begin with the elders if they would discharge their trust by the younger generation.

Young India, 9-9-1926

316. 'TOWARDS MORAL BANKRUPTCY'

I have received many letters, both in English and vernacular, asking me to publish this series of articles in pamphlet form in all the three languages—English, Hindi and Gujarati. I am aware that a dozen letters may only represent the individual writers and there may be no real demand for the pamphlets. These are not propitious times for venturing on new publications. But a friend has come to the rescue and guaranteed all loss. The pamphlets will, therefore, be shortly

published. If the correspondents who offered to contribute towards the cost of publication still retain the desire to contribute, they will please forward their donations. If those who want copies will register their names at the *Young India* office beforehand, it will help the manager to fix the number of copies to be printed.

Young India, 9-9-1926

317. NOTES

CONGRESS PRESIDENTSHIP

Sjt. Shrinivas Iyengar's election as President of the forthcoming Congress was a foregone conclusion. The Congress Committees were bound to elect an avowed Swarajist. If Sjt. Shrinivas Iyengar is a fighter, he is also an idealist. He is impatient and his impatient zeal often takes him into waters too deep for ordinary men. He plunges without giving a second thought. He comes upon the responsible office at a time of unexampled difficulty. But Sjt. Iyengar has faith in himself and his cause. Gods have been known to help those who believe in themselves. Let us hope that they will not prove false in this case. Sjt. Iyengar will need all the help that Congressmen can give him. We have learnt the art of giving passive loyalty. But time has come when we must learn to give active loyalty. Difficult as his task is, it would be quite easy if Congressmen will carry out policies and resolutions to which they themselves become party. This is the least that is expected of members of any organization that is to make any progress. I tender Sjt. Iyengar my congratulations for the high honour that has been conferred upon him, and I tender my sympathy for the extraordinary difficulties that face him and pray that God will give him the strength and wisdom to overcome them.

WORTHY OF EXAMPLE

Sjt. Haribhau Phatak sending to the Secretary, All-India Spinners' Association, yarn contributions says:

> I am sending today Shrimati Annapurnabai Gore's yarn 25,000 yds. In Maharashtra many women undertake observances during the monsoon season. Annapurnabai has vowed to spin and present 1,00,000 yards of yarn during the season. The accompanying is the first month's contribution. My friend Shridharpant Shastri is her husband and both are members of the A.I.S.A. They have already sent their full quota. They are a busy family. They have children

and they are poor. With all that they have bad eyes. This effort therefore on their part is well worth noting.

And so the effort undoubtedly is. It is not possible without love of one's kind; and it is love of the poor, love of God, love of 'the country' that is behind the charkha movement.

THE DOUBLE DISTILLED POISON

The curse of untouchability has permeated even the 'untouchables'. And so we have grades of untouchability amongst them, the higher grade refusing contact with the lower. A Thiyya friend writes from Calicut:

> We Thiyyas, a supposed low-caste people, but in education and social status much improved, and almost equal to any other community in Malabar, have a temple here in Calicut. A meeting was arranged to consider the question of giving entry to our *Panchama* brothers on the birthday of our great Guru, Sri Sri Narayana Guru. This was opposed by a large majority and there was much hooliganism to give trouble to the supporters. We voted for the entry of the *Panchama* brethren, but we were in a minority. We have therefore boycotted the temple and we go and worship at another temple where no such distinction is observed. We are determined to fight this battle to a finish.

I tender my congratulations to the small band of reformers. It was a right thing for them to refuse to use a privilege that was denied to the *Panchamas*. Those who claim justice must come with clean hands. The Thiyyas may not set up against others a barrier which they would break down when erected against themselves. That was the lesson Vykom taught. It must on no account be forgotten. Let the reformers then pursue their battle, in the true satyagraha spirit, without anger and with quiet determination, and they will soon turn the minority into a majority. Time and tide are with them.

A TISSUE OF MISREPRESENTATIONS

If most newspapers in the world were to cease publication, the world will not lose anything. Probably, it will heave a sigh of relief. The newspapers generally give not facts but fiction. This reflection arises from my having read a so-called interview with me published in the *Messenger of America*. It is the official organ of the American Philosophical Society. Why even a philosophical society's organ should give currency to fiction in the name of fact is more than I can understand.

I should not have noticed this 'interview' but for the distortion

it contains about my views of Theosophy.

I must, therefore pass by the fiction that"I was spinning on an old-fashioned loom," or that"there were mango trees outside my room," or the worse fiction that"it is through sympathy and understanding of America and the other great nations that we Indians gain the moral force to make our sacrifices."

I must hasten to the Theosophical fictions. Among other things I am reported to have said is that"I am not in sympathy with the Theosophical Movement", that"I am still a Theosophist but I am not in sympathy with the movement." This is just the opposite of what I could have said. For I am not and have never been a member of any Theosophical Society, but I am and have ever been in sympathy with its message of universal brotherhood and consequent toleration. I owe much to Theosophical friends of whom I have many. Whatever critics may say against Madame Blavatsky or Col. Olcott or Dr. Besant, their contribution to humanity will always rank high. What has been a bar to my joining the society, as the interview somewhat correctly puts, is its secret side—its occultism. It has never appealed to me. I long to belong to the masses. Any secrecy hinders the real spirit of democracy. But I recognize that there are two sides at least to every question. And there may be much to be said in favour of occultism in religion. Hinduism is certainly not free from it. But I am not called upon to subscribe to it.

I repeat the request I have often made to interviewers that, if they must interview me or report anything about me, they will do me a favour and serve truth if they will submit to me for correction and verification all they wish to report as having been said by me.

Young India, 9-9-1926

318. DEFENDING CHILD MARRIAGE

A reader of *Young India* writes:

> I am very much pained to read the following sentence in your article,"Curse of Child Marriage", published in the *Young India* of the 26th August 1926:"Only a man innocent of self-restraint and steeped in vice could call it a sin not to marry a girl before she reached the age of monthly periods."
>
> I fail to understand why you could not take a charitable view of those whose opinion differs from you. One can certainly say that the Hindu law-giver was entirely wrong in prescribing child marriage. But I think it

improper to say that those who insist on child marriage are"steeped in vice". It seems to go beyond the limits of politeness in controversy. In fact this is the first time that I heard such an argument against child marriage. Neither the Hindu social reformers nor the Christian missionaries ever said so, so far as I am aware. Imagine therefore the shock which I received when I found this argument in the writing of Mahatma Gandhi whom I believed to be perfection itself, so far at least as charity towards opponents is concerned.

You have condemned not one or two but probably every one of the Hindu law-givers. For, so far as I know, every *smritikara* enjoins early marriage of girls. It is impossible to hold as you have suggested that the passages enjoining early marriage are interpolations. The practice of early marriage is not confined to any province or class of society, but is practically a universal custom in India. It is also a very old practice dating from the time of the *Ramayana.*

I shall try to give briefly what I consider might have been the reasons why the Hindu law-givers insisted upon early marriage of girls. They considered it very desirable that every girl should have a husband as a rule. This is necessary no less for the peace of mind and happiness of the girls themselves than for the welfare of society in general. If every girl has to be provided with a husband, the choice of husband should be made by the parents of the girl and not by the girls themselves. If the choice is left to the girls themselves, it will result in many girls not being married at all, not because they do not like marriage, but because it is very difficult for all girls to find out suitable husbands. It is also dangerous, for it might lead to flirtation and might cause looseness of morals. Youths who appear to be good might ruin the virtue of simple girls. Again, if the choice is to be made by parents, the girls must be married young. When they are grown up, they may fall in love and may not like to marry the bridegroom selected by the parents. When a girl is married young, she becomes one with her husband and his family. The union is more natural and more perfect. It is sometimes difficult for grown-up girls with fixed ideas and habits to adapt themselves in a new home.

The chief objection to early marriage is that it weakens the health of the girl and her children. But this objection is not very convincing for the following reasons. The age of marriage is now rising among the Hindus, but the race is becoming weaker. Fifty or a hundred years ago the men and women were generally stronger, healthier and more long-lived than now. But early marriage was then more in vogue. The physique of educated girls who are married late is not generally better than the girls who receive less education and are married early. From these facts it appears probable that early marriage does not cause as much physical deterioration as some people believe.

You have good knowledge of both European society and Indian society. You will be able to say whether on the whole Indian wives are more devoted to their husbands than European wives; whether among the poor people the Indian husbands treat their wives more kindly than European husbands; whether there are fewer cases of unhappy marriages among Indians than among Europeans; whether sexual morality is higher in Indian society than in European society. If in these respects Indian marriages are more successful than European marriages, then early marriage which is an essential feature of Indian marriages should not be condemned.

I cannot believe that the Hindu law-givers were actuated by any consideration except the true welfare of society in general (including both men and women) in laying down the injunction of early marriage of girls. I believe that early marriage of girls is one of the features of Hindu society which have maintained its purity and prevented its disruption in spite of very hostile environments. You may not believe all this. But may we not expect that you should discard your idea that all the great Hindu law-givers who have insisted on early marriage of girls were innocent of self-restraint and were"steeped in vice"?

The Madras case reported by you seems to be very peculiar. The jury held that the girl committed suicide. But the girl said that her husband set fire to her clothes. In these conflicting circumstances, it is very difficult to hold that the facts which you consider to be indisputable are really so. There have been millions of cases of girl-wives below 13. Not one case of suicide due to cruel advances of the husband has been heard before. Probably there were peculiar features in the Madras case and early marriage was not the principal cause of the death.

Well does the poet say:"It costs very little to fashion a suitable philosophy in order to mitigate the rudeness of facts that secretly hurt one's conscience." This reader of *Young India* has gone a step further. He has not only fashioned a suitable philosophy but ignored facts and erected his argument on unsupported statements.

The charge of want of charity I must pass by, if only because I have not accused the law-givers, but I have ventured to impute vice to those who could insist on marriage at an age too tender for bearing the burden of motherhood. Want of charity comes into being only when you accuse a live person not an imaginary being, and that too without cause—of impure motives. But is there any warrant for the writer saying that the original authors of the several *smritis* who preached self-restraint wrote the verses enjoining marriage of little

girls? Is it not more charitable to assume that the *rishis* could not be guilty of impurity or gross ignorance of cardinal facts concerning the growth of the human body?

But even if the texts ordering child, as opposed to early (for early marriage means marriage well before 25), marriage be found to be authoritative, we must reject them in the light of positive experience and scientific knowledge. I question the accuracy of the statement that child marriage is universal in Hindu society. I should be sorry to find that 'millions of girls' are married, i.e., live as wives whilst they are yet children. The Hindus would have died as a race long ago, if 'millions of girls' had their marriages consummated at, say, the age of eleven.

Nor does it follow that, if the parents are to continue to make the choice of husbands for their daughters, the marriage must be contracted and consummated early. It is still less true to maintain that if girls have to make their choice, there must be courtship and flirtation. After all, courtship is not universal in Europe and thousands of Hindu girls are married after fifteen and yet have their husbands selected by their parents. Mussalman parents invariably select husbands for their grown-up daughters. Whether the choice is to be made by girls or their parents is a separate question and is regulated by custom.

The correspondent has tendered no proof to support the statement that children of grown-up wives are weaker than those of child wives. In spite of my experience of both Indian and European society, I must refuse to enter into a comparison of their morals. Granting, however, for the sake of argument that morals of European society are lower than those of Hindu society, will it naturally follow that the lowness is due to the marriages taking place after full maturity?

Lastly, the Madras case does not help the correspondent, but his use of it betrays his hasty judgment based upon a total disregard of facts. If he will refer to the article again he will discover that I have drawn my conclusion from proved facts. My conclusion is unaffected by the cause of death. It was proved (1) that the girl was of tender age; (2) that she had no sexual desire; (3) that the 'husband' made cruel advances; (4) that she is no more. It was bad enough if the girl committed suicide, it was worse if the husband murdered her because she could not yield to his inhuman lust. The girl was fit only to learn and play, not to play the wife and carry on her tiny shoulders the weight of household cares or the yoke of a lord and master.

My correspondent is a man occupying a high position in society. The nation expects better things from those of her sons and daughters who have received a liberal education and who are expected to think and act in her behalf. We have many abuses in our midst—moral, social, economic and political. They require patient study, diligent research, delicate handling, accuracy of statement and clear thinking on them, and sober, impartial judgment. We may then differ, if necessary, as poles asunder. But we shall surely harm the country, our respective religions and the national cause, if we do not toil to discover the truth and adhere to it, cost what it may.

Young India, 9-9-1926

319. DIGNITY OF LABOUR

We meet every day young men, graduates of our universities, hawking their degrees. They ask for the recommendation of a man who has no education but commands wealth, and in nine cases out of ten, the rich man's recommendation carries greater weight with the officials than the university degree. What does this prove? It proves that money is valued more than intellectual culture. Brain is at a high discount. Why is this so? Because brain has failed to earn money. This failure is due to want of occupation in which intellectual equipment is in demand. Brain which is the most valuable and most powerful force in human society is a waste product for want of a market.

The peasant's assets are his hands. The zamindar's assets are his lands. Culture of land is agriculture. Culture of hand is industry. I am aware that agriculture has been called an industry, but differentiation on the basis of their essentials should not place agriculture in the category of industries. A branch of manual labour which affords facilities for a progressive culture of the hand securing higher wages at successive stages should be properly called industry. This is not the case with the hand working on land. The man who drives a plough, sows seeds or weeds the fields will not earn higher wages by the culture of the hand. There is no scope for attainment of a more remunerative skill in the agriculturist's occupation. Now take the case of a carpenter; he begins by making packing-cases. By culture he may learn to make a tantalus. Mark the progress in the manual skill resulting in a corresponding rise in the daily wages of the man. Let me assure you that the man who made the tantalus with two snakes with their expanded hoods guarding the bottles was first taken into my service for making packing cases. His initial wages were 6 annas a day and in two years' time he was earning one rupee a day and the market value of his handi work left at least 4 annas a day to his employer. This gives a rise in

wages from Rs. 133 to 365 in two years. . . .Over 98 per cent of the population work on land. Land does not grow in area. Hands grow in number with the growth of the population. A holding which sustained a family of 5 members 30 years back now has to support 12 to 15 members. In some cases this extra pressure is relieved by emigration but in most cases a low standard of vitality is accepted as inevitable.

The foregoing is an extract from Sjt. M. S. Das's speech delivered to the Bihar Young Men's Institute in 1924. I have kept that speech by me so as to be able to deal with the essential part of it on a suitable occasion. There is nothing new in what the speaker has said. But the value of his remarks is derived from the fact that, though a lawyer of distinction, he has not only not despised labour with the hands, but actually learnt handicrafts at a late period in life, not merely as a hobby, but for the sake of teaching young men dignity of labour, and showing that without their turning their attention to the industries of the country the outlook for India is poor. Sjt. Das has himself been instrumental in establishing a tannery at Cuttack which has been a centre of training for many a young man who was before a mere unskilled labourer. But the greatest industry which requires the intelligence of millions of hands is no doubt hand-spinning. What is needed is to give the vast agricultural population of this country an added and an intelligent occupation which will train both their brains and hands. It is the finest and cheapest education that can be devised for them. Cheapest because it is immediately remunerative. And if we want universal education in India, the primary education consists not in a knowledge of the three R's but in a knowledge of hand-spinning and all it implies. And when through it the hand and the eye are properly trained, the boy or the girl is ready to receive instruction in the three R's. This I know would appear to some to be utterly absurd and to others to be totally unworkable. But those who so think do not know the condition of the millions. Nor do they know what it means to educate the millions of children of Indian peasantry. And this much-needed education cannot be given unless educated India which is responsible for the political awakening in the country will appreciate the dignity of labour and unless every young man would consider it his imperative duty to learn the art of hand-spinning and then re-introduce it in the village.

Young India, 9-9-1926

320. OUT OF THE FRYING-PAN

The report on the condition of returned emigrants stranded in Calcutta submitted to the Council of the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association makes painful reading. It appears that there are over 2,000 returned emigrants in Calcutta living in squalid surroundings. They are from Fiji, Trinidad, Surinam and British Guiana."The desire to visit their motherland and the rumour that India had obtained self-government were the two chief reasons which led them to leave their birth-place." But they find that their own people in their villages will not have them and so they want to go back to the place where they have come from." 'Anywhere out of India' is their cry". Meantime they are eking out a miserable existence in Calcutta."They all looked famished. Their lot is the lowest ebb of human misery." The Act that the majority of these men are Colonial-born aggravates their misery. The reader will not appreciate the full meaning of being 'Colonial-born'. These men are neither Indian nor Colonial. They have no Indian culture in the foreign lands they go to, save what they pick up from their uncultured half-dis-Indianized parents. They are not Colonial in that they are debarred access to the Colonial, i.e., Western, culture. They are therefore out of the frying-pan into fire. There at least they had some money and a kind of a home. Here they are social lepers, not even knowing the language of the people.

Therefore, the report suggests that it is the clear duty of the Government to send them back to the most suitable Colony that would receive them. The tropical Colonies must be glad to have them in preference to raw recruits who have to be initiated. The duty is clearly the Government's. For they alone can carry on negotiations with the various Colonies. This duty should have been discharged long ago. The Imperial Citizenship Association has made the following appeal to the Government:

> With reference to returned Indian emigrants from Fiji, British Guiana, Trinidad and other Colonies now stranded in Calcutta, the Council of the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association, through a representative specially sent from here for the purpose, has made investigations on the spot, and in the light of those investigations, I have the honour to submit the following recommendations for the immediate consideration of the Government of India:
>
> l. The Government of Fiji should be requested to extend the duration of the moratorium for free passages to freed indentured labourers from 1930 to 1935.

2. The returned Indian emigrants from British Guiana of whom there are several hundreds now in Calcutta and elsewhere and who are anxious to go back should be included in the Government of India's scheme of emigration of 500 families to British Guiana.

3. The Government of India should, without further delay, establish Emigrants' Depots in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. These Depots should be organized on the basis of the Indian Emigrants, Friendly Society which was established in Calcutta in 1921 and was dissolved in 1923. This Society looked after the interests of emigrants in every way and was managed by a local committee of both officials and non-officials and was very largely financed by the Government of India.

In view of the fact that another boat with several hundreds of emigrants is expected in Calcutta next month, my Council hopes that the Government of India will realize the gravity of the situation and act in a manner which will not only relieve the distress now prevalent but also effectively prevent further congestion and suffering.

For the time being, it will be enough if the stranded men get the relief asked for.

But the innocent-looking appeal raises broad and fundamental questions which must not be discussed in this brief notice of the special circumstances brought to light by the report. They must not be allowed to confuse the one clear issue which awaits immediate treatment. The broad questions however are:

1. The whole of the emigration policy.
2. The special case of British Guiana and Fiji.
3. The scope of the friendly societies referred to in the appeal.
4. The duty of the nation by the outgoing and returning emigrants.

The consideration of these questions requires a more favourable occasion and a more thorough treatment than can be given them at the present moment.

Young India, 9-9-1926

321. LETTER TO REGISTRAR, BOMBAY UNIVERSITY

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 9, 1926

DEAR SIR,

I have your letter No. 8539 of 1926 dated 6th September 1926 intimating that the Syndicate has appointed me as one of the judges for the examination of the Ashburner Prize essay for the year 1926. Apart from anything else, I regret to inform you that I have not a single moment to spare between now and October for examining the essay in question with the care and attention I would like to give it. I would, therefore, ask you kindly to remove my name from the list of judges.

Yours faithfully,

THE REGISTRAR
BOMBAY UNIVERSITY
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 10991-a

322. LETTER TO A. T. GIDWANI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 9, 1926

MY DEAR GIDWANI,

I have your letter. Mr. Basu shall be suitably received on his arrival. He has given me no intimation as yet.

I have forgotten all about Jugal Kishore. My apologies to him. I think it is quite possible to take him in if he does not restrict me to anything in particular. That is to say, does he believe in khadi? And will he be prepared to work in the Khadi Department? What would be his requirements? Is he married?

Yours sincerely,

ACHARYA A. T. GIDWANI
PREM MAHA VIDYALAYA
BRINDABAN

From a microfilm: S.N. 11274

323. LETTER TO JOSEPH BAPTISTA

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

September 9, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 6th September.[1] I do not think there is sufficient sincerity in the atmosphere to warrant a day for public prayer in connection with Hindu-Muslim tension. The prayer must proceed from the heart. There must be a sincere desire for reconciliation. I think the more becoming thing is for each one of us to pray in his own closet.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

JOSEPH BAPTISTA, ESQ.
MATHAPPACADY
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 12380

324. LETTER TO S. D. DEV

THE ASHRAM

SABARMATI,

September 9, 1926

MY DEAR DEV,

I have your letter of the 5th instant. About Ahmednagar, my message was wanted and I have sent it.

For Pandharpur, don't you know my vow not to accept any public engagements before the 20th December? The exception is confined only to absolutely unexpected events. You should, therefore, secure Jamnalalji or Rajagopalachari or Gangadharrao Deshpande or you can also get Pandit Motilalji and several others one could think

[1] Baptista had written that for promoting"peace and goodwill on a national scale" among the different communities in India, one day—say, the first Sunday in November—should be set aside as a day of prayer, etc.

of. Any appeal next year made to me will not go in vain. This year, as you see, it is absolutely impossible.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. D. DEV
KHADI EXHIBITION
AHMEDNAGAR

From a photostat: S.N. 19681

325. LETTER TO DEV RAJ

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI ,
September 9, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is not possible to give you specific advice without actually seeing you. But generally, the following instructions may be followed:

Live and sleep in the open air. Take the simplest food without condiments always leaving a margin at the end of each meal. Do not eat after sunset. Avoid salt. Take plenty of fresh fruit and to every portion of milk add a little water. Do not boil the milk thick. Take gentle breathing exercises. Have some bodily work every day and if possible . . .[1] in solitude if you can bear solitude. And cultivate the companionship of good chaste people and read clean literature.

Yours sincerely,

DEV RAJ, ESQ.
WAGON MOVEMENT EXPERIMENT
D. S. OFFICE
KARACHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 19682

326. LETTER TO BECHAR BHANJI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Thursday, Bhadra Sud 2, September 9, 1926

BHAISHRI BECHAR BHANJI,

I have your letter. I see nothing wrong in the eight things in which you say you believe. If they are living convictions in your

[1] Some words are missing in the source.

heart, you will certainly save yourself from all mental weaknesses and cravings. If one's belief is sincere and held with faith, one should strive hard, practise *tapascharya* and mortify the body to see that it sinks ever deeper into the heart; success is assured then.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

BECHAR BHANJI TEACHER
Via KUNDALA
AT AMBA
KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5573; also S.N. 12275

327. LETTER TO BHIKHAIJI PALAMKOT

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Thursday, Bhadra Sud 2, September 9, 1926

DEAR SISTER,

You are older than I am, but your handwriting and your aspirations would certainly do credit to a young woman. I can, therefore, understand the description of yourself which you give. What you say of your ancestors is certainly remarkable, and does honour to them, to you and to the country. I would have felt happier still if you had been able to serve the cause of Indian music, though of course one should feel happy if anyone teaches even a Western art which helps his or her spiritual development. This is so in your case. I wish you success in your venture, such as will be worthy of the reputation which you enjoy. That is the least you deserve. When I happen to be in Bombay, do favour me with a visit.

SHRIMATI BHIKHAIJI PALAMKOT
61, CAMBALA HILL
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY-6

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12276

328. LETTER TO G. N. KANITKAR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 10, 1926

MY DEAR KANITKAR,

I have your letter and the registered parcel. Please do not register parcels any more. I have so arranged that the magazines are handed to me as soon as they arrive. We must save every pice we can.

I note what you say about advertisements. What you have done is quite satisfactory.

Do not ask me to write anything about the Brahmin and non-Brahmin question just now. No harm will be done by my refraining, for the time being.

Yours sincerely,
M. K GANDHI

SJT. G. N. KANITKAR
341, SADASHIV PETH
POONA CITY

From the original: C.W. 959. Courtesy: Gajanan Kanitkar

329. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 10, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. I do not know what to say now or how to comfort you. I can only pray for your peace. Do not on any account damage your health by putting an undue strain upon your body or nerves. Why should Anil be getting fever every day? Why should you not be quite all right? It was a matter of grief to me that Hemaprabha Devi could not find the Ashram atmosphere congenial to her spirit. If only she could have stayed here with the children, it would have been much better and you would have been freer. I know that she can look after you as no one else can. But all husbands have to get over that

helplessness. Hindu wives are in this respect in a much better and stronger position because they will not have themselves to be looked after by anybody.

Yours,

BAPU

SJT. SATIS CH. DAS GUPTA
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 1561

330. LETTER TO MAHARAJA OF NABHA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 10, 1926

DEAR MAHARAJA SAHEB,

I have a copy of your letter[1] written to me on the 20th September last year together with your letter to my son. I quite recollect having received your letter. My impression is that I told Maulana Mahomed Ali that it would be impossible for the Congress to take any effective steps in your case. And having done so, it is likely that I wrote nothing to you. But, if I did not, it was not due to want of attention or courtesy. Hardly a letter comes to me which remains unacknowledged.

Distance lends enchantment to the scene. But let me assure you that a President of the Congress is not 'uncrowned' king of India. He wields no power. He has no strength such as you imagine. I know I had none. If I had thought that it was possible for me to render any help whatsoever to you, I should have done so without the slightest hesitation. But I had none then, I have none now.

I may inform you that I read the papers regarding your case and discussed it with several Sikh friends long before you wrote to me, and I told them that it was not possible even for the Sikhs to help you, and that any attempt made by them would but injure your cause and their own movement. I am still of opinion that the mixing up of your

[1] In this the Maharaja complained that Gandhiji had not taken the trouble of even acknowledging his petition (S.N. 10989).

case with the Gurdwara movement was a serious blunder. And this opinion, I gave even whilst I was in my sick-bed at Sassoon Hospital when a deputation from Sikh friends came and waited upon me.[1]

Yours, sincerely,

HIS HIGHNESS THE MAHARAJA SAHEB OF NABHA
"SNOWDON"
MUSSOORIE W.

From a photostat: S.N. 10994

331. LETTER TO S. S. MUTGI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 10, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I have not studied the question of influence of planets and stars upon mankind and therefore I am unable to answer your first question.

When a person is under the influence of his or her passions, she or he must seek solitude, observe perfect silence and refrain from all activities till the passions are subsided and in order to avoid activity, complete fasting is advisable while the tremor of the passion continues.

The only scientific method of studying religious books is to study a little at a time and proceed after due assimilation, never accepting . . . as God's word anything that is repugnant to one's moral sense.

It is not possible to lay down any hard and fast rules about hours of study. For some a few minutes suffice. For others a few hours are enough. Each one must find out for himself how much he can read and digest. Merely stuffing of the brain with facts or arguments or assertions is perfectly useless.

Yours sincerely,

S. S. MUTGI
NEW BAZAR
BIJAPUR

From a photostat: S.N. 19684

[1] The letter bears a note on top by a secretary reading:"As some corrections were made after your letter was posted, I send you herewith a corrected copy".

332. LETTER TO R. SURYANARAYAN ROW

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 10, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter with papers regarding your scheme for Depressed Classes. It is a matter of exceeding regret to me that I cannot help you in it for the simple reason that you are partly Government-aided. I can understand and appreciate your work. I must not be mixed up in it. The friends who give me pecuniary help do so on the strength of my being totally independent of Government organizations. Mine is therefore a restricted activity and restricted class of donors. I cannot vary well approach with regard to the scheme, however laudable it may be in itself, if it is under Government patronage.

I did get the pamphlets you sent to me some time ago. I have not yet overtaken them.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. SURYANARAYAN ROW
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
CALICUT

From a microfilm: S.N. 19686

333. LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 10, 1926

I have your letter. I have neither been able to follow nor to understand all the ramifications of the Hedjaz trouble. But on the strength of my belief that for godfearing people joy comes out of troubles, I have assumed that in the end all will be well.

I note what you say about your appeal on behalf of the khaddar movement. But I am not going to be satisfied until your promise is redeemed.

You will give me due notice before you come so that I may be

ready with curds and other necessaries for the Derwish.

Yours sincerely,

MAULANA SHAUKAT ALI
CENTRAL KHILAFAT COMMITTEE
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 19687

334. LETTER TO V. N. APTE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 10, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I understand your suggestions. The motive behind the publication of the statistics is merely to give a rough idea of the khadi work that is being done. Some of the information which you suggest is really unavailable. For instance, it is not possible to know with any degree of accuracy the output [of] carders per hour, much less of yarn spun by professional spinners. The average earned by them is obtained from books in our possession. The output per hour can only be obtained from the spinners who in the vast majority of cases have no time-sense and who spin during all the odd minutes that they spare. The statistics obtained therefore are about as much as it was possible to get. But as time goes by, greater and greater accuracy and fuller detail will be obtained.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. V. N. APTE
KHADI KARYALAYA
MALPUR DONDAICHE

From a microfilm: S.N. 19688

335. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Friday, Bhadra Sud 3, September 10, 1926

BHAISHRI KAKA,

Your letter to Swami about your health did not alarm me, but your letter to me did. I will certainly have a talk with Swami; but, as

they say, too many midwives attending on a woman in labour make the delivery more difficult, and so I am of the view that when one friend is guiding a person with great love and intelligently, others may express an opinion if they feel inclined to and leave the matter there. I believe that for many reasons the right of advising you in regard to your health belongs chiefly to Swami. He is, moreover, an intelligent person and, therefore, I don't feel anxious either. There may be differences of opinion in certain matters and I make a suggestion in passing, but don't press my view. There is hardly any science as imperfect as the science of medicine, and, in a matter in which we are guided mostly by inferences, to press one's view on a man who is following a certain line, and thereby create doubt in his mind, will be like spoiling the mendicant's chances for both things, as the saying goes. I am not particularly enamoured of Mussoorie. We are poor people and I, therefore, do believe that we should draw the line somewhere. As to where and when to draw it, there can be of course no fixed rule which can be applied to everyone. All of us here will discuss with Swami what should be done in your case, and finally abide by his decision. There is biting cold in the air here these days. The sky is all the time overcast with clouds and the river is full to the banks.

Tanasukha's letter had no effect on me. The ideas expressed in it are immature. But then, children ought to have the freedomto think even such thoughts. Some of these errors are such as they themselves see and correct in the course of time.

KAKASAHEB KALELKAR

SWAVALAMBAN PATHSHALA

CHINCHWAD

(DIST. POONA)

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12277

336. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

Bhadrapad Sud 3, Friday [*September 10, 1926*][2]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letters. 32 years is nothing. You still have a long life before you. Your health will certainly improve. What Dr. Mehta says

is absolutely right. Do take sun-bath there when there is sunshine. Direct exposure to sunrays is as important as pure air. This is being proved with each passing day. And now if doctors take as much care about diet as they do about air, there can be great progress. May you be blessed with a long life.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
HOMI VILLA
PANCHGANI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

337. A TALK

[After *October 10, 1926*][1]

On reading Narahari's report, the cultivators of Bardoli might feel with me as an accused person is said to have felt listening to his lawyer's speech, Tears flowed from his eyes as he listened. On the magistrate asking him why he was crying, the accused replied that in truth he did not know that he was as innocent as the lawyer had made him out to be. I wonder if the cultivators who have read Narahari's report ask themselves how they are still alive though they are as poor as they are described in it. We should not rest content with this report. People cannot manage to live even in the manner you have described them as living. If what you say is indeed true, there should be decrease in the number of villages and the fact of such decrease should be proved. A given state of affairs is bound to have certain consequences. We should collect evidence to show how many persons in Bardoli live on money earned outside, how many persons have left the place and gone elsewhere and how many fields have passed into the hands of big landlords. We do not follow up the reports which we hear and ascertain their truth. I have much to say about this report. We cannot start a struggle on its basis. It is a good one as a collection of statistics. It may even do as a lawyer's rejoinder, but I do not think it can serve as a basis for comparison.

[1] From the reference to Narahari's report on Bardoli peasants; the eighth and last instalment of the report was published in *Navajivan* on 10-10-1926.

We should go deep into this problem. I think that for advising people to court imprisonment, to let their lands be confiscated and invite poverty upon themselves, we should have some other kind of material than what you have collected. If we start a struggle to force the Government to revise the method which they have followed so far, it will be a long one. I do not believe that these cultivators are ready to take up such an arduous struggle.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11450

338. LETTER TO PARAMANAND SAMUELS LALL

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 11, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and the book called *Ever Increasing Faith* for both of which I thank you. I receive so many gifts from so many good friends both known and unknown to me, that it becomes impossible to do justice to them. I have not a minute to spare to read the literature which is being sent to me. Heaven only knows when I can read the book you have sent me. And my difficulty is that I have not the desire which I used to have for reading. The desire is to think, to pray and to act according to the light that God gives me. The experiences of others, valuable though they are, cannot avail me at the present moment for, as I fancy, God has cut out my work and has left me no choice but to do the work.

Yours sincerely,

PARAMANAND SAMUELS LALL, ESQ.
7, PANJMAHAL ROAD
LAHORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 19689

339. LETTER TO LALA LAJPAT RAI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 11, 1926

DEAR LALAJI,

I see you have remembered me in your wanderings for you have sent me the little pocket edition of the *Gita* and the four other jewels. I thank you for the thought that has prompted the gift as also

the choice. Whatever journeys you may undertake on the political highway, I hope that you will keep a green corner for the poor man and his khadi, remember his perpetual knocks at the door. I expect you to keep it open for him always.

I hope you have benefited in health by the change.

Yours sincerely,

LALA LAJPAT RAI

From a photostat: S.N. 19690

340. LETTER TO BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Saturday, Bhadra Sud 4 [*September 11, 1926*][1]

BHAI BANARASIDASJI,

Here is my message.

I am much pained to hear that Indians in Fiji are sunk deep in the drink-evil. May God save them from it!

Yours,
MOHANDAS

SHRI BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI
FEROZABAD (U.P.)

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2565

341. LETTER TO NANABHAI BHATT

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Saturday, Bhadra Sud 4, September 11, 1926

BHAI NANABHAI,

I got your letter and the three invitations. I have read the latter, and return them with this. I am sure there can be nothing to criticize in the reply which you have sent and so I will not waste your time and mine by so much as commenting on them. You have acted correctly in regard to Narahari. I have still to receive from you acknowledg-

[1]From the postmark

ment of the letter with which a copy of Punjabhai's letter was sent to you. I am sure you got that letter. If you had your whole toe amputated, you certainly ran a great risk. I had merely understood you to mean that you had gone in for a minor incision on it. I hope you are all right now and can walk and move about.

SHRI NANABHAI
DAKSHINAMURTI
BHAVNAGAR

From a photo of the Gujarati: S.N. 12278

342. SATYAGRAHA—TRUE AND FALSE

[*September 12, 1926*][1]

There are many forms of satyagraha, of which fasting may or may not be one, according to the circumstances of the case. A friend has put the following poser:

> A man want to recover money another owes him. He cannot do so by going to law as he is a non-co-operator, and the debtor in the intoxication of the power of his wealth pays him no heed, and refuses even to accept arbitration. If in these circumstances, the creditor sits *dharna* at the debtor's door, would it not be satyagraha? The fasting creditor seeks to injure no one by his fasting. Ever since the golden ageof Rama,we have been following this method. But I am told you regard this as intimidation. If you do, will you kindly explain?

I know the correspondent. He has written from the purest motive. But I have no doubt that he is mistaken in his interpretation of satyagraha. Satyagraha can never be resorted to for personal gain. If fasting with a view to recovering money is to be encouraged, there would be no end of scoundrels blackmailing people by resorting to these means. I know that many such people are to be met with in the country. It is not right to argue that those who rightly resort to fasting need not be condemned because it is abused in a few cases. Any and everyone may not draw his own distinction between fasting—satyagraha—true and false. What one regards as true satyagraha may very likely be otherwise. Satyagraha, therefore, cannot be resorted to for personal gain, but only for the good of others. A satyagrahi should

[1] The original, in Gujarati, appeared in *Navajivan*, 12-9-1926. The English translation is by Mahadev Desai.

always be ready to undergo suffering and pecuniary loss. That there would not be wanting dishonest people to reap an undue advantage from the boycott of law-courts practised by good people was a contingency not unexpected at the inception of non-co-operation. It was then thought that the beauty of non-co-operation lay just in taking those risks.

But satyagraha in the form of fasting cannot be undertaken as against an opponent. Fasting can be resorted to only against one's nearest and dearest, and that solely for his or her good.

In a country like India, where the spirit of charity or pity is not lacking, it would be nothing short of an outrage to resort to fasting for recovering money. I know people who have given away money, quite against their will, but out of a false sense of pity. The satyagrahi has, therefore, to proceed warily in a land like ours. It is likely that some men may succeed in recovering money due to them by resorting to fasting; but instead of calling it a triumph of satyagraha, I would call it a triumph of *duragraha* or violence. The triumph of satyagraha consists in meeting death in the insistence on truth. A satyagrahi is always unattached to the attainment of the object of satyagraha; one seeking to recover money cannot be so unattached. I am therefore clear that fasting for the sake of personal gain is nothing short of intimidation and the result of ignorance.

Young India, 30-9-1926

343. A DILEMMA

A correspondent writes:[1]

It is likely that the statement,"it would be preferable to use English cloth rather than use cloth made in Indian mills", was quoted[2] from *Hind Swaraj*. In the logical context in which the remark occurs, Iwould say today the same thing which I did in 1908.[3] It is a statement

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had requested Gandhiji to explain the reason which had led to the change in his attitude towards textile mills in India. In *Hind Swaraj*, Gandhiji had stated that it might be in the interest of the country to continue to import cloth from Manchester for some time longer rather than set up mills in the country itself, but in 1921 he had adopted the attitude that India should herself produce all the cloth required to meet her needs, even supporting Indian mills, if necessary.

[2] By Balukaka Kanetkar, at a meeting in Poona

[3] *Hind Swaraj* was written in 1909.

of principle, and it may not be possible to act upon it in certain circumstances. I, therefore, drew the readers' attention to this point in the Hindi edition of *Hind Swaraj*.[1] What I have stated there is also correct in our present circumstances. If we had not allowed ourselves to be caught in the snare of mills, if the question had merely been whether we should set up new mills and use what we suppose would be swadeshi cloth or to continue to import and use foreign cloth, I would prefer the latter course, because I do not believe that the mill industry is an activity which deserves to be spread in other parts of the world. We could produce cloth even if we had no mill industry, produce enough to meet our needs. We have seen from experience that we do not have to spend much time in this work. I do not, therefore, believe that the mill industry serves any social purpose or benefits the people in any way. But the problem is quite different, the position being exactly the opposite. We have quite a large number of mills in the country. It is not possible today to persuade their owners to wind them up. Boycott of foreign cloth is not only desirable but essential; it is our duty to bring it about; we have the right to do so. In doing that duty, we should makeuse of a means which is readily available to us. Not to do so would augur lack of intelligence in us.

Dharma is not an absolute thing which does not change even when circumstances have changed. If people living on the Equator follow what is dharma for people near the North Pole, they would probably be guilty of *adharma*[2]. There is only one absolute dharma, and that is contained in God, otherwise known as truth. The dharma of beings, who are governed by their circumstances and whose strength is limited, changes from hour to hour. The ground on which their dharma rests is unchanging, and that is truth or, if one prefers, non-violence; but, as one stands firm on this ground, there will necessarily be many changes in what dharma requires in actual practice. We should understand the problem of mills in this light. Otherwise, we have no reason to welcome the spread of an industry which induces cultivators to leave their fields to go to cities and live there, with their families, in narrow, dark cells without any regard for morality. Even looking at it from the point of view of the rich, we see

[1] From the preface to the Hindi edition published in 1921, the correspondent had quoted:"My views in regard to mills have undergone this much change. In view of the present predicament of India, we should produce in our own country all the cloth that we need even by supporting, if necessary, mills in India rather than buy cloth made in Manchester."

[2] Opposite of dharma

no very elevating scenes which are due to the mill-industry. It is not an ennobling ideal merely to earn money and distribute it among a small number of share holders. But, as the body seems to us a filthy thing when we think of it in the abstract and still we tolerate it because we cannot dispense with it, so also we should tolerate mills since in our present circumstances we cannot get rid of them, and if they serve our purpose, avail ourselves of their benefit to bring about boycott of foreign cloth. If they do not serve even this purpose, if we discover that on the contrary they hinder our efforts to bring about such boycott, then their destruction may be considered desirable, nay necessary.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-9-1926

344. LETTER TO WILLIAM DOULL

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 12, 1926

DEAR MR. DOULL,

I have delayed acknowledging your letter[1] of 5th June as I was hoping to see Mr. Umar Johari. I have now seen him. I have paid Rs. 6,500/- the other day and the following cable[2] was sent to you:

I hope that you will send me the securities duly executed. There should be an acceptance by the trustees that this debt will be a first charge on the assets to be handed to Sorabji. You will also please send me cession of the insurance policy duly registered at the insurance office.

Yours sincerely,

WILLIAM DOULL, ESQ.
MURRAY COURT
375, SMITH STREET
DURBAN
NATAL

From a photostat: S.N. 10808

[1] In his letter, Doull of Livingston and Doull, Durban Solicitors, had written to Gandhiji of the grave financial difficulties in which Sorabji found himself and that it would stave off his insolvency if he was advanced some moneys from the Rustomjee Jivanji Ghorkhodu Trust on the security of Sorabji's life insurance policies (S.N. 10763).

[2] This is not available.

345. LETTER TO REV. DEWDNEY W. DREW

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 12, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Your long and welcome letter[1] has revived old pleasant memories and old pleasant associations. It was good of you tohave visited my son and encouraged him. I am glad that his work has commended itself to you.

You do not expect me to interest you in my activities here nor would I take any such liberty. My editing of *Young India* is really my weekly letter to friends who will care to follow the activities that engross me at the present moment.

The South African affair is somewhat of a shock to me. I was not prepared for such a manifest breach of the undertakings of the Union Government in 1914.

Now that you have opened correspondence do please keep it up and write to me whenever you feel like thinking of an old friend.

Yours sincerely,

REV. DEWDNEY W. DREW
PHOENIX
NATAL

From a photostat: S.N. 10809

346. LETTER TO MALCOLM MUGGERIDGE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 12, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I have not read the book referred to by you. My own personal experience and those of many others is

[1] Writing on July 28, after a silence of over 12 years, Drew described *inter alia* his visit to the Press at Phoenix where *Indian Opinion* was being printed and his meeting Manilal Gandhi whose devoted labours for his father's weekly he commended (S.N. 10788).

at variance with the quotation sent by you. But I think there is difference between the author's standpoint and that of my friends and my own. When abstinence is practised"under the false idea that the instinct is but a low pleasure" it may produce"irritability and the weakening of love". But when abstinence is practised for the purpose of self-realization, for the purpose of husbanding vitality and for the seeking, basing [*sic*] love not on physical pleasure but upon soul contact, it soothes one's nerves and purifies and therefore strengthens the bond between the two. Most of the ills that you describe spring, in my opinion, from a wrong view of love and a wrong view of sexual relation. Under my own plan husband and wife need not liveseparately, that is, under separate roofs, but they certainly ought not to share the same room and lock themselves in. Long course of habit blinds us to the ugliness of men and women passing nights after nights in privacy, without any moral purpose whatsoever. In doing so we become less even than animals. I can see nothing wrong in husband and wife seeking privacy only for sexual act which they will perform in due humility and purely for the sake of procreation. There will, I know, still be animal pleasure left in the act. I would call that lawful animal pleasure. And if we could only set our thought right and strive, in spite of the present practice to the contrary, to shape our own in accordance with the thought, I doubt not that restraint will not only be easy, but the most natural thing in the world. I may have the handsomest girl as my sister and if the custom of kissing my sister is in vogue and in accordance with it I kiss my sister, surely no lustful thought will spring up in my breast. Why should it be different as between husband and wife? That it is different I know to my cost but the difference lies in our mental attitude. We kiss our wives with the intention of satisfying the lustful pleasure. We kiss our sisters or daughters out of lustless affection.

If the mine-owners win, they will win not because there are too many miners, but because the miners do not know how to control themselves. If every miner committed race suicide, ceased to procreate, I do not know that he will better his condition. He will have no ambition left in him. He will not want increase of wages. It is difficult to forecast the future of a body of men who, not knowing the higher life, do not want to restrain themselves and would avoid the responsibilities of citizenship.

You will please remember that check upon procreation is

common ground between us. But the methods for checking are so diametrically opposite that the results also are equally different.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. MUGGERIDGE, ESQ.
AT"FARLEY"
OOTACAMUND

From a photostat: S.N. 19691

347. LETTER TO RISHABHDAS

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
Bhadra Sud 7, 1982, September 14, 1926

CHI. RISHABHDAS,

I have your letter. You will be doing the proper thing if you follow Bhai Dastane's advice. Your father must be running the business for your sake. It is your dharma to renounce your interest in it. If you sever your connection with it, I feel strongly that you should accept no help from your father. You should obtain from the khadi institution what you need for the maintenance of yourself and your wife. If friends voluntarily offer you any help, you may accept it. They will be paying that sum only to the khadi institution. I hope your wife is keeping good health. Do whatever you decide, without doubts and misgiving.

C/O CONGRESS KHADI BHANDAR
JALGAON

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12280

348. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM PATWARDHAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Tuesday, Bhadra Sud 7, September 14, 1926

BHAISHRI APPA,

I have your letter. After leaving this place, Bhai Abdullah went to you. He must be an old friend by now. I cannot of course object to

[1] For Gandhiji's article dealing with the points raised by the addressee, *vide* "Influence of Attitudes", 16-9-1926.

your resuming the diet of uncooked articles; under one condition, though, your health must not suffer. I, too, have had sufficient experience of the harmlessness of uncooked food. But experiments should be carried out in a scientific manner and on a big enough scale. There can be no doubt, of course, that such food should be eaten in small quantity only. Those whose stomach may have become as weak as mine, what should they do? I can think of nothing as a substitute for milk.

The Spinners' Association can certainly take proper precautions in its own stores to ensure that they do not sell fake khadi. But what can it do about other stores?

The broad limit for eradication of untouchability has already been defined, which is, that the four *varnas* should act towards the untouchables as the first three *varnas* act towards the fourth. Anyone who wishes to go beyond this, to eat in the company of untouchables, for instance, may do so of his own free will and at his own risk. We may not refrain from eating in their company fearing that others might follow our example and be guilty of sin, for those who eat in their company commit no sin at all. We, at any rate, eat with them because we think it meritorious to do so. If we cease believing in the idea of pollution through touch, the restrictions in regard to eating will not be, ought not to be, considered an essential part of the caste-system.

If Bhangis are forbidden to ride in tram-cars in Bombay, I think that is an injustice.

Even the present caste-system is based on contempt. All trace of contempt will disappear from Hinduism, if it gets rid of the spirit of untouchability. The notions of high and low are fruit and symptom of the disease of untouchability. Even the history which we learn tells us that the ideas which at present have struck deep roots among us were not a part of the *varna* system of old days.

You may go on asking questions till you are satisfied.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PURUSHOTTAM PATWARDHAN
(BHAISHRI APPA)
SHRI TILAK RASHTRIYA SHALA
RATNAGIRI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12281

349. TELEGRAM TO A. A. PAUL

[*September 15, 1926*][1]

A. A. PAUL
INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP CONFERENCE
CHITTOOR

REGRET INABILITY REACH YOUR LETTER[2] EARLIER. WISH CONFERENCE SUCCESS INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP IS WHAT WE ALL DESIRE. WITHOUT IT WE CANNOT LIVE AS MEN AND WOMEN.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 11376

350. MESSAGE ABOUT SOUTH AFRICAN DEPUTATION

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 15, 1926

I join the chorus of welcome that will be extended to the South African Deputation that is coming on behalf of the Union Government.[3] Let us show to them all the goodwill that we are capable of showing. But let us not also build castles in the air. The deputation is but a part of the Conference that is to be held in December. They are coming with no authority for action. They are coming merely to gain impressions. The solution of the difficult problem that faces the statesman of South Africa and India depends upon a multiplicity of circumstances. The coming of the deputation is one such circumstance which we must use in the best manner possible. Let us put the deputation in the position of seeing all the sides of the picture. In other words, they should be enabled to see the truth, the real truth, and nothing but the truth. The case for the Indian settlers in South Africa rests upon purest justice. An impartial study of the question therefore on the part of the South African statesmen that are coming can only do the cause good.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 19692; also *The Bombay Chronicle,* 18-9-1926

[1] The date is noted on Paul's letter of September 6.

[2] Paul had written to Gandhiji requesting him to attend the International Fellowship conference at Chittoor during October 8-10 (S.N. 11376).

[3] The deputation arrived in India on September 19, 1926.

351. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

September 15, 1926

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

I have your weekly gift again to acknowledge. Your offer to send me simple Tamil sentences week by week is most tempting. But I must resist the temptation as I have really no time left for anything more than I have on hand.

With love to you all.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3194

352. LETTER TO BHAVANIDAYAL

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Wednesday, Bhadra Shukla 8 [*September 15, 1926*][1]

BHAI BHAVANIDAYLJI,

I have your letter. My reply is as follows:

(1) No, Sir.[2]

(2) The offer was for a plot of land at a distance of 13 miles from Johannesburg and not on long lease. I had dissuaded the Indian residents from accepting it. The reason is obvious.

(3) I did not receive a farthing from the Municipality. But, it had to pay expenses in cases which it lost. Almost all that I received from Indian settlers was handed over for public work.

(4) Both the Associations were functioning till the last and were independent of each other.

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's letter of September 9, 1926, regarding South Africa, *vide* Appendix"Extracts from Bhavani Dayal's Letter", 9-9-1926.

[2] This is in reply to a question whether Gandhiji had given his consent to a move on the part of Indians to surrender the Indian locations in Johannesburg to the Municipality.

(5) It is contrary to dharma to bow to anyone under force, but it is one's dharma to bow to everyone in the world of one's own free will; the same principle applies to the question of finger-prints. In India as also in some other countries, fingerprints are required even from persons other than prisoners. Please remember that Mahadevji[1] danced in a naked state.

(6) Our people had objected to giving photographs too, and rightly. In my view, it is far better to give finger-prints than photographs and the method is more scientific.

(7) Your interpretation of"vested rights" is correct.

(8) I have not ignored your book but I have not finished reading it. I am told that it is full of errors. Not thinking it proper to discuss them, I have kept quiet. My recollection is that you, too, had admitted some errors and written to me to express your regret.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 10990

353. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Wednesday, Bhadra Sud 8 [*September 15, 1926*][2]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I did get your letter. I have received Lady Pattani's reply, which please find enclosed. You may now take possession of the bungalow whenever you wish.

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

HOMI VILLA

PANCHGANI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 12279

[1] Lord Siva

[2] The addressee stayed at Panchgani in 1926.

354. NOTES

CHARKHA IN SHAHABAD SCHOOLS

The Secretary of the Charkha Committee of the Shahabad District Board writes:[1]

At the demonstration the Secretary read a report from which I take the following:[2]

Whilst the Shahabad District Board is to be congratulated on the introduction of the charkha in the District Board schools, much remains to be done before the experiment can be termed a success. Is all the yarn spun tested for its strength and evenness? Do the boys and girls know how to repair their own charkhas? The output is not enough for the number spinning. There is danger of our being satisfied with a make-believe. That would be worse than no charkha.

INDIAN TEXT-BOOKS

What it means to prepare real text-books for India's children may be somewhat realized from the following quotation from a letter from Mr. Gregg who is at present teaching hill children on Mr. Stokes's farm in Kotgarh near Simla. He says:

> My time has been much occupied in preparing a re-arrangement of the text-books in both mathematics and physics for my pupils, such as will conform to their experience. All English text-books, and even the Indian ones, are apparently written for city-bred children and presuppose familiarity with machinery and manufactured apparatus of all kinds. These children here have never seen automobiles, steam engines, electric lights, pumps, water-pipes, or even bullock-carts. So the assumptions, pictures, technical terms and arrangement of the text-books of physics, and even of much of mathematics can have no reality and therefore no interest or educational value for them. Gradually, therefore, I am putting together what will be in effect a text-book on science and mathematics for Indian village children. Since most of the children of India are in the villages, I hope it will be useful.

But Mr. Gregg's letter opens up a much wider question. What is

[1] Not reproduced here. This was about a spinning demonstration by the students of primary schools of Shahabad district held on August 27.

[2] Not reproduced here. This gave an account of the progress of spinning work in the various schools.

true of urbanized, exploiting and wealthy countries likeEngland and America cannot be true of an India predominantly rural, pauperized and exploited. For India a multiplicity of text-books means deprivation of the vast majority of village children of the means of instruction. Text-books, therefore, in India must mean, principally and for the lower standards, text-books for teachers, not pupils. Indeed, I am not sure that it is not better for the children to have much of the preliminary instruction imparted to them vocally. To impose on children of tender age a knowledge of the alphabet and the ability to read before they can gain general knowledge is to deprive them, whilst they are fresh, of the power of assimilating instruction by word of mouth. Should, for instance, a lad of seven wait for learning the *Ramayana* till he can read it? The results that we arrive at when we think of the few lacs living in the cities of India are wholly different from those we obtain when we think in terms of the millions of rural India and this, whether we think of matters educational, social, economic or apolitical Mr. Gregg's effort, therefore, is fraught with important consequences.

Young India, 16-9-1926

355. STUDENTS' DUTY

A Lahore correspondent writes a pathetic letter in scholarly Hindi. I give a free rendering of the main parts of the letter:

> Hindu-Muslim feuds and the feverish activity over the Council elections have thrown the non co-operating students off their balance. They have sacrificed much for the country. Its service is their watchword. They are today without a helmsman. They cannot enthuse over Councils. They do not want to take part in the Hindu-Muslim feud. They are therefore drifting towards a life of aimlessness and worse. Must they be allowed thus to drift? Pray remember that ultimately you are responsible for this result. For, though nominally they obeyed the Congress call, in reality it was you they obeyed. Is it not up to you now to guide them?

Man can make a trough, can he lead unwilling horses to it? I sympathize with these splendid young men, but I am unable to blame myself for their drifting. If they obeyed my call, what is there to prevent them [from] doing so now? I am speaking with no uncertain

voice to all who will listen, to take up the gospel of the charkha. But the fact is that in 1920 they listened not to me (and that very properly) but to the Congress. What is perhaps more accurate, they listened to the inner voice. The Congress call was an echo of their own longings. They were ready for the negative part. The call of the charkha which is the positive part of the Congress programme, for let it be remembered that it is still the Congress call, seems to make no appeal to them. If so, there is still another much-needed work which is also part of the positive programme of the Congress—the service of the untouchables. Here, too, there is more than enough work for all the students who are pining to do national service. Let them understand that all those who raise the moral tone of the community as a whole, all those who find occupation for the idle millions, are real builders of swaraj. They will make easy even the purely political work. This positive work will evoke the best in the students. It is both post-graduate and pre-graduate work. It is the only real graduating.

But it may be that neither the charkha work nor the untouchability work is exciting enough for them. Then let them know that I am useless as a physician. I have but a limited stock of prescriptions. l believe in unity of disease and, therefore, also of cure. But must a physician be blamed for his limitations, especially when he declares them from the house-tops?

The students for whom the correspondent writes must be resourceful enough to find their own course in life. Self-reliance is swaraj.

Young India, 16-9-1926

356. INFLUENCE OF ATTITUDES

I have been very interested in your articles in *Young India* on the subject of birth control. I expect you have read J. A. Hadfield's book *Psychology and Morals*. I want to draw your attention to this passage from it:

"We, therefore, speak of sexual pleasure when the expression of this instinct is alien to our moral sense; and we speak of sexual joy when the expression of this instinct is in conformity with the sentiment of love. . . . The too profuse breeders punish not only the poor children they breed, but also humanity in general."[1]

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here from Malcolm Muggeridge's letter; *vide* also"Letter to Malcolm Muggeridge", 12-9-1926.

So writes a correspondent. The letter to me is a study in mental attitudes and their influence. Mind takes a rope to be a snake and the man with that mentality turns pale and runs away or takes up a stick to belabour the fancied snake. Another mistakes a sister for wife and has animal passion rising in his breast. The passion subsides, the moment he discovers his mistake. And so in the case quoted by the correspondent. No doubt, whilst"abstinence is practised under the false idea that the instinct is but a low pleasure", it is likely"to produce irritability and the weakening of love". But if abstinence is practised with the desire to strengthen the bond of love, to purify it and to conserve the vital energy for a better purpose, instead of promoting irritability, it will promote equanimity, and instead of loosening the bond of affection, strengthen it. Love based upon indulgence of animal passion is at best a selfish affair and likely to snap under the slightest strain. And why should the sexual act be a sacrament in the human species, if it is not that among the lower animals? Why should we not look at it as what it is in reality, i.e., a simple act of procreation to which we are helplessly drawn for the perpetuation of the species? Only a man having been gifted with a free will to a limited extent exercises the human prerogative of self-denial for the sake of the well-being of the species, for the sake of the nobler purpose, to which he is born, than his brother-animals. It is the force of habit which makes us think the sexual act to be necessary and desirable for the promotion of love, apart from procreation, in spite of innumerable experiences to the contrary that it does not deepen love, that it is in no way necessary for its retention or enrichment. Indeed, instances can be quoted in which that bond has grown stronger with abstinence. No doubt abstinence must be a voluntary act undertaken for mutual moral advancement.

Human society is a ceaseless growth, an unfoldment in terms of spirituality. If so, it must be based on ever-increasing restraint upon the demands of the flesh. Thus, marriage must be considered to be a sacrament imposing discipline upon the partners restricting them to the physical union only among themselves and for the purpose only of procreation when both the partners desire and are prepared for it. Then, in either case supposed by the correspondent, there would be no question of sexual act outside the desire for procreation.

There is an end to all argument if we start, as my correspondent has started, with the premise that sexual act is a necessity outside of the

purpose of procreation. The premise is vitiated in the presence of authentic instances that can be cited of complete abstinence having been practised by some of the highest among mankind in all climes. It is no argument against the possibility or desirability of abstinence to say that it is difficult for the vast majority of mankind. What was not possible for the vast majority a hundred years ago has been found possible today. And what is a hundred years in the cycle of time open to us for making infinite progress? If scientists are right, it was but yesterday that we found ourselves endowed with the human body. Who knows, who dare prescribe, its limitations? Indeed, every day we are discovering the infiniteness of its city[1] for good as well as evil.

If the possibility and desirability of abstinence be admitted, we must find out and devise the means of attaining it. And as I have said in a previous article[1], life must be remodelled, if we are to live under restraint and discipline. We may not, as the vulgar saying goes, have the cake and eat it. If we would impose restraint upon the organs of procreation, we must impose it upon all the others. If the eye and the ear and the nose and the tongue, the hands and the feet are let loose, it is impossible to keep the primary organ under check. Most cases of irritability, hysteria, and even insanity which are wrongly ascribed to attempts at continence will in truth be found traceable to the incontinence of the other senses. No sin, no breach of Nature's laws, goes unpunished.

I must not quarrel about words. If self-control be an interference with Nature precisely in the same sense as contraceptives, be it so. I would still maintain that the one interference is lawful and desirable because it promotes the well-being of the individuals as well as society, whereas the other degrades both and, therefore, unlawful. Self-control is the surest and the only method of regulating the birth-rate. Birth control by contraceptives is race suicide.

Lastly, if the mine-owners are in the wrong and still win, they will do so not because the miners over breed, but because the miners have not learnt the lesson of restraint all along the line. If miners had no children, they would have no incentive for any betterment and they will have no provable cause for a rise in wages. Need they drink, gamble, smoke? Will it be any answer to say that mine-owners do all these things and yet have the upper hand? If the miners do not claim

[1] *Vide*"Conservation of Vital Energy", 2-9-1926

to be better than capitalists, what right have they to ask for the world's sympathy? Is it to multiply capitalists and strengthen capitalism? We are called upon to pay homage to democracy under the promise of a better world when it reigns supreme. Let us not reproduce on a vast scale the evils we choose to ascribe to capitalists and capitalism.

I am painfully conscious of the fact that self-control is not easily attainable. But its slowness need not ruffle us. Haste is waste. Impatience will not end the evil of excessive birth-rate among the proletariat. Workers among the proletariat have a tremendous task before them. Let them not rule out of their lives the lessons of restraint that the greatest teachers among mankind have handed to us out of the rich stores of their experiences. The fundamental truths they have given us were tested by them in a better laboratory than any equipped under the most up-to-date conditions. The necessity of self-control is the common teaching of them all.

Young India, 16-9-1926

357. ANTI-CONSCRIPTION

The following innocent manifesto[1] has been issued in Europe by a speciall *ad hoc* committee whose address is 11, Abbey Road, Enfield, Middlesex, England. Its Hon. Secretary is Mr. H. Runham Brown:

> During the War people in all the countries determined to throw off for ever the yoke of militarism, and, when peace came, the League of Nations was welcomed as the offspring of this hope. It is our duty to see that the terrible suffering of the War does not recur.
>
> We call for some definite step towards complete disarmament, and the demilitarizing of the mind of civilized nations. The most effective measure towards this would be the universal abolition of conscription. We therefore ask the League of Nations to propose the abolition of compulsory military service in all countries as a first step towards true disarmament..
>
> It is our belief that conscript armies, with their large corps of professional officers, are a grave menace to peace. Conscription involves the degradation of human personality, and the destruction of liberty. Barrack life, military drill, blind obedience to commands, however unjust and foolish they may be, and deliberate training for slaughter undermine respect for the

[1] This carried the signatures, among others, of Gandhiji and other prominent Indian leaders.

individual, for democracy and human life.

It is debasing human dignity to force men to give up their lives, or to inflict death against their will, or without conviction as to the justice of their action. The State which thinks itself entitled to force its citizens to go to war will never pay proper regard to the value and happiness of their lives in peace. Moreover, by conscription the militarist spirit of aggressiveness is implanted in the whole male population at the most impressionable age. By training for war men come to consider war as unavoidable and even desirable.

By the universal abolition of conscription, war will be made less easy. The Government of a country which maintains conscription has little difficulty in declaring war, for it can silence the whole population by a mobilization order. When Governments have to depend for support upon the voluntary consent of their peoples, they must necessarily exercise caution in their foreign policies.

In the first draft of the Covenant of the League of Nations, President Wilson[1] proposed to make conscription illegal in all affiliated countries. It is our duty to restore the original spirit which created the League, a pint shared by many of those who fought in the war, and professed by many of the statesmen of the countries concerned. By the universal abolition of conscription we can take a decisive step towards peace and liberty. We therefore call upon all men and women of goodwill to help create in all countries a public opinion which will induce Governments and the League of Nations to take this definite step to rid the world of the spirit of militarism, and to open the way to a new era of freedom within nations and of fraternity between them.

The manifesto is signed by well-known men and women from England, Finland, France, Germany, India, Sweden, Holland, Czechoslovakia, Belgium, Spain, Switzerland, Denmark, Austria, Japan and Norway. The first step towards the abolition of the military spirit is no doubt abolition of conscription. But the reformers will have to put up an immense struggle to secure State action in the desired direction. Each is afraid and distrustful[2] of his neighbour.

Young India, 16-9-1926

358. KHADI SERVICE

The Council of the All-India Spinners' Association that was held recently, discussing the desirability of announcing a definite

[1] Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924), 28th President of the U.S.A.

[2] The source has trustful; *vide*, however,"A Correction", 7-10-1926.

Khadi Service, appointed a small committee to draft the constitution and circulate it for opinion among khadi workers. The best and cheapest method of circulating the constitution is through the medium of the Press. The draft constitution is published below. I hope that all those who are interested in khadi will send their considered opinion as early as possible. I invite specially the opinion of teachers and students in national educational institutions. There is in this Khadi Service almost limitless scope. Those who are satisfied with mere livelihood derived from service of the millions will find this Khadi Service to be attractive and all satisfying. The opinion of teachers and students will be most valuable in enabling the Council to fix an acceptable constitution. The following is the translation of the draft constitution.

KHADI SERVICE

There shall be under the All-India Spinners' Association a service called the 'Khadi Service'.

No one shall in future be accepted as a member of that service who does not hold a certificate from the Technical Department of the Association at present situated at the Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati.

QUALIFICATIONS OF CANDIDATES

No one who has not completed his 16th year, who has not a competent knowledge of the vernacular of his province, and of arithmetic, and who does not produce a certificate of good conduct and health, shall be admitted for instruction in the Technical Department.

INSTRUCTION

The course of instruction shall be not less than two years and shall include:

(a) all the processes that cotton has to go through up to weaving, that is, gathering, ginning, carding, spinning and weaving;

(b) a knowledge of Hindi or Hindustani, where candidates come from a province where Hindi or Hindustani is not the vernacular;

(c) a knowledge of book-keeping—indigenous and Western.

When the candidate has obtained a certificate of competency to the foregoing he will be sent to a khadi karyalaya in any of the provinces to gain practical experience for one season which extends to nearly 8 months. Any candidate who has obtained a satisfactory

certificate from the head of the depot to which he has been sent for practical experience shall be enrolled as a member of the Khadi Service, provided, however, that no one shall be so enrolled who has either broken down in character or health during the course of instruction.

Any person so enrolled will be liable to serve in any depot wherever he is required by the Association. The salary shall be per month Rs. . . . . subject to such increase as may be fixed from time to time by the Khadi Service Board to be appointed by the Association.

Every candidate who wishes to avail himself of the Khadi Service shall be required on joining to sign the contract of service to be framed by the said board.

MISCELLANEOUS

Persons who do not wish to join the Khadi Service may also be admitted for instruction in the Technical Department. Preference, however, will always be given to those who wish to enter the Khadi Service.

There will be a short course of 3 months for those who merely want to learn hand-spinning and all the antecedent processes, that is, ginning, carding and sliver-making.

Every applicant for instruction whose application has been accepted will be required to deposit return fare for the place from which he or she comes, plus Rs. 3 to be utilized for his or her return in the event of his or her being dismissed from any cause whatsoever.

SCHOLARSHIP

A monthly scholarship of Rs. 12 for board, and free lodging, shall be given to those candidates for instruction who are thought to the entire satisfaction of the Director of the Technical Department to be too poor to pay for their board. No monetary payment will be made where the Department is able to conduct a common boarding-house for candidates.

RESERVATION

The Council reserves the right to alter or amend the constitution from time to time and frame by-laws, fix the terms of service, rules of discipline and deal with other matters not covered by the constitution. Nothing in this constitution shall affect the rights of those who are already in the employment of the A.I.S.A.

Young India, 16-9-1926

359. LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 16, 1926

DEAR BIG BROTHER,

I have your letter. I am glad you have liked my reply to the appeal.

Start if you like by all means on the 17th but I shall have to leave for Bombay on the same day you arrive here. I have to do so in connection with the South African Deputation. I leave Bombay the same night, take silence also in the train. You shall have plenty of curds, bran bread and green vegetables when you come. I would like you to come next week. But if you are coming according to your programme, please send a wire to Anasuyabehn and she will inform me. The special bread will be prepared only after you are here. It won't take much time as I shall keep the ingredients ready.

Yours sincerely,

MAULANA SHAUKAT ALI
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S. N. 19693

360. LETTER TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Bhadra Sud 9, September 16, 1926

BHAISHRI PRANJIVAN,

I wrote a letter to you about Jeki[1]. I send with this her own letter. You now seem to be well enough to have started working. You have been so careful about your health that I need not tell you not to overwork. Please send money regularly to Jeki. Also let me know whether I should send her expenses for the journey here, and whether I should let her come here. If possible, kindly reply by wire.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

DR. P. J. MEHTA
14, MOGUL ST.
RANGOON

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12282

[1] Addressee's daughter who was then at the Sabarmati Ashram

361. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

September 17, 1926

MY DEAR CHILD,

The Roman Catholic fast which you refer to in your letter is really no fasting at all, but there is or there was a real fast also amongst them. However, whether they have or they had or not is of no consequence to us. Neither fasting nor anything else that is imposed from without can be of any value. You need not have apologized for raising the question about Christ. In spite of most devout attention to every word ascribed to Jesus in the New Testament and in spite of my having read in a humble spirit all about Jesus, I have really not seen any fundamental distinction between him and the other great teachers. That you see a vast difference between Jesus and the other teachers I can understand, explain and appreciate. That is the teaching you have imbibed from childhood and you would read everything else with that unconscious conviction. Nobody taught me in my childhood to differentiate. I have therefore grown without bias one way or the other. I can pay equal homage to Jesus, Muhammed, Krishna, Buddha, Zoroaster and others that may be named. But this is not a matter for argument. It is a matter for each one's deep and sacred conviction. I have no desire whatsoever to dislodge you from the exclusive homage you pay to Jesus. But I would like you to understand and appreciate the other inclusive position.

What Menon has told you about the pecuniary difficulty is quite correct. But so is your remark[1]. You will come here if God makes the way clear for you.

Yours,

BAPU

MRS. ESTHER MENON

PORTO NOVO

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child,* pp. 85-6

[1] Of August 23, 1926

362. LETTER TO FRANCISCA STANDENATH

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 17, 1926

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your latest letter and the previous one also. I had intended to acknowledge the previous letter[1] but pressure of work has prevented me from doing so. I have, however, been keeping myself in touch with you through Swami Anand, and latterly through Mirabai. You have given me no cause whatsoever for displeasure and let me assure you that it is difficult for me to be easily displeased.

I detected in your letters overmuch suspicion. Have you made yourself certain that your letters are intercepted or opened?[2] And if they are, why not be totally indifferent? Instead of having *Young India* by registered post, will it not be better to have double copies, the second copy to follow next week, so as to ensure delivery either one week or the other? I suppose there is nothing to prevent the postal department from intercepting registered letters. If I were you, I would even offer to show them all the periodicals and letters I should receive if only they will deliver them promptly to me.

From a photostat: S.N. 10813

363. LETTER TO HELENE HAUSSDING

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 17, 1926

MY DEAR SPARROW[3],

I have your letter. I will send something to the German friend as per your advice. The boils were merely a figment of the imagination, and the imagination being braced up by the fresh breeze of Mussoorie, the boils have disappeared. I see you are quite in your element there. I hope you have persuaded yourself to stay there

[1] Or March 22, 1926

[2] Standenath had expressed doubt and concern about the due delivery of her mail to her.

[3] Evidently, a fond nickname

beyond September. I assure you, neither Kripalani nor the students will take it amiss and I shall apologize for your absence and, if you like, take the burden of your sin if it is transferable. But I would like that distant chirp from Mussoorie rather than your boilful, constipated chirp from close quarters. I believe in the Latin proverb *mens sana in corpore sano.*

Devdas tells me you have an adopted son in Lucknow. I would strongly advise you not to go to your son till the cold weather or rather cool weather has set in. I would, therefore, like you to stay in Mussoorie as long as possible or ask the son of your adoptions to found a home in a cooler place and take you there.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S. N. 19694

364. LETTER TO P. A. WADIA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 17, 1926

DEAR FRIEND

I have your letter giving me a copy of your speech delivered at the Dadabhoy[1] Jayanti. I have read your speech. Whilst it is good, I do not see anything original about it and you have introduced a thought about Dadabhoy which, perhaps, he himself, if he was alive, would repudiate. Dadabhoy's appeal was first and foremost to the self in us, secondarily to the outsiders.

I am returning your speech as requested by you.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1.

P. A. WADIA, ESQ.
HORMAZD VILLA
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

From a photostat: SAN. 19696

[1] Dadabhai Naoroji

365. LETTER TO SHEWAKRAM KARAMCHAND

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 17, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Here are my answers:

1. I have simply cited the instance of George Muller as I have heard. I believe in the possibility of a heart prayer being answered in the manner George Muller's is supposed to have been. It does not mean that George Muller did not work for his daily bread. He prayed for the support of a philanthropic institution which he conducted. His life otherwise was a most strenuous life. But it is said of him that he never stretched forth his hand for begging except to God.

2. I have not studied the miracles from the miraculous standpoint. I neither believe nor disbelieve them. I hold that they ought not to affect our conduct one way or the other.

3. I think it is highly probable that the period of our life is fixed, that is to say, the number of breaths we are to take, but that it is possible for us to regulate the duration of breaths and thus apparently prolong life. This is a question of which I have not made any study and I do not allow it to worry me. I have, therefore, given you not my own experience or positive belief but that belief of some people which has commended itself to me.

4. They have no doubt a cooling effect. But they are also in a way stimulants. But you should know that at the present moment I am not myself discarding at least goat's milk. But my belief in the advisability, wherever health permits, of avoiding milk and its products—curds, etc.,—for the sake of making *brahmacharya* easier to practise remains unchanged.

5. It is a fact that I forgo the last meal if I have not been able to take it before sunset. It is a good, rule for a *brahmachari* to follow.

6. I do take walking exercise regularly. I keep myself fit for work by regular habits and by a proper selection of food and observing moderation in the quantity I fake and by exercising restraint upon the other senses.

7. Monday is a day of silence for me. I do edit *Young India* at least partly on Mondays but, since the operation, I have not been

fasting on Mondays. I do recommend a weekly fast to young men who lead busy lives and who are not particular about the quality and the quantity of the food they take. A weekly fast wisely managed is a help rather than a hindrance to the performance of all work, especially when it is mental.

8. A teacher best serves his pupils by living an absolutely exemplary life in every particular and by completely identifying himself with his pupils.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SHEWAKRAM KARAMCHAND
TEACHER
M.A.V. SCHOOL
OLD SUKKUR

From a photostat: S.N. 19697

366. LETTER TO B. N. MAZUMDAR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 17, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. Let us not confuse the issue by raising the question of divorce. The only question to be considered is whether a widow should have the same right and free choice as the widower, and, secondly, whether a girl of tender years, even 15, who has been practically forcibly raped and after the rape becomes, according to the present mistaken belief, a widow, should have the right to marry, or if you like, to remarry a properly qualified person or not.

I would like you not to be shocked at the use of the word rape in this connection. I want you to be shocked at what is today happening in our society. Today the chastity which we impute to widows has been discovered to be amiss. Secret vice that is corrupting society and which now and then sees light of day should be a sufficient warning to us against taking the name of purity, religion, morality in connection with widowhood. What we need to be protected against is not the absolutely necessary remarriage of young widows but the inhuman lust of men in Hindu society. Have you studied the

case of men who have more than one wife? Or of old men almost on the brink of the grave marrying girls of 11 and 12 years? Such cases happened only the other day in Western India and in southern India and I have knowledge of such cases all over India.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. B. N. MAZUMDAR
ASST. ENGINEER, P.W.D., BENGAL
3, CHARNOCK PLACE
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 19698

367. LETTER TO PATRICK DUNCAN

SABARMATI,
September 17, 1926

DEAR MR. DUNCAN[1],

I tender my welcome to you and your colleagues. I hope to attend the at-home of Sunday. If you wish to see me before the at-home, please telephone at Laburnum Road. I do not know the telephone number of my host. Mrs. Naidoo will give it to you. I expect to reach Bombay Sunday morning and leave it Sunday night.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : Duncan Papers. Courtesy : University Library. Cape town

368. LETTER TO GOPABANDHU DAS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 18, 1926

DEAR GOPABANDHU BABU,

I have your letter.[3] It is a tragic picture you have given of Orissa. My advice to you is not to travel about thinking of giving relief here,

[1] Leader of the South African Deputation that arrived in India on September 19, 1926; *vide*"That Round Table Conference", 22-7-1926 and"Message to African Deputation", 15-9-1926.

[2] *ibid.*

[3] Gopabandhu Das had written on September 10, 1926, giving details of the Orissa floods, repeating his request for an expert Khadi organizer and complaining of his own illness (S.N. 10992).

there and everywhere. Let us recognize our limitations in all humility. We are not gods but mere frail insignificant human beings. We have no Government to help us. Even our own organization, the Congress, is shattered to pieces. We have no control over an army of workers. We are scattered individuals. If we recognize this limitation we shall not worry and shall find enough work to do. Thus reduced to its simplest term, the problem is easy of solution. You should simply select an area which you can cope with and settle down there and develop it steadily in every way. No more is required of you or any single soul on earth than this. You will have given all you have in the best manner possible.

I wish I could send you someone. Unfortunately, I have no one who can go there and organize. That is my limitation. You should yourself become an expert and if you have any worker, he should become an expert. What is Govinda Babu doing? And is there no expert yet trained in Khadi Department?

Orissa haunts me like a nightmare. Such a splendid country and yet poverty-stricken; its workers good and yet so helpless. Do not wear away your constitution uselessly going about, but preserve it by observing the simple rules of health. Please keep me informed of what is going on.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

PANDIT GOPABANDHU DAS
BURMAN DAK BUNGALOW
CUTTACK

From a photostat: S.N. 10997

369. LETTER TO PYARELAL

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 18, 1926

MY DEAR PYARELAL,

I have your letter. I shall certainly go through the notes you have sent me in reply to the questions raised by Sir Henry Lawrence.

The account you gave me of your encounter with the City Magistrate is excruciatingly funny. It is a fine example of arrogance, ignorance and red tape combined in one person.

I wish Mathuradas will now do without a cook. Your description of the Pathashala of Wai does not surprise me. Without burning sympathy for the poor people it is impossible to appreciate the necessity of spinning.

I am going for one day tonight to Bombay returning Monday morning. I have to go in connection with the South African Deputation. Mahadev alone is coming with me. You will give me a full description of the new abode when you have gone there.

Yours,

From a photostat: S.N. 19699

370. LETTER TO R. K. KARANTHA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 18, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I do not feel inclined to publish it in *Young India* unless I can verify the information you have given from the experience of several other people. I am in touch with men who have gone in for these postures but they are not able to certify to the certainty of the result that in your own case has beenfortunately attained. I am forwarding your letter to the Swami[1] himself for his criticism.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. K KARANTHA
GLADHURST
SANTA CRUZ
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 19701

371. LETTER TO SWAMI KUVALAYANANDA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 18, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I enclose herewith a letter for your perusal and remarks. If you have any positive results which you can precisely vouch for in the

[1] Swami Kuvalayananda; *vide* the succeeding item.

direction suggested by the correspondent[1] and if you will let me have them, I shall value them and put some young men to practise the postures. You may suggest if they can be undertaken without personal touch.

Yours sincerely,

SWAMI KUVALAYANANDA
KAIVALYA DHAMA
KUNJAVANA
LONAVALA POST
[BOMBAY]

From a photostat: S.N. 19700

372. LETTER TO S. NARAYANA IYER

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 18, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The only thing I can suggest for your friend is that he should have no excitement. He should live allthe 24 hours in the open air. He should be constantly keeping his body and mind engaged in pure work and pure thought. He should take such gentle exercise as would not unduly tire him. He should omit pulse, eat rice sparingly, avoid all condiments, and he should take a hip-bath in cold water daily on an empty stomach. And he must pray incessantly to God for a pure heart. He must retire early to bed and get up very early.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. NARAYANA IYER
2 /15 NAMASIVAYA MUDALI STREET
TRIPLICANE, MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 19702

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

373. A LETTER[1]

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 18, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You can learn carding and spinning without any difficulty in Bombay if you apply to Mrs. Avantikabai Gokhale, Bhatwadi, Girgaum or to Mr. Vithaldas Jerajani, Khadi Bhandar, Princess Street, Bombay or to Mr. Kotak, Khadi Bhandar, Kalbadevi, Bombay. And when you have acquired the art, you can learn weaving by going to one of the khadi centres such as Bardoli, Ahmedabad, etc. But if you become an expert in carding and spinning, it is unnecessary for you to become a weaver, because the race of weavers is not yet dead and all the yarn you spin can be easily woven.

Yours sincerely

From a microfilm: S. N. 19703

374. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

Saturday, September 18, 1926

BHAISHRI NARAHARI,

You have not asked for a reply to your letter, but I wished to write a long one. In my view the step which you have taken is correct. I understand Nanabhai's point of view, but to me wearing khadi and spinning are as essential a part of education as learning Gujarati. This is not being a missionary. I shall be patient in regard to your decision. Sometimes problems solve themselves.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI N. D. PARIKH
LOKAMANYA R. V. MANDIR
SURAT

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19550

[1] The addressee is not known.

375. MY NOTES

PERENNIAL QUESTIONS

A reader of *Navajivan* charged with spiritual aspiration insists on his questions being answered through *Navajivan*. I feel some hesitation and am also doubtful whether *Navajivan* is the appropriate place for answering these questions, which moreover are not new. They have troubled people since time immemorial. Nevertheless, I cannot bring myself to reject the correspondent's request. I, therefore, venture to reproduce here his questions and my answers to them.

Should one meditate on God?

One has to do this so that one may know God through the intellect and feel His presence in the heart.

If meditation is essential, how should it be done?

All-transcending and without form, God cannot be apprehended even through meditation. Meditating on the impersonal is hard for embodied beings. So one should meditate on a manifestation of God in personal form. In this age and in this country, that form is *Daridranarayana*. The only way of meditating on Him is to serve the poor. There may be different ways of serving the poor, but in India the root cause of poverty is idleness and unemployment. In order that people may shake off their laziness, we should spin ourselves and persuade them also to spin and thereby provide them innocent employment. With every breath we take, we should utter this name, *Daridranarayana*, and should see him in our imagination pleased and smiling with satisfaction with every revolution of the spinning-wheel.

What are the attributes of God?

The answer to this question is included in what is stated above, and it does not, therefore, require a separate answer. But let me repeat it and say that He alone knows His attributes, or, rather, that those who have been able to know them have not succeeded in expressing them in words. He is beyond the reach of language; the language in which He can be adequately described has not yet been discovered. So it is that we worship Him as Matsya[1], Varah[2], Narsimha[3], or in human form[4], as suits the temperament of each of us. In doing this, all of us

[1] Incarnation of Vishnu as Fish
[2] Incarnation of Vishnu as Boar
[3] Incarnation of Vishnu as Man-lion
[4] Incarnation of Vishnu as Rama and Krishna

simultaneously follow and do not follow truth. We follow it from our point of view, but do not follow it from the point of view of others who disagree with us. In the eyes of God, we both follow and do not follow truth.

SPINNING-WHEEL AND SELF-PURIFICATION

A worker writes from Vedchhi:[1]

One is rewarded according to one's faith. A Farahad breaking stones for a living got a Shirin. The spinning-wheel will have the power which we put into it. If the sacred *mantra* and similar verbal symbols have immense power in them, it is because we have absolute faith in their power and do *tapascharya* in order that our faith may bear fruit. In the same way, if we try to spread the use of the spinning-wheel with the faith that we shall thereby serve the poor and purify both society and ourselves, and if we do *tapascharya*, even lay down our lives, in order that our faith may be rewarded, it certainly will be rewarded.

Something like this has happened in Vedchhi. Propaganda against the drink-evil can succeed only if carried on in this spirit. A drink addict will not respond if we simply ask him to give up drinking. It is a language which he does not understand. If, however, we live as his neighbour and, by our example, persuade him to employ himself in useful work, he would give up drinking. The drink-addicts in Vedchhi seem to have responded to such an appeal. We would succeed in all other places if we worked with similar patience and faith.

But I should like to say one thing to all workers so that they may be vigilant. The change which we see now will prove illusory and disappear in a few days if the work is not kept up. To ensure that the transformation in the lives of the people becomes permanent, the workers in the respective villages should remain alert and go on with their work without stopping or relaxing their effort.

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had described the transformation in the lives of *Chodharas* in the Bardoli taluka in Gujarat since the spinning-wheel had been introduced among them.

A resident of Bardoli taluka writes:[1]

The song has a spiritual meaning which is easy enough to understand.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-9-1926

376. INTERVIEW TO "THE NATAL ADVERTISER"[2]

[BOMBAY,
September 19, 1926]

. . . He maintains that improvement of the masses is becoming progressively more acute every year, and his remedy is to encourage the peasant, who is unemployed for a great portion of the year while the weather is unpropitious, to take to spinning as a means of increasing his income, and of preventing the exploitation of India by the overseas manufacturer.

Foreign manufacturers take £40,000,000 from India annually for cotton cloth, and this can be saved if my charkha (spinning-wheel) movement receives adequate support.

He admitted that the foreign cloth, or the mill cloth of India, was a better and cheaper textile than the homespun; but when asked whether his movement as a remonstrance against the overwhelming forces of labour saving machinery and mass production was not as futile as the action of those who destroyed labour-saving machinery in England to keep up the number of hand-workers, he demurred, adding that Indian philosophy was such that his movement was bound to succeed. (A millowner's subsequent rejoinder to this contention was:"But how can it succeed when hand-spinning can only earn one-third of what can be earned daily by mill-hands at incomparably easier work?") In reply to questions, Gandhiji said the movement was"deeply religious", though without ritual—but propagated by some literature and the holding of meetings. He claimed that the mere introduction of

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had reproduced in the letter a song which an old woman had recited to him and which she herself had learnt from her mother who used to sing it while spinning.

[2] On September 18 Gandhiji left Ahmedabad to greet the members of the South African Delegation in Bombay. This meeting took place on September 19 in Sarojini Naidu's rooms at the Taj Mahal Hotel. The extract is from a report by the correspondent of *The Natal Advertiser* datelined: Poona, September 21, reproduced by *The Hindu*.

hand-spinning had its regenerative influence upon the community, and said its political significance would be realized, because of the universal confidence that would be won by the ultimate success of the movement. . . .

The Hindu, 3-12-1926

377. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

[*September 19, 1926*][1]

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

The Bombay Samachar mistook me for you and published the information that I was ill. So they thought I was not coming. How nice it would have been if you had gone with a message from me! But it turned out to be only a rumour. I had a long chat with all the members of the deputation, at Mrs. Naidu's room. We talked most of the time about khaddar. They wanted to know why I was so heavily clad. The answer was a sermon on khaddar in which they were deeply interested. Did not see Jahangir anywhere. Met Sir M. Habibulla and had a long chat.

Yes, I may come tomorrow and spin to amuse you. You must not leave till you are strong enough to go.

With love,

Yours,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 2636

378. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SABARMATI,
September 20, 1926

JAMNALAL BAJAJ
SHREE
BOMBAY

THANK GOD. ANXIOUSLY AWAITING PARTICULARS.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 58

[1] Gandhiji met the South-African Deputation in Bombay on September 19, and left for Ahmedabad the next day as indicated in the letter.

379. LETTER TO RAMI PAREKH

Monday [*September 20, 1926*][1]

CHI. RAMI,

I received your first letter only today. Always write like this. Look after Kusum. Keep me posted with news of her. All are well here. Kunvarji[2] came yesterday. I had been to Bombay for a day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9700

380. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 21, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[3] together with the original terms from the Macmillan Company. There is only one exception that I feel should be made to clause 1. Cession of the rights to the English-speaking world should not include India. My desire is to let the English-knowing public in India have the cheapest possible edition and I think too that the Indian edition should be published in India. The circulation of the Indian edition can be easily restricted to India.

I suppose the Macmillan Company know that I propose publishing parts in book form now as each part is completed from time to time. This would remain unaffected by the proposed contract. It is open to them if they wish to publish the book in parts, in which case circulation of parts outside India can be stopped.

Yours sincerely,

REV. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES
12 PARK AVENUE
NEW YORK CITY

From a copy: S.N. 32229

[1] From the S.N. register
[2] Kunvarji Parekh, addressee's husband
[3] Dated August 18, 1926, which was in reply to Gandhiji's letter dated July 9, 1926.

381. LETTER TO A. W. BAKER[1]

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 21, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I appreciate the fact that you are continuously thinking of me. I did not know that you had taken up residence at North Shepstone. I hope Mrs. Baker is profiting by her stay at the beautiful seaside. I do hold with you that truth is one, but we only see it through the glass darkly, and only in part and each according to his light. The result is naturally a multitude of viewpoints. But if all proceed like the beams of the sun from one central fact, all is well. But I don't want to argue. Though we may differ, I know that we are all sailing in the same direction.

Yours sincerely,

A. W. BAKER, ESQ.
NORTH SHEPSTONE
NATAL

From a photostat: SAN. 10815

382. LETTER TO HARDAYAL NAG

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 21, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I must say I do not like your khaddar programme. You do not advance the cause of khadi by importing Chandpur spun yarn and getting it woven there. What you want to spread is spinning among your boys. They may become weavers by all means but then they must weave what they themselves spin. If you will only get your boys to spin, the whole of your stock of cotton can be consumed on the spot. And surely there must be some volunteers

[1] In his letter of August 24, Baker had asked Gandhiji:"May not Gautama the Buddha and Confucius have been also reflectors of that one Supreme Truth in preparation for the great unveiling in Jesus the Christ the Light of the World? . . ." (S.N. 10802).

in Chandpur who are also spinning. In many parts [of] Bengal and other parts of India, spinning is being done although there is no local cotton grown.

Yours sincerely,

BABU HARDAYAL NAG
CHANDPUR
BENGAL

From a microfilm: S.N. 19704

383. LETTER TO DR. SATYAPAL

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 21, 1926

DEAR DR. SATYAPAL

I have your letter. I wish I could persuade you not to embark upon this newspaper enterprise. It can do no earthly good. We have too many papers and I am satisfied that you will not advance the national cause by adding one more to the army of newspapers that have already grown into a nuisance. If you have got honest workers by your side, why engage them in writing what everybody knows? Why not take whatever constructive work they are capable of doing? Each worker is worth more than a newspaper. You will only make [for] turbidity of the atmosphere by launching out upon your enterprise. But if I cannot persuade [you] to desist at least do pleaselet me have my own way. Recently I have been declining to write for newspapers altogether. But there the main reason is health consideration. I am altogether overworked. If I can help it I would even stop writing for *Young India* and *Navajivan* for the time being but that I dare not do. However, I do not want to put you off with any other reason but the main one.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat. S.N. 19705

384. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH[1]

SABARMATI,
Bhadra Sud 15 [*September 21, 1926*][2]

BHAISHRI MUNNALAL,

I have your letter. Lists of publications by the Navajivan Prakashan Mandir are often published in *Navajivan.* I have not asserted that cow-sacrifice is mentioned in the the Vedas, I do not know whether it is so mentioned. *Mantras* from the Vedas are recited daily in the Ashram. You need not believe everything that may be said about me. Whenever you feel a doubt, you may write to me and ascertain the facts.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SJT. MOTILAL NATHUSHA
RAJPARA
GOTIMOHALLA
BURHANPUR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 6989. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

385. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

Bhadra Sud 15 [*September 21, 1926*][3]

MY DEAR RAMESHWARDASJI,

I have your letter. There are about 2,500 subscribers of *Hindi Navajivan*. For it to become self-supporting 500 more will be required. I do not know exactly how many of them may be fromMaharashtra. It would not help to increase the subscription to Rs. 2. You must not worry. Repeat *Ramanama* every day.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: G.N. 166

386. HAND-SPINNING IN MYSORE

The Director of Industries in Mysore, Mr. Z. Meccai, has prepared an interesting note on hand-spinning in Mysore. I publish

[1] It appears this was sent care of Motilal Nathusha.
[2] From the postmark
[3] *ibid*.

the following condensation of the notes:[1]

I congratulate the Mysore authorities upon the encouragement they are giving to the revival of the only universals cottage industry of India. I commend to their attention the experience of the All-India Spinners' Association. It has found by experiment and observation that it is advisable to introduce hand-ginning simultaneously with hand-spinning. This is easiest in the districts where cotton is grown. Where it is not grown but where it is possible to grow, encouragement should be given to grow it locally. Machine-ginned and machine-pressed cotton loses its vitality and is more difficult to treat with the hand-bow than hand-ginned cotton. In several parts of India, the spinners take seed-cotton. Spinners should also be encouraged to do their own carding. The performance by the spinner of the two processes doubles his wage. With a view to increasing the strength of hand-spun yarn, the State should undertake periodically to test the hand-spun yarn and publish results. Indeed, the whole subject needs to be treated in a scientific manner. And who can be more fitted to do so than a State like Mysore?

Young India, 23-9-1926

387. NON-RESISTANCE TRUE AND FALSE

America is the home of inter-racial conflict on a vast scale. There are earnest men and women in that land of enterprises who are seeking to solve the difficult problem along the lines of non-resistance. One such American[2] friend sends me a paper called the *Inquiry* which contains an interesting discussion on the doctrine of non-resistance. It consists of instances that might possibly be grouped under non-resistance. I select three samples:

> A Chinese student related his experiences at the State University from which he was about to graduate. His reception there had been anything but friendly for the most part, although a few men had gone out of their way to befriend him one of them even inviting the Chinese to his home for a week-end. On the other hand, a fellow-student who occupied a room next to his made himself particularly obnoxious, throwing shoes against his door and

[1] This is not reproduced here. It furnished a detailed report of the measures taken by the Mysore Industries Department to promote hand-spinning.

[2] This was a mistake. The sender was not an American but an Indian; *vide* "A Correction", 7-10-1926.

indulging in other pranks. The Chinese overheard this student express horror on finding that an American had taken him home to introduce him to his mother and sister, and immediately he made up his mind that he would teach this student to respect him, not for his own sake, but for the sake of his dear motherland.

So he went out of his way to be friendly to his neighbour. Every day he gave him a smiling good morning though at first he received no response. He ignored every insult, but tried to make himself pleasant and useful. When he knew his neighbour to be hard up he casually invited him to go to a movie with him. Gradually they talked together more often and found that they had several interests in common. After a while this student invited him to his home.

"We have become warm friends," concluded the Chinese."I have since spent many holidays and week-ends at his home; and on leaving the university I shall know that one of my fellow-students at least will regretfully miss me."

The secretary of a railroad Young Men's Christian Association brought one evening into the building twelve Danes, working on the railroad, who had no place to sleep. The English-speaking men, under the sway of racial antipathy, began to object and protested against the foreigners being brought in. Among these newcomers however was a skilled musician, who, while the Americans were presenting their objections to the secretary, began to play upon the accordion. He discoursedsweet music, which soon had its effect. The ire on the faces of the native-born soon began to vanish; the censure died on their lips; their hearts were softened; and that night they sat up late listening to the foreigner playing—Peter Roberts, *The New Immigration*. The Macmillan Co., 1922, p. 300.

There is a colony of Japanese in X, California. Several years ago some real estate agents sought to sell a considerable amount of land to other Japanese, and the white people were aroused at the thought of a great influx of these people. Meetings were held and a big sign was put on the main boulevard which read:"No Japanese wanted here."

The old resident Japanese of X, who had lived on good terms with the white people being members of their Farmers' Association, went to the white people and, after consultation finally agreed with them that a further increase in the Japanese population would not be a Good thing. The sign was changed to read:"No more Japanese wanted here."

The person who tells this story contends that this action advanced the solidarity of the community and improved relations between the whites and the Japanese in that place, as witness the following:

"The Japanese of X, learning that the American church was in financial

difficulties offered to give a definite amount yearly for its support, in addition to carrying on their own Japanese church work."

Now the first easily comes under true non-resistance. The second is more an instance of presence of mind than non-resistance. The third, from the facts as stated, is an instance, if not of cowardice, as contended by some of the debators, certainly of selfishness. The resident Japanese population in order to retain their earthly possessions agreed to the prohibition of further Japanese immigration. It may have been sound policy. It may have been the only policy advisable. But it was not non-resistance.

Non-resistance is restraint voluntarily undertaken for the good of society. It is, therefore, an intensely active, purifying, inward force. It is often antagonistic to the material good of the non-resister. It may even mean his utter material ruin. It is rooted in internal strength, never weakness. It must be consciously exercised. It, therefore, presupposes ability to offer physical resistance. In the last instance, therefore, the Japanese would have non-resisted, if they had left all their possessions rather than surrendered the rights of prospective immigrants. They might also have suffered death [by] lynching without even mental retaliation and thus melted the hearts of their persecutors. It was no victory of truth that, without any inconvenience to themselves, they were able to retain their property. In terms of non-resistance, their contribution to the American church in its difficulty was a bribe, by no means a token of goodwill or a free gift.

The acquisition of the spirit of non-resistance is a matter of long training in self-denial and appreciation of the hidden forces within ourselves. It changes one's outlook upon life. It puts different values upon things and upsets previous calculations. And when once it is set in motion, its effect, if it is intensive enough, can overtake the whole universe. It is the greatest force because it is the highest expression of the soul. All need not possess the same measure of conscious non-resistance for its full operation. It is enough for one person only to possess it, even as one general is enough to regulate and dispose of the energy of millions of soldiers who enlist under his banner though they know not the why and wherefore of his dispositions. The monkeys of one Rama were enough to confound the innumerable host armed from head to foot of the ten-headed Ravana.

Young India, 23-9-1926

388. NO FAITH IN PRAYER

Here is a letter written by a student to the Principal of a national institution asking to be excused from attending its prayer meetings:

> I beg to state that I have no belief in prayer, as I do not believe in anything known as God to whom I should pray. I never feel any necessity of supposing a god for myself. What do I lose if I do not care for Him and calmly and sincerely work my own schemes?
>
> So far as congregational prayer is concerned, it is of no use. Can such a huge mass of men enter, into any mental concentration upon a thing, however trifling it may be? Are the little and ignorant children, expected to fix their fickle attention on the subtlest ideas of our great scriptures, God and soul and equality of all men and many other high sounding phrases? This great performance is required to be done at a particular time at the command of a particular man. Can love for the so called Lord take its root in the hearts of boys by any such mechanical function? Nothing can be more repugnant to reason than to expect the same behaviour from men of every temperament. Therefore, prayer should not be a compulsion. Let those pray who have a taste for it and those avoid who dislike it. Anything done without conviction is an immoral and degrading action.

Let us first examine the worth of the last idea. Is it an immoral and degrading act to submit to discipline before one begins to have conviction about its necessity? Is it immoral and degrading to study subjects according to the school syllabus if one has no conviction about its utility? May a boy be excused from studying his vernacular if he has persuaded himself that it is useless? Is it not truer to say that a school boy has no conviction about the things he has to learn or the discipline he has to go through? His choice is exhausted if he had it, when he elected to belong to an institution. His joining one means that he will willingly submit to its rules and regulations. It is open to hint to leave it, but he may not choose what or how he will learn.

It is for teachers to make attractive and intelligible what to the pupils may at first appear repulsive or uninteresting.

It is easy enough to say, ‘I do not believe in God.’ For God permits all things to be said of Him with impunity. He looks at our acts. And any breach of His law carried with it, not its vindictive, but its purifying, compelling, punishment. God’s existence cannot be, does not need to be, proved. God is. If He is not felt, so much the worse for us. The absence of feeling is a disease which we shall some

day throw off *nolens volens*.

But a boy may not argue. He must, out of a sense of discipline, attend prayer meetings if the institution to which he belongs requires such attendance. He may respectfully put his doubts before his teachers. He need not believe what does not appeal to him. But if he has respect for his teachers, he will do without believing what he is asked to do, not out of fear, not out of churlishness, but with the knowledge that it is right for him so to do and with the hope that what is dark to him today will some day be made clear to him.

Prayer is not an asking. It is a longing of the soul. It is a daily admission of one's weakness. The tallest among us has a perpetual reminder of his nothingness before death, disease, old age, accidents, etc. We are living in the midst of death. What is the value of"working for our own schemes" when they might be reduced to naught in the twinkling of an eye, or when we may be equally swiftly and unawares be taken away from them? But we may feel strong as a rock, if we could truthfully say:"We work for God and His schemes." Then all is as clear as daylight. Then nothing perishes. All perishing is then only what seems. Death and destruction have *then, but only then*, no reality about them. For death or destruction is then but a change. An artist destroys his picture for creating a better one. A watch-maker throws away a bad spring to put in a new and useful one.

A congregational prayer is a mighty thing. What we do not often do alone, we do together. Boys do not need conviction. If they merely attend in obedience to the call to prayer without inward resistance, they feel the exaltation. But many do not. They are even mischievous. All the same the unconscious effect cannot be resisted. Are there not boys who at the commencement of their career were scoffers but who subsequently became mighty believers in the efficacy of congrega-tional prayer? It is a common experience for men who have no robust faith to seek the comfort of congregational prayer. All who flock to churches, temples, or mosques are not scoffers or humbugs. They are honest men and women. For them congregational prayer is like a daily bath, a necessity, of their existence. These places of worship are not a mere idle superstition to be swept away at the first opportunity. They have survived all attacks up to now and are likely to persist to the end of time.

Young India, 23-9-1926

389. RELIGION OF VOLUNTEERS

After showing that in this land of many religions, a volunteer is hard put to it to find a common denominator of conduct, a correspondent thus eloquently described the religion of a volunteer:[1]

Stripped of the eloquence, this religion of Truth again resolves itself into its component parts—Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, etc. For Truth will appear to most sincere and conscientious Hindus, Mussalmans and Christians as Hinduism, Islam and Christianity, respectively, *as they believe them*.

The golden rule of conduct, therefore, is mutual toleration seeing that we will never all think alike and that we shall always see *Truth* in fragment and from different angles of vision. Conscience is not the same thing for all. Whilst, therefore, it is a good guide for individual conduct, imposition of that conduct upon all will be an insufferable interference with everybody else's freedom of conscience. It is a much-abused term. Have all people a conscience? Has a cannibal a conscience? Must he be allowed to act according to the dictates of his conscience which tells him that it is his duty to kill and eat his fellows? Now the etymological meaning of conscience is 'true knowledge'. The dictionary meaning is 'faculty distinguishing between right and wrong and influencing conduct accordingly'. Possession of such a faculty is possible only for a trained person, that is, one who has undergone discipline and learnt to listen to the inner voice. But even amongst the most conscientious persons, there will be room enough for honest differences of opinion. The only possible rule of conduct in any civilized society is therefore mutual toleration. It can be inculcated among and practised by all irrespective of their status and training.

Young India, 23-9-1926

390. KHADI HAWKING IN NORTH MAHARASHTRA

Mr. V. V. Dastane reports that between 31st August and 7th September, assisted in each place by local helpers, Mr. Bharucha hawked khadi worth Rs. 3,597 in Chalisgaon, Pachora, Bhusaval,

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had emphasized that Truth, as the essence of all religions, should be the religion of the volunteer, and be above all denominational religions.

Akola and Jalgaon. He states that all Khandesh stock was exhausted and that had they included khadi from outside they would have sold much more.

Young India, 23-9-1926

391. RETURNED EMIGRANTS

I appreciate the anxiety of Pandit Benarsidas[1] to save the unfortunate people from another disappointment by those who were domiciled in Fiji being sent to British Guiana. Though the difference between the two countries is great, the experiment is worth trying if the Fiji men desire to go on British Guiana and if that Government will take them notwithstanding the knowledge that they belong to Fiji. So far as the Colonial-borns are concerned, I feel sure that though they may have a knowledge of what is known as kitchen Hindustani, they will not be happy except in the Colonies. The vital issues referred to by Pandit Benarsidas must be dealt with later.[2]

Young India, 23-9-1926

392. THE CURSE OF 'I' AND 'MINE'

The following condensed report of Sjt. Satis Chandra Mukerjee's speech delivered at a peace meeting the other day at Darbhanga will be read with interest and profit:[3]

If we could erase the"I's" and the"Mine's" from religion, politics, economics, etc., we shall soon be free and bring heaven upon earth.

Young India, 23-9-1926

[1] For Benarsidas Chaturvedi's letter to Editor, *Young India*, *vide* "Letter from Benarsidas Chaturvedi", 23-9-1926.

[2] Benarsidas Chaturvedi wrote again and Gandhiji had fresh comments to offer; *vide*"Returned Emigrants", 4-11-1926.

[3] This is not reproduced here. The writer's thesis was that the feeling of"I" and"mine" was responsible for much of the communal intolerance and violence in the country, and that, indeed, a true understanding of all religions was possible only through regard for the universal virtues, Truth, Non-violence, etc.

393. NOTES

TO B, AGRA

I fix arbitrary limit nor do I restrict myself to hard and fast conditions. The widows should have the same freedom that men have. If widowhood is to remain pure, men will have to attain greater purity. After all widows can remarry only when there are men ready to marry them. It may, however, be laid down as a general rule that where a widow cannot restrain herself, she should have the freedom to remarry without incurring any odium. Is it not better that she marries openly than that she should sin secretly? In the case of child-widows there can be no question of opinion. They should be remarried by the parents. If the wives and widows in the fourth division are no better than beasts, which I totally deny and I claim to know something of them, the fault lies at the door of the so-called higher classes. You seem to forget the law that if one limb suffers, the whole body suffers. If one Sudra does evil, it harms the whole society, even as it harms himself and his special class or caste.

ONLY A FEW YEARS AGO

From Sjt. C. Balajee Rao's note-book I cull the following extracts which he has copied from Gilbert Slater's *Some South Indian Villages*, 1918 (University of Madras, Economic Studies). The extracts are valuable as showing what harm the disappearance of hand-spinning has brought to the villagers. There is no reason why the mischief should not be undone, if only we get sufficient workers to strive for the revival of the industry:[1]

Young India, 23-9-1926

394. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

[Before *September 23, 1926*][2]

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your note. There is no hurry about sending a wire. If you send me the car say at 2.30 p.m., I shall have finished the day's work

[1] Not reproduced here. These described the decline of subsidiary cottage industries following the disappearance of hand-spinning in several villages.

[2] The letter appears to have been written some time before September 23, the date of the succeeding item.

as much as possible and would reach there about 3.30, be with you for about an hour and come back in time to spin or may spin there while talking. Mridula[1] may keep her wheel ready for me. You must on no account think of stirring out or leaving Ahmedabad in a hurry. Take your rest either there or here—but you must not stir till you are completely cured. More when we meet.

With love,

Yours,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 2637

395. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

Thursday [*September 23, 1926*][2]

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

How naughty? But it is quite right to have complete rest. You must not think of going tomorrow nor the day after unless you are quite ready. I would come to you if you want me in body. If not, the body remains here and the spirit watches by your bedside.

With love,

Yours,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 2634

396. LETTER TO EMIL RONIGER

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 23, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I had not seen Mirabehn's letter to you. Evidently my words carried a meaning to her which I had not mended. I did not want her to write in my name and on my behalf. But interpreting my remarks in the manner she did, she was of course quite right in writing to you in my name. She has read to me her letter

[1] Presumably, Mridula Sarabhai, daughter of Ambalal Sarabhai the Ahmedabad millowner

[2] Andrews sailed for South Africa on September 29. The letter appears to have been written on the preceding Thursday, which was September 23.

to you. 1 had not got from that letter that she said anything that might lead you to think that I was displeased. As a matter of fact, I am not inclined to quarrel with your preface even now and after your explanation and after your having recognized your own attitude.

In my opinion a publisher has every right in publishing certainly writings and dissent[ing] partly or wholly from the views expressed by the author or to tone them down. You know much better than I do what the European reader will approve of or can assimilate. You have, therefore, a perfect right to tone down my remarks.

I myself recognize the defects from a scientific point of view of the *Guide to Health*. In its translated form, I have never read it through. The information given in it about physiological facts is undoubtedly borrowed. The only value of the book consists in subordinating health or the body to that of the spirit within. When I wrote the chapters, I wrote them purely for the Gujarati readers of the *Indian Opinion*. I give you my assurance, therefore, that there was no question of my being displeased at all.

One thing certainly I did not like. Mis-translations and omissions of portions in the original. That I hold is unpardonable. A publisher should publish the whole of an author's writings unless he has the author's permission to delete passages and unless the publisher has informed the author of deletions. You will please, therefore, dismiss from your mind the slightest suspicion that I was either displeased or angry about anything you have done in connection with the publication of my writings.

Yours sincerely,

EMIL RONIGER, ESQ.
SCHWEIZ

From a photostat: S.N. 10819

397. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 23, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[1] I shan't hastily advise the council to do away with the Andhra agency. But I have felt that both you and Seetharama

[1] Writing on September 18, Venkatappayya had deplored the possibility of having to close down of khadi agency at Guntur, as suggested by Gandhiji to Sitarama Sastri and given the assurance that by personal efforts and supervision they would ensure better conditions (S.N. 11238).

Shastri are too soft-hearted. My own opinion is that softness and ahimsa go ill together. You have to be sometimes hard in order to be really and truly kind. But in Andhra, I have been watching with the greatest pain the indiscipline practised under the name of liberty and unprincipled men getting the upper hand and doing what they like with impunity. Not that these things have not happened elsewhere. But in Andhra, perhaps, the evil has been moreaccentuated. Khadi can succeed today if we can get disciplined men with boundless faith in it and with no other irons in the fire. If you think that you and Seetharama Shastri have that absolute faith in khadi and if you think that you can be hard enough when occasion requires hardness, by all means continue the agency. But let there be no further experimenting in dilatoriness and compromising and pleading [with] people. The agency may be conducted on a business-like footing. And if you think that it is worth while coming here to discuss the whole situation, by all means do come and bring Seetharama Shastri and anybody else you like.

I hope your health is all right and that you have got over your domestic worries.

Yours sincerely,

KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA GARU
GUNTUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 11239

398. LETTER TO Z. M. PARET

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
September 23, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I actually wrote something for you and then destroyed it feeling that I was not doing justice to you. That is to say, instead of striving with you, I was yielding to your wish so as to avoid trouble. What I want to tell you is that you need not lead an organ to carry on temperance work. If you have sincere helpers, their time and your time will be a comparative waste. I have worked among drunkards both in South Africa and here. Do you know that you never reach them through writing? They are past reading anything, they are past being influenced by anything they read. It is the personal touch that wins them from drink if anything does at all.

Recently, I have taken to advising every friend who wants to publish a newspaper not to do so[1]. I have resisted also the demand for writing for them. I want to do likewise with you, even if I cannot dissuade you from embarking on your enterprise. You might be too much committed to retrace your steps or you might hold diametrically opposite views as to the method of carrying on temperance work. I am unable to condemn such thought and action based thereon, only I would then like to have my way and if possible have it appreciated.[2]

Yours sincerely,

DR. Z. M. PARET
EDITOR,
"POWRA PRABHA"
KOTTAYAM
S. INDIA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19706

399. LETTER TO NANALAL KAVI

THE ASHRAM
September 24, 1926

BHAISHRI NANALAL KAVI,

I have your letter. Thanks. I did not write to you to invite you to act as a *panch*, but only requested your help as a friend. But I see that I have not been able to explain my point of view. I will, therefore, trouble you no further.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

SHRINIVAS, SIR JAGMOHANDAS'S BUNGALOW
NAPEAN SEA ROAD
BOMBAY

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19951

[1] *Vide"* Letter to Dr. Satyapal", 21-9-1926.
[2] *Vide"* Letter to Z. M. Paret", 7-10-1926.

400. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS R. TAIRSEE

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Friday, Bhadra Vad 3 [*September 24, 1926*][1]

BHAISHRI LAKSHMIDAS,

I have to reply to two letters from you, one about the boycott of British goods and the other concerning the deputation from South Africa. On reading the pamphlet about boycott, [I feel that] you have written it with a courage worthy of you. But I have not been impressed by your argument. I may not, on principle, agree with the idea of boycotting British goods, but I would certainly understand it if it was feasible and of benefit from a practical point of view. You have not been able to prove either its feasibility or its practical utility. On the contrary, after reading your pamphlet I feel that the boycott of British goods will be of no benefit even from the practical point of view. I am sure you will not want me to go into reasons. From you I would expect suggestions which are practicable. You are intelligent and would not, I believe, strike a blow which would fail in its aim. This blow which you have struck, I am afraid, has certainly failed in its aim.

We or the people wanted representatives from South Africa to visit this country. The Indian residents in South Africa also wanted that we should extend a welcome even to an enemy if we have invited him to our tent. The Conference[2] has been arranged because of the agitation here, and these gentlemen are here in connection with it. It is our clear duty to extend a welcome to them. By doing so, we strengthen our position so that we should be able to tell them what we feel about their laws. We cannot refuse to have anything to do with them by arguing that they have been invited here only by the Government and that we have nothing to do in the matter. We can certainly advance such an argument against anything done in defiance of public opinion. I was, therefore, surprised to read your letter. I had

[1] Reference in the letter to the delegation from South Africa indicates that the letter was written in 1926.

[2] The Round Table Conference on the Indian question in South Africa held at Cape from December 17, 1926 to January 13, 1927

thought that you, at any rate, would not fail to understand our clear duty of extending a welcome to the representatives.

SHRI LAKSHMIDAS TAIRSEE

BAZAAR GATE STREET

FORT

BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12283

401. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Friday, Bhadra Vad 3, September 24, 1926

CHI. JAMNADAS,

The accompanying letter is from Shamaldas. Read out the main part of it to aunt. Preserve the letter or return it to me. I believe that there is nothing more for you to do just now.

SHRI JAMNADAS GANDHI

RAJKOT

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12284

402. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

Bhadrapad Vad 3, Friday [*September 24, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. The new place should certainly suit you better. Is there some extra accommodation? I have already written to Lady Pattani that we shall keep the bungalow up to February. By the end of February you will have become fit enough to go to Almora, etc., and so the change may even he agreeable to you. But we can

[1] From the postmark

think about all that in February. Find out from the agent the rent of Pattani Saheb's bungalow.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
PANCHGANI CASTLE
PANCHGANI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

403. TELEGRAM TO RAGHWADAS

[On or after *September 24, 1926*][1]

I HAVE SANCTIONED NOTHING FOR ANY ELECTION NOR HAVE AUTHORITY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 11330

404. LETTER TO MOTI CHOKSI

THE ASHRAM,
Saturday, Bhadra Vad 4 [*September 25, 1926*][2]

CHI. MOTI,

I got your five and a half lines. They are not uniformly straight, and if they were re-written properly they would become five. The letters which compose the lines are of all shapes and sizes, some big, some small, some thin and some thick. Even so, it is a letter from you, and that is a favour, no doubt. Let me know what opinion the doctor gave after examining your blood. It is good that you have started reading again. If we fix a time for everything and adhere to it, we improve both in physical and in mental health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12135

[1] This was in reply to Raghwadas's telegram received on September 24, 1926 which read:"According Raghupati Sahay's lecture Gorakhpur public wants to know whether you sanctioned twentyfive thousand rupees for election" (S.N. 11330).

[2] From the postmark

405. LETTER TO MOHANLAL

THE ASHRAM,
Saturday, September 25[1]*, 1926*

BHAI MOHANLAL,

Herewith a letter from Rameshwardasji. His address is"Dhulia". If the books ordered by him have not been sent, please send him all the Gujarati books published by us and whatever Hindi books are ready. Send the bill to him. He will remit the amount. It is not necessary to dispatch the books by V.P. Write to me if you do not receive the money in time.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 12286

406. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Saturday, Bhadra Krishna 4 [*September 25, 1926*][2]

BHAI RAMESHWARJI,

I have your letter. I shall select the books. It is only through patience and contentment that man can be cured of his restlessness.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 186

407. DIFFICULTIES OF A SPINNER

A voluntary spinner writes as follows:[3]

This is a reasonable request. It is not necessary for the Spinners' Association to start a new journal for the purpose; but the difficulties of the kind mentioned by the spinner could be solved through

[1] The source has 26 which, however, was not a Saturday.
[2] From the postmark
[3] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had suggested that the All-India Spinners' Association should maintain contacts with spinners and help them to solve their problems.

Navajivan and *Young India*. Whoever experiences any difficulties in spinning or wishes to ask any questions concerning it may certainly write; his questions will be answered in *Navajivan*. The trouble is that the spinners do nothing to get their problems solved and do not write to me either because of their laziness or indifference or, sometimes, for fear lest they should add to my burden. A sacrificial spinner cannot afford to be either lazy or careless. To be concerned for me is to do injustice both to me and to this movement. I can easily request others to solve problems which I cannot solve myself. Anyone, therefore, who has problems may write without the slightest hesitation, only remembering one condition, namely, that the letters should be written in ink and the correspondent should explain his problem briefly and in legible handwriting, and without argument. It will be easier for me if the envelope bears the words"About Spinning".

Now the letter given above has raised one problem which can be solved here. Blowing water-spray is intended to moisten every thread on the hank. This process is essential for increasing the strength of the yarn. It has been found to do so to the extent of 20 per cent. No one, therefore, should remove the yarn from the real without first blowing water-spray on it. The easiest and the best method of serving the aim behind blowing is to keep the reel immersed in water for three to five minutes and move the hand over it to, moisten it. This will moisten every part of the thread to the right degree. The reel will last longer if it is made wholly of wood, instead of having strings round it. The cotton strings used for this purpose will get soiled and then wear out if the reel is immersed in water frequently. If the yarn is not removed from the reel soon after immersing the latter into water but left on it for twelve hours, every coil on the reel would suck in moisture. Our purpose would be served better if the yarn is carefully spread out on the reel before the latter is immersed into water. Moving the hand on the yarn after immersing the reel in water will moisten the yarn more quickly.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-9-1926

408. RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS

A teacher writes:[1]

Everyone will admit that there is much truth in what the writer says. The point does not need to be laboured that after one's children are grown-up, if one continues to have children from the same wife or if she is dead, from a second wife, it produces a bad effect on the minds of the older children. But if it is not possible for him to practise self-control, a father should lodge his older children in a separate establishment, or should himself live in a separate room, so that they will not have any opportunity of seeing or hearing anything. This will at least ensure a certain degree of decency. Though childhood should be lived in innocence, parents fond of pleasure corrupt the minds of their children. The practice of *vanaprasthashrama* is good for develop-ing a sense of morality in children and for making them freedom-loving and self-reliant.

The suggestion which the writer has made to teachers is certainly sound. But where there are forty to fifty children in a class and the relationship of the teacher with the pupils is confined to class-work lessons, how will it be possible for the teacher, even if he so wishes, to establish any spiritual relationship with so many children? Again, when six or seven teachers teach six or seven different subjects, which of them can assume the responsibility to give them moral instruction?

Lastly, how many teachers can we come across who will guide the children along the path of morality or win their confidence? This indeed raises the whole question of education, but it cannot be discussed here.

Society moves forward like a flock of sheep without thought or circumspection and some even consider that to be progress. But despite this awful state of affairs, our individual path is clear. Those who know own it to themselves to create and spread an atmosphere of morality in their own field of work. To begin with, they must first bring about improvement in themselves. When we consider the faults of others, we appear to be very virtuous. But if we direct our attention to drawbacks, we shall find that we are crafty and lascivious. It is far

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had deplored parents of grown-up boys and girls continuing to have children and had suggested that teachers should make friends with pupils individually and inculcate in them respect for morality.

more profitable to sit in judgment on ourselves than on others and while doing so, we find out ways for others. This is one meaning among others of the adage,"If you are good, the world is good." Tulsidas has likened the saint to the philosopher's stone. The simile is not wrong. We must all try to be saints. To be that is not a gift from the skies for an extraordinary man, but is the bounden duty of every man and that indeed is the essence of life.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-9-1926

409. TELEGRAM TO NEGAPATAM LABOUR UNION

[Before *September 27, 1926*]

SATYAGRAHA UNLAWFUL IN THE CASE MENTIONED.[1]

The Hindu, 28-9-1926

410. LETTER TO ROHINI POOVIAH

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

September 29, 1926

I have your letter. I shall certainly read your report on the Bhil Seva Mandal.

Have you finally decided to throw in your lot with the Ashram? It would be a rash step, especially when it is evident that you should be earning something at least for the time. If you do join the Ashram, it will still have to be on probation in the first instance. And even as a probationer, you have to take certain vows that is, truth, non-violence, poverty, i.e., non-possession, *brahmacharyam*, etc. They become final at the end of the probation. There is much to be said for Big Brother's caution not from the point of view of marriage but from the point of view of the life to be led here. If the idea of simplicity, poverty, truth, and non-violence has taken possession of you, nobody on earth can prevent you from joining the Ashram. But you must not

[1] This was in reply to a communication from the President of the Local Railway Labourers' Union seeking Gandhiji's opinion on the proposed satyagraha by the railway labourers at Negapatam.

come with a view merely to give the Ashram life a trial. You need not prepare a khaddar mosquito curtain. It will be certainly better if you secure one. Try at the Khadi Bhandar in Princess Street. But any curtain will do.

Yours sincerely,

MISS ROHINI POOVIAH
C/O MRS. S. N. HAJI
OPPOSITE MARINE LINES STATION
QUEEN'S ROAD
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 19707

411. NOTES

TAPPERS' ASSOCIATION

A correspondent sends me the following report of the formation of a Tappers' Association in Cochin:[1]

Travancore and Cochin are palm groves. Tapping is a big industry in these States. But tapping, instead of being used for health-giving purposes, is abused for promoting the destruction of health and morals. For, the toddy tapped is fermented and sold as drink. This reminds one of the use that is made of vineyards in Europe and South Africa. There is no fruit save oranges to match grapes in its health-giving properties. A person who would live on fresh grapes and a little fatless bread need never get ill. But the grape culture supports a manufacture that destroys annually more people than gunpowder. What fruitarians are nevertheless trying to do, with no present prospect, but with faith in the truth of their mission, the Tappers, Association may do in Cochin if it works without being dismayed by disappointments. It is a splendid idea to turn toddy into jaggery. If it succeeds, it will solve the problem of occupying tappers when temperance becomes the rule of life in the land of palms. It is painful to find that in a Brahmin-ruled State, which has the reputation of being called enlightened, instead of facilities being given there

[1] At a meeting of tappers held at Kunnamkulam, an association was formed with membership restricted to those who tapped for sweet toddy for manufacturing jaggery. Some 102 tappers took the vow that they would not tap for fermented toddy. The object of the Association was to work for the moral and social improvement of the tappers in Cochin State.

should be vexatious rules imposed upon those who would tap for manufacturing jaggery.

PIVOT OF EDUCATION

At a time when emphasis in education is put more upon literary knowledge than upon character building, the following from the article of Principal Jacks in the *Sunday School Chronicle* will be read with profit:[1]

IN FAR-OFF TUTICORIN

Sjt. K. Nalla Sivan Pillai writes:[2]

My best wishes will not avail the Swadesa Balyam Sangam if the members do not do their duty by it. The inaccuracy of the language of the latter is disturbing. Why should there be an"about" in giving information about a small society? Instead of saying"most of them spin", the correspondent could have given the exact number of spinners, the time given by each daily to spinning and the count and the quantity spun. Why"there are *about* 20 charkhas" and why not exactly how many? Why"*some* paid spinners"? Why not *quite* how many? Why no mention of the wage given? Are they spinners in need? What is the meaning of"*about* 60 towels"? 60 is a round number. A business-like organization should give business-like information. And those who wish to do khaddar work, i.e., serve the poorest and the neediest, must be business-like. An association of exactly 20 members or even 13 would be a good and lucky association and will be a valuable nucleus for khaddar propaganda on a large scale, if all the 20 or 13 are honest, self-sacrificing, earnest and industrious plodding workers. Khaddar work cannot be done by fits and starts. It cannot be done by impulsive men who would slave for a few days, maybe a few months, and then collapse altogether. Determination and grit are absolute essentials of success in this great national movement.

[1] The extract, not reproduced here, dwelt on failure, in the march of science, to solve the problem of its correct application, and emphasized the need for"all the enterprise of education and all the activities of religion" to reach"their focus—the point of responsibility".

[2] Here followed a factual report of the activities of the Swadesa Balyam Sangam of Tuticorin, not reproduced here.

ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION

The A. I. S. A. finishes the first year of its existence at the end of the month. Those who are in arrears for the passing year should make up their quota, if they wish to be considered continuing members of the A.I.S.A. Those who wish to renew their subscription for the next year should hasten to send in their quota. Too much stress cannot be placed upon the necessity of sending well-twisted, even and sprayed yarn. The testers have tested the yarn sent in an indulgent way. But indulgence cannot be continued for ever. It would be had for the spinners and bad for the nation. Spinners therefore need not be surprised if they find that bad yarn is henceforth rejected, as bad coin, or for that matter everything bad, is or must be rejected. Let the members remember that for receiving the privileges of the constitution to be revised at the end of five years of existence of theas sociation, it will be necessary to show five years' continuing membership.

"TAKLI" IN SCHOOLS

Babu Prafulla Ch. Sen has sent to the All-India Spinners' Association an accurate and detailed report of the results of one month's *takli* spinning in the Duadando National School (Bengal) which he has just taken over. The names, the times, and the yards spun, and the average speed for everybody are given in the table sent by him. Twenty-six boys spun during the month of August 14,368 yards, in weight 56 *tolas*, of from six to 30 counts. Nearly 50 per cent of the yarn was fit for warp. The highest average speed attained was 90 yards per hour. The highest time spun by a boy was 18 hours during the month. The highest quantity was 1,621 yards. Only four boys spun 1,000 yards or over and thus qualified themselves in one month to become members of the juvenile branch of the Association, i.e., if they were also wearing khaddar. If the teachers and the boys persist, there is no reason why at the end of the year every boy should not spin enough for his own clothing. I take it that the boys will in due course be taught to card their own cotton, if they are not already doing so.

Prafulla Babu supplements the table with the following interesting letter:[1]

Young India, 30-9-1926

[1] Not reproduced here. It described the happy results of a change-over from inefficient spinning-wheels to the *taklis* which the pupils took up with avidity.

412. SOUTHWARD

That restless great soul, Charlie Andrews, is never so happy as when he is wandering in search of God, i.e., humane service. Illness does not baffle him. If it is labour in distress, Charlie Andrews rushes to the rescue. If it is the flood-stricken that need his assistance, he goes, fever or no fever. Indians overseas find in him an ever-ready helper and an unfailing guide. He was not well. He had a bite from a poisonous insect when he was at Stokes's farm. But he would not take full rest as Shantiniketan needed him. He came to Sabarmati before proceeding to South Africa. He was not well. He got worse. But he will not cancelhis passage. He was better, having rested under the hospitable roof of Sjt. Ambalal Sarabhai. And now, though he is not strong enough, he is on his way to South Africa. Before leaving, he left a writing which the reader will find in another column.

For him this work of love is a search for God. It is God's call to which he has responded.

He knows that he may get nothing. But his is"not to reason why"; his is"but to do and die". It is enough for him that the Indians of South Africa want him and that they have a just cause. He does not stop to weigh whether the cause is big or small. For him nothing is too small that is just and truthful. No individual is too lowly, if he needs his service. The Brahmin and the Bhangi, the prince and the peasant, the capitalist and the labourers claim his equal attention, if they stand for truth and justice.

He is sensitive. He feels the criticism gently conveyed to him by well-meaning friends that he should have been in India whilst the Union Deputation was here and the India settlers would not need him so long before the time of the Round Table Conference. He has allowed himself just to answer the criticism in his"In Search of God"[1]. He was not wanted by the Deputation. Its hands are full. As a matter of fact, the Deputation does want not to be coached. It does not

[1] The correct title of the article by Andrews is"The Search for God". He wrote of his impending journey to South Africa:"There have been many voices of discouragement of late, stating—what seems almost evident on the surface—that journeys to South Africa are useless, while the colour bar remains so firmly established; while the daily treatment of Indians in the streets, in the railway trains and in constant social ways, marks them out as an inferior and subject race. All this I know full well from a bitter and intimate experience. Nevertheless, in face of an Asiatic Bill, which has only been suspended, not withdrawn, I have confidence and hope. For God is there, keeping His high Festival in human hearts, quickening love in them among the Dutch and English, even as He is doing here among ourselves; and surely He will meet me there as the companion. . . ."

want to collect evidence officially. It has come to gather impressions without being told. It is enough if the members have come with an open mind. We have no reason to think otherwise. They must be left undisturbed save by their own consciences. And conscience acts best when unprompted. It is put upon its mettle.

Mr. Andrews is wanted in south Africa and that now. Because the settlers immediately need a helper. Reuter has told us they were in consternation when they heard of his illness. He is their chief, if not their only hope. They must prepare their case. They needall the time that is now left for that preparation. They need him for this.

He must prepare the atmosphere that is required for the Conference. He is the only living link between the whites and the Indians. The Conference can do nothing, if South African public opinion is intensely hostile to Indians. South African public opinion is not like ours. It has force behind it. It has votes that count. It can dictate policies. It can defy Downing Street. Mr. Andrews can to some extent cultivate and mould that opinion. His very presence disarms criticism and silences opposition. His place at the present moment is undoubtedly in South Africa.

And the deliberations of the Conference will affect not only the future of settlers in South Africa but they will indirectly influence the Asiatic policy of the other Dominions and Colonies. But the settlers must not deceive themselves. Mr. Andrews's powerful intervention is indispensable for their cause. But the ultimate success must depend upon themselves. There is no help in the world. like self-help. They must be firm but moderate in their demands; they must speak with one voice; they must act like one man; they must not swerve an inch from truth; they must discharge their part of the contract, i. e., they must conform strictly to all sanitary and building regulations; and lastly they must be prepared in a body to suffer for their cause. There is no salvation without suffering.

Young India, 30-9-1926

413. NATIONAL EDUCATION

I commend to the attention of all who are interested in national education the convocation address of Acharya A. T. Gidwani delivered before the students of Kashi Vidyapith and from which I

reproduce elsewhere[1] the main extracts. He is by no means despondent about national education or national educational institutions. And in order to cure students of their despondency, he advises them like himself to visit pilgrim-like the different national educational institutions and centres where national graduates are working. I share Acharya Gidwani's optimism. But I do not blind myself, as I know the Acharya does not blind himself, to the grave limitations of the national institutions. They do not show the virility of new institutions. The teachers of these institutions have to show greater faith in national education and the institutions they are conducting. They have to perform acts of greater surrender than hitherto. I am convinced that these institutions, in so far as they are languishing, are so doing for the want of faith, the want of dedication on the part of the teachers. They must dare to be original. An attempt may be made to evolve by a conference a common system and a common policy. But probably the better way lies in each institution evolving along its own original lines. This country of ours is vast and variegated enough to warrant a variety of experiments. There are certain things which are obviously common to all national institutions. They do not need re-telling. The idea of pilgrimage on the part of the teachers to the various institutions is undoubtedly sound. But even that idea presupposes a certain degree of buoyant faith.

There is too much of make-believe, self-deception and submission to convention. The field of education which holds the seeds of the future of the children of the soil requires absolute sincerity, fearlessness in the pursuit of truth and boldest experiments, provided always that they are sound and based upon deep thought matured and sanctified by a life of consecration. Not every tyro in education may make such experiments. If the field is vast enough for sound experimenting, it is too dangerous for hasty and ill-conceived prospecting such as people in feverish search of gold delight in.

Young India, 30-9-1926

414. THE UNIVERSAL COTTAGE INDUSTRY

Babu Bijay Bihari Mukharjee of the Bengal Civil Service has published a booklet on the cottage industry of Bengal. It was awarded

[1] *Young India*, 30-9-1926, pp. 343-4

the Beereshwar Mitter Gold Medal of the Calcutta University. Whilst the conclusions of Babu Bijay Bihari are infirm, the facts he has set forth are well worth consideration by everyone who wishes well to this country. They derive greater importance from the fact that what is true of Bengal is true almost of all India.

> In Bengal, according to the census of 1921, out of every 1,000 persons only 68 live in towns. Outside Calcutta and the metropolitan districts of Howrah, the 24 Parganas and Hooghly, there are three towns containing over 30,000 people. . . . It will not therefore be unreasonableto hold that of 46,695,536 of the population of the British territory in Bengal, scarcely more than about 13 lakhs of people are urban and the rest live mainly in the villages.

Therefore the writer naturally contends:

> To develop the village and to secure for its inhabitants that sufficiency of comforts which is essential even in a country where only a little suffices, to organize it as a living entity in the body politic of the constitution is the crucial problem before the country. The utterance of Sir Horace Plunkett that"we must have home before home rule" is true of Bengal as much as of Ireland to which he addressed it. One need not ignore the effect of the form of government and the need for a change in it to be convinced of the paramount and supreme necessity of attempts to rehabilitate the 'home' in the villages. In that scheme of rehabilitation the cottage industry is not merely helpful, but absolutely essential.

The author has no difficulty in showing that India was, at one time, not very remote, happy and prosperous. He thus quotes Elphinstone:

> All the descriptions of the parts of India visited by the Greeks give the idea of a country teeming with population and enjoying the highest degree of prosperity.

He has less difficulty in showing that the prosperity was mainly due to the one single industry of spinning and weaving. But today hand-spinning needs resurrection and weaving, though still an important cottage industry, does not need the same attention.

Today, there is no prosperity to note. Three-fourths of the people are dependent solely upon cultivation. In Dacca and Faridpur 92% and in Midnapur 74% of the cultivable land is now under cultivation. The average under cultivation per head of the agricultural population is respectively, .72, .73 and .84 acres for the three districts. Thus there is little margin left for additional cultivation. And no

peasantry that is solely dependent on agriculture can possibly live on less than one acre of land. The real average is far below the average given, because in the calculation are included are huge tracts owned by rich zamindars.

> It is no wonder, therefore, that one of the highest officials of the Government had to declare that in this country half the people did not know what it was to have two meals a day.
>
> The seriousness of the situation was expressed by the Famine Commission so long ago as 1877-78 thus: A main cause of the disastrousconsequences of Indian famines and one of the greatest difficulties in the way of providing relief in an effectual shape is to be found in the fact that the great mass of the people directly depend on agriculture and that there is no other industry from which any considerable part of the population derives support. The failure of the usual rains deprives the labouring class as a whole, not only of the ordinary supplies of food obtainable at prices within their reach but also of the sole employment by which they can earn the means of procuring it. The complete remedy, say the Commissioners, for this condition of things will be found only in the development of industries other than agriculture and independent of the fluctuations of the seasons.

The writer shows too that the bulk of the peasantry is occupied only during four months of the year.

> The clerks, the officials, the lawyers, the doctors, the politicians, the teachers and all who believe themselves educated in English do not come up even to one per cent of the population.

I have remarked that the writer is weak in his conclusions. The weakness in my opinion is derived from the fact that he has collected all possible cottage industries. As a recital it is good enough. But it does not solve the problem which needs a speedy solution. For the vast bulk of the population, as also the worker in the villages, a museum of industries is simply bewildering. They should have one universal industry. And by a process of exclusion, one arrives at the irresistible conclusion that the only universal industry for the millions is spinning and no other. That does not mean that other industries do not matter or are useless. Indeed, from the individual standpoint, any other industry would be more remunerative than spinning. Watch-making will be no doubt most remunerative and fascinating industry. But how many can engage in it? Is it of any use to the millions of villagers? But if the villagers can reconstruct their home, begin to live again as their fore-fathers did, if they begin to make

good use of their idle hours, all else, all the other industries will revive as a matter of course. It is no use putting before famishing men a multiplicity of raw foods and expecting them to make their choice. They would not know what to do with them. They will probably rush after the most tempting and perish in the attempt. I remember once in my life being nearly lynched whilst I was distributing rations to famished people. I had to enclose and guard myself and the provisions before I could distribute what I had been given for distribution. We make little headway because we have an unclassified catalogue of industries for the people to choose, when we should know that there is only one industry it is possible to put before all. They may not all take it up. Let those who can and wish to, by all means, take up any other. But national resources must be concentrated upon the one industry of hand-spinning which all can take up now and besides which the vast majority can take up no other. And when the nation's attention is thus rivetted on its revival, we will not have to be in search of a market for khaddar. The energy and money that have today to be devoted to popularizing khaddar will tomorrow be devoted to its greater manufacture and to its improvement. It is the national inertia that blinds us to the possibility of khaddar and thus paralyses our capacity for a grand national effort. It is not enough to say that hand-spinning is *one* of the industries to be revived. It is necessary to insist that it is *the* central industry that must engage our attention if we are to re-establish the village home.

Young India, 30-9-1926

415. LETTER TO GOPABANDHU DAS

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

October 1, 1926

DEAR GOPABANDHU BABU,

Mr. Andrews asks me to write to you on his behalf as he was unable to do so before he went away. He discussed the Orissa question together and he entertains the same view that I have expressed to you.[1]

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Gopabandhu Das", 18-9-1926.

I do hope that you received that letter of mine, and that you have caught its spirit.

Are you any better now?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

PANDIT GOPABANDHU DAS
"SAMAJ" OFFICE
PURI, B.M. Ry.

From the original: C.W. 7739. Courtesy: Radhanath Rath

416. A LETTER[1]

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 1, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I suppose it was for the sake of drawing us closer that Charlie Andrews commissioned me before leaving for South Africa to give you a line about him. He was none too well when he left. I was anxious to keep him with me for a little longer so that he might become stronger but he would not miss the steamer on which he had booked his passage. His heart was with the distressed people in South Africa. I therefore did not strive with him.

I hope that you are keeping well and strong.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 19708

417. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 1, 1926

MY DEAR HENRY,

This is both for you and Millie because Charlie has asked me after his own fashion to write to both of you about him. I suppose he wants me to certify to you that his love for India is as green as ever and not a whit less than his love for England, and his love for humanity is equally great and deep. He was none too well when he

[1] Addressee not known

sailed, but he would not listen to anybody. He could easily have given himself a fortnight's rest and taken next boat, but his heart was in South Africa. I therefore did not strive with him.

I am making full use of your collection of the *Gita* texts. It is being copied almost regularly day after day and as soon as it is finished, the precious volume will be sent to you duly registered and insured.

You have asked me for additional texts. If I come across any, I will send you the names.

I hope this will find you both, the boys, Sally, Maud and Mater in the possession of full health. Devdas as you know had [an] operation for appendicitis some months ago. He is enjoying himself at Mussoorie. Ramdas is looking after khadi work in Amreli.

Your sincerely,

H. S. L. POLAK, ESQ.
42, 47, 48, DANNES INN HOUSE
265 STRAND
LONDON W.C. 2.

From a photostat: S.N. 19709

418. LETTER TO MISSES ANDREWS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 1, 1926

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

Though I cannot recall your features, I have a vivid recollection of having met you in Birmingham in 1914. Your brother Charlie has been more and more endearing himself to the people here. In fact, he has become as much Indian as he is English. And he is now on his way to fulfil his self-imposed mission in South Africa. I had a few happy days with him before he sailed for South Africa. Do please give me a line in acknowledgment when you have leisure and tell me how you are faring.

Yours sincerely,

THE MISSES ANDREWS
ARDLEIGH
BRAY'S LANE, COVENTRY
ENGLAND

From a photostat: S.N. 19710

419. LETTER TO BAPUBHAI

THE ASHRAM
Bhadra Vad 10, October 1, 1926

BHAISHRI BAPUBHAI,

I got your letter. I recognize no date as my birth anniversary. I know *Rentia-baras*[1]. On that day, everyone should spin, and take a vow that he would spin regularly in future, and wear pure khadi if he has not been doing that

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19952

420. CABLE TO A. I. KAJEE

[*October 2, 1926*][2]

KAJEE
CONGRESS
DURBAN

INADVISABLE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 12024

421. LETTER TO LALTA PERSHAD SHAD

October 2, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and the books. The English book I shall return as soon as I have finished it. But it may take some time before I

[1] The twelfth day in the dark half of *Bhadra*, Gandhiji's birth-date according to the Vikram calendar followed in Gujarat, came to be popularly known by this name. It means,"the twelfth day, dedicated to the spinning-wheel."

[2] The cable is quoted in a letter to Gandhiji from A. I. Kajee, Honorary General Secretary, South African Indian Congress, Durban, dated October 10. The letter referred to Gandhiji having received the Union Government deputation in India, and to the proposed visit of Andrews on October 20, and sent Gandhiji copies of Justice Carter's judgment in *Mrs. Sophia Bhayla* v. *The Licensing Officer for East Court* (S. N. 12024). *Vide"*Precarious Condition in South Africa", 4-11-1926.

can go through it. My difficulty, however, is more fundamental than you imagine. But fundamental though it is, it is not so serious as perhaps you imagine. I am in search of a guru because I am humble and because that search is a scientific necessity for every godfearing man. The search is its own reward and its own satisfaction. Some do get the guru they want. But it is not a matter of such moment if they cannot get the guru during the current incarnation. It is enough if the search is absolutely sincere and equally persistent. It is also an article of faith with me that, if my search is sincere and persistent, my guru will come to me instead of my having to go to him if and when I deserve him. I am therefore quite content to remain as I am and there is enough warrant in the Shastras for such contentment. You will, therefore, not consider it a matter of indifference on my part if I cannot take up your suggestion enthusiastically and proceed to Agra. At the same time, if ever I do go to Agra in the course of my travels, I would certainly like to see the institution described by you. I would like too to have more information about it. I know the prototype in Pabna of the Agra institution. I had a long chat about it with Deshbandhu. He was undoubtedly enthusiastic about it. He had great faith in the Thakur and it was out of regard for him that I made it a point when I visited Pabna to see the Sat Sangh Mutt and to make the acquaintance of the Thakur and his mother and the inmates of the Mutt. But I must tell you that I was not much impressed either with the Thakur or with all I saw in the institution. And what I have since heard about the institution is not very creditable to it. The information given to me may be totally incorrect. But I am telling you somewhat of what I know and what I have heard about it.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. LALTA PERSHAD SHAD
KAYASTH MOHALLA
AJMER

From a photostat: S.N. 19711

422. LETTER TO R. B. GREGG

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 2, 1926

MY DEAR GOVIND,

I duly received the box containing the golden delicious apples. Please thank Stokes for the parcel of apples. They were certainly delicious to eat. They were not golden to look at. My teeth couldn't

work through the apples without stewing them. I ate two. The rest were distributed among patients and persons whom you and Stokes would consider deserving.

I know [I] owe you a reply to your previous letter. I want to send you a fairly long and full reply. That is why I am taking time. Andrews is off. He was none too well for the voyage, but he is not one to be easily dissuaded. I therefore did not strive with him.

Yours sincerely,

R. B. GREGG, ESQ.
C/O S. E. STOKES, ESQ.
KOTGARH
SIMLA HILLS

From a photostat: S.N. 19712

423. LETTER TO WAI GORAKSHA MANDAL

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI
October 2, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Please let me know the number of members requiring cotton, the quantity required and the count they spin. Are they skilled spinners? Can they pass the ordinary tests about strength and evenness? Are they too poor to buy cotton? Do they know carding? If not, who makes slivers for them? On receiving your replies to these, I shall be able to decide.

Yours sincerely,

WAI GORAKSHA MANDAL

From a microfilm: S. N. 19713

424. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN CHOKSI

Bhadra Vad 11 [*October 2, 1926*][1]

CHI. MOTI,

I got your letter. Doing service there is your main duty and it should make you completely happy. Take care of your health.

You should improve your handwriting. Today was Mani's

[1] From the postmark

birthday. She came to me on her own and took three vows in my presence, not to tell an untruth, not to do mischief and to get up at four in the morning. I will watch how long the child can keep her vows.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12137

425. MADHADA ASHRAM

I made some reference in *Navajivan*,[1] about a year ago, to the state of affairs in the Madhada Ashram, having received complaints in regard to it. I then started correspondence with Shri Shivji on the subject. He agreed to show me the accounts of the Ashram. I sent a personal representative to look into them, and he did so. But Bhai Shivji did not show him some of the account books on the ground that they related to private property.

I received grave charges regarding the moral character of Shri Shivji. I communicated them to him. And he gave me permission to institute an inquiry into the matter. Those who had made the charges were, all of them, responsible persons. Shri came and met me in the Ashram in connection with this matter. His confessions in regard to the charges gave me a painful shock. I advised him to resign from the Conference[2] and to give up control of the institutions under his charge. He resigned, but did not leave the institutions. I acquainted theExecutive Committee of the Conference with the conversation I had with Shri Shivji, and told them what according to me the duty of a public worker required him to do in this situation. I requested the members not to divulge what I had told them.

I informed Shri Shivji that I would have to issue a public statement of some kind. He requested me not to do so and expressed a desire to see me. We met. Shri Shivji felt that I had done him great injustice. I tried to pacify him but to no effect. He says that he had made his confessions in sheer anger. He believes that I was excited during my conversation with him, and says that, because I was excited,

[1] *Vide"* Speech at Madhada", 2-4-1925. Shivjii was the founder-manager of the Ashram at Madhada, a village in Saurashtra.

[2] Kathiawar Political Conference

he too got excited and was betrayed into making statements which were not true. In view of this, I told him that I was willing to place this matter before a *panch*. It is possible that I have been led away by prejudice and have unintentionally done him injustice. If the *panch* believe, after hearing my account that I was prejudiced and if they can convince me that I was so, then I will admit my error and publicly apologize. If I do not agree with the finding of the *panch* and if they ask me to maintain silence in public on this subject, I will do so.

Shri Shivji is not agreeable to this. He sent me a draft of the terms of reference for the proposed *panch*, which I refused to sign. According to my previous decision, therefore, I must publish the facts. I have given sufficient time to Shri Shivji and tried to understand his arguments, so that I may not do him injustice in any way. His friends have written somewhat strong letters to me. They have testified to Shri Shivji's innocence. I have read all the letters carefully but I am sorry to state that they have had a contrary effect on me. I do not at all feel that I was excited or angry during my conversation with Shri Shivji. I am not quick to get angry. Nor is it my impression that Shri Shivji had made his confessions to me in sheer excitement. I believe that the affairs of the Madhada Ashram and the private properties are so mixed up that it was, and is, Shri Shivji's duty to show all the accounts. His serious admissions create doubts about his moral character too. No public worker can afford to have moral weaknesses implied in his admissions.

Anyone who runs an institution for widows or young men or women should maintain a particularly high standard of conduct. He cannot have a private life; it is my firm view that the public has a right to know everything about his life. Shri Shivji is a public worker and has been running an institution for young men and women and for widows. The activities of the Madhada Ashram were many-sided, and that is why I have, as a matter of duty and with great pain, given publicity to the most important aspect of the conclusions of the inquiry I had instituted.

Bhai Shivji and his friends will be pained by this. I can give them only one consolation, and that is to assure them that I have felt, and still feel, much more deeply pained by the impression which has been produced on my mind by the affair than they would feel by my writing this. I do not wish to see anyone in this world morally degraded. I feel ashamed to see even one person fall. I am of the view

that when an individual falls the whole society falls. If I could have avoided writing this, I would certainly have kept silent. I prefer silence in such matters. But does anyone always get what would make him happy?

I regard myself as a true friend of Shri Shivji. This article does not mean that I have washed my hands of this affair. I have given him sufficient time. I am ready to give still more time if required. If any of Shri Shivji's friends can show me that I am in error, I will be grateful to him and will be happy to admit my mistake.

If Shri Shivji or any of his friends wishes to write something by way of reply to this, I will publish the whole reply provided it is reasonably short. I should like to tell Shri Shivji's friends that even if a hundred thousand persons believe a person to be innocent but one individual can prove his guilt, then the evidence of those hundred thousand does not avail. I find it necessary to say this in order that people may not write to me the kind of letters which I have been lately receiving for publication

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-10-1926

426. KHADI AT CONCESSION PRICE

Shri Punjabhai Hirachand, treasurer of the Provincial [Congress] Committee, states that between October 3 and 18 khadi will be sold at considerably reduced prices in the pure khadi store in Pada Pole on Richey Road. In some of the varieties the reduction will be as much as 50 per cent. It will not be less than 6 per cent in any variety. The price of the coarse variety from Kathiawar will be 4 annas a yard instead of 8 annas. Khadi for shirts will cost 4 annas 6 pies a yard instead of 6 annas and shawls and scarves will cost Rs. 1-12-0 each instead of Rs. 2-4-0. Caps, satchels, straps for bed-steads, etc., will be sold at 12_% reduction. These are only a few items from the list he has sent.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-10-1926

427. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SABARMATI,
Bhadrapad Vad 12, Sunday [*October 3, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

How did you get the pain again? I hope there is no moisture in the air there? When does the rain stop? You are unnecessarily worried about places like Almora. There is no need to worry at all. But we shall think about that only after December. In the meantime, let us see the result of Dr. Talwalkar's experiment on Kaka.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
HOMI VILLA
PANCHGANI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

428. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Sunday, Bhadra Krishnapaksha 12 [*October 3, 1926*][2]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter.

When there is a difference of opinion between revered Malaviyaji and me, I cannot express a positive view because I hold him in great reverence. Personally I am quite sure in my mind that at any rate your sphere of work is not in the Council. If, however, you have confidence in yourself and if Malaviyaji wishes that you should enter it, you may certainly do so. One should not readily give up the work one has already taken in hand. My view now is that you should dissu-

[1] From the postmark

[2] Reference to addressee's candidature for Council election indicates that the letter was written in 1926.

ade your friends from offering you advice and, if you get a majority, enter the Council. It does not seem advisable to withdraw after going this far. In the end you will yourself leave the Council. Yes, if Pandit Malaviyaji releases you out of regard for your health, it will be a great blessing for you. Even from the point of view of your health, I think it inadvisable for you to enter the Assembly or the Council.

I do not agree with the comparison you have made.

Jamnalalji is here.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6136. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

429. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

SABARMATI,
October 3, 1926

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

I have your letter. The opinion of teachers has been invited in order to make it easy for pupils in national schools to join Khadi Service. For the time being, training will be given by the Satyagraha Ashram itself. Experience shows that all processes up to weaving and keeping of accounts cannot be taught in one year. We have refrained from mentioning the amount of salary so as to enable every friend to state his own independent opinion.

After joining Khadi Service, one is required to work for eight hours daily. While under training, the pupil has to work according to the Ashram rules. Poor pupils are paid enough to cover their expenses, including that on clothes.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI MOOLCHANDJI
TEACHER, A. V. SCHOOL
MANPUR, C. I.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 830

430. LETTER TO BENARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

SABARMATI,
Bhadra Krishnapaksha 12 [*October 3, 1926*][1]

BHAI BENARASIDASJI,

I have your second article. Kindly let me know when I admitted that it was an error on my part to have stated that 500 workers should be permitted to emigrate to British Guiana as an experimental measure. I do not remember having said that. If you can, please send the article in which I have said so. I will publish your article along with that one.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

SHRI BENARASIDAS CHATURVEDI
FEROZABAD
E. I. R.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2566

431. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Bhadrapad Vad 13, 1982 [*October 4, 1926*]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Rs. 2,400 as rent is too high for you. I cannot ask directly about the payment of rent. I shall be able to speak about it only when Pattani Saheb comes. When I wrote to Pattani Saheb it was with the idea that we would have to pay something by way of rent. Lady Pattani did get the letter in which I had mentioned February as our time limit. But apparently she did not inform the agent accordingly. We shall proceed on theassumption that we shall want the place only up to February. What you have written to the agent is correct.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
PANCHGANI CASTLE
PANCHGANI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the postmark

432. LETTER TO KALYANJI V. MEHTA

Bhadra Vad 14 , 1982 [*October 5, 1926*][1]

BHAISHRI KALYANJI,

A letter was written to you, at my instance, concerning Bhai Manibhai. I shall be happy to have your immediate reply. Manibhai, too, is worrying himself about the matter.

BAPU

BHAISHRI KALYANJI VITHALBHAI MEHTA
SWARAJ ASHRAM
BARDOLI
Via SURAT

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2679

433. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM PATWARDHAN[2]

Bhadra Vad 14, 1982 [*October 5, 1926*]

BHAI APPA,

I have your letter. I like your idea about a calendar. Here are a few thoughts.

> It is our moral duty to wear hand-woven khadi made from hand-spun yarn, for by doing so we provide employment and give food to crores of our brothers and sisters who are starving for want of work.
>
> Spinning is a moral duty for all of us, for unless we take it up the poor of the country will have no faith in it andin us. *Yadyadacharati*[3], etc. If we spin, our time will be well employed, the quality of yarn will improve and, finally, yarn will become cheaper.
>
> Our wearing khadi will help to bring about boycott of foreign cloth, as a result of which we shall acquire self-confidence, our strength will increase and the country will be saved not less than sixty crores of rupees.

[1] The postmark bears the date 6-10-1926, Sabarmati, but *Bhadra Vad* 14 fell on October

[2] Popularly known as Appasaheb Patwardhan

[3] A reference to the *Bhagavad Gita*, III, 21

You will be able to formulate other arguments besides these. Abdulla should return with his health completely restored.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19953

434. LETTER TO BALDEV SHARMA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October *6, 1926*

DEAR FRIEND,

I have seen your letter addressed to the Superintendent of the Ashram. Do you know that in the Ashram the main work is labouring with one's hands and feet? Are you satisfied with incessant labour at the spinning-wheel or the loom and doing sanitation work such as cleaning roads, sanitary buckets, etc.? Are you able to live as a *brahmachari*, and take the vow of poverty? Are you keeping good health? If your answers to these questions are satisfactory, I must say that just at the present moment, the Ashram is overcrowded, but as soon as there is a vacant room available, you can certainly be admitted as a probationer.

Your sincerely,

SJT. BALDEV SHARMA
"AMRITDHARA"
LAHORE

From a microfilm: S. N. 19714

435. VEGETARIANISM

A correspondent is born in a meat-eating family. He has successfully resisted the pressure from his parents to return to the flesh-pot. But, he says, in a book I have before me:

> I read the opinion of Swami Vivekananda on the subject and feel a good deal shaken in my belief. The Swami holds that for Indians in their present state flesh-diet is a necessity and he advises his friends to eat flesh freely. He even goes so far as to say"If you incur any sin thereby throw it upon me; I will bear it." I am now in a fix whether to eat flesh or not.

This blind worship of authority is a sign of weakness of mind. If the correspondent has such a deep-seated conviction that flesh-eating is not right, why should he be moved by the opinion to the contrary of the whole world? One needs to be slow to form convictions, but once formed they must be defended against the heaviest odds.

As for the opinion of the great Swami, I have not seen the actual writing but I fear the correspondent has correctly quoted him. My opinion is well known. I do not regard flesh-food as necessary for us at any stage and under any clime in which it is possible for human beings ordinarily to live. I hold flesh-food to be unsuited to our species. We err in copying the lower animal world if we are superior to it. Experience teaches that animal food is unsuited to those who would curb their passions.

But it is wrong to over-estimate the importance of food in the formation of character or in subjugating the flesh. Diet is a powerful factor not to be neglected. But to sum up all religion in terms of diet, as is often done in India, is as wrong as it is to disregard all restraint in regard to diet and to give full reins to one's appetite. Vegetarianism is one of the priceless gifts of Hinduism. It may not be lightly given up. It is necessary therefore to correct the error that vegetarianism has made us weak in mind or body or passive or inert in action. The greatest Hindu reformers have been the activest in their generation and they have invariably been vegetarians. Who could show greater activity than, say, Sankara or Dayanand in their times?

But my correspondent must not accept me as his authority. The choice of one's diet is not a thing to be based on faith. It is a matter for everyone to reason out for himself. There has grown up especially in the West an amount of literature on vegetarianism which any seeker after truth may study with profit. Many eminent medical men have contributed to this literature. Here, in India, we have not needed any encouragement for vegetarianism. For it has been hitherto accepted as the most desirable and the most respectable thing. Those, however, who like the correspondent feel shaken, may study the growing movement towards vegetarianism in the West.

Young India, 7-10-1926

436. LETTER TO AMY JACQUES GARVEY

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 12, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I had the 2nd volume of"The Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey"[1] or"Africa for Africans" for which I thank you.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

AMY JACQUES GARVEY
P. O. BOX NO. 22, STATION E
NEW YORK CITY, U. S. A.

From a copy : Gandhi Museum (Vol. 136) : Courtesy : Gandhi Memorial Museum, New York

437. THE SAME OLD ARGUMENT

After reciting the evils from which we are suffering and after dealing with the improvements he would make in agriculture, a correspondent writes:[2]

This is the old argument restated. The correspondent forgets that to make India like England and America is to find some other races and places of the earth for exploitation. So far it appears that the Western nations have divided all the known races outside Europe for exploitation and that there are no new worlds to discover. Among the exploited, India is the greatest victim. Japan is taking the share of the spoils no doubt. But if India and China refuse to be exploited what will happen to the exploiters? And if the Western nations plus Japan are likely to come to grief in the event of India and China refusing to be exploited, what can be the fate of India trying to ape the West? Indeed, the West had had a surfeit of industrialism and exploitation. If they who are suffering from the disease are unable to find a remedy

[1] Marcus Garvey was the Chairman of the Fourth International Convention of the Negro Peoples of the World.

[2] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had argued that modern civilization including steamships, railways, machinery and large-scale production should be accepted.

to correct the evils, how shall we, mere novices, be able to avoid them? The fact is that this industrial civilization is a disease because it is *all* evil. Let us not be deceived by catchwords and phrases. I have no quarrel with steamships or telegraphs. They may stay, if they can, without the support of industrialism and all it connotes. They are not an end. We must not suffer exploitation for the sake of steamships and telegraphs. They are in no way indispensable for the permanent welfare of the human race. Now that we know the use of steam and electricity, we should be able to use them on due occasion and after we have learnt to avoid industrialism. Our concern is, therefore, to destroy industrialism at any cost.

The correspondent has suggested the remedy without knowing it himself. For he admits that India has lived till now when other nations have perished because"she has adapted herself to changing conditions". Adaptability is not imitation. It means power of resistance and assimilation. India has withstood the onslaughts of other civilizations because she has stood firm on her own ground. Not that she has not made changes. But the changes she has made have promoted her growth. To change to industrialism is to court disaster. The present distress is undoubtedly insufferable. Pauperism must go. But industrialism is no remedy. The evil does not lie in the use of bullock carts. It lies in our selfishness and want of consideration for our neighbours. If we have no love for our neighbours, no change however revolutionary can do us any good. And if we love our neighbours, the paupers of India, for their sakes, we shall use what they make for us; for their sakes we, who should know, shall not engage in an immoral traffic with the West in the shape of buying the foreign fineries and taking them to the villages.

If we would but think seriously and persistently, we shall discover that before we make any other changes, the one great change to make is to discard foreign cloth and reinstate the ancient cottage industry of hand-spinning. We must thus restore our ancient and health-giving industry if we would resist industrialism.

I do not fight shy of capital. I fight capitalism. The West teaches one to avoid concentration of capital, to avoid a racial war in another and deadlier form. Capital and labour need not be antagonistic to each other. I cannot picture to myself a time when no man shall be richer than another. But I do picture to myself a time when the rich will spurn to enrich themselves at the expense of the poor and the

poor will cease to envy the rich. Even in a most perfect world, we shall fail to avoid inequalities, but we can and must avoid strife and bitterness. There are numerous examples extant of the rich and the poor living in perfect friendliness. We have but to multiply such instances.

India's destiny lies not along the bloody way of the West, of which she shows signs of tiredness, but along the bloodless way of peace that comes from a simple and godly life. India is in danger of losing her soul. She cannot lose it and live. She must not, therefore, lazily and helplessly say,"I cannot escape the onrush from the West." She must be strong enough to resist it for her own sake and that of the world.

Young India, 7-10-1926

438. SORROWS OF GIRL-WIVES

"A Hindu lady from Bengal" writes:[1]

Whether the picture drawn here is true to life or overdrawn, the substance is surely true. I do not need to search for evidence in support. I know a medical man enjoying a large practice having married and taken to himself, an elderly widower, a girl who was young enough to be his daughter. They were living together as"husband and wife". Another, a sixty-year-old educationist a widower, married a girl of nine years. Though everybody knew of the scandal and recognized it as such, he remained inspector outwardly, respected both by the Government and the public. It is possible for me to recall more such instances from my memory and that of friends.

The fair correspondent is correct in saying that"there is no power of resistance left" in the women of India"to fight against any evil whatever". No doubt man is primarily responsible for this state of things. But may women always throw the blame on women and salve their consciences? Do the enlightened among them not owe it to their sex, as also to men whose mothers they are, to take up the burden of reform? What is all the education worth that they are receiving if, on

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had thanked Gandhiji for"speaking on behalf of the poor girl-wives of our Hindu Society" and cited cases of 10-year-old girl-wives being either killed or cruelly maltreated by brutal and pleasure- craving husbands.

marriage, they are to become mere dolls for their husbands and prematurely engaged in the task of rearing would-be manikins? They may fight, if they like, for votes for women. It costs neither time nor trouble. It provides them with innocent recreation. But where are the brave women who work among the girl-wives and girl-widows, and who would take no rest and leave none for men, till girl marriages become an impossibility, and till every girl feels in herself strength enough to refuse to be married except when she is of full age and to the person about whom she is given the final choice?

Young India, 7-10-1926

439. WANTS SATISFACTION

Here is eloquence which I have not abridged except for the removal of a fling or two at the"magnates of wealth" with their"cesspools in the bed of economic stream":[1]

> I read your article"Students' Duty" of the 16th September. You refuse to guide the unwilling. . . . The thought of the coming millennium makes it a pleasure to spin.
>
> Meanwhile, your forces fret under famine rations and laziness imposed upon them.
>
> Spinning for creating the charkha atmosphere does not occupy all the time . . . I am sure men will not have to rot for want of work and bread in your scheme of swaraj. Working as we do on your terms, we have a right to ask for satisfaction. I expect it in the columns of *Young India* early, as weariness of life grows every minute

The correspondent seems to possess a fine sense of humour and, therefore, does not need much satisfaction from me. But for the enlightenment of those No-changers, who may be in the same position as he is, but who do not possess the same sense of humour, I may state that, having taken the post of schoolmaster in a Taluq Board school, I should stick to it and spread the gospel of khaddar and only leave the post when I get a job more after the heart of a No-changer; and then too if it can be left without putting the employers to inconvenience. A conscientious worker will never leave his employer in the lurch or use an existing job as a mere stalking-horse. The correspondent could, however, have finished his course of weaving. A good pattern weaver any day earns one rupee per day. If he had become an accomplished

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

shoe-maker, he could also have made as much. One who has caught the spirit of the spinning movement need never feel idle. Has the correspondent mastered the science of spinning? Does he know ginning and carding? He can then earn from eight annas to a rupee per day from ginning and carding. But, presently there will be the Khadi Service. One who is poor but willing can sustain oneself even whilst qualifying for the Service. There is illimitable scope for those honest men and women who do not mind toiling with their bodies and would be satisfied with a simple sustenance wage and have no ambition for riches or fame.

Young India, 7-10-1926

440. A CORRECTION

In my article on"Non-resistance" in the issue of 23rd September, I said the paper from which I have quoted was received from an American friend.[1] This was a mistake. The sender who is an Indian and is living in India now draws my attention to the fact that it was he who had received it in the first instance from his American friend and that therefore the sender to me was not an American friend. I apologize for the error which was unintentional. I had put the paper among the *Young India* matter file for attention and had forgotten that it was sent by an Indian friend.

A MISPRINT

The same correspondent draws attention to a misprint in the issue of 16th September in the last line of the article headed"Anti-Conscription". The original reads:"Each is afraid and trustful of his neighbour." It should be"distrustful".

Young India, 7-10-1926

441. LETTER TO Z. M. PARET

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 7, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I understand your viewpoint. But somehow or other, I cannot adopt it. I may be wrong but the conviction is growing upon me that this idea of making substantial reforms through the

[1] *Vide*"Non-resistance True and False", 23-9-1926.

press agency has been altogether overdone. Everything that you mention in your letter can be done far more efficiently by quiet, organized and persistent work. I would, therefore, ask you not to press me to give you anything. I wouldn't have my heart in it. Let me add that I continue to edit *Young India* and *Navajivan* only because it is work that I have already taken in hand or rather, that was almost forced upon me. But if somebody were today to ask me to embark on any such new venture, I would flatly decline. I ask you to appreciate my difficulty.

Your sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 19715

442. LETTER TO DR. MURARILAL

THE ASHRAM,
October 7, 1926

DEAR DR. MURARILAL,

I have your letter. All my sympathies are with you in your great loss. I had no idea that your brother had died. But it is a toll which every public worker is often called upon to pay.

With reference to the election bitterness, you attribute to me powers which I do not possess. Could I have felt that I could usefully intervene, believe me, I would have waited for no call; I would have forced myself on the attention of Panditji and Lalaji. But I know my powerlessness and, therefore, I grin and bear.

Yours sincerely,

DR. MURARILAL
CAWNPORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 19716

443. LETTER TO R. GANGADHARAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 7, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I would like you to look at the problem in another way. The constitution of the sexes is the . . .[1] temptation

[1] This is blank in the source.

that nature has put in our way. If we succumb to it, we remain rooted to the earth. If we surmount it, we rise higher. The tongue is given to us to taste and to speak. But the more we restrain it the better we are, and so with most things in nature. It would be wrong, therefore, to say that it is a fetish of nature's law to restrain our carnal aptitude.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. GANGADHARAN

THOPPIKANILAKAM

VAIKOM

From a photostat: S.N. 19717

444. LETTER TO BHAVANIDAYAL

Asvina Sud 1 [*October 7, 1926*][1]

BHAISHRI BHAVANIDAYAL,

I have your letter. I think I wrote to you giving my opinion. Even so, I give it here again.

After going through the whole of the book, I realized that I was wrong in having described it as containing slanders. I ask your forgiveness for having done you injustice. I do not recollect now after reading which book of yours I formed this opinion.

And now I reply to your letter. As history, the book leaves much to be desired. All the facts are not stated correctly. I have not read it from the point of view of historical accuracy, nor have I the time to read it from that point of view and make corrections. The fact is that very few of us have the skill of writing anything from the standpoint of history.

Even the account of the satyagraha struggle [in South Africa] which I have written should be treated not as a book of history. I have only given in it my experiences and reminiscences. I, therefore, consider it difficult as also irrelevant to take notice of your book in my autobiography.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C.W.8655. Courtesy: Vishnu Dayal

[1] The serial publication of *An Autobiography* referred to in the letter was commenced in *Young India* on December 10, 1925. The following *Asvina Sud* 1 fell on this date.

445. CIRCULAR LETTER

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

October 8, 1926

I had expected you to let me have your opinion upon the draft rules for Khadi Service published in *Young India*.[1] I am anxious to publish them in their final shape as early as possible and set the scheme a-going. The only delay is your considered opinion. You will find the rules in *Young India* dated 16th September 1926. Wherever blanks have been kept, as for instance about the salary, they have been purposely kept so that everybody may give his own independent opinion.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. R.
,, RAJENDRA BABU
,, GANGADHARRAO DESHPANDE
,, KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA GARU
DR. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA
SJT. NIRANJAN PATNAIK
,, SATIS BABU
,, V. V. DASTANE

From a microfilm: S.N. 12072

446. LETTER TO AMBIKAPRASAD

Asvina Sud 2 [*October 8, 1926*][2]

BHAI AMBIKAPRASADJI,

I have your letter. I am not qualified now to say anything by way of guidance on the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity. It seems to me that I am serving the cause by my very silence. Please, therefore, excuse me.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7483

[1] *Vide"*Khadi Service", 16-9-1926.

[2] It was in 1926 that Gandhiji had decided to keep silence over communal and political issues, referred to in the letter.

447. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SABARMATI,
October 9, 1926

RAJAGOPALACHARI
TIRUCHENGODU (SOUTH INDIA)

YOU CAN SAY YOU CANNOT CONDUCT ELECTION CAMPAIGN WITHOUT CONVICTION BACK IT ESPECIALLY WHEN DOMESTIC QUARRELS BITTERNESS DAILY INCREASING OVER ELECTIONS.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 12072a

448. IS THIS HUMANITY?-I[1]

[*October 10, 1926*][2]

The Ahmedabad Humanitarian League has addressed me a letter from which I take the relevant portions:

> The talk of the whole city of Ahmedabad is the destruction of 60 dogs on his mill premises at the instance of Seth. . . Many a humanitarian heart is considerably agitated over the incident. When Hinduism forbids the taking of the life of any living being, when it declares it to be a sin, do you think it right to kill rabid dogs for the reason that they would bite human beings and by biting other dogs make them also rabid? Are not the man who actually destroys the dogs as also the man at whose instance he does so both sinners?
>
> A deputation of three gentlemen from our Society waited on the Seth on the 28th ultimo. He confessed in the course of the interview that he had to take the course in question to save human life. He also said:"I myself had no sleep on the night I took that decision. I met Mahatmaji the next morning and ascertained his view in the matter. He said, 'What else could be done?'" Is that a fact? And if so, what does it mean?
>
> We hope you will express your views in the matter and set the whole controversy at rest and prevent humanitarianism from beingendangered by the shocks given to it by distinguished men like the Seth. The Ahmedabad Municipality, we have heard, is soon going to have before it a resolution for the castration of stray dogs. Is it proper? Does religion

[1] This is the first of a series of eight Gujarati articles published in *Navajivan*. These were later translated by Mahadev Desai into English and published in *Young India*.

[2] The articles are placed under the date of publication in *Navajivan*.

sanction the castration of an animal? We should be thankful if you would give your opinion in this matter also.

Ahmedabad knows the name of the mill-owner, but as *Navajivan* is being read outside Ahmedabad also, I have omitted to mention his name in accordance with my practice to avoid personalities whilst discussing a principle. The question raised by the Humanitarian Society is an intricate one. I had been thinking of discussing the question ever since and even before the incident, but on second thought dropped the idea. But the letter of the Society now compels me, makes it my duty, to enter into a public discussion of the question.

I must say that my relations with the mill-owner, have been sweet, and, if I may say so, friendly. He came to me and expressed his distress in having had to order destruction of the dogs, and asked my opinion about it. He also said:"When the Government, the Municipality and the *Mahajan* all alike failed to guide me, I was driven to this course." I gave him the reply that the Society's letter attributes to me.

I have since thought over the matter and feel that my reply was quite proper.

Imperfect, erring mortals as we are, there is no course open to us but the destruction of rabid dogs. At times we may be faced with the unavoidable duty of killing a man who is found in the act of killing people.

If we persist in keeping stray dogs undisturbed, we shall soon be faced with the duty of either castrating them or killing them. A third alternative is that of having a special *pinjrapole* for dogs. But it is out of the question. When we cannot cope with all the stray cattle in the city, the very proposal of having a *pinjrapole* for dogs seems to me to be chimerical.

There can be no two opinions on the fact that Hinduism regards killing a living being as sinful. I think all religions are agreed on the principle. There is generally no difficulty in determining a principle. The difficult comes in when one proceeds to put it into practice. A principle is the expression of a perfection, and as imperfect beings like us cannot practise perfection, we devise every moment limits of its compromise in practice; So Hinduism has laid down that killing for sacrifice is no *ahimsa* (violence). This is only a half-truth. Violence will be violence for all time, and all violence is sinful. But what is inevitable is not *regarded* as a sin, so much so that the science of daily

practice has not only declared the inevitable violence involved in killing for sacrifice as permissible, but even regarded it as meritorious.

But unavoidable violence cannot be defined. For it changes with time, place and person. What is regarded as excusable at one time may be inexcusable at another. The violence involved in burning fuel or coal in the depth of winter to keep the body warm may be unavoidable and, therefore, a duty for weak-bodied man, but fire unnecessarily lit in midsummer is clearly violence.

We recognize the duty of killing microbes by the use of disinfectants. It is violence and yet a duty. But why go even as far as that? The air in a dark, closed room is full of little microbes, and the introduction of light and air into it by opening it is destruction indeed. But it is ever a duty to use that finest of disinfectants—pure air.

These instances can be multiplied. The principle that applies in the instances cited applies in the matter of killing rabid dogs. To destroy a rabid dog is to commit the minimum amount of violence. A recluse, who is living in a forest and is compassion incarnate, may not destroy a rabid dog. For in his compassion he has the virtue of making it whole. But a city-dweller who is responsible for the protection of lives under his care and who does not possess the virtues of the recluse, but is capable of destroying a rabid dog, is faced with a conflict of duties. If he kills the dog, he commits a sin. If he does not kill it, he commits a graver sin. So he prefers to commit the lesser one and save himself from the graver.

I believe myself to be saturated with ahimsa—non-violence. Ahimsa and Truth are as my two lungs. I cannot live without them. But I see every moment, with more and more clearness, the immense power of ahimsa and the littleness of man. Even the forest-dweller cannot be entirely free from violence, in spite of his limitless compassion. With every breath he commits a certain amount of violence. The body itself is a house of slaughter, and therefore *moksha* and Eternal Bliss consist in perfect deliverance from the body and, therefore, all pleasure, save the joy of *moksha*, is evanescent, imperfect.

That being the case, we have to drink, in daily life, many a bitter draught of violence.

It is therefore a thousand pities that the question of stray dogs, etc., assumes such a monstrous proportion in this sacred land of ahimsa. It is my firm conviction that we are propagating*himsa*

in the name of ahimsa owing to our deep ignorance of the great principle. It may be a sin to destroy rabid dogs and such others as are liable to catch rabies. But we are responsible, the *mahajan is* responsible, for this state of things. The *mahajan* may not allow the dogs to stray. It is a sin, it should be a sin, to feed stray dogs, and we should save numerous dogs if we had legislation making every stray dog liable to be shot. Even if those who feed stray dogs consented to pay a penalty for their misdirected compassion we should be free from the curse of stray dogs.

Humanity is a noble attribute of the soul. It is not exhausted with saving a few fish or a few dogs. Such saving may even be sinful. If I have a swarm of ants in my house, the man who proceeds to feed them will be guilty of a sin. For God has provided their grain for the ants, but the man who feeds them might destroy me and my family. The *mahajan* may feel itself safe and believe that it has saved their lives by dumping dogs near my field, but it will have committed the greater sin of putting my life in danger. Humaneness is impossible without thought, discrimination, charity, fearlessness, humility and clear vision. It is no easy thing to walk on the sharp sword-edge of ahimsa in this world which is so full of *himsa.* Wealth does not help; anger is the enemy of ahimsa; and pride is a monster that swallows it up. In this strait and narrow observance of this religion of ahimsa one has often to know so-called *himsa* as the truest form of ahimsa.

Things in this world are not what they seem and do not seem as they really are. Or if they are seen as they are, they so appear only to a few who have perfected themselves after ages of penance. But none has yet been able to describe the reality, and no one, can.

Young India, 21-10-1926

449. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

October 10, 1926

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

I continue to receive your weekly gift. Let Savitri write once in a way.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3181

450. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 10, 1926

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS,

It was from Guruji that I learnt something about you. How is it that you have not kept me in touch with you for some time now? Let me know all about your health.

Here at the present moment about 30 people are bed-ridden with malaria. Shanker, Kakasaheb's son, has a mild attack of typhoid and Kishorelal is down with his old friend asthma. Devdas is still at Mussoorie.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19721

451. LETTER TO B. G. HORNIMAN

Sunday, October 10, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

You will not misunderstand me for telling you that I must not send you any message for your forthcoming paper.[1] The increasing bitterness has made me sad. Multiplication of newspapers multiplies bitterness. Of late, therefore, I have ceased to send messages to newspapers, especially new ones. I refused only two weeks ago to send a message of simple good wishes to Dr. Satyapal on his enterprise.[2] I did likewise for a nationalist weekly in U.P.[3] If I could I would dissuade you from your enterprise at this juncture and feel that I had done a true friend's duty.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI B. G. HORNIMAN

From a photostat: S.N. 11010

[1] Horniman had sought a message from Gandhiji for the inaugural October 16 issue of *The Indian National Herald* whose policy, he wrote,"will be strongly nationalist and in support of the Indian National Congress" (S.N. 11003).

[2] *Vide"*Letter to Dr. Satyapal", 21-9-1926.

[3] *Vide"*Letter to Z. M. Paret", 23-9-1926.

452. A LETTER

SABARMATI,
October 10, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I shall be happy to meet the Maulana and give him a note of introduction.

I prize your congratulations on my achievement or rather that of the film company.

Herewith a letter from Sjt. Ramachandran[1] which speaks for itself. Of course he wants no remuneration. If you entertain his proposal, you will find board and lodging for him in the premises. But if you do not need his services or for any other reason it is not convenient for you to have him, you will not hesitate to say no! Ramchandran is a . . .[2] good man.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original : C.W. 10875. Courtesy : Dr. Zakir Husain Library, Jamia Millia Islamia

453. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

SABARMATI,
Ashwin Shukla 4, 1982 [*October 10, 1926*]

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I have your letter. I am glad to know that Martanda[3] is improving. If you can find out why he was not recovering here, please let me know. What treatment is he taking? May you succeed in observing the vows. The work on the occasion of the *Charkha-dwadashi* was well done. Keep me informed of the results of your dietetic experiments.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA
RAJASTHAN CHARKHA SANGH
AJMER

From the Hindi original : Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Who was teaching spinning at Jamia Millia, Delhi.
[2] Illegible
[3] Addressee's brother

454. WILL

[*October 10, 1926*]

This is my last testament, and by this I revoke all wills executed by me heretofore. I do not possess any property of my own. If, after my death, any article is found to be of my ownership, I bequeath the same to the Trustees of the Satyagraha Ashram, namely, Shri R. J. Jhaveri[1], B. Jamnlalji[2], M. H. Desai[3], I. A. K. Bawazeer[4] and C. K. Gandhi[5], or the Trustees of the said Satyagraha Ashram at the time of my demise and thereafter to the Trustees thereof from time to time as my heirs. I also bequeath to the aforesaid Trustees all my rights in whatever books and whatever articles I have written or I may write hereafter, and also appoint them to administer my affairs after my death if and when necessary. The income derived from the said books and articles or from the copyrights thereof and the property found to be of my ownership is to be used for carrying out the objects of the Satyagraha Ashram according to their discretion. If any of the afore-mentioned Trustees resigns or dies during my lifetime or after my death, the surviving Trustees may carry on the duties under this Will and can appoint a new Trustee to fill up the vacancy if they so desire. I reserve my right to add to or alter this Will.

This Will has been executed by me in a sound state of mind and of my free will at Sabarmati Satyagraha Ashram, *Asho Sud 4*, *Samvat 1982*.

Witnesses: MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

DESAI VALJI GOVINDJI

CHHOTELAL JAIN

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12220

[1] Revashanker J. Jhaveri
[2] Jamnalal Bajaj
[3] Mahadev Desai
[4] Imam Saheb Abdul Kader Bawazeer
[5] Chhaganlal Khushalchand Gandhi

455. LETTER TO CHANDRASHANKAR

THE ASHRAM,
Asvina Sud 4, 1982, October 11, 1926

BHAISHRI CHANDRASHANKAR,

I have your postcard. I desire neither activity nor withdrawal from activity. I hunger after swaraj, and the hunger is becoming more intense as time passes.

If I were an emperor, I would have done one thing more. It is this: I would have declared illness a crime and punished those who were guilty of it. Among such persons, I would have singled you out to be the first to be punished.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19954

456. LETTER TO RAMI PAREKH

Monday [*October 11, 1926*][1]

CHI. RAMI,

I have your letter. Make it a habit to write in ink. So far all is well here. Do you study anything? Do you spin?

There are many people in the Ashram nowadays. Many have come from outside for the Charkha Jayanti.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9701

457. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Tuesday, October 12, 1926

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your letter after a long time. You have taken difficult vows. May God be your help. Certainly it is my earnest wish that you

[1] From the S.N. register

should dedicate yourself wholly to khadi. But plunge into the work only when you think it right. There is no doubt that khadi is our *Kamadhenu*. If I can make myself totally passionless in this life, you and the others will not look for any livelihood save khadi. I hope you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Motana Man, p. 32

458. RACE ARROGANCE

A German correspondent who is interested in obliterating race distinctions sends me an article showing the wrong done by white Europe to the Abyssinians and the Riffs and the injustice that is being daily perpetrated against the Negro in the United States of America in the name of and for the sake of maintaining white superiority. From the article, I cull the following three instances:

> There were Christian clergymen the other day voyaging to the"Holy Land". A clergyman from the Southern States announced himself. His white fellow clergymen would not let him travel with them. The passage was refunded and compensation was paid and thus they got rid of the"coloured man".
>
> In South Carolina (U.S.A.) a white man stole a motor car. He got four weeks. The same Court of Justice condemned a Negro to three years' penal servitude for stealing a bicyle. A Delaware (U.S.A.)"coloured" man was sentenced to death for committing rape on a white girl. At Alabama (U.S.A.) two whites were fined $. 250 each for committing rape on coloured girls.

If the white man is cursed with the pride of race, we are cursed with the pride of birth. Our treatment of the so-called untouchablesis no better than that of coloured people by the white man. I have cited the examples to show that the material achievements of the West have made no material difference in their morality—the final test of any civilization.

Young India, 14-10-1926

459. A CATECHISM

I gladly publish this catechism[1]. But I must not enter into a long reply even though I should fail to satisfy the able catechist.

1. What I have pleaded for is that parents who commit the sin of"marrying" their daughters of tender age should expiate for the sin by remarrying these daughters, should they become widowed while they are yet in their teens.[2] If the girls become widowed at a ripe age, it is their concern whether they would remarry or remain widowed. If I were called upon to state what the rule should be,. I should say the same rule should apply to women as to men. If a fifty-year-old widower may remarry with impunity, it should be open to the widow of that age to do likewise. That in my opinion both will be sinning by remarriage is quite another matter. I should any day subscribe to a reform in the Hindu law making sinful the remarriage of a widow or a widower who voluntarily married after maturity.

2. All I have advocated is abolition of the fifth *varna*.[3] The untouchables should, therefore, merge in the fourth division. The reorganization of the four divisions, the abolition of artificial inequalities and of subdivisions is a separate branch of reform. Interdining means dining off the same plate. If I eat a biscuit cooked by Vishnu, Solomon, Ismail and Company, I do not interdine.

3. I call myself a *sanatani* Hindu[4], because I believe in the Vedas, the Upanishads, the *Puranas* and the writings left by the holy reformers. This belief does not require me to accept as authentic everything that passes as Shastras. I reject everything that contradicts the fundamental principles of morality. I am not required to accept the *ipse dixit* or the interpretations of pundits. Above all I call myself

[1] Not reproduced here. This was a long letter by an"Assistant Executive Engineer" raising four basic issues.

[2] The correspondent, referring to Gandhiji's article"Supressed Humanity", 19-8-1926, had asked what his prescription would be for widows of 15 years of age or above.

[3] The correspondent had sought to know why caste reform should not involve inter-dining.

[4] The correspondent had asked, citing what Gandhiji had written in"Curse of Child Marriage", 26-8-1926, why he termed himself a"Hindu" and at the same time denied the authority of the Shastras. The correspondent had charged Gandhiji, in the light of his articles"Defending Child Marriage", 9-9-1926 and"The Hydra-headed Monster", 29-7-1926, with intolerance of which Gandhiji had considered Swami Dayanand and the Arya Samajists guilty.

a *sanatani* Hindu, so long as Hindu society in general accepts me as such. In a concrete manner he is a Hindu who believes in God, immortality of the soul, transmigration, the law of Karma and *moksha*, and who tries to practise truth and ahimsa in daily life, and therefore practises cow-protection in its widest sense and understands and tries to act according to the law of *varnashrama*.

I must not be drawn into controversy about Swami Dayanand.[1]

Young India, 14-10-1926

460. TYRANNY OF WORDS

A correspondent thus writes on my article"No Faith in Prayer" published in *Young India* dated September 23rd:

> In your article bearing the above caption you hardly do justice to the"boy" or to your own position as a great thinker. It is true that the expressions used by the writer in his letter are not all happy but of his clarity of thought there is no doubt. It is also *very* evident that he is not a boy as the word is understood. I should be much surprised to find him under twenty. Even if he is young he seems to show sufficient intellectual development not to be treated in the manner of"A boy may not argue". The writer of the letter is a rationalist while you are a believer, two age-old types, with age-old conflict. The attitude of the one is, 'Let me be convinced and I shall believe', that of the other is, 'Believe and conviction shall come'. The first appeals to reason, the second appeals to authority. You seem to thank that agnosticism is but a passing phase among all young people and that faith comes to them sooner or later. There is the well-known case of Swami Vivekanandato support your view. You therefore proceed to prescribe a compulsory dose of prayer to the"boy" for his own good. Your reasons are twofold. *Firstly,* prayer for its own sake, as a recognition of one's own littleness, and mightiness and goodness of the supposed higher being; *Secondly,* for its utility, for the solace it bring to those who want to be solaced. l shall dispose of the second argument first. Here it is recommended as a sort of staff to the weak. Such are the trials of life, and such is their power to shatter the reason of men that a great many people may need prayer and faith sometimes. They have a right to it and they are welcome to it. But there have been and there are always some true rationalists—few no doubt—who have never felt the necessity of either. There is also the class of people who while they are not aggressive doubters are

[1] *ibid.*

indifferent to religion.

As all people do not ultimately require the help of prayer and as those who feel its necessity are *free* to take to it and *do* take to it, when required, compulsion in prayer from the point of utility cannot be upheld. Compulsory physical exercise and education may be necessary for physical and mental development of a person, not so the belief in God and prayer for the moral side. Some of the world's greatest agnostics have been the most moral men. To these I suppose you would recommend prayer for its own sake, as an expression of humility, in fact your first argument. Too much has been made of this humility. So vast is knowledge that even the greatest scientists have felt humble sometimes, but their general trait has been that of *masterful* inquiry, their faith in their own powers has been as great as their conquests of nature. Had it not been so we should still be scratching earth with bare fingers for roots, nay, we should have been wiped the surface of the earth.

During the Ice Age when human beings were dying of cold and when fire was first discovered, your prototype in that age must have taunted the discoverer with 'What is the use of your schemes, of what avail are they against the power and wrath of God?' The humble have been promised the Kingdom of God hereafter. We do not know whether they will get it, but there on this earth their portion is serfdom. To revert to the main point, your assertion about"accept the belief and the faith shall come" is too true, terribly true. Much of the religious fanaticism of this world can be traced directly to the kind of teaching. Provided you catch them young enough, and keep at them repeatedly and long enough, you can make a good majority of human beings believe in *anything.* That is how your orthodox Hindu or fanatical Mahommedan is manufactured. There are of course always a small few in either community who will outgrow these beliefs that have been forced upon them. Do you know that if the Hindus and the Mahommedans stopped studying their scriptures until they reached maturity, they would not be such fanatical believers in their dogmas and would cease to quarrel for their sake? Secular education is the remedy for the Hindu-Muslim riots, but you will not be able to appreciate the solution, for you are not made that way.

Great as our debt is to you for setting an unprecedented example in courage, action and sacrifice in this country, where people have been always *much* afraid, when the final judgment is passed on your work it will be said that your influence gave a great setback to intellectual progress in this country.

I do not know the meaning of boy"as the word is ordinarily understood", if a 20-year-old lad is not a boy. Indeed I would call all school-going persons boys and girls, irrespective of their ages. But whether the doubting student may be called a boy or a man, my

argument must stand. A student is like a soldier (and a soldier may be 40 years old) who may not argue about matters of discipline when he has put himself and chooses to remain under it. A soldier may not remain a unit in his regiment and have the option of doing or not doing things he is asked to do. Similarly a student, no matter how wise or old he is, surrenders when he joins a school or a college the right of rejecting its discipline. Here there is no underrating or despising the intelligence of the student. It is an aid to his intelligence for him to come voluntarily under discipline. But my correspondent willingly bears the heavy yoke of the tyranny of words. He scents"compulsion" in every act that displeases the doer. But there is compulsion and compulsion. We call self-imposed compulsion self-restraint. We hug it and grow under it. But compulsion to be shunned even at the cost of life is restraint superimposed upon us against our wills and often with the object of humiliating us and robbing us of our dignity as men and boys if you will. Social restraints generally are healthy and we reject them to our own undoing. Submission to crawling orders is unmanly and cowardly. Worse still is submission to the multitude of passions that crowd round us every moment of our lives ready to hold us their slaves.

But the correspondent has yet another word that holds him in its chains. It is the mighty word"rationalism". Well, I had a full dose of it. Experience has humbled me enough to let me realize the specific limitations of reason. Just as matter misplaced becomes dirt, reason misused becomes lunacy. If we would but render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's, all would be well.

Rationalists are admirable beings, rationalism is a hideous monster when it claims for itself omnipotence. Attribution of omnipotence to reason is as bad a piece of idolatry as is worship of stock and stone believing it to be God.

Who has reasoned out the use of prayer? Its use is felt after practice. Such is the world's testimony. Cardinal Newman never surrendered his reason, but he yielded a better place to prayer when he humbly sang"one step enough for me". Sankara was a prince among reasoners. There is hardly anything in the world's literature to surpass Sankara's rationalism. But he yielded the first place to prayer and faith.

The correspondent has made a hasty generalization from the fleeting and disturbing events that are happening before us. But everything on this earth lends itself to abuse. It seems to be a law

governing everything pertaining to man. No doubt religion has to answer for some of the most terrible crimes in history. But that is the fault not of religion but of the ungovernable brute in man. He has not yet shed the effects of his brute ancestry.

I do not know a single rationalist who has never done anything in simple faith and has based every one of his acts on reason. But we all know millions of human beings living their more or less orderly lives because of their childlike faith in the Maker of us all. That very faith is a prayer. The"boy" on whose letter I based my article belongs to that vast mass of humanity and the article was written to steady him and his fellow-searchers, not to disturb the happiness of rationalists like the correspondent.

But he quarrels even with the bent that is given to the youth of the world by their elders and teachers. But that it seems is an inseparable handicap (if it be one) of impressionable age. Purely secular education is also an attempt to mould the young mind after a fashion. The correspondent is good enough to grant that the body and the mind may be trained and directed. Of the soul which makes the body and the mind possible, he has no care, or perhaps he is in doubt as to its existence. But his disbelief cannot avail him. He cannot escape the consequence of his reasoning. For, why may not a believer argue on the correspondent's own ground and say he must influence the soul of boys and girls even as the others influence the body and the intelligence? The evils of religious instruction will vanish with the evolution of the true religious spirit. To give up religious instruction is like letting a field lie fallow and grow weeds for want of the tiller's knowledge of the proper use of the field.

The correspondent's excursion into the great discoveries of the ancients is really irrelevant to the subject under discussion. No one questions, I do not, the utility or the brilliance of those discoveries. They were generally a proper field for the use and exercise of reason. But they, the ancients, did not delete from their lives the predominant function of faith and prayer. Works without faith and prayer are like an artificial flower that has no fragrance. I plead not for the suppression of reason, but for a due recognition of that in us which sanctifies reason itself.

Young India, 14-10-1926

461. "TAKLI" IN SCHOOLS

I offer no apology for reproducing practically in full the following business-like report of *takli* spinning in the national school at Dondaicha (West Khandesh):[1]

There should be no delay about introducing carding in the school.[2] No boy or girl can be regarded a full spinner unless he or she can card and make slivers. There is no reason why the schoolmasters should not card for their pupils till the latter have learnt it themselves. National school teachers may not regard themselves as mere paid employees. They are trustees for the moral and mental and physical welfare of the pupils as well as for national finances.

Young India, 14-10-1926

462. KHADI EXHIBITIONS

Bihar seems to be specializing in khadi exhibitions. Here is the latest report about an exhibition at Jamshedpur being the fourteenth of the season:[3]

Ahmednagar in Maharashtra has also had a successful exhibition. This was held between 11th and 19th September. The report before me states that it was attended by Seth JamnalalBajaj and Messrs B. G. Horniman, Khadilkar, Jamnadas Mehta, V. V. Dastane, C. V. Vaidya, Shankerrao Lavate, Vamanrao Joshi, and Dr. Sathe among others. The attendance was nearly ten thousand and included all classes. The cash sales amounted to over Rs. 4,000.

Young India, 14-10-1926

463. IMPROVISED METHOD OF TESTING

The head master of Dondaicha school inquires whether there is an improvised method of testing the strength and the count of yarn.

[1] The report, not given here, furnished details of production of yarn by the pupils and the accounts of the *takli* class.

[2] The report had said:"Carding will be taken in hand after one month, when agricultural pursuits of boys are over."

[3] The report, not reproduced here, was of the exhibition organized by the Bihar Provincial Khadi Department between September 15 and 23. It gave a gist of the speech by F. C. Temple, who had presided over the inaugural function. It was attended, among others, by Rajendra Prasad .

Here is a recipe:

Take from the yarn at random 4 yards and make a reel two feet in circumference. This will be one foot in length and hang it stretched to a peg so as not to get untwisted. Hang at the other end regulated weights. You are ready to measure the test when the strand snaps by the weight.

Weigh the broken strand in a fine scale. Now one *tola* is 100 *ratis.* If the reel weighs approximately 18_ *ratis* the yarn is count 1. If the reel weighs less the fraction of 18 *ratis* will be the count of yarn. Thus if the 4 yards weigh 3 *ratis,* since 3 *ratis is* 1/6th of 18, the count is 6. In the absence of fine scales and very small weights, the strands may be more yards, where a waste of yarn is not of much consequence. (Broken yarn may be used for making wicks, etc.) The convenient length is 21 yards and its multiples, 42, 84. The following table should be memorized:

7000 grains = 1 lb. = 38 8/9 *tolas*

180 grains = 1 *tola*

840 yards yarn = 1 lease.

Therefore:

$$\frac{\text{7000 grains}}{\text{Weight of hank of 840 yards (in grains)}} = \text{Count.}$$

Or

$$\frac{\text{38 8/9 } \textit{tolas}}{\text{Weight of hank in } \textit{tolas}} = \text{Count.}$$

Or

$$\frac{\text{Yards X 10}}{\textit{Tolas} \text{ X 216}} = \text{Count.}$$

To arrive at the test remember:

$$\frac{\text{315 } \textit{tolas} \text{ X length}}{\text{Count}} = \text{100 test.}$$

One round = 2 lengths.

To find the unevenness of a given quantity of yarn made up into strands:

Find the counts of six strands selected anyhow from your hank.

Total the counts and divide by six. You have the average count.

Take the difference between the highest and the lowest counts.

Then

$$\frac{\text{The difference X 100}}{\text{the average}} = \text{unevenness p.c.}$$

Deduct the unevenness percentage from 100 and you have the percentage of evenness.

Thus if six strands show respectively 16, 18, 15, 20, 22, and 17 counts, the total is 108; $\frac{108}{6} = 18$.

Now the lowest count is 15 and the highest is 22. The difference is 7.

Therefore $\frac{7 \text{ X } 100}{18} = 39$ nearly unevenness.

Therefore 100-39 = 61 evenness.

Young India, 14-10-1926

464. LETTER TO KSHITISH CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 14, 1926

DEAR KSHITISH BABU,

I have your letter about Gauhati Exhibition. Immediately on receipt of your letter, I sent a telegram[1] to the Committee whether they reconsider their decision to include mill cloth and powerloom cloth in their exhibits. This is the telegraphic reply received by me:

> Not exhibiting mill cloth powerloom cloth. Items carelessly included in prospectus. Making necessary correction—Secretary, Congress Exhibition.

I suppose nothing now needs to be done.

I hope you are doing well. Satis Babu has not written to me now for some time. I hope both he and Hemaprabhadevi are also doing well.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KSHITISH CH. DAS GUPTA
39, CHARKDANGA, ROAD
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 11240a

[1] This is not available.

465. LETTER TO NORMAN LEYS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 14, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter[1] and the statement made before the Court by Mr. Tarini P. Sinha. I have a copy of your book called *Kenya.* But I shall value an autograph[ed] copy if you have one to spare.

Yours sincerely,

DR. NORMAN LEYS
BRAILSFORD
NEAR DERBY

From a photostat: S.N. 12173

466. LETTER TO ZUBEDA BANO

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 14, 1925

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,

I like your letter. You must gradually improve your hand-writing. But, for a ten-year-old girl what you have sent is not at all bad especially as you have been studying English only for the last 4 months. I cannot recommend any English book to you which you can read and understand well at the present moment. My advice to you would be to learn all about India from the vernacular, which I suppose is Hindustani. Do you read the Devanagari script? If you can, I can recommend some books to you.

Having taken it up, I hope you will never give up the charkha and khaddar.

Yours sincerely,

MISS ZUBEDA BANO
C/O SECRETARY
ANJUMAN ISLAM
INDORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 19718

[1] This was dated September 20 (S.N. 12172); *vide* Appendix"Letter from Norman Leys", 20-9-1926.

467. LETTER TO DR. PARASHURAM

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 14, 1926

DEAR DR. PARASHURAM,

I have your letter. The only advice that I can give you is: 'Go back to your place, return to your practice and there do what service you can. And make no fuss about it.'

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19719

468. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 14, 1926

DEAR MOTI BABU,

I have your letter together with a report of production and sale of khadi for the month of August.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

BABU MOTILAL ROY
PRABARTAK SANGH
CHANDERNAGORE

From a photostat: G.N. 11030

469. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 15, 1926]

DEAR MIRA,

I am silent for overtaking arrears. I did not think of glycerine being an animal product though now that you mention it, I see I knew the thing. But although it is an animal product, you should continue to use it to paint the tonsils. Applying is not the same thing as eating.

You probably use soap that contains animal fat, but you will not eat it. More, however, later. I hope you will not disturb yourself over the matter.

BAPU

MIRA BEHN

From the original: C.W. 5187. Courtesy: Mirabehn

470. LETTER TO ATHALYE[1]

THE ASHRAM,
October 15, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

With reference to your letter, I have now got a detailed reply from Jamnalalji from which I gather that you wrote to him letters of confession and apology for having caused him much worry and trouble. So far as I can see, Jamnalalji has gone out of his way to placate you. And the arbitration, which was of your choice, decided against you. Jamnalalji further tells me he has had no correspondence or other communication with Dr. Mehta with reference to you. Nothing, therefore, remains to be done by me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. ATHALYE
SADASHIV PETH
POONA CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 19720

471. LETTER TO SATISH CHANDRA MUKHERJEE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 15, 1926

DEAR SATISH BABU,

I have your letter with useful enclosures[2] thoughtfully sent by you. I did not know that Krishnadas was away from you. I never gave

[1] The identity of the addressee is not known.

[2] The enclosures to Mukherjee's letter of October 12, 1926, consisted of the copy of a letter dated September 15, 1926 from Dr. Karl Thieme of Leipzig, addressed to Krishnadas, a typescript copy of"A Quarker View of Non-co-operation" by A. Barrett-Brown, Principal, Ruskin College, and the press cutting of a letter from Miss Lilian Edger to *The Statesman*, 3-10-1926,"which," Mukherjee wrote,"has appealed to me and may just interest you" (S.N. 11004).

myself any anxiety on his score seeing that he is by your side or somewhere under your direct guidance.

Of course, the Hindu-Muslim problem is becoming more and more complicated.[1] But what is one to do where one is helpless? I am an optimist because I believe in the efficacy of prayerful thought. When time for action has come, God will give the light and guidance. I therefore watch, wait and pray holding myself in momentary readiness to respond.

The cutting that Miss Lilian Edger has sent you is interesting as also the extracts from"No More War". I hope to make use of both in *Young India*. Lord Oxford's article, I have not yet read. You have said nothing, in your own fashion, about your health. Do please let me have a line to tell me that you are keeping stronger than before. There is no prospect now of Romaine Rolland coming to India at all;[2] certainly, not during the ensuing winter. He is daily aging and has a very delicate constitution.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 11006

472. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SABARMATI,
October 16, 1926

SHREE
BOMBAY

KAMALA HAS NO TYPHOID SIMPLE MALARIA. GETTING BETTER. NO ANXIETY.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p . 58

[1] Mukherjee had written:"The Hindu-Muslim riots are a great strain on me and my nerves. . . ."

[2] This was in reply to Mukherjee's question:"Do you expect M. Romain Rolland somewhere next winter?"

473. IS THIS HUMANITY?-II

[*October 17, 1926*]

When I wrote the article on this subject I knew that I was adding one more to my already heavy burden of troubles. But it could not be helped.

Angry letters are now pouring in. At an hour when after a hard day's work I was about to retire to bed, three friends invaded me, infringed the religion of ahimsa in the name of humanity, and engaged me in a discussion on it. They had come in the name of humanity. How could I refuse to see them?

So I met them. One of them, I saw, betrayed anger, bitterness and arrogance. He did not seem to me to have come with a view to getting his doubts solved. He had come rather to correct me. Everyone has a right to do so, but whoever undertakes such a mission must know my position. This friend had taken no trouble to understand my position. But he was not to blame for it. This impatience which is but a symptom of violence is to be found everywhere. The violence in this case was painful to me as it was betrayed by an advocate of non-violence.

He claimed to be a Jain. I have made a fair study of Jainism. This visitor's ahimsa was a distortion of the reality as I have known it in Jainism. But the Jains have no monopoly of ahimsa. It is not the exclusive peculiarity of any religion. Every religion is based on ahimsa, its application is different in different religions.

I do not think that the Jains of today practise ahimsa in any better way than others. I can say this because of my acquaintance with Jains, which is so old that many take me to be a Jain. Mahavir was an incarnation of compassion, of ahimsa. How I wish his votaries were votaries also of his ahimsa!

Protection of little creatures is indeed an essential part of ahimsa, but it does not exhaust itself with it. Ahimsa begins with it. Besides protection may not always mean mere refraining from killing. Torture or participation, direct or indirect, in the unnecessary multiplication of those that must die is *himsa*

The multiplication of dogs is unnecessary. A roving dog without an owner is a danger to society and a swarm of them is a menace to its very existence.

If we want to keep dogs in towns or villages in a decent manner, no dog should be suffered to wander. There should be no stray dogs even as we have no stray cattle. Humanitarian societies should find a religious solution of such questions.

But can we take individual charge of these roving dogs? And if we cannot, can we have a *pinjarapole* for them? If both these things are impossible, there seems to me to be no alternative except to kill them.

Connivance or putting up with the *status quo* is no ahimsa, there is no thought or discrimination in it. Dogs will be killed whenever they are a menace to society. I regard this as unavoidable in the life of a householder. To wait until they get rabid is not to be merciful to them. We can imagine what the dogs would wish if a meeting could be called of them, from what we would wish under the same circumstances. We will not choose to live anyhow. That many of us do so is no credit to us. A meeting of wise men will never resolve that men may treat one another as they treat rabid or stray dogs. What shall we expect of them if there were to be some beings loasing it over us as we do over dogs? Would we not rather prefer to be killed than to be treated as dogs? We offend against dogs as a class by suffering them to stray and live on crumbs or savings from our plates that we throw at them and we injure our neighbours also by doing so.

I admit that there is the duty of suffering dogs to live even at the cost of one's life. But that religion is not for the householder who desires to live, who procreates, who would protect society. The householder can but practise the middle path of taking care of a few dogs.

Our domestics of today are the wild animals of yesterday. The buffalo is a domestic only in India. It is a sin to domesticate wild animals inasmuch as man does so for his selfish purposes. That he has domesticated the cow and the buffalo is not out of mercy for them, it is for his own use. He, therefore, does not allow a cow or a buffalo to stray. The same duty is incumbent regarding dogs. I am, therefore, strongly of opinion that, if we would practise the religion of humanity, we should have a law making it obligatory on those who would have dogs to keep them under guard, and not allow them to stray, and making all the stray dogs liable to be destroyed after a certain date.

If the *mahajan* has really any mercy for the dogs, it should take possession of all the stray dogs and distribute them to those who want

to keep them. It seems to me to be impossible to protect dogs as we can protect the cows.

But there is a regular science of dog-keeping which the people in the West have formulated and perfected. We should learn it from them and devise measures for the solution of our own problem. The work cannot be done without patience, wisdom and perseverance.

So much about dogs. But with ahimsa in its comprehensive aspect I propose to deal on another occasion.

Young India, 28-10-1926

474. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Asvina Sud 11, 1982 [*October 17, 1926*]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Giridhari tells me that your health has still not improved. This is not good. It must improve, even if that means your going away somewhere. You should go to a place where you can live in solitude. The air should be wholesome, and you should have the right kind of companion with you. Your illness is both physical and mental. You ought not to carry an excessive burden of work.

You need not worry about Kamala. Her fever is like that of the others. She is in fact ready to go to Wardha or Bombay or any other place. But I don't feel like letting her go till she is quite all right, nor is it necessary that she should go. I see her from time to time. It is her mother-in-law about whom I feel worried, because she gets nervous, though, of course, she will certainly recover.

I hope you take regular walks. You must go out both in the morning and in the evening.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2873

475. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

Asvina Sud 11, 1982 [*October 17, 1926*]

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

What did you do about the matter discussed in the letter concerning sub-castes?

Now as trustee of the Madhada Ashram, you should take control of it openly.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5702

476. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

Asvina Sud 11, 1982 [*October 17, 1926*]

BHAI BENARSIDAS,

Several days have passed since I got your letter, but owing to pressure of work, I have not been able to reply to it. When did I write and say that I had committed an error in advising that 500 persons could be sent to British Guiana? Let me know where that article is. I have held back your letter from publication until after I have seen it.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2571

477. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[1]

AHMEDABAD,
October 17, 1926

Interviewed by a representative of the Associated Press on the personnel of the Indian delegation to the Round Table Conference to be held at Cape Town in December, Mahatma Gandhi said:

I think the choice is carefully made. I like the idea of Sir Mahomed Habibullah's leading the deputation. Mr. Corbett has intimate experience of the intricate question which the Delegation is to handle. Sir Darcy Lindsay, as a representative of European commerce, should have great weight in South Africa. This Deputation would have been altogether incomplete without Mr. Srinivasa Sastri. He knows Colonial questions. He knows South African statesmen, and who can question his learning and industry? Sir Phiroze Sethna's inclusion is not difficult to understand. Sir George Paddison by his able work on the last deputation had made himself indispensable. Mr. Bajpai as

[1] The interview was also published in some other daily newspapers.

Secretary was a foregone conclusion.

There are no doubt names missing, but that is not a matter of much consequence. It is enough to realize that those who are included in the delegation are all good and sound men representative of varied interests. I am anxious that this delegation, imperfect and incomplete though it may appear to some of us, should receive the moral approbation of the public. Things seem to have gone on smoothly up to now, and I am not without hope that the forthcoming Conference will give at least breathing time to the Indian settlers of South Africa as also to the Government of India if it does its duty to improve the status of the settlers. Every year of respite gained is so much gained on behalf of justice which is entirely on our side.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-10-1926

478. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Asvina Sud 12, 1982 [*October 18, 1926*]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

You must have got my letter written yesterday. If you can find time, go and visit Pratap Pandit's tannery, and ask him when he will send his man.

Kamala was thoroughly examined by Dr. Rajabali. There is no cause for anxiety. It has been decided to put her under his treatment.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2874

479. LETTER TO DR. VARDHARAJLU

October 20, 1926

DEAR DR. VARDHARAJLU,

This introduces to you Mr. and Mrs. Naidu of South Africa. They have just arrived from Natal and intend to visit the holy places.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. N. 7193

480. TOUGH QUESTION

A fair friend who has some faith in my wisdom and sincerity asks some knotty questions which I would fain avoid for fear of raising an indignant controversy on the part of some husbands jealous of their rights. But jealous husbands would spare me, for they know that I happen to be one myself having led a fairly happy married life for the past forty years in spite of occasional jars.

The first question is apposite and timely (The original is in Marathi. I have given a free rendering.):

> Can a man or woman attain self-realization by mere recitation of *Ramanama* and without taking part in national service? I ask this question because some of my sisters say that they do not need to do anything beyond attending to family requirements and occasionally showing kindness to the poor.

This question has puzzled not only women but many men and has taxed me to the utmost. I know that there is a school of philosophy which teaches complete inaction and futility of all effort. I have not been able to appreciate that teaching unless, in order to secure verbal agreement, I were to put my own interpretation on it. In my humble opinion, effort is necessary for one's own growth. It has to be irrespective of results. *Ramanama* or some equivalent is necessary not for the sake of repetition but for the sake of purification, as an aid to effort, for direct guidance from above. It is, therefore, never a substitute for effort. It is meant for intensifying and guiding it in proper channel. If all effort is vain, why family cares or an occasional help to the poor? In this very effort is contained the germ of national service. And national service, to me, means service of humanity, even as disinterested service of the family means the same thing. Disinterested service of the family necessarily leads one to national service. *Ramanama* gives one detachment and ballast and never throws one off one's balance at critical moments. Self-realization I hold to be impossible without service of and identification with the poorest.

The second question is:

> In Hinduism devotion of wife to her husband and her complete merger in him is the highest aim, never mind whether the husband is a fiend or an embodiment of love. If this be the correct conduct for a wife, may she in the teeth of opposition by

her husband undertake national service? Or must she only go as far as the husband will permit her to go?

My ideal of a wife is Sita and of a husband Rama. But Sita was no slave of Rama. Or each was slave of the other. Rama is ever considerate to Sita. Where there is true love, the question asked does not occur. Where there is no true love, the bond has never existed. But the Hindu household of today is a conundrum. Husbands and wives when they are married know nothing of one another. Religious sanction fortified by custom and the even flow of the lives of the married people keep the peace in the vast majority of Hindu households. But when either wife or husband holds views out of the ordinary, there is danger of jars. In the case of the husband he has no scruples. He does not consider himself under any obligation to consult his partner's wishes. He regards his wife as his property. And the poor wife who believes in the husband's claim often suppresses herself. I think there is a way out. Mirabai has shown the way. The wife has a perfect right to take her own course and meekly brave the consequences when she knows herself to be in the right and when her resistance is for a nobler purpose.

The third question is:

> If a husband is, say, a meat-eater and the wife considers meat-eating an evil, may she follow her own bent? May she even try by all loving ways to wean her husband from meat-eating or the like? Or is she bound to cook meat for her husband or worse still, is she bound to eat it, if the husband requires her? If you say that the wife may take her own course, how can a joint household be run when the one compels and the other rebels?

This question is partly answered in the answer to the second. A wife is not bound to be an accomplice in her husband's crimes. And when she holds anything to be wrong, she must dare to do the right. But, seeing that the wife's function is to manage the household and thus to cook, as the husband's is to earn for the family, she is bound to cook meat for the family if both have been meat-eaters before. If, on the other hand, in a vegetarian family, the husband becomes a meat-eater and seeks to compel the wife to cook for him, the wife is in no way bound to cook what offends her sense of right. The peace of a household is a most desirable thing. But it cannot be an end in itself. For me, the married state is as much a state of discipline as any other. Life is duty, a probation. Married life is intended to promote mutual good both here and hereafter. It is meant also to serve humanity.

When one partner breaks the law of discipline, the right accrues to the other of breaking the bond. The breach here is moral and not physical. It precludes divorce. The wife or the husband separates but to serve the end for which they had united. Hinduism regards each as absolute equal of the other. No doubt a different practice has grown up, no one knows since when. But so have many other evils crept into it. This, however, I do know that Hinduism leaves the individual absolutely free to do what he or she likes for the sake of self-realization for which and which alone he or she is born.

Young India, 21-10-1926

481. KNOTTY PROBLEMS OF NON-VIOLENCE

The destruction of certain dogs by a millowner, when some of them were suffering from hydrophobia and when there was danger of the employees being bitten any moment has angered members of the very influential Jain community of Ahmedabad. Having many friends among them and being regarded by many as an authority in matters of ahimsa (non-violence), I have been helplessly and reluctantly drawn into the controversy. As the matter has gone beyond the mere Gujarati-speaking public of Ahmedabad, I am presenting the readers of *Young India* with a translation of the series of articles[1] I am devoting to the subject covering as far as possible the whole wide field of ahimsa. I have no doubt that many readers of *Young India* who are interested in the theory and evolution of non-violence will welcome the translation of the series.

Young India, 21-10-1926

482. STAND FOR NON-VIOLENCE

A friend sends me the following cutting from the New York *Nation:*

> Some time ago (either in the latter part of 1924 or early in 1925) a band of twenty-five American missionaries in China addressed the following appeal to the American Minister at Peking:
>
> "The undersigned American missionaries are in China as messengers of the gospel of brotherhood and peace. Our task is to lead men and women into a

[1] For the first article of the series, *vide*"Is This Humanity? - I", 10-10-1926.

new life in Christ, which promotes brotherhood and takes away all occasions of war. We, therefore, express our earnest desire that no form of military pressure, especially no foreign military force, be exerted to protect us or our property; and that in the event of our capture by lawless persons or our death at their hands, no money be paid for our release, no punitive expedition be sent out, and no indemnities be exacted. We take this stand believing that the way to establish righteousness and peace is through bringing the spirit of personal good-will to bear on all persons under all circumstances, even through suffering wrong without retaliation."

The American Legation, however, replied that this petition was inconsistent with the necessity that exists for safeguarding Americans in China, and that therefore, no exception could or would be made in the procedure in case of emergencies with regard to the signers of the petition.

This is one of those instances in which two apparently contradictory positions are right at the same time. For the brave missionaries there was no other attitude possible, though, nowadays, very few adopt it. Was it not about China that a missionary deputation some thirty years ago waited on the late Lord Salisbury and asked the protection of the British gunboats for carrying their message to the unwilling Chinese? Then the late noble Marquess had to tell the missionaries that, if they sought the protection of the British arms, they must submit to international obligations and curb their missionary ardour. He reminded them that the Christians of old, if they penetrated the remotest regions of the earth, expected no protection save from God and put their lives in constant danger. In the case quoted by the New York *Nation,* the missionaries according to the report have reverted to the ancient practice.

The American Government, however, so long as it retains its present character, can only give the answer they are reported to have given. That the answer betrays the evil of the modern system is another matter. The American prestige depends not upon its moral strength but upon force. But why should the whole armed force of America be mobilized for the so-called vindication of its honour or name? What harm can accrue to the honour of America if twenty-five missionaries choose to go to China uninvited for the sake of delivering their message and get killed in the act? Probably, it would be the best thing for their mission. The American Government by its interference could only interrupt the full working of the law of suffering. But self-restraint of America would mean a complete change of

outlook. Today, defence of citizenship is a defence of national commerce, i.e., exploitation. That exploitation presupposes the use of force for imposing commerce upon an unwilling people. Nations have in a sense, therefore, almost become gangs of robbers, whereas they should be a peaceful combination of men and women united for the common good of mankind. In the latter case, their strength will lie not in their skill in the use of gunpowder, but in the possession of superior moral fibre. The action of the twenty-five missionaries is a dim shadow of reconstructed society or even reconstructed nations. I do not know whether they carried out their principle into practice in every department of life. I need hardly point out that in spite of the threat of the American Government to protect them against themselves, they could neutralize, indeed even frustrate, any effort at retaliation. But that means complete self-effacement. And if one is to combat the fetish of force, it will only be by means totally different from those in vogue among the pure worshippers of brute force.

It must not be forgotten that, after all, there is a philosophy behind the modern worship of brute force with a history to back it. The microscopic non-militant minority has, indeed, nothing to fear from it, if only it has immovable faith behind it. But faith in the possibility of holding together society without brute force seems somehow to be lacking. Yet, if one person can pit himself against the whole world, why cannot two or more do likewise together? I know the answer that has been given. Time alone can show the possibilities of the revolution that is silently creeping upon us. Speculation is waste of effort where action is already afoot. Those who have faith will join the initial effort in which demonstrable results cannot be shown.

Young India, 21-10-1926

483. ECONOMICS OF KHADDAR

At the instance of a friend, I had brief notes[1] prepared on khaddar economics. The notes ran out into many sheets and involved a fair amount of labour. But they were too comprehensive for the purpose intended. They were, therefore, recast and condensed and almost rewritten. Thus two helpers have laboured at these notes. They present in a connected and readable form the economics of khaddar

[1] These were published in *Young India*, 21-10-1926 and 28-10-1926 under the title"Charkha as the Only Cottage Industry".

and appeal to a wider public than the notes if only presented to a friend would reach. They are, therefore, being published in three instalments in these columns. The first appears this week. The readers of *Young India* may not find anything new in them but they will find the scattered arguments compressed in a series of connected chapters and within a small compass.

KHADI STATISTICS

I hope the khadi workers have been carefully following the digest of Khadi statistics I have been publishing from time to time. They are a valuable record and give us an indication of the progress and possibilities of Khadi that nothing else can. I do hope that those who have not yet sent them will kindly furnish the information at the earliest opportunity.

Young India, 21-10-1926

484. NOTES

THE INDIAN DELEGATION

I have already expressed my opinion about Sir Mahomed Habibulla's deputation. It is a carefully made choice. I am glad to find that it has been blessed by the public. The question of the status of Indians overseas is perhaps the one question on which all parties are united. Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians, Parsis, etc., speak with one voice. European opinion coincides with the Indian. The Government backs public opinion. All this unity is needed if the cause of justice is to be vindicated. This remarkable unanimity of opinion cannot but react upon South African opinion.

But this unity need not be confined to the question of the status of Indians abroad. Is it too much to wish to extend it to other equally natural and pure causes? Or is unity possible only on questions remote in space from the actors? True unity comes of itself. No attempt had to be made for achieving unity of opinion on the South African question. All instinctively thought alike. Unity on other matters will also come instinctively when its time has come. I am optimistic enough to think that it is coming sooner than many of us expect or imagine.

But let us return to the deputation. The settlers in South Africa have in Mr. C. F. Andrews a link between the deputation and

themselves as also between the Union Government and themselves. Let them make the most of the opportunity that has presented itself to them. They must unite all their forces. The best workers among them should collect all the material and place it at Mr. Andrews's disposal. they should understand the limits of the deputation and they must be as firm in their presentation of their claim as one expects them to bemoderate. Moderation, firmness and unity combined with absolute adherence to truth should make victory easily possible.

CONGRESS EXHIBITION

Exhibitions used formerly to be a feature of the National Congress. They had then ceased to be. The fashion was revived in Ahmedabad and has been since continued with progressive improvement. The central feature of these exhibitions has been khaddar with all the hand-processes through which cotton passes before it comes out as khaddar. The feature of these exhibitions has been the inclusion of only those things which have been manufactured in India from start to finish. They have, therefore, excluded so-called swadeshi watches or harmoniums whose every part was imported from outside. They have also excluded all mill-spun yarn and mill-woven cloth. These exhibitions are meant for the encouragement of those things which are neglected and which deserve encouragement. No one will hold an exhibition for showing faggots of wood which everyone knows and uses. But there would be an exhibition of wood that possessed extraordinary virtue which needed to be brought to the notice of the people. Faggots of ordinary wood would be excluded not out of any jealousy of them but because attention would be divided between extraordinary wood needing advertisement and protection and the wood that had no such need. I was, therefore, surprised when a correspondent drew my attention to the Assam Exhibition Committee having included in the exhibits cotton fabrics woven on power-looms and out of mill-spun yarn. The description of the items does not exclude even foreign cloth or yarn. I telegraphed to the Committee. The reader will be glad to know that the Committee promptly replied[1] to the effect that the inclusion of mill-spun etc., was due to a mistake and that it was being immediately corrected.[2] I congratulate the Committee upon its admission and readiness to correct the error. I may state that the description of other goods too is so loose and wide as to include almost every conceivable thing. If these Congress exhibitions are to be an education to the

[1] *Vide"* Letter to Kshitish Chandra Das Gupta", 14-10-1926.

[2] *ibid.*

people, an encouragement to struggling home industries and a demonstration of the possibilities of khadar, the limits that the previous exhibitions have observed should be rigidly adhered to.

Young India, 21-10-1926

485. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

October 21, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter after ages as it were. I did suspect that you were not getting on as well as I had expected. But whether I can help or not, you should share your sorrows with me. If I know the best, I must know also the worst. Do please, therefore, let me know what are the unexpected difficulties.

I have read the cutting from the *Englishman*. We know that khaddar has not become popular. When it does we shall not be long in getting what we want.

I note your remarks on the Khadi Service.

Varadachari did ask me to ask you to write the chapter on cotton. I told him not to worry you. I knew that your hands must be full.

With love to you all,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1562

486. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Asvina Sud 15, 1982 [*October 21, 1926*]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. This is not the time to start an Ashram such as you have described. The atmosphere is very foul. Workers have neither intelligence nor character.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRIJUT GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
C/O HINDU SABHA
GORAKHPUR

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6137. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

487. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL G. VORA

Asvina Sud 15, 1982 [*October 21, 1926*]

BHAI CHIMANLALJI,

I have your letter. *Shad-darshan-samuchchayagranth* is a discussion of Buddhism, Vedant, etc. The original work is in Sanskrit. Its Gujarati translation has been published. It may be available with some bookseller selling Gujarati books. It is a difficult work, and is purely an intellectual exercise.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRIYUT CHIMANLAL GULABCHAND VORA
SHRIMALI MOHALLA
RATLAM

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6301

488. LETTER TO LAKSHMAN DUTT BHATT

Ashwin Shukla 15, 1982 [*October 21, 1926*]

BHAI LAKSHMAN DUTTJI,

I have your letter. I am obliged to you for your invitation, but I am unable this year to take part in any public function. Therefore please excuse me.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SJT. LAKSHMAN DUTT BHATT
KASHIPUR
NAINITAL DIST.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10844

489. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

SABARMATI,
Asvina Krishnapaksha 2, 1982 [*October 23, 1926*]

BHAI BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. Dharma is a subtle subject. No person can teach another what his dharma is. Just today I was explaining one

shloka to women. It says that what learned and good men, who are free from likes and dislikes, regard as dharma and what appeals to our heart to be so is dharma. I am neither a learned man nor am I free from likes and dislikes. I am striving to be good. I feel that, if you have the spiritual strength, you should leave your home and earn what you can through honest means and, if you can spare anything from it, then give it to your brother. Therein lies the service of your family. Be alone and consult the Lord of your heart and do as He bids you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2369

490. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

Asvina Krishnapaksha 2, 1982 [*October 23, 1926*]

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

I have your letters. I am happy every time to read that you keep good health. Quite a few people are ill here these days. How is the weather there? In all, how many charkhas are plying?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6527

491. TELEGRAM TO SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY

[SABARMATI,
On or after *October 23, 1926*][1]

SERVINDIA
POONA CITY

IS ANY TRUTH RUMOUR SHASTRI UNABLE GO AFRICA THROUGH ILLNESS.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 12025

[1] This telegram was in reply to C. F. Andrews's cable from Durban dated October 20, 1926, received at Sabarmati on October 23, 1926, which read: *Natal Witness* publishes Sastri unable come owing sudden illness. Have you information? Community very anxious.

492. IS THIS HUMANITY?-III

[*October 24, 1926*]

Whilst I admit the possibility of having made a mistake in giving the opinion that the destruction by Mr. Ambalal's order of sixty dogs was unavoidable, I do not regret having expressed that opinion. The result so far is all to the good. We shall perhaps now understand more clearly our duty to such animals. Much wrong has been done partly out of ignorance, partly from hypocrisy and partly for fear of public opinion. All that should now cease.

But if the good is to be maintained, a clear understanding is necessary between the readers and myself. I have received quite a pile of letters on the subject, some friendly, some sharp and some bitter. They do not seem to have understood my attitude on the destruction of dogs by Mr. Ambalal. I have often had the misfortune to be misunderstood. In South Africa my life was in peril over an action which was quite consistent with my avowed principles but which, as was proved later, was rashly regarded as contrary to them.[1] The so-called"Himalayan blunder" of Bardoli is a recent memory. The Bombay Government very kindly imprisoned me at Yeravda and saved me the trouble of much writing by way of explaining and clearing my position. The Bardoli decision, I still hold, was not wrong. It was, on the contrary, an act of purest ahimsa and of invaluable service to the country. I feel just as clear about my opinion regarding the present question. I hold that the opinion is perfectly in accord with my conception of ahimsa.

The critics, whether friendly or hostile, should bear with me. Some of the hostile critics have transgressed the limits of decorum. They have made no attempt to understand my position. It seems they cannot for a moment tolerate my opinion. Now they must be one of two things. They are either my teachers or they regard me as one. In the latter case, they should be courteous and patient and should have faith in me and ponder over what I write. In the former case, they should be indulgent to me and try to reason with me as lovingly and patiently as they can. I teach the children under my care not by being angry with them, but I teach them, if at all, by loving them, by

[1] The reference is to the assaults made on Gandhiji in 1908 by his Indian followers under the belief that he had compromised with the Smuts Government; *vide*"Letter to Friends", 10-2-1908.

allowing for their ignorance, and by playing with them. I expect the same love, the same consideration and the same sportsmanlike spirit from my angry teachers. I have given my opinion with regard to the dogs with the best of motives and as a matter of duty. If I am mistaken, let the critics who would teach me reason with me patiently and logically. Angry and irrelevant argument will not convince me.

A gentleman called on me the other evening at a late hour. He knew that my time was completely occupied. He engaged me in a discussion, used hard and bitter language and poured vials of wrath on me. I answered his questions in good humour and politely. He has published the interview in a leaflet which he is selling. It is before me. It has crossed the limits of truth, obviously of decorum. He had neither obtained my permission to publish the interview nor showed it to me before publication. Does he seek to teach me in this manner? He who trifles with truth cuts at the root of ahimsa. He who is angry is guilty of *himsa*. How can such a man teach me ahimsa?

Even so the hostile critics are doing me a service. They teach me to examine myself. They afford me an opportunity to see if I am free from the reaction of anger. And when I go to the root of their anger, I find nothing but love. They have attributed to me ahimsa as they understand it. Now they find me acting in a contrary manner and are angry with me. They once regarded me as a mahatma, they were glad that my influence on the people was according to their liking. Now I am an *alpatma* (a little soul) in their opinion; my influence on the people they now regard as unwholesome and they are pained by the discovery; and as they cannot control themselves, they turn the feeling of pain into one of anger.

I do not mind this outburst of anger, as I appreciate the motive behind it. I must try to reason with them patiently, and if they would help me in my attempt, I request them to calm their anger. I am a votary of truth and seeker after it. If I am convinced that I am mistaken I shall admit my mistake (as I always love to do), and shall promptly mend it. It is the word of the scriptures that the mistakes of a votary of truth never harm anybody. That is the glorious secret of truth.

Just a word to friendly critics: I have preserved your letters. I usually reply to my correspondents individually. But the number of letters I have received this time and have been still getting is so large and they are so inordinately long that I cannot possibly reply to them

individually. I cannot, I fear, make time even to acknowledge them. Some of the correspondents ask me to publish their letters in *Navajivan.* I hope they will not press the request. I shall try to answer all the arguments that are relevant as well as I can, and hope that that will satisfy them.

I bespeak the indulgence of the reader for this necessary preface. I shall now take up some of the letters before me.

A friend says:

> You ask us not to feed stray dogs. But we do not invite them. They simply come. How can they be turned back? It will be time enough when there is a plethora of them. But is there any doubt that feeding dogs cultivates the impulse of compassion and turning them away hardens our hearts? We are all sinners. Why should we not practise what little kindness we can?

It is from this false feeling of compassion that we encourage *himsa* in the name of ahimsa. But as ignorance is no excuse before man-made law, even so is it no excuse before the divine Law.

But let us analyse the argument. We cast a morsel at the beggar come to our door, and feel that we have earned some merit, but we really thereby add to the numbers of beggars, aggravate the evil of beggary, encourage idleness and consequently promote irreligion. This does not mean that we should starve the really deserving beggars. It is the duty of society to support the blind and the infirm, but everyone may not take the task upon himself. The head of the society, i.e., the *mahajan* or the State where it is well organized, should undertake the task, and the philanthropically inclined should subscribe funds to such an institution. If the *mahajan* is pure-minded and wise, it will carefully investigate the condition of beggars and protect the deserving ones. When this does not happen, i.e., when relief is indiscriminate, scoundrels disguised as beggars get the benefit of it and the poverty of the land increases.

If it is thus a sin on the part of an individual to undertake feeding beggars, it is no less a sin for him to feed stray dogs. It is a false sense of compassion. It is an insult to the starving dog to throw a crumb at him. Roving dogs do not indicate the civilization or compassion of the society, they betray on the contrary, the ignorance and lethargy of its members. The lower animals are our brethren. I include among them the lion and the tiger. We do not know how to live with these carnivorous beasts and poisonous reptiles because of

our ignorance. When man knows himself better, he will learn to befriend even these. Today he does not even know how to befriend a man of a different religion or from a foreign country.

The dog is a faithful companion. There are numerous instances of the faithfulness of dogs and horses. But that means that we should keep them and treat them with respect as we do our companions and not allow them to roam about. By aggravating the evil of stray dogs we shall not be acquitting ourselves of our duty to them. But if we regard the existence of stray dogs as a shame to us and, therefore, refuse to feed them, we shall be doing the dogs as a class a real service and make them happy.

What, then, can a humane man do for stray dogs? He should set apart a portion of his income and send it on to a society for the protection of those animals if there be one. If such a society is impossible—and I know it is very difficult even if it is not impossible—he should try to own one or more dogs. If he cannot do so, he should give up worrying about the question of dogs and direct his humanity towards the service of other animals.

"But you are asking us to destroy them?" is the question angrily or lovingly asked by others. Now, I have not suggested the extirpation of dogs as an absolute duty. I have suggested the killing of some dogs as a"duty in distress" and under certain circumstances. When the State does not care for stray dogs, nor does the *mahajan*, and when one is not prepared to take care of them oneself, then, and if one regards them as a danger to society, one should kill them and relieve them from a lingering death. This is a bitter dose, I agree. But it is my innermost conviction that true love and compassion consist in taking it.

The dogs in India are today in as bad a plight as the decrepit animals and men in the land. It is my firm conviction that this sorry plight is due to our misconception of ahimsa, is due to our want of ahimsa. Practice of ahimsa cannot have as its result impotence, impoverishment and famine. If this is a sacred land we should not see impoverishment stalking it. From this state of things some rash and impatient souls have drawn the conclusion that ahimsa is irreligion. But I know that it is not ahimsa that is wrong, it is its votaries that are wrong.

Ahimsa is the religion of a Kshatriya. Mahavira was a Kshatriya, Buddha was a Kshatriya, Rama and Krishna were Kshatriyas and all of them were votaries of ahimsa. We want to propagate ahimsa in their

name. But today ahimsa has become the monopoly of timid Vaisyas[1] and that is why it has been besmirched. Ahimsa is the extreme limit of forgiveness. But forgiveness is the quality of the brave. Ahimsa is impossible without fearlessness.

Cows we cannot protect, dogs we kick about and belabour with sticks, their ribs are seen sticking out, and yet we are not ashamed of ourselves and raise a hue and cry when a stray dog is killed. Which of the two is better—that five thousand dogs should wander about in semi-starvation living on dirt and excreta and drag on a miserable existence, or that fifty should die and keep the rest in a decent condition? It is admittedly sinful always to be spurning and kicking the dogs. But it is possible that the man who kills the dogs that he cannot bear to see tortured thus may be doing a meritorious act. Merely taking life is not always *himsa*, one may even say that there is sometimes more *himsa* in not taking life. We must examine this position in another article.

Young India, 4-11-1926

493. LETTER TO ROBERT SHEMELD

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 24, 1926

DEAR MR. SHEMELD,

Your letter[2] was an agreeable surprise. You remind me of happy communions of 30 years ago. I have a vivid recollection of your face and Mrs. Shemeld's.

I do not need to tell you anything about my life here as it has become an open book. I have looked at your War Manifesto[3]. Quite like you. Please remember me to Mrs. Shemeld.

Yours sincerely,

ROBERT SHEMELD, ESQ.
308, THE ATHERTON
2112 F STREET, N. W.
WASHINGTON, D. C.

From a photostat S. N. 10832

[1] The source here has"Vaishnavas": *vide"*A Correction", 11-11-1926.

[2] Writing this on September 14, the correspondent had said:"Your frequent visits in our humble missionary home at Pretoria were a pleasure still green in our memory although thirty years have passed since we last met you" (S. N. 10810)

[3] Shemeld had enclosed a petition which he"had printed at Pretoria in 1900 in an endeavour to prevent further bloodshed but which was not favoured by many except missionaries." The reference was to the Boer War.

494. LETTER TO FELIX VALYI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 24, 1926

DEAR FRIEND

I have your letter. Much as I would like to write for your monthly review, I am so overworked just now that I have resolved not to write for any magazine for some time to come. If I ever get moments of leisure and I am duly reminded, I would write something later for you. But it may be all hoping against hope.

Yours sincerely,

FELIX VALYI, ESQ.
HOTEL RICHMOND
GENEVA (SWITZERLAND)

From a photostat: S.N. 10833

495. LETTER TO ELSE GIESE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 24, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter[1] through my friend Mr. Deshpande of Baroda. I feel thankful to God that my writings give solace to friends all overs the world.

Yours sincerely,

MADAM ELSE GIESE
BERLIN SW 11,
PRINZ ULBRECHT—STRASSE 5

From a Photostat: S.N. 19722

[1] In her letter of August 25, 1926, the correspondent wrote of her having read with great interest the collection of Gandhiji's articles from *Young India,* and her wanting to write an article on the part khaddar played in the national movement (S.N. 10804).

496. LETTER TO WADHOOMAL MANGHIRMAL

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 24, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am sorry for your misfortune. I can only advise you to bear it bravely and think no more of the one who used to be your wife at one time. What does a woman do when her husband lives with other women? She simply submits and is still content to live with her so-called husband. You do not need to do that. You should devote your energy to bringing up the children she has left behind.

Yours sincerely,

WADHOOMAL MANGHIRMAL, ESQ.
AERATED WATER SHOPKEEPER
SEHWAN (BIHAR)

From a microfilm: S.N. 19723

497. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL CHOKSI

Monday, October 24, 1926

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL,

I have your letter. I am sending on the letters meant for Velanbehn and Moti. Please do take the injection. We can draw no conclusion from the fact the one person died after taking it. Having put yourself under a doctor's treatment, it is but right that you should put your trust in him. If he is confident, we should have no fear at all. Moti simply forgot to tell me about the matter. She told me that you had refused to take the injection, but said nothing about your having asked for my advice.

I find it a difficult task to cure her of her carelessness and lethargy. I cannot spare enough time for that. Of course, I had a talk with her the very first day. I may be able to do something only if I keep her with me. But she also may not be ready for that. I am sorry I cannot give her as much time as I should like to.

It is her old complaint from which Velanbehn has been suffering. She is living on fruits and milk on my advice. This may have brought on a little weakness, but there is certainly some relief in

her complaint. There is no cause for anxiety at all. Your necessity comes first, and so, if you require her, do let me know by all means.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12138

498. LETTER TO MOHANLAL MANGALDAS SHAH

THE ASHRAM,
October 24, 1926

BHAISHRI MOHANLAL MANGALDAS SHAH,

Self-realization means that we should know all selves to be ourselves. You should consult the Dweller within to know how you may live your life to the best end.

If you wish to see God, you should forget yourself, even if that means the end of your life the very next day.

If you dedicate every action to Rama, you will spontaneously have his name on your lips every moment.

The vow of silence helps in the search for truth. To keep it, one should refrain from speaking or from communicating anything by writing, or do it only for immediate practical purposes.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

MOUN BHUVAN
AT ALINA
TALUKA NADIAD

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19955

499. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI PURUSHOTTAM

October 24, 1926

BHAISHRI BHAGWANJI,

I had your letters. I will write in *Navajivan* about untouchability when I get time. As I could not act as our respectable and worthy leaders of society would in regard to the dog, I gave my opinion that a dog could be killed in certain circumstances and subject to certain restrictions. I have neither the inclination nor the time to study the

Western science about dogs. The subject of non-violence is not as simple as you seem to think it is. If we may not kill dogs, what sin have plants committed? Ponder over the meaning of this question, and treat dogs as you might treat plants. But more in *Navajivan*.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAISHRI BHAGWANJI PURUSHOTTAM
CHARKHA, *Via* BABRA
KATHIAWAR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19956.

500. SPEECH AT LABOUR UNION, AHMEDABAD[1]

[*October 24, 1926*]

In this meeting only the representatives have been called in view of my resolve not to go out during the year unless there is some specific reason. I have not called all the workers to this meeting, so that the subjects which we cannot discuss in a large meeting can be discussed in this small meeting. I have thirty five years of experience of directing the affairs of public societies. And it is our general habit to spend as much as we get and not to accumulate, though you can spend as much as you like. Even if you collect Rs. 1 crore, in my opinion, your institution will deteriorate like other institutions. On the contrary whatever you spend for your workers you would get it back with compound interest. You demand bonus from the mills, but the millowners say that they have not enough money to declare bonus. Let me tell you that unless you give up drinking and other vices, your demands will not have the least effect on your superiors. The remedy to remove your grievances is in your hands. If you wish to bring swaraj in the mills, you will have to put an end to all your vices. You should work with full enthusiasm in the mills as if you were the owners of the mill. And you should so organize your Union that not a single worker remains out of it. Your Union is well known in India; you must not, therefore, become unduly proud of it. This Union is regarded as the best in India because it is so well organized. But you must not rest until you have removed the defects that have come to

[1] Gandhiji who was presiding over the annual meeting held at The Ashram spoke after Gulzarilal Nanda, secretary of the Union, had presented the report for 1925.

your knowledge. There is no end to progress.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 31-10-1926

501. MESSAGE TO"FORWARD"

I wish *Forward* many happy returns. The longer young men like Subhash Bose are denied the right of a fair trial and yet kept under lock and key, the quicker is our pace towards our goal. Fight for freedom is no mock affair. It is so real and so terrible that it will require the best of thousands of us. Let us not grudge the price.

M. K. GANDHI

Forward, 25-10-1926

502. LETTER TO MR. AND MRS. POLAK

SABARMATI,
October 26, 1926

MY DEAR HENRY AND MILLIE,

Though your first cable had prepared me for the worst, the reality gave me a great shock. Ba was with me for some talk when the second cable was received. She could perceive the shock I felt. I hope you duly received both my cables[1]. I am anxious to know that you got them because I wanted you to feel that I was a sharer of your sorrows.

You know that he did write to me the one and only love letter in reply to mine. I could trace in that letter the same imperious will I knew so well when he was my bed-fellow. My faith in the immortality of the soul is more stable than ever. I know, therefore, that it is all well with him."Death is but a sleep and a forgetting." This is no poetic phrase with me and you. It is for Waldo[2] a stepping stone to a higher life. May you, therefore, have the strength to bear the loss and find comfort in the thought that we must all go where Waldo has gone.

All join me in sending you love.

Yours,

BHAI

From a photostat: S.N. 10834

[1] These are not available.
[2] Polak's eldest son

503. LETTER C. F. ANDREWS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 26, 1926

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have replied your cable. Shastri is certainly coming.[1]

I hope you are keeping quite well and fit. I can't too often repeat to you: 'Be careful for nothing.' The deputation is, I think, quite nice and should produce a good impression.

All your commandments were fulfilled. I had a nice reply from the Metropolitan.

Poor Henry! I have just got a cable to say that he has lost Waldo. Millie will be deeply cut up. But she is a brave woman and will soon recover from the shock.

Yours,

MOHAN

[PS.]

Will you please look up Mrs. P. K. Naidu when you go to Johannesburg and find out, too, how she is being supported? Ramachandran has gone to the National Muslim University at Delhi to teach spinning and Shanti is about to leave for Singapore in search of a living as he wishes to support the girl whom he expects some day to marry. Devdas is still at Mussoorie, Krishnadas still in Bengal and Pyarelal still with Mathuradas. We are having a fair share of malaria. But the patients are on the road to recovery.

M

REV. C. F. ANDREWS
DURBAN

From a photostat: S.N. 12025a

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Servants of India Society", on or after 23-10-1926.

504. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

Asvina Vad 6, 1982 [*October 26, 1926*][1]

BHAI DEVCHANDBHAI,

It is necessary to think and decide whether cotton should be stocked next year.

Ch. Jaisukhlal[2] writes to say that, if we wish to hold a khadi exhibition at the time of the Conference[3] we should start preparing for it from now on. I too think so.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5704

505. LETTER TO UDIT MISHRA

THE ASHRAM,

Asvina Krishnapaksha 6, 1982 [*October 26, 1926*]

BHAI UDIT MISHRAJI,

I have your letter.

I am of the view that we should save our boys from the present-day schools. If we get a good teacher, it is better to place the boys in his charge. It would be best, of course, to have a good school.

Our actions in past lives are no doubt the chief cause of our being involved in the concerns of our present life. When I used to travel third-class, there were many occasions when I cleaned compartment dirtied by passengers. Some felt ashamed and stopped dirtying it, and some just did not care to take any notice.

When I first went to Rajendrababu's place, he was in Puri. He did not even know that I had gone to his place, nor did I know him personally. His servant treated me as he would a poor man. I was dressed like one, and the servant was not at fault at all. Rajendrababu met me a few days afterwards in Muzaffarpur.

[1] The postmark bears the date 27-10-1926.
[2] Jaisukhlal Gandhi, Gandhiji's nephew
[3] The Kathiawar Political Conference

Kindly write nothing about these matters, nothing at any rate of names and places.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SJT. UDIT MISHRA
BIRLA PARK
BALLYGUNJ
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 19958

506. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

[SABARMATI,
October 27, 1926][1]

MY DEAR CHILD,

My blessings on the addition to the family. Hope you and the baby are steadily progressing. Any of the names suggested by you is good. The shorter the better.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child,* p. 79

507. LETTER TO LALAN PANDIT

THE ASHRAM,
October 27, 1926

BHAISHRI LALAN,

I got your letters. The previous two will be answered in *Navajivan* as occasion arises. But the one I got today is addressed specially to me. I have endured praises of me all these years; should I not, then, endure some censure? I am not out to propagate a new religion. But I certainly wish to revive an old one. It rests with God, however, to fulfil my wish.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

C/O SHETH CHHOTALAL MULKCHAND
HATHIBAI'S WADI, ANNEXE
AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 19957

[1] From the postmark

508. NOTES

TO JOURNALIST FRIENDS

Applications for articles for journals and magazines in and out of India are daily pouring in upon me. Things have come to such a pass that I must either leave *Young India* and *Navajivan* editing or respectfully refuse to write for other papers. Since I must not, so long as there are enough subscribers and I have energy, give up *Young India* or *Navajivan*, I have been forced to stop writing for other papers. The fact is I have not the ability to write at will on any and every subject. My field is very limited and even on the subjects I am familiar with, I cannot always be original. I have no false notions about the efficacy of my writings. On the contrary I know that often the unwritten word is more forcible and truer than the written or the spoken word. Let the sum of our acts speak. The continuous multiplication of ephemeral literature is growing into a terrible nuisance which I must not assist to increase, even if I cannot do anything to stop or regulate it.

A WARNING

Of late many young men have been coming to the Satyagraha Ashram, without warning, and without permission, either to stay for a short time or to be admitted as candidates for membership. Much as the management would like to find room for all who choose to come, whether as visitors or candidate members, it is physically impossible even to make the attempt. The Ashram is at present taxed to its utmost capacity and the management has been obliged to put off even friends who had sought previous permission and intended to find their own expenses. It is improper for young men to come without notice and permission. During the past fortnight, four such young men have come. And what was more grievous still was that they did not even bring enough to pay their way back. The last was an M.A., who said he came with the view of joining the Ashram, but on the way, altered his decision and thought he would stay for a few days and study the Ashram life. He had brought with him no credentials and had not enough money on his person to buy a return ticket. I had to harden my heart and tell him that he could not stay at the Ashram without having obtained previous permission. It is incomprehensible to me that well-educated young men should not know the ordinary courtesies of life and the laws of hospitality. I know that there is an evil

reputation about the Ashram. Visitors who have come without notice have sometimes told me that they thought that the Ashram was the one place in India where people could go without permission and find a warm welcome. It is therefore as well for young men to realize that the Ashrams cannot live up to any such expectation and that it is but an ordinary human institution striving to reach its ideals and ever failing to do so. The members would be satisfied if it could be said of them that they had tried their best to realize the ideals they had subscribed to.

ABOUT FASTING

'A Precisionist' writes:

> A devoted ant careful filer as I am of your paper, I have to draw your attention to the following dictum in its issue of 30-9-26:"Fasting can be resorted to only against one's nearest and dearest, and that for his or her good."[1]
>
> From your previous writings, however, it would appear that there is one important exception to this. Fasting or hunger-striking in prison against humiliating treatment, as in case food is offered in an insulting manner, is also true satyagraha. I wish you had not lost sight of this while writing to an enquirer on the ethics of"Satyagraha—True and False".

If the instance quoted by 'A Precisionist' is an exception, I could quote many others. A man may fast for penance, purification and for considerations of physical health. More such instances can perhaps be given. But in the first case, I have pointed out the limits of satyagrahic fasting, i.e., when you *seek* to influence people by fasting. The so-called exception is a dissimilar case. There the protest was against the felt humiliation. In"Satyagraha—True and False", emphasis was put on the evil of fasting against a person to make him pay what the fast-ing person considered was his due and the opponent considered not to be due.

HINDU AND HINDUISM

A correspondent who is a patient and diligent reader of *Young India* writes:

> Replying to the catechism of 'An Assistant Executive Engineer' in your issue of 14-10-26 you say:"In a concrete manner *he is a Hindu who believes in God,* immortality of the soul, etc."
>
> On reading this I am tempted to confront you with your own writing of

[1] *Vide"*Satyagraha—True and False", 12-9-1926. An English translation of this by Mahadev Desai appeared in *Young India*, 30-9-1926.

nearly two years ago. In *Young India* of April 24, 1924, p. 136,[1] you wrote:"If I were asked to define the Hindu creed I should simply say: 'Search after Truth through non-violent means. *A man may not believe in God and still call himself a Hindu.* Hinduism is a relentless pursuit after Truth.'"

THE ITALICS IN BOTH QUOTATIONS ARE MINE.

I am surprised that the correspondent does not see the distinction between the two statements. One refers to a Hindu in a concrete manner. Denial of the existence of God is not a characteristic of Hinduism. Millions of Hindus do believe in God. Therefore one may say 'there are Hindus who believe in God, etc.' But 'a man may not believe in God and still call himself a Hindu'. In the second case I have attempted an exhaustive definition. In the first case, I have given a fairly general illustration. I, therefore, see no conflict between the two positions.

CUSTOMS EXACTIONS

A passenger who has recently returned from South Africa asked me if it was not possible to undo the evil of extortions that regularly take place in the Customs Department. Although his luggage contained nothing taxable, he said he had to give a bribe in order to get the clearance in time. I asked him if he would give enough time and trouble to the matter and face an inquiry. He said he could not do so. This attitude is normal and explains the existence of the exactions which are not only to be found in the customs but also on railways. Whilst it is true that the public must be prepared to suffer temporary inconveniences, if they want redress, it is up to the authorities to prevent so far as it is humanly possible exactions which poor people have to suffer. It will not be a bad thing for some public-spirited young men to submit themselves to these exactions and then report them to the proper quarters. A few such cases will lessen the evil. The only way to the eradication of the evil is no doubt an incorruptible public. So long as there are people who would evade customs dues, so long will there be customs officials who will want their price.

Young India, 28-10-1926

[1] *Vide* "What is Hinduism?", 24-4-1924.

509. A BOON TO CULTIVATORS

Some months ago Sjt. Ramachandran of Madras, an agricultural graduate, wrote to me to recommend his well-lift for use in the Ashram. He claimed for it great saving of labour to the animals used in the ordinary contrivances and also saving in cost. The invention attracted me and I wrote to the inventor telling him that if he came himself and successfully installed the lift, the lift would be bought. He promptly responded and his invention has been at work at the Ashram for over a month. Everyone who knows anything of agriculture at the Ashram is thoroughly satisfied with the working of the lift. To make assurance doubly sure, I had it examined by an engineer, who too considered the invention to be quite sound and extremely ingenious. This is what the inventor has to say for his invention:

> I am convinced that rapid extension of well-irrigation for our dry lands which form 80 per cent of the arable lands in India is the real solution for the agricultural problem of India. The income from dry land does not exceed Rs. 30 an acre, while the same land when irrigated from a well produced crops worth Rs. 200 to 1000 per acre, providing ample work for a number of families all the year round. The chief difficulty in the way is that costly pairs of bullocks are necessary, they often suffer from yoke-galls, badly deteriorate in health and that their efficiency is very low. With a view to solve this difficulty, nearly 14 years ago I began my experiments and trials, and placed before the market this humble contrivance, now working on the Ashram well. The new contrivance is only the ordinary *kos* known also as *charas, mot* or *kavalai* with reduced friction in the ramp or the inclined plane by the use of a trolley on a railed incline for generating power by the mere weight of an animal. Just as a bicycle helps a man to go 12 miles an hour while he can walk only 3 miles an hour, this trolley helps the animal to do 4 times as much work as the same animal would do in the ordinary way. This great reduction in friction has enabled only one animal instead of two to lift each time almost the same quantity of water as in the ordinary way, without any waste of energy in pulling. This single animal being relieved from pulling lifts double the number of buckets per hour. So the quantity of water lifted in the R. Lift should not be judged by the mere shape and size of the bucket nor by the effort and number of animals used, but by the actual capacity of the bucket multiplied by the number of buckets lifted per hour.
>
> It has been tested and recorded all over India by experts that a good pair of bulls worth Rs. 300 to 400 lift only 1,600 gallons per hour from a depth of 20 feet. I have been demonstrating in the Ashram as I have been doing elsewhere how a male buffalo (purchased by the Ashram for Rs. 31) has been lifting 2,000 gallons per hour (60 buckets of 32 gallons each per hour)

from a depth of 34 feet, whereas two costly bullocks in our time-honoured lift can draw a little over 1,000 gallons per hour (30 buckets of 35 gallons each per hour). I have demonstrated and convinced more than 20 officers of the Madras Agricultural and Industrial Departments in vain at an enormous cost to me during the last 11 years. Dr. Clouston during my demonstration of this lift at Nagpur admitted and highly appreciated the simplicity of the mechanism, high efficiency and the humane mode of applying animal power.

The cost of the whole appliance is Rs. 275 for a depth of 50 feet, but Sjt. Ramachandran says that if the lift became popular, the price could be further reduced. For the depth of 30 ft. it costs only Rs. 230. With a suitable organization the lift could be made available to any cultivator in India for Rs. 150. I have also suggested that if the patent rights are given up or if the parts that can be locally had are so made or purchased, there might be still further reduction. Add to the present cost of the R. Lift the cost of a male buffalo, say Rs. 30. The whole lift would cost no more than Rs. 305. The cost of a pair of bullocks would range from Rs. 300 to 400. The greatest saving is however effected in the monthly expenditure. The upkeep of a pair of bullocks would be Rs. 50 to 60, whereas that of a male buffalo would be Rs. 20 to 25. The greatest use of the invention lies in the immense saving of labour to animals, and a still greater lies in the work that can be taken from the male buffalo who for want of use is in the vast majority of cases cruelly left to perish where he is not actually butchered.

The wonder, therefore, is that this invention has not attracted the attention of the Government. Sjt. Ramachandran has many bitter complaints to make about the indifference of the authorities whom he approached. But I have preferred not to make any but a passing reference to his complaints. Let those who wish visit the Ashram and see the lift at work at the Ashram every morning. As much water is not required at the present moment, the lift is not kept at work the whole day. But it will be working between 8 and 10 a.m. always, and will be in charge of the inventor himself who will gladly explain all about it.

A friend writing to me about the Agricultural Exhibition in Poona says:

> I see here piles of machinery and tools most of which we can never use. I miss the thing which is a boon to man and animal in India. I mean the Ramachandran Lift.

I do not know enough of agriculture, as the friend does, to warrant his enthusiasm, but I know enough to be able to say that this lift requires examination by everyone who is at all interested in the agricultural problems of India.

Young India, 28-10-1926

510. CONDOLENCES

I join my respectful condolences to those already conveyed to the staff and family of the late editor of *The Hindu*—S. Rangaswami Iyengar. This death, closely following Mr. S. Kasturiranga Iyengar's, is a heavy blow to Indian journalism.

The reader will be grieved to learn that Mr. H. S. L. Polak has just lost his eldest son, Waldo. Early in the week a cable was received from Mr. Polak telling me of Waldo's serious illness. It was followed only two days later by another, announcing the sudden death.

The parents' grief, I know, will be shared by many who have known Mr. and Mrs. Polak as friends of India.

Young India, 28-10-1926

511. LETTER TO EDITOR,"ROMAIN ROLLAND BIRTHDAY-BOOK"

[Before *October 29, 1926*]

My difficulty was my unfitness to find myself among those men of letters whose contributions you have invited. This is no mock modesty, but my innermost feeling. I am unfit also because, I confess, I knew practically nothing about our good friend before he imposed upon himself the task of becoming my self-chosen advertiser. And you will be perhaps amazed to know that now too, my acquaintance with him is confined to a very cursory glance at that booklet regarding myself. The work before me leaves me no time to read the things I would like to. I have, therefore, even now, not been able to read any of his great works.[1]

Romain Rolland, p. 160

[1] Reproduced from *Romain Rolland Birthday-Book* published by Rotoppel-Verlag, Zurich, 1926

512. LETTER TO EMIL RONIGER[1]

[Before *October 29, 1926*]

I have purposely refrained from acknowledging your letter all these long weeks, not because there was any unwillingness on my part to contribute my humble quota to the tribute that will be paid by many persons all the world over to the humanitarian work of Romain Rolland. My difficulty was my unfitness to find myself among those men of letters whose contributions you have invited. This is no mock modesty, but my inmost feeling. I am unfit also because, I confess, I knew practically nothing about our great and good friend before he imposed upon himself the task of becoming my self-chosen advertiser.[2] And you will be perhaps amazed to know that now, too, my acquaintance with him is confined to a very cursory glance at that booklet[3] regarding myself. The work before me leaves me no time to read the things I would like to. I have, therefore, even now, not been able to read any of his great works. All, therefore, I know about Romain Rolland is what I have learned from those who have come into personal contact with him. Perhaps it is better that I know him through the living touch of mutual friends. They have enabled me to understand and appreciate the deep humanity of all his acts in every sphere of life. The world is the richer for his life and work. May he be long spared to continue the noble mission of spreading peace among mankind.

M. K. GANDHI

Romain Rolland and Gandhi: Correspondence, pp. 77-8

[1] *Vide"*Letter to Editor,"Romain Rolland Birthday-Book", 29-10-1926.

[2] It was conveyed to Gandhiji by Rabindranath Tagore that Romain Rolland did not like the expression ''self-chosen advertiser" used by him. For Gandhiji's explanation, *vide"*Letter to Romain Rolland", 29-10-1926.

[3] *Mahatma Gandhi*

513. LETTER TO ROMAIN ROLLAND

SABARMATI,

October 29, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Mira has given me a good translation of your beautiful letter.[1] I think I understand and appreciate its spirit fully. I would have gladly gone to Helsingfors had I not felt that the invitation was prompted and not spontaneous. There were other reasons. I waited for the call from within, it did not come. I give you my assurance that I shall not resist it when it comes.

I fear my estimate of your book was not quite correctly reproduced. I knew that you wrote from the deepest conviction.

One thing more I would like to have off my mind. In the album presented to you, I am one of the contributors. The Poet has sent me the message that my description of you as my self-chosen advertiser has given you offence. I can only give you my assurance that the expression was used as a mark of my affection for you and my unworthiness to deserve your attention. It may be difficult for the man in the street to believe, but cannot be for you, when I say that I simply do not understand the fuss that is made about my qualities. And I have no false modesty about me.

I do expect to meet you in the flesh some day and that in the best of health.[2]

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 12175

[1] The letter addressed to Mirabehn was dated September 26, 1996; *vide*"Romain Rolland's Letter to Mirabehn", 26-9-1926 (S.N 12174).

[2] Gandhiji met Romain Rolland in Switzerland in 1931 on his way back home from the Second Round Table Conference in London.

514. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

[SABARMATI,]
October 29, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

It was a great relief to me when Vaze replied that you fully intended to go to S.A.[1] Andrews sent a cable telling me that there was a rumour of your illness and consequent cancellation of your membership and that the rumour had greatly upset our people. Your letter now sets all doubt at rest. I sent a reassuring cable to Andrews immediately on Vaze's wire.

I quite agree with you that not much is to be expected from the conference. But I am not without hope that our people will have some breathing time.

The opinion I have expressed upon the killing of stray dogs has indeed estranged many from me. But that has ever been my lot. I know that the latest storm will pass like its predecessors.

I do hope you are keeping excellent health and that you will be able to retain it during the trying times ahead of you in S. A. Andrews and I set much store by your being in the deputation. Somehow or other your inclusion has given me a feeling of safety.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

RT. HON'BLE V. S. SASTRI

From a photostat: S.N. 12028

515. LETTER TO K. VISVA EASAN

October 29, 1926

DEAR FRIEND

I have read the cutting sent by you. I do think that the cruelty to the cat was abominable and in a State regulated by a system of punishments, the punishment would be justified.

SJT. K. VISVA EASAN
TRICHINOPOLY
S. INDIA

From the office copy: S.N. 19959

[1] As a member of the Indian deputation to South Africa

516. LETTER TO V. M. TARKUNDE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 30, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

1. When I pray, I do not ask for anything but I simply think of some of the verses or hymns which I fancy for the moment.

2. The relation between God and myself is not only at prayer but, at all times, that of master and slave in perpetual bondage.

3. Prayer is to me the intense longing of the heart to merge myself in the Master. If a man does not pray, evidently he has no longing; there is no feeling of helplessness and when there is no helplessness, there is no need for help.

4. The class eat the corn produced by the mass from purely selfish motives. But when the class begin to use khaddar, they will do so deliberately for the sake of serving the mass and establishing the bond between themselves and the mass.

5. Lawyers, etc., are invited and expected to spin by way of sacrifice and encouragement. As the leaders do, so will the followers. I spin because through my spinning, I expect to be able to, so far as a single individual is able to, move the mass to spin for their own sake and get rid of their idleness.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. V. M. TARKUNDE
151, KASABA PETH
POONA CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 19724

517. LETTER TO K. VEERABHADRACHARYALU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 30, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Everybody is expected to get up in the Ashram at 4 in the morning and attend prayer which begins at 4-15. Everybody is supposed to work in connection with the Ashram from 7

a.m. to 4-30 p.m. with an interval of an hour and a half. There is another prayer meeting at 7 p.m.

The principal vows are: *brahmacharya*, truth, non-violence, khaddar, removal of untouchability.

The food given is vegetarian and simple. Majority cook for themselves. The main changes in diet which have been found to be necessary are return to milk and substitution of oils with ghee and in the place of fruit, green vegetables in moderation should be taken. Vegetables may be eaten without salt.

In order to avoid constipation you should omit rice, take as little ghee as possible, take hip baths, plenty of exercise and you may take also abdominal earth bandages at night on empty stomach and you should drink hot water with or without salt and lemon first thing in the morning.

Yours sincerely

SJT. K. VEERABHADRACHARYALU
ADHYAKSHA
SRI BHARATI VIDYASHRAMA
GORIGIPUDI, PEDAPULIVARRU P.O.
GUNTUR DT.

From a microfilm: S.N. 19725

518. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN CHOKSI

Asvina Vad 9, 1982, October 30, 1926

CHI. MOTI

I have your letter. My mind feels [now] at ease. On reading the postcard, I felt that I should now talk to Lakshmidas, and I have done so. May God give you the strength to stick to your resolution. Do not give up the practice of writing to me from time to time. There was much illness here, but things are improving now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12139

519. IS THIS HUMANITY?-IV

[*October 31, 1926*]

Taking life may be a duty. Let us consider this position.

We do destroy as much life as we think is necessary for sustaining the body. Thus for food we take life, vegetable and other, and for health we destroy mosquitoes and the like by the use of disinfectants, etc., and we do not think that we are guilty of irreligion in doing so.

This is as regards one's own self. But for the sake of others, i.e., for the benefit of the species, we kill carnivorous beasts. When lions and tigers pester their villages, the villagers regard it a duty to kill them or have them killed.

Even man-slaughter may be necessary in certain cases. Suppose a man runs amuck and goes furiously about sword in hand, and killing anyone that comes his way, and no one dares to capture him alive. Anyone who dispatches this lunatic will earn the gratitude of the community and be regarded a benevolent man.

From the point of view of ahimsa it is the plain duty of everyone to kill such a man. There is, indeed, one exception if it can be so called. The yogi who can subdue the fury of this dangerous man may not kill him. But we are not here dealing with beings who have almost reached perfection; we are considering the duty of the society, of the ordinary erring human beings.

There may be a difference of opinion as regards the appositeness of my illustrations. But if they are inadequate, others can be easily imagined. What they are meant to show is that refraining from taking life can in no circumstances be an absolute duty.

The fact is that ahimsa does not simply mean non-killing. *Himsa* means causing pain to or killing any life out of anger or from a selfish purpose, or with the intention of injuring it. Refraining from so doing is ahimsa.

The physician who prescribes bitter medicine causes you pain but does no *himsa*. If he fails to prescribe bitter medicine when it is necessary to do so, he fails in his duty of ahimsa. The surgeon who, from fear of causing pain to his patient, hesitates to amputate a rotten limb is guilty of *himsa*. He who refrains from killing a murderer who is about to kill his ward (when he cannot prevent him otherwise)earns no merit, but commits a sin, he practises no ahimsa but *himsa* out of a fatuous sense of ahimsa.

Let us now examine the root of ahimsa. It is uttermost selfless-

ness. Selflessness means complete freedom from a regard for one's body. When some sage observed man killing numberless creatures, big and small, out of a regard for his own body, he was shocked at his ignorance. He pitied him for thus forgetting the deathless soul, encased within the perishable body, and for thinking of the ephemeral physical pleasure in preference to the eternal bliss of the spirit. He therefrom deduced the duty of complete self-efface-ment. He saw that if man desired to realize himself, i.e., truth, he could do so only by being completely detached from the body, i e., by making all other beings feel safe from him. That is the way of ahimsa.

A realization of this truth shows that the sin of *himsa* consists not in merely taking life, but in taking life for the sake of one's perishable body. All destruction therefore involved in the process of eating, drinking, etc., is selfish and, therefore, *himsa*. But man regards it to be unavoidable and puts up with it. But the destruction of bodies of tortured creatures being for their own peace cannot be regarded as *himsa*, or the unavoidable destruction caused for the purpose of protecting one's wards cannot be regarded as *himsa*.

This line of reasoning is liable to be most mischievously used used but that is not because the reasoning is faulty, but because of the inherent frailty of man to catch at whatever pretexts he can get to deceive himself to satisfy his selfishness or egoism. But that danger may not excuse one from defining the true nature of ahimsa. Thus, we arrive at the following result from the foregoing:

1. It is impossible to sustain one's body without the destruction of other bodies to some extent.

2. All have to destroy some life

(a) for sustaining their own bodies;

(b) for protecting those under their care; or

(c) sometimes for the sake of those whose life is taken.

3. (a) and (b) in (2) mean *himsa* to a greater or less extent. (c) means no *himsa*, and is therefore ahimsa. *Himsa* in (a) and (b) is unavoidable.

4. A progressive ahimsaist will, therefore, commit the *himsa* contained in (a) and (b) as little as possible, only when it is unavoi-dable, and after full and mature deliberation and having exhausted all remedies to avoid it.

The destruction of dogs that I have suggested came under (4) and can, therefore, be resorted to only when it is unavoidable, when there is no other remedy and after mature deliberation. But I have not the slightest doubt that refraining from that destruction when it is

unavoidable is worse than destruction. And, therefore, although there can be no absolute duty to kill dogs, etc., it becomes a necessary duty for certain people at certain times and under certain circumstances.

I shall now try to take up one by one some of the questions that have been asked me. Some correspondents demand personal replies, and in case I fail to do so threaten to publish their views. It is impossible for me to reach every individual correspondent by a perso-nal reply. Those that are necessary I shall deal with here. I have no right, nor desire, to stop people from carrying on the controversy in other papers. I may remind the correspondents, however, that threats and impatience have no place in a sober and religious discussion.

A correspondent asks:

> How did you hit upon the religion of destroying dogs at the old age of 57? If it had occurred to you earlier than this, why were you silent so long?

Man proclaims a truth only when he sees it and when it is necessary, no matter even if it be in his old age. I have long recognized the duty of killing such animals within the limits laid down above, and have acted up to it on occasions. In India the villagers have long recognized the duty of destroying intruding dogs. They keep dogs who scare away intruders and kill them if they do not escape with their lives These watch-dogs are purposely maintained with a view to protecting the village from other dogs, etc., as also from thieves and robbers whom they attack fearlessly. The dogs have become a nuisance only in cities, and the best remedy is to have a law against stray dogs. That will involve the least destruction of dogs and ensure the protection of citizens.

Another correspondent asks:

> Do you expect to convince people by logical argument in a matter like that of ahimsa?

The rebuke contained in this is not without some substance. But I wanted to convince no one. Being a student and practiser of ahimsa, I have had to give expression to my views when the occasion demanded it. I have an opinion based on experience that logic and reasoning have some place, no doubt very small, in a religious discussion.

Young India, 4-11-1926

520. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN M. ASAR

Sunday, [*July-October, 1926*][1]

CHI. MOTIBEHN,

I was very glad to receive your letter. Start the study of Gujarati. The handwriting is good of course.

You must get rid of slow fever. It is necessary to have hi-bath for that purpose. It will be good if you remain on milk and fruits for a while. Raw vegetables can be regarded as fruits You must chew them well or make them into pulp. You have got to cure constipation. Take enema if you do not pass stool. In the morning, you should drink hot water as soon as you have cleaned your teeth. Many people have benefited from it. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: G. N. 3762

521. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SABARMATI,
November 1, 1926

MY DEAR C.R.,

I have your note. I understand how your boys are shaping. When boys grow old, they must be allowed to go their way. If I were you and Narasinharao could not help running into the trap, I should let him have his way, only, I would not support him in the trap.

These elections are an awful business. You are well out of them.

I am not religiously against quinine. I have been using it freely in the Ashram. I should be chary of using it for myself.

Heaven only knows whether I am going to Gauhati or not. But I suppose I will have to go. I have no heart in going there. My work lies in the Ashram and I see my use here. However, a month hence is too long a time for one to speculate about.

Are you keeping all right? Can you walk 50 miles at a stretch? Can you wrestle with Mahadev or even me? A fair test!

[1] From the contents it is presumed that the letter was written during the latter half of the year 1926 when the addressee was not keeping good health; *vide* "Letter to Motibehn Choksi", 8-7-1926, "Letter to Motibehn Choksi", 17-7-1926 and "Letter to Najuklal Choksi", 24-10-1926.

Sickness is now clearing. Am off to Bombay today for a day to see Sir Ganga Ram and others and preach the wheel.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 19727

522. LETTER TO KAKALBHAI KOTHARI

Asvina Vad 11, 1982 [*November 1, 1926*]

BHAISHRI KAKALBHAI[1],

I have your letter. It cannot be published in *Navajivan*. I have not yet read Shivaji's letter published in the newspapers. He has sent me a copy for publication. Shall decide what to do after perusing it. It is only from you that I have come to know of what he did in the Kutch Parishad. I have read nothing about this Parishad. I see no objection to Saurashtra doing what it thinks fit in this connection. For the sake of Truth even, not a single step should be taken in excitement or haste. If out of fear we refrain from doing something, that will be contrary to truth. I could not guess who the other person might be. Whenever you feel like letting me know, please do.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Ramdas has written to me about the charges against the Amreli Karyalaya. If you have received some report about them, you should make inquiries and publish them.

MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19960

[1] A Congress worker and journalist of Saurashtra

523. LETTER TO INDRAJI

KHADI PRATISTHAN,
15 COLLEGE SQUARE, CALCUTTA,
[After *November 2, 1926*][1]

MY DEAR INDRAJI,

Maqbul Hussain has been complaining from Bharatpur that a lot of persecution against the Mussalmans has been going on in that state and that many Mussalmans have been forced to leave it. Gandhiji wrote to the Minister but he has had no reply. You know the Minister, says Bapu. Would you kindly ask him as to what he has to say?

Yours sincerely,

MAHADEV DESAI

[PS.]

How is Swamiji now? At Bombay we heard he was very ill.

From a photostat: G. N. 7208; also C. W. 4868

524. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

GRANT ROAD,
November 2, 1926

MATHURADAS
PANCHGANI CASTLE
PANCHGANI

CAN YOU RELEASE PYARELAL WHO MUST GO ATTEND HIS SISTER SUFFERING FROM TYPHOID. ARRANGING SEND SUBSTITUTE. REPLY SABARMATI.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the contents. Swami Shraddhanand, addressee's father, was shot dead on December 23, 1926. The postscript would suggest that the letter was written on behalf of Gandhiji after his visit to Bombay on November 2, *vide* "Shraddhanandji - The Martyr", 30-12-1926.

525. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

Asvina Vad 13, 1982 [*November 3, 1926*]

BHAISHRI DAHYABHAI,

I have your letter. Do come and see me. I should have replied earlier but I could not manage to reply yesterday while on the train. Please forgive me.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

BHAISHRI DAHYABHAI M. PATEL
TALUKA SAMITI
DHOLKA

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2697. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

526. RETURNED EMIGRANTS

To

The Editor, *Young India*

SIR,

I must confess that I was rather mistaken in being too sure about the knowledge of Hindustani possessed by the Colonial-born Indians. . . .[1]

As regards the Fiji Indians being sent to British Guiana, I remain convinced that the experiment will lead to another disappointment to the Fiji people. . . .

I remind you that in 1920 you made the mistake of recommending an experimental shipment of 500 labourers to British Guiana and confessed it when it was pointed out to you by Mr. Polak and others.[2] I am afraid that you are repeating your mistake. . . . I am sure that the Fiji returned emigrants, accustomed as they are to one of the finest tropical climates, will find their life miserable in that malaria-ridden mudland of British Guiana. . . . I am entirely opposed to the idea of Fiji Indians being sent to British Guiana. My main argument against the experiment recommended by you rests on higher grounds of humaneness. . . . I beseech you to reconsider the whole

[1] *Vide"*Returned Emigrants", 23-9-1926.

[2] The reference probably is to"British Guiana and Fiji Deputations", before 4-2-1920, and"Letter to Dr. Joseph Nunan", 5-2-1920.

thing again and thus prevent another disappointment and disaster in the life of those who were domiciled in Fiji.[1]

Yours, etc.,

BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

The foregoing letter was received some time ago. But I was anxious to verify for myself the"confession" imputed to me. Pandit Banarasidas Chaturvedi has kindly sent me a cutting containing an interview which I gave some years ago regarding an experimental ship-ment. I have seen the"confession". In my opinion, it has no rele-vance to the present opinion. My opinion is concerned only with those who are now living in a disgraceful state in Calcutta, who cannot and will not go to the villages, and for whom any other state will be probably better than the present. They may, in my opinion, go to British Guiana, if they choose. They cannot lose much. Their going is not even to be used as a preliminary to the shipment of others. The remedy I have suggested is an emergency measure dealing with only a few hundreds at the outset. It should be remembered that my recommendation is for sending Fiji Indians to British Guiana only if any other remedy fails, and even then it is subject to the final consent of the people themselves. I am therefore sorry that I cannot reconsider the opinion I have given. A permanent remedy no doubt lies in consi-dering and dealing adequately with the whole question of emi-gration.

Young India, 4-11-1926

527. NOTES

SUBSCRIBERS TO A.I.S.A.

The subscriptions for the new year of the All-India Spinners Association are coming in but not as fast as they might be. It is hoped that the subscribers this year will make it a point to improve the qua-lity of their yarn in strength, evenness and fineness. They should aim at a standard count so as to make it possible to weave their yarn into one good piece. Indeed this sacrificial yarn should be far superior to the yarn spun for hire.

But a correspondent says:

> You write about improving the quality of yarn, you refer to testing machines. Then is it not necessary to advise the spinning member of the defects in his spinning, so that he may try to improve it?

Attempts are being made to have all yarn tested at the A.I.S.A. office but only a limited number of packets can be tested per day.

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

Whenever the yarn is tested, the result is sent to the spinner. But I suggest to those who are anxious to make quick progress to improvise their own testing contrivance, which they can do without any difficulty or expense. The improvised contrivance has already been described in these pages.[1] It is well for the members to remember that the A.I.S.A. represents the poor man's movement and, therefore, cannot afford to spend much at the central office. Decentralization and distribution have to keep pace with centralization and concentration.

FROM ENGLAND

A lady from Bristol sends the following:

> Herewith £1 towards the spinning-wheels, would it were £100. I expect you do not realize how much help you get from spirits in England who realize the awful weight that lies upon you and try to help you, sending forth their spirits to you.

The virtue of letters like this lies not in the value of the monetary contribution but an appreciation of the fundamental fact underlying the spinning-wheel, viz., that it is an attempt to replace the spirit of killing competition that threatens to turn man into beast by the spirit of co-ordinated effort that lifts the whole humanity with the lifting of one's own self. This movement can only succeed if the purest forces in the world combine to work towards the consummation. But the momentum must first come from within India's borders. And if I had no faith in God, in India and the cause,"the awful weight" would certainly kill me. As it is, I turn the weight over to God's broad shoulders.

Young India, 4-11-1926

528. PRECARIOUS CONDITION IN SOUTH AFRICA

The latest mail from South Africa has brought me a batch of papers which show the precarious condition of the Indian settlers in that sub-continent. Trade licenses are an eternal problem. The administrative reins are being daily tightened. Hitherto, in Natal, it has been a fairly recognized rule not to touch old licenses under the wide discretionary powers given to licensing officers except for cases of grave insanitation or breach of conditions imposed by the officers. But that sound rule is gradually being disregarded and even renewals are being arbitrarily refused. The case sent to me is pathetic and refers to an old lady Mrs. Sophia Bhayla. The Secretary of the S. A. Con-

[1] *Vide"*Improvised Method of Testing", 14-10-1926.

gress in introducing the case says:

> This poor lady with five children has been ruined through the caprice of the licensing officer and to avoid being put in jail by her creditors, it is highly likely that she will have to seek the protection of the law of insolvency.

The judges of the appellate courts showed their sympathy for the poor woman but declared themselves powerless, being bound under the statute not to interfere with the discretion vested by the legislature in the licensing officers, except when they can be proved to have been bribed or incapable of exercising the powers vested in them. Here is what the principal judgment says:

> The licensing officer refused her license after she had held it for many years and it would appear that the refusal is based on the ground that this lady had not paid the dues which it is said she should have paid to the Town Council of Estcourt. At first sight it would appear that that was somewhat harsh for the licensing officer, who happens to be town clerk and town treasurer and holds other offices as well, because of the knowledge that he had as town treasurer and town clerk, he should say as licensing officer: "Well, you had trouble with my employers, the Town Council, and you have not paid your rates or the dues which are payable and, therefore, I will not grant you a renewal of this license." That does appear to one's mind to be inequitable. If this lady had committed an offence against the bye-laws, there was a ready remedy for that by prosecuting her or by proceeding against her according to the law if she had broken any contract.

Thus, the judges though willing were unable to redress a manifest wrong. When a law is bad, a judge is helpless unless he resigns. Such heroic action is not to be expected in these days.

But the Government is not powerless. Town Councils, composed as they are of rival traders, are not to be expected to do justice. They will generally use the powers given to them for crushing their rivals, but the central administration can certainly render aid in such glaring cases. The Round Table Conference will be a mockery, if even cases of manifest hardship remain unredressed. The Class Areas Bill may be shelved for ever but if the spirit animating it survives, the position of the settlers will in no wise be better than if the Bill had been passed. An empty victory will be worse than a proper defeat. For in the noise of it, the cry of the anguish of the sufferers may be hushed and they may be denied even the solace of sympathy.

Young India, 4-11-1926

529. A PLEA FOR PURITY

It is no longer possible for me to suppress the voluminous correspondence that is pouring in upon me in connection with the elections and, incidentally, with canvassing for Congress membership. A candidate for legislature membership writes:[1]

> When I embarked upon this business I had no notion of what I was to be in for. My agents play false. They attribute to me virtues which I do not recognize in myself. My opponents condemn me to vice I have never been guilty of. . . . I want a clean and a fair fight. . . . Can you show a way out or will you simply say that Council-going is wrong and I must retire?

Another correspondent writes:[2]

> Can you not as of yore prevent the frauds that are being perpetrated in the name of the Congress, and, shall I say, even in your name? . . . How can you remain silent now when these frauds can be proved to exist? I can give you proofs if you want them.
>
> Here in my Province, parties who are interested in packing the Congress—I can use no other word—are degrading the Congress name and with it the name of khaddar till both stink in one's nostrils. Men are practically picked up in the streets, their subscriptions are paid for them and pieces of khaddar are wrapped round them in order to fulfil the letter of the law of the Congress. Surely you can raise your voice against this debasing practice. . . . Will these men or their representatives enable us to get swaraj? Retirement or no retirement, we expect you at least to use your pen against these practices.

A third correspondent writes:[3]

> Do you know that, in my province, shameful practices are being resorted to in order to register members? A man of loose character has got hold of women of ill-fame—I personally know at least one—and is using them or her for the work of canvassing members. She goes from door to door, appeals to the baser passions of mankind and gets members. Is this legal? Is this moral? What is the Congress worth when members are registered by these means?. . . Are you prepared to justify the canvassing of Congress members by such women? And, if not, will you not say so publicly?

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.
[2] *ibid.*
[3] *ibid.*

A fourth correspondent sends me cuttings which show that candidates and their supporters appeal to sub-communal passions. He says:[1]

> Hindu and Muslim divisions we have, but now we have an appeal to provincial and caste jealousies and passions, that is to say, voters are asked to vote for men belonging to their own province or to their own castes and trades, and not for their intrinsic worth. . . .

A fifth correspondent sends me cuttings containing speeches which I cannot reproduce, which almost beat Billings-gate.

A sixth tells me that money is being freely used which can only be described as bribery. Men who were never worth much are today getting handsome salaries merely because they can speak and because they are supposed to wield some influence in their own districts. They have no opinions of their own. Some of them are brazen-faced enough to own that they are only acting as agents and that they would champion any policy, as a lawyer champions for money any cause that he gets, irrespective of morals.

I have been told that all these things are inevitable when a nation is rising from stupor. No doubt there is some truth in this. When people were thoroughly apathetic and only a few men were interested in running elections and running associations, impurities remained underground. Now that a large body of people are taking part in these public matters, the impurities which were hidden are coming to the surface. Unfortunately if all my correspondents are right, there is not anything better left under the surface, in other words, impurities are not superficial, but they are in the whole body itself. I should hope that things are not so bad and that the body is sound and that the statements made above are true only in isolated cases.

I do not know. I confess that I am not following the newspapers. Nor am I otherwise in touch with what is going on and it was for that reason that I have hitherto refrained from noticing the voluminous correspondence before me. But some of the correspondents are known to me. All of them have given me their names and addresses and some of them have offered to supply me with further particulars.

[1] *ibid.*

Some of them have sent me newspaper cuttings in corroboration. I felt in the circumstances that I should be wrong if I did not even give a gist of this correspondence. I have digested it for what it is worth and present it for the serious consideration of workers all over India who are taking part in the elections, no matter to what party they belong. I draw the particular attention of all Congress workers to the painful allegations made. The latter must remember that the Congress creed is still unamended. The creed requires them to work for the attainment of swaraj by peaceful and legitimate means. Theresolutions require the absolute use of pure khaddar on all Congress occasions. Let the Congress workers then not believe their creed or their resolutions. And if I have no creed for non Congressmen to draw attention to, I wish they would realize that without purity of public life, swaraj is an impossibility.

Young India, 4-11-1926

530. LITERALISM

A correspondent writes thus passionately:

> I am afraid there is a little fly in the ointment of your splendid defence (in *Young India* of September 23) of the practice of Divine prayer, especially congregational prayer. At the end of the article, referring to churches, temples and mosques you say, "These places of worship are not a mere idle superstition to be swept away at the first opportunity. They have survived all attacks up to now and are likely to persist to the end of time.[1]
>
> On reading this I asked myself: Attacks by whom? Surely those attacks were not made by atheists or scoffers or humbugs, to anything like the extent to which the opposing sects of God-believers are known to have attacks the places of worship of one another. In fact, most, if not all, of the attacks you speak of were perpetrated by 'godly' zealots, *in the name and for the glory of each one's own God.* It would be insulting your knowledge of world history to cite instances.
>
> Secondly, I asked myself: Is it true—is it strictly correct to say, that these places of worship have survived all attacks? Again the answer is: Surely not. Witness the site at Kashi (or Benares) where had stood the temple of Vishvanath for long centuries, since even before Lord Buddha's time—but where now stands dominating the 'Holy City' a mosque built out of the ruins of

[1] *Vide* "No Faith in Prayer". 23-9-1926.

the desecrated old temple by orders of no less a man than the 'Living Saint' (*Zinda Pir*), the 'Ascetic King' (*Sultan Auliya*), the 'Puritan Emperor'—Aurangzeb. Again, it is not the 'unbelieving' British, but the terrible believer, Ibn Saud, and his Wahabi hosts, that are responsible for the recent demolition and desecration of many places of worship in the Hedjaz (Muslims' 'Holy Land'), over which Mussalman Indians are just now so loudly lamenting, and which the Nizam of Hyderabad—alone of all Muslim rulers in the world—has vainly tried to restore with his money.

Do these facts mean nothing to you Mahatmaji?

These facts do mean a great deal to me. They show undoubtedly man's barbarity. But they chasten me. They warn me against becoming intolerant. And they make me tolerant even towards the intolerant. They show man's utter insignificance and thus drive him to pray, if he will not be led to it. For, does not history record instances of humbled pride bending the knee before the Almighty, washing His feet with tears of blood and asking to be reduced to dust under His heels? Verily 'the letter killeth, the spirit giveth life.'

The writer who is one of the most regular and painstaking readers of *Young India* should know by this time that places of worship to me are not merely brick and mortar. They are but a shadow of the reality. Against every church and every mosque and every temple destroyed, hundreds have risen in their places. It is wholly irrelevant to the argument about the necessity of prayer that the so-called believers have belied their belief and that many places renowned for their sacred character have been razed to the ground. I hold it to be enough, and it is enough for my argument, if I can prove that there have been men in the world, and there are men today in existence, for whom prayer is positively the bread of life. I recommend to the correspondent the practice of going unobserved to mosques, temples and churches, without any preconceived ideas, and he will discover as I have discovered that there is something in them which appeals to the heart and which transforms those who go there, not for show, not out of shame or fear, but out of simple devotion. It defies analysis. Nevertheless the fact stands that pure minded people going to the present places of pilgrimage which have become hot-beds of error, superstition, and even immorality, return from them purer for the act of worship. Hence the significant assurance in the *Bhagavad Gita:* "I make return according to the spirit in which men worship Me."[1]

What the correspondent has written undoubtedly shows our

present limitations, which we must try as early as possible to get rid of. It is a plea for purification of religions, broadening of the outlook. That much-needed reform is surely coming. There is a better world-consciousness, and may I say that even the reform we all hanker after needs intense prayer in order to achieve deeper purification of self ? For, without deeper purification of mankind in general, mutual toleration and mutual goodwill are not possible.

Young India, 4-11-1926

531. UNTOUCHABLES' RIGHT OF WORSHIP

A friend from Neemach Cantt. asks:

1. Do the untouchables, also called *atishudras* by people of higher castes, —do they too have the right to offer worship before the image of Vishnu and to take it out in a procession through the streets?

2. Do the *Vaishnavas* go to hell if they have *darshan* of an image of Vishnu which has been worshiped by *atishudras*?

That people still feel the need to ask such questions is a matter of sorrow. I firmly believe that our *Antyaja* brothers have as much right to place the image of Vishnu in a chariot and take it out in a procession as any other people. And so, too, a *Vaishnava* far from committing a sin earns merit by *darshan* of an image which has been worshiped by *atishudras.* A *Vaishnava* who knowingly avoids worshipping such an image brings the *Vaishnava* dharma into contempt.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 4-11-1926

532. LETTER TO NATHUBHAI NEMICHAND PAREKH

SABARMATI,

[*November 4, 1926*][1]

BHAI NATHUBHAI,

I have been receiving your loving letters. If I do not reply, do not feel that I am indifferent to your letters. I have been patiently discussing the topic in *Navajivan.* I welcome opposition from sim-

[1] From the post mark

ple-hearted men like you. Certainly it is not my aim that the dogs should be killed at once. My article seemingly expresses a new idea and therefore readers take time to understand it, but ultimately people like you will surely follow it or I will come to see my mistake.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI NATHUBHAI NEMICHAND PAREKH

CALICUT, MALABAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6248

533. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE

Ashwin Vad 14 [*November 4, 1926*][1]

BHAISHRI MAMA,

I have your letter. I can have nothing to say as long as you stick on there.

I shall start writing on what must be done to remove untouchability. Your view does not tally with our idea of asking for contributions from *Antyaja* friends. Others may well serve in that way. Friends expect different from me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3815

534. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Thursday [*November 4, 1926*][2]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Your letter. I received Baijnathji's *hundi* and have sent him the receipt. Soniramji is here; he is not in good health. Kamala changed her mind at the last minute and has decided to go with me to Wardha and I am happy about it. My health is now good. I had been to

[1] As noted on the letter

[2] From the postmark

Bombay for a day.[1] I had talks with Sir Ganga Ram, Kamath, Ganguli and Sir Chunilal.[2] Let's see the result.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2875

535. PREFACE TO" SHRIMAD RAJCHANDRA"

November 5, 1926

INTRODUCTION

When Shri Revashanker Jagjivan, whom I regard as an elder brother, asked me for a foreword to this[3] edition of Shrimad Rajchandra's[4] letters and writings, I could not refuse his request. As I tried to think what I could say in such a foreword, I felt that it would serve two purposes if I gave the few chapters of my reminiscences of Rajchandra which I wrote in the Yeravda jail[5]: one, that as my attempt, though incomplete, was undertaken purely in a spirit of religious devotion, it might help other *mumukshus*[6] like me, and two, that those who did not know Shrimad Rajchandra in life might know a little about him and so find it easier to understand some of his writings.

The chapters which follow leave the story incomplete. I do not think that I can complete it, for, even if I get time, I do not feel inclined to go much further than the point where I left off. I, therefore, wish to complete the last chapter, which had remained unfinished, and include in it a few things.

In these chapters I have not touched upon one aspect of the subject which I think I should place before the readers. Some people assert that Shrimad was the twenty-fifth Tirthankar[7]. Some others believe that he has attained *moksha*. Both these beliefs, I think, are improper. Either those who hold them do not know Shrimad or their definitions of Tirthankar or liberated soul are different from the commonly accepted ones. We may not lower the standard of truth even

[1] On November 2

[2] Members of the Royal Agricultural Commission with whom Gandhiji discussed the benefits of the spinning-wheel and khadi

[3] Second edition. It cannot be ascertained when the first edition was published.

[4] Rajchandra Ravjibhai Mehta

[5] Gandhiji was in this jail from March 1922 to February 1924.

[6] Seekers after *moksha*, deliverance from phenomenal existence as the supreme end of life

[7] A soul that has risen to perfection and teaches the way to others. Jains believe in 24 such Tirthankars, of whom Mahavira, a contemporary of the Buddha, was the last.

for the sake of those whom we love dearly. *Moksha* is a condition of supreme value. It is the highest state of the *atman*[1]. It is so rare a condition that to attain it much more effort and patience are necessary than, say, for emptying the sea drop by drop with a blade of grass. A perfect description of that state is impossible. A Tirthankar will naturally command, without seeking them, the powers which belong to the state immediately preceding *moksha*. One who has attained freedom while still living in this body will suffer from no physical disease. In a body untroubled by desire there can be no disease. There can be no disease where there is no attachment. Where there is desire there is attachment and while there is attachment *moksha* is impossible. Shrimad had not attained the total freedom from attachment which should characterize a *mukta purusha*[2] or the *vibhuti* which belongs to a Tirthankar. He had such freedom and such powers in a much larger measure than the ordinary man or woman, and so in common speech we may describe him as one who was free from attachment or who possessed superhuman powers. I am sure, however, that Shrimad had not attained to the perfect freedom from attachment which we attribute to a *mukta purusha* or acquired the *vibhuti* which we believe that a Tirthankar would manifest. I do not say this with the intention of pointing out any shortcoming in a great character worthy of our highest reverence; I say it in order to do justice both to him and to the cause of truth. We are all worldly creatures, whereas Shrimad was not. We shall have to wander from existence to existence, whereas Shrimad may have only one life more to live. We are perhaps running away from *moksha,* while Shrimad was flying towards it with the speed of wind.

This was no small achievement. Even so, I must say that he had not attained the supreme state so beautifully described by him. He himself said that he had come upon the Sahara in his journey and that he had failed to cross the desert. Shrimad Rajchandra, however, was a rare being. His writings are the quintessence of his experiences. Anyone who reads them, reflects over them and follows them in his life will find the path to *moksha* easier; his yearning for sense-pleasures will become progressively weaker, he will become disinterested in the affairs of this world, will cease to be attached to the life of the body and devote himself to the welfare of the *atman*.

[1] The self
[2] A liberated person

The reader will see from this that Shrimad's writings are meant only for those who are qualified to study them. All readers will not find them interesting. Those who are inclined to be critical will get material for criticism. But those who have faith will find these writings of absorbing interest. I have always felt that Shrimad's writings breathe the spirit of truth. He did not write a single word in order to show off his knowledge. His aim in his writings was to share his inward bliss with his readers. I am sure that anyone who wishes to free himself from inner conflicts and is eager to know his duty in life will gain much from Shrimad's writings, whether such a reader is a Hindu or belongs to another faith.

And, hoping that the few reminiscences of Shrimad's life which I have written down will help the reader who is qualified to read his writings, I give them here as part of this Foreword.

SOME REMINISCENCES OF RAYCHANDBHAI

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTORY

Today is the birth anniversary of the late Shrimad Rajchandra, whose reminiscences I have started writing, that is, it is the *Kartiki Purnima*[1], Samvat 1979. I am not attempting to write a biography of Shrimad; such an attempt is beyond my capacity. I do not have with me the material needed for a biography. If I wanted to write one, I would spend some time in his birth-place, the port of Vavania[2], examine the house in which he lived, see the places which were the scenes of his childhood play and wanderings, meet his childhood friends, visit the school which he attended, interview his friends, disciples and relatives and gather from them all information which was likely to be useful; only after I had done all this would I start writing the biography. But I have not visited these places or become acquainted with such persons.

And now I have begun to doubt even my capacity for writing these reminiscences. I remember to have remarked more than once that, if I had the time, I would write such reminiscences. One of his disciples, for whom I feel the highest respect, heard me say this, and I have undertaken this attempt mainly to satisfy him. I would be happy,

[1] The full-moon day of *Kartika*; the day corresponded to November 4, 1922.

[2] In Saurashtra

in any case, to write these reminiscences of Shrimad Rajchandra, whom I used to call Raychandbhai or the Poet, out of my love and respect, and explain their significance to *mumukshus*. As it is, however, my attempt is merely intended to satisfy a friend. To be able to do justice to these reminiscences of his life, I should be well acquainted with the Jain way, which I must admit I am not. I will, therefore, write them from an extremely restricted point of view. I will content myself with a record of my memories of him and of the events in his life which had left an impression on me, and with a discussion of what I learned from those occasions. The benefit which I thus derived, or some benefit similar to that, will perhaps be derived by the reader who is a *mumukshu* from a perusal of these reminiscences.

I have used the word *mumukshu* advisedly. This attempt at writing my reminiscences is not intended for all classes of readers.

Three persons have influenced me deeply, Tolstoy, Ruskin and Raychandbhai: Tolstoy through one of his books and through a little correspondence with him, Ruskin through one book of his, *Unto This Last*—which in Gujarati I have called *Sarvodaya*,—and Raychandbhai through intimate personal contact. When I began to feel doubts about Hinduism as a religion, it was Raychandbhai who helped me to resolve them. In the year 1893, I came into close contact with some Christian gentlemen in South Africa. Their lives were pure, and they were devoted to their religion. Their main work in life was to persuade followers of other faiths to embrace Christianity. Though I had come into contact with them in connection with practical affairs, they began to feel solicitude for my spiritual welfare. I realized that I had one duty: that until I had studied the teachings of Hinduism and found that they did not satisfy my soul, I should not renounce the faith in which I was born. I, therefore, started reading Hindu and other scriptures. I read books on Christianity and Islam. I carried on correspondence with some friends I had made in London. I placed my doubts before them. I entered into correspondence with every person in India in whom I had some trust, Raychandbhai being the chief among them.[1] I had already been introduced to him and a close bond had grown between us. I had respect for him, and so I decided to get from him everything he could give. The result was that I gained peace of mind. I felt reassured that Hinduism could give me what I

[1] *Vide* "Gandhiji's Questions to Rajchandra and his Replies", before 12-12-1926.

needed. The reader will have some idea of how much my respect for Raychandbhai must have increased because of his being responsible for this result.

Nevertheless, I have not accepted him as my guru. I am still in search of one, and so far my feeling in regard to everyone whom I might think of as a guru has been"No, not this". One must have the requisite qualification to come upon a perfect guru, and I cannot claim to have it.

CHAPTER 2

I was introduced to Raychandbhai in July 1891, on the very day on which, returning from England, I landed in Bombay. At this time of the year the sea is stormy. The ship, therefore, had arrived late and it was already night. I stayed with Dr. Pranjivan Mehta, Barrister, now the well-known jeweller of Rangoon. Raychandbhai was his elder brother's son-in-law. The doctor himslef introduced me to him. On the same day I was also introduced to Jhaveri Revashanker Jagjivandas, another elder brother of his. The doctor introduced Raychandbhai as"a poet", and added,"though a poet, he is in our business. He is a man of spiritual knowledge and a *shatavadhani*" [1]. Someone suggested that I should utter a number of words in his presence, saying that no matter to what language they belonged he would repeat them in the same order in which I had uttered them. I could not believe this. I was a young man, had just returned from England, and was a little vain, too, of my knowledge of languages; in those days I was under the powerful spell of English. Having been to England made a man feel that he was heaven-born. I poured out all my store of knowledge, and first wrote out words from different languages—for how possibly could I afterwards remember them in their due order? I then read out the words. Raychandbhai repeated them slowly one after another and in the same order. I was pleased and astonished, and formed a high opinion about his memory. This was an excellent experience to break a little the binding spell of English on me.

The Poet did not know English at all. At the time I am speaking of, he was not more than twenty-five. His study in the Gujarati school was not much either. And even then he possessed such a powerful

[1] One who can pay attention to a hundred things simultaneously

memory and such knowledge, and was respected by everyone round him! I was all admiration. The power of memory is not sold in schools. Knowledge, too, can be acquired without going to school if one wants it—is keen on it—and one need not go to England or elsewhere to command respect, for virtue is always respected. I learned these truths on the very day I landed in Bombay.

The acquaintance with the poet which began on this occasion grew over the years. Other persons possess a powerful memory, and one need not be dazzled by it. Knowledge of the Shastras, too, is found in plenty in many. But such persons, if they have no real culture, can give us nothing of value. A combination of powerful memory and knowledge of the Shastras will have real worth and will benefit the world only if they exist along with genuine culture of the heart.

CHAPTER 3: VAIRAGYA[1]

When shall I know that state supreme,
When will the knots, outer and inner, snap?
When shall I, breaking the bonds that bind us fast,
Tread the path trodden by the wise and the great?

Withdrawing the mind from all interests,
Using this body solely for self-control,
He desires nothing to serve any ulterior end of his own,
Seeing nothing in the body to bring on a trace of the darkness
of ignorance.

These are the first two verses of Raychandbhai's inspired utterance at the age of eighteen.

During the two years I remained in close contact with him, I felt in him every moment the spirit of *vairagya* which shines through these verses. One rare feature of his writings is that he always set down what he had felt in his own experience. There is in them no trace of unreality. I have never read any line by him which was written to produce an effect on others. He had always by his side a book on some religious subject and a note-book with blank pages. The latter he used for noting down any thoughts which occurred to him. Somtimes, it would be prose and sometimes poetry. The poem about

[1] State of disinterstedness towards wordly things

the”supreme state” must have been written in that manner.

Whatever he was doing at the moment, whether eating or resting or lying in bed, he was invariably disinterested towards things of the world. I never saw him being tempted by objects of pleasure or luxury in this world.

I watched his daily life respectfully, and at close quarters. He accepted whatever he was served at meals. His dress was simple, a dhoti and shirt, an *angarakhun*[1] and a turban of mixed silk and cotton yarn. I do not remember that these garments used to be strikingly clean or carefully ironed. It was the same to him whether he squatted on the ground or had a chair to sit on. In the shop, he generally squatted on a *gadi*[2].

He used to walk slowly, and the passer-by could see that he was absorbed in thought even while walking. There was a strange power in his eyes; they were extremely bright, and free from any sign of impatience or anxiety. They bespoke single-minded attention. The face was round, the lips thin, the nose neither pointed nor flat and the body of light build and medium size. The skin was dark. He looked an embodiment of peace. There was such sweetness in his voice that one simply wanted to go on listening to him. The face was smiling and cheerful; it shone with the light of inner joy. He had such ready command of language that I do not remember his ever pausing for a word to express his thoughts. I rarely saw him changing a word while writing a letter. And yet the reader would never feel that any thought was imperfectly expressed, or the construction of a sentence was defective or the choice of a word faulty.

These qualities can exist only in a man of self-control. A man cannot become free from attachments by making a show of being so. That state is a state of grace for the *atman*. Anyone who strives for it will discover that it may be won only after a ceaseless effort through many lives. One will discover, if one struggles to get rid of attachments, how difficult it is to succeed in the attempt. The Poet made me feel that this state of freedom from attachment was spontaneous to him.

The first step towards *moksha* is freedom from attachment. Can we ever listen with pleasure to anyone talking about *moksha* so long as

[1] A tight-fitting coat of relatively thin cloth, fastened with laces

[2] Cushion

our mind is attached to a single object in this world? If at any time we seem to do so, it is only the ear which is pleased, in the same way, that is, as we may be pleased merely by the musical tune of a song without following its meaning. It will be a long time before such indulgence of the ear results in our adopting a way of life which could lead towards *moksha*. Without genuine *vairagya* in the mind, one cannot be possessed with a yearning for *moksha*. The poet was possessed by such yearning.

CHAPTER 4: BUSINESS LIFE

He is a true *Vanik*[1] who never speaks an untruth,

He is a true *Vanik* who never gives short measure,

He is a true *Vanik* who honours his father's word,

He is a true *Vanik* who returns the principal with interest.

Good sense is the *Vanik's* measure, and the king's measure his credit.

Should the *Vania*[2] neglect business, suffering like a forest fire spreads far and wide.

SHAMAL BHATT

It is generally believed that the spheres of practical affairs or business and spiritual pursuits or dharma are distinct from and incompatible with each other, that it is madness to introduce dharma into business, for we should succeed in neither if we made any such attempt. If this belief is not false, there is no hope for us at all. There is not a single concern or sphere of practical affairs from where dharma can be kept out.

Raychandbhai showed through his life that, if a man is devoted to dharma, this devotion should be evident in every action of his. It is not true at all that dharma is something to be observed on the *Ekadashi*[3] day or during the *Paryushan*[4], on the *Id*[5] day or on a Sunday, in temples, churches or mosques, but not in the shop or the King's court; on the contrary, Raychandbhai used to say and hold, and demonstrated through his own conduct, that such a belief amounted to ignorance of the nature of dharma.

[1] A community traditionally engaged in trade and commerce
[2] Same as *Vanik*
[3] Eleventh day of the each half of the lunar month
[4] A week devoted by Jains to fasting and self-purification
[5] A day observed as sacred by Muslims

The business in which he was engaged was that of diamonds and pearls. He carried it on in partnership with Revashanker Jagjivan Jhaveri. He also ran a cloth shop side by side. I formed the impression that he was completely upright in his dealings. I was accidentally present sometimes when he negotiated a deal. His terms were always clear and firm. I never saw any 'cleverness' about them. If the other party tried it, he immediately saw through it, and would not tolerate it. On such occasions, he would even knit his brows in anger, and one could see a flash of redness in his eyes.

Raychandbhai disproved the prevalent idea that a man who is wise in the sphere of dharma will not be wise in the affairs of practical life. He displayed the utmost vigilance and intelligence in his business. He could judge the worth of diamonds and pearls with the utmost accuracy. Though he did not know English, he was quick in following the general substance of the letters and telegrams received from his agents in Paris and took no time to see through their tricks. His guesses generally turned out to be correct.

Though he displayed such vigilance and intelligence in his business, he was never impatient or felt worried about his affairs. Even when he was attending the shop, some book on a religious subject would always be lying by his side and, as soon as he had finished dealing with a customer, he would open it, or would open the note-book in which he used to note down the thoughts which occurred to him. Every day he had men like me, in search of knowledge, coming to him. He would not hesitate to discuss religious matters with them. The Poet did not follow the general, and beautiful, rule of doing business and discussing dharma each at its proper time, of attending to one thing at a time. Being a *shatavadhani*, he could afford to violate it. Others who might seek to emulate him would fare as a man trying to ride two horses at the same time. Even for a man who is wholly devoted to dharma and is completely free from attachments, it would be best always to concentrate on what he is engaged in at the moment; in fact that would be the right thing for him to do. That would be a sign of his being a man of yoga. Dharma requires one to act in that manner. If any work, be it business or something else, is a worthy activity, it ought to be done with single-minded attention. For a *mumukshu*, inward meditation on the self should be as spontaneous and continuous as breathing. He should not cease from it even for a moment. But even while meditating on the self, he should be totally absorbed in the work he was doing.

I do not mean to say that the Poet did not live in this way. I have said above that he used to display the utmost vigilance in his business. I did, however, form the impression that the Poet exacted more work from his body than he should have done. Could it possibly mean imperfection in his yoga? It is a principle of dharma that one should even lay down one's life in discharging one's duty. But to undertake work beyond one's capacity and look upon it as one's duty is a form of attachment. I have always felt that the Poet did have this highly subtle attachment in him.

It often happens that man accepts work beyond his capacity through spiritual motives and then finds it difficult to cope with it. We look upon this as virtue and admire it. But looked at from a spiritual point of view, that is, from the point of view of dharma, there is every possibility that the motive behind such work springs from a subtle form of ignorance.

If we are no more than instruments in this world, if it is true that we are given this body on hire and that our highest duty is to attain *moksha* through it as quickly as we may, then we must certainly give up everything which may serve as an obstacle in our path—that is the only true spiritual attitude.

Raychandbhai himself had explained to me, in a different form and in his own wonderful manner, the argument I have advanced above. How, then, did he come to take upon himself certain tasks which worried him and brought on severe illness on him?

If I am right in believing that even Raychandbhai was temporarily overcome with spiritual ignorance in the form of a desire to do good, the truth of the line"All creatures follow their nature, what then will constraint avail?"[1] is very well illustrated in his case, and this is all that it means. There are some who use these words of Krishna to justify self-indulgence; they altogether pervert their meaning. Raychandbhai's *prakriti* took him into deep waters despite himself. To undertake work in this manner may be an error, but it may be considered so only in the case of one who is nearing perfection. We, ordinary men and women, can do justice to a good cause only if we become mad after it. We shall close this argument here.

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, III, 33

It is also sometimes believed that religious-minded men are so simple that everyone can deceive them, that they understand nothing about worldly affairs. If this belief is true, then the two avatars, Krishnachandra and Ramachandra, should be looked upon not as incarnations but as mere ordinary men of the world. The Poet used to say that it should be impossible to deceive a person of perfect spiritual knowledge. A person may be religious-minded, that is, may be moral in his life, but may have no spiritual knowledge. What is required for *moksha*, however, is a happy combination of moral life and spiritual knowledge which is the result of one's own experience. In the presence of one who has acquired such knowledge, hypocrisy and fraud cannot keep their mask for long. Untruth cannot flourish in the presence of truth. In the presence of non-violence, violence ceases. Where the light of honesty shines, the darkness of deception vanishes. The moment a man of spiritual knowledge devoted to dharma sees a deceitful man, his heart melts with compassion. How can one who has seen the self in him fail to understand another person? I cannot say that the Poet always demonstrated this truth in his life. People did occasionally cheat him in the name of religion. Such instances do not prove any flaw in the principles, but suggest how very difficult it is to acquire spiritual knowledge of absolute purity.

Despite these limitations, I have not observed in anyone else such a beautiful combination of practical ability and devotion to dharma as I did in the Poet.

CHAPTER 5: DHARMA

Before we examine Raychandbhai's life of dharma, it is necessary to discuss the nature of dharma as explained by him.

Dharma does not mean any particular creed or dogma. Nor does it mean reading or learning by rote books known as Shastras or even believing all that they say.

Dharma is a quality of the soul and is present, visibly or invisibly, in every human being. Through it we know our duty in human life and our ture relation with other souls. It is evident that we cannot do so till we have known the self in us. Hence dharma is the means by which we can know ourselves.

We may accept this means from wherever we get it, whether from India or Europe or Arabia. Anyone who has studied the scriptures of different faiths will say that the general nature of this

means as expounded in them is the same. No Shastra in any religion says that we may speak untruth or follow it in practice, nor that we may commit violence. Stating the quintessence of all Shastras, Shankaracharya said:"*Brahma satyam jaganmithya*" [1] The Koran-e-Sharif says the same thing in different words when it asserts that God is one and alone, and that nothing beside Him exists. The Bible says:"I and my Father are one." All these are different statements of the same truth. But imperfect human beings, expounding this one truth through their various understandings, have erected veritable prison-houses from which our minds have to escape. We, imperfect human beings, try to go forward with the help of others less imperfect than we, and imagine that beyond a certain stage there is no further way to go. In truth it is not so at all. After a certain stage is reached, the Shastras give no help; experience alone helps then. Hence sang Raychandbhai:

> That state the Blessed one who has attained perfection of knowledge
> sees in his vision,
> But cannot describe in words;
> I have fixed my eyes on that supreme state as my goal,
> But at present it is an aspiration beyond my power to realize[2].

Ultimately, therefore, it is the *atman* which wins *moksha* for itself.

Raychandbhai has expounded this essential truth in numerous ways in his writings. He had made a deep study of a number of books on dharma. He could follow Sanskrit and Magadhi languages without any difficulty. He had studied Vedanta, as also the *Bhagavata* and the *Gita.* As for books on Jain religion, he used to read every such book that he came across. His capacity for reading and absorbing was inexhaustible. He found one reading enough for grasping the substance of a book.

He had also read in translation the Koran and the Zend-Avesta.

He used to tell me that he was inclined towards Jain philosophy. He believed that the *Jinagamas*[3] contained the perfection of spiritual knowledge. It is necessary that I should state this view of his. I look upon myself as altogether unqualified to express an opinion on it.

[1] The *Brahma* alone is real, the world of appearance is false.

[2] Probably, through a slip of memory, Gandhiji has here brought together the first two lines of stanza 20 and the first two of stanza 21.

[3] Sacred books of the Jains

Raychandbhai did not, however, lack respect for other faiths. He even felt admiration for Vedanta. A *vedantin*[1] would naturally take the Poet to be a *vedantin*. In all his discussions with me, he never told me that if I wished to attain *moksha* I should follow a particular dharma and no other. He advised me only to pay attention to my actions. When we discussed what books I should read, he took into consideration my personal inclination and the early family influences on me and advised me to continue the *Gita* which I was then reading. Other books which he suggested were *Panchikaran, Maniratnamala*, the chapter on *Vairagya* in *Yogavasistha, Kavyadohan* Part I, and *Mokshamala* composed by himself.

Raychandbhai used to say that the different faiths were like so many walled enclosures in which men and women were confined. He whose one aim in life is to attain *moksha* need not give exclusive devotion to a particular faith.

> Live as you will,
>
> Attain to Hari anyhow.

This was Raychandbhai's principle too, as it was Akha's[2]. He was always bored by religious controversy and rarely engaged himself in it. He would study and understand the excellence of each faith and explain it to the followers of that faith. Through my correspondence with him from South Africa, too, this is the lesson which I learned from him.

My own belief is that every religion is perfect from the point of view of its followers and imperfect from that of the followers of other faiths. Examined from an independent point of view, every religion is both perfect and imperfect. Beyond a certain stage, every Shastra becomes a fetter hindering further progress; but, then, that is the stage reached by one who has transcended the *gunas*. If we follow Raychandbhai's point of view, no one need give up his faith and embrace another. Everyone may, following his own faith, win his freedom, that is, *moksha*, for to win *moksha* means to be perfectly free from attachments and aversions.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Shrimad Rajchandra

[1] Follower of Vedanta
[2] A Gujarati poet of the 17th century

536. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 5, 1926

DEAR MOTIBABU,

I have your usual balance-sheet for which I thank you. Our accountant here tells me that if in your next balance-sheet you will send the amount of capital investment in the khadi work and the management expenses, he will be able to appreciate the figures better.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

BABU MOTILAL ROY
PRABARTAK SANGHA
CHANDERNAGORE
(BENGAL)

From a photostat: G.N. 11031

537. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Diwali [*November 5, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have not written to you for a long time. Today it is Diwali, and I am thinking of all of you. These days, because of heavy pressure of work, I observe silence for two or three hours for writing letters. There is no difficulty about writing as the hand moves quite well.

As far as you are concerned for the present my only wish is that you should get well.

I have your telegram concerning Pyarelal. I think that for a few days you will have to manage as at present. I do not know whether you can, but if it is more than a minor inconvenience write to me frankly. I sent you a telegram. I also sent one to Devdas. I havereceived his telegram in reply. He is willing to come. He will be coming here on the 8th and then he will go back there. He has asked my permission to go to Assam. In that case it will be a problem to

[1] The addressee received the letter on November 7, 1926. Diwali was on November 5.

decide whom I should assign to be with you. But God will show the way. I shall not leave it to you to choose a third person. I will send anyone I can spare.

Pyare Ali must have met you. He is a man with a pure heart. At least to me his wife appeared to be a saintly lady.

Remind Taramati again that she has to write to me now and then. I have already written to you that I had mentioned the name Rohit by mistake. But both the names can perhaps remain? That young man is having the rare benefit of the climate there. Does Taramati go for walks? Anybody who does not go for walks in Panchgani should be considered a criminal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

538. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

Ashwin Vad 30, Diwali [*November 5, 1926*][1]

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your letter. A Happy New Year to you all and may all your wishes be fulfilled. I am not aware of Diwali or any other festival. All the days are either festivals or days of gloom. If our soul is blissful, then it is festival. If the soul in pursuit of passion is sad, it is a day of gloom in spite of it being a festival. Ba is now fully recovered.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19961

539. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

SABARMATI,

Diwali, November 5, 1926

DEAR HARIBHAU,

I am returning the Tamil Veda today. I have glanced through it. It seems to me that a large part of it is of no relevance today. But it

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

would certainly be good if a translation of such a great Tamil work was available. It would be good if somebody could write an introduction to it pointing out the merits and demerits of the work. I do not have the ability to write such an introduction. I do not have the necessary knowledge of Tamil. I cannot even say if the translation is accurate or not. I hope Martand's health has improved.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

540. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Diwali [*November 5, 1926*][1]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I was very much pleased to have your long letter. I had heard slanderous remarks made about you. I did not believe them, but your letter has completely satisfied me. They said that you took work by giving Rs. 500[2] instead of a hundred. From what you have written, I have nothing to say.

As for Geneva, I must advise you to be patient. I see no great benefit in your going there. If the experience of the West is necessary, go on your own. You will have many occasions to go. But my inner self says it is not today. In the end you should do what your conscience dictates.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 6137. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] The reference to addressee's proposed trip to Geneva suggests that the letter was written in 1926. Diwali fell on November 5 in that year.

[2] Perhaps a slip for Rs. 50

541. MESSAGE TO "FORWARD"

As heirs to the great legacy left by him[1], he must deserve it by our action.

Forward, 6-11-1926

542. IS THIS HUMANITY?—V[2]

[*November 7, 1926*][3]

A friend writes a long letter mentioning his difficulties and pointing out what Jainism has to say to him, a *shrawak*, in the matter. One of his questions is:

> You say that if we can niether take individual charge of roving dogs nor have a *pinjrapole* for them, the only alternative is to kill them. Does that mean that every roving dog should be killed, although it may not be rabid? Don't you agree that we leave unmolested all harmful beasts, birds and reptiles, so long as they do not actually harm us? Why should the dogs be an exception? Where is the humanity of shooting innocent dogs whenever they are found roving? How can one wishing well to all living beings do this?

The writer has misunderstood my meaning. I would not suggest even the destruction of rabid dogs for the sake of it, much less that of innocent, roving dogs. Nor have I said that these latter should be killed wherever they are found. I have only suggested legislation to that effect, so that as soon as the law is made, humane people might wake up in the matter and devise measures for the better management of stray dogs. Some of these might be owned, some might be put in quarantine. The remedy, when it is taken, will be once for all. Stray dogs do not drop down from heaven. They are a sign of the idleness, indifference and ignorance of society. When they grow into a nuisance, it is due to our ignorance and want of compassion. A stray dog is bound to take to his heels if you do not feed him. The measure that I have suggested is actuated no less by a consideration of the welfare of the dogs than by that of society. It is the duty of a

[1] C. R. Das

[2] Originally written in Gujarati, the articles were translated into English by Mahadev Desai.

[3] The articles are placed according to the dates of their publication in *Navajivan*.

humanitarian to allow no living being aimlessly to roam about. In performance of that duty it may be his duty once in a way to kill some dogs.

Here is another question:

> I agree that the dogs are sure to be killed by man whenever they become a menace to society. But you say, 'To wait until they get rabid is not to be merciful to them.' This means that every dog is potentially rabid and that therefore it should be killed as a matter of precaution. I met a friend from the Ashram who assured me that you did not mean this, and that you had suggested it only as a last resort when dogs had become a menace. This is not clear from your articles. Will you make it clear?

My previous articles and my answer to the first question leave nothing to be cleared. I must explain what I mean when you say that you cannot wait on until the dog gets rabid. Every stray dog is harmful. The harm is [not] confined to cities alone and it must stop. We do not wait until the serpent bites us. The rabies of the dog is concealed in its capacity to bite. A friend has sent me figures of cases of hydrophobia treated in the Civil hospital, Ahmedabad:

Period	Cases from the city	Cases from the district	Total
Jan. to Dec '25	194	923	1,117
Jan. to Sept.'26	295	695	990

These figures must alarm everyone who is interested in the welfare of the community, especially if he is a humanitarian. I admit that all the cases may not have been of hydrophobia. But it is difficult to say whether a dog is or is not rabid, and many run in fear to the hospital, because most dogs are found to be rabid afterwards. There is only one remedy to relieve them of this fear and it is not to allow dogs to roam about.

I was in England 40 years ago when effective measures were taken to stamp out rabies. There were, of course, no stray dogs there. But even for the dogs which had regular owners, an order was passed that dogs found without collars with the name and address of the owner thereon and without muzzles would be killed. The measure was taken purely in the public interest. Practically the next day all the dogs in London were found to be with collars and muzzles. It was, therefore, necessary to kill only a very few. If anyone thinks that the people in the West are innocent of humanity, he is sadly mistaken.

The ideal of humanity in the West is perhaps lower, but their practice of it is very much more thorough than ours. We rest content with a lofty ideal and are slow or lazy in its practice. We are wrapped in deep darkness, as is evident from our paupers, cattle and other animals. They are eloquent of our irreligion rather than of religion.

Here is a third question:

> You have different definitions of religion for the individual and for society. But why should not religion in both cases be the same? The ideal ought to be the same for both. That it may be impossible to carry it out is a different matter. For, even in case of the individual, only the occasion can show how far he has been able to carry out his ideal in practice. You yourself have said that your ideal is to save even a cruel animal at the risk of your life, but you could not say what you would actually do when faced by such an animal. There is no reason why society should not similarly have a lofty ideal and leave the individuals free to practise it according to their capacity.

My definition of religion for the individual and for society is the same. The ideal must always be the same, but the practice I have conceived to be different in the case of the individual and the society. Truly speaking, practice differs in case of every individual. I do not know of two men having the same extent of the practice of ahimsa, though their definition of ahimsa is the same. The extent of practice in case of society is the average of the different capacities of its members. Thus, for instance, where a section of the society is milk-arian and the other fruitarain, the practice for the society extends to the use of milk and fruit.

The writer next sets out two Jain doctrines as follows:

> Jainism is based on the doctrine of *syadvada*—manysidedness of reality. As is aptly said: 'No absolute rule is correct; only the relative rule is the correct rule.' Which means that an act which may be described as *himsa* under certain circumstances may be ahimsa under other circumstances. Man should always use his discrimination in determining his conduct. There are two classes of Jains. Sadhus (the monks) and *shrawaks* (the laity). Their code of conduct is thus defined: The sadhu is always non-violent. He may not eat to save himself, may not cook for himself, may not walk even a step for his own purpose—all his activity is for the welfare of the community and it should be as harmless as possible. He has to avoid the 42 infringements laid down in the Shastras. The sadhu is described as *nirgrantha*—free from bonds. So far as I know there is no sadhu today who can satisfy the definition of a sadhu given above.

The *shrawak* may not kill or injure any living being, except when it is essential for himself. He is a worldly man and he cannot take his humanity farther than this. So if 20 per cent compassion is expected of the Sadhu, 1.25 per cent is expected of the *shrawak*. If the latter goes beyond the measure expected of him he approaches the state of a sadhu, but *as a shrawak* nothing more is expected of him.

I knew the substance of this distincition. I am quite conscious that the Jain doctrine is not contrary to the opinion I have expressed in these articles. If the Jains accept the interpretation given above, the opinion expressed by me can be deduced from it. But whether they accept it or not, I humbly submit that my opinion is capable of being, and has been, independently justified.

Young India, 11-11-1926

543. ABOUT MADHADA ASHRAM

Bhai Shivji had sent to the newspapers a statement in reply to my article[1] regarding Madhada Ashram and himself. This statement he has now sent to me for publication; but as it has already appeared in the daily newspapers, I see no need to publish it here. However, as a certain portion of it referring to his relations with me is of interest to the public, I give below my reply to it.

I was sad to read Bhai Shivji's statement. He has adopted the proverbial method of the thief attacking the warder.

There are no differences of opinion between Bhai Shivji and myself. But I have formed a certain opinion regarding his character and his management of affairs on the basis of Shivji's own confessions. This opinion I conveyed to the executive committee of the Kathiawar Political Conference, and I proposed, as I felt bound, to publish it in the *Navajivan*. But before I did so, I wrote to Bhai Shivji, so as to avoid any injustice being done to him. The question before me was whether I should or should not publish my opinion about Bhai Shivji. This cannot be described as a difference of opinion.

It was certainly I who suggested the idea of the *Panch*. That was for Bhai Shivji's satisfaction and not for mine. There are no allegations against me. Being a public worker I had the duty of making an inquiry into the charges against a colleague. I started the

[1] *Vide* "Madhada Ashram", 3-10-1926.

inquiry and, as it was being made, I kept Bhai Shivji informed about it. Finally, I had a meeting with him, and in view of the confessions which he then made there remained nothing more for me to do. Bhai Shivji was found guilty on his own admission. When the case was placed before the committee of the Conference on the same day, and when it became imperative for me to publish it in the *Navajivan*, Bhai Shivji changed his attitude.

If Bhai Shivji or any of his friends wish to know from me the details of the confessions made by Shivji, together with the details of the inquiry that I had made, then I am willing to write to them these details. Bhai Shivji and his friends are at liberty to publish my correspondence with them or with others on this matter. I do not wish to bore the readers by publishing it myself.

I must, however, say that Bhai Shivji's behaviour in every respect, after my inquiry about him, has confirmed my opinion against him. First, I was the judge and others were the complainants. They had given money to Bhai Shivji. When my viewpoint became unacceptable to Bhai Shivji, even I was declared to be a complainant. Now Bhai Shivji, in his statement, seems to consider me at fault. But he and all those who are interested in the social workers obeying more or less the rules and regulations of morality, and who desire faultless management of public funds should know that the proposal to appoint the *Panch* was for the benefit of Bhai Shivji. He is still guilty in my opinion. His lapses are grave and he has confessed most of them. The *panchnama*[1], which I could never have signed, was drawn up as far as I know, by Bhai Shivji himself. By issuing this statement Bhai Shivji has added salt to the wound and made his guilt worse.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-11-1926

544. LETTER TO BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

Kartika Sud 3, 1983 [*November 8, 1926*]

BHAI BANARASIDASJI,

I have your letter. I like the idea of your going to S.A. but the purpose of it does not seem very justifiable to me. If you want to earn your livelihood by going there and writing for the newspapers, the

[1] A written statement announcing the appointment of arbitrators

purpose will not be served by your going to South Africa. It will be better if you write a book or take up a job in order to earn money.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2574

545. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Kartika Sud 3, 1983 [*November 8, 1926*]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. I had completely forgotten the election affair. I see no difficulty in your doing what you think proper. I have written to everyone concerned that I can never participate in it. I would not approve of it if you have to visit many places. It would harm your health.

Ba is completely well, so there is no need to worry. Let us see what happens when I come. There must be many candidates. I intend to bring Lakshmidas with me so that he may have a change.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2876

546. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SABARMATI,

November 10, 1926

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

PANCHGANI CASTLE

PANCHGANI

DEVDAS REACHING THERE THURSDAY AFTERNOON.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

547. LETTER TO SYED ZAHIRUL HAQ

SABARMATI,

November 10, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter.[1] It may flatter my pride, but I hope I have none. I am conscious of my unfitness and limitations. If there was the slightest chance of successful intervention, my seclusion would not deter me. But I see none. I therefore remain still and pray.

The spinning-wheel is not dearer to me than precious lives. I take to it as a child to its mother's breasts, because I believe it to possess the capacity of saving millions of lives from penury and degradation. I commend it to you.

Yours sincerely,

The Hindu, 19-11-1926

548. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

November 10, 1926

MY DEAR C. R.,

Your letter. The dogs are giving enough food for *Navajivan.* They have also increased the sale of postage stamps. And it is all to the good.[2]

Chhotalal leaves for your place on 16th. So he thinks. He won't be happy till he gets there. He is a beautiful, restless soul. Work, work, work.

I think you should come to Wardha. It is a long journey but, if you can at all spare yourself, do come. Not to go to Gauhati is a sound decision.

[1] Syed Zahirul Haq of Barh, Patna, had, in an open letter dated October 25, 1926, drawn Gandhiji's attention to the communal riots in Howrah on the occasion of Durga Puja and appealed to him to"leave your Ashram and rescue the people as a saviour of the nation from the deep ditch they are going to fall into". The 'open letter' as well as Gandhiji's reply was published in *The Hindu* under the caption:"Hindu-Muslim Disharmony: Mahatmaji's Reply to Call for Intervention". The correspondence was also published in *The Searchlight*, 26-11-1926.

[2] The reference obviously is to the series of articles published under the title"Is This Humanity?".

I think with you about the agricultural commission. I hope to write something next week.

Devdas was here for a day. He has gone to Panchgani to replace Pyarelal who has gone to Punjab to nurse a cousin of his.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 19728

549. LETTER TO S. G. VAZE

November 10, 1926

MY DEAR VAZE,

I have your letter. Benarsidas anticipated you and sent me a copy of your letter to him. The reason he has given me for his wishing to join [you] does not appeal to me.[1] He has unnecessarily impoverished himself and now thinks that he will have a better career as a journalist if he goes to South Africa. I totally dissent from the view. Apart from his reason, however, his going to South Africa with you appeals to me. And if you and he think that he should go, I suggest Shastriar[2] writing to Mrs. Naidu or J. B. Petit for the fare. I think you will get it for the asking.

You hardly need any recommendation from me when you have Andrews there. My son[3] too is there. But here is one letter, though you do not need even that. You must have heard about him from G. It was at his villa that we stayed in Johannesburg.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I am glad S. is coming.[4] I hope to see you with him.

From a photostat: G.N. 2766

[1] *Vide"* Letter to Banarasidas Chaturvedi", 8-11-1-26.

[2] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri

[3] Manilal Gandhi

[4] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri came to see Gandhiji on November 21.

550. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE

Kartika Sud 5, 1983, November 10, 1926

BHAI MAMA,

I have not been silent of purpose. I have written about that portion of your letter which called for a note. I shall start the series of articles and I shall send you the portion about Godhra before publishing it. I think there should be no objection to purchasing the Ramachandran water-lift[1]. Some difficulties have, however, arisen in securing it. I have helped you as much as I could.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3816

[1] A large-size bucket contrivance devised by Shri Ramachandran of Agriculture College, Madras, for drawing water from wells with the help of only one animal

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM NORMAN LEYS

BRAILSFORD,
NEAR DERBY,
June 29, 1926

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I am most grateful for your letter.

My great difficulty, in which I am most anxious for your advice, is this. I am a member of the committee set up by the Independent Labour Party to determine what policy that party should pursue in regard to India. The I.L.P is a constituent part of the Labour Party and contains the great majority of its most active members. It is definitely anti-Imperialist, by contrast with a group in the Labour Party which would have the party make no distinct break with past traditions. Hitherto most of the things that the I.L.P. has urged the Labour Party to adopt, it has adopted. But the time is near when there will be a struggle between I.L.P. ideas and Imperialist ideas in the L.P. When that struggle comes a great deal will depend on whether we can prove our policy to be practicable. If for example our opponents can say "what is the use of arousing the enmity of British people in India for the sake of a policy which Indians themselves don't want and wouldn't act upon?"—then the people who say "let things go on as they are until Indians learn more sense" will prevail in the Labour Party. And that would mean an end to any hope of fraternal relations for many years, since Labour Governments in this country would have no reason to behave to[wards] India differently from Conservative Governments.

For these reasons it does seem to me important that this committee should reach the right conclusions. I ask you to tell me what these conclusions should be. What should the next Labour Government do about India?

The obvious answer is that they should do as Indians themselves wish, and of course the ignorant among us are content with that answer. Those who like me know a little more, know that in no country are those who love their country in agreement about even the chief political measures and steps to be taken. And it is painfully evident that the disagreements in India are deeper and wider than usual. Does that fact make the problem—our problem in this country, I mean not yours in your country—insoluble? In answer I think we ought both to admit that in the cases of past nationalist movements success was attained only when some organized body of men had won the support of the great majority of those who were ready to make sacrificesfor their country's liberty. In Italy for example, national liberty was won only when the policy of Cavour and Garibaldi prevailed in the minds of the Italians over the policy of Mazzini. (I believe Mazzini was right and Cavour wrong but that is irrelevent.)

Foreigners were able to help the Italians to independence only because there were conspicuous people to deal with who were known to have the support, not of all Italians but of so large a proportion of them that they could speak for Italy. Nothing of that sort is apparently imaginable in India for many years. What then can the friends of India do? So far as I can see there are only two possible answers. They can arbitrarily choose some group of men in India with definite views and a programme so fully and carefully worked out that its practicability is tolerably certain, adopt that policy and hope that its adoption by Socialist opinion in Britain will result in its gradually gaining ground in India until it can be acted on. Or, they could simply frame a policy of their own, drafting a constitution which in their opinion would work and would also perhaps win support from men in India who find nothing to admire in one another's proposals. Which of these solutions do you prefer? Or is there another, a third, outside my range of vision? The second alternative appears presumptuous, but it must be remembered that we in this country have an unprecedented experience, not only of the operation of democratic institutions but of the framing of constitutions for other countries.

There is one isolated point you raise on which I should be specially grateful for further information. You suggest that the British authorities may partly be responsible for the communal strife. I can understand that an administrative act like the partition of Bengal might aggravate it. But I cannot understand how any agent of government could possibly influence the people who actually engage in strife. The important question to ask is what a Labour Government could do to put an end to those actions of its agents in India, whatever they may be, which increase hatred between Hindu and Muslim. It obviously could not replace most of these agents by men sympathetic with Indian liberty. What less drastic steps *could* it take?

If you are going to be so generous with your time and energy as to answer this letter, please do not trouble to follow my arguments in detail. I have shown you whether my mind has been drawn by the facts, only because I could explain our perplexity in no other way. In your answer I beg you to think of one thing only, how you would act if your name were not Gandhi but Leys, and God had given you some responsibility for coming to decisions which conceivably may become the decisions upon which some day a British Government may act. What arguments would you use with those whose remedy is to leave alone? And just what, as precisely as possible, would you advocate if in my place? I hope the comparison between us, that suggests that in my place you might conceivably think as I do. will not vex you. If mankind is a single family, none of the differences between its members should prevent them from helping one another.

Yours sincerely,
NORMAN LEYS

From a photos tat: S.N. 12168

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM NORMAN LEYS

BRAILSFORD,
NEAR DERBY,
August 9, 1926

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Your letter gives me real hope that with your help Socialists in this country may discover what it is their duty to do in regard to India. But do not imagine that I am "called upon to lead or guide the I.L.P". I am merely one out of about a dozen members of that party who because they have had some special experience have been asked by their fellow members to explore and discover what the duty of the whole party is. Will you allow the other members of the committee to read your letters, on condition that they must not get into print?

Your explanation of the difference between the various Indian parties and their programmes is most important. It has cleared away one mystery from my mind. Even more important is your prescription for the solution of the problem a Labour Government would have to meet in India. You would have such a government choose some one person to first of all confer with the leaders of Indian opinion and then decide on a constitution and programme which his party would impose on India. Public opinion would disapprove of a single person being given such a task. But I see no reason against its being given to a committee of three or four persons. There are of course immense difficulties in the way of your solution (which is identical with the second alternative in my last letter) but the great thing about it is that it is a real solution. The difficulties are of two sorts. One sort is inherent in British politics. Committees with us are representative. They are samples of a variety of types of mind. But a committee to draw up a constitution for India would have to be composed of men with the same mind. Important differences among its members would wreck its work. A greater difficulty would be to get the Labour Government to entrust the task to men who would disregard everything but the needs of India. The last Labour Government stultified itself by fear. It was afraid, not only of its enemies but of its own programme. I know Lord Oliver to be a true friend to India. But I feel sure he would admit now that if he had risked his all in framing even in bare outlines, a really democratic constitution, and urging it on his cabinet, he would have done the right thing. But even you cannot realize the storm it would create if the next Labour Government gave the Indian problem to be solved by men who sought a solution that would conform to two conditions and these two only, viz., that their constitution would work and that it would satisfy the bulk of Indian opinion. Unless the I.L.P. leavens the whole Labour Party very rapidly the next Labour Government will leave India to some "safe" man, and, if it expects him, either alone or with one or two others, to make a constitution, will expect one that would buy off with compromises the less rabid imperialists.

The other sort of difficulty comes from your end. You practically admit that

Muslims would resist by fighting if a democratic government were set up in India. I believe that Islam and democracy are as incompatible as oil and water. Do you expect that the rest of Indians would defend their political liberty against them? Or are British troops to be called in? In either case you must admit Muslim resistance would involve a kind of war, and that would mean that the blood of many innocents would be shed.

You put forward one suggestion that you think would help to diminish Muslim antagonism, "preference in education". Could you elaborate that idea? We have a plan in this country whereby in secondary, i.e., more advanced, schools which get grants of public money, a large number of the scholars must be poor and must be given free education. Is that the sort of thing you mean? Would you have the constitution include clauses that would compel the Provincial Governments to give a proportion of such "free places" to Muslim children, according to the number of Muslims in the population? Finally, there is insistent in my mind the dreadful question, to which I know there can be no answer, whether the inexperience of Indians will lead them to choose to represent them bad men, men who will deceive the people with flattery and others who will fill their own pockets. We even in the Labour Party have many of the former class, no doubt some of the latter class. If I were a member of a committee with the task of giving India self-government—the idea is ridiculous of course—I should feel in my bones that the whole scheme might break down. But I should also feel that the one chance of success lay in boldness, in throwing on the whole people of India more duties and more responsibility than they ask, in calling on them in effect to behave like free men. Such a scheme most I.C.S. men would I suppose refuse to work. Then would come the testing time. I feel sure-that Indians do exist to fill with efficiency the legislative, administrative and executive posts that will be vacant. But will the Indian people choose these men and not others, or rather choose enough of them to enable the machinery of government to work well enough to prevent new tyrannies arising, whether a new Akbar or a new Curzon is no matter?

Most gratefully yours,

NORMAN LEYS

[PS.]

It is quite impossible for me to visit India. A number of much more important people in the party have of course done as you suggest and have done all they could to discover what Indians would wish a Labour Government to do in India.

From a photos tat: S.N. 12170

APPENDIX III

LETTER FROM NORMAN LEYS

September 20, 1926

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I cannot find anything to differ from in your letter, although of course differences in histories and environments always leave their marks. I am most grateful for the time and thought you have given to my questions and shall not hesitate in future to consult you when perplexed about Indian affairs.

I have recently got to know one of your disciples, Tarini P. Sinha. He has recently been on a speaking tour among the miners who live about thirty miles from our house. Ten days ago he was arrested for something he had said. I went to him as soon as I heard of the arrest. His case has been postponed for a fortnight and he will come to our house from London on the way to the court. I have little doubt he will be discharged acquitted[1]. The only sentence that the police seem to have objected to was a criticism of patriotism and I have no doubt at all that he made it quite clear that what he condemned was not love of one's own country but the hatred of or even the slighting of other countries. In fact the real reason for his arrest seems to have been the language used by a very young Englishman who had been accompanying Mr. Sinha, and was in the habit of using vulgar terms of abuse and even encouraging the miners to injure those of their number who had accepted the terms of the mine-owners. If Mr. Sinha had been an Englishman he would have declined to continue to speak from the same platform as this man unless he gave better advice. But I think this man is sorry now.

One feature of your movement that we on this side of the world also share is the idea of restricting personal expenditure to an equal part of the national income. I have been trying to do it for years, and failing most of the time. Besides personal difficulties there are those which arise from the fact that family expenses are the chief trouble—and women are always more conservative than men. Also I don't think the idea a good one for the young, who ought to have more than an equal share. But some day I hope there will be a fraternity in this country of people who, while living outwardly in every way like those who have taken no vow, pledge themselves not to spend their money on themselves.

I think I remember Mr. Andrews saying he had sent you last year one of the copies of my book I had sent him for distribution. It is called *Kenya.* But if you have no copy please let me know, if you would be so good as to let me give you one. You will let me sign myself as we Socialists do.

Yours fraternally,

NORMAN LEYS

From a photos tat: S.N. 12172

[1] The source has both the words.

APPENDIX IV

(*AN APPEAL*)

MAHATMAJI,

You will, perhaps, be surprised and even annoyed at this somewhat unusual mode of approach to one who has never denied accessibility to the humblest of his followers. Our only excuse for this method of addressing you is to be found in the present deplorable condition of our national politics, the distressing divisions and cross-divisions of parties and principles, the clash of personalities and the clang of prejudice. You are, of course, not unaware of this nor can any other Indian heart bleed as freely as yours must be bleeding at the distressful spectacle presented by the country. But what, perhaps, we venture to think, is unknown to you and what we seek with all respect to bring to your notice, by this communication addressed through the medium of the Press, is the unspoken anxiety and eagerness of millions of your countrymen who have been long waiting for a lead from you, the one Indian who is a national figure and is trusted by all the warring communities and feared as well as respected by the Government. These your countrymen are unable to voice their sentiments and make their appeal to you because they respect the self-denying ordinance you have imposed on yourself. Sir, if it be not presumptuous in your eyes that we thus constitute ourselves their spokesmen and plead with you to resume the reins that you have voluntarily surrendered, will you permit us to make this appeal, in the name of the unspeaking masses of India, in the name of those who, while you were still at the helm, followed your orders and instructions without cavil or question, in the name of those sacred principles of liberty, equality and fraternity which are being trampled under foot simply because the one man who could hold up his head and withstand the onslaught of reactionarism in these days of distress and despair is not there at his post?

Sir, our reasons for this appeal cannot be unknown to you. We have been your followers ever since you started the campaign of non-violent non-co-operation and we have not ceased to believe in the central basis of your war against the present system of government. The country, probably, was not prepared to submit to the rigorous self-discipline, the relentless self-denial that the pursuit of your great ideal necessarily involved; and so in sheer despair at the unreadiness of your countrymen and despite the unspeakable anguish to yourself, you elected rather to countermand the campaign commencing at Bardoli than to proceed further at the cost of repeated and innumerable Chauri Chauras. With your incarceration, Sir, commenced the decay of the strident sentiment of national solidarity and of the determined resolve to win national freedom. Your release and the subsequent developments of the political situation are much too well known to need recall. But the nation has watched with breathless suspense the triumph after triumph of the forces of reaction, the surrender after surrender which you seemed to be making rather than permit the country to be cast into the unfathomable pit of irremediable wrongs. There are many, however, who have never understood the sublime self-sacrifice dictating your actions ever since

your unconditional release from jail and we express the sentiments of such doubters and waverers and the inarticulate but not insignificant millions as well as of ourselves when we say that the moment has come when you may, out of your infinite love for the motherland, make the greater sacrifice than all others you have made hitherto, of foregoing the vow you have imposed on yourself.

The more imperative reasons why the unquestioned leader of the Indian people should emerge at this critical juncture from his self-imposed seclusion are also not lacking. Besides the great, incalculable harm done to the soul of a country by foreign domination of the kind we are undergoing, India has today innumerable reasons to apprehend that, without a determined stand for their rights by her people, the interests of this country will be immolated on the altar of the greed of alien exploiters. You will, we hope, pardon our pointing out the lesson of the recent happenings in the Legislative Assembly. Because the Swarajists were absent, as a measure of their conjoint protest against the unruffled irresponsiveness of the bureaucracy, the Government dared to hasten with a Bill of prime importance to the material interests of the country, but the Swarajists, recognizing the immense importance of the Currency legislation, checkmated them by returning to the Assembly on the fateful day. There are, however, countless directions in which the bureaucracy can and will do material harm to the interests of this country, in the absence of any check or control from the representatives of the people. And if the latter are threatened with wholesale disintegration, as it seems too painfully evident by the recent attempts at Party-mongering by every self-styled leader and spokesman, there is a danger that, in the next Assembly and Councils, the anti-Nationalist majority will be overwhelming. The tragedy of the situation, however, is that such a majority will, as amatter of fact, reflect only a very small minority of the people of India. For we are convinced that the country is, even now, nationalist to the core. It only needs a leader who thinks their thoughts, hopes their hopes, feels their wrongs and fights their battle, without a thought for self. Sir, such a leader is rare; but India is fortunate in having at least one such citizen, to wit, yourself. Sir, we beg you in the name of your country, and for the reason not only of the wrongs it has already suffered but of those other countless wrongs it will be made to suffer, to forgo your vow of retirement, to abandon your resolve of self-effacement, to listen to the call of your country and resume the helm that none can hold like you. We are not making this prayer in the blind faith and the unreasoning feeling that somehow good will come of all the ills that oppress the world. We know the chaos into which the country has fallen, but we think if you, Sir, will respond to this call, both men and material will be found in abundance once more to wage the war of our country's liberation.

We have no desire to be invidious or personal. We have no intention to criticize, to praise or censure individuals for this or that act in your absence or during your retirement. We think the country has had enough of recriminations, and is ready to let bygones be bygones. But to achieve that, also, we need a real leader by right of his divine gifts of leadership that no amount of newspaper advertisement or platform assertion will infuse in any man, if he be lacking in the same by nature. And, if you

respond to this call, if you seek the *modus operandi* and a word by way of suggestion,—mere suggestion— is not unwelcome to you, may we mention that as the first act of your resumed authority, you should yourself call a fully representative conference,—representative not of individuals but of all the principles or interests that tear this country into hostile camps? In such a conference there will be room enough for Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya as well as Sir Abdur Rahim, Mr. Jayakar[1] as well as Mr. Patel[2]. Agitation has, we know, been set afoot of late to call a special session of our National Congress. We submit, most respectfully, that such session is as inexpedient as it would be unfruitful. For the Congress is necessarily bound by its constitution and rules of procedure that will not permit that unrestricted interchange of sentiments and views which seems to us to be the only way for clearing up the mass of misunderstanding and prejudice lying at the root of inter-communal quarrels. We are not unmindful of the fact that you, too, if you undertake to call a really representative conference of the kind we have ventured to suggest, will not be altogether exempt from a liability to censure. But your motives are above suspicion; your action is bound to be national in the highest sense of the term; and, at the very worst, it is a chance of personal misunderstanding or misrepresentation, which, we feel, a man of your grandeur can afford to run, and must run, in view of the great interests at stake. We have placed before you the country's unexpressed wish, and we leave it now to you to act as it seems best to you, without, we trust, doubting, that we remain, as ever, your most respectful and dutiful followers.

(DR.) SYED MAHMUD
(DURBAR) GOPALDAS A. DESAI
(DR.) SAIFUDDIN KITCHLEW
BURJORJI FRAMJI BHARUCHA
LAKSHMIDAS ROWJI TAIRSEE
NAVROJI H. BELGAMWALA
CHANDULAL DESAI
SRINIVAS V. KAUJALGI
SYED ABDULLAH BRELVI
JAISUKHLAL K. MEHTA
R. K. SIDHVA
SORAB P. KAPADIA

The Bombay Chronicle, 6-9-1926

APPENDIX V

EXTRACTS FROM BHAVANI DAYAL'S LETTER

September 9, 1926

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I am writing a book called *Fourteen Years in South Africa* which will contain a summary of my experiences there. I therefore take the liberty of addressing to you the following questions:

1. When the Indian Location near Johannesburg was transferred to the

[1] M. R. Jayakar
[2] Vithalbhai Patel

municipality, had you on behalf of the Indians consented to the transfer?

2. After the Location had been taken away, is it true that the municipality offered an alternative site to the Indians and that you advised the community not to accept it? If so, could you give your reasons?

3. Is it true that in connection with the Location you received £ 1,600/- from the municipality? And did you also receive anything from the Indians?

4. Was not the British Indian Association organized in place of the Transvaal Indian Association then existing in Johannesburg?

5. If giving finger-prints under compulsion was improper how was it proper to give them voluntarily? I feel somewhat baffled. Is there provision anywhere else in the world to take finger-prints except from prisoners?

6. If the Government wanted to stop unauthorized immigrants, couldn't this have been done with the help of photographs, which is the means used for identification all the world over?

7. About vested rights you once said: "By vested rights I understand the right of an Indian and his successors to live and trade in the township in which he was living and trading no matter how often he shifts his residence or business from place to place in the same township." Does this not imply that a trader or his successor who has the right to trade in a certain township retains that right even if he frequently goes on changing premises? Does not this also mean that save those actually engaged in trade or their successors "no other or no new" Indians would have any trading rights? So far as I understand by "protection of vested rights" you had meant "protection of the existing rights". Would you clarify?

8. 1 have just finished reading your *Satyagraha in South Africa.* In the preface of the book while there is a mention of Rajendra Babu's *Satyagraha in Champaran* there is not a word about [my] *History of the South African Satyagraha.* If my work was incomprehensive or unauthentic a line from you could have stopped its sale. And if the events described in it are authentic, then why has it been ignored? . . .

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 10990

APPENDIX VI

LETTER FROM BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

FEROZABAD,
AGRA,

SIR,

There are certain statements in your article "Out of the Frying-pan" published in the Young *India* of 9th Sept. which require explanation at your hands. You have quoted a passage from the report of Mr. S. A. Waiz to the l.I.C. Association which asserts that there were two 'chief reasons' which led the Colonial Indians to leave their land of birth: (l) The desire to visit the motherland and (2) The rumour that India had obtained self-government. Now as one who has been in close touch with many of

these returned emigrants for the last six years and who has visited their quarters not less than twenty times during this period, I can say that the second reason is pure fiction. When I was entrusted with the work of looking after these emigrants by Mr. Andrews and yourself, one or two persons brought forward the same reason before me and I made a thorough enquiry into it and found it absolutely without any foundation. Evidently Mr. Waiz has been misled by some of the clever people in Matiaburz.

Referring to the difficulties of these returned emigrants in India you say, "Here they are social lepers, not even knowing the language of the people." First of all I must say that most of them *do* know the language of the people. Surely they can express their ideas though not in grammatically correct Hindustani, I have myself talked with hundreds of these people in Matiaburz in Hindi and during my several visits to Matiaburz I did not come across a single Indian whom your phrase "not even knowing the language of the people" could apply. I can definitely say that most of them have fair knowledge of speaking Hindustani. Of course they do not know literary Hindi or Urdu.

Then there is one thing more that must not be forgotten, i.e., more than eighty per cent of the returned emigrants get absorbed in the villages of India and it is only less than twenty per cent who find their way to Matiaburz, and these people in Matiaburz have been offered opportunities for settlement many a time but they have all along refused to consider them. There can be no doubt that a good many of those who are at present stranded in Matiaburz suffered at the hands of their caste people, the zamindars and the police and the pandits, but as I have said they form only a small percentage of the total number of the returned emigrants. Thus your statement requires qualification.

You approve the policy of sending these returned emigrants to the "most suitable colony that would receive them". At present only British Guiana is ready to receive them and the Government of India is willing to send some of them to that Colony. Indeed there is a steamer waiting at Calcutta for some days past. It sails on 20th. Do you approve of the idea of Fiji Indians being sent to British Guiana? I ask this question because I am afraid that the Indian Government may take advantage of this statement of yours and despatch these Fiji Indians to British Guiana. At present the number of British Guiana returned emigrants in Matiaburz does not exceed 300, while the number of Fiji-returned is more than 600. I made an enquiry in Matiaburz 10 months ago and published my conclusions in the *Chand* of Allahabad. Extracts from this article of mine were read by a member of the Fiji Legislative Council in a meeting of the Council and he moved a resolution that 500 of these Fiji people should be taken to Fiji. The resolution was passed and was taken as a unanimous expression of opinion of the elected members of the Council. Now the Governor of Fiji has written to the Secretary of State for the Colonies on this subject. So there is just a possibility of Fiji-returned emigrants being sent back to Fiji.

You have mentioned four fundamental questions raised by this problem of stranded emigrants in Matiaburz: (I) emigration policy, (2) special case of British Guiana and Fiji, (3) scope of the friendly societies and (4) the duty of the nation. You

say that immediate relief should be given to the stranded emigrants in Calcutta. Now so far as the question of British Guiana returned emigrants being sent to that Colony is concerned, I entirely agree with you but I will not advise the Fiji Indians to be sent to British Guiana which has a climate very much worse than that of Fiji, which possesses an ideal climate. Indeed the four fundamental questions raised by you are inter-related and they require immediate attention. It is clear from the letter of the Government of India that they intend to recruit 500 families for British Guiana. Besides this thousands of Indians return from the Colonies every year and there is no doubt that the Matiaburz problem is not a temporary one, it will be recurring again and again for a long time to come. We must also remember that many of the Colonial Governments have been playing one mischief, i.e., they are sending their papers to India. After having given the best portion of their lives to the Colonies these unfortunate people return to their motherland complete moral and physical wrecks and these will never make good Colonists. We know a large number of these people were sent to Mauritius more than two years ago and most of them returned to India at the cost of the Mauritius Government! In our anxiety to give these people immediate relief we must not neglect this aspect of the question, i.e., how many of them will make good Colonists. Our duty does not finish simply in despatching these people in haste to any Colony.

The whole question requires a thorough discussion among those who are interested in it and who can do something for these people. When we have done so and arrived at some conclusions then will come the time to require the Government to do its duty. The discussion suggested by me will have to be preceded by a thorough enquiry about the condition of returned emigrants in the districts from which they go to Matiaburz.

Yours etc.,

BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

Young India 23-9-1926

APPENDIX VII

GANDHIJI'S QUESTIONS TO RAJCHANDRA AND HIS REPLIES[1]

1. Q. What is the Soul? Does it perform actions? Do past actions impede its progress or not?

A. (1) As there are physical objects like a pot, piece of cloth, etc., so there is an entity called the *atman* whose essence is knowledge. The former are impermanent. They cannot exist through all time in the same form. The *atman* is an imperishable entity which exists eternally in the same form. Anything which is not the product of

[1] The translation of the questions is reproduced from The letter accompanying Rajchandra's replies is dated Bombay, Saturday, *Aso Vad* 6, *1950* [October 20, 1894].

a combination of other elements is imperishable. We cannot think of the *atman* as being such a product, for, no matter in how many thousand different ways we combine material substances, such combinations cannot possibly produce life and consciousness. Every one of us can know from experience that by combining several elements we cannot produce in the compound a property which is not present in any of those elements. We do not find knowledge to be the essence of physical substances. If we change the forms of such substances and combine them, or if they change and combine by chance, the products will be of the same kind as they are; that is, they will be of a material nature and will not have knowledge as their essence. It is not possible, then, that the *atman*, which the seers describe as having knowledge as its essential character, can be produced by any combination of the elements (earth, water, air, space) of which physical substances like a pot, a piece of cloth, etc., are composed. The *atman* has knowledge as its essential character, whereas material substances are characterized by its absence. These are the eternal natures of the two.

This and a thousand other reasons prove the *atman* to be imperishable. Further reflection on the subject enables us to realize that the *atman* from its nature is imperishable. There is, therefore, no error or logical difficulty in believing that the *atman*, the existence of which is the cause of our experiencing happiness and suffering which also withdraws itself from either, and which is conscious of something which thinks and impels, is characterized by awareness as its essential nature and that, in virtue of this nature, it is an imperishable entity which exists eternally; on the contrary, belief in the *atman* has this merit of accepting truth.

(2) When the *atman* has attained a state of knowledge, the state resulting from a true understanding of its essence, it is the *karta*[1] of that state, the state of illumination (determination of what it truly is) and of the resulting state of pure awareness, which is its true nature. In a state of ignorance, it is the *karta* of the emotions of anger, love of honour, attachment, greed, etc., and when enjoying the fruits of these emotions, becomes, as the occasion may require, the *karta* of physical objects like a pot, a piece of cloth etc., that is, he is not the creator of the original substance of those objects, but is only the *karta* of the action of imposing some form on it. This latter state is described in Jainism as karma, and in Vedanta as illusion or in other similar terms. If we reflect carefully on the matter, we shall clearly see that the *atman* cannot be the *karta* of physical objects or emotions like anger, that it is *karta* only of the state of self-realization.

(3) The karmas performed while in the state of ignorance are like seed in the beginning and grow into a tree in course of time; in other words, the *atman* has to suffer the consequences of those karmas. Just as contact with fire produces the experience of heat, the natural end of which is pain, so the *atman*, being the *karta* of emotions of anger, etc., has to suffer, as consequence, pain in the form of birth, old

[1] Author, doer

age and death. You should carefully reflect over this idea and ask me any question which may arise in your mind about it, for an understanding of the state from which the soul must withdraw itself and the effort to withdraw will bring deliverance to it.

2. Q. What is God? Is He the creator of the universe?

A. (1) You, I and others are souls suffering the bondage of karma. The soul's existence in its natural state, that is, in freedom from karma and purely as the *atman* that it is, is the state of being Ishvar.[1] That which has the *aishvarya*[2] of knowledge, etc., may be described as Ishvar. This Ishvarhood is the natural state of the *atman*, which is not revealed when it is engaged in karmas. When the *atman* however, realizes that being engaged in karma is not its real nature and fixes its attention on itself, then alone do omniscience, power etc., manifest themselves in it and we can see nothing among all the objects in the universe with greater power than the *atman's*. It is, therefore, my positive belief that Ishvar is another name for *atman* and does not signify a different Being of greater power.

(2) Ishvar is not the creator ot the universe, that is, atoms, space, etc., can be conceived only as imperishable entities and not as created from some other substance. If it is stated that they came into being from Ishvar, that, too, does not seem likely; for, if we believe that Ishvar is a spirit, how can atoms, space, etc., come into being from Him? For it is impossible that matter can come into existence from that which is spirit. If Ishvar is regarded as material, He will then lose His Ishvarhood; also, a spiritual entity like the soul cannot come into being from such an Ishvar. If we regard Him as being both matter and spirit, that only means that we are pleased to call the world, which is both matter and spirit, by another name, Ishvar. Instead of doing that, it is better to call the world the world: If we hold that atoms, space, etc., are imperishable entities and that Ishvar only awards the fruits of karma, this too, cannot be proved. Convincing reasons have been given in support of this view in *Shatdarshan Samuchchaya*[3].

3. Q. What is *moksha*?

A. While the *atman* is in the state of ignorance, characterized by anger, etc., it is under the bondage of the body, and complete cessation of such a state, deliverance from it, is described by seers as *moksha*. A little reflection shows this to be logical and convincing.

4. Q. Is it possible for a person to know for certain, while he is still living, whether or not he will attain *moksha*.

A. If our arms are tied with a rope wound several times round them and if the twists of the rope are loosened one after another, we feel the loosening of each twist

[1] Ruler, God
[2] Power
[3] A philosophical treatise; Rajchandra had earlier sent a copy of it to Gandhiji.

and in the end become conscious of the rope having been removed. In like manner as the innumerable bonds, the products of ignorance, which bind the *atman* loosen one by one, the latter becomes conscious of progressing towards *moksha*, and when the bonds are about to fall off, the *atman* shines forth with the light of its essence and knows beyond doubt that it is about to be delivered from the bonds of ignorance. While still dwelling in this body, it comes out of the state of ignorance, etc., and becomes conscious of its pure essence and of its absolute otherness and freedom from all relations. In other words, it is possible to experience the state of *moksha* even while living.

5. Q. It is said that after his death, a man may, according to his actions, be reborn as an animal, a tree or even a stone. Is this a fact?

A. After the soul has left the body, it attains a state according to the merit it has earned through its actions; hence, it may be born even as a lower creature, or may have even to assume a body of earth[1] and, devoid of the other four senses suffer the fruits of its karma [through the sense of touch alone]. This does not mean, however, that it becomes pure stone or earth. The soul assumes a body of stone, but, even then, it exists as soul, though its existence is not manifest to us. Since in that condition the other four senses are unmanifest, the soul may be described as having an earth-body. In the course of time, the soul leaves such a body after it has enjoyed the fruits of its karmas and then the stone material exists merely as atoms and, because the soul has left it, does not possess the instinct of food, etc. In other words, the idea is not that stone itself, which is pure matter, becomes a soul. It is in order to enjoy the fruits of those karmas which, because of their hard nature, compels the soul to take on a body possessing only one sense, the sense of touch the other senses remaining unmanifest, that it is born in an earth-body; it does not, however, become pure earth or stone. The body is like a garment to the soul, and is not its essence.

[6. & 7.][2] The answer to Q. 6 is contained in the reply given above as also the answer to Q. 7 which is that earth or stone as such cannot be the *karta*s of any karma. It is the soul which has entered them and lives in them that is the *karta* of karmas, and even so, the relation between the two is like milk and water. Just as, even when they are mixed, milk is milk and water is water, so also the soul through the binding effect of its karmas which confines it to the possession of one sense only, seems to have become stone or mere matter, but, in its essential nature, it is a soul and even in that state it possesses the instincts of hunger, fear etc., though they remain unmanifest.

8. Q. What is Arya Dharma? Do all Indian religions originate from the Vedas?

A. (1) In defining Arya Dharma, everyone has his own religion in view.

[1] Probably as a particle of organic matter present in the earth

[2] The questions are not given in the source in Gandhiji's words and, therefore, they are not included in the questions translated in Vol. I.

Commonly a Jain describes Jainism, a Buddhist describes Buddhism and a Vedantin describes Vedanta as Arya Dharma. But seers describe only that Arya—noble—path as Arya Dharma which enables the soul to realize its true nature, and rightly so.

(2) It is impossible that all religions had their origin in the Vedas. I know from experience that great souls like the [Jain] Tirthankars[1] have revealed knowledge of a thousand times deeper import than what the Vedas contain. I, therefore, believe that, since something imperfect cannot be the origin of a perfect thing, we are not justified in asserting that all religions had originated from the Vedas. We may believe that Vaishnavism and other sects had their origin in the Vedas. It seems that the latter existed before the time of the Buddha and Mahavira, the last teacher of Jainism; it also seems likely that they are really ancient works. But we cannot say that only that which is ancient is true or perfect, nor that what came later is necessarily untrue or imperfect. Apart from this, the ideas propounded in the Vedas and in Jain doctrines have existed from the beginning of time; only the outward forms changed. There is no totally new creation or absolute destruction. Since we may believe that the ideas propounded by the Vedas and in the doctrines of Jainism and other religions have existed from the beginning of time, where is the room for controversy? All the same, it is only right that you and I and others should reflect and consider which of these systems of ideas has more power—truth—in them.

9. Q. Who composed the Vedas? Are they *anadi*[2] ? If so, what does *anadi* mean?

A. (1) The Vedas were probably composed a long time ago.

(2) No scripture, considered as a book, is *anadi*; but with respect to the ideas propounded in them, all scriptures are *anadi*, for there have been souls at all times who taught them in one form or another. It cannot be otherwise. The emotions of anger, etc., are *anadi* and so are those of forgiveness, etc. The way of violence, too, is *anadi*, as is the path of non-violence. What we should consider is which of these conduce to the welfate of the soul?Both classes of things are *anadi*, though sometimes the one and sometimes the other may be predominant.

10. Q. Who is the author of the *Gita*? Is God its author? Is there any evidence that He is?

A. (1) The replies given above partly answer this question; if by God we mean a person who has attained illumination—perfect illuminations—then we can say that the *Gita* was composed by God. If, however, we accept God as being all-pervading, like the sky, eternally existing and passive, the *Gita* or any other book cannot have been composed by Him. For, writing a book is an ordinary activity undertaken at a particular point in time and is not *anadi*.

[1] Self-realized men whose teachings evolved into Jainism
[2] Without a beginning

(2) The *Gita* is believed to be the work of Veda Vyasa and, since Lord Krishna had propounded this teaching to Arjuna, He is said to be its real author. This may be true. The work is indeed great. The ideas it propounds have been taught from time immemorial, but it is not possible that these same verses have existed from the beginning of time. Nor is it likely that they were composed by God Who does nothing. They can have been composed only by an embodied soul, who acts. There is no harm, therefore, in saying that a perfectly illuminated person is God, and that a Shastra taught by him is one revealed by God.

11. Q. Does any merit accrue from the sacrifice of animals or other things?

A. It is always sinful to kill an animal to give it as an offering in sacrifice or injure it in any way, even if this is done for the purpose of a sacrifice or living in the very abode of God. The practice of giving gifts at the time of a sacrifice does earn some merit, but since this is accompanied with violence it, too, deserves no commendation.

12. Q. If a claim is put forward that a particular religion is the best, may we not ask the claimant for proof?

A. If no proof is required and if any such claim is made without proof in its support, reason and unreason, dharma and *adharma*, everything will have to be accepted as "the best" . Only the test of proof can show what is the best and what is not. That religion alone is the best and is truly strong, which is most helpful in destroying the bondage of worldly life and can establish us in the state which is our essence.

13. Q. Do you know anything about Christianity? If so, what do you think of it?

A. I know something in general about Christianity. Even a little study of the subject will show that no other country has gone so deep as India and discovered a religious path which can rival the one discovered by the great seers of India. Among the other religions, Christianity asserts the eternal subjection of the soul, even in the state of *moksha*. It does not give a true description of the *anadi* state of the soul, of the law of karma or of the cessation of karma, and I am not likely, therefore, to accept the view that it is the best religion. It does not seem to offer a satisfactory solution of the problems which I have mentioned. I am not making this statement in a sectarian spirit. If you wish to ask more questions on this, you may, and then it will be possible for me to resolve your doubts still further.

14. Q. The Christians hold that the Bible is divinely inspired and that Christ was an incarnation of God, being his son. Was He?

A. This is a matter of faith and cannot be proved rationally. What I said above concerning the claim that the *Gita* and the Vedas are divinely inspired may be applied to the Bible too. It is impossible that God, who is free from birth and death will incarnate Himself as a human being; for it is the changes of attachment, aversion,

etc., which are the cause of birth and it does not appeal to reason that God, who has no attachment and aversion, will take birth as a human being. The idea that Jesus is, and was, the son of God may perhaps be acceptable if we interpret the belief as an allegory; otherwise, tested by the canons of reason, it is difficult to accept. How can we say that God, Who is free, has or had a son? If we assert that He has or had one, what was the manner of the son's birth? If we believe that both God and His son are *anadi*, how can we explain their being father and son? These and other objections deserve examination. If we reflect over them, I think the belief will not be found acceptable.

15. Q. Were all the Old Testament prophecies fulfilled in Christ?

A. Even if they were, that should only make us think about the two scriptures. Nor is the act of the prophecies having been fulfilled a sufficiently strong reason to justify us in asserting that Jesus was an incarnation of God, for the birth of a great soul can also be predicted with the help of astrology. Even if, however, someone foretold the event by virtue of his knowledge, unless it is established that that person had perfect knowledge of the path to *moksha*, the fact of his having predicted a future event appeals only to faith as proof of a thing and we cannot believe that no reasoning on the opposite side can diminish its force.

[16][1] . *A.* In this question you ask about the miracles attributed to Jesus Christ. If it is said that he put a soul back into the body which it had left, or that he put another soul in its place, this could not possibly have been done. If it could be done, the law of karma would lose its meaning. Apart from this, mastery of yoga techniques enables a person to perform certain miracles, and if it is claimed that Jesus had such powers we cannot assert that the claim is false or impossible. Such yogic powers are of no consequence compared to the power of the *atman*; the latter is infinitely greater than the powers attained by yoga. You may ask more questions on this subject when we meet.

17. Q. Can anyone remember his past lives or have an idea of his future lives?

A. This is quite possible. One whose knowledge has become pure may be able to do so. We can infer the possibility of rain from certain signs in the clouds: similarly, from the actions of a soul in this life, we can understand, perhaps partially, their causes in its previous existence. We can also judge from the nature of the actions what results they are likely to have. On further reflection, we can also know what kind of a future existence the soul is likely to have or what kind of a past existence it had.

18. Q. If yes, who can?

A. The answer to this is contained in the reply above.

19. Q. You have given the names of some who have attained *moksha*. What is the authority for this statement?

A. If you have addressed this question personally to me, I may say in reply that

[1] This is omitted in the translation of the questions in.

one can to some extent infer from one's own experience how a person whose involvement in earthly existence is about to end is likely to speak or act, and on the basis of this one can assert whether or not such a person attained *moksha*. In most cases, we can also get from Shastras reasons in support of our conclusion.

20. Q. What makes you say that even Buddha did not attain *moksha*?

A. On the basis of the teachings of Buddhist scriptures. If his views were the same as these, then they seem to have been inconsistent with one another, and that is not a mark of perfect illumination. If a person has not attained perfect illumination his attachments and aversions are not likely to disappear so long as he is in such a state; earthly existence is a necessary consequence. One cannot, therefore, claim such a person to have attained absolute *moksha*. Moreover, it is impossible for you and me to know from independent sources that the Buddha's views were different from those contained in the teachings attributed to him. Even so, if it is asserted that his views were in fact different and proof given in support of the assertion, there is no reason why we should not accept that as possible.

21. Q. What will finally happen to this world?

A. It does not seem rationally possible to me that all souls will attain absolute *moksha* or that the world will perish completely. It is likely to continue to exist for ever in the same state as at present. Some aspect of it may undergo transformation and almost disappear, and another may grow; such is the nature of the world that, if there is growth in one sphere, there is decline in another. Having regard to this fact, and after deep reflection, it seems impossible to me that this world will perish completely. By "world" we do not mean this earth only.

22. Q. Will the world be morally better off in the future?

A. It would not be proper to encourage any soul which loves immorality to take wrong advantage of the answer to this question. All modes in this world, including morality and immorality, have existed from the beginning of time. But it is possible for you and me to eschew immorality and accept morality, and it is the duty of the *atman* to do that. It is not possible to assert that immorality will be given up by all and morality will prevail, for such an extreme state cannot come about.

23. Q. Is there anything like total destruction of the world?

A. If by *pralaya* is meant total destruction, that is not possible, for complete destruction of all that exists is impossible. If by *pralaya* is meant the merging of everything in God, the belief is accepted in some doctrines but that does not seem possible to me. For, how can all objects and all souls arrive in an identical state so that such a thing may happen? If they ever do, then diversity cannot develop again. If we accept the possibility of *pralaya* on the supposition of unmanifest diversity in the souls and manifest sameness, how can diversity exist except through connection with a body? If we believe that such connection exists [in the state of *pralaya*], we shall have to believe further that all souls will have one sense only and in doing so

we shall reject, without reason, the possibility of other modes of existence. In other words, we shall have to suppose that a soul which had attained a higher state and was about to be free for ever from the contingency of existence with one sense only had none the less to be in such a state. This and many similar doubts arise. A *pralaya* involving all souls is impossible.

24. Q. Can an illiterate person attain *moksha* through *bhakti* alone?

A. *Bhakti* is a cause of knowledge and knowledge of *moksha*. If by an illiterate person we mean one without knowledge of letters, it is not impossible that he may cultivate *bhakti*. Every soul has knowledge as its essence. The power of *bhakti* purifies knowledge, and pure knowledge becomes the cause of *moksha*. I do not believe that, without the manifestation of perfect knowledge, absolute *moksha* is possible. Nor need I point out that knowledge of letters is contained in perfect [spiritual] knowledge. It cannot be true that knowledge of letters is a cause of *moksha* and that, without it, self-realization is not possible.

25. Q. Rama and Krishna are described as incarnations of God. What does that mean? Were they God Himself or only a part of Him? Can we attain salvation through faith in them?

A. (1) I, too, am convinced that both were souls of great holiness. Each of them, being an *atman*, was God, If it is a fact that all the coverings over their *atman* had fallen off, there need be no dispute about their having attained absolute *moksha*. I do not think that any soul can be a portion of God, for I can think of a thousand reasons against such a belief. If we believe a soul to be a portion of God, the belief in bondage and *moksha* will have no meaning. For then God Himself will be the cause of ignorance, etc., and if that is true, He ceases to be God. In other words, in being regarded as Lord of the soul God actually loses something from His status. Moreover, if we believe that the soul is a portion of God, what motive will a person have to strive for anything? For in that case the soul cannot be regarded as the *karta* of any thing. In view of this and other objections, I am not prepared to believe any soul to be a portion of God; how, then, can I believe that such was the case with great and holy souls like Rama and Krishna? There is no error in believing that these two were unmanifest God, but it is doubtful whether perfect Godhood had become manifest in them.

(2) The question whether we can attain *moksha* through faith in them can be easily answered. *Moksha* means absence of or deliverance from all forms of attachment, ignorance, etc. It can be attained when we cultivate faith in a person whose teaching will enable us to win such freedom from attachment and ignorance, and, reflecting on our true essence, come to have the same faith in our *atman* that we have in the teacher and identify ourselves with his personality. Worship of any kind other than this cannot win absolute *moksha*. It may help one to win the means of *moksha*, but even that cannot be asserted with certainty.

26. Q. Who were Brahma, Vishnu and Siva?

A. If people believed in three *gunas*[1] as the cause of creation and personified them [as Brahma, Vishnu and Siva], this or similar explanations may make the belief plausible. But I am not particularly disposed to believe that they are what the *Puranas* describe them to be, for some of the descriptions appear to be allegories intended for religious instruction. Even so, I think it would be better that we, too, try to profit from the instruction they contain rather than attempt in vain to ascertain the principles embodied in the personification of Brahma, and so on.

27. Q. If a snake is about to bite me, should I allow myself to be bitten or should I kill it, supposing that that is the only way in which I can save myself?

A. One hesitates to advise you that you should let the snake bite you. Nevertheless, how can it be right for you, if you have realized that the body is perishable, to kill, for protecting a body which has no real value to you, a creature which clings to it with love? For anyone who desires his spiritual welfare, the best course is to let his body perish in such circumstances. But how should a person who does not desire spiritual welfare behave? My only reply to such a question is, how can I advise such a person that he should pass through hell and similar worlds, that is, that he should kill the snake? If the person lacks the culture of Aryan character, one may advise him to kill the snake, but we should wish that neither you nor I will even dream of being such a person.

[From Gujarati]

Shrimad Rajchandra

[1] Modes of cosmic energy

1. *PROSTITUTION OF IDEALS*

I extract the following from a letter on the remarriage of child widows:

> In your reply to B., Agra, in the *Young India* of September 23,[1] you say that child widows should be remarried by their parents. How can this be done by those parents who perform *kanyadan*, i.e., who give their daughters in marriage according to Shastric injunctions? Surely, it is impossible for parents who have most solemnly and by religious rites renounced all claims on their daughter in favour of their son-in-law to give her in marriage after his death to another person. She may of her own accord remarry if she will, but since she was given by her parents as a gift or donation (*dan*) to her husband, no one in the world after the death of her husband has any right to give her in marriage. And for the same reason she herself does not possess any right to remarry. She would, therefore, be faithless and a traitress to her dead husband if she remarried without his express consent given at the time of his death. From a logical point of view, it is thus impossible for a widow—be she child, young or old—who was married according to *kanyadan* system, which is prevalent amongst most *sanatanis*, to remarry unless her husband had given her permission to do so. A true *sanatani* husband cannot, however, brook the idea of giving such permission. He will rather fain agree to his wife's becoming *sati*, if she can or, at any rate, will like her to spend the rest of her life in devotion to his memory or, which is the same thing, in devotion to God. In this he will solely be actuated by the desire or sense of duty to help the preservation of the high ideals of Hindu marriage and widowhood, which are complementary to and not independent of each other.

I regard this kind of argument as prostitution of a high ideal. No doubt the correspondent means well, but his over-anxiety about purity of woman makes him lose sight of elementary justice. What is *kanyadan* in the case of little children? Has a father any rights of property over his children? He is their protector, not owner. And he forfeits the privilege of protection when he abuses it by seeking to barter away the liberty of his ward. Again, how can a donation be made to a child who is incapable of receiving a gift? There is no gift where the capacity to receive is lacking. Surely *kanyadan* is a mystic, religious rite with a spiritual significance. To use such terms in their

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 23-9-1926.

literal sense is an abuse of language and religion. One may as well take literally the mystic language of the *Puranas* and believe in the earth being a flat dish sustained on the hood of a thousand-headed snake and Divinity lying in soft ease on an ocean of milk for his bed.

The least that a parent, who has so abused his trust as to give in marriage an infant to an old man in his dotage or to a boy hardly out of his teens, can do is to purge himself of his sin by remarrying the daughter when she becomes widowed. As I have said in a previous note[1], such marriages should be declared null and void from the beginning.

Young India, 11-11-1926

2. *HANDLOOM* v. *SPINNING-WHEEL*

It seems now to be generally recognized that India, having more than 71 per cent of her population as agriculturists most of whom are idle for nearly six months in the year, needs a supplementary industry and that that industry to be universal can only be hand-spinning. But some contend that hand-weaving is better because it is more remunerative and, therefore, a better proposition.

Now let us understand this argument in some detail. It is said that hand-weaving gives about eight annas per day as against one anna from hand-spinning. Therefore, if a person works for only two hours per day, he will earn from hand-weaving two annas against one pice in the same time from hand-spinning. It is added that one pice would be no economic attraction to anybody and that, if hand-weaving could be presented to the people, it would be wrong to ask them to do hand-spinning *instead*. The protagonists of the handloom contend further that there is no difficulty about getting as much mill-spun yarn as may be required for India's needs, and, finally, they say that even for the sake of keeping alive hand-weaving, which has hitherto defied the competition of weaving-mills, it should be pushed with vigour and determination. Some of the protagonists of hand-weaving even go so far as to say that the hand-spinning movement is mischievous in that it turns people's attention away from the possible industry of hand-weaving and misleads them into supporting an impossible industry which has died of its own inherent weakness.

[1] *Vide* "Defending Child Marriage", 9-9-1926.

Let us test this specious-looking argument.

In the first instance, hand-weaving is not a practicable proposition as a supplementary industry, because it is not easy to teach, it has never been universal in India, it requires several hands to work at, it cannot be done during odd moments. It has been and can only be generally an independent occupation and is in the majority of cases the sole occupation like shoe-making or smithy.

Moreover hand-weaving cannot be universal in the same sense that hand-spinning can be. India needs 4,661 million yards of cloth per year. A weaver weaves on an average three quarters of a yard per hour of rough khaddar. Therefore, if all foreign, indigenous or mill-made cloth could be excluded, at the most nine million weavers working at the rate of two hours per day would be required to produce the whole of our annual requirements. If it be contended that not so many weavers but so many families would be occupied, then the two annas for two hours would have to be distributed among many, thus materially reducing the earnings of the individual per day.

Now let us consider the possibilities of spinning. We know that it was at one time the *universal* supplementry industry of India. Millions have not yet forgotten the art and tens of thousands have even now spinning-wheels in their homes. Hand-spinning is therefore capable of immediate and limitless extension. And as it has been found that ten spinners supply one weaver, against nine million weavers ninety million spinners would be able to add to their earnings what to them will be a material and welcome addition, i.e., at least 25 per cent of their income. I have assumed the very high figure of 40 rupees per year per head to be the average income. Unlike weaving, spinning may be interrupted any moment and, therefore, it can be done during all odd moments. Spinning is learnt easily and quickly and the spinner begins to draw some thread from the very commencement.

Moreover, it is wrong to rely upon an unfailing supply of mill-yarn. Hand-weaving and mill-weaving are not complementary propositions. They are mutually antagonistic, the tendency of weaving mills, like all machinery, always being to displace the product of the hand. If, therefore, hand-weaving could become a supplementary industry on a large scale, it would have to be solely dependent on mills which would naturally squeeze the last pie from the weaver for the supply of yarn and would scrap it at the first opportunity.

On the other hand, hand-spinning and hand-weaving are mutually complementary, as can be today proved from the experience of the existing spinning depots. Even as I write, I have letters from co-workers saying that in their centres they have to send away weavers for want of yarn.

It is little known that a vast number of weavers of mill yarn are in the hands of *sowcars*, and they must be, so long as they rely upon the mill product. The village economy demands that the weaver should receive his yarn not from the middleman but from his fellow-worker the farmer.

Again, so far as can be ascertained, there are at present some twenty lakhs of weavers at work. Every additional loom means an outlay of at least Rs. 15. Every additional wheel need not mean more than Rs. $3^1/_2$. The Khadi Pratishthan pattern costs only Rs. $2^1/_2$. And, at a pinch, even an improvised *takli* which need not cost anything can be impressed into service.

Thus, the spinning-wheel appears to be the only foundation on which satisfactory village life can be constructed. It is the centre round which alone it is possible to build up village reorganization.

But it is said that one pice per two hours is no economic attraction to even the poor villager. In the first place, the wheel is not meant for, it is not now presented to, any person who has a more remunerative employment. How is it that thousands of women are today walking a few miles daily or weekly to receive raw cotton and the few pice for the yarn they deliver? If a loom were suggested to them, they would not take it up, they would not have the time or the ability for it. Town-dwellers have no notion of the gnawing poverty of the masses of India. Let us not talk of the machine age in their case. The machinery of Manchester has robbed them of the butter to their bread which the wheel was, for it has been replaced by nothing else equal to it or better. For these, therefore, the spinning-wheel is their only hope.

I do not here examine the more ambitious but chimerical proposals for agricultural improvements. There is room enough for them, I have no doubt. But that is a matter of time and education, whereas the ever-growing poverty demands an immediate remedy which the wheel alone supplies. The wheel does not displace or disregard possibilities in the shape of such improvements. It is a prelude to them. Wherever it has gone, it is affecting the lives of villagers in a variety of

ways and it enables the townspeople to establish a living contct with the villagers and their villages.

"If hand-spinning is all you say, how is it that it has not already been universally adopted?", asks the critic. The question is quite fair. The answer is simple. The message of the wheel has to be carried to a people who have no hope, no initiative left in them and who would, if left to themselves, starve and die rather than work and live. Such was not the case before, but long neglect has made laziness a habit with them. That laziness can only be removed by the living contact and example of men of character and industry plying the wheel before them and by gently showing them the way. The second great difficulty is the absence of a ready market for khaddar. I confess that it cannot for the time being compete with mill-cloth. I will not engage in any such killing competition. The capitalist may for capturing the market sell his calico for nothing. The manufacturer whose only capital is labour cannot afford to do so. Can there be any competition between the dead artificial rose, however symmetrical it may be, and the living rose whose two petals will not be alike, or can there be any competition between a wax statue of Cromwell and the living one? Khaddar is a living thing. But India has lost her eye for the real art and is, therefore, satisfied with the glossy exterior, Revive the healthy national taste for khaddar and you will find every village a busy hive. As it is, the resouces of khaddar organizations are taxed to the utmost in order to create a market for the article. The marvel is that in spite of heavy odds against it, the movement is making headway. Over twelve lacs worth of khaddar was sold only last year. But it is nothing to boast of when one thinks of what needs to be done.

I have thus summarized the case for the spinning-wheel as a supplementary industry as against the handloom. Let there be no confusion of thought. I am not against the handloom. It is a great and thriving cottage industry. It will progress automatically if the spinning-wheel succeeds. It is bound to die if the wheel fails.

I invite criticism of the argument and shall gladly retrace my steps if the argument or the facts cannot be sustained.

Young India, 11-11-1926

3. *COW-PROTECTION*

A correspondent writes:

> As most of the Hindus intuitively feel that the cow should be protected at all events, I too do so. I had witnessed the miserable sight of starving cows in their prime of life, being sold in lots, to Mussalman hide merchants in the famine-stricken areas of the Ceded Districts.
>
> The Hindu scriptures alone seem to have enjoined cow-protection on its followers. I have been trying to understand the philosophy of it. If the cow has to be protected purely from selfish motives, on account of its continuous utility from its birth till after its death, cow-protection should have become universal and not confined to Hindus alone, for, mankind by instinct is selfish. If, on the other hand, it has to be protected on account of its meek and harmless nature, there are other animals as the sheep and deer which also equally require human protection. What then is the special virtue in the cow, exclusively known or useful to the Hindu, over other domestic animals at any rate? If Hindus, not excluding the vegetarian and orthodox sections, are entitled to kill buffaloes, goats, sheep, etc., for purposes of food or sacrifice, what right have we to resent Mussalmans killing the cow for sacrifice or food?
>
> Would not the appeal of the Hindus to the Mussalmans to protect the cow be more reasonable and effective, if we Hindus ourselves gave up animal killing for food or sacrifice?

There is much to be said in favour of the argument adopted by the correspondent. But man does not govern himself by logic. He is a complex being; therefore, a multiplicity of considerations act upon him and move him to do or to refrain from doing things. Logically speaking, therefore, a Hindu who protects the cow should protect every animal. But taking all things into consideration, we may not cavil at his protecting the cow because he fails to protect the other animals. The only question, therefore, to consider is whether he is right in protecting the cow. And he cannot be wrong in so doing if non-killing of animals generally may be regarded as a duty for one who believes in ahimsa. And every Hindu, and for that matter every man of religion, does so. The duty of not killing animals generally and, therefore, protecting them must be accepted as an indisputable fact. It is then so much to the credit of Hinduism that it has taken up cow-protection as a duty. And he is a poor specimen of Hinduism who stops merely at cow-protection when he can extend the arm of protection to other animals. The cow merely stands as a symbol, and protection of the cow is the least he is expected to undertake. But, as I

have shown already in my previous writings, he is failing even in this elementary obligation.

The motive that actuates cow-protection is not 'purely selfish', though selfish consideration undoubtedly enters into it. If it was purely selfish, the cow would be killed as in other countries after it had ceased to give full use. The Hindus will not kill the cow even though she may be a heavy burden. The numberless *goshalas* that have been established by charitably-minded people for tending disabled and useless cows is in a way an eloquent testimony of the effort that is being made in the direction. Though they are today very poor institutions for the object to be achieved, the fact does not detract from the value of the motive behind the act.

The philosophy of cow-protection therefore is, in my opinion, sublime. It immediately puts the animal creation on the same level with man so far as the right to live is concerned. But it is no part of Hinduism to prevent by force cow-slaughter by those who do not believe in cow-protection. Hindus will bring the Mussalmans and the rest of the world to their way of thinking only by living the religion of ahimsa as fully as it is humanly possible. They must rely upon the working of the great principle in their own lives and making its effective appeal to the outer world. They will not convert the latter by force of arms. They certainly can by force of ahimsa. We little realize the matchless potency of ahimsa when it is thoroughly put into active operation.

Young India, 11-11-1926

4. TAKLI IN SCHOOLS

Dr. Profulla Chandra Ghosh of Khadi Pratishthan sends me the following notes on the introduction of *takli* in schools:[1]

I congratulate the authorities in charge of the Malikanda national school. A spinning-wheel is any day superior to the *takli* for obtaining a larger quantity of yarn. And I have never intended to give absolute preference to the *takli* over the wheel. But I have little doubt

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had argued, giving figures about the progress in spinning on the charkha by boys of the national school at Malikanda, Dacca, that it could not be said that *takli* was always to be preferred to the charkha in schools. That could be done only in the case of the younger boys who could not ply the charkha.

in my mind that, in the large number of schools we have, the *takli* yields better results than the spinning-wheel as has been amply shown by general experience. The reasons are obvious. School-rooms are too small to accommodate the spinning-wheels for all the boys and girls. Secondly, even if room could be found, they are far too expensive compared to the *takli.* Thirdly, the wheel frequently goes out of order and neither the school masters nor the pupils are able to set them right in a moment. Once the wheel goes out of order, it often takes a long time to repair it. It is not possible to supervise the work of a large number of boys spinning at the wheel. On the other hand, the *takli* is incredibly cheap. It can be worked by thousands at a time. It can be handled even in a crowded room requiring practically no space for its accommodation. It rarely goes out of order and when it does, it can be instantaneously replaced. *Takli*-spinning can be supervised no matter how many pupils engage in the operation. The quantitative result of mass spinning on the *takli* is on the whole more satisfactory than on the wheel. But having said all this in praise of the *takli*, needless to say I can have no objection to any school taking up the wheel in preference to the *takli* if it can overcome the objections mentioned by me.

Young India, 11-11-1926

5. *NOTES*

KHADDAR AND GOVERNMENT SERVANTS

A correspondent says:

> Some of the Government servants are terribly afraid to purchase hand-spun and hand-woven cloth when our hawkers approach them. They are under the impression that they should not purchase khaddar, yet the Bombay Government is openly appealing to the people to encourage Indian industries. Can you say whether the Madras Government servants are allowed to purchase hand-spun and hand-woven cloth without fear of the Government?

I wish I could answer the question. But I have not the power. It is however inconceivable to me that any Government should proscribe the use of hand-spun and hand-woven cloth. It is possible to conceive the insistence on a form of dress, but certainly not the kind of cloth to be used. It is painful to find that there are Government servants who labour under imaginary fears. I have seen many Government servants making free use of khaddar without let or hindrance. If I was a servant

of the Madras Government, I should unhesitatingly wear khaddar unless there was positive prohibition to the contrary in which case I should resign.

KHADI WORK AND VOLUNTEERS

Dr. Hardiker has sent me the programme of the work to be done by the Karnatak Branch of the Hindustani Seva Dal. I take the following from the copy before me:

> The organizers and workers of the Karnatak Branch of the Hindustani Seva Dal met at the Dal Office, Hubli, on the 13th, 14th and 15th October, 1926, with Mr. Hoskoppa Krishnarao in the chair and after full discussion passed the following resolutions regarding the future programme of work to be undertaken by them:
>
> *Resolution* 1: This meeting of the organizers and workers of the Karnatak Dal resolves that they should concentrate their attention on the following programme:
>
> (a) To sell khaddar worth Rs. 40,000 (forty thousand) in Karnatak within seventy-two appointed days beginning from the 1st of February 1927 to the 13th midnight of April 1927 (including the National Week), under a scheme to be settled finally by Dr. Hardiker and Mr. Hoskoppa Krishnarao, in consultation with Mahatma Gandhi, Sjts. G. B. Deshpande and S. V. Kowjalgi.
>
> *Note*: The commencement of work under this item has to be postponed to 1st February, 1927, in view of the Assam Congress necessitating the Dal's concentrated activities at Gauhati during the preceding period commencing from the middle of November.

This is a good khadi programme. The Dal will have done well if it is carried out. Let me point out from my own experience and that of co-workers that khadi work will not flourish unless the principal workers know the science of ginning, carding, spinning and can distin-guish between the different varieties of cotton and know genuine khadi from the spurious article. Khadi work to succeed evokes all the best that is in one. I shall watch the progress of the programme with considerable interest. There was another resolution passed by the Dal inviting me to visit the Province next year during the sale days. I should not give much credit to the volunteers if they expect to sell only 40,000 worth of khaddar with me as one of the sellers. The members should know that I put a fairly high price on my presence. They will have to put before me a more attractive programme than they have prepared if they are to draw me. And they

must know that I am but one bride with many suitors to please. And as I do not believe in polyandry, the winner will have to offer a tempting dowry. It would be well for them therefore not to build any hope on my going to Karnatak early next year.

KHADI AMONGST NON-BRAHMINS

A correspondent writes:

> You will be glad to learn that the non-Brahmins of Nipani are taking a keen interest in khadi. It is the one platform on which Brahmins and non-Brahmins are uniting. There was a large meeting on the 23rd of October. It was a good meeting. Mr. Rawan was present at the meeting and he gave his whole-hearted support to khadi although he said that he continued to abide by the non-Brahmin party's programme of work. A khadi bhandar was opened at Nipani. This was chiefly due to the exertion of Sheth Mulji Sicca of Cutch. He has promised to sell khaddar at cost price. The non-Brahmin friends seem to be convinced that the question of growing poverty of the masses, which term includes non-Brahmins, cannot be solved without the universal use of khadi. The Nipani leaders therefore feel that it is not enough to be hostile to khadi but it is necessary to encourage khadi by all available means.

I congratulate the non-Brahmin friends of Nipani upon their decision, and hope that they will organize khadi work so as to place it on a stable basis.

SPINNING IN SCHOOLS

The following report about the progress of spinning in the schools under Guntur Municipality will be read with interest:

> The number of schools is 35.
>
> Girls' schools 9 and boys' schools 26. There are 454 girls and 363 boys. The number of girls spinning is 70 and that of boys 60. 15 charkhas are supplied to the boys' schools and 17 to the girls' schools. During the year the boys have spun 24,000 yds. and the girls 26,000 yds. The boys' yarn weighs 118 *tolas* and the girls' yarn 130 *tolas*. The Municipality purchased 3 maunds of slivers for Rs. 46-8-0. The yarn is in the Municipal office. About 100 of the pupils wear khadi. The number of all the teachers is 87. Out of them 30 are women and 57 are men. Almost all wear khadi. 63 give yarn to the A.I.S.A. One is also a Congress member under the yarn subscription rule.
>
> Rs. 500 worth of khadi was purchased.

Spinning is taught in 10 schools at present. Hindi was being taught in 10 schools but was discontinued owing to an adverse resolution of the Municipal Council.

Khadi is being freely distributed to *Panchama* boys and poor boys. Caste teachers are working in *Panchama* schools and *Panchama* teachers are teaching in schools where high-caste Hindus are studying.

Holidays are being granted on the occasion of the birthday or anniversary of the national heroes.

All teachers are able to spin. Their yarn is in the Municipal office. A charkha has been supplied to every teacher. About two maunds of slivers are used by the teachers.

The other employees of the Municipality are about 100 and almost all of them wear khadi.

SPINNING DURING THE WAR

A Mombasa correspondent sends the following extracts from *My Reminiscences of East Africa* by General Von Kettow-Vorbeck, showing the possibilities of spinning under stress:

> Notwithstanding the great amount of booty taken at Tanga, it was evident that, as the war seemed likely to be prolonged, the stocks in the Colony would become exhausted. The natives at New Moschi began all of a sudden to wear silk; this was by no means a sign of special extravagance; the stocks of cotton clothing in the Indian shops were simply coming to an end. We had seriously to think of starting manufactures ourselves, in order to convert the abundant raw material into finished products. A curious existence now developed, reminding one of the industry of the Swiss family Robinson. Cotton fields existed in plenty. Popular books were hunted up, giving information about the forgotten arts of hand-spinning and weaving; white and black women took to spinning by hand; at the missions and in private workshops spinning-wheels and looms were built. In this manner, in a short time, the first useful piece of cotton cloth was produced. After various trials, the most suitable dye was obtained from the root of a tree called Ndaa, which imparted a brownish-yellow colour, very inconspicuous both in the grass and in the bush, and therefore, specially suitable for uniforms.

Would that we considered India to be in a state of war and refrained from using foreign cloth and even Indian mill-made cloth. All argument against the possibility of hand-spinning will then vanish like smoke. And are we not in a state worse than war when we have proof positive that millions of the inhabitants of India are living in semi-starvation?

A kind Tamil friend sends me for my day of silence quotations that do one's soul good to read. I do not give in *Young India* quotations except when there is an association about them and when they are relevant. In the collection the friend has sent me I find the following very appropriate verses from George Herbert:

Teach me, my God and King,
In all things Thee to see,
And what I do in anything,
To do it as for Thee.
A servant with this clause
Makes drudgerie divine;
Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws,
Makes that and the action fine.[1]

I give one more equally appropriate. It is from Ruskin:

> When we build, let it be such a work as our descendants will thank us for; and let us think, as we lay stone on stone, that a time is to come when stones will be held sacred because our hands have touched them, and that men will say as they look upon them: See! this our fathers did for us.

Public life would be much purer than it is if we would do everything in the name of the King of kings and not for self but for posterity.

Young India, 11-11-1926

6. A CORRECTION

It gives me great pleasure to be able to publish this correction.[2] The notes in question were prepared, as I have already stated, first by one co-worker and then recast by another. They had to be done in a hurry. Needless to say, none of the writers had the slightest intention of comparing the two institutions. The object was merely to show the steady reduction in khaddar prices. The correction made by Satis Babu is welcome and enforces the argument advanced by the writers

[1] This is not, however, the first time Gandhiji had come across these lines. He commended them to Esther Faering in a letter on March 17, 1920.

[2] Not reproduced here. This came from Satis Chandra Das Gupta and pointed out in a letter of November 2, 1926, in the light of figures, the unfairness of the comparison of the Khadi Pratishthan with the Abhoy Ashram, made in the article "Charkha as the Only Cottage Industry" in *Young India*, 28-10-1926.

who had to depend upon the figures they could then lay hands upon. I am glad too to be able to give the readers the corrected and increased sales of the Pratishthan.

Young India, 11-11-1926

7. LETTER TO DR. K. K. KURUVILLA

SABARMATI,
November 11, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I do remember the correspondence with Dr. Faret. In my opinion, his course is clear. He must persist in picketing in spite of the notice. If he has the backing of public opinion, he will be able to do the picketing. If he has not, he will have to go to jail. And his imprisonment must ultimately bring success. But before taking the step, he should cultivate public opinion and make it clear to the Government that he has no intention of resorting to violent picketing.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. K. K. KURUVILLA
MARTHOUSE SEMINARY
KOTTAYAM

From a microfilm: S.N. 19732

8. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

November 12, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I feel your pangs from this long distance and, therefore, dread to write to you and still more to ask you to do anything outside your beat.

But the work I am asking you to do may be a little welcome diversion. Do go to Capt. Petaval's Institute in Bagbazar silently and see what it is. Is there anything in it? He is most insistent and wants me to advertise his movement. I have no faith in it or him[1] Lest I may

[1] *Vide* "Letter to J. W. Petaval", 12-11-1926.

be doing him an injustice, I want you to guide me. You will see that now he has Dr. Ray with him.

You must come out of the Slough of Despond and be joyful even though everything may seemingly go wrong. You saw the liberty I took with your letter about the prices.[1]

How is Hemprabha Devi doing? She must write to me at least once a fortnight. Has malaria abated in your colony?

Can you attend on 23rd?

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1563

9. *LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR*

[*November 12, 1926*][2]

DEAR FRIEND,

Your welcome letter. I cannot plead guilty to the charge that I am partial to the North and indifferent to the South. I do not know that I shall have much to say about the Congress deliberations, even if I go there. I shall want to occupy the position I did in 1915-18, my work being confined to my special subjects. Somehow or other, the councils do not interest me. And what is going on makes me sad.

How are you keeping?

Yours sincerely,

C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR
ARAMA
SALEM

From a photostat: S.N. 19730

[1] *Vide* the footnote to "A Correction", 11-11-1926.
[2] From the addressee's letter dated November 17, 1926 (S.N. 12083).

10. LETTER TO H. B. TEJUMAL

[*November 12, 1926*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

To quote from scriptures will not help you. Draupadi's prayer is a celebrated instance. If one has faith in one's prayer, I have not a shadow of a doubt in my mind that it can move mountains. Faith and proof are contradictory acts. Hence illustrations are of little avail. The only thing is to pray whether one gets an answer to one's prayer or not. Prayer should never be directed to a selfish object.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. H. B. TEJUMAL
MEDICAL PRACTITIONER
NEW SUKKUR
SIND

From a photostat: S.N. 19731

11. LETTER TO J. W. PETAVAL

SABARMATI,
November 12, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I am thankful for your persistence. Please continue. Some day I shall understand you and your scheme better. You are getting, on your spinning, enough help. Pray, therefore, let me watch your activity in silence. Some day I must visit your institution in person.

Yours sincerely,

CAPTAIN PETAVAL
POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE
BAGBAZAR
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm : S.N. 19733

[1] Based on the S.N. register

12. LETTER TO GIRI RAJ KISHORE

November 12, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You may come. But I warn you again. I may simply give you a corner in my verandah for your abode. There may be no intellectual work for you at all and there may be all labour including, of course, sanitation work, water carrying, etc. You may be put on spinning or the like for eight hours per day.

You may be called upon to do your own cooking and, in no case, should your expense exceed Rs. 15 per month. Several here do it for less than Rs. 10.

If this attracts you, you will be happy here, not otherwise.

Yours sincerely,

GIRI RAJ KISHORE
ROHTAK

From a microfilm: S.N. 19734

13. LETTER TO MURLI PRASAD AMBARTHA

November 12, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Khaddar is advocated not for the ruin of Manchester but for the uplift of the masses.

Mills can give employment only to a few lacs. Millions of people in partial unemployment must have an industry brought to them. The wheel is the only such industry. The question of cost cannot be allowed to affect an industry which is a vital need. Dear khaddar is therefore economically cheaper than cheap khaddar. It is possible to clothe India through khaddar in a year's time. It is impossible to do so through mills. The latter cannot do it under 20 years at least.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. MURLI PRASAD AMBARTHA
C/O B. GOKUL PRASAD
VAKIL
MORADPORE P.O.
PATNA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19735

14. LETTER TO IDA MILLER

November 12, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. M. Roniger will, I think, be translating *The Story of My Experiments with Truth.*

Yours sincerely,

FR. IDA MILLER
XIII BAUMGARTENSTRASSE, 53
VIENNA

From a photostat: S.N. 19736

15. LETTER TO MULCHAND AGARWAL

Kartika Sud 7, 1983 [*November 12, 1926*]

BHAISHRI MULCHANDJI,

I have your letter. I have respect for traditional ceremonies but as place, time and circumstances change, so does the nature of traditions. I am neutral as regards the thread and other ceremonies.

I believe in *varnashrama* but these days both [*varna* and *ashrama*] seem to have vanished. We have all become Sudras. There were never five *varnas*.

The process of spinning is merely a *yajna* and open to all; but one who performs it for the sake of livelihood is a vaisya. From the point of view of vocation it is a teacher, only if he works without wages is he a Brahmin.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 764

16. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

Friday [*November 12, 1926*][1]

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

Chi. Devdas says that both of you wish to come and stay here with some of your friends but that you are feeling shy. There is no

[1] The postmark bears the date 13-11-1926. Friday fell on November 12.

reason to feel so. Come without hesitation whenever you wish to. There will be some congestion, but I shall put you up somewhere. Your health, I hope, is excellent. We shall discuss Mr. Eddy's book when you come. I have already given some thought to it.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAI BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA
275 HORNBY ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6587

17. LETTER TO SRI PRAKASA

[*November 13, 1926*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The dogs you refer to I do not regard as a nuisance though even in their case I would make their life less precarious than it is. But there are dogs in a city like Ahmedabad who are a danger to society, who are ill cared for and who are not wanted. If they cannot be cared for or otherwise kept as we would be kept, they should be killed rather than that they should be specimens of living death.

I hope to deal with the khaddar question in *Y.I.*

Yours sincerely,

SRI PRAKASA
SEVASHRAMA
BENARES CANTONMENT

From a microfilm: S.N. 19729

[1] Based on the S.N. register

18. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Saturday [*November 13, 1926*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your two letters. I have no worry if you keep well. I can bear your coming here sooner or later. I cannot bear it if your health breaks down. You must certainly be acquainted with Vikram, Indravadan's brother. He wishes to stay in the Ashram. What have you to say about this?

Devdas was here for a day and then he left for Panchgani.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. VASUMATI DHIMATRAM
C/O AMBALAL MATHURADAS
PALIAD-VEDA
P.O. DANGARVA

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 472. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit; also S.N. 9220

19. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

Saturday, Kartika Sud 8, 1983 [*November 13, 1926*]

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

I got your letters. I read some of them to the Ashramites. The dream was good. I cannot tell you more than what you heard in it. It would be enough if that much is accomplished. Hope your health is good. Are there cows and buffaloes in Nepal? The paper on which you have written is hand-made. Is it made there or is it imported? What is the price? Bhansali's forty days of fast will be over on Monday. His health is excellent.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6528

[1] From the postmark

20. IS THIS HUMANITY?—VI

[*November 14, 1926*]

A friend has sent a long letter containing a number of questions and raising a number of dificulties. He has also sent me his copies of *Navajivan* with profuse marginal notes on this series of articles. Some of his questions have been already answered in these pages. Without reproducing here the rest of his questions, I propose merely to give my answers.

I think I have been considering the whole question quite dispassionately. I do not think I could be accused of any partiality for *himsa* or for my own peculiar views in the matter. My partiality is all for truth which I seek to find out through ahimsa. It is my conviction that it cannot be found out in any other way. The question in dispute for me is not whether truth is our goal or not, nor whether ahimsa is or is not the only way to it. There is no possibility of my ever doubting these fundamental principles. The question before me is about the practice of these principles. Every day I see fresh aspects opening out to me. There is every possibility of my making mistakes in the practice of ahimsa and, though I am taking every precaution possible to avoid them, it is possible that I may err occasionally. Let not friends, therefore, impute partiality to me when I cannot agree with them. Letthem believe me to be unconsciously in error and bear with me. I now proceed to give the answers.

1. The question to solve is not what is hydrophobia and how to treat it.

2 The municipality or the Government will find a remedy not in accordance with ahimsa but with what they conceive to be public interest. The Mahajan can find the right remedy if they are truly non-violent. Government will never subscribe to the absolute principle of non-destruction of animals (dogs in the present case). Municipalities have members belonging to different faiths and different communities. They cannot, therefore, be expected to insist on a non-violent remedy.

3. The duty of finding a non-violent remedy is the Mahajan's. It is a mistake to think that the Mahajan is blameless or helpless.

4. For the purpose of the discussion, I make no distincition between a rabid dog and a man who has run amuck and is in the act of dealing death. Habitual violence is a disease. The habitually violent man goes on in his murderous career only because he is beside

himself. Both a rabid dog and a rabid man are worthy of pity. When they are found in the act of injuring others, and when there is no other remedy than to take their life, it becomes a duty to do so to arrest their activity. The duty is all the greater in case of a votary of ahimsa.

5. I have never meant that everyone should own a dog. What I have said is that the dogs should in no case be ownerless. Not that the owned dogs will be immune, but the owners will be responsible for them if they are diseased or get rabies.

6. The ownerless stray dogs are not innocent as lambs. They were never so. Owned dogs are generally so. The purpose of the present controversy is to make all the dogs innocuous.

7. I have never suggested that roving dogs should be killed wherever found. I have suggested enabling legislation in the interest of the dogs themselves. That will make humanly inclined people alive to their sense of duty and they will then either own dogs or find out some other remedy and thus make the existence of stray dogs impossible. In refusing alms to the beggar, the purpose is not to starve him, but to teach him self-help, to make him a man. The duty of killing dogs arises in the circumstances and to the extent I have indicated in the previous articles. To say that it is a sin to extirpate dogs is not to contradict me. For I have never expressed a contrary opinion.

8. It is idle to discuss whether Mr. Ambalal's conduct was or was not proper, or whether my opinion about it was or was not correct. The public is not in full possession of the details of the incident. The broader question of ahimsa is the main issue, and to bring in Mr. Ambalal in the discussion is to cloud the issue.

9. The issue is: Whether, in consonance with the principle of ahimsa, it may be a duty to kill certain dogs under certain circumstances when no other alternative is possible. I submit that it may be and I hold that there cannot be two opinions in the matter. There may be a difference as to whether particular circumstances justify the act. The consolation for a votary of ahimsa lies in the fact that, from his standpoint, such circumstances can only be rare.

10. But I can see one difference of opinion that must for the time being remain. In the letter under consideration as also in many others, I see that there is an instinctive horror of killing living beings under any circumstances whatsoever. For instance, an alternative has been suggested in the shape of confining even rabid dogs in a certain place and allowing them to die a slow death. Now, my idea of com-

passion makes this thing impossible for me. I cannot for a moment bear to see a dog, or for that matter any other living being, helplessly suffering the torture of a slow death. I do not kill a human being thus circumstanced because I have more hopeful remedies. I should kill a dog similarly situated, because in its case I am without a remedy. Should my child be attacked by rabies and there was no hopeful remedy to relieve his agony, I should consider it my duty to take his life. Fatalism has its limits. We leave things to Fate after exhausting all the remedies. One of the remedies, and the final one to relieve the agony of a tortured child, is to take his life.

But I shall not labour this point. What to my mind is impotence of the votaries of ahimsa is an obstacle to a true understanding of this dharma. I hope therefore that those who differ from me will for the present bear with me.

So much about the thoughful letter of a friend. I shall now deal with an angry letter. The letter says:

> You have been so much under the Western influence that you have learnt to think it proper to kill lower beings for the sake of man. It is better for you to confess your error and apologize to the world. You should have made up your mind in this matter after exhaustless [*sic*] sifting. Instead, you have passionately taken sides and discredited yourself.

This is the least offensive sentence I have picked up from letters of this type. I submit I have not formed my opinion without much deliberation. It is not an opinion I have recently formed. Neither is ithasty. One should not let one's so-called greatness come in the way of the formation of opinion, otherwise one cannot arrive at truth.

I do not think that everything Western is to be rejected. I have condemned the Western civilization in no measured terms. I still do so, but it does not mean that everything Western should be rejected. I have learnt a great deal from the West and I am grateful to it. I should think myself unfortunate if contact with and the literature of the West had no influence on me. But I do not think I owe my opinion about the dogs to my Western education or Western influence. The West (with the exception of a small school of thought) thinks that it is no sin to kill the lower animals for what it regards to be the benefit of man. It has, therefore, encouraged vivisection. The West does not think it wrong to commit violence of all kinds for the satisfaction of the palate. I do not subscribe to these views. According to the Western standard, it is no sin, on the contrary it is a merit to kill animals that are no longer useful. Whereas I recognize limits at every step. I regard

even the destruction of vegetable life as *himsa.* It is not the teaching of the West.

Argumentum ad hominem has no place in a discussion of principles and their practice. My opinions should be considered as they are, irrespective of whether they are derived from the West or the East. Whether they are based on truth or untruth, *himsa* or ahimsa, is the only thing to be considred. I firmly believe that they are based on truth and ahimsa.

Young India, 18-11-1926

21. VAUTHA FAIR

Fairs are held all over our country. At some place or other annual fairs are held. All sorts of people come to these fairs from nearby places. For the big fairs people come from every part of India.

Such a fair is held every *Kartiki Purnima* at Vautha in Dholka taluka. On behalf of the District Congress Committee, Shri Dahyabhai has been rendering service there, with the help of a small band of volunteers, for the last several years. This year, too, he has published an appeal for volunteers. Last year and the year before I had intended to attend this fair but could not. This year, too, to my great regret, I am not able to go. But I recommend that those who wish to do social service should go there. Even in the fairs organized for religious purposes, evil prctices have grown rampant. Cheats go to such fairs and deceive simple people. Many kinds of immorality are practised there and gambling and other vices encouraged. Volunteers can definitely effect some reform by going there. I hope that those who can spare some days will go there and render all possible services.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-11-1926

22. LETTER TO GERTRUDE GROGAN

November 14, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I like your earnest letter.[1] When, if ever, God wants me to go to America, He will open the way for me and guide my steps.

Yours sincerely,

MISS GERTRUDE GROGAN
BARNARD COLLEGE
NEW YORK

From a photostat: S.N. 19737

23. LETTER TO REMESHWARDAS PODDAR

Kartika Shukla 9, 1983 [*November 14, 1926*]

BHAI RAMESHWARJI,

We have no other way but Ramanama. Chant Ramanama and never be disheartened.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 188

24. LETTER TO FEROZE

November 15, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter. There is no royal road to the control of passions. Constant endeavour and constant waiting upon God are the two things needed.

Yours sincerely,

FEROZE
V. CHAKWANO
P.O. PHALIA
(GUJRAT DISTRICT)
PUNJAB

From a microfilm: S.N. 19738

[1] On October 15, 1926, the correspondent had written of America's need of spiritual guidance and added: "It takes a man of your great insight to furnish it. For the sake of those in America who feel a need for you, come, oh Mahatma, and you will be assured of a sincere welcome" (S.N. 10830).

25. LETTER TO FELIX VALYE

November 15, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Mr. Pickthall[1] asks me for an article or a message for your magazine. I have not a moment to spare for writing an article. What message shall I send you save to say that my nationalism is intense internationalism? I am sick of the strife between nations or religions.

Yours sincerely,

DR. FELIX VALYE
HOTEL RICHMOND
GENEVA

From a photostat: S.N. 19739

26. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK AND MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

November 15, 1926

MY DEAR HENRY AND MILLIE,

I have both your letters. I can read your grief and fortitude. Such events humble our pride and make us weary of the world's tinsel. They make us realize the meaning of 'to be in the world and yet not of it'. Your account of Ceilia and Agnes gave me much joy. Agnes's life was shaped when I last saw her, Ceilia's was still in the making. Hers is wonderful sacrifice. If Leon at all remembers me, let him write to me.

With love,

Yours,
BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Marmaduke Pickthall, sometime eidtor of *The Bombay Chronicle*

27. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Monday [*November 15, 1926*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I get your letters regularly. Kamala is well and happy now.

There is no need to come specially to attend the meeting of the Charkha Sangh. I hope you are having rest there. If you are not, you should run away to some other place.

Read the wires. I found all the replies satisfactory.

Bhansali's fast of forty days will end today. He will break his fast tomorrow morning. His strength has been very well maintained. He has not taken any service from anyone.

I hope to start from here on the 2nd December.[2] Who will accompany me has not yet been decided.

Devdas has gone to Panchgani because of Mathuradas. Pyarelal had to go to the Punjab because of his sister.

It was necessary for Soniramji to undergo an operation and his mother and others were not willing to have the operation done anywhere except in Rangoon.

Champabehn is here. She has not been entrusted with any responsibilities.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2877

28. LETTER TO LALAN PANDIT

THE ASHRAM,
November 15, 1926

BHAISHRI LALAN,

I am not aware of any violence in my language. Calling a hypocrite a hypocrite is no violence but perhaps there is violence in not calling him so. What would we call a serpent? If my son is worthless and if I describe him using good epithets, I would be guilty of untruth, and in my humble opinion untruth in any form is violence. In calling a worthless person worthless there is no violence, but

[1] From the reference in the letter to Bhansali's fast, it is clear that it was written on the Monday following November 13, 1926; *vide* "Letter to Tulsi Maher" 13-11-1926.

[2] To go to Wardha; Gandhiji reached there on December 4.

unedifying behaviour on our part towards him is violence. I do not read the *Bombay Samachar*.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

BHAI LALAN PANDIT
C/O SHETH CHHOTALAL MALUKCHAND
HATHIBHAINI BHARNI VADI
AHMEDABAD

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19962

29. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

[*November 15, 1926*][1]

BHAISHRI DEVCHAND,

It is good that Bhai Fulchand[2] took pity on you. But I can't afford to do so. Who can do the copying for me? Therefore you have to read my handwriting.

I received your letter only today, therefore I have sent a telegram to Porbandar saying that the March dates would suit me.

We cannot drag Malaviyaji [to the conference][3]. Besides, what will he speak in the Khaddar Conference?[4] I prefer Jaisukhlal Mehta or Vallabhbhai Patel. It is worthwhile if men are drawn through interest in work. What can they do if they come only because of big names.

These are my personal views only. What you all decide is to be accepted as the right thing.

I shall definitely start from here on the 2nd December.

When I shall return is in God's hand. It should not be surprising if I return only at the time of the Conference. So take from me in the current month whatever work you wish me to do.

Tell Bhai Fulchand that his letter will be discussed when he comes here.

BAPU

[1] From the postmark
[2] Fulchand Kasturchand Shah
[3] For holding the session of the Kathiawar Political Conference
[4] This was to be held along with the Kathiawar Political Conference at the same place; *vide* "Letter to Devchand Parekh", 26-10-1926.

[PS.]

I am returning the letter in English.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5721

30. TELEGRAM TO MADHOJEE, MANDAL MANTRI, NIMKHAR[1]

[*On or after November 15, 1926*]

I MUST NOT INTERFERE.

GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 4964 b. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

31. INTRODUCTION TO "HAND-SPINNING AND HAND-WEAVING "

SABARMATI,
November 16, 1926

It will be remembered that early last year Sjt. Revashanker Jagjivan Mehta, the Joint Treasurer of the National Congress, announced a prize of Rs. 1,000 for the best essay on spinning. The judges appointed were Sjts. Ambalal Sarabhai, Shankerlal Banker, Maganlal Gandhi and myself. Sixty other essays were received. After much deliberation, the judges decided to distribute the prize between Professor S. V. Puntambekar, at present of the Benares Hindu University, and Sjt. N. S. Varadachari. The essay that is now being presented to the public is the result of the joint effort of these two winners who were requested to amalgamate their essays and give a joint production. It is difficult to say how far the effort is an improvement upon the originals. But workers in the vast field of hand-spinning will find ample material in the following pages to strengthen their position and I should be much surprised if the sceptic does not find enough food for reflection.

The authors have applied themselves to an examination principally of the following propositions:

Are there millions in India who require a supplementary occupation, the majority being idle for want of it during at least four months in the year? Is hand-spinning the only supplementary occu-

[1] This was sent in reply to a telegram dated November 15 reading: "Kindly wire whom you prefer Birla or Sriprakasa. Congress work suffering."

pation and, if it is, can it be easily taken up by the people? Is it possible to sell khaddar woven from hand-spun yarn among the people in the teeth of the competition offered by foreign and Indian mills?

The readers will find that the authors have endeavoured to give an affirmative answer to all these important questions. Is it not the duty of everyone who wants to see an amelioration in the condition of India's masses carefully to read what the authors have stated and to support the khaddar movement if they accept their conclusions? Let them denounce it as a waste of effort, if they can dare controvert the facts adduced by the authors.

M. K. GANDHI

Hand-spinning and Hand-weaving

32. LETTER TO N. S. VARADACHARI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
November 16, 1926

MY DEAR VARADACHARI,

Here is the preface[1]. It should be quite in time. If you have to suggest any improvement, do not hesitate to make the suggestion. You may write your own preface and call it foreword or call this foreword and call yours a preface if you like writing one. You will see that the essay is free from error.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: S.N. 11246

33. LETTER TO KANAK CHANDRA SHARMA[2]

[*November 16, 1926*]

I have your letter and the piece of khaddar.

KANAK CHANDRA SHARMA
[SECRETARY AND ACCOUNTANT
A. I. S. A.
NAVGONG
ASSAM]

From a microfilm: S.N. 11247

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The reply is scribbled on an undated letter reporting the position of khaddar production work in Navgong district and making suggestions for improved cotton cultivation.

34. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

Kartika Sud 11 [*November 16, 1926*][1]

BHAI BRIJKRISHNA,

It was only due to lack of time that I could not reply to your letter earlier. Do come when you feel like coming and go whenever you wish. I want to offer you whatever consolation I can.

Devdas came here and went off to Panchgani.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2351

35. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

Kartika Sud 11 [*November 16, 1926*][2]

BHAISHRI MUNNALAL,

I have your letter. One who tries to observe *brahmacharya*, truth, non-violence, non-thieving and non-possession, who believes that untouchability is sinful, who labours without feeling any fatigue, who thinks it is his dharma to clean latrines, who controls the palate and spins and cards daily and wears pure khadi, only such a person may stay in the Ashram.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

SHRI MUNNALAL GANGADAS SHAH
BURHANPUR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 1996

[1] Devdas went to Panchgani in 1926. *Kartika Sud* 11 fell on November 16.

[2] The postmark bears the date 18-11-1926. *Kartika Sud* 11, however, fell on November 16.

36. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[Before *November 18, 1926*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

It will not do if you remain lenient. To be lenient with Ratilal is to be cruel to him. To be strict with him is kindness. What would have happened if the doctor had made an incision on my stomach lightly? Or, how effective would be a person who pierces the earlobes if he pricked the needle lightly.

Even with Ramachandra, be strict as the situation demands and be frank. After you have shown your generosity to the full, he should realize what his shortcomings are.

Remember that the article[2] I have sent about the lift, has to be sent straight to *Navajivan* if it is all right. If you want to give it in the coming issue of *Young India*, get it translated into English by Valji or send a copy of it here in time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : S.N. 32906

37. FLOWERS FROM THE POET'S GARDEN

Mrs. Blair¾daughter of the late W. C. Bonnerjee¾sends me the following translation made specially for her by Mrs. Pramatha Chaudhuri, the Poet's niece. Mrs. Blair says:

> She wrote them out for me in Bengali as I wanted a helpful saying for everyday reference such as one can get in English. She selected these quotations from addresses given by the Poet from time to time at Santiniketan. The addresses were written down at the time the Poet gave them, but I do not think they have been printed. I liked the quotations so much that I got them put into English.

I am sure the readers of *Young India* will like to treasure these flowers from the Poet's garden.

> The centi-petalled lotus of Love, depending on the stalk of Self,

[1] From the contents; *vide fn* 1 on the following page.

[2] The reference presumably is to the article titled, 'Ramachandran Lift', published in *Young India*, 18.11.1926; *vide* "Notes", 18-11-1926.

gradually unfolds itself petal by petal from the self to the family, from the family to society, from society to one's country, from one's country to humanity, from humanity to the Universal Spirit, from the Universal Spirit to the Supreme Spirit, thereby accomplishing its process of evolution.

He whose intellect cannot perceive law and order in the working of the universe is incapable, ineffectual and defeated in every department of life.

They who succeed in the field of material power do so by aggrandizing themselves, whereas they who succeed in the spiritual sphere do so by sacrificing themselves.

Because when a man attempts to see the whole thing at once he sees it indistinctly, therefore he first breaks it up into parts, and then fits them all into a whole.

In proportion as India lost mastery over Nature by giving overemphasis to the spiritual side, so she is now required to pay the penalty for it.

The work that we do from necessity or want, that work is our bondage; but the work that we do out of joy is not bondage; that work is freedom. We realize perfect joy in proportion as we are able to harmonize knowledge, love and work in ourselves.

He who desires to be master of the house must be stricter than all others in obeying the discipline and rules of the house.

When the mind is not prepared to receive ideas, then words do not reveal their full meaning to the irreverent listener.

Life's mission is a very difficult one, its field is very large, its laws are very difficult to understand, its activities are very various, its sacrifices are very hard to make.

The lamp cannot conceal its own light within itself.

As stagnant water is ever afraid of being polluted by dirt, so today captive India, through fear of pollution, continually raises forbidding walls in order to cut herself off from all connection with the outer and larger world, and keeps even sun and air at a distance.

It is only when we daily draw purity from the source of our character, that words and ideas come to our help.

Man has built up his life on three great planes, the material, the religious, and the spiritual.

We give the name of desire to that external force which attracts our efforts to things outside us.

As external things are the aim of desire, so are inward motives the aim

of will.

In all this vast Universe, and throughout this great life of humanity, it is impossible that we should not acknowledge Him at all anywhere.

When the ties of desire are severed, then earth, sky and water, living creatures and inanimate objects, beasts and men¾all become filled with bliss, and there is no limit to joy.

That I have come and stood in the midst of this vast universe is a most wonderful event, there is nothing more momentous than it.

There is joy even in the endeavour after realization, let alone the state of fulfilment.

To what an incalculable extent do we waste our strength throughout the day in futile talk and in futile deeds?

It is only when we want to turn towards God that we are able to realize how strong is the attraction of this godless life that we have built up for ourselves.

As the final aim of every tree is to bring forth fruit, so the final aim of this world-tree is to bring forth the perfect man.

Dwelling in the midst of this world, God only gives of Himself; He takes nothing. And when our soul can partake of this nature of God, then will it attain Truth.

Young India, 18-11-1926

38. SPINNING AS DEATHBED CONSOLATION

Two versions have been published in *Young India* of the story in which the brave Buddhist wife asks her dying husband to dismiss all anxious worldly thoughts out of his mind and to die a peaceful death as she knows how to spin and will maintain the children as well as herself by that means, one in 1921 and the other during the current year. But they were either inaccurate or incomplete. Having since looked up the Pali original, I translate below the first, and part of the second paragraph in Section XVI, *Chakkampata* (*Saraniya-Vagga*) of the *Anguttara-Nikaya*, a canonical work of the Buddhists:

"The householder Nakulapita was dangerously ill and very much worried. Then Nakulamata, his wife, addressing him, said, 'You should not now give yourself to anxious thought even for a moment. It is very painful that a person should die with anxious thoughts weighing upon his mind, and the Lord Buddha has censured such a kind of death. Perhaps you are afraid that

when you are no longer with us, I shall not be able to feed the children and maintain the household. But your fears are groundless, as I am skilful in spinning cotton and in dressing hair (This second expression is not quite clear to me. I wish some Pali scholar throws more light upon it. V. G. D.) and will, therefore, have no difficulty whatever in providing for children as well as myself when you are away. Therefore please dismiss all disturbing thoughts out of your mind.

" 'Again perhaps you apprehend that when you are no more I might contract a second marriage. But you must drive away any such fear, seeing that we have for the last sixteen years lived a life of chastity though married, and maintaining a household. Please let your mind be at perfect peace.' "

V. G. D

From this note I have removed the original text as I hardly think the readers of *Young India* want the original texts, Sanskrit or other. But I must not omit the following remark that V.G.D. made under the texts removed.

It is a great pity that all Pali texts are published in the Latin script although Fausboll of Copenhagen, the Danish editor of the *Jataka*, haughtily observes:

"I have continued to transliterate the Oriental into Latin characters and shall continue to do so in all I publish of Pali, for it is my conviction that the fine Latin characters must not only henceforward be applied to languages which have no literature and to literatures which have hitherto not been published, but also that they one day will supersede all other characters whenEuropeo-American civilization has, like a lava, laid itself over all other civilizations and made them into Herculaneums and Pompeiis." I wonder how the Buddhist patrons of the Pali Text Society enjoy the fine prospect pictured in the above.

Young India, 18-11-1926

39. THE ARTS OF KINGS AND QUEENS

A correspondent who has personal experience of the service that the spinning-wheel is rendering sends me the following from Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies*:[1]

Begin with the first¾the lord of them all¾agriculture. . . .

Then, after agriculture, the art of kings, take the next head of human arts¾weaving, the art of queens, honoured of all noble Heathen women, in the

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

person of their virgin goddess¾honoured of all Hebrew women, by the word of their priest king¾'She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff; she stretcheth out her hand to the poor. She is not afraid of the snow for her household, for all her household are clothed with scarlet. She maketh herself covering of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple. She maketh fine linen and selleth it, and delivereth girdles to the merchant.' What have we done in all these thousands of years with this bright art of Greek maid and Christian matron? Six thousand years of weaving and have we learnt to weave? Might not every naked wall have been purple with tapestry, and *every feeble breast fenced with sweet colours from the cold*? What have we done? *Our fingers are too few, it seems, to twist together some poor covering for our bodies*. We set our streams to work for us, and choke the air with fire, *to turn our spinning-wheels*¾and are we clothed yet? Are not the streets of the capitals of Europe foul with the sale of cast clouts and rotten rags? Is not the beauty of your sweet children left in wretchedness of disgrace, while with better honour, nature clothes the brood of the bird in its nest, and the suckling of the wolf in her den? And does not every winter's snow robe what you have not robed, and shroud what you have not shrouded; and every winter's wind bear up to heaven its wasted souls, to witness against you hereafter, by the voice of their Christ: 'I was naked, and you clothed me not?'

and remarks

Scathing indictment indeed, but how fervently he pleads for the spinning-wheel. If he could say this of an admittedly rich country like Europe, how much more should it be true of a country like India, proved beyond question to be poorer?

Young India, 18-11-1926.

40. SOUTH AFRICAN SITUATION

Here are extracts from a letter from Mr. Andrews after his arrival in Durban;

It is good to get here again, and though it has been a difficult time on the voyage, I am so thankful that I came on and did not delay longer. There are any amount of things here to be settled and other things to put straight before the delegation arrives, and it will take every moment of my time to get through.

Today I have had the warmest possible welcome and Rawat's Bioscope was crowded this evening at the 'welcome'. I am staying with Sorabji at 19, 1st Avenue. The house at 110, Field Street, is all pulled down and the site sold

to Europeans!

The days have been crowded to the full and it is almost impossible to avoid it as I had expected. There was a very serious smallpox outbreak in the Indian quarters and every single smallpox case was that of an Indian. The mortality was as high as 25% and it was of a very virulent type. There were vicious letters in the Press abusing Indians for insanitary habits, etc. The one thing to do was what you did in Johannesburg and after getting vaccinated myself (without which I could have done nothing at all), I got the Medical Officer to let me visit the Indians who were kept in quarantine daily, and did everything I could to pacify them. Also we met and formed an Indian Health Committee and decided to work under the doctor's orders and he has already set us to work. At once, as soon as this was announced the whole tone of the Press changed and we have been praised where before we were being blamed. Altogether it is going to work out for the best.

I have had time now to consider things fully and get hold of the situation. There is no doubt that if we can get the best public opinion on our side in the next few weeks, we shall get a good Press and materially help the Conference by creating a favourable atmosphere beforehand. It has been rather difficult to persuade them not to have a big demonstration just at the time of the Conference, thinking it would 'impress' them. I have been explaining to them that some good solid work [like] clearing out the dirt from insanitary quarters would 'impress' far more than all the demonstrations and speeches in the world.

At the same time, the last thing I should wish is that things should go to the other extreme and get slack and lazy and indifferent. What is needed is to direct the excitement and energy into a right channel. I have consulted the best Europeans who are sympathetic and they all say that the hartal and Day of Prayer which we held about a year ago was extraordinarily impressive in the right sense of the word and no one felt it to be provocative. They felt that Indians were doing the right thing in their own way and doing it well.

The reference to the sale of the property in Field Street revives oldest memories. It was one of the oldest properties of which a long lease was purchased by the late Haji Aboobakr Amod,¾one of the earliest Indian merchants to settle in South Africa. The property was sublet to the late Parsi Rustomjee who had possession of it till his death. It was more a public place than a private store¾most informal Indian gatherings were held there. It was the place where the most important decisions were taken. It was there that Gokhale used to pass much of his day time. It was there that Andrews worked. It sheltered the rich and the poor. It had become a real dharmsala. On the expiry of the lease the Durban Town Council refused to renew the lease and

advertised the property for sale subject to the prohibition of Indian bids. The Durban Town Council knew the (to the Indians) sacred character of the place, but the knowledge could not save the property from passing into European hands. Hence the reference to it by Mr. Andrews and the note of exclamation.

His presence there at this juncture is indeed a godsend. The unfortunate outbreak of smallpox might easily have created a panic both among Europeans and Indians. The former might have taken dangerously drastic measures and the latter might have become paralysed with fear. The prompt measures taken by Mr. Andrews averted what might have developed into a calamity.

That godly man's presence is likely to turn the scales in favour of the settlers. And though not much may be expected of the Conference, he is certainly creating the proper atmosphere for a calm and just consideration of the intricate problem.

Sir Mahomed Habibulla's deputation has a heavy responsibility on its shoulders. It has the solid backing of unanimous public opinion. Let us hope for the best.

Young India, 18-11-1926

41. SPINNING IN MUNICIPALITIES

It is only by accident that I get information about spinning in the schools under Municipalities and Local and District Boards. If the chairmen or secretaries of Municipalities and Local and District Boards who are in the habit of seeing *Young India* will kindly send the information about the introduction and progress of spinning in those schools, it will be possible to get accurate statistics about the output of yarn in such schools and the number of boys and girls spinning.

Young India, 18-11-1926

42 CONDITIONS OF PACIFIC STRIKES

A friend sends me an extract from *No More War*, an organ of the British Pacifists. I copy from the extract the following conditions Mr. A. Fenner Brockway lays down as a test of a pacific strike:

1. A strike in protest of social evils which destroy human life can be as much an act of pacifism as a strike against war. (Starvation wages kill as many

human beings as are killed by guns.)

2. If it be said that "constitutional" means could be used to end these evils, the same can be said of war. Our "constitutional" machinery is inadequate. The voters two years ago had neither wage reductions nor war in mind.

3.If it be said that a strike (and particularly a general strike) against wage reductions is an effort to "coerce" the nation or the Government, the same can be said about a general strike against war. As a matter of fact, neither has any promise of success unless the greater part of the nation supports it.

4. It is not accurate to liken a strike to an economic blockade. So far as there is danger of hunger, it would be the strikers themselves who would suffer first. In actual fact, in the recent General Strike, the T.U.C. (Trade Union Congress) was prepared to co-operate in maintaining life and health. The Government refused co-operation.

5. *The determining factor as to whether a strike is pacifist or not* is the spirit from which it springs. A strike against war in which the motive was hatred of members of the Government rather than of war and which represented a spirit which might be transformed into civil war, would not be an act of pacifism, nor would a strike against wage reductions animated by hatred of the employers or of members of the Government, or by anti-social feeling. But both are acts of pacifism when inspired by the spirit of protest against the evils themselves.

6. Whilst it is admitted that a non-pacifist spirit occasionally showed itself in the utterances, and still more rarely in the acts of strikers, I have not the least hesitation in saying that the dominant motive in the Great Strike was that of self-sacrificing moral protest and not anti-social force or personal hatred. It was this which gave it spiritual power; in this the secret of the wonderful self-discipline of the men was to be found.

A pacifism which can only see the cruelties of occasional military warfare and is blind to the continuous cruelties of our social system is worthless. Unless our pacifism finds expression in the broad human movement which is seeking not merely the end of war, but our equally non-pacifist civilization as a whole, it will be of little account in the onward march of mankind. The spirit of life will sweep on, quite uninfluenced by it.

The No More War Movement will fulfil its purpose just in so far as it recognizes this.

I would only add to these admirable conditions one more test. A pacific strike must be limited to those who are labouring under the grievance to be redressed. Thus if the match manufacturers, say, of Timbuctoo, who are quite satisfied with their lot, strike out of sym-

pathy for its millhands who are getting starvation wages, the match manufacturers' strike would be a species of violence. They may and should help in a most effective manner by withdrawing their custom from the millowners of Timbuctoo without laying themselves open to the charge of violence. But it is possible to conceive occasions when those who are not directly suffering may be under an obligation to cease work. Thus if, in the instance imagined, the masters in the match factory combine with the millowners of Timbuctoo, it will clearly be the duty of the workers in the match factory to make common cause with the mill-hands. But I have suggested the addition purely by way of illustration. In the last resort, every case has to be judged on its own merits. Violence is a subtle force. It is not easy always to detect its presence though you may feel it all the same.

Young India, 18-11-1926

43. NOTES

RAMACHANDRAN LIFT

Numerous letters have been received both by Mr. Ramachandran and me regarding the Ramachandran Animal Power Lift. Some ask to be supplied with the lift at once, others ask pertinent questions about it. Mr. Ramachandran has left all the letters with me. The lift is patented. The inventor has no lift ready to supply. He has to get it manufactured. He has not the means to attend to many orders with despatch. I am, therefore, trying to secure facili-ties for rapid manufacture. The inventor has proceeded to Madras to attend to his affairs and prepare to give his whole time to the supervision of manufacture and putting up the lift. I, therefore, urge the correspondents to be a little patient and await the nece-ssary arrangements that must be made before a supply can be commenced. An endeavour is being made to nationalize the manufacture and to secure the lowest possible quotations for the lift.

Correspondents will forgive me for not replying individually to their letters. I deal below with some of the points raised by them:

1. If the arrangements that are pending go through, I hope to publish a diagram with the letterpress.

2. The parts are not at all complicated; on the contrary, the plan is incredibly simple. It is undoubtedly designed to answer village requirements.

3. Small lengths of rails, pulleys and wire ropes have to be supplied from cities.

4. The lift should last several years. The bucket and the rope may require more frequent replacement.

5. So far as I can see, an ordinary village blacksmith should be able to attend to such repairs as may become necessary.

6. The lift must be fixed by a skilled mechanic. The weights, the incline, etc., have to be adjusted. The rails must be truly laid. The pulley must be in its proper position. But I understand that a man with ordinary intelligence can be easily and quickly trained to fix the lift with its appurtenances. The mechanic will have to be paid his travelling expenses, etc. These details are now being attended to.

7. The most economical way is to use a heavy male buffalo, the heavier the animal, the larger the quantity of water it will carry without any exertion.

8. The empty trolley is carried up by the weight of the bucket.

9. The bucket is as a rule 40 lbs. in weight, the trolley 100 lbs.

10. The lift can be employed for any depth, even 125 ft., i.e., it is capable of being used wherever the ordinary *mhote* can be.

KHADI SALES

During the period of probation the problem of the sale of khadi is as great as, if not greater than, that of production. Hitherto, the sales have not kept pace with production. The best-managed province for sales is undoubtedly Bengal. The tone set by the Khadi Pratishthan, ¾the creation of Dr. Ray and his lieutenant Satis Chandra Das Gupta¾has been kept up by the organizations that have grown up there. Bengal has also striven with considerable success to manufacture according to local needs. This is sound economy. The method has enabled the workers to come and keep in touch with the buying middle class at the one end and the manufacturing poor class at the other. The consequence is a steady improvement in texture, variety and pattern and in prices from the buyer's point of view. The remarkable fact about the growing cheapness of khadi is that gener-ally the reduction in prices has not meant a corresponding reduction in wages of carders, spinners and weavers, but has been due to better knowledge and greater efficiency.

The latest instance of organized sales comes from Sylhet. Sjt. Dhirendranath Das Gupta has been managing only a small khadi centre at Kulaura near Sylhet. He reports that he sold during the Puja

holidays only over Rs. 2,600 worth of khadi.

Though there is no doubt that in the other provinces, too, considerable improvement has been made as in Bengal, the sales have not been so methodically organized as there. Bihar is trying to come very near Bengal. But the workers all over the provinces should devise methods of stimulating sales. The experiences of Mr. Bharucha and other veterans should be pooled and schemes with variations suiting the various provinces should be devised and put into operation. Hawking and peripatetic exhibitions have come to stay. There is danger of all these schemes being top-heavy if the minutest details are not worked out. There are some stores in the different parts of India which from this standpoint should perhaps be closed. A store costing Rs. 500 per year and selling no more is one that is fit to be closed. There is gross mismanagement or ignorance about it.

THE TRUE SPIRIT

A correspondent writes:[1]

For me this correspondent is a member, in spirit, of both the organizations. Technically he will become a member by producing the yarn of his own spinning before a deputy of A.I.S.A. in his district, and sending the equivalent price of the yarn. For some, even to send that amount is not possible. They can then remain members in spirit and enroll themselves as volunteers sending a report of their work from time to time and holding themselves ready to do any service that may be required of them and that they may be capable of rendering.

TEMPERANCE REFORM

For some time past some Christians of Travancore have been earnestly striving to put down the drink habit by working from within, i.e., by seeing and speaking to the people given to the habit. They are trying to organize picketing with the intention of warning the visitors to the liquor dens. The simple procedure seems to have frightened the Travancore authorities. The District Magistrate at Kottayam has served a gagging notice upon Dr. Z. M. Paret who is a well-known Christian in Travancore and, so far as I know, whose non-violent spirit has never been questioned. This is the notice:

[1] The letter is not reproduced here; it stated the writer's difficulty, in view of his financial position, to pay subscriptions to the A.I.S.A. and the All-India Cow-Protection Association, despite being a spinner and weaver.

> Whereas it has been made to appear to me from reports received from the District Superintendent of Police, Kottayam, that you are making speeches inciting people to do picketing before liquor shops and to commit other form of lawlessness and that speeches are likely to cause breaches of the peace and bring the authority of Government into contempt, I do hereby strictly order and enjoin you under Section 26 of the Regulation IV of 1905 not to make any speech, harangue or address from this day in any part of this District of Kottayam.

The notice begs the question by describing every speech advising picketing as an incitement. What the "other form of lawlessness" there can be is not made clear in the order. Thus in Travancore if the Magistrate's order correctly interprets its law, a premium is put upon the vice of drunkenness. Not only does a State provide facilities for drink but it also prevents reformers from resorting to the only effective and peaceful method of directly approaching the drunkards and appealing to them not to give way to temptation. I hope that the law of Travancore is faultless and that the District Magistrate has erred in his interpretation. The interpretation should be tested in a higher court. In any case, the reformers' duty is clear. If the law is at fault they must move for its repeal. And if all effort to set it right fails, their peaceful picketing must go on even at the risk of being imprisoned, taking care to avoid enlisting as volunteers persons who cannot restrain themselves under provocation. It is worthy of note that the gag is perpetual.

IS IT HYPER-SUSPICION ?

> My fears at the very outset that the Agricultural Commission is merely a British commercial enterprise for selling agricultural implements is being confirmed by reports of meetings held in England.

This is an extract from a letter of a correspondent who weighs every word he writes, has no malice in him, and is at present not much interested in politics. I have reproduced the extract because I have shared the fear myself. It is possible that the fear is an echo of my own distrust and that the Commission is a well-meant effort to probe the bottom of the agricultural condition of the people of India. I would be delighted to discover that my fear or suspicion was wholly unjustified. But whilst it lasts and is shared by others, it is much better to express it than to harbour it secretly.

Only the other day, I reproduced an extract from a letter received from another correspondent who was a visitor to the Exhibition. He had gone with a bias in favour of the Exhibition. But he

could not help giving an involuntary expression to his feeling that "the centre of attraction in the Exhibition was agricultural implements and machinery which the peasantry would never use." Indeed, he went further and said, "Some of the machinery was fit only for the scrap heap." He knew what he was talking about, having handled machinery on a fairly large scale. He thought that many things were allowed to be exhibited which had not been tested and guaranteed. An exhibition to be instructive and profitable should contain nothing that is not tested. Simple credulous people going there finding in flaring headlines preposterous claims on behalf of machines would naturally buy them and on finding them to be useless rue the day when they purchased them. The wise and just thing, however, is to suspend one's judgment and to keep an open mind till the report of the Commission is out.

WIDOWS AND WIDOWERS

A correspondent writes:

> I have carefully read the correspondence "A Catechism" and your replies published in the *Young India* dated 14th October '26. While answering the first question of the correspondent on page 357 in para first in the concluding portion, you say, "I should any day subscribe to a reform in the Hindu Law making sinful the remarriage of a widow or a widower who voluntarily married after maturity."
>
> In my opinion, a reform of this kind in the Hindu Law will be disastrous and to a large extent affect the moral standard of the society as a whole. For instance if a man or a woman married after maturity and unfortunately happens to lose either his wife or her husband after some days of married life, do you mean to say that the man or the woman should not be allowed to remarry even though a great desire of enjoying married life is left unfulfilled, for the only reason that the man or the woman concerned married after maturity? If a reform of this kind is made in the Hindu Law, I am afraid the man or the woman will find out some immoral way of gratifying his or her unsatisfied desire and there will be a wholesale moral corruption in the society. I therefore think that this question should entirely be left to the discretion of the man or woman concerned.

My reply to the catechist was a challenge to man who is the law-giver. He will not allow his liberty to be restricted. My reply, therefore, is an attempt to show that what is considered desirable for man should be equally so for women and that, therefore, a widow should have the same discretion as a widower about remarriage. Moreover, the Hindu

Law is not inelastic like the laws made under the British Constitution. It will be noticed that I have deliberately used the word 'sinful' instead of criminal. A crime carries with it punishment imposed by a man-worked State. A sin is punishable only by God or one's conscience. And I do think that, if Hindu society would rise to the level I have aimed at in my answer, it will be a great gain for it and humanity.

WHAT IS KHADDAR?

A friend enquires whether the following definition of a 'Congressman' given in *The Leader* is a correct definition:

> Those who do not use 'pure' khaddar, i.e., khaddar woven by themselves out of yarn spun by themselves, have no right to call themselves Congressmen and should not be treated as such.

The correct definition is given in the body of the Congress resolutions. But for the sake of those who have no time to refer to the Congress resolutions, I may state that it has never been contemplated that the cloth to be used by Congressmen has to be woven by themselves. As a matter of fact, neither has the khaddar yarn to be spun by the members. The spinning test is totally apart from the wearing of khaddar, and it is purely voluntary. Whereas the wearing of khaddar is compulsory, the only thing needful is that the khaddar should be hand-spun and hand-woven¾it does not matter by whom spun and woven. The yarn spun by the member need not form any part of the khaddar he wears. It is surprising to me that at this time of the day it is necessary to explain the meaning of khaddar. The appropriate question, however, would be how many Congressmen are wearing such pure khaddar as it is defined in the Congress resolution and not as in the quotation.

THE NECESSITY OF TESTING YARN

I have often laid stress upon the necessity of testing all the yarn that is spun either by volunteers or paid spinners. It does not mean that the yarn should be tested every day. But a periodical test is necessary if we are to improve the strength and evenness. These pages have also shown how a testing plant can be improvised without any difficulty. I hope that khadi centres will introduce this much-needed reform.

Young India, 18-11-1926

44. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

THE ASHRAM,
Thursday, November 18, 1926

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. You may come to Wardha. You have not given me the news that I had specially asked for about your health. Ramdas left today after staying for two days. Haribhai[1] has come today. He and Kusum[2] will go to Broach tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9221

45. LETTER TO REVASHANKER J. MEHTA

Kartika Sud 14 [*November 18, 1926*][3]

REVERED REVASHANKERBHAI,

I have your letter. It would certainly be very good if Jamnalal did do the work of the school.

Please let me know how much money can be invested in the [Ramachandran] lift. Do not have any qualms in regard to the matter. I have never wished to know anything about finances and therefore I may unknowingly make a bold demand. It is for you to check such a demand. If I know for certain that you will, then only will I not hesitate to make demands on suitable occasion.

Good that you have decided to go to Deolali. There is no harm if you send Dhiru[4] here provided he likes to come. It will be no burden to me. The weather is very good at present. It is not possible for me to go to Deolali and now there is no need either.

Regards from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1260

[1] Haribhai Desai of Broach; he had worked for some time as Gandhiji's secretary during the initial period of the Sabarmati Ashram.

[2] Wife of Haribhai Desai

[3] Reference to addressee's Deolali trip indicates that the letter was written in 1926; *vide* "Letter to Revashanker J. Mehta", 25-11-1926.

[4] Addressee's son

46. LETTER TO BAPUBHAI NARANJI VASHI

Kartika Sud 14, 1983, November 18, 1926

BHAISHRI BAPUBHAI,

I am giving in *Navajivan* the reply[1] to the last paragraph of your letter. I do not wish to give there the reply to the rest of your letter.

Every Hindu should have nothing but respect for Rishi Dayanand's[2] life. *Satyartha Prakash* is disappointing but it is better not to search and find out why it is so. We should exalt the virtues of great men. We may take note of their imperfections, if any, but a devotee should not probe into their causes.

I have deliberately decided not to give extracts from *Satyartha Prakash.* The person for whose sake I wished to give the extracts has already called on me. I showed him the extracts. If, further, I were to give the extracts [in *Navajivan*], this great man would be maligned, and his virtues lost sight of and a controversy might start; hence I decided not to give them.

I find the use of the word 'Arya' artificial. Whatever may be the origin of the word 'Hindu', it carries naturally that meaning which is forced into any other word.

By birth we all are low. It is only when we acquire virtuous qualities that we become *dwijas*[3]; this is the purport of one verse. Others emphasize the importance of birth. Each view is valuable from its respective point of view. We take birth according to the s*anskaras* of our previous births. New *sanskaras* modify them to some extent. There is humility and conservation of strength in allowing ourselves to be known as we are born.

What we call *prarabdha* is nothing but the fruit of deeds in our previous births. Human efforts mean our attempts to make desirable changes therein. Sometimes one acts in opposition to the other, while at other times they run together harmoniously. Hence it cannot be said that one is always stronger than the other. We cannot disregard *prarabdha*; we cannot give up human effort. This explains the importance attributed to effort free from attachment.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19965

[1] Not traceable

[2] Dayanand Saraswati, author of *Satyartha Prakash* and founder of the Arya Samaj

[3] Twice-born

47. LETTER TO RAMI PAREKH

Thursday, [November 18, 1926][1]

CHI. RAMI,

I have your letter after a long time. Everybody is happy here. There is no special illness nowadays. Chi. Ramdas[2] was here for a couple of days. He is in good health. He is touring in Kathiawar and selling khadi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 9702

48. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Kartika Sud 14, 1983 [*November 18, 1926*]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. Regarding Geneva I have given my opinion a few days ago at your Kashi address.

It appears from Deviprasadji's letter that you are bound by promise. If such is the case the question of going or not going does not arise. As it is, you ought to go .

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 6138. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

49. LETTER TO PARAMESHWARA DIAL GUPTA

November 19, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I do not propose specifically to deal with your questions in *Young India*. I have in the past dealt with such difficulties and may do so incidentally in the series I am writing.

I do not regard Rama and Krishna as historical characters as depicted in the books. Ravana represents passions, as Kauravas represent the evil in us. The burden of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* is to teach ahimsa.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vasumati Pandit", 18-11-1926.
[2] Son of Gandhiji

I do not accept everything related in the *Mahabharata* as gospel.

If you will reread my writings on ahimsa, you will not find any contradiction between the passages quoted by you.

If a man cannot defend his country by non-violent means, he will be justified in using violent means rather than surrender in a cowardly manner.

I do say that truth must be told at any cost. But one is not always bound to disclose facts.

Yours sincerely,

PARAMESHWARA DIAL GUPTA
CHRIST CHURCH COLLEGE
CAWNPORE

From a photostat: S.N. 19740

50. LETTER TO SATYANAND SARASVATI

SABARMATI,
November 19, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I believe Rajendra Babu to be incapable of doing anything mean. But if you give me permission to send your letter to Rajendra Babu, I would secure his explanation.

I do not repent of my estimate of Mussalmans.

Yours sincerely,

SWAMI SATYANAND SARASVATI
C/O B. N. SINHA
SAMASTIPUR
B.N.W. RY.

From a photostat: S. N. 19742

51. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

[*November 19, 1926*][1]

BHAISHRI DEVCHAND,

I have your letter. We should not put Dr. Pranjivan to inconvenience[2]. But we can have Revashankerbhai[3]. Would you like Nanabhai Narsinhprasad? Do you want Jamnalalji? We have the big problem of English, otherwise we could have Rajagopalachari. Would you like to have Kripalani? But I should suggest that you choose a real lover of khadi. I think we should look at the work of a man rather than his name. I have received your wire. The 30th will suit me.[4]

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5705

52. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

Friday [*November 19, 1926*][5]

BHAISHRI BEHRAMJI,

I have your letter. You may come whenever you can. I will start from here on the 2nd December. It is not certain when I shall return to the Ashram. I had come to know from Devdas that you were in danger of getting leucoderma. Even if you get it, what does it matter? There is no need to worry or be perturbed about it. I assure that you have enough spiritual understanding to be able to live cheerfully even if you have leucoderma. We can talk about this if you come earlier.

Mrs. Eddy's book is ordinary. It contains nothing new. Her language has a certain strangeness about it. That lady may have some ability but I found that she was misusing her knowledge. The cure for suffering lies in bearing it. Man should never use his spiritual strength to cure his suffering. If Jesus uses his spiritual power to cure the sick, that does not mean that all of us should start using our spiritual power

[1] From the postmark

[2] By offering him the presidentship of the Kathiawar Political Conference

[3] Revashanker Zaveri, brother of Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta

[4] For holding the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Kathiawar Political Conference

[5] Mahadev Desai, writing to the addressee on November 21, and apparently referring to this letter, asked: "Have you received Bapu's letter regarding Christian science?" The letter, therefore, appears to have been written on the preceding Friday which was November 19.

to cure ourselves. If we adopt remedies to cure the body, which is perishable, they, too, should be physical.

Hence a sick person should pray to God thus:

"O God! this illness is the result of my sins committed knowingly or unknowingly. Deliver me from my sins and give me the strength to bear this suffering."

If a sick man thinks that he is not sick, it is a kind of delusion. He is a true man who knows that he is sick but remains unaffected by his suffering. A sick person should analyse himself and, realizing that his body and soul are distinct, understand their true relation and the meaning of *moksha*.

I strongly advise you to leave off Christian science. You may, if you wish, certainly try ordinary remedies for your ailment, or do nothing and have faith in God. That's the golden mean. Take simple treatment and develop the power of endurance.

If you have anything to say to me in this matter, please do. I have certainly not read Mrs. Eddy's book as carefully as you are likely to have done. I have just glanced through it. If I have done her an injustice, it has been done unknowingly. But how can I hide from you the impression it has made on me?

And, therefore, the last point is that, whatever my views, you should weigh them and do what your conscience tells you. We ourselves bind or free us. Others merely advise and keep away.

Blessings to you both.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7534

53. LETTER TO HARJIVAN M. VYAS

Kartika Purnima 1983 [*November 19, 1926*]

BHAISHRI HARJIVAN,

I have your letter. My viewpoint is entirely different as regards both your questions.

Mill cloth may or may not contain any fat, but on account of the use of that cloth the fat of millions is being sucked and therefore its use should be given up.

If, while refining foreign sugar, bone dust is used, there is no reason to believe that it is not used in sugar made in our country. But it is good if we make the least use of sugar and such other things.

If we examine minutely how everything is made we shall surely find some sort of defect. So a thoughtful person will make do with the fewest things, and will give up using foreign goods even of good quality when local substitutes are available.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

BRAHMACHARI HARJIVAN MANISHANKER VYAS
ZAMKA, P.O. BAGASRA, BHAYANI
KATHIAWAR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19967.

54. LETTER TO SATISH CHANDRA MUKHERJEE

November 20, 1926

DEAR SATISH BABU,

I was delighted to have your long letter. But I was sorry to learn that you had malaria and that Krishnadas had unhappy experiences. You must please take care of yourself and have Krishnadas by your side. I hope you will continue to let me hear from you both about yourself and Krishnadas.

I am thankful for your profitable criticism. I shall deal with some of the points in the series I am writing. Greatest good of the greatest number is a doctrine which I think cannot be defended on the ground of ahimsa. Ahimsa insists on the greatest good of all. My defence of the destruction of the dogs is no doubt partly utilitarian and a concession to and an admission of our weakness. But destruction of suffering animals is defended on the highest ground of religion.

Yours sincerely,

SATISH CHANDRA MUKHERJEE
C/O. S. C. GUHA
DARBHANGA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19743

55. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Kartika Vad 1 [*November 20, 1926*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. May you live long and may your purity grow. No one in this world is free from imperfection. We can only strive to get rid of it. You are making an effort in that direction. A person who makes an honest effort knows no fall. This is the divine pledge.

We shall now meet on the 4th. I intend to go *via* Tapti Valley [Railway]. Shastriar arrives tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2878

56. IS THIS HUMANITY?—VII

[*November 21, 1926*]

Some of my correspondents do not seem to realize the fundamental consideration underlying my suggestion for the destruc-tion of dogs under certain circumstances. Thus, for instance, I have not made the suggestion in a purely utilitarian spirit. The utility to society incidentally accrues from the act, but the principal consi-deration is the relief of the long drawn-out agony of the creatures whose present condition it is simply impossible for me to tolerate. In the articles in this series, there has not been even the remo-test suggestion that man has the right of disposal over the lower animals and that he may, therefore, kill them for his own comfort or pleasure. One of the writers betrays a strange confusion of thought when he says that the characteristic of an exalted soul is that he remains unaffected by the misery around him. He is callous, rather than exalted, who has not learnt to melt at others' woe, who has not learnt to see himself in others and others in himself. Intense longing for the happiness of others was the mother of the discovery of ahimsa. And the sage who was the embodiment of compassion found his soul's delight in re-nouncing his own physical comfort and stopped killing for his pleas-ure the dumb creation about him.

[1] The postmark bears the date, "23-11-1926", Wardha, where the addressee received it.

A correspondent reminds me of the advice given me by Shri Rajchandra when I approached him with a doubt as to what I should do if a serpent threatened to bite me. Certainly his advice was that, rather than kill the serpent, I should allow myself to be killed by it. But the correspondent forgets that it is not myself that is the subject-matter of the present discussion, but the welfare of society in general as also of the suffering animals. If I had approached Raychandbhai with the question whether I should or should not kill a serpent writhing in agony, and whose pain I could not relieve otherwise, or whether I should or should not kill a serpent threatening to bite a child under my protection, if I could not otherwise turn the reptile away, I do not know what what answer he would have given. For me the answer is clear as daylight and I have given it.

A studious correspondent confronts me with some verses from aJain philosopher and asks if I agree with the position taken up in them. One of the verses says:

> One should not kill even beasts of prey in the belief that by killing one such, one saves the lives of many.

Another says:

> Nor should one kill them out of a compassionate feeling that if they were suffered to live longer they might sink deeper into sin.

The third verse says:

> Nor should one kill distressed creatures presuming that one would thereby shorten the length of their agony.

To me the meaning of the verses is clear. And it is this that a particular theory should not be the spring of action in any case. You may commit *himsa*, not in order that you thereby realize in practice a pet theory of yours, but because you are driven to it as an imperative duty. Work which spontaneously comes to one's lot, or action without attachment, in the words of the *Gita*, is the duty of a seeker after *moksha*. Confine your energy to work that comes your way, I conceive the Jain philosopher to say, never seek fresh fields of acti-vity. The verses, to me, define the mental attitude of detachment that should govern one's action in cases where *himsa* seems to be imperative and unavoidable.

But I have arrived at my present views independently of any authority, though originally they may have been drawn from various sources, and I submit that they are in perfect consonance with ahimsa,

even though they may be proved to be contrary to the teaching of the philosopher.

Young India, 25-11-1926

57. KHADI FROM YAJNA YARN

A member of the All-India Spinners' Association writes as follows:

> Khadi is woven from the yarn received from the members and then it is sold. How are the proceeds utilized? Would it be wrong if this khadi was supplied to the poor at a cheaper rate, charging only the weaving expenses, etc.? What advantage do you find in the present system? I wish you to clarify this matter through *Navajivan*.

I think that this question has already been answered once. The *yajna* yarn is received in a very limited quantity¾and though its quality is improving day by day and so irregularly that it can just cover the expenses of collecting and storing. Hence the khadi made from this yarn is sold at ordinary rates. Sufficient khadi to meet the demands of poor people is produced neither from *yajna* yarn nor from any other yarn. But the *yajna* yarn amply feeds the poor. The khadi that is produced out of the yarn spun by the poor costs more per yard than mill-made cloth. Yet the middle and the rich classes are trying to ensure the success of the art of spinning by purchasing it. When this *yajna* which is now being performed on a small scale becomes widespread, khadi will be given almost free to the poor, while the rich and the middle classes will wear khadi available at low price. At present the yarn received by the Spinners' Association satisfies the sentiment which when developed will fulfil the material need. If the Spinners' Association has no members and if [for membership] there is no condition of good spinning, then there would be no one carrying on khadi work as at present. Thus even though the poor are not enabled to wear khadi made of yarn received by the Spinners' Association, yet they derive all the benefits of its activities. The very existence of the Spinners' Association is for the benefit of the poor.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-11-1926

58. NOTES

LATE SHRI LALLUBHAI ASHARAM

Who will not feel grieved at the death of Sir Lallubhai Asharam? He was the glory of Gujarat. All are praising him with one voice for his sense of justice. I had very little personal acquaintance with him; but I hear praises of his character from every quarter. Sir Lallubhai possessed the rare combination of knowledge, wealth and character. Every Gujarati, every Indian can be proud of him and emulate his good qualities. May God grant strength and courage to the members of Sir Lallubhai's family to bear this great calamity.

KHADI-HAWKING IN KATHIAWAR

I have written earlier that the Khadi Institution at Amreli has produced khadi in large quantities. My view is that this khadi should be consumed in Kathiawar itself. It is our misfortune that khadi has to be hawked. If khadi is consumed locally then the energy spent by the hawkers in selling it can be utilized for increasing production. The production is not done for fun, but for the sake of giving work to unemployed women. Those Kathiawaris who realize this should make full use of the khadi produced in Kathiawar. This is a service to India and this is real economics. It would be doing service to the whole world if all of us would shoulder our individual responsibilities. Society is crushed because its members have to carry others' burdens. If a few rich would cease riding on the shoulders of the poor, then the burden on the poor would be lightened. But the world will always have the rich and the poor. And so there arises the duty of doing service to the poor. We may not have the strength to live like the poor, but all of us can.

This explains why it is essential for us to spin. If we wear the khadi which is spun and woven by the poor, it would be a service to them to that extent.

We should begin this service with our next door neighbours. So the khadi produced in Kathiawar must be purchased, in the first instance, by Kathiawaris themselves.

This khadi may be found expensive, coarse, or not durable. But I hold that it ought to be purchased in spite of these defects. The *chapatis* made by a mother though thick, ill-shaped and expensive are preferable to the beautiful round and cheap *chapatis* of Delhi.

Following this line of thinking, Abbas Saheb will again start

khadi-hawking in Kathiawar. Starting on the 19th, the programme is as follows:

Gondal	19, 20
Dhoraji	22, 23, 24
Ranavav	26, 27
Manavadar, Batwa	1, 2, 3, 4
Mangrol	4, 5, 6
Junagadh	10, 11
Jetpur	20, 21, 22
Upleta	24, 25
Porbandar	28, 29, 30
Verawal	7, 8, 9
Jamnagar	12, 13, 14

It is my earnest hope that at all these places the people will welcome him and his co-workers and help them in selling off the khadi.

I should like to say that much better khadi is produced at present than that sold four years ago; it is thinner, more durable and cheaper. With the passage of time and with due encouragement, it willbe still better and cheaper. It is in our hands to bring this about.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-11-1926

59. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

November 22, [*1926*][1]

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have just got your cable about prayer day[2]. I am forwarding it to Sarojini and writing a strong backing leader in *Young India*.[3] The

[1] The original did not bear the 'year'. This is inferred from the reference to the article about Colonial-born Indians published under "Notes", 25-11-1926.

[2] To be observed on December 19, the Sunday following the arrival of the Government of India delegation in South Africa for the Round Table Conference. *Charles Freer Andrews*, p. 222, has: The proposal was welcomed everywhere; in India, Gandhi and Dr. Westcott the Metropolitan commended it to their people; in South Africa, under the leadership of the Deans of Cape Town and Johannesburg English Christians joined with Indians in prayer, and Dr. da Plessis of Stellenboch issued a similar call to the Afrikaander people.

[3] *Vide* "A Day of Prayer", 25-11-1926.

whole Ashram will join you that day in your prayers. I hope to be that day in Wardha. I shall be with you in spirit that day though the body will be there with Vinoba and Jamnalalji.

Shastri[1] was here yesterday. We had a long and quiet chat.

Please remember there can be no response from our side to any scheme of repatriation, voluntary or otherwise. We are bound to look after all returned immigrants. But that can be no part of any scheme. Any such agreement will immediately make repatriation compulsory in substance though not in law.

I hope you are getting *Young India* regularly. I do deal with S.A. matters almost in every issue. The coming number will deal with Colonial-born Indians. It is an appeal to them not to ask for any differential treatment.

Hope you are keeping good health.

The elections here have saturated the atmosphere with poison.

With love,

Yours,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 967

60. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

November 22, 1926

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your two letters. No one who reads your letter about Capt. Petaval can accuse you of want of humour. For conciseness and biting sarcasm, the letter is not to be improved upon.

Your letter about Prafulla Babu makes me intensely grieved. I wish you had given me the cause for this sudden change. What is he now going to do? It does mean much to me that a man of Kshitish Babu's silent enthusiasm can be closely drawn to me, i.e., the movement.

You must not lose your equanimity on any account whatsoever. Read over and over again that part of "Ayodhya Kand" which deals with the banishment of Rama. It is enough to make anyone rejoice in suffering. What though even the whole world should desert so long as

[1] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri

your own faith does not desert you? Khadi if it has truth in it and true representatives will survive many more shocks. You must come to Wardha early and pass a few quiet days there.

Of course you will tell me to write to Prafulla Babu, if you think it necessary.

Here is a letter from Abhoy Ashram for publication. Please tell me what to do with it. I am telling Suresh Babu that I am sending it to you before publishing it.

Hemprabha Devi's letter is sweet.

With love,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1564

61. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

Monday [*November 22, 1926*][1]

DEAR SISTER,

I am very happy to have your letter. You must alwas write to me.

I do not know the reason why Prafulla Babu left. Such things will keep on happening in the world. You are right in saying that in suffering the soul blossoms. This is the teaching of all religions.

I am relieved to know that all of you are now keeping good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1615

62. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

November 22, 1926

MY DEAR C.R.,

I have your letter. I knew when I wrote the article[2] on hand-weaving *v.* hand-spinning, that those whom I had in view would be little touched by it. But I could see that there were many who thought

[1] It appears this letter was written on the same day as the one to Satis Chandra Das Gupta, *vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* "Handloom *v*. Spinning-wheel", 11-11-1926.

like them. They might understand the position. If I ever see the Viceroy, I do not expect to fare better with him. Two pice per day sticks in the throat. Acceptance of the wheel means a revolution in one's outlook.

Well, you have Chhotelal there. I hope you will succeed in making him positively gay. I should even countenance his marriage, if I could make him shake off his moodiness. I will propose a vote of thanks to you at the next meeting of our newly-formed board, if you can renew him and make him think of others besides himself.

Sastri passed a pleasant afternoon with us yesterday. He asked be shown the Ashram and he looked at everything with interest.

Pethick-Lawrence tells me he had a nice time with you.

With love

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

What about Wardha?

From a photostat: S.N. 19744

63. LETTER TO RAVISHANKER G. ANJARIA

Kartika Vad 5 [*November 23, 1926*][1]

BHAISHRI RAVISHANKER ANJARIA,

I have looked over your questions. Blind faith surely destroys the soul. Moreover, this is not a subject which requires you to believe in someone. It is therefore proper that everyone should decide for himself with the help of his own discretion.

You will not find in my article anything to the effect that all stray dogs are in a miserable plight.

Nor have I stated anywhere that all dogs might bite or catch rabies.

Nor have I suggested at any place destruction of the canine race.

I would never suggest violence for the sake of utility. In my opinion, where there is no dharma there is no utility.

But those who needs must destroy dogs can easily busy them-

[1] The reference to the two articles about killing rabid dogs which had appeared in *Navajivan*, 10-10-1926 and 17-10-1926, suggests that the letter was written in 1926.

selves with checking cow-slaughter like others who try to put an end to cow-slaughter though they think nothing of destroying vege-tation. Whether the killing of a dog is unavoidable is to be decided on the merits of each individual case. Do not the Hindus who kill goats ab-jure cow-slaughter?

A man who looks to his own happiness and continually commits violence in quest of it knows not his dharma.

Have no fear that my articles would shake non-violence off its foundations.

Why should we not regard the deliberate breeding of dogs as unnecessary as we do that of mosquitoes and the like?

I do not endeavour to preach violence; I only intend to deprecate false non-violence. In fact, we have been committing grave violence in the name of non-violence. And I find that in these circumstances we cannot readily understand true non-violence.

I have no doubt that my view is based on true non-violence. I can, therefore, wait in patience. Do not be uneasy as I am not likely to ask you or anyone else to kill a dog or any other creature.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

DOCTOR SAHEB RAVISHANKER GANESHJI ANJARIA
MANGROL
KATHIAWAR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S. N. 19968

64. LETTER TO JANAKDHARI PRASAD

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
November 24, 1926

DEAR JANAKDHARI BABU,

I have your letter. I was grieved to hear of your fever and happy to learn at the same time that you have pulled through.

I do not feel inclined to make time for reading the literature about the 'Coming of the World Teacher', because it would not carry conviction to me. If a great teacher comes down to the earth, he would leave his mark whether we recognize him or not. So long as we believe

in and worship God with all our heart, we are on the safe ground. He will make our way clear to whatever we should do.

Yours sincerely,

JANAKDHARI PRASAD

GANDHI VIDYALAYA

HAJIPUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 19746

65. LETTER TO F. W. PETHICK-LAWRENCE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
November 24, 1926

DEAR MR. LAWRENCE,

I was delighted to receive your letter.[1] Friends had really prepared me for receiving you and Mrs. Lawrence at the Ashram and I was looking forward to your visit here. I am sorry you were not able to come. I shall certainly be delighted to meet you at Gauhati if I come there. There is just a likelihood of my being unable to attend the forthcoming Congress. I shall know more fully during the second week of December.

I shall be in Wardha near Nagpur between 4th and 20th December.

I, indeed, remember having had the privilege of lunching with you in London when I was there on the South African Deputation.

Yours sincerely,

F. W. PETHICK-LAWRENCE, ESQ.

C/O. GREAT EASTERN HOTEL

CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 19747

[1] Writing from Adyar on November 16, Pethick-Lawrence who, along with his wife, was then visiting India, had recalled Gandhiji's visits to them in London many years ago, and hoped to meet Gandhiji again at the Gauhati Congress the following month (S.N. 10840).

66. LETTER TO J. W. PETAVAL

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
November 24, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. In order to know something about your activity as distinguished from your writings, I asked a kind friend in Calcutta to see your place.[1] The enclosed is an extract from hisletter.[2] You, will, therefore, see that I am in my own way trying to study your movement. Let me feel my way to it in the manner I know.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19748

67. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

Wednesday [*November 24, 1926*][3]

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your letter. There will be accommodation for as many as will come. We shall consider the cases of Hakim Saheb, Dr. Ansari and others. If you arrive on Monday evening, it will be all right.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5710

68. NOTES

ADDRESS TO SASTRI

Ahmedabad honoured itself by using the occasion of the Rt. Hon. Sastri's private visit to present him with an address and a purse. It is worthy of note that persons belonging to all parties joined the function. Would that such occasions were often seized to demonstrate our oneness in spite of our political or religious differences and also to promote mutually courteous and friendly intercourse among different groups.

COLONIAL-BORN INDIANS

I have received a letter on behalf of colonial-born Indians of South Africa chiding me for "absolutely forgetting them". The letter

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 12-11-1926.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 22-11-1926.
[3] The postmark bears the date, 25-11-1926, Sabarmati.

says:

> Our only desire is that we should receive only one message from you. I am sure you will not refuse this our last request to you.

I appreciate the affection underlying this rebuke. There is a strong tie binding the colonial-born Indians to me. But there was no special message that I could think of sending to them. The majority of my messages are sent through the weeklies that I am editing. And the pages of *Young India* and Gujarati and Hindi *Navajivan* are full of messages to the settlers and their descendants in South Africa. Though I do attend to a great deal of private correspondence, force of circumstances has obliged me to restrict it to its utmost limit and treat these weeklies as a vehicle for correspondence. These weeklies, as a friend once reminded me, are not newspapers but views-papers, for the transmission of my views such as they are. They have also received messages through C.F. Andrews. But these friends want me to send them a special message through the Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri. I know what this request means. The letter reminds me of the days when Gokhale was in South Africa. The colonial-born Indians knew my connection with Gokhale and they rightly expect me to use Srinivasa Sastri as a vehicle for all my thoughts and sentiments. Colonial-born Indians and other friends in South Africa will certainly have their heart's content through Srinivasa Sastri.

I am writing these notes before meeting him. We shall have discussed the whole of the South African question not only in its relationship to the things that the Union Government can or cannot do, but also to the things that the Indians, including the colonial-born, can and cannot do. But one thing I would say to the latter publicly. Let them beware of the tendency to cut themselves away from the settlers who were not born there and of asking for special privileges by reason of their own South African birth. Let them remember that they are, and remain, Indians in every sense of the term in spite of their South African birth and that, therefore, their duty is to throw in their lot completely with the former and work with them in every possible way. They will, by so doing, serve themselves and the country. Let them remember the work that they did so selflessly and bravely as members of the Stretcher Bearer Corps in 1899 during the Boer War and during the protracted satyagraha struggle between 1906 and 1914. Never was there then a whisper of their cutting themselves adrift or asking for special privileges. They have a great future before

them if they will seize the occasion. They can become a living link between South Africa and India, if they will but represent the best of India and assimilate the best of the Western civilization that they come in contact with and as it is represented there by the best Englishmen and the best Boers.

A TISSUE OF MISREPRESENTATIONS

A friend sent me some time ago an article written about me in *The Nineteenth Century and After*. I glanced through it, but it contained so many misrepresentations that I did not think it worthwhile reading it through, nor did I feel inclined to contradict the many falsehoods contained in it. Those who would credit them were not likely to be affected by any contradiction from me. But now a law student who, from the tone of his letter, has felt deeply hurt by the article, which he does not believe, wants me to deal with two specific statements. They are:

> In one of the schools which owed allegiance to Gandhi, a high-caste parent refused co-education of his son with the out-caste, and a high-caste teacher refused to teach a low-caste boy. The question was referred to Gandhi who upheld the high-caste men. That he said he would have helped the untouchables if he could does not excuse him.
>
> The papers of the time published statements to the effect that Gandhi was busy over his work of collection in Bombay and could not come just then, etc.

They are both false. Those who know my work about untouchables know that I have resisted, at the risk of losing friendships and donations to public causes, any attempt to discriminate against untouchables in national institutions. There is half truth in the statement about Chandpur. I did not go there when the trouble broke out. But the reason given by the writer is utterly devoid of truth. I am not omnipotent. I have only a limited sphere of work. I apply myself to the task that comes to me. I go only where I am wanted and where I regard myself competent to render some service. Thus I do not now run to places where Hindus and Mussalmans fight, not because I do not want to go or am preoccupied, but because I feel powerless. Nor do I rush wherever labour troubles occur, even though I may be invited. The work I was then doing had nothing to do with my not going to Chandpur. If I had felt the call I would have gone at all cost.

The law student and others who are interested in me will do well not to be disturbed over misrepresentations regarding me. They are

the lot of public workers. My reputation will not suffer by *misrepresentations*. It certainly will when I am guilty of misconduct. No whitewashing will then save it. But today my withers are unwrung even though a German friend tells me that a German paper accuses me of having promoted a film company. The innocent writer does not know that I have never once been to a cinema and refuse to be enthused about it and waste God-given time in spite of pressure sometimes used by kind friends. They tell me it has an educational value. It is possible that it has. But its corrupting influence obtrudes itself upon me every day. Education, therefore, I seek elsewhere.

THE WHEEL IN ENGLAND

A correspondent writes:

> I give below some extracts from *Village Industries* by J. L. Green:
>
> "Spinning and weaving, too, have been revived here and there as an auxiliary occupation. A good example of what may be done by enthusiasm in this direction exists at Willey, one of the beautiful villages for which Surrey is famous. A few years ago Miss Margaret Lieth, one of the youngest lady inhabitants of the village, commenced a weekly spinning and weaving class in a large comfortable room in her garden, and by her example and energy, she has managed to get practically the whole village interested in the work.
>
> "A third example is the spinning and weaving industry at Winterlow, where several men and women are employed in their own homes and in a weaving-shed."
>
> If the charkha is not out of place in England how much less is it in India?

This extract but emphasizes the titbits (often quoted in these pages) Sjt. Balaji Rao of Coimbatore has been assiduously collecting to demonstrate the universality of the life-giving industry.

KHADDAR AND MADRAS GOVERNMENT

Sjt. C. V. Rangam Chetti addressed the following letter to the Madras Government:

> I have the honour to bring to your kind notice that some of the Government servants are terribly afraid to purchase hand-spun and hand-woven cloths when our hawkers approach them. They are under the impression that they should not purchase these cloths. You are aware that the Bombay Government is openly appealing to the people to encourage Indian industries. In last summer Rs. 800 worth of khaddar was sold by my hawkers at Ooty. Most of the purchasers are Government servants. I have the honour to request that you will be good enough to let me know whether Government servants are

allowed to purchase hand-spun and hand-woven cloths without fear by the Madras Government.

To which the following reply has been received by him:

The honorary Manager, All-India Spinners' Association (Andhra Branch), is informed that the Government have no reason to suppose that either the fear or the impression referred to exists among those in their service.

I congratulate both the parties and I hope that if there are Government employees who refuse to buy khadi for fear of Government, they will shed their fear and their foreign garments.

Young India, 25-11-1926

69. A DAY OF PRAYER

C. F. Andrews has sent me the following characteristic cablegram:

Executive decided observe December nineteenth day prayer forthcoming Conference. Churches co-operating. After widest consulting best European sentiment feel step likely much appreciated. Advise Sarojini.

He is an intensely godly man and, therefore, a man of prayer. His politics are guided, coloured and ennobled by his prayers. Prayer with him is no empty formula. It is with him intense and incessant communion with God and waiting upon Him for guidance is his daily work great and small. No work that is done in His name and dedicated to Him is small. All work when so done assumes equal merit. A scavenger who works in His service shares equal distinction with a king who uses his gifts in His name and as a mere trustee. Unlike as among us very imperfect beings, in His Durbar the motive rather than the act itself decides its quality. We infer the intention from the act. He, knowing the intention as much as the act, judges the act according to the intention.

And Andrews, because his intentions are the purest possible, believes that God will ensure his success. He has every reason for his belief. For he has hitherto succeeded where others have failed. No one knows the history of Andrews's many unseen services. Those the public see are by no means the most significant or fruitful, not to mention contemporary events. Who knows, for instance, how he influenced the many beneficial decisions of Lord Hardinge? Truly with him, his "left hand knoweth not what his right hand doeth".

This good man has made his own this South African matter to

which he was first appointed by Gokhale. He thinks and prays about it intensely. He had prepared me by a previous letter for the cable I have given to the public. He has infected the Indians with his belief in prayer. I know them all and I must own that many have accepted his advice purely as a matter of form or to please him or to make political capital out of the event. But I know that there are some who have endorsed his proposition with absolute sincerity. The sincerity of the few will cover the insincerity or the indifference of the many.

The Dutch element of South Africa is religious according to its own lights. In South Africa, therefore, in times of famines or locust visitations, there are days officially appointed for humiliation and prayer. It is then no wonder that Andrews has found the best European sentiment ranging itself round a proposal which has its seat, not in his brain but in his heart. But he is not easily satisfied. He wants an adequate response from India and her public bodies. He wants no resolutions, he does not ask for money, he wants a melting of our hearts. He wants us, if we will, to look Godward. He wants us to seek help from God.

Andrews has become an Indian because he is an Englishman. He wants to rule not by force but by love. And love ever identifies itself with the loved one. He believes that the reputation of European humanity is at stake in South Africa. So much tribulation has been suffered in South Africa that in his opinion, the future of the relations between Asiatic and coloured races and the European will largely depend upon the deliberations of the forth-coming Conference, which is mainly a result of his efforts. He wants divine blessings on these deliberations and asks our co-operation [in] invoking them. Let no one ask what is prayer and where and who is God. Both prayer and belief in God are supremely acts of faith. Let those, therefore, who have that faith respond to the appeal of this English Indian.

Prayer is a result of realization of our helplessness and our final reliance upon God to the exclusion of all else. We are surely conscious of our helplessness. On the eve of his departure, the Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri has called the Indian cause which he is going to espouse a ‘desperate cause’. Let us then pray on the 19th if we have faith in God. All Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians, Parsis, Jews and others can join if they will. Though we may know Him by a thousand names, He is one and the same to us all.

Young India, 25-11-1926

70. CURIOUS IDEAS[1]

This is a joint production from the teachers of a Board High School. It is therefore a somewhat representative and responsible document. But for this character the letter bears, I should not have published it. The campaign against untouchability and other social and religious reforms is bringing to light grotesque and subtle ideas held even by men of learning. The defence offered by the teachers of gross superstitions shows how argument follows conviction, and, therefore, shows what a small place argument holds in any great movement. It is the example of the reformer that matters. And when that example assumes power by being proof against misrepresentation, calumny, and persecution even to the point of death, the reform spreads. So will it be with untouchability and the like. But let us evaluate these teachers' arguments for a while.

In the first instance, they have chosen a bad analogy. I do not know that people are afraid to approach me or to touch me. On the contrary, whenever I travel, I am embarrassed by the over-attention of crowds wanting to touch me. They will not leave me alone even while I am taking my bath.

Secondly, if our untouchable countrymen are afraid to touch the higher-caste men, surely it is not because of the latter's greater purity, but because they have been taught not to touch them and because of the knowledge that any attempt to touch would be followed by abuse or worse.

Thirdly, the inferiority, in point of character, of the untouchables is an unwarranted assumption. Class considered, probably they are in no way inferior to the others for truthfulness, purity and other public and private virtues, which under favourable circumstances they have been capable of exhibiting as fully as any.

It is a misuse of the doctrine of previous birth to argue that these people will require generations before they can come up to the level of the so-called high-castes. The *Gita* teaches us that it is as open to an untouchable as to a learned pundit to attain salvation in the existing birth. If the high-castes are really higher, they should have no fear of association with the untouchables. For the latter can only gain by such

[1] These ideas were embodied in a joint statement, not reproduced here, in which the authors had questioned the wisdom of Gandhiji's anti-untouchability campaign, pleaded for *sattvic* food, suggested that Gandhiji should take to the yoga of the *rishis*, and persuade some of his followers to live and work in villages.

superior contact without the former becoming in any way degraded especially when they mix among the untouchables for the sake of service and not for the sake of mere sociableness in which there is mutual give and take of vice and virtue. I do not become contaminated by entering a public house if I enter it as a reformer with the intention of weaning the drunkard from his habit as I would be contaminated if I entered a public house with a friend to keep him company and without any preconceived determination of resisting the temptation that the public house or the friend may place in my way.

Equally strange is the argument of the teachers regarding the influence of food on character. I am a keen food reformer, many friends consider me to be fanatical in my zeal for food reform and for reducing one's food to the simplest terms possible. But I know that the teachers are attaching importance to food out of all proportion and the influence it exerts upon character. If public work were to be suspended till public workers were found who would avoid all condiments and subscribe to a rigid food formula, there would be no public work done. One can only press the advantages of a simple, frugal and non-stimulating diet upon workers. But one dare not stop all public activity till that reform has been achieved. The mischievous habit that has grown up of measuring religion and conduct in terms of food is highly detrimental to the growth of a sound religious sense. For these worthy teachers would even postpone the overdue marriage reform, till people begin to take what they are pleased to call *sattvic* food. There is no doubt whatsoever that there is a vital connection between diet and self-restraint. At the same time, innumerable ins-tances are on record of people being in the habit of taking ordinary food and still keeping themselves under restraint. Those who are trying to exercise self-restraint find out for themselves the value of regulating the demands of the palate. It would be wrong, therefore, to make of dietetic reform an indispensable condition for other reforms. As for the removal of the cruel practice of child-marriage let the teachers and those who think like them know that there are people who, in spite of their rigidly simple diet, find it most difficult to curb their animal passions. After all is said and done, "the mind is its own place, and in itself can make heaven of hell, a hell of heaven". And why is there all this morbid anxiety about female purity? Have women any say in the matter of male purity? We hear nothing of women's anxiety about men's chastity. Why should men arrogate to themselves the right to regulate female purity? It cannot be superimposed from without. It is

a matter of evolution from within and, therefore, of individual self-effort.

As to the results of practice of yoga and non-violence, I cannot subscribe to the claim made by the teachers on behalf of those who take to non-violence and yogic practices. Even the most advanced among them cannot override the irrevocable and immutable laws of nature. They are as much bound by them as any of us. God Himself has reserved no right of revision of His own laws nor is there any need for Him for any such revision. He is all-powerful, all-knowing. He knows at the same time and without any effort the past, the present and the future. He has, therefore, nothing to reconsider, nothing to revise, nothing to alter and nothing to amend.

Non-violent people and yogis do undoubtedly develop certain powers. But they are all within the realm of Universal Law. I do not resort to any yogic practice firstly, because I have inward peace without it (It may be wrong on my part to be content with my present lot.) and, secondly, because I have not found a person whom I could implicitly trust and who could teach me the proper yogic exercises.

As for the movement towards villages, many of my co-workers are already working in the villages. But I confess that it is an uphill task. I own that it is not possible for everybody to be able to settle down in a village because he has the will.

Young India, 25-11-1926

71. KHADI WORK IN TAMIL NADU

The following carefully prepared report[1] of khadi work in Tamil Nadu for the past twelve months will be studied with interest. It shows slow but steady progress in every branch of the work. The reduction in the selling price by 25 per cent is a good gain, though part of it is no doubt due to the fall in the price of cotton. The quality of khadi has perceptibly improved. One feature of the sales is that three fourths of the khadi is now being sold locally. This was not so in the initial

[1] Not reproduced here. The report covered the work of 64 khadi organizations in 13 Tamil districts for the period October 1925—September 1926. It gave figures to show that, whereas production through private agencies was increasing, direct production through A.I.S.A. had decreased. It also gave figures to show that prices had been reduced, quality had improved and sales had gone up, and described efforts being made to seek the co-operation of local bodies in introducing hand-spinning in schools.

stages. The hawking scheme is largely responsible for this healthy improvement. The report draws attention to the ignorant and extraordinary Government resolution which prohibits introduction of hand-spinning in schools where hand-weaving is also not taught and which thus renders the introduction of hand-spinning all but impossible. The ignorance of the framer of the resolution is on a par with that of a noted economist who thinks he has demolished hand- spinning all the while knowing it only as hand-weaving.

Young India, 25-11-1926

72. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
November 25, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[1] Did I not say in my first letter that I am not sure of attending the Congress this year for the simple reason that I do not know whether I can [be] of any service? At the same time, I shall not certainly avoid going there if my absence is at all likely to be misunderstood. But I shall consult friends when this wretched election fever has subsided.

My attitude towards Hindu-Muslim unity is a fixed thing. I want it without the slightest bargain and I shall strain every nerve to secure it.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 12087

73. LETTER TO L. R. PANGARKAR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
November 25, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I deeply appreciate it. I cannot give you any

[1] In his letter of November 17, Vijayaraghavachariar had likened Gandhiji to "sandalwood which perfumes the hand that crushes it and would yield none of its fragrance to gentle touches" and hoped that Gandhiji would solve the Hindu-Muslim problem at the Gauhati session of the Congress (S.N. 12083).

idea of how much I avoid writing and speaking on all kinds of subjects that are referred to me. But on some matters when reference is made, it is impossible for me to avoid speaking or writing, even at the risk of losing popularity and more. When saying what you feel is relevant, if you do not say it you are guilty of untruth. I cannot very well alter the whole course of my life by suppressing the truth rather than the telling of it because relevant.

Yours sincerely,

L. R. PANGARKAR, ESQ.

NASIK CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 19749

74. LETTER TO REVASHANKER J. MEHTA

Thursday [*November 25, 1926*][1]

RESPECTED REVASHANKERBHAI,

Received your letter. The matter about the [Ramachandran] water-lift is clear to me. I feel that we ought to keep an eye on Dhiru's diet.

I shall leave this place for Wardha on the 2nd. I have chanced upon the postcard Chi. Ratilal[2] wrote to a diamond merchant asking for diamonds. He has not much judgment. He admitted [having done that] when I spoke to him. Both have returned from Dhoraji[3].

Pranams from

MOHANDAS

SHRIYUT REVASHANKER JAGJIVAN MEHTA

ROSEDALE

DEOLALI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 1265

[1] From the postmark

[2] Son of the addressee's brother, Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta

[3] A small town in Saurashtra

75. A LETTER[1]

THE ASHRAM,
Thursday, November 25, 1926

BHAISHRI,

I have your letter. I have no doubts about the importance of agriculture. But I do not know of any other means apart from the charkha for promoting agriculture.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19969

76. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Kartika Krishna 6, 1983 [*November 25, 1926*]

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I got your telegram. I am sorry to tell you that my last letter to you was sent to revered Malaviyaji's address. It only said this: The reason why I oppose your going to Europe is that you should go as a free person. Copies of such letters are not kept. But this was the purport. It is a different matter if you had promised and are morally bound to go.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6139. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

77. LETTER TO LILAVATI

Kartika Krishna 6, 1983 [*November 25, 1926*]

CHI. LILAVATI,

There is no better *mantra* than Ramanama. In this age and in this country there can be no *yajna* better than that of the charkha.

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6277

[1] Addressee not known

78. LETTER TO VRAJLAL JAGANNATH SHARMA

Kartik Krishna 6, 1983 [*November 25, 1926*]

SHRI VRAJLALJI,

I have your letter. I beg to be excused for the delay in replying. Your mother can certainly come here. She can also have aroom to herself. I hope she will not be hindered by the problem of untouchability.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI VRAJLAL JAGANNATH SHARMAJI
C/O B. N. MOTIWALA, ESQ.
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10577

79. LETTER TO E. STANLEY JONES

SABARMATI,
November 26, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I shall be pleased to meet Bishop Welsh when he comes.

Pray tell Mrs. Jones I have not forgotten her commission[1]. But I have not yet been able to steal a single minute for the work.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : C. W. 11342. Courtesy : Mrs. Eunice Jones Mathews

80. TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT, CONGRESS, KHAGARIA[2]

[SABARMATI,
On or after *November 26, 1926*]

NOT INTERFERING ELECTIONS. ALL CHARGE HANDED SWARAJISTS.

GANDHI

From the draft: C.W. 4964. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

[1] *Vide* "Spinning as Deathbed Consolation", 18-11-1926

[2] This was sent in reply to a telegram from the addressee received in Sabarmati on November 26, 1926 which read: "Printed copies telegram purpor[ting] your saying voting Congressmen sinful published here confusing Counsil voters. Wire. . . publication actual facts."

81. DISCOURSES ON THE "GITA" [1]

[1]

February 24, 1926

This verse[2] provides the key to the study of the *Gita.* It is both a prayer and a stipulation. It says,"Whatever you may be, whether Vishnu or Siva, if you are free from attachment and aversions, I bow to you."

The *Mahabharata* is not history; it is a *dharma-grantha*[3]. Who can ever describe an actual event? A man cannot exactly describe even a drop of water seen by him. God having created him so weak, how can he describe an actual event perfectly? In this battle, moreover, the warriors were, on the one side, the sons[4] of Dharma, Vayu, Indra and Ashvinikumars and, on the other, a hundred brothers[5] all born at the same instant. Have we ever heard of such a thing actually happening? Duryodhana[6] rode on the chariot of *adharma*[7], and Arjuna[8] that of dharma. The battle described here is, therefore, a struggle between dharma and *adharma*. Sanjaya[9] is a man of devotion. The battle takes place far away from where he is, and he cannot see it; Vyasa[10], therefore, endows him with divine vision so that he can see what is happening. And what does this signify? Only this: that the epic describes the battle ever raging between the countless Kauravas and Pandavas dwelling within us. It is a battle between the innumerable forces of good and evil which become personified in us as virtues and vices. We shall leave aside the question of violence and non-violence and say

[1] The talks were given at the Satyagraha Ashram, Ahmedabad, during morning prayers over a period of nine months from February 24 to November 27, 1926. Notes were taken by Mahadev Desai and Punjabhai, an inmate of the Ashram. These were edited by Narahari Parikh and published in book form in 1955 under the title *Gandhijinu Gitashikshan.*

[2] The verse in question was recited by Narayan Moreshwar Khare, music teacher at the Ashram.

[3] Work treating of religious and ethical questions

[4] Yudhishthira, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva whose fatherhood has been attributed to the five gods listed

[5] The Kauravas

[6] Eldest of the Kauravas

[7] The opposite of dharma

[8] Third among the Pandavas, the central figure in the epic

[9] Who saw and reported the battle to the blind King Dhritarashtra, father of the Kauravas

[10] Author of the *Mahabharata*; he himself figures in some of the episodes described in the epic.

that this *dharma-grantha* was written to explain man's duty in this inner strife.

[2][1]

Chapter I

February 25, 1926

Quite a few such blind men[2] live within us. This is not a battle which took place so many thousand years ago; it is one which is raging all the time, even today.

Duryodhana tells Dronacharya[3] that his own pupil, Dhrishtadyumna[4], has planned the deployment [on the Pandava side]. They are, on both sides, his pupils, to whom he has imparted the same knowledge. But it depends on themselves whether they use that knowledge well or ill.

[3]

February 26, 1926

I displayed my ignorance, not knowledge, on the first day.[5] But there is much in the *Gita* for anyone who, though ignorant of grammar, aspires after *moksha*. It is stated in the *Gita* itself that everyone, whether a woman, a Vaisya or a Sudra, can acquire spiritual knowledge if they have devotion to God. All the same, learning should not be slighted. To understand any matter, one must have the knowledge which comes from learning. If any one of you had committed the mistake which I did, I would not have overlooked it.

Well, then, the battle-field described here is primarily the one inside the human body. Does the *Gita* then prohibit physical fighting altogether? No; fighting there may well be. But here the physical battle is only an occasion for describing the battle-field of the human body. In this view the names mentioned are not of persons but of qualities which they represent. What is described is the conflict within the human body between opposing moral tendencies imagined as distinct figures. A seer such as Vyasa would never concern himself with a description of mere physical fighting. It is the human body that is described as Kurukshetra, as *dharma-kshetra*[6]. It does become that

[1] This talk covers the first three verses of Chapter I.

[2] The reference is to Dhritarashtra.

[3] The Brahmin preceptor who had taught the Pandavas and the Kauravas the art and science of war

[4] Brother of Draupadi, wife of the Pandavas

[5] That is, on February 25, 1926. Gandhiji had made a mistake while splitting a vowel combination (*pashya+etam* in I. iii).

[6] Field of dharma

when used in the service of God. The epithet may also mean that for a Kshatriya a battle-field is always a field of dharma. Surely a field on which the Pandavas too were present could not be altogether a place of sin.

Bankimchandra[1] says that it is doubtful whether Draupadi had five sons. It is, however, difficult to decide. Karna had the Sun-god as father. Every one of the characters had a miraculous birth. Whether out of compassion for Duryodhana, or because he was generous-hearted, Karna joined the former's side. Besides Karna, Duryodhana had good men like Bhishma[2] and Drona also on his side. This suggests that *evil cannot by itself flourish in this world*. It can do so only if it is allied with some good. This was the principle underlying non-co-operation, that the evil system which the Government represents, and which has endured only because of the support it receives from good people, cannot survive if that support is withdrawn. Just as the Government needs the support of good men in order to exist, so Duryodhana required men like Bhishma and Drona in order to show that there was justice on his side.

[4][3]

February 27, 1926

This pair of words can be interpreted in two different ways: *aparyapta* may mean (1) boundless, limitless, or (2) inadequate, insufficient; and *paryapta* may mean (1) limited or (2) adequate, sufficient. The meaning will depend on what we believe to be the feeling in Duryodhana's heart. Of the two meanings of *aparyapta*, I have accepted "inadequate","insufficient". It has appealed to me from my earliest days. What Duryodhana felt was that their army, protected by Bhishma, was not sufficiently strong, whereas the Pandava army, protected by Bhima[4], was; for grandfather Bhishma loved both sides and Duryodhana had, therefore, a secret fear that he might not fight with his whole heart.

[1] Bankimchandra Chatterjee (1838-1894); Bengali poet and novelist; author of *Krishnacharitra*—a book which Gandhiji had read during his imprisonment in Yeravda.

[2] Uncle of Pandu and Dhritarashtra; to enable his father Santanu to marry Satyavati, he renounced his claim to kingship and pledged that he would never marry.

[3] This talk covers verses 10 to 16 dwelling chiefly on verse 10.

[4] The second of the Pandavas

[5]

February 28, 1926

The use of Sanskrit for prayers is a mere form; the real aim is to let the meaning of dharma sink into one's heart. Simple like a villager that I am, why should I insist on reading the *Gita* myself? Why should Mahadev refuse to do that?[1] Why did I take this upon myself? Because I have the necessary humility. I believe that we are all imperfect in one way or another. But I know well enough what dharma means, and have tried to follow it in my life. If I have somewhere deep in me the spirit of dharma and loving devotion to God, I shall be able to kindle it in you. But one cannot light a piece of stone. Only those of you who have some oil and wick in them will light their lamp with this match-stick of mine; only those who have something in them will profit from this discussion.

Our pronunciation should be such that the recitation of the verses would immediately please the mind. I committed a grammatical error yesterday. In the clause *shankham dadhmau pratapavan*[2], I explained *pratapavan* as being in apposition to *shankham*. It should be applied to Bhishma, the grandfather. But my Sanskrit is no better than a villager's. I am not so proficient in it that, if I commit an error, it would be immediately felt by my ear, would jar on it.

Sanjaya is proceeding with his description of the conches which are being blown in the Pandava camp.

Kairmaya saha yoddhavyam:[3] Arjuna is asking, not whether it is necessary that he should fight, but against whom he has to fight. If he did not wish to fight, he would have told Krishna so on the previous day itself. He had no aversion to fighting as such. In fact, he had obtained Yudhishthira's[4] permission and secured weapons from Indra that he might fight. Krishna would have, in that case, asked Arjuna to go to Duryodhana and win him over. But that was not the case. Arjuna had fought even during the exile. He had fought when King Virat[5] was attacked by Duryodhana. He was always prepared to fight. His question, therefore, was who they were against whom he would be

[1] Gandhiji had remarked that Mahadev Desai knew better how to read the verses and explain the meaning, and the latter had demurred.

[2] The valiant one blew his conch; I, 12.

[3] Against whom I must fight; I, 22.

[4] The eldest of the Pandavas

[5] With whom the Pandavas lived in disguise during the last year of their exile

fighting. We should always bear this in mind.

[6]

March 2, 1926

Arjuna requests Shri Krishna to station his chariot between the two armies, so that he may see the warriors on the field.

He sees that all of them are relatives and friends, whom one cannot easily bring oneself to kill.

Arjuna says: "I do not see any good in killing one's kinsmen." The stress here is on "kinsmen". He says:

> I would not fight against them, even for the kingdom of the three worlds; how could I, then, fight against them for a few clods of earth?[1]

Because he has asked for only five villages as the Pandavas' share. He repeatedly asks how he can be happy after killing his kinsmen. All his arguments are summed up in the question: *Kairmaya saha yoddhavyam*? He is unhappy, not at the thought of killing, but at the thought of whom he was required to kill. By putting the word "kinsmen" repeatedly in his mouth, the author of the *Gita* shows into what darkness and ignorance he has sunk. Arjuna has been arguing from a practical point of view and Shri Krishna, it is hinted here, will try to meet that very argument.

The world will blame a person even for going to a court against his relations. Arjuna is shaken in his whole being, but it is not as if Shri Krishna wanted him to cast off this weakness of his forthwith. If, while seeking to follow the path of good, we do not eschew something which even in practical life we are required to eschew, dharma would cease to be dharma. In our daily life we avoid doing things out of fear of society. In this case, it is not merely a question of avoiding something which even ordinary people would avoid; it is a question of killing hundreds of thousands of men. How could Arjuna bring himself to do that? He had no need to go to Krishna for an answer to the question. If he could have approached us, even we could have told him; "Do not fight." When the dharma laid down for even this *kaliyuga*[2] requires us to refrain from unnecessary fighting, we should ask why Arjuna thought it necessary to put the question to Shri Krishna and why the two had such a long discussion. We can, therefore, understand the teaching of the *Gita* aright only if we give

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, I, 35

[2] Age of strife

careful thought to the author's aim and the attendant circumstances. These last verses, however, are of great importance, for the entire argument which follows is based on them; we shall discuss them tomorrow.

[7]

March 3, 1926

What people would generally do in their common dealings is regarded as good. If we see anyone here, or elsewhere, who renounces a right in regard to worldly matters and forgives even strangers, not to speak of relations, we would think of him as a good man. If we desist from beating up a thief or any other felon, do nothing to get him punished but, after admonishing him and recovering from him the stolen article, let him go, we would be credited with humanity and our action would be regarded as an instance of non-violence; a contrary course would be looked upon as violence. How is it, then, that Shri Krishna stops Arjuna from advancing such an argument? How can we explain a plainly contrary teaching in *Bhagavad Gita*? Why does Shri Krishna describe Arjuna as cowardly and weak?

The *Bhagavad Gita* is consistent from the first to the last verse. That is why we meditate on its teaching and hope to discover from it the path to *moksha*. We should, therefore, think whether Arjuna's argument is valid or contains some flaw.

As though he were digging up a mountain to discover a mouse, Shri Krishna[1] describes the *Gita*, at the conclusion of each chapter, as an Upanishad, as a *Yogashastra*[2] and as *brahmavidya*[3] and describes this particular one as a chapter on Arjuna's despondency.

It is important to consider what Arjuna's question was and what the circumstances were in which he raised it. Having got his chariot stationed between the two armies, he said he wanted to see who those men were against whom he would be fighting. His reason is, for the time being, clouded. He has lost his nerve. All that has gone before shows that Arjuna is a great warrior and that, when starting out to fight, he does not, like Dharmaraja[4], hesitate and ask all manner of questions. In the past, he never hesitated even when he had to fight against relations. Even during their fourteen years' exile, he gave

[1] Evidently, this is a slip for Vyasa, author of the *Mahabharata.*

[2] A treatise on yoga

[3] Knowledge concerning the *Brahman*, the Absolute

[4] Yudhishthira

free expression to his hatred for the Kauravas before Dharmaraja; what is more, victory in the battle depends entirely on him. Bhima is physically strong and daring, but he lacks Arjuna's power. In their preparations for the battle during the fourteen years' exile, the other brothers always placed Arjuna at their head. When there was a battle outside Viratnagar, Arjuna, who had been living there in disguise wanted to be led to the place of fighting. Why does a man, who loves fighting to this extent, want his chariot to be stationed between the two armies and to see who the warriors are on the other side? He knows every one of them well enough. Why does he argue with Shri Krishna and tell him all that he does? He could have left the place immediately. Arjuna has a smaller army—an army of seven *aksh-auhini*[1] as against the Kauravas' of eleven. Let us suppose that Arjuna flees the battle-field. Though his enemies are wicked people, are sinners, they are his relations and he cannot bring himself to kill them. If he leaves the field, what would happen to those vast numbers on his side? If Arjuna went away, leaving them behind, would the Kauravas have mercy on them? If he left the battle, the Pandava army would be simply annihilated. What, then, would be the plight of their wives and children? I publish in *Navajivan* a narrative of the European War, and there is a reason for this. It reminds us of the battle of the *Mahabharata*. I give the narrative so that readers may know the ruin which such a war brings on a whole people. If Arjuna had left the battlefield, the very calamities which he feared would have befallen them. Their families would have been ruined, and the traditional dharma of these families and the race would have been destroyed. Arjuna, therefore, had no choice but to fight. This is the meaning of the battle in crude physical terms; I shall discuss later what it would be if the battlefield were taken to be the human being.

I will tell you tomorrow what I said when I discussed the *Gita* in Phoenix[2].

[8]

Chapter II

March 4, 1926

Shri Krishna tells Arjuna: Shake off this faintness of heart and arise. His state of mind is imagined to be like that of Christian in the Slough of Despond. Why does Krishna say this to Arjuna, who is in

[1] A division of the army comprising 1,09,350 foot-soldiers, 65,610 horse-soldiers, 21,870 chariot-soldiers and 21,870 elephant-soldiers

[2] Settlement near Durban, which Gandhiji had founded in 1904

fact ready to forgo everything?

When I was in London, I had talks with many revolutionaries. Shyamji Krishnavarma, Savarkar[1] and others used to tell me that the *Gita* and the *Ramayana* taught quite the opposite of what I said they did. I felt then how much better it would have been if the sage Vyasa had not taken this illustration of fighting for inculcating spiritual knowledge. For when even highly learned and thoughtful men read this meaning in the *Gita*, what can we expect of ordinary people? If what we describe as the very quintessence of all Shastras, as one of the Upanishads, can be interpreted to yield such a wrong meaning, it would have been better for the holy Vyasa to have taken another, more effective, illustration to teach sacred truths.

He has drawn Arjuna and Shri Krishna so vividly that we are inclined to regard them as historical figures. The historian-author, moreover, gives the histories of cities, communities and individual characters and claims that he is describing a battle in which the best men of his age took part. I said how much better it would have been if the revered Vyasa had not adopted the method which he did. This, you may say, was impertinence on my part. But what should one seeking to serve truth do? What must one do if one sees an error? It is not wrong to draw attention, in all humility, to what one feels to be an error. This thought remained in my mind for many years. Then I thought I should read the *Mahabharata*. I decided to do so, that I might understand the atmosphere of the age in which the *Gita* was written and feel the good and the evil influences at work in that age. I read in jail a Gujarati version of the *Mahabharata* which I could get there. I saw that Vyasa did not believe that fighting was wrong. The illustration which he has taken is a very beautiful one. Just as in Aesop's *Fables* and in *Panchtantra*, the authors have created conversations among birds and animals to impart moral teaching, so in the *Mahabharata* virtues and vices are personified and great moral truths conveyed through those figures. The description of the battle serves only as a pretext. The *Mahabharata* itself was not composed with the aim of describing a battle. In the *Gita*, the author has cleverly made use of the event to teach great truths. If the reader is not on his guard, he may be misled. The very nature of dharma is such that one may easily fall into error if one is not vigilant. Anyone rashly imitating Prahlad would do something very wrong. This is the reason for the

[1] Vinayak Damodar Savarkar

injunction against the reading of the Shastras by one without qualification. It is not easy for any person to solve the problems of dharma which may face him. He will not succeed till he has made himself fit by observing the *yama-niyamas*[1] and similar other rules of discipline. To take up a work like the *Gita* without having equipped oneself in this manner is the surest way of falling into the Slough of Despond. It would be like taking up a study of botany without ever having seen plants.

The author has used the word *Gudakesha* for Arjuna. It means one who has conquered sleep, who is always vigilant. We should, therefore, think carefully about this illustration of the battle. The first thing to bear in mind is that Arjuna falls into the error of making a distinction between kinsmen and outsiders. Outsiders may be killed even if they are not oppressors, and kinsmen may not be killed even if they are. My son, even if a drunkard, would inherit my property. I would write in *Navajivan* about another's son if he was wicked, but would not treat my own son in that manner. The *Gita* says, "No, this is not right. We have no right to point an accusing finger at others. We should point out the lapses of our own people first." Arjuna was Dronacharya's best pupil. Bhishma had actually showered love on him as if he had been his first-born. Arjuna should be ready to kill either of them. It has become his duty to non-co-operate with both, for they have joined the wrong side. Should it become necessary to cut off, with a sword, one's father's head, one must do so if one has a sword and is a Kshatriya, and if one would be ready to cut off anyone else's head in similar circumstances. Shri Krishna, therefore, asks Arjuna to free himself from ignorant attachments in this world. How should I act as editor of *Navajivan*? Would it be right for me to proclaim with beat of drum the theft committed by an outsider's child and say nothing about a boy of my Ashram, who may have misbehaved in the same way? Certainly not. The *Gita* permits no distinction between one's relations and others. If one must kill, one should kill one's own people first. Shri Krishna asks Arjuna: "What is this you are saying about people being your relations?" The *Gita* wants to free him from this ignorant distinction of some people being his relations and others not. He has resolved to kill. It was not right, then, that he should shrink from killing particular individuals. It was not with any selfish motive that he had gone out to kill. Ravana

[1] Rules of moral discipline and religious observances

deserved to be killed by Rama. Why did not the latter take cover behind such wise talk? He knew well enough that Ravana could do no harm to Sita. But he did not argue with himself in that manner. We never say that he fought for the sake of Sita; we believe that he fought in order to kill Ravana.

Even if we believe in non-violence, it would not be proper for us to refuse, through cowardice, to protect the weak. If Arjuna had forgotten the difference between kinsmen and others and had been so filled with the spirit of non-violence as to bring about a change of heart in Duryodhana, he would have been another Shri Krishna. Actually, however, he believed Duryodhana to be wicked. I might be ready to embrace a snake, but, if one comes to bite you, I should kill it and protect you. Arjuna has two courses open to him: he should either kill Duryodhana and others, or else convert them. In the circumstances, Arjuna's laying down arms would mean the annihilation of all those on his side. His refusal to fight would bring on a disaster. Thus, Vyasa has taken the right illustration. A person who believes in fighting and does not regard it as violence, though it is violence, is here being asked to kill.

[9]

March 5, 1926

The question which Arjuna asks Shri Krishna is not whether it is right for him to kill. His question is whether it would be right to kill his kinsmen. This question arises out of bias. Bhishma and Drona, a kinsman and an honoured person, stand vividly before his eyes. How can he kill them? To a person whose dilemma is not concerning violence and non-violence but is only about whom he may kill, our commonsense can give only one answer. But a godfearing man like Arjuna should pause and reflect before acting. Only a person with deep understanding can solve the rather fine problem whether he should go on with the recitation of *gayatri*[1] or run to the help of someone who is crying out in distress. To a godfearing man, the problem would present no difficulty. The author of the *Mahabharata* has discussed such delicate issues on almost every page of the epic. He has taken instances from the lives of individual characters and drawn lessons from them. Some of the instances may well have been incidents of history, but he has treated them as poets and seers have

[1] Vedic prayer to Sun-god for illumination

always treated such incidents. English poets, too, have written plays and poems with historical figures as subjects. The author of the *Mahabharata* raises, for instance, the question whether the sage Vishvamitra had secretly eaten beef[1] and whether one should accept food offered by a chamar. The author has, thus, discussed problems of three kinds.

[10]

March 6, 1926

From today we begin the argument of the *Gita* and shall not, therefore, be able to go as fast with the verses as we have been doing.

"Accept innocent happiness, innocent joy, whatever the source," said Raychandbhai. Accordingly, we may derive a variety of meanings from the verses of the *Gita.*

The argument addressed to Arjuna begins with the eleventh verse[2], and continues right up to the last chapter. Shri Krishna starts with the distinction between the *atman*[3] and the body, for that is the first step to spiritual knowledge. We must first know certain definitions, then alone can we proceed. Arjuna is represented as a seeker, as a man who believes in the *atman* and observes the disciplines of *yama-niyama*, and so Shri Krishna starts giving him the knowledge of the *atman*. One becomes entitled to ask questions and seek illumination only if one has observed *brahmacharya*[4] and always followed truth, and only then will one's questions deserve to be answered. Arjuna has this fitness; he has the genuine spirit of submission and humility.

We have not yet fully discussed the premise on which the argument of the *Gita* is based. Yesterday we were discussing Arjuna's plea that it is wrong to kill one's kinsmen, not that it is wrong to kill at all. He was asked to forget the distinction of kinsmen and outsiders. The Hindu Shastras say that non-violence is the supreme dharma. The question, therefore, whether or not it is right to kill does not arise. Only an atheist would raise such a question. Arjuna has observed the disciplines of *yama-niyama*, among which ahimsa is placed first. But ahimsa is an ideal which it is impossible to realize to perfection. It may be possible to realize it in thought, but not in action. Shankara-

[1] The story is told in the Shanti Parva of the *Mahabharata.*

[2] Of Chapter II

[3] The self, unidentifiable with any one aspect of human individuality

[4] Celibacy, as an expression of perfect control of all the senses

charya[1] has said that one seeking *moksha* should have far greater patience than one who would try to empty the sea, drop by drop, with a blade of grass. One must have equal patience for realizing the ideal of perfect non-violence. It is impossible in this body to follow ahimsa fully. That is why *moksha* is laid down as the supreme end of life. Violence is inescapable. While the eyes wink and nails have to be pared, violence in one form or another is unavoidable. Evil is inherent in action, the *Gita* says further on. Arjuna did not, therefore, raise the question of violence and non-violence. He simply raised the question of distinction between kinsmen and others, much in the same way that a fond mother would advance arguments favouring her child.

The *Bhagavad Gita* traces all maladies to their one source. A physician treats different diseases with different remedies. But, on the basis of researches in medical science, physicians are now coming to the conclusion that, though diseases seem different from one another, in the final analysis they are one. The cause is one, and so is the cure. Similarly, Shri Krishna says that there is only one spiritual evil, with only one cause and one remedy. To explain this oneness, an extreme example is used. If one's kinsmen deserve to be killed, they ought to be killed; and one must not hesitate even if the entire world were likely to be destroyed in consequence. It is not only Arjuna's right but his duty to act in this manner. To his question whether one ought not to make an exception in regard to relations, he gets an un-ambiguous answer. The principle, thus, admits of no exception, just as there can be no exception in the matter of following truth, for truth is God and, if exceptions were admitted in regard to it, God also would be sometimes truth and sometimes not-truth. Thus the rule in this instance admits of no exception.

Shri Krishna tells Arjuna that he is talking specious wisdom. The *Gita* does not teach the path of action, nor of knowledge, nor of devotion. No matter how well one cultivates *vairagya* or how diligent one is in performing good actions or what measure of *bhakti*[2] one practises, one will not shed the sense of "I" and "mine" till one has attained knowledge. One can attain self-realization only if one sheds this attachment to the ego. It is possible only for a person who has

[1] 780-812; philosopher and teacher of Vedanta. He travelled all over the country and established a number of *mathas*. His works include commentaries on the *Bhagavad Gita* and the Upanishads and many hymns.

[2] Devotion

succeeded in doing so. In English, 'i' is a vertical line with a dot[1] above it. Only when this 'I' is done away with can one attain self-realization. A man's devotion to God is to be judged from the extent to which he gives up his stiffness and bends low in humility. Only then will he be, not an impostor, but a truly illumined man, a man of genuine knowledge. The *Gita* does not advocate any one of the three paths; I have from my experience come to the conclusion that it has been composed to teach this one truth which I have explained. We can follow truth only in the measure that we shed our attachment to the ego.

It is to teach this that Shri Krishna has advanced the beautiful argument of the *Gita.*

[11]

March 7, 1926

As every human being passes through childhood, youth and so on to old age, so also does he or she meet death. The phrase *dehantarprapti*[2] used here does not mean a new body or another life, for what is being discussed here is the fear of death, not that of a new life.

[12]

March 9, 1926

We feel afraid only so long as we take the rope to be a serpent. Likewise, if we know the natural stages of growth of the body, we shall not grieve over death. In order to help Arjuna to overcome his agitation, Shri Krishna tries to explain to him the difference between the *atman* and the body.

> O Kaunteya, contacts of the senses with their objects bring cold and heat, pleasure and pain; they come and go and are transient. Endure them, O Bharata.
>
> O noblest of men, the wise man who is not disturbed or agitated by these, who is unmoved by pleasure and pain, he alone is fitted for immortality.[3]

Any being who is not subject to the impressions of senses will never experience fear. It is these impressions which are responsible for the feelings of happiness and misery. Someone has said that the

[1] Gandhiji uses the word '*shunya*' for 'dot'. The suggestion is that one progress on the spiritual path in the measure that one travels towards this *shunya* or zero.

[2] Passing into another body; II, 13

[3] II, 14 and 15. The translation of this and other verses from the *Gita* is reproduced from Mahadev Desai's *The Gita According to Gandhi.*

muscles of a man who is angry become thirteen times as tense as when he is normal, and of a man who is laughing nine times as tense. That is, one spends more energy when one is angry, and one whose energy is thus wasted cannot attain to immortality. The cultivation of this state requires practice. We can even say of a person who has attained to it that he is God. Once a sannyasi, an impostor, paid a visit to Phoenix. He asked me to recite any verse from the *Gita* which I knew. I recited this one. During the early days of my legal practice, I was on one occasion very much troubled in my mind. I then went out for a walk. I was very much agitated. I then remembered this verse, and the very next moment I was almost dancing with relief. We should identify ourselves with Arjuna and have faith that Shri Krishna is driving our chariot. Thus, the meaning of the *Gita* on the commonsense level is that, once we have plunged into a battle, we should go on fighting. One ought not to give up the task one has undertaken. In this way, the illustration used should not be pointless or inadequate and a wise man should not read a wrong meaning in it either.

Vyasa's own intention was something different. He wanted to write the *Mahabharata* in such a way that even little boys and girls would study it, remember the virtuous characters in it and learn to keep away from people like the wicked characters in the epic. His aim was to strengthen the finer impulses in us and help us to overcome the evil ones. Before the women, too, he held up the example of Draupadi and thus taught them that they should, when threatened with danger, roar like lionesses and protect their honour. Draupadi could do this and rouse Arjuna, Yudhishthira and Bhima. The author of the *Mahabharata* has raised woman to a great height through his epic. The chief aim of the epic, however, is to represent the most invisible of all invisible wars. It tells of the Arjuna and other Pandavas in our minds who are battling with the Kauravas in it. The moral problems which confront one in this inner war are far more difficult than those of a physical war. An error in the sphere of practical action will at the most result in the destruction of this perishable body, but the result of an error in this inner invisible war will lead to perdition. The most painful punishment is appointed for evil intention. In the course of time, Pandavas and Kauravas are bound to be forgotten. They will most certainly be forgotten when this Age ends. We should not delude ourselves with the belief that they will continue to be remembered for ever. This Age of ours was preceded by many others. Even when all of them are forgotten, this war in our heart will go on. The *Gita* shows

how we may emerge safe from it. The Krishna of the *Gita* is not the person who, when the hour of his death arrived, fell to a hunter's arrow, and Arjuna is not that person from whose hand the Gandiva bow slipped. Krishna is the *atman* in us, who is our charioteer. We can win only if we hand over the reins of the chariot to him. God makes us dance, like the master in a puppet show. We are smaller than even puppets. We should, therefore, trust everything to God, as children to parents. Let us not eat uncooked stuff. Let Krishna the cook prepare and give us what food of grace. He wills for our *atman*.

The *Gita* does not decide for us. But if, whenever faced with a moral problem, you give up attachment to the ego and then decide what you should do, you will come to no harm. This is the substance of the argument which Shri Krishna has expanded into 18 chapters.

[13]

March 10, 1926

The verse[1] beginning with the phrase *matrasparsha* applies to sleeping as much as to waking. We have to make ourselves conscious machines. We should cultivate such perfect concentration that, like a man asleep, we are aware of nothing else. Hazrat Ali told his people to draw out the arrow from his body while he was praying, for at that time he would be totally absorbed in devotion to God. One cannot say that such a thing could be done when one was asleep, for one would not be able to fall asleep at all when the body was pierced with an arrow. A person who can be totally absorbed in every task on hand, as Hazrat Ali could be in prayer, who lives in such a state of self-absorption all the twenty-four hours of the day, will attain to immortality.

Shri Krishna now explains why the impressions of the senses are unreal:

> What is non-Being is never known to have been, and what is Being is never known not to have been. Of both these the secret has been seen by the seers of the Truth.[2]

That which never was cannot exist, and that which exists cannot cease to exist. Even the sun is transient, coming into existence and vanishing. The candle both exists and does not exist, for, when it is burnt up, its substance dissolves back into the five elements. Everything which has a name and a form ceases one day to exist in that particular mode, though it does not cease to be as a creation of God.

[1] II, 14
[2] II, 16

[14]

March 11, 1926

The *jnanis*, the men of knowledge, have discovered what exists and what does not exist. Name and form are brittle as glass. The *jnanis* know what is implied in the difference between existence and non-existence. We only know one simple thing: God is, nothing else is.

We shall breathe life into the Ashram by laying down our own lives. Its lands and buildings may disappear, but the spirit we inform it with will never perish.

> Know that to be imperishable whereby all this is pervaded. No one can destroy that immutable Being.[1]

Know that his Bodiless One, which can lift many Govardhan mountains on its little finger,[2] is imperishable.

Avyaya means that which cannot be spent.

[15]

March 12, 1926

> These bodies of the embodied one who is eternal, imperishable and immeasurable are finite. Fight, therefore, O Bharata.[3]

Aprameya means that for which there can be no evidence, that is, no evidence in the sense in which smoke is regarded as evidence of fire.

Therefore fight, O Bharata. If we argue that since all bodies are perishable, one may kill, does it follow that I may kill all the women and children in the Ashram? Would I have in doing so acted according to the teaching of the *Bhagavad Gita*, merely because their bodies are perishable? We believe the watchman to have been mad because he had killed a person; if, however, he were to cite this verse of the *Gita* to justify what he did, we would call him wicked. What, then, shall we say of a person who mouths these seemingly learned arguments and then commits wickedness? To know the answer to this, we should go back to the First Chapter. Arjuna had said that he did not want even the kingdom of gods if he had to kill his kith and kin

[1] II, 17

[2] Shri Krishna as a boy is said to have lifted the Govardhan mountain on his little finger.

[3] II, 18

for that. But he is bound, in any case, to kill them, for he has accepted the dharma which requires him to kill. This verse with the word *yudhyasva* applies to him, but it does not apply to others. In this verse, Shri Krishna wants to free Arjuna from his ignorant attachment. When Harishchandra was required to kill a virtuous woman like Taramati[1], his eyes fell on her *mangal-sutra*[2] and [recognizing her], he held back. He would not have done so if it had been some other woman. In this case Shri Krishna would have told him that it was his duty to kill her. He would say to Harishchandra: You have lost your wits; you have killed people in the past and now you shrink from killing the woman because of your attachment for her as your wife. You would thus betray your dharma. He would tell Harishchandra that his body as well as his wife's was perishable. If a person would cut his own throat rather than another's, then Krishna would tell him that he could kill others as a duty.

Shri Krishna advances another argument.

> He who thinks of This (*Atman*) as slayer and he who believes This to be slain, are both ignorant. This neither slays nor is ever slain.[3]

The *atman* neither kills nor is killed. This argument can be advanced only to a person. . .[4] It is like putting the cart before the horse. As that is impossible, so the body, if it sought to drive the *atman*, would never succeed. If anyone says that it can, he does not know what he is talking about.

[16]

March 13, 1926

Suppose that your father was a teacher,[5] that you and . . . misbehaved in the same way and your father punished . . . but not you; would that be right?[6] Arjuna did not understand what even a child like you does. Shri Krishna told him all this long argument of the *Gita* just to explain this.

He who is afraid kills. He for whom there is no death will not

[1] Harishchandra's wife

[2] Ornament carrying black or purple coral beads worn as a symbol of the married state

[3] II, 19

[4] Some words have been missing here in the source.

[5] This was addressed to a child in the audience.

[6] The child replied to this in the negative.

kill.

Those who come to the prayer meeting but do not follow the readings from the *Gita* should be regarded as not attending the prayers. We shall have truly welcomed the guest who has arrived at our place only if we receive him into the home with love, help him to wash, offer him a clean seat and serve him the best food prepared for ourselves, and ourselves eat only what remains after he has finished. We shall have welcomed him, shall have acted truthfully, only if we act in this manner. But if one frowns at the guest, does not speak to him with love, places before him a dirty, unwashed plate and serves stale food, fails to ask him if he would have another helping and then claims to have welcomed him and offered him a meal, one would have done nothing of the sort but would in fact have insulted the guest. Such conduct, therefore, would be a violation of truth. Rotten and foul-smelling food or, food which has been left over ought not to be offered even to a beggar. If at all we wish to offer food to a beggar, we should offer clean grain. If we would rather give him nothing, we should tell him so discreetly. This would be acting truthfully. We can thus, by exercising our discrimination, decide what is truthful and what is not.

> This is never born nor ever dies, nor having been will ever not be any more; unborn, eternal, everlasting, ancient. This is not slain when the body is slain.[1]

This *atman* was never born and will never die; it is not as though it ever was not and may not be again. The author has used a separate epithet to indicate each of these several aspects. The *atman* is unborn, eternal and ancient. Everyone knows it. The body perishes, but it does not. One generation knows of it from another. It is a thing that all parents must have explained, or ought to explain, to their children.

> He who knows This, O Partha, to be imperishable, eternal, unborn, and immutable—whom and how can that man slay or cause to be slain?[2]

The *Gita* has been composed not in the form of aphorisms, but so as to be carried in the mind from moment to moment. It was written not for the learned, but for all the four castes,—rather, all the eighteen castes—to read and understand. It was written for the Sudras, the Bhangis[3], and for women—in fact, for all classes. If the author has used a variety of epithets for a subject, though all of them mean the same thing, it is simply in order that we may grasp what he wants us to understand—in the same way that a mother explains a point to her

[1] II, 20
[2] II, 21
[3] Community regarded as untouchables attending to scavenging work

children over and over again in different words.

[17]

March 14, 1926

> As a man casts off worn-out garments and takes others that are new, even so the embodied one casts off worn-out bodies and passes on to others new.[1]

Would I be ready to change this body for another, unless I would give up a worn-out one and have a fresh one? If the eyes cannot see, the ears cannot hear and the palate cannot relish food, would a person wish to live on bed-ridden, or die?

> This no weapons wound, This no fire burns, This no waters wet, This no wind doth dry.[2]

Weapons cannot cleave it. If we strike the air with a weapon, can we hurt it? The *atman* is subtler even than air. Fire cannot burn it, nor can water wet it; how can air, then, ever dry it? Having described the *atman* thus, the author gives an appropriate epithet to indicate each of its several aspects:

> Beyond all cutting, burning, wetting and drying is This—eternal, all-pervading, stable, immovable, everlasting.[3]

More epithets again: eternal, all-pervading, stable, immovable and everlasting. The verse which follows states the same thing.

> Perceivable neither by the senses nor by the mind. This is called unchangeable; therefore, knowing This as such, thou shouldst not grieve.[4]

Such is the *atman*, Krishna says and you should not, therefore, grieve over anyone's death. Why should you, then, grieve over the death of your relations?

[18]

March 16, 1926

What do you call the thing which protects us against the sun?[5] Likewise, there is a word, *aja*, to designate that which was never born, and another, *achhedya*, to designate that which cannot be pierced.

Shri Krishna takes Arjuna slowly from darkness to light. Have

[1] II, 22
[2] II, 23
[3] II, 24
[4] II, 25
[5] The question was addressed to a child who replied: *chhatri*, an umbrella.

you seen the *atman*?[1]

It is so naughty that it dwells in us and yet we cannot see it. It is the deer that even Ramachandra would not be able to kill. Ramachandra is omnipotent, and so he could kill only that which deserved to be killed.

Having argued thus, Shri Krishna says: "But suppose that the *atman* has none of these attributes. What of it? What even if it is born and dies again and again? All the more reason why you should not grieve over death."

> And if thou deemest This to be always coming to birth and always dying, even then, O Mahabahu, thou shouldst not grieve.
>
> For certain is the death of the born, and certain is the birth of the dead; therefore, what is unavoidable thou shouldst not regret.[2]

He who dies is certain to be born again. We ought not to grieve over what is inescapable, what cannot be helped.

[19]

March 17, 1926

> The state of all beings before birth is unmanifest; their middle state is manifest; their state after death is again unmanifest. What occasion is there for lament, O Bharata?[3]

All beings were unmanifest before birth and will again become unmanifest after death. Birth and death are God's concern. He alone, therefore, knows their mystery. Even doctors have failed here, for they cannot create a body. "Who am I, whence do I come? Am I destined to rise to heaven?" The *atman* becomes incarnate in birth. We can see this, the middle stage. Men who have thought over these problems have asserted that, for bestowing and taking away life, God does not require even a fraction of the time that is required for drawing and erasing a circle on the blackboard. No mathematician can ever calculate the measure of that time.

Tatra ka paridevana. Why, then, grieve? This is the great mystery of God. As a magician creates the illusion of a tree and destroys it, so God sports in endless ways and does not let us know the beginning and the end of his play. Why grieve over this?

> One looks upon This as a marvel; another speaks of This as such;

[1] The question was again put to a child who answered in the negative.
[2] II, 26 and 27
[3] II, 28

another hears thereof as a marvel; yet having heard of This none truly knows This.[1]

Some wise men see the *atman* as a thing of wonder and some describe it so. Others hear it so described but cannot understand what it is. Such is our pathetic state. There can be no end to describing God's greatness, so mysterious is His sport.

Finally, Shri Krishna sums up:

> This embodied one in the body of every being is ever beyond all harm, O Bharata; thou shouldst not, therefore, grieve for anyone.[2]

"O Arjuna, this *atman* which dwells in everyone's body can never be killed." The body's death is like the breaking of a piece of glass. This cycle of birth and death goes on for ever and ever.

[20]

March 18, 1926

The theft which took place today[3] provides a lesson in the application of the *Gita*. Where there is possessiveness, there is violence. We have to guard things which we think are ours; when we give away a thing to someone, this possessiveness disappears since we no longer regard that thing as ours. All things in the world belong to us, but we are indifferent towards them and do not lose any sleep on their account. In the same way, we should think that the things we keep in the Ashram belong to others as much as to us, and so remain indifferent towards them. The other way is the way of violence, of Satan. That is not the way we have chosen. Ours, however, is a mixed way at present. We have adopted the principle of collective possession, and individual possession is restricted to a minimum. Krishna tells Arjuna to give up this possessiveness, and through these two characters Vyasa tells us to do so.

After discussing the problem from the spiritual point of view Shri Krishna considers it from the mundane point of view. He tells Arjuna what his duty in the practical world requires.

> Again, seeing thine own duty thou shouldst not shrink from it; for there is no higher good for a Kshatriya than a righteous war.[4]

A Kshatriya has no duty higher than that of fighting in a

[1] II, 29
[2] II, 30
[3] In the Ashram
[4] II, 31

righteous war. Why is the war described as righteous? Because it is not of Arjuna's seeking. He was happy enough in his home, but he was challenged by Duryodhana. The war came to him without his seeking, and had as it were opened the door of heaven to him.

Proceeding, Shri Krishna talks about one's good name in the world:

> The world will for ever recount the story of thy disgrace; and for a man of honour disgrace is worse than death.[1]

If a person who has accepted cleaning of latrines as his work wearied of it, saying that it was a Bhangi's work, Shri Krishna would tell him that he was betraying his dharma, that he would lose his good name, that people would for ever talk ill of him. For a man who has a good reputation in society, its loss is worse than death. Arjuna, Shri Krishna said, would give the great warrior a ground for accusing him of having fled from the battlefield in fear. He sums up this part of the argument with the following verse:

> Hold alike pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, and gird up thy loins for the fight; so doing thou shalt not incur sin.[2]

The argument in this verse is not practical, but spiritual.

[21]

March 19, 1926

The verse about "pleasure and pain" is not addressed to Arjuna alone but to all of us. "You will incur no sin by killing your kinsmen." —this is said repeatedly in the *Gita*. If a person remains unconcerned with defeat or victory, knowing that they are a part of life, he commits no sin in fighting. But we should also say that he earns no merit. If we seek merit, we shall also incur sin. Even the best thing has an element of evil in it. Nothing in the world is wholly good or wholly evil. Where there is action there is some evil. If Harishchandra had felt any doubt in his mind, what would a holy sage have told him? "Cut your wife's throat; you will incur no sin." If a person learns to make no distinction between gain and loss, pleasure and pain, he would rarely be tempted to commit a sin.

If we had blamed the thieves and regarded them as very wicked men, we would have been filled with rage and wanted to kill them.

[1] II, 34
[2] II, 38

We can do without beating of drums over a birth, but it is difficult not to grieve over a death. If we thus cultivate an attitude of indifference and learn to check anger, we shall one day succeed in freeing ourselves from these pairs of opposites.

The argument in the *Bhagavad Gita* falls into three parts: (1) "Whence this weakness in you?" (2) Arjuna's questioning; (3) Krishna awakening his intellect and explaining to him how the *atman* and the body are separate things. Then follow the practical considerations.

What is one to do? How is one to proceed having known that the *atman* is different from the body? This is the fourth stage in the argument.

> Thus have I set before thee the attitude of Knowledge; hear now the attitude of Action; resorting to this attitude thou shalt cast off the bondage of action.[1]

The word *sankhya*, it has been said, is somewhat confusing. It may be so for the learned, it is not so for us. All that Shri Krishna means is this: "I explained the matter to you from a theoretical point of view. I pointed out the difference between the *atman* and the body. Having explained this to you, I will now put the argument with reference to yoga. Yoga means practice. After understanding this, you will have to translate your knowledge into action in the manner I shall explain." The word yoga is used repeatedly in the *Gita*. It explains how to act. "If you understand this," Shri Krishna says, "you will escape from the bondage of action."

[22]

March 20, 1926

There is much disputation concerning the meaning of the verse which we took up for discussion yesterday, as will be evident to anyone who makes a deep study of the *Gita*. I however feel that you should follow the rule that I have followed. It does not matter if that seems like making a virtue of our weakness. We should not involve ourselves in disputations about the meaning of Shastras. Bishop Butler was a man of great learning, but he took a pledge never to enter in a religious controversy. An atheist happened to be on a visit [to England]. The Bishop could have argued with him. But he wrote to a friend saying that he would not enter into any discussion with the atheist. It was possible, he said, that he might not be able to answer an

[1] II, 39

argument of the latter on the instant. It was also possible, he added, that his reasoning might have no effect on others, in which case he would produce on them a wrong impression. It was therefore better, he said, to remain quiet. The atheist was free to question any belief. Why enter into any argument, about the existence of God, which was self-evident?

Raychandbhai once thought that he could do good to the world through his gift of attending to a hundred things simultaneously. If, he thought, he gave demonstrations of that gift in the Town Hall in Bombay, with a High Court judge presiding over the function, people would be converted and seek the welfare of their soul. After two or three days, he felt doubts about the wisdom of such a demonstration. It would be, he thought, a display of his own attainments, but would prove nothing about the power of God. Accordingly, he wrote a letter of apology and said that he had decided not to give the demonstration, but did not wish to explain why.

A person may say about Siva: 'He may be naked, He may wear human skulls round his neck, but He is my God, I want no other.' We may say the same thing in regard to this verse. *Sankhya* may mean any number of things. I have explained the idea to the best of my understanding and I have set you thinking. Now I shall demonstrate a practical application. Its many explanations may be of interest to learned men; they are not for us. We wish to study so that we may learn to be servants and devotees of God, may see God. To see God we do not have to enter into disputes. At the moment these children make my world. I wish to awaken their thought, entertain them and explain things to them. I have no aim beyond this. Every day we recite:

> What is non-Being is never known to have been,
>
> And what is Being is never known not to have been.

If, despite that, we act as if the unreal was the real, to what purpose do we recite the verse?

At every moment we have to decide whether a particular action will serve the *atman* or the body. We cannot, however, break open the cage of the body, and so we must simultaneously follow *vidya*[1] and *avidya*[2].

And now follows a verse which explains how a person who tries

[1] Knowledge

[2] Ignorance; for Gandhiji's meaning here, *vide Isopanishad*.

to put this teaching into action is saved.

> Here no effort undertaken is lost, no disaster befalls. Even a little of this righteous course delivers one from great fear.[1]

No sin is incurred by those that follow the path of action. A beginning made is not wasted. Even a little effort along this path saves one from great danger. This is a royal road, easy to follow. It is the sovereign yoga. In following it, there is no fear of stumbling. Once a beginning is made, nothing will stand in our way.

Only yesterday I wrote to a friend and told him that he suffered not from fistula but from something else. I advised him to keep repeating Ramanama. What one does in this way never goes in vain. How would it have helped him if I had advised him to have a *yajna*[2] performed? He would not have got a genuine priest to conduct the *yajna*. There would be many other difficulties. Nor would I advise him to go to Jagannath Puri [3] and make such and such an offering to such and such a deity. What if following my advice, he became an atheist? If, instead, he got smitten with love for Rama, he would be saved from a great fear. He suffers from a mental disease and should become free from attachments. He should constantly think on Rama. Doctors, too, advise us not to think of the disease from which we may be suffering.

This is a very important verse. It contains the profound idea that nothing done is ever lost, that there is no sin there, only safety. This is the royal road, the right angle. All right angles are of 90 degrees. This path is the path of truth. There is no harm, no fear of destruction, in following it. On the other hand, a person who argues whether it is right to tell a lie in order to save a cow or to eat meat to save one's life, can never be sure where he will end up.

[23]

March 21, 1926

Three points, tests or conditions are mentioned for proving that the *atman* is different from the body. We can act every moment on the assurance: in this path no effort is ever lost. What can we do right now which will never be lost? What can we think of? There is only one reply, that we must follow the prayers, and that too with perfect con-

[1] II, 40
[2] Sacrifice
[3] A centre of pilgrimage in Orissa

centration.

Ramaswamy Aiyar once addressed a meeting in Bombay in the early days of non-co-operation. Khadilkar[1] said then that among all political activities there was only one which satisfied all the three conditions. That activity yields immediate result; there is no obstacle to its progress; and there is the advantage of being saved from the fear of loss of sixty crores of rupees.

Shri Krishna explained the same thing over again in the verse which follows:

> The attitude, in this matter, springing, as it does, from fixed resolve but one, O Kurunandana; but for those who have no fixed resolve the attitudes are many-branched and unending.[2]

O Arjuna, the resolute intellect here is one-pointed. Along this path which I shall explain to you, one must hold one's intellect so firm that there is no wavering. The actions of a man whose intellect is not fixed on one aim, who is not single-minded in his devotion, will branch out in many directions. As the mind leaps, monkey-fashion, from branch to branch, so does the intellect. A person who clings to his life will seek help from any *vaid* or saint or witch-doctor whom he meets. Similarly, a monkey will fly from branch to branch and ultimately meet an untimely death, the victim of a sling-shot. The mind of a person of uncertain purpose grows weak day by day and becomes so unsettled that he can think of nothing except what is in his mind at the moment. In present-day politics, there is no good at all and plenty of evil, for it is full of flattery and one is not protected from dangers, but, on the contrary, surrounded by them. It does not help us to realize the *atman*; in fact we lost our soul. We lose our dharma, we lose the capacity for good works, lose both this world and the other. If, on the other hand, we can have faith in this spinning-wheel movement, we can serve the world, be happy ourselves, can live safe from a great danger, that is, can live without fear of those who would hold us down. We also secure, simultaneously, a means of ensuring our welfare in the other world. If a person who takes up this work does not seem to be of a fixed mind, you may conclude that he is not following the royal path.

It is only if we have the faith in our hearts that we are all one,

[1] Presumably, Krishnaji Prabhakar Khadilkar, a scholar, journalist, dramatist and public worker of Maharashtra

[2] II, 41

though we exist as separate beings, it is only then that we can feel a sense of equality. Otherwise, even two leaves are not equal.

The next three verses describe the man whose intellect is not resolute.

[24]

March 23, 1926

A person who is of fixed mind in a small matter can be so even in a big matter. If he is asked to make an ellipsoid of clay and concentrate on it, he would do so. In trying to concentrate on any object, one is likely to be distracted by all manner of troublesome thoughts. A person to whom this happens may be described as one whose intellect is not fixed on one aim. One who would succeed in the yoga of works must be of a fixed mind in small matters as well as big.

Now follows the description of an intellect not fixed on one aim. In describing it, Vyasa has run down the Vedas as he has done nowhere else. So many things were interpolated into the Shastras in the course of time, but we have gone on believing that everything in them is divinely inspired. By doing this, we make ourselves mere pedants. *Veda* means to know. That which helps us to acquire the knowledge of the *Brahman*, which provides us the best means of acquiring such knowledge, that is the Veda.

> The ignorant, revelling in the letter of the Vedas, declare that there is naught else; carnally-minded, holding heaven to be their goal, they utter swelling words which promise birth as the fruit of action and which dwell on the many and varied rites to be performed for the sake of pleasure and power; intent, as they are, on pleasure and power their swelling words rob them of their wits, and they have no settled attitude which can be centred on the supreme goal.[1]

Ignorant people, that is persons who are learned and yet devoid of knowledge, utter flowery speech, that is speech which is attractive, on which blossom new flowers every day. Men who wrangle over the meaning of the Vedas; men filled with endless desires (men who have many wishes and teach others to be like them); men who are ever thinking of heaven (who are merely for enjoyments, who always talk of enjoying even this world thoroughly and paint glowing and attractive pictures of life in heaven and) who assert that there is nothing beyond heaven; who always say that our actions in life unfailingly

[1] II, 42, 43 and 44

bear appropriate fruits and persuade people to perform innumerable rituals to secure enjoyments and win greatness (there are people who say these things even today.); who advise us to propitiate a great many gods and so make us feel helpless; who induce us to offer fanciful prayers to imaginary gods and turn us away from prayer to the God of all gods—such men push us deeper and deeper into quagmire. The fancies and thoughts which often trouble our minds are also evidence of an intellect branching out in many directions. Even in small matters, we can say, our intellect is not resolute. It will be resolute only if we fix our minds on one purpose and cling to it with discrimination, only if we work without looking for immediate results. At present, whether in politics or social reform we leap from one branch to another. I began with the illustration of a ball of earth and told you that, even if we concentrate on that, we can realize the *atman*.

I was once asked by someone why I had not succeeded in realizing the *atman*. I told him that for me the means themselves stood for such realization. The fact that such a question was asked is enough to suggest that the person who put it would not understand the humility which inspired my reply and would approach many others with the same question. This same condition prevailed in Vyasa's time. How can we expect that a person who is attached to enjoyments of the senses and possession of power, whose mind has been led away by all manner of attractive words, will have a resolute intellect? *Samadhi* means fixing the mind on God. How can one's intellect remain fixed and motionless in such a state? The mind of a person who is not satisfied with a lakh which he has earned and hopes to earn ten lakhs the next day, who, addressed as a *Mahatma* this day, hopes to be so addressed ever afterwards—the mind of such a person is distracted by all manner of thoughts and attractive visions. His mind will not be plain white, like khadi; he is ever wanting to dress his mind, as fashionable women do their bodies in many-coloured saris with borders of various designs. Such a person can never be devoted to God. Only he who has a spirit of extreme humility, who has the faith of Faithful[1], can be said to have a resolute intellect.

[25]

March 24, 1926

We saw yesterday that those who hanker after enjoyments and

[1] In *Pilgrim's Progress*

power can never fix their intellect on one aim. Only a person like Hazrat Ali who is completely absorbed in God can succeed in doing so. Only a person whose *chitta*[1] has become absolutely purified, whose mind has expanded and awakened to light, has become as clear as a mirror, can have in his stainless mind, a vision of God. If any sound emanates from such a person it can only be that of the name of Rama. After explaining this, Shri Krishna described the pedantic student of the Vedas. He now sums up the idea of the three verses in one:

> The Vedas have as their domain the three *gunas*[2]; eschew them, O Arjuna. Free thyself from the pairs of opposites, abide in eternal truth, scorn to gain or guard anything, remain the master of thy soul.[3]

The Vedas treat of the three *gunas*; you rise above them. (But this is not true. If it is, the Vedas would not be God's word. Shri Krishna is here talking about the Vedas as expounded by the ritualist pedants. The statement, therefore, gives only one side of the truth. The Vedas which utter *neti neti*[4]—there is nothing except truth—those Vedas are ever the objects of reverence for us. We can cite verses from the *Gita* itself and that it tells us to accept the Vedas as thus understood.)

Arjuna is asked to be above the pairs of opposites, which means to be indifferent to happiness and suffering. He should act in the fighting between the Kauravas and the Pandavas as if he was not personally involved in it. He should be *nityasattvastha*, which means that his mind should always remain steadfast. He should be *niryoga-kshema*, that is, give up all thought of acquiring, holding and defending possessions. But one must preserve one's body, at any rate. Arjuna should, therefore, cultivate detachment in that respect. He should cease to concern himself with yoga and *kshema* and live in the *atman*. He should live always thinking that he is not the body, not an entity with a name and a form, that he transcends these.

> To the extent that a well is of use when there is a flood of water on all sides, to the same extent are all the Vedas of use to an enlightened *Brahman*.[5]

What may be found in a tank will also be found in a big lake. He who knows the *Brahman* will know everything else. He possesses occult powers, too, for the knowledge of the *Brahman* is the perfec-

[1] Mind-stuff
[2] *Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, modes of being
[3] II, 45
[4] "Not this, not this"
[5] II, 46

tion of these powers. The three *gunas* are dealt with in the Vedas; he who rises above them attains to the knowledge of *Brahman*. The person who has the throne will not covet a position of civil or police authority. He who has reached the Gangotri[1] has known the Ganga. We get from the former all the benefit we would from the latter, and in addition the person taking his abode near the Gangotri is away from the crowd and lives unattached to the pairs of opposites. Near the Hoogli, the Ganga water is turbid, but it is fresh and clear near Rishikesh and Hardwar. The higher one ascends towards the top, the greater the purity and cleanliness.

(Some interpret this verse in a different way, but we shall not go into that.)

After this introduction, Shri Krishna tells Arjuna that the sovereign yoga which he wished to explain to the latter was this:

> Action alone is thy province, never the fruits thereof; let not thy motive be the fruit of action, nor shouldst thou desire to avoid action.[2]

Your right is to work, and not to expect the fruit. The slave-owner tells the slave: "Mind your work, but beware lest you pluck a fruit from the garden. Yours is to take what I give." God has put us under restriction in the same manner. He tells us that we may work if we wish, but that the reward of work is entirely for Him to give. Our duty is to pray to Him, and the best way in which we can do this is to work with the pickaxe, to remove scum from the river and to sweep and clean our yards. This, certainly, is a difficult lesson to learn. The relationship between the slave-owner and his slave is an unhealthy one. It is based on [the owner's] self-interest. That between the lion and the goat is of the same character. But man is ever rushing into the mouth of God. A wise man does so consciously and deliberately, and tells God that he wishes to be His slave, and not the world's. The more God seems to reject him, the more he strives to be near Him. This verse is intended to describe this peculiar relationship. The eye-lids certainly protect the eyes, but they do not do so with conscious intention. They protect the eyes by reflex action. The relationship between God and man is similarly spontaneous. Mirabai has sung: "By a slender thread has Hari tied me to Him, and I turn as He pulls the thread." The relationship between us and God is of the kind described here. The thread is slender, and a single one besides.

[1] Source of the Ganga in the Himalayas
[2] II, 47

Ma karmafala, etc., means: "Do not act so as to be the cause of your suffering fruits of action; do not be attached to action; or be over-eager to do anything. Think that everything is done by Me. What reason do you have to believe that you do things?" So, if it is God's will that we must die, He will destroy us; if such is not His will, He will arrest the hand raised against us.

[26]

March 25, 1926

Ma te sangostvakarmani: In reading this yesterday, I said *karmani* instead of *akarmani*, for that is how I have always read this verse. *Akarma* means all work which falls outside the sphere of one's duty."You should not," Krishna says to Arjuna,"feel tempted to take up such work, feel drawn to work which is not your duty."

> Act thou, O Dhananjaya, without attachment, steadfast in Yoga, even-minded in success and failure. Even-mindedness is Yoga.[1]

Work without attachment, being established firmly in yoga. Yoga means renouncing the fruit of action. It means not desiring the fruit of work which is *akarma*. We should do no work with attachment. Attachment to good work, is that too wrong? Yes, it is. If we are attached to our goal of winning swaraj, we shall not hesitate to adopt bad means. If a person is particular that he would give slivers to me personally, one day he might even steal them. Hence, we should not be attached even to a good cause. Only then will our means remain pure and our actions too.

Proceeding, Shri Krishna says: One should be even-minded in success and failure. In other words, one should dedicate to Krishna all that one does, surrender oneself completely to Him. The person who has an equal mind towards all things may be described as one established in yoga. Krishna explains the same idea further:

> For action, O Dhananjaya, is far inferior to unattached action; seek refuge in the attitude of detachment. Pitiable are those who make fruit their motive.[2]

Work done without the yoga of intellect is extremely harmful. One should, therefore, seek refuge in intellect."Intellect" means a resolute intellect. Having once made a decision there is no arguing the matter further. Anyone who works for reward is a *kripan*, that is, a person deserving our pity.

[1] II, 48
[2] II, 49

[27]

March 26, 1926

A person without a fixed purpose has an unsteady mind. Bhartrihari[1] has described many forms of this weakness of mind.

> Here in this world a man gifted with that attitude of detachment escapes the fruit of both good and evil deeds. Gird thyself up for yoga, therefore. Yoga is skill in action.[2]

A person who is firmly yoked to his intellect, an intellect which is resolute, who is totally merged in it and who is a yogi, such a one renounces [the fruit of] work both good and bad, that is, is disinterested towards either. Shri Krishna, therefore, asks Arjuna to be a yogi. Yoga means nothing but skill in work. Anyone who wants to decide whether he should or should not do a particular thing, should seek a yogi's advice. This is why it is said that where there is a prince of yogis like Shri Krishna and a bowman of prowess like Arjuna, prosperity and power follow as a matter of course.

> For sages, gifted with the attitude of detachment, who renounce the fruit of action, are released from the bondage of birth and attain to the state which is free from all ills.[3]

Yogis renounce the fruits of work, and are freed from the bonds of birth. How can a person who has awakened to the truth about his body ever die? Such a one attains to immortality.

> When thy understanding will have passed through the slough of delusion, then wilt thou be indifferent alike to what thou hast heard and wilt hear.[4]

When your intellect, Shri Krishna tells Arjuna, has crossed the slough of delusion, you will become disinterested towards all that you may have heard in the past or that may seem to you worth hearing in future; that is, you will remain indifferent.

> When thy understanding, distracted by much hearing, will rest steadfast and unmoved in concentration, then wilt thou attain Yoga.[5]

When your intellect, once perverted by listening to all manner of arguments, is totally absorbed in the contemplation of God, you will

[1] A celebrated poet and grammarian of ancient India, who is said to have been the brother of King Vikramaditya

[2] II, 50

[3] II, 51

[4] II, 52

[5] II, 53

then attain to yoga. When a person is firmly established in *samadhi*[1] he is filled with ecstatic love and, therefore, can be completely indifferent to this world.

[28]

March 27, 1926

Arjuna now asks how we may know the man established in *samadhi* from his speech. "Speech" means outward sign. The food which the *Gita* offers is different from what one's mother gives. Before Mother *Gita*, the earthly mother stands no comparison. He who has the *Gita* always engraved in his heart and keeps it there till the moment of death, will attain to *moksha*. A boy who gives himself to daily worship of the *Gita* will be another Dhruva or Sudhanva. We recite these verses daily so that we may understand their meaning and be guided by them.

[29]

March 28, 1926

"You are my arm," Shri Krishna tells Arjuna. "It is I who make it move." We say, likewise, in our morning prayers: "You it is that makes our senses function." One who is ever patient and works with single-minded attention to the task on hand may be described as a yogi skilled in action.

[30]

March 30, 1926

> When a man puts away, O Partha, all the cravings that arise in the mind and finds comfort for himself only from *atman*, then is he called the man of secure understanding.[2]

He who banishes all bad desires arising in his mind may be described as a *sthitaprajna*[3]. We add the word "bad" because here in the Ashram we engage ourselves in ceaseless work and we cannot ask a cripple to get up and walk. Though, of course, ultimately we arrive at a stage when we should banish all desires, even the desire to see God, for to a person in that stage all action becomes spontaneous. After one has seen God face to face, how can the desire to see Him still remain? When you have already jumped into the river, the desire

[1] The eighth stage in yoga
[2] II, 55
[3] One who is of steadfast intellect

to do so will no longer be there. Our desire to see God ceases when we are lost in Him, have become one with Him.

We would be ill if we remained in a river the whole day. Anyone who sleeps all the twenty-four hours will fall ill, and so also anyone who eats all day long. There is not a single thing in the world which we can go on desiring perpetually. It is because of this that we have the problem of happiness and misery. The more often we desire a thing, the stronger our desire becomes every time. The more we satisfy desires, the more urgent they become. That is also true about our daily discussions of the *Gita*. Though I cannot make them very interesting, those who really wish to follow them will find their desire becoming daily stronger. No one, of course, will fall ill because of that. Or, maybe, we need not consciously desire a thing which we always want. The sun rises and sets every day; we do not consciously wish that it may. He who has overcome his desires completely, should be natural in all his actions, as walking and similar movements of the body are natural.

There is only one desire in life which is good and the desire for the means to realize it is also good.

Who can succeed in banishing desires in this manner? He whose self abides content in itself is known as a *sthitaprajna.*

Whenever we hear anyone speaking about God, we should forget everything else and attend to his words. A person such as described above, if he is attending a reading of the *Ramayana* or the *Gita*, will be completely absorbed in following them. He will never feel it a strain to rise even at four in the morning.

The state in which the self abides in itself in serene content is the same as described by Narasinh Mehta[1] in this line in a poem of his: "The *Brahman* dancing in sportive play in front of the *Brahman*." The poet here expresses the very same truth. The *Brahman* has all its joy through the *Brahman* in the company of the *Brahman.* The slave can never conceive of his existence without his master. A person who has the name of another on his lips all the twenty-four hours will forget himself in the latter. The *atman*[2] becomes the *Paramatman*[3] in the same manner. The *atman* may be a ray of the *Paramatman*, but a ray of the sun is the sun itself. Apart from God, we can have no

[1] A 15th-century saint-poet of Gujarat
[2] The individual self
[3] The Universal Self

existence at all. He who makes himself God's slave becomes one with God.

The state described here is not that of a person who lives self-satisfied, surrounding himself with possessions of all kinds. We should learn to be content in ourselves. The means and the end should become one. But who can find joy in the self through the self? One can do that by learning to work in a new spirit. One who takes opium before going to bed will not sleep well, but the man who sleeps in the natural course will sleep in peace, his mind abiding in God.

The verses which follow are by way of an explanation of this verse. Self-help does not consist merely in not seeking help from others; it consists in not needing such help.

If children have faith, they can live as a *sthitaprajna* does. They have their parents and teachers to look after their needs. They have, therefore, no need to take thought for themselves. They should always be guided by their elders. A child who lives in this manner is a *brahmachari*, a *muni*, a *sthitaprajna*. He is so in the sense that he does what he is asked to and carries out every instruction. Such a child could even become Prahlad.

[31]

March 31, 1926

The verse[1] beginning with *prajahati* can never mean that we may remain as we are. If that were the meaning, the second line would have no place in it. The man who lives contented in the self through the self will give up all desires, but one can live in such a state only if the desire to become better, to grow spiritually awakens in one. Anyone who wants to live in such a state must give up everything which is likely to obstruct his effort. If all that we do is merely to indulge in fancies, like Shaikhchilli[2], it would be better not to think at all, neither good thoughts nor bad. The road to hell is paved with good intentions. That is why it is said that one may cast into a river a ton of thoughts and cling to an ounce of practice.

(I have read in an English book that a boy who eats till he is full cannot preserve celibacy. One should not overload one's stomach.)

Whose mind is untroubled in sorrows and longeth not for joys, who is

[1] II, 55

[2] Day-dreamer

free from passion, fear and wrath—he is called the ascetic of secure understanding.[1]

The man who does not feel depressed by suffering, is not overcome by suffering (knowing that suffering is always the effect of some cause), who is indifferent amid pleasures and is no more subject to attachments, fear and anger—such a person may be described as *sthitadhi*, that is, one whose intellect remains steadfast and is never caught in a whirlpool.

Who owns attachment nowhere, who feels neither joy nor resentment whether good or bad comes his way—that man's understanding is secure.[2]

The man who has withdrawn interest from all objects, given up desire for them, who is unconcerned, indifferent in good or ill chance, who is neither pleased nor annoyed by anything—such a person's intellect is steadfast. Shri Krishna gives an illustration of this:

And when, like the tortoise drawing in its limbs from every side, this man draws in his senses from their objects, his understanding is secure.[3]

The man who holds in his senses to prevent them from going out to their objects, as the tortoise draws in his limbs and holds them as if under a shield, has an intellect which is steadfast. Only that man who voluntarily holds in his senses may be known as completely absorbed in God. When our senses seem to move out of our control, we should think of the tortoise. The objects of the senses are like pebbles. If we hold in the senses, the pebbles will not hurt, that is, if we hold under control our hands, our feet, our eyes, and so on.

[32]

April 1, 1926

Shri Krishna now explains how the senses may be held back from their objects.

When a man starves his senses, the objects of those senses disappear from him, but not the yearning for them; the yearning too departs when he beholds the Supreme.[4]

Only a person who denies the body the food it craves for will cease to be troubled by his senses. The senses of a well-fed man always keep awake, but they lose all their power when he stops eating.

[1] II, 56
[2] II, 57
[3] II, 58
[4] II, 59

The Shastras say that, if a man's appetites are not under his control, it would be best for him to fast. We are enjoined to fast during the Ramadan and the extra lunar month of the Hindus to discipline the senses. Suppose that I have decided to go to the city and see a play; if however, I have been fasting on that day, I would feel disinclined to go. If our senses cannot be controlled we should undertake a fast; if they cannot be controlled fully, we should give up food altogether. This is what the first half of the verse means.

And now about the second half:

The appetites subside, but our pleasure in the objects of senses remains. If a person who is fasting feels that his life is secure, he will not suffer because of the fast, but ordinarily desire for food persists. During a fast, impure desires will probably subside, but one gets impatient for the fast to end. Unless the desire for food disappears completely, the fast will not endure. The desire for sacrifice will not endure without renunciation. When we have an opportunity to enjoy anything, we find that our physical appetites become strong again. This, of course, does not mean that we should not occasionally give up things for a temporary period. We should certainly give up anything we can give up.

In the first half, we are told that we should curb impure desires by fasting; but fasting alone does not yield the required result. Something more is needed. If we see God, our instinctive desire for objects of senses will also subside. This last thing confronts us with a problem. Until one's pleasure in objects of the senses has disappeared, one cannot become established in *samadhi*, and until one has become so established one will not succeed in overcoming desires.

How to solve this problem? We should persevere in our effort. We should, slowly and gradually, learn to feel God's presence in the depths of our heart. We should, occasionally, banish the very thought of eating and feel that it would be much better that our body should perish than that we should be enslaved by pleasures. One does not, of course, achieve self-conquest by committing suicide. It is the desires which need to be conquered. Anyone who eats to keep alive his body may certainly eat, but he should stop eating if he finds that eating food rouses his appetites. If he can be patient when fasting, they will subside completely. He may, when they have subsided, ask for milk or water if he wants these for keeping himself alive. It is said about Lord Buddha that he once fainted because he had been fasting. At that time,

a woman came and placed a few drops of milk on his lips. Did the milk rouse his appetites? No; on the contrary, he realized God soon after.

The purport of this verse is that we should fast for self-purification. But the Shastras tell us that, while fasting, we should wish with all our strength for freedom from desire. If, in addition, we also yearn to see God, then only will our fasting bear fruit. If we desire that our appetite should subside, it is in order that we may see God. When we are fasting, our one desire should be to see God. Our appetites stand in the way, and so we must weaken their hold on us. After a person has seen God, it is all one to him whether he eats or does not eat. Vinoba told me a story about Chaitanya[1], that a lump of sugar placed on his tongue remained there undissolved, like a stone. The reason for this was that his pleasure in objects of sense had completely died away. I have said that it is not the palate, but the mind, which feels pleasure. If a man's pleasure in objects of sense has disappeared, if he has become established in *samadhi*, or if he is suffering from a disease 'like jaundice, nothing placed on his tongue will dissolve. Thus, the man who has turned away from pleasures and the man who is stricken with disease ultimately reach the same state, one voluntarily, the other against his will.

Chaitanyadeva felt all the time that it was God's grace which sustained him and that if he should eat at all, it must be only that he may see God one day. To see Him one should completely conquer one's appetites, and even the instinctive pleasure one feels in objects of sense must subside. This verse provides the key to such a state. To curb the appetites, we should stop eating, that is, deny our senses their food. When they have no occasion to function, they will be denied their food. If, after this, we take the next step and concentrate our attention on attaining self-realization, our instinctive pleasure in objects of sense will subside completely. The man who attains such a state will be in the same condition as Janaka[2].

[33]

April 2, 1926

We shall proceed with the verse we took up yesterday. It is a very important verse. I kept thinking on it the whole day. Four or five

[1] A 16th-century religious reformer of Bengal

[2] Philosopher-king, famous in the Upanishads as a knower of Reality and master of desireless action

hundred years ago, in Europe and Arabia they attached great importance to mortification of the flesh. In the time of the Prophet, prayer, fasting and keeping awake at night were considered essential for subduing the *nafas* (this is a very good word denoting the sense-organs collectively; it also means desire). The Prophet was often awake till two or three after midnight, and was never particular when and what he ate. It was not merely that he kept the *roza* fast. That was necessary for everyone to keep, even for people engrossed in worldly affairs. The Prophet, however, undertook a *roza* fast every now and then. While one is keeping this fast, one is not permitted to take water during day-time, but after sunset it is absolutely necessary that one must drink some water. The Prophet, however, did not apply this rule to himself, and so an associate of his told him: "Since you do not eat, we too will not eat." The Prophet's reply was:"No, you should not fast. God sends you no such food as He sends me." Silenced by the reply, the questioner slapped himself on the face and left, thinking: "We, others, observe the *roza* because he falls into ecstasies and asks us to fast, but in actual practice we only make a fuss." To the Prophet, fasting brought happiness, for it was an occasion when he could live constantly in the presence of God. His food consisted of dates. Just as in countries where people drink every home has a vineyard, so in Arabia there are date-palms near every house, and when the Prophet wished to eat he plucked a few dates from these trees. Some others who lived with the Prophet and served him also ate dates. the little flour that was ground for them was also coarse. He used to keep awake for such long hours that the Bibisaheb would wait impatiently for him to lie down to sleep. Besides keeping awake thus, he would withdraw himself into solitude so that he might subdue the senses and be blessed with a vision of God. Jesus did likewise. He lived in solitude, fasted for forty days and subjected his body to the utmost mortification. At the end of forty days, he felt that he heard a mysterious voice, that God was talking to him and that the veil which hid God from him had lifted. Those who followed him taught the same thing. There has been a tradition of fasting and prayer in Europe right to the present day.

And then came Luther in Germany. He said that the others had misinterpreted the texts, and that their lives were all deception. As the sun moves westward, darkness follows close behind it, reaching almost as far as the sun but not quite; in the same way, hypocrisy follows

close behind holiness. Luther saw through all this. He plainly saw the superstitions and hypocrisies which flourished in monasteries. It is a strange law of nature that once men become accustomed to a certain thing they continue to do it through sheer inertia. In those days, they even burnt people alive. Those who believed in mortifying the flesh thought it their duty to curb the senses and to kill others who did not do so. Observing these evils, Luther went to the opposite extreme. After all, whatever the evils associated with external practices, it is only through self-control that one can see God. The Protestants, however, believed that there was nothing but hypocrisy in the Catholic practices, and so they destroyed a most potent means of realizing God. Because this means harmed some people, it does not follow that it harms all. But they believed that it did.

In India, too, this wind is blowing at present. It is often said that control of the senses is difficult to achieve, but in truth it is not so. This is not only my present belief; I held it even when I was conducting my experiments. Three things are essential for control of the senses: (1) faith; (2) a conviction of the necessity of subjugating the senses, so strong that we would persist even if we were all alone in this belief; (3) food is body's nourishment, a means of keeping it alive, but it is also the cause of the senses becoming turbulent and, therefore, when it ceases to serve the purpose of nourishing the body, eating should cease. When steam fails to make the engine run, when the pipe through which it flows is rusted, its supply ought to be stopped. A wise engineer would know that, if this supply were not stopped, the engine could burst. The position with regard to food and the body is identical, and, therefore, if feeding the body results in the senses becoming turbulent, we should stop eating. As, however, our instinctive pleasure in food will not disappear when we stop eating, we should also pray for God's grace. We have a poem in which we say that we should pray for God's forgiveness for the thousand sins which we commit. We are drawn to these sins against our will, we slip into them slowly and gradually without consciously wishing to commit them. We should pray for God's mercy so that we may be forgiven the many thousand sins of this kind. Hence, if anyone is convinced that he ought to kill his physical appetites, he does nothing wrong is fasting. If he has faith, it will certainly be rewarded. If it is not rewarded, God's promise to man will be falsified; but our experience is that this never happens. One must not shrink from a fast of ten or

twenty or fifty days. Gibbon[1] never made any statement without first verifying its truth. He has mentioned Catholics fasting for as many as fifty days. They had certainly mastered the senses to the degree. In this miserable age, people become impatient if they get no result in five days. Let no one think that our pleasure in objects can be quickly destroyed. If it is not destroyed and the man can control himself no longer, he may eat, but he should not accept defeat. He should start a fast again. This readiness to stake one's all and perish is bound to be rewarded with victory. The man will ultimately win but only if he perseveres after failing ten or even twenty times. There is such great beauty in this effort, and that is why I advise it. What is followed in the Roman Catholic Church is also enjoined in Islam. The people who at present do evil things in the name of Islam have little understanding of it. Those, on the other hand, who go on praying in their obscure homes, certainly realize God. They give up all indulgences. One cannot indulge in pleasures and live a life of renunciation at the same time. If we understand the truth that we eat only to give the body its hire, then we are fit to understand the *Gita*.

One more point (which I will not elaborate today). It is, that the author of the *Gita* has categorically laid down the principles. We shall find no error in them if we examine them in the abstract, but when we try to put them into practice we experience difficulties. But I will take up this point later.

Having told Arjuna this with regard to cravings of the senses, Shri Krishna proceeds as in the next verse:

> For, in spite of the wise man's endeavour, O Kaunteya, the unruly senses distract his mind perforce.[2]

However much an intelligent man may strive, the senses are restless, they shake his self-control and forcibly draw his mind towards their objects; they draw even a *jnani*[3] after them. The senses are like uncontrollable horses. If the rider is not vigilant and the reins are not all right, there is no knowing where they will carry him. "A monkey, and drunk besides"[4], that is how it will be.

> Holding all these in check, the yogi should sit intent on Me; for he

[1] Edward Gibbon (1733-94); author of *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*

[2] II, 60

[3] A man of spiritual knowledge and illumination

[4] A Gujarati saying

whose senses are under control is secure of understanding.[1]

"The *sthitadhi*, having controlled all his senses, will rest wholly absorbed in Me. Anyone who strives in this manner and succeeds in holding his senses under control, such a one is a *yogi*."

Thus Shri Krishna shows how to become a *sthitaprajna*.

[34]

April 3, 1926

I explained yesterday that, in order that our pleasure in the objects of senses may subside completely, fasting, *bhakti*,[2] prayer and vigils are necessary. But the pleasure [in objects] will not disappear till we have realized God. The question is, can it disappear completely while the body is there? I have come to the conclusion that no one can be called a *mukta* while he is still alive; one may be said at the most to have become fit for *moksha*. When we speak of Janaka as a *muktatma*, the word *mukta* is used in a general sense and the term means that he was a man who would attain deliverance after his death, that he would not have to be born again. It is doing violence to the meaning of words to say that a man has attained deliverance even while he lives in the body, for the necessity for deliverance remains so long as connection with the body remains. A little reflection will show us that, if our egoistic attachment to ourselves has completely disappeared, the body cannot survive. If we have no wish at all to keep the body alive, it must cease to exist. If we but move our hand the mind is bound to move too. If, now, we would completely withdraw the mind from the body, the latter should become "as the burnt silken thread, only the form surviving". Some attachment is bound to persist while our bodies are capable of motion. Scientists remove air from a bottle, but a little of it remains in it. The air becomes more and more rarefied, and only a scientist would know that there was any inside. Similarly, our pleasure in objects does not disappear completely while the least degree of association with the body persists, as signified by its movements. Moreover, as long as we commit even a little violence, *moksha* is not possible, and the slightest movement of the body involves some violence. Even if the body is lying completely motion-less, its functioning involves some violence, however little it may be. There is violence even in the act of thinking, and so long as that is so man

[1] II, 61

[2] Devotion to God

cannot attain a state of perfect self-realization, his mind cannot even comprehend such a state.

Thus, the cravings of the senses die away only when we cease to exist in the body. This is a terrible statement to make, but the *Gita* does not shrink from stating terrible truths. Truth does not remain hidden because it is not stated. *Moksha* is the supreme end, and even yogis can experience it only in contemplation. We must, therefore, say that the Dweller in the body cannot be free while He dwells in it. The prisoner is in jail and the king promises him that he will be released; but till he is actually released he cannot be said to have come out of the cage.

He can only imagine his condition after release. In the same way, if there is anyone waiting to receive and greet the *atman* on its release, he cannot do that as long as it remains imprisoned in this cage of the body.

And this cannot but be so. How can it be otherwise than that the state after release will be different from the state before it?

Truth is so profound and great a thing that, as we think more and more about it, we realize that to have a direct experience of it, we should completely shed our attachment to the body and yearn every moment for *moksha*. As we think of *moksha* in this light, its value in our eyes should daily increase. If it is the most important thing in life, it should be clear to us that it cannot be attained while we live in this body. Till the gate of the body prison has opened, the fragrance of *moksha* is beyond our experience. Whether terrible or not, this is the truth.

We need not spend much thought or indulge in intellectual exercises over this problem. Once we are decided on the end, we should concentrate our attention on the means; if they are right, the end is as good as attained. If we have trust in our father, we may rest assured that we shall get our share in his property and need not ask him whether he has made a will. Similarly, we need not argue about this matter. The thing is like Euclid's straight line. No one in the world has as yet succeeded in drawing a perfect right angle, but we can construct buildings with the help of instruments which approximate to a right angle. Likewise, we can only conceive the state of *moksha.* We can conceive a perfect straight line only when we erase the straight line before us; similarly, we can attain deliverance only when we leave the body.

> In a man brooding on objects of the senses, attachment to them springs up; attachment begets craving and craving begets wrath.

> Wrath breeds stupefaction, stupefaction leads to loss of memory, loss of memory ruins the reason, and the ruin of reason spells utter destruction.[1]

Dwelling constantly on objects of sense-pleasure produces attachment for them. Shri Krishna here explains the order in which withdrawal from sense-objects is to be accomplished. If we constantly think about having a certain object, the mind will become strongly attached to the thought of its possession, and this in turn will grow into a passionate desire to possess it so that the object takes still greater hold of our mind. Attachment produces impatience and passion gives rise to anger. When we fail to get the object of our desire, we become angry. As it recedes from us, we get angry with others. Anger clouds a man's vision, so that he loses his judgment and forgets what he is. "Who am I, and from whence?"—he forgets to ask. If he could but recollect, would he not realize what was proper and what was not proper for him? The man who forgets what he is loses his power of discrimination. Such a person is as good as dead. Quite a few persons mount the gallows with perhaps a smile on their face. But they depart from this world and have no future in the other. Thus, through constant dwelling on objects of sense the man is ultimately destroyed. He as good as commits suicide. It is not merely that his body perishes; he will not rise from his fallen state for many lives to come. One should, therefore, crush the craving of sense the moment it arises. The first thing to do is to get over the habit of dwelling on objects of sense-pleasure in our imagination. For that purpose, one should constantly think on God, should live as it were in a state of *samadhi*.

[35]

April 4, 1926

> But the disciplined soul, moving among sense-objects with the senses weaned from likes and dislikes and brought under the control of *atman*, attains peace of mind.[2]

He who lives with his senses no longer subject to attachments and aversions and perfectly under his control becomes fit for God's grace. When a man's ears, nose, eyes, and so on, go on performing their functions naturally without conscious willing on his part—the winking of the eyelids does not need to be willed, there must be some disease if it is otherwise—we say of such a person that his sense-

[1] II, 62 and 63
[2] II, 64

organs, having become free from attachments and aversions, function spontaneously.

What is the natural work of the ear? We describe a man as established in *samadhi* when his *atman* abides in serene content in itself. His senses must be under his perfect control. The ears of a man whose mind has become one-pointed must have become the servants of his *atman*. Actually, however, we are the slaves of our senses. From this slavery we must win swaraj for the *atman*. The ears should in fact listen only to the divine music of the *atman*. They would not, then, hear even the loud beating of drums. While the *atman* dwells in this body, it should live as the latter's master and god, and use the senses to do only their natural work. Such a person has no charm for Panditji's singing; he attends only to the praise of God.

As Sanjaya had been given the gift of divine vision, so there are divine eyes and ears behind our bodily eyes and ears. The person who is ruled by his *atman* will have the gift of inner senses and will not need the outer ones. These latter are always subject to some degree of attachment and aversion. Our hands may be cut off, but they will not move on their own—such should be the degree of our self-control. There was once a great bishop[1] in England who held out his hands to be burnt first. Hazarat Ali did not feel the pain of the arrow, for his mind was absorbed in the contemplation of God. The man who has not sold himself to his senses as their slave, but has made himself God's slave has no right to ask for a reward from Him in the form of His grace. He who has become God's slave will, instead of trying to be a master in this world, believe even while he suffers God's lashes that they are for his good. Why do we pray to God to breathe greater life into us? God had His own interest—a divine interest—in creating man and that is that the latter should so live that he would not seek pleasures of the senses, but would devote himself entirely to His contemplation and service.

This is the principle. In daily life, one should choose the best that is possible for one. If a man is incapable of hearing the divine song in him, he may listen to good songs sung by others. He should do work which would make him feel in tune with his *atman*. As long as we must use our moral judgment, we should choose what is good and shun what is evil. We shall then succeed in making the senses do

[1] Presumably this refers to Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556), Archbishop of Canterbury, who was burnt at the stake.

their natural work. For one who lives in this way,

> Peace of mind means the end of all ills, for the understanding of him whose mind is at peace stands secure.[1]

When God's grace descends on us, bringing us peace, all our suffering ends. Who can harm him who is protected by Rama? He on whom God daily showers His grace has all his sufferings destroyed. The intellect of a man whose *chitta* has become calm and whose only thought is of God, stands secure and is protected against error. Shri Krishna now describes a condition the opposite of this:

> The undisciplined man has neither understanding nor devotion; for, for him who has no devotion there is no peace, and for him who has no peace whence happiness?[2]

The meaning is that the man who has not become one in God, who is not a yogi established in *samadhi*; lacks the faculty of intellect altogether. One who is unsteady has an intellect which is many-branched; of what good is such an intellect? It feels no devotion, it does not utter Ramanama. He who lacks devotion and does not meditate on God, how can he attain peace? The man who is filled with devotion sits in single-minded con-templation of God, but the other man who has no peace, how can he be happy?

[36]

April 6, 1926

Before we resume our reading of the *Gita*, let us apply to our practical situation what we have already learnt. Today is the sixth[3], the day of India's awakening. I look upon it as a day of religious awakening, though ordinarily it would be regarded as a day of political significance. On that day we had kept a fast, bathed in a river and gone to temples; Muslims had offered prayers in mosques and Parsis in their fire-temples. Who can say how many of them were sincere? At that time, of course, everyone seemed to be sincere. That was the day on which we started satyagraha. We commenced civil disobedience in the evening by selling copies of *Hind Swaraj*[4]. All, Hindus, Muslims and Parsis, seemed to have gone crazy on that day.

[1] II, 65

[2] II, 66

[3] April 6, 1919 was observed throughout India as a day of protest against the Rowlatt Bills: *vide* "Speech at Chowpatty, Bombay", 6-4-1919.

[4] Published in 1909 and proscribed in March 1910 by the Government of Bombay 3.

Today, too, we have kept a twenty-four hours' fast. We should understand the aim behind it. The aim is to bring about spiritual awakening in us. Our aspiration to go from untruth into truth, from darkness into light, is not something for the distant future; it is immediate. For us, non-violence and truth are symbolized in the spinning-wheel. It may be made only of wood, but if we see in it the *chintamani*[1] then it becomes the *chintamani*. It is intelligent to regard the spinning-wheel to be what it is, but it is more intelligent to regard it as the *chintamani*. If even the dullest can see God in a clod of earth, what may we not see in the spinning-wheel?

What is wrong, if we see swaraj in the spinning-wheel? Our idea, therefore, does not violate dharma. We should understand this when we keep a fast and spin. The Satyagraha Ashram will go on doing its work even when the rest of the country goes to sleep. And we shall, as I have said, get swaraj through the spinning-wheel. The *Bhagavad Gita* says that women, Vaisyas and Sudras, all classes of people, can win freedom. In the same way, all of us can do this. Whether or not we are stout and well-fed, we can do this work if we are strong in mind. Let us, therefore, cultivate firmness of mind; if we do not let the senses distract the mind, we can become fit for satyagraha.

Let us now take up the verse which we are to discuss today.

> For when his mind runs after any of the roaming senses, it sweeps away his understanding, as the wind a vessel upon the waters.[2]

A pleasure-loving man wastes his time in aimless wandering; he must have new suits of clothes every day, he eats and drinks what pleases his palate and goes about dressed in finery. If one of his pleasure-loving senses is so undisciplined that it seeks gratification anywhere and anyhow and if his mind is totally enslaved by this one sense, it will drag his intellect behind it as the wind drives a ship before it in the sea and wrecks it on a rock or runs it aground. Thus the man whose senses are completely out of his control and whose mind is totally enslaved by one of them will be ruined through gradual stages explained earlier as the consequences of attachment. If the mind is enslaved by even a single sense, one is lost.

> Therefore, O Mahabahu, he, whose senses are reined in on all sides from their objects, is the man of secure understanding.[3]

[1] A fabulous gem that fulfils all the desires of its owner
[2] II, 67
[3] II, 68

The man whose senses are under his control and are kept away from their objects is a man established in *samadhi*.

> When it is night for all other beings, the disciplined soul is awake; when all other beings are awake, it is night for the seeing ascetic.[1]

In conclusion, Shri Krishna gives the mark of a *sthitaprajna* in one verse. He is awake when it is night for other human beings, and when other human beings and all the creatures seem to be awake, it is night for the ascetic who sees.

This should be the ideal for the Satyagraha Ashram. Let us pray that we may see light when all around us there is darkness. If we are brave, the whole world will be brave; as in our body, so in the universe—this is how we should feel. We should thus be ready to take upon ourselves the burden of the whole world, but we can bear the burden only if we mean by it doing *tapascharya*[2] on behalf of the entire world. We shall then see light where others see nothing but darkness. Let others think that the spinning-wheel is useless, and believe that we cannot win swaraj by keeping fasts. We should tell them that we are sure we shall get it; for, as the *Gita* says, *yavanartha udapane*[3], that is, if through fasts and similar practices we can obtain the position of a liveried servant in God's Kingdom, why cannot we secure such a position in our swaraj? The world will tell us that the senses cannot be controlled. We should reply that they certainly can be. If people tell us that truth does not avail in the world, we should reply that it does. The world and the man established in *samadhi* are like the west and the east. The world's night is our day and the world's day is our night. There is, thus, non-co-operation between the two. This should be our attitude if we understand the *Gita* rightly. This does not mean that we are superior to others; we are humble men and women, we are a mere drop while the world is the ocean. But we should have the faith that, if we succeed in crossing to the other shore, the world, too, will. Without such faith we cannot claim that the world's night is our day. If we can achieve self-realization through fasting and spinning, then self-realization necessarily implies swaraj.

[1] II, 69
[2] Voluntary suffering as moral discipline
[3] A reference to II, 46

[37]

April 7, 1926

Yesterday, we learnt an important mark of the *sthitaprajna*. What seems light to other people is darkness to the yogi. For instance, we tell a great number of people that they should eat sparingly, but a man who has spent his days in devotion to God will immediately understand that, if he eats full meals every day, it will be a hindrance to his life of devotion. Such a yogi, therefore, will keep himself alive on very little food while other people go on feasting on delicacies. But he will not parade his self-control. Narasinh Mehta ridiculed in his song renunciation, knowledge, meditation, etc., and gave the palm to the *gopi's* love, but this sounds strange to people in the modern age. The truth is that those whom the world knows as yogis are not really yogis, nor what the world describes as the four modes of liberation[1] or as spiritual enlightenment are such in fact. These phrases are used merely to deceive the world. The man who really lives a life of contemplation will outwardly seem a man of the world. His mind may be absorbed in God all the hours of the day, but he will move in the world like other men. He will not go about trumpeting that he lives a life of contemplation. The *gopis* in their love go on dancing, for, knowing that their love is pure, they are not afraid of the world's censure. Mira said that she paid no heed to what the world said, since she had not left her husband but only wished to discover the true meaning of devotion to one's husband. Gopichand[2] is living in a palace of gold. He is looking admiringly at his body, which is exuding the fragrance of *abir*[3] and *gulal*[4], and his face is lit up with a smile of joy. And then, it happens, tears drop from the eyes of Mainavati[5] who is watching him from the balcony above. Gopichand wonders from where the water-drops can come, seeing that there are no clouds in the sky. Mainavati explains to him that his body which

[1] Namely, attaining *salokya* (the world of God), *samipya* (nearness to God), *sarupya* (the form of God), *sayujya* (union with God)

[2] A king in Hindu mythology who by his renunciation displayed the purest love for his mother

[3] White powder

[4] Red powder

[5] Gopichand's mother

he so admired will one day perish, it will be covered with wrinkles, the teeth in the mouth will loosen and come out and the eyes will see no more. What will his body avail him, she asks, if he were to die just then? She has wasted her whole life, but he has time yet to escape and save himself. Is it likely that a mother would give such advice? What the world prizes highly seemed of little worth to this mother, for she was a woman of spiritual wisdom. As the earth rotates on its axis, once every twenty-four hours we are hanging with our feet up and heads down. We can move about in this position because the earth pulls us towards itself like the ants moving on the surface of a lump of sugar. We, the ants on the earth, do not know that the latter is round and is in constant motion. The spiritually enlightened man and the yogi know the hidden truth of these things and tell us what is unreal. What the world takes as real is unreal to them. What it describes as darkness, they will describe as light. The yogi has an inner vision which is different from the world's. The body should live as prisoner of the *atman*. It should function entirely under the latter's control.

> He is whom all longings subside, even as the waters subside in the ocean which, though ever being filled by them, never overflows—that man finds peace; not he who cherishes longing.

The sea, though being ever added to, remains confined within its bounds; it stands where it has always stood despite countless rivers emptying their waters into it. The man in whom evil impulses and desires subside in the same manner is a yogi. The man who is a slave of desires, whose senses are for ever being allured by their objects, such a person is not a yogi. He is a yogi who is like the sea, who is not like a rivulet or a brook which soon overflows and soon dries up. Christian[1], too, was a yogi and a man of contemplative life. His voice sounded but one refrain. A man, whose mind is constantly absorbed in God, whether he is bathing or eating or drinking, how can he feel evil desires? Like the sea, he is ever full. Rivers and streams fall into it and come to rest, and their waters are cleansed of their dirt. If this dirt spread out in the sea-water, would the latter be as clear as it is? We actually go to a sea-coast to enjoy its fresh air. In like manner, every evil desire subsides and disappears in the sea of a yogi's mind.

[1] In *Pilgrim's Progress*

> The man who sheds all longing and moves without concern, free from the sense of 'I' and 'mine'—he attains peace.[1]

Such peace may be experienced by a man who has given up all cravings and lives untroubled by desires. He attains to it by shedding the consciousness of "I" and "mine". He alone is a true yogi who never feels "I am doing this".

> This is the state, O Partha, of the man who rests in *Brahman*; having attained to it, he is not deluded. He who abides in this state even at the hour of death passes into oneness with *Brahman*.[2]

The *brahmi* state is that in which we realize the *Brahman*. Having attained it, we are never overpowered by the darkness of ignorance again. It has already been said that objects of sense lose all attraction for us when we have seen God. Similarly, here again Shri Krishna sums up the argument by saying that, having attained to the *brahmi* state, a man never falls again into delusion. A person who is in this state at the moment of his death attains *brahma-nirvana*[3]. This statement can mean either of two things: one, that he will attain to the *Brahman* if he is in that state at the moment of death, and, two, that he will attain eternal peace if he always lives in such a state, right up to the moment of death. If a man who has lived a wicked life till now takes to a good life from tomorrow, there is nothing he will lack. But it will not avail a man to have been good all his life if in his last days he becomes wicked. That man, then, may be said to be good who remains so till the last day of his life. That is why it is said: "Call no man good till he is dead." However good a man may have been, he may yet weaken in his old age and worry over his children and his social affairs. We may know that a man has attained *moksha* only if he died in the *brahmi* state.

The nirvana of the Buddhists is *shunyata*[4], but the nirvana of the *Gita* means peace and that is why it is described as *brahma-nirvana*. We need not concern ourselves with this distinction. There is no reason for supposing that there is a difference between the nirvana mentioned by Lord Buddha and the nirvana of the *Gita*. Buddha's description of nirvana and this other description of nirvana refer to the same state. A number of learned men have shown that the Buddha

[1] II, 71
[2] II, 72
[3] Absorption in the *Brahman*
[4] Nothingness

did not teach a doctrine denying the existence of God. But all these are pointless controversies. What can we say about a state which is so different from anything known in our life that we cannot describe it even when we have attained to it? If it is agreed that our bodily existence is not a thing to be cherished, all these other controversies are unmeaning.

This is the end of Chapter II. *Sthitaprajna* means a person who has become completely free from attachments and aversions.

[38]

[Chapter III]

April 8, 1926

The Chapter which we completed yesterday is known as Sankhyayoga. We saw that, after discussing the distinction between the body and the *atman*, Shri Krishna told Arjuna that he had explained the Sankhya view, that is, analysed logically the distinction between the body and the *atman*. This did not help Arjuna to know it in his own experience, but he grasped it intellectually. Arjuna's duty of fighting was explained to him, but only so far as it could be done with the help of argument. Shri Krishna then explained yoga to him, that is, the method of acting in a disinterested spirit. This led to the discussion concerning the *sthitaprajna*.

From the last verse of Chapter II, it would seem that Shri Krishna had nothing further to add. Indeed, if Arjuna had not again put a question to him, there was really nothing for him to add. The *brahmi* state includes *bhakti* too. But in view of the natural tendency in everyone to let his desires rule his reason, truth has to be repeated often so that it may be made more clear. If an unenlightened man decides for himself, he usually decides in favour of worldliness. Therefore he has to keep on repeating to himself that he is the *atman*, for it is not a truth experienced by him at all hours of the day. A son who has no doubt in his mind at all need not tell his mother that he is her son. The repetition of Ramanama and *dwadashmantra*[1] are for people who have not had self-realization. After release from the body, the man who explains and the man who listens, the two will be one. So long as the body exists, the problems of the means [of attaining *moksha*] will remain; that is why Vyasa expanded the *Gita* this length. There is nothing in it which is not contained in the verses which we recite at the time of our evening prayers. Vyasa has placed before

[1] Literally, sacred formula of twelve syllables: *Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya*

readers a divine truth through the *Gita*. Whether Sankhya or yoga, sannyasa or the life of the house-holder, all these paths are essentially one. Action and inaction mean the same thing, this is the substance of the *Gita's* teaching. Since these different paths are so mixed up with one another, we should understand their essential identity if our one aim is to know God and realize the unreality of all else. The way to know Him is not to sit cross-legged, but to work in a disinterested spirit.

A man does not become a yogi because he is known to have performed a thousand *yajnas* or made huge gifts. We have to take into account whether he was free from attachment to the ego, whether he willingly turned [in Mira's words] as God pulled him with a slender thread, whether he worked accordingly, and so on. Vyasa wants to tell us that a yogi should offer up to God everything he does, whether it be good or indifferent, should look upon Him as the sole author of everything. And so he makes Arjuna ask Krishna:

> If, O Janardana, thou holdest that the attitude of detachment is superior to action, then why, O Keshava, dost thou urge me to dreadful action?
>
> Thou dost seem to confuse my understanding with perplexing speech; tell me, therefore, in no uncertain voice, that alone whereby I may attain salvation.[1]

First, Shri Krishna put forward the logical argument, and then he described the marks of the *sthitaprajna*. He also explained that yoga meant *karmasu kaushalam*[2]. Arjuna complains that Shri Krishna has confused his judgment by such contradictory advice, and requests him to tell him some one thing clearly and definitely.

> I have spoken, before, O sinless one, of two attitudes in this world—the Sankhyas', that of *jnanayoga* and the yogis', that of *Karmayoga*.[3]

[39]

April 9, 1926

Arjuna tells Shri Krishna: I cannot judge what is good. At moments I feel that I should fight, and then again I feel that a *sthitaprajna* should have no work to do.

> Never does man enjoy freedom from action by not undertaking action, nor does he attain that freedom by mere renunciation of action.[4]

[1] III, I & 2
[2] Skill in action
[3] III, 3
[4] III, 4

Merely by refusing to work, one can never experience the state of *naishkarmya* (freedom from experiencing results of action), or attain to *moksha*.

We shall meet this word karma again and again in the *Gita*. What can it mean? It must have, of course, a restricted meaning. But it will help us to understand the relevant verses in the *Gita* if we take the word in its broadest meaning. Karma means any action, any bodily activity or motion. In the *Gita's* definition of the word, however, karma includes even thought. Any motion, any sound, even breathing, are forms of karma. Some of them we cannot avoid performing. Some of them we perform as a matter of necessity, some others are involuntary. The divine in us urges us on to the path of good, and the demoniac to that of evil. Even if the man is good the demoniac element in him drives him to evil courses. Another man may be wicked, but the divine element in him forces him to follow good. Thus action is impelled by nature, or is the result of compulsion or volition. How do you say, Shri Krishna asks Arjuna, that you will not work? You will not stop riding the horses of your fancies. Even sannyasis are helpless, let them say what they will. Even the decision to stop breathing is karma. Even the refraining from karma is karma. It will not, help one, therefore, to attain to the state of *naishkarmya.* Renunciation of action and the state of *naishkarmya* should come spontaneously.

> For none ever remains inactive even for a moment; for all are compelled to action by the *gunas* inherent in *prakriti*[1].[2]

No one can cease from karma even for a moment. To listen and not to listen, both are forms of karma. *Sattva, rajas* and *tamas,* the three forces or modes of *prakriti*, drive everyone to action, whether he will or no. A *tamasik* man is one who works in a mechanical fashion, a *rajasik* man is one who rides too many horses, who is restless and is always doing something or other, and the *sattvik* man is one who works with peace in his mind. One is always driven to work by one or another of these three modes of *prakriti* or by a combination of them.

> He who curbs the organs of action but allows the mind to dwell on the sense-objects—such a one, wholly deluded, is called a hypocrite.[3]

[1] Cosmic energy, as distinguished (in the Sankhya philosophy) from *Purusha,* the Cosmic Consciousness, witness of the action of *prakriti*

[2] III, 5

[3] III, 6

Anyone who curbs the organs of action outwardly but dwells all the time on the objects of sense and gives free rein to his fancies, and then believes that he has attained to *naishkarmya*, such a person is sunk in ignorance and his claim is mere hypocrisy. A person who gets his hands tied up but in his mind strikes the enemy, does in reality strike, though outwardly he does not seem to do so. He does not get the pleasure of actually striking, but certainly experiences the fruit of doing so. Please do not misunderstand what I have said. It does not mean that there is no scope for effort or striving, nor that, in that case, we had better act as we feel inclined to. We are constantly thinking of doing something or other, but reflection also helps us in restraining our hands. There can be no hypocrisy in ceaselessly fighting the enemy who holds us in his grip. The point of the verse is that there should be no contradiction between thought and action. It is hypocrisy to yearn inwardly for an object and outwardly keep away from it. It is not hypocrisy if, despite one's best efforts, one does not succeed in always remaining vigilant, for the evil habit has had a long hold over us. Only, one should not merely try but also wish to remain vigilant. Hence, it is wrong for anyone who mentally dwells on objects of sense and outwardly shuns them to describe himself as a sannyasi or yogi. The psychological effects of our actions in past lives cannot be wiped out all at once. Waves of desire will continue to rise. They will drench us again and again, but one day they will leave us dry. If someone forces me to take up and hold a lamp in my hand, I can say that I did not hold it, for I was not willing to do so. If a person is forced to do anything, his action is not his. For instance, a person who is forced to let off a gun is not a murderer. On the other hand the man who supplied him the powder and planned everything is a murderer. If the man who actually fires the shot does so of his own free will, he too is a murderer. In this way, there should be concord between thought and action. Where this is absent, it is difficult to judge to whom to attribute intention and to whom action. We kept a fast on the sixth; if, however, we dwelt in our minds the whole day on the pleasure of eating, our fast was no fast. On the other hand, a person is not a hypocrite if, though tempted to eat, he suppresses the desire every time he feels it and so keeps struggling all the time. The man who does evil things has no hope. But he who struggles against evil thoughts will tell himself that he would die rather than let himself do an evil thing; he will go on fighting against his evil thought. The *brahmachari* between whose thoughts and actions reigns perfect

harmony and who is always pure in mind deserves the highest reverence. It is the nature of the mind to be ceaselessly active, thinking of one thing or another. He who strives ceaselessly to restrain it is sure to win the battle. It is not as if he never gratified sex-urge, but he does so with discrimination. He is a true sannyasi and yogi between whose thoughts and actions there is such complete harmony that he is not even aware that he observes *brahmacharya*. He should be a man who has made himself a eunuch. If the person is a woman, she should not be conscious at all of being a woman. The man's impotence should not be the incapacity of disease; he should have voluntarily cultivated it. He should become completely free from desire, should become incapable of doing evil. Even a vigilant man may fall, but ultimately he will win complete freedom from desire. A man who remains non-violent in action will in time become free even from the desire to strike anyone.

There is no outward difference between a fool and a wise man. The former has no pretensions. The latter wants to be taken as a fool. Outwardly, the behaviour of the two will seem alike. The man whose mind is active with intense energy will appear dull. The earth rotates with such great speed that it seems to be stationary. There is no reference here to the idea of *shunya*. Buddha's nirvana was also not *shunya*. There is only a seeming inertness.

[40]

April 10, 1926

We saw yesterday that a man, while himself remaining in the background, may provide the means of killing and get someone else to do it, and thus become guilty of the heinous sin of murder. His guilt is even greater than that of the person who actually kills. Yudhishthira went to Drona and Bhishma and asked them:'What is this you have decided to do?'[1] They replied that it was their stomach which had forced them. This means that a slave or servant, being unable to oppose his master's wishes, is less guilty than the latter. The person, on the other hand, who plots a murder and gets someone else to execute the plot is far more wicked than the latter. He is a hypocrite, moreover, as the verse explains.

[1] They had agreed to fight on the side of the Kauravas though they knew that justice was on the side of the Pandavas.

Proceeding, Shri Krishna explains the opposite manner of acting:

> But he, O Arjuna, who keeping all the senses under control of the mind, engages the organs in *karmayoga*, without attachment—that man excels.[1]

The first point is that one should go on doing karma through the respective organs of action, and the second is that one should hold the same organs under one's control. Shri Krishna has thus divided the physical organs into two classes. The ten organs are the sentries. Five of them function as spies and the other five carry out orders. Hands, feet, etc., belong to the latter class. If the eyes, the nose and other sentries of their class do not remain under our control, we can stop using them. We can curb them every moment. Holding them under control, we make the sentries of the other class carry out orders. He is the best man who controls the functioning of his organs in this manner and works without attachment. A man who gets angry cannot be described as non-attached, he is, in truth, strongly attached.

> Do thou thy allotted task; for action is superior to inaction; with inaction even life's normal course is not possible.[2]

One should do the appointed work, the task which has been assigned to one, for action is superior to inaction. No one can cease completely from action even for a moment. If that is so, it is better that we work of our own free will. Why need we consult anyone for doing *niyata* karma, that is, for doing work specially meant for us? For, we cannot even keep our bodies alive without working.

> This world of men suffers bondage from all action save that which is done for the sake of sacrifice; to this end, O Kaunteya, perform action without attachment.[3]

Yesterday I explained the meaning of the word karma. Similarly, we should discuss the meaning of *yajna* too. Some learned students of the Shastras believe that the *Gita* is not concerned with work like a cobbler's or like spinning, that is, with work which we do in our practical life. By karma they mean such things as ritual offering of food to the manes, and exclude spinning and weaving from its definition. But the *Gita* is very much concerned with practical life. A dharma which does not serve practical needs is no dharma, it is

[1] III, 7
[2] III, 8
[3] III, 9

adharma[1]. Even cleaning of latrines should be done in a religious spirit. A man of such spirit will ask himself, as he does the work, why there should be so much foul smell. We should realize that we are full of evil desires. The excreta of a person who is suffering from a disease or is full of evil desires are bound to emit foul smell. Another person who does not do this work in a religious spirit but shirks his duty will remove the contents anyhow, and not clean the bucket; such a man does not do the work as a religious duty. He has no compassion in him, nor discrimination. Thus, dharma is certainly connected with practical life. We have, therefore, accepted a broad definition of karma, and will accept an equally broad definition of *yajna*. We will discuss this tomorrow.

[41]

April 11, 1926

As we have the word *yajna* in our language and the practice is enjoined in our dharma, so the Bible and the holy books of the Jews too have each a corresponding word, and an idea similar to that of *yajna*. We find three things in the Koran: (1) animal sacrifices, on the Bakr-i-Id day; (2) it refers to a practice which also obtained among the Jews, a father sacrificing his son—Ibrahim does this; and (3) Ramadan, which is a form of sacrifice, that is, parting with or giving up something which is dear to us. In the same way, we see in the Bible the meaning of the term sacrifice expanding after Jesus. He told the people that they could not realize their aim by this sacrifice of animals, that for performing a sacrifice in the right sense of the term they would have to do much more than kill animals. He told them that it was not a sacrifice to destroy other lives, that one should give one's own life as sacrifice. With that idea, he sacrificed his own life for the eternal welfare of the world, for its spiritual welfare, for washing away its sins and not merely for feeding the people. Among the Hindus, too, the practice of human sacrifice was prevalent at one time. Then followed animal sacrifice. Even today, thousands of goats are sacrificed to Mother Kali. *Yajnas* are also performed for securing the fulfilment of many worldly desires. The root word in the English term "sacrifice" had a good meaning; it meant "to sanctify". In Sanskrit, *yaj* means "to worship". In the Old Testament, the word for *yajna*

[1] The opposite of dharma

means "to renounce". But the underlying idea, that all actions performed for the good or service of others are forms of *yajna*, will be accepted by everyone. Maybe our motive in sacrificing an animal is that of public good, for instance, securing rainfall. The motive in this may be that of public good, but it is not a true sacrifice in which we kill other creatures. We may tell ourselves that we have made a sacrifice in paying for the goat, but the crores of other Hindus are not likely to share that belief.

In Gujarat, too, we find this practice prevails in places. A buffalo is sacrificed on the Dushera Day[1]. Our reason, however, tells us that there is no sacrifice in this, that we do not really worship God by doing this. However, the belief underlying this practice, too, is that we serve public good through it. We should, therefore, include two points in the definition of *yajna*: it is something which is done to serve others' good, but without causing suffering to any creature. We serve the good of the world by refraining from causing suffering to other creatures, because we shall refrain from doing so only if we cherish the lives of other creatures as we do our own, only if we believe that the body is transient. If we interpret correctly the word *yajna* as it is used in the *Gita*, we shall find no difficulty in understanding its teaching and living in accordance with it. We can perform a *yajna* with the mind as much as with the body. Of these two meanings of *yajna*, we should accept that which suits the context every time.

We need not go into why in the past people performed—or even at the present time do perform—animal sacrifice. We shall answer the question in one or two sentences. Man selects for his food what is available in his environment. What objection, moreover, can there be from people's point of view to anything done for public good which is not in itself regarded as sinful? Where people believe that the rains will not come unless some person or creature is sacrificed, no hesitation is felt in performing such a sacrifice. As man's beliefs become more enlightened, the meanings, which people attach to certain words also become more enlightened. Even if Vyasa had defined the words which he used, we would ask why we should accept the meanings given by him. For instance, non-co-operation has come to mean much more than we at first intended it to mean. There is no harm in our

[1] The tenth day of *Asvina*, the month in the Hindu Calendar roughly corresponding to October

enlarging the meaning of the word *yajna*, even if the new meaning we attach to the term was never in Vyasa's mind. We shall do no injustice to Vyasa by expanding the meaning of his words. Sons should enrich the legacy of their fathers. Why should we object if anyone regarded the spinning-wheel with greater sentiment than what we seek to create in the people about it? It is quite possible that in future people may see harm in the spinning-wheel, may come to think that no one should wear cotton clothes at all, because they do harm. They may, for instance, believe that clothes should be made from fibres extracted from banana leaves. If people should come to feel that way, anyone who still clings to the spinning-wheel would be looked upon as a fool. A wise man, however, will mean by the spinning-wheel not an article made of wood but any type of work which provides employment to all people. That is also the case with regard to the meaning of the term *yajna*. Thus, we may, and should, attach to it a meaning not intended by Vyasa.

> Together with sacrifice did the Lord of beings create, of old, mankind, declaring:
>
> "With this may you cherish the gods and may the gods cherish you; thus cherishing one another may you attain the highest good.[1]

We should think carefully what the term god, too, means. Who are god Indra and other gods? Who are the god of water and the god of woodlands? There was an argument once over one of the verses in our morning prayers, whether it was proper to worship Saraswati conceived as a figure with hands and feet. Just as it was explained at the time that Saraswati was not a goddess living somewhere far away in the clouds, so are Indra and others not gods living in the heavens; they symbolize the forces of nature. If only we take the thirty-three crores of gods in whom we believe to stand for man, we would serve our own good and also that of the whole world, of all the creatures in it. The gods symbolize the different forms of energy, the forces which sustain the universe. Even the belief in terrible gods does not deserve to be dismissed. The power of God in all its three aspects—creative, protective and destructive—is beneficial, but we do not understand the real meaning of these three aspects because of our limited knowledge. The *Nagapanchami* day is observed to save ourselves from harm by

[1] III, 10 & 11

snakes. It is not right to observe any such day to appease snakes. And so also about ghosts and spirits. What are ghosts? They are merely creatures of our imagination. Our aim should be, instead, to worship the sustaining energy of God, to worship it in all its aspects.

[42]

April 13, 1926

We cannot give any arbitrary meaning to the term *yajna*. We can adopt only a meaning which is consistent with the use of the word in the *Gita*. We may draw all possible conclusions from the principles of geometry, but they should be such as Euclid would not question or oppose. We do no injustice to the poet in going beyond his meaning. Any purpose which a well serves will be served by a lake too. If water can be used for a good purpose, it can also be used for an evil purpose. We can destroy a dam and thereby render innumerable fields useless. So the meaning which we have attached to the term *yajna*, namely, any action performed with a view to public good, is not inconsistent with the use of the term in the *Gita*.

"This world suffers bondage from work unless it is work done as *yajna*"; in this verse, the word *yajna* can also be interpreted to mean Vishnu and the worshippers of Siva may take it to mean Siva. In other words, any work dedicated to God helps one to attain *moksha*.

"Along with *yajna* the Lord created men." Which type of *yajna* is meant here? Does the term have any special meaning? I think it has. The reference here is not to mental or intellectual work. Brahma[1] did not ask human beings to multiply and prosper merely by working with their minds; what He meant was that they should do so through bodily *yajna*, by working with the body. Scriptures of other religions enjoin the same thing. The Bible says: "With the sweat of thy brow thou shalt earn thy bread."[2] Thus bodily labour is our lot in life; it is best, then, to do it in the spirit of service and dedicate it to Shri Krishna. Anyone who works in that spirit all his life becomes free from evil and is delivered from all bonds. Such a person is like a soldier in the King's army, who is content to carry out orders. He is as worthy as the General. Both have equal value in God's eyes, for He looks only to the attitude. Arjuna's arrows availed him not when

[1] The Creator

[2] Gandhiji said this in English.

Krishna was no longer by his side, and he was robbed by a Kaba[1]. The verse, commencing with *sahayajna* then, talks of bodily *yajna,* of a kind, moreover, through which gods and men would serve each other's needs. By gods we may understand all living beings or God's sustaining energy. Gods are the invisible forces. So long as a person has someone in sight for whom he works, he is not engaged in service; real service consists in working for those whom one does not know personally. The thirty-three crores of gods belong to the world of imagination. Children cannot even conceive this number. We cannot take in with our eyes so many beings assembled at one place, nor count them. We cannot see these gods, as we see our children, and yet we cultivate a living relationship with them. By and by, the sphere of our service will enlarge itself to embrace the whole world. We have thus left aside the word gods and interpreted the verse to mean that we should serve the humblest human beings, even those whom we never see, with respect and honour and looking upon them as gods and not as our servants; we should, in other words, serve the whole world.

This verse tells us that we should undertake bodily labour to do service. Man simply cannot live without such work. If he had not violated this law, he would not suffer as much as he does, the rich would not have become masters of immeasurable stores of wealth and the millions would not be suffering in poverty. God is a great economist. He is omnipotent. We cannot refrain completely from storing things for future use. But God never stores, for he can destroy and create the universe with a mere thought. He wants us, therefore, to provide only for each day. If we want anything the next day, we must labour for it. He has warned that we are doomed if we do not labour, if we do not bend the body and work with it. He has commanded that we should willingly endure every kind of suffering. If we honour this law in our life, there would be no hunger and no sin or immorality in this world. Evil desires will never disturb a man who labours all the twenty-four hours for the good of the world (I say twenty-four hours because one keeps working even in sleep.). If the labourers in the world were filled with evil desires as we are, the world could not last. The rich seek all kinds of luxuries. If the workers, too, did that, where would the world be? In the West, nowadays the idea has come to prevail that men and women are born to gratify all their desires. *Adharma* is being propagated. If people worked with the shovel or

[1] A highway robber

pick-axe, would they be disturbed with evil desires? We should submit ourselves, therefore, to this restraining law. If we do our bodily *yajna* properly, all will be well with us, we shall advance the good of our *atman* and of the world, our mind and body will be ruled by our *atman* and we shall be filled with serene peace. It can be said that such a person, even though acting, does nothing.

I cannot understand the idea that one can perform a *yajna* by lighting a few sticks. It does not do to say that doing so purifies the air. There are many other ways of purifying the air. Why should we at all pollute the air? It is always pure. It is we who pollute it. But this is not the aim behind a *yajna*. When the Aryans first came to this country, they tried to civilize the non-Aryan races. Maybe the idea of *yajna* was originally conceived for the uplift of the latter. There were big forests in those days, and it may have been regarded as everyone's duty to help in clearing these forests, for it was a social necessity. And because this work was regarded as a duty, it came to be looked upon as a means of attaining *moksha*. Innumerable ceremonies were devised, all of which required the lighting of fire. If these *rishis*[1] had lived in the desert of Sahara, they would have conceived of *yajna* as refraining from cutting a single twig, as planting of trees or drawing a certain quantity of water. In burning wood in this age, we misuse the capital of our forefathers; or we show ourselves witless pedants by understanding the thing in a literal sense. If we think of the matter now, we shall see that burning sticks is no longer a form of bodily *yajna*. If we would undertake any such *yajna* in this age and in this country, it is spinning, the reason being the same as in the instance I cited of the forests. At that time, the very thought of cutting trees for wood in a forest might have shaken a man with fear; but the man who had faith would have started the work straightway, for the person who had asked him to do it was inspired with absolute conviction. Such a man of faith would simply go on cutting trees (Recall the instance of Stevenson and the ditch near Manchester. He asked people to go on and on filling it with earth.) If the order for cutting down trees had not gone out, snakes and poisonous air would have remained of course. Someone has said that a true idea is born in the mind of one person who acts upon it, and thus, it starts on its career. If you employ the right means, the end is certain to follow. All that is necessary is to make a start. A man of faith will go ahead with his work, undeterred

[1] Literally, seers

by difficulties. He knows no such thing as failure. Let the world believe in failure, he would say, I do not know what it is. This is what is meant by disinterested work. Such a person hopes for nothing, and works in patience; he resorts to no scheming and is never in too much hurry for the result.

[43]

April 14, 1926

We discussed yesterday the meaning of the term *yajna*. Using one's limbs, labouring, working for others' good, these ideas follow from this one verse. What is meant by saying that mankind was created along with *yajna*? As we cannot escape the cycle of birth, old age and death, so also bodily labour is our lot in life from which there is no escape. But what actually happens is that man becomes self-centred and follows his own wishes in every matter, or works in order that he may be able to indulge in pleasures. But the world cannot go on thus, and if the world cannot go on, the individual who behaves in this manner also cannot live. Man is born a helpless creature. The child needs someone—a mother-god or father-god—to look after it. Man is born dependent, and dies in dependence. Freedom is a state of the mind. A man can describe himself as *swadhin*[1] only to the extent that he feels so, for he can say that he submits himself to a law of his own free will. But there are laws disregard of which would make government impossible; a man cannot, however, commit a crime and escape its consequences. Not only that, the relations of the person committing a crime also suffer with him. A crime ultimately proves as harmful to its author as the swallowing of raw mercury. Man is, thus, dependent on others in all things. He is his own master in only a few matters. It is, therefore, best for him to do everything in the spirit of *yajna*. *Yajna* was created simultaneously with us, so that we may serve the gods and the latter may serve us. If we let ourselves be ruled by them, they, too, will be ruled by us. The right *yajna* for this age is the *yajna* of spinning. We should, however, think of *yajna* only in its primary meaning which we have discussed. All other forms of *yajna* follow from that. Our most important activity is eating and drinking. Even our body is born as a slave. If we learn to keep it alive exclusively for the good of the *atman*, we should attain *moksha*. The body is meant to be spent for the good of the *atman* and of the

[1] Dependent on oneself

world. Different men act in different ways, and if we believe in what the law terms "a legal fiction", that the king does no wrong, then the king also becomes good. If today the Princes are wicked, so are their subjects. In these other matters too, we keep up some legal fictions. We entertain such a fiction about the spinning-wheel, too, that through it we establish a bond with the world, having abandoned the old fiction that we establish such a bond by burning sticks and pouring ghee into the fire.

It is not recently that I have come to attach this meaning to *yajna*; I have understood it in that sense ever since I first read the *Gita*. What I read about the Russian writer Bondoref's [views on] "bread labour"[1] only confirmed my idea, but the idea was with me from the beginning and has grown stronger with years. The Russian writer has stated one side of the truth. We understand the other side too. We now understand the idea of bread labour better, for by *yajna* we do not mean labour as a means of livelihood. Thanks to the associations which the term calls up, we do not restrict *yajna* to mean this and no more. Labour in this context means bodily labour. He alone should eat who has laboured for twelve hours. Anyone who sincerely wants to observe *brahmacharya*, to preserve purity and to be free from evil desires, must engage himself in bodily labour. People who do physical work are not subject to the sway of such desires as much as we are. Maybe they are dull in mind; but it is better to be dull in mind than to be a prey to evil desires. The world would go on even if there were no intelligent men and women in it, but it would be nowhere if all people refused to do physical work. We have exercised our intelligence in acknowledging the law of bodily labour. The one universal form of such labour is agriculture and it should, therefore, be looked upon as *yajna*.

> "Cherished with sacrifice, the gods will bestow on you the desired boons." He who enjoys their gifts without rendering aught unto them is verily a thief.[2]

The gods, gratified by *yajna*, that is, by your work for the service of others and your bodily labour, will grant you the means to gratify your desires; that is, the gods in the form of society will grant them to you. Anyone who receives what they give but offers nothing

[1] Gandhiji uses the English expression.
[2] III, 12

to others is a thief. He is a thief who does not do bodily labour for society.

> The righteous men who eat the residue of the sacrifice are freed from all sin, but the wicked who cook for themselves eat sin.[1]

Those holy persons who eat only what is left behind after the *yajna* is over become free from all sins. They who first offer to society, to Shri Krishna, what they get to eat, live free from sin. But those who cook food only for themselves, who work only for selfish ends, take in nothing but sin when they eat. That is why one should regularly and daily perform *yajna*, make a sacrifice, of which body labour is the foundation. The greatest *yajna* consists in observing the very first commandment of God, the commandment with which every human being is sent into this world.

> From food springs all life, from rain is born food; from sacrifice comes rain and sacrifice is the result of action.[2]

If people did nothing, there would be no rains, which means that there would be no rains if people did not perform *yajna*. Work which is necessary must be done. But people are simply not ready to exert themselves and plant trees. Rains are plentiful in forests. But there they are of no benefit to human beings; in fact they do terrible harm. They do not do that after human beings start working in those forests. Cherapunji has the heaviest rainfall in the world, but what good does all that rain do? (Of course, the rainfall there serves as a standard of comparison for rainfall in other parts of the world, but that is a different matter.)

In this verse, the *Bhagavad Gita* enunciates the principle explained by scientists that there can be no rain in regions barren of vegetation.

[44]

April 15, 1926

> Know that action springs from *Brahman* and *Brahman* from the Imperishable; hence the all-pervading *Brahman* is ever firm-founded on sacrifice.[3]

This verse is a little difficult to understand. "You should know," Krishna says to Arjuna, "that karma springs from *Brahman*,

[1] III, 13
[2] III, 14
[3] III, 15

and the latter from *yajna*." In an annotated *Gita* found in Bihar, karma is explained as *Brahman*, and a little below, the latter is explained as the source of the universe, as that which fills the entire universe, and from which arise Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, or, in other words, as that which we describe as dwelling in the hearts of all creatures, that which is the common element of belief among all faiths and sects.

It is true that *Brahman* springs from *yajna*. Wherever we find anyone filled with the spirit of renunciation, anyone whose *atman* abides in serene content within itself, who suffers when others suffer and who practises the supreme *yajna* of maintaining a sameness of attitude towards all, there we may be sure that *Brahman* is present. But there is one thing, whether about this *yajna* or any other, namely, that it should not be so performed as to cost the body nothing. Dharma is not to be followed with tender regard for one's body. That is dharma in following which one suffers in the body to the limit of one's endurance. There is no *yajna* for him who is not ready to mortify his body. What right does a person have who undertakes bodily labour for the sake of the world—if there are thirty-three crores in India, there must be billions in the whole world, and if to these we add the insects and other forms of life, then each of us is but one hair on the body as compared with the total number of living creatures in the world—what right does such a person have to feel that he works for the world? If all my hairs were to be plucked off, I would die, but one hair lost means nothing. If we look round in the world, we shall see that the whole of it is within us. If we forget which is the hair and which the world, we shall come to feel one with the world. We shall then spend this body in the service of the world all the hours of the day.

All this talk about knowledge is because of the body; otherwise, for an unembodied one, how can there be any question of knowledge? The highest knowledge of all in the world is knowledge of the self. Moreover, the idea of a human being having no body exists only in our imagination. Mortification of the body, therefore, is the only means of self-realization and the only *yajna* for everyone in this world. We are all labourers. If the rich would look upon themselves as labourers as much as the people who work with their bodies are labourers, the latter would get all that they want. They would then feel quite satisfied with their condition and devote themselves wholeheartedly to their work. If the working men, however, deliberately claim that they are the equals of their masters, they are sure to come to

grief. If we follow the methods of the British in running our government when we have swaraj, we would be behaving as masters. But we wish to give up the ways of masters and turn ourselves into workers. If, while working as labourers, we learn to be detached and make ourselves ciphers, we would come out of the darkness of night. This is the idea in the verse containing the phrase eternally founded in *yajna*.

But, then, who is the Brahma mentioned in the first verse of this group? Who, again, are Vishnu and Siva? I do not look upon them as distinct Beings. We may take them to represent aspects of God or His powers. They are represented in the *puranas* as being different from other gods. All that is partly right and partly wrong. They imagined all these things because they wanted to teach people dharma somehow. In truth, there is no such Being as Brahma or Siva. The only reality is the neuter *Brahman*. But as God is conceived of as doing nothing, it was imagined that this universe comes into existence out of Brahma. If I destroy a man's belief in a Brahma with four faces, in what way do I enlighten him? How will that profit me? If such a person asks me whether I share his belief, I will tell him that I do not. But others who believe in a personal God should be free to do so. And so Brahma means the active energy of God. In fact in Tilak Maharaj's *Gita*, Brahma is explained as *prakriti*; I will say, then, that *prakriti* is Brahma. Whatever our belief, what we have to understand from all this is that in every *yajna* God's presence may be felt, and that, where there is no *yajna* of body labour, God, too, is absent, though, of course, we believe that God is present everywhere. Human beings go on working with their bodies and that keeps the cycle going. I have no doubt at all that the Imperishable here means God.

> He who does not follow the wheel thus set in motion here below, he, living in sin, sating his senses, lives, O Partha, in vain.[1]

Such a person's life is a burden on others. The earth rotates ceaselessly all the twenty-four hours of the day, and anyone who merely rests on it doing nothing lives to no purpose. One who is always engaged in *yajna* is not subject to the binding effects of karma. But he who, disinclined to work, pleads *aham Brahmasmi*[2] in justification of his idleness, is stated by the *Gita* to be living in sin. This is what Narasinha Mehta meant when he wrote that those who

[1] III, 16

[2] I am *Brahman*; one of the four "great utterances" in the Upanishads

renounce the world will not win deliverance and those who enjoy life will. Here, "those who enjoy life" means all the people in the world who labour with their bodies and "those who renounce the world" means the incorrigible idlers.

I have explained the wheel in this verse to mean the spinning-wheel. I look upon it as the means of supreme *yajna* in this age. He who plies it will have lived worthily, will have won the battle of life.

[45]

April 16, 1926

Yajna means any activity for the good of others.[1] A man works for the good of others when he spends his body in their service. If we look upon our body as the property of the world and use it so, we would retain our control over it but always keep it clean, would not let it be eaten up by white ants. All this, however, should be done in a spirit of dedication to God. It would give us profound happiness if in using it we act as its trustees or guardians. A watchman who serves as one who held his body as a trust may assure us that he would be constantly seen coming to our house, and that this fact by itself was enough to keep off thieves, and if we have trust in such effect of his name we might let this Rama[2], this watchman, go, grant him *moksha*. Similarly, [we should have faith that] any physical labour undertaken in the spirit of service will produce rain.

That is a poet's explanation[3] and it is correct. The word *yajna* comes from the root *yaj*, which means "to worship", and we please God by worshipping Him through physical labour. What should we do if we want rain over a desert? We should plant trees there. We should plant trees in any region over which we want rain, and cut them down in those regions where it rains in excess.

The original intention behind the idea of *yajna* was that people should do physical work. We forgot the root and came to concern ourselves with branches and leaves, believing that by pouring oblations into fire we perform a *yajna*. In the old days, it was necessary to cut down trees and burn up the wood in order to clear the land. What was the idea in the pupils approaching their teachers wood

[1] A member of the audience had asked Gandhiji how *yajna* could produce rain.

[2] A general name for servant, current among Gujaratis in Bombay

[3] A child in the audience had said that their service through physical labour would please God.

in hand? Cutting down trees and burning wood had become a form of *yajna*. At the present time, spinning has become a *yajna*. If water was scarce and we had to fetch it from a distance of two miles, fetching water would be a *yajna*.

Laborare est orare—Work is worship. We can connect this dictum with the idea in this verse.

[46]

April 17, 1926

If we use our intellect for serving others, would that also not be a form of *yajna*? This verse does not say that all forms of *yajna* produce rain. It only says that without *yajna* there can be no rain. That does not mean that all forms of *yajna* can produce rain, just as it is not true that all edible things can support life.

It may be asked what connection there can be between the facts of physical life and spiritual matters? The laws which hold in the spiritual world hold also in the phenomenal world. All the rules which concern the physical body have the welfare of the *atman* as their aim. That should be our primary aim in all our physical activities. We must turn away from everything which does not help us to attain self-realization. One thing, of course, is true. Just as bodily labour undertaken with a view to service will produce rain, so the employment of our intellect in the service of others will promote the welfare of the world.

How do we explain the fact that sometimes *yajna* fails to produce rain? An effect follows a chain of causes, all of which are not visible to us. Besides *yajna*, many other favourable circumstances have to be present. We have no ground for believing that a given action must always produce a given effect. There may have been a thousand other factors which had contributed to the appearance of that effect on a previous occasion.

No event or action is without its effect. Was the earthquake in Japan at the end of the last war the result of Divine wrath? The explanation given by. . .[1] was that when man becomes cruel, nature too may become so. There is, however, no question of cruelty on the part of nature. How can we regard anything which is pure justice as cruelty? Man does everything through pride. Not so God. To attribute cruelty to Him is to measure Him with a yardstick which we

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

apply to human beings. This is the point of view which produced philosophical atheism. How can we turn God into a human being? From another point of view, He certainly acts, for he bestows life and consciousness. It is He who is ever active and does everything, hears without ears and sees without eyes. It is not correct to believe that an earthquake may be punishment for sin. Why should we believe, either, that an earthquake is a punishment? If a nation is sunk in sin and God wants to save it, He might send an earthquake with that aim. If I wish to commit an immoral act, a most heinous one, and if God sends a snake to bite me in order to prevent me from doing what I intend, would that be His wrath? He does that in order to save me. Take the story of Nala and Karkotak. Karkotak told Nala that if he did not transform him into an ugly figure, he, Nala, would perish with the advent of *Kaliyuga*. Similarly, we should not believe that possession of a kingdom is necessarily the reward of holy merit earned by our goodness. God's ways are inscrutable. We should be afraid of answering all such questions. We may answer simply that we do not know. Of course, we can know God's laws, we have a right to ask what they are. But a wise man restrains his curiosity and tries to know only as much as is necessary for attaining self-realization. Even in that sphere, there ought to be a limit somewhere. Even scientists have not been able to discover how the soul comes into being. I do not find it impossible to imagine that one day man will be able to prevent earthquakes, just as he is able to change the courses of rivers. But the power to bring about such changes is a trival matter. The laws of physical nature pale into insignificance when compared with those of the *atman*, for the former concern only the world of name and form. It is wise not to have too much curiosity regarding them. We may know what is necessary for us in order to offer praise to God, and, having acquired enough for that purpose, we should have no more curiosity in such matters.

[47]

April 18, 1926

> But the man who revels in *atman*, who is content in *atman* and who is satisfied only with *atman*, for him no action exists.[1]

[1] III, 17 & 18

He has no interest whatever in anything done, nor in anything not done, nor has he need to rely on anything for personal ends.[1]

There is nothing for such a person to do; not that he does nothing, but it makes no difference to him whether he does or does not do it. He is equally unconcerned in either case. He has no end to pursue through other beings.

It may seem to us that both the verses say the same thing. If we do not think carefully, we shall probably feel that they contradict the verses which precede them. It was said in one of them that anyone who refused to work the rotating wheel was a sinful and indolent man. Here, on the other hand, it is said with reference to the man living contented in the *atman* that there is noting for him to do. It may seem, but it is not, a paradox to say that one who works in the spirit of service will live contented in his self and there will be nothing which he wants to do. If we place an ant on a ball and keep the latter rotating, there will be nothing for the ant to do but to rest where it is, content with itself. It will tell itself that the ball was rotating, and itself with it, and that was enough. If, now, an ant-hill was provided inside the ball and it was necessary for the ant to move and reach it, it would say that it would be moving inside a rotating ball and have to exercise no choice in doing so. What duty can a prisoner have? He merely carries out orders. The man who lives in the self makes himself the slave of the self. He carries out the orders of the self, and, therefore, has his happiness in the self and lives contented in it. (If the prisoner I referred to just now was a satyagrahi, he would say that he would go on listening carefully to this master, the self, and so win it over.) If he is all the time absorbed in listening to the voice of the self and acts so as to conform to the turning wheel, what would be there for him to do? Tolstoy states somewhere this same thing, that man in his foolishness boasts that he will do this and he will do that, that he will relieve the suffering of people in distress and so on. But it will be enough, says Tolstoy, if this person comes down from off the backs of the people he is sitting on. The people on whose backs he is riding, they have nothing to do. We are riding on the backs of the poor. There is nothing we need do, except get off their backs—if, that is, we follow only the voice of the self inside. There is nothing for us to do because we are not even aware of doing anything when we do it spontaneously.

[1] III, 17 & 18

Thus, the man who refused to do *yajna* was described earlier as *indriyarma*,[1] as an incorrigible idler, and another who is ceaselessly employed in work is described as one who is content in the self. He works so much, and that spontaneously, that there is nothing for him to do.

I understand better than Panditji himself the point of the question[2] which he put. How is it that the *Gita* talks about rain? In a discussion about spiritual matters, everything must be about the *atman*. This is probably what he has in mind. The *Gita* leads the reader on to worms and insects, to birds and animals, and so on finally to rain, and tells him that, if people do enough physical work, they will get as much rain as they need. We can infer some such general principle from its teaching.

Can rain have any connection at all with whether we lead sinful or virtuous lives? It may have, but we do not know how. If we understand a part of the whole, then we shall understand the whole. We know something about the world of invisible things if we understand the visible world. For instance, if we make it a practice to walk long distances, the *atman* within us too will be governed by the rhythm. If, thus, we understand how we should act in one matter, we shall also know how to act in other matters. For this purpose, too, there is a rule we can follow, and that is that we should discover a principle or a law which has no exception. For instance, water is water only if it contains one part oxygen and two parts hydrogen. This law has no exception, in the same way that a right angle must have ninety degrees, neither more nor less. If, therefore, we know what the "wheel thus set in motion"[3] is, in accordance with the rule explained above that a principle should have no exception, we shall experience no difficulty. Shri Krishna has explained here a law of physical nature first and then, through it, a spiritual law.

[48]

April 20, 1926

> Therefore, do thou ever perform without attachment the work that thou must do; for performing action without attachment man attains the Supreme.[4]

[1] III, 16
[2] How could *yajna* produce rain?
[3] *Vide* translation of III, 16.
[4] III, 19

The verses here have different meanings, but it is not that one verse applies to the enlightened man and the other to the man yet striving for enlightenment. One and the same verse can be understood to apply to both, in the same way that the *Gita* as a whole can be interpreted to refer to both the types of war, the outer and the inner. This verse, therefore, means that we may say of a person whose attachment to the ego has disappeared that there is no karma for him, that he may do something and yet do nothing.

> For through action alone Janaka and others achieved perfection; even with a view to the guidance of mankind thou must act.[1]

When Janaka was informed that his city was burning, he merely said: what if it is burning? The man who is directing the operations of a fire brigade can go on giving directions only if he keeps himself where he is. Can he leave his place of duty if he is told that his town or his house is on fire? He has completely given up thinking about himself. The person who follows the maxim, "Honesty is the best policy", exchanges a diamond for a cowrie. If the man who follows truth does so with the hope that he will thereby succeed better in his business, his truthfulness will be a cause of bondage for him, but it will be the cause of his deliverance if he follows it for the sake of *moksha*. Anyone who acts in this manner is a yogi, for yoga means skill or wisdom in action. He who does all these things with a selfish motive is a mere stone; he who does them for the highest end is like Jada Bharata[2], though, in the end, he does attain illumination. The line "Live as you like"[3] applies to him. For that, however, the person should go on working ceaselessly. "He intends nothing to serve other ends".[4] This can be said only of one who has cleansed himself completely of the ego.

> Whatever the best man does is also done by other men; what example he sets, the world follows.[5]

[1] III, 20

[2] His story is told in the *Bhagavat*. An illuminated soul from his birth, outwardly he lived as an imbecile, indifferent to all slights.

[3] The first line of a verse from Akha, a 17th-century Gujarati poet, whom Gandhiji often quotes

[4] A line from Rajchandra, who had exercised a profound influence on Gandhiji's thinking in his early years.

[5] III, 21

People will adopt the standards which such a person sets. They will always observe what the eminent do. To what extent does Gandhi follow truth in life? Even the thoughts in which a great man indulges will produce an effect. His is a lame truthfulness who speaks truth as a matter of policy, but he who is truthful in his thoughts will act aright though he be dumb. Every thought of such a person is bound to come true. He is the ideal man whose actions, speech and thought are in harmony with one another. Everyone will follow him. This is the reason why I have placed the spinning-wheel before people; if there are any who devote themselves to it whole-heartedly, all will follow them. If those who worship an image of clay can realize God, why not a person who spins in this spirit?

[49]

April 21, 1926

Today is Ramanavami Day[1]. On this day we have a reading from the *Ramayana* for two hours and, in the morning, there is a discourse on the incarnation of Rama. People fast, or take only one meal or eat only fruit. We shall put into practice what we have learnt from the *Gita* by celebrating the Ramanavami today in this manner. I am faced with a conflict of duties. Though I am in the Ashram, I may not be able to join in the celebration. There is another duty I have to discharge. Pandit Motilal has written to me and asked me to send for a certain person and discuss some matters with him. I shall, therefore, be in the Ashram but engaged in discussions with him; when the *Ramayana* is being read, I shall be busy looking after the preparations for his lunch. All this is wrong. If I had become totally absorbed with all these activities in the Ashram and made it a rule to join in every celebration as I unfailingly attend prayers at four in the morning, I would have told Motilalji that today being Ramanavami I would be able to free myself only for half the day. But I do not yet have such firmness of mind, and therefore, cannot act in that manner. It would not seem natural in me to do so. But I should let the Ashram advance in that direction. So long as we have not become truly civilized, we are half animal and half human. If we could be complete men, our lives would be devoted wholly to the pursuit of goodness. I often feel that, as your leader, I should set an example in every matter. But I cannot

[1] The birth-anniversary of Rama on the ninth day of the bright half of *Chaitra*, a month corresponding to April-May

do so unless there is complete harmony between my thought, speech and action. You should, of course, go on with the usual programme. Keep a fast and have a reading from the *Ramayana*. Please bear with my deficiency, and see that you do not follow this weakness of mine after I am dead. My inability today to remain firm is not part of my normal nature. But it is my duty, I owe it to you, to present myself to you as I am.

I shall take no time now, speaking on Rama's life; I shall speak about it when readings from the *Ramayana* begin soon after the rest period is over.

Just now I shall only say that we should make it our aim to spread among the people a realization of the holy power of Rama-nama[1]. Which is the Rama of the *Ramadhun*[2] that follows the *bhajan*[3]? Is he the Rama of Tulsidas or Valmiki, or the Rama whose birth-anniversary falls today? Are these Ramas different from one another, or are they the same Rama? We shall understand all this if we reflect carefully over the matter. I shall have to leave some of these points. I can only follow my own sentiment in this matter. Let every-one dwell today on the thought that Ramanama will save us. I still feel troubled in my mind sometimes. When I worry over my work, like other people, I start repeating Ramanama. I sometimes keep thinking about the *Gita* and the meaning of particular verses when I retire for the day; I start repeating Ramanama, then fall asleep, for I know that it is my duty at that time to sleep. If we wish to fill the whole world with the power of Ramanama, it is not by constantly repeating the sounds *ra* and *ma* that we can succeed; we must ceaselessly think on God. If the mind is disturbed by all kinds of evil thoughts or if we get angry, we should start repeating Ramanama. If our aim is to use Ramanama to deceive the country so that it may follow us, it is a very wicked thought. For us Ramanama is a boat for crossing to the other shore. We should, therefore, put it in the proper place, enveloped with sweet fragrance. I was once presented with a copy of the Koran. Haji Habib told me that it could be kept with proper care only at his place, and nowhere else, for they would put it above other books and touch it with their hands only after washing them properly. This, he said, I might not do. In this way man envelops in fragrance the thing which

[1] Repeating the name Rama as a sacred formula

[2] A song for group singing, with frequent repetition of the name 'Rama'

[3] Devotional song

is dear to his heart. God will certainly be displeased with the man who keeps the Koran in the holiest place but his mind in an unholy place.

We should thus give a wide meaning to Ramanama. We should extract the utmost benefit from anything to which our heart is drawn.

[50]

April 22, 1926

> Whatever the best man does is also done by other men; what example he sets, the world follows.[1]

We should learn from this verse that if young people follow the bad example of their elders, it is the elders who should be blamed.

> For me, O Partha, there is naught to do in the three worlds, nothing worth gaining that I have not gained; yet I am ever in action.[2]

For whom should one cook, for one already full or for one fasting? For others, of course. To Shri Krishna, the whole world is a guest, and he loves all the creatures in it (and he must, for the world is his creation!). People look upon me as Purushottam, says Krishna, so I must observe proper measure in everything, otherwise the universe would perish.

> Indeed, for were I not, unslumbering ever to remain in action, O Partha, men would follow my example in every way.[3]

I have to be busy every moment to see that the world goes on, for I am its ruler, I am the master of the ceremonies. Since I make the world dance as I will, I am also called Natavar[4]. This ruler of the world cannot afford to sleep by day or by night, nor can he rest from work.

> If I were not to perform my task, these worlds would be ruined; I should be the cause of chaos and of the end of all mankind.[5]

I must, says Krishna, keep the fire burning the whole day, otherwise there would be confusion in the social order, and, I would be responsible for the destruction of society.

We work so that we may please God, and if we give up doing that the people will observe no discipline, will refuse to work and feel completely lost.

[1] III, 21
[2] III, 22
[3] III, 23
[4] The Supreme Player
[5] III, 24

> Just as, with attachment, the unenlightened perform all actions, O Bharata, even so, but unattached, should the enlightened man act, with a desire for the welfare of humanity.[1]

One must work just as ignorant people do, except that they work with attachment. We, too, must take up a pick-axe and work like them. A wise man should be as industrious and work as hard as others; only, he should work for the good of the world, disinterestedly and without attachment. (If you spin for the poor without attachment to your work, you will serve your own good and theirs). If you work in this spirit, you are a man of spiritual knowledge and, though working, are doing nothing. Does a person who has kept the *ekadashi*[2] fast commit a sin by attending to cooking? He or she cooks, in a disinterested spirit, for children and guests.

[51]

April 23, 1926

> The enlightened may not confuse the mind of the unenlightened, who are attached to action; rather must he perform all actions unattached, and thus encourage them to do likewise.[3]

A wise man should not confuse the judgment of ignorant people who are attached to the work which they do, should not, for instance, ask them to go without a thing because we can do so. Shri Krishna has said a little earlier that if he did not work for the people, there would be confusion of *varnas* in society. He says the same thing in this verse in different words. If Arjuna took any unexpected step, people would not understand his intention and might do something which he had never wanted them to do. He had asked those hundreds of thousands of men to assemble there ready for battle. How could he, now, cause confusion in their minds? He should, therefore, go on doing his duty in the spirit of yoga, unattached to the fruits of his work, and inspire others to work likewise.

> All action is entirely done by *gunas* of *prakriti*. Man, deluded by the sense of 'I', thinks 'I am the doer'.[4]

The man who is sunk in ignorance believes in his pride that his actions are his, whereas they are prompted by his nature, by *sattva*,

[1] III, 25
[2] The eleventh day in either half of the lunar month
[3] III, 26
[4] III, 27

rajas and *tamas*. (Anyone who says that he bats his eyelids is either a fool or suffering from a disease of the eye. He does not wink his eyes really, he harms them.) But he who acts as if he were a mere witness of his actions will win admiration for everything he does. The work done by a person without much ability but also without attachment to his ego will produce better results than that done by another who is attached to his ego. Take the example of a state ruled by a king and his minister. The latter works within the framework of the administrative setup. In just the same way, we are pilgrims in this world and obey the laws of the world. If we lay claim to what we are prompted by our nature to do, we sow confusion in the minds of the ignorant. We should realize that we are no more than servants bound to carry out another's orders, and should voluntarily act as if we were slaves. Mira described herself as being a slender thread, because she submitted to her nature. She used the phrase "slender thread" because she had submitted herself to God's will so completely that there was no question of her resisting. He who eats simply to give the body its hire will not think of pleasing his palate. Anyone who lives in accordance with this law will forget his ego completely, surrender to Krishna everything he does.

[52]

April 24, 1926

The verse which we shall discuss today presents a problem, for its meaning has been completely perverted. It is interpreted without any reference to the context. There was a libertine in Rajkot. He used this verse to justify his dissolute life. He was a student of the shastras and could cite appropriate Sanskrit verses, on occasion, and so enjoyed a good status in society. He used to say that nature followed its own urges and that, therefore, he was not to blame, that he was untouched by either sin or virtue.

> But he, O Mahabahu, who understands the truth of the various *gunas* and their various activities, knows that it is the *gunas* that operate on the *gunas*; he does not claim to be the doer.[1]

He who classifies *gunas* and karma into their sub-divisions, divides them into their different types and then analyses each, and so arrives at the truth about them will know that everything is the result

[1] III, 28

gunas acting upon one another and will not get involved in their activities through attachment to them. The impostor I mentioned used to say that *prakriti* was God's *maya*[1], and he was not responsible for her actions. If, however, we understand the meaning which the term *prakriti* bears in the preceding verse, we shall see that there was nothing we need do of our own choice. Only that person who has ceased to be attached to any work can say, like King Janaka, that he is not responsible for the actions of his *prakriti*. But the man who is full of ignorant attachment and thinks little cannot take cover behind this verse. The point of this verse is, in the extremely difficult business of running this world, in the running of this intricate machine (the very thought of which is sufficient to make one's head spin), what is there that I can do? What strength have I? I dare not touch a single part of it. Anyone who considers carefully how this world is kept going will see that the different *gunas* are ceaselessly active and doing their work. Let us take the small example of the spinning-wheel. Suppose for a moment that the spindle became conceited. Its part in the working of the wheel is quite small. It has no motion of its own, and if it believed itself or the string to be the source of the motion, it would commit a grievous error. If it decides to become bent, it would produce a discordant note while rotating. It might feel that, instead of rotating monotonously, it was now moving in a novel manner, but it would soon lose its place. When dying, it might perhaps realize that it had made a terrible mistake, that its pride had cost it its very life. Let us suppose now that the spindle has no such pride. It will then think that its motion was not its own, that it contributed nothing to the spinning, the string did its work and the wheel did its. It might then say that the *gunas* operate on the *gunas* and that it was of no interest to itself how they worked. I must work, the spindle would tell itself, as a mere slave, otherwise I and my relations would be ruined. It would then feel no pride and would no longer be carried away by foolish notions. We could say of such a spindle that it had learnt wisdom. The same argument applies to human beings. No one can go on indulging himself and then argue that his conduct was the result of the *gunas* doing their work according to their nature. We would come to grief if we made wrong comparisons. If, pointing to the example of an animal, we, too, act as it does, we would become animals. A man, on

[1] A term in Vedanta; it means the illusory world of phenomena and also the creative energy which projects that world.

the contrary, must bear in mind that he is a human being, and that he resembles animals up to a point and no more; that is, he resembles them in respect of the physical needs of sleeping, eating, breeding, etc. The man who decides that he need not eat and sleep as animals do, that he need not, like a dog fight for a piece of bread, such a person will reflect deeply and, having discovered the truth, always live as a mere witness. The animal instincts will not have completely disappeared, but he will realize, if he has understood the law which rules human life, that he must not be a slave to sleep, food and sex, that, in other words, the laws of animal life do not apply to him. As soon as he has understood the laws of *prakriti*, he will see that they are the basis of the laws governing human life. In regard to the machine of his body his only right, he now sees, is to maintain a disinterested attitude towards it. He will not, then, touch anything unclean with his hand or see it with his eyes. Such a person will become free from bondage to the body and be able to say that in all his actions it is the *gunas* which act according to their nature, that the ears do their work of hearing, the eyes of seeing, and so on. He will act like the spindle in our example as if he were inert matter with no will of his own. His body will function mechanically. It will then indulge in immorality no more than a log of wood does. By its nature, the human body is but a corpse and, by itself, is as sinless as a log. The senses will not do evil of themselves, so long as the mind which controls them does not wish to do evil. He who has discovered the law of human life will study the working of the *gunas* and act accordingly like the man who prints after setting the types carefully. The types which have become worn out have to be melted back into metal and cast again, and then reset; in like manner, the man who is guided by the truth that in all matters it is the *gunas* which do their work will make himself completely inert, doing nothing on his own.

[53]

April 25, 1926

The senses are not just 16,000[1], their number is infinite. If we make them dance as we wish, instead of ourselves dancing as they wish, we would be the directors of the drama of life. In the first Chapter, even the evil-minded Duryodhana asks his warriors to remain

[1] Lord Krishna is believed to have ruled over 16,000 senses, which are represented as His queens.

in their positions and protect the patriarch Bhishma. If, likewise, we protect the director of the drama, who dwells within us, play our part in accordance with his instructions, the director would not become weak.

> Deluded by the *gunas* of *prakriti* men become attached to the activities of the *gunas*; he who knows the truth of things should not unhinge the slow-witted who have not the knowledge.[1]

This world is *maya*, it is a rotating wheel, and, therefore, those who are sunk in darkness remain attached to *guna* and karma. Those who are under the spell of the *gunas* of *prakriti* are swayed by all kinds of desires, yield to grief and ignorant attachments. The man of knowledge should not unsettle the ignorant, he should not lift him from one place and put him in another. For instance, says Shri Krishna to Arjuna, you are on a battle-field, ready for fighting, and so are these others; you have now chanced to learn some wisdom, but you should not, because of that, shake others from their beliefs. If anyone of us should suddenly become enlightened with profound knowledge, it does not mean that he would be able to change all others immediately. He is a fool who seeks to change overnight other people who are following their own ways in life. This, of course, does not mean that, where the system itself is bad, we should not try to reform it. That would be a complete perversion of this idea.

[54]

April 27, 1926

> Cast all thy acts on Me, with thy mind fixed on the indwelling *atman*, and without any thought of fruit or sense of 'mine' shake off thy fever and fight![2]

After explaining all this—after explaining what karma is and why one should do it—Shri Krishna tells Arjuna that, dedicating every action to Him, having purified his mind, fixed it on his *atman* and emptied it of all desires, and without entertaining any thought of gain, he should go on doing karma (not that, Shri Krishna explains, he should win a kingdom and enjoy it but) as a matter of duty and irrespective of whether or not he was likely to benefit. (We should, for instance, get up at four in the morning as a matter of duty without

[1] III, 29
[2] III, 30

thinking whether it will do us any good). You should, Shri Krishna says, shed your attachment to the ego and work—that is, work with the thought that you are not the doer of the karma and its fruit is not meant for you to enjoy, acting as if you were a piece of inert matter like the spindle of the spinning-wheel and like the wick of a lamp which goes on burning by itself. If I did not bring into existence all the factors necessary for the burning of the lamp, how would the wick burn? The wick was shut up within the cotton pad. How did that cotton know that it would one day be made into a wick? It was spun and twisted and then made into a wick. If Arjuna wanted to be like the wick, to think of himself as the *atman* within and not his body, he must learn to shed his attachment to the ego and empty himself of all desires. By first choosing good against evil and then becoming unattached to either, one can transcend both. So long as we dwell in the body, it functions according to its nature. We should live in accordance with this truth, otherwise we shall invite moral ruin. We should, therefore, aim at the highest. The same is true about our aspiration for *moksha*. One who is already in water no longer desires to jump into it. If it were true that in water we melt away, we would not at all want to jump into it. Just then, however, *moksha* was not Arjuna's goal, nor did he aspire after it or hope for it. We should have as our ideal a state unaffected by hope or desire though, of course, our present state is that of human beings full of desires. Being in a state unaffected by desire is the same as having the absolute conviction that we shall attain *moksha*. This idea of a state unaffected by desire is to be understood both in regard to our spiritual aspiration and the needs of the body, that is, both in regard to the ultimate goal and practical concerns. In regard to the former, there is no question of being affected by desire. The man who is incapable of doing evil, what interest can he have in good and evil? It is not true that, after the evil in one is completely destroyed, one is able to do good. We only imagine that it is so. When a person never feels the urge to use a sword, how can we attribute non-violence to him? This is a scientific truth, and not poetry; it states a principle concerning the *atman*. Be in such a state, Shri Krishna tells Arjuna, that is, be perfectly still in your mind, and fight. This idea that one should learn to act like inert matter occurs at many places in the *Mahabharata*. Why did Shri Krishna ask

them to place an iron image of Bhima before Dhritarashtra?[1] He made everyone his instrument, and then asked them to place an iron image of Bhima—what does all this mean? He asked Arjuna to become passion-free and fight, that is, to banish all impatience and anxiety from his mind and then fight. I would kill a snake or flea or bug only if I am angry or annoyed.

We shall discuss tomorrow what Krishna meant when he asked Arjuna to "fight".

[55]

April 28,1926

Shri Krishna asked Arjuna to banish all impatience and anxiety and then fight. When he said "fight", he meant that Arjuna should do what he regarded as his duty. If we could know every time what we should do, if everyone's duty, in a given situation was evident to him, all of us would have the same ideas of duty. But that is not so. On the contrary, we have to reflect to discover what our duty is. We have to apply numerous tests and then only do we see what our duty is. That is why Shri Krishna asks Arjuna to be passion-free and do his duty. One can do one's duty only if one banishes all impatience and anxiety in regard to it. Anyone who has lost control over his speech-organs will seem to talk in a disconnected fashion. The fact is that all of us talk in that manner. An Italian has described all human beings as mad. If we were not mad, we would not indulge in all this vain prattle; though, even when prattling, we prefer to prattle in one way rather than another. Since, therefore, we must make a choice at every step, Arjuna is asked to do his duty without being over-excited about it, that is, without attachments and aversions. We need not doubt the intentions behind the actions of a mother who has ceased to make any distinction between her own child and another's. Freedom from attachment and aversion is the first step towards understanding one's duty. Following this line of thinking to its logical conclusion, we would see that a non-violent man is one who is free from attachments and aversions. For instance, Harishchandra saw the auspicious necklace round Taramati's neck and recognized it. He saw that he had to cut off the dear head of her whom he adored. You will ask me how

[1] At the end of the fighting, the blind Dhritarashtra wanted to embrace Bhima, but Shri Krishna saw that he wished to crush Bhima in his arms and so advised an iron image of Bhima to be placed before the king.

this is an illustration of non-violence. Violence does not consist in the act of cutting off someone's head; it consists in the motive behind the act. How if we knew that Harishchandra would have preferred to kill himself rather than kill Taramati? Suppose it had been the King's order that, if the *Chandal* could not bring himself to kill the person before him, he could kill himself, Harishchandra would have certainly preferred to put the knife to his own throat. But he was given no such choice. He had actually brought down the knife and it was then that the gods held back his hand.

Take another instance, that of a doctor who has to carry out an operation. The doctor who operated upon me was all kindness. Even if he was not, he did not in any case wish to harm me. If the doctor was called upon to amputate someone's leg, he would certainly not derive pleasure from the operation. His only motive would be to help the patient. Not only the doctor, but the patient too knows that the amputation is for his benefit. Thus operations involve the use of all kinds of knives and lancets, but they involve no violence.

A third instance. Let us suppose that a man has had his head half cut and it is hanging loose from the neck. He signs to passers-by and requests them to kill him so that he might be spared the suffering. Most passers-by, let us suppose, take no notice and go on. One, however, stops and looks at the man, sees his suffering and realizes that his death is certain. This person, then, may surely sever the head completely and end his suffering. This, too, is non-violence. It is so because the passer-by was not prompted by any selfish motive in what he did.

We hear in our country many persons advance such arguments to justify killing, but they are insincere; those, for example, who kill snakes are cowards. They are afraid of dying themselves, and their only thought in killing a snake is to save themselves from being bitten by it. The violence involved in killing a snake may be pardonable, but violence there certainly is. There is violence (may be pardonable violence) in killing even a person who is the most wicked of men in the eyes of the world, for killing him will not make the world a happier place, and those who kill him do not do so because they are really concerned about his welfare. If one person is out to destroy the entire world, and all the people in the world prefer to be destroyed rather than kill him, it is possible that that person will be terrified by

the violence he would have perpetrated, and after that there would be no more violence[1] in the world.

Thus, to be *vigatajvara* means to be without aversions and attachments. One may even commit violence then. If anyone, deceiving himself, commits violence in the name of non-violence, of course he would not attain *moksha*. There is a possibility of *moksha* for one who commits violence but knows that he does so, but there is none for the hypocrite.

And so Shri Krishna said, "Cast all thy acts on Me."[2] He thus asked Arjuna to fulfil a number of conditions and then to fight.

> Those who always act according to the rule I have here laid down, in faith and without cavilling,—they too are released from the bondage of their actions.[3]

To do one's duty means to fight and struggle. Since every karma involves a choice, there is necessarily a struggle. Even though caught in this way between opposites, you will have transcended them if you dedicate every action to Krishna, do everything without attachment or aversion, have faith in God and present every karma as a gift to Him. If you believe God to be the author of all you do, you will be touched neither by sin nor by virtue. God comes down in the form of Vaman[4], with an appealing face like a mother's, and begs us to trust everything to Him. He who accepts my teaching, says Shri Krishna, and acts accordingly, without attachments and aversions and without partiality to anyone, is not bound by the effects of any karma.

[56]

April 29, 1926

> But those who cavil at the rule and refuse to conform to it are fools, dead to all knowledge; know that they are lost.[5]
>
> Even a man of knowledge acts according to his nature; all creatures follow their nature; what then will constraint avail?[6]

[1] The source has 'non-violence', evidently, a slip.

[2] III, 30

[3] III, 31

[4] One of the incarnations of Vishnu. He begged from the demon King Bali as much ground as he could cover in three steps and, on the request being granted, covered Heaven and Earth in two steps and claimed the King's head for the third.

[5] III, 32

[6] III, 33

This verse has been taken to mean that a wicked person can never reform himself. An instance of this is provided here by. . . [1]; she lies there away from us, and how can we persuade her to change her ways? But, then, the aspiration to realize God is also part of human nature. The beast's nature is merely to feed and sleep. It cannot meditate on Rama every morning, but man is different. Ramdas Swami[2] exhorted people never to depart from the path of virtue, the path of the highest virtue. But this verse says something altogether different; (all creatures follow their nature). If a person has the nature of an animal, how far will another succeed, try as long as he might, in reforming that person? How long can we keep such a person suppressed? What can we do to a person who refuses to behave better than an animal? I could have hit that girl with my sandals, but it would have made her more obstinate still. One day, however, she may feel Rama's grace and, remembering this incident, reform herself. This verse is not intended to discourage a man from struggling against his nature. One must of course struggle to improve oneself. But should some other person tell us day in and day out that we remain as beasts and do not improve, there is bound to be a quarrel every time. Take the example of a teacher and a pupil. If the pupil himself tells the teacher that the latter should cane him or box his ears whenever he did anything wrong, the teacher should certainly do that.

Yesterday, we mentioned three illustrations of non-violence. This is one more instance of it. Pupils such as the one in this illustration control themselves and are also controlled by others. Our minds may be disturbed by innumerable evil desires, but we do not welcome them, as we do not welcome a disease which may attack us. Our natural desire is to get well, and the doctor, therefore, is free to put any restrictions on us; the patient will thank him for doing so. But what good will it do to punish a person who does not himself wish to change? Anyone who has ceased to be a human being and behaves like a beast cannot be reformed by others, true though it is that Rama dwells in his heart too. Of course, one should never despair of being

[1] The name is omitted in the source.
[2] A 17th-century religious reformer of Maharashtra

able to improve oneself. But how can outward self-control help a man to whom wickedness has become second nature? His release can come only with death. Ravana told Mandodari[1] that he was an enemy of Rama, that he wished to die. And die he did, through his own sins.

Nigraha means trying to control oneself or others. One may try to control a friend, or one's wife or sister or pupil, if they wish to reform themselves. But what can we do if they oppose us? What can even an emperor do to a person who has abandoned all shame? No one will succeed in his efforts to reform such a person.

We can offer satyagraha only against a person who has some love in his heart. We can control another only if there is mutual love between us; where there is no such love, the only course for us is non-co-operation with the other party. Tulsidas advised non-co-operation with the wicked.

[57]

April 30, 1926

Men believe in their pride that they can imprison others and beat them into submission. But we know that thefts and murders have not stopped. What, then, should one do? Everyone should look after himself. This verse certainly does not mean that one should not try even to control oneself, for we have already read: holding all these in check, the yogi should sit intent on Me.[2] The senses are so powerful that trying to control them taxes our energy to the utmost and involves us in violent struggle against ourselves. Shri Krishna tells Arjuna there that he who controls them—passionately beats them down into submission and reins them in, as we do a horse—we do no violence in using the whip thus—and sits meditating on Him, self-controlled, is a man established in *samadhi*. A little later, he says: therefore Mahabahu, he whose senses are reined in on all sides from their objects. . . .[3]

Nigraha means another person trying to impose discipline on us. Addressed to Arjuna, the verse means: "If you believe that you can control your army, you should understand that it will not obey you, for it does not think as you do, its heart is set on fighting. By

[1] His wife
[2] II, 61
[3] II, 68

running away from battle, you will be instrumental in the warriors forsaking the traditional duty of their caste and being guilty of conduct unworthy of themselves."

> Each sense has its settled likes and dislikes towards its objects; man should not come under the sway of these, for they are his besetters.[1]

Attachment and aversion are an inseparable pair. The senses feel either the one or the other towards their objects. We should not be swayed by them, for they are the thieves trying to rob the *purusha*[2] within us. They are ever after us, go where we will, and rob us of all our earnings. There is thus the fullest scope for human striving; in fact, it is one's duty to strive. Having done that duty, one may console oneself with the preceding verse; struggling tirelessly, we may tell ourselves that we can go no further than our nature permits. But taking up such an attitude does not help us. We must continue to struggle ceaselessly. We should continue till we reach the breaking point and that with the conviction that we are bound to succeed. Any man or woman or child who takes cover behind the preceding verse and stops struggling will be a thief in God's eyes. The line, "seeking pearls, men plunge into the sea, reckless of their lives,"[3]describes the spirit of desperate earnestness in striving.

> Better one's own duty, bereft of merit, than another's well-performed; better is death in the discharge of one's duty; another's duty is fraught with danger. [4]

We should strive to the best of our ability in our own sphere of work, but waste no effort on anything which lies outside it. It would be dangerous for us to go and live in a mansion in Bombay, but it would be a sign of our being happy if we are content to live here in the Ashram.

[58]

May 1, 1926

To speak the truth is a dharma common to all. But there are special duties, that is, duties which pertain to individuals. Suppose that one's job is to clean lavatories. Such a person should not envy another whose job is to keep accounts, The man who cleans lavatories

[1] III, 34
[2] In Sankhya philosophy, the inner witness watching the play of *prakriti*
[3] From a poem by Pritam, a Gujarati poet, (1720-98)
[4] III, 35

as carefully as he does the utensils in his home observes his dharma in the truest manner. It would not be right for Arjuna to think of retiring to a forest and spending his days telling beads on the rosary. His duty was to fight and kill. Retiring to a forest may be the right course for a *rishi*, it was not so for Arjuna. Even if the dharma meant for Arjuna seemed less worthy, for him it was the best. Why should he, Shri Krishna asks him, talk egotistically, acting like the proverbial dog who believed that he was drawing the heavily-laden cart? He assures Arjuna that, if there was any sin in the latter following his dharma, the responsibility for that would be His, Krishna's. During the years which Ramachandra spent in the forest, Bharat did not himself rule the kingdom as king but acted as the former's representative. Ramachandra's sandals were placed on the throne and Bharat carried on the administration in Ramachandra's name. There was not a moment when he was not absorbed in thinking on Rama. Similarly, Shri Krishna asks Arjuna why he thought that, if he won the battle, the kingdom would be his. If he had no wish to enjoy the fruits of his effort, it was actually his dharma to fight and win the kingdom. He should act only as an instrument.

> Then what impels man to sin, O Varshneya, even against his will, as though by force compelled?[1]

We shall discuss Shri Krishna's reply tomorrow.

[59]

May 2, 1926

How is it that a person is often driven to a wrong path against his or her will?

> It is Lust, it is Wrath, born of the *guna—rajas*. It is the archdevourer, the arch-sinner. Know this to be man's enemy here.[2]

The reply, according to Shri Krishna, was simple. When the child refuses to go to school, is simply unwilling to go, what is the reason? He refuses to go because he wants to run away with a bad play-fellow or because he is planning some mischief. Thus, one cause is *kama*[3]. It is man's evil thoughts which drive him to evil deeds. The second cause is anger. We get angry when we do not get the thing we want. Anger has its source in *rajas*. These two great enemies of man

[1] III, 36
[2] III, 37
[3] Desire

drive him to sin. The reign of *kama* is different in its effect from the reign of Rama. Those who prosper under Rama's reign understand the sport of God which this creation is. Those, on the other hand, who are swayed by desire and anger will see, in the creation, not Rama's sport, but Satan's. Like Kumbhakarna[1] *kama* is ever waiting, open-mouthed, for its prey. When its appetite is not satisfied, its victim is filled with anger. Know, Shri Krishna tells Arjuna, that this is your enemy. Since the two are twins, He has used the singular pronoun *enam*.

> As fire is obscured by smoke, a mirror by dirt, and the embryo by the amnion, so is knowledge obscured by this.[2]

If there is any smoke, it stays only for a while. As soon as it has gone, the fire gives full heat. The mirror will have to be cleaned, and only then will it give service, provided of course we know that the thing is a mirror. But the foetus covered by the placenta can do nothing about it, it cannot even cry. The man who is under the sway of desire and anger passes through these three stages.

> Knowledge is obscured, O kaunteya, by this eternal enemy of the wise man in the form of Lust, the insatiable fire.[3]

This *kama* harms, like an enemy, even a man of spiritual knowledge.

[60]

May 4, 1926

> The senses, the mind and the reason are said to be its seat; by means of these it obscures knowledge and stupefies man.
>
> Therefore, O Bharatarshabha, bridle thou first the senses and then rid thyself of this sinner, the destroyer of knowledge and discrimination.
>
> Subtle, they say, are the senses; subtler than the senses is the mind; subtler than the mind is the reason; but subtler even than the reason is He. [4]

Shri Krishna now explains the various stages. It is true indeed that the senses are powerful—they control the body. The mind is stronger than the senses and the intellect stronger than the mind. But stronger still than the intellect is the *atman* which dwells in the body. The senses, the mind and the intellect, these three are the dwelling

[1] Ravana's brother in the *Ramayana*, a voracious eater who slept for days at a stretch

[2] III, 38

[3] III, 39

[4] III, 40, 41 & 42

places of desire and anger. But the *atman* in you, Shri Krishna tells Arjuna, is higher than all of them. If we seize the house in which the enemy lodges, we shall be able to kill him, or he will leave the place and run away. Occasionally, one may forget Him who is the Lord over these three, but that need not worry us, since the moment we think about that Lord we shall be able to overcome all of them.

> Thus realizing Him to be subtler than the reason, and controlling the self by the Self (*Atman*), destroy, O Mahabahu, this enemy—Lust, so hard to overcome.[1]

"Subduing the *atman* by the *atman*" means overcoming the baser, the demoniac impulses in the mind through the *atman*, that is, through the godward impulses; in other words, Arjuna should, Shri Krishna tells him, master his egotistic instincts by striving for spiritual welfare and, assured that his real self was more potent than the intellect, he should storm the fort and seize it. The senses are the gate-keepers and the mind is the minister. What the senses tell the mind is reported by the latter to the intellect, and the intellect decides and issues its order. If, however, we regain the sovereignty which is rightfully ours, then we would be able to subdue the mind, the intellect and the senses whom at present we have accepted as our masters, as in our country we have accepted foreigners as our masters and believe that we get the food we eat because of them.

Our *atman* should be vigilant day and night. One whose *atman* is so awake will not have dreams in his sleep. But we are bound to have them if we are slaves of sleep. Shri Krishna thus assures Arjuna that, if he keeps constant watch, he will be harassed neither by thieves coming in from outside nor by those that dwell within. If we do not establish our rule over the body, it will yearn for things which we do not approve of and we shall forfeit our authority over it.

[61]

May 5, 1926

If we wish to deal worthily by even the most wicked person, we should assume that he has no evil intention. He is bound to have good feelings somewhere deep in his heart. The *atman* never gets angry. It remains unattached and unmoved. If we cannot overcome desire or anger in us even in some measure, we should tolerate them when they invade us.

[1] III, 43

No one has yet succeeded in laying down a universal rule about how we should act towards a thief. We should, however, bear in mind that however we act we should be inspired by love for him. We must think and find out how we may win him over with love. We should assume that it is not in human nature to steal. Even as rational beings we should be convinced that there is no human being in the world who is beyond all hope of change. Love is a kind of force of attraction. Science tells us that even dust has the property of attracting other things. Even a particle of dust possesses some kind of power of attraction; that is why Mirabai sings about the bond of love. That bond is much stronger than that of a slender thread can ever be.[1] Why should we be filled with passion or get angry whenever we lose anything?

Such is the yoga described in this third chapter. There is ceaseless movement and change. We cannot choose but work with the body as ceaselessly as the ball of this earth rotates. What is the way, then, of saving ourselves from work? The *Gita* replies that, by shedding all attachment and aversion, we escape the fruits of our actions.

[Chapter Four]

> I expounded this imperishable yoga to Vivasvan; Vivasvan communicated it to Manu, and Manu to Ikshvaku.
>
> Thus handed down in succession, the royal sages learnt it; with long lapse of time it dwindled away in this world, O Parantapa.[2]

We are doing things every moment, but it is God who has placed us on his wheel and is moving it like a potter, producing ever new shapes. "This yoga was known from the beginning of time, but has perished in this age. People have forgotten the art of working without attachment and aversion. Were it not so," Shri Krishna said, "I would not have had to be a witness to this battle."

> The same ancient yoga have I expounded to thee today; for thou art My devotee and My friend, and this is the supreme mystery.[3]

The highest truth may be imparted only to a *bhakta*[4], for such a person will serve the world's good.

[1] Mirabai's lines read : Hari has tied me with a slender thread /And I turn as He pulls me.

[2] IV, 1 & 2

[3] IV, 3

[4] A devotee of God

[62]

May 6, 1926

Shri Krishna says,

This yoga, "was known in ancient times, I taught it to Vivasvan, he taught it to Manu, and Manu taught it to Ikshavaku. At this Arjuna wonders. You and I, he says, live in the present age, and you say you taught this to people in former times; how can that be?

> Later was Thy birth, my Lord, earlier that of Vivasvan. How then am I to understand that Thou didst expound it in the beginning?
>
> Many births have we passed through, O Arjuna, both thou and I; I know them all, thou knowest them not, O Parantapa.[1]

When we sing about the succession of births for human beings through 84,00,000 living forms, we refer to our having had countless lives before the present one, and we state our inference that death is only a change from an old house into a new one. But it is only a person who remembers his previous lives that can say this with certainty. Shri Krishna states categorically that, being a yogi, he remembered his previous existences but tha Arjuna could not remember his. He could say this; we cannot.

> Though unborn and inexhaustible in My essence, though Lord of all beings, yet assuming control over My nature, I come into being by My mysterious power.[2]

The Hindu belief in avatars may present a difficulty to some of us. Avatar means descent. Our descent means God's descent too, for He is present in every creature and in every object. All this is His *maya.* All concrete things—our body, the material objects, all these—exist at definite points in space and time, but the *atman* was not born in time, it pervades all space and exists through all time. We do not know it by direct experience. If we wish to understand the principle known as God, either with the help of reason or through faith, we should first know the *atman*. What is it? So long as we live in ignorance, it is more distant than even the sky, but in our awakened state we cannot say that it is removed from us by even so much as an inch. It is that through which we came into being and through which we exist if you believe that you are that, then "I" and "you" are identical—but only a person devoid of egotism can assert that. "I"

[1] IV, 4 & 5
[2] IV, 6

and "you" are identical in the sense in which the ring and chain are in the final analysis but gold. Name and form are only for a moment; while things have them, they are no more real than a mirage. That into which things merge when they cease to have name and form is ever the same.

And so Krishna says:

"Though I was never born in time, though I am the Lord of all creatures, I incarnate Myself and am born as a human being."

This is the essential nature of the *atman*. If we realize this truth, we would always act in conformity with that nature; we then act, though born as human beings, as if we were never born. If the *atman* in each of us is identical with the *atman* in everyone else, one *atman* born in a body means all of them born, and all others born means that one born too. This is a difficult idea to grasp. "This is *maya*,"says Shri Krishna, "and through it I incarnate Myself in this world time and again."

We can follow reason only up to a point. What, then, does avatar mean? It is not as if God comes down from above. It would be right to say, if we can say it without egotism, that each one of us is an avatar. The *atman* in every body is as potent as the *atman* in any other, though outwardly we see differences. In our awakened state all are one, though in our ignorant state we may seem separate existences. In real truth, there are not several, there is only one.

If we constantly reflect over this essence named the *atman*, we shall regard no one as an enemy to be killed and shall have nothing to get angry about. We shall then see that anyone who hits us hits himself too.

When Krishna says that He incarnates Himself as a human being, he only uses the idiom of common speech. God never incarnates Himself as an *atman* and is never born as a human being. He is ever the same. When, from our human point of view, we see special excellence in some individual, we look upon him as an avatar. In God's language there is no such word as avatar; it exists only in the language of human beings.

[63]

May 7, 1926

Arjuna asked Shri Krishna how He could have expounded this yoga to other people of olden times, to which Shri Krishna replied that they had had many previous existences, which He remembered but Arjuna could not. He added that, though He was not subject to

birth and change, though He was the Lord who dwelt in the hearts of all creatures, He submitted to the action of *prakriti*, which was His creation, and through the power of his *maya* came down to live on the earth.

He then proceeds to explain in what circumstances God incarnates Himself as a human being.

> For whenever Right declines and Wrong prevails, then O Bharata, I come to birth.[1]

In these lines Shri Krishna held out an assurance to the entire world. If God remained inactive when dharma was eclipsed, man would be helpless. In this *Kaliyuga*, all human efforts produce results contrary to what was intended. Hindus and Muslims, for instance, continue to fight among themselves. Can anyone prevent this? I was passionately eager to do such penance that they should never fight. But all my efforts failed. Does that mean that this fighting will go on for ever? Assuredly not. Will God let human beings overindulge their senses with impunity? He tells us that He will tolerate our self-indulgence within limits, for He knows that we would weary of it. I will tolerate, He says, a little fighting and will not incarnate on the earth just because of that. But when men recognize no limits in fighting, demolish temples and kill people indiscriminately, that would mean eclipse of dharma. That would be wickedness in the name of dharma, it would mean the spread of *adharma* and disorder. Do not, God says to comfort men, give way to despair when such things happen. "It is good," He says, "that you feel helpless at such a time, for by making you feel so I humble your pride." We remember what Surdas[2] says: "I have tried my strength in one way and another, till I am weary and can do no more; you must save me now;" that is how man thinks in his pride, that he will do this, and he will do that, but God humbles his pride. Man, however, has this promise from the Lord. He need not despair and feel that, if he fails in some task, it will not be done. Let him have faith that God will have it done. So the Lord has said in these lines that, whenever necessary, He comes down to live on the earth, and sets everything right. If He did not do that, He would not enjoy our worship and reverence. What dishonour can there ever be for a man who lives as God's slave? It is the slave's master who will be judged from the manner in which the slave lives. Is it, therefore,

[1] IV, 7

[2] A 16th-century saint-poet of Northern India

ever likely that God will let dharma be eclipsed? If *adharma* prevails, God will forfeit our reverence and worship. He has, therefore, no choice but to incarnate Himself as a human being.

> To save the righteous, to destroy the wicked, and to re-establish Right I am born from age to age.[1]

Shri Krishna has told us that we do nothing, nor does He. Who, then, destroys the wicked, and how are they destroyed? It is God's inviolable law that karma never fails to produce its effect. We can say that a human being may be able to counter-act the effects of karma, and yet assert that karma never fails to produce its effect. The point is not that a person may not have to suffer the fruits of his actions, but that, if he cultivates non-attachment, even while in fact suffering the fruits of action, he would not inwardly feel that he suffered them. But suffer them he must. No karma is ever forgiven. It is, therefore, the wickedness of the wicked which destroys them. When, in this world, one human being kills another, the former is only an instrument. Arjuna was a bowman of prowess and brave warrior. When he killed his enemies, it was not his strength which prevailed against Duryodhana. The latter was destroyed by his own sins. Hence the saying, "The pot of sin is bound to break on day." If it was true that God comes down from above and destroys the wicked, He would be as much under the sway of ignorance as we are. But that is not what happens. If we have faith and understand God's law, we would be sure that the wicked would be destroyed through their own sins.

Destruction of the wicked does not mean their physical destruction. Physically, both the wicked and the virtuous perish. It may be that a *bhakta* will pass away in the prime of his youth, and a wicked person will live up to the age of 76; shall we say that this was an instance of God's injustice? Kesar Bhagat was bitten by a serpent yesterday and died; should we, therefore, believe that he was a wicked man? In fact he was a good man; he was, though a mere labourer, a *bhakta* and a man of upright character. We would be punished with degradation if we believed that a man must have been wicked because he died early.

Yes, it is true in one sense that the good do not die, for we sing their glory ever afterwards. Everyone sings the glory of Rama, but no one of Ravana. If we think of him still, it is in order that we may keep

[1] IV, 8

ourselves free from his sins, run away from them. On the contrary, if we sing the virtues of a man and assimilate them, let them sink into our very soul, they are bound to become stronger in us day by day. Virtues never die. If we see the contrary in the world, that is but God's *maya*. It is true that virtues are cultivated with effort, and that vices require no such effort; but ultimately vices perish and virtues prosper. The appearance to the contrary is the effect of *maya*. If that were not so, what is said here about "destruction of the wicked" would not be true.

Shri Krishna does not mean here physical destruction of the wicked. While the *vasana*[1] with which a man died exists, he cannot but be born again. It is stated, it is true, that a good man will not be born again, but only if he rises above the place of *gunas*. There is, beyond the *gunas* of good and evil, a state which is characterized by no *guna*. It is not an undesirable state, but a desirable one. It is the state of *moksha*, a state which endures for ever. But the assurance which God holds out here is not that goodness never perishes, but that evil most certainly does. When evil seems to prevail in the world, He, the Witness within, manifests Himself and shows that in truth it does not, shows it by the example of His own life. When evil spreads in the world, some persons, inspired by God, feel in their hearts that it is not enough for them to be a little good, that they must do *tapascharya* and be exceptionally good, so good that people would look upon them as perfect manifestation of the Divine in man. That is how Shri Krishna came to be worshipped as the fullest avatar. God has in these verses assured man that whenever dharma is eclipsed and the reign of *adharma* spreads, He comes into the world to protect the good, to destroy the wicked and restore the rule of dharma. This means that dharma is never destroyed. Shri Krishna did not say that while the wicked are destroyed, the good are not. He himself passed away, and that too meeting an untimely death.

If we take a total view, we shall see that it is not wickedness but goodness which rules the world. The wicked can prevail only when they number crores, but goodness will rule when embodied to perfection even in one person. Non-violence has been described as so powerful that all forces of violence subside in its presence. Under its influence, even beasts forget their nature. Even one good person can

[1] Desire clinging to one's self even after the death of the physical body

change the world. Such a one enjoys an empire over people's hearts; we do not, because we follow goodness only as best we may. The type of good man I have mentioned has but to send a message, and people will do what he wants them to do, such is the power of goodness. Where wickedness prevails, there is disorder in every field of life, but where goodness rules, order prevails and people are happy. They are happy not in the sense that their material needs are satisfied but in the sense that they lead virtuous and contented lives. As for material possessions, some men have crores of rupees and yet live a distracted life; that is no sign of being happy.

This verse, then, means that when *adharma* spreads, some men undertake *tapascharya* and, through their *tapascharya*, generate goodness in the world. Even the wicked bow in reverence before goodness. Its power is felt by beasts too. This can happen even in the present age. Anyone who has completely shed hatred and ill will, who has succeeded in making his life a perfect embodiment of truth, can command everything in life. He does not have to ask that anything be done. He has only to wish and the wish will be fulfilled.

God does not have to be born and to die, to incarnate Himself on earth as a human being. It is but His *maya* that we see in the world. That *maya* is described here and we are reassured that wickedness prevails only for a while but goodness endures for ever. We should, therefore, cultivate goodness in ourselves and see that we do nothing whereby we may become wicked.

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God destroys evil and restores goodness by inspiring man's heart with noble ideals. On the balance goodness must prevail in the world, otherwise the world would perish. We see that a family in which evil increases is ruined, like, for instance, the Yadava race, which perished. It had taken to evil ways. Though a man like Krishna dwelt among them, the Yadavas took to immorality and drinking, fought among themselves and were killed. Even a strong and self-willed man whom no one dares attack will sooner or later fall at someone's hands; this is so true that no member of the Yadava race survived. When there is so much evil in the world that on the balance there is more of it than good, that their sum is a minus quantity, the destruction of the world is certain. The body endures only so long as there is vitality in it; in the

same way, the world would perish if at any time there should be less of goodness and more of evil in it. That is why the Lord said that He appeared in the world in every age.

> He who knows the secret of this My divine birth and action is not born again, after leaving the body; he comes to Me, O Arjuna.[1]

Is there any reason why such a person should not merge into God? He would see that his body was perishable, and that it was not worthwhile to waste his energy on it. Was it not better, he would ask himself, to strive to realize the immortal *atman*? The *atman* is confined in the cage of this body, held in the prison of the body like a criminal. All of us have committed a crime, so to say, and are, therefore, imprisoned in the body; witness, for instance, Tulsidas and Surdas saying in their poems that there was no greater sinner in the world than they. We sin from the moment we are born, and that is why we are born again and again. Being confined in the cage of this body, we cannot soar as high as we wish. But we can do so if we reflect over the mystery of God's incarnations and actions in the world of men. If we realize the truth about the atman which is a lion, we shall become lions. How can we realize that truth? To explain that, Shri Krishna says:

> Freed from passion, fear and wrath, filled full with Me, relying on Me, and refined by the fiery ordeal of knowledge, many have becone one with Me.[2]

"Those who know the mystery of God's incarnations and actions become free from attachments, from fear and anger," says Shri Krishna. "They become absorbed in Me. (If you open their hearts, you will find the image of Rama inside.) They live in complete surrender to Me. Purified by knowledge and *tapaschaprya* they have become as I am, have lost themselves in Me." Shri Krishna has explained here how we may know that a person has understood the mystery of God's incarnations and actions.

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> In whatever way men resort to Me, even so do I render to them. In every way, O Partha, the path men follow is Mine.[3]

[1] IV, 9
[2] IV, 10
[3] IV, 11

In other words, people reap as they sow. As the quality of your *bhakti*, so is its reward. If there is any motive behind your *bhakti*, if you seek anything through it, you will get what the quality of your *bhakti* entitles you to. You will get, not what you wish to get, but what you deserve to get. We may wish to become God, but that does not mean that we shall become God. We shall get only that which we have earned by our manner of life. We shall get what we deserve. If you walk a distance of four miles, you will get only what is at the end of it. If you eat *kariatu*[1] to have a purge, it does not mean that the effect will follow. *Kariatu* will at the most cure a mild fever. If you swallow castor oil and then wish that you should get no motion, you cannot have it so. This is the meaning of the line: In whatever way men resort to Me, even so do I render to them.

Shri Krishna then says: *mama vartmanuvartante manushyah Partha sarvashah.*

"Everyone follows a path which leads to Me." This verse has a history behind it. When Tilak Maharaj was alive, he had cited this verse in the course of a discussion about violence and non-violence. I had argued that we should bear with a person who might have slapped us. In reply, he cited this verse to prove that the *Gita* upheld the principle of "tit for tat". That is, we should act towards a person as he acts towards us. I cling to the reply which I gave to him then.[2] I had argued that this verse could not be used in support of his contention. We should not act towards a person as he acts towards us. If he is bad to us, we may not therefore be bad to him. This verse merely lays down God's law. Shri Krishna says that He will worship a person as the latter worships Him. That means, we reap as we sow. One cannot do evil to others and expect good for oneself. Man has no right to return two slaps for one. But a principle quite the opposite of this prevails in the world, and as education spreads the position becomes worse. Uncivilized people may return two slaps for one, may fight back when attacked, and among them the relation of father and son may not be always sweet. If, however, a father behaves as a civilized man, he would use wisdom and endure the son's misconduct in patience, and so teach him to behave with humility. If the son is good, then he would suffer his parents' weaknesses in patience, and that is

[1] Chiretta

[2] *Vide* "Note on Tilak's Letter", after 18-1-1920.

the better way of the two. We prefer the second to the first. Besides, we read in the preceding verse about the type of man who can realize God. It says that those serene persons who are *vitaragabhayakrodhah*, that is, who are free from all attachment, fear and anger, realize God. The present verse cannot contradict that one, but completes its meaning. The previous verse says that a person who yields to attachment and anger will not realize God. If one yields to anger, one will reap the fruit of anger. We are thus taught not to yield to anger but to banish attachment, fear and anger from us.

In the second line, therefore, the Lord says that men are governed by His law. He means that law, the law of karma, which rules the world. We can truly say that God is law. God created His law and left the world to its governance, reserving to Himself no right to interfere with its operation. He then told men to decide for themselves whether they would or would not continue to be born in the world, as though making the position clear to them in advance so that they might not blame Him afterwards.

If we worship God, He would be pleased; but it does not mean that, if we do not worship Him, He would be displeased and would change His law. The law is immutable. Ishvar[1] is not a ruler though literally the word means "a ruler". But, then, since God does nothing, he suffers nothing either. He neither acts nor suffers the consequences of action. He stands apart, detached. We have given free rein to our imagination and employed all manner of epithets to describe God, and we quarrel about Him needlessly. Take the instance of the Jain and the Vedanta philosophies. According to the latter, all things are pervaded by God, whereas the former holds that no such being as God exists. We adopt a third attitude,—one which is the right one for laymen to adopt—namely, that God both exists and does not exist. God is not a ruler; He is all-pervasive, He is life, He is unconditioned and devoid of form. His rule consists in the rule of His law. No one has questioned the existence of His law. Not a single school of philosophy has done so. That law is of course a living law. If we equate it with God, recognize that it is God, people will then have no reason for quarrelling. That is the implication of this verse.

The principle of "You will reap as you sow" is part of even man-made law. Anyone who steals is punished. Even a thief has to

[1] God

submit to the law. He is not a rebel. The person who defies a law with deliberate intention to do so is an outlaw, but the murderer who is punished for his crime is not an outlaw. We become outlaws when we commit civil disobedience, for our disobedience is deliberate. Those who commit civil disobedience, and do so deliberately, are also outlaws, but the person who steals in abject helplessness is still ruled by the country's law. In the same way, man too is ruled by God's law, whether he submits to it willingly or not. That immutable truth is stated in this verse:

> Those who desire their actions to bear fruit worship the gods here; for in this world of men the fruit of actions is quickly obtainable.[1]

Every desire bears its proper fruit. So long as any desire is left in us, we cannot escape the round of birth and death. If we strive for yogic powers, our effort will certainly be rewarded, though not necessarily in the manner described in books on yoga. Chanting a *mantra*[2] is not necessarily rewarded in exactly the same way as described in the Shastras. Men try to discover God's laws, they conclude that certain actions will have certain results. If they get hold of the truth, may be there will be some efficacy in the *mantras* which they employ; but, then, even self-seeking and insincere men use this method. Or, it may be that the ceremonies accompanying the chanting of the *mantra* were not correctly performed; if so, the hoped-for result would not follow. I do not know anything about *mantras* for counteracting the effects of snake-bite, but there may be something in these claims. Some persons assert that we still know very little about the laws underlying the efficacy of such *mantras*. In this age they are discovering the laws of the visible world, but the number of such laws is infinite. Shall we ever succeed in discovering them all? Similarly, there are laws governing the invisible world too. In future, the laws of that world—the powers of the mind—may also be discovered. *Mantras* originated in the discovery of such laws. But, like the hypotheses about the visible world, the principles behind particular *mantras* may or may not be true and, according as they are true or not, the *mantras* may succeed or fail.

[1] IV, 12

[2] Formula with magical efficacy

The author of the *Gita* knew this and, therefore, advised us to take no interest at all in these things. If we go after them, we may perhaps have our desires fulfilled, and so he said that people who hanker after worldly success worship various gods. But that, he said, will profit them little in the end. It will not increase the sum of happiness in the world. If, however, we decide to work in a spirit of disinterested service, we would not concern ourselves with *mantras*, nor shall we be required to study innumerable Shastras. Just one little Shastra will suffice, the practice of *bhakti*—Ramanama. We shall not even have to study the whole of the *Gita*, it will suffice if we understand its substance. We should find out and take the place appointed for us in this world-machine created by God. A man who has no desires, how well his work shines ! We suffer because of our innumerable desires. People do not keep to their places of duty and that creates disorder and confusion in the world. That man who, instead of being absorbed in his work, is always discontented has not found his right place in the world-machine. If even in a family every member is discontented, the family would be disrupted. In similar circumstances there would be chaos in a country's government, too. If everyone working in this world-machine seeks a reward for his work and, therefore, constantly changes the spheres of his work, there will be no order anywhere; the condition of such a person is like that of one who wastes himself in pleasures and then runs about in search of tonics and pills. With our minds full of cravings, we run after things in the world. While our attachment to the ego remains, we shall never taste the sweet ambrosia of Self-knowledge. The *Gita*, therefore, tells us that if, giving up attachment to the ego, we attend to the best of our ability to the task which has fallen to our lot, an emperor's work and that of one who cleans lavatories will be esteemed of equal worth in God's court. There, King Janaka and the man who cleaned lavatories in his palace have an equally honoured place. Suppose, however, that a present-day ruler and Janaka's Bhangi were to present themselves in God's court at the same time, in all likelihood, the Bhangi would be given an exalted place and the ruler would be left out. In God's court a man with a crown is not esteemed as of greater worth than one who has nothing on his head. The latter will be regarded worthy of a crown while a man with a jewelled crown will receive no attention. Hence the

Gita says that he who works without attachment to the ego works best and becomes qualified for *moksha*.

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May 11, 1926

> The order of the four *varnas*[1] was created by Me according to the different *gunas* and karma of each; yet know that though, therefore, author thereof, being changeless I am not the author.[2]

"I have," Shri Krishna says, "created four *varnas* on the basis of character and work." These are Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra. What should be the character of a Brahmin? What is distinctive of him? He is a Brahmin who knows *Brahman*, who lives most in the consciousness of God. And a Brahmin's work in life is to teach and help people to realize God. Besides this particular gift, he will also have the qualities of character which mark the other *varnas*. The Kshatriya's special dharma is protection of society. He should, above all, be a brave man. The Vaisya occupies himself with commerce. That is his special dharma. If he did not follow it, perhaps the world would not go on as it does. The Sudra's special dharma is service. If he combines with his service the spirit of *yajna* or the motive of public good, he will win the reward of his life. There is here no question of higher and lower. If we regard the person who cleans lavatories as lower and another who reads the *Gita* as higher, that will be the end of us. The majority in the world are engaged in the work of service. If a man combines the spirit of *yajna* with such work, he will be a *mumukshu*. A Sudra is expected to have humility, but humility does not mean abjectness. He serves no one except God.

Anyone for whom action is a necessity is subject to continual change. God is spotless and without form. He has no need to sleep or eat and drink. He does not move, and yet it is He who does everything. The weather expert will tell us that the storm was produced by changes in atmospheric pressure, but as he looks back for

[1] Divisions of society
[2] IV, 13

antecedent causes, he will reach a point beyond which he will not be able to go. God is an expert law-maker, for He is the author of all laws, though, being perfect, He is under no necessity to act or do anything. He never violates His law. God is present in everything that exists and, therefore, He and His law are one. He is spirit. That is, His law is spirit, it is God Himself. He is, and also is not, the doer of things. Since the universe displays some order in its running, we may assume that God is the author of that order. But the Lord has told us here that He is its author and yet is not its author—that is His mystery beyond human understanding.

Actions do not affect Me, nor am I concerned with the fruits thereof.[1] "Fruits of action do not cling to me, for I have no desire for them," says Shri Krishna. Once a machine is set in motion, every part in it works automatically. When we have learnt to function in this manner, like a machine, we shall have gained the true end of human effort. We shall then be fit for direct realization of God

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May 12, 1926

God works like a machine. He is His law. He is the author of law and He it is who administers it. What perfect order this represents ! There is never a question of His suspending His law or of deciding to uphold it. The machine has been going on from eternity. God's law exists and has been in operation since the time that He came into being, if we can say such a thing about Him. We indeed conceive such a necessity for Him. He never suffers the effects of karma, for He has no wish to be fulfilled through any karma. Every part in a machine goes on working ceaselessly; it is the man behind the machine who operates it. In regard to God, we also imagine that He is Himself the machine and its operator. Can anyone say of a machine that it suffers the effects of karma or has any wish to be fulfilled through karma? A machine simply goes on working. If, in the same manner, we become totally immersed in our work, so that we are one with our work, we lose ourselves in that work. But, then, we should first ascertain our duty. The man of lust loses himself in his lust, so much so that he

[1] IV, 14

becomes the very embodiment of lust. Even simple contact with such a person is dangerous. We should not lose ourselves in our passions in that manner. Our duty is to strive for self-realization and we should lose ourselves in that aim. Such a person can never be disturbed by evil desire and, at last, he becomes one with God. If we lose ourselves in God, become machines, make ourselves as clay in God's hands, is it any wonder that we may become one with Him? We should lose ourselves in God so completely that we do not remain separate from Him at all. This verse explains how we can do so. It is to explain this that the Lord says here that karma has no effect on him, for he desires nothing through karma.

"Anyone who knows this truth about Me is never bound by karma."[1] How can he be? He who knows God's law will work but will desire nothing through work. Why do we feel the strain of work? Because, as we work, we remain attached to the "I" within us; were it not so, we would never feel impatient or worried. We should be so absorbed in our work that we do not even notice the time when we should stop it. We should thus work on like machines. I once saw a beautiful painting in a Roman Catholic Church, the work of a gifted painter. It is the time of prayer. Women have been working in the fields, pickaxes in hand. As one of them was about to dig with her pickaxe, the bell tolled for prayer and the pickaxe fell from her hand, she bent her body as though kneeling for prayer and started praying. The poet—for the painter is a poet—had imagined the woman as working like a machine. For these women work was woship. There is a saying in Latin which means that bodily labour is a form of worship. Anyone who believes that it is so will automatically kneel down at prayer time. A person who has resolved that he will always get up at four will roll up his bed as the clock strikes four. If such a person misses praying at prayer time, he will feel weary and oppressed and will not be able to concentrate on any work.

A person who works with such devotion, how can he suffer the effects of karma? That is, he never feels the strain of work. He is ever fresh. There are so many who cannot be happy unless they are working. They never feel the need to stop work for a moment and stretch themselves for rest. If any visitors interrupt them in their work, they feel miserable. Such persons never feel the effects of karma.

[1] IV, 14

The man of lust loses himself in his lust, but he wearies of his indulgence because he seeks pleasure from it. Anyone who seeks pleasure is bound to weary of it sooner or later. If a person indulges his palate, he cannot but fall ill; he is bound to suffer from some disease. But what disease can he suffer from who never indulges his palate, who does not eat for enjoyment? One should do the task on hand without expecting pleasure from doing it, do it merely as one's duty. He who approaches his work in this spirit, who desires nothing through it, will not have to suffer the effects of karma. God does not suffer the effects of karma though He controls this vast machine. The signs which indicate that we suffer such effects are the need we feel for food and water and the wearing out of our bodies. God.is ever awake. We are awake for some time and then sleep, we eat and feel hungry. But God, though He is ever awake, does not have to make an effort to keep Himself awake, He does not sleep and does not eat. Though He acts, He does nothing. Behind every act of ours, there is a trace of egotism and attachment to the "I",—an action of the will. We will to act, we have to do so, before we do anything. God keeps awake for ever without a moment's interruption. We cannot do so. If, however, we keep such a state before us as our ideal, we can do the best work. That is why Shri Krishna said: yoga is skill in action.[1] That is, the man who is firmly established in yoga always does better work than one who is restless and impatient in his work.

> Knowing this did men of old, desirous of Freedom, perform action; do thou, then just as they did—the men of old in days gone by.[2]

The seekers of *moksha* in old days knew this truth and worked in such a spirit. To realize God means to work like God, with single-minded devotion and ceaseless vigilance. Though living in the human body, we should imitate God as much as we can. "Our forefathers did this. You too," Shri Krishna tells Arjuna, "should act in the same manner" (Man is ruled by vows. God has no need to take any. Everyone should resolve that he or she will not fall asleep here. You ought not to give me pain by dozing here.) How is it that Arjuna thought about dharma when he was required to kill his relations? Shri Krishna, therefore, rebuked him and said that he should not think on those lines, for in old times people worked without thinking of any reward for work. If one works in that spirit, one is not bound by the

[1] II, 50
[2] IV, 15

effects of karma. “Think how I act,” says Shri Krishna. “I create society with its four classes, but I am not bound by the effects of karma, for I remain unattached.”“You too”, He tells Arjuna,“should act in that manner.”

You, students, should study with the same devotion as the *brahmacharis* [1] of old days. They bore themselves in such a manner that, though mere boys, they seemed to be grown-up, mature men. I speak of more than forty years ago. I distinctly remember that, at our place, in the absence of the priest his young son read the *Bhagavata*, and he read it very well indeed; so good was the education he had received at home. He must have been barely fifteen. Those whom we descirbe as *brahmacharis* today must behave as the *brahmacharis* of old did. You should sit upright, like a pole. Practise prayers for a whole month, and then you will discover that you are making some progress. What is the meaning of your feeling restless as you sit here? What is the good if you feel that, when you leave this place, you will get back into bed?

“Do your work and leave the responsibility to me,” says Shri Krishna. “What is it you can do? Everything is done by me. Left to yourself, you will remain slumbering. On your own, you do only evil. You cannot say that I incline you to remain slumbering or to do evil. I inspire you to do only good. It is Satan who inclines you to remain slumbering, to abuse people, to behave disrespectfully to others and to cheat people in the name of spinning.”

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May 13, 1926

> ‘What is action? What inaction?’— here even the wise are perplexed. I will then expound to thee that action knowing which thou shalt be saved from evil.[2]

“I will explain to you what right karma is and, having understood it, you will save yourself from evil, from the round of birth and death.”

Our eyes are closed with bandages, like those over the eyes of the bullock in the oil-press. These bandages are not eternal, but we let them stay because we have grown used to them as natural, as fear is

[1] Students attached to preceptors in hermitages
[2] IV, 16

natural to us. There was a lion cub who, having always lived among goats, would tremble with fear like a goat, Then a real lion happened to meet him, and he held a mirror before him. The cub roared, and escaped from the company of the goats. This cub had not been forced to put a bandage over its eyes, the bandage had just grown of itself. In the same way, everyone of us has the bandage of ignorance grown over the eyes, and we do not know that it is not our dharma to live in evil, to submit to the round of birth and death. Our dharma is to rise ever higher until at last we can rise no more. We can have no rest till we have reached the goal. There will be eternal peace when we have reached it, that is, the peace of *moksha*. If you are on the top of the Himalayas, you are certain to fall from there, the top itself will crumble one day. It will crumble because it is ever changing. There is no changing in the state of *moksha* and no falling from there. *Moksha* means destruction of the shackles of birth and death, getting out of that round, it means deliverance from evil. If we meet a worthy guru, and he loosens the bandage of ignorance over our eyes and holds before us the mirror of knowledge, we would know what we are, would know whether we deserve to go from birth to birth or are fit for something else. In truth we deserve better than to follow this round, we belong to a higher station. We shall become fit for that station when the darkness of ignorance has vanished. The Lord told Arjuna that He would show the way by following which he could save himself from evil, that his actions till then were only a means of binding him. Shri Krishna wished to help Arjuna to deliver himself from that bondage, but what could He have taught him if the latter had not questioned Him eagerly, had not shown that he thirsted for knowledge, if he had not told Him: "I am like one sunk in ignorance; I do not know what my duty is; I have faith in you; show me what my dharma is?"

> For it is meet to know the meaning of action, of forbidden action, as also of inaction. Impenetrable is the secret of action.[1]

One should know what karma is, what *vikarma*—that is, forbidden karma—is, what *akarma*—that is, ceasing from karma—is. The truth about karma is a deep mystery.

> Who sees inaction in action and action in inaction, he is enlightened among men, he is a yogi, he has done all he need do.[2]

[1] IV, 17
[2] IV, 18

The aim of this verse is to show that one who does karma may still not be doing anything. I have already in a previous discourse mentioned my own example and told you that if I worked with attachment to my ego there were occasions when I would become mad. But things go on and leave me unaffected because I do everything merely as my duty. Even if every boy here were to leave me, I would not shed one tear. I would, on the contrary, dance with joy like Narasinh Mehta and sing "Happy am I that the net is no more". If we work in such a disinterested spirit, we can follow the example of the Lord who said that, though He had created society with its four classes, He was not their creator. That is so because of the principle that one may do karma and still not have done it.

We are caught in the motion of the wheel of this world. Our duty is to work ceaselessly as a part of this machine. We should spend every minute of our waking life in doing work which has fallen to our lot, and do it as if we are impatient over it and yet not be so, be calm in fact. The bullock that keeps the water-wheel in motion goes round and round, but no bucket falls from its place. If it were not a bucket but our heart in that place, it might even fall off; the bucket, however, does not fall off, it remains in its place, calm. We should be filled with such calm. On the other hand, if our heart is agitated, we may rest from work but shall not have ceased from action, we would still be working. The bonds tighten round such a person and there is but misery in store for him. If he believes that those who let themselves be entangled in the affairs of life weave bonds of karma round them and that he himself is free, he will be under a delusion, for every thought is a form of karma. That is why the Lord has said that the truth about karma is a deep mystery. Those who do karma through their thoughts load themselves with burdens so heavy that they will never be able to throw them off. On the other hand the man who becomes absorbed in work, does it as duty, and, if he finds that he cannot do a particular thing, leaves it alone,—such a person weaves no bond of karma round him.

Last evening, I rebuked . . . [1] and other boys. On that, . . .[2] told me that there was harshness in my voice and asked me if it was not a sign of anger in me. I said that I was not God. I only strive for

[1] The names are omitted in the source.

[2] *Ibid*

perfection, but I am not fit to be anyone's guru. I am full of desires, and so, when I am excited, my voice is naturally raised. If I had succeeded in banishing every desire from me, I would be able to do as much work as I am doing now, but my voice would ever be the same. I aspire to reach such a state. It is true that sometimes my voice is raised and there is a little flash of anger in my eyes. This is the state Arjuna had in mind when he asked the Lord how a person is overcome with evil desire against his will.[1] I am still swayed by desire and anger. I say this to illustrate the truth that we cease from karma in the measure that we do karma without any thought of its fruit. If I run away from a task in despair, if I get upset or raise my voice because. . .[2] does not listen to me, I weave the bonds of karma round me. Having undertaken a duty, having agreed to look after some children entrusted to me and sharing the responsibility of bringing them up, how can I now run away from the task? If I retire to the heights of the Himalayas and live there in peace, I would be indulging my body in idle comfort and weave round myself the bonds of karma. I must, therefore, remain in the midst of these responsibilities, and win *moksha* through them. If I become free from anger and shake off ignorance, if I become more vigilant and alert, I would be doing no karma even when occupied in some karma. This illustration explains both the ideas, of a person doing no karma even when occupied in karma and of another who, though he believes that he is doing no karma, is in fact weaving the bonds of karma round himself.

Everyone should apply this illustration to himself, forgetting all about me as an individual. I have mentioned my own example merely in order to explain that we are all imperfect. I say, not merely out of modesty or as a matter of form, but with detachment, that I am imperfect. This is not my modesty, but the simple truth. When I am completely free from the sway of desire and anger, you will always see me calm, more so than you see me today. I am striving to be free from these. I feel that one day I shall attain such a state of calm.

In this age, we do not have the means with which to measure ourselves. The *Gita* was composed to help us. It says that we should

[1] III, 36

[2] The names are omitted in the source.

work like machines and pour out our life in our work.

[69]

May 23, 1926

We should think further about the first line of the verse[1] beginning with *karmanyakarma*.

We saw in a previous verse that no human being ceases from karma altogether even for a moment. That means that the very process of living is a form of karma. Eating, speaking, thinking, sleeping, all these are forms of karma (. . . .[2] said that, when he retired to that place to seek peace, he had tried to stop even thinking, for thinking, too, is a form of karma). Thus, no one can escape doing karma. Still the *Gita* distinguishes between karma and *akarma*, between the yogi and ordinary human beings, between night and day, and explains that the involuntary processes in the body are not karma; that is, even though we do such karma, we weave no bond round us through it. I have an aim in this discussion of the *Gita*, and that is that children should understand some of the ideas and act accordingly, and, therefore, the discussion is certainly a form of karma for me. If I had accepted the work of teaching and if explaining the *Gita* came naturally to me, then this very work would perhaps deserve to be described as *akarma*. Even so, the idea of *akarma* is like the Euclidean definition of a straight line, and the work of explaining the *Gita* would be *akarma* only in a relative sense. Karma becomes relatively *akarma* when it is undertaken for the service of others, for the sake of our higher good. We may be said to eat and breathe with that aim only if we have voluntarily and deliberately dedicated our body to the service of Shri Krishna. He who lives with the knowledge that his body is not his, that God makes it dance as He wills, may be said to have realized God. All karma done in that spirit is *akarma*. Anything else, though seeming *akarma*, is in truth karma. A yogi may have ceased riding fancy's horses, and still his *samadhi* may be a form of karma for him if he has sought it for better health. Some persons suffering from consumption learn to enter into such *samadhi*; it is plain that their aim in doing so is to cure themselves of their disease. Their karma in this case is not inspired by the motive of higher good. Only that karma is so inspired in which our aim is realization of God and nothing else,

[1] IV, 18

[2] The name is omitted in the source.

when this aim, too, is pursued with spontaneous naturalness. The person who is inspired by it is not in the least conscious of it. In all that he does, there is only the yearning for realizing God and no other thought. Such a person loses the very consciousness of his body, as the *gopis* did. Even those who are possessed by lust lose the consciousness of their bodies, but they go to hell because they have given themselves up to the pursuit of lust and do not yearn to see God. When such a person, after he has had enough of pleasure, experiences the joy of devotion to God, he realizes that this latter joy is far superior to the pleasure he got by giving himself up to lust, that by losing himself in the pleasure of lust he grew weaker, whereas by losing himself in the joy of God he was filled with strength. After this experience, he is no more negligent in work but learns to be proficient in it. He who does everything for the sake of the higher good and dedicates all his work to God has ceased from karma. Just as the judge dispenses justice and the hangman hangs the condemned man in the name of the king, so if we feel that in this empire of the universe we are God's slaves and are prompted by Him to do what we do, all our actions will be for our higher good.

> He whose every undertaking is free from desire and selfish purpose, and he who has burnt all his actions in the fire of knowledge—such a one the wise call a *pandita*.[1]

That person whose undertakings are never inspired by selfish desire or personal aims but are altogether spontaneous, whose karmas have been burnt up by the fire of knowledge (everything that exists and will cease has life in it, which means that a piece of stone has life in it, but, though it does no karma it has no knowledge either)—such a person will not be like a stone in regard to karma but, on the contrary, may do all manner of karma and will still have his karmas burnt up by the fire of knowledge. For instance, this earth created by God is in unceasing motion and yet seems at rest; it seems so though it is spinning with a speed which would make us giddy if we could see it. When typing on a typewriter has become mechanical work with the typist, the finger will alight on the right letter even when he is not looking at the keyboard; he who is able to work in such spontaneous manner and is fully alert, like the typist, in everything he does, may be described as the Buddha.

[1] IV, 19

[70]

June 2, 1926

We may be doing much work, but without any consciousness that we are working.[1] We wish to know the *atman* dwelling in this human body—wish to know it directly so that its knowledge may become a part of our being as it was with Sudama[2]. An experienced carpenter will make a board effortlessly, whereas one with only a theoretical knowledge of the craft will not be able to make one. He who has learnt to work effortlessly in this manner goes on working mechanically and still remains detached. The verse beginning with *yasya sarve samarambhah*[3] describes the character of such a person. We do not have to make any effort for winking the eye; all our actions should become spontaneous like this. Anyone who has acquired control over his thoughts to this degree will never have an evil thought; such a person will move in the world as if he was no more than a corpse. He will seem so to us because he has no desire and no aim, is not subject to attachments and aversions; he is a man who has ceased from karma.

This work of explaining the *Gita* which I am doing is prompted by a personal motive, the wish to see that the boys understand it.

> He who has renounced attachment to the fruit of action, who is ever content, and free from all dependence,—he, though immersed in action, yet acts not.[4]

He who has given up desire for the fruits of karma, who is ever contented, not more so at one time and less at another time, who is always satisfied with what he has—such a person may be ever so deeply engrossed in work but in truth he does nothing. As Narasinh Mehta has said, an ascetic and a perfectly chaste woman do not know the pleasure of earthly love; if any such person were to come and see us plying the charkha all the hours of the day, he would think that we had become mad, that we were so occupied with work that we paid no attention to performing daily worship. But, according to the *Gita,* we can say that we were doing no work, for we had no selfish aim in our

[1] The remark was prompted by the sight of a mad man who came towards the meeting, muttering the word "Prabhu", God.

[2] An indigent Brahmin friend of Krishna

[3] IV, 19

[4] IV, 20

work and did it simply as our dharma, did it merely because of our faith [in the value of spinning]. With scepticism all round us, to go on spinning with the faith that it would bring swaraj indicates the state of unvarying inner content in which we live. This is true, of course, of only those people who attribute all this power to the charkha and devote themselves whole-heartedly to it.

> Expecting naught, holding his mind and body in check, putting away every possession, and going through action only in the body, he incurs no stain.[1]

He alone does not feel the body to be a burden who hopes for nothing, whose mind is ever steady and who has completely given up the desire for possessions. How does this become possible? The body, too, is a kind of property which we possess. We should so use it that we would not mind its perishing today rather than tomorrow. If we cultivate such an attitude, we would not feel the body to be a burden. Ladha Maharaj had given up all concern with this particular form of property, the body, and kept repeating the name Siva all the hours of the day; anyone who works in that spirit, with the sole aim of giving the body its hire and not for the sake of pleasures, may be doing karma all the time and still he stores up no sins.

[71]

June 3, 1926

That person who is described as doing *shariram* karma does not have to suffer the fruits of karma. This does not mean that his karma bears no fruit, but only that he seeks none. In other words, he does not attribute the karma to his *atman*. For instance, I listen to the *Gita* being read out. I should do so with humility, for listening to it is my duty; the fruit of listening to it will follow of itself, whether we think of it or not, in the same way that a seed which has been sown grows by itself into a tree. This seed has no ego. We are animals to the extent that we have some needs in common with them, but in certain respects we are different from them. The consciousness that we do things should disappear from us. A person who writes his diary every day does not think about how much his hand worked during the day; in that way all our work should be done mechanically.

Even an action which one took to be most virtuous karma may

[1] IV, 21

turn out to be sin. Supposing one is born a prince through the virtue of meritorious work, how does it profit one? What good is there in being born a prince? To be born poor and to be born a prince, these are two extremes of the same state. We say that we should try to make do with less sleep, and that may seem contrary to the teaching of the verse we are discussing. But we make the effort in order that by and by sleeping less may become natural to us, just as we try to rise above *rajas* and *tamas* by engaging ourselves in *sattvik*[1] activity.

Shariram karma means karma for keeping the body alive. Observance of *brahmacharya* and other rules has become difficult for us because we pamper the body too much. We have made difficult what should be quite natural to us. It is not natural for human beings to violate *brahmacharya*. We seek pleasures because we live as if the body and the *atman* were identical. If, instead, we look upon the body as only a material object and think merely of keeping it alive somehow, we would not run after pleasures. How can we be ever disturbed by evil desires if we look upon our body as the temple of the *atman*? Should anyone maintain himself merely by doing half an hour's writing every day? No. Anyone who does so is a thief. The mind works for the *atman*, and so does the body, but we ought to undertake physical labour to maintain the body. Even the work of teaching cannot serve as a means for this purpose. Only agriculture or similar work can count as work for the sake of the body.

> Content with whatever chance may bring, rid of the pairs of opposites, free from ill will, even-minded in success and failure, he is not bound though he acts.[1]

He who is satisfied with what he gets in the ordinary course of things, who has risen above the pairs of opposites, such as happiness and suffering, has no ill will in him and bears an equal mind towards success and failure, is indifferent towards them or is not affected by them—such a person does not dance with joy on getting something which is welcome to him and does not start lamenting his lot when disagreeable things happen—he may do karma and still be not doing it, that is, will not be bound by the effects of his karma.

> Of the free soul who has shed all attachment, whose mind is firmly grounded in knowledge, who acts only for sacrifice, all karma is extinguished.[2]

[1] Characterized by *sattva*
[1] IV, 22
[2] IV, 23

That person who works without attachment is free, that is, he is not bound by the effects of karma. He whose mind has become steady through knowledge and who always works in the spirit of *yajna* has all his karmas burnt up in the fire of knowledge.

It would be far better that we die than that we eat merely to serve ourselves. That is, if we cultivate a state of mind such that we eat and drink in order that we may serve God, serve the *atman*, that is, eat and drink in the spirit of *yajna*, then we shall have ceased from karma.

[72]

June 4, 1926

If we recite certain verses thousands of times over and over again and with faith, they acquire great power for us. A Muslim should not tire of reciting *kalamas*[1] and a Hindu should not tire of reciting the *gayatri* or of repeating Ramanama or the *dwadash mantra*. I have discussed today's verses at great length with Vinobaji, too, but I am not sure of their meaning. The *Gita* was composed after the time of the Vedas, and the different sects have tried so to interpret its teaching that it may support their own tenets. It is too much to believe that the *Gita* condemned Vedic rituals. I have, therefore, tried again and again to get a meaning which would not conflict with the Vedic practices. Not that this was necessary for myself. My task is to find in them a meaning that would satisfy you. The teacher of the *Gita* did not lay down that those who came after him should always read in it only the meaning which he himself had in mind. Now, it says that every karma done in the spirit of *yajna* leaves no effects behind it. Any action done without reference to one's own interest is a form of *yajna*. The next verse follows as a consequence from this, and also explains the manner of doing such *yajna*.

> The offering of sacrifice is *Brahman*; the oblation is *Brahman*; it is offered by *Brahman* in the fire that is *Brahman*; thus he whose mind is fixed on acts dedicated to *Brahman* must needs pass on to *Brahman*.[2]

That which is thrown into the *yajna* is *Brahman* and so is the oblation (*arpan* has been interpreted to mean all the materials used for the purpose of the *yajna*). If that oblation is thrown by *Brahman*

[1] The creed of Islam as expressed in the verse from the Koran: There is no God but Allah and Mohammed is His apostle.

[2] IV, 24

into the fire which is also *Brahman*, it is bound to act as *Brahman*. Anyone who relates all his karmas to *Brahman* will merge into the latter. How can a person who sees God in every aspect of a *yajna* have to suffer the fruits of karma? He becomes both the ladle used in the *yajna* and the oblation poured out by its means. He looks upon God as a potter and offers himself as clay to Him and lets Him make from it any pot He pleases. The verse thus explains how there may be *akarma* in karma.

[73]

June 5, 1926

Shri Krishna now explains the different types of *yajna*:

> Some yogis perform sacrifice in the form of worship of the gods, others offer sacrifice of sacrifice itself in the fire that is *Brahman*.[1]

I have been told by Vinoba that there is support in the Vedas for the view that a person who has attained to knowledge of the *Brahman* need not worry about performing *yajna*. One who has made his life itself a long *yajna*, why should he undertake any other *yajna*?

A woman who is nearly blind has come among us. She has a fine voice and sings *Raghupati Raghav Raja Ram*. She is a Tamilian. She has come here with her husband's permission. She appears intelligent. We should feel that anyone who serves her performs a *yajna*. Such service serves our higher good. But to a person who performs a *yajna* by means of a *yajna*, that is, who has made his whole life a *yajna*, doing a *yajna* comes most naturally. Such a person is ever engaged in doing *yajna* with ceaseless vigilance. He identifies himself with all creatures in their suffering. The meaning here is not that he gives up doing *yajna*. Rather, it becomes his very nature to engage himself in *yajna*, just as it is natural for God to dwell in the heart of the basest of human beings. Some persons make a sacrificial offering of sense organs, hearing and others, into the fire of self-control; that is, they stop hearing with their ears, speaking with their tongues, savouring food and drink with the palate and seeing with their eyes. Others make a sacrificial offering of sound and other objects of sense into the fire of the sense-organs. Here the process is reversed. Since we cannot stop our ears altogther, we should hear only what is good. Since we cannot keep our eyes shut for ever, we should use them only to see the glory of God everywhere. This is what is meant by saying

[1] IV, 25

that some persons sacrifice the objects of sense into the fire of the organs of sense.

[74]

June 6, 1926

When Kishorelal was living apart from others in a cottage, he tried to cultivate self-control. He was disturbed by the noise of passing trains while reading the *Jnaneshvari*[1]. I made the suggestion to him that he should block his ears with pieces of rubber. But he got used to the situation and declined to use any such pieces.

But what about children? The only course for them [in such circumstances] is to take measures to stop the functioning of the organ in question, for the state of inward concentration is not easy for them to cultivate. That is how we should act in regard to sound and other objects of sense.

Proceeding, Shri Krishna says:

> Others again sacrifice all the activities of the senses and of the vital energy in the yogic fire of self-control kindled by knowledge.[2]

Others stop the functioning of all sense organs, stop even the movement of *prana*, that is, breathing, make themselves motionless and enter into *samadhi*, become firmly established in the *atman* and, lighting this yoga with the fire of knowledge, make a sacrificial offering of all the organs into it.

If a person cannot control his mind by any other means, he may adopt this way. Or one may get angry with oneself and stop the functioning of all one's organs. Some persons become angry with themselves because they do not succeed in their efforts to observe *brahmacharya*. Those who sail to the North Pole sacrifice money in millions over and over again, without gatting disheartened. The man who tries to observe *brahmacharya* but fails in his efforts becomes desperate and undertakes an indefinite fast, resolving in his mind that he will not let any organ of the body function because, so long as even one of them is functioning, his mind revels in evil thoughts; he, therefore, decides that it is best to stop all organs from functioning. This is lighting up the fire of the yoga of control of the *atman*. This is no mere *samadhi* of the body, it is *samadhi* illumined by knowledge.

[1] Commentary on the *Gita* by Jnaneshvar, a Maharashtrian saint of the thirteenth century

[2] IV, 27

A man striving for success in *brahmacharya* suffers pain as a woman in labour does. If a person cannot bear obstruction to his efforts to cultivate self-control, we see that he gets upset. This is why I often say that such a person is like a milch cow and that we should bear his kicks.

> Some sacrifice with material gifts; with austerities; with yoga; some with the acquiring and some with the imparting of knowledge. All these are sacrifices of stern vows and serious endeavour.[1]

There are people in this world who perform the *yajna* of money (who let their wealth be shared by others). Some others perform *tapas*[2] and imprison the monkey which is our mind. Some others, still, practise yoga or devote themselves regularly to holy studies, to the study of the Vedas. Some perform the *yajna* of the pursuit of knowledge. They do not read, but devote themselves to reflection and meditation. Ascetics who put themselves under strict vows perform a *yajna* in that manner.

[75]

June 8, 1926

> Others absorbed in the practices of the control of the vital energy sacrifice the outward in the inward and the inward in the outward, or check the flow of both the inward and the outward vital airs.[3]

Some throw *pranavayu*[4] as sacrifice into *apanavayu*[5], while others hold the latter in the former. Some others still hold both. All these are practitioners of *pranayama*[6] .

> Yet others, abstemious in food, sacrifice one form of vital energy in another. All these know what sacrifice is and purge themselves of all impurities by sacrifice.[7]

[76]

June 9, 1926

> Those who partake of the residue of sacrifice—called *amrita* (ambrosia)—attain to everlasting *Brahman*. Even this world is not for a non-

[1] IV, 28
[2] Austerities
[3] IV, 29
[4] Vital air in the lung
[5] Vital air in the abdomen
[6] Breath control
[7] IV, 30

sacrificer; how then the next, O Kurusattama?[1]

To strive and conquer desire is also a form of *yajna*. The *Gita* teaches us to look upon all activities for *paramartha*[2] as forms of *yajna*. *Paropakar* means working for others; but the idea that we work for others is only an illusion. We always work for ourselves. We shall attain deliverance only if we work exclusively for our higher self. All activities for *paramartha*, therefore, aim at one's own good.

Coming back to the verse, those who consume what remains after the *yajna* is over, that is, those who utilize for themselves only the time which remains after they have completed the *yajna*, enjoy *amrita* and attain to the timeless *Brahman*. The person who has done no work during the day but, like a heifer idling in mud, has spent his time in bed, steals the sleep which he enjoys at night. The man who does no *yajna* can win nothing in this world; what then can he win in the other world? He is lost in both.

[77]

June 10, 1926

The verse which we have been discussing has a wide meaning. It means that we should eat only after all others have had their food. So long as the embodied soul lives in this world, it has no choice but to have relations with others. To become disinterested in the body, therefore, means that one should devote oneself exclusively to the service of others so that one may attain the *Brahman* beyond time. We should be as impatient to attain it as a lost sheep is to get back to its fold. Those who, on the contrary, live only for themselves prosper neither in this world nor in the next. Therefore, Shri Krishna tells Arjuna: stop thinking of some people being and others not being your relations. If you may kill any people, you should kill these too.

> Even so various sacrifices have been described in the Vedas; know them all to proceed from action; knowing this thou shalt be released.[3]

One meaning given to this verse is that there are these different types of *yajna* in the sight of the *Brahman* [*sic*]. This interpretation omits any reference to the Vedas, for the *Gita* has actually denounced them. And, moreover, the verses[4] in question are found nowhere in the

[1] IV, 31

[2] Literally, the Supreme good; the term also means altruism.

[3] IV, 32

[4] That is, the verses in the *Gita* enumerating the different types of *yajna*; IV, 24 to 30

Vedas. Ordinarily, of course, the verse should mean this: "The Vedas describe these different types of *yajna*. You should know that all of them exist through karma; only so can you win *moksha*." After explaining the meanings of karma and *akarma*, the Lord makes it clear in this verse that it is simply impossible for anyone to live without doing karma. That of course does not mean that a state of *akarma* is impossible. Every karma done for the good of the *atman*, though it appears to be karma, is in reality *akarma*. If we can renounce the fruits of karma, that is, work only for others, then we may work like horses. On the other hand, when working for ourselves, we should be like a piece of inert matter, have no interest in the work at all. This is a state of the heart, an attitude of mind. Anyone who cultivates that attitude towards everything he does, sleeping, eating, drinking or cleaning the lavatory, will attain to *moksha*.

The words *evam bahuvidhah* in this verse mean that the different types of *yajna* are enumerated only as illustrations. Others can also be included if they satisfy the *Gita*'s definition of *yajna*.

> Knowledge-sacrifice is better, O Parantapa, than material sacrifice, for all action which does not bind finds its consummation in Knowledge (*jnana*).[1]

The person who performs the *yajna* of knowledge makes a greater sacrifice than another who performs the *yajna* of money, for the *yajna* of knowledge includes everything, money and all other things. Knowledge covers everything, which exists in the world, without reference to the distinction between living and non-living. If we understand the terms *dravya*[2] and *jnana* in a wide sense, a *yajna* of knowledge includes *yajna* of every kind of *dravya*. Anyone who imparts the highest knowledge to us, convinces us to the very depth of our being that the body is not the *atman*, performs a very great *yajna* indeed.

[78]

June 11, 1926

> The masters of knowledge who have seen the Truth will impart to thee this Knowledge; learn it through humble homage and service and by repeated questioning.[3]

"You can obtain this knowledge,"Shri Krishna tells Arjuna, "by bowing before a guru in utmost humility,—by prostrating your-

[1] IV, 33
[2] Any material; in a restricted sense, the term means "money".
[3] IV, 34

self before him, fuel in hand,—by serving him and by frequent questioning, by harassing him with questions, and in no other way. The enlightened ones who have seen the truth will impart this knowledge to you."

[79]

June 12, 1926

> When thou hast gained this knowledge, O Pandava, thou shalt not again fall into such error; by virtue of it thou shalt see all beings without exception in thyself and thus in Me.[1]

"When you have received that knowledge," proceeds Shri Krishna, "your understanding will never again be clouded by the darkness of ignorance and you will make no distinction like that between kinsmen and others, you will learn to regard all beings with an equal eye so that you will see them all as existing in you and in Me; in other words, for you everyone will be a kinsman. The entire universe is filled by Me, and, therefore, you will see Me in all objects. When the 'I' in you has melted away, then it will be *jale Vishnu, sthale Vishnu, Vishnu Parvatamastake*[2] for you." Once we have realized that this whole universe exists in God, how can there be any problem of violence and non-violence for us? We would feel even thieves and tigers to be ourselves. Till we feel in that way, we may be sure that we have not attained to a state of knowledge at all.

[80]

June 13, 1926

Can we claim that we have the knowledge described in the verse which we have been discussing? Suppose that we learn in one day to recite it; do we then become seers of truth? Do we become so when we teach that verse to others? Of course not. We cannot have this knowledge merely by talking about it. We understand with our reason that the universe is the same as ourselves, but we can only imagine what that means. We cannot grasp the idea or feel its truth. The moment we leave this place, we shall treat all others as different from us. Only that person in whom this idea has sunk from the intellect to the heart—even an intellectual nincompoop can have a heart which is an ocean of compassion—can feel its truth in direct experience. Shri

[1] IV, 35

[2] "Vishnu in water, Vishnu on land and Vishnu on the tops of mountains"

Krishna says to Arjuna: "When I say that men of knowledge will impart this knowledge to you, I do not mean that they will convince your reason; I mean that they will awaken in you the faith that it is so. You will then realize that it is because of your reason that you see things as separate from one another, that in truth they are one" God, ourselves and all objects in the universe are in essence one Reality. Even God vanishes and we have only *neti, neti*. When a person has realized this, his ignorance will have completely vanished.

> Even though thou be the most sinful of sinners, thou shalt cross the ocean of sin by the boat of knowledge.[1]

"Even if you are the most wicked of sinners," says Shri Krishna, "you will cross the sea of darkness and ignorance with the ship of knowledge"—crossing the Swayambhu-Raman[2] sea of *moha* [3] sang Raychandbhai.

Hunger cannot be satisfied by the knowledge that there is food in the vessel, or even when that food is swallowed down into the stomach; it is only when it is digested in the stomach and converted into blood that we may say that our hunger is satisfied.

> As a blazing fire turns its fuel to ashes, O Arjuna, even so the fire of knowledge turns all actions to ashes.[4]

First, knowledge was compared to a ship, and now it is compared to fire. It burns up the bonds of karma.

[81]

June 15, 1926

For me, the *Gita* is the ship, not because it is a learned work but because I have liked it, it has appealed to me in my old age, or because some verse in it has been a great support to me, put it any way you like.

Man does not live by bread alone, whereas the lower creatures need only food to live. Anna Kingsford used to say that men seemed like tigers and snakes. Certainly, the lower creatures are as brethren to us. We all come from the same source. But they need only food to

[1] IV, 36

[2] The name given in Jain literature to the farthest sea, which was believed to be so vast that no one could cross it

[3] The state of delusion in which the self takes the phenomenal existence as real

[4] IV, 37

live, whereas man lives by performing *yajna*.Everyone performs *yajna* in one way or another. The spinning-wheel is one type of y*ajna*. Prayers, too, are a *yajna* for us. They represent a mode of spiritual cleansing. Till we have performed that *yajna*, we should feel uneasy inside us. Only those who attend to these readings of the *Gita* in that spirit, not others, may be said to be really interested in it. If we were not thus interested in these readings, we would engage a teacher more learned than even Vinoba and with his help, study the *Gita* in order to learn Sanskrit or be honoured as pundits in society. Instead, we join these prayers in order that they may sustain us in our life. Man's need for prayer is as great as his need for bread. A bad man will use his ears to hear evil of others and see sinful things, but the good man says that, had he a thousand eyes and ears, he would use them to contemplate the vision of God for ever and to heat devotional songs, and employ his five thousand tongues to sing His praises. It is only after I have prayed here every day that I feel the bliss of having tasted the *amrita* of knowledge. For that man who wishes to be a real human being, dal and *roti* are not his food. They count little to him. His real food is prayer. On Sundays, I need to lie in bed till late in the morning, and in vain would Ba[1] try to get me out of it. She used to spoil my mornings, which was not right. Many women do this sort of thing. They should not. Actually I had an excuse for what I did, for in those days I did not pray (as I do now). Even so, I tell you of my mistake. Sleeping for longer hours on Sundays did not make me the less drowsy on Mondays. You are *brahmacharis*. You ought to get up in time and attend prayers every day. You may excuse yourselves from other duties, but never from prayers. You should cultivate such a state of mind that for half an hour you will have only one thought in your mind, and no other. Everyone should set apart some time in this manner for reflection. It provides an opportunity to feel one with all living creatures. That is enough for today by way of introduction to the *Gita.*

[82]

June 16. 1926

There is nothing in this world so purifying as Knowledge. He who is perfected by yoga finds it in himself in the fulness of time.[2]

[1] Kasturba Gandhi
[2] IV, 38

We see nothing in this world as holy as this knowledge (The purest *yajna*, therefore, is the *yajna* of knowledge.). He who has become fit for *moksha* through the practice of yoga comes to this knowledge in the course of time by his own effort. That knowledge is realization of the self. As soon as this realization is attained, all the burden of this body and of karma will melt away.

> It is the man of faith who gains knowledge—the man who is intent on it and who has mastery over his senses; having gained knowledge, he comes are long to the supreme peace.[1]

Anyone who has unshakable faith will win deliverance with the help of Ramanama only. Parents purposely give their children the names of the Lord. That also may save them. That person who is for ever devoted to the Lord, who is self-controlled and who can fall into sleep any time he chooses, who has perfect control over every sense attains this knowledge and soon wins peace—*moksha* through it.

[83]

June 17, 1926

We do a sum in mathematics with the help of our reasoning faculty. It does not matter whether or not we have faith in mathematics. But, for spiritual knowledge, faith is essential. Does a child have to train his intellect in order to love its mother or father? An illiterate mother loves her child with her heart. We may have a love relationship of any kind with God. The poet has presented to us only a few aspects of Divine love. A person who has no conception of the vast sea may be given some idea of it by telling him of rivers and streams.

> But the man of doubt, without knowledge and without faith, is lost; for him who is given to doubt there is neither this world nor that beyond, nor happiness.[2]

That person who does not value knowledge, who lacks faith, that is, who is a sceptic, will perish. He prospers neither in this world nor in the other.

> He who has renounced all action by means of yoga, who has severed all doubt by means of knowledge—him self-possessed, no actions bind, O Dhananjaya![3]

"Therefore," Shri Krishna says, "the doubt in your heart, born of ignorance, destroy it with the sword of knowledge and take up

[1] IV, 39
[2] IV, 40
[3] IV, 41

yoga—karmayoga[1] —and get ready."

[84]

[Chapter V]

June 18, 1926

> Thou laudest renunciation of actions, O Krishna, whilst at the same time thou laudest performance of action; tell me for a certainty which is the better.[2]

Shri Vyasa uses the figure of Arjuna to make it clear that he wrote the *Mahabharata* only as a *yajna* and that those who read it for their spiritual good would also be performing a *yajna*.

[85]

June 19, 1926

When can we say that a person who is eating is, nevertheless, not eating? Can we say that because, while eating, he absentmindedly puts a morsel into his nostril? Anyone who thinks about play while he is eating is merely inattentive; we cannot say that he is disinterested in eating. But a person may be eating with proper attention and yet we may say of him that he is, nevertheless, not eating. Of whom can we say this? Of one who eats as though he was performing a *yajna*, who offers up his action of eating to Shri Krishna, who eats with the feeling that he does so in obedience to the Lord's command. Or, such a person may also tell himself that it is not he, but his body, that is eating—the *atman* does not eat, or drink or sleep; he will then eat to serve others, to serve the lame, the crippled and the afflicted. That will be service of God, for God who dwells in the afflicted is also like them. That person's karma of eating will be in truth *akarma*, and will not bind him. If we aspire to be good, we must ceaselessly work to serve others, serve them in a perfectly disinterested spirit. We should not serve anyone with the hope that he, too, will serve us one day, but we may serve him because the Lord dwells in him and we serve that Lord. If we hear anyone crying in distress for help, we should immediately run to him and help him. We should help the Lord crying in distress. After doing what was needed, we should feel that it was all a dream. Would the Lord ever cry in distress? In this way, all our acts of

[1] The yoga of disinterested work
[2] V, 1

service will seem to us as dreams.

Those who offer delicacies to the Lord before partaking of them, do they really perform an act of dedication to Shri Krishna? No, they don't. They themselves eat those delicacies. They do not eat them in the spirit of *yajna*. if a person offers the best part of such dainties to others to eat and himself eats only the indifferent items which remain behind, we may describe him as *yajnashishtamritabhuj*[1].

> Renunciation and performance of action both lead to salvation; but of the two, *karmayoga* (performance) is better than sannyasa (renunciation).[2]

[86]

June 20, 1926

When Shri Krishna said *nehabhikramanashosti* [3] He assured us that no effort undertaken to follow dharma is ever wasted. Man cannot completely refrain from karma, and therefore, it is easy for everyone to follow karmayoga. Renunciation of karma, on the other hand, is a difficult matter, for it requires knowledge, whereas karmayoga can be followed even by an ordinary person. To retire into a cave in the Himalayas and sit there for ever doing nothing—it is extremely difficult to succeed in such an effort. It is a hard task to cultivate such stillness that one would not be tempted by anything even in one's thoughts. The Lord, therefore, tells us that karmayoga is a better path, since the other one is beset with obstacles and is likely to encourage hypocrisy, while the karmayogi runs no such risk.

> Him one should know as ever renouncing who has no dislikes and likes; for he who is free from the pairs of opposites is easily released from bondage.[4]

Why should a karmayogi be looked upon as superior to a sannyasi? A karmayogi is necessarily a sannyasi. But a karmayogi of what type? One who has no ill will, who desires nothing and is ever devoted to his duty, who is not affected by the pairs of opposites, easily becomes free from the binding effects of karma.

> It is the ignorant who speak of *sankhya* and yoga as different, not so those who have knowledge. He who is rightly established even in one wins to

[1] One who eats the *amrita* left behind in a *yajna*; IV, 31
[2] V, 2
[3] In, II, 40
[4] V, 3

the fruit of both.[1]

Sankhya here means sannyasa and yoga means karmayoga. Men of little understanding think them to be distinct from each other, but not so the wise. In truth, they are two sides of the same coin. Anyone who becomes established in either reaps the fruit of success in the other too.

A thing at rest and another in intense motion seem alike. The earth, for instance. Rest and motion are a pair of opposites. But he who remains unaffected by such opposites reaps the fruit of both.

> The goal that the *sankhyas* attain is also reached by the yogis. He sees truly who sees both *sankhya* and yoga as one.[2]

The state which is attained through *sankhya,* that is, through renunciation of karma, is attained by the karmayogi too. He alone has true knowledge who understands that *sankhya* and karmayoga are the same thing. That is, if we consider the essence of the two, we shall find no difference between them at all. Hence work done in the spirit of *yajna,* done without egotism for our higher good and for the service of others, has a place in both.

[87]

June 22, 1926

Karma means work which circumstances make it necessary for us to undertake, not that which we do of our own choice. We should feel that we need not even pray for *praninam artinashanam*[3] or wish to work ceaselessly with that aim. When the 'I'in a person has vanished and he has merged into God, he feels no need to pray for anything. He will do only such work as circumstances make necessary for him. If he has no inclination of his own, only the purest type of work will come to him, and he will do it with the feeling that Narayana[4] does everything. When Harishchandra got ready to put the knife to his wife's throat, was it really Harishchandra who was acting? It was the Lord who prompted him to act as he did, and Harishchandra only carried out His order. The unhappy man, he had made himself a

[1] V, 4
[2] V, 5
[3] "End to the suffering of all creatures", from the verse:
I do not desire a kingdom nor that I may go to heaven or win liberation.
I only desire that the suffering of all creatures in pain may end.
[4] Vishnu

mere servant. Having made ourselves servants of the Lord, it is not for us to choose what we shall do and what we shall not. We should do any work which comes to us and at the same time leave the burden of such work to Narayana to shoulder.

> But renunciation, O Mahabahu, is hard to attain except by yoga; the ascetic equipped with yoga attains *Brahman* ere long.[1]

For him who has not learnt to offer all his actions to Shri Krishna, sannyasa is extremely difficult to practise. The truth is that sannyasa is impossible to practise except through karmayoga. Really speaking, therefore, sannyasa is karmayoga, and nothing else. He who has become free from attachments and aversions, who has shed the "I" in him, has become a true sannyasi.

> The yogi who has cleansed himself, has gained mastery over his mind and all his senses, who has become one with the *atman* in all creation, although he acts he remains unaffected.[2]

He who is established in yoga soon attains the *Brahman*. Anyone who successfully follows karmayoga becomes established in yoga. He who has become pure, he whose evil impulses have all been burnt away and become reduced to a burnt thread in which only the twists of the original material are visible, will act mechanically in everything he does. That of course does not mean that he pays no attention to what he is doing; it only means that he has no egotistic feeling that he himself is doing anything, though the thread which he draws out will be as straight as that drawn by a machine. An unthinking person works mechanically and the Lord's servant, too, does merely what he is asked to do. But he does not work for payment and, therefore, his work shines out, whereas the hired labourer's work does not shine out as he works for money. No supervisor is required to keep watch over a Lord's servant at work.Outwardly, he seems dull, but inwardly he ever lives in the *Brahman*. He will have all the virtues of a machine and none of its defects. Besides, the man who lives in the *atman*, who has subdued the demons in him and mastered the senses, who sees himself in all creatures and all creatures in himself, will make no distinction between relations and others. He will ever live as a servant of all, and will partake only of what remains after others have had their share. Of such a person it can be said, *kurvannapi na lipyate*, that he works, but is not bound by the effects of karma.

[1] V, 6
[2] V, 7

The yogi who has seen the Truth knows that it is not he that acts whilst seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, walking, sleeping, or breathing.

Talking, letting go, holding fast, opening or closing the eyes—in the conviction that it is the senses that are moving in their respective spheres.[1]

These two verses are a commentary on the preceding verse. The man who knows the Truth acts as if he himself did nothing. Whether seeing or hearing, smelling, eating, walking, lying down to sleep, breathing, speaking, parting with or accepting anything, winking—in all these he will feel that it is his senses which are functioning according to their nature. Such a person acts but does not do anything. A yogi can take up this attitude, and so can a rogue, as also a devotee of the Lord. He who has consecrated his heart to the Lord will feel no desire to do anything for himself. Even when he retires to sleep, he will say that it is his body which will fall into sleep. The functions of the body are not evil in themselves. We make them so. If the body works without interference by us, it will emit nothing but fragrance. We can thus take it as a mathematical truth that our work will tend to evil in proportion as we are conscious of the 'I' in us and it will tend to good in proportion as we shed that 'I'.

[88]

June 23, 1926

If we keep loudly reciting the two verses which we have been discussing, we do not become yogis thereby. We should cultivate such a state that we wholly cease to be conscious of the 'I' in us. Only that person can apply these verses to himself who is always completely absorbed in the task on hand, whose every action is dedicated to Shri Krishna and who seeks no benefit for himself from anything he does. If he uses his ears, it is to hear praise of God. If he uses his eyes, it is to have *darshan*[2] of the Lord. Nor does he ever suffer. Whenever anything happens which might cause him pain, he would think that the pain was not felt by him. 'If', he would tell himself, 'I forget the 'I' in me when suffering this pain and think of Rama, no one would be able to know that I had been stung by a scorpion.' He would feel that it had stung his body and that there was a red spot on it, that is all. He works mechanically, and still everything he does shines out. His

[1] V, 8 & 9

[2] Sight of an object, place or person regarded as holy

actions grow ever more beautiful. He never tires of work, never feels upset and confused.

> He who dedicates his actions to *Brahman* and performs them without attachment is not smeared by sin, as the lotus leaf by water.[1]

Shri Krishna says this to guard against anyone making unworthy use of the preceding two verses. Such a person remains untouched by sin, as the lotus leaf remains untouched by water. The term "sin" is used here in a wide sense, and covers both sin and virtue. Such a person does not have to suffer the consequences of either sinful or virtuous action. He goes on working, but remains unaffected by work. Leaves of other plants get wet and decay, but the lotus is not moistened by water.

> Only with the body, mind and intellect and also with the senses do the yogis perform action without attachment for the sake of self-purification.[2]

The yogis work, but only with their bodies, with their minds or their intellectual faculties or their senses, and feel that they themselves are not working since they work without attachment and with the aim of self-purification. To work with this aim means to dedicate one's work to the *Brahman*.

We worked for self-purification in 1921, but afterwards strayed from that path and so found ourselves in difficulties.

He who works for self-purification goes on working with his machine in a disinterested spirit.

> A man of yoga obtains everlasting peace by abandoning the fruit of action; the man ignorant of yoga, selfishly attached to fruit, remains bound.[3]

Renouncing the fruits of karma, the yogi wins the peace which is the reward of faith and devotion, the peace which brings *moksha*—the peace enjoyed by the man established in *Brahman*. That is not the peace of a stone or the peace which the unthinking man enjoys, or that which the man of lust absorbed in the pursuit of lust enjoys for a while; it is the peace of the man established in *Brahman*, the bliss which belongs to the *atman*.

The man who is not established in yoga stays in the grip of desire. He who works under the sway of ignorance must be a man attached, that is, one who is bound through attachment to fruits of work or with the snake-like coil of expectation and sense-cravings.

[1] V, 10
[2] V, 11
[3] V, 12

When a snake is provoked, it can coil round us and crush us to death, but at the most it breaks our bones. To Mirabai, however, the snake in front of her seemed Shaligram[1] dancing. At the worst it would have harmed her physically, but the snake which bites the man of lust destroys his very soul.

[89]

June 24, 1926

We should understand the meaning of the words of the *Gita* not merely to satisfy our curiosity but with the aim of putting its teaching into practice. In my case, the constant reading of the *Gita* has filled my life with prayer. We should leave alone what we cannot put into practice. It is a misuse of our intellectual energy and a waste of time to go on reading what we cannot put into practice. I have to say this because of a complaint Shri Vinoba has made. As the students do not go to bed early, they find it difficult to rise early and their health suffers. The students complain that the teachers, too, do not retire early but keep awake talking till midnight. This does not accord well with the spirit in which we have been reading the *Gita*. We should be *sarvabhutatmabhutatma*[2] or *atmavat sarvabhuteshu*[3]. For the sake of our neighbour, we should desist from making noise or, if we talk, talk in low whispers, as thieves do. I, too, should retire early in the evening. What does the phrase *brahmanyadhaya karmani*[4] mean? God does not arouse him who does not wish to wake up. That means that we should adjust ourselves to the weakest limbs in society; or eliminate them, destroy and burn or bury them. If we are not ready for this, we should not exert ourselves to reform or raise any class of people.

> Renouncing with the mind all actions, the dweller in the body, who is master of himself, rests happily in his city of nine gates, neither doing nor getting anything done.[5]

The self-controlled man, that is, the man established in the *atman*, mentally renounces all karma and lives in peace. To renounce all karma mentally means to make the mind indifferent to them, to withdraw it into an attitude of detachment towards work and feel that

[1] Shri Krishna
[2] Who sees his *atman* as one with the *atman* in every creature; in V, 7
[3] Who sees himself in all creatures.
[4] In V, 10
[5] V, 13

we are not doing what we are engaged in, that it is God who impels us to do it. Surely we do not feel, as we breathe, that we are breathing. We have mentally renounced that karma. It becomes necessary to breathe with a conscious effort of mind only when natural breathing is obstructed. At all other times, it goes on mechanically. The *atman* dwells, ever at rest, in this body with nine doors [1] doing nothing and causing nothing to be done. Though it may be working or acting to make others work, it will not be doing so if it has mentally renounced karma.

[90]

June 25, 1926

This life is a play proceeding before us. If we devote ourselves to our work without taking interest in the play or letting our mind be distracted by it, we would be *karmasannyasis*[2]. Suppose that a prisoner is asked to attend and witness another being whipped. He attends without any interest. His eyes see what is happening, but his mind may not be attentive. I would see a thing to which I become a witness by chance, but I would leave the place without stopping even a moment longer.

We recognize relationships, that this is a son and that is a brother, regard it as our duty to see that the bonds endure, and act accordingly—in all this we are involved with our minds. There is no mental renunciation of karma.

> The Lord creates neither agency nor action for the world; neither does He connect action with its fruit. It is nature that is at work.[3]

The Lord says: "Ultimately I am the Creator of all beings. That means that, when you see I see, and when you do not see I, too, do not see."[4] That is [His] nature. This is a truth before which speech fails.

We may assert, from different points of view, that God is the Doer, and also that He is not.

If you withdraw interest from the functioning of your senses, they will never feel any strain and you will not feel exhausted. Of course, some exhaustion you will always feel, since complete annihilation of the 'I' sense is impossible. We discussed yesterday the idea that we should speak not of "self-realization" but of "self-purifi-

[1] Eyes, ears, nostrils, mouth and two organs of excretion
[2] Those who have renounced action
[3] V, 14
[4] The second sentence is placed within brackets in the source.

cation". Self-purification is to be achieved through the body. We act through the *atman* to the degree that we have to act through the body. In truth, however, the *atman* does nothing, nor does it cause anything to be done.

[91]

June 26, 1926

When God the Artist painted this human eye, He so made it that the *atman* should shine through it. He certainly could not have intended it to cast lustful glances. The function of the eye is to ensure the safety of the body and to see God. What are the thoughts which come to your mind when you look upon the image of Hanuman? Of *brahmacharya*, *bhakti* and service. And of strength, for he was Ramachandra's servant and Ramachandra always gives his servants the strength they need. In this way the moment we look at anyone's eyes we should be able to see the *atman* behind.

> The Lord does not take upon Himself anyone's vice or virtue; it is ignorance that veils knowledge and deludes all creatures.[1]

Man's real nature is to serve others and to work for self-purification, and so we should not cherish the 'I' in us. This is why it is said here that God does not take upon Himself anyone's sin.

> But to them whose ignorance is destroyed by the knowledge of *atman*, this their knowledge, like the sun, reveals the Supreme.[2]

When a man's ignorance, which envelops the knowledge in him, has been destroyed by that knowledge, the light of God is revealed to him. God is the witness of all that occurs. The idea that we should live in obedience to Him, act only as prompted by Him—that is knowledge. We can experience its truth directly only when all the twists in the heart have straightened out and the *atman* alone shines there forever.

[92]

June 27, 1926

When the night in one's mind has turned to dawn, one comes in the presence of God.

> Those whose intellect is suffused with That, whose self has become one

[1] V, 15
[2] V, 16

with That, who abide in That, and whose end and aim is That, wipe out their sins with knowledge, and go whence there is no return.[1]

He whose intellect has become fixed on the Lord, who has merged in Him, who is exclusively devoted to Him and who ever lives absorbed in Him, who has dedicated his all to the Lord and trusts to Him alone, such a person, attains deliverance; the sins of such a one are washed away by knowledge.

The men of Self-realization look with an equal eye on a Brahmin possessed of learning and humility, a cow, an elephant, a dog and even a dog-eater.[2]

Pundits, that is, men of knowledge, see all things with an equal eye. They have the same regard for a Brahmin rich in learning and gentleness, for a cow, an elephant, a dog or a *Chandal*. They feel that the *atman* in each of these is identical with the *atman* in themselves. The only difference is that in some the *atman* is enveloped by layers upon layers of ignorance, and in others these layers have fallen off. What was said earlier, that the yogi sees himself in others, means the same thing as this. Ganga water in separate vessels is Ganga water after all.

In this very body they have conquered the round of birth and death, whose mind is anchored in sameness; for perfect *Brahman* is same to all, therefore in *Brahman* they rest.[3]

They have conquered the world on this very earth, in this very life, who are equal in mind to all human beings, who have no taint of impurity in them, who abide in God and live ever devoted to Him.

When can we say of a person that he is *samadarshi*? Can we say so of that man who would give equal quantities to an elephant and an ant? Indeed no. We can say it of him who gives to each according to his or her need. A mother will give nothing to her child who is ill and will give another who is well as much as he can eat. A person who is filled with the spirit of non-violence, with compassion, will so act that the world will say of him that he behaved towards all as if they were himself, did justice to all; that he gave water to him who needed water and milk to him who needed milk.

No one can be like God, absolutely free from impurity and equal towards all. One can, therefore, become *samadarshi* only by

[1] V, 17
[2] V, 18
[3] V, 19

losing oneself in Him.

[93]

June 29, 1926

Let us describe some instances of equal regard for all. One is that of the elephant and the ant. Second, if an enemy and a friend arrive at his place together, both hungry, the *samadarshi* will offer food first to the enemy. He would feel that to be justice. He would be afraid lest there be some hatred for the enemy lurking in his heart, and he would satisfy him first. The friend, too, would appreciate his motive.

A pundit[1] does not mean one who is merely learned, but one who is both learned and wise. If anyone warns him that feeding an enemy would be like giving milk to a snake, he would cite in reply this verse from the *Gita* and say that he was man of faith, that his father was a lover of the *Gita* and so was he, that they had never come to harm by following its teaching. 'Why should I, therefore, not continue to do so?,' he would ask.

One rule of swadeshi is that in serving people we should give priority to those who live near us. There is also an opposite rule, that we should serve first those who are distant from us and then those who are near us. Near in the first rule means physically near, and distant in the second rule means distant from us mentally. Both may mean the same thing. An enemy may be physically near and distant mentally; we should, despite his being distant, serve him first.

The reason behind this rule of swadeshi is that we cannot reach all human beings in this world. If you ignore your neighbour and seek to serve someone living far away, that would be pride on your part.

We display good manners, culture and learning in serving first those who are mentally distant from us.

> In this very body they have conquered the round of birth and death, whose mind is anchored in sameness; for perfect *Brahman* is same to all, therefore in *Brahman* they rest.

Those who follow this rule in their conduct have won the battle of this life. They hold enemy and friend in equal regard. The enemy is the elephant and the friend is the ant of our illustration.

[1] The reference is to V, 18.

We should make ourselves like that with which we wish to be one. If we wish to lose ourselves in *Brahman*, we must become *samadarshi* as *Brahman* is.

> He whose understanding is secure, who is undeluded, who knows *Brahman* and who rests in *Brahman*, will neither be glad to get what is pleasant, nor sad to get what is unpleasant.[1]

[94]

June 30, 1926

> He who has detached himself from contacts without finds bliss in *atman*; having achieved union with *Brahman* he enjoys eternal bliss.[2]

The person, who has become liberated into unity with *Brahman* and who is not attached to the objects of his outgoing senses, experiences true happiness in his *atman*. One can have peace only by remaining unattached. It is impossible to prevent the impact of sense-impressions; that is why Shri Krishna speaks of the need to become unattached. If we constantly meditate on the holy feet of Rama, the impact of external impressions will have no effect on us. The *atman* that is united in yoga with *Brahman*, that is, which has attained to the state of *samadhi* in which it merges into *Brahman* and abides in it for ever, such an *atman* enjoys undying bliss.

> For the joys derived from sense-contacts are nothing but mines of misery; they have beginning and end, O Kaunteya; the wise man does not revel therein.
>
> The man who is able even here on earth, ere he is released from the body, to hold out against the flood-tide of lust and wrath,—he is a yogi, he is happy.[3]

Shri Krishna is repeating here what he has already explained in Chapter II.

> He who finds happiness only within, rest only within, light only within,—that yogi, having become one with Nature, attains to oneness with *Brahman*.[4]

That yogi who finds his happiness and his peace within him, who does not need external objects to make him happy, who is ever self-absorbed and is inspired by the light which shines within him,

[1] V, 20
[2] V, 21
[3] V, 22 & 23
[4] V, 24

such a yogi has merged into *Brahman* and attains nirvana in it.

We should read the *Bhagavad Gita* in order that its poetry may be revealed to us.[1] There are two types of nirvana. One is destruction of one's body, after which, however, the necessity of being born again and again remains as ever. The other nirvana is *brahmanirvana*, which is a state of void. But the void is in regard to the external world; within it is all bliss of illumination.

> They win oneness with *Brahman*— the seers whose sins are wiped out, whose doubts are resolved, who have mastered themselves, and who are engrossed in the welfare of all beings.[2]

Rishis who are sinless and pure attain to *brahmanirvana, Rishis* of what description? Those whose doubts have vanished, who hold their *atman* a prisoner (have control over it) and who rejoice in the good of all creatures.

Such a *rishi* can bear ill will to no one. He is ever ready to serve the welfare of even the most wicked. He serves the whole world. A person can become the very embodiment of selfless service only if Rama dwells in his heart. Anyone who is earnestly concerned for the good of another cannot bear any real suffering on the part of the latter. We have heard of fathers who get cholera if their sons are infected by it, though of course their concern was only for their sons. A father may not be happy with his son, and still he cannot bear when the latter suffers. A *rishi* like this would be moved to profuse tears by the suffering of others, and he would strive ceaselessly to end it.

[95]

July 1, 1926

Sarvabhutahite ratah: We have an instance of this in the story of Yudhishthira and his dog.[3] We should not merely cure the fever of a member of our family, but try to discover the cause of the fever from which the whole world is suffering and remove that cause. All beings in the world are sunk in ignorance.

Do you know anything about the *atman*? Perhaps a little. Well, a *rotla*[4] is unbaked before it is baked.[5]

The cause of disease is not in the stomach, it is indulgence of the

[1] This sentence is in square brackets in the source.

[2] V, 25

[3] In the *Mahabharata*, Yudhishthira refused to enter Heaven unless a dog that followed him was also allowed to go, with him.

[4] Thick, round cake of unleavened bread, made of coarse millet

[5] This paragraph is placed within brackets in the source.

palate, and the cause of that, again, is the mind.

> Rid of lust and wrath, masters of themselves, the ascetics who have realized *atman* find oneness with *Brahman* everywhere around them.[1]

Those yogis who are free from desire and anger, whose minds have become steady and who are ever absorbed in their *sadhana* [2] who have realized the self, are always and in all circumstances in a state of *brahmanirvana*.

> That ascetic is ever free—who having shut out the outward sense-contacts, sits with his gaze fixed between the brows, outward and inward breathing in the nostrils made equal; his senses, mind, and reason held in check; rid of longing, fear and wrath; and intent on Freedom.[3]

Outward action is a symbol of inner action. It is not enough that breathing is regular and the eyes are focused on a point between the brows; these actions should be symbols of an inner state.

The first verse here runs on into the second one.

> Knowing Me as the Acceptor of sacrifice and austerity, the great Lord of all the worlds, the Friend of all creation the yogi attains to peace.[4]

Since God is the Friend of all creatures, why need such a person fear Him?

Since He accepts all service and all our karmas, they can never be fruitless. In dedicating everything to Him, we necessarily act without thought of self. And we are convinced in the heart of our hearts that nothing that we do will remain fruitless.

[96]

Chapter VI

July 2, 1926

The last chapter raised the question, "Of sannyasa and karmayoga, which is superior?" Shri Krishna has tried to answer the question, but the problem is not one which can be easily solved. The personal God and the impersonal *Brahman*, both are real; and likewise he who rests in absolute peace and he who is ceaselessly occupied in work, both are right, for the sannyasi is in fact working and the other one who is always working rests in absolute peace. One person may feel that there is nothing he need do, that he is already in the presence

[1] V, 26
[2] Single-minded effort for self-realization
[3] V, 27 & 28
[4] V, 29

of God; such a person can cease from work. He who has free access to the king's court, what more need he do? When the subjects themselves know the king's will and carry it out, what work need the king do? It would surprise the subjects only if he came forward to work. I have still to remind you again and again that you should not doze here, that you should be attentive, and so on; but a day will come when it will not at all be necessary for me to do this, for all of you will have then learnt to work methodically. It is, therefore, right and proper that at present I keep telling you these things and take interest in these matters; it will be equally right if, by and by, I stop doing so and let myself rest in peace.

But Arjuna does not say yet that he has understood the point, and so Shri Krishna takes up the same argument again in Chapter VI.

> He who performs all obligatory action, without depending on the fruit thereof, is a sannyasi and a yogi—not the man who neglects the sacrificial fire nor he who neglects action.[1]

He who deposits all his works in God's treasury, and goes on doing his duty without looking for reward—for, as we know, God is the enjoyer of *yajna* and *tapas*,—is both a sannyasi and a yogi. But that person who never lights the fire for *yajna*—originally it was an act of public service to keep a fire burning in the home for performing a *yajna*—or never works, is neither a sannyasi nor a yogi. Such a person would in fact be a prince of idlers.

> What is called sannyasa, know thou to be yoga, O Pandava; for none can become a yogi who has not renounced selfish purpose.[2]

Shri Krishna says: "Know that yoga is the same thing that the learned describe as sannyasa. For you, it is not sannyasa to run away from the battle; sannyasa for you lies in fighting—it is I that enjoy a *yajna*—for the person who has not renounced personal motives for action can never be a yogi. Sannyasa is not something which can be demonstrated outwardly; it is a matter of the spirit within. The restless play of desires and fancies should cease; only then can one be a sannyasi."

[97]

July 3, 1926

> For the man who seeks to scale the heights of yoga, action is said to be the means; for the same man, when he has scaled those heights, repose is said

[1] VI, 1
[2] VI, 2

to be the means.[1]

For the *muni* who aspires to master yoga, the only means is work (For yoga has been defined as skill in action). If a person lets himself be beaten for a long time on the anvil of work, some day he may be shaped into a yogi. For him who has established himself in yoga, who has attained to a state of spiritual equipoise, whose mind has become steadfast, for such a person the right means [of contin-uing in this state] is *shama*, that is, resting in peace.

The argument here is the same that we discussed yesterday. Today, I have to try and explain my meaning in different ways. To succeed in my effort, I have to see that my meaning sinks into you, so that you understand it as clearly as I do. This effort is a kind of yoga and will be rewarded with success. When you learn to understand my meaning through a mere gesture, then the right means for us will be silence. A factory is filled with noise the whole day, but, when the time for closing it arrives, complete peace reigns in it. That machine required the means of work in order to be a yogi; afterwards, peace became the means. That is how a well-ordered machine acts. Such peace is not the peace of the grave or the peace of lethargy or inertness; it is the peace of conscious life, the peace of the sea.

When a man is not attached either to the objects of senses or to actions and sheds all selfish purpose, then he is said to have scaled the heights of yoga.[2]

When a person remains unattached to objects of the senses or to work, but uses his senses and works in a detached spirit, such a person, then, who has renounced all personal motives for work, is said to have established himself in yoga.

By one's Self should one raise oneself, and not allow oneself to fall; for *Atman* (Self) alone is the friend of self, and Self alone is self's foe.[3]

You can win *moksha* only by your own effort. Today, we simply act as enemies of our *atman.* The *atman* is self-effulgent, and so it must win its freedom by its own effort. Who can light the divine sun? He rises into freedom as soon as it is dawn. He comes, established in yoga, and sinks into peace in the evening (But does the sun really sink into peace? Shall I have sunk into peace even when I die?).

[1] VI, 3
[2] VI, 4
[3] VI, 5

[98]

July 4, 1926

In our ordinary language we say that God grants freedom to the *atman*, for we do not know how to express the idea in any other way. But can the *atman* ever merge in God except through its own power? It has all the attributes of God, and that is why it can merge in Him. As the *atman* is self-effulgent, so is God. A thing cannot merge in something else with unlike attributes. We are advised to take care and see that our atman does not destroy itself, for it is in the power of the *atman* to do so, though, of course, it cannot annihilate itself completely because it is imperishable. The man who says "I am an atheist" contradicts himself in that very statement. We cannot add a single moment to the life of this universe, and so also we can never succeed in destroying the *atman*.

> His Self alone is friend who has conquered himself by his Self; but to him who has not conquered himself and is thus inimical to himself, even his Self behaves as foe.[1]

While we live, there are two sides in us: the demoniac and the divine, the God-like and the Satanic. So long as this strife goes on, it is our duty to fight Satan and protect ourselves. In the war between gods and demons, it is the former who always win in the end. When the world is no more, God will laugh and ask where Satan was. The *atman* of the atheist acts as his enemy. The truth is that the *atman* of each of us does so, thanks to the evil of *kaliyuga*.

> Of him who has conquered himself and who rests in perfect calm the Self is completely composed, in cold and heat, in pleasure and pain, in honour and dishonour.[2]

That person who has overcome the lower self in him and who is ever unperturbed, in heat or cold, pleasure or pain, honour or dishonour,—any praise or censure given to us is like a stream which flows away towards God and disappears—the *Paramatman* is such a person becomes *samahita*[3]. Even in him who is the very image of unquiet, who is filled, not with non-violence, but with violence, who is not truthful but untruthful—even in such a one the Supreme Self abides in perfect equipoise.

[1] VI, 6
[2] VI, 7
[3] Gandhiji has not indicated the meaning which he attaches to it.

[99]

July 6, 1926

We can say that the *atman* dwells in perfect equipoise when what is outside of us is a reflection of what is within. It will not do if the body is erect but the mind is not so. Today our minds are not erect. The dog has four legs, and we have two, and yet our minds behave like those of four-legged creatures.

> The yogi who is filled with the contentment of wisdom and discriminative knowledge, who is firm as a rock, who has mastered his senses, and to whom a clod of earth, a stone and gold are the same, is possessed of yoga.[1]

Jnana here means listening to readings from the Shastras, meditating over them, studying them, and *vijnana* means realizing the *atman* in direct experience. *Jnana* is understanding through reason, and *vijnana* is that knowledge which sinks through reason into experience. *Jnana* is knowledge obtained from the Shastras, whereas *vijnana* is knowledge which is part of one's experience. Non-violence will have become direct experience for us in this sense when our whole life comes to be permeated with the spirit of compassion, when non-violence manifests itself in us in its true essence. That boy who comes to feel compassion as his own experience will to that extent have purified himself, or attained knowledge of the self.

He whose *atman* is filled to perfect contentment with such *jnana* and *vijnana*, who dwells firmly like *kuta*—he is a *kutastha* that is, who endures blows, as the anvil does without ever breaking into pieces, remains unshaken in the midst of even extreme suffering—who has subdued his senses completely, such a one may be described as a yogi who has attained freedom. He has become united with God, has become inwardly purified. To such a yogi, clay, stone and gold, all are equal. All three come from earth. Earth which has hardened is stone. Gold, silver, diamonds, sapphire, all these are transformations of earth. But they are all without any worth—everyone of them is but dust. If we shed greed, we would look upon all these articles with the same eye.

> He excels who regards alike the boon companion, the friend, the enemy the stranger, the mediator, the alien and the ally, as also the saint and the sinner.[2]

[1] VI, 8
[2] VI, 9

He who has the same regard for friend and foe, for one who deserves to be hated and one who is a kinsman, for the sadhu and the sinner, as he would have for clay and gold, he may be said to have won the battle of this life. The same law applies to the world of the living which applies to the world of inert matter. As clay and gold are ultimately the same substance, so the sadhu and the sinner are ultimately one.

The sadhu and the sinner are forms of the same reality. They are both manifestations of the *atman*. The layer of uncleanliness has disappeared from over the sadhu's *atman* and is becoming ever thicker over the sinner's. We shall have risen above the ordinary level only when we learn to have equal regard for either. Tulsidas has shown by his example how we can do that.

> Let the yogi constantly apply his thought to *atman* remaining alone in a secluded place, his mind and body in control, rid of desires and possessions.[1]

A yogi should constantly live in a solitude and be in union with the *atman*. To live in solitude means to withdraw the mind from the outside world. He who lives by himself and seeks to control his mind should shed all desires and, having renounced all possessions, yoke the *atman* to the *Paramatman* in contemplation. Renunciation of possessions includes renunciation of the desire for possessions too. He who practises *japa*[2] in solitude in the hope of winning a kingdom is no yogi. A man who possesses a few lakhs of rupees may be less acquisitive than another who daily gives away money in charity and sacrifices wealth but is constantly thinking of money.

[100]

July 7, 1926

Rahasi[3] means in a quiet place free from noise and *ekaki*[4] means living by oneself. One can live in solitude and by oneself even in the midst of the bazaar in Ahmedabad.

Even so, one must have physical solitude. One can go to a cremation ground and, thinking on the perishable body, experience the feeling of solitude. *Yatachittatma*[5] means one who is free from

[1] VI, 10
[2] Constant repetition of a name or formula believed to have spiritual power
[3] In VI, 10
[4] *Ibid*
[5] *Ibid*

physical or mental restlessness. A man can make do with a mere *langoti*[1], which even a flying kite may bring him. Can anyone, however, do without some possessions for the comfort of the body? We should supply the body its minimum needs and not seek to multiply them. If we go on multiplying bodily needs, we shall ever be going from birth to death and from death to birth. So long as the turban is there, we may use it but we should not buy another to replace it; likewise, we may look after the body, but only to supply its minimum needs. We shall not then have to be born and to die again and again. *Atmanam unjita*[2] means yoking the *atman* to the *Paramatman* fixing it on the *Paramatman.*

> Fixing for himself, in a pure spot, a firm seat, neither too high nor yet too low, covered with *kusha* grass, thereon a deerskin, and thereon a cloth.[3]

One should place a seat in a holy spot—*desha* may mean even "country", for it was supposed that Bharat was *karmabhumi*—a country in which people engage themselves in *karma* with ceaseless vigilance is a *karmabhumi*—whereas one is born in other countries to enjoy the fruits of one's actions (though India is no longer such a country today)—One should place a firm seat, neither too high nor too low. One should spread out *kusha* grass and *ajin*, and then cover the spot with a piece of cloth. *Ajin* means deerskin. This is mentioned because in those days deer used to be hunted. A yogi devotes himself to his practice for quite a long time. He should, therefore, protect himself carefully lest he should feel cold and his limbs become cramped. He should place himself on such a seat and remain there motionless.

> Sitting on that seat, with mind concentrated, the functions of thought and sense in control, he should set himself to the practice of yoga for the sake of self-purification.[4]

[101]

July 8, 1926

I gave a wrong meaning yesterday to the phrase *yatachittendriya*.[5] To control the activity of the *chitta* and the senses means to

[1] Codpiece
[2] In VI, 10
[3] VI, II
[4] VI, 12
[5] In VI, 12

restrain such activity. *Yogah chittavrittinirodhah*[1]. If the waves are continually rising, we describe the sea as stormy. There is no essential difference between the sea and the waves in it. All souls are like waves in water, that is, they are but different forms of that water. We need not ask why we should let waves rise in ourselves. Human beings conceive God as a kind of doll; respectable people even make gold images of Him. All this goes on. The rising of a wave means being born, and the wave subsiding means death. Telling himself this, a man may become steady in mind and let the wave of desire subside in it. Patanjali tells us that if we restrain the waves from rising, we shall know whether the master of the *chitta* is desire or whether it is God. Expanding the phrase *chittavriti*, Shri Krishna sopke of *chitta* and *indriyas* in this verse.

> Keeping himself steady, holding the trunk, the neck and the head in a straight line and motionless, fixing his eye on the tip of his nose, and looking not around.
>
> Tranquil in spirit, free from fear, steadfast in the vow of *brahmacharya*, holding his mind in control, the yogi should sit, with all his thoughts on Me, absorbed in Me.[2]

[102]

July 9, 1926

These four verses describe processes of yoga. I remember to have read in jail that they would take not less than six months to learn. These processes are physical actions, and we cannot be certain that everyone will profit from them. The body and the mind, however, are so difficult to control that in our country people attach special importance to these processes. When such ideas are given importance in theory, all kinds of experiments are undertaken, as, for instance, climbing Dhavalgiri as a holy effort. Two Italian boys had decided to tour round the whole earth walking. They were just young boys. They were happy with what they had undertaken. When I asked them what they hoped to learn from their tour, one of them got very angry. They would acquire a venturesome spirit, from which they themselves would profit, but in other ways they would have simply thrown away their lives. The same is true about *pranayama* and other processes which have been mentioned. There is no fraud behind them,and no intention

[1] "Yoga is controlling the activity of the mind"—Patanjali in *Yogasutra*.
[2] VI, 13 & 14

to impose on people; they are a means of fixing our mind on God. If I resolve to observe silence even when in the midst of a bazaar, why should I let my mind be distracted by the noise around me? Similarly, while attending these prayers, too, we are at once in the midst of society and in solitude.

> The yogi, who ever thus, with mind controlled, unites himself to *atman*, wins the peace which culminates in *Nirvana*, the peace that is in Me.[1]

We may attain the peace which follows our merging in *Brahman* if we are good children of God.

> Yoga is not for him who eats too much, nor for him who fasts too much, neither for him who sleeps to much, nor yet for him who is too wakeful.[2]

Yoga is not meant for the person who eats too much. He will not succeed in his efforts for spiritual discipline. Nor will the person who eats nothing, who takes a vow of total abstinence from God, succeed in his yoga. Similarly, the man who sleeps or keeps awake too long also will not succeed.

It should be borne in mind that this is said in continuation of the preceding four verses. It is true that anyone who eats or sleeps too much can achieve nothing. Some persons live merely on the physical level; they can achieve nothing worth while. But the converse requires a little thinking about. He who has undertaken spiritual discipline but cannot bear hunger will be in the same mental condition as the starving millions in the country. He will not be able to provide his *chitta* the nourishment it needs and so he will not succeed in fixing his thoughts on God. And the same is true about keeping awake.

There is no fear that anyone here intends to abstain from food or to keep awake too long in this manner. This verse refers to a person who imposes such discipline on himself for progress in yoga. But a person who, however hard he tries, cannot acquire control over his senses, whose eyes always open to cast lustful glances and whose other senses, too, crave indulgence—let such a person certainly undertake long fasts, even if his body should perish in consequence. He should do nothing for outward show. We look upon truth as the chain which binds us all together here. Any of us here who fasts will not deceive himself. He may fast if he feels that he cannot curb his cravings in any other way. An idea has come to prevail nowadays that in this world one must satisfy one's desires. Hence my advice to you that you

[1] VI, 15
[2] VI, 16

should not spare yourself any harshness in striving for self-purification. If a person loves to boast about secretly gratifying his eye, ear or palate, it would do him much good to take any number of vows to curb the body and cultivate vigilance. If we wish to, we can certainly control the senses. But we do not wish do so, and then look for excuses. The *Gita* advises such persons not to eat or sleep too much.

The four verses we have discussed describe a method which serves as a kind of help like that with which a child may learn to walk. They advise one to follow the golden mean. Having adopted such a method, one's effort should be to do or to die. If people sacrifice so much to discover the North Pole, will it be too much if we lay down our lives in the effort to discover the North Pole of the *atman*?

[103]

July 10, 1926

Shri Krishna advised moderation in the beginning, the avoiding of excess in all matters. It is only by and by that one can judge what constitutes excess. He said, therefore, that in the beginning one should proceed slowly.

A time may come, however, when we shall not feel as excess what may seem to be so to an ordinary person. When a person is distracted by innumerable evil impulses and feels himself helpless to curb them, he may employ satyagraha against his body and against God. We should scrupulously practise non-violence towards others, but we would come to grief if we adopt it in dealing with our body. Against our body we must employ non-co-operation. That is, we must begin by non-co-operating with the evil impulses in our heart. We must tell the body that we have been paying it hire in the form of food for working as our watchman, but that we have decided to stop paying it from today because it is not doing its duty properly. We may pay rent only for a house which serves to protect us, of which the roof does not leak and the walls are not dilapidated. Why pay for a house which is rotten inside? The other one with a leaking roof and dilapidated walls can be repaired, but what can we do with a house the air in which has become poisoned? Thus, if the body does not fulfil the conditions of our leasing it, we have a right to go on an indefinite fast.

> To him who is disciplined in food and recreation, in effort in all activities, and in sleep and walking, yoga (discipline) becomes a relief from

all ills.[1]

The man who avoids excess, what does he gain? He who is regular in food, rest and so on, who acts with due moderation in everything, who is moderate even in his sleep, will find that his practice of yoga ends all his suffering.

> When one's thought, completely controlled, rests steadily only on *atman*, when one is free from longing for all objects of desire, then one is called a yogi.[2]

When the mind has come under our complete control, when it is easily restrained by us, when it is fixed constantly on the *atman*, that is, acts in everything in obedience to the *atman*, when it has become completely disinterested, that is, become free from all desires, then the person may be said to be established in yoga.

> As a taper in a windless spot flickers not, even so is a yogi, with his thought controlled, seeking to unite himself with *atman*.[3]

The condition of the yogi who is regularly practising yoga and who has acquired control over his mind is like that of a lamp in a windless place, which does not flicker. If we are unsteady in mind, the storm of the cravings of the senses blows out the *atman* as a breeze blows out the lamp. As the latter gets its food from air, so the *atman* gets the food it needs through the senses and the mind. The lamp gets its food from air which is motionless; likewise the *atman* gets nourishing food from the mind if we keep the air of its impulses still.

> Where thought curbed by the practice of yoga completely ceases, where a man sits content within himself, *atman* having seen *atman*.[4]

When the impulses in a persons' mind have subsided and the mind is filled with peace, when through the practice of yoga the mind has come under one's control and its impulses have subsided, when the person sees the *atman* through the *atman*, that is, when his mind has become absorbed in the *atman* and he lives for ever content in the *atman*,—such a person has become a yogi.

[104]

July 11, 1926

Watt discovered that if we collect steam and let it escape through a pipe, it will draw a load of any weitht. Similarly, those boys who

[1] VI, 17
[2] VI, 18
[3] VI, 19
[4] VI, 20

restrain all their outgoing impulses and concentrate them in one direction will be able to carry any weight on their shoulders. How much, then, would we benefit if we restrain all these impulses and let them subside and be transformed into devotion to God.

> Where he experiences that endless bliss beyond the sense which can be grasped by reason alone; wherein established he swerves not from the Truth;[1]

When compared with the highest bliss—the bliss which abides for ever—the pleasures of the senses are but momentary. That bliss cannot be felt through the senses, it can be experienced only by the intellect. If a person has perceived with his intellect the reality which God is, if he has understood with it his duty and then yoked himself to the chariot of God, if, shaking off lethargy, he has entered his name in God's office for duty—such a person will never be shaken from his purpose.

A person whose mind has become fixed in this manner does not cease even for a moment to be conscious of the reality which is God. He is a yogi.

> Where he holds no other gain greater than that which he has gained; and where, securely seated, he is not shaken by any calamity however great;[2]

Having attained this state, the person does not even dream that he can gain anything better still. Such a condition is possible only if one thinks about nothing but Ramanama even in one's dreams, if one has worked the whole day in a disinterested spirit of service. If we have not spent the night in sound sleep, if we have had a bad dream, we may understand that our mind is still full of greed, attachment, etc. He whose mind does not sleep at all during any hour of the day is firmly established in yoga, he is single-minded in his devotion.

I once saw in Pretoria jail a Negro who had a mind so strong, like a demon's, that he never shrank back, no matter how much he was flogged. The yogi's mind, however, becomes like a god's; his skin glows and the mind never wavers. If the mind of a person who dwells in solitude is wandering in all directions, though physically alone he lives amidst a crowd.

> That state should be known as yoga (union with the Supreme), the disunion from all union with pain. This yoga must one practise with firm resolve and unwearying zeal.[3]

[1] VI, 21
[2] VI, 22
[3] VI, 23

What has been described as yoga means complete absence of suffering. The state beyond happiness and suffering cannot be described in words. We speak of it as peace. When we are in that state, we are said to be in yoga. We should establish ourselves in such yoga with a determined mind, without getting tired of the effort.

[105]

July 13, 1926

Anyone who depends for his happiness on external circumstances makes it plain that in fact he does not want to be happy. In the end such a person becomes unhappy. But he who feels neither happiness nor misery—we should throw both into the river Sabarmati—if we become glad on getting something which is to our liking and feel miserable when we get something which we do not like, either state of mind is bad—he who rises above both happiness and misery has achieved yoga. Yoga means absence of suffering, never feeling miserable. If anyone abuses us, we should lay the abuse at God's feet. Likewise, if anyone praises us, the praise too we should lay at His feet. This is the meaning of non-possessiveness. He is a yogi who cultivates such a state of mind and feels himself as light as a flower.

> Shaking oneself completely free from longings born of selfish purpose; reining in the whole host of senses, from all sides, with the mind itself;
>
> With reason held securely by the will, he should gradually attain calm and with the mind established in *atman* think of nothing.[1]

Such a person is a yogi; that is, he escapes from the dualities of happiness and suffering.

> Wherever the fickle and unsteady mind wanders, thence should it be reined in and brought under the sole sway of *atman*.[2]

Proceeding, Shri Krishna explains in different words the idea of the preceding verses. He has asked Arjuna to fix the mind on the *atman*. What more can He say? But He tries to explain the idea still more clearly.

One should withdraw the mind from any object or thought to which it wanders, hold it in check and bring it under the control of the *atman*.

[1] VI, 24 & 25
[2] VI, 26

The speed of air can be measured by a meterologist and that of electricity by a scientist. But no machine has yet been invented to measure the speed of the mind. It is unsteady and restless. We should withdraw it from every direction in which it flies and fix it in the right place, that is, in the *atman*.

> For, supreme bliss comes to this yogi, who, with mind becalmed, with passions stilled, has become one with *Brahman*, and is purged of all stain.[1]

Such a yogi, whose mind has become stilled, whose *rajasik* impulses, whose egotism and pride, have all completely subsided, and who has become merged in *Brahman*—such a yogi will experience the supreme bliss.

> The yogi, cleansed of all stain, unites himself ever thus to *atman*, easily enjoys the endless bliss of contact with *Brahman*.[2]

The yogi who has thus learnt to yoke his *atman* constantly [to God], who has been purified of his sins, who has felt the contact of *Brahman*, enjoys everlasting bliss.

> The man equipped with yoga looks on all with an impartial eye, seeing *atman* in all beings and all beings in *atman*.[3]

He who is established in yoga, who looks upon all with an equal eye, sees himself in all other creatures and all other creatures in himself—such a yogi with an equal eye for all can enjoy the bliss of merging in *Brahman*.

[106]

July 14, 1926

The verse which we took up yersterday is an important one. The yogi is not one who sits down to practise breathing exercises; he is one who looks upon all with an equal eye, sees other creatures in himself. Such a one attains *moksha*. To look upon all with an equal eye means to act towards others as we would towards ourselves. That idea is explained still further in the following verse.

> He who sees Me everywhere and everything in Me, never vanishes from Me nor I from him.[4]

"He who sees Me everywhere and sees all creatures and objects in Me, I am never absent from such a person. He is always dear to Me,

[1] VI, 27
[2] VI, 28
[3] VI, 29
[4] VI, 30

he is never far from Me",—as Hanuman was never far from Ramachandra.

[107]

July 15, 1926

It is not easy to see all creatures in ourselves. The key with which to achieve this is given in the next verse, and that is, that one should see others in oneself by seeing them and oneself in God. As ice becomes what it is from water, so we have all come from the same water and shall turn again into that water. The hailstone which realizes that it is water in substance will feel itself as water. God and God's *maya* are one; what distinction, then, can there be between a Brahmin, a *Chandal* and a Sudra? That is why the sage Bharadwaja asked Rama whether the latter had killed Ravana or only his own *maya*. Rama is never absent from us and we are never far from Rama.

> The yogi who, anchored in unity, worships Me abiding in all beings, lives and moves in Me, no matter how he live and move.[1]

"The yogi," says Shri Krishna, "who worships Me the dweller in all creatures, who, after merging in *Brahman*, feels that he is *Brahman* and that the world exists in *Brahman* and who worships Me with that feeling, such a yogi, though ever enganged in outward activities, lives in Me."

As they say, "walking with unsteady steps on the earth but fixing the mind on the sky", so a person who has his eyes always fixed on the sky of his heart dwells in God every moment, whether walking or eating or drinking, or in any condition whatever. There are impostors who claim that, though they may indulge in immoral pleasures, they are still yogis. They tell us that, being victims of *maya*, we may hold that some things are permitted and others forbidden, but that they themselves are bound by no rules. If we ask them to exchange their gold for our stone, they will not agree. They will answer that they are learned men and the gold had better be with them. But about the actions of a person who has banished all evil from his heart, the world will say—he himself will not claim it—that though doing karma he dwells in God.

> He who, by likening himself with others, senses pleasure and pain equally for all as for himself, is deemed to be the highest yogi. O Arjuna.[2]

[1] VI, 31
[2] VI, 32

He who acts towards others as if they were himself will meet their needs as if they were his own, will do to others what he would to himself, will learn to look upon himself and the world as one. He is a true yogi who is happy when others are happy and suffers when other suffer.

Only that person who has reduced himself to a cipher, has completely shed his egotism, can claim to be so. He alone may be said to be such a person who has dedicated his all to God. But this is a difficult state to achieve, and so Arjuna puts a question.

> I do not see, O Madhusudana, how this yoga, based on the equal mindedness that Thou hast expounded to me, can steadily endure, because of fickleness (of the mind).[1]

When we are travelling in a train, we cannot see clearly the things outside. That is how it is.

> For fickle is the mind, O Krishna, unruly, over-powering and stubborn; to cub it is, I think, as hard as to curb the wind.[2]

Arjuna says: "O Krishna, the mind is fickle, it unsteadies the heart, it is strong, and obstinate in its fickleness. We can see this truth if we can curb it, but it is as difficult to curb it as it is to curb air."

> Undoubtedly, O Mahabahu, the mind is fickle and hard to curb; yet, O Kaunteya, it can be held in check by constant practice and dispassion.
>
> Without self-restraint, yoga, I hold, is difficult to attain; but the self-governed soul can attain it by proper means, if he strive for it.[3]

[108]

July 16, 1926

We may have studied the *Gita* with great care and attention, but we can achieve nothing if we lack strength of heart. We should strive for self-purification in respect of all our attachments. We should overcome ignorant attachments and carry out self-purification. Arjuna has become a bridge between Shri Krishna and the world. Possessing such knowledge and after having enjoyed, the privilege of Shri Krishna's company for so long a time, he should have no question to ask. It is for the benefit of the world that he puts all the questions.

> If one, possessed of faith, but slack of effort, because of his mind straying from yoga, reach not perfection in yoga, what end does he come to, O

[1] VI, 33
[2] VI, 34
[3] VI, 35 & 36

Krishna?[1]

He who does not persevere in his effort to be a yogi, who does not strive hard enough, who has faith but whose mind has wandered away from yoga—he may have retired into a secluded spot in a forest but his thoughts dwell in the world without—what becomes of such a person who has failed to reach the goal of his yoga? Does he rise or does he fall?

> Without a foothold, and floundering in the path to *Brahman*, fallen from both, is he indeed not lost, O Mahabahu, like a dissipated cloud?[2]

A person may have read a number of books and been struggling for some spiritual progress. But afterwards he thinks and tells himself: No, I feel inclined to retire into solitude and put my head in God's lap and offer satyagraha to him." One, however, who has let his mind wander in all sorts of ways and has become full of doubts perishes like a scattered cloud. He becomes like a jug without a bottom. Because he has strayed from the path towards *Brahman* which he has been following, does such a person perish?

> This my doubt, O Krishna, do Thou dispel utterly; for there is to be found none other that Thou to banish this doubt.[3]

[109]

July 17, 1926

Shri Krishna answers this question with a solemn assurance.

> Neither in this world, nor in the next, can there be ruin for him, O Partha; no well-doer, oh loved one, meets with a sad end.[4]

Shri Krishna says: "No, Arjuna, such a person is destroyed neither in this world nor in the other, for a weak yogi who strives half-heartedly is certainly not destroyed. No one who strives for good ever comes to harm." In these words, Shri Krishna assured the whole world that He would always welcome those who sought Him as persons engaged in a good effort, no matter with what energy they pursued their aim. Every action bears fruit and in particular no effort for realizing God is ever wasted. A person making such an effort never falls, but always rises. If he has faith, what does it matter if he connot strive with determination? Whatever his achievement, he will be counted as a

[1] VI, 37
[2] VI, 38
[3] VI, 39
[4] VI, 40

soldier in God's army.

> Fallen from yoga, a man attains the world of righteous souls, and having dwelt there for numberless years is then born in a house of pure and gentle blood.[1]

Such a person rises, after his death, to the world which men of good deeds attain and, after dwelling in it for a long time, is born in a family of men who are holy and possess *shri*—that is, men who enjoy God's grace, not necessarily posses riches—for it is difficult for one born in a rich family to practise yoga or chant Ramanama. Is Vishnu, with whom dwells Lakshmi, believed to be the Lord of Lakshmi because He owns a mint? No. Lakshmi means *bhakti*. The sage Agastya may be described as a man who enjoyed *shri*, for he had obtained from Shiva the boon of *bhakti*. Shri Krishna ate a dish of green leaves offered by Vidura.[2] It is in the family of such a person that one who has fallen from the path of yoga, a weak yogi who none the less has faith, is born.

> Or he may even be born into a family of yogis, though such birth as this is all too rare in this world.[3]

Or he is born in the family of a wise yogi. Born in such a family, he learns to have an equal mind in all things right from his childhood. *Bhakti* is a daily practice in the family of such a yogi. We may say that Sudhanva and Narad were so fortunately born.

> There, O Kurunandana, he recovers the intellectual stage he had reached in his previous birth, and thence he stretches forward again towards perfection.[4]

He acquires in this family the state of equal-mindedness which I explained to you. He acquires in this life the state which he had failed to acquire in his previous life, whether or not he remembers his effort in that life.

In Itlaly, there is an eight-year-old boy who plays on the Sitar [*sic*] as if he was born with the skill.

Similarly, if a boy of eight can look upon all with equal regard, we shall conclude that that is the effect of his mode of life in a previous birth. He will then strive fruther in the same direction and

[1] VI, 41

[2] Character in the *Mahabharata* known as "the wisest of the wise", he gave good advice to both the Pandavas and the Kauravas, but in the war he sided with the former.

[3] VI, 42

[4] VI, 43

ultimately reach his goal.

> By vertue of that previous practice he is borne on, whether he will it or not; even he with a desire to know yoga passes beyond the Vedic ritual.[1]

Becuaue of his experience in the previous life, such a person is spontaneously drawn towards God. He who is a yogi and yearns for knowledge crosses the *shabdabrahman*, that is, goes beyond the endless forms of karma and rituals enjoined in the Vedas, not beyond the karma which we undertake with a view to service or in a disin-terested spirit but beyond the karma prompted by personal motive and activities undertaken fot the sake of various personal gains.

> But the yogi who perseveres in his striving, cleansed of sin, perfected through many births, reaches the highest state.[2]

Perserving in his effort, such a yogi destroys the effects of his sins and, succeeding in his aim after many lives, attains *moksha*.

[110]

July 18, 1926

The capital of self-purification acquired in this life will never be wasted.

> The yogi is deemed higher than the man of austerities; he is deemed also higher than the man of knowledge; higher is he than the man engrossed in ritual; therefore be thou a yogi, O Arjuna!.[3]

Shri Krishna says: "I ask you to be a yogi, for the yogi is superior to the person who performs *tapascharya*, and he is considered superior even to the man who is a *jnani*. Here *jnani* does not signify a person who is merely learned in Shastras or is wise in practical affairs. The yogi is superior also to one who spends all his time in rituals and similar pursuits. You should, therefore, be a yogi."

> And among all yogis, he who worships Me with faith, his inmost self all rapt in Me, is deemed by Me to be the best yogi.[4]

Among all classes of yogis, the best of course is the one who has faith in God. As the rays of the moon are the only thing which will make the *chataka* bird happy, so nothing is as effective as constant repetition of the Lord's name for ending man's threefold suffering in this world.

[1] VI, 44
[2] VI, 45
[3] VI, 46
[4] VI, 47

A Swami from Pushkar Raj[1] once came to visit me. He asked me: "Why have you taken up the spinning-wheel now in your old age?" In a region in which water is scarce, anyone who digs with a shovel—digs for water so that he may serve others—is repeating Ramanama though he may not be literally doing so, and reaps the fruit of repeating it. There are many in the world for whom food is the only *Brahman*. It is dharma to undertake physical labour and make such a starving person laour too, till he can get food. That sannyasi put his question to me, but he did not know that I was practising *akrama* through karma.

In this sixth chapter, Shri Krishna has explained how one may cultivate the spirit of sacrifice through work; he has explained the means of learning self-control. As the method, however, is difficult to practise—though it is not essential that everyone should follow it—, the question is raised whether a person who fails in such an effort does not get the worst of both the worlds. Replying, Shri Krishna says: "No; nothing done with a spiritual motive is lost."

[111]

Chapter VII

July 20, 1926

> Hear, O Partha, how, with thy mind rivetted on Me, by practising yoga and making Me the sole refuge, thou shalt, without doubt, know Me fully.
>
> I will declare to thee, in its entirely, this knowledge, combined with discriminative knowledge, which when thou hast known there remains here nothing more to be known.
>
> Among thousands of men hardly one strives after perfection; among those who strive hardly one knows Me in truth.[2]

That is, this knowledge is of supreme worth and not everyone can acquire it.

> Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Ether, Mind, Reason and Ego—thus eight-fold is my *prakriti* divided.
>
> This is My lower aspect; but know thou My other aspect, the higher—which is *Jiva* (the Vital Essence) by which, O Mahabahu, this world is sustained.[3]

[1] A holy place in Rajasthan, sacred to *Vaishnavas*
[2] VII, 1, 2 3
[3] VII, 4 & 5

[Shri Krishna says to Arjuna,] "There is also another *prakriti* of Mine which you may call *para prakriti*. It exists in living creatures, and is superior to the *prakriti* in inert matter; through it the entire universe exists."

[112]

July 21, 1926

We should regard an enemy as one with us. We should reflect how we with someone who is afraid of us to behave towards us. Even if it is in his power to cut us to pieces, we want him to be fair to us. If we have imprisoned someone, we should not put him under greater restraint than necessary, though he may be our enemy. In any case, we cannot torture him to death. This is no more than the law of the world. Even obeying that law, though we fear snakes and do not wish to die, we also want to complete the reading of the *Gita* and to acquire the highest knowledge, to serve a few people in the world and bring the spining-movement to sucess, to work in the cause of cow-protection. With this aim, we may wish to protect ourselves. I don't wish to suggest that you cruelly tortured the snake. But certainly you did not simply lift it and remove it elsewhere. This is a difficult matter. We may catch a snake and remove it, but should do so gently. We should not inflict pain on it. We should think on this matter not because Kishorelalbhai wants us to do so, but because we want to put the teaching of the *Gita* into practice. We should certainly not beat up a snake for our pleasure. We must not derive pleasure from tossing a kitten. This is ignorance and cruelty. Even a child should think how he or she would feel if someone treated him or her in the same manner.

Why does the *Gita* counsel us to treat *Chandals* and *Bhangis* in the same manner as we do others?

We should actually feel towards them in the same manner. It is in vain that one reads the *Gita* if one does not try to live in such a spirit. We should not get pleasure in torturing snakes and other creatures like them. We catch a snake and hold it tight with sticks, but we may do this because we have no choice in the matter. Our attitude should be the same as when we take special care of the body and even pamper it, but feel how much better it would be if we did not do this. We should adopt a fixed attitude of mind, that in such matters we should do the minimum necessary and no more. Do not tell

yourselves that you will think about these matters when you have white hair on your heads. You must make the best use of your youth right now. As Lord Krishna said, among thousands only one person strives for self-realization, that is, for self-purification, and among the thousands who strive only a rare person comes to a right knowledge of Him. Hence we should strive hard and long. We should look upon ourselves as those exceptional persons among thousands. We should try to become philosophers. We should aspire to be the rare individuals among those thousands, and hope that we shall succeed.

> Know that these two compose the source from which all beings spring; I am the origin and end of the entire universe.[1]

Shri Krishna says: "The *apara prakriti*, the soul that lives in the visible world, and the *para prakriti*, the invisible world, believe these to be the cause of all creatures that live. For I am the source of the whole universe, and am that in which it subsides. That is, I am the cause of creation and destruction. Do not think, therefore, that you kill anyone."

> There is nothing higher than I, O Dhananjaya; all this is strung on Me as a row of gems upon a thread.[2]

"As the beads are held together by the string, so this universe is held by Me."

> In water I am the savour, O Kaunteya; in the sun and the moon I am the light; the syllable AUM in all the Vedas; the sound in ether, and manliness in men.
>
> I am the sweet fragrance in earth; the brilliance in fire; the life in all beings; and the austerity in ascetics.[3]
>
> Know Me, O Partha, to be the primeval seed of all beings; I am the reason of rational beings and the splendour of the splendid.[4]

[113]

July 22, 1926

> Of the strong, I am the strength, divorced from lust and passion; in beings I am desire undivorced from righteousness.[5]

"I am the strength of the strong, but that strength which is used without selfish motive or attachment. Such was King Janaka's

[1] VII, 6
[2] VII, 7
[3] VII, 8 & 9
[4] VII, 10
[5] VII, 11

strength. I am the *kama* in creatures which is not contrary to dharma." "Kama not contrary to dharma" means the desire for *moksha,* or the desire to end the suffering of creatures.

If we desire to end the suffering of others, our suffering, too, will end. This is true in the ordinary sense of the words. But in Sanskrit the desire to end the suffering of others is described as a *mahaswartha*.[1] It means interest in the *moksha* of all creatures. Anyone who feels such a desire would be striving hard for his own *moksha*.

> Know that all the manifestations of the three *gunas*, *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*, proceed from none but Me; yet I am not in them; they are in Me.[2]

We say that we should offer up everything to God, even evil. The two, good and evil, are inseparable, and so we should offer up both. If we wish to give up sin, we should give up virtue too. There is possessiveness in clinging even to virtue.

We say of the physical Rama that he both had and did not have a body. He had contradictory attributes, he was personal God and impersonal *Brahman*, he had attributes and was beyond attributes. For the evil, God is evil. He is in truth the very image of compassion, but He cannot violate His law and so we say that He destroys evil.

> Befogged by these manifestations of the three *gunas*, the entire world fails to recognize Me, the imperishable, as transcending them.[3]

Truly speaking, even those who are ruled by *sattvik* impulses may be said to be under their power because of their ignorance.

> For this My divine delusive mystery made up of the three *gunas* is hard to pierce; but those who make Me their sole refuge pierce the veil.[4]

It is said in the *Bhagavat* that in *Kaliyuga* anyone who constantly repeats *Om namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya* will cross this sea of becoming and reach the other shore. This is true of Ramanama, too.

> The deluded evil-doers, lowest of men, do not seek refuge in Me; for, by reason of this delusive mystery, they are bereft of knowledge and given to devilish ways.[5]

[1] Literally, supreme self-interest
[2] VII, 12
[3] VII, 13
[4] VII, 14
[5] VII, 15

[114]

July 23, 1926

> Four types of well-doers are devoted to Me, O Arjuna; they are, O Bharatarshabha, the afflicted, the spiritual seeker, the material seeker, and the enlightened.[1]

My worshippers whose actions are ever the holiest fall into four classes, says Shri Krishna. They are: (1) those in distress, (2) those who yearn for *jnana* or seek *moksha*, (3) those who worship Me for worldly benefits, and (4) the *jnanis* who worship God as His servants and seek nothing from Him. They tell God that it was simply their duty, as His subjects, to worship Him, and that it made no difference to them whether or not He rewarded them.

> Of these the enlightened, ever attached to Me in single-minded devotion, is the best; for to the enlightened I am exceedingly dear and he is dear to Me.[2]

Among them all, the *jnani*, who always lives in union with Me, yoked with Me, calls upon Me "*tunhi, tunhi*"[3] and lives as a *bhakta*, keeps repeating My name as if he was reciting a *kalama* from the Koran, is the best.

Mirabai was a great devotee of the Lord, but she belonged to the class of *jnanis*. "I am," Shri Krishna says, "very dear to such *jnanis* and they to Me. We are thus like the lover and the beloved."

> All these are estimable indeed, but the enlightened I hold to be My very self; for he, the true yogi, is stayed on Me alone, the supreme goal.[4]

All these four classes are noble people, though maybe some of them believe in *mantras* and worship God through them. Is it not better that, instead of spending their time in sin, they should worship God?

Is not a man who begs before the king's palace better than another who enters it to rob? The self-respect of a suffering man is fully preserved only if he approaches the king and no one else for help. There are people in the world who, when they suffer, seek succour not from God but from others. The Lord, therefore, is certainly pleased when people go to Him. "All these are certainly worthy men," says Shri Krishna, "but of them all the *jnani* is My very soul,

[1] VII, 16
[2] VII, 17
[3] "Thou, Thou"
[4] VII, 18

Myself as it were. He who has yoked himself to Me has risen to the highest state."

> At the end of many births the enlightened man finds refuge in Me; rare indeed is this great soul to whom 'Vasudeva is all'.[1]

After many lives, the *jnani* seeks refuge in Me."After many lives" means after a long and hard struggle. Such a person is always saying, not with his tongue merely but with his very heart, that this whole universe is a manifestation of Vasudeva.[2] A mahatma of that greatness is very rare.

> Men, bereft of knowledge by reason of various longings, seek refuge in other gods, pinning their faith on diverse rites, guided by their own nature.[3]

Selfish men whose minds are clouded by all kinds of worldly desires and who seek the help of witch-doctors worship lower deities. Some, for instance, vow to make a gift of so much rice or so many coconuts to the Mother-goddess at Khodiar; they obey their nature and worship her in that manner.

We may say that Ladha Maharaj belonged to the class of men who are driven by suffering to worship God, but he may also have been a *jnani*. We do not know his mental state.

[115]

July 24, 1926

> Whatever form one desires to worship in faith and devotion, in that very form I make that faith of his secure.[4]

If they think that they of their own accord worship the gods whom they do, they are ignorant. They do not get their faith from those deities. What help can a mere courtier give to one who has direct access to the king? For instance, Sudama went straight to Shri Krishna, and then the courtiers' attitude towards him changed. Such a person need not worship any other deity.

> Possessed of that faith he seeks to propitiate that one, and obtains therethrough his longings, dispensed in truth by none but Me.[5]

[1] VII, 19
[2] Vishnu
[3] VII, 20
[4] VII, 21
[5] VII, 22

If there were many independent deities who could act on their own, there would be no God.

> But limited is the fruit that falls to those short-sighted ones; those who worship the gods go to the gods, those who worship Me come unto Me.[1]

Short-sighted worshippers of gods reap perishable fruits. Only one type of person wins deliverance. Those who worship the lower gods rise so far as the world of those gods. Those who worship Me come direct to Me.

> Not knowing My transcendent, imperishable, supreme character, the undiscerning think Me who am unmanifest to have become manifest.[2]

"These persons of little intelligence do not know My unmanifest state," says Shri Krishna. "They mistake the manifest universe for the invisible reality behind. They do not know the best part of Me at all (the part beyond the manifest), do not know Me as the changeless, supreme Purushottama." If, for instance, we worship the Sun, who gives light and heat, we divide the divine power of God into its several aspects and worship one of them. Instead, we should try to know the highest, the invisible state of God. This visible universe is ever taking new shapes. The gods change their forms but God is ever the same.

[116]

July 25, 1926

Our intellect has not the power to tear up the veil from before the *atman* and set it free. One who has felt the desire to do this has no little intellectual power. So long as we have not reflected deeply over these matters, we imagine beings with as many as ten heads. Then someone may wake up and ask whether the *atman* can ever have heads. He would then remember his study [of the *Gita*], remember the verses in the Second Chapter and realize that the *atman* was unmanifest and could not be pierced or wetted. "Unthinking men," Shri Krishna says, "wish to measure Me with their little yardsticks, they make an image of Me and act as if it was Myself."

> Veiled by the delusive mystery created by My unique power, I am not manifest to all; this bewildered world does not recognize Me, birthless and changeless.[3]

[1] VII, 23
[2] VII, 24
[3] VII, 25

"I do not vouchsafe light to all. Everyone cannot know Me, for I am veiled by the *maya* of My yoga." If God had not created such *maya*, we could not have existed in this visible universe. But, then, one may ask, why did God create this universe at all? To ask this question is like a clock asking why its maker made it. A creature must have complete faith in its creator."The unthinking man enveloped in *maya*," says Shri Krishna, "does not know Me, the Unborn and the Immutable."

[117]

July 27, 1926

"I am not luminous to all, that is, everyone cannot see Me. Human beings are blinded by My light. Such is the power of My *maya* that people can truthfully say that at this moment some lives are being born and some are dying." But we should understand that these transformations are not real. Who can know that Reality which is veiled behind objects with name and form? If someone told us that in his country rivers get frozen and that human beings and vehicles pass over them, we would not easily understand his statement; this idea of Reality veiled behind these objects with name and form is similar to that. It is true, nonetheless. The Lord says that this is due to the power of His *yogamaya*, that His real essence is the Unmanifest.

> I know, O Arjuna, all creatures past, present and to be; but no one knows Me.
>
> All creatures in this universe are bewildered, O Parantapa, by virtue of the delusion of the pairs of opposites sprung from likes and dislikes, O Bharata.
>
> But those virtuous men whose sin has come to an end, freed from the delusion of the pairs of opposites, worship Me in steadfast faith.
>
> Those who endeavour for freedom from age and death by taking refuge in Me, know in full that *Brahman, adhyatma* and all karma.
>
> Those who know Me, including *adhibhuta, adhidaiva, adhiyajna,* possessed of even-mindedness, they know Me even at the time of passing away.[1]

Those who think of Me, even at the moment of death, as *adhibhuta, adhidaiva* and *adhiyajna,* are men who have become steady. They who know Me as the Lord of all creatures, of the gods and of *yajnas*, that is, as the Creator and Preserver of the whole

[1] VII, 26, 27, 28, 29 & 30

universe, and know that this world of flux has no effect on Me whatever, are men united to Me in yoga."

[118]

Chapter VIII

July 28, 1926

In Chapter VII, Shri Krishna fulfilled his promise, explained both *jnana* and *vijnana* and assured Arjuna that once he had understood these he would never be touched by evil.

The *apara prakriti*, the world of visible objects, can be perceived with the senses and known through the intellect, but the *para prakriti* can be apprehended only when we go beyond the senses, the intellect and the ego. If we wish to know God's transcendent essence, we should in some measure be what He is. We, too, have the two essences, *apara* and *para*, in us, of which we should subdue the *apara* and acquire better knowledge of the *para*.

The main question raised in Chapter I was, how can one kill one's kinsmen? The answer to this extended to seven Chapters. And now begins the eighth. Shri Krishna is making all this effort with the aim of removing the confusion of thought and the ignorance which had unsettled Arjuna's mind. He has been brought to the point of distinction between the *apara* and the *para prakriti*.

> What is the *Brahman*? What is *adhyatma*? What karma, O Purushottama? What is called *adhibhuta*? And what *adhidaiva*?
>
> And who here in this body is *adhiyajna* and how? And how at the time of death art Thou to be known by the self-controlled?[1]

Arjuna asks Shri Krishna, "You have told me about *Brahman*, *adhyatma*, karma, *adhibhuta* and so on. But what do these terms mean? And what is *adhiyajna*? What is meant by saying that he whose mind is yoked to the Lord can know all this at the moment of death?"

[119]

July 29, 1926

Shri Krishna answers Arjuna's question.

> The Supreme, the Imperishable is *Brahman*; its manifestation is *adhyatma*; the creative process whereby all beings are created is called karma.[2]

[1] VIII, 1 & 2
[2] VIII, 3

That which never perishes and is the ultimate Reality is *Brahman.* Our nature is *adhyatma*.

The Lord of us all is the power which creates this *adhyatma.* Creating all beings and keeping them in existence is an act of renunciation and is known as karma.

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July 30, 1926

We cannot have personal relation with all beings in the world, but can have spiritual relation with them.

Anyone who feels no desire to do good to others harms not only himself but others too. If a woman expecting a baby does not protect, it she may die and the baby, too, may die. To protect it is her karma, which is a form of renunciation. If such a woman is not regular in eating, if she thinks evil thoughts and eats unwholesome food, both she and the baby would be harmed. We are continually harming ourselves in this manner. Some of us may be inclined to ask how the world is concerned if we harm ourselves. But in harming ourselves, we harm both ourselves and the world.

Karma here certainly does not mean an act of creation. Vyasa's writing of the *Gita* and the *Mahabharata* was a great *visarga* (an act of renunciation). It is impossible that the jewel of a work like the *Gita* would signify by the term karma the merely physical act of creation.

> *Adhibhuta* is My perishable form; *adhidaivata* is the individual self in that form; and O best among the embodied, *adhiyajna* am I in this body, purified by sacrifice.[1]

That is, Shri Krishna says that He is the Lord of *yajnas* and grants their fruit. The modes of being which belong to the living creatures in the world are perishable modes.

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July 31, 1926

There is a saying in Latin which means that the way to Hell is paved with good intentions. Good intentions by themselves do not succeed, but the person doomed to Hell believes that they do, without his having to strive to realize them. We cannot give all that we with to, but we can receive everything we would. However much I try, if you

[1] VIII, 4

do not receive what I give, what can I do? If all of you make a serious effort, you can stop wasting others' time. If you but try to get up at four, you will most certainly not fail. What does it matter even if the effort breaks us? *Moksha* is for those who strive till they break.

Krishna is the Lord of *yajna*, and we worship Him because, though in human form, He worked all His life. He was awake every moment, awake even when the Pandavas slept. The latter's eyes were always fixed on Him. He did not wish to harm the Kauravas or help the Pandavas; His only aim was to see that right prevailed. He spent his body working ceaselessly all His life, but it retained its light till the last. The word *prayatna*[1] in just an ordinary word, but the thing itself is such that the moment you resolve on it you will begin to reap the fruit. Krishna had resolved that the Pandavas should win and, therefore, their victory was certain. He was the very embodiment of disinterested service, and wished to harm none. When Parashuram[2] was lying with his head in Karna's lap, the latter was bitten by some deadly creature and was bleeding profusely, but he did not move an inch. Surely, he too was a human being, like any of us. We should, similarly, make good resolutions and strive to realize them, offering up the fruit of our effort to Shri Krishna.

By describing Arjuna as the best among beings endowed with a body, Shri Krishna suggests that he need not fear anyone at all.

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August 1, 1926

> And he who, at the last hour remembering Me only, departs leaving the body, enters into Me; of that there is no doubt.
>
> Or whatever form a man continually contemplates, that same he remembers in the hour of death, and to that very form he goes, O Kaunteya.[3]

Hence they say, you will reap as you sow.

We should let no impurity enter our thoughts. Perents give us the human form, sometimes a form like their own. The subtle changes which take place within us become visible through our eyes. If we get a disease, we should believe that we ourselves are the cause of it. A person whose mind is so strong that he influences his surroundings,

[1] Effort, striving

[2] A Brahmin-warrior, one of the incarnations of Vishnu, from whom Karna learned the art science of fighting

[3] VIII, 5 & 6

instead of being influenced by them, gets no disease. It is for our good, therefore, to believe that our illness is the result of our sins. If we have been repeating Ramanama from the depth of our heart, how can even a dream, if it is evil, leap over that protecting wall and enter our mind? If any does, we may believe that we have been uttering Ramanama only with our lips. If we have any fear whatever in our heart, that too is a form of evil and we suffer from many serious diseases because of it. Hence, as we free ourselves more and more from evil impulses and desires, we become less and less subject to disease. Even persons whose ears and noses and all other limbs had been infected are known to have recovered. The body possesses a natural power of recovery. Recovery brought about with the help of herbs lasts for some time only; and the man who has overcome his evil desires and cultivated devotion to God will refuse to be cured with the help of herbs and say that, when the evil in him has disappeared, he will be all right. If, as a result of this attitude, he dies, he will welcome death.

Anyone who thinks wicked thoughts will find that in one day his body has become ugly. Once a person charged with murder came to me. I merely looked at him and told him that he was trying to deceive me. He left at once.

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August 3, 1926

Thinking is a form of karma. Thoughts have such power that sometimes their effects are more terrible than those of actions. If someone finds a pistol placed in his hand by another person and is forced to fire it, he cannot be said to have committed violence because he had acted under force. But he who harbours violence in his thoughts and, keeping himself in the background, incites others to do violence, is guilty of terrible violence. Besides, there are also enemies within which prompt us to commit violence. Despite our effort to think the best thoughts and act upon them, we are driven to commit sin. It is the desire and anger in us which are responsible for this. All the same, our efforts at self-control and good thoughts help us. If the God of death himself puts a pistol in a person's hands and forces him to commit violence, such violence will not harm him. He will ever have the name of Narayana on his lips and, when he dies, his end will be good. Ordinarily we do not see this happen, for our thoughts are those

of miserable wretches. They ought ever to flow in a self-controlled stream. A person whose thoughts are of this kind repeats the name of Narayana while engaged in any work. His actions are not his, they are prompted by the Lord within.

Shri Krishna has packed in these two verses the essence of all philosophy: man will reap as he thinks.

> Therefore at all times remember Me and fight on; thy mind and reason thus on Me fixed thou shalt surely come to me.
>
> With thought steadied by constant practice, and wandering nowhere, he who meditates on the Supreme Celestial Being, O Partha, goes to Him.[1]

No one should believe that it will suffice if he does this at the moment of death. He who has been striving in this direction from his childhood will win the battle and the other will lose. We boarded a ship at Delagoa Bay to see Gokhale off. The latter was playing billiards. I had not joined him. He thought I did not like his playing that game and asked me: "Do you think I enjoy playing this?" "No," I said, "you are trying to prove the ability of our country-men." In this way, even his playing was dedicated to Lord Krishna. I of course knew it. I am sure in my mind that my effort to learn dancing was also not prompted by love of dancing. At that time, my only thought was to acquire all the accomplishments which make a gentleman. The point is that everything we do should be dedicated to Shri Krishna. We can so dedicate only the work which comes to us unsought, not that which we undertake of our own choice. Though the inmates of the Ashram attend to different tasks, dedicating them to Shri Krishna, in reality all of them are doing the same work if there is complete harmony in their thoughts. If that is not so, and only one person is earnest about spinning and others let their minds wander, then they cannot be said to join the former in spinning.

[124]

August 4, 1926

> Who so, at the time of death, with unwavering mind, with devotion, and fixing the breath rightly between the brows by the power of yoga, meditates on the Sage, the Ancient, the Ruler, subtler than the subtlest, the Supporter of all, the Inconceivable, glorious as the sun beyond the

[1] VIII, 7 & 8

darkness,—he goes to that Supreme Celestial Being.[1]

He who knows all attains to that supreme, divine Purusha. At the moment of departing, that is, when dying, one should think on that Purusha Who is beginningless, Who rules the world and Who is in essence finer than the finest we can conceive.

In the sixth century B.C., there ruled in Lydia a king named Croesus[2]. He had immense wealth. The Greek saint and law giver, Solon[3] once went to see him. Croesus asked him whether anyone could be happier than he himself was. Solon's reply was that only after a man has died can we say whether he had been happy. This same Croesus was afterwards attacked and defeated by King Cyrus of Persia. He was sentenced to be hanged. As he was being taken to the gallows, he shouted Solon's name thrice. On being asked by Cyrus why he did that, he repeated Solon's reply to his question. Cyrus freed him and kept him as his adviser. When the King died, he left his son in the care of Croesus. In much the same way, it is only after a man's death that we can say whether he has passed into a higher world.

Proceeding, Shri Krishna describes that supreme Purusha, Who is the Creator of everything that exists, Whose essence cannot be comprehended by our minds, Whom only the yogis see in their contemplation, Who has the glory of the sun (shines like the sun, with the light of timeless consciousness) and Who is beyond the darkness of ignorance. Our reason cannot conceive how infinitely small and how infinitely vast He is. He who, when leaving this world, thinks with a fixed mind on this Purusha,—only his mind is fixed who has yoked himself to the Lord in *bhakti* and who possesses the strength acquired by long *sadhana*—thinks of Him with *bhakti* and with the power of his yoga, who refuses any treatment or medicine to save his life—keeps his mouth shut,—who knows that he is leaving for a world where there is no darkness and no suffering or happiness, and who focuses his *prana* on the point midway between his brows and meditates,—such a person attains to the realm of the Supreme, the Divine Purusha described in this verse.

[1] VIII, 9 & 10

[2] The last king of Lydia, 560-546 B.C.

[3] *c.* 638-558 B.C.; Athenian statesman and poet. The story of their meeting is narrated by Herodotus, but is chronologically impossible.

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August 5, 1926

That which the knowers of the Vedas call the Imperishable (*or* that word which the knowers of the Vedas repeat), wherein the escetics freed from passion enter and desiring which they practise *brahmacharya*, that Goal (*or* Word) I will declare to thee in brief.

Closing all the gates, locking up the mind in the hridaya, fixing his breath within the head, rapt in yogic meditation;

Who so departs leaving the body uttering *AUM—Brahman* in one syllable—repeatedly thinking on Me, he reaches the highest state.[1]

While in the previous verse Shri Krishna referred to other states of mind, here He speaks only of meditation on the Lord.

That yogi easily wins to Me, O Partha, who, ever attached to Me, constantly remembers Me with undivided mind.

Great souls, having come to Me, reach the highest perfection; they come not again to birth, unlasting and (withal) an abode of misery.[2]

Why is it misery to be born over and over again?

A STUDENT: One may not be born a human being—in every life.

But what does it matter if one is born a monkey. We may enjoy our life dancing and jumping about all the time.

ANOTHER STUDENT: Can one be sure that, after one dies, in the next life, one will be born a Brahmin?

Should we not welcome that state in which there is no death? Are there any who like dying? Those who do, die again and again. He who does not want death gives up his attachment to bodily life, closes all the bodily doors without much thinking. If he forgets the body, mortifies it every moment, he will not have to die. It is because there is death for everyone who is born that life is a cause of suffering. The birds are ever happy, but then they have no knowledge and are not free. Would you like it, if someone changed all the boys into birds? That state in which there is no death and no birth, no disease, no attachment and no aversion, that supreme state is known as *moksha*.

[1] VIII, 11, 12 & 13
[2] VIII, 14 & 15

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August 6, 1926

Even big mountains, sun and moon and stars, all things are transient. If our lives were as long as one crore years, perhaps we would not feel the transience of our existence. We are not conscious of the transience of the sun, but science tells us that it is not eternal. Both from a profound and from a superficial view, it is transient. Ramanama alone is imperishable. Life and death are both transitory states; not only are they so, they are the cause of all suffering.

Why? It is not because the *Gita* says so that we should regard them as the cause of suffering; we should feel in our own lives that they are so. The best way of ensuring that after death we pass to a higher world is to feel every moment that life in this world is from its very nature full of suffering, so that we give up attachment to it and free ourselves from the dualities of love and hatred.

We can understand even with our reason that life in this world is full of suffering. If we but think, we shall realize that the very process of birth of all creatures is something repulsive. This is what is meant by saying "I am sin", "I have my source in sin". This existence being enveloped in *maya*, we take pleasure every moment in what should repel us. We have no sense through which we can feel in all its intensity this pain [which the process of birth means]. Even our state after birth is, from the beginning to the end, one long imprisonment. We love fondling a child, because it smiles and laughs with pleasure. But, then, prisoners also laugh. We take pleasure in this slavery because it is a part of our existence, but in truth it is a state in which we can not rest in peace even for a moment. Look at the physical frame of this body. It excretes dirt through countless pores, such dirt as we cannot bear touching. If only we reflect, we shall find nothing to attract us in this body. But, then, even this prison is a house through which we can win our freedom. If we come to regard it in that light, we shall make the minimum necessary use of it. The way to freedom, of course, does not lie in committing suicide. Anyone who kills himself will certainly be born again. He will yearn all the more to return to life. The ideal of self-control had its origin in the knowledge of the manner in which life comes into existence and of other facts of our physical life. This body is not to be pampered, but to be

mortified and subjugated. If it sees that it does not get what it craves, it will on its own leave us in terror. If, Shri Krishna says, people realize the misery of this existence, the state to which He will raise them will be a little better than their present one. That supreme state is not to be conceived as one in which the higher bliss which we experience in this life will also vanish. On the contrary, we shall have it thousand fold in that other state. With this thought constantly in one's mind, one should get absorbed in the duties of this life, forget oneself altogether in them. One should see oneself in the whole world and the world in oneself, and act towards others accordingly. The ideal of non-violence also had its origin in this realization that, when human life as such is full of suffering, we should cause suffering to none.

> From the world of Brahma down, all the worlds are subject to return, O Arjuna; but on coming to Me there is no rebirth.[1]

All the worlds, including the world of Brahma [2] will return to their source. The sun, the moon, Brahma, Vishnu, all will perish. "But," Shri Krishna says, "once a human being comes to Me, he never perishes."

This is what I have tried to explain in my talk today.

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August 7, 1926

There is great poetry in this verse. This little drop contains knowledge as vast as the sea, and the more that knowledge becomes part of our experience the more we discover its poetry. In such a verse, the poet soars on the wings of his imagination, released from the bondage of the body and the senses. His imagination works on what he has heard with his ears and seen with his eyes and, going beyond the certainties of reason, he says that all that is known through the senses is a product of the human mind; that is, he imagines that since we ourselves perish, this whole universe will perish too. All that the human mind can imagine or conceive is perishable, is subject to ceaseless change. He who has dedicated himself to truth will not be prepared to forsake it merely because the world does not agree with him, as if his truth depended on the world and he was acting in a play. Shri Krishna, therefore, the Prince of Yogis that He is, says here that we believe there is happiness in the world of Brahma but that there is

[1] VIII, 16

[2] One of several heavens, distinct from the absolute, impersonal Brahma

no happiness even there.

He asks Arjuna to go to the world beyond all these worlds, the world in which He Himself dwells. This is simply beyond our imagination. But what is beyon our imagination does exist, nevertheless. If a person dies striving to reach that world, there is no rebirth for him.

> Those men indeed know what is Day and what is Night, who know that Brahma's day lasts a thousand *yugas* and that his night too is a thousand *yugas* long.[1]

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August 8, 1926

A day and a night of ours are made up of 24 hours. They say that anyone who focuses his eyes on the tip of his nose and meditates will find bliss, but it is necessary to go beyond this. In order to become become a *jnani* one must learn to look deep into things. Anyone who practises this method but goes beyond it will study his self and draw far-reaching conclusions, will realize that things are not what they seem. We do not, thus, require a *Gita* to tell us that Brahma[2] must have a day different in length from ours; we can see this ourselves if we use our brains. It seems to us an absolute certainty that the Sun will always be there. He will be a *jnani* who understands the nature of time from a study of one object existing in time. Such a person will take into account all the factors, which ordinary men and women fail to do. The latter would generally reason that, since no one practises control of the senses, it is impossible to practise and ought not to be attempted; if we reason thus, we shall invite ruin upon ourselves. This is fallacious reasoning.

If we want to know what is a day and what a night, we should have a standard of measurement. How can we measure infinite time? A day as long as a thousand *yugas* and a night of equal length! We should know that there is a day and night of such length in order that we may learn patience, and that, if the result of our effort takes time to show itself; we may not give way to despair. We may have faith in the spinning-wheel, but what progress can we expect from devoted work of only four or five years? We may see no tangible result in our own life-time. Nonetheless, we should have faith and go on working. Having devoted ourselves to this work, we should not give way to des-

[1] VIII, 17

[2] The Creator in the Hindu Trinity

pair, nor be proud of ourselves. Let us remember that a thousand *yugas* make one day, and out of a thousand Parvatis one succeeds. There were a great many Parvatis and Shambhus who failed, before one Parvati and one Shambhu succeeded. We should know that this is how the power of *tapas* works.

> At the coming of Day all the manifest spring forth from the Unmanifest, and at the coming of Night they are dissolved into that same Unmanifest.[1]

When Brahma's day[2] begins, the Unmanifest becomes manifest. All these creatures, which had vanished into nothingness, come to life again. When his night begins, the whole creation vanishes, that is, merges into the Unmanifest. In this way, all creation appears and vanishes, and does so endlessly. We have no reason to believe that the universe is fixed and motionless; in fact it is revolving, with a speed a thousand times greater than that of a spindle. The Earth will return into nothingness, will perish, but there will certainly be some who will survive that final destruction.

> This same multitude of creatures come to birth, O Partha, again and again; they are dissolved at the coming of Night, whether they will or not; and at the break of Day they are re-born.[3]

When the night comes, whether we wish it or not, the universe returns into nothingness, and when the day comes a new creation appears.

How long shall we remain caught in this endless cycle? To reassure us on this, Shri Krishna says:

> But higher than that Unmanifest is another Unmanifest Being, everlasting, which perisheth not when all creatures perish.[4]

There is another Unmanifest Reality beyon this Unmanifest[5] and it is immutable; it is the immutable Reality immanent in all perishable creatures. Everything which exists will perish, but the ground of all this existence is imperishable. Thus, we go a good deal further than the tip of our nose.

[1] VIII, 18

[2] A day and a night of Brahma consist of 8,640,000,000 years or 2,000 *mahayugas*.

[3] VIII, 19

[4] VIII, 20

[5] The source to which the visible universe returns at the end of the cycle; *vide* verse 18 above.

This Unmanifest, named the Imperishable, is declared to be the highest goal. For those who reach it there is no return. That is My highest abode.[1]

Shri Krishna says: "You can come to Me by patient striving and living in this world only as a witness. Have faith and, devoting yourself to duty, work out the welfare of your soul." The substance of all this is that the supreme *Brahman* never perishes, everything else does.

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August 10, 1926

The form in which the timeless essence which is God manifests itself is known as His incarnation. We can know that essence in every creature. The principle of oneness does not mean that all of us should become beasts; it means, on the contrary, that God is present in the heart of even the most wicked of creatures, and that the latter awakes to His presence when the time comes. Ramachandra's picture as a child is a product of the poet's imagination, but we may believe it as true, knowing that higher consciousness is present even at that age. If a little child is a *jnani* and still behaves as we know children do, we should say, "The *Brahman* sports before the *Brahman*."[2] Such a child would be a visible form of the *Brahman*, in the same sense that Parvati was the embodiment of *tapascharya* and Krishna of yoga, of the *Brahman*.

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August 11, 1926

This Supreme Being, O Partha, may be won by undivided devotion; in It all beings dwell, by It all is pervaded.[3]

"That supreme state, to be attained in yogic contemplation, is beyond my reach": so sang Raychandbhai.

Now I will tell thee, Bharatarshabha, the conditions which determine the exemption from return, as also the return, of yogis after they pass away hence.[4]

"I shall now describe that state" (the word may also mean time) "after reaching which, or that path after treading which, there is no returning."

[1] VIII, 21
[2] The line is from a poem by Narasinh Mehta
[3] VIII, 22
[4] VIII, 23

> Fire, Light, Day, the Bright Fortnight, the six months of the Northern Solstice—through these departing men knowing *Brahman* go to *Brahman*.[1]

It is often said that this and the next verse do not fit into the teaching of the *Gita*, but we will treat them as if they did.

The *Gita* did not drop down from heaven, nor is it as if every work that Krishna said to Arjuna was written down. Vyasa has given what the Lord said to a seeker and, in doing so, he would include even things which he himself did not understand from his own experience. It may have been a general belief in those times which made people particular that they did important things at particular hours of the day only, or welcomed death during a certain part of the day. The favourites of a king can approach him only at a fixed hour, and no one else can go to him at that time. Similarly, it may have been the prevalent belief in those days that only people who died in an auspicious hour would reach God; this, of course, did not mean that those who died in some other hour had not aspired and striven in their lives to reach God after death.

Those who die when there is fire and light, on any day in the bright half of one of the six months following the winter solstice, will reach the *Brahman.* This statement may be intended to have either a literal or an allegorical meaning. If the latter, it means, that anyone who has attained a state like the bright half of the month, a state of knowledge as bright as light, will not return to this world after death. On the other hand:

> Smoke, Night, the Dark Fortnight, the six months of the Southern Solstice—therethrough the yogi attains to the lunar light and thence returns.[2]

Such a person lives in heaven and, when the merit earned by his virtuous deeds is exhausted, he returns to the earth.

We may, therefore, take either of the two meanings. Anyone who has not attained to full illumination will have to return to this earth; in other words, he who spends his life in disinterested work and prays daily to the Lord with love and devotion will not have to return, for he will have cut asunder the bonds of karma. Anyone who departs after a life of disinterested *bhakti* will not have to return.

[1] VIII, 24
[2] VIII, 25

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August 12, 1926

Some persons treat these two verses as interpolated; we cannot do so, for the copies of the *Gita* which we use contain them. If the meaning of any verse contradicts the very meaning of the *Gita*, we may reject that verse, otherwise we should try to reconcile it with the rest of the teaching, as we did yesterday. *Kala* [in these verses] means state, condition. We do not know whether, in the age when the *Gita* was composed, the North and the South Poles were discovered. For those who live in the region of the North Pole, the day and the night are as long as our six months. The period following the winter solstice is a time of light and signifies a waking state, whereas the period following the summer solstice signifies a state of ignorance. We have compared the latter state with the state full of desire and the former with that which is free from desire.

The Lord, Shri Krishna, now proceeds:

> These two paths—bright and dark—are deemed to be the eternal paths of the world; by the one a man goes to return not, by the other he returns again.[1]

These two paths, the bright and the dark, that which leads to a state from which there is no returning and the other which leads to a state which is impermanent, have existed from the beginning of time. The bright state is that of the illumination of knowledge and the dark state is that of ignorance. Dying in one state, a person never returns; dying in the other, he is bound to return.

> The yogi knowing these two paths falls not into delusion, O Partha; therefore, at all times, O Arjuna, remain steadfast in yoga.[2]

The yogi who knows the distinction between these two paths never succumbs to darkness. He realizes that disinterested *bhakti* is the best form of *bhakti*. If we have faith in the Lord and *bhakti* for Him, why should we forever be begging things from Him? Anyone who is filled with faith and love will feel that there is nothing for him to beg. He will have offered everything to the Lord, placed himself at His mercy. He may say: "All that is mine is yours." Such single-minded *bhakti* is *uttarayana*[3], it is light, and so on. What, again, is the

[1] VIII, 26
[2] VIII, 27
[3] Northward course of the sun

significance of Krishna's advice to remain yoked to Him at all times? It means that one should cling to knowledge and single-minded devotion. The gods are immortal, but only compared to human beings. They, too, will perish in time."Therefore," says Shri Krishna, "instead of going to the gods who will perish, if you come to Me, then alone will you get knowledge and in no other way." Arjuna should, Shri Krishna says, keep the knot in his heart, the little grains of dust which cover the knowledge within, so thoroughly cleaned that at the moment of death he will spontaneously have the right thoughts.

> Whatever fruit of good deeds is laid down as accruing from (a study of) the Vedas, from sacrifices, austerities, and acts of charity—all that the yogi transcends, on knowing this, and reaches the Supreme and Primal Abode.[1]

We saw in the verse beginning with *yavanartha udapane*[2] that he who has acquired this light and knowledge is in the condition of one who has secured that beyond which nothing else remains to be obtained.

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Chapter IX

August 13, 1926

> I will now declare to thee, who art uncensorious, this mysterious knowledge, together with discriminative knowledge, knowing which thou shalt be released from ill.
>
> This is the king of sciences, the king of mysteries, pure and sovereign, capable of direct comprehension, the essence of dharma, easy to practise, changeless.[3]

There was a man who, whenever he got very angry, sat down to do sums in algebra; anyone else who tried to do this, when he ought to be repeating Ramanama, would find the effort a burden-some task. If somone is dying and cries for help, it would be unfeeling arrogance to tell him that you were busy doing sums in algebra, for it would be moment when the Shastras could well be thrown into the sea. Doing a sum in algebra is not in itself a duty, but the aim behind it may be a duty. Through it, I may know who and where I am. Doing a sum is not by itself a duty, the first duty is service. For instance, eating is never a duty in itself. He is a true man who leaves the dinner table and runs to do an act of service.

[1] VIII, 28
[2] II, 46
[3] IX, 1 & 2

The knwoledge of this duty is *rajavidya*. It is the king of all secrets, it is sacred and the highest knowledge, it is dharma and worthy to be followed in action, and easy to follow besides; once acquired, it is never destroyed. "I will impart that knowledge to you," says Shri Krishna.

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August 14, 1926

> Men who have no faith in this doctrine, O Parantapa, far from coming to Me, return repeatedly to the path of this world of death.
>
> By Me, unmanifest in form, this whole world is pervaded; all beings are in Me, I am not in them.[1]

So long as our eyes of knowledge have not opened, we have no choice but to see with the eyes of faith.

> And yet those beings are not in Me. That indeed is My unique power as Lord! Sustainer of all beings, I am not in them; My Self brings them into existence.
>
> As the mighty wind, moving everywhere, is ever contained in ether, even so know that all beings are contained in Me.[2]

Air fills space, but space is not identical with air. We can say that air fills space. Though space is empty, we can say that it is filled with air. And yet space is not air. The air which fills space is still not in it, so God who dwells in all creatures is still not in them. In one sense, He is not in them, for we can see other things with our eyes but not Him.

He who has faith and he who lacks it, both are sincere in their beliefs. God exists for him who has faith, but does not exist for him who lacks it.

A Shastri will be able to explain the point of these two verses.

The Ganga water does, and yet does not, contain dirt. Similarly, even the most wicked of beings exists in God. The cruellest of men, even a *Chandal*, exists in Him, and yet does not. God is above good and bad. Vyasa puts these contradictory statements together, for our reason knows its limitation in trying to describe the truth. It is enough if we understand that God pervades the entire universe.

[1] IX, 3 & 4
[2] IX, 5 & 6

[134][1]

August 15, 1926

Innumerable ways of falling are open to a man, he need not make any effort for the purpose; it is for rising that one has to strive. We may revere and always keep in a proper place a holy book which we believe helps us on the path of good; but anyone who goes no further than showing it outward reverence will find such reverence a means of bondage. There should, therefore, be discrimination even in reverence; only so will that reverence help us to advance. Outward reverence for a holy book is not all. We should go further than that. We should try to follow the teaching of the book in our life. God is omnipotent and we are His creatures. When, however, we, who are mere ants in His sight try to eat Him up, He uses a part of His infinite power. He is so near that we feel we can touch Him this very moment, and yet we never do, so far away He is. As space and air exist one in the other, so do God and the universe. He who has faith certainly exists in God; he who lacks it does not. God does not force Himself on anyone, but He does not close the door, either, against anyone who aspires to be united to Him—such is His nature.

> All beings, O Kaunteya, merge into my *prakriti*, at the end of a *kalpa*, and I send them forth again when a *kalpa* begins.[2]

The holy books speak of such rise and disappearance of the worlds.

The individual soul, of course, passes through birth and death. But the universe, too, comes into existence and disappears. If the soul, therefore, wishes to know its essence, it will have to transcend the universe. We know for certain that this lamp will one day be destroyed, and yet it is the only thing we can use; it is essential, therefore, that we take care to keep it clean. This Ashram has buil-dings, which are its body, so to say. They will be destroyed one day. But the Ashram's soul, which is its ideals, will never perish. To realize that imperishable essence, we may even need to put up buildings of brick and mortar. In this way, we must use our reason and discrimination and keep working. If we wish to live in this world, we must put to use even things which will perish, but only with the aim of realizing the imperishable essence beyond them.

[1] The notes of this discourse were taken by Punjabhai.

[2] IX, 7

Resorting to my *prakriti*, I send forth again and again this multitude of beings, powerless under the sway of *prakriti*.[1]

[135]

August 17, 1926

But all this activity, O Dhananjaya, does not bind Me, seated as one indifferent, unattached to it.[2]

God acts according to His *prakriti*, and yet He does nothing since He is above even His *prakriti*.

If a king does sinful things, his subjects too suffer. But God, being omniscient, can do nothing without thought. Sin means only what is done without taking thought. How can a person who thinks before acting commit a sin? Likewise, how can one who is by nature inclined to sin act virtuously? If one does good spontaneously, in the same way that our eyes wink automatically, one will not have to suffer the fruits of such good actions. It is man's nature to do good, for all selves are one. That being so, the apparent separateness of each self has no significance. When this is realized, man's ego melts away. Man's essence, which is *atman*, is all-pervading, for he who has realized it will not see himself as different from others, but will see all in himself. For such a person, therefore, doing good becomes his nature. When he seems to be serving other creatures, he is doing so not out of kindness to them but is merely following his own nature. To us who are enveloped in *maya*, it may seem that he is practising virtue, but in truth it is not so; he is acting only according to his nature towards all creatures.

[136]

August 18, 1926

With me as Presiding Witness, *prakriti* gives birth to all that moves and does not move; and because of this, O Kaunteya, the wheel of the world keeps going.

Not knowing My transcendent nature as the sovereign Lord of all beings, fools condemn Me incarnated as man.[3]

"Creatures sunk in darkness, dwelling in the human body, do not know Me," says Shri Krishna, "they disregard Me"(Has not

[1] IX, 8
[2] IX, 9
[3] IX, 10 & 11

Tulsidas said that those who make a distinction between Rama and God are ignorant and know nothing? We project our ignorance on to God too.) "They do not know My supreme state, do not know Me as the Lord of all creatures. Labouring under the illusion that I am a human being, they do not know My real essence."

[137]

August 19, 1926

> Vain are the hopes, actions and knowledge of those witless ones who have resorted to the delusive nature of monsters and devils.
>
> But those great souls who resort to the divine nature. O Partha, know Me as the Imperishable Source of all beings and worship Me with an undivided mind.[1]

The mahatmas, who are ruled by their divine *prakriti*, like Vibhishana[2] and others, worship Me with their minds illumined by knowledge and with single-minded devotion—Me who am the Creator of all beings.

> Always declaring My glory, striving in steadfast faith, they do Me devout homage; ever attached to Me, they worship Me.
>
> Yet others, with knowledge-sacrifice, worship Me, who am to be seen everywhere, as one, as different or as many.[3]

"Others worship Me by striving for knowledge. Some of them worship Me as the only One (that is, believing that all this is Vasudeva), some others worship My different manifestations and others still worship Me in everything which exists.

We may take *vishvatomukham* to go with *mam*, and understand the line to mean that "they worship Me who am the same in all or dwell in all"; or we may interpret *ekatvena* to mean "with devotion" and *prithaktvena* to mean that "they look upon Me as the Lord and themselves as My devotees and worship Me in that spirit". Or, *ekatvena* may mean "worshipping Me as Impersonal Absolute" and *prithaktvena* may mean "worshipping Me as personal God". In any case, *vishvatomukham* taken as an independent, third term, yields no sense.

[1] IX, 12 & 13

[2] In the *Ramayana*; he tried to persuade his brother, Ravana, to restore Sita to Rama. Failing in this effort, he went over to Rama and was accepted by him.

[3] IX, 14 & 15

[138]

August 20, 1926

> I am the sacrificial vow; I am the sacrifice; I the ancestral oblation; I the herb; I the sacred text; I the clarified butter; I the fire; I the burnt offering.
>
> Of this universe I am Father, Mother, Creator, Grandsire; I am what is to be known, the sacred syllable *AUM*; the *Rig*, the *Sama* and the *Yajur*;
>
> I am the Goal, the Sustainer, the Lord, the Witness, the Abode, the Refuge, the Freiend; the Origin, the End, the Preservation, the Treasurehouse, the Imperishable Seed.[1]

I am *gati* which means *moksha*—the state which human beings strive to attain. I am the sustainer, the Lord, and the witness. I am the abode, and the shelter. I am *suhrid* which means a kind friend who serves me without expectation of reward.

> I give heat; I hold back and pour forth rain; I am deathlessness and also death, O Arjuna, Being and not-Being as well.[2]

I give heat, but in the form of the sun which gives happiness and the light of knowledge to all creatures. I draw the rains and release them. I am death and I am immortality; I am being and also non-being.

That is, every object and every state which we can think of in this universe are God. This means that God is not merely all that is good, He is also the evil. Nothing exists unless He wills it. It is not true that God is the Lord of light and Satan of darkness. While we live in this body, we may believe in these dualities. We should engrave Tulsidasji's words in our hearts, that while we are enveloped in *maya* all this, which is false, will seem as true. The nacre will appear as silver and the sun's rays will appear as the mirage. We shall continue to think in this way till a *jnani* opens our eyes and convinces us that the appearance of the rope as the serpent, of the nacre as silver and of the sun's rays as mirage, is but the work of our imagination. We believe that God is both good and evil and, believing that, some of us ask what harm there is in following evil. But it is quite wrong if we argue thus. The point is not that we should act like scorpions or centipedes, but that we should have goodwill for them, without ourselves becoming poisonous like them. The Lord has here stated a profound truth which

[1] IX, 16, 17 & 18
[2] IX, 19

is beyond the capacity of our reason to comprehend. What He has stated cannot possibly be true in this world. We can only imagine that it must be true in some sense. Being and non-being, virtue and sin, immortality and death, these are contradictory things. They cannot be true for human beings, they can be so only for God. That third state [in which contraries are reconciled] is not a mere mixure of the two. Hydrogen and oxygen together yield water, but water does not display the separate properties of either; it has characteristics of its own. Similarly, we must not imagine that God has in Him the qualities of both virtue and sin, but should think that He has something else which is different from either. If we had both virtue and sin in us, there would be an explosion, but Siva swallows both. The existence of the two in God is a miracle, and He alone knows its mystery. We should make no attempt to cultivate such a state. If we try to combine the two in us, such an attempt to imitate God will simply destroy us.

> Followers of the three Vedas, who drink the *soma* juice and are purged of sin, worship Me with sacrifice and pray for going to heaven; they reach the holy world of the gods and enjoy in heaven the divine joys of the gods.[1]

Those who perform the rituals enjoined in the three Vedas, who drink *somarasa* (in the region of the North Pole *somarasa* was food and it would be a crime to refuse it to anyone, for if given to a dying man it saved life), who wash away their sins and worship the Lord by performing sacrifices, pray that they should go to heaven. They go to the sacred realm of Indra and there enjoy divine pleasure such as gods do.

[139]

August 22, 1926

> They enjoy the vast world of heaven, and their merit spent, they enter the world of the mortals; thus those who, following the Vedic law, long for the fruit of their action earn but the round of birth and death.
>
> As for those who worship Me, thinking on Me alone and nothing else, ever attached to Me, I bear the burden of getting them what they need.[2]

Yoga means realization of God and *kshema* means safeguarding of the means which help us to attain it.

> Even those who, devoted to other gods, worship them in full faith, even they, O Kaunteya, worship none but Me, though not according to the rule.[3]

[1] IX, 20
[2] IX, 21 & 22
[3] IX, 23

The right method is to have no intermediary between oneself and God. "But," Shri Krishna says, "those who seek Me through the gate-keepers that stand between, they too worship Me, for they worship these in order to reach Me."

> For I am the Acceptor and the Director of all sacrifices; but not recongnizing Me as I am, they go astray.[1]

"I am," says the Lord "the recipient and the Lord of all *yajnas*." That is, he who does everything without thinking that he himself does it can say that not he but the Lord does everything. "Those, however, who do not know the truth and, therefore, do not know Me, return again to the world."

The sinful man, so long as he is conscious of his ego, describes himself as the most wicked of men. Tulsidas says, on the one hand, that there could be none as lustful, lecherous, degraded and adulterous as he was and, on the other hand, attributes all his sins to God, for, since he had no ego in him, how could he have committed those sins? The river Ganga washes away all kinds of sins, but she receives no stain. Likewise, the timeless body in Rama is sinless. The physical Rama, of course, is subject to sin. If we prevert this idea and start committing sins and then say that sins cannot touch us, we shall be like the frog in the fable who tried to blow his body into the size of an ox and so burst. A *bhakta* will say: "I am a sinful man, but I am in your hands." Beyond this, our reason does not work. "Do not describe man as God; he is not God, but he is not different from the light of God."

[140]

August 24, 1926

> Those who worship the gods go to the gods; those who worship the manes go to the manes; those who worship the spirits go to the spirits; but those who worship Me come to Me.
>
> Any offering of leaf, flower, fruit or water, made to Me in devotion, by an earnest soul, I lovingly accept.[2]

The Lord did not accept the fruit sent by Duryodhana, for he had not sent it with love. His motive was to get his own aim served through Shri Krishna. He wanted the Lord's help on his own terms. He had not mastered the self. But Vidura, who was a man of simple heart, offered a plain dish of leafy greens and the Lord accepted it

[1] IX, 24
[2] IX, 25 & 26

with love, for Vidura's *bhakti* was unrivalled and his heart was straightforward and clean. He felt no awe for the wealth of the mighty.

> Whatever thou dost, whatever thou eastest, whatever thou offerest as sacrifice or gift, whatever austerity thou dost perform, O Kaunteya, dedicate all to Me.
>
> So doing thou shalt be released from the bondage of action yielding good and evil fruit; having accomplished both renunciation and performance, thou shalt be released (from birth and death) and come unto Me.[1]

"If you live thus, you will be free from the bonds of karma which are sometimes good and sometimes evil in their fruit, for I shall be the recipient of all that you enjoy." He who has purified himself through sannyassayoga—who dedicates to the Lord all that he does, who keeps on doing useful work right till the end of his life, but in a spirit of dedication to the Lord,—such a one goes to Him after death.

> I am the same to all beings; with Me there is none disfavoured, none favoured; but those who worship Me with devotion are in Me and I in them.[2]

If we seek refuge in the Lord, He will give us all that we can wish. If we go to the Ganga, we can have the Ganga water, but we shall have only as much as fills our cupped palm if that is all we seek. The Lord provides a grain for the ant and a cart-load for the elephant.

[141]

August 25, 1926

> A sinner, however great, if he turns to Me with undivided devotion, must indeed be counted a saint; for he has settled resolve.[3]

A man like Ajamila may have resolved to purify himself of the evil in him, and he may sit down in a firm posture for yoga; maybe his thoughts do not leave him, but he is none the less a sadhu who keeps repeating *Om* and is firm in his resolution. But another person who is not firm in his mind and not regular in practice, who follows no method in his work, may be a good man and still he does not deserve to be called a sadhu.

> For soon he becomes righteous and wins everlasting peace; know for a certainly, O Kaunteya, that My *bhakta* never perishes.[4]

Such a person soon becomes a holy man, and attains inviolable

[1] IX, 27 & 28
[2] IX, 29
[3] IX, 30
[4] IX, 31

peace of mind. We should not, therefore, regard even the most wicked of men as wicked. He can become good in this very life. Shri Krishna says: "Be certain, O Arjuna, that no *bhakta* of mine ever perishes."

This body perishes, but he dies after becoming a good man rather than a wicked one.

> For finding refuge in Me, even those who though are born of the womb of sin, women, Vaisyas, and Sudras too, reach the supreme goal.[1]

"Anyone who surrenders himself or herself to Me," assures the Lord, "whether man or woman, Vaisya or Sudra, or one born among wicked people—in a family of the most wicked *Chandals*—even then such a person will attain the supreme state."

The Lord has given a great assurance to the world in these verses. This is His reply to those learned in the Vedas. Such persons argue that those who have not studied the Vedas cannot realize God. It was believed in those days that women, Vaisyas and Sudras cannot attain *moksha*. In fact, Krishna tended cows as a boy in Nanda's family and did the work of a Sudra. The Vaisya's function was rearing cows and agriculture. But in course of time those who were engaged in agriculture came to be regarded as Sudras. Shri Krishna says here that, even if Vaisyas and Sudras are not able to study the Vedas, they can certainly attain the blessed state. Anyone who, though ignorant of the Vedas, knows the *Brahman*, and has a pure heart is certain to attain this state.

> How much more then, the pure Brahmins and seer-kings who are my devotees? Do thou worship Me, therefore, since thou hast come to this fleeting and joyless world.
>
> On Me fix thy mind, to Me bring thy devotion, to Me offer thy sacrifice, to Me make thy obeisance; thus having attached thyself to Me and made Me thy end and aim, to Me indeed shalt thou come.[2]

"Forget yourself in Me," says Shri Krishna,"meditate constantly on Me, let your *atman* be in ceaseless communion with Me, and live with your heart ever united with Me; if you live thus, I shall draw you towards Me."

"You need only allow yourself to be drawn, and shall not resist. You may not draw Me, but I can draw you. You will be able to understand this riddle, no one else will."

[1] IX, 32
[2] IX, 33 & 34

This chapter has also been named *Rajavidya*[1] and *Rajaguhya-yoga*[2]. Shri Krishna tells Arjuna that He has explained the highest knowledge and expounded the highest mystery—the meaning of yoga and *kshema*. The union of yoga is to be achieved with the Lord; one should not aspire to earn great riches or rise to a position of honour or win an empire in this world. All that is needed is a fixed determination to realize God. What is the good of any pleasure we can get through the senses—the eyes, the nose, the ears and so on? We should not be allured by it, for such pleasure is short-lived. There were emperors, but they have passed away. He whom we seek dwells in our hearts, and the holy temple in which He sits opens only by the means of prayer. The Lord explained this by saying *manmana bhava madhakto madyaji*[3]. "I am," He says, "the author and sustainer of all, I am the friend, I am the source, the cause of existence and of the final destruction—I am all this. There is nothing else. I am all that there is. You are of no consequence. The other gods in the worlds in between will also perish, like you. I alone never perish. If you wish that you should not perish, you should come to My world, and that you can do by surrendering your whole mind to Me. Whether you are engaged in bathing or washing or any other like activities, if you are repeating my name the while and if you dedicate to Me all that you eat, if you worship Me as you give your body its hire, you will surely come to Me."

[142]

Chapter X

August 26, 1926

> Yet once more, O Mahabahu, hear My supreme word, which I will utter to thee, gratified one, for thy benefit.
>
> Neither the gods nor the great seers know My origin; for I am, every way, the origin of them both.
>
> He who knows Me, the great Lord of the worlds, as birthless and without beginning, he among mortals, undeluded, is released from sins.[4]

Those who know Me as the Unborn, the Beginningless and the Supreme Lord of all creatures do not sink into the darkness of

[1] The sovereign science
[2] The yoga of sovereign mystery
[3] In IX, 34
[4] X, 1, 2 & 3

ignorance. A person who has sunk in darkness knows the night as day and the day as night. Among all these creatures who are bound to perish, the *jnani* becomes free from all sins, for he will have no vestige of aversion and attachment, no trace of egotism; he will remain unaffected by the pairs of opposites, will ever be humble and believe that it is the Lord who provides for his living.

> Discernment, knowledge, freedom from delusion, long suffering, truth, self-restraint, inward calm, pleasure, pain, birth, death, fear and fearlessness;[1]
>
> Non-violence, even-mindedness, contentment, austerity, beneficence, good and ill fame,—all these various attributes of creatures proceed verily from Me.[2]

All the qualities mentioned in these two verses, intellect, knowledge, the absence of ignorant attachment, forgiveness, truthfulness, control of the senses, serenity, happiness and suffering, birth and death, fear and absence of fear, ahimsa, inward poise and contentment, *tapas*, making gifts, good name or evil reputation among men—these conditions exist in all creatures and I am the cause of each one of them.

The Creator of all beings is also the cause of all the good and evil which we see in these beings.

[143][3]

August 27, 1926

> The seven great seers, the ancient four, and the Manus too were born of Me and of My mind, and of them were born all the creatures in the world.
>
> He who knows in truth this My immanence and My yoga becomes gifted with unshakable yoga; of this there is no doubt.[4]

Everything which exists is created by the Lord. He who believes, not merely with his reason but with his heart, that no creature can live or act without His permission or except as He wills, yokes himself to Him in single-minded devotion, but he who forgets the Lord and believes in his pride that he rises by his own efforts labours under a delusion. There is no doubt at all that he who believes in God from the depth of his heart and obeys the Lord who dwells in him attains to a state of serenity which is never perturbed.

[1] X, 4
[2] X, 5
[3] The notes of this discourse were not taken by Mahadev Desai.
[4] X, 6 & 7

I am the source of all, all proceeds from Me; knowing this, the wise worship Me with hearts full of devotion.

With Me in their thoughts, their whole soul devoted to Me, teaching one another, with Me ever on their lips, they live in contentment and joy.

To these, ever in tune with Me worshipping Me with affectionate devotion, I give the power of selfless action, whereby they come to Me[1].

In this way, knowledge comes spontaneously to a *bhakta*. He does not have to wade through big volumes. But he who believes that he will acquire knowledge first and cultivate *bhakti* afterwards will fail miserably in his aim. No one can acquire knowledge in that way. Such knowledge breeds, if anything, pride. But he who lovingly cultivates devotion for the Lord and constantly thinks on Him gets knowledge without any special effort to that end.

Out of every compassion for them, I Who dwell in their hearts, destroy the darkness, born of ignorance, with the refulgent lamp of knowledge.[2]

[144]

August 28, 1926

Lord! Thou art the supreme *Brahman*, the supreme Abode, the supreme Purifer! Everlasting Celestial Being, the Primal God, Unborn, All-pervading.

Thus have all the seers—the divine seer Narada, Asita, Devala, Vyasa —declared Thee; and Thou Thyself dost tell me so.

All that Thou tellest me is true, I know, O Keshava, verily, Lord, neither the gods nor the demons know Thy manifestation.

Thyself alone Thou knowest by Thyself, O Purushottama, O Source and Lord of all beings, God of gods, O Ruler of the universe!

Indeed Thou oughtest to tell me of all Thy manifestations, without a remainder, whereby Thou dost pervade these worlds.

O Yogi! constantly meditating on Thee, how am I to know Thee? In what various aspects am I to think of Thee, O Lord?

Recount to me yet again, in full detail, Thy unique power and Thy immanence, O Janardana! For my ears cannot be sated with listening to Thy life-giving words.[3]

One who does engraving work every day does not tire of it. He returns to it whenever he is free. Similarly, Arjuna, who loves

[1] X, 8, to 10
[2] X, 11
[3] X, 12 to 18

repeating Krishna's name in devotion, requests Him again and again to describe His powers till the latter can say no more.

[145]

August 29, 1926

Yea, I will unfold to thee, O Kurushreshtha, My divine mainifestations,— the cheifiest only; for there is no limit to their extent.[1]

I am the *Atman*, O Gudakesha, seated in the heart of every being; I am the beginning, the middle and the end of all beings.

Of the *Adityas* I am Vishnu; of luminaries, the radiant Sun; of *Maruts* I am *Marichi*; of constellations, the moon.

Of the Vedas I am the *Sama* Veda; of the gods, Indra; of the senses I am the mind; of beings I am the consciousness.

Of *Rudras* I am Shankara; of *Yakshas* and *Rakshasas* Kubera; of *Vasus* I am the Fire; of mountains Meru.

Of priests. O Partha, know Me to be the chief Brihaspati; of army captains I am Kartikeya; and of waters, the ocean.

Of the great seers I am Bhrigu; of words I am the one syllable '*AUM*', of sacrifices I am the *Japa* sacrifice; of things immovable, the Himalayas.

Of all trees I am Ashvattha; of the divine seers, Narada; of the heavenly choir I am Chitraratha; of the perfected I am Kapila the ascetic.

Of horses, know Me to be Uchchaihshravas born with *Amrita*; of mighty elephants I am Airavata; of men, the monarch.

Of weapons I am *Vajra*; of cows, *Kamadhenu*; I am Kandarpa, the god of generation; of serpents I am Vasuki.

Of cobras I am Ananta; of water-dwellers I am Varuna; of the menes I am Aryaman; and of the chastisers, Yama.

Of demons I am Prahlada; of reckoners, the Time; of beasts I am the lion; and of birds, Garuda.

Of cleansing agents I am the Wind; of wielders of weapons, Rama; of fishes I am the crocodile; of rivers, the Gangas.

Of creations I am the beginning, end and middle, O Arjuna; of sciences, the science of spiritual knowledge; of debaters, the right argument.

Of letters, the letter A; of compounds I am the *dvandva*; I am the imperishable Time; I am the creator to be seen everywhere.

All-seizing Death am I, as also the source of things to be; in feminine virtues I am *Kirti*. (glory), *Shri* (beauty), *Vak (*speech), *Smriti* (memory), *Medha* (intelligence), *Dhriti* (constancy) and *Kshama* (forgiveness).

Of *Saman* hymns I an *Brihat Saman*; of metres, *Gayatri*; of months I am *Margashirsha*; of seasons, the spring.[2]

[1] X, 19
[2] X, 20 to 35

"I am *Brihat Saman* among *Saman* hymns and *Gayatri* among metres. Among the months, I am *Margashirsha* (when in old times the Aryans lived in the region of the North Pole, this was regarded as the first month of the year and that is why it is mentioned here). Among the seasons I am Spring."

[146]

August 31, 1926

> Of deceivers I am the dice-play; of the splendid, the splendour; I am victory, I am resolution, I am the goodness of the good.[1]

"I am the gaming of those who indulge in gambling." (This is merely intended to point out that God exists not only in what is good in the world, but also in what is evil. Shri Krishna could also have said that He was the sin of the wicked. He could certainly have said that He was Ravana among the demons, for He let Ravana have his way and enjoy himself only as long as He chose. The author's intention is only to assert that God is omnipotent. God's creation contains both good and evil. By saying this, Shri Krishna gives us some freedom to choose between the two. To us who are confined in the prison of this body, he grants that freedom. He gives us the freedom to shake off our bonds. If a prisoner condemned to imprisonment for life is permitted a seemingly unimportant condition by fulfilling which he can be free, it will be a great thing for him, for he can secure his freedom through it. We are in the same condition, for the Lord has assured us that we can be what we wish to be.) I am the splendour of the splendid. I am victory, resolution and the goodness of the good.

> Of *Vrishnis* I am Vasudeva; of Pandavas Dhananjaya; of ascetics I am Vyasa; and of seers, Ushanas.
>
> I am the rod of those that punish; the strategy of those seeking victory; of secret things I am silence, and the knowlege of those that know.
>
> Whatever is the seed of every being, O Arjuna, that am I; there is nothing, whether moving or fixed, that can be without Me.
>
> There is no end to my divine manifestations; what extent of them I have told thee now is only by way of illustration.
>
> Whatever is glorious, beautiful and mighty know thou that all such has issued from a fragment of My splendour.

[1] X, 36

But why needst thou to learn this at great length, O Arjuna? With but a part of Myself I stand upholding this universe.[1]

If we have an idea of the infinite powers of the Lord, we shall become humble. We will not then follow the example of Narad who once felt proud of the one power which he possessed. The Lord has said that even being proud is His privilege. The substance of all that He has said is that we should learn to be the humblest of the humble. Knowing that there is no limit to the power of God, we should submit to violence if anyone attacks us, without offering violence in return. If we attenpt to resist him with violence, God will humble our pride, for there has been no demon, from Ravana downwards, whom the Lord has not destroyed.

[147]

Chapter XI

September 1, 1926

This is regarded as an important chapter. The *Gita* is poem with a profound meaning, and the eleventh Chapter is the most poetic of all. If we wish to learn true *bhakti*, we should know this Chapter by heart. If we do so, we shall feel, when reciting it, that we are bathing in a sea of *bhakti*.

Out of Thy grace towards me, Thou hast told me the supreme mystery revealing the knowledge of the Supreme; is has banished my delusion.

Of the origin and destruction of beings I have heard from Thee in full detail, as also of Thy imperishable majesty, O Kamalapatraksha!

Thou art indeed just as Thou hast described Thyself, Parameshvara! I do crave to behold now that form of Thine as Ishvara.

If, Lord, Thou thinkest it possible for me to bear the sight, reveal to me, O Yogeshvara, Thy imperishable form.

[148]

September 2, 1926

Behold, O Partha, my forms divine in their hundreds and thousands, infinitely diverse, infinitely various in colour and aspect.

Behold the *Adityas*, the *Vasus*, the *Rudras*, the two *Ashwins*, and the *Maruts*; behold. O Bharata, numerous marvels never revealed before,

Behold today, O Gudakesha, in my body, the whole universe, moving,

[1] X, 37 to 42

and unmoving, all in one, and whatever else thou cravest to see.[1]

" See the *Adityas*," Shri Krishna says, "the *Vasus*, the *Rudras*, the *Ashwins* and the *Maruts*, all together. See the entire world, animate and inanimate, all as one reality."

This cosmic form includes, good and evil, Hindus and Muslims, believers and atheists, all.

"You may also see," Shri Krishna adds, "anything else you wish to see."

> But thou canst not see Me with these thine own eyes. I give thee the eye divine; behold My sovereign power!
>
> With these words, O King, the great Lord of Yoga, Hari, then revealed to Partha His supreme form as Ishvara.[2]

[149]

September 3, 1926

The teaching of the *Gita* was not meant to be merely preserved in a book; it was meant to be translated into action. Mahadev and Punjabhai take notes of what I speak, but had we arranged recording on a gramophone plate, every word could have been taken down. Could we have said, then, that the gramophone machine had understood the *Gita*? It is an inanimate object. Similarly, what will this knowledge profit us if we merely take down notes and do not put the teaching into practice? We should, therefore, serve the people among whom we live, and help our elders in their domestic chores. Why should Ba find it necessary to send for Kusum to help her? Why should she request Ramachandra, who is a guest here just for a few days, to help her wash the kitchen? Why should she, who is at present under a vow of eating only once a day, not get some time for rest? If you give her no help, you are like the gramophone in our example.

> With many mouths, and many eyes, many wondrous aspects, many divine ornaments, and many brandished weapons divine;
>
> Wearing divine garlands and vestments, anointed with divine perfumes, it was the form of God, all marvellous, infinite, seen everywhere.
>
> Were the splendour of a thousand suns to shoot forth all at once in the sky that might perchance resemble the splendour of that Mighty One.
>
> Then did Pandava see the whole universe in its manifold divisions gathered as one in the body of that God of gods.[3]

[1] XI, 1 to 7
[2] XI. 8 & 9
[3] XI, 10 to 13

The whole universe, despite its manifold divisions, is gathered there in Him (Like a tree and its leaves. The tree is like the cosmic form of the Lord, the root and the leaves being one. The root contains the whole world of the tree, and the leaves represent that world divided into many forms.). Arjuna saw thus the [cosmic] form of the God of gods.

> Then Dhananjaya, wonderstruck and thrilled in every fibre of his being, bowed low his head before the Lord, addressing Him thus with folded hands:[1]

[150]

September 4, 1926

> Within Thy form, O Lord, I see all the gods and the divers multitudes of beings, the Lord Brahma on his lotus-throne and all the seers and the serpents divine.
>
> With many arms bellies, months and eyes, I see Thy infinite form everywhere. Neither Thy end, nor middle, nor beginning do I see, O Lord of Universe, Universal-formed![2]

(On the one hand, Arjuna says that Shri Krishna has a definite form and, on the othe, he says that He is formless. In other words, His form is so vast that in truth He is formless.)

> With crown and mace and disc, a mass of effulgence, gleaming everywhere I see Thee, so dazzling to the sight, bright with the splendour of the fiery sun blazing from all sides,—incomprehensible.[3]

You bear crown, mace and disc. You are a mass of radiance which glown at all places.

(The sun gives some faint idea of the Lord's light, but it is no more than a dim point of light in comparison with the Lord's.) Thou art as lustrous as fire and the sun. Thou art dazzling to the sight because of thy immeasurable effulgence.

> Thou art the Supreme Imperishable worthy to be known; Thou art the final resting-place of this universe; Thou art the changeless guardian of the Eternal Dharma; Thou art, I believe, the Everlasting Being.[4]

Cannot we say that the rains yesterday were an aspect of this infinite cosmic form of God? He has placed the sun at such a great distance from us; what would have been our condition if it had been a

[1] XI, 14
[2] XI, 15 & 16
[3] XI, 17
[4] XI, 18

little nearer? Can we, then, imagine Arjuna's condition wih Shri Krishna standing near him, Krishna glowing with the light of a thousand suns.

> Thou hast no beginning, middle nor end; infinite is Thy might; arms innumerable; for eyes, the sun and the moon; Thy mouth a blazzing fire, overpowering the universe with Thy radiance.[1]
>
> By Thee alone are filled the spaces between heaven and earth and all the quarters; at the sight of this Thy wondrous terrible form, the three worlds are sore oppressed, O Mahatman![2]

(This Sabarmati, too, is an aspect of the infinite power of God. If the warning received yesterdys comes true and there is a heavy flood, we would simply shake with fear.)

> Here, too, the multitudes of gods are seen to enter Thee; some awestruck praise Thee with folded arms; the hosts of great seers and *siddhas*, 'All Hail' on their lips, hymn Thee with songs of praise.[3]

[151]

September 5, 1926

One feels as though these versed were specially written for us.

We had information from the Collector that there would be a heavy flood in the Sabarmati. Naturally, I was agitated in my heart, not knowing what to do. But I reminded myself of the verses which I daily recite before the women: "*Govind, Dwarkavasin*" and so on. Krishna would be welcome if he flew to our help on His Garuda. Otherwise, if all these things were carried away in the flood, our honour would be saved. Let anyone who survives to witness the destruction live on faithful to our vows.

I had advised them to construct the loom-shed as far away as the road. "The weak will pretend to be good" as the saying goes, and so we have nothing to do but wait in patience. If the authorities of the [Sabarmati] jail invite us to take shelter in it, I will ask them if they have invited the people of Vadaj too. I will tell them that they should offer shelter to all others before they invite us.

You should eat, not to gratify your palate, but to keep yourselves alive to keep up your strength. As I sit here in peace, we

[1] XI, 19
[2] XI, 20
[3] XI, 21

heard the blowing of the mill whistles, and so I remarked, "No one can escape work." It is the same story: "We seek refuge with the Lord who is the ship that ferries us across this sea of creation." Shall we never be free from this affliction [of work]? When afflicted with other deseases, we may keep repeating the Lord's name, or the *dwadash mantra* or any other prayer which will bring us peace of mind. Which is a greater storm, the inward storm in the heart or this outward storm of work? Is this latter storm more of an affliction than that our eyes and ears should disobey us and attend to things which they ought to shun? Every inmate of the Ashram has wings. I should like even the women to have them. Anyone who wihses to leave is certainly free to do so, either by train or to the city on the other side. As the headman of a village, this is all I can tell you. If you can think of anything better, please do.

The *Rudras, Adityas, Vasus, Sadhyas,* all the gods, the twin *Ashwins, Maruts,* Manes, the hosts of *Gandharvas, Yakshas, Asuras* and *siddhas*—all gaze on Thee in wonderment.

At the sight of Thy mighty form, O Mahabahu, many-mouthed, with eyes, arms, thighs and feet innumerable, with many vast bellies, terrible with many jaws, the worlds feel fearfully oppressed, and so do I.

For as I behold Thee touching the sky, glowing, numerous-hued with gaping mouths and wide resplendent eyes, I feel oppressed in my innermost being; no peace nor quiet I find, O Vishnu!

And as I see Thy mouths with fearful jaws, resembling the Fire of Doom, I lose all sense of direction, and find no relief. Be gracious, O Devesha, O Jagannivasa!

All the sons of Dhritarashtra, and with them the crowd of kings, Bhishma, Drona, and that Karna too, as also our chief warriors—

Are hastening into the fearful jaws of Thy terrible mouths. Some indeed, caught between Thy teeth are seen, their heads being crushed to atoms.

As rivers in their numerous torrents run headlong to the sea, even so the heroes of the world of men rush into Thy flaming mouths.

As moths, fast-flying, plunge into blazing fire straight to their doom, even so these rush headlong into Thy mouths, to their destruction.

Devouring all these from all sides, Thou lappest them with Thy flaming tongues; Thy fierce rays blaze forth, filling the whole universe with their lustre.

Tell me, Lord, who Thou art so dread of form! Hail to Thee, O Devavara! Be gracious! I desire to know Thee, Primal Lord; for I comprehend not what Thou dost.[1]

[1] XI, 22 to 31

[152]

September 7, 1926

Doom am I, full-ripe, dealing death to the worlds, engaged in devouring mankind. Even without thy slaying them, not one of the warriors, ranged for battle against thee, shall survive.[1]

Therefore, do thou arise, and win renown! Defeat thy foes and enjoy a thriving kingdom. By Me have these already been destroyed; be thou no more than an instrument, O Savyasachin![2]

"Savyasachin" means one who can use a bow with the left hand, that is, with either hand.

Drona, Bhishma, Jayadratha and Karna, as also the other warrior chiefs—already slain by Me—slay thou! Be not dismayed! Fight! Victory is thine over thy foes in the field.

Hearing this word of Keshava, crown-wearer Arjuna folded his hands, and trembling made obeisance. Bowing and all hesitant, in faltering accents, he proceeded to address Krishna once more.

Right proper it is, O Hrishikesha, that Thy praise should stir the world to gladness and tender emotion; the *Rakshasas* in fear fly to every quarter and all the hosts of *Siddhas* do reverent homage.[3]

"And why should they not bow to you? You are the destroyer of the demons." The demons are our enemies, external and internal. What even if the river should swallow us and destroy us? How much more fearful is the flood inside us? Who will destroy the demons inside? And so Arjuna said:

And why should they not bow down to Thee, O Mahatman? Thou art the First Creator, greater even than Brahma. O Ananta, O Devesha, O Jagannivasa, Thou art the Imperishable, Being, not-Being, and That which transcends even these.

Thou art the Primal God, the Ancient Being; Thou art the final resting-place of this Universe; Thou art the Knower, the 'to-be-known', the supreme Abode; by Thee, O myriad-formed, is the Universe pervaded.

Thou art *Vayu, Yama, Agni, Varuna, Shashanka, Prajapati,* and *Prapitamaha*! All hail to Thee, a thousand times all hail! Again and yet again all hail to Thee![4]

[1] XI, 32
[2] XI, 33
[3] XI, 34 to 36
[4] XI, 37 to 39

[153]

September 8, 1926

There was once a woman in Madras who was a devotee of the Lord. She used to worship Him with her back towards the idol. A learned man rebuked her for doing so, but she cited this verse in reply, and the learned pundit was speechless. If all space is pervaded by God, when we find his eyes, ears and noses on all sides, why should we sit facing in a particular direction to worship Him?

> All hail to Thee from before and behind! All hail to Thee from every side, O All; Thy prowess is infinite, Thy might is measureless! Thou holdest all; therefore Thou art all.
>
> If ever in carelessness, thinking of Thee as comrade, I addressed Thee saying, ' O Krishna!', 'O Yadava!' nor knowing Thy greatness, in negligence or in affection.
>
> If ever I have been rude to Thee in jest, whilst at play, at rest-time, ot at meals, whilst alone or in company, O Achuta, forgive Thou my fault—I beg of Thee, O Incomprehensible one!
>
> Thou art Father of this world, of the moving and the un-moving; Thou art its adored, its worthiest, Master; there is none equal to Thee; how then any greater than Thee? Thy power is matchless in the three worlds.
>
> Therefore, I prostrate myself before Thee, and beseech Thy grace, O Lord Adorable! As father with son, as comrade with comrade, so shouldst Thou bear, beloved Lord, with me, Thy loved one.
>
> I am filled with joy to see what never was seen before, and yet my heart is oppressed with fear. Show me that original form of Thine, O Lord! Be gracious, Devesha, O Jagannivasa!
>
> I crave to see Thee even as Thou wast, with crown, with mace, disc in hand; wear Thou, once more, that four-armed form, O thousand armed Vishvamurti!
>
> Ir is to favour thee, O Arjuna, that I have revealed to thee, by My own unique power, this My Form Supreme, Resplendent, Universal, Infinite, Primal—which none save thee has ever seen.
>
> Not by the study of the Vedas, not by secrifice, not by the study of other scriptures, not by gifts, nor yet by performance of rites or of fierce austerities can I, in such a form, be seen by anyone save thee in the world of men, O Kurupravira!
>
> Be thou neither oppressed nor bewildered to look on this awful form of Mine. Banish thy fear, ease thy mind, and lo! behold Me once again as I was.[1]

[1] XI, 40 to 49

[154]

September 9, 1926

> Beholding again Thy benign human form I am come to myself and am once more in my normal state.
>
> Very hard to behold is that Form of Mine which thou hast seen; even the gods always yearn to see it.
>
> Not by the Vedas, not by penance, nor by gifts, nor yet by sacrifice, can any behold Me in the Form that thou hast seen.
>
> But by single-minded devotion, O Arjuna, I may in this Form be known and seen, and truly entered into, O Parantapa![1]

First we should know the Lord, then see Him and then merge into Him. We may tell Him: "You may eat me up, I will not resist if You do. I am Yours, and I want to be one with You. What harm can it do even if You eat me up?" Telling us that He can grind us into paste with his teeth and throw it out, He tells us that we can know Him through *bhakti*. We can pass His test only through faith. When we know that everything takes place through Him and that we live and die as He wills, how can we be affected by anything?

> He alone comes to Me, O Pandava, who does My work, who has made Me his goal, who is My devotee, who has renounced attachment, who has ill will towards none.[2]

The Lord has given the whole substance of Chapter XI in this last verse. "He who works for Me is ever devoted to Me, who is attached to nothing and bears ill will to none—not even to a person who may have committed a heinous sin—but ever blesses him instead,—such a person comes to Me."

[155][3]

Chapter XII

September 10, 1926

To love God means to be free from attachment to any work. We should of course do work, but without egotistic attachment to it, simply for the love of God. A lustful man forgets his love for parents and children when seeking gratification of his lust and abandons

[1] XI, 51 to 54
[2] XI, 55
[3] The notes of this discourse were not taken by Mahadev Desai.

himself blindly to it. This also is a form of non-attachment. But the cause is a filthy one, whereas love for God is good. And now for the meaning of the verse [with which we began].

> Of the devotees who thus worship Thee, incessantly attached, and those who worship the Imperishable Unmanifest, which are the better yogis?[1]

The Lord replies:

> Those I regard as the best yogis who, riveting their minds on Me, ever attached, worship Me, with the highest faith.
>
> But those who worship the Imperishable, the Indefinable, the Unmanifest, the Omnipresent, the Unthinkable, the Rock-seated, the Immovable, the Unchanging,
>
> Keeping the whole host of senses in complete control, looking on all with an impartial eye, engrossed in the welfare of all beings—these come indeed to Me.[2]

[156][3]

September 11, 1926

> Greater is the travail of those whose mind is fixed on the Unmanifest; for it is hard for embodied mortals to gain the Unmanifest Goal.[4]

Those who have fixed their minds on the Unmanifest, that is, who worship the formless *Brahman*, experience greater difficulty in their effort, for it is extremely difficult for us, embodied souls, to know the unmanifest state.

It is very difficult to meditate on *shunya*. The moment we attribute a single quality to God, we cease to worship the Unmanifest. We must all, nevertheless, realize that beyond the Personal God there is a Formless Essence which our reason cannot comprehend. The consummation of *bhakti* lies in the *bhakta* merging in God, so that ultimately nothing but One Formless God remains. Since, however, it is easier to reach this state through the worship of the Personal God, the Lord says that the other path of seeking the Formless Essence directly is difficult to follow.

> But those who casting all their actions on Me, making Me their all in all, worship Me with the meditation of undivided devotion,

[1] XII, 1
[2] XII, 2 to 4
[3] The notes of this discourse were not taken by Mahadev Desai.
[4] XII, 5

Of such, whose thoughts are centred on Me, O Partha, I become ere long the Deliverer from the ocean of this world of death.[1]

[157]

September 12, 1926

The verse beginning with *kleshodhikatarastesham*[2] has given me great light; for it says that devotion to the Unmanifest is difficult to cultivate and that it is a harder path to follow. The reason given is very significant. If one retires to a forest and meditates on God, one can certainly realize Him. Likewise, one who serves as an accountant or clerk or manager in a firm can also do that. Both may be in the same state of mind and can, therefore, reach the same goal.

If we are sincere in our devotion to the cause of the spinning-wheel movement, the country is bound to embrace it in course of time. This faith is an illustration of the path which human beings should adopt, this is the path of *bhakti*, of the worship of a Personal God, for the spinning-wheel is visible to us and we see power in it. If, however, we worship the spinning-wheel for itself, our worship will be like the worship of the Unmanifest *Brahman*. It will be so, that is, if we merely worship the spinning-wheel without spinning on it. In my view, however, even if a time comes when we decide to withdraw into complete silence, it will not mean that we have abandoned the spinning-wheel or forsaken our aspiration for the *Brahman*. If indeed we ever retire to some high peak on the Himalayas, it will not be because we shall have lost interest in the spinning-wheel or been disillusioned with the people. To retire with such a motive will be no way of worshipping the Unmanifest. Of course, we shall benefit in some way even if we do so. If a man decides out of disgust to observe *brahmacharya* or to give up immorality, he will certainly benefit. But his action will not nave been prompted by true knowledge. Similarly, this idea of retirement is not meant for anyone who is disgusted with the spinning-wheel or with the people.

If a person, however, feels that there is an Essence beyond this universe of objects with name and form and that he must know it, and if he leaves this world and withdraws into solitude with that aim, that also is a legitimate path. But it is a difficult one even if one is sincere in one's aspiration to cultivate *bhakti* or the Unmanifest. The idea that the *Brahman* is real and that the visible universe is illusory is simply

[1] XII, 6 & 7
[2] XII, 5

beyond the capacity of our reason to comprehend. How difficult it must be, then, to live according to it? It is only when our body is completely transformed into an armour that nothing will pierce it. The Shastras narrate the stories of Prahlad[1] and Sudhanva[2]. As these stories show, it is possible, even while one is physically alive, to live as if one had renounced one's body. It is extremely difficult for a man to cultivate such a state of mind and live for ever absorbed in the *atman*. All but one in a crore live in illusion and error. They will not break away from their ignorant attachment and will have to be born again in this world.

The path of karma is the easiest to follow. The path of reason can lead one into great error. The path along which we have the least danger of falling into error is the one described in the verse beginning with *nehabhikramanashosti*[3]. Neither Christians nor Muslims, nor certainly Hindus, have risen above the worship of the Personal God. There is a book by Shibli[4] in which he has discussed the question whether or not God has a body. Even a person who aspires to cultivate devotion exclusively for the Unmanifest worships some visible symbol. We can of course understand with our intellect the idea that the body is unconnected with the *atman*. To say that one can attain *moksha* while physically alive only means that, after death, one will not have to be born again. Has anyone ever been able to say what his state after death will be? The spiritualists and Theosophists are not correct, in my view, about what they say concerning spirits, in the sense that no one has been able to know and tell the whole truth.

For this reason, Shri Krishna told Arjuna that it would be better for him to take no interest in the problem at all. "Silence is golden in this matter," he says. "Don't you see, you dear simpleton, that I Myself have taken on a human body? And you ask Me, of all persons, whether worship of the Unmanifest is better, or that of the Personal God. You had better stop asking such questions and do as I tell you. Free yourself from all thoughts of violence and act towards all creatures with equal love and regard." If we understand this truth, we

[1] A devotee of God who was persecuted by Hiranyakashipu, his unbelieving father

[2] Son of king Hansadhwaj in the *Mahabharata*, who defying his parents and adhering to truth and God, smilingly threw himself into a cauldron of boiling oil

[3] II, 40

[4] Presumably, *Life of the Prophet* by Maulana Shibli

would escape many problems. We should not mind if, because we worship the Personal God, we are called idolaters and criticized for being so. And, therefore, proceeding, Shri Krishna says:

> On Me set thy mind, on Me rest thy conviction; thus without doubt shalt thou remain only in Me hereafter.
>
> If thou canst not set thy mind steadily on Me, then by the method of constant practice seek to win Me, O Dhananjaya.[1]

What is the difference between *abhyasayoga* and meditating on God? I think the former means listening to readings from holy books, reflecting on them and letting the mind dwell on their teachings. It means associating ourselves with men who are engaged in doing these things and listening to prayer songs and group devotions, for every little offering we make, leaf, flower, fruit or water, ultimately reaches God.

[158][2]

September 14,1926

> If thou art also unequal to this method of constant practice, concentrate on service for Me, even thus serving Me thou shalt attain perfection.
>
> If thou art unable even to do this, then dedicating all to Me, with mind controlled, abandon the fruit of action.[3]

"Do not," Shri Krishna says, "be impatient to reap the fruit of your efforts."

> Better is knowledge than practice, better than knowledge is concentration, better than concentration is renunciation of the fruit of all action, from which directly issues peace.[4]

Here *jnana* does not mean mere learning, but it means genuine experience of truth in however limited a measure. Meditation, which means concentration of the mind [on God], is better than such *jnana*, but renunciation of the fruit of action is said to be better even than such meditation. Shri Krishna says this because a person practising meditation may possibly be deceiving himself. Moreover, *jnana* does not mean ultimate self-realization. *Jnana* and meditation are compared here in their restricted meanings and one is described as better

[1] XII, 8 & 9
[2] The notes of this discourse were taken by Punjabhai.
[3] XII, 10 & 11
[4] XII, 12

than the other. Renunciation of the fruits of action is mentioned last, but in truth it should be the first step. One who practises it becomes free from attachment to the ego.

Shri Krishna then proceeds to describe the characteristics of a man of this type.

> Who has ill will towards none, who is friendly and compassionate, who has shed all thought of 'mine' or 'I', who regards pain and pleasure alike, who is long-suffering;[1]

Friendship can exist only between equals, but one should feel compassion towards all. We cannot throw a cricket bat at a dog to hit it. How would we feel if our parents or teachers did that to us? Even if we are obedient sons of our parents, how would we feel towards them if they threw a bat at us to hit us? We shall not discuss here what our duty towards a dog is. It is certain, however, that it is not right for us to hit one. Forgiveness lies is not being angry even with a dog which may have bitten us. Tit for tat is a wrong principle. It is certainly not based on forgiveness. What can we gain by being wicked with the wicked? The good of both lies only in our showing love and compassion even for such persons.

We should understand the difference between selflessness and freedom from egotism. The first means not making a distinction between ourselves and others. It describes a person who regards the entire world as his family. The second term describes a person who believes that it is not he who has done a particular thing, that it is God who has done it.

[159]

September 15, 1926

> Who is ever content gifted with yoga, self-restrained, of firm conviction, who has dedicated his mind and reason to Me—that devotee (*bhakta*) of Mine is dear to Me.
>
> Who gives no trouble to the world, to whom the world causes no trouble, who is free from exultation, resentment, fear and vexation,—that man is dear to Me.[2]

The meaning of this verse is already contained in the term *adweshta*[3].

[1] XII, 13
[2] XII, 14 & 15
[3] In XII, 13

Who expects naught, who is pure, resourceful, unconcerned, untroubled, who indulges in no undertakings,—that devotee of Mine is dear to Me.[1]

The whole of Chapter XII describes the characteristics of a *bhakta*. If we compare the verses[2] which describe a *sthitaprajna* with these, we shall find them similar.

On whom does a *bhakta* of God rely except on Him? *Shuchi* means a person who is pure both in body and mind. *Daksha* means a person who does everything which he undertakes, wholly in a spirit of dedication to God. *Udasin* means one who remains unaffected even if all his many plans come to nothing. One who is a *sarvarambhapparityagi* will not go in search of work, work will come seeking him. God Himself will appoint his work and call him to it. Such a person, knowing that God shoulders the burdens of us all, leaves everything to Him. A slave need not go looking for work.

Who rejoices not, neither frets not grieves, who covets not, who abandons both good and ill—that devotee of Mine is dear to Me.

Who is same to foe and friend, who regards alike respect and disrespect, cold and heat, pleasure and pain, who is free from attachment;

Who weighs in equal scale blame and praise, who is silent, content with whatever his lot, who owns no home, who is of steady mind,—that devotee of Mine is dear to Me.[3]

"He does not get elated, though an emperor may bow to him," so sang Raychandbhai.

They who follow this essence of dharma, as I have told it, with faith, keeping Me as their goal,—those devotees are exceedingly dear to Me.[4]

All of us have our appointed tasks, as Brahmins or Kshatriyas, Vaisyas or Sudras. Anyone who does his work without hope of reward and in a disinterested spirit is a *bhakta* of God. The Second Chapter contains verses describing a *sthitaprajna*. They describe the state of mind of a yogi living absorbed in a mystic world. This Chapter XII describes, in our ordinary language, the state of mind of a *bhakta*.

[1] XII, 16
[2] In II, 55 to 72
[3] XII, 17 to 19
[4] XII, 20

[160]

Chapter XIII

September 16, 1926

From Chapter XIII begins a new subject. It discusses the body and its nature.

> This body, O Kaunteya, is called the Field; he who knows it is called the knower of the Field by those who know.[1]

Pandavas and Kauravas, that is, divine and demoniacal impulses, were fighting in this body, and God was watching the fight from a distance. Please do not believe that this is the history of a battle which took place on a little field near Hastinapur; the war is still going on. This is the verse we should keep in mind in order to understand the meaning of the phrase *dharmakshetra*.

> And understand Me to be, O Bharata, the knower of the Field in all the Fields; and the knowledge of the Field and the knower of the Field, I hold, is true knowledge.[2]

Our bodily life will have been lived to some purpose if it is spent in thinking which of these two we should serve and which we should go to for refuge.

[161]

September 17, 1926

> What that Field is, what its nature, what its modifications, and whence is what, as also who He is, and what His power—hear this briefly from Me.
>
> This subject has been sung by seers distinctly and in various ways, in different hymns as also in aphoristic texts about *Brahman* well reasoned and unequivocal.[3]

This theme has been expounded analytically by seers in manifold ways in various hymns. It has been discussed in the *Brahmasutras*[4] with steps logically arranged and clearly explaining the connection between cause and effect; and every word has been weighed so that not a syllable could be altered.

> The great elements, Individuation, Reason, the Unmanifest, the ten senses, and the one (mind), and the five spheres of the senses;

[1] XIII, 1
[2] XIII, 2
[3] XIII, 3 & 4
[4] Aphorisms on Vedanta philosophy by Badarayana

Desire, dislike, pleasure, pain, association, consciousness, cohesion—this, is sum, is what is called the Field with its modifications.[1]

The five *mahabhutas*, *ahamkar*, which sustains those *bhutas*, *buddhi*, the *avyakta* (*prakriti*), the ten sense, the mind and the objects of the five senses, so also desire, ill will, happiness, misery, association, consciousness, cohesion—this, in brief, is the Field with its modifications.

Sanghat means the power of the different elements in the body to co-operate with one another. *Dhriti* does not mean the abstract virtue of patience, but the property of the atoms in physical bodies to cohere. This property is made possible by *ahamkar*, which is latent in the unmanifest *prakriti*.

Freedom from pride and pretentiousness, non-violence, forgiveness, uprightness, service of the Master, purity, steadfastness, self-restraint;

Aversion from sense-objects, absence of conceit, realization of the painfulness and evil of birth, death, age and disease;

Absence of attachment, refusal to be wrapped up in one's children, wife, home and family, even-mindedness whether good or ill befall;

Unwavering and all-exclusive devotion to Me, resort to secluded spots, distaste for the haunts of men;

Settled conviction of the nature of the *atman*, perception of the goal of the knowledge of Truth,—

All this is declared to be knowledge and the reverse of it is ignorance.[2]

Shauch means outer and inner purity. It can be achieved by repeating Ramanama. This purity can be properly preserved only if the heart is constantly kept clean by repeating Ramanama. Every morning, we should weep with tears streaming from our eyes and ask ourselves why we did not remember to start repeating Ramanama, and why we, of all people, had a bad dream.

Absence of interest in the objects of senses means the awareness that certain things ought to be treated as forbidden by us, that they ought to be unacceptable to us.

The attributes described include the realization of the evils of birth and death, of old age, disease and suffering. One who realizes this starts with the thought: "I am sin." Why is it, we should ask ourselves, that we are afflicted with all manner of diseases? We ought to learn to cultivate equanimity of mind towards everything which may happen, good and evil. What does living in solitude mean?

[1] XIII, 5 & 6
[2] XIII, 7 to 11

Retiring into a cave to live there alone by oneself? Our effort will have been worthwhile only if we can feel solitude even in the midst of a huge crowd. To live in solitude means to sit in a spot meditating on one single thought.

[162]

September 18, 1926

> I will (now) expound to thee that which is to be known and knowing which one enjoys immortality; it is the supreme *Brahman* which has no beginning, which is called neither Being nor non-Being.[1]

Why does Shri Krishna say this, when they say that the *Brahman* is *sachchidananda* and that it alone is real? What he means to say is that *Brahman* does not mean being, the contrary of non-being. When we use the word *sat* in connection with the *Brahman*, its meaning transcends the two opposites and it signifies neither being nor non-being. It is, so to say, a neutral term. God cannot be described as evil, nor as good. He is above either. The reality which is God is beyond the three categories of time.

> Everywhere having hands and feet, everywhere having eyes, heads, mouths, everywhere having ears, It abides embracing everything in the universe.
>
> Seeming to possess the functions of the senses, It is devoid of all the senses; It touches naught, upholds all; having no *gunas*, It experiences *gunas*.
>
> Without all beings, yet within; immovable yet moving; so subtle that It cannot be perceived; so far and yet so near It is.
>
> Undivided, It seems to subsist divided in all beings; this *Brahman*—That which is to be known is the Sustainer of all, yet It is their Devourer and Creator.[2]

Though indivisible He seems to be there divided in all beings. He is worth knowing. He sustains all the creatures. He is their destroyer and yet the Creator of them all.

[163]

September 21, 1926

All contrary qualities are attributed to God because we cannot free our minds from dualities.

[1] XIII, 12
[2] XIII, 13 to 16

> Light of all lights, It is said to be beyond darkness; It is knowledge, the object of knowledge, to be gained only by knowledge; It is seated in the hearts of all.[1]

He is the Superlight. He is beyond darkness, that is, He is self-effulgent. . . .

He is Himself Knowledge. He is also the object of Knowledge to be realized only by Knowledge.

> Thus have I expounded in brief the Field, Knowledge and that which is to be known; My devotee, when he knows this, is worthy to become one with Me.
>
> Know that *prakriti* and *purusha* are both without beginning; know that all the modifications and *gunas* are born of *prakriti*.
>
> *Prakriti* is described as the cause in the creation of effects from causes; *Purusha* is described as the cause of the experiencing of pleasure and pain.[2]

Karya (anything done under compulsion of desires) and *karan* (the desires)—*prakriti* is the cause of their creation. *Purusha* is the cause of the experience of happiness and misery.

God is described as having two aspects. Under one aspect we should know Him as *prakriti* and under the other as *purusha*. The world is ever changing, and is therefore *maya*. The *purusha* is not transient, for He is the witness.

> For the *purusha*, residing in *prakriti*, experiences the *gunas* born of prakriti; attachment to these *gunas* is the cause of his birth in good or evil wombs.[3]

[164]

September 22, 1926

It is enough if we look upon God as a king and if all of us become His slaves, that is, disclaim any right over our bodies.

> What is called in this body the Witness, the Assentor, the Sustaner, the Experiencer, the Great Lord and also the Supreme *Atman*, is the Supreme Being.[4]

The *purusha* dwelling in this body is *para*, that is, beyond *maya* but He witnesses and gives consent. He is the *bharta* who sustains

[1] XIII, 17
[2] XIII, 18 to 20
[3] XIII, 21
[4] XIII, 22

everything, and also the Enjoyer. He is, moreover, the God of gods and is described as *Paramatman*.

Fire has the power of burning, but it can burn nothing without God's consent.

> He who thus knows *purusha* and *prakriti* with its *gunas*, is not born again, no matter how he live and move.[1]

If anyone claims that he is a *bhakta* of God and that, therefore, the sins he may commit are committed by God, he is wrong. But it would be right if the world said of him that he was a man of God and that everything he did was done through him by God. If anyone asks us whether we have attained spiritual knowledge, our reply should be: "Only God knows; I do not know." Our reason may be carried away by pride at any time and become evil, but the man who has attained to perfect knowledge will never be misguided by his reason. Our belief is that Rama and Krishna were incarnations of God. How can we be sure that King Rama was not a hypocrite and his rule was not evil? How do we know that Krishna was not the most wicked of men? But we have no right to indulge in such doubts. Whomsoever we worship, we should look upon as *Purna Purushottam*,[2] that is best. If we believe that the people of India have faith in God, we should worship Him accordingly.

This verse does not sanction self-indulgence, but points out the great value of *bhakti*. Every karma has the effect of binding the soul, but one can become free from the bonds of karma by dedicating all one's karmas to God. Thus, anyone who has become free from the egotistic idea of being the author of anything and who recognizes every moment of his life the authority of the Dweller within will never commit sin. It is in egotism that sin has its source. There is no sin where there is no consciousness of the "I". This verse explains how to act so that one may commit no sin.

> Some through meditation behold the *atman* by themselves in their own self; others by *Sankhya* Yoga, and others by Karma Yoga.[3]

[1] XIII, 23

[2] Perfect incarnation of God; the description is generally limited to Shri Krishna

[3] XIII, 24

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September 23, 1926

> Yet others, not knowing (Him) thus, worship (Him) having heard from others; they too pass beyond death, because of devoted adherence to what they have heard.[1]

If, having heard it explained that we shall be saved by dedicating all our work to God, we act in this spirit, then we can say that "he who . . . is not born again, no matter how he live and move" applies to us.

> Wherever something is born, animate or inanimate, know, thou Bharatarshabha, that it issues from the union of the Field and the knower of the Field.[2]

If we examine things separately, human beings, grains of dust, water, and so on, out conclusions [about their origin] will be different in each case. If, instead, we go to the very first cause, we shall no more think of objects having their distinctive forms and names. The Ravana who invests things with such charm that we willingly submit to its spell is far more dangerous than the other one of the story who killed people physically.

> Who sees abiding in all beings the same *Parameshvara*, imperishable in the perishable, he sees indeed.[3]

Though things are ever perishing, there is an indestructible element in everything which remains unaffected by any change, He alone sees who sees this.

> When he sees the same *Ishvara* abiding everywhere alike, he does not hurt himself by himself and hence he attains the highest goal.[4]

When he sees the same God abiding alike at all places he does not destroy the self by the self-*believes that, with the destruction of his body, he himself does not perish*—and consequently he achieves the highest status.

> Who sees that it is *prakriti* that performs all actions and thus (knows) that *atman* performs them not, he sees indeed.[5]

[1] XIII, 25
[2] XIII, 26
[3] XIII, 27
[4] XIII, 28
[5] XIII, 29

Who realizes that *prakriti* is the doer of all actions and sees that *atman* is not the doer—*though all things take place through God's maya, the Supreme Purusha involved in the process is not their author*— he alone who does so sees indeed.

> When he sees the diversity of beings as founded in unity and the whole expanse issuing therefrom, then he attains to *Brahman*.[1]

[166]

September 24, 1926

The *Gita* is a work intended to be a guide in life and we should be able to find in it support for all our actions in practical life. Not all can understand Dr. Tribhuvandas's book[2]; a vaid or a doctor can understand it more easily than laymen. We are in the same position as the latter [in relation to the *Gita*].

> This Imperishable Supreme *Atman*, O Kaunteya, though residing in the body, acts not and is not stained, for He has no beginning and no *gunas*.
>
> As the all-pervading ether, by reason of its subtlety, is not soiled, even so *atman* pervading every part of the body is not soiled.
>
> As the one Sun illumines the whole universe, even so the Master of the Field illumines the whole field.
>
> Those who, with the eyes of knowledge, thus perceive the distinction between the Field and the knower of the Field, and (the secret) of the relese of beings from *prakriti*, they attain to the Supreme.[3]

Who knows the difference between the Field and the knower of the Field, and who knows how creatures may become free from the bonds of *prakriti* and *maya*, he realizes *moksha*.

[167]

September 25, 1926

In Chapter XIII Shri Krishna explained the nature of the Field and the knower of the Field, the means of understanding the nature of each and the different characteristics of such knowledge. The very first characteristic of knowledge is stated to be *amanitva*. Hence, however great one's knowledge, if one is proud of that knowledge, one has read the *Gita* in vain. Where there is pride, there is no

[1] XIII, 30
[2] *Ma-ne Shikhaman* (Advice to a Mother)
[3] XIII, 31 to 34

knowledge. A man who has knowledge is always free from pride and ostentation, is straightforward, serves his guru, is pure and steady, is a man of self-control and is free from egotism, and he does not suffer because of old age and disease. He is not attached to his son or wife or home, is filled with unswerving devotion for the Lord, lives in solitude, takes interest in spiritual studies and is devoted to the pursuit of philosophic truth.

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Chapter XIV

September 26, 1926

We assemble here for studying the *Gita*, that is, for learning to follow its teaching in daily life. When we have a stomachache, we consult a book of home remedies and use the medicine suggested. The *Gita* is such a book of home remedies for us. We find in it medicines for our spiritual disease. If we want to make the *Gita* our *Kamadhenu*, we should make it our only source as far as possible. We may consult any number of books in the world in support of what we derive from the *Gita*, but should be satisfied with its sole authority. For this, we should have singleminded devotion to it. Such devotion should become spontaneous in us.

In a certain place, people used secretly to catch fish from the village pond. The village committee decided that, since in any case people caught fish,—did so in secret and were then afraid of being discovered—they should be required to take out licences for catching fish and some revenue raised by that means. This led to a dispute between two parties and the dispute was brought to me for settlement. I was afraid to give a decision, for people are not content to leave it to others to exercise discrimination in religious matters and faith on their behalf. If we are guided by some other person's ideas about dharma, we would be lost when he was dead. It would have been much better if those village people had decided to consult the *Gita* or the Veda or the Koran, instead of asking me. We should look upon any of these works as the means of solving our spiritual problems. But I was told afterwards in reply [to my suggestion] that one could find support from a book for any idea. The true meaning of *Kamadhuk*, however, is that it satisfies a pure wish only. If the *Gita* satisfies any wish, it

would not be a *kamadhuk* but would be aunt *Putana*[1]. When the authors of the Shastras said that Sudras and others should not read Vedas and other [sacred] works, probably their reason was that the latter might interpret these works to justify their own wishes in particular matters. Anyone who approaches the Shastras without scrupulous regard for truth and non-violence will derive no benefit from them. It is possible to draw any number of evil ideas from the Bible, the Vedas, the Koran and other scriptures. I have come across persons who justified even murder on the authority of these works. The *Gita*, however, will serve as a safe guide to anyone who reads it with truth and non-violence as his guiding principles. Everyone should decide for himself with its help. The work will not be a *Kamadhenu* to any person who consults Kishorelal or me, and accepts our interpretation of it. Instead of borrowing faith from others, one should have one's own faith and come to decisions accordingly. If the intention is sincere and there is no desire for outward show, any error that the decision may contain will be forgiven. A person acting in this manner learns a lesson from his error and discovers the right path.

> Yet again will I expound the highest and the best of all knowledge, knowing which all the sages passed hence to the highest perfection.
>
> By having recourse to this knowledge they became one with Me. They need not come to birth even at a creation, nor do they suffer at a dissolution.[2]

[169]

September 28, 1926

> The great *prakriti* is for me the womb in which I deposit the germ; from it all beings come to birth, O Bharata.[3]

Among the very first sentences in the Bible is; God said let there be light, and there was light; [that is,] let there be a universe, and a universe came into existence. A potter has to mould clay into a shape on his wheel and then put the thing into fire to bake; God does not have to act in that manner. He is a magician, He simply puts the seed in his imagination—which is *prakriti*, Lakshmi or Mother Goddess of the world—and the universe comes into existence.

[1] A female demon who attempted to kill the infant Krishna by suckling him, but was herself sucked to death by the child

[2] XIV,1 & 2

[3] XIV, 3

Whatever forms take birth in the various species, the great *prakriti* is their Mother and I the seed-giving Father.[1]

I am the *mahadyoni* of all the forms which take birth in the various species, as also the source of the seed—

Sattva, rajas and *tamas* are the *gunas* sprung from *prakriti*; it is they, O Mahabahu, that keep the imperishable Dweller bound to the body.

Of these *sattva*, being stainless, is light-giving and healing; it binds with the bond of happiness and the bond of knowledge, O sinless one.[2]

Those persons whose food, recreation and thoughts are *sattvik* are healthy. A person who merely eats *sattvik* food but is not *sattvik* in his general way of living and in his thoughts should be looked upon as a diseased person.

Rajas, know thou, is of the nature of passion, the source of thirst and attachment; it keeps man bound with the bond of action.[3]

Know that *rajas* is associated with desire. This may mean either that it has its source in, or that it is the cause of, desire. It creates attachment for cravings. It keeps the embodied one (i.e., living being) bound with the bond of karma.

Tamas, know thou, is born of ignorance, of mortal man's delusion; it keeps him bound with heedlessness, sloth and slumber, O Bharata.[4]

Pramad means all kinds of unworthy wishes arising in us. *Alas* is *pramad* in a worse form still. *Nidra,* which is next, is the state of mind natural to those sunk in darkness. A man who is established in *Samadhi* and is always awake feels no need to recline for rest or stretch his limbs for relaxation. A lethargic person would not get up even from a place which had caught fire. It is his slumber that is referred to as part of the meaning of *tamas*.

[170]

September 29, 1926

Sattva attaches man to happiness, *rajas* to action, and *tamas*, shrouding knowledge, attaches him to heedlessness.[5]

Sattva leads to happiness and the quality of *rajas* to karma. (This is not karma as it is defined in the *Gita*; it is the karma of him

[1] XIV, 4
[2] XIV, 5 & 6
[3] XIV, 7
[4] XIV, 8
[5] XIV, 9

who is always doing something or other without pausing to think.) *Tamas* covers up knowledge and leads to *pramad*.

> *Sattva* prevails, O Bharata, having overcome *rajas* and *tamas*; *rajas*, when it has overpowered *sattva* and *tamas*; likewise *tamas* reigns when *sattva* and *rajas* are crushed.[1]

If a person overcomes *rajas* and *tamas*, he can create *sattva*. (All the three exist in us. We should make a special effort to cultivate that which we want to strengthen.) If we wish to strengthen *rajas*, we should subdue the other two and, if the quality of *tamas*, we should stop the activity of both *sattva* and *rajas*.

> When the light—knowledge—shines forth from all the gates of this body, then it may be knwon that the *sattva* thrives.
>
> Greed, activity, assumption of undertakings, restlessness, craving—these are in evidence when *rajas* flourishes, O Bharatarshabha.
>
> Ignorance, dullness, heedlessness, and delusion—these are in evidence when *tamas* reigns, O Kurunandana.
>
> If the embodied one meets his end whilst *sattva* prevails, then he attains to the spotless worlds of the knowers of the Highest.[2]

That is, he attains spiritual welfare. When he is nearing death, such a person refuses to take any medicine which may be offered, and says that he will have nothing but Ganga water. He who awaits death in peace in this manner is a *sattvik* man.

> If he dies during the reign within him of *rajas*, he is born among men attached to action; and if he dies to *tamas*, he is born in a species not endowed with reason.[3]

The world of beings of action means the human world. The dark world means the world of brutes.

> The fruit of *sattvik* action is said to be stainless merit; that of *rajas* is pain and that of *tamas* ignorance.
>
> Of *sattva*, knowledge is born, of *rajas*, greed; of *tamas*, heedlessness, delusion and ignorance.
>
> Those abiding in *sattva* rise upwards, those in *rajas* stay midway, those in *tamas* sink downwards.
>
> When the seer perceives no agent another than the *gunas* and knows Him who is above the *gunas*, he attains to My being.[4]

When the *atman* dwelling as witness in this body sees none else, but knows only Him who is above the *gunas*, that person comes to Me.

[1] XIV, 10
[2] XIV, 11 to 14
[3] XIV, 15
[4] XIV, 16 to 19

When the embodied one transcends these three *gunas* which are born of his contact with the body, he is released from the pain of birth, death and age and attains *moksha*.[1]

[171]

September 30, 1926

Arjuna asks:

What, O Lord, are the marks of him who has transcended the three *gunas*? How does he conduct himself? How does he transcend the three *gunas*?

He, O Pandava, who does not disdain light, activity, and delusion when they come into being, nor desires them when they vanish.[2]

The Lord replies:

He who transcends the three *gunas*, does not suffer because of light or activity or darkness—that is, when any of them predominates over the others—and does not wish that it should prevail or subside.

This is one of the few difficult verses in the *Gita*. Should not one wish to have knowledge? In fact, in the *gayatri mantra* itself—in the best Vedic prayer—we pray to the shining Being to purify our intellect, to make it *sattvik*. We also pray: *tamaso ma jyotirgamaya*[3]. We aspire to be lifted from the darkness of attachment to illumination, from darkness to light. What, then, should we make of the statement in this verse? If we, living in the Ashram, did not cherish the aspiration which we do, we would fail in our aims. We must teach every child to say this prayer the very first thing in the morning. We should pray, tears streaming from our eyes, to be saved from the army of Kauravas, the army of deep slumber.

What, then, does the *Gita* teach? That we should not mind even if the slumber becomes deeper, should not even wish to get out of it? Should we say, I have no wish, the three states are the same to me? If anyone feels thus, you may be sure he will be totally ruined. Either we should regard this verse as an interpolation, or as the very key to the meaning of the *Gita*. If you remember, in the beginning Arjuna does not ask whether or not it is proper to kill, but asks what good he could expect from killing his kinsmen. And so the Lord asks him: "What is this distinction you make between kinsmen and others? Your duty is to do the job of killing, irrespective of whether they are your kinsmen

[1] XIV, 20
[2] XIV, 21 & 22
[3] "Take me from darkness to light," an Upanishadic prayer

or others." Similarly, Arjuna does not hear ask Shri Krishna which of the three *gunas* is best. He knows that ultimately one must transcend all the three. We can know a person who possesses one of the three *gunas*. It is not difficult to distinguish among the three classes. But can we find anyone in this world who has risen above the *gunas* altogether? This verse gives the Lord's reply to that question. What other reply could He give? A person who has risen above the three *gunas* will not let himself be deceived by the threefold distinction of good, bad and indifferent, and we shall not see in him the effects of any of the three *gunas*, so rare will be his state of mind. But this is an important chapter, and we shall think more about it tomorrow.

[172]

October 1, 1926

We discussed one idea yesterday. Talking of a person who does not feel concerned whether light, activity or darkness prevails or subsides, we saw that we find no one of the sort in the world. We come across no person who does not wish to get rid of what we regard as evil—lethargy, inertia or excessive activity—or does not wish to acquire pure knowledge. On the contrary, we pray for such knowledge. The word *jijnasu*[1] came into use because of our aspiration for knowledge, and we should pray that this aspiration may ever grow. This verse, therefore, should fill us with greater enthusiasm for doing our duty. Our aim is to strive to end the suffering of the entire world.

It is a general rule that we should not take any statement of a writer in isolation, but should consider it in its total context.

Now, then, for whom is this verse meant? Well, it is meant for one who has risen above the *gunas*. It enumerates the characteristics of such a person. This is what he would appear to us to be. We do not know how he in fact acts. We say, for instance, that the sun is a blazing fire, but scientists say that it is utterly black. An English poet has said that things are not what they seem. This is Sankara's theory of *maya*. It means that things do not appear as they are, that they are not what they seem to be, for everything is known to us through the medium of the waves in our minds.

Surely, the rainbow is not in truth what it seems to be. It is mere appearance. That is why it has been said that this world is like waves in

[1] One who seeks knowledge

water, or like a rainbow.

By what sign shall we, who live in the three-coloured world, recognize the man who has transcended the three *gunas*? He will not feel unhappy if the world mistakenly labels a man bad, or regards him as a man of knowledge or a lethargic man. What does it matter if the world thinks that we are mere agitators?

Thus, one who has risen above the three *gunas* will not seem to the world to be happy when one sees activity or unhappy when one sees lethargy. Such a person has come out of the duality of happiness and misery. He has risen above the pairs of opposites. A person like this should seem to us untouched, unconcerned, by anything. He should be absolutely free from egotism.

There is, thus, a state which is different even from the middle one. The *Bhagavad Gita* has stressed this point again and again. It teaches you just one thing, to shed the thought of "I" in such matters. We say *neti, neti*. You think I am such a person. In truth, I am "yes" and you are "no".[1] A person who has risen above the three *gunas* should appear to the world to be a cipher, a mere stone. That is, he sould have got rid of his "I". The world has looked upon Rama as God incarnate, for it could not do otherwise. Shankara asked Parvati how she could suppose that Rama felt miserable because of separation from Sita. He was, he said, pained to see that she had attributed ignorance to Rama, who had shed his egotism and worked like a cipher.

[173][2]

October 2, 1926

Every day we are born anew. *Ayurved* tells us that every seven years the whole body of a person changes into a new one, but that we are not aware of the change because it takes place slowly. The body does not change all of a sudden at the end of the seventh year, as if by magic, but the old body gradually wears out and is replaced by a new one. Thus, creation and destruction follow upon the heels of each other. There is no point of space so completely empty that you can put anything there without displacing something else, that is, you cannot create without destroying. Even the mind becomes either stronger or weaker day by day. Everything in the world is in a state of

[1] Gandhiji meant that one was more conscious of one's own "I" than the "I" of another.

[2] The notes of this discourse were not taken by Mahadev Desai.

flux. Nothing is fixed. Only God is both fixed and changing.

A person who has risen above the three *gunas* is one who has become a cipher. But when can one be in such a state? In his poem beginning with the words *apurva avasar*, Shri Rajchandra sings: "When the body has become as the burnt rope". That should be our condition. When a rope is burnt, only its form remains, and none of its other properties survive. Such a rope may be said to have risen above the three *gunas*, for it no longer has the property in virtue of which it can be used for connecting or binding things or drawing water from a well. A person who has risen above the three *gunas* is like such a rope. As a rope may produce on us the illusion of a snake, so we may think of such a person as being like inert stone or having no interest in any activity, but he does not care. It is our dharma to be like such burnt rope.

The only way of rising to this state beyond the three *gunas* is to cultivate the *sattvik* quality, for in order to rise to that state one is required to cultivate the virtues of fearlessness, humility, sincerity, and so on. So long as we live in the body, there is some evil, some violence. The most, therefore, that we can do is to be *sattvik* in the highest degree possible.

The state beyond the three *gunas* can only be imagined. It does not seem possible to maintain it in action. In concrete action, our state must be *sattvik* in the highest degree. We cannot say even of a seemingly perfect man that he has risen beyond the three *gunas*. We can only say that he seems to be like one who has so risen. Someone has said in English that, outwardly, we shall find no difference between a sinner and a man of virtue, but that the greater a sinner the more virtuous he can be. He ever thinks of his sinful life and gives up his vices one by one. To such a sinner, even a beautiful temptress like Rambha is but a wooden or stone figure. In this way, he becomes pure in no time.

If we wish to attain *moksha* any time, to rise above the three *gunas*, we should cultivate in us the *sattvik* qualities. That is why we pray: *tamaso ma jyotirgamaya*. So long as a person feels that he serves others, he is selfish. If he believes that he has risen above the three *gunas*, he is a great hypocrite. If we really serve others, people will certainly know that. How can we ourselves know it? It is said in the Bible: "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand does." That is the mark of a person being *sattvik*. The characteristics of such a person are almost similar to those of one who has risen above the three *gunas*, though, of course, the latter is undoubtedly on

a higher level than the former since he knows neither what his right hand nor what his left hand does.

> He, who, seated as one indifferent, is not shaken by the *gunas*, and stays still and moves not, knowing it is the *gunas* playing their parts;
>
> He who holds pleasure and pain alike, who sedate, who regards earth, stone and gold, as all the same, who is wise and weighs in equal scale things pleasant and unpleasant, who is even-minded in praise and blame;
>
> Who holds alike respect and disrespect, who is the same to friend and foe, who indulges in no undertakings—that man is called *gunatita*.[1]

A person who has risen above the three *gunas* knows what it is to be in that state but cannot describe it. If anyone can describe his state, he is not a person who has so risen, for he is still conscious of his "I".

> He who serves Me with an unwavering and exclusive *bhaktiyoga* transcends these *gunas* and is worthy to become one with *Brahman*.
>
> For I am the very image of *Brahman*, changeless and deathless, as also of everlasting dharma and perfect bliss.[2]

A person who struggles ceaselessly and hard to overcome his shortcomings may not perhaps succeed, in this birth, in overcoming them all, but in the end he will surely benefit. Today the world will censure him for his shortcomings; if, however, he bears all that in patience, and strives ever harder, he is sure ultimately to get peace of mind. Peace lies in the very fact of struggling. It is a source of great reassurance. Hence, we should strive to cultivate *sattvik* qualities.

[174][3]

Chapter XV

October 3, 1926

The Lord Said:

> With its root above and branches below, the *ashvattha* tree, they say, is imperishable; it has Vedic hymns for leaves; he who knows it knows the Vedas.[4]

Shvah means "tomorrow". *Ashvattha*, therefore, means this transient world which will not last beyond tomorrow. It is changing every moment. That is why it is *ashvattha*. He is a man of spiritual

[1] XIV, 23 to 25
[2] XIV, 26 & 27
[3] The notes of this discourse were not taken by Mahadev Desai.
[4] XV, 1

knowledge who knows the real nature of this world and also knows dharma.

[175]

October 5, 1926

> Above and below its branches spread, blossoming because of the *gunas*, having for their shoots the sense-objects; deep down in the world of men are ramified its roots, in the shape of the consequences of action.[1]

In the first verse, Shri Krishna shows the means of going beyond this world. In this verse, he has described the world from another point of view, that of the ignorant man.

> Its form as such is not here perceived, neither is its end, nor beginning, nor basis. Let men first hew down this deep-rooted *Ashvattha* with the sure weapon of detachment:
>
> Let him pray to win to that haven from which there is no return and seek to find refuge in the Primal Being from whom has emanated this ancient world of action.[2]

We shall remain apart from this world, while working in it, when we no longer look upon it as God's sport but, regarding it as the sphere in which people run after enjoyments, cut it off at the root with the weapon of non-co-operation. In no other way is it possible to cut it off at the roots, for it is without beginning and without end. That is why Shri Krishna has advised non-co-operation.

> To that imperishable haven those enlightened souls go—who are without pride and delusion, who have triumphed over the taints of attachment, who are ever in tune with the Supreme, whose passions have died, who are exempt from the pairs of opposites, such as pleasure and pain.[3]

They who crave to win that haven are indifferent to honour or insult. They are absolutely free from delusion. They have scored triumph over the taints of attachment. Those who are always *atmarthi* (that is, who are aware every moment that they are not their physical bodies but are the *atman*), whose cravings for objects of senses have subsided (who look not fear-struck but serene at the moment of death) are the enlightened souls that go to that imperishable haven.

[1] XV, 2
[2] XV, 3 & 4
[3] XV, 5

On every leaf of the banyan tree are inscribed the Vedas, which means that Ramanama is inscribed on its every leaf. The world is a holy gift made by God out of His grace; the tree of the world grows from the navel of Brahma. But there is another world with its root below, whose leaves are the various objects of sense-pleasure; that world is the world of desire.

Adhyatmanityah means those whose thoughts dwell with love on Rama, who repeat His name and do His work.

[176]

October 6, 1926

Neither the sun, nor the moon, nor fire illumine it; men who arrive there return not—that is My supreme abode.[1]

Its light is not borrowed from the sun or the moon or the fire, for it shines with its own light, men who reach it return not—that is my supreme abode.

A part indeed of Myself which has been the eternal *Jiva* in this world of life attracts the mind and the five senses from their place in *prakriti*.[2]

"Every hair on the body chants the Vedas," so sang Tulsidas.

When the Master (of the body) acquires a body and discards it, He carries these with Him wherever He goes, even as the wind carries scents from flower-beds.

Having settled Himself in the senses—ear, eye, touch, taste, and smell—as well as the mind, through them He frequents their objects.

The deluded perceive Him not as He leaves or settles in (a body) or enjoys (sense-objects) in association with the *gunas*; it is only those endowed with the eye of knowledge that see Him.[3]

We see only the world, but do not see God who is immanent in it.

[177]

October 7, 1926

Yogis who strive see Him seated in themselves; the witless ones who have not cleansed themselves see Him not, even though they strive.[4]

[1] XV, 6
[2] XV, 7
[3] XV, 8 to 10
[4] XV, 11

The first thing necessary, therefore, is the observance of the rules of *yama-niyama*.

One who has not observed them is apt to give wrong meanings to the verses of the *Gita*. Such a person would tell himself that, since the objects of senses are created by God, we should accept and enjoy them. They alone, who have become purified, who have suffered in the furnace of *tapas*, will read the right meanings.

> The light in the sun which illumines the whole universe and which is in the moon and in the fire—that light, know thou, is Mine.[1]

There is a story in an Upanishad which tells how some gods took the form of *yakshas* and went to test *Agni*, *Vayu*, etc., but were worsted.[2]

> It is I who, penetrating the earth, uphold all beings with my strength, and becoming the moon—the essence of all sap—nourish all herbs.[3]

Pervading the earth, I uphold all beings with my strength, and becoming the moon, the producer of all sap, nourish all herbs, food-crops and all else that grows in the fields.

> It is I who, becoming the *Vaishvanara* Fire and entering the bodies of all that breathe, assimilate the four kinds of food with the help of the outward and the inward breaths.[4]

Vaishvanara means the heat which digests food. The four types of food are what is sucked, what is licked, what is drunk and what is eaten.

> And I am seated in the hearts of all; from Me proceed memory, knowledge and the dispelling of doubt[5] ; it is I who am to be known in all the Vedas, I, the author of Vedanta and the knower of the Vedas.[6]

[178]

October 8, 1926

> There are two Beings in the world: *kshara* (perishable) and *akshara* (imperishable). Kshara embraces all creatures and their permanent basis is *akshara*.[7]

[1] XV, 12

[2] Gandhiji had probably the *Kenopanishad* in mind. If so, he did not recollect the details of the story correctly.

[3] XV, 13

[4] XV, 14

[5] In his rendering Gandhiji has used the word "intellect" in place of "the dispelling of doubt".

[6] XV, 15

[7] XV, 16

In this world there are two Beings—*kshara* and *akshara*. *Kshara* means all beings which are subject to death, which have a name and form. The immutable reality behind them, the power of which sustains all, is *akshara*.

> The Supreme Being is surely another—called *Paramatman* who as the Imperishable *Ishvara* pervades and supports the three worlds.
>
> Because I transcend the *kshara* and am also higher than the *akshara*, I am known in the world and in the Vedas as *Purushottama* (the Highest Being).[1]

Because I transcend *kshara*, that is, the world of name and form and am also higher than *akshara*, the world and the Vedas know Me as the highest among all beings.

> He who, undeluded, knows Me *Purushottama*, knows all, he worships Me with all his heart, O Bharata.[2]

He is above all opposites. Once we have risen above this world, which is but *maya*, need we think of God as its author?

> Thus I have revealed to thee, sinless one, this most mysterious Shastra; he who understands this, O Bharata, is a man of understanding, he has fulfilled his life's mission.[3]

I have disclosed to thee this most secret (the best even of the best) Shastra; he who understands this becomes a man of understanding, fulfils his life's mission and also becomes free from his debt.

[179]

Chapter XVI

October 9, 1926

The Lord said:

> Fearlessness, purity of heart, steadfastness in *jnana* and yoga—knowledge and action, beneficence, self-restraint, sacrifice, spiritual study, austerity, and uprightness;[4]
>
> Non-violence, truth, slowness to wrath, the spirit of dedication, serenity, aversion to slander, tenderness to all that lives, freedom from greed, gentleness, modesty, freedom from levity;
>
> Spiritedness, forgiveness, fortitude, purity, freedom from ill will and arrogance—these are to be found in one born with the divine heritage, O Bharata.[5]

[1] XV, 17 & 18
[2] XV, 19
[3] XV, 20
[4] XVI, 1
[5] XVI, 2 & 3

Sattvasanshuddhi means purity of the self or inner purity. *Jnanayogavyavasthiti* means certainty of knowledge; *jnanavyavasthiti* means unceasing direct experience, and *yogavyavasthiti* means constant awareness of God, sense of identity with Him. Ahimsa also embraces violence deliberately committed out of compassion (When Dr. Nangi was to perform an operation, he used to fast on the day previous, so that no emotional disturbances in him, like anger, etc., might affect the patient). A teacher who punishes his pupils without anger will have tears streaming from his eyes as he canes him. Consider Yudhisthira's forbearance—when, in King Virata's court, the King struck him, he did not let the drops of blood fall from his nostrils on the ground. Forbearance means returning good for evil, so profound is its significance.

[180]

October 10, 1926

> Pretentiousness, arrogance, self-conceit, wrath, coarseness, ignorance—these are to be found in one born with the devilish heritage.[1]

Dambha means pretending to possess what one does not. *Darpa* means boasting about something which one possesses in only a small measure. *Abhiman* means being proud of a quality which one possesses. Narad showed pride when he had vanquished Kamadeva[2] and he fell because of his pride. *Parushya* means harshness.

> The divine heritage makes for Freedom. The devilish for bondage. Grieve not, O Partha; thou art born with a divine, heritage.
>
> There are two orders of created beings in this world—the divine and the devilish; the divine order has been described in detail, hear from Me now of the devilish, O Partha.
>
> Men of the devil do not know what they may do and what they may not; neither purity, nor right conduct, not truth is to be found in them.[3]

Those who lack purity and truthfulness and whose conduct is not moral are diseased men and women. There can be no disease unless there is mental evil or bodily error. A person whose *atman* is awake every moment of his life constantly prays that his body be filled with light. How did Ladha Maharaj overcome his leukoderma?

[1] XVI, 4
[2] God of love
[3] XVI, 5 to 7

Every time he applied the *bel* leaves on the affected parts, he prayed that light should enter his body. We can prevent unhealthy emotions from disturbing our body only if we daily pray for the flow of light into it. I would ask every person who suffered from a disease if he was free from attachments and aversions. Outwardly we may be clean and our conduct may be moral; but, in the absence of truthfulness, it is all as hollow as a drum. We gather here to cultivate that truthfulness.

[181]

October 12, 1926

> 'Without truth, without basis, without God is the universe' they say; 'born of the union of the sexes, prompted by naught but lust.'
>
> Holding this view, these depraved souls, of feeble understanding and of fierce deeds, come forth as enemies of the world to destroy it.
>
> Given to insatiable lust, possessed by pretentiousness, arrogance and conceit, they seize wicked purposes in their delusion, and go about pledged to unclean deeds[1] .
>
> Given to boundless cares that end only with their death, making indulgence or lust their sole goal, convinced that that is all.
>
> Caught in a myriad snares of hope, slaves to lust and wrath, they seek unlawfully to amass wealth for the satisfaction of their appetites.[2]

How can desire and anger overcome him who is protected by willing submission to holy authority?

Anger consumes many times more energy than does joy. It is because people spend more energy than they can afford that injustice and tyranny prevail in the world.

[182]

October 13, 1926

Anger involves expenditure of energy by thirteen muscles, whereas laughter by only ten. Enjoyment of sense-pleasure leads to death. *Brahmacharya* leads to immortality. Once Raychandbhai was suffering from headache. I asked him to which theatre he had been to see a play. He replied that he had been witnessing a play at night, lying at home, and said that he did not wish to consume his energy in

[1] Gandhiji's rendering has "of sinful bent of mind" in place of "pledged to unclean deeds".

[2] XVI, 8 to 12

trying to cure his headache. It was good, he told me, that I saw him as he was. He was, he said, less powerful than God's law.

Sexual indulgence necessarily leads to death. If people gave themselves up to it, God's rule in the world would end, and Satan's prevail.

> This have I gained today; this aspiration shall I now attain; this wealth is mine; this likewise shall be mine hereafter.
>
> This enemy I have already slain, others also I shall slay; lord of all am I; enjoyment is mine, perfection is mine, strength is mine, happiness is mine.
>
> 'Wealthy am I, and high-born. What other is like unto me? I shall perform a sacrifice! I shall give alms! I shall be merry!' Thus think they, by ignorance deluded.[1]

Living in this way, man gambles away the *ratnachintamani*[2] of his body. Even Yudhishthira had gambled, and lost Draupadi too in the throw. We can, however, say that he had less of anger and desire in him than Duryodhana. We ourselves are full of that mixture. We must strive our best to raise ourselves to a higher level.

> And tossed about by diverse fancies, caught in the net of delusion, stuck deep in the indulgence of appetites, into foul hell they fall.
>
> Wise in their own conceit, stubborn, full of the intoxication of pelf and pride, they offer nominal sacrifices for show, contrary to the rule.[3]

Yajna is only a pretext; their real aim is to serve their own interests.

[183]

October 14, 1926

> Given to pride, force, arrogance, lust and wrath they are deriders indeed, scorning Me in their own and others' bodies.
>
> These cruel scorners, lowest of mankind and vile, I hurl down again and again, into devilish wombs.
>
> Doomed to devilish wombs, these deluded ones, far from ever coming to Me, sink lower and lower in birth after birth.[4]
>
> Threefold is this gate of hell, leading man to perdition,—Lust, Wrath

[1] XVI, 13 to 15
[2] A precious stone which yields everything that is desired
[3] XVI, 16 & 17
[4] XVI, 18 to 20

and Greed; these three, therefore, should be shunned.[1]

One who keeps himself free from these does not devote himself to the pursuit of worldly happiness, but follows the path of spiritual welfare.

> The man who escapes these three gates of Darkness, O Kaunteya, works out his welfare and thence reaches the highest state.
>
> He who forsakes the rule of Shastra and does but the bidding of his selfish desires, gains neither perfection, nor happiness, nor the highest state.
>
> Therefore let Shastra be thy authority for determining what ought to be done and what ought not to be done; ascertain thou the rule of the Shastra and do thy task here (accordingly).[2]

In this context, we should say that we would obey our conscience. But, then, even Ravana would say that he obeyed his conscience. He alone can use this plea whose mind has become puri-fied by knowledge acquired from Shastras. So the question is, what is Shastra? The Vedas, the works of history, the *Puranas* all these are Shastras. They, however, contain contradictory statements. Shastra comes from the root *shas*. Someone has argued that the *Gita* teaches the principle of "tit for tat", and quotes Shaikh Sadi in his support, who said that he who was good to the bad would be bad to the good. But Shastra is subject to the principles of truth and non-violence. Shastra rules, and does not aim at spreading anarchy. But of this more tomorrow.

[184]

October 15, 1926

Whenever we have a social problem to discuss, we should think of authorities and consult them; as, for instance, in connection with the problem of dogs which is unnecessarily agitating me. If, however, our foundations are not strong, consulting a Shastra will avail us nothing. If the foundations are strong, it should be our principle that we will cling to truth at any cost. We shall have read Shastras to some purpose if we are determined that, even if Yudhishthira told a lie, our ideal shall be truth.

If by Shastra we mean a book, the Bible, the Koran and other

[1] XVI, 21
[2] XVI, 22 to 24

books have been before mankind for so many hundreds of years, but no one has come to the end of these problems. The intention in this verse is to tell us not to look upon ourselves as an authority, that is, not to be guided by our wishes and feelings. So long as one's intellect has not become vigilant and the heart is not filled exclusively with Ramanama, one should be ruled by the authority of the Shastras. Here Shri Krishna refers to the struggle in us between divine and demoniac impulses. So long as we are in that condition, we should be guided by the authority of the Shastras. That Shastra means *shishtachara*[1] that is, we should follow the example of those forefathers of ours who were holy and fearless. The ideal of conduct among shepherds may be stealing sheep, and among meat-eaters eating meat. A boy once wanted to discuss with me whether or not we can eat meat, but his mother did not let me discuss the subject with him. She was right. She thought that nothing could be brought about by force. If the boy became a vegetarian, she thought, there would be a quarrel in the family. One must certainly fear *shishtachara*. It may be disregarded only if it requires one to violate truth, etc. Where the tradition of guru and disciple has disappeared, men will follow their own wishes. The *Gita* has advised us: *tadviddhi pranipatena*[2] but it is not so easy to find a guru. If we keep on the search for a guru, we shall always have some wholesome fear in our heart. With the thought of a guru constantly in our mind, it will remain pure. The *Gita* tells us that, if the divine impulse has quickened in us, we should be humble. [One should think] "I know nothing. I want to ask God, or a guru, but how may I see either?" We should, therefore, pray. He who prays with faith in God will one day be saved. He who talks as if *Brahman* was in him will not be saved. The literal meaning of the verse is that we should be guided by the authority of the Shastras. The derived meaning is that we should be guided by *shishtachara*. To be *shishta* means that, in the absence of a guru, we should be humble, and to be humble means to worship our personal God. That is, we should look upon ourselves as insignificant creatures, like bugs and fleas, and worship God. If you are humble, you will be saved. If you are humble and sincere, the veils before your eyes will be lifted one after another.

Chapter XVII begins with the idea explained in this verse.

[1] The prevailing social standard of right conduct

[2] Acquire knowledge by prostrating yourself (before a guru); in IV, 34

Chapter XVII

Arjuna said:

> What, then, O Krishna, is the position of those who forsake the rule of Shastra and yet worship with faith? Do they act from *sattva* or *rajas* or *tamas?*[1]

By disregarding the manner enjoined in the Shastras means by disregarding the *shishtachara*, or without the guidance of a guru, and with faith means with some little humility. Shri Krishna's reply to this is indirect. Not to accept Shastra as an authority and to have faith are inconsistent with each other. Faith consists in accepting the authority of Shastra.

Shri Krishna replies:

> Threefold is the faith of men, an expression of their nature in each case; it is *sattvik, rajas* or *tamas*. Hear thou of it.[2]

Arjuna and Shri Krishna are friends, but the former does not understand that Shri Krishna is playing with him. It is certainly not Arjuna's intention to corner Shri Krishna in argument. But the latter thinks that He might play with Arjuna a little. The Lord need not bother Himself why Arjuna put this question. He assumes that a person may disregard the manner enjoined in the Shastras, and then asks what kind of faith such a person has. Is it *sattvik* or *rajasik* or *tamasik*?

[185]

October 16, 1926

> The faith of every man is in accord with his innate character; man is made up of faith; whatever his object of faith, even so is he.[3]

Faith can be enlightened. Everyone needs faith, provided one is not misguided by it. If anyone clings to a straw, he will certainly fall, but he will not fall who clings to the branch of a tree. Mrs. Besant has said that a person needs steps till he has climbed to the top. Shastra is such a step. Once a person has climbed to the top, he needs neither steps nor banisters. The top appears so perfectly flat to him that he pays no attention to what is below.

[1] XVII, 1
[2] XVII, 2
[3] XVII, 3

Sattvik persons worship the gods[1], *rajasik* ones, the *Yakshas* and *Rakshasas*; and others—men of *tamas*—worship manes and spirits.

Those men who, wedded to pretentiousness and arrogance, possessed by the violence of lust and passion, practise fierce austerity not ordained by Shastra.

They, whilst they torture the several elements that make up their bodies, torture Me too dwelling in them; know them to be of unholy resolves.[2]

Those who do not even abide by the rules enjoined by Shastras but in their pride follow their self-chosen way fall into such a state.

If you put truth in one scale of the measure and *tapas*, Shastras and similar things in the other scale, the former will weigh heavier. That Shastra which seeks to suppress truth is of little use. Those who follow such a Shastra are men of demoniac inclination. If truth is timeless, so is untruth; and, likewise, if light is timeless, so is darkness too. We should embrace what is timeless only if it is combined with truth.

[186]

October 17, 1926

If a Shastra is not supported by truth and non-violence, it may even be the means of our fall. As they say, we should swim in our father's well, not drown ourselves in it. Father in this context means *shishtachara*. It is said that one cannot get knowledge without a guru. The moment you have found one, you know what the *shishtachara* is. But these are such hard times that one does not easily find a guru. If we are doing God's work, it is bound to be in harmony with *shisht-achara*. That is why we are enjoined to keep repeating the Lord's name while doing any work. This verse explains in what spirit we should do this. Our faith must not be in ghosts and spirits or in demons. We ought to pray only to a beneficent deity.

Of three kinds again is the food that is dear to each; so also are sacrifice, austerity, and charity. Hear how they differ.

Victuals that add to one's years, vitality strength, health, happiness and appetite; are savoury, rich, substantial and inviting, are dear to the *sattvik*.[3]

Victuals that are bitter, sour, salty, overhot, spicy, dry, burning, and

[1] In his rendering Gandhiji has added here: "Gods mean *sattvik* powers or impulses".

[2] XVII, 4 to 6

[3] XVII, 7 & 8

causing pain, bitterness and disease, are dear to the *rajas.*

Food which has become cold, insipid, putrid, stale, discarded and unfit for sacrifice, is dear to the *tamas.*[1]

If we cling to this classification, we shall not come to the right conclusion. Shri Krishna has first explained the qualities of the *sattvik* man, and then his taste, etc. *Ladu*[2]-lovers have included *ladus* in *sattvik* food. They do not help one to safeguard one's *brahmacharya*. In interpreting the meaning of *rasya*[3], too, we should use discrimination. There must have been a reason in that age for making such a classification, for there must have been persons even then who would eat a handful of chillies at a time. In the present age, there is no need for eating *snigdha*[4] foods. If here we start eating ghee, our food would be, not *sattvik* or *rajasik,* but such as a demon would love. The inclusion of bitter, sour and saltish foods is quite correct. Then the verse mentions food which has been left over. Stilton cheese (a food containing countless germs) is of this class. *Daliya*[5] and *mamara*[6] do not belong to this class.

[187]

October 19, 1926

That sacrifice is *sattvik* which is willingly offered as a duty without desire for fruit and according to the rule.

But when sacrifice is offered with an eye to fruit and for vain glory, know, O Bharatashreshtha, that it is *rajas.*

Sacrifice which is contrary to the rule, which produces no food[7], which lacks the sacred text, which involves no giving up and which is devoid of faith is said to be *tamas*.[8]

A *yajna* without *dakshina* means one in which no gifts are made to the poor.

Homage to the gods, to Brahmins, to gurus and to wise men; cleanliness, uprightness, *brahmacharya* and non-violence—these constitute

[1] XVII, 9 & 10
[2] A sweet shaped like a ball
[3] Relishing
[4] Containing fat
[5] & [6] Processed gram and rice
[7] Gandhiji's rendering has "grain" in place of "food".
[8] XVII, 11 to 13

austerity (*tapas*) of the body.[1]

That is *tapas* in which one goes through physical discomfort or hardship.

Words that cause no hurt, that are true, loving and helpful, and spiritual study constitute austerity of speech.

Serenity, benignity, silence, self-restraint, and purity of the spirit—these constitute austerity of the mind.

This threefold austerity practised in perfect faith by men not desirous of fruit, and disciplined, is said to be *sattvik*.

Austerity which is practised with an eye to gain praise, honour and homage and for ostentation is said to be *rajas*; it is fleeting and unstable.

Austerity which is practised from any foolish obsession, either to torture oneself or to procure another's ruin, is called *tamas*.[2]

A person who fasts for a hundred days or keeps standing on one foot performs not *sattvik* but *tamasik tapas.*

[188]

October 20, 1926

Charity, given as a matter of duty, without expectation of any return,[3] at the right place and time, and to the right person is said to be *sattvik*.[4]

It may not in all circumstances be right to give what it is right to give in certain circumstances. This is also true about recipients. It is but right to give food to one who has lost the use of his limbs altogether. But suppose there is a blind man who is suffering from fever and comes begging. He would be an unworthy object of our charity if we gave him food. If we give him a blanket and he sells it, then also will our gift have been made to an unworthy person. In one place, it may be right to give food, in another something else, and in still another a third thing, The principle is the same in all cases, but its application will vary according to place, time and person. The same is true about *yajnas.*

Charity, which is given either in the hope of receiving in return, or with a view to winning merit, or grudgingly, is declared to be *rajas.*

Charity given at the wrong place and time, and to an undeserving

[1] XVII, 14
[2] XVII, 15 to 19
[3] Gandhiji's rendering has: "to one who is not in a position to do good in turn"
[4] XVII, 20

recipient, disrespectfully and with contempt, is declared to the *tamas*.

AUM TAT SAT has been declared to be the threefold name of *Brahman* and by that name were created of old the *Brahmanas*, the Vedas and sacrifices.

Therefore, with AUM ever on their lips, all the rites of sacrifice, charity and austerity, proceed always according to the rule, by *Brahma-vadins*[1].[2]

Those who seek knowledge of the *Brahman* dedicate all their *yajnas*, gifts and *tapas* to Shri Krishna. They do everything in the name of Hari[3], in the name of *Aum*.

With utterance of TAT and without desire for fruit are the several rites of sacrifice, austerity and charity performed by those seeking Freedom.

SAT is employed in the sense of 'real' and 'good'; O Partha, Sat is also applied to beautiful deeds.

[27][4] Constancy in sacrifice, austerity and charity, is called SAT; and all work for these purpose is also SAT.[5]

Aum comes first in all these actions. *Sat* signifies the process of their performance. If we wish that we should be steady in our *yajnas* and gifts, then *Aum* signifies the commencement and *sat* signifies the process. *Sat* signifies process and also stands for Hari. *Brahma satyam jaganmithya* has been stated in this sense.

Whatever is done, O Partha, by way of sacrifice, charity or austerity or any other work, is called *asat* if done without faith. It counts for naught hereafter as here.[6]

Aum tat sat means that all that exists is *Aum*, that our "I" is unreal, that God alone is and nothing else is real, that we are all running after things in vain.

We should even eat our food in a *sattvik* spirit. There are persons who eat as an act of worship. We should resolve that we wish to live as ciphers in this world. The world may kick us from one place to another as if we were a ball, but we will not let ourselves be so kicked. We will use our knowledge, our bodies, our strength and money, all

[1] Expounders of *Brahman*

[2] XVII, 21 to 24

[3] Vishnu

[4] Gandhiji has not given a translation of this verse. He has, however, referred to its content in the comment which follows.

[5] XVII, 25 to 27

[6] XVII, 28

for the service of others, and that too not with the desire to earn a good name for ourselves. Thus, *Aum tat sat* is a vow of humility. It teaches us to realize our utter insignificance, to be completely free from egotism. If the Imam Saheb[1] would recite it, here is a *kalama* for him.

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October 21, 1926

The threefold classification of gifts, faith, *tapas*, etc., given in Chapter XVII is only an illustration. We can make as many categories as we like. The intention was to show that the reign of the three *gunas* prevails throughout the universe. A cooking or other utensil is an inert object, but it contains air inside; likewise, everything is pervaded by the spirit. Existing apart from the three *gunas* is God. We have to merge in Him. Even if we cultivate the *sattvik* qualities to their highest perfection in us, something of *rajasik* and *tamasik* will remain. But, without worrying ourselves about this, we should continue to strive and cultivate finer and finer *sattvik* qualities in us, for the impulses which agitate us the least and consume the least amount of our energy are *sattvik* impulses. Though Janaka was as good as a disembodied soul even while he lived in a body, the difference between him and us is only one of degree. It is true, of course, that for one like him there was no returning to this life after he was dead.

Chapter XVIII

In Chapter XVIII Arjuna requests Shri Krishna to explain to him the distinction between sannyasa and *tyaga*. He says:

> Mahabahu! I would fain learn severally the secret of *sannyasa* and of *tyga*, O Hrishikesha, O Keshinishudana.[2]

The Lord replies:

> Renunciation of actions springing from selfish desire is described as *sannyasa* by the seers; abandonment of the fruit of all action is called *tyaga* by the wise.[3]

There is no real distinction between the two. *Kamya* karma seems to mean all karma—though I am not sure that I am right. Total renunciation of karma is not possible. The renunciation of all karma, then, is sannyasa, and *tyaga* means renunciation of fruits of karma.

[1] Abdul Kadir Bawazeer
[2] XVIII, 1
[3] XVIII, 2

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October 22, 1926

Yesterday I interpreted *kamya* karma to mean all karmas. Surendra then reminded me of the explanation given by Vinoba, namely, karmas undertaken with definite motives. But every karma has some motive behind it. That we may be unattached to it is a different matter, but the motive is bound to be served. The existence of the body itself means karma. Though we live in the body, we can live unconcerned with it.

> Some thoughtful persons say: "All action should be abandoned as an evil"; others say: "Action for sacrifice, charity and austerity should not be relinquished."
>
> Hear my decision in this matter of *tyaga*, O Bharatasattama; for *tyaga*, too, O mightiest of men, has been described to be of three kinds.
>
> Action for sacrifice, charity and austerity may not be abandoned; it must needs be performed. Sacrifice, charity and austerity are purifiers of the wise.
>
> But even these actions should be performed abandoning all attachment and fruit; such, O Partha, is my best and considered opinion.
>
> It is not right to renounce one's allotted task; its abandonment, from delusion, is said to be *tamas*.
>
> He who abandons action, deeming it painful and for fear of straining his limbs, he will never gain the fruit of abandonment, for his abandonment is *rajas*.
>
> But when an allotted task is performed from a sense of duty and with abandonment of attachment and fruit, O Arjuna, that abandonment is deemed to be *sattvik*.
>
> Neither does he disdain unpleasent action, nor does he cling to pleasant action—this wise man full of *sattva*, who practises abandonment, and who has shaken off all doubts.
>
> For the embodied one cannot completely abandon action; but he who abandons the fruit of action is named a *tyagi*.[1]

When we have resolved to renounce the fruits of all karmas, we will engage ourselves only in karma which is in the nature of a duty for us. By the sannyasa mentioned in the first verse, the poet meant renunciation of all karmas. The central idea of Chapter XVII was that one should work without selfish motives. The state of mind in which such motives will have disappeared most is the *sattvik* state. Total renunciation of karma is impossible while we live in the body, and the *atman's* connection with the body will remain right till the moment of death. What a person who has fallen into a state of

[1] XVIII, 3 to 11

samadhi can do is to stop the movements of the heart so that the heart-beat will not be perceived even with a stethoscope. The practitioners of yoga tell us that the soul can leave the body at will and fly away for a while. But to what purpose? We can certainly reduce the pulse-rate at will. The truth is that if a yogi really wishes that his soul should leave his body, his faculty of speech and his mind, it will certainly do so. I have no doubt that, if we do not will that the body should endure, it will certainly fall. But our desire to give up the body is never intense, for we feel even a pin-prick. A person like Ramdas Swami can even dwell in another's body and feel his suffering, but he cannot be conscious of the bodies of all, except in imagination. All that we can do, therefore, is to shun karmas which have any trace of egotism in them.

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October 23, 1926

Harishchandra's actions belonged to the category of *tyaga.* He was equally ready, when duty required him, to perform appar-ently evil as well as good actions.

> To those who do not practise abandonment accrues, when they pass away, the fruit of action which is of three kinds: disagreeable, agreeable, mixed; but never to the sannyasis.
>
> Learn, from me, O Mahabahu, the five factors mentioned in the *Sankhya* doctrine,[1] for the accomplishment of all action:
>
> The field, the doer, the various means, the several different operations, fifth and the last, the Unseen.[2]

When Fate was no longer favourable, Arjuna was robbed though he still had with him the same bow and arrows which he always had.

> Whatever action, right or wrong, a man undertakes to do with the body, speech or mind, these are the five factors thereof.
>
> This being so, he who, by reason of unenlightened intellect, sees the unconditioned *atman* as the agent—such a man is dense and unseeing.
>
> He who is free from all sense of "I", whose motive is untainted, slays not nor is bound, even though he slay all these worlds.[3]

If I put a pebble in . . . 's[4] hand and incite him to fling it at . . .[5]

[1] Gandhiji's rendering adds here: "in which karma has been discussed".
[2] XVIII, 12 to 14
[3] XVIII, 15 to 17
[4] The names are omitted in the source.
[5] *Ibid*

would the sin be on his head or mine? Arjuna dragged Krishna all the way from Dwarka [to Hastinapur] and was now saying that he did not wish to fight. Was that right? Shri Krishna tells Arjuna: "I ask you to fight." What harm need Arjuna fear, then? The sword in Harishchandra's hand was not his, nor was it Kashiraja's.[1] Harishchandra could have resorted to satyagraha, but should he have done that simply because the person in question was Taramati? When one's self-interest is involved, one should do an [unpleasant] thing irrespective of whether in itself it ought to be done. If, however, no self-interest had been involved, if it was not that the woman was his queen, if Harishchandra had been repelled by the deed itself, so much so that his hand would have refused to obey him, he could have resorted to satyagraha.

If read superficially, this verse is likely to mislead the reader. We shall not find anywhere in the world a perfect example of such a person; as in geometry we require imaginary, ideal figures, so in practical affairs, too, we require ideal instances when discussing ethical issues. This verse, therefore, can be construed thus only: "We may say [for the sake of argument] that he whose sense of 'I' has melted away altogether and whose reason is tainted with no trace of evil whatever can kill the entire world; but one who is completely free from the egotistic sense of 'I' has no body, and one whose reason is absolutely pure is simultaneously conscious of time in all its categories, past, present and futue, and there is only one such being, God, Who does nothing though doing everything and Who is non-violent though He kills". Man, therefor, has only one course open to him, that of not killing and of following the *shishtachara*—of following Shastra.

> Knowledge, the object of knowledge, and the knower compose the threefold urge to action; the means, the action and the doer compose the threefold sum of action.[2]

For instance, the idea that we must get swaraj is knowledge, and the person who deserves it is the knower. But this is not enough to bring us swaraj. There should be corresponding work for swaraj—the means of winning it. We can think out similar instances of any class of

[1] Harishchandra was sold by sage Vishwamitra to recover the sacrificial gift due from him. When his wife, Taramati, came to the burning-ground to cremate her son, Harishchandra threatened to strike her with his sword because she prevented him from obeying his master and removing the shroud from the corpse.

[2] XVIII, 18

activities.

> Knowledge, action, and the doer are of three kinds according to their different *gunas*; hear thou these, just as they have been described in the science of the *gunas*.
>
> Know that knowledge whereby one sees in all beings immutable entity—a unity in diversity—to be *sattvik*.[1]

Things in this world seem distinct from one another, but in reality they are not so. If the jaundice in our eyes disappears, we would see all things as one, undivided reality.

> That knowledge which perceives separately in all beings several entities of diverse kinds, know thou to be *rajas*.[2]

That knowledge is *rajasik* which perceives separately in all beings different entities of various kinds.

It is through the *rajas* spirit that we make these three classes: I, mine and others. Attachments and aversions arise from this. The *sattvik* state has no room for attachments and aversions.

> And knowledge which, without reason, clings to one single thing, as though it were everything, which misses the true essence and is superficial is *tamas*.[3]

Tamas jnana is that in virtue of which a person does every-thing with attachment, without seeing any purpose in what he does and believing that it is without significance and of no consequence.

In *tamas* knowledge, all kinds of notions are mixed up and it is believed that there is no such Being as God.

> That action is called *sattvik* which, being one's allotted task, is performed without attachment, without like or dislike, and without a desire for fruit.
>
> That action which is prompted by the desire for fruit or by the thought of 'I', and which involves much dissipation of energy is called *rajas*.[4]

A *sattvik* person does not go seeking work. A *rajasik* person is engaged one day in inventing an aeroplane and is busy the next in discovering how to reach India from England in five hours. Such a person sets apart half an hour out of twenty-four to deceive his *atman*, and devotes the remaining twenty-three and a half to his body.

Is the charkha work *rajasik*, or is it *sattvik* too? This can be

[1] XVIII, 19 & 20
[2] XVIII, 21
[3] XVIII, 22
[4] XVIII, 23 & 24

decided only by reference to the spirit in which it is done. If a person plies the charkha merely for the sake of money, his work is *rajasik*, but it will be *sattvik* if he does so for the good of the world, in the spirit of a *yajna*.

> That action which is blindly undertaken without any regard to capacity and consequences, involving loss and hurt, is called *tamas*.[1]

In *tamas*, a person plunges into work without thinking of the consequences. One who works without desiring the fruit of his work knows what that fruit will be, but does not yearn for it.

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October 26, 1926

> That doer is called *sattvik* who has shed all attachment, all thought of 'I', who is filled with firmness and zeal, and who recks neither success nor failure.[2]

Free from the sense of "I" means one who works merely as an instrument. To say that he should have no attachment does not mean that he should be indifferent; on the contrary, such a person should be more active than others. The relation of God's devotee to God is, in one sense, that of the lover and the beloved, though in reality the two are as different from each other as north is from south. The devotee remains unattached [to sense-pleasures], whereas the lustful lover and beloved lose their vitality day by day. Do the British officials who come out to India lack anything in endurance and energy? They seem to be yogis, but they are not free from attachment. They believe in ends, and will adopt any means, fair or foul, for their sake. But one who is free from attachment is concerned with nothing but work and displays unfailing determination and energy. He displays determination and energy even in plying the charkha. A person who works in this spirit is a *sattvik* doer.

> That doer is said to be *rajas* who is passionate, desirous of the fruit of action, greedy, violent, unclean, and[3] moved by joy and sorrow.
>
> That doer is called *tamas* who is undisciplined, vulgar, stubborn, knavish, spiteful[4], indolent, woebegone, and dilatory.

[1] XVIII, 25

[2] XVIII, 26

[3] Gandhiji's rendering has; "easily excited by joy or sorrow in success or failure".

[4] In place of "spiteful", Gandhiji's rendering has: "lacking firmness of decision".

Hear now, O Dhananjaya, detailed fully and severally, the threefold division of understanding and will, according to their *gunas*.

That understanding, O Partha, is *sattvik* which knows action from inaction, what ought to be done from what ought not to be done, fear from fearlessness[1] and bondage from release.

That understanding, O Partha, is *rajas*, which decides erroneously between right and wrong, between what ought to be done and what ought not to be done.

That understanding. O Partha, is *tamas* which, shrouded in darkness, thinks wrong to be right and mistakes[2] everything for its reverse[3].

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October 27, 1926

That will, O Partha, is *sattvik* which maintains an unbroken harmony between the activities of the mind, the vital energies and the senses.[4]

If a person clings to the decision he has made without being exercised about the consequences, does not change it from day to day, then we may say that he possesses a will that is unswerving. "By yoga" means in a spirit of dedication to God.

That will, O Partha, is *rajas* which clings, with attachment, to right-eousness, desire and wealth, desirous of fruit in each case.[5]

The first signifies dedication to God and the second attachment. Because of that attachment, one pursues dharma, *artha*[6] and *kama*[7]. The decision of such a person may be faulty.

That will, O Partha, is *tamas*, whereby insensate man does not abandon sleep, fear, grief, despair and self-conceit.[8]

Everything we do involves grief and ignorance and, at any rate, disappointment and fear.

Hear now from Me, O Bharatarshabha, the three kinds of pleasure.

Pleasure which is enjoyed only by repeated practice, and which puts an end to pain.

[1] In place of "fear from fearlessness", Gandhiji's rendering has: "which things one should guard against and of which things one need have no fear."
[2] Gandhiji's rendering has: "sees everything in a wrong light".
[3] XVIII, 27 to 32
[4] XVIII, 33
[5] XVIII, 34
[6] Wealth, power
[7] Pleasure
[8] XVIII, 35

Which, in its inception, is as poison, but in the end as nectar, born of the serene realization of the true nature of *atman*—that pleasure is said to be *sattvik*.[1]

One must do *tapascharya* for such happiness. It involves renunciation and, therefore, means hardship in the beginning. Everything in which one must sacrifice sleep and give up lethargy, for instance, study and learning and teaching, is a kind of *tapascharya*. But the reward is knowledge of the self. The bliss of knowing the *atman* is of the same character as the *atman*. The happiness of the body comes wholly from the satisfaction of desires, and because it depends on the satisfaction of desires it is transient. It is as transient as the life of a butterfly or a flash of lightning. The other happiness abides for ever. The happiness which springs from the serenity resulting from knowledge of the *atman* is like *amrita*.

That pleasure is called *rajas* which, arising from the contact of the senses with their objects, is at first as nectar but in the end like poison.[2]

Suppose we have been to a play or some such show. We enjoy witnessing it, but afterwards suffer for loss of sleep and also on account of the effect of the play on our mind.

That pleasure is called *tamas* which, arising from sleep and sloth and heedlessness, stupefies the soul both at first and in the end.

There is no being, either on earth or in heaven among the gods, that can be free from these three *gunas* born of *prakriti*.[3]

We should, therefore, strive to become free from these.

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October 28, 1926

The duties of Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras are distributed according to their innate qualifications, O Parantapa.

Serenity, self-restraint, austerity, purity, forgiveness, uprightness, knowledge and discriminative knowledge, faith in God are the Brahmin's natural duties.[4]

Serenity, self-restraint, *tapas* (to keep body, speech and mind under control by hard discipline), purity, forgiveness (to wish well, from the heart, even to a person who may have hit us with a stone), straightforwardness (to have no impurity in one's eyes, to behave

[1] XVIII, 36 & 37
[2] XVIII, 38
[3] XVIII, 39 & 40
[4] XVIII, 41 & 42

decently), knowledge and knowledge based on experience (not bookish, dry knowledge), faith in God—these are the natural duties of the Brahmin.

A person may have the qualities enumerated above, but may not believe in God, may be lacking in faith and devotion; if so, those very qualities will prove harmful. For instance, in Europe these days they train the body for prize competitions and wrestling matches. These persons, too, are required to exercise discipline over the body, but that is done without devotion to God and helps them in no way. Hence belief in and devotion to God should be among the most important characteristics of a Brahmin.

> Valour, spiritedness, constancy, resourcefulness, not fleeing from battle, generosity[1] and the capacity to rule are the natural duties of a Kshatriya.[2]

A Brahmin, too, should have these qualities. For instance, Vashishtha and other sages had them. Likewise, a Kshatriya should have the qualities of a Brahmin; for example, Yudhishthira, Ramachandra, etc., were Kshatriyas but possessed the virtues of Brahmins. Bharata was the very ideal of what a Brahmin should be. In this way every individual should display, in varying measure, the qualities associated with all the castes, and a person will belong to the caste whose virtues he possesses in a predominant measure. These will determine his natural karmas.

> Tilling the soil, protection of the cow and commerce are the natural functions of a Vaisya, while service is the natural duty of a Sudra.
>
> Each man, by complete absorption in the performance of his duty, wins perfection. Hear now how he wins such perfection by devotion to that duty.
>
> By offering the worship of his duty to Him Who is the moving spirit of all beings, and by Whom all this is pervaded, man wins perfection.[3]

Anyone who worships the *atman*—the *Brahman*—God that exists pervading the universe like its warp and woof,—reaches the goal; true success crowns him alone who sees prayer or worship in the karma which has fallen to his lot as his duty, who has made service and every karma of his a form of prayer.

[1] In place of "generosity", Gandhiji's rendering has: "being always ready to help the poor".

[2] XVIII, 43

[3] XVIII, 44 to 46

Better one's own duty[1], though uninviting, than another's[2] which may be more easily performed; doing duty which accords with one's nature, one incurs no sin.

One should not abandon, O Kaunteya, that duty to which one is born,[3] imperfect though it be; for all action, in its inception, is enveloped in imperfection, as fire in smoke.[4]

This does not apply to actions like a stealing; it applies only to actions which have been described in the preceding verses as the natural karmas of the four castes. Even if one sees some evil in such karmas—as, for instance, Arjuna's shrinking from fighting because of his weakness of attachment— it is best to do them, for every karma, every beginning, is tainted with some evil.

He who has weaned himself from attachments[5] of all kinds, who is master of himself, who is dead to desire, attains through renunciation the supreme perfection of freedom from action.[6]

Here by sannyasa is meant, not renunciation of all karmas but only the renunciation of the fruit of all karmas and it is such renunciation alone which can be successfully practised.

Learn now from Me, in brief, O Kaunteya, how he who has gained this perfection, attains to *Brahman*, the supreme consummation of knowledge.[7]

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October 29, 1926

Equipped with purified understanding, restraining the self with firm will, abandoning sound and other objects of the senses, putting aside likes and dislikes.

Living in solitude, spare in diet, restrained in speech, body and mind, ever absorbed in *Dhyanayoga*, anchored in dispassion.

Without pride, violence, arrogance, lust, wrath, possession, having shed all sense of 'mine' and at peace with himself, he is fit to become one with *Brahman*.[8]

Ahankar, *bala* and *darpa* include one another, but it would not be like the *Gita* to use only one term. Its manner is to say the same

[1] Gandhiji' rendering adds here: "karma which is one's duty".

[2] Gandhiji' rendering adds here: "karma which is somebody else's duty".

[3] Gandhiji' rendering has: "which has come to one unsought".

[4] XVIII, 47 & 48

[5] Gandhiji's rendering has: "He who has given up attachment to everything that is, has become free from attachment".

[6] XVIII, 49

[7] XVIII, 50

[8] XVIII, 51 to 53

thing over and over again in different ways. *Laghvashi*: I observe the vow of taking not more than five articles in my daily food, but, even if I keep it literally, I shall not have succeeded in keeping it well. Haridas mentioned dates and gave some good ones as gift. He watched my mood and offered me one to eat. I relished it, and immediately became conscious of a lapse. Even as it is, I told myself, you eat more than others do. I ate the date and it stuck in my throat. This is what should happen if we treat the body as something out of which we must take work.

In this verse, we are asked to purify the intellect and to be *laghvashi*. To be *laghvashi* does not mean merely to be moderate in eating, but to be satisfied with one article when we feel we can make do with two. It is as though this misfortune befell me because we would be discussing the word *laghvashi* today. A person may take a vow that he would live exclusively on milk, and then consume fifteen pounds a day, or convert it into *mava*[1] and eat it. Why is it that such a person won't add water to milk and drink it? A barrister friend in England used to read for sixteen hours a day. He used to add water to his soup. Real hunger will prompt one to eat things that taste like *amrita.*

> One with *Brahman* and at peace with himself, grieves not, nor desires; holding all beings alike, he achieves supreme devotion to Me.
>
> By devotion he realizes in truth how great I am, who I am; and having known Me in reality he enters into Me.
>
> Even whilst always performing actions, he who makes Me his refuge wins, by My grace,[2] the eternal and imperishable haven.
>
> Casting, with thy mind, all actions on Me, make Me thy goal, and resorting to the yoga of even-mindedness[3] fix thy thought ever on Me.
>
> Fixing thus thy thought on Me, thou shalt surmount all obstacles by My grace; but if possessed by the sense of 'I' thou listen not, thou shalt perish.
>
> If obsessed by the sense of 'I', thou thinkest, "I will not fight", vain is thy obsession;(thy)nature will compel thee.
>
> What thou wilt not do, O Kaunteya, because of thy delusion, thou shalt do, even against thy will, bound as thou art by the duty to which thou art born.[4]

[1] Milk boiled till it becomes a thick paste
[2] Gandhiji's rendering adds here: "not through his own strength".
[3] Gandhiji's rendering adds here: "knowledge and meditation".
[4] XVIII, 54 to 60

"Hence," says Shri Krishna,"dedicate everything to me and, free from attachments and aversions and ever devoted to me, do the task which has fallen to your lot; so acting, you will remain untouched by sin."

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October 30, 1926

> God, O Arjuna, dwells in the heart of every being and to His delusive mystery whirls them all,(as though) set[2] on a machine.[3]

We are sitting on this ball of earth, which does not stop from rotating or revolving even for a moment. It keeps rotating and revolving all the twenty-four hours. The stars and the sun do the same. Thus, nothing in the world is motionless. But things do not move through their own power; it is God's power which keeps everything in motion. Just as we keep a machine in motion only as long as we choose and it has no power of its own to move, so also does God keep us in motion as He wills. We should not, therefore, be proud that we have done something. We should shed our egotism, become as a machine in God's hand and carry out His will, look upon Him as our all and obey His plan.

> In Him alone seek thy refuge with all thy heart, O Bharata. By His grace shalt thou win to the eternal haven of supreme peace.
>
> Thus have I expounded to thee the most mysterious of all knowledge; ponder over it fully, then act as thou wilt.
>
> Hear again My supreme word, the most mysterious of all; dearly beloved thou art of Me, hence I desire to declare thy welfare.
>
> On Me fix thy mind, to Me bring thy devotion, to Me offer thy sacrifice, to Me make thy obeisance; to Me indeed shalt thou come—solemn is My promise to thee, thou art dear to Me.
>
> Abandon all duties and come to Me, the only refuge. I will release thee from all sins, grieve not![4]

This verse is the essence of all Shastras and of the *Gita.* Shri Krishna tells Arjuna: "You should give up all arguing and take refuge in Me. That will be wholly for your supreme good. Only the service of the *atman* will advance a person's welfare."

[1] The notes of this discourse were not taken by Mahadev Desai.

[2] Gandhiji's rendering has "the clay of the potter's wheel", in place of "set on a machine".

[3] XVIII, 61

[4] XVIII, 62 to 66

Utter this[1] never to him who knows no austerity, has no devotion, nor any desire to listen, nor yet to him who scoffs at Me.

He who will propound this supreme mystery to My devotees, shall, by that act of highest devotion to Me, surely come to Me.[2]

All knowledge is preserved only when imparted to a person who is worthy of it, and not when imparted to one who is unworthy of it.

Nor among men is there any who renders dearer service to Me than he; nor shall there be on earth any more beloved by Me than he.

And who so shall study this sacred discourse of ours shall worship Me with the sacrifice of knowledge. That is My belief.[3]

That is, he who studies this intelligently will become free. Merely reciting the verses mechanically and without understanding their meaning will certainly not bring freedom.

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October 31, 1926

And the man of faith who, scorning not,[4] will but listen to it,—even he shall be released and will go to the happy worlds of men of virtuous deeds.

Hast thou heard this, O Partha, with a concentrated mind? Has thy delusion, born of ignorance, been destroyed, O Dhananjaya?[5]

Arjuna said:

Thanks to Thy grace, O Achyuta, my delusion is destroyed, my understanding has returned, I stand secure, my doubts all dispelled; I will do Thy bidding.[6]

Arjuna's memory, which had become clouded, has become clear. He has understood what his nature and his duty are, and his doubt has gone.

Sanjaya said:

Thus did I hear this marvellous and thrilling discourse between Vasudeva and the great-souled Partha.

It was by Vyasa's favour that I listened to this supreme and mysterious Yoga as expounded by the lips of the Master of Yoga, Krishna Himself.

[1] Gandhiji's rendering has; "this knowledge".
[2] XVIII, 67 & 68
[3] XVIII, 69 & 70
[4] Gandhiji's rendering adds here: "one whose faith is blind may scorn".
[5] XVIII, 71 & 72
[6] XVIII, 73

> O King, as often as I recall that marvellous and purifying discourse between Keshava and Arjuna, I am filled with recurring rapture.[1]

If we do not feel a new interest in this every time we read it, the fault must lie with us, it cannot be that of the author of the *Gita.*

> And as often as I recall that marvellous form of Hari, my wonder knows no bounds and I rejoice again and again.
>
> Wheresoever Krishna, the Master of Yoga, is, and wheresoever is Partha the Bowman, there rest assured are Fortune, Victory, Prosperity and Eternal Right.[2]

To Shri Krishna has been attached the epithet *Yogeshvar* and to Arjuna *Dhanurdhara;* this means that there are fortune, victory and eternal right only where there is perfect knowledge joined with light and power. He who has knowledge should have the fullest strength to use it; there should be perfection of knowledge and it should be fully translated into action.

We have taken this to be an imaginary conversation. The author of the *Mahabharata* has given us a wonderful work; he has displayed in it his perfect knowledge. He had entered into Krishna's heart. *Dhanurdhara* means a person devoted to duty. Is there anyone who has attained to absolute knowledge? For that person, however, who has the strength of spirit to act upon what seems certain knowledge to him, there is no such thing as defeat; he may even have prosperity, and more than that he does not wish. If he goes on acting in that spirit, even his errors will be corrected in course of time. We know that we should always speak the truth, but manage to tell only half the truth but he who has pure knowledge and the necessary energy to act upon it, that is, has taken up a bow and arrow, will never depart from the path of morality.

We do not intend to give up the reading of the *Gita*; its reading at prayer time will continue, a few verses every day. We may also discuss some of them, if we wish to.

This is a work which persons belonging to all faiths can read. It does not favour any sectarian point of view. It teaches nothing but pure ethics.

[1] XVIII, 74 to 76
[2] XVIII, 77 & 78

CONCLUSION

[1]

November 4, 1926

The conclusion of our study of the *Gita* is that we should pray and read holy books, and know our duty and do it. If any book can help, it is this. Really, however, what help can a book or a commentary on it give? In the end, we achieve only as much as it is our good fortune to do. Our only right is to *purushartha*[1]. We can only strive and work. All human beings, and animals too, struggle. The only difference is that we believe that behind our struggle there is an intelligent purpose. What is the purpose, however? Merely to keep alive this body, or to know that which has taken on this body? To raise it or advance it, if that is possible? For the first object we work in any case, whether we wish or no. Our body itself is so made that it makes us work for it, even if we are unwilling. For instance, while the baby still in the mother's womb, its organs do function in one way or another. Though unconsciously, it does breathe. That also is a kind of effort. But it is not *purushartha*. Only effort aimed at the welfare of the *atman* can be described as *purushartha*. It has been described as the supreme *purushartha*. All else is futile expenditure of energy. For such *purushartha*, one of the means is reading the Shastras and reflecting and meditating on them. In order that our study may be really useful, it is necessary to repeat our recitation over and over again with attention to pronunciation, rhythm, etc. It is necessary to create an atmosphere of holiness round the *Gita*. If we are completely indifferent to it, then of course there is no question of attending to grammar, pronunciation, etc.

The truth about ourselves is that we strive for the supreme *purushartha* and know how to seek the means for it. We would honour and revere the *Gita*. It will certainly protect us. It is a deity of the mind. If so, we should read it daily as a part of our prayer.

What lesson shall we draw from all this? Today I will place before you only one idea. The *Gita* does not give the central importance to karma, nor to *jnana* nor to *bhakti*. It gives importance to all these. Oxygen is a very useful ingredient of air, but we cannot have only oxygen, other gases are equally necessary. Similarly, every element which the *Gita* includes is essential. Karma, *jnana* and *bhakti*, all three are essential, and each in its place is of central importance. Without *bhakti* human effort by itself will not succeed, and, without

[1] Striving or determined effort

jnana, *bhakti* will not bear fruit. Hence we see at places *bhakti* or *jnana* treated as a means which helps us in doing the right karma.

We can, however, do without any of the three elements, thanks to something else which has been explained. We cannot easily understand *jnana* and can understand *bhakti*[1], but we can understand karma more easily than either. Decorating the image, repeating Ramanama, all this is karma. Activity of every kind is karma. Karma means body. When any thought takes on a body, assumes form, it becomes karma. Body is a visible thing. To the degree that we can see the body, we can see karma. We cannot, therefore, live without karma, and that is why, we can say, the *Gita* has stressed karma. However, *bhakti* and *jnana*, too, are essential. Let us suppose that we have boarded the ship; who is to give it motion now? Who will start it? We feel happy at the sight of the ship and board it, with faith [that it will move]. Similarly, karma is indeed necessary, but we shall reach the goal only when an intelligent engineer starts and drives the ship. The idea of renouncing karma is a futile one. Even a sannyasi cannot live without karma. This argument, however, comes in later.

The *Gita*'s karma is not karma done under compulsion; it must be prompted by some little measure at any rate of knowledge.

[2]

November 5, 1926[2]

Following the path of non-violence, we discovered the value of the spinning-wheel, as also of *brahmacharya*. Beyond the river [Sabarmati] is *bhogabhumi*[3] while this is *karmabhumi*[4]. We wish to follow the path of renunciation. But no renunciation is truly such unless it gives us joy. We cannot live without joy. It is but proper that we should celebrate Diwali in a different manner from how it is done on that side of the river. We should today draw up a balance-sheet of our work. Our books of accounts are in our heart. We should have completely cleared the debit side. A business man always credits in his book at least one and a quarter rupee [on the New Year day]. We can

[1] The source has *jnana*, which seems to be a slip.
[2] This was Diwali day.
[3] Place for enjoyment
[4] Place for duty

follow him by making some good resolution. If we read the *Gita* regularly, we shall understand our duty easily.

The karma which the *Gita* advocates is done of one's own free will, and it is such karma as one cannot live without at all. There is another definition of karma besides this. Karma means body. So long as the body is connected with the soul, it has motion and acts. But karma also means violence. Hence comlete freedom from karma, which means from the body, is *moksha*. We should seek an existence that dispenses with this body and is beyond this world full of violence. In this world which is all karma, we should strive to cultivate a state of *akarma*. The *Gita* has shown how we can do this. We shall discuss this by and by.

[3]

November 6, 1926

The peace of mind and the joy we feel when, with closed eyes, we recite the verses from memory are really great. We feel less joy when we read the verses.

Today is *padavo* (the New Year Day). May you succeed in the good resolutions which you made before coming here. Anyone who has not made a single resolution should make one at least, that he or she will be sincere. If you do not become so, the bright outer surface will be no more than gilt and the inside will be base metal. Nothing will shine without truth; let everyone, there-fore, resolve that he will show himself as he is. The joy one can get by showing oneself as one is, is not to be had by decorating one's figure or beautifying oneself. There is untruth in wearing your cap at an angle, in wearing the sari in a particular style and dressing your hair smartly. Anyone who dresses himself in various fashions so that he may appear more handsome than he is starts learning a lesson in falsehood. We can build a palace on the foundation of truthfulness.

Chapter III deserves special attention. We saw yesterday that karma means the body, it means violence, and I told you then that I would discuss this idea further today. This Chapter dwells on the necessity of *yajna*. *Yajna* means work for the benefit of others. Afterwards, it is explained that every karma is tainted with evil, as it involves some measure of violence. However, violence committed for the sake of *yajna* is not violence. *Yajna* here does not mean that *yajna* in which they kill animals. There was a time when such *yajnas* were regarded as true *yajnas*, but now most people believe that they are not

so. Since, however, every karma involves violence, I have divided violence into two categories. There is violence when the intention is to give pain, otherwise it is only an act of killing. Breathing involves killing, which is unavoidable violence, and is, therefore, forgiven. Without such unavoidable violence, we cannot keep alive the body for its sacred pilgrimage. It is a principle of homoeopathy that the patient should take in the smallest possible quantity the very substance which has caused the disease. Similarly, if we wish to become non-violent in this violent world, we shall advance as we gradually become more and more non-violent. On the other hand, trying to overcome violence with violence leads to evil consequence. *Akarma* means reducing karma and the degree of violence involved in each karma. One who does that will not go seeking work to do. Such a person will ultimately reach a state in which his thought itself will be action. We cannot pursue even *bhakti* or *jnana* without some measure of karma—we shall see tomorrow how this is so.

[4]

November 7, 1926

Since every karma involves violence, our ideal is to escape all karma, which means to win deliverance from this life. This does not mean that the world in which we live should vanish or be destroyed; it means that one should voluntarily renounce activity and sit at home quietly, that is, live in *Vaikunth*[1], knowing that this world of name and form is transient and that it is unprofitable to take pleasure in it. This, however, is not possible. We cannot, through force of will, have this world vanish from before us, or bring about the *moksha* of all people in it. Everyone, then, should seek his *moksha;* but how? By committing suicide? One who kills himself will not escape the body. It is opposing the law of nature to seek escape in this manner. It is with the mind that we have to renounce the body. If every karma involves violence and evil, we can mentally renounce karma. Does it mean that, after renouncing karma in that manner, one can do any karma one chooses? No. At present we mentally draw to ourselves innumerable things. When we have mentally renounced all karmas, a great many of them will fall off on their own. Such a person will then use to his benefit, as much as he can, the world from which all air will have escaped. “Only the outward form surviving, as of the burnt rope”; however, the burnt rope will also occupy a little space. Even if it is

[1] The abode of Vishnu

reduced to dust particles and they fly away into air, they will certainly occupy some space somewhere! It is our belief that if the outward form vanishes and the dust particles, too, vanish, then everything will have vanished. Like the sea, God neither increases nor decreases. The dust particles, obeying their nature, will have merged in Him. When we have renounced karma mentally, all attachment to it will have ceased. Such a person will not even think what his duty is. He will be working only as directed by others. It is not he who will be doing the unavoidable, residual karma; God will be doing that. If I am not responsible even for my breathing, I am doing it under force, not willingly. A person who acts in such manner is non-violent. No one can be more non-violent than this while living in the body. Hence, as we saw in Chapter III, karma done in the spirit of *yajna*, that is, for the benefit of others, does not bind. To do karma for the benefit of others means to enlist ourselves as soldiers in God's army, to dedicate to Him our all, body, mind, wealth, intellect. I read a book by a protestant named Wallace. He saw that their activity of converting others to Christianity did no good. He decided to mix with our people. He fell in love with the religions of India, but he could not forget Jesus. He then embraced the Roman Catholic Church, and felt that he was nothing as an individual, that the Church was all. He made an image, Parthiveshwar Chintamani, and resolved to surrender himself to it. As for the line of guru and disciple [to which he should belong], he looked upon society as a whole as his guru. This idea has appealed to me. If the Pope is immoral, there is bound to be corruption in society, but any person who has decided that he will do nothing on his own but do only what the Pope asks him to do, will only benefit himself. A protestant would say that one should obey one's conscience, but this Wallace kept his conscience out and surrendered himself to the Pope. His giving up concern for his conscience was a great idea. He has narrated a story. A Hindu once advised him[1] that repeating Ramanama was good and a Muslim advised the name Khuda. He repeated the names Rama and Khuda by turn. He once saw that another person uttering Ramanama was floating on water. Thereupon, he started saying Khuda-Rama and began to sink. God then told him: "My friend, I am both Khuda and Rama." This man, Wallace, thus wanted to cultivate single-minded devotion. His worshipping another person wholeheartedly was itself worship of his conscience. Everything

[1] It is not clear from the source who is meant.

becomes easy only when one surrenders oneself to God and lives as a cipher. A person who does so will have renounced all karma. Suppose a woman regularly goes to the *haveli*[1], and that the other women who go there are immoral. This woman, however, will be saved. The man who taught the *mantra* of Ramanama could not float, but the other one who learnt it and used it with faith did. Similarly, this woman who goes to the temple sees no immoral figure in the image, she sees only God. She would swim across and be saved; the others would be drowned. In the same way, anyone who mentally renounces all karma will be doing even the unavoidable, residual karma unwillingly and, therefore, will not be responsible for them. If he eats, he does so unwillingly; he breathes, too, unwillingly. How smooth everything becomes as soon as we mentally renounce all karma. We shall discuss tomorrow the meaning of violence and non-violence and of bondage and *moksha*.

[5]

November 9, 1926

A person can be free from karma only when he gives up his body altogether. Even the wish to live in the body must be renounced. If it is not, one will have to pass through many more lives. The wish to live in this body is what is termed *dehadhyasa*. That is the sea of existence. While we remain in it, we shall ever be tossed about by the waves. In the course of time, then, we may perceive the deep truth that what we call happiness is not happiness but only an illusion of happiness, that misery is not misery but only an illusion of it. If a person mentally renounces karma, he becomes free from the sense of "I" and "Mine". He, therefore, resolves to work only in the spirit of *yajna* and for the benefit of others. Work done in such spirit is ahimsa, but only when two conditions are fulfilled by it. One is that there should be no element of selfishness in our motive, and the second is that there should be no self-interest of ours in it, that on the contrary it should be for the good and for the benefit of the world. If these two conditions are fulfilled then even the most dreadful-seeming act may be regarded as an act of ahimsa. We attribute ahimsa to an act, but we can do that only if the act is for the service of others. If a person can truthfully claim that he eats and performs other like acts in a disinterested spirit he is free from attachments. The wish to live in the

[1] *Vaishnava* temple

body remains so long as I cling to it. We cannot hold a string in a disinterested spirit; holding it is an act of will. If a person has withdrawn his mind from the body as much as is humanly possible, he wins freedom from bondage to the body. What I am discussing is the question of violence and non-violence, of living in the body and being free from bondage to it. If this bodily life has no sense, use the body for the services of others, for a life of prayer to God. Those who advised us thus were not ignorant men, they spoke from experience. It is we who did not understand them. It is extremely difficult to give up our clinging to the body. Someone may well ask how we can explain this idea to a child. My reply is that it is only in young age that this idea is easily understood; one cannot understand it after one has lost one's teeth. A historian has said that there is no difference in outlook between youth and old age. Youth has desire and the capacity to satisfy it; in old age, the capacity is wanting and so the desire becomes stronger. If we do not follow the example of Menavati, who explained to Gopichand [the futility of attachment to bodily life], we shall invite misery upon ourselves. I go a step further and say that an old man is far more thoughtless than a young man. A prince is always surrounded by *hakims*[1] and consuming *yakutis*[2] but he is ever talking Vedanta[3]. Thus, boys and old men are the same in this regard. Anyone who imbibes something, however little that may be, from these verses from the whole work, commencing with *Aum*—can attain complete peace. For him there will be only work undertaken for the service of others; the innumerable other karmas will have fallen away. If, while we live in this body, we keep it yoked to work like a bullock to the cart, it will run after fewer things to do and with very much less intensity. We shall, then, seem to be doing nothing, but in fact we shall be working with energy which it is impossible to describe. We should seek out one activity or karma from among the countless in the world, or rather one activity or karma should come seeking us. Anyone who wants to serve will find objects of service anywhere. At the end of all discussion, Shri Krishna asked Arjuna in Chapter XVIII: "Surrender yourself to Me, do this very thing, but in obedience to My command. Dedicate your all to Me and go on with it," How this can be done, we shall discuss later.

[1] Practitioners of *Unani* system of medicine
[2] *Unani* tonics
[3] Metaphysics (especially of the Upanishads)

[6]

November 10, 1926

Today we are to have a bird's-eye view of the discussions, but I simply could not think out what to say. Right at the end of the work, in Chapter XVIII, Vyasa wondered what he had been making Krishna teach Arjuna, whether it was knowledge or ignorance, pure *bhakti* or something else. So he made Krishna brush aside all else and say: "Abandon all duties and come to Me, the only refuge."[1] He later made Arjuna also say that he had forgotten what he had been taught. The Lord replied that He, too, did not always remember the discussion and said that He would teach something new. And so He taught another *Gita*[2] which no one remembers.

Swami . . .[3] has been wandering for twenty-seven years, but till this day he has discovered nothing. Finally, now, he has joined the sect of . . . .[4] I am talking in a tone of despair, but what I am saying is true. How does one, and how should one, seek refuge in the Lord? Shri. . .'[5], the goldsmith, asked me to give him something, saying "Else, what could I carry back with me?" I looked at him for a while, unable to think of anything. Then I said: "Repeat Ramanama." What was it, however, that I gave him? And what did he receive? Things don't work that way. This is an old custom, but how many people following it seek refuge in Rama? The *Gita* was not the first work which advised us to seek refuge in the Lord. How, then, can we end our restless yearning? We must look inwards, not outwards, to discover the way. If we look outwards, where should we search? If God, on the other hand, is not outside of us but inside, how may we look inwards? How shall we blow up the big rock that lies across our way as we look inwards? To seek God means to sink into ourselves, that is, to renounce all activities. Since, however, it is not possible to reno-unce all activities, we should engage ourselves in as few activities as possible, reduce ourselves to the utmost insignificance. To seek God is not a Herculean task, as the world may think it is; all that is necessary is to make oneself humble and yoke the mind to work every minute for the welfare of the *atman*. It is we who obstruct ourselves in this effort.

[1] In XVIII, 66
[2] The *Mahabharata*, "Ashvamedha Parva"
[3] The names are omitted in the source.
[4] *Ibid*
[5] *Ibid*

What should we do to overcome the obstructions? This is the first thing taught in the science of yoga. I have been thinking what education we should plan for boys and girls. They must get training in this. We should not deprive them of their right to get it. We wish to identify ourselves with the poor, but the children of the poor get nothing. From their infancy they work in the fields. Wherever the farmers' work is done systematically, their children are employed in such work right from their early years and few people think about the problems which exercise us. The way to realize God, which means the way to win swaraj too, is to do something which seems altogether unimportant, and that is, to show ourselves as we are even before children. If such behaviour becomes natural to us, the children will also watch it with admiration. I told you about Wallace. He said at the end: "I have still not surrendered my reason, and it is a protestant reason." But he did surrender his reason, his views, his all, and the salt was absorbed in the water of the sea. That is what the Buddha called nirvana. Such a person would not even remember that once he was an insignificant entity and think that he had now become the sea. We should, therefore, experience our insignificance, undertake the least important task and for its sake renounce everything, cultivate perfect disinterestedness.

We can achieve nothing by busily running about. The *Gita* advised Arjuna to give up concern with all dharma, that is, to take up the least important work and experience his insignificance. It tells us, in effect: "Live as a servant of the world; it is beyond your capacity to do more."

[7]

November 12, 1926

Can procreation for *yajna* be described as consistent with *brahmacharya*? Yes, it can. In it, however, the desire for progeny is more important than concern for *yajna*. Whereas the world simply cannot go on without non-violence practised as *yajna*, we cannot say that procreation is essential. If the *smritis*[1] say, nevertheless, that *brahmacharya* is possible for a householder, they use the term *brahmacharya* in a restricted sense which we have completely rejected in our discussions.

Besides, there is one more argument. If destruction is violence,

[1] Sacred books prescribing rules for personal conduct and social life

creation, too, is violence. Procreation, therefore, involves violence. The creation of what is bound to perish certainly involves violence.

[8]

November 13, 1926

The *Mahabharata* is a unique work and in it the *Gita* has a unique place. Describing a physical battle, it gives an account of an invisible fight and shows through it that in the physical battle not only those who lose but even those who win are defeated. The five or six who survived lived as though they were dead. Dhritarashtra becomes miserable, and so does Kunti[1]. We see in the Swarga-rohana Parva the fate which meets the five brothers and Draupadi. They die one after another. Yudhishthira, too, is hardly able to reach the end of the journey. And, therefore, Vyasa says that what they got from their victory was no better than dust.

This does not means that we should stop striving . In one sphere, Fate is all powerful, and in another *purushartha. Purushartha* means striving , and supreme *purushartha* means escaping from the pairs of opposites. Living in the world of opposites is no better than collecting dust with our hands. It is, however, the purpose of the *Gita* to show that every particle of dust can become as valuable as a jewel in certain conditions. The three *gunas* are aiming arrows at you from all sides. If you remain unmoved as they pierce you, you can win. Those arrows may fall on the body and on the *atman* dwelling in the body, but, let them fall as long as they may, what harm can they do me so long as my *atman* is awake?

What is the condition under which this may be so? To explain who can understand this problem, Shri Vyasa gave the *Arjunavi-shadayoga*[2]. Arjuna here stands for the *atman* seeking knowledge. So long as the intellect is not aroused by circumstances, It will not feel the desire for knowledge. The *Gita* is not for the intellect so long as it remains ensnared by worldly allurements. Is the *Gita* for students? It is for all those who have faith, such faith that they wish to be Arjunas. A student who believes the statement of his teacher that India is 1,900 miles in length and 1,500 miles in breadth will not take up a rod and start measuring the distances. He takes the statement on trust. Similarly, when the teacher tells the pupils in the first standard that the earth is

[1] Mother of the Pandavas

[2] Chapter I

round, an intelligent pupil will believe him and start arguing with another who holds that it is flat. The pupil who is convinced of the truth of the statement will not question it. Such a pupil will also take on trust statements concerning dharma, which is also a kind of geography, as he does those about the physical science of geography. He will exercise his curiosity in regard to many problems, but some things have to be accepted on trust. For instance, the definition of a straight line. Afterwards, such things become clear as day-light. The years of student-life are a time when one should take things on trust. Why students, even grown-up people take things on trust. We have no choice but to have faith in the ultimate things which remain unexplained by reason. A student's reason is virgin, and it is not taxed much. As it sharpens and acquires light and power, he goes on solving problems with its help by repeatedly putting questions, bowing humbly to the teacher as he does so. The only condition is that the pupil should feel curiosity and be eager to know. That is why Chapter I is called *Vishadayoga*. The term means the path which unites one to God through despondency. If we wish to be filled with exclusive devotion to God, to win *moksha*, we should go through despondency. . . . [1] told me: "Cannot we see God through fasting? Is it not right that we should punish the body severely if we feel all the time distracted by evil thoughts?" "There are," he said, "so many *bawas* [2]in the country. Some of them lie on spikes in the fierce sun and derive great contentment; surely they cannot be thinking evil thoughts at that time?" We shall find such persons in Europe too. Fakirs also have that experience. There have always been people in the world who did *tapas*, and theirs is not a crazy notion. I have merely put before you my humble view. I do not ask you to do such things. Our aim is to mortify the mind, to teach it patience in order to purify it. Fasting and similar lashes are sufficient for that. If we could be certain that we would always succeed in our aim by fasting, everyone would fast. Do you think there are only a few in this world who seek knowledge? There are many such. People suffer a great many hardships to secure worldly things; do you think, then, that nobody would come forward to suffer being pierced with a nail in the neck for this purpose? I have seen persons who stabbed themselves with a knife as they begged for a pice. If people can do this to themselves for a pice, why should they

[1] The names are omitted in the source.

[2] Mendicant sadhus

not do it for a throne? But that path is not easy. We have a middle way open to us, which is the only one worth following. But there is a point in what . . . [1] told me, and that is that we should have a burning aspiration in this direction. We should have the same impatience and yearning for *moksha* which lustful men and women display for the gratification of their lust. Let us renounce our yearning for worldly things and cultivate yearning for *moksha* instead. The first condition for one to be like Arjuna is that one should feel a burning aspiration. People start making distinctions between "mine" and "others". There is no doubt about whether we may kill or not. We know that we may not kill. The eternal law is not the law of killing. Arjuna did not have the strength to follow that independent law, and merely asks how he could bring himself to aim his arrows at Drona and Bhishma. In this way, he made the false distinction between "his" and "others" and declared that he would not fight. But he is a mature man. He does not decide impulsively while sunk in darkness. He is all love for Krishna. Sinking with nervous fear, he asks Krishna to solve his problem. It is only when we feel nervous like him that we shall be cured. We shall not be cured till we feel a crisis. The experience is like the pangs of childbirth. Arjuna's experience is that which overwhelms one when one feels born again; may all of us have this experience. If the feeling endures, we would be saved.

[9][2]

In Chapter II, [we see that] the seeker should be eager. A person gets knowledge only when he suffers so much for it that his body becomes completely wasted and seems as if it would pass away any moment. We learn the same lesson from the story of *Gajendramoksha* and the narratives about Draupadi and others. When one has suffered so much, one gets knowledge and one's reason becomes purified. When Pilgrim felt that he was surrounded by fire on all sides, he ran without worrying about his wife and children. When we have such a feeling, we may say that our reason has become purified, and all veils will then be lifted. Arjuna's heart is in the right place, but it is enveloped in ignorance and, therefore, it cannot help him to decide. So Krishna explains the distinction between *atman* and the body. He advances one argument to convince Arjuna, till he is overwhelmed by it. Arjuna was worrying so much about the body; he should now worry

[1] The names are omitted in the source.

[2] The date of this discourse is not given in the source.

equally for the *atman*. Krishna explains to him that the two things are distinct. The *atman* neither kills nor is killed. It is the body which perishes. Arjuna should know that in any case it will die, and should not worry about it. But this was only an argument. What should Arjuna actually do? "If you do," Shri Krishna tells him, "what I ask you to do, you will have no cause to repent. Even if you make only a moderate effort, it will be rewarded. You should take my word that what you do, however small, will bear fruit." What type of person is he who works without worrying about the result? To answer this question, Shri Krishna describes the characteristics of such a person in Chapter II itself. The description creats so much interest in Arjuna, who was yearning for knowledge, that he feels eager to hear further. He has no inkling yet of *bhakti*. One cultivates it only when one forgets everything else. Mira was filled with *bhakti* when she realized that having seen the light of the sun and the moon, she did not need the light shed by a glow-worm. If such a person still needs to do karma, it is only for serving others and not for his own sake. A *bhakta* may do exactly what we do, but his reason will show him how to do it in a different manner. And so the Lord explains how to do karma, and thereafter He explains the secret of *bhakti*. [Understanding that], one's attachment to the body falls away, the *atman* becomes stronger and awakens more fully day by day, and ultimately one sees it in a divine vision.

[10][1]

When Arjuna becomes utterly weak, his intellect is awakened. Shri Krishna then tells him: "Your intellect by itself will not serve you. You will need to do yoga, karmayoga." Tilak Maharaj has demonstrated this with many convincing arguments. He has shown that the intellect needs, as it were, to take a partner to itself and be a householder. When Arjuna asked Shri Krishna to explain to him the characteristics of the person practising both forms of yoga, the latter enumerated the characteristics of a *sthitaprajna*. This confused Arjuna. Would such a person be a man of karma or a *jnani*?

In Chapter III, therefore, Shri Krishna explains the meaning of karma. No one can live at all without karma. Mirabai begged of the Lord that she should think on Him with every breath she took. We do not breathe consciously, but do so instinctively. A healthy person does all karmas with detachment in the same manner as he breathes. Karma may be a sign of health and it may also be a sign of disease. For instance,

[1] The date of this discourse is not given in the source.

the manner in which a person suffering from asthma breathes indicates that he has a disease. This is also true of a man who feels suffocated. Similarly, one's karma may be a sign of health in some other person, but not in oneself. After this, Shri Krishna gave the example of Janaka and others. Citing His own example, He said that He, too, had to work and keep the machine going. He could not so much as stretch His limbs for rest. Arjuna could sleep, Shri Krishna said, but He could not. Even then, He was always detached. If we follow this example, our intellect would retain its power till we are a hundred, or rather it would grow in strength with years. But human beings are attached to sense pleasures. If they were not, they would always attain perfect knowledge in course of time. If our experience is to the contrary, let us not pay attention to that. We are imperfect human beings and deduce imperfect principles from our imperfect experience. There should be, therefore, some flaw somewhere if experience tells us otherwise. Look at a fruit. As it grows bigger, it becomes more juicy and richer. The date has fallen off the tree and dried, but how sweet it is! Similarly, the intellect of a person who does not violate God's law should ripen and grow with years. In actual experience, however, we find that as a person grows older, he or she declines in strength and intelligence. Such a person has been a lover of gross pleasures in his life.

For an ordinary person, Chapter III is as valuable as a silver pot. It is extremely useful.

[11][1]

We have seen that God does not cease from karma even for a moment. How, then, can we win *moksha*? The reply was that the body should be left to do its karmas, that the *atman* was not involved in them. This teaching has been altogether misinterpreted by immoral people. But, truly speaking, it is easy enough to understand that the bond of the body itself involves karma. If there were no body, there would be no need to do karma, and God having no body He has no need to do karma. But the Lord says that, even though He has no body, He does not cease from karma. He should, therefore, be thought of as having one, for this entire visible creation is His body. When we think of Him as having no body, He is a Formless Reality. If the *atman* realizes that the body does its karma, it will be free from the bond of the latter. How can one feel that it is the body which goes on doing

[1] The date of this discourse is not given in the source.

certain karmas? The body cannot do karma without the ego. Without the *atman*, the body itself can do nothing. This is one more problem. This makes the *atman* a doer. It means, then, that the *atman*, joined to the ego, dwells in the body and does things. What we should do then was explained in Chapter III."Service of others brings holy merit to one, and through harassment of others one incurs sin." We may unhesitatingly do what is most for the benefit of others. We shall, of course, assume that the person doing that will be as detached from it as he can be. When we take the least credit for such work, it will be done with the most efficiency. A person walking with his natural speed of a mile an hour will outdistance another running at a speed of sixty miles, for the former will have his joy in his *atman*, whereas the latter will be full of doubts. His running will on the whole serve no purpose. If our work is free from egotism, though our speed may be slow, we are certain to reach the goal. Let us by all means work in the spirit of *yajna* and for the benefit of others. All that we should concern ourselves with is whether it is the body or the *atman* that we serve. To say that man is born for service of others is true in one sense only, because all his work is prompted by self-interest. If this self-interest is the interest of the *atman*, then one's work is for the benefit of others. All the activities of such a person will be prompted by the motive of service.

Hence, the Lord concluded this part of the argument with the verse, "Better one's own duty, bereft of merit".[1] That means that, be one's own dharma what it is, even if it is seemingly without merit, it is better than another's which may have greater merit in it. Arjuna was attracted by the dharma of other people, and therefore, the Lord told him that, however good it was, it was not his dharma. Dharma well performed cannot be another's, for in fact such dharma cannot be well performed. Only one's own dharma can be well performed. The truth is that ultimately Arjuna will have to renounce both his own dharma and that of others, but he cannot have that *moksha* right now. *Swadharma* is what is natural to one. For him who works without egotism, his dharma lies clear before him. It grows and expands on its own. We can satisfactorily perform only our dharma, that which lies before us. We are deluded if we think that we can do teaching better than the work of cleaning lavatories which may have been assigned to us. We do as much good by cleaning lavatories as we would by teaching. From one point of view, the former is certainly without merit. What is cleaning lavatories in comparison with studies? The Ganga stands nowhere in comparison with the sea. The Ganga's

[1] III, 35

dharma is to let boats sail over her, the sea's to let ships sail over it. The Ganga's may seem to have no merit, but that is her true dharma. When we say that a dharma may be, or may seem to be, devoid of merit, "may be" is used ambiguously to mean "may seem to be". From one point of view a certain task may be better than another, and yet for us the latter is superior.

This truth is the source of the idea of *varna*. Today all the four *varnas* have forsaken their functions, and yet we believe in the idea, for it helps to have an ideal even if it is no more than an ideal. Anyone who wishes to become free from the body has no choice but to believe in *varna*, that is, in his own natural work. The Lord, therefore, told Arjuna that his work was to kill, and asked him to do it as *yajna*, without making a distinction between kinsmen and others. The words *viguna* and *svanushthitat* have an equal and like force.

[12][1]

The *Gita* is a valuable provision for the mind in one's life-journey, as the spinning-wheel is for the body. It is a provision which I am able to supply. Continue to receive it. Remember the resolution of the committee about the verses included in the prayers. Even if they seem to be without merit, their recitation must be continued. The Chapters from the *Gita* [for recitation] should change every fortnight. You will find it difficult to keep up the practice till you have memorized the verses; if so, by all means read from a book. If by and by only one person remains to keep up this practice, he should imagine the entire world to be his listeners and go on reciting the verses. This is the only right course for anyone who has dedicated his life to non-violence. This is for those who wish to enjoy a spiritual empire, not for those who crave for empires of other kinds. Follow the practice with greater zest and put greater life into it day by day. Today it is just a week-old baby. By and by it will, like the sun and the moon, rise and set periodically. Gradually, try to follow the meaning of the verses.

As I have told you, the *Gita* is a big knowledge-feast, it is the very *amrita* of knowledge. I must have had some point in saying that. Many can memorize the verses. It is something within the power of both a god and a demon. I have suggested memorizing in order that you may make the right use of the *Gita* thereby, and not to enable

[1] The date of this discourse is not given in the source.

you to make a show of your knowledge of it. If you know the verses by heart, you will get a little electrical energy from them at some hour of the day. You will think of some verse or other, and it will save you. These verses are like oxygen. For those who read the *Gita* with faith, it is like the fabled wish-yielding tree. It can end all of our threefold sufferings. We may not see such a result in this life, but our faith should not be shaken on that account. If the result does not come, the reason will be deficiency of our own effort and not want of truth in the idea itself. It is only if we read the *Gita* in this spirit that it will prove the *amrita* of knowledge.

[13][1]

How should we define *swadharma*? The *varnashrama* had its origin in this idea. It is not peculiar to Hinduism, but prevails all over the world. In view of this, it is necessary to consider what *swadharma* means. In Chapter XVIII, we were even told that following one's *swadharma* one attains perfection; that is, following one's *swadharma* one attains equality with all. In this transitory world, we see equality nowhere. No two leaves are equal. But the *Gita* shows the way to equality. We shall see tomorrow how it does that.

[14][2]

Swadharma, though devoid of merit, is better than *paradharma*, so much so that, if need be, one should prefer to die while doing one's *swadharma*. The reason is that *paradharma* may prove dangerous. We should be careful about this. No one should do work which belongs to another, for that may be dangerous. Suppose that there is a powerful minister in a country. Asquith was superior in authority to the commander-in-chief of the army, but his dharma was only to issue orders and it was for the latter to give effect to them. Obeying his orders, the commander-in-chief would order the army to march to the battle-field. Suppose Asquith became vain and himself wanted to lead the army; if he did that, the country would be destroyed. The minister is of course next to the King in authority, but his taking upon himself this *paradharma* would be fraught with danger. Now think of the commander-in-chief. Suppose he wanted to rise to a higher position of authority and to become a minister, so that he might order the next commander-in-chief. If he did, there would

[1] The dates of these discourses are not given in the source.
[2] *Ibid*

be a great struggle for power in the country and it would be destroyed. The commander-in-chief would lose the position he already enjoyed, without getting the one he wanted. One more condition is also essential. The commander-in-chief should do his work, and the minister his; neither is superior or inferior to the other. This requires a sense of dharma on the part of both. If they have it, neither would feel superior or inferior to the other, for each would do his own dharma well and earn 100 per cent marks.

In God's court, one's attitude to work will be given the highest importance. No one there will take into account who was superior and who inferior in status and authority. One should never believe that one's own dharma is superior and another's inferior. Or rather, one should believe that one's dharma is the best for one. Take the example of a mother's attitude to her child. If the latter is ugly, the mother will shower all the greater care on it and will quarrel with anyone who slights it. In the same way, one's own dharma helps one to win *moksha*. The *Mahabharata* contains many examples of this truth. In Tulsidas's work, too, Guha and Shabari were devoted to God as they did their own work, and so attained the supreme state.

Varnashrama had its origin in the idea of *swadharma*. We do not see today the true idea of *varna*. It is limited now to restrictions about inter-dining and inter-marriage. The idea of *varna* is not peculiar to Hinduism. Such dharma which was peculiar to one society would become narrow, and one need not die for it. If our dharma is universal and valid at all times, one should be ready to die for it. *Varna* does not consist in customary practices regarding inter-dining and inter-marriage; the division of society into *varna*s is a division of functions. The idea of pollution by touch was a later accretion. The distinctions of *varna* prevail all over the world. We find them in every country. Most parents have to think what they will do about their children when they grow up, and the boys and the girls, too, have to think about their future. Exercised over these problems, we sacrifice our interests in this world and our welfare in the next. Worried by them, we lose sight of our means of deliverance. Can anyone else show us what our *swadharma* is? Doing *swadharma* does not mean the freedom of the individual and subordination of society. If a man seeks *moksha* and still believes that he is independent, he will utterly fail in his aspiration. One who seeks *moksha* behaves as society's servant. To win *moksha* means to merge in the sea. To attain that state means to be one with an infinitely vast sea. We are but germs in

society. That word "germs" signifies our subordination to it. We are, in truth, free in such subordination. Our duty is what society assigns to us. Of three persons who work together, one is bound to be the leader. A commander-in-chief must consult the minister in certain matters; and likewise the minister, too, should consult the former in some other matters. The definition [of *swadharma*], then, is that one must do the work assigned to one by one's superior. From this, we shall by and by rise to a higher stage.

[15][1]

How is that in this *Gita* which is concerned with *moksha* we are asked to do work which may have no great significance, and to concern ourselves with *swadharma*? Can we win *moksha* in this manner? Yes, we can. In the *Mahabharata* there is Tuladhar's story. The Brahmin in search of knowledge got it from a butcher. The devotee whom Mahadev [Desai] mentioned was a potter, and Bhojo Bhagat[2] was a cobbler. In saying, "better is death in the discharge of one's duty."[3] Shri Krishna has not laid down a principle very difficult to follow. The idea of *swadharma* involves restrictions on oneself. *Swa* means that which one has been able to digest. If we are not able to digest [what we eat], many disturbances in the system will follow and we would get diseases. If, observing others round us consuming *dudhapak*[4] and growing fat, we also eat it, we would come to grief. *Swadharma* indeed helps everyone to win *moksha*. But, till we have won it, what should we do as human beings living in these physical bodies? If we understand the body's dharma and do it, we shall have to voluntarily accept subordination in order that we may become perfectly ourselves. It is to God that we have to subordinate ourselves. Can we hope that, because we recite *antar mama*[5] every day, God who is asleep in our hearts will awake? To wake Him, we shall have to seek someone's help. *Swadharma* means the work which falls to our lot from hour to hour. We should do the work assigned to us by others. We have to submit ourselves to our conscience, but what will a person do if he has no conscience? When we have eliminated the "I" from us, then will God take the place vacated by it. We have to accept subordination for His sake. Having accepted a job anywhere, we

[1] The date of this discourse is not given in the source.
[2] Gujarati poet, 1785-1850
[3] In III, 35
[4] Boiled, sweetened milk cooked with a little rice
[5] A Bengali *bhajan* included in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*

should do it with single-minded devotion and sense of duty; we should do it even if this work which falls to our lot is unattractive to us, repels us or smells of violence. If in a world like ours full of violence, such work falls to our lot, we must do it. A task of this kind fell to the lot of Harishchandra. When he raised his sword to kill his wife, he had no violence in him. Did he wish ill to his wife? His heart was filled with compassion. The poet says that he had hardened his heart, but in truth he had hardened only his hand. If we were painters, we would not draw him with a face distorted by a feeling of aversion. If he had in fact raised his sword with reluctance on his face, we would have to say that he was overcome by ignorant attachment and that, having risen so high, at last he fell; this blot would have remained on him. We cannot imagine any sign of suffering on his face. Following his example, we should do with perfect devotion and without hesitation any duty which falls to our lot. It is best, in the first instance, not to take up a task, but, having taken up one, we must not forsake it. Consider, for instance, a large black ant whose feet, if stuck in jaggery, will not let go their hold of it; they remain stuck to it. Not to forsake the task undertaken, that is but the definition of satyagraha itself. Everyone, from a child to an old man, should cling to the task undertaken till he or she breaks. This is internal meditation, this is Vedanta. Of course, the work done in this spirit should be dedicated to God. We should be totally absorbed in any work which we may be doing. If such absorption is inspired with a selfish interest in work, it will bring about our fall, and if with a sense of dedication to God it will lift us up.

[16][1]

So, then, this is one idea, that *swadharma* is better than *paradharma*. The next question is: if no one can escape doing karma, what is the difference between the karma of a wise man and that of an ignorant man? The former performs *yajna* for others, the latter works for himself. If we do karma as *yajna*, it would be as if we did no karma. Shri Krishna then advanced the argument of society's good, and told Arjuna that he should work on without wasting a single moment in idleness, should work on without concern for the "I" and dedicating to God all that he did.

How does it happen that, though trying to act in this way, man sometimes commits sin? If, in doing *swadharma*, we follow our own wilful inclinations, do it in pride, we are not doing *swadharma*. What is

[1] The date of this discourse is not given in the source.

the reason that, though most people in the world do their *swadharma*, the pile of sins in the world remains as huge as ever?

With Chapter III the *Gita* ends. It need not have been followed by anything more. Even in the third Chapter, there are five or six verses which are really important. The rest of the *Gita* is intended to explain more clearly what has been said in the first three chapters.

Shri Krishna tells Arjuna, in reply to his question, that desire and anger ride on our two shoulders. If they are with us while we do our *swadharma*, then we gain nothing. Can we say that many of those who enter the Councils act unworthily? They do it to serve others. But their action is prompted by desire, by the aim of getting the better of the Government; there is anger behind it and, therefore, it is not right. Desire and anger are blood-brothers. They dwell in the senses and the mind. We can, therefore, overcome them only by subduing these. Hence it is that the way to *moksha* is said to lie in becoming free from attachments and aversions. This is the reason why we are advised to become free from them. If we are enslaved by something, is there anything we would not do for its sake? Vishvamitra[1] did hard *tapas*, but afterwards he felt that his *tapas* was superior to Vasishtha's[2]; from that arose desire, which provoked anger. One should understand this with one's reason at any rate and move as slowly as a snail; one may then work on without fear of any kind.

[17]

November 23, 1926

We ought to cultivate such a state of mind that on no day can we have peace unless we have recited verses from the *Gita*. What a contrast between the noise at the evening and the peace in the early morning! We should not be satisfied merely with reciting the verses or leading their recitation anyhow. Day by day our recitation should improve in regard to pronunciation. One person's lapse in this matter is the lapse of all. As this is true of the music in a concert, so is it true of the music of life. If we pray with the heart and the mind in unison, why should we care for the perishable body? Why should we be concerned whether it lives or falls? We may not mind the distance from others which this material thing imposes on us; after all, how far apart can a material thing keep us? If we have cultivated the unity of our self with

[1] Sages in the *Ramayana*
[2] *Ibid*

the selves of others, with God as witness, if we treat the lapse of one as the lapse of all, it will be very good indeed. If we also pronounce the words correctly, we shall approach God with water in a vessel as clean as possible. We shall have placed a *bel* leaf in the water with utmost attention to cleanliness, and filled the vessel with water from the purest source. Such outward attentions are meaningless in themselves; but they lend grace where there is faith. A man of faith will make his gift as artistic as he can. Today's craftsmanship is lifeless and no craftsmanship at all. How much patience must the craftsmanship of olden days have required? How many years must have been spent on learning it? We have come across no engineer of the old school, one who had built palaces in his time. Our effort to master correct pronunciation is a sign of our heart-felt love; we should not, thus, let our recitation of the *Gita* become dry at any time.

In Chapter III, Shri Krishna explained the supremacy of karma. After explaining that, if we wish to practise yoga through karma, we should dedicate to God every karma which we do, He explained what other things should accompany karma. It should be enriched with knowledge. Let us think about the path of knowledge and the path of karma. Anyone who follows the former exclusively becomes heartless; he who follows the latter exclusively becomes dull in mind. For the right choice of karma we should combine the methods of both the paths. Both are excellent, but neither can be practised without the other. Is there anything as humble as a stone, or anything which does as much karma as it does? How utterly dedicated to God is its karma? It goes on working for ever in the same, unchanging manner; but, as a mere piece of stone, it never wins *moksha*. A stone should cease to be a stone and should become Ahalya[1], should come alive. On the one hand, we should be as inert as a stone, and, on the other, we should become the very image of knowledge, and this in such manner that no one can say whether the person is a man of karma or of knowledge. Then will his *purushartha* be complete. Where *jnana* and karma unite, *bhakti* will follow as a matter of course. For the moment, we have seen that there should be a combination of the two. When we have understood the meaning of both, we shall see no difference between *sankhya* and yoga. That is the substance of Chapter IV. I shall not go into a discussion of the different types of *yajna*.

[1] A character in the *Ramayana.* Her husband's curse had turned her into a stone, which regained her living form at the touch of Rama's feet.

[18][1]

Hathayogis[2] believe Chapter VI to have been written for them. Their belief is that it was written because *hathayoga* has a place in the practice of yoga. I do not share this view, though I admit that *hathayoga* has some utility. We should avail ourselves of all possible means which help in self-realization. It is said about the purely physical processes described in *hathayoga* that those who go through them will attain self-realization. Jnanadeva went riding on a wall to receive someone who was coming to see him riding a lion. But what then? He thereby brought yoga into discredit. These processes do not necessarily take one to God. The secret of rising towards God lies in the mind. In this very Chapter there is the verse: *Uddharedatm-anatmanam natmanamavasadayet*.[3] That is, this Chapter teaches the importance of controlling the self. Mortification of the body is also as much for the control of the mind as for the control of the self. Anyone who practises these processes, knowing that they help control of the mind, will certainly derive much profit from them. We have not taken them up because we have not met anyone who knows them. We have been visited by many who believed in them and recommended them to us, but none who knew them. Hence I have done nothing in that field. But I do have them in my mind. I mention this thing so that, if you come across a sadhu who is like me a seeker, you should avail yourselves of his services. Our bodies have become very weak. If we know these physical processes very well, they would be found to be far more effective exercises than what they teach in England. The sixth Chapter of course discusses the importance of rules. It also explains the means of doing karma in a disinterested spirit. *Jnana* signifies the knowledge of man who knows the Shastras and the term yogi means one who knows the science of karma.

This Chapter explains the conditions which must be fulfilled before we can do karma in a disinterested spirit. It is not possible to do karma in that spirit without control of the self. Those who control themselves from hour to hour, only they can work in that spirit. Thieves, robbers and immoral men never talk about doing karma in a disinterested spirit. Many persons use the *Gita* to justify their actions. But disinterestedness is a state of the mind, and such a state can never be cultivated without effort and without self-control. One whose left hand does not know what his right hand does, such a one knows what it is to be equal-minded. Our yardstick is the ability to see others as

[1] The date of this discourse is not given in the source.

[2] Practitioners of yoga in its purely physical aspect

[3] In VI, 5

ourselves. We should think whether we should be happy if others did to us what we do to them.

Disinterestedness can never be cultivated without a spirit of renunciation. That is the true meaning of Chapter VI.

[19][1]

The *Bhagavad Gita* is divided into three parts: six chapters for the syllable *tat*, six for *tvam* and six for *asi*[2].

In Chapter VI, Shri Krishna explains the means of controlling the senses. In the seventh chapter, he discusses the distinction between *jnana* and *vijnana*. *Vijnana* means knowledge of particulars. *jnana* embraces God's *para prakriti*, and *vijnana* relates to His *apara prakriti*. Chapter VIII discusses further what is included in *vijnana*. The last verse in Chapter VII says that he who performs the three types of sacrifice, *adhiyajna*, *adhidaiva* and *adhibhuta*, goes to the Lord. Discussing *akshara*, Shri Krishna explained that one should meditate exclusively on that, for one becomes like that on which one meditates. He explained *adhidaiva* to mean that He was the *Para-brahman*, supreme above all, and asked why, since this was so, anyone should seek to please other deities lower or higher. It is God alone that one should worship and serve. But what does serving God mean? Shri Krishna said that He was both the invisible Reality and the visible world. If so, the karma which we do is also done by Krishna. If He is the master of the show, can we believe that we do anything? As the dirty water which falls into the Ganga is purified, so we should believe that the sins we commit are committed by God, for he who harbours no sinful thoughts cannot commit sin. Anything to which motion is imparted retains it for some time. If we fell a tree, for some time the leaves would remain green, but they would soon begin to wither. If a person has overcome both his conscious and unconscious desires, they will not rise again. In Chapters VII and VIII, Shri Krishna explains what Creation is and describes the visible world and the nature of karma, and shows that everything exists in God. Why does He lay so much stress on the necessity of doing karma in a disinter-ested spirit? These two chapters sufficiently explain the reason. A person who has plunged into water goes on swimming in it, but the latter is in no way

[1] The date of this discourse is not given in the source.

[2] The three syllables constitute the great Upanishadic text *tat tvam asi*, "That thou art."

concerned. Similarly, God is a sea of compassion. This too, however, is merely a conception of our mind. Truly speaking, God is neither a generous-hearted Being nor a sea of compassion. It is in such a God that we lie and move.

[20][1]

Chapters IX and X are to be taken together. Shri Krishna says: "I dwell in all creatures, hence do all things for my sake." And so He said: "On Me fix thy mind, to Me bring thy devotion."[2] In Chapter X Arjuna asked Shri Krishna to show him His divine powers. The stream of *bhakti* which flows from Chapter VII onwards gathers volume from chapter to chapter. Shri Krishna shows Arjuna His divine powers and urges him again and again to dedicate everything to God. All the four chapters lead us towards *bhakti*. Chapter IX, especially, is about *rajavidya* and *rajaguhya*. It is really a great support for persons like us given to a life of sin. Even the most sinful person is promised help and support. The *Gita* would not approve anyone running down *mantras* from the Vedas. It says, on the contrary, that even the most sinful man will be saved if he dedicates everything to Shri Krishna. This knowledge is *guhya* only so long as it has not touched the heart.

[21]

[*November 27, 1926*][3]

Shri Krishna showed His cosmic form to Arjuna and explained to him that it could be seen, not by those who had studied the Vedas and gained other like qualifications, but only by those whose hearts were steeped in *bhakti*. What a vision it must have been! My enthusiasm for the *Gita* grows day by day. I agreed to talk about the *Gita* and explain its meaning, and I liked the idea; but my pleasure in the discussion has grown from what it was when I started. I get daily more absorbed in it. We, who are given to self-indulgence, cannot always taste this joy. The real joy comes from *bhakti*, that is, it is spiritual. This interest is growing because it is like savouring food which is digested more and more completely from day to day, and it influences our conduct accordingly. Such is my state of mind. I feel that in this chapter the *Gita* reaches its highest point. We take twelve

[1] The date of this discourse is not given in the source.
[2] In XVIII, 65
[3] This date is given on the title page of *Gandhijinu Gitashikshan*.

minutes to recite it, so that we are likely to feel tired by the time we have come half-way. If we let ourselves sink it it, we should be saved. Shri Vyasa has described the vision so vividly that we feel as if we see it with our own eyes. Beholding it, we wonder what our own place in this universe is. It is nothing. It is as small as a grain of dust. Where are we in this universe of stars, suns and planets? If a hair could speak, it would describe its place thus: "I have value so long as I am a part of the body; separate me from it and my value is lost. The essence of life in me cannot vanish; as for the material substance, even the vast universe is transient, existing only as name and form." We are nothing, compared with that visible manifestation of God, this vast universe. Being what they are, whom can we kill? Even if we kill anyone, we too shall die simultaneously. As we understand this more and more, we should become steeped ever more fully in *bhakti*.

Even those who go out visiting other places should keep up the daily practice.

[From Gujarati]

Gandhijinu Gitashikshan

82. LETTER TO C. NARAYANA RAO

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
November 27, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[1] Why do you want to leave your permanent service? I think it is quite possible for one to serve one's country no matter in what situation of life one may be, provided, of course, that the occupation itself is clean. In any case, in addition to the reason [for] wanting to leave service, please supply me with the following information:

What is your age? Are you married? Have you children? Are your parents alive? Have you any dependents? Are you keeping excellent health? Are you prepared to do continuous physical labour for 8 hours per day? Can you be satisfied with mere sanitation, field work or work in the kitchen or work at the spinning-wheel and the

[1] Writing on November 19, the correspondent had expressed a desire to leave his job and enter the Ashram for "leading a happy and peaceful life".

like? Do you know Sanskrit? How far have you studied? What languages do you know?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. NARAYANA RAO
CLERK, EXCISE DEPTT.
BERHAMPORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 11020

83. LETTER TO RICHARD B. GREGG

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
November 27, 1926

I see you are adding to my debt. I already owe you a reply to several questions in your previous letter.[1] And I have now before me another letter with quotations from Thomas Paine.[2] The quotations I hope to use as you suggest. I have not yet gone through them.

The articles on khaddar you may use just as you like.

I am glad you have appreciated the articles"Is This Humanity?". I felt that I should make my position clear irrespective of whether it sounded or was in fact tenable or not. It is enough that the views expressed therein represent my definite conclusions.

You will notice the flaw in your analogy. You compare duty towards the ward with your duty towards moral welfare of the assailant. Now the moral welfare of the assailant is not at stake when you are defending the ward. It is his physical existence that is at stake. And, if instead of the assailant being a stranger, it was another ward, but stronger than the one then under your protection, you would still have to defend the one under your protection against the other ward who is about to assail the former and whom you have no other means of overcoming. God will judge your duty in accordance with your intentions. Indeed, one may go a step further and assume the one who is to be protected not to be a ward, but an utter stranger who has sought protection. There is a beautiful tale in the *Mahabharata*. A great prince[3] had a pigeon flying to him for protection against a hawk. The hawk feels that the pigeon is his lawful prey duly appointed as such

[1] For Gandhiji's earlier letters to Gregg.
[2] *Vide* "Price of Freedom", 9-12-1926.
[3] King Sivi of Ushinara, near Gandhara

by God. The prince wards him off by saying that whilst pigeons ordinarily were a lawful prey for hawks, he cannot neglect the obvious duty of protecting those who sought his protection and the prince generously offered his own flesh as substitute. This, of course, is the most spiritual method of dealing with the hawk. But where one is too weak to adopt that method, one would be bound to carry out the law of protection by resisting the approach of the hawk by force. And this one would do in accordance with the law of ahimsa. I don't know whether I have made my position clear.

I see you are not coming to pass your winter in Sabarmati. I am sorry in two ways. First, because, though I shall be away, the Ashramites will miss you. Secondly, because, it is the fear of the Ashram climate and water that is deterring you. We, diet reformers, should really discover ways of bending climate to our will rather than succumb to them. I know, however, this is counsel of perfection. The step you are taking is prudent and therefore in the circumstances superior to the counsel of perfection which cannot be carried out without taking risk. I shall follow with considerable interest your researches in the tutorial line.

Devdas is quite well and strong. He has gone to nurse Mathuradas at Panchgani. I leave for Wardha on the 2nd December. My love to you and the Stokes and Sundaram and Savitri.

Yours,

R. B. GREGG

SIMLA

From a photostat: S.N. 12088.

84. IS THIS HUMANITY?—VIII

[*November 28, 1926*]

Letters on this subject are still pouring in, but I fail to discover in them any new question or any fresh argument advanced. I would therefore ask those who have been thinking on this subject to read this series of articles over and over again. I do so without the slightest hesitation, inasmuch as they are the result not of ideas hastily formed, but of experience of many years. I have presented no new principles, but have tried to restate old principles. I cannot say how far the presentation is correct, but as it represents my honest conviction, and

as many friends expect me to solve intricate problems in ahimsa, I can only ask them to turn to the series I have been writing. Some of my correspondents wrench my own sentences from their contexts and quote them against me, some quote part of them and omit the most essential remainder.

Thus I have never advocated the extirpation of dogs as a class. On the contrary my suggestions have been made for their betterment. I have repeatedly said that I have suggested the destruction of certain dogs under certain circumstances. Even this may be open to question. If it is, the objector should address himself only to that and nothing more.

I continue to be the same votary of ahimsa that I was before. I still continue to hold life not only in man and animal, but in plant and flower, as sacred, and yet make use of vegetables and flowers and fruit. Only the spirit behind the use is: 'He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting.' Destruction of dogs, even as that of plant or vegetable, is advised only when it is a matter of imperative duty, and only when it is meant not to sow to the flesh, but to the spirit.

What torments me is the impotence of the votary of ahimsa. Ahimsa is not impotence. Ahimsa is nor powerlessness. Ahimsa is unconquerable power. We shrink from it as we are dazed by its overpowering lustre. Only very few of us can catch a glimpse of it. Ahimsa is the distinguishing characteristic of an untrammelled spirit. It is at the root of a number of other qualities—discrimination, detachment, penance, equability and knowledge. It is the way of the brave, not of shrinkers. He who would understand ahimsa must understand the meaning of the inevitable *himsa* one sees about oneself. This statement, I know, is liable to abuse. But what is there free from this danger? Is not even God's name turned to the worst account? Have not rivers of blood been made to flow in His name? Have we not worshipped the Devil in His name? But that does not diminish His glory. That does not mean that we shall take His name in a secret corner.

All action is tainted inasmuch as it presupposes *himsa*. And yet we free ourselves from the bondage of action through action itself. This body is the receptacle of sin, and yet we seek to achieve salvation by making of that abode of sin God's own sanctuary. Even so with *himsa*.

And this *himsa*, calculated to take us on the onward path, must

be spontaneous, must be the lowest minimum, must be rooted in compassion, must have discrimination, restraint, detachment at its back, and must lead us every moment onward to the path of ahimsa.

I propose to conclude this series with a brief reference by way of illustration to the way in which we are trying to solve the dog problem in the Ashram.

The problem is as old as the Ashram itself. The activity of the *Mahajan* has made it more serious, and we have put up with it not without reluctance. It is our practice to destroy rabid dogs. Two or three such cases have occurred during the last ten years. Healthy dogs have not been destroyed. They are being refused fool. I see that, if the rule is strictly observed we would be all happy, but we cannot do so. Every inmate does not yet realize the necessity of it, and those who do are not sufficiently alive to the observance of the rule. And there are also employees in the Ashram,—how can they be made to observe the rule?

Some dogs we feed, there being no other alternative. Two bitches and their puppies are being maintained at present. The puppies have been kept in cosy boxes or baskets to keep them from cold, and are being given milk and the dams get specially prepared food.

On the other hand, we have applied to the *Mahajan* to remove stray dogs from here. The request has been accepted, though their cart has not yet come.

I have explained to the best of my light our duty to the dogs. Everyone has to act according to his own light. Let no one learn from me the *duty* of destruction. He may under certain circumstances permit himself to have recourse to it. I have laid down the limits. Everyone observes and will observe the law according to his own capacity. I have referred to the present practice at the Ashram simply to serve as an illustration of what my opinion means.

The religion of ahimsa consists in allowing others the maximum of convenience at the maximum of inconvenience to us, even at the risk of life. Everyone has to determine for himself the amount of inconvenience he is capable of putting up with. No third party can determine it for him. Religion, even as the soul, is both one and many.

Young India, 2-12-1926

85. SPEECH AT CONVOCATION OF GUJARAT VIDYAPITH, AHMEDABAD

November 28, 1926

I take it as God's favour that I have been able to be present here this year as I was last year. I congratulate the students who have received degrees and prizes and pray that their aspirations may bear fruit. I did not know what to say on this occasion. Just then Shri Chintaman Vaidya came to my rescue. The moment I received this week his letter saying that he would be coming here on business, the burden on me was lifted. His name is not unknown to students. His scholarship too is well known. He has published books on the *Mahabharata* and on Indian history. He has served his motherland not only through books but also through public work. Like our Vidyapith, there is a Vidyapith in Maharashtra also. He has been serving it. He holds the office of its Vice-Chancellor. The status of that Vice-Chancellor is higher than that of ours. Shankaracharya is the Chancellor there. Nanabhai[1] can work in consultation with me, while Shri Vaidya himself bears the entire responsibility there. It will certainly be worth your while to listen to what he has to say. And yet I have a few things to say to you.

All of you can see that in numerical strength the condition of the Vidyapith is deteriorating. But that does not frighten me in the least. Even today I have the same faith in its mission that I had when under good auspices I set up this Vidyapith in 1920. I may boldly say that my faith is being even strengthened. Numerical strength does count in the world, but so far as our movement is concerned we have to rely only on the strength of quality. When the numerical strength is small we need not be disheartened, but we must maintain special vigilance. Today a handful of British official rule over India. Do they have that much self-confidence? As there are 250 districts in India, there must be 250 Collectors. How many men have to be controlled by a single Collector? And yet he can play tennis in the evening and enjoy sound sleep at night. He does not feel worried even in a forest. As we have to fight him, cultivate self-confidence even though you are a handful. If we have thousands of workers, we can afford indolence or neglect of duty, but when the number is small, everyone has to be particularly vigilant.

[1] Nrisinhprasad Bhatt, then Vice-Chancellor of Gujarat Vidyapith

I assure you that I have not the slightest anxiety about the future of the Vidyapith. If you would remain vigilant in your work, the future is certainly bright. Even if there is but one student in the Vidyapith, he will definitely do his work. And for the sake of that one student—even if I were in Kashmir—I shall come here to award him a degree. You should never think that my enthusiasm at that time will be less even by an iota. I can say that I shall have all the greater enthusiasm in awarding a degree to that single student and I shall take greater pride in it—if I am entitled to take such pride.

The Vice-Chancellor has requested me to lead the Vidyapith along the lines of independent education. I welcome the ideals which he has set forth. Further I have been asked whether we shall retain the temptation of prizes. We have to make the students realize that education is itself a prize. The fruit of a sacrifice is the sacrifice itself. I welcome this idea also. But I am one who acts knowing one's limitations. We have to work against such a powerful wind that I dare make no changes.

I have committed no folly in establishing the Vidyapith. You too should if you can have the same faith. I know our drawbacks, because I am full of them. Do not allow weaknesses to creep in.

[From Gujarati]

Sabarmati, Vol. V, Autumn Issue, 1926

86. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

Monday [*November 29, 1926*][1]

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Mirabehn will reach Delhi on Friday at about 10 or 11 and will be staying, at Vidyavatiji's Gurukul. She goes there with the intention of learning Hindi. Meet her at the station and take her to Daryaganj.

Give her the help she needs. I am hoping that someone from the Gurukul will be at the station.

If you feel like coming to Wardha[2], do come over.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2353

[1] Mirabehn was in Delhi on Friday, December 3, 1926; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 3-12-1926. The preceding Monday was November 29.

[2] On December 3, 1926, Gandhiji left Ahmedabad for Wardha, where he stayed up to December 20, 1926.

87. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

ASHRAM,
Monday [*November 29, 1926*]

BHAISHRI PURUSHOTTAM,

You have done what no one else has succeeded in doing. As I had promised, I have been studying currency this month.[1] Last week I finished reading the Royal Commission's report.[2] I was very happy to read your minute. This does not mean that I understand the subject. You probably have no idea of my ignorance of the subject. The distinction between Gold Exchange standard, bullion standard and Exchange standard is still not clear to me. Just now I have been reading Madan's books. I do not know when I shall be ready to give my opinion. I am getting ready to display my ignorance. Meanwhile, from a distance I watch with admiration your fight.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19970

88. STRENGTH IN WEAKNESS

I make no apology for reproducing General Smuts' great speech[3] on Emily Hobhouse at the time of burying the ashes of Emily Hobhouse in Bloemfontein. The speech makes clear what one individual with force of character can do; what a woman, miscalled the weaker sex, can do; what true patriotism means.

Young India, 2-12-1926

89. THE WHEEL OF LIFE

The headline is of my making but what follows is an abstract of C. Rajagopalachari's notes[4] submitted to the Royal Agricultural

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jaisukhlal Krishnalal Mehta", on or after 7-9-1926.

[2] The Royal Commission on Indian Currency, headed by Hilton Young, was announced by the Viceroy on August 20, 1926. In its report, the commission recommended fixing the value of the rupee at 1s 6d gold and the creation of a Central Bank. The addressee, who was a member of the Commission, differed from the majority on these two points.

[3] Not reproduced here

[4] Not reproduced here. The notes said that within a short time the number of

Commission[1]. The value of the notes lies in their being an accurate record of his experience. After a careful perusal of the note, the reader will answer for himself whether the spinning-wheel is or is not truly the Wheel of Life for India's millions. C. Rajagopalachari's second suggestion that the temptation of drink must be removed from the poor people is worthy of serious consideration by those who will solve the problem of economic distress. If the men will use up in drink the hard-earned coppers of their women spinners, even the spinning-wheel will be but a frail support.

Young India, 2-12-1926

90. NOTES

CURRENCY

For the past many years, I have resisted the pressure of friends to study the currency question, not because it is not one of the most important questions engaging public attention but because I have more than enough to do and because I know nothing about the science and I never speak or write on subjects of which I have not acquired a knowledge to my own satisfaction. I am now no longer able to resist the pressure. The friends urge that I must assist in popularizing its study, and use such influence as I possess among the masses for their education in this vital matter. I do not share their enthusiasm. I am not sure that the masses can be made to understand the very intricate riddles of currency. But I dare not brush aside the weighty statement they make that the present currency policy of the Government if carried out means a strain upon the resources of the dumb millions of India which they are ill able to sustain. I have therefore promised to study the question, open the columns of *Young India* for its discussion and if possible to express my own opinion about it. In redemption of that promise I am in a position to publish elsewhere what I hope is the first instalment of a series of articles on

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spinning-wheels plying in Tamil districts alone had gone up to 30,000; that the average income from each wheel was Rs. 14-9-8 per year which, when compared with the Rs. 50/- that some of the agriculturist families got from their land per year, was substantial amount.

[1] The Royal Commission on Indian Agriculture. The formation of the Commission headed by the Marquis of Linlithgow was announced by the Viceroy on January 20, 1926, and its sittings took place in the winter of 1926-27.

currency from the pen of Professor P. A. Wadia. I have myself just finished a preliminary study of the report of the Royal Commission. I confess I do not understand it as I would understand say a work on the economics of the spinning-wheel. I am in search of a teacher who would make the language of currency almost as real to me as that of the spinning-wheel. Then but not till then shall I be able to express my own opinion on the problem. Meanwhile I promise to devote to its serious study all the odd moments I can spare.

STRAY DOGS *V.* VILLAGE DOGS

A friend says: "You advocate the destruction of stray dogs. Do you include in the category the very useful village dogs?"

Most certainly I do not. I have made that perfectly clear in the pages of *Navajivan*. The village dogs are the cheapest and the most efficient police we have for protecting villagers against thieves at night and intruding dogs and other animals during the day. But I have not advocated indiscriminate destruction even of stray dogs. Many other remedies have to be adopted before that drastic measure is resorted to. What I have insisted upon is a municipal bye-law authorizing municipalities to destroy unowned dogs. This simple legislation will protect the dogs from cruel neglect and put the *Mahajan* upon their mettle. It is the indiscriminate and thoughtless charity which has to be resisted. That charity which feeds dogs and indeed men who choose to become beggars harms the beggars and the society which encourages such false charity.

THE WORTHIEST LADY

A correspondent sends the following interesting cutting[1] taken from a history of Rome.

Young India, 2-12-1926

[1] Not reproduced here. The extract described how four Romans disputed about whose wife was the worthiest of them all and discovered that it was Lucretia, wife of Lucius Tarquinius Collatinus, distinguished for her beauty and domestic virtues, who was working at the loom while the other three feasted.

91. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SURAT,
December 3 [*1926*]

CHI. MIRA[1],

Your telegram received. Delighted. God be with you.[2]

With love,

BAPU

SHRIMATI MIRABAI
KANYA GURUKUL
DARYAGANJ
DELHI

From the original: C.W. 5188. Courtesy: Mirabehn

92. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Friday [*December 3, 1926*][3]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

It is night now and I am on my way to Wardha by the Tapti Valley train. I have been under such heavy pressure of work of late that I have hardly been able to cope with letters. The last five days' post is still lying unattended to.

Devdas is not giving any satisfactory news about your health. If your stomach has distended and you cannot digest food and are feeling restless then you must reduce your intake of food. When Kaka Saheb had indigestion, he too was made to give up food. There is nothing to worry about if you have to fast for a couple of days. It will also be good if you can keep yourself on milk and fruit for a few days. If you want, I can also discuss it with Dr. Jivraj. All the doctors here are of the opinion that in your condition you must eat less and eat light food. You must eat only what you can digest and consider

[1] The superscription in this and other letters addressed to Mirabehn is in Devanagari.

[2] Gandhiji had sent Mirabehn to the Kanya Gurukul in Delhi to learn Hindi and to teach carding and spinning.

[3] The addressee received the letter on December 6, 1926. The Friday prior to this date corresponded to December 3.

everything else poison. You have done well to resign from the Municipality.

I shall be at Wardha till the 20th at least.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

93. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

[*December 4, 1926*][1]

BHAISHRI PURUSHOTTAMDAS,

It is all right that you wrote in English. Allow me to continue to write in Gujarati. I have not been able to read your articles. If you have any off-prints please send me. I have invited Jaisukhlal Mehta to Wardha to gather more information. I am writing this on my way to Wardha. I shall be at Wardha till the 20th.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: Purushottamdas Thakurdas Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

94. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

WARDHA,
Kartika Krishna 14, 1983 [*December 4, 1926*]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. I have no difficulty in reading your letter. If no promise is broken by your not going to Europe, then it is my belief that this is not the time for you to go there.

I do not wish to write anything about your victory. There are certain battles in which defeat is victory. I do not know if what has happened now is good for you or not. My advice is for you to observe objectively everything that happens in the Assembly[2].

I know that I have served the country through my silence; however, I am not confident that I can unite the various parties. My

[1] From the postmark
[2] Central Legislative Assembly

heart shrinks from the idea of going to Gauhati.[1] I have even written to Srinivasa Iyengar and Motilalji asking to be excused. When I feel confident, I shall myself step into the arena.

I do not know where it would be proper for me to stay in Calcutta if I had to go there. Unless I am forced to go to some other place, I would like to live under your care.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6140. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

95. CULTURE

Elsewhere I reproduce almost word for word the talk Mahadev Desai gave on the *takli* during the Youth Week[2], for it embodies his inmost thoughts and the attendant circumstances are worthy of note. That speech was not delivered for its own sake. But some young men got bored listening to it and they started a disturbance. I have often written to say that the practice of causing disturbances does not become India's culture. In this country, at any rate, those who do not like someone's speech may not pay attention to it, and if they find it repugnant they may walk out. But they should not employ force to stop a speaker from speaking. To shout down someone is nothing but use of force. If intolerance grown among us, it will hamper our progress. We have no reason to believe that what we do not like must assuredly be bad. Certainly there are many things in the world which taste bitter in the beginning but turn out to be sweet in the end.

A nation whose youths discard restraint, courtesy, humility and tolerance courts destruction. The reins of national life are in the hands of youth alone. Their responsibility is greater than that of old people because the latter have given whatever they could or as much as they wished to give [to the nation]. Youths are today shaping the new order and making fresh contributions.

Those who had made noise forgot this responsibility of theirs. Mahadev Desai's speech was being communicated by his hands. Hence it was such as could be followed through the eyes. The youths were unable to stop the speech that was being conveyed by the hands.

[1] For the annual session of the Congress

[2] Celebrated at Ahmedabad in November, 1926

When they realized this inability of theirs, they stopped their shouting. But they certainly earned discredit by shouting. The next day the papers reported that the youths prevented Mahadev Desai from giving his speech on the *takli*. This brought discredit not to Mahadev Desai but to those who had shouted. But their discredit is tantamount to our country's. A country's credit is not distinct from that of its citizens.

Showing repugnance against the *takli* is like marching an army against an ant. It has been shown in *Navajivan* by extracts quoted from old books that the *takli* is one of man's oldest tools. The *takli* is poor people's machine, it is their asylum. Just as the plough is the means of producing food, so is the *takli* the means of producing cloth. Huge mills may arise out of the *takli*. A spinning-mill means a mill containing *taklis*. Just as a man who, plugging the pipe-connections to the different houses, trains them towards his own house and thereby makes others dependent on him for water supply, a spinning-mill too makes independent spinners dependent by getting within itself all the various *taklis*. Thus, a *takli* is a symbol of freedom, a mill that of dependence. How then can one dislike such a thing as a means of support? It is our duty to realize the power of that tiny thing. He who makes us realize its power deserves our gratitude, deserves a good turn from us.

Just as we should starve if we renounced the plough, we have become naked by giving up the *takli*. Because a few get clothes, we should not think that crores of people also get them. Records prove that lakhs of our brothers and sisters go about naked and suffer from hunger.

The *takli* has a twofold power—to cover the body and to feed it—because spinning provides us with cloth and the money saved thereby goes to augment our power of purchasing food. Hence I have given to the *takli* or the spinning-wheel the name of *Annapurna*[1].

The *takli* dispels our lethargy, covers our body and supports it. How can such an implement be disliked?

Moreover, a *takli* brings us into contact with our poor brethren and enables us to share their hardships.

The sages have given us through a story-poem an idea of the power of a tiny blade of grass. The wind could not blow it away. The fire could not burn it up. Someone may well ignore a blade of grass

[1] Goddess of plenty

considering it worthy of contempt, but if countless numbers of them were not there we would get neither food nor water. The power that lies hidden in a tiny blade of grass also lies hidden in the *takli*. I request those who have scoffed at the *takli* to read the dialogue between Yaksha and the gods. Those who belittle the *takli* belittle the poor. Those who belittle the poor cut off their own legs, cut off the branch on which they are sitting. The rich exist because the poor are there. If there were no poor, how could there be room for the rich?

Young men, whether in a school or a college, Whether non-co-operators or co-operators, whether among those who shouted and created disturbance or its unhappy witnesses, do not give up our old culture, do not give up courtesy, do not give up love of the poor. Just as the sword is a symbol of destruction, the *takli* is a symbol of sustenance. Those who used the sword in the form of shouting did no creditable thing. You should not discard the *takli* or calumniate it. Mahadev has drawn your attention to your duty. It is my firm faith that those who do not perform the *yajna* of spinning and do not wear khadi, which is its *prasad*[1], know neither the poor nor their ways. You too should have that faith.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-12-1926

96. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

WARDHA,
December 5, 1926

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I got your letter. Your coming here made me very happy indeed. Come again. As you progressively shed the love of the body, you will have more and more peace of mind. I have still not got hold of the name of that oil. I will find it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4367. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

[1] Gift of grace

97. TELEGRAM TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

December 6, 1926

TO
CHHAGANLAL GANDHI
ASHRAM, SABARMATI

AMERICAN FRIENDS WELCOME.

BAPU

From the original as delivered: S.N. 11249

98. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

WARDHA,
Silence Day, December 6, 1926

SISTERS,

As I had promised, the first thing I am doing in the morning after breakfast is to write this letter to you.

It is now five minutes to seven, and so all of you must be on your way to the prayer ground. Whatever time you fix, keep to it. I am sure that those of you who have agreed to attend [the prayers] would be doing that unless it be for very serious reasons. I have suggested to Ramniklal[1] that he should explain to you one or twoverses from the *Gita* every day. But you may make him read anything you like. Do not give up the practice of writing. Keep trying to improve your handwriting.

But all this is not dharma itself, it is only a help in following dharma. The definition of dharma is contained in the verses which we used to read daily. What we want to learn is how to follow dharma. It lies in altruism. Altruism means desiring and working for the good of others and serving them. Begin this service by loving one another like sisters and sharing one another's griefs. This is but one point. As I wish to write to you every week, let me end my speech here.

Dakshabehn, Kamalabehn and Chi. Rukhi are quite well. All of them travelled by third class but the train was not crowded and so they experienced no hardship. I was the only one to travel in the second class. Lakshmidas[2] is immersed in the charkha work. What happened

[1] Ramniklal Modi, a teacher in the Ashram School
[2] Lakshmidas P. Asar

there about reading from the *Gita* has also happened here. For the rest please read my letter to Chi. Purushottam.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3629

99. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

WARDHA,
December 6, 1926

DEAR MISS LESTER,

I was able to finish reading your letter last night. I fear you will see more of the things you have described if you stay in India long enough. Religion is a complex problem, as complex as life itself. It is remarkable how much humbug can pass under its hallowed name. But what you have seen is a passing phase. The remote village life is in its way deeply spiritual, in my opinion more so than in the West. That is the permanent part of mass Hinduism. It will be finally judged by its influence on them. For ages the cult of violence has failed to produce any impression on them. History has no record of these villages having in a mass taken part in violence. Not therefore that they are totally non-violent. But they are comparatively so. However, all this is futile writing. What matters is how we live ourselves irrespective of what the whole world may do. The more I see of the world the more humbled I become and the more fully I learn to lean on God. I must not go beyond two pages.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6560

100. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Monday [*December 6, 1926*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

I had expected to hear from you today. This is my second letter to you. The first was a card. I see that it is possible to send you the *Autobiography*[2] if it is written on Mondays, as I have done. Here is the translation therefore. Please revise and post here the same day in which case it will be in time. If you cannot revise the same day you may send direct to Swami. This should reach you on Wednesday and if it is posted even on Thursday, I should get it in time on Saturday. . .. The last day for posting to Ahmedabad for *Y.I.* is Sunday here. Now you know what you can do. This arrangement will continue so long as I am here.

Here is Rolland's letter.[3] Sparrow[4] has translated it for me. Here it is. If you think it is accurate, you need not translate anew for me.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5189. Courtesy: Mirabehn

101. LETTER TO LALTA PERSHAD SHAD

WARDHA,
December 6, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

You will forgive me for not acknowledging earlier your letter of 30th October. The reason for the delay in acknowledging it was that owing to the heavy correspondence, your letter was inadvertently put away in a file and was handed to me only last week.

Exactly the same pressure has been brought to bear upon me as you have put to go and see the Sat Gurus who the writers consider are likely to satisfy my craving. Only three or four days ago, I received a telegram from Madras Presidency "Come at once, show you the guru you want." Should I have gone there and should I respond to all such

[1] Date supplied by the addressee

[2] The *Autobiography* commenced appearing in instalments in *Young India*, 3-12-1925. Gandhiji used to send Mirabehn Mahadev Desai's translation of each chapter for revision.

[3] *Vide* Appendix "Romain Rolland's Letter to Gandhiji", before 12-12-1926.

[4] Miss Helene Haussding

letters? In my opinion, that is not the way to follow out the search for a guru. When I say that at the proper time the guru will come to the seeker, it is not a sign of arrogance but a statement of a well-known truth. You do not move about on the earth in search of God. He is to be found in your heart. And so does the guru, the perfect man, seek out all those who are craving in all humility and sincerity. The problem before me, therefore, is not so simple as you put it, nor is it a case of wilfulness or obstinacy.

I made a commencement with the English book you have sent me, but I must tell you that I have not been able to make further progress, for the simple reason that the things already taken by me leave no moment's rest or interval.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. LALTA PERSHAD SHAD
KAYASTH MOHALLA
AJMER

From a photostat: S.N. 19761

102. LETTER TO V. V. DASTANE

WARDHA,
December 6, 1926

MY DEAR DASTANE,

I have your letter. Of course you know that my consent regarding the translation of the *Autobiography* into Marathi is subject to Swami's approval. But I think Swami was agreeable.

From what you have written, it seems to me that Munshiji is morally liable to support only his father. The rest are his sons and his wife and perhaps the three infants who are, I suppose, young children and not grown [-up] once. The eldest son should be called upon to support himself. It will be a service to him and a burden off from Munshiji's shoulders. If the daughter-in-law cannot live with her husband, she can be accommodated in some Ashram where she can earn her own living. The 10-years-old boy should also be put in an Ashram. Munshiji himself should select some work suitable for him and which he should be bound to do. I wonder if the daughter-in-law is the housewife and housekeeper in the family. Even if it is so and if she consents, the son should be asked to leave the house unless he will

work for his own living. In any way Munshiji himself should object to being a burden on the nation when there is no occasion for it.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19762

103. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

WARDHA,
Monday [*December 6, 1926*][1]

I enclose a letter for the Ashram women's association. I was pained to find that you are still in an uncertain state of mind. I do not think any other place will suit you better than the Ashram. Even in the Ashram there may be something you do not like. If that is so, you may try to change it. If you are constipated, the remedy is in your own hands. Or you may get drinking water from Ahmedabad. Enough of it for one person to drink can easily be brought from the city. If you boil the water from the river and then drink it, it will be as good as water from the city. You must make a firm resolve to remain cheerful. Do not change your mind about coming here after the 14th. You will certainly get help here in your Sanskrit studies at any rate. And the climate will of course suit you. Do not hesitate to write to me frankly.

Tell Ramniklal that I feel rather worried as I have no news about Punjabhai's[2] health. What is his address? If Ramniklal gets any news about Punjabhai's health, ask him to write to me.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, pp. 41-2

104. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
WARDHA,
Magsar Sud 1, 1983 [*December 6, 1926*]

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

You are welcome. I got your letter at Wardha. You give no news about your health. Write about it. I shall have to go to Kathiawar in

[1] As in the printed source
[2] Punjabhai Shah, an inmate of the Ashram

March.[1] We shall certainly meet then. I will write if I have to come earlier. I also got a letter from you written from England.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a Photostat Of The Gujarati Original: C.W. 3217. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

105. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

Monday [*December 6, 1926*][2]

BHAI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I send the accompanying for you to read and preserve. I have sent a suitable reply. I have written to tell him[3] that he need say nothing on the political situation, [and also that] we shall not ask him often to go to Kathiawar.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5722

106. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
Silence Day [*December 6, 1926*][4]

CHI. RAMDAS,

I got your letter. Where there is faith and straightforwardness, success follows sooner or later. Can one admire sufficiently Abbas Saheb's[5] straightforwardness? His faith is equally great, and so circumstances continue to favour him. Tell Abbas Saheb that I liked Rehana[6] very much this time. I spent hours with Mirabai. Soheli also met me at Baroda. She is grown up now and is engaged and so she

[1] For a session of the Kathiawar Political Conference

[2] The postmark bears the date December 9, 1926. The preceding Monday fell on December 6, 1926.

[3] Amritlal Thakkar, who had been invited to preside over the session of the Kathiawar Political Conference and who seems to have explained his difficulties in accepting the invitation

[4] From the postmark

[5] Abbas Tyabji

[6] Daughter of Abbas Tyabji

was feeling very shy. She did not even talk to me. Manilal[1] will land in Bombay on the 11th. Most probably Omar Seth will insist upon his getting off at Porbandar.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Blessings to Abbas Saheb.

CHI. RAMDAS GANDHI
C/O CHI. GOURISHANKER VYAS
MANAVADAR
KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: G. N. 6851

107. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

WARDHA,
Wednesday [*December 8, 1926*][2]

CHI. MANI,

I have your postcard. Come by all means. The morning train is more convenient than the night train. But do what you like. I am not waiting to get married, so that I may change my mind every moment. This is the privilege of unmarried girls. Boys too exercise a little of it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro— Manibehn Patelne, p.42

108. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

[*December 8, 1926*][3]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your letter. Ba is still in the Ashram. I have about ten people here—Mahadev, Subbiah, Keshu, Lakshmidas, Krishnadas, Kamala-behn, Dakshabehn (whom you do not know) and Rukhi. Over

[1] Manilal Gandhi
[2] As in the printed source
[3] From the postmark

and above these, Rajagopalachari and other gentlemen have also arrived. Don't you want to come to Wardha? I believe I shall be here up to the 20th at least. I hope you are in good health. Miss Haussding is also with me. Mirabehn has gone to Delhi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 473. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

109. LETTER TO RAJKISHORI MEHROTRA

Wednesday [*December 8, 1926*][1]

CHI. RAJKISHORI,

I have your letter. I would very much love to send you somewhere for education. But it would mean that you have given up the desire for further progeny, that you have resolved to observe *brahmacharya*, that you have vowed to spend your life in the service of others, and that you have given up the shelter of your own parents and parents-in-law. Have you their permission? To be self-reliant one has to forgo the attendance of servants and so on. Observing you, I find that you have not yet attained control of the palate; nor have you given up other pleasures. Consider all these things and then let me know your firm decision. Meanwhile you may put in a good deal of study even while you are in the Ashram. Do it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4954; also G.N. 7479. Courtesy: Parashuram Mehrotra

[1] From the postmark

110. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

[Before *December 9, 1926*][1]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I found it rather hard to come away leaving you behind. Your unsteady mind also is responsible for your ill health. It is to one's advantage to let the mind become a little insensitive. Thinking overmuch is not a good sign. Just as it is a sign of disease if the heart-beat is too slow or too fast, so is it with the mind. To be equiminded, one has to avoid being both. It is a rather unusual state of mind. Lacking a word to describe it, we speak of it as something which means that one is neither too sensitive nor too insensitive, but that is not so. It is something quite different from this since equi-minded means suspension of both states of sensitivity and insensitivity. You should try to cultivate such a state of mind. However, it may be said that it cannot even be cultivated. What you need to do, therefore, is to overcome your sensitiveness.[2]

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32979

111. HER OTHER SERVICES

In sending me a cutting from *Indian Opinion*, Phoenix (Natal), a friend drew my attention to an omission from General Smuts' tribute to Emily Hobhouse copied some time ago in these pages. It refers to her effort to introduce spinning and weaving industry amongst the distressed Boer women after the Boer War. Here is the passage[3] in question.

Young India, 9-12-1926

[1] The addressee has noted at the top of the letter that he received the letter on December 9, 1926.

[2] This marks the end of page one of the letter. The remaining pages could not be traced.

[3] Not reproduced here

112. PRICE OF FREEDOM

Mr. Gregg sends me[1] the following extracts from a written address by Thomas Paine to the soldiers of General George Washington's American army in the Revolutionary War, December 1776, fighting against the British for the freedom of the thirteen American Colonies:

> These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it *now* deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap we esteem too lightly; 'tis dearness only that gives everything its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed, if so celestial an article as *Freedom* should not be highly rated. . . .
>
> I once felt all that kind of anger, which a man ought to feel against the mean principles that are held by the Tories: a noted one, who kept a tavern at Amboy, was standing at his door, with as pretty a child in his hand, about eight or nine years old, as I ever saw, and after speaking his mind as freely as he thought was prudent, finished with this unfatherly expression, "Well, give me peace in my day.' Not a man lives on the continent but fully believes that a separation must some time or other finally take place, and a generous parent should have said, 'If there must be trouble, let it be in my day that my child may have peace,' and this single reflection, well applied, is sufficient to awaken every man to duty. Not a place upon earth might be so happy as America. Her situation is remote from all the wrangling world, and she has nothing to do but to trade with them . . . .
>
> I call not upon a few, but upon all, not on this state or that state, but on *every* state; up and help us; lay your shoulders to the wheel; better have too much force than too little, when so great an object is at stake. Let it be told to the future world, that in the depth of winter, when nothing but hope and virtue could survive, the city and the country, alarmed at one common danger, came forth to meet and to repulse it. Say not that thousands are gone, turn out your tens of thousands; throw not the burden of the day upon Providence, but *'show your faith by your works'* that God may bless you. It matters not where you live, or what rank of life you hold, the evil or the blessing will reach you all. The far and the near, the home countries and back, the rich and the poor, will

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Richard B. Gregg", 27-11-1926.

> suffer or rejoice alike. The heart that feels not now is dead; the blood of his children will curse his cowardice, who shrinks back at a time when a little might have saved the whole, and made *them* happy. I love the man that can smile in trouble, that can gather strength from distress, and grow brave by reflection. 'Tis the business of little minds to shrink; but he whose heart is firm, and whose conscience approves his conduct, will pursue his principles unto death . . . .
>
> There are cases which cannot be overdone by language, and this is one. There are persons too who see not the full extent of the evil which threatens them; they solace themselves with hopes that the enemy, if he succeed, will be merciful. It is the madness of folly to expect mercy from those who have refused to do justice; and even mercy, where conquest is the object, is only a trick of war; the cunning of the fox is as murderous as the violence of the wolf, and we ought to guard equally against both.

It is remarkable how similar are the qualities required of soldiers of peace and soldiers of war. Thomas Paine's speech could be addressed almost word for word and with complete appropriateness to the Congress volunteers of 1921 who enrolled under the Ahmedabad Congress pledge of complete non-violence in thought word and deed. Whether you secure freedom by the use of physical force or spiritual force, i.e., through self-suffering, the price to be paid must be heavy, if it is to be a valuable article. Bravery and perseverance in the face of odds are as necessary, if not more, to the man of the spirit as to the man of the sword. Whether we will win swaraj by violent means or non-violent, we shall have to discard ease and comfort, not to speak of luxuries. Pratap reduced himself to penury for the sake of what he believed to be freedom. Prahlad delivered his body for free destruction for what he believed to be his freedom. But there are among us not a few who would gain swaraj for a song. Thomas Paine tells us that such a thing is not possible.

Young India, 9-12-1926

113. THE GREATEST GOOD OF ALL

A constant reader of *Young India* sends the following:[1]

I reproduce this letter for it helps me to elucidate my own position. If such a very careful reader of *Young India*, as I know this correspondent is, misunderstands my position as is evident from his letter, how many more occasional readers must have done likewise? Several readers did draw my attention to the danger of a misunderstanding arising owing to the traditional hardness of our hearts which makes us prone to seize every opportunity of doing violence. One can only be—one ought to be—most careful in the h n andling of delicate problems; but no fear of misuse of statements can be permitted to stop a free and honest discussion of fundamental truths. For me, I shall learn to be and do right only by prayerful discussion, elucidation and interchange of views. This letter I have quoted is an instance in point. The discussion has brought to light an honest misunderstanding of difference between the correspondent and myself in the interpretation of the same principle.

Whilst I am of opinion that Dr. Blazer was well acquitted, according to the test laid down by me, he was wrong in taking the life of his daughter. It betrayed want of faith in the humanity of those around him. There was no warrant for him to suppose that the daughter would not have been cared for by others. The position in the case of dogs under the circumstances assumed by me is materially different from the position in which Dr. Blazer found himself. Nor am I able to subscribe to the view that an idiot has no soul. I believe that even the lower creation have souls.

Weightier still is the difficulty which another earnest reader puts and which may be thus summarized:

> I appreciate the position you have taken up. It is the only true position. But does not your argument after all resolve itself into the utilitarian doctrine of the greater good of the greater number? And if that is your position, wherein does the doctrine of non-violence differ from the utilitarian which

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent enclosed a newspaper cutting which carried a report of how a Dr. Blazer had chloroformed his imbecile daughter because he felt there would be no one to look after her once he was dead. It also carried the report of a French actress who shot her lover at his own request as he was suffering from an incurable disease. The jury in both cases acquitted the accused.

makes no pretence to non-violence and which will not hesitate to destroy life if the destruction would lead to the greater good of the greater number?

In the first place even though the outward act may be the same, its implications will vary according to the motive prompting it. Thus as non-violence in the West stops at man and, even then, only where possible, there is no compunction felt either over subjecting animals to vivisection for the supposed greater good of mankind or over heaping up most destructive armaments also in the name of the same doctrine of utility. A votary of non-violence, on the other hand, might have done one act of destruction in common with the utilitarian, but he would prefer to die rather than make himself party to vivisection or to an endless multiplication of armaments.

The fact is that a votary of ahimsa cannot subscribe to the utilitarian formula. He will strive for the greatest good of all and die in the attempt to realize the ideal. He will therefore be willing to die so that the others may live. He will serve himself with the rest, by himself dying. The greatest good of all inevitably includes the good of the greater number, and therefore he and the utilitarian will converge at many points in their career but there does come a time when they must part company, and even work in opposite directions. The utilitarian to be logical will never sacrifice himself. The absolutist will even sacrifice himself. The absolutist, when he kills a dog, does so either out of weakness or in rare cases for the sake of the dog himself. That it is a dangerous thing to decide what is or is not good for the dog, and that he may therefore make grievous mistakes is irrelevant to the fact of the motive prompting the act. The absolutist's sphere of destruction will be always the narrowest possible. The utilitarian's has no limit. Judged by the standard of non-violence the late War was wholly wrong. Judged by the utilitarian standard each party has justified it according to its idea of utility. Even the Jallianwala Bagh massacre was justified by its perpetrators on the grounds of utility. And precisely on the same ground the anarchist justifies his assassinations. But none of these acts can possibly be justified on the greatest-good-of-all principle.

Young India, 9-12-1926

114. NOTES

INCONGRUITY

With my resumed travelling, if it has to be continued, begins my sorrow—crowds coming to have *darshan* with unmistakable affection in their bright eyes and smiling faces, but doing nothing of what I have ceaselessly poured into their ears. On the 4th instant, girls and boys presented to me in the early morning hours at Jalgaon their neatly made strands of hand-spun yarn but with a few honourable exceptions, they themselves were dressed in millmade cloth. I wonder if the girls and the boys knew why they were spinning at all. The girls had been spinning only for four months and they belonged to the municipal school.

GOOD WORK

The report before me of their spinning tells me that the work of introducing spinning in certain schools of the municipality was entrusted to East Khandesh District Khadi Board. How businesslike it would be if this example was followed by the other municipalities and orgnization of hand-spinning was entrusted to Khadi Boards who are naturally expected to have experts for the work? In this school they have both the *takli* and the charkha. The maximum spun by a single girl on the wheel was 7,188 yards of yarn. The highest count was 22. The maximum per hour spun on the *takli* was 120 yards; on the charkha, 375 yards. The report says:

> *Takli*-spinning has so much fascinated the girls of standard IV that 15 of them learnt to spin on charkha and have spun during their spare time. Their example has induced some girls of standard III also to learn on charkha. The contagion is spreading and the number of such voluntary girl-spinners is steadily increasing. The spinning has become a pastime with some as they come to spin even on holidays. 12 prepare their own slivers while 2 have commenced even to learn carding.

It is to be hoped that before long every girl will card her own cotton and prepare her own slivers and that the teachers will induce the girls to take to wearing khaddar. The best way of doing it is fully to explain to the girls the reason for spinning and to place every facility for procuring khaddar at reasonable prices and of the type they need. The teachers should also establish contact with the parents of the girls and secure their active co-operation in the work. The fact is that all this work can only be thoroughly done when the organizers

throw their whole soul into it, as witness the extraordinary success of the work among the Labour Union schools of Ahmedabad. All the spinning teachers would do well to make themselves the improvised testing appliance which has been described in these pages. Speed without strength is waste. To draw thread is not enough. It is necessary to draw thread that can be used for warp.

Young India, 9-12-1926

115. KHADDAR IN THE PUNJAB

The following is a summary[1] prepared in the A.I.S.A. office of an exhaustive report in Hindi received from the A.I.S.A. agency, Punjab. The original contains details which the summary has omitted for the sake of condensation. In the original I find that khaddar work is going on in 42 centres. I invite the reader to visualize what this means. It means a living contact with toilers in these villages and distributing wealth among them in exchange for their labour.'So do the merchants' one may be thoughtlessly inclined to say. But there is a great difference between a merchant who goes in their midst to exploit them and a patriot who goes to them to invite them to work and receive wages for their labour. When the wheel is firmly established, its appeal will be irresistible. Its result will be banishment of starvation for those who would work without having to tear down their homes. The feature of the Punjab work is that it has now become almost self-supporting. It has practically no bad book debts. Exchange of yarn for khaddar at an additional charge of 2 as. per yard is a valuable feature fraught with great consequences. It is possible, I suppose, only in a place like the Punjab where, as the report says there is a large number of men and women still wearing khaddar. Lala Kishan Chand Bhatia naturally takes pride in the fact that he has been able to have sheets locally printed at reduced prices. He has also imported the Khadi Pratishthan wheel and copied it with effect. The cry in the Punjab as elsewhere is want of patronage. Khaddar cannot be sold as fast as it is produced. All may not die for the country, may we not for its sake even wear khaddar unless it is equal in appearance and price to the latest machine-made stuff from Manchester or Japan? If we will not even give one extra pice for khaddar or put some restraint upon our sartorial taste, What is our patriotism worth? The

[1] Not reproduced here

Punjab has cotton, spinning, weaving and commercial ability. Will it not have enough patriotism to buy up khaddar as fast as it can be made? It should not be necessary for Jamnalalji or me or any one else to go to the Punjab, collect money for khaddar work or to sell it.

Young India, 9-12-1926

116. DOWN WITH SUPERNATURALISM![1]

To
THE EDITOR,
Young India
SIR,

When you judge the action of a 'believer' like Aurangzeb in desecrating and demolishing a place of worship like the Kashi temple as 'belying' his 'belief', viz., Islam (in *Young India* of 4-11-'26), are you not presuming to know more of Islam than the Prophet of Islam himself? For you must know that Mahomed himself, the beau ideal of Aurangzeb, when he entered Mecca in triumph against the enemies, destroyed all the objects and places of 'idolatrous' worship in that city, leaving a few of them like the Kaaba stone which he himself believed in! So then you must either (i) say that Mahomed was one of those 'so-called believers who belied[2] their belief',—which will not be in keeping with your former dictum that the great religious teachers of mankind were men who had exhibited the image of God in their own persons (*vide Young India*, 8-7-'26, page 244, column 2); or (ii) allegorize away the iconoclastic career of the Arabian Prophet (May peace be on Him!), as you usually do with whatever in the scriptures of any sect taken literally you do not 'understand' or whatever in them similarly understood does not 'appeal to your reason'; or (iii) repudiate the universally received life story of Mahomed as spurious. If there is a fourth way, please point it out; but please remember that Aurangzeb has been styled a 'living saint' (Zinda Pir, etc.) by all Sunni divines and historians who have never a word to say against his temple destruction, so far as I know, but many of whom on the contrary have glorified him therefor.

Is this fact not remarkable, seeing how the Ulema of India are today divided on the subject of the desecrations, the demolitions and messacres which Ibn Saud, the Wahabi, has been responsible for in Mecca, Medina and Taif, one section (the Ahle hadis) Justifying those deeds as quite Islamic, and the other (Shias, Hanafis, etc.) declaring them un-Islamic? But I have yet to meet a member of that learned and pious fraternity who will wholeheartedly condemn Aurangzeb's high-handedness on the Hindus' holiest of holies. It is much like those Sanatanis who would lynch you for trying to do away with

[1] This appeared in the correspondence column of *Young India*.

[2] The source has "believed in" which was corrected in *Young India*, 23-12-1926.

untouchability in India and at the same time lynch also, if they could, those white- coloured folk in South Africa who are maintaining untouchability with the Indians there.

I am thus led to think that conflict and inconsistency are in the nature of all non-rational faiths of supernatural pretensions. Hence, however much you try to 'liberalize' such religions, you will never have truly liberalized them before you have improved them out of existence altogether. To mend them is to end them, and can only one liberalize them *away*; that is my opinion in which, the more I think, the more I am confirmed.

Prince Yudhishthira seems to have glimpsed the truth when he answered the Yaksha in this wise:

श्रुतिर्विभिन्ना स्मृतयश्च भिन्ना,
नैको मुनिर्यस्य मतं प्रमाणम् ।
धर्मस्य तत्त्वं निहितं गुहायाम्॥

So in the cave where it lives we will do best to leave it!

Yours, etc.,

A SEEKER AFTER TRUTH

The reader will be glad to have this beautiful letter. The writer's hit at me is quite delicious. But I do not propose to adopt any of the three courses he thinks I usually take for defending the indefensible. There is so far as I know nothing in common between the Prophet's destruction of idols in Mecca and the reputed destruction by Aurangzeb. And should it turn out that the Prophet had erred on occasions, his error would but prove his fallible nature without in any way diminishing his glory as an inspired seer exhibiting on most occasions the image of God? He never himself claimed infallibility. On the contrary, he often consulted his companions and when he was once told by Omer that he need not consult anybody as he had direct dealings with God, it is recorded that he retorted that if he had on that occasion a message from God, he would not have consulted Omer. I know that "A Seeker after Truth" does not seriously mean that I "allegorize away", without good cause, whatever is inconvenient. I hope that his banter is meant merely to 'draw me'. Whatever the cause, I assure him and all concerned that whenever I regard any narrative as an allegory, I have substantial and intrinsic evidence for my belief. Nor do I repudiate without sufficient cause anything as spurious or apocryphal. As a fellow-seeker after Truth I hope I have courage enough to own my errors and limitations. There are things in all religious books which baffle me. I hope some day to have them

made clear to me. Till then, I cultivate humility, patience to wait. Man need not know all.

The most serious part however of the writer's letter is his repudiation of the supernatural. I suggest to him that rationalists have as many conundrums and inconsistencies to account for as supernaturalists. Is the uniform testimony of some of the purest and noblest men so much humbug and hallucination when they say that according not to their belief, but experience, there is something beyond the senses? Is it not an arrogant claim to lay down the law that there is nothing beyond the five senses? Who does not *feel* that there are mysteries impenetrable by reason? Do not the daily and so-called sudden transformations of the character of those who worship in faith incontestably show that there are things that reason cannot understand or explain? The celebrated verse quoted by the writer after all presents the difficulty of knowing dharma except through the heart. And, after all, the author of the great book from which the verse has been taken was himself a believer in the supernatural. The mystery of creation and death is itself a living demonstration of the supernatural. It will be time enough to scoff at it when man has by his reason succeeded in creating life.

Young India, 9-12-1926

117. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

WARDHA,
December 9, 1926

CHI. MIRA,

Your two letters came into my hands the same day. I am glad you wrote so fully. Please continue the habit. I miss you in my walks here. We traverse the same old route. I hope you got my two letters. Nothing yet certain about going to Gauhati.[1] You will make it a point to see Hakimji and M. Mahomed Ali. You should see his wife and daughters too.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5190. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] To attend the Congress session

118. LETTER TO SHUAIB QURESHI

WARDHA,
December 9, 1926

MY DEAR SHUAIB,

The papers you sent me through Shankerlal about the Nigoi ground have been lying with me and in front of me all these long days. I have now read the whole of the thing carefully. The minutes of the meeting of the arbitrators, or whatever they may be called, have not been signed by all the parties. Messrs Bhopatkar and Dandekar were, therefore, strictly speaking, justified in making any corrections they chose. I am not going into the merits at all. Nor are the corrections made, I think, vitally different from the context.

So far as I can see there is only one material correction, namely, 'Hindus should ever have access to it as before.' Is that not contemplated by the original draft?

What is the cart track in clause 4 meant for? Was it intended that the cart track will enable the people to visit Dehu but not so as to enable them also to visit the *paduka*? Having gone so far as to retain the rights of Hindus to visit the *paduka*, everything else becomes, in my opinion, of little consequence.

If you are interesting yourself in this matter, I would advise you carefully to study the documents and then guide the trustees. If the Hindu arbitrators are still agreeable to the substance of the understanding set forth in D, I think that there is every prospect of a settlement.

What are you now doing? Do you propose to discharge the burden you have taken on your shoulders on behalf of the All-India Spinners' Association? You have to render an account of your doings in that behalf to the President and, what is more, to the still small voice within.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S. N. 12381

119. LETTER TO GORDON LAW

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 9, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1] for which I thank you. The book[s] that I can recommend regarding Hinduism are Sir Edwin Arnold's translation of the *Bhagavad Gita* called the *Song Celestial*, his *Light of Asia*, Max Muller's *India: What It Can Teach Us*, Dutt's abridged *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* in verses. There are several other books but I think that these give one a fair idea of Hindu thought.

Do you know that since 1915 I have discontinued giving sittings to photographers?[2] I have not one single copy of my own photograph. Those that are on sale at stationery shops and elsewhere are all snapshots. If you want me to get hold of one of these which friends tell me hardly represent me, I shall buy a copy and gladly sign it. But I would far rather like that the boys thought more of what I stand for than what my exterior is like. But I do not wish to dogmatize. They shall make their own choice or you for them.

Here is my message to your boys: Above all think, speak and do the truth at any cost, with special emphasis on *any*.

Yours sincerely,

GORDON LAW, ESQ.
BOYS SECRETARY
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
NEWBURG
NEW YORK, U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N. 19756

[1] Law, writing on November 5, had requested for information about what he should read from the Hindu scriptures (S.N. 10836).

[2] The correspondent had pleaded for one signed photograph of Gandhiji; *ibid.*

120. LETTER TO DR. SURESH BANNERJI

WARDHA,
December 9, 1926

DEAR SURESH BABU,

I have your letter. I hope you will entirely get rid of your heart trouble.

I do not know whether to feel glad or sorry over Profulla Babu's decision. It all depends upon the motive behind it. I have written to him asking him to come to Wardha if he will. His severing the connection with the Pratishthan has given a severe shock to Satis Babu. You must some day come to Wardha and make Vinoba's acquaintance.

I have not forgotten the promise to pass a few days with you on my return from Gauhati if I go to Gauhati at all. I am yet undecided.

Yours sincerely,

DR. SURESH BANNERJI
ABHAY ASHRAM
COMILLA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19757

121. LETTER TO RAMDEV

WARDHA,
December 9, 1926

DEAR RAMDEVJI,

I have your letter. I do not remember having received the communication containing extracts about the 'pranks of anglicized Indians'. If you will send me a copy of that communication, I will see what I can do with it. I shall await your short article.

You may publish the scheme or do as you like with it.

I have in mind the forthcoming visit to the Gurukul to which I am really looking forward but you won't expect me to stay there for 13 days. Is that also the time of the Kumbha Mela?

The short article is received.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RAMDEVJI
GURUKUL UNIVERSITY
P. O. GURUKUL KANGRI
(BIJNOR) U.P.

From a microfilm: S.N. 19758

122. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 9, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have purposely kept your telegram pending correspondence I am carrying on with Motilalji and other friends. I am not yet certain about my going to Gauhati. Motilalji just sends me a peremptory wire, but I am awaiting for his considered reply to my letter. In any event, if I do go to Gauhati, on my way going there I shall be in Calcutta only for a few hours pending the departure of the Assam Mail. I am therefore unable to give you any definite reply just now.

I hope the Hospital is flourishing.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN ROY
CHITTARANJAN HOSPITAL
RUSSA ROAD
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm : S.N. 19759

123. LETTER TO HAKIM AJMAL KHAN

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 9, 1926

DEAR HAKIM SAHEB,

About the time I left the Ashram I got a letter from you. It was written by your secretary. I have not understood the letter. I do not know what Mr. C. Vijayaraghavachariar has written to you. Do you want me to write to him?

I hope that you are now thoroughly restored. I wonder if you are now taking any interest in public life. I came to Wardha 4 days ago and I am likely to be here for some time. I am trying to avoid going to Gauhati this time and I am trying to persuade Motilalji and others to let me off.

Yours sincerely,

HAKIM SAHEB AJMAL KHAN
SHARIF MANZIL
DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 19760

124. LETTER TO DR. N. S. HARDIKAR

WARDHA,
December 9, 1926

DEAR DR. HARDIKAR,

I have not been able to reply to your letter earlier, for the simple reason that I have been overwhelmed with work and I had not the copy of *Young India* before me at the time I received your letter.

To draw me to Karnatak, you should really be able to sell one lakh worth of khaddar and collect one lakh for khaddar work. You say you would win me for remodelling the political life of Karnatak. Do you believe in the ability of khadi to remodel political life? Do you know that I have staked all upon khadi? The proposition enunciated is that you advance the political life in the country in exact proportion to the advance of khadi and no more. The moment I have driven this truth home, that moment will begin the forward movement.

Yours sincerely,

DR. N.S. HARDIKAR
HUBLI

From a microfilm : S.N. 19763

125. LETTER TO H. C. HULL

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 9, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your kind letter.[1] Yours is the fourth invitation I have received to visit America. Somehow or other, I do not think [*sic*] as yet the call within. If I am to be guided by the mere desire, I should straight away respond to your invitation. But something within me tells me that I could not deliver my message more effectively by

[1] Hannah Clothier Hull had written on November 6 to say how warmly the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom would welcome Gandhiji's visit to the United States and added: We consider that your message for Peace and Goodwill is a message for people everywhere and that delivered personally would be a great help to the whole movement (S. N. 10837).

going to America than by living it myself here, however inadequately it may be.

Yours sincerely,

HANNAH CLOTHIER HULL
NATIONAL CHAIRMAN
504, WALNUT LANE
SWARTHMORE, PENNA
U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N. 19764

126. LETTER TO FRANCISCA STANDENATH

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 9, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am so sorry that you did not get khaddar. I thought I had attended to it. On receiving your letter that you have not yet got it from Swami who was then travelling, I have now spoken to Swami and I hope that you received it before this letter.

I have not contributed anything whatsoever to the paper *Conscience* referred to by you. I came to know of its existence only through you. So many people are just now making use of all sorts of things in connection with me without my authority or knowledge.

You will let me know in due course whether the khaddar you received was of much use there. Of course, in that climate you will not hesitate to use all the warm clothing you need. The rule about khaddar is of local application, not of universal application. We in India dare not, when we have got our own cotton and ability to turn it into cloth, use cotton fabric which is not made here and which is imported from outside even though millions of people who are now idle for want of occupation could be usefully occupied in the khaddar industry.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. FRANCISCA STANDENATH
TRAUTMANSDORFGASSE NO. 1
GRAZ (IN STYRIA)
AUSTRIA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19765

127. LETTER TO S. B. SPILLENAAR

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 9, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[1] There is no bar to anybody who enjoys good health and who is prepared to go through hardships of life, to live in poverty, and to do continuous labour, being admitted as a member of the Ashram. But I would advise you not to come to India whose climate is different from yours and where customs and habits are also so different. I think that you should try to reproduce the Ashram life there with such changes as may be found necessary. I cannot advise you to undertake the risk of coming to India and endangering your health or being otherwise disappointed.

Yours sincerely,

SOHANNA BATTEEJEE SPILLENAAR
61, P.W. 114TH STREET
NEW YORK CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 19766

128. LETTER TO ROLLO RUSSELL

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 9, 1926

I was delighted to hear from you after so many years. I have got the book you have sent me. Much as I would like to read it, I do not know when I shall be able to read it.

Mine is a very difficult life—more so than when you saw it in Johannesburg. I have also after some experience come to see that it is not what you read but what you think that affects your life. I do hear about you from the Polaks now and then and it gives me delight to

[1] In the course of a lengthy letter dated October 20, Spillenaar, "a teacher of music and art" who had lost interest in her work and now evidently desired "spiritual enlightenment", had written to Gandhiji seeking admission to the Ashram for herself and her eleven-year-old son (S. N. 10931).

know that you were the same innocent soul that I knew in Johannesburg.

I am sending a line to Mrs. Russell

Yours sincerely,

KENT HOUSE
1, NOTTINGHAM PLACE
W.I.

From a photostat: S.N. 19767

129. LETTER TO MRS. ROLLO RUSSELL

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 9, 1926

DEAR MRS. RUSSELL,

I was delighted to have the volume of verses written by your husband. I prize the gift though I am unable to say when I shall be able to read the volume. My time is all mortgaged.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. ROLLO RUSSELL

From a microfilm: S.N. 19768

130. LETTER TO EMIL RONIGER

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 9, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I have no desire whatsoever to drive a commercial bargain. If I receive anything from the sale of the translation, it would simply go towards the upkeep of khaddar or untouchability work I am doing here. I suppose for the present you will confine yourself to the German translation. You will let me know in what other languages you expect the *Autobiography* to be trans-lated. I have myself no notion as to the time when the *Autobiography* will be completed. There is yet a vast ground to cover.

If you think it worth while, the German translation of the first and second parts which are now completed may be published.

Suppression of passages from an autobiography does not appeal

to me. Its merit lies in its being published in its complete from even though it may be crude or uninteresting to those who may not know the language of the narrator. You may however consider this point and imagine me to be open to conviction. If possible, you should let me know, by way of illustration, what you would like to suppress.

I shall be pleased to meet Dr. Hurlimann when he arrives here.

Yours sincerely,

EMIL RONIGER, ESQ.
REINFELDEN
SCHWEIZ

From a copy: S. N. 32245

131. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 9, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter enclosing the draft agreement prepared by the Company. You will see that I have made 3 additions, all of which are, in my opinion, necessary. I have signed the agreement before two witnesses and initialled the additions whether made by me or the Company.

The two parts I contemplate publishing as soon as possible. It is open to the Macmillan Company to publish the volumes as they get completed. But if they do not feel inclined to do so, they must not mind the sale of Indian edition outside India. Hence the inscription of the addition to clause 12[1].

Yours sincerely,

DR. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES
12 PARK AVENUE
NEW YORK CITY
(U.S.A.)

From a copy: S.N. 32231

[1] Which read: "The author reserves the right to a cheap edition of the said work for sale in India, it being provided, however, that the sale of the said edition shall be restricted to India, after the time the company's copyright edition is available for sale."

132. TELEGRAM TO S. SRINIVASA IYENGAR[1]

[On or before *December 10, 1926*]

REACHING GAUHATI 24TH.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-12-1926

133. LETTER TO G. V. KETKAR

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 10, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The idea of a Gita Day and the manner in which you want it observed does not appeal to me at all. What is more, I do not agree with the interpretation you have sought to put upon it. I can't belittle the teaching of the Divine book by confining it to a description of a clash of arms between rival clans on an earthly battlefield.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 982. Courtesy: G. V. Ketkar

134. LETTER TO A. A. PAUL

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 10, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I wonder what is going on about the contemplated Chinese visit.[2] The Indian programme before me for the next year is so heavy and there are many other such considerations that I should now like to know definitely, at the earliest possible moment, if and when I must go to China. You will please make it clear to the friends who are in correspondence with you that they are in no way bound to carry out visit programme, because they have contemplated it and have in a way

[1] Srinivasa Iyengar had been elected President of the Congress session due to be held at Gauhati.

[2] Through A. A. Paul, Gandhiji had received an invitation to visit China and had tentatively agreed to do so in the autumn of 1927.

even given me the invitation. The visit, therefore, should be brought about only if there is a real felt want. I am sick of spectacular demonstrations. I have no desire for making speeches. The only thing I love is simple heart-to-heart conversation and an elucidation of difficulties. I would like you to cancel the contemplated visit without reference to me, if you arrive at the conclusion that not much good is to be expected out of it. My own opinion is, that in the present disturbed state of China,[1] the visit will miscarry. My message is one of unadulterated non-violence and truth. People are ill-fitted to receive such a message when feeling runs high and blood is hot. Nothing but a clear, proper call, therefore, should move me to China. Even if our friends in China are insistent and you also come to the conclusion that the visit should be paid, you will of course leave the final decision to me. Let there be the fullest material possible sent to me so as to arrive at a proper decision. In all such matters, it is the answer [to] the prayer that enables me to arrive at my decision.

Yours sincerely,

A. A. PAUL, ESQ.
KILPAUK
MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 11378

135. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

WARDHA,
December 10, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have seen your telegram to Mahadeo. I do not remember having received any letter from you and [to] the telegram I sent you a reply from Wardha by post[2] which I hope you have now received. It is now settled that I am going to Gauhati. I leave here on the 22nd, reach Calcutta on the 23rd morning and entrain the same day for Gauhati. I

[1] China was, at this time, going through a phase of civil strife. Various provincial war-lords contended against one another for supremacy, and the Kuomintang under Chiang Kai-Sheik had not yet established itself as an effective central authority.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. B. C. Roy", 9-12-1926.

hardly think you want me to perform the ceremony[1] during the few hours that I am in Calcutta.

I propose to stay with a friend in Calcutta who used to come very often at Russa Road when I was there and who got me to promise that I would stay with him next time I went to Calcutta. His name and address are: Sjt. Khandelwal, 50, Harish Mukerji Road, Calcutta.

Yours sincerely,

DR. B. C. ROY
36, WELLINGTON STREET
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S. N. 19754

136. LETTER TO D. K. PHADAKE

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 10, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and the pages of your translation of Lokamanya's life by Mr. Kelkar.

I should like you to come to Wardha, hire some rooms near-by and watch me at my work from early morning to nine o'clock at night and if you find that there are any moments when I am free, you can inspan them for going through your book and then writing a preface. But if you cannot do so, you should take it from me that I have absolutely no leisure left to me and I have hardly time to go through the tasks that I have already undertaken. You must, therefore, please forgive.

Yours sincerely,

D. K. PHADAKE, ESQ.
6, KOCHIN STREET
FORT
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 19755

[1] This presumably refers to the laying of the foundation-stone of one of the wings of Chittaranjan Seva Sadan, which ceremony Gandhiji performed; *vide* "Speech at Chittaranjan Seva Sadan, Calcutta", 2-1-1927.

137. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Saturday [*December 11, 1926*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

I have your 4 letters. Two I have acknowledged already.

I suppose you know the meaning of *chi*[2]. It stands for *chiranjivi*[3] meaning 'long-lived'. That is the blessing which an elder prefixes to the names of the younger members of his family.

I like all your letters. I am glad you had an early opportunity of going to the Mussalman friend. Miss Grover's[4] name I had forgotten altogether. I was delighted that you went there. She is a good earnest soul, much devoted to her work.

You should give me your day's doings, and describe the prayers, the studies and the meals. Tell me what you are eating. How are your bowels acting? What is the quantity of milk you are taking? What are the times of your meals? Are there mosquitoes there? Do you take your walks regularly? Do you write any Hindi? Does anyone teach you? What fruit are you getting?

I duly got the corrected chapter.[5] You should find out the posting time.

I leave Wardha on 21st inst. Motilalji[6] insists on my going to Gauhati. I hope you will be getting your *Y. I.* regularly. If you do not, you should ask Swami and write to Mrityunjay to attend. I take it you will be getting Hindi *Navajivan* also.

You will not forget the Urdu script please.

The American friends, mother and daughter, are still here. I think I told you about their arrival. The daughter is a teacher in an important school. They are leaving tomorrow. Jamnalalji has over 40 guests on my account. Poor Jankibehn[7] !

I am keeping exceptionally good health. Exercise regularly morning and evening.

[1] From the postmark
[2] In Devnagari in the source
[3] *ibid*.
[4] The name is not quite legible.
[5] Of the *Autobiography*; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 6-12-1926.
[6] Motilal Nehru
[7] Jamnalal Bajaj's wife

You can't complain of any brevity about this letter.

With love,

BAPU

Saturday

I was uncertain about the correctness of the passage in Rolland's letter[1] which you have now corrected. It reads perfectly intelligible now. Please do not return the original. File it among your papers.

B

From the original: C.W. 5191. Courtesy: Mirabehn

138. KATHIAWAR POLITICAL CONFERENCE

I congratulate the Committee of the Kathiawar Political Conference on choosing Shri Amritlal Thakkar as President of its forthcoming session[2].

Names of a number of luminaries in the political field had been suggested but when Amritlal Thakkar's name came up, no one had anything to say against it. As I understand it, the main consideration underlying this choice is that the president should be at least someone from Kathiawar and a man of character with a patriotic spirit. Shri Amritlal Thakkar could easily stand this triple test and come out successful. We cannot today find a worker who can excel Shri Amritlal Thakkar in point of character; whether in Kathiawar, in Gujarat or in India. His sacrifice for the sake of the country was perhaps earlier than that of all of us. His devotion has brought credit to him and his country and it is difficult to compete with him in dedicated service. Moreover, the field of activity which he selected for such service is as easy as it is difficult. It is easy because there are only a few who take interest in serving the communities whom he has chosen to serve and so he achieves quick results. It is difficult because if no results that startle the world are forthcoming, the raw or unseasoned workers would feel despondent. But Amritlal became the priest to Dheds[3] and Bhangis and not being satisfied with it became the servant and friend of the Bhils[4].

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Romain Rolland's Letter to Gandhiji".

[2] Which was to be held at Porbandar in March 1927 but could be held only in January 1928.

[3] One of the communities traditionally regarded as untouchables

[4] Aboriginal tribe in Gujarat and Central India

What will such a man do at a political conference? This point did not occur to those who selected him; but it did to Amritlal Thakkar. Taking me to task for allowing his name to come up for selection, he writes to me a letter whose summary is given below:[1]

The fact that this question occurred to him points to the fine state of his mind. But does he not know that nowadays the Political Conference has made it its business to serve the *Antyajas* and others? Who can say that this service is not implied by and included in khadi? Not only that, but the Conference this year has directly rendered no mean service to the *Antyajas* and others and has spent no small amount of money for them. Thus the very activities which are dear to Shri Amritlal Thakkar constitute the present field of operation of the Conference. Moreover, Amritlal Thakkar is the pioneer of khadi work in Kathiawar. I do not, however, know whether his love of khadi or his faith in it is still the same as before. He will most probably clarify this point at the Conference.

Now there remains politics. In my opinion, there can be no conference or other politics outside of such constructive activities. I have visualized the same for the whole of India. If India leaves off the so-called politics and plunges itself only in constructive activities and works with the devotion of a Thakkar, swaraj will be secured very easily. Moreover, if I apply this principle to India I would naturally apply it in particular to Kathiawar. This does not mean that no political work should be done in Kathiawar or outside it. He who can only do political work and finds constructive activity futile will certainly plunge himself in politics alone. We shall take the cue from them and follow them. If we do not like their work, we shall allow them to go their way. When they will see that none of us follows them, they will doubt the correctness of their way and will retrace their steps. The Kathiawar Conference has taken of this golden way. I hope the Conference will not deviate from that path. I do not know of a single incident by reason of which the Conference should so deviate. If we become good, alert, free from fear, become united—the ruler too will easily become good, alert, loving and friendly towards his subjects. The divine rule "if one is good, "the world is good" is no mere popular saying but a truth. "As the subjects so the ruler" is truer in

[1] Not translated here. In the letter Thakkar had asked Gandhiji how he could fit in with politics when his field of work was with Dheds, Bhangis, Bhils, Kolis and others.

this democratic age than "as the ruler so the sudjects". Hence politics means a relationship among the people from the lowest to the highest strata and unity among all. This unity is a sort of constructive work wherein there is need of mutual relationship for all. Long speeches or articles cannot tell upon the rulers as the quiet, humble, modest work on khadi has been doing. But only the wise can listen to the silent eloquence of khadi. Earnest work and concentration are needed to listen to that sweet speech. Removal of untouchability means self-purification and union of hearts with the poor. To me speeches made in the Councils appear as nothing before this power.

But these are my own thoughts. I offer them to the Kathiawaris and to Shri Amritlal Thakkar. They may accept what they like out of them and reject the rest.

I had asked the Conference in Bhavnagar[1] to place me in charge of political work. The Conference did so. I believe the Conference has not erred therein. I have not been able to achieve anything that I can flaunt. I have suffered a defeat, I have been disappointed a little, but no other way occurred to me; there was and there is only that way. The Conference of entire Kathiawar can do only this much, can merely implore. That the people of the various States can do something special is a diffenent matter. The workers of the various States who are familiar with the political conditions in their States can and should do the work there. I have deliberately set a limit to the field of activities of the Kathiawar Political Conference. Our President should consider whether we should cross this limit or not and should show us a new way if possible.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-12-1926

139. ANTYAJ DIRECTORY

The Antyaj Directory which has been brought out by Shri Amritlal Thakkar's Antyaj Seva Mandal[2], has been purposely published by me, word for word, in the *Navajivan*[3]. I am afraid some of the readers must have got annoyed on seeing it, and those who were not annoyed might not have read it. If both these classes of readers exist

[1] At the session held there in 1925

[2] Association for service of untouchables

[3] In its issues of November 7, 14, 21, 28 and December 5, 1926

then I would specifically recommend them to retrieve the previous issues and read the directory. The reader will get some idea of the amount of hard work put in compiling this directory. Investigations were made in 88 villages of the Anand taluk itself. Such detailed investigation in each and every village demands the sacrifice of a great deal of time.

The facts found in the directory bring disgrace to those who follow Hindu dharma. One who reads this directory will realize immediately how much we have failed in our duty towards the *Antyajas*. A stranger may well say that the people of the place where *Antyajas* cannot have an adequate supply of even drinking water do not know the barest elements of religion.

The reader will note that in most of the villages Christian missionaries have been active. But this thing is as shameful for us as it is creditable to them. The service that we are now rendering to the Harijans may well be considered as satisfactory in view of the fact that formerly we were doing nothing at all. But it is a matter of shame for us as long as there is even a single village without a Hindu worker for the Harijan or without proper facilities of drinking water.

Shri Amritlal Thakkar assigned the work of this directory to Shri Parikshitlal[1]. Shri Parikshitlal is a graduate of the Vidyapith. This vast field is open for every graduate of the Vidyapith. Service to the villages is true service to the nation, because the people of India live in the seven lacs of her villages. India does not exist in her cities which are mere degraded images of Europe's cities. And those who have realized that the service of villages starts with khadi and the cause of the *Antyajas* have known almost everything there is to know.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-12-1926

140. LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA

WARDHA,

Magsar Sud 7, 1983 [*December 12, 1926*]

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA,

I had certainly preserved this song of yours. Send me an acknowledgment. I am sure you are continuing your Hindi studies

[1] Parikshitlal Mazmudar, later President of the Gujarat Harijan Sevak Sangh

and attending prayers regularly. Chandan and others must have improved their health. Do all the women spin?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 4909. Courtesy: Hari-ichchha Kamdar

141. LETTER TO DR. KARL THIEME

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 13, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Here are my answers to your questions:

(1) The attempts at solving the Hindu-Muslim question have not yet been successful. It is a matter of time.

(2) I am unable to endorse any scheme of co-operation with the British Government until the system is adequately changed, i.e., until military expenditure is very considerably reduced to the advantage of India and prohibitive tariff imposed upon all foreign cloth and until prohibition is declared. I have no select material to send you but you can gather all the information on these points in the pages of *Young India* whose principal writings are now available in book-form. The book can be had of Mr. S. Ganesan, 29, Pycrofts Road, Triplicane, Madras.

Yours sincerely,

DR. KARL THIEME
LEIPZIG
GERMANY

From a photostat: S.N. 12319

142. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 13, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

The enclosed has remained with me for a long time, buried among the papers which I was then unable to attend to. As I have a

few moments to spare to go through arrears, I have come across the enclosed which I send you for such remarks as you may wish to make.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 19750

143. LETTER TO DHIREN

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 13, 1926

MY DEAR DHIREN,

Your letter of 9th instant has lain with me for some time. But pressure of work has been so overwhelming that much of my correspondence has remained in arrears. I know your letter ought not to have so remained. But you will believe me when I tell you that there has been of late not one moment for me to spare and I have been obliged to put off many things which I otherwise might not have.

I hear from Urmila Devi that you are keeping good health and that you are keeping yourself busy. I hope, too, that you have made considerable progress in spinning. I wish you would learn carding also there if you are permitted to do so. If you have even seen the process of carding, you could easily learn it even without any tution.

Now for your question. An innocent prisoner need not starve and, in my opinion, he does not lose his dignity by accepting maintenance money from his custodians. But I do think that he may not take any-thing beyond his bare sustenance. But he need not stint himself to the extent of damaging his health or starving his relatives if the custodians pay him enough to enable him to support those who were depending upon him. Thus, after all, the question of amount is a matter for each individual to settle for himself. But I have no doubt whatsoever about the propriety of accepting maintenance money.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. DHIREN
C/O SUPERINTENDENT
CENTRAL JAIL
MIDNAPORE (BENGAL)

From a photostat: S.N. 19751

144. LETTER TO S. K. JAIN

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 13, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter of 3rd October last has lain with me without attention for want of time. If the young man will correspond with me giving me all the particulars about his life and tell me whether he will be prepared to go through the discipline at the Satyagraha Ashram for six months before he is put to any work, I shall see what can be done. As a matter of fact, there is no difficulty about accommodating any number of young men of character and ability.

I am in Wardha up to the 20th instant, after which date, it would be better to address your letter to my permanent address.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. K. JAIN
15, NAGJI BUNGALOWS
MATUNGA, G.I.P.
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S. N. 19752

145. LETTER TO T. N. NATHANI

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 13, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I do not remember the swami or the incident. But it is quite likely that I asked him, if he came to the Ashram, whether he spun. But I could not have turned my back towards him as he must have found me busy at the time. It is my habit now to receive visitors whilst I am spinning so as to save time. I talk and spin at the same time.

I do remember having received a complaint about my having been represented in some photo prints as Lord Krishna. I do also remember having written strongly against it. But I have no re-collection of how many lines I wrote about the incident. I do not think that the weight of a writing is to be justified by its length.

I have not yet found a single swami coming to me whom I could instinctively tell as my guru.

Yours sincerely,

TARACHAND NANAKRAM NATHANI
HALANI, (*via*) MEHRABPUR, N. W. RLY.

From a photostat: S.N. 19753

146. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

WARDHA,
Monday [*December 13, 1926*][1]

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

You know that Chi. Mathuradas[2] stays in your bungalow at Panchgani. He has not so far paid any rent. He and I earnestly desire that something should be paid. I have also told him that he should vacate the bungalow during the season; they are therefore, getting ready to vacate it by the end of February. I wish you to let me know the amount of the rent. Write to me about your health.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3208. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

147. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

WARDHA,
Magsar Sud 11, 1983, December 13, 1926

Today also I am thinking of you after my breakfast. It is exactly 6.50, your time for prayers. You may miss everything else but not this. It means co-operation among ourselves, and between ourselves and God. It is a real purifying bath. As the body becomes dirty if we do not bathe, so also the pure soul appears impure unless the heart is washed with the water of prayer. Do not, therefore, miss prayers any time. At 4 o'clock in the morning, there is an opportunity for co-operation among all. Not all the women, however, are able to attend the prayer. But the 7 o'clock prayer is an occasion of co-operation

[1] From the postmark
[2] Mathuradas Trikumji

among women. It should be possible for all of them to attend it. Co-operation among Ashram women is very essential.

The two American ladies who had stayed with you for a day came here. They left yesterday after staying here for three days. They are mother and daughter. The daughter is unmarried and is twenty-five years of age. She teaches one of the higher classes in a college of five hundred girls. Her Principal has sent her on tour to study how moral education is given in different parts of the world. Her mother accompanies her as her guardian. The two go everywhere in the world fearlessly. How I wish that we had such fearlessness, and this young woman's devotion to service !

Mirabehn's life should set all of you thinking. You must be receiving letters in Hindi from her. From her letters to me I see that she has won over the hearts of the Gurukul girls with her simplicity and affectionate nature. She has made herself one with the girls, and has been teaching them carding and spinning very well. She does not waste a single moment. I expect such devotion, sacrifice and purity from you. Is it too much to hope that you should become experts in your work, live a pure life and take yourselves to all parts of the country? Every moment I realize the need for women workers. We find many self-sacrificing men. But do we see anywhere self-sacrificing women coming out for public work? Woman is an embodiment of self-sacrifice. But at present her self-sacrifice is confined to the family. Why should she not make for the nation even greater sacrifices than what she does for her family? Any woman who dedicates herself to dharma will ultimately make such sacrifice for the whole world. But one's country represents the first stage. And when the interest of one's country is not in conflict with the interests of the world, service in the cause of one's country takes one towards *moksha*.

My request to you this week is that all of you should think seriously of this.

I address this letter to Tarabehn[1] since Manibehn may not be there. But I should like you to appoint a leader from among yourselves.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3632

[1] Wife of Ramniklal Modi

148. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHA,
Tuesday, December 14, 1926

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have received your letter. In my letter to Devdas I have said everything I wanted to say about you. Hence there is nothing more to say. In my opinion, if you keep yourself increasingly on fruit and milk you will be greatly benefited. I would also like your being given Kuhne's baths. I gave that treatment to Uttamchand at the Ashram and his fever left him. I am aware that physically you are more delicate. But I would not be afraid on that account. However, that question does not arise now. After hearing about the condition of Jawaharlal's wife[1], I have less faith in allopathic treatment. Surgery is good. The rest is a matter of chance. Even so we cannot help depending on it because there are amongst its practitioners people who genuinely go by their beliefs.

You must muster up the courage to go to the Himalayas.

I have discussed the matter with Pyarelal. He is perfectly ready to accompany you there. He is not keen to come to Assam. After the Congress is over, Devdas will replace him if it should be found necessary.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

149. A LETTER[2]

WARDHA,
December 15, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter has been placed in my hands only just now. Much as I should like to speak to your hostel on ahimsa, I fear I shall have no

[1] Kamala Nehru, who was undergoing treatment for tuberculosis in Switzerland
[2] The addressee is not known.

time on the 21st when I shall be in Nagpur only for a few hours. I may not leave Wardha before that date.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 4505. Courtesy: Mrs. Lumsden

150. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Wednesday and Thursday [*December 15/16, 1926*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have your two letters. I hope you do not have the misgivings you expressed in your earlier letter. You have never given me a cause to discard you as a useless person. And I do not consider any person as useless. So how could I think of you in those terms?

I took upon myself the responsibility of work in Vijapur and other places not because I was disappointed with the work but in order to take over from you the unbearably heavy burden of work. Your body which was once as strong as a lion's has now become a skeleton. I could not bear that. Whatever fault I found in you, I looked upon them as your illness. Under heavy pressure of work, a man develops a kind of intolerance. I saw that in you and even drew your attention to it. In due course, you will be rid of it provided I help you. With the knowledge of my situation, I can visualize yours. I am indeed burdened with work. How can I know what others around me suffer on account of it but I do realize it and therefore remain quiet most often. Discard the feeling that you have hurt me. I am not hurt at all.

I have already sent the plan of Kaka's house. I vaguely remember that I had given Bhansali's [plan] to Chhaganlal. It is certainly not here. In case it is not traced, tell Bhansali to make it again. But you should get that plan there. Ask someone to enquire from Chhaganlal. Get the final plan done by Tyabji's man. Chhaganlal knows what measures I had suggested for the sake of economy in the plan of Valjibhai's house. He would have arrived by now. Find out from him.

[1] From the reference in the postscript to celebration of Prayer Day for South Africa on the l9th; December 19, 1926 was observed as a day of prayer wishing success to the Round Table Conference in South Africa to solve the problems of Indian settlers. *Vide* "Letter to C.F. Andrews", 22-11-1926, "A Letter", 15-12-1926 and "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", December 1926. The Wednesday-Thursday prior to this date fell on 15th and 16th December 1926 respectively.

Entrust the work to Vikram, Parsibhai, etc.

I understand about Kevalram. Tell him whatever you feel like. He has faults no doubt but I believe he is a good man. He cannot but be influenced by the generosity we show to him.

It is the best thing for Giriraj, Shankaran, etc., to do combined cooking. One possibility is that you take food with them, or, you all may have a combined kitchen. There is only one kitchen at present and it is better to maintain it in such a way that all the guests can eat there. Do not stretch the issue till it snaps but put up with it if you can. Try to find outwhat can be done and do what you feel is proper. One remembers the master's advice only till one crosses the gate.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

l9th is the prayer day for South Africa In consultation with Kakasaheb, do what ought to be done there on that day. For Khadi work in Panch Talavadi, send a hundi of Rs. 600/- to Balwantrai and debit it in the account of Ka[thiwad] Ra[jya] Pa[rishad]. That money is for buying cotton.

Ramachandra is going there. A new agreement has been signed with him according to the enclosed documents. The previous one has been cancelled because the new patent has to be obtained and there were other difficulties too.[1] Now we do not have to take risk for a long time. Arrange to get the lift manufactured soon in the factory there. If you want to train some of the workers who are already there, do that. I want to give some work to Pragji. I feel that now you should engage Pragji for this work and get everything done through him. At present, he should be given a salary of Rs. 75/- per month. Take from him this and any other work you want him to do. If you approve of my suggestion, write to Pragji yourself. I would like it better if he stays alone for the time being. I enclose herewith a letter for him. That will help you. If you do not want any new suggestions from me, send the enclosed letter and call him there.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PPS.]

Take Pasubhai's advice regarding the lift. He is capable of

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Manilal Gandhi", December 1926

suggesting modifications. He has told me that he has studied about lifts.

Account for the expenses on the lift as follows

Cost price + 25 + office expenses + expenses incurred on operation.

Amreli office will buy cotton worth Rs. 3.000/-. Accept *hundi* for that.

I wanted to read this again but could not.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 32912

151. FROM HIS HIMALAYAN HEIGHTS

A friend who has all his life lived in the plains of India and who is now combining work with recreation in the Himalayas, being lost in admiration over the snowy range, sends me the following quotation:

> Lifted above the world in silence, terrible in their cold and their distance, yet beautiful beyond all words, what are the Himalayas like? Why, they are like a great monk, clothed in ashes, lost in meditation, silent and alone! They are like the great god himself, Siva Mahadeva.

and ends with Holmes' 'tribute to silence':

> Silence is the true language of cosmic adoration.

Young India, 16-12-1926

152. SOUTH AFRICAN SITUATION

Mr. Andrews cables as follows from Pretoria:

> Prayer day endorsed by Dutch Church nineteenth. Hertzog receives delegates[1] seventeenth. Then retires. First session twentieth.

The endorsement of the prayer day by the Dutch reformed Church is a great step towards securing an atmosphere favouring a just solution of the dificult question. The Dutch Church is a most conservative body in South Africa. It has rarely taken a broad view of the Indian or the general colour question as it is called in South Africa. The reception that is to take place on the seventeenth by General Hertzog of the delegates to the Conference is a step in recognition of

[1] The members of the Indian deputation who were visiting South Africa to discuss with the Union Government problems of South African Indians

the tremendous importance of the Conference and of the issues that are to be discussed by the Conference.

I hope that the Indian public will back wholeheartedly the noble effort of this single-minded Englishman. One may thoughtlessly say that it costs nothing to offer prayers and that the pressmen will announce that prayers were offered for the success of the mission at so many places. But in reality, it is a most difficult thing that Mr. Andrews has asked us to do. One can give of one's possessions willingly or unwillingly or even for a show. One may give unwilling intellectual assent to a proposition. But there is no such thing as unwilling or showy heart co-operation. And what Mr. Andrews wants is heart co-operation, for, prayer is nothing else but an intense longing of the heart. You may express yourself through the lips; you may express yourself in the private closet or in public; but to be genuine, the expression must come from the deepest recesses of the heart. Let those who can, that is those who believe in the cause of the Indians of South Africa and who believe in God and therefore in prayer, set apart some time on the nineteenth instant for the heart co-operation with the Indian settlers of South Africa and invoke God's blessings on the deliberations of the Conference.

If there is anybody in India who still does not know what the Indian cause in South Africa is, let him or her understand that the very existence of the Indians in South Africa is at stake. Specifically, the Asiatic Bill[1] that was suspended during the last session of the Union Parliament and which will be subject matter of discussion is a bill which is so designed as to make it impossible for any self-respecting Indian to remain in South Africa. Let those who do not know the legal position of Indians in South Africa realize that they have practically no political status whatsoever within the Union. They have no rights even of residence in Orangia except as domestic servants. In many parts they cannot become owners of landed property.Throughout South Africa, the trading rights have been considerably curtailed and the administration of the existing legislation regarding trading rights is becoming more and more severe against Indian traders, even against those who are holders of trading licenses of long standing. I say nothing about the social barriers that have been erected against them and consequent difficulties about freedom of travelling etc. They have hardly any facility for the education of their children worth the name. The position, therefore, it will be seen, is precarious enough as it is.

[1] The Class Areas Bill

The Asiatic Bill if it is passed will put the finishing touch. The Conference has been brought about after tremendous difficulties to ease the situation and to secure the barest justice for the Indian settler. And it is on this effort that C. F. Andrews seeks to invoke the blessing of God on the nineteenth instant. Let those who believe, in all humility, tender their heart co-operation.

Young India, 16-12-1926

153. NOTES

"PROSPEROUS" INDIA

Mr. A. M. Samuel, Minister for Overseas Trade, is reported to have thus spoken to the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce:

> India is our best customer. She buys about £ 90,000,000 worth of goods from us a year, mostly manufactured goods of high finish containing a large amount of British labour. Any increase of trade with India, therefore, would be welcome because by increasing the employment of labour we would be carrying out the main policy of the present Government, namely, the reduction of unemployment figures.
>
> India bought from us immense quantities of iron and steel goods and railway material. She was prosperous and had large sums with which to purchase imported goods. She only awaited a level of prices which would suit her views. The credit of India stood very high, second only to the credit of Great Britain herself. Many firms in the Lincoln district already possessed properly equipped sales and technical organizations in India, but the Government representatives in India asked firms to provide efficient and technical representation upon the spot. The sale of highly complex machinery and plant called for an increased backing up by technical advisers, The salesman needed a technical adviser at his right hand always to assist him in obtaining contracts. It was necessary that the British technical representatives should be in touch with the buying engineers in India to explain the details of the machines offered or sold. We still supplied 80 per cent of the machinery imported into India, and most of the British firms had their own technical agents in India, but he still came across reports of Indian purchasing authorities complaining that they did not get the services from the British expert staffs that they desired. They also complained that we did not maintain an adequate supply in India of stocks and spare parts.
>
> As regards the Indian market for agricultural machinery, he knew that British firms had gone to great trouble and expense to develop this market without any considerable success. The Indian Government, however, was striving to assist the Indian cultivator, and one of the best methods to do so

was to put better agricultural implements into his hands. Agricultural and co-operative credit departments were being set up in India to show the people how to use and repair modern implements and to assist them to purchase them.

There is no doubt that Mr. Samuel honestly believes that we are prosperous, and that it would add to our prosperity to buy all the machinery that England can manufacture, whether agricultural or otherwise, as also technical skill. How far from truth both these statements appear to us to be. We know that India is not prosperous; that it is daily growing poorer, and some of us know also that the problem of poverty will never be solved by an indiscriminate importation of machinery and technical skill from England, or any other foreign land. As Gokhale put it years ago, this kind of importation stunts our growth. We become more and more hewers of wood and drawers of water. What we need to do is to add to our capacity for labour with our hands and feet the necessary technical skill, so that we may devise our own machinery suitable to our requirements. A slavish imitation of the West can but kill all initiative or skill and therefore the capacity for living with anything like decent comfort. It is such speeches like Mr. Samuel's which arouse suspicions about the object of Commissions like the Royal Agricultural Commission, as was recently adverted to in these pages.

Young India, 16-12-1926

154. KHADI PRATISHTHAN

Last week I published a comprehensive summary of the report upon the progress of khadi in the Punjab.[1] I now give below a similar report from the Khadi Pratishthan omitting the balance-sheet, because the items that the reader would be interested in are included in the body of the report. Khadi workers will carefully study the reports I am publishing so that they can compare the methods of work adopted in different provinces. The reader will note that magic lantern lectures for popularizing khadi are a special feature introduced by the Khadi Pratishthan and are being now taken up in other parts of India. The technical department is also a strong feature of the Pratishthan. After considerable difficulty, the Pratishthan has secured its own premises, where extensive experiments are being carried on in dyeing and bleaching all of which makes khadi more attractive.

Young India, 16-12-1926

[1] *Vide* "Khaddar in the Punjab", 9-12-1926.

155. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI PATEL

WARDHA,
Thursday, December 16, 1926

BHAI SHIVABHAI,

I have your letter.

There is no reason for you to worry. Strictly speaking, I do regard a violation of the vow to have occurred, but our responsibility for that is slight. You did not consciously desire that the thing should happen, and, therefore, no elaborate atonement is necessary. Whenever you have an involuntary discharge in dreams, you should take light food or even forgo a meal the next day. Or, when you become conscious that it has occurred, you should get up and take a hip-bath. If this is not possible, you should clean the wet part, and repeat Rama-nama. This cleaning will be enough atonement. What you should do depends on the state of your mind at the moment. After cleaning yourself in this manner, you should not make yourself unhappy about the occurrence or brood over it. If you have slipped either in regard to eating, reading, thinking or selecting your company, see that you do not commit a similar error in future. Only a person who is completely free from desire can escape involuntary ejaculation, and that too with ceaseless effort.

You should give up your evening meals and casual snacks. Nothing should be taken just to gratify the palate. You should be content with whatever pleasure you get from the food that you must take.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

There is no news about your brother yet.

I have not gone through the letter after writing it.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9491

156. LETTER TO HARDAYAL NAG

[*December 17, 1926*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[2] which I was delighted to receive. I do not know what I shall be doing at Gauhati. I shall act as the Spirit leads me.

Charkha is surely not dying in Bengal. It may be in Chandpur. The output of khaddar in Bengal is steadily increasing and so are the sales.

If you are not keeping very good health, I certainly do not think it is worth while troubling [you] to come to Gauhati. Whatever I do there will undoubtedly be known to the public. But I have advised all non-co-operators not to trouble about coming to Gauhati with the expectation of any fireworks display or even the expectation of any non-co-operation programme being discussed, apart from khaddar.

Forward, 24-12-1926

157. LETTER TO S. HIGGINBOTTOM

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 17, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is evident that thoughts produce effects, perhaps, more powerful than the spoken word; for, if you have thought so much of me, for which many thanks, I have thought none the less of you and I have spoken to so many about you and your acts.

I do not think there is any chance of my passing through Allahabad in the near future and I have in front of me a prolonged tour. But I am likely to be at the Ashram at the end of February when, if you could come over and pass a day or two, we could have a quiet time together and you could see the Ashram activities and also give us

[1] As in the source

[2] The correspondent had asked for Gandhiji's programme at the Gauhati Congress.

the benefit of your valuable advice in the agricultural work we are doing.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SAM HIGGINBOTTOM, ESQ.
ALLAHABAD AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTE
ALLAHABAD

From a photostat: G.N. 8935

158. MESSAGE TO PUBLIC MEETING, WARDHA[1]

December 19, 1926

I am glad you are having a prayer meeting in response to the appeal of that good soul Andrews. The problem in South Africa is the problem of the removal of untouchability. The work of the conference now [being] held in South Africa will have a far-reaching effect not only on Indians but on all Asiatics, Negroes and others. Let us pray to God that He may inspire the members of the conference with wisdom and that justice may be done.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-12-1926

159. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

December 19, 1926

CHI. MIRA,

I have been having your delightful letters. I dare not attempt a long letter just now. When I write to Rolland, it shall go through you. But do you think it is necessary to write? I am glad you have come in touch with Mrs. Gadodia. You must take long walks.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5192. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] Gangadharrao Deshpande presided at the meeting. The message was read out by Mahadev Desai.

160. LETTER TO RAJKISHORI MEHROTRA

WARDHA,

Monday [On or before *December 20, 1926*][1]

CHI. RAJKISHORI,

I had been intending to talk to you in detail but could not get the time. Parasram tells me your mind is not at peace in the Ashram. Parasram does not intend to keep you there under compulsion. If you wish to stay somewhere else you may do so. You should not force Parasram to leave the Ashram. He is bound to provide you a maintenance but not to stay with you if you do not like to stay where he does. The wife follows the husband but the husband cannot follow the wife because he is often obliged to go to various places for earning a livelihood or for self-improvement.

I hope you and the boys are in good health. Write to me what you feel without any hesitation.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W.4953. Courtesy: Parashu Ram Mehrotra

161. LETTER TO PARASHU RAM MEHROTRA [2]

Silence Day [On or before *December 20, 1926*][3]

"Adhere to work entrusted. Sending instructions."

You must have got the above telegram. Remain absorbed in your work. Keep sending money to your parents as you used to. Do the *Young India* work and that of Hindi teaching. More when I come. Stop worrying.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Neither you, nor Rajkishori, nor the children should fall ill. Mind.

I leave Wardha on the 21st.

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4957. Courtesy: Parashu Ram Mehrotra

[1] The date is based on the recollection of Parashu Ram Mehrotra.

[2] The first sheet of the letter is not available.

[3] *Ibid*

162. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day, Magsar Sud 1, [*19*]*83* [*December 20, 1926*]

DEAR SISTERS,

I got Chi. Radha's[1] letters written on behalf of all of you. It is good that you have chosen Gangabehn as your leader. But may I draw your attention to the necessity of your helping her to discharge her duties well, now that you have made her your leader? By appointing an illiterate sister of yours as your leader, you have given due importance to character and sacrifice. This is as it should be. Knowledge is useless without character. Have no doubt whatever about this.

A leader means the most important servant. A king acquires the right to issue orders only when he has risen above all others in his ability to serve. His orders would then be, not for serving his self-interest, but for the good of the community. These days irreligion parades as religion. Kings, therefore, run after pleasures instead of living as men of self-sacrifice, and exercise authority only to that end. But you have appointed Gangabehn as your leader with a religious aim. This means that you have decided Gangabehn to be the chief servant among you all who are trying to become servants.

Please remember that all of you are tied to Mother India with a cord of hand-spun yarn. If you give up spinning, you give up service too. Do not, therefore, neglect the spinning-wheel. Today Rama dwells in the spinning-wheel. The fire of starvation is raging all around. I do not see any other help against it except through the spinning-wheel. God always reveals Himself to us in some concrete shape. That is why we sing of Draupadi that for her God took the form of garments. Anyone who desires to see God today may see Him in the form of the spinning-wheel.

I have exceeded my limits. I did not wish to write more than two sheets. I cannot cope with my work if I become too greedy to write to you.

I send to Chi. Maganlal all the letters of Mirabehn. I want all you sisters to listen to them carefully, try to understand them and reflect over them. In my view she is at present the ideal woman worker among us.

[1] Daughter of Maganlal Gandhi

By asking me to write to you on good paper with a margin, Radha has laid on me a fairly heavy burden. I shall bear it as far as I can.

I say nothing regarding my health, since it is very good. Jamnalalji and Janakibehn are sheltering me and giving me plenty of quiet. It seems I have gained four pounds. I am able to eat well. At every meal I eat a little of what Ba prepares for me. I have still some of it left.

I shall leave this place tomorrow. Mithubehn[1], Jamnabehn and Perinbehn[2] are coming here from Bombay for khadi work. I shall meet them at Gondia,[3] You should find out from the map where Gondia is.

Dakshabehn and the German lady left yesterday, the former for Bardoli and the latter for Banaras.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3630

163. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[*December 20, 1926*][4]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I had been wanting to write to you for a long time but could make it only today.

I had asked Mahadev to write to you about Rukhi. I suppose he has done that. I have asked Valji, too, to write to you. The doctor is of the opinion that after she gets some strength, her appendix should be removed. This time she might recover completely. But as long as her appendix is not removed, she will have to be very careful about her diet and, till then, she will not put on weight and will remain weak. Show her to Haribhai and if he suggests, have her operated. There is no risk and from Govindbhai's case, we know that Haribhai is a very careful person. I have explained everything in detail to Keshu. For the

[1] Mithubehn Petit

[2] Perinbehn Captain

[3] Gandhiji visited Gondia, now in Madhya Pradesh, on December 22, 1926.

[4] From the reference to Gandhijiís departure for Amravati ìtomorrowî and arrival in Calcutta on a Thursday; he left for Amravati on 21st December 1926 and reached Calcutta on 23rd, a Thursday, leaving for Assam the same day. Vide also " Letter to Ashram Woman", 20-12-1926.

time being, Rukhi should live on milk and fruit. If she is constipated, she should be given enema to keep her bowels clean. She should not move about. Nothing to worry if she sits. If Haribhai suggests that she should be immediately admitted to the hospital, then do so. I will take Rukhi with me in the same train by which I am going to Amaravati tomorrow. At two stations, she will have to change trains but I have made arrangement for that. Rukhi will reach there on Wednesday night. Do give her enema at night if she does not pass stool the whole day and has not taken enema at Surat or if she feels even slightly heavy in the stomach. Otherwise let her go to bed. Add water to her milk before heating it. Send me a telegram of her arrival there. I will reach Calcutta on Thursday and on the same day at 3 O' clock, will catch the Assam Mail. So 1 can get the telegram only if you send it early on Thursday. I have asked Keshu to take my address with him.

I send herewith a postcard from Vajubhai. He wants cotton. My feeling is he works in the villages of Bhavanagar State on behalf of Pattani Saheb. And if that is so, why does he not take cotton from the state. Even then, I have written to Balwantrai to have a talk with you. If you think it proper, get him some cotton and lay down whatever conditions you want to. Cotton could be given only as a loan and in return we should either get khadi or money.

Write to me if we have an unduly large stock of khadi there and you are not able to sell it off. If you can dispose it off by converting it into useful things, do that. We should have the capacity to stock khadi.

I hope you have sent the copies of the Agreement with Ganga-behn to Deshpande.

Parnerkar had come here to see me. He has impressed Jamnalalji, Vaijnath and me. He will reach there by the 7th. He is to be given Rs. 125/- per month and a place to stay. Debit his salary in the account of All-lndia Cow Protection Society. If you feel that something should be debited for the house rent do that also. I want the entire dairy account to come under the All-India Cow Protection Society. Put into practice those suggestions of Parnerkar which are acceptable to you. The tannery (*charmalaya*) will also be brought under All-India Cow Protection Society.

This will no doubt take a lot of your time. You will be able to cope with the work if you do only planning and supervision. It is necessary to have someone trained by Ganesh. For the dairy, Shiva-bhai Haribhai is there.

I have already written to you about Ramachandran.

Let me know immediately if you find the work heavy or feel uneasy about it. Do not hide your feelings in order to save me from worry.

Inform me immediately if you feel I am making a mistake. If I am not convinced, put up with me. But do not hide your feelings in the belief that I am not going to correct myself.

I am intentionally setting up cow-protection and other industries there. I think it is not beyond our capacity. We must make it a success.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am sending herewith other letters from Mirabehn. I want the girls to read them carefully. Of course, others should also read them.

I will not have the time to read this letter again.

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 32940

164. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHA ,
Silence Day [*December 20, 1926*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I am enclosing herewith the letter from Pattaniji. His goodness is beyond measure. You write a letter to him direct. I still feel that we should send him whatever money we can in such a way that his feelings are not hurt. He may well use the amount for any charitable purpose he wants. If you feel that your financial situation is such that you must save every pie you can, then you need not send anything. And if you cannot leave Panchgani you should not hesitate to stay on there. Write to Pattaniji and send the letter to me. I shall post it to him after perusal.

Pyarelal must have reached there in time. Devdas had written that you could not be left without someone to help you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Till the 28th, write to me only at the Gauhati address.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The addressee received this on December 22. The silence day, i.e., the Monday, prior to this date, fell on December 20.

165. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Monday [*December 20, 1926*][1]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Received your two letters. I am returning Bhai Shriprakash's original letter.

I was glad to read the plain story of your department. Elections have polluted our atmosphere. I have seen enough of this. After all the trouble taken, the country is not going to gain but lose. But I cannot advise you to leave the Assembly. The idea of being neutral is that not even a vote should be cast under pressure from anyone, as usually happens.

The assurance you gave me was needless because I have faith in your earnest efforts. Even then your assurance is gratifying.

I shall arrive in Calcutta on the 23rd and leave for Gauhati the same day. I shall stay at Bhai Khandelwal's. When I was in Calcutta he used to call often. I had told him that, when I went to Calcutta again and if it was not for political reasons, I would stay with him, and he insists on it now. And so I shall have to stay at his place. You aren't going to Gauhati, are you?

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6141. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

166. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, WARDHA[2]

[*December 20, 1926*][3]

. . . I do not know what else I am expected to do. During the year of silence, I have given my most earnest thought to it and have come to the conclusion that we can have swaraj, even *Ramarajya*, if we fulfil the triple programme—a programme in which men and women,

[1] The reference in the letter to Gandhiji's arrival on 23rd in Calcutta *en route* to Gauhati suggests that the letter was written on the preceding Monday, which fell on this date.

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". A Gujarati report of what appears to be the same speech was published in *Navajivan*, 26-12-1926.

[3] As given by Mahadev Desai

young and old, Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians, Government servants and all can alike take part. I am, if possible, more convinced than ever that swaraj is impossible to be attained if there is no Hindu-Muslim unity, if we still suffer from the curse of untouchability and if our middle classes refuse to understand the gospel of swadeshi. Don't think that I am sticking on to this programme out of obstinacy or perversity. There is nothing on earth that I would not give for the sake of the country excepting, of course, two things and two only, viz., Truth and Non-violence. I would not sacrifice these two for all the world. For, to me Truth is God and there is no way to find truth except the way of Non-violence. And I do not seek to serve India at the sacrifice of Truth or God. For I know that a man who forsakes Truth can forsake his country, and his nearest and dearest ones. . . . Now is the time to act. For how long is a man to go on talking? He may do so once, twice, aye, a hundred times, but action or example is his last resort. . . . Even if the whole of India ranged on one side were to declare that Hindu-Muslim unity is impossible, I will declare that it is perfectly possible, I will say that, if there is anything like God or Truth on earth, Hindu-Muslim unity is also possible. Even if masses of people were to burn khadi publicly and say that it is an insane programme, I will declare that those people have gone mad. In the same way, even if all the Hindus of India were to be ranged against me in declaring that untouchability, as we know it today, has the sanction of the Shastras or the *smritis*, I will then declare that these Shastras and these s*mritis* are false. Everywhere shall I go forth thus uttering the three articles of my creed—my *kalma* and my *gayatri*,—so that I may be true to myself and my Maker.

Young India, 30-12-1926

167. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

ON THE TRAIN,
Tuesday [*December 21, 1926*][1]

BHAI RAMESHWARJI,

I got your letter as well as Rs. 50. You have done nothing wrong by not coming to Wardha. Even if you have done something wrong,

[1] The postmark bears the date 22-12-1926, which was a Wednesday.

you have made up for it by sending the money. I am passing the money to Amritlalji. Repeat Ramanama.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 187

168. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

GONDIA,
[*December 21, 1926*][1]

CHI. MANI,

I am aware of your affection for me. But surely you do not expect to stay with me all your life. But you can live with my work. That means that you should prepare yourself for it. Do not waste a single minute there. Write to me regularly. I too shall write as often as I can.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 39

169. SPEECH AT OPENING OF GYMNASIUM, AMRAOTI[2]

[*December 21, 1926*][3]

You know that I am a man conscious of my limitations and it is not in my nature to have more things than I can attend to. But I could not resist Dr. Patwardhan's request. I was glad to be told that this gymnasium was open to Hindus and Mussalmans alike, and that not only Mussalmans but untouchable youths are members of it. I rejoice to see that the institution is thus free from communalism.

Our Shastras say that a boy who would keep his body fit and strong and make the best use of it should observe *brahmacharya*. I have travelled all over the country and one of the most deplorable things I have noticed is the rickety bodies of young men. So long as

[1] The source has "1926". Gandhiji was in Gondia for a few hours on December 21.

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter".

[3] Mahadev Desai says: "The year's silence was broken on the evening of the 20th at the same place [Wardha], and active touring began yesterday. Amraoti, Nagpur and Gondia being the places visited. . ." Gandhiji was at Nagpur on December 21. It is likely that he visited Amraoti earlier on the same day.

we labour under the curse of child-marriage, and so long as many members of our society are children of such marriages, so long much bodily exercise is an impossibility. Who will recommend physical exercise to consumptives? We should therefore lay the axe at the root of this curse, if we would see our young men and women strong and healthy and India on the path of vigorous and healthy growth. Manu has laid down that a student should observe *brahmacharya* up to his 25th year at least. All physical exercise will be futile so long as these conditions are not satisfied.

But there is another thing to which I should like to draw your attention. You know that I am pledged to have nothing to do with things even remotely connected with violence. Whatever others may say, I am convinced that the way of non-violence is the only way and the highest and permanent religion for me. How is it then, someone might ask, that an avowed votary of non-violence like me has at all associated himself with an institution like this? The reason is clear. Ahimsa or non-violence means the renunciation of the capacity to use violence. He who has not that capacity is therefore incapable of exercising non-violence. Non-violence is a mighty spiritual force but its votary should have the power to use physical force and should consciously and deliberately refuse to exercise that force. Not that physical training is a *sine qua non* for acquiring capacity for violence, but we may not encourage our youths to have feeble physiques in order to be capable of ahimsa. You cannot make a man non-violent by depriving him of arms. One of the many crimes of the British rule in India is that we have been forcibly deprived of our arms—not indeed with a view to making us non-violent even if such a thing was possible but to emasculating us. I want India to be strong and free to exercise its strength and yet to renounce it.

Thus I like institutions like these for physical training. But let me utter a word of warning. No institution that has as its object the subjection of a community, whether Hindu, Mussalman, Parsi, or Christian, can have my blessings. Only that institution can have my blessings which aims as the growth of the physical culture of all communities, of all the youths of the nation, to whatever creed or community they belong. I should not have come here, did I not know that the gymnasium I have opened belonged to the latter type, and whilst once more congratulating you I wish and pray that you may all

be true and pure, and your lives may be consecrated to the service of our nation and of our religions.

Young India, 30-12-1926

170. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, NAGPUR[1]

December 21, 1926

Mahatmaji exhorted the people to help the Tilak Vidyalaya with money. He reiterated his faith in khaddar and said that, if the people were willing to follow his advice, they could get swaraj in a few years. Mahatmaji was pained to see people wearing foreign cloth and said that he was tired of hearing *Mahatma Gandhiki Jai*. What he wanted was real work. From this morning he had assumed active work and would travel through the length and breadth of India to preach his message of the charkha.

Forward, 22-12-1926

171. THE MESSAGE OF GANGA AND JUMNA

A friend thus writes:[2]

We have more Gangas and Jumnas than the two. It is true they bear other names. They are, however, watering our vast plains from the North to the South and the East to the West. The message that the Ganga and the Jumna gave to this friend is not the only message that the mighty rivers of India are giving to her inhabitants. They remind us of the sacrifice we must make for the sake of the land we are living in. They remind us of the process of purification that we must continuously go through as the rivers themselves are going through from moment to moment. I wrote nearly 10 years ago that the *gayatri*, the common prayer of Hinduism, was one of the precious gifts of the Ganga. Her shining waters must have given the *rishis* of old the inspiration. In the modern rush, the chief use we have for our rivers is to empty our gutters in them and to navigate our cargo vessels, and in the process make them dirtier still. We have no time, as the friend had, to stroll down to these rivers, and in silent meditation listen to the message they murmur to us.

Young India, 23-12-1926

[1] The meeting was held at Chitnis Park on the seventh anniversary of the Tilak Vidyalaya.

[2] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had described the feelings of ecstasy that the river Jumna had inspired in him.

172. NOTES

A. I. S. A. RESOLUTIONS

The following resolutions were passed by the Council of the All-India Spinners' Association at its meeting held at Wardha from 13th to 16th December 1926.

I. Resolved that all sale depots conducted directly by the All-India Spinners' Association or through provincial departments be instructed strictly to avoid all sales on credit whether they be retail sales or wholesale transactions with other depots

II. Resolved that cash securities be insisted on from hawkers covering the amount of stock taken by them for sales. In special cases, however, where desirable hawkers are unable to furnish such security, personal sureties may be taken from them. In all cases hawkers should be strictly warned that they should make no credit sales on any account and periodical settlements of accounts should be made. If at any time a hawker is unable to pay up the cash for the stock sold or the balance of stock does not tally, the hawker should be at once discharged and steps should be taken against him for recovery of the monies due.

III. whereas it is not desirable that the sale depots should be run in places where the public does not give adequate support enabling them to be conducted without loss, all provincial departments are instructed to close down depots where, after two years' experience, it is found that the charges incurred exceed $6^{1}/_{4}$% of the total sales effected per year, and to open new depots only where they expect this standard to be reached at least in the course of a year.

IV. Whereas it is necessary, at present, to concentrate our efforts on such centres, where, by reason of greater unemployment or special adaptability to the industry of hand-spinning and hand-weaving, there are greater facilities for the production of khadi, it is resolved that, in proposing schemes of work, provincial agents and secretaries should not undertake to open or maintain centres of production which can be run only at a loss. But where it is considered desirable in the interests of the movement that any centres should be run or maintained at a loss, it should be borne in mind that no more than 10% of the total capital invested for production in the province should be invested in such pioneer effort.

In another column is published a letter from Mr. D. B. Desai, a settler of Kenya, referring to an increase in the poll tax which Indians of Kenya have been made to pay for the past twelve years and more.[1] The letter is remarkable for the wealth of details it contains. If the facts set forth in it are true, it is a serious reflection upon the Europeans of Kenya and the Kenya Government. The reader will recollect that the Indians of Kenya did not submit to the poll tax without protest. Of course the protest was useless. But one would have thought that there would be no further addition to the iniquitous tax. If, however, my correspondent is right, by a currency trick the tax wasraised by 50 per cent., i.e., it went up from 20 shillings to 30 and now the amending legislation raises it to 50 shillings. The reasons given for the rise would seem to be utterly absurd. The reader must read the letter to know how the tax is to be utilized. The Kenya Indians have certainly every reason for hoping that the public and the Government will come to their assistance and demand a veto of this discriminating and unjust legislation.

Young India, 23-12-1926

173. KHADI SERVICE

The Council of the All-India Spinners' Association, after most careful and exhaustive discussion and after considering all the opinions that had been received upon the draft published some time ago in these pages, has recast the rules which the reader will find published elsewhere. Forms of application and contract of service are also published. This service provides those who want to serve the cause of khadi an opportunity of so doing and, at the same time, a modest remuneration for themselves.

The Board of Studies will also be the Examination Board. It does not mean necessarily that all the Examiners will examine all the candidates. But the various examinations required under the rules will be conducted by one or more of the examiners selected by the Chairman of the Board.

Suggestions were received that the course which extends to 3 years is altogether too long for the remuneration promised. But all the

[1] For the text of the letter, *vide* Appendix "Kenya Indians: D.B. Desai's Letter", 12-12-1926

members came to the conculsion that 3 years were none too long for the subjects to be studied and the practical work to be done. Experience gained during the last five years has shown that continued practice is necessary to learn the various arts that are included in the course. Those who have gone out to organize khadi work in the different villages with less experience and knowledge have found themselves handicapped. The science of hand-spinning is capable of progressive improvement. Researches that are being made from time to time show that there is room for the best among us to apply themselves to the development of the art so that without extra effort or time the income of the millions, for whom hand-spinning is designed, may be almost doubled.

It is an unfortunate fact that in our schools and colleges handicrafts find no place. All the knowledge, therefore, gained in the schools and colleges is of little use for the training required for khadi service. Therefore a graduate has to start almost on equal terms with a raw youth. Indeed, it is possible for the former even to labour under a handicap, if he has developed, as many do develop, a repugnance towards physical exertion.

The second question that came up for anxious consideration was that of remuneration. The Khadi Service is designed for meeting the need of paupers. It is impossible to hold out bright pecuniary prospects in such a service. I have no doubt whatsoever that the scale of salaries devised by the Government is out of all proportion to the condition of India's masses. It has relation to the requirements of the inhabitants of a rich island and therefore means an almost unbearable burden upon the poor millions. Let no one, therefore, compare the remuneration offered under the Khadi Service with that obtainable under the Government service. At the same time, I make bold to say that the start offered is as good as that offered by the Government. Where the Khadi Service fails in comparison is in the ultimate prospect. The maximum attainable under the Government may reach four figures whereas Khadi Service offers an increase amounting to Rs. 20 at the most. For those, therefore, who have received an English education to enter this service is undoubtedly a sacrifice. But is it too much to ask the English-educated youths of the country to make what after all is a very small sacrifice? I consider it to be very small, for it should be remembered that they have received their English education at the expense of the masses. It is an exclusive education which the masses can never get. And it is an education which, if it has given us a few self-sacrificing patriots, has also produced many more men who

have been willing accomplices with the Government in holding India in bondage.

It will also be noted that to the poor and deserving, the service offers a suitable scholarship and at the end of the training, while the rules bind the Association to keep those who may be found properly qualified employed for 10 years, they leave it open for them to serve the Association or to seek prospects elsewhere. This relaxation has been purposely made in order to induce young men to come and learn the art of spinning and all it means even though they may not join the Service.

Young India, 23-12-1926

174. HAND-WEAVING AMONG PARSIS

A correspondent extracts for me the following passage from the Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency, Volume VII, Page 155, edition 1883:

> The Parsi weavers of Gandevi were of special note, and in 1787-88 Dr. Hove, a European traveller, visited that town for the express purpose of learning from the Parsis some knowledge of their art. The industry has died out for above fifty years. The Parsi women of the priestly class still, however, make a large number of sacred threads *kusti* or *kasti*, worn by Parsi men and women. These find a large sale in Bombay and cost Rs. 3 or more according to the labour displayed. Some of the Parsi women also make tape for cots and rough dhoti and khadi to order for local traders, but the Parsis as a rule have quite abandoned the weaving in which they excelled.

What a great boon to India and to themselves it would be if the Parsis who are conducting liquor shops were to exchange the immoral liquor traffic for the uplifting and productive occupation of weaving in which they excelled only 50 years ago! The reference to the hand-spun *kasti* reminds me of the stalwart Parsi sister whom I met in Navsari and who told me that the Parsi ladies of Navsari who made their livelihood out of *kasti*-spinning and whose sacred fingers gave the religious touch to the *kasti* were hounded out by those who had gone there under the guise of reformers to substitute the hand-spun thread with the machine-spun.

Young India, 23-12-1926

175. ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION

The annual report of the All-India Spinners' Association has been just published. It is brief enough for any busy man to go

through. A spinners' association means an association not of but for the poorest. It cannot be of the poorest, for they have no knowledge of what an association is and have not even labour to save which they can give to their association. It follows therefore that if there must be an association for them, others who live on their labour make some small return to the poorest of their brothers and sisters. Of such then is this Association made. They are all too few for the purpose. I wish there were more. But whether they are few or many, their work is substantial. It has on its record 110 carders, 42,959 spinners and 3,407 weavers among whom were distributed over 9 lakhs of rupees at the lowest computation. This distributing work was done at 150 production centres catering to the needs of roughly 1,500 villages. I have mentioned these salient facts merely to whet the reader's appetite. There is not an idle word in the report. It is simply a fairly well arranged catalogue of facts and figures. The reader, if he cares to look at it, will find therein the quantity of khadi produced and sold during the year. He will find too how many young men are earning their living in this growing organization, and how many other ancillary activities are undertaken by it. The report can be had by writing to the All-India Spinners' Association office, Ahmedabad, and sending 4 annas stamps.

Young India, 23-12-1926

176. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

CALCUTTA,
December 24, 1926

Before he left for Gauhati, Mahatma Gandhi, interviewed on the question of a new programme, said it was too early to talk because the programme had to be settled by the Congress. He said:

Everyone may have his own views, but it is difficult to say what the Congress will accept. So far as I am aware, the people are going with an open mind and a sincere desire to arrive at some workable programme which can be accepted by different groups, but it is too risky to prophesy anything about what the programme is going to be, even roughly.

On the working of the Reforms, Mahatmaji remarked:

So far as I can say, there will be certainly strongest disinclination to work the Reforms until, naturally, the sore point that Bengal feels,

namely, indefinite detention of political prisoners, is honourably and satisfactorily settled.

The Bombay Chronicle, 25-12-1926

177. TELEGRAM TO LAJPAT RAI[1]

December 24, 1926

RECEIVED STUNNING NEWS. YOU SHOULD GO DELHI PREVENT EXCITEMENT OR RESENTMENT. WIRE PARTICULARS.

The Leader, 28-12-1926

178. TELEGRAM TO INDRA VIDYAVACHASPATI[2]

[*December 24, 1926*]

HAVE RECEIVED STUNNING WIRE. FATHER DIED LIKE A HERO.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 6-1-1927

179. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING, GAUHATI[3]

[*December 24, 1926*]

A press reporter had come to me and asked me to say something. I told him I could not. I felt too overwhelmed to be able to say anything. Mrs. Naidu also pleaded with me for a message. I again refused. Since I have been, this time, ordered to speak, I shall try to express what I feel. But I am in no condition really to say anything. I can, however, tell you how the news affected me. As soon as I received Lalaji's wire I conveyed the news to Malaviyaji and others and sent telegrams to Lalaji and Swamiji's son Indra. In that telegram, rather

[1] The news of Swami Shraddhanand's assassination was received by Lajpat Rai at Calcutta on December 23, and the next day he conveyed it to Gandhiji, who was on his way to Gauhati to attend the A.I.C.C. meeting. The telegram reached him at Sorbhog, a wayside station. Gandhiji sent this telegram to Lajpat Rai who, along with M. R. Jayakar, left Calcutta for Delhi the same night.

[2] Mahadev Desai, in his "Gauhati Letter", says that Gandhiji sent this telegram on hearing of the assassination of Swami Shraddhanand.

[3] The text of the speech has been extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Gauhati Letter".

than express sorrow or grief, I said that this was no ordinary death, that I should not weep over it. Unbearable as it is, my heart refuses to grieve; it rather prays that all of us may be granted such a death.

From Swami Shraddhanand's point of view what has happened may be called a blessed event. He had been ill. I had not been aware of it but a friend told me that it would be a miracle if Swamiji survived. Later, in reply to a telegram of mine his son wired that he was slowly improving. I was assured that Dr. Ansari was looking after him with solicitude. Thus he was in bed gravely ill and in bed he was murdered. All men, of course, must die but of what worth is their dying? In India and wherever there are Hindus and Mussalmans, the death of Swamiji before his time will produce an effect very different from what would have been produced if Swamiji had died a natural death. I have not sent brother Indra any telegram or letter expressing sympathy with him. There was nothing I could say to him except that the death his father had met was a blessed death.

But I have said all this from the point of view of Swamiji and from my own point of view. I have repeatedly said that I make no distinction between Hindus and Mussalmans. I am a Hindu by birth and I find peace in the Hindu religion. Whenever peace seemed to elude me, it was in the Hindu religion that I found it. I studied other religions also and I decided that, whatever its defects and drawbacks, Hinduism alone could be the religion for me. That is what I feel and that is why I call myself a *sanatani* Hindu. Many *sanatanis* feel exasperated by this claim of mine and say: How can this man who has come back from England with all these new-fangled ideas be a Hindu? But this does not weaken my claim to being a Hindu, and Hinduism tells me to abide in friendship with all. So I have to think of the viewpoint of Mussalmans also.

And when I look at this matter from the Mussalmans' viewpoint, things are different. This deed was done through the hand of a Mussalman. Entering the house under the pretext of having a religious discussion with Swamiji he committed this monstrous act. The servant had told him that Swamiji was ill and could not see him. There was some argument at the door. When Swamiji heard it, he said: "Well, let him come." And although Swamiji need not have talked with him, he did so. He had not the strength, in fact, to talk much. All he wanted was gently to persuade him to go away. So he called him and said: "My friend, you can talk with me to your heart's content after I get well. But now I am bed-ridden." At this the visitor asked for water to

drink. Swamiji told Dharam Singh to get him some. As soon as the faithful servant turned his back, he took out a revolver. He fired two shots, not satisfied with one. Swamiji died then and there. Hearing the shots Dharam Singh ran to save his master, but it was too late! It was not God's will that Swamiji's body should be saved. Dharam Singh was also hit and is now in hospital. The killer, Abdul Rashid, is in police custody. It pains me to imagine the feeling that this will evoke among the Hindus. Without doubt this will create ill feeling for Mussalmans among the Hindus. Today there is no love between the two communities. There is no trust. Both do realize that at the end they have to live together like brothers, but meanwhile each, conscious of its weakness, wants to fight with the other, become strong and then unite. In these circumstances, and with the poison that is spread in the newspapers, it is difficult to say what this deed will lead to. That was why I wanted to keep silent. I cannot calm the storm that is raging within me, I cannot suppress it and I cannot express it before you.

We should learn a lesson from the fact that Swamiji died by the hand of Abdul Rashid. Let this make us try to understand each other. It would be wonderful if we realized that we cannot live together in perpetual conflict. But the atmosphere that prevails today holds out no hope that we shall escape with only one murder,

I shall say nothing at the moment of my personal relationship with Shraddhanandji. He opened out his heart to me. About six months ago when he visited the Ashram, he said to me: "I get many letters holding out threats to my life. But they do not worry me." You see, he was a brave man. In all the world I know no one braver than Swamiji. He had no fear of death for he had faith in God. That is why he used to say: "Even if they take my life what would it matter?" There is nothing to be wondered at that he was killed. There would be nothing to be wondered at if there were more murders. Today it is a Mussalman who has murdered a Hindu. We should not be surprised if a Hindu killed a Mussalman. God forbid that this should happen but what else can one expect when we cannot control our tongue or our pen? I must, however, say that if any Hindu imitated this act he would only bring disgrace to Hinduism.

I have said that it would be better if, instead of ignorant people fighting among themselves, the leaders who harbour enmity towards each other were to do the fighting. But it should not be that an individual from among the ignorant folk takes the life of a leader.

Let us pray to God that we may understand the real meaning of this assassination. This is a testing time for Hindus and Mussalmans. Let the Hindus remain peaceful and refrain from seeking revenge for this murder. Let them not think that the two communities are now enemies of each other and that unity is no longer possible. If they do, they will be committing a crime and bringing disgrace upon their religions. And, in my opinion, if a Mussalman thinks than Abdul Rashid did well he will be disgracing his religion. For that is not his religion. His religion is something else. Now is the opportunity for the Mussalmans to show the real teachings of Islam. Shraddhanandji and the Hindus have, of course, got what they had to, but as a man and as a friend and brother of Mussalmans, I must tell them that it will do both our communities good if we would understand this in the right spirit. May God give us faith and wisdom to survive this test and to behave towards each other, after this deed, in such a way that God can say that the two communities did what they ought to have done.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 6-1-1927

180. SPEECH AT SWADESHI EXHIBITION, GAUHATI[1]

December 25, 1926

Mahatmaji said that his faith in the charkha was intense and was increasing day by day. He, therefore, welcomed all opportunities of doing propaganda for organizing the charkha movement. For swaraj he had laid down three conditions, of which he held the spread of spinning-wheel to be the foremost. Indeed, this was the one platform where crores could work together—juveniles, adults, men and women could all contribute their mite. And more than this, it was a platform which offered women the best scope for taking their due share in the national movement for swaraj. He was, indeed, sure that success in the charkha programme would itself go a great deal towards the fulfilment of the second condition, namely, Hindu-Muslim unity.

He was studying the currency problem with a view to forming his own opinion on the controversy that was going on in respect of the exchange ratio. But from what he had read, he felt that really towns lived on villages and middlemen were helping to bleed the peasants and the country and were sending out of the country crores of

[1] The opening of the Swadeshi Exhibition by Gandhiji drew large crowds who lined the route and shouted "*Mahatma Gandhiki Jai*" as he entered the exhibition grounds. The attendance within the enclosure was large and on the dais, besides Gandhiji, were seated Malaviya and Sarojini Naidu. Other leaders present included Srinivasa Iyengar, Dr. Moonje, Motilal Nehru, Abul Kalam Azad, B. G. Horniman, V. J. Patel, Mohamed Ali, Swami Satyadev, Mrs. Aney and Lala Girdharilal.

rupees. He stated on the testimony of the Government Collectors' reports that villages were being ruined and that at least one-tenth of the people of India did not have enough to eat. For one hundred years the town people had bled the villager white. Why then would not they give the villager some return by taking to khaddar and thereby encouraging a movement which was full of the greatest possibilities for the uplift of the country? The Congress was a great institution, but it had not reached the villagers to any appreciable extent.

The Spinners' Association, organized under the Congress, had been given by the Congress complete swaraj and the Association had already secured touch with 1,500 villages and was providing work for 50,000 women and 4,000 weavers. Those who visited places of pilgrimage knew the state of beggary there. He held it a crime to give charity to the people capable of doing work if they were provided proper employment. The fifty thousand women who had been provided work by the Spinners' Association were those who had had no employment and did not earn a penny. If their operations could be extended and if he could be backed by the knowledge that leaders like Pandit Motilal, Pandit Malaviya and Maulana Mohamed Ali were taking to the spinning-wheel, his message would be heard and the problem of beggary could as well be tackled. A vast field remained to be covered as there were something like seven lakhs of villages in India. The price of khaddar today was practically half of what it was in 1921 and certainly it was untrue to say that there was less of khaddar produced.

Forward, 27-12-1926

181. ALL-INDIA COW-PROTECTION ASSOCIATION

It is said that the work of this Association proceeds but sluggishly. Its Working Committee met in Wardha on the 17th of this month. A resolution was passed to start the work of the committee meeting after postponing it for half an hour, due to want of quorum; in the meantime Dr. Moonje arrived and then the meeting commenced its work with the requisite quorum. This sort of thing should not happen in any organization. But as we have little or no interest in the constructive programme, only a few people attend such meetings if there is no financial gain in doing so.

This Association has to secure cow-protection through institutions selling milk and hides; hard work, finance, talent, etc., are therefore necessary. Who would like to attend a meeting of such an Association?

And yet, the question of cow-protection is very important from the religious and economic points of view. Agriculture is not possible without the well-being of cattle and man cannot live without agriculture. Moreover, we cannot have milk without cattle and the life of the people becomes difficult without milk.

The well-being of cattle depends entirely on their intelligent rearing and such knowledge cannot be gained without effort. Hence the object of the All-India Cow-protection Association is to spread such knowledge through experiments and to remove the repugnance that people have towards the trade in hides and tanning.

Who should take interest in this? Every thinking man and woman should. Whether many take interest or a few, such associations should continue their work with determination and prove their faith in it.

Hence the Committee has passed four resolutions.

Since an expert in the art of dairy management is available, the President has been authorized to spend up to Rs. 50,000 in order to implement the experiment of a dairy.

A gentleman is available for running the leather workshop and hence expenditure up to another Rs. 50,000 has been sanctioned to run this experiment.

The Association does not yet have so much money. The Association would hardly have Rs. 10,000. As for the rest, it is uncertain. There is a hope that the remaining amount will be provided. Friends have offered to help. And I have the faith that money will be positively available if the work as well as the workers are good. Hence I have taken the above-mentioned authority from the Committee. Those interested in the welfare of the cow should render such help as they may wish to offer. Every pie is and will be accounted for. Account will be regularly published. Success or failiure in the work depends on circumtances. It is hoped that at the end of the experiment both the activities can be shown to be self-supporting.

I wish to introduce the workers engaged in this work after I am well acquainted with this work. If these experiments succeed, they would I think, provide the key to cow-protection.

The other resolution are to make the Association self-sufficient in membership. The society is in need of workers and not officers. Hence there is a resolution to the effect that if a member of the Committee absents himself from three consecutive meetings. membership lapses automatically. This resolution is essential because only those who can give the benefit of their veiw while the Committee formulastes resolutions deserve to continue as members. How can those who do not remain present give such benefit? The secretary will start correspondece with-with every member in this behalf.

The fourth resolution applies to the members. Those members who do not pay in their subscription for the following year will not

remain members. This is just to tgive a reminder. The members and representatives of this Association should be responsible individuals. Really speaking, these two principles should be regarded as inevitable in al instutions that members must pay the subscription and that the representatives must be present at the meeiging.

It is my hope that those who subscribe to the objectives of the Association will welcome all these four resolution and help the Association as much as possible.

It may be said that the Committee had just to approve the arrangement regarding the secretary. Shri Valji Govindji Desai was appointed Secretary on a sala ry of Rs. 200 a month Shri Valji Desai is a *go-sevak*[1] and a learned man. He did not ask for Rs. 200 out of greed but because his family responsibilities were large. I could not find a more qualified Secretary tnan Shri Desai. According to the Constitution of the Association the responsibility for the choice rested with me When Shri Valji Desai was appointed for this work, it was felt positively available if the works as well as the workers are good. Hence I have taken the above-mentioned authority from the Committee. Those interested in the welfare of the cow should render such help as they may wish to offer. Every pie is and will be accounted for. Accounts will be regularly published. Success or failure in the work depends on circumstances. It is hoped that at the end of the experiment both the activities can be shown to be self-supporting.

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The fourth resolution applies to the members. Those members who do not pay in their subscription for the following year will not remain members. This is just to give a reminder. The members and representatives of this Association should be responsible individuals.

[1] One who serves the cause of cow-protection

Really speaking, these, two principles should be regarded as inevitable in all institutions that members must pay the subscription and that the representatives must be present at the meeting.

It is my hope that those who subscribe to the objectives of the Association will welcome all these four resolutions and help the Association as much as possible.

It may be said that the Committee had just to approve the arrangement regarding the Secretary. Shri Valji Govindji Desai was appointed Secretary on a salary of Rs. 200 a month. Shri Valji Desai is a *go-sevak*[1] and a learned man. He did not ask for Rs. 200 out of greed but because his family responsibilities were large. I could not find a more qualified Secretary than Shri Desai. According to the constitution of the Association the responsibility for the choice rested with me. When Shri Valji Desai was appointed for this work, it was felt that he would have to devote all his time to the work of cow-protection. Later it was found that he could spare some time. So we both decided that he should utilize that time in literary activities and earn some income out of it. Since he can get that type of work, he informed the Association that he would not receive from it more than Rs. 50 a month. He has been taking this amount since July last. The Association has accepted his decision with thanks. He has been granted permisson to do during his spare time any outside work available to him. I must say that the work that Shri Valji Desai is doing in his spare time may not be regarded as done for the Association itself, but it is, to a large extent, definitely connected with the work of cow-protection. It does not appear necessary to pass on this information. It does not appear necessary to pass on this information to the readers of *Navajivan*.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 26-12-1926

182. SPEECH AT FLAG-HOISTING CEREMONY, GAUHATI [2]

December 26, 1926

DR. HARDIKAR AND VOLUNTEERS,

I am glad to see you here this morning. I hope that the National flag unfurled by me this morning will be kept flying for ever and you

[1] One who serves the cause of cow-protection

[2] Delivered in Hindi after unfurling the Congress flag in front of the Congress *pandal* in the morning. Dr. N. S. Hardikar was in charge of the volunteers.

will all do works befitting the honour of the great flag. I bless you for your service to the Motherland.

Forward, 27-12-1926

183. RESOLUTION AND SPEECH AT CONGRESS SESSION, GAUHATI [1]

December 26, 1926

RESOLUTION

This Congress expresses its horror and indignation at the cowardly and treacherous murder of Swami Shraddhanand and places on record its sense of the irreparable loss the nation has sustained by the tragic death of a brave and noble patriot who dedicated his life and his great gifts to the service of his country and of his faith and espoused with fearless devotion the cause of the lowly, the fallen and the weak.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You must have noticed that the resolution I have moved originally stood in Maulana Mohamed Ali's name. But I am here to move it in obedience to the President's summons. We see from the newspapers that the assassination of Swamiji has evoked grief and horror throughout the land. I said speaking on the same subject at the All-India Congress Committee that we should not mourn over Swamiji's death. He had died the death of a hero, and every one of us might wish for such a death. But I want to make a slight correction in that last statement. Every brave man welcomes such a death whenever it comes to him. He greets it as a friend. But let no one therefore invite or hanker after such a death, let no one desire that someone else should be in the wrong and err against God and man, so that he might become a martyr. It is wrong to wish anyone to go astray. Let us all be brave enough to die the death of a martyr, but let no one lust for martyrdom.

Swamiji was a hero among heroes, the bravest of the brave. He had astonished the nation with an unbroken record of bravery. I am witness of the pledge he had taken to sacrifice himself at the altar of the country.

But need anyone speak at length on Swamiji's services to the nation? Swamiji, as everyone knew, was the help of the helpless, the

[1] The text of the speech was also published in *Young India*, 13-1-1927, under the heading "Hero among Heroes".

friend of the weak and the oppressed and the work he had done for the untouchables was unsurpassed. I well remember his having told me once that, unless every Hindu member of the All-India Congress Committee had an untouchable servant in his home, the work of the Congress for the uplift of the untouchables would not be complete. This may sound as an impracticable proposal, but it shows his unbounded love for the untouchables.

I shall not refer here to his many other services. Whilst the assassination of such a great hero and patriot, such a servant and devotee of God as Swamiji, can be made to serve the country's cause, imperfect men as we are, it is natural for us to mourn over his sad death. And when one thinks of the circumstances under which he met his death, one is naturally filled with horror and indignation. The assassin sought an interview with Swamiji to have a discussion on Islam. His faithful servant refused to admit him as he had Dr. Ansari's orders to allow no interviews so long as Swamiji was seriously ailing. But God had evidently ordered otherwise. Swamiji, when he overheard the request, asked Dharam Singh to let the man in. Brother Abdul Rashid was shown in. I purposely call him brother, and if we are true Hindus you will understand why I call him so. Swamiji asked his servant to admit Abdul Rashid, because God had willed to show therethrough the greatness of Swamiji and the glory of Hinduism. Swamiji was, of course, too ill to discuss religious topics and he asked the stranger to seek another occasion. But he would not go. He said he was thirsty and asked for water. Swamiji asked Dharam Singh to fetch water for him and taking advantage of his absence, the man deposited bullet shots in Swamiji's breast.

This is a thing which should not have happened in India—India where both Hindus and Mussalmans are proud of their faiths. I have studied the Koran with the same reverent attention as I give the *Gita*, and I say that the Koran nowhere sanctions or enjoins such murders. The murder has been possible because the two communities look upon each other with feelings of hatred and enmity. Many Mussalmans believe that Lalaji and Malaviyaji are the sworn enemies of Islam as was Swamiji in their opinion. On the other hand, many Hindus regard Sir Abdur Rahim and other Mussalmans as the enemies of Hinduism. To my mind both are wholly wrong. Swamiji was no enemy of Islam nor are Lalaji and Malaviyaji. Lalaji and Malaviyaji have a right to express their opinion freely and even if we disagree with them, no one may excite feelings of hatred against them. And yet, what do we see today? There are few Mussalman papers today which do not use foul language against these patriots. Now I ask in all humility what is the wrong they have done. We may not see eye to eye

with them in their methods of work. But I am sure that it is his great service that has earned for Malaviyaji the name, Bharat Bhushan. Lalaji too has a great record of service. Then take the Mussalman leaders. Sir Abdur Rahim may think that Hindus are in advance of the Mussalmans in every respect, that they are rich, they are educated, and the Mussalmans are poor and uneducated. Sir Abdur Rahim thinks that his community should have a preference in the services. It is open to us to feel and say that he is mistaken in his views, but why should we abuse him for his opinions? If Maulana Mahomed Ali says that although he has respect for Gandhi he holds that the faith of a Muslim who believes in the Koran is greater than the faith of Gandhi, why should we be angry? Do not some Christian clergymen say that a Christian regularly going to church and serving Jesus is better than a Hindu however pious he may be? What does that matter to us? I therefore appeal to you that if you hold dear the memory of Swami Shraddhanandji, you would help in purging the atmosphere of mutual hatred and calumny, you would help in boycotting papers which foment hatred and spread misrepresentation. I am sure that India would lose nothing if 90 per cent of the papers were to cease today. Many Mussalman papers today subsist on hatred of the Hindu and many Hindu papers subsist on hatred of the Mussalman. Swamiji has left for us a rich lesson written in his blood. "Do you know the liberality of the Arya Samaj?," he once asked me. "Do you know how Maharshi Dayanand forgave the man who poisoned him?" I knew it. How could I be ignorant of it, knowing as I did that the Maharshi had before him the example of Yudhishthira and the teaching of the *Gita* and the Upanishads? But Shraddhanandji in his overflowing reverence for the Maharshi dilated upon his forgiveness. I tell you the disciple had no less of that noble quality than his great master. Speaking once about the implications of *shuddhi* he told me that his *shuddhi* excluded any feeling of ill will for the Mussalman, that it meant purification of self and of the great community to which he belonged, and that his ideal was the ideal of the *Gita*—"See thyself in every one of the created beings." But he emphasized that the Hindu also was no less a friend of his than the Mussalman and that it was his duty to serve him. Even if the whole Muslim world were to turn against me, I would declare that Malaviyaji is my friend and elder brother. I declare also in the same breath that none of the Mussalman leaders is an enemy of Hinduism. Sir Abdur Rahim is not an enemy of the Hindus, nor is Mian Fazli Hussain. When I met him he assured me that he was an old Congressman, that he loved the Hindus no less than the Mussalmans, but that as a Mussalman he wanted to serve the latter. We may disagree with him in his views, we may not like his

demands for the Mussalmans, but why should we therefore swear at him and say that he is an enemy of the Hindus? Why should we not express our dissent from his views and fight them, if necessary, even as I do with Malaviyaji, in many respects, in a satyagrahi way? I repeat, therefore, with all the emphasis I can command that Sir Abdur Rahim or Mr. Jinnah or the Ali Brothers are no enemies of the Hindus. Let not the lesson of Swami Shraddhanandji's death be lost on us. You will all be accepting this resolution standing while, at this moment perhaps, there are Hindu-Muslim disturbances going on in Delhi. But I tell you that, if every one of you understands and lays to his heart the lesson that Swami Shraddhanandji has left for us, it is again possible to win swaraj in no time. I am a mad man, you will say, accustomed to giving rash promises. Well, I tell you I am not mad, I am still as much in earnest about my programme as I was in 1920, but those who made pledges in 1920 broke them and made swaraj impossible then. We are all children of the same Father—whom the Hindu and the Mussalman and the Christian know by different names. What if Sankara declared his faith in one God in his formula *Ekamevadvitiyam* of Ramanuja in his dual doctrine or Mahomed in his *La Illah Illillah*? All meant one and the same thing. If we cleanse our hearts, we shall be able to see that Swamiji has served us in his death as much as he served us when living. Let us purify our hearts with his blood, and fight, if need be, for our rights in a peaceful and satyagrahi way. Let every Mussalman also understand that Swami Shraddhanandji was no enemy of Islam, that his was a pure and unsullied life, and that he has left for us all the lesson of peace written in his blood.

Now you will, perhaps, understand why I have called Abdul Rashid a brother, and I repeat it, I do not even regard him as guilty of Swami's murder. Guilty, indeed, are all those who excited feelings of hatred against one another. For us Hindus, the *Gita* enjoins on us the lesson of equality; we are to cherish the same feelings towards a learned Brahmin as towards a *Chandal*, a dog, a cow and an elephant.

This is no occasion for mourning or tears, it is an occasion that should burn in our hearts the lesson of bravery. Bravery is not the exclusive quality of the Kshatriyas. It may be their special privilege. But, in our battle for swaraj, bravery is essential as much for the Brahmin and the Vaisya and the Sudra as for the Kshatriya. Let us not therefore shed tears of sorrow, but chasten our hearts and steel them with some of the fire and faith that were Shraddhanandji's.

Report of the Indian National Congress, Forty-first Session, Gauhati (Assam), 1926, pp. 42-5

184. RESOLUTION AND SPEECH AT CONGRESS SESSION, GAUHATI

December 26, 1926

RESOLUTION

This Congress welcomes the Round Table Conference now sitting in South Africa to deliberate upon the best method of dealing with the question of the status of Indian settlers in that sub-continent and prays for divine blessing and guidance upon its deliberations.

This Congress once more tenders its thanks to that good Englishman, Mr. C. F. Andrews, who has been chiefly instrumental in preparing in South Africa a calm atmosphere suitable for the holding of the Conference.

This Congress authorizes the President to cable the text of the Resolution to General Hertzog, Sir M. Habibulla and Mr. C. F. Andrews.[1]

Mahatmaji addressed the assembly in Hindi and the following is a summary of his speech:

He said that Mr. C. F. Andrews had kept him in touch with the position in South Africa through correspondence. Mr. Andrews had emphasized in his letters that prayers should be held all over for divine guidance of the Round Table Conference. Need for such prayer was paramount. They knew that the Indian Government had no power to force its will on South Africa. The recent Imperial Conference had conceded to the dominions even greater freedom and independence in the field of imperial relations. They could, therefore, only pray to God to shower His blessings on those engaged in the discussions of the Round Table Conference so that enlightened by the divine blessings, the Conference might concede justice to the Indian settlers in South Africa.

He then drew the attention of the audience to the fact that the untouchability of South Africa, from which their countrymen were suffering, was nothing but a repercussion of Indian untouchability. It therefore behoved them to put their own house in order.

He reminded the South African statesmen that history showed those who having power abused it prepared for their own ruin, and implored them to grant the Indian settlers elementary justice which they desired. They did not ask for favours; in fact they had forgone, for the sake of peace, things they need not have in strict justice.

Report of the Indian National Congress, Forty-first Session, Gauhati (Assam), 1926, pp. 51-2

[1] The resolution was seconded by Abul Kalam Azad, and passed unanimously.

185. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

GAUHATI,
Monday, December 27, 1926

DEAR SISTERS,

Instead of writing to you in the morning as usual, I am writing this just before the mail is cleared. Here it is cleared early.

The scenery around here is lovely. Our hut is put up right on the bank of the Brahmaputra; Kaka Saheb would be tempted by the very sight of the hut to stay here. There is a thatch of straw by way of roof. The walls are made of pieces of bamboo that grows all round here. The bamboo is plastered with mud. The inside of the wall is covered with khadi made in Assam. There is no cot inside, but there is an improvised platform, a wooden plank with bamboo legs. Over it is spread straw, on the hay a carpet and on the carpet a khadi sheet. On this I sit, dine and sleep. It is big enough to accommodate four more, but no one else sleeps on it. The ground in the hut, too, is spread over with hay, on which is spread a carpet, which again is covered with khadi. Who would not like to stay in such a hut? Of course, the life of such a hut is very short. It is useless in the rainy season. But it costs very little, takes only a day or two to put up, and requires no great skill. This is so with all true art. It is always simple and natural.

It is quite damp and cold here, but if one moves about briskly one does not get ill.

More next time, whatever comes to my mind then.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3631

186. SPEECH AT CONGRESS SESSION, GAUHATI[1]

December 27, 1926

Mr. Gandhi said an appeal had been made to him for sense of justice. His sense of justice would restore the yarn franchise and make spinning also obligatory.[2] Personally he believed in quality rather than in quantity, but if Congressmen believed in quantity rather than in quality, he suggested that the fewer the restrictions the better for the Congress. If, on the other hand, they believed in quality, then they must impose certain restrictions upon membership which promoted quality and thereby promoted national regeneration. The Congress wanted all the parties within its fold, but they wanted them not at any cost, and let it not be a charge either against the No-changers or against the Swarajists that they wanted to keep the Congress as a close corporation; but, after all, national organizations had their own restrictions which regulated their growth. It was, therefore, for the committee to decide whether khaddar was essential or not. In his opinion it was the only binding tie between the Congress and the masses. There were on the Spinners' Association's register more than fifty thousand men and women who were provided with work. Congress must harness this power of khaddar and increase it in order to achieve swaraj. Swaraj would not drop from the Downing Street but by linking the Congress with the masses through that slender cotton thread. He granted that the present franchise could not work because as it stood it was humiliating. What had happened in a number of cases was that a few yards of khaddar hired or purchased were kept near the Congress Committee's offices and the members, while entering the offices in order to participate in committee discussions and registering their votes, put on the khaddar cloth.

Please do not insult the masses who are dumb. They are already sufficiently insulted. If you believe in the number and not on the quality of Congressmen, then we may as well urge the Congress to

[1] Gandhiji was speaking in the Subjects Committee on a motion by Motilal Nehru which read: "Resolved that the following amendment be made in Article 7 of the Congress constitution: Substitute the following for sub-Clause 4. 'No person shall be entitled to vote at the election of the representatives or the delegates or any committee or sub-committee or any Congress organization whatsoever or to be elected as such or to take part in any meeting of the Congress or Congress organization or any committee or sub-committee thereof if he has not complied with sub-Section (1) hereof and does not habitually wear hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar."

[2] Mahadev Desai's report in his "Weekly Letter" has this here: "Let me say my sense of justice will be reconciled only by the restoration of the spinning franchise. If a stiffening of the franchise is, as I think it certainly is, necessary for national growth, am I not justified in laying down conditions for it? If any member should charge me with motives to exclude any party, I should feel deeply sorry, if not insulted."

remove this yarn franchise completely; but if you believe in quality, then we must stiffen the franchise. Not that I want Congressmen to go out of Congress but because this stiffening is necessary for the growth of the Congress organization.

The amendment of Pandit Motilal is a plea for honesty. If you do not believe in the wearing of khaddar then it is your bounden duty to unhesitatingly vote against it, but the existing clause is nothing but humiliation. In voting on this question, consideration of person must be avoided. Khaddar must stand on its own bottom or it should be destroyed. Please, therefore, eliminate me from your considerations. I do not care whether khaddar remains or not, but I do care for honour of the Congress, because Congress is a mighty name. No success at the polls will achieve swaraj. Yesterday you had to raise the delegate's fee from one to five rupees. Why? Has the Congress chest become so empty? If we had faith in Congress, our financial position would have been brighter. Was not our financial position far better in 1920-21? Is it khaddar that has brought our finances so low? I would ask you to put your hands on your heart and ask yourself why is this downfall. My individual opinion is that this proposition must be carried without any dissentient but if you carry the proposition, you must carry it with all the implications, that is, we must carry on the education of the people in the use of khaddar. You must do nothing to placate me. I do not need your patronage. I am an humble servant of the nation exactly on the same basis as you are, on the terms of absolute equality. I reserve all the rights of a member to myself and, as I am a lover of liberty, I give you the same right to exercise your liberty.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 28-12-1926

187. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*December 27, 1926*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

I have all your love letters. The one about the repugnance against Mussalmans is disturbing. It is the fear of conversion that has caused this repugnance.

You are doing the right thing there. Watch everything. Mend where you can. Be still, where you are helpless. You have gone there

[1] From the postmark

only as a learner. Your *business* is to finish your Hindi. You will teach and reform only by the way. You will not therefore become a participator in anything that goes on in your school which the Gurukul is for you, even as I cannot be a participator in the sins of a drunkard who may teach me how to shave. But this is not to criticize anything you have hitherto done. This is merely to assure you that you are doing quite well.

Why apologize about the expenses? We do want to be stingy. But we do not want to deny ourselves the things we need for keeping us fit for service. You know that you can get what funds you need from Mr. Gadodia.

Rita is *aritha* the soap-nut.

You will see many more Miss Rams. May your contact open their eyes. Raisina[1] is all you describe it to be and much worse. It is built with blood money. Instead of the blood circulating down to the feet, it is all being sucked by the head. Presently there will be meningitis and—!

Here the scenery is beautiful. Our hut is on the edge of the bank of the mighty Brahmaputra. It is damp and cold; very windy. But the weather is most bracing if one would take vigorous exercise. I generally walk to the Congress tent—one mile and a little over.

I leave tomorrow for Calcutta where I expect to be for four days.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5193. Courtesy: Mirabehn

188. SPEECH AT CONGRESS SESSION, GAUHATI [2]

December 28, 1926

You are seeking to inculcate a spirit of complete independence among those who are divided amongst themselves. A wise man does not attempt to take a bigger bite than he can digest. Supposing complete independence was something infinitely superior to swaraj, even then I suggest to you to be patient and attain what is possible at the present moment and then mount further steps. One step is now

[1] New Delhi

[2] Gandhiji was speaking on the Independence Resolution in the Subjects Committee.

enough for me, but coming to the rock-bottom, I suggest to you that swaraj includes complete independence, and because it included this, Mr. Jinnah and Pandit Malaviya resisted it, and Mr. Jinnah even went out. We want to make it absolutely clear that we want to remain within the Empire if it may be possible. Why do you lose all faith in human nature and in yourself? Why do you lose faith in your ability to bend down the haughtiness of the Englishmen and make them serve you? If you have repugnance against the white skin, do you want to drive away every Englishman and not keep any, even for teaching you English? Take the instance of South Africa; there is that haughty nation the Dutch Boer. Even they do not bring in such a resolution. General Hertzog has returned from London completely converted. He knows, if he wants to declare independence today he can get it. I shall not be satisfied with any constitution that we may get from the British Parliament unless it leaves that power with us also. So that if we choose to declare independence we could do so. ("Hear, hear.") Do not impair the effect that the word carries. Do not limit its interpretation. Who knows somebody may give us a still better definition. The potency of the word increases because it is undefined and is, I would say, undefinable.

Mahatma Gandhi at this stage made a statement about his views confidently on the Nabha question in the light of the fact that the Congress should not take up questions concerning Indian States. He wanted this question to be reopened and also felt that the currency issue was so important from the point of view of the masses that he was surprised to hear that last night [Subjects] Committee dismissed it summarily.[1]

The Searchlight, 2-1-1927

189. SPEECH AT CONGRESS SESSION, GAUHATI [2]

December 28, 1926

Mahatma Gandhi congratulated Mr. Banerjee on this sentiment.[3] They should not mind the galaxy of Mahatmas throughout the length and breadth of the country. It was better to get out of their clutches (laughter).

But I am not a Mahatma. I am an humble servant of the nation and you won't easily get out of my clutches (laughter). Because I do

[1] After Gandhiji, Motilal Nehru and Sambamurti spoke.

[2] Gandhiji was speaking for a second time on the Independence Resolution.

[3] Upendranath Banerjee had said that the mere fact that Gandhiji was opposed to the resolution should not be an argument against the resolution.

not yield to the fiery anarchist in my capacity for selfsacrifice, I am never frightened of even the most forward programme; but I would like you to consider and weigh the words from the lips of a man who has seen many a battle in his life and who knows how forward marches can be performed. If you difine the word "swaraj" today, you will be simply limiting its potency. I may say complete indepen-dence is included in the word 'swaraj'. It also includes something else which is repugnant to your sense of self-respect today. I say it does include a close association with the British people on terms of absolute equality. Those to whom this association is unbearable because of the atrocities of the Jallianwala Bagh and because of what has gone on even after the inauguration of the Reforms, I sympathize with them, but I say you are impatient and my advice to you is *festina lente* (hasten slowly).

If this resolution is not withdrawn and is challenged to division and rejected by an overwhelming majority, you will still have before you a most forward programme I have given, but do not delude yourself even with the distant hope that I will lead even you in the Council programme. There is no if about it today. When the spirit within me tells me that I shall go to the battle-ground in the Council, I shall on my knees apply to Panditji to take me into his fold and give me his secretaryship (laughter), but that is not yet. You should not say or think that the time may never come. I have never erased out of my mind the Council programme. Those who have a long memory may recall that, at the special session in Calcutta, I said that they must not think that the Councils might never be considered by us, but if I went to the Council or sent people to the Council, and Lord Reading asked me, 'You come to my Council,' I would say, 'Yes, but do these things and I come.' Just as I accepted the Champaran Commission of enquiry, I am quite capable of accepting office in the Council and capable of becoming an Executive Councillor (laughter), but when I become an Executive Councillor you may depend upon me that swaraj has come (laughter) and Mr. Sambamurti's complete independence also.

I have acquired and achieved my own personal independence. Now I want every Indian to acquire that independence and the sum-total of that is complete independence. I can tell you negatively that, until the All-India Congress Committee really becomes the working body of the men determined to complete the work, when India has

really completed one of its promises, namely, the boycott of foreign cloth, when you have very nearly achieved the boycott of foreign cloth, you will find me going to Pandit Motilal and saying, 'Please sir, may I be admitted into your Council party?' But that boycott cannot be achieved unless you really become determined men. I want every one of you to join this Khadi Service. I can give you thirty rupees a month and training, but I will send you to the villages and you achieve the boycott of foreign cloth. Then, you will have me to work the Council programme also.

Today we are not a disciplined body. You put your hand on your heart and say that you are. We do not yield with willing obedience to the Chair that we ought to. We should lift up our Chairman and say, 'Yes, we shall march with you shoulder to shoulder.'

Do you know that threatening letters are being received that now that Swami Shraddhanand has lost his life, some Mussalman should also lose his? There is a postcard which is now in the hands of the Chairman. It is anonymous. There is nothing in it, but the sum-total of these anonymous letters gives us the clue as to where the country is going. Can I have any time for shouldering the Council programme when the atmosphere around us is surcharged?[1] If it is possible for so many of us to cleanse the atmosphere, you will find me giving my attention to the Council programme. Please eliminate me from your mind. If you summarily reject this amendment, you will do so on your own responsibility and its merits without the slightest bargaining and without the slightest mental reservation.[2]

The Searchlight, 2-1-1927

190. SPEECH AT MEETING OF MUNICIPAL BOARD, GAUHATI [3]

December 28, 1926

Mahatmaji, in a brief reply, thanked the Board for the honour done to him and stated that he was very much pleased that spinning and weaving had not yet lost their hold on the people of Assam. He was conscious that even today it was essential for every girl of marriageable age among them to have the knowledge of weaving. He wanted the Gauhati Municipal Board to set an example to other local bodies by introducing teaching of spinning, weaving and Hindi to the boys and girls in primary schools under their control and for this purpose he wanted them to get trained teachers. If Gauhati gave the lead, others would follow.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 30-12-1926

[1] The source has "surfeited".

[2] The amendment was rejected by a large majority.

[3] Gandhiji was presented an address of welcome by the Municipal Board.

191. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS[1]

GAUHATI,
December 28, 1926

He informed the Associated Press representative that his business in the coming year would be to spread the message of the charkha and use of khaddar and also collect funds for the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial, the central factor of which is spread of khaddar.

Forward, 30-12-1926

192. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI H. SHAH

ON WAY TO CALCUTTA,
Wednesday, [*December 29, 1926*][2]

BHAI PUNJABHAI,

I received your letter just when I was getting anxious about you. I cannot think of making any changes right now. You know what you should do. Do not strain yourself too much. Eat only what suits you. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : G. N. 4011

193. ABHOY ASHRAM KHADI WORK

The following report[3] of khadi work done by the Abhoy Ashram, Comilla, for 1925-26 will be read with interest. I would urge the reader to study the reports I am publishing. They prove, as nothing else can, the progress and potentiality of khadi in a cumulative and compelling manner. The reports make not an isolated case nor a case for one province only, but they present cases from almost all the provinces. Those provinces that show nothing or little are the provinces that await workers.'The harvest is, indeed, rich, the labourers

[1] The interview took place before Gandhiji's departure for Calcutta the same day in the afternoon.

[2] From the contents it appears that Gandhiji was on his way to Calcutta on this day, a Wednesday.

[3] Not reproduced here

are few.' The report of the Abhoy Ashram gives one an idea how khadi has gone down in prices. It shows that khadi prices will drop still further as the skill of spinners and weavers increases. The most remarkable fact about this enterprise is that khadi has been self-supporting from the very beginning. The reason is not far to seek. The majority of the members are volunteers and take only a subsistence wage. I would like those who draw up reports to avoid 'about' and 'nearly' whenever they are giving figures. 'About 8,000 spinners' carries but a vague idea. Each centre must be able to give the exact number of spinners, weavers and carders, etc. In a great movement of a universal character, one cannot be too careful, too accurate. The movement depends for its success upon the strictest adherence to truth and purity of character on the part of workers. It has no bounty save the honour, character and sacrifice of its workers. And no movement that has this backing needs any other bounty.

Young India, 30-12-1926

194. SHRADDHANANDJI—THE MARTYR

The expected has happened. Swami Shraddhanandji passed a day or two at the Satyagraha Ashram at Sabarmati, now about six months ago, and told me, in the course of his conversations, that he often received letters threatening his life. Where is the reformer who has not a price put upon his head? There was, therefore, nothing untoward in his getting the letters. And there is nothing untoward in the assassination having taken place.

Swamiji was a reformer, he was a man of action, not of words. His was a living belief. He had suffered for it. He was bravery personified. He never quailed before danger. He was a warrior. And a warrior loves to die, not on a sick-bed, but on the battlefield.

Shraddhanandji became seriously ill about a month ago. Dr. Ansari was, as his physician, giving him all the loving attention he was capable of giving. The telegram I received from his son, Indra, in reply to my inquiry[1] at the beginning of month, was that he was better and that he wanted my 'love and prayer' both of which he had before the asking.

God had willed for him a martyr's death and so, though he was still on the sick-bed, he died at the hands of an assassin who had asked to be admitted to the Swamiji's presence for the purpose of holding a

[1] This communication is not available.

religious discourse on Islam, who was admitted at the Swamiji's instance, and who, under pretence of wanting water to quench his thirst, had Swamiji's faithful servant, Dharam Singh, sent out to fetch water, and who, in the absence of the servant, deposited two death wounds in the patient's breast, as he was lying in his bed. We have not the last words of the Swamiji, but if I knew him at all, I have no doubt that he prayed to his God to forgive him who knew not that he was doing anything wrong. In the language of the *Gita*, therefore,'Happy the warrior who achieves such a blessed death'.

Death is at any time blessed, but it is twice blessed for a warrior who dies for his cause, i.e., truth. Death is no fiend, he is the truest of friends. He delivers us from agony. He helps us against ourselves. He ever gives us new chances, new hopes. He is like sleep, a sweet restorer. Yet it is customary to mourn when a friend dies. The custom has no operation when the death is that of a martyr. I cannot, therefore, mourn over this death. He and his are to be envied. For though Shraddhanandji is dead, he is yet living. He is living in a truer sense than when he moved about in our midst in his giant body. The family in which he was born, the nation to which he belonged are to be congratulated upon so glorious a death as this. He lived a hero. He has died a hero.

But there is another side to the shield. I regard myself as a friend of the Mussalmans. They are my blood-brothers. Their wrongs are my wrongs. I share their sorrows and their joys. Any evil deed done by a Mussalman hurts me just as much as that done by a Hindu. This foul deed has been done by one who bears a Mussalman name. As a friend of the Mussalmans, therefore, I deeply regret the event. The joy of the death is thus tempered by the sorrow that an erring, misguided brother has been the cause of it. Martyrdom can, therefore, never be wished for. It becomes a thing of joy only when it comes unsought. We may not gloat over the errors of the least of our fellows.

But the fact is that an error often refuses to become patent until it becomes atrocious. It dies only after being completely disgraced.

This tragedy has a national importance. It draws pointed attention to an evil that is eating into the vitals of the nation. Both Hindus and Mussalmans have the choice before them. We are both on our trial.

Hindus may, by being resentful, disgrace Hinduism and postpone the unity that must come. They can by self-restraint show themselves to be worthy of the message of the Upanishads and of Yudhishthira who was the embodiment of forgiveness. Let us not

ascribe the crime of an individual to a whole community. Let us not harbour the spirit of retaliation. Let us not think of the wrong as done by a Mussalman against a Hindu, but of an erring brother against a hero.

Mussalmans have an ordeal to pass through. There can be no doubt that they are too free with the knife and the pistol. The sword is no emblem of Islam. But Islam was born in an environment where the sword was and still remains the supreme law. The message of Jesus has proved ineffective because the environment was unready to receive it. So with the message of the Prophet. The sword is yet too much in evidence among Mussalmans. It must be sheathed if Islam is to be what it means—peace. There is danger of Mussalmans secretly endorsing the mad deed. It will be a calamity for them and the world. For ours is after all a world problem. Reliance upon the sword is wholly inconsistent with reliance upon God. There should be, on their part, unequivocal mass condemnation of the atrocity.

I wish to plead for Abdul Rashid. I do not know who he is. It does not matter to me what prompted the deed. The fault is ours. The newspaper man has become a walking plague. He spreads the contagion of lies and calumnies. He exhausts the foul vocabulary of his dialect, and injects his virus into the unsuspecting, and often receptive minds of his readers. Leaders 'intoxicated with the exuberance of their own language' have not known to put a curb upon their tongues or pens. Secret and insidious propaganda has done its dark and horrible work, unchecked and unabashed. It is, therefore, we the educated and the semi-educated class that are responsible for the hot fever which possessed Abdul Rashid.

It is unnecessary to discriminate and apportion the blame between the rival parties. Where both are to blame, who can arbitrate with golden scales and fix the exact ratio of blame? It is no part of self-defence to tell lies or exaggerate.

It is too much to hope, but Swamiji was great enough to warrant the hope that his blood may wash us of our guilt, cleanse our hearts and cement these two mighty divisions of the human family.

I must deal with the life of Swamiji as I knew him in the next issue of *Young India*.

Young India, 30-12-1926

195. COMPARISON IN UNTOUCHABILITY

During my stay in Wardha, I had occasion to visit the untouchable quarters. The inmates seemed happy but the awakening that has come into being amongst them has made them dissatisfied with the progress of the campaign against the curse of untouchability. The resent the fact that they are still being debarred from the use of temples, wells and public schools in general. They cannot, they will not, understand that progress is 'lame' and, therefore, tantalizingly slow. They can see no reason, there is none, for the insufferable disabilities under which they are labouring.

Two days after this interesting visit I discovered that in Wardha, thanks to the efforts of Jamnalalji, they were better off than anywhere else. They have several public wells open to them. They were freely admitted to the Municipal schools. As orphans they had the same facilities as the others. They had free use of public water-taps. And a continuous attempt was being made to break down completely the wall of prejudice against them.

About the same time that I was having experiences of the thought-current of the untouchable brethren, I had to rehearse to myself the incidents of the untouchability of South Africa. I had to do so in view of the Round Table Conference that is deliberating there at present. We who are responsible for Indian untouchability are ourselves victims of it in South Africa. It is a case over again of 'the biter bitten'. We have sown the wind in India, we are reaping the whirlwind in South Africa.

The Conference is now sitting to consider whether there is a way out. Andrews is making herculean efforts to bring about a happy result. He has mobilized the purest forces of South Africa in favour of the cause.

Let us, however, see the difference between the two untouchabilities. The Indian is withering. The axe has been laid at its root. Enlightened public opinion is against it. No one whose opinion carries any weight defends it. The chains that bind the 'untouchables' are daily being broken. Law does not countenance it. What there is of it is all due to the persistence of custom. Customs die hard, they long survive the withdrawal of legal sanction, especially if they are ancient. The disappearance of Indian untouchability is now purely a question of time.

The South African species on the other hand is growing into a hardy tree. It is being daily armed with fresh legal sanctions. The legal

disabilities of the Indian untouchables of South Africa have grown with every sitting of the Union Parliament since 1915 in spite of the final settlement of 1914. It is spreading in other parts of the British Empire, as was made plain by the Kenya letter printed last week in these columns.

It is against this growing evil that Andrews is fighting almost single-handed in South Africa. Let us hope that his efforts will be crowned with success.

But the very best way of dealing with the evil no doubt is to rid ourselves of it in India. The members of the Union Deputation[1] were heard to say more than once that it would be time for Indians to agitate for the removal of the bar in South Africa when they had got rid of it in India. No doubt they forgot or did not know that with us here, there was no legislative bar against the untouchables. But it would ill become us to advance an argument of that nature when we are seeking justice. There is a fine legal maxim which is applicable to our case. Those who seek justice must come with clean hands. The best case therefore that we can prepare against South African untouchability is to put our own house in order. Till then, I suppose, we will have to be content with what palliatives the Round Table Conference secures for us.

There is the other side to the question. The untouchables owe something to themselves and to India. But I must deal with this phase of the question in another article.

Young, India, 30-12-1926

196. NOTES

SIR HABIBULLA DEPUTATION

Mr. C. F. Andrews cables.

> Advisable delegation stay till February to tide over provincial election and keep atmosphere calm.

I do hope that it would be possible for Lord Irwin to comply with Mr. Andrews' advice and permit the Deputation to stay in South Africa till the elections are over. The elections in South Africa, as everywhere else, raise not the best thoughts but the worst passions and create bad blood. There is no doubt that the Deputation's will be a restraining influence. But that, of course, from a South African point of view, may be the best reason for sending the Deputation away

[1] The Parliamentary deputation from South Africa headed by F.W. Beyers, which arrived in India on September 18, 1926, on a three weeks' visit at the invitation of the Government of India

before the elections begin. The candidates may resent the courteous curb that the presence of the Deputation must impose upon a free flow of their eloquence.

"HAPPY DESPATCH"?

The esteemed correspondent whose letter evoked the article "The Greatest Good of All"[1] (*Young India*, 9-12-1926) writes:

> Of the three cases, you have dealt only with the first that of Dr. Blazer and expressed no opinion no the merits of the other two—the Paris case and the Danish law. I and many others of your readers, I am sure, would be grateful if you could enlighten us as to how you would judge these matters also from your own ethical standpoint.

The cases referred to are:

> At about the same time last year I remember I read about the Paris case in which an actress shot and killed her lover at his own importunate request, as he was suffering excruciating pain from a disease from which there was no hope of recovery. The actress was tried for manslaughter, but acquitted on the jury's verdict that no crime had been committed in view of the circumstances. Though there appears to be no law in France to justify such a verdict, I have read that in Denmark there has been actually a law passed making it no crime for certain authorized persons in cases like the above to put an end to a human life with 'happy despatch'.

In my opinion, such killing, if it is done *bona fide*, will certainly not count as *himsa* as understood and defined by me. But I could not take it upon my shoulders to justify such action on the part of a third party, as I would never have sufficient material to judge such a case. The defence will rest solely upon the intention. And since no one but God is the infallible judge of intentions, everyone must act on his own responsibility and take all the consequences. It follows, therefore, that the Danish law cannot be defended. And I should hold it to be most dangerous to justify any act of killing on the ground of the desire of the victim to be killed. There are many cases in which a man may for the moment, being overwhelmed with pain, desire to be killed rather than live in agony. But he would be most grateful upon recovery to know that his wish was not complied with. The better thing would, in my opinion, be boldly to put an end to a life which we may absolutely know to be past saving. Such a case would be that of a comrade on the battle-field who has received a fatal wound and who has no possibility of receiving any medical aid. In this case, it will not be his wish that would determine the act of killing but the certain knowledge of a lingering death in utter helplessness and without hope even of loving nursing. For it is assumed that the soldier who ends the agony by

[1] *Vide* "The Greatest Good of All", 9-12-1926.

killing is not able even to nurse his wounded comrade.

CONTROL OF EVIL THOUGHTS

A correspondent sends me an essay in support of the view propounded in these columns in the series of articles "Towards Moral Bankruptcy". There is nothing new in it, but it contains a quotation from Buddha's teaching which should help those who are trying to control evil thoughts. Here is the passage:

> When by reason of a phase of mind, there arise in a brother bad and wrong thoughts associated with appetite, hatred and delusion, then he should divert his mind from that to another phase associated with what is right. If they still arise, then he should study the perils they entail, marking how wrong and depraved such thoughts are and how they ripen into ill. If they still keep on rising, he should ignore them and not let his mind dwell on them. And if they still continue, he must be think him how to allay all these modes and fashions of thoughts. As he does so, these thoughts will pass away and disappear, so that his heart stands firm, is steadfast, is focussed and concentrated. And lastly, if, allay as he may, these thoughts continue to rise, then with his teeth clenched and with his tongue pressed against his palate, he should by sheer force of mind, restrain, coerce and dominate his heart. As he does so these thoughts will pass away and disappear. He will think only such thoughts as he wishes and not those he wishes not to think.

Young India, 30-12-1926

197. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CALCUTTA [1]

December 31,1926

Mahatmaji, addressing the gathering in Hindi, said that Swami Shraddhanand's death was not an easy thing. It was not the death on an ordinary man. The heroes died not the death of an ordinary man. Swamiji was immortal by sacrificing his life for the cause of Hindu religion. They had assembled there to perform some "tarpan" for the memory of the late Swami. A memorial fund had been opened and he hoped that everybody would contribute his mite to it. They had chalked out a proposal that ten lakhs of rupees would be raised for the memorial fund half of which would be spent for untouchability work and half for *shuddhi* and *sangathan*. Swamiji had done much for the Hindu religion and he was one of the foremost religious workers. Swamiji, continued Mahatma Gandhi, had no differences with him in respect of removing untouchability. To speak the truth, the late Swamiji lived for the untouchables and if they meant to do proper honour to his memory, they could only do it by taking up the mission of Swami Shraddhanand's life.

Speaking on *shuddhi* and *sangathan* Mahatmaji said that the mission taken up by the late Swami was on the proper way. Every religion had a legitimate right of conversion and self-organization so long as it was not based on force. Swami

[1] The meeting was held at Maheshwari Bhavan, Barrabazar, to pay tribute to Swami Shraddhanand's memory and to collect funds for *shuddhi* and *sang a than* movement. Madan Mohan Malaviya also spoke on the occasion.

Shraddhanand was not ever for forcibly converting anybody and he could claim to know Swamiji fully well.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 1-1-1927

198. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Monday [*December 1926*][1]

I have your two letters. It is good that you have started taking your meals in the common mess.

Please let me know about Keshu's[2] condition. Nobody can manufacture or sell the Ramchandra lift. Have you renewed the registration of its patent? If you received any communication from the Patents Office, please pay up the arrears. We can pay Best & Co. only after the formalities about the patent are completed, when we start selling the lifts.

Kakasaheb should prepare a report of the prayer for South Africa and sent it to Andrews. I have no more time to write; it is about 10 p.m.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7749. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chowdhari

199. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

[*1926*][3]

CHI. MANI,

I got your letter. Well, if unmarried girls fall ill, to whom shall I complain about it? It is as if the sea had caught fire. We should master the art of preserving good health if only for being able to serve others. I think that all of you must use mosquitonets at night as a matter of course even as you wear clothes. For the rest, read my letter to the Ashram Children.

I hope that by the time you get this letter you will have completely recovered from your illness.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 37

[1] December 19, 1926 was observed as a day of prayer for success of the Round Table Conference in South Africa. Reference in the letter to this day suggests that the letter was written sometime in December.

[2] Son of the addressee

[3] As in the source

200. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Silence Day [*1926*][1]

CHI. MANI,

I have not heard from you lately. I hope you are quite well now. Your illnesses will become fewer as you cease worrying needlessly and your mind becomes trusting like a little child's. You should understand the meaning of "trusting". It means that one with such a mind never takes offence, nor takes notice of anyone's misconduct nor sees wrong anywhere. This is a noble state of mind. Let me tell you straightway that I for my part have not attained it. I wish to reach it, but I am still far away from it. It is reached earlier by men and women who observe inviolate *brahmacharya*. I have known such people. Andrews has nearly reached it. Men who look upon him as a fool are fools themselves. You must cultivate such a trusting nature.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 38

201. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Silence Day [*1926*][2]

CHI. MANI,

I got your letter. I heard the news from father too. I do not write more about [your] illness, for I hope to meet you on Saturday at the latest. But you should get well and strong immediately.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 39

[1]As in the printed source

[2] *Ibid*

202. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Silence Day [*1926*][1]

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. Upon a chance remark by me, Mahadev [Desai] showed me your letter to him without waiting to get your permission. No one should expect Mahadev to keep anything from me. That is beyond his power. Once we have formed a habit, we are unable to do anything different. This virtue is worth cultivating so far as good habits are concerned. One who sincerely meditates over non-violence becomes in the end incapable of violence, not in deed but in thought. Thought is the father of action. When thought disappears, action automatically becomes impossible.

What if separation from you has been as painful to me as separation from me is to you? You chose what was for your good, and I chose what was good for me. In acting thus lies your welfare, mine and the world's. Education should enable us to find our happiness in our good. If, therefore, you think that living in the Ashram is good for you, you should feel happy in doing so. And in this do not deceive yourself or me. You may be sure that the moment you do not like to stay in the Ashram, I shall willingly let you go elsewhere. Writeto me without reserve. Never mind if I do not understand you or lecture to you in reply. Learn to bear with the lectures of seniors.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 40

203. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Monday [*1926*][2]

CHI. MANI,

I got your letter. You did well to go to Ahmedabad city at the time of uncle's (Vithalbhai's)[3] visit.

Manu[4] and Manilal[5] can be brought round only with patience.

[1] As in the printed source

[2] As in the printed source

[3] Vithalbhai Patel visited Ahmedabad after his election as President of the Central Legislative Assembly.

[4] Grand-daughter of Gandhiji

[5] One of the Ashram students

Ba again said she would start on Sunday. She must reach [Sabarmati] on Wednesday at the latest.

I am writing this just before retiring to bed. So I will not write more.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 41

204. LETTER TO LAKSHMI [1]

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
[*1926*][2]

CHI. LAKSHMI,

This time, it may be said, your letter was late. Your handwriting has improved. There should not be two kinds of writing in one letter. There is nothing to worry if you are inclined to play. Children are bound to be playful. But they should have the same heart for work too. Those children whose mind is always engrossed in play can't help lying some time or other. Now you will be entering your 13th year. It is not so young an age. You should get from here new clothes if those you are using wear out. If they can be stitched there, that is, if Danibehn knows how to sew, khadi can be sent from here; but if she is unable to do so, the clothes can be made here and sent to you. Take a vow to do some good deed on your birthday.

Rukhi[3] and Anandi[4] are ill. Both have fever. I hope they will be all right in two or three days.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 19627

[1] Daughter of Dudabhai; a Harijan inmate of the Ashram

[2] The addressee was born in 1914. Reference to her 13th birthday suggests that letter was written in 1926.

[3] Daughter of Maganlal Gandhi

[4] Daughter of Lakshmidas Asar

205. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Friday [*1926*][1]

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

After you wrote about the fever, there has been no letter from you; I trust there is nothing to worry about. I wish you to recover the strength you have lost even if you have to try hard. Can you disentangle yourself from administration till you completely regain strength? I may be tempted to come to Trapaj if you take complete rest and make a vow to get back your full strength. If I do so, I would place you in the custody of a guard. Will an unrestricted authority tolerate this restriction?

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3200; also G.N. 5886. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

206. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Saturday [*1926*][2]

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I have your letter. Looking at your meagre weight, you cannot be said to have really recovered. Nor do you seem to have improved much in Abu. Your acceptance of my condition for coming to Trapaj is lukewarm. Such acceptance will not tempt me to pay the visit. The weather here at present is not inviting to an ailing man. The afternoons are very sultry. The sky is overcast; and it would not rain. In such weather even otherwise healthy people may fall ill. Why not take your family and go to Panchgani? Of course, I do wish you to spend a few days at Panchgani.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati:C.W. 3201. Courtesy:Mahesh Pattani

[1] Reference in the letter to the addressee's indifferent state of health and his stay at Trapaj suggests this year.

[2] Year inferred from contents; *vide* preceding item.

207. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Silence Day [*1926*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I understand that the time of the prayer is not going to be changed. After gaining some more experience, if you want to change it, do so. Do not think about my view. Even if the time is not changed, the time for goingto bed should be fixed. We are all guilty in this regard. Under some pretext or other, we do not go to bed early. I believe our good lies in our success in getting over this weakness. As long as we do not overcome it, no time of the morning prayer will suit us. The morning prayer should be discontinued if everyone believes that this weakness cannot be overcome. It would be undesirable to leave the decision to individuals, but as long as we do not observe the time for going to bed, we cannot fix the time for the morning prayer.

I do not believe that the timing of the prayer is the cause of illness. All the malaria patients must use mosquito-nets. They should not bathe in cold water. It is enough if they rub clean the body with a dry towel or use a towel dipped in hot water. There is no need to believe that one has bathed only when one has poured water over his head.

There is no time to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Everyone should read this letter.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32892

208. TALKS TO ASHRAM WOMEN [2]

[*1926*]

O Govinda, O Krishna residing in Dwarka, O beloved of all Gopis, how is it that you do not know that I am oppressed by the Kauravas, i.e., wicked passions?

O Lord, O husband of the Goddess of Beauty, O Lord of Vraja, the destroyer of all distresses, O Janardana, rescue me submerged in the ocean of the Kauravas.

O Krishna, Krishna, O great sage, Soul of the universe, Creator of the

[1] From the contents; *vide* "Telegram to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 6-12-1926.

[2] Notes taken by Manibehn Patel at Gandhiji's morning prayer meetings for women during 1926

universe, O Govinda, save me who seek your help, drooping in the midst of the Kurus.

My ideal is this: A man should remain man and yet should become woman; similarly a woman should remain woman and yet become man. This means that man should cultivate the gentleness and the discrimination of woman; and woman should cast off her timidity and become brave and courageous.

It is said that women are jealous, but this does not mean that men are free from this failing or that all women are jealous. Women have to stay indoors for all the twenty-four hours and therefore their jealousy becomes more conspicuous. That is all.

* * *

My patience in teaching you will be endless. It will end only when your readiness to learn ends.

* * *

Both man and woman can become fearless. Man thinks that he can be fearless, but it is not always true; similarly woman thinks she is weak and allows herself to be called so; this too is not right. Women have no need at all for fear. I will tell you what I heard about Mirabai the day before yesterday. Mirabai went to Vrindavan and knocked at the door of a sadhu. The sadhu replied from inside that he never looked at a woman. Mirabai asked him, "Who are you? I know only one man, and that is Krishna." On hearing this, the sadhu opened the door, fell at the feet of Mirabai and said, "You have opened my eyes today. I have been saved from an abyss."

* * *

Man and woman are characterized by fear as long as both are subject to passions.

Draupadi showed as great a strength as Yudhishthira did.

Draupadi had five husbands at one time and yet has been called 'chaste'. This is because in that age, just as a man could marry several wives, a woman (in certain regions) could marry several husbands. The code of marriage changes with time and place.

But from another point of view, Draupadi is a symbol of the mind. And the five Pandavas are the five senses brought under its control. And it is indeed desirable that they are so controlled. Since all the five senses were under the control of the mind and had become refined, the mind (Draupadi) can be said to have wedded the five senses (Pandavas).

The strength which Draupadi showed was immense. Even Bhima and the Dharmaraja Yudhishthira were afraid of her.

While in jail, as I read the prayer of Draupadi to Krishna at this time, as given in the *Mahabharata*, I wept bitterly.

To my mind, this prayer of Draupadi has extraordinary strength in it. Countless men in North India recite these verses.

The power of words too increases or decreases in proportion to the penance underlying them. What is there in the word ‘ ’? It is simply made up of three syllables •, © and ◊. And yet its value lies in the penance associated with it. When there is greater penance behind the word, its value becomes greater. The same is the case with Draupadi. She may even be regarded as an imaginary character created by Vyasa. Such a woman may or may not have existed. But the great strength of Vyasa’s penance and the recitation by crores of people of the prayers put into Draupadi’s mouth by him have raised the value of that prayer.

‘Govinda’ means the master of the senses; by Gopis are meant the thousands of sense-organs. *Gopijanapriya* means one who is the beloved of the masses or, say, of the weak. Draupadi was surrounded by the Kauravas. The Kauravas are our evil desires. Draupadi cries, “O Keshava, how is it that you do not know me ?” It is the cry of the distressed, the voice of the aggrieved. Do not we all have evil desires? When are we free from passions? Draupadi says that she has been surrounded by Kauravas. Here ‘Kauravas’ may also mean wicked persons. But we are overpowered even more by our evil desires than by wicked persons. So it is better to interpret ‘Kauravas’ to mean evil desires.

Draupadi is a servant of God and as such she has the right even to quarrel with Him. She cries, “Oh Master, Oh Lord, Oh Ramanath, i.e., Lakshmipati, i.e., Lord of the World, He who gives salvation, He who brings about self-realization, Vrajnath, i.e., Lord of the Universe, Artinashana, i.e., Dispeller of grief, I am drowning in a sea of Kauravas, i.e., I am sinking in a multitude of desires; I am full of wicked passions. Save me.”

Draupadi repeats the call “Krishna, Krishna”. When a person is either in great joy or in great misery, he calls out to God twice. Draupadi says, “I come to you for refuge; save me; I am beset with evil passions, and have become weak; my limbs are giving way. Save me.”

In Bombay there is a woman named Janakibai. In 1915 when I was staying with Revashankarbhai she came to see me. She boasted a great deal about herself. At that time I did not believe her. Then when I went to Dwarka, she also was there. I made particular inquiries in regard to her and found that she moved quite freely among the most wicked of men. Her idea was that she should be able to preserve her

chastity even while living in the midst of the worst men. It so happens that no one even in anger addresses her with a disrespectful 'thou'. She moves amongst them like a lioness.

* * *

We are helpless like Draupadi, because we are all full of impurities and evil desires. Our fear of serpents and such like is a proof of our weakness. I am regarded as the highest in the Ashram; even then I, too, feel afraid. It means that I am also more helpless than Draupadi.

Dwarka means the whole world, or we ourselves, not the dirty little town near Porbandar in Kathiawar.

* * *

What can women have done that even men like Tulsidas have used insulting epithets for them? Whether it was the fault of Tulsidas or of the times, the blemish is nevertheless there.

The ancient laws were made by seers who were men. The women's experience, therefore, is not represented in them. Strictly speaking, as between man and woman, neither should be regarded as superior or inferior. The place and functions of both are different, and God has defined both.

* * *

Only the self can raise the self; the self is the help of the self. Only women can raise women. This requires *tapascharya* and hard work. It is true that women are more capable of it than men; but the *tapascharya* must be intelligent. Today women merely toil on in a helpless condition like drudges.

It may be agreed that no one can save woman except herself. But it may be asked, 'Can she be self-supporting ?' My heart says that she can. If she learns satyagraha, she can be perfectly independent and self-supporting. She will not have to feel dependent upon anyone. This does not mean that she shall not take any help from others. She will certainly. But if such help be not forthcoming she will not feel destitute. If we are detached, even while we use the articles which we receive, we are self-dependent. In such a state, even though receiving help from all the world we in fact never become dependent on anyone. And if help were refused, we would say, it was good that it was not given, and would not get angry, nor blame anyone. This is called satyagraha. It is not enough merely to be convinced that we should be fearless. We should become fearless at heart. Casting off fear does not mean that we should not care for the world's opinion.

One should give up the idea that one is helpless. God is the help of all. It is possible to throw the blame for the present sorry condition

of women on their husbands. But women should think how best they can themselves cast off their own weakness.

* * *

There can be only one prayer for us all. If we offer this prayer daily, understanding it properly, it will get embedded in our minds. Keshava (God) is always with us. He is not in some Dwarka. That is only the language of the poet. Draupadi forgot that Keshava was with her. He clothed her body again and again remaining beside her. Whenever evil thoughts or evil desires spring in our mind, we should say to ourselves:oh, why do such thoughts come to me? We should then think of these verses of prayer.

* * *

This[1] is not a mere political book. I have used the language of politics, but I have really tried to offer a glimpse of dharma. What is the meaning of 'Hind Swaraj'? It means rule of dharma or *Rama-rajya*. I have addressed as many meetings of women as of men. At women's meetings I have always used the word *Ramarajya* in place of swaraj.

This book is the gist of my thinking for several years. Just as one cannot help speaking out when one's heart is full, so also I have been unable to restrain myself from writing the book since my heart was full. The book is meant mainly for the illiterate masses.

* * *

Whatever character we have inherited from our parents is our real inheritance. It may be said to be our spiritual inheritance, and it is our duty to add to it. If a father leaves an inheritance of a lac of rupees and the son increases it to a million and then says "What kind of man my father was who collected only a lac and how clever I am that I amassed a million", he is a wicked son; there is pride in what he says. We do not wish to add to money inherited from our parents, but to character, to our spiritual inheritance, and we should not feel proud about it, for spiritual inheritance is not possible without humility.

* * *

In abstaining from a thing we have not been used to from birth—for example, meat-eating—we make no sacrifice. Such a thing is quite natural for us, and we perform no heroic act thereby.

* * *

Man's beauty is in his character, that of a beast in its body. In the case of a cow, for instance, we may say how good it is because of its skin, or hair, or feet, or horns; in the case of a man, on the other

[1] *Hind Swaraj*

hand, we do not say that he is good because he is five feet and a half, or bad because he is four feet and a half, or better if he is an inch more than five feet and a half. Being good or bad in the case of man lies in his heart, not in his body or even in his accumulated wealth. Here in the Ashram, we have regarded it our dharma to build up the virtues of the heart. We eat and drink, and construct buildings with sand and mortar. That is because we have to do these things. We have not despised mud huts, we would not be ashamed to live in one but we should indeed feel ashamed to live in luxury. We should hang our heads in shame if we add to our wealth. Indeed, we may possess wealth for service; we have to accumulate such wealth, much against our will. But some people accumulate wealth regarding greed as their religion. This is not proper. In proportion as we make our outer life more and more elaborate, we harm our moral progress, and we injure our dharma.

* * *

Our merchants earn crores of rupees in the markets of Bombay. That is no cause for delight to us. It is rather a matter for regret. Because when a Bombay merchant earns five crores by way of brokerage, the Britisher gets ninety-five crores and that too he takes away from the country through bleeding the poor man white. We do not realize this, because after all it takes time to bleed a nation of thirty-three crores of people.

* * *

If a labourer does all his work dedicating it to God, then thereby he can attain self-realization. Self-realization means purity of self. Strictly speaking, only those who do bodily labour get self-realization; because 'God is the strength of the weak'. By 'weak' is not meant 'weak in body', though for them also their strength is God—but we should take it to mean weak in means and materials. The labourer must cultivate humility, for mere developing of intelligence may lead to the development of an *asuri* intelligence. By doing merely intellectual work, we develop *asuri* tendencies. It is, therefore, that the *Gita* says that one who eats without labour eats stolen food. Humility is inherent in labour. And that is why it is karmayoga or activity that leads to salvation. Doing physical work simply for wages is no karmayoga, since the idea is simply to earn money. Cleaning of latrines for earning money is no *yajna* (sacrifice). But the same work if done by way of service, for the sake of sanitation and for the good of others, becomes *yajna*. One who does bodily labour out of a spirit of service, in all humility and for self-realization, gets self-realization.

Such a one should never feel reluctant to work. He should be ever awake.

* * *

How can the pot call the kettle black when both are of practically the same colour? In the same way what can man say to woman or how can he criticize her? If numerous suspicions, doubts, passions and fears characterize women, they exist also in men. Some pundits say that woman cannot attain salvation. But as I see it, that is not so. The *Vaishnavas* believe that there has not been a greater devotee than Mirabai. My view is that if Mirabai cannot get salvation, no man can ever get it.

* * *

The farmer sleeps in the field. Are you or the British officer ever likely to sleep there? But who cares for the poor man's feelings? What joy does he get out of life? He has to work in the field from early morning. So he also spreads his bed there. He may die of snake-bite. But the farmer leads such a life by compulsion. If it is at all called sacrifice on his part, it is sacrifice forced on him. It is not as though he refused to travel by train; if someone provided him the opportunity, he would travel. But if he leads his particular kind of life in full knowledge of it, his life would indeed be blessed. Some sages lead a life like this farmer, or like Jada Bharat. But in their case they have taken to such life purposely.

* * *

I would certainly worship an idol made of clay, if thereby my mind becomes lighter. If my life becomes fruitful, then only the worship of young Krishna's idol has meaning. The stone is no God; but God resides in the stone. If I besmear the idol with sandal paste, make an offering of rice, and pray to it for strength to cut off so many heads, one of you should throw the idol into a well, or break it into pieces.

* * *

If we wish to develop in us the capacity to look on all with an equal eye, we should aim at getting only what the rest of the world gets. Thus if the whole world gets milk, we may also have it. We may pray to God and say, "O God, if you wish me to have milk, give it first to the rest of the world." But who can pray thus? Only he who has so much sympathy for others and who labours for their good. Even if we cannot practise this principle, we must at least understandand appreciate it. For the present, our only prayer to God should be that since we are fallen so low He may accept whatever little we do. We may not progress in this direction but He should give us

strength to lessen our *parigraha*. If we repent of our sins, they will not increase further. We should not keep anything with us thinking it belongs to us, but should strive to give up as much of our *parigraha* as we can.

* * *

If man needs the help of the whole world before he can follow truth and non-violence, then he would indeed become dependent. But God has arranged things so beautifully, that even if the whole world is against him, he can still follow truth and non-violence himself. If we do not wish to quarrel, the other person can certainly not quarrel with us. In the end he will get tired and will be quiet. On the other hand, if we become angry, we increase anger. It is like adding fuel to the fire.

* * *

How can he rise, in whose mind there is never any problem?

* * *

From the fact that . . .[1] committed suicide, we should learn that we should not allow sorrow or troubles to prey constantly upon our minds. We should not brood over them. If we have felt hurt by someone, we should tell him so straightway. Then the pain will not remain in our hearts. Even brooding sorrowfully within oneself is a kind of suicide.

Self-condemnation is desirable to some degree. In a way it is good to remain dissatisfied with oneself. If a man's dissatisfaction is within limits he will rise. But if he always needlessly goes on finding fault with himself and says, he has not been able to do this or that, then he will really not be able to do anything and will become a fool. We should at the same time be contented and discontented. Then only can we rise.

The body is sometimes called a *ratnachintamani*. If we remain devoted to God, it would really prove to be so. But to become wholly devoted to God, we have to control the body.

Man has to move about out of doors. His work is outside the house. So he does not quickly become despondent. But woman has to stay all the time inside the house. So she is lonely and falls an easy prey to despondency. If she finds another woman to talk to, she becomes so talkative that she fails to discriminate between what she should say and what she should not. Being always in the house she develops such defects. Of course, in a sense such loneliness is desirable. It saves her from many temptations. But it is fruitful only if we learn to turn our eyes inward, search our hearts, and become

[1] Name omitted in the source

introspective.

* * *

Suppose there is a woman who is entirely illiterate yet remains devoted to her duties. She does not touch even a blade of grass that does not belong to her. She does not steal even in her dreams. If you ask her what the *Bhagavata* is, she stares you in the face. But she loves every human being as though she were the mother of all mankind.

Suppose there is another woman, who knows everything, has all the Upanishads by heart, whose pronunciation is excellent, but who steals, lies, is clever in making others work for her and is adept in almost everything. There is not the slightest doubt that the former is superior to the latter. Of course if she learns reading and writing, she would be better still.

* * *

Of what use is knowledge in which there is no humility or tenderness? Sage Kaushika became angry when a bird eased itself over him. The bird was consumed to ashes by his anger. The sage felt somewhat proud at the power of his penance. He than went to a house as a guest. The lady of the house was busy serving her husband, and so kept the visitor waiting. After she had finished her work she went to the sage with some food for him and stating the cause of her delay apologized to him. The sage got angry. The lady said, "I am not a bird that you can burn me with an angry look; besides, such anger cannot be called wisdom." The sage learnt a lesson and said, "You have given me two kinds of food—food to eat and the food of wisdom."

* * *

A man who does the work that falls to his lot in the natural course of things can remain unattached to it. He does not get false attachment for such work.

Real knowledge and true education can be had by devoted performance of one's duty.

It is disgusting to see people that throng the hospitals. Doctors treat them, but it is also their duty to teach them how to remain healthy. But hardly any doctor does this. Most doctors pamper the body. By doing this they harm man's character and degrade his soul. Besides, by pampering the body they do not really save it.

To kill living animals for medicinal purposes to learn suturing, is this the work of a human being? It is the work of the devil.

* * *

Passion is common both to man and woman. The mind of a

passionate person always wanders about seeking objects of pleasure. We must understand that our life is not for enjoying or giving such pleasures, but for self-realization.

The marriage of Siva and Parvati is regarded as an ideal marriage. One who wants to wed like Parvati should think of a man like Siva who is free from all passions. It is not Parvati alone that was destined to get such a husband. Every woman holds that fate in her own hands.

In choosing a husband, one must not go by the kind of clothes he puts on, or the turban he wears. One must see how educated he is, and how good he is in character. Once you have decided to marry, marry one who has good character, and whose mind is compatible with yours. If you find such a person, well and good; otherwise resolve to remain unmarried. One should not think of marrying anyone that comes along. Parvati had resolved that she would marry only one who was free from all passions like Siva, otherwise she would remain unmarried. Every girl should cherish the ideal of Parvati.

* * *

Not to ride on another's back is also service. Not to accept service from another, and to develop an attitude of not making others work for one is also service.

* * *

The world is such that if we put three stitches at one place thirteen others give way elsewhere. Then how can we improve it? Real progress consists in recognizing Truth which exists within us as our Soul.

If you are good, the world is good. Bhagawan Patanjali has written that the desire for revenge disappears in the presence of non-violence. If we are ourselves slaves we regard all others also as slaves. In short, who wants to cheat an innocent man? One who tries to play false with such a person will ultimately only hurt himself. If we do not retaliate, if we do not oppose the misdeeds of a wicked person, hismisdeeds themselves will bring about his downfall. He will fall and then correct himself.

* * *

If we achieve swaraj in our own Ashram, we would obtain swaraj for the whole of India. It means we would all be straight like a stick. None of us would look upon another with suspicion. If we have no mutual distrust swaraj is at hand.

Swaraj means rule over one's own self, not over another. It means controlling one's self. He who has gained control over his sense organs, has obtained almost everything.

He who believes in punishment and violence has necessarily to resort to deceit. Deceit is a necessary accompaniment of such belief.

* * *

Our temple is in our Ashram, nay, it is in our hearts. A temple constructed of a few stones has no meaning. Only a temple raised in our hearts is useful.

If our Ashram goes on well like this and does not produce any bad people, it will become a place for pilgrimage.

* * *

Every pebble on the bank of the Narmada is said to be Siva. By the Narmada we do not mean only the river near Broach, but all rivers. If we wash clean a pebble on the bank of a river and offer *bilva patra*[1] to it, the pebble becomes Siva for us. Going a step further, if we take a lump of earth and mould it into the shape of a Siva Linga it also becomes Siva for us. On going still further, we may think that Siva resides in the hearts of us all.

We are idolators as well as iconoclasts. We destroy the stone in the idol, but we worship the image of God in it.

I expect all the women in the Ashram not to do a single piece of work without giving it proper thought. To this end, women should acquire knowledge. At present, the women of India have become dull and lifeless.

* * *

A girl who wishes to remain unmarried should be wedded to independence. A girl dependent upon others can never remain unmarried.

If the ghost dies, the spirit will rise. If we rob someone, someone else is ready to rob us. There is a proverb in Gujarati which says thatthere is always something mightier than a lion to subdue a lion.

* * *

Just as when we do not know cooking, and yet prepare half-cooked things and eat them we get indigestion, in the same way if we cannot understand what we read and yet go on reading, we shall get literary indigestion.

* * *

Even the greatest are punished if they do things they ought not to do.

* * *

[1] The leaf of a tree regarded sacred by Hindus

Devotees of God carry on activities dictated by their inner voice. But this inner voice also may sometimes deceive. So devotees must always remain vigilant.

* * *

A person who tells a half-lie tells one lie and a half, because he deceives also his own mind; whereas a person who tells an absolute lie knows that he is telling one.

* * *

Education of children mainly depends on mothers. Howsoever I may try to educate children in the Ashram, my efforts would prove futile without the co-operation of mothers. We have to educate our children to be helpful to others.

Even when a child goes to a teacher for studying, he takes with him a string attached to his mother's heart. He is always thinking when he can return to his mother. The mother draws the child to herself by means of this string.

We may read the *Gita*, or the *Ramayana* or the *Hind Swaraj*. But what we have to learn from them is desire for the welfare of others. We have to teach this to our children also.

* * *

Those forefathers of ours who gave up liquor did a manly thing. But for us who have never drunk liquor, there is only negative kind of merit in not drinking. We simply do not incur the sin of drinking—that is all. We may be said to have really given up drinking only when we understand all the evils that result from drinking.

In the same way, there is no meaning in our observing sacred days and vows without understanding their significance. Such observance becomes useful both to us and to society if we understand and can explain to others their significance. Such observance becomes useful both to us and to society if we understand and can explain to others their significance. Our women observe Nagapanchami, Janmashtami and other holy days. But they should understand their significance. It is possible that the meaning of Nagapanchami is that considering the serpent as a symbol of the enemy, it was sought through this means to inculcate the principle of not killing even one's enemies. In this world, excepting perhaps man, there is no other creature so poisonous as a serpent. If we regard anyone as so full of venom as a serpent, we should learn to love him, as though he were full of nectar. From doing this, we shall learn that every human being is worthy of worship, i.e., of service.

* * *

This world is held together by bonds of love. History does not

record the day-to-day incidents of love and service. It only records incidents of conflict and wars. Actually, however, acts of love and service are much more common in this world than conflicts and quarrels. We see innumerable villages and towns flourishing in the world. If the world were always full of discord, they could not possibly exist.

* * *

We must necessarily abolish those laws that destroy dharma. Not only should we not abide by such laws, but we should even actively resist them. Now there are two ways of doing this—either through violence or through satyagraha. We should follow only the path of satyagraha. We cannot commit violence in the name of dharma. We may allow ourselves to be hanged or to be killed rather than kill others in the name of dharma.

* * *

It is often asked how women may protect their honour. It is even suggested that they should carry daggers on them. If they do carry daggers, the daggers could of course be used against their own persons. One has to be very tough to be able to wield a dagger. One would have to change one's whole mode of life, for a person who has never seen blood drawn, or drawn blood himself, can never use a dagger. In order to be able to use a dagger, we shall have to take to hunting, kill quantities of sheep—so hard shall we have to make our hearts before we can thrust a dagger into someone.

So instead of teaching women to use a dagger, it is better to teach them to be fearless. God's protecting hand is always over us. If we really believe in the existence of God, whom shall we fear? Even if the most wicked of persons assaults you, recite Ramanama. Most wicked persons would run away at this earnest cry to God. But if that does not happen, what does it matter? We should learn to die on such an occasion. If a child is on its death-bed, do we not almost kill ourselves in looking after it? If even after the mother's greatest efforts, the child dies in her lap, she has the satisfaction that she did her best for it. It is our duty to be ever prepared thus to lay down our life. However wicked the man, if we die rather than yield to his physical strength, what after all can he do to us? It is possible that a wicked man may give up his wickedness when faced with a pure-minded person, who is quite prepared to die. Thus satyagraha is twice blessed. It blesses him who offers it and also him against whom it is offered.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Ashramni Behnone, pp. 77-97

209. LETTER TO MAHARAJA OF NABHA

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 1, 1927

DEAR FRIEND[1]

I was distressed to find that a resolution was brought up before the Congress[2] in connection with yourself. I understood also that the resolution was brought at your desire and instance. When it was first brought to my notice, I told Sardar Sardul Singh that it would be injurious to press the resolution. I told him that even whilst I was ailing in Poona[3] I had studied your Highness's papers and I was satisfied that yours was not a case for public agitation and that if any relief was to be expected, it was to be had only through proper diplomatic channels which really do not admit of public agitation. I told Sardar Sardul Singh further that it would be wrong for the Congress to be identified with the agitation and it would be harmful to your own cause. Nevertheless, in the absence of Pundit Motilalji and myself, the resolution was brought up before the Subjects Committee which, in my opinion unthinkingly and hastily, adopted it. The following morning I was informed of the event. Pundit Motilalji was equally distressed with me to find that the resolution was passed. And it was only then that I heard that Pundit Motilalji was your legal adviser. As a lawyer of some experience I think that a client does grave injury to his cause who behind the back of his legal adviser adopts means of redressing the wrong which he entrusted to a chosen adviser. I further learn that you were so impatient to be reinstalled that you were paying heavy sums to all sorts of men who at all held out hope of securing relief for you. As a friend and servant of India and therefore of your Highness, I have no hesitation in saying that if you have been paying people in the manner described to me, you are but injuring your cause and your reputation. I think that you could restrain all your friends, however well-meaning they may be from carrying on public agitation such as ventilating your case before the Congress, that you should be true to your legal adviser and should do nothing behind his back, and that if you have a good case, you will get relief only through proper and clean diplomatic channels. Lastly, I repeat what I have said to the Sikh friends who, I expect, saw me on

[1] Ripudamansing Malavendra Bahadur, deposed ruler of Nabha

[2] At the Gauhati session of the Congress on December 27, 1926, a resolution was moved regarding the addressee's restoration; *vide* "Speech at Congress Session, Gauhati", 28-12-1926; background information, *vide* also "Statement on Akali Movement", 4-3-1924 and "Advice to Akalis", 9-3-1924.

[3] In January, 1924

your behalf and who were hurt because I had intervened and persuaded the Subjects Committee to reconsider and reverse its decision. If they thought I had not properly studied the case or there were any documents which had not been shown to me by the Sikh deputation that had seen me at the Sassoon Hospital[1] I would be prepared patiently to go through the case and give my opinion. You must have seen that the Subjects Committee has referred the case to the Working Committee for examination, if the matter is brought before it on your behalf, and for confidential report.[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

HIS HIGHNESS THE MAHARAJA OF NABHA

DEHRADUN

From a copy: C.W. 10704. Courtesy: Jamia Millia Library

210. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

[*January 1, 1927*][3]

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. Read the letter[4] on the reverse. I am thinking of sending you for this work. Only you or Mirabehn can work there. The girls there would be Sindhi and so knowledge of English and Hindi would be necessary. We cannot send Mirabehn as yet. I, therefore, should like you to go. If you decide to do so let me know.

Whether you feel happy or not, you have to stay in the Ashram, that is to say, with me. Pour out your heart to me and exact from me a mother's duties. Are you sure that the reason for your lack of interest is not the absence of a life-companion? A well-wisher of yours emphatically advised me that I should get you married. The suggestion was made as we were talking about a certain young man. He is not a Patidar, but is a deserving youth. I said that I had no fear on your account. I see no signs at present to suggest that you may wish to get married. He then told me that I did not know you. You can see from my language that I am not joking this time. Reply to me

[1] In March 1924

[2] For Gandhiji's further correspondence with the addressee, *vide* "Letter to Maharaja of Nabha", 28-5-1927.

[3] As in the printed source

[4] Dated 20-12-1926, from Narayandas Anandji of Karachi, asking Gandhiji to depute a competent lady from Gujarat to teach *takli*-spinning in the Municipal Girls' Schools of Karachi

without any fear. One thing is certain, that a girl who wants to remain unmarried all her life should be brave. She should remain cheerful otherwise people would say that she should be married off.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MANIBEHN PATEL
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SABARMATI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, pp. 43-4

211. LETTER TO MAZHARUL HAQUE

January 1, 1927

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Writing to you became necessary as we did not meet at Sivan.

I do not have your original letter on Hindu-Muslim unity. Therefore I cannot speak more than what I wrote on the piece of paper last Monday. Today again is Monday, when I am free.

If Mahadev really understands you, you have stopped trusting me because of my article published on Swami Shraddhanand. And he told me that the reason of your distrust is only one sentence, i.e., 'The Muslims enjoy much more freedom in using the sword and pistol'. If I write something on the basis of my faith, then why not believe me. Can I retain the faith of my friends only by accepting what they do. If my statement is wrong, you should oppose it and keep me away from it sympathetically but you should go on believing me till you are able to say that I am not partialtowards any religion or caste and, what I write, I really believe in it.

If there are some other things in my article which have hurt you, tell me about them and correct me. Do not stop believing in me. The trust that has stood the test of time, should not disappear because of my one single article.

Now, take the statement. I had some fixed opinion about Muslims since the day I knew them. Because of this, when I came out of jail, I wrote all those things without reading anything about them. They are based on my long personal experience and unbiased opinion of friends. These friends are as unbiased as I feel you are. In fact, many Muslims have made the unrestricted use of [violence in the name of] their religion. Just tell me how I can distrust my own eyes or friends whom I trust.

However, despite this, I love Muslims. It is not their fault but it is

the fault of their circumstances.

Peace is the message of the 'New Testament' and yet the behaviour of a Christian is violent as it appears to me. But this faith of mine does not stop me from loving them and appreciating the good things in the 'New Testament'.

I had thought of writing to you that very time when you did not like my article. This is the least one can expect from friends. You should not mind it. But now that I invite you, you should find out the facts for me. You should not think that I had not written to you because of your differences on my article.

I do not expect that my friends should agree with whatever I say. It is enough if we shared a common goal and I trusted them. If there were differences and all of them were to be sorted out, life would become a burden. But the differences that hurt should certainly be resolved.

Now, let the white beard do some cleaning up.

With love.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Ashiyana Ki Awaz, pp. 45-6

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

ROMAIN ROLLAND'S LETTER TO MIRABEHN[1]

VILLENEUVE (VAND)
VILLA OLGA,
September 26, 1926

DEAR FRIEND,

I find, at last, an hour for conversing with you—, and, through you, with your Bapu.

I am replying to your letter of the end of July, and I return to my regrets that Gandhi could not take part in the conference for Christian Young Men at Helsingfors. Those regrets are accentuated since my meeting with several of these young men and with K. T. Paul.

The question is in no way, as you think, one of a fashionable enthusiasm for Gandhiji's person, or a superficial infatuation for the doctrine of Gandhi. No, there is not even a question of it,—the fact, more unexpected, but indisputable, is that the person, the action, the life and the faith of Gandhi have been the strongest stimulant for European Christianity. Neither you nor Gandhi could have expected it; and it was scarcely the goal for which the Mahatma was searching. But great actions have unexpected repercussions; and often their effect equals or surpasses in importance the effect which had been expected and wished by the man of God. Because, after all, it is not he who acts; it is, by his means, God.

The fact is then that Young Christian Europe has seen in Gandhi the purest Christian (without knowing it) of today,—the man who, over and above all the priests and pastors, resumes the direct tradition with the spirit of the Gospel.

That he has found himself in possession of immense influence over these young Christians, for interpreting to them their own doctrine, and for showing them the path in an hour of agonizing uncertainties and doubts.

Once more, it may be, that Gandhi did not wish this. But once more, another greater than he willed it for him. And he has not the right to escape from it in the future. Because, however imperious may be his Indian task, the human task envelopes it and surpasses it. And whatever may be his personal faith in Hinduism,—the most ardent fire, the most divine of all faith, the eternal is that which feels sin common with all, and not that which differentiates God is in the centre of the Bush. And he who hears Him speak, and repeats what He says, speaks for all.

[1] Translated from the French by Mirabehn

. . . Now, the Christianity of today is consumed by the anguish of a problem of conscience and faith, that not one of her chief's or official representatives has the power to solve. I find acute expression of this in the works of a professor of the University of Rome which I have just received. *Ubi Christianus*? and *Dothrina di cristo,* by Luigi Trafelli—the author, who is undoubtedly a tortured conscience, starts with the declaration that the "Metanoia" or "evangelical conversion" where the preaching of Jesus begins, is an absolute overthrow and the complete transformation of the values, which, in the normal life of men, are the most appreciated. It is necessary to strip "the old man" and to redress "the new man", who will not be able to enter into the Kingdom of God, if he does not sacrifice all half-duties to the whole duty, and all compromises of the world to the will of perfection. "Be thou then perfect as is thy Father in Heaven." No concessions to the world. "Leave all and follow Me."

Now, after having examined the perpetual conflicts of this order with the worldly order, and all the "combinations" imagined by the Church and the pseudo-believers, for reconciling them, Luigi Trafelli asks himself the mournful question: "Do Christians still exist?" and concludes: "No, they exist no more,"—and he admits himself: "I am not a Christian."—but adds: "At least, I have not got the hypocrisy to call myself Christian, as do the churches, while betraying the express word of Christ."

This question is made particularly tragic owing to the social crisis, which is passing over Europe,—the world—(and especially the country which is the seat of official catholicism, Italy).

At the present hour, the power of the State in Italy has reached a sovereignty which is veritably demoniac. Everything is sacrificed to it, religious conscience is trampled under its feet. The individual soul is annihilated. He who resists the "public will" (translated by one or two leaders who incarnate it) is or will be crushed. A Mussolini, with formidable cynicism, displays this doctrine, accepted by millions of Italians, which will certainly spread before long in Europe and America (above all, in America).

Now, what are the guides of religious conscience doing at this hour? They dare not take the responsibility of the nameless sufferings into which they would throw those who ask their advice, by saying to them, "Resist! Be persecuted!" the worst, the most mediocre think of their tranquillity. The best remind themselves of old Tolstoy who was in despair at seeing his disciples persecuted while he could not succeed in getting persecuted himself: because power is too cunning not to treat with care the men who are in broad daylight, and severely the obscure. The result is that all search for and teach compromises—the inner lie; and the soul degrades itself.

The young men realize this, they listen for the voice of the gospel which will say to them:

"The duty is there—the voice speaks not. They are left—it is for this reason that so many young Christians look towards Gandhi.

. . . You say to me, my friend, that it is for me to reply to them. . . . No. I

cannot. It is necessary to see me as I am, and not lend to me a faith, thoughts, a mission that I have not got.

I am not a Christian, I am not a Gandhist, I am not a believer in a revealed religion. I am a man of the Occident who, in all love and in all sincerity, searches for the truth. That which I strive to teach to myself is for others, it is never to belie one's own thoughts, never to say that one knows that which one only "believes" or hopes, to say exactly that which one knows,—nothing more,—and, be it that one understands or does not understand, to conserve intact energy and love. The word of the Introduction to The *Life of Michael Angelo* "See men and life as they are,—and as they are, love them and act . . ."

There is my role. And it is also to discover and make known to others all the sources of strength, all the hearths of light, which exist in the world. To the heroes and the saints I say: "Take, and drink!"

But my role is not to speak in the name of a religion which I have not. Let those speak who have !

. . . We have lately had a visit from a gay American who is making an express tour of all the celebrated men of the globe; five minutes for each one. His name is Buchanan, and he has seen Gandhi at the beginning of the year. He says that Gandhi said, regarding my book on him: "It is literature" ("*C'est de la literature"*) it is not altogether just. It should be said: "It is love" ("*C'est de l'amour*"). Everybody knows that love does not see very exactly. My book must often be erroneous. How could it be otherwise? I knew nothing of the atmosphere of India, or of the language. I made the *tour de force* in six to twelve months, from imagination, after the books I had read, all a great life, and that of a people who were far away and unknown to me. It was very audacious! But love did not give me the liberty not to imagine, and—that which I loved, my joy, my enthusiasm,—not to share them with my brothers of Europe. In that, I believe I have succeeded. If I have sometimes often mispresented the character and the thought of Gandhi, may he pardon me. I have often asked myself what Christ would have thought of the narratives of his disciples ! In any case, true or false, I have not written for "literature". (The litterateurs scarcely consider me as one of them). I wrote to relieve my heart.

. . . We are pretty well, in spite of the fact that I have just been laid up for a fortnight with intestinal fever. Madeleine has spent a little time in Savoie and we have had beautiful walks together. Since August the splendor of the summer has been marvellous.

I am not surprised that you feel yourself "at home" in India. Did not you tell us that you have gipsy blood? And you have seen that, according to the latest discoveries the gipsies unquestionably had India for their cradle. You return to your point of departure.

Madeleine and I send you our most affectionate thoughts. To Bapu my filial respect,—in spite of the fact that I am corporally older than him. But the soul belongs to other cycles of time to the body.

Yours,

ROMAIN ROLLAND

From a photostat: S.N. 12174

APPENDIX II

ROMAIN ROLLAND'S LETTER TO GANDHIJI

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your good letter[1] that Mira has sent me. I thank you cordially for it. But I do not understand at all what the Poet could have told you. I never said or wrote anything to Tagore regarding your article in the *Liber-Amicorum*. I have never spoken about it to any of the Poet's party. If I had done so, it would have only been to express joy which those words have given me and the gratitude I have felt. How could the idea have entered my mind to complain of a judgment like yours? I consider it an honour of my life to have been able to place myself at your service and to have spread your thoughts in the world.

I claim this role of *free servitor*—far far from protesting against it! And I am grieved to see that such thoughts have been attributed to me.

I cannot understand this at all. These are without doubt baseless reports which start without cause and are magnified in circulation, and lead to so much misunderstanding. This one must be entirely [ef] faced, for it has absolutely no basis.

Dear friend, I love you and revere you. Pray remain to the end of your life towards me and all others what you always have been, the absolutely sincere man who does not seek to please or flatter, who says not one word more than he thinks. All *amour propre* disappears in your presence.

From a photostat of the draft in Mahadev Desai's handwriting: S.N. 13288

APPENDIX III

KENYA INDIANS: D. B. DESAI'S LETTER

BROACH,

December 12, 1926

SIR,

I think you are by now aware that Kenya (British East Africa) Government has decided to levy an additional tax of one pound on every Indian, as a non-native Poll Tax. The Indian Citizens'Association has sent me now the following cable:

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Romain Rolland", 29-10-1926.

"Additional Poll Tax one pound Asiatics only. Move Press, platform, Congress and Government."

From this cablegram, I gather that things have become worse and they ask help of the people of India as well as the Government of India, and I have no doubt that both will readily give assistance to Kenya Indians in the matter.

I think it will be of some use if I give you some history as regards this non-native Poll Tax. The ordinance for the collection of this non-native Poll Tax was passed by the British East Africa Govern-ment in the year 1912 to collect from every non-native male adult a sum of fifteen rupees per annum from the Ist of January 1913. At this time, i.e., in 1912, there was no Indian Representative—either nominated or elected—on the Kenya Legislative Council; so accor-ding to that popular maxim "no taxation without representation", this non-native Poll Tax of fifteen rupees was both bad and unjust as against Indians.

Further up to 1920 in Kenya (then British East Africa) the Indian rupee was a current and legal coin, and from 1912 till the day the currency was changed, a rupee there was equivalent to one shilling and four pence; so Indians used to pay every year Rs. 15 equal to 20s Subsequently rupee currency was changed to florin currency, making a florin equal to a rupee (or in other words substituting "florins" wherever the word "rupees" appeared in all the local laws and ordin-ances in British East Africa). By this change of currency florins 15 were charged for this non-native Poll Tax. In the year 1922, a further change in currency was effected in British East Africa (Kenya) whereby shilling currency was introduced in place of florin currency making two shillings equal to a florin. So under the latter change of currency 30s were charged for this tax, thus making this tax of 30 shillings instead of 20 shillings without any fault of the tax-payers. This shows an increase of 50 per cent, which is really, one must admit, unjust.

I further think it will be of interest to you to know that in the territories now known as the "Colony and Protectorate of Kenya" there is included a ten miles coastal strip of land which is under the suzerainty of H.H. the Sultan of Zanzibar and for which the Kenya Government, from the day it assumed the administration in that country, is paying an annual rent to H. H. the Sultan of Zanzibar. And under the treaty which has been made by the British Government with the Sultan of Zanzibar, it has been agreed *inter alia* that no new taxes will be imposed, save and except those enumerated and mentioned in the said treaty upon the residents residing in this ten miles strip and it is understood that the British Government has not got the sanction of H. H. the Sultan of Zanzibar with regard to the levy of this non-native Poll Tax.

Last month the Kenya Legislative Council has passed the Non-Native Poll Tax (amendment) Ordinance whereby the Government will charge every non-native male Asiatic 50 instead of 30 shillings stated above. The reason advanced for this and

other taxation (of which particulars will be found mentioned below) is to provide for educational facilities to European and Indian children. But the Gover-nment of Kenya, it seems to me, has forgotten, when advancing the above reason, that from the beginning till now the Government of Kenya has spent considerably large amounts after European chil-dren's education neglecting and at the cost of Indian children's edu-cation, and the provision was hithertofore made from "General Tax-ation". But now in order to tax the Indian community, it seems to me, the Government has engineered this new device which, in my opinion, is both inequitable and unjust.

From the Minority Report which has been submitted by the Hon. Messrs J. B. Pandya and Shamsud Deen, the two nominated Indian members to the Kenya Legislative Council, it appears that the Kenya Government requires £ 52,000 for education purposes and this sum is to be earmarked as follows:

Europeans	£ 32,000 for 960 children, i.e., about £ 33 17s per head
Indians	£ 20,000 for 2,318 children, i.e., about £ 812s per head

So from this one could easily understand how Indian education in Kenya is neglected. Over and above the number of children mentioned above there are 2,547 Indian children without any means of education. Further, I think, it will not be out of place here to mention to you that school-going children pay 2s, 4s and 8s per month according to the standard in which they study, which will also mean that Indian children are contributing much more than their European brothers and sisters and this fact the Government of Kenya has omitted to take into its consideration.

As stated in the Majority Report (which is signed by the Colonial Secretary to the Government of Kenya as one of the Members of the Committee), which is submitted to the Kenya Government (and of which report the Governor has spoken in very high terms) and which is passed by the Kenya Legislative Council, the said amount of £ 52,000 has been raised in the following way:

Spirits £ 25,000; Wines £ 7,000; Champagnes £ 500;

Male domestic servants £ 7,000 (from Europeans only) and Asiatic Poll Tax £ 12,000.

It is alleged and assumed in the said Majority Report that for the first three items which are to produce £ 32,500 in taxation, £ 24,500 will be contributed by the Europeans and the rest by the Indians. But as the Kenya Government keeps no record to show the proportion, it will be unwise to arrive at any assumption. Barring this £ 32,500 there remains £19,000 in the new taxation which are divided between the Europeans and the Indians; the former contribute £ 7,000 and the latter £12,000.

The domestic servants' tax which is mentioned in the above paragraph is to be payable "at the rate of two shillings per mensem on every *male domestic* servant above the apparent age of *sixteen* and in *excess* of *two* servants per household" which will mean that there will be many families which will not be burdened with this tax,

which is not an *individual* tax, while in the case of the additional Asiatic Poll Tax every male adult Asiatic will have to pay 20s extra. Here too there is an open injustice.

One of the members who has signed the said Majority Report has stated during the debate in the Kenya Legislative Council, "With regard to the Poll Tax, this was *especially* put in to meet the requirements of the Indian community, as it was felt that the Indian community did not spend money in the country on *luxuries* like Europeans did, *but sent it out of the country*." From the above statement one naturally gathers the prejudices which are working in the matter of levying of this new tax. The only motive for the new additional one pound poll tax, to my mind, is to harass the law-abiding Indian citizens of Kenya by the Kenya Government which is in the hands of the Kenya white settlers practically speaking.

On behalf of the Kenya Indians I have to request you to take this matter up and do the needful justice to this subject as occasions require. Your advice to Kenya Indians will be appreciated. I may in the end mention that if the people in India and the Government of India will not take steps to cause this new additional tax to be removed, the Kenya Government will start collecting it from the Ist January, 1927 and if it is once collected it will be very difficult, as I understand it, to get it removed. I think the Gauhati Congress should take this matter up.

Yours, etc.,

D.B. DESAI

Young India, 23-12-1926

1. SPEECH AT MEETING OF DEPRESSED-CLASS SCHOOLS, CALCUTTA [1]

January 2, 1927

Mahatmaji in reply said that he never knew that the members of the depressed classes would present him with an address. He felt their troubles and untold miseries and he sometimes wanted to become an untouchable so that he would clearly realize their position in the country. Mahatmaji was sorry to say that the members of the Hindu community were not helping them in any way. On the other hand, they were having their service in the way of labour. The country would be ruined if that feeling prevailed in the Hindu community. Swami Shraddhanand who had sacrificed his valuable life in removing untouchability from the country had said that, if he saw that the Hindus were keeping at least one depressed-class boy in their house, he would think that the Hindus were really feeling for the untouchables in the country. Before that Swamiji expected that they should give up the habit of drinking, gambling, and other vices which always kept them behind the other communities in the country.

Continuing, Mahatmaji said that Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya had issued an appeal to collect five lakhs of rupees to complete the *shuddhi* and *sangathan* movement of Swami Shraddhanand. Malaviyaji did not expect any money from them as he knew the members of the Hindu community would fulfil his desire for their good. Still as a mark of respect to the sacred memory of Swami [Shraddhanand] they should collect some money among themselves and approach Malaviyaji with the purse.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 4-1-1927

2. SPEECH AT CHITTARANJAN SEVA SADAN, CALCUTTA [2]

[*January 2, 1927*][3]

In declaring the foundation to be well and truly laid,[4] Gandhiji emphasized what Dr. Nilratan Sarkar had described as the spiritual unity between Deshbandhu and Gandhiji which had become, if possible, more real after Deshbandhu's death. He had no doubt that, if Deshbandhu's energies had not been absorbed, like all other political leaders', by politics owing to the peculiar conditions of enslaved India, he

[1] Gandhiji was replying to an address of welcome presented by the students of sixteen depressed-class schools in Calcutta and Howrah. The meeting was held at Mirzapur Park, Calcutta.

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[3] The date is taken from the *Forward* report.

[4] Two annexes for the Obstetric Ward and X-Ray Block of the Seva Sadan—the Deshbandhu Memorial Hospital

would have entirely devoted himself to religious reform and to the service of *Daridranarayana*[1] . But Deshbandhu believed, said Gandhiji, in following the lesson of the *Gita*—Do your immediate duty, even though other duties may seem to be superior—and if he seemed that day to be laying the foundation of an ordinary maternity home, he was sure that from the point of view of Deshbandhu it was a step forward to swaraj. He then alluded to the suspicion expressed in some quarters that the Bengalis being of a parochial outlook, the memorial would also take a parochial character.

I would not mind the Bengalis absorbing the whole of India in Bengal, for then the old Panditji[2] from the U.P. and myself, an old Bania from Gujarat, would be left free to have some rest. I would not mind in the least the whole of India being absorbed in Bengal that gave birth to Rabindranath, Ram Mohan Roy, Keshub Chandra Sen, Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Vivekanand, Bengal which was hallowed by the sacred feet of Chaitanya, Bengal which is sanctified by the sacred rivers the Ganges and the Brahmaputra. But the fear is baseless, as Dr. Bidhan Roy has declared on behalf of the trustees, that Seva Sadan would be conducted on the same broad lines as [those on which] Deshbandhu served the Motherland. The institution is a living tribute to one who had the emancipation of women at heart, those down-trodden sisters of ours who are the victims of our lust and passion. It does not belong to this or that trustee, it belongs to the nation. Let us strive to make it worthy of Deshbandhu and let it immortalize his memory in India.

Young India, 13-1-1927

3. SPEECH AT KEORAHTALA CREMATION GROUND, CALCUTTA [3]

January 2, 1927

Mahatma Gandhi made a short speech on the occasion. He said that he laid the foundation of a memorial in honour of one of the greatest patriots of Bengal, nay, of whole India. Mahatma Gandhi thought himself very fortunate in performing the ceremony. He regretted that he could not come into intimate acquaintance with Aswini Babu. When Mahatmaji was in South Africa, he used to read newspapers during the Bengal Partition days and it was there that he got acquainted with Aswini Babu's

[1] God in the form of the destitute
[2] Madan Mohan Malaviya
[3] Gandhiji was laying the foundation for a memorial to Aswini Kumar Du tt .

works through the papers.

On his return to India, Mahatmaji continued, he had the privilege to have *darshan* of the late Aswini Kumar Dutt and that was during his Bengal tour when he went to Barisal. At Barisal, as soon as he got down from the steamer, he was told that Aswini Babu was lying on sick-bed and hence could not come to welcome him. So he thought it his first and foremost duty to go directly and see the great patriot on his sick-bed. He still remembered that loving look when he met Aswini Babu and he could never forget it.

Mahatmaji next recognized that the lesson we learnt from the life of Aswini Kumar was that only those could be the worshippers of the motherland who had given up all pleasures of life and sacrificed all their desires for the cause of the country. Mahatmaji advised young Indians to learn the spirit in which Aswini Kumar led his life, and that was the lesson that every young man should learn from the life of the great men of the world.

Mahatmaji further said that many things could be heard about many people in the papers, but untill and unless one could come in contact with those men, one was not able to get the truth about them. When Mahatmaji came in close contact with Aswini Dutt, he realized the absolute truth of what he had read in the papers.

Mahatmaji, in conclusion, appealed to young men to mix with such great men and follow in their footsteps if they wanted to serve the country, and the only true memorial that they could raise in the name of such great men was only to follow in their footsteps.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 4-1-1927

4. SPEECH AT KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR [1]

[*January, 1927*][2]

You will see that he[3] has staked his all on Khadi. Many of you will think that he has gone mad, but I tell you it is faith that moves mountains, and Satis Babu has faith in khadi, and the determination that he must stop, as much as he can, the lakhs of rupees worth of foreign cloth that is dumped every day in the Calcutta market.

In response to his appeal for collections, Rs. 500 were collected on the spot and Rs. 3,000 and odd were promised.

Young India, 13-1-1927

[1] Gandhiji was opening the Kalashala of Khadi Pratishthan, established by Satis Chandra Das Gupta, at Sodepur, near Calcutta. The report is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter".

[2] The date is taken from the *Hindu* report.

[3] Satis Chandra Das Gupta

5. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

[After *January 2, 1927*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I find that you make mistakes in gender. In the Kutchhi dialect there are only [two] genders—feminine and masculine. But in Gujarati there is a third, the neuter gender. You say *ghar kevo*[2], while in Gujarati we say *ghar kevun*[3], you say *tamaro sharir*[4], while in Gujarati we would say *tamarun sharir*[5]. You will find it interesting to compare the two languages in this manner and will be able to correct your mistakes more easily. Such mental exercise will also develop your intellect.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8703. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

6. TELEGRAM TO PARASHU RAM MEHROTRA

CALCUTTA,
January 3, 1927

PARASHU RAM
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
WARDHA

YOU MAY DEVOTE FOR [TNIGHT][6] "STREEDARPAN"[7].

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 7487; also C.W. 4962

[1] The letter was in reply to one from the addressee dated January 2, 1927.

[2] Gujarati expression for "What kind of a house"; the adjective is in the masculine gender and in the second expression in the neuter gender.

[3] Gujarati expression for "What kind of a house"; the adjective is in the neuter gender.

[4] Gujarati expression for "Your body"; the adjective is in the masculine gender.

[5] Gujarati expression "Your body"; the adjective is in the neuter gender.

[6] This part of the original is damaged.

[7] *Streedarpan* was a Hindi magazine devoted to social topics, edited by Mehrotra before he joined the Ashram. He had sought leave of absence from Gandhiji for attending to its financial problems.

7. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

January 3, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your two letters. I see what you are passing through and I am glad of it. You have to love humanity in spite of itself. The Ashram is finally not at Sabarmati but in yourself. The vilest beings must enter there purified. That is the meaning of treating all alike and in this universe of opposites remaining unaffected even as the lotus remains unaffected by water though immersed in it.

I understand your programme. You may carry it out. I continue to send you letters to Kanya Gurukul till I hear from you again.

I suppose in the circumstances related by you, you will not advice me to send anybody to the place as a pupil.

I am writing this at Sodepur, a suburb of Calcutta, where Satis Babu has built his Khadi Works. It is a great effort. It has cost nearly Rs. 80,000.

We leave for Comilla tomorrow as per programme sent to you. But for future guidance, it would be well to note that when in doubt send to the last address.

You will be interested in the enclosed which was handed to me by a friend.

With love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5194. Courtesy: Mirabehn

8. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

[SODEPUR,]
Monday [*January 3, 1927*][1]

CHI. MANI,

I had hoped to get a letter from you but so far I have not had any. I hope you are keeping good health, both of body and mind. You must be making rapid progress in Sanskrit. Write to me in detail. I shall be in Comilla till the 6th, and in Kashi till the 9th. In Kashi,

[1] As in the printed source

address the letter at "Gandhi Ashram, Banaras Cantonment". Write to Father. He seems to be worrying about you. We are all well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRIMATI MANIBEHN
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
WARDHA, B. N. RLY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 44

9. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

SODEPUR,
Monday, Magsar Vad O[1]*, January 3, 1927*

DEAR SISTERS,

This time I have not yet received your weekly letter. We have shifted today to the new buildings erected on the land purchased by the Khadi Pratishthan. They have built many small houses here. The houses took only nine months to build. The processes of washing, bleaching and dyeing khaddar with the aid of machines are now carried on here. There was a big gathering here yesterday. Theatten dance was very good. I thought that I should ask for a collection from the audience; I did, and got about Rs. 3,500/-.

Prayers are held here just as we hold them there. The verses which they recite are also the same. But their recitation is out of tune, compared to ours, and so it jars a little on the ear. But gradually they will improve.

Perinbehn, Mithubehn and Jamnabehn are still with me. They are carrying on their khadi work. They have sold about half the stock they had brought with them.

It is a very good thing that your prayers are held regularly. I note that they are also well attended. Do not forget that spinning is *yajna*. The *Gita* says that he who eats food without offering *yajna* eats stolen food. *'Yajna' means work done for the good of others.* For us spinning is such public work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3633

[1] The new moon day

10. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

ON THE TRAIN,
January 4, 1927

BHAISHRI,

You ask me not to write merely to acknowledge your letters, and want to know when I am going to Kathiawar. I must reply, then. I am hoping that I shall be there in the beginning of March.[1]

Look after your health.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

If the Hindus forgive Abdul Rashid[2], what can be more welcome than that?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3210. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

11. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

Tuesday [*January 4, 1927*][3]

CHI. RAMDAS,

I write this on the train. Regarding towels . . .[4] to Pattani Saheb and others. There are many hospitals in Kathiawar. All the towels can be easily sold among them. After buying from Gondal did you not buy khadi at all or did you buy it from somewhere else? I am making arrangements for the rent to be paid by aunt. I will not leave her without any means of support. Manilal[5] is going to the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6852

[1] The Kathiawar Political Conference was to be held at Porbandar in March.
[2] Assassin of Shraddhanand
[3] From the postmark
[4] Some words are missing in the source.
[5] Manilal Gandhi who had come to India from South Africa

12. PRAYER DISCOURSE AT ABHOY ASHRAM [1], *COMILLA*

[*January 5, 1927*][2]

You are the pioneers and like the Jamnotri and Gangotri.[3] Be you as those two streams. As I think of you I picture to myself two fine horses running abreast and drawing the khadi carriage at full speed, vying with each other. You have achieved a unique success inasmuch as you do not depend on extra-provincial help for the sale of your products. You have bent the women of Bengal to your will—all honour to them—and they are proud today to wear saris that you supply to them. Let then the strength and weakness of each be thestrength and weakness of the other, and let the Khadi Pratishthan look in its hour of difficulties to the Abhoy Ashram, and *vice versa.*

Young India, 13-1-1927

13. SPEECH AT VILLAGERS' MEETING, COMILLA

January 5, 1927

The Mahatma with his party visited two Namsudra villages, viz., Rajapura and Muradpur, near about the Ashram and addressed the inhabitants in Hindi. The Mahatma was received by the villagers, men, women and children with *hullas*[4], and the blowing of conch-shells and *sankirtans*[5]. His message to them was not to consider themselves lower than others and not to imitate the bad habits of the so-called higher classes. He asked them to give up drinking and to lead a simple and honest life. He specially dwelt upon the importance and utility of khaddar and exhorted them to follow the examples of the members of the Abhoy Ashram. . . .

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 7-1-1927

[1] Institution run by Dr. Suresh Chandra Bannerji. The Ashram conducted seven schools for untouchables and also ran a khadi store. Only the concluding remarks of a long talk at the prayer are available.

[2] The report is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter" where no date has been assigned to it, but it is placed before the report of the public meeting, which took place on January 5.

[3] The reference is to the Khadi Pratishthan and the Abhoy Ashram.

[4] Sound uttered by women of Bengal on auspicious occasions as a sign of welcome

[5] Devotional mass singing

14. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, COMILLA [1]

January 5, 1927

You have been so kind to me in giving me permission to speak in Hindi. If only because I want to show you my appreciation of your kindness, I propose to say a few words to you in English. Every time that I am obliged to speak in the English language before an audience of my countrymen, I feel humiliated and ashamed. I have urged upon Bengali audiences several times not to put an undue strain upon my loyalty, not to put an undue strain upon Bharatamata herself. It is the easiest thing possible for every Indian north of the Vindhya range to pick up Hindi inside of a month. Try it and tell me if what I say is not true. Let us not say that our mother tongue is only Bengali or Gujarati or Punjabi, as the case may be. These are provincial languages. When we sing that ode to the Motherland—*Bande Mataram*, we sing it to the whole of India. When Bankim[2] wrote the inspired song he said *sapt-akoti bhujaih*[3]. But you and others deliberately said *dwi-trimshatkoti bhujaih*[4] and it was proper. It was proper and dignified on your part to sing of *dwi-trimshatkoti bhujaih*, and it was proper and dignified for the whole of India to accept that magnificent ode. Shall we not then live up to it and sing with all our hearts and say we are sons of Mother India, not merely sons of Bengal? I ask you, therefore, next time I happen to come here or you invite me to come, to insist upon my speaking to you in Hindi and Hindi alone. That is one thing.

We have seen the last of the last session of the Congress. On the sacred banks of the Brahmaputra, in the midst of that magnificent foliage and scenery almost unrivalled in the world, our leaders deliberated. They have evolved a Council programme. But how many of us can take a direct part in the working of that programme? How many of us can enter Councils and the Legislative Assembly? How many of us are entitled to elect members to these legislative bodies? Are the millions of the villagers of India enfranchised? Is India living in her 10 or 20 cities, or is she living in her 700,000 villages? What then is the programme that can weld together the 30 crores of people scattered on a surface 1,900 miles long and 1,500 miles broad in

[1] The meeting was held at Mahesh Prangan.

[2] Bankim Chandra Chatterji

[3] Seven crore arms—a reference to the population of Bengal at the time

[4] Sixty crore arms—a reference to the population of India

700,000 villages? What is it that every villager, man, woman and child, Hindu and Mussalman, can do with profit and, at the same time, uplift the whole of India? The one and unequivocal answer is the spinning-wheel and khaddar. The message of khaddar can penetrate to remotest villages if we only will that it shall be so. The spinning-wheel can be turned by millions of the villagers of India who have been reduced to pauperism, who have been ground down to dust, not merely under the foreigner's heels but under your heels, under my heels. We the city-dwellers are living upon the labour, upon the wealth of these millions of villagers; not like the Americans, not like the Englishmen, who live upon the exploitation of Asiatic races or the so-called weaker races of the earth. Even they would be obliged to take up the spinning-wheel or any equivalent if they were not able to exploit India, China, Africa and other parts of the earth. We do not exploit them, because it is a virtue of necessity with us. But I hope that a time is coming when out of the fullness of our hearts, out of a wider national outlook, we shall disdain of our own free will to exploit a single nation of the earth, no matter how weak. I hope that in your lifetime and mine that time is coming when we shall reach our freedom and having reached it, we shall say to all the nations of the earth that they need not fear us, as we have lived in perpetual fear of the so-called civilized races of the earth. You may not believe me today. You may call me, if you like, a mad man. But the time is coming when you will say that what this old man said was right and that, if India was really to prosper in her villages and not in her cities, the spinning-wheel was the only instrument of India's prosperity and India's freedom.

And hence it was that you saw the phenomenon at Gauhati, which I did not expect, which I had not asked for, however much I desired it. But you saw at Gauhati the extraordinary phenomenon of the Congress franchise being improved along khaddar lines. I know there were bickerings about it. But I also know that it was the pressure of the popular mind that extorted that improvement in the franchise. The leaders made that important improvement because they saw that khaddar and khaddar alone was the only passport to the hearts of the villagers. Let me assure you that it was khaddar that won the elections for the Swarajists. You may not know, or perhaps you know, that in Madras even those who were otherwise opposed to khaddar were obliged to take it up at the time of appealing to the electorate, and as the days roll on, you will find that khaddar will gain in importance, because it has intrinsic worth about it; and because no national popular organization contains for its working so many self-sacrificing, able, young, educated men as the khaddar organization; because no

organization is capable of giving employment to an almost unlimited number of patriotic youths who will be content with an honourable livelihood and who will be content to pass their lives in the closest touch with the villagers and share their food, their sorrows and joys. I invite you to show me a single other organization which has that capacity in it.

Believe me, khaddar is not a dying cult. There is no fall in the barometer of khaddar. Five year's experience show that it has been an undoubtedly gradual, but a steady and hopeful rise. It could not have been otherwise. Because India wants it, because India's millions require full means in order to sustain their energy, therefore the Congress has passed the resolution making it necessary for Congress- men to wear khaddar habitually and not merely on ceremonial occasions. They may wear mill-cloth on rare occasions, when it is absolutely necessary for their bread and butter; but they dare not, if they are honest Congressmen, habitually wear anything but hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar.

And now a word about untouchability. A great hero and patriot Swami Shradhanandji died for the sake of the untouchables. He loved them as dearly as his own life. He regarded them as his own children, and, if it was in his power, he would have banished untouchability from the shores of India. And what does that banishment mean? It means universal love. It means translating into action the great message of the *Bhagavad Gita* which is: Treat the Brahmin and the Bhangi alike, if you would but know God. But how are they alike? A Brahmin is any day superior to the Bhangi in learning, and how am I to treat both alike? The *Bhagavad Gita* says that you should treat them even as you would wish to be treated by them, or even as you would treat yourself:

आत्मवत्सर्वभूतेषु य: पश्यति स पश्यति।[1]

That is the teaching of the *Bhagavad Gita*. That hero and martyr translated this teaching into action in his own life and he has sanctified it, and sealed it with his blood. Let that blood purify us, and let it remove the last taint of any isolation or aloofness that we may be harbouring against those brothers of ours whom in our arrogance we call untouchables. They are not untouchables, we are untouchables. Let them have every attention, every kindness that they deserve from

[1] This is not to be found in the *Bhagavad Gita*; cf., however, VI, 29 & 32, with one of which, it is possible, Gandhiji confused it.

us. During my Comilla visit, I have seen two villages which are predominantly occupied by the so-called untouchables. Had I not been told, I should not have known that the people I saw were untouchables. I could see no difference between them and the others who were standing with them there. They eat and drink and think and feel even as we do. If a sum-total of their virtues and vices and the privileges they are denied were to be made and compared with our virtues and vices and the privileges we enjoy and deny to them, I am sure in God's books we should find our debit side far heavier than theirs. Let us then think no more of any single person on earth as an untouchable. That is the lesson that comes down to us form South Africa too. A just Nemesis has descended upon us there. Just as we are treating our brothers here, our kith and kin are being treated as pariahs and Bhangis in South Africa. The moment we purge ourselves of the sin, the moment we are free from the curse of untouchability, you will find the shackles dropping off our countrymen in South Africa.

I dare not touch the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity. It has passed out of human hands, and has been transferred to God's hands alone. Even as Draupadi, forsaken by her husbands, forsaken by men and gods alike, asked God and God alone to come to her help, and God gave her unfailing help, so it is with me and so should it be with every one of us. Let us ask for help from God, the All-Powerful and tell Him that we His tiny creatures have failed to do what we ought to do, we hate one another, we distrust one another, we fly at one another's throat and we even become assassins. Let our heart's cry then ascend to His throne, and let us wash His feet with tears of blood and ask Him to purge our hearts of all hatred in us. We are disgracing His earth, His name and this sacred land by distrusting and fearing one another. Although we are sons and daughters of the same motherland, although we eat the same food, we have no room for one another. Let us ask God in all humility to give us sense, to give us wisdom.

You have listened to me with the greatest attention. I have given you also what I don't willingly give to the audience—an English speech, and that also at some length. I now want my reward. I want you tomorrow to come to the Abhoy Ashram and denude it of every yard of khaddar in its store, if my message, the message of the paupers of India, has gone home to you. There you will see a band of workers working for them and for you. They are the link between you

and the villagers. They are trying to do their level best to serve the motherland. I want you to put your hands into your pockets and give me what you have and what you can and what you will, not out of shame, not out of any pressure that you may feel becuase you are in this meeting, not out of patronage for me or affection for me. I shall use your affection for other work if you will give me your affection. But I want you to give me what you can and what you have for the sake of paupers, for the sake of those who do not even get one square meal a day. If you are satisfied that this organization is being worked well, and with ability and self-sacrifice, and if you are convinced that it is not sinful to wear khaddar and it cannot be wrong to wear khaddar woven and spun by your starving countrymen, and that it is right and proper and necessary to do so, you will give your coppers and silver and gold, whatever you may have.

If you have any suspicion about it, any doubts in the matter, I ask you to restrain your hands and not to give me a single pie. If not today, at least on some near date, you will be convinced of the message. But if you are convinced that this is the right thing—although you may not have the strength to carry out the message fully into practice—you will support this great, aye the greatest, national industry. There is no better way of industrializing the villages of India than the spinning-wheel. No man has yet been able to show a better or more effective substitute—I say even an equal substitute—than the spinning-wheel for the millions of Indians who are idle for at least four months in the year, who are starving for want of a square meal, and for whom even one anna a day means a fortune. I plead on behalf of them. May God help you to understand this simple message.

You will recall that last time I was in Bengal, I collected for the All-Bengal Deshbandhu Memorial. That was for what is now the Seva Sadan. I announced then that, in due course, I would collect for the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial. You know that its object was to promote the message of the spinning-wheel. You will thus be contributing to the Memorial by contributing to khaddar.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 7-1-1927*; also Young India*, 13-1-1927

15. SWAMIJI AS I KNEW HIM

My first acquaintance with Swamiji was when he was Mahatma Munshiram, and that by letter. He was then Governor of Kangri Gurukul, his great original contribution to education. He was not satisfied

with the orthodox Western method. He wanted his boys to be saturated with Vedic teaching, and he taught through Hindi, not English. He wanted them to be and remain *brahmacharis* during their training. He had inspired his boys to contribute to the fund that was then being collected for the Satyagrahis of South Africa. And he wanted them to do so by themselves labouring as coolies for hire; for, was it not a coolies' fight in South Africa? The boys rose to the occasion, earned full wages and sent them to me. The letter he wrote to me about this incident was written in Hindi. I was addressed as 'my dear brother'. It endeared me to Mahatma Munshiram. We had never met each other before.

Andrews was the link between us. He was anxious that whenever I returned home, I should make the acquaintance of what I used tocall his trinity—the Poet, Principal Rudra and Mahatma Munshiram.

From the time of the receipt of that letter, we became brothers-in-arms. We met each other in 1915 at his favourite Gurukul and with each meeting we came closer and knew each other better. His love of ancient India, Sanskrit and Hindi was remarkable. He was undoubtedly a non-co-operator before non-co-operation was born. He was impatient to gain swaraj. He hated untouchability and was anxious to raise the status of the untouchables. He could not brook any restriction upon their freedom.

When the Rowlatt agitation was started, he was among the very first to hail it. He wrote a very warm letter to me. But the suspension of Satyagraha after the Amritsar and Viramgam tragedies he could not understand. From that period our differences commenced but they never once disturbed the brotherly relations that subsisted between us. The differences showed to me his childlike nature. He blurted out the truth as he knew it without regard to consequences. He was daring to a fault. I observed more and more the temperamental differences beetween us as time progressed but they only proved to me the goodness of the soul in him. To think audibly is no crime, it is a virtue. It is the hallmark of truth. Swamiji thought audibly.

The Bardoli decision broke his heart. He despaired of me. His open protest was most energetic. His private letters to me were still more so but with the emphasis on the differences there was an equal emphasis on love. He was not satisfied with an avowal of love in mere letters. He sought me out as opportunity offered and explained his own position, tried to understand mine. But the real reason, as it seems

to me, for seeking me out was to assure me, as if any such assurance was necessary, of undiminished love for me as for a younger brother.

My remarks about the Arya Samaj and its great author and my references to him hurt him deeply; but our friendship was strong enough to bear the strain. He could not understand that it was possible to reconcile my general estimate of the Maharshi with the quality of forgiveness that he had in a boundless measure for personal injury . His devotion to the Maharshi was too great to brook any criticism of him or his teachings.

He has been severely criticized and maligned in the Mussalman Press for his *shuddhi* movement. I myself could not accept his standpoint. I do not accept it even now. But, in my opinion, he had a complete defence of his own position from his own standpoint. *Shuddhi* is entitled to the same toleration that is claimed for *tabligh* so long as either remains within moral and legitimate bounds. But this is not the occasion for entering into an examination of that highly controversial question. Both the *tabligh* and the *shuddhi* which is a reply to the former, have to undergo a radical change. Progress of liberal study of religions of the world is bound to revolutionize the existing clumsy method of proselytizing which looks to the form rather than the substance. It is the transference of allegiance from one fold to another and the mutual decrying of rival faiths which gives rise to mutual hatred.

Swamiji's assassination can be turned to good account by us if we both Hindus and Mussalmans could possibly realize the deeper meaning of *shuddhi*.

I cannot close the reminiscences of the life of a great reformer without recalling his last visit to the Satyagraha Ashram only a few months ago. Let me assure my Mussalman friends that he was no hater of Mussalmans. He undoubtedly distrusted many Mussalmans. But he bore them no ill will. He thought that Hindus were cowed down and he wanted them to be brave and be able to defend themselves and their honour. In this connection he told me that he was much misunderstood and that he was absolutely innocent of many things that were said against him. He told me he had several threatening letters. He was warned by friends not to travel alone. But this man of faith said, " What protection shall I seek but of God? Not a blade of grass perishes without His will. I know therefore that nothing can happen to me so long as He wishes me to serve through this body."

During this stay of his he spoke to the boys and girls of the Ashram school. He said the best protection of Hinduism must come from within, from self-purification. He put the greatest emphasis on the need of *brahmacharya* for the building of character and body.

Young India, 6-1-1927

16. NOTES

SHRADDHANAND MEMORIAL

It is in the fitness of things that there should be an appeal on behalf of the Hindu Mahasabha for funds to perpetuate the memory of the late Swami Shraddhanandji. I congratulate the Sabha on having decided upon inviting collections for carrying on the work for which the Swamiji chiefly lived after his sannyasa. This was removal of untouchability, *shuddhi* and *sangathan*. The appeal has been made for five lakhs for untouchability and as many for *shuddhi* and *sangathan*. For my own part I still remain unconvinced about the necessity of the *shuddhi* movement, taking *shuddhi* in the sense it is generally understood. *Shuddhi* of sinners is a perpetual inward performance. *Shuddhi* of those who can be identified neither as Hindus nor as Mussalmans or who have been recently declared converts but who do not know even the meaning of conversion and who want to be known definitely as Hindus is not conversion but *prayaschitta* or penance. The third aspect of *shuddhi* is conversion properly so called. And I question its use in this age of growing toleration and enlightenment. I am against conversion whether it is known as *shuddhi* by Hindus, *tabligh* by Mussalmans or proselytizing by Christians. Conversion is a heart-process known only to and by God. It must be left to itself. But this is no place for airing my views on conversion. Those who believe in it have a perfect right to follow their own course without let or hindrance, so long as it is kept within proper limits, i.e., so long as there is no force or fraud or material inducement and so long as the parties are free agents and of mature age and understanding. Those, therefore, who believe in *shuddhi* have a perfect right to subscribe to the appeal.

Sangathan is really a sound movement. Every community is entitled, indeed bound, to organize itself if it is to live as a separate entity. I have kept myself aloof from it because of my peculiar ideas

of organization. I believe in quality rather than quantity. The fashion nowadays is to rely upon quantity even at the cost of quality. Quantity has its place no doubt in social and political economy. Only I am ill-fitted for organizing quantity in the way it is done at present. Therefore, for me the appeal only for funds for the removal of untouchability has a value. It comes with a force all its own. For reform of Hinduism and for its real protection, removal of untouchability is the greatest thing. It is all-inclusive and, therefore, if this the blackest spot on Hinduism is removed, you have automatically all that *shuddhi* and *sangathan* can be expected to yield. And I say this, not because of the vast number of untouchables whom every Hindu should seek to embrace as one of his own but because consciousness of having broken down a barbarous and ancient custom and consequent purity it necessarily implies gives a strength which is irresistible. Removal of untouchability therefore is a spiritual process. Swamiji was a living embodiment of that reformation because he had no half measures about it, because he would not compromise, he would give no quarter. If he could have had his way, he would have made short work of untouchability in Hinduism. He would have opened every well and every temple to every untouchable on conditions of absolute equality and he would have braved all consequences. I can conceive no more fitting memorial to Swami Shraddhanandji than that every Hindu should henceforth purge his heart of the uncleanliness which untouchability undoubtedly in and deal with the untouchable as with his own kith and kin. His monetary contribution to the memorial, therefore, will, in my opinion, be merely an earnest of his irrevocable resolution to root out the evil and cast it away once and for all from Hinduism.

The 9th day of January is the day appointed for doing public and religious reverence to the memory of the Swamiji. I hope that the ceremony will be performed in every city and every village. But the ceremony will lose its real significance, if at the same time those who take part in it do not purge themselves of the taint of untouchability. Every untouchable should, therefore, take part in the ceremony; and what a great thing it would be if every temple were thrown open to the untouchables on that day. If an organized effort is made, the collections could be finished without the slightest difficulty before the sun sets on the 9th January.

KHADI BOARD OF STUDIES

In selecting the Board of Studies the Council of the All-India Spinners' Association had included Dr. Profulla Chandra Ghosh's name in the Board subject to his acceptance of the office. But as his acceptance was not received owing to his absence from his head-quarters in time for publication, the name was withdrawn at the last moment. Dr. Ghosh has now kindly accepted the office. The reader will be glad to learn that the Board will have the assistance of one who has made a study of and has practical experience of the science of charkha and khadi.

PRIZE ESSAY ON HAND-SPINNING

The Prize Essay on Hand-Spinning and Hand-weaving issued by the All-India Spinners' Association and written by Professor S.V. Puntambekar and Sjt. N. S. Varadachari is a publication which I commend to the attention both of the khadi worker and the sceptic. The khadi worker will find many things in this volume occupying 235 pages of bold type in octavo size, which he perhaps had not known before. It has four chapters. The first gives the history of hand-spinning and hand- weaving in India before the advent of the British. The second deals with the complete ruin of hand-spinning, the great-est national industry, and almost complete ruin of hand-weaving, the second great national industry. The third deals with the possibilities of hand-spinning and hand-weaving and incidentally sets up a compa-rison between mill-spinning and mill-weaving and hand-spinning and hand-weaving. And the fourth deals with exclusion or boycott of all foreign cloth through the spinning-wheel. The authors give facts and figures for every statement made by them.

The price of the book is one rupee. Copies can be had from the office of the All-India Spinners' Association, Ahmedabad, or from Mr. S. Ganesan, Current Thought Press, Triplicane, Madras, by send-ing one rupee and two annas to cover postage.

Young India, 6-1-1927

17. THE CONGRESS

When, in Cawnpore, the Assam delegates gave the invitation to hold the Congress of 1926 at Gauhati and the Congress accepted the invitation I was filled with misgivings. I felt that Assam was too far away, too unorganized and too poor to shoulder the heavy burden of

holding a Congress session. Gauhati has a population of only 16,000. No place with such a small population has, before Gauhati, had the temerity to invite the Congress. Gauhati, however, beat all previous records, and in an incredibly short space of time erected, in the midst of surroundings of great natural beauty on the banks of the great Brahmaputra, a city under khadi canvas. The huge Congress pavilion itself was made of pure Assam khadi. The Reception Committee had to import material and men from outside in order to provide for the varied tastes of delegates and visitors from different provinces. Leaders' quarters were isolated from the delegates' quarters. When I resented the isolation, I was told that it was not done intentionally, but it had to be done because there was not enough ground available in one single spot to provide accommodation for all. The construction of the cottages was incredibly simple,—Assam bamboo, Assam mud, Assam straw, Assam khadi and Assam labour were responsible for the very simple but artistic huts erected on the Brahmaputra bank. And as Mr. Phookan led me to one of these beautiful huts, he said,"Now it must delight your heart in that we are giving you not a palace miscalled hut, as you had remarked in Belgaum[1], but we are giving you a proper hut, only we cannot claim any merit for it because it is a virtue of necessity; for we could have given you nothing more, nothing less." I was, however, more than glad for this virtue of necessity. Let not the reader however imagine for one moment that there was in any degree whatsoever less comfort in these artistic huts than in the palatial-looking structure that was provided in Belgaum. All the other arrangements so far as I gather were in keeping with this artistic simplicity.

The address of the Chairman[2] of the Reception Committee was equally simple and equally artistic and therefore naturally brief.

Proceedings commenced punctually at the advertised time. No time was lost in ceremonial functions. In a few minutes Mr. Phookan's brief address was finished, the President[3] amidst shouts of applause walked to the rostrum and read his address. The suppressed gloom cast over the assembly through the news of the assassination of Swami Shraddhanandji was no doubt there, but it was not allowed to be made visible. The delegates knew that Swamiji had died a hero's

[1] The venue of the Congress session in 1924, over which Gandhiji presided
[2] Phookan
[3] S. Srinivasa Iyengar

death and it therefore demanded no tears but action and so the business part of the Congress went on as if nothing had happened. The ceremonial was severely cut off including the usual presidential procession. The address of the President for the matters it covers is brief enough. I pass by the references to the Councils and the defence of the Swarajist attitude which occupies half of the address.

The constructive programme has its due share given to it. The place of honour is assigned to khaddar. The President trusts that the All-India Spinners' Association will become a nation-wide labouror ganization which, if it cannot be identical with swaraj, will go some way towards it. It can become that if every Congressman and every Congresswoman will do his or her duty.

> The spinning-wheel has by its persuasiveness affected to a visible extent the national psychology, and has lent a new dignity to our manhood and womanhood.

This was more than exemplified by the enthusiastic manner in which the amendment in the franchise clause regarding khaddar was accepted by the Congress in spite of stubborn opposition offered to it. No wonder that the President considers that "khaddar is at once the radiant symbol of our self-reliance and of our power of resistance".

In the constructive programme the second place is given to prohibition and the President correctly pleads guilty to the charge that we have not lately paid much attention to the question of total prohibition. He says,

> The movement will gain in moral grandeur if we successfully organize the will of the nation in that behalf.

He remarks that

> No minister has during the past six years been found, and I doubt whether a minister will now be found, to be courageous enough to bring in a bill for total prohibition and to resign his office on its rejection or disallowance.

There is something somewhere utterly wrong if, in a place like India which is overwhelmingly dry, ministers are unwilling to provide what is the nation's due, namely, total prohibition. There is as much flaw in the argument that it is an interference with the right of the people, as there would be in the argument that the laws prohibiting theft interfere with the right of thieving. A thief steals all earthly possessions, a drunkard steals his own and his neighbour's honour. It

surprises me to discover that the President has failed to suggest the obvious method of providing for the deficit of revenue. There is a huge military expenditure, so much of which is utterly useless and based upon distrust of the nation. It is capable of reduction by more than 25 crores which is the revenue from drinks and drugs.

Untouchability comes next. He does not think that it is necessary to wait for swaraj till untouchability is removed. He cites the capital instance, in his favour, of the United States of America achieving freedom long before the abolition of a very real and widespread slavery. But he hastens to add,

> We must all agree that we must make an end of untouchability, apart from any question of swaraj and whether we ever win swaraj or not.

And then this Brahmin philosopher lays down that

> the higher philosophy of Hinduism as well as the history of the religious dissidence in our country emboldens me to claim that the rule regarding untouchability has neither part nor lot with the indestructible soul of Hinduism. Judged by any test humanitarian, rational or spiritual, patriotic or democratic, we cannot with decency uphold in Hinduism the dogma of an immutable untouchability. It clouds our vision, limits our experience, hardens our heart, narrows our sphere of responsibility and prevents our ideals of justice, love and sincerity from being perfect.

I congratulate the President for this eloquent and severe condemnation of the curse that has descended upon Hinduism.

The next heading is labour and unemployment. I am inclined to think that this needs more diligent study than appears to have been given to it. It requires, in my opinion, considerable revision. I suggest that the charkha movement with all its implications provides the largest form of relief to the unemployment of millions.

The currency policy of the Government has also claimed a paragraph in his address. The President ‘cordially’ welcomes the formation of the Indian currency League and trusts that it will adequately educate public opinion on the question of the ratio, the gold standard, gold currency and other cognate questions. He says:

> But I am certain the League will be able to achieve nothing, either by debate and vote in the Assembly or by protest outside, unless it comes into line with the Congress and unless its members harness themselves to the dynamic politics of the Congress.

Indian States have also found a paragraph in the address.

Greater India naturally follows the paragraph on Indian States.

> The status of Indians abroad, whether in South Africa or Kenya, in Fiji or Guiana, in Ceylon or Malaya, in America or Australia, depends inevitably upon the status of Indians in their own land; and swaraj for India depends in its turn upon the brave and unfaltering spirit of our kith and kin across the seas.

I suppose the presidential suggestion " of the holding once in a way of a session of the Congress in South Africa" is merely a pious wish. The subject deserves better examination than it has received. I presume the absence of any reference to Mr. Andrews's signal services is an unintentional oversight due to the many local pre-occupations of the very busy President.

The Asiatic Federation comes in too for a few lines. Mr. Iyengar deplores that "we have too long neglected the possibilities of a cultural and business union with all Asiatic countries." I venture to suggest that the cultural union is being sufficiently attended to by our great Poet and the business union by the great commercial firms.

The irrepressible optimism of the President is to be observed in the paragraphs upon Communalism and Nationalism. He says:

> I am confident that wherever intensive propaganda, sincere and persuasive, clearly analyses the fallacies underlying it, communalism will go to the wall. Happily, prejudice and suspicion are not deep-seated amongst Indians and communalism is but their offspring.

Under the heading 'Plea for Tolerance', one reads the following pregnant sentences:

> Though each community should be free to make conversions, no resort to conversion is really any longer useful or necessary. For the lives of the best and most pious men in each community are a fitter and more effective propaganda in that behalf than definite missionary effort. But wherever the latter is made, it should be open and general and neither secret nor directed to the converting of particular men or women. Let us realize that no great and long-established religion gains in truth, beauty or spirituality with any increase in its census figures.

He winds up the paragraph by quoting the following beautiful passage from Ashoka's inscriptions:

> He who does reverence to his own sect while disparaging the sects of others wholly from attachment to his own, with intent to enhance the splendour of his own sect, in reality by such conduct inflicts the severest injury on his own sect.

The President is evidently against communal representation. He says:

> That much abused expression "communal representation" is a misnomer; for all the communities are equally interested in all public questions and in the country's problems and in particular solutions of them.

Again he says:

> Let us realize clearly that to uphold justice between man and man is to uphold justice between community and community. As a safeguard a negative rule against members of any community or caste monopolizing offices is all that is required.

The President remarks:

> The intrusion into politics of religion, and very often of dogmatic religion, must be resisted as a primitive or mediaeval idea, born of theocracies, and disastrous alike to religion and to politics.

But he adds:

> I do not speak of morality or of that spiritual quality which is common to all religions; for thereby politics and organizations are cleansed and made sweet and wholesome.

Sjt. Iyengar adds:

> Let us not forget, in the fever of political controversy, that the strength of each religion is derived from God and rooted in the souls of Prahlads. Not all the tortures of a Torquemada[1], nor all the burning at the stakes, nor all the forms of persecution have been able to destroy the mystic quality of the human soul. Neither Hinduism nor Islam derives or requires strength either from the present or from any future Government. Both stand far, far above swaraj which is not comparable to them. Neither foreign governments nor self-governments, neither democracies nor autocracies, can destroy that seed of faith which is in every one of us, that inspired interpretation of the universe to which one clings for guidance and solace in this world and for salvation in the next.

The last three pages of the address are devoted to a fervent appeal for unity.

> There can be only two parties in India, the party of the Government and its adherents that obstruct swaraj, and the party that fights visibly and unceasingly for swaraj . . . I deprecate the philosophy of individualism in a supreme struggle for freedom against a powerful people with their trained bureaucracy and with unlimited material resources. On a question whether a

[1] Thomas Torquemada (1420-1498); Inquisitor-General of Spain who is said to have condemned more than 10,000 people to be burned at the stake

> particular course is wise or unwise, will succeed or fail, will accelerate swaraj or retard it, to make one's opinion or judgment or feeling a matter of conscience is false philosophy. On a point of religion, of morality, of honour, one's own conscience must be the arbiter, but in transacting the affairs of a country, when a decision is not irreligious, immoral or dishonourable, I fail to see how we may rely on our right to differ from one another and yet uphold the discipline necessary for an organization fighting for swaraj.

The conclusion is in keeping with the fervency of the appeal and the deep emotion that underlies every line of this address. He says:

> Swaraj is not an intellectual but an emotional proposition. We must cherish it in our hearts with unquenchable faith. . . . We must become possessed by a passion for swaraj that is not warped by fallacies and impulses, that will stand for a uniform and rapid corporate advance in serried masses, that will know no obstacles, that will not wax and wane with the seasons, that will not be daunted by imprisonments or depressed by failures.

Let me hope that the appeal will find an echo in the hearts of us all.

The resolutions do not require an elaborate examination. Besides the condolence resolutions, there is of course the Council resolution for the guidance of Council-wallas, then the resolutions about South Africa and Kenya, the Bengal detenus and the Gurdwara prisoners. The khaddar clause in the constitution is, in my opinion, altered for the better. The ceremonial wear had become the laughing stock of all. Habitual wear of khaddar is the right thing if khaddar wear should find a place in our franchise qualifications. It is to be hoped that every Congress worker will enforce this resolution in his own person and induce others to do likewise. But I must deal more fully in a subsequent issue with many other things that were discussed in the Subjects Committee in connection with the resolutions withdrawn or rejected.

Young India, 6-1-1927

18. INTERVIEW TO FREE PRESS OF INDIA

COMILLA,
January 6, 1927

With reference to the statement[1] issued by Mr. T. C. Goswami[2] on the habitual khadi wear resolution passed by the Congress at Gauhati the following interview was granted to a representative of the Free Press of India by Mahatma Gandhi:

I tender my congratulations to Mr. Goswami upon his frank statement on khaddar. It should clear the atmosphere of cant, hypocrisy and humbug. Khaddar must stand or fall on its own merits. Mr. Goswami betrays a mental attitude which no doubt makes any mention of khaddar repugnant to him. His is not an objection to khaddar as a fetish but it is an objection to khaddar even as an economic factor, because he says that khaddar may be even an economic waste and permanent exclusion of foreign cloth may not be a desirable thing. If I thought like Mr. Goswami I should also object to the khaddar clause as strongly as he does. The change from ceremonial to habitual wear was not due to my prompting. But I have no hesitation in endorsing the change as desirable and even necessary for the growth of a true national life. Politics apart from nationalism I do not understand. I consider boycott of foreign cloth not merely as a political expedient but as a permanent duty. I regard it as immediately possible in terms of khaddar if we have the will.

I go a step further and say that boycott of foreign cloth through khaddar is the only thing the nation is capable of achieving within a measurable distance of time, and since the economic aspect of khaddar includes organization of the whole nation towards one *single* effort, it has tremendous political consequences. If, therefore, it is right and proper to restrict the membership of the Congress to those who desire swaraj and to exclude those who wish to retain the present British domination, it is equally right to restrict the membership to those who desire and work for the boycott of foreign cloth, through active, continuous and persistent khaddar production and sale. It is the beauty of khaddar and not its limitation, as Mr. Goswami suggests, that it is no respecter of persons and that it can adorn the body of a government spy as much as that of a saintly servant of India, whoever

[1] Not reproduced here
[2] Member of the Legislative Assembly from Bengal

he may be. For the nation includes all the highest and the lowest, the healthy and the unhealthy, the good as well as the wicked. But it should be the privilege of the good to reform the wicked and serve them.

Forward, 7-1-1927

19. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, COMILLA

January 6, 1927

. . . Next he addressed a big gathering of ladies, where he said that they must have swaraj, which meant *Ramarajya* which again could not come without Sita. He exhorted all to attain the virtues of Sita and to wear clothes made by their own hands as Sita used to do, and also to follow the examples of Sita by leading a simple and pure life. He concluded by saying that the charkha was the only cure for pauperism.

When he appealed for funds for the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial, the ladies contributed some money and some of them even gave away their gold ornaments.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 8-1-1927

20. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

[KASHI,]
Saturday [*January 8, 1927*][1]

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. It is good that you are studying with Valjibhai's help. You will learn much from him.

I do not know why you have been relieved of your teaching work, for I could not understand the reasons from the letter in which the news was conveyed to me. You yourself should be bold and ask the reason. I thought that the reason must have been explained to you. I remained unconcerned by the news because, irrespective of whether or not you teach, you continue to stay in the Ashram, and the salary, or whatever you name it, will continue to be paid to you. The responsibility for you is mine. You should not get angry with the teachers . They have to run the institution, and so they may act as they think proper. But you have a right to know the reason, and you shall know it.

[1] As in the printed source

You should now get ready to learn spinning. You should learn everything that goes with it, that is to say, repairing the spinning-wheel, recognizing the different varieties of cotton, ginning, pressing, carding, spinning, moistening the yarn, making skeins, joining thebroken thread—all these processes. You should learn to make a *mal*[1] and to wind the *sadi*[2] round the spindle. Moreover, wherever you go you should learn what else you can besides these processes, and as part of this programme of studies you should improve your proficiency in Hindi and Sanskrit. In studying Sanskrit, you should know the meaning of every verse in the *Gita* along with its syntax. And of course, you should learn to spin on the *takli.* There was a telegram from Karachi to say that your name has been sent to the Board. I am happy.

Write to me regularly and go on working very cheerfully. Now, from the 2nd to the 8th I shall be in Gondia, Nagpur, Wardha, Akola and Amaravati. I am not certain about the towns on the programme. It will be better to address your letters to Wardha.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, pp. 45-6

21. COMPLICATIONS OF UNTOUCHABILITY

I publish in this issue Shri Govindji Jadavdas's letter under the heading which he has himself given to it, viz., "The Downfall of Hinduism". The purport of his letter is this: If untouchability is to be removed, then why have separate schools, temples and wells for the untouchables? This argument is certainly not pointless. Similar problems have arisen and still arise in South Africa. I had raised the argument myself, in South Africa, that setting up of separate schools for the Indians means prolonging the life of untouchability. Only those who have themselves suffered can realize the pain of other sufferers; in the same way I can appreciate Shri Govindji's unhappiness.

But where I realized that it would be considered foolish on my part to ignore the existence of a thing which does exist, I did my work

[1] Belt or cord passing round the wheel and the spindle

[2] Cotton thread moistened with gum

with full realization of the discrimination which was there. So I accepted the proposal of having separate schools. I had also accepted [in S. Africa] the proposal for separate first and second-class compartments in trains for Indians. Like Govindji I too had opposed such a discrimination there. But when the mere existence of a community was in danger, I accepted such a discrimination which would virtually lead to lightening the discrimination in spite of its continuance. For example, the Indians could formerly travel only by the third class; as a result of the agitation an order was issued allowing them to travel in first and second-class compartments. Simultaneously it was decided to have for the Indians separate first and second-class coaches. We accepted this provision even after we had opposed discrimination. The government authorities can make arrangements [for common coaches] but how can others be forced to sit with us?

I yielded to this line of thinking and came to the conclusion that as long as the *Antyajas* are not able to make use of common temples, etc., it is better to have for them separate institutions by which they may benefit, rather than totally to deprive them of the amenity. Theoretically, untouchability has disappeared. Still many are not yet ready to discard it altogether in practice. What should the friends of the untouchables do so long as such a situation persists? How else can they prove their sincerity of purpose? The answer should be that it can be done by constructing temples, etc., for the untouchables.

Shri Govindji says that such temples, etc., may be built, but why label them with unpleasant words, "for the untouchables only"? No one has assigned such unpleasant labels. The temples, etc., which are being built are used by those who have made donations towards their cost as well as by other friends of the untouchables. From this viewpoint the institutions built for the benefit of the untouchables are in fact for the general public. But the untouchables have the first claim upon them. In the matter of using these institutions, the untouchables are given the first preference, and their requirements looked to first.

Though I can fully realize the unhappiness of an *Antyaja* like Shri Govindji, I wish him to believe that the Antyaj Directory[1] and the underlying motive to build temples, etc., is pure, laudable and in the interests of the *Antyajas*.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-1-1927

[1] *Vide* "Antyaja Directory", 12-12-1926.

22. *INTERVIEW TO BHAGWANDAS*[1]

BANARAS,
January 9, 1927

BHAGWANDAS: Mahatmaji, I wish very much to know what you think of certain measures which seem to me very helpful, or indeed indispensable, for the welfare and progress of India in political as well as other respects. I have been trying my feeble best to place them before the public for the last six years, but more or less in vain. If they could secure your approval, the country would look at them with more consideration, and might attempt to put them into operation, for the force of your *tapasya* (asceticism and self-denial) is very great, and the country rightly places great faith in you because of your great selflessness. I put these measures into the form of proposals for Resolutions, and requested my dear friend, Shri Shiva Prasad Gupta, to try to get them placed before the Gauhati Congress. But nothing more could be done than to place copies in the hands of the members of the A.I. Congress Committee. With your permission I will put the same in the form of questions to you.

First of all, do you think, or not, that the essence of true swaraj, true self-government, is that all the laws should be made by the elected representatives of the people, and that these elected representatives should embody the higher self, and not the lower self, of the people, that is to say, they should be the wisest, the most experienced, the most unselfish and philanthropic persons available?

MAHATMA GANDHI: This also is among the essential features.

What other essential features are there, if any?

My ideal is that every person should realize dharma. In that case, there will be no need left for any representatives. That is the ideal swaraj. There are no rulers and no ruled in that swaraj. no government servants; all are the servants of all. This is the ideal swaraj. If this ideal swaraj is kept in view, mistakes would be avoided, or, at least, minimized. It is certain that such ideal swaraj can never be attained; but we will be able to make a near approach to it.

This is no doubt the highest kind of swaraj. Apparently the Republic of the Uttara-Kuru as described in the *Mahabharata* was something like this.

But the inhabitants of that happy land were all supermen and superwomen, god-and-goddess-like *Jivanmuktas* and *Yoga-Siddhas*, perfect, final, men and women,

[1] The original Hindi report of the interview was published in *Aaj,* 19-2-1927.

insan-ul-ka-mil, mard-wa-zan-i-mam ("Be ye perfect, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect"), according to the tradition of that epic. In view, obviously, of our present condition, however, you yourself said at the Ahmedabad Congress of 1921 that you could lead this country to Dominion Home Rule. Would not that be the preliminary or intermediate form of swaraj which would be suitable for us now?

Yes.

There must be legislatures in such swaraj?

Yes.

Representatives would have to be elected for them?

Yes.

These representatives should be the wisest, most experienced, most self-less, most philanthropic persons available?

Yes.

Electors should always keep this ideal, this guiding principle, in view?

Yes.

Should this guiding principle be followed in making elections for District Boards, Municipal Boards, and other local elective bodies, as well as for the Congress Committees of all grades?

Certainly.

Is this guiding principle recognized by, is this ideal spread among, the Indian public?

To some extent.

Looking at the elections made to the Congress Committee and the various elective bodies, what inference can we draw as to the extent to which this principle is recognized and acted on? Is the extent very small, or sufficient?

It is less than it ought to be.

This same principle should guide the elections to the legislative bodies, should it not?

It should guide all the elections that are made nowadays.

Has sufficient effort been made by leaders, individually, or by the Congress as a body, to spread this ideal among the public?

It would not be enough to say yes or no in reply to this question. I believe that the present atmosphere is not favourable for this purpose.

You said before that the principle had been recognized to some extent by the public. What was the cause of the spread of the ideal to that small extent?

So far the effort has been individual. When the atmosphere becomes favourable, then all persons begin to act according to such ideals without any effort.

Should effort be made to create such a favourable atmosphere or not?

It should be made unceasingly.

What kind of effort would be helpful?

The number of the individuals who make this effort should increase constantly. And there is, and has always been, only one way to bring about this increase, viz., that those who believe in this ideal should cling to it in the face of all difficulties.

That is to say, individuals should spread the ideal by teaching and preaching, in speech and writing?

Individuals should preach by the example of their conduct. Speeches and writings are also of help. Conduct includes speaking and writing.

I entirely agree that preaching has no force if the preacher does not act up to his own advice. But while you have been putting on khaddar and working the charkha yourself, you have also, side by side, with the setting of this personal example, been preaching them very extensively and very diligently. And that is why they are spreading. So too you have been preaching assiduously and widely various measures connected with non-violent non-co-operation. Do you not think that in this very important matter also it is very necessary to give advice to and remind the public persistently as thus: "Whenever you have to elect representatives, you should elect persons of such-and-such qualifications"? Without such advice, will not the general public remain in darkness, without any guide, in this exceedingly important matter?

This question is right. But really the answer to it is included in my previous answer. I regard advising and preaching as part of conduct generally. I do not give a separate place to precept because when a person cannot set a good example his precept is useless, and often becomes harmful. And he who keeps his conduct right does as a fact give advice also whenever there is an opportunity.

But so far as I am aware, you have not advised the Indian public as yet, in your speeches and writings, as to the qualifications they should look for in the persons they elect.

Not once but many times have I given this advice, in speech and writing.

Should I find writings on the subject in *Young India*?

Yes.

I will search. In the meanwhile, will you kindly tell me what means should be employed, what rules followed, to secure properly qualified representatives? So far as I can see, the general complaint is that the representatives chosen are not of the right

quality, either in the self-governed countries of the West or in present-day India under the new election system. This is the one chief and serious defect in current systems of self-government, is it not?

And this is the reason why I strongly oppose Council-entry. So long as the people do not realize *swatva* (i.e., spirituality), so long as their intelligence is not awake, so long it will not be possible to secure purity in elections by any laws. And this purity has a large part in my present efforts. From the very beginning my endeavour has been directed towards the increase of the power, the soul-force of the people, by self-purification and *tapasya* (self-denial, *riyazat, nafs-kushi*). By such *tapasya* their intelligence will be purified and rectified. Because of this, the persons who were elected for Municipal Boards, etc., after the commencement of the non-co-operation movement, were good persons, and they were elected without trouble and expense. When that atmosphere disappeared, confusion began.

By the ancient tradition of this land, *tapasya* (self-denial, *riyazat, zohd*) and *vidya* (right knowledge) are two distinguishable (though more or less interdependent) things, and only by the combination of both is achieved that true humanity, true spirituality, or realization of God or Self or *Brahman* or Allah or *Brahmanhood*, or Kamal, however it may be called, which is what I believe you mean by *swatva* (selfness). In the Puranic story we read that Ravana and others made great *tapasya*, but the result of that was tyrannical earthly power and excessive luxury to them, for some time, and groaning to the rest of the world. They made *tapasya* without *vidya* (right knowledge). What I feel is that in the atmosphere created by the N.C.O., there was the element of *tapasya*, but not of *vidya* (emotion and enthusiasm and self-denial but not clear intelligence and right knowledge of the essential feature of the object to be striven for); and that this was the reason why the atmosphere could not gain permanence, but dispersed in two or three years. Do you think this belief of mine to be right or wrong?

It is generally right. A little modification is needed. Our *tapasya* at that time was not sufficient in amount. Had it been sufficient, we should certainly have achieved the *vidya* also. The Lord has said in the *Gita* that God gives right understanding to the person of firm devotion.

I too believe so, but devotion brings such wholesome fruit only when it is rightly directed, when its aim, its object, its ideal, is the Right Object, not otherwise. The *Gita* also says: "They who worship other gods go to the other gods; they who worship *Me* (the Higher Self) come to *Me*." Also : "There is no purifier like unto knowledge." My belief has therefore always been that from the very beginning of

tapasya (self-denying effort), right knowledge of the essential features of the true Goal is also absolutely indispensable; otherwise the soul-force, the power, of whatever kind, gathered by *tapasya*, will certainly err away into wrong paths, as that of Ravana, etc. Is that belief of mine wrong or right?

Entirely right.

Just for this very reason have I been endeavouring, from the very beginning of the N.C.O. movement, that side by side with the *tapasya* (self-sacrifice) of N.C.O., appropriate *vidya* (right knowledge) should be particularly imparted to the people, by the Congress and the leaders, as to the *essential* of this intermediate swaraj, i.e., Dominion Home Rule, viz., the election of *duly qualified* representatives. Was this wish of mine wrong?

If it meant that any *yojana* (detailed constitution) should be placed before the people, then I have arrived at the opinion that it would be of no use. But it is quite right and proper that such knowledge should be given to the people, that they should be so awakened as will make them able to elect duly qualified representatives only. What the qualifications of the representatives should be—I do not like to fix this now. All this should be left to the intelligence of the electors.

In respect of the charkha, the cultivation of cotton, the storing of yarn, the weaving of cloth, the selling of it, etc., you yourself and through your co-workers, are constantly giving instruction and information to the people in much detail. Do you not think it necessary to give to the people, similarly, in respect of this very important matter even some little specific indication as to the marks by which the fitness of representatives might be recognized? Even such self-evident truths, as that two and two make four, have to be taught to children with much labour. That the charkha should be worked in leisure hours is also an almost self-evident proposition; yet this also, and with all the labour you have spent on it, is not yet so widespread among the people as it ought to be. Now then can you leave for the unaided understanding of the electors the decision of the fitness of representatives, without any instruction and guidance? If you think it undesirable to fix any age-limit, you might give indications in some other respects at least.

I have written something in this respect, and will write as I find time. But there is no need to speak about it in the Congress. When the people come to the occasion for electing representatives, then advice will have to be given to them about it, as is done now regarding the charkha. Everything has its own fit time.

Which of the qualifications suggested by me in No. 2 of my proposals for the Gauhati Congress do you think to be desirable, if any at all, for persons to be elected?

Almost all, but not for legislative enactment. It is a matter essentially for the education of the electors.

I will now ask about another matter. Is it possible to bring about unity and peace between the followers of the several religions without explaining to them that the essentials of all these religions are one and the same? Without showing that the various religions are one at heart, is it possible to make the various religionists one at heart?

No.

Only when it is explained to the followers of the several religions that the heart of all religions is the same, will it become possible to make peace between the followers thereof?

Yes.

What should be done to bring this about?

All the good and true followers of the several religions should preach and promulgate this fact.

What special effort have you made, or intend to make, in this behalf?

I have made enough individual effort; and it continues to be made even today. There is a lack of persons amongst us for this *prachara* (propaganda), i.e., there are very few persons amongst us who might separate the merits and demerits of the various religions, bring together all the merits, and put them before the people.

Do you not think that an influential leader like yourself should bring together into a committee elected representatives, large-hearted and broadminded, of the several religions current in India, who might preach such essential unity of the religions by speech, writings, and conduct?

I think I have made efforts to the extent of my powers; but it seems I have not the ability to bring together educated and learned persons for such work. I have, therefore, contented myself with my own individual efforts.

As the time is short, I pass on to another subject. The Hindu Sabha is laying stress on *shuddhi* and *sangathan*. Can the work of *shuddhi* be done effectively without accepting the principle of "class-caste by temperament and functions (and not by birth)"? And is the work of *sangathan* possible without first abolishing the mutual untouchability which prevails at present in respect of dining among the thousands of sub-castes of Hindus?

I have explained my views as regards *shuddhi* and *sangathan* in *Young India* in the articles I wrote in appreciation of Shraddhanandji. I am unable to say more. I may say here, however, that even

panktibheda (Separate seats at dinner) is destructive of *sangathan*, without a doubt.

You have said in *Young India* of 6-1-1927 : "Both the *tabligh* and the *shuddhi* which is a reply to the former, have to undergo a radical change. Progress of liberal study of religions of the world is bound to revolutionize the existing clumsy method of proselytizing which looks to the form rather than the substance. It is the transference of allegiance from one fold to another and the mutual decrying of rival faiths which gives rise to mutual hatred. . . ." "The third aspect of *shuddhi* is conversion properly so called. And I question its use in this age of growing toleration and enlightenment. I am against conversion, whether it is known as *shuddhi* by Hindus, *tabligh* by Mussalmans, or proselytizing by Christians."

I most heartily subscribe to all this; in saying it you have completely endorsed the first two objects of the Theosophical Society, which has been working for fifty-one years, and of which I have been a member for forty-three. But the "growing toleration and enlightenment" are obviously growing very very slowly, and the "liberal study of the religions of the world", which "is bound to revolutionize the existing clumsy methods of proselytizing" which seek simply to change the labels and signboards on the foreheads of persons, has failed to produce its due effect, so far, on the *practice* of the highly educated men who are at the back of these conversion movements. Therefore is it not desirable that a great leader like yourself should diligently help to quicken the growth of the toleration and enlightenment and the progress of the liberal study of religions, in more specific and express ways, as suggested in No. 6 of my proposals for the Gauhati Congress, by organizing committees for the purpose all over the country, to do this vitally important work, which has been rather put aside latterly by the Theosophical Society?

When I asked in my previous question whether the principle of caste according to character-and-functioning (*karmana varnah*) was not the only legitimate basis as well as completion of *shuddhi*, my implication was just this that if the principle was accepted, the whole of mankind would at once be "converted" to essential Hinduism without anyone having to change his particular religious label or signboard.

I can only answer in the words of the seer : "The distant scene I do not care to see, one step enough for me." After all, the future isdetermined by the sum-total of the present activities, often contradictory, of mankind.

You do not, presumably, think it undesirable to form an army of volunteers for public work in connection with the Congress. If so, do you not think that if the qualifications mentioned in No. 5(a-b) of my proposals for the Gauhati Congress were prescribed and adopted, the army would become much more efficient? If you consider any particular qualification out of these inappropriate, or any other as more appropriate, would you very kindly mention it?

It would be desirable to form such a corps if it is possible. The qualifications too are good. But my experience shows that we are not

in a position to form any such body for all India. It will not come into being by means of resolutions.

The Hindustan Times, 4-10-1927

23. SPEECH AT BENARES HINDU UNIVERSITY[1]

BANARAS,
January 9, 1927

" You have had your say now. No one is listening to you. Why not stop talking of khaddar?" That was the advice that was being given him in some quarters. Gandhiji said:

But why should I stop reciting my favourite *mantra* when I have before me the example of Prahlad of old refusing to give up Rama-nama in the teeth of tortures worse than death? And I have not had to go through any tortures yet. How can I give up the only message that the condition of my country has been whispering to me? Panditji[2] has collected and has been still collecting lakhs and lakhs of rupees for you from Rajas and Maharajas. The money apparently comes from these wealthy princes, but in reality it comes from the millions of our poor. For unlike Europe the rich of our land grow rich at the expense of our villagers the bulk of whom have to go without a square meal a day. The education that you receive today is thus paid for by the starving villagers who will never have the chance of such an education. It is your duty to refuse to have an education that is not within the reach of the poor, but I do not ask that of you today. I ask you to render just a slight return to the poor by doing a little *yajn* for them. For he who eats without doing his *yajna* steals his food, say the *Gita*. The *yajna* that was required of the British civic population during the War was for each household to grow potatoes in its yard and for each household to do a little simple sewing. The *yajna* of our age and for us is the spinning-wheel. Day in and day out I have been talking about it, writing about it. I shall say no more today. If the message of the poor of India has touched your hearts I want you to raid Kripalani's khaddar store tomorrow and denude it of all its stock, and to empty your pockets tonight. Panditji has cultivated the art of beggary.

[1] The meeting was attended by about 2,000 students and was held under a *shamiana* specially erected for the Viceregal visit which preceded Gandhiji's by just a week. The report is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter".

[2] Madan Mohan Malaviya

I have learnt it from him, and if he specializes in laying the princes under tribute, I have learnt to be equally shameless in emptying the pockets of the poor, for the benefit of those who are poorer than they.

* * *

Malaviyaji's one object in begging millions for you, in raising these palatial buildings, is to send out to the country gems of purest ray, citizens healthy and strong to serve their motherland. That purpose will be defeated if you allow yourselves to be swept with the wind that comes today from the West—the wind of impurity. Not that the methods have the general sanction of Europe. There are friends in Europe, a very few, who are fighting hard to counteract the poisonous tendency. But if you do not wake up betimes, the immoral wave that is fast gathering strength might soon envelop and overwhelm you. I cry out to you, therefore, with all the strength at my command: Be warned, and flee from the fire before it consumes you.

Young India, 20-1-1927

24. SPEECH AT SHRADDHANAND MEMORIAL MEETING, BANARAS

January 9, 1927

It is a sacred day today and the meeting is taking place at a very good spot, where temple and mosque stand side by side. If any Mussalman considers Swami Shraddhanand to have been an enemy, he is in error. Swamiji died as a hero. He pursued his mission according to truth and dharma with great courage.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 10-1-1927

25. SPEECH AT MEETING OF UNTOUCHABLES, BANARAS

January 9, 1927

I thank you for the address you have presented to me. If Mussalmans will only realize it, this is for them too a sacred day. We have today paid homage to the memory of Swami Shraddhanand and have bathed in the Ganga. We took the holy bath in the hope that we too might gain some of the qualities of Swamiji. Swamiji was a friend of the untouchables. He suffered in their suffering. And it was for their sake that he sacrificed his life. It was all to the good. If someone

gets killed for the sake of religion it brings him only good. He cannot die a nobler death. Swamiji was so firm that he found it painful himself to go where untouchables were not allowed to go—just as Yudhishthira would not go even to heaven without his companion, the dog. The untouchables too have faults. Some of them drink. This they should give up. They should not argue that after all caste Hindus drink too. For the untouchables have got to go forward. They should imitate virtues, not vices. They should not gamble. They should not lie. They should maintain cleanliness. Every morning and evening they should repeat the name of Rama and thus cleanse their souls. We should all wear khadi. For this gives livelihood to the poor. Contributions will be raised all over the country today for the emanci-pation of the untouchables. I want that you should also contribute at least one pice each. I pray to God that the hearts of the so-called untouchables may become pure and they may be pillars of the Hindu community.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 10-1-1927

26. SPEECH AT MEETING OF WOMEN, BANARAS[1]

January 9, 1927

Sisters, I have just come from one meeting and am on my way to another, a bigger one. Please listen peacefully to the few words I have to say to you. The first thing is that if you want swaraj or *Ramarajya* in India you have to become pure as Sita. Sita was pure in body and mind. When she was put through the ordeal on her return from Lanka, the flames did not even touch her. Why? Because she was pure not only in body but also in mind. No cloth was imported from England at the time, English cloth was not worn. All women plied the charkha and wore khadi. Foreign cloth does not add to your beauty. Real beauty consists in making body and mind pure. Only a woman who keeps body and mind pure can be worthy of our reverence. Therefore, sisters, wear khadi, ply the charkha and become pure. Make your sons and daughters pure by having them wear khadi. If you wish to give me something make some donation for khadi.

The other thing I wish to talk to you about is the death of Swami Shraddhanand. Swamiji is not dead: he lives in our hearts. He was

[1] The meeting was held in the Kashi Naresh Hall of the Hindu School.

brave; he had a noble soul. We have taken a bath in the Ganga and we have paid tribute to Swamiji. May God impart to us some of his qualities so that we can carry on his work.

[From Hindi]
Aaj, 12-1-1927

27. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BANARAS

January 9, 1927

Mahatmaji thanked the Municipal Board for the address presented to him and said it had been suggested to him that he should start his new programme from Banaras. He said:

I am sorry I have not come here to enunciate some new programme. Nor am I aware of any new programme. I am afraid therefore that those who have come to this meeting looking for a new programme will have to be disappointed. I put before the people only what I feel is to their good. There is nowhere else in the world such stark poverty as prevails in India. The poor want work. The peasantry want work for four months of the year. The purpose is not fulfilled by simply distributing money among the poor. This will make beggars of them. The best occupation for them, the best work for the peasantry is the charkha. No one has told me that there can be any simpler occupation than the charkha. I therefore appeal to you to wear khadi, ply the charkha and help in this programme. I appeal to you to go and see the khadi exhibition after this meeting. You will then know what fine khadi is now being produced. If people were to help in this, ten times as much could be accomplished.

God dwells in our hearts. If we listen to Him we shall know that it is our duty to wear cloth made by poor people. Foreigners would even distribute their cloth free to make it acceptable to us. Those who grudge paying a little extra money for the poor cannot be either true Hindus or true Mussalmans. For those who will not help the poor, it is futile to think of God.

I have just come from Bangali Tola and a meeting of women at the Hindu School. Women have made donations. Some of them have parted with even their jewellery. Here at this meeting also there are some sisters. I ask them too to be pure as Sitaji. When she was put through the ordeal, when she entered the fire, she did not get burnt, the flames did not so much as touch her. No foreign cloth ever came

in contact with Sitaji's body. Sitaji and her maid both plied the charkha. During that age yarn was spun with hand and people wore hand-spun cloth. I appeal to the ladies to ply the charkha and wear khadi.

I am asked why I keep silent on the Hindu-Muslim question. We have now lost grip of this question. Today is the *jalanjali*[1] day of Swami Shraddhanand. Let us today commune with his soul. A brother of ours became mad and killed him. In truth he is not dead. He lives yet. Had the assassin not become mad this tragedy would not have occurred. I receive letters saying that there are a number of people behind this. I do not know. But I know that this killing is against the teachings of the Koran. I cannot accept that Shraddhanandji was an enemy of the Mussalmans. I did not agree with all his views. All the same I have repeatedly said the Mussalmans should not consider Shraddhanandji, Malaviyaji and Lalaji their enemies. All have the right freely and fearlessly to express their views. All can preach their several religions. Swamiji was full of compassion for all living things. Now of course the untouchables are treated much more humanely than before. In this respect we have made some progress. Swami Shraddhanand had been associated with this work from a very early stage. Emancipation of the untouchables was the main part of his programme. The time is now coming when Hindus and Muslims will cleanse their hearts and God will be pleased. The only way in which we can please Swamiji's soul is for all of us to help in the work for the emancipation of the untouchables.

I must tell the Hindus to wash off the stain of untouchability. This will be true *shuddhi*. They should not think of revenge. If they do, they will cause pain to the soul of Shraddhanandji and disgrace Hinduism. Madness cannot be answered by madness. I appeal to the Hindus not to seek revenge, not to think of it. Otherwise they would cause pain to the soul of Shraddhanandji.

To the Mussalmans I have to say this. Let there not be a single Mussalman who approves this killing of Shraddhanandji even privately. There is nothing in the Koran to support this. If we wish to free India, we must cleanse our hearts.

[From Hindi]
Aaj, 12-1-1927

[1] Offering of water as part of obsequies

28. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised BANARAS *alias* KASHI,

January 10, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter, or letters is it? I am writing this against my time for going to the station.

I am glad of all the varied experiences you are having. I shall not be angry so long as you keep your health and your mental balance. For the rest we learn through mistakes. Not that I know of mistakes made by you. But where there is consciousness of mistakes, readiness to mend is sufficient penance and antidote in a majority of cases.

I had rich experiences in Kashi, but of these I have no time to speak.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5196. Courtesy: Mirabehn

29. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

KASHI,

Silence Day, Pausa Sud 6 [*January 10, 1927*][1]

DEAR SISTERS,

Only yesterday I got the letter written by Chi. Radha. I see that your 7 o'clock prayers are going on regularly and that all of you feel interested in them. I am happy. What Kaka Saheb has said is certainly worth bearing in mind. Instead of replying by a mere yes or no, we should develop the ability to understand and explain the reasons for our reply.

Yesterday was the day of homage to Shraddhanandji. Pandit Malaviyaji is here in Kashi at present. He sent word at the last moment that we ought to go to the Ganga-ghat for a bath and prayers. I got ready and took with me the students of the Rashtriya Vidyapith who had come to see me. We formed ourselves in twos and started. Malaviyaji joined us and slowly our procession swelled. I have not time for

[1] *Pausa Sud* 6 seems to be a slip for *Pausa Sud* 7 which was a Monday.

describing the scene at the Gangaghat. It was simply grand. The ghat is not as clean as I would wish it to be.

After bath, we went for the *darshan* of Kashi Vishwanath. Mahadev will perhaps give you a description of other things there. The German lady was with us. It was doubtful whether she would be permitted to enter. She is a Buddhist and hence can be regarded as a Hindu. How could she be denied admittance? *I had decided that if she was stopped, I too would not go in*. But the priest kept quiet when he was told that she was a Hindu.

How can I describe the dirtiness of the street leading to the Kashi Vishwanath temple?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3634

30. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

KASHI,
Monday [*January 10, 1927*][1]

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. There is no harm if Ba reads it. I have not given it to her so far, but I intend to. You would have done a good turn to Harilal if you had not given him even the ten rupees which you gave. But don't mind, since you have given it. I don't think you have made any big mistake. Often strictness results in real kindness and kindness turns out to be cruelty. If all people become strict with Harilal with a loving heart, his eyes would soon open. But all of us are full of weaknesses and, therefore, cannot cultivate such loving strictness. Being ourselves in need of false kindness, we show such kindness to others. I am not reproaching you for giving him ten rupees but am only trying to teach you wisdom. You will still have many ordeals to pass through.

I have been trying to do something for you. Have no worry on that account. But make yourself worthy. Do not waste a single moment. If you have time, write an article about E. A. either for *Young India* or *Navajivan* and send it to me immediately.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1118. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

[1] Gandhiji was in Banaras on Monday, January 10, 1927.

31. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

January 10, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter describing the drive with Hakimji. I do not mind either your tasting the dishes at Brijkishen's or the *pan* from Hakimji. The latter's tempting you with *pan* distresses me. It is bad stuff and he should never have offered it to you. But opinions differ. He evidently considers it to be harmless. However, the reasoning that you have employed for justifying the tasting of the dishes and the *pan* is in my opinion faulty. Why should one *know* the taste of what one does not need or wish to take? Do you know that this is the reasoning that has been applied to justify every form of vice? It is the million times told story of the forbidden apple: why should I not know the taste of the thing I am asked not to take or touch? But you must not worry. If you do not understand my reasoning, you must argue with me patiently. If you appreciate my reasoning, it is to serve as warning in the future. But it must not result in self-reproach. There is no cause for it. The incident is trivial. But trivialities possess deadly potentialities. Hence the paternal warning.

Now about your analysis of the Kanya Gurukul. I hope you have spoken about it to Vidyavati. But you must discuss it freely with Principals Ramdev and Sethi. Principal Ramdev is her guide and if he is convinced, immediate improvement can be made. I propose to send him the relevant extract from your letter. That will make your position quite clear. The insanitation, the indiscipline must go. The anti-Muslim feeling is a more difficult proposition. But you have to do your duty. Little girls' minds must not be poisoned if we can help it. But whilst you will talk about these things, you will remember your limits. You have gone out to learn Hindi and to observe and gain experience, not to reform or teach. Yours will, therefore, be remarks only by the way and merely as suggestions either for acceptance or rejection. Your own conduct is sufficient effort for reform otherwise.I am writing this on the moving train during my silence which finishes at 9 p.m.

With love,

BAPU

[PS.]

Yes, when you go back to Delhi to inspect *takli*-spinning you may stay with Brijkishen.

BAPU

[PPS.]

Can you decipher my writing?

From the original: C.W. 5195. Courtesy: Mirabehn

32. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

ON THE TRAIN,
Monday [*January 10, 1927*][1]

BHAISHRI NANABHAI,

I have your letter. I feel that Dastane's demand is reasonable. Just now I am touring for collecting funds. Hence I should go in the main to places where I can expect to obtain some contributions. But I think Akola is bound to be included in the itinerary. There is no question of my not visiting a place which has a devoted lover of Khadi like you. Formerly I used to tour with the idea which you have explained. If you do not follow the difference, ask me again. Gomatibehn[2] must be free from her fever and Kishorelal must have left by now.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRIYUT NANABHAI ICHCHHARAM MASHRUWALA
AKOLA DISTRICT

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4319. Courtesy: Kanubhai Mashruwala

[1] The postmark bears the date January 13, 1927. Monday fell on January 10.
[2] Wife of Kishorelal Mashruwala

33. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

KASHI,
Monday [*January 10, 1927*][1]

DEAR HARIBHAU,

I have received your letter. There is no reason to be unhappy about the resolution passed by the school committee with regard to Martand. I personally feel that your decision to keep him there is best. But if you wish to send him to Wardha there should be no difficulty. It would be as well to know what Martand himself wants.

My health is fine. I am going to Bihar today. Devdas is with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

34. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

KASHI,
Silence Day [*January 10, 1927*]

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I have been wanting to write to you every Monday, but the letter remains unwritten till it is time for the post to go. So I decided to write early today.

I may not write to you; but can I forget you? I cannot forget you even if I want because the packet of cloves and the blankets you have given constantly remind me of you.

As for my experiences, what should I write and what not write? You can read about them in *Young India* and *Navajivan.*

I am keeping very good health. Now I am closing the letter because people have started coming.

Tell Mridu that I shall ask her for the account. Do go to the Ashram occasionally.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 11573

[1] From the contents. Gandhiji was in Kashi on January 9 and 10, 1927, and left for Bihar on the 10th.

35. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

[After *January 10, 1927*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Never mind if you commit mistakes. If you keep on trying to avoid them, they will cease by and by.

Spiritual progress is easy for one whose mind is always occupied with thoughts of serving others. Since you are constantly engaged in such service, everything will be well with you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8704. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

36. LETTER TO COW-PROTECTION COMMITTEE, MYSORE

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 11, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I must apologize to you for the very long delay in acknowledging your letter of 27th November, 1926. I duly received your first intimation which I thought was purely formal and as I had nothing effective to say, I did not send you a reply. From your second letter, however, I observe that you were anxious to have my opinion. But when I received it I was so overwhelmed with work that I had no time to collect my thoughts and give you a considered reply. Even as it is, I am sending you this reply in the midst of my Bihar tour. I hope you will accept these facts as sufficient excuse for the delay that has been caused in sending you my reply. Probably now it is of no use, even so I gave myself the satisfaction of telling you that there was no discourtesy intended by me in the first instance in not replying and now in replying at a time when my reply may prove too late.

In matters of religion I am against any State interference, and the cow question is in India a mixed matter of religion and economy. So far as economy is concerned, I have no doubt that it is the concern

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's dated January 10, 1927.

of every State, whether Hindu or Mussalman, to conserve the cattle supply. But, if I have understood your questionnaire rightly, the underlying note is whether the State would be justified in interposing itself between Hindus and Mussalmans and regulating cow slaughter even for purposes which Mussalmans consider to be religious. In India which I consider to be as much the land of Hindus born in it as of Mussalmans, Christians and others born in it, even a Hindu State may not prohibit cow slaughter for purposes considered to be religious by any of its subjects without the consent of the intelligent majority of such subjects so long as such slaughter is conducted in private and without any intention of provoking or giving offence to Hindus. That the very knowledge of any such slaughter would give offence to Hindus is inevitable. But unfortunately we know that in India cow slaughter is often resorted to defy and wound Hindu sentiment. This should be put down by every State that has the slightest regard for its subjects. But in my opinion the economic side of the cow question, if it is properly handled, automatically provides for the delicate religious side. Cow slaughter should be and can be made economically impossible, whereas unfortunately, of all the places in the world, it is the sacred animal of the Hindus which has become the cheapest for slaughter. To this end I suggest the following:

(1) The State should in the open market buy out every [head of]
cattle offered for sale by outbidding every other buyer.

(2) The State should run dairies in all principal towns ensuring a cheap supply of milk.

(3) The State should run tanneries where the hides, bones, etc., of all dead cattle in its possession should be utilized and should offer to buy again in the open market all privately-owned dead cattle.

(4) The State should keep model cattle farms and instruct the people in the art of breeding and keeping cattle.

(5) The State should make liberal provision . . .[1]

From a microfilm: S. N. 12667

[1] The letter is incomplete.

37. LETTER TO A. C. C. HARVEY [1]

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 11, 1927

DEAR FRIEND1,

Your letter written on Christmas Day has followed me in my travels and I am able to overtake it only today. I would ask you to believe me when I tell you that I have nothing against General Dyer or even Sir Michael O'Dwyer.[2] They were both creatures[3] and symptoms of a deep-seated disease of which I had not sufficient knowledge when I pleaded for co-operation at Amritsar. Whatever force there was in my plea was in my honest belief behind it. The Rowlatt Act and the subsequent events having opened my eyes, I cannot summon to my aid the fervour of Amritsar. My belief is shaken. Nothing has happened to restore it, though I am eager for its restoration. It gives me no pleasure to disbelieve men and measures. But I shall be false if I shut my eyes to facts as I see them. I think that non-co-operation is a fundamental fact in God's plan, even as darkness is. There is no such thing as co-operation if there is no non-co-operation.[4] If we give our co-operation for the prosecution of that which is good, we must withdraw it from that which is evil. I believe that the present British administration of India is on the whole not good but positively evil. The military policy and the revenue policy which includes the hideous

[1] A.C.C. Harvey was on the staff of the Khalsa College, Amritsar, during 1919-20, and met Gandhiji when he visited the institution (S.N. 12094).

[2] Harvey had referred to a meeting at Bombay on December 21, at which Sir Chimanlal Setalwad and Jinnah had "urged the policy of 'back to Amritsar' ", whereas Gandhiji, he recalled, has persuaded the Congress at Amritsar to adopt a 'policy of moderation and co-operation'. Harvey had observed that "Worse things were done on the nationalist side than that of the Government". *Ibid*.

[3] The source has "preachers".

[4] Criticizing the policy of non-co-operation as not being right "in the light of the universal religion", Harvey had commended "the policy of co-operation, of friendly discussion, of 'getting together' to talk over things, to explain viewpoints, quietly, sincerely and with desire to understand, as so ably exemplified by such men as Lord Reading, Lord Irwin". Further, Harvey had described the policy of non-co-operation as not only negative and therefore barren, "not only politically wrong, but also *irreligious*, contrary to the will of God". He had appealed to Gandhiji "to ponder over these words so that you may perhaps be helpful to them to give a right lead" (S.N. 12094).

traffic in drink and drugs and the preference given to English interests over Indian are causing progressive deterioration both moral and material of the people of this unhappy country. English people are not all conscious of this tremendous wrong that is being done to the country and they will never be if we continue to give our co-operation whether through ignorance, through hypocrisy or through weakness.

Ludhiana Punjab] Non-co-operation, therefore, is the only alternative to an armed rebellion. It has been suggested that the object can be achieved by persuasion and argument. In my opinion, which is based upon extensive experience, argument has only a limited place in an endeavour to persuade people. In deepest matters argument hopelessly fails. But whilst I feel so strongly about my position, let me assure you that my non-co-operation is itself designed to bring about co-operation. I need hardly assure you. . . .[1]

[A. C. C. HARVEY

GOVERNMENT INTERMEDIATE COLLEGE

From a photostat: S.N. 12804

38. A LETTER[2]

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 12, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I do not propose to deal with your letter in the columns of *Young India*, because I think the average reader has not the difficulty that has presented itself to you. I could certainly call myself a votary of non-violence, if in spite of the consciousness that I kill thousands of invisible creatures, I incessantly long to be free from the necessity of so killing and avoid every occasion possible for so doing. And, I therefore long to be free from the bondage of the flesh which is birth and death. My refusal to live the present life does not end the agony. But refusal to have another body after the dissolution of the existing one, is a possibility capable of realization.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 12805

[1] The text in the source is incomplete.
[2] The addressee is not known.

39. SPEECH AT DHANBAD [1]

January 12, 1927

He said that on an enquiry from Babu Rajendra Prasad about the inclement weather he had come to know that rains even in winter were not quite unusual in the province and that that was to some extent necessary too. He was no doubt conscious of the immense difficulties the audience had to face on account of the rain; his own difficulties were no less. But he was capable of working in the midst of all sorts of difficulties, his life had been only a prolonged story of his fight with difficulties of every description.

After announcing the meeting to be addressed by him at six next evening, he proceeded to explain the purpose of his visit. He said that they were perhaps aware that his tour was specially intended to preach the message of the charkha and khaddar. He admitted that there was enough field in the country for other activities with a view to the attainment of swaraj but he had taken to the charkha because he had found that that could be prescribed with equal force for all—Hindus and Muslims, males and females, men and boys, touchables and untouchables. The charkha was the universal thing and as such it was to be taken up by all according to the capacity of each individual. Working at the wheel was the sacred business of every Indian; everyone was required to join this universal *yajna*. But if that was not possible for all, they could do one thing. They could at least put on khaddar.

Continuing, he said that khaddar work to be conducted on a large scale throughout India demanded a large sum of money to be spent over it. That money was to be supplied by the country. Nearly 16 lakhs were already collected and spent and as a result, nearly 50 thousand women who had formerly nothing to do, and about 4,000 men who also formerly had alomst nothing to do, had got employment. Weavers, many of whom were compelled to give up their profession on account of hard competition with Lancashire weavers, had once more found occupation, while large sums had already gone to the carders and ginners. Spinning, therefore, was the saviour of the poor, while the middle-class men also could derive much benefit from it. Without humbly approaching the Government, without supplicating the rich, middle-class young men could solve a good deal of their unemployment problem by taking to the charkha. Riches were of course not to be expected from this work, but young men could very well earn an honest living by reverting to khaddar work.

Proceeding, he said that the fund, for which he was appealing for money, was called Deshbandhu Memorial Fund, started to commemorate the sacred memory of the late Deshbandhu. Khaddar was very dear to his heart. He had realized that the charkha was the thing for the whole of India and through that alone one could approach the masses for village reconstruction work which was the unrealized dream of his life. A

[1] The meeting was held in a local hall.

few days before his death, he had expressed his wish to the speaker to accompany him (Mahatmaji) on his tour for khaddar work. But "man proposes God disposes". Before he could begin to work according to his plan, he was snatched away by the cruel hand of death. It was in order to fulfil his last wish, said Mahatmaji, that the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund, to be utilized by the All-India Spinners' Association, was inaugurated. He referred to the circumstances under which the All-Bengal Deshbandhu Memorial Fund was allowed to be spent over the Hospital, while at the very time he had appealed for money for the All-India Memorial Fund for khaddar work. It was time, said the speaker, that each one of them contributed his quota to fulfil the last wishes of Deshbandhu. By contributing to this fund the donor might serve two useful purposes at the same time; firstly they would honour the sacred memory of Deshbandhu who lived and died for them, and, secondly, they would be helping the poor with work and money.

Proceeding, Mahatmaji said that to purchase one yard of khaddar was to help the poor men of their country to the extent of about four annas, whereas spending money over foreign cloth was to send the same abroad to the untold miseries of their own people. To purchase Indian mill-made cloth did not mean helping the poor, for it was the capitalists who used to enjoy the largest amount of profit, doling out a negligible amount to the labourers, which was not sufficient for them even to keep their body and soul together. Three-fourths of the money spent over Indian mill-made cloths, said the speaker, filled the already overflowing coffers of the capitalists, while the labourers who were really in need of money did not get collectively more than one-fourth of the profit. The charkha was the only effective weapon to fight the poverty of the country to a successful close.

Mahatmaji then appealed for money. He wanted everyone present to contribute his mite for this noble work and asked them to send the money to the proper authority if they had not it with them at that time. He exhorted the audience to solemnly promise in that hall to put on khaddar habitually for all time to come. He said that he would ask them even to burn their foreign clothes, if they had any. But if they could not go so far as that, they must henceforward boycott all foreign clothes without the least hesitation. Khaddar had become the burning passion of his life because he had found that and that alone could give food to the poor. People might call him mad, but he could not give up that work for anything. He asked everyone present in that hall to pay what little he could. He did not want that people should pay money out of fear or shame; he wanted every one of them to feel the nobility of the cause and then do whatever lay in his power.

Referring to untouchability, he said that that was greatest blot upon Hindu society and that should be wiped out at the soonest possible date. Hinduism never taught one man to consider another man as untouchable. By observing the custom of

untouchability, Hindus were committing a sin. Swami Shraddhanand gave his life for the sake of the removal of untouchability. It was their duty to take up that work of service to the poor and the untouchables.

Incidentally he referred to the Hindu-Muslim tension and deplored the murder of Swamiji. But Sawamiji's death could be turned to good account, if both the Hindus and the Muslims cleansed their hearts with his blood. That would be the work of purfication, that would be a real *shuddhi* work. What was the duty of the Hindus? They should not seek to retaliate. The teaching of all religions was not to return evil for evil but good for evil. All the religions taught that the greatest conquest was the conquest of one's own self. The Hindus should attain that self-possession. Abdul Rashid was a poor creature; he alone was not responsible for this diabolical deed. The bulk of the Muslim Press in Delhi and all those who had been holding up Swami Shraddhanand, Lala Lajpat Rai and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya as the enemies of Islam collectively contributed to the murder. The results of those things were before them. The whole atmosphere of the country demanded purificatin. Enthusiasm like that of 1922 was necessary for their success in the battle they had undertaken, but that could not come until the process of purification had reached its completion. Everyone should, therefore, concentrate all his attention upon self-purification. It was wholly unwise to be inimical to the enemies, one should rather pity them.

The Searchlight, 16-1-1927

40. INDEPENDENCE

Year after year a resolution is moved in the Congress to amend the Congress creed so as to define swaraj as complete independence and year after year happily the Congress throws out the resolution by an overwhelming majority. The rejection of the resolution is proof of the sanity of the Congress. The moving of the resolution betrays the impatience (pardonable in the circumstances) of some ardent Congressmen who have lost all faith in the British intentions and who think that the British Government will never render justice to India. The advocates of independence forget that they betray want of faith in human nature and therefore in themselves. Why do they think that there can never be change of heart in those who are guiding the British people? Is it not more correct and more dignified to own that there is no change of heart because we are weak? Nature abhors weakness. We want from the British people and the world at large not mercy but justice that is our due. And justice will come when it is deserved by our being and feeling strong.

I am sure that the staunchest votary of independence does not mean that he will not have any British association on any terms whatsoever. Even when he says so, he means, as one of the supporters of the resolution admitted in answer to my question, that the British people will never accept association on equal terms. This is totally different from rejecting British association on any terms.

Indeed the word swaraj is all-embracing. It does include complete independence as it includes many other things. To give it one definite meaning is to narrow the outlook, and to limit what is at present happily limitless. Let the content of swaraj grow with the growth of national consciousness and aspirations. We may be satisfied today with dominion status. The future generations may not be, may want something better. Swaraj without any qualifying clause includes that which is better than the best one can conceive or have today. Swaraj means even under dominion status a capacity to declare independence at will. So long as we have not achieved that capacity, we have no swaraj. This is the least it should mean. South Africa has achieved that status today. It is a partnership at will of free peoples. Between Britain and the Dominions there is a partnership at will on terms of equality and for mutual benefit. What India will finally have is for her and her alone to determine. This power of determination remains unfettered by the existing creed. What therefore the creed does retain is the possibility of evolution of swaraj within the British Empire or call it the British Commonwealth. The cryptic meaning of swaraj I have often described to be within the Empire if possible, without if necessary. I venture to think that it is not possible to im-prove upon that conception. It is totally consistent with national self-respect and it provides for the highest growth of the nation.

After all, the real definition will be determined by our action, the means we adopt to achieve the goal. If we would but concentrate upon the means, swaraj will take care of itself. Our exploration should, therefore, take place in the direction of determining not the definition of an indefinable term like swaraj but in discovering the ways and means.

Young India, 13-1-1927

41. NOTE

INDIANS IN PANAMA

The Legislative Assembly of the Republic of Panama recently passed an Immigration Restriction Act prohibiting the entry of British Indians among others. President Chiari had in a well-considered message returned the Bill to the Assembly advising considerable amendments and reconsideration. But the Assembly refused to make the amendments recommended except in matters that were inevitable. The Assembly defended its restriction upon the liberty of British Indians on the ground of protection of the rights of posterity. There are at present not more than perhaps thirity Sindhi Indian merchants of fancy goods. It was acknowledged that their presence was no menace to the inhabitants of Panama. Nevertheless the law is retrospective in its effect with the exception that those who can prove continuous previous domicile of ten years may receive exemption certificates. I hardly think there are many settlers there who can prove continuous residence in Panama for such a long period. If African experience is any guide, Indian settlers abroad are not in the habit of staying out of India for such a long period. The matter is now, I understand, before the Foreign Office. It remains to be seen how far that office is able to protect the rights of the resident Indian population and of those who may choose to emigrate to Panama in search of an honest livelihood.

Young India, 13-1-1927

42. MESSAGE TO CONGRESSMEN

Have faith. Along with intellectual capacity develop strength of character.

[From Hindi]
Aaj, 13-1-1927

43. SPEECH AT DHANBAD [1]

January 13, 1927

Mahatma Gandhi in replying thanked the commissioners for the welcome addresses they had presented him. He thanked particularly the commissioners of the Municipality for frankly confessing that khaddar and charkha were not much in use in the jurisdiction of their municipality. He said that he used to take keen interest in municipal affairs even when he was in South Africa. He knew that towns played a prominent part in the affairs of the country and that almost all movements in the modern world sprang from the towns. He was aware further that sense of civic responsibility was to be awakened in their young men. But in the peculiar condition of India, towns were at the most only of secondary importance. India lived in villages and towns, sank into insignificance when compared with seven lakhs of villages. This importance of village life in India was not to be lost sight of by the commissioners of the municipalities. There was a growing tendency in this country on the part of the educated men to cut off all their connection with villages and wipe them out of their memory. This tendency was to be checked. In Europe the villages depended for everything upon the towns which were the centres of all sorts of activites. But in India it was the villages which nourished the towns and as such it was the duty of every townsman to see that the healthy growth of the villagers was not interfered with in any way. One wondered how India could be so poor in spite of her exports exceeding her imports. The reason was that crores of rupees went out of this country to add to the prosperity of other people while the majority of their own men did not know what it was to have two full meals a day. Whatever little money was left in this country went to the coffers of merchants and middle men. He (Mahatmaji) did not envy their lot but the poor villages were not to be forgotten. They themselves were starving while they were supplying the townspeople not only with food but also with other luxuries. It was to find out a few morsels of food for these hungry millions that he was asking them to take to the charkha. The poor, weak, miserable villagers could eat and live if only they all used khaddar in preference to all other cloth. He wished them all to work at the charkha as a sacred duty but if they could not do so they could wear khaddar at least. He said that he was glad that they had introduced spinning on a small scale in their jurisdiction but the work remained still incomplete. All their activities would remain incomplete until they perfected the khaddar organization. He himself would not be satisfied till then. To work for khaddar was to work for the poor.

[1] At the meeting, held in the morning in the Dhanbad town hall, Gandhiji was presented addresses by the Dhanbad Municipality and the Local Board. Gandhiji addressed altogether five meetings at Dhanbad, Jharia and other places.

That was why he had been devoting all his time and energy to the work. It was their duty to take up that work for the sake of the poor, for the country and for God.

Concluding, he thanked them once more for the warm reception they had accorded him.

The Searchlight, 16-1-1927

44. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KATRAS [1]

January 13, 1927

He said that he was glad to see them there . Last time when he was at Jharia, he had no opportunity to go to that place [Katras]. Jharia, he said, was a place which attracted people, both capitalists and labourers, from all parts of India. Labourers were the chief inhabitants of that place and as such he wanted to speak a few words to them.

Continuing, he said that he used to call himself also a labourer. If anybody enquired about his calling, he used to say that he was a weaver, or a cultivator. He would rather like to be called a scavenger. The profession of a scavenger was not to be looked down upon. He did a great benefit to human society. His profession was to cleanse the most dirty portion of a house. Society was, therefore, highly indebted to him. His was a profession of service and it was unwise to consider him low. His (speaker's) mother, in fact, every mother, did the same thing as a scavenger. Did they hate their mothers for that reason? If his own mother had not done the work of a scavenger for him in his boyhood, he could not have lived so long and come in their midst to address them. It was not due to the profession that a scavenger should be looked down upon. Unless the heart of a man was dirty, there was no reason why he should be considered low, no matter how low his profession might be. His appeal, therefore, to the scavengers as a matter of fact, to all labourers, was that they should begin to cleanse themselves simultaneously with cleansing the household of other persons. He was aware that the labourers were addicted to drinking, gambling, smoking and other evil habits. They must be free of all these vices. He was in favour of total prohibition, but as long as that could not be achieved, they should themselves try to get rid of that pernicious habit. Credit lay in a man's abstinence in the midst of all sorts of temptations. He appealed to them to give up drinking for God's sake as well as for their own sake.

Referring to gambling, he said that was a most vicious practice. The Pandavas lost their all on that account. But they recovered at last because they were on the side of truth. Yudhishthira was himself repentant for what he did. Referring to their lustful

[1] The meeting was held in a spacious *pandal*. Gandhiji spoke after an address of welcome in Hindi was presented to him.

habit, he said that he was aware that there were people who used to leave their wives and destroy their health and wealth after vile prostitutes. That was a very bad habit. All women, other than one's wife, were to be considered as sisters.

Smoking of *bidi* and g*anja* was also to be given up. He could not understand why people smoked *ganja*. He knew that even rich and learned men smoked cigarettes and *bidis*. But that was no reason why they also should be addicted to the same. There was no reason why one man should be addicted to vicious habits because another man was used to them. His appeal to even the educated men was that they should give up smoking.

Continuing, he said that labourers should remember that there were men who were poorer than them. They (the labourers) had money to spend over wine, gambling, smoking and all that, but there were people in villages who could not get even sufficient food and clothing to keep themselves alive. They could at least earn about 15 to 20 rupees, but their brothers in villages could seldom see the face of a pice. Had they any feeling for them? They themselves were poor. Was it not very reasonable, then, that they should realize the miseries of those who were poorer than even them, he asked, If they felt like that, it was their duty to wear khaddar exclusively. They should clothe themselves with khaddar woven with pure yarn spun by their poor sisters in villages. Whatever they paid for khaddar was paid to those poor creatures. Women who could not earn even a penny were earning about two annas a day each. He was appealing to them for that money to be paid to their poor fellow beings. They could help them with that money by wearing khaddar. The law of God was that man should sympathize with his fellow-creatures in distress. He appealed, therefore, in God's name to them to exclude all clothes except khaddar and help him with money in cash, no matter how little it was, to carry on that work. Khaddar worth Rs. 96 thousand was produced in Bihar the previous year and about 60 thousand worth was sold within a period of six months. All this money went to the homes of the poor. A good deal of money was now spent over the selling of khaddar. If they purchased khaddar as they purchased foreign cloth, much of that money could be saved and utilized for the purpose of production. If they decided to do that, the entire amount of khaddar required in the country could be produced here without any difficulty. What was necessary was their sympathy and support; would they deny that?

Addressing the ladies he said that, if they wanted swaraj, which term was synonymous with *Ramraj*, they should each be like Sita. Sita was pure of heart, she kept her body clean by wearing hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar. She lived at a time when the charkha was to be found in every household and every woman used to spin. That time was to be revived again. The charkha should even now find as important a place as the household hearth.

Addressing others, the Mahatma said that, if they wanted freedom they would have to undergo considerable sacrifice. The minimum they could do was to put on

khaddar. The khaddar movement must receive their whole-hearted support; they must render every possible financial support to that cause. He then narrated the circumstances in which the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund was inaugurated and appealed to the audience to honour the sacred memory of the departed great by contributing to that fund.

Continuing, he said that the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund was to be utilized for the purpose of spreading khaddar. They had already got some money for the Fund but the work they had undertaken demanded more and more money. Sixty crores of rupees annually went out of the country; their aim was to keep that money here. A huge sum was, therefore, to be spent over that. Their task was great, but he hoped to fulfil it with their help. Everyone could pay to that fund without any difficulty; even Government servants could contribute to that. He hoped that he would not go disappointed from that place.

Referring to untouchability, he said that Swami Shraddhanand sacrificed his life for that cause, They should remove this blot at least for the sake of Swamiji. Hinduism had nothing to do with that pernicious system. The *Gita* never taught a man to consider another as untouchable.

Referring to Hindu-Muslim unity, he said that both the communities were to go through the process of purification before they could hope to attain that unity. To the Muslims, he said that, if anyone of them considered the murder of Swamiji as a praiseworthy act on the part of the murderer, it was a great mistake. He claimed to be a *sanatani* Hindu, but he had studied the Koran with as much reverence as the *Gita*. But he had nowhere found in the Koran any approval of such dastardly deeds. On the contrary, there were passages there distinctly against violence. If violence was to be committed, it was to be committed upon one's own self for the purpose of fighting the evils in oneself, not upon another person. Hindus had become weak and cowardly; how could they expect to rise in spite of their weaknesses? The real *shuddhi* work was the work of self-purification and it was the duty of everyone of them to go through that process. He prayed to God to help them in their work.[1]

The Searchlight, 19-1-1927

45. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, JHARIA [2]

January 13, 1927

Mahatma Gandhi, in addressing the meeting, said that he was glad that the president of the Employees' Association had complied with his request and did not read the address written in English. He had received two addresses in the morning

[1] At the meeting, a purse of Rs. 885 was presented to Gandhiji and some money collected on the spot.

[2] At the meeting an address of welcome was presented to Gandhiji by the members of the Indian Colliery Employees' Association, Jharia.

which were written in English . But he objected to the third, because there were few people in the meeting who could understand that language. He would have very much appreciated the address if it was written either in Hindi or in Bengali. He had no quarrel with the English language; it was, indeed, a good language. He claimed to have some knowledge of it. If he had any ill feeling against the English language, he would not have conducted an English paper. But all occasions were not favourable for using that language. They had their lingua franca, that is, Hindi. They could very well use that language on interprovincial matters no matter if it was faulty. A man was not to be judged by his words, they were to see whether his heart was sincere. He himself might speak grammatically incorrect Hindi, hut his motive was honest and that was enough to recommend his speech to them.

Continuing, he said that Jharia was a place where people, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Marwaris, Gujaratis, Bengalis, Biharis, in fact, people from all provinces of India flocked together. He hoped that they all lived together on friendly terms without bearing ill will to anyone.

Proceeding, he narrated the havoc caused to India by imported cloth. He said that it was but natural and desirable that man should try to do good to all, irrespective of their nationality and religion. But is was monstrous for a man to help others in such a way as to incur irreparable loss to his own house. Why did they put on foreign cloth then? Was it to help the weavers of Manchester? Certainly not. The one answer he had found to this question was that is was a fashion to put on foreign clothes and that khaddar was rough and coarse. But would they refuse the bread prepared by their mothers if it was bad and go begging from door to door for the better bread? Khaddar was the gift of their motherland and therefore sacred to them. They might demand of their mothers for better bread; but, as long as that was not ready, they had no other alternative but to take that contentedly. Similarly, they might try to improve the quality of khaddar but as long as that could not be done, they had to remain content with what was available, no matter how coarse it was.

Proceeding, he said that a characteristic feature of Indian civilization was that a man was to help his fellowmen in distress. By wearing khaddar, they could perform their religious duty, namely, helping the poor. Their *Gita* taught them that a man who did not perform *yajna* committed sin thereby. Spinning at the wheel was *yajna* for them; a spinning-wheel was to be kept in every household as a sacred altar. He said that he was just coming from the local khadi Bhandar. He had seen that khaddar worth only Rs. 1,000 was kept in stock in that shop and even that could not be consumed. He did not know how many rupees worth of foreign cloth was sold in Jharia, but he was sure that the sale of foreign cloth exceeded that of khaddar many times. It was a matter of great regret to him that even such a small khaddar shop could not be

conducted in Jharia. He appealed to all to make it a point to wear khaddar. He requested them to solemnly promise to discard all foreign cloth and habitually wear khaddar.

Addressing the labourers, he asked them to observe temperance and put on khaddar in preference to all other cloth. They would thereby be giving food and clothing to hundreds of their own hungry men and women who could not earn even a single pice for want of occupation. Mahatmaji next touched upon untouchability and Hindu-Muslim tension.

Replying to the address, he said that he was glad that the work of the association was improving and he congratulated the organizers on their success. As to the second, namely, the relations between the capitalist and the labourer, he assured them that his sympathy was always with the poor labourers and that his aim was to establish harmony and peace between the employer and the employee. He said that he had, of course, done something for the labourers of Jamshedpur but he was not fully aware of local conditions. In Jamshedpur the leaders of the labourers included some of his own men and even his friend and brother, Mr. Andrews. Nevertheless, if his help was at any time necessary, he would try to do what little he could. He, of course, did not believe that all capitalists were bad and oppressive; on the contrary, he knew many who had really the good of the employees at heart. He was for equal and legitimate rights for all. He advised the labourers to be on the right path and said that he was sure that truth would triumph at last. He concluded his speech by once more appealing for money.[1]

The Searchlight, 19-1-1927

46. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, AURANGABAD [2]

January 14, 1927

He said that when he toured in Bihar on a previous occasion he had not the opportunity to come to that place. He was glad, therefore, to meet them there and thanked them for coming over to that place from distant villages. He said that his visit was intended to appeal to them to do some little work for India and for themselves and hoped that they would not disappoint him.

India, he said, was a poor country. Those who lived in the towns could scarcely imagine how poor the villagers were; even those villagers who had come to the meeting did not know that there were men living in far-off villages who were poorer than them even. These poor people lived in woeful obscurity dragging somehow or

[1] At the end of the speech Gandhiji was presented a purse of Rs. 1,001.

[2] About 10,000 people were present at the meeting which was held in the open maidan near the Dak Bungalow and which Gandhiji addressed for about half an hour.

other their miserable existence to a melancholy close. The people of the towns depended for their livelihood upon the villagers who, in their turn, got money from those miserable creatures. They produced wealth for the whole country, while they themselves had no means to keep their bodies and souls together. The railways of India might bring some amount of wealth to a fortunate few, but they deprived the real producers of wealth of even their means of livelihood. He appealed to them in the name of God for those poor, wretched and miserable villagers who were the very backbone of Indian society.

Continuing, he described how the imports of foreign cloth had contributed to the misery and poverty of their people and explained how a check on that unlimited import might give an effective check to the growing poverty of the country. The most effective weapon he had devised to fight the course of such unnatural events was the spinning-wheel and he said he had come to recommend that to them. He was confident that if they could effectively boycott foreign cloth and take exclusively to khaddar, they could proceed a long way towards their goal, namely, swaraj. But if the political significance of khaddar was not recognized, there were other grounds strong enough to recommend it. If khaddar was not to be used as a political weapon, they might use it with a view to helping thousands of their poor countrymen. The charkha, he said, was their *Annapurna* because it had the power to give food and drink to almost an unlimited number of poor men. The poverty of their people was a universally recognized fact; even English chroniclers had in their books testified to the fact that there were thousands of people in India who did not know what it was to have two full meals a day. He himself had seen with his own eyes in Orissa what he had so long read only in books. People in Orissa were so poor that they had really no means of subsistence. Was it not their duty to help them?—he asked. If they could not help them in any other way, they might help them by wearing khadi. The work of khaddar could be done by all-Hindus and Muslims, males and females, men and boys. The Bengalis and the Punjabis, all could join this work and contribute their mite to its success. There was no ban even upon Government servants in respect of wearing khadi. Khaddar produced by their own brothers and sisters in the peaceful atmosphere of villages situated far off from the din and bustle of modern industrialism, deserved every sympathy and encouragement from them. It was sanctified with their memories of the past; it was their religious duty to put on khaddar in preference to every other kind of cloth.

Continuing, he said that money spent on foreign cloth went into the pockets of the weavers of Manchester and Lancashire, while that spent over Indian mill-made cloth filled the already-full coffers of the Ahmedabad merchants. It pained him to think that in spite of there being expert manufacturers in India, Indians had to pay so much money to foreign manufacturers. The East India Company might have been responsible for the extinction of their industry during the first period of their reign. They might have put an end to their textile industry by violence and their undesirable methods. But who was responsible for the continuance of that state of things, he

asked. If they even now began to patronize khaddar, Indian cloth might once more become the observed of all observers of the world. They should take to spinning and khaddar as a means of *prayashchitta*. Even the rich men should begin to spin, not for money, but for setting an example to the credulous and imitative people of the villages. Hinduism strictly enjoined upon everyone to perform *yajna. Yajna* was that which was performed not in the interest of one's own self, but in the interest of others. In the present circumstances of India, no other work could be more beneficial to the poor villagers than spinning and it was therefore the best possible *yajna* for the Indians.

Proceeding, the Mahatma said that in Bihar alone they had distributed Rs. 29,000 and Rs. 36,000 among the spinners and weavers, respectively. It seemed to him that the people of Bihar had love for khaddar, but if all of them had patronized it they might have distributed more wealth among the poor inhabitants of the province. About one hundred years ago, Patna used to produce very fine khadi which was exported to foreign countries and the people of those countries used that cloth as an object of luxury. The wheel had turned and India instead of exporting fine cloth to foreign countries consumed imported cloth worth crores of rupees and the people of India felt proud to wear fine foreign cloth. They as people of Bihar mush remember the progress that the textile industry had made in Patna in the past and it was their duty to revive those good old days. They could do so by patronizing khaddar in every possible manner. Khaddar had made progress; fine khaddar was now available and the price also had considerably gone down as compared with what it was in 1921. If the people made adequate response it might still be made cheaper.

He then appealed for funds for the All-India Spinners' Association and then dealt with the problem of untouchability and the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity.

He said that swaraj which had ever been the dream of his life had almost come in 1921-22. The real *shuddhi* work, namely, the process of purification, had begun at that time. A wave of enthusiasm had swept over the country and that was why they could come almost near their goal. The same chapter was to be repeated again, but that could not be done till dissensions and disunions kept them hopelessly divided.

Proceeding, he said that those who entered the Councils did it with the sincere desire of doing good to the country and they might do some good work as well. But how many could go to the Councils and how many were there who had right of voting, he asked. Sixty lakhs of voters did not constitute the whole of India; his aim was to raise the thirty crores of Indian people. Khaddar, he believed, might serve as a link between the rich and the poor; the spinning-wheel might bring about unity and harmony among the entire population of India. He appealed once more to the people to contribute to the funds of the All-India Spinners' Association and prayed to God to help them in doing their duty.[1]

The Searchlight, 21-1-1927

[1] At the end of the meeting, Gandhiji was presented a purse of Rs. 2501.

47. ENTRY IN VISITORS' BOOK [1]

GAYA,
Pausa Sud 12, 1983 [*January 15,1927*][2]

I feel very happy to see this library. While thanking the donor, I pray for the progress of the library.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2509

48. TELEGRAM TO MANIBEHN PATEL

GAYA,
January 15, 1927

YOUR DELIGHTFUL LETTER. MASTER CARDING GINNING SOON.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 46

49. SPEECH AT MEETING, GAYA [3]

January 15, 1927

Mahatmaji, speaking in Hindi, regretted that the address presented to him on behalf of the municipality was written in English. He said that whenever he found an opportunity he had repeatedly asked the people to present him addresses either in the vernacular of their province or in the national language of India, namely, Hindi. He had no spite against the English language; he himself used that language on special occasions, but it was undesirable that they should use it while addressing their own men. He requested the municipality to use Hindi whenever they presented any address, not merely to himself, but to any other Indian leader.

Continuing, he said that Gaya was really a sacred place to the Hindus, a place of pilgrimage for them. But it pained him to see the deplorable state of the roads of that sacred city which was frequented by people from all parts of the country. He had occasion that morning to see some of the roads in Gaya. They surpassed in dirtiness even the roads of Ahmedabad, which was an old city and home of many poor people,

[1] Of the Munnalal Library at Gaya

[2] There was no *Pausa Sud* 12 in this year. Gandhiji was in Gaya on January 15, 1927 which corresponded to *Pausa Sud* 13.

[3] At the meeting, Gandhiji was presented addresses by the Municipality and the District Board.

which fact might be an excuse for the municipality of that place. He regretted to say that he had never before seen such dirty roads in any part of India. Gaya, being a place of all-India interest, its municipality ought to have been an ideal one, but he was sadly disappointed. He said that the commissioners should be up and doing in reforming the municipal arrangements of that great city. How could they do so? In order to achieve that end, the commissioners should themselves take up the work. Mere dependence upon paid sweepers and scavengers would not better the situation. He would rather request the chairman and the commissioners of the Board to take the broomsticks and buckets of water themselves and proceed to cleanse the roads and latrines of the city. Towns were of considerable importance to the development of a country. Growth of civic responsibilities in the people was an urgent necessity for their political emancipation. He said that the case of Gaya was not an exception. There were many other municipalities in India which were guilty of such bad administration. But the exceptional character of Gaya city demanded it to be free from these evils. There was nothing to be ashamed of in sweeping the streets; he himself had done it in many places; he had done it even in Bihar, in Champaran. He was no lover of Western civilization; he would rather oppose all Western influences which tended to injure the vital interests of India. But he would welcome all that was good in Western culture. In respect of municipal administration, they had much to learn from the Western people. Glasgow and Birmingham were formerly as dirty as Gaya, or perhaps even worse. But the way in which the municipal administrators of those two places had reformed them was worthy to be imitated by the municipal commissioners of India. He hoped that the Gaya Municipality will be prompt in reforming the state of that city.

Continuing, he regretted that the Chairman of the Municipality did not inform him in the morning that he and his colleagues could not agree on two points, namely khaddar and removal of untouchability. In that case he might make time to try to convince them on those two points. If they wanted to create a link between them and the villagers, the charkha and khaddar were unavoidable for them. As regards untouchability, he did not think that there was any necessity of arguing on that point, after the death of Swami Shraddhanand. He claimed to be *sanatani* Hindu. But he had never found any of the Hindu scriptures sanctioning untouchability in the form in which it was practised by them. If untouchability was not removed, Hindu society might altogether perish in the near future. There were only three religions in the world, namely, Christianity, Islam and Hinduism. He would regard Buddhism and Sikhism as branches of Hinduism, as the Hindu Mahasabha had defined it. But the mighty Hindu society was fast disintegrating. Christianity and Islam, in fact, the entire non-Hindu population of the world, were keenly watching the movements of the Hindu society. If they wanted to justify their existence and revive their old glory, it was their clear duty to remove that blot from Hinduism.

He had received that morning a cable from Mr. Andrews. If they continued to tyrannize upon the so-called untouchables, how could they expect to receive proper treatment at the hands of the white men in South Africa? Sjt. Gokhale had rightly said

in one of his addresses that it was but quite natural that the white people should look down upon the Indians who so inhumanly treated certain sections of their own people. So long as the removal of untouchability was not achieved and the khaddar movement was not made to succeed, all their works would remain incomplete.

Continuing, he thanked the District Board for taking up khaddar work, although he was sorry that spinning could not be made popular with school-children. He was not surprised, for he knew the habit of children. In order to make them spin regularly, the teachers should have to spin themselves. The example of teachers might prompt the students to cling to the charkha as a plaything and they might create wonders while playing with the same. He reminded the people of the good old days of their textile industry and asked them to endeavour their best to bring back those days.

The Searchlight, 21-1-1927

50. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, RAMNA [1]

January 15, 1927

He said that he was reminded by the chairman of the municipality as well as by the president of the Hindu Sabha that Gaya was a sacred place of pilgrimage, hallowed by the association of Lord Buddha. But it pained him to see the miserable state of the latrines and the roads of Gaya dirtier than those which he had ever seen in his life. He said that he had reminded the commissioners of their duty, but, if the people had not developed sufficient sense of responsibility, it was impossible for the municipality to discharge its duty. Where the people were alert, the commissioners could not neglect their duty, for it was in the hands of the people themselves to replace those commissioners by new and better ones. He had advised the commissioners to sweep and cleanse the roads, he would advise all the people to join them in their work. Keeping the roads clean was as much the duty of the citizens as of the scavengers; the latter could not discharge their duty if the former did not heartily co-operate with them.

Referring to the Hindu Sabha address, he said he was glad that the Sabha was trying to free the Hindus of cowardice. But he had found that the Hindus alone were not cowards. Cowardice had become the attribute of Indians as a whole. If they could get rid of this evil, there could be no power on earth to check their forward march.

He thanked the Hindu Sabha for working for khaddar and removal of untouchability. Untouchability, he had told them on a former occasion, was no part of Hinduism. They should hang down their head in shame before the world for indulging

[1] Over 10,000 people attended the meeting at which an address of welcome was presented to Gandhiji by the local Hindu Sabha.

in that sin. The *Gita* taught them that man should not differentiate between a Brahmin and a *Chandal*. The interpretation which he would give to that verse was that man should serve both Brahmin and *Chandal* alike and hate none. According to Hinduism, there were only four *varnas*; there could not be a fifth one.

Proceeding, he said that *shuddhi* with him was synonymous with *atmashuddhi*, self-purification. They would work this *shuddhi* by loving the untouchables. Swami Shraddhanand had died for religion. The one burning passion of his life had been the regeneration of the untouchables. They should do away with that evil at least for the sake of the great Swami. He (the Mahatma) had of course his honest difference of opinion with Swamiji with regard to *shuddhi* as he (Swamiji) understood it. He said:[1]

I have made no secret of the fact that I did not approve of all aspects of the *shuddhi* work. After much prayerful study of the Hindu Shastras I have come to the conclusion that there is no room in them for conversion such as they have in Islam and Christianity. I am also certain on a prayerful reading of the Koran that there is no warrant for the *tabligh* that is being promoted today. It is possible that I may be mistaken. Let God correct me in that case. I for myself would love to protect my religion with *tapascharya*—the way of prayerful suffering which is the royal road to success in any noble object. The real memorial that the Hindus can raise to Swamiji is to rid Hinduism of the curse of untouchability. Let both Hindus and Mussalmans cleanse their hearts with the purifying blood of Swamiji's sacrifice. I must be free to read the *Gita* or the Koran of my own accord. Why should a Hindu compel me to read the one or a Mussalman to read the other? Why should I need a Christian to compel me to read the Bible? No one may stand between a man and his religion or God. He who has no inkling of religion, whose heart is arid and purified—how dare he purify (by proselytizing) others? But that is my opinion. And as I am a votary of liberty I have in spite of my opinion insisted that Shraddhanandji had as much right to propagate the Vedic dharma as a Mussalman to propagate that of the Koran. And if Shraddhanandji was assassinated for his *shuddhi* work, it did no credit to Islam. Hinduism is proud of the sacrifice and has been enriched by it. Let no Mussalman secretly approve of the act or believe that it has done any good to Islam. Let not a single Hindu harbour any thought of retaliation. If the Hindu and the Mussalman rid themselves of mutual distrust and fear, there is no power that can stop their freedom. We are

[1] The paragraph that follows has been extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter" in *Young India*.

the makers of our own slavery. I had sealed my lips up to now on this burning topic. It is Shraddhanandji's sacrifice that has compelled me to open them to a certain extent. But I can give no guidance in this atmosphere. I shall only send my prayers to God that He may rid us of fear and hatred and distrust, and make us rely solely on the strength of love.

Referring to the protection of cows, he observed that it was a non-controversial matter and he was glad that they were doing so. The Hindus themselves were responsible for the present condition of Indian cows. If they did not sell their cows to the butchers for money, if they took proper care of the milch cows, their condition could not be so deplorable. He had heard that there was a *goshala* in Gaya. There were many such in India. If they could properly conduct them, they could easily maintain old and decrepit cows out of the income derived from milk, milk-products and hides of dead cows which could be made payable by establishing tanneries.

Continuing, Mahatmaji appealed to the people to help the poor villagers by habitually wearing khadi. Charkha, he said, was their *kamadhenu*. It had the power to feed thousands of poor, starving villagers. He regretted that even a small khaddar shop could not be conducted in a town like Gaya. It pained him to see a small khaddar shop amidst a number of big shops full of foreign cloth. He longed to see that day when all the big shops in the market would be stocked with khaddar, while there would remain only one or two small shops with foreign and Indian mill-made cloth and even those few not properly conducted.

Concluding, he appealed to the people in the name of God, to contribute what little they could to the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund for khaddar work and thus give financial help to the poor people of their country. . . .

The Searchlight, 21-1-1927; also *Young India*, 27-1-1927

51. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*January 16, 1927*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter giving a description of your mishap, etc. I thought that the Bihar itinerary was sent to you, but I now remember it was not even ready when the first dates were sent. The Bihar dates were sent to you yesterday. I take it that you are using your map to locate the places and I suggest your writing the stations in Hindi

[1] From the postmark

characters as an interesting and useful exercise.

With love,

BAPU

[PS.]

This is being written just after prayer time 5 a.m. for we are just going far away.

From the original: C.W. 5197. Courtesy: Mirabehn

52. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

ON TOUR,
[*January 16, 1927*][1]

BHAISHRI DAHYABHAI,

I got your letter. There is no doubt that the condition of the cultivators is deteriorating in these times. But the causes of that deterioration go deeper than you think. Impatience will harm the cause. Anger does not mend matters. If you realize that the remedy lies not with the Government but with the cultivators, you will go ahead with your work without feeling unhappy all the time. If I get even a moment free, I will write about the subject in *Navajivan*. I got the cutting from the *Prajabandhu*[2]. I did not get the one you say you sent before this. I think I shall come upon it by and by.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2698. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

53. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

Sunday [*January 16, 1927*][3]

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I got your letter. I had also got your telegram. Every effort is being made to send you all the original writings.

I wish to engage you for translation work. I am writing to Kaka about it. The series being contributed by Shankerlal's brother-in-law

[1] From the postmark
[2] A Gujarati weekly of Ahmedabad
[3] From the postmark

will continue for a long time and I feel that you can be utilized in that work. I am writing to Kaka as he is the editor.

I suppose you remember that March 11 is the date fixed for the meeting of [All-India] Cow-protection [Association][1]. You must have found the names of the members and written to them. Sunday you must have despatched the Association circular regarding the meeting, and finalized the accounts by obtaining details from Revashankerbhai[2], the Ashram[3], etc.

Are you taking care of your health?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

BHAISHRI VALJI DESAI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM

SABARMATI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7390. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

54. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, SONEPUR [4]

January 16, 1927

Think of Sita. Do you imagine she went about with Rama in his 14 years' forest wanderings with heavy ornaments like you? Do you think they add to your beauty? Sita cared for the beauty of her heart and covered her body with pure khaddar. The heavy ornaments you wear are not only ugly but harmful inasmuch as they are the permanent receptacles of dirt. Free yourselves of these shackles and relieve the poverty of people who have no clothes, much less ornaments, to wear.

Young India, 27-1-1927

[1] The addressee was then secretary of the Association.

[2] Revashanker J. Zaveri, who was then the treasurer of the Association

[3] The Sabarmati Ashram, the headquarters of the Association

[4] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

55. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CHHAPRA[1]

January 16, 1927

Mahatmaji made a joint reply. After having thanked the Boards for kindly presenting him the addresses, he said that although he would speak a few words on other subjects also, his visit was mainly intended to preach the message of khaddar and charkha. He said that one of the addresses referred to his efforts to root out the evil of untouchability. It was the burning desire of his heart to wipe out that blot from Hindu society. Swami Shraddhanand, he said, who died in his attempts to do so, used to say that unless one untouchable was kept as family member in the house of each and every Indian leader, they could not say that untouchability was removed. The fifth *varna* was their own creation; the Shastras never sanctioned it. If the leaders kept the untouchables in their houses, there was no reason why people should blame them. 'Serve the untouchables' was the lesson of Swami Shraddhanand's life. They should learn further the lesson of fearlessness from his life and that of the evils of communalism from his death. He said that Hindu-Muslim unity was a dire necessity for them. Unless that was attained they could not even dream of swaraj.

Continuing, he said that the poverty of their country was a universally admitted fact. If they were true to their religion and true to their country, they could not but have sympathy with the poor. The best way they could help the poor was by wearing khadi. They should not spend even a cowrie over foreign or Indian mill-made clothes.

He appealed once more to them to put on khaddar in preference to all other clothes.

He then announced that he would himself sell khaddar in that meeting, and, with a few pieces of Khadi in his hand, he stood on the dais and called for purchasers. . . .

The Searchlight, 21-1-1927

[1] At the meeting, which was attended by about ten thousand people, Gandhiji was presented addresses in Hindi by the Municipality and the District Board. He later addressed a women's meeting at the Town Hall before proceeding to Ekma.

56. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, SEWAN [1]

[*January 16, 1927*][2]

I am glad you say that your sub-division is better than other parts so far as Hindu-Muslim unity is concerned. But can you say that you are so united that your unity will stand the strain of anything happening elsewhere? I wish there can be at least one province, one district, one sub-division in this vast land which can proudly say that no power on earth can foment a Hindu-Muslim quarrel there. We may think we are living but disunited we are worse than dead. The Hindu thinks that in quarrelling with the Mussalman he is benefiting Hinduism, and the Mussalman thinks that in fighting a Hindu he is benefiting Islam. But each is ruining his faith. And the poison has spread as among the members of the communities themselves. And no wonder. For one man cannot do right in one department of life whilst he is occupied in doing wrong in any other department. Life is one indivisible whole.

I said at Comilla that the problem had passed out of human hands, and that God had taken it into His own. Maybe the statement springs from my egotism. But I do not think so. I have ample reason for it. With my hand on my breast, I can say that not a minute in my life am I forgetful of God. For over twenty years I have been doing everything that I have done as in the presence of God. Hindu-Muslim unity I had made a mission of my life. I worked for it in South Africa, I toiled for it here, I did penance for it, but God was not satisfied, God did not want me to take any credit for the work. And so I have now washed my hands. I am helpless. I have exhausted all my effort. But as I am a believer in God, as I never for a moment lose faith in Him, as I content myself with the joy and sorrow that He wills for me, I may feel helpless, but I never lose hope. Something within me tells me that Hindu-Muslim unity must come and will come sooner than we might dare to hope, that God will one day force it on us, in spite of ourselves. That is why I said that it has passed into the hands of God. This, I said, might be taken to be an arrogant utterance—arrogant inasmuch as it implies that it is not in the power of any other man to

[1] Condensed summary of a speech delivered in Hindi

[2] Sewan is a sub-divisional town in the district of Saran, which, according to *The Searchlight*, 21-1-1927, Gandhiji covered on January 16.

achieve the work, as if no one has worked for it more than I. But there is no arrogance in the statement. Hundreds may have done the work with the same earnestness, love and energy, but none with more. And I believe that all of them must be feeling as helpless as I. In 1920, I said that not even the British Empire with all the resources of its armed strength, diplomacy and organization could efface us, make us slaves, or divide Hindus from Mussalmans. But that was because I thought we were godfearing then. We trusted one another and we relied on one another's strength. But how am I to prevail upon you today to cast off all fear, hatred and distrust? Shraddhanandji was not the enemy of Mussalmans. He was a warrior, he had the courage of his convictions. Assassination was not the way to fight him. Let us Hindus and Mussalmans both wash the sins of our heart with his blood.

And what is it that we should be fighting for? We Hindus may be idol-worshippers. We may be mistaken. But when God gave every man the right to make mistakes, when God suffers us to live although we are idol-worshippers, why should not the Mussalmans suffer us too? And if a Mussalman thinks that he must slaughter the cow, why should a Hindu stay his hands by force? Why should he not fall on bended knees before him and plead with him? But we will do no such thing. Well then, God will one day make the Mussalman and the Hindu do what we will not do today. If you are believers, I beseech you to retire into yourselves and pray to the In-dweller to stay your hands from wrong and to make them do the right thing. Let that be our prayer every morning and evening. There is no other way.

Young India, 27-1-1927

57. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

January 17, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

We are now on the north of the Ganges and therefore letters will for the time being take longer to reach you. We are on Rajendra Babu's ancestral property in a remote village[1] though not remote from the railway line.

What is your progress in Hindi now? Are you speaking it without reserve? Do you get much time to talk in Hindi? Or do you have

[1] Jeeradei

to carry on your work through English? I hope you have continued your weekly Hindi letter to the Ashram. It is fairly cold here. It is never warm in the shade. The weather is also damp but bracing. One feels like walking all day long and yet I can get but little [time].

I am there somewhere about 20th March. I suppose you would want to be there till then but in no case if the place does not suit you.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope you have got the itinerary. If not, address your letters Khadi Office, Muradpore, Patna. It is incessant wandering. By the [time you]r reply to this reaches me, it will be quite 10 days, I fear. I reach Patna 30th inst.

From the original: C.W. 5198. Courtesy: Mirabehn

58. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Silence Day [*January 17, 1927*][1]

CHI. MANI,

I got your letter. There is nothing in your letter which you need keep back from others. However, no one else except Mahadev has read it.

Surely, I will never force you to marry, nor will Father. If I could have my way I would rather force girls to remain unmarried. It is the girls themselves who compel me to force them to marry. You are, therefore, safe so far as I am concerned. I was being harassed by people who did not understand you and so I wrote to you to ascertain your desire and that too because I had observed your restlessness. I do know of young women (girls) whose restlessness is due to their desire to get married, though they themselves are not aware of this. I am sure that is cannot be so in your case. Still it was my duty to draw your attention to the problem, and I also wished to suggest that there was no harm in thinking of getting married even after having expressed one's intention not to do so. Of course it would be different if you had taken a vow. In that case, the heavens may fall but the vow must not be violated. Since, however, you have not taken a vow, even a person like me may ask you what you desire. Others may even urge you to get

[1] As in the printed source

married. This does not mean that I want you to take a vow. That you may do when you feel that it is absolutely necessary. I shall never feel compelled again to mention the subject of marriage to you; not only that, but I shall even prevent others from doing so. You should, however, get over your restlessness and so live always that your unmarried state may win people's respect. *Brahmacharya* should be understood in a spiritual sense, and in order that it may bring you spiritual benefit, you should observe it in the manner recently complained by me in my autobiography in *Navajivan*. You should, therefore, maintain a calm and cheerful temper, be industrious in your habits and cultivate a tolerant outlook.

Read *Margopadeshika*[1] several times over till you have mastered it. Understand the meaning of every word in the *Gita* with the help of the rules explained in that book.

I have sent a wire to you asking you to master ginning and carding. I have sent a wire to Narayandas too at Karachi. But have not received a reply from him; whether or not I hear from him, I have received similar requests from others too. I intend to send you to various places from time to time for teaching spinning. I have asked for a salary of Rs. 50 and travelling expenses. This will give you good experience too. We shall think afterwards what to do then. You should not take up any work there for the present. You should, however, continue drawing Rs. 30/-. You may save what you can from it. I will ask for an account later on.

Ble ssings from

BAPU

CHI. MANIBEHN PATEL
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SABARMATI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, pp. 47-51

[1] Sanskrit Reader written by Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar

59. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Silence Day, Pausa Sud 14 [*January 17, 1927*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. I have sent you a telegram regarding the stores at Gondia and Amaravati. If I have to visit Gondia, I may be able to go there too. I have to leave Patna on the 31st evening. I can catch the Bombay Mail at Mogulsarai on the 1st. I shall be reaching Jabalpur . . .[2] on the same day. That means that I shall be arriving in Gondia on the 2nd. I shall get a seat in the Bhusaval [Mail] at any rate on the 3rd.

Now about Manilal. I have written to Kishorelal in that connec-tion and have asked him to show the letter to you. My suggestion just now is that either Gomatibehn or Vijayalakshmi should ask Sushila, without mentioning the name, whether she intends to get married. I gather from Kishorelal's letter that none of the girls is yet thinking of getting married. If this is true, why should we persuade her to marry? Kishorelal believes that, if at all, Sushila may be thinking of getting married. That is why it seems to me that we can proceed further in the matter after ascertaining whether she wishes to get married. Meanwhile I will definitely come there. Perhaps we shall then know more clearly what to do.

My tour in these parts is going on at great speed . . .[3] is arranged well. Better arrangements . . .[4] can be made though today we are in Rajendra Babu's village.

Although Janakibehn's complaint of piles has become less acute, it is better to consult a doctor and do as he suggests. I should not like you to postpone consulting a doctor.

I hope Vinoba is keeping good health. I wish to hear about Shivaji's health too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2879

[1] The itinerary of Gandhiji's tour mentioned in the letter suggests that the letter was written in January 1927. Although *Pausa Sud* 14 corresponded to January 16, Monday was January 17.

[2] Omission is in the source.

[3] omission is in the source.

[4] *ibid.*

60. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day, Pausa Sud 14 [*January 17, 1927*]

DEAR SISTERS,

I have your letter.

I always write to you on Mondays; but as I keep moving from town to town, the day on which you receive my letters may vary. Till now I was to the south of the Ganga. Yesterday I came over to the north, crossing the river. From Patna we crossed over to the other side by means of a boat. A car awaited us there and took us to Sonepur. Soil here is not sticky like mud; it has a mixture of sand in it. It, therefore, feels soft to the feet like velvet. Ba and I walked for about a mile. We were not wearing sandals. We liked to walk on the sand very much indeed. Mother Ganga prepares new soil every year in this part of the country. For hundreds of miles she carries mud and silt with her and, depositing them here, she runs along to the sea as though she wanted to avoid feeling embarrassed by being told by anyone of the great good she was doing to the land.

Today we are in Rajendra Babu's village. Rajbansi Devi is here. Chandramukhi and Vidyavati are at present in Chhapra, the town where he (i.e., Rajendra Babu) lives. We met them in Chhapra. Both are in relatively good health—Chandramukhi slightly worse than she was in the Ashram and Vidyavati slightly better.

In a women's meeting yesterday I started educating them on a new subject. The women here wear heavy silver ornaments; they keep their children dirty and do not comb their hair. I, therefore, criticized their habit of wearing ornaments. The result was that some of them gave away their anklets, necklaces and so on to me, and promised that they would neither buy nor wear others in future. While doing this, I thought of all of you. Ba is giving me great help in this work, but that is because she agrees with me in this. You can do work of this kind better than I. But that requires self-sacrifice, enthusiasm, and opportunities. All this you can have there. Do we not sing *atmavatsarvabhuteshu*[1]? We should regard all as ourselves. Then, on finding somebody's children dirty, we would feel as if our own children were

[1] (He sees rightly who) in all things sees himself.

dirty and so would feel ashamed; on finding someone else suffer would ourselves suffer and seek a remedy for the suffering.

But I have exceeded my limit. Much as I like to exceed, I feel nervous when I look at the pile of correspondence lying before me.

Find out from a map where Patna, Sonepur, and Chhapra are situated. This is the land where King Janaka lived.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

With whose permission did Gangabehn Zaveri let her foot be sprained? Well, God's will be done! If one is negligent, one deserves punishment.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3635

61. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*January 18, 1927*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

I have two more letters from you. Yes, you may go to Hardwar as soon as you wish. You need not stay there for teaching carding and spinning unless it is a help to learning Hindi. As you do not seem to be getting much Hindi, it is better to go away at once. In no case must you endanger your health. You will therefore judge for yourself and do what you think is best. You will of course tell Vidyavati exactly as you feel.

Your letter about the assassination makes me sad. I am hoping that you probably did not understand what your informers were saying or feeling. Hatred is of course there or there would have been no strife. But to think that youngsters can be infected makes one shudder.

Did you go to Swamiji's house?

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5199. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] From the postmark

62. KHADI IN BIHAR

Sjt. Rajendra Prasad has sent me the report on the work of the Bihar branch of the A.I.S.A. for the year ending September 1926. It is a record of steady progress. After mentioning the vicissitudes the organization had to pass through in the early stages, the report says:[1]

There are 8 production and sale centres and 11 sale depots. Besides these there are sale agencies at 6 places and more are being established. The agency has 65 wholetime workers including two honorary workers. Their average earnings are Rs. 25 per month. During the year under review 2,698 spinners earned Rs. 29,519; 489 weavers, Rs. 36,862; 6 tailors, Rs. 230 during two months; 8 dyers and printers Rs. 2,273 during six months including the cost of dyes; and 40 washermen Rs. 1,951 during six months. It goes without saying that the spinners and weavers too were not wholetime workers. They worked only during their spare time and irregularly.

The report then says:

> The progress that has been made is not only in regard to increased production and sale but also in regard to the quality of khaddar and reduction in its price.

The average price in 1923 was Rs. 1-0-5 per yard of fine cloth. It was reduced to As. 13 in 1926. When the yarn was very weak the weaving charge was 3 annas 3 pies per yard of 45 inches width. On account of the improvement in the yarn, it has now been reduced to 2 annas 3 pies per yard of the same width. Nor is there any difficulty about getting sufficient weavers to weave hand-spun yarn. Some of these weavers weave even up to 72 inches width and the variety of weaving includes twills, coatings of various designs, etc. Dyeing and printing is being developed under the special care of a graduate of the Bihar Vidyapith.

The report, after mentioning the work in different branches of the organization, says:

> If we could dispose of our present stock, it is expected that we shall be able to reduce our prices still further by about 10 p.c.

[1] The statement, which gave figures of the production and sale of khaddar, is not reproduced here.

It naturally dwells upon the successful peripatetic exhibitions that were held during the year, of which a detailed account has appeared from time to time in these pages. The interesting report contains the following pregnant reflections:

> The province of Bihar is particularly suited for khaddar work. The population is agricultural; there is no industry in the province worth the name, outside the coalfields of Chhotanagpur and apart from the great Tata Iron and Steel Works at Jamshedpur. The tradition of spinning is still extant in most parts of it and the number of weavers and looms is large enough to supply almost the entire requirement of cloth of the province. Cotton, though of an inferior quality, is also produced in many parts of it. The work of production of khaddar is, therefore, not very difficult, although it requires organization and technical skill to improve its quality. It can be extended almost indefinitely, if sufficient capital and organizing and technical skill are forthcoming.
>
> The above narrative will show the progress made in reviving the ancient but practically all but dead industry of spinning in Bihar. We have succeeded in touching but the merest fringe of the vast area in which spinning can be revived and made to furnish a much-needed occupation for the idle hours of our great agricultural population. That its possibilities are vast can hardly be denied. That some supplementary occupation, not to speak of income, is necessary for the population will be apparent from the fact that the average quantity of land actually cultivated with food and non-food crops is less than three-quarters of an acre per head. It is the yield of this small quantity of land, nearly four-fifths of which are unirrigated and depend upon the freaks of the monsoon, that is expected not only to keep the body and soul together of every individual but also to supply him with cloth and other necessaries of life and to meet among others all demands of the zamindar, the society and the State. Looked at from this point of view the admittedly scanty earning of 7 pies per day by charkha is not after all so small and does afford, as experience has shown, substantial relief to a class of people who need such relief but cannot get it through forced unemployment. It is believed that agriculture does not require more than a hundred days' labour in the year but the work is so distributed that the agriculturist cannot leave his farm and seek work elsewhere at a distance. In fact, the nature of the work is such that it allows plenty of leisure but at short intervals and a supplementary industry, which is not capable of being taken up and put aside to be resumed later at the stage at which it was left, cannot be usefully taken up. Experience has shown that the charkha alone can serve the purpose.

It is hoped that the appeal made in the report to the public for the purchase of khaddar will meet with the liberal response it deserves.

Young India, 20-1-1927

63. HINDI v. *ENGLISH*

Organizers of meetings seem to require constant reminders that not English but Hindi or Hindustani is the common medium of expression among the masses. I have observed that unlike as in 1921 the addresses hitherto presented to me during the tour have been in most cases in English. The absurdity became patent when an address in English on behalf of the employees of Jharia collieries was sought to be read to me and that, at a big mass meeting attended by thousands, hardly fifty of whom could possibly understand English. The vast majority could have easily followed Hindi and a very large number could have understood Bengali. The officers of the association were from Bengal. If the English drafting was meant for me, it was wholly unnecessary. They might have written the address in Bengali and given me a translation in Hindi or even in English. But to inflict English on that big audience would have been an insult to them. I hope that the time is coming when, if the proceedings are conducted in a language the majority cannot understand, they would leave such meetings. Be it said to the credit of the chairman at this meeting that he saw the absurdity as soon as I drew his attention to it and very courteously allowed the address to be taken as read. May the incident serve as a warning to all the organizers but more especially those in the Andhradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnatak. I know their difficulty. But they have had now for six years in their midst an efficient organization for the spread of Hindi. Their addresses should be in the vernaculars of their respective provinces with a Hindi translation for my benefit. I have always made an exception in Dravida land and delivered my speeches in English wherever they have so desired. But I do think that the time has come when they should dispense with English for big public meetings. Really it is the English-speaking leaders who are blocking the way to our rapid progress among the masses by their refusal to learn Hindi which can be easily picked up inside of three months even in Dravida land, if the learners will give three hours per day. Let those who doubt give a trial to the Hindi Prachar Karyalaya conducted in Madras under the aegis of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Prayag. They will find at the head office in Triplicane and the branches in Andhradesh and elsewhere books and teachers that will satisfy them. There is no excuse save

idleness or disinclination for not knowing Hindi which is understood by over twenty crores of the people of Hindustan.

Young India, 20-1-1927

64. NOTES

ALL-INDIA DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL

I hope the readers of *Young India* have not forgotten the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial. When I suspended touring after the Cawnpore Congress for one year, I knew that the collection of funds for the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial to which I had pledged myself would be suspended. But it was inevitable. At the time of suspension I had stated that, if God willed it, at the end of the year I would resume my tour for the collection. I resumed it at Calcutta and all the collections that I am now making will be for the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial except where the donors otherwise specify the object of their donations. And since the object of the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial is village organization and that through the spinning movement, all these collections automatically become part of the All-India Spinners' Association which is the agency through which the Memorial collections are to be utilized for the purpose. A resolution to this effect was passed by the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Committee at Cawnpore in 1925. I trust, therefore, that those who are in charge of the organization of meetings in connection with my tour will take good care to inform those who may attend meetings of the object of the tour. There should be no desire to spring a surprise upon those who attend meetings by asking for subscription. The honest course is to let them know beforehand that they will be asked to pay. No one need pay unless he believes in the Memorial and its object. I know, too, that a man may revere the memory of Deshbandhu and still not believe in the spinning movement. But I would venture to remind such people of what were Deshbandhu's last wishes expressed to his wife, his sister and his trusted lieutenants and Satis Chandra Das Gupta of Khadi Pratishthan and to me almost exactly 7 days before his death. He said that as soon as he descended from Darjeeling, he would throw himself heart and soul into the spinning movement. He could see that that was the greatest constructive movement we could undertake and that it was the most effective method of village organization and village reconstruction. It was for that reason that he had asked me to send for Satis Babu with

whom he had discussed the plan of working the spinning movement and it was for the spinning movement that he had intended to spend the largest part of the money that had been collected for village reconstruction. The Spinners' Association, therefore, is the natural outcome, if I may say so, of Deshbandhu's wishes.

TO ORGANIZERS

If all goes well, I hope during the year to cover, besides Bihar, part of Maharashtra, Madras Presidency including Karnatak, U.P., Bengal and Orissa. I should love to visit the other provinces also if time and health permit and if they intend to subscribe to the Memorial, that is, khadi work.

To Orissa I have promised to go and pass there, so far as it is humanly possible, the month of November, not because I expect to make large collections but because it is to my mind an epitome of our distressful condition. Orissa regenerate is to me the regeneration for the whole of India. It is a land which need not be the poorest in the country. Its people are in no way inferior to those of the other parts of India. They have a fine history all their own. They have magnificent temples. They have the Lord of the Universe in their midst who knows no distinction between his creatures. And yet, sad to relate, under the very shadow of the mighty temple people die of hunger in their thousands. It is a land of chronic poverty, chronic famine, and chronic disease. Nowhere have I seen in the eyes of people so much blankness, so much despair, so much lifelessness as in Orissa. I therefore look forward to my stay in November with sad pleasure.

It is a province that can be, ought to be, easily organized for spinning, because the people have no work. The whole of Orissa cannot be transplanted to the factories of Bengal or the factories of all India put together. It would be wrong even if it was possible. Happily it is not possible. The people must live on their own land and learn to be resourceful, industrious, and learn even to be happy. They have forgotten what happiness can be. Let the workers in Orissa, therefore, understand their responsibility. I expect them to throw themselves heart and soul into the spinning movement. Let them not think of the whole of Orissa. Let them think of single villages where they will establish themselves, and where they may, by prayerful and persistent effort, lift the people out of the Slough of Despond into which they have stuck.

And though, as I have said, I do not expect to make large collections, I shall welcome the only pies of the people who will attend meetings, even as I welcomed them when I travelled in 1921. The sight of old people with their trembling fingers untying the knots which firmly held their pies and willingly surrendering them to me is never to be forgotten. I want to see it again and renew, if a renewal is necessary, the determination that this winter of despair is to be changed into the summer of hope and happiness within a measurable distance of time.

May I ask the organizers also to bear in mind that the tour is to be almost incessant and that I must do my editing and attend to my correspondence during the hours they may leave for me and in the trains? Besides Mondays, at least three hours should be left for me in addition to the time required for ablutions and meals. All night demonstrations must be avoided. It is impossible after a strenuous day's work to stand the strain of disturbance during sleeping hours.

And as this is to be a purely business tour, the meetings should be so arranged and the audiences should be so seated as to leave passages for collectors to pass to and fro. All shoutings and noises should be avoided. I have observed that where management is efficient, collections mount up. The audiences have invariably been found by me to be responsive. Though the thousands of the rich are welcome, I know that it is the coppers and the single rupees of the poor people that bless the movement. It is theirs and let them freely contribute to it their mite.

Young India, 20-1-1927

65. THE CENTRAL FACT

During my tour in so far as it has progressed up to now, I have observed that spinning organizations have not an accurate register of spinners and that the figures supplied and published by me from time to time in these pages were based upon the deductions drawn from the actual wages paid to the spinners. For statistical information the calculation is sound enough because it must err on the right side, i.e., of understatement. But it is not good enough for the movement itself. The spinning movement depends for its permanence upon a vital and direct contact being established between the workers and the spinners; for then and then only shall we be able to understand the wants,

aspirations and limitations of the spinners. The object is to penetrate the remotest Indian homes in the innumerable villages of India and to introduce a ray of hope and light into these homes. This we shall never do, if we do not establish a living touch with the spinners. We cannot, therefore, be satisfied with the work of middlemen whom we may not and do not know. We must be able to trace the course of every pie till it is safely deposited in the hands of the spinners. And let it be remembered that spinning is the central fact of the movement, not weaving, not dyeing, not printing, not even carding and ginning, anterior though the last two processes are to spinning. For the economic solution depends upon a supplementary employment being found for the largest number of the semi-starved millions. That employment by far the best is spinning and that alone, as will be seen by a study of the figures for the various provinces given in these pages.

The Bihar figures reproduced in this issue show 489 weavers against 2,698 spinners. My own observation is that ten spinners are required to feed one weaver both working for the same amount of time. The ultimate ambition is to teach the spinners carding and ginning so as to enable them to increase their earnings as spinners without much effort and without much training. This is being done on a fairly large scale in Bihar, Bengal and the Madras Presidency. The Spinners' Association can justify its existence therefore only upon its achieving a progressive amelioration in the economic condition of the vast masses who can be reached in no other way in a shorter time. The movement depends also for its increasing influence and vitality upon this fact of its tender care for the millions of whom it has as yet only touched but a small part.

Workers have suggested to me that, if an accurate register is to be kept of every spinner, it would involve extra cost. Possibly, it will. Not being in charge of a single centre, I am unable fully to understand the difficulty of keeping such registers. But I can say without any fear of challenge that, whatever the cost may be, a complete register of spinners is an absolute necessity until spinning has become an automatically working movement beyond risk of destruction. The extra cost that the keeping of such a register may involve will be worth undertaking if we are to put the movement on a stable foundation. What an accurate and simultaneous entry of every pie received and spent in a banking corporation is to its honest existence and steady

growth, an accurate register of spinners is to the honest existence and steady growth of the spinning movement. I hope therefore that every spinning organization will without any loss of time set about keeping a full and up-to-date register of its spinners. Needless to say that the workers who will be incharge of the registers and who will come in contact with the spinners must be men—and how nice if they were women?—of unimpeachable character and purity. The discovery of this flaw in the movement was made by me through the hypersensitiveness of the workers of Bengal. In my notice of the Abhoy Ashram report,[1] I made an incidental observation that our statements of figures must not contain "abouts" and "nearlies" and then I made a general observation about the necessity of purity of character. I had in making that observation no one in particular in mind but owing to the juxtaposition of the general remark to the mention of the work of the Abhoy Ashram some of its inmates suspected that my remarks were aimed at them. I had no difficulty in disabusing their minds of the suspicion; but the conversation enabled me to understand and convince the members of the Ashram of the necessity of keeping an accurate up-to-date register of spinners. I am therefore not sorry for the paragraph that I wrote in my notice of the Abhoy Ashram, if only because it has led to the discovery of the flaw in our human account-keeping. But let me reiterate for the information of all concerned that in this spinning movement which is fraught with tremendous consequences, we cannot put too much stress upon the absolute necessity of members of our organizations being and remaining beyond suspicion, and if we are to attain this standard of purity, we will have to develop a thick skin enough to stand and take in good part well-meant suggestions, criticisms and observations.

Young India, 20-1-1927

66. A CANDID CRITIC

I must not withhold the following letter from the readers :

> I have perused your article 'Swamiji the Martyr' with the care and reverence it deserves. I have read it five times before attempting to criticize it. This is to avoid hasty criticism.
>
> The article is undoubtedly written in fascinating language. I envy your style. It attracts, but to me it appears, that it is rather dangerously attractive.

[1] *Vide* "Abhoy Ashram Khadi Work", 30-12-1926.

My criticism is based on my estimation of your character. I have often debated with some friends on this subject. They hold that you are a statesman in the garb of a saint—ready to forgo truth in the cause of your country. I have on the contrary maintained that you are a saint—who has entered politics in fulfilment of your mission, to practise truth in the face of most trying and perplexing circumstances. I shall be very obliged to know if my estimation is correct. For if it is not, the criticism that follows has little value. I am of the opinion that a man of policy is within his rights to write in the manner you have done.

You will agree with me that to suppress truth is a form of falsehood; to refuse to call a spade a spade when you feel it like that is cowardice; and that fearlessness and truth go together.

Do you feel, Mahatmaji, that the murder of Swamiji was an inhuman, barbarous and cruel act of a Muslim ruffian and that the entire Muslim community should be ashamed of it? Why do you refuse to characterize it as such? Instead of condemning the deed and the doer, and those who are responsible for this act (those who describe Hindu leaders as Kafirs— the hot Muslim propagandists and the mad Muslim priests), you have begun to defend the murderer and hold an apology for the community. You never defended Dyer. Is not a European a brother too?

You say further, Islam means peace. Is this truth? Islam as taught by the Koran and practised by Muslims ever since its birth never meant peace. What makes you write a thing so patently wrong? Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism of course teach peace, but not Islam. May I know what makes you think and write like this?

You never minced matters when condemning the wrongs of the Government, you never minced matters when you condemned Arya Samaj, why fear to condemn Muslims for even proved wrongs?

I am sure if such a black act had been committed by a Hindu against a Muslim leader (which Heaven forbid!), you would have condemned the murderer and the community in unsparing terms. You would have asked Hindus to repent in sack-cloth and ashes, to offer fasts, hold hartal, raise memorial to the departed Muslim and many other things. Why do you accord preferential treatment to your 'blood brothers'the Muslims?

A truth-teller knows no fear, not even of the sword of Islam and I trust you will oblige me by giving reply to above in the columns of your esteemed weekly.

The writer is frank and obviously in earnest and reflects the prevalent mood.

To clothe me with sainthood is too early even if it is possible. I myself do not feel a saint in any shape or form. But I do feel I am a votary of Truth in spite of all my errors of unconscious omission and commission. The correspondent has judged rightly that I am not "a statesman in the garb of a saint". But since Truth is the highest wisdom, sometimes my acts appear to be consistent with the highest statesmanship. But I hope I have no policy in me save the policy of truth and ahimsa. I will not sacrifice truth and ahimsa even for the deliverance of my country or religion. This is as much as to say that neither can be so delivered.

In writing about the assassination of Swamiji, I have not suppressed truth. I do believe the act to be all that the correspondent describes. But I feel pity for the murderer even as I felt for General Dyer. Let not the correspondent forget that I refused to be party to any agitation for the prosecution of General Dyer. I do claim that a European is just as much brother to me as a Mussalman Indian or a Hindu.

What I do feel about the assassin is that he is himself a victim of foul irreligious propaganda in the name of religion. Hence it is that I have held the newspapers that have corrupted the public mind to be responsible for the murder. I do hold the maulvis and all those who have indulged in exciting hatred against Swamiji to be responsible.

But I do regard Islam to be a religion of peace in the same sense as Christianity, Buddhism and Hinduism are. No doubt there are differences in degree, but the object of these religions is peace. I know the passages that can be quoted from the Koran to the contrary. But so is it possible to quote passages from the Vedas to the contrary. What is the meaning of imprecations pronounced against the Anaryas[1]? Of course these passages bear today a different meaning but at one time they did wear a dreadful aspect. What is the meaning of the treatment of untouchables by us Hindus? Let not the pot call the kettle black. The fact is that we are all growing. I have given my opinion that the followers of Islam are too free with the sword. But that is not due to the teaching of the Koran. That is due in my opinion to the environment in which Islam was born. Christianity has a bloody record against it, not because Jesus was found wanting, but because the

[1] Non-Aryans

environment in which it spread was not responsive to his lofty teaching.

These two, Christianity and Islam, are after all religions of but yesterday. They are yet in the course of being interpreted. I reject the claim of maulvis to give a final interpretation to the message of Mahomed as I reject that of the Christian clergy to give a final interpretation to the message of Jesus. Both are being interpreted in the lives of those who are living these messages in silence and in perfect self-dedication. Bluster is no religion nor is vast learning stored in capacious brains. The seat of religion is in the heart. We Hindus, Christians, Mussalmans and others have to write the interpretation of our respective faiths with our own crimson blood and not otherwise.

Young India, 20-1-1927

67. SPEECH AT MADHUBANI [1]

January 20, 1927

Mahatmaji in replying thanked the Boards for presenting him addresses. He thanked the boys of the Brahmacharya Ashram also for singing before him the sweet Vedic hymns. He said that there was neither any necessity, nor had he so much time at his disposal to reply separately to all the addresses presented to him. But one thing had drawn his attention. He said that he was told in three or four addresses that attempts were being made to start Ayurvedic dispensaries in many parts of the province. It seemed to him that the people of Bihar were interesting themselves in the Ayurvedic system of treatment. He had expressed his opinion on the subject on many occasions and he would like to draw their attention to that. He believed that there was a good deal of truth in that system, but he believed none the less that the practitioners of that system had their own defects and joined the profession without proper training. He admitted that the Western system of medical treatment was very defective, but he knew this also that the Indians did not do even half of what the people of Europe were doing for the success of their medical science. But they had great opportunity to work for the improvement of that science. He requested the Municipalities and District Boards to see to this matter. He further requested the *vaidyas* to make a scientific study of the system. If there were defects in the system,

[1] At the meeting, addresses were presented to Gandhiji on behalf of the Municipality, the District Board, the *goshalas*, the Youngmen's Debating Club and the Arya Samaj.

and defects there certainly were, they should not try to conceal them; on the contrary, every effort should be made to remove them.

Continuing, he said that he was glad to learn that the organizers of the Madhubani *goshala* agreed with his views on the utilization of the hides of dead cattle for the improvement of the cattle themselves. *Goshalas*, he said, had two aspects, one economic and the other religious. The question of cow-protection was a non-controversial matter. He did not understand why there should be any quarrel with the Muslims on that point. His views on *kurbani*, he said, remained unchanged.

Continuing, he said that the existing line of work of the *goshala* had also many defects in it. They should be maintained in the right and proper way. The organizers of these houses should be thoroughly acquainted with the treatment of animal diseases. They should know how to house and feed the cows, how to make milk cheaper for the poor village purchasers; in fact, the conductors of *goshalas* must thoroughly study the science of cattle-keeping and then alone could the purpose of *goshalas* be served.

Proceeding, he said that he had done all he could for the attainment of Hindu-Muslim unity but had failed. For that reason he had given up reading newspapers even. He had no time to read them either. His condition, he said, had become like king Janaka of Mithila who had looked indifferently when his own city was burning, for he had done all he could to prevent the fire. Similarly his (Mahatmaji's) attitude towards Hindu-Muslim differences was that of indifference for he knew that it was not in his power to remedy it. He said he did not know how or when Hindu-Muslim unity would come. The people of this country had gone mad; they were unhesitatingly cutting the throats of each other. He could not be a party to it. His religion was of non-violence, his faith in non-violence remained as unshaken as it was before, although attempts were made by his friends to convince him of the utility of violence on special occasions. To him all things were not as they seemed and he believed firmly that non-violence was the religion through which alone one could triumph ultimately. For all those reasons, he said, he had stopped dealing with the subject altogether. But he believed that the unity would certainly come one day, if not through the agency of man, through the agency of God.

Referring to khaddar, he said that he was glad that a purse was presented to him for khaddar work. But from Madhubani he expected much more. Madhubani, he said, was a big khaddar centre. He saw that many poor spinners of the place came four or five miles walking on foot with their yarn to take cotton or money from the workers. He knew that there were people who were even poorer than they. While he was at Champaran he had heard a lady complain that she could not take her bath in the Ganges and clean her clothes because she had no additional clothes to spare. This might have been an exaggeration but such cases were not absent. There was no other

way to relieve the poverty of those people except by giving them an occupation and the best possible occupation they could give them was spinning.

Continuing, he said that he had just heard a hymn from the *Isopanishad* which meant that those who did not work stole other men's property. What did it mean, he asked. It did not mean that he actually stole other men's property but it meant that he lived on the food earned by other men's labour. As a matter of fact, no man had any right to live, unless he worked not only for himself but for all men alike, for an individual is but a drop in the great ocean of humanity. Similarly, the *Gita* taught him that no man should eat unless he had performed *yajna* and of the many *yajnas* sanctioned by that sacred book, that of working for others was the best. Spinning, then, was the only work which could help thousands of people; it was the universal *yajna* which could be performed by all.

Addressing the ladies, he said that to him all who were clad in foreign clothes were naked, for nothing but khaddar could cover the nakedness of Indians.

Mahatmaji appealed to the people to look into the affairs of the local national school and of the *goshala* and help them with money if they deserved it. It was the duty of a citizen, he said, to help his fellow-beings and institutions in distress.

He concluded by appealing once more for money for khaddar work and asking people to purchase khadi which was stocked at the meeting.

The Searchlight, 26-1-1927

68. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, SAMASTIPUR

January 20, 1927

He said that he was glad to see them once more. It was impossible for him to forget the people of Samastipur who had once brought him there in a special train with Bapu Brajkishore Prasad and others. He had, therefore, come to Samastipur with great hope. His tour, he said, was intended to preach the message of khaddar. It pained him very much to see that most of the people who had come to see him had not put on khaddar. He had preached the message of khaddar for five long years from thousands of platforms but still the people were reluctant to use khadi. Bihar had the capacity to produce as much khaddar as could be consumed in the province and if only the people patronized that great cottage industry, thousands of their unemployed men and women—ginners, carders, spinners, weavers, and even bleachers and washermen—could be provided with food and clothing. Every farthing that they could spend on khadi would go to the homes of their poor countrymen. It was their religious duty, therefore, to put on khadi and khadi alone.

Continuing, he said that by purchasing mill-made cloth they were helping only the rich mill-owners of either Lancashire or Ahmedabad. He was intimately acquainted

with the condition of labourers through Anasuyabehn. He knew it definitely that the labourers were little benefited by the huge amount of money that people spent over mill-made cloth. The rich mill-owners were not in need of money and they had a wide market even outside India, but the poor countrymen of theirs were dying for a bit of rough bread. He knew how poor the people of Bihar were, for he had been in Champaran for a long time. Would they not be kind and sympathetic to these poor people, he asked.

Proceeding, he said that money was necessary for the furtherance of khaddar work. In order to save crores of money permanently in the country, crores of money were to be invested in the beginning. He had come to their door to beg of them that money. He regretted that no khaddar was stocked at the place of the meeting, although he was told on his arrival that there were khaddar shops in the town and that some khaddar would surely be stocked on the spot. Nevertheless he requested the people to go at once to the khaddar shop and clothe themselves in khadi.

Concluding, Mahatmaji spoke a few words on the evils of untouchability and paid an eloquent tribute to Shraddhanand, the martyr, who had embraced death in his attempt to regenerate the untouchables.

An address of welcome on behalf of the Municipality was then read by Babu Giriwardhar, Chairman, to which Mahatmaji made a short reply. He expressed his satisfaction that there was no ill-feeling between the Hindu and the Mussalmans of Samastipur. It was a great thing. He hoped that that state of things would continue to exist.

Referring to their desire to have a khaddar-producing centre at Samastipur, he said that if they sincerely desired such an organization, Rajendra Babu would surely look into the matter. He hoped that if requisite amount of money was advanced by the people themselves, Rajendra Babu would be coming to their help with all the energy he possessed.

Referring to the national school, he regretted that it was not what it ought to have been. He saw there certain charkhas and the students were also seen sitting by them, but it was all a mockery, a mere show. Neither the teacher nor the students knew anything about spinning. He had given proper instructions to the head master and he (the head master) had agreed to work according to that plan. He hoped that they would send him a satisfactory report within a month.

Continuing, he said that the municipalities could do a good deal of work if they so desired. They could push on the khaddar work to the great profit of not only the work but of themselves also.

A purse of Rs. 2,000 was then presented to him on which he remarked that Samastipur should not have contributed such a small amount.

The Searchlight, 26-1-1927

69. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

AKOLA,
February 7, 1927

MY DEAR BHRRR[1],

I was delighted to receive your note. Of course you had great success in Kathiawar. Ramdas told all about it.

Sohaila[2] certainly will have my blessings, if she and hers will behave themselves and wear khadi.

Here is the letter you want for Dr. Mehta. But must you go to Rangoon for the amount? Why can you not collect what you can locally and the rest may be collected without your going to Rangoon, seeing that you will allow Hindus to participate in the contributions? Of course if you go to Rangoon you will collect the small amount you mention in a few days.

With love,

Yours,

BHRRR

From a photostat: S.N. 9557

70. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

AKOLA,
Silence Day [*February 7, 1927*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I got your letter and Radha's, and also other letters, acquainting me with Rukhi's progress. Now we need not worry on her account. We are crushed under the triple burden of the doctor's services as also those rendered by others. We ought not to think of repaying it. Even the thought of a token payment would be sinful. We can return their kindness only with a general awakening of our conscience. How can we make our young men and women see this? Had we been house-holders, even a single such illness would have consumed what-ever Santok might have kept back. But there is no end to the illnesses

[1] This was a form of greeting used by Gandhiji and Abbas Tyabji for each other.

[2] Addressee's daughter who was engaged to Mahomed Habib of Aligarh

around us. Why, even amongst those whom Santok regards as her own there is no less misery. . . .[1]

I expect that separate accounts of all these matters are properly maintained; I mean they ought to be. I would say they are correctly maintained only if the rent and other items are correctly entered. I see you have been carrying rather a heavy burden. You alone know how it should or could be lightened. How are things going on at Vijapur? How much khadi has been lying with us? Hurry up with the statement about our agricultural activities, which is to be sent to Sir Gangaram. I have another letter from him.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Radha should not expect a separate letter for some time, but she should write to me all the same.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7774. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

71. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[*February 7, 1927*][2]

. . .[3] serve us and others should attend to our comforts. Do we really deserve all this? Please think over this. It will be long before we really serve the world. At the moment we just accept what the world offers us, claiming to be social workers. Let us live up to the world's expectations of us. May I hope you will contribute your full mite to achieve this?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8839. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

[1] As in the source

[2] From the reference to accepting services this appears to have been written about the same time as the preceding letter.

[3] The earlier part of this letter is not available.

72. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

AKOLA,
Silence Day [*February 7, 1927*]

SISTERS,

Today I am observing my day of silence in the midst of the members of our Ashram family. Kishorelalbhai, Gomatibehn, Nathji, Tulsi Maher and Tara—are not all these to be regarded as belonging to our Ashram? And who would regard Nanabhai, his wife and Sushila as outsiders? So do not expect me to write anything except about them this week.

Gomatibehn is still having a little fever, and is confined to bed. But she is cheerful; no one could say from her face that she was suffering from a long and serious illness. The reason for this cheerfulness is her faith. May we all have such faith!

Kishorelalbhai is getting on as usual. It cannot be said that he has acquired more strength. He even had fever and shivering last night. The fever lasted for a short time and subsided.

Whenever there is illness among the dear ones, Nathji cannot but be in their midst.

Nanabhai is perpetually ill. He is down with asthma but his face shows great calm.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3638

73. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

AKOLA,
Silence Day [*February 7, 1927*]

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have been getting your letters. You should improve your health a great deal. Today we are here in the midst of Gomatibehn, Kishorelalbhai and Tulsi Maher. And here too is Nathji.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Programme:

9	Bhusaval
10	Jalgaon
11	Chopda
12	Amalner
13-14	Dhulia

I do not know the subsequent programme.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6853

74. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

AKOLA,
Silence Day, February 7, 1927

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

Today we are in Akola. Kishorelal has been ill for a long time and now Gomatibehn is bed-ridden. His elder brother, Nanabhai is also ill. In spite of all this the family's tranquillity and faith in dharma is great. Meeting them is a rare pleasure.

The summer heat has already started in this part of the country.

I had already asked you about Sparrow[1]. Her letters that followed have shocked me. I have written to her. If she shows you the letter, read it. I was much distressed.

I am awaiting a detailed letter from you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32826

75. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

February 8, 1927

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

I am glad you are by Devdas's side. His stay there is bound to do him good. You should have an operation without delay for

[1] Helene Haussding

Savitri's tonsillitis. You had become irregular about sending me weekly verses. I am glad you have now recommenced.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3198

76. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN,
Tuesday [*February 8, 1927*][1]

CHI. MANILAL,

Now I can let you have the news. I have almost settled the betrothal. But although you have given me the authority to finalize the matter I do not propose to exercise it.

Herewith a letter from Sushila; she is Tarabehn's elder sister. At 19 she is in good health though slightly hard of hearing. She knows Gujarati and Marathi. She also understands Hindi and a little English. She had her schooling up to the fourth form. I send with this Sushila's photograph. She is Kishorelalbhai's niece. Her parents are alive. Sushila is good at painting and also tries a little music. She plays on the harmonium. She is good at house work. She has herself written the letter without any help. She has also been told that you were almost engaged in South Africa. I would not have been able to find out a better match. Initially the suggestion came from Jamnalalji. Sushila's brother is to be operated upon. The marriage can be fixed for the 11th of March if he recovers [by then], and you can set sail immediately. If the operation is not successful marriage would be postponed on account of the mourning.

Now about you. I believe . . .[2] you have no disease such as syphilis or diabetes. I also told Sushila that . . .[3] if you ever go astray she should try to stop you and if you persist she should leave you.

Now along with your approval I want a solemn assurance from you that . . .[4] you shall honour Sushila's freedom; that you shall treat her as your companion, never as a slave; that you shall take as much

[1] Gandhiji left Akola on February 8; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 7-2-1927.
[2] A few lines are omitted here.
[3] Two lines are omitted here.
[4] A line is omitted here.

care of her person as of your own; that you shall not force her to surrender to your passion, but that you shall take your pleasure only with her consent. I would advise you to set certain limits to your enjoyment.

While describing your good points I have let it be known that you are generous, guileless, and affectionate; that you have great love for the motherland and want to serve her.

I carry a grave responsibility. Here is a devout family. I would be glad if we become related. They have left everything to me. You must never deceive me. I would be mortally hurt if Sushila suffered the least unhappiness. She has impressed me as an innocent girl true to her name[1].

You know my attitude towards women. Men have not been treating them well. I have proposed this alliance assuming you to be capable of coming up to my ideals.

Now if you are agreeable to this engagement, wire to me and write a detailed letter. If you do not approve of this match or if you cannot accept the conditions I have laid down, wire to me: "Unable accept"[2], and if you would say 'Yes', then wire, "Approve match, can satisfy your test".[3]

Write to me at length. Here is my address: 10th Jalgaon; 11th Jalgaon; 12th Chopda; 13th, 14th and 15th Dhulia.

With the fear of God in your heart, write to me only the truth. May God bless you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9124. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

[1] *Sushila* literally means 'of virtuous character'.

[2] The source has this word in English.

[3] *ibid.*

77. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Tuesday, February 8, 1927

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. You are always in my thoughts but I just do not find time to write. I did not know that Mahadev too had not been able to write to you.

I have sent your letter to Pattani Saheb and asked him to reply to you direct. The only reply he will send is that you should stay there. Devdas has sent you Dr. Ansari's letter. Let me know your decision after reading it.

Perhaps you do not know that Revashankarbhai is going to Ceylon, taking Dhiru[2] along with him.

Even if you do not write letters, Pyarelal must. Even other wise Pyarelal should write to me as a rule.

Blessings

BAPU

[PS.]

Dates: 10th Bhusaval, 11th Jalgaon, 12th Amalner, 13-14Dhulia. I do not know the names of the other places.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

78. SPEECH AT NATIONAL SCHOOL, KHAMGAON

February 8, 1927

The reason why I have taken the trouble to carry out this examination[4] is that I have heard much praise of you, and what I am saying now is not to criticize you, but because I appreciate your effort and wish to help you. I must inform you that I am not satisfied if this is the standard of the most brilliant boy of the school. I am not satisfied either with his pronunciation or with the translation. English pronunciations were also bad. Only teachers who can teach correct pronunciation, whether of Sanskrit or English, should be employed. If such teachers are not available, then we should stop teaching. But we have forsaken satyagraha and so plan our work to please the people anyhow. Let us follow truth in our system of education too. I will now

suggest a little modification in your attitude to the charkha.[1]

I see that the charkha has a place on your programme, but it is one out of the four or five things you teach here. Now I want you to understand that the charkha has a place all its own, for reasons that should be obvious to you. For charkha is not one of the professions that you teach. A profession is for earning a livelihood, and if charkha was to be taught as a profession it should have no place on your syllabus. But it has a special purpose. When you put it in line with carpentry, clay-modelling, etc., you are guilty of a confusion of thought. Charkha is an instrument of service. In a national school therefore where the nation expects us to train national servants, the scheme of studies will centre round the charkha. It is a science in itself and it is a science which gives us a knowledge of the means of ameliorating the condition of the masses.

Devotion to a cause is no longer a strong point in our life. A true *brahmachari* is one who is devoted to his ideal and single-minded in his pursuit of the Brahman. If you at all want to give a place to the charkha, then it ought to have a special place. The distinctive quality of our national schools should be that we treat them as a great yajna and should train ourselves to run them accordingly. You must always think how much the knowledge of English helps in the propagation of the charkha, what support the *Gita* gives to the charkha, and what improvement you can effect in it if you learn carpentry and smithy.[2]

Do you know that we have not a national institution where mechanical engineering is taught and where good spindles are made? If therefore you learn mechanics, concentrate on learning how to make a true spindle and how to mend a wrong one. You should be able to tell the circumference of an ideal wheel, the distance between the axle and the poles, the number of revolutions of your spindle, etc. A carpenter in a national school will not have as his ambition the making of an ideal cabinet, but of an ideal charkha. In short, you should study the charkha scientifically and with religious zeal, i.e., with a view to making it the mightiest lever of the nation's salvation.

Young India, 17-2-1927

[1] This paragraph is taken from *Navajivan*, 20-2-1927.

[2] *ibid.*

79. SPEECH ON UNTOUCHABILITY, KHAMGAON[1]

February 8, 1927

If I could think of anything that is untouchable it is foreign clothes. Anything that is prejudicial to the welfare of the nation is untouchable. Anything that is calculated to do the nation a disservice is untouchable. Liquor therefore is untouchable, foreign cloth is untouchable, but no human being is untouchable, and I regard it as fiendish or satanic to regard a fifth of the land as untouchable.

Young India, 17-2-1927

80. SPEECH ON TILAK SWARAJ FUND, PACHORA

February 8, 1927

Mahatmaji addressed the meeting emphasizing the need for khaddar and the removal of untouchability. Some questions were put to him and he answered them. The important question was as to how the one crore of rupees collected for the Tilak Swaraj Fund had been spent.

In replying to this question at length, Mahatmaji invited the curious to study the audit accounts published by the All-India Congress Committee. Every pie had been properly accounted for. Did they distrust the honesty of the treasurers like Seth Revashanker Jagjivan Zaveri and Seth Jamnalal Bajaj? The fact was that some people had given their contributions specially earmarked for certain purposes and they were being spent for them. For example, Seth Revashankerbhai had himself given Rs. 40,000 for educational purposes in Kathiawar. A gentleman in Bombay had given two to three lakhs for the removal of untouchability and they were being properly used. Both the treasurers as well as Mr. Shankerlal Banker, the Secretary of the All-India Spinners' Association, had given magnificent donations and it was not likely that they would be careless in the management of the funds. Capable business man as every one of them was, he was, however, ready to admit that there were some losses in some cases, but the total could not in any case exceed Rs. 50,000. They were due to the inevitable risk that every business man has to face. In Bihar, for instance, khadi was sold on credit to a number of people who had failed to satisfy the obligations. In Andhra, good Konda Venkatappayya was imposed upon by certain people. He had disbursed certain amounts, which could not be readily realized. He had put undue trust in them and they had deceived him. Everyone knew that he had not taken a single pie for himself. Then there were cases of loss, which the greatest carefulness on one's part does not always succeed in avoiding. Recently Sjt. Mahadev Desai, who had been in the service for ten years, now as a trusted "hamal" (coolie) lost Rs. 400 at

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

Bhandara. Could he ask him to repay the amount? He was bound to enter it in the accounts as being lost, though Mahadev Desai himself was looking forward to make good the loss as soon as possible.

These things were bound to happen in the regular course of business and he would even warn the audience that on rare occasions there might be even frauds. But, knowing all these things, if they thought that good work was being done, they might give whatever they could. He for himself was bound to trust the workers, whom the people trusted. Sjt. Dastane, for instance, was their worker. If he commanded their trust, why should Gandhiji distrust him? Mahatmaji assured them that every pie would be credited and accounted for and every loss accurately shown.

Knowing all these things, if they wanted to subscribe to the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund, which is the same as the Khaddar Fund, let them subscribe; and he assured them that whatever they gave would be carefully spent and accounted for in the best manner possible.

The Hindu, 12-2-1927

81. BE IN TIME

The eventful month of April will be soon on us with its memories of the birth of the nation accompanied by unparalleled rejoicings in which lakhs upon lakhs of people took part and which showed the possibilities of what the nation, if it could only act with one mind, could do. It is a month which showed also what haughty, revengeful and merciless Imperialism could do to save itself. The 6th and the 13th of April[1] are never-to-be-forgotten days in the life of the nation. Since then the nation has been struggling not to return evil for evil, not to act in a spirit of retaliation, but to use for self-purification the mingled crimson stream that flowed in Jallianwala. The nation has been struggling to express itself in a non-violent spirit expressed by the spinning-wheel and khadi, the removal of untouchability and solidarity of the different sects and creeds. It is clear, however, that khadi is the only thing in which the whole nation can take part. If we want to act non-violently, we must act constructively, patiently and with quiet and quenchless confidence in ourselves and in our method. We must evolve unity, strength and iron discipline. We must learn to give effect to our views in spite of the vast odds against us. Let us realize that the British rule is imposed upon us because British commerce is forced upon us. If we could but purify British commerce, we would purify the British connection. Our commercial

[1] 1919

transactions with the British as with the world should be on our terms and should therefore be mutually beneficial and absolutely voluntary. But Lancashire cloth is a symbol of our helpless exploitation, whereas khadi is the symbol of self-help, self-reliance and freedom, not merely of individuals or groups, sects or clans, but of the whole nation. It is a movement in which the prince and the pauper, men and women, boys and girls, Hindus and Mussalmans, Christians, Parsis and Jews, Englishmen, Americans and Japanese, if they wish well to India and get rid of the spirit of exploitation, can also take part. Thus it is a unique movement. It is good not merely for some, not merely for the vast majority, hut it is good for all. We may do many other and many more things during the forthcoming National Week. But let us at least organize khadi. Here are the ways:

1. We can, every one of us, buy as much khadi as we can.
2. We can sell as much khadi as we can.
3. We can spin as much yarn as we can.
4. We can give as much as we can to the All-India Spinners' Association and collect from others.
5. Lastly, if we have the will and the opportunity, we can dedicate ourselves wholly to khadi work.

As I write this, the question arises in my own mind: 'But what about the immediate present, what about the Bengal detenus who are pining away in their prison-cells without any knowledge of charges against them, without any trial and without knowing how long they are to be detained?' My answer however is quite clear. If I could think of any other more expeditious method of setting them free, I would adopt it and suggest it today; but there is not. Slow, as this may seem, it is, in my humble opinion, the surest and the quickest method. Let those therefore who have belief in khadi or who have no belief in anything else, do their best bit during the National Week. A true soldier does not argue as he marches how success is going to be ultimately achieved. But he is confident that if he only plays his humble part well, somehow or other the battle will be won. It is in that spirit that every one of us should act. It is not given to us to know the future, But it is given to every one of us to know how to do our own part well. Let us then do that which we know is possible for us if we only will.

Young India, 10-2-1927

82. NATIONAL LANGUAGE

In reply to my innocent paragraph about the evil habit of using English at our public meetings, a habit happily growing less day by day, a correspondent writes:[1]

> *The Hindu* of 28th January quotes *in extenso* your article[2] in *Young India* suggesting that in your proposed tour to the Southern Presidency, any address that may be presented to you should be in the vernacular of the place. You suggest also that a Hindi translation of the address should be supplied for your benefit. I observe further that you think that the time has come when South India should dispense with English for large public meetings. According to you, it is the English-speaking leaders who are blocking the way to our rapid progress among the masses by their refusal to learn Hindi. But the truth seems to be that, had it not been for this language, there would have been no active political life in India as we have it today. . . .Just as you say it would be an insult to inflict English on an audience composed of colliery workmen, I contend that to inflict any other language but English on an audience composed of people collected from various parts of India will be an affront to the latter. You will remember that the President[3] of this year's Congress was in the first instance called upon to speak in Hindi. It was only his rare courage and his rarer wit that saved him from what looked to be a very embarrassing situation. Supposing the President addressed that body in his own vernacular, how many in the audience would have understood him? Or for the matter of that, how many of the delegates assembled would have sat through the whole speech? . . . So long therefore as a common Indian language suitable to India and Burma is not agreed upon, English is bound to be and will be the only medium of communication among the Indian people. Instead of therefore setting your face against the use of the English language, and until such time as a common language is evolved for India, a man situated in your position should not add to the existing difficulties of the people by calling upon them to learn altogether a different language. . . .
>
> You remark in your article that it would be difficult to approach the masses if English is used as the medium. I quite agree with you there. But the masses should in the first instance be approached by people belonging to themselves and who live in their midst. It is, of course, understood that when approaching them their own language will be used. . . .

I publish the letter because it reflects an attitude with which one

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

[2] *Vide* "Hindi v. English", 20-1-1927.

[3] S. Srinivasa Iyengar

has to reckon. The correspondent in his eagerness to defend his own laziness, for it is difficult otherwise to characterize his mentality, has missed the following fundamental facts: English is known hardly to one per cent of the population. It will never be learnt by the masses and we have to reckon daily more and more with the masses in all our political transactions The Congress every year has delegates and visitors the majority of whom do not know and understand English, and when it becomes a thoroughly democratic body, whose delegates are scavengers, cobblers, farmers, washermen, tailors and such others, there will be very few to know English. As against hardly one per cent of the total population knowing English, over 60 per cent of the total population of India at the present moment understand the ordinary rustic Hindustani. For an Indian it is any day infinitely easier to learn Hindustani than English. These are the facts, but the correspondent has overlooked them.

Moreover, in his zeal to make English the official language of the Congress, the correspondent has forgotten the agitation that has been going on in the Congress ever since its inception for a wider recognition of Hindustani as the common medium and that there is now already a resolution of the Congress making Hindustani the common medium. The correspondent seems to think that I decry the use of even learning English, which I have never done. That the English-speaking Indians have rendered immense service to the country nobody can deny, but unfortunately it is equally undeniable that further progress is being blocked by us English-speaking Indians refusing to learn the language of the masses and to work amongst them in accordance with methods best suited to them. The instance given by the correspondent of Mr. Chen is beside the point. I do not know what he is doing, but I do know that he is not speaking to the Chinese masses through English. And all I have claimed is that at our mixed mass meetings where the language of the province will not be understood by all, if any other language is to be adopted, it must be Hindustani. Surely, it is a proposition which does not admit of any challenge.

Young India, 10-2-1927

83. SIR HABIBULLAH DEPUTATION

I tender heartiest welcome to Sir Habibullah Deputation on its return home. The public have not yet sufficient knowledge for forming a definite opinion about the results of the Deputation.[1] One thing is however certain that they have by their tact, ability and cohesion contributed not a little to the peaceful atmosphere that reigned supreme whilst the Round Table Conference was going on. One can only hope that the atmosphere will be reflected in the result of their deliberations. Not much importance need be attached to the cablegram from South Africa attributing the opinion on the part of a section of the Indian settlers, rejecting the conclusions of the Round Table Conference. It is as yet too early. The opinion can only be based upon conjecture, for nobody knows what the conclusions are. We are therefore bound to suspend judgment till we have the full text before us of the agreement said to have been arrived at between the parties. The ever-vigilant Mr. Andrews is there to watch Indian interests.

In this connection an Indian settler sends me the following appropriate reflections on the deliberations:[2]

> Recent messages from South Africa through Reuter's agency and Mr. C. F. Andrews suggest that with the enhanced status acquired by the Union of South Africa. . . she has begun to view the Indian question. . . in a more generous spirit. . . .
>
> The Round Table Conference too according to the Hon. Mr. Sastri[3] has terminated successfully and Mr. Sastri has expressed his thorough satisfaction with the agreement arrived at between the Union and the Indian Government delegates. . . . We can only wish that his high hopes may be fulfilled. Mr. Sastri has further advised the Indian settlers: "If you, our people from India, play the game, it will not be long before you get your due. . . even in the measure that you expect." Mr. Sastri has thus given the Indian settlers the hope that they would even be granted full civic rights. Whether Indians are given full civic rights or not, even if the present policy of persecuting and driving Indians from pillar to post is abandoned and they are allowed to earn

[1] *Vide* "Honourable Compromise", 24-2-1927.

[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

[3] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri

an honest livelihood undisturbed and unmolested,—the labours of the Conference will not have been in vain.

It were well to give the advice to play the game to the Union[1] Government. Even while we are given the hope of a satisfactory settlement of the Indian question and while we are being told that a change of heart has taken place, we find that the policy of depriving Indians of their means of livelihood and ousting them is being persistently pursued by the Provincial Governments with the sanction of the Union Government.

The Town Council of Pietermaritzburg is clearing what it has chosen to term the European locality of every single Indian trader by refusing to grant him a renewal of his licence. Many old established firms have thus already had to close down their businesses in those places without any compensation whatsoever. From a report published in *Indian Opinion* dated December 31, we find that several tailors, shoemakers and barbers who were carrying on their respective occupations for the last ten, fifteen and twenty years have been refused licences on the only ground that they were Indians, and on appeal the decision of the Licensing Officer was upheld by the Town Council in every case, That this should happen just when the Conference was deliberating is not a little surprising and it is a glaring illustration of who has not been playing the game.

Young India, 10-2-1927

84. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Thursday, February 10, 1927

CHI. MANI,

I have two letters from you, You have done well to begin learning Hindi, Whatever you do, you should preserve your health, and then I shall be free from anxiety,

Never spoil your handwriting. It does not matter if you have to spend more time on writing, Soon you will be able to write a good hand fast.

The slivers are very good indeed, I wish that you take a first in every single process connected with cotton. You will be most useful to me as a spinning teacher in girls' schools, and later on as a welfare worker for poor women if your health permits. There is no end to the work to be done among women, but this can be done only

[1] The Source has "Indian", a misprint, *Young India*, 17-2-1927, published this correction.

to a limited extent by men.

Let me know everything that is wrong with the [Ashram] kitchen, and gently draw Sankaran's attention to it. You may even demonstrate the right method of doing things for a couple of days, but you must not get mixed up with it every day. You have to learn to live with others. I shall be very pleased when I can place you anywhere without hesitation as I can place Mahadev or Devdas for instance. I shall be satisfied when you do not hurt anyone's feelings or feel hurt yourself.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, pp. 52-3

85. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Thursday [*February 10, 1927*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Tulsi Maherji tells me that I should let you know my opinion about [supplying] cotton to him, and that you propose to act accordingly. I am on my way to the station and will therefore write only this.

I think we should make up the deficit by drawing on the Charkha Sangh or from the Ashram. If you have no objection to drawing on the Charkha Sangh and obtaining the Council's sanction later, you may do so. Or else debit it to the Ashram account and let him have the cotton.

He has Rs. 300. He wants to have a wagonload of cotton packed in gunny bags. You may let him have that much if it would not cost more than Rs. 800, over and above the Rs. 300.

I would think it advisable to send less cotton if there could be a saving on railway freight. He has asked for 50 Bengali maunds presuming that transport charges up to Raxaul will be the same for 50 maunds as for 25. If it is so it appears advisable to send 50 maunds. Now if I have left anything unsaid you should do as you think fit. Whatever

[1] From the reference to Tulsi Maher who was with Gandhiji on February 7; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn" 7-2-1927.

you think may be considered as my opinion.

When you go to Bombay take with you my things such as books, clothes, etc. On reaching there get yourself promptly operated upon if the doctor so advises.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2883

86. SPEECH AT JALGAON [1]

February 10, 1927

One of the special features of the tour was the auctioning of the caskets containing addresses at the meetings where they were given. The beginning was made at Jalgaon and the process was continued until Dhulia. Gandhiji said:

You must know, friends, that excepting things which have a special artistic value and which I can hand over to Prof. Malkani[2] who is collecting such things at the Gujarat Vidyapith, I cannot afford to carry these caskets with me. For one thing I carry no steel trunks with me, nor have I any provision at the Ashram to keep them. The only course left for me therefore is to sell them. Don't you think that in doing so I am in any way disregarding or belittling the love with which they are being given. On the contrary, I propose to return the love in the best manner I can, and that is by converting the caskets into money for the work which is nearest my heart and for which you are showering your love on me.

The sentiment was appreciated everywhere, with the result that at a village like Shahade a trifling casket fetched as much as Rs. 300, and at Dondaiche the plate and other things fetched over Rs. 200.

Young India, 24-2-1927

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] N. R. Malkani

87. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

DHULIA,
Friday [*February 11, 1927*][1]

BHIAISHRI FULCHAND,

I have your letter. The Parishad's stars, it appears, are not favourable. We might therefore have to make some [propitiatory] sacrifice. We have not yet been able to get a site for setting up the pandal; surely we cannot afford to be so dependent. Why can we not hold the convention in some private premises? Why not at Umarsheth's or some other farm? Why not at Ranavav? But a player always sees more than an onlooker. It is no use my arriving at any decision when I am so far away. Please do whatever you think proper. Devchandbhai asks for some dates during April or May. But it cannot be done. The position at the moment is that a date once cancelled is finally cancelled.

From April to July all days are engaged. A few days in August are free. After that I shall be free only in early December. I shall certainly be at the Ashram in the beginning of March. We shall meet then.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Now up to the 14th write to me at Dhulia.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2831. Courtesy: Sharadabehn Shah

88. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

Saturday [*February 12, 1927*][2]

CHI. JANAKIBEHN,

I am not surprised that you faced the operation with great courage. I would have been surprised to see you break down. I have always found you full of courage. May it endure for ever. Get well

[1] It appears that the letter was written before Gandhiji reached Dhulia on February 13.

[2] The addressee was operated upon on February 11.

soon and after that observe the whole regimen strictly and never fall ill. I am in need of many women who are strong in both body and mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2887

89. SPEECH ON KHADI, AMALNER[1]

February 12, 1927

At Amalner for instance a doubt was expressed as to the utility of carrying the message of khaddar to a mill area like that place. "There are 2,000 labourers here and they form the bulk of the population. Do you expect them to wear khadi? Do you expect the mill-owners to wear khadi?"

Gandhiji gave a lengthy reply.

It is a question that you may well ask, and yet should not need to ask at this time of the day. Truth has to be repeated a million times if it is not understood by all. If only a single expression of truth was sufficient everyone should have been a believer in God by now. The fact is that the truth that God is one has a million times been told, but the hearts of only a few have been able to receive it.

The 330 rupees that the labourers have contributed to the purse are for me worth their weight in gold. But it is not for the first time that labourers are giving concrete expression to their sympathy. Even the mill-owners have done so and will do so in the conviction that they are helping a good cause, and the labourers are doing so because of their sympathy for a fellow-labourer like myself. But an understanding of one's duty and the observance thereof are different things. If they went together we should have *Ramarajya.* There are for instance those who know the value of *brahmacharya* but who cannot observe it. Even so there are those who appreciate the message of khadi but who are not able to conquer their love of ease and comfort and exclusively wear khadi. Many come and tell me: 'We value your message, but show us the way to carry it out.' And as honest conviction is bound to be followed by practice sooner or later this attitude fills me with more hope. You may be employing 2,000 labourers here but do not forget that you tear them from the soil, do

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

not forget that your mills can provide only a handful with labour, and can never find employment for the millions who must be rooted to the soil and who want more work. The question has been before the Royal Commission of Agriculture, the question is before the Viceroy and I challenge any-one to find a better solution than the one I have placed before the country. Dr. Roy[1] could not carry his chemical works to the famine areas in Bogra and Khulna; he had to fall back on the spinn-ing-wheels. Let not your ambition be to concentrate thousands of spindles in a mill, but to convert every home into a spinning mill.

'Do I seek to destroy the mill industry?' I have often been asked. If I did I should not have pressed for the abolition of the excise duty. I want the mill industry to prosper—only I do not want it to prosper at the expense of the country. On the contrary if the interests of the country demand that the industry should go, I should let it go without the slightest compunction. The mill-owners who support me understand my attitude and many want this movement to prosper, even if its prosperity should mean their loss.

And you ask how those who produce mill cloth may wear anything else. Do you know that in Manchester the manufacturers do not wear their own products? You need not mind your inability to use cloth produced by your own mills. The good Duchess of Sutherland saw the miserable plight of the poor islanders of Hebrides and placed spinning-wheels and looms at their disposal. The citizens of Manchester, including mill-owners, do wear the hand-spun stuffs prepared by the Hebrides people, even at three times the cost of the mill stuff.

Do not hanker after cheapness and fineness. If you want cheap and fine stuffs you must spin fine yarn as the late Jogesh Chatterji did or you must spend more money for it. Those who talk of swaraj cannot have both cheapness and fineness. Think of the sacrifices all fighters have to make. In Queen Elizabeth's time heavy duties were imposed on foreign stuffs and heavy penalties were prescribed for the purchase of Holland laces. Am I asking for much when I ask you to remember your poor and to purchase their khadi? Do not say you will maintain the poor on charity. Only two classes of people are entitled to charity and no one else—the Brahmin who possesses nothing and whose business it is to spread holy learning, and the cripple

[1] P. C. Ray

and the blind. But at Jagannath Puri the iniquitous system of giving doles to the able-bodied idle is going on to our eternal shame and humiliation, and it is to wipe out that shame that I am going about with the message of charkha up and down the whole country.

Young India, 24-2-1927

90. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised DONDAICHE,

Sunday [*February 13, 1927*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

Today is Sunday morning before prayer whilst the others are getting up.

Here is the further itinerary.

I have your latest letter.

I forgot to tell you how glad I was that Father and others were coming nearer to you. It must be the natural result as you have for them nothing but pure affection daily growing purer. Knowing affection grows purer if also more detached.

I understand the changes in your vow. They are quite all right.

No more today.

Yours,

BAPU

15th February			Dhulia	24th February	Satara
16th „		Nasik	25th	„	Belgaum
17th „		Ahmednagar	26th	„	Vengurla,
18th „		Kurduwadi,			Dist. Ratnagiri
		Dist. Sholapur	27th	„	
19th „			28th	„	Ratnagiri
20th „		Sholapur	1st	March	Chiplun,
21st „					Dist. Ratnagiri
22nd					
„		Gulbarga	2nd	„	Mahad,

[1] According to Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter" (*Young India*, 24-2-1927) Gandhiji was at Dondaiche on February 12; Sunday was February 13.

23rd ,,	Pandharpur,		Dist. Kolaba
	Dist. Sholapur	3rd „	Bombay

From the original: C. W. 5203. Courtesy: Mirabehn

91. LETTER TO KSHITISH CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

DHULIA,
February 13, 1927

MY DEAR KSHITISH BABU,

I have your two letters redirected to me at Dhulia. I am glad that Anil is better and entirely out of danger. I send you a copy of my itinerary. Please continue to advise me upon his progress.

I have just learnt that Tarini Babu has left Wardha. I am myself more anxious about him than Anil because Tarini Babu's disease has made a home in his body whereas Anil's was a temporary crisis. Tarini Babu therefore requires the best attention possible. I suggest your taking him to Dr. Bidhan Roy or Sir Nilaratan, if necessary, with a note from Sir P. C. Roy. We must not hesitate to take the best advice available if we are to save him.

The samples sent by you have not been forwarded to me. I shall he writing to the people at Jalgaon about it.

I value the note you have sent me about Mr. Chatterjee. I am going to make use of it for *Young India*.[1] Please give my respectful condolences to the family of the deceased.

I hope you and other members are keeping well and that the work at Sodepur is progressing. I know that the whole brunt now falls upon your shoulders, but thank God they are broad enough to bear it.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure 1

SJT KSHITISH BABU
170, BOW BAZAR STREET
CALCUTTA

[ENCLOSURE]

Programme

Upto 15th	Dhulia	19th }	
16th-17th	Ahmednagar	20th }	Sholapur

[1] *Vide* "A Great Spinner", 17-2-1927.

18th	Kurduwadi, Dist. Sholapur	21st	
22nd	Gulbarga, Nizam State	27th	Ratnagiri
		28th	„
23rd	Pandharpur, Dist. Sholapur	1-3-27	Chiplun Dist. Ratnagiri
24th	Satara	2-3-27	Mahad, Dist. Kolaba
25th	Belgaum		
26th	Vengurla, Dist. Ratnagiri	3-3-27	Bombay

From a photostat G.N. 8922

92. LETTER TO B. F. MADON

DHULIA,
February 13, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your illuminating letter. Everything coming from you commands my attention because I like your straightforward and popular exposition of a subject which has been [made] unnecessarily abstruse by economists. I am taking the liberty in anticipation of your permission of sending your letter to Prof. Wadia so that he may understand and appreciate your viewpoint. I would love to constitute myself a bridge over the gulf that, without cause as it seems to me, separates economists and that makes it difficult for a layman to study this very important subject. If all the principal economists of our country will agree on the fundamentals and issue a brief, reasoned joint statement, it will prove very useful to students like me who have opportunities of educating the popular mind.

What is this thunderbolt that Mr. Shroff has hurled in our midst? It is occasionally that I get a peep at the newspapers. Whenever therefore you get a moment and have anything to pass on to a busy man like me, please do not hesitate. For, though I am saying nothing in the Press, I am watching everything with an absolutely open mind.

From a photostat: S.N. 11777-A

93. LETTER TO P. A. WADIA

DHULIA,
February 13, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I send you Mr. Madon's letter and a copy of my reply[1] to him. These speak for themselves. I therefore add nothing beyond saying that I know that I can implicitly rely upon your doing everything possible to put this controversy[2] on a high and moral level.

I send you my itinerary up to the end of the month so that in the event of your wanting to say to me anything urgently you can put yourself in direct touch with me without the intervention of my permanent address.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure 1 + 1

PROF. P. A. WADIA
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 11777

94. LETTER TO SUSHILABEHN MASHRUWALA

Sunday [*February 13, 1927*][3]

CHI. SUSHILA,

Herewith the telegram I have from Manilal, and also a copy of the letter[4] I had written to him; so you will now understand what I expect from both of you. God alone would know how fortunate you are but Manilal, I think, has certainly been lucky in getting you.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The ratio controversy; *vide* also "Letter to Purushottamdas Thakurdas", 22-2-1927 and "Letter to B. F. Madon", 22-2-1927.

[3] Inferred from the contents

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Manilal Gandhi", 8-2-1927.

Get used to writing in ink. Try to improve your Gujarati as much as possible. Write to me if you get the time. Remember you can always write to me frankly.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

My tour programme can be had from Nanabhai.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1122. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

95. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

[*February 13, 1927*][1]

BHAISHRI NANABHAI,

I got your letter at Jalgaon. Please go through the telegram from Manilal, which I got at Amalner, a copy of my letter to him and my letter[2] to Sushila and then pass them on to Chi. Sushila.

Now that Chi. Shanti is not to be operated upon for the time being, it would suit me if the marriage is solemnized at an early date and then the eight days of Holi[3] will not come in the way. I am likely to reach Sabarmati on the 6th which will be *Phagan Sud* 3. I would suggest we discontinue consulting an astrologer for choosing a date. For an auspicious thing the sooner the better. But in these matters I would not insist on my own views.

I can appreciate your wish to have Akola as the venue. All my tour dates are fixed. Only this change could be made: Since the Kathiawar [Political] Conference has been postponed I am free from the 4th to the 8th; on the 4th I reach Bombay. From Bombay I can straight away come up to Akola alongwith Manilal. Thus we can have the marriage on the 6th when I reach there and having spent there Monday the 7th, my silence day, I can leave for Ahmedabad. I must reach Ahmedabad by the 10th at the latest. I would like to put you to the minimum inconvenience. If you would have the date some time before the 6th that could be done if the marriage is performed wherever I happen to be. The other alternative is that you should

[1] Inferred from the contents

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] Which are considered inauspicious

perform the ceremony without my being present. You would all like me to be there. I know Ba would desire it, so would Manilal. But I do not consider my presence indispensable. If you agree to this and if you can find out a date that suits you and falls before March 11 you can have a day of your choice.

I do not regard marriage as always indispensable. When it becomes indispensable it could only be a religious rite which may be performed with or without the presence of elders. And it could be done any time. This is why I do not insist on my being there. I importune you for an early date because Manilal's work in Natal suffers, and I want to send him off at the earliest opportunity.

Please consider all this and fix any day that suits you, and, if possible, send me a wire.

Here is my tour programme:

13, 14, 15	Dhulia	22	Gulbarga
16	Nasik	23	Pandharpur
17	Ahmednagar	24	Satara
18	Kurduwadi	25	Belgaum
19, 20, 21	Sholapur		

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1123. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

96. SPEECHES AT DHULIA[1]

February 13, 1927

The programme at Dhulia was heavy, but everything was so ordered and quiet that Gandhiji could address six meetings during the day, spinning on his charkha throughout the speeches! He said:

You will not regard me as impertinent if I go on spinning whilst I address you. I do so because of the wonderful stillness here, and because I think I can best respond to your affection by giving you an object-lesson in the thing I most believe in. When Dr. Tagore came to our Ashram some years ago,[2] I asked him, after the morning prayers

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"; the first speech is from the issue of February 24 and the other two from that of March 3.

[2] In 1920.

were over, to address a few words to our boys. He said nothing, spoke nothing by way of apology, but sang one of his sweetest songs in his sweetest way and was quiet. That to my mind was the acme of his courtesy. He satisfied us with the best that his soul could give. I am simply following him in turning my wheel before you, which is my only lyre and through which I think I can render the greatest service to India.

There have been everywhere addresses from the local bodies. Let me summarize Gandhiji's reply to the Local Board address at Dhulia.

During my wanderings throughout the land I have not yet come across a single local body which has been fanctioning of its own independent initiative and which I could point to as an ideal body. Mr. Lionel Curtis remarking on the contrast between an Indian village and an English village said that whereas the one gives you an impression of general untidiness and reminds you of a village built on a dunghill, the other gives an impression of cleanliness and health and beauty all around. Of course he knew nothing of the condition of the Indian villager, he did not know that his daily income was five per cent of that of the English villager. But let us not ignore one substratum truth in his remark. There is no gainsaying the fact that our villager betrays a woeful ignorance of even the rudiments of village sanitation. One could deplore the race prejudice amongst the South African Europeans, but their attempts to keep their towns healthy and sanitary were heroic and worthy of imitation. Do not say that politics occupy all your time and that you have no time for other things. It is a lame excuse. The capacity to look after the village and town sanitation is included in our capacity for swaraj and when we demonstrate it, nothing on earth can stand between us and swaraj. You may be sure that we shall be able to retain only as much as our capacity has won for us. Some of our local bodies keep only those roads clean as are likely to be used by Government officials, but they have no regard for the roads which are used day and night by poor villagers and their bullocks, and which are always and everywhere ill-kept. Can't we make the roads more easy and better negotiable and make the villagers' and the bullocks' lot a little less irksome? . . .

At Dhulia the merchants had insisted on voting him an exclusive address and an exclusive purse, and in the address Gandhiji as one of them, as belonging to the Vaisya class. And in his reply they got more than they had bargained for.

As I said at Jalpaiguri in 1925[1], it is not the Brahmins, nor the Kshatriyas nor the Sudras that lost India; it is the Vaisyas who lost India, and it is the Vaisyas alone who can regain it. Indian history is replete with instances of Banias who helped and served the English shopkeeper to the prejudice of India. The shopkeepers who came here in search of trade became warriors to protect their trade and became Brahmins too to maintain their dominion based on trade. Our *varna-sharma* dharma does not say that a Bania may not be a Kshatriya and fight for the honour of his mother and sister, nor does it say that a Bania may not acquire knowledge like the Brahmin and serve like the Sudra. The Englishman combined all the qualities in himself; and dazzled at his feat we forgot our dharma, we became cowards, we forgot the real work of the Bania—agriculture, cow-pro-tection and trade—and became traitors to the motherland. You can retrieve the situation today by becoming true Banias again, by capturing again the whole of the national trade. Our black caps, our mill dhotis and our women's fine saris are the badges of our shame and slavery. Instead of keeping the raw produce in the country and manufacturing it we looked to our narrow interests of the hour, sold the raw produce, and helped the Englishman to tighten his grip on us. We are engaged in our immoral trade today to the eternal ruin of our motherland. Doctors may heal if we are ill, lawyers may help us in law-courts, but only merchants can win swaraj. I want us to be the Vaisya of the *Bhagavad Gita*, the Vaisya whose natural calling is protection of the cow, agriculture and trade, for his own country. If we were true to our calling why should a scrap of foreign cloth come to our country, why should a cow be sold to a butcher, why should nine crore rupees worth of hides be sent out abroad? What is it that has so deadened our sense to our obvious duty? We think we must trade in foreign cloth, we refuse to listen if someone asks us to keep our dead cattle and treat their hides ourselves. We turn away in disgust when we are asked to convert our dairies into good milk-producing centres and tanneries. I cannot tell you the deep agony of my soul. Do you think I am mistaken? Do you think I am in my dotage? I tell you I shall pocket

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Jalpaiguri", 10-6-1925.

all my pride and fall at the feet of anyone who proves to me that I am wrong. Win me over to you, if you dare, otherwise follow me and take up the cause of khadi and the cow.

Young India, 24-2-1927 and 3-3-1927

97. LETTER TO SUSHILABEHN MASHRUWALA

Sunday night [*February 13, 1927*]

CHI. SUSHILA,

I hope you have the letter[1] I wrote earlier. Preserve that letter as well as its enclosures. Let me have your reply. Let Nanabhai and others read the letter. Young people, young women especially, fight shy of discussing such matters with their elders. You need not feel the least embarrassment. You should not even hesitate to call each other by your names. In later life this kind of reserve comes in our way. I see no sense in it. Manilal too has become tongue-tied. I shall write to him to shake off his bashfulness.

Write to me about Gomatibehn's health. I do hope Kishorelal won't have fever again.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1126. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

98. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised

DHULIA,
February 14, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I wrote yesterday a brief letter.

You need not worry about sending me your account[2]. You should certainly keep an account of every pice spent, and that not on scraps of paper, but in a properly kept account book. It is incredibly simple. There are credit entries and debit entries. Cash is debtor to the extent of moneys received by it, creditor to the extent paid out.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sushilabehn Mashruwala", 13-2-1927.

[2] "Account-keeping was always a nightmare for me, and I finally reduced it to writing down everything and giving it to others to add up and balance." (Mirabehn)

Therefore receipts go to the debit side and expenditure to the credit side. Thus:

Date	Dr. to		Date		Cr. by
	Monies received		12-8	Paid for	
	from Ashram	150/–/–		tonga	1/8/–
				postage	3/8/–
				Balance	145/–/–
		---			---
		150/–/–			150/–/–

This is how according to the English system all cash-books are kept, and yours is a cash-book. A ledger is an index for the different accounts in a cash-book and a day-book. A day-book contains all transactions where no cash passes. Thus sales on credit and purchases on credit will be entered in a day-book. This is in practice the whole of account keeping.

I am surprised you had no wheel there. I must give you a travelling charkha such as I have. I am asking Khadi Pratishthan to send one to you. If you cannot manage it yourself, I must teach you when I come there.

Dhulia is a very restful place. We are accommodated in the house of a worker who joined me when I was working in Champaran. And here too lives a gentleman who wears a face gentler even than Andrews, if it is possible. Akola was another such place. And Akola has given me a bride for Manilal. She is Kishorelal's niece, 19 years old. Marriage will take place almost immediately. She will accompany Manilal when he leaves for South Africa. She belongs to a godly family.

With love,

BAPU

[PS.]

17	Ahmedanagar	23	Pandharpur
18}	Kurduwadi	24	Satara
19 }	Sholapur	25	Belgaum
20}		26	Vengurla
21 }		27, 28	Ratnagiri
22	Gulbarga		

If I cannot give you the other dates you may address Ratnagiri till 3rd.

4th Bombay: Mani Bhavan, Laburnam Road, Gamdevi

From the original: C.W. 5204. Courtesy: Mirabehn

99. LETTER TO HEMAPRABHA DEVI DAS GUPTA

DHULIA,
Monday [*February 14, 1927*][1]

DEAR SISTER,

God is testing you severely. Never give up. Happiness and unhappiness, birth and death, old age and disease are ever with us. 1 could not bear to see you crying when I was at Sodepur. It is good if God would let our dear ones be with us, nor is it bad if He takes them away. They belong to Him; and what is it to us if He takes away his own? Surely, He is going to take away everyone. Being the greatest of all actors we call Him *Natavar,* the Supreme Actor. He tosses us as He pleases. We are after all puppets. Is it not better to dance in tune with Him than with the world?

May God grant peace to you all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1663

100. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

DHULIA,
Monday [*February 14, 1927*][2]

BHAI BRIJKRISHNA,

I am awaiting your reply about the job at Jamshedpur. Have you now regained your peace of mind?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2355

[1] From the reference to the death of addressee's son in "Letter to Hemaprabha Devi Das Gupta". 19-2-1927

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Brijkrishna Chandiwala, 22-2-1927.

101. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Silence Day [*February 14, 1927*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

You must have got the news about Manilal. If Manilal has not shown the letters written to him, you will know from letter to Chhaganlal. Please inform everyone. I do not know if Nanabhai will have Panditji or someone else to perform the rites; I have left it to him. Please ask Panditji to be ready in case he has to go. The wedding will be at Akola.

Herewith two more letters from Mirabehn. I have already asked Mahadev to write to you about Parasram.

Please let me have the news from Vijapur. Ask John to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7764. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

102. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

DHULIA,

Monday, Maha Sud 13 [*February 14, 1927*][2]

SISTERS,

I am in receipt of your letter written by Chi. Manibehn.

What you write to me in regard to women who intend to visit the Ashram is quite right. For the present, I cannot expect any of you to keep them with you. I wish only that you will mix freely with them, will look after them if they are ill, will not keep away from them, and you will invite them off and on to your midst.

You might have known that Tara's elder sister Chi. Sushila has been betrothed to Chi. Manilal. The marriage will take place at Akola on the 6th of March. I shall, therefore, reach the Ashram on the evening of the 8th or on the morning of the 9th. 14th is Monday. I

[1] From the reference to the news about Manilal's wedding

[2] *ibid.*

shall stay on in the Ashram till that day, and then again I set out. So I shall have only a few days in the Ashram.

Whether I will or no, I get involved thus in marriages. And yet the more I am drawn into such activities, the more I see that it is very necessary for men and women to observe *brahmacharya.* Chi. Manilal remained unmarried for 32 years, merely in order to develop self-control. He then expressed a desire to marry, and so I began looking for a good match. As he is to marry in a family of persons devoted to God, I expect nothing but good to result from this alliance.

We should not feel bashful to talk about marriage. But whether married or unmarried, we should not become a prey to passion by such talk. One who cannot control one's passions should certainly marry. But one who can control them, should do so and seek to obtain *moksha* in this very life.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3639

103. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

Silence Day [*February 14, 1927*][1]

BHAISHRI NANABHAI,

I have your telegram. I am glad that the 6th suits you. Please get either Gopalrao from Wardha or Sahasrabuddhe there for the marriage ceremony; or shall we ask Panditji to come over from the Ashram? Or if there is some particular person in your view, that makes no difference for me. Nothing suits me better than if Nath himself performs the rites. If you would have Panditji, let me know by wire.

We shall have no ceremony other than the strictly religious. You must not incur expenditure by putting up pandals and other things. Please have no sweets in the meals. Our new relationship is not going to make you my in-laws nor is Sushila going to be my daughter-in-law; she will still be a daughter to me, and you will all be my cousins as always.

You must not give away with the bride so much as a grain of gold. Indeed, she must not wear any jewellery on the occasion. If afterwards she has a liking for them I shall be helpless. Because she has as much freedom as you and I.

[1] From the discussion about Manilal's wedding and Gandhiji's tour programme

On my part I am not bringing her anything besides a garland of my hand-spun yarn. Of course I am going to present her a takli, the *Gita* and a copy of the *Bhajanavali*, if available.

In South Africa Manilal wears foreign dress; he had asked my permission for it, but Sushila would not need it. In her khaddar sari she will be as resplendent as the celebrated Sita. Please do not gather a crowd, nevertheless do not hesitate to invite those whom you ought to. I shall leave Bombay along with Manilal by the Nagpur Mail and reach Akola on the 6th morning. The 7th being a Monday, I shall stay on there. On the 7th if there is a convenient train in the evening I shall straight away leave for Ahmedabad.

Ramdas and Devdas may arrive there either with me or direct. I will not stop anyone else who wants to go there.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

My Tour Programme:

15 Dhulia	24 Satara
16 Nasik	25 Belgaum
17 Ahmednagar	26 Vengurla
18 Kurduwadi	27, 28, 1, 2, 3 Ratnagiri and adjoining areas
19, 20, 21 Sholapur	4 Bombay
22 Gulbarga	
23 Pandharpur	

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1120. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

104. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[*February 14, 1927*][1]

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. The marriage will be at Akola. The day has been fixed for Sunday, 6th March. I have to go to Akola direct from Bombay. I am likely to reach Bombay not earlier than the 4th. Being a Monday, the 7th will be spent in Akola. We can leave on the 7th

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

evening and reach the Ashram on the 8th evening or the 9th morning.

I have written to Nanabhai asking him not to put up any show. He should give the bride not even the most insignificant jewels. I am giving her nothing. In South Africa, you use foreign dress with my permission but Sushila need do nothing of the sort; in her khaddar sari she will look as resplendent as Sita. Let me know if you want any change in these arrangements. After you are married you are both free to live as you like. But I certainly wish that you should give no jewels to Sushila and that there too she should wear no cloth other than khadi.

The more I think the more I feel that you are going to have a jewel. My only fear is whether you would be able to take care of her.

Please keep your passion under control; let her study. The girl would be helpful in many of your activities. She can even learn composing. If she tries she can improve her Gujarati but it all depends upon you whether you would make a doll or a companion out of her. After all, she is just a child. She does not know the ways of the world. If, henceforth, you will observe more restraint than hitherto I see a blissful future for both of you.

May God grant strength and wisdom to both of you.

Now you can easily go to South Africa in March. You can make the necessary preparations.

You should start from there on the 4th and meet me in Bombay on the morning of the 5th.

I am writing to Ramdas and Devdas that they may come along if they want to.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have sent your letter to Sushila. Write nothing to Harilal.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1130. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

105. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

[After *February 15, 1927*][1]

BHAISHRI RAMESHWARJI,

I have both your letters. The garland that you got was given [to me] for khadi work; so the price you paid for it would be utilized for the same cause. For cow-protection too we should do only what is right, and now I shall need quite a lot for it since the tanning school has started functioning. But we must be patient.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 206

106. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

February 16, 1927

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

It was a great joy to have your letter after so many months.

Yes I did receive the Schreiner volumes.[2]

You must not give up the struggle against life's temptations. I do indeed expect you one fine day in India. Do come if it is only for a brief visit.

Manilal is to be married on 5th March.[3] He will take his wife with him. You will look after both please.

I dare not give you a long love letter as I have to work against time. Incessant travelling is my lot this year. I have to cover about six

[1] During his Maharashtra tour Gandhiji was in Dhulia, the addressee's home town, from February 13 to 15. It is presumed that the garland mentioned in the letter was auctioned by Gandhiji in Dhulia.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to H. Kallenbach", 29-7-1926.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 6-3-1927.

villages daily except on Mondays which, thank God, is my day of silence.

With love,

Yours,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original : Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy : National Archives of India

107. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

ON THE WAY TO NASIK,
Wednesday, February 16[1]*, 1927*

CHI. MANI,

I have got your letter. It looks as if I shall reach there on the 8th at the earliest. There is no news from Karachi.

How is it that Gangadevi falls ill every now and then? We shall arrange for her to go somewhere else for a change of climate if she wants to. Ask her as well as Totaram. Does she have a restricted diet?

I will subject you to a test in Sanskrit, carding, spinning, etc., when I come. Improve still more your Gujarati handwriting and make further progress in Gujarati grammar.

The programme for perfecting the Ashram kitchen which has been engaging their attention much must now be brought to an end. Do your bit.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 53

[1] The source has "18".

108. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Wednesday [*February 16, 1927*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got all your letters. I have asked Mahadev to reply to them as well as to take the necessary action. Something has already been done.

I still have to write about the laxity in spinning. I shall take out some time and attend to it. I am writing this on a moving train. The schedule was such that I could do nothing. But now I have asked the programmes to be so arranged that I may get some more margin. Who else but the Charkha Bhandar is to make up the losses resulting from the transfer to Jerajani when the two stores are amalgamated? I do not very well understand it as I have forgotten many of the facts. Anyway we shall finally decide about it in the Conference which is to be held at Belgaum on the 25th or 26th. Are you supposed to attend it? Take over into the Charkha Sangh the yarn we got from South Africa. I am very glad that you examine the strength of all the yarn. Whatever time is spent in it is only . . .[2] for us because we get to learn much out of it.

Whatever experiences you have, whatever there is worth knowing, do write out in Gujarati and send over to me so that it can be published in *Navajivan* and we can also take out of it whatever we want for *Young India*.

Other things you will learn there and so I do not write about them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7712. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] From the reference to the "moving train" it appears that the letter was written on the same date as the preceding letter. The itineraries show that Gandhiji planned to be in Belgaum on the 25th or 26th.

[2] Illegible in the source

109. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

NASIK,
February 16, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I had first thought of asking the Khadi Pratishthan people to debit the Ashram with the price of the travelling charkha that will he sent to you. But I reconsidered my decision and I saw that it would be cheaper to have the charkha by value payable parcel. If therefore you receive a parcel from Calcutta by value payable post, please discharge the bill there.

On the 6th and 7th of March, I shall be at Akola for Manilal's marriage. From the 8th to 14th March I am at the Ashram, 15th to 17th Bardoli. I entrain at Surat on the evening of the 17th for the Gurukul.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

[PS.]

Better a dictated letter than none.

SHRIMATI MIRABEHN
GURUKUL KANGRI

From the original: C.W. 5205. Courtesy: Mirabehn.

110. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Wednesday [*February 16, 1927*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. I shall reach Bombay some time on the 4th or by the morning of the 5th. Dastane wants me to be in Poona on the 4th. Jaisukhlal Mehta wants me to devote a few hours to Santa Cruz. If I can satisfy him by spending the 5th morning at Santa Cruz I can allot the evening of the 4th to Poona and leave there on the same night for Bombay from where I can proceed to Akola.

[1] From the reference to Manilal's wedding and Gandhiji's programme "to proceed to Sangamner"

Since Gomati has returned there she and Kishorelal need not again come to Akola. If Nath is there please ascertain from him if he would perform the wedding rites. I would like to have the ceremony performed by him, if it is no inconvenience to him.

I think it would not matter if you could not come because of Janakibehn's operation or something else.

I have to proceed to Sangamner this very evening.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2884

111. SPEECH AT NASIK[1]

February 16, 1927

Some youths handed over to me several questions as soon as I arrived here; my replies to them will be my speech today.

[1.] Don't you think as a Hindu you should concentrate on collecting for the Shraddhanand Fund rather than for any other fund?

I am an imperfect mortal and my capacities are limited. I know the theory and practice of economy, and whilst all my time and energy are given to the country, I am not vain enough to think that I should do all things myself. The work you refer to is engaging the attention and energies of men like Malaviyaji and Lalaji and there is no reason why I should also put in my oar. At the first meeting held in Calcutta[2] to collect funds for raising a fitting memorial to Shraddhanandji, I was asked to be present by Pandit Malaviyaji and I did so. I do not think he expects more from me. I claim to follow in daily life the teachings of the *Gita* and I know that, humble as is the work that I am doing, it is better for me than much other work which may be quite as good and even better but which is not my work.

[2.] The collections you make today are only for khadi, are they not so? If they are, how will you utilize them?

Yes, of course, this fund is only for khadi because it is being collected for the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. The

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The introductory paragraph, questions 2, 5 and 6, and their answers are from *Navajivan*, 27-2-1927.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Calcutta", 31-12-1926.

Deshbandhu's name has been associated with this fund because hehad drawn up, a few days before his death, a scheme for the organization of villages through khadi. Khadi work was dear to him. The All-India Spinners' Association has been set up only to collect funds for khadi and use them to organize work. Accounts of its funds are being maintained to a pie and everyone has a right to inspect them. The Association has an executive committee, auditors and inspectors. This Association has now placed before the country a scheme for an organization of khadi service. You will ask what effective work this association can do, paying as it will be only thirty rupees a month to each worker. Of course, ours is a poor Association, for it has been established with money collected from the poorest of the poor. It is not another Indian Civil Service, so that it can afford to pay salaries of thousands of rupees. The Indian Civil Service is maintained with taxes paid by the people and is meant to rule the people; our poor little association is meant to serve them.

[3.] Are you partial to the Mussalmans? Why don't you answer the charges some of the Mussalman leaders level against you?

I can do justice to people of other faiths by appearing to be partial to them, and I know that I am protecting my own faith by showing if you will a reasoned partiality for other faiths. I do not, I cannot, wish to harm the Hindu religion, for I am after all a drop in the ocean of Hinduism. If Mussalmans call me kaffir, what then? What can be the answer to it? In South Africa, a nephew of mine was staying with me. It was only when people said that I was partial to him that he realized, and I realized, that I was only just to him. The fact that the Mussalmans are finding fault with me possibly suggests that I am not yet sufficiently partial to them to convince them that I am just to them. Why should I answer their charges? All my twenty-four hours are consecrated to the service of Lord Krishna who is ever with me, who guides my footsteps, and whom I always pray to do whatever is needed for me. He will answer for me, if there be any need.

[4.] If you fought for the Khilafat, why do you not fight for the Hindu *sangathan*[1] today?

The question is well asked. I had pledged myself to lay down my life for the Khilafat and I knew that I was indirectly helping thereby the cause of the cow. 'How much cow-protection have you

[1] Movement for unity

achieved?'—you will ask. Very little, I admit. But what does that matter to me? "To work you have the right and duty and not to fruit thereof," says the *Gita.*[1] It was at the bidding of the Lord that I offered my co-operation to the Ali Brothers and rendered whatever help I could. I have never had reason to regret it. I would do the same thing should another occasion arise. That is the teaching of all our religious books. Let the people rail at me, insult me if they like. I am not going to pay them back in their coin. Mine is the religion of *tapascharya,* the way of penance taught by the scriptures and by Tulsidas. That is the law of my being and I cannot do otherwise. "The whole creation," says the *Gita,* "follows the law of its being. How will restraint then avail?"[2] My joy is in the fulfilment of my duty and the confidence that when some day the Mussalmans join hands with the Hindus in protecting the cow, everyone will say that the good result is due to the efforts of that mad Gandhi who died working for the cause.

In my opinion, there is no sanction in Hinduism, Islam or Christianity for the *shuddhi, tabligh* or proselytizing (respectively) as it is going on today. How then can I take part in the *shuddhi*? The *Gita* and the Tulsi *Ramayana* teach me to resort to self-purification whenever I or my religion is in danger. And what is true for me is true for all. That process of self-purification I am going through all the twenty-four hours of my day. Parvati, Narada had foretold, would have an ominous-looking husband. She knew that only Siva was as blissful as he was ominous-looking and she performed penance for winning Siva and won him. So the lesson of penance and self-purification is writ large everywhere in our scriptures and the Himalayas are the living witness to it—the Himalayas where countless *rishis* ground their bodies to dust for self-purification The Vedas, to me, are not the texts writ on paper, but my very conscience and the In-dweller. They tell me to observe *yama* and *niyama* (the cardinal and the causal virtues) and trust everything to Lord Krishna. In all humility I claim that all my work is conducive to the service of Hinduism. As a Hindu, I could do nothing else. The way of doing it is of course my own.

[5.] Do you know that most of the donors of the money that will be presented to you today are dealers in foreign cloth, and they give you money for the love they bear you, not for the love of khadi?

[1] II. 47
[2] III. 33

I do not want a single pice offered through love for me; I want people to appreciate my mission and help it with money. Through love you can give me another thing. Through it you can give me your foreign clothes, but not money. The truth is that business men give me money in the belief that, if my business thrives, it will harm neither them nor the country. They know that ultimately they will have to deal in khadi. They understand the position correctly but today they lack strength of will. They ask me to pray to God that He may grant them that strength. Meanwhile, they donate money and help this movement. They do not give me money in order to deceive me.

[6.] Why do you confine yourself to khadi work alone and neglect other important or even more important political activities?

I have already said that the sphere of my work is limited. Duryodhana described how his warriors had taken up their due positions on the battle-field. He had asked everyone to remain in his place and protect Bhishma. The *varnashrama* dharma taught in the *Gita* also says the same thing. It asks everyone to know his own sphere of work. If India wants me to serve it, it must understand my limitations. Although it is possible that 1 can do other jobs well, there are people doing them. As I believe that no one else can do khadi work as well as I can and since I regard khadi work as my supreme duty, I have confined myself to that work. I favour satyagraha, I want to start it, but I want to create a suitable atmosphere for it through khadi. Satyagraha is like my very breath, but I regard it as impossible without khadi.

[7.] What is the extent of the help you are getting from the Mussalmans during this tour?

I admit that for my khadi work I have been having not much help from them. But what does that matter? I do not bargain with my brother or wife in my domestic affairs. I do my duty and leave the rest to do theirs. In the same way I will not bargain with the Mussalmans, as I will not with Pandit Motilalji or Kelkar. Why should we fear the Mussalmans? We need fear only God and no man. Even if men should play you false, do not be deterred from doing your duty, in the confidence that God will take care of you.

Young India, 3-3-1927

112. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

[Before *February 17, 1927*][1]

DEAR SATIS BABU,

You must be well. Now that you have gone out of Calcutta, you must give yourself prolonged rest and be thoroughly restored. You will not be anxious about Pratishthan affairs. Leave them in God's hands in so far as your share of the work is concerned. After all khadi is not and cannot be one man's affair. If it is pleasing in the eye of God, He will raise His own instruments and keep in order those He has raised. Let us realize that we are nothing even as a machine is nothing. The machinist is everything. Let us reduce the teaching, of the *Gita* and the *Ramayana* to practice and we shall cease to worry.

Do please keep me well posted with news about yourselves. Here are the dates:

17 Ahmednagar
18 Kurduwadi
19, 20, 21 Sholapur
22 Gulbarga
23 Pandharpur
24 Satara
25 Belgaum
26 Vengurla
27, 28 Ratnagiri
1, 2, 3 March Ratnagiri
4 Bombay

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1633

113. OUT OF NOTHING

When one thinks of the immense possibility of the charkha it is surprising that its simple message is taking so long to become universal. "Nothing comes out of nothing," says a Latin proverb. But the charkha would seem to falsify at least the letter of the proverb. For without destroying or replacing anything useful, it seeks to utilize the waste and idle hours of the nation.

This idleness, whether it be regarded as enforced or voluntary, is

[1] From the tour programme

killing the very soul of the nation. The more I penetrate the villages, the greater is the shock delivered as I perceive the blank stare in the eyes of the villagers I meet. Having nothing else to do but to work as labourers side by side with their bullocks, they have become almost like them. It is a tragedy of the first magnitude that millions have ceased to use their hands as hands. Nature is revenging herself upon us with terrible effect for this criminal waste of the gift she has bestowed upon us human beings. We refuse to make full use of the gift. And it is the exquisite mechanism of the hands that among a few other things separates us from the beast. Millions of us use them merely as feet. The result is that she starves both the body and the mind.

The spinning-wheel alone can stop this reckless waste. It can do that now and without any extraordinary outlay of money or intelligence. Owing to this waste, we are living in a state almost of suspended animation. It can be revived if only every home is again turned into a spinning-mill and every village into a weaving-mill. With it will at once revive the ancient rustic art and the rustic song. A semi-starved nation can have neither religion nor art nor organization.

The only objection that has been urged by its critics is that the wheel does not pay. But even if it pays only one pice per day, it does pay when we remember that our average income is six pice per day against the fourteen rupees and six rupees per day respectively of the average American and the average Englishman. The spinning-wheel is an attempt to produce something out of nothing. If we save sixty crores of rupees to the nation through the spinning-wheel, as we certainly can, we add that vast amount to the national income. In the process we automatically organize our villages. And as almost the whole of the amount must be distributed amongst the poorest of the land, it becomes a scheme of just and nearly equal distribution of so much wealth. Add to this the immense moral value of such distribution, and the case for the charkha becomes irresistible.

Young India, 17-2-1927

114. A GREAT SPINNER

When at the end of the Bihar tour and on my way to the Central Provinces, I heard at Calcutta of the death of Babu Jogeshwar Chatterjee whom I had the privilege of knowing as a spinner who gave

promise of being able to revive the old Dacca *shubnum*—the night-dew muslin—I at once sent a message[1] to Kshitish Babu of Khadi Pratishthan to supply me with details of the deceased's life. These have been now received and I share them with the reader:[2]

> Jogeshwar Chatterjee, son of Sjt. Jatileshwar Chatterjee of village Panpur in the district of 24-Parganas . . . died on Sunday, the 30th January morning. He left behind him his wife, a daughter aged one year, a younger brother and aged father. . . .
>
> Jogeshwar Babu read up to B.A., and was a teacher for some time. He then took service in the E.B.R., and served it for seven years. . . . He was aged 35 at the time of death.
>
> He took to spinning during the Non-co-operation days, and was an ardent spinner. . . . At the Gauhati Exhibition a muslin of 200 counts was exhibited by the Pratishthan, the yarn of which was spun by Jogeshwar Babu. During one year—Cawnpore Exhibition to Gauhati Exhibition—he spun 200 count yarn for the above muslin, and sufficient yarn of 100 count, out of which two dhotis are made. Of the last two dhotis, one was for Acharya P. C. Ray and the other for his father. . . .
>
> He was all along spinning on the Pratishthan's box charkha. He was out-and-out a khadi man, who used to spin during leisure hours, and made such a rapid progress in spinning.

I tender my condolences to the family of the deceased and hope that the attempt to reproduce the ancient art will not die with Jogesh Babu's death. Let it be remembered that Jogesh Babu's was a labour of patriotic love. And it is only voluntary spinners who can follow up Jogesh Babu's grand effort.

Young India, 17-2-1927

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Kshitish Chandra Das Gupta", 13-2-1927.

[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

115. TELEGRAM TO SAM HIGGINBOTTOM

AHMEDNAGAR,
February 18, 1927

TO
ALAGIN
NAINI

YOUR LETTER. COULD YOU COME SABARMATI NINTH TENTH TWELFTH OR THIRTEENTH MARCH STAYING WITH ME AT LEAST TWENTYFOUR HOURS.[3]

GANDHI

From a photostat: Higginbottom Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

116. LETTER TO HARRY KINGMAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,[1]
February 18, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter which is so seasonable.[2] Could you not give me some reliable literature on the Chinese movement and give me a truthful story of current events? I never put much reliance upon newspapers and I am most anxious to know what is happening now in China.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

HARRY KINGMAN, ESQ.
68, RECREATION ROAD
TIENTSIN
CHINA

From a photostat: G.N. 5043

[1] Permanent address
[2] *Vide* "Our Helplessness", 3-2-1927.

117. SPEECH AT AHMEDNAGAR[1]

February 18, 1927

I have just been to the Rashtriya Pathshala. I have inspected for nearly an hour like a strict inspector all the management and working of the institution and found it to my satisfaction. I have thoroughly examined the boys in a lively heart-to-heart talk and found them sharp in intellect and prompt in answers. In short, I see in Ahmednagar Rashtriya Pathshala a lovely little oasis in the midst of such a vast desert of darkness.[2]

[Continuing,] Mr. Gandhi said that, if Ahmednagar district was poor, the rest of India was poorer still. Hundreds of thousands of men and women were without any kind of employment and almost starving. He had not the slightest doubt in his mind that khadi work alone could give these people some employment and bread. He appealed to all present to give their mite to him for his great work.

The Hindu, 19-2-1927

118. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

MIRAZGAON,
February 19, 1927

MY DEAR SATIS BABU,

So you and Hemaprabha Devi are being tried through and through. You will stand this very severe test and come out victorious. Read the second chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita* again and again and face the battle like true warriors that you are. It is now your double duty to take care of yourselves. Among the properties you hold in trust for God's purposes, your bodies are not the least important. If we may not indulge them neither may we for-bare them through false love [*sic*].

But enough of philosophy. Ever since the receipt of the telegram I have prayed for you. And this letter is the first thing I have

[1] In reply to addresses by the Municipality, District Board and Hindu Sabha

[2] From a microfilm (S.N. 14841) of a printed pamphlet issued in 1928 by Principal H. B. Hiray, Rashtriya Pathshala, Ahmednagar

taken up after the morning prayer. May God sustain you and bless you.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1565

119. LETTER TO HEMAPRABHA DEVI DAS GUPTA

Saturday [*February 19, 1927*][1]

DEAR SISTER,

What can I write to you? May your wisdom, your faith and your devotion all come to your succour. Can Anil die? Anil is with us for ever, only his body has been shed. Pray, do not lose heart.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1661

120. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Saturday [*February 19, 1927*][2]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. I did not wire to you because I had no reason to stop you from trying to meet Lalaji's demand.

For some time I would like to have a postcard daily informing me about Janakibehn's health.

Anil, Satis Babu's son, has expired. Satis Babu is at Giridih. His address is: Home Villa, Giridih. It would however be safer to write to the Khadi Pratishthan address. I have a telegram telling me that both of them have sustained a great shock. I have sent them a long wire of condolence.

Now it is certain that I shall reach Bombay on the 5th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2885

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] From the reference to Anil's death

121. LETTER TO PRABHUDAYAL

ON TOUR,
February 19, 1927

BHAI PRABHUDAYALJI,

Your letter has been moving along with me. I could lay my hand on it only today.

However much the world may change, if you are convinced that khadi brings material as well as spiritual benefit and that other stuff merely pleases one's fancy, you should be content with khaddar clothes alone.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: G.N. 10063

122. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

[After *February 19, 1927*][1]

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your pathetic letter which I see you wrote to lighten your burden. Gods, it is said, take away those they love most. The human mind has devised many methods of assuaging grief. But the real fact is not to feel the grief. But that is almost superhuman especially in Hindu society. Please tell Hemaprabha Devi not to think of what Anil would have done, if he had lived. His work in that body was finished. A rare soul such as Anil's had much higher work to do and he left the body. Let us not grieve over *our* loss which may be the world's gain. It is as well that we do not know the mysteries of life and death. I want you both now to get rid of your weakness. Pray do not think of stirring till you have fully recuperated yourself.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1634

[1] The letter appears to have been written on receipt of addressee's reply to Gandhiji's condolence letter of February 19.

123. LETTER TO KSHITISH CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

ON THE TRAIN,
[After *February 19, 1927*][1]

DEAR KSHITISH BABU,

I did not know till today, and after the receipt of Satis Babu's letter that you had no son and that you were lavishing all your affection on Anil as your own son. Your grief I am able now to understand more fully than I had done before. It is difficult on such occasions to give any consolation. It has to come from within. May all your knowledge and your faith come to your assistance to give you courage and hope. If only our faith in the immortality of soul is real, nothing like death can matter. May God give you peace and strength.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 8923

124. LETTER TO EKAROZ

ON TOUR,
February 20, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I espoused the Khilafat cause not for the sake of tyranny but for the sake of humanity. This insidious attempt that, I think, was made to destroy the Khilafat had to be resisted. My resistance being non-violent prevented in my opinion, violence which would but for the movement have undoubtedly broken out. The Khilafat movement was not decided upon to bolster any Turkish tyranny. Wherever tyranny exists, it must be resisted by non-violent means.

Yours sincerely,

REV. FR. EKAROZ
HAIFA, GERMAN HOSPISEE OF ST. CHARLES
PALESTINE

From a photostat: S.N. 11785

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

125. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[1]

February 20, 1927

You forget you are a son of Bapu's niece; Manilal therefore is your maternal uncle. Would children offer any presents to their mother? Herein you forget even our Hindu tradition. However, if you are so affluent, I am willing to accept the amount for cow-protection and the tanning school. I might grab all the money that you may offer. So, if you are not going to be disappointed, you had better take my advice and keep quiet over it.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 92

126. SPEECH AT SHOLAPUR [2]

February 20, 1927

As at Nasik,[3] the speech at Sholapur was a reply to questions and criticisms made in an open letter addressed to Gandhiji by some people from the town. Their first criticism was that those who appeared in khadi on the occasion of Gandhiji's visit were hypocrites inasmuch as they would shelve it the day he left. Did that indicate the progress of khadi? Gandhiji said:

Well, I do not know. I know that I am selling khadi wherever I go, and there ends my work. Supposing you purchase from me millions of rupees worth of khadi and sink it into the sea, the sale is not vitiated. But the criticism is unfair. I know that some wear khadi for the occasion, but they do not disguise the fact. They appreciate the message of khadi, but they say they cannot exclusively wear it for a number of reasons. Am I to tell them, 'You are no good. I can do without your khadi?' No, no. My duty is to define our dharma in its fulness. Their duty is to follow it as much as they can. People deceive me, you say. I do not understand how they can harm me even if they do. I am but a self-appointed agent of *Daridranarayana* and I shall take from you only what you can give me. . . .

[1] Written by Mahadev Desai to Gandhiji's dictation

[2] This was published under the title, "Two Speeches".

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Nasik", 16-2-1927.

"You are good enough," they say, "but your work has ruined the country." I am but an erring mortal and like any one of you I am full of shortcomings; therefore I beseech you to reject them and simply make the best of my capacity for service. Turn my good points to account and reject the bad ones. If you do not pick and choose and simply reject me wholesale, what will the world say to you? Will you regret the service of a man as a carrier because he is blind?

As I said at Nasik, I fail to understand the *shuddhi, tabligh* and proselytization as they are carried on today. I cannot understand a man changing the religion of his forefathers at the instance of another. But that is my personal conviction. No one need stop *shuddhi, tabligh* or proselytization at my instance. My own duty is clear. I must go on purifying myself and hoping that only thereby would I react on my surroundings. It is my unshakable conviction that penance and self-purification are the only means for the protection of Hinduism. Do any amount of *sangathan*, only let not that *sangathan* be of the evil forces, let it be only of the forces of good. . . .

You say I am partial to the Mussalmans. So be it, though the Mussalmans do not admit it. But my religion will not suffer by even an iota by reason of my partiality. I shall have to answer my God and my Maker if I give anyone less than his due, but I am sure that He will bless me if He knows that I gave someone more than his due. I ask you to understand me. If my hand or heart has done anything more than was anyone's due, you should be proud of it, rather than deplore it. It should be a matter of pride to you as Hindus to think that there was amongst you at least one mad Gandhi who was not only just to the Mussalmans, but even went out of his way in giving them more than their due. Hinduism is replete with instances of tolerance, sacrifice and forgiveness. Think of the sacrifice of the Pandavas, think of the forgiveness of Yudhishthira. Should it be a matter for sorrow for you, that there is at least one man who has tried to carry out the precept of Hinduism to the letter? . . .

If there is anything in the charge that you are wearing khadi just to please me, and for show, I say for God's sake do not do so. I am not a Mahatma. If I am one, the Mahatmaship is but the expression of some *shakti*[1]. Pray do nothing for my sake. I shuddered when

[1] Power

someone proposed that though I was silent I should exhibit myself for *darshan*[1]. I assure you the words '*darshan*' and 'Mahatma' stink in my nostrils. I am unworthy of giving *darshan.* Even like you I am a vessel of clay, liable to all the affections and passions that flesh is heir to. How can I be fit to give you *darshan*? One and only one *darshan* is necessary, viz., that of the nameless, formless, indefinable Absolute. Try, if you can, to see Him everywhere, in a poor man's hut as in a palace, in a latrine as well as in a temple. Have, if you will, the *darshan* of khadi and visualize its immense potentialities. Dismiss the mortal frame called Gandhi from your mind. Its *darshan* will be of no avail.

Young India, 10-3-1927

127. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

[Before *February 21, 1927*][2]

Haste is waste. Let me do a few places thoroughly rather than many places indifferently. You will have to remember that I have to do continuous travelling throughout the year. My capacity and energy are limited. I must therefore have three forty-five minutes for three meals, one forty-five minutes for bath, etc., and two forty-five minutes for a quiet walk in the morning and evening. I must be made to retire at 9 p.m., and I must have three hours for attending to correspon-dence and editing, and I must have half an hour for sleep during day. If you can give me these hours, I fancy that I shall not only bear the strain of travelling but go on almost indefinitely and shall improve in health.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-2-1927

128. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised SHOLAPUR,
February 21, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter from Delhi. I note your remarks about Guru-

[1] Sight of a person, place or thing considered holy
[2] Released on February 21, 1927 from Madras by the Free Press

kuls. I have not yet [got] Ramachandra's letter. I am not at all sorry you have gone to the Gurukul. The Gurukuls are an honest attempt. I want you to discuss these things fully with Ramdevji and others. You will influence them when you speak to them with a loving heart. We must measure people with their own measure and see how far they come up to it. You do not need this caution. But seeing that you have set a rigorous standard for yourself and you are in a strange environment, I am anxious for you not to lose your balance even by a hair's breadth.

I have too much pressure today to write more.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

Satis Babu has lost his eldest son. Write to him care Khadi Pratishthan, Sodepur, Calcutta.

26th Belgaum
5th Bombay
6th, 7th Akola (Manilal's marriage)
8th Bombay
9th-14th Ashram

From the original: C.W. 5206. Courtesy: Mirabehn

129. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

Monday [*February 21, 1927*][1]

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. I do not want Sushila to make a resolve; I do not know her that well. But you should acquaint yourself with her people. They are a cultured family. All of them wear khadi. I agree it is difficult for you to wear khadi. It will not be difficult for Sushila as long as she keeps up her Indian style with sari and other things. A presentable khaddar dress can be had at a reasonable price. People dressed in khadi are to be found now even in distant Edinburgh.

[1] From the reference to Manilal's wedding and the message to Panditji in this and the succeeding two letters, it appears that all the three were written on the same date.

It is not my attempt to make recluses of you or Sushila, but I certainly intend to make you disciplined householders. If I wanted to make you monks I would not have bothered about getting you married. I would not disapprove if you sought your pleasure within limits. In spite of all this you are free and should act as you please; I do not want to exercise the least pressure.

Jamnalalji has not turned a recluse, only he has given up a number of pleasures. You are quite grown-up and I do not look upon you as a child.

I have been taking steps after consulting you about everything. Do let me know if you wish for any change in the marriage ceremony or for some merriment. I have suggested and acted as I thought fit but I want to be as agreeable to you as I can while following my own code of conduct[1]. I know marriage is a turning point in the life of a young man and woman. I am also aware thatparents should not interfere in it. Do not think yourself to be under any kind of pressure. Do I need to be more frank? Do I have to give any more reassurance?

Nanabhai has invited Panditji, so he should come with you. Both of you can meet me by taking the Tapti Valley route; thereby you can also save some time. But do what both of you find convenient.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1119. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

130. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

Monday [*February 21, 1927*][2]

BHAI NANABHAI,

I have your letter. The wedding may take place at 10-30. Evening would never suit me.

Why should you offer a dress to Manilal? The dress he will have on, won't that do? However, I would not hurt your feelings.

Tell Chi. Sushila that she must cultivate the habit of writing letters. Once she starts writing she will not be short of topics.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Manilal Gandhi", 14-2-1927.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

I have written for Panditji's coming over.

You need not send biscuits from there. I have collected plenty of them on my way. Vijayalakshmi may pack a tin for me when I reach there.

Does she still want to have Manilal stay with her for some days? If she does I would send him there a few days ahead or he may stay on for some days after the marriage. You already have my tour programme.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1121. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

131. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Monday [*February 21, 1927*]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have your letter.

For the present take such work from Parasram as he can do.

Ask Panditji to be ready. He should take a train from Sabarmati on the 5th morning to save time and money, and join me at Jalgaon by taking the Tapti Valley route. It will do if Manilal also takes the same train. But they may, if they want to, travel *via* Bombay. Panditji should write to Nanabhai about the preparations to be made. The marriage ceremony is to be performed on Sunday at 10-30 a.m.

I was under the impression that Ganesh's Christian name was John. Because of this and because I had forgotten the name Ganesh, I wrote John.[1] Give him this new letter in which I refer to him by the name of Ganesh. And if the fellow can take a joke and would not mind his name being forgotten, give him the one which carries the name of John too. Otherwise destroy that letter.

Now I do not have to worry about Rukhi.

I feel we must not let the common mess close, though those who want to, may drop out of it. Self-Cooking and common mess must he carried on together.

We are bound to devote the minimum amount necessary for the tannery and the [water] lift. The funds for cow-protection have to be used for the tannery. I remember a resolution to this effect adopted at

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 2-2-1927.

Wardha. If not we will pass one on the 11th. We must take up that activity which involves no risk of loss.

For the lift too we shall collect the amount needed. But I shall decide about it after I reach there on the 9th.

The amount from Mirabehn comes in regularly. All of it is to be spent at the Ashram. Since a year is over, we can now utilize the amount. Only you have to be careful that we do not suffer any loss on account of an error in accounts or some other slip.

Are you now in a position to meet the demand for lifts and to set them up? I have deliberately omitted to publish anything [about the lift]. Write to me if you want it to be publicized so that I can prepare an article for the next issue. Let me know what I may write. Have you now trained people to work the lift? I believe I must mention the minimum weight of the animal that should go with each. Why can we not use an old buffalo? Why not a good or pliant bull? There should be no error in our calculations. I am afraid, we might have to depute our men in all places for quite some time. But it will be all right if you have given thought to all this.

The same applies to hides and skins. Let me have a copy of the pamphlet about this. I will publish it after examining it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

A special letter for the Ashram is enclosed.

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 7762. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

132. LETTER TO ASHRAM MEMBERS

Silence Day, February 21, 1927

I see from the letters I get that attendance at the prayer is irregular and thin. A general slackness is also creeping into the spinning.

Spinning and prayer are the two beacons for us. If we do not keep an eye on them, we will be able to do no credit either to the Ashram or to ourselves. It is one thing not to do them after deciding right from the beginning that we would not engage in either of them, and another to omit doing them after undertaking them. In my opinion, he who approves of neither can achieve nothing at the

Ashram, since we regard them both as essential religious activities. Those who, while approving of them, grow lax in their practice will develop a general laxity. If we wish to learn to insist on truth and to experience the strength it gives, we must never omit to perform the two aforesaid rites. Both require faith on our part. To a certain extent we can adduce rational arguments in support of both, but in the last resort faith alone can satisfy us. One sometimes feels that nothing is gained by attendance at prayers, that one is unable to concentrate attention, one feels a sense of lethargy, and so on. These things cannot be reasoned out; they can be dispelled only by faith. The *Gita* recommends faith alone when it speaks of dispassionate action. An effort is never wasted. It is an act of faith to believe in the ultimate triumph of truth in the face of failures, and to follow truth dispassionately. We should have the same attitude to spinning as to prayer. It is not for me to calculate how this much spinning would benefit me or the country. One may not see any immediate benefit from spinning but one must stick to one's belief that it is going to bring some benefit. The point is to learn to stick to our resolve. The two external and common activities of prayer and spinning are likely to develop this tenacity. If we are lax in these activities, when shall we learn to stand firm on truth?

I therefore appeal to all, young and old, not to neglect these two activities.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8053. Courtesy: Raojibhai N. Patel

133. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

SHOLAPUR,
Monday, Maha Vad 5 [*February 21, 1927*]

SISTERS,

I have your letter.

I find that carding and other work has been going on well. If you persevere in the same way, you will make good progress within a short time.

The effect of regular work is like that of regular food. It nourishes the soul. But, even as over-eating spoils one's health, so excessive work at a time wears out one's spirit.

We are in Sholapur today. It is a big city. There are five mills here. The biggest of them belongs to Morarji Gokuldas. His grandson Shantikumar is still a youth so far as age goes, but he has a great soul. He loves khadi and wears only khadi. I do not mean that this is his greatest virtue. He is sympathetic, generous, humble, devoted to God and truthful. He has the virtue that his name indicates, i.e., he is calmness incarnate. I am very glad that such a jewel amongst men is found in a multi-millionaire family. I was not acquainted with his wife. Yesterday, while I took my meal, I made her sit down by me and talked to her to my heart's content. I suggested to her that she should take to public work like her husband. I cited all of you as an example to her. Was I right in doing so or was it only my conceit? You alone know whether all of you are devoted to service. Anyhow that is what escaped my lips. It is up to you to justify my statement.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3640

134. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[*February 21, 1927*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. I am returning herewith both the letters from Ghanshyamdas. Because I have faith in his word I am not afraid that he would marry again.

I want you to come to Belgaum on 25-26 and also to present yourself at the Ashram on the 11th. There is much work to be done at both the places. It would be worth the while if you could stay at the Ashram from the 9th to 13th. You may also stay with me at the time of the Gurukul [Convocation] when Ghanshyamdas too proposes to be present. It depends more on your own convenience in view of the other things you have to attend to.

What is Kamala doing? I am worried on her account. This does not mean you too should start worrying. She could perhaps settle

[1] *Vide* the succeeding item.

down if we could arrange for her education. Let her learn as much English as she likes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2882

135. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Silence Day [*February 21, 1927*][1]

CHI. ANASUYABHEN,

I expected a letter from you but there is none. I had also expected a letter from Miss Haussding but there is none from her either. I am a little worried about her.

We are in Sholapur today. Shantikumar is looking after us very well. It is getting quite hot here.

Jamnabehn has arrived from Barsi (Bardoli). There is no time for writing more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 32833

136. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SHOLAPUR,
Monday [*February 21, 1927*][2]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have two letters from you. Because I trust your word I am not afraid of your reconsidering it. I trust you also in the matter of the Assembly. But in view of the prevailing atmosphere there it is difficult to remain absolutely independent.

On the question of *sangathan* I hold the same views that I have expressed. Organization is certainly not the remedy for the case,

[1] From the contents it is evident that the letter was written on this date, a silence day, when Gandhiji was at Sholapur.

[2] Gandhiji was in Sholapur on this date.

particulars of which you have sent to me. Here the remedy is either *tapascharya* or individual courage. As long as we remain cowards no wonder our women fall into the hands of the lecherous. I know of a Hindu prince in whose territory no young girl was safe and the husband and the father used to be helpless. But then this is a complicated problem. Please do come to the Gurukul if you can. I wish to have you with me for a fortnight; we cannot dispose of such matters in a day. In the meanwhile whatever my advice do what your inner voice bids you.

Blessings to your son and daughter-in-law.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

22 Gulbarga	4 Poona
23 Pandharpur	5 Bombay
24-25 District Satara	6-7 Akola
26 Belgaum	8 Bombay
27—March 3 Ratnagiri	9-14 Ashram

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6144. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

137. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SHOLAPUR,
[*February 21, 1927*][1]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Kindly go through the enclosed letter[2] and let me have your views on it.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Tour Programme:

26 Belgaum	5 Bombay

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Presumably, the succeeding item

27 Malvan (Distt. Ratnagiri)
28 Ratnagiri
1-2-3 Ratnagiri District
4 Poona
6-7 Akola
8 Bombay
9-14 Ashram

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6145. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

138. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

ON TOUR,
GULBARGA,
February 22, 1927

DEAR SIR PURUSHOTTAMDAS[1],

As it appears to be more convenient for you to handle English letters I am sending you this in English.

Though I have myself yet written nothing about currency matters, perhaps you are aware that I have been closely following the agitation[2], that is, as closely as I can, in spite of incessant travelling. I have been studying the question carefully and carrying on an active correspondence with experts chiefly Messrs Madon and Wadia. The latter has sent me a draft bill which I understand he has circulated among the members of the Assembly. Will you please let me know whether that Bill meets your approval?

If a pure gold standard is established, free mints opened, and a Reserve Bank established, does not the question of ratio disappear altogether? Will not things right themselves? Whereas if the ratio is fixed at 1 to 15 and all questions about gold, currency, mints and Reserve Bank shelved or decided in accordance with the recommendation of the Commission, will it not be worse than the existing state of things?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. G.

SIR PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS
BOMBAY

From a copy: C.W. 7825. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Member of Hilton-Young Commission, the Royal Commission on Indian Currency and Finance

[2] Against the fixation of the rupee at 1s 6d gold (as recommended by the Hilton-Young Commission) instead of at 1s 4d gold (as proposed in the addressee's dissenting minute)

139. LETTER TO B. F. MADON

GULBARGA,
February 22, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your latest letter for which I thank you. What do you say to this letter? At the time of replying please return the enclosure.

I note what you say about Mr. Shroff.

Do you not think that there is considerable force in what Prof. Wadia says, namely, that the ratio question should not be separated from the permanent question of standard; or do you say that since there is a statutory definition of the rupee in terms of gold, we should be entirely satisfied if the ratio is satisfactorily settled and the other recommendations[1] of the Commission either shelved or given effect to just as they are. In other words, if you had the choice what will you do?

Have the ratio fixed at 1 to 15 and the *status quo* retained in all other respects?

Or the ratio fixed at 1 to 50 and gold Bullion standard with the Reserve Bank mentioned in the Commission established?

Or a pure gold standard established, mints reopened for coining gold mohors freely and a central bank given such as Prof. Wadia suggests, leaving the ratio undisturbed by any statutory action?

Have you read Messrs Wadia and Joshi's draft Bill?

From a microfilm: S.N. 12900

140 LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

GULBARGA,
Maha Vad 6 [*February 22, 1927*][2]

PRIEST OF DHEDS AND BHILS,

Please do come, and do bring Dheds and Bhangis along with

[1] Embodied in Gold Standard and Reserve Bank of India Bill introduced in the Legislative Assembly on January 25, 1927

[2] In 1927, Gandhiji was in Gulbarga on this date.

you. Please inform Jugatram or whoever is to be informed so that he may make the necessary arrangements. If they carry their food and bed with them as also a *lota*[1] and a rope and are prepared to sleep on the ground, they need not give any prior intimation.

We have just reached Gulbarga by the train we took at Sholapur. And I have got some time to write letters; I am stealing a few moments to indulge in a little fun with you, and also finish off some work by the way.

Hail, Thakkar Bapa, high priest of the lowly ones!

Whatever you would have from

BAPU

[PS.]

'Bapu' is certainly better than 'Mahatma'.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2711

141. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

Tuesday, [*February 22, 1927*][2]

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. I cannot decide about your competence to work in Jamshedpur. I have no experience of your knowledge of the English language. If you are confident of your ability for this work, you should go to Jamshedpur, look about yourself, and then make the final decision. As to the Ashram, you can come over at any time you please. There is plenty of work to do. But then you must be prepared to run around anywhere, and must also acquire sufficient experience of the technique of spinning. How far have you studied English?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Tour Programme:

24-25 Satara	5 Bombay
26 Belgaum	6-7 Akola
27-March 3 District Ratnagiri	8 Bombay

[1] A vessel, without handle or spout, for carrying water

[2] From Gandhiji's tour programme

4 Poona 9-14 Ashram

On the night of the 17th I shall entrain at Surat for Hardwar. I am not stopping over at Delhi; but it is on my way to Hardwar. I have to stay at the Gurukul for three days.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2354

142. SPEECH AT GULBARGA[1]

February 22, 1927

[Addressing] both the Hindus and Mussalmans gathered in the vast courtyard of the famous Sharana Basappa Temple which still bore the marks of the mob-fury of 1924[2], Gandhiji said:

My heart burns with agony when I see young men, dressed in foreign caps and clothes. It is surprising that they do not see that, whilst the rupees that they spend on foreign caps are wasted, the annas that they need spend on khadi caps all go to the pockets of the poor. The man who shuts his eyes to the poor of his land and seeks to befriend the poor of the world must be mad indeed. God will find him guilty of arrogating to himself His function. The Hindu who recites his *Gayatri* regularly and the Mussalman who says his *namaz* five times a day are doing so in vain, if they have no corner in their hearts for the poor of their land. This is the message I would leave with the Hindus and Mussalmans of this place.

Much as I would like to pour out my agony before you, I know that it will be a cry in the wilderness. I therefore daily send out my prayer to God: 'Lord, do somehow deliver us from this conflagration.' But I should be untrue to my creed if as a believing and satyagrahi Hindu I disguised from you the feelings within me. When I went into the temple I was shown the spot where the idol was removed and the Nandi[3] was desecrated. I tell you the sight pained me. You may call me an idolator if you will. I see God everywhere and in everything. I tell you God would never approve of those acts of desecration. Whilst in Yeravda Jail, I read Maulana Shibli's *Life of the Prophet*, I also read *Usva-e-Sahaba* and can say that those who did

[1] This was published under the title "Two Speeches".

[2] *Vide* "Notes", 28-8-1924.

[3] Sacred bull

the acts were wrong, that Islam never sanctions such things and they were guilty before God and man. When I heard of these things I was convinced that the matter had passed out of human hands. If there were men who devoted all their time and energy to the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity I at least was one of them, but when my efforts did not seem to bear any fruit I threw myself on God. When the saints and godfearing people of Islam saw that there was discord and strife after the passing away of the Prophet, they dissociated themselves from them, migrated to Egypt, Persia and other lands and there retired into seclusion and sent up their prayers to God. It is these saints that have kept Islam alive. How often have I wished to retire thus into seclusion! And though I know that history will take note of my efforts as those of one who was a servant of God, who committed Himalayan blunders but who had also the courage to confess them and repent for them, I know that today I can do no better than be silent on this question.

But if you will not listen to me in that matter, you certainly will not disdain to think of the millions of the poor amongst you. Do you know that many of the spinners in Bihar, Bengal and the Punjab out of the 50,000 spinners in India for whom the A.I.S.A. finds employment, are Mussalmans? Have you read the heart-rending tales of woe of some of them? One of the workers in Gujarat asked a Mussalman woman aged 65 as to why she bothered to spin when spinning brought her only an anna per day. She said the fact that there was someone to give her an anna in return for the yarn she spun convinced her that there surely must be God somewhere. Fight, therefore, as much as you wish, but when a man like me appeals for help, pray forget your quarrels and your hostilities and do something for the cause he pleads.

Young India, 10-3-1927

143. LETTER TO K. RAJAGOPALACHARI

ON TOUR,
February 23, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I enclose the discharge document fair copied and duly signed by me.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure 1

SJT. K. RAJAGOPALACHARI
KHADDAR STORES
GANDHI STREET
TIRUPATI
(CHITTORE DISTRICT)

From a photostat: G.N. 5670

144. SPEECH AT PANDHARPUR[1]

[*February 23, 1927*][2]

At Pandharpur the people in charge of the temple had somehow got the report that Gandhiji was going there with a European friend and they were terribly exercised as to what they should do if Gandhiji insisted on entering the temple with the friend as he did at Banaras. They must have been relieved to find that there was no such friend in our party. But Gandhiji made a pointed reference to this matter in his speech. He said:

I am sorry that neither the Buddhist friend who was with me at Banaras nor the 'untouchable' girl I have adopted is with me. But you may be sure that I should not have visited the temple without them if they had been with me. Had I left them out, I should have been guilty of insulting Vithoba Himself. I would not mind even an atheist entering our temple, for I know that God can take care of Himself. Who is there in the world who can insult the God in the image? But

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] Gandhiji was at Pandharpur on this date; *vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 21-2-1927.

the lady friend who was with me is a Buddhist and therefore a Hindu. If she had no right to enter the temple, who else can have it? I have visited many places of pilgrimage and I have been pained to see hypocrisy and cupidity there. It is necessary first to purify the drunken and dissolute worshippers in charge of some of these temples. If the things continue as they are today, if we do not bestir ourselves and go through the necessary penance and cleansing and self-purification, I tell you that not even the 22 crores of Hindus can keep Hinduism alive. The Himalayas are spotlessly snow-white in virtue of the spotless glory of the countless sages who laid down their lives performing penance in their caves. Only such penance can save us and our religion from perdition today.

Young India, 10-3-1927

145. HONOURABLE COMPROMISE

Sir Mahomed Habibullah and his colleagues are to be congratulated upon having secured a settlement that is honourable to both parties. It is not the best that could be conceived, but it is the best that was possible. I doubt if any other deputation could have done more. The Class Areas Bill, which brought about the Conference and round which the battle raged, is dead and gone. The Right Hon. Srinivasa Sastri, who when the deputation sailed for South Africa was of all members the most communicative and had warned us not to expect much, did not conceal at the end of the labours of the Conference his satisfaction at the result. A perusal of the settlement warrants the satisfaction.

But like all compromises this one is not without its danger points. The dropping of the Class Areas Bill is balanced by repatriation, re-emerging as re-emigration. If the name is more dignified, it is also more dangerous. Repatriation could only be to India. Re-emigration can be to any country. The following sentence in the settlement clearly points to that interpretation:"The Union Government therefore will organize a scheme of assisted emigration to India or other countries where Western standards are not required." This assisted emigration to other countries I hold to be dangerous, for there is no knowing what may happen to the poor ignorant men going to an unknown land, where they would be utter strangers. Such countries as would take them would only be either Fiji or British Guiana. Neither

has a good name in India. It is decidedly a disadvantage to have been party to assisted emigration to any other part of the world.

The good point about this assisted emigration is that whereas before the settlement the repatriates lost their domicile, the re-emigrants now retain it and lose it only if they absent themselves so long as to warrant the inference that there is no intention on their part to return to South Africa. How many assisted emigrants can hope to refund the assistance in money they might have received or how many can hope to return with their families is a different question. The non-forfeiture clause is clearly designed not so much to guarantee a substantial right as not to hurt national self-respect.

The annexure, containing a summary of "conclusions reached by the Round Table Conference on the Indian question in South Africa", is a remarkable document betraying in every paragraph a heroic attempt to reconcile conflicting interests and sentiments. The industrious reader will have no difficulty in discovering hopeful paragraphs. I shall therefore content myself with drawing attention to a paragraph that is fraught with grave danger. The Union Government is "to take special steps under the Public Health Act for an investigation into the sanitary and housing conditions in and around Durban, which will include the question of the limitation of sale of municipal lands subject to restrictive conditions". I do not know what is aimed at in this paragraph, but my suspecting mind—and my suspicion is based upon previous bitter experience of interpretations, warranted and unwarranted, that a strong party places upon agreements with a weak party to the latter's disadvantage—conjures up all kinds of frightful consequences arising from this proposed committee and limitation. Already the Durban Corporation has been invested with powers which it has utilized for the suppression of its Indian citizens. So far as I know a committee can bring to light nothing that is not known to the Corporation or the Government. The appointment of an advisory committee of Indians may be simple padding. The Health Committee may bring in a hysterical report, as a previous committee to my knowledge has done, and limitations may be put upon the purchase of municipal lands by Indians which may cramp the Indian community residing in Durban. Nor do I like the paragraph which seems to imply that provincial Governments are at liberty to take any action they might against the Indian settlers without

reference to the Central Government.

But the compromise is acceptable in spite of the dangers referred to by me, not so much for what has been actually achieved as for the almost sudden transformation of the atmosphere in South Africa from one of remorseless hostility towards Indians to that of a generous toleration and from complete social ostracism to that of admission of Indians to social functions. Mr. Andrews sends me a glowing account of the utmost cordiality with which the Indian members of the Deputation were received alike by the Government and the people, how local Indians were able to gain entry to the most fashionable hotel in Cape Town without any let or hindrance and how the Europeans in South Africa were flocking to him to know all about the Indian Deputation and the Indian question. If this atmosphere of goodwill and sociability is kept up and encouraged, the settlement can be used as a solid foundation for erecting a beautiful temple of freedom for the Indian settlers in South Africa. But the success of the settlement very largely depends upon the selection of the Consul or the Commissioner who will be selected to represent the Government of India. He must be a person of eminence, great ability and great strength of character, and in my opinion, he must be an Indian. They very fact of his being an Indian will strike the imagination of the European population and raise the Indian settlers in European estimation. He will reach the heart of Indians in a way no Englishman, not even perhaps Mr. Andrews, can, and if a man can be selected who will command the equal esteem of the Union Government we need not fear the future. Such a man in my humble opinion is Mr. Srinivasa Sastri. I cannot conclude this hasty survey of the settlement without placing on record my deepest conviction that the happy result is predominantly due to the ceaseless and prayerful labours of that godly self-effacing Englishman, Charlie Andrews.

Young India, 24-2-1927

146. NOTES

A SIMPLE SUGGESTION

During my tour I observe that at some of the meetings volunteers thoughtlessly begin distribution of papers, such as copies of address, etc., just after the guest has arrived and the address has begun to be read. They do not realize that this creates a fresh disturbance in already noisy and restless meetings. If papers are to be distributed, they should be distributed before the proceedings

commence. It is not even realized that if papers are distributed, they should be distributed to all who want them. In mass meetings such distribution is impossible unless thousands of copies are available. In my opinion this would mean an utterly useless waste of public money. Whatever is absolutely necessary will surely be printed by local papers and the public should be satisfied with what the papers give. If they are unable to follow the proceedings without the papers it would not be a bad plan to sell such papers when there would be no question of favouritism. All those who wish to possess copies can have them for a trifling charge to cover printing expenses and a small addition so as to form a contribution, however small, to the expense of organizing meetings.

STEWARDS OF THE NATION

Much trouble, time and money can be saved by a little forethought. As it is, I often notice a reckless waste of public funds in connection with these meetings. Let organizers of all meetings, but especially of khadi meetings, realize that we are the poorest country in the world, millions of whom are semi-starved, if only because their earnings are less even than three pice per day. Let organizers therefore understand, as stewards for the nation, it is their duty to spend public funds like misers and never to spend a pie without thought and without necessity. Organizers of khadi meetings should further realize that every pice collected is a pice meant for the starving millions and so one pice means often a day's earning for a widow. They must not therefore spend where they need not. For instance, they spend money on paper decorations. This is no time for decorations. Let them save as much as they can by avoiding all decorations save only those which may be required to attract people's attention. In that case they can think of several artistic things which cost nothing or very little. Thus they can have flags and buntings out of waste khaddar. We are now going in for extensive tailoring in connection with khaddar sales. There is always much waste material in a tailor's shop which he throws away. Now every part of this waste can be used for buntings which unlike paper buntings can be preserved for further use.

WRITE YOUR ADDRESSES

Flowers may be avoided altogether and yarn garlands may be presented. Yarn must not be damaged by being tied into knots. It can be presented in its natural condition so that it can be subsequently used for weaving or any similar purpose. Money can also be saved by avoiding the printing of addresses. The best calligraphist among the organizers can write out the address on simple handmade paper and the paper can be nicely sewn on to a piece of khaddar, or if a little volunteer boy or girl would embroider the letters on a piece of khaddar it would be still better, the thread for embroidery, too, being hand-spun. Such work will be at once artistic and even valuable. I have stolen the idea from the remarkable way in which Babu Mahendra Prasad's daughter Rama had embroidered for her father the address presented by the Chapra Municipality of which he is Chairman. It cost the Municipality nothing and I have become possessor of a work of art which will adorn the museum which Adhyapak Malkani has brought into being in the Gujarat National College.

AVOID SILVER CASKETS

Expensive caskets are not required, for I have no use for them nor have I any room to keep them in. Latterly I have been putting to auction every expensive casket received by me and handing the proceeds to the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. Although these auctions have invariably proved profitable in that they have fetched much more than their intrinsic value it will not be proper to present caskets for the purpose of securing fancy prices. It will be a good exercise for organizers if they must give their khaddar addresses in caskets to find out something cheap, local and artistic.

NOT A PLEASURE TRIP

Well has Gangadharrao said that mine is not a pleasure trip, but a business tour during which I expect to do substantial business for my principal *Daridranarayana*. Every function therefore should be in fitting with that setting. I have observed that often more local men travel with me than are necessary for the purpose of the mission and that motor-cars are hired without due regard to economy. Every item of expenditure should be previously and carefully thought out. Unless we do so we shall not raise into being an efficient, economical organization calculated to serve the starving millions and we shall be guilty of the same charge, no matter on however small a scale, of

extravagance that we legitimately bring against the Government. Kitson burners should be avoided whenever possible. I notice, too, a lavish expenditure on feeding. Those who travel with me do not do so to be entertained. It is enough to provide clean lodging and clean food. Indeed I often feel like copying for the whole of my company the excellent example of Mr. Bharucha who always insists on carrying his own food with him. We spend much too much money and time upon food. It grieves me to see people sending for parcels of fruit from Bombay or Calcutta. Much of this expense is wholly unnecessary. Some fruit is no doubt an essential part of my dietary and unless obtainable locally, something has no doubt to be imported. But I am sure that the expense incurred in bringing fruit can at least he reduced by 75 per cent. 'But,' argue over-zealous friends, 'why should not people who love you express their regard in some such loving acts of service? They will not spend money otherwise, nor will they give you all the money that they spend for your personal comfort. Let them therefore have the joy of spending some little money for you.' The argument is no doubt flattering, but wholly unconvincing.

TRANSMUTATION INTO SERVICE

If those who love cannot transfer their love to the thing for which I stand, their love is blind and of little value. I do not know if one should live to provide mere enjoyment for friends. Friendship means loving mutual service, and sometimes it is a positive disservice to indulge one's friends and to expose them to temptations. And if there are friends who would spend lavishly for providing luxuries for me, but would not spend for the cause I espouse, it is my clear duty to resist such luxuries. Friends to be friends must first provide me with necessaries of life before they think of indulging me with luxuries; and khaddar work is a vital necessary of life for me, more vital than food. Reception Committees please note.

AUCTION OF GARLANDS

The foregoing paragraphs were written, or rather dictated at the halts before we reached Ahmednagar at which latter place, there was an imposing meeting where there were several addresses presented, the Municipal address being in a beautiful silver cylinder. The representatives of each body brought also expensive flower garlands. Mr. Firodia who presented the inevitable purse excused himself for its

smallness by saying that Ahmednagar was a famine-ridden tract. When therefore I began my reply[1] I could not help noticing the contrast between the palatial surroundings, the expensive ceremonial and the statement of famine conditions. I told the audience that what was true of Ahmednagar was true of the whole of India. Was not India a famine-ridden land? But the fact did not prevent accumulation of wealth on the part of a few. We the city-dwellers lived upon the exploitation of the famine-stricken villagers and the Khaddar movement was in tended somewhat to redress the wrong and to make some slight return to the millions whom we were exploiting. I therefore suggested that the acknowledgment of the fact that Ahmednagar was a famine area made it doubly the duty of its well-to-do citizens to give more rather than less. I told them also that it would ill become me to accept for myself such caskets and rich floral tributes. I told them further that believing as I did that plants were as much endowed with life as we were ourselves, I did not like the unnecessary plucking of a single flower. But in a place like Ahmed-nagar my dislike was heightened by the reminder that I was a self-chosen representative of the very famine-stricken millions whom Mr. Firodia had mentioned. Every rupee spent upon unnecessary things meant a deprivation of the livelihood of 16 famishing women and I therefore suggested that they should auction the silver casket as also the flowers, and if my remarks went home they would pay not the market value of the casket and the flowers but they would pay for the sentiment that the things would carry with them. The auctioning was entrusted naturally to the Chairman of the Municipality, Khan Bahadur Dorabseth. The casket was knocked down to Sheth Magniramji the local philanthropist for Rs. 1,001 and the garlands and the bouquets were auctioned separately under the same able management and they fetched in all Rs. 502. The result of my appeal went beyond the meeting and the citizens seemed to catch the spirit of my address to them, and the purse of Rs. 1,700 for which Mr. Firodia had apologized went up to nearly Rs. 6,000 apart from a brisk sale of khadi at the meeting. Future organizers beware! I warn them that they need not present me with flowers and rich caskets, but if they do I shall assume

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Ahmednagar", 18-2-1927.

that they are presented for the purpose of being auctioned and in order that their contribution to the poor people's fund may be substantially increased.

TILAK SWARAJ FUND

During the Maharashtra tour at one or two meetings I was asked what had become of the crore collected for Tilak Swaraj Fund.[1] The questioners had every right to put this question even though they might not have contributed a pie to the Fund. A public fund becomes public property and therefore every member of the public is entitled to know in detail the administration of such funds. I therefore answered the question fairly exhaustively. The gist of my answer will bear repetition although the question has been answered in these pages already.

The accounts have been published regularly by the All-India Congress Committee. Copies of the audited accounts can be had at any time from the Congress Secretaries or the Treasurers. Every pie has been accounted for. There is no doubt that in some instances those to whom funds were entrusted were not faithful to the trust, but that is as much as to say that the Congress like all human institutions is an imperfect body having in its fold all sorts of men. I know of no institution in the world which does not have dishonest agents. The Congress is no exception. But I can say this that no loss has been sustained beyond what a most careful merchant suffers. The little loss that had been sustained is due not to negligence, but has occurred inspite of vigilant inspection and auditing. It should be further borne in mind that the Congress has had in Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and in Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj an incorruptible working Secretary and an incorruptible working Treasurer respectively. Moreover 75 per cent of the funds were administered locally by local representatives who had assisted in raising the funds and who were trusted by the people. Lastly, the largest amounts were mostly earmarked and controlled by the donors, subject no doubt to the conditions that they were to be used only for purposes coming within the programme of non-co-operation and the accounts were to be open to inspection by Congress agents. Personally, I have absolutely no regret about having raised the Fund and my conscience is clear as to its administration.

[1] *Vide* "Speech on Tilak Swaraj Fund, Pachora", 8-2-1927.

Everything that was humanly possible to guard against fraud, mal-administration or misappropriation was done. The Fund has served an immense national purpose. The tremendous organization that came into being all of a sudden could not have been created without this great national Fund to which both rich and poor contributed so handsomely.

ALL-INDIA COW-PROTECTION ASSOCIATION

The Secretary acknowledges further receipt of yarn as under:

MEMBERS' YARN (YARDS)

11	Nathabhai Dahyabhai Patel	Sojitra	12,500
12	T. M. Kanal	Haliyal	24,000
13	Punabhai Mamaiya	Karachi	16,000
14	V. G. Joglekar	Hadvi	24,000
15	Patelukhana Rama Rao	Ramachandrapur	6,000
16	N. Bhavanishanker Rao	Bangalore	9,640
17	Ishvarlal Thakordas Nanavati	Surat	24,000

Nos. 5, 6, 8 and 10 have advanced their totals to 24,002, 24,000, 22,000 and 14,940 respectively.

Young India, 24-2-1927

147. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[Before *February 25, 1927*][1]

[CHI.] NARANDAS,

I have just got another letter from you.

About the Bhandar I have sent you a telegram to go over to Belgaum. You will be there on the 25th itself. I shall come only on the 26th.

Let me have your opinion about supplying spinning-wheels to Panch Talawdi. It would of course be convenient to run the department through Amreli [office]. Why no figures about the Kotak Bhandar? They were not there last time too.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7711. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Inferred from the contents

148. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

[After *February 26, 1927*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. Did you not have my letter telling you about my meeting with your father-in-law? Your father intends by the end of March to send you, Vidyawati and, if possible, Chandramukhi too to the Ashram.

Step up your study of the *Ramayana* and the *Gita* and never give up spinning. Recite Ramanama while plying the wheel.

Tulsi Maherji met me for the second time.

The region I am now touring is very lovely. It is called Konkan and forms part of Maharashtra; moreover, I am touring this district for the first time.

I have given my tour programme in my letter to your father.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3327

149. LAST PILGRIMAGE OF A MUMUKSH [2]

We refer to the demise of a saintly individual as his last pilgrimage. The wise have regarded this world as an inn or a traveller's lodge; there for a while we stay and then walk on. The *Gita* says that the body is a *dharmakshetra*[3]. Shri Ranchhoddas Dharshi has gone from this *kshetra.* I knew him quite intimately. He lived in Karachi in recent years. He was a great devotee of Shrimad Rajchan-dra. Ranchhodbhai had perfect faith in the latter's teachings. I have seen him shedding tears of joy even at the mention of Raychandbhai. All those who knew him and came in touch with him will certainly feel grieved at his demise. As for himself, he has departed after fulfilling his mission. He always worked unobtrusively in the public life of Karachi. He did not care for fame; his only desire was to work. He

[1] *ibid,*

[2] Seeker of *moksha,* i. e., freedom from phenomenal existence as the goal of life

[3] Field of dharma

had full faith in khadi and carried on the khadi work in Karachi with great enthusiasm. May his soul rest in peace and the members of his family be consoled.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-2-1927

150. LETTER TO LAURA I. FINCH

February 27, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter has been redirected to me from Sabarmati. As I am constantly on the move, you will pardon my dictating this letter. Both you and Mrs. Blair whom I know very well would be welcome at the Ashram whenever you both go there. For the most part I expect to be there between 9th and 14th of March. I should be delighted to give you personal welcome if you come during that time.

I would suggest you and Mrs. Blair carrying a mosquito net, not that there are many mosquitoes at the Ashram but it is wise to be forearmed especially as we do not stock mosquito-curtains at the Ashram.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 12815

151. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

MALVAN,
February, 28 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have two letters from you.

I have no doubt in my mind that a vow is like a rudder—a life regulator. And just as a rudderless ship is lost, so is a life without a vow a lost life. For after all a vow means a religious determination to carry out a decision for self-restraint even at the cost of one's life. I should therefore welcome your desire to take what is perhaps the supremest vow for a man or a woman. But if it is taken let it be taken after the maturest deliberation. It would be wrong on my part to

prevent you from taking the vow, if you are clear about the necessity of taking it. Not to take the vow is to trust one's little self. To take it is to distrust oneself and to trust only God. I know where I should have been if I had not taken the vows I have.

But there is the other side, i.e., Andrews's. He says: "I do not know that the voice within is always the voice of God. What I may hold to be right today may be found to be wrong tomorrow. I must therefore hold myself free to do the will of God as I discover it from moment to moment." This attitude has answered his purpose. I should be undone. I see a fallacy behind A's argument. He does not. So it sustains him. Fallacy, error and the like are relative terms. What is good for one may not be good for all even though Truth is one for all time. The difficulty lies in our hopeless ignorance of Truth. Cruel God has enabled us to see that Truth is one and nothing else is; but He has disabled us for knowing its content.

If therefore you feel the call within to take the vow and if you feel it will make you feel freer, you shall take it. Nothing need be done in haste.

You must keep your health. Of course you will always starve when you feel the slightest touch of fullness or indigestion. Even weakness is preferable to apparent strength if it is accompanied by indigestion or even a feeling of fullness.

You must not worry about your Hindi. You are doing all you can. The rest must lie in the hands of God. A change may be necessary after we meet. The fact evidently is that you must not combine two things—learning Hindi and teaching charkha. It evidently exhausts you. And you have not been helped to the extent you needed. However the experiences you have gained are inestimable and I am satisfied.

I have only now got Ramachandra's letter. I must see what can be done when I am there.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

I have no time even for revising this important letter.

From the original: C.W. 5207. Courtesy: Mirabehn.

152. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

MALVAN,
Maha Vad 11 [*February 28, 1927*]

SISTERS,

This is the last letter I write to you, for next Monday I should be on my way back home.

In my tours I always address women's meetings. Consequently I keep learning new things about women. I realize that women hold the key to swaraj. But who will awaken them? Many women have little to do. Who will make them industrious? Mothers spoil their children from birth. Who will prevent them? They load their children with ornaments and clothes of all kinds. They get their girls married quite young. They give them in marriage to old men. When I look at the jewels on women, I feel very annoyed. Who will explain to them that real beauty lies in the heart and not in these ornaments? I can write on many such matters. But how can all this be set right? It can be done only when a brilliant and dynamic Draupadi rises from amongst women. You have to try and get the necessary qualifications. Make up your mind about it and then have patience. One can achieve nothing by being in too great a hurry.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3641

153. LETTER TO N. M. KHARE

MALVAN,
Monday [*February 28, 1927*]

BHAI PANDITJI,

Please go through the letter from Nanabhai which I have forwarded to Chi. Manilal. If you can find the time, please go there a day in advance and satisfy Nanabhai. We must have the minimum rituals. Please make it a point that the ceremony does not stretch beyond an

hour. Though of course you should do all that ought to be done. Please have two copies of the [marriage] vow, one for each of them. We shall not have to solemnize such marriages. We cannot refuse if other friends want it. Hence this procedure and so on. Please think over it and try to make it as solemn and sacred as possible. Consult Kaka; we might add to or amend it if necessary.

I think we should start the ceremony with prayers and devotional songs and also conclude it in like manner. Consult Kaka about this too; if we decide to do so, what *bhajans* we should have, what *slokas* we should recite in our prayers, etc. Not the usual prayers that we offer daily but if you can find out some which would specially suit the occasion.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 250. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn Khare

154. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[*February 28, 1927*][1]

CHI. MANILAL,

This should reach you on Wednesday.

Maganlal writes to me that you would board the train in Bombay. You have to leave there on Friday. On Saturday morning I shall be in Poona. Leaving there at 10, I shall join you at Kalyan. I have a meeting at Poona in the morning.

Herewith letters from Nanabhai and Sushila, for your information. I think you should honour their wish to have you at Akola for some days. Vijayalakshmi would naturally want to know you; she is your mother-in-law.

You should not be angry nor should you worry over what Sushila writes about jewels and dresses; I have tried to encourage all the good traits she has cultivated. But I have not bound her to anything. You will influence her the way you would like to, and take such liberties as you please with her consent.

The vow to be taken at the time of the marriage ceremony is available with Panditji. I wish you would get it in advance, think over it and understand it. May you be always ready to observe the vow and

[1] From the reference to Panditji; *vide* the preceding letter.

may God grant you the strength for it.

I know marriage begins a new life. Therefore though I do not get the time to write to you more often or at greater length, I am always thinking about you.

Even if you stay over at Akola I must leave on Monday. I have plenty of work waiting for me at Ashram.

Make a note of whatever you want to ask me or tell me, because after this meeting we may perhaps not meet again, may be never in our lives. In the month of March, when you will proceed to South Africa, I do not know where I may be wandering. I see therefore that whatever you have to ask should be done mainly on the train. On Sunday we shall be busy with the wedding ceremony. Of course there may not be much fuss. There would be a solemn atmosphere on the day and also peace all round. But I am a busy man and it is quite likely that we shall get little time to ourselves.

In his letter Nanabhai asks for Panditji to go there a day in advance. Panditji may do so if he can. Just the same I am dropping a line to Nanabhai assuring him that this should not be necessary. He [Panditji] should however spare a day if possible.

Bring with you two copies of the *Gita*, two of the [*Ashram*] *Bhajanavali* and a couple of taklis.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1124. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

155. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

[*February 28, 1927*][1]

BHAISHRI NANABHAI,

I have your letter. You may not need Panditji to go there in advance. All the same I have written to him that he should reach a day earlier if he could.

You must not put up any kind of elaborate decorations or other fanfare. Please spend as little as possible on pandals, etc. It would look well to have the marriage ceremony in the open; it would be enough if there is shade.

There is a religious atmosphere about your house, no doubt; but

[1] From the reference to Panditji; *vide* the preceding item.

I wish it is particularly so during these days.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have written to Manilal to spend a few days at Akola if he can. If he does it might become necessary to let them have a separate room. Perhaps it is essential that immediately after marriage they live together for some days.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1129. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

156. LETTER TO SUSHILABEHN I. MASHRUWALA

Monday [*February 28, 1927*][1]

CHI. SUSHILA,

So at long last I have a letter from you written with much nervousness. I wish you could get into the practice of writing to me without shrinking.

On Sunday Manilal and you, Nanabhai and Vijayalakshmi, myself and Ba will have to observe fast till the marriage ceremony is over, i.e., up to about 12 noon. Devote all that time to contemplating on dharma and to understanding the significance of marriage. People are now totally oblivious of the fact that marriage is not a license, it is a discipline. A person—man or woman—has recourse to marriage to regulate, to circumscribe the desire one feels. This is the distinction between man and beast. Thus though pursuit of pleasure results from marriage, the Shastras suggest that the couple should gradually shake off its hold over them. Even those relationships which are formed for pleasure, the Shastras try to use for the attainment of *moksha*. They enjoin them to this end. So much so that seekers have described the relationship between the individual self and the Supreme Self on the analogy of marital union. The concept of purity underlies conjugal love just as much as the communion of an individual with God. Thus marriage can become a great help in rendering social service. May your marriage prove so.

I am trying to let you have in advance a copy of the marriage

[1] From the reference to the marriage vow; *vide* "Letter to N. M. Khare", 28-2-1927; also "Letter to Manilal Gandhi," 28-2-1927.

vow. If you get it ponder over it. May God grant you the strength to fulfil it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1125. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

157. SPEECH AT LANJE[1]

February 28, 1927

I do not know whether I should pity you or myself for keeping you waiting until this hour[2]. But you know we have done what the yogi of the *Gita* does. "The night of sleep of the ordinary mortals is a day of wakefulness for the yogi." I congratulate you on your yoga, but you will better deserve my congratulations if you show that you are true yogis by contributing for the poor, and by purchasing our khadi.

Young India, 10-3-1927

158. SPEECH AT RATNAGIRI[3]

[*March 1, 1927*][4]

After describing Ratnagiri as a place of pilgrimage for the whole of India, as it was Lokamanya's birth-place, and after a feeling reference to Sjt. V. D. Savarkar, Gandhiji said:

You know Lokamanya's swaraj *mantra*. I do not think there has been any follower of Lokamanya who has tried to carry out the *mantra* more than I. There may be many whose efforts are equal to mine, but no one can claim to have put forth greater effort. For I know that not only is swaraj our birthright, but that it is our sacred duty to win it. For in so far as we are removed from swaraj we are removed from manhood. A proper manifestation of all our powers is impossible without swaraj. And the swaraj that Lokamanya had in view was not the swaraj for Ratnagiri people or for Maharashtrians, but for the whole of India, poor as well as rich, and swaraj has no meaning for

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"
[2] Gandhiji reached Lanje after midnight.
[3] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"
[4] From the "Weekly Letter" in *Young India*, 10-3-1927

the poor unless they have enough to eat. Why should we not serve our mills, you ask. Sheth Narottam Morarji, the owner of the Sholapur mills is a friend of mine, and I was the guest of his son[1] who showered his affection on me. But does that mean that I must use cloth from the Sholapur mills and serve that "poor" Sheth Narottam and his son? Even they will not say that I would be serving the poor by using their cloth.

I have been told everywhere that Konkan is poor. If you are poor, the situation must be unbearable for you. You say that poor people from your parts go to Bombay and earn a living there. Do you know the price that they have to pay for that living? They live in hovels without light and air, a few feet by a few feet, where several men and women are huddled together without regard for their bodily cleanliness or decency. Are you ready to send your mothers and sisters to live under such conditions? Do you not agree that the women that go to the Bombay mills are your mothers and sisters and the men your brothers? Are you prepared to see your brothers and sisters take to a life of drunkenness and shame and return home and spread the infection of their vices? Is it worth while paying this terrible price for the eight annas they manage to earn there?

Our cattle are destroyed because we do not know true cow-protection and our villages are ruined because we do not know true economics and sociology. The charkha can stop that ruinous process. Do you know the daily income per head of our country? Our economists say that it is one anna and six pies, though even that is misleading. If someone were to work out the average depth of a river as four feet from the fact that the river was six feet deep in certain places and two feet in others, and proceeded to ford it, would he not be drowned? That is how statistics mislead. The average income is worked out from the figures of the income of the poor man as also of the Viceroy and the millionaires. The actual income will therefore be hardly three pice per head. Now if I supplement that income by even three pice with the help of the charkha, am I not right in calling the charkha my cow of plenty? Some people attribute superhuman powers to me, some say I have an extraordinary character. God alone knows what I am. It is also possible to disagree about the efficacy of

[1] Shantikumar; *vide* "Letter to Ashram Women", 21-2-1927.

satyagraha, but I do not think there is any reason for disagreement on these obvious facts about the charkha. If someone convinces me today that there is no poverty in India, that there are few in India who starve for want of even a few pice a day, I shall own myself to have been mistaken and shall destroy the spinning-wheel.

I ask you therefore to bear in mind what you mean when you say that Konkan is poor. If you are really poor there is nothing like the wheel which can cure your impoverishment and which is a safeguard for the honour of your women. Seek ye first the charkha and its concomitants and everything else will be added unto you. How can you disregard a thing which is of such a national and universal character? Does it behove the followers of Lokamanya to deride or reject the wheel?

But you will ask, as a youth who sought to heckle me asked, "If Lokamanya liked this thing, why did he not ask the country to take it up?" Well, I cannot be taken in by your question. Whether or not Lokamanya had khadi in mind when he defined swadeshi, surely his swadeshi cannot but include khadi. I am but the heir of Lokamanya, and if I do not add to the patrimony he has left me, I would not be a worthy son of a worthy father. I pondered well over Lokamanya's message, applied my many years experience to it and came to the conclusion that Lokamanya's message must mean khadi. Do you know what he used to do? I am telling you of an incident that happened a short time before his death. When Maulana Shaukat Ali approached him as regards the Khilafat question, Lokamanya said to him: "I shall put my signature to whatever Gandhi signs, for I trust to his better knowledge in this matter." Supposing therefore Lokamanya had not khadi in mind when he advised swadeshi, what does it matter? Supposing we were manufacturing spectacles here and someone were to say, "We cannot use them, Lokamanya did not advise the use thereof", would it be proper? We would dismiss him as a literalist, *Vedavadarata* as the *Gita* would describe him. As the literalist interpreter of the Vedas does not grasp the infinite meaning of the Vedas, even so these literalist interpreters of Lokamanya's message miss its infinite power.

But someone comes and says, "When Mussalmans are converting us who is going to listen to your khadi?" Have you, I ask, become so impotent that you will be Mussalmans because someone compels you to embrace Islam? If you have true dharma in you, no

one dare violate it. But I want to protect even our dharma by means of khadi. For khadi means the service not only of Hindu but of Mussalman women. A Maulvi in Bengal went and asked some of those women not to spin, on the ground that the khadi movement was a Hindu movement. They listened to him for a couple of days, but the third day they came asking for cotton. For what could they do? They could not go on starving and the Maulvi had no food to offer them. The learned author of the *Mahabharata* has described Vishvamitra, the sage, as ready to eat what was forbidden to him and even to steal, when he was oppressed by the pangs of hunger. One cannot say what a hungry man or woman would not stoop to. I therefore tell you that you must take to khadi if only to alleviate the poverty and safeguard the honour of your women.

I am asked to take part in the *shuddhi* movement. How can I, when I wish that its Muslim and Christian counterparts should also cease? It is unthinkable that a man will become good or attain salvation only if he embraces a particular religion—Hinduism, Christianity or Islam. Purity of character and salvation depend on the purity of heart. I therefore say to the Hindus, "Do whatever you like, but don't ask a man like me, who has come to his conclusions after the maturest thinking, to take up what he cannot." Man's capacity is after all limited. I can do what is within my power, not what is beyond it. I cannot do a hundred or even half a dozen things at a time. I would think myself blessed even if I can do one thing well at a time. If you agree with me that the charkha is the best *sangathan* that is possible, give me as much help as you can render.

Young India, 17-3-1927

159. DISCUSSION WITH V. D. SAVARKAR[1]

March 1, 1927

Sjt. Savarkar asked Gandhiji to clear his attitude about untouchability and *shuddhi*. Gandhiji cleared some of the misrepresentations and said:

We cannot have long talk today, but you know my regard for you as a lover of truth and as one who would lay down his life for the sake of truth. Besides, our goal is ultimately one and I would like you

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter", Gandhiji had called on V. D. Savarkar who was ailing at his residence in Ratnagiri.

to correspond with me as regards all points of difference between us. And more. I know that you cannot go out of Ratnagiri and I would not mind finding out two or three days to come and stay with you if necessary to discuss these things to our satisfaction.[1]

Young India, 17-3-1927

160. LETTER TO P. A. WADIA

ON TOUR,
MAHAD,
March 2, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Here is the result of my correspondence with Mr. Madon. There seems to be much force in Mr. Madon's reasoning. I send you a copy of my letter to Mr. Madon. I shall anxiously await your reply. I now fancy that I am getting enough material to enable me to come to a decision.

I reproduce my itinerary for ready reference:

4th to 5th March Poona, care Swarajya Office, 6, Sukrawar Peth

6th to 7th Akola, care Nanabhai Mashruwala

8th to 14th Ashram, Sabarmati

15th to 17th Bardoli Taluk

18th to 21st Gurukul Kangri (District Bijnor)

22nd to the end of the month in Karnatak and also upto 4th April Karnatak.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure 1

PRO. P. A. WADIA
HORMAZD VILLA
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 12903

[1] Savarkar replied: "I thank you, but you are free and I am bound, and I don't want to put you in the same case as I. But I will correspond with you."

161. RAMACHANDRA LIFT

After having advertised the Ramachandra Lift in these pages I have been purposely silent about it all these weeks because it was necessary to ensure a continuous supply of these lifts on the cheapest terms possible before further notice could be taken of this ingenious invention. I have much pleasure now in informing the reader that Sjt. Ramachandra Aiyer has placed himself entirely at the disposal of the Ashram, made over his patent rights to the Ashram subject to a certain royalty being paid to him for every lift up to 1,000 lifts. Lifts can now be had on the following terms:

> Cost of the lift f.o.r. Sabarmati:
>
> For 30 ft. depth, Rs. 125; for 35 ft. depth, Rs. 132; for 40 ft. depth, Rs. 139 and so on; Rs. 7 extra for every additional 5 ft. depth.
>
> These quotations are for such lifts as contain buckets up to 32 gallons. For buckets of greater sizes special quotations will be offered.
>
> (Prices are subject to market fluctuations and may vary without notice.)
>
> For local governments, zamindars, native States and co-operative societies who are willing to introduce the lift in their jurisdictions on a large scale) special quotations will be supplied on application for orders of 50 lifts or over at a time. A reduction in the prices will be made according to saving in the charges for packing, despatching, etc.
>
> When sending orders, the intending purchaser should supply the maximum depth of the well as measured from the silt to the point of discharge, and mention the size of bucket required.
>
> *All orders must accompany 50 per cent cash and for the balance, the articles will be sent per V.P.P. The delivery of the lift will be made nearly a month after the receipt of money in order of precedence.*

There is no profit made by the Ashram, only cost price up to delivery is charged. The lift that has been now at work at the Ashram has proved entirely satisfactory and the problem at the Ashram is what use to make of the superfluous bulls. An illustrative catalogue giving full details has been printed. Anyone requiring further information can have the catalogue on sending to the Ashram Manager one anna postage stamp. All those who corresponded with Sjt. Ramachandra Aiyer or with me may now have their lifts on complying with the foregoing terms.

Young India, 3-3-1927

162. IS INDIA PROHIBITIONIST?

An English friend who is anxious to undertake prohibition work for India writes:[1]

> I know that what everyone will say to me is that the Indians themselves have shown no overpowering desire for prohibition and that as *they* have not organized any movement for this, it is interference on our part to move in the matter. Moreover of all the Councils only one or two have declared for prohibition. Already people are saying this to me. I always point them to the Non-co-operation movement when the volunteers picketed the liquor shops. But when they say that was five years ago and they have shown no great enthusiasm lately, what is the answer?

The puzzle the friend asks me to solve is not new. The question is bound to occur to one who does not know the history of the total prohibition movement in India. And a stranger coming in our midst is bound to ask himself, 'If India wants total prohibition, why does she not agitate for it as she does for many other things?' One observes that people do not agitate when they feel absolutely helpless. It is our helplessness which prevents us from agitating beyond having resolutions by temperance societies and sometimes petitions to the Legislative bodies. The cry for swaraj came out of a realization of growing helplessness in matters of paramount importance to our well-being. Take the military expenditure. Everyone recognizes that much of it is a criminal waste of money collected from the starving millions. Instead of agitating for reduction in military expenditure, we agitate for swaraj, the argument being that nothing is possible without swaraj. Who can say that there is no great deal of truth in the argument? When in 1920 we felt that we were getting swaraj, we took the law into our own hands, we successfully picketed the liquor shops and the Government was frightened to notice an immediate fall in the liquor revenue. Liquor dealers trembled in their shoes and for a moment it appeared as if the drink evil had gone. Unfortunately the party of non-violence had not attained sufficient control over the people. Violence broke out. It was discovered that pickets did not everywhere carry out the instructions to create a blockade without resort to violence or threats to use it. The picketing had therefore to

[1] The reference is to Muriel Lester; *vide* "Letter to Muriel Lester", 17-3-1927.

be suspended.

But the history of 1920-21 shows in unmistakable terms what India would do if she had the power and what she did do when she thought that she had it. Let it be further borne in mind that millions of Indians are teetotallers by religion and by habit. Millions therefore cannot possibly be interested in keeping up the nefarious liquor traffic. Thus in so far as it can be said that there is no agitation in India in favour of total prohibition, absence of agitation is due not to want of desire on the part of the people to secure total prohibition, but it is due to a consciousness of helplessness and to the certain knowledge that it is an integral part of the struggle for swaraj.

The very fact that it is necessary for any Englishman to defend liquor revenue on the grounds that there is no agitation among us for total prohibition, makes out an irresistible case for swaraj. For, it shows utter ignorance of Indian conditions where the opinion is honestly held. There is no agitation on the part of the people against malaria and scores of other diseases. Is that any reason for taking no measures for eradicating malaria and other diseases? In order to deal with a known evil, no agitation should be necessary for taking prompt measures. The drink and the drug evil is in many respects infinitely worse than the evil caused by malaria and the like; for, whilst the latter only injures the body, the former saps both body and soul. The drink revenue, military expenditure and the Lancashire's exploitation of India through its calico, constitute the threefold wrong done by British rule to India. When Englishmen realize that it is sinful to trade upon the drink habit of the poor labourers of India, that it is sinful to dump down English and other foreign calico on the Indian soil when India's starving millions can easily produce during their spare hours all the cloth needed for her requirements, and when they realize that it is sinful to impose a terrific military burden upon India under the ostensible purpose of defending her borders but in reality for the sake of holding her people under subjection against their will, it would be a complete demonstration of change of heart, and co-operation on a basis of absolute equality will become a real possibility. The only agitation therefore that India can carry on is to end the system which makes these wrongs possible, which is the same thing as saying that

the agitation for swaraj is the agitation for the removal of these wrongs. This removal is the acid test, in my opinion, of English sincerity.

Young India, 3-3-1927

163. ANCIENT WISDOM

Here is wisdom sent to me by the friend whom I have already introduced to the readers of these columns:

> That which is incomplete becomes complete.
> The crooked becomes straight.
> The empty becomes full.
> The worn-out becomes new.
> He who obtains has little.
> He who scatters has much.
> That is why the self-controlled man holds to unity and brings it into manifestation for men.
> He looks not at self, therefore he sees clearly.
> He asserts not himself, therefore he shines.
> He boasts not himself, therefore he has merit.
> He glorifies not himself, therefore he endures.
> The Master indeed does not strive, yet no one in the world can strive against him.
> The words of the Ancients were not empty words.
> "That which is incomplete becomes complete."

Young India, 3-3-1927

164. CO-OPERATIVE KHADI PURCHASE

Sjt. K. A. Nair writes as follows:[1]

I commend this ingenious device for the adoption of khadi lovers. This method enables one to buy khadi without having to pay for it at once. But the unfortunate member of this co-operative club, as it may be called, whose name comes last in the raffle gains no

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent, a member of the All-India Spinners' Association had organized a raffle, with 12 members, each paying Rs. 2, monthly, for twelve months, all agreeing that the winner each month will be given khadi cloth worth Rs. 24 according to his taste from a Khadi Bhandar instead of Rs. 24 in cash.

advantage from his investment save that he will have learnt the art of buying khadi in a thrifty manner. The club will be his savings bank and at the end of a year he is in a position to buy all his khadi worth Rs. 24 without feeling the pinch. If the arrangement can be extended to a longer period, as it well may be by easy adjustment, all can receive the same advantage. But perhaps the attraction lies in the uncertainty of advantage and in the trifling nature of the disadvantage. The success of this scheme lies entirely in the honesty of the members. For, if the member who has received his Rs. 24 worth of khadi ceases to pay his contributions, the remaining ones become the losers. Therefore if this scheme has to work inexpensively and yet effectively, the membership must be necessarily restricted and confined only to those who know one another and are also perhaps working in a common institution or office so as to minimize the risk of loss by death or dishonesty. I hope that the example set by Sjt. Nair and his friends will be copied by others.

Young India, 3-3-1927

165. SPEECH AT VAISYA VIDYASHRAM, SASAVANE[1]

[*March 3, 1927*][2]

I had come entirely unprepared for these tokens of love,[3]— love not only for me, but for the poor, and my greatest joy is due to the shape these tokens have taken. The donation of Rs. 63-3-0[4] reminds me of a sacred donation that I received from the late Swami Shraddhanand for my work in South Africa and which represented the value of the labour of love rendered by his *brahmacharis.* It is worth more than millions to me and it makes my responsibility for utilizing the funds all the greater. Your yarn also is worth its weight in gold, for what is the value of gold, but the price of labour spent in obtaining it? Is your labour any the less? And it is more sacred

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] From the "Weekly Letter" in *Young India,* 10-3-1927

[3] The inmates of the Vidyashram, an institution for imparting vocational training to unmarried Vaisya boys, had presented to Gandhiji 1,60,000 yards of hand-spun yarn, a piece of hand-woven cloth, Rs. 501 collected from the Vaisya community and Rs. 190 from the neighbouring village.

[4] Being the value of ghee, sugar, milk and wheat which the boys had denied themselves for one week for Deshbandhu Fund

inasmuch as it has been all done in the spirit of sacrifice.

The rest of the speech was as a Vaisya talking to Vaisya boys.

With *brahmacharya* as your shield and buckler you should find no difficulty in entering any walk of life, and if you will follow the vocation natural to you—agriculture, cow-protection, and commerce—in the right way, you will serve both your community and the country. But beware that your pursuit of these professions may not become synonymous with exploitation as it is today. If you desire to take off the sinister aspect of greedy commerce, you will have to make it centre round the charkha. There are exploiters enough on this earth. If we also follow suit, we shall have to seek for our victims on other planets. Khadi is the only wholesome national trade that we can pursue and as Vaisyas I ask you not to neglect it.

There were garlands . . . but Gandhiji did not auction them. Nor did he make any appeal for collections. He said:

I had not come on a business visit here. But you have given me more than enough.

Young India, 17-3-1927

166. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI[1]

[Before *March 4, 1927*][2]

Besides these I want a takli with a case to be presented to the bride and the groom. Manilal does not spin on the takli; so Sushila alone is to be given one. Ask Manilal if he would ply one so that I may give one to him also. Please send two. Manilal should himself bring along these articles when he comes.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Please look after Professor Jugalkishore.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7765. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

[1] Only the concluding paragraph of this letter is available.

[2] From the reference to wedding gifts for Manilal who was to leave for Akola on 4-3-1927.

167. SPEECH AT VAISYA VIDYASHRAM GYMNASIUM[1]

[*March 4, 1927*]

In the morning Gandhiji performed the installation ceremony of the image of Maruti[2] as part of their gymnasium. He said:

I install this image of Maruti here, not merely because Maruti had the strength of a giant. Even Ravana had that strength. But Maruti had the strength of soul, and his physical strength was only a manifestation of his spiritual strength which in its turn was the direct fruit of his exclusive devotion to Rama and his *brahmacharya.* May you therefore be like Maruti of matchless valour born out of your *brahmacharya* and may that valour be dedicated to the service of the Motherland.

Young India, 17-3-1927

168. SPEECHES AT POONA[3]

[*March 4, 1927*][4]

[Concluding his Maharashtra tour Gandhiji addressed a public meeting at Reay Market. He said:]

Hanuman tore open his heart and showed that there was nothing there but Ramanama. I have none of the power of Hanuman to tear open my heart, but if any of you feel inclined to do it, I assure you will find nothing here but love for Rama whom I see face to face in the starving millions of India.

Gandhiji . . . [addressed a students' meeting] at about midnight. The cry for "English, English" was there . . . Gandhiji, pained as he was by it, acceeded to the demand because of his overflowing love for the students. He said:

If I cannot make myself understood to Poona students, it is my misfortune, the misfortune of my country, and shall I say your misfortune?

But he acceeded to the students' clamour for English only so far as he had to express his regret for being late at the meeting . . . When he saw that he had succeeded

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"
[2] Another name of Hanuman
[3] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"
[4] From *The Bombay Chronicle,* 11-3-1927

in gaining their ear, he delivered the message itself in Hindi. He said:

It is possible that my message if delivered in English might get more silver from you, and it is probable that you might understand me better. But I hold my message to be far superior to myself and far superior to the vehicle through which it is expressed. It has a power all its own, and I hope it will produce an impression on the youth of India. Whether it will produce an impression in my lifetime or not, I do not care, but my faith is immovable, and as the days roll on and as the agony of the masses becomes prolonged, it will burn itself into the heart of every Indian who has a heart to respond to the message. You must understand, that at a time of my life when I should be enjoying my well-earned rest, I am not going about from one end of the country to the other for nothing. It is because I feel within myself with increasing force every day the strength of my conviction that I must try until the end of my days to reach it to as many ears and hearts as possible.

The rest was a brief history of the charkha movement, which he had conceived as early as 1908 before he had actually seen a charkha, and the duty of the student world to those at the cost of whose moral and material ruin they were receiving their education.

You may, if you will, go on receiving that education, but do at least make a decent return for it. I know you have not taken to khadi, not because you are perverse, but because you lack the conviction that there is anything like the stupendous problem of poverty and unemployment, whose existence I have been declaring from the housetops. The King of Siam refused to believe Lord Curzon when he said to him that he was coming from a country where rivers were frozen for a part of the year. I assure you I am describing to you conditions I have seen with my own eyes when I say that 30 million people in our land have to go without a decent meal a day.

The rest of the speech was on *brahmacharya*, a thing that comes uppermost to Gandhiji's lips whenever he finds himself amongst students. Rubbing the thing home into them, he said:

It is as easy as it appears to be difficult, for *brahmacharya* is a quality of the soul; and your souls are not dead but slumbering. They are only waiting to be aroused. It seems difficult to arouse them because we have become unbelievers. It will be easy as soon as you have faith, for with faith comes God's grace. Then it no longer

remains a matter of effort and trouble, but of joy and peace. I tell you this as I have known the joy of it.

Young India, 24-3-1927

169. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

Sunday [*March 6, 1927*][1]

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have come to Akola for a day to marry Manilal to a niece of Kishorelal Mashruwala. I leave for the Ashram tonight. I hope you are making steady progress.

Arrangements are being made to send you as much as possible out of the 50,000 you ask. The hawking commission is not possible. It is paid under the rules only to professional hawkers for their maintenance. If we stretch the rule, we should be overwhelmed. The rules were framed to encourage hawking for a livelihood.

I do hope that you are all now past the danger zone.

How is Tarini?

I am at the Ashram from 8th to 14th March, and then 15-17 Bardoli, 19-21 Gurukul Kangri, District Bijnor, and then I proceed to Karnatak where perhaps it is better to locate me in Belgaum though I shall be wandering far and near.

With love to you all,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1631

170. LETTER TO MIRABHEN

March 7,1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your two letters.

This is early morning. I am sitting in a third-class carriage at Bhusaval with Ba, Sushila, Manilal's wife, Manilal, Ramdas, Mahadev and Panditji who came to perform the marriage ceremony. The wedding was of the simplest character—no presents were accepted, no

[1] From the reference to Manilal's wedding

expense incurred.

To gain one more day, I decided to travel during my silence. I am travelling third class because I must not spend on second class for Manilal and his wife and I do not want to cut myself off from the new addition the very first day of her joining the family. And as I have about six days of rest at the Ashram in front of me, and as this is an easy third-class journey, I do not mind it; on the contrary I like it.[1]

I shall read your corrections in the autobiography when I reach the Ashram. I had anticipated your many corrections in the chapters that had not been previously seen by you.[2]

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5208. Courtesy: Mirabehn

171. LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA AND OTHERS

Monday [*March 7, 1927*][3]

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA, CHANDAN, TARA, VASANT,

I have your letters. Every day I think of writing to you, but where could I get the time? Now *Navajivan* is as good as a letter from me to everyone; you have to be content with it. This too I write on a train, on my way to the Ashram.

I agree you had to go to Rajkot though I did not like your running away. It would have been much better if you could have stayed on at the Ashram. Now let me know what you do there about your studies, etc.

Manibehn writes to me that Chi. Prabha has started spinning. How nice if she would do regular spinning and carding and wear khadi.

[1] "From now onwards Bapu travelled third class more and more frequently and finally it became an unbreakable rule." (Mirabehn)

[2] "Certain chapters had been published in *Young India* without my seeing them, because of postal difficulties, and I had to correct them afterwards for the book."

[3] Gandhiji travelled from Akola to Ahmedabad on March 7, 1927; *vide* also the preceding item.

When are you likely to return? I shall be at the Ashram till the 14th. You girls should all write to me. Write clear bold letters and in ink.

Write to me everything, when you get up, what you read, whether or not you take walks, etc. Does Vasant feel any more exhaustion? There she must be keeping better health than at the Ashram. Never let slip whatever good you have acquired in the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 4905. Courtesy: Hari-ichchha Desai

172. SILENCE DAY NOTE TO MANILAL GANDHI[1]

[*March 7, 1927*]

Now that I have got you married and introduced you [to your wife] it is for you to take the initiative and run your own house. Go and sit near Sushila. See what clothes she has got, find out her wishes and then make a note of what she needs. This will break the ice and things will get moving. Or you may try some other approach. Or shall I ask her to come near you and . . .[2] tell the others to move away?

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 4718

173. UNTOUCHABILITY, WOMEN AND SWARAJ

I gladly publish Suhasini Devi's letter[3] which the reader will find in another column. Whilst the versatile President[4] of the Congress is well able to defend himself, I am inclined to think that my fair correspondent has over-generalized from her own very brief experience. No statistics are needed to demonstrate the vast strides that the movement for the removal of untouchability has made. The barrier is breaking down everywhere. The higher classes are to be met

[1] Evidently written soon after Manilal's marriage

[2] As in the source

[3] In this she had complained that concrete action regarding removal of untouchability was not being taken to the extent it was demanded in the Congress resolutions.

[4] S. Srinivasa Iyengar

with in every province ministering to the wants of the suppressed classes in the shape of conducting schools and boarding-houses for their children. It was this phenomenon that the President evidently had in mind when he made the reference in his address. There is however infinitely more yet to be done than has been already accomplished.

The question of breaking down the feminine prejudice is most difficult. It is in reality a question of female education. And in this it is a question not merely of education of girls but it is one of the education of married women. I have therefore repeatedly suggested that every patriotic husband should become the wife's own teacher and prepare her for work among her less fortunate sisters. I have also drawn attention to the implications of the suggestion. One of them is for husbands to cease to treat their wives as objects of their enjoyment but to regard them as co-partners in their work of nation-building. We cannot have Rama without Sita. And Sita got her real schooling under the gentle care of her partner during those terrible years of exile and probation. Well, we are all exiles in our own land and need to imitate Rama and Sita to the best of our abilities and opportunity. And in this connection, I cannot help drawing Suhasini Devi's attention to the fact that Sjt. Iyengar has not only broken down the barrier of untouchability for himself but has carried his wife and family too with him in the reform which perhaps he himself would have thought impossible only ten years ago.

The question of inter-dining must be kept distinct from that of untouchability. Exclusion in culinary matters permeates the whole of Hindu society. To confuse it with untouchability is to retard the progress of the latter movement which is aimed at removing the ban on the social service to which the so-called untouchable has as much right as any other human being and on the same terms as the others receive it.

There is, too, confusion regarding swaraj. The term swaraj has many meanings. When Sjt. Iyengar says that removal of untouchability has nothing to do with swaraj, I presume he means that its existence can be no hindrance to constitutional advance. It can surely have nothing to do with diarchy or greater and effective powers being given to the legislatures. Removal of untouchability is a social question to be handled by Hindus. Why should it prevent the Mussalman and the Parsi in common with the Hindu from having the power to regulate the military expenditure, to determine the ratio or to achieve total prohi-bition or to impose a prohibitive tariff on foreign

cloth and protecting the indigenous industries? Real organic swaraj is a different question. That freedom which is associated with the term swaraj in the popular mind is no doubt unattainable without not only the removal of untouchability and the promotion of heart unity between the different sections but also without removing many other social evils that can be easily named. That inward growth which must never stop we have come to understand by the comprehensive term swaraj. And that swaraj cannot be had so long as walls of prejudice, passion and superstition continue to stifle the growth of that stately oak.

Young India, 10-3-1927

174. PRAVARTAK YOUNG BENGAL SANGH AND KHADI

There is no province at the present moment so sorely affected as Bengal. Some of its best young men are rotting in jails without knowing why. Even in the Congress camp there is division. After Deshbandhu the Provincial Congress Committee has not been able to reconcile itself to a single leadership. It is no wonder. There could be only one Deshbandhu.

But in spite of all this, constructive work is going on in Bengal almost without a stop. The number of selfless young men who are engaged in that work is daily growing. The Pravartak Sangh of Bengal whose headquarters are in Chandranagar and which is guided by Sjt. Motilal Roy has been steadily increasing its activity in the production and sale of khadi. But hitherto khadi in the Sangh has been a subsidiary activity—a little one among big ones. But Moti Babu is now determined to make it the centre of his system. I had a long talk about it myself with him when he said that the conviction was being forced upon him that it was not possible to render true service to the masses except through the spinning-wheel as the centre piece. Messrs Banker and Lakshmidas visited Chandranagar after me and they gave me a glowing account of the enthusiasm of the Sangh, about the wheel and its work at Kutubdia. They told me too how eager Moti Babu was to learn the latest improvements in carding and spinning. The Sangh is a comparatively old institution. Its original inspiration is derived from the recluse of Pondichery and has a number of selfless devoted workers in Bengal.

From their khadi figures before me for January, I find that at their production centre they manufactured over Rs. 700 worth of khadi and their sales amounted to over Rs. 3,400 during that month. If the Sangh could concentrate its energies on khadi production, it could soon rival Khadi Pratishthan and Abhoy Ashram without in any way interfering with either. For the field for both production and sale is unlimited provided that each new organization explores and takes up a new field. It is impossible for any single organization to cope with a mighty province like Bengal.

Young India, 10-3-1927

175. WANTED WORKERS

One hears loose talk about village organization, about work in the villages. Paper schemes also for village organization are now and again presented to the country and sometimes elegantly printed and often indifferently written. When questioned the authors tell us frankly that they have not tried their schemes, they have not got the resources, or the time or the inclination; but they think that any idea that occurs to them they are in duty bound to put before the country, however ill-digested or impracticable it might be. Some of the authors get angry when they find that their schemes do not even get a start. But there is one scheme which has been now before the country for some years and which its authors have tried to work first individually, then collectively and which is now being worked through an ever-growing organization called the All-India Spinners' Association. The spinning programme which has been demonstrated to be comparatively a success can be indefinitely extended if workers of the right type can be had.

During the Maharashtra tour, I have been taken to villages where there is almost continuous famine and where people are supposed to be without enough work and without enough to eat. Some of the villages are deserted for six or eight months during the year. The villagers go to Bombay, work under unhealthy and often immoral conditions, then return to their villages during the rainy season bringing with them corruption, drunkenness and disease. If the righttype of workers go to these villages with the message of the wheel and with a patience that will not be exhausted and a faith that will not be moved, not one of the villagers need leave their homes. For it is not

merely the wages earned by the spinners that are to be counted but it is the whole reconstruction that follows in the wake of the spinning-wheel. The village weaver, the village dyer, the village washerman, the village blacksmith, the village carpenter, all and many others will then find themselves reinstated in their ancient dignity, as is already happening wherever the spinning-wheel has gained a footing.

Who then can become a village worker? For the work that is required of him each worker should have a thorough knowledge both theoretical and practical of the science of spinning; he should therefore know the different varieties of cotton; he should know the method of picking cotton suitable for hand-spinning. For mill-spinning cotton is picked anyhow. For hand-spinning if cotton is properly picked it will save an immense amount of labour and the yarn also will be stronger. He should know how to gin and should know the varieties of hand-gins used in Indian villages. He should know carding and he should know the different carding-bows in use. He should be able to tell the different staples of cotton and should be able to spin a given number of counts. He should be able to test the strength and evenness and counts of yarn. He should know a good charkha from a bad one and should be able to put dilapidated charkhas under repair. He should be able to straighten an incorrect spindle. If the worker is to live a model life in his village, he must know also the laws of civic sanitation and provide an object-lesson in sanitation to the villagers. He should know the domestic treatment of diseases of daily occurrence. He should know simple accountancy. Above all he must lead a pure and chaste life, if he is to make his mark amongst the villagers and gain their confidence. Naturally a village worker must find happiness in a simple and frugal life. Let no one think that I have sketched what is an impossible requirement. I have not. The technique though it reads formidable is by no means so for a patient student. Purity of character must be a foregone conclusion in any of this work. And no village worker can help falling a prey to some disease or other if he does not know and observe in his own person the laws of sanitation and does not know domestic treatment of simple diseases. The spinning organization is capable of accommodating any number of workers who can satisfy the simple test laid down above.

Young India, 10-3-1927

176. THE SOUTH AFRICAN SETTLEMENT

I publish this[1] not so much for its intrinsic merit as for a sample of how a thinking settler in South Africa views the Settlement.

Young India, 10-3-1927

177. BURMA AND CEYLON

A correspondent whose studious habits are evidenced by his letter itself writes thus:

> Some of the following may strike you as idle academic questions, but the mention of India and Burma in the letter of your correspondent, who objects to Hindustani being our inter-provincial language, published in *Young India* of 10-2-1927, along with your reply[2] (in which however you do not refer to Burma), gives me the excuse to put you these questions which I have long been thinking of doing:
>
> 1. Do you believe that Burma can properly be a partner with India in the future swaraj, or do you think it better that Burma should have a separate nationality ? (As Burmese opinion itself is divided on the question, yours may guide both it and the Indian.)
>
> 2. Have you ever been to Burma in the course of your many past tours of your country? If not, do you intend paying a visit to Burma in the future and when ?
>
> 3. Don't you think it fit that Ceylon should be a partner with India in a future Swarajic Federation on account of their closer racial, linguistic and religious ties that exist between India and Burma—provided of course that the Ceylonese are willing to it (and they seem very likely) ?
>
> 4. Do you think that Hindustani has any appreciable vogue in Burma, though it has been a Congress province now for some years (since 1908?), or that Hindustani will be acceptable to the Burmese?
>
> 5. Ditto of Ceylon and the Ceylonese.
>
> Well, these questions coming from me who have never been to Burma or Ceylon myself and can boast of no personal connections there may surprise you, but my interest in them is that of a cosmopolitan, which I take you also to be. I therefore hope you will answer them at your early convenience, especially as I know that many Burmese and Ceylonese as well as Indians are

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had expressed satisfaction over the settlement, but pointed out that owing to the "bitter experience of the way such agreements have fared in the past one is apt to view it with the gravest suspicion."

[2] *Vide* "National Language", 10-2-1927.

greatly interested in them, and are curious to know your views

I have been to Burma and know that part of the world sufficiently to enable me to answer with confidence the question put by the correspondent. I cannot say the same thing of Ceylon, which in spite of my desire, I have not yet been able to visit. I have no doubt in my mind that Burma cannot form part of India under swaraj. British India is an artificial description reminding us of foreign, that is, British domination and therefore its boundary is contracted or expanded at the will of those who hold us in bondage. Free India will be an organic whole and will include those only who desire to remain as its free citizens. Therefore free India will have its geographical, ethnic and cultural limits. A free India will therefore recognize the differences in race and culture of the Burmese, and while it will extend the hand of fellowship and help to the Burmese nation, it will recognize its right to complete independence and help it to regain and retain it in so far as it lies in India's power. Needless to say that therefore in my scheme there is no demand upon the Burmese to learn Hindi or Hindustani. I expect those who are within the real Indian border to learn Hindustani because they are the children of a common land and heirs to a common culture and are bound together by various other considerations and their provincial dialects contain so many common words.

About Ceylon I cannot speak with equal confidence. Although we have a common culture with Ceylon and although it is predominantly inhabited by Indians from the South, it is a separate entity. And as I have no imperial aspirations for India of my imagination, I should be content to regard Ceylon as an absolutely independent State; but I should not hesitate to accept Ceylon as part of free India if the Islanders express their wish to be so in an unmistakable language.

Young India, 10-3-1927

178. LETTER TO MAMA D. SARAIYA

Saturday, Fagan Sud 9 [*March 12, 1927*][1]

CHI. MAMA[2],

I was sorry to learn you were rather unwell. But you should no more expect *pujya* Gangabehn to look after you. She is spiritually inclined and it is your duty to help her in her quest. I wish you would

[1] The addressee died in 1927.

[2] Daughter of Gangabehn Vaidya

appreciate this and cheerfully let her go.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2818. Courtesy: Purushottam D.Saraiya

179. A MESSAGE

SABARMATI,
March 13, 1927

God is Truth. The way to Truth lies through *Ahimsa* (non-violence) .

M. K. GANDHI

The Immortal Mahatma

180. READ, REFLECT AND WEEP

I have intentionally given this heading to the article below:[1]

It is anonymous, but a priest of Dheds is not a common sight. This proud priest of the Dheds, therefore, has, under the pretext of concealing his name, told us in effect that there may be many workers for the Dheds but only Thakkar Bapa can be regarded as their priest. The article is long, but the reader should not get tired. If he has the slightest sympathy for the cause, he would not be able to leave it in the middle, once he has started reading it. Love of the poor flows in every line of it. If we let but a few drops of it moisten our hearts, our sufferings would end and so would those of the depressed classes.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-3-1927

[1] Not reproduced here. Written under a pseudonym, "Priest of Dheds", the article discussed the problems of untouchables in the villages of Gujarat.

181. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*March 14, 1927*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

I have all your letters. This is my last of the few days at the Ashram. We shall soon meet and hence no occasion to give you a long love letter. You must regain your lost health. In spite of all your bitter experiences and little progress in Hindi I am certainly not sorry for your having gone there.

It is impossible for me to be there[2] earlier than 19th for I finish a Submerged Classes Conference only on 17th. I would gladly have given up a day at the Ashram if I could have altered the dates of the Conference. But that was not to be thought of. I have now suggested that Ba or Mahadev should open the exhibition in Hardwar unless they will have someone else.

I do hope the wheel has arrived from Calcutta.

Did I tell you I had gained five more Ibs. in weight? On the day I reached here, I was nearly 108 Ibs. This is very good. I shall be weighed again this evening.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5209. Courtesy: Mirabehn

182. LETTER TO KSHITISH CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

Unrevised *March 14, 1927*

DEAR KSHITISH BABU,

I am so glad—I have sent you a wire today heartily approving your decision. But you must keep your health and make Sodepur a health resort, by proper drainage and what not. Do please continue to write to me. Have you sent a travelling charkha to Mirabai, Gurukul Kangri, Bijnor District? I wrote to you long ago about it. If you have not, please send it by V.P.P. immediately.

Here are my dates:

19-21	Gurukul Kangri, Dist. Bijnor	27-4th April Karnatak, headquarters Belgaum

[1] From *Bapu's Letters to Mira*

[2] Gurukul Kangri

23	Laburnum Road, Gamdevi, Bombay	5-12 Madras
25-26	Kolhapur	12-27 Mysore State

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 8031

183. LETTER TO SAM HIGGINBOTTOM

March 14, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your two wires to which I sent a reply at Lyallpur. I then received another wire today. I am helpless. I must keep an appointment which involves thousands of poor men and women. I could have intercepted you on the way but I thought that you should see the Ashram before seeing me. Pray make yourself at home at the Ashram and examine everything critically and have a heart-to-heart chat with my co-workers. You can then meet me near Bardoli at the Conference[1] I am taking in on the 16th or at Bardoli itself on the 17th. You can reach it *via* Surat. Mr. Banker will telegraph your wishes and I shall arrange for a friend to meet you at Surat and he will bring you to me wherever I may be on the Tapti Valley Railway.

I am sorry for all the trouble you are being put to. But my programme is so rigid that I dare not interfere with it.

I hope you are strong and fit and that you will have no inconvenience at the Ashram.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: Sam Higginbottom Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The Raniparaj Conference at Sathvav and Vedchhi on March 15 and 16, 1927

184. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

[On or after *March 14, 1927*][1]

DEAR SATIS BABU,

What a joy Kshitish Babu's decision! I have telegraphed my approval and warned him against being ill in Sodepur.

I am glad Tarini is getting better.

How about Hemaprabha Devi and the boy? I shall feel relieved when you can really tell me that you are all yourselves again.

I shall inquire about the commission.

With love to you all,

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

[PS.]

19-21	Gurukul Kangri,	25-26 Kolhapur
	Dist. Bijnor	27-4th April[2] Belgaum
23	Bombay	5-12 Madras

From a photostat: G.N. 1632

185. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

March 15, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your two letters. There might be one more tomorrow. I see even Sethi has been failing you.

The purpose of writing this letter is to ask you to send Mrs. Row the letters she wants. Here is her letter. You know her. She was at the Ashram for a day. She is the wife of the celebrated Dr. Row and the daughter of a celebrated Sanskrit scholar. She is herself too a good Sanskrit scholar. The rest you can gather from her letter. Please write to her directly. You may wait if you like till we meet.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5210. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The source has "March".

186. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

March 15, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

It would delight my heart to be your guest during my stay in Madras. I am in Rajagopalachari's hands. Please arrange what you like with him.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2235

187. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Tuesday [*March 15, 1927*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I write this from a jungle. I must have three hours. I have already had three hours' silence. Go through the enclosed letter and do send him the essay on spinning in exchange for the spindle. The spindle has arrived there; Krishnadas knows about it. Send him a report about it. If it is a good spindle we should have it [made] at a reasonable cost. You should not keep the spindle if it is not perfect. But you should point out its defects and help him. The man seems to be all right. Please let me know if in the first instance, I should not refer such letters to you. I shudder to think of the load of your work. I am therefore anxious to spare you as much work as possible.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7760. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

188. LETTER TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

March 15, 1927

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I have your letter. Bhai Kasandas's[2] scheme is very good but he does not have competent women workers. Bombay is not the field for such work.

Is it not a wonder that you are well? How are you now?

[1] From the addressee's endorsement: "Date of receipt, 16-3-1927"

[2] Karsandas Chitalia

Manilal and Sushila are well. I left the Ashram yesterday. 5th-17th Bardoli, 19th-21st Gurukul Kangri, and on Friday Bijnor.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10722. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

189. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

MADHI,
[*March 15, 1927*][1]

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I have your letter. I get news about your health regularly. Now you have been released. That's good. If you cannot recoup enough strength you had better drop your trip to Bharatpur.

Ghanshyamdasji's letter shows his candour. It is enclosed herewith.

How is Janakibehn now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6142. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Gandhiji was in Madhi, Mandvi taluk, Surat district, on this date; *vide* the succeeding item.

190. SPEECH AT MADHI, MANDVI TALUK

March 15, 1927

Many thoughts occur to me on entering this taluk. I forget my misery by poking fun at you, but it is a sign of my pain that I resort to that. There was a day when not only Gujarat but the whole of India respected Surat district, and its contribution to the swaraj effort was considered to be the best, from the point of view of monetary help, silent work as soldiers' and work in the field of education and for the service of *Antyajas.* There was a friendly competition between two districts. Even now I have memories of that friendly strife in which Bardoli had excelled itself, What a contrast between that day when Bardoli had become famous in the world, and today? If we go to Bardoli today, we would see only a few white caps and a few *Antyajas.* We would be reminded of the tragic events in Sarbhan and wonder if we would ever get swaraj. And how can I ever forget the pledge we had taken, the oath the forty-eight men had taken with God as their witness and, relying on their word, the ultimatum I had sent to the Viceroy? And now I have to come here to inaugurate this Ashram, The lesson we should draw from this is that we should not lose heart, should not lose faith till death and should not retreat—that is the significance of the starting of this Ashram. It is not a matter of pride that we have started it with money from the Gujarat Provincial Committee. If you wish that an Ashram should be established here, then you should not be reluctant to give the necessary money. You should raise the money and then ask me for men. It is a wrong procedure to get money from the Provincial Committee for work here. Anyone who depends only on the blood in his brain for his work is bound to fail. One should rely on the blood in every part of one's body. Instead of functioning as our brain, the Provincial Committee has become our feet, and we let ourselves be dragged behind it. This is an unhappy state of affairs.

When I see national schools and depressed communities in any place, I am reminded of Gujarat. I wonder, then, if Gujarat is not out of the competition. But I am an optimist, and see rays of hope even in the face of countless disappointments. One such ray, of course, is this modest Ashram, for there are still earnest workers to run it. May it prosper, and may Bardoli, broken in spirit, and Surat in ruins, shine again and shed lustre on Gujarat and the country.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 20-3-1927

191. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[Before *March 16, 1927*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Kaka Saheb had suggested that the Managing Committee should see all relevant letters so as to know my views on various matters. This is right and so henceforth I shall write separately on business matters so that everyone can go through the correspondence. Again I find you as uncharitable as before. I agree it is unavoidable since you are not aware of it. Shake off this attitude. You will be able to do so if you try. You must participate in the work of the School Committee. If you wish to be nominated to the Education Committee, it can be done. Do not stand on prestige. More when I get your letter. Try to pacify Ramachandra. You should have a better appreciation of the difficulties of the lift.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7761. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

192. SPEECH AT RANIPARAJ CONFERENCE, VEDCHHI[2]

March 16, 1927

Gandhiji asked:

Those who pledged themselves to wear khaddar, raise their hands—all. Those who pledged themselves to abjure drink—all. Those who have kept their vows—all. Those who have broken their vow-—none.

The earlier part [of his speech] was by way of appeal to the money-lender and the liquor-seller, the Bania and the Parsi, to reform their ways, as the latter part was one of congratulation to the Hillmen and urging them to carry on self-purification more extensively. There was a quaint appeal about the way in which he commended to them the new appellation of "Hillmen".

Why should you be called "black" people? We are all black, the God who coloured our skin being the same, and his brush being the same. You will be called Hillmen from today. Be you brave as the

[1] From the date of receipt endorsed by the addressee

[2] This was published under the title "In a Gold Mine".

lions and tigers in the hills, so that none may cheat you, or oppress you, or violate your purity. The denizen of the forest is either a wise man, a *rishi* or a dacoit or a beast of prey. You are neither of the last two, so you have to become *rishis.* And there is no lack of opportunity for you. None of the wicked temptations of the towns lie in your way. You are fitted by nature to live on fruit and root and to eat in order to live, not to live in order to eat, and therefore best fitted to teach us that healthy way of living. Learn our sacred lore and with your innate purity of heart tame the lion and the tiger, as did the *rishis* of old. To the women I would say just a word. I am glad you have taken to khaddar, I now want you to give up your ugly ornaments which disfigure your limbs, are receptacles of dirt, and badges of slavery.

Young India, 24-3-1927

193. MR. SPEAKER'S DONATION

It was not without regret that I had to withhold the pleasure from the readers of sharing the news contained in the following correspondence between Sjt. Vithalbhai Patel and myself. . . .

IV[1]

20, AKBAR ROAD, NEW DELHI,
March 9, 1927

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I have decided, as you are already aware, to remit to you as before such amount as I think I can reasonably save every month from my salary for the purpose mentioned in my letter to you on the subject in the month of April[2] last. I propose to continue this arrangement as far as possible during the whole period of my office as President of the Assembly.

I enclose herewith a cheque for Rs. 2,000 representing such savings till the end of February.

Yours sincerely
V. J. PATEL

But they direct their use in any manner they choose. Vithalbhai desires to constitute of such donations a special fund and leave its

[1] I, II and III are not reproduced here. For III, *vide* "Letter to Vithalbhai J. Patel", 25-7-1926.

[2] In fact, May; letter No. I in the correspondence; *vide* Appendix "Vithalbhai Patel's Letter to Gandhiji", 10-5-1926.

administration in the hands of men of known standing. If the object is to be attained, the board of trustees should, whilst it ought to be completely national, be representative of as many parties as it is possible to bring at a common board. I therefore invite criticism and suggestions from those who approve of the plan. I have no desire to take sole charge of the funds or to use them only for the purposes to which my life is devoted. I know that I shall be best fulfilling the purpose of Vithalbhai's great gift by seeking the co-operation of as many as would help.

Young India, 17-3-1927

194. NO AND YES

"Comrade" Saklatwala is dreadfully in earnest. His sincerity is transparent. His sacrifices are great. His passion for the poor is unquestioned. I have therefore given his fervent open appeal[1] to me that close attention which that of a sincere patriot and humanitarian must command. But in spite of all my desire to say 'Yes' to his appeal, I must say 'No' if I am to return sincerity for sincerity or if I am to act according to my faith. But I can say 'Yes' to his appeal after my own fashion. For underneath his intense desire that I should co-operate with him on his terms, there is the emphatic implied condition that I must say 'Yes' only if his argument satisfies my head and heart. A 'No' uttered from deepest conviction is better and greater than a 'Yes' merely uttered to please, or what is worse, to avoide trouble.

In spite of all the desire to offer hearty co-operation, I find myself against a blind wall. His facts are fiction and his deductions based upon fiction are necessarily baseless. And where these facts are true, my whole energy is concentrated upon nullifying their (to me) poisonous results. I am sorry, but we do stand at opposite poles. There is however one great thing in common between us. Both claim to have the good of the country and humanity as our only goal. Though therefore we may for the moment seem to be going in opposite directions, I expect we shall meet some day. I promise to make ample amends when I discover my error. Meanwhile however, my error, since I do not recognize it as such, must be my shield and my solace.

[1] Saklatwa.la's "Open Letter to Mahatma Gandhi" was released in Bombay on March 8 and was published in *The Hindustan Times*, 17-3-1927. For excerpts from it, *vide* Appendix "Extracts from Shapurji Saklatvala's Open Letter", 17-3-1927.

For unlike“Comrade” Saklatwala, I do not believe that multiplication of wants and machinery contrived to supply them is taking the world a single step nearer its goal. “Comrade” Saklatwala swears by the modern rush. I whole-heartedly detest this mad desire to destroy distance and time, to increase animal appetites and go to the ends of the earth in search of their satisfaction. If modern civilization stands for all this, and I have understood it to do so, I call it satanic and with it the present system of Government, its best exponent. I distrust its schemes of amelioration of the lot of the poor, I distrust its currency reform, I distrust its army and navy. In the name of civilization and its own safety this Government has continuously bled the masses, it has enslaved the people, it has bribed the powerful with distinctions and riches and it has sought to crush under the weight of its despotic regulations the liberty-loving patriots who would not be won over either by flattery or riches. I would destroy that system today, if I had the power. I would use the most deadly weapons, if I believed that they would destroy it. I refrain only because the use of such weapons would only perpetuate the system though it may destroy its present administrators. Those who seek to destroy men rather than their manners adopt the latter and become worse than those whom they destroy under the mistaken belief that the manners will die with the men. They do not know the root of the evil.

The movement of 1920 was designed to show that we could not reform the soulless system by violent means, thus becoming soulless ourselves, but we could do so only by not becoming victims of the system, i.e., by non-co-operation, by saying an emphatic ‘No’ to every advance made to entrap us into the nets spread by satan.

That movement suffered a check but is not dead. My promise was conditional. The conditions were simple and easy. But they proved too difficult for those who took a leading part in the movement.

What “Comrade” Saklatwala believes to be my error and failure I regard to be the expression of my strength and deep conviction. It may be an error but so long as my conviction that it is truth abides, my very error must, as it does, sustain me. My retracing my steps at Bardoli I hold to be an act of wisdom and supreme service to the country. The Government is the weaker for that decision. It would have regained all lost position if I had persisted after Chauri Chaura in

carrying out the terms of what was regarded as an ultimatum[1] to the Viceroy.

My "Comrade" is wrong in saying that the South African movement was a failure. If it was, my whole life must be written down as a failure. And his invitation to me to enlist under his colours must be held to be meaningless. South Africa gave the start to my life's mission. Nor do I consider it to be wrong to have offered, during the late War, the services of my companions and myself, under my then convictions, as ambulance men.

This great M.P. is in a hurry. He disdains to study facts. Let me inform him that the khadi movement is not on the wane. It did last year at least twenty times as much work as during 1920. It is now serving not less than 50,000 spinners in 1,500 villages besides weavers, washermen, printers, dyers and tailors.

Mr. Saklatwala asks what khaddar stands for. Well, it stands for simplicity not shoddiness. It sits well on the shoulders of the poor and it can be made, as it was made in the days of yore, to adorn the bodies of the richest and the most artistic men and women. It is reviving ancient art and crafts. It does not seek to destroy all machinery but it does regulate its use and check its weedy growth. It uses machinery for the service of the poorest in their own cottages. The wheel is itself an exquisite piece of machinery.

Khaddar delivers the poor from the bonds of the rich and creates a moral and spiritual bond between the classes and the masses. It restores to the poor somewhat of what the rich have taken from them.

Khaddar does not displace a single cottage industry. On the contrary, it is being daily recognized that it is becoming the centre of other village industries. Khaddar brings a ray of hope to the widow's broken-up home.

But it does not prevent her from earning more if she can. It prevents no one from seeking a better occupation. Khaddar offers honourable employment to those in need of some. It utilizes the idle hours of the nation. The esteemed comrade quotes with pride the work of those who offer more lucrative employment. Let him know that khaddar does that automatically. It cannot put annas into the pockets of the poor without putting rupees into the pockets of some.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 1-2-1922.

Whereas those who begin their work in the cities, though they are no doubt doing good work, touch but the fringe of the question. Khaddar touches the very centre and therefore necessarily includes the rest.

But the whole of the impatient communist's letter concentrates itself upon the cities and thus ignores India and Indian conditions which are to be found only in her 7,00,000 villages. The half a dozen modern cities are an excrescence and serve at the present moment the evil purpose of draining the life-blood of the villages. Khaddar is an attempt to revise and reverse the process and establish a better relationship between the cities and the villages. The cities with their insolent torts [*sic*] are a constant menace to the life and liberty of the villagers.

Khaddar has the greatest organizing power in it because it has itself to be organized and because it affects all India. If khaddar rained from heaven it would be a calamity. But as it can only be manufactured by the willing co-operation of starving millions and thousands of middle-class men and women, its success means the best organization conceivable along peaceful lines.

If cooking had to be revived and required the same organization, I should claim for it the same merit that I claim for khaddar.

My communist comrade finds fault with my work among the labourers in Jamshedpur because I accepted an address in Jamshedpur not from the Tatas but from the employees. His disapprobation is due, I expect, to the fact that the late Mr. Ratan Tata was in the chair. Well, I am not ashamed of the honour. Mr. Tata appeared to me to be a humane and considerate employer. He readily granted, I think, all the prayers of the employees and I heard later that the agreement was being honourably kept. I do ask and receive donations for my work from the rich as well as the poor. The former gladly give me their donations. This is no personal triumph. It is the triumph of non-violence which I endeavoured to represent, be it ever so inadequately. It is to me a matter of perennial satisfaction that I retain generally the affection and the trust of those whose principles and policies I oppose. The South Africans gave me personally their confidence and extended their friendship. In spite of my denunciation of British policy and system I enjoy the affection of thousands of Englishmen and women, and in spite of unqualified condemnation of modern materialistic civilization, the circle of European and American friends

is ever widening. It is again a triumph of non-violence.

Lastly about labour in the cities. Let there be no misunderstanding. I am not opposed to organization of labour, but as in everything else, I want its organization along Indian lines, or if you will, my lines. I am doing it. The Indian labourer knows it instinctively. I do not regard capital to be the enemy of labour. I hold their co-ordination to be perfectly possible. The organization of labour that I undertook in South Africa, Champaran or Ahmedabad was in no spirit of hostility to the capitalists. The resistance in each case and to the extent it was thought necessary was wholly successful. My ideal is equal distribution, but so far as I can see, it is not to be realized. I therefore work for equitable distribution. This I seek to attain through khaddar. And since its attainment must sterilize British exploitation at its centre, it is calculated to purify the British connection. Hence in that sense khaddar leads to swaraj.

The Mahatma I must leave to his fate. Though a non-cooperator I shall gladly subscribe to a bill to make it criminal for anybody to call me Mahatma and to touch my feet. Where I can impose the law myself, i.e., at the Ashram, the practice is criminal.

Young India, 17-3-1927

195. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

(ON TOUR,)

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]

March 17, 1927

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I get your letters regularly. You asked me how to answer the conundrums that your fellow passengers had put before you regarding India's alleged indifference about total prohibition. As, in my travels, I had not your address, I could not write to you, but I wrote a leading article[2] in *Young India* based upon your letter, which I hope you saw and which contained the answer you wanted. If you need anything more, you will please refer to me.

I am glad you are being assisted by Tarini Sinha.

I am looking forward to your letter giving me a description of

[1] Permanent address

[2] *Vide* "Is India Prohibitionist?", 3-3-1927.

your experiences at the India Office. I am quite sure that the steps you are taking to equip yourself for the task are the proper and necessary steps. They alone can give you the knowledge, experience and confidence required for the struggle that is in front of you.

I have read your interview with The Observer. It was reproduced in one of the Indian dailies. I certainly agree with you that if you had not given that interview it would have been better. But, if the reporter has correctly reported you what does it matter even if it contains some erroneous deductions. It would be terrible if at every step we hesitate because of the possibility of erroneous judgement.

From a photostat : G.N. 6565

Yours sincerely,

M.K. GANDHI

196. M. K. GANDHI

ON RETURN FROM VEDCHHI,
Thursday, [*March 17, 1927*][1]

CHI. TARA,

It was very good that you came to the Ashram. The training the women get at the Ashram at present is not being provided anywhere in the world. Do whatever work you can while taking care of your health. Look after the children well, as if they were your own children. Keep Vimu with you if she agrees. I do not know where you have decided to stay. If you are going to stay in the hostel, Vimu will have to live away from you. Take particular care of her even if she lives away. It would be great if she could by some means come under your influence.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : G. N. 4186

197. CONVOCATION ADDRESS AT GURUKUL KANGRI[2]

March, 19, 1927

The Gurukul was Swamiji's best creation and though he is physically not with us he lives amongst us in his Gurukul. It was his

[1] Inferred from the fact that Gandhiji returned to Bardoli from Vedchhi on March 17, 1927 which was a Thursday.

[2] Delivered on the occasion of its silver jubilee. This is from a report by Mahadev Desai.

most original contribution to education, inasmuchas when we had lost our heads over Western education he decided that we should think and act and educate ourselves in the Vedic way. Swamiji will live with us so long as his Gurukul lasts and the Gurukul will last so long as there is a single graduate of the Gurukul prepared to serve it with truth and self-sacrifice, and with the courage which was Swamiji's and which is a synonym for forgiveness. Then there is *brahmacharya* on which Swamiji laid the greatest emphasis and without which all your education will come to naught. Avoiding lustful contact with women is not the last word on *brahmacharya*. It is only the beginning and the perf ection is reached when the *brahmachari* refuses to be ruffled or angry, no matter what provocation is offered him. For anger is the destruction of *virya*, the vital essence.[1]

I appeal to you to carry on the work, by forgetting which you will forget Swamiji and by killing which you will kill Swamiji. Remember Abdul Rashid has not murdered Swamiji, he has made him a martyr. The day you forget the Swami's mission will be his day of death. The Swami was a great lover of untouchables. All who love him are in duty bound to carry on his mission. It will be a great misfortune if the Swami's beloved cause is given up because of lack of funds or workers.

Continuing, Mr. Gandhi said that Malaviyaji has pleaded more strongly for khaddar than he could do, but he too wanted to appeal as khaddar helped the solution of the problem of untouchability. Khaddar and charkha provided food to the teeming millions, mostly the depressed classes. Hence khaddar and the removal of untouchability were interwoven and could not be separated.

If you want to save our ancient civilization and if you feel it a duty to save the villagers from destruction, then take up the message of khaddar from village to village.

Concluding, Mr. Gandhi said :

Truth is the bedrock of happy live. Be true to yourselves and the country.

Young India,31-3-1927

198. SATYAGRAHA WEEK

April 6 is nearing. I assume that at that time efforts will be made at every place to sell khadi. I draw the attention of the citizens of Ahmedabad to the following note[2] sent by the Khadi Bhandar on Ritchie Road in Ahmedabad announcing reduction of prices during the period :

[1] What follows is from *The Leader*, 23-3-1927

[2] Bit reproduced here

I hope a good many citizens will buy this khadi. Everyone should remember that this reduction will be in force only from April 6 to April 13.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-3-1927

199. SPEECH ON SHRADDHANAND MEMORIAL FUND, GURUKUL KANGRI[1]

March 19, 1927

We khadi workers make our collections in handkerchiefs, yours you would do in buckets. . . .

If I have criticized the Arya Samaj, I am also anxious to give my tribute of praise for its work. And those who give hearty praise have a right to criticize too. Of all religious and political bodies that have come into being of late years the Arya Samaj has made probably the greatest contribution to bridge the gulf between the classes and the masses that had been widening ever since the advent of the British in India. No institution is perfect, and I could, if I would, point out some of the defects of the Gurukul. But there is no questioning the fact that it has rendered substantial service to the country. Whenever I see a Punjabi youth capable of reading and writing Devanagari, I immediately conclude that he must have had his training in one of the Gurukuls. They have done more than any other institutions in these parts to revivify Sanskrit learning and Aryan culture.

Young India, 31-3-1927

[1] From a report by Mahadev Desai

200. SPEECH AT NATIONAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE, HARDWAR[1]

March 20, 1927

It is the duty of every Indian student to learn Sanskrit. It certainly is the duty of the Hindus, but it is also the Muslims' because, in the final analysis, their forbears too were Rama and Krishna and they ought to know Sanskrit in order to know them. However, to maintain contacts with the Muslims, it is also the duty of Hindus to learn the former's language. Today we run away from each other's languages because we have become mad. Take it for a certainty that an institution which teaches fear and hatred of others surely is not a national institution.

Gandhiji said that national institutions should produce messengers of Hindu-Muslim unity. Institutions producing fanatical Hindus and Muslims were worth destruction. Educational institutions were not meant to produce bigoted persons. He was sure that there was no reason for disappointment and still the cause could prosper if self-reliant and self-sacrificing teachers were available.[2]

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 27-3-1927

201. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO MIRABEHN

[*March 21, 1972*][3]

I can't decide. You must be guided by your own inner promptings. I asked you before agreeing. But it is quite all right. There is nothing in that agreement. You can discuss the pros and cons as if no agreement was reached and then decide. I do not want you to. But Jamnalalji does. You will go for having contact with him and there will be nothing but Hindi there to speak. But I would leave it to you. If you have positive disinclination you will certainly not go. It is a 2-months course.

[1] Delivered as President of the Conference, held under the auspices of Gurukul Kangri

[2] This paragraph is from *The Leader,* 23-3-1927

[3] Scribbled on the back of a letter to Mirabehn dated 19-3-1927, apparently this is a silence-day note written before Mirabehn left the Bhagwadbhakti Ashram at Rewari on March 21, for further Hindustani studies. *Vide* also 1st footnote to "Letter to Ashram Women", 22-3-1927.

202. SILENCE DAY NOTE TO CHAND TYAGI

March 21, 1927

I wanted to talk to you at night but you were not there. At 10 I entered upon my silence.

What do you wish to do? If nothing worries you here and you find you are at peace, you should propagate what you believe in and thereby serve the country.

. . . . . .[1]

You can go to the Ashram whenever you wish. Nowadays I do not stay there. I do not know, therefore, if you would like to go there.

You can also write to me any time you wish.

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4276. Courtesy: Chand Tyagi

203. LETTER TO MAMA D. SARAIYA

HARDWAR,
Fagan Vad 3, 1983 [*March 21, 1927*]

CHI. MAMA,

I was glad to read your letter. One should say you have acted nobly if you relieved Gangabehn without rancour and as a matter of dharma, and I am sure you will have peace hereafter because your mind would have regained its equanimity. We ought to be only too glad to have some of our dear ones spiritually inclined and regarding the entire world as their own family.

I hope you are now better. Please write to me again. Cultivate the habit of writing tidy letters and in ink.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2819. Courtesy: Purushottam D. Saraiya

[1] As in the source

204. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

Not revised HARDWAR

Fagan Vad 3, 1983 [March 21, 1927]

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

Your letter about Rs. 2,000 has been referred to me. I have not a cowrie left with me. Whatever had been saved has been spent, so I shall have to go abegging once again.

I have written to them to send you the amount this time, whatever their difficulty. But what about later?

Now you will have to get your budget approved by me. You—i.e., you and Devchandbhai—should have the influence to raise the funds needed to run the Parishad. If this cannot be done, how long can we hold on?

Budgets for all the other centres should also receive prior approval. You should show to Nanabhai the budget for your school in particular. He should inspect the school and I shall try to raise the amount that he approves of. I am always thinking of affiliating all the national schools to the Vidyapith, because it is now becoming difficult to ask for separate funds. Of course we do collect from a great many donors in the name of khadi. I had hoped to accomplish something at the Parishad; but it did not come off. So now we have to think anew since it has been postponed to August. So get your budget first sanctioned by me before you put in your next demand. Ultimately each [institution] will have to stand on its own as in the rest of the country. Or we shall have to draw up some special scheme for education in Maha Gujarat. You should contact Nanabhai and consider all

23-24 Bombay

25-26 Kolhapur

27 Belgaum

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2833. Courtesy: Sharadabehn Shah

205. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

The matters. We may be said to have taken up three tasks, viz., the khadi movement, work among the *Antyajas* and national education in general.

I see all the three combined in khadi; education it certainly

covers. I have not yet discovered any final solution for the *Antyaja* problem. I write all this for your co-workers to think over. You should write to me for clarifications, which might solve some of your problems.

Chi. Chhaganlal will go through this before delivering it to you, so that they will all know where I am at the moment.

Blessings from

BAPU

206. ANTED WORKERS

HARDWAR,
Silence Day [March 21, 1927]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter which I am forwarding to Chi. Kishorelal. He is a man of truth and aspires for *moksha*. You and I ought to reconsider a matter about which he has doubts. You and I should, therefore, endeavour to convince him that the step you propose to take is not contrary to dharma. What Chi. Mama has written can be considered good, provided she has not done it in anger. It is all right if you take the step after mature deliberation. In that case Mama too will be perfectly at peace. If the move disturbs her it would not at all be wrong to suspect some flaw in it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8824. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

207. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Monday [*March 21, 1927*][1]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter.

When I get the money it will help the charkha movement. I am very glad that *pujya* Malaviyaji is being progressively drawn to the charkha. I shall want large amounts for the charkha work. With his help I can raise larger funds.

[1] From the tour programme

Bhaiji and Rameshwarji have decided to donate money for the construction of reservoirs of water for the *Antyajas;* it will be spent as directed by them.

I did not know Parasram collected scraps of paper. I have warned him against this fault. He will write to you. He had no wrong motive. He is a simpleton but I can get work out of him. He wishes to live with *pujya* Malaviyaji and Rabindranath for some days. I have asked him to try on his own to get himself admitted to their service.

In my opinion the following rules of conduct must be observed to safeguard one's health while staying in Europe:

1. We should not take food to which we are not used.

2. In Europe they eat six or seven times a day, but we must not eat more than thrice. Do not get addicted to taking chocolate or other such things between meals.

3. They eat even at 1 o'clock at night. But we must eat nothing after 8 in the evening. When visiting people and places we are, it is believed, expected to take tea, etc. This is not true.

4. One should go walking at least six miles daily. One should walk both in the morning and in the evening.

5. It is not right to wear too many clothes, secret being that one must not feel cold. Walking shakes off cold.

6. It is not at all necessary to put on European dress.

7. One should try to get acquainted with the poor people of Europe; walking helps such acquaintance. When there is time at your disposal, it is better to walk.

8. Do not persuade yourself for a moment that since you have gone to Europe you have got to do something, Attempt only what clean and spontaneous efforts can accomplish.

9. Your stay in Europe will, I feel, result in at least one good thing. You can certainly build up your body.

10. May God save you from mental debauchery; very few Indians escape it. While their way of living is natural to them, it only helps to intoxicate us.

11. The practice of reading the *Gita* and the *Ramayana* must in no case be given up. If you have not been doing it already, the sooner you begin the better.

I am sure you did not expect advice in such minute detail. This I am giving because I have great faith in the goodness of yourself and

your brothers. Few rich people possess your goodness and humility. I seek an intense growth in these qualities and I want to put them to use in the service of the nation. I have no faith in the principle of *shatham prati shathyam*[1]. Therefore, wherever I see purity, truth and non-violence, etc., even in the smallest degree, I start collecting the treasure with the care of a miser, and it makes me happy.

You can ask for any further advice.

23-24 Bombay 27- April 4 Belgaum

25-26 Kolhapur 5-12 Madras

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[P.S]

Please acknowledge receipt.

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6146. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

208. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[*March 21, 1927*][2]

[QUESTION:] 1. Do you feel it unbearable to live under the present political thraldom or not?

[ANSWER :] I do.

2. If so, are you yourself individually prepared to get rid of it and gain political freedom or not?

I am.

3. Is there any objection to suppose that "your being prepared" means that you have acquired two spiritual qualities, viz., soul-force and love of freedom ?

You may suppose so.

4. Does not "preparation for the attainment of freedom" mean making the Indians endowed with the qualities and power necessary for such attainment which you respectively have acquired?

It does mean.

5. Is not intellectual and moral education necessary for acquiring such qualities?

It is.

[1] 'Roguery towards a rogue'

[2] *Vide* the succeeding item.

6. If so, what are the ways of educating the whole nation and how much time will it take to do it?

Through spinning.

7. Is not the creation of a feeling of thorough disgust for political subjection extremely necessary?

It is.

8. If so, what may be in your opinion the percentage of people having such a feeling among the three hundred millions of Indians?

Difficult to estimate.

9. To create the consciousness of bondage is it not necessary to have the knowledge of the past glory of the motherland and to feel real restlessness on account of the present painful condition?

It is.

10. Is it possible to create soul-force in the absence of the said knowledge or the said restlessness ?

Hardly.

11. Do acquisition of soul-force and the possession of the power to suffer any pains boldly and calmly constitute the chief pillars of your spiritual activities or not?

To an extent, yes.

12. Where, under what circumstances and how are the people to make use of their soul-force for wresting power from the rulers ?

Throughout the country by non-violent non-co-operation.

13. What kind of intellectual, moral and physical preparation is necessary on the part of the people for the accomplishment of these two objects, viz., civil disobedience and refusal to pay Government taxes?

Hand-spinning gives them an idea of non-violence and self-confidence.

14. If our preparedness be looked upon as being complete, i.e., 16 annas, what proportion of the preparedness in terms of annas is necessary, in your opinion, on the part of your followers or the general public to bring about the attainment of freedom?

Eight annas one pie.

15. Is the public so prepared today? If not how much time do you think, it will take to be so prepared?

Not yet; unable to prophesy.

16. What percentage of people in the country knows the fact that there is a unique personality like Mahatma Gandhi in India?

I have no idea.

17. If it is taken for granted that one among a thousand may know it, how many persons per hundred thousand may have, in your opinion, the knowledge of Mahatmaji's ideas of freedom and his activities?

1/1000th of those that know.

18. It seems that there is complete darkness with respect to such knowledge; if the darkness is to be dispelled, how long will it have to be done?

As long as is necessary.

19. Do you say that it is impossible to attain swaraj even if, in the absence of unity between the Hindus and Muslims, people of both communities should feel the miseries of political bondage to be unbearable and should struggle to be free from it, and even if a feeling should arise in both the communities that life without freedom is worse than death?

I do not, if both feel as you suggest.

20. Do you say that a painful consciousness of the unbearable political condition has not the power to bring into being the union of the communities belonging to two different cultures ?

It has the power.

21. The religious persecution of the Hindus by the Mohammedans was the principal cause which contributed to the attainment of freedom in the days of Shivaji and people belonging to different castes became united to free themselves from religious persecutions. Readers of history do know the fact that the establishment of *maths* by Ramdas proved very useful in this respect. Is it not the fact that the freedom which the people want today is for freeing themselves from the political, industrial and commercial oppression?

Yes; indeed.

22. Whether untouchability goes away or not, whether the Hindu- Mohammedan disunion disappears or not, if, in spite of the existence of these two things, we could have two thousand persons maddened with the desire for freedom and endowed with soul-force, will you say that these men will not be able to gain the freedom of the country?

These two thousands will sweep away disunion and untouchability and bring swaraj.

23. If 1,400 civilians can hold such a vast country like India under subjugation will you say that the said two thousand persons endowed with the said qualities will not be able to take back India?

Vide answer 22.

24. In short, do you say that it is not possible to attain swaraj even if the one emotion of feeling a strong disgust for bondage and regarding life without liberty to be unbearable, pervades the whole of India?

Mere emotion will never bring swaraj.

25. If it is seen that the said emotion is quite indispensable and that it would lead to the attainment of swaraj, can it be created by your present lectures on khaddar?

My lectures on khaddar are converting that emotion into energy.

The Hindustan Times, 30-4-1927

209. LETTER TO G. K TILAK[1]

IN MOVING TRAIN,
March 21,1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter has been following me all this time. As you had taken considerable pains over your questions, but as I must not take them in *Young India*, I send you replies[2] herewith. You may publish them if you like.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Hindustan Times, 30-4-1927

210. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day [*March 22, 1927*][3]

SISTERS,

Parting this time was particularly painful as I was anxious to talk to you about things and to have your views on many more. But who after all is free? We are in God's hands and we dance as He makes us to. If we acted according to our own desires we would come to grief. And so I do not worry although my wish was not fulfilled. We shall meet again when He wills. Till then we shall communicate by means of letters.

This is what I would like you to do just now:

1. Acquire a methodical and sound knowledge of ginning, carding and spinning--so good that you may be able to teach others.

[1] A pleader of Barsi

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] From the reference to Mirabehn who left for Rewari Ashram on March 21; *vide* the succeeding item

2. Look after the common kitchen and make it an ideal place. For the present I do not want any one of you to give all your time to that work, but since this duty is yours by birth and training, I entrust to you the responsibility of seeing that the cooking is well done and that the kitchen is clean.

These two tasks are just the right ones for you. Are they not ?

Mirabai will leave today for Rewari Ashram,[1] where Jamnalalji's daughter is staying.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N. 3642

211. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

ON THE TRAIN, AFTER BHARATPUR
March 22, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

The parting today was sad, because I saw that I pained you. And yet it was inevitable. I want you to be a perfect woman. I want you to shed all angularities. All unnecessary reserve must go. Ashram is the centre of your home, but wherever you happen to be must be your home. Without being a burden on people with whom we come in contact, we must get the things we need from them. We must feel one with all. And I have discovered that we never give without receiving consciously or unconsciously. There is a reserve which I want us all to have. But that reserve must be a fruit of self-denial, not sensitiveness. Yours is due to sensitiveness. This must go. I thought I would draw your attention. But I saw that I should have waited. However, the thing is done.

Do throw off the nervousness. You must not cling to me as in this body. The spirit without the body is ever with you. And that is more than the feeble embodied imprisoned spirit with all the limitations that flesh is heir to. The spirit without the flesh is perfect, and that is all we need. This can be felt only when we practise detachment. This you must now try to achieve.

This is how I would grow if I were you. But you should grow along your own lines. You will therefore reject all I have said in this

[1] For further Hindustani studies

that does not appeal to your heart or head. You must retain your individuality at all cost. Resist me when you must. For I may judge you wrongly in spite of all my love for you. I do not want you to impute infallibility to me.

23-24 Bombay, Laburnum Road

24-26 Kolhapur

27 onwards Belgaum

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

You left money, etc. It has been sent to you.

From the original: C.W. 5211. Courtesy: Mirabehn.

212. SPEECH AT SANTA CRUZ, BOMBAY[1]

March 23, 1927

Replying, Gandhiji began to address the gathering in Gujarati when he was requested to speak in Hindi as there was a large section of Madrasis and others, who could not understand Gujarati. Gandhiji, however, took votes and according to the majority began to speak in Gujarati but assured the minority that their claim would not be neglected. He said:

The fear entertained by Mr. J. K. Mehta is well-founded and I am really going to hit as hard as a man with non-violence as his creed can do for the wide difference between the amount given at Santa Cruz six years ago and the one[2] given today. It was only on account of the pressing invitation of Mr. Mehta that I agreed to come here instead of going to Rewari as was originally fixed. You perhaps know that though I am not neglecting the cities I have been going to the villages very often these days because India resides not in her handful of towns but in villages. Even there it is not difficult to collect Rs. 3,000. You will perhaps be surprised to learn that the villages in Maharashtra and Bihar contributed a lakh and a quarter each during my last tour there. And khaddar too is spreading fast and wide in villages. I shall quote figures which will prove, in spite of all the odd

[1] In reply to a welcome address by Jaisukhlal K. Mehta, Chairman, Bombay Suburban District Congress Committee

[2] Rs. 3,000; against 52,000, six years earlier

rumours that khaddar is extinct, that khaddar is produced 20 times more than it was being manufactured in 1920, i.e., in the beginning of the movement. In 1926, khaddar worth at least Rs. 20 lakhs was manufactured and at least 50,000 women scattered in 1,500 different villages of the country were given work of spinning for which they were paid over Rs. 9 lakhs. But this position is not at all satisfactory. It does not satisfy me. I have found that khaddar is rarely seen in Bombay and other cities. In Bombay in 1921, the case was quite different. I can account for the present slackness on two grounds that either those who were wearing khaddar before have changed their opinion or that they were playing a false part in 1921.

Although this is not the occasion on which I can speak either on non-co-operation or Hindu-Muslim unity, I should state clearlythat my faith in those things is as great and as firm as it ever was. I should say it is greater. If I want swaraj and swaraj of the type I have been struggling for all along the last few years, I cannot help feeling that Hindu-Muslim unity is absolutely necessary. But as one who can know human nature, I have found that the whole atmosphere is changed. But it is not so with khaddar. The result of the khaddar work is not disappointing. I have found that people are not tired of it. And for this we need not rely on newspapers which as a matter of fact are read only in cities. I have found no newspapers in Hardwar and yet Rs. 2 lakhs were easily collected there. That place is not like Bombay which seems to me to be an offshoot of England.

The money that I have been collecting at present goes to the All-India Deshbandhu Das Memorial Fund which is to be spent in village organization. The fitting memorial to the late Deshbandhu would be a thorough organization of villages and I dare say that charkha is the only way to organize the villages of India. I can give you an example of the Raniparaj community of the Surat District where through the message of the charkha the community in about 104 villages has been thoroughly organized.[1] The illiterate women of that community have given up wearing heavy ornaments and all of them—-men, women and children wore pure khaddar. It is for work among such classes and villages that money is wanted. I am the self-appointed barrister of the millions of poor people—*Daridran-aray-anas*—of India and in their name I appeal to you the richer classes to

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Madhi, Mandvi Taluk", 15-3-1927

contribute the greatest amount for the great movement of khaddar.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-3-1927

213. FROM HIS TREASURE CHEST

I cull the following from gems the friend whom I have already introduced to the reader sends for my day of silence:

> The tongue of man reveals so imperfectly the secret mysteries of God, that words would have been to us rather a hindrance than a consolation.
>
> BROTHER GILES
>
> Settle yourselves in solitude and you will come upon God in yourselves.
>
> TERESA
>
> Thou needst not call Him to thee from a distance, thy opening and His entering are but one moment. It is harder for Him to wait, than for thee.
>
> MASTER EXKHART

Young India, 24-3-1927

214. FACE TO FACE WITH THE PAUPER

The following[1] is a free translation made by Mahadev Desai of an accurate account vividly told in the pages of Navajivan by a khadi worker of pauperism in parts of Bardoli taluk which is supposed to be one of the most fertile places of Gujarat The account is written in the form of a story 'the writer bids fair to become the peopls's poet of a very high order. Its artistic beauty adds to its intrinsic worth I commend it specially to the attention of the sceptic.

Young India, 24-3-1927

215. KANGRI GURUKUL

Kangri Gurukul was the body in which the soul of Shraddhananji resided, no matter where its temporary earthly tabernacle wandered from time to time, and Shraddhanandji lives so long as the Gurukul lives The best memorial therefore that can be erected to the memory of the deceased martyr is to perpetuate the Gurukul. No doubt the really permanent memorial will have to come through the

[1] Not reproduced here

character of the professors and the scholars of the Gurukul and through their determination to retain in it the predominance of ancient teaching and conduct based on it. Shradhanandji used with ample justification to plead that his Gurukul was a national institution in the non-co-operation sense long before the birth of Non-co-operation. He believed that to belong to a Government educational institution was to subscribe to the predominance of Western influence whether we willed or no. He did not object to assimilating what was useful of the West on his own terms and in his own time. To be a fitting memorial of the Swami the Gurukul must therefore keep its complete independence of the Government. And it is a matter of no small satisfaction that the Gurukul in spite of its independence of Governrnent aid or influence continues to grow in numbers as I hope too it does in character, in the spirit of its revered founder.

But if the memorial depends for its real existence ultimately on the character of the scholars and the professors it has to depend presently upon financial support from the public. Acharya Ramadeva has issued an appeal for three lakhs of rupees. I understand that nearly two lakhs are already subscribed. The scene I witnessed when the appeal[1] was made in that huge pandal on the Gurukul ground on the 19th instant was a never-to-be forgotten sight.[2] People—men and women—vied with one another in pouring their rupees and notes into the buckets with which voluntecrs moved about among the visitors. There were hardly any coppers to be seen. I heartily commend this appeal to the attention of the public. I have stated my differences with the Arya Samaj and its doctrines. They abide. I have my differences about the conduct of Gurukul. But I am not blind to the services of the Arya Samaj and the necessity of Gurukuls. They have revivified religion, if they have also limited its growth. Every reform has that tendency in it. The wise sift the good from the bad and conserve what is good. The Gurukuls has much in it to conserve and those who would want it to be better than it is have but to prove their friendliness before they seek to introduce changes for its betterment. I have therefore no hesitation in identifying myself with the appeal for funds. There should be no delay or difficulty in making up the modest sum required.

Young India, 24-3-1927

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Shraddhanand Memorial", 3-3-1927.

[2] *Vide* "Speech on Shraddhanand Memorial Fund, Gurukul Kangri", 19-3-1927.

216. PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION OF "SELF-RESTRAINT v. SELF-INDULGENCE"[1]

That the first edition was sold out practically within a week of its publication is a matter of joy to me. The correspondence that the series of articles collected in this volume has given rise to shows the need for such a publication. May those who have not made self-indulgence a religion, but who are struggling to regain lost self-control, which should under normal conditions be our natural state, find some help from a perusal of these pages. For their guidance the following instructions may prove useful:

1. Remember if you are married that your wife is your friend, companion and co-worker, not an instrument of sexual enjoyment.

2. Self-control is the law of your being. Therefore the sexual act can be performed only when both desire it and that too subject to rules which in their lucidity both may have agreed upon.

3. If you are unmarried you owe it to yourself, to society and to your future partner to keep yourself pure. If you cultivate this sense of loyalty, you will find it as an infallible protection against temptation.

4. Think always of that unseen Power which though we may never see we all feel within watching and noting every impure thought and you will find that Power ever helping you.

5. Laws governing a life of self-restraint must be necessary different from a life of self-indulgence. Therefore you will regulate your society, your reading, your haunts of recreation and your food.

You will seek the society of the good and the pure.

You will resolutely refrain from reading passion-breeding novels and magazines and read the works that sustain humanity. You will make one book your constant companion for references and guidance.

You will avoid theatres and cinemas. Recreation is where you may not dissipate yourself but recreate yourself You will therefore attend bhajan mandalis where the word and the tune uplift the soul.

You will cat not to satisfy your palate but your

[1] This was published under the title, "Self-control".

hunger. A self-indulgent man lives to eat; a self-restrained man eats to live. Therefore you will abstain from all irritating condiments, alcohol which excites the nerves, and narcotics which deaden the sense of right and wrong. You will regulate the quantity and times of your meals.

6. When your passions threaten to get the better of you go down on your knees and cry out to God for help. Ramanama is my infallible Help. As extraneous aid take a hip-bath i.e., sit in a tubfull of cold water with your legs out of it, and you will find your passions have immediately cooled. Sit in it for a rew minutes unless you are weak and there I danger of a chill.

7. Take brisk walking exercise in the open air early in the morning and at night before going to bed.

8. "Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise," is a sound proverb. 9 o'clock to bed and 4 o'clock to rise is a good rule. Go to bed on an empty stomach. Therefore your last meal must not be after 6 p.m.

9. Remember that man is a representative of God to serve all that lives and thus to express God's dignity and love. Let service be your sole joy and you will need no other enjoyment in life.

Young India, 24-3-1927

217. TO A READER OF "YOUNG INDIA"

I do not propose to publish your letter in defence of the *purdah*. I am of opinion that the *purdah* in India is recent institution and was adopted during the period of Hindu decline. In the age when proud Draupadi and spotless Sita lived there could be no *purdah*. Gargi could not have held her discourses from behind the *purdah*. Nor is the *purdah* universal in India. It is unknown in the Deccan, Gujarat and the Punjab. It is unknown among the peasantry and one does not hear of any untoward consequences of the comparative freedom which women in these provinces and among peasantry enjoy. Nor will it be just to say that the women or men in the other parts of the world are less moral because of the absence of the *purdah* system. "A reader of *young India"* seeks to defend everything that is ancient. Whilst I hold that the ancients gave us a moral code which is not to be

surpassed, I am unable to subscribe to the doctrine of their infallibility in every detail. And who shall say what is really ancient? Are all the hundered and eight Upanishads of equal sanctity? It seems to me that we must test on the anvil of reason everything that is capable of being tested by it and reject that which does not satisfy it even though it may appear in an ancient garb.

Young India, 24-3-1927

218. 'IN SEARCH OF KNOWLEDGE'

Thus writes Sjt. S. D. Nadkarni :

In October 1921, to a correspondent asking the question, "Is your 'soul-force' attainable by the masses?", you replied : "They have it already in abundance. Once upon a time an expediton of French scientists set out in search of knowledge and in due course reached India. They tried hard to find it, as they had expected, among the learned ones, but failed. Unexpectedly they found it in a parish home" (*Young India*, 27-10-1927, p. 342).[1]

I had then thought in my innocence that you were referring to some real incident you had read of; and so being as curious as the French expedition itself, I approached you for details. You kindly answered my query personally, saying that you thought the article made it sufficiently clear that it was a purely imaginary account.

Thereafter in 1925, at a meeting with the Christian missionaries in Calcutta you said: "I am not able to say that here in this fair land ...[2] man is vile. He is not vile. He is as much a seeker after truth as you and I are, possibly more so. This reminds me of a French book translated for me by a French friend. It is an account of an imaginary expedition in search of knowledge. One party landed in India and found Truth and God personified in a little pariah's hut" (*Young India*, 6-8-1925, p. 274).[3]

Now, if you are not going to deal with the topic in the further reminiscences of your life, I should be obliged if you could tell us through *Young India* (or communicate to me personally) the names of the book and its author, and say who translated it for you, and when and where. Is the translation published and available? I wish to ascertain whether the book is one of the two referred to in Yule and Burnell's *Hobon-Jobson* (*s. v.* pariah) as

[1] *Vide* "The Secret of It?" 27-10-1921.
[2] As in the source
[3] *Vide* "Speech at Meeting of Missionaries", 28-7-1925.

"Bernardin de St. Pierre's preposterous though once popular tale, *La Chaumiere Indienne* (i.e., 'The Indian Cottage'), whence too the misplaced halo of sentiment which reached its acme in the drama of Casimir Delavigne, and which still in some degree adheres to the name ('pariah')". (There is no question , of course, of my agreeing with the English crities' judgment of the French authors).

I wish I could give Mr. Nadkarni the full information he wants. I forget the name of the story. The book was specially translated for me by an Anglo-French friend when he was staying with me at Tolstoy Farm near Johannesburg about 1910. I had intended to pubnlish it but my treasure of books has suffered the same fate as my other treasures. I lost many valuable books and manuscripts during transit in 1915 and this precious translation was among them. But some of my readers will probably give the information Mr. Nadkarni desires. I have a recollection that the gifted author of the book makes his otherwise admirable story end in a girl of the pariah home marrying a Charistian, as if the home where his scientists found knowledge was not complete without a love affair and without a marriage that must tear the girl away from her surroundings and make her less useful for the service of her neighbours.

Young India, 24-3-1927

219. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

BOMBAY,
March 24, 1927

QUESTION: Comrade Saklatvala has asked you to be the leader of Trade Union movement in India. What is your answer to that call?

ANSWER : I do not consider that I am qualified for leadership.

But Mr. Saklatvala says that you are the best qualified man for the work.

It flatters my pride but it does not convince me.

How do you say that the Government is weakened by your Bardoli decision?[1]

Had I continued the campaign, Bardoli people would have been done, and our cause would have suffered. There would have been much more tension than there is today. The fact is that the people were not prepared for non-violence and the campaign would have ended in a widespread terrorism. The Government know that Non-co-

[1] *Vide* "No and Yes", 17-3-1927

operation is not dead. They dread nothing so much as non-co-operation. They know how to deal with a violent outbreak but they don't know how to deal with non-violence and non-co-operation. The Bardoli decision was an orderly and deliberate withdrawal, not a panicky rout. The weakening of Government prestige that had taken place at the time of the so-called ultimatum, still continues. It is open to us to undertake a forward movement at any time we choose. The awe of the Government is gone for ever.

The general consensus of opinion is that your reply to Comrade Saklatvala ought to have been a little more detailed. Do you propose giving him any more reply?

In my opinion I have given a sufficient reply. I could not treat each and every subject in detail. If there is any obscurity about my reply I should be prepared to remove it.

You have said in your reply that you have your own independent ways of organizing labour. Can you explain that viewpoint a little further?

Yes, I should organize labour by efforts from within. It is not so much discontent with capital that I want to inculcate as discontent with themselves. I want real co-operation between labour and capital. I shall convince the labourers that in many things they are to blame themselves instead of blaming the capitalists. As in the political so in the labour movement, I rely upon internal reform, i.e., self-purification. Such reform will command equitable treatment from employers. Throughout my experience both in South Africa and India, I have always laid the greatest stress on the principle that labourers must evolve strength from within. Then capital will become a real servant of labour. I seek to achieve co-operation between capital and labour, in the same way as I seek to bring co-operation between India and England .

Regarding the Muslim proposal for joint electorate, Mahatma Gandhi said that the joint electorate was a happy sign and augured well. He was not willing to hazard any detailed opinion before considering the question in all its aspects. He said the proposed All-India Convention should finally settle the matter.

[Q:] Do you intend visiting any foreign country in the near future?

[A:] I have no such intention at the present moment.

But what about China?

I cannot say anything definitely just yet, but I know I am not visiting China this year.

Did the khaddar message impress the pilgrims and sadhus at Hardwar?

It is very difficult to say. In fact, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji had been trying his best to enlist the sympathy of those pilgrims and sadhus for khaddar propaganda. He is more in tough with them than I am. He is staying at Hardwar for 10 days during the mela and he will be doing all he can to interest the sadhus in the khaddar movement.

Would you arrange more conferences with them to secure their services for khaddar and prohibition work and also for the removal of untouchability?

Of course, the sadhus can do a lot in all those things but at present I have no idea whether I shall arrange any special conferences with them. Pandit Malaviyaji has taken the initiative in the matter and he will exercise greater influence on them than I can.

What specific methods of propaganda would you suggest to hasten prohibition in India? What do you think of renewing peaceful picketing with proper safeguards?

If picketing with proper safeguards is possible I shall welcome it at any moment but I do not know whether it can be renewed at present. Picketing requires an atmosphere of peacefulness but the question is whether that kind of atmosphere really exists in the country. I am personally ready to start picketing the moment I acquire confidence in a peaceful atmosphere, which I don't possess at present.

The Bombay Chronicle, 25-3-1927

220. SPEECH AT SARVAJANIK JIVADAYA KHATA[1], *GHATKOPAR*

March 24, 1927

Accompanied by Sir Chunilal Metha, the Finance Member to the Government of Bombay, and Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel of Ahmedabad, Gandhiji paid a visit to the Sarvajanik Jivadaya Khata at Ghatkopar on Thursday morning. . . . After Gandhiji was shown round the stables of the institution and the cattle, . . . the Secretary of the institution . . . accorded a sincere welcome. . . .

[Replying,] . . . Gandhiji expressed his immense pleasure and congratulated the Committee for the Jivadaya Khata. Since he undertook the cow-protection work at Belgaum in 1925, he had longed to pay a visit to the institution, but he had not been able to do so because of his preoccupations. His tour in 1925 had given him many opportunities to study the subject of the protection of milch

[1] An institution founded in 1923 to prevent milch cattle being slaughtered and to supply pure milk to the citizens of Bombay

cattle in India and he had come to the conclusion that slaughter of milch cattle could not be effectively prevented unless those who wanted to do so took to hide industry. The question of industry was very important in view of the fact that hides worth about nine crores were exported from India every year. It was not a sin even for Hindus to trade in hides and Gandhiji hoped to find a tannery in the Sarvajanik Jivadaya Khata when he visited it next. Concluding, Gandhiji advised the Committee of the institution to give up breeding buffaloes and concentrate all their resources on breeding cows.

Mahatmaji said that if he were Governor of Bombay he would have those stables removed to a distance of 20 miles and given not 10 but thousands of acres of land with ample grass meadows. He argued the establishment of a leather factory attached to the association stables in order to run an institution on economic lines. The association should also link itself to agricultural institutions so that the manure might be utilized most profitably.[1]

The Bombay Chronicle, 25-3-1927

221. INTERVIEW TO A.P.I. ON MAHARASHTRA TOUR

POONA[2],
March 24, 1927

I never shared the fears of some of my friends that Maharashtra would receive the message of charkha-spinning coldly. So far as collections were concerned, they went beyond my expectations as my estimates were only one lakh, while total collections came to Rs. 1,20,000 excluding khadi sales which were quite as good as in Bihar.

The Bombay Chronicle, 25-3-1927

222. SPEECH AT BOYS' MEETING, KOLHAPUR[3]

March 25, 1927

The little boys of the school had all been waiting in the sun with the handsome purse they had collected and they had the lesson of fearlessness from Gandhiji's lips:

Fearlessness is the foundation of all education, the beginning and not the end. If you do not build on that foundation, the edifice of all your education will topple over.

And to send the lesson home to them he told them the story of Prahlada and exhorted them to declare the truth courteously and bravely without regard for the consequences as the twelve-year-old Prahlada did.

Young India, 31-3-1927

[1] This paragraph is from *The Hindustan Times*, 26-3-1927
[2] At Poona Railway Station on way to Kolhapur
[3] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter".

223. SPEECH TO CHRISTIANS, KOLHAPUR[1]

March 25, 1927

At Negala, Mahatmaji was given a cordial welcome by the Christian community. The Principal of the Girls' Christian High School in his welcome address assured Mahatmaji that the Christian community was one with him *in* all his activities. In his reply, Mahatmaji said:[2]

My experience tells me that the Kingdom of God is within us, and that we can realize it not by saying "Lord, Lord," but by doing His will and His work. If therefore we wait for the Kingdom to come as something coming from outside, we shall be sadly mistaken. I am glad you are with me in my programme. I may assure you then that whatever I do is done with the object of that realization. Untouchability, you say, you would like to see removed as much as I. Well, then, I may tell you that you cannot remove untouchability without whole-heartedly taking up khadi work, for that work includes removal of untouchability, and goes beyond it. Do you know that there are thousands of villages where people are starving and which are on the brink of ruin? If we would listen to the voice of God, I assure you we would hear Him say that we are taking His name in vain if we do not think of the poor and help them. Mr. Sam Higginbottom, a Christian missionary friend, came to see me the other day to discuss this very thing. Fortunately he met me just in that area where the spinning-wheel and khadi had done their work. I ask you to go and visit such parts, and if you cannot do so, to take my word for it, that there is no better subsidiary occupation for the poor than khadi. If you cannot render the little help that they need, it is no use talking of service of God and service of the poor. Please go to the exhibition[3] and see things for yourselves, and try to identify yourselves with the poor by actually helping them.

Young India, 31-3-1927

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter".

[2] This paragraph is *from The Bombay Chronicle, 29-3-1927*

[3] Khadi Exhibition; Gandhiji had inaugurated it earlier during the day.

224. SPEECH AT KOLHAPUR[1]

March 25, 1927

The Diwan saw him during the day, and he had a long talk with him. Gandhiji asked him if there was anything like a ban on khadi in Kolhapur State. There may have been something like it, he said, but there was nothing now.

Have I your permission then to say to the people at the public meeting in your name that people may go to the palace and all State offices and attend functions dressed in khadi?

The Diwan had no objection, and Gandhiji declared the thing at the public meeting and thanked him for the assurance. He said:

Do not have any illusion about khadi. It is not that khadi invests the wearer with any sort of saintliness. It is the duty of everyone who has the good of the poor at heart to wear it. Even an adulterer and a prostitute may wear it. This is how I would approach them. 'As to our conduct,' I would say to them, 'you are answerable to God. But whether you are able to mend your ways or no, you can certainly wear khadi and do some service to the poor. He who wastes money on liquor is a sinner. He who wastes money on tobacco is a smaller sinner, if you will. The one who wastes money on foreign cloth is as great a sinner as the second if not the first, and the one who uses Indian mill cloth has neither virtue nor vice to his credit or debit. But the khadi- wearer has distinctly something to his credit inasmuch as he serves both the poor and his country. Khadi immediately takes him up from a lower level and makes him the friend of the poor.'

Young India, 31-3-1927

225. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

[Before *March 26, 1927*][2]

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your pathetic letter. I was wondering why there was nothing from you so long. Now I know. It distresses me to find you in such a dilapidated condition. I am writing this in the midst of distractions. I have not a moment to spare. I therefore send you my

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] From the reference to his South India tour it seems that this was written before Gandhiji became ill.

love and prayerful blessings. I am in the South in April. I must make a desperate effort to meet you during the tour.

When Maria returns I must see what can be done for spinning.

With love to you all,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat. Courtesy: National Archives of India; also My Dear Child, p, 87

226. DISCUSSION WITH DR. WANLESS[1]

[*March 26, 1927*][2]

That is an instance where the doctors fortunately succeeded in prevailing upon Gandhiji. There have been instances in which they have failed. For Gandhiji, who in many respects is an ideal patient, as many doctors have certified, also at times becomes the despair of his doctors. The doctor immediately after the collapse prescribed undisturbed bodily rest, including cessation from spinning.[3]

Well, then, take my blood-pressure, before spinning and after spinning, and if you can convince me that after spinning it hasgone up to an alarming extent, I shall accept your advice. On the contrary, I assure you spinning is a positive relaxation, it soothes the nerves. And then, doctor, you must know that mine is a code of life far different from yours. For instance, you would prescribe all sorts of medicines. Now I have laid down a course of life, which, in certain respects, I may not change. So if you give me a medicine which is composed of five ingredients I would take it, provided you agree to my forgoing my meal which may under no circumstances exceed five articles a day. So you must either convince me that the medicine is more essential for my health than the diet, or must reconcile yourself to administering no medicine. Then there is another thing. Spinning is a thing l cannot live without. If I must eat and live I must spin. And what a glorious death it would be if you came and found me spinning and collapsing in the midst of it. You would abuse those about me to your heart's content, if you insisted on your discipline as a doctor, but if you are

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle,* 28-3-1927 and Young *India,* 31-3-1927

[3] For the medical opinions, *vide* Appendix "Medical Opinions", 29-3-1927.

good you will say it has been a welcome death. You must know that I would be conscience-stricken and make myself most miserable if I continued to live on and was not able to spin. Yes, I may stop reading, writing and even spinning, provided I stop feeding too. Will you permit me that?

No, doctor, I may not implicitly obey you, unless you can claim infallibility.

"If we could claim it," rejoined the doctor with justice, "we should not be administering drugs, but be oracles sitting in temples."

No wonder Dr. Wanless frankly said that no treatment was necessary excepting rest for an indefinite period.

Young India, 14-4-1927

227. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

[After *March 26, 1927*][1]

DEAR SATIS BABU,

Well, it is not much use inquiring about you now that I am myself in the mire. I am trying to pull myself out. But if God wills otherwise what is my trial worth? Anyway I do not expect to go beyond 13th April, 1928. I have nothing new to say or give. I may collect more, give a little more guidance and patch here and patch there. But really the clock has struck for me. To reduce the message to execution is left for you. You have therefore to live and work. If I survive I shall not be of much use for active work evidently. Let us see: "Thy will be done, not ours, oh Lord!" What is the use then even of peeping into the future? Just for the moment I appear to be as fit as a fiddle. And so I amuse myself by sending love messages to friends I can think of and have no time to talk to.

My love to you and Hemaprabha Devi.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1635

[1] It appears that this letter was written after Gandhiji fell ill.

228. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Sunday [On or before *March 27*][1] *1927*

CHI. MANI,

I have been waiting for your letter. I know you have been deliberately refraining from writing. But now there is no need for it. How far have you progressed in Sanskrit? And would you now be ranked first in carding and spinning?

No news from Karachi. How is your health?

I am improving every day. There is no cause for anxiety.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, pp. 54-5

229. NATIONAL WEEK AND GUJARAT

I hope that Gujaratis will heartily respond to the appeal made by Shri Vallabhbhai Patel on behalf of the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee in connection with the National Week. One can say that collecting a sum of Rs. 1 lakh is child's play for Gujarat. This amount, moreover, is required for work among the suppressed classes, which include *Antyajas* and the Raniparaj community. From now on, we will describe *Antyajas* too as *dalit.* The term was first used by Swami Shraddhanand. Swami Vivekananda chose an English word having the same meaning. He described the untouchables not as "depressed"[2] but as "suppressed"[3] and quite rightly. They became, and remain, what they are because they were suppressed by the so-called upper classes. The Hindi word for this is *dalit.* Among all the suppressed classes, the untouchables are the most suppressed. The Rani (Kali) paraj community is also suppressed, and so are other communities, like Oghra, etc.. It is the object of the Provincial Committee to serve all these communities to the best of its resources. This

[1] From the reference to Sanskrit, spinning, carding and khadi; *vide* "Letter to Manibehn Patel", 28-3-1927.

[2] The source has these words in English.

[3] *ibid.*

is constructive work which will win swaraj; it is a philanthropic activity and is a part of dharma. I hope, therefore, that everyone will enthusiastically respond to this appeal and the sum of one lakh will be collected in no time, and also that honest people will come forward and enroll themselves immediately as volunteers for this work.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 27-3-1927

230. PROGRESS OF KHADI

I have not been able to publish Lakshmidas's letters describing his tour, for I have had no time at all to read and arrange them properly. A good number of useful letters from him have accumulated. I have decided to spare time somehow and publish some of the material. I give below[1], from among these letters, those describing the activities of the Chandranagar Pravartak Sangh and the Khadi Pratishthan Kala Shala.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 27-3-1927

231. CONDITIONS OF COW-PROTECTION[2]

It has been a matter of sorrow for me to have taken up the burden of cow-protection during the ending years of my life. But there need be no sorrow when burdens come not of one's seeking but when they seek one irresistibly. And so has been for me the case with cow-protection.

Recently at Ghatkopar, Bombay, I had the occasion to visit the institution[3] of the humanitarian society ably managed by its secretary Sjt. Nagindas. It is now conducting an experiment in dairying with the laudable object ultimately of replacing the illmanaged and disease-breeding private dairies of Bombay which are situated in the heart of the city and where there is no exercise ground for the cattle, and where the best cattle are prematurely given to the butcher's knife.

[1] Not translated here

[2] This was written on or before March 28, 1927; *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 28-3-1927.

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Sarvajanik Jivadaya Khata, Ghatkopar", 24-3-1927.

But though the institution is ably managed, it has some inherent defects to which upon its invitation I had to draw the Society's attention. Incidentally I ventured to lay down the conditions of cow-protection which are well worth repeating:

1. Every such institution should be situated out in the open where it is possible to have plenty, i.e., thousands of acres, of open ground capable of growing fodder and giving exercise to the cattle. If I had the management of all the goshalas, I should sell the majority of the present ones at handsome profits and buy suitable plots in the vicinity except where the existing places may be needed for mere receiving depots.

2. Every goshala should be turned into a model dairy and a model tannery. Every single head of dead cattle should be retained and scientifically treated and the hide, bones, entrails, etc., should be used to the best advantage. I should regard the hide of dead cattle to be sacred and usable as distinguished from the hide and other parts of slaughtered cattle, which should be deemed to be unfit for human use or at least for Hindu use.

3. Urine and dung in many goshalas are thrown away. This I regard as criminal waste.

4. All goshalas should he managed under scientific supervision and guidance.

5. Properly managed every goshala should be and can be made self-supporting, donations being used for its extension. The idea is never to make these institutions profit-making concerns, all profits being utilized towards buying maimed and disabled cattle and buying in the open market *all* cattle destined for the slaughterhouse.

6. This consummation is impossible if the goshalas take in buffaloes, goats, etc. So far as I can see, much as I would like it to be otherwise. not until the whole of India becomes vegetarian, can goats and sheep be saved from the butcher's knife. Buffaloes can be saved if we will not insist upon buffalo's milk and religiously avoid it in preference to cow's milk. In Bombay on the other hand, the practice is to take bufffalo's milk *instead* of cow's milk. Physicians unanimously declare that cow's milk is medically superior to buffalo's milk and it is the opinion of dairy experts that cow's milk can by judicious management be made much richer than it is at present found to be. I hold that it is impossible to save both the buffalo and the cow. The cow can be saved only if buffalo-breeding is given up.

The buffalo cannot be used for agricultural purposes on a wide scale. It is just possible to save the existing stock, if we will cease to breed it any further. It is no part of religion to breed buffaloes or for that matter cows. We breed for our own uses. It is cruelty to the cow as well as to the buffalo to breed the latter. Humanitarians should know that Hindu shepherds even at the present moment mercilessly kill young male buffaloes as they cannot profitably feed them. To save the cow and her progeny—and that only is a feasible proposition—the Hindus will forgo profits from the trade concerning the cow and her products, but never otherwise. Religion to be true must satisfy what may be termed humanitarian economics, i.e., where the income and the expenditure balance each other. The attainment of such economies is just possible with the cow and the cow only with the assistance of donations for some years from pious Hindus. It should be remembered that this great humanitarian attempt is being made in the face of a beef-eating world. Not till the whole world turns predominantly vegetarian is it possible to make any advance upon the limitations I have sought to describe. To succeed to that extent is to open the way, for future generations, to further efforts. To overstep the limitation is to consign the cow for ever to the slaughter-house in addition to the buffalo and the other animals.

Hindus and the humanitarian societies in charge of goshalas and pinjrapoles, if they are wisely religious, will bear the foregoing conditions of cow-protection in mind and proceed immediately to give effect to them.

Young India, 31-3-1927

232. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA MUKERJEE

March 28, 1927

MY DEAR SATIS BABU,

I know you are thinking of me. To say "don't" would be cruel. But to say "pray" would be just. Ill or well, living or dying, should not matter to you or to me. Anxiety would not add one moment to my allotted time. Nothing is yet fixed as to what I am to do next. I am allowing myself to be guided by the doctors as much as is possible for me to do.

"Take no thought for the morrow" is a beautiful saying recorded of Jesus. सुख दुखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयौजयौ[1] has a powerful appeal for me at the present moment. The underlying thought is the same in both the sayings.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a copy C.W. 9171. Courtesy: K. P. S. Malani

233. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

NIPANI,
Silence Day [*March 28, 1927*][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

You must not be alarmed at my illness. You should remove the inconveniences to Bhai Bomanji and do nothing more. He needs the commode and other things upstairs.

Mrityunjaya promised to observe discipline, relying on which I suggested that Vidyavati and Prabhavati may he accommodated within the Ashram precincts. Do we not ourselves live there? I trust Mrityunjaya's word as much as I trust other persons'. He is a very polite and truthful boy. He has all of Rajendra Babu's qualities. But you may, of course, accommodate him somewhere else if you want to.

Why is the Vijapur case hanging fire? We will not give any interest. How can we? Does Deshpande Saheb decline to work?

Now you must write out the thing for Sir Gangaram.

I am writing to Chhotelal. Write what you can about cow-protection. Let us add no more buffaloes to our stock. Read my article[3] in *Young India*.

Purushottamdas has expressed an altogether different opinion about the Ramachandra lift. Please consider his arguments with patience. I hope you have arranged for the spindle and have written to Apte. You must have sent over the essay on spinning.

It is good that you gave up your vow of taking salt-free food. Sharadabehn says she would do four hours' spinning and carding, and whatever sewing there may be as also help in the kitchen as much

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 38: "Pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat—treating them alike."

[2] Inferred from the contents

[3] *Vide* "Conditions of Cow-protection", 28-3-1927.

It is good that you gave up your vow of taking salt-free food. Sharadabehn says she would do four hours' spinning and carding, and whatever sewing there may be as also help in the kitchen as much as she can. Now let me know how much she has been able to carry out.

If I can hold on till June I want to come over for the Parishad I can do so even earlier.

Kaka must have himself read to you my letter to him. I have letters in this connection from Kaka and the other teachers. Kaka has withdrawn his attack on hearing of my indisposition. I wish you would all take decisions on merits. You should attach no importance to my illness. You will not find it in my writing. Today it is just an illness, tomorrow there may be death. Why think about it? Or let us make our decisions after reckoning on the inevitability of death. So that it is no special factor to be considered.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

My programme has not yet been settled.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9126. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

234. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

NIPANI,
Silence Day [*March 28, 1927*]

DEAR SISTERS,

Do not worry if I tell you that I have been ill. Today it is only a small illness. In a few years life itself will pass away. But what does it matter? The *Gita* clearly teaches us and we too see daily ourselves that those who are born die and those who die are born again. Everyone repays his debt more or less and passes away.

I don't say this lightly, but quite seriously. If it were not for human passion there will be no disease. A person who has no passion has also to die. But he drops gently down like a ripe fruit. I hope and pray that I should drop like that. I ever have this hope and wish. But who knows? Passions I still have and they play their part. The state of complete freedom from passion can be realized only through personal experience.

Devote yourselves entirely to your duties. Youth is given to us to conquer passions. We should not allow it to pass away fruitless. Safeguard your purity. Do not give up the spinning-wheel. As far as possible do not leave the Ashram either.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3643

235. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

NIPANI,
Silence Day, March 28, 1927

CHI MANI,

Don't waste a thought on my illness. We take no note of the years passing by. Now, like advancing age, is not disease too written into men's destiny, prone as they are to passion? Some pass away in the natural course; but go all of us must. Where then is the sense in lamenting over it?

There is yet no telegram about you; I expect one any time. Be prepared. What is your progress in Sanskrit? I hope your carding and spinning can now be regarded as all right, can they not?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Though this is written on the same day as the letter[1] to Ashram Women, it will reach you later because it is past the time of clearance.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Munibehn Patelne, p 54

236. LETTER TO RADHA

March 28, 1927

CHI. RADHA,

Did you forget you were forbidden to fall ill? Do not tell me that those who live in glass-houses should not throw stones at others. Well, I had my own illusions and I over-worked myself, for which God has laid me low. But what had you been kicking against? Now forget it, we are faced with the fact of your illness. Well, then, learn to be cheerful in spite of it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

237. LETTER TO PYARELAL NAYYAR

March 28, 1927

I hope you are not ruffled to hear that I have had an attack. An attack may prove fatal. The present one should he regarded as a clear notice: If not today, then some other day—I have stipulated the period till the 13th of April, 1928. But then one who has escaped a cata-

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

strophe may live for a hundred years. If we live we will spin and if we cannot spin we will refuse to live. Isn't that all right?

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

238. LETTER TO JAMNALAL

March 28, 1927

[CHI.] JAMNALALJI,

You ought not to have been upset. The light is bound to go out one day; now it has only dimmed. It is all the same to us whether it dims or dies away. That which gives light must grow faint and go out.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

239. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

March 28, 1927

CHI. KAKA,

You seem to be working the wrong way. I may put it thus: the relation continues to be like that between master and maid. You did not think of your earlier resolves; did not consider the earlier letter nor did you wait for Maganlal to come. I have letters from all the teachers. Much of what I have said to you applies to them as well. I shall accept whatever you decide after consulting Maganlal. Don't let my illness come in the way. Make no tentative decision. There should be no violence if you reach a decision on merits. Regard the Ashram and the school as belonging to you all and do what you please without taking my presence into account.

Don't worry on my account. You can all be regarded as wise, so I do not have to cheer you up. Now what is there to follow except death? Let that too come by the 13th of April, 1928. This interval is not too short for the attainment of swaraj in my lifetime. I am growing more and more convinced that only the reign of the spinning-wheel will bring swaraj; dedicate your lives to establishing it, if you all have the faith I have.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

240. LETTER TO VELANBEHN

March 28, 1927

Here is one sick person asking another why the latter has fallen ill. Now never mind if you have fallen ill. I hope you are cheerful as ever; or are you not? In our ignorance we might say we cannot prevent or control diseases. But can it not be said that being cheerful in spite of ill health rests entirely with us? So never lose spirit, though ill, and always remember Rama.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

241. LETTER TO ASHRAM CHILDREN

March 28, 1927

BOYS AND GIRLS,

You are all students of the *Gita,* and this study should always weigh with you. If therefore you are alarmed at the news of my illness you should look to the *Gita* for assuagement. I am stuck after I finished translating the second chapter. I am therefore dwelling with delight on that chapter. You too should do the same—the body cannot escape due chastisement. What is there to lament over life and death? Those who die are to be born again and those who live are destined to die. Why then be glad about life and lament over death? Yes, there is one thing to remember. Having known this we should discover our duty and then stick to it till the end. You for your part have found out your goal in life, by reasoning perhaps or through faith. Now beware of slipping. You will then continue to play as usual without being affected by news of my collapse, not to speak of just being laid up. If anyone talks of my total collapse you should prove it to be incon-sequential by carrying on your task. May I expect this from you?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

242. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

NIPANI,
Silence Day [*March 28, 1927*]

CHI. MANILAL AND CHI. SUSHILA,

I have got letters from you both. I must say I was pained. The slightest deviation from truth pierces me like a dart. I can forgive Sushila's slip considering her a child with no self-mastery, but there was no excuse for you to have slipped. Now what is done is done—-make no more promise to me; it is enough if you keep whatever you have already made.

Don't worry on account of my illness. There is certainly no need for you to be here. You can serve me best by always being faithful in your own duties. Fleeting are the bonds of flesh; they will not endure. Why lament over this, why brood over it?

With a wish that both of you should be noble and illustrious,

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 4714. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

243. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Silence Day [*March 28, 1927*][1]

Do not be scared by the news of my illness. Being scared is forbidden for all. You must go on doing your work as if nothing had happened to me.

I visited Chi. Mama[2]. She is terribly worn in body. She can recover only if God so wills. It will be good if on completion of one year, you visit your relatives and do some heartsearching. Chi. Mama will feel happy. Go and see her and give her what advice you think proper. Also hear what Kishorelalbhai may have to say.

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's illness and the addressee's daughter's critical condition this letter appears to have been written at the end of March, 1927. The last Monday in the month was March 28.

[2] Mama D. Saraiya, addressee's daughter, who died soon after; *vide* "Letter to Gangabehn Vaidya", 10-4-1927.

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Do not be scared by the news of my illness. Being scared is forbidden

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 11382; also C.W. 8826

244. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

NIPANI,
Silence Day [*March 28, 1927*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. Do not be worried in the least by anything you may hear about me[2]. I am watching what happens. I shall not write more.

You must have received the bangles.

For the present, Devdas has gone to Amaravati with Janakibehn[3]. I have told him to go to you whenever he desires.

I hope your health is improving.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The addressee received the letter on March 30, 1927. The Monday prior to this was March 28, when Gandhiji was at Nipani.

[2] Gandhiji had developed high blood-pressure and had been advised complete rest.

[3] Janakidevi Bajaj

245. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

NIPANI,
Silence Day [*March 28, 1927*][1]

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

Do not get frightened. Today the cart has fallen into a ditch, tomorrow it will break. Sooner or later that will happen. Why need we fear it? Remain engrossed in your work. It will be enough if we ceaselessly strive to reach what we believe to be our ideal and do not give it up even if we break in the effort. I am being looked after quite well. You need not therefore worry on that account. It is not yet decided where I should stay and what regimen I should follow. It will be in a day or two. If Shankerlal arrives there he will read this, otherwise send the letter wherever he is. Worrying will not help in the least.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 11571

246. LETTER TO E. STANLEY JONES

NIPANI,
March 30, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

My answer to your letter is 'yes'. It means the discovery of God's laws. God has laid me low for the moment.[2] But He is infinitely merciful.

My apologies to Mrs. Jones. I have not forgotten her letter.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : C. W. 11343. Courtesy : Mrs. Eunice Jones Mathews

[1] Inferred from the reference to Gandhiji's ill health and his stay at Nipani.

[2] Gandhiji took ill on March 24 and was advised rest by doctors in a hill station.

247. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

[*End of March 1927*][1]

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got the letter you wrote before you left. I hope you have arrived safe.

I had sent a radio set for you, but before it could reach you your steamer had left the wharf. I had it sent within the time fixed by you.

One who has failed to keep one's word should become more resolute. You could not keep your promise, so now you have resolved not to make any. Remember this is not the way to rise; it only leads to one's fall. May God help you . . .[2]

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 4715. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

248. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI[3]

[After *March 31, 1927*]

It does not matter if you omit to give a stamp[ed receipt] when the party agrees. There should be no rudeness, that is all.

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4277. Courtesy: Chand Tyagi

249. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*April 1, 1927*][4]

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter and also wire[5]. You must not be perturbed. The crash was bound to come some day. You must forget me in the body. You can't have it for ever. You must do the work in front of you. I must

[1] The addressees were to sail for South Africa immediately after their marriage.

[2] The rest of the letter is not available.

[3] In reply to his letter of March 31

[4] From the postmark

[5] In reply to Mahadev Desai's telegram dated March 27, 1927 from Nipani, which read: "Bapu has narrowly escaped attack of apoplexy. High blood-pressure still continues. Doctors ascribe it to overwork, nervous exhaustion and advise complete rest, cancellation all programmes, hot months at any rate. Leaving for Belgaum twenty-eighth."

not write more for fear of offending the doctor and those around me. I am taking as much rest as I think I need. But I cannot pamper the body overmuch. You must promise not to worry. Merge yourself in your work.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

Movement uncertain yet.

SHRIMATI MIRABEHN

BHAGWADBHAKTI ASHRAM

RAMPURA

REWARI

From the original: C.W. 5213. Courtesy: Mirabehn

250. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

AMBOLI,
Friday, April 1, 1927

HIGH PRIEST OF THE LOWLY,

My health has tied me down to the bed; yesterday therefore I could go through your [draft] speech from one end to the other. A person like me could learn a little from it but it is my humble opinion that as a presidential address it will not do. I do not write this in exercise of any right of "veto" that you have conferred on me. I am only arguing with you as a friend.

The speech gives no evidence of a sense of proportion. We seem to have lost it. Another reason is that it violates the implicit understanding with the Rana Saheb. A third reason is that the speech does not suit the kind of audience we are going to muster.

I say there is no sense of proportion because this speech does not take into account the past convention. There is a breach of our implicit understanding with the Rana Saheb that there should be no personal criticism, etc. And the speech will be neither appreciated nor read by the sections whom we are at the moment trying to rouse. If you follow *Gulliver's Travels* and conceive an imaginary country in which to apply your correctives, you could say all that you have said; or if you emulate Aesop you could have a bird of your choice

perched on every tree in Saurashtra to expound your doctrines through their chatter. And then you could have instructed us while you amused us. Or like Vyasa you may create sub-human and super-human characters, reject the past, compile a history of mankind and then give us a miniature *Mahabharata* of Saurashtra.

We needs must train a new class of audience for the speech that you have drafted or that has been drafted for you. Our first task therefore will be to annul the constitution adopted at Bhavnagar. I may perhaps agree to this. And then we should call a conference of such select people as would be competent to appreciate and also act upon the thoughts contained in your speech. We should place before them your suggestions and have them implemented.

I would therefore make the following suggestions: You should call a small committee and place your ideas before them. You may then lay the foundation of your speech as was the practice followed by the Congress in the past. Speeches by Wedderburn, Webb, Bradlaugh and others used to be placed before Pherozeshah, Gokhale and others for approval. In this way a tradition was maintained. This state of affairs, I know, came down to the times of Sinha. Your speech belongs to that tradition. I do not suggest that it is of no use; we want a new society to make use of it. You cannot address such speeches to peasants.

Whatever happens to me the Conference must be held in June. I suggest that at the same time we should decide upon the constitution of the Conference and first put our own house in order. And then start immediately a new era by convening the newly constituted Conference. But I cannot explain all this in a letter. I think there is no sense in discussing individual points when I am recommending a radical revision of your draft.

Though of course I write this, at the moment I am so weak I cannot invite any one of you to come here soon. You should therefore confer with Devchandbhai, Fulchand and Amritlal and do whatever you have to. I would also invite Patwari, Pattani Saheb and Shukla Saheb to this meeting. I would acquaint myself with everyone's opinion and do what appears good for us. But then that is how I think. If you go ahead you should also obtain Vallabhbhai's advice. Whatever you do let it be based on solid foundations.

Wishing success in all your noble efforts,

BAPU

[PS.]

You can ask me anything when you write to me; whether it does any good can be judged by you or God.

Friday—Belgaum[1]

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

251. DISCUSSION WITH DR. JIVARAJ MEHTA[2]

April 3, 1927[3]

GANDHIJI: How long may I accept the hospitality of a Chief[4] who has been kindness itself ? And apart from the climate, I can be as restful at Sabarmati as at any other place. It is not the heat that matters, though I am confident of dodging even that heat by various devices. And if we are to identify ourselves with the poor, surely we should understand that a vast mass of our people live and work and toil in excessive heat of the sun, and never think of going for a change when an illness overtakes them.

The argument is unanswerable though the doctor who concerns himself mainly with physiological considerations may brush it aside. But Gandhiji has had always the good fortune of having as his friends doctors who, at least so far as he is concerned, are prepared to consult not merely the needs of his body, but the needs of his soul, and try to suit their advice as regards keeping of the body to his mental and spiritual predilections.

GANDHIJI: If then I am merely to vegetate, I must be content to recuperate in my own place.

DR. MEHTA: But you will not vegetate. Your rest is work itself, for it will set you up and make the body stand another spell of strain.

But that rest I can have at Sabarmati.

Yes, you may have it, and yet the heat might affect the blood-pressure, and retard recovery.

[1] As in the source. The letter was apparently written in Belgium but Amboli address was given at the top for the addressee's benefit.

[2] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"; as a result of this discussion Gandhiji agreed to go to Nandi Hills.

[3] From a report in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 2-4-1927 and *The Hindu*, 6-4-1927

[4] Chief of Savantwadi at whose bungalow Gandhiji was staying in Amboli

If you can find me some sort of work at the hill-station you propose, or if there is near prospect of my taking up the thread of my interrupted programme, I might reconcile myself to Bangalore or some such place.

Work is there enough for you and always. I am not going to cut you off from your normal activity. The strain you were putting yourself to was abnormal. As soon as you begin to feel better people may see you, offer the purses they may have collected, workers may present you reports of work, and receive suggestions and advice from you. All I want you to do is to continue to direct, without taking any actual share in the work yourself. You do as much light reading as possible, and write your autobiography but not attend to piles of correspondence.

I am glad. But what is light reading? Reading that does not tax me, isn't it?

Young India, 14-4-1927

252. DISCUSSION ON NATIONAL WEEK AT AMBOLI[1]

[*April 4, 1927*]

Two days before the National Week[2] Gandhiji asked how we intended to spend the week at Amboli. Twelve hours' continuous plying of the charkha, said I. That was far from satisfying him. He said:

Twelve hours' is all right, I shall also contribute my hour. But you must go to Savantwadi and hawk khadi there during the week, you must try to go to the untouchables' quarters, inquire about their welfare, see if they have schools, wells, etc. Even when Devdas and you go to Savantwadi, I shall see that the wheel is kept turning.

Young India, 21-4-1927

253. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 4, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

Though you absolve me from having to write to you I cannot deny myself the joy of writing to you every Monday. Writing love letters is a recreation, not a task one would seek an excuse to shirk. I am better though still weak.

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"
[2] April 6 to 13

Dr. Mehta came all the way from Bombay to examine the body. He is emphatically of opinion that all touring should be given up for some months to come. He does not forbid reading in the bed or even occasional letters to friends. If I take full rest he thinks that I would regain most of the lost strength but never be strong enough to undertake the exacting tours such as the one that came to an abrupt end on the 25th ultimo. We shall see. If the tour is finally cancelled, I must take my rest at the Ashram. I shall come to a decision today or tomorrow. The probability is that it will be cancelled. Even so I shall not move out before Tuesday next week.

But why are you having these attacks?[1] Is it mere spiritual agony or has the climate also anything to do with it? If you need a bracing climate you must move out. How do you find the climate there?

It was quite right not to have gone to Bharatpur. If Shanta is there, please give the enclosed to her.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5214. Courtesy: Mirabehn

254. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Silence Day, Chaitra Sud 3 [*April 4, 1927*][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I am eager to know Sir Gangaram's experience of farming.

I like your co-operation with the teachers, but only if it is sincere and spontaneous. If it has come about owing to my illness there will again be some snags. I yearn for such involuntary co-ordination as there is between one eye and the other. This is possible only if we look upon all people as our own. Experience tells us that a team of good men is better than a mere conglomeration of good results. Disinterested action consists in the faith that everything will ultimately lead to good results.

Did you do anything about penetrating the villages?

Take immediate action with regard to the water problem.

[1] "The struggle in the heart was going on." (Mirabehn)

[2] From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary

How is the dairy working? Examine coolly Bhai Purushottam's arguments against the Ramachandra lift, before you dispose of them.

I shall be there soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7763. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

255. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

AMBOLI, NEAR SAVANTWADI, KONKAN,
Monday [*April 4, 1927*][1]

CHI. JANAKIBEHN,

Devdas had to leave you but I did not like it. I could see, however, he could not help it. Maybe now he can return in a few days.

How are you now? Have you been regaining strength? Any complaints ?

Is Chi. Kamala studying anything? Do not write to me yourself but get Kamala to write to me a long letter.

None should worry about my health. At any rate now I am keeping well. The old are on the verge of death, are not they? Therefore under this or that pretext they must leave their old abodes and inhabit new ones if they please. But if they would rather leave the cage altogether they might soar in the air and enjoy freedom. But then our case is similar to that of a prisoner who, owing to his long detention, comes to be attached to his cell. We do not wish to give up the body because we identify ourselves with it. I do not know what I wish. As far as my reason goes I do not find it worth caring for. But poor reason is helpless before delusion. The truth will be known when the end comes.

Who is at present attending on you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2880

[1] From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary

256. LETTER TO RAMDAS

April 4, 1927

Not for one moment should we forget the fact that we are poor. It appears you have come to realize it.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

257. LETTER TO ASHRAM CHILDREN

April 4, 1927

CHILDREN,

Look here, make the Satyagraha Week[1] a success. Those who cannot be interested in the *Gita,* those who have no ear for the music of the spinning-wheel, do not at all understand life. Since we ourselves are the fountains of delight, we should know how to derive it from tunes which would bring us felicity. Therein lies real art. It is servile to seek delight from without; true happiness lies in evoking delight from within. If we cannot impart this knowledge to you now, all of us would be adjudged not as teachers but as mere barbers. How can anyone call you unworthy disciples?

I am fine.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

258. LETTER TO HEMAPRABHA DEVI DAS GUPTA

Silence Day [*April 4, 1927*][2]

DEAR SISTER,

No letter from you these many days; please write to me if you have the strength. Such letters are no nuisance to me, they do me good.

[1] April 6 to 13

[2] Gangadharrao had left for Mysore State before the 10th.

I am all right. Ba, Mahadev, Devdas, Krishnadas and others are with me. Rajaji and Gangadharrao too are here. It's a quiet place.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1662

259. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

April 6, 1927

MY DEAR FRIEND,

This is from a sick-bed. I had hoped to see you in Bangalore and press my suit. But it cannot be for some time yet. I have no reply to my wire which I hope you did get. You will break the heart of Indians in South Africa if you do not go.[1] Mrs. Sastri should certainly go with you.[2] I do not know that it is an advantage to have both host and hostess as brilliant talkers in English. You will be her interpreter or you can take for her one of the gifted Tamil graduate girls of whom you have so many. She will be her companion, teacher and interpreter. What did Queen Victoria do when she was hostess to the Shah of Persia who knew no English? And you can make it clear to Lord Irwin that you would want to be here when the Royal Commission comes. Lastly, there will be no fear of pinpricks whilst Lord Irwin is Viceroy. He knows you so well. I urge you to reconsider your decision and go even if it is for a year. You alone can inaugurate the working of the compact, you alone can set the tone.

May God guide you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, p. 164

[1] As the first Agent of the Government of India

[2] Mrs. Sastri did not accompany Mr. Sastri.

260. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVALEKAR

AMBOLI, SAVANTWADI STATE,
April 6, 1927

BHAI SATAVALEKAR,

I am confined to a sick-bed. I could therefore easily get the time to read your book on *brahmacharya.* I liked the book. For years I have regarded you as a devotee of truth; hence this letter.

1. Do you regard the *asanas* [postures] as an infallible means *to brahmacharya*?

2. If this is true does it not mean that a man who practises *asanas* retains his vital fluid under all circumstances? Does it also mean that such an aspirant becomes free from passion ? You are perhaps aware of a certain process in Western medicine by which a man can retain the fluid but is not freed from passion. This method is followed by those who propose to enjoy sex without losing the fluid. Do our systems mean this thing when they speak of becoming *urdhvareta?* If it were so, the state of the *urdhvareta* would be detrimental to pure *brahmacharya.* And then there would be a lurking danger of harm in retaining semen with the help of the *asanas. A* friend from Delhi writes to me saying that with the help of *asanas* he has attained *brahmacharya* to such an extent that he can take any kind or quantity of food and enjoy almost all pleasures without losing his vital fluid. I did not continue further correspondence with him as I was not impressed by his letter. Another friend writes to say that with the help of *pranayama*[1], *asanas* and the like the final stage of *brahmacharya* can be attained within six months. Him I know. He is a simple straightforward man with no guile. And he goes on insisting that I should practise *asanas* and the like. I have not yet acted on his advice but your book has moved me. I came in contact with many students and I cannot satisfy them all by my own experiments. Besides restrictions of diet, etc., all my experiments are purely psychological. I write this as it appears to me that a section of the student community has fallen so low that *asanas* and the like can [alone] be of any help to them.

[1] Breath-control

3. Do you have personal experience of what you write about *brahmacharya* in plants,[1] etc.? You would be aware that Western scholars of natural sciences nowadays write against *brahmacharya*. I have refuted their arguments with the help of my little experience and by the exercise of whatever talents I have. But it is essential that these Western treatises are examined by our own experts since they greatly influence our young men.

4. I have also gone through your book *Suryabhedan Vyayam*. Do you think there is no harm if a man like me takes that exercise merely with the aid of the book?

5. Am I right if I find a slight difference between your method and the rules laid down in the commentaries on the *Rigveda* and the other texts for interpreting the hymns?

I shall be in Amboli till the 18th of this month.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 12771

261. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

AMBOLI [*via*] BELGAUM,
Satyagraha Day [*April 6, 1927*]

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I have written to you but have had no reply.

Please see that my capacity to raise funds has gone down considerably owing to my failing health. I had made some provision but it is not available at the moment.

Had I not had the attack I could have somehow coped with the situation.

I had asked Mahadev to write to Devchandbhai about the speech [drafted] by Bhai Amritlal Bapa. It has to be examined carefully. I think the [Kathiawar] Political Conference and the charkha movement should be kept apart. Let it be like this. There are three heads of expenditure which can be arranged as follows:

[1] Non-germination or passivity in germination in plants and limiting copulation to periods of 'heat' in animals

1. Entrusting khadi activity to the Charkha Sangh as it will survive me and carry on in whatever manner it can.

2. The schools and the *Antyaja* work be handed over to the Vidyapith which too will survive me.

And an independent activity for Kathiawar.

We have not yet been able to make separate arrangements to run these three programmes on their own. I can therefore make only these suggestions. Khadi activities can also be entrusted to the Gujarat Khadi Mandal. This can be finalized after we have a discussion with Bhai Lakshmidas. Besides these three, no other programme is, at present, likely to engage my attention. I see however that there ought to be an independent institution for those pursuing other interests and the Political Conference may serve this purpose. But then these are the sick thoughts of a sick man.

You should contact Devchandbhai and others and find out a way after cool deliberation. If you want to see me you should all come at your own expense; that too a fortnight hence. I think at the moment I have not the strength to discuss the matter at length.

God willing, I hope to keep the appointed date in the month of June. But I can say nothing definite just now.

What you do, do unhesitatingly and dispassionately like voluntary trustees.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Most probably on the 19th I shall be taken from Belgaum to Nandi Hills, near Bangalore, where we are to reach on the 20th.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2856. Courtesy: Sharadabehn Shah

262. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

AMBOLI,
Chaitra Sud 5 [*April 6, 1927*]

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I have gone through the letter from *murabbi*[1] Revashankarbhai; what he says is right. You have got to know the rules to be observed at meetings and those governing the institution. A copy of the resolutions passed must immediately be sent to the Treasurer. Are there your initials. . .[2] to the other members also . . .[3] the resolution itself. Now you should send to Revashankarbhai . . .[4] copies of the resolutions adopted at Wardha as also of those passed at the general meeting.

It would also be right to send copies to members of the Committee.

Write to the newly-elected members requesting them to send in their acceptance.

How is Champa pulling on? A copy of the resolutions, etc., should have appeared in *Navajivan.* I forgot to give you the hint because I left in a hurry. But then would you not take up the burden of all this worry?

Hari-ichchha and others may live rent-free. Consult Maganlal about accommodating them and then ask them to come over. If you find they cannot be accommodated with anyone we will have to wait for a while.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I have already written to Revashankarbhai to pass on the money.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7391. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1] Respected
[2] Illegible in the source
[3] *ibid.*
[4] *ibid.*

263. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Chaitra Sud 5 [*April 6, 1927*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have been getting your letters. There is absolutely no breach of vow in your going to Chi. Mama. A visit on such an occasion was naturally expected. Now you should return to your place in the Ashram only after Chi. Mama is completely at rest. You should make Chi. Mama learn this formula: It is none of our concern whether the body falls or lasts, the soul cannot depart. Why should we bother about the body? We should be satisfied with thought of the immortal self.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am fine.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8825. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

264. WHAT SHALL I DO?

The Satyagraha Week has come again. By the time this appears in print, one day of the precious week will have gone. I would urge the reader not to fritter away the week by asking the question, 'What shall *we* do?', but to make the best possible use of it by asking, 'What shall *I* do?' There was a time when we could usefully ask and did ask the other question. And if each one will do his or her duty to the fullest measure possible, we shall soon be able to ask, 'What shall *we* do next?'

The foundation of satyagraha as of nation-building is undoubtedly self-purification, self-dedication, selflessness. Let each one ask oneself: 'How then can I purify myself in terms of the nation?' Rectitude of private character is surely the beginning of the structure. If my private character is foul, I am like "a sounding brass and tinkling cymbal". If then I am not right inside, I must this very instant purge myself and be a fit vessel for dedication. Government cannot

[1] The addressee's daughter Mama was ill and passed away in 1927. *Vide* "Letter to Damodar Lakshmidas" and "Letter to Gangabehn Vaidya", 10-4-1927.

help me or interfere with me here. I must be the sole author of my making or unmaking.

Having ensured a pure personal character I must ask the next question, what shall I do as a national servant? If a Hindu, I hate the Mussalman or a person of another faith, I must at once make an honourable peace with him. If I regard any single person as an untouchable, I must blot the sin from my heart and hug the one whom I have hitherto in my arrogance or ignorance regarded as untouchable and as a token I must render him some personal service, be it only going to his quarters and calling the children together and playing with them. In these things again, I need no support from the Government and yet in doing these things whole-heartedly I have surely brought swaraj nearer for the effort and rendered myself fitter for joint service whenever the occasion arises.

Is there a drink shop near me? I must try to wean an erring brother from going to the house of his own destruction. We began this work gloriously in 1921. Our violence brought it to an inglorious end. Individual effort in this matter is still possible even though the atmosphere for wholesale mass action is for the moment wanting.

And last but not least, I must do my share of spinning, if I have but faith in its capacity to serve the poorest, so graphically described in Markham's words reproduced[1] in last week's *Young India*. I must hawk Khadi. If I have the power, I must induce my neighbour to spin for the sake of *Daridranarayana* and if he or she wears foreign cloth, I must induce him or her to discard it.

Shri Vallabhbhai has approached, during this National Week, the Gujaratis living in Kathiawar, Gujarat and in foreign countries for donations for the benefit of the suppressed classes in Gujarat. His appeal is for one lakh of rupees to support the activities being carried on at present for the uplift of the depressed classes in Gujarat. I would like to enrol myself as Vallabhbhai's volunteer and move from house to house, begging bowl in hand, to plead with my dear friends to fill it, and also persuade them to enrol themselves as volunteers for the collection, and persuade also school-going girls and young women to do likewise, with the permission of their parents, and help in swelling the contents of Vallabhbhai's purse.[2]

[1] Under the title, "Whom Khadi Stands for"; *vide* Appendix *ibid*, 31-3-1927.

[2] This paragraph is taken from *Navajivan*, 10-4-1927.

This is by no means an exhaustive list. I have simply given an indication of the enormous possibilities of individual effort. Let each one find out for himself or herself the best way of service during this week of privilege. The seeker will be amazed to discover in the search after individual action, the immense possibilities of silent, sustained and fruitful common action. Let not the immensity of a common programme daze or paralyse us. What is true of the individual will be tomorrow true of the whole nation if individuals will but refuse to lose heart and hope.

Young India, 7-4-1927

265. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

April 7, 1927

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your sweet letter. You will see that the tour is cancelled for the time being. I assure you that I shall take no rash steps and try my best to give the system rest. Pray do not worry on my account. Do you, Hemaprabha Devi, the boy and Tarini get well?

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

Amboli till 18th instant and then Mysore

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
HOME VILLA
GIRIDIH

From a photostat: G.N. 1566

266. LETTER TO NANALAL KAVI

April 7, 1927

The poet says that Damayanti[1], though innocent, was charged with stealing. It was her bad luck. Something like it has happened to me. I took pains and fondly wrote out a harmless little letter praising you, which you did not like. Every morning I ask forgiveness of God even for any unconscious faults. Won't you please pardon me this

[1] Damayanti in the *Mahabharata* was accused of stealing because the fish handed over to her for cooking would come to life the moment she touched them.

unintentional slip, for which I apologize to you? Unless you forgive me I will not stop begging pardon.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

267. LETTER TO GOKALBHAI

April 7, 1927

I have your letter. You were certainly right in not reading out my message.[1] A message which the addressee does not like must not be read out. It would have been better if you had not published it in the other journals. You would have missed nothing by withholding it. Moreover a poet's anger, I think, makes him into a milch cow[2]. I will swallow all his displeasures but even from at a distance I will utilize his talents. Please do not worry; pass on the enclosed letter[3] to him.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

268. LETTER TO NANABHAI

April 8, 1927

I always had faith in *pranayama, asanas* and the like. But I could not try any of them for want of a proper guru. Luckily now I am on a sick-bed so I get something to read and ruminate. I am further inclined towards *asanas* on reading Satavalekar's articles on the subject. Being a disciple of Nathuram Sharma, you have, I expect, some experience in this subject. I knew him, but he did not impress me. Some four or five members of our family came under his influence. But being inconspicuous I could not learn *asanas,* etc., from him. Now I would like to know about your experience of the same. Have you studied this? If you have, have you kept up the practice? Please, if you don't mind, tell me all you know about this.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] On the occasion of poet Nanalal Kavi's birthday
[2] Whose kicks one may suffer with gratitude
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

269. LETTER TO AMRITLAL

April 8, 1927

BHAISHRI AMRITLAL,

You must have seen my letter[1] to Amritlal Bapa. I want you to look into it. After all, his speech has been drafted by you. I want this matter to be settled purely on the basis of principle. We must not let my personal feelings interfere with it. And if it is a question of my feelings I am all for what suits the atmosphere in Kathiawar and is ultimately good for its people. I am for khadi because I see advantage in it; but how could it prove beneficial if the climate is against it? Oxygen is vital for our breathing but what is it to the trees? And you all are the life of Kathiawar. If I cannot convince you all about a thing, either I should not do it at all or do it in a different way.

I am aware of your ability. I very much appreciate some of the things you do. I count you among those serving the motherland. You have courage which you should exercise to encourage others and contend with me, if you have to, without hesitation. Do what you want to do, not what I want you to. That alone will be the right thing. Surely we cannot shine in borrowed feathers.

At the moment I can take no interest in activities other than khadi or similar constructive work. Being thus engaged, if I have any more to live, it might some day occur to me to offer battle within the limits of satyagraha and if the struggle does not come off in my own lifetime it will be taken up by such of my successors as can do it.

Bloody revolutions just do not appeal to me. I never wish to kill even a venomous snake, not to speak of a venomous man. I know the world has gone in for bloody revolution too for winning freedom. I wish to spend all my life trying to prove its futility. I take delight in this only and so I never lose patience. All the ways that occur to me are but ways of peace. That for me is the straight and therefore the shortest path. You should lend me your support only if it appeals to you and to those who look to you for guidance; otherwise, it is best to leave me alone as it has been said: "One's own dharma is superior to"[2], etc. Lying in a sick-bed, I get more time to think and therefore I am trying to clarify our views and my own.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Dcsai

[1] *Vide* "Letter to A. V. Thakkar", 1-4-1927.

[2] *Bhagavad Gita,* III. 35

270. LETTER TO HIRALAL AMRITLAL

April 8, 1927

Of course it was only to collect funds that I had been to Santa Cruz.[1] We cannot expect to produce khadi there, it can only be sold there. There may well be some difference of opinion in respect of auctions. I see nothing wrong in auctions, the institution in itself is certainly without blemish; nor is there anything bad in the purpose for which it was held. Then why oppose it?

I would suggest that a serious student like you should not draw hasty conclusions. And a pure activity like khadi deserves closer study.

Visit the Ashram, look around for yourself, speak to Narandas, Maganlal and Shankerlal, see what Lakshmidas has been doing and then come out with your suggestions.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

271. LETTER TO SHAMBHULAL

April 8, 1927

I see that I can at the moment have my heart nowhere but in khadi work. It may perhaps be a mistake on my part.

> There is the illusion of silver in mother of pearl, and of moisture in the sunbeams. This is absolutely unreal, yet none can avoid the error.[2]

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Santa Cruz", 23-3-1927.

[2] *Ramacharitamanasa* I. 117

272. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Friday [*April 8, 1927*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have not been writing to you at all, but I keep myself informed all the time about your activities.

I had preserved one of your letters drawing my attention to the expenditure on khadi work in Gujarat. I intended to discuss it with Lakshmidas and you. But that could not be. Let us see if we can take it up some time. I believe your contention is that in enabling the spinners to earn Rs. 29,000 as wages we have spent more than an equal amount and that this is too much. Does this amount also include the expenditure incurred on our work amongst the Raniparaj community? The answer to this question should be that at this stage the work on khadi includes awakening and educating the masses. If this is really so, it is part of our policy; and so long as this policy is followed sincerely we should bear with it as an experiment. But this is only my view. If you enlighten me on this point I shall discuss it with Lakshmidas in case he meets me sooner or when all three of us meet.

2. At the present moment, at any rate, I am afraid, I have no time or energy to raise separate funds for khadi work in Kathiawar. I, therefore, think that we should entrust it to the Charkha Sangh and carry on such work as can be done subject to its rules and regulations. In this connection I have written to Bhai Fulchand. You may also think over it. Perhaps it had better be merged with the work in Gujarat. As it is, I only see this much, that it cannot be carried on as an independent unit. You may, if you want to, discuss the matter with Lakshmidas, in case he is there, and with Shankerlal. In the meanwhile you may look after and promote the work in Kathiawar according to facilities available in the Ashram and keep me informed. We should be careful and see that whatever work has been or is being done is not undone.

3. Of late you have not been publishing in *Young India* facts and figures [about khadi]. Figures of production, at any rate, ought to appear. You should also keep sending any interesting details about the yarn you receive from the members.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Fulchand K. Shah", 6-4-1927.

As I have now resumed working gradually, you need not spare me. Do write to me and ask me whatever you want to.

I had a talk with Chi. Purushottam and we are in correspondence. I could not speak to you about this; but the boy seemed to have a pure heart. Surely, God will look after him.

How is Kanu getting on?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9141. Courtesy: Jamnadas Gandhi

273. A LETTER

April 8, 1927

Certainly I do wish that we got out of narrow caste circles. The significance of dharma does not lie in clinging to the caste system; it is strictly confined to *varnashrama.* One never hears of hundreds of *varnas.* But I do not insist on this point.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

274. LETTER TO DAMODAR LAKSHMIDAS

AMBOLI, *via* BELGAUM,
Chaitra Sud 9 [*April 10, 1927*]

BHAI DAMODAR LAKSHMIDAS,

Bhai Kishorelal conveyed to me the news of Chi. Mamabai's demise. We cannot help grieving owing to the bonds of flesh. But when looking at it from Mamabai's standpoint, I realize that she has been released from pain.

I am not well enough acquainted with you but I would, if I may, advise you to cherish and remain faithful to her memory, abstaining from another alliance.

You have the great responsibility of the children. Make arrangements for them in consultation with *pujya* Gangabehn and do what you can to advance their interests. Ask any help you want of me and, needless to say, I shall do whatever I can.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

Frorn the Gujarati original: C.W. 2817. Courtesy: Purushottam D. Saraiya

275. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Sunday [*April 10, 1927*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I am not unhappy at Chi. Mama's passing away. The poor girl was in agony. And it was good that you were with her at the last hour. I have written to [your] son-in-law. We are left with the problem of what we should do about the children. The question now is whether or not you should accept custody of the children if he leaves them in your care and offers their maintenance. Please think over this. I am sure you have not been upset.

I have been getting your letters. I may say I am keeping well. During the last two days I have been walking a little.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8827. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

276. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

BOMBAY,
April 10, 1927

CHI. RAMDAS,

I received your letter of complaint only today on my arrival in Bombay. A detailed letter may never get written because of my procrastination, so I write a brief one right away. You still continue to regret that you have no formal education. You must get over it. In my programme of action it is of least importance. If you come, you can be of help in innumerable ways. You can even work on a salary if you so wish. I would make use of you in spinning and weaving and make you independent. I would also use you for the service of the country. But there are many other jobs apart from these. There is the work of the press, of the school, of Hindi. Many people, big and small, are helping me. I am sure that you too can join them. But I wish that you should do only what gives you satisfaction.

Chi. Jamnadas has returned from England.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Motanan Man, p. 34

[1] From the reference to Mama's death, *vide* the preceding item.

277. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 11, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. Of course you were quite right in delivering your whole soul to me. I quite agree with you that we have to evolve an organization and that therefore there should be method about the business. But in your affection for me perhaps there is a trace of impatience with the people who organized the tours. However, all will profit by the warning received. I am taking all the necessary rest amid these very lovely surroundings and shall have more when I am taken to Mysore. Rest is not to be taken at the Ashram. Dr. Mehta insisted on a cool place[1] being selected. And I am to remain where I was to tour during April.

You can see from the handwriting that I am getting stronger day by day. I had quite a fair walk yesterday. So much for myself.

I like this idea of your riding. It should brace you and enable you too, to go to the villages and see something of rural life. Have they provided you with a proper saddle? You should try to follow all the shades of village Hindi. I am not going to be satisfied till you have mastered Hindi so well as to be able to follow and speak the villagers' Hindi. Do not be frightened. It will come because of your love of your work. I shall not be impatient. But, for your work a thorough knowledge of Hindi is a necessity. You will therefore seek every occasion for speaking and knowing it. Insist on understanding all that goes on about you.

Here is a letter for you from Noorbanu whom you must recognize, the fat, fair lady. She recently gave over to the Ashram several thousand rupees worth of her jewellery. She and her husband are just now living at Mahabaleshwar. They have just come in to see me. Do write to her in reply. Their address is Mahabaleshwar College, Mahabaleshwar. Mrs. Noorbanu Pyareali is her full name.

I am anxious to know how the new wheel is working. Have you good wheels there?

[1] Nandi Hills, near Bangalore; *vide* "Discussion with Dr. Jivaraj Mehta", 3-4-1927.

Do you get good fruit for yourself?

With love,

BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev and Devdas have gone out to hawk khadi.

From the original: C.W. 5215. Courtesy: Mirabehn

278. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVALEKAR

AMBOLI,
Monday [*April 11, 1927*][1]

BHAI SATVALEKAR,

I have your two letters and the books; let me thank you for it.

Please continue to send me the issues of *Vaidika Dharma.*

I have with me many young men as well as women. On my part I have made great efforts to keep them in good health while they observed *brahmacharya.* Only disciplines like *asanas* have yet to be tried. Could you suggest to me some methods, as I am afraid, they cannot very well be learnt merely with the help of books and illustration. . . .[2]

Please send over to the Ashram two copies [each] *of Surya-bhedan Vyayam* and *Brahmasharya,* which will be paid for by the Ashram. If you agree to it I wish to bring out a Gujarati translation after assimilating and revising the two works.

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12771

[1] From the addressee's reply to the letter

[2] Page 2 is missing in the source. Only pages 1 and 3 are available.

279. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

[*April 11, 1927*][1]

SISTERS,

You have absolved me [from writing to you]. But how can I take advantage of it unless I have to? My health is not so bad now that I cannot write to you. Yesterday I even walked a good distance. To write to you is therefore not much of a strain.

Have any of you decided to supervise the common kitchen by turns? Lakshmibehn[2] had definitely expressed willingness to do so. If no one else has done it so far at least she should do it. If there is any defect in the common kitchen the fault will be that of all. Will it not ? You may free yourselves from kitchen work when the men have acquired as much skill as you have at present, but certainly not till then.

Please find enclosed Mirabai's letter. Give it to Chi. Maganlal. I send it as it is worth reading.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3644

280. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 13, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I must write on this fasting day to acknowledge your letter containing extracts from Beethoven.[3] They are good spiritual food. I don't want you to forget your music or your taste for it. It would be cruel to forget that to which you owe so much, and which has really brought you to me.[4]

[1] From the reference to supervision of the common kitchen and to Gandhiji's "walking a good distance". *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 11-4-1927.

[2] Wife of Khare, the musician; she had experience in running a common kitchen at the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya, Bombay.

[3] "As far as I can remember, I quoted extracts from Romain Rolland's *Life of Beethoven*, and one thing I gave was, Beethoven's motto, 'Through Suffering, Joy'." (Mirabehn)

[4] For an account of *this, vide* Appendix "From the Preface to *Bapu's Letters to Mira*", after 31-3-1927.

Please thank the Maharajji and all the friends for the[ir] kind invitation. But for the present I must go to Nandi Hills in Mysore. I know that I should be quite happy there if I could come.

We have kept the week[1] here in a royal style. One wheel has been kept going 16 hours daily. The output has been more than 3,000 rounds of 4 ft. each daily. Almost all kept the fast on 6th and 13th.

I shall expect here still more letters from you.

Kaka[2] has sent a copy of your translation of Rolland's letter. The translation is very good indeed. The original could not be better.

I am glad you met the Commissioner, etc. You are getting your deserts—those of one adopted by a scavenger. You must forget what you *have been*. You have to realize what you *are*. These poor officials really do not know where they are when they see you. They cannot forget your antecedents and naturally get perplexed. You have to put them at ease. When the present King—so tradition says-—was enlisted as a sailor he was treated as such and had in common with the rest black coffee and black bread for breakfast. This was the least part of the affair. He was taken for a common sailor. So one day will you be taken for a common village girl. That would be your pride and mine.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C W. 5216. Courtesy: Mirabehn

281. LETTER TO SURENDRA

Wednesday [*April 13, 1927*][3]

CHI. SURENDRA,

I have your letter. If you get leave thence do go to Nathji and to Wardha. Undoubtedly the study of hygiene is most essential. This would include *asanas* and breath-control which, I think, would need a guide. I would like you to practise them. Nathji has some experience in this field. He does not seem to have much faith in it. Having discussed it with a few people I was led to believe that *asanas,* etc.,

[1] National Week

[2] Kalelkar

[3] From the reference to sending the addressee to S. D. Satavalekar; *vide* "Letter to S. D. Satavalekar", 14-4-1927, where Gandhiji says: "I shall try and send you a good student."

were of no avail in curing the sick. I have not personally reached this conclusion. If you want to learn them I would send you to Pandit Satavalekar. There is a swami in Hardwar who also has promised to train an ashramite if one goes to him. I have not met him though Mahadev has. Nowhere have I found the purity that I would expect but then we want to associate only to the extent of learning the *asanas*, etc. Write to Nathji and obtain his opinion.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9414

282. FAITH v. *REASON*

An M.B.B.S. from Mandalay sends a string of questions of which the first is:

> You once expressed your opinion in the pages of *Young India* that faith begins where reason ends. Then I expect you will call it faith, if a person believes in a thing for which he can give no reasons. Is it not then clear that faith is believing unreasonably? Do you think it is truth or justice if anybody believed in anything unreasonable? I think it is folly to believc in that way. I do not know what your barrister mind will call it. If you think like me I hope you will call faith as nothing but folly.

If the worthy doctor will excuse my saying so, there is in his question a clear failure to understand my meaning. That which is beyond reason is surely not unreasonable. Unreasonable belief is blind faith and is often superstition. To ask anybody to believe without proof what is capable of proof would be unreasonable, as for instance asking an intelligent person to believe without proof that the sum of the angles of a triangle is equal to two right angles. But for an experienced person to ask another to believe without being able to prove that there is God is humbly to confess his limitations and to ask another to accept in faith the statement of his experience. It is merely a question of that person's credibility. In ordinary matters of life we accept in faith the word of persons on whom we choose to rely although we are often cheated. Why may we not then in matters of life and death accept the testimony of sages all the world over that there is God and that He is to be seen by following Truth and Innocence (non-violence)? It is at least as reasonable for me to ask my correspondent to have that faith in this universal testimony as it would

be for him to ask me to take his medicine in faith even though many a medicine-man might have failed me. I make bold to say that without faith this world would come to naught in a moment. True faith is appropriation of the reasoned experience of people whom we believe to have lived a life purified by prayer and penance. Belief therefore in prophets or incarnations who have lived in remote ages is not an idle superstition but a satisfaction of an inmost, spiritual want. The formula therefore I have humbly suggested for guidance is rejection of every demand for faith where a matter is capable of present proof unquestioned acceptance on faith of that which is itself incapable of proof except through personal experience.

The correspondent's next question is:[1]

In *Young India* of December 9, 1926,[2] there appeared a press-cutting that one Doctor Harold Blazer, who chloroformed his daughter because he felt that his own end was near and there was no one to care for her when he was gone, was fully acquitted. Dr. Blazer's counsel, Mr. Howry declared: "Blazer did a right and moral thing by keeping the poor girl [for whom he had cared for thirty-two years] from becoming a charge on others." To this you expressed your opinion that Dr. Blazer was wrong in taking the life of his daughter because it betrayed want of faith in the humanity of those round him and that there was no warrant for him to suppose that the daughter would not have been cared for by others.... I would request you to think over it again, for I think this is not an ordinary matter. For it is evident that you have got no scruples to put a useless burden on society simply because you have got enough faith in the society to shoulder the burden. For God's sake please excuse us from believing in that useless, nay, extremely harmful, faith. Such a faith of yours, I sincerely believe, is very harmful to the best interests of India.... If after many more years of faithful service of India, you become . . . absolutely useless to society, will you like the society to feed you because you have got still life left in you or because you served so well? . . .

I do believe that whilst the jury was right in acquitting Dr. Blazer, considered from the strictly moral point of view Dr. Blazer was wrong. My correspondent in his utilitarian zeal has overlooked the frightful consequences and implications of the doctrine he lays down. Indeed his doctrine would belie his own profession. What would he say if a young practitioner chloroformed to death a patient whom he, the junior practitioner, considered to be incurable and therefore a useless burden to society and whom another as a senior subsequently found to be a case quite capable of cure ? Is it not the boast of

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

[2] *Vide* "The Greatest Good of All", 9-12-1926.

medical science to treat no case as finally incurable? As for myself, well, I do expect my countrymen to support me when I become a useless and burdensome article, assuming of course that I shall still want to live. What is more, I have full faith in my countrymen supporting me if that event comes to pass. I wonder whether my correspondent will have all the lepers, the blind, the deaf, one fine night to be chloroformed to sweet, everlasting sleep. And yet Damien was a leper and Milton was a blind poet. Man is not all body but he is something infinitely higher.

The correspondent's third question is:[1]

In the same article, i.e., "The Greatest Good of all", you wrote that a votary of ahimsa cannot subscribe to the utilitarian formula. He will strive for the greatest good of all and die in the attempt to realize the ideal . . . . May I conclude then that you will prefer to be bitten by a poisonous snake and die rather than kill the same in trying to save yourself? If I am right in my conclusion, . . . that way you will be doing the greatest possible harm to India by trying to save a harmful living creature and by dying willingly in trying to realize the ideal of your so-called greatest good of all . . . . You admit that you are an imperfect mortal. So it is impossible for you to benefit the whole world. It is even impossible for you to benefit the whole of India in all possible ways. Therefore it is quite reasonable to be contented with the greatest good of the greatest number rather than pretend to do the greatest good to all without exception the good and the wicked, the useful and the useless, man, animal, etc., etc.

This is a question I would fain avoid answering, not because of want of faith but because of want of courage. But I must not conceal my faith even though I may not have the courage to act up to it when it is put on its trial. Here then is my answer. I do not want to live at the cost of the life even of a snake. I should let him bite me to death rather than kill him. But it is likely that if God puts me to that cruel test and permits a snake to assault me, I may not have the courage to die, but that the beast in me may assert itself and I may seek to kill the snake in defending this perishable body. I admit that my belief has not yet become so incarnate in me as to warrant my stating emphatically that I have shed all fear of snakes so as to befriend them as I would like to be able to. It is my implicit belief that snakes, tigers, etc., are God's answer to the poisonous, wicked, evil thoughts that we harbour. Anna Kingsford saw in the streets of Paris tigers in men already taking shape. I believe that all life is one. Thoughts take definite forms. Tigers and snakes have kinship with us. They are a

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

warning to us to avoid harbouring evil, wicked, lustful thoughts. If I want to rid the earth of venomous beasts and reptiles, I must rid myself of all venomous thoughts. I shall not do so if in my impatient ignorance and in my desire to prolong the existence of the body I seek to kill the so-called venomous beasts and reptiles. If in not seeking to defend myself against such noxious animals I die, I should die to rise again a better and a fuller man. With that faith in me how should I seek to kill a fellow-being in a snake? But this is philosophy. Let me pray and let my readers join in the prayer to God that He may give me the strength to live up to that philosophy. For philosophy without life corresponding is like a body without life.

I know that in this land of ours we have enouh phiosophy and but little life. But I know also that the laws governing the conduct of man have still to be explored and the condition of exploration is imperative and unalterable. We shall explore them only by dying, never by killing. We must become living embodiments of Truth and Love, for God is Truth and Love.

Young India, 14-4-1927

283. CIVILIZATION AND CULTURE

Dr. Martin Hurlimann, a Sanskrit scholar of Zurich, sends the following instructive translation of selections[1] from the writings of Heinrich Pestalozzi who died just a century ago and was according to Dr. Hurlimann "one of Europe's greatest educationists as also one of the greatest among fighters for *Menschlichkeit* and *Menschenwurde*, i.e., humanity and dignity of man but not understood on the Continent and almost unknown to the rest of the world".

Young India, 14-4-1927

[1] Not reproduced here

284. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

AMBOLI,
April 14, 1927

DEAR BROTHER,

Your letter has given me boundless joy. The news will cheer our people and Andrews. And Europeans will be glad to have to do with one whom they have come to know and respect. For me your letter is a great relief. And for your health God will take care of it. Freedom from the turmoil into which our country has landed itself will refresh your tired nerves whilst at the same time you will be doing inestimable service to the country. The present confusion does not admit of much hurry and calculated interference. It will settle itself in due time.

Mrs. Sastri will be of great help to you in South Africa and her presence will mean much to our dumb sisters there.

I expect to reach Nandi Hills on Wednesday next. You will please come whenever you can and like.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

V. S. Srinivasa Sastri Papers (Correspondence No. 470). Courtesy: National Archives of India

285. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVALEKAR

AMBOLI,
April 14, 1927

BHAI SATAVALEKAR,

I thank you for your prompt reply. I shall try and send you a good student. From the consideration you have been showing me I see that you are treating me as a fellow-seeker. I shall certainly try to become one. I read your book on the *Isopanishad* and was extremely pleased.

I shall write to Bhai Bapulal[1] in connection with *Brahmacharya* and *Suryabhedan Vyayam*. He must not suffer any financial loss.

[1] Bapulal Kuberdas Patel of the Arya Samaj, Anand, Kheda District, publisher of the addressee's books

I am acquainted with Kuvalayanandji. I had sent a young boy to him who being weak was not taught *pranayama* and other disciplines but was instead treated with medicines. Despite the prevailing climate I have not lost hope regarding the practice of *brahmacharya,* etc. There will rise from our midst a true aspirant who will clear the prevailing atmosphere. As yet I have come across no such aspirant. My own *tapascharya* is hopelessly imperfect. I have been observing external, physical *brahmacharya* for nearly 30 years. I have, however, not freed myself from passion; I am trying to. I think complete control of all the five sense-organs is essential for the observance of perfect *brahmacharya.* It will not suffice to have control over the six-fold passion[1]; it has to be rooted out. I believe in every word of the verse: "The yearning too departs when he beholds the Supreme."[2] The world is prone to hero-worship. The unhealthy climate prevailing around will soon clear when such a person emerges. Let us work with all our faith for the advent of such a person amidst us. And have not you yourself said that if the message of the Upanishads, etc., is eternally true—and so it is —even today we can come across Uma, Hemavati and Yaksha and, God willing, we shall. I too have read about rubbing in semen and consuming it.[3] I regard this as a demoniac practice. There may be some truth in it but the experiment deserves no consideration, because we want the *brahmacharis* to master their senses. Preserving and retaining the vital fluid is a means to an end and not an end in itself. Consuming semen does not bring about freedom from passion; it might to some extent remove the debility consequent upon ejaculation. This is what the Western method achieves. 'The root cause of seminal discharge lies in the rising of passion, [And] we aim at annihilating all passion.

That is why I enquired about the *asanas,* etc, Now I understand that *asanas,* etc., are a stage on the way [to *brahmacharya*] and it may be deemed necessary for the aspirant to pass through them.

Have I made myself clear ?

I have understood what you say in your book about the *asanas* for retaining semen. Your cautions put one on guard. Even for a

[1] Desire, anger, avarice, delusion, pride, envy

[2] *Bhagavad Gita,* II. 59

[3] The addressee had referred to an ancient Sanskrit text which says that semen from involuntary ejaculation should be rubbed between the breasts or the brows, or consumed orally.

married man I see no harm in the *siddha* and other *asanas*. With the help of *siddhasana* a married man's semen may possibly be retained, the secretion however does not stop. How many men can we come across today who go to their wives purely for the sake of progeny? If the term 'calming down' can be used of passion etc., a married man may calm down his passion with the help of *siddha* and other *asanas*. But then it is another thing if his aim is absolute eradication of desire.

I was relieved to find that you do not reject the Puranas. I was afraid you would be disdainful of the ancient Puranas. Indeed I am convinced that at a time when people were growing sceptical the authors of the Puranas aroused in them a love for dharma with their rich poetic appeal, Our Shastras need to be re-interpreted as you are doing, in the light of modern knowledge and for the young people of today.

When I am settled somewhere I would like to give you the trouble of coming over to me so that we can compare notes.

I am now reading the *Kenopanishad* after which I shall take up your *Mahabharata Samalochana*[1].

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 12771

286. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

NANDI HILLS, MYSORE,[2]
Chaitra Sud 13 [*April 14, 1927*]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I do think of you very often. How are you getting along now? When will you be going to the Ashram? How is Vidyavati? Whether or not I write to you, you must write regularly to me. I think I am slightly better now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3329

[1] A treatise, the first three parts of which had then been published

[2] This address was given for the addressee's reply. Gandhiji left Amboli for Nandi Hills on April 18; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 18-4-1927.

287. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

Saturday [On or before *April 16, 1927*][1]

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

I know that no letter from you is in itself a letter. But there is no reason at all to feel anxious. I am taking good care of my health. I heed the advice of the doctors to the extent possible. I am taking rest and will continue to do so. I shall not be in a hurry to plunge into work. We have to start from here on the 18th and leave Belgaum on the l9th. This is what Raja and Gangadharan have said. They both have gone to Bangalore. I shall know in two or three days where I am to go for rest. This place too is no doubt good.

You are having good experience. Continue writing to me as before and send me the note about your travels so that I may know where you will be on which day.

You and Lakshmidas will be taking care of yourselves. Convene a meeting of the council after my programme is settled. In the meantime do not allow any work to be postponed.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

There is a letter from Lakshmidas. I am not writing to him separately. His suggestion has already been carried out.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32713

288. LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA

NANDI HILLS, MYSORE,[2]
Chaitra Purnima [*April 16, 1927*]

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA,

I have the letter written by all of you, sisters. I am steadily improving. I often think of you all. I on my part tried hard to bring you all to the Ashram. You may go if you still wish to. You can all

[1] Gandhiji arrived at Nandi Hills on Aprii 19, 1927. The Saturday preceding that date was April 16.

[2] This address was given for the addressee's reply. Gandhiji left Amboli for Nandi Hills on April 18; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 18-4-1927.

live where you like, but spin a lot, study a lot and move about a lot. The body and the mind ought to be fit, Write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA DESAI
C/O SUNDERJI GOVINDJI DESAI
IN THE OLD HOUSE OF RATILAL MANIAR
RAJKOT

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 4906. Courtesy: Hari-ichchhabehn Kamdar

289. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Saturday [On or after *April 16, 1927*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Herewith a letter from Bhai Damodardas. It is a good one. Think and decide about the children now.

I am keeping good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8830. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya. Also G.N. 11386

290. DISCUSSION WITH CHIEF OF SAVANTWADI, AMBOLI[2]

[*April 17, 1927*][3]

His Highness and the Rani came to see Gandhiji on the day before we left Amboli. They were as usual very nice and asked if it was not too late to persuade Gandhiji to stay a little longer at Amboli. Gandhiji said he wished very much he could continue his stay in that scented spot surrounded by picturesque scenery, in fact, he was distressed to leave it, but he could not help it as he wanted to combine rest with work. And then Gandhiji proceeded to ask the questions I had not asked the other day.

GANDHIJI: Mahadev has been telling me all the good things he has been hearing about you. One of these I should like to be verified

[1] From the reference to the addressee's daughter's children. Mama the addressee's daughter, had passed away in the beginning of April, 1927; *Vide* "Letter to Gangabehn Vaidya", 10-4-1927. The Saturday after April 10 was April 16.

[2] From Mahadev Desai's article, "A Popular Prince"

[3] Gandhiji left Amboli on the 18th; *vide* the succeeding item

by you. Is it true that you draw Rs. 2,000 only from the public revenue for your private purse?

H. H. OF SAVANTWADI: Not Rs. 2,000, but Rs. 2,500; but expenses incurred on all State occasions are met from the State revenue.

That is all right. Now you will stay at Amboli during the summer months. Will the expenses be borne by the State?

No, they will be borne by me.

And I hear you are keeping with you a number of orphans. You find their expenses too out of your purse?

Yes, Gandhiji. But they are not all orphans. Some of them are. They come of poor but respectable families. There are many more applications but I am sorry I cannot afford to have more.

Well, yours is the only instance I know of a ruling prince drawing a fixed allowance from the public revenue.

No, you might expect to see many more. The Mysore Maharaja draws a fixed allowance.

Then it is lucky that after having stayed under your roof I am going to enjoy the hospitality of one like you.

Yes, and Gwalior did not draw anything from the State Treasury.

That is to say?

He had his private income and lived on that.

But what is private income but earned from the State itself?

And now turning to the Rani, who, by the bye, is a princess of the Baroda family, Gandhiji said:

Yes, I know one as simple as you, the Maharani Regent of Travancore. I was fascinated by her simplicity,[1] her dress could not be simpler, and I looked in vain for an ornament on her person, except the *mangalamala*. The furniture in her room was as severely simple as could be. I was introduced to the young Maharaja whom it was difficult to recognize as such. But there the comparison ends. They do not live on paltry wages like you.

The Rani smiled thankfully, whilst Gandhiji continued:

And I was not surprised at the small quantity of khadi that you purchased, knowing as I did that your means were limited and that you must live within your income. And now that I know that like His Highness you also mix very much among your people, may I suggest that you will enhance your power of service by mastering the art of

[1] *Vide* "All About Travancore", 26-3-1925.

spinning?

The spinning-wheel was all the while going on. The Rani nodded assent, and the Chief said: "That's not all the khadi we have. We purchased some at the last year's Khadi Exhibition, and we shall get more from you whenever we want." All this while His Highness dressed in a short coat and knickers was squatting on the floor.

Young India, 28-4-1927

291. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 18, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letters.

You must not put yourself under over-strain. If the teaching overtaxes you, it must be reduced and so the learning. You may make it clear to the people about you as to your physical capacity. On no account must you lose your health. Do you get proper fruit and milk?

I am getting on famously. For the last two days I have been taking walks both morning and evening without suffering any harm., As you know I have replaced one fruit with a vegetable and am taking *bhakhari*.

We leave Amboli today and leave Belgaum tomorrow if all goes well. Nandi Hills, Mysore, will be the address for the next two months.

I shall not leave this place without much regret. The spot itself is delightful. But what has attached me to this place is the exceptional character of the Chief. From all the accounts received by me he appears to be an ideal Chief. He draws a fixed sum from the State revenue for his personal expenses. He mixes freely with his people. He has visited every one of his 125 villages. He lives an abstemious life and his wife is worthy of him. I have met him often and his frank and easy manners have pleased me. Hence it is that I like this place so much. But we can't do always the things we like. We shall be leaving inside of a few hours.

I expect a report of the new charkha.

They seem to have worked wonders at the Ashram. Keshu having spun over 15,000 yards in 24 hours.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5217. Courtesy: Mirabehn

292. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Silence Day, Chaitra Vad[*1, April 18, 1927*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. May all your devout wishes be fulfilled and may God grant you the strength to observe your vows.

Your attitude towards the children is correct. If Damodardas entrusts custody of the children to you, you being in the Ashram, it would be your duty to look after them. But it must suit the Ashram too. Discuss the issue with Kaka. It is a different matter if your heart refuses to do so. In such cases one does not know instantaneously what one's dharma is.

Today we leave this place for Nandi Hills. Now on you should write to that address. I presume you will for the time being stay with Kaka, so I send this to his address.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8828. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

293. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day, Chaitra Wad 2 [*April 19, 1927*][2]

SISTERS,

I am sending this letter to your secretary in the absence of Gangabehn. In Gangabehn's absence you should appoint an acting president. Your work should now be so perfectly regulated that it goes on automatically as in other institutions. In order that this may happen, a leader is absolutely necessary. A leader should have fewer powers but greater responsibilities; she should always be thinking of the good of the institution, and try to increase its capacity for service.

It appears that your observance of the National Week was quite successful. It was good that you cleaned the latrines. As time passes you should take up more and more responsibilities, provided always

[1] The source has *Chaitra Vad* 2, which was April 19. But Gandhiji left for Nandi Hills on April 18, which corresponded to the duplicate *Chaitra Vad* 1.

[2] The year is determined from the reference to Gangabehn being the president of Ashram women's Mandal.

that you have the strength.

Maintain your contact with women who do outside work. You must also be in touch with Rajibehn and Champavatibehn. Write to me, if you know, how Rajibehn is getting on with her work.

My health appears to have improved. To this end I am making a simple experiment. If it proves successful, it will have many uses. But I do not want to take your time now by telling you more about it. I will perhaps tell you about it next week.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3645

294. LETTER TO KUVALAYANAND

NANDI HILLS, MYSORE,
April 19,1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter to Baba Saheb Soman offering to come to Mysore at once if necessary and in any case after 26th if required. I would like you to come to Nandi Hills as soon as possible after 26th. If you will kindly send a wire, arrangements will be made to bring you to Nandi Hills from the nearest station.

The growing self-abuse among the students has, as you know, attracted me to the yogic *asanas,* as possible cure of the evil habit. In the course of my reading I saw that *asanas* were recommended as a remedy for the cure of many other ills. During my illness I read Pandit Satavalekar's writings. And I thought that I would experiment with myself. Copious laudatory notices of *shirshasana* drew me to it. And for the last five days I have been trying *shirshasana* for a few seconds each time. I do it in the morning before the meal twice at intervals of two minutes. The practice is preceded by *neti,* cleansing the nostrils by means of strips of thin cloth. I remain absolutely passive during the practice of the *asana.* Sjt. Gunaji assists to lift the body and sustain it on the head. The same thing is repeated at 9 p.m. before retiring. The last meal—milk and fruit is taken at 5 p.m. I have noticed no ill effects. On the contrary, I feel fresher and stronger and am able to take short walks. My appetite has improved. Now the question is whether *shirshasana* thus passively practised is likely to

ease the blood-pressure or to increase it. I take it that *neti* can do no harm at all in any case. My blood-pressure is at present 180 by auscultation. During the five days the pressure has not increased. Will you advise me to continue the practice or discontinue pending your arrival?

Please wire if you want me to discontinue. I do not want the *asanas* to be blamed through any hasty action on my part.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5045

295. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL G. BANKER

Silence Day, [After *April 19, 1927*][1]

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

I have your letter. It is all right that you did not come. I hope you are looking after your health. Right now it is like one guilty person blaming another. However, if you feel inclined, you may come for the sake of having the combined benefit of the climate and work so that all of us can be warned by my mistake. But do what you think appropriate.

I would be very happy if Jamnalalji. . . .[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : S. N. 32750

296. ALL-INDIA COW-PROTECTION ASSOCIATION

I had fully intended to report the proceedings of this business Association, which is known by the few, whose origin was practically accidental and which ever since its origin has been trying in the face of odds to solve the very difficult problem of cow protection in terms of religious economics. A meeting of the managing committee of the Association as also its general meeting were held together at the

[1] From the contents it is evident that the letter was written after Gandhiji reached Nandi Hills on April 19, 1927; *vide* also "Letter to Shankerlal Banker", 16-5-1927 and "Letter to Anasuyabehn Sarabhai", after 5-6-1927.

[2] Two sentences that follow are not legible in the source.

Ashram on the 11th March last. But through my hurried departure and subsequent illness, the proceedings have remained unreported. The following resolution[1] was however passed unanimously at this meeting:

> Inasmuch as a resolution was passed at the last meeting of the managing committee of the Association (at Wardha) to the effect that a sum not exceeding one lakh rupees might be spent for conducting a model dairy and a model tannery, it is hereby resolved that the said experiment be conducted by and under the supervision of the managing committee of the Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, in accordance with the objects of the All-India Cow-protection Association, and to that end a sum not exceeding one lakh rupees, earmarked for the purpose, be donated to the managing committee of the Ashram out of the funds of the Association, with instructions to that committee to furnish an account of the progress of the experiment from time to time.

The following office-bearers of the managing committee of the All-India Cow-protection Association were elected at the meeting:

Chairman—M. K. Gandhi

Treasurer—Sheth Revashanker Jagjivan Jhaveri

Members—Sjt. Baijnath Kedia; Sjt. Mahavir Poddar; Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj; Sjt. Parameshwari Prasad Gazipuria; Sjt. Narayandas Poddar; Dr. B. S. Moonje; Sjt. Balakrishna Martanda Chonde; Sjt. Shankar Shrikrishna Dev; Sjt. Narayana Balakrishna Kelkar; Sjt. Nagindas Amulakharai; Sjt. Manilal Vallabhji Kothari; Sjt. Maganlal Khushalchand Gandhi

Secretary—Valji Govindji Desai

I had hoped during my tour to collect, from lovers of the cow, funds for the Association. The resolution contemplates the expenditure of one lakh of rupees. But the Association has not more than 15,000 rupees in its possession. The resolution has been taken in the hope that the Association will receive sufficient donations from the public. Now that I must be confined to my rooms for some time to come, I appeal to those who are interested in and approve of the method adopted by the Association for the protection and preservation of India's cattle, to send in their mite, without a personal appeal. Everything received will be acknowledged in these columns. Readers know that the terms of membership of the Association are Rs. 5 or 24,000 yards of well-twisted self-spun yarn per year. I expect, however, substantial donations from those who believe in the method and

[1] Proposed by Jamnalal Bajaj

management of the Association.[1]

I hope that cow-protection workers will not let Jamnalalji bear the burden of collecting this fund.

To look after the dairy, an experienced gentleman named Parnerkar has been appointed. An Indian tanner who has taken training in America has been entrusted with the tannery work. I hope to publish shortly an account of the work done by them. I suggest to cow-protection workers that they should visit the Ashram and see for themselves the work being done in both the fields.

Young India, 21-4-1927

297. TRUTH IS ONE

A Polish Professor writes:

> I am reading with intense joy your fascinating articles in *Young India* and wish to impress upon you the truth that they are the source of power not only for your own country but for the world. And as you have such a wide spiritual experience, may I ask you one question to be answered if possible in *Young India?* It is a very important fundamental question to which an answer from you would have a great value. Do you admit that there is in human thought some absolute certainty, as for instance as to God and prayer, where we might be said to have reached perfect unchangeable truth ? Do you also confess that some particular experience led you to change your first opinion, for instance, as to the right of killing certain dangerous animals? Now my fundamental question is, on what particular points do you change your opinion? And what guarantee can these changes leave as to the unshaken truth of what remains certain ? How can we distinguish opportunistic change of opinion from the permanence of an absolute certainty in essentials? Can you define in what things we may change and what kind of things remain unchangeable? Is independence of each country or people one of those absolute truths, or is there some innate incapacity in some nations for self-government and in others an innate capacity for governing such incapable nations, as the Germans profess to have a capacity for governing other nations and thus justify their ruling ambition?

I have taken the liberty of altering a word here and there in this letter for the purpose of making the writer's meaning clearer than it appears to be to me in the original. Without in any shape or form endorsing the claim to the powers that the writer ascribes to me, I

[1] What follows is from *Navajivan,* 24-4-1927.

would in all humility endeavour to answer his questions. My own conscious claim is very simple and emphatic. I am a humble but very earnest seeker after truth. And in my search, I take all fellow-seekers in uttermost confidence so that I may know my mistakes and correct them. I confess that I have often erred in my estimates and judgments. As for instance, whereas I thought from insufficient data that the people of Kheda were ready for civil disobedience, I suddenly discovered that I had committed a Himalayan miscalculation and saw that they could not offer civil disobedience inasmuch as they had not known what it was to tender willing obedience to laws which might be even considered irksome but not immoral. Immediately I made the discovery, I retraced my steps. A similar error of judgment was committed by me when I presented what has been described as the Bardoli ultimatum.[1] I had then believed that the country, that is the people, had been awakened and touched by the movement, had understood the utility of nonviolence. I discovered my error within twenty-four hours of the delivery of the ultimatum and retraced my steps. And inasmuch as in every case I retraced my steps, no permanent harm was done. On the contrary, the fundamental truth of non-violence has been made infinitely more manifest than it ever has been, and the country has in no way been permanently injured.

But I am not aware of having changed my opinion about the necessity of killing certain dangerous animals in certain circumstances specifically mentioned in my articles[2]. So far as I am aware of my own opinions, I have ever held the opinion expressed by me in those articles. That however does not mean that the opinion is unchangeable. I claim to have no infallible guidance or inspiration. So far as my experience goes, the claim to infallibility on the part of a human being would be untenable, seeing that inspiration too can come only to one who is free from the action of pairs of opposites, and it will be difficult to judge on a given occasion whether the claim to freedom from pairs of opposites is justified. The claim to infallibility would thus always be a most dangerous claim to make. This however does not leave us without any guidance whatsoever. The sum total of the experience of the sages of the world is available to us and would be for all time to come. Moreover, there are not many fundamental truths, but there is only one fundamental truth which is Truth itself,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 1-2-1922.

[2] Under the caption "Is This Humanity?".

otherwise known as Non-violence. Finite human being shall never know in its fulness Truth and Love which is in itself infinite. But we do know enough for our guidance. We shall err, and sometimes grievously, in our application. But man is a self-governing being, and self-government necessarily includes the power as much to commit errors as to set them right as often as they are made. I do not know whether this will satisfy my correspondent. But whether it does or not, I have no power in me to give him a more satisfactory answer. After all each one must be a law unto himself, the invariable condition being that he must then walk in the fear of God and therefore continually keep on purifying his heart. A man to be a man must be twice-born as Hindus would say, reborn as Christians would say.

The concluding questions of the correspondent are easily answered. In fact, the answers can be inferred from the foregoing remarks. I do think that independence of each country is a truth in the same sense and to the same extent that independence of each man is. There is, therefore, no inherent incapacity for self-government in any country or nation and therefore no inherent capacity for governing other nations. No doubt my correspondent honestly thinks that Germans profess to have a God-given capacity for ruling over other nations. But if there are German imperialists, there are also humble German democrats, who are content if they can quietly govern themselves.

Young India, 21-4-1927

298. KHADI STORES

The following list[1] of khadi stores in the four provinces of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Maharashtra and Bihar will be read with interest. I propose to publish a list of similar stores in the other provinces as soon as they are available. The list is a sign of the very substantial progress made by khadi since 1920. Measured by what we seek to achieve, the progress no doubt leaves much to be desired. 110 stores in four provinces should, when khadi becomes current like grain or ghee, read 110 stores in a city like Bombay alone and then they would not be too many. And why should it be surprising or unthinkable to have khadi as universal as grain or ghee? Or, if such universality for

[1] Not reproduced here

khadi must be unthinkable, why should it be unthinkable to have, say twenty years hence, as many shops for Australian butter and American wheat as we have today for our own ghee and wheat? If it is patriotic enough to buy foreign cloth because it is cheaper or more pleasant to the eye, why will it not be patriotic enough, when that time comes, to buy cheaper foreign butter and foreign wheat, even though our ghee manufacturers and wheat-growers may become idle and starve for want of other occupations to take the place of the lost ones? These are reflections presented for the edification of wearers of foreign cloth.

But what is the lesson these stores teach us, khadi organisers? In my opinion, by honest and able organization, we can create a universal demand for khadi,

(a) if those who are engaged in khadi production will pay attention to the manufacture of stronger and more even yarn equal at least to the mill-spun yarn;

(b) if they will also study the tastes of the people and produce sufficient variety of khadi;

(c) if by efficiency in other directions they bring down the price of khadi;

(d) if those who are engaged in the distribution of khadi will gain greater knowledge of the tastes of the people and will learn the art of selling;

(e) if both the producers and the sellers will realize that they must give the maximum of efficiency with the minimum of wages and that *self-sacrifice* is the one imperative condition of successful organiza-tion of khadi on a universal basis.

I note that private depots assume names after their owners or some other name. For greater convenience, I would suggest their having one name—simple Khadi Bhandar or Vastralaya, with A.I.S.A. or Congress or Private as the case may be in parenthesis. Where there are more than one in the same place they may have consecutive numbers. This is desirable so long as khadi has to be organized and nursed and so long as the various depots are either directly owned by the A.I.S.A. or are certified by and affiliated to it.

Young India, 21-4-1927

299. LETTER TO TARINI P. SINHA[1]

April 21, 1927

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I shall use your Bureau if I find occasion for it.

What is the use of putting me down on your correspondents' list if you don't expect me to do any work at all? Personally I am averse to ornamental list of anything. The sooner we get out of this habit the better for us. After all your work if it is substantial and earnest is bound to tell whether you have the prop of ornamental figures or not. Since the whole burden of this Bureau will, I expect, fall upon your shoulder, I thought that I should warn you against repeating the vicious custom of having any fictitious list of correspondents or members.

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 12486

300. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised

NANDI HILLS, MYSORE,
April 25, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your four letters of which three were received together yesterday.

You must have got the wire of departure sent to you from Belgaum on 19th.

One of your letters yesterday prompted me to send you a peremptory wire asking you to come to Nandi. But I restrained myself. The other two letters were less gloomy. But even so, if the separation becomes unbearable, you must come without waiting for an answer or any prompting from me. The love of the people round you should really strengthen you and keep you there. Your letter describing the affection of the people there is most touching and it

[1] In reply to his letter of March 27 from London, where he had set up an Indian Information Bureau

would be a matter for sorrow if you cannot be at peace with yourself there. But no one can suddenly change one's nature and if your effort to compose yourself there becomes fruitless, you should tell the friends there so plainly and come away here without the slightest hesitation. On no account should there be a breakdown there. You must not try your nerves to the breaking point.

This is the sixth day here. I am not yet acclimatized. I have not retained the energy and the strength I felt at Amboli, but doctors assure me that Nandi must in the end be more beneficial than Amboli. They say that this is an ideal place for blood-pressure men. There is no cause whatsoever for worry or anxiety.

Since you were so worried about the forgetfulness about the two fasts, it was well that you fasted.[1] There is no doubt that fasting is a good thing even physically whenever there is a nervous strain. It would certainly have been well, if I had fasted before the collapse came. The strain of that day was terrific. But this is wisdom after the event. We may profit by that stupid mistake of mine. I call it stupid because I was aware of the strain and of the merit of fasting in such circumstances. But the Devil is ever after us and catches us at our weakest. He found me weak and wanting and trapped me. Your fast therefore does not worry me. Only you will know when to take it and how to take it.

You must develop iron nerves. It is necessary for our work.

God be with you.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5218. Courtesy: Mirabehn

301. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

NANDI HILLS, MYSORE,
April 25, 1927

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have not written to you for some time now. I have been having your letters.

Please have no anxiety on my behalf. I am having all the

[1] "I had forgotten to fast on the first and last days of the National Week which begins on the 6th and ends on the 13th of April." (Mirabehn)

attention and care that can possibly be given. I have the best medical advice here. The weather is bracing and cool. I shall not plunge into active work thoughtlessly or without medical advice. If your health permits you to come, do please come. But you must not on any account tax your system. The elevation here is over 4,800 feet. There is an abrupt rise of 2,000 feet. It is an exceedingly dry place and without vegetation around.

Your letters have been silent about Hemaprabha Devi. Is she all right now? And how is your boy (I forget his name) and how is Tarini?

With love to you all,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1567

302. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
April 25, 1927

I have your letter of the 29th March. I must dictate this letter as I must keep as much on my back as possible.

I see you want me to give you the name of an Indian friend who could lay the foundation stone for your new hall. The only one I can think of and thoroughly recommend and whom I know personally very well is Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. His address is: Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Clinique Stephani, Montanas Sierre, Switzerland. And you must write to him. Use this letter and draw him. He will come if you want him and you will be pleased to have him. He is one of the truest men I know in India. I am writing to him.

I do not like your resolution at all. Here is the text that I would recommend. I know it will be difficult for you to pilot my text. But really that alone will answer if it is backed by corresponding action. The resolution you have given is very vague and will be accepted by the Government of India without any difficulty. For, they will say that they do not thwart any action which the Indian people by their accredited representatives may desire to carry through. They will say, 'we have transferred this department to them. Let them adjust the finances as they like.' Do you see what I mean? Our case is that the

[1] Permanent address

Government is not sincere, that the people have really no hand in the matter, and that the transfer of excise revenue to the elected representatives is itself proof of the Government's insincerity. Education is a transferred subject and the financial assistance given to them is from the excise revenue. The Government have thus created a tie. If the accredited representatives shut up liquor shops, they must starve education or impose fresh taxation upon a people who are in no way able to bear the weight even of existing taxation. The remedy, therefore, is, if the position stated above is correct, for the Government to keep the excise department themselves and carry the prohibition policy through and recoup themselves for the loss of revenue by cutting down the military budget. They have as much right to raise revenue through liquor as they would have to raise revenue through legalized prostitution. If this is your position independently of me and if you can support the position by your own study of facts, figures and other literature, your resolution would run thus:

> In the opinion of this meeting it is wrong for the people of this country to be party to the maintenance of the liquor traffic in India and that therefore it was wrong on the part of the Government to have made the liquor revenue of India a 'transferred' (provincial) subject and consequently a principal source of revenue on which the spending departments of education and development have to depend, thereby rendering it practically impossible for the Ministers responsible for these departments to undertake a policy of prohibition. In the opinion of this meeting the Government of India should have retained the Liquor Revenue as a Central subject and carried out a policy of complete prohibition, the loss of revenue thus sustained being made up for, by retrenchment in the ever-growing and largely unnecessary military expenditure. This meeting therefore calls upon the Government to take the steps necessary to enforce the wish expressed in this resolution.

You may lick the resolution into shape in any manner you like so long as you retain the substance of it unimpaired. I fear that you will find it difficult to carry through the resolution of this character. But really it is the only thing worth having. And if you find that there is no atmosphere yet in England for such a drastic resolution—and I admit that it is drastic—merely put your case before the educated public, and wait for the resolution. The resolution given to you by

your friends gives a wrong lead and you know how difficult it is to undo the mischief done by a thing wrongly begun.

I am getting better though I must still take extra-ordinary care to give myself as much rest as is possible both for body and mind.

Yours sincerely,

MISS MURIEL LESTER
CHILDREN'S HOUSE
BOW
LONDON E. 3

From a photostat: S.N. 12475

303. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Silence Day [*April 25, 1927*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter.

I am relieved to learn that Purushottam is now improving.

I could not very well follow your telegram. I am however sending a wire telling to contact Vallabhbhai.

The replies you have given to various people are all right. I shall let you know if they have now anything to write to me and in case they do so.

I shall write to Bhai Shankerlal about the suggestion from Dastane.

I am not at all satisfied with the accounts of the dairy. There are 21 errors and we must not pass over them. Please revise the accounts and let me have the figures. Go to Parnerkar and draw his attention to these errors. If Maganlal has come there, have another discussion with him. How could so many mistakes and such grave ones escape his notice ? Even if they were not grave, their number is certainly alarming. When you send me the revised figures, put the wrong ones alongside. Pursue this matter to its end.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7710. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Parnerkar joined the Ashram in March 1927 and the figures about the dairy appeared in *Navajivan* dated 8-5-1927. Also *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 27-4-1927.

304. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Sunday [After *April 25, 1927*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. I have already replied to you but the reply may not have been clear.

My own reason refuses to work in this matter. You may therefore use your reason and come to a decision leaving the responsibility to me. About Gariyadhar, do what you think best on the whole. As regards the Panch Talavadi matter, if your reason does not approve of either Maneklal or Chhaganlal, pay them their due salaries and ask them to stand on their own feet. About Vajeram, do what you think proper. Draw the money that you may need from the khadi account in the Ashram. If the total amount exceeds Rs. 1,000, ask me.

I will continue to be concerned so long as you two brothers do not give me a satisfactory explanation as regards the accounts of the dairy. For, it is a question of adhering to truth. If you think it necessary, I will correct what I have written in *Navajivan* about it. Therefore, look carefully in the matter and let me know. Purshottam must have fully recovered.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33877

[1] In his letter to the addressee dated April 25, 1927, Gandhiji says he was "not at all satisfied with the accounts of the dairy"; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 25-4-1927. The reference to the dairy accounts here clearly indicates that this was written on a later date.

305. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

NANDI DURG,
Silence Day, Chaitra Vad 9, April [*26*][1], *1927*

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. The last sentence in it is incomplete, and there is no signature or date either. This shows undue haste. Sweet are the fruits of patience, as our proverb says. Mango trees do not yield overnight, says another. In English one would say haste makes waste. It was very nice of you to have made a dhoti for Father from your own sari. If you continue this practice and if Dahyabhai and Yashoda too follow suit, how nice it would be.

There is no reason to think that the Karachi job will not be offered to you. But if it is not, there are other places ready to receive you. These can only be considered when I hear something definite from Karachi.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, pp. 55-6

306. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day, Chaitra Vad 9 [*April 26, 1927*][2]

SISTERS,

It looks as though you gave me permission to stop writing to you, because you yourselves did not wish to write to me. Or is it because there is confusion in your Mandal for want of a new president, even as chaos may prevail in a country when there is no king?

Whatever it is, how can I possibly eat and drink and move about and not think of you? None of you gives me any news about Gangadevi. I take it, therefore, that she is now restored to normal health. Do not fail to tell me if any of you fall ill.

There are at present men as well as women in the Ashram. But

[1] The source has "25".
[2] Year inferred from the contents

suppose, some day, only women are left, and robbers attack the Ashram. Have you ever thought about what you would do in such a case? If you have not thought about it, please do so now and let me know. Do not imagine that such an occasion will never arise. It does arise many a time in our small villages. It happens often in South Africa.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3646

307. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Silence Day, Chaitra Vad 9 [*April 26, 1927*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

You should not at all hesitate to write detailed letters; you should also put any question you want to.

Consult Jamnalalji about the expenditure and do whatever you can. You may wind up anything that you cannot cope with.

After Kashi reads the enclosed letter you may pass it on, if you like, to Nimu or to Mani; I am not writing separately to everyone. Send Chi. Prabhudas to Ranavav soon. I am improving steadily.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Let Bhai Fulchandji have at your convenience what amounts he asks for. Herewith his letter.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9125. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] Year inferred from reference to the letter from Fulchand for reply to which, *vide* "Letter to Fulchand K. Shah", 27-4-1927.

308. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[*April 26, 1927*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have your letter. Do as you please about Bhuvarji. You must have noticed that he does not get along with Sitla Sahai. I got the notes from the Working Committee. I wish everything is settled amicably. I am at the moment concerned about the safety of our persons and property. I think it is not right for us to hire the services of a watchman. I can understand having paid assistants from outside the Ashram for other jobs. But just as we have to offer our own prayers so we shall achieve our aim only when we are able to take care of ourselves. Or we shall have to have recourse to the practice [of employing watchmen], in which case our experiments with truth and non-violence would suffer. We cannot have a watchman who commits violence [against the intruders] nor can we let him suffer violence [at their hands]. If there is to be violence we should inflict it ourselves and also suffer it ourselves. Women and children too should acquire this strength. Just see what an absurd result we get if we visualize a magnified picture of the reports that have reached me. Let us decide, on the basis of merit, our course of conduct since we have not yet lost control of the situation. The East India Company built fortresses and employed mercenaries simply because they had to submit to the circumstances. Should we be swayed by circumstances or should we have them under our sway ? I think we should train workers who would keep an all-night vigil. They will have to think of some means of winning over the thieves without having to act in a way contrary to dharma. Let them stay awake at night and sleep for eight hours in the day. Sailors do it without their health being affected by it. They may take turns at this task. But then you may look upon this as a sick man's wonderings. Being at a distance, I am building castles in the air. But you should all think over this individually and collectively and find out a remedy to your liking. But do come to some final decision in the matter. We ought to know who the intruders were this time. We ought to be able to follow their trail since there were so many of them. Those that were injured can be traced. I shall agree with you even if

[1] From the reference to intruders into the Ashram; *vide* "Letter to Ashram Women", 26-4-1927.

you all came to the conclusion that we should wind up all our activities, because ultimately it is up to all of you there to run the show. Now we must immediately have our accounts audited. You can invite Nathji's auditors or those of the Charkha Sangh or anyone else you like, but it should no more be left pending consideration. Ask the auditors to examine the accounts minutely and critically and to make any suggestions they would like to. Chi. Narandas should sit with them so that he can help them with information.

This letter is for all of you. I am improving though not very fast. Yesterday I walked a lot so that I could take rest today.

Blessings from

BAPU

Supplement

PS.

After writing this, I read in the other letter from you about the arrangements, etc. So according to our practice, the enclosed letter should be addressed to Chhaganlal, shouldn't it? It is all right if the changes have all been introduced after due deliberations.

I have noted what you say about Sir Gangaram. The description fails to make a favourable impression on me. It is all to the good that you could learn something about agriculture. Ours is an absolutely unique way. Our aim is to ensure that we follow our dharma till the end.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PPS.]

How are Rukhi, Radha?

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7766. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

309. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Tuesday, April 26, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I must write as often as I can for the time being. I shall anxiously await your reply to yesterday's letter. You must cheer up.

If there are carpenters there you should get the travelling wheel mended. Where you can yourself do the mending you should do it

yourself. You may ask the friends there for the necessary tools or buy some. They are always handy.

I am feeling stronger than yesterday. Subbiah is waiting for the post.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5219. Courtesy: Mirabehn

310. LETTER TO KSHITISH CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

NANDI HILLS, MYSORE,
April 26, 1927

DEAR KSHITISH BABU,

Though I have not written to you during my illness, I have often thought of you and the Pratishthan. I am getting on fairly well and can do a moderate amount of letter-writing, etc. Do please tell me how you are getting on and how the climate of Sodepur agrees with the workers there.

I send you an extract from Mirabai's letter about the travelling charkha. I too have found the parts to be weak. It will be no disadvantage if it is made stronger even though the weight increases a bit. The axle bearings should be metallic and the uprights should undoubtedly be strong. The spokes too should be more rigid than they are. However, you will see what can be and should be done. Mirabai is a most thoughtful worker. Her well meant criticism should be taken for what it is worth.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 8032

311. LETTER TO R. B. GREGG

NANDI HILLS,
April 26, 1927

MY DEAR GOVIND,

Do not be alarmed. Though I reply to your letter so promptly, it is not by way of courtesy, but for pleasure; for, I do not yield to you

in my zeal for dietetic reform. Only my lot having been during the last 20 years cast in a rigid mould, I have not been able to wriggle out of it in spite of my intense desire to prosecute dietetic research. But now that nature had laid me low, the appetite which was never eradicated, but was only under suppression, has become active and I go for everything in this direction with avidity.

Now to the point. For the last two days I have made one important change prompted by a fellow crank. He suggested my taking the juice of fresh *neem* leaves by mixing it with milk. He says my case is not one of blood-pressure but of flatulence. Blood pressure there certainly is; but I am inclined to agree with this friend, that blood-pressure is a temporary effect of flatulence which is the root cause, and he thinks I could deal with the latter by taking the juice of *neem* leaves with my meals. These leaves are bitter. He says they contain the necessary vitamins. I am watching their effect now. Your letter was received yesterday and the change I have made today is to take unboiled milk. This was suggested by some medical friends at Amboli. But I was not responsive. But your letter has evoked the necessary response. My hosts have brought some goats on to this hill and they are milked under supervision. Milk was therefore brought this morning fresh from the udders. It was mixed with *neem* leaves juice and hot raisin water was added to the milk. This in accordance with your letter gives me the vitamins from the milk and in accordance with that friend gives me the vitamins from the *neem* leaves. I am therefore at the present moment omitting fresh vegetables because I am not yet satisfied that these vegetables are necessary especially as I am taking those bitter leaves and unboiled milk. At what point are vitamins destroyed when you boil leafy vegetables ? What is the virtue of vitamins? What is the quantity of leafy vegetables one should take in order to get the required measure of vitamins? What quantity of unboiled milk will give the vitamins required? Is it true that mere heating the milk does not destroy vitamins? Or they are only destroyed when milk is brought to the boiling point?

I have tried the nuts in the manner you suggest. I had them reduced to butter. The pulp was as fine as butter. I had almonds turned into milk. But I could not cope with it, no matter how far you pulverized the nuts. They must, it appears, pass through the double process of digestion like all non-flesh foods. It is only animal food which does not tax the large intestines. Before nuts, therefore, can

attain the digestibility of milk, the first process of digestion must be gone through outside the human system. I was told when I was in London, that melted nuts had that effect. I do not know how far this is true. I want to succeed in non-milk experiment because I am convinced that milk, apart from mother's milk, is not human food, nor is cooking essential. A perfect food therefore for human needs has yet to be found. From the spiritual stand-point, I have a horror of animal milk, and that it is goat's milk I am taking does not lessen the horror. It merely enables me to respect the letter of my vow, though I know that the spirit of it is hardly kept if not already broken. I have reconciled myself to goat's milk under the delusive belief that I must have for my work on the earth in this body and so I cling to it at the expense of my innermost conviction. He, therefore, who can wean me from milk, will be in a way a deliverer. There are spiritual experiences which I know have been interrupted because of my taking milk. When I was living rigidly on sun-baked fruits and sun-baked nuts without using fire and this was for several years—the animal passion was not merely under conscious subjection and control, but it was, so far as my memory serves me, thoroughly absent and I believe that I had almost entirely conquered it. All that has been changed since my return to milk diet. I can no longer claim that immunity. I can only say in all humility that though I am conscious of that passion, I can keep it under subjection and appear before the world a respectable human being from whose lust no woman need fear. But it cost me all my strength to keep the brute in me under disciplined subjection and control. I am positive that a full-grown man does not need all that effort to keep his passions under check. On the contrary, the energy that set free when the passions are kept under control can, if he wishes, be transferred into unconquerable power for the good of mankind. But somehow or other, I fancy that I shall never attain that freedom, that personal swaraj, so long as I have to struggle against the effect of the highly exciting unnatural food; whereas, nuts are fine muscle builders without being stimulants in the sense in which I have used them. Now you can understand why I reply to your letter so promptly.

It is a great pity that you have not yet got rid of your piles. No mere dietetic change will give you relief. Medicine will be only a palliative. I am making explorations into which I must not enter now, because, I am merely on the threshold of them. I am collecting round me friends who have experimented. I shall give you a report if I see

any signs of real success. It hurts me however to think that you did not have an operation for want of means. Dr. Ansari is a first-class surgeon. I could send a note to him if you don't know him. He will, I am sure, gladly perform the operation and put you either in his own house or in some place where you will have to pay nothing. You could also have the operation performed by one of the cleverest of surgeons in India, that is, Dr. Dalal in Bombay. There are not one but more than one hospitals that I know will admit you with greatest pleasure. You may not know that Dr. Dalal operated on me, Devdas, Mrs. Jamnalalji and, last but not the least, Andrews. You have only to let me know what arrangements you would like and they shall be made. Do not hesitate please to write to me of your discoveries about the spinning-wheel and machinery. Of course I am interested in your scholastic researches, and, as a matter of fact, this enforced rest gives me just the time to read letters and to reflect upon topics in which both you and I are interested. From the length of the dictated letter you can infer that I am not badly off though I need to lie on my back as much as possible. There is no difficulty about dictating letters and even sitting up for a time to write as I did yesterday, it being my silence day.

With love to you all,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

R. B. GREGG, ESQ.
CARE OF S.E. STOKES, ESQ.
KOTGARH, SIMLA HILLS

From a photostat: S.N. 12571

312. LETTER T0 MAGANLAL GANDHI

[After *April 26, 1927*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

This time the thieves in the Ashram seem to have been more bold. We have to decide how to deal with them—whether we would like to shift to the nearby villages, or, we would like to fight the

[1] The contents of this letter closely match those of the letter to the addressee dated April 26, 1927; *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 26-4-1927. The nature of reference to the auditing of accounts suggests that this was written on a later date.

thieves, or, would do both. We will never seek the help from the Government. If we wish to deal with it ourselves, we will have to make arrangement for lights. In that case, we have no option but to have the electricity. It is the cheapest source and is our . . .[1] We have to use the engine for water and perhaps the same may be used for electric lights. For the protection of the guards, we will have to make special arrangement. The situation remains the same even if we ourselves do the work of guards. We have taken up so many activities here that we cannot do without taking steps for their protection or we will have to wind up all the activites....[2] We have to see how long we can adhere to ahimsa in spite of our activities....[3]

I am not able to take any decision on behalf of everyone. One man alone cannot do that. Whatever decision you all take jointly will be the best. I will only say that it is necessary for us to take a prompt decision in the matter.

I am reminding you again about the auditor. Inspect the sales depot. There is a risk here. We have to take into consideration that too.

Nurbanu has come here. It is more than a month since she decided to sell off her ornaments. She says that there is no change in it. So they are to be sold off if there are any buyers.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32916

313. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

NANDI DURG,
Chaitra Vad [*11, April 27, 1927*][4]

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I have your letter. Cholera has broken out in an epidemic form in Porbandar and Bhai Amritlal Thakkar is afraid we cannot hold the convention in June. Is it true? He has another reason, viz., my

[1] A few words are illegible at each of these places.

[2] *ibid.*

[3] *ibid.*

[4] The source has *Chaitra Vad* 10, which however was a *kshaya* (skipped) date.

indifferent health and I too agree with him. Please let me know the various aspects of the situation.

I have forwarded to Chi. Chhaganlal the letter about funds for the school, asking him to send the amount as and when possible.[1] I also understand from your letter that you have no intention of coming under the Vidyapith and that, if your present requirements are met with, you will later on manage yourself somehow.

I have been writing to Narandas about the khadi work.

Now about the Satyagraha Dal.

There will never be too many satyagrahis; my blessings therefore even to those who would try to become one. But are we likely to gain any special advantage by forming a Dal? There could be recruiting for an immediate task on hand. Will the Dal be useful as a stand-by when an occasion comes up? Or if we have such an organization, it should, I am convinced by experience, be engaged in some constructive activity. In the event of a struggle, we can draw from it the required number of workers and the rest can come and join of their own accord. What will these 18 persons do as long as there is no occasion to launch a struggle? Of course they do carry on their spinning; when I speak of constructive activity I mean that which would keep them occupied all the time. All these 18 persons have their own business to attend to. At the moment they have no social activity to take up collectively.

Who will build up faultless character? How is it defined? You for one know well that the Satyagraha Ashram exists just for it. And even there, who could certify faultless character?

Satyagraha and the satyagrahis are like the sun and its rays, you cannot hide them under a bushel, they cannot be unmade by your refusing to recognize them.

Everywhere today I see occasions for satyagraha; but where are those who would offer it? Those that would are ever ready. They are preparing themselves and when they have the confidence they will never wait for my permission or anyone else's.

In spite of all this cautioning, I would ask you to let all that you have done stand as it is. It would not have mattered had you not worked it up, but where the intention is noble there is no room for disappointment or for undoing what has been done.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 26-4-1927.

Think of something that would strengthen the bond among the workers. As for my criticism in the first instance you should think it over yourself and then make such additions and alterations as you think right.

When we meet we shall again discuss it further.

This Dal is certainly not in response to those who are pressing us to take up political activity. Their point of view too deserves to be understood. It is a different thing that you and I are not interested in it. They maintain that even today we should carry on a movement, as far as we can, over all the issues that are believed to have a political aspect. Satyagraha may or may not come off, but let us at least present a petition regarding our present miseries. If nothing more, let us come together for discussions since we are allowed to. If nothing else, let us at any rate exchange views and so on.

This line of thought cannot certainly be dismissed; we too had been thinking this way in the past. Your Dal does not answer this expectation. You should find out some simple way for them, or help them find it. One of the ways to do this is to willingly leave the organization of the Political Conference to them and help them with it as much as you can.

As I write, more comes to my pen. But if I set out to "print" all of it I would tire my hand and my doctor will warn me that my blood-pressure may rise.

You should therefore strike the 't's and dot the 'i's in what I have written today. And if you cannot, you should get me to do it on some other occasion.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2866. Courtesy: Sharadabehn Shah

314. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE

NANDI HILLS, MYSORE,
Tuesday, Chaitra Vad 11 [*April 27, 1927*][1]

BHAISHRI MAMA,

I have your letter. It appears the Godhra Ashram has at present a good number of students. But then you also could be said to have done good work. You must have noticed however that the Ashram children did more spinning in that way. Did you read Ramachandran's report of Jamia Millia?

It may be said the boys there did absolutely no spinning for six years. Just a knowledgeable, affectionate teacher who had faith in it has changed the entire atmosphere of the Ashram. Many such stories come to me. I do not write all this as criticism of you but only to strengthen your faith if I may.

But I do not want to tell you things, I want to hear what you have to say. How do you feel about Ramanandji's work? What about that of the Punjab? Did you cope with that task?

Everyone believes I should be all right. The doctors here say that I have no illness as such, but that I must have long rest. The weather here is fine. The view cannot compare with the one at Chinchpokli.

If it were your responsibility, what would you do about the nuisance of prowlers round the Ashram? Think long before you answer.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3847

[1] The source *has Chaitra Vad* 10, which however was a *kshaya* date.

315. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised April 27, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your cheerful letter. If you can realize every word of what you have written, all your trouble is over and also my anxiety. We really live through and in our work. We perish through our perishable bodies, if instead of using them as temporary instruments, we identify ourselves with them. The more I observe and study things, the more convinced I become that sorrow over separation and death is perhaps the greatest delusion. To realize that it is a delusion is to become free. There is no death, no separation of the substance. And yet the tragedy of it is that though we love friends for the substance we recognize in them, we deplore the destruction of the insubstantial that covers the substance for the time being. Whereas real friendship should be used to reach the whole through the fragment. You seem to have got the truth for the moment. Let it abide for ever.[1]

I do not know how Krishnanandji came to think that I was coming there in June. What I did say—I think in letter was that I would like to come as early as I could. I note your warning. There is little chance of my being able to leave the place before June, if then.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5220. Courtesy: Mirabehn

316. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN

April 27, 1927

An illness comes on with a steed's speed and goes away at a snail's pace. If only you girls had allowed me to starve on that day instead of getting fruits and other things ready for me, I would not have fallen ill. You should show your affection not by feasting me but by making me fast. Even if I come asking for food after doing a lot of work, I must be told, 'Now be patient, rest for a while. We will let

[1] "I had grasped the truth with my intellect, but the heart lagged behind for still many years after this." (Mirabehn)

you have a little milk and maybe an orange.' You can say this to me nicely. Don't you know I often deal with Rasik and Manu in this way ? Who would call me cruel on this account? Why must I be my sole guardian? Why can't you girls be to me what I am to Manu? Now when you return, be kind to me in this way.

Blessings to all the sisters from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

317. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Wednesdays [*April 27, 1927*][1]

I have your letter. Herewith find the letters from Ganesh and Ramachandra. Answers to these are also enclosed. Let me know if From the Gujarati original: C. W. 8701. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri ut what Ramachandra writes.

The statistics about cows and buffaloes will prove useful.

Blessings from

BAPU

318. UNTOUCHABILITY AND UNREASON

A correspondent from Mahad writes:

> It gives me much sorrow to let you know that there was a riot on the 20th of March last between touchables and untouchables at Mahad. There was held a conference of the Colaba District depressed classes on the 19th and 20th ultimo. The meeting was quite successful. But whilst the crowd was dispersing, Mr. A. V. Chitre of the Social Service League of Bombay told the people as they were thirsty and as the sun was very hot that they could go to the public tank and drink water. There were some who tried to dissuade the men from going to the tank. But Dr. Ambedkar the president decided to march the men to the tank. Even the police inspector could not feel the gravity of the situation, and instead of stopping the crowd from proceeding to the tank, went with them. The tank is situated in the midst of the Brahmin locality. As however no

[1] From the reference to the statistics about cows and buffaloes printed in *Navajivan,* 8-5-1927

one was aware that the untouchables were going to the tank there was no disturbance, and hundreds of them quenched their thirst at the tank with cries of *"Hara Hara Mahadev"*. Meanwhile the touchables came to the scene and they watched the incident with rage. The crowd of untouchables then went back to the pandal for their meals. Within an hour of this the Mahad public was suddenly awakened by the wild cry *Gurava* and they were told that the untouchables were thinking of entering the temple of Vireshwar.

It was a false cry; but in no time the temple was filled by an infuriated mob of touchables who had sticks in their hands. The poor untouchables had no intention whatsoever of going to the temple. But the touchables finding no untouchable attempting to enter the temple practically ran amuck, went to the bazaar and began to beat any untouchable they came across in the street. All the while this beating was going on on the part of the touchables, not one untouchable offered any resistance. A few touchables who sympathized with the untouchables tried to protect them; but the furious mob would not be checked. They even rushed into the huts of shoe-makers and such others and beat them severely. The helpless untouchables ran wildly for help; but none was offered by the shopkeepers. The untouchables who were in the pandal were derided by the touchables for not coming out in the open to fight. There were nearly 1,500 of the former in the pandal and if they had offered to fight there would have been a great calamity and Hinduism would have been disgraced. Dr. Ambedkar justified the advice that he had given on the strength of the resolution that was passed in the Bombay Legislative Council and on the opinion expressed by the Mahad Municipality that the untouchables were lawfully entitled to take water from public tanks and wells.

I have omitted from the correspondent's letter several passages giving further details. But the letter appears to me to be genuine and does not in any way appear to be an over-estimate. Assuming then that the incident is correctly reported there can be no question about the unprovoked lawlessness on the part of the so-called higher classes. For, it should be remembered that it was not the drinking of water at the tank which had brought together the "touchables" to the temple but the false report that the untouchables were wanting to enter the temple. But one can hardly expect sanity to exist side by side with unreason. Untouchability itself has no reason behind it. It is an inhuman institution. It is tottering and it is sought to be supported by the so-called orthodox party by sheer brute force.

The so-called untouchables have brought the question a step nearer solution by their exemplary self-restraint under most provo-

king circumstances. Had they retaliated it would have been perhaps difficult to distribute the blame. As it is, the blame is all on the side of the "touchables". Brute force will not sustain untouch-ability. It will bring about a revulsion of feeling in favour of the suppressed classes. It is a sign of the times that there were at least some "touchables" who tried to defend the poor untouchables. One could wish that there were many more in Mahad. Silent sympathy on such occasions is not of much use. Every Hindu, who considers the removal of untouch-ability to be of paramount importance, should on such occasions prove his sympathy by publicly defending the suppressed classes and having his own head broken in defending the helpless and the down-trodden.

I cannot help thinking that Dr. Ambedkar was fully justified in putting to test the resolutions of the Bombay Legislative Council and the Mahad Municipality by advising the so-called untouchables to go to the tank to quench their thirst. No incident of this character should pass by unnoticed on the part of associations like the Hindu Maha-sabha interested in this reform. Let them investigate the statements made by my correspondent and if they can be substantiated, let them condemn the action of the "touchables". There is nothing like the growth of enlightened public opinion for eradicating everything evil, which untouchability undoubtedly is.

Young India, 28-4-1927

319. SASTRI AS FIRST AMBASSADOR

Very considerable relief will be felt by the Indian settlers in South Africa over the announcement that the Right Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri has consented to become India's first Agent-general in that sub-continent, if the post is finally offered to him by the Government of India. It is a great sacrifice that Sastri and the Servants of India Society have made. It is an open secret that left to himself he was not inclined to undertake the responsibility and to leave his work in India. But he has yielded to the pressure of friends, especially when it was urged upon him that he alone could successfully inaugurate the working of the Agreement in bringing about which he played not an inconsiderable part. We know from the cables that were sent from time to time from South Africa that the Europeans were anxious that he should accept the honour. Sjt. Srinivasa Sastri had by his eloquence,

transparent sincerity, sweet reasonableness, and extreme earnestness won the esteem and respect of the Union Government and the Europeans in South Africa during the short time that he was there as a member of the Habibullah Deputation. I know how nervously anxious our countrymen in South Africa were that he should become the first Agent. It was impossible for Sjt. Srinivasa Sastri whom God has endowed with a generous nature not to respond to such a unanimous call from South Africa. It is almost a foregone conclusion that the appointment will be duly made and very shortly announced.

The first Agent-general will have his work cut out for him. Both the Union Government and our countrymen have no doubt high expectations of India's first ambassador. The Union Government no doubt think that being an Indian and a person of great distinction he will make their path smooth with the Indian community in connection with any measures that they may take. In other words, they will expect him to be their sympathetic interpreter both to the Indian community and to the Government of India. Our countrymen equally surely expect him to insist upon an honourable and even a liberal interpretation and fulfilment of the Agreement. It is any time a delicate task to please rival claimants, more so now in South Africa where the clash of conflicting interests is simply bewildering. But I know that if anybody can hold the scales absolutely even and thus give satisfaction to all parties concerned, Sjt. Srinivas Sastri is certainly the one to be able to do so. I feel certain that the Union Ministers do not expect the new Agent to surrender an inch of what is justly due to the Indian community. All he can be expected to do is to persuade the Indian settlers not to go behind and travel beyond the Settlement[1] of 1914, for some time to come at any rate, until they have proved themselves entitled, by exemplary self-restraint and behaviour, to an enlargement of the position attained by the Agreement of 1914. Our countrymen in South Africa, if they intend to make the Agent's position fairly easy and their own position secure, will not expect him to work wonders. It will be wrong to look forward to a complete transformation of the old position, because an honourable Agreement has been arrived at and because a great countryman is going to South Africa to see to the fulfilment of that Agreement. They must remember that the Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri is not going there as their counsel briefed to attend to every individual grievance. To smother him with

[1] *Vide* "The Indians' Relief Act, 1914", after 5-6-1914.

detailed individual grievances would be to kill the goose that lays the golden eggs. He goes there as a trustee for India's honour. He goes there to safeguard the rights and liberty of the general body of Indian settlers. He will be there to see that no fresh restrictive legislation is embarked upon by the Union Government and that the existing restrictive laws are administered liberally and with due regard to the vested rights. Any individual grievance therefore that he might be called upon to tackle will have to be in terms of the position I have set forth, that is to say, it will have to be illustrative of some general principle of wide application. Unless therefore the Indian community exercises prudential restraint upon themselves in approaching him for redress of their individual grievances, they will make the Agent's position intolerable and even useless for the high purpose for which it is intended. Indeed such an ambasador's usefulness lies not so much in work appertaining to his official capacity as to the indirect service he can render by his sociableness, and by his character, which leaves its impress upon anything and anybody that it comes in contact with officially or otherwise. And if our countrymen desire to make use of the great qualities of head and heart that Sjt. Sastri posseses, they will bear in mind the limitations I have endeavoured to set forth.

I understand that if Sjt. Sastri goes, Mrs. Sastri too will accompany him. This will be a great gain to the settlers. Let the Indian sisters in South Africa gather round Mrs. Sastri and surround her with every affection. They will find in her an invaluable instrument of social service. She will act as a leaven in their midst to raise the general tone among the many thousand Indian sisters who are scattered throughout South Africa.

Young India, 28-4-1927

320. A TERRIBLE CONTRAST

A friend having for the first time seen New Delhi and the Assembly Hall in March last writes:[1]

> I was the other day for the first time in the Assembly Hall and it was for the first time then that I saw New Delhi also. I could see how millions must have been poured into the construction of New Delhi to make it so imposing. The Assembly Hall too presents an equally imposing appearance. But as I

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

came out of the Assembly Hall, I saw dilapidated huts which turned out to be the labour camp where I thought must be living the coolies working at the construction of New Delhi....

The contrast between the palaces built in New Delhi for wealthy people and the miserable huts allotted to the people whose labour was responsible for the palaces was too terrible for contemplation....

How, I thought to myself, could the members of the Assembly day after day miss the horrible contrast which I could see even during the few moments that I was in New Delhi? . . .

I have said nothing to any of the members. But could you not do anything in this matter? I have said nothing because I could influence no one; but you may think it worth while doing something. You are a friend of the poor and might be able to secure some relief. Anyway I could not help disburdening myself to you.

I have summarized the main contents of the letter which my fair correspondent has written in Hindi. The criminal disparity that exists between the condition of labour and that of capital is no new thing in modern times. The discovery made by the friend reminds one of the discovery said to have been made centuries ago by Gautama Buddha. It was no new thing he saw. But the shock received by the sight of old age, disease and other miseries of life transformed his life and materially affected the fortunes of the world. It is well that this lady has received her first shock. If she and the other cultured women of India, who have received their education at the expense of the very poor people of whom the correspondent writes so pathetically, will dive deeper and make some slight return to these poor people by making common cause with them, some alleviation in their distressful condition will not be long in coming. Every palace that one sees in India is a demonstration not of her riches but of the insolence of power that riches give to the few, who owe them to the miserably requitted labours of the millions of the paupers of India. We have a Government which is based upon and which only exists by the exploitation of the toiling millions.

A friend sent me the other day a cutting from an English newspaper which considered Rs. 1,500 for an Englishman to be not enough for his wants in India, and it warned Englishmen from venturing out to India if they could get not more than Rs. 1,500 per month. There is no need to quarrel with that standard. From the writer's own standpoint, Rs. 1,500 per month is demonstrably

inadequate because he regards club life, a motor-car, migration to a hill-station during the hot months, education of children in England to be the necessary minimum. All one can say and one must say about this standard is, that if it is the indispensable minimum, it is a standard too expensive for India to afford; and however beneficial in the abstract may the services of English officials be demonstrated to be, if the toiling millions are to live, they must get along without these beneficial services for the simple reason that the benefit is beyond the reach of their pockets. I suppose it is possible to demonstrate that if the millions of India could be translated to some bracing Himalayan plateau, they would be able to double the length of their days on earth. But it is a proposition which they will laugh out of court as beyond their reach.

What the lady observed in New Delhi is but a tiny symptom of an ever-growing and deep-seated disease which is daily destroying the lives of thousands of people. It is quite possible to imagine that if an energetic member of the Assembly moved a resolution calling upon the Government to provide better housing accommodation for the labourers, the resolution would be carried, that it would not be vetoed and that the Government would gladly give effect to it at the expense of millions poorer still than these labourers. I am sure that this is not what the fair friend really desires. What she desires in common with every Indian who knows anything of the country is a radical change in the system of government which is top-heavy and which under its intolerable weight is crushing day after day the poor inhabitants of this country who are groaning at the bottom. I have pointed the way out of this difficult situation times without number. I do not know another.

Young India, 28-4-1927

321. NOTES

KHADDAR AND PREM MAHAVIDYALAYA

Acharya Gidwani has been slowly but surely revolutionizing the mentality of the boys learning in Prem Mahavidyalaya at Brindaban. In the course of a letter he says:

> I do not boast of my khaddar work in this Mahavidyalaya; but I can safely assure you that you will not be disappointed when you see it. Beginning with gentle pressure I have arrived at a stage when every teacher and student

wears khaddar without grudging and everyone spins on *takli* for 45 minutes daily. Carding is done by turns and weaving is taught to select students. Dyeing has been started. About Rs. 2,000 worth of khaddar has been sold through the Prem Mahavidyalaya during the session, and everyone in Muttra and the neighbourhood looks upon the Prem Mahavidyalaya as a stronghold of *shuddha* khaddar. Two tailors have been busy sewing exclusively khaddar for months in the Mahavidyalaya and will continue doing so.

I congratulate Acharya Gidwani and his staff and students. His performance reminds me of a similar performance reported in these columns with reference to the Jamia Millia of Delhi. These two instances and more can be quoted to show that where there are earnestness and faith there is no difficulty about response from students. I have said repeatedly that it is the easiest thing to popularize khaddar and hand-spinning in schools if the teachers have faith combined with knowledge and perseverance. I know of no school where these three conditions being fulfilled there has been failure.

Young India, 28-4-1927

322. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

NANDI HILLS,
April 28, 1927

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

It was a treat to receive your letter. But you will remember that you owe me a medical visit—can't call it professional because a professional visit will carry with it Rs. 1,000 per day if not more, now that you have been twice to Europe since the promise of a visit. And, is not each European visit supposed to add to the capacity of doctors and lawyers and therefore also their daily fees? Meanwhile, I shall bear your instructions in my mind. My chief difficulty is how to control the mind and not to let it think, unless I develop *dementia*. If you say I may not reduce my thoughts to writing or not even give utterance by speech even in the shape of conversation, I can somewhat understand; but I do not know how I can prevent the doings of Hindus and Mussalmans from making me think furiously. Nor do I know how to prevent the growing starvation of millions acting upon my mind. I do not need to read papers and get information to make me continuously think of these things. The ony way to prevent me from thinking of these things is for Hindus and Mussalmans to behave like human beings rather than sub-human animals and for all of us

who get more than our share of our daily bread to think of the vast majority of the teeming millions and for their sakes to discard foreign cloth and for their encouragement to spin during every idle moment.

If it is really a fact that high blood-pressure is due to an over-wrought brain, I seriously contend that the only way to remove this tension would be to prescribe a starvation cure. Deep down in me I do feel that a prolonged fast is the only radical cure because during the 21 days fast[1], I could see that after 10 days I has ceased even to think of the outside world. The starvation had created that temporary mental adjustment. Whilst I am eating even if it was possible the mind refuses not to think. But under starvation the mind will co-operate in ceasing to think and worry. And, if in spite of the care that I am myself taking and in spite of the army of medical friends who see me and examine me, in spite of the quacks whose opinion I voluntarily seek and in spite of the undivided attention of devoted nurses, blood-pressure refuses to yield and weakness persists, I shall certainly risk causing temporary pain to many friends and impose a fast upon myself either to end or to mend this vegetating and vexing state. But there is no cause for any alarm. It seems that the pressure will go down. For the last two days I am feeling stronger than when I came to Nandi. The highest pressure during last week was 188. On Tuesday last it was found to be 180. This was the first decline yet noticed after the collapse.

This hill is 4,850 feet, therefore, not so high as Ooty nor so cold; but it is cool enough and Doctor Mehta considers that I should not [go] to a higher altitude. Others again say that higher the altitude the better it is for . . .[2] When doctors differ what is a poor patient to do? Some day when you are free I shall certainly expect you when we shall talk not merely of my health but about several other things of infinitely greater importance.

Please give my love to all who think of me and accept it for yourself.

Yours sincerely,

From the photostat: S.N. 14119 & 12949

[1] From September 17 to October 8, 1924.

[2] The source is blank here.

323. LETTER TO SHANKARAN

NANDI HILLS,
April 28, 1927

MY DEAR SHANKARAN,

Your letter is a tonic for me. You are realizing all my expectations. I am delighted that the kitchen is in a perfect state now. Who is your right-hand man? How is Giriraj doing? Are you keeping perfect health? Your kitchen must become a treasure store of health of mind, body and spirit. There must be all about it and for all times a sweetness, restfulness and peacefulness which should be capable of being detected by any passer-by. Everything in its place, everything clean, no foreign smells of a multiplicity of condiments, only the natural smell of simple edibles and workers working harmoniously, contentedly and smilingly in their own persons showing perfect health. Do you know that the *rishis* of old were poets, philosophers, cooks, scavengers all rolled into one? Nalaraja was a wise ruler, an ideal husband and a finished cook. Every occupation may become disgraced by bad associations and every occupation can become a stepping-stone to salvation when it is undertaken by a wise man.

Yours,

From a photostat: S.N. 14120

324. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised April 28/29, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

Your latest letter is still more cheerful. I hope this mood will last. I very nearly sent you a card in Hindi today. But it was too late. This [is] written after the receipt of the post, but also after its departure which precedes the receipt

I have made a slight change in the food here which is approved by a distinguished doctor who is living nearby. I am now taking raw milk and adding now and then juice of a few *neem* leaves and have omitted chapatis and vegetables for the time being. I may revert to the latter two if it becomes necessary. There is now noticed a decline in

the blood-pressure for the first time since the collapse. I am feeling altogether better.

The rest through Mahadev.

With love,

BAPU

29th Morning

You should certainly translate Rolland's book. But if you are at peace with yourself now your permanent attainment of internal peace is far more important than anything else. You like the people there. You can therefore give them much and take also. I would like you if you can to grow to your full height there before you leave. My suggestion then is that you should set apart religiously an hour daily for translation and make such progress as you can. Meanwhile, God might open the way for me to stay there for the necessary time and the facts may be revised in consultation with Mahadev. Or when you feel that your work there is finished you can come wherever I am if I do not come there soon enough. But you shall decide what to do. I have told you you are free to come here whenever you like. Only do not please regard the translation work more important than what you are doing there. If a man is to be judged by his deeds and not by whatever the sanest man of the age may from a distant study of him say of him then the lives of co-workers will be the best judgement on me. You understand what I mean, do you not?

I fancy I have forgotten to answer a question you asked in one of your letters. Undoubtedly the interpretation of your vow is that your last meal should be finished before 7 p.m. or dusk whichever the vow is. You are therefore right in your interpretation. The rule regarding vows is when in doubt interpret against yourself, i.e., in favour of greater restriction.

BAPU

[PS.]

Please tell Lady Slade[1] I am thankful for her concern about me.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5221. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] Addressee's mother

325. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Friday [*April 29*][1] *1927*

CHI. MANI,

I have your letters. It would be very good indeed for you to take your meals at the Ashram mess. Read my letter[2] to Shankaran on the subject. You have done well to take charge of Champa[3].

How is your health now?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 55

326. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Chaitra Vad 13 [*April 29, 1927*][4]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Read this letter and then send it immediately to Nimu.

Let me know what you and Kashi feel. Ramdas is getting good training. At present, he is very much interested in it. Let us see what happens later on.

I am not at all inclined to send Prabhudas to Almora. I am trying to bring him here. He will get everything here.

I even feel like sending him to Mathuradas in Panchagani. It is better not to do anything in haste. These days, it is neither hot nor cold, so he could go for a couple of days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original 32858

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Shankaran", 28-4-1927.

[2] *ibid.*

[3] Dr. Pranjivandas Jagjivan Mehta's daughter-in-law

[4] From Mathuradas's presence at Panchagani where he went in the year 1927. *Chaitra Vad* 13 in 1927 corresponded to April 29.

327. LETTER TO JAGJIVANDAS NARAYANDAS MEHTA

NANDI HILLS,
April 30, 1927

Do a fine job of what you take up as a trust. You should give up the work at Lathi if you are doubtful about it or cannot cope with it.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 69

328. LETTER TO SUMANT MEHTA

April 30, 1927

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I have your letter. Indeed you have presented an abstract discussion. Well, I like that too, but at the moment you are in the land of Narasinh Mehta; so I am reminded of his morning hymn.

For the present let us vie with each other in getting well quick. Please convey my congratulations to Bhai Raichura on the privilege of serving you. *Vandemataram* to Sharadabehn.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

329. LETTER TO NIMU

April 30, 1927

CHI. NIMU,

Next year you will be married, and begin a new life. I want you and Ramdas to get ready and prepare yourselves for it. I write this to you after I have written to Ramdas. I have long since been corresponding with Ramdas. Go through the enclosed extract from Ramdas's letter.

I wish both of you would devote your lives to service; Ramdas does wish to. You should earn your livelihood too from it, as Maganlal does and many others too. I wish you two could become an ideal couple, for which you should begin your efforts from now on.

Whatever time you can spare from your household duties you may devote to khadi work, for which you too would be paid. I have been doing it in two cases; one of Chi. [Kishorelal] and Gomatibehn and the other of Thakkar and his wife. But you can surpass them both. The job that you are required to do will be easy but you will get the satisfaction that you can earn on your own, and one should always try to prove that one can. You can run your home along with this occupation, and, I think, you can also look after your children when you have them. Thousands of husbands and wives from poor families earn their living in this way. You know yourself the cases of Dudabhai and Danibehn, of Ramjibhai and Gangabehn. We shall also remain poor alongside of them. Only then shall we be fit to realize God.

For accomplishing this you ought to improve your ginning, carding and spinning. Side by side, you must improve your knowledge of Gujarati and pick up some book-keeping. You can find time for all this. You must improve your health too. Sanskrit and so on are of course to be there.

* * *[1]

Consider all this and write to me frankly what you think about it. Write to me as a daughter would speak to her mother without reserve, or like two friends opening their hearts to each other. Write to me what you want to do without bothering about my likes. Tell me frankly about anything in my letter that you do not approve. Nothing can be accomplished by force; something will be by what you willingly undertake to do.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

330. LETTER TO SITARAM PURUSHOTTAM PATWARDHAN[2]

April 30, 1927

In my article[3] about buffaloes I have said nothing about destroying them; on the contrary an attempt should be made to raise their breed. Where the need for a thing is real it will surely be

[1] As in the source
[2] Alias Appal
[3] *Vide* "Conditions of Cow-protection", pp. 197-9.

protected. What I mean is that cow-protection alone can be part of dharma. It includes compassion for other animals. But these are not being destroyed. There is no need to take up the stupendous task of stopping their destruction. And if we are able to protect the cow, all else that needs to be done will be accomplished automatically. It is not the purport of my writing to ignore the buffalo. I only indicate the limit of our ability. Even the villages ought to have something in the nature of a tannery, a dairy. In other words, the tanning process in the villages needs to be improved. There is need for some sophistication in the manner of skinning. There should be some expert experimenting with regard to the cow; there has to be knowledge of the methods of increasing their yield. It is our misfortune that today we can only carry this knowledge from the town to the country. At the moment we are not even aware of this science. I mean, we shall be able to do nothing before those who have learnt it in the West evolve it anew with an appreciation of the local environment and in an assimilable form. So, for the time being, we shall only be experimenting, the point being that an industry which is today handled mainly by ignorant men for earning a livelihood should be taken up by the educated class, keeping in view our country's welfare, as is being done in the case of spinning and weaving. Efforts in the direction have now been initiated in the Ashram.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

331. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

[*April 30, 1927*][1]

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your letter. It is very good that you have started.

The letter from Khushalbhai is nice; please let me know what you wrote in reply to him. Service does include one's interest. One who serves with a pure heart is always provided for by God. It certainly is an inexhaustible source of learning. No sincere worker has

[1] The concluding paragraph of the letter appears in the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary under this date.

ever starved. Maganlal and others have lost nothing, on the contrary they have ennobled their lives and attained their goal.

If you feel that you lack aptitude for doing a thing, this shortcoming can certainly be removed by trying hard. Experience will bring all the knowledge one needs. There will be no difficulty whatever in raising a grand edifice on the foundations of noble character.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6856

332. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Chaitra Vad 14 [*April 30, 1927*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

We all deliberated a lot this morning about Prabhudas. Along with other places you are thinking of, keep in mind Nandi too. However, Rajaji and others are of the opinion that it would be better if no sick person is sent there. I do not put Prabhudas in the category of such persons. For him, it is better if we take a decision soon. Why cannot he go to Doctor in Dholwad? Gangabehn will look after him also. And at Panchgani, there is the facility of Mathuradas's room and he could stay with him. Instead of my asking Mathuradas, it is better if you ask him. He will be a little confused if I ask him. Or, instead of going there, he should come here. Gangadharrao says that he can go to Hubli. It is at a height of 3000 ft. Prabhudas has seen the place. Pundalik is there. So he would not need any other companion. Out of all these places, choose one. I find it somewhat difficult to accept Almora. Jamnadas himself needs looking after. What is the good of putting two sick persons together. An added reason for my preference for Panchgani is the possibility of Pyarelal being there. Write to me whatever decision you take or send me a telegram.

Mathuradas's address is: Panchgani Castle

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32872

[1] The contents of the letter indicate that Gandhiji wrote the letter from Nandi Hills where he was convalescing in 1927. Reference to Mathuradas Trikumji's presence at Panchgani also confirms the year as 1927; *vide* "Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", 17-6-1926 and *vide* "Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", before 17-9-1927, *Chaitra Vad* 14 in 1927 corresponded to April 30.

333. LETTER TO LAJPAT RAI[1]

NANDI HILLS,
April 30, 1927

DEAR LALAJI,

I got your letter and the Trust papers. Let me congratulate you on your decision. This amount, I am afraid, will not be sufficient; we will require yet more funds, for which we must wait.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]
Lala Lajpat Rai —Ek Jeevani, p. 468

334. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Saturday [*April 30, 1927*][2]

CHI. MIRA,

Well, I have nothing to say today. I only write so that you may know that nowadays I am rather worried about you. God will take care of you. Do you understand what I say?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 5222. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] The English original is not traceable; *vide* also "Letter to Lajpat Rai", 1-5-1927.

[2] From the postmark

335. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

Wednesday [After *April 30, 1927*][1]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. I have got your point for not coming to Nandi. My objection to your going to Almora was . . .[2] for want of a man. Now Jethalal is coming and if he keeps good health, you can go without any compunction.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32973

336. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[*April-May 1927*][3]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your wire.

You still should not overlook the precautions which are necessary. We must ensure our safety. Women should have no fear of any kind. Do not give up till you find out who the thieves are. Do not even entertain the idea that you would look for them when they strike again. We can be said to have served dharma as we know it, to the best of our ability only when we learn to solve our problems ourselves.

Herewith a letter from Kediyaji about cow-protection. Acknowledge it. If you feel it is necessary to deposit it with Revashankerbhai, do so and take from him whatever money you need or, keep the letter as it is and send a credit note to Revashankerbhai.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 32882

[1] From the contents, the letter appears to have been written *after* the one to Chhaganlal Gandhi, addressee's father, dated April 30, 1927; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] A few words here are illegible in the source.

[3] From the reference to thefts in the Ashram and precautions suggested; *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 26-4-1927.

337. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Thursday [*April-May 1927*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

It is time for the post so I would not write more. My advice is that you get the attached letter printed. Form yourselves into batches, go to all the suspected villages, organise meetings and read out the letter there.

Those women who are scared should be assured of their safety immediately.

No one can go on leave at present. Those who are already on leave should come back. It is your duty to pursue this work, to the exclusion of all other activities.

Take Vallabhbhai's advice. We will not lodge a complaint. However, we can take advice from those who are known to the police. Can not we make an arrangement with the police that they do not arrest the culprits but keep an eye on them?

I am writing whatever occurs to me. Do whatever you feel should be done. Send me all the details. I am better.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 32881

338. LETTER TO LAJPAT RAI[2]

May 1, 1927

DEAR LALAJI,

The afore-mentioned letter[3] was written last night. I did not fully reveal my feelings. My congratulations were not without a tinge of criticism. Let me now say it out.

The idea is laudable but your method of implementing it has its own flaws. Your wife and children should not become the trustees.

[1] From the reference to thefts in the Ashram; *vide* 1st footnote to the preceding item.

[2] The English original is not traceable.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Lajpat Rai", 30-4-1927.

Your trustees should be those who entirely agree with your thoughts and are prepared to suffer the severest hardships to see them materialize. If your wife, daughter and son have these qualities they can be the trustees, though they are related to you.

Now I have told you the whole truth and thank God He gave me the strength to do so. Without it I would not have been able to do my duty which, as a friend, I ought to do.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Lala Lajpat Rai —Ek Jeevani, p. 468

339. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

May 2, 1927

YOUR WIRE. NANDI HAS SUITED BEYOND EXPECTATION. YESTERDAY'S EXAMINATION SHOWED NORMAL BLOOD-PRESSURE. TAKING TWO LONG WALKS DAILY GROWING STRONGER AND WRITING. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 5223. Courtesy: Mirabehn

340. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised NANDI HILLS,
May 2, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I wrote to you a postcard[1] in Hindi just to tell you that I was thinking constantly of you and to see whether you could read and understand my Hindi. Do not be alarmed. I do not propose to write to you always in Hindi. But if you can follow my Hindi, I do want now and then to write my extra letters in Hindi, i.e., if you like the idea, not otherwise.

Now for your disturbing wire. I wonder what in my letters has prompted it. You can have no notion of the energy I have already regained. I have written for *Navajivan* four articles this week. For *Young India* I wrote three last week. I am really doing almost the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 30-4-1927.

normal work for the papers now. And I do a fair amount of love letters.

But all this is nothing compared to the result of medical examination yesterday. The pressure dropped from 188 to 155, and 155 to 160 is the normal for my age. I have been walking for the last three days over one mile per day in two periods each extending to 30 minutes. This is more than Amboli. So there is now no anxiety about my health. There can be no question now of leaving Nandi. It would be foolish to think of leaving it till my previous strength is attained, if it can be at all or till the season for Nandi ends which it does about July.

I observe from your wire that in spite of your previous letter of attainment of peace, the pendulum has swung back and that you are again perturbed. This does not surprise me. If our lucid moments were lasting, nothing further will remain to be done. Unfortunately or fortunately, we have to pass through many an ebb and flow before we settle down to real peace.

I have therefore left you free to do as you please. Better certainly if you can keep your peace and stay. Equally certainly come away if you cannot keep your peace. Only, in any decision you come to, please eliminate the question of my health. For if you come, you would find little difference between me as you saw me in Kangri and me as I am now. Dive deep into yourself then and find out if you can where you are and act accordingly irrespective of what I would like you to do. Or put it another way. I would like you to do what your inner spirit tells you to do.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5224. Courtesy: Mirabehn

341. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

NANDI DURG,
Silence Day, May 2, 1927

CHI. MANI,

Father writes to say that you look pulled down. How is it? Our body must be strong and radiant. An ideal virgin is expected to be at the top in every respect.

If you have not to go to Karachi, I would like to send you instead of Champavati to Delhi. There are many girls there and lots of work. And the climate of Delhi is excellent. I expect a wire from Karachi soon.

Let me know if any of the women in the Ashram are afraid of thieves.

Was Radha badly hurt? Did she have a fright?[1] I don't have the time now to write to her separately.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro: Manibehn Patelne, p. 56

342. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day, Vaishakha Sud 2 [*May 3, 1927*][2]

SISTERS,

I have now received plenty of hand-made paper. Even though the size of the paper is a little smaller than what you ask for, I believe you will prefer hand-made paper. Our chief duty today, of course, lies in regard to cloth; because from it our starving masses obtain their bread. There are not many who make this paper. Yet as long as we find something that is made in our country, and it is good, we must procure and use it.

It is very good that you have set apart some money for postage. It does not matter if the amount is small; but keep regular accounts so

[1] When the thieves came to her house

[2] Year is determined from the reference to the menace of thieves at the Ashram.

that those of you who can, may learn thereby how to keep accounts.

I find your progress in another direction also praiseworthy. Last week I raised the problem of protecting yourselves against thieves.[1] Do not lightly brush it aside. I wish you to falsify the epithets 'weak', 'timid' and so on that are specially used about women. They do not apply to all women of course. Who would say the women of *Raniparaj* are 'timid'? How can you call them weak? The women of the West, of course, take part these days in everything. I do not mean to say that they should be imitated; but at least they have been falsifying many of the assumptions of men. The Negro women of Africa are not at all 'timid'. Perhaps there is no such epithet in their language to be applied to them. In Burma, it is the men who appear timid and as it were the weaker sex. Women themselves carry on business of all kinds.

I raised the problem of thieves, not to frighten you, but to make you think calmly about it. In the Ashram we all wish to realize that we have a 'soul'. Now the soul is neither male nor female; neither young nor old. The scriptures as well as our own experience tell us that these are the attributes only of the body. The same soul pervades you and me. How then can I protect you ? Is it not by learning the art of how to protect oneself? Only then can I teach you.

There is enough for you to think over here. If I feel inclined, I will take up the subject once again.

If any of you wish to write to me, do so without hesitation. I learn that Valjibhai has frightened all of you. Do not get frightened.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3647

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Ashram Women", 26-4-1927.

343. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

NANDI DURG,
Vaishakha Sud 3, May 4, 1927

CHI. MANI,

Tell Gangadevi that she should follow the doctor's instructions and take *moong* water if she likes. I cannot suggest any treatment unless I see her. Who is this new physician? Since when has he been visiting the Ashram?

Which of the sisters have volunteered for night patrol duty?

My health is improving. Write to me regularly. How do you do?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Ask Vasumatibehn to write to me.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro: Manibehn Patelne, p. 57

344. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Thursday [*May 4, 1927*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have been wanting to write to you for a good many days, but can do so only now. Hardly a day passes when I do not talk about you or think of you.

You had asked Pyarelal to find out about Nandi. In my opinion Nandi will not suit you. It is not a place where you can stay throughout the year. The weather changes greatly within 24 hours. And the variations are too great in winter and summer. All provisions have to be secured from the plains. The season is over by June. So I think only Panchgani would suit you.

It is another question how long we should occupy the bungalow at Panchgani. This season is already past. So it is all right to spend the monsoon there. Then perhaps it will be better for you to go to Mahabaleshwar. From October onwards the weather there is said to be

[1] From *Bapuni Prasadi*

very good. If we have to undergo the same sort of thing next year also we have time enough to decide what to do.

Revashankarbhai lives in Solan. I have asked him to let me know how things are there.

My health is gradually improving. Hence there is nothing to write on that score.

I can see that Taramati will not write unless she is provoked. Tell her in my opinion she is lazy. I want her fully to benefit physically, mentally and spiritually by her stay at Panchgani. Dilip appears to be deriving the fullest benefit from staying there.

This morning Pyarelal started out on his way to join you. I now have your wire, and so I have sent a telegram to Pyarelal at Bangalore to stop him.

From your letter it appears that I alone was responsible for detaining Pyarelal. I wanted to keep him with me for a few days. After your telegram yesterday he asked my permission to leave and I gave the permission.

Now I will wait for your letter. And I will do whatever is proper.

You had wished that I should stay at Panchgani. But that was not possible. Work demanded that 1 should be in this province. Once my health is normal I shall certainly finish the work. True, it will be done in a somewhat novel manner.

Are you reading anything?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

345. MAN'S INHUMANITY TO MAN

In another column will be seen an extract from *Navajivan* of a most disgraceful case of calculated inhumanity of a medical man towards the dying wife of a member of the suppressed class in Kathiawar village. Sjt. Amritlal Thakkar who is responsible for giving the details of the case has withheld the names of the place and parties for fear of the poor suppressed class schoolmaster being further molested by the medical man. I wish, however, that the names will be disclosed. Time must come when the suppressed class people will have

to be encouraged by us to dare to suffer further hardships and tyranny. Their sufferings are already too great for any further sufferings to be really felt. Public opinion cannot be roused over grievances that cannot be verified and traced to their sources. I do not know the rules of the Medical Council in Bombay. I know that in other places a medical practitioner, who refused to attend before his fees were paid, would be answerable to the Council and would be liable to have his name removed from the Council's list and be otherwise subject to disciplinary action. Fees are no doubt exactable; but proper attendance upon patients is the first duty of a medical practitioner. The real inhumanity, however, if the facts stated are true, consists in the practitioner refusing to enter the untouchable's quarters, refusing himself to see the patient, and refusing himself to apply the thermometer. And if the doctrine of untouchability can ever be applied in any circumstances, it is certainly applicable to this member of the profession which he has disgraced. But I am hoping that there is some exaggeration in the statement made by Sjt. Thakkar's correspondent and, if there is none, that the medical practitioner will himself come forth and make ample amends to the society which he has so outraged by his inhuman conduct.

Young India, 5-5-1927

346. KHADI FOR UTKAL

Three months ago Sjt. Shankerlal Banker and Lakshmidas Purushottam travelled in Orissa examining the khadi work going on in that land of paupers. And now Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj has also been touring in that province. Lakshmidas's notes have been published in *Navajivan.* Jamnalalji has sent the summary[1] of his impressions which I commend to the workers in Utkal and all khadi lovers.

Young India, 5-5-1927

[1] Not reproduced here. It described the "semi-starved" condition of the people and recommended hand-spinning and hand-weaving to raise their economic, social and spiritual standards.

347. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

NANDI,
May 5, 1927

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
BIRLA HOUSE
GIRGAUM
BOMBAY

WISH YOU SUCCESS TERMS MY LAST LETTER. AM DAILY GETTING STRONG. BLOOD-PRESSURE NORMAL SINCE SUNDAY. NO CAUSE ANXIETY. GOD BLESS YOU.

GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 7876. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

348. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

[*May 5, 1927*][1]

MY DEAR SATIS BABU,

I may be said to be out of the wood now, blood-pressure having become normal. I am taking fair walks morning and evening and doing a moderate amount of writing and reading.

But I see you are not yet free and Nikhil seems to be causing anxiety. May God bless the boy.

I am going to take all the rest that may be thought necessary.

With love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1569

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's "blood-pressure having become normal"; *vide* the preceding item.

349. TELEGRAM TO SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM

May 5, 1927

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SABARMATI

IN VIEW FREQUENT RAIDS ADVISE CANCELLATION VACATION LEAVE. ALL WHO CAN SHOULD REMAIN ASHRAM. IF NECESSARY WOMEN SHOULD BE ACCOMMODATED NIGHT CHHATRALAYA. SEND ME DAILY REPORTS. AM PERFECTLY WELL.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 11786

350. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

NANDI HILLS, MYSORE,
May 5, 1927

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

Yes, I am still bed-ridden, but now I can work more or less. I am of course thinking about [the work] there.

It seems advisable to have a committee appointed for khadi work in Kathiawar, constituted as below:

Devchandbhai—President

Harakhchand, Jaisukhlal—Secretaries

Fulchand, Manilal Kothari, Jivarambhai Kutchwada, Narandas and Ramdas.

I have acted on behalf of Narandasbhai without consulting anyone else. If you agree to this please dispose of the matter soon.

You are short of funds. But I have already written[1] asking for an amount to be sent to Fulchand if it can be arranged at the Ashram. But today I have a letter saying there are no more funds at the Ashram and so they can send you nothing. You may, if you can, have a loan from Vallabhbhai payable to holder, but only if you can return the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 26-4-1927 and "Letter to Fulchand K. Shah", 27-4-1927.

amount. I might have managed it, if I were there. But now I am helpless.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5720

351. LETTER TO TARINI P. SINHA

NANDI HILLS,
May 6, 1927

MY DEAR TARINI,

I was delighted to have your letter. Yours has been a protracted illness. I hope, however, that you will soon regain your original vigour. You will not overtax yourself with your resumed studies.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1568

352. LETTER TO HONORARY SECRETARY, AYURVEDIC CONFERENCE[1]

[Before *May 7, 1927*]

DEAR FRIEND,

Owing to my sudden illness, I have not been able to reply earlier to your letter of the 17th ultimo. The remarks quoted by you and ascribed to me in the Minority Report[2], which of course I have not seen, are substantially correct but they have been torn from their context. In the speech, the report of which I have not read, from which I suppose the remarks quoted by you have been taken, I was drawing a distinction between Ayurveda and Ayurvedic physicians of today and I do hold the opinion that they do not do justice to the profession they seek to represent. But these remarks should not be used in support of any proposition designed to prevent Government's assistance being given for Ayurveda research. I believe that Ayurveda is a field for much research work. For want of research scholars, unlike Western medicine, it has practically come to a standstill.

[1] In Ceylon
[2] Of the Commission on Ayurvedic medicine

Therefore, I should not discountenance aid being given to Ayurveda research under given circumstances and to honest and industrious men who love research work and who have the necessary qualifications. I should add that the remarks attributed to me were made at the ceremony of laying the foundation of an Ayurvedic College. Had I been averse to any aid being given to Ayurvedic work, I should certainly have declined to lay the foundation of an Ayurvedic College at Calcutta, to open the Tibbia College in Delhi and very recently, to open an Ayurvedic Hospital at Ahmednagar.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 7-5-1927

353. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

May 7, 1927

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Thank God the tension is over.[1] It is a pleasure to write to you. You are going under the best of auspices. May your way be uniformly smooth and may God give you all the strength and wisdom you will need.

Here is Andrews's latest letter. If you care, I would like you to cable you will soon join him. Or on receiving a line from you, I would cable if you like.

The Viceroy's letter is very good indeed.

If you at all find the time, please ascend the hill once more.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

V. S. Srinivasa Sastri Papers (Correspondence No. 477). Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] The reference is to Sastri's decision on going to South Africa.

354. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 7, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I had your sweet wire and your letter. Fall it was.[1] But I was not ruffled. I knew that you fell but to rise. When moments of exaltation become a permanent part of our lives, we need little further. Therefore I was not unprepared for the fall in the barometer. You will come when you must. Only you will do nothing without fullest deliberation.

I now walk almost my usual pace. The round I took four days ago has now been doubled. Progress is steady. You do not expect me each time now to say I am getting on. You will know when there is an interruption.

Pray never rely upon the newspapers. You get your information first hand.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5225. Courtesy: Mirabehn

355. LETTER TO HEMAPRABHA DEVI DAS GUPTA

NANDI HILLS,
Saturday [*May 7, 1927*][2]

DEAR SISTER,

I have both your letters. I can understand your grief at the death of Anil. But you should add to your spiritual strength as a result of this. Continuous grief wears out one's strength. One can add to one's strength by putting one's sorrows to good use, and it is best utilized by intensifying our desire to serve. It is therefore my constant prayer that one should devote every moment of one's life to service. One can practise it in two ways: first, by reading good books and meditating on them; secondly, by constantly engaging oneself in altruistic activities.

[1] "In spite of the intellectual realization the heart had already failed me." (Mirabehn)

[2] From the reference to Nikhil's health; *Vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 5-5-1927.

As for asceticism, it is this that weakens our attachment to worldly objects and strengthens our love of things spiritual. One attains asceticism by reasoning, while one succeeds in practising it by persistent effort. For this very reason one may describe practice as sustained effort.

Nikhil still seems to have a weak heart; what, in the opinion of the doctors, is the reason for this?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1649

356. COW v. *BUFFALO OR COW-*CUM*-BUFFALO?*[1]

A worker in the cause of cow-protection writes from Konkan:

In your recent article[2] giving the conditions of cow-protection you said that the question of the protection of the cow should not be mixed up with that of the protection of the buffalo. At the back of this suggestion seems to be the fact that the buffalo bull is not useful for agricultural purposes. But in Konkan he is fairly useful. It is the buffalo bull which draws the municipal refuse carts, which works water pumps and even draws the plough, especially when there is a heavy downpour disabling the bullock and most of the agriculture in Konkan is being done under monsoon conditions. The buffalo bull has therefore his place in Konkan.

The Konkan cow does not yield more than one pound of milk, whereas the buffalo yields 5 to 10 lb. It may be possible, after systematic breeding, to make the cow yield more and richer milk, but the buffalo needs no special culture at all. Does not therefore the buffalo in Konkan at any rate need as much protection as the cow? Please correct me if I am wrong.

The buffalo, I admit, has no place on the ghats where the temperature is higher, fields are bigger and water scarce. He needs much water both to drink and bathe in. Konkan is the place for him.

Your tannery and dairy are for cities. For the villages you must suggest some more practical ways and means. Let every village possess a studbull, maintain him partly from the common fund and partly from contributions from those who make use of him. This can be done everywhere and it will improve the stock. Could you not suggest similar other remedies?

[1] The original Gujarati was published in *Navajivan*, 8-5-1927. This is a translation by Mahadev Desai.

[2] *Vide* "Conditions of Cow-protection", pp. 197-9.

These are appropriate questions. My article was not intended to throw the buffalo by the board, it suggested the stopping of buffalo-breeding in her own interest. In other words it meant freedom of the buffalo from its bondage. We have domesticated the cow for our own uses and therefore it has become part of our religion to protect her. It was my object to show that in trying to breed the buffalo, as we do the cow, we might lose both.

The Konkan example does not affect my proposition. We must, of course, make use of the existing stock of buffaloes, and let it be done in parts like Konkan. But our duty is clear. We must not increase our responsibility by breeding the buffalo where we can do with the cow alone. We must therefore content ourselves with the use of cow's milk only. It should not be necessary in a city like Bombay to use buffalo's milk in preference to cow's milk. An endeavour should be organized on a large scale to cheapen the supply of pure cow's milk, and to improve the milk yield of the cow. It is possible too to make cow's milk richer. All these things have been developed into a science in Europe, especially in Denmark. Cows in those countries yield richer and more milk than our buffaloes. I have heard from *vaidyas* that buffalo's milk lacks and can never be made to have the hygenic and health-giving properties that cow's milk possesses. Pious people have told me that cow's milk is *sattvic* (possessing finer qualities) whereas buffalo's milk is *tamasic* (gross). I do not know how far this is true. I am trying to ascertain the truth through the proper channel. But it does seem to me, that all that the buffalo can give and even more, the cow also can or can be made to give. If this is true, why should man, having regard to his own needs, make himself responsible for breeding the buffalo ? And having regard to the need of the buffalo, why should we needlessly keep her in bondage ? Or to put it more simply, why should we press her into our service?

The fact that some people make a pecuniary gain out of buffalo-breeding can have no place in this religious discussion in which we have in view the good of all. In thinking solely of the narrow interest of the self or of the moment, we have ruined ourselves, i.e., our country and our religion. We can be a nation, only when we try to think in terms of the wider interests of the country. If we cannot even think in those terms, it is no use talking of religion. From the national point of view, the good of the country is the supreme consideration. From the religious point of view the good of all living

beings from the cow down to the ant is the supreme consideration.[1]

Let the reader now turn to the table given elsewhere in this issue. The table relates to the income from and expenditure on the cattle maintained at the Satyagraha Ashram. The names are those of different cows. The manager in his covering letter says:

> It is by no means the rule that the buffalo yields more than the cow. Some of the cows in the table yield a net profit, some just pay their way and some are boarders. These last we shall prevent from breeding and propose to take light work from them. A sterile cow has already been trained to do some work. The buffalo calves sell cheap, whereas some calves of the cow are worth Rs. 100 each. Two or three have taken the place of the horse with the result that we have dispensed with our horse-carriage.

The Ashram has decided to have no more buffaloes. We may not draw large deductions from the table, but it is certainly obvious that if the cow is fed properly she compares favourably with the buffalo in her yield, she does not cost more, and her calves are much more useful.

I propose to publish in *Navajivan* the results of the further experiments that are being conducted in the Ashram.

The Konkan friend is not right when he says that the dairy and the tannery are useful only in and for the city, and have no place in the villages. The cow has become a costly proposition even in the villages. It is as essential to keep proper accounts of her yield and to improve her stock and her milk in villages as in cities. And the skinning of dead cattle and the prompt and skilled treatment of the hides is more essential in villages than in cities, and that is the work to be done in tanneries. It is a painful fact that in our present condition we have to cultivate the science of tanning in the cities and then take it to the villages. For one thing it is impossible to conduct big experiments in the villages, and cattle that are slaughtered in the cities come from the villages. If we can therefore conduct experiments in dairying and tanning from the religious and national point of view in the cities, we can easily give the benefit of them to the villages, and the cattle wealth of India which is at the present day being destroyed because of our ignorance will be saved, and man and animal will both be less unhappy than now.

Young India, 19-5-1927

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Sitaram Parushottam Patwardhan", 30-4-1927.

357. WHAT CAN PERSEVERANCE NOT ACHIEVE?

In the West we sometimes see a man performing club-swinging continuously for twenty-four hours. These shows are held to demonstrate how far a man's endurance can go. Thousands of spectators give money and fill the theatres to see that. I have my own doubts whether these kinds of shows are of any use.

But readers will recall that something like this, though with a different, i. e., religious motive was organized in the Ashram during the National Week. Some youths insisted on plying the charkha continuously for twenty-four hours, forgoing their usual sleep. The letter written by the one who spun the largest quantity of yarn is interesting and, therefore, I give it below:[1]

Those who welcome any manifestation of enthusiasm by the young or have faith in the charkha *yajna* will feel happy to read this letter. Those students who happen to read this letter should learn a lesson from it. It is good to have interest in games, but it is better still to have the same interest in philanthropic work. They should also observe that such uninterrupted work is quite within the capacity of those who safeguard their health and observe *brahmacharya.* It is an abuse of one's education to use it for earning money. Education proves its worth when used for the service of others. Moreover, a student needs to have faith also. Reason will certainly help a little to understand that India's poverty can be banished through a simple thing like the charkha. But, in the end, it is only faith which will sustain the student's love of it. I realize every moment, from what I see of students, that without faith education is of little use.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-5-1927

[1] Not translated here

358. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised Sunday [*May 8, 1927*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

I hope you are getting all the letters I have been writing to you of late. Probably one letter every other day on an average.

I have your further letter. But I see it[2] will be some time before you regain your balance. I do not mind the ups and downs so long as you retain the elasticity. My own opinion is this: it will be perfectly natural for you to come to me wherever I am after finishing your allotted task, whenever that happens. An ordinary person may not give up a self-imposed programme. But if you become highly emotional and your nerves remain under tension, you should come even though your course may not be finished.

Naturally I am anxious for you to finish your course. I should not like to have to think that it was beyond you. But your health is more precious to me than your studies or any other preparation .

You must not think of coming to me for my health. For it is good and I cannot be looked after better even if you came. If I needed your nursing, I should wire for you. But such an event will not happen, if only because I have got into the habit of taking nursing from anybody and I train new nurses to my requirements. There are more nurses than I need here. So if you come in the hope of doing some personal service, you would feel idle and yawning.

Now for the necessity of personal touch. My own opinion is that it is necessary in the preliminary stages. And then the touch comes through joint work. You come in daily touch with me by doing my work as if it was your own. And this can, must and will outlast the existence of this physical body of mine. You are and will be in touch whether I am alive or dead. And that is what I want you to be. You have come to me not for me but for my ideals in so far as I live them. You now know how far I live the ideals I set forth. It is now for you to work out those ideals and practise them to greater perfection than has been given to me to do. He or she who does that will be my first heir

[1] From *Bapu's Letters to Mira*

[2] The source has "you".

and representative. I want you to be the first if only because you studied me from a distance and made your choice. And when in the course of the work, God brings us physically together, it is well, but it is well also when he keeps us apart in pursuance of the common object.

But this is counsel of perfection. Having listened to it and understood it, you are free to do as you choose. If you cannot contain yourself, you must come and not feel that I shall be displeased. I should be displeased if you did violence to yourself and became prostrate.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5226. Courtesy: Mirabehn

359. LETTER TO GANGARAM

NANDI HILLS (MYSORE STATE),
May 8, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I got your letter too late to enable me to write to you so as to reach you. It was impossible for me to travel to Bombay because medical orders are peremptory—as peremptory as your own —and seeing that the medical orders were prior in point of time, they had to be obeyed.

I have really begun now to despair of your ever teaching me. You promised to turn my Ashram ground into a paradise if I sent you a map and all the details of past successes and failures. Well, I have given you all the information, I sent you my best man and the Ashram ground still awaits the magic touch. All the information about the poverty of the masses that you can give me can never be first hand because all you can tell me is stories of witnesses. You have not tasted the sweets of poverty. And, what is a millionaire, a successful engineer and a business man to teach one who knows the sweet, as well as the bitter, of poverty and who has come in direct touch with the masses about the latter's poverty? Thirdly—but I must not say anything about the third thing at the present moment.

Your connecting my bad health with a breach of promise which I never made to you or to anybody is in keeping with your lavishness

in promising a poor man like me all kinds of El Dorado. I am not aware of having made you any promise that I shall never take part in politics and what is more, I have not taken part in politics as yet. But I do promise that if favourable opportunity occurs, I should not hesitate to plunge into them. For the present I am content to sit at the wheel and sing the praises of God in that He gives me strength enough to perform that little bit of service to the masses of India in whose exploitation you are taking such a prominent part be it ever so unconsciously.

I do not expect any reply to this letter whilst you are in the West. When you do come to India I shall be glad to receive a further instalment of your promises with the certain knowledge that you will continue to break them as heretofore and like the wolf that swore at the lamb turn against me and accuse me of breaking promises never made by me. I shall take all such rebuke in good grace as in spite of your arrogation of universal knowledge, I have great regard for the qualities of your heart.

Yours sincerely,

SIR GANGARAM, KT. C.I.E., M.V.C.
CARE SIR PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 12577

360. LETTER TO REV. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
May 8, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 4th April last.

When the interim volume is published, I shall see that no efforts are made to obtain orders outside of India.

I am unable to tell you when the autobiography will be finished. I have to write from day to day. I have mapped out no fixed plan. I write every week as the past events develop in my mind on the day allotted for writing the weekly chapter. I am now dealing with events of 1903-4 and I have to cover the stormy period in South Africa extending to the middle of 1914 and the equally stormy 12 years of

[1] Permanent address

India. If therefore there is really any demand for these chapters in America or Europe, it will be advisable to publish them in volumes as they are being published here. If the MacMillan Company do not propose to publish the autobiography in instalments, it will be impossible to prevent sales outside India assuming of course that there is a natural as distinguished from stimulated desire in the West for reading these chapters.

Yours sincerely,

REV. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES
12, PARK AVENUE AND 34TH STREET
NEW YORK CITY (U.S.A.)

From a photostat: S.N. 13971

361. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Sunday [*May 8, 1927*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Pyarelal is on his way to join you. You will receive this letter the day offer his arrival. I could not send the letter with him. I have sent Pyarelal because he felt that he had got to go back there for accounts, etc. Your decision to carry on without him is fine if it does not mean any harm to your health. We must be grateful that your health has improved to that extent. But do not hesitate to write to me any time you feel the need for help. I think it would be good to spend the present monsoon there. Panchgani is definitely better than Deolali. It is said to be particularly good in the rainy season. It would be all right spending the winter near Bombay after you have fully recovered. But the doctors would know better.

You must have received my previous letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From *Bapuni Prasadi*

362. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Monday [*May 9, 1927*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

I had two letters again. How is it that letters bearing different dates are received the same day in different packets ?

I have nothing more to say today. I am glad you have completely regained your balance.

My idea about the translation is that you should make it at first without reference to any other translation and then for your difficulties turn to the English version. It is right for you to be diffident but I have no misgivings and I do not want you to lose your originality by concurrent reference to any aid save that of a dictionary. Mark the passages you may not understand and refer to the other translations *subsequently* as I am doing with the *Gita*.

What has brought Valunjker and Gangubai? Remember me to them. I am glad for your sake that they are there. With love,

Yours

BAPU

From the Original: C.W. 5227. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] From *Bapu's Letters to Mira*

363. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

[Before *May 10, 1927*][1]

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I have your letter. Stop worrying about me. I am improving in health. I shall stay in Nandi Durg as long as the doctors consider it necessary. Afterwards I shall go to Bangalore because in June Nandi is quite cold, while Bangalore is moderately so. Left to myself I do not want to travel. But when it cools down a little and when I have improved my health, I should like to stay quietly in two or three places in Madras and Karnataka in order to collect funds. No one sees any harm in short comfortable journeys in which I do not have to address people. I have consulted many doctors but no one imposes restrictions such as those you suggest. And if I may not speak, may not think and may not do anything at all, then for what purpose do you intend to save my life? I have not so far developped such powers that I can lie in bed and serve by sheer silent thought. Asking me to care for my health much more than the others generally do amounts to misusing me. Dr. Mehta has not forbidden me from writing for *Young India* and *Navajivan.* The only thing that everyone says is that I should not work at the same tempo as before. And I cannot do that. Certainly, I must do as much as I comfortably can. What is more, Dr. Mehta believes that if I do not work as much as I can, I shall be completely bed-ridden.

It is because of this I wish that none of you should worry too much about me. I shall write to Panditji about Saklatwala. What is his address in England?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32795

[1] From the last paragraph of the letter, inquiring the address of Saklatwala to whom Gandhiji wrote on May 10 (*vide* "Letter to Shapurji Saklatvala", 10-5-1927), this letter appears to have been written before that date.

364. LETTER TO A. RANGASWAMY AIYENGAR

NANDI HILLS,
May 10, 1927

DEAR RANGASWAMI AIYENGAR,

In accordance with the instructions of the Working Committee, I am sending herewith draft rules in connection with Article VII (iv) b[1].

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Encl. 1.

SRIJUT A. RANGASWAMI AIYENGAR
GENERAL SECRETARY, A.I.C.C.
DESHABANDHU BUILDINGS
MOUNT ROAD, MADRAS

[ENCLOSURE]

DRAFT RULES

1. Every person choosing under Article VII of the Constitution to send the subscription in yarn shall send 2,000 yards of evenly spun yarn of his or her own spinning to the All India Spinners' Association office, Sabarmati, to reach on or before the 28th February every year in advance for the full year.

2. Members joining in the middle of the year shall send the full quota for the year at the time of application for admission. No one who has failed to send his yarn subscription on or before the 28th February, or in case of members joining in the middle of the year, no one who has not paid in the full quota of 2,000 yards shall be entitled to exercise any of the privileges of membership referred to in Sec. (iv) of Art. VII.

3. The yarn shall be hanked in 4 ft. circumference and sent up at the member's cost to the A.I.S.A. office, Sabarmati with such parti-culars filled in as may be prescribed in the forms issued from that office.

[1] Of the Congress constitution; *vide* 1st footnote to "Speech at Congress Session, Gauhati", 27-12-1926 and "Khadi Franchise", 9-6-1927.

Presumably this was sent for the A.I.C.C. meeting scheduled to be held in Bombay on May 15 and 16, 1927; *vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 19-5-1927.

4. On any member being found to the satisfaction of the President of a Provincial Congress Committee to be infringing the rule of habitual wear of khaddar, he may at his discretion report him to the President of the Congress; and he shall thereupon forfeit for the rest of the year the right to vote or be elected at the election of representatives or delegates or any committee or sub-committee of any Congress organization whatsoever or to take part in any meeting of the Congress or Congress organization or any committee or sub-committee thereof.

5. Subject to the above rule, if at any meeting a question is raised that any member is not entitled to vote or to be elected or to take part in any proceedings thereof, on the ground that he does not habitually wear khaddar, the statement of the member himself shall, except where it is manifestly untrue to the knowledge of the Chairman, be accepted without further proof in regard to the question so far as that meeting is concerned.

From a copy: A.I.C.C. File No. 194, 1927. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

365. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[*May 9,1927*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL

If we are not financially strong enough to provide money to Fulchand for the conference, write to him frankly to that effect. Tell Vallabhbhai to give him a loan if it is possible and make sure that he accepts the loan only if he is capable of repaying it.

The documents are to be given to Ramachandra as they are. They are to be given to him only to fulfil his requirements. I believe it is necessary to pay off the debts due to West. We have to write to him that the debts will be paid off gradually as the goods are sold. How can Ramachandra himself pay? The right over the patent is ours. I have understood the dealing to be his way that we have to deal with the situation if West claims money from Ramachandra. I have accordingly convinced Ramachandra. If you want me to write to him to this effect, I will do so

I have a letter from Shankerlal about handing over the charge to

[1] As suggested in the source. References in "Ramachandra Lift", 3-3-1927, also indicates that the letter may have been written on this date.

Jamnalal. I will take action on it immediately. Do not hesitate in the least to write to me or ask me anything. My health is no doubt good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32911

366. LETTER TO SHAPURJI SAKLATVALA

NANDI HILLS (MYSORE STATE),
May 10, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Shrimati Anasuyabai has sent me your letter herself and your joint letter to her, Gulzarilal[1] and Desai. I have read them both carefully. I had your own letter also. I could not reply to you earlier for want of your address.

As soon as I heard from Anasuyabai, I put myself in Communication with Motilalji. I am daily expecting his reply. You shall know it as soon as I receive it. I thank you for the confidence you repose in me and it will be a joy to me if I can render any personal service to you; but I am afraid my longing and ability to render service have to stop there.

So far as our ideals are concerned, we stand apart.[2] Whilst Anasuyabai and Banker as also Gulzarilal and Desai are absolutely free agents, they have exercised their choice of accepting my guidance in framing their labour policy and administration. I must therefore shoulder my share of the responsibility for what is happening about labour in Ahmedabad. I have certainly advised them to keep Ahmedabad labour aloof from the other labour movements in India so long as Ahmedabad labour chooses to remain under their guidance. My reason is exceedingly simple. Labour in India is still extremely unorganized. The labourers have no mind of their own, when it comes to matters of national policy or even the general welfare of labour itself. Labourers in various parts of India have no social contact and no other mutual ties. It is provincial and even in the same city it is highly communal. It is not everywhere wisely guided. In

[1] Gulzarilal Nanda, sometime Home Minister, Government of India

[2] The addressee was of the opinion that the energies of all leaders should be harnessed towards an early inauguration of labour and industrial organizations all over the country.

many places it is under selfish and highly unscrupulous guidance. There is no absolute cohesion amongst provincial labour leaders, and there is little discipline among sub-leaders. The latter do not uniformly tender obedience to their provincial chiefs. Leaders in different provinces have no single policy to follow. In these circumstances, an all India union can only exist on paper. I hold it to be suicidal therefore for Ahmedabad to think of belonging to it. My own conviction is that Ahmedabad is rendering a service to labour all over India by its abstention, or as I call it self-restraint. If it can succeed in perfecting its own organization, it is bound to serve as a model to the rest of India and its success is bound to prove highly infectious. But I am free to confess that there is as yet no assurance of success in the near future. The energy of the workers is sorely tried in combating disruptive forces that ever continue to crop up. There is the Hindu-Muslim tension; there is the question of touchables and untouchables in Hinduism, etc. Add to this extreme ignorance and selfishness among the labourers themselves. It is a marvel to me that labour in Ahmedabad has made the progress it has during the last 12 years of its corporate existence. If then Ahmedabad remains isolated it does so not selfishly, but for the sake of labour as a whole.

One word as to the policy. It is not anti-capitalistic. The idea is to take from capital labour's due share and no more, and this not by paralysing capital but by reform among labourers from within and by their own self-consciousness; not again through the cleverness and manoeuvring of non-labour leaders, but by educating labour to evolve its own leadership and its own self-reliant, self-existing organization. Its direct aim is not in the least degree political. Its direct aim is internal reform and evolution of internal strength. The indirect result of this evolution, when, if ever it becomes complete, will naturally be tremendously political. I have not therefore the remotest idea of exploiting labour or organizing it for any direct political end. It will be of itself a political power of first-class importance when it becomes a self-existing unit. Labour, in my opinion, must not become a pawn in the hands of the politicians on the political chess-board. It must by its sheer strength dominate the chessboard. And that can only happen if I can retain the intelligent and voluntary co-operation of the workers in Ahmedabad and if our joint effort ultimately succeeds. This is my dream. I hug it because it gives me all the consolation I

need; and the policy I have outlined, you will recognize, is a direct outcome of my implicit belief in and acceptance of non-violence. It may be all a delusion; but it is as much a reality with me as life itself so long as I do not see it as delusion but see it as the only life-giving force. You will now see why I cannot, even if I had the power, respond to your appeal for dividing the funds collected by me in accordance with your suggestion. But I may tell you that I have not even the power. The funds have been collected purely for khadi work and it would be criminal misappropriation on may part to divert them to any other use.

This letter may not please you. I shall be sorry if it does not. But I regard you as a fellow-seeker after Truth and if my reading of you is correct, there is no reason why my having told you the whole truth and nothing but the truth should not please you immensely. It is not given to all of us to agree with one another on all our opinions; but it is given to every one of us to tender the same respect for the opinions and actions of our fellows as we expect for our own.

Yours sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

SAKLATVALA, ESQ.

From a photostat: S.N. 12491

367. LETTER TO ISABEL BAMLET

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
May 10, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you.

For me the problem of life is not quite so simple as it appears to you. I am sure you do not want me to enter into the reason for my conclusions. You believe in God's guidance and so do I. Let me walk as He may seem to me to guide me.

I may without using your name make the main contents of your

[1] Permanent address

letter as a text for an article[1] in the pages of *Young India* edited by me. I suppose you will have no objection.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

I. BAMLET, ESQ.
C/O IMPERIAL BANK OF INDIA
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: C.W. 4443. Courtesy: Mrs. Carlisle Bamlet

368. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

NANDI DURG,

Silence Day, Vaishakha Sud 9 [*May 10, 1927*][2]

SISTERS,

What you say about thieves is correct. For the present, it is enough if you try to forget that you are "weak". You should on no account make the mistake of taking me to mean that men should give up their duty of protecting [women] . Because woman tries to come into her own, man should not think that she has already become capable of protecting herself; a man, who by thinking so, fails to protect women, is nothing but a shameless coward. He may be regarded as less than a man. Man has kept woman in subordination and in a state of dependence; so it is his duty to protect her. We are trying in the Ashram to make both men and women vigilant and self-reliant. But our goal is still far off. Till then my trying to awaken and put courage into your heart is one thing and men's duty towards you is another thing. So as long as there is one man alive in the Ashram, you should regard yourselves as fully protected.

There is no news of Surajbehn in your letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3648

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 12-5-1927, sub-title, "Most Economical".
[2] Year is fixed from the reference to thieves.

369. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

NANDI HILLS, MYSORE,
Vaishakha Sud 10 [*May 11, 1927*][1]

CHI. MANILAL AND CHI. SUSHILA,

Your letter has not reached me but I have seen the one you wrote to Ramdas who perhaps forgot to send over the one to me.

I am glad that both of you are getting along well. I always wish you will help each other in your progress.

I am improving steadily. I have already written to you that I had a wire sent to you as you wished but your steamer had by then sailed. Verses from the *Gita* are being regularly sent to you. Please meditate on them as often as you can.

Sjt. Srinivasa Sastri will arrive there soon. Try to keep in touch with him as much as you can and render him any help he may want.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

It appears I shall have to be in these parts for two or three months more. If you propose to address a letter direct to me, send it to Bangalore. We will have to come down from these hills in the month of June.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1132. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

[1] Year inferred from contents

370. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

Wednesday, May 11, 1927

I have your letter. It is not satyagraha in the true sense of the word if people outside the State of Gondal agitate against the ban on entry of newspapers into the State. People not belonging to the Gondal State can offer satyagraha there only when the cause of Gondal subjects is common to all the States and if success in the Gondal case would mean an improvement in all the other States. Moreover offering satyagraha against a ban on entry of journals is like killing a buffalo for the sake of a thong or like citing scriptures for eating carrots while swallowing whole camels. Even if the satyagraha in Gondal is to be offered by the State subjects they ought to have a stronger reason.

The Wadhwan well case is slightly stronger no doubt, but before you take it up you should be prepared to bear the loss of the school. You should try some preliminary remedies, e.g., you should carry on negotiations, bring in the good offices of intermediaries, give the matter sufficient publicity. You ought to prove that the ban is due solely to ill will. In short, a satyagrahi's case has to be self-proven. If there is any scope for doubt, if the other party has anything to say, a satyagrahi should hold his patience for the nonce. If you look at all the occasions when I had offered satyagraha you will be able to see this condition as well as others.

You have rightly laid down the limit that satyagraha cannot be offered without my permission. Observe this limit steadfastly, and obtain my written approval before starting anything. This will be good for you and the principle of satyagraha will not be compromised by your action.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

371. NOTES

EVILS OF MACHINE-MILLING

Mr. Andrews, who is working himself almost to death in the interest of the Indian settlers of South Africa, cannot forget things that he has at heart in India itself. Having read Mahadev Desai's account of the Bihar tour, he cabled some time ago:

> Tell Mahadev delighted accounts Bihar tour. Give love Rajendraprasad. Suggest your emphasizing hand-milling. Have witnessed evils rice mills, including destruction of vitamins. Warn public against unauthorized cables from South Africa.

The reader can see that the foregoing cablegram was sent in order that I may warn the public against accepting everything that comes from South Africa, unless it bears Andrews's own hallmark. But I hardly think that the caution is required. Naturally the public here will discount anything sensational that may come from South Africa, unless it is duly countersigned. But let us hope that the Rt. Hon'ble Srinivasa Sastri will soon be on his way to South Africa, when all cause for alarm or anxiety will be set at rest. Without, therefore, dilating upon the South African part of the cable, I return to the rice mills, whose evils have distressed him so much as to prompt the cabling of his opinion. The reader will appreciate Andrews's anxiety when I inform him that he has to live whilst in India in the midst of rice mills. For whereas when he first went to Shantiniketan near Bolepur, there was no rice mill in Bolepur, at the present moment several such mills are working in that once quiet place. He often spoke to me about the din, the dust and the smoke and the fraudulent trafficking that has been going on in Bolepur since the advent of rice mills, and spoke also of the deprivation of a useful cottage industry by reason of the installation of these mills. There can be no doubt that hand-husked rice is infinitely superior to mill-husked rice. Medical men can, however, speak on the evil with greater authority than I can. The moral evil of those mills stares one in the face, as soon as one goes to places where these mills have found a place. In spite, however, of my knowledge of the evil of this growing destruction of cottage industries, had I not been bed-ridden, I should not have undertaken the task that Andrews out of his good nature and out of the abundance of love that he has for India suggests that I should do. For

I regard myself as an economical worker, fully cognizant of my own limitations. In trying to revive hand-spinning I feel that I am touching the root of the evil, that it is enough to occupy all my energy, and that if that movement becomes successful, as I am daily becoming more and more convinced that it will, the undulated evils of rice mills, to which Andrews draws attention, and others which can be named will automatically disappear. Let us not make the mistake of thinking that what has happened in India about the spinning-wheel, and what is now happening about other cottage industries, such as hand-milling of rice, need cause no harm to national life, because such things have happened in the West without the West having come to grief. In the first place it is yet too early to say positively that the destruction of village life in the West has been either a benefit to it, or to mankind in general. In the second place, and this is more pertinent, assuming that the new life that has come into being in the West is calculated to benefit mankind, let us understand that whereas in the West the villagers whose industry was destroyed readily found another occupation, and were, therefore, somehow provided, with us only an infinitesimal portion of those whom the erection of these mills deprives of their occupation is otherwise provided, and that the vast majority are left idle and penniless. Let not the reader also rush to the conclusion that the hand-spinning movement is an indiscriminate onslaught upon machinery. This movement is intended to displace only such machinery worked by power as is harmful to the moral and material welfare of the starving millions. The fact is that we are too much obsessed by the glamour of the West, and the ready-made literature that is poured down upon us from week to week. We forget that what may be perfectly good for certain conditions in the West is not necessarily good for certain other, and often diametrically opposite, conditions in the East. Free Trade which may have been good enough for England would certainly have ruined Germany. Germany prospered, only because her thinkers, instead of slavishly following England, took note of the special conditions of their own land, and devised economics suited to them. And both England and Germany will have to revise their policy in economics immediatelythe nations that are now being exploited by them come to their own, and refuse to be exploited. The civilization of both is based upon the exploitation of other lands. Let us remember that even if we have desire, we have not the power to exploit any single nation on earth.

Hence if we are to live as an independent nation, we must evolve economics and conditions suited to our growth.

MOST ECONOMICAL

A friend, who fell ill about the same time as I became incapacitated, writing out of sympathy, and herself in search of it, says in her letter:

> I had time to philosophize and there was one thought I was working at ever since I lost my voice. And I have discovered that there is no necessity for living, and that Fate in giving us death early is most economical. For thereby she economizes the power that abides in us whereas we waste it by living when living becomes manifestly unnecessary. I spun the thought out until I felt exhausted, and I said to myself, "After all what is the good? The call somehow or other has not come. And so I must be wasted till there is nothing more left to be wasted.''[1]

What a comforting thought it is to think of death, whenever it comes, as a wise plan in the economy of Nature? If we could realize this law of our being and be prepared for death as a welcome friend and deliverer, we should cease to engage in the frantic struggle for life. We shall cease to want to live at the cost of other lives and in contempt of all considerations of humanity. But to philosophize, as this friend has done, is one thing; to realize at the required moment the truth of the philosophy is totally another. Such realization is impossible without a due conception of the definite and grave limitations of the body and an abiding faith in God and His unchangeable Law of Karma.

Young India, 12-5-1927

372. YOUNG AT 75

An English friend writes:

> I want just to tell you of a letter and photographs I have had from a dear old Swiss peasant woman of over 70, who spins and weaves away up in the mountains above Villeneuve. She writes in answer to letters that she has had of mine, and then she says (in French dialect),
>
> "We are commencing the winter and the snows are coming down to keep us company for many months. I shall have plenty of time to occupy myself with my loom. And I have now got an order for two pieces at 59 metres,

[1] For Gandhiji's reply; *vide* "Letter to Isabel Bamlet", 10-5-1927

so I shall need the time, as I get tired easily in these days" (at 75 years old!). Her life is a perfect example of the full, yet peaceful and contented existence, which should be the lot of all peasantry. In the summer she works in the fields, with just a few odd hours of spinning and weaving put in here and there when the days are wet, and in the winter when the land is under snow, she works away at her wheel and her loom all day. Take this hand industry away from her, and she would be lost in complete misery. As it is, she is the happiest and sweetest-natured person on the mountainside. Why? Because she alone, of all the peasants in that place, has retained the old industry, and she alone has a full and true life. I enclose you one of the little photographs which shows her sitting on a log of wood caressing one of her goats, which may give you some slight idea of her dear old face. The younger woman is her daughter-in-law.

I have the beautiful photograph which I am unable to reproduce in *Young India*, but the imaginative reader will have no difficulty in filling in the picture. The point of the letter however is that even in that machine-ridden country, there are people who find their true peace in this, at one time universal, home industry of the wheel and the loom. And if this old woman, who for her industry is young at 75, finds her solace, not her livelihood, in the wheel and the loom, how much greater is their need in this land where very few women reach the age of 75, where the majority needlessly are old at 50, and where millions of women need not merely the solace of an innocent cottage industry to occupy their idle hours but who need it even more to keep the wolf from the door?

'If that is so, why do not the millions take to the home industry, even as the dear old Swiss sister does, and find from it their solace and their food? What is there to prevent them from doing so?,' asks the ignorant scoffer. But somewhat similar was the question put by a burly, rough-looking Englishman to Surendranath Bannerjea in 1889 or 1890 when he was haranguing an English audience. This worthy member of the firm of John Bull and Company asked the then uncrowned king of Bengal, if what the latter said was true that India desired freedom, what prevented her from taking it, how was it that they, members of this numerous and powerful firm, never heard of breaking of window-panes, let alone heads, as they the members were wont to do when they could not get what they wanted? So far as my memory serves me right, the papers recorded no answer from the orator. There was only a 'hear, hear' from the audience. But what the honest Englishman said to Surendranath may be safely repeated even today, and we know that such a question will be no answer to the cry

for freedom. We may not know how to win it. Knowing the way we may not have the power or the will to adopt it. Nevertheless the cry for freedom is both just and natural. Be it ever so ineffective, it is the first step to freedom.

In the instance of the starving millions the scoffers forget in their ignorance that the millions have not even the wish to cry out for work or bread. Hence we join the English historian in calling them "dumb millions". We (including the scoffers) have to be their voice. We have to teach the dumb millions the first lesson. We, not *they*, are responsible for their awful poverty and ignorance. They don't know what they want or need. They are living corpses.

Who shall dare say to the untouchables that if they want their freedom, who prevents them from taking it? God is long-suffering and patient. He lets the tyrant dig his own grave, only issuing grave warnings at stated intervals.

We would say, and justly, that though the taunt of the Englishman could be theoretically justified, it would ill become Englishmen to beg the question in that manner, when anyone of us, though feeling helpless, is yet expressing the natural desire for freedom. So will it ill become us, middle-class men and women, to hurl the taunt put by me in the mouth of the imaginary scoffer in answer to the crying need of the millions—a need which they may not even feel but which a few of us feel for them. The way to answer the need is to multiply the number of such representatives who would not only be the mouth-piece of the dumb millions but would adopt corresponding measures by themselves taking up the wheel, by throwing away foreign fineries, by wearing khadi and by not resting till every idle hour of the nation is usefully occupied. Then, but not till then, shall India's women be young, happy and godfearing at 75, even as the Swiss sister of 75 is represented to be.

Young India, 12-5-1927

373. FOR SUBSCRIBERS, SOUTH INDIA FLOOD RELIEF

The following letter[1] was received by me last year, and has been lying with me ever since. One of the signatories Diwan Bahadur M. O. Parthasarathi Aiyengar unfortunately died sometime after signing the

[1] Not reproduced here

letter. The contents of the letter and the distinguished names[1] attached to it speak for themselves. I heartily endorse the appeal[2]. But before I can formally give effect to it, it is necessary to ascertain the wishes of the donors. In answer to the appeal issued in these columns and *Navajivan*, some sent their donations to the Satyagraha Ashram, some to the *Navajivan*, office, and some to the office of the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee. The funds were sent from time to time to Sjt. Rajagopalachari upon requisition. Audited accounts were published by him in the papers. The catastrophe was so sudden that it appealed to the imagination of the philanthropic public and a liberal response was made to the various appeals that were issued. The result was that practically everywhere there was a surplus. The agencies created were unable to spend the full amount with due regard to the proper discharge of their duties. As the signatories to the following letter inform me, the other agencies have disposed of the surplus in some beneficial manner or other. I have not been in a hurry to use up the surplus of the amounts received in answer to the appeal made in these columns. It is deposited in banks and is bearing interest. India is unfortunately a land of almost perpetual famines, and the chief activity of the All-India Spinners' Association at the present moment is directly to deal with such causes of famine as are within the power of man to control. Man cannot control and regulate floods beyond a certain limit. They will take their toll in spite of the exercise of all the ingenuity that man may be capable of. But floods always leave a legacy behind, which man can and is bound to deal with. In a similar manner man cannot bring water beyond a certain point when the rains fail. But man can produce conditions whereby people who are willing to work can find work enough to buy food with, when Nature leaves enough scope for transferring grain from one place to another. It is exactly these causes that the All-India Spinners' Association is endeavouring in a humble manner to deal with through its growing army of workers. The method adopted is to establish spinning centres in places where there is the greatest need for work during off-seasons. The largest amount of such work is being done, as is now well known, in South India. And the letter I have reproduced is a recommendation

[1] S. Srinivasa Iyengar; S. Ramanathan, Secretary, A.I.S.A., Tamilnad and Kerala; C. Rajagopalachari; K. Kelappan; M. O. Parthasarathi Aiyengar; M. Krishna Nair, M.L.C., Ex-Diwan of Travancore and T. Rangachariar

[2] To give the unspent balance of South India Flood Relief Fund for khadi work in South India through A.I.S.A.

for the use of this surplus of the Flood Relief Fund through this agency. When I made an appeal for directing the funds for use in Orissa, no subscriber objected and several wrote to me approving of the suggestion. I now invite the subscribers, if they wish, to signify their own opinion. In the absence of any opinion to the contrary from them within a fortnight of the publication of this note, I propose to utilize the surplus in the manner suggested by the distinguished signatories. Needless to say I have consulted all my co-workers, and they approve of the suggestion.

Young India, 12-5-1927

374. THE SKELETONS OF ORISSA

According to my theory, if khadi work cannot be made a success in Utkal, it cannot be made a success anywhere. Yet, strange though it may appear, nowhere have the khadi workers experienced a greater difficulty in organizing hand-spinning than there. The eyes of the living skeletons of Utkal are unlit by a single ray of hope. What interest can the means of livelihood have for one who has despaired of life itself? Those who have taken to spinning in Utkal are men who still retain some hope of life, The khadi worker there has not yet been able to touch the vast majority who have lost all hope. The people are dying under our very eyes. We could see it clearly if only we had the eyes to see. We would then take up spinning for sacrifice and give away all our hoarded money for khadi work, or in case we had none, we would cut down our luxuries and superfluous expense and devote the savings to the same end.

It is only if we ourselves spin that we will be able to create the spinning atmosphere necessary to quicken these skeletons to life. But a spinning atmosphere by itself cannot do more than merely touch the fringe of the problem. Progress depends upon funds. No *yajna* can be complete without *dakshina*[1]. And it is clear to me as daylight that spinning is the one true *yajna* today and to contribute funds for its advancement is the only *dakshina*. For those who have not yet

[1] Offering

realized this simple truth, the following letter[1] will serve as an eye-opener.

Young India, 12-5-1927

375. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 12, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

Again I have your two letters delivered the same day. I am so glad you seem to have settled down. But whenever you feel unsettled, you will not hesitate to tell me about it, as you now know from *experience* that I shall be patient. I am most anxious that you should not appear to be what you are not. I must take you as you are and help you to be what you should be. That I can only do if I give you no cause to fear me. That is why I told you once I wanted to be not merely in the place of father but mother also to you.

You will not leave the D.C. alone so long as he entertains your letter. Answer politely all his doubts and queries. Tell him if you know the difference between the Persian wheel which we have and the Ramachandra lift as also why spinning is not merely one of the industries but is the key industry of the nation.

There seems to be still some misunderstanding about my coming there. I am anxious to be there for two reasons. I want to see the place about which I have heard so much and I want to be with you. But the time I do not know. I am not likely to leave the South yet for four months, I fear. But it is no use forecasting events. I[t] should be enough for me to be able to say that I long to be there just as much as I long to be at Sabarmati. Please gently tell Krishnanandji this thing.[2]

Let Valunjker write to me. You should get hold of the correct spelling of his name. Let him write it [in] the Hindi character. Are they making a long stay there?

[1] Not reproduced here. Written by Laxmidas Purushottam, it was a similar appeal as that of Shankerlal Banker; *vide* "Khadi for Utkal", 5-5-1927.

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Mirabehn", 27-4-1927.

I am well.
With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5228. Courtesy: Mirabehn

376. LETTER TO H. KALLENBACH

NANDI HILLS (NEAR BANGALORE),
May 13, 1927

LOWER HOUSE,

As I lie in bed and look up old undisposed of correspondence and revive old and sacred memories, I chance upon your letter of 27th February sent with Andrews's letter from your home at Inanda, and I revive so many pleasant and sacred memories. Every letter that you have written during the last two years—and you have not written many—has been a despondent letter, distrustful of yourself; but as long as I live I am not going to lose faith in you. I am hoping that some day as before you will have a fatigue of the exciting things that give you momentary pleasure and that you will at least come to India to meet an old friend and renew many old acquaintances. You have made a provisional promise to do so next September or October. Do come if you can and then stay as long as you like or as little as you like.

I am glad you are having short spells of Andrews's company. I have not come across a humbler or more godfearing man throughout my varied experience.

You don't want me to say anything about my illness; because I see you do get *Young India* and read it. I am at the present moment taking my cure in a little hill in the State of Mysore where an army of devoted volunteers and many of my closest co-workers are looking after me. Mrs. Gandhi and Devdas are with me. The names of others would mean nothing to you. So I do not give them. But when you do come, you will see them all and recognize them as having been with me on this hill.

This loss of strength came in the twinkling of an eye. Latterly I

had put such terrific strain upon the brain that I was afraid of a crisis and it came just when I was arranging to have a lighter programme. But God seemed to say, 'I shall demolish your pride before you recognize your mad method and show you that you were utterly wrong in rushing as you have been doing, thinking that it was all well because it was for a good cause. You fool, you thought that you would work wonders. Have your lesson now and learn whilst there is yet time that God alone is to wonder-work and He uses whom He pleases as His instrument.' I am taking the chastisement I hope in due humility and if He raises me from this sick-bed, I am making Him promises that I shall reform my ways and shall seek still more strenuously to know His will and do it.

I hope you are keeping in touch with Manilal. He has got a girl with a strong character as his wife. She is the best girl I could possibly have found for him. Chance put her my way. She belongs to a godly family. Remember you are one of the trustees for Phœnix and I look to you to discharge your trust.

Sastri will be in South Africa probably within a month of your receipt of this. I have had long chats with him about you and your associations with Gokhale. Do try to be close to him and bring all our old companions in touch with him.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 12350

377. LETTER TO P.J.. REDDY

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
May 13, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I did receive the cablegram from the Chinese Students' Association and whilst I was touring in Bihar. So far as I recollect, I sent them a letter also acknowledging the cablegram. What is however more to the purpose, I took immediate action by writing in *Young India.* And there was agitation against the despatch of Indian troops but as you are aware, we have no power.

I am now writing to the Association to the address sent by you.

Yours sincerely,

P. J. REDDY, ESQ.
HON. SECRETARY
HINDUSTHAN ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL EUROPE
KNESEBECKSTER 8-9
CHARLOTTENBURG 2
BERLIN

From a photostat: S.N. 12489

378. LETTER TO CHINESE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[2]
May 13, 1927

DEAR FRIENDS,

I understand from Sjt. Reddy that you did not know whether I received your cablegram sent by you some time ago, and whether I took any action upon it. You had given no address so far as I recollect in your cablegram; but I have a recollection that I sent you an acknowledgement to the place from which your cable was sent. What is more to the purpose, I took immediate action and wrote strongly in *Young India* which I had taken for granted you regularly read. There

[1] Permanent address
[2] *ibid*

was persistent agitation against the dispatch of Indian troops from almost all the Indian public bodies. But I am sorry to have to confess that Indian public opinion is not powerful enough to carry in such matters weight with the Government. It has to be recognized that we are after all a fallen nation struggling to rise and therefore beyond wishing nations like you all success in their endeavour to attain full freedom, we can do very little indeed to help.

Yours sincerely,

CHINESE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
BERLIN

From a photostat: S.N. 12498

379. LETTER TO H. CLAYTON

NANDI HILLS,
May 13, 1927

DEAR MR. CLAYTON,

Mr. A. V. Thakkar of the Servants of India Society has sent me a cutting from *The Times of India* of the 4th instant containing the report of a debate in the Corporation in which you are reported to have said in reference to Mr. Thakkar's investigation as follows:

> Proceeding, the Commissioner said he was not going into the question of general administration. Mr. Horniman had referred to the investigations of Mr. Thakkar. Now, he (the speaker) had great admiration for Mr. Thakkar. During the last ten years every opportunity was given to that gentleman to make inquiries and once in conjunction with Mr. Gandhi. The result was that Mr. Gandhi reported that the class of witnesses was so unreliable that he could not believe one single allegation made by them !

I shall be glad if you will kindly tell me whether you are reported correctly, and I shall thank you if you will kindly let me have a copy of the report which I am said to have made. I do remember an interview or interviews with the late Mr. Turner in connection with the complaints of Bhangis. But I have no recollection of my having made either in conjunction with Mr. Thakkar or otherwise any enquiry of the type suggested in the paragraphs quoted above.

I must thank you for the kind enquiries that you made about me

when Dr. Mehta visited me at Amboli. As you know I am now taking my rest at the above hill which is a higher elevation than Amboli, therefore cooler.

Yours sincerely,

H. CLAYTON, ESQ.
COMMISSIONER
MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 12909

380. LETTER TO R. B. GREGG

NANDI HILLS,
May 13, 1927

MY DEAR GOVIND,

I have your typed letter. Though typewritten letters are undoubtedly easier to read, I have still a weakness for hand written letters. This however does not mean that I want you to write to me in your own hand. Your typewritten letters are quite as welcome as the handwritten ones and for the time being I have myself mostly to rely upon shorthand and the typewriter.

I have not yet got the book on vitamins. If you had given me the name of the book and the author, I would have tried to procure it in Bangalore which I am sure has very good bookshops.

I shall look forward to your manuscript on khadi. I won't discuss now the theory you have sketched in your letter.

Almonds I treated in two ways. I had them roasted and pounded through a nutmill into pulp and took this in the shape of butter. I had them also soaked overnight in water, the skin was removed and then it was pounded very fine, mixed with water and turned into milk. This milk was warmed and raised to boiling point and then eaten. Even this I could not digest. This was however now nearly eight or nine years ago—after the attack of dysentery. I have not dared to try the experiment again and after taking to goat's milk. But I should gladly make the experiment on my own responsibility if I had no other

undertakings and should try it in spite of the other undertakings under skilled supervision.

With love to you all,

Yours sincerely,

R. B. GREGG
KOTGARH

From a photostat: S.N. 14122

381. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

NANDI DURG,
Vaishakha Sud 12, May [*13*][1], *1927*

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. You both did well to volunteer your services for patrolling the Ashram at night. I wish you did it to the full extent of your physical capacity (even if as assistants to some other person). Fear is a mere figment of our imagination; there is nothing real about it. It vanishes as a result of facing it often enough and by the grace of God. When the thieves realize that even our paid watchman will not beat them up but would suffer beating at their hands and that the volunteers belong to a different class altogether and are ordinary householders, they will cease to trouble the Ashram folk. I am sure that someone of you will employ soul-force some day and win them over by love. But there is no doubt that this is like placing one's hand in a pit occupied by a snake. Someone will be beaten up or even killed. What man is there who is not afflicted by disease? Men, women and children, all fall a victim to it. How often was Radha knocked down? What happened to Rukhi? How many girls were taken to the Hospital at Juhu? If we can stand it, why should we not also take a beating from thieves and others, with courage? This idea may be strange for those who expect to be protected by the police but not for us at the Ashram.

I received the slivers prepared by you just as I was spinning and tried them at once. The thread did not break even once, and today I have found out a way to determine the strength just by myself and no sliver has yet given me a thread comparable to that from you. I have come across no sliver better than yours. Equally good slivers might have come my way only once or twice before. But I do not think

[1] The source has "12".

anybody can make better slivers than yours. Indeed after once having tried my hand at yours, it may be difficult to spin with any other. I wish and hope that you will be first in the first class in writing a good hand and in spinning as well as carding.

I had a letter from Karachi yesterday. Your appointment appears to have been delayed on account of Narandas's absence. So they have asked for a month's time. I wrote that if they really wanted you, I would wait for a month longer, but they should do nothing just by way of courtesy or just to get you there, i.e., merely to oblige us. I also asked for a reply by wire. I would like you to go only to a place where you are really wanted; only this would be seemly. We are in no hurry. Meanwhile you have to become perfect in every department of your studies.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne. pp. 60-1

382. LETTER TO JETHALAL

NANDI DURG, MYSORE,
Vaishakha Sud 12 [*May 13, 1927*][1]

BHAISHRI JETHALAL,

I have your letter. If you persevere, you will succeed in your efforts. In this age such efforts do not bear quick fruit, but hereafter you must observe this one rule. Whatever the vow, once you take it, you must keep it. You may pile up all the barricades you need for safeguarding [your vow] and for protecting yourself [against breach]; one of the essential and fundamental safeguards is this. During the period of your vow, the two of you should live absolutely apart from each other and under no circumstances allow yourself any privacy. If you have neither the inclination nor the strength to keep a vow, you may not take it, but having taken once you must-abide by the necessary conditions. You should go through Pandit Satavalekar's book on *brahmacharya.* His address is Oundh (District Satara). A copy of the book has already come to the Ashram, from where you

[1] Year inferred from the contents

can borrow it for reading.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1356

383. LETTER T0 MOTILAL NEHRU

NANDI HILLS,
May 14, 1927

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I must dictate. Writing regularly with my own hand causes too much strain and it is not possible to sit up long. This, however, does not mean that I am not getting stronger, but the strength comes very slowly. And I do not want to be in arrears with such correspondence as I would like to attend to.

I prize your first letter as a gift. It shows you in all your greatness and goodness.

You are living for your children. I envy them. But Krishna's[1] wedding must not be after Jawahar's type. It must be as humble as Sarup's[2]. Otherwise I must apply for a warrant of attachment. Or, if I feel I must enter into collusion with Krishna.

I read the public printed report from beginning to end. And I have now read the confidential report[3]. Both are worthy of Jawaharlal. I appreciate the view he presents about foreign propaganda. But somehow or other I still feel that our way lies differently. I feel that we will not get the support of Europe beyond a certain point, because after all most of the European States are partners in our exploitation, and if my proposition is correct, namely, that we must resist this exploitation in every shape and form, we shall not retain European sympathy during the final heat of the struggle. However, for the moment my view is merely academic. And you will vote Congress funds as you please.

[1] Krishna (Mrs. Hutheesing)
[2] Vijayalakshmi (Mrs. Pandit)
[3] About the doings of the "Oppressed Nations' Conference"

The idea of Jawaharlal presiding has an irresistible appeal for me. But I wonder whether it would be proper in the present atmosphere to saddle the responsibility upon him. It seems to me to be a thankless task. All discipline has vanished. Communalism is at its height. Intrigue is triumphant everywhere. Good and true men are finding it difficult to hold on to their position in the Congress. Jawahar's time will be simply taken away in keeping the Congress house tolerably pure and he will simply sicken. Till your letter came, I had no thought of interfering this year in the choice of the President. My instinct still goes that way. But, being out of touch, I may be taking too gloomy a view of the situation. You know better. And seeing that you are taking your head, and I suppose heart also, to Bombay, you will know the situation at first hand and guide me. There will be still time enough to move.

I return Krishna's copy of Jawahar's confidential report as also the first page of his letter. I have only just received papers regarding Saklatvala which I shall go through in due time.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 12576

384. LETTER TO DR. B. S. MOONJE

NANDI HILLS,
May 14, 1927

DEAR DR. MOONJE,

I was looking forward to a copy of your address. I have now received the same with your covering letter for both of which I thank you.

Acharya Gidwani wrote to me preparing me for the receipt of your address. I had not read it but he told me that you had imputed to me a view of untouchability which I have never held or expressed. And, when he told me so, I wrote to him saying that if you had done any such thing, it would not surprise me as your philosophy admitted of any means for beating an opponent with. I have now read your address and I see that it confirms Acharya Gidwani's opinion. I suppose it is unnecessary to tell you that the view you ascribe to me is not mine. For, it is conceivable to me that you did not know my repeated declarations that I do not regard untouchability as is now

practised as a part of Hindu religion, and that if I could persuade myself that it was, I should disown Hinduism. But this very palpable misrepresentation of my view does not affect our friendship. For, mistaken though I regard your philosophy to be, love of the country is good enough bond between you and me. Some day of course I expect to convert you [to] my view that it is a good policy even to treat an opponent fairly and justly. And my conversion of you will be my contribution to the *shuddhi* movement.

Of course you want to know my opinion about your address. I congratulate you upon your frankness and fearlessness; but the substance of your address makes no appeal to me. Your address is a powerful and eloquent plea on behalf of Islam not as its best exponents know it, but as you know it, and if I do not know better my own Hinduism, I do not know what I should do. You have also put yourself to immense pain in demonstrating that untouchability is an integral part of Hinduism, a view which I repudiate and have always repudiated *in toto*. Happily for me, my Hinduism does not bind me to every verse because it is written in Sanskrit, because it is supposed to be a part of some of our scriptures. If your portraiture of events is true and if your view of Hinduism is also true, the outlook is only gloomy both for Hinduism and for the country. But let me tell you with all deference that in spite of your literal knowledge of the Shastras, yours is a distorted view of Hinduism. I claim in all humility to have lived Hinduism all my life. But I can't convert you by argument. And I know you will sweep me off my feet with a mere gesture if I endeavour to convert you by means of lathi blows. I shall therefore be content with what I know to be the Hindu way and wait patiently for my opportunity.

Yours sincerely,

DR. B. S. MOONJE
NAGPUR

From a photostat: S.N. 14613

385. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

NANDI,
Vaishakh Sud 13 [*May 14, 1927*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. Writing to persons like you is no strain. Lately I have changed my way of working. Instead of writing myself, I dictate letters lying down. That way I am able to attend to more letters. Write to Pattani Saheb regarding the bungalow and give him your last date. If you wish, I shall write to him. It is better to spend November- December only there. If all is well you may come down in January. If you really wish to write about tuberculosis in Gujarati, go to a medical college when you are ready and study the subject without any desire for a degree. Do you know that that is what Dr. Anna Kingsford did? She also had tuberculosis. While studying the subject, she discovered something altogether new. She cured her disease by taking to vegetarian diet. It is another matter that the cause of her disease was different. You can also discover something.

Now for Pyarelal. If you send away Pyarelal in a hurry, you will earn a severe rebuke. I had decided for Pyarelal the programme that he should be with you and do his work. Pyarelal is learned, yet is reticent. Because of his undue timidity, he is not able to give of his best. That is why I had given him the responsibility of writing regularly while he stayed with you. In one of your letters you had mentioned that Pyarelal was feeling bored. That is not true. As soon as he came here, Pyarelal sought my permission to go back. But I detained him because I wanted to have a leisurely talk with him and to cure his mental troubles. Do not send back Pyarelal because you want to make the experiment of carrying on without help. Discuss the matter further with Pyarelal and then write to me as you consider fit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From *Bapuni Prasadi*

386. LETTER TO CHINAI

NANDI DURG,
Vaishakha Sud 13 [*May 14, 1927*][3]

BHAISHRI CHINAI,

I have your letter. Even before this I got the news from Bhai Kalyanji and Pragjibhai. Your letter however throws more light. I congratulate you on the fortitude you displayed in receiving the blows without either returning them or running away. I have no doubt that your action will bring benefit to you as well as to the people. We should entertain no doubt about it just because we cannot ourselves see its good results.

I shall now answer your questions. It cannot be stated categorically whether or not one may participate in the activities of the Hindu [Maha]sabha. Those who are capable of having their own ideals implemented may surely do it, or those who are in agreement with the ideology of their local leaders will join them anyway. I find nothing wrong with the Hindu [Maha]sabha's aims and ideals. There can be nothing wrong in organizing a community. Abolition of untouchability is everyone's dharma.

Shuddhi is a very wide term. A part of what it connotes may be acceptable to us, some of it may be rejected. I think their manifesto gives no rigid definition of *shuddhi*. People therefore have to make their own individual choice after considering the activities carried on in their respective province or city. As a matter of fact you have therefore to act as directed by your own inner self in view of the local situation. There is no absolute dharma that you must attend all the meetings convened by the Mahasabha, nor are you bound by dharma to take active part in any meeting which you happen to attend. Dharma consists in undertaking an act only if it is likely to advance what one regards as one's dharma. I would have no objection to taking part in a procession launched by the Hindu [Maha]sabha if it is done with a pure motive and not expressly with the intention to create trouble. If we get news of a riot we should certainly exercise our strength, such as it is, in bringing about peace. It is everyone's dharma to make every pious effort to stop riots breaking out. I employ the adjective "pious" with a purpose because in this age of cowardice men are presumed to be observing their dharma of peace by remai-

ning indifferent merely with a view to saving their own skin. Thus by pious efforts, I mean, no one is required to check the riots at the cost of his dharma. If there is an attack on my temple coming up and I just disappear or if I am advised to run away, neither I nor the person who counsels flight can be said to have been trying to stop the riot.

Social boycott can be justified in principle. I have however never seen a clear reason for a social boycott of Muslims; nor is a general social boycott possible, as far as I can see.

Please do write to me if you need further elucidation. I hope your pain has subsided; that Raiji too must be all right by now. One of your doubts remains to be cleared. There is absolutely no reason to believe that the Government has a hand in the functioning of the Hindu [Maha]sabha. The Government, nonetheless, is wont to make use of every sabha or samiti with a view to consolidating their own position, as it does with the Hindu [Maha]sabha, the Muslim League and even the Congress.

Let Bhai Kalyanji and Bhai Pragji too read this letter so that I need not write to them separately.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2684

387. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

NANDI DURG,
Vaishakha Sud 13 [*May 14, 1927*]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

A long-awaited letter from you after many days. It is good that you visited the Kanya Gurukul. When you write to Champavatibehn, please ask her to keep me informed about the institution. I am pleased that none of your girls is scared of the thieves. I wish that we while at the Ashram do not live in fear.

If Surajbehn invites you to have a look at the Shravikashram at Palitana, do go and visit it when you get the time. I think, however, that you were absolutely correct in expressing your unwillingness to stay there. I would wish you to gain self-confidence and be better trained, and your convictions to be more firm before you decide to serve individually.

Surendraji's candour can never fail to have a good effect. Those of the girls who come to know him have improved, and I wish you to utilize his presence more. I regard Surendra as an unblemished *brahmachari*.

It is very good that you have taken Ramanama into your heart. This name alone averts all ills.

I am steadily improving. For the present I propose to make it a practice to dictate my letters instead of writing them myself because of the temptation to deal with too many letters and also to conserve my energy.

Ba sends her blessings.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3135

388. CABLE TO LOUISE DIEL[1]

[*On or after May 14, 1927*]

TRUE ART CONSISTS MASSES LEARNING SELF-PURIFICATION SELF-RESTRAINT. MAY GERMAN MASSES COPY THIS ART OF LIFE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 12500

389. APPEAL TO SOUTH AFRICAN INDIANS[2]

The Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri has yielded to the pressure of friends in accepting the office of the first Ambassador for India in South Africa, at the sacrifice of his cherished wishes, solely with the object of serving you. It rests with you to make the best use of his services and his presence amongst you. You cannot do so unless you fulfil the following conditions:

1. You will not expect too much.
2. You will not try to seek relief in purely individual cases through him.

[1] In reply to Louise Diel's cable received on May 14, 1927, which read: "We celebrate 60th birthday of Kaete Kollwritz, great German artist of masses. Please cable message to address."

[2] The Gujarati original, from which this was translated, was published in *Navajivan*, 15-5-1927.

3. You will not swerve from truth in your dealings with him. To be false to him would be to be false to yourselves.

4. You will remain completely united.

5. You will put your own house in order and purify yourselves.

You will not assume that all your grievances will disappear with the coming of the Rt. Hon. Sastri as first Agent. He will have done enough if he succeeds in seeing that no new restrictive legislation is passed against you, that the operation of the old restrictive enactments is not made unnecessarily harsh and that the spirit of the new Agreement is carried out by the Union Government.

The Rt. Hon. Sastri is going there as the representative, not of individuals, but of India as a whole. He is going there to uphold the prestige of India. Therefore you will not run to him for relief in every individual case. If you do, you will make the mistake of expending a pound for the matter of a penny.

Our strength depends solely on truth. No matter how you behave in your business dealings, you will never in the interests of the community think of swerving from the path of truth in your dealings with the Rt. Hon. Sastri. In attempting to deceive him you will be working your own ruin.

We here constantly receive reports of dissensions amongst you. If you go on creating different and conflicting interests, e.g., the rights of the rich as distinguished from those of the poor, the rights of the North Indians as distinguished from those of the South Indians, of the Colonial-born as distinguished from those of the merchants, of the latter from those of the indentured, of the Transvaal Indians as distinguished from those of the Cape Indians and Natal Indians, you will lose the little that you have gained. If you want to better the position of the whole community, you will always stand united.

We are ultimately to win by our own endeavour which does not mean sharp practice, but self-purification, which again means reform from within and purging ourselves of evil customs and superstitions, educating our children, and contributing money for education as well as other measures of social reform. In this work of self-purification, the Rt. Hon. Sastri's profound experience as an educationist and reformer should be very helpful, and the presence of Mrs. Sastri should be an inspiration to our women.

You will never get such another opportunity in the near future of ameliorating your condition. In my opinion it was impossible to

find a worthier, abler and more impartial representative than the Rt. Hon. Sastri. Let us believe that the Hand of God has brought about this happy consummation. It rests with you entirely to benefit or not by the chance which God has in his mercy given you. May He show you the right path.

Young India, 19-5-192

390. NOTE

RAMACHANDRA LIFT

The lift has now been in use in several parts of Gujarat since the management of it was taken over by the Satyagraha Ashram. With reference to one that was recently put up in Palanpur, Sheth Amritlal Raychand Jhaveri writes:[1]

I print the substance of the Gujarati letter received by me as preliminary evidence of the successful working of the lift, and in order to invite the opinion of others who have already got the Ramachandra lifts. I should not have concerned myself about it but for its very great humanitarian aspect. However, I am anxious to move cautiously. I have heard some criticism about the lift and I invite all the testimony for and against the lift. Up to now all the criticism that I have received has made no appeal to me; but if there is any criticism worth noticing I shall not hesitate to take the reader into confidence. I need not repeat that the spirit of this enterprise is not commercial in any sense of the term. Mr. Ramachandra Iyer has sold his patent rights for a royalty of Rs. 25 per lift up to 1,000. This was due to him as he has incurred considerable debts and as he must live. But beyond that, nothing but actual expenses are added in counting the cost.... Those who desire to see the lift at work may visit the Ashram for the purpose.[2]

Where the only object is absolute religious activity and pursuit of truth, there is no reason to hide anything. The object of the appreciation printed above is thus clear. If the lift has the merits described above then all must take advantage of it. We started with only one lift in the Satyagraha Ashram and have now provided four lifts. Out of these three are in working condition; but I do not

[1] The letter is not reproduced here.
[2] What follows is from *Navajivan,* 15-5-1927.

consider this to be sufficient proof. If those who have bought the equipment are satisfied, and if they feel that because of this there is some saving of cattle as well as money, then nothing can be said against it. It can be said that experience gained so far is in favour of the Ramachandra lift.

Young India, 26-5-1927*; also Navajivan*, 15-5-1927

391. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

NANDI,
May 15, 1927

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
PANCHGANI CASTLE
PANCHGANI

DETAIN PYARELAL PENDING RECEIPT LETTER POSTED TODAY.[1]

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

392. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

NANDI HILLS,
May 15, 1927

DEAR BROTHER,

I must dictate this letter. I forgot to mention one thing to you. I think I gave you the name of Umar Hajee Ahmed Jhaveri, one of the most truthful men I have met in my life. If he has thought ill of a person, I have known him to tell him so and apologize. He is the brother of the very first Indian merchant who went to South Africa, the late Abubakar Ahmed. Umar Hajee Ahmed has considerable property in Durban and has a plot of land with handsome buildings in a central place in Church Street, Pretoria. This property was the only property registered in the name of an Indian in the Transvaal. It became a point of honour with us to insist upon that property remain-

[1] Presumably the reference is to the preceding item, which might have been posted late.

ing in the ownership of Indians. Mr. Jhaveri was telling me that there was some dispute about it. I don't remember the exact circumstances in which the matter stands at present, though of course the past history I know well. This is a matter that might come before you. You will then recall the fact that I mentioned it to you. This is no individual matter but one of national concern. There is correspon-dence about this between General Smuts and myself. You will see all the papers if the case ever comes before you.

I saw Dr. Malan's cable. It was splendid. I am glad you are going so early as 8th June. Poor Andrews is being torn to pieces, and you will not reach South Africa a moment too soon.

The Natal Provincial Council's vote is indeed a bad beginning. But in the Cape Parliament the Natal vote counts for little. I have no doubt that you will have no difficulty with the Natal members some of whom are good, and all of them, unlike as in the Transvaal, the Orange and even the Cape, are proud of the British connection. But, probably, you already know all such things.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 12351

393. LETTER TO C. NARAYANA RAO

NANDI HILLS,
May 15, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Owing to my illness your letter has remained unanswered all this long time. Do you still desire to leave the Excise Department? And are you prepared to go to the Ashram and submit to its discipline without any pay? Though you do not know cooking, it will be necessary for you to take part in the kitchen work. What you do not know will be taught to you. If you are admitted you will be expected to learn Hindi. You will be expected to get up at 4 o'clock in the morning and from 4 o'clock till 7-30 in the evening you will be expected to take some part in the joint work at the Ashram. Of course necessary leisure for ablutions, etc., is provided. Thus you will see that before 8 o'clock in the evening you will have little time for doing private reading. There will be an hour's rest during the day; but after strenuous labour, you will hardly feel up to reading anything. Thus strictly speaking there is no such thing as 8 hours' day in the Ashram for

volunteers who come under the Ashram discipline. You will be expected to retire to bed at 9 o'clock at night. In fact one motto at the Ashram is that work for the common good is prayer and work is devotion to God. If you feel that you can go through the Ashram discipline, please let me know and I shall forward your letter to the Manager of the Ashram with a recommendation to admit you. Whether you may be finally admitted or not will depend upon the Managing Committee who has full control over everything in the Ashram.

Yours sincerely,

C. NARAYANA RAO, ESQ.
EXCISE DEPARTMENT
BEJJIPURAM
(BERHAMPORE P. O.)

From a photostat: S.N. 12564

394. LETTER TO N. H. TELANG

NANDI HILLS,
May 15, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Owing to my sickness I have not been able to do anything further in connection with your letter. If you join the training class, your own expenses will be paid, provided, of course, that you enter into an agreement after the training is finished to serve the All-India Spinners' Association. If you show considerable aptitude, it is possible that you will get a pass certificate before the ordinary time and might then be admitted to the service at once. If you are prepared to take the training in the circumstances, I do not anticipate much difficulty about your admission.

Yours sincerely,

N. H. TELANG, ESQ.
TEACHER
A. V. SCHOOL
BALAPUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 12567-A

395. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

NANDI HILLS, BANGALORE,
May 15, 1927

CHI. BENARSIDASJI,

I have your letter. Before I got it, I had no knowledge of all that had been written from the Ashram. You are no doubt aware that I am lying ill in bed. I can only guess why such a letter came to be written from the Ashram. Thus, as I have found Totaramji very systematic in all his work, this letter too must have been written at his instance. If this is true you have no reason to feel unhappy about it. As for me, I have full faith in your truthfulness. But when a particular job....[1] a man should willingly act in conformity with the common rules.

Whatever the best man does. . .[2]

Again you may not be aware that a managing committee has now been formed in the Ashram and all business is transacted through it. And it has relieved me of all my responsibilities after I fell ill. Consequently it is implied that I should claim or exercise no prerogative. If I have not been able to satisfy you even after writing all this please write to me what else I should do.

What are you doing these days? What means have you adopted for earning your livelihood?

My health is now improving.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2576

396. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised

NANDI HILLS,
May 16, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. You may be declared to be a discharged patient now I suppose and so I have eased down a bit in my sending you love letters.

[1] As in the source

[2] *Bhagavad Gita* III. 21; the whole verse reads: "Whatever the best man does is also done by other men; what example he sets, the world follows."

I am making steady progress. Bangalore doctors came today and they found the blood-pressure to be only 150 and the general condition quite good. They now want me to eat more. I shall see what is possible in that direction. I have been obliged to omit bread and vegetable because I thought them to be too heavy. I must now make another attempt. But there is no doubt about my getting better.

I see you are making headway with your work. How many women are there and how many girls? How many men and how many boys? Give me, when you can, a general idea of the Ashram and its inmates.

I do not know if anybody has told you that at Sabarmati of late we have been having much too much attention from thieves. Once our watchman suffered bad injuries in a scuffle with them. That woke me to a sense of our duty. And I thought that this work of guarding was as much *our* duty as a common kitchen. I therefore suggested that we must become our own watchmen and watchwomen and that we should seek not to beat the thieves out of the Ashram, but try to wean them from their error if they could be got at and that we should risk being beaten by them. The suggestion has been adopted and there are now over thirty volunteers including five women. This is a good beginning.

The common kitchen is daily improving. Shankaran has proved an ideal chief and *chef.* There are over twenty dining at the kitchen. All this will delight your heart when you return.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5229. Courtesy: Mirabehn

397. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Vaishakha Sud Purnima [*May 16, 1927*][1]

SISTERS,

I am very glad to know that you are not afraid. A person who knows that God is the Protector of all, why need he fear? By saying that God is the Protector of all, I do not mean that none would be able to rob or harm us. If this happens, it is not a reflection on the capacity of God to protect us; it is an indication of our lack of faith in Him. The river is ever ready to give water to all. But if one does not approach it with a pot in which to fetch water, or avoids it thinking its water poisonous, how can that be the fault of the river? Fear is a sign of lack of faith. But faith cannot be developed by means of reasoning. It comes gradually through reflection, meditation and practice. To develop such faith, we pray to God, recite *bhajans*, read good books, seek the company of the good and take to sacrificial spinning at the wheel. He who has no faith will not even touch the spinning-wheel.

I am getting better.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I did not notice all this space on the rear side. We know we are all poor, so how can I now throw away this space?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3649

398. LETTER TO TARA MODI

NANDI DURG,
Vaishakha Sud 15 [*May 16, 1927*]

CHI. TARA,

I do get news about your health. How did your health give way? Why should you get hysteria? Write me a detailed letter if you have the strength. If you have to fast, I am not going to worry at all because

[1] Year is fixed from the reference to the scare from robbers at the Ashram.

I am more and more convinced that when no other medicine works, fasting is a sure remedy. Fasting does no harm, but don't try it if you don't have the courage.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1697. Courtesy: Ramniklal Modi

399. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

Purnima [*May 16, 1927*][1]

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

I have your letter. I am steadily regaining the vigour. Do not worry in the least. I will try to take complete rest.

It would be good not to saddle Jamnalalji with more responsibility for the present. Whatever the problems, I shall be able to take quick decisions and perhaps you too will be able to explain to me. I am afraid Jamnalalji might fall ill. I like Rajaji's suggestion. If you can work in the Nandi Hills for two months, the work can get done quickly and conveniently. Houses are plentiful and so it would be no trouble for me at all. Please consider and if you feel the need come over. It would be good if you too could have some peace.

I had a fairly long discussion with Bhai Dhirajlal at Bombay. He talked to me quite frankly and openly. He wants to have training at Bardoli and then work in Bombay. He does not seem to have found a clear direction yet. But it is just as well that he should spend a little time at Bardoli or Sabarmati.

I have received Anasuyabehn's letter. She will definitely be coming to the Nandi Hills. It will not cause any trouble or congestion for me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32723

[1] The date has been inferred from Gandhiji's stay at Nandi Hills from April 19 to June 5, 1927. *Purnima* during this period corresponded to this date. 424

400. LETTER TO GANGADEVI SANADHYA[1]

NANDI DURG,
Vaisakha 15 [*May 16, 1927*]

DEAR SISTER,

You have not recovered as yet. How is it? Quite some time has gone by. Do you not wish even to change the treatment? Totaram should write to me all the details. You need not bother to write.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2548

401. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

NANDI HILLS,
May 17,1927

DEAR SATIS BABU,

When my illness is fast becoming a thing of the past yours seems to be obstinate. Whilst it remains so, you must not stir out. But why does it persist like that? Are you undergoing any treatment there? What exactly is the food you are taking? I ask this question as Mr. Gregg has sent me a book containing the latest researches on food and its relation to health. One thing does appear to me, however apart from the book. May it be that your vegetarian food does not agree with your body that has been built up upon flesh foods? While the change may not have done any visible harm, may it have undermined the constitution or may it be that the change of diet does not serve for rebuilding a shattered constitution? So it happened in my case. I went on famously on fruit and nut alone for more than six years. But after that severe attack of dysentery I could not rebuild the body without milk to which in some shape or other the constitution was used up to 45 years or rather 40 years. You know my rigid predilection, bordering on fanaticism, for vegetarianism. But my fanaticism exhausts itself with my own person for the simple reason that it is a mater of lifelong habit and of deep religious conviction. But religious convic-

[1] Wife of Totaram Sanadhya, a Fiji-returned immigrant, an inmate of the Sabarmati Ashram

tion is a matter personal to every individual. Therefore, even being a vegetarian, I never enforce my conviction on friends but leave them free to do as they choose, even when they are under my influence, as I did for instance for Prabhudas, Chhaganlal's son. I had an English friend living with me in Durban. He had become a vegetarian under my influence. After some time he became ill. I could see that he could not get on well without his usual diet. I begged of him to procure meat from outside and become well. I could not introduce it in my own home. I want you to seriously consider the question therefore. You have to think not only of yourself but of Nikhil also and even Hemprabha Devi if she is still as bad as you are and Tarini if he is a vegetarian. If you are eating pulses, they are of course a fatal thing for weak persons and those with sedentary habits. You saw with what agitation Andrews cabled to me all the way from South Africa about milled rice. And my concern about your food became enhanced upon reading the book sent by Mr. Gregg.

If there is any particular book on Buddhism that you require please tell me and I shall try to procure it.

The paragraph about yoga in *Navajivan* was unfortunate. I did think of yoga practices, but only from two sides, their reputed helpfulness in restoring health and in aiding *brahmacharya,* the latter for the sake of helping the student world whose mind is cut up to pieces under dissipating practices, and the former with reference to my own health. Having read a book on *brahmacharya,* during my illness and having heard copious references to use of *asanas* I began further research. I do not hope to get much help for acquiring greater purity. Not that I do not need all that I can get, but I do not feel that I shall get it through these practices. One who considers himself proficient in yoga told me that in their final stages Raja Yoga, Hatha Yoga and Karma Yoga were one and the same and that it was only in the final stage that conquest of passions in every shape and form was at all possible; and that in Hatha Yoga the final stage was difficult of attainment and required extensive practice. I was not surprised to hear this. For, I knew it before I was so authoritatively told. For that conquest therefore I have only to continue along the path I have so long followed. But I am taking gentle exercise by way of some of these *asanas* and am eager to take more as I become stronger. You need not therefore think any more about the yoga practices. Some day in order to remove expectations and misunderstandings, I propose

to write about this thing in the pages of *Young India*. If I make any discovery about the simple use of *asanas* for regaining health, I shall certainly write to you.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1570

402. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

NANDI,
Tuesday [On or after *May 17, 1927*][1]

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I had desisted from replying to your last letter hoping that you would soon be arriving here. Meanwhile however I have had letters from Saklatwala. Hence this letter to you. I also enclose his letters as well as a copy of my letter to him.

My health is certainly good. The doctors say my blood-pressure is a little low. It has certainly not gone up.

Rajaji arrived here today. I take it you will now be arriving soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32786

403. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

NANDI DURG,
Viashakh Vad 2 [*May 18, 1927*][2]

CHI, MATHURADS,

I have your telegram. I am relieved. If you are able to walk 20 furlongs at a stretch without getting tired and without a rise in temperature, we can say that you have turned the corner.

Talwalkar is an honest and industrious man and he thinks that in

[1] From the reference to the Saklatwala papers which Gandhiji received on May 14, 1927, during his stay at Nandi Hills for recuperation of health. The first Tuesday after May 14 was the 17th.

[2] The addressee received this letter on May 20, 1927. *Vaishakh Vad 2* in 1927 corresponded to this date.

the treatment of tuberculosis he has no rival. I do not have the same regard for his ability as I have for his good nature. That is why I have not told you anything about him. But I know him very well. He treated Kaka and Uttam Chand—whom you do not know. And at present it appears that both of them have recovered. That is what the two of them think too. I know that others also have faith in him. His treatment consists essentially of injections in which he has profound faith. I do not think he has talked to you about the injections. But I can talk to him if you wish. But I think that if he wants to give you injections and you want to take them you will have to stay at Ahmedabad.

You must have met Nargisbehn and others.

My health is gradually improving.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

404. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

NANDIDOORG,[1]
May, 18, 1927

BHAISHRI 5 KHUSHALBHAI[2],

I received your letter. I was very pleased.

Please do write to Ramdas and tell him whatever you think he ought to do. I believe khadi work to be both a business and a form of national service. When the use of khadi has become widespread, the very men who have now taken possession of the Mulji Jetha Market[3] and send crores of rupees abroad and make profits of lakhs for themselves, will compensate the thirty-three crores of Gods of India[4] to the tune of crores of rupees and retain lakhs for themselves. And, in

[1] In the Mysore state. Gandhiji was resting here after he had a mild stroke in the last week of March of 1927.

[2] Gandhiji's cousin, father of Gandhiji's nephews Chhaganlal, Maganlal and Narandas who helped him in his numerous other activities. The figure '5' in old style letters expressed reverence for the person addressed.

[3] A busy cloth trade centre in Bombay

[4] That is, the people of India whom Gandhiji regarded as the Gods of ancient Indian mythology

this way, both the Gods and the cloth merchants will prosper[1]. Today, these cloth merchants are making their profits, as they believe them to be, at the expense of the Gods. I do wish that Ramdas, and to the extent possible Nimu, should take full part in helping the change that is currently taking place in cloth trade, transforming it from an immoral trade into a moral one. But that wish is of secondary importance to me. The more important thing is the freedom of Ramdas and Nimu. I myself am content telling them what I think, and will be satisfied with whatever course of action they adopt. You have as much right as I naturally have to take a share in promoting their good. You are as much in place of a respected elder to them as I am. I, therefore, wish that you should guide them. It is your right and also your duty to do so. It would of course be very good if we both held the same views. But I would see no harm even if our views differed. Sincerely held differences of views conduce to our good. I hold that we harm each other's good by suppressing our views out of false regard for each other. Therefore, please do tell Ramdas whatever you think.

I was glad to learn from your letter that Chi. Navin is now coming round to the right path.

Jai Shrikrishna from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

405. LETTER TO MULCHAND AGRAWAL

NANDI DURG,
Vaisakha Krishna 2 [*May 18, 1927*]

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

I have your letter. You have started khadi work, for which I thank you. Nowadays owing to my illness, Jamnalalji is handling the work of the Charkha Sangh. I shall pass your letter to him. He is due here in a day or two.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 761

[1] The reference is to *Bhagavad Gita*. Chapter III. verses 10 and 11, in which Shri Krishna says that Brahma created the people to nourish the Gods through such offerings, the Gods in turn nourishing peoples so that both might prosper.

406. NAGPUR SATYAGRAHA

I see an Associated Press telegram in the papers, in which Mr. Manchershah Awari is reported to have said, that he had my consent and full sympathy for his movement of civil disobedience with regard to the Arms Act and the Explosive Substances Act, designed for the release of the Bengal detenus.

If my recollection is correct, either the Associated Press representative has misunderstood Mr. Awari, or the latter has misunderstood me. I have no recollection of having given my consent in advance to Mr. Awari's proposed launching out on civil disobedience in any connection whatsoever. It is really contrary to my practice to give such consent in advance. I did discuss the theory of civil disobedience with Mr. Awari, for whose patriotic spirit and self-sacrifice I have great regard. I drew his attention to the grave limitations of civil disobe-dience. He spoke, and rightly, with great warmth and concern about the Bengal detenus, and I remember having said, that if some move-ment in the shape of civil disobedience could be conceived and successfully launched, it would be a great thing. I hold that view even at the present moment. For I regard the indefinite detention of the Bengal patriots without any trial of any sort as a grave injustice. And if I have remained dumb, it is not because I do not feel the wrong as keenly as the closest friends of the detenus, but because I do not desire to make a fruitless exhibition of my powerlessness. A public worker has to learn to endure with fortitude what he cannot cure. And bed-ridden though I am, if I could think of any feasible civil plan for securing the release of these prisoners, I should embark upon it without the slightest hesitation. But I confess that I have none in view. My own personal opinion is that there is no atmosphere in the country for civil disobedience. We have fallen upon evil times. The atmosphere today is one not of non-violent disobedience but of very violent and suicidal disobedience.

I have no knowledge whatsoever of what is being done in Nagpur. I can pronounce no judgment upon Mr. Awari's movement. I have given no consent for the movement. I had intended to say not one word about the movement, and it would have been well if Mr. Awari had not dragged in my name. If he thought that his movement had my consent, he should have laid the whole of his plan in a concrete form before me and secured it in writing. If I had approved of it and if I could not have taken an active part myself, I would at

least have backed it with all the force at my command through these columns. He must now thank himself if my disclaimer harms his movement in any way.

And let it be a warning in future to everyone concerned against using my name in connection with any movement without my previous consent in writing. Indeed it is necessary for workers to become self-reliant and dare to prosecute their plans if they so desire without hankering after the backing of names of persons supposed to be great and influential. Let them rely upon the strength of their own conviction and the cause they seek to espouse. Mistakes there will be. Suffering even avoidable there must be. But nations are not easily made. There will have to be rigid and iron discipline before we achieve anything great and enduring, and that discipline will not come by mere academic argument and appeal to reason and logic. Discipline is learnt in the school of adversity. And when zealous young men will train themselves to responsible work without any shield, they will learn what responsibility and discipline are. And out of this army of candidate leaders, will arise one real leader, who will not have to plead for obedience and discipline but who will command it as a matter of course, because he will have been tried in many a skirmish and will have proved his right to undisputed leadership.

Young India, 19-5-1927

407. HORRIBLE PRACTICES

Mr. Andrews in the course of a letter from Durban says:[1]

I know the temple at Umbilo, which may really be called a suburb of Durban. Even years ago, when the temple was erected, I had my misgivings. Bitter experience has taught me that all temples are not houses of God. They can be habitations of the devil. These places of worship have no value unless the keeper is a good man of God. Temples, mosques, churches are what man makes them to be. I am therefore not surprised at the painful and horribly superstitious practices going on in this so-called temple. The origin of these practices is easy enough to trace. There are three classes of Indians in South Africa. The free Indian trader has nothing to do with these practices.

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had referred to the evil practices of self-torture like "fire-walking" festivals by Indians at Umbilo temple and to a page of pictures of such things in *The Natal Advertiser*.

Nor have the large number of Colonial-born Indians who have received in the face of terrible odds a tolerably liberal education. The third class is the indentured Indian, now become free. He is drawn naturally from the poorest class here. Nothing has ever been done by the Government or the employers or by the free Indian community to help these unfortunate men and women out of their ignorance and superstition. The result is that they are preyed upon by superstitious and even evil-minded men who pose as priests and holy men. They mutter a few Sanskrit verses whose meaning they do not know and which they horribly mispronounce, and resort to all kinds of awe-inspiring practices. And what can be better than a temple, where simple people congregate and where every kind of superstition derives a halo from associations attributed to temples? I think that the common law of South Africa is wide enough to deal with these practices if the Government desires to put them down.

The fact is, unfortunately, that the prejudice against Indians in South Africa is not ascribable to these practices, nor is it directed against the men who are victims of this barbarism. It is directed chiefly against the free trading class who have nothing to do with these practices. And therefore these practices have gone without any notice or comment. And if they are now being noticed, it is in order to prejudice the European mind against the Habibullah Agreement and against what little relief is sought to be given by it to the Indian settlers. It should also be borne in mind that these practices are by no means common amongst Indians throughout South Africa. They are confined only to the part of the coast of Natal where indentured Indians are to be found in their largest numbers. If therefore the Government intend to put these practices down, they can do so under the common law with ease, and they can be dealt with also through municipal bye-laws. I am sure, that if action is taken, not a voice will be raised against it in the name of religion falsely so called for sheltering these practices. No cultured Indian will have anything to do with them, and the ignorant people who witness these tortures with awe will not dare to defend them in a court of law. What we can do here is to encourage cultured Indians in South Africa to fight the superstition. They should, without seeking Government intervention, work in the midst of the poor people, and wean them from these barbarisms, and advise them to help the Government, if they choose to prosecute those who take part in those practices, thus showing their desire not to reproduce in South Africa all that is bad in our life, but

to reproduce only that which is good in our civilization. It is our duty to advise and encourage our countrymen in South Africa to do nothing that will give a handle to the agitation against them.

Young India, 19-5-1927

408. LETTER TO SATCOWRIPATI RAY

NANDI HILLS (MYSORE STATE),
May 19, 1927

DEAR SATCOWRI BABU,

I got your letter day before yesterday after that day's mail was closed. I could not possibly over-take your letter yesterday.

You have my deepest sympathy with you in your troubles. But I have much fear it is out of my power to help you in the direction desired by you. All the same please let me have a full description of your property, where it is situated, what is its extent, whether there are any buildings on it and if there are, their dimensions. Possession of this information will be useful for me. But your case is not out of the ordinary. I know many who are passing through the same difficulty. It is also one of the things we have to go through in our march towards our goal. And I want you to bear your troubles with philosophic calmness as I know you will do.

But why do you say insolvency is not to be thought of? Honest insolvency is no crime if a borrower [borrows] in good faith for investing in a prosperous enterprise. Suppose that through no fault of my own the enterprise fails and the loaner knew that I had no other means of repayment. Surely if he is impatient, insolvency is the only honourable course left open for me even if I desired as I should to repay the loan in spite of insolvency. For, insolvency would be the only way of my doing further business. As a lawyer you know the genesis of insolvency law. It was created to protect honest but unlucky enterprise and to encourage trade and enterprise. No doubt the golden rule is not to borrow. But so few of us follow the golden rule. The next best therefore is not to accept a defeat but to seek the protection of the insolvency court and open a new leaf, and if successful, in the next enterprise, repay of one's own free will the original loaner. There are such celebrated instances of men having deliberately become insolvent and then repaid their creditors. In my own practice, I advised

one of my nearest clients[1], who because he had taken part in the satyagraha movement, was forced into the insolvency court. I called a meeting of the debtors. They were unbending. I challenged them to do their worst. The consequence was insolvency. But after the insolvency, the client paid the creditors in full to their agreeable astonishment. They apologized and they showed their sincerity by giving him afterwards unlimited credit which they had no occasion to regret. I therefore strongly advise you to meet the creditors, place the position frankly and fearlessly before them and tell them that you will repay if you earned. If they don't listen, let them make you insolvent, or if the insolvency law here admits of voluntary surrender you may even surrender voluntarily. Then you will have breathing time and then if you do not want to resume practice, you will join the Khadi Service. Khadi Service will never give you Rs. 25,000. But if the movement goes forward with a leap, khadi will become a commercial proposition, and when it does become that, there will be a moderate amount of money in it also. This may seem to be all far-fetched; not so to me. I regard khadi as a far sounder proposition even from a commercial standpoint than the least that can be made by our merchant princes. After all sound commerce is of slow growth. But my confidence in khadi is such that, though it is of slow growth, in the long run, it will prove to be the shortest route to healthy commercial prosperity of individuals as it certainly will be of the nation.

I do not want you [to] succumb therefore under the influence of false pride or [a] false sense of honour. I want you to be a pattern for others, and therefore please follow my advice and get rid of the burden which is evidently bearing you down. Then make a firm resolution not to borrow a single farthing henceforth. Public workers must not borrow. And insist upon your numerous family dependants to work for their livelihood and let them all work for khadi, and if they don't want to do that, the male members may make their own choice; females may grumble but will submit to the inevitable. This regulation of family obligations is also a necessary corollary to national uplift. We must break through this family crust if we are to grow to our national height. These falsely assumed obligations I know are hampering the progress of individuals and the nation in a way very few things are doing. It is wrong, I almost want to say immoral, to support men and women who have some capacity for work. Even a

[1] A. M. Kachhalia; *vide* "Representation at Meeting of Chachalia's Creditors" 22-1-1909.

rich nation, if it made[1] an attempt to support one half of its members without taking any work from them, it will go to the dogs. But we are doing infinitely worse and still expect to become a strong, self-reliant and self-respecting nation; it is an impossible proposition.

Do let me know your final decision and do not hesitate to write to me as often as you like. It will be a terrible thing if you are lost to public work.

Yours sincerely,

SATCOWRIPATI RAY, ESQ.
27, KALIDAS PATITUNDU LANE
KALIGHAT
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 12579

409. LETTER TO S. SRINIVASA AIYENGAR

NANDI HILLS,
May 19, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I must dictate in order to conserve my energy.

I appreciate your considerate telegram[2]. I haven't enthused over it because of the wretched atmosphere about us. Our best resolutions come to naught because we seem to have lost the power of taking the people with us. Of what use will be our resolutions if the people continue savagely to break one another's heads? But I have said of you that where others have failed, you may owing to your invincible faith succeed. I wish therefore all strength to your elbow and shall rejoice if you succeed in putting an end to this disgraceful civil war and make men out of beasts that we have become at present.

I am making steady progress and trying to follow your movements as carefully as I can.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. SRINIVASA AIYENGAR
MYLAPORE

From a photostat: S.N. 14124

[1] The source has "Even rich nations if they made".

[2] Reporting a unanimous resolution on Hindu-Muslim question by the A.I.C.C. on May 15 and 16 at Bombay

410. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

NANDI DURG,
Vaishakha Krishna 3 [*May 19, 1927*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

You write it would be better if Manibehn stayed [at the Ashram] instead of going over to Karachi. God alone knows whether or not she would have the opportunity to go. But if she is not to go there, still she has to be sent out somewhere because I wonder if she has yet developed any attachment to the Ashram. The girl is extremely candid and honest; so wherever she is, she is sure to do the work, but it is for you all to create in her affection and interest. Do keep her there if you can. And if this is possible [for the time being], I need not arrange to send her elsewhere. I would let the [chance] at Karachi materialize if it is to happen. But She can also be called back from there after a short period. I am [glad] that the [Ashram] women have [taken up] the mess. Please congratulate them all and tell them that they must fulfil with credit what they have undertaken.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9187. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

411. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

NANDI DURG,
Vaishakha Krishna 3 [*May 19, 1927*][2]

BHAISHRI PULCHAND,

Your letter. It has always been my view that we should on no account bring in the British Government to mediate in the affairs of the native States. But we cannot say that this principle is to be followed on every occasion, because as I expect a man who would neither ask for nor want the mediation of the British to possess the strength to resist oppression peacefully or otherwise or acquire the capacity to suffer it silently. But a man who is unable to fight, who cannot put up

[1] Year inferred from contents
[2] *ibid*

with oppression and either enlists the aid of the British or loses his manhood by abject submission to oppression should certainly seek the help of the British.

According to my concept of the Kathiawar Political Conference, there is no question of seeking British help; and hence if it works in accordance with my idea, it would consist of only the simple unsophisticated people offering non-co-operation and satyagraha and wearing only khadi.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2854. Courtesy: Sharadabehn Shah

412. LETTER TO SHAPURJI SAKLATVALA

NANDI HILLS (MYSORE STATE),

May 20, 1927

Here is an extract from Pandit Motilalji's letter in answer to mine. Please tell me what you would have me to do further in the matter.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure 1

SHAPURJI SAKLATVALA, M.P.
HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON S.W. I
FROM DEAR FRIEND,

From a Photostat : S. N. 12504

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Fulchand K. Shah", 11-5-1927.

413. A LETTER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
May 20, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. Besides the writings mentioned by you, there is a monograph by the late Rev. Joseph Doke, also by Dr. P. J. Mehta, and by H. S. L. Polak besides other writings collected by G. A. Natesan and copies of *Young India* since 1922, and my booklet called *Indian Home Rule*[2]. Most of these publications I think can be secured from G. A. Natesan of the *Indian Review*, Madras. *Young India* is edited by me and is published at Ahmedabad. *Ethical Religion* is not an original book. It is a translation of an adaptation in Gujarati of an American publication called *Ethics of Religion* by Salter which I read years ago. In its translated form I have not read it. It will be therefore risky to derive a knowledge of my belief through that book. If you desire any further information, you will [not] hesitate, please ask for it.

I thank you for your enquiry about my health which is steadily improving.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 14125

414. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

NANDI DURG,
Vaishakha Krishna 4 [*May 20, 1927*]

CHI. VASUMATI,

Your letter. Even if you have nothing to write, you will not be excused from writing once a week. At least I can certainly hope to see the improvement in your handwriting. And if you find nothing to write, just say what you did on that day (or on the previous day).

Blessings from

BAPU

VASUMATI DHIMATRAM NAVALRAM PANDIT
KELAPITH

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 474. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

[1] Permanent address
[2] *Vide* "hind Swaraj", 22-11-1909.

415. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Friday, May 20, 1927

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I have your letter. You will have got copies of my letters to Saklatwala.

I certainly like the idea of opening a school for Antyaja girls and I know very well that you have stayed back only for that reason.

My health is picking up. I have increased the duration of my walks. I have begun taking a little bread and butter. I have given up one fruit and instead introduced some green vegetable in my diet. I shall observe the result.

Jamnalal and Rajendrababu arrived here today.

Look after your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32823

416. LETTER TO GEORGES MIGNON

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
May 21, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you.

You may publish in your magazine the chapters of my writings called "My Experiments with Truth". Their rights of publication in book form in French have already been given to M. Emil Roniger. You will please therefore confine your translation to its publication in your magazine. I take it you will kindly send me copies of your magazine that may contain the translation from time to time.

Yours sincerely,

M. GEORGES MIGNON
EDITOR OF "EXTREME-ASIE"
SAIGON

From a photostat: S.N. 12505

[1] Permanent address

417. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

NANDI HILLS,
May 21, 1927

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

I was grieved to hear of your illness. I hope you will soon recover. Why not come here to regain your strength? The climate here as you know is very nice.

Somehow or other the resolution[1] of the A.I.C.C. does not fill me with immediate hope, much less, enthusiasm. The hope deep down which is born of implicit faith is there. But it receives no added impulse from the resolution. For, I feel the few who have a detached mind and who are keeping their heads cool, can produce at present no impression upon those who are fighting or those who are at the back of the fighters. I don't know if you think that you have any influence. I see nothing but devilry going on under the garb of religion. Not until we learn to become men and therefore instead of breaking heads for the vindication of supposed rights, we learn to refer to arbitration matters even of attacks upon our rights supposed or real and until we cease to think of Government interference, shall we have real peace or real swaraj. Anything short of that gives me no satisfaction. My only hope therefore lies in prayer and answer to prayer.

Yours sincerely,

DR. M. A. ANSARI
1, DARYAGANJ
DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 14126

418. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

NANDI DURG,
May 21, 1927

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter.

You have surely heard the song with this first line "Never give up, even it you lose your life". That is to say, we may lose our life but

[1] On Hindu-Muslim unity; *vide* "Letter to S. Srinivasa Aiyengar", 19-5-1927

never lose heart. And where is the sense in admitting defeat as regards spinning, for instance, and writing a good hand, especially when I am by your side to encourage you? "Stone upon stone a dam is built and drop by drop the lake filled up." Nothing is impossible for the industrious. So do not lose heart. By regular spinning you are sure to increase your speed and you will improve your hand by constant practice in writing clear and bold letters. I know of a great many people who have thus improved their handwriting. You have done well in taking up the work of the Ashram stores. Now do not give it up but do it perfectly. Never mind if you don't have to keep accounts, but you should acquaint yourself with the general principles. If this work takes up so much of your time that you cannot spin for two hours every day, you may spin for a shorter period but with concentration. It is better to spin for a short time with application than to spin longer and impatiently; for you will thus spin stronger and more uniform yarn and that too faster.

Do keep me informed about Gangadevi.

Yours,

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 62

419. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

NANDI DURG,
May 21, 1927

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I have read your letter to Jamnalal and also those to Chhaganlal. I understand about Ramachandra and Ganesh. Do what all of you think proper.

It occurs to me that there is one thing I should write to you about. Ramchandra and Ganesh are both good and honest persons. Such persons should be retained if possible. But while they are retained, we must be firm with them as well as gentle. We should not have the slightest hesitation in pointing out their faults. That is what I mean by firmness. You must frankly tell Ramchandra: 'You exaggerate. You are hasty and hot-tempered and never willing to see your own faults. You can stay here only by recognizing those faults and overcoming them. It is no use appealing to Gandhi, because he has delegated all powers to us.' If he stays on even after such frank

talk, he should be allowed to stay and if he wishes to go, he should be allowed to go, whatever the inconvenience caused thereby. You must also tell Ganesh frankly: 'We suspect that you do not wish to teach the others the craft you know. We can carry on only if you teach others and train them. If not, you are free to go. But we shall not drive you away if you should wish to continue here even after you have trained somebody. You will continue to receive the help you are having today. We want you to stay. But you can stay only on our conditions.' In other words, firmness lies in telling a person what we think about him. We should be gentle in conveying this and it should not be an expression of hasty judgment. Gentleness also means an effort to see whatever good may be seen in a fault. But ultimately, we can proceed correctly and carry on our work only when we have fully expressed our view about a fault of which we are convinced. Then alone can we consider ourselves true satyagrahis. I see that relations among people are not smooth. At present there is hesitation in frankly expressing our views on the faults of others which are clear to us. If that veil of hesitation is removed, much of the work can become easy. This is intended only by way of guidance.

I am returning the letter from Ramachandra in case it is of use to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Sabarmati Museum and Sangrahalaya

420. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

NANDI DURG,
Vaisakha Krishna 5 [*May 21, 1927*]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Jamnalalji is here since a couple of days ago. He has conveyed your message to me. I can think of nothing further to write to you than what I have already done. Regarding an audience with the Emperor I think you should not try for one. You should not, however, refuse it if the Secretary of State for India or the Prime Minister proposes to arrange it. As far as I know I think political matters are not discussed with the British Monarch. Only formal greetings are

exchanged. Do meet the ministers and talk with them whatever you want to. Observe closely the British jails and also visit the poorer districts of London with some knowledgeable person and study the condition of the poor. Once or twice, on a Saturday evening, stand near the pubs of the poor and the bars of the rich and watch their doings.

I am improving day by day.

I wrote *to pujya* Malaviyaji long ago. I expect no reply from him as answering letters is contrary to his nature. But he does send a telegram in reply to one. I am going to write to him again all the same.

I hope you are well.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6147. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

421. HE SHOULD BE DISMISSED

I have now got the name and the address of the doctor, the account of whose inhuman treatment of an *Antyaja* woman was given to us by Shri Amritlal Thakkar.[1] Now an inquiry is being made into the case and in the mean time I do not see any necessity of disclosing his identity. A well-known doctor friend writes :[2]

My reason for publishing this letter is that the inhuman treatment of the Antyaja woman was such as no one can possibly condone. I do not believe that if the doctor is a private practitioner, the only alternatives before us are to grieve over the incident in helpless silence, if we wish to follow the path of non-violence, or, if not, give the doctor a thrashing. A thrashing is not likely to make the doctor change his ways. Antyaja brethren will not benefit in any way, and we will probably fail either to do justice to the doctor or win redress for the cruel ill-treatment of the woman. One who follows non-violence need not feel helpless. The path of non-violence is neither for the coward nor for the stupid. It is for those who are ever

[1] *Vide* "Man's Inhumanity to Man", 5-5-1927.

[2] The letter is not translated here.

vigilant. The law of violence concerns the body and its requirements, while the law of non-violence appeals to the heart. Through non-violence we can arouse religious consciousness among the people, which means cultivating bold and true public opinion. If the true spirit of compassion were alive in the village in which this incident occurred, such cruelty would never have been possible. The poor doctor was only an agent. The spirit of cruelty was in the atmosphere and that is why he had the courage to demand two rupees in advance and, though he got the money, felt afraid that he would be polluted by touching the Antyaja woman, even for treating her. It is the duty of men who follow the path of non-violence to be always vigilant and educate public opinion so as to create an atmosphere in which men like the doctor would find no encouragement for the evil in them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-5-1927

422. THE COW AND THE BUFFALO

A votary of non-violence writes:[1]

When writing the article on the cow and the buffalo, I had assumed that no clarification was called for about the matter of swaraj to the buffalo. When we domesticate an animal, we deprive it of its freedom, however good our intention in domesticating it may be. Hundreds of Englishmen feel happy in the belief that they rule India with a good motive and, even if we reject that rule, they think us to be fools and do not relinquish what they consider to be their duty of ruling over us. But if a judge were appointed between us, this statement by us would suffice: 'How can these self-appointed protectors of ours understand our sufferings. Only the All-seeing God and we ourselves know them. And we of course say that our good lies in being released from our bondage.' Similarly, if the buffalo could speak and if an impartial judge were appointed between her and us and the buffalo entered a similar plea, and I do believe she would do so—the verdict would be in her favour. And so I said that by giving up our fancy for rearing buffaloes, we would not be forsaking her,

[1] The letter is not translated here. Referring to Gandhiji's article "Cow V. Buffalo or Cow-*cum*-Buffalo?", 8-5-1927, the correspondent had asked what Gandhiji had meant by granting swaraj to the buffalo.

that is, would not be doing her any harm, but would be granting her freedom. There is no question in this of our disowning an accepted responsibility. We must accept responsibility for those buffaloes which we have reared, but, if I am right in my view, no duty like that which we have accepted in regard to the cow, of adopting ways and means of increasing and improving the progeny of the cow, devolves upon us in regard to the buffalo. Hence it is not necessary to regard the protection of the buffalo as included in our special duty of cow-protection. If people accept my suggestion, it will naturally be our duty to collect together all the buffaloes we have reared in regions where the cow and the bullock cannot, but only the buffalo can be maintained, and provide for the protection of her male progeny as well.

It was not my intention to suggest that there should be separate dairies and tanneries for villages, but the fact is that in the existing circumstances, it is only after making experiments in the cities that we can take to villages the science of cattle-rearing, of extracting the maximum quantity of milk from the cow without torturing her, and that of tanning her hide and so on. Such is our pitiable condition at present. In these days, when village pasture lands have disappeared and oilcake, hay, etc., have become dear, the villagers maintain their cattle with great difficulty. We rest content with whatever use the illiterate tanner can make of the hide. The bones, etc., are wasted. As a consequence, this living wealth perishes and, if the cattle do not die, they live on as skeletons, often become a burden to the owner and in the end, land in slaughter-houses in Bombay and other cities. I know that, in these circumstances, important changes need to be adopted, but I am at present unable to say how to bring them about, what methods we should adopt from the West, and so on. This whole thing is at the moment in an experimental stage. If I have been able to explain what needs to be done, it is for every individual worker to experiment on his own and discover how to do it. There was a time when appropriate changes could be effected in our civilization and people accepted the need for such changes. As long as these conditions of progress were accepted, so long, we can say, our civilization was living. Now we believe that whatever is written in a book which is published as a Shastra and which finds its way into our hands is the Lord's word and cannot be altered in any way. We must get out of this horrible mental death. We can see with our own eyes that there have been changes in our ways of thought and life in every age. Accepting this truth, cultured workers should enter the villages

with confidence in themselves. It is necessary for all of them to accept certain general principles; there will be differences in the methods of implementing them. That is inevitable and should be welcomed. From that we shall find the best ways of implementing those principles. From this point of view, the question whether we should introduce Western machines and, if so, to what extent, becomes secondary. The general principle is that we should produce or make whatever we can in the villages themselves, and while we can do with the indigenous razor, should not bother to introduce the German Krupp razor because it is regarded as superior. If, however, we cannot make the sewing needle in the village, we should not set our face against the easily available and cheap needle from Austria. I see nothing wrong in accepting from any quarter whatever is good and is worth accepting and which we can assimilate.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-5-1927

423. LETTER TO ISABEL BAMLET

NANDI HILLS (MYSORE STATE),
May 22, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. When I say[1] the problem is not so simple as it appears to you, I mean two things. It is not enough merely to take the name of God or believe in this thing or the other or even in this man or the other; but it is necessary ever to wait upon God and find out what His will is. I have found this to be a most difficult, though very agreeable, task. It is often a question, and a very delicate one, when what we may consider to be His will is really His and not ours. Thus we come to what St. Paul has said: "Work out your own salvation."

The second difficulty is that all religions have more or less similar formulae, and all have produced, and continue to produce, good, true and godfearing men and women.

In the circumstances, it is not a simple matter for a humble student of all the faiths of the world to find out by prayer which is the truest religion. But it is not difficult to say, as I do say, that all religions are more or less God-given and that therefore one must work out one's own salvation in the religion of one's own forefathers; for, a

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Isabel Bamlet", 10-5-1927.

seeker after Truth finds out that all religions melt and become one in God Who is one and the same for all His creatures.

I shall bear your caution in mind if I write anything in *Young India*. I shall certainly not make use of your name.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MRS. ISABEL BAMLET
C/O THE BRISTOL HOTEL
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: C.W. 4442. Courtesy: Carlisle Bamlet

424. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

NANDI HILLS,
May 22, 1927

MY DEAR BHRRR AND PROUD FATHER,

I must dictate this although it is a love letter, as I better conserve my energy if I dictate stretched on my bed. There is nothing however to be concerned about my health, as I am making steady progress though it will be some time before I regain the strength that I lost in the twinkling of an eye. It may not be possible to regain all that I have lost; but the doctors are of opinion that much of it, it is perfectly possible to get back.

Please give my congratulations to Sohaila and Professor Muhammed Habib. Though I cannot be with you in the body, I shall be with you in the spirit. I wish them both a happy life of useful service to the country. Sohaila must remember that she is not going to be married to become a mere doll and become lost to the country. But she would be expected, like her grey-headed young father, who is daily getting younger, to serve the country with the same devotion that her young father is doing; and if her husband is at all lukewarm, to touch him with her spirit and make him joint partner in such service, as he would be joint partner in all the joys and sorrows of life. It is no use my even wishing that there should be no sorrow and all joy. It would be a flat and dull picture without any beautiful shades. There may be joys but they must be relieved by occasional sorrows. So my wish and hope is that God will give them a fair measure of joys of life if He must also give them doses of sorrows to remind them that He is not to be forgotten in the midst of life's joys.

I was wondering what you were doing and how you fared in Rangoon. You have kept me without a letter now for a very long time. I suppose it is all deliberate and out of considerateness for a bed-ridden friend. Raihana also has followed suit. But you should know that neither your letter nor hers can possibly be a tax on my energy.

Give my love to the bride and the bridegroom and all the friends and members of the family who may have gathered there to celebrate the coming event and accept the same for yourself and Mrs. Abbas.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9558

425. LETTER TO SONJA SCHLESIN

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
May 22, 1927

DEAR MISS SCHLESIN,

As you know I am just now bed-ridden and I must therefore dictate my reply to your letter of the 20th April just received. It is difficult to recall what I wrote in all my letters to you. So far as my memory serves me, there is not a single letter of yours which has gone by without an acknowledgement. There are many compliments which I do not and cannot appropriate; but the one about my being a prompt correspondent, I can ever claim in spite of your different experience. For, everybody else of my acquaintance has paid me the compliment of being a prompt correspondent, that is of course comparatively to many others.

I have no letter of yours dated 4th January. But I have one dated 3rd January in my file. I do not think that I gave you, if I did at all, a detailed reply to that letter. It was received at the Ashram on the 3rd February. It was then redirected to me during my tour. Soon after, I became incapacitated.

Mr. Stanley Jones's book[2] I read but only cursorily as during the tour I was able to do very little of reading. Indeed, it was not even possible for me to look at the many books that came to me. This I did

[1] Permanent address
[2] *The Christ of the Indian Road*

as it was accompanied by a letter from Mr. Stanley Jones whom I knew very well. I do not remember his suggestion and I have not his book by me.

I quite agree with you that karma and the cross may well go together. If you have followed the pages of *Young India*, you must have noticed that last year I read the New Testament every Saturday to the students of our National College. I did stumble over the words "without a cause"[1], and in explaining it I simply rejected the thing as redundant. But I was agreeably surprised on turning to Moffat's and Weymouth's translations which I had by me to make the discovery that you made. In reading all religious works, I have learnt one thing. Never to take them literally, but understand the drift and catch the drift also by means of what is to me an infallible canon of interpretation, and reject those which cannot stand the test of Truth and Ahimsa. I know that even in spite of this canon of interpretation difficulties do arise; but they are solved if one has patience and if one has a living faith in God.

I am sending your letter to Mr. Jones as I have no doubt he will like to see your argument. I am not likely to meet him in the near future as I shall be for some months still in the South. Your letters should be addressed to the Ashram as usual.

The autobiography is not yet complete. Ganesan cannot send you a copy of the autobiography. The three parts that have been completed are in course of publication in book form. But for the present, you have to rely upon the numbers of *Young India* which contain the chapters to date. You may borrow the volumes from Manilal or you should wait till the three parts are published in book form. You may know that before I commenced the autobiography I finished the history of the South African Passive Resistance. The original is in Gujarati. Its translation is now being published in instalments by Ganesan. I am afraid it will be some time before the whole history is available in English.

Do see Mr. Sastri, India's first Agent for South Africa. He is an extremely fine man. As you know he is Gokhale's successor. He knows all about you and is himself eager to see you.

[1] *St. Matthew, v.* 22. The words found in the Authorized Version are omitted in the Revised and later versions.

I am getting better. Of those you know Mrs. Gandhi and Devdas are with me.

Yours sincerely,

MISS SCHLESIN
BOX 2284
JOHANNESBURG
(SOUTH AFRICA)

From a photostat: S.N. 12353

426. LETTER TO REV. STANLEY JONES

NANDI HILLS (MYSORE STATE),
May 22, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Here is a letter from Miss Schlesin, a dear friend in South Africa. You will be interested in it. Please return it after perusal.

I must ask you to tell Mrs. Jones again that the pamphlet addressed to boys and girls on purity of life is still being hatched in my mind and I have not despaired of being able to write out something or rather dictate something from this sick-bed.

I am now gradually regaining the lost strength.

Yours sincerely

Enclosure 1

REV. STANLEY JONES
SITAPUR, U.P.

From a photostat: S.N. 14127

427. LETTER TO DEVESHVAR SIDDHANTALANKAR

NANDI HILLS (MYSORE STATE),
May 22, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have carefully preserved your letter of 29th January in the hope some day of being able to write to you. It was received during my tour and I was not able to read the cuttings till during the last three days. Lying on my sick-bed I have been gradually overtaking my correspondence and I have now gone through the cuttings. They are valuable. In some places your translation does not do justice to the original. But the pains you have taken to be just leads me to hope that the mistake is due to inadvertence.

The extracts you have collected certainly makes one sink. I am not a critical student of religious books including the Koran. I have read these books with sympathy and with a view to deriving religious consolation. The effect therefore produced upon your[1] mind by the passages collected by you was naturally not produced upon my mind. The commentary you have given upon the text, "there should be no violence in religion," is quite new to me and gives a different meaning from the one which the text bears without the commentary. I would however like to consult Mussalman friends about it. But after all the careful thought I have given to the passages extracted by you, I adhere to the conclusion that Islam is not a religion of the sword; but it is like all other great religions a religion of peace. I say so for this reason. I have met numerous Mussalmans who no more think of slaying men of different faiths than you or I do. And these Mussalmans are by no means scoffers. They are devout followers of their faith. The long line of Sufis whose veneration for the Koran cannot be questioned owe their illuminating philosophy of peace and love to the Koran. I have read Maulana Shibli's *Life of the Prophet* as also portions of his Al *Kalam. I* have read also his *Leaves from the Lives of the Companions of the Prophet.* The sum-total of the impression left on my mind by these writings is of an elevating character. I hope you do not wish to suggest that Maulana Shibli and such other writers on Islam have written what they did not believe and in order to throw dust in the eyes of others. All this does not however mean that I regard the life of the Prophet to have been perfect or that the Koran itself is a perfect book. Like all other religious books including our own, there are passages which cause difficulty. But the difficulties caused in reading the Koran are not greater than those caused by reading books of other faiths. Christianity, I surmise, admittedly is a religion of peace; but the Old Testament which is part of Christian teaching is full of blood and thunder, and the history of early Christianity is also by no means creditable to the Christians.

You ask me to quote from the Vedas passages alike to those in the Koran. You have yourself admitted the reference to the *dasyus.* The gloss you put upon the passages relating to *dasyus* may be quite all right; but that is precisely how sympathetic commentators of the Koran explain similar passages. *Dasyus* do not consider themselves to be wicked.

[1] The source has "my".

Everybody justifies his description of practices by imputing wickedness to those whom he distrusts. General Dyer himself surely believed that English men and women were in danger of losing their lives if he did not take the measures he did. We who know better call it an act of cruelty and vengeance. But from General Dyer's own standpoint, he is justified. Many Hindus sincerely believe that it is a proper thing to kill a man who wants to kill a cow[1] and he will quote scripture for his defence and many other Hindus will be found to justify his action. But strangers who do not accept the sacredness of the cow will hold it to be preposterous to kill a human being for the sake of slaying an animal. Guru Nanak[2] who undoubtedly read the Koran and is reported even to have gone to Mecca, returned with lofty regard for Islam. Kabir[3] did likewise. So did Dadu. I cannot therefore help thinking that it is a fruitless and undesirable effort to show that the Koran is a wicked book and that followers of the Koran are still more so. I suggest that the better method is to find out the good points and the beauties of these writings which have transformed the lives of those who have believed in them. It is unsafe and even dangerous to judge Islam and Mussalmans by the conduct of many of those who are misrepresented here in India and then to seek to ascribe their conduct to the teachings of the Koran. In order to defend the general trend of the Koran in favour of peace I am not required to disprove any atrocity by a single Mussalman or to explain away the few misdeeds that I see going on before me, But my liberal estimate of the Koran thus enables me to extend to the Mussalmans the justice that I would have extended to fellow-Hindus. It is an easier task to sympathize with the different religions of the world than to pick up one and seek to prove it as the only true religion and then set about demolishing all the rest.

I have entered into a long reply to your letter because I believe you to be a seeker after Truth. If you want any further explanation from me, I shall gladly give it.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DEVESHVAR SIDDHANTALANKAR
NAINI (U.P.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 12383

[1] The source has "to kill men who want to kill a cow".
[2] 1469-1538; religious reformer and founder of Sikhism
[3] Mystic poet and saint of medieval India; disciple of Ramananda

428. LETTER TO NARMADA

NANDI DURG,
Vaishakha Krishna 6 [*May 22, 1927*]

CHI. NARMADA,

I had replied to your letter but I had sent it to your school address because I did not know your full name and address. You must have received that letter.

I did not know you were to be married so soon. I hope you would continue your studies and that you would not give up the noble patriotic feelings that you had expressed to me and also conveyed through your letter and that your husband would let you cherish them. Never give up khadi and the spinning wheel....[1]

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4755

429. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 23, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

Throughout the week I have not written to you though I have received more than one letter from you. And for the most part for the present I propose not to write more than once per week. I want to conserve my energy for the work for *Young India*, *Navajivan* and *Gita*. I am doing now at least five times as much as I used to on the *Gita.* I want if possible to finish the translation before the end of August. And during this rest I would like to give more attention to *Young India* and *Navajivan* without feeling in any way responsible for filling the columns. But of course I shall write oftener if necessary or if you again have those moods returning. But you will not now.

I am so glad you resisted the bhang. It is as bad almost as liquor. In any case you will remember what I wrote[2] over the betel leaf offered by Hakimji—never to eat a single thing without knowing it and its quality. In case of doubt always refrain and refer to me if

[1] Illegible
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 10-1-1927.

necessary. I understand from Jamnalalji to whom I mentioned the matter that Maharajji himself took it. Unfortunately many religiously-minded people take for feeling exalted. The exaltation is all false I know. However, you have done your duty by mentioning the thing to him. The things must take their own course now.

Jamnalalji showed me your Hindi letter to him. It was quite good. The writing was very good. J. leaves for Bombay tomorrow.

I am looking forward to your translation of Rolland's letter to you.

I have resumed bread or *bhakhari* and a vegetable for the midday meal. Today is the fifth day. Nothing untoward so far. I am walking too, better.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

The accompanying for Gangu.

From the original: C.W. 5230. Courtesy: Mirabehn

430. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

NANDI,
Silence Day, Vaishakha Vad 7 [*May 23, 1927*]

SISTERS,

You have taken on yourselves the management of the store. I regard it as a great step forward. Now stick diligently to the work. God will help you to succeed. There are plenty of other such duties that you can undertake by which you can bring credit to the Ashram. But I am in no hurry about it. Since your minds are pure, you will gradually take up many new duties of your own accord. Concentrate for the present upon making the management of the store a complete success. Do not neglect even the smallest detail connected with it. You must of course learn how to keep accounts. Do not imagine that it is difficult. It is very easy to keep and understand accounts. Addition may be difficult. If one does not know the multiplication tables or addition, one would certainly experience some difficulty. But addition comes with practice. Learn addition, subtraction, multiplication and simple division, whichever it is that you do not know. All this does

involve a little trouble, but once you have mastered these processes the rest is all very easy. If one has the will, one may even find it interesting.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3650

431. LETTER TO ASHRAM CHILDREN

Monday, May 23, 1927

Bal remembers that God was the first *brahmachari*. The idea seems extremely beautiful to me. A perfect *brahmachari* must be perfectly pure. Who else but God can be so? But we must try to become pure like Him. All Shastras proclaim that that is possible. There is nothing but joy in trying to become like Him. It is my experience that we do not get even one-ten-millionth part of that joy from the things of this world which are supposed to give us pleasure. Hundreds of yogis have said the same thing from their experience. Have faith in their experience and try to observe *brahmacharya* to the best of your ability.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

432. LETTER TO RADHA

May 23, 1927

I was glad to know that you were not frightened by that lump of earth. It was good that it did not cause you any great hurt. But what even if it had? If at all, such a lump of earth will hurt only the body. The body is like a glass bangle. The glass bangle which is the human body is of no account whatever in the eternity of *Brahman*, as life of a glass bangle is of none in comparison with the human life-span of a hundred years. What does it matter if it perishes today or tomorrow, or if it develops a crack? The intellect grasps this idea very easily, but one will never know fear if it sinks into one's heart. Such a person would never do wrong. He would oppress no one. We should return to this thought whenever faced with any danger, and, in order that it may

come to us unfailingly at such times, we should constantly meditate on it.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

433. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE

NANDI DURG,
Vaishakha Krishna 8 [*May 24, 1927*]

BHAISHRI MAMA,

I have your letter discussing the problem. It is well written indeed, but you will see that I have written no word about Surat and Baroda in *Navajivan.* There was a purpose in this. If I were to say that mischievous elements deliberately indulge in hooliganism that would have on them the opposite effect [to that intended]. I even go to the extent of believing that if the newspapers write nothing about the disturbances, they will subside by themselves. But not all newspapermen want it, so it will not come to be. But let those of us who know remain silent. Let those who want to fight do it. If we happen to be present there and feel like sacrificing ourselves and if we have the strength let us do it. That's enough. And if we can sacrifice ourselves with a detached mind, let us be confident that its result will definitely be good.

If you ask for your article to be returned you can have it; I have, therefore, saved it till now. If I do not hear from you, I shall destroy it, after waiting for a while.

I am steadily improving.

Blessings from

BAPU

MAMASAHEB PHADKE
ANTYAJA ASHRAM
GODHRA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3817

434. A PRAYER

May 24, 1927

Oh Lord! Give us the strength to follow what we sincerely believe to be dharma and while doing so to bear, with love and patience, people's censure, abuse, assault, death, penury or any other evil.[1]

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

435. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

NANDI HILLS (MYSORE STATE)
May 25, 1927

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I had your letter whilst I was on the sick-list and unable to do much correspondence. I am still convalescing and am able to do only a moderate amount of work; but I am making steady progress.

You have been there a long time now; but I know you have not wasted it. I hope however that Kamala will become completely restored when you return. If her health requires a longer stay, I presume that you will remain there.

I read most carefully your public report as also your private confidential report about the doings of the Oppressed Nations' Conference. I myself do not expect much from this league, if only because its free activity depends upon the goodwill of the powers that are partners in the exploitation of the oppressed nations and I feel that the members of the European nations that joined the league will not be able to sustain the last heat. For, they will not be able to accommodate themselves to what they would consider to be an injury to their self-interest. On our side there is danger of our people again looking to external forces and external aid for salvation instead of seeking to achieve it by evolving internal strength. But this is mere academic opinion. I am not at all carefully following European events. You are on the spot and you may see an altruistic improvement in the atmosphere there which I miss altogether.

[1] In a letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi, Gandhiji advised him to say this at prayer-time every day.

There is some talk of your being chosen as President for the coming Congress. I am in correspondence with Father about it.[1] The outlook here is not at all happy in spite of the unanimous resolution of the A.I.C.C. on the Hindu-Muslim question. I do not know whether the process of breaking heads will in any way be checked. We have lost hold upon the masses, and it seems to me that if you became President, you will be lost for one year at any rate to the masses. That, however, does not mean that Congress work has to be neglected. Someone has got to do it; but there are many who are willing and eager to do that work, maybe, due to mixed motives, even selfish motives; but they will keep the Congress going on somehow or other. The institution will always be, at their wish, at the disposal of those who may be qualified for mass work and may have gained control over the masses. The question then is how your services can be best utilized. What you yourself think, you should do. I know you are capable of taking a detached view and you will say quite unselfishly like Dadabhai or MacSwiney "put the crown on my head", and I have no doubt that it will be so put. I do not myself see the way so clear as to make me force the crown on you and plead with you to wear it. Father will be writing to you also by this mail, if he has not done so already. I am sending a copy of this to him.

It might be as well for you to cable your wishes. I am likely to be in Bangalore till the end of July. You may therefore send your cable directly to Bangalore, or to be absolutely certain send it to the Ashram and it will be repeated to me wherever I may be.

With love to you all,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 12572; also *A Bunch of Old Letters,* pp. 54-5

436. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

NANDI HILLS,
May 25, 1927

DEAR MOTILALJI,

Jamnalalji delivered your letter to me and he told me you were sending a long letter. Ever since the receipt of your first letter, I have

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Motilal Nehru", 14-5-1927.

been constantly thinking over the matter. The President is here and he broached the subject yesterday. I mentioned Jawaharlal's name. He had not thought of it. He, however, preferred Ansari and I told him that if Dr. Ansari could be induced to accept the honour, there was an end to all talk about Jawaharlal and that I thought it would be good luck if Dr. Ansari could be induced to shoulder the burden. However, I have written to Jawaharlal and I send you a copy of my letter[1] to him. It expresses my opinion to date. At first I thought I would let you send my letter so that you could stop it if you liked; but I then thought that after all there was no harm in my letter going to Jawaharlal before you had seen it. You could add whatever you liked to my letter so as to enable Jawaharlal to form a correct judgement.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 14614

437. LETTER TO H. CLAYTON

NANDI HILLS,
May 25, 1927

DEAR MR. CLAYTON,

I am extremely grateful to you for your prompt and exhaustive reply to my letter of the 13th instant. I have carefully gone through the cutting from the Municipal Corporation Proceedings of 1918; but I see nothing wrong there to warrant the suggestion that I made any inquiry or that I made any report to the late Dr. Turner. As I was interested in everything connected with untouchability and as I was closely in touch with the Servants of India Society, so far as I recollect, I went with Mr. Thakkar at his instance to see the chawls and see the unfortunate people. On hearing that I had gone, Dr. Turner sent me a message and I gladly met him and told him what I had been doing in the chawls. You will not call this an inquiry by me or a report. If I had conducted an inquiry, it would have naturally taken a proper shape, I would have taken the evidence of men in writing, I would have seen the officials who were charged with corruption and made a proper written report. As it was, I happened to be in Bombay at the time in the course of my touring and Mr. Thakkar took me to the chawls as other people took me to many other places. I do not think that this

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

visit of mine and my conversation with Dr. Turner should for ever be used to damage Mr. Thakkar's reputation as a careful investigator. However, I want to turn this account to a useful purpose. I do not propose at this stage to say anything in the papers. But I am in correspondence with Mr. Thakkar. I am taking the liberty of sending a copy of your letter to him making suggestions to him so that this matter of alleged corruption might be once for all set at rest.

I quite agree with you that there should be no unfounded accusations made against anything or person and no general accusations made against the Corporation staff without adequate evidence to support them. With your permission, after finishing the correspondence with Mr. Thakkar, I hope to revert to the subject-matter of my letter.

Thanking you for your enquiry about myself. I am making fair progress and I shall certainly be delighted when I next pass through Bombay to meet you to revive the pleasant recollections of our meeting in Godhra.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 12911

438. LETTER TO TOTARAM SANADHYA

NANDI DURG,
Vaisakha Krishna 9 [*May 25, 1927*]

BHAI TOTARAM,

I have your letter. Now I understand the true nature of Gangadevi's disease. Other things may well continue but she must be taken out. She cannot walk by herself. Therefore, either some boys should take her out in a chair for half an hour in the open air or even a wheel chair may be used. The wheel chair can be managed by one or two boys only. She can also lie down in it. Rest is imperative but so is open air. You should not hesitate to arrange for this. Ba seldom writes to anyone nor am I in the habit of mentioning her in my letters. Nevertheless she always remembers everyone.

Gangadevi should take it that my blessings always include Ba's.

I am very pleased by the fortitude shown by both of you and I know it is an example for all of us. May God grant you peace, as ever.

My health is improving.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2529

439. HIGHLY UNSATISFACTORY

I wish it was possible for me to tender the Government of Bengal congratulations upon the release of Sjt. Subhas Chandra Bose. The release has been granted, not because public opinion demanded it, not because Government considered the Chief Officer of the Calcutta Corporation to be guiltless, nor because they considered that he had been sufficiently punished for a crime of which neither he nor the public has any knowledge, but because their own medical officers considered the distinguished prisoner to be seriously ill, so seriously ill as to cause fear about his life. If Sjt. Subhas Chandra Bose is a danger to society or to the life of anybody, and if he is a man of determination as he is reputed to be and even believed by the Government to be, he is no less dangerous because he is seriously ill. Why should the Government be afraid of his dying in their prison? Surely it is not customary with them to release every prisoner who becomes dangerously ill. And if it was right to discharge him for his illness, why was he not discharged when he first showed signs of tuberculosis? Papers have been for a long time full of information about the alarming character of his disease. His brother repeatedly warned the Government about the prisoner's illness.

It is, I venture to suggest cowardly to fling a dying man in the face of his relatives and wash oneself of the guilt of his death. This release brings us no nearer to the solution of the question of imprisonment or indefinite detention, without trial, of prisoners whom Government choose to suspect. The Bengal Regulation remains where it was. More or less healthy detenus must continue to rot, and are now deprived of the support of an agitation which was kept at a fairly high pitch because a powerful man was under detention. No doubt some sort of agitation will still continue for the release of the other detenus. But there is every fear of its lacking strength. Indian nature is grateful for the smallest mercies. It is easily satisfied. And the public will condone the detention of the other prisoners for the release of Sjt. Subhas Chandra Bose, forgetting that the release is due not to any

relenting on the part of the Government but due to Nature's supreme intervention.

It may seem cruel, but I must confess that I would far rather not have any release at all than have a release on false issues, which merely complicate the main issue and make it more difficult to deal with than before; for behind the agitation for the release of the detenus is the great question of the liberty of the citizens and the question of extraordinary powers exercised over the lives of people by an utterly irresponsible Government. The one consolation that the public can derive from this painful affair is, that Sjt. Subhas Chandra Bose up to the very last moment manfully declined to accept the humiliating conditions from time to time proposed by the Government for his discharge. Let us hope and pray that he will be soon restored to health and that a long life of service will be vouchsafed to him.

Young India, 26-5-1927

440. AN APPEAL TO INDIAN HUMANITY

In another place will be found a substance of the observations made in the columns of *Navajivan* by Sjt. Kishorelal Mashruwala. He is a worker of long standing and was up to recently Registrar of the Gujarat Vidyapith, and it was only due to illness that he was obliged to relinquish the post. He is one of the most thoughtful among the silent workers we have in India. He weighs every word he writes or utters. I mention these qualifications of his; for I am anxious that his reflections should not be dismissed out of consideration as so many writings nowadays have to be.

The story of the abuse of the helpless women of the *Raniparaj* community is a blot upon the nation. Sjt. Kishorelal Mashruwala has made his appeal to the Parsis, and from his standpoint, rightly too. For it is the Parsis who will be better able, if anyone is, to influence the Parsi men who are said to be corrupting innocent womanhood. But I am painfully aware of the fact that it is not the Parsis alone who hold so cheap the honour of poor sisters. Indians belonging to the other faiths, placed in similar circumstances, have been known to behave exactly as the Parsi canteen-keepers are reported to be doing. But that is no justification whatsoever for the inhuman crimes of the latter. The lust for money, which drives these adventurers to a trade which they know saps the manhood of the otherwise fine forest-dwellers miscalled

Kaliparaj, i.e., black people, tempts them to the worse crime of defilement.

The British Government or rather the Government of India and the Baroda State must be held primarily responsible for the tragedy described by Sjt. Mashruwala; for it is they, who for their wretched revenue allow liquor shops to be opened or to exist in the midst of these simple people. These people have never asked for these shops, and even if they had, it would be still criminal to open liquor shops for them, even as it would be to allow a little child to play with fire because he desires it. But a reformer does not *stop* before commencing action to philosophize or to distribute blame through golden scales. He begins his reform wherever the opportunity offers itself. And now that the corruption has been brought to light, it behoves Parsi reformers to go to the delinquents and appeal to their sense of honour and try to wean them from the crime of violating the womanhood of the simple, innocent and guileless *Raniparaj,* even if they cannot also be weaned from trafficking in liquor.

Unfortunately, there is much truth in the taunt levelled at us as a nation, that we have not sufficient regard for the honour of our women. It is no use false patriotism seeking cover under *tu quoque* argument; nor must we mix up sexual immorality, in which depraved men and women of equal status indulge of their own free but unbridled will, with the instances of crime quoted by Sjt. Kishorelal Mashruwala.

Immoralities of the first kind are bad enough and do incredible harm to mankind; but the crimes like those of the Parsi canteen-keepers are infinitely worse and have not yet, thank God, received the tacit endorsement of fashionable society. In the instances quoted by Sjt. Kishorelal Mashruwala, the canteen-keepers are in the position of trustees, and it is insufferable that they should induce ignorant women in whose midst they are living to become instruments of their criminal lust. It is this kind of indifference to the honour of ignorant sisters who come under the influence or protection of the so-called better class men, which has been justifiably criticized, and which we must, if we want to become a self-respecting and independent nation, outgrow at any cost. The honour of the least among our sisters must be as dear to us as that of our blood-sisters.

Young India, 26-5-1927

441. NOTES

ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION

The Council of the All-India Spinners' Association has, owing to the necessity of prolonged rest that I must take from active and routine work, relieved me of the burden of directing the affairs of the Association and appointed Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj as officiating Chairman. Whilst, therefore, I still nominally remain President of the Association, the whole burden of directing its affairs will now fall upon Jamnalalji, and correspondents will henceforth, whenever they find it necessary, write to him rather than to me. The proper course certainly is to write to the working Secretary Sjt. Shankerlal Banker to whom naturally Jamnalalji will have to refer all correspondence before coming to any decision. This does not mean that I shall take no interest in the affairs of the Association. On the contrary, whenever in the opinion of the Council or the officiating Chairman or the Secretary, any matter should be referred to me, it will come before me for guidance and advice. But the Council's decision and the arrangements I have come to with it are that I should not worry myself as hitherto over details and over every individual matter trifling or otherwise. They have taken an undertaking from me to refrain from doing so and to throw the burden on them and leave it for them to refer to me matters which they may consider to be important enough for referring to me. The test of a living organization is that it depends upon no single individual, however important, however able he may be. A living organization goes on irrespective of persons. The endeavour of the members of the Council is to make the Association a living and efficiently working organization. I trust, therefore, that khadi workers and khadi lovers will fall in with the new arrangement and render all the help they can to the Council in working this growing organization to the fullest extent possible.

AN EXAMPLE TO COPY

The State of Jaora seems to be noted for its dyeing and printing. I understand that His Highness the Nawab Saheb is interested in the khadi movement and, in order to make khadi more attractive by putting it through the dyeing and printing processes and thus to encourage it, he has exempted khadi from any tax. I congratulate the State on this praiseworthy step, and hope that other States will grant favoured treatment to this great and growing national enterprise which

is fraught with tremendous economic benefit to the starving millions.

VIVEKANANDA AND SPINNING

A correspondent sends me interesting extracts from Vivekananda's answers to his American questioners. I take the following from them on spinning:

> Speaking of Indian village life he says: "In some places the common village girl with her spinning-wheel says: 'Do not talk to me of dualism, my spinning-wheel says, *So'ham, So'ham,* I am He, I am He.' What is the value of these machines and sciences? They have only one result; they spread knowledge. You have not solved the problem of want, but only made it keener. Machines do not solve the poverty problem; they simply make men struggle the more. Competition gets keener.... The value of everything is to be decided by how far it is a manifestation of God.

Young India, 26-5-1927

442. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

NANDI HILLS,

May 26, 1927

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter and I have one from Kshitish Babu also. You already have seen my note[1] in *Young India*. I had assumed when Jamnalalji who was here told me that I should write a paragraph in *Young India* about the new arrangement that all the members of the Council had agreed to it. The original idea was to have my resignation in its entirety. The resolution already passed adopts the middle course. I thought that my ceasing to be the President of the Association would be too hasty and might damage the cause, and it was not warranted by anything in my health. But I thought that it was quite a good idea to relieve me of the responsibility of routine work and let the Council evolve independently of me, whilst my advice and guidance were available wherever necessary.

Personally, I think that the tour had nothing to do with the collapse. It was the very exacting nature of the work that I myself voluntarily undertook. No one pressed me to go through the hurri-

[1] On All-India Spinners' Association; *vide* the preceding item.

cane touring. I let the co-workers think and thought myself that my constitution would somehow or other stand the pressure that was put upon it, and do you know that the collapse came upon the very last day of this severe trial? For, I had intended to turn over a new leaf after finishing the Maharashtra tour and had given due notice[1] to Rajagopalachariar that I would no longer be hurried and was looking forward to finishing the rest of the tours during the year in easy stages. If the collapse had not occurred, I would have thought in my pride that I could tax my constitution to any extent. Nature took her vengeance and she did it so gently that, as Dr. Wanless put it, "it was Nature's first fairly severe warning". He thinks, many other doctors think and I think also that, if I regain, as I think it is possible to do, a fair measure of the strength I lost in the twinkling of an eye, I should be able to do a moderate amount of touring. Doctors even think that it might do good, though the condition is imperative that there must be daily rest; no hurry; no bustle; no working to time and order; only one meeting per day, and not much speaking even then and so on. I am trying to adjust my mind to this new mode of life. If I succeed, it may be possible to prolong the life and still do a moderate amount of work. Please, therefore, do not worry about what has happened. Later on, I may even resume the routine work.

You should regularly give me a weekly letter and tell me how you and all the others are faring. As for myself, I am making steady progress daily. In a month's time, I might be able to do a little of gentle touring in Madras Presidency in order to take charge of the purses already collected.

With love, Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1571; also from a microfilm: S.N. 19777

[1] *Vide* "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", before 21-2-1927.

443. LETTER TO JANE HOWARD

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
May 26, 1927

DEAR MISS HOWARD,

I was delighted to receive your letter giving me details about the late Mr. Howard and yourself. Of your connection with him and your selfless devotion, I knew nothing. It does one's soul good to read the account you have sent me, for which I am most grateful to you.

I hope you are now getting your *Young India* regularly; if not, you will please let me know. Do please write to me from time to time. I am obliged to dictate this letter as I am just now on the sick-list.

With loving regards from Mrs. Gandhi and myself,

Yours sincerely,

MISS JANE HOWARD
ROSEMARY
50, PANDORA ROAD
MALVERN
JOHANNESBURG

From a photostat: S.N. 12354

[1] Permanent address

444. LETTER TO FRANCISCA STANDENATH

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
May 26, 1927

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter now after a long time. I always think of you. You need not be anxious about my health. I am making steady progress. The collapse, though it was temporary, left me very weak. I am however able to attend to a moderate amount of work daily.

I shall look forward to your account of your meeting with Mr. Ranchhodlal Amritlal.

I note what you say about the two publications. We should not however mind them. We cannot prevent people from holding what views they like. We have to respect other people's opinions even though they may not be to our liking even as we expect them to respect ours.

Yours, sincerely,

MRS. FRANCISCA STANDENATH
GRAZ (IN STYRIA)
TRAUTMANSDORFGASSE 1
(AUSTRIA)

From a photostat: S.N. 12493

445. LETTER TO SRI PRAKASA

NANDI HILLS,
May 26, 1927

MY DEAR SRI PRAKASA,

I was delighted to receive your letter redirected to me from the Ashram. Your yarn is passable, and you should enlist yourself as a member of the Spinners' Association without any misgivings.

In the hot days, I can understand the *takli* giving you trouble. It would then be best to do it at dawn when you can see the thread clearly without artificial light at all. At that time there is even in thedriest climate a certain humidity which makes the slivers more workable. And, at the time of doing the *takli,* if you are doing it in quiet, you can recite all your *Bhagavad Gita* or any other favourite

[1] Permanent address

shlokas.

Herewith receipt for Rs. 265-3-0 which they have sent me from the Ashram.

I am glad you have decided to make khaddar wear and spinning compulsory in the Vidyapith.

I hope you have not abandoned the idea of passing some time at the Ashram.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure 1

From a microfilm: S.N. 19776

446. LETTER TO R. B. GREGG

NANDI HILLS,
May 27, 1927

MY DEAR GOVIND,

The occasion for writing this letter is supplied by your capital letter of the 17th instant to Maganlal of which he has sent me a copy.

Your suggestions are all perfect, if the premises can be accepted by us. Probably Maganlal has not even thought of what I am about to tell you; though I shouldn't be surprised if he has also thought of the same thing, for I think that he has assimilated the inwardness of the spinning movement. What I want to state is this: the movement is bound to fail if we expect to succeed by adopting the same methods, or very nearly the same methods with necessary adaptations, as the adversary, if such a term can be properly used under a plan of life which admits of no enemies. In my opinion, we have to devise other ways of making the movement a living and universal force at least so far as India is concerned. The adversary believes in the latest appliances and therefore is bound to adopt the methods of those who are adepts in using those appliances; but in the spinning movement, modern appliances are largely discarded and the few that are retained are used in a different way. Typewriters, shorthand assistance and the like are taken in our movement as a temporary measure. Immediately one goes to the villages, these become a hindrance rather than a help. If the movement has to depend upon first-class stenography, it will fail before long. For, it cannot make any headway under those conditions beyond the cities. It cannot succeed even if it has to depend upon the English language for its spread. And so you find that at the Ashram, in the Association office and even here we are managing with most

indifferent stenography. Even if we advertised, we shall probably not get the best stenographer, because he will know that there is room only for half a dozen stenographers in the movement, and then we shall have to pay not 100 or 125, which is the most I think that is being paid, but we should have to pay anything between 200 and 400 for getting the assistance such as you have in mind. I should quite agree with you if you argue that even that salary would be economy even if only one man has to be obtained. Experience, however, shows that it is not possible to retain the services of such a man unless you are prepared to allow him to become the master and to dictate his own terms in every respect. Thus it would be useless to have an able stenographer who has no faith in the movement, who would disdain to wear khadi and who would require polished furniture before he will settle down to work. The spinning movement, so far as I can see, will never afford the high wages that are demanded by good men in such a line of business. Do you know that if in khadi service we offer high wages even to one man, there is immediately and naturally a ferment throughout the rank and file and they would all begin to compare their low wages to the high wages given even to one single man? The proper working of the spinning movement is still being evolved. It is in a state of flux, and it will be some time before it can be said to be stabilized. It is a movement which has to grow from within. It is a movement which requires a fair measure of continuous sacrifice from those who have become accustomed to city life. The class of men and women required for the movement have got to be trained and brought up. They cannot therefore be had by advertising. The reason why we have not got efficient stenography is because no endeavour has been made to train stenographers. It is quite possible for instance to make of Chhaganlal, Mahadev, Krishnadas, Pyarelal and many others whom I can name first-class stenographers. But it was considered not worth-while doing so. It would have been like throwing away a rupee for a pice, and so we are managing with fourth-rate stenographers hoping that if they assimilate the spirit of the movement they will distinguish themselves in the work they have undertaken by coming up to the highest level. I have entered into this elaborate argument—very badly expressed because it is for the first time that I am reducing to writing this thought about the movement—because I am anxious that you who are saturated with the spirit of the spinning movement should understand all that is at the back of my mind and then give me the benefit of your criticism. If I have not expressed myself clearly, as I

am afraid I have not, do not please hesitate to ask me for further explanation and by an interchange of a few letters, probably, I shall be able to express myself more clearly than I have done. But of course apart from what I have said above, there is much to be said for your view.

Young India and *Navajivan* are not all I want them to be. There are reasons for it into which however I need not enter just now. Some are avoidable and some are unavoidable. I hope to be able to cope with those that are avoidable.

I got the book on vitamins. I read it through as soon as I got it. It is a good book. But it failed to convince me. The subject of vitamins has still, so far as I can see, to be investigated. The author's statement does not appear to me to be the final word. Their ruling out all the nuts and the pulses in preference to meat foods goes against the grain and is contrary to all I have read in the vegetarian literature. If what the authors have said be the final word about them, it is a severe blow to vegetarianism. But the authors could not possibly have sufficient data about the effect of nuts and pulses to enable them to come to a just decision. Accurate observation about the efficacy or the inefficacy of vegetable protein foods can only be made on an extensive scale in India, where alone one meets thousands of born vegetarians. Their diet and their habits have to be scientifically observed and analysed before safe deductions can be drawn; and then, too, there are so many disturbing factors. Climate, harmful customs and suchlike have to be taken into account before using the values of foods taken by them. I am therefore taking all the statements in that book with a great deal of caution. The late A. F. Hills was President of the Vegetarian Society in London. He was a good man. I do not know the extent of his scientific knowledge. But he indulged in bold speculations about diet. He carried on a series of experiments himself. He wrote a number of articles on what he called "vital food". He divided foods into three or four divisions: one for those whose occupation was pre-dominantly body-labour; another for those whose occupation was predominantly intellectual; third for those whose occupation was predominantly spiritual and the fourth for those who were not in a healthy condition. His reasoning used to appeal to me in those days. I do not know whether it would now if I read all his writings afresh. I followed also keenly the controversy going on in the medical profession in those days about food values, and I know that

one army of doctors defended white bread for all they were worth, and another army suggested that white bread was the staff of death and that the brown bread alone was the staff of life. There was even a Bread Reform League with Miss Yates as its energetic Secretary. I used to come in close contact with the lady. But I learnt even then that either side was fanatical, either produced statistics and analysis of various types of bread. No one had sufficient data for its absolute conclusions. For they could not set a large number of men, who would for the sake of their observations, live purely on brown bread and water or white bread and water. I remember one example that was given by a doctor. I think it was Dr. Allinson. He said he put one of his dogs upon white bread for one month and it died; and another upon brown bread for one month and it lived. The irresistible inference was that white bread was the staff of death and brown bread was the staff of life. He did not state whether both the dogs were kept under restraint the whole of the time, nor did he state whether both the dogs started with the same stamina. Let me confess that in those days, that is nearly 40 years ago, I sided with Dr. Allinson and I swallowed his testimony about the dogs and used to eat nothing but brown bread, and in the brown bread variety also, largely Allinson's brown bread; because, the worthy doctor took care to emphasize the necessity of taking Allinson's brown bread, for that alone contained the whole wheat-meal ground to the necessary fineness. He was a good man. I read all his writings. Even in 1914, I consulted him when I was suffering from pleurisy when I constantly refused to take even milk. Probably the worthy doctor is still alive. All the same I came to discount, as experience ripened, most of the argument of the type I have mentioned. The upshot of all this is to tell you that I have not made many changes in my food beyond what I reported to you. I still take unboiled milk. I dilute it with water. The milk that comes fresh from the goats is poured over boiling water; that gives the necessary warmth to the milk and addition of water makes it lighter. I am taking yet a little bread or a little *bhakhari* made of home-ground wheat, and I am taking one green vegetable. The authors of the book say that addition of soda destroys the vitamins in the vegetables. But without soda, the vegetables refuse to be soft. I have therefore decided to add soda to the vegetable. It is difficult to digest it unless it is thoroughly cooked. Uncooked green cabbage, my system rejects. You will have observed that all the four vitamins are to be found in milk. They are to be found also in the fruits I am taking and therefore I do not lose

much by adding soda at the time of cooking cabbage or Indian marrow. There is no difficulty about the cooking of spinach without soda and so whenever I get spinach, soda is not added. There is no occasion for worry about my health; for, I seem to be getting better though slowly. No food will give me personal satisfaction unless I can revert to fruits and nuts. But it seems to me that I shall have to close this earthly life without getting that personal satisfaction.

Yours sincerely,

[PS.]

Forgive me this very long letter. I did not know it was going to be so long.

From a photostat: S.N. 12574

447. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

NANDI DURG,
Krishna 11 [*May 27, 1927*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have heard what you wrote about Ramachandra to Mahadev. I have nothing to say about it at this moment. Since you have handed over my letter to him, watch its effect. Talk over the matter with Jamnalalji when he comes there and do what is necessary. Then if there is anything for me to write, let me know.

Govindji's letter is very nice. I have conveyed to him the thoughts it raised in me. Herewith a copy of my reply.[2] Read it yourself and let Narandas too read it. If he has not read the original letter, let him do so. If any ideas occur to you on reading my reply, write to me. If there is in it anything that you do not understand, please let me know. We would obviously be imperfect in a field where we do not at all wish to compete with the other party. But where we do so or where we claim to specialize, we should try and be as perfect as possible. There will be no difficulty in publishing in *Navajivan* or *Young India* any material that you think should appear, if you send it to me and if I approve it. If you let me have a draft of an advertisement of books that ought to be taken notice of in *Young India* or *Navajivan*, I shall do what is necessary.

[1] Inferred from the contents
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

I had prepared a note about Henry but I held it back after I had your letter and Jamnalalji's. Now get it from Swami and examine it; and, if you think it can be included, after making the necessary changes, send it to me. If it is not to be included at all, nothing need be done.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7767. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

448. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

NANDI HILLS,
May 28, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your two letters as also your telegram. In order not to delay replying for two days I am resorting to dictation. I do not want to break the rule as far as possible of not writing letters myself except during silence. Both your letters are precious. I now understand the Ashram much better than I ever did before. It is almost like having been there myself and seen it. So characteristic is your account, and it is usefully supplemented by Valunjker's letter.

You did well in not entering into the comparative merits of respective parties, and I do hope that you will remain unmoved even if you hear comparisons that may not please you. Those who enter into comparisons do so honestly. That it is improper to enter into such comparisons they do not know. And what is the use of being ruffled by listening to an expression of views honestly held?

This use of bhang is a disturbing factor, and if it is not checked in time, it will prove the undoing of that institution. But you are again right in not insisting on the reform. You have not gone there as a supervisor or an inspector to make reforms. You have gone there to perfect your study of Hindi and in so doing to give such service as you can and as may be acceptable. And that brings me to your Hindi. You have been quickened into action yourself. Of course our formula has been Hindi first, everything else after. I had felt that the formula was being somewhat overlooked. In my letters whilst you were in Delhi, I had emphasized this thing when you were discussing the various limitations of the Delhi Gurukul. But I thought that to bring the formula up and further in my letters would be undesirable, and I

knew that you were yourself on the watch and would pull yourself up if you found yourself napping. This you have now done, and I am glad and quite satisfied. Of course there are innumerable things you can do usefully wherever you are placed. And the test of the possession of the religious sense really consists in one's being able to pick out the 'rightest' thing out of many things which are all 'right' more or less. This is the meaning of a verse in the *Bhagavad Gita* which says: "Better even to die doing one's duty, however lowly it may be, than doing some other's however grand it may be.''[1] And so, I have myself not a shadow of doubt that you will be entitled to pass by many things which you can easily do, if the one thing for which you have left Sabarmati has at all to be sacrificed or neglected. And, if there or at any other place, you become an unwelcome visitor because of your insistence upon that one thing, that is sufficient warning for you to leave the place. And when you feel that imperative call, you will simply not listen to any other suggestion. But that burning overpowering desire must come from within. I must not goad, I *will* not goad. I shall be entirely satisfied with what progress you can make, no matter how slow it is. You will do your Hindi in the way that you think is best, and if you find that it is more conducive to your peace of mind to have several other occupations side by side with Hindi, you will take them up. Do not therefore please continuously think of what I would like, but do what you think you can easily, without impairing your health, of both body and mind; and in the execution of your plan when you want my assistance or advice, you shall fall back upon it immediately, as for instance about going to Brij Kishan. Your telegram leads me to think that now there is no occasion for you to leave that Ashram. But you evidently do not know that Brij Kishan has not been keeping well and has therefore been sent to Mussoorie. But if you desire to go to Delhi, I doubt not that you could go to Brij Kishen's house although he himself is not there. And of course there are many places where you can be sent for your Hindi, if Bhagwadbhakti Ashram does not give you all you want in the shape of Hindi,

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5231. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] XVIII. 7

449. LETTER GULZARILAL NANDA

NANDI HALLS,
May 28, 1927

MY DEAR GULZARILAL,

I was delighted to hear from you. Whilst lying on my bed, I have constantly thought of so many like you in whom I am deeply interested and from whom, I expect many large and big things if only God will give them the requisite health for the task before them.

Your description of a truly religious life is accurate. I have not a shadow of a doubt that this blessed state of inward joy and freedom from anxiety should last in the midst of the greatest trials conceivable. It admits of no exception whatsoever. Naturally, it is unattainable except by the very fewest. But that it is attainable by human beings, I have also no doubt. That we do not find in history evidence regarding the existence of any such person merely proves to me that all the record that we have has been prepared by imperfect beings, and it is impossible for imperfect beings to give us a faithful record of perfect ones. The same may be said of our own experiences. We have to be very nearly perfect in order to meet perfect souls as you have described. Nor need you think that I have laid down an absurd proposition inasmuch as it is incapable of being recorded, or being experienced by the average man. To raise such a doubt would be begging the question, for we are here picturing to ourselves extraordinary mortals, though mortals nevertheless, and surely extra-ordinary powers are required to find out these extraordinary mortals. This statement is true even of much lesser things, things almost ridiculous, and yet very difficult of accomplishment, such, for instance, as the discoveries of Sir J. C. Bose or the finest paintings. Both these, we average beings will have to take on trust. It is only the privileged few who have got the special faculty for understanding and appreciating either those discoveries, or those paintings. These do not appear to us to be incredible and we are able to accept them on faith only because in favour of these we have the testimony of a larger number of witnesses than we can possibly have for the things of permanent value, such as human perfection of the utmost type. Therefore the limitation that you have accepted is quite a workable thing for the time being. For, even inside the limitation, there is ample scope for widening the field for the progress of the state of being and remaining unruffled in the face of the onslaught of sorrows and trials, which before regeneration would have paralysed us.

I am glad you have intensified your devotions. I do not know

what you are reading at present. And I do not know whether I told you that we must arrive at a time when we do not need the solace of many books but that we make one book yield us all we want. In the last stage, of course, when life becomes one of perfect surrender and complete self-effacement, the support of even one book becomes unnecessary. At the present moment, though I am reading many things, the *Bhagavad Gita is* becoming more and more the only infallible guide, the only dictionary of reference, in which I find all the sorrows, all the troubles, all the trials arranged in the alphabetical order with exquisite solutions. I think I did tell you that the *Song Celestial* was the best rendering I had come across of the *Bhagavad Gita.* But if you do not know Sanskrit, I know that a knowledge of Sanskrit to enable you to understand the *Bhagavad Gita is* easily within your power. You can almost in a month's time know enough Sanskrit to understand the original text. For, though the English rendering is grand and though you might be able to get some Hindi or Urdu translation also, of course there is nothing like the original. The original will enable you to give your own meaning and gloss to the text. That book is not a historical record, but it is a record of the concrete experiences of its author, whether it was really Vyasa or not I am not concerned. And if it is a record of anybody's experience, it must not be beyond us to be able to test the truth of it by repeating the experience. I am testing the truth almost every day in my life and find it never failing. This of course does not mean that I have reached the state described, for instance, at the end of the Second Chapter. But I know that the more we carry out the prescription given in it, the nearer do we answer the description given of the perfect state.

I hope you are keeping good health. I am of course making steady progress.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 9641. Courtesy: Gulzarilal Nanda

450. LETTER TO DHAN GOPAL MUKERJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
May 28, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your kind letter with your subscription for *Young India*. If you do not get it regularly, please report it to the manager and let me have a line also.

Please do not have any anxiety about my health. I am taking all the necessary care and am giving myself as much rest as it is possible to give.

Yours sincerely,

DHAN GOPAL MUKERJI, ESQ.
THE TOWN HALL CLUB
123, WEST 43RD STREET
NEW YORK

From a photostat: S.N. 12507

451. LETTER TO MAHARAJA OF NABHA

NANDI HILLS,
May 28, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 20th instant. I do not know why you considered my letter of the 1st January to be insulting. I can only give you my assurance that no insult was intended.

The paragraph you have copied in your letter, I do not understand.

You are wrong in inferring that the letter of 1st January was either dictated or prompted by Pandit Motilalji. I had left the Congress before the session was over, and I did not know that Pandit Motilalji was in Calcutta on the 1st January. But whether he was or not, he certainly knew nothing even of the fact that I was writing to you. I simply felt that I would be doing a friendly turn by writing to you as I did.

[1] Permanent address

I know nothing about the Lakhna Raj case. Your letter was the first information to me about even the existence of Lakhna Raj. That there was any case in connection with it, I had no knowledge whatsoever.

I venture to think that your description of Pundit Motilalji is, to say the least, ungentlemanly. He may be all the things you have said of him, but the code of honour prevalent in good society debars one from impugning before a stranger the character of any man, whoever he may be. And, after all, I am a perfect stranger to Your Highness. In spite of your imputations on the character of Pundit Motilalji he remains for me a high-souled, able, self-sacrificing patriot enjoying in the country a position not attained by many public workers. As it happens at the present moment, his politics are not my politics. But if they were mine, I should certainly deem it an honour to allow my judgement to be influenced and tested by his.

Yours sincerely,

HIS HIGHNESS THE MAHARAJA OF NABHA
DEHRA DUN (U.P.)

From a photostat: S.N. 12581

452. LETTER TO DR. M. S. KELKAR

NANDI HILLS,
May 28, 1927

DEAR DOCTOR,

I have your letter. Though I do not propose to trouble you to come over here, I would like you definitely, if you can, to write out what you will have me do, and I shall incorporate as many of your suggestions as it is possible for me.

I cannot get distilled water in Nandi. I know that it can be made by oneself. But I have not got the proper tubes and utensils for it here. When I go down to Bangalore, I shall see whether I can procure distilled water.

As it is, I take raw milk diluted with boiling water. This seems to agree with me better. I am taking 30 ounces of raw milk and about two ounces of whole-meal flour turned into *bhakhari* to which is added a little butter, soda and salt. I take also one vegetable well boiled and added to it a tea-spoonful of fresh butter from goat's milk. I add to the morning milk the juice of 10 full-grown leaves of *neem*

tree. I sleep well and I do about four hours' dictation daily, one hour's writing and at least one hour's reading. This is fair amount of work for a patient who is convalescing. In addition to this, I have half an hour's fairly brisk walk in the morning and half an hour in the evening. And I retire at 9 in the night and get up at 4 in the morning. Of course the morning and the evening prayers are there. I do also deep-breathing morning and evening. I sleep about an hour and half during the day with an earth bandage on the head. Now you may make any suggestions you like.

Now about yourself. I am really most anxious to help you. But, in spite of all the goodwill in the world, I have not been able to enthuse over your treatment. I think it is wrong to say that all the patients I placed at your disposal were those who had passed through many doctors and had almost been given up. You had Prabhudas, you had his grandfather, you had Gomatibehn, you had Navin, and many others whose names I can recall if I tax my memory. Your insistence upon eggs and your great partiality for astrology are two serious drawbacks. I respect your insistence upon eggs. But they don't suit my religious sense. I respect also your partiality for astrology. But I cannot get rid of my scepticism about it. Therefore I can only make a limited use of your attainments.

I wonder whether you have studied the use of *asanas* as part of treatment of disease. My attention has been recently drawn to them. But as you have a fair knowledge of physiology, I would like you, in the light of that knowledge, to examine the claims made on behalf of the various *asanas*. Have you also studied the newest researches made about vitamins?

Yours sincerely,

DR. M. S. KELKAR
342, SADASHIV PETH
POONA CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 14131

453. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

NANDI DURG,
Vaishakha Krishna 12 [*May 28, 1927*]

CHI. VASUMATI,

Your letter to hand. It may well be that they are working without getting results. But what I got from your diary you could not have given even through many letters. Therefore even if it relates only to a day prior to that on which you write to me, do let me have your diary. It is good that you regularly write to Ramdas.

My health is improving.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 471. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

454. LETTER TO TARA MODI

NANDI DURG,
Vaishakha Krishna 12 [*May 28, 1927*]

CHI. TARA,

Your letter. I learn from Surendra's letter that you have grown very weak. Strength which is lost will come back only gradually. Need I tell you to have patience? Moreover, the presence of Nathji is for you a soothing balm. I write this not with the expectation of any reply from you but only to bring you peace, if I can. Ramniklal will write, if necessary; if you want to convey anything to me, tell him about it. But on no account should you write yourself. I find from my own experience that good fresh milk, that is, pure milk if available there, is easier to digest, when mixed with boiling water. Moreover, all doctors here agree that if a cow is free from disease, if its udders are washed, if the container is clean and the milkman washes his hands well with hot water before milking the cow, such fresh milk when taken without boiling is more nourishing and easier to digest. If it is boiled, the vitamins are destroyed.

We have already a long tradition of drinking slow-boiled milk. So if it is available, give it a trial.

Ba sends her blessings.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1696. Courtesy: Ramniklal Modi

455. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS

May 28, 1927

BHAI LAKSHMIDAS,

Your letter. I have read Bhai Jethalal's letter. We have been doing khadi work in the native States. But I have always had a fear that when the impact of khadi begins to tell on foreign cloth, it will be attacked from all quarters; I doubt whether at that time we shall be able to carry on our work in the native States. If our *tapascharya is* prolonged and sincere, we might perhaps survive such attacks. Now the question naturally arises what stand we should take in the native States during this transitional period. My inner voice tells me that we should plainly reject [their favour] if it means giving undertakings which would compromise our honour. How can we give in writing anything that would seem like ignoring Pathik and Ramnarayan? We should talk to them politely and try to persuade them. 'We propose to do only khadi work in your territories. That too as a matter of business. We have no wish to interfere in the affairs of your State.' This we shall state, if you like, in writing. 'We wish to do khadi work in your State merely from the business point of view. But we do not want this to be interpreted to mean that even outside your State we will have nothing to do with politics or that we have no line of thought on the subject. We have no political affiliations with Pathik and others, but we do not wish to by-pass them in any way; nor do we regard them as traitors. But we do not wish to be instrumental in harming them in their relations with you.' I think we should boldly say something to this effect. If we do not act in some such way khadi will lose its power. If the Government takes away khadi work from us and gets it done arbitrarily through its own machinery, shall we be able to attach all the power to khadi that we do today? In short, we would swallow many a bitter pill for the sake of khadi. We may put up with personal insults, but even khadi work may not be carried on under such circumstances as would compromise our principles. The fact is that under such circumstances, khadi work simply cannot be done. Perhaps you are not aware that an attempt was made to get the Charkha Sangh registered. The Charkha Sangh is an independent limb of the Congress enjoying the power to secede from the parent body. The officials agreed to register it if this spiritual bond were broken. We decided against getting the Charkha Sangh registered and

declined to snap that bond.

Well, I am dictating this from a height of 5,000 feet; you may therefore look at it in the right perspective after making the necessary allowances. I write not for being acted upon, but only because it may help you in finding some solution. I have discussed this matter with Jamnalalji to some extent. He will soon be at the Ashram when you too should see him and do what you all wish to. But then "the master's advice must be left at the door''.[1]

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

456. WELCOME DONATION FOR CAUSE OF SUPPRESSED CLASSES

A telegram has been received from Shri Vallabhbhai saying that a generous gentleman has donated Rs. 50,000 for the benefit of the suppressed communities, and another has donated Rs. 2,500. I saw in the papers that the name of the first donor is Mansukhlal Chhaganlal. It seems that the other has not thought it proper to let his name be known. I congratulate both these gentlemen. My conviction grows stronger day by day that such thoughtful donations are alone religious charities. It is a happy sign that the desire to make donations for religious causes is still alive among us. But we hardly know what is religion. I have often said that in this age much adharma is done in the name of dharma. On the one hand, therefore, we have to nurse the religious sentiment of the people and, on the other, we have to point out the right way for the exercise of that sentiment. Good intentions by themselves do not take one to heaven. There is a saying in English that the path to hell is paved with good intentions. There is much truth in this. Many thieves steal with good motives. Many are those who tell lies with good motives. Even a religious person like Yudhishthira makes the mistake of uttering a falsehood with a good motive, and for that he had to suffer the stink of hell. We see ourselves that numerous murders are committed with good motives. Hence, good intentions by themselves are unavailing. They should be accompanied by good deeds, and that is possible only if we have right knowledge. It would

[1] A Gujarati proverb

be good, therefore, if religious-minded men and women follow the example of these two donors, find out religious causes and support them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-5-1927

457. MEANS OF COW-PROTECTION

Shri Pragji Mavji, manager of the pinjrapole in Nasik, makes the following suggestions in a letter[1] which he has written:

In these suggestions there is not much that is new and has not been said in *Navajivan*. But I have printed them to show how a devoted servant of mother cow and experienced manager of a pinjrapole supports the suggestions which have been made earlier in these columns. The letter also contains some useful information. For instance, the information about the use which contractors make of dead cattle, if these are handed over to them, is such as will shock us. Such wicked things happen because, in the name of religion, people themselves do not make use of the dead animals but hand them over to others. The suggestion in regard to bones needs some modification. Burying bones as they are does not produce manure; they have to be ground into powder. The flesh and intestines need not be buried. Intestines are used even now for making leather strips, strings for musical instruments and catguts, and the fat obtained from flesh is used in great quantities for lubricating machinery. So there remains very little to be buried in its natural form. But this concerns the future. If we accept in principle that by making in goshalas and pinjrapoles all those things against the use of which we have no religious objection, we can save the maximum number of cattle, other discoveries will follow.

The reproach to cow-protection workers implied in the last suggestion deserves attention. Every such worker should bear in mind that there is a greater need for workers who will devote themselves to active work of service and make themselves proficient in their field of work than for preachers who go round exhorting others.

But, along with this letter[2], I have before me a press-cutting containing a long interrogatory addressed to me on the question of

[1] Not translated here

[2] What follows is the translation as found in *Young India*, 3-11-1927.

cow-protection. The underlying suggestion obviously seems to be that the methods of cow-protection advocated by me are not consistent with my profession of Hinduism. For in his introductory remarks to his questions the writer has tried to make light of the basic principle of cow-protection that I have formulated, viz., that what is economically wrong cannot be religiously right. In other words, if a religion cuts at the very fundamentals of economics it is not a true religion but only a delusion. My critic on the other hand believes that this view is opposed to the teachings of our ancient scriptures. I, at least, am not aware of a single text in opposition to this view nor do I know of any religious institution that is being maintained in any part of the world today in antagonism to the elementary principles of economics. As for Nature, anyone who has eyes can see, that it always observes the principle that I have stated. For instance, if it has implanted in its creation the instinct for food it also produces enough food to satisfy that instinct from day to day. But it does not produce a jot more. That is Nature's way. But man, blinded by his selfish greed, grabs and consumes more than his requirements in defiance of Nature's principle, in defiance of the elementary and immutable moralities of non-stealing and non-possession of other's property and thus brings down no end of misery upon himself and his fellow-creatures. To turn to another illustration, our Shastras have enjoined that the Brahmin should give knowledge as charity without expecting any material reward for it for himself. But they have at the same time conferred upon him the privilege of asking for and receiving alms and have laid upon the other sections of the community the duty of giving alms, thus uniting religion and economics in a common bond of harmony. The reader will be able to find further instances of this kind for himself. The religious principle requires that the debit and credit sides of one's balance-sheet should be perfectly square. That is also the truest economics and therefore true religion. Whenever there is any discrepancy between these two it spells bad economics and makes for unrighteousness. That is why the illustrious author of the *Gita* has defined yoga as "balance" or "evenness". But the majority of mankind do not understand this use of economics to subserve religion; they want it only for amassing "profits" for themselves. Humanitarian economics, on the other hand, for which I stand, rules out "profits" altogether. But it rules out "deficit" no less for the simple reason that it is utterly impossible to safeguard a religious institution by following a policy of dead loss. That is the reason why in spite of

our 1,500 goshalas we have not only failed to protect the cow, but its slaughter is day by day on the increase. If in spite of this we delude ourselves into the belief that we have done our duty by the cow by establishing these homes for cattle, and remain smugly self-satisfied there, whatever comfort it may give us, it won't bring us one whit nearer the goal of cow-protection, whereas it can be demonstrably shown that by adopting the policy that I have suggested we can easily realize this goal. It does not require much effort to see that but for the fact that the cow yields us milk, the duty of cow-protection would not have come into being at all. There are a host of other innocent animals besides the cow in the world but nobody has ever thought of setting up their protection as a religious obligation, and if somebody had attempted it, it would have simply remained a dead-letter. We have use for the cow. That is why it has become religiously incumbent on us to protect it.

To turn now to the questionnaire drawn up by my critic, I will embody the questions in my answers without reproducing them separately:

1. Every goshala or Pinjrapole should have a tannery adequate to its needs attached to it. In other words, the manager in charge of every such institution should have a thorough knowledge of the immediate steps necessary for utilizing the remains of dead cattle. If this is done, the question, viz., how many heads of cattle should a particular goshala contain, won't arise at all.

2. I do not know what the rate of mortality of cattle in goshalas is, nor is it relevant to my proposition. So long as there is a single head of cattle in a goshala, its manager ought to know how to dispose of its remains after it is dead, just as he is expected to know how to look after it while it is alive.

3. Such humanitarian institutions for the protection of cattle as I have described should normally take charge of the remains of the cattle that might die in the village. Therein lies the interest of the cattle, the depressed classes and the general public alike. In villages where there are no goshalas or the concomitant tanneries, some local person who believes in cow-protection should take it upon himself to get the carcasses removed to the nearest tannery or get the preliminary processes performed upon it and send the useful parts there.

4. The establishment of such tanneries as I have described does not require much capital outlay. Only some initial expenditure

would be needed to train up workers for this work.

5. It is true that at present the leather prepared from slaughtered hides is superior in quality to that prepared from dead hides. But during the late War the Government of India spent enormous sums of money to improve the quality of leather from dead hides; and tannery experts have told me that dead hides can be tanned into as good leather as leather from slaughtered hides. I myself am conducting experiments in this direction. In Cuttack, Sjt. Madhusudan Das has been doing the same for a number of years and with success as he tells me. The Calcutta Government Research Tannery is also at present engaged in similar experiments.

But the tragedy of it today is that we annually export crores worth of hides to foreign countries, and by ignorantly using leather goods made from the hides of slaughtered cattle, become indirectly participators in the sin of their slaughter.

It rests in our hands entirely to prevent the export of hides of our dead cattle to foreign countries. And this we can easily do by bringing the export trade in hides under our control through the establishment of tanneries on altruistic lines. We cannot only save nine crores of rupees annually to our country but by employing that sum properly save a countless number of cattle.

I need hardly say that the humanitarian tanneries that I have suggested would also be utilizing the bones and other useful parts of the dead cattle. In fact it is more necessary than ever.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-5-1927

458. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

NANDI,
May 29, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I sent you a fairly long reply to your two letters and wire. I have not heard in continuation of your wire. This dictation enables me to overtake much work without tiring me, as I can do the dictation lying down. It is likely that in the course of a few days, we shall remove to Bangalore, as it is getting very windy here and the climate seems to be too bracing for me. I must not yet take brisk walks. You may there-

fore safely write your letters now addressed to Bangalore. Coomara Park will very probably be the address. You will say Bangalore City because there are two watertight divisions, Cantonment and City, and unless 'City' is mentioned, the letters first go to the Cantonment as they do all over India where there is also a Cantonment.

There is nothing new to report so far as health is concerned. I think I did tell you that I had reverted to *bhakhari* and a vegetable.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5232. Courtesy: Mirabehn

459. LETTER TO NARGIS CAPTAIN

NANDI HILLS,
May 29, 1927

Do not compliment me on my promptness in acknowledging your letter. Only it facilitates my work and therefore recovery if I do what little I can from day to day and have no arrears weighing upon my mind.

Letters like the one you have sent me I rarely publish. The rule is to publish such letters when there is something in them which requires a public discussion. The letter you have sent me is really too personal for publication and there is no warrant for printing it except to gratify my own pride. There is therefore no question of my advertising you just yet or putting Dr. Scarpa in a false position by bringing in his name in the pages of *Young India* and in connection with an Italian letter.

I see that your letter is three letters rolled into one. Please tell Perin and Khurshed that you are not there to encourage their laziness. It will be time for them to cease to work and let you work for them when they cease to eat and let you eat for them. There is a verse[1] in the *Gita* whose paraphrase is: Those who eat without working are thieves, except of course patients like myself. For myself I have still only progress to report. It is getting colder here day by day. This is the rainy season here though the rains have not yet properly set in.

Yours,

From a photostat: S.N. 14129

[1] III. 12

460. LETTER TO R. B. GREGG

NANDI HILLS,
May 29, 1927

MY DEAR GOVIND,

I have your very important letter. It crossed mine. I cannot appropriate the credit you give me for gentle criticism of your handwriting. What I wanted to say was that although I liked handwritten letter, there was no occasion for you to revert to writing your letters for my sake and that you should continue type-writing as you believe in it, and as I know it does result in economy of time. Nor do I consider your handwriting to be bad. It might be clearer. But fortunately for my friends I have my own writing as the criterion and that being so, I know very few whose writing is worse than mine, and yet because of my dislike of typewriters, if I could possibly write with my own hand, I will inflict that illegible hand in preference to having my letters typed or typing them myself. The reason underlying is this. If I have any concern for my friends, I should endeavour to write a better and more legible hand. Typewriter is a cover for indifference and laziness. Moreover I believe in the dictum —handwriting reveals the writer. Typewriting certainly results in economy of time. But whilst I admit that time is money, I do not admit that money is everything, and therefore I can conceive innumerable occasions when economy of time would be misplaced. And the inroads that the typewriter is making have all but destroyed the magnificent art of calligraphy. I wonder if you have seen old handwritten manuscripts when people used to pour forth their very soul into their work. But I must not stray away from the subject on which I want to write.

Your suggestions about selecting a few untouchable boys and making them ideal farmers does great credit to your heart. But it betrays your ignorance of the situation. Even if half-a-dozen untouchables could be trained as you suggest, that will in no way bring us nearer the solution of the problem of untouchability. To petrify on this matter—Hindu mind will immediately say, we shall touch every untouchable who qualified as these six men have. You perhaps know that there have been many and many pariah saints, but their sainthood has not saved this suppressed class. The orthodox mind again argues the pariah saint becomes so because of his past karma and he naturally commands our respect. When the others do likewise, they will also command the same respect. It is this immoral

deduction from the theory of karma which has got to be combated at every step and the Hindu mind has got to be educated by fierce penance and understanding that the theory of karma is not intended to kill all reform and all efforts, but that it is intended for mankind to work out all evil karma and he who does not do so is not entitled to belong to the human species. The Hindu mind has therefore to be educated to regard intrinsically as equals the lowest, the fallen and the downtrodden and to give them a helping hand so as to make them level with the rest. And why, apart from the question of untouchability, should not the most promising young men be sent out to become accomplished farmers and try the experiment suggested by you? Surely you do not wish to imply that the touchables in their pride will not care to learn farming with a view to utilizing human excreta as manure. If that is your argument, it would be wrong to expect untouchables to handle work which others would consider as degrading. As you know at the Ashram, we have untouchable boys. We do not even ask them to do the sanitary work. The initiative is taken by the so-called high-caste men; for, on such points the so-called untouchables would be very touchy. I am having that experience everywhere. Underlying your suggestion, therefore, is the question not of untouchability but of improved farming methods along simple lines. But I have simply not handled this question energetically because I believe in the doctrine of one thing at a time. There is much scattered work here, so much laziness, so much blind imitation, so little concentration that it is necessary to hammer away at one very simple but fairly universal thing, and if that succeeds, the rest can follow. And agriculture is an industry which can only be improved when it receives state assistance. In an ill-governed country, I think with Thoreau that the citizen who resists the evil government must ignore property rights. And without assurance of settled ownership, it is impossible to do much in the way of agriculture. I do not want to elaborate this thing. I have said sufficient to enable you to fill in the rest. Whilst your suggestion does not seem to me to be feasible so far as the untouchables are concerned and difficult of accomplishment, even as a general scheme the extract sent by you is valuable and I propose as soon as I find space to reproduce it in *Young India so* that those who are at all inclined in the direction might take the matter up.

I did not get the larger volume about vitamins. What I got was *Food and Health.* But that book also gives enough information about

vitamins. Dr. Kellogg's writings I know. I have read his book, and if it has not been lost as many of my books have been, it must be in the Ashram library. However, you seem to know him personally, and I shall look forward to what he has to say. Have you put the whole case before him and asked whether he can suggest an effective vegetarian substitute for milk in the case of patients?

Yours sincerely,

R. B. GREGG, ESQ.
KOTGARH
SIMLA HILLS

From a photostat: S.N. 14132

461. LETTER TO T. N. SARMA

NANDI HILLS,
May 29, 1927

MY DEAR SARMA,

I remember your visit at Calcutta and the conversation that you had over your Ashram. I am sorry about your wife's illness. I am likely to descend this hill in the course of a few days and go down to Bangalore for completing the cure. When I am in Bangalore do come whenever you wish and we shall have a chat.

All you say about Hanumantarao is quite true. He was a man among men. Let us make him live in us and through us by following him closely, in his self-sacrifice, self-effacement, love of truth, ahimsa and devotion to duty.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. N. SARMA
199, EAST PARK ROAD
BANGALORE CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 14133

462. LETTER TO SAM HIGGINBOTTOM

KUMARA PARK,
BANGALORE,
May 29, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

A correspondent in Mysore has sent me the following which is being distributed fairly liberally. Before I say anything about the

writing, will you kindly tell me whether you are correctly reported and whether the extracts reproduced do you full justice.

I had your letter of kind enquiry for which I thank you. I am making steady progress. I am likely to be in these parts yet for a while. It will therefore be better to send your answer directly to the address noted at the top.

Yours sincerely,

DR. SAM HIGGINBOTTOM
AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTE
ALLAHABAD

From a photostat: S.N. 14134

463. LETTER TO K. T. PAUL

NANDI HILLS,
May 29, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am likely in the course of a few days to go down to Bangalore and take the rest of the cure there. Do come whenever you can and I shall be delighted to see you whether I am on the Hill or in Bangalore. You will know at once from the papers when I have gone to Bangalore. In any case you can't come to the Hill without taking Bangalore on your way.

I am aware that so many friends have prayed for my recovery. unknown friends has been that God may, if He spares me My counter-prayer in answer to all the prayers of known and, make me worthy of those loving prayers.

I am making fair progress.

Yours sincerely,

K. T. PAUL, ESQ.
THOTTAM
SALEM

From a Photostat: S.N. 14135

464. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

NANDI,
Vaishakha Vad [*14, May 29, 1927*][1]

SISTERS,

There has been no letter from you this week.

Have you received any letters from Mirabehn? I find from her letters that she has been working hard among both men and women. There is in her letters something about which I would like you to know. She writes that the women with whom she comes into contact are all extremely good, but at the same time terribly ignorant. They do not know even the simplest things. If Mirabehn talks to them of the spinning-wheel, they are surprised. They cannot of course understand that spinning is necessary in the interests of the poor. Their idea of religion is visiting the temple. They hardly know what 'service' is. It may be that some of this is a result of Mirabehn's lack of experience. But we are all aware of the general ignorance of our women. It is men who are mainly responsible for this. The only remedy lies, doesn't it, in their awakening. But the responsibility for bringing about that awakening rests upon you. All of you should prepare yourselves for the work according to your abilities.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3651

[1] The source has *Vaishakha Vad* 13, which however was a *Kshaya* date.

465.LETTER TO JUGALKISHORE

May 29, 1927

I hope you will get from this work all the intellectual and spiritual nourishment you need. I have no doubt that once you have mastered the elements of this science you will get thoroughly interested in it. Learning the elements of anything is always difficult and irksome. It is so with the delightful art of music too. We all know about mathematics. The same is the case of this grand and noble science of the charkha. I call it grand because the more closely we study it the more we discover in it. And we need as much skill to attain proficiency in it as in any other major craft. I call this noble because it touches millions of people. I know of no other science save agriculture which has such universal applica-tion. Therefore I wish your devotion to this task is strengthened.

I have understood your nature. You keep away from a thing so long as your head and heart do not accept it fully and this is quite right. Write to me about your experiences.

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

466. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

NANDI DURG,
Vaishakh Krishna 14 [*May 29, 1927*][1]

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I was very happy. The receipt for the money has been sent from the Ashram. The solution to your difficulties with regard to the spinning-wheel has also been suggested. If even then the spinning-wheel cannot be worked write again to the Ashram and also to me.

It was a meritorious act on your part to have collected funds for cow-protection. I hope that all women will give attention to this work.

Yours sincerely,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

467. LETTER TO GANGA DEVI

NANDI DURG,

Vaishakh Vad 14 [*May 29, 1927*]

DEAR SISTER GANGA DEVI,

I have received your letter. It makes me anxious that you are still so weak. If you feel hungry, you should increase the quantity of milk. We get good milk there. Hence it will be all right to take it even unboiled. Along with milk, I also take the juice of ten neem leaves. It does not spoil the taste of milk. Try it for a couple of days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Benarsidas Chaturvedi Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] The year has been inferred from Gandhiji's stay at Nandi Durg.

468. LETTER TO IMPERIAL INDIAN CITIZENSHIP ASSOCIATION

NANDI HILLS,
May 31, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I wish your meeting every success. The Rt. Hon'ble Srinivasa Sastri embarks upon his arduous mission under the best of auspices. He takes with him the goodwill of all India, and both the Europeans and our countrymen in South Africa are looking forward to his advent. I know that if any man can possibly produce harmony between the Europeans and the Indian settlers, it is certainly Sjt. Srinivasa Sastri. May God give him all the wisdom and all the strength he will need in South Africa.

Yours sincerely,

THE SECRETARY
THE IMPERIAL INDIAN CITIZENSHIP ASSOCIATION
PETIT BUILDING
359, HORNBY ROAD
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 12355

469. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

NANDI HILLS,
May 31, 1927

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. I have said my say. I understand your reasoning and value your determination. However, I send you the book on *Food and Health.* As a chemist you will understand it better than I can. Personally, I challenge many of the authors' conclusions. But my challenge is based upon prejudice. I attack their data on insufficiency of evidence; but I have no data myself to support my challenge. I know the healthier condition of widows.

So far as Nikhil is concerned, he need never go to Calcutta. If Hemaprabha Devi can be happy at the Ashram, she can live with Nikhil there and husband his strength. Or, she can stay in Patna, and she can be in Wardha also with quarters all to herself.

I must finish Madras and would really like to go through the other provinces also if I can do them gently and in a leisurely fashion leaving ample margin for rest and having no more than one meeting per day or even per two days. Not to do Madras, if I can at all manage it, would be criminal as there is already nearly three lakhs of rupees collected and locked up and people will not part with it unless I present myself to receive it. I can therefore combine rest and work. It becomes fairly cool in the Madras Presidency in the month of July. The whole of June will be spent in resting. The Mysore tour will be easy, because Mysore is on a higher level. It is a plateau of 3,000 feet above the sea level and the climate at this time of the year is exceptionally mild. Then there are other parts of the Madras Presidency too which are quite cool. And Karnatak is perfect after June. You need have therefore no worry whatsoever, and, of course, I shall be taking soundings as the tour progresses. What is more, the ever kind and the ever vigilant Nature will give warning betimes of any danger that may be lurking. And then, in spite of all the extraordinary precautions, she will one day send her messenger who like a thief in the night will steal in *some day* and unperceived by anybody administer the dose which will send me to long sleep.

Yours,

BAPU

SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
HOME VILLA
GIRIDIH
(BIHAR)

From a photostat: G.N. 1572

470. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

NANDI HILLS,
May 31, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Either Jamnalalji committed a blunder or the interviewer. There is absolutely no chance even if I become obdurate of my being able to resume my tour in the middle of June. Let alone the doctors, I have myself no such confidence. Nandi has done me good. But there is much leeway yet to be made up. I get easily tired and I cannot move about with ease. A month more is the very least I

shall require. What I feel is that I shall not be able to venture out much before the third week of July.

Rajagopalachari is not just now here. He has gone to Bangalore to find and prepare quarters for me there as the weather here is now becoming too bracing for me. He is the jailor in charge and it is he who has to dispose of me finally, so far as this Presidency is concerned. But in so far as I have any control over my rnovements, I would certainly love to be your guest if Salem is on the list at all. And, if it is not on the list, you can easily have it on the list by collecting a fat purse for the dumb millions from among your innumerable friends in Salem.

I never know that the European Association at Calcutta had passed such an original resolution as you have described.

Yes, I do feel, without being able to assign any justification for the feeling, that behind all the seeming anarchy, order is being evolved and that we shall not for ever remain a damned country.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR
FAIRYFALLS VIEW
KODAIKANAL OBSERVATORY P. O.
KODAIKANAL HILLS

From a photostat: S.N. 12586

471. LETTER TO KHANCHAND AIDAS R. KOBE

NANDI HILLS,
May 31, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 15th April last redirected to me for which I thank you and the donors. You have not mentioned any particular cause to which the collection should he devoted. Unless, therefore, I hear from you to the contrary, it will be used for khadi, untouchability or cow-protection work whichever may be most in need according to the judgement of the Managing Board of the Satyagraha Ashram. Please let me have a line in reply.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KHANCHAND AIDAS R. KOBE

From a microfilm; S.N. 14139

472. LETTER TO TARUN CHANDRA SINHA

NANDI HILLS (MYSORE STATE),
May 31, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. At the present moment I can only ask you to read the reprint of the articles I wrote in *Young India*. The reprint is called *Self-restraint v. Self-indulgence*. It can be had at the *Young India* office, Ahmedabad. And if you propose to get the book and read it, you may correspond with me after you have read it and tell me whether you have found any help. Meanwhile I can only pray that God may give you the right guidance and strength of mind to do the right thing.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. TARUN CHANDRA SINHA
SHUSUNG P.O.
(MYMENSING DISTRICT)
BIHAR

From a photostat: S.N. 14136

473. LETTER TO BASANTA KUMAR RAHA

NANDI HILLS,
May 31, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. As I do not know whether the English letter is written by you or for you, I shall have a translation of this letter enclosed with this.

It is not because I do not want to comply with your proposal but because I have no fitness for becoming anybody's guru, being myself in search of one. After all a person who sets out to become anybody's guru, if he is a sincere man, must have confidence in himself. The relation of a teacher and disciple is not a mechanical one but it is organic. The only suggestion, therefore, that I can make to you is that if you cannot be satisfied with personal effort and struggle, you can have the guru of your imagination; but then it won't be my conscious self; for I should be utterly incapable of giving you unerring guidance which a true guru is supposed to give and you may draw what

comfort it is possible for you to do from the imaginary picture. I am sorry that I can give you no other or further comfort. The best thing one can do however is to kneel down to God above and ask Him to give the required guidance. He is the only source of light and of peace.

Yours sincerely,

BABU BASANTA KUMAR RAHA
BARNES JUNCTION
DISTRICT JALPAIGURI (BENGAL)

From a photostat: S.N. 14137

474 A LETTER

NANDI HILLS,
May 31, 1927

DEAR SIR,

I have your letter of the 21st instant. I am afraid, your notions of business and mine seem to be so diametrically opposite, that it is not possible at the present moment to find a meeting ground, and after all, our depots, it seems to me, cannot be of any service to you.

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 14138

475. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DAULATRAM

NANDI HILLS,
May 31, 1927

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

I have your letter. I understand your difficulties and your struggles as I have always done and have therefore sympathized with you even whilst I have been powerless to give you any help or guidance. Personally, as I have implied in my letter to the President, I have not much faith in patched-up compromises brought about by mutual fear. And then, the contracts made by us, polished patriots, have no effect upon the masses, who either act under the impulse of the moment or under the guidance of mischief-makers. We, the so-called representatives of the people, build airy houses of our own imagination. But I suppose the imaginary is real to the one who sees it as such, and what is real is imaginary to him. A shadow is the real dog

to the one who only sees his own self through the clear water and bleeds himself to death by straining every nerve in barking at his own shadow.

When you are sufficiently sick of the business and tired, do come and pass a few days with me. I descend from this hill in the course of the week and shall be in Bangalore at least for one month.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. JAIRAMDAS DAULATRAM, M.L.C.
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat: S.N. 14140

476. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

[*End of May 1927*][1]

CHI. TUSI MAHER,

I have your letter. I am sorry to read of your illness. You need not have been over-enthusiastic. All that we do must be done with a detached mind. And nothing done in this way will be beyond our capacity and therefore affect our health. You should spare no pains so long as you are not attached to results. To exert oneself beyond that is to ruin one's health and undo the work done. That was the cause of my breakdown. I did not observe even a nominal limit to my capacity during and after my tour of Maharashtra. Now I am paying the penalty ten times over. Had I added even of a quarter of the last two months (spent in rest] to the Maharashtra tour, the programme would have been completed smoothly and possibly I would have been spared this illness. For me the shore is in sight but you have just set out on your voyage. Taking a lesson from my case you should calm down and do quietly whatever you can. Milk and ghee may be taken without any qualms if considered necessary for recouping your strength. Haven't I said that a friend who gives up milk and ghee is himself responsible for the risk incurred and that if he cannot sustain his body with this abstinence he must forthwith return to the milk and ghee diet.

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's tour of Maharashtra and to the passage of "two months" since his "breakdown"

I expect to have another letter from you before you reply to this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6531

477. LETTER T0 V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

NANDI HILLS,
June 1, 1927

DEAR BROTHER,

In a few days' time you will be on the waters and at the end of the month you will be in South Africa. My thoughts and my prayers will be with you throughout your stay in that subcontinent. This appointment is to me a unique event. I must not let myself say one word more. May God keep you and bless you.

Do let me have a line whenever you can. I hope you got the important letter[1] I addressed you at Madras just after we last met.

Yours sincerely,

THE RT. HON'BLE V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI
CARE OF SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
SANDHURST ROAD, GIRGAUM
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 12356

478. LETTER TO H. HARCOURT

NANDI HILLS,
June 1, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 1st May last for which I thank you. I have no recollection of the terms of the challenge I issued or your reply to the challenge.[2] And it would be very difficult for me now, especially when I am convalescing far away from the Ashram, to refresh my memory as to the terms of the challenge by referring to the papers of 1921-22.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 15-5-1927.

[2] In his letter, Harcourt had said that he had replied in a note to a challenge addressed to Government by Gandhiji.

I have enquired about your pamphlet[1]. I now understand that the pamphlet was seen by one of my companions; but, as it was seen a long time after its receipt by him and as I was in the midst of my work which hardly left me time to see any pamphlet, he did not bring it to my notice. I am sorry that it remained without acknowledgement. I have now sent for it. I have leisure enough during my convalescence to look at your pamphlet; and if I trace it, I shall certainly read it and let you have my views upon it.

I am sorry that you had to remain in suspense for such a long time with reference to the two matters about which you had a right to expect from me at least an acknowledgement and it is contrary to my habit to leave such things unacknowledged.

Yours sincerely,

H. HARCOURT, ESQ.
119, GIPSY HILL
LONDON S.E. 19

From a photostat: S.N. 12494

479. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

June 1, 1927

How can I put obstacles in your way or in the way of anyone else who, prompted by a religious motive, undertakes a religious effort. But I wish to place a suggestion before you. Fasting concerns the body. Hence, though it has an important place in one's spiritual develop-ment, relatively it is a small thing. It is a means and serves a useful purpose only when the mind is behind it. I know that your mind cannot but be behind your fast, otherwise you could not have fasted for so many days. Nevertheless please think more deeply over the matter and reconsider it. Do you fast for some sort of self-purification? Do you weigh afterwards the benefits of your fasts? Or are you indifferent towards them? If you are, how do you justify your fasts as spontaneous acts? The desire for fruit is implicit in describing a fast as meant for self-purification. This is not an unworthy desire; it is a worthy one. In interpreting what is meant by the desire for fruit, one must use discrimination. One's duty is to be a *mumukshu. A mumukshu is* one who aspires after *moksha.* The true meaning of

[1] *Sidelights on the Crisis in India* by H. Harcourt and Chhotu Ram; Harcourt was a member of the Indian Civil Service and Deputy Commissioner of Gurdaspur and Chhotu Ram was Minister for Agriculture in the Punjab Government.

renunciation of the desire for fruit is that one who renounces it knows that the fruit does follow. He does not mind if he himself does not enjoy that fruit. Absence of the desire for fruit makes a man courageous and helps to maintain the purity of the means.

But I have written more than I should. My aim was merely to caution you. That was my duty. But do as your inner voice tells you.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

480. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

NANDI DURG,
Jyaishtha Shukla 2 [*June 1, 1927*][1]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter to hand. While I am dictating this letter Mahadev reminds me that you had sent word through Jamnalalji that I should write to you in English. But I propose to write nothing that needs be conveyed to anyone. I am, therefore, having this letter written in Hindi.

I have the letter you wrote from the steamer. I have already written two letters to your Geneva address. They must have reached you. I am steadily improving. I write regularly to *pujya* Malaviyaji. No sooner had I written to him this week than a lengthy telegram arrived from him, telling me that his health was now better but weakness persisted. He is at present in Bombay. It won't be right to say I do not take care of my health. I do take all the precautions that I think are necessary to preserve my health. *Pujya* Malaviyaji does not do it as I have complained on many occasions and he took no rest even after solemnly promising to do so. He has great faith in the treatment of *vaidyas* and believes that he keeps and can keep well by taking their pills and powders. And so strong is his self-confidence that in spite of his weakness and ill health he is determined to live at least up to seventy-five. May God carry him through his resolve. Who can try to persuade him? I have written to him in a lighter vein but with as much severity as can be combined with courtesy. The truth is that man's wisdom is determined by his past karma. In such matters there is very little scope for human effort. It is our duty to try and we

[1] Year inferred from the contents

ought to do it but there comes in the life of every man a time when all effort appears futile and luckily God gives us no fore-knowledge of the end so as to avoid the frustration. Why then worry over the inevitable? The affairs of the nation depend neither upon Malaviyaji nor upon Lalaji[1] nor upon me. All are but instruments; moreover I think a good man's efforts bear fruit only after his death. It is not correct as Shakespeare says, "the evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones". Evil does not endure. Rama is still in our midst and we cherish his memory. Ravana and his wickedness are no more. Not even the wicked utter his name. Who knows what Rama was in his own age? The poet certainly says that in his own lifetime even Rama did not escape recriminations. But now all his imperfections have, with his body, turned to ashes and we worship him as an incarnation of God. And the Kingdom of Rama is much wider now than it ever was while he lived in the body. When I write this I don't mean to philosophize or persuade you to suppress your feelings. But I emphasize that we should never grieve over the death of one whom we regard as a saint. And we must have the firm belief that a saint's deeds begin to work or, say, truly bear fruit only after his death. The achievements which were regarded as great in his own time are only infinitesimal compared to the influence they will have in times to come. Yet it is certainly our duty to emulate to the best of our ability the good deeds of those whom we regard as saints of our age.

Regarding your health I would suggest if you have no faith in allopathy, and you need not have it, that you should visit the institutions of Louis Kuhne and Just when you go to Germany. Their treatment with open air and water has benefited hundreds of people. Contact the Vegetarian Society both at London and Manchester. There are always some nice, serious-minded people to be found there who will be courteous and considerate. Of course, you will come across some faddists and fanatics too. You said milk was not available on the steamer. Next time you should carry Horlick's Malted Milk. It is pure milk-powder. The chemists say that this dehydrated powder contains all that milk does. You can try it.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6148. Courtesy. G. D. Birla

[1] Lala Lajpat Rai

481. A LETTER

[*After June 1, 1927*][1]

This is a simple example of how to see action in non-action. With a spinning-wheel or the *Gita* or the *Ramayana* in one's hand one can never say that one has no work to do. Till we are so content in our minds that we feel thus, we are bound to be restless for one reason or another. You ought to get over such restlessness; I have always expected that of you. You should finish with lightning speed whatever task falls to you in the natural course of events.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

482. LETTER TO MANILAL NATHUBHAI DOSHI

[*After Jane 1, 1927*][2]

I got your letter. *Brahmacharya* is to be observed in three ways— in mind, in speech and in body. As long as the mind feels the slightest evil desire, there is always a danger of the desire for indulgence being aroused. The evil desires of the mind are not controlled in a moment; their control, being the aim of man's highest effort, takes ages to attain. It is logical to believe that a person who conquers the evil desires in him in this life has succeeded in doing so by reason of the efforts in many lives rather than merely through his efforts in this life. If in our conscious moments the body is about to violate *brahmacharya,* it is our duty at that time to commit suicide and destroy the body. Hence one cannot be too vigilant towards one's body; anyone who cannot be so vigilant has yet to learn the first lesson of *brahmacharya. Brahmacharya* in speech is practically included in bodily *brahmacharya,* for, though it is the mind that inspires speech, in itself speech is a bodily function. There remains the mind. As one acquires greater control over the mind, one finds it easy to keep the body under control without having to struggle to do so, but until the mind is completely subjugated, there is a chance of involuntary emission. We should not be frightened at such emission. It is the mind we should fear. Involuntary emission is Nature's warning

[1] In the source these two letters follow the entries for June 1, 1927

[2] *ibid.*

to us that the mind has not been subjugated. We see that even lustful men remain complacent because they do not have involuntary emissions. They feel pleased with themselves because of their freedom from such emissions. But, truly speaking, their being self-satisfied in this manner is their fall. In America they employ means which prevent involuntary emissions while the mind remains filled with lustful thoughts. But to regard such a man as a *brahmachari* amounts to murdering the language. Hence, though safeguarding of the vital fluid is the external form of *brahmacharya*, one cannot definitely say that its preservation is necessarily a manifestation of *brahmacharya*. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that it is an essential aspect of complete *brahmacharya*. My point in writing this is that, if there is involuntary emission despite our continuous and sincere struggling to avoid it, despite our vigilance and after we have neglected to adopt no measure which can possibly help us to avoid it, we need not get frightened or lose heart and feel that we have committed a great sin; rather we should look upon it as kind Nature's warning and look deeper into ourselves. We should find out where evil desires are lurking in the mind and strive harder still to banish them. The effort is its own reward. If we have been cheating ourselves and mentally indulging our secret desires, we should make sure that we run away from those activities or associations which cause our downfall or make us weak. It should not matter if, in doing so, one ruins one's business or loses one's wealth and passes for a fool among the people.

It is necessary to be almost completely free from sensuous desires in order to be blessed by the vision of God; the desires that still remain will be destroyed only by that vision. There is no sure means which can help us to have this vision. No one else can bring us to it. Truly speaking, the Shastras and those learned in them can only recount their experiences, and, if we lack faith, their experience may awaken faith in us; but no one else can make the necessary effort on our behalf. I can, therefore, tell you only this: do not give up your struggle for a single moment. To get a vision of God is the highest aim of human effort. Add up, therefore, all the struggles that human beings are ready to undertake to get certain things in this world and add up all those efforts; it is necessary, in order to get a vision of God, to make an effort a myriad times more difficult than the sum of all those struggles of human beings in this world. If one does not gain that vision, even after such an effort, one will be free to raise questions; there will be some justification for lack of faith then. But, till

then, we must not give up our faith and our struggle.

The example of Mansukhlal which you have cited is inappropriate. He possessed much knowledge of the Shastras, and he struggled [for self-control] but he had not become free from desire, neither did he make such a claim. Hence the fact that he felt a desire for a thing like a water-melon during his last hours is not enough reason to fill us with despair or to justify our disparaging him. We should not deceive ourselves and believe, living in these evil times and in this world full of difficulties, that we can easily become free from desires, nor should we entertain such expectations even of a person whom we believe to be good lest we get a shock or doubt his goodness when we have a contrary experience of him. We should remember that the soul's power is unlimited. He whose desires have totally perished is practically fit to be God. Let us not believe that good men with whom we come in contact have gained such fitness and thereby reduce God's measuring rod to the littleness of our finger.

If we see any person standing even on the first notch on that yardstick, we should feel happy and hope that, if one person can become fit enough to stand on the first notch, all of us can, if we but try, acquire the strength to stand on the second notch, and strive on in that hope.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

483. HOW TO PROTECT THE COW

I gladly publish these notes[1] from Sjt. C. V. Vaidya. Those, who believe in the methods advocated in these columns for cow-protection, will be glad to find, that a scholar of Sjt. C. V. Vaidya's repute is in substantial agreement with those methods. The distinction that the learned writer draws between pinjrapole and goshala need not cause any anxiety or difficulty. My own opinion is, that either may be also the other, so long as separate accounts are kept and separate methods of feeding and housing the disabled and the working animals are adopted. Legislation and the State aid advocated by Sjt. Vaidya need not at present distract our attention. For there is immense scope for private effort, building public opinion in favour of the proposed

[1] Not reproduced here

methods and showing their workability in practice. We are so far behind, indeed, that we have not even enough trained workers to conduct dairies and tanneries along the lines suggested by Sjt. Vaidya. There are at least 1,500 pinjrapoles and goshalas according to the figures in my possession, which can, without much further donation, but by efficient management, test the usefulness of the methods. Their adoption will simply revolutionize the management of these institutions and put life into these, today for the most part, lifeless bodies. These pinjrapoles and goshalas, as they are at present being conducted, are more a salve to our conscience than a protection to the cow. The learned writer's categorical statement, that during the Vedic and the *Brahmana* period cow-slaughter was countenanced and beef was eaten, will be hotly contested by Pandit Satavalekar, who has been a close student of Vedic lore for the past 35 years, and by Acharya Ramadeva who claims to be a historian and to have critically studied the ancient history of Bharatavarsha. But with the historical portion practical men and women will not concern themselves. They will perhaps be content like me to hope that our ancestors in the Vedic times knew better than to seek to gain merit by sacrificing innocent animals or to satisfy their palate by eating beef.

Young India, 2-6-1927

484. CHOICE BEFORE US

A correspondent sends me a cutting from the Press giving most gruesome facts about the growing infantile crimes and illicit gratification among girls in the New World.

A boy of four years is reported to have shot his mother, because she forbade him to play with matches. When the police confronted him, he was in no way taken aback. He threatened "to shoot them too", and when questioned by the Coroner, he grew so impatient with him that he picked up a knife from among the exhibits lying in front of him and rushed to strike him. It is said, that hardly a day passes in America without some crime being committed by a boy or a girl, and in most American colleges there are said to be suicide clubs or crime societies, and the more horrible part of the account shows that many girls, even of exclusive colleges, have become so lawless as to run away in pursuit of illicit adventures.

It is difficult, in an age in which newspapers, in order to provide

sensational food for their readers, invent stories when they have no facts to weave narratives from, to believe without reservation reports such as I have condensed. But whilst one may make ample allowance for exaggeration, there is no doubt that infantile crime and lawlessness among boys and girls are sufficiently extensive in the New World to make us beware of a civilization which must be held responsible for these crimes and lawlessness. That life in the West goes on—and it may be said progressively after a fashion—in spite of these infantile crimes, may be granted. And it may also be granted that the wise people of the West are not only not unaware of the evil, but that they are manfully struggling to overtake it. Nevertheless we have to decide whether we shall indiscriminately copy this civilization. We may well pause in the face of the awful revelations that come to us from the West from time to time, and ask ourselves, whether after all it is not better to hold by our own civilization and seek, in the light of the comparative knowledge that is available to us, to reform it by removing its known excrescences. For, there is no doubt, that if the West has its terrific problem arising out of its own civilization, we have no less grave problems of our own to deal with.

It is perhaps unnecessary, if not useless, in this connection to weigh the merits of the two civilizations. It is likely that the West has evolved a civilization suited to its climate and surroundings, and similarly, we have a civilization suited to our conditions, and both are good in their own respective spheres. This may be safely said that the crimes and the lawlessness described by me are almost impossible with us, and I hold that this is due to our pacific training and the restraining influence in the midst of which we are brought up. Cowardliness which often springs from pacific training, and obsequiousness which comes from the restraint that is handed down from generation to generation, have somehow to be avoided, if the ancient civilization is not to perish before the mad modern rush. The distinguishing characteristic of modern civilization is an indefinite multiplicity of human wants. The characteristic of ancient civilization is an imperative restriction upon and a strict regulating of those wants. The modern or Western insatiableness arises really from want of a living faith in a future state and therefore also in Divinity. The restraint of ancient or Eastern civilization arises from a belief, often in spite of ourselves, in a future state and the existence of a Divine Power. The record condensed above is a warning if we will take it, against a blind imitation of the West, which one sees so often in the

city life of India and especially among the educated classes. Some of the immediate and brilliant results of modern inventions are too maddening to resist. But I have no manner of doubt that the victory of man lies in that resistance. We are in danger of bartering away the permanent good for a momentary pleasure.

Young India, 2-6-1927

485. THE WHEEL OF LIFE AND THE VEDAS

Pandit Satavalekar of Aundh wrote in 1922 a booklet in Hindi called वेद में चर्खा i.e., *Charkha in the Vedas*, and favoured me with a copy whilst I was resting in the Yeravda jail. I glanced then through its pages and with interest, but asked myself what good would it be to us in this age of so-called advancement to know that the charkha was to be found in the Vedas. Everybody knows that our remote ancestors spun and wove in their cottages even as they did so many other things. But we no longer do them. So I said to myself. The booklet, I hastily concluded, was not of much practical value and I laid it aside. On the sick-bed I have again an opportunity of turning, so far as my strength permits, to quiet studies. Another book of Pandit Satavalekar (of which more hereafter) has attracted me to his writings, and he has now favoured me with another copy of the booklet in question. I observe that it has undergone a second edition. I have read it this time more carefully, and I find that the *mantras* cited by the author from the Vedas demonstrate not merely the fact that our ancestors in those times were spinning and weaving, but they present, perhaps, a, for us, novel way of looking at the wheel. Here is what may be called the key *mantra* for spinners and weavers from *Rig-Veda* (X. 53-6) quoted by the author:

तंतु तन्वन रजसो भानुमन्विहि ज्योतिष्मत:

पथो रक्षधिया कृतान ॥ अनुलवणं वयत

जोगुवामपो मनुर्भव जनय दैव्यं जनम् ॥ ऋ.१०।५३ ।६

I give a free rendering as follows:

> Having spun the thread and given it a shining colour, weave it without knots, and so guard the pathways which the enlightened have chalked out, and thinking well, lead posterity unto the divine light, or (according to the author's rendering) bring forth divine progeny. This truly is the work of poets.

If the translation is at all correct—and the author has not merely given his own rendering but has reproduced Griffith's translation also

in his booklet—the *mantra* proves not merely the existence of spinning and weaving in the Vedic times, but that it was the calling of the noblest men and women as well of the humblest. It was one of the pathways which wisdom hath prepared and to guard which was the work of poets. Little did I know, when I humbly presented the charkha to our Poet[1] as a sacrificial rite, that I had behind me the authority of what is understood to be the oldest Veda. I commend the *mantra* to all those who are engaged in reviving this ancient and sacred industry and art. Let them thoughtfully recite this *mantra* whilst doing their sacrificial spinning. Let them treasure it in their hearts and keep their faith unshaken even in the face of disappointments and reverses in their forward march.

I cannot resist quoting another beautiful *mantra* from the booklet:

यो यज्ञो विश्वतस्तन्तुभिस्तत एकशतं देवकर्मेभिरायतः ॥

इमे वयन्ति पितरा व आथयुः प्रवथाप वयेत्थासते तते ॥ ऋ १०।१३०।१

This is again from the *Rig-Veda* (X. 130-1). It means:

> Hundred and one artists are working at the sacrifice which through the myriad threads overspreads the earth. Here are the elderly guardians. They watch the processes saying,"Weave on here, do this right there."

Thus we see that spinning and weaving was regarded as a sacrifice even in those ancient days and commanded the protecting care of the elders. The author shows abundant evidence that both spinning and weaving were done by men as well as women. In fact the industry was as universal as farming. He shows too that the sartorial art was well advanced in those times. There were different dresses prescribed for different occasions as also for different states. If the farmer had his *langoti*[2], royalty had its robe. There is mention of colours, fringes and gold borders. The author has also shown that some of the most beautiful metaphors have been taken from the language of spinners and weavers.

I must resist the temptation to quote more extracts from this thoughtfully written booklet. There is a *mantra* which proves that the

[1] Rabindranath Tagore
[2] Loin-cloth

soldiers of those days were not above doing these processes; that the bridegroom's garment was always made by the bride as is still the custom in Assam.

There is one thing, however, the author leaves to other research scholars in the Vedic lore to discover. So far as he has been able to study the Vedas, he has not found a single equivalent for cotton as he has for wool and silk. He is, therefore, unable to say whether in those days our ancestors had only woollen and silken garments or whether they had already discovered the cotton fibres.

Young India, 2-6-1927

486. LETTER TO HELENE HAUSSDING

NANDI HILLS,
June 2, 1927

I have your sweet little note. But it is disturbing to think that you are not yet well. If your recovery is dependent upon mine, well then you must already have recovered, because you had two letters from me telling you that I was on the road to recovery. I hope you got those two letters. But though I am on the road to recovery, I have to take care of myself and take plenty of rest. I, therefore, do most of my correspondence lying down and through dictation. Hence this typewritten letter.

You know my theory of the disease, don't you? I regard it as a result of some conscious or unconscious sin as I call or breaches of Nature's laws. When you lose mental equanimity, be it ever so little, it sets up terrible agitations in the body, and these latter produce visible effects upon it. I know that I am not free from these affections or perturbations as I would call them and I had the collapse. I do not flatter myself with such unctuous pleas as overwork, terrific strain, etc., in order to drown my conscience. On the contrary, I know that overwork and terrific strain are just as apprehensible, even though they may be in a good cause, as a drinking-bout or visiting cinemas. The results of both are the same. And, if I have attained equanimity, I should unerringly know when to work, when not to work and should be able to have the same control over the mind as I should have over the body. But I confess I have not. The mind continuously gives me [the] slip and outruns me. What wonder then that I am still convalescing? But all this confession is merely a preface to tell you

that you must not hug your disease to yourself and from your philosophic height blame the doctor, the weather, the food and everything and everybody else but yourself. Let us call a spade a spade.

Yours,

MISS HELENE HAUSSDING
GERMANY

From a photostat: S.N. 12510

487. LETTER TO M. M. GIDWANI

NANDI HILLS,
June 2, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

It was good of you to have sent your article for *Young India* entitled "The Present Situation". But I am afraid that it will not be of much use for the readers of *Young India*. That it will lead popular education is an admitted fact. But the only question is how to do it and who shall do it. And *Young India is* published either to suggest new lines of thought or to show practical methods of working out plans and policies already accepted. I return your article lest you may want it.

Yours sincerely,

PROF. M. M. GIDWANI, M. A.
EDITOR,
"SINDHUDESH"
KARACHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 14142

488. LETTER TO GOSIBEHN

NANDI HILLS,
June 2, 1927

I am glad I have at least succeeded in drawing you. I have ward to your letter especially after Perin had prepared me for It. I am glad also of the confession. But a good confession results in a change of ways. But I see you have not yet become a Gujarati scholar, nor evidently did those excellent copy-books sent by grandfather produce any impression upon you. But here I cannot judge. If I did, it would

be like pot calling the kettle black. In spite of schoolmasters having put copy-books before me, I write a hand much worse than yours.

I thought that Nargis had sent A.E.'s book The Interpreters. It came before your letter. I think that very book was sent to me through Jaijee when I was in Yeravda. But alas! I was discharged before I could read the book through. There is not much danger of a sudden discharge now. I shall therefore read it and tell you what I think of it.

We remove to Bangalore on Sunday. You must all come there. There is going to be a Khadi Exhibition in July. I am writting to Mithubehn about it, and if you could come for that exhibition, you could all become stall holders and take the Bangalore public by storm.

I am gaining strength slowly.

Yours,

SHRIMATI GOSIBEHN
OMRA HALL, PANCHGANI

From a photostat: S.N. 14143

489. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

NANDI HILLS,
June *3, 1927*

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. It fills me with both sorrow and joy; sorrow because for the time being at any rate that Ashram has fallen in my estimation, and joy because you are so gentle and yet so brave. You become a shield both for yourself and Gangu. That you committed the initial mistake of accepting the invitation to witness the bhang preparation dwindles into insignificance in the face of your subsequent firmness combined with gentleness. Your acceptance of the invitation was as good or as bad as acceptance of an invitation to watch the manufacture of brandy in a brewery. But that acceptance itself was due to your great anxiety to please Maharajji and not out of any unpardonable or improper curiosity. On reading your letter, my first thought was to wire to you for you, Valunjker and Gangu to leave the Ashram at once. I then said to myself that that would be wrong especially when you had proved your presence of mind and bravery in the face of a wretched situation. I therefore decided to write to you and give you my reflections and then let you act as you thought proper in the circumstances.

I regard the scene you have described as highly improper, even immoral, on the part of those who sought to tempt you and almost force the vile stuff down your throat and poor Gangu's, and then as you turned your backs upon them, to sprinkle the dirty water was more like a scene in a tavern than in a *brahmacharya* Ashram, where service of God and man is supposed to be the goal and where *brahmacharya* is strictly enjoined. Your fast was good for your purification. It has washed you clean of the initial mistake, and if they will take it, it is a gentle warning to the managers of the Ashram. It seems to me, however, that you should follow up the action by having a firm conversation with the Rao Saheb and other inmates, and, if you wish it, with the Maharajji himself. Whereas in a previous letter[1] I told you that it was no business of yours to rid the Ashram of the bhang habit, now in view of the developments described by you, it becomes your duty either to end the bhang or to end your presence there. I regard it to be next to impossible, both for men and women, to remain without sensual agitations whilst they are under the influence of bhang even though they may be able to exercise outward bodily control, though from my own experience of it, it seems to me that when I was under the influence of bhang any man or woman could have played fast or loose with me. And now that your eyes have been opened, it would be improper to lend any countenance to that Ashram unless they are sincerely ready to reform their ways. You may not co-operate with the Ashram even to gain a kingdom or even if it was the only place where you could finish your Hindi course. You may tell them that you are not there to impose your views, but as a friend you were bound to draw their attention to the evil which had forced itself upon your attention, and that unless the evil was eradicated—and that too not for your sake but out of conviction—you could not remain there to receive personal courtesies and personal favours in the shape of Hindi teaching. If therefore they could not see eye to eye with you about the evil of bhang, you would still be friends with them but you couldn't possibly remain in the Ashram, nor Valunjker and Gangu who are also under the same discipline as you. You may read this letter to whomsoever you like. Discuss first with Valunjker—for, he is a wise man—the propriety of the step I have suggested, see what he has to say, see also what Gangu has to say. She is like a simple glorious child. But wisdom often comes out of the mouths of babes

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 28-5-1927.

and her intuition may be better than our reasoned judgement. And then if you feel like referring to me, do so by all means. If you wish to consult Jamnalalji, you may write to him also. I am sending him your letter and a copy of this so that you don't have to say much to him. Do nothing in a hurry, nothing in a huff, certainly nothing in anger; but take whatever step you wish after humble prayer and with the greatest deliberation.

I am perfectly at ease having dictated this letter. Such experiences, when they come to us unsought, are precious trials that God sends to those who would listen to the "still small voice" within. If I have read more into your letter than you meant and have been guilty of any injustice to the people at the Ashram, you will not

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5233. Courtesy: Mirabehn

490. LETTER TO K. VYASA RAO

NANDI HILLS,
June 3, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have carefully gone through your pamphlet *Foundations of Swaraj,* as also your manifesto. About the manifesto, I cannot say anything because I do not know the facts. About the pamphlet, I am sorry to say it was a deep disappointment to me. You have lost yourself in the exuberance of your own language. You have not taken the trouble of studying a movement, not by any means insignificant so far at least as its extent is concerned, and have set about demolishing a picture of your own imagination. You have not cared to understand the implications of soul-power or the implications of the spinning-wheel. The other chapters betray a most superficial study of questions handled by you. I understood from you that you had 25 years' experience of public service at your back. It is a matter of deep sorrow to me that so many years of study should have brought forth such little fruit. Please do not be flattered by the testimonials that you have received about your other book from distinguished newspapers. I know nothing about the other book. But if it is based upon the same

preparation that is betrayed by the pamphlet you left with me, it could not be up to much. A good command over a language is often a hindrance rather than a help when that facility for expression is not backed by deep thinking and industrious research.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. K. VYASA RAO
CHENGALVARAYA MUDALI STREET
TRIPLICANE
MADRAS

From a photostat: G.N. 84; also S.N. 14144

491. LETTER T0 RAIHANA TYABJI

ANDI HILLS,
JUNE 3, 1927

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

What a wonderful and poetic love letter you have sent me! I would wonder if my letter to Father crossed yours or whether this letter of yours is prompted by the reminder sent in my letter to Father. Not only must I not write much myself, but I must not even dictate for any length of time. I don't want therefore to chat with you long. But let me hasten to tell you that if you can be happy and comfortable in the Ashram, I would love to have you in spite of your not doing any work with your hands. Spinning by the hand is after all a test, an emblem, an earnest of what is within, and I know that you have all that substance within you. What does it matter that through no present fault of your own, you are simply physically incapable of spinning. The work done by the spirit within is infinitely precious, more precious than the formal spinning done by many without the heart in it. Come therefore when you like to the Ashram as your very home and I shall certainly take all that your voice can give me. But I should prize your presence even if you had not that rich melodious voice. What I prize is your goodness, which can act without speaking. It is like the fragrance of a sweet flower. It does not need any movement and yet the fragrance is all pervading and unmistakable, and it survives for a while even after the flower is withdrawn. How much longer must the fragrance of goodness last even after the body is

withdrawn? But be absolutely sure that you will like the Ashram and that your body can sustain the Ashram life.

Do you write to Mira? If not, do please now. Her address is Bhagavadbhakti Ashram, Rampura, Rewari (Dt. Gurgaon).

With love to all.

Yours,

BAPU

MISS RAIHANA TYABJI
SOUTH WOOD
MUSSOORIE

From a photostat: S.N. 9602

492. LETTER TO SECRETARY, A.I.S.A.

NANDI HILLS,
June 3, 1927

THE SECRETARY
ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION
MIRZAPUR
AHMEDABAD

DEAR SIR,

Whilst there remains any uncertainty about the legality of the resolution about Jamnalalji being officiating Chairman of the Council, the process I suggest in my capacity as President is that anything that is required to be done should first receive the approval of Jamnalalji as if he was legally the officiating Chairman and then his decision should be submitted to me for formal and final approval. That will save me from my having to critically examine the merits of each matter.

With reference to the ten thousand rupees supplied to the Maharashtra Agency in anticipation of sanction, I entirely approve. And so do I approve the proposal to pay the Karnatak Agency the collections already made by me at Nipani, Belgaum and elsewhere.

I think it is quite the proper thing to hold a meeting of the Council in Bangalore at the time of the forthcoming Exhibition or earlier, whichever date may suit you, Jamnalalji and others.

I descend to Bangalore on Sunday. I understand that there is very ample accommodation in the State House placed at my disposal.

Yours faithfully,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19778

493. LETTER TO DR. M. S. KELKAR

NANDI HILLS,
June 3, 1927

DEAR DOCTOR,

Your letters are always interesting and instructive. Do I gather that you would prefer my giving up wheat-meal or oatmeal, salt, soda and vegetables altogether and confine myself to milk, water and fruit? Am I right in thinking that you consider raw milk better than boiled milk?

Yes, I well remember your talk about sterile eggs and their culture. I shall enquire here myself; but if you have any literature on the subject, I would like to study it. Without further consideration I am prepared to say that I would put sterile eggs, as you have described them to be, under the same category as milk. I am therefore open to receive further instruction about them and their culture.

You must some day try to convince me about the value of astrology; for, I do not deny the possibility of its being a true science. But I do not regard the investigation and use of every science as beneficial to mankind.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 14145

494. LETTER TO GANGUBEHN

June 3, 1927

Brahmacharya, etc., can be practised only by an inner urge and by cultivating spiritual energy. This energy again can only be cultivated by constant application. There are two means of such application. One, discriminating and meditative study of good books, and two, efforts to practise the noble principles one has learnt. Learning without practice goes waste and serves only to turn one's head. Whatever therefore one has learnt one should immediately reduce to action. Therefore, a woman wanting to practise *brahmacharya* should take to non-violence, truth, non-possession, etc. She should thus zealously guard herself against the slightest untruth, against violence in thought, word or deed and should strive to give up all possessions. The scriptures tell us that courage and contentment are also to be cultivated. Courage should mean both inward and outward courage and it should be practised as soon as its implications are

clearly understood. So is the case with contentment. We should not be upset if someone abuses us, maligns us or calls us fools. This is a sign of contentment. We should remain contented even if we do not get food when hungry or we do not get clothes when we shiver. And as long as we do not practise what we have learnt we should not take a new lesson. We must apply ourselves to a greater understanding of what we have learnt, and think of nothing else. This also is a part of the dharma of *brahmacharya* because the latter is the high watermark of discipline.

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

495. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVALEKAR

June 3, 1927

I have almost finished reading the current issue of *Vaidika Dharma*. I wish to make some comments about the article on *brahmacharya* in the issue. You have interpreted *brahmacharya* only as preservation of the vital fluid and mentioned manly pursuits like hunting and so on in that context. Visiting foreign lands and founding colonies have also been mentioned. In my humble view this involves unsound logic. The first fallacy consists of narrow definition. The *brahmacharya* which you have explained by first quoting a *mantra* from the *Atharva-Veda*, viz., the gods overcame death by the strength of *brahmacharya*, and by practising it man also can overcome death, cannot be restricted to mere preservation of the vital fluid. The other is the fallacy of too wide definition. *Brahmacharya* need not be associated with acts of valour, etc. We see this in the world today. If the mere preservation of semen is the object of *brahmacharya*, it can be attained, as I have said in one of my letters, in a few minutes by a surgical operation. This operation does not make a man impotent; but allows him to indulge in sexual pleasures without losing his vital fluid. Such a man does not lose by way of manly adventures either. I am sure, however, that you will not call this *brahmacharya*.

The *brahmacharya* which you seek is attainable only by the subjugation of sexual and other desires. The preservation of the vital fluid, although important, is only a bye-product. Its direct and primary objective is nothing less than communion with the *Brahman*. This is the only desirable and legitimate adventure on the path of

brahmacharya. Why should a man take to the uphill task of conquering desires for the sake of *brahmacharya,* when manly adventures like vanquishing the enemy or undertaking foreign expeditions can be achieved by thousands of people without practising *brahmacharya?* And nobody does it, as I can vouchsafe from my fairly wide experience. Where can we find braver warriors than the German and the English soldiers? They are regularly provided with prostitutes. Hundreds, if not thousands, of innocent girls are sacrificed to the sexual hunger of these soldiers. No one despises these brave Kshatriyas who defend the country; on the other hand, educated and civilized men and women dote on these soldiers. I am not employing epithets like Kshatriyas, etc., on my own or to explain my meaning. In my view they are no warriors at all. I do not consider them defenders of the country. Dharma declines when we sing praises of these men. But under modern civilization there is nothing but praise for these people.

Now let us come to the Indian scene. Pathans, Sikhs and Gorkhas are the three acknowledged martial races. There is a similar provision of prostitutes for them as in the case of the German and other soldiers. They have an honoured place, you know, in the Empire. If you look at the ancient lores, adultery has been tolerated in the case of Kshatriyas. I write all this because I wish that the people should derive full benefit from your profound studies of the Vedas and other ancient scriptures. This will be possible by putting the scriptures in the crucible of modern conditions, by objective observation and intense churning. I can write a lot on this subject, but this should do to indicate to you the burden of my theme. Another reason for my brevity is that I have little energy. I have great respect for your learning and truthfulness, which has impelled me r`to write so much.

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

EXTRACTS FROM SHAPURJI SAKLATVALA'S OPEN LETTER

DEAR COMRADE GANDHI,

We are both erratic enough to permit each other to be rude in order to freely express oneself correctly instead of getting lost in artificiality of phraseology....

During my conversation with you at certain periods you did not seem to take a definite attitude with regard to the value of organization of labour and peasants. You emphatically argued that the charkha movement was making organization. I emphatically deny it.... For centuries together, millions of men and women in India have been boiling rice, utilizing similar quantities of rice and water and conducting cooking operations.... All these operations surely have not produced any organization and the work of spinning can never do so any more than the work of cooking....

Before 1900, leaders who . . . worked to build up hopes of salvation . . . were popular leaders as Gladstone was to the British, Bismarck to the Germans, or Parnell to the Irish or Dadabhai or Pherozeshah and Surendranath to the Indians. By the year 1900 the masses of men got tired and sick and their hearts began to burn with fire. The change came on very rapidly and universally and only such individuals as expressed the burning fire of the heart and the revolt of the suffering human beings were taken as leaders. The first task of these was to express boldly and fearlessly the unexpressed voice of the people. The second task of these leaders was . . . to make it absolutely impossible for the old order to continue to function. The third task was to reconstruct and arduously and slowly to build up a new life. Ireland produced a De Valera. He did No. I and 2 and his people are now bravely carrying on his task No. 3. Russia has produced Lenin. He did No. 1 and 2 and though his life was short, he led his people on the right path regarding No. 3. Turkey produced Kemal. He did No. I and 2 and is fortunate enough to be kicking and vigorous to carry on his task No. 3. China produced Sun-Yat-Sen. He completed No. I and 2 and after his death his well-organized and well-disciplined followers are carrying on task No. 3. In Italy, though in contrary direction, Mussolini plays the same individual part, India at that moment announced to the world her leader to be Gandhi. You performed No. 1 but you abandoned task No. 2 and so task No. 3 is out of the question and we are so overwhelmed with the disastrous defect at the second stage of your struggle that our lot today is harder than before. . . .

You have created an influence over our countrymen in the lowest strata of society wider and deeper than anybody else. However, what is your real object? If your purpose is to give your share in the national and political work, your approach to the people should be on terms of absolute equality and your task must be to inspire

confidence into them. From this point of view you must stop allowing people to address you as a Mahatma.

Then there is one thing that I witnessed at Yeotmeal which has hurt me greatly and I had some slight evidence of it before. Your work regarding the removal of untouchability is grand in its aspiration and is not bad in its success as it is generally carried on. However I strongly object to your permitting my countrymen and countrywomen to touch your feet and put their fingers to their eyes. Such touchability appears to be more damnable than untouchability. You are ruining the mentality and the psychology of these villagers for another generation or two. You are preparing the country not for mass civil disobedience but for servile obedience and for a belief that there are superior persons on earth and Mahatmas in this life at a time when in this country the white man's prestige is already a dangerous obstacle in our way. Politically this career of yours is ruinous and from a humanitarian point of view its degenerating influence appears to me to be a moral plague....

What I want of you is that you be a good old Gandhi, put an ordinary pair of khaddar trousers and coat and come out and work with us in the ordinary way. Come and organize with us (as you alone by yourself have failed) our workers, our peasants and our youths, not with a metaphysical sentimentality but with a set purpose a clear-cut and well-defined object and by methods such as by experiment are making success for all human beings.

Therefore before I go, I should like you to get up one morning as from a dream and to say "Yes" and many of us can soon be put together in a good team and set about putting an end to so many deplorable conditions of life in India about which none of us has any doubt.

I remain,
Yours fraternally,

SHAPURJI SAKLATVALA

The Hindustan Times, 17-3-1927

APPENDIX II

SHRADDHANAND MEMORIAL

An appeal signed by Pandit Malaviyaji and Lala Lajpat Rai says:

It is decided that, except the appeal for 2_ lakhs for the Gurukul Kangri which had already been issued by the Punjab Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, only one appeal should be issued on behalf of the Hindu community as a whole for Rs. 10 lakhs, 5 1akhs of which should be kept as a permanent endowment and 5 lakhs should be used immediately as follows: 1_ lakhs for the uplift of the depressed classes *(achhutoddhar);* 1 _ for carrying on the work of *shuddhi* and 1 _ for promoting Hindu *sangathan.* The Trustees shall select such agencies of the Hindu Mahasabha, Sanatan Dharma Sabha and the Arya Samaj, including the Bharatiya Shuddhi Sabha and the Dalitoddhar Sabha of Delhi to carry out the objects of the Trust as they may consider fit from time to time, subject to such general conditions for the submission and audit

of accounts as they may lay down; but the work of *sangathan* shall be carried out through the Hindu Mahasabha alone. The interest of the five lakhs of the permanent fund will also be spent on the three objects named above in the proportion stated. It has also been decided that at least half the total amount raised in a province shall be spent within that province, and this applies to the interest of the permanent endowment fund also.

It has been also resolved that steps be taken to acquire the house in which Swami Shraddhanandji was murdered with the object of converting it into Swami Shraddhanand Memorial Bhavan.

Every donor is free to earmark his donation for any of the purposes named above. The donations will be strictly used for that purpose or purposes only for which a donor has given it.

All donations should be remitted to the Manager, The Punjab National Bank Ltd., Delhi, to be credited to the Shraddhanand Memorial Fund. When remitting money, remitters are requested to send to the Bank a complete statement of the names and addresses of donors, and the amounts subscribed by each donor and also his instructions, if any. They are also requested to send a copy of such statements to the Secretary, Shraddhanand Memorial Fund, Delhi.

To ensure that all subscriptions are duly credited to the Fund, a formal receipt for the amount subscribed will be sent to the donors by the Secretary, Shraddhanand Memorial Fund. If such a receipt is not received by a donor within fifteen days of payment, it is requested that the donor should inform the Secretary of the fact.

We owe it to the memory of the revered Swamiji that the sum of ten lakhs for which the appeal has been issued by the Hindu Mahasabha, should be fully subscribed at the latest by the 30th of April next,

We are of opinion that all efforts should be concentrated on raising the All-India Memorial and that all movements for local or sectional memorials should be deferred until the All-India Memorial Fund is fully subscribed.[1]

The division of the Fund into three parts enables everyone to make his own choice and contribute freely to the object he may have most at heart. It is to be hoped that the subscribers will bear in mind the date before which the memorial committee expects to finish the collections.

Young India, 3-3-1927

APPENDIX III

MEDICAL OPINIONS[2]

Mr. Gandhi has had a mild stroke of apoplexy. He must not be allowed his usual correspondence for a week. His speaking and travelling programmes should be indefinitely postponed. Absolute rest and freedom from his regular activities should

[1] The appeal ends here. The concluding paragraph is editorial comment.
[2] These were published under the title “What Doctors Say”.

be enjoined for an indefinite period. Mr. Gandhi is advised to cancel his travelling and speaking programmes during the hot weather.

W. J. WANLESS

Mahatma Gandhi is now threatened with an impending danger of apoplexy due to high blood-pressure condition as a result of continuous overwork. He must have absolute rest in a cool climate for some time to come. He is also advised to cancel all his present programmes till his condition decidedly improves.

G. V. ANKLIKER, M.D. AND C. R. KOKATNUR, M.D.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-3-1927

APPENDIX IV

WHOM KHADI STANDS FOR

'THE MAN WITH THE HOE'

Bowed by the weight of centuries he leans
Upon his hoe and gazes on the ground,
The emptiness of ages in his face,
And on his back the burden of the world.
Who made him dead to rapture and despair,
A thing that grieves not and that never hopes,
Staid and stunned, a brother to the Ox?
Who loosened and let down this brutal jaw?
Whose was the hand that slanted back his brow,
Whose breath blew out the light within his brain?

* * *

Oh, masters, lords and rulers in all lands,
Is this the handiwork you give to God,
This monstrous thing distorted and soul-quenched?
How will you ever straighten up this shape,
Touch it again with immortality,
Give it the upward looking and the light:
Rebuild in it the music and the dream?

—Edward Markham

Young India, 31-3-1927

APPENDIX V

FROM THE PREFACE TO "BAPU'S LETTERS TO MIRA"

In order that the reader may have a clearer background, I will explain briefly the outline of events in my life which led me to Bapu. Having been brought up in an English country home, I was familiar with rural life, besides which there was, inherent in me from the beginning, a profound love of Nature. At the age of 15, I first

heard the music of Beethoven. Forthwith my spirit within was awakened to a living sense of the Divine Power, and prayer to God became a reality. Through Beethoven's music I was led to Romain Rolland, and through Romain Rolland to Bapu. These were not just easy stages. On the contrary, turmoil, darkness, hope, despair—all had to be passed through before the pure Light of Truth broke in upon my troubled soul and led me to my destination.

All along a power was impelling me. I did not understand it for a long while, but, by the time I came to know of Romain Rolland, this force was becoming apparent to me, and from the time of our first meetings at Villeneuve, an extraordinary sense of mellow happiness possessed me. I felt something was coming. I had not the slightest idea *what.* I only knew that *all would be well.* Even when Romain Rolland talked to me about Bapu, and said a little book he had written about him was in the Press, I did not realize more than that I must read the book. Then the day came when the book was published. I went to the publisher's shop in the Latin Quarter of Paris, where I was then staying. The whole shop window was full of a little book with an orange coloured cover on which was printed in black 'Mahatma Gandhi'. I bought a copy, took my lodging and began to read. I could not put it down. I read and read, and as I read the dawn in my heart glowed brighter and brighter, and by the time I had finished, the Sun of Truth was pouring his rays into my soul. From that moment I knew that my life was dedicated to Bapu. That for which I had been waiting had come, and it was this.

I straightaway went to London and booked a passage to India at the P. & O. office. I also sought out and devoured all the literature I could; writings of Bapu, writings of Tagore, English and French translations of the *Bhagavad Gita;* and even the Upanishads and Vedas I peeped into. But very soon I began to realize that I was a fool to think that I could rush to Bapu like this. I was wholly unfit spiritually and physically, and I must first put myself through a severe training. I accordingly went back to the P. & O. office and changed my reserved berth for one a year later.

I now set about things in a thorough and systematic way. First I studied the rules and regulations of the Sabarmati Ashram in every detail. Then I began changing my diet item by item, until I reached pure vegetarian food. I started sitting cross-legged on the floor. Ten minutes at a stretch was all I could do in the beginning, but with steady practice I became perfectly at ease. I commenced lessons in Urdu and of course learnt carding, spinning and weaving. This had to be in wool, but gave me good practice. At the same time study of the literature continued. In the midst of this training news came in the papers that Bapu had gone on a 21 days' fast for Hindu-Muslim unity. As the days went by, the papers began saying that Bapu would probably not survive. I prayed to God in anguish. The days dragged on. But I never slackened in my training because, even if Bapu were to pass away in his physical form, I knew I must go to India to serve his cause. It seemed an eternity, but at last the 21 days were over and the news came that the fast had been safely broken.

Up to now I had not written a word to Bapu. But on the successful completion of the fast, my heart was so full of thankful joy that I just had to write.

Bapu's Letters to Mira, pp. 3-5

1. LETTER TO SECRETARY, A.I.S.A.

NANDI HILLS,
June 4, 1927

DEAR SIR,

With reference to your letter of the 31st ultimo, I have already said that the Karnatak Agency may be supplied with funds in anticipation of the Council's approval provided of course that Jamnalalji has approved Regarding Maharashtra what Jamnalalji says should be done. But I suggest that Sjt. Dastane should be fully satisfied about the wisdom of the decision. He would see the wisdom of consolidating what has already been undertaken.

Let Satis Babu's letter be circulated. His insistence shows the necessity of holding the Council meeting as early as possible.

Yours faithfully,

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 19779

2. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

NANDI HILLS,
June 4, 1927

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I remain unaffected by the effusion which the *Chronicle* has passed on to you and you to me. Of course you do not expect absolute smooth sailing. Such imbecile opposition you will have. But I know that you will stand unmoved. You will have the solid backing of the vast majority of the Indian population.

I sent you a little note[1] two three days ago, which I hope was duly delivered to you. May God guide your footsteps.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 12358

[1] *Vide* "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 1-6-1927

3. LETTER TO S. D. NADKARNI[1]

NANDI HILLS,
June 4, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I am glad that you are moving our friends on your side to open a local public temple[2] to the so-called untouchables. I hope that the forthcoming meeting will pass the contemplated resolution unanimously, and if they do, they will be doing justice more to themselves than to whom we have so long held under suppression. My opinion is our temples have been forsaken by God. Because of our ungodly treatment of a portion of our countrymen, God has made Himself untouchable, unapproachable and unseeable. God will re-enter our temples only when we have opened not merely our temples but our hearts to these fellow-countrymen and fellow-religionists.

Though your letter for *Young India* does not seem to me to rise to the height of some of the former communications you have been good enough to send me, I propose to publish it[3] as soon as I can, if only for the well-meaning and well-meant hits at me which I know are intended to travel far beyond me, in the hope that they will produce some impression.

I hope my message will be in time for the meeting. I got your letter only last evening and I am sending you the message by the return post.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

S. D. NADKARNI, ESQ.
KARWAR
(N. KANARA)

From a photostat: S.N. 14617

[1] In reply to a letter written on behalf of the workers of Karwar, seeking Gandhiji's opinion on the question of "untouchables and temple entry".

[2] To Vithoba

[3] Published under the caption "On Behalf of Untouchables", in *Young India*, 30-6-1927; *vide* also "Our Shame", 30-6-1927.

4. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

June 4, 1927

You will have to struggle. Manliness consists in struggling. It is such struggling that moulds us. Hence be fearless and fight on. Never lose heart, and, if the enemy succeeds in throwing you down though you may have fought with all your strength, do not get dejected in the least. Be on your feet again and resume the fight. When we do not share responsibility for our defeat, we have no cause at all for shame, for then our defeat is no defeat. You should be very vigilant so that you may not have involuntary emission during sleep, and, if you feel the desire aroused at any hour during the night, you should without a moment's delay, get out of bed immediately and drink some cold water, then sit in cold water and pour a jugful of cold water over the genitals. Often we become calmed down by walking about for a while and repeating Ramanama. Moreover, whenever we are unoccupied we should recall to mind perfect *brahmacharis* like Bhishma[1] and others, that is to say, we should think of their strength of mind. If these seem too distant in time, we should reflect on the lives of Andrews, Pearson, Kitchin and others. If even these seem too remote, at any rate we have with us the five—Vinoba, Balkrishna, Surendra, Chhotelal and Krishnadas. We can cite other examples from India; you should tell yourself that you can certainly do what they can. You should also reflect from time to time on daily readings from the *Gita;* that too can give us great peace of mind.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

5. LETTER TO SHARADABEHN KOTAK

June 4, 1927

What you write about the problem of thieves is quite right. My putting the question to you did not mean that I expected you to be able to find the solution immediately. It was intended to make all the women think. Men must do their duty of protecting women. But after

[1] A character in the *Mahabharata* who early in life took a vow of celibacy and observed it throughout his long life.

all men's bodies are, like those of women, as brittle as glass bangles, though perhaps the male bangles are harder and can bear stronger blows. What women should do when those bangles are broken, is a question which they themselves should consider. There is the same *atman* in woman as in man. It is not affected by differences of caste, sex or country. The wide-awake *atman* in a heroic woman can be a thousand times more powerful than the slumbering *atman* in a wicked man. Hence, in the competition for displaying spiritual consciousness and strength of soul, all people—the maimed and the crippled, the strong and the weak, men and women, the old and the young and children—can participate on equal terms if they wish. Even a dense dark night obstructs only our natural eyes, but if we have developed divine eyes, what can a dense dark night or a long-handled sickle or a large baton do to us? And if, on such a dark night a giant of a man carrying a terrible weapon comes and stands before one of us—the others having either gone to sleep or been killed or run away—if at that time we do not remember the name of Rama, then our having chanted it morning and evening will have been in vain. It is in the hope that it may come to us at such a dreadful time and help us that we unfailingly repeat Ramanama morning and evening even though we may feel lazy, or be tired or sleepy. It is possible that after long practice, that name will come to our lips spontaneously every time we need it, will even be engraved in our hearts.

The women of the Raniparaj community are certainly more fearless than we. They will go anywhere during night time. They do not depend on being protected by men. It is, however, true that they have other fears, but my statement is only about fear of thieves and the like. It is not true to say that the Kaniparaj women do not care about their chastity. It is not proper either, to believe that only those who care for their *chastity* are afraid. The fear which afflicts us in the Ashram has nothing to do with outrage of modesty. If we take count of cases of rape in the world, we shall discover that such incidents are very rare. A woman's virtue is violated through both the man and the woman acting voluntarily, and if a woman is self-controlled and pure in mind, violation of her virtue is impossible. This is true in two senses. One is that the Shastras proclaim, and it must be believed, that the body of one whose mind is pure in every way is protected by the mind itself, just as Sita's mind protected her body. As you know, Ravana could not outrage Sita's modesty, and the reason was not that he did not possess brute strength, but that he knew that if he tried to

assault her his body would be burnt to ashes that very moment; and so he tried to win her consent through all manner of means, deceptions and threats, but they were of no avail in the face of Sita's strength of mind. And the second meaning is that, if a woman's mind is pure, her virtue is not violated and she is not stained by sin, even though she may have been raped. Neither will the world reproach her, nor will there be anything against her from the point of view of dharma. A pure woman, therefore, should never be afraid of her modesty being violated. On the contrary, she may remain confident that, if her mind is steadfast, her body will always remain inviolate. Forest-dwellers everywhere are less often overcome by evil desires than city-dwellers. They have not even the time to fall a prey to such thoughts. I do not mean to say that they all remain pure through their own voluntary effort. It is easy for them to live pure lives as it is easy for us to be vegetarians. Wherever there is immorality in the forests, both the man and the woman fall through their own free will.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary: Courtesy: Narayan Desai

6. *CABLE TO BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION*[1]

[On or after *June 4, 1927*]

BIAS[2]
JOHANNESBURG

STRONGLY ADVISE JOINT ACTION.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 12357

[1] In reply to a cable dated June 3, 1927, received on June 4 from A. I. Kajee; it read: "Transvaal Indians secession from Congress destroys solidarity our community. Mass meeting Johannesburg Sunday. Extremely necessary you cable immediately to association against such action."

[2] Telegraphic address

7. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

NANDI DURG, MYSORE,
[Before *June 5, 1927*][1]

BHAI RAMESHWARJI,

Your letter to hand. I am steadily improving. There is no cause for worry. You did right in informing me of the death of Shankarrao's son. I have sent a letter of consolation to him and his wife. What can I write to bring you peace of mind? Let us believe that the one aim of our life is to control our senses; it is the highest human achievement and therefore attainable with difficulty. By constant effort we can conquer our passions. You should be engaged in some noble work, mentally as well as physically. Only when the mind is uncontrolled does it fall a prey to passion. Why not make a painstaking study of the *Gita?* And why not learn Sanskrit to understand the original work? When you have not got to be at the shop or when you have to be there and have nothing to do, why not ply the charkha or the *takli?* Just as man cuts through solid mountains with persistent effort, so can he cut through the barrier of passion. Therefore you should always be diligent.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 205

8. "SWEET MUSIC IN SPINNING-WHEEL"

I have published this article[2] as I have received it. It is one of those received in response to the public request, made by Shri Karsandas Chitaliya, for articles on the spinning-wheel. He gave me last year the one which he had considered to be the best and preserved. I had intended to publish it on some occasion and I do so now.

This article is dated September 21, 1921. Those days were different from these. In the intoxicating atmosphere of that age, many people used to sing praises of the spinning-wheel. If, therefore,

[1] Gandhiji descended from Nandi Hills to Bangalore on June 5, 1927.
[2] Not translated here

"Vanavasi" still sees *Navajivan* and reads this note, I would ask whether he could say today what he did in 1921. Or does he also feel about the s pinning-wheel as others do who were in love with it in 1921 but dislike it today? If that is so, let him send in his criticism too. If it is well written, I am prepared to publish it, for I do not wish to preserve a single certificate for the spinning wheel which is not genuine. If the spinning-wheel survives, it will be on its own merits. Even if I get many people to write poems in praise of it and publish them, it will make no progress unless it has intrinsic merit. If it has such merit, any spinner's experiences narrated in his rustic language will suffice to support the cause. Every reader of *Navajivan* knows that at present the cause of the spinning-wheel is being advocated in rustic language. It is making slow but steady progress.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-6-1927

9. NATIONAL EDUCATION

A friend writing from Nairobi about national education says what may be briefly stated thus: National education has failed to show any progress because students are not given an education which would train them to be self-reliant. The difficulty would be removed if agriculture is also taught along with charkha. As in the life of the people so also in the school, agriculture should have the first place while Charkha should have the second.

We have considered this criticism in the columns of the *Navajivan* before. But since people generally do not remember what they read in the newspapers, it is necessary to reconsider such questions whenever they are raised. There is no reason for the belief that national education has ceased to make any progress, or that its pace has become very slow. And to the extent that it has really become slow the responsibility is that of the teachers. I have already said so many times and it is something which can be proved. Where the teachers have had perseverance, faith and intelligence coupled with character, national schools are still going strong. We have had occasions to refer to this fact many times.

Though the teachers are responsible for this slowness, they are not to be entirely blamed for it. They were themselves the product of an alien Government and a system of education designed to produce

slaves, and had broken away from it with great difficulty. They gave whatever help they could and then ropped out. The existing national schools must first show their inner strength and brilliance before national education can march further ahead, and I am sure they could do it if they are going to last. Government schools do not impart an education calculated to make the students independent; yet they exist because they have blinded our vision with their dazzle. Besides, they hold out for some students the lure of lucrative jobs carrying four to five hundred rupees a month at the end of their studies. And the students think as they do about a lottery: "One of us is surely going to win the prize. Who knows, I may be that lucky one!" National education does not hold out any such allurement.

Let us now examine the suggestion made by the correspondent. It is true that agriculture occupies a place of importance in our economic life. But it has not disappeared; it is still there. We have got to revive it. There is in it scope for improvement. But improving agriculture is beyond the capacity of those who are engaged in national education. We can do nothing to improve it without the help of the State. It will need lakhs of I rupees which will have to be spent merely on the preliminary experiments. I am sure that this cannot be done without swaraj, for Government laws relating to agriculture should be in accord with the economic conditions of the country. There should be model farms at numerous places throughtout the country for the dissemination of agricultural knowledge and the peasants and farmers should be provided various facilities to enable them to do their work more efficiently. All these things are lacking today in India. But in South Africa, Australia and other countries where there are popular Governments wedded to the welfare of the people, the peasants do enjoy all these advantages. Therefore, the next best thing the national educationists have—is the charkha, as is admitted by the above correspondent. And the institutions which have adopted charkha as the medium of national education can accommodate all the youths wishing to go in for national education, and can train them to become self-reliant. Bu their knowledge of the Charkha must be both comprehensive and scientific. Such youths are being trained gradually, and as the movement for khadi advances national education will also expand and extend over a larger and larger field.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-6- 1927

10. SPEECH AT CHIKBALLAPUR[1]

June 5, I 927

FRIENDS,

I thank you for your purse and address. I thank the Reception commitee and the people of Chikballapur for having made my stay at Nandi so comfortable. You have spent lavishly at your expense in order to anticipate every one of my wants. I shall never forget this kindness. But I must also say that the only reason for my stay in Mysore is to be able to give you my message on behalf of the poorest of the land, your labourers, and I hope that the message of the spinning-wheel would receive an abiding place in your hearts. I shall only be satisfied when I hear that you produce your own khaddar and wear your own khaddar. I hope that in Chikballapur you have no untouchability. I regard untouchabilitv as a blot on Hinduism. I find no authorities in Hinduism for treating a portion of our countryrnen as untouchable. I hope you will remember this. I thank you once more for all your kindness.

The Hindu, 6-6-1927

11. LETTER TO GANGADHAR SHASTRI JOSHI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 5, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

You were good enough to send me a copy of your letter to Dr. Gananath Sen regarding his rendering of certain Ayurvedic terms. I wonder if Dr. Sen ever sent you any reply.

As you seem to be a close student of Ayurveda, could you please tell me

(a) in what way Ayurvedic treatment is superior to the Allopathic treatment?

(b) Is there any progressive research work being done either in Ayurvedic *materia medica* or in any other branch of medicine or surgery in terms of Ayurveda?

(c) Have you or any other Ayurvedic physician investigated the

[1] *En route* to Bangalore

meaning of or tested the prescriptions contained in *hridroga shweta kushta-nashan sukta—kushta-nashan sukta—suktas* reproduced in the current number of the *Vaidika Dharma* edited by Pandit Satavalekar of Oundh? If you have not the magazine, I shall be glad to send it to you.

Yours sincerely,

DR. GANGADHAR SHASTRI JOSHI
TILAK MAHAVIDYALAYA
POONA

From a photostat: S.N. 14147

12. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Jeth Sud 6 [*June 5, 1927*]

DEAR SISTERS,

Your letter.

I have come down to Bangalore today and am not fatigued. Doctors examined me; they say that I shall be all right within a month's time.

What Ramaniklalbhai says is quite true. There are many books that are worth reading. Let him choose what he likes. After all everything depends upon the interest that one who reads to others can create in his listeners. None of you should pass over any portion of the book which you do not understand. You should ask for the meaning again and again, if necessary, till you understand it. Many other things besides become clear if you understand even one thing thoroughly. I like the bangles made by Manibehn Patel out of khadi cloth. I have suggested that the bangles should be made, not of khaddar, but of yarn. The *raksha*[1] is also a kind of bangle and it is always made of yarn. One can put as much art and colour into a yarn bangle as one likes. And I am sure that the innocent pleasure one gets from wearing a thing prepared with careful art by one's own hand can never be had by putting on even a jewel-studded bangle costing thousands of rupees.

Tell Mirabehn that if she desires to study, she should go to Jekibehn regularly and not merely when it pleases her to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3652

[1] Thread that a sister ties round the wrist of her brother on Coconut Day

13. LETTER TO KUMI

BANGALORE,
Jeth Sud 6 [*June 5, 1927*]

CHI. KUMI,

Your letter to hand. I share your unhappiness. But I can offer no consolation except to ask you to bear with it. Chi. Harilal's last letter is worse than even his previous ones. You and I should look upon him as a sick man and take no notice what he writes. I believe he will return to his senses some day. I do hope neither of you two sisters thinks that I have said anything anywhere about you and him. I do not remember having said anything about the plight you are in to anyone except Harilal himself. And I am amazed at what he writes about Chanchi. I have looked upon you all girls as my daughters. Haridasbhai had discussed with me at length the question of Chanchi's betrothal. Where could we have found a more sober girl however much we tried? I do not know if Harilal is still sore about my attitude to the marriage. It is true I was against an early marriage. But have I no business to tell you even this? There is no question of my defending myself against Harilal's attack. But if you so much as feel that I have done something that adds to your unhappiness, please do not let such a thought ever cross your mind. Just for this reason I writeall this. I do not worry because you sisters are both brave. I have already made arrangements to take Manu to the Ashram and keep her there. I would advise her to be sent immediately. If Bali reads Harilal's letters, let her read this letter too. But if you have taken the precaution of not letting her read his letters, there is no need to let her read this one either. But if she has read them, ask her not to be unhappy on account of Harilal's letter.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12193

14. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE CITY,
[After, *June 5, 1972*][1]

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

Your letter. We will have to resist the temptation of the T.S. money if the mill owners will not let us use it. I do not believe that my writing to Mangaldas will help. The better course would be for you to have frank talks with him and other mill owners and find out what their feelings are in the matter. If you like I shall write to Gordhanbhai. We must work even for the mill-hands with detachment. What can we do if they do not in any way understand what is good for them.

Money for the Antyaja school should come only from Antyaja work. If it is necessary to collect funds for others that can be done but we do not want to reduce the workers to destitution or beggary. They have money. They should spend that money on the education and other needs of their children. I know it is difficult to get them to do so. For them raising funds is easy. But we have begun our work knowing full well that it will be difficult. Having sacrificed everything, if we fail, it is not failure but success. Because in that failure lies our well-being and that of others. So after doing whatever we can if some schools close down, it cannot be helped.

Shankerlal will have to pay a visit here. If you come along too at that time we can talk things over and you may feel somewhat reassured.

I reached Bangalore on Sunday. My health is good. The house is not crowded.

Blessings form

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32794

[1] From the contents of the letter. Gandhiji reached Bangalore on June 5, a Sunday.

15. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, BANGALORE[1]

[After *June 5, 1927*]

Ever since our arrival, a number of people have been gathering here every evening to take part in our evening prayers . . . and one evening at the close of the prayer, Gandhiji had to address them a few words of appeal and advice. He said:

I want you to be patient with me. That is to say, you will not crowd round me or follow me when I go out for my evening walk. I am a patient and I have yet to recover my voice. I have yet to recover my strength and I have come here to rest myself. After I get better I hope to do what little service I can to the people of Mysore. You will therefore give me all the rest I need and not disturb my quiet walks. This is so far as I am concerned. As for you, I may say that all of you, no matter to what faith you belong, are welcome to take part in the prayer. But there are one or two conditions. The first is that you should come with a prayerful mind, a prayerful heart and a prayerful attitude. Everyone—Hindu, Muslim, Christian, no matter to what faith he belongs—can participate in the prayer. After the repetition of the verses is done, we chant *Raghupati Raghava Rajaram, Patitapavana Sitaram,* in which all who have a voice may join, so that our prayer may gather volume, and please God if there is a God who listens to our prayers. There is another condition. You know what *Patita Pavana Sitaram* means. We pray to God who saves the fallen and the downtrodden. I would therefore ask you to come in khadi, for khadi links you with the fallen and the downtrodden. As a visible token of your desire to help them I ask you all—men, women and children, young and old, of whatever faith—to come dressed in khadi. That is the least little that you can do to be fit to repeat the prayer:

Raghupati Raghava Rajaram
Patitapavana Sitaram

It is a prayer in which everyone may join, not only the Hindus but Muslims, Christians and others, for it is an invocation not to a king, but the King of kings, the God of gods, whom we all adore.

Young India, 16-6-1927

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

16. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN[1]

[JUNE] 6 [1927][2]

RECEIVED WIRE. SUBJECT JAMNALALJI'S OPINIONS SUGGEST GOING WITH VALUNJKER GANGU SABARMATI. VALUNJKER TEACHING HINDI REGULARLY PENDING OTHER ARRANGEMENT. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5235. Courtesy: Mirabehn

17. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 6, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have been regularly receiving your letters. But it is well for you to know that one letter was received after the letter following it. How that letter could have been delayed for two days and where, it is difficult for me to know. Do you post the letters yourself or who does?

Do please write as often as you like. I am interested in knowing the progress of events there. I shall write beyond the Monday letter only when necessary.

If all goes well after the experiences you have gone through, I shall be delighted. But how it can after you have found the principal parties shifting their ground and prevaricating, I do not know. But you have my full letter and I shall await your reply to it. No more compromise with bhang. But you will come to decision yourself with due regard to all the circumstances as they may present themselves to you.

We moved to Bangalore yesterday. And though there was some strain, not of the journey but at a place near Nandi where I had to stop

[1] In reply to her telegram which read: "Wrote June 3 suggesting I leave owing unpleasant discoveries. Since then rapid developments. Exposures telegraphed Jamnalalji recommending come immediately investigate situation. Will await his coming. Afterwards advisable I leave immediately. Please telegraph advise where go. All well. Love."

[2] *Vide* the succeeding item.

and whose people had made all the arrangements for my comfort, the blood-pressure had not increased at all nor did I notice any other effect of the strain. The doctors came yesterday and they said I should be quite all right in a month's time and able to do the ordinary touring though not at breakneck speed.

I have already given the address here—Kumara Park, Bangalore City.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

Just as I,was closing this I got your wire. I was prepared for it. I have wired[1] saying that subject to Jamnalalji's opinion you should go with Valunjker and Gangu to Sabarmati and learn Hindi with Valunjker, pending other arrangement. Now that Gangu is attached to you so much, I want you to keep her under your wings so long as it is necessary. There are several other places I have mentioned to you already but I am not in a hurry to come to a decision. If Valunjker and Gangu are not to be with you, it might be as well for you to pass a few days with me before settling down anywhere else for finishing your Hindi. You may have acquired enough confidence now to finish your Hindi even at the Ashram. What in my opinion you need is someone who would talk to you in Hindi only. But I shall he largely guided by your instinct.

You are having the richest experiences of your life. Turn to verse 9 of the 6th chapter, *Gita*:

"The equiminded one is the same to the good as well as evil. . . ,"[2] We have to love them all in spite of the sad discoveries. But love and equal treatment are expressed and can be expressed only in service. 'You are bad but I love you just as when I thought you were good.' Life's work is summed up in attaining that state.

Rock of ages cleft for me
Let me hide myself in Thee

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5234. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] As in the source

18. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 6, 1927

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

This will reach you the same time that Sastri reaches South Africa. Though in one way his arrival will somewhat ease the terrible strain which you are undergoing, I can say that in the initial stages, his arrival will also add to your burdens. For you will be wanting to protect him from both the Indian malcontents and Europeans.

I had your cablegram to one portion of which, that is, with reference to Pragji, I sent you a reply. You have been this time so grandly economic in sending me cablegrams, and have I not shown my appreciation by dealing with your warning about rice-mills and destruction of vitamins?

At first I thought I would deal with that part of your cablegram which referred to Sastri's table allowance. But I saw at once that this was one of your nervous mistakes—if that is a proper expression to describe what you know I mean. That cablegram was not from Charlie the man of God, but from C. F. Andrews the man of calculation whose calculation had told upon his brain and brought on all kinds of imaginary fears due to his nervousness. After all have we not hit upon Sastri for his character and learning and for his simplicity and hatred of all pomp and ceremonial? Just as if you become a Grandee and sought to win over people by entertaining them at fashionable hotels and moved about in first class motor-cars you would lose all the magnificent influence which you have gained in South Africa, so I am sure will Sastri lose all his influence if he began to give lavish entertainments with a view to gaining friends not for himself but for his cause. After all will it not be better that he appears in reality as a representative of a poor, exploited continent than that he should appear as an agent of a mighty foreign and expensive Government dependent for its lavishness upon the impoverishment of dumb millions? Is not his agency of the Government subordinate to his agency of the Man within him?

I recall the controversy that was carried on in the public Press in 1889 or 1890 in London in connection with the expensive upkeep of the Bishop of London with his palace. I remember also the sensation

that was created when the Bishop came out with his balance-sheet in which he showed on the expenditure side the cost of liveried servants, a carriage in pair, etc., which he justified because he had to move among and affect the lives of lords and kings. If I recollect rightly, this publication of the balance-sheet and the defence exposed the Bishop to further ridicule. Imagine Jesus wearing robes resplendent with diamonds and pearls and holding dinners served in golden plates with the choicest old wines and viands with a view to comforting epicures and millionaires of his age. But I must stop here. I think I have given you enough tonic for steadying your nerve and refreshing you.

Though I seem to be on the road to recovery, the head still remains silly and becomes refractory under the slightest pressure. However, I pray and grin and bear it. He gave me all the needed strength for all these years. He might humble my pride by reducing me to helplessness.

Yours,

From a photostat: S.N. 12347

19. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

BANGALORE CITY,
June 6, 1927

CHI. MANILAL AND CHI. SUSHILA,

So far your letters have been coming regularly. It would be good if you kept this up.

This letter should go to you by the same steamer by which Sastriji arrives there.

The translation of the *Gita* is now proceeding five times faster, so that you will now have a lot of feeding. You should both ask me whatever you do not understand.

My health continues to improve. I arrived in Bangalore yesterday. Nandi is now too cold for me. I shall be here for a month at least. Thereafter, I hope, I shall get to move about a little. Look after Sastriji.

If Sushila learns type-composing and if God keeps her well she will be of much help to you. I too wish she should be.

If you earnestly study each and every problem there, you will

acquire the knowledge that I expect of you.

Let not your expenses or style be such as to rouse envy. Could this by any chance be the reason why the men do not stick to you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1133. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

20. MESSAGE ON V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

[*June 7, 1927*][1]

I wish your meeting every success. The Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri embarks upon his arduous mission under the best of auspices. He takes with him the goodwill of all India, and both the Europeans and our countrymen in South Africa are looking forward to his advent. I know that if any man can possibly produce harmony between the Europeans and the Indian settlers, it is certainly Sjt. Srinivasa Sastri. May God give him all the wisdom and all the strength he will need in South Africa.

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-6-1927

21. LETTER TO FIROZA P. S. TALEYARKHAN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 7, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter. I came down here on Sunday. Do please come any day you like except Mondays when I am silent. Four O'clock is the best time for me. I hope you are feeling better.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

FIROZA P. S. TALEYARKHAN
3, RESIDENCY ROAD
BANGALORE

From the original: C.W. 9170

[1] The message was read out on this date at a public meeting in Sir Cowasji Jehangir Hall, Bombay; Sarojini Naidu presided.

22. LETTER TO RUSTOMJI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE CITY,
June 7, 1927

BHAISHRI RUSTOMJI,

Your letter of the 3rd I got today. And it is just today that I learn from the papers that Manchershah has been sentenced to four years and that he has not yet given up his fast. Bhai Manchershah is a very good boy and also a very stubborn one. He does not listen to me as to you. When I was in Nagpur last, I had a long talk with him. I had asked him not to be impatient, but I found he was the type who would listen to none. Parents must give up all hopes of [controlling] their children when the latter grow up. Everyone acts in accordance with his karma. Parents should speak to their grown-up children as to friends and if the latter pay no heed they should keep quiet. I too have grown-up sons. I put up with the fact that my eldest son does not listen to me nor do I grieve over it. I write this hoping it would console you. I am sorry I can do nothing more than asking you to keep your peace. Why do you think yourself helpless? One who trusts in God is not helpless, one who relies on man is truly helpless.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12820

23. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Jeth Sud 8, 1983 [*June 7, 1927*]

DEAR HARIBHAU,

I have your letter in Hindi.[1] I am dictating this in Gujarati as I can finish the letter quicker.

I understand that the work of mobile sales is going on well there. The experience everywhere is the same. This would show that people do love khadi, but only as a step-sister. As for Mysore, I have received the authentic papers and I shall send you the copies. What is the condition on which a reply to the question will be sought from Sir Prabhashankar Pattani? The reply will come when we ask for it. Is that what you would want too?

[1] This sentence is in Hindi.

Mahadev does not remember to have received a reply to the letter you wrote to the ruler of Gwalior.

Do not worry about Chi. Martand.

Are you now fully recovered?

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

24. A LETTER

[Before *June 8, 1927*][1]

Yours is not pure love. The woman is married. If you wish to serve that woman and her husband in any way, you must give up every connection with her. If, for that purpose, you have to leave Broach, you should do that too. It is your moral duty to do so. If you save yourself from the *adharma* that is now being widely practised in the name of love, you will earn admiration for your great courage.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

25. TELEGRAM TO SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM

June 8, 1927

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SABARMATI

TELL JAMNALALJI MIRABEHN WIRES MAHARAJ OTHERS FLED KASHMIR. HE SHOULD STILL GO AND PATIENTLY INVESTIGATE THINGS ASHRAM NOTWITHSTANDING ABSENCE PRINCIPALS SENDING HIM FULL LETTER REWARI. IF JAMNALALJI GONE POST THIS.
NEED NOT REPEAT BY WIRE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5232. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] The source contains this letter before the entries for June 8, 1927.

26. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

. . [1] *Sud 9* [*June 8, 1927*][2]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Your telegram. I sent you a telegram[3] which you must have received at the Ashram. I have a shocking report from Mirabehn about the incident of water.[4] Since you must have learnt about it all, I make suggestions only for future. Although Maharajji and others have already left, you should closely investigate whatever calls for investigation. We have got to write something about whatever facts we come across. We must caution the parents, and also the people. If the men and women who stay there are innocent and can understand things they ought to be asked to go away. If you want you may detain Mirabehn for some time to help the innocent residents. You need not stay there for long. If Mirabehn has to leave the place, I think it would be all right if Valunjker and Gangubehn stayed with her. Gangubehn appears to have taken well to Mirabehn; it seems she will learn a lot from her. Now the question is where these people should go. If Gangubehn has not to stay with her, Mirabehn might wish to go with me for some time. Thus she may have a little more peace of mind and to some extent devote herself to her studies. But if you too think that she should stay with Gangubehn and others, at the moment I can think of only Sabarmati or Wardha. Consider any other idea that you may have.

My health continues to improve.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 10605

[1] The source is illegible here.

[2] From the succeeding item

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

[4] The reference to bhang water; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 23-5-1927 and 3-6-1927.

27. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 8, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letters and telegram. I remain unperturbed. We have simply to deal with this corruption as a surgeon deals with eruptions which are symptomatical of some deep-seated internal disease. I have written separately to Jamnalalji. I did feel that your letters were being tampered with. But I considered that also to be good because, if they have disturbed your outgoing and incoming post, they have learnt something from it.

I have suggested to Jamnalalji that even though the principal parties have gone, you should continue your investigations and probe the disease to its source. There may be some simple folks who are mere dupes. If their eyes can be opened, you should open them, and they should be advised to leave the Ashram not upon some pretext or another but upon the clearest possible statement of the discovery of corruption. And, in whatever you do, let Jamnalalji's be the final judgment. He is shrewd, penetrating, fearless and just; and he has greater experience than you have of that institution and of men and things in general in India. So it is wise to be guided by his judgment.

If it is finally decided that you should leave at once, I can only think of Sabarmati or Wardha, if you have Valunjker and Gangubehn with you. After your last letter I feel more and more that Gangubehn should not be torn from you. Whether it is an institution or whether it is an individual, we have the same code of conduct. She requires the same care and attention as the whole problem of swaraj would, provided that it becomes the clear duty for the moment to attend to the A dindividual, and it seems to me just now that you are a windfall for Gangubehn and you may prove her salvation.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5237. Courtesy: Mirabehn

28. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 8, 1927

I have your beautiful and strong letter. wIt pains me to think that there was no one who would give you the proper resolution. However you have now got it and you will let me know how you are faring with it.

Thanks to the prayers of innumerable friends known and unknown to me, I seem to be getting better and stronger and hope to be fairly in harness next month. I am taking care of myself for I want you to succeed in your anti-drink campaign so that I can come there and reap the fruits of the work you are now doing. But the implications of your success are enormous. And if I had no faith in God and His utter goodness, I should despair of a comparatively unknown worker in the slums reaching the high and the mighty of the land and changing their hearts. May you have all the strength for so doing.

I am glad you have written to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and I do hope that he will be able to do the work.

Yours sincerely,

MISS MURIEL LESTER
KINGSLEY HALL
POWIS ROAD
BOW
E. 3 LONDON

From a photostat: S.N. 12508Ï

29. LETTER TO BASIL MATHEWS

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
June 8, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Mr. K. T. Paul has just handed your letter personally to me.

Here is my answer to your enquiry[2]:

TRUTH and LOVE have been jointly the guiding principle of my life. If God who is indefinable can be at all defined, then I should say that God is TRUTH. It is impossible to reach HIM, that is, TRUTH, except through LOVE. Love can only be expressed fully when man reduces himself to a cipher. This process of reduction to cipher is the highest effort man or woman is capable of making. It is the only effort worth making, and it is possible only through ever-increasing self-restraint.

Ever at youth's service,

BASIL MATHEWS, ESQ.,
EDITOR, "WORLD'S YOUTH"
3, RUE GENERAL DUFOUR
GENEVA

From a photostat: S.N. 12514

[1] Permanent address
[2] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Basil Mathews", 5-1-1927.

30. LETTER TO HENRY A. ATKINSON

AS AT SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,[1]
SABARMATI (INDIA),
June 8, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Mr. K. T. Paul was able only yesterday to hand me personally your letter of 5th September last. He told me that you were likely to visit India during the cold weather this year. If so, I might have the pleasure of being able to discuss your proposal more fully when we meet. At present, I shall only say that the idea of a religiousconference somehow or other does not appeal to me as religious enough. I say this in all humility.

Yours sincerely,

DR. HENRY A. ATKINSON
70, FIFTH AVENUE
NEW YORK

From a photostat: S.N. 12515

31. LETTER TO HARRY F. WARD

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[2]
June 8, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 11th March last. I have your articles which I shall go through as soon as I can. As you may have known I had a collapse two months ago during my tour and I am now convalescent.

The Chinese visit has been indefinitely postponed.

I have no recollection of the book on *Non-violent Coercion*[3] having been received by me from you. Had the receipt come to my knowledge, I should have acknowledged it. But it is likely that it was received and not brought to my notice, if at the time I was travelling. I shall now enquire; but in any case, you need not trouble to send me

[1] Permanent address
[2] Permanent address
[3] By Case

another copy because that book was sent to me, I cannot now recall by whom, two years ago, and I read it with interest.

Please remember me to Mrs. Ward.

Yours sincerely,

HARRY F. WARD

UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

BROADWAY AT 120TH STREET

NEW YORK

From a photostat: S.N. 12516

32. LETTER TO KUVALAYANAND

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,

June 8, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your prompt reply. I shall try to increase the quantity of butter.

The *pranayama* causes no difficulty, and as a rule, I take all the deep breath without a break.

I did not notice the effects you ascribed to *savasana.* May it not be that the prescribed period is too short, that is two minutes? I did feel refreshed when I used to lie flat on my back for nearly 15 minutes.

Nor did I notice any positive effect of *sarvangasana.* Would you advise increasing the angle or increasing the period for the pose at the present angle?

I forgot to mention the massage. It has been continued without interruption. But the abdominal and heart massage has been omitted for some time. The abdominal was omitted for fear that continued massage might weaken the intestinal muscles and may render it a habit always to have that massage for inducing proper motion. The heart massage I left off feeling it to be unnecessary arguing to myself, perhaps wrongly, that the massage could not possibly reach the heart which is floating in a solid case of ribs and flesh. Now that you have thought of the massage and specifically mentioned the abdominal and

the heart, I shall resume the massage. But in your next letter, you will please give me your answer to my doubt.

Yours sincerely,

SRIMAT KUVALAYANANDJI
KUNJAVANA
LONAVLA

From a photostat: S.N. 12592

33. LETTER TO KUMI

June 8, 1927

I read your letter and Harilal's letters. Harilal's letters neither surprise nor pain me. He was born during what I regard, relatively, as my period of indulgence. By that time I had already tasted non-vegetarian food and intended to eat it more often when I was independent. The company which I kept was also not good, though I did not realize it. All such things cannot but affect children invisibly, and, therefore, myself and Ba, to the extent that she was a willing partner in indulgence, are responsible for the condition in which Harilal lives today. Why, then, blame Harilal? And you too should not blame yourself. It is certainly bad of him to make this charge against Chi. Bali. . . .[1] Personally, I believe that Harilal will wake up from his deep slumber and reform himself. But that may be because of my attachment as a father, or possibly my faith as a human being makes me say so. Be that as it may, we can only wish that God should give him good sense.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] As in the source

34. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
[*June 8, 1927*][1]

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

Your letter to hand. Glad to learn you are well. No more need now to give up milk. Regarding the body as a means of [serving] the people and as the gateway to *moksha*, it becomes duty of every servant [of society] and seeker of *moksha* to take the care of his body with all possible efforts as required by his dharma. I can understand how, during illness you felt the wicked passion crystallized into an image and later the divine power too appeared similarly. But it should be realized that both are mental projections. And true dharma consists in not even expecting such an experience. Divine revelation is not a miracle but the reward of *tapascharya* and the endless spiritual joy that this experience brings is the real truth. All else is unreal. And this is the true meaning of disinterested service. When in trouble one need not give one's prayer to be saved from pain, yet it is certainly no better than patiently enduring the pain. Indeed, why should we desire happiness? When pain comes or happiness, it should all be the same to us. We should not strive for happiness nor furnish the trappings of pain. In all circumstances we should do our duty as we see it from time to time.

I hope you got my earlier letter. The help received from the Maharaja and the other officials is a matter of satisfaction.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6530

[1] A part of this letter is available in photostat S.N. 10604. It was presumably written on the same date as S.N. 10605 i.e., "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 8-6-1927.

35. NOTE

KHADDAR WORK IN NELLORE DISTRICT

Deshabhakta Konda Venkatappayya sends the following[1] remarkable notes about the progress of khadi in the Nellore District of Andhra. There is much in the notes which can be copied by every municipality and other khadi associations.

Young India, 9-6-1927

36. ASHRAM TANNERY

It is possible for me now to inform readers that they can get from the Sabarmati Satyagraha Ashram Tannery Department well-prepared dead-cattle hide. Sandals, belts and such other things are already being made but not yet in quantities large enough for executing all the orders that may be received. But it is possible now to meet a fair demand for prepared dead-cattle hide in three colours, black, dark-brown and yellow, and two qualities at Rs. 1-8-0 and Rs. 1-4-0 per pound. Those who are interested in making this experiment a success and who desire to use only dead-cattle hide should correspond with the Manager, Satyagraha Ashram Tannery Department, for all further information. Till the Ashram is ready to execute orders for boots, shoes and other prepared leather articles, I suggest the purchase of dead-cattle hide which is now available at the Ashram, and getting what they want prepared through their own shoe-makers. It is easier, cheaper and more expeditious for people to get used to buying hide as they buy khadi, and to get articles prepared for themselves as they get their clothes prepared from the khadi they purchase. It is not easy to open many tanneries. It would be a proper division of labour to take the work of manufacture off the hands of tanneries, if the work of taking possession of all the raw hide of dead cattle with a view to replacing the hide of slaughtered cattle is to be done with expedition.

Young India, 9-6-1927

[1] Not reproduced here

37. KHADI FRANCHISE

Sjt. Srinivasa Iyengar, who is endeavouring with might and main to signalize his year of office as President of the Congress by achieving, if human effort can, Hindu-Muslim unity and by doing many other things, asked me when he kindly visited me at Nandi, whether I would relent in the matter of the obligation on every member of a Congress organization habitually to wear khadi. I told him that there was nothing for me to relent about. At Gauhati I was not insistent on the present clause. When asked, I merely gave my opinion that experience had shown that either the khadi clause should go altogether, or it should be stiffened to mean habitual as distinguished from ceremonial wear. I have seen nothing since to alter that opinion.

But if the members do not desire any discipline, or desiring discipline they do not want the clause about habitual khadi wear, and if they would laugh the khadi clause to scorn and break the rule on every occasion that offered itself to them, the clause should be undoubtedly removed. In a popular institution, it must be the opinion of the majority that must count. But I have always held that when a respectable minority objects to any rule of conduct, it would be dignified for the majority, and would conduce to the good of the Congress, for the majority to yield to the minority. Numerical strength savours of violence when it acts in total disregard of any strongly-felt opinion of a minority. The rule of majority is perfectly sound, only where there is no rigid insistence on the part of the dissenters upon their dissent, and where there is on their behalf a sportsmanlike obedience to the opinion of the majority. No organization can run smoothly when it is divided into camps, each growling at the other and each determined to have its own way by hook or by crook. I had therefore no hesitation in telling the President, that he should assist the removal of the clause about khadi if that clause could not gain willing submission from the minority.

This, however, is totally different from the question of my opinion. Any appeal to me to change my opinion, as has been done so often before, would be, to say the least, unfair to me. I must be allowed to retain my opinion as to the khadi clause or as to the method of running the Congress organization. All I can say is that my

opinion should have no greater weight than the opinion of any other member of the Congress. My own opinion is emphatically that it will be wrong for the Congress, if it is to have an organic connection with the starving millions, to break this one and only bond between the classes and the masses. But I know that there is another school of thought in our country which rejects khadi as any token of a bond between the classes and the masses, and regards it as a mere *mahatmaic* freak or fad. That school is entitled to the same respect for its opinion as I venture to claim for my own. The President and the other members of the Congress have really to decide the question upon its merits, and ask themselves what is good for the Congress and fearlessly decide accordingly.

After all khadi is a force to be reckoned with, if it has come to stay. If it has staunch, true and self-sacrificing workers to back it, and if it has intrinsic value, it will prosper even though the Congress should in its wisdom give it up as part of the franchise, or even give it up altogether. The Congress will be the first to recognize anything that becomes a living force in the country. It may legitimately ignore it till it has proved its vitality. There may be and there are no doubt many things which are good in themselves. But a vast popular organization like the Congress cannot possibly take up things merely because they are good. It can only take up things that are good, provided they have popular backing. Without such backing the Congress would cease to be representative of the people and would merely represent a body of reformers or faddists.

Let the members of the Congress therefore come to a decision untrammelled by my opinion or anybody else's. If their experience tells them that khadi has no backing in the country, if they think that it has nothing to do with the masses, they should unhesitatingly repeal the offending clause.

I have repeatedly held, that in every matter of urgency the All-India Congress Committee has not only the power but is bound to deal with the urgency as if it was itself the Congress, and run the risk of its decision being overturned at the next ordinary session of the Congress. A special session becomes necessary only when on any matter of urgency opinion is sharply divided, or when on any such matter public opinion requires to be educated, or lastly, when a popular demonstration on an intensive scale on any given question is required. In every other circumstance, and in every other matter of urgency, I venture to think that the All-India Congress Committee will

be abdicating its function if it does not give its decisive opinion and act upon it.

Young India, 9-6-1927

38. STUDENTS IN CONFERENCE

The Secretary of the sixth Sind Students' Conference sent me a printed circular asking for a message. I received a wire also asking for the same thing. But being in a somewhat inaccessible place, both the circular letter and the telegram were received too late for me to send a message. Nor am I in a position to comply with numerous requests for messages, articles and what not. But as I profess to be interested in everything connected with students as I am somewhat in touch with the student world all over India, I could not help criticizing within myself the programme sketched in the circular letter. Thinking that it might be helpful, I reduce some of it to writing and present it to the student world. I take the following from the circular letter which by the way is badly printed and contains mistakes which are hardly pardonable for a students' society:

> The organizers of this Conference are endeavouring their utmost to make this Conference as interesting and instructive as possible.... We intend organizing a series of educational discourses and we request you to give us the benefit.... The problem of female education here in Sind deserves a special consideration.... We are not blind to the other necessities of students. Sports competitions are being organized and along with elocution competitions they will, it is hoped, make the Conference more interesting. Nor have we eliminated drama and music from our programme. . . . Pieces in Urdu and English will also be staged.

I have not omitted a single operative sentence that would give one an idea of what the Conference was expected to do, and yet one fails to find a single reference to things of permanent interest to the student world. I have no doubt that the dramatic and musical and gymnastic performances were all provided on a "grand scale". I take the phrase in inverted commas from the circular. I have no doubt also that the Conference had attractive papers on female education. But so far as the circular is concerned there is no mention of the disgraceful *deti-leti* (dowry) practices, from which the students have not freed themselves and which in many respects makes the lives of Sindhi girls

a hell upon earth and of parents of daughters a torture. There is nothing in the circular to show that the Conference intended to tackle the question of the morals of the students. Nor is there anything to show that the Conference was to do anything to show the students the way to become fearless nation-builders. It is a matter of no small credit to Sind that it is supplying so many institutions with brilliant professors, but more is always expected from those who give much. And I, who have every reason to be grateful to Sindhi friends for giving me fine co-workers for the Gujarat Vidyaptith, am not going to be satisfied with getting professors and khadi workers. Sind has got its Sadhu Vasvani. It can boast of a number of great reformers. But the students will put themselved in the wrong, if they will be contented with appropriation of the merit gained by the sadhus and reformers of Sind. They have got to become nation-builders. The base imitation of the West, the ability to speak and write correct and polished English, will not add one brick to the temple of freedom. The student world, which is receiving an education far too expensive for starving India and an education which only a microscopic minority can ever hope to receive, is expected to qualify itself for it by giving its life-blood to the nation. Students must become pioneers in conservative reform, conserving all that is good in the nation and fearlessly ridding society of the innumerable abuses that have crept into it.

These conferences should open the eyes of students to the realities before them. They should result in making them think of things which, in the class-room adapted to its foreign setting, they do not get an opportunity of learning. They may not be able in these conferences to discuss questions regarded as purely political. But they can and they must study and discuss social and economic questions which are as important to our generation as the highest political question. A nation-building programme can leave no part of the nation untouched. Students have to react upon the dumb millions. They have to learn to think not in terms of a province, or a town, or a class, or a caste, but in terms of a continent and of the millions who include untouchables, drunkards, hooligans and even prostitutes, for whose existence in our midst every one of us is responsible. Students in olden times were called *brahmacharis,* that is, those who walked with and in the fear of God. They were honoured by kings and elders. They were a voluntary charge on the nation, and in return they gave to the nation a hundredfold strong souls, strong brains, strong arms. Students in the modern world, wherever they are to be found among fallen nations, are considered to be their hope, and have become the

self-sacrificing leaders of reforms in every department. Not that we have no such examples in India; but they are far too few. What I plead for is that students' conferences should stand for this kind of organized work befitting the status of *brahmacharis.*

Young India, 9-6-1927

39. WHAT WE ARE LOSING

The readers of *Young India* are familiar with Mr. Gregg's name. He is studying in a very concrete manner and with a passion worthy of a patriotic son of the soil the many questions affecting this land. His studies and experiments in hand-spinning continue unabated. He is experimenting in education of the children of backward classes. He is interested in the welfare of these classes. And in that connection, he is studying the question of agriculture. Having watched the economic and highly hygienic disposal of night-soil at the Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, he is now studying that question in a methodical manner. In the course of a letter suggesting the establishment of an experim-ental farm he says:

> The special feature of the farm would be its use of night-soil as fertilizer, burying it as is done at the Satyagraha Ashram, or treating it as do the farmers of China and Japan.[1] The whole body of sweepers in the entire area from which the collections would be made would need to be carefully organized and gradually trained into the best ways of handling the stuff.
>
> In a very short time, such a farm would become wonderfully productive in either grain, cattle-fodder, fruit or certain kinds of vegetables, all of which could be sold in the same locality, thus avoiding transportation charges in the marketing and yielding a fair profit for the further development of the scheme or the education and betterment of the whole sweeper community of the city or district. Such use of the night-soil would be an enormous saving of very valuable manurial material which is now not only almost entirely wasted, I believe, but a source of much illness and consequent economic loss to the entire community, through the breeding of flies and the carrying of all sorts of germs and filth.

Mr. Gregg then continues:[2]

Young India, 9-6-1927

[1] As described in *Farmers of Forty Centuries* by F. H. King, quoted at length by Gregg

[2] Not reproduced here

40. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 9, 1927

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

This is the fourth letter I am writing to you after your departure from Bombay. Jamnalalji has sent me your cablegram. Hence this letter in English. I must not yet try to write letters myself. In order to conserve my energy, therefore, I am dictating most of my correspondence, whether in English, Hindi or Gujarati.

Malaviyaji is with me today. He is on his way to Ooty to recoup himself. He came this morning and was to have left this evening; but on my telling him that the day after tomorrow is the Mysore Maharaja's birthday and suggesting that he should go to Mysore to give his blessings before proceeding to Ooty, he has sent a telegram to the Dewan. He has suspended his journey forward and will probably leave for Mysore tomorrow. Of course, I have been in regular correspondence with him and he has been replying by wires. He is looking much pulled down, but he is as hopeful as ever about everything. There is nothing wrong with his body. It is simply weakness caused by ceaseless wear and tear. He promises to take about a month's rest in Ooty. He has Dr. Mangal Singh with him, and, of course, a cook. Govind was with him as far as Bombay but has been obliged to go to Allahabad as he could not get a postponement of his 'crow case'.

I wonder if I suggested to you that you should see Miss Muriel Lester who is working in the slums of London. She was in India for some time last year. She was at the Ashram for one month. She is a most enthusiastic and able worker. She is working in the cause of total prohibition and is trying to cultivate public opinion there. Her address is: Miss Muriel Lester, Kingsley Hall, Powis Road, Bow, E. 3.

I hope that your health has improved and likewise Lalaji's. I descended from Nandi last Sunday. I am making fair progress. Doctors here are of opinion that I will be able to resume a moderate amount of touring next month.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From the original.C.W. 7877.Courtesy:G.D.Birla

41. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

KUMARA PARK, BANALORE,
June 9, 1927

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. I would suggest your not disturbing the arrangement as per *Young India* announcement. Poor Shankerlal! He got so frightened over your letter that he began referring every matter to me. I have consoled him and told him that he need not do so, and that, in any case, he should first consult Jamnalalji and, after getting his opinion, he might refer matters to me so that I might not have to go through all the details. I am now awaiting his letter. But I know he will be more at ease if he has your letter signifying your approval of the arrangement pending the next meeting of the Council.

I endorse all you say about labour and the Congress. If labour was to be properly organized and not exploited for political purposes, it would certainly be a most desirable thing for the Congress to take charge of labour. And I presume Rajendra Babu's approval goes no further than that. But at the present moment we have not got in the Congress men of the stamp required for constructive organization. The whole thing is mere talk.

I hope you got the book I sent to you on *Food and Health*. I descended to Bangalore on Sunday last and I am feeling better. I am taking more food. The tour will begin with Mysore, which itself will take perhaps a fortnight. And Mysore is a big plateau, 3,000 ft. high, therefore the climate throughout the Mysore State is very moderate.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: *G.N. 1573*

42. LETTER TO M. K. SAHASRABUDDHI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 9, 1927

MY DEAR SAHASRABUDDHI,

Your postcard addressed to Sabarmati was redirected here and received by me only yesterday. I remember you well and I did talk about you to Narmada, when I was in Alibagh. But I do not remember

having suggested to anybody that you should leave your studies and join the Ashram at Sabarmati. I do not know how Narmada or anybody else could possibly have gathered the impression that I want you to give up your studies. But now that you have written to me, which I did not want you to do, so that I could know you better, please let me know what you are studying at present and what you propose to do after your studies are finished.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. SAHASRABUDDHI, ESQ.
KALAMBA ROAD, ALIBAGH (DISTRICT COLABA)

From a microfilm: S.N. 14148

43. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE CITY,
Jeth Sud 10 [*June 9, 1927*]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have another nice letter from you. The experiment of keeping a diary has borne fruit. Ramdas appears to be undecided about coming here. I hear from him but he says nothing about coming here. I came down to Bangalore on Sunday itself. Compared to Nandi it is warm here but the doctors think it should suit my health. I am not likely to move at least for one month. Thereafter I hope to go around a little.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9344

44. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
Jeth Sud 11 [*June 10, 1927*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. There is no mosquito menace where we have been put up. The place is very good and it is pretty cold. And I feel that I am improving day by day. So there is no question of leaving.

[1] The postmark bears the date "June 12, 1927". *Jeth Sud 11* corresponded to June 10 in 1927

You know the purpose of my staying here. That purpose would not be served at Panchgani. I am staying here in the hope of completing the khadi work planned for the South. And while staying here, I am doing something or other for this place. It gives me satisfaction that your health is gradually improving. Do keep seeing your sisters.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
PANCHGANI CASTLE
PANCHGANI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

45. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

June 11, 1927

TO
MIRABEHN
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SABARMATI

YOU SHOULD COME IF AT ALL UNCOMPOSED. LOVE.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 5238. Courtesy: Mirabehn

46. LETTER TO S. T. SHEPPARD

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 11, 1927

DEAR MR. SHEPPARD,

I thank you for your letter of the 8th instant.

I am sorry I have to inform you that the copyright for the publication in the West of the Autobiography in book form was given at the instance of the Rev- John Haynes Holmes some months ago to the Macmillan Company of New York.

You are quite right in having the impression that I have never before reserved copyright in any of my writings. But Mr. Holmes

induced me to depart from the rule on the ground that without the transfer of the copyright, no European publishing house would care to publish the Autobiography and that its publication might be of some little assistance in the West.

I thank you for your enquiry about myself. I am making steady progress and am permitted by the doctors to attend to a moderate amount of correspondence, etc.

Yours sincerely,

S. T. SHEPPARD, ESQ.
"THE TIMES OF INDIA" OFFICE
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 12808

47. LETTER TO H. CLAYTON

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 11, 1927

DEAR MR. CLAYTON,

I thank you for your letter of the 6th June.

I note the care with which you seem to have gone into the allegations. I hope to write further as soon as I have heard from Mr. Thakkar.

I shall take care to prevent publication of any portion of the minutes of the Committee meeting referred to in your letter and of which you have favoured me with a copy.

Yours sincerely,

H. CLAYTON, ESQ.
COMMISSIONER,
MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 12913

48. LETTER TO SAM HIGGINBOTTOM

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 11, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your prompt reply.

In the circumstances mentioned by you, I will not make any use of the publication referred to in my previous letter.

Whist I agree with you that all religious dectrine has an economic aspect and that economic law is as much God's law as religious laws, I profoundly differ from your application of the doctrine. It can easily be shown that transmigration has nothing to do with poverty. The present system of caste has certainly something to do with it. The treatment of women again can be shown to have no connection with poverty. But if you can spare the time, I would certainly value an article or two from your pen giving your views about cattle and their treatment and your argument in proof of your belief that the three things mentioned by you are "in combination, the primary and fundamental causes of India's poverty". If you think that there is room for correcting your opinion about the fundamental causes of India's poverty we may discuss the causes through private correspondence. I know you to be a well-wisher of the country and a searcher after truth. I know also that you have great capacity for serving India. I am therefore most anxious to take all the advantage I can of your love of the country and your great knowledge in the interest of a cause which is common to us both. I am therefore anxious that so far as it is possible, there should be agreement between us about the fundamental cause of the great and growing poverty of India.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 12915

49. LETTER TO MANAGER, AMERICAN BAPTIST MISSION

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 11, 1927

DEAR SIR,

I understand from a friend that your mission knows a method whereby poultry can be so bred as to yield eggs that are sterile from the commencement of their being laid. I have never known this. But as my informant is a medical man and insistent upon the accuracy of the statement made by him, I ask you to enlighten me if you will.

Yours faithfully,

THE MANAGER
THE AMERICAN BAPTIST MISSION
SANGLI

From a photostat: S.N. 14149

50. LETTER TO J. BHIMA RAO

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 11, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. If you will read the columns of *Young India* you will find that the reference to Sir M. Vishveshwarayya's administration as *Ramarajya* is a joke and that tribute to the Chief of Savantwadi is a personal tribute. I do not see how on the strength of the acknowledgement of the undoubted good qualities of one Chief, princes can possibly sustain misrule or justify the principle of absolute autocracy. I do not therefore think that the point you have raised requires an elucidation in the pages of *Young India*.

Yours sincerely,

J. BHIMA RAO, ESQ.
THE SWADESHI PERFUMERY WORKS
JAMKHANDI HOUSE
BANGALORE CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 14150

51. LETTER TO OTTAMA BHIKKHU

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 11, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter remained unacknowledged as I was not yet ready to lay myself out for receiving visitors, and then it remained buried in my file. As I am now attending more diligently to the correspondence, I have come upon your letter. I shall be pleased to meet you any time you come to Bangalore up to the end of this month. I do not see visitors before 3 o'clock. Any day except Monday between 3 and 4-30 would be suitable time to see me.

Yours sincerely,

OTTAMA BHIKKHU, ESQ.
NAIR BUILDING
LAMINGTON ROAD
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 14151

52. LETTER TO R. SUBRAMANIAM

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 11, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I hope you don't want me to deal with the subject matter of it in *Young India*. Do you suppose that insurance agents are carrying on their business for serving the public? And why should my remark[1] wound the feelings of insurance agents because I regard insurance as a trap. There was no reflection meant upon the American in the remark I made. If the agent is alive, as I hope he is, and if he sees the paragraph, he will himself have a hearty laugh over it and feel flattered that he was able by his sweet tongue to beguile me into taking a policy. There was nothing wrong about his having induced me. But if he posed as philanthropist and not merely as a business man bent upon making some money for himself and his principals, he would immediately put himself in the wrong.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. SUBRAMANIAM
SUN LIFE ASSURANCE CO. OF CANADA
MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 14152

53. LETTER TO GOPALDAS

BANGALORE,
June 11, 1927

BHAI GOPALDASJI,

I have your letter. To me restricted widow-marriage is a question of compassion. Corruption is to be found even where widows remarry—as amongst us—but this is an irrelevant point. The point to be considered is this: Is it right to impose upon woman a restriction which man would not accept for himself? A girl who does not understand the meaning of marriage is married off and later loses her so-called husband. Can such a girl be called a widow? All such

[1] In the serial instalment of Autobiography published in *Young India, 9-6-1927*.

questions relating to the plight of widows are a matter of dharma, of compassion and while solving them we should not call up and confront the conditions obtaining in some other countries, but consider only what our dharma points to. Looking at it from this angle, I think that it is the duty of the Hindu society to get all child-widows married

Yours,

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 12821

54. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 12, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your several letters. They make sorry reading. But it is profitable. Your going there had a purpose behind it.

Jamnalalji wired[1] as per enclosed. I therefore sent you on Saturday at Sabarmati a wire[2] asking you to come here, if you at all felt uncomposed. For that was the meaning I read into Jamnalalji's wire. I am assuming always that you will act naturally and take me literally whenever I sent letters or wires regarding yourself. I cannot guide you if I have to guess your requirements and you have to guess my wishes. So you will do exactly as you think necessary for you progress.

I do not think you need worry about your being in the Ashram without having finished your Hindi, if otherwise you would be there. Gangu is a great consideration. If she has your company without taking up much of your time it does not matter. But you know best what should be done. She need not interfere with your studies. On the contrary, she may be a kind of a help as you must speak to her in Hindi always. It gives you compulsory practice in speaking. But that is my way of looking at the thing.

As for your vow regarding food, do not prolong the vow without reconsideration in the light of past experiences. You may for the present live according to the spirit of the vow, i.e., take nothing merely for taste or pleasure but do not hesitate to add to the number,

[1] On June 11, 1927, which read: "Myself Maganlalji went Rewari. No cause anxiety. Mirabehn Gangubehn Valunjkerji going Sabarmati. Myself going Udaipur. Think call Mirabehn Bangalore now. Wire decision here."

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Mirabehn", 11-6-1927.

if health required it or the same things are unobtainable for the next meal.

I am saying just now nothing about Rewari Ashram as I am in the dark about the latest events. Krishnanandji never wrote. His suggestion that I should see the necessity of taking bhang is original.

The doctor saw me today (Sunday) and was satisfied with the progress made.

With love,

BAPU

Frorn the original: C.W. 5240. Courtesy: Mirabehn

55. LETTER TO SATCOWRIPATI RAY

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June, 12, 1927

DEAR SATCOWRI BABU,

I have your long and full letter. Please do not apologize. If I cannot render concrete service, I can at least give you the consolation of a friend whose whole heart is with you in your trouble. I shall treasure the detailed information you have given me for future use if chance throws itself my way. But 1 shall be unable to raise for you the sum you need to tide over your difficulty. Meanwhile I would advise you strongly to concentrate your attention upon building up your practice. I see no way out of it just at present, I know it is bad, but we do not always get things that we like or that are good. Practice evidently is just now your *swadharma*[1], and therefore the best for you. But will you not make up your mind that no matter how much practice you get, you will no longer spend on marriages? Whether it will come in my life or not, the time is coming when men like you will have again to give up practice, give up hearth and home and plunge into the struggle for liberty, Let this practice therefore be a trust for you. But you and your family should live as the poorest of our people, and therefore you should bring up your daughters now to grow up without thinking of marriage, and when they are to be married, they are to be married without any expense whatsoever. Do you know that during the past two years, I have been helping to marry several couples without the expense of even Rs. 10 you might say,

[1] One's own duty

Two of these were my relations, one my son, another my grand-daughter. The others were daughters or sons of friends and co-workers, all having lived before like you and me. In order to hearten you, I must mention them. Vallabhbhai was a barrister with a first-class practice. His son was married the other day at the Ashram with nothing but the simple religious ceremony. No dinner was given and not one single piece of ornament was given to the bride. The other case was that of Dastane, the erstwhile leading lawyer of Bhusaval. His daughter was given to a co-worker. She had no ornament except a few yards of yarn of my own spinning round her neck. Dastane had a few friends who imposed themselves on him when he gave his daughter in marriage, and who had to be fed for one or two days. I do not think that they were more than 10, if that number. He had many more friends. But he had warned them against attending. Naturally he had sent no invitations. I could give other similar instances. In our struggle for freedom these social reforms have really become extremely necessary.

I evidently did not make myself sufficiently understood about making a living from khadi. I did not suggest that you should set up your own khadi business at present. What I suggested was that you might come into the khadi service, become a technical expert and so indispensable to that service. But that service could not give you more than Rs. 100 or 125 at the outside per month. It must remain a poor service. And what I meant about the members of the family was that all young men and women might do something or other in connection with khadi so that all would feel that they were contributing to the family till. Several workers are trying to remodel their life in accordance with this pattern. But I say that this may be too much for you, and if it is too much, that is no reflection upon you, After all mental adjustments cannot take place at will, and mental adjustments take practical shape only after they have saturated our being and become part of it, I have therefore thrown out the suggestions. Let them work their way in your mental laboratory,

And whilst you are following out your practice, I would like you to study, even if it is as a matter of recreation, the technique of khadi by passing a few days in the Khadi Pratishthan, Sodepur, and a few days in Abhoy Ashram, Comilla. Visit their branches, study how things go on there. And if you get a little bit of leisure, go to the Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, study the history of each family living there, see what the women are doing alongside of men, cross-examine

them and find out whether they are really happy with their altered condition. Then see Rajagopalachari's Ashram, see what Gangadharrao is doing in Karnataka in his own estate. And when you have done this, you will have some notion of what I mean. It is really difficult to express all that you have in you in words. Language is a limitation, and a terrible limitation of one's thoughts, and therefore a very poor vehicle for expressing them.

Lastly, if at all you feel like it, do come down to Bangalore where I am yet to rest up to the end of the month and pass a few days with me.

I note what you say about Subhas Bose. I am following him as closely as I can through the papers. If you see him, please tell him that I often think of him. I did send him a telegram immediately on his release. I am anxious to know whether he got it. I don't want any reply from him. I simply mention this as you have been good enough to volunteer news about him which I appreciate.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 12587

56. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

BANGALORE,
Jyaishtha Shukla 13 [*June 12, 1927*][1]

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

Your letter to hand. Diligence should not be taken to mean working beyond one's strength; it only means keeping the body and the mind constantly occupied with such work as they can normally cope with. An irregularity about bowel movement is hard to bear. There is no doubt fasting is the first remedy for it. But this treatment should be attempted only under the supervision of someone who knows about it. If you wish to be treated I shall see if I can send you to one or two friends who offer this treatment. You must not be lethargic about this matter. So write to me soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 203

[1] Inferred from the contents; *vide* also "Letter to Rameshwardas Poddar", before 5-6-1927.

57. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Monday, Jeth Sud 13 [*June 13, 1927*][1]

SISTERS,

Your letter.

You once wrote to me that all of you take turns in leading the prayers by reciting the Sanskrit verses. I have still to congratulate you upon this practice. I hope your pronunciation of Sanskrit words is correct. Of course as far as we are concerned God does not take into account whether His name is uttered correctly or incorrectly. He only cares for the language of the heart. If the heart is pure, even indistinct babbling is reckoned at one hundred per cent. While on this topic I wish to relate some of the pleasant experiences I am having here.

Mysore is a part of Karnatak, which gave us Kaka Saheb. The women here know both music and Sanskrit very well. I heard them singing in Nandi. I heard both songs and recitation of Sanskrit by two women here the day before yesterday. They sang the substance of the *Ramayana* in Sanskrit correctly pronounced. I think there were more than a hundred verses. I could not detect a single flaw in their recitation. One of them is still a student. She knows also the meaning of the verses.

But why should I write about this to you? I regard the work you are doing there now as more important than studying Sanskrit. If you become fearless, remain pure, turn out to be good workers and learn to live and work together, it will mean an education superior to any other. If, in addition, study of Sanskrit goes with it, it will be sweeter even than honey.

I suppose Gangabehn and others get my letter or a copy of it to read.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3653

[1] Year is determined from the reference to Nandi Hills. The source has *Jeth Sud* 14, but in this month, *Jeth Sud* 13 fell on Sunday as well as on Monday.

58. LETTER TO WILLIAM SMITH

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 14, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Day before yesterday I passed through the Imperial Dairy and some students showed me some of your beautiful animals. I had the pleasure of knowing about you and your interest in cattle through Sir Harold Mann's communications. You may be aware that I am deeply interested in the cattle problem and therefore in cattle-breeding, dairying, tanning, etc. And whilst I am convalescing and have to be in Bangalore yet for a fortnight, I would like to visit the dairy every day if my health permits and pass there about half an hour learning all that can be learnt during that time. I wonder if it is possible for you to instruct someone in charge to give me the assistance I need and which I should value. I would esteem too any literature that you can provide me with and that you think I should read. I have already initiated through experts supplied to me by Sir Harold Mann a dairying experiment at Sabarmati. I would value too the privilege of a talk with you on this subject if you can spare the time for me. I know you are an almost next-door neighbour. I have often passed by your bungalow on my strolls. I am allowed to see visitors between 3 and half-past four, and if you are at home during that time, any day, I should do myself the honour of calling to see you.

Yours sincerely,

WILLIAM SMITH, ESQ.
IMPERIAL DAIRY EXPERT
BANGALORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 12916

59. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY[1], CHITTARANJAN HOSPITAL

[Before *June 15, 1927*]

WISH EVERY SUCCESS CELEBRATION[2].

GANDHI

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 16-6-1927

60. LETTER TO SECRETARY, INDIAN INFORMATION CENTRE

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 15, 1927

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. In the circumstances mentioned by you, I shall not resist you any longer. You may put my name down as one of your correspondents.

If you are an honorary and self-appointed agency why not call yourself the honorary Indian interpretation centre ? For you claim to give not merely information about India but interpret so far as you can the Indian mind to the public there. And this you do, not as an agency paid from or by India but as an agency self-created for the love of the thing itself.

Yours sincerely,

TARINI PRASAD SINHA, ESQ.
SECRETARY,
THE INDIAN INFORMATION CENTRE
7, TAVISTOCK PLACE, LONDON W.C. 1

From a photostat: S.N. 12502

[1] Dr. K. S. Roy
[2] Of the Hospital Day

61. LETTER TO J. FRIEND LODGE

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 15, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I send you the autograph herewith. The name of the photographer is Mahulikar, Ritchie Road, Ahmedabad.

Yours sincerely,

J. FRIEND LODGE, ESQ.
'SUNSET'
BUSTLETON
PHILA.

From a photostat: S.N. 12520

62. LETTER TO SRI PRAKASA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 15, 1927

MY DEAR SRI PRAKASA,

I have your letter. Your fear may give place to the confidence that the notice sent by you about the Vidyapith will be published in *Young India*.

One cheque that I received some days ago was already acknowledged. I wrote to you on 26th May. Did you send any cheque after?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SRI PRAKASA
SEVASHRAM
BENARES CANTT.

From a microfilm: S.N. 14153

63. LETTER TO DR. THOMPSON

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 15, 1927

DEAR DR. THOMPSON,

I understand from the Rev. Mr. Hickling that you were to be back on the 11th instant. I hope you have now returned and left Mrs. Thompson in the enjoyment of good health.

For myself, I seem to be making steady progress. I am eating better and have been able to double the distance I used to walk at Nandi. The pressure seems to have become normal at 150. If you are at all coming to Bangalore, I know you will not mind looking me up.

But the real purpose for writing this letter is to ask you whether I should now send my son Devdas to you. His general health has very considerably improved. Except for once, he had no nose-bleeding. If Devdas understood you correctly he tells me you told him that on your return you wanted to see and examine him more carefully. He can come there any day that is convenient to you if, that is to say, you think that he should come. After the 29th he will be wanted in Bangalore continuously for some time.

Yours sincerely

DR. THOMPSON, ESQ.
CHIKBALLAPUR

From a photostat: S.N. 14154

64. LETTER TO GULZARILAL NANDA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 15, 1927

MY DEAR GULZARILAL,

I have your letter and your draft to the Secretary. You may send the letter. I do not want to suggest any alterations or improvements in it; but I will just state what I think about the whole thing and the extent to which we may rely upon mill-owners' help and to which they are themselves at the present stage likely to go.

So far as the Rs. 12,500 are concerned, I am afraid, we shall not get them unless Kasturbhai, who is insistent even to the extent of

demanding his own quota back, as he might well do, invites the other donors to do likewise. So far, therefore, as these funds are concerned, the way to work lies in that direction. The ultimate decision will be taken by the mill-owners on side issues and on personal likes and dislikes. These aberrations we shall always have with us and we must suffer them with becoming calmness.

But the more important point for consideration is the principle which should guide us in our relations with the mill-owners, or, more generally speaking, capitalists. At the present moment, we shall do well to be satisfied with doing the right without expecting reciprocity and therefore without expecting any pecuniary help from the capitalists. Inch by inch labour will have to make its position good and better its conditions independently of outside support. The outside support may be divided into two parts: from the capitalists directly concerned, in this instance, therefore the mill-owners, and secondly, from the general sympathetic public. The second support we shall get more quickly and without in any way endangering our interests. The support from capitalists directly concerned will come when labour has vindicated itself and has almost attained the position of being able to dictate its own terms. It will be then and not till then that we shall get willing help from capital. If my diagnosis is correct, we must then so order our affairs as to undertake just such work as we can do irrespective of outside assistance. When its needs are to be supplemented, we should go to the independent outsiders and never go to the interested outsiders; but we do not need to refuse the help from the last source when it comes voluntarily. And we must always be able to so shape our course as to *feel* independent of all outside help. Our concentration therefore must be in educating labour from within and out of means chiefly supplied by labour itself. This, in my opinion, is the shortest and the simplest way of serving labour. It will undoubtedly cause in the initial stages great difficulty, great embarrassment and labour itself will be irresponsive. But that is the very reason why we should persist in what we know to be the best course. Any other way, labour becomes pauperized and demoralized as one sees happening all over India. Applying the principle to the present case, my solution would be to carry on such negotiations with the mill-owners as may be consistent with the dignity and self-respect, but to be prepared to do without the assistance that is being received now. You must stillfind ways and means of continuing the schools. See what resources there are within ourselves. Put the whole question

before the members of the Union, and at the same time canvass for subscriptions amongst private friends and then appeal to the public also. I do not anticipate much difficulty in getting public help. And, in any appeal that may be made to the public, the circumstances necessitating the appeal now should be briefly stated. This will involve some criticism of the mill-owners; but that is inevitable. I wonder if I have made my position absolutely clear. If I have not, please do not hesitate to write to me again.

Yours sincerely,

GULZARILAL
AHMEDABAD

From a photostat: S.N. 14155

65. LETTER TO J. W. PETAVEL

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 15, 1927

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I see with much pleasure you will not give in, and if you will continue to hammer away, it is likely that some day I shall be able to see eye to eye with you and then do what you want me to.

I have now got your book. I shall go through the portions referred to by you.

Yours sincerely,

J. W. PETAVEL, ESQ.
BAGBAZAR, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 14156

66. LETTER TO SECRETARY, A.I.S.A.

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 15, 1927

I have your letter. I have gone through the agenda. I cannot think of any addition. The agenda seems to me to be exhaustive.

The draft rules for agencies seem to me to be quite good. I cannot think of any improvement just now. I do not want to concerntrate upon the work and tax my brain. But they read all right. If anything arising out of them is referred to me at the meeting in any

definite form, I shall be able to give my opinion. It will be premature to ask the several khadi centres to communicate with the Central office only through the respective agencies. That would be an ideal to be reached but after we are better organized and the necessity for acting through agencies is generally recognized.

At the present moment we are trying to evolve organized order out of disorganized work. We have therefore to act after the style of a family in which the *paterfamilias* is referred to by the respective members without any intervention. But in order to establish the custom of dealing through agencies, we may refer all the communications we received to the agents wherever necessary and we may also refer all new correspondence to the agents. And thirdly we may ask the agents to interest themselves in the several centres in their jurisdiction even though they may not be invited by respective centres. The agents may thus create between the centres and themselves a living bond so that instead of referring to head office, the centres will of their own accord refer to the agents. We may for the moment frustrate the end we have in view, if we impose the condition from above. Also wherever any centre is recalcitrant and is causing trouble and insists upon dealing with the head office or not at all, we may impose the condition of coming through the agent.

As to the Council, I suggest the following without having given much thought to the thing:

The Council should meet quarterly. At least a week's clear notice should be received by every member. The week to count from the date of each member receiving notice at his registered address. The agenda should contain just the items to be considered and where, in the opinion of the Secretary, papers are necessary to be sent, he may do so, and at the foot of the agenda he may have a general notice to the effect that any member who wants to have any information about any item on the agenda will be supplied with the information by the Secretary upon request. In extaordinary emergencies the sanction of the members may be ascertained by correspondence whether telegraphic or postal. Any such decision should be brought before the next ordinary meeting of the Council. Where even this is not possible the Secretary and the Chairman may on their own responsibility dispose of matters and in those involving financial obligation, disburse not more than, say, Rs. 5,000.

It would be certainly convenient for you to come a day or two

before the meeting. There should be however enough time to give also in the meeting and after the meeting. In any event, all the members will be in Bangalore up to the third of July at least. I am assuming that I shall not be asked to be present at the meeting more than it is absolutely necessary. Though even now I do considerable amount of work which is all done at my convenience with considerable rest during intervals, I am making steady progress. I note and doctors advice also that the less concentrated the work the better it is for me, and in no case should there be concentrated work.

The Madras Flood Relief money can now be transferred. Chhaganlal and Swami are being advised. I suggest that the deposits should not be disturbed but should be adjusted on maturity so as not to forfeit the interest.

About Mithubehn's letter, I am asking Rajagopalachari about it. In may opinion, she should be paid as from the Exhibition Committee. For, the Committee should be the best judge as to who should come and who should not come. In this instance, the Committe having invited Mithubehn will most probably tell her that her expenses will be defrayed by them.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19781

67. LETTER TO GANGU

[After *June 15, 1927*][1]

CHI. GANGU,

Your letter. You write good Hindi. You will soon be avoiding the mistakes you now make.

You should bear no resentment even in your heart against Lakshmibehn for what she said. Doing the *Vatapooja*[2] was as much right for her as not doing it was for you. You have no faith in these things; therefore it would have been useless for you to join; it might have looked like weakness or even hypocrisy. We should have the same tolerance for other people's conduct and beliefs as we may expect from them towards our own.

You need not be unhappy if Chi. Maganlal did not give you the charkha. If you ask him he will surely tell you the reason. Even if we are not satisfied with the explanation, still we must not feel aggrieved. We must not hastily conclude that a person's attitude or act is all wrong just because he himself or the elders cannot give us a satisfactory explanation of it. Only by living in society can we learn to tolerate difference of opinion and the pairs of opposites such as happiness and unhappiness. And as you want to dedicate yourself to service and observe *brahmacharya*, you must fully acquire the qualities of forbearance and tolerance. Mirabehn thinks you need to improve your spinning, ginning, etc. In spinning the thread . . .[3]

Manibehn has been a *brahmacharini* till now, and proposes to remain one and she is making positive efforts towards it. The other has entered married life but is aware of the nobility of *brahmacharya* and endeavours to observe it herself. You must not suppress your feelings just because I write all this. Do write to me whatever you think. I shall try to point out the pitfalls ahead on your way. Take from this whatever you find acceptable and go ahead.

From a microfilm of the Hindi : S.N. 12324

[1] This letter appears to have been written after Gangu left Rewari Ashram for Sabarmati along with Mirabehn in 1927. The *Vatapooja* fell on June 15.

[2] Worship of the banyan tree by married women on the full moon day of *Jyaishtha*.

[3] As in the source

68. HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

When the President of the Congress[1] wired that a unanimous resolution on the Hindu-Muslim question was reached by the All-India Congress Committee[2], I could not enthuse over the information. The wire told me enough about the contents of the resolution. When the President paid me a visit at Nandi[3], he asked me whether I would write on it. I told him I did not think I could write anything helpful. A few days after the visit I got a message from a friend. Its purport was : "You are responsible for the mischief that is going on in our midst. If you had not dragged the Hindus into the Khilafat agitation, the recent tragic events would not have happened. But you alone can now save us."

In translating the message I have softened the bitterness of the language of the original. It seems to me to call for a reiteration of my belief about Hindu-Muslim unity.

I do not repent of my part in the Khilafat agitation. It was a duty I discharged towards my Mussalman countrymen. The Hindus would have been wrong, if they had not helped their brethren in their distress. However ugly the present look of things may be, future generations of Mussalmans will recall with gratitude this great act of friendship on the part of Hindus. But the future apart, as I believe in the proverb that virtue is its own reward, I should always defend my action on the Khilafat question. I therefore received the friends's message of rebuke with perfect calmness.

But I wish I could fulfil his expectations and assist immediately and materially in bringing about peace. For I am just as strong a believer as ever in unity and the necessity for it. If it could be achieved by giving my life, I have the will to give it and I hope I have the strength for it. I should with the greatest joy undertake an indefinite fast, as I very nearly did at Delhi, in 1924,[4] if it would melt and change the stony hearts of Hindus and Mussalmans. But I have no sign from God within to undertake the penance. If a penance is itself an act of purification, it has also to be preceded by an equal measure

[1] S. Srinivasa Iyengar

[2] On May 15 and 16, 1927, at Bombay

[3] The reference is to Nandi Hills near Bangalore where Gandhiji was resting from April 19 to June 4 after he had fallen ill on March 26, 1927.

[4] From September 17 to October 8.

of initial purification. I am obviously not pure enough for that supreme penance.

If the reader does not see me now often refer to the question in these pages, it is because the sense of humiliation has gone too deep for words. It matters little to me whether the perpetrators of shameful deeds are Hindus or Mussalmans. It is enough to know that some of us are blaspheming a patient God and doing inhuman deeds in the sacred name of religion. I know too that neither assassination nor fratricidal acts can possibly save religion. Religion worth the name can only be saved by purity, humility and fearlessness of the uttermost type among its professors. It is the only *shuddhi*[1] and only propaganda.

Hence has the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee left me unmoved. For I know that we have not yet changed our hearts. We have not shed fear of one another. Any compromise that is unaccompanied by these two conditions must be a mere make-shift.

Moreover, I feel that any agreement between the component parts of the nation must be voluntary and must remain so for all time. It must not, if it is conceived in terms of swaraj, depend for its final ratification or enforcement upon a legal enactment. Ratification by our respective organizations must be held to be final and binding. Enforcement must depend upon the honour of the leaders of respective parties and ultimately, in the absence of reliance on non-violence, on the arbitrament of civil war fought decently or indecently as the case may be. It is a sign of weakness, not of fitness for swaraj to go to the foreign ruling power to arbitrate between us or to enforce the peace between us at the point of the bayonet.

If we the so-called leaders have no control over our fighting elements, our agreement must be held to be unreal and useless. Before we think of real swaraj, we must gain control over the masses. We must learn to behave ourselves. The agreement had no effect on Delhi, and to our eternal shame the government has been the keeper of the peace on Bakr Id.

My creed of non-violence is an extremely active force. It has no room for cowardice or even weakness. There is hope for a violent man to be some day non-violent, but there is none for a coward. I have therefore said more than once in these pages that if we do not know

[1] Reconversion to Hinduism; literally, ‘purification’

how to defend ourselves, our women and our places of worship by the force of suffering, i.e., non-violence, we must, if we are men, be at least able to defend all these by fighting. It is unmanly to ask or expect the Government to ensure the peace between rival parties or to defend our women against ourselves. And while we remain so unmanly it is hopless to expect swaraj. In well-ordered societies, governments merely undertake the police work. But the recent elaborate preparations at Delhi or Lahore were no part of police work. Differences we shall always have. But we must learn to settle them all, whether religious or other, by arbitration. Before the rules we must be able to present a united front and demonstrate to the world our capacity for regulating our own manners if we would have swaraj.

If, however, we have no leaders whom we can elect as arbitrators who would give wise and impartial decisions, or, if we are too unruly and barbarous to wait for and abide by decisions of arbitrators of our choice, we must fight till we are exhausted and come to our senses. The Government will no doubt always intervene, whether we will or no, either to keep the public peace or to preserve its safety. But it will weaken us the least, if the rival factions will courageously and straightforwardly refrain from courting the protection or assistance of Government. Why should a murderer in such warfare be defended? Let him seek the gallows. Let breakers of places of worship come forth boldly and say, we have done this for the sake of religion, punish us if you like! Let those who kill innocent passers-by deliver themselves to the police and say, we have done it all for God's sake! All this may read heartless. But I have merely endeavoured to suggest a way that is straighter and less weak than the one we have hitherto adopted.

And if we cannot, after the manner of civilized men, resort to voluntary arbitration or, after the manner of brave barbarous races, fight out differences without seeking the intervention of British justice or bayonets, all we may expect to get in the shape of reforms is an increased agent's share in the bureaucratic Government; in other words, an increasing share in the exploitation of the dumb millions. Let us take care that any agreement we may come to does not reduce us to that unenviable condition.

Young India, 16-6-1927

69. NOTES

SARDAR KHARAK SINGH

It must be a matter of joy to every patriot to find Sardar Kharak Singh once more free to take up national work outside the prison walls. By his indomitable will and refusal to bend himself to authority in order gain his freedom he had risen in the estimation of his countrymen. May he have long years of service to the country in its fight for freedom.

HAVE I BOYCOTTED ANDHRA?

When Deshabhakta Konda Venkatappayya saw me at Nandi and again at Bangalore, he told me that as Andhra was not on the tour list for the year, many Andhra friends had enquired of him whether I had boycotted Andhra. My old love of the Andhra people and the happy memories of my connection with them will not let me boycott Andhra, even if I wish to, though some of the Andhra workers do sometimes vex one into wishing to boycott the province till they set themselves right. They are fine men. They have got the patriotic spirit. But some of them are workers only so-called. They are all leaders and when everybody wants to lead there is nobody to serve, no one to obey and in the exercise of that false independence the people are neglected. I hope the workers to whom these remarks may apply will not say to themselves or to me that they are no worse than other provinces. It would be a wrong way of looking at the right thing. After all Andhra men and women who at one time gave promise of being the first in the field for real civil disobedience must not be satisfied with being as bad as the rest. Those who seek to compete for civil disobedience have to prove their capacity for exemplary obedience, restraint and discipline. Andhra, which might have easily been first in khadi and every one of its departments, has yet to come up to the mark. But I must not exhaust the whole of my battery of criticism. I must reserve it for my forthcoming visit, as I had never given up the idea of visiting Andhradesh. As a suitable month could not be set apart this year, the idea was to reserve Andhra for next year unless I could give it, as it was then thought, the first fortnight of December. God has however upset all my plan and the whole of the programme for the second half of this year has been dislocated. And if I am at all fit and well and there is no accident I would like to be in Andhradesh not for a few days but for a month or two next year. I have therefore told Konda

Venkatappaya that if the people will still have me, I would like to visit Andhra early next year and combine rest with work. I must not be expected to rush through space and programmes as before. Let the workers also realize that I shall be devoting the stay in Andhra to khadi work alone.

Untouchability work is no doubt part of my being. But that work is largely included in khadi work. For, it is designed to level up those who occupy the lowest rung of the ladder with those who are at the top. It is the cotton thread which beginning in the humblest cottage of India and reaching the highest in the land can alone indissolubly bind the two and make them feel akin. I know that the Andhra workers are very ambitious. Let their ambition percolate down to the lowest stratum of society and all will be well.

A WELCOME STEP

A correspondent from Holakere in Mysore writes:

> I am highly glad to inform you that the people belonging to Lambani community of my taluk have completely abstained from drinking today and other liquors since a month and a half. It was in the Lambani Conference held in this town at the end of last April that they had taken an oath not to touch any liquor, prostrating themselves before the evening sun. Since then they have not swerved from their oath. If anyone of that community is seen near a toddy shop, he is strictly dealt with by the *Naik*, *Yajaman* and *Karabhan* of that hamlet. Their women carry to us every day the glad news, there are no broils at their hovel and that they lead a very peaceful life. This is an instance to show that your movement of purification had entered our State even before your entering it.

I congratulate the Lambani community upon the great step they have taken, and hope that they will not slide back like many who did so after the exultation of 1921 had subsided. Let me invite the attention of the leaders of the community to the case recorded in these pages[1] of the Raniparaj[2] people of whom those abstainers who took to the charkha as a means of occupying their time and attention not only had no hankering after liquor but were able to double their savings. For, they not only saved what was spent upon the drink but they also added to their income by saving in the cost of clothing. It is the universal experience of temperance reformers that if the people who

[1] In Young India, 26-5-1927, under the title "Among Raniparaj People"

[2] Literally, 'hill-people' as renamed by Gandhiji; formerly known as Kaliparaj, which meant 'black people'.

take pledges do not usefully occupy their time, the hankering returns and it becomes too strong to resist the temptation. I hope too that other villages will follow the example of Holakere and that when I am enabled to begin my tour in Mysore, I shall receive, side by side with glowing accounts which I have been promised of the progress of khadi, accounts also of eradication of the drink habit.

Young India, 16-6-1927

70. RANIPARAJ INQUIRY COMMITTEE

Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel has lost no time in embarking upon the work of the Committee that was only recently appointed at the Raniparaj Conference[1] . The following extracts[2] from the interim report of the second tour of the Committee will be read with interest:

The Committee visited eighteen villages recording statements of witnesses from 47 villages in the Chikhli and Bulsar Talukas and is in the State of Bansda. It reflects credit upon the Bansda State that the Committee is able to give a glowing account of the interest that the Maharaja Saheb of Bansda is taking in his people. But all the good that is undoubtedly being done by His Highness to his people is really undone so long as he considers it necessary to derive an income from the drink traffic. No doubt the fact that the three neighbours adjacent to the Bansda territory, that is, the British, the Gaekwad and Dharampur have no prohibition makes it difficult for Bansda to carry out the policy of successful prohibition. But great things can not be done without great sacrifice and geat measures. Bansda can not only lead the way by declaring out and out prohibition, but can then agitate for prohibition in the neighbouring States. The chief thing is to be prepared to sacrifice the drink revenue. An immediate beginning can be made by deciding not to use that revenue for any purpose, however laudable it may be, save for that of carrying on an intensive anti-drink propaganda amongst the tribes given to drink. For, there is no doubt that any State that seriously wants its people to give up the evil habit cannot be satisfied merely with making it legally impossible to indulge in the evil habit, but to find out the cause of the habit and to educate the people to give it up. In the end, no State need suffer by depriving itself of the drink revenue. The inevitable outcome of any

[1] Held on March 16, 1927.

[2] Not reproduced here

policy of prohibition carried out side by side with constructive work of the nature suggested by me must result in an ever increasing prosperity of the people and therefore of the State. India is the most promising country in the world for carrying out total prohibition for the simple reason that addiction to drink is not considered respectable or fashionable and is confined only to a certain class of people.

Young India, 16-6-1927

71. LETTER TO SONJA SCHLESIN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 16, 1927

DEAR MISS SCHLESIN[1],

Here is a letter from Dr. Jones[2] which perhaps you would like.

I hope you had my long letter[3], and I do hope also that you will make it a point to see Mr. Sastri[4]. When are you coming here? I wish you could also go to Phoenix and see Manilal and his wife.

Yours sincerely,

MISS SCHLESIN
POST BOX NO. 2284
JOHANNESBURG

From a photostat : S.N. 12360

[1] A Jewish girl who was Gandhiji's private secretary for many years in South Africa

[2] Stanley Jones

[3] Dated May 22, 1927.

[4] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, Agent-General of India in South Africa

72. LETTER TO W. B. STOVER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
June 16, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter[2]. Your suggestion[3] is undoubtedly interesting. But I do not understand why you fall foul of the charkha which the millions can easily take up; whereas your suggestion requires technical knowledge and character at its back. Your friends of the West have made a god of literacy. I wonder what Jesus, whom you call the "Lord Christ", would say if he came in flesh and saw the people of the West crazy over a knowledge of letters, wealth and passing the best part of their time and life in seeking happiness from the external. Supposing that every person of education gave mechanically half an hour to teaching every untouchable, of what avail will it be to him or to the untouchables? And why are you so much enamoured of the material progress of Japan?[4] I do not know whether the material has gone side by side with the moral progress. I have no wish to judge the Japanese. I have not even the data for doing so even if I wished. But neither literacy nor wealth without the moral backing has any attraction for me. And do you know why I swear by the charkha? I do because not merely the untouchables but millions of other people in India are starving because they have no work and because now they have even become too lazy to work. I am therefore presenting the charkha to the starving millions as there is no other simple productive work which can be presented to the millions; and I present it to the educated and the well-to-do people of India as an example for the rest.

I have the highest regard for my missionary friends, and that very regard makes me warn them in season and out of season against misinterpreting the message of the Bible. You tell me, "you have

[1] Permanent address

[2] Dated May 2, 1927

[3] W. B. Stover had written : "I suggest that instead of the charkha every day, you set the example and put the challenge to all of educated India, to choose someone of illiterate India, and spend a half hour a day is teaching this illiterate person. I would suggest that the teacher and the one taught be of different castes. This idea carried to any great extent throughout the land would bring almost a revolution in the thinking of the people."

[4] Stover had written : "Japan has attained the highest literacy."

taken the Lord Christ for your leader and guide. There is none better." You do not mind my correcting you. I regard Jesus as a human being like the rest of the teachers of the world. As such He was undoubtedly great. But I do not by any means regard him to have been the very best. The acknowledgement of the debt which I have so often repeated that I owe to the Sermon on the Mount should not be mistaken to mean an acknowledgement of the orthodox interpretation of the Bible, or the life of Jesus. I must not sail under false colours.

Your letter is sincere and I felt that I could not better reciprocate your sincerity than by putting before you frankly my position.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI
W. B. STOVER, ESQ.
MOUNT MORRIS
ILLINOIS, U.S.A.

From a photostat : S.N. 12521

73. LETTER TO DR. M. S. KELKAR

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 16, 1927

DEAR DOCTOR,

I see that mental distance between you and me is really growing. I can sympathize neither your salic [*sic*] in astrology nor in black magic. They may both be substantial sciences; but they are sciences which I think we should avoid. As a matter of fact I do not attach so much value to things pertaining to the body as the wish to exhaust every available means for sustaining[1] the body or for keeping it in order as it has only a very limited importance in the scheme of life. I apply also equally limited means and therefore continually exclude those means which may seem to me to be of doubtful moral value. So then, if I err at all, I shall err on the right side. Excess care of the body and explorations into astrology—and what not—for the sake of that caretaking means going further away from his Maker, and seems like putting the shadow before the substance. I would not trouble you to travel with me.

Doctors here consider that 150 is normal blood-pressure for me

[1] The source has "subsisting".

and they have no misgivings whatsoever about my being able to resume moderate touring next month. I am certainly getting daily stronger physically.

Yours sincerely,

DR. M. S. KELKAR
C/O J. G. GADRE
NEW BHAT WADI
BOMBAY 4

From a photostat : S.N. 14157

74. LETTER TO A. A. PAUL

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 16, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and the pamphlet which I know I shall be interested to read.

I do not know when I shall be in Madras, I hardly think on the 23rd of July. But in any case I do not know whether I shall have gained sufficient strength during the year to conduct the retreat for hours' length as I was expected in the programme you had sent me before the breakdown in my health. The whole of the Southern tour is undergoing a radical transformation. I do not think Mr. Rajagopachari has yet been able to reshape it.

Yours sincerely,

A. A. PAUL, ESQ.
7, MILLER ROAD
KILPAUK, MADRAS

From a microfilm : S.N. 14158

75. LETTER TO MANECKBAI BAHADURJI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 16, 1927

I have your letter. Do please continue to write giving me all the titbits of Panchgani, of your own beautiful nest, telling me all about the birds that come and go.

Bangalore is the finest and cleanest place I have seen as yet in

India. I have no doubt, it too has its dark corners. But I have not seen them as yet. And I suppose I shall not be able to see them either, because I am taken for my walks only to beautiful places. And its climate at least at this time of the year is certainly glorious. It is cool and yet not too cold. Its flowers also are very beautiful and various.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. MANECKBAI BAHADURJI

OMRA HALL

PANCHGANI

From a photostat : S.N. 14159

76. LETTER TO A. RANGASWAMI IYENGAR

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,

June 16, 1927

MY DEAR RANGASWAMI,

I have your letter enclosing extract from the Rev. Mr. Holme's letter for which I thank you.

I have also your letter about the forthcoming special meeting of the All-India Congress Committee. I do not suppose you expect me to take any notice of this letter. I presume it is a multiplex copy sent *pro forma* to all the members of the Working Committee.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. A. RANGASWAMI IYENGAR

DESHBANDHU BUILDINGS

MOUNT ROAD

MADRAS

From a microfilm : S.N. 14160

77. LETTER TO R. B. GREGG

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 16, 1927

MY DEAR GOVIND,

I have your letter. Of course I can agree with every work of what you have said about typewriters and typists. There is nothing inconsistent between your letter and my presentation. I simply told[1] you why there had been seeming indifference about getting the very best typists.

But the advertisement idea does not commend itself to me. We have so many limitations that people who know us will not care to apply, and if strangers in search of employment but not knowing what we are do apply, it would be a waste of time for them and us to trouble them. I am writing this from bitter experience. But I again entirely agree with you that there is certainly within limitations scope for educated Indians to find themselves in khadi work. And that process is gradually going on. There is much more that I can write on this subject. But it is unnecessary to tax you on details. I was long with my previous letter because I was anxious to discuss some principles.

I am entirely at one with you that Maganlalji should have all the assistance he needs and that whatever assistance we take should be of the best type available; and if I felt that advertising in the manner you suggest would do it, I should go in for it. And, in any case, Maganlal can certainly advertise. There is no principle at stake, nor is there any question of much expense.

I know that you never implied that there was anything wrong in handling human excreta and I also know that you yourself did the thing yourself in the Ashram. What I told you was that the untouchables themselves would feel as I suggested. That would be wrong I know. But I simply mentioned the difficulty. They will take up the kind of work you suggest only after some of us have done, and done it successfully.

I don't know whether it was your prompting or not, but I have got a new edition of Dr. Kellogg's book on diet. It is a big volume and it is lying in front of me. It is enough to make one giddy even to contemplate reading that volume especially when I have mortgaged

[1] In letter dated May 27, 1927.

every available minute for the work I have on hand and which I feel I must do. I shall therefore profit more by the correspondence lessons that you are giving me out of your experience on dieting than by reading the big book.

The new shorthand idea appeals to me. And if someone at the Ashram will go in for it, I would not mind spending the money. You will therefore press the suggestion on the people at the Ashram.

With love to you all,

Yours,

R. B. GREGG, ESQ.

C/O S. E. STOKES, ESQ.

KOTGARH

SIMLA HILLS

From a photostat : S.N. 14161

78. LETTER TO MIRZA M. ISMAIL

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,

June 16, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I esteem your letter enclosing copy of your address to the Mysore Representative Assembly. I shall go through the whole of it as soon as I get a few moments. But I have already gone through the portion kindly marked by you referring to the untouchables. It gave me great joy.

I had also your letter about the birthday greetings.

I hope to be able to visit Mysore before the 15th of next month and pay my respects to the Maharaja Saheb.

Yours sincerely,

MIRZA M. ISMAIL, ESQ.

'LAKE VIEW'

MYSORE

[PS.]

I now learn that the marking was done here.

M. K. G.

From a photostat : S.N. 14162

79. LETTER TO DR. B. S. MOONJE

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 16, 1927

DEAR DR. MOONJE,

I am sincerly sorry for having given you offence. I was certainly not unbalanced when I wrote to you. I have really believed that it was part of your philosophy to beat an opponent in views with any stick that came your way.Indeed I can give you names of those who have valiantly defended that philosophy. But I shall not argue with you. If we meet, I shall give you chapter and verse for the belief I have held about you. But of course I like your energetic contradiction. For I can only like repudiation of a philosophy which I have considered to be morally indefensible and utterly false. Only my philosophy has room for holding in respect those who have a false philosophy but who do not know that it is false. You have quoted Jamnalalji in your support. I hardly think he will assist you. But I will preserve your letter and ask him about it.

Now for your question. I have certainly said that untouchability as practised today in Hinduism is the darkest blot on it. But that is different from saying that it is part of Hindu religion as you have made me say. For you will find in my writings an emphatic statement to the effect that untouchability is no part of Hindu religion, and that if it was, I should renounce Hinduism. Indeed, you will find in the cutting you have sent me the following sentence : "I find no authority whatsoever in Hinduism for treating any portion of the human family as untouchable." I have called it an excrescence.

Yours sincerely,

DR. B. S. MOONJE
NAGPUR CITY

From a photostat : S.N. 14616

80. LETTER TO KUVALAYANAND [1]

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 17, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I now understand all you say about the abdominal massage and massage of the heart. Of course it has been continued ever since I wrote to you. I simply wanted to clear what I did not understand. I have told you that in the physical application of these exercises, I propose to go by faith in you. Whilst I shall present my doubts to you so long as I do not understand your explanations, they shall be final for me.

I want to give the practice of these yogic exercises a full trial, if only because I regard them of all the methods of medical treatment to be the freest from danger.

After I wrote my letter of the 8th, I took a forward step which I hope you would not consider hasty. On re-reading your notes, I saw that you expected me to go up to 30 degrees angle. So, after writing to you, I immediately broadened the angle but limited the duration to five minutes in accordance with the instructions. But I have my own doubts as to the angle being 30, because I have not yet secured an accurate measuring instrument. Not being satisfied with the raising of the cot, I looked about for a plank which I have now secured. The cot has a wooden surface. I spread on it not a mattress but a padded rug, and I take the *sarvangasan* on it with the help of the board. It is now infinitely better than the previous exercises. Mahadev has been measuring the thing, and he thinks that the angle at which I take it is nearer to 50 than 30. I am not satisfied that it is anything like 50. Be that as it may. I am feeling no discomfort. Today will be the 4th day, and the duration is only five minutes. Blood-pressure is taken every Sunday, and if I find that the pressure has at all gone up, I shall ascribe the rising to the angle and drop the exercise till I hear from you in reply to this. And I shall drop it, in any case, if you think that I have gone too far.

There is another passive exercise which I have been taking, not very regularly but fairly regularly, which I used to take when I was convalescing after dysentery and when I was physically much weaker than I am today. And it is to raise the legs at right angles to the trunk

[1] In reply to his letter dated June 14

and keep them for two or three minutes there; that is for removing any fatigue there may be after the walk; and then, I have the legs in that straight condition bent as much as can be bent without any strain whatsoever towards the head, whilst the trunk is lying on the bed. This I take to strengthen the muscular exercise for the abdomen. I think I even mentioned to you that this was given to me by Dr. Kelkar whom, I understand, you know. And he has been writing to me to press that exercise on me. Both these things, keeping the legs straight and at right angles to the trunk and gently bending the legs towards the head seem to me to do good. There is no fatigue left and there is felt after the bending exercise a forward movement about the bowels.

I am still not taking tepid water and salt in the morning; for, the enema continues and I am now able to retain the water for half an hour. But I do take a tumbler full of water by the nose. Less than half of the quantity is spilt in the process of drinking through the nose. So I think about four ounces of cool water I take in this way just after the mouth wash.

The walking exercise in the morning and in the evening continues, 40 minutes each time. But the distance covered is greater than when I began after coming to Bangalore. It is nothing less than two miles every time.

I have not yet dared to go beyond two teaspoonfuls of melted butter. Milk has been increased, I think I told you, from 30 to 40 ounces and *bhakhari*[1] or oatmeal two ounces remain.

I enclose your original notes which you need not return because I shall remember the contents. You will please send me any further instructions you may think desirable.

Yours sincerely,

SRIMUT KUVALAYANANDJI
KUNJAVANA
LONAVLA

From a photostat : G.N. 5048; also S.N. 12596

[1] Thick cake prepared from wheat flour

81. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

BANGALORE,
Jeth Vad 2 [*June 17, 1927*]

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter. You want my permission to go and see Chi. Harilal. A son need not seek his grandfather's permission to see his father. No one can stand in the way of a son's wishes. You have now come of age, and that is another reason why there should be no question of my giving you permission.

All I can do is to explain to you your responsibility, and this is my advice in regard to your seeing Chi. Harilal. I believe he is present following a wrong path. He leads an immoral life. He has become an addict. He has forgotten his dharma, and, therefore, he is not fit to exercise his right as a father. I regard him as suffering from a kind of disease. His disease is not physical but spiritual, and spiritual disease is more dreadful than a physical ailment. It is not, therefore, your duty to go to him to comfort him; on the contrary, it is your duty to keep away from him. You, I and his friends and well-wishers should employ spritual non-co-operation against him. If you have intended to go to him to reform him I regard your idea as worthy of support, and in that case I would facilitate your going. But just now it seeems that you wish to go because of that letter. I feel, therefore, that your going to him will mean your encouraging him in his intention. Moreover, if you wish to go to him in order to reform him, you are not yet, from a practical point of view, fit and sufficiently mature to undertake such a task. From that point of view, you are yet a child. You are still studying. It is my desire, and also my effort to see that as you study, you should so develop your soul that you may acquire the power to do what I could not in regard to Harilal, and you should so impress him that the moment he sees you he would abjure his evil habits. I have been bringing up both you brothers with that aim in view. If you have the capacity, you will be able to benefit from such education. I would, therefore, advise you to write to Harilal and tell him firmly that he gives up his addictions and his immoral life and is able to support you all, or until you are able by the power of your *tapascharya* [1] to awaken him from his slumber, you cannot go and see him. I do not, however, insist that you should forthwith accept my

[1] Self-suffering as moral discipline

advice. So far, Harilal used to admit his weaknesses, and has been saying that he would try to shake them off; but now he has started writing letters against me in the papers. I have not seen those letters, but I know their purport. Harilal says that it is I who have forsaken my dharma, not he, and that I have been propagating the Buddhist faith. And he holds that such propaganda is harmful to people's welfare and, therefore, regards it as an evil. His rebellion, he says, is against that evil. And he intends to take you brothers away from under my undesirable influence at the first opportunity. As such are his views, you are likely to be assailed by doubts. If you have the slightest doubt whether my ideas are right or Harilal's, I think you should not be led away by my ideas. Hence this is my further advice to you that should humbly consult the teachers under whom you have studied or those among the elders with whom you have come in contact in the Ashram and who command your confidence. Put all your problems before them and act as they advise. If you ask me to solve your problems, I too will help. The *Gita* which all of us study daily, which you have been learning by heart and trying to understand with great devotion, says that we should get our problems solved with the help of those whom we regard as our elders by earnestly questioning them with humility. We should have faith in them, accept what they say as true and act accordingly. I wish, and I advise you, that you should do what I have suggested. Do not reach a hasty decision. Do not act with childish immaturity. Try to understand what your duty at the present moment is, and act with courage and determination in accordance with that duty. Consider, not what you would like to do, but what you should do. You may show this letter to anyone you may wish to consult. I shall wait for your reply. Let me know how both of you are.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 7703. Courtesy: Kanti Gandhi

82. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 18, 1927

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. If you can at all bear the strain of travelling, the weather here should suit you remarkably for, it is superb at this time of the year. But you must not undergo any strain or risk. You should come only if the doctor advises.

I am glad everything is now being removed to Sodepur. Let the boys go to Wardha by all means. But the distance to Ahmedabad need not put them off, if they will be happier at Sabarmati, as perhaps thay are likely to be. Wardha has not the convenience that Sabarmati in some respects has, especially when Jamnalalji is not there as he will not be now for some time.

With love to you all,

Yours,

BAPU

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

HOME VILLA

GIRIDIH

From a photostat: G. N. 1574

83. LETTER TO MANORAMA DEVI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 18, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your pathetic letter. It is evident it is not written by yourself. As you seem to know some English you may write to me in your own English whatever you like; better still write in Bengali. I don't understand it myself, but I have Bengali assistants here permanently with me. And tell me what your age is; what you propose to do with your parents? Have you their consent to leave them? Are you keeping good health? Will you travel alone if permission is given to you to come to the Ashram? Do you know Sjt. Gopabandhu Das? And If you do, will you please see him and let him write to me? And even if you do not know him, will you make it a point to see him? He is well known in Orissa. He is President of the Congress Committee

and he was at one time member of the Legislative Council. He is to be found either at Cuttack or at Puri. Who is your friend who has written the letter for you? I would like to help you. But before I know how I can help you, it is necessary for me to have all the particulars.

Yours sincerely,

SRIMATI MANORAMA DEVI

CHANDISAHI

CUTTACK (ORISSA)

From a photostat: S. N. 12578

84. LETTER TO FIROZA P. S. TALEYARKHAN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,

June 18, 1927

Your note was received last night; but it was handed to me only just now. I am sorry you have been laid up. I was wondering why you had not come in as you had intended to do. Of course I shall be delighted to see you whenever you come. And do please bring Lady Banerjee with you. Of course you know the hour and you won't mind if there are other visitors sitting or coming in at the time. Then you could come any day without notice. But please do not strain yourself to come if your are at all unwell. I shan't misunderstand your not coming. We are both convalescing and, in any case, now that I know who you are there need be no formality whatsoever.

Yours sincerely,

SHRIMATI FIROZA P. S. TALEYARKHAN

3, RESIDENCY ROAD

BANGALORE

From a photostat: S. N. 14163

85. LETTER TO PRINCIPAL, SANGLI INDUSTRIAL AND AGRICULTURAL SCHOOL

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,

June 18, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your very full letter. Only one further inquiry I would esteem it a favour if you would answer. Is there any difference

in the ratio of nutrition between fertilized and sterile eggs? In your school, do you also teach cattle-breeding and dairying?

Yours sincerely,

THE PRINCIPAL

SANGLI INDUSTRIAL AND AGRICULTURAL SCHOOL

SANGLI

From a photostat: S. N. 14164

86. QUARRELLING IN THE NAME OF RELIGION

A gentleman has sent me newspaper cuttings regarding the dispute which occurred in Udaipur State between Shwetambars[1] and Digambars[2] and suggested that I should go through them and give my opinion about it. For one thing, in my present state of health I cannot spare enough time to read so many newspapers carefully, and, even if I had the necessary time and energy, it is not my practice to form an opinion on any matter—no one should, I believe—from what one reads in the papers. I, therefore, do not know which party is at fault, or more at fault. However, I shall express the thoughts which occured to me after a fairly close reading of the cuttings.

The language of the writers indicates their partisan spirit. Each side blames the other and considers itself innocent.

I found no essential differences between this dispute and the writings about it, on the one hand, and the Hindu-Muslim quarrel and the writings about it on the other. There is more bitterness in the latter and the language of the writings is more venomous, but the difference is only of one degree.

The fact is that we have forgotten the very meaning of religion. Everyone fights to prove that his own view is the right one. There is no trace of any desire to understand what religion means, in what it consists, by what marks it can be recognized , and how it can be preserved.

We have a right to expect more wisdom from the Jains; they are votaries of *syadvada* [3] and claim themselves to be the only followers of the path of compassion. They should display tolerance; that is, be liberal towards others who hold different views. We should know that

[1] Sects of Jains

[2] *ibid.*

[3] The doctrine of the plurality of truth

other people will be attached to what they regard as truth quite as much as we will to what we regard as truth. Even when we feel that our opponent is at fault, we should not get angry with him but should act towards him with charity.

As I read these articles, however, I felt that even in Jain homes and temples texts of *syadvada* and compassion merely decorate old books and no other significance. I realize this in experience again and again. Where the doctrine of compassion is followed in action, it seems to be limited to feeding ants and preventing people from catching fish. I have also observed that if, in displaying compassion in this manner, cruelty is shown to human beings, that is regarded as dharma.

Raychandbhai often said that when Jainism was embraced by Vanias[1], it was interpreted in a Vania spirit, and knowledge and courage, which should be the signs of compassion, vanished almost completely; compassion became synonymous with cowardice and thus came to be despised.

Moreover, dharma and wealth are eternal enemies; but the Goddess Lakhmi took up her abode in Jain temples and the result was that religious issues, instead of being solved through *tapascharya*,came to be settled in courts of law through argument by lawyers. That is, those who could pay more could get a point of religious principle interpreted in their favour.

This picture may appear somewhat exaggerated, but it is not so. I know the Jains. I know them and the principles of their religion as intimately as I do Vaishnavism and Vaishnavas. Some in their anger believe me to be a Jain. Others in their love wish that I should became a Jain. Some Jains are pleased by my partiality for a few members of their community. I have learnt much from their books. My contact with many Jain friends has helped me much. All this has prompted me to write what I have done above thereby awaken those Jains who love their religion.

Why should there be hatred between Shwetambars and Digambars? Their religious principles are the same. The few differences which exist are easy enough to tolerate. They are such as can be resolved to the satisfaction of both parties, like the differences between the followers of the *advaita*[2] and the *dvaita*[3] doctrines.

There are numerous monks and nuns among Jains, and they

[1] Members of a community traditionally engaged in buisness and commerce
[2] Identity of the individual self with the universal Self
[3] Separateness of the individual self from the universal Self

have plenty of spare time. Why should they not engage themselves in real *tapascharya*? Why should they not acquire the highest knowledge? Why should they not seek to impart to others the benefit of their experience?

Jain youths seem to be engrossed in earning wealth like their elders. Why should they not, though living the life of householders, become like *tapasvis*[1], generous-hearted and the very embodiment of the purest spirit of compassion?

I was asked to give my opinion about the Palitana[2] affairs, and now I am asked my opinion about the sorry dispute in Udaipur. The correspondents on this occasion, too, are young friends. This time I have given an opinion which probably they never expected. I do not distinguish between Hindus and Jains. I can establish the unity of Hinduism, that is, the Vedic doctrine, with Jainism, with the help of *syadvada* itself. For myself personally, I established long ago the unity of all religions with its help. The dispute between Shwetambars and Digambars cannot be settled through newspapers nor in a court of law. Both parties should atone for their errors and purify themselves, or one party should do that on behalf of both. Those who cannot do even this should stop talking about religion, be humble and keep silent.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-6-1927

87. SWADESHI v. *FOREIGN*

A friend from Kathiawar writes as follows :[3]

Many readers will immediately see the fallacies in this letter. Even so, since one often hears similar views expressed by others, it is necessary to explain again the meaning of swadeshi as clearly as one can. Moreover, we suffer a great deal through an abuse of the idea of swadeshi. If many of the activities which are being carried on in the name of swadeshi were stopped and the effort spent on true swadeshi, we should achieve our goal much earlier.

[1] Those who practise *tapascharya*

[2] A Jain centre of pilgrimage in Saurashtra

[3] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had criticized Gandhiji's view that foreign articles which could not be manufactured in India and which were useful should be readily accepted. For Gandhiji's views *vide* "The Cow and the Buffalo", 22-5-1927.

I am sure that I have become more and not less scrupulous in following the vow of swadeshi. I have been following it, as I had conceived it in 1920, and am following it even more scrupulously today. We may certainly accept a foreign needle, since it is a useful article and can be assimilated. By accepting it, we harm no industry or craft in the country and its acceptance, therefore, does not throw anyone out of employment. On the contrary, the needle provides work to hundreds, work which benefits the country. Foreign cloth may be good in quality, and cheaper, may even be offered free; even then, it should be rejected, for its acceptance has ruined crores of our countrymen. We had been producing cloth in our own villages, and have found no other work in place of that industry. We committed a great sin in abandoning it. Its abandonment resulted in starvation, and that led to an increase in disease, crime and immorality. If ever the time comes when the people of this country will have another, more honest occupation [than spinning and weaving] and when the cotton cannot be grown on the soil of this land or when the cultivators themselves will prefer to grow another, more profitable crop, then the vow of swadeshi cloth may serve no useful purpose. If future generations, reading the literature of this age, regard this vow as an immutable principle and even at that time apply the principle of swadeshi to cloth, they will show themselves foolish and will be acting like people who drown themselves in their ancestral well instead of swimming across it. My reason cannot conceive of such a time ever coming. Whether it comes or not, there can be no two opinions that in our present condition khadi is the purest form of swadeshi and we can even say that now there are no two opinions about it.

Raw materials worth crores of rupees are produced in this country and, thanks to our ignorance, lethargy and lack of invention, exported to foreign countries; the result is, as Shri Madhusudan Das has pointed out, that we remain ignorant like animals, our hands do not get the training which they ought to and our intellects do not develop as they should. As a consequence, living art has disappeared from our land and we are content to imitate the West. As long as we cannot make the machines required for utilizing the hide of dead cattle, worth nine crores, available in our country, I would be ready to import them from any part of the world and would still believe that I was scrupulously keeping of the world and would still believe that I scrupulously keeping the vow of swadeshi. I would believe that I would be only discrediting that vow by refusing, out of obstinacy, to

import those machines. Similarly our country produces a great many things with medicinal properties, and those come back to us in the form of a variety of drugs or other articles. It is our duty to import any machines, and obtain any help, which will enable us to utilize these things in our own country.

Swadeshi is an eternal religious duty. The manner of following it may, and ought to, change from age to age. The principle of swadeshi is the soul and khadi is its body in this age and in this country. If in the course of time this body perishes, swadeshi will assume a new body but the soul dwelling in it will be the same. Swadeshi is service, and if we understand its nature we shall simultaneously benefit oursleves, our families, our country and the world. Swadeshi is not intended to serve self-interest but is pure altruism, and hence I call it a form of *yajna*. It certainly benefits ourselves, but there is no room in it for hatred of others. There can be no absolute duty of not importing anything at any time; only, we may not import anything which may harm the country. Nor can it be accepted as an absolute principle that everything that belongs to or is produced by one's own country is good. Anything, whether indigenous or foreign, which is good and serves our interest, should be readily accepted, and likewise anything, indigenous or foreign, which is bad and harmful should be rejected. The country produces a huge quantity of liquor, but all of it deserves to be shunned. There is no reason to believe that, if the whole country gives up drinking, those engaged in the liquor trade will be ruined. Their present business harms themselves and the country and they will not starve if they lose it; there will be other, better occupations which they can follow.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-6-1927

88. LETTER TO THE SECRETARY, A.I.S.A.

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 19, 1927

DEAR SIR,

With reference to the collections made in Benares, it is quite correct to state that they were all made for the Gandhi Ashram, Benares. They should therefore have the whole amount not as a loan but as a grant. It ought to appear in our books because the collection was responsibly made. It should be entered as ear-marked for Gandhi Ashram, Benares, and there would be no need to get the sanction from the Council for the grant.

As to Laxmi Behn and Harjivan, my opinion is that the whole things should be left to Rajendra Babu to manage, such help being given to him as he may require for facilitating the execution of his decision. This thing may be further discussed when we meet.

As to Gulbarga collection, I am conferring with Gangadharrao. But the position generally is this. Whilst it is convenient for us to know from which province collections have been received, all these collections are on behalf of the Association. If the idea is that the whole of the Maharashtra collections should be necessarily spent for Maharashtra, and that other provincial collections should be similarly treated, the doctrine is untenable. And I made it clear during the tour at all the places where the question was raised that whilst the places at which the amounts were collected wiil be borne in mind at the time of considering the allocation of funds, the Association could not undertake necessarily to spend funds in the place where they have been collected. It is therefore a matter of little importance what description is given to the entry of Gulbarga collections in our books. Theoretically, it is open to the Association to spend the whole of the Maharashtra collection, say in Orissa and *vice versa*. That it would be gross abuse of authority and that such abuse would break the Association is also true. But I mention this merely to illustrate my meaning and to show that so far as ledger entry is concerned, it is a matter of no moment where a particular collection comes from.

Yours sincerely,

THE SECRETARY
ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION
AHMEDABAD

From a microfilm : S.N. 19782

89. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 19, 1927

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

I have your two letters. I am glad you have opened your heart to me. The very act of doing so often soothes one. Do not therefore apologize for writing at length and in whatsover manner the spirit moves you. I am glad you have got the permission from mother for taking to simpler dress. I would like you to open out your heart to both father and mother as you have done to me. Never mind their laughing you out or smothering you with ridicule or putting you down even in anger. You will take it all in good part and with a smile on your lips. They have a right to do all those things. And when they recognize in you, in spite of ridicule, anger, etc., a seriousness and determination which shall not be moved, they will let you do what you like. How often have not young men and women built castles in the air only to be destroyed later. Why should you expect people to regard you as an exception? If you are an exception, you will stand ridicule, contempt and worse, and come out better through the ordeal. After all God *must* put us through the test.

I share your grief over your having to give up that dress on which mother has lavished so much time and so much love. But love is its own reward. And parents do not regret the trouble they have taken after things which their children outgrow. Let all those things of yours go to Sohila when mother is satisfied that you will never be likely to want them.

Mira has left Rewari and before she migrates to Wardha for perfecting her Hindi, she has come to Bangalore where she will be for a few days.

I have not got the poetic language to describe the weather here, but it is really fine at this time of the year in Bangalore. Of course we have not the Himalayas here. But I suppose you know Bangalore better than I do. I am still progressing.

With Love,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat : S.N. 9603

90. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 19, 1927

I have your brief letters. But I can read through them your grief as well as your victory over it. You are used to all kinds of charges and innuendoes. Sastri is now there. So after you have been there a month or so with him, I expect you will be returning. How I wish you were with me in Bangalore. You would have then been my door-keeper and enjoyed the glorious weather here. As it is Rajagopalachari and Gangadharrao are the gate-keepers. I see very little of them. They put in their appearance only to bring any visitors and take them out. I know nothing about their trials and their attempt to shield me. As Rajagopalachari himself has written in his latest story[1], "Illnesses of rich men or great men have a charm and romance all their own." One needs to be really a pauper to understand the chastening effects of illness. I am not going to give you any of the innumerable painful titbits from this end. You have enough of them all there. This is therefore merely to assure you that you are ever in my mind.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 12362

[1] "The Blind Girl of Vellalapatti" in *Young India*, 23-6-1927

91. LETTER TO HARINDRANATH CHATTOPADHYAYA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 19, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Have you not unconsciously made a mistake and written to me when you should have written to the Poet? Or, have you really thought that I know the literary men and artists of Europe? If you have, it is then a case of distance lending enchantment to the scene. I have hardly any correspondence even with M. Romain Rolland. I do not think that I have written more than two letters to him. The European correspondents are all common readers of *Young India*. I do not even remember their names, and they will not be the persons whom you have in view. Now, please tell me what you will have me to do.

Yours sincerely,

H. CHATTOPADHYAYA, ESQ.
KODIALBAIL P.O.
MANGALORE

From a photostat : S.N. 12773

92. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU [1]

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 19, 1927

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I must still dictate, though this dictating is not to be regarded as any indication of weakness of body. I am simply literally following doctor's advice in order to store up energy for future use. Whether energy is being thereby stored or not remains to be known.

I have your telegram. If you could have braved the travelling through the hot parts, you would certainly have been amply rewarded and forgotten the heat of central India. I wonder whether chamber work could not be done outside Allahabad. Pherozeshah used to drag clients after him. Of course it was cruel. I wonder whether for reasons of health you would not be justified in putting clients to the trouble of following you to a cool place.

Things, as they are shaping in the Congress, confirm the opinion

[1] In reply to his letter dated June 11

that it is not yet time for Jawaharlal to shoulder the burden. He is too high-souled to stand the anarchy and hooliganism that seem to be growing in the Congress, and it would be cruel to expect him to evolve order all of a sudden out of chaos. I am confident, however, that the anarchy will spend itself before long and the hooligans will themselves want a disciplinarian. Jawaharlal will come in then. For the present, we should press Dr. Ansari to take the reins. He won't control the holligans. He will let them have their way; but he may specialize in the Hindu-Muslim question and do something in the matter. It will be quite enough work for him in the coming year to solve the almost insoluble problem.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 12867

93. LETTER TO MATHURADAS

BANGALORE,
Jeth Vad 5 [*June 20, 1927*][1]

BHAI MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. May your resolve to observe *brahmacharya* endure for ever and God give you the strength for it. Has this vow been taken with the willing consent of your wife? If it is, its observance will be easier.

Do not admit defeat about khadi;this work is a kind of *tapascharya*. We do not give up our faith in truth, or forsake its practice or its propagation, even if the whole world habitually speaks untruth; in this age and in the circumstances in which we are placed, we should act in the same manner in regard to khadi. What are you doing there now, and how do you carry on your work?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3763

[1] Gandhiji was in Bangalore on this day in 1927.

94. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

BANGALORE,
Jeth Vad 5 [*June 20, 1927*]

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I get your letters regularly. I feel happy. Whether the cause of this regularity is the regret I expressed in Bombay or the new broom in the form of Sushila is a question which only you two can answer. If my regret is the cause, may the memory of that regret remain fresh with you for ever, and if the new broom is the cause, let it never grow old.

My letter is late by a week. I will be more careful hereafter. Your regularity will keep me careful. When elders become old, the young can keep them vigilant. Perhaps you know that, had Gorakh[1] not proved stronger than Machchhendra, the latter would have fallen. If you do not know about this, ask me; I will explain the story in my next letter, and shall have a good subject to write upon.

I am very glad to hear that Sushila has put on weight. Has her deafness decreased somewhat? It is also good news she has started type-composing. She can become capable of managing a press. A girl of 17 or 18 can train herself in no time. The burden of household chores on her should not increase. For that, if you keep your food requirements simple as you used to do formerly, a great deal of time will be saved. Food should be cooked only once and that too should be very simple, so that the kitchen may not occupy all one's time. Manilal knows all this art, if, that is, he has not forgotten it. A woman is not born merely to cook meals. Since cooking must be done, both [husband and wife] should take a hand in it. If they do and work in a spirit of service, they can easily discover many ways of saving time.

You may take as much as you can digest from all this that I have written and leave the rest.

I shall certainly try to write a letter by every mail, but remember that the translation of the *Gita* which I have given you must also be counted among my letters. That translation is intended for people like you, and now it is being done at a faster rate.

Let me know if you do not understand or like its language, so

[1] A disciple who saved his Guru Machchhendra, when the latter seemed to have yielded to the attraction of worldly life.

that I may be more careful and may revise that part which you find not easy to understand. This will help me as much as it will help you.

I am glad to know that you continue to read the *Gita*. You have sent your photograph to Ramdas. It does not seem that you have sent one here.

I shall respect your wish that no one else should read your letters, but they contain nothing private. Everyone naturally wants to hear news of you; if, therefore, you wish that no one should read your letters, you should from time to time write a letter to Chhaganlal which all people in the Ashram may read. All the same, I have respected your wishes and not passed on your letters to others.

[PS.] I am quite well. By the time this reaches you,

I shall have already resumed my tour.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4721

95. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

BANGALORE,
Jeth Vad 5 [*June 20, 1927*][1]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. You, me and everyone else would have been put to shame if, after having gone there, you had missed home as Shanti did. We have been taught to feel at home wherever we are. Since you have liked the place, your health should improve there.

Do not move about more than you can endure. What do you do foryour food? Where do you bring it from? What fruits do you get? And what is the arrangement for milk? Let me also know with whom you keep company there and about all other things that may occur to you. Just as it is useless to think about the past, it is useless to think of the future. 'One step enough for me' is an advice based on experience. What shall we gain by knowing the future? In other words, why do we not merge the future and the past in the present? The present, after all, is nothing but an extension of the past. To think of

[1] From the combination of place-name, Gujarati day and month in the dateline as also the contents; *vide* "Letter to Victor Mohan Joshi", 21-6-1927. *Jeth Vad* 5 in 1927 corresponded to June 20.

the distant future when at every minute changes are unfolding before our eyes, is like building castles in the air and only fools build castles in the air. The present means our duty of the moment. If we know what is our duty of the moment and direct all our efforts to its fulfilment, it is the highest form of valour. Unhappiness is born out of imagining a rosy future and lamenting about the past. So, one who takes care of the present and fulfills his duties has conquered the cycles of birth and death.

I have written to Victor Joshi today[1]. If Chhotelal is there, give him this news. I am not writing a separate letter to him because before this reaches there, he would have left and if he has not, he would read this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: S.N. 32972

96. LETTER TO LAKSHMIKANT

BANGALORE,
Jyaishtha Krishna 6 [*June 20, 1927*]

BHAI LAKSHMIKANTJI,

I got both your letters. I wanted to have a talk with *pujya* Malaviyaji and therefore could not reply to your previous letter immediately. I think you should not have written an open letter. The problem of caste-reform is very serious and difficult. It calls for great patience. Malaviyaji bears no ill will towards you. After having talked to him I am convinced that there was a difference between your way of working and his. *Pujya* Malaviyaji desires reform of Hindu society; he also wants the narrow caste restrictions to be liberalized but he believes that reforms cannot be effected just by the pioneering efforts of one man. But then he is making all possible efforts if only according to his own method. He would never think of annoying you.

Now here is my view. Whatever you did was right. Reformers should carry on their mission without cutting themselves off from Hindu society, bearing no malice and with perfect love of the Hindu religion, and while doing so, put up with all the hardships that might

[1] Victor Mohan Joshi. However, Gandhiji's letter to him is dated June 21, 1927, not June 20 as suggested here. *Vide* "Letter to Victor Mohan Joshi", 21-6-1927.

come in their way. Those who violate social conventions in the course of their activities must submit to the sanctions laid down by society and have a liberal attitude towards society while suffering them. This is what is called satyagraha. It is not for a social reformerto first disregard society's laws and then to feel sore about having to suffer punishment for this disregard. I hear if you go through some formal atonement you can be re-admitted to the caste. I am against submitting to such atonement. We atone for what we regard as sin. What you have done is no sin. It is therefore needless, even improper, to atone for it. But if you are not prepared to suffer excommunication you can return to your caste by going through the prescribed atonement. I was pained to see in your open letter a reference to Islam which looked like a threat. Every man follows his own faith not because he wants to oblige others but because he considers religion as the lifeline without which life appears impossible to him. If the tenets of Hinduism are to bring you *moksha*, there is no ground to revolt against it even if all the Hindus of this country were to oppose you.

From a microfilm of the Hindi : S.N. 12674

97. A LETTER

[Before *June 21, 1927*][1]

I have your letter. Books like the *Bhagavata* seem to have been written to meet the requirements of many different kinds of men. It is possible that immoral people will seek in it support for their immorality. If a man reads the *Bhagavata* with the desire to find God on every page of the work, any evil that may be present in his mind will disappear. The right course appears to be to give up reading a book which fills us with bad thoughts. The *Bhagavata* is not a historical work. It does not give an account of a historical Krishna. Krishna is the *atman* and the Gopis are the many senses. They are obedient servants of the self-controlled *atman* and dance before it as it wills.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

[1] The source has this letter before the entries for June 21, 1927.

98. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 21, 1927

MY DEAR BHRRRR,[1]

Better late than never. I have your letter at last. Why should marriage ceremonies cost so much time, trouble, money, and make even 70-year-young people look old for all the time and trouble taken over marriages of their children? What is there extraordinary in a marriage to elate parents and their children and almost make them mad with joy? Is it not an everyday occurrence like birth, youth, old age and death itself? They are all necessary changes attendant upon life. But of course all this is philosophy after the event. If I had a marriage in prospect, perhaps, I should write differently. But even if I intended to be married, there does not appear to be in existence a parent mad enough or sane enough to give me his girl in marriage. I can therefore safely deliver lectures to young people and old people who take pleasure in wasting their time and money over marriages. However I shall forgive all this extravagance, if Sohaila properly puts down her husband when he endeavours to restrain her freedom, and by sheer force of exemplary character breaks down the wretched *purdah* in Lucknow and the neighbourhood; and of course the propaganda of khaddar is the least I expect her to do.

I am still gathering strength and I am not likely to leave the South for another two months. It must therefore be some time before I shall have the pleasure of hugging you and touching your silvery beard and chatting on all matters important and unimportant. Raihana must be allowed to grow in her own way.

With love to you all,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 9559

[1] This was a form of greeting used by Gandhiji and Abbas Tyabji for each other.

99. LETTER TO DEBENDRA NATH MITRA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 21, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I must apologize to you for entirely forgetting to give you my suggestions regarding agriculture. My impression is that unless improvements which are within the means of the poor are taken to their very farms as they were in South Africa, success will be slow. My recent studies more and more demonstrate to me the necessity of the State taking virtual control of all the cattle. It seems to me that unless the cattle problem is properly tackled, they will either be killed out mercilessly or we shall be. And while things are allowed to take their course, we are both being ground down. Destruction of uneconomic cattle, I hold to be impractical and criminal in our country. We must therefore take charge of the uneconomic cattle and find ways and means of supporting them as economically as possible, getting what return we can out of their manure and out of their hide, bone, etc., after they die. We should cease to allow a single calf to come into being except through proper bulls. Your farm should therefore, in my opinion, contain facilities for proper dairying and tanning and there should be series of experiments to find out the relative value of manure in connection with the feed of unused and unuseful cattle. I do not know whether you followed the series of articles that were published in *Young India* on the cattle problem. There are of course other things I might mention; but they require legislation and [are] therefore outside your jurisdiction and control.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. DEBENDRA NATH MITRA
GOVT. AGRICULTURAL FARM
FARIDPUR (EAST BENGAL)

From a microfilm : S.N. 12917

100. LETTER TO LAJPAT RAI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 21, 1927

DEAR LALAJI,

I do not know whether this letter will reach you. I simply passed on to you about the trust what I felt.[1] I know that you will do whatever is proper. I surely do not need any explanation.

I hope you are gaining strength day by day and taking rest without being concerned with the events that may be going on about you. I would like you to do what Asquith did in the midst of the War. He took, when his health threatened to break down, a fortnight's cruise in the Mediterranean and cut himself off from all communications. We may not afford to take any such cruise, but we can afford to retire unto ourselves untouched by the environment.

Yours sincerely,

LALA LAJPAT RAI
NATIONAL LIBERAL CLUB
WHITEHALL PLACE
LONDON S. W. 1

From a photostat : S. N. 14166

101. LETTER TO VICTOR MOHAN JOSHI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 21, 1927

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Chhotalalji tells me you were grieved that I had not gone to Almora up to now. When you give me sufficient inducement about khadi work, you will find me taking my convalescence in Almora instead of Bangalore. Meanwhile, you have Prabhudas there, and whatever service may be rendered to him will be rendered to one who bids fair to become if he is spared by God a faithful servant of the nation.

Yours sincerely,

VICTOR MOHAN JOSHI
ALMORA

From a photostat : S. N. 14167

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lajpat Rai", 1-5-1927.

102. LETTER TO DR. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,

June 21, 1927

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I have your letter. I shall deal with the appeal[1] in the columns of *Young India*. I would suggest your going from door to door and making collections. There is really no other way. If I could at all come there, I should join you.

I cannot invite you and Basanti Devi to come here because I am still half-bedridden and not moving about. In the month of July the doctors expect that I shall be able to do a little travelling. But it won't enable me to put forth energy that I should have to if I invited you and took you from place to place. For that you will have to give me strength when I come to Bengal if I am ever enabled to do.

How is Basanti Devi getting on ? She and Mona and Baby are all playing me false. Tell them I shall have my revenge one of these days. I am here at least up to the end of the month.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY

36, WELLINGTON STREET

CALCUTTA

From a photostat : S. N. 14168

[1] *Vide* "Chittaranjan Seva Sadan", 30-6-1927.

103. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
Jeth Vad 7 [*June 21, 1927*][1]

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I have just now received a telegram from Swami to the effect that your mother fell dead while she was walking with you. I can offer only felicitations on such a holy death. We should all pray for such a death. Her bodily presence with us was a source of support and comfort, and if we feel grieved for the loss of that feeling, our grief would be nothing but selfishness.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From Gujarati : C. W. 7392. Courtesy : Valjibhai Desai

104. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day, Jeth Vad 7, [*June 21, 1927*][2]

SISTERS,

Received your letter.

That I praised the bangles made of yarn does not mean that all of you should start wearing them. Such innovations will endure only if they proceed from the heart. And I wish that none of you should do anything merely for fear of not confoming.

Now I visit daily a milk-producing centre. It gives rise to various thoughts in my mind—one of which I shall put down here. Just as you have undertaken the work of the store, so also you can help to run these milk centres. Thousands of cattle perish daily owing to our ignorance and idleness. I find that this is work that can be done as easily by women as by men. The sturdy cowherd-women of Kathiawar appear before my mind's eyes. We are already farmers, weavers and sweepers; we need to be cowherds too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 3654

[1] Gandhiji was in Bangalore on this date in 1927.

[2] The source has June 23, 1927, presumably the date of receipt. The source again has *Jeth Vad* 6 which, in 1927, was *kshaya*, not reckoned. *Jeth Vad* 7, June 21, 1927 was a Tuesday.

105. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

BANGALORE,
Jeth Vad 7 [*June 21, 1927*][1]

BHAISHRI BHANSALI,

I liked your letter very much because you had opened your heart in it. Manibehn has today given me the news that your seven-day fast is progressing well. A seven-day fast is child's play for you. I had not, therefore, felt worried over it at all. But I see an error in the argument you have advanced about the reason for the fast. The best thing is not to do a thing about doing which we have a doubt. If we have started doing a thing, and then we get a doubt about it, true expiation consists in abandoning it that very moment. Any other atonement which excludes this is useless. If your demand for a new house was wrong, you cannot atone for that error by means of a fast. If you see no error in that demand, atonement is not called for at all. If you have even the slightest doubt about having committed an error, to seek to cover it up by means of a fast amounts to committing a second error, because by undertaking a fast we banish the thought of error from our mind and we ought not to do this. Expiation such as fasting is a form of self-punishment and punishment can be only for a thing which we cannot undo. If we abuse someone or beat him, we cannot take back the abuse or the beating. We may, therefore, inflict on ourselves punishment like a fast; such punishment brings about self-purification, and also restrains us from making a similar mistake again. But suppose that we have stolen someone's money. At the time of doing so, we felt that there was nothing wrong in it but later on we got a doubt about what we had done and felt afraid lest we had done a wrong; then, at that very moment, we ought to return the money to the owner and threafter, if we so wish, we may undergo self-punishment such as a fast. Returning the money is like returning a loan and hence that does not amount even to punishment. You may perhaps argue why you should return the goods so long as you are not sure that stealing is bad, and tell yourself that you will return them when you decide that it is indeed bad. Many sins are, and have been committed in the world through such reasoning. Being moral requires that wherever there is a doubt, we should decide against our own interest. But we may go a step further and suppose that, so long as we have a

[1] From the reference to the addressee's seven-day fast

doubt about stealing being wrong, we shall also have a doubt about the desirability of returning the money. Even then, in such circumstances a fast certainly is not a means of resolving such a doubt. On the contrary, the fast may prove an obstacle in our effort to discover the truth.

Here I have only analysed the ethical principle for your benefit. I myself have no doubt whatever in your case. You had a right to ask for a roomier house in a quiet part, for the inmates of the Ashram regard your living in the Ashram as conducive to its progress. The best place for the experiments which you have been making is the Ashram, and such experiments are an inseparable part of its life. Hence any facilities which you consider necessary for those experiments and which others accept as necessary should be provided to you if the financial condition of the Ashram permits them, and it is because this was the position that a house has been got ready for you. Moreover, if hereafter it is felt that such an arrangement ought not to have been made, you can move into another small house that may be vacant. On that score, too, we need have no fear. Moreover, Lilabehn may get more accustomed to the conditions there and come to like living in simplicity, and you may become so detached that the atmosphere round you will not affect you at all; then you yourself will decide to leave that house and ask for another. And if I see that you or Lilabehn has become weak, I shall not, as an elder and guardian, hesitate to speak to you about it. If I shrink from doing so, I shall fall from my dharma. Thus you are safe in every way. I could have explained all this in my reply to your very letter. It even occurred to me to do so. But I did not think it advisable to do that and stop your fast abruptly. I was also afraid that I might shock you by advancing such an argument when you were about to start your fast. Hence I deferred writing this. Now you are in a position to appreciate my argument objectively, since the fast is now out of the way. There is a sound reason behind my plea. If you remain complacent because of the fast and believe that there is no reason now to feel doubtful about the propriety of having put up a new building, that would not be right. The truth is that it is our duty to feel doubtful about the propriety of every one of our indulgences, and it is complacency to feel no such doubt. If we do not feel doubtful in this manner, we shall never be able to practise complete renunciation. Hence this caution. I have also something to say about the other portions of your letter, but this is enough for the present. I shall attend to those portions when I have

the time. The matter is certainly not urgent.

Please have no hesitaion in writing to me whatever you wish.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 12194

106. LETTER TO SATAVALEKAR

June 21, 1927

It is the common experience that *brahmacharya* is not essential for the conservation and development of bodily strength and so on. Hence there is the danger of overlooking the importance of *brahmacharya* in tracing the close association between *brahmacharya* and physical strength. We have fallen lower than the *asuri*[1] countries. The reason for it is the having fallen from our own position we are not able to attain another either. We are afraid of accommodating all that the *asuri* tradition implies, whereas we lack the strength to translate into action the *daivi*[2] traditions. It is for this reson that attempts are being made in the country today to bring in the *asuri* traditions—this is what I see everywhere. But these traditions simply cannot work. The people cannot digest them. And as they are lax in following the *daivi* tradition, they stand where they are. Hence I believe that since we follow the *daivi* tradition our acts must be pure and we must somehow save ourselves from copying the *asuri* tradition.

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

107. LETTER TO DEVI WEST

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 22, 1927

MY DEAR DEVI,

I have your letter. I am getting better though I am still weak and convalescing at a cool place.

Yes. Manilal is still at Phoenix looking after *Indian Opinion*. His wife is now helping him. He tells me she has already learnt the compositor's work. She is a good girl and you would have liked her if

[1] Demoniac
[2] Divine

you had seen her. Manilal is very devoted to her and both of them seem to be very happy. Manilal has all new men now on his staff.

Yes. Mirabai[1] is still with me. At the present moment, she is even at Bangalore where I am. She has come to be with me for a few days. Then she goes to a branch of the Ashram for perfecting her Hindi.

How do you occupy your time there? Devdas is with me, and Ramdas is at his post in a khadi workshop.

I am sorry you do not see *Young India*. I am now asking the manager to put you on the free list. Do you not get *Indian Opinion* ? If you do not, you should write to Manilal without any hesitation to send you a copy. But if you would rather not write, I would do so gladly on hearing from you. You ought to have been getting both *India Opinion* and *Young India*. I should have myself enquired about the latter, but I took it for granted that you saw the paper.

With love,

Yours sincerely,

BHAI
MISS DEVI WEST
22, GEORGE STREET
LOUTH
LINCOLNSHIRE (ENGLAND)

From a photostat : S.N. 12506

108. LETTER TO H. HARCOURT

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 22, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I wrote to you in my last letter[2] that I will send for the copy of your book[3] you had kindly sent me. I have now got it and having the leisure of a convalescent, I went through the book from end to end. I read it with interest. I liked your humorous touches especially with reference to the complainant who the accused said in his evidence had

[1] Mirabehn
[2] *Vide* "Letter to H. Harcourt", 1-6-1927.
[3] *Sidelights on the Crisis in india* by H. Harcourt and Chhotu Ram; Harcourt was a member of the Indian Civil Service and Deputy Commissioner of Gurdaspur and Chhotu Ram was Minister for Agriculture in the Punjab Government.

struck the latter's fist with his nose. I have remembered that joke well because you have unwittingly summed up my own belief. I have certainly run up my nose against many a fist, and have hitherto come out unhurt. I have found in my experience that when instead of putting up your nose for the man with the fist to play with, you try to ward off his play by holding it back, you really get the knock-out blow. But I must not try to present you my philosophy of life if the method I stand for can possibly be described by such a dignified word.

But I would say one word with reference to your estimate of me. I ask you to believe me when I assure you that I endeavoured to see myself in your looking-glass. But I have failed to recognize myself in it. I do not wonder at the picture you have drawn of me. I hope that I do not entertain any elongated notions about myself. But I cannot help expressing my grief that a man so sincere like you should have failed to study an honest movement which somehow or other caught the imagination of thousands upon thousands of men and women who had hitherto been left untouched, with more attention than you evidently felt called upon to give. Many English friends are now beginning to see that my movement was an honest attempt through non-co-operation to bring about hearty co-operation of equals, instead of an enforced and superficial co-operation between parties one of which regarded itself as superior to the other.

I shall await your letter[1] telling me what your challenge was. And if I find it to be still capable of being taken up, and find myself equally capable of taking it up, you may depend upon me responding to it.

Yours sincerely,

H. HARCOURT, ESQ.
119, GIPSY HILL
LONDON S.E. 19

From a photostat : S.N. 12523

[1] In his letter dated July 12 Harcourt wrote : "The challenge I referred to was yours and addressed to my countrymen in general. I tried to reply but I have no copy now" (S .N. 12531).

109. LETTER TO G. K. DEVADHAR

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 22, 1927

MY DEAR DEVADHAR,

I thank you for your letter. I did read about your election in the papers. It was a foregone conclusion. I therefore did not send you my congratulations. And though in the opinion of the outside world, it is an honour conferred upon you, I know as well as you do that for you it is a matter of greater responsibility and greater opportunity for service. You call me a friend and supporter of the Society. I regard myself as some friend and supporter of the Society. I regard myself as something much more. I have never considered myself as anything but a member of the Society. Though I am not officially a member [and] am not taking any active part in its activities, [this] does not cause me the slightest worry. My abstention is my quota of service. When a member of a numerous family cannot see eye to eye with the rest although his heart is with them, he serves the family best by non-interference, always wishing that his head may be where his heart is so that he can render active service. Has it not been said that those also serve who wait and pray? You have therefore a right to command my service whenever you think that with my limitations it can be of any use to you.

I do not expect to be a Sabarmati before the end of August, for doctors here tell me I shall be able to do a certain amount of touring from next month, and if I can do so, I shall want to finish as far as I can the Southern tour that was mapped out and over which immense trouble was taken by Rajagopalachari and Gangadharrao Deshpande. If I must regard your headquarters as Poona, it is just as easy for you if not easier to come to Bangalore as to go to Sabarmati. And I am here till about 10th of July. You can come here therefore if you at all can and will. I shall always have my grievance against Mrs. Devadhar, for she is under promise to come to Sabarmati and stay there a few days, a promise she has never yet fulfilled.

With love,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. G. K. DEVADHAR
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIEY
POONA

From a photostat : S.N. 14169

110. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 22, 1927

I have your letter from Geneva. I hope you have received all my previous letters including the last one which was in English. I see that you are observing things with your customary keenness. I hope however that you will form no hasty conclusions as so many of our superior men have often done. All is not gold that glitters. The converse of it is also equally true. All is not dirt that appears dirty. And how often do we not see the two co-existing, riches and poverty, virtue and vice, Jekyll and Hyde, God and Satan? The combination that you have described of wine-drinking, womanizing, etc., with physical strength, orderliness, common honesty and ardent patriotism is not to be denied. The fact seems to me to be that one virtue does not lead at any rate all at once to all the other virtues, and a particular quality ceases to be a virtue when it solidifies into a custom. Vegetarianism with us is really no virtue. We are vegetarians by custom. It would be a sacrifice for us a large majority of vegetarians to be otherwise. But vegetarianism in Europe will be a virtue. It would be an active force in the life of a European vegetarian, and if he is a seeker of truth that one reform will lead him to many others. Foreign visitors to India have remarked upon our general domestic happiness and family affection. This quality is part of our being. A father loves his children and children render willing obedience to parents without much effort on either side. People in Europe have found by experience that it is necessary for them to extend the family idea and regard the society to which they belong as a nation. Hence patriotism there is not a virtue which needs to be cultivated. Want of it would be noticed as a strange thing and would lead to excommunication of the type familiar in Europe. They have also understood the doctrine of honesty being the best policy and so up to a point, you will find that quality abundantly in evidence. With us patriotism has got to be cultivated. We have in practice not gone beyond family affection as a nation. But I shall not elaborate this point further as I must keep an appointment which I have put off to finish this letter.

It will be an agreeable surprise to me if you succeed in enlisting 500 paying subscribers for *Young India*. It would be further proof of European interest in what *Young India* stands for.

I am making steady progress. And doctors are of opinion that I

should be able to resume touring on a moderate scale early next month.

Yours sincerely,

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA

C/O THOMAS COOK & SONS

LUDGATE HILL

LONDON

From a photostat : S.N. 14170

111. LANCASHIRE BLOCK

The long delay which took place in the publication of the Tariff Board report was almost a certain indication of the rejection of any recommendation for granting further protection to the great mill industry. The Government will not offend Japan by discriminating against it and favouring Lancashire. And it dare not displease Lancashire by applying it any protective duty. For Lancashire is the Government in substance; and to grant India effective protection against Lancashire would be almost like committing suicide.

This question of protection for the mill industry against Lancashire and other foreign competition is a question of life and death for India as it is supposedly one of life and death also for Lancashire. To realize the truth of this statement, one has merely to look at the table of imports. Imports from Lancashire are by far the largest of all the other imports, nearly half of all British imports. Lancashire has risen on the ashes of India's greatest cottage industry and it is sustained by the exploitation of the helpless millions of this land. The indigenous mill industry is really regarded as an interloper, and if it could be decently squashed in the interest of Lancashire, it would be suppressed without ceremony. The stupendous interest of Lancashire is allowed to override every moral consideration. The existence of that industry harms both Lancashire and India. It has reduced India to pauperism, and India's pauperism reduces Lancashire to moral bankruptcy.

The mill-owners of India will never be able to vindicate their position in the face of this almost insurmountable obstacle, unless they courageously make common cause with the people and force protection from the Government. It is the country's right. If a country has the right to determine the composition of its inhabitants, and to exclude those whom it considers to be detrimental to its existence, it has a greater right to determine the composition of the

goods that it would permit to be imported within its borders and to exclude those that it may consider to be harmful to its population.

There can be no doubt that foreign cloth is the most harmful among all our imports. The mill industry may for a time flourish somehow, it may also show a temporary prosperity by various manipulations or by favourable accidents; but unless it secures effective protection against all foreign cloth, it is bound to go under sooner or later, and certainly much sooner than one expects. Some day or other there is bound to be a real sustained mass awakening, whether mad and undisciplined but organized in its own madness, or (as I hope), disciplined and organized non-violently. And when it comes the indigenous mill industry, unless it is recognized as their own by the masses, will perish in the flames that must overtake foreign cloth. It is time for the mill-owners to make common cause with khadi and wrest protection from an unwilling Government. There is room enough for years to come for both, if the province of each is now marked out and rigidly respected. It is then possible for them to prosper in spite of Government aloofness and even insidious opposition. But this presupposes intelligent sacrifice on the part of the mill-owners, a vital combination amongst them and an iron determination to carry through their programme.

I was glad to notice an authoritative repudiation of the rumour that a cut in the wages of the mill-hands was contemplated as a reply to the Government's decision. It would have been suicidal. What is wanted at this time is not antagonizing labour, but making common cause with labour and regarding mill-hands as much proprietors of the mills as the shareholders and agents. If the shareholders supply the capital, the labourers supply the muscle for the conversion of capital into cloth. A combination, therefore, between the mill-owners, the mill-hands and the masses would be an irresistible combination which the Government dare not ignore. Will the mill-owners have enough foresight, courage and patriotism for the task? The 1s. 6d. ratio, it was contended (with a great degree of force in the contention), was a hit aginst that great industry and a gift to Lancashire. The resolution on the Tariff Board report is another such hit and therefore another gift to Lancashire. I wonder whether this last hit will stir the mill-owners to right action. No petition, no resolution in the Legislative Assembly will be of any use unless it is backed by effective mass action, and, in my humble opinion, it is not possible to conceive of any milder mass action than I have ventured to suggest.

Young India, 23-6-1927

112. NOTES

THE FORTHCOMING TOUR

If the progress I am supposed to be making continues to the end of the month, Drs. Subbarao and Krishnaswami Rao who have been kindly attending on me tell me that I should be able to resume a moderate amount of touring taken in easy stages. In view, therefore, of the possible resumption, I would like the workers and all concerned to bear in mind that I shall not be able to sustain the strain to which I seemed to be equal up to the end of March. Processions and noises must be abandoned and people should be repeatedly warned against crowding round me shouting and touching my feet; nor may I be expected to visit institutions in the places to which I may be taken. One meeting and informal discussion with workers is about all I shall be able to manage per day. It is, I know, ungracious to use Chikballapur as my illustration to show how not to do it. The people of Chikballapur have been extraordinarily kind to me personally. A friend who noticed the exquisite attention paid to me at Nandi Hills by the representatives who used to come from Chikballapur from time to time to see that everything was supplied and in order, and who noticed the loving attention of the volunteers all drawn from representative families of Mysore, could not help remarking that it was wonderful manifestation of selfless love that the people of Mysore exhibited, in that I had done nothing, specially for the people of Mysore, I had hardly even seen the country except for the flying visits to Bangalore. I could not help endorsing the spontaneous remark made by this friend. It was so true. The reception committee of Chikba-llapur left no stone unturned to anticipate my wants and supply them at considerable sacrifice of time and money. I would therefore gladly have avoided using Chikballapur for an unfavourable illustration.

But what happened there was so typical that I must not omit to mention it. Although there was to be no procession, and I was to be taken quickly and quietly to the place of the meeting[1] which was to be perfectly noiseless, the leaders and the people lost their heads when they saw my car, and though the sun was beating hot, Mr. Hamza Husain Saheb, who is the chairman of the general reception committee and who was escorting me, had to submit to the pain of seeing the hood taken off and the motor carried in procession at a snail's pace. Officiating Dewan and ex-Police Commissioner though he was, he

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Chikballapur", 5-6-1927.

knew that at this moment he was connected with a representative of India's paupers, and as such had meekly to submit to the risk of all the good that Nandi had done to his charge being undone. I pleaded with the leaders whom I had seen in Nandi and who were near the car to restrain the enthusiasm and quickly take the motor to the meeting place. "We shall soon reach it", was the only reply I could get. The meeting, too, was none too orderly, and on the top of that, though the majority of the audience did not understand Enlgish, the address was read to me in that language in spite of my repeated warning in these pages that it would be more in keeping with the surroundings, at least at meetings where poor people gather in thousands, to conduct proceedings in their mother tongue supplying me when necessary with a translation in Hindi. But this much must be said for Chikballapur. Its mistakes too were due to affection. I was told that they never had a popular meeting of this character before. They naturally did not wish to damp the enthusiasm of the people. They lost their heads themselves for the moment, being caught in the wave of enthusiasm, and for the Hindi translation possibly they had not a single person in Chikballapur knowing Hindi. But let the other local reception committees profit by the unavoidable mistakes of Chikballapur. Let them have previous rehearsals in checking their enthusiasm. Let them translate it into purchases and hard work at the spinning-wheel. That would be an intelligent, profitable and national application of the energy created by the enthusiasm, and it would not only gladden their guest but will also strengthen his body, mind and soul.

INDECENT ADVERTISEMENTS

Lying on my back and trying at times, in obedience to medical instructions, to take my mind off serious reading, I chance upon advertisement sheets of newspapers. They are sometimes painfully instructive. I see often in respectable papers advertisements of a lewd nature. The headings are deceptive. In one case, the heading was "Books Relating to Yoga". On looking at the contents of the advertisement, I discovered hardly one book out of ten having any reference to yoga; all the rest had reference to sex, suggesting that young men and women may indulge in sexual pleasures without coming to grief, promising to divulge secret remedies. I came upon worse things which I do not propose to copy in these pages. Hardly a newspaper is free from liquor advertisements, and advertisements regarding medicines designed to debase and corrupt youthful minds.

The editors and the proprietors who are themselves known to be pure and opposed to drink, to smoking and such other evils, are at times found not to be averse to deriving an income from advertisements which are obviously intended to spread the evils which they shun. The argument sometimes advanced is that it is not possible to conduct a newspaper on any other condition. But is it necessary to conduct newspapers at any cost? Is the good that they do so great as to outweigh the evil that mischievous advertisements cause? We have a journalists' association. Is it not possible through it to cultivate a uniform code of morals among them and to create a public opinion that would make it impossible for a respectable journal to violate the prescribed code?

Young India, 23-6-1927

113. TELEGRAM TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

BANGALORE,
June 23, 1927

RAMESHWARDAS
DHULIA

DIFFICULT PROVIDE FASTING TREATMENT FOR YOU AND MEDICAL TREATMENT FOR YOUR WIFE SAME PLACE. CAN YOU SEPARATE? WILL YOUR WIFE UNDERGO OPERATION IF NECESSARY BY MALE DOCTOR? SEND FULL REPLY BY POST.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 739

114. LETTER TO HELENE HAUSSDING

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 23, 1927

MY DEAR SPARROW,

I have your postcard. I am grieved to learn that you were still ailing at the time of writing. But I hope that by the time this reaches you, you will be at least just as healthy as I seem to have become. You must not prolong your sickness beyond certain limits and those limits have been crossed already.

For your edification, I send you a free rendering by Krishnadas of an article contributed by a fellow passenger of yours. I wonder if

she has correctly reported the conversation ascribed to you.

The weather in Bangalore is extremely nice. I expect to be here yet for about 20 days by which time doctors expect I should be able to move about without difficulty.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 12524

115. LETTER TO J. W. PETAVEL

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 23, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I hope you duly received my previous letter[1]. You sent me your book at an opportune moment. Whilst I am convalescing, I have nothing to do but read what little I can and dictate a few letters and a few articles. I therefore took up your book with a view to learn the central fact of your programme, policy or teaching whatever it might be described as. I have just finished it and I am now dictating this letter. I am sorry to say that the book has not made any appeal to me. What is true in it, I began doing in 1909-10 when for the satyagrahis of the Transvaal a friend gave me the use of 1,100 acres of land which he and I called Tolstoy Farm. There we were doing exactly what you have suggested. Boys and their relatives everyone was expected to work, and boys had some tuition, plenty of work and plenty of play. If they were examined today some of them might perhaps say they would have preferred all play and no work, and the more modest ones might say they would have preferred more play and less work. But I was unable to advance any claim on behalf of that colony which you advance on behalf of yours. I wish that your claim could be sustained.

I very carefully studied the association's appeal to busy people. The picture suggested by your diagram No. 1 of the future, I fear, for a long time to come will remain a mere picture. c.d. may in course of time be magnified into C.D. But it will be absorbed as it is being absorbed now by A.B.

You have headed three chapters, "A Lesson from Switzerland", "Belgium" and "America". On going through the chapters, I find nothing of what these three countries are doing except a bare

[1] Dated June 15, 1927.

mention. I am not wiser about the Swiss method, no wiser about the Belgian or the American method. And your advice to copy the rapid locomotion of America, makes me giddy even to read it. I suppose, if you succeed (say) in converting Calcutta into a second New York with moving platforms and fourfold railways, etc., etc., and take me there to witness the marvellous performance, I should fall dead at the very sight of the thing. I have numerous, I was going to say innumerable, American friends. But they have all assured me that there is beneath the untold wealth of America, degradation, superstition and vice incarnate and the inequalities between A.B. and B.C. are enormous and that B.C. is being successfully exploited by A.B., in many cases B.C. not even knowing how. As I think of your chapter on America, I recall what Stead wrote many years ago, "If Christ Came to Chicago". And if my present informants have not misled me, what Stead wrote now nearly 40 years ago is truer today than when he wrote that biting article.

Of the Belgian and the Swiss examples I can say nothing; for, I know nothing. And you have given neither facts nor figures. Your book reminds me of what Ruskin wrote somewhere and which may be thus paraphrased : If men become machines and if bone and muscle could be removed from these machines, they could be flattened into bricks of a required size and these human bricks could then be consolidated into a majestic pyramid and made to do anything that the controller of these bricks desired. But unfortunately or fortunately you have to deal not with machines but with bony, intelligent muscle each having its own individuality and each pulling its own way. I wonder if your lineal cities, co-operative schemes, garden suburbs and transformed educational methods all drawn up with exactness and printed in beautiful type will change society in the manner you expect without devising some means of appealing to the soul within. I conclude with what I have said before of successful policy so that a practical man like me may learn something.

Yours sincerely,

CAPTAIN J. W. PETAVEL, ESQ.

BAGH BAZAAR

CALCUTTA

From a photostat : S.N. 14171

116. LETTER TO HARINDRANATH CHATTOPADHYAYA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 24, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. I send you the enclosed for what it may be worth.

You have tempted me with a bribe[2]. But a bribery being an unlawful thing, is always given in cash; whereas you have asked me to accept a credit note. However I rely upon cashing the note on presentation whether by me in person or by my successor in office as the representative of *Daridranarayana*.

Yours sincerely,

PS.

[All] letters pass through one or two hands before they [come] to me for signature. One of the . . .[3] me for letters of recommendation. As far as possible I avoid giving letters of recommendation to anybody. If there is any truth in the information given to me, I hope you will protect your and India's honour. I delayed the posting of the letter in order to find from the voice within what my course of duty was in the light of the information. This morning I felt I must send the letter with the enclosures and pass on to you the information in the hope that you would take it in spirit in which it is offered and not think ill of the informant or me. The former has no malice against you.

May God be with us all.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 12773

[1] Dated June 22. The addressee had requested for a letter of introduction from Gandhiji for use in Europe.

[2] The addressee had promised that on his return when he founded the National Theatre, "the language of the plays shall be Hindi and that of the scenes or costumes, khaddar".

[3] The source is not legible here.

117. LETTER TO P. K. CHARLU

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 24, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter, and also a copy of your journal. I have glanced through its pages. I am unable to congratulate you upon it. There is great deal of hasty ventures of this kind. I personally think that publication of magazines is being overdone and such overpublication can do no good to the nation. I fail to see from your magazine that you have a special message to give. What is really wanted at the present moment is silent and steady work. I am a believer in the proverb that example is better than precept. I wish indeed that I could even now wean you from proceeding further with your venture.

I had the privilege of meeting your father in 1896 when I was in Madras.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. K. CHARLU
EDITOR AND PUBLISHER
"DHARMA"
6, SUNKURAMA CHETTY STREET, G. T.
MADRAS

From a microfilm : S.N. 14172

118. LETTER TO P. RAJAGOPALA IYER

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 24, 1927

MY DEAR RAJAGOPALAN,

I have read the report you have sent. It is good work you are doing. Do not try to do too much at a time, but go forward step by step, and never enter depth beyond your capacity, pecuniary, physical, mental and spiritual; your progress will then be even substantial and never-failing. You should survey the villages that may be within five miles radius of your place and where the people are receptive, poor because they are idle part of the year, [and] present the charkha to them not by mere speech but by demonstration. Never offer a higher wage than the maximum fixed by the Spinners' Association, and if

the people do not accept your message, do not worry, but do not give up hope. If your faith persists and your action corresponds to the faith, you will find a response sooner or later from the surrounding villages. I take it you are doing at your Ashram hand-ginning, carding and spinning and that nothing is being slurred over but everything done as perfectly as possible.

Please continue to send me a brief monthly report for my personal information. I do not propose to take any notice of it at the present moment in *Young India*. Let the institution take root.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. RAJAGOPALIER
PALAYUR
Via MUTHUPET

From a microfilm : S.N. 19783

119. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU [1]

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 25, 1927

MY DEAR MIRABAI,

I have your love letter. I hope Padmaja lying on a sofa was a case of a spoilt babe wanting to be fondled by her mother and not of sickness or fatigue. It is time for her to outgrow her illness and weakness and engage in some stern work and relieve us old people of the burden. Then you may talk of my right to take real rest.

If Dr. Ansari is not to lead us next year, we must find some other man or woman. There are many forces just now working against Motilalji. The burden will be too great for him to shoulder. I do not share the view that we must have a Hindu for the coming year. On the contrary, for the very purpose in view there is no other man than Dr. Ansari[2] . He alone can pilot a Hindu-Muslim pact through the Congress. His selection will command universal acceptance. Hindus will render him loyal obedience and the fact of the Congress being predominantly Hindu will not—cannot—be disputed by a Mussalman being in the Chair. Think it over and if you have any doubt, wire your

[1] President of the Congress in 1925
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Motilal Nehru", 19-6-1927.

departure for Bangalore to discuss the question. I duly sent a wire today.

With love,

Yours,

"WIZARD"

SHRIMATI SAROJINI DEVI
TAJ MAHAL HOTEL
BOMBAY

From a photostat : S.N. 12868

120. LETTER TO SHAH CHAMANLAL DUNGAJI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 25, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I had already intended to deal in the pages of *Young India* with the question discussed by you. Do you want me to make public use of your letter and the facts contained in it, especially the fact that cows or bullocks are every day slaughtered for providing food for lions and tigers?

What is your authority for saying that I am against legislation altogether regarding cow-slaughter prohibition? I would like you to show me the statement ascribing to me the opinion which I have never held. What I have said what I adhere to is that such legislation ought not to be embarked upon even in a Hindu State if an intelligent majority of the Mussalmans oppose it. I have also added that legislation alone will not save the cow. But I propose to deal with this subject fairly fully in the pages of *Young India*, which I expect you will see.[1]

If you are desirous of discussing the subject more fully with me, all the friends who are interested in the question may come any day at 4 p.m. except Monday. To avoid delay, I suggest your making an appointment beforehand so that I should be ready to talk to you precisely at the appointed time.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SHAH CHAMANLAL DUNGAJI
PRESIDENT
SHRI GORAKSHAKA MANDALI
BANGALORE CITY

From a microfilm : S.N. 12918

[1] *Vide* "The Cow in Mysore", 7-7-1927.

121. LETTER TO WILLIAM SMITH

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 25, 1927

DEAR MR. SMITH,

I have carefully gone through both your papers[1]. They are interesting and useful for a sceptic. I am a confirmed believer, but ill-equipped, ignorant man. I therefore want you to draw up for me and persons like me—of this there is a respectable number—a tangible business scheme which will enable the reader to immediately put it into practice, if he has skilled assistance and money. Could you therefore please give me such a scheme un-embellished with argument? It would give plan and specifications, an estimate of the cost of plants, machinery, etc., and the probable working cost of and returns from the enterprise.

I have been thinking deeply over what you and your men so kindly showed me at the Imperial Dairy Institute.[2] I have several questions to ask. But for the present, I would like to say that in order to make the institution answer Indian requirements, it needs an addition of two things.

There seems to be no facility for studying methods of castration. The raising of the standard of the breed all over India seems to me to be impossible until the promiscuous herding of cows with bulls is done away with. Castration seems to be the only remedy. The indigenous method is hideously cruel.

Secondly, it seems to me that a dairy to satisfy Indian requirements has necessarily to become a tannery also. Countries of the West have found a short cut to economic success by killing cattle which they consider to be a burden. We in India have to deal with the economics of the cattle question subject to the limitation that cattle have to be supported even when they give inadequate or no return for their upkeep. Hence I feel that a dairy scheme, which does not provide for and against this necessary limitation, must be faulty from an economic standpoint. Whether the Imperial Institution can be expanded to cover these points or not, is not for me to say. But could

[1] "Dairies as an Indian Village Industry", dated January 3, 1927, and "The Need for a Village Dairy Factory System in India", dated June 10, 1927 (S. N. 12926)

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Gandhiji at the Imperial Dairy, Bangalore", 23-6-1927.

you give me any guidance or recommend any literature on these points?

And generally what books will you suggest my studying in order to enable me the better to digest the information I have gathered during the few days' visit to the Dairy? If you have any literature in connection with the activities of the Imperial Dairy, and if it is saleable, I should like to buy it.

I cannot conclude this letter without thanking you for all the facilities you kindly gave me in connection with my visits to the Dairy.

Yours sincerely,

WILLIAM SMITH, ESQ.
IMPERIAL DAIRY EXPERT
BANGALORE

From a microfilm : S.N. 12927

122. LETTER TO K. KELAPPAN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 25, 1927

MY DEAR KELAPPAN,

I have been often thinking of you and wondering what you were doing. And now to my delight I have your letter. I cannot advise you how you should go about. If you cannot raise money in Kerala for the time being, I feel that money can be supplied if you can produce absolutely reliable workers who will be prepared to render service at a sacrifice. If you have such young men, prepare the list with qualifications and the scheme of work and then you can bring that scheme and discuss it with me. Ultimately of course it will have to be under the control of a board.

So far as a grant from the Municipality is concerned there will be no hesitation in accepting and even asking for it.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 14618

123. "NAVAJIVAN" IN DEVANAGARI SCRIPT

I draw the attention of readers to the following letter[1] :

I had received this letter as far back as in February. I had preserved it intending to publish it when I had time for it; then came my illness and there was more delay.

The correspondent's object is praiseworthy. I am of the view that all Indian languages should be written in the Devanagari script, and I do not except the Dravidian languages and Urdu from this. But I see difficulties in getting people to carry out this suggestion. So long as there is hostility between Hindus and Muslims, no Muslim will write Urdu in the Devanagari script. I am not suggesting that the Persian script should be given up, my idea is that common books in Urdu should be written in the Devanagari script. At present, however, even this is bound to remain a mere idea. But, without waiting for unity of hearts to be established between Hindus and Muslims, Gujarat, Bengal and other provinces can make a start if they wish to.

All good causes cannot be taken up by one person. Even if anyone tried to take them up, he would only render himself ridiculous. Someone else, therefore, should make this cause his own and devote all his time and energy to it.

However, readers of *Navajivan* can certainly prevail upon me to act upon one of the suggestions made by this correspondent. If a majority of them approve of *Navajivan* being printed in the Devanagari script, I would immediately discuss the matter with my co-workers. I do not have the courage to take the initiative about this without knowing readers' views. I attach greater importance to propagating my ideas about problems over which I have reflected for many years and which I regard as very urgent, than to the popularizing of a script. *Navajivan* has taken many risks in the past, but all of them were for the sake of fundamental principles. I would not take the risk of affecting the circulation of *Navajivan* for the sake of the Devanagari script.

Among readers of *Navajivan* there are many women, as also some Parsis and Muslims. I am afraid that all of them would find it difficult, if not impossible, to read the Devanagari script. If my view is

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had suggested that Gandhiji should advocate the adoption of Devanagari as the common script for languages of North India and himself publish the Gujarati *Navajivan* in that script.

correct, I cannot print *Navajivan* in that script. Since popularizing this script is not my special field of work, I feel that I cannot take the risk of making a start in this regard. Even if the Gujarati *Navajivan* were published in the Devanagari script, the need for *Hindi Navajivan* would remain, for its readers cannot follow Gujarati.

But the correspondent's suggestion is worth being adopted and deserves the support of newspapers, etc., It is also worth ascertaining the views of *Navajivan*'s readers about it, and that is why I have published his letter. I would advise him not to rest content with writing the letter but, if he has the necessary time, to dedicate his life to propagation of his idea.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-6-1927

124. PHILANTHROPIC DOCTOR

ANTYAJAS FIRST

I give below almost the whole of a letter which Shri Amritlal Sheth[1] has written to me describing how Doctor Lala Mathurdas visited Wadhwan and cured the eye diseases of hundreds of sufferers.

In former times, *vaids*[2] practised only for sevice. They got enough for their livelihood from what the rich paid them, but that was not looked upon as their fee. They believed that *vaids'* duty was to treat the patients for their diseases, and that God would provide for their livelihood. These days, and that God would provide for their livelihood. These days, like others the *vaids*, the *hakims*[3] and the doctors, all the three classes, by and large, practise to make money. But philanthropic doctors like Lala Mathurdas prove that all among them are not of that type.

The Arya Samaj has accepted the service of *Antyajas* as their special field of work; it is, therefore, not at all surprising that this good doctor felt very happy in serving them. The workers in Wadhwan deserve commendation for giving priority to *Antyajas*. As for Lala Mathurdas, what commendation can I offer him? The account given in the following letter proves that the satisfaction he felt in serving others is his best reward. I publish Shri Amritlal's letter in the hope

[1] A Congress worker of Saurashtra; founder-editor of *Janmabhumi*, a Gujarati daily published from Bombay. The letter is not translated here.

[2] Physicians practising the Ayurvedic system of medicine

[3] Physicians practising the Unani system of medicine

that other doctors, *vaids* and *hakims* will follow this example of service.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-6-1927

125. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

BANGALORE,

June 26, 1927

MY DEAR MALKANI,

Your letter[1] cuts me to the quick. I do not mind what happens to the Mahavidyalaya but I do mind what happens to a man. I had considered you to be good, strong and immovable under the greatest stress. You have been weighed and found wanting. This desertion in indecent haste is to me inexplicable. I am sorry also for Thadani[2] . He forgot the ordinary gentlemanly behaviour in his hurry to do good.

You may show this to him. May God help you and me.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 875 & S.N. 12599

126. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Sunday Night, Jeth Vad 12 [*June 26, 1927*][3]

DEAR SISTERS,

Received your letter and the attendance book. Please do continue to send me the attendance book. I get to know many things from it.

I have been able to get a great deal of news from Manibehn. Whatever the odds, carry on the work in the store. We regard the Ashram as our family, and through it we try to learn to look upon our country and the whole world as one family. Therefore as in a family, so in the care of the store we should share one another's responsibilities.

[1] Dated June 20, 1927. The addressee had intimated that he had joined the Sindh National College, Hyderabad (Sind), leaving the Gujarat Mahavidyalaya of the Gujarat Vidyapith, having sent his resignation to J. B. Kripalani, its Principal.

[2] N. V. Thadani, Principal, Sindh National College

[3] The year is inferred from the reference to the death of Valji Desai's mother.

Do not let my suggestions, like that for serving the cow, frighten you. I shall go on writing whatever occurs to me. Accept what you like, what is within your abilities, and do it when you have an opportunity.

Only the meritorious will meet with a death like that of Valjibhai's mother.

Blessed is the son, blessed the mother, and blessed the Ashram where such a death took place. I am also reminded of Vrajlalbhai's sacred death.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3655

127. A LETTER

[Before *June 27, 1927*][1]

Just as it is useless to brood over the past, even so, it is useless to speculate about the future. "One step enough for me", says the voice of wisdom. What does it avail us to know the future? Or why not merge both the past and the future into the present? The present or the past does have a future. And when change confronts us from moment to moment, to think of some remote future is buildng castles in the air. And only a fool builds castles in the air. The present means our duty at this moment. If we put all our strength into doing our duty, as we know it at this moment, we shall have made the highest human effort. Sorrow springs from dreaming of the future and from lamenting the past. Hence one who concerns himself with the present and does his duty has neither birth nor death.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

[1] The source has this letter after the entries for June 21, and before those for June 27, 1927.

128. LETTER TO TARA MODI

BANGALORE,
Jeth Vad [*13, June 27, 1927*][1]

CHI. TARA,

I was very glad to read your letter. I refrained from writing to you merely in order to save you the trouble of reading my letter. But you are always before my mind's eye. I wish to see you strong and healthy in body and mind. Anyone who observes a difficult vow like yours in the prime of youth should never fall ill. But it may take ages to acquire such purity of heart. If one has holy merit acquired in previous births, one's heart will change the moment one wishes that it should change. We should try patiently till it does and not lose heart.

It is my firm faith and experience that one whose thoughts spontaneously and constantly flow towards the *atman* can never know sickness. My experience is very limited indeed, but one can judge the whole from a part.

For the present, continue the treatment which you are following and get well. Write to me everything you know about the person who is treating you, his experience, etc., etc. Do not be in a hurry to start walking; do as he directs you.

Write to me when you have the strength and inclination for it.

My health continues to improve. Manibehn and Chi. Keshu have come from the Ashram in connection with the Exhibition. It is likely that the others will come to[morrow.][2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 1940. Courtesy : Ramniklal Modi

[1] From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary
[2] The source is not legible here.

129. LETTER TO DR. M. S. KELKAR

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 28, 1927

MY DEAR DR.,

I have your letter. Of course when I refer to the increase of distance between us, it will only mean the distance in our methods of thinking, never in feeling. My regard for you cannot possibly be diminished no matter however much I may differ from you and your viewpoint. Of course I know that you are as much a seeker after Truth as I am. My impression is that you have your conclusions on very inadequate data, and to found a science upon your astrological observations, on what is now termed as black magic, you require overwhelming evidence of an absolutely unimpeachable character. So far as I know from discussions with you, I do not think you have such data for claiming finality about your conclusions or even [to] warrant preliminary inference. Do you not think that we have got to be far more exacting about things which men equally earnest as ourselves have rejected after trial?

Are you prepared for a fee to go to Dhulia and treat two patients, husband and wife?[1] And, if you are, please tell me what you would charge? The husband is suffering from habitual constipation and it seems to me to be a case for fasting. About the wife's disease I have no sufficient knowledge.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 14174

130. LETTER TO MRS. BLAIR

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 28, 1927

DEAR MRS. BLAIR,

You are so good. Whenever there is [2], you never fail to send it to me. I hope that those who have given their names[3] will persist to the

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Rameshwardas Poddar", 23-6-1927.

[2] The source has a blank here.

[3] To spin at least half an hour a day; *vide* "Notes", 7-7-1927, sub-heading, "Desh-bandhu Day at Darjeeling".

end. Of course it is quite the proper thing to spin wool in Darjeeling. The chief thing is to do hand-spinning. I expect you some day at the Ashram. Of cousrse I am still convalescing, and have to do what little I can in the South.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. BLAIR
MALL VILLA 3
DARJEELING

From a microfilm : S.N. 14175

131. LETTER TO JAMINI BHUSHAN MITRA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 28, 1927

DEAR JAMINI BABU,

I have your letter. The policy of the Association is to discountenance the starting or manning of separate khadi organizations except for good grounds. Of course you might have sufficient reasons. But I do not know. In any case, it will be necessary for you to approach the Association through the Bengal Agent who, as you know, is Satis Babu. You have first of all to satisfy him. Lastly, perhaps you do not know that owing to my illness I have not been able to take an active interest in the proceedings of the Association. I would therefore suggest carrying on your further correspondence in this matter with the Secretary of the Association at Ahmedabad. Whenever there is any necessity, of course he does refer to me.

I am forwarding your letter to Satis Babu in order that there may be no waste of time.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. JAMINI BHUSHAN MITRA
KHALISPUR ASHRAM
P.O.B. KHALISPUR
(KHULNA)

From a microfilm : S.N. 19784

132. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

June 28, 1927

No matter what Chi. Shankar does, you should not feel sorry. How can the poor fellow help it? What should he do—keep pace with you, obey Kaki or be in tune with the wind that blows about him? Day by day, I find myself experiencing merely the bondage of human existence. Man has freedom only to attain *moksha*. In whatever else he does, he becomes more and more dependent on others. You can easily check up on this. Then you will not bother about Shankar and Kaki.

What wonder if Bal longs for Kaki's company? She alone is the medicine for him. If we decide not to take Kaki into the Ashram we should offer him his choice. He either stays with Kaki at Belgaum or wherever she would or in the Ashram with anyone we ask him to stay with. I have not yet decided that Kaki must come to the Ashram. I have had no reply as yet to my letter to her. I have been waiting for it a long while.

I welcome Gangubehn staying with you and coming in contact with Gangabehn and keeping it up. Gangubehn appears to be an absolutely innocent girl. I would like it very much if Gangabehn formed a separate group of the women in the Ashram. She should start it gradually and those who want to associate with her may do so. I like, as an ideal thing, even a married couple living apart in the Ashram. It appears difficult to implement the idea at present. But if we once accept an ideal, we can ultimately live up to it. Rather than discussing the ideal, at present, if only all the women who live scattered about come to live together and find it workable we shall have scored a great victory.

The path of non-violence is the most difficult of all. Truth is not a path, it is the goal. There is only one path—that of non-violence—to reach there, so how could it be easy? So far we have not yet attained non-violence in thought. When we see our duty clear as daylight, we sometimes lack the strength to carry it out. In view of this let us be as careful as possible in our thought and action and live happily. If what the *Gita* conveys is correct I get this same meaning out of it while translating it. . . .[1] Not to find fault in others is to see one's own. Those we see in others were once in us too and, in a sense, are still

[1] As in the source

there. In the process of forgetting the difference of mine and thine, Surdas and others called themselves rogues[1] and so on.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

133. LETTER TO SURENDRA

BANGALORE,
Jeth Vad 14 [*June 28, 1927*][2]

CHI. SURENDRA,

I got your letter. I have written a long letter to Kaka Saheb. I do not understand why he worries. Lakshmidas has not so far sent me his new ideas about khadi propaganda. I have written to Kishorelal about *asana* exercises, and he will write to me after discussing the matter with Nathji. I should like you to send me your experiences of the institutions you visited. For instance, what did you see in Saswad? And in Supa? What did you notice elsewhere worthy of acceptance by us? We wish, if we can, to accept whatever is good in others; we should, therefore, rejoice whenever we see something good and emulate it. If we happen to notice any shortcomings, we should tolerate them, since we too always expect the world to tolerate our shortcomings.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9409

134. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

BANGALORE,
June 28, 1927

BHAI NAJUKLAL,

I have your letter as also Chi. Moti's. Neither her elders nor you have been able to cure Moti of her lethargy. Let us now see whether her offspring succeeds in doing that. I hope you have recovered your health completely. It is some satisfaction to know that you have not been infected by Moti. I say this because the experience of the world is that when two persons live together one of them cannot but be

[1] *Mo sama kaun kutila khala kami*

[2] Gandhiji was in Bangalore on this date in 1927.

influenced by the other. Hence either Moti will be infected by you—it is clear that she has not been—or you will be infected by her. I am all the time afraid that you will be infected by her. Write to me when the delivery is expected, and even otherwise write from time to time. For some time yet I shall remain hereabouts.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL CHOKSI

SEVASHRAM

BROACH

From a photostat of the Gujaratii : S.N. 12140

135. LETTER TO RAJKISHORI MEHROTRA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,

June 28, 1927

CHI. RAJKISHORI,

I wrote two letters to you but got no reply. Now that I have your letter, I write this. Le tme know how you are observing your vow. And how are the boys? How is your health? What have you been reading these days? Letters can be received at this address up to 10th July, after which they should be addressed to the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original : C.W. 6659. Courtesy : Parashuram Mehrotra

136. LETTER TO BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

BANGALORE,

June 28, 1927

BHAI BANARASIDASJI,

Your letter. I cannot understand why there was no reply at all from the Ashram. I am looking into it. It appears that I shall not be able to go to the Ashram for nearly two months. There would be nothing wrong if I happened to get your letter during my illness.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 2572

137. LETTER TO KUVALAYANAND

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 29, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1] for which I thank you. I am sorry to have to report to you that the blood-pressure taken on last Sunday week had been found to have risen from 150 to 160. The doctors could not make out why the increase had taken place. I then gave them an ocular demonstration of what I had been doing in the way of *sarvangasana*, as also *halasana*, as you have termed the practice I described to you. They urged me to stop the two practices for the time being.[2] I therefore stopped them. Otherwise too, as I said in my previous letter, I would have stopped *sarvangasana* if the pressure had gone up, till I had taken your advice. Last Sunday the blood-pressure was taken again, and it was found to have gone down by five degrees. I suppose, therefore, it is best for me to continue the suspension of the two practices for a while. In any event, they will remain suspended till I hear from you.

Everything else continues as before, that is, walks, deep-breathing, the *shavasana* and the massage. I am able to take butter also without difficulty. It has been now increased to three tea-spoons. I do not propose to go beyond this, unless you consider that it is necessary to increase the quantity. Milk stands at 30 ounces. I am now weighing the *bhakharis* I take, and the quantity I take weighs three ounces in a cooked condition. In view of the tendency of the system towards an increase in blood-pressure on the slightest provocation, do you want me to start *bhujangasana*? So far as physical strength is concerned, there is no difficulty about undertaking any of these practices. And personally I am unable to understand why some of these *asanas* should increase the blood-pressure, although they do not apparently affect the system otherwise. I suppose they do not increase blood-pressure in men enjoying normal health. It would be well if you could say which *asanas* are positively harmless, so far as blood-pressure is concerned.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 5050

[1] Dated June 22, 1927

[2] In the draft (S.N. 14176), the words "for the time being" were put at the end of the next sentence.

138. LETTER TO ALVI

June 29, 1927

I have your straightforward letter.[1] Of course, you have addressed it to the Editor but I shall not reply to it in *Navajivan* because the question you have raised is not likely to occur to many. I suspect from your letter that your study of the *Gita* is not deep enough. There is no difference, between *nishkama karma*[2] and *tatastha karma*[3] . You take it for granted that a benevolent act is an unattached one.*But non-attachment and benevolence are two distinct qualities*. In this world one sees attachment in benevolence everywhere and hence numberless sins have been,are being and will be committed in the name of benevolence. The reason why the *Gita* is dear to me is that the divine author has seen this distinction through experience and has in the course of his work endeavoured to explain it minutely and repeatedly in varying words and also in identical terms. It was certainly no selfish act on my part to have helped the vegetarian movement, but despite this fact I looked upon it as my own rather than God's; and where personal attachment develops there is no impartiality and no detachment. Today I clearly see my attachment and desire in having been emboldened to deploy my client's money for that work because I regarded that work as my own. Khadi work certainly is benevolent. Suppose I have some money belonging to you and of course I intend to return it to you. I may even be able to return it forthwith. Now if I am carrying on khadi work without personal attachment, I would never use your money. It should be my dharma to carry on the business of khadi only with the money specifically received for it. And as long as that work can be carried on without attachment and desire, I would not make use of any other money. Now you must have seen how in that case I lost my impartiality. Had I used my own money, there would have been no difficulty. Staying impartial does not mean withholding help. Where one feels one should help and if one has the capacity, one should certainly do so; one should not however press into service another's resources without his permission. And even in seeking such permission one ought to be discreet. I had

[1] In which the correspondent had asked why Gandhiji had described his action in donating Badri's money for the cause of vegetarianism as neither unattached nor impartial.

[2] Desireless work

[3] Work done without attachment

the late Bhai Badri's permission though I do not regard it as such. He was not capable of thinking independently and giving his opinion. He had given his consent merely because of his faith in me. And that too in the distinct belief that I would never allow his money to be misused. Under such circumstances it was my dharma not to risk his money to the slightest extent. If you do not understand me after all this, do ask me for further clarification.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

139. LETTER TO JAGMOHAN DAHYABHAI

June 29, 1927

A healthy mother's milk contains all the elements that a child needs. Mother's milk is a complete food for the child. Hence there is absolutely no need to give it fruit juices. Sometimes we see such need because the mother is subject to passions and yields to temptations of the palate or may be she has a disease and therefore her milk is not quite wholesome and nourishing. I can therefore offer you only this advice : if the child keeps healthy and if you see his strength growing day by day, you need give it nothing besides milk but if you find it whining or growing thin or if mother's milk is not enough in quantity, you can certainly give it small quantities of orange or grape juice.

The sentence I have quoted from my book does not hold in the case of a child of two or three months. But when a child begins to sit, can exert itself sufficiently and when its gums have become strong, it should get used to green fruits in case it needs more than mother's milk. In short, we should first let it have milk and then start on fruits.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

140. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

[After *June 29, 1927*][1]

I would advise you and Devchandbhai not to insist on running the administration of the Conference. And if both of you are interested in any other work in addition to the work of khadi, the

[1] The source has this letter after the entries for June 29, 1927.

Antyajas, national education, etc., or any other equally constructive activity, and if you are competent to take it up, do retain charge of the administration and do whatever is right. Speaking for myself, I have no interest at present in political activities apart from cow-protection and so on, nor do I find myself up to it. I therefore simply watch it from a distance. If someone says something about politics I discuss it a little with him. When I cannot avoid writing about it I scribble off something. In other respects I remain completely untouched.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

141. OUR SHAME

Sjt. S. D. Nadkarni is a clear writer, and has a very large heart for the so-called untouchables. I publish in another column, without any alteration, a letter[1] from him, in which he has poured out his feeling for the suppressed classes. And he has rightly used me as a peg, on which to hang his indictment of the touchables. Leaving aside, however, myself out of account, it seems to me that his deep feeling has overpowered the sense of logic which as a rule does not fail him. I venture to think, that terrible as the case for untouchables is, it had no place either in the discussions of the All-India Congress Committee at Bombay, or at the Unity Conference at Delhi, when only the question of Hindu-Muslim unity alone was on the anvil. It would have been just as logical to discuss at these meetings the question, say, of the woes of child widows, terrible as these are, as it would have been to handle the question of untouchability. But the slight illogicality of the letter must not be allowed to blur the very important question so forcibly presented by Sjt. Nadkarni. I entirely agree with him, that if there is no swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity, much less is there swaraj without the removal of the shame of Hinduism, which untouchability certainly is. I am unconcerned with the question, what place untouchables will have in any political constitution that may be drawn up. Every one of the artificial props, that may be set up in the constitution, will be broken to bits, if we Hindus do not wish to play the game. The reasoning I have given against separate electorates and against separate treatment in the constitution is equally applicable in the case of untouchables. This removal of untouchability is not to be

[1] Dated May 28, 1927

brought about by any legal enactment. It will only be brought about, when the Hindu conscience is roused to action, and of its own accord *removes* the shame. It is a duty the touchables owe to the untouchables.

> Let them not wait till the Suppressed Class Leagues and Touchable-Untouchable riots open their eyes to the needs of the most needy among us Indians.

This is a terrible sentence occurring in the concluding portion of the letter. It is impossible to deny the force behind it. It reminds me of the conversation that took place between the late Hari Narayan Apte and myself just before Gokhale died. It was at the Servants of India Society's quarters in Poona, that I was pleading for work amongst the so-called higher classes, rather than agitating amongst the suppressed classes after the fashion of some missionaries, and creating unrest among them. I was new to the work. I had not drunk deep of the ocean of miseries, in which the suprressed classes were being drowned, as the late Hari Narayan Apte had. In my philosophical prudence I asked this reformer, burning with the shame of the wrongs heaped upon the suppressed classes by the suppressing classes, whether he would incite suppressed classes against us. Instantly and indignantly came the reply :

> Certainly, if I could, I would make them rebel against us today, and wrest from us by force what we will not give them voluntarily and as a matter of duty.

Much progress has been achieved in the matter of this reform. But infinitely more remains to be done. Most reforms have been preceded by bloodshed. There seems to arrive a point, at which patience of the downtrodden is exhausted, and taking the law into their own hands and maddened with grief and rage they make short work of the tyrant, and in their turn repeat, on an opportunity occurring, all the mistakes of the tyrant. Though, therefore, I share now to the fullest extent, I hope, the indignation that filled Hari Narayan Apte, I must work in the hope that the so-called higher class Hindus will, whilst there is yet time, retrace their steps, and render to the suppressed classes the justice which has become long overdue, and in the further hope that, should the former not repent, the suppressed classes will know better than to rise in revolt against the wrongdoers. I must continue to work in the hope that they will vindicate themselves and their Hinduism by going through a process of conscious

suffering and self-purification, and thus proving themselves superior Hindus to those who are today disgracing themselves and Hinduism before man and God. Every individual Hindu, who feels as Sjt. Nadkarni does for the untouchables, can meanwhile make common cause with them by himself or herself becoming untouchable by sharing their sorrows and their trials.

Young India, 30-6-1927

142. CHITTARANJAN SEVA SADAN

Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, the celebrated physician of Calcutta and one of the trustees of the All-Bengal Deshbandhu Memorial Trust, has issued an appeal for five lakhs of rupees for the Seva Sadan. It will be remembered that this institution is situated on the ground which Deshbandhu in his lifetime had made over to the trustees. The ground was partly encumbered. It was redeemed out of the memorial funds that were collected immediately after Deshbandhu's death, and for over a year, a well-equipped and well-managed hospital and a dispensary have been going on there. The total number of the cases treated at the outdoor during the year was 22,000, new cases being 7,023. The total number of indoor patients was 579 with only 23 beds. The trustees now propose to add 32 beds. There can be no doubt that the institution supplies a felt want, and that it needs expansion. Expansion means more money. Those, who revere the memory of Deshbandhu, and who appreciate the necessity of rendering aid to the ailing, will not lose time in responding to the appeal issued on behalf of the Board of Trustees. A full report of the institution, containing a certified account of income and expenditure, and an analysis of cases treated at the institution, accompanies the report, which can be had from Dr. Biddhan Chandra Roy, 148, Russa Road South, Calcutta. Subscriptions can be sent to the Secretary, Deshbandhu Memorial Trust, 36, Wellington Street, Calcultta, or to the account of Deshbandhu Memorial Trust, Central Bank of India, Limited, 100, Clive Street, Calcutta.

Young India, 30-6-1927

143. BANGALORE KHADI EXHIBITION

Sjts. C. Rajagopalachari and Gangadharrao Deshpande are making great preparations to make the forthcoming Khadi Exhibition at Bangalore a thorough success. They are aiming not at quantity but quality, and so they have purposely restricted the scope. It is to be therefore not an all-India, but a South India Exhibition. But they are inviting from all the provinces the assistance that may be necessary in order to complete the technical demonstration, and in order to make the Exhibition an instructive object lesson. Those, therefore, who would learn all about the technique of khadi from hand-ginning to hand-weaving, and study the instruments used in the processes and to see them at work by skilled hands, will not fail to attend the Exhibition. It is a happy augury for the future of khadi in Mysore that the State has given a donation of Rs. 500/- towards the expenses of the Exhibition, and that the Director of Industries has become a member of the Exhibition Committee. Indeed the economic and the philanthropic side of khadi is so overwhelmingly important that it is a wonder that Rajas and Maharajas have not given the movement the support that it deserves. Everybody agrees that millions of villagers require a supplementary occupation. Scores of paper schemes are being hawked about the country for achieving village reconstruction. But not one scheme has the universal application that khadi has. And so far as I am aware, not one scheme is being tried on the scale that khadi is being tried. It is not a small achievement to be able to show that the khadi scheme is at work in at least 1,500 villages.

That khadi has a political side to it need not frighten a single person, even though he may be an official. Indeed many learned politicians laugh at khadi, when any political consequence is ascribed to it; and they would be right if the word 'political' was used in connection with khadi in the same sense that it is used in connection with Councils. Khadi has a political consequence precisely in the same sense that education has, co-operative schemes have, temperance reform has. It is impossible to avoid the political effect of any progressive measure that a nation may adopt. The Viceroy, and the Rajas, Maharajas and everybody must, if they are not traitors to the country, take an active part in promoting Hindu-Muslim unity, and yet nobody has ventured to laugh at the idea of Hindu-Muslim unity having a tremendous political consequence; nor have I known anybody keeping himself aloof from the movement for promoting

that unity on the ground that it has a tremendous political consequence. Indeed the full success of khadi and therewith its political effect depend upon the support of all, politicians and non-politicians, the prince and the pauper, the zamindar and the ryot. Every attempt is therefore being made to keep khadi above political turmoil. It is not an emblem of revolt; but it is an emblem of self-assertion, self-reliance and determination to abolish artificial distinctions between rich and poor, between capital and labour, and establish a living bond between the two. I am hoping, therefore, that the forthcoming Exhibition will receive the solid support of all classes of people, including the numerous European settlements in the cantonment of Bangalore. That large population will be equally welcome with the rest. Indeed in my talks with the European friends, who have kindly visited me during my convalescence at Nandi and at Bangalore,I have not hesitated to present the message of khadi, that is the message of India's starving millions, for their acceptance.

One word to the fashionable people of Bangalore. I observe a teacher of Trichinopoly has been pleading for the adoption of a minimum in sartorial matters. I observed, also, that Sjt. Srinivasa Sastri the other day at a public meeting remarked upon what might almost be called the over-dress of the fashionable people of Bangalore. And I have noticed on the part of those who believe in khadi a timid hesitation to adopt it in the face of the Bangalore fashion. I plead for the necessary courage to set aside fashion, which can only be sustained at the expense of our starving neighbours. By all means let monied people have tasteful ornamentation, whether in dress or in other surroundings; but I do plead for an observance, as between themselves and their starving brethren, of a due sense of proportion, such as is always observed in well ordered society. India's minimum is a *langoti* requiring less than 1/6th of a square yard. Let our fashion have some correspondence to this minimum. Let not those, who would raise this minimum, and multiply India's wants in order to wake her up to action, think that they would achieve the end by first multiplying their own wants at the expense of the poor, and without in the same proportion enabling and inducing the latter to raise their standard of living. One universal and effective and immediate way to enable and induce these millions to raise their standard of living is for the fashionable middle class to adopt khadi, and thereby put a few coppers into their pockets. Many in Bangalore have given pecuniary contributions to khadi work. But this is not enough. Khadi cannot

make real progress, unless there are people to wear it. I therefore ask the people of Bangalore and neighbouring districts not merely to visit the Exhibition, and give the movement pecuniary support, but also to identify themselves with the poor by adopting khadi for their dress.

Young India, 30-6-1927

144. NOTES

IN JUSTICE TO HER MEMORY

The Modern Review[1] has a paragraph on what occurs in *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, Chapter 19, Part III,[2] on Sister Nivedita. After quoting my remarks, *The Modern Review* has :

> The mention of "the splendour that surrounded her" without any other details conveys a wrong idea of Sister Nivedita's mode of living. The fact is, at the time when Mr. Gandhi saw her, she was the guest of Mrs. Ole Bull and Miss Josephine MacLeod at the American Consulate, and, as such, was not responsible for the "splendour". Her ascetic and very simple style of living in a tumbledown house in Bossepara Lane, Baghbazar, is well known to all her friends and acquaintances.
>
> We do not know whether Mr. Gokhale spoke to Mr. Gandhi in English and actually used the word "volatile" to describe her; for what has appeared in *Young India* is translated from the Gujarati *Navajivan*. But whoever may be responsible for the use of the word 'volatile' has wronged her memory. Sister Nivedita had her defects, as in fact even the greatest of mankind had and have, but volatile she was not in any sense of that word. As English is not our vernacular, we have consulted two dictionaries on our table to find out its exact meaning as applied to human beings. The Pocket Oxford Dictionary defined it to mean "of gay temperament, mercurial". In Webster's New International Dictionary the explanation given is, "light-hearted; airy; lively; hence, changeable; fickle". Sister Nivedita was a very serious-minded person, noted for her constancy and steadfast devotion to the cause of Hinduism and India.
>
> The reference to "her overflowing love for Hinduism" is quite just and accurate.

I gladly reproduce this correction. For I never knew the fact, till I saw the note in *The Modern Review* that I had met the deceased not at her own place but at a guest's. The reader has to recognize my

[1] Of July, 1927

[2] Published in *Young India*, April 14, 1927

painful limitations. My reading is so poor that I have not read, much though I should like to have, the lives even of those who have contributed to the making of modern India. My only consolation is that the poverty of my reading is not due to any laziness on my part, but a life of ceaseless action and full of tempest from early youth left not time for much reading. Whether on the whole I have lost or gained thereby is to me a debatable question. But if it is a gain, it has been achieved in spite of myself. I can therefore claim no credit for it. And if in the story that I am writing from week to week,[1] I deal with men and women, I do so only in so far as such reference is necessary for showing the working of my mind, so far as I can, in my search for Truth. I am therefore leaving out innumerable instances in life, which would be certainly otherwise interesting, as also references to several men and women. And it will be unjust to those whom I am obliged to refer in the story and to me, if the reader concludes that the estimate that I may give about persons is my final statement or true in fact. Such references should be regarded merely as the impression left upon my mind at the time to which they may relate. I introduced Sister Nivedita, Swami Vivekananda, Maharshi Devendranath and others in the story simply to illustrate my desperate search, and to illustrate the point, that even then my political work in South Africa was an integral part of that search, which was never once subordinated to the political work. It has therefore given me pleasure to reproduce the paragraph in *The Modern Review* at the very first opportunity after reading it.

As to the use of the word "volatile", though the translation is not mine, I cannot dissociate myself from its use, because as a rule I revise these translations, and I remember having discussed the adjective with Mahadev Desai. We both had doubts about the use of the adjective being correct. The choice lay between volatile, violent and fanatical. The last two were considered to be too strong. Mahadev had chosen volatile and I passed it. But neither he nor I had the dictionary meaning in view.

What word Gokhale used I cannot recall. The word used in the original writing is *tej*. I have a full recollection of the conversation between Sister Nivedita and myself. But I do not propose to describe

[1] The reference is to Ganghiji's autobiography, chapters of which were being published in *Navajivan* from November 29, 1925 and in *Young India* from December 3, 1925.

it. No fault in the translation of the original can possibly damage the memory of one who loved Hinduism and India so well. It will ever be cherished with gratefulness.

Young India, 30-6-1927

145. KASHI VIDYAPITH

The readers of *Young India* know that the Kashi Vidyapith is one of the very few national institutions still alive. I have much pleasure in publishing the following[1] sent to me by the Registrar of the Kashi Vidyapith.

Young India, 30-6-1927

146. MESSAGE TO "FORWARD" [2]

June 30, 1927

If we would be worthy of swaraj and of the sacrifice of Deshbandhu, we must show some tangible work of construction in terms of the nation. Khadi holds the field till something better and equally universal can displace it. And if khadi and the spinning-wheel be considered beneath dignity and notice, we stand in danger of being considered beneath notice by the Mother.

The Hindu, 1-7-1927

[1] Not reproduced here; it gave the date of reopening of the Vidyalaya, subjects taught, minimum qualifications for admission, etc.

[2] For its "Deshbandhu Number"

147. LETTER TO P. R. SUBRAMANIA SASTRI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
June 30, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Sjt. Rajagopalachariar has shown me your letter of the 29th instant. I am not yet fit enough to meet people for holding sustained discourse. Whilst therefore if you desire to come, you will be welcome any day between 4 and 5 p.m. I shall not be able to engage in any long conversation with you. If you have anything original to say, I would suggest your writing it as briefly as possible on one side of an ordianry note paper and sending it do me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. R. SUBRAMANIA SASTRI
55, MALLESWARAM
BANGALORE

From a photostat : S.N. 14177

148. LETTER TO T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIAR [1]

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 1, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

It is a most dangerous thing to expect me to send replies by return post. It is by mere accident that I am able to deal with your letter immediately on receipt.

I do hope that you will be able to make further progress with the resolutions you refer to, namely, remarriage of virgin widows and post-puberty marriage. These two, I consider, to be elementary reforms and they are the least that Hindus owe to Hinduism and India and their womenfolk.

I hope your conference will not forget the suppressed classes and the spinning-wheel.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIAR
XIII ARYA VAISYA CONFERENCE
SALEM

From a microfilm : S.N. 14179

[1] This was sent as a message to the Arya Vaisya Conference which began at Salem on July 2.

149. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 1, 1927

I hope you got my letter. This is only to send you Andrews' cable[1] . I know that you are six inches taller, if such a thing may be said of a mere woman, for the triumph of the principle for which you stood up so bravely in South Africa. You have every reason to be proud.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 12363

150. LETTER TO HARINDRANATH CHATTOPADHYAYA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 1, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I shall look forward to the end of June 1928.

As you have not told me anything about the lady you have in view, I can only give you general information. The Ashram is, you might almost say, a workshop. Men and women are engaged in doing some work or other, all activities centred round ginning, carding, spinning and weaving, and both men and women, boys and girls take their due share in these activities. There is, no doubt, literary training in a proper school conducted in the Ashram. But vocational training is not sacrificed to literary training. One might almost therefore fancy that literary training is subordinated to the vocational. English is taught, it might almost be said, under compulsion. We don't encourage the teaching of English there, and the rule of first exacting a knowledge of Sanskrit and Hindi before going to English is more or less adhered to. If, therefore this lady does not know Hindi, or wants to do everything through English, or is fond merely of literary pursuits, at the Ashram, she would be like fish out of water. Now if you want to know the details about the Ashram, you will please tell me and I shall pass on your letter to the proper quarters for reply.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 12775

[1] Dated June 25; it read : "Malan faithfully loyal towards settlement, rejected hostile amendments. Thank God worst strain over. Tell Sarojini."

151. LETTER TO J. W. PETAVEL

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 1, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your two letters. Isn't it funny that in spite of both of them being long, I find nothing there touching the direct question that I have put? Surely, it is the easiest thing possible for you to tell me what is Belgium doing, what is Switzerland doing? What are you *doing* as distinguished from writing?

I add another question. I have nearly 80 acres of ground on which we are nearly 200 souls, men and women and children, and therefore parents with their children. We are doing a little bit of agriculture and we are doing dairy work, etc. Tell me what we should do to fall under your scheme.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 14178

152. LETTER TO B. F. BHARUCHA [1]

[Before *July 2, 1927*][2]

What will you see by going to Nagpur? It is not necessary for me to explain to you that a satyagrahi cannot break the Arms Act. From the outset, the meaning of civil disobedience has been violation of such laws as are opposed to *niti* (ethics), so that there can be violation of *jakati* laws (tariff or taxation laws). There cannot be violation of laws that forbid thefts. Similarly, the man who carries on a peaceful campaign cannot carry a sword or a rifle with the object of being arrested or with any other purpose. At Lucknow, where Maulana Mahomed Ali and I were going round, we found volunteers with naked swords and we made them give up their swords. At Bezwada Maulana Mahomed Ali and I made volunteers give up their big sticks, though no permit or licence was necessary to carry them.

The man who is out to die or to give up his life, how can he hold

[1] This is part of a Gujarati letter the original of which is not available. *Vide* "Limitations of Satyagraha", 14-7-1927,

[2] This letter was read by the addressee at an emergent meeting of Nagpur Nagar Congress Committee held on July 2.

a sword? Anything may happen after altering the aspect of the campaign, giving up the name of satyagraha or withdrawing the epithet *shanti*. But under cover of words such as *shanti*, satyagraha, etc., how could there be promulgation of *ashanti* or *asatya*? Ere this, I had seen your support to the Nagpur campaign and even then I felt pained. But it is hardly possible to correct even our friends immediately they err. I have written even this much because of your reference in you letter that you were proceeding to Nagpur to see what was going on there.

The Hindu, 4-7-1927

153. MESSAGE TO PEOPLE OF SOUTH INDIA

[*July 2, 1927*][1]

In a letter addressed to the men and women of South India, Mahatma Gandhi says :

It has been a matter of deep grief to me that owing to the collapse of my health, I was unable to enter upon the tour in South India on the appointed date. God willing, I hope to commence the tour some time in July though the original programme will have to be considerably modified and reduced. Meanwhile, however, I hope that those who have not yet taken to khadi will do so for the sake of the starving millions; for, whoever buys one yard of khadi puts the whole of the cost of it into the pockets of the poor people of this famine-stricken land, more than half of it going directly into the pockets of those to whom every pie means so much money to buy the necessaries of life.

The Hindu, 2-7-1927

[1] Released on this date by the Associated Press of India from Bangalore

154. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU [1]

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 2, 1927

DEAR MOTILALJI,

So I can't have you in Bangalore, it appears. It will be cruel to have you follow me somewhere down South to melt there. But if you come even about the end of this month, I might be at some pleasant place in Mysore, because the whole of Mysore is Nature's favoured spot in India's plains.

About the time that Sarojini Devi wrote to you, she wrote to me also, and sent a peremptory telegram asking me to support her request, and even to "issue orders". But I knew beforehand what you would say to the proposal kindly meant, but thoughtlessly made. I wrote to her almost in the same strain as you, and suggested that Dr. Ansari was the only possible president. I told her also that I did not at all believe that his occupancy of the presidential chair would in any way diminish the weight of any settlement arrived at by the Congress. In my opinion, if Dr. Ansari is chosen, a reasonable settlement has a better chance of being adopted by the Congress.

You did tell me about the appearence of *Tara*[2] . What with *Chand* [3] and *Tara*, there must be perpetual illumination in the house; and the appearance of *Suraj* [4] to support Chand and Tara is, let us hope, a question merely of time. I shall readily forgive Sarup for never thinking of writing to me if she brings up her Suns and Moons and Stars for the service of the Motherland. I hope both the mother and the baby are making steady progress.

I make my first appearance tomorrow to open a Khadi Exhibition which has been arranged in Bangalore in order to keep my chief warders Gangadharrao and Rajagopalachari occupied. They are doing a brisk trade in khadi and are not ashamed to exploit their prisoner's illness.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S. N. 12598

[1] In reply to his letter dated June 25. Motilal Nehru had written : "Your letter arrived just after I had posted my reply to Sarojini who was instigated by Jinnah and the Maharaja of Mahmudabad to offer the Crown to me in supersession of both Ansari and Jawahar."

[2] Second daughter of Sarup (Vijayalakhmi Pandit); literally, 'star'

[3] First daughter of Sarup; literally, 'moon'

[4] Literally, 'sun'

155. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

BANGLALORE,
Ashadh Sud 3 [*July 2, 1927*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got you letter. You have done well in going to the Ashram. Take good care of your health. Health permitting, help if you can in the work of the store which the women have taken upon themselves. My health is steadily improving. There is still room for improvement in your handwriting. It will improve if you write carefully and slowly for some time. Speed will come by and by. It is the same with this as with spinning. It is difficult to ensure strength in the yarn after first learning to spin fast; on the contrary, speed will increase of itself after one has learnt to spin strong yarn.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 587. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

156. LETTER TO SANTOJI MAHARAJ

BANGALORE,
Ashadh Sud 3 [*July 2, 1927*]

SHRI SANTOJI MAHARAJ,

I have carefully preserved your questions, and with God's grace I shall try to answer them now. I enclose the question with this answer so that you may not have to take the trouble of recalling them and I may not have to copy them. I have numbered them serially, and there should be, therefore, no confusion.

1. Only he can interpret the *Gita* correctly who tries to follow its teaching in practice, and the correctness of the interpretation will be in proportion to his success in living according to the teaching. The *Gita* was not composed as a learned treatise. It may be a profound one, but in my view the realization of its profound quality depends on the depth of one's sincerity in puting its teaching into practice. I have read Lokamanya Tilak's and Shankaracharya's commentaries and tried to understand them as well as I could. I am not qualified to pronounce judgement on their learning. If we accept the point of view

[1] Gandhiji was in Bangalore on this date in 1927.

I have suggested, the question of expressing an opinion on their learning does not arise. The *Gita* is related to the Vedas and the Upanishads, for it gives the essence of both.

2. The *Gita* teaches that one should cultivate the state of *samatva* [1] and explains with every manner of argument the means of doing so, namely, *bhakti* [2] accompanied with *jnana*[3] , that is, service of every living creature without thought of reward.

3. The godly heritage, according to the *Gita*, is that which helps one to attain self-realization. The sign of having acquired such heritage is the weaknig of one's attachments and aversions, and the means of acquiring it is cultivation of *bhakti* for the Lord.

4. As far as I have been able to read and understand the teachings of our sacred writers of past times, I don't think there is any difference of view.

5. A Brahmin and a Bhangi[4] [let us suppose] are stung by a scorpion. I see that a *vaid* has arrived to help the former, and another has been sent for. The *vaid* simply does not look towards the Bhangi who has been crying for help. Both the *vaid* and the Brahmin hear his cries. If the Brahmin has learnt to regard all beings with an equal eye, he would ask the *vaid* to treat the Bhangi first. If I were the *vaid*, I would run to the Bhangi, suck out the poison from the wound and apply to him whatever other remedies I knew. Having done that, I would offer my service to the Brahmin, if he required it, and then attend to my other work. To cultivate an equal eye towards all beings means to serve all people in the world with equal regard.

6. It is not true at all that the Lord teaches in the *Gita* that one may kill one's kinsmen. When Arjuna got ready to fight for what he believed to be a just cause, and was overcome with ignorant attachment and weakness, through which he made a distinction between kinsmen and others, the Lord cured him of his attachment and weakness. We can only guess what reply Krishna would have given if Arjuna had protested and said he did not wish to kill at all, whether his opponents were kinsmen or others. It is my humble view, however, that the *Gita* was not composed to give a direct answer to that question.

[1] Equanimity in all circumstances and equality towards all things
[2] Devotion
[3] Knowledge
[4] Member of a caste traditionally associated with scavenging work

7. I have felt that there is a greater spirit of universality and liberalism in the *sanatana* Vedic dharma[1] .

8. The question, which is the chief religious work, one can answer only for oneself. For me it is the *Gita*. One distinction at any rate among such works is based on the subjects they deal with, namely, those which lay down codes of conduct and others which state and explain the nature of Godhead. If the question refers to anything more than this, I have not understood it.

9. The difference between the rules of conduct enjoined by the various religions will change from age to age, and as knowledge and the spirit of liberalism grow such differences will diminish.

10. I think this question is involved in question 9. But I shall say this way of further explanation. We should believe that the practices and modes of conduct which we find represented in the Koran, the Bible, the Vedas and other works were the best in those times and lands. If our reason cannot accept them in this age, it is our dharma to change them or abandon them altogether. Only fundamental principles are immutable.

11. In acting towards other people and understanding their faiths one should follow the principle of regarding others as oneself.

12. I think it almost impossible to decide which out of the many interpretations of religious works represents undiluted truth. That is why the *Gita* has convincingly argued that *samanvaya*[2] is the best. God alone represents perfect truth. Imperfect man, therefore, should humbly believe that as one's truth is dear to one, so others' truths are bound to be dear to them. Hence everyone should follow his own path and others should not hinder him from doing so. People will then follow, of their own accord, that path which is found from experience to be the smoothest.

13. Till we come across a person of experience and of perfect purity in conduct, we should observe the rules of conduct and discipline enjoined in the religious work which we have accepted as our scripture, read it regularly, reflect over it and put its teachings into practice. Those who cannot do even this are ignorant people. Such of them as cannot observe purity in conduct have a protector only in God. I believe in the assurance given in the Gita that even people of

[1] The dharma based on the Vedic tradition

[2] Synthesis

this class are saved somehow. Words certainly have a meaning, but there ebbs and floods in the meaning of words as if they had a life of their own.

14. As I understand the problem, without a belief in reincarnation it would be almost impossible to prove that the world is governed by justice. Moreover, one soul cannot have [full] experience of the world within the span of one life, which is but a moment in a vast cycle of time. I can practically say that I have direct proof every moment of the truth of the belief in reincarnation.

15. Virtue and sin exist in the same sense that light and darkness, happiness and suffering, truth and untruth, do. However, just as there is an unknowable and indescribable Reality beyond the categories of existence and non-existence, so also there is something beyond virtue and sin of which this body can have no experience. The descriptions given in Buddhist writings or in those of the Nyaya and the Sankhya schools of philosophy are not unalterable, but these too, can be understood and accepted from the respective viewpoints.

16. For the development of man's reasoning faculty, the right influences are certainly essential. To put it scientifically, every society solves the problem in every age for itself.

17. Violence means injuring a creature through bodily action or speech or in thought, with the intention of injuring it. Non-violence means not injuring any creature in this manner. The doctrine of non-violence propounded in Vedanta literature, as far as I have understood it, seems to me all right. But I cannot say myself whether I have understood the Vedanta teaching correctly, nor can I claim that my study of the Vedanta is deep.

18. For being able to observe *brahmacharya*, one must keep the mind, speech and body constantly engaged in morally pure activity. We can, therefore, say in a general way that a *brahmachari* should do the opposite of what householders given to the enjoyment of pleasures do. It is my experience that desires in the mind are closely connected with the kind of food one eats, but I know that such desires arise even when one's food is pure and small in quantity. We may, therefore, say that right food is a great help for the observance of *brahmacharya*, but that it is not all. The purest food is fruit, which has naturally ripened, eaten in solitude. I have no doubt about this at all. The chief thing is that, if the palate could be controlled, the observance of *brahmacharya* would become quite easy. We commit

two errors in saying that knowledge has reference to the mind and food is connected with the body, which is a material object. The body of a living human being is not altogether inert. And the thing which we call mind and which learns from experience is as closely connected with the body as light is with the sun. A dead body is one from which the mind has gone; such a body does not eat or drink. Thus, it is the mind which eats through the body, and likewise it is through the body that really speaking it acquires knowledge.

19. The universal Soul in which all the souls exist is God. The living creature which does not know that universal Soul and looks upon itself as separate from other creatures is what we call *jiva*[1]. That universal Soul, though dwelling in all, is not directly experienced; that is its beauty, its miracle, its *maya*[2] . The true end of human effort consists in crossing that *maya* and knowing that universal Soul, which is the one source of all. It is not a thing which can be experienced in a manner our reason can understand; how, then, can there be any means of experiencing it? But anyone who has the strength to forget the "I" in him and make himself a cipher can have a glimpse of this universal Soul, though he cannot help someone else to have it too. Such a person is so dazzled by the mere glimpse, and so utterly spellbound, that he merges in it. He feels no desire and no need to describe his supreme bliss to anyone.

20. I have somehow found something for myself by combining all the suggestions made by the authors of Shastras. It is, therefore, quite difficult for me to say which path is acceptable. Shankara is dear to me, and so are Ramanuja, Madhav, Vallabha and others—I have relished delicacies from all, but have not been able to satisfy my hunger through what I got from any of them.

21. It may now be seen that the reply to this question is contained in the replies to the preceding questions. *Yajna*[3] , *dana*[4] , *tapas*[5] , are obligatory duties, but that does not mean that the manner of performing them in this age should be the same as in ancient times. *Yajna*, *dana*, etc., are permanent principles. The social practices and the concrete forms through which they are put into practice may

[1] Individual soul
[2] Mystery
[3] Sacrifice
[4] Gift-giving, charity
[5] Austerity

change from age to age and country to country. In my view, for example, the supreme *yajna* for this country and in this age is the spinning-wheel. The right gift which a seeker of *moksha* in this country and this age may make is to dedicate his all, body, intellect and possessions, to the service of the country. And, likewise, the right *tapas* for this country and this age consists in burning with agony at the suffering of countless untouchables and others who are starving for want of food or because of famines. Anyone who performs these three important duties certainly becomes purified and he may even have a vision of God's cosmic form which Arjuna had.

22. *Saguna*[1] , *nirguna*[2] , etc., belong to the speech of human beings trying to express their imperfect knowledge which is sheer ignorance. In truth God is beyond description. Even to call Him *nirguna* is an utterly vain attempt to describe Him. Since, however, He is a slave of His devotees, He can be described not with a thousand but with an infinite number of epithets, all of which can be applied to him from the point of view of the respective devotees, and it is His supreme mercy that He tolerates them all. There is no error, therefore, in saying that He exists as all bodies, all sense-organs and all other things. We may thus confess our inability to describe Him.

23. I wish to say in all humility that my fasts and other ordeals are inspired by the desire to see God face to face. I fast in order that, even if I go without food altogether, I may have a glimpse of God such as I have described in these answers. But one cannot force oneself to undertake a fast. One must have fitness even for a fast. I am constantly striving for such fitness. But it is possible that I may not acquire it in this life and may even die ingloriously.

This completes the list of your questions. If you have any other questions to ask besides these, do ask them. You will notice a certain positiveness in some or all of the answers. Please do not put it down to presumption or pride. If I did not write what I have done, I would be guilty of untruth, for it would mean concealing my real beliefs through false humility. If, therefore, you see impropriety in my positiveness, kindly forgive me for that.

The revered Malaviyaji Maharaj is here. I have discussions with

[1] With attributes
[2] Without attributes

him on all manner of religious issues. I will tell him of your desire too.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 12323

157. HONOURABLE LABOUR

Cotton is produced in Viramgam, Lakhtar and other areas and, though the steam engine has been introduced in these areas, it has not been possible to dispense with the human machine and therefore, extracting cotton from the pods and similar work is being done by men and women. This is work which cannot be done by one person, it must be taken up by large number. If, therefore, the Machine Age comes to stay, machines for extracting cotton are bound to be introduced in these areas. At present,
however, the work of extracting cotton from the pods is fortunately or unfortunately—according to one's point of view—done by men and women. I, therefore, put a few questions to a friend who does this work. He says in reply.[1]

If, fifty or sixty years ago, any person like me had put similar questions about spinning, he would have received literally the same reply as this; for at that time the spinning-wheel was a sign not of poverty but of culture and respectability, and the rich used to spin willingly as a matter of duty, just as they do now the work of extracting cotton from the pods and do not mind accepting money for it, though such work is a means of livelihood for the poor. As long as the rich had not given up spinning, the poor were safe and spinning did not disappear as an occupation. Such universal occupations are a duty as much as they are occupations, and they last only so long as the rich keep them up, for they offer no opportunities for making millions or for speculation. They remain alive only if the rich have regard for the welfare of society as a whole. When social concern ceases to be a motive, everyone strives to be a millionaire and looks for an occupation which may help him to be one. The *varnashrama*[2]

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had explained that the work was regarded as honourable and was done by everyone, rich and poor.

[2] The division of society into four *varnas* or castes and of the individual's life into four *ashramas* or stages

dharma was conceived and accepted as part of Hinduism so that people may not yield to such wicked temptations which degrade them spiritually. This dharma now survives only in name and its real nature is forgotten. Everywhere we see only its distortions. A dharma which was conceived as a means of regulating occupations is now confined to restrictive practices about eating and marrying. How can I persuade people that in the revival of the spinning-wheel lies the revival of *varnashrama*, of pure dharma and, if I may say without being guilty of exaggeration, of dharma in its entirety?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-7-1927

158. THE DILEMMA OF A STUDENT

A simple-hearted student writes :

> I have read your letter advising me to become a khadi worker, with the greatest attention. I do want to take up some which will enable me to serve the country. But I have yet to decide whether I should be a khadi worker or take up another form of service. I have not yet felt that khadi work can be a means for inner progress. For the present, I spin just to do my duty to society, knowing as I do that spinning is necessary both for our economic amelioration and for the attainment of freedom. Eventually, of course, I will choose the work which satisfies me the most. For the moment, however, my aim is to acquire as much knowledge as possible and to prepare myself for service.
>
> As for *brahmacharya*, what can I write about it? I can only pray to God to give me the strength to fulfil my desire to observe the vow of *brahmacharya*.
>
> I do not understand why you give equal importance both to the acquisition of knowledge and craft work in schools. I have felt that in trying to do both things at the same time we fail to do either of them well.
>
> We do have to learn some craft. But would it not be better if it were taught after the intellectual part of our training is over? Spinning I do not regard as craft work, but as a duty one owes to society. Everyone must therefore spin. But I feel that weaving, agriculture and carpentry may well be postponed till after the academic studies are over. Each of them is an independent subject of study complete in itself, and it would be enough if a year or more is allotted to it separately.
>
> The way things are being attempted here harms both intellectual development and proficiency in craft work. To do craft work for three hours, to spin in spare time, and to study all those subjects which are taught in other

schools, to do one's own reading, and then to take part with others in the necessary community chores—all this is indeed very difficult to do.

The amount of reading laid down for the boys cannot be lessened. It is necessary for them to learn all the subjects. How are we justified then in burdening the boys with extra work when they have to learn so many subjects besides doing their own reading? If they do not get enough time to fulfil even the assignments set to them, how can they be expected to do their own personal reading and thinking? I find that as teaching advances, it becomes ever more necessary to do extra-curricular reading and there is no time for it.

I have spoken of these difficulties to the teachers. There have also been discussions about it, but I am not satisfied. I think they have not sufficient appreciation of our difficulties. Will you please give the points I have raised some consideration and explain to me where I err?

There are two important points raised in this letter. The reader need not be told that it is a reply to my letter. I thought that instead of sending a private reply to the correspondent I had better discuss it in the *Navajivan* so that it may be of use to other students who have similar difficulties. I had therefore kept it pending these three months.

The distinction made here in inner progress and the service of society is also made by many others in India. I consider this distinction is due to an error of thought. I believe, and it is also my experience, that all that is against the progress of the soul is also against the true interest of society in general. The progress of the soul can best be achieved, according to me, through the service of society. Service is the same as *yajna*. Service which comes in the way of the progress of the soul is to be shunned and renounced.

There is a school of thought which says that service may also be rendered at times through lying. But everybody knows that lying degrades the soul and it makes it fall its high state. Therefore, service through lying should never be thought of. Really speaking, the idea that lying can also serve as a means of service is just a delusion. Its result may seem beneficial to society for a while, but it can be proved that eventually it does more harm than good.

But, then, the charkha does good to soeiety, to the world, and therefore to the soul also. This does not mean that a spinner can *ipso facto* realize the progress of the soul. He who spins for earning a few coppers gets only a few coppers. But he who spins with the obejct of

realizing his soul may attain liberation through it. As has been said, he too becomes fit for liberation who offers water for the thirsty in the spirit of devotion. Of those who repeat the *Gayatri mantra* either for show or for money, the first falls while the other goes on farther than the fulfilment of his desire for money. Liberation is reached wherever the objective is of the highest and purest, and is backed by similar action.

In fact, the knowledge of Brahman, i.e., the Ultimate Reality, is necessary in order to know what is the highest objective and the highest action. To try to achieve proper fitness for khadi work with the object of the progress of the soul is no small matter. A khadi worker who wants also the progress of the soul must be free from all likes and dislikes. This covers almost all that needs to be said on this question. We have not yet had even a single khadi worker who would be content to receive just enough for his maintenance and settle down to work in unfavourable surroundings in a remote village far away from a railway station. I would expect such a worker to know Sanskrit and music, and have a fairly good knowledge of the essentials of all the important religions. He can put to good use those arts that he knows. But he can serve contentedly even if he knows nothing except the science of charkha.

In order to dispel the darkness and misery of age-long indolence, superstition, hunger and distrust, we need men of austerity who have got to the very door-step of liberation. Even a slight practice of this dharma wards off great calamity[1] and hence is easy. But its perfect implementation is as arduous as the austerities of a man thirsting for self-realization.

I do not mean to suggest that one should give up one's studies and devote oneself immediately to khadi work. I suggest that a student who has courage, strength and faith should take a vow from today onwards that he will become a khadi worker when he has finished his studies. If he makes this resolve one can consider that his service in the cause of khadi has already begun, because he will then choose whatever he decides to learn with the object of acquiring the necessary capacity for this particular type of work.

[1] A reference to the *Bhagavad Gita*, II, 40

Let us now examine the second difficulty. The correspondent says:

> I do not understand why you give equal importance to the acquisition of knowledge and the learning of craft work at the same time.

I have been asked this question time and again ever since I returned to India, and I have always given the same answer to it, i.e., they must be given an equal importance. It used to be so in olden times. The student went to the teacher with a bundle of sacrificial sticks in his hands which indicated his readiness to work and his humility. The former consisted of fetching wood from the forest and water for the use of the guru. The student also learned something about agriculture, cow-keeping etc.

Today this is not so, and that is one of the reasons why there is so much hunger, injustice and vice in the world. Literacy, i.e., learning of books, acquisition of intellectual knowledge and useful manual work in various crafts are not different, though they may seem so. Efforts to separate them and break the link that binds them together results in the misuse of knowledge. The intellectual side of it is like husband and manual labour like his wife. The bond between the two is indissoluble. Divorced from manual labour this husband is today acting like a libertine. He casts his evil eye here, there and everywhere and yet remains unsatisfied and in the end falls down tired and spent.

Indeed, if a comparison has to be made between the two, the first place will have to be given to manual work, for a child does not use his intelligence first but his hands and feet. Gradually, he learns to use his eyes and ears and begins to understand things only when he is four or five years of age. But this does not mean that with greater power of understanding he can neglect his body. If he does so he will destory both the body and the mind. The intellect finds its expression in action by the body. Today the exercise of the body has come to be confined merely to gymnastics. Formerly this need was satisfied by useful labour. There is no suggestion that boys should not play games or take part in sports, etc. But there should not be any great need for games merely for health's sake. Rather, there should be rest and relaxation of both the body and the mind. There is no place for indolence in education. Whether learning a craft or acquiring

knowledge of the three R's, education must always be interesting. If a boy gets bored either with reading and writing or craft work, the fault does not lie with him but with the method of education and the teacher.

While this letter was lying with me, I chanced to read a book about a new educational experiment being undertaken in England. An institution has been set up there which will start centres imparting literary education along with training in craft work. Among the list of the sponsors of this institution I find the names of almost all the eminent British educationists. Their aim is to change the present trend in education and impart to the children both literary education and training in crafts. More such centres will be started at places with plenty of open space around them so that arrangements could be made for their training in crafts. This will enable the boys to earn something while learning. The editor of the book says that this will probably lengthen the period of literary education, but he also states that it will do no harm; on the contrary, it will do good to the students. When a student starts to earn he realizes the value of money honestly earned and acquires respect for all forms of knowledge imparted to him.

I think the experiments that I carried out in South Africa confirm this view. To the extent that I could see how to carry them out and actually did carry them out they succeeded well.

Very little time is required to go over lessons or do extra-curricular reading if the method of teaching is good. Of course, students do need some time to do what they like—to read as they please or even to while it away in idleness. I learnt a while ago that this is what they call *shavasana* in the yogic science. *Shavasana* means to lie down like a corpse with the feet outstretched and with the body and mind completely relaxed and at ease. Of course, even here the repetition of Ramanama should go on with every breath, but it should not disturb one's rest. For a *brahmachari* every breath is but a repetition of the Lord's name.

But if what I say is correct how is it that this student and his other friends who are not untruthful or vain and who are ready to

work hard to reach their goal do not experience its truth?

The tragedy with us is that all of us teachers have been born and have grown up in an age when the accent is on literary education, and training in crafts is very much neglected. And yet, some of us have detected this fatal flaw. Efforts are being made to correct it, but it is not yet clear how the correction can be made. Besides, the little that we have understood we have not yet the power to implement. Those who can teach *Raghuvamsa* or *Ramayana* or Shakespeare have not either the training or the aptitude to teach carpentry or weaving. They have not the same knowledge of weaving as they have of *Raghuvamsa*; and when they have, they have not the same interest in it. No wonder that, on account of this imperfection in our teachers, we find it difficult to produce the right type of students—students who will be equally at home both in literary learning and in crafts and who will at the same time character. Therefore, in this period of transition our imperfect and ill-equipped teachers and hardworking students must have both patience and faith. With faith one can cross the seas and storm even the most impregnable forts.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-7-1927

159. LETTER TO WILLIAM SMITH

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 3, 1927

DEAR MR. SMITH,

I thank you for your two letters and very carefully prepared notes and the Italian pamphlet illustrating the principle and use of castrating forceps.

I have now gone through your notes, and if you are free on Tuesday next at 4 p.m. I shall be delighted to see you.

Could I publish your valuable notes in the pages of *Young India* or make other public use of them?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 12919

160. SPEECH AT OPENING OF KHADI EXHIBITION, BANGALORE

July 3, 1927

FRIENDS,

You have extended to me a very great privilege by asking me to perform the opening ceremony at this function. It is a matter of great grief to me that I shall be unable to make my opening speech myself. You will agree with me that I ought not to take an undue advantage of the liberty given to me by Dr. Subba Rao and those medical friends who have been helping me. I want therefore to go as gently as possible and not to put an undue strain upon my constitution. I therefore reduced the few ideas that I have to present to you in connection with this Exhibition to writing. Mr.Tathachary will read a translation in the mother tongue of this province and then Mr. Rajagopalachari will read to you the English original. I am sorry that in this province you will not take the trouble of learning what is the lingua franca of India or should be. I have been obliged always, whenever I have come down to the South, to remark upon this deficiency. You have now a Hindi Prachar Office also in Bangalore and I do hope that at no distant time as I expect you will come up to Tamil Nadu and Andhra Desha in Hindi as in khadi and so make up your deficiency with reference to ignorance in Hindi. Had I seen in

front of me only my Mussalman brethren I know that I could have spoken to them in Hindi. They are preserving the prestige of the lingua franca but the Hindus are lagging far behind in the South. I hope that you will run a close race with the Mussalman brethren in Mysore and make up your deficiency in Hindi. With these few words I shall call upon my friend to read the Kanarese translation.

After the reading of the Kanarese version of Mahatmaji's address was over, Mr. C. Rajagopalachari read in clear terms the following address of Gandhiji in English :

FRIENDS,

It is a matter of great pleasure to me to meet you in this lovely city and find in our midst our veteran leader, *Poojaniya* Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji. Hindu tradition makes me always feel embarrassed to take a leading part in any function at which he is present. For ever since my return to our beloved country, I have looked up to him as to an elder brother. But what I feel to be a call of duty enables me somewhat to overcome the embarrassment.

On this my first permitted appearance on a public platform since my illness, let me thank His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore and its people for the great kindness and consideration shown to me during my prolonged convalescence. Your lavish hospitality has made illness itself attractive. But it has grieved me to observe, as I did in the appeal issued by my friends for enlisting your support for khadi, that they had endeavoured to exploit my illness by suggesting that if you all supported khadi by subscribing to funds and adopting it for your dress, my recovery would be quicker. I would ask you to dismiss this consideration from your minds altogether. If khadi makes no appeal to your reason and has no place in national economy, it must be suppressed in spite of my weakness for it. In great national causes, personal affections must be discounted as disturbing factors. And if I have become so soft as to become enervated for want of support for my whims and fancies, or may be, even follies, it is surely better for the nation that I should become and remain so ill as to be unfit for further mischief.

The Exhibition, which it will be my privilege presently to declare open, is a right and proper kind of appeal. It is carefully designed so as to give you an ocular demonstration of what khadi meant and what it has already achieved. If its careful study conquers your reason, but in spite of the conviction of your reason, you find yourselves too weak to translate its dictates into action, then, indeed, let

your affection for me give you heart and courage to overcome your weakness. For I stand before you as a self-chosen representative of the dumb, semi-starved, because workless, millions of India whom the late Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das appropriately called *Daridranarayana*. Every pice you contribute to the support of khadi, every yard of khadi you buy, means so much concrete sympathy shown by you for these millions.

Let me then summarize the conclusions of workers in the service of *Daridranarayana* which you may test for yourselves if you will patiently study the literature that you will find on the Exhibition stalls as also the results of khadi activity which you will find demonstrated at those stalls. The Prize Essay on Hand-spinning by Messrs S. V. Puntambekar and N. S. Varadachari traces for you the history of the ruin of the only national and universal cottage industry of India as also the possibilities of its revival. You will find it proved there that in this country there are millions of peasants who have no occupation for at least four months in the year, and that the only possible occupation for them in their own cottages in nothing but hand-spinning. Many good and well-intentioned people have suggested most ambitious and attractive schemes of village reorganization. But I make bold to say that not one of these schemes is at present in operation and that it is not possible to enforce any of them, at least during the lifetime of this generation; whereas, the spinning-wheel has been making its silent but slow progress throughout the length and breadth of India. Its revival dates from 1920 during which year, in spite of the forest of white caps one saw in the principal streets of cities, in reality there was not to be found khadi more than one lakh at the outside. But the carefully prepared report of the All-India Spinners' Association for the last year will show you that during the year 1926 alone over Rs. 23 lakhs worth of khadi was produced throughout India and that the sales amounted to Rs. 28 lakhs. Capital investment by the Association amounts to over Rs. 18 lakhs. Fifty thousand spinners worked during the year under review for the production of this khadi.These spinners, before they took to hand-spinning, had no other earnings or occupation during the time that they gave to spinning. Their earnings have ranged from one pice to two annas per day according to the time they gave and the skill they put in it. The very fact that fifty thousand women were eager to do this work for what may appear to us to be a miserable wage should be sufficient workable demonstration that hand-spinning is not an uneconomic, profitless or unpractical

proposition. In many instances women walk four miles to receive their cotton. Round hand-spinning as the centre have been built up many other occupations. Weavers, dhobis, dyers, printers and carders who had either died out or were dying out have found in the revival of hand-spinning a new hope. One new weaver and one new carder comes into being against ten spinners and their wages are anything between four annas and one and a half rupees per day. 1,500 villages are being thus served by an army of more or less educated workers whose salary ranges from Rs. 100 to Rs. 150 per month. Not less than 1,000 such young men and some young women find an honest livelihood in this national service. The spinners and other workers include Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, Sudras, the so-called untouchables, Mussalmans, Christians, Parsis, Sikhs, in fact every caste and creed. Besides the paid workers, there are several absolutely unpaid volunteers too engaged in this work of reconstruction. In Satis Chandra Das Gupta and Profulla Chandra Ghosh, Bengal has given to this service two of Acharya Ray's most brilliant pupils. Satis Chandra Das Gupta had built up Acharya Ray's chemical works. Profulla Chandra Ghosh had been assistant assayer in the Government Mint. Both left their lucrative posts to give themselves to khadi. Several distinguished lawyers, even doctors, some of whom you know personally, have given up their profession and taken to this work. And it is slowly dawning upon the merchant class that khadi is a service which does demand their mercantile ability. You will, perhaps, now understand why I have called this hand-spinning movement the greatest co-operative effort of modern times. And if six years' progress, insignificant as it may appear compared to the mighty result in view, is an indication of the future, God willing, at no distant time we shall find our villages, which at the present moment seem to be crumbling to ruins, becoming hives of honest and patient industry.

The Exhibition will enable you to understand all the processes that cotton goes through before it reaches you as khadi. For you will see ginning, carding, sliver-making, spinning and weaving demonstrated before you. You will see also the very simple tools and machinery which are being used for these processes. The charts will tell you the output of these little machines, most of which can be esily made in our villages.

I must not also omit to draw the attention of fashionable, artistic and moneyed members of my audience to the will-filled stall where you will see handsomely worked and embroidered fine khadi in the

preparation of which nearly 400 girls in Bombay are earning anything between six annas and one and a half rupees per day. It is an organization conducted by Rashtriya Stri Sabha of Bombay, which, among other self-sacrificing ladies, includes the grand-daughters of the Grand Old Man of India, Dadabhai Naoroji, and a sister belonging to the great Petit family.

Madhusudan Das was a brilliant lawyer in Cuttack. The poverty of Orissa woke him from his dreams and he saw that necessary as work with plough and oxen in our fields was, we should soon be reduced to the status of the bovine species unless we added to our agriculture some industry which called forth the cunning of the hand, and he has himself become a finished artisan.

But I must not any longer stand between you and the feast for your eyes and intellect that has been prepared by the Exhibition Committee. May it enable you to appreciate the priceless value of khadi as a central fact in village organization and may it induce you to establish between yourselves and the poor villagers a living bond by sending those of you who have the leisure and the inclination to villages to deliver the message of the spinning-wheel, and all of you at least by adopting khadi for your dress and household use! In the work of God, as I venture to suggest it is, the harvest is indeed rich but the labourers are few. Every one of you can, if you will, add to the number.

I have much pleasure in declaring the Exhibition open, and I pray to God that He may bless the work, if it is commendable in His sight and the workers be found worthy.

This over amidst impressive silence, Mahatmaji spoke the following few words in conclusion :

FRIENDS,

I shall presently perform the opening ceremony by uncovering a model charkha prepared at the Industrial Shop of the Department of Industries in Mysore. Mr. Gangadharrao Deshpande, in his opening speech inviting me to perform the ceremony, drew your attention to the great help that is being rendered by the State and especially the Department of Industries to this movement. They have prepared many such charkhas. You will see in the Exhibition Court a variety of charkhas, old spinning-wheels, which are still to be found in a more or less dilapidated condition in Mysore and the evolution that a spinning-wheel has gone through during these six years. The charkha that I shall have the privilege of presently exposing to your view is by

no means the best in the scale of evolution. But we thought it was in the fitness of things that an article made in Mysore should be first exposed to view.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya will lead you to the Exhibition Court. He has kindly consented to do this work for me in order to spare me the strain of going through the Exhibition Court. He will also continue the present proceedings this evening at 5-30 when he will give you what his heart prompts him to give you on what he has seen in the Exhibition Court, and what he has gathered during these six years about khaddar and I do hope that you will all come and listen to the message that he might have to deliver to you. You will not attempt whilst he takes the leaders to the court to crowd round, otherwise it will not be really possible to study what is to be studied in the Exhibition. It is designed to be really a study for those who want to understand what his khadi movement stands for and what it has been able to do. It is not a mere ocular demonstration to be dismissed out of our minds, immediately we have gone out of the Exhibition Court. It is not a cinema. It is actually a nursery where a student, a lover of humanity, a lover of his own country may come and see things for himself. I invite sceptics to go there and pause not a few moments, but to go there and pause a few hours and I promise that he will find himself amply rewarded and possibly his scepticism also will be dismissed. I invite the candid critic also to go there and I have no doubt that he will find imperfections, he will find those charts not drawn in artistic fashion, but he will find heart put into those charts. They give you facts and figures which are compiled by students who want only to serve truth and nothing but the truth. You will find there always an understatement but not an overstatement. With these words I have much pleasure to uncover the charkha and I hope that you will all support this movement as it deserves.

Amidst great applause Mahatmaji then uncovered a charkha raised to the seat of Gandhiji by Mr. Deshpande.

The Hindu, 4-7-1927

161. LETTER TO MIRABEHN [1]

July 4, 1927

CHI. MIRA[2],

I had expected a letter from you today. But there is nothing as yet. There is just a slight chance of one more post. I hope you were not overcrowded in the train, that there was no difficulty at Guntakal. After you went there was a wire from Vallunjkar asking Mahadev to suggest your breaking journey at Golanad to see Kakasaheb, himself and Gangu. But you were gone and I did not think it worth while wiring in the hope (very distant) of catching you before you could leave Bombay.

How well you put it? You were parting but to come nearer. It was quite true. You did well in coming and equally well in leaving when you did.

Remember my parting words. You are not to kill yourself or ruin your health in trying to finish Hindi in two months. Let us hope that you will finish it. But it does not matter in the least if you cannot. Yours is but to try. Again do not take the vow to use only Hindi in Wardha unless you feel practically driven to it. Nothing hangs by it. You need not consider what I would like. In matters like this there should be no question of considering my opinion or wishes. After all it is a question of choosing the best way of *doing* Hindi. The way that suits you is the best for you and no other.

With love,

BAPU

[PS.]

The opening ceremony went off yesterday without any difficulty. I stood the strain well. The doctors came afterwards and they were satisfied to find no alteration in the pulse. I hope you left your constipation here.

B.

[1] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, Mirabehn explains : "I had now left Bhagavadbhakti Ashram, Rewari, and was spending a short time at Sabarmati after having been to see Bapu at Bangalore, and before going to Vinoba's Ashram at Wardha for continuing my Hindi studies."

[2] The superscription in this and other letters to Mirabehn is in Devanagari.

[PPS.]

Immediately after handing this for the post I got your expected beautiful letter[1]. It is perfectly intelligible. There are very few mistakes. Continue to write as often as you like.

B.

From the original : C.W. 5243. Courtesy : Mirabehn

162. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Silence Day [*July 4, 1927*][2]

CHI. MIRA,

I have sent the Monday letter to Sabarmati. But if you leave for Wardha before getting it, you should not miss your Monday mail at Wardha either; hence this epistle.

I had expected your letter today but it has not come; it must tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Don't worry. The letter addressed to Sabarmati is in English.

[PPS.]

I have just had your Hindi letter. It is beautiful.

From the Hindi original : C.W. 5242. Courtesy : Mirabehn

163. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day, Ashadh Sud 5[3] [*July 4, 1927*]

SISTERS,

I thought of you yesterday. Exhibitions and such other activities are really more the work of women than of men. No one was able to decorate his or her stall better than Mithubehn. It is just what one would expect; because all the twenty-four hours she keeps thinking how khadi can be made more lovely. Under her guidance,

[1] In Hindi

[2] From the postmark

[3] The source has Ashadh Sud 6, which is evidently a slip. The letter was written on the day following the opening of the Exhibition.

starting with a few, now about four hundred girls work on khadi and earn their livelihood, or wear only khadi spun by themselves.

Manibehn has been able to bring credit to herself and to the Exhibition by means of her carding bow.

As so many Ashram people have now arrived, the recitation of the *Gita* in the mornings has been started. Today Manibehn recited the fourth chapter. She had recited the first chapter too. Her intonation is good. Indeed all of you should learn to read the *Gita* in the proper way and understand its meaning. Just as a woman is not accomplished unless she is a good cook, so also a woman who does not know the *Gita* cannot be said to be accomplished.

Who is in charge of the store at present?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3656

164. LETTER TO MANU H. GANDHI

Ashadh Sud 5, [*July 4, 1927*][1]

CHI. MANU,

I have your letter. Keep on writing in that manner. We all think of you but Ba misses you very much. She often says, 'When shall I see Manu ?' But that is in the hands of God. We shall meet when He ordains. Do you learn *bhajans,* etc., there? Hariichchhabehn[2], Tarabehn and others are there. Do you ever meet them?

There is a Khadi Exhibition here today. Manibehn[3] cards cotton there. Kanti Parekh has also come. He also cards cotton. Keshubhai spins cotton. There are so many others. It has a good collection of khadi. If you were here, I would have shown you everything. But can we poor travel such a distance [only for this purposel]?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 5053. Courtesy: Manu S. Mashruwala

[1] The letter evidently belongs to 1927. Gandhiji was in Bangalore where the Khadi Exhibition was held; *vide* also "Speech at Opening of Khadi Exhibition, Bangalore", 3-7-1927 and "Letter to Ashram Women", 4-7-1927.

[2] Harichchha Kamdar

[3] Manibehn Patel, daughter of Vallabhbhai Patel

165. LETTER TO J. B. PETIT

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 5, 1927

DEAR MR. PETIT,

The enclosed is a copy repeated at Bangalore of a cable[1] received from Andrews at Sabarmati. It speaks for itself. It will be a great calamity if Mr. Sastri's health breaks down, or if he has to undergo financial worries. Personally, I think that the Government of India will not be able to meet the special requirements in the present case. It would be wrong to set an awkward precedent, and yet, if Mr. Sastri's mission is to succeed, he must have ample funds enabling him to move from place to place and find decent accommodation. Future agents won't need triple accommodation. But Mr. Sastri has to break new ground and he has therefore to exploit not merely his official position for reducing the discordant elements to harmony but he has got to exploit his own special gifts to that end. His more solid work therefore will be extra-official. In order to be able to do this, he must have funds. South Africa like India is a place of distances. Between Cape Town and Durban it is nearly 1,400 miles by rail, and in each place he must have accommodation of his own. If he went to hotels, he would be inaccessible to the majority of the Indians who are poor.

I do not think we can state all these things in the press and make a public appeal for funds. The only legitimate thing therefore to do is for the Imperial Citizenship Association to place at Mr. Sastri's disposal a fairly large sum. No time should be lost. I have not a shadow of a doubt that such an expense would be a fair charge upon the funds of the I.C.A.

I suggest that Rs. 25,000/- may be at once transferred to him to be used as he may think necessary for his own personal convenience. He can be trusted to use the amount judiciously and to refund what he may not need.

For the sake of speedy despatch, I am sending a copy of this letter to the members of the Committee whom I know and who I think

[1] Dated July 4. It read : "Sastri's health causing great anxiety. Financial worries superadded because allowances altogether insufficient. Cabled Viceroy Department. Sastri dislikes anything except constructive. Press notice suggesting absolute necessity ample allowances inform public. Probably necessary upkeep three houses. Hotels impossible. Watch my press cables."

will be interested in the subject matter.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

J. [B.] PETIT, ESQ.
IMPERIAL CITIZENSHIP ASSOCIATION
BOMBAY

From a photostat : S.N. 12365

166. LETTER TO JOSHI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 5, 1927

MY DEAR JOSHI,

I believe you are on the Committee of the Imperial Citizenship Association. The enclosed[1] speaks for itself. If you agree with the view I have set forth in the letter, you will please expedite business.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 12365

167. LETTER TO K. S. NATARAJAN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 5, 1927

DEAR MR. NATARAJAN,

I enclose herewith a copy of my letter to Mr. Petit.[2] I do not need to add anything except to ask you please to expedite the despatch of funds, if you agree with the substance of my letter to Mr. Petit.

Yours sincerely,

K. S. NATARAJAN, ESQ.
"INDIAN SOCIAL REFORMER"
FORT
BOMBAY

From a photostat : S.N. 12365

[1] *Vide* item 97 above.

168. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 5, 1927

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your two letters. Last was received only yesterday.

Your letter about the business of the Council was placed before the Council. Jammalalji and Shankerlal will write to you fully. I have not attended any of the meetings except the first one which I simply opened without any remarks and retired. I think the Council has confirmed the original proposal to relieve me from all administrative work. I remain the president; but Jamnalalji becomes the officiating chairman of the Council. And I think that this is the best thing to do. This spares me the trouble of having to go into every detail of administration.

Your suggestion that the Council meeting should be held at different centres has been adopted.

Not vital changes should be made in the constitution for five years according to the original intention. To change officers every year, and especially the secretaries, would be a dangerous thing. Secretaries should be helped by fresh suggestions. But as we are really a business house, administrative control should be continuous, if we are to make the house stable. And, personally, I think that it is impossible to get a secretary more energetic, more conscientious than Shankerlal.

Your letter about Hemprabha Dev's latest developments provides food for deep reflection. Let there be nothing done in a hurry.

The suggestion about maintenance is startling and I would like a long time in order that it may soak into me. We must meet before anything is done. Supposing that I am free from the Southern tour about the end of August or middle of September and go through it without any mishap, would you have me to undertake the Bengal tour in gentle stages? Please do not be anxious about me; for, I shall do nothing in haste and I shall watch myself as the tour progresses. Nobody wants to run avoidable risks. Both Rajagopalachari and Gangadharrao are taking elaborate precautions to avoid the slightest strain. Chikballapur was for them also a good lesson.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 19786

169. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

Ashadh Sud 6 [*July 5, 1927*][1]

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your cable. You must have received my reply to it. You must have got my letters even before my reply to the cable. But I sent the cable as I thought that would make both of you happier, especially Sushila. If Manilal alone were there, I would not have spent money on a cable and would have rebuked him for wasting money on one. But considering that Sushila was in foreign country, that she has never been abroad before now and that, therefore, she would be happy to hear from me, I thought it proper to send a cable. I am glad to know that both of you would like to receive letters from me, but at the same time I should like to make it clear that, if you do not receive one, you should not suppose that my failure to write was due to indifference or carelessness. It may be that I cannot find the time to write because of pressure of work, or that I miss writing because I do not remember the date on which the mail leaves. If I am ill, you will have somehow heard about it. But now I shall be more careful about writing.

Sushila should forget her attachment to her parental home. We ought always to remember our parents, but it is not possible to live for ever with them. A son cannot do so. How, then, is it possible for a daughter? Her home is with her husband. Sushila should, therefore, understand that her home is where Manilal is and learn to live like Savitri[2] . She should protect herself and also protect Manilal. In both of you maintaining simplicity, truthfulness, compassion and patriotism, despite the many temptations surrounding you, in your observing self-restraint as befits you and protecting each other's body and character lies the success of your marriage.

Sushila's physical strength does not seem to have increased in proportion to the increase in her weight. There is only one way of increasing it : that she should eat nothing but wholesome food, and only as much as can be digested, and take as much physical exercise in the open air as she can without getting exhausted, and that both of you should refrain, as much as possible, from sexual indulgence. I am a living example before you of how much even mental indulgence

[1] From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary

[2] Who wrested the soul of her husband back from the God of Death. The story is told in the *Mahabharata*.

tells on the body. I failed to wake up for thirty years, and reap the fruits of that to this day. My body is comparatively good. I have, it may be said, suffered from very few illnesses. Still, I know that had I waked up earlier, my body would have been as strong as adamant. My capacity to serve would also have been far greater than it is. There was none to awaken me or to keep me vigilant. I am there to awaken you both and keep you on your guard. Learn from my experience.

I keep good health. As a khadi exhibition is on here these days and as there is to be a meeting of the Charkha Sangh, Jamnalalji, Mithubehn, Jamnabehn, Maganlal, Keshu, Anasuyabehn, Shankerlal and others have come here. In a day or two the nest will be empty again.

You send your letters needlessly to Amreli. If you write the word 'personal' on your letters, no one will read them, but why do you wish that no one in the Ashram should read them? It would be all right if you wish that no one should read those letters of yours in which you consult me about your moral problems, but what can be there in ordinary letters that no one should read?

We all saw your photograph which Jamnalalji has received. The photograph which you have sent for me or Ba has not yet reached us. It must be on the way. Our time is wasted in inquiring about it without knowing to what address it was sent.

I hope you receive the translation of the *Gita* regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4724

170. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 6, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

Your telegram is disturbing. No letters yet received. I shall anxiously await further news. May God keep you.

Yours,

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 5244. Courtesy : Mirabehn

171. LETTER TO A. FENNER BROCKWAY

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 6, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your confidential letter of the 13th June last with the enclosures. I appreciate the honour you have done me by sending me your draft Bill, and I beg to tender my thanks to those members of the Independent Labour Party who have worked at the Bill.

I am however unable to give any effective advice or guidance as my work for the present lies in a different direction. I am devoting the whole of my energy to developing internal strength. I have therefore very little time left for studying the question what form the final constitution should take. I do not in any shape or form discount the importance of that question. But I know my own limitations, and so, as far as possible, I help the movement towards arriving at a suitable constitution by non-interference and sympathetic watch. But I take it that you have circulated the draft Bill among many other public men in India and invited their opinion. If at any time I feel that I can do any useful work in this connection, I shall not hesitate to correspond with you.

Yours sincerely,

A. FENNER BROCKWAY, ESQ.
14, GREAT GEORGE STREET
LONDON S.N. I

From a photostat : S.N. 12530

172. LETTER TO GIRIRAJ KISHORE

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 6, 1927

MY DEAR GIRIRAJ,

I have your letter. I like your heart searching. There is always one danger in this process. A man who is not self-possessed becomes morose and imagines all kinds of things about himself. This is the state of a hypochondriac. Do you know what that would means in the medical world? It means a person who imagines every disease to be in

himself of which he reads a description. Whilst, therefore, it is the most proper thing to rid oneself of any weakness of which one is conscious there must be nothing imagined and there should be no brooding. Instead of saying to yourself, 'I am wretched, so evil and I shall never be good', the proper formula is, 'I will be good; for, God is good and merciful; He will make me good.' The first formula is weakening and the second is invigorating.

Your statement that an ideal cook is he who feels about the diners as a mother does for her children is perfect. It is of course difficult to feel like that; but by practice everything becomes easy. Be patient with everybody, return a kind answer to every enquiry and give up the last chapati and the last spoonful of dal, even though there may be nothing left for you and those who may be the last to dine being waiters. You may prepare something for yourself to satisfy hunger. This may mean additional time. Never mind it. And, therefore, cooks and waiters should never have any fixed appointments after the completion of kitchen work. There must always be wide margin left for emergencies.

You must not regard yourself as unfit for the work. A man who wants to do work for society and in society, that is, in company with others, has to have practically the same qualities whether it is in the kitchen or in the sanitary yard or in the weaving shed, and no man becomes a worthy human being unless he has gone through these purifying fires. I, therefore, want you to compose yourself completely, and find your satisfaction in your work, dealing with every emergency that may arise. I know that all this is esay enough to say. It is not so easy to practise. Nevertheless all our learning and everything we do has to be done in order to arrive at this equableness. I hope, therefore, you will never accept defeat.

Do please write to me whenever you like. Always try to cultivate a compact style. But if you cannot say what you want to, briefly, I do not mind even your long letters. But it will be a good practice for you after having written your long letter to reduce it to a quarter and see whether you cannot say the same thing in quarter length.

Yours sincerely,

GIRIRAJ KISHORE
ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a photostat : S.N. 14180

173. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DAULATRAM

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 6, 1927

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

I need you badly if you can possibly spare yourself from Council work. Malaviyaji and I have been considering the advisbility of establishing an All-India Anti-untouchability Association. Jamnalalji, Rajagopalachari, Shankerlal, Rajendra Babu and others think likewise. There is no man to take up the work so suitable like you. Jamnalalji thinks that I must press you to come out at any cost. I won't do that. But I thought I must place this proposition before you, and if the inner voice prompts you, then indeed I want you. But if you think you can better utilize your abilities for the service of the country by being in the Council, I have nothing to say. Just think the matter over well and let me know. If you come to a firm opinion which you can transmit to me by wire, you may even wire.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. JAIRAMDAS DAULATRAM, M.L.C.
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a microfilm : S.N. 14619

174. LETTER TO LILIAN EDGER

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 6, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Krishnadas has handed your letter to me and the yarn sent with it. The yarn is not at all bad. It can of course be more even. I do not think that age is a bar. I know many as old as you who have taken to spinning and who have become very good spinners. No doubt it requires much patience in the beginning.

You have asked me whether the small quantities that you spin can be of any help to the poor. I say unhesitatingly, "Yes." This does not mean that the yarn you may be sending will be separately woven into khadi and sent to the poor. That is not what we are doing with the yarn contribution we are receiving. But what we are doing is to convert such yarn into khadi, and utilize the proceeds of the sale of that khadi for providing spinning and other ancillary work to the poor

people. This is the very best help can be rendered to them.

I quite agree with you that it is difficult for individuals to distribute their charity judiciously. The vast majority of street beggars are mere professional idlers when they are not much worse, and those who have money to spare do an ill-service to these beggars and to the country by giving them money, food or clothing. We have found by experience that we do no service by distributing amongst poor people khadi prepared from yarn contributions. The chief need is neither food nor clothing but work which they can do in their cottages. But where it becomes necessary to provide clothing side by side with work, we do not hesitate to do so. But that happens only in rare cases. The chief value, in my opinion, of any person spinning by way of sacrifice lies in the work itself, and in the promotion of the work atmosphere that is created in the country and in the promotion of a tangible feeling for the poorest in the land.

Now for your questions :

1. It is wrong to draw the thread and the twist. The thread must be drawn whilst the spindle is revolving rapidly round its own centre. This movement ensures the proper twist. Drawing of the yarn and the movement of the spindle go on simultaneously so that there is no difficulty about continuously drawing the thread with ease. And whilst the thread is being drawn the sliver is held fairly tight between the fingers so that the twist does not reach the thread up to the very end which is held between the fingers.

2. Wax has to be used occasionally for the *mal*, that is the chord that goes round the wheel and the spindle.

3. Oil has not to be used very often. The ordinary machine oil [can] serve the purpose. But in the absence of that, a drop of the ordinary cooking oil is quite serviceable. An occasional drop on the axle where it touches the uprights and on the holders which hold the spindle makes for smooth movement.

4. It will be better to wind off after an hour's spinning. Those who can spin very rapidly unwind every 20 minutes. When in unwinding the thread tangles, you know that the cone has not been made tight. If your yarn is well-twisted, you can wind it round the spindle each time fairly tight and the cone should feel hard to the touch and not at all soft.

5. When the chord breaks and if you cannot twist a chord out of your own yarn, you can use any bazaar twine of the diameter of your chord.

Lastly, if you will become a good spinner and if you will spin for sacrifice, it is really necessary for you to watch someone who spins well. Wherever you may be whether in Kashi or Darbhanga, there is no difficulty about your getting proper assistance.

Wishing you every success in your effort,

Yours sincerely,

MISS LILIAN EDGER
CARE OF POST MASTER
SRINAGAR (KASHMIR)

From a microfilm : S.N. 19785

175. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN

BANGALORE,
Ashadh Shukla 7 [*July 6, 1927*]

DEAR SIR,

I got your telegram yesterday. I hope you have my reply. You must have my earlier letter too. I am pained by your telegram. In my humble opinion, it was not decent to hold out a threat of legal action. I have said on several occasions and also reiterated in my letter that if you think the work accomplished here as the Sammelan's property, well, it can be settled by arbitration. I can understand that it will be your duty to go to a court of law if you hold that it would be in the interest of the Sammelan to obtain the court's verdict. If you deem it proper to go to the court, do not blame Pandit Harihar Sharma. Whatever changes in work have been brought about by him had my sanction. I have always thought that it was I who through the Sammelan conducted the work in the South. I always thought that by entrusting this work to the Sammelan I have only enhanced its prestige and that in case of a disagreement the Sammelan would not move to take charge of the work nor obstruct me from carrying it on according to my own plans. I still desire your co-operation in this work but if you think that the funds collected by Jamnalalji and those by Panditji in the South were all to be handed over to the Sammelan, I am sorry the matter can be decided only by arbitration or in a court of law.

Yours,

From a microfilm of the Hindi : S.N. 11817

176. A LETTER

[Before *July 7, 1927*][1]

Your questions are really very good but among the readers of *Young India* and *Navajivan* few would be eager for a casuistical enquiry into this question. I shall therfore rest content with answering you alone.

Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose's theory is not new. Our Shastras recognize the presence of life in plants as in human beings. Certainly therefore the statement that life lives on life is established by facts. And this is the one reason why the body is regarded as an appendage of the *atman* and its absence essential for the supreme state of the *atman*. Although all life must be embodied only through some sort of violence, the question still remains what form of life should comprise life's food. Human physiology as well as the experience of the wise shows that the right food for us is the fruit ripened on the tree and suchlike. The pure seeker will not use even fire. We may not reach this ideal state, yet it is our duty to strive for it as far as we can, and in this our endeavour meat-eating can have no place. [Feeding on] plant life should be the limit for us.

2. I can say from my own experience and that of others that there is absolutely no danger of tuberculosis and such other diseases resulting from vegetarian diet even in countries like England. Today thousands of Englishmen are vegetarians, [though] usually they do take eggs.

3. Vegetarian restaurants make use of egg and milk; they neither serve nor cook meat. They place eggs and milk in the same category and agree that it would be better to give up both as neither is a vegetable. This is my opinion too. Barring mother's milk during infancy man has no right to take milk. I shall say something about this in *Young India*. You will find it in the course of the autobiography. Till now it was my belief that every egg could be hatched. Now I learn from experts that a hen lays eggs even without mating and that such eggs cannot be hatched. These eggs are as much without life and therefore as unobjectionable as milk. Now I am wondering whether eggs may not have a place in a vegetarian diet since milk is included. But this much I do know that from the

[1] From the reference to the discussion about milk in the "Autobiography" (Pt. IV, Ch. VIII), which appeared in *Young India*, 7-7-1927

standpoint of *brahmacharya* eggs are to be eschewed as are many vegetables too. But this is a digression. Today I am considering eggs purely from the point of view of vegetarian diet.

I congratulate you on writing in Hindi.

Yours,

From a photostat of the Hindi : S.N. 12325

177. NOTES

DESHBANDHU DAY AT DARJEELING

The reader will be glad to share the following with me from Mrs. Blair from Darjeeling :

> It may perhaps interest you to know that the Darjeeling Mahila Samiti held a meeting on June 15th in memory of the great patriot, the late Mr. C. R. Das, at which Shrimati Urmila Devi spoke. Her subject was the wearing of khadi and the obligation on those, who wished to help the poor of their country, to spin at least half an hour a day. On the following Wednesday, 22nd instant, nine of the members in the presence of Shrimati Urmila Devi promised to spin at least half an hour a day. Later on they may feel worthy to become members of the A.I.S.A.[1] At present they are going to spin wool in order to be able to give warm clothes in the winter to the Baby Clinic and the Hospital.[2]

It is a good thing that the ladies of Darjeeling observed the anniversary of Deshbandhu in the manner described by Mrs. Blair. I hope that the nine ladies who have given their names will persist in their effort. We have in this counrty a habit of making promises in a fit of enthusiasm, keeping them for a time, and then forgetting them altogether. I hope that these members will be steadfast enough to continue their sacrificial spinning so long as a single Indian has to starve for want of work in his or her own home. One knows the fashion of saying, "If they have no work, why do they not emigrate, why do they not go to the tea plantations, why do they not go to the cities where labour is in demand, and earn as much as eight annas?' I have in these pages often demonstrated the falsity of this argument. Millions cannot leave their homes, even if they wish to. And it would be a calamity if they all did. Coal at the pit's mouth in Newcastle is

[1] All-India Spinners Association
[2] For Gandhiji's reply to Mrs. Blair, *vide* "Letter to Mrs. Blair", 28-6-1927.

probably to be had for nothing, or very little. But such cannot be the case in Bombay. If Bombay must use Newcastle coal, it has to pay for transport. Similarly work to be had in Bombay will be of no use to the millions, who cannot, will not and must not leave their cottages and fields. Work has got therefore to be transported to their cottages, and inversely as in the case of coal at Newcastle, the work transported to cottages is less paying than work in Bombay in terms of coin. But in terms of mental satisfaction, and grain or vegetable, the work obtained in the cottages is far more profitable than that obtainable in Bombay.

ADI KARNATAKAS

All the readers of *Young India* may not know who *Adi Karnatakas* are. They are the suppressed classes of Karnatak. Just as at the Raniparaj Conference, friends of the Raniparaj altered the name Kaliparaj to the more appropriate name Raniparaj, so the suppressed classes all over India have been not unnaturally taking for themselves names which have no bad odour about them. In this spirit the suppressed classes in Karnatak describe themselves as *Adi Karnatakas*. And so I notice under that heading two paragraphs in the address of the Dewan of Mysore to its Representative Assembly. One observes from these paragraphs, that

> exceptional facilities have been created for the education of the members of these classes, and methods have been adopted to suit their special circumstances. Among these methods are scholarships, exemptions from schools fees, a free supply of clothes and school requisites, free hostels; and over and above the right of admission to all shcools, 605 special schools have been provided for them. There are altogether 16,575 students of this class receiving tuition in Mysore.

An attempt is being made to organize a co-operative agricultural scheme with due provision of land, live-stock and direction.

The paragraphs end with the following suggestion :

> These people ought to be the strength of our strength. Shall we let them become our weakness? They have a rankling sense of wrong which only kindness can heal. The aim should be to “Hinduize” them more and more, for they belong to the Hindu community, and to offer them every facility to remain within the fold. They will be a mighty accession to the strength of our body politic; if not, they will be an equally heavy subtraction from it. Alienated, they will introduce an additional element of heterogeneity which will further complicate the already difficult problems of administration. No possible means of amelioration should be neglected, and every friend of Hindu society,

every lover of Mysore, should supplement the efforts of Government with all his strength.

This suggestion is a gentle warning both to the Christian missionary and the Mussalman missionary not to try to wean these suppressed classes from Hinduism, but if they at all wish to interfere, to act so that they may become better Hindus. If the suggestion is acted upon by the parties concerned, it will be a substantial contribution towards the attainment of real peace in the land.

Young India, 7-7-1927

178. THE COW IN MYSORE

I have received letters from Cow-protection Societies in Mysore, protesting against my letter[1] to the Mysore Cow-protection Committee appointed by the State. My letter was in answer to a questionnaire issued by that Committee. Extracts from that letter published in the Madras Press led the Cow-protection Societies in question to think that I was totally against legal prohibtion of cow-slaughter under any circumstances whatsoever. I was surprised to receive these letters, and I wondered whether, in a moment of inadvertence, I had ever said that there should never be any legislation against cow-slaughter. I therefore asked for a copy of my letter from the Cow-protection Committee, which they have kindly sent me. As the letter represents my considered opinion, and as it has been given some importance by the Committee and has caused misunderstanding among the public of Mysore interested in this every important question, I reproduce the whole of it below :[2]

Neither the discussion with the members of the several Cow-protection Societies, nor the correspondence before me warrants any alteration of the opinion expressed in this letter. The reader will observe that I have nowhere said that there should never be any legislation against cow-slaughter. But what I have said is that there should be no prohibition of cow-slaughter by legislation *without the consent of the intelligent majority of the subjects* adversely affected by it. Therefore, the Mysore State will be perfectly justified, and, indeed, bound to undertake legislation prohibiting cow-slaughter, if it has the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Cow-Protection Committee, Mysore", 11-1-1927.

[2] Not reproduced here

consent of the intelligent majority of its Mussalman population. The members of the Cow-protection Societies that met me assured me that the relations between Hindus and Mussalmans in Mysore were cordial, and that a majority of Mussalmans in Mysore were as much in favour of legislative prohibition as Hindus, and I was glad to be assured by them that many Europeans, especially missionaries, were in favour of such prohibition. So far, therefore, as the question of legislation in Mysore is concerned, if the statements made to me are correct, the way is clear for legislative prohibition. But let me reiterate what I have pointed out in my letter, and what I have emphasized so often in these columns, namely, that legislative prohibition is the smallest part of any programme of cow-protection. The trend of the letters received by me, and the activity of most Cow-protection Societies, however, show, that they would be satisfied with mere legal prohibition. I wish to warn all such societies against staking their all on legislation. We have already too much of it in this law-ridden country. People seem to think that when a law is passed against any evil, it will die without any further effort. There never was a grosser self deception. Legislation is intended and is effective against an ignorant or a small evil-minded minority; but no legislation which is opposed by an intelligent and organized public opinion, or under cover of religion by a fanatical minority, can ever succeed. The more I study the question of cow-protection, the stronger the conviction grows upon me, that protection of the cow and her progeny can be attained, only if there is continuous and sustained constructive effort along the lines suggested by me. There may be, probably there is, room for supplementing or amending the constructive programme sketched by me. But there is no room for doubting the absolute necessity of a vast constructive programme if India's cattle are to be saved from destruction. And the preservation of cattle really means also a step towards the preservation of the starving millions of India's men and women who have also been reduced to the condition of her cattle. The Indian States undoubtedly can in this as in many such matters give the lead to the rest of India. And among the States, probably, there is none better fitted, or better able, to make the right beginning than Mysore. It has, from all accounts received by me, a popular prince, an enlightened public opinion, no Hindu-Mussalman question, and a sympathetic Dewan. Mysore has also the Imperial Institute of Dairying and Animal Husbandry, and Mr. William Smith, the Imperial Dairy Expert, is himself stationed at Bangalore. The State has, therefore, all the

materials necessary for evolving a constructive policy. Add to this the fact that Nature has endowed Mysore with a glorious climate. The title a Hindu king dearly cherishes is that of defender of the cow and the Brahmin. The cow means not merely the animal, the giver of milk and innumerable other things to India, but it means also the helpless, the downtrodden and the poor. Brahmin means the representative of divine knowledge and experience. But today, alas! Hindu princes are powerless, and in many cases even indifferent, if not unwilling, to ensure this full protection. Unless the States and the people co-operate with one another to control and regulate the breeding of cattle, the production of milk supply, and the disposal of dead cattle, for the benefit of the people as a whole, the cattle of India will be bred but to die an unnatrual death at the hands of the butcher, notwithstanding all the legislation that may be passed against cow-slaughter. The ignorance of Nature's Law will be accepted as no excuse when men and women of India appear before the Throne of Judgment.

I was shocked to learn from the members of the Cow-protection Society that beef slaughtered in Bangalore and in Mysore was given to the animals in the State gardens, that beef was much cheaper than any other meat, and that the *Adi Karnatakas*, who claimed to be and were recognized as Hindus, and who knew the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* as well as any other Hindu, were addicted to beef-eating. If all this is true, the better-placed Hindus are clearly to blame for such a state of things. If the *Adi Karnatakas* do not respect the sanctity of the cow, it is because they know no better. But what is to be said of the Hindus who have so criminally neglected their brethren as to omit to acquaint them with a fundamental truth of Hinduism?

Young India, 7-7-1927

179. WHAT IS A POLITICAL ASSOCIATION?

I read the following in *The Hindu* of the 25th June last :

> Under Rule 23 (1) of Government Servants' Conduct Rules, Government have, I understand, prohibited Government servants from subscribing to the Khadi Fund, which is in aid of the All-India Spinners' Association. The reasons for this prohibition are stated to be, (1) that it is an association, established with the consent of the All-India Congress Committee, as an integral part of the Congress organization, (2) that it declares itself prepared to receive and acknowledge yarn subscriptions for membership of the Congress and (3) that therefore it must be regarded as a political association.

If the information supplied by the special correspondent of *The Hindu* is correct, the ruling of the Madras Government appears to me to be a case of perverted judgement,and a gross interference with the private liberty of its servants. If it is intended merely as an attack upon khadi or the All-India Spinners' Association, I have no doubt that both will survive the shock. And if it is an invitation to the All-India Spinners' Association to sever its connection with the Congress, I should be extremely sorry if I discovered that the Association had done anything to deserve such an invitation. The Association is proud of its being an integral part of the Congress organization, and it will deem it an honour and a privilege to work under the Congress banner, so long as that venerable national institution regards it as worthy of its patronage. But if by merely owning the parentage and patronage of the Congress an institution becomes a political association, the interpretation would involve most awkward conequences, which I hope no self-respecting Government servant will tolerate.

There are many schools for suppressed class children run in several provinces under the Congress aegis, and with Congress funds, to which Government servants also have been known to contribute without any secrecy. Was it wrong for them to do so? And are schools for 'untouchables' political bodies, because they are run with Congress funds and by Congressmen? Provincial Congress Committees have been known to open famine relief funds, and invite subscriptions to which Government servants have subscribed. Was it a breach of Government Servants' Conduct Rules? These relief committees were and the suppressed class committees are integral parts of the Congress organization. Are they, therefore, political associations? The Congress may open hospitals as an integral part of the Congress organization and its activity. Will the hospitals therefore become political associations? Khadi is at the present moment an integral part of the Congress franchise. Is it a crime therefore for Government servants to wear it? Is it not possible for the Congress to have its political, its social, its moral, its economic, medical, sociological and such other departments, all integral parts of that organization, and yet wholly self-governing and wholly independent each of the others? Every Congressman regrets that the Congress, although among all the national bodies it is the most influential and the most important, is not yet able to command men and money enough to organize every department of national life. But as time goes on, and as it is able to draw to it men of the right stamp, as well as

money, it will certainly touch every part of our national life. It would be ridiculous then to say that all its non-political activities became tainted with politics, and were therefore taboo to the Government servants. And if the Government dared to issue such a boycott, it would prove to be its own death warrant.

I am painfully conscious of the fact that the Congress is a long way off from attaining that height. But when it does, the Government, will be absorbed by it, and there will be nobody to resent, resist, or interfere with the Congress influence. That the Government has been able—assuming that the information given in *The Hindu* is correct—to regard the All-India Spinners' Association as a political association, shows that the Congress influence is at a discount at the present moment, that the public voice is ineffective, and that therefore it is open for the Government to issue any ruling, no matter how insulting or how ridiculous it may be. I can only hope that there will be Government servants courageous enough to disregard this monstrous ruling and openly help the Spinners' Association this monstrous ruling and openly help the Spinners' Association which in spite of the Government order, I submit, is entirely a non-political body, and was in so many words intended by the Congress to be and to remain, for the reasons stated in the resolution which brought the Association into being. Here are the words of the resolution which is part of the constitution of the All-India Spinners' Association :

> Whereas the time has arrived for the establishment of an expert organization for the development of hand-spinning and khaddar, and whereas experience has shown that such development is not possible without a permanent organization, *unaffected and uncontrolled by politics, by political changes or political bodies*, an organization called the All-India Spinners' Association is hereby established with the consent of the All-India Congress Committee, as an intergral part of the Congress organization, but *with independent existence and powers.*

Two things stand out unequivocal and emphatic in this preamble, namely, that it is unaffected and uncontrolled by politics, political changes, or political bodies, and that it has an independent existence and powers. How such an association could be called a political association, simply because it is an integral part of the Congress, and also because like a bank it has accepted the agency of the Congress for the collection of yarn subscription, passes comprehension. But acts of governments are often incomprehensible. It would have been more honest, if the reported action of the Madras

Government had taken the form of a straight order to its servants to have nothing to do with the All-India Spinners's Association on the simple and intelligible ground, that it does not like the penetration of the charkha into the villages and the consequent progress of khadi and all that it means.

Young India, 7-7-1927

180. WORK BEFORE PINJRAPOLES

Sjt. Y. M. Parnerkar, whose services have been engaged on behalf of the All-India Cow-protection Association, has sent me notes of his impressions gathered from his visit to Kathiawar where he went in search of good cows. In the hope that his plea for the expansion of pinjrapoles into model dairies and cattle-breeding farms on a moderate scale and under skilled management will not fall upon deaf ears, I condense them below.

> One thing that strikes most a lover of cattle when he visits Kathiawar, the home of the well-known *Gir* animals, is the enormous number of charitable institutions, run as retiring places for desabled cattle, chiefly cows. They are known as pinjrapoles. When they were first started there was not the deep poverty that faces us today. It was then a matter of little importance, whether they were economically managed or not. But today the condition is altered. No such institution can now hope for long to stand well, unless it is put on a sound financial basis. The longevity of pinjrapoles could only be guaranteed if they became self-supporting. It was found that nearly eight lakhs of rupees per year were spent as recurring expenses only in Kathiawar on these institutions. Yet it is difficult, if not impossible, to secure even a few good cows in home for the best milk-producing cow in all India. This tract, once overflowing with milk, produces now hardly any pure and hygienic cow's milk. The once warlike race of Kathis is now deteriorating for want of proper nourishment, notwithstanding plentiful grazing facilities for cattle-breeding. Bullocks for agricultural labour are imported by the cultivators from outside. The buffalo is overpowering the cow in the production of milk and ghee, and so driving her off the stage. Time has come for the best brains of the country to take up this very important problem.
>
> There can be no two opinions on the point that the duty of

the *gosevak* does not end with merely saving the cow from the butcher's knife, but he has to stop the deterioration and try to raise the standard of milk production. It could be said that the surest way of saving the cow from going to the slaughter-house is to make it so expensive that the butcher cannot afford to purchase it. This could only be done, when the cow finds a good place among the paying heads in a dairyman's or a cattle-breeder's ledger. The productive power of an average Indian cow has gone down so low that it is difficult for a business man to take up the work. The problem has therefore to be handled on a religious or national basis.

The work can be accomplished by the existing pinjrapoles. They have capital, buildings, and above all, public sympathy. What is needed is good management and enterprise. When a pinjrapole maintains about 100 or 200 retired cattle, it can add a few good cows that will support themselves and leave a margin for the other heads. If the cows are well kept, regularly bred to good bulls, and the calves well cared for, during a short period these should become places where the dairyman can purchase his foundation stock, the agriculturist may get his draft cattle, the fancy cattle-keeper the use of a good bull, the needy man his sick animals well treated, the ignorant cow-owner guidance in the best way of maintaining his live-stock, and what is more important, all from the child in the cradle to the old man on the deathbed may get pure milk and its nourishing products at moderate rate.

Young India, 7-7-1927

181. AGES-OLD PROBLEM

A sannyasi from Almora writes as follows :

In replying to a correspondent, you have said in *Young India* of 14th April last that, even if you were attacked by a snake, you would not wish to kill it.[1] In my opinion, this would be improper; for in the first place, you would be thereby killing yourself, and secondly, by letting such a venomous reptile free, you would be instrumental in causing injury to others. Take another instance. If the owner of a house, in which a snake has entered, removed the snake without killing it from his house, it is sure to enter some other house and injure its inmates. Surely, the responsibility for the injury, it

[1] *Vide* "Faith v. Reason", 14-4-1927.

may fatal, to the inmates of the other house, done by the snake that was let off, will be on the head of him who has under a false notion of pity let the snake off. There are many other reptiles, beasts and insects who injure human beings or spread disease. Surely, if the destruction of this life be considered *himsa*, then it is infinitely less than the destruction wrought by these creatures. Let it be granted that when a man kills for his own sake, it is *himsa*; but it cannot be when destruction is resorted to for the sake of saving many other precious lives. After all, the quality of an act is determined by the motive prompting it, and when the motive for destruction is the higher good, such desctruction becomes a duty and ceases to be *himsa*. I would like you to answer this argument in the pages of *Young India*.

The Sannyasi's argument is ages old. There is no doubt that there is very considerable force in it. Had it not been so, destruction would not have gone on as it has from ancient times. Few men are wantonly wicked. The most heinous and the most cruel crimes of which history has record have been committed under cover of religion or equally other noble motive. But in my opinion, we are no better off for the destruction that has gone on even under the highest sanction, that is, or religion. No doubt destruction in some form or other of some life is inevitable. Life lived upon life. Hence only is the highest bliss attainable ascribed by seers to a state, in which life is possible without the necessity of a perishable case, for whose sustenance destruction becomes at all necessary. And it is possible for man whilst in the body to hope to attain that state, only if he confines himself to the least possible destruction, such as is caused in his taking of vegetable life. The freer he is, consciously and deliberately, from the necessity of living upon the destruction of other life, the nearer he is to Truth and God. That all mankind is not likely to accept what may appear to be an unattractive existence does not affect the validity of my argument. Men, who lead this life of utter selflessness and of pity for the meanest creature that lives, enable us to understand the power of God, and serve as leaven to lift up humanity, and light its path towards its goal. We have no right to destroy life that we cannot create. It seems to me to be atheistical to think that God has created some life only to be destroyed by man, either for his pleasure or for sustaining a body, which he knows, is after all doomed to death any moment. We do not know what part the many so-called noxious creatures play in the economy of Nature. We shall never know the laws of Nature by destruction. We have records of men, whose love has travelled beyond their kind, living in perfect safety even in the midst of ferocious

beasts. There seems to be so much affinity between all life, that tigers, lions and snakes have refrained from harming men, who have shed all fear of them and will approach them as friends.

The argument that if I do not destroy a snake known to be venomous, he will cause the death of many men and women is deceptive. It is no part of my duty to set about seeking out all the venomous creatures and destroying them. Nor need I take it for granted, that if I do not destroy a snake I encounter, it is bound to bite the next passer-by. I must not be the judge between the snake and my neighbours. I have sufficiently discharged my duty to my neighbours if I do unto them as I would that they should do unto me, and if I do not expose them to any greater risk than I do myself, and if I do not better my own condition in any way whatsoever at their expense. I may not therefore leave the snake in my neighbour's compound as is very often done. The utmost I can do is to leave the reptile as much out of harm's way as possible, and warn my neighbours about its appearance in the neighbourhood and its disposal by me. I am aware that this is no comfort for my neighbours, nor any protection, but we are living in the midst of death, trying to grope our way to Truth. Perhaps it is as well that we are beset with danger at every point in our life; for , in spite of our knowledge of the danger and of our precarious existence, our indifference to the Source of all life is excelled only by our amazing arrogance.

I am not satisfied with the answer given to the sannyasi. His letter, which is written in Hindi, shows that my correspondent is himself a fellow seeker after Truth. Hence only have I felt the call to answer his query in public. My own position is pitiable. My intellect rebels against the destruction of any life in any shape whatsoever. But my heart is not strong enough to befriend those creatures which experience has shown are destructive. The language of convincing confidence, which comes form actual experience, fails me, and it will continue to be so, so long as I am cowardly enough to fear snakes, tigers and the like. I have entered upon the reply with the greatest diffidence. But I felt that it would be wrong not to declare my belief for fear of losing caste and being regarded as a dangerous animal myself. I was once so regarded by friends in South Africa. We were all sitting at a table, and discussion turned upon the very topic I have here discussed. They were English missionary friends. They did not mind my views about transmigration, cow-protection, vegetarianism, though they all appeared to be very crude to them. But they could not help

betraying their disgust, which was written in their faces, when I said that I would not, if God gave me the courage, kill a snake,[1] even if I knew that not to kill would be certain death for me. Disgust was hidden by the suppressed laughter which accompanied, "O! You are a dangerous man then!"

Young India, 7-7-1927

182. LETTER TO B. F. BHARUCHA

[After *July 7, 1927*][2]

I have your letters. I shall now reply to them as far as I can; but for a completely satisfactory reply you must run down here, as you usually do. Take it that the replies I give are for your benefit only. If, however, you wire me asking for my permision to publish my replies, I am not going to decline it; just the same I should like to say that you have committed a blunder in publishing any last letter[3] . I had not written either to disturb the satyagrahis or to check them, but merely for information and as a warning to you. When you solicited my permission, I thought you approved the substance of my letter and that you intended to stop the struggle and therefore you wanted to make use of my letter. Instead, you did just the opposite. If you had not understood my reply or if you did not approve of it there was absolutely no need to communicate it to the satyagrahis. I cannot understand how and why a rift was created among them. But it is no use crying over spilt milk.

Now that's all over. But I must say this : It is your duty and of other friends who regard the Nagpur struggle as a satyagraha to continue it. If you must have the sanction of the Congress, you must strongly refute my views and obtain its sanction. And know that I am not going to take it amiss if you do so. And if you obtain the sanction of the Congress I shall not be sorry; instead, I shall congratulate you. But let me strike a note of caution that before you do anything, make sure that you have correctly understood my views. The answers to your other questions are as follows :

1. It was not my duty to offer unsolicited criticism of the Nagpur satyagraha.

[1] *Vide* also "Satyagraha in South Africa", 22-11-1925.

[2] The source has this letter after the entries for July 7, 1927.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to B. F. Bharucha", before 2-7-1927.

2. I did not think it proper to say anything beyond refuting what Awari[1] had written about my approval.

3. I do not understand on what matter I should have consulted Bhai Awari.

4. How do you hold me responsible for the resolutions that came up in the All-India Congress Committee? I had nothing to do with them. I do happen to be a member of the Working Committee, but my condition is that my presence should not be expected in any committee. If you ask me why I should agree to be on the Committee when I attend none of its meetings I must admit I have no defence or if I have any the President would be able to put it forward.

5. Now you will know that I had no hand in appointing Vallabhbhai; in fact the latter had told me that he had no idea of it. He could not disregard the Committee's insistence. Do you not yourself claim as much as Vallabhbhai does to understand my principles? But if I am to decide whose claim is stronger I can do so only at the time of my death, because how can I tell right today to what extent Vallabhbhai or you will be able to follow my ideas at some critical moment? But assuming that I myself were present at the Committee [meeting] and were against [the use of] arms, I would nevertheless find no inconsistency if I went to Nagpur at the Committee's insistence. I would go, explain my ideas and after having known the facts, make a report. If someone can convince me that resorting to arms can come within the scope of satyagraha should I not let him do so? How can one pronounce judgment without knowing the facts? Then if you would ask me why I wrote that letter to you, let me tell you that it is a common practice for friends to exchange ideas, that it is only rational to be willing to modify one's own ideas in the process, if possible. For instance today I do believe that God exists but I do not refuse to listen to the agnostics.

7. Won't you now agree that the answer to your seventh question is included in my answer to your sixth[2]? If you do not, then let me know to that I shall find time and answer it again.

8. I think this too is covered by my answers to the earlier questions.

9. When you say that the calm atmosphere necessary for satyagraha is not there, you make an observation applying to the

[1] Manchersha Awari

[2] Answer to Question 6 is missing.

But there are a number of other conditions for satyagraha and when I talked of the general atmosphere in the country, you sought to limit your view to the local atmosphere. Here again you misunderstand my article[1].

10. If I tell the Congress President who has proffered help that a certain satyagraha is no satyagraha, although you are associated with it, what is there to be embarrassed about? Certainly you are no stranger to the well-known dictum : "There are as many ideas as there are heads."

11. I have a number of other ideas which the [Congress] President, Patel, Bharucha, Mahadev and Ba do not know and even I myself do not know. Do not therefore be unhappy when you come across some of my hitherto unknown ideas. And whatever regrets I felt on account of your support, I withdraw so that I may relieve you of yours.

12. I do want swaraj.

13. There is absolute need of self-protection.

14. For that my weapon is satyagraha. Because I realized the futility of weapons fashioned out of such gross material as wood, iron, electricity, etc., I invented the invisible substance of satyagraha and sought refuge in it. But that does not mean that everyone should have recourse to the same invisible weapon. Others may well obtain swaraj and defend it with arms.

In my scheme of swaraj there is a place for such weapons too, but it is of no use to me, as it cannot go with satyagraha.15. I think the answer to this question is covered by my answer to the fourteenth question.

16. The answer to this question too is practically covered by my answer to the fourteenth but, for the sake of clarity, I would say that those who do not understand satyagraha or in spite of their understanding it cannot digest it, will definitely take up material weapons and they have a right to do so. The State will have to provide training for it.

You ask to be excused for your long article. Now this is violence like the Western practice of deliberately committing an offence and then seeking to get out of it by formal apology. If you must apologize for writing a long letter, why write one at all? But you wrote it all the same and also apologized. We are at present under Western

[1] *Vide* "Nagpur Satyagraha", 19-5-1927.

domination. Submitting to your violence, therefore, I forgive you because my satyagraha is none the worse for it. If you feel sorry you will not be excused; not only that but I shall have to launch satyagraha against you. If you can convey my message to Awari, send him word to eat, drink and be merry. His going to the jail has not pained me in the least. I regard him as a man of courage. But I also know that he is immature. There is no limit to his goodness as to his stubbornness. I put up with his lack of understanding and his haughtiness and praise his goodness, his courage and his patriotism.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

183. SPEECH TO ADI KARNATAKA BOYS, BANGALORE [1]

Before *July 8, 1927*

The students of the Bangalore State Hostel for *Adi Karnataka* Boys were brought over the other day to Kumara Park by Sjt. Shankarnarayan Rao . . . [Gandhiji was told :] "We have 145 boys now, but propose to take in more by cutting down Re. 1 monthly that is given them as pocket money. But the boys are opposed to the proposal." . . . Gandhiji who was requested to address a few words of advice immediately laid his finger thereon and said :

I was distressed, my boys, to find that you were forgetting your simple habits, and were reluctant to part with your pocket money for the sake of your brethren. I assure you that my father gave me no pocket money, and in no other part of India boys of the middle class are treated like you. But the State does not house and feed and educate you in order that you may learn idleness and forget simplicity and self-help. You must learn to wash your own clothes, cook your own food, and do all your work yourselves. And may I tell you? As I look at you I feel as though you were all foreigners. Can you tell me why?

The best amongst the students immediately answered : "Because we are wearing foreign cloth."

That is very good. Now there is no reason why you should not be wearing khadi, every one of you. I tell you I could give you for one-fourth the price much cleaner caps than you are wearing now. The circumstance that your superiors or your teachers do not wear khadi need not deter you. You will not drink liquor, or eat beef or

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

carrion, because your parents or other *Adi Karnatakas* do so. You will on the contrary give up all these things, and insist on your Superintendent providing you with khadi clothes, telling him that in case they are dear you would gladly curtail part of your cloth rations. You must know that there in the country millions of children who do not get the education that you get, who do not get not only the pocket money you get, but not even enough food that your pocket money could buy them. I want you for their sake to wear khadi and to learn to spin. Go to the Exhibition and see what it has to teach you.

Young India, 14-7-1927

184. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 8, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letters. There seems to be one missing still. Absence of further telegraphic news from you I take to mean good news.

Do stay as long as you wish and certainly till you are quite restored to health. Health must be kept.

With love,

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 5246. Courtesy : Mirabehn

185. SPEECH AT KHADI EXHIBITION, BANGALORE [1]

July 8, 1927

Distribution of prizes over, amidst an impressive silence, Mahatmaji spoke as follows :

FRIENDS,

Perhaps the best demonstration that you can all give of your interest in these proceedings is as soon as this function is over for you to proceed to the Exhibition Court and empty the stalls. Rajagopalachari read to you the figures of six days' sale with some degree of pride and satisfaction. I must confess to you that when I think of your own capacity, eight thousand rupees' purchase brings no satisfaction whatsoever to me. When in my imagination I picture to myself so many shops, cloth shops in Bangalore and when I look at

[1] At its closing ceremony; the Exhibition began on July 3.

the dresses that most men and women in Bangalore wear, eight thousand rupees seem to me be a mere fleabite. But khadi workers know their difficulties. They realize every moment of the progress of this movement how uphill the task is and so when compared to their experience of khadi exhibitions elsewhere, they find a little rise in the sale barometer, they derive satisfaction. Such really is the kind of satisfaction that Rajagopalachari has derived. But I felt it would be wrong on my part if I did not draw the attention of you all who are living in this beautiful land to the work that lies before you, if you will do it.

Ours is not a city civilization and if there are any dreamers who think that some day or other we shall implant on our soil the city civilization of the West, being a dreamer of a type myself, I warn the dreamers against the slightest hope in our own generation and for some generations at least to come of such dreams being realized. Just think for one moment what our country is : 700,000 villages, in a vast continent, 1,900 miles long, 1,500 miles broad, and these villages even according to Western pandits handed down to us from times immemorial. America is a new continent. They have millions of acres of land lying absolutely fallow and a sparse population. There were no villages when the people from old England went to America, when Columbus went to America, not of the type you find here, and they brought into being a new civilization. It may be that it is the most perfect of its kind for that soil, but what is good for the virgin soil of America need not, cannot, in my opinion is not, good for this ancient soil, watered by its mighty rivers, protected by the highest mountain peaks, and inhabited by people, the most conservative on the face of the globe, having traditions of their own, habits and customs which cannot be eradicated on the spur of the moment. Then I say that if you think that you will import the city civilization from the West and eradicate your villages you can do so on one condition, the condition of Chengizkhan, fabled in history. I do not know what Chengizkhan did or did not do. But if history gives [the truth] about him then I know that before you can implant the civilization from America onto this soil you will require at least several hundred Chengizkhans who will mercilessly kill off the villagers, pick out the sturdiest men and women whom these Chengizkhans can bend to their iron brutal will and use the human species as if they were so many brutes and beasts, then indeed such a dream can be realized. But if you want to keep your villages intact, if you want to assimilate the best that we may

learn from the West, then indeed here is work enough for you, to men and women in Bangalore and Mysore and Karnataka, the Southern Peninsula and the few who have come from the North also.

I do not know whether you have been touched as I have been by the sight of these prize-winners who do not know the distinctions between Brahmin and non-Brahmin, Hindus and Mussalmans, rich and poor. They have also one thing in common, namely, the poverty of this land and those who belong to rich families have cast in their lot with those who are the poorest in front of us. I do not know whether you take the same interest, whether you have the same knowledge that you have of racing language. If in this assembly representing the poorest of India, if in spite of these you had prize-winners from the football ground, racing ground or the cricket field, I know what some of you will feel, I know how enthusiastic you will feel. But I do not know that you understand the language of spinners and carders. I do not know whether in spite of your having gone to the Exhibition you really understand the hidden meaning of these processes. If you do, then I know that you will have the same feeling that is welling up in my breast at this moment, when I feel impelled to speak out my mind to you in spite of my weak health.

At this stage Mahatmaji was visibly moved and there were tears in his eyes. He paused for a few minutes . . .

I pray to God that He may give you strength and wisdom to understand the meaning of this Exhibition and this demonstration.

I have not many more words to say and you will forgive me if you find me breaking down in the midst of my delivery of the message to you. I am really too full of this thing and it is difficult in spite of the ability I too possess to control myself and to hide my feelings and speak to you purely the common language of reason. But sometimes emotion and sentiments overpower me and I wish God gave me the power that I daily yearn for to open out my heart to you so that can read not the language that tongue can speak but the language that the heart can speak. May God bless you and may God bless the prize-winners and may He bless this function. I thank you all for attending.

The Hindu, 9-7-1927

186. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 9, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter after the wire. You must have received my usual weekly letter. I sent also a postcard to Wardha but that was merely to tell you that I had sent the main letter to Sabarmati. I am glad you decided to stay on and to get the doctor's report. If we knew all the laws of nature or having known, had the power to obey them in thought, word and deed, we would be God Himself and not need to do anything at all. As it is, we hardly know the laws and have little power to obey them. Hence disease and all its effects. It is, therefore, enough for us to realize that every illness is but a breach of some unknown law of nature and to strive to know the laws and pray for power to obey. Heart prayer, therefore, whilst we are ill, is both work and medicine.

I went through another day's strain yesterday and stood it extremely well, better even than last Sunday. I am in no hurry to have your Hindi letters.

With love,

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 5247. Courtesy : Mirabehn

187. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

July 9, 1927

MY DEAR MALKANI,

Your letter. A broken bottle may somehow be held together but can it ever regain the quality of unbreakability that might have been ascribed to it by its owner? I have not yet got over the shock of your fall.[1] You do not know how I have sworn by you. You were among the very few of my unbreakables.

But I must bury the past. I shall try. Whether you should return to the Mahavidyalaya or not I do not know. Let Kripalani judge. The blow was so stunning that I did not think it fit to write to Kripalani or Nanabhai[2] nor have they said anything to me.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to N. R. Malkani", 26-6-1927.

[2] Nrisinhaprasad (Nanabhai) Kalidas Bhatt who was at the time the *Kulanayak* (Vice-Chancellor) of the Gujarat Vidyapith

But it is quite clear that you may not now leave the Sind show without ample notice to Thadani. Your repentance is good and proper. Nothing however need be done in haste now. Please keep yourself in touch with me. Discuss your repentance with your wife and mother-in-law. Let them too realize what the return means.

I am here for some time yet.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 876

188. SPEECH AT AMATEUR DRAMATIC ASSOCIATION, MYSORE [1]

[*July 9, 1927*][2]

The week began with Gandhiji's attendance at the special dramatic performance—"Kabir'—organized by the Amateur Dramatic Association of Pandit Taranath. . . . The whole idea was to popularize Hindi and khadi. Whilst, therefore, Gandhiji summed up his criticism in just one phrase,—"Kabir in a modernized form",—he paid to all concerned a tribute of praise which was well deserved. He thanked them for the threefold pleasure of "having given to the self-appointed representative of *Daridranarayana* a purse not to be counted", of listening in South India to "Hindi exquisitely pronounced and rendered" and of seeing the majority of actors dressed in khadi, and said :

The actors have realized the pain I feel when I do not see a single countryman of mine in khadi, be he a prince or a peasant, a lawyer, a doctor or a business man, be the person a man or woman, belonging to the highest or the lowest strata of society. I am hoping for a day when all will follow this common dharma of our motherland, and I hope that what has been acted will be translated into life by the actors and be a permanent part of them and us. I assure you that among the pleasant recollections that I shall carry with me, if God permits me to leave Karnataka alive, the memory of this evening will not be the least pleasant.

Young India, 21-7-1927

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] According to Mahadev Desai's Diary

189. TWO SCALES

Writing about a girl, who had been married by her thoughtless parents while she was still a child and had never come to know her husband, and who had later become "a widow", I had expressed the view that I would not regard her as married at all, and that, apart from the question whether she should be regarded as married or not, it was the duty of her parents to get her married again.

Reading about this view in newspapers, a gentleman has written a long letter to me in Hindi to the following effect :

The reasons which you advance to justify the remarriage of child widows will also apply to other widows. Would you, then, encourage all widows to remarry? I would urge that we should prohibit even widowers from remarrying and should not in any case permit widows to remarry.

Men have committed through the ages a great many sins with the help of arguments such as these. I have come across meat-eaters who argue that, since man is obliged to eat meat in the region of the North Pole where the land is snow-bound all through the year, it is not sinful to eat meat in this country too, despite the heat here.

We easily find arguments to justify sinful practices. Widowers will not refrain from remarrying, but under cover of the argument that they should, we are urged to withhold justice from widows. Those who have made us unfit for swaraj now tell us: "You will get swaraj when you are fit for it." We who have suppressed and degraded the untouchables say : "Let reform themselves and then mix with us."

Like a dishonest Vania, men keep two scales, one for buying and another for selling things with. They feel their own weaknesses, huge as hills, to be as small as mustard seed and regard the weaknesses of others, small like grains, to be as big as hills.

If men use reason, they will see that they have no right to suppress widows. Enforced widowhood is not virtue but sin. It covers up a disease which breaks out with the opportunity for contact with a man. If a grown-up woman who has become a widow does not even feel the desire to remarry, she deserves to be revered by the whole world, she is a pillar of dharma. But one who wishes to remarry and refrains from doing so out of fear of society or is restrained by law, has already remarried in thought. She deserves not reverence but

compassion and should be free to remarry. In former times she was free. Following custom slavishly, so-called high-caste Hindus turned this voluntary dharma into a law and introduced coercion in dharma.

Justice required that, so long as widowers have the right to remarry, widows too should have it. Certain restrictions are necessary for the protection of society, but they should be the same for both men and women and should command the willing consent of all thinking women as of all thinking men.

We should not forget the difference between child-widows and other widows. It is the duty of parents and of society to get the former married again, but they have no such duty towards other widows. In their case, all that is necessary is to remove the present restraint enforced by custom or law. In other words, if such widows wish to remarry they should be free to do so.

The only restraint over the remarriage of grown-up widowers and widows can be that exercised by public opinion. That public opinion is now flowing in the opposite direction. Where, however, respect for dharma, discipline and self-control is widespread, very few men and women will violate them. As things are, people who respect them are exceptions rather than the rule. A rich old man of sixty feels no shame in marrying a girl of ten or twelve, the marriage being the third in his life, and society tolerates this. When on the other hand, a helpless widow of twenty wishes to remarry because she cannot observe self-control, despite her efforts, she is despised by society. This is not dharma but *adharma* [1].

It is useless and irrelevant to point to immorality and like evils prevailing in other countries as an argument against the removal of this coercion, this *adharma*. Even if all widows, from child-widows to widows of sixty, were as pure as the immaculate Sita, I would say that if any of them wanted to remarry nobody had the right to stop them from doing so. Society may plead with them with love, but it has no right to restrain them by force.

If we apply to others the yardstick which we use for ourselves, the world would be freed of the threefold suffering and dharma would prevail once again.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-7-1927

[1] The opposite of dharma

190. A LETTER

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 10, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for sending the copies of resolutions passed at the public meeting of the Mussalmans of the Ambala city on the first instant. In your letter you have specially invited my attention to Resolution No. 5 and requested immediate action. Perhaps you are unaware that I have recently gone through a very serious illness and that I am still lying on a convalescent bed and that I am under medical orders not to undertake much activity. I read no North Indian newspapers at all. The only paper I may be said to read is *The Hindu* of Madras, and I cast an occasional glance at a Bombay English daily. This gives me no information about what is in the Hindu papers. I have seen in these papers no offensive reference to the Prophet or Islam or the Muslims. If you have Press cuttings containing the references complained of in Resolution No. 5, I would thank you to send them if only as a loan if necessary. I shall undertake to study them and return them after perusal. I will certainly give my opinion upon them. So far as the judgment[1] in the *Rangila Rasul*[2] case is concerned, you will permit me to say that the whole of the agitation in respect of it is unfortunate and unjustified. I do not seek to justify the judgment but all that is said against Justice Dilip Singh is in my opinion highly improper. If he has misread the law, as he well might have, the remedy is not a condemnation of the Judge as a man but the true remedy is to appeal against the judgment or if the law itself is defective to agitate for its amendment.

I am no defender of the author of *Rangila Rasul*. It may be a new thing to you. I had the opportunity of reading that pamphlet some years ago, and I commented upon it very severely in the columns of *Young India*[3] . Probably you do not know this fact. You may not also know that the author of *Rangila Rasul* is not the only misguided mischief-maker. I have seen Muslim writings just as offensive as *Rangila Rasul*. So far as I am aware there is nothing to choose between this class of writers, whether Hindu or Mussalman, and both are equally worthy of condemnation. But the remedy against this

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. Abdul Gani", 11-8-1927.

[2] An Urdu pamphlet

[3] *Vide* "Notes", 10-7-1924 and "Notes", 10-7-1924.

evil, so far as I am concerned, is not through a court of law, certainly not through violence, but through cultivation of healthy Hindi-Muslim opinioin which will make the publication of sheets inflaming religious passions against one another an impossibility. But I am aware that my views are just now out of fashion. I, therefore, hold my silence so far as it is possible to do so. I could not ignore your letter, and delicate though my health is, I felt that I should send you a fairly full reply which I have done as lover of, and believer in, Hindu-Muslim unity and as your friend and brother if it is possible for you so to regard me. I have not written this letter for publication but it is written for you to share it with those who may wish to know my opinion and who desire to promote Hindu-Muslim unity. I have no desire to be drawn into a newspaper controversy or even into a profitless discussion by correspondence. If my letter makes no appeal to your reason I would urge you to dismiss it from your mind and throw it into the waste paper basket. For your information I may tell you that I am no longer a Bar-at-Law. I am a poor scavenger and spinner.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 12384

191. LETTER TO J. B. KRIPALANI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 10, 1927

MY DEAR PROFESSOR,

I sent you a telegram yesterday in reply to your letter to Mahadev. I have purposely refrained hitherto from writing to you anything about Malkani. He wrote to me announcing his resignation.[1] It very nearly broke me to pieces. For, I regarded Malkani to be one of my unbreakables.[2] What would happen to the Vidyapith did not affect me but that a man had fallen shook me to the marrow. It is good that he has repented but you will be entirely justified in not taking him back. For his part, it would be another wrong if he felt Thadani as unceremoniously as he left us. His wanting to be taken

[1] *Vide* "Letter to N. R. Malkani", 26-6-1927.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to N. R. Malkani", 9-7-1927.

back, therefore, after three months or earlier if Thadani can spare him appears to me quite justified. That if he is truly repentant he must not remain at the Sind College permanently, I have no doubt. Nor must he feel hurt if he cannot be accepted by you. You will, therefore, come to a decision upon his solely from the point of view of the Mahavidyalaya. And if you think that the other professors would rather not have him I would not press for his reinstatement. It would embarrass him and it would put out the dissenting professors. If you therefore decide to have him, there should be a wholehearted unanimity.

Yes. I have been getting some information about the new Vinayamandir. I was delighted to find so good an attendance. I did not expect that response. I hope that it would be a progressive success and that those who are responsible for its creation would never desert it, whether it continues to draw a large number of students or whether it declines.

I wish you would have a radical operation for piles if Dr. Dalal is now ready.

Kikibehn continues to favour me with a little letter from time to time. You are not to expect me there before October as far as I can judge at present.

Yours sincerely,

ACHARYA KRIPALANI
GUJARAT VIDYAPITH

From a photostat : S.N. 12603

192. SPEECH AT ALL-KARNATAKA HINDI CONFERENCE, BANGALORE [1]

July 10, 1927

The All-Karnataka Hindi Sammelan held its session this afternoon at the Majestic Theatre before a vast concourse of people. . . . At about 3 p.m. Mahatmaji arrived and conducted the proceedingss of the day. . . . He then distributed the diplomas to the successful candidates at the last Hindi examination, one of whom was a lady who had obtained a I Class. After distribution of prizes Mahatmaji, before speaking in Hindi, wanted to know how many would like the speech to be in English. The audience to a man raised their hands and Mahatmaji smiling next asked them by the same means to signify whether they wanted Kanarese translation to which also there was assent even from the ladies' gallery. He then spoke in Hindi and his speech was translated to the audience by Mr. Gangadharrao Deshpande. After dealing with the usefulness of the movement, Mahatmaji [said :][2]

India is divided into two parts today, and the portion north of the Vindhya has no heart relations with the southern portions. It is the duty of the South to learn the language of the North which is far larger. When I find it easy to travel from Sind to Bengal with the little bit of my knowledge of Hindi, it is impossible in these parts to get along without English. Unless you learn Hindi, you will not break through the Vindhya that stands between the South and the North. I do not want you to ignore your vernaculars—you may be as proud of them as I am of mine—but if we would be Indians and not merely Gujaratis, Bengalis, Tamilians or Karnatakas, we ought to learn Hindi. It is not difficult to learn. Those who have learnt it have not taken more than six months studying two hours a week. I appeal to you to devote that brief period to the service of the motherland.

Different from the question of a lingua franca is that of a common script. Whereas knowledge of Hindi enables you to come in contact with people of the North and send out your hearts to them, adoption on your part of Devanagari as the script for your vernaculars enables the people in the North to come in close contact with you.

Now is the question of funds. I am glad that South India has begun to contribute towards the expenses of the Prachar. But a yearly

[1] This was the first All-Karnataka Hindi Conference. It began on July 9 and ended on July 10. Gandhiji attended this Conference on the last day.

[2] This paragraph has been taken from *The Hindu*, 12-7-1927.

expenditure of Rs. 10,000 is necessary for the work, and I appeal to you to find that amount from South India.

Young India, 21-7-1927

193. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*July 10, 1927*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. You will follow the doctor's directions accurately. There need be no hurry about Wardha. You can do your Hindi just as well there. No Wardha until you feel quite free and secure. Dr. Harilal Desai is quite a sound man and very careful.

Do not strain yourself to write to me in Hindi. By all means do, whenever you feel like it. You will use the mosquito net without any hesitation. Do not be in a hurry to move about quickly.

I had another meeting today, this time for Hindi. I stood it quite well.

With love,

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 5245. Courtesy : Mirabehn

194. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 11, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

No letter from you today but there is your welcome telegram which is more than a letter because it gives me news todate. What an important part regularity of bowels plays in one's system? It is clear too that frequent fasting for purely health reasons is a desirable thing. But I do not need to emphasize the point with you.

My address up to 16th August is Bangalore. I shall be going out now and again for a day or two. But Bangalore is to be headquarters till the 16th August.

With love,

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 5248. Courtesy : Mirabehn

[1] From the reference in the last paragraph to Hindi conference, *vide* the preceding item.

195. LETTER TO GOPALRAO

Silence Day, July 11, 1927

Your letter. You will, of course, have to consider what Kakasaheb says.

You want to enjoy the full bliss of *brahmacharya* immediately but this cannot be done. If you are content with forgoing marriage then do not marry. If not, make arrangements for getting married. You are no stranger to the difference between contentment and bliss.

The idea of merging into each other if you find an ideal wife is itself a great illusion. Many have been deluded by it and it will be no wonder if you too are lost. If you will escape it till the end, that would be a matter for wonder.

Having seen us all married people, if you are convinced that it is not worth while following suit—and convinced you ought to be—give up for the present the desire to taste the joy of *brahmacharya* and ponder over the joylessness of marriage, if you have observed it. Continue to think on this line—'God alone knows what bliss there is to be enjoyed in *brahmacharya*, but because there is no joy in marriage, I am not going to marry at all.'

Here is an argument on a lower level :

'I would not say I don't want to marry. Indeed, under certain circumstances I may marry. But today my country is in bondage; plight of the women is miserable. As I am engaged in this work, how can I marry? I must take this vow that until we attain the swaraj of my conception, I shall not marry even if Rambha[1] were to solicit me.' Try to think in this way if you can. Formulate your definition of swaraj. I suggest a simple one : 'The day when the spinning-wheel spreads throughout India and there is complete boycott of foreign cloth.' If you find this hard to work upon, write out one you like and vow not to marry until that is attained and put up a copy in your room where everyone can see it. Send one to Kakasaheb and one to me.

If you can do neither try this thought. 'I do have a desire to marry and it cannot be suppressed. But I will not marry a girl of my caste as I would not marry my own sister. I will insist on breaking the barriers of caste. The girl must know Sanskrit, Marathi, Hindi and Gujarati; she should not hanker after money; if her parents are alive

[1] A celestial nymph

we must have their consent. She must have absolute love of khadi; she must appreciate and have faith in my other ideals and love the untouchables, be strong of body and prepared to live in some remote village and be willing to honour the well-known discipline of *brahmacharya* in marriage.' If you cannot do even this, know that you will not be able to observe *brahmacharya* and therefore marry at the first opportunity. If you resolve to observe the above discipline, write down the vow and proceed as before.

But then what I have suggested to you is only the way of worshipping a Deity conceived with form and attributes. Observance of *brahmacharya* for the sake of attaining inviolate *brahmacharya* is like worshipping One without attributes. It is difficult for all of us.

I have pointed out to you the path that I myself took. I have just been tasting a droplet of the subtle bliss of *brahmacharya* from out of its physical advantages. My intellect has none the less realized its bliss but you should know all the same that I have not actually experienced it.

If anyone can truly describe what that bliss is, Vinoba, Surendranath and others, who, I believe, observe inviolate *brahmacharya*, may perhaps be able to. I could give you only a partial account of the [bliss of] *brahmacharya* which knows what sense-pleasures and marriage mean. Only the perfect can give a perfect account.

It is possible that you will not be satisfied by this too. If you would not find here the answer to your question you will now understand why it is so. Neither Kakasaheb nor I, in fact no one who has known married life, is competent to answer your question from personal experience. For these same reasons we, being embodied, are able to describe only partially the joy of *moksha*. Since there is no speech without a body, *moksha* is and will ever remain indescribable. Likewise, only an inviolate *brahmachari* can describe the path of pure *brahmacharya* or we should plod on in life, keeping in view the descriptions given by the Shastras.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

196. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

BANGALORE,
Monday, July 11, 1927

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL,

I got your postcard. God provides man with a means to learn from his fall. You two have it through the birth of a son, but Moti, if she wills, can so use it as to fulfil the true end of her life. You are, moreover, a teacher by vocation. I shall wait and see how you bring up the child born to you. Let Moti read this.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Preserve this postcard.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 12141

197. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 12, 1927

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

In the abstract, there can be no doubt that you have a right to wear whatever you like and to see or be seen by any friends you like. But when it comes to reducing an abstract right to concrete practice, innumerable things present themselves for consideration. And my advice is that in everything you do, you should possess confidence enough to bear down all opposition and to be able to convince everybody around you of the justice of your action. Do you reason with mother with the same frankness that you show in your letters to me? But let me give a concrete suggestion. Do you permit me to discuss your letter with both father and mother? Can I send them your last letter? I destroy all your letters after replying. The last one I am preserving till I receive your answer. From what I know of them and the manner in which they have brought up their children, it seems to me that they are most considerate, liberal-minded parents and will not interfere with the independence of their grown-up children. Your recent letters have therefore been a surprise to me. I therefore say

nothing further just now and await your reply.

Meanwhile I ask you not to worry about things over which you may have no control. If you cannot have your way about your dress or choice of friends or dealings with them, know that there are many in the same condition in which you are, and that there is no person on this earth who has really got the liberty to do what he or she likes. Some restraint on liberty is demoralizing and some is uplifting. No restraint is demoralizing which one submits to, not out of fear, selfishness or the like, but out of consideration for, or affection for others. I cannot conceive your yielding to fear under any circumstance whatsoever.

I heard some very fine music yesterday. It went on for full one hour whilst I was spinning. I thought of your voice the whole of that time, and fine as both were yesterday, I observed that yours was in no way inferior, and to me, it even appeared to be superior. But that may be due to my partiality for you. Anyway you have a voice that would certainly sing away others' cares. Invoke it for dispelling your own.

With love,

BAPU

MISS RAIHANA TYABJI
SOUTHWOOD
MUSSOORIE
U.P.

From a photostat : S.N. 9604

198. LETTER TO J. W. PETAVEL

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 12, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have carefully gone through the nine sides of your bank-note-size paper and I am not only none the wiser for it, but it has made confusion worse confounded. I do not yet know what Belgium and Switzerland are doing. I never told you[1] that the two colonies that I established in South Africa have failed. On the contrary, they succeeded as far as they went. I simply gave you the information in order to tell you that because those colonies succeeded to an extent, I could not draw the large deductions that you did from your untried

[1] *Vide* "Letter to J. W. Petavel", 23-6-1927.

plan.

For the Ashram, you have told me nothing new. And when you tell me that I must present something that will give in an hour what I promise in eight hours, we come to a standstill. I know no scheme that will give 300 millions of people two annas per hour. I have worked out your scheme to the best of my ability and it has failed me. Nor am I in a position to agree with you that it is possible to make something out of the modern craze for accumulation of wealth and destroying time and distance. Where, therefore, you see meeting ground, I see absolutely none. Both your non-co-operation scheme and co-operation scheme appear to me to be unworkable and unintelligible. I cannot therefore give you room in the pages of *Young India*.

The certificates that you have secured from Sir Ashutosh and others make no impression upon me because I have always fought shy of certificates so much so that I destroyed what I used to hold myself. And as I feel that I have got the ability of testing schemes on their own merits, certificates are to me sometimes a hindrance and every time a superfluity.

Before you can draw me to your scheme, two things are necessary. Show we something actually at work, and show me that it is capable of indefinite multiplication and yet producing the same results as I am doing for mine. I am showing my scheme at work in 1,500 villages and I can only wish that it was multiplied so as to reach 700 thousand and still the result will be constant. I want you to bear in mind that in corresponding with me you are corresponding with a practical man who has a horror of chimeras and who will not be dazzled by specious-looking things written or printed on paper.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 14181

199. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day, Ashadh Sud 13 [*July 12, 1927*][1]

SISTERS,

Received your letter.

Manibehn will tell you how many women took part in Exhibition, and what they did. Here it is enough to say that one of them was expert in keeping accounts while some others were equally expert in selling khaddar. They have received silver and gold medals. A blind woman spun exceedingly well at the Exhibition. She was the centre of attraction for all. One of the women was first in spinning fine, strong yarn and won a gold medal. Manibehn upheld the good name of the Ashram. Her carding drew the attention of all.

There was Hindi Sammelan here. Here also one of the women was first. Some of the women here are making very good efforts to learn Hindi.

All this awakening is proceeding beautifully in this State. I have already written to you how some of the women here sing sweet *bhajans* at evening prayers too. On Saturday one of them played the vina for me. She herself composes the *bhajans*. They say she is very skillful in playing the vina.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3657

200. SPEECH TO MYSORE STUDENTS, BANGALORE

[*July 12, 1927*][2]

FRIENDS,

I thank God for being able to speak to you though in a low tone and for enabling me to speak to you in Hindi. You know perhaps that I speak with my friends in Hindi and in own mother tongue Gujarati. I know however that in your schools and colleges and when you meet your friends and students you talk only in English. You have cultivated it as a habit and to me it appears it is a bad habit. I do not

[1] The year is inferred from the reference to the Khadi Exhibition and the Hindi Sammelan held at Bangalore.

[2] From *Young India*, 21-7-1927 and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 13-7-1927

object to your learning Enlgish for the sake of acquiring knowledge or for the sake of earning your livelihood but I object to your giving so much importance to English and giving a low place to your national language, Hindi. I do not think it is right on your part to use in your conversation with your friends and relatives any other language than your national language or your mother tongue. Have love for your own language.

I have to make request to my student friends. In the measure in which you learn English learn the national language and leave the glamour of the foreign tongue. I am grateful to you for this address presented to me in Hindi printed in Devanagari script. In order to serve our *Daridranarayana* in our land you have given me a purse and I am grateful to you all. You have all, in your love, collected so much for me but it is no wonder. Wherever I go I meet such sincere love and service from you students of India. That is your dharma, that is your duty. I ask why would you not help this fund? How much are you spending for your education and how many cities are there in the whole of Hindustan and how much money is being thrown away there? But do you know where those who live in cities get their money from? It is from the villages where there is only sorrow and where *Daridranarayana* lives. The money that you all spend for your education is all coming to you from your villages and you are being educated out of this sorrowful source. Twenty five crores of rupees are going for the evils of the country as drink and can you who live in the cities, can you not give two pies for your poor brothers and sisters in those villages? Let these two pies be your *prayaschitta*[1] . Today, I see you all in foreign clothes and caps. Our sisters there are all in foreign cloth. Do not say they are made in Mysore, do not forget that the yarn is made outside your own country. Let me say this to you t oday. Go to the khadi depots and buy the caps for four annas or five annas and discard these costly caps and buy khadi and wear. That would be a service truly rendered.

Today we have lost the real significance of the term *vidyarthi*[2] . In ancient days when all knew its meaning it stood for *brahmacharis* and *brahmacharinis* and it stood for *Brahmajnanam*[3] . It stood for

[1] Expiation or atonement
[2] Student
[3] Knowledge of the Ultimate

mukti[1] , our own *mukti*, the *mukti* or liberty for the country, for the liberty of the individual. Today I ask you how many of you are true *brahmacharis* and *brahmacharinis*? Do you know anything about the controlling of the senses and training of the mind in the true path of *bhakti* and service? Do you know what our forefathers were doing? If you really know the duties of true *brahmacharis*, if you are really *vidyarthis* in the real sense of the term, then there would not be the suffering in our land that we now see. Our ancient rishis[2] , pious maulvis[3] and Christians have left us rich and precious treasures, to enjoy them and to become useful to others, whereby we must think of God every moment of our living life. We must leave off our coarse desires if we desire true *mukti*. I do not say that in youth you must all leave your amusements and pleasures and practise yoga, but I want that you recognize your duties, and do them as becomes real students and pupils of *Brahmajnanam*. The youths of today were not as the *brahmacharis* of old in health, they visit theatres, drink and eat wrong things and take pride in giving enjoyment to the senses. If your bodies are not strong your minds would also be affected and when your minds are affected you cannot have a knowledge of God and your duty. You cannot have the will power to control yourself, you lose your vigour and energy and you become weak and slow. I have heard that some students take coffee as many as seven or eight times a day. I want my young friends to remember I was also a student once. I ask them to answer me why they should not drink pure water or milk when they are thirsty and eat food when they are hungry? Why should they go on poisoning their bodies with all sorts of things? I hope you will see the true significance of what I say to you today. Think of the ideal of *brahmacharya*, ponder over it in your wisdom and act upon it with conviction. In the *Bhagavad Gita* emphasis is laid on sacrifice; in the Koran and in the Bible it is the same; he who does not make any sacrifice is not really a man. Think of this term sacrifice and examine it in the present state of our country. I pray to God that He will give you strength and wisdom to understand the word sacrifice and make sacrifice yourselves. I pray to God that He may give you the wisdom to think of the poor of the country in the villages far away from the cities and towns that you are building in their blood and the sacrifice

[1] Freedom from phenomenal existence
[2] Sages
[3] Muslim scholars

of their lives, on their miseries and the miseries of their families and children. Think of God for half an hour every day, spinning the charkha and weaving your cloth. Think of all these when you are thinking of God every day for half an hour. May He give you the wisdom to know how you can save the poor of your land. This is all I have to say to you today.

The Hindu, 13-7-1927

201. SPEECH AT INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE, BANGALORE

[*July 12, 1927*][1]

I was wondering where do I come in? There is no place here for a rustic like me who has to stand speechless in awe and wonderment. I am not in a mood to say much. All I can say is that all these huge laboratories and electrical apparatus you see here are due to the labour—unwilling and forced—of millions. For Tata's thirty lakhs did not come from outside, nor does the Mysore contribution come from anywhere else but this *begar*[2] world. If we were to meet the villagers and to explain to them how we are utilizing their money on buildings and plants which will never benefit them, but might perhaps benefit their posterity, they will not understand it. They will turn a cold shoulder. But we never take them into our confidence, we take it as a matter of right, and forge that the rule of "no taxation without representation" applies to them too. If you will really apply it to them, and realize your responsibility to render them an account, you will see that there is another side to all these appointments. You will then find not a little but a big corner in your hearts for them, and if you will keep it in a good, nice condition, you will utilize your knowledge for the benefit of the millions on whose labour your education depends. I shall utilize the purse you have given me for *Daridranarayana*. The real *Daridranarayana* even I have not seen, but know only through my imagiation. Even the spinners who will get this money are not the real *Daridranarayana* who live in remote corners of distant villages which have yet to be explored. I was told by your professor that the properties of some of the chemicals will take years of experiments to explore. But who will try to explore these villages? Just as some of the experiments in your laboratories go on

[1] From *The Hindu*, 13-7-1927

[2] Forced labour

for all the twenty four hours, let the big corner in your heart remain perpetually warm for the benefit of the poor millions.

I expect far more from you than from the ordinary man in the street. Don't be satisfied with having given the little you have done, and say, 'We have done what we could, let us now play tennis and billiards.' I tell you, in the billiard room and on the tennis court think of the big debt that is being piled against you from day to day. But beggars cannot be choosers. I thank you for what you have given me. Think of the prayer I have made and translate it into action. Don't be afraid of wearing the cloth the poor women make for you, don't be afraid of your employers showing you the door if you wear khadi. I would like you to be men, and stand up before the world firm in your convictions. Let your zeal for the dumb millions be not stifled in the search for wealth. I tell you, you can devise a far greater wireless instrument, which does not require external research, but internal—and all research will be useless if it is not allied to internal research—which can link your hearts with those of the millions. Unless all the discoveries that you make have the welfare of the poor as the end in view, all your workshops will be really no better than Satan's workshops, as Rajagopalachari said in a joke. Well I have given you enough food for thought, if you are in a reflective mood, as all research students ought to be.

In concluding, he [said that] they must keep the lamp of their love for the motherland and her children always bright, trim, and steady. And as they did that, so they deserved the knowledge and the advantage they were deriving from the Institute.[1]

Young India, 21-7-1927

[1] This paragraph is from *The Hindu*, 13-7-1927.

202. MESSAGE TO "THE SEARCHLIGHT" [1]

July 13, 1927

Those who want a message from me must not be surprised to receive the same message again and again; for, I have nothing new. Let the editor, the proprietor and the staff of *The Searchlight* as also the readers do their quota of work for the millions, that it, let them wear nothing but khadi; let them exclude all foreign cloth from their use; let them give as much as they can towards khadi work; and let them spin at least for half an hour good, even and weavable yarn and make a present of it to the All-India Spinners' Association in the name of and on behalf of *Daridranarayana*. To know whether this message has at least been read by those concerned, I suggest their sending me contribution and telling me whether they have accepted and are acting in accordance with the message. If they do not appreciate the message, let them send me a postcard stating their objections and reasons.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 14182

203. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 13, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

Just as I am about to go to a place, I received your letter and wire. So you are off on Saturday. I note what you say about Gangu. God be with you.

Love,

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 5249. Courtesy : Mirabehn

[1] For its anniversary number of July 15

204. LETTER TO J. Z. HODGE

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 13, 1927

DEAR MR. HODGE,

It was a delight to receive your letter[1] from Edinburgh and to find that my little friends had now become big friends and were getting on quite nicely.

When I receive the papers you refer to from Sir Daniel Hamilton, I will certainly study them with care and let him know my conclusions.

I am making fair progress. Please remember me to Mrs. Hodge.

Yours sincerely,

J. Z. HODGE, ESQ.

C/O NISBES

31, WARRENDER PARK TERRACE

EDINBURGH

From a photostat : S.N. 12509

205. LETTER TO SHAPURJI SAKLATVALA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 13, 1927

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 16th June last through Bharucha. I understand and appreciate the viewpoint elaborated in your letter, and it would give me much pleasure if I can do anything whatsoever to assist you in coming to a settlement with the Tatas.[2] But I know my limitations and I would like you to recognize them. All I can do is to work through Panditji which I am doing.

Yours sincerely,

SHAPURJI SAKLATVALA, ESQ., M.P.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON S.W. 1

From a photostat : S.N. 12532

[1] Dated June 1, 1927. Introducing Sir Daniel Hamilton, the addressee had requested Gandhiji to help him in spreading the co-operative movement in India.

[2] The reference is to "Saklatvala's forced resignation of his post in the Tata firm in London".

206. LETTER TO D. C. BOSE

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 13, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I am ashamed that your letter of 30th June last year has remained undealt with by me throughout all this time. You however had acknowledgments from time to time. I am not disposed to blame my assistants in connection with the delay. Some of it was unavoidable and some could have been avoided but for the letter having been mislaid. I however understand that my reply will not yet be too late.

I should be inclined to agree with the advice received by you from an English friend and quoted at the end of your letter. If there was really no better way, there was certainly nothing wrong in your having written to me. For, part of my public work consists in sharing, where I cannot solve, difficulties such as you have mentioned. I can appreciate all you say about the good qualities of Englishmen and even add to what you have said in your letter. But in spite of the ample food I have received during the past seven years for reflection[1], my opinion of the system not only remains unaltered [but] has received further confirmation. And the Excise Department is among the blackest spots in the system. I could not therefore be reconciled to your being in if I can in any way help you to be out of it. Your letter attracts me to you. I would like to have you in some of the departments of national service which I am more or less controlling. And if you can get some privilege leave, I would like you to overtake me wherever I may be so that I can see you face to face and discuss all the questions you have raised in your letter. I am in Mysore up to the 15th of August and my headquarters will be Bangalore till that time. I expect to be away from time to time from Bangalore, but within the Mysore State and therefore not more than a few hours' journey from Bangalore where the keeper of the house I am staying will direct you.

Meanwhile, I can answer one of your questions straightaway. If you have the real call from within you will be not only right but it will be your duty to resist all the pressure that can be brought to bear upon you for marriage. If you can control your carnal appetites, I

[1] The addressee had written : "The failure of your movement with subsequent Hindu-Muslim tension . . . has no doubt given you sufficient food for reflection."

have no doubt that the obligations which you feel you have towards the members of your family impose the restraint upon you.

If you intend to come and see me, please bear in mind that whilst it will be possible, all other conditions being satisfied, to find enough for the support of your family, you will have to be free to be posted wherever duty calls you and even to move about from place to place, and if you do not know Hindi, you will be expected to learn it.

Yours sincerely,

D. C. BOSE, ESQ.
55, CORNWALLIS STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat : S.N. 12601

207. LETTER TO S. RAMANATHAN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 13, 1927

MY DEAR RAMANATHAN,

Mr. Mahadeva Iyer of Shermadevi Gurukul is here. I never knew that you have anything to do with this Gurukul. But Mr. Mahadeva Iyer tells me that you are vitally interested in it. When V. V. S. Iyer was alive he wrote to me and spoke to me about the inter-dining controversy that was then going on. Mahadeva Iyer has briefly described to me the happenings after Iyer's death. Will you please let me know what connection you have with this Gurukul and what is now wanted by the party which Mahadeva Iyer describes as hostile to him or to the Gurukul?

I hope you have got over your fever.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. RAMANATHAN
ERODE

From a microfilm : S.N. 12930

208. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 13, 1927

DEAR MOTILALJI,

Here is a characteristic letter from "Comrade' Saklatvala. The facsimile of the stamped letter he sends seems to make out a very strong moral claim for him. I do not need to say anything more; for I know that whatever language he uses you will press his claim for all its worth.

I have another letter from Jawaharlal. There is nothing new in it.

Yours sincerely,

PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU
'ANAND BHAWAN'
ALLAHABAD

From a photostat : S.N. 14183

209. LETTER TO S. RAMACHANDRAN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 13, 1927

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRAN,

The accounts I hear concerning you are not at all satisfactory. You have made it difficult for people to talk to you because you become excited and you suspect everybody. Without any permission from the Ashram, you stayed an unduly long time at Banaras and have now proferred an explanation which it is very difficult to justify unless you have received previous permission from the authorities at Banaras. In the circumstances, it seems to me to be useless to keep you any longer at the Ashram. The Ashram must do without you, and, in any case, there is not that demand for the lift[1] which would warrant your being kept at the Ashram.

Although you have parted with your patent rights, if you think that the patent can be worked to better advantage by you, I am quite prepared to advise the return of the patent to you, provided you

[1] The Ramachandran animal power lift, a contrivance devised by the addressee for drawing water from wells with the help of a single male buffalo; *vide* "A Boon to Cultivators", 28-10-1926.

arrange to pay the expenses incurred by the Ashram on your behalf. If you have anything to discuss with me, you are at liberty to come over to wherever I may be for the time being, but, of course,you will find your own expenses. You will not ask the Ashram people to find them.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. S. RAMCHANDRAN
LIFT WORKS
ASHRAM, SABARMATI
(B.B. & C.I.RY.)

From a photos tat: C.W. 11165. Courte sy: Ramdas Chaita nya

210. A LETTER

Ashadh Shukla 14 [*July 13, 1927*][1]

Tulsidas has left nothing unsaid about the greatness of His name. The *Dwadasha mantra,*[2] the *Ashtakshara*[3], etc., bring peace to the victim of infatuation, and one should rely upon whatever *mantra* brings one peace. But for one who has never experienced peace and is in quest of it, Ramanama will certainly prove a *parasmani*[4]. God has been given a thousand names which only means that he can be called by any name and that his qualities are infinite. That is why God is also beyond nomenclature and free from attributes. But for us mortals the support of His name is absolutely essential to fall back upon and in this age even the ignorant and the illiterate can have recourse to an *Ekakshara mantra*[5] in the form of Ramanama. In fact, uttering Ramanama covers the *Ekakshara* and there is no difference between 'Om' and 'Rama'. But the value of reciting His name cannot be established by reasoning, it can only be experienced if one does it with faith.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi : S.N. 12797

[1] The source places this along with the other letters belonging to 1927.
[2] *Om namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya*
[3] *Om namo Narayanaya*
[4] Philosopher's stone
[5] *Om*

211. SPEECH AT MAHILA SAMAJ, BANGALORE [1]

July 13, 1927

Daridranarayana is insatiable and there is room enough in his belly for all the money and the ornaments you can give. The ornaments are your *streedhan* and you have a right to dispose it of as you like. Your real ornaments are your virtues, and you will be doing real service to the poorest of the land by disposing of part of your jewellery.

Young India, 21-7-1927

212. INTERVIEW TO MR. AND MRS. BJERRUM[2]

[Before *July 14, 1927*]

Among the new missionary friends is a Danish couple Mr. and Mrs. Bjerrum . . Gandhiji was at his wheel when the friends came.

MR. BJERRUM : This is a new wheel different from the ones we saw at the Exhibition.

GANDHIJI : Yes, it is a travelling charkha. When you fold it, it looks like a medicine chest, and a medicine chest it is for our poor people.

After giving their pleasant impressions of the Exhibition, Mr. Bjerrum began to talk of the students of his college. "The dress of most of our students is Europeanized," he informed Gandhiji not without some sorrow.

GANDHIJI : It is a great pity that Christianity should be mixed up with foreign dress and foreign ways of eating and drinking.

MRS. BJERRUM : It is indeed. But don't you think a change has already begun?

GANDHIJI : Well, a change in thought is certainly coming over, but not a corresponding change in conduct.

And with this he narrated some of his experiences with the friends of the Y.M.C.A. of Calcutta.

MR. BJERRUM : May we know what form in your opinion missionary work should take if the missionaries are to stay in India?

[GANDHIJI] : Yes. They have to alter their attitude. Today they tell people that there is no salvation for them expcept through the

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"
[2] *ibid.*

Bible and through Christianity. It is customary to decry other religions and to offer their own as the only that can bring deliverance. That attitude should be radically changed. Let them appear before the people as they are, and try to rejoice in seeing Hindus become better Hindus and Mussalmans better Mussalmans. Let them start work at the bottom, let them enter into what is best in their life and offer nothing inconsistent with it. That will make their work far more efficacious, and what they will say and offer to the people not as patrons, but as one of them, not to oblige them but to serve them and to work among them.

MR. BJERRUM : Thank you. We are going to Denmark next year and would like to take some message from you.

[GANDHIJI] : The external is always an expression of the internal, and if the people of Denmark would serve us, let them teach us their life-giving industry of co-operative dairy and cattle-breeding.

Young India, 14-7-1927

213. REFORM OF PINJRAPOLE

It has been my privilege during my convalescence at Bangalore to pay regular visits to the Imperial Animal Husbandry and Dairy Institute, and to take there, what may be called, regular lessons. Mr. William Smith, who is the Imperial Dairy Expert and Head of this Institute, and his assistants have most carefully shown me the working of the Institute and the different departments into which it is divided. I trust I shall make use of the knowledge thus gained in conducting the dairying experiment at the Satyagraha Ashram on behalf of the All-India Cow-protection Association. As a result of several discussions with Mr. Smith I asked him kindly to prepare for me notes on the working of pinjrapoles and on methods of cattle-improvement in our villages, which he very kindly and promptly undertook to do. I am already in possession of two valuable notes. I give below his note on pinjrapoles.

> Some of the existing pinjrapoles with more or less permanent and assured incomes are fairly well managed,and do provide a comfortable refuge for a certain number of cattle which have to be economically useful in their old age. In many of these institutions it is however not an uncommon thing, when trade is bad and subscriptions are slow in coming in, to find cattle being kept in these places in a state of starvation which must mean great suffering to the

animals and which eventually kills them. In cases like this instead of being a refuge for the animals the goshala becomes a cow-killing institution, the method of killing being a cruel death by starvation. In at least six cases have I seen the cattle in goshalas being starved to death. The first thing then to be done with the existing pinjrapoles is to see they do not under any circumstances whatever admit to their shelters a larger number of animals than they can feed properly, house comfortably and take care of until they die a really natural death.

All the larger pinjrapoles with an assured income, and which can command capital, should in my opinion be divided into three departments, the whole being managed by a trained dairy farm manager.

1. The refuge department where old and economically useless cattle excluding buffaloes should be comfortably fed and cared for until they die naturally.

2. A dairy department where all cows sent to the pinjrapole to escape slaughter and capable of breeding and all other cows capable of bearing calves and yielding milk should be fed, housed and milked as a commercial dairy herd with careful milk-recording, and the milk sold to the best advantage. The very best class of stud bulls should be used in this herd and all calves carefully reared, males not good enough for issue as stud bulls to be castrated and those considered good enough for breeding either transferred to the stud department or issued to villages as breeding bulls. All female stock to be reared as milkers and breeders. When the home-bred progeny of this department gets too numerous for the pinjrapole to deal with, they could be sold to reputable Hindu owners on the distinct understanding that they are to be returned to the refuge department of the pinjrapole when too old to work or milk.

3. A stud department where the very best of the right class of breeding bulls should be kept as stud for the use of the breeders in the district. The service of these animals could be given free for all cows passed by the expert manager as suitable for breeding with the pinjrapoles stud animals and careful records of all servings kept. This department might also undertake the castration of all unsuitable animals in the district free of charge.

It is not necessary to take any specific steps to improve the quality of buffaloes. India cannot afford to keep any class or bovine which does not possess dual purpose qualities, i.e., milk in the case of the female and draught in the case of the male. Generally speaking the male buffalo is unsuitable for field or cart work, and consequently unless the males, except those required for stud purposes, are slaughtered at birth, they remain an incubus in the country. The majority of the people in India do not aprove of the the killing of any

kind of animals, and in any case it is not an economic proposition to rear and kill these animals for beef, as the value of this class of meat in India is far below cost of production.

The buffalo exists and increases in India owing to the poor milking quality of the cows, and the aim of all cattle breeding propaganda ought to be so to increase the milk-yielding capacity of all classes of cows, that they will not only provide sufficient milk to rear a strong, healthy calf, but in addition to this give as much milk as pay the cost of their feed. If and when we attain to this standard there will be no need for the buffalo which will be automatically eliminated by economic forces. The existing conditions prevailing in many parts of India today, where a cultivator keeps two or three cows to rear bullocks from and one or two buffaloes to provide milk and ghee for his houshold, cannot continue. It is too costly and there is no reason whatever why the cows now kept for breeding should not in the future rear their calves and provide in addition all the milk and ghee required by the houshold. Our cattle have little or no beef value and we cannot afford to keep cows for draught cattle production and buffaloes for milk. The cow alone can and must do both duties. For these reasons the pinjrapole societies should confine themselves to caring for and improving the cow. Agriculture in India depends upon the efficiency of the cow as a bullock-producer not the buffalo; and the health of the people can be maintained and improved by the milk of the cow. In a sense the buffalo is an interloper introduced because of the poor milking qualities of the cow.

If all pinjrapoles employed really qualified men capable of managing the pinjrapoles on the foregoing lines, they could undoubtedly do a great work for India.

The reader will observe from the foregoing that Mr. Smith has written with a knowledge of the existing pinjrapoles. He told me that he had visited many of them. In his opinion the pinjrapoles should serve the purpose not merely of being a home for aged and otherwise disabled cattle, but also for protecting the cow, and educating the people in the art of such protection. To that end they must have a properly equipped model dairy and a stud department. I add to these conditions a tannery department. I discussed with Mr. Smith the question of adding tanneries. The idea appeared attractive to him, but being a specialist he naturally did not want to travel beyond his province. Mr. Smith's cautious remarks about the buffalo are worthy of attention. He has not, and he cannot be expected to have, the same feeling about animal slaughter, but he recognizes that in India any

proposition suggesting slaughter of useless animals would be just as much out of place as a proposition for the destruction of aged and disabled parents would be anywhere. He has, therefore, endeavoured to enter into the Hindu feeling as much as possible, and suggested means of protection and conservation of cattle consistently with Indian traditions. I hope that managers of pinjrapoles will study the suggestions made in Mr. Smith's important note and make the necessary alterations in their management, which, I am certain, can be made with very little extra cost in the beginning, and with much profit in the end. I must deal in a future issue with the other material[1] Mr. Smith has kindly placed at my disposal.

Young India, 14-7-1927

214. AN ALL-INDIA SCRIPT

A Gujarati correspondent wrote some time ago to *Navajivan* a letter advising that I should print *Navajivan* in Devanagari script, so as to give a practical demonstration of my belief in the necessity of there being one script for all India. Although it is my firm conviction that there should be one script for all the Indian languages, and that that script can only be Devanagari, I could not follow the correspondent's advice for the reasons stated in my note[2] in *Navajivan*, and which I need not reiterate here. But there is no doubt that we ought to seize the opportunity that the great national awakening gives us, of not merely popularizing the idea but of doing something concrete in that direction. The Hindu-Muslim madness no doubt stands in the way of a thorough reform. But before the acceptance of Devanagari script becomes a universal fact in India, Hindu India has got to be converted to the idea of one script for all the languages derived from Sanskrit and the Dravidian stock. At the present moment we have Bengali script in Bengal, Gurmukhi in the Punjab, Sindhi in Sind, Oriya in Utkal, Gujarati in Gujrat, Telugu in Andhradesha, Tamil in Tamilnad, Malayalam in Kerala, Kanarese in Karnatak, not to speak of Kaithi in Bihar and Modi in the Deccan. If all these scripts could be replaced by Devanagari for all practical and national purposes, it would mean a tremendous step forward. It will help to solidify Hindu India and bring the different provinces in closer touch. Anyone who has any

[1] *Vide* "Village Cattle Improvement", 4-8-1927.
[2] *Vide* "*Navajivan* in Devanagari Script", 26-6-1927.

knowledge of the different Indian languages and scripts knows to his cost what time it takes to master a new script. For the love of his country, no doubt, nothing is difficult, and time spent in mastering the different scripts, some of which are very beautiful, is in no way idly spent. But this spirit of abandon is not to be expected of millions. National leaders have to make things esay for them. Therefore, we must have an easily adaptable universal script for all India, and there is nothing so adaptable and readymade as Devanagari script. There is, or there used to be, an all-India organization for this very purpose. I do not know what its activities are at present. But if the work has to be done, either the original association should be strengthened, or a new one formed for this purpose. The movement should in no way be confused with the spread of Hindi or Hindustani as the lingua franca. The latter work is going on very slowly, but steadily. Use of one script will facilitate the spread of one language. But the functions of the two run parallel only up to a point. Hindi or Hindustani is not designed to replace the provincial languages, but is intended to supplement them, and to be used for inter-provincial contact. And till the Hindu-Muslim tension lasts it takes the form either of Urdu written in the Persian script, and containing a preponderance of Persian or Arabic words, or Hindi written in Devanagari, and containing a preponderance of Sanskrit words. When the hearts of the two meet, the two forms of the same language will be fused together, and we shall have a resultant of the two, containing as many Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic or other words as may be necessary for its full growth and full expression.

But one script is undoubtedly designed to displace all the different scripts so as to render it easy for people belonging to different provinces to learn provincial languages. The best way of achieving the purpose is first to make the learning of Devanagari script compulsory at least for Hindus in all the schools, as it is in Gujarat, and secondly to print the important literature in different Indian languages in Devanagari script. Such effort has already been made to a certain extent. I have seen *Gitanjali* printed in Devanagari script. But the effort requires to be made on a large scale, and there should be propaganda carried on for the spread of such books. Though I know that it is out of fashion just now to suggest anything along constructive lines that may bring Hindus and Mussalmans together, I cannot help repeating what I have said in these columns and elsewhere, that Hindus must learn Urdu if they will come nearer their Mussalman brethren, and Mussalmans must learn Hindi if they

will come nearer their Hindu brethren. Those who have faith in real unity between Hindus and Mussalmans need not be disconcerted by the present terrible expression of mutual hatred. Their faith, if it is of any value, must make them actively but unobtrusively perform, whenever possible, all acts of mutual toleration, affection and courtesy, and learning of one another's language is the least that one can do in that direction. Is it not better for Hindus to learn through the many ably-written Urdu books by devout Mussalmans what Mussalmans think of the Koran and the Prophet, and for Mussalmans to learn through equally well-written Hindi books by devout Hindus what Hindus think of the *Gita* and Krishna than that the respective parties should learn all the bad things that might have been said about their respective religious books and their inspirers through their ignorant or fanatical detractors?

Young India, 14-7-1927

215. LIMITATIONS OF SATYAGRAHA

An innocent paragraph, occurring in a letter[1] in reply to one covering other subjects, has led to what I venture to call a thoughtless misrepresentation of satyagraha and its author. The paragraph is part of a private letter written in Gujarati to Mr. Bharucha. It is no thesis on satyagraha, and like every letter it contains many things understood between the writer of the original letter and that of the reply. It was not meant for publication. But when Mr. Bharucha telegraphed asking for permission to publish the paragraph, I had no hesitation in wiring permission. It appears from the newspaper report before me that the speakers at the Nagpur meeting suggested that I should have explained at the time the Nagpur Satyagraha was launched out what I have explained in my letter to Mr. Bharucha. I must dissent from the view. Had Mr. Awari not ascribed to me endorsement of his campaign, I should not even have written the article I did in repudiation. Where I cannot help, it is my rule not to hinder by any unnecessary or uncalled for interference on my part. Instead, therefore, of giving an exhaustive opinion on what I then knew of Nagpur Satyagraha, I confined myself to a repudiation and an opinion on the general atmosphere of violence prevalent in the country. And I cannot help saying that it was an unlawful use to make of my private letter for suspending Nagpur Satyagraha, if those who were permitted to see the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to B. F. Bharucha", before 2-7-1927.

letter did not accept the reasoning contained in it. Moreover, when they decided to make public use of the letter, they owed it to me to have made clear to them the points which they could not understand, or which appeared to them to be inconsistent with my previous writings. They owed it to the enthusiastic young men in Nagpur neither to damp their zeal nor to disconcert them by hurling in their midst an opinion which the receivers did not understand and did not accept. For myself I do not consider it to be any part of my duty to express an opinion upon the many insane things that are going on in this country, for I am humble enough to recognize that what may appear to me to be insane need not appear so to those who are doing those acts, and may even be in reality an epitome of wisdom. Though, therefore, things are being done in the name of satyagraha in several places, I have not felt called upon to say one word about them. And I do suggest to the young men in Nagpur and to all concerned that they are not in any way bound to receive the permission of the Congress to offer satyagraha or any other resistance to any unjust act so long as they do not use the Congress name. And if they are really of opinion that the Nagpur Satyagraha was justified, that it was really satyagraha, it would amount to a desertion on the part of their commander and other comrades in jail not to immediately re-embark upon their campaign, unless they think with me that what they thought was satyagraha was not so in fact.

Having cleared the ground so far, let me now try to remove the confusion that the well-meaning friends who have undertaken to criticize the letter in question have created about satyagraha. I do maintain that the Arms Act could not be broken in terms of satyagraha in the way it was in Nagpur. Let it be remembered that the bone of contention between the "Republican Army" of Nagpur and the Government was not the Arms Act but the unjust and lawless detention of many patriotic young Bengalis. It was in every way wrong, therefore, to select the Arms Act for civil disobedience. Several speakers have read into my letter a meaning which I hold it does not bear and was never intended to bear. As long ago as 1917 or 1918, I said that amongst the many black deeds of the Government, disarmament was the blackest. And out-and-out believer in non-violence though I am, I hold that it is right of any Indian who wishes to bear arms to do so under lawful permission. I do submit that an Arms Act is now and will ever be a necessity of good government. I do not believe in the inherent right of every citizen to possess as many

arms as he chooses without a licence. On the contrary, I hold it to be absolutely necessary for good government that the State should have the authority to prohibit the holding of arms except under prescribed conditions. I can also conceive the possibility of satyagraha being offered against an unjust Arms Act or its unjust administration, as I can justify satyagraha against an unjust Arms Act for preventing thefts or other crimes. But I do maintain that just as satyagraha cannot be offered against an unjust Crimes Act by committing the specific crimes, so can satyagraha not be offered against an unjust Arms Act by carrying arms.

Let us also appreciate the distinction between satyagraha and civil disobedience All civil disobedience is a part or branch of satyagraha, but all satyagraha is not civil disobedience. And seeing that the Nagpur friends have suspended what they were pleased to call satyagraha or civil disobedience, let me suggest for their information and that of others how satyagraha can be legitimately offered with reference to the Bengal detenus. If they will not be angry with me or laugh at me, let me commence by saying that they can offer satyagraha by developing the power of the people through khadi, and through khadi achieving boycott of foreign cloth.They can offer satyagraha by becoming precursors of Hindu-Muslim unity, by allowing their heads to be broken whenever there is a quarrel between the two, and whilst there is no active quarrel in their parts by performing silent acts of service to those of the opposite faith to theirs. If such constructive methods are too flat for them, and if they will be satisfied by nothing less than civil disobedience in spite of the violence of thought, word and deed raging round us, I suggest the following prescription of individual civil disobedience, which even one man can offer, not indeed in the hope of securing immediate release of detenus, but certainly in the hope of the individual sacrifice ultimately eventuating in such release. Let a batch, or only one person, say from Nagpur, march on foot to the Government House in Calcutta, and if a march is irksome or impossible then let him, her, or them beg enough money for train fare from friends, and having reached Calcutta let only one satyagrahi march to the Government House and walk on to the point where he or she is stopped. There let him or her stop and demand the release of detenus or his or her own arrest. To preserve intact the civil nature of this disobedience the satyagrahi must be wholly unarmed, and in spite of insults, kicks or worse must meekly stand the ground, and be arrested without the

slightest opposition. He may carry his own food in his pocket, a bottleful of water, take his *Gita*, the Koran, the Bible, the Zend Avesta or the *Granth Sahib*, as the case may be, and his *takli*. If there are many such real satyagrahis, they will certainly transform the atmoshpere in an immensely short time, even as one gentle shower transforms the plains of India into a beautiful green carpet in one single day.

The question will legitimately be asked, 'If you really mean what you say, why don't you take lead, never mind whether anyone follows you or not?' My answerr is : I do not regard myself as pure enough to undertake such a heroic mission. I am trying every moment of my life to attain the requisite purity of thought, word and deed. As it is, I confess that I am swayed by many passions. Anger wells up in my breast when I see or hear about what I consider to be misdeeds. All I can humbly claim for myself is that I can keep these passions and moods under fair subjection, and prevent them from gaining mastery over me. But the standard of purity that I want for any such heroic measure is not to have such passions at all and yet to hate the wrong. When I feel that I have become incapable even of thinking evil, and I hold it to be possible for every God-fearing man to attain that state, I shall wait for no man's advice, and even at the risk of being called the maddest of men, I shall not hesitate to knock at the Viceregal gate or go wherever God leads me, and demand what is due to this country which is being ground to dust today.

Meanwhile let no man mock at satyagraha. Let no man parody it. If it is at all possible, leave satyagraha alone, and the whole field is open for unchecked action. On a chartless sea in which there is no lighthouse a captain dares whither he wills. But a captain who knowing the existence of a lighthouse and its position, sails anyhow, or takes no precaution for knowing the lighthouse from deceiving stars, will be considered unfit for his post. If the reader can bear with me, let him understand that I claim to be the keeper of the lighthouse called satyagraha in the otherwise chartless sea of Indian politics. And, therefore, it is that I have suggested that those who make for satyagraha will do well to go to its keeper. I can, therefore, merely rely upon the indulgence of fellow-workers for recognition of my office.

Young India. 14-7-1927

216. THE GOOSE AND THE GANDER

TO THE EDITOR, "YOUNG INDIA"

DEAR SIR,

You affirm that swaraj is impossible without the removal of untouchability, even as it is impossible without Hindu-Muslim unity. I would link up the two impossibilities and say that Hindu-Muslim unity is impossible without the removal of untouchability—in other words, that Hindu-Muslim unity is impossible without Hindu unity. I hope you grant this proposition. Andrews is one of those who seem to have realized the truth of it.

But be that as it may, allow me to point out one little difficulty in your otherwise most helpful entitled "Our Shame" in which you so generously notice my letter to you printed in the same issue (June 30th). If, because Hindu-Muslim unity is necessary for swaraj, special political provision is to be made for the Mussalmans, as was done by you in your scheme[1] published in *Young India* for 19-2-1925 or as is done in the latest communal Pact, viz., that of the A.I.C.C. which, be it noted, purports to be a general communal settlement, and not merely a Hindu-Muslim arrangement as you think—then why leave the suppresed class in the cold, when you grant that its unity with the rest of the nation is as necessary for swaraj as Hindu-Muslim unity? We leave the woes of our child-widows out of these schemes and pacts, because (1) these widows are not a community, (2) there is legislation to help them, and (3) most of us (rightly or wrongly) do not look upon the amelioration of their condition as the *sine qua non* of swaraj. If legal enactments are useless for Touchable-Untouchable unity, they must be equally so for Hindu-Muslim unity. But what do we find in actual practice? In the name of swaraj and Hindu-Muslim unity, the needs (real or supposed) of the most clamant but not the most needy community alone are attended to in our Acts, Pacts and Schemes. And that is excused on the plea that special provision for any community is a necessary evil.

Well, I say, if special provision is a necessary evil, tolerate it where it is most necessary, i.e., in the case of the suppressed class, who, as you have already recognized, have a much stronger case for special treatment than the Mussalmans, —and not merely where it is most vociferously demanded, as in the case of our Islamic countrymen. If communal representation is to be allowed in some form or other, in spite of its known evils, then allow it in all cases impartially, even at the risk of a *reductio ad absurdum*. Else mention no community at all in your scheme, but let equal opportunities for all *citizens*

[1] *Vide* "Hindu-Muslim Question", 19-2-1925.

(and not communities), alike in the mater of education, the public services, and representation on elective bodies, be the guiding inviolable principle of your constitution.

I hope you will advise our Congress Executive to guide themselves along either of these two ways, the only logical ways as they appear to a humble student of and worker for his nation. For ourselves there is no question which of the two we would prefer. Have you not, at my instance, committed yourself to the latter, which I may call the Rational Nationalist way, in *Young India* for 20-801925, p. 292?[1] You have, and therefore I pray that you advise the Congress Committee who are charged with the drafting of a constitution for the future government of this country, and who have made a public appeal for suggestions towards it, not to go in for any unhealthy compromise between the oil and water of the two ways, but to stick to one of the two, preferably the latter. For Reason and Jusitce' sake avoid invidiousness, the original sin of the Pact of 1916.[2]

I am

KARWAR (N. KANARA), *Yours, etc.,*

July 4, 1927 S. D. NADKARNI

I entirely agree with my correspondent that if there is a special provision in any future swaraj constitution in one case, there will have to be in every other similar case, whether there is clamour in connection with it or not. I have in my recent article on Hindu-Muslim unity[3] given my deliberate opinion against any legal enactment with reference to any understanding that might be arrived at between Hindus and Mussalmans. No special legislation without a change of heart can possibly bring about organic unity. And when there is a change of heart no such legislation can possibly be necessary. My effort which takes the form of prayer in our present helpless condition is mainly devoted to procuring that change of heart. And what is true of Hindu-Muslim unity is more true of the suppressed class. No protective legislation will help them unless the so-called higher class Hindus cleanse themselves, and are eager to do justice to the suppressed class. And when they have cleansed themselves no such legislation is necessary. At the present moment law enables them to use public schools and public wells, but the so-called

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 20-8-1925.

[2] Lucknow Pact, an agreement between leaders of the Congress and the Msulim League by which the Congress conceded separate Muslim electorates

[3] *Vide* "Hindu-Muslim Unity", 16-6-1927.

high class Hindus successfully prevent their use by them. What, therefore, I would advise all fellow-reformers in this direction is to concentrate attention upon bettering in a concrete condition the lot of the suppressed class by providing schools, wells, and temples for them, and reformers themselves using all these in preference to those from which the suppressed classes may be excluded.

Young India, 14-7-1925

217. SPEECH IN REPLY TO MUNICIPAL ADDRESS, TUMKUR [1]

July 14, 1927

FRIENDS,

I thank you for this address but I wish it had not been presented to me in English. I see before me so many of my Mussalman and Hindu brothers and sisters and if you would have used either your own mother tongue or used the national language, Hindi, they would have heard and understood and I would have been pleased to receive that address. I hope you realize that it is they, the masses, that should understand the significance of all this. They must understand this and understand one another well. They are brothers and they are the right and left eye of our motherland. To make them understand we must use the language they understand very well.

I am pleased to see that many of you are clad in khadi. But I want you not only to wear khadi today for this function only but to continue to use it always, all your life and make your brothers and sisters in the villages also, when you go to them, use khadi. A khadi vastralaya is going to be opened here for you today. I want you all to go there and empty the depot. I am aware that our khadi work is increasing in your place. I pray to God that He may bless you with the strength and wisdom to continue that work. I hope you realize that you must all help in this cause for the sake of the poor of the country.

I want to speak to you one word today. I want to know how many amongst you who have gathered today are *Adi Karnatakas*?[2] Many of your brothers and sisters have not come here. To you and to those who have not come I will say this. Much is being done for the uplift of your community. In your Mysore Parliament (the

[1] Gandhiji's speech in Hindi was rendered into Kanarese by Gangadharrao Deshpande.

[2] Some in the audience raised their hands.

Representative Assembly), the Dewan has dwelt upon this in this address. I am also glad to hear that His Highness takes a great interest in the cause of the downtrodden of your province. I feel for your position. We have to consider ourselves *Panchamas* as *prayaschitta* for what we have done to a portion of our own brothers and sisters.

But I want to speak to you, the representatives or members of the *Adi Karnataka* community here. Wherever I go I have seen them in the grip of very bad habits, as eating the flesh of cow and mutton. They must know they belong to the great Hindu fold and that they must not eat cow's flesh. Many friends, many true and good men, in order to promote love and brotherliness among the communities of India have given up this habit. Hundreds of my friends, Mussalmans and Englishmen, have given up this habit. Many a high-placed Mussalman, I know, does not countenance the slaughter of cows. In your own State you have a society to protect cows and there is a movement to prevent their slaughter. I am glad your ruler is interested in this movement. In great numbers you have assembled here today but what is the number of cows that are living and how many are slaughtered? Mr. William Smith of the Dairy Farm in Bangalore has stated that there was much animal slughter in Mysore State, it is much more than necessary. But I want to know why you do that at all?

We are an agricultural people and we are as a nation dependent upon our cattle from ancient times. When I was in the Nandi Hills my friends supplied me with good milk but I know the difficulty of good milk supply that is to be observed everywhere in our land. How many children there are in our land and can we say that we have enough good pure cow's milk for them all? In our own interest, in the interest of our country I want to appeal to them not to indulge in this habit of flesh-eating.

You have stated in your address that you are going to get water-supply and electricity.

Whilst I congratulate you on this, I may tell you that I expected you to give me assurances in other matters. Can you assure me that the children in the town will be ensured a liberal supply of clean and cheap milk? You have not told me that you have done all you can for cow-protection, short of legislation prohibiting it. You have told me that you have a population of 15,000, but you have omitted to give me the strength of your livestock. There was a time in our land, when the wealth and prosperity of the people was measured by the number

of children in the family and the head of cattle that it possessed. I assure you that you could have an ideal dairy here for much less than three lakhs you will spend on water works or even less than Rs. 50,000 that you will invest in electricity. For much less money you can have a dairy so as to make it possible for people to have milk as easily as water. Have you persuaded your *Panchamas* to give up beef and liquor? And what have you done for hygiene and sanitation? The West has come in for much blame from me, but its hygiene and sanitation are object-lessons for us. To me, the test of a people's knowledge of sanitation is the condition of their latrines, and I am told that the state of things here is scandalous. The most orthodox and learned amongst us do not scruple to infringe the laws of sanitation, though all scriptures say that every infringement of a law of health or hygiene or sanitation is a sin. I ask you to study this question deeply and to aim at being ideal scavengers. So long as you do not take the broom and the bucket in your hands, you cannot make your town and cities clean.[1]

Do you know what great advance in these matters the cities of the West have made? You must copy them and keep your own place clean and healthy if you want your citizens to have a clean and healthy life. I have gone to so many cities but I am not satisfied in this matter. You must all cultivate the habit of cleanliness and sanitation and you must all help to be scavengers of your town if you want to live without disease and dirt. . . .

Lastly I will say one work. For the poor of the country, I appeal to you to take to spinning at the charkha. Do not say you have no time. If you are rising from your bed at seven in the morning I request you, I beg of you to rise at five and give the two hours for spinning at the charkha.

Well, I tell you that the spinning-wheel I am placing before you is a symbol of industry, and lazy people cannot work it. Time is wealth, and the *Gita* says the Great Annihilator annihilates those who waste time.[2]

Two hours a day at the charkha would do a very great deal for the country and its poor millions. I have come to you today to ask this

[1] These paragraphs have been taken from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter" in *Young India*, 4-8-1927.

[2] *ibid.*

of you. I thank you all for this reception and address. May God bless you.

The Hindu, 18-7-1927

218. SPEECH AT PRANI DAYA SANGHA, TUMKUR[1]

July 14, 1927

FRIENDS,

I thank you for address and purse. It also gives me pleasure to receive your address in your own mother tongue. You gave me an English translation of it but I have not read it. Instead, I have listened to the reading of your beautiful Kanarese and I understood much because, Kanarese, Tamil, Telugu and every other vernacular in the country are as sisters to our national language, Hindi. This morning in reply to your Municipal Address I have spoken at length on cow-protection and I hope and wish you will remember my appeal on behalf of the poor cows of our country. Perhaps you might know there is a big Sangha for the purpose in Belgaum and they have asked me to be its president. We have also a similar society at Sabarmati Ashram. The money you have given me today wuld go to that society for the protection of cows. But, I want you in Mysore to do in Mysore itself what we are doing there. You will have known of our work in the pages of *Young India* and *Navajivan*. I want you to do that work. You must do it here and you must all do it. For remember, friends, that whether it is khadi work or cow-protection work it is not going to be accomplished by one man alone. Also remember that in the protection of your cattle lies the wealth of your country. Cow is the mother of the land and if you understand the full significance of the term 'mother' you will realize the importance of cow-protection in the progress and welfare of our motherland. I thank you once more your kindness.

The Hindu, 18-7-1927

[1] Gandhiji spoke in Hindi.

219. SPEECH AT MADDAGIRI [1]

July 15, 1927

FRIENDS,

In order to serve the poor of the country you have given me a purse and address for which I thank you all. You know that this service of the poor is very vast, the poor men—*Daridranarayana* has a big body, the biggest stomach. This *Daridranarayana* lives in the heart and the breath of the lowest and the poorest in the village huts. He lives far away from the towns, in the interior of your villages, he does not have even one single meal a day and yet you are raising your cities and towns from his money, from his toil and his earnings. You don't get money from outside, from foreign trade; you only send it outside by your trade. Do you know how much cotton trade is being carried on, and how much cotton is being grown here; its cost in Egypt for instance and its cost here? It has been said that when a country sends out its raw materials to a foreign country there is no improvement for that country. There is one way however for some improvement of this grinding poverty and that is by khadi work. You may not send out your cotton. You may spin it and weave it into cloth and wear it. I know it is for this purpose you have given me this purse but you could have given more. If I were well I would at this moment go amongst you with the charkha and appeal to you to spin along with me always. Some of you, many of you today have worn khadi. I am thankful that you have given some money to the poor weavers but I ask you if you are going to wear it always? If not your giving me this purse is of no value. If you are to help the poor, if you are to perform your dharma irrespective of caste or creed, if you think and hope that your motherland should prosper, if you think of God, then wearing khadi is your duty, it is your dharma. Will you do it?

In yesterday's meetings at Tumkur I have pleaded with my *Panchama* brethren not to take cow-flesh or eat any flesh whatsoever. I will not say further today to my *Panchama* brethren here. Do not eat cow's flesh, do not drink, live a clean and pure life without sin and disease. I am glad you have a hall called after Lokamanya Tilak. I hope you will remember the life of that great son of India, and act up to his principles. Friends, I thank you all.

The Hindi, 18-7-1927

[1] Gandhiji spoke in Hindi.

220. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[Before *July 16, 1927*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have not been writing to you at all these days but I do remember you every day. I still need rest. Hence I write or dictate letters only when it cannot be avoided.

Even this I write on business. Pyarelal is needed in the Ashram at present. For some years now a worker from Madras called Shankaran has been staying at the Ashram. He is a very nice man. He is now here with me. He knows Hindi fairly well. He of course knows English. He is very intelligent in work. Till now he has had the sole charge of the kitchen. He had gone to Madras to see his mother. On being asked he showed willingness to replace Pyarelal. If you agree to have Shankaran instead of Pyarelal, then Pyarelal can be sent to the Ashram. If I have your letter saying yes, I will send Shankaran to you. When he gets into the routine there, Pyarelal can leave. But if for some reason you find that it cannot be done, do not hesitate to write to me. Show this letter to Pyarelal if you are in a position to relieve Pyarelal and also tell him that he has not written to me for a long time. Write to me about your health. Let me know how you find the monsoon there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati origin al: Pyarel al Papers . Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y. Courte sy: Belade vi Nayyar and Dr. Sushil a Nayyar

221. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, TUMKUR [2]

July 16, 1927

FRIENDS,

I thank you for all your purses and addresses. Mr. Hamza Hussain suggested to me before I took seat that I should talk to you in English. But I am not going to follow that suggestion. There are so many here to whom if I speak in English it would be desrespectful, for how many of you have taught your ladies English? Or is it that you want to test me whether I know English? (Laughter) If so, I may tell you I demand fees and you will have to pay a very heavy fee for wanting to examine me. Perhaps you may say that the purse you have

[1] The addressee received the letter on July 16, 1927.

[2] Gandhiji spoke in Hindi

given me is a fee by itself. No. I know you have given me the purse because you want to serve the poor of the country not by actual food but by khadi work. You may not know how many poor people there are. Do you know how very big is the stomach of *Daridranarayana* of our land? Whatever you give him is not enough. You may not know him but he lives far away in the villages, out of sight of your cities and towns; you do not know him because so many of you, so many of the ladies here have all come in foreign cloth. Do you know that every rupee's worth of Manchester cloth that you buy increases the *daridrya*[1] of our land? When the people in the villages and huts are starving is it just that you should send away your wealth out of your land to distant Manchester? I want you all today to think well on this matter and I want you to feel this in your heart deeply. If you really feel the sense of grinding poverty of this land I want you to come to the conclusion that you ought not to go on wearing foreign cloth. Make a resolve today to do your bit by wearing khadi and by contributing your help to its cause, the cause of the poor. I may inform you with pleasure that when I appealed for help on behalf of this cause the ladies in the Mahila Seva Samaj at Bangalore threw away their jewels and ornaments. They knew that their chief ornament is their heart and that they are no true ornaments that adorn the body outside.

Before I close, I want to say one word. I am very grateful to you all, particularly the Reception Committee of Tumkur who have made my stay here quite comfortable. I thank you once more for your excellent arrangements. The Headmaster of your High School told me they have started a poor boys' fund and that they have resolved to call it by my name. You know, my friends, I am very poor myself and so I am a relative to all the poor. If I could, I could put into that fund at least one single pie but I have not got a pie which I can call my own. What I eat, what I wear is all yours and long since my earning has been given up. So I cannot give the fund a pie of my own. I know however you can all give something to that fund. There are so many very poor students in our country. They all need your help. I hope you will all help the poor students of your place at least and make the fund a useful one. Do not spend out of it any sum for entertainment or other purposes but make it really serve the purpose for which it was started. I thank you once more and bid you goodbye.

The Hindu, 18-7-1927

[1] Poverty

222. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 17, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have been away for two days, and there was no telegram yesterday. But I take it that as per your previous telegraphic information you left Sabarmati for Wardha yesterday.

The negative participle should always go with the verb, when the verb is to be negative and when the subject has to be qualified by a long phrase, the qualifying phrase should precede the subject. Hence your original sentence which read :

अब कोई नहीं बातचीत करने के लिये अन्दर आयेंगे[1] should read as follows :

अब बातचीत करने के लिये कोई अन्दर नहीं आयेंगे[2] !

Whilst you can say कोई सुधार[3], कुछ is better. कुछ means 'a little', कोई means 'someone'. But sometimes कोई is used in the place of कुछ. The safer thing, however, is to use कुछ whenever you mean a little or some. You cannot say कोई दूध; you must say कुछ दूध[4] .

Do tell me for my information whatever improvement you would suggest about spinning, prayer, kitchen, etc. I would then be able to correct you if you have come to a hasty judgment; or if I accept your judgment, I might suggest the improvement.

One earns the right of fiercest criticism when one has convinced one's neighbours of one's affection for them and one's sound judgment, and when one is sure of not being in the slightest degree ruffled if one's judgment is not accepted or enforced. In other words, there should be love, faculty for clear perception and complete toleration to enable one to criticize.

You have used the word भावनात्मक in connection with Bhansali to mean 'emotional'. But here as emotional is used disparagingly, भावनात्मक will not do. You can say भावनात्मक for Andrews by way of compliment. The word perhaps you want to use for Bhansli is स्वप्नावस्थ meaning, living in the dreamland and missing the reailty, or you mean soft-brained. He is a man of very lofty emotion. But I am getting concerned about him. More than one person has drawn my attention

[1] *Ab koi nahin batchit karnekeliye andar aayenge.*

[2] *Ab batchit karnekeliye koi andar nahin aayenge* meaning 'now no one will come in to talk.'

[3] *Koi sudhar* meaning 'a little improvement'

[4] *Kuchh doodh* meaning 'some milk'

to his becoming over-emotional. If you have acquired any influence with him, do open up a brief correspondence and tactfully discuss him with himself. But you will do what you like. I do not want to add to your tasks.

Tomorrow I go to Mysore and return from Mysore on the 23rd. Here is a copy of my programme which will be carried out if my health permits it. But you should continue to send your letters to Bangalore. The difference would be only that of one day wherever I am. And as the programme is only tentative, it is better not to run any risk.

With love,

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 5250. Courtesy : Mirabehn

223. LETTER TO A. I. KAJEE

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 17, 1927

MY DEAR KAJEE,

I was delighted to receive your letter after a long absence. It is difficult to give you guidance from this distance over differences with the Transvaal. I am, however, hoping that Mr. Sastri's arrival has smoothed matters over.

As soon as I got the cablegram from Johannesburg, I sent a reply which I hope was duly received. Do please keep me informed of further developments.

I am glad that Manilal and his wife are happy and are both rendering national service.

Yours sincerely,

A. I. KAJEE, ESQ.
SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN CONGRESS
175, GREY STREET
DURBAN
(NATAL)

From a photostat : S.N. 12361

224. LETTER TO VIJAYPAL SINGH

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 17, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I mentioned almonds and grapes by way of example. Undoubtedly local fruits and nuts would be that best. But so far as the nutritive value is concerned, nothing is lost in taking the fruits sun-dried in other climates except, perhaps, the vitamins which can be easily supplied by adding fresh lemons. For we, poor people, groundnuts, coconut and the green which are to be had everywhere are perhaps an ideal diet. But I speak without any definite experience.I,therefore, dissuade people from being entirely guided by me in making dietetic experiment.But, if those who have independent experience and have some scientific training would conduct experiments in order to find physical and spiritual values of different fruits, they would no doubt render service in a field which is capable of limitless exploration.

In fasting for health's sake, copious draughts of water are necessary. I used salt and soda as neat water created nausea. For my fasts previous to the one in Delhi, I had nothing but water of which because of nausea, I was able to drink very little. I have a friend who only the other day fasted for full 40 days and drank fresh water only copiously, and he kept excellent health.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. VIJAYPAL SINGH, B.A., LL.B, M.L.C.
'PREM BHAWAN'
MEERUT

From a photostat : S.N. 14184

225. LETTER TO OTTAMA BHIKKHU

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 17, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I wish that I could visit Burma. But if I keep up what little strength I have regained, it would be required for overtaking the interrupted programme during the year. I do not know what will be in store for me thereafter.

With reference to the secession of Burma from India, Burmese should certainly have my sympathy if they wished to secede. I would certainly not want them to sever their connection if they find it beneficial. At the present moment, I feel that India, in co-operation with the British, is exploiting Burma. That our cultures have a common origin has a strong apeal for me in favour of its absorption into India. But that absorption should come naturally and after both of us have become conscious of our strenth. But I confess that I am speaking without much experience. I must, therefore, be content with a statement of the general principle that the benefit of Burma should be the sole consideration in deciding whether it should be an autonomous sovereign State or a province of India. I must not prejudice your case one way or the other by taking the matter up in *Young India*. That I can only do after visiting Burma if God provides that opportunity for me and studying the problem on the spot. I do not propose to publish your letter.

Yours sincerely,

OTTAMA BHIKKHU
MAHA BODHI SOCIETY
4-A, COLLEGE SQUARE
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S. N. 14185

226. LETTER TO NARGIS CAPTAIN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 17, 1927

I have your letter. I wish I could go to Panchgani and see the little villages you describe. But that cannot be as I have already commenced gentle touring, and if does not disturb my health, it will now continue practically to the end of the year. What I should like to do is of course that some of you sisters should take this reponsibility of touring off my shoulders and do it yourselves. But since you will not do it, how can poor lay man like me help going about begging from place to place?

Mithuben, Ratanben and Jamnaben are here, and they will be here for a few days longer. Mithuben has sold quite a lot of fashionable khadi.

I don't know which book you mean about me. Nobody to my knowledge has written inside of two or three months.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S. N. 14186

227. LETTER TO K. J. NARAYANAN NAMBUDRIPAD

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I suggest to you that our untouchability is not due to the distinction between rich and poor. But it seems to me to be due to the arrogance of those who are learned in booklore towards those who are not, and it has gone to the uttermost limit of calculated cruelty. I am both pained and surprised that you should defend what is perhaps the greatest wrong done under cover of religion.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. J. NARAYANAN NAMBUDRIPAD
VADAKKANCHERI P.O.
(COCHIN STATE)

From a microfilm : S.N. 14620

228. SPEECH IN REPLY TO MUNICIPAL ADDRESS, BANGALORE [1]

July 17, 1927

FRIENDS,

I thank you for the address you have given me on behalf of your Municipal Council. I am sorry I cannot speak loud enough so that every one of you might hear me. You have dwelt on what you are doing as members of the Municipal Council in your address. I am very much pleased with your work and I congratulate you on it. I must thank you for having introduced compulsory education in your city for your youths and I must also congratulate you for your having in your beautiful city such big roads and lights. It appears to me from what you have stated in your address that your municipal work is on right lines and that your record is one that would afford satisfaction to

[1] Gandhiji spoke in Hindi.

all. I might tell you the true germ of swaraj lies in municipal work, and I want you to recognize it.

I have been amidst you for some time but because I could not go out on account of health, I could not personally find out your municipal work especially in regard to public health. But I take it, it is generally good. I have been told that your upper classes and middle classes are healthy. If so, I want to ask you a question. Have you got poor people in your city? If you have, I want to ask you as members of the Municipality whether you have kept their houses healthy and tidy? Do you take any interest in their houses? In your address you have not told me of the state of your scavengers, nor have you informed me anything as to how you supply good milk to your children, the old and the sick of your town. You have many merchants and traders who pay you taxes but have you ascertained anything about them? Are they selling good flour and rations to the poor who come from the villages to purchase from them? Your market gets supplied with things from distant villages and you purchase them as you like but have you stopped to enquire of their conditions in their distant homes in the villages? I cannot gather anything from your address as to how many drunkards there are in your city and how many wanton sinners there are and what steps you have taken to prevent them from poisoning your city life. I want also to know what the state of your cows and cattle is and what you as a municipal body have been doing in this direction. Can you answer these questions? If so, I can talk to you still more. But if you cannot, I want you, I request you to consider all these questions and think of them always in your active municipal work.

I must say I am very grateful for your Municipality for giving a place to the charkha. To me, it seems that you are thinking of your poor. By this, I am sure you are aware that if you want to keep the land from getting poorer, if you want to help the poor sisters and brothers of your place, charkha is the only way. I feel truly grateful to you for this. I am also glad that you are supplying khadi to your employees. There are so many of you here today who know that if you have to help in the only way you could it is by purchasing khadi. Have some consideration for the poor, take the cloth they weave for you and let them be sure of their wages and your purchase. I pray to God that the city which gave me health may grow ever more in wealth. You have all given me of your love and I thank you all for this. May God bless you and your Municipality with a great future.

The Hindu, 18-7-1927

229. SPEECH TO LABOURERS, BANGALORE [1]

July 17, 1927

FRIENDS,

You have given my your addresses in the national language, Hindi, in the Mysore mother tongue, Kanarese, and also in Tamil and you have also given me a purse to serve the poor people of your country. I am deeply grateful to you all for this. Your offering for the cause of the poor does not bring to me any wonder because I have been a labourer myself for the past 35 years. Ever since I went to South Africa, I have known the woes of labour intimately. Having experienced some of them myself I also know that help in these matters seldom comes from outside. We must help ourselves and then only God will help us. That has been my experience. In South Africa when this burden of suffering was weighing heavily we found out that nobody could help us so well as we ourselves and we went on making our own efforts steadily and always on the right path. Then only relief came to us. In Ahmedabad also it was the same experience. The labourers did not set fire to property, they did not bully the employers, they harmed nobody and they went on fighting their cause in all just ways and right paths. They carried on in peace and suffering; they told their masters : "We are groaning under suffering, and you are happy, may you live more happily." This went home and truth triumphed. This is the spirit of the silent and bold path of suffering; it is called 'satyagraha'. It means that you take your stand on truth and never swerve from the path of right in fighting your cause. It means success of truth, it means self-help. Remember that you must help yourselves. This path is open to every one of you, young and old.

You have stated in your address that conditions in your mills are more hard than in other mills. I do not know if it is true, but if it is, then I am sorry to hear of it. But I know one thing, and that is, your director is the son-in-law of my friend, Chandavarkar, and he would be very sympathetic to you. He invited me to the mills and agreed to any suggestions to be made. I sent Mr. Rajagopalachari who came to

[1] Of the Malleswaram Labour Union of the Maharaja Mills. Illustrating the case of a dismissed labourer, the address mentioned "the unfortunate position of labour in Mysore State, the indifference of Government and lack of public sympathy for labour movement in general". Gandhiji's speech in Hindi was rendered into Kanarese by Gangadharrao Deshpande.

you and ascertained the matter. This was at the time of your strike. Since then I do not know what your state is but whatever it is, always remember that you must help yourselves in this and that you must learn to depend upon your own selves. I want to ask you if you can do so. You are quarrelling amongst yourselves, you do not make any co-operative and united effort, you have not all thought about bettering your conditions in real earnest, many of you waste your time. You do not feel that the sorrow of one of you is the sorrow of you all. You go to drink and you go to play cards or gamble. You should not do that if you have to better your conditions, if you have to help yourselves as men. You must be aware of all this. You have given me this purse and it is because you know there are millions who are much poorer than you, more hungry than you. You must know that you must help these poor souls. You must not forget that the cloth you produce in your own mills is not for you or for your people but for trade purposes. It is for the benefit of your people but for trade purposes. It is for the benefit of your masters and it is not for protecting the poor of your land, to help them get a morsel of food in the villages. You must wear khadi and help poor men and women who weave it for you. It is you who must help them first, for the rich do not come as quickly. You must help them by wearing and purchasing khadi.

I know that the present troubles arise because the mill-owners and the shareholders consider they are one and that you workers are separate. It is only on the day they are going to consider that the workers also are one of them, that their interests are also the labourers' interests, on that day it is that this problem is going to be solved. When this recognition comes the mills would prosper for there would be no division of interests as between capital and labour. This day must come for that is dharma. But till that day comes it is your duty to go on fighting for your cause but fight for it as dharma and never swerve from the path of right and justice. Think well on what I have said to you today. Do not think there is any other path of bettering your condition or achieving success for efforts. There is no other path than dharma or the path of righteousness. Never forget this. May God bless you all in your efforts with strength and success.

The Hindu, 18-7-1927

230. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Half revised *July 18, 1927*

CHI. MIRA,

I sent you a letter yesterday. I therefore do not want to say much today.

You have done well in explaining your position fully to Valunjkar and it is a correct position. You must be free to do the work that comes to your lot. Nor must Gangu hang on to your skirt. She must be taught to grow independently. But seeing that she wants to come under your influence you will handle her lovingly and give her what you can.

You will not experiment there with your health but eat what you need. Order the quantity of fruit you need as you used to at the Ashram and if anybody sends any fruit to you keep what *you* need and send the rest to the kitchen, i.e., Vinoba. Do not think that the others need it because you need it. You do not need the *jowari* that the others need. That fruit happens to be a delicacy as well as food is perhaps unfortunate. It is enough if we learn to take delicacies too as we would medicine in their proper measure and then we may harden our hearts and eat them although the others may not get them. The dangers surrounding this position are too patent to require mention. People have accommodated themselves to even vices under the plea of necessity. But we need not be afraid of such awkward consequences, if we would keep a ceaseless watch over ourselves. There are dangers every way we turn. But we must obey *our* fundamental natures be the cost what it may.

This has been a longer letter than I had wanted it to be.

With love,

BAPU

[PS.]

I am quite well.

From the original : C.W. 5251. Courtesy : Mirabehn

231. LETTER TO J. B. KRIPALANI

July 18, 1927

MY DEAR PROFESSOR,

Nanabhai tells me you have threatened to leave (almost?) if the Vidyapith does not take back Malkani. This attitude is wrong. You cannot manufacture charity by threats. And why would the Vidyapith be uncharitable if it cannot see its way to take Malkani back? Seeing that there is much opposition to his being taken back, it would be a mistake to press his reinstatement. Please revise your opinion.

In any event I have not seen the last of Malkani. I am carrying on correspondence with him and about him. For me Malkani's error is a national tragedy. His reinstatement is a most insignificant thing. How to put together the broken bits of Malkani and to find him again a man is the sole question with me. And I am giving the thing best of myself.

With love,

BAPU

From a photostat : S.N. 12609

232. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Silence Day [*July 18, 1927*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I wrote you a letter about Pyarelal. Could it be that you have not received it? I have detained Shankaran here. There has not been any letter from you for a long time. All of us are going to Mysore today. We shall be there for three days. By the 23rd we shall be back here (Bangalore).

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

CASTLE HILL

PANCHGANI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The postmark has "July 19, 1927" The silence day, i.e., Monday, sell on July 18.

233. LETTER TO J. B. PETIT [1]

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 19, 1927

DEAR MR. PETIT,

I thank you for your prompt attention to my letter[2] about Mr. Sastri. Of course, in my opinion, nothing has to be said against the Government. The point raised by you is, I think, debatable. What the service regulations come to is that no servant of the Crown should receive a single farthing from those whom he has to serve. But it seems to me that a Viceroy who, for example, may wish to do good to India beyond his province and receives aid from his friends and relatives in England will not be debarred from openly receiving such aid. I have no doubt whatsoever about the Government playing the game[3] in the matter of Mr. Sastri. The point of my letter went deeper. I hold that the Government may not go beyond a certain point. However, I do not wish to labour the point any further.

Yours sincerely,

JEHANGIR B. PETIT, ESQ.
PETIT BUILDING
359, HORNBY ROAD
FORT
BOMBAY

From a photostat : S.N. 12367

[1] In reply to his letter dated July 16 in which it was stated that "the [Imperial Citizenship] Association cannot finance Mr. Sastri". It also enclosed for Gandhiji's reference M. Habibullah's letter to J. B. Petit dated July 12, 1927. Habibullah had written : "There can of course, be no question of any unofficial organization being required to assist the Government or their Agent financially. . . . He is to get a salary of £2,500 per annum which is exactly the amount given to a Cabinet Minister in South Africa, a sumptuary allowance of £500 per annum, a house which will be rented and furnished by Government, a car also purchased by Government—a maintenance allowance for the car of £200 per annum. For the house he will have to pay rent calculated at 10 per cent per annum of his salary, and 10 per cent per annum calculated on the capital outlay of the furniture for the use of the furniture. He will, so far as we are aware, have to pay no income tax . . . I am sure you will agree that these terms cannot be described as niggardly."

[2] Dated July 5, 1927

[3] There were proposals to increase the allowances.

234. LETTER TO N. V. THADANI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 19, 1927

MY DEAR THADANI,

I have your letter. You have entirely missed my point. I did not even know that your college was national merely in name. My complaint was not that Malkani went from a national college to a Government college. My complaint would have had the same force, if Malkani, instead of going from the Mahavidyalaya to a Government college, had deserted the Mahavidyalaya for a selfless expedition to the North Pole in search of knowledge, or say, had gone to Kashi Vidyapith or Bihar Vidyapith both of which are direct offspring of non-co-operation and with both of which I am more or less connected. And I should have considered the conduct of Sriprakash Babu and Rajendra Babu, respectively, as ungentlemanly if they had seduced Malkani behind the back of the authorities of the Mahavidyalaya as you have done. And I have felt it so keenly in this case because of my high opinion about Malkani. Many other professors deserted the Mahavidyalaya before Malkani. In their case, I felt nothing, because I had staked nothing on them. I do not know whether I have yet made my point clear. I know no distinction between Sind and Gujarat or any other province. If Malkani had been posted in Sind and was seduced by someone in Gujarat, I should have said and felt the same thing, again because of the personal factor that it was Malkani who had allowed himself to be seduced.

I do not underrate your difficulties; I do not underrate your cause; but what I feel is that you adopted a questionable method for achieving your purpose. You will not build up the morals of the Sindhi youth by undermining those of Malkani. Malkani standing at the helm of his sinking ship in Gujarat, himself starving, his wife and mother-in-law looking daggers at him, and his friends howling at him in indignation for his madness, would have been an ideal professor for your boys and a noble lesson for India. I wonder if I am still clear to you. Do not for one moment consider that the fact that it is Gujarat Mahavidyalaya that will come to grief that has weighed with me. My life has been a witness of many such institutions arising and falling with some of which I have myself been intimately connected. For me, their worth has consisted in their having thrown up heroes and thus finished their task. It may interest you to know that the Senate of the

Vidyapith has been convulsed over Malkani's letter recalling his resignation. Many professors who were always more or less against Malkani offered strenuous opposition to Malkani's reinstatement. The question was referred to me and I sent in my opinion that Malkani could not be reinstated in the face of that opposition. It will be awkward for his as also for the professors and bad for the Mahavidyalaya. The question of the Mahavidyalaya therefore is settled so far as Malkani is concerned. But the question of Malkani himself still remains a running sore. I have already given my opinion that he cannot undo one wrong by doing another, and that therefore he may not now leave you in the lurch without your being able to replace him. But if you would know my opinion, it is decidedly this : that Malkani should not remain in your institution a minute longer than is absolutely necessary, that you should set about finding a substitute without the least delay, that you should set a time-limit for your search, and that after the expiry of the time-limit, whether you have found a substitute or not, Malkani should leave you and either do what he likes, or let me do with him what I like. I may inform you that I have not yet got over the shock. Bardoli never disturbed my sleep; but Malkani does. You will be entitled to say that I deserve no pity if I would depart from the lesson of the *Gita* by which I swear and have such unwarranted faith in men. I shall accept your judgment and plead in justification that I cannot surmount my fundamental nature all of a sudden. Please share this with Malkani.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. V. THADANI

HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat : S.N. 12606

235. LETTER TO K. S. KARANTH

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 19, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and the medal. Here are the answers to your questions :

1. I do not think that there is any moral obligation for a man to take out an insurance policy for the sake of his creditors. But it is enough that he strains every nerve to pay his creditors while there is life in him. Of course, the great thing is never to incur debts on any account whatsoever. Having thus dealt with the ethics of insurance, I must warn you against throwing up your policy merely on the strength of my opinion. There is nothing wrong or sinful in your keeping up the insurance policy unless the consciousness of wrong comes upon you apart from my opinion. I would therefore dissuade you from hastily giving up the policy. There must be a definite living faith in God and complete reliance upon Him before one gives up what are generally regarded as legitimate things like insurance policy. Many other things should precede this sort of renunciation.

2. I think you were quite right in attending the marriage ceremony. It should be a warning against hasty promises.

3. I should draw a sharp distinction between *kirtans*[1] and theatricals. The question of theatricals is very serious, and as you seem to know all about the lives of actors, it may be as well for you to avoid the profession. But I am myself not on sure ground here. The theatre is as old as mankind. How far it has tended to make men better, I don't know. I have not studied its history. You must, therefore, not accept me as a guide. Either use your own judgment or go to those who can guide you with confidence and about whose purity of life you have no doubt. This covers the fourth question also.

5. In the male the sexual act is a giving up of vital energy every time. In the female that giving up process commences only with parturition.

6. M. Bureau does not refer to wet dreams at all. They are undoubtedly harmful. He merely refers to the conversion of the excess of nutrition into seminal fluid in the male. But it requires to be husbanded and reserved for reproduction when the latter is desired, or

[1] Devotional songs

transmutation into spiritual energy. This is my conviction. Whether M. Bureau means it or not, I can't say, because I have not the book with me at the time of answering.

So long as your friends know that any gift that they may make to you will go for some public purpose, there is no harm in accepting it if it pleases them better to serve the public cause by making gifts to their friends. There is, however, no doubt that it is best to dissuade friends from such practice.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. S. KARANTH
C/O G. N. POI, ESQ.
NIHALCHAND BUILDING
NEW QUEENS ROAD
GIRGAUM
BOMBAY

From a photostat : S.N. 14187

236. LETTER TO DR. M. S. KELKAR

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 19, 1927

DEAR DOCTOR,

I thank you for your kind and thoughtful warning. I am simply going by the advice of the doctor here who constantly examines me. He is in charge of the Victoria Hospital and is reputed to be very clever and very careful. However, I am taking the tour in easy stages. But I quite agree with you that if I could bury myself in some seaside place, it would be better. However, your letter puts me further on my guard. I shall watch myself and not hesitate to still further restrain myself, if necessary.

I am keeping in touch with Uttam Chand, and I know that he is making fair progress and so also Kakasaheb. Their recovery will certainly be directly traceable to your treatment, and I am so glad that Gangabehn is also making steady progress.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 14188

237. LETTER TO SURAJ PRASAD MATHUR

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 19, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. My present life is no reaction of the past. Probably, my condemnation of my past life is an exaggeration. It should be remembered that the condemnation is according to the measure of standard I have evolved for myself. Life of perfect restraint had a fascination for me, even whilst I indulged myself with my wife. But though the spirit was willing the flesh was weak. I was able to control the flesh only by much patient effort, and God definitely helped me first by frequently sending me away from my wife and secondly by throwing circumstances in my way which made it necessary to restrain my lust even for the sake of meeting those circumstances. I do not think that I sinned against my wife more than the average man. But such comparisons are totally wrong and should never be held to justify sinning. Everyone must set up his code for himself and regulate his life in strictest accordance with it. After all, sin is a mental state. And, whilst a man who commits a particular sin will certainly receive his due punishment from Nature, if he is not conscious of that sin, he won't blame himself. But I being conscious of the same sin dare not justify myself and hold myself free from blame, because my ignorant brother commits it through ignorance, and therefore does not blame himself, and is probably not blamed by the society either. I think this covers all the points raised by you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SURAJ PRASAD MATHUR
TEACHER, SIR HARCOURT BUTLER HIGH SCHOOL
HELEN LODGE
SIMLA

From a photostat : S.N. 14189

238. LETTER TO GANGADHAR SHASTRI JOSHI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 19, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and the pains you have taken to answer my questions. Do you claim cheapness, simplicity and efficacy for Ayurvedic medicine as we find it at present? After my own fashion, I have been interested in its success ever since 1891, and have even spent what little I was capable of and induced friends to spend on behalf of Ayurvedic physicians. But so far, I have found it to be neither cheap nor simple nor efficacious. Some of the prescriptions are most complicated. Ayurvedic physicians have been known to charge as much as men with medical degrees. I know Ayurvedic physicians who charge today even as much as Rs. 1,000 per day. The best of them are beyond the reach of the poor. And what I have also unfortunately found is that a very large number of patients have gone to the physicians with Western degrees after having found Ayurvedic treatment to be inefficacious. I am aware of the converse also having happened. But the scales seem to me to weigh in favour of Allopathy. My own desire has been and is now also to find Ayurveda practice successful, if only because I am probably fanatically vegetarian and because I have a horror of Allopathy for many reasons I need not go into. Even for simple home treatment, having studied something of both Ayurvedic and Allopathic drugs, I have been obliged to use Allopathic drugs instead of Ayurvedic. For instance, I have found nothing so efficacious as quinine for malaria or iodine for simple pains or Condy's fluid as a disinfectant. I must not, however, worry you with my own experience. If it is not troublesome, will you kindly illustrate in what way Ayurveda aims at purifying the whole system rather than affording only temporary relief? As time permits me, I shall go through the pamphlets you have kindly sent me. I shall also await the views from the friends to whom you have shown my letter. You will please write to me if you do not receive the relevant texts from Pandit Satavalekar.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GANGADHAR SHASTRI JOSHIJI
9/2, SADASHIV PETH
POONA CITY

From a photostat : S.N. 14190

239. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 19, 1927

DEAR SATIS BABU,

Your letter arrived the same day as Dr. Ray who gave me doleful news about Pratishthan. He said that you were not at all fit for work, and that you were yet going back to Calcutta because your presence was needed at Sodepur. He added that Kshitish Babu was being over-worked. Knowing his pessimism, I have discounted the news he has given me. But I suppose the substance is true. You will, therefore, tell me all about the work there. But I want your assurance that, whatever may be the nature of the work, you are not going to put an undue strain upon yourself. Of course, you will laugh at this and retort "physician heal thyself". But I really believe that I do conserve my energy to the best of my ability. And, then, I have a solid wall of protection from so many sentinels. That I have not been able to avoid illnesses is a matter of humiliation for me. I should have been able to do so. But as I have said so often, I woke up too late in life to be able to have a disease-proof constitution. Up to the age of nearly 30, according to my notions of economy, I wasted myself whenever opportunity offered itself. The real building up began after that time, and then too, knowledge came in dribblets. This is only one though the main reason for breakdowns in my life. I want all co-workers to learn to avoid my mistakes. But of course all this is wretched philosophizing. You know what I want to say. Do not be anxious about khadi or the Pratishthan which is one and the same thing. Let us give the best of what we have, work in uttermost humility, and then say after the manner of Janaka, "What does it matter if khadi lives or perishes?"

With reference to the Bengal tour, you will not want me to come to Bengal unless you are yourself able to bear the strain. Of course you will not discuss this thing publicly till you know how the present trial tour shapes. I must confess that I am not over-well or over-strong. But the doctor who is attending on me is a clever and a careful man, and he tells me that there is nothing wrong with blood-pressure or with anything else and that I am quite all right.

The Hindu-Muslim thing would be unbearable if I begin to think about it. But of whatever happens there, please keep me well-informed.

I have not written separately to Hemprabha Devi in order to conserve my energy. She is ever in my thoughts.

With love,

Yours,

From a microfilm : S.N. 19787

240. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day, Ashadh Vad 5 [*July 19, 1927*][1]

SISTERS,

I have to write many letters today. But how can I miss writing to you?

I wish to hit two targets at one stroke. Now this is a rendering of an English saying which literally means to kill two birds with one stone. Such sayings come into vogue where violence is common in every walk of life. My rendering too is not faultless. But indeed we could hit a target without intending to hurt anyone.

My twofold purpose is to write my usual letter to you and to include in it my reply to Chi. Vasumati. She asks, "You say that women should know how to read the *Gita* as well as they should know how to roll chapatis. How is this possible? It will take a lot of time to learn."

It does indeed take time. But what can one not achieve with perseverance? A task can be accomplished if one devotes some time, if not a great deal, to it. It is difficult to learn cooking after you are grown up. Even then you can learn it with persistent efforts. If our women cannot pronounce Sanskrit well, the fault is not theirs. It is one's parents' fault, or if one is married it is the fault of one's husband or of his people. But what is the use of putting the blame on others? Let us see how we can remove the defect now. In the Ashram we look for our own defects and then try to remedy them. Of course we should not overdo learning to pronounce Sanskrit correctly. We

[1] The year is inferred from the reference to Karnatak.

should carry out our other duties in the Ashram, and while doing so, try also to improve our pronunciation as much as we can. The only point I wanted you to know was that in Karnatak many women pronounce Sanskrit more correctly than even men in Gujarat.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3658

241. LETTER TO JETHALAL GANDHI

BANGALORE,
Ashadh Vad 5 [*July 19, 1927*][1]

BHAI JETHALAL,

I got your letter and the booklet about *snatakas*[2] which you have published. I could read the booklet only today. I can see that you have put great labour into it. The booklet is useful. I will find use for it in *Young India* and *Navajivan* too.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Sabarmati Snataka Vibhag, Book 6, No. 4, *Shishir*, 1984, p. 34

[1] Gandhiji was in Bangalore on this date in 1927
[2] Graduates

242. SPEECH TO STUDENTS, MYSORE[1]

July 19, 1927

MR. PRINCIPAL, PROFESSORS, SISTERS AND FRIENDS,

You have honoured me with an address. You have likewise with a purse of Rs. 700 for the service of the *Daridranarayanas* of this land. I thank you sincerely for both. I am sorry I am not able to express to you here all that I feel, all that I want to say. I am not able to return in the least measure the overwhelming kindness that you have shown me in cities and villages alike. In a gathering like this, no student should even be anxious that I should speak in English. Some of those present will not understand me if I speak in English. I have doubtless great attachment for English. If our object is to serve our motherland adequately, and if we desire that there should be greater affinity and harmony between the various classes, it is not to be achieved by spreading the knowledge of English. I have, therefore, a favour to ask of the students. That is also my message to them. They should cultivate a knowledge of Hindi, and devote themselves to the service of the motherland. My association with the students of our country dates back to 10 years, since my return to India. I know the hardship and the difficulties of the students. I have been seeing them every day. I also know their weak points. It has been my privilege to have a corner in their hearts. They have not hesitated to open their hearts to me, to tell me even what they had concealed from their parents. I do not know how I could bring them peace, or what message I could give them. I share in their sorrows, and I have been striving to alleviate their hardships. But in this world, we have to look only to God for help. None other could render any effectual help. There is no sin equal to that of disbelieving in Him, in denying Him. Amongst the students of today the spirit of atheism is gaining ground. I am deeply grieved that things should be so. Whenever I see Hindu students, I ask them to think of God, to pray, to repeat Ramanama. They ask me where is God, where is Rama and such other questions. When I see Mussalman youths and ask them to read the Koran, and to live the life enjoined therein, they also ask me similar questions. The education which leads to the negation of God cannot make for the service of the country nor of humanity. In your address, you have referred to my service to my country. Whatever I have been doing is

[1] Gandhiji's speech in Hindi was rendered into Kanarese by Gangadharrao Deshpande.

done with a sense of my duty to God. And this I consider to be the right thing. God is not seated in the skies, in the heavens, or elsewhere. He is enshrined in the heart of everyone—be he a Hindu, Mohammedan, Christian or Jew, man or woman.

I consider that real service of the country and of God consists in serving the poor humanity, whom Deshbandhu Das rightly designated the *Daridranarayana*. Such service however must be whole-hearted. When I see students, my heart goes out to them. If your hearts are not free from taint, neither the colleges, nor the libraries, nor this environment will avail you. His heart is pure who, seeing one in distress, will himself feel distressed. In our country, one-tenth of the population have not as much as one meal a day. Have our students any idea of this? Having knowledge of this they are spending their time and money on cinemas, theatres, etc. Is this fair? Is this the way to serve the country? The education you are receiving in colleges is not for the poor of the country. Such education could serve its purpose only when it leads them to the service of the suffering millions. I therefore tell you that the real service of God consists in the service of humanity. For this end, wear khadi, and spin for half an hour a day. In your address you refer to my efforts to revive the charkha. If you merely praise me in the addresses, but do nothing yourselves to encourage spinning, it would be nothing short of fulsome flattery. I do not want to take more of your time. I have elsewhere spoken about the duties of students,[1] and you can read them. I always pray to God that He prosper you, the youth of India, that He speed you in the service of the country. God bless you all.

The Hindu, 21-7-1927

243. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

AS AT KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 20, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter about prayer. The letter is beautiful. I like also the caution that you have uttered for yourself. Love means infinite patience, and exactly in the measure that we become impatient of our own weaknesses, we have to be patient with regard to the weaknesses of our neighbours. We easily enough see their weaknesses; but we

[1] *Vide* "Speech to Mysore Students, Bangalore", 12-7-1927.

have absolutely no knowledge of their striving to overcome them. However, I have forwarded your letter to the Ashram and asked Chhaganlal to read it to the Managing Board and see what can be done. One thing must not be over looked. That the prayer meetings at the Ashram are not what they should be—full of fragrance and reality—is really due to my own shortcomings of which neither you nor anybody else can have any notion whatsoever. The value of prayer dawned upon me very late in life, and as I have a fair capacity for imposing discipline upon myself, I have by patient and painful striving been able now for some years to conform to the outward form. But do I conform to the spirit? My answer is : No. Whilst it is true that life would be insipid for me without the prayer, I am not absorbed in the message of the prayer at the prayer times. The mind wanders whither it would in spite of incessant striving. If I could but lose myself in the prayer like the great Ali, you will not have to make the complaint that you have rightly registered in your letter. You will not now wonder why I am patient with those who are slack even in attending to the external form. I therefore tremble to impose any iron rule upon the people. Knowing my own weakness, I sympathize with theirs, and hope that if I grow, they must grow with me. You will now understand more than ever what I have so often said to so many people: I must be measured not by what I appear personally, but by how I appear in the lives of the people at the Ashram. The Ashram, especially when I am withdrawn from it, is really the only infallible guide to a knowledge of me.

It is time for me now to keep an appointment.

With love,

BAPU

From the original : C. W. 5252. Courtesy : Mirabehn

244. LETTER TO LIES BURZAS[1]

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 20, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I was pleased to receive your note through Sparrow[2].

The more I live the more real the doctrine of oneness of life becomes to me. But the difficulty of practising the doctrine is also growing with me instead of diminishing. Realization of the doctrine seems to be impossible unless we could reduce the 'I' in us to a complete cipher.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S. N. 12525

245. LETTER TO HELENE HAUSSDING

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 20, 1927

MY DEAR SPARROW,

I have your letter[3]. I see that you make a distinction between a letter and a postcard. I do not. But tell me why is a postcard not a letter except, of course, for the Postal Department. But seeing that we do not belong to that department, and that so far as we could we should as poor people use the cheapest method of exchanging our views, a postcard should be as good a letter if it could be made to contain all that you wish to say.

I must still continue to dictate my letters. Although I can be said to be a discharged patient, the memory of my being a patient is still very fresh and very definite.

Krishnadas has gone to Bihar in connection with A.I.S.A.'s work, as also to see his guru, and possibly his parents, and he will then go to the Ashram to finish the literary work that is weighing upon his head.

You ask me "if the diseases are due to our own transgressions, that transgression is to be laid at the door of a blind-born baby". I thought that being a Buddhist you believed in transmigration and

[1] In reply to the addressee's letter dated June 23, 1927
[2] Helene Haussding
[3] Dated June 25, 1927

previous existence just as fully as in the present. For me, I implicitly believe that every birth means the birth of a new soul. Birth and death to me, therefore, are almost interchangeable words and two modes of expressing the same state. If you will closely analyse the doctrine of transmigration, you will answer for yourself, also the question "why is the air laden with microbes?"

'Pearl'[1] and 'Lal' and others whom you know but casually, and whose names you won't be able to recall, much less to pronounce, are with me just now and will be for a few days longer. My headquarters still remain Bangalore and will remain so practicaly to the end of August.

I am forwarding your letter to Krishnadas. Here is a letter to the friend.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S. N. 12526

246. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 20, 1927

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have both your letters. Events have moved fairly fast between the dates of my letter and of the arrival of your letters. Sarojini Devi suggested under pressure from Mahmudabad[2] and Mr. Jinnah that I should press Father to accept the Presidential chair for the coming year. I totally dissented from her view and told her that Dr. Ansari was the only possible President, though even he will be able to do precious little.

Things are going from bad to worse, and it is quite plain that we have not yet drunk the last dregs. But I regard all this rising of the poison to the surface as a necessary process in national up-building. It is quite true that what was burrowing under the surface has now broken through the crust and allows itself to be seen by the naked eye.

[1] Not known. The addressee had written : "The knowledge of your love always gives him new strength to prune his plumage for new flights and fights. I am only echoing Pearl's thoughts, words . . ."

[2] The source has "Muhammadabad".

I saw the other day in the daily press portraits of yourself, Kamala, Krishna and Indu, or was it you three without Indu, I now forget. You all seem to have grown fuller in the face and all over. I hope that the appearance coincides with the reality.

Though I am not yet physically quite strong, I have resumed the interrupted tour with considerable modifications and in gentle stages. I will not have resumed it but for the fact that collections were locked up and could not be freed unless I presented myself for receiving them.

Shankerlal and Anasuyabehn are just now with me in addition to the party mentioned by me in my previous letter.

From a photostat : S. N. 12611

247. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

AS AT KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 20, 1927

I have not written to you for the last two mails, nor is there anything particular to say to you just now. But you will be glad to learn that for the first time during my 12 years in India after my return from South Africa, I had what may be called a fairly prolonged real contact with Pandit Malaviyaji. Instead of going to Ooty, he remained in Bangalore as long as it was possible for him to do in view of the Reserve Bank Committee meeting at Calcutta. Of course all the time we were under the same roof, and we had discussions on many things. We reached one definite conclusion, and it was that there should be, just like the All-India Spinners' Association, and All-India Cow-protection Association, a definite body called 'All-India Untouchability Association' brought into being with a definite constructive programme for the uplift of the suppressed classes. I have no time just now to discuss the outlines of the scheme. But I am now looking for an efficient secretary to believe in the work and who would give his whole heart to it to the exclusion practically of every other activity. A further stage will be reached as soon as I can find such a secretary.

Jamnalalji showed me your circular letter to friends. I see how your mind is working in that atmosphere. I would warn you against using the same scales and weights for two different materials. Eyes are well adapted for examining and inspecting a drawing-room furniture. Do they serve the same purpose for examining the furniture in the

blue vault overhead?

I have resumed gentle touring. I do not know whether I have been wise in resuming it so early. But I am daily taking a measure of my capacity.

If Lalaji[1] is with you, please give him my love and tell him that there shall be a violent quarrel between him and me if he does not give himself full rest and return with full vigour for tackling the work that lies in front of him.

Yours,

From a photostat : S. N. 14192

248. SPEECH AT HINDI BHASHA SEVA SAMAJ, MYSORE[2]

July 20, 1927

After distributing the certificates to the successful students . . . Mahatmaji delivered his address in Hindi. The address was translated into Kannada by Desabhakta Gangadharrao sentence by sentence.

Mahatmaji observed that their President, Mr. M. Venkatakrishnaiya, was called by them all "the grand old man of Mysore". The expression "grand old man" was doubtless dear to him. But he would ask them to call Mr. Venkatakrishnaiya the aged grandfather of Mysore, *vriddhapitamaha*, as Mr. Gangadharrao called, or they might call him by any other better name in Hindi, Sanskrit or Kannada. The addess they had presented him had a message behind it. It was that Hindi should become the common language of India, that the people living in India, of whatever community, should all become united as a nation. Today they had not a language which was the language of all their countrymen. Their hearts too were not united. There were differences between Brahmins and non-Brahmins, between Hindus and Mussalmans, and in the Hindu fold itself there were the untouchables who have been kept aloof, as though they were not part of it. Their hearts, instead of being united, had been drawn away from each other. The object of a common language for the whole country was to unite them all. When they were all thus united by this bond of a common language they would all understand the meaning of "grand old man". Let them imagine for a moment that they were living in the time of the Pandavas. If aged Bhishma came there, and they all said that the "grand old man" came, how ludicrous it would be. They must ever remember Bhishma and his vows. Whenever they thought of Bhishma, every one of them would be thrilled with certain courage and heroic spirit, and everyone would be reminded of Bhishma's vows, and would receive an awakening. If

[1] Lajpat Rai

[2] At its second Hindi convocation

they but put themselves in mind of Bhishma every morning, he was sure they would develop courage and heroism, so essential for national regeneration.

Mahatmaji expressed his gratification that in Mysore Hindi *prachar* had made such splendid progress. He thanked th *pracharaks* for giving tuition to as many as 700 pupils in the course of 11 months. Mr. Jamna Prasad did not desire that a gathering like the present should be called a convocation. He dreaded the use of the expression "convocation". For his own part, he did not see why it should not be called a "convocation". It meant simply a congregation and conversation. But through their association with English education, such an occasion had come to be regarded as some grand function. If they all made up their minds to spread Hindi, to learn Hindi themselves, and to show their sympathy, it would be a great thing, and this day would be remembered always.

In conclusion, Mahatmaji observed:

My appeal to you is that you should all give your mind to the spread of Hindi by providing the necessary funds and encouragement. You should not depend for funds from outside. There is no need for it. For this work, you must collect funds that may be necessary for one, two or more years. I believe it is possible to collect the funds needed at this gathering. I wish the progress would be greater in the future, and more abiding. To those who are the happy recipients of certificates I say, use the knowledge of Hindi for the service of the country. I thank you all for honouring me with the address, and for giving me the opportunity to participate in the function.

The Hindu, 22-7-1927

249. SPEECH IN REPLY TO ADDRESSES, MYSORE

July 20, 1927

Mahatmaji, in the course of his joint reply to the several addresses presented to him[1], said that their love for him was so great that to save his time and to afford him relief, they had arranged to present them all together. He was thankful to them for it. It pleased him to learn that His Highness's Government had shown their sympathy for the khaddar movement, and had agreed to the abolition of octroi on khadi imported into the city. All the addresses had alluded to the khadi and charkha

[1] By the Mysore City Municipal Council, the Mysore District Board, the Mysore Congress Committee, the Dattatreya Gorakshana Mandali, the Kaniyars and other citizens of Mysore. Gandhiji's reply in Hindi was rendered into Kanarese by Gangadharrao Deshpande.

movements. He was pleased to note that the people of Mysore liked khadi and the charkha, but his experience told him that he was not to be deceived by such praise as they showered in the addresses, for they had not gone far beyond the region of praise and entered the practical region.

He was delighted to see the beautiful city of Mysore with its palaces and mansions, is broad and well-kept roads, gardens and parks. This was one side of the view. When he considered the other side, the poor in the city and in the villages steeped in misery and pain, his heart was touched. He wished to see the day when the Maharajas in India and their advisers showed love and pity to the poor, who were grovelling in poverty and misery, so that the gulf between them, between the rich and the poor, may be bridged. It was not that he hated palaces and mansions, or gardens and parks. It was his desire to see that in India, the rich and the poor were united at heart. It was to bridge the gulf that was between them, it was to bring about contact between the rich and the poor that his efforts were directed these seven years. The gulf could not be bridged by such works as the Bhadravati Works and the gold mines of Kolar. The Bhadravati Works and the gold mines were doubtless necessary. The mines of contact between the rich and the poor was possible only by means of the hand-spun yarn. They might know that the bridge between Rishikesh and Gangotri called the Lakshmanjhula was constructed out of hand-spun yarn. Let none despise it. When once they worked at the charkha, they would see that it was what he represented it to be. He was overjoyed to learn that His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore also worked at the spinning-wheel and had thereby set an example to his people.

To the Kaniyars he said that he shared their grief. As long as Hindu society, observed Mahatmaji, kept even one Hindu outside its pale, he would also consider himself as a *Panchama*. He could not conceive of swaraj without the removal of the taint of untouchability.

He would, however, ask the Kaniyars why it was that they should think they were better than the *Panchamas*, and why they should desire to be included in the four *varnas*. His understanding of the Shastras told him that no one *varna* was superior to another. His impression was that the Brahmin was superior to the others when he maintained his own dharma, which was that of service. The Kshatriyas were likewise superior in their own dharma, of protecting the weak against the strong. There was no superiority by those of one *varna* preying upon those of the others. The Kaniyars should follow the example of Yudhishthira who, until his dog was allowed to enter *swarga*, would not enter it. Until the *Adi Karnatakas* also secured their proper place in Hindu society, they should not be anxious for their own rights. He was glad that the Kaniyars did not eat beef and drink intoxicating liquors.

As regards the question of temple-entry, Mahatmaji said that they as much right to enter the temples as he himself or any other Hindu had. It grieved him to learn

that the Kaniyars were kept out of temples. They had however to bear their difficulties patiently. Mahatmaji assured the Kaniyars that His Highness the Maharaja and Government had been doing their utmost to improve the condition of the Kaniyars. One thing which they, along with other Hindus, ought to do was *tapascharya* and thereby attain *atma shuddhi*. The Hindu Shastras told them that even Brahma was able to undertake the task of creation by means of *tapascharya*. Parvati, the consort of Parameshwara, got him for her husband by *tapascharya*. The Kaniyars likewise could wrest all their rights by *tapascharya*.

In reply to the address of the Gorakshana Mandali, Mahatmaji said he was pleased to learn that in Mysore Hindus and Muslims were living in perfect amity and concord. It pleased him also to learn that the majority of the Muslims were also with the Hindus on the question of the prevention of cow-slaughter. He congratulated both the communities and wished that all the communities in India would follow the example of Mysore and maintain cordiality of relationship with each other. He had already stated his views on the question of legislation for cow-protection. In those States in which the majority of the Muslims were with the Hindus, the State, observed Mahatmaji, was justified in legislating for the prevention of cow-slaughter. So long as those who espoused the cause of cow-protection did no constructive work for preventing cow-slaughter, they could not be said doing any useful work. He had been trying to tell them why it should be done. As without knowledge *mukti* was not possible, so in the matter of cow-protection, mere blind devotion would not do. In his writings and speeches, he had discussed the question and they should all study them.

In conclusion, Mahatmaji thanked the various bodies for the addresses presented to him that day. He appealed to the ladies to buy khaddar and to show their interest in hand-spinning. The meeting terminated, as it had commenced, with national songs.

The Hindu, 25-7-1927

250. NOTES

THE LATE SIR GANGA RAM

The death of Sir Ganga Ram removes from our midst an able and practical agriculturist, a great philanthropist and a friend of the widow. Though advanced in years, Sir Ganga Ram had the energy of youth. His optimism was equal to the obstinacy with which he held on to his views. I had the privilege of coming in fair contact with him recently. And though we could not agree on several matters, I recognized in him a sincere reformer and a great worker. And although, with all the respect due to his age and experience, I

expressed my dissent from many of his views with energy and insistence, his affection for me, whom he regarded comparatively to him as a young man of but yesterday, grew with my opposition to some of his extraordinary views on Indian poverty. He was so eager for long discussions with me, and so hopeful of weaning me from the error of my ways, that he offered to take me to England at his own expense, and promised to drive all the nonsense out of my head. Though I could not accept the offer which he had seriously meant, I wrote to him on the eve of his departure, promising to see him and undertaking to convert him to the creed of the spinning-wheel, which he thought was fit only to be burnt as firewood. The reader may well imagine my grief therefore over the news of his sudden death. But it is a death which we could all wish to have. For he went to England not on a pleasure trip, but on what he considered to be a peremptory duty. He has therefore died in harness. India has every reason to be proud of having a man like Sir Ganga Ram as one of her distinguished sons. I tender both my congratulations and condolences to the family of the deceased reformer.

CONGRESS PRESIDENT FOR 1928

The election of Dr. Ansari as President of the National Assembly for the coming year is a foregone conclusion. There is no one on the national horizon to challenge the election. Dr. Ansari is as good an Indian as he is a Mussalman. He has been never suspected of fanaticism. He has been continuously Joint Secretary of the Congress for years. His recent efforts to promote union are well known. And as a matter of fact, had I not stood in the way at Belgaum, Shrimati Sarojini Devi at Cawnpore and Sjt. Srinivasa Iyengar at Gauhati, Dr. Ansari would have been elected on any of these occasions. For his name was on everybody's lips when these elections took place. But special reasons postponed Dr. Ansari's claim, and it now seems that fates had conspired to postpone the election so that he might come in when he was most wanted. If any possible scheme of Hindu-Mulsim unity is to be found acceptable to both the parties, Dr. Ansari undoubtedly is the man to pilot such a scheme through the Congress. I respectfully dissent from the view that in a Congress which is predominantly Hindu, a Hindu should be the President, so that such a scheme might be claimed to have whole-hearted acceptance by the Hindus. On the contrary, nothing can be more auspicious for the inauguration of such a scheme than that, in spite of the poisonous atmosphere prevailing in the country, a national association

containing a preponderating majority of Hindus shoud unanimously and whole-heartedly elect a Mussalman as its President. That fact by itself would be an earnest of the Hindu desire for such unity. And of all the Mussalman nationalists, there is no Musalman more respected than Dr. Ansari by the Mussalmans in general. It is, therefore, in my opinion, in every way desirable, that Dr. Ansari should guide the National Congress during the coming year. Fot it is not merely the passing of a scheme that is wanted, but a proper working of it is, perhaps, more necessary than its aceptance by the two parties. And assuming that a scheme acceptable to both is passed, ceaseless watch will be required during the coming year as to its operation. Dr. Ansari is the most fitted for this work. I hope, therefore, that all the provinces will unanimously recommend Dr. Ansari's name for the highest honour that is in the gift of the National Assembly.

KHADI IN UDAIPUR

Some time ago the daily Press published the news that khadi workers in Bijolia were arrested and that the manager of the khadi organization there was required to give an undertaking that he would give notice to the authorities of any person coming to him. On receiving this information Sheth Jamnalalji proceeded to Udaipur to ascertain the true situation. Having seen the authorities in Udaipur and then having gone to Bijolia, Jamnalalji came to Bangalore for attending the meeting of the Council of the All-India Spinners' Association, and the South India Khadi Exhibition. During the Bangalore visit, he told me that it was quite true that two khadi workers had been arrested in Bijolia, and that they were arrested not for doing khadi work, but under the suspicion that they were meddling with the politics of the State. The authorities assured Jamnalalji that they not only did not wish to interfere with khadi work, but that they welcomed khadi workers, and that they were even prepared to give khadi work substantial help under well-defined conditions. Jamnalalji then saw the local authorities in Bijolia, and it has now been arranged, that no undertaking is to be taken from the khadi workers, it being understood between Jamnalalji and the local authorities, that the khadi workers will not directly or indirectly take part in or interfere with the politics of the State, and that they will confine themselves merely to the organization of the people for khadi production and sales. Jamnalalji had no hesitation in giving the undertaking for the simple reason that it has been the uniform and invariable practice of the Charkha Sangh to confine its work in the Indian States purely to khadi work.

Young India, 21-7-1927

251. STARVING MUNICIPAL BOARDS

The brief address, that Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel delivered before the First Conference held in Gujarat of its Municipalities and Local Boards, is worthy of study by everyone interested in the efficient working of Municipalities, Local Boards and District Boards. It is packed with facts as startling as they are disturbing. On the one hand, he says, the responsibilities of these bodies have been increased by conferring on them larger rights, and on the other, the means of discharging those responsibilities have been somehow or other curtailed. Himself being President of one of the first class Municipalities of India, he has a long record of municipal service behind him. Even the Government have been obliged to give his administration of Ahmedabad Municipality unstinted and unmixed praise. He has slaved for his Municipality as few persons have done. Like Phirozeshah Mehta, having accepted the chair, he has held the work of his office to be far more important for him than any other national work, no matter how urgent or greater in extent it might be. Having made the choice of his dharma, he has preferred it, even though a superior has often called for the exercise of his singular abilities and powers of application. His address, therefore, needs to be studied carefully by everyone concerned. He backs his assertions with concrete facts which anybody may challenge. He thinks that the 157 Municipalities of the Bombay Presidency are economically in straightened circumstances. In some cases, he says, the salaries of municipal teachers are in arrears. Their incomes are really inadequate for the work before them. Their sanitary measures have to be held in abeyance for want of funds. Compulsory education schemes are shelved for similar reasons. He adduces in support of many of his statements his own painful experience, and he severely criticizes the Government's niggardly policy in connection with Municipalities.

The President is as unsparing of the citizens as he is of the Government. He exclaims:

> Citizens of our cities regulate their lives as if they were living not in cities but in villages, and therefore, many houses have no sanitary accommodation or receptacle reserved for collection of rubbish. They do not hesitate to keep their cattle anyhow, though living in crowded quarters. Shepherds bring their droves of cattle and plant them in the midst of cities with the greatest unconcern. Generally speaking, people are indifferent about observing simple

rules of health and sanitation. They neither know how to observe them for themselves or for the sake of their neighbours. It is common experience to see them shoving rubbish on to their neighbour's yards. They do not hesitate to throw from their heights rubbish or water on to the streets heedless of the passers-by. They would spit anywhere, they would perform their natural functions anywhere. The condition of villages is no better. Rubbish-heaps meet your gaze on approaching them. Village ponds become stinking cess-pools, and soaking dirt near village wells is a common feature.

Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel says, and most people would agree with him, "that it would be criminal to look to the Government for help in such matters".

I suppose that he has purposely refrained from touching in his address upon the petty intrigues that go on in Municipalities, and make the work of the real worker and reformer almost an impossibility. Some of the foremost workers tried, but to meet severe disappointment. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in Allahabad, Babu Rajendra Prasad in Patna found intrigue to be too trying for them. Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das strove manfully against heavy odds, and the responsibility nearly crushed him. The fact is that the municipal voter has not yet become alive to a sense of his civic responsibility. He does not regard himself as in any way responsible for the well-being of all the citizens. Our educational system is not designed to give an object-lesson in corporate responsibility. Municipal councillors therefore need feel responsible to no one.

In the heyday of Non-co-operation, I ventured to suggest that if the people had really developed a sense of civic responsibility, three-fourths of the municipal work could be done without Government's assistance or patronage. I showed by taking facts and figures of municipal work in Mehmadabad, that the citizens could manage their municipal work with half the cost without having a statutory Municipality. And I showed too that a statutory Municipality became a necessity only when the councillors had no co-operation from the people, or when they wished to force their reform schemes down the throats of unwilling citizens. They needed in a small place like Mehmadabad no elaborate machinery to light their streets, to clean their latrines, and their roads, and to manage their schools, and there could be no questions of police, if the citizens were all good and pure, or if they had a citizen-guard for guarding peaceful citizens against thieves, loafers or hooligans. Those men who are real servants of the

people, would become municipal councillors for the sake of service and not for the sake of gaining fame or engaging in intrigues and finding employment for their needy friends or relatives. What is wanted, therefore, is zealous education of the people on the part of workers, not merely by means of speeches, but through silent social service rendered without the slightest expectation of reward, even in the shape of thanks, but on the contrary, with every expectation of receiving the execration and worse of a public enraged over any attempt to make it give up its superstitions or insanitary habits. I know of a poor sanitary inspector, who was very nearly lynched for his zeal in impartially getting hold of all the culprits who with criminal indifference dirtied the streets of the town, whose sanitation the poor man was paid to guard.

Young India, 21-7-1927

252. 'G' WARD D. C. C. KHADI BHANDAR

Sjt. M. N. Padweker of 'G' Ward District Congress Committee, Bombay, draws my attention to the omission from the list of khadi bhandars published in these columns of this bhandar. I hasten to rectify the unintended omission. Such omissions are bound to occur whilst the All-India Spinners' Association is trying to secure an exhaustive list of khadi bhandars within its knowledge.

In his letter, the writer says:

> The shop was about to be closed for want of good sales; but the energetic efforts of some of the workers, who took up hawking khadi on Sundays and holidays, the only days they could spare being employed for their maintenance on week days, have saved it. In Bombay, this is the only shop which endeavours to take khadi to every door; and the workers are quite confident that in the near future this bhandar will have taken the message of khadi to every house in the city and suburbs.

I wish the workers every success.

Young India, 21-7-1927

253. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

MYSORE,
July 21, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. I shall try to secure Shanti's room for you if it is at all possible.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 5253. Courtesy: Mirabehn

254. LETTER TO S. V. KAUJALGI

AS AT KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 21, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Owing to the touring, I have not been able to overtake it. I have shown it to Gangadharrao, and I see that though you are both servants of the country, you are temperamentally so hopelessly different or seem to me.

I have not resumed the tour with full confidence. I simply felt that what little strength I had gathered might be carefully used for finishing in a mild form the programme that had already been mapped out and for realizing the khadi collections. The tour was undertaken also purely in the interest of khadi. I had neither the desire nor the capacity for doing general propaganda work in the existing state of the country. For me, khadi is my propaganda. For if that one thing can be shown to be a thorough success, everthing else will follow. My idea is that we must have at least one constructive item made a demonstrable success on a wide scale. As it is, the people seem to have lost confidence in themselves, and have made up their minds that they can succeed in no constructive effort.

Gangadharrao is a wholehogger like myself for khadi. I would, therefore, let him take me to those parts which may be promising either for khadi production, or for sale, or for collections for khadi. I would therefore not ask you to join me in the tour, but would expect you to give Gangadharrao or khadi work such help as you can be way writing to friends in the places I may visit.

Mysore will take me up to the end of August, and if I feel at all strong enough, I shall do the Tamil Districts after. For Karnatak, I am

not likely therefore to be ready, if at all this year, before the middle of October. But I should know definitely only after the Mysore tour is finished. I am asking everywhere for reduction of the programme to a minimum and avoidance of places which can be avoided.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. V. KAUJALGI

BIJAPUR

From a Photostat: S. N. 12612

255. LETTER TO Y. M. PARNERKAR

MYSORE,
July 21, 1927

DEAR PARNERKAR,

I have secured the forms that are kept in the Palace Diary at Mysore for some guidance to us. I enclose them herewith.I had a chat with Maganlal to the effect that we should have an accurate record of all the observations that we may make. These forms may help you to draw up something necessary. Of course I would like our forms to be kept in Hindi or Gujarati.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

From a microfilm: S. N. 12920

256. LETTER TO K. P. PADMANABHA IYER

AS AT KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 21, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Do you recommend the diet mentioned in your letter on the strength of extensive experiences and experiments? And, if you do, I would like you to give me an idea of the experiments you have made. Have you considered the real values of banana and tender coconut-milk? Is it not a fact that banana and coconut contain little or no protein; whereas, milk contains comparatively a fair amount of protein? And is it not also a fact that coconut fat is less digestible because less assimilable than animal fact, that is, ghee? Could you recommend coconut-milk in the place of cow's milk for babies?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. P. PADMANABHA IYER
SUB ASST. SURGEON
A. E. DISPENSARY
PUDUKKOTTAI
VIA TUTICORIN

From a photostat: S. N. 14193

257. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

MYSORE,
Ashadha Vad 7, Thursday [*July 21, 1927*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,[2]

It seems Chi. Maitri suffers from bad health from time to time. She may need immediate treatment. If necessary, show her to the doctor.

Ramachandra has left. Even then, do not hesitate to lay off those who are still there. Jamnalalji and Maganlal would have arrived there. So, do whatever is necessary and do not worry and save money.

[1] From the combination of place-name, Gujarati day and month and Thursday in the dateline, the year appears to be 1927, In no other year was Gandhiji at Mysore on *Ashadha Vad*, corresponding to a Thursday. In 1927, it corresponded to July 21.

[2] The letter is in a different hand but the subscription is by Gandhiji.

Take proper care of your ear. I would like you to spend two months in Almora. At present, I have little time either for writing or dictating letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al : S.N. 32874

258. SPEECH TO ADI KARNATAKAS, MYSORE

[*July 21, 1927*][1]

I am both happy and unhappy to meet you. I am happy because I have had occasion to purify myself by having met you, but I am unhappy that for health and other reasons I have to reconcile myself to staying in palaces, although I know full well the miserable conditions in which you live. Truth or God whose votary I am tells me every moment that my place is not in palaces but among you. But this may be a temporary fit of desire for renunciation. It may be that the moment I leave these surrounding I will forget you and your cottages, but it is also possible, and let me hope that a day will come, when God will give me the strength to do the thing I prize so much. Today I have just come to assure you that there is an ever-increasing band of workers interested in and striving for your welfare. I congratulate the Brahmin lady who has dedicated herself to your service. It is my firm faith that in the near future Hinduism will be purged of the stain of untouchability. There is no one high or low in the sight of God, and he who considers himself superior to another is described by the Shastras as foolish. But so far as you are concerned, I am quite sure that your salvation is in your hands. How can you, being Hindus, whose duty it is to protect the cow, eat beef and carrion? It is because it is cheap, I am told. Well, nothing is cheap that holds religion cheap, nothing is dear that holds religion dear. I tell you I find it difficult to persuade the othodox to mix with you, for they tell me, that you are given to beef-eating, liquor and the like. If you will therefore cleanse yourselves you will make work easy for me. Don't retort that the touchables are no better. They are no better, I know, but they may not listen through their pride, you need not imitate them. You have to raise yourselves. You therefore have to purify yourselves. And if you do, no power on earth can stop your onward march.

Young India, 4-8-1997

[1] From a report in The Hindu, 25-7-1927

259. LETTER TO KUSUMBEHN DESAI

BANGALORE,
Ashadh Vad 8, Samvat 1983, July 21, 1927

CHI. KUSUM,

About Haribhai what shall I write to you? You are not alone in your loss. Many others share the grief. But one must bear one's grief. Everyone departs at the appointed time. We too shall do that. I need not have written even this to you, for Bhai Najuklal tells me that you have shown great courage. And that befits one who has been trained by Haribhai, because you were more his pupil than his wife.[1]

What do you wish to do now? I do not know if your parents are alive. Let me know your position. If you wish to live in the Ashram, let me know that too. Write to me without any reservations.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Kusumbehn Desaine, p. 3

260. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

[*July 22, 1927*]

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL,

I got your letter. Before that, I had received Dr. Chandulal's telegram and had sent a reply to it. It must have been received there.

Please hand over the enclosed letter[2] to Chi. Kusum. Let me know all the facts about her. I hope Chi. Moti and the child keep well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 12140-A

[1] *Vide* also "Death of a Satyagrahi", 7-8-1927.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

261. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

Ashdh Vad 10 [*July 23, 1927*][1]

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

Your letter. I am writing to Nanasaheb Deo. The venture just undertaken is highly commendable. Nanasaheb will write to me if any help from Vinoba or Kakasaheb is needed for this work.

Keep Ramanama firm in your heart.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 184

262. SPEECH AT FAREWELL MEETING, MYSORE

July 23, 1927

In the course of his speech, Mahatmaji thanked the citizens of Mysore for their contribution and proceeded to observe that their leading citizen, Sowcar D. Banumaiya, had given Rs. 1,501 and to him he had given his word that his contribution would be used only for the poor in this State. It was his desire and that of his co-workers that whatever was collected in Mysore should if possible be spent in Mysore. It was however the usual thing, where there was not an adequate number of the poor, or where there was no scope for encouraging the manufacture of khadi, to spend the amount collected in another part of the country, where poverty was acute, and where they could not raise any fund. For example, in Utkal Province, where the people were extremely poor and miserable, and where consequently they could not raise any fund, funds raised elsewhere had to be spent on khadi work and thereby for feeding the poor of Utkal.

Bombay and Cutch had subscribed large sums, but not a pie could be spent in Bombay. All that was collected there was spent elsewhere. He had collected lakhs of rupees from his Marwari friends in Marwar, but they were not spent there.

They must bear in mind one thing, that South India and North India are not separate, and that in South India, Andhra, Tamilnad and Karnataka are not separate. They should never think that there is no sort of connection or relationship between these, or between North India and South India. They should all make effort for the prosperity of Karnataka. It was not merely for Karnataka, but for the progress and prosperity of the whole country.

As regards the sums raised in the town, and especially that one on the way to Krishnarajasagara, viz., Rs. 51 given at the Tuberculosis Sanatorium, he saw the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Rameshwardas Poddar", before 5-6-1927 and 12-6-1927.

patients there and they had left a deep impression on his mind. To use Pandit Malaviyaji's expression, their gift was *suddha* cowrie given with a pure heart. He had no idea they would offer him anything, and when such pure gift came up [of] its own accord there was a heavy responsibility on those entrusted with it. That was not the only *suddha* cowrie he had received. He had been daily praying to God that not a pie should be mis-spent, that every pie may be utilized for the cause. The accounts may be examined not merely by the donors, but by the public, and mistakes and mis-handling pointed out. If they slept away, if they gave no thought to it, those that handled the fund today might die, and there would be none to look to its administration or to carry on the work.

In India there were many institutions, many charitable institutions existing for promoting dharma. The funds of not a few of these were used for personal ends. If the public knew their responsibility such things should be impossible. Mahatmaji appealed to one and all to see the amount raised for the cause of the charkha was properly spent. In order, however, to ensure the success of the undertaking, they needed men who had a conscience and a sense of their duty and responsibility.[1]

There is no lack of efficiency among the people of Karnataka. You have a distinguished engineer[2], you have distinguished musicians, you have a distinguished artist[3], and many others that I could name in various other spheres. I want you now to produce a distinguished spinning expert. You have three khadi shops here. I wish you had need for them and even more, but today I know, and this meeting is an eloquent proof of it, that there is no need for three shops. Even many of you who are sympathetically inclined towards khadi are not wearing it. Have therefore instead of those three, one efficient khadi shop and organize it properly. There are many institutions where the charkha has been introduced. I was told that His Highness' bodyguards were spinning, but I also know how inefficiently this work is going on. In all those institutions and for the bodyguards you must engage a spinning expert. Bad yarn, like bad music, is good for nothing. I would like to assure those who would serve *Daridranarayana* that there is music, art, economy and joy in the spinning-wheel. I have seen quite a number of institutions in Mysore—the Princess Krishnarajamanni Sanatorium where I expected nothing, but where the patients insisted on my receiving their genuine token of love for the poor millions; the home for the blind and the

[1] This and the preceding paragraphs are from *The Hindu*, 25-7-1927.

[2] Dr. M. Vishveshvarayya

[3] Venkatappa

mute of which the blind inmates have entertained me to soulful music these two days; the home for the destitute and the infirm as also your school for *Adi Karnataka* boys. These are proofs of the Maharaja's humanitarian spirit, but I may tell you that you have to extend it still further. The blind and the infirm have, thanks to our charitable instincts, not to go without food. But there are millions of our villagers, who cannot go out to beg, who solely depend on a fraction of an acre of land each, and who have often to go without food. We are responsible for their starvation and their poverty. In Mysore which is the home of humanitarian and philanthropic institutions I would urge to have some provision for the toiling, starving millions.

You are doubly fortunate. You have a glorious climate and wonderful natural scenery, and you have a ruler, who from all accounts is good and benevolent and always thinking of the welfare of his people. In a State like this there should not be a single beggar or a single man suffering from starvation and impoverishment. I saw the Krishnarajasagara dam today and was delighted to see that wonderful engineering feat of Sir M. Vishveshvarayya, the second I am told of its kind in the world. In a home of such great enterprises I beg of you to make some provision for *Daridranarayana*. I thank you for the love you have showered on me, and I pray that I may be worthy of it.

Young India, 11-8-1927

263. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 24, 1927

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your beautiful letter. Let nothing be done in a hurry. I wrote four days ago at length to Thadani and asked him to share the letter with you.[1]

Gujarat Vidyalaya at present is out of the question. But if you will place yourself in my hands of course, I have many uses for you. But that is neither here nor there. Discuss everything firmly and calmly with everyone who has the slightest influence over you and then see where you stand. You know what lasting association with me means. Though you may never have to mount the gallows, you must

[1] *Vide* "Letter to N. V. Thadani", 19-7-1927

be prepared to mount them as you would mount a throne or a professorial chair.

Thadani did not understand my previous letter at all, or my letters to you. I do not know how my last letter to him will fare.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 877; also S. N. 12616

264. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

July 24, 1927

MY DEAR MALKANI,,

I have your letter which I was daily expecting.

I understand your situation. You must finish the contract with Thadani first. You have now taken up Sindhi Sahitya Sabha and of course you could not possibly refrain from the flood relief service. When you are free from these obligations you should write to me. Let there be no haste this time. You should discuss the thing fully with your wife and mother-in-law. If while you are testing yourself, you feel more attracted to any work there rather than being at my beck and call, you shall be absolved. If you come back to me, you should do so because you cannot do otherwise. After all you will give a good account of yourself wherever you are. Only I had my eye on you as one of the 'chosen few'. But that is not a forced growth. Being in that state must give the greatest satisfaction to the soul. I would therefore like you to test yourself through and through before you return to me. It won't be a bed of roses. Though I have many plans, I do not know where I should put you, even if you came to me today. All I know is that I should put you where there is the greatest heat.

You may share this letter with as many friends as you like.

I am sorry for Thadani. I know that he won't misunderstand me long. My bitter language was not from anger but from love.

Please ask Jairamdas if he is in need of funds. Have you many workers for the flood relief? I see that where we have not enough true workers, funds are useless.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 873

265. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 24, 1927

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

I have your letter. As you think that the matters between you and Mother are fixed up, I am not writing to her or to Father, but look to you to smooth your way, which you will do if you know your own mind and adhere to it with firmness though with greatest gentleness.

We are not bound to patronize any industry whatsoever. But when in satisfying our vital wants we are bound to patronize some industry, we naturally patronize that which supports our neighbours who need our help most. This answers your question.

With love,

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 9605

266. LETTER TO K. T. CHAKRAVARTI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 24, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 11th instant. I hope that "your prayer to lead me to true light" will be answered.

What passage in *Young India* made you think that I considered the treatment I received from the Congress in 1901 was "beggarly"? Anyway I certainly did not expect nor had any right to expect better treatment than I received from everyone. I do not recall the introduction you refer to, but I have referred elsewhere to the fatherly treatment I received from Surendranath Banerjea. Sir Dinsha Wacha had a perfect right to stop me as he did. It would be intolerable if every youngster, because he has rendered some slight service, claimed the privilege which old and tried servants of the nation should have. Gokhale's name you will find repeatedly mentioned in these chapters for the simple reason that he singled me out for his special attention, not because I think that deserved it or because he alone gave me my due when others failed. Can you not see that I have endeavoured to show in the chapters that the connection between Gokhale and myself

was spontaneous even as it is between husband and wife? It would be a sorrowful thing for the world if a woman, because she happens to attract a particular person and not others, were to consider that she has been slighted by the others and her merit recognized only by one man. Can you not see that these things illustrate the mysterious working of nature, and that these affections can only be somewhat accounted for by the doctrine of previous birth and previous connection?

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

K. T. CHAKRAVARTI

CHITTAGONG

From a photostat: S. N. 12615

267. A LETTER

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 24, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am certainly sorry that General Dyer is suffering from paralysis. I do not think that his paralysis has any necessary connection with his action in Jallianwala Bagh. Have you considered the implcation of such beliefs? After all people whom we consider to be good and pure have also been known to have suffered from serious diseases. My own case is in point. My dysentery, appendicitis and this time a mild attack of paralysis must have been known to you. I should be very sorry if some good Englishmen were to think these diseases were due to my fierce opposition as it must appear in their estimation to the English Government. Though I believe that every disease is a direct result of some transgression of Nature's laws either in this birth or the previous, we have got no data to know invariably the transgressions which led to these diseases.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: S. N. 14194

268. LETTER TO KHURSHID

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 24, 1927

This one line to acknowledge your letter. I was thinking why I have not heard from any of you. How I wish you were with me during this trip because this is a most beatiful country. There is much art here to be seen, and very fine music.

You will tell me what happens ultimately about your getting a post as a music teacher in an Indian State.

I am keeping good health.

Yours sincerely,

MISS KHURSHID
NEPEAN SEA ROAD
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S. N. 14195

269. LETTER TO KUVALAYANAND

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 24, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am taking all the care I can of the body and the tour is taken as gently as possible. I quite agree with you that if I had not moved at all, perhaps, it would have been better. But as the doctor here encouraged me, I felt that I had no right to postpone the tour. After all one has got to take risks in this life and know. . . [1] a body which must perish one day. And, if any mishap occurs, I shall certainly not blame the yogic exercises in the slightest degree but I shall blame myself for having tried an experiment which was fraught with some danger.

The exercises continue as before. Do please come whenever you can.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S. N. 14196

[1] The source has a blank here.

270. LETTER TO SUNDER LAL MATHUR

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 24, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Any clean earth, black or red, but clay will do. The mud poultice should be taken at least for seven days continuously and if it does good, you may continue it till you feel that you have had enough. For dyspesia, a complete fast with copious draughts of water is a fine thing even while earth bandages continue. And if you have the fast, you should clean the bowels once a day by means of enema.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SUNDER LAL MATHUR, B.A., LL.B
Vakil
PIRGHAIB
MORADABAD (U. P.)

From a photostat: S. N. 14197

271. LETTER TO J. W. PETAVEL

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 24, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I shan't get tired of you, because it is not an easy thing to tire me out; but soon you will have to give me up as a bad case. For even your latest letter does not give me the bread I want.

Which is the brilliant successful model colony referred to in your article? I wish I could persuade you to write less and do more. I have told you what I am doing at Sabarmati. It seems to me to be along the lines suggested by you without the American . . .[1] which is your ideal but not mine. You seem to me to build on insufficient data. For instance, what is the use of your telling me that Germans grow 70,000 grains out of one grain, whereas, we in India grow 70 out of one. For, what applies to Germany does not apply to India and will not for generations to come. I wish too that I could cure you of the

[1] The source has a blank here.

habit of stringing together all the distinguished names you can think of, without regard to the relevancy of such stringing. Will you not, like a scientist, appeal to cold reason testing every fact for yourself and enabling the reader to test your tests? Surely you should by this time know that authorities are not required in support of sound propositions except by way of some little stimulation, and they are worse than useless when they are invoked in aid of propositions of doubtful value.

If I was the editor-in-chief of your magazine, nine-tenth of what I read in the specimens you sent me I should score out, and I would require you to rewrite fortifying it with concrete facts, and then I would perhaps still further condense it. Just think what a saving of time it would mean for the busy reader and saving of expense in printer's ink, compositors' and proof-readers' salaries, etc., and the matter thus printed would pass muster even in scientific scale and if it was reasonable, it would sell like hot cakes.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 14198

272. SPEECH AT CIVIC AND SOCIAL PROGRESS ASSOCIATION, BANGALORE[1]

July 24, 1927

FRIENDS,

I have heard of the work of your Association and I am very much pleased. You have today given me an opportunity to learn of your activities and I am gratified to find that one of the prominent among them is the effort that you are making towards the betterment of your *Adi Karnatakas* here. Though one of the chief ways of achieving the progress of your city is by means of an association such as yours, I can tell you, there is no other *punya karma*[2] than this work of uplifting your own brothers and sisters known as *Adi Karnatakas*. But as you yourselves have stated in your address, you have done much in this direction, but much more, very much more remains to be done. You know fully well, the work would never be complete, would

[1] Gandhiji's speech in Hindi was rendered into Kanarese by Gangadharrao Deshpande.

[2] Meritorious deed

never be perfect so long as there is a temple in this land which shuts out your *Adi Karnataka* brother, and so long as there is one person amongst you who would not allow the *Adi Karnataka* to approach him as a brother.

Of course you know the condition of the poor *Adi Karnataka* and you also know that it is not part of the Hindu dharma to eat the flesh of the cow. On the other hand protection of the cow is enjoined on all by the Hindu dharma. And you who know of this, have you taught this to your brethren in the villages? Ignorance of this Hindu dharma had bred evil habits amongst them who are also Hindus, but they must be made to understand that you are really anxious to help them better their lives according to Hindu dharma. You must all open out your hearts to make them understand that. You must do your duty by them if you are true members of the society to which you belong.

Do not think that you have only one duty, the duty to your country to perform. There is also the duty to society and these two are interdependent. You cannot perform the one and neglect the other. You cannot hold them as apart from each other. You will realize that in the uplift of your brethren, in the reform of your social evils, in making your society a real force in the country and in establishing communal harmony, perfect and long-lasting friendship between Hindus and Mussalmans—in all these lies also your duty to country. Thus you will realize that both duties are one for you and if you are to serve your country you must also serve the society to which you belong.

Having realized this you will have to turn your attention to the crying evils of early-marriage system. Do not call it dharma or a thing supported by Shastras that you can marry a little girl fonding on the knee, that it could be straightway married and asked to become a housewife. And yet, I have known many of my friends, learned lawyers and doctors, educated and enlightened men marry girls before they were thirteen. (Laughter) Friends, it is no laughing matter, it is a matter for shame and tears. I tell you, there is no sadder evil in our society than this. You must think of this seriously and not with laughter. Our youth must resolve that they would not marry girls before they are fifteen. It is they who must help in this task of reform. You must all help in this cause, both young and old.

You have doubtless heard of the great name of Ganga Ram[1].

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 21-7-1927.

This great man has done great things in the Punjab by his engineering skill, as your great man, Sir Vishveshvarayya has done here in Mysore. But greater than all these is the work he has done for the cause of widow remarriage. Like that you must also do your bit to help in this cause of the window. But I ask who is a widow? A widow is a person held in high veneration amongst us but can you say that widowhood has come to a girl of 14 and 15 because she has lost her husband? If a parent, due to poverty or other causes, married his girl of 13 who loses her husband next year or immediately, can you say that she is a widow and that she has to suffer all the miseries of life ever after? Day after day this question has been arresting our attention very vitally and we cannot ignore it or afford to remain indifferent. Do not perpetuate suffering. When you men have got the right to marry again, why do you deny it to your ladies? You must recognize that you have got to restore this right and I ask, will you do this and serve your society most truly?

On last word. I have known that societies like yours confine their activities to the cities. This must not be. You must extend your work beyond your cities, to the villages and hamlets. I ask you to remember this. May God bless your society and its noble efforts.

The Hindu, 25-7-1927

273. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 25, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your long letter but none too long for the matters covered by it.

You will guard yourself against the scorpions. Earth should be kept always ready at hand in a receptacle and often exposed to the sun. You should use plenty of it and whenever possible let it directly touch the skin if it is not bruised. It may be renewed every few hours if the pain persists.

Now about the monthly sickness. You perhaps know that observing seclusion is not compulsory at the Ashram. But I am not sure as to what should be exactly done. The women have really to help. For they alone can say what is needed. The untouchability is, I fancy, really due to man's inability to curb his beastly lust. Untouchability merely as to the act probably did not serve the

purpose but when it was complete and became a religious observance, perhaps it came to be respected by man. I wonder how man behaves in the West during this sickness and also how the Mussalman behaves in such circumstances. For the time being you should continue your search and read some literature bearing on it if there is any. If you can correspond with some of your people in the matter, do. And now that you are about this, I shall try to gather what information I can.

I understand what you say about the prayers, etc. I shall wait.

The strain of Mysore was quite bearable.

With love,

BAPU

From a original : C.W. 5254. Courtesy : Mirabehn

274. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day, Ashadh Vad 12 [*July 25, 1927*][1]

SISTERS,

I wish to devote this letter to the subject of attendance at classes. I find great irregularity in your attendance. In the Ashram, social life and lessons in social service begin with these women's classes. Therefore, just as we do not give up taking our daily food except when we are ill or because of some extraordinary circumstance, so also we may be absent from the classes only for unavoidable reasons. You have taken a vow to attend the classes regularly. Then how can you break that vow? As the body can be sustained only by observing the rules of bodily health, an institution or society can be sustained only by observing social rules. Will you not, therefore, promise me that you will not absent yourselves except for reasons which no one can question?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3659

[1] The year is inferred from the reference to Gandhiji's examining the Ashram women's attendance register.

275. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Silence Day [*July 25, 1927*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have received your two letters. Study as much as you like, but take good care of your health.

I think you intend to call on Haribhai's widow, Chi. Kusum. If you do so, find out what her condition is. I have written a letter to her.[2] What is her wish? Are her parents alive? How old is she, and what is her financial condition? Is she self-controlled or overcome with grief? If you know the background to her marriage, let me know it. If not, try to learn it. I had intended to know about it from Haribhai himself, but he is gone.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 616. Courtesy : Vasumati Pandit

276. LETTER TO KUNVARJI PAREKH

Silence Day [*July 25, 1927*][3]

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I write this postcard only to tell you that I think of you every day. I get no time to [write]. Ramdas gives me news about you. I hope your mind is at peace.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati S.N. 9703

[1] From the reference to Haribhai's demise
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Kusumbehn Desai", 22-7-1927.
[3] From the S.N. Register

277. LETTER TO M. CHENGIAH CHETTY[1]

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 26, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Sjt. Rajagopalachariar has shown me your letter. I thank you for the warning about the management of Khadi Funds. I do not know what happened to the Khilafat Funds, except that the banker with whom the funds were placed failed. But I may state that I never had anything to do with the management of the Khilafat Fund. For the Khadi Funds, I am certainly responsible. There is a Council of the All-India Spinners' Association which is entrusted with these Funds and their management. Seth Jamnalal Bajaj who is a very well-known merchant of long standing and a director of several important concerns is the treasurer of the Association. Sjt. Shankerlal Banker who is the son of late Ghelabhai Banker of the Bank of Bombay is the Secretary. The moneys are kept in well-known banks. Proper books of account are kept and they are audited by chartered accountants from time to time. The are inspectors appointed to inspect the accounts of subordinate organizations. Everything that is humanly possible to safeguard the Funds and their proper distribution is being done.

I enclose herewith a copy of the printed report published by the All-India Spinners' Association in which you will find the audited accounts also. If, after perusal of the report or even before, you have any suggestions to make for further safeguarding the Funds, I shall be thankful to receive them.

With reference to my appeal[2] at the Mahila Samaj for ornaments and calling them *streedhan*, I do hold very strong views. Ever since I have been in India, and even in South Africa, I have not hesitated to induce sisters both Indian and European to part with their jewellery. As long ago as 1906, I remember the late Surendranath Banerjea having also appealed to the ladies at Lahore, and I remember too that ornaments were showered upon him. I do not feel that in my appeal I am doing anything out of the way. Indeed yours is the first note of

[1] In reply to his letter dated July 21 in which the addressee had asked "if any committee had been appointed to manage the Khadi Funds". He had also criticized Gandhiji's views on *streedhan*.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Mahila Samaj, Bangalore", 13-7-1927.

dissent I have yet had. In fact, many well-to-do friends have been glad of my appeal, and some of them even took me to their homes when I was appealing on behalf of the Tilak Swaraj Fund and asked me to appeal to their womenfolk to part with their ornaments, their intention being to wean the latter from a craving for hoarding and wearing costly jewels. I have been often publicly thanked for having succeeded to some slight extent in introducing simplicity in the households of the rich people of the land. Never has any pressure been brought to bear upon the sisters. In every case where wives have parted with their jewellery, I have presumed the co-operation of their husbands. I have never accepted from little girls anything unless their parents or guardians were consenting parties. Nevertheless, I have believed that it is wrong on the part of husbands to arrogate to themselves the right of dictating what their wives shall or shall not do with their jewellery. It is the one thing which is in their exclusive possession, and I think that they should have the freest right to dispose of them how they will. But this is my own personal opinion and has nothing to do with what has actually happened in practice.

Do you think that because some people, who in their enthusiasm parted with their foreign cloth and allowed them to be burnt, now repent, I should also repent with them for having asked them to do what they did in a moment of lucidity and what it was their sacred duty to have done. If you do, I must again respectfully dissent from you. I had not only no compunction when I made an appeal for burning of foreign cloth, very costly in many instances, but I have not the slightest trace of repentance in me for having got the response I did. I always look forward to[1] that act of burning as one of the many sacred acts I have been privileged by God to be party to.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. CHENGIAH CHETTY

CHAMARAJPET

BANGALORE CITY

From a microfiom: S. N. 12618

[1] Perhaps a slip for "I always look back on"

278. LETTER TO RAJKISHORI MEHROTRA

BANGALORE,
July 26, 1927

CHI. RAJKISHORI,

Your postcard. Keep up this practice of writing. What are you reading these days? What is your daily routine? How is your health? I am in Bangalore up to August. I am recouping strength.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C. W. 4963. Courtesy: Parashuram Mehrotra

279. LETTER TO JETHALAL JOSHI

BANGALORE,
Ashadh Krishna 13 [*July 26, 1927*]

BHAI JETHALALJI,

Your letter. I see no harm—in fact there would be advantage—in chanting the *Gayatri mantra* while plying the *takli,* especially when there is sacrificial spinning, i.e., as gesture of sympathy for the poor.

Your wife should visit her father's place clad in khadi only and if her parents urge her to give up khadi, she should gently convince them. Her parents' displeasure, she should bear with calm. If she has neither this courage nor the strength to bear her parents' displeasure she should, as long as it might be necessary in order to please them, wear whatever clothes they give her.

You need not take the vow of having only one meal a day. It is wrong and also harmful to eat at one time a quantity equal to two meals. Of course one should give up the evening meal and eat sparingly at the other meals.

Let me know what present occupation is and also what else you are equipped to do, your educational qualifications and so on. Perhaps you can get good milk from the Ashram. Make enquiries there. Milk from the Ashram cannot be delivered at your residence.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1355

280. A LETTER

July 26, 1927

Your letter.

If your wife has fallen, I would hold you too responsible for it. You were separated from her. The girl would not have been keen on marrying you nor would she have consented to your separation. If she could not live without sex and went astray, why blame her? When a man errs, his wife puts up with it with suppressed anger. If the son which your wife has borne is not yours, you can sever relationship with her. But I feel you must yourself support the woman. If she abandons you or chooses to live with the other man, you have to bear it. You are not obliged to live with your wife out of a sense of shame. If you intend to live with her, pitying her for falling because you had gone away, that too would not be regarded as immoral. But you can take this step only when the woman has repented for her action and she is going to be happy in your company. If, however, she has become absolutely depraved, it is your duty to abandon her.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

281. SPEECH AT UNITED THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE, BANGALORE[1]

[*July 26, 1927*][2]

The first desideratum was a knowledge of Hindi for those who aspired to be ministers to the masses of the country. I confess that it is the fault of the previous generation who committed us to the medium of English. But you must break the barrier, if you would reach the masses beyond the Vindhya range. As regards the service that can be or should be rendered by you, I don't think I need speak much, for you have made my task easy by endorsing my mission of the spinning-wheel. You have mentioned the depressed classes, but there is a vast mass of men who are more depressed than the so-called

[1] From Mahadev Desai's article "Talks with Missionaries". The motto of the college, "Go ye not to be ministered unto, but to minister unto other people", served as the text of the talk.

[2] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

depressed classes, and who constitute the real India. The vast network of railways touches but a fringe of these masses, and if you will travel somewhat outside the railway beat you will visualize them. These railway lines running north to south and east to west are arteries which drain away the wealth of the masses—Lord Salisbury used the word "bleed"—and no return is made to them. We in the cities become partners in the blood-sucking process, which phrase, however bad it may be, truly depicts the state of things. I have something of this class. I have brooded over their wants, and if I was a painter I could draw a picture of them with their blank eyes, without a spark or lustre or life in them. How are we to minister to them? Tolostoy gave the picturesque phrase, "Let us get off the shoulders of our neighbours." If everyone performs that single operation he would have rendered all service God requires of him. It is a startling proposition, and as you are in a place where you are learning the art of ministry, you must work it out. Build up the premises one on another and see what you arrive at. If you discover any other method than I have suggested of getting off the backs of those poor people, let me know. I am a learner myself, I have no axe to grind, and wherever I see a truth, I take it up and try to act up to it.

A missionary friend from America wrote to me suggesting literary education for the masses instead of the charkha.[1] Well, I felt sorry for him, especially because he had written the letter from the fulness of his heart. I do not think even Jesus knew much of letters, and if the early Christians cultivated literary knowledge, it was in order to perform their ministry better. But I suppose there is no passage in the New Testament in which there is even the slightest emphasis placed on mere literary education as the first condition for people to come to their own. Not that I discount literacy. It is a question of emphasis. It is like a good thing misplaced just like matter which is misplaced becomes dirt. And whenever I see wrong emphasis being placed on a good thing, my soul rises up against it. Before a child has knowledge of letters, it must be fed and clothed and taught the art of feeding itself. I do not want it to be spoon-fed, but self-reliant. Let you children first know the use of their hands and feet. So I say the first

[1] *Vide* "Letter to W. B. Stover", 16-6-1927.

condition is to take to them the message of the spinning-wheel.

I did not like the expression "patronizing khadi" used by you. It has a bad odour. Will you become patrons or servants? So long as khadi is patronized it will be a fad or fashion, but when it becomes a passion it will be the symbol of service. The moment you begin to use khadi, you begin to serve. During my 35 years' constant contact with the poor I have found the art of service incredibly simple. It is not learnt in colleges and schools. The spirit of service can be learnt anywhere. Again here it is a question of emphasis. The art itself is as simple as the process whereby Saul became Paul[1] . The change came over him with a flash, and immediately there is a change of heart in you, you become ministers. May God help to clear this for you.

Young India, 11-8-1927

282. SPEECH AT MYTHIC SOCIETY, BANGALORE

July 26, 1927

FRIENDS,

I do not know whether you can all hear me. I am sorry I cannot raise my voice. I thank you sincerely for your address and garlands and for having brought me to this Temple of Peace. I must confess I feel like a fish out of water, for I have long been out of touch, that touch with literature which this Society rightly expects. For one long unbroken period of 35 years my lot has been cast in less peaceful spheres which have kept me out all literary studies, much as I should have valued it. Except for the short time that I was in prison, I had no other time to turn to literature. I have seen your journal and I congratulate you on your work. You have stated you are interested in research work and I see that your research work has been thorough-going.[2]

I suggest that some one of you should make researches to find

[1] New Testament, *The Acts,* ix

[2] This paragraph has been taken from *The Hindu,* 27-7-1927.

out what led to the curse of untouchability to descend upon this land. I wish that the learned men of Mysore, amongst whom there are some of the finest scholars, could find out authorities to show that untouchability could be no part of the Hindu religion, and that our remote ancestors through whom we received the inspiration of the Vedas and who gave us the rich heritage of the Upanishads never believed in untouchability, even as I don't, and that it is merely a vicious excrescence upon Hinduism. And I tell you that if you can do so, among the many services you have already rendered this will not be by any means the least. Workers like myself say on their own authority that this thing is no part of Hinduism. I am no scholar and have to read the Shastras in the original, by my Hindu soul rises up in revolt against such an abomination. However, I look to you scholars and research students to arm workers like myself with authoritative declarations that would command the attention of pundits, and to furnish workers with evidence so forceful and masterly as would dissolve the orthodox opposition. It should be the proud privilege of your Society to furnish workers with authoritative texts which they could not get anywhere else, and fortify them in their work.

Young India, 18-8-1927

283. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

[After *July 26, 1927*][1]

I have your letter intended for *Young India*. At first I laughed over it and dictated a brief note on it and sent it to be typed for *Young India*. But today I woke up to find myself sorry at the thought of your letter and my laughter disappeared because I see in it a lack of restraint and understanding. I cannot now recall your expressing a difference of opinion with me. I know there were discussions between us but I had thought that in the end you were convinced. But if that is not so, the certificate you grant me in your letter is out of place, and your letter suggests that the mental weakness you mention has been with me from the moment we knew each other. The publicity you have given to my mental weakness does not pain me. But I am hurt because you kept your knowledge of it from me till today and because I see that some matters have been twisted in your letter. Moreover, a telegram from Ahmedabad today says that many activities are at a standstill because of unusually heavy rain and if *Young India* cannot come out this time the matter already sent is enough to fill the next issue. Nature has, therefore, provided me with enough respite to await your reply. Where you blame me for scribbling away in haste, I do not see even a trace of hurry, but since your letter has hurt me I do feel that I should be in no hurry to write about it. I understand from your last letter that you did not, as usual, hasten to meet me because of your mother's illness. I want you therefore to call on me if her condition has improved. If you feel that you are not likely to misunderstand me at any point, I do not think you need see me. Write to me if you hold the latter view or send me a telegram, so that I shall certainly publish your letter.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

[1] The source has this letter after the entries for July 26, 1927.

284. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[Before *July 27, 1927*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Shankaran brings you this letter. I expect him to give you as much satisfaction as Pyarelal did. If Pyarelal wishes he may visit me here before going to the Ashram.

It is a great comfort to me that you are enjoying good health. My going there is of course out of the question. But the air here is not much inferior to what you have there. Taramati should write to me. Dilip will have started romping around.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

285. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

[*July 27, 1927*][2]

Your letter (or ultimatum?) to hand. My letter appears to have crossed yours. I urge you not to act in haste. You do not think you are in a hurry because you are impatient to start your fast. However, I do feel that you are in too great a hurry. If you accept the moral position at any rate that when you take such a step you should do so in my presence, please withdraw your ultimatum. I have received three strong letters urging me to dissuade you from undertaking this fast. One is from Bhai Kishorelal, another from Ramniklal and the third from Mirabehn. Mirabehn met you after a long interval, became very sad on seeing you and found your countenance "queer". She found even your talk "queer" and felt that you had become extremely "emotional". All these words in quotes are hers. The letter was in Hindi but she had used the English words in it. I suggested to her that she write to you directly.[3] I have received her reply also and she says that she dare not go to that extent lest she should hurt you. In spite of my reporting all these three opinions, if I were near you and you could persuade me,I would grant you permission to undertake the fast

[1] The addressee received the letter on July 27, 1927
[2] *Vide* the succeeding item.
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 17-7-1927.

and also bless you. But since I am so far away, I must also let these three letters make their impact on my mind. Your letter appears to contradict your own earlier letter because you were till now hoping for my permission, and I presumed that you would not undertake the fast if you do not have it. But in your last letter you say nothing about my permission, you no more expect it but seek my blessings. If you are hoping for my permission, I shall not be able to grant it. How could I permit what I do not consider right? Personally I think even if you have my permission for your course of action, both you and I must obtain the permission of the Managing Committee. If there is anyone who can be free to do such things after obtaining such permission, it is perhaps myself because, being the founder of the Ashram and initiator of the new and vital experiments in satyagraha, I may be expected to have such privilege, but I do have some doubt in this regard too. Even I should not have the right to take any steps that might harm the institution once it has been founded. I was mindful of this also when I had undertaken the seven days's fast. And even about that, there was some talk.

I have indulged in so much autobiography in order to make you see your duty. I am one of those who believe that there is a place for a fast like yours in certain situations. But I see clearly from this distance that yours is not such a situation and how can I bless a thing which I regard as improper? Hence if you would be persistent I can only say that I shall bear with your persistence and acquiesce in the inevitable unwillingly and painfully. Before you take any step, discuss the matter with the Managing Committee with a calm mind and also with those whom you regard as your personal friends. Consider your duty towards Lilabehn; if she consents to your step, I would not value her consent; but if she opposes, I would value it greatly because you have sheltered her. If you can and will withdraw your ultimatum and give me an assurance that without my permission you will never embark on a fast, I am ready, at present through correspondence and personally if necessary and when an occasion offers, to discuss the ethics of fasting and whetever points you have raised in your earlier letter. I wish our friends and the Managing Committee to read this letter and you should give it to them for reading. May God help you.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

286. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 27, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. Of course you know that Wardha is but a branch of Sabarmati. But Wardha has to specialize for discipline and Vinoba is developing it without troubling me and without being hampered by me. Nor has Wardha the same changes to face or new experiments to make as Sabarmati has. And then Sabarmati has no one mind uncontrolled by outside force to change it as Wardha has. But for all practical purposes, Sabarmati and Wardha must be considered as one and indivisible.

But now your mind must be freed for the next two months from even having to think of these places. Your sole concern during these precious two months is to concentrate on your work and on your health.

I have an ultimatum from Bhansali that he proposes to commence his long fast as from the 6th of August. I have warned him against it and implored him not to undertake it at least till I have gone to the Ashram and had an opportunity of discussing the thing with him. The letter goes today. I have mentioned your opinion also about his proposed fast and about his appearance. I hope he will listen to my entreaty.

What food are you taking daily?

With love,

BAPU

SRIMATI MIRABAI
SATYAGRAHASHRAM
WARDHA

From the original : C.W. 5225. Courtesy : Mirabehn

287. LETTER TO FRANCISCA STANDENATH [1]

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 27, 1927

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am glad you have come in such close touch with the friends[2] to whom I gave an introduction note for you. I have regarded them as among the best of the wealthy people of my acquaintance.

From your letter I suspect that you regard cotton-spinning as the only spinning. But it is not so. Wool-spinning is also important, though nothing like cotton-spinning, for the simple reason that millions live on the plains and hardly require woollen clothing. By all means do cotton-spinning when you can; but why not wool-spinning in the absence of cotton-spinning. And then the woollen yarn may be woven for your own use. You must know that I myself do use hand-spun wool without the slightest compunction. Even as I am dictating this letter, I have covered myself with a woollen blanket, hand-spun of course. It is fairly cold where I am recuperating. I am asking Swami Anand to send your some hand-spun wool, and I am also asking him to send you a blanket piece which you can either use as a blanket or for making blouses, etc. It won't be smooth to the touch, but then you won't need to wear it next to the skin.

I note that you are persevering in your study of Sanskrit and other languages.

Whenever you can spare some money, you should both come to India, if only for a season and see things for yourself. You will then perhaps get a true perspective and probably be enabled to modify some of the exaggerated notions you might have about India in general and the Ashram and myself in particular. I am anxious that you should know things as they are, or at least as they appear to you at close quarters and not as they seem to you from a distance.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 12527

[1] n reply to her letter dated July 26
[2] Ranchhodlal Amritlal Thaker and Bhogilal Thaker

288. LETTER TO TARINI PRASAD SINHA

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 27, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am asking *Young India* office to send the *Manchester Guardian* copy of *Young India* to Mr. Dickes personally.

As to the suggested change, I have not yet felt the force of Mr. Dickes' remarks.[1] With me it is a matter of "experiments with truth". But not knowing the use of English words so well as an Englishman, I would like Mr. Dickes, if he can find time, to explain more fully his reasoning.

As to what Mr. Dickes calls the "God stunt", I can only say in all humility that it is a precious fact with me much truer than the fact that I am writing to you.

Will you please pass this letter on to Mr. Dickes?

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 12529

289. LETTER TO SHAPURJI SAKLATVALA

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 27, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I should love to respond, as I know you would like me to, to your earnest call; but I see that we look at things differently. Pray do not think that my labour work unlike khaddar work is merely confined to Ahmedabad. If labour elsewhere will accept my guidance, I would certainly organize it all over. But I am content with guiding Ahmedabad and hope that if Ahmedabad proves successful, it will be copied by the whole of India.

There is no analogy between the khaddar movement and the labour movement. If khaddar like labour were conducted by several distinct organizations, probably I would be compelled to restrict my activities to those organizations only that would listen to me. I have no magical power for bringing labour organization out of disorganization. The organic touch with labour all over India I have because

[1] The addressee had passed on to Gandhiji a suggestion of E. W. Dickes that the title of *The Story of My Experiments with Truth* be changed into "The Story of My Schooling with Truth".

wherever I go labour flocks round me. But that touch is not strong enough to enable me to organize it after my own fashion. I give you my assurance that the moment I feel that I can usefully come in, I shall not hesitate to offer my services to the all-India organization.

About the Khaddar Fund, I can only say you have written without knowledge. Even law will prevent me from using the Khaddar Fund for any other than the advertised purpose even if my conscience becomes elastic enough to permit me to use it otherwise.

I read the other day in the papers that you had a slight operation performed on you and that you were already on the road to recovery. I hope that you have now fully recovered.

I wrote to you only the other day about your own personal affairs which shall not escape my attention.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 12533

290. LETTER TO C. V. VAIDYA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 27, 1927

DEAR MR. VAIDYA,

I must thank you for your delightful letter with its humorous touches. I am not sending it to Pandit Satavalekar, but drinking in the facts, or what is a better term, your opinions—for are not facts stated but opinions,—all for myself.

In the course of my practice, I have so often envied the poor judges who, if they were honest, I knew, must have been hard put to it for coming to a just decision. And in spite of knowing this thing, I have become a self-constituted judge and much trying on account of my ignorance of the originals to know the correct interpretation or practice of the Vedas or practice of our remote forefathers. Of course I don't go so far remote as to the monkeys as Darwin would have as our remote ancestors. And I am safe from destruction in the midst of the war of opposite opinions by my sane belief that it is our right irrespective of the interpretation of the written Vedas or the practice of our ancestors to regulate our practice in the light of modern research and the behest of our own conscience.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. V. VAIDYA
POONA CITY

From a microfilm : S.N. 12621

291. LETTER TO S. RAMANATHAN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 27, 1927

MY DEAR RAMANATHAN,

I have both your letters. I hope you are now completely restored.

Mr. Mahadeva Iyer has been coming to me since my return from Mysore almost every day, and I have been giving a few minutes daily to him. If I find anything useful to say, I shall write to you again.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. RAMANATHAN
A. I. S. A.
ERODE

From a microfilm : S.N. 12933

292. LETTER TO NARGIS CAPTAIN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 27, 1927

I know why you have not written to me all these long long days. But all the same I have got to write to you. I saw your letters both to Jammabehn and Mithubehn. I had long chats with the latter, and I see that whilst she is most lovable and a woman having immense capacity for work and service, she has an awful temper and a highly suspicious nature. She has developed, what seems to me to be utterly groundless, suspicion of Yashwantprasad whom she has come to regard as her determined enemy. This makes it practically impossible for Jamnabehn to work with her. On the whole, therefore, it seems to me that it would be better to leave her alone in the development of fashionable khadi which has made her speciality and to which she gives the whole of her time. After all her accounts are perfect in the sense that every penny received and spent is accounted for. The account-keeping is not in the orthodox style. That I suppose is now being done. The accounts can also be regularly audited. And so long as she does that, there is no reason why her work should not be treated as an independent branch of the Stree Sabha. You may all still hold

yourselves ready for services whenever she wants them. I say you all because Mithubehn does not want interference from anybody except when she requires it. I sympathize with her in this attitude because with her highly suspicious nature of which she has no knowledge, she cannot take up any other attitude if she is to work in peace. I endeavoured to show her that Yeshwantprasad had no axe to grind and that he was interested in her work because Jamnabehn was in it, and every one of you appreciated his help. But I could not remove her suspicion. On the contrary, she reiterated it and said that like hers my eyes would in course of time be opened to Yeshwantprasad's intriguing nature as she called it. This is unfortunate. But we have to make the best of it. Unfortunately the women of India have not before now worked in an organized fashion. It will therefore be some time before they can do so. As a matter of fact even the men of India are not yet able to run many successful organizations without friction and without mutual suspicion. I do not want you to overtax yourself about this matter. But if you can send for Mithubehn and others and, seeing that they accept you as their commander-in-chief, pull them all by the ear and make them work together, it would be very nice.

I see that since your return home, you have not kept first class health. But you must really be strong. I shan't be satisfied till you have gone to Kashmir. Though I have never seen it, I have heard a lot about it. It is highly likely that the bracing air of Kashmir will suit you admirably.

Do write to me and tell me all about your health. How I wish you could have come here. The weather is really superb and quite cool for us, but of course it may not be for you.

MRS. NARGIS CAPTAIN

COMRA HALL

PANCHGANI

From a photostat : S.N. 14199

293. LETTER TO S. V. KAUJALGI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 27, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I see my letter has hurt you. But I do not know what else I could have done in the circumstances. The verse you have quoted is perfect. As a woman I should feel pride in nestling myself in the bosom of my husband. As a creeper I should be faithful to the immovable tree which lies near me and affords me protection and feel pride in circling myself round it. And as a leader or president of the Spinners' Association I should be false to my trust if I do not depend upon those co-workers whom I ever find near me and ready to do the work entrusted to them. Is it not the essential condition of the very existence of the three named by the poet in the verse quoted by you? Come near me, woo me and I shall be a faithful wife. Be like an immovable tree near me, and I shall circle round you. Merge yourself in khadi work and lead me by the nose. But if you will not occupy any of the three positions, then I shall accept you with quiet resignation as a candid critic offering explanations to the Press. You shall still remain a friend and fellow-worker, and I shall demand from you such quota of service as, in my opinion, you can render.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 19790

294. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

BANGALORE,
Ashadh Krishna 14 [*July 27, 1927*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Your letter. Let me know what is being arranged for you. I had always held that you could never fall ill. And now I learn from your letter that you too have fallen ill. What was it? I am keeping well. These days I also do a bit of touring but Bangalore will remain my headquarters till the end of August.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 3320

[1] Gandhiji was in Bangalore on this date in 1927.

295. LETTER TO T. PARAMASIVA IYER

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 29, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and warning. But I am none the wiser for your letter. I shall try to read what you have written about Bhadravati.

What however briefly is your objection to Krishnarajasagara? What do you think can be the motive prompting him to falsehoods, etc., which you ascribe to Sir M. Vishveshvarayya? Everything I have heard about his character is entirely in his favour. Outside Karnatak he is known as a very patriotic man. Personally I am totally opposed to him in his ambition for Americanizing India. Nor do I share his dream about supplying electric power to every village in India. But this fundamental difference does not blind me to his great abilities and his great services. I would therefore require positive unchallengeable proof to dislodge him from the position he occupies in my estimation.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. PARAMASIVA IYER
RETIRED JUDGE
'THE WHITE HOUSE'
BANGALORE CITY

From a microfilm : S.N. 12623

296. LETTER TO S. D. NADKARNI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 29, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I do not propose to publish your letter suggesting the adoption of Devanagari as the all-India script. I have denied myself the pleasure of publishing a similar and more elaborate letter from Kakasaheb Kalelkar because it would merely lead to confusion. The reform of Devanagari, however desirable it may be, is a side issue. If we can but induce leaders of thought to adopt Devanagari as a common script its reform wherever necessary is bound to come.

Personally I like your suggestion for dropping the horizontal

caps as I would call them. Kakasaheb goes one better and suggests the Gujarati script which is really reformed Nagari. But I have suppressed Kakasaheb's proposal because it would simply lead to an interminable controversy and take the mind of thinking India away from the main issue. Whilst I believe that the reformation of Devanagari in some shape or other is necessary, I am only indifferent to it at present. It would be a tremendous saving of national energy and a move on the part of different linguistic provinces towards one another to adopt one script however imperfect it may be.

For your information I give you the reason for not printing *Navajivan* in Devanagari. *Navajivan* has its own work cut out. In order to make good its message it has submitted to a curtailment of its subscription list. You may not know that at one time it and *Young India* had each nearly 30,000 subscribers. But today it has come down to less than 7,000. I do not mind its coming to zero for enforcement of the mission for which the papers were brought into being. Adoption of Devanagari was not part of that mission. I have a large number of women readers and Parsis and Mussalmans who can struggle even through Gujarati type with some labour. They find it difficult even to understand the moderate number of Sanskrit words that have got to be used in editing *Navajivan*. If I adopt Devanagari all these would be helpless and give up *Navajivan* and me in sheer disgust. Amongst what may be called the upper ten, I have, I fear, very few readers of *Navajivan*.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. D. NADKARNI
KARWAR
(N. KANARA)

From a photostat : S.N. 12625

297. LETTER TO T. R. MAHADEVA IYER

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 29, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

In my opinion you will be justified and you are bound after due notice to the public and especially to the donors to hand over the Gurukula property both movable and immovable to those who have declared themselves the committee of management, if the committee

will not agree to arbitration.

The answers I have given to your questions are not to be considered as legal opinion in any sense. They are merely answers that common sense has dictated to me. And though I have no objection whatsoever to your publishing the answers, I would much rather that they were not, because I have no desire to be drawn into a public controversy over any of the answers.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. R. MAHADEVA IYER
TAMIL GURUKULA
SHERMADEVI

From a microfilm : S.N. 12935

298. LETTER TO T. T. SHARMAN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 29, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter together with a copy of your Weekly. It seems to me to be perfectly useless for me to send anything for your paper and I cannot read it and therefore know nothing of its contents. I do not remember ever to have written anything for any paper whose policy and principles I did not know and whose conductors were equally unfamiliar to me. I hope you will therefore please excuse me, and I am sure in my present state of health you will not want me to have a friend to translate for me your paper and give so much of my time to it.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. T. SHARMAN
EDITOR
"VISVAKARNATAKA"
BANGALORE CITY

From a microfilm : S.N. 14201

299. LETTER TO N. SANKARA IYER

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 29, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for the extract from Tchekov story and the information about mill khaddar. I know that several mills are openly selling what is called mill khaddar. I am working through the khaddar organizations to minimize the effect of this deception.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. SANKARA AIYER
14, PATKAR'S BUILDING
BANDRA,
BOMBAY NO. 20

From a microfilm : S.N. 19791

300. LETTER TO RADHA SUNDER DAS

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 29, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am sorry that your application has not been favourably received. But you must be neither despondent nor enraged against those who have rejected your application. These things must always happen. And it would be wrong to suppose that because our applications are not accepted injustice has been done. Please keep me informed of your progress and movements.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RADHA SUNDER DAS
SURI P.O.
BIRBHOOM DISTRICT

From a microfilm : S.N. 19792

301. LETTER TO H. G. PATHAK

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 29, 1927

MY DEAR HARIBHAU,

I have your letter. No apology is needed for not writing in Hindi. But I shall certainly be glad at the end of six months from now to find you writing in Hindi.

I did not take part in any of the proceedings of the A.I.S.A. Council meeting here. Nor had I seen the resolution of which you have sent me a copy. I have promised Jamnalalji and other members of the Council faithfully not to intervene in anything that they may do except when they ask me.

Whatever you think is not proper in the resolution I would like you to write to Jamnalalji or to Mr. Banker. But I quite agree with you that the workers ought not to be hampered by unnecessary restrictions. I do not think there is any desire on the part of the Council to put any obstruction in the way of the young men.

With reference to the Rs. 2,500 loan I did not understand that it was to be used for buying the *Gandhi Shikshanamala* but that it was to be used for paying off Mr. Kanitkar's debts and that the books were to [be] held as security for the amount of the loan. Nor did I contemplate that if there were any profits made from the sale of the books they were to go to A.I.S.A. So far as I recollect our conversation I did not contemplate making any profits. But if there were any, they should go towards the upkeep of the *Swarajya* which after all is as much Mr. Kanitkar's concern as any other. You may make use of this letter in your communication with Jamnalalji, and if necessary, the resolution will be altered accordingly at the next meeting of the Council. But, even as the resolution stands, I do not think that for your purposes it needs any alteration.

Instead of calling the copies "a security", they have called the transaction "a sale" which in effect is one and the same thing, and the question of profits is a very distant hope.

The pronote required should of course be sent without delay by you even if you wish for any alterations in the resolution.

I do not think that the charge against the Council of lukwarmness towards Maharashtra is correct. That you have to suffer is true and that perhaps makes workers sensitive and makes them

expect from the Council what it really cannot do. But the suffering will only make you all the fitter for service if the suffering does notweaken the principles of the sufferers.

Regarding Lokamanya's reminiscences you are asking me to put an extra tax upon the very limited energy that I have got and which I require for my present work. Nothing that I may write can possibly remove the impression that might have been created with reference to my attitude towards Lokamanya or his life-work. That can only be removed by my uniformly correct conduct, and the question of conduct can only be determined after my death. If, therefore, I write anything at all I should certainly not do so in the hope of the reward that you hold out before me.

About the unemployment, I don't know what I can do from here beyond saying that you should send all the likely names to the Technical Department. Personally I think that every willing worker can be accommodated in the Khadi Service. But I cannot give that faith to all the co-workers. And for such practical work, therefore, it is best for the present to treat me as dead. If I come to life again and plunge into practical work, you will certainly come to me. But, for the present, you have to go to Mr. Banker. Frame a policy and then see whether many can be accommodated. Do not give up the hope or the work on behalf of the unemployed fit men because you can no longer rely upon me.

About the co-operation with mill-owners, it is really for them to co-operate with us. Our co-operation therefore just now consists in cheapening khadi, making it stronger and in helping the mill-owners to get all the Government aid they can.

Have I made myself clear? I shall make note of Annapurnabai's *vrat*[1]. Please write to Mr. Banker for a formal receipt of your policy.

I shall look forward to Mr. Joglekar's pocket looms.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. H. G. PATHAK
283, SADASHIV PETH
POONA CITY

From a microfilm : S.N. 19793

[1] Vow

302. LETTER TO KUSUMBEHN DESAI

BANGALORE,
July 29, 1927

CHI. KUSUM,

I had been waiting for your letter. Chi. Vasumati had given me some information. Now your letter completes the picture.

I cannot think of any better arrangement than that you should take charge of Haribhai's pupils and they should look after you. But whether you can take up this work, you alone know best. I see that you were as much Haribhai's pupil as his wife. You and your well-wishers will know only by experience how far your mind has become trained. We do not always understand our mind.

I see from the letters of Chi. Vasumati and Bhai Chhaganlal Joshi that your marriage was largely your own choice. It was your own strong wish that you should marry Haribhai. You can show in many ways that your choice was worthy. A girl who selects as her husband a man who is much older than herself marries not his body but its master. Haribhai's body has passed away. But he himself is still you, and will remain with you as long as you wish.

Ask me anything you wish to. I shall be here in Bangalore till the end of this month.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Kusumbehn Desaine, p. 4

303. DISCUSSION WITH MISSIONARIES [1]

[*July 29, 1927*][2]

Gandhiji opened the discussion by claiming himself to be a friend of the missionaries, ever since his close contact with them in South Africa.

Though I have been a friend, I have always been a critic, not from any desire to be critical, but because I have felt that I would be a better friend if I opened out my heart, even at the risk of wounding their feelings. They never allowed me to think that they felt hurt, they certainly never resented my criticism.

Then he referred to his first speech before the missionaries in India on swadeshi, since which twelve years had rolled away and with them much of the mists also.

The first distinction I would like to make, after these prefatory remarks, between your missionary work and mine, is that while I am strengthening the faith of the people, you are undermining it. Your work, I have always held, will be all the richer, if you accept as settled facts the faiths of the people you come to serve—faiths which, however crude, are valuable to them. And in order to appreciate what I say, it becomes perhaps necessary to re-read the message of the Bible in terms of what is happening around us. The world is the same, but the spirit ever broadens intensively and extensively, and it might be that many things in the Bible will have to be re-interpreted in the light of discoveries—not of modern science—but in the spiritual world in the shape of direct experiences common to all faiths. The fundamental verses of St. John do require to be re-read and re-interpreted. I have come to feel that like us human beings words have their evolution from stage to stage in the contents they hold. For instance the contents of the richest word—God—are not the same to every one of us. They will vary with the experience of each. They will mean one thing to the Santhal and another to his next door neighbour Ravindranath Tagore. The *sanatani* may reject my interpretation of God and Hinduism. But God Himself is a long-suffering God who puts up with any amount of abuse and misinterpretations. If we were to put the spiritual experiences together we would find a resultant which would answer the cravings of human nature. Christianity is

[1] From Mahadev Desai's article, "Talks with Missionaries"
[2] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

1,900 years old, Islam is 1,300 years old, who knows the possibility of either? I have not read the Vedas in the original, but have tried to assimilate their spirit and have not hesitated to say that though the Vedas may be 13,000 years old—or even a million years old, as they well may be, for the word of God is as old as God Himself—even the Vedas must be interpreted in the light of our experience. The powers of God should not be limited by the limitations of our understanding. To you who have come to teach India, I therefore say, you cannot give without taking. If you have come to give rich treasures of experiences, open your hearts out to receive the treasures of this land, and you will not be disappointed, neither will you have misread the message of the Bible.

Interesting questions and answers followed, which I summarize below :

Q. What then are we doing? Are we doing the right thing?

A. You are trying to do the right thing in the wrong way. I want you to complement the faith of the people instead of undermining it. As the Dewan of Mysore said in his address to the Assembly, the *Adi Karnatakas* should be made better Hindus, as they belong to Hindusim. I would similarly say to you, make us better Hindus, i.e., better men or women. Why should a man, even if he becomes a Christian, be torn from his surroundings? Whilst a boy I heard it being said, that to become a Christian was to have a brandy bottle in one hand and beef in the other. Things are better now, but it is not unusual to find Christianity synonymous with denationalization and Europeanization. Must we give up our simplicity, to become better people? Do not lay the axe at our simplicity.

There are not only two issues before us, viz., to serve and to teach, there is a third issue, viz., evangelizing, declaring the glad tidings of the coming of Jesus and his death in redemption for our sins. What is the right way of giving the good news? We need not undermine the faith but we may make people lose their faith in lesser things.

That lands me into the region of interpretation. Whilst I must not enter into it. I may suggest that God did not bear the Cross only 1,900 years ago, but He bears it today, and He dies and is resurrected from day to day. It would be poor comfort to the world if it had to depend upon a historical God who died 2,000 years ago. Do not then preach the God of history, but show Him as He lives today through you. In South Africa I met a number of friends, and read a number of books—Pearson, Parker and Butlerall giving their own

interpretations, and I said to myself I must not bother myself with these conflicting interpretations. It is better to allow our lives to speak for us than our words. C.F. Andrews never preaches. He is incessantly doing his work. He finds enough work and stays where he finds it and takes no credit for bearing the Cross. I have the honour to know hundreds of honest Christians, but I have not known one better than Andrews.

But what about animistic beliefs? Should they not be corrected?

Well, we have been working amongst the so-called 'untouchables' and backward classes, and we have never bothered ourselves with their beliefs, animistic or otherwise. Superstitions and undesirable things go as soon as we begin to live the correct life. I concern myself not with their belief but with asking them to do the right thing. As soon as they do it, their belief rights itself.

You speak of simplicity. But what are we to do in this age of motor-cars? You could not have come here without a motor-car!

Well, a motor-car is not a necessity. I certainly did not need it to come here. If God wants you to be useful he should find the means to make you useful. Motor-cars do not mean the sum of our spiritual experience. There was no motor-car in Jesus' or Mahomed's time, and yet they did not need them for their work. I do not hold them to be essential for real progress. We need to be humble. And humility and simplicity are not mere outward expressions. When Paul speaks of humility he means heart-humility. A true Christian has little need to speak. He goes about his Father's business. May I cite my own case? Speeches were the least part of my work in South Africa. Most of the 16,000 people who rose like one man and joined me had not even seen me, much less heard me speak.

How can we help condemning if we feel that our Christian truth is the only reality?

That brings me to the duty of tolerance. If you cannot feel that the other faith is as true as yours, you should feel at least that the men are as true as you. The intolerance of the Christian missionaries does not, I am glad to say, take the ugly shape it used to take some years ago. Think of the caricature of Hinduism, which one finds in so many publications of the Christian Literature Society. A lady wrote to me the other day saying that unless I embraced Christianity all my work would be nothing worth. And of course that Christianity must mean what she understands as such! Well, all I can say is that it is a wrong attitude.

Young India, 11-8-1927

304. LETTER TO KAMALA DAS GUPTA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 30, 1927

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I hope you will not mind my dictating what is a reply to a personal letter.

You are not the only girl with the difficulties mentioned by you. But if you have patience, perseverance in your ideals and humility, you will have no difficulty in conquering your parents' pressure. For, after all,they have to go by the ordinary experience and the ordinary experience is that both young men and young women have often entertained lofty ideas in moments of enthusiasm which they are not able to carry out to the end. I myself know many such instances. Parents are therefore cautious and chary of taking seriously their children's lofty ideals. If your parents insist upon your marriage how could they permit you to go to the Sabarmati Ashram? And then I must warn you against drawing a flattering picture of the Ashram. It is a place for toilers, those who believe in the necessity and the moral value of labouring with their hands and feet.Then English is rarely spoken there. Knowledge of Hindi is an absolute necessity.

I know the standard of Bethune College girls. If you have learnt to consider what is provided in that college and what the girls provide themselves with there to be your necessaries, you are hardly likely to be satisfied with the simplicity of the Ashram life. But in spite of my warning, if you still feel drawn to the Ashram and your parents permit you, I shall send your name to the Managing Board.

In your next letter please give me some more particulars about you. Give me your age, the occupation of your father and such other things that you think I should know.

Yours sincerely,

SHRIMATI KAMALA DAS GUPTA
1, AKHIL MISTRY LANE
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm : S.N. 12626

305. LETTER TO DR. B. S. MOONJE

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 30, 1927

DEAR DR. MOONJE,

I was relieved to have your letter giving a full description of your accident. Thank god that the injury received is not permanent. What a miraculous escape you all had!

Please tell your grandson that his singular escape without injury should mean great things for the country and that he must from now prepare to dedicate his life for the service of the country with the fullest determination to do better than his grandfather and his old contemporaries like myself.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 14202

306. LETTER TO E. S. PATWARDHAN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 30, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Owing to my illness and movement I have not been able to overtake your letter for a long time for which please excuse me. Had I been up and doing as I used to before the collapse, I should have done something regarding your difficulty. But now I am really powerless. As you know I have given up practically all administrative work. I am simply attending to the correspondence, editing and absolutely necessary touring in slow stages. Jamnalalji is the officiating Chairman of the Association and I would like you to approach him and convince him.

I did discuss the whole of your affairs with him before the collapse. Though he was here recently for the meeting of the Council of the Association, I took no part in the proceedings of the meeting and discussed no administrative measures with Jamnalalji. I had indeed hoped to study the Vidyalaya and your difficulties much more than before. But my incapacitation upset this as well as other similar plans. I hope you will therefore forgive me.

The enclosure will be sent on Monday by registered post.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. EKNATH SRIPAD PATWARDHAN
PRAMUKH
TILAK MAHAVIDYALAYA
MAHAL, NAGPUR

From a microfilm : S.N. 19794

307. LETTER TO V. V. DASTANE

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
July 30, 1927

MY DEAR DASTANE,

I have your letter. I am sorry that I did not see you. If I was what I was before the collapse I would certainly not have turned away a single aspirant for khadi service merely on the ground of want of accommodation. But Jamnalalji and Shankerlal must manage according to their abilities and their self-confidence. You must discuss the pros and cons with them. I shall do likewise but my doing will be in a leisurely fashion. Of course you must not suffer any loss of confidence if it is at all possible. But if we are really helpless, we must not pretend to be brave. Above all we must be true.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. V. V. DASTANE
A.I.S.A. (MAHARASHTRA BRANCH)
PIMPARALA P.O.

From a microfilm : S.N. 19795

308. SPEECH AT CHAMARAJENDRA SANSKRIT PATHASHALA, BANGALORE

July 30, 1927

I appreciate the honour you have done me in giving me a Sanskrit address. I hold that every Hindu boy and girl must acquire a knowledge of Sanskrit, and that every Hindu should have enough knowledge of Sanskrit to be able to express himself in that language whenever an occasion arises.

I was pained to hear that there were pundits in the Mysore State who fought shy of teaching Sanskrit to Sudras and *Panchamas*. I do

not know how far the contention that the Sudras have no right to learn Sanskrit and hence to read the Vedas is supported by the authority of scriptures, but as a *sanatani* Hindu I am firmly of opinion that even if there is any authority we must not kill the spirit of our religion by a literal interpretation of the texts. Words have, like man himself, an evolution, and even a Vedic text must be rejected if it is repugnant to reason and contrary to experience. Thus so far as I understand the Shastras I think that there is no authority in them for untouchability as we understand it today, and my experience of the so-called untouchables in different parts of India has shown me that man to man the 'untouchable' is in no way inferior to his 'touchable' brother either intellectually or morally. I know suppressed class people who are leading as clean and moral lives as any one of us, and I have seen *Adi Karnataka* boys who read and recite Sanskrit verses as well as any of the Brahmin boys and girls here. I am grateful therefore that you should have thought fit to invite a man of such radical views in your midst, and even to vote an address to him, and to approve of those views in the address. I am glad to see so many Brahmins plying their *taklis*, but I want you not to confine yourselves to making your sacred threads out of the yarn. The *yajnopavits*[1] of course will continue to be of *takli* yarn, but you will make your clothes also from that yarn or charkha yarn. I tell you I was pained to see boys and girls dressed in foreign clothes reciting verses from scriptures. To say the least, it struck me to be incongruous. The external is in no way the essence of religion, but the external oft proclaims the internal, and whenever therefore I go to a Sanskrit college or an institution where Aryan culture is taught, I look forward to being reminded of the simple and sacred surroundings of our ancient *rishis*. I am sorry that you have not fulfilled my expectation, and I appeal to the teachers and the parents of these children to make the children true representatives of ancient culture.

Young India, 18-8-1927

[1] Sacred thread worn by the Hindus

309. NATURE'S 'WRATH'

Nature never acts in anger. Its laws work unfailingly, like good clock. No changes ever occur in them. In fact Nature has not even reserved the right to change them, nor does it need to do so. Nature is perfect, and her laws too are perfect.

But we do not know these laws and, therefore, when they surprise us by their working we describe them as Nature's wrath. She has just shown such wrath against Gujarat. How can I, staying in far-away Bangalore, form a true idea of this miniature *pralaya*[1]? My only means of knowing its magnitude are the reports appearing in newspapers and one wire from Vallabhbhai and another from the Ashram.

God alone knows whether this flood is a punishment for some sins of ours or some event which, on certain conditions being fulfilled, may give us some needed benefit. We would do well to regard it as a punishment for our sins. There is not only no great difference between moral sins and economic sins, but on the contrary the two kinds of sins are closely related. Among the three classes of sins, telling lies, dirtying the river-water and raising an opium or tobacco crop in the fields in place of wheat there is only a difference of degree, none of kind. It is not true that one who tells a lie suffers spiritually but he who dirties the water does not, or that the soul of him who raises an opium crop prospers. As our discrimination improves, we understand the nature of our sins better.

If, however, we wait doing nothing till we know our sins better and take no steps to relieve the people's losses which we see with our naked eyes, we would be reckoned fools.

Vallabhbhai has started a fund on behalf of the Provincial Committee[2] , and Manilal Kothari[3] is going round to meet people to collect contributions to it. There was a telegram from him to say that philanthropic rich men have already contributed Rs. 30,000. Let people contribute as much as they can. Though it avails little to try to mend a rent in the sky,[4] if everyone helps to the best of his ability the

[1] The universal flood which is believed to end a cycle of creation. Gandhiji here refers to the unprecedented floods in Gujarat in July 1927.

[2] Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee

[3] A Congress worker of Saurashtra who worked for many years as Secretary of the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee

[4] A Gujarati saying

people cannot but feel cheered by the sympathy thus shown. The Committee will try to reach as many people as it can. As yet, it is not even likely to have an idea of how many people have suffered, or how much they have suffered and in what manner. Some details, which I do not know at the moment of writing this (on August 1) will have become known by the time this appears in print. On knowing them, those who have paid nothing as yet should pay something and so contribute to this essential relief-work.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-8-1927

310. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

August 1 [*1927*]

CHI. MIRA,

I have your beautifully written Hindi letter. Your time table seems to be crowded. There is no breathing time between different periods. I suppose it is the same with all. It is quite capable of execution, if one concentrates and does not fuss or waste in idle thought or talk.

You know the plight of Gujarat. Rain has done very great damage and the Ashram too has come in for its due share. I have a telegram too that Kantilal who was keeping accounts was drowned in the river. It appears to be a case of suicide. I have no definite particulars yet.

I shall be absent from Bangalore for four days from tomorrow, returning Friday evening.

No more this time.

With love,

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 5256. Courtesy : Mirabehn

311. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

BANGALORE,
August 1, 1927

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I was thankful for your first letter from South Africa. The hopeful note cheers me.

The Transvaal, I see, is causing you some anxiety. But I have every hope that the people there will ultimately listen to you.

I notice your appeal for social workers. You won't get many from this end. I know Devadhar contemplates sending or even taking a batch. But my own feeling is that it is essentially work for local volunteers. But whether it is done by local volunteers or workers imported from here, the work is worth doing and has got to be done. The Government of India, the Natal Government and the planters are not a little to blame for the mischief. The tone having been once set, it is tremendously difficult to set another all of a sudden. All strength to your elbow.

Do please keep your health.

Andrews cabled about your expenses.[1] I am not going to weary you with what was done here. But I am informed that you will have all the assistance you need. I personally feel quite at ease. It is not the style of living that is going to count in your case, it is your internal strength that is going to count and is counting already.

I am keeping well and am likely to be in the South practically to the end of October. I shall not be leaving Mysore before the end of the month.

With love,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original : C.W. 9229. Courtesy : S. R. Venkataraman

[1] *Vide* "Letter to J. B. Petit", 5-7-1927.

312. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN

BANGALORE,
August 1, 1927

DEAR MR. SECRETARY,

A copy of your letter to Pandit Harihar Sharma, dated *Shravan Krishna* 10[1], has been sent to me. Sharmaji has gone to Rameshwaram.

Some time ago[2] I wrote to you in reply to your telegram and letter but having had no response from you I presume you did not get my reply.

In case that reply has not reached you let me repeat what I said in it. Whatever changes have come about in the Madras Hindi Prachar Office have been publicly approved by me. Sharmaji is not at all responsible for them. You will certainly not look upon Sharmaji as your paid employee. Our differences over the ownership of the office is an old story. I had made clear this point to you also in Wardha. If you deem it proper, this dispute can be settled by arbitration. If you think resorting to arbitration would not be in the interest of the Sammelan, you can take whatever legal action you will against me alone.

Yours,

From a microfilm of the Hindi : S.N. 12777

313. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

Silence Day, August 1, 1927

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have read your letter to Devdas. Write to me whatever you notice about Kanti and Rasik, but I don't want you to worry about it. We should not worry about a task which has not fallen to our lot even if it is urgent or personal. This is what the *Gita* and our dharma teach us. Either one should regard nothing as personal or only that which is with one on hand and devote oneself to it. One should not worry even about one's own father if he is far away and should have faith in God

[1] Corresponding to July 23, 1927, according to the Vikram calendar followed in North India

[2] On July 6, 1927

that He is the protector of all and He employs whomever He wishes as His instrument. This rule holds good even when one's father is close by and someone else is engaged in attending on him and one has some other work to do. What appplies to the father also applies to a brother, a nephew, the wife, a son and others. You are in the Ashram only to learn your job and to pick up whatever you can from its atmosphere. While doing so you may see or hear many other things. But your duty requires you only to pass on this information to some responsible person. It is only in this way that we can live in peace in society . We cannot afford to sit in judgment upon the world.

You have good experience of the Divine wrath there.[1] Write to me about it. Let me know all about your health too.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

314. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Shravan Sud 4 [*August 1, 1927*]

SISTERS,

This time the post has been irregular. The mail due on Monday was received here only yesterday. I hope none of you was frightened on account of the torrential rains and the flood. Such calamities occur only to test whether we have learnt the lessons of life. What would it matter if the Ashram or for that matter Ahmedabad itself was washed away by the flood in spite of our best efforts? The wonder is that so much has remained safe in spite of such torrential floods. But after all, who knows whether we gain more by saving or by losing? It may be that what has been saved has really been lost and what has been lost has really been saved. But everyone likes to be saved, and we are thankful to God when we are saved. Actually, one should thank God for everything that happens. That is what is meant by *samatva*.

But think of the loss of Kantilal.[2] How can we bear this grief? That also we must bear however difficult it is. One's intellect works in accordance with one's karma. If it is true that Kantilal has committed

[1] Torrential rains; *vide* the succeeding item.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 1-8-1927.

suicide, I can guess the reason, I think. But we need not worry about the reason. We should make up our minds that we ourselves will never commit suicide. The kind of people who commit suicide either worry too much about the world, or try to hide their faults from the world. We should never pretend to be what we are not, or try to do what is clearly beyond us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3660

315. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Silence Day [*August 1, 1927*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. You may give the money lying in Bombay for Gujarat[2] if you so wish. I personally feel that it should be used only for the South. A letter to that effect has also been published in *Young India*. For Gujarat we can find as much money as is needed. But now that you have taken the step, it may be difficult to retrace it.

I hope you find Shankaran satisfactory. He is a good worker. That is the impression he has given all of us.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

PANCHGANI CASTLE

PANCHGANI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the postmark

[2] For flood-relief work

316. SPEECH TO LAMBANIS, ARSIKERE JUNCTION [1]

August 2, 1927

You must all wear khaddar; it is made by your people, and the cost goes to feed them. You must all completely give up drinking and flesh-eating. Also you must listen to me and follow my words, if you are really true in your love and affection for me. You must understand that when once a girl is married among your community, she must not be taken away again by someone of you and remarrried according to your pernicious old custom. This is against all Hindu dharma.

Turning to the Lambani women, Gandhiji said they must not unnecessarily burden themselves with heavy ornaments as they were now doing.

The Hindu, 5-8-1927

317. TELEGRAM TO REVASHANKAR ZAVERI

August 3, 1927

MORALITY

BOMBAY

YOUR TELEGRAM RECEIVED HERE TOO LATE. PLEASE TELL SIR PURUSHOTTAMDAS[2] ALREADY ISSUED APPEAL FOR FUNDS THROUGH 'NAVAJIVAN' AND 'YOUNG INDIA'

GANDHI

From the original: Purushottamdas Thakurdas Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] At the station yard, in reply to the welcome address in Lambani presented on behalf of the Mysore Provincial Lambani Sangh

[2] Purushottamdas Thakurdas

318. LETTER TO C. V. VAIDYA [1]

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
August 3, 1927

DEAR MR. VAIDYA,

I highly appreciate your letter. I know that you have the instinct of the judge and had been a judge in Gwalior for a long time. But your letter has whetted my curiosity, and I must make time to study your volumes. Are they in Marathi or in English? You must pardon my gross ignorance even of our good authors of whom I have long known you to be one. But fate has never left me any time for doing this kind of reading.

Are the authorities in favour of your conclusion—that our forefathers in the Vedic times ate beef—collected in those volumes?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. V. VAIDYA
SADASHIV PETH
POONA CITY

From a photostat : S.N. 12629

319. LETTER TO DR. GURUDAS ROY

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
August 3, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am perfectly confident that you can do without any European clothing in England and Scotland provided that you take sufficient stock of hand-spun woollen clothing. It may be found a little more costly if you go in for very fine Kashmir woollen hand-spun. You may not know that Pandit Motilalji when he was preparing to go to Europe as a member of the Skeen Committee[2] had an entirely hand-spun outfit including his cardigan jackets. You can get very warm and very cheap hand-spun Nepali blankets.

As to the quantity, it is very difficult for me to prescribe. But if I were you, I should take half a dozen blankets. I presume you will wear

[1] In reply to his letter of July 3, 1927 (S.N. 12627)

[2] Appointed with Sir Andrew Skeen as president to investigate the question of establishment of an Indian Sandhurst

trousers. You can get suitable woollen stuff for trousers, etc. I suggest your consulting Satis Babu of Khadi Pratishthan, and if he cannot furnish you with an outfit, I know that the Khadi Bhandar of Bombay can, because that Bhandar has provided many England-going Indians with proper outfits. Khadi Pratishthan's address you know—170, Bow Bazaar Street, Calcutta. The address of the Khadi Bhandar is Princess Street, Bombay. All your underclothings may well be cotton khadi.

Yours sincerely,

DR. GURUDAS ROY
BALAGARH P.O.
HOOGHLY DISTRICT
BENGAL

From a photostat S.N. 14205

320. LETTER TO V. V. DASTANE

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
August 3, 1927

MY DEAR DASTANE,

I have your letter. I like the idea of Malaviyaji touring Maharashtra in the interest of khadi. But I do not want you to trouble him just now. He is himself in a weak state of health, and we must not be party to putting any strain upon it. Then again the workers do not now need the stimulation of further awakening and spectacular meetings. You have hardly yet time to consolidate the energy set free during my tour. You have to build up and put on a solid basis all the different centres that have been brought into existence. Watch the work in the different centres and put Pimparala itself on a solid foundation. All this means that you should be free from having to organize any big tours at present. And, thirdly, if Professor Kale, the *Kesari* people and others who have hitherto stood aside from khadi are inclined to view it with favour, let that sentiment silently grow. It does not need any encouragment from you or me; but it is bound to be encouraged by any solid achievement we may show in the shape of larger production, regular silent improvement in quality, reduction in prices and steady employment of young men. You must learn not to live on stimulants. Do you not agree?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 19796

321. LETTER TO A. RANGASWAMY IYENGAR

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
August 3, 1927

MY DEAR RANGASWAMY,

I do not know whether you want any reply from me to your circular letter about the Nagpur Satyagraha. But if you do, I can think of adding nothing to my recent article[1] in *Young India*. If, beyond what is contained in that article, any further information is required, or if the Committee has any further questions to ask me, I shall gladly answer them. But this letter need not be part of the record if my opinion can for my own sake be dispensed with.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 14206

322. LETTER TO R. B. GREGG

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
August 3, 1927

MY DEAR GOVIND,

I have your letter. I am dictating this during my tour which I am taking in very slow stages without putting any undue strain upon my health which seems to be steadily getting better.

I shall look forward to a typed copy of your work and I shall certainly go through it and let you have my opinion on it and suggestions if there are any to make.

You certainly do not need to explain to me why you could not pay for the proposed operation. I can easily arrange for it. But why do you want to postpone it till December? Is it not better to spare yourself from Kotgarh for a fortnight or so and get the operation done now or as soon as I can get an appointment from Dr. Dalal? I shall write to him after hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 14208

[1] *Vide* "Nagpur Satyagraha", 19-5-1927.

323. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

HASSAN,
August 3, 1927

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS,

I had your letter that you left on leaving Bangalore. There was nothing in it that needed a reply. I have now seen your letter to Subbiah and was delighted to hear that you were successful in Muzaffarpur. In the letter you left, you promised to write again from Darbhanga. That letter has still not arrived. I am anxious to know that you are keeping quite well and fit and to know all about Guruji's health.

This I am dictating from Hassan where we arrived yesterday evening. We reach Bangalore again on the 5th instant and resume tour on the 9th, still confining it to Mysore. I shall not leave Bangalore finally before the end of the month. But you will know if there is any change.

You must have heard all about the awful rains in Gujarat. The Ashram also came in for a bit of loss. Poor Kantilal who was keeping books in the Ashram was drowned. It seems to have been a case of suicide; but I am still awaiting full particulars.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KRISHNADAS
CARE OF SJT. SATIS CHANDRA MUKERJEE
LAL BAGH
DARBHANGA
BIHAR

From a photostat : S.N. 14204

324. LETTER TO SHANKER

HASSAN,
August 3, 1927

MY DEAR SHANKER,

I have your postcard. I see you have already made yourself quite at home there. You will cover yourself well if you find it very cold there. The climate however is very bracing and is bound to agree with you.

Do write to me regularly.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SHANKER
C/O MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
PANCHGANI CASTLE
PANCHGANI

From a microfilm : S.N. 14207

325. LETTER TO SECRETARY, JUBILEE COMMITTEE

HASSAN,
August 3, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I am much obliged to you for the invitation to the Maharaja Silver Jubilee Commemoration[1]. I hope that the function will be worthy of the occasion.

Yours faithfully,

THE SECRETARY
JUBILEE COMMITTEE
BANGALORE CITY

From a microfilm : S.N. 14209

[1] On August 8, 1927

326. SPEECH AT TOWN HALL, HASSAN [1]

August 3, 1927

FRIENDS,

You have given me addresses of welcome and you have given me a purse, and I thank you for the same. I am also pleased to hear of your khadi work and your invitation to open your Khaddar Co-operative Society. I must also thank you for your work in the uplift of the *Adi Karnatakas*. In doing so, let me remind you that this great work cannot be fully accomplished merely by the establishment of a school, etc. You must do the work in your heart. You must get rid of the untouchability-feeling from your thoughts. You must know that there is no sanction in the Shastras for such thinking. When you get that feeling of brotherliness, when you get that oneness of feeling between you all, Hindus and Mussalmans, and both sexes, when you get that feeling by using khadi, every one of you, then only our condition, and the condition of our country is going to improve and not until then. That is the force of khadi and, in establishing your Khadi Co-operative Society, you must all co-operate in this great task. That task is to give food to the starving poor of your place, for, when you take khaddar and make others purchase it, the weavers who wove and the spinners who spun are sure of their wages and of their food. Are you going to help this cause?

I am appealing to you for your help. I once more express my satisfaction at your efforts to establish an institute for the *Adi Karnatakas* on the lines of the Tuskegee Institute of Booker T. Washington. Friends, now, the need is for many such institutions all over the country. The names of General Armstrong and Booker T. Washington are very great names of service and sacrifice; I want you to understand and realize the amount of their work. I want our educated friends to realize this. I want them also to realize that when they are propagating intellectual culture, they must also inculcate the principle of dignity of labour as is done in those institutions. Please remember this. I thank you all for your reception.

The Hindu, 5-8-1927

[1] In reply to welcome addresses presented by the District Board and Hassan Municipality

327. EXHIBITION SALES

Sjt. Sitaram Shastri wires :

> Cloth exhibited Andhra branch stall, Bangalore Exhibition, worth Rs. 4,085; sales—retail Rs. 1,750, wholesale Rs. 1,516.

Masulipatam Satyanarayana informs :

> Exhibition Stall : Cloth worth Rs. 3,051, sales—retail Rs. 980, wholesale Rs. 966.

That means 80 per cent, and 63 per cent, of the stock, which is indeed very good.

Young India, 4-8-1927

328. INDIAN SHIPPING

The ceremony performed by Sjt. Vithalbhai Patel at the launching of *Jalabala*, the Scindia Steam Navigation Company's new ship, does not evoke any feeling of national pride or rejoicing. It only serves as a reminder of our fallen state. What is the addition of one little ship to our microscopic fleet? The sadness of the reminder is heightened by the fact that our mercantile fleet may at any moment be turned into a fleet warring against our own liberty or against that of nations with which India has no quarrel and with whose aspirations India may even have every sympathy, as for instance, China. There is nothing to prevent the Government from commandeering any one of the ships belonging to the swadeshi companies for carrying soldiers to punish China for daring to fight for liberty. There is no wonder, therefore, that Vithalbhai Patel, who in spite of his being the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly cannot cease to be an ardent nationalist, recalled the history of the calculated destruction of India's mercantile marine. He pointed out to his audience that "there was a time when first-rate vessels built, owned, manned and managed by Indians used to carry the rich products of India to distant lands." "A combination of circumstances," which the speaker did not think it worth while to mention, "made it extremely difficult for Indians to pursue it, killed that industry outright, and subsequently made it extremely difficult for Indians to revive their past glory." Sjt. Vithalbhai went on : "It is again interesting to note that shipping companies were started during the last 50 years in India, but they were all wiped out of existence by the rate war and other methods, about which the less said the better."

But even as a patient derives comfort, if anything gives him a

little hope and a little energy, and the whole family joins him rejoicing over the acquisition of slight unexpected strength, so did Vithalbhai Patel derive joy and hope from the launching of this new enterprise of the Scindia Steam Navigation Company. Let us hope that *Jalabala* will be a precursor of many other steamers and that in the near future it would be possible to revive the old ship-building trade of India, and for some patriot to perform the ceremony of launching an India-built ship on Indian waters free of the fear of its being used for warring against ourselves or any other nation and free from the greed of exploitation of any other country.

Young India, 4-8-1927

329. CULTURAL SPINNING

An English friend sends me a cutting from the *Scotsman* of 21st April. It is entitled "Value of Rhythm". It is an account of a spinning demonstration at the Easter Conference held at Edinburgh under the auspices of the Institute of Handicraft Teachers. Dr. John Gunn presided at the meeting. The lecture demonstration was given by Mr. William Kirkness F.S.A. (Scot). I quote below verbatim the interesting report[1] from the *Scotsman* :

Young India, 4-8-1927

330. VILLAGE CATTLE IMPROVEMENT

This week I give Mr. Smith's note[2] on a co-operative scheme for the improvement of village cattle. The pinjrapole scheme published in the issue of July 7th[3] is capable of being enforced almost immediately, because the machinery is ready and only requires supplementary improvement, whereas the proposed scheme for the villages outside the ghee-producing tract and remote from cities is comparatively difficult of operation. But real improvement has to begin from these numerous villages, which, on account of economic pressure and the ignorance of people in cattle-breeding, helplessly become centres for slaughter-houses to draw upon. If a careful student were to study the movement of cattle that find themselves in the numerous slaughter-

[1] Not reproduced here. The lecturer spoke highly of the value of spinning in the education of temperamental children.

[2] Not reproduced here

[3] By Y. M. Parnerkar; *vide* "Work before Pinjrapoles", 7-7-1927

houses of India, he will find that agents who know no principle save that of making money as fast as possible and anyhow purchase cattle from these remote villages for the slaughter-houses. A *gosevak* is not easily made, certainly never for the wishing. He has to study his art as much as an engineer or a lawyer or a doctor, and has to take more pains than any of them. Mr. Smith's scheme should, therefore, be studied by those who desire the welfare of cattle and of Indian villages, with a view to putting it into operation in select villages. There is nothing sacrosanct about the scheme. It serves as a model for one who knows nothing about cattle-breeding or co-operative schemes. Nor need a non-co-operator be frightened of it, because of the mention of Government co-operative department. There is no such thing as national non-co-operation at the present moment. When it was in vogue, it did not touch all Government departments. There were non-co-operators who did not taboo co-operative societies, and I know several today who call themselves non-co-operators although they belong to active co-operative organizations. But a *gosevak* who does not wish to take advantage of a statutory co-operative society may still utilize the scheme. Indeed I do not know that on the whole it would not be better to do without seeking the shelter of a statutory society. He may take the advice of the co-operative department if it will whole-heartedly give it to him, and may also make use of studs if any are available. The chief thing is to make a beginning in the matter of the education of villagers in cattle improvement. The proposed scheme is a help in that direction. Mr. Smith promises a double increase in the value of cattle and the yield of milk if the scheme is properly worked.

Young India, 4-8-1927

331. HELP GUJARAT

Proud Gujarat is laid low and she who has hitherto filled the beggar's bowl is now obliged to take the bowl herself. I have had up to now nothing to go by except the newspaper reports. Though Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel was preparing me for the worst through his private wires he was unable to give details. I give below his telegram just received on my return from Hassan :[1]

> Most part Gujarat North of Narmada and Kathiawar devastated. People rendered homeless. Cattle and belongings washed away. Total damage in crores. Loss of life small except in Baroda. Kheda district is worst with 100 inches of rain. Borsad still isolated. Piteous appeals for help coming from all parts of Gujarat and Kathiawar. Public meeting was held on August 2nd, Relief Committees formed. Three lakhs for food relief Ahmedabad district and ten lakhs for advancing loans reconstruction of houses to be raised. Provincial relief to be separately conducted under Prantik Samiti. Relief centres have been opened under Amritlal Thakkar, Lakshmidas Purushottam and Narahari Parikh respectively at Anand, Nadiad and Mehmedabad. Maganlal Gandhi will reach Borsad and establish communications. Other centres are also being reached and relief operations started. Amritlal Sheth is trying to reach areas of Kathiawar and is organizing relief. The immediate problem is one of saving life by the timely supply of foodstuffs. Local resources are inadequate. Pray issue a general appeal to all India for succour without delay.

Sjt. Fulchand Shah sends a detailed wire from Nadiad about Kheda. Dr. Chandulal of Broach sends an angry wire asking me what I intend doing towards the relief of the distress in Gujarat. I have been dumbstruck by the newspaper reports. Those who know anything of the devastating floods in the South can somewhat realize what a howling wilderness parts of Gujarat must have become. Kheda owes its fertility to the industry of its resourceful farmers. It is no joke for them to find the whole of their crops washed away and their fields stinking with the stench of the carcasses of their valuable and splendid cattle.

I know that no human effort can possibly make up for the loss of crores worth of crops, cattle and belongings, together with rich manure washed away into the ocean, but human sympathy can do much to relieve the mental agony of the people who have lost their all.

[1] Gandhiji returned from Hassan on 4th evening.

I do hope that all who see this appeal and who can will send their mite towards relief.

Sjt. Patel is a seasoned soldier and has no other occupation than that of service. He has got an efficient agency of workers under him. Donors need, therefore, have no fear of wasteful expense or misappropriation. Properly audited accounts will be published, and all sums received will be acknowledged in the columns of *Young India* and if necessary *Navajivan*. Relief work will be done by him in collaboration with other agencies that may be brought into being. The chief thing is to send help. Let the donor choose his favourite and most trusted agency, but let him make sure that he sends not the least but the most he can.

Young India, 11-8-1927

332. LETTER TO H. HARCOURT [1]

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 4, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your warm letter. You may not know that I expressed before the trying judge the same sentiments that you express, namely, that my viewpoint not being accepted, the Government was bound to arrest and imprison me. The challenge to Government to do either the one or the other was for me the only honourable course, and, in my opinion, the only alternative to violent rebellion on the part of those who rightly or wrongly feel oppressed. But the largest part of my life has been devoted and is still being devoted to finding points of contact rather than difference. But experience has abundantly proved to me that to every honest man there come in his life occasions for parting of ways which I have termed "Non-co-operation".

Yours sincerely,

H. HARCOURT, ESQ.
119, GIPSY HILL
LONDON S.E. 19

From a photostat : S.N. 12535

[1] In reply to the addressee's letter dated July 12, 1927

333. LETTER TO G. A. PATKAR

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 4, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Your idea of starting a fund is praiseworthy; but I am afraid it will not work. It is not a small thing for one who draws a salary of Rs. 50 to save Rs. 5 out of it every month, and I have found even amongst those who can afford, very few steadily paying. Nor, when the capital required is collected in the manner you suggest, is it an easy thing to start industries. The starting of industries requires more than mere capital. And, thirdly, my own time which owing to my failing health is limited is entirely absorbed by the industry of khadi, and if your friends would be content to pay their quota to this national industry, I shall be pleased to receive it, but not for any other industry.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. A. PATKAR
BOMBAY

From a photostat : S.N. 14211

334. LETTER TO SWAMI

[After *August 4, 1927*][1]

Yours two letters. One is about relieving you and the other about the floods in Gujarat.

I do not know and I believe that your request to be relieved has nothing to do with your quarrel with Kaka[2]. If I have to grant you the discharge, I cannot do it until I go over there, because I must, as is my practice, first get to know the main persons there. Only then could I know what to do. I would know nothing about Bhai Mohanlal. If you have full confidence, I have no objection to your shouldering the responsibility of the work while taking up the other job and moving wherever you like. If the responsibility is not yours, I can be carefree only when I come to know Bhai Mohanlal and put him in charge or

[1] From the reference to heavy floods in Gujarat and to Vallabhbhai's appeal published in *Young India* of this date

[2] D. B. Kalelkar

appoint someone else as superintendent. I think neither course is possible at the moment. Even the trust matter is uncertain at present.

Since you are coming here in connection with your work, we shall discuss the matter further then. Kaka is all right. I had gone out on tour for three days but did not take Kaka with me. You may rest assured from my side about Kaka because I am not the one to coerce. I shall try to give full weight to the idea suggested by you if you come and explain it to me; if you do not come at all I shall try to put it across to the extent I have understood it. If you are suggesting that I have no right to direct Kaka, I will not accept that view. I sensed some such hint in your letter. I cannot quite agree with the meaning you seem to attach to friendship. I too had interpreted it somewhat like that in my nonage. If my assumption that you put a similar interpretation on it is correct, I also know that it is contrary to dharma. I have written somewhere in *Navajivan* itself that in this world there can be no friend except God and that we are all bullocks together; in that some are more close to each other, some less so. But then I have digressed into a new subject. In short, it is enough it I could satisfy you by being as agreeable as I could.

Now my view about the collection from Malabar is that it should not be used in Gujarat. I think it would be upright to act as if the amount had been spent up when the time-limit of the notice I had issued expired. That it has not been spent up is mere chance. That we act differently when pressed by circumstances and through weakness is another thing. I merely give my opinion. But if you or Vallabhbhai do not approve of that view, please do correct me. There is no place for delicacy[1] in such matters, and certainly none among us.

Now about my going over there. While reading your letter I felt I should start soon. Not even three quarters of an hour has passed after reading it, but the swoon is over now. I am no longer fit to travel. I know my body well enough. I still have enough strength to be left alone to think and do my work, but the ability to talk to a group, to guide and to explain things to a succession of people coming to me, to humour them, to get angry with them and to get work out of them has all but left me. After all it may possibly return. At present the ability to lie down and sleep is on the increase. In this condition, I think it is not possible for me to go over there, sit in the Ashram and rally volunteers. Moreover, I believe one cannot do work without running around and I never had the knack of taking work from new

[1] The source has this in English.

people while sitting in one place without moving about. If we cannot get volunteers in response to Vallabhbhai's appeal[1] , we had better realize our limitations. If more funds come in, let them remain unused; we may offer them to those others who could do better work than we; on the other hand if we know that we still command respect enough to collect more money but not the strength to rally workers we should sit quiet, not squander our influence by asking for funds. You may not be aware that everyone in Malabar had surplus money left with him not because of lack of volunteers but because when everything is uprooted people work in a different way and do not even think of the losses. There is no power in the world which would meet the wants of crores of people. All of us can therefore do only some patchwork. And I think we ought to do that. While doing so if we can ensure that the rogues and thieves do not get at the money or that the protectors do not become looters, we shall have acquitted ourselves as well as taking a dip in the Ganga.[2] Such floods suggest that what we say in our childhood is *veda vakya*[3] —this is God's play with bat and ball. One day there is sure to come a flood bigger than the present one. Even then some will survive who will not brood over the dead but will be able to laugh and multiply the race. Do not deduce from this that I wish to say that it would not matter if we became cruel or if we did nothing. Absolutely not. However, I must say we need not take upon ourselves the responsibility for all this destruction. But we must make our contribution to the extent possible to relieving the misery arising from this destruction and rest content. I do not at all approve of the argument that at this time we should organize an army of volunteers and awaken Gujarat once again.When the time comes, and the understanding is there and if it has been decreed that we become the instruments, anything may or may not happen now, Gujarat will wake up and so will the whole of India. But this is for me a matter of faith more or less. It is out of place here even to think of it. We should not shirk doing whatever we can in regard to this emergency.

I can think of nothing more.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

[1] Published in *Young India*, 4-8-1927

[2] A Gujarati proverb meaning the highest achievement

[3] Scriptural utterance

335. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
August 5, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. I understand and do not mind the distinction you draw between Wardha and Sabarmati. I am glad you have written to Bhansali. There is nothing further about the Ashram beyond what I wrote to you.

The learning of Hindi must not be a strain upon you. You must not do it as a task. Immediately it gets on your nerves, you must let it go. I have told you that I have infinite patience and I shall certainly not take you to task if you can't finish your programme in two months' time. The work must give you pleasure, and it must be left off as soon as it fatigues you.

If I knew what work is to be given to you as soon as you go to the Ashram, I would certainly tell you; but I do not know it myself. I quite agree with your argument against teaching English, and I shall certainly avoid giving that work. So far as I can see at present, it will be some work to be done in company. For, I want you to be accustomed to different temperaments and working under circumstances no matter how adverse they may be. But if you have any choice, by no means tell me. My own habit is never to tax myself about things which I need not decide at the moment. But if you will begin to think of it from now, by all means do, and discuss with me through your letters. In no case would I have given you anything without first consulting you. I shall certainly want to know your choice whether now or after you have gone to the Ashram.

It is quite right your not having written to the Rao Saheb until you had the inspiration. There is no hurry, and so long as the proper language does not come you need not write at all.

I just returned from touring this morning to find your letter. The touring will be resumed on the 9th instant. Then probably I shall be away for nearly 10 days. But it would be safer to send your letter to Bangalore. I said Bangalore City before, but I find that Bangalore brings your letters two hours earlier. Kumara Park is not served from the City office but from the Central office.

With love,

SRIMATI MIRABAI
WARDHA

From the original : C.W. 5258. Courtesy : Mirabehn

336. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

[*August*] *5* [*1927*][1]

MIRABAI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM

WARDHA

LETTER DULY POSTED.[2] ALL WELL. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 5257. Courtesy : Mirabehn

337. LETTER TO MAHARAJA OF MYSORE

BANGALORE,

August 5 [*1927*][3]

DEAR FRIEND,

Next Monday[4] will be perhaps next to your coronation the happiest day in your life. In what manner should I send you my felicitations? Not by mere words of good wishes however well meant they may be. But I feel that I could not as a true friend do less than suggest your doing for your poorest subjects what you seem so successfully to have done for the middle class, the town-dwellers. You may not be able to do anything striking so soon as Monday next. But is it impossible to do away with the drink traffic? It is ruining the people.

It has been a matter of deep joy to me to learn wherever I have gone nothing but praise of your benevolence and purity. The drink curse under a rule so good appears to be so out of tune.

But I must not turn what is meant the heart-wish of a friend into a lecture. May you be long spared to give happiness to your people and to make yours a model State in every sense of the term.

I shall pray on Monday for a due fulfilment of all your noblest wishes.

I am,

Your Highness's

[1] From the postmark

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] Gandhiji was in Bangalore on this date in 1927

[4] August 8, 1927 was the 25th anniversary of the Maharaja's coronation. A formal message, *vide* the succeeding item, also appeared in the Press.

[PS.]

Pray do not feel bound to acknowledge this note.

THE MAHARAJA OF MYSORE

From a photostat : S.N. 12630

338. MESSAGE ON SILVER JUBILEE

[*August 5, 1927*][1]

It has been a most agreeable thing for me to find that no one has ever had a word to say against the Maharaja Saheb. I have almost wondered whether the friends round me have conspired to keep all evil reports from me. May all the good I have heard of the Maharaja be and for ever remain wholly true. I join the people of Mysore in wishing His Highness many a long year of useful service to the State and its people.

From a photostat S.N. 12630

339. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS BY MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

[*August 5, 1927*][2]

[Q.] 1. Do you believe in the distinct existence of Trinity—Nature, Soul and God?

[A.] I do believe but the word "distinct" sticks in the throat, for though the three are separate in name they are one in substance.

2. Whether soul is one or numerous? Has it entirely its separate existence or is it a portion of the Great *Atman*—God?

Souls seem to be many; but underneath the seeming variety, there is an essential oneness.

3. If it is particle [of God] it ought to be all-knowing, quite free from all evils and should possess all the qualities of God, as a particle of fire, water or gold possesses all the talents of the whole from which it is separated.

In its essence the soul is free from all evil, but torn from its source it partakes of evil and all other limitations even as drop of water torn from its source and found as part of a dirty pool seems for the time being to partake of the pool's dirt.

4. We often see that a man does evil deeds. Whence that evil comes?

[1] Presumably written on the same date as the preceding item

[2] *Vide* the succeeding item.

We should be satisfied to know that there is evil in the world and that it has got to be avoided. If we knew its origin we should be God Almighty. But at the present we are in the unfortunate position of that drop of water in the dirty pool, and whilst we are doers of evil deeds, we must suffer the consequences thereof.

5. In the world we see different men. Those who work and do right deeds are gifted; those who do wrong or bad deeds are punished and have to suffer. This is all in accordance with the theory of karma. When one suffers—as a peasant or a labourer in India does at present, he suffers through his own past deeds, that is the Will of God. Why should we interfere in the Will of God by helping him so that he may not suffer?

If the Indian peasant was isolated and was seated on some mountain top, we shall not be perhaps responsible for his state. But seeing that he is part of the same society that we are, we cannot divest ourselves of responsibility for his even state as that drop of water in the pool cannot. Why God suffers this evil to exist, I am thankful to feel that He alone knows.

6. Instead of devoting our energies for the good of *others* should we not devote our energies in acquiring knowledge or earning money for ourselves or at the most for our relatives and neighbours and that too because they may help us in time of need?

Precisely for the reason that we may help our relatives, must we help all others whom in our ignorance we refuse to recognize as relatives. We are like the drop of water. It enjoys even that dirty existence by the help of its neighbours at the farthest end; for, its near neighbours have to depend upon theirs and so on to the end.

7. Yourself as well as others define "swarajya" as control over the self, reformation, betterment or improvement of the *self*, and also it is evident, that if one controls and improves or reforms himself, the society or the nation will be reformed by itself as the *nation* is a composition of *individuals*.

It is a correct statement; self-rule is home-rule.

From a photostat : G.N. 765

340. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

BANGALORE,
Shravan Shukla 8 [*August 5, 1927*][1]

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

I do not think it necessary to answer your queries[2] in *Young India*. Ask me any other questions if you want to.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 765

341. LETTER TO W. LUTOSTAWSKI

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 6, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

You will now see my reply to your questions in *Young India*,[3] and if you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

I like your three rules about preservation of health. The two I understand thoroughly. For, I myself don't believe in worry and always try to snatch moments for sleep and possess a fair capacity for going off to sleep almost at will. Fasting too I understand. But I do not as you seem to have been doing. You say you fast for 10 or 15 days before each voyage. This requires explanation. 10 or 15 days before each voyage. This requires explanation. 10 or 15 is a very vague number. For, 10 days or 15 days make a great difference for a fasting man, at least such is my experience. And what is this fasting? Do you take nothing during the fast except water, not fruit, not milk? Have you record of your weight before and after fast? How often have you taken these fasts? What is your weight now, and what is the meaning of each voyage? What is its duration? Do you fast, for instance, if you have to be at sea for one day only? You say you take one meal about midday at a time of intense activity. What does that meal consist of? And, do you take no fruit, no milk, no other drink except water either in the morning or in the evening? Then, again you say you fast only when you have too much weight. Do you then say

[1] Gandhiji was in Bangalore on this date in 1927.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] *Vide* "Unity in Variety", 11-8-1927.

that you have always too much weight before each voyage? And why do you ever have too much weight if you are a spare eater as you evidently seem to be? When you are not intensely active, how many meals do you take?

Then you say that you use at least 20 quarts of water to clear your bowels every day, until the water is returned clean and transparent and this you do when you have too much weight.What do you mean by use of water? Is it enema, or do you drink 20 quarts, even whilst you are taking your one meal per day? If you drink it, do you work it out through the kidneys or through the bowels? The experience of myself and all my friends who have fasted for long lengths of time is that when we have fasted for long lengths of time is that when we have fasted the water has to pass through the kidneys, never through the bowels unless we have taken the enema. As you may know I am deeply interested in all experiments in fasting and dietetics whether merely for health or spiritual growth.

Yours sincerely,

PROF. W. LUTOSTAWSKI
JAGIELLONSKA 7 m. 2, WILNO
(POLAND)

From a photostat : S.N. 12513

342. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[On or after *August 6, 1927*][1]

JAMNALALJI
SATYAGRAHASHRAM
SABARMATI

CONSIDER YOUR ATTENDANCE HINDI SAMMELAN MEETING ALLAHABAD FOURTEENTH INSTANT ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. YOU SHOULD CANVASS OTHER MEMBERS.

BAPU

From a photostat : S.N. 15172

[1] From a note in Gujarati in the source, it is evident that this was sent at the same time as the following two telegrams.

343. TELEGRAM TO SAROJINI NAIDU [1]

[On or after *August 6, 1927*]

SAROJINIDEVI

TAJMAHAL

AM CONSTANT COMMUNICATION VALLABHBHAI. CONSULTING HIM ABOUT NECESSITY MY PRESENCE.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 15173

344. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

[On or after *August 6, 1927*]

VALLABHBHAI

SAROJINI DEVI SAYS I SHOULD GO THERE FOR MORAL SUCCOUR. IS MY PRESENCE ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY? AM STILL USELESS FOR ACTIVE WORK OR LONG DISCUSSIONS CONFERENCES.

BAPU

From a photostat : S.N. 15173 A

345. DEATH OF A SATYAGRAHI

Perhaps all readers of *Navajivan* may not be familiar with the name of Shri Harilal Maneklal Desai. He died a few days ago in Broach. A friend who lived with him says in a letter that his face was lit up with an expression of joy till the very end.

Shri Harilal resigned from the Baroda High School at the time of the Non-co-operation movement. He was the French teacher there. From then until his death he retained unwavering faith in non-co-operation. He strove to the best of his ability to follow truth as he understood it, and so I called him a satyagrahi. His humility was an ornament to his love of truth. He toured with me for a while in the early days of the Non-co-operation movement and I was struck at that time by his clean method of work, his thoroughness and alertness. During those days it was he who replied to many of the letters I received, and helped me in other ways. During that period of my

[1] In reply to her telegram received on August 6, 1927, which read : "Dear Bapu even risking your health do visit Gujarat. Your presence essential. Give moral succour and solace in terrible distress. All friends join me this request."

association with him, I could see that he took great pains to understand satyagraha and non-co-operation. He started khadi work in Kapadwanj by his unaided efforts and made a success of it. During the last years of his life, he helped the Broach Education Society and did whatever teaching work came his way. Among the names which I have mentally noted of those who can be relied upon to plunge into a civil disobedience movement if such an auspicious occasion arises, Haribhai's was one. Cruel fate has now erased that name. A satyagrahi, however, does not feel sorry even for this. A satyagrahi friend helps even in death as much as he does when alive. "To live on in death" is the great *mantra* which inspires his life.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-8-1927

346. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

August 7, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I must be very brief this time, for I have much writing in front of me. The Gujarat floods and visitors occupy my time.

I have discussed with Kakasaheb what Valunjker told you. Kakasaheb says he never intended to give the impression that with Valunjker he was ready and willing to establish an ashram for women and do educational work among them. He loves that work but does not consider himself to be yet ready for it.

With love,

BAPU

[PS.]

Later—I have your letter. The Monday letter was duly posted. May it be that you have inferred from the date of the letter that it was not Monday's? This passes as a Monday letter. The date you will see is Sunday's, because it was written last night as nowadays I often do after taking silence. This I do to avoid continuous strain on Mondays. Of course you must not read so as to strain your eyes.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 5259. Courtesy : Mirabehn

347. LETTER TO GULZAR MOHAMAD 'AQUIL'

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
August 7, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and I am glad you have written to me.

I am indeed aware of the unfortunate controversy over the book *Rangila Rasul*. You may not know that probably long before you knew the book or its contents, it came into my hands and I denounced it in strong language in the columns of *Young India*. This happened three years ago. I have not the *Young India* file before me. But the book is not a recent publication. If you are not a regular reader of *Young India* I shall be glad to ask the manager to send you the reference.

I have taken no part in the present controversy because I think that the Mussalman agitation is almost altogether wrong. Their denunciation of the judge[1] is uncalled for. Agitation for an amendment of the law is absolutely proper. But whether there is agitation or not the Government will be bound to strengthen the law.

So far as the merits are concerned, there at least an equal number of equally scurrilous anti-Hindu writings as anti-Islamic. All this has been stated by me in clear language in the pages of *Young India*.

I do not read all the newspapers. The Hindu-edited newspapers have not appeared to me to have vigorously or at all supported the action of the author of *Rangila Rasul* or in any other way disrespectful to the Prophet. I shall thank you to let me have the newspapers you have in mind. Or, is you will give me the number and names of the newspapers, I shall send for them myself.

I am sorry to know that you think that the communal taint has affected me. So far as I know myself, I can give my assurance that I am the same to my Mussalman brethren that I was in 1920, and it is my constant prayer to God that I may be and remain the same up to the end of my life.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

GULZAR MOHAMAD 'AQUIL', ESQ.
HATI GATE
BATALA (DISTRICT GURUDASPUR)
PUNJAB

From a microfilm : S.N. 12385

[1] Justice Dilip Singh; *vide* also "A Letter", 10-7-1927.

348. LETTER TO WILLIAM SMITH

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
August 7, 1927

DEAR MR. SMITH,

I thank you for your letter about the Italian method of castration enclosing a letter from the Superintendent, Imperial Cattle-breeding Farm, Karnal.

I shall see if I can prepare something for you that may be fit for publication. But I hope you will not mind delay; for, as you know I have not much time at my disposal. But I am asking the manager to let me have accurate details and figures.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 12921

349. LETTER TO Y. M. PARNERKAR

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
August 7, 1927

MY DEAR PARNERKAR,

I enclose herewith two letters for your file and note. When you can get the time I would like you to give me notes containing the information enabling me to prepare the article of the kind Mr. William Smith wants.

I hope that you are now thoroughly acclimatized and that both of you are keeping well and fit.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. PARNERKAR
DAIRY
ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a microfilm : S.N. 12922

350. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
August 7, 1927

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. You must take only that service from Dr. Ray which he can freely give from his heart. Khadi has ultimately to stand on its own merits and legs. It is well if we can get real co-operation

from our great men. But it must be well also if we do not. We must rely upon the eternal truth that nothing on this earth that is intrinsically sound and is represented by a living force can possibly die.

Your difficulties I can understand well. And if I had a bagful of coins I could send them to you by express parcel in order to relieve your pecuniary distress; but I have not much hope of getting anything either. What I am able to collect in these parts will have to be used for development here. Therefore the only way to give pecuniary help to Bengal is for me to go to Bengal when you are ready and tour to collect.

This year is to go without, and the programme here will have to be carried over to next year, almost up to the end of March with an interval of a fortnight at the Ashram for Ramdas' marriage. I therefore want you to become accustomed to think that you must manage our business, as it may now be called, with what capital we have. Therefore, I would like you, Kshitish Babu and others who are associated with you to confer together and evolve a programme which will save you from all worry and trouble. Once we recognize our limitations we shall cease to fret.

From your letter, I gather that there will be no office in Calcutta proper and that all your work would be done as from Sodepur. Will there be a store in Calcutta, or not even that? Personally, I would not mind if you thought that there should be no store in Calcutta, that is to say, that there should be none if it was not self-supporting.

I am still keeping fit. I shall be in and about Bangalore up to the 28th of this month, if there is no peremptory call from Gujarat owing to the floods. Pressure is being put upon me to go there. But till Vallabhbhai wants me, I shall resist the pressure. For I know that I can do nothing by my mere presence if I cannot do active work.

Yours,

BABU SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
SODEPUR

From a microfilm : S.N. 19797

351. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day [*August 8, 1927*][1]

SISTERS,

Today I must be brief, I lack both time and subject.

I have been forgetting to answer your inquiries about Manibehn's return. Most probably she will leave soon after the 20th and, stopping at Poona and Bombay for a day each, she will go to Broach and from there to the Ashram.

We are having a difficult time at the Ashram at present. All of you should continue to be brave. Our responsibilities are very great. If we always have Rama in our hearts, no harm can ever befall us.

Kakasaheb who is here is keeping well.

Blessings form

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3662

352. LETTER TO J. B. PETIT

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
August 9, 1927

DEAR MR. PETIT,

You will forgive me for troubling you once more. Probably Andrews has cabled to you that he is returning on the 20th instant. I see that the Corporation has voted an address. I have suggested in my article in *Young India*[2] that it should be made the occasion of a public demonstration on a wide scale. For, not only does Andrews deserve all the honour that we can show to him but the occasion will bear a political significance in South Africa and will strengthen Mr. Sastri's hands if the presentation of the address becomes not a humdrum function but an enthusiastic popular demonstration.

The main purpose of this letter is to suggest that the Imperial Citizenship Association should present him with a solid purse to be utilized by him for educational and kindred work in South Africa. You might have seen Mr. Sastri's appeal for social. . . .[3] All this is in conjunction with Mr. Andrews. No doubt our people in South Africa

[1] From the reference to lack of time, *vide* also "Letter to Mirabehn", 7-8-1927.

[2] *Vide* "Welcome Good Samaritan", 11-8-1927.

[3] The source has a blank here.

must find the means; but both their capacity and will are limited. Anything sent from here will encourage the workers there and strengthen Mr. Sastri's hands. And the reason why I suggest the presentation of the purse in a public manner to Mr. Andrews is that its demonstrative value may be emphasized. Indeed, in my articles I have even suggested the Corporation instead of giving a costly casket should vote a purse, that is of course if it is permissible under its rules.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Mr. Natarajan.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 12369

353. LETTER TO K. S. NATARAJAN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,

August 9, 1927

DEAR MR. NATARAJAN,

I enclose herewith a copy of my letter to Mr. Petit for your consideration. The letter speaks for itself.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. K. S. NATARAJAN

BOMBAY

From a photostat : S.N. 12369

354. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
August 9, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Mahadev has not been able to place before me the papers you refer to as yet; for, he has found me too busy.

The inks I shall test and let you know my impression.

How is your daughter getting on both in health and studies? She must some day come to the Ashram.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KONDA VENKATAPPAYYAGARU
GUNTUR

From a microfilm : S.N. 14212

355. LETTER TO E. S. PATWARDHAN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
August 9, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am sending it to Sheth Jamnalalji and asking him to go into the matter carefully and do whatever he thinks just and possible. Beyond that I must not influence him.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

E. S. PATWARDHAN, ESQ.
PRESIDENT
TILAK VIDYALAYA
NAGPUR

From a microfilm : S.N. 14215

356. LETTER TO JAMINI BHUSHAN MITRA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
August 9, 1927

DEAR JAMINI BABU,

I have your letter. I appreciate the confidence you repose in me. But the attitude you have adopted is wrong. Even if I was well, I should be powerless to do anything single-handed. But I am still more powerless seeing that I could take no part in the administrative work. Surely, you and Satis Babu know each other much better than you and I. And if you cannot convince Satis Babu, how shall I be able to help? But if you think that Satis Babu is prejudiced against you, you should have self-confidence enough to be able to convince the Secretary of the Association and the members of the Council other than Satis Babu of his prejudice. I can give you this assurance that Mr. Shankerlal Banker in the first instance and the other members of the Council in the second will consider all you might have to say quite impartially and independently of Satis Babu. There is also Dr. Ray and he will surely listen to you as much as to Satis Babu. For I know what affection he has for you. For my own part I must also add that Satis Babu will not do any conscious injustice to you. As a matter of fact, he wrote to me a kind letter about you and nothing will please me better than to find that you have met Satis Babu and become satisfied that he has no prejudice against you. After all he has no ends of his own to serve by putting obstacles in your way. He has exchanged a life of ease, comfort and honour for one of deprivation, pains, sorrows and self-effacement. If I am wrong you may correct me. It grives me that self-sacrificing workers cannot hold together and work away for a cause which is common to them all.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. JAMINI BHUSHAN MITRA
KALISPUR ASHRAM
P.O. BALIKHOLA
KHALISPUR
KHULNA (BENGAL)

From a microfilm : S.N. 19798

357. LETTER TO SWAMI

August 9, 1927

Your latest telegram.[1] I have sent a reply by wire which you must have received. Your telegram and your letter are full of your love and your sorrow. I expect nothing else of you.

It is my duty to restrain excess of love. I could not see from the figures you sent me that we are at the moment in a position to produce Rs. 25,000. I understand that at present we can somehow balance the two sides.

But if we have a saving of Rs. 25,000, does it not prove that we must be making a huge profit somewhere or that we do not pay enough to our workers?

It may or may not be as you say. None the less I do feel that if we have the capacity to make this donation it could be done only anonymously. If our small institution could make such a large donation, it would have an impact on others and this may arouse jealousy, obviously it could not be emulated. Generally, a donation is announced so that others may follow suit. Else it is merely showing off.

For us being in good shape means not being able to give away anything at all. I see from your report that the tenements of our workers are in a state of disrepair. If our resources permit we should utilize what we can spare for repairing their houses so that they would not be a burden on the public funds. I would regard that as our substantial contribution.

No one here has understood fully the meaning of your telegram. If you thought that the workers, etc., would accept minimum wages and pay up the remainder as monthly instalments, I would suggest that as they save up progressively, those savings should be utilized for the benefit of the Dheds and Bhangis and something permanent can thus be achieved. I believe all will receive the help urgently needed and they will find their feet. If we have earned our money honestly, I wish you to make the purest use of it.

But you may, if you like, treat all this as needless fuss. I might have scribbled a lot without knowing things. You are free to do

[1] Suggesting that Rs. 25,000 be set apart for flood relief by *Navajivan* and offering to defer his retirement for two years so that the institution need not suffer financially

anything in counsultation with Vallabhbhai, Jamnalalji and others and I shall approve of whatever you do. I shall be quite content if you regarded the above ideas as emotional outburst of one of the press workers and treat them accordingly.

It may be that you would be bound for two years; but I like that.

Whatever I send you now is sent only after being shown to Kaka. And that will be the case hereafter. Take it that he has approved, what he has not objected to.

Had I not had on my hand today grave matters beyond my capacity, I would have written much more.

[From Gujarati]

From a manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

358. AN APPEAL

BANGALORE,
August 10, 1927

FRIENDS,

This is addressed to the Gujarati-speaking Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis and Christians if any. The other citizenss will have the opportunity of subscribing to a fund which I am hoping will be soon started.

This appeal is in connection with the heavy floods of Gujarat the like of which have not occurred within living memory. I hope therefore that all Gujaratis, men and women, will contribute to this fund as much as they can. The funds will be sent to Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel, the President of the Ahmedabad Municipality and of the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee.

The appeal is being taken up by Messrs Chimanlal Bhogilal Desai, Raojibhai Patel and Chhotalal Kothari. Every subscriber is[1] requested to give his or her name against the sum subscribed so as to facilitate accurate publication of the list in the pages of *Young India* or *Navajivan.*

To organized relief in times of distress. Let those Gujaratis who are not wanted for work in Gujarat or who can be spared turn their

[1] End of page 2. In the photostat volume, two pages (numbered 3 and 4) are interpolated after page 2 and the original page 3 has been renumbered 5. But these two pages, which seem to be part of another appeal, are reproduced below.

attention to the places where help may be most needed. The distress of Gujarat must not blind the Gujaratis to the need of the other provinces. The present distress must be utilized to make us less provincial and more national. We must feel one with the least and the remotest of the thirty crores of God's creatures who inhabit this land.

M. K. G.

From a photostat : S.N. 12797

359. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
August 10, 1927

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

I have your bomb-shell. I had as long chats with Panditji over it as it was possible for us both to have. Your draft statement does not shock me. The atmosphere about us is so debilitating and irresponsive that the tallest of us becomes dazed for the moment. The suffocation has clearly overtaken you. It is no fault of yours. And as I could say to Khwaja in spite of his going back upon his brilliant professions that I could love him, so I can literally say of you in spite of what is admittedly a lapse. I say "admittedly" because you still believe in Non-co-operation, but the situation demands, in your opinion, a different conduct and you deceive yourself into the belief that the different conduct would hasten Non-co-operation. I don't believe it. But I can't impart my belief or unbelief to you. You must act up to whatever is natural for you.

But I have this suggestion. Keep those views ot yourself. You are in no way called upon to publish them. For, if I am no politician, you are still less. When swaraj is established, you won't want to belong to the diplomatic service, nor to the military. You would fight shy of the law department. You would be content, if you are placed in charge of the medical service and given a free purse for all your researches, intelligent or otherwise, even as I would aspire after nothing more serious or important than the spinning department, if hand-spinning has not become universal by that time. The law, diplomacy, military and the rest, we shall leave to Motilalji and company; and if Panditji thinks that Shaukat Ali would be good company, he may throw at him the military departments.

If my reading is correct, you and I, but you more than I, will not

be expected to contribute to the discussion over Assembly and Councils programme, constitution making and what not or better still, what rot. I, therefore, think that you will commit no crime against God or Indian humanity, if you announce to the world that you have no opinion on these matters which must be left to specialists and politicians. I am sure you have not made the mistake of supposing that I have sponsored your election[1] because I considered you to be a brilliant political thinker or anything near that state. The country has acclaimed your election with one voice because you are a true and good Mussalman, you are a lover of your country, there is no camouflage in you, you know your limitations, you keep your head about you, but because above all, Hindu-Muslim unity is a passion with you, and you entertain ideas about it which you would gladly share with your country and which you are impatient to share with it, and enforce them even if it be at the point of the bayonet. Your election is a demonstration, in spite of the madness raging round us, that the country is thirsting for domestic peace, and that it is sick over dishonesty, fraud, immorality and violence committed in the sacred name of religion. I therefore ask you to tear your statement to pieces. Keep that opinion to yourself, accept the election with grace, dignity and thankfulness, and announce that you have no political policy of your own to place before the country, that so far as that is concerned, you will take up a strictly judicial and impartial attitude and act merely as a chairman of meetings guiding deliberations, keeping order and enforcing decisions of majorities, that you have accepted the election with the sole intention of guiding the country your year of office, by all the power at your command, to domestic peace. For, you owe it to the country as a Mussalman and a staunch nationalist to vindicate the religion of the Prophet and the honour of the country by giving all the talents you have for securing a domestic peace honourable to all parties. Nobody expects more of you. And, if you meddle in anything else, you will be travelling outside your province.

I have not telegraphed to you; for, I thought I would save a few rupees of the poor spinners. That I have left to Panditji who is better able to patronize the telegraph department. You made him your carrier, and I give myself the same honour by letting him carry my reply. And in the face of this reply, you dare not refuse the crown of thorns that is offered to you by a grateful country, and you dare not

[1] For the Congress presidentship

publish your statement, however precious your views are. If you wish to place them before a few friends gathered together in a drawing-room enjoying hookah, you may certainly enliven the company with your views. But beyond the four walls of such a drawing-room, your views may not travel.

This letter gives you sufficient indication of my health and ill-health. Health you may gather from the length of the letter and the views expressed therein. Ill-health you are entirely to infer from the fact that much against my will I have been obliged to dictate what is purely a personal and affectionate letter of an old friend.

You need not apologize for not coming. If I find myself on the brink of the precipice, I shall not hesitate to telegraph for you, nor; if I undertake a fast more prolonged than 21 days. And I know that whatever engagement may be, you will leave them to see a friend patient if only to say good-bye to him or to wean him from his mad fasting career. Meanwhile by all means continue to make your thousand per day on condition that a certain respectable percentage of your ill-gotten gains is reserved for the poor spinners, if only by way of penance.

May I expect a reassuring telegram from you?

When you meet Hakimji, please warn him against forgetting me altogether.

Yours sincerely,

DR. M. A. ANSARI
NO. 1, DARYAGANJ
DELHI

From a photostat : S.N. 12870

360. LETTER TO T. R. MAHADEVA IYER

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
August 10, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

You must excuse me for not being able to write to you earlier. I waited purposely for one or two days as Dr. Varadarajulu was coming. I have now discussed the situation with him also. He tells me that the people in the Malay Peninsula are also with the Committee and he really thinks that I need not bother myself about the matter as in course of time the possession of the property was bound to revert to

the Committee. My own opinion is that where there is a large number of people who want to observe caste restrictions, they should be able to send their children to the gurukul with the option to them to feed them separately. But if the majority of those who are in power do not favour the view and wish to have a rigid rule excluding all who wish to observe caste restrictions you should gracefully and instantaneously give up possession. If what Dr. Varadarajulu says is true, namely, that you have no effective opinion behind you, it appears to me to be useless to go to arbitration. If you will give up possession at once, you are at liberty to use this letter in order to justify your step.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. R. MAHADEVA IYER
NO. 1, KRISHNAMACHARI ROAD
NUNGUMBAKKAM
CATHEDRAL P.O.
MADRAS

From a microfilm : S.N. 12936-A

361. LETTER TO S. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
August 10, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

We had a fine family gathering yesterday—three Brahmins against two non-Brahmins or in modern language three co-operators against two non-co-operators, myself being in each case in a minority. But strangely enough, the party forgot differences of opinion and differences of *varna* and came to the unanimous opinion that you should be advised, asked and pressed to send a nice little love letter to Mr. R. K. Shunmugam Chetty asking him to see you at once for a personal chat. This decision was taken because we felt that you being a Brahmin, President of the Congress, and a leader of the Swaraj Party had an advantage over the poor non-Brahmin member of the Party, and we also felt, apart of course from Mr. Chetty, that you will honour our decision without any ado, in spite of a certain amount of delicacy about sending any such letter.

I do not need to give you the contents of the discussion; for, you will have them all from Mr. Satyamurti, and you will not expect a

fellow-patient to enter into any explanation or discussion. If Panditji who is in better health and in the best of spirits wishes to inflict upon you an explanation and a discussion instead of issuing orders as chief of the Swaraj Party and ex-President of the Congress, he may do so. For my part, I shall simply expect you to write the love letter in your best style and with the diplomatic reserve of the English diplomat.

I was disturbed when I saw a brief paragraph about your illness. Your telegram reassured me, and I hope that this will find you fit enough to undertake the fatiguing journey in front of you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

MYLAPORE

MADRAS

From a photostat : S.N. 14213

362. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

BANGALORE,

Shravan Shuddha 12[*August 10, 1927*][1]

BHAISHRI VALJI,

In our circle you are the only student of the Vedas. Today I am sending you an issue of *Vaidik Dharma*. Go through it carefully and let me have your opinion about it. Is the view correct that in Vedic times respectable people did not favour eating meat, and especially beef, and that animals were not killed in sacrifices? If you think that it is, what have you to say about the contrary view expressed by Shri Vaidya[2]?

I should like to have from you regular news about the dairy, the tannery, etc.

I hope you are keeping good health.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 7393. Courtesy : Valjibhai Desai

[1] Gandhiji was in Bangalore on this date in 1927.

[2] C. V. Vaidya, Sanskrit scholar and Indologist

363. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Wednesday, August 10, 1927

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I cannot make out from your letter whether Purushottam has left his job or not. You will be truly able to influence your pupils only when you all give your spare time to manual work and handicrafts and the pupils realize that you enjoy doing it. If you say you do not get time, I shall retort that you do not find time because you have no real interest in it. I can certainly understand that our students too wish to earn money. The fact remains that we ourselves do not face poverty and are not labourers in the true sense. Again, it is not that accumulation of property is distasteful to all of us. We can only say that it should be so and that we are trying to make it so. How can the students rise above this position? Hence, before the students stop dreaming of the future, the Ashram ought to make great headway. Indeed the fact is that though, comparatively, our sacrifices and efforts appear illustrious actually both are as good as nothing. It may be that we are not to blame for it and that circumstances are responsible for it. But we must not on that account ignore it.

I have discussed your letter with Kakasaheb today. Whenever we get time, we do engage in such discussions. Since Kaka will write more about this, I shall not. I shall concede this much that as long as Kakasaheb is the Vice-president of the managing committee, the moral responsibility will be his. Therefore, although far away, you have a right to obtain his opinion. We are both considering whether Kaka will be able to do his duty of pronouncing an opinion. But Swami, who in this matter enjoys authority over both of us, is far away. We must also consider what he thinks.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

364. ANOTHER KHADI BHANDAR

The Honorary Secretary of the Khaddar Co-operative Society Limited of Shimoga writes to say that among the khadi bhandars of Karnatak should be included the khadi bhandar run by this Society at Shimoga. The bhandar was only recently opened. I gladly mention this bhandar. But I warn all the new ventures that they must be run on business lines and by those who know something of the techniques of khadi sales. Not everyone can run a khadi bhandar successfully, not even everyone who has been in charge of a cloth shop. A manager of a khadi bhandar should know the different varieties of khadi, and should know how to distinguish between genuine khadi and imitations. He should also know the art of presenting khadi to the public in an inviting manner, and above all, he has to be scrupulously honest. I invite other bhandars like the Shimoga Bhandar to send in their names with full particulars to the Secretary, All-India Spinners' Association, Ahmedabad.

Young India, 11-8-1927

365. INDIAN SETTLERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

India's first Ambassador has not allowed the grass to grow under his feet. He is busily sowing seeds of true union by a seasonable word now addressed to the Europeans and now to the Indian settlers, and he seems to be having fair success with both. Europeans gracefully acknowledge his splendid worth and exquisite impartiality. Indians gratefully recognize the immense strength of character which backs every word that this great son of India utters.

He has now appealed to them to produce an army of social workers in the cause of public health and sanitation. Let us hope that his appeal will not fall upon deaf ears, and that well-to-do and educated Indians will respond as zealously as they did when C. F. Andrews appealed to them for assistance for the scavenging work he did during the outbreak of smallpox in Durban some months ago. Agent though he is of the Government, if Reuter's report is correct, Sjt. Sastri did not spare it over its criminal indifference about the sanitary and social welfare of the indentured Indians. For the neglect of sanitation amongst the indentured Indians, three parties are really responsible—the Government of India, the employers, and the Local

Government. If the Government of India had insisted upon a minimum standard, and if the employers had taken a human interest in the employees and the Local Government had considered the indentured Indians as future citizens of South Africa, they would have learnt, during their five years' indenture, habits of modern sanitation. For during the five years of indenture they had to live like soldiers in barracks and they could have been made to conform to any reasonable sanitary regulations that might have been framed, even as they were made to conform to labour regulations which were often even harsh and severe. But this is past history. There is no more indentured emigration now.

The questions is now to make of the existing Indian population model citizens, and if the Government and the Indian settlers co-operate, it is not at all impossible to set a better tone, and create a healthy Indian public opinion that would not tolerate any insanitation or ugliness. Let the Indian settlers do their part of forming sanitation brigades, cleaning up latrines and streets and instructing ignorant people in the elementary laws of sanitation, even as they did in 1897 in Durban. Sjt. Sastri's work will be frutiless unless he is willingly, intelligently and whole-heartedly helped by the Indian settlers. They must conform to the wholesome maxim of law that those who seek justice or equity must come with clean hands. Let the settlers be clean in body, mind and soul, and thus make the best use of the golden opportunity they have of having an Ambassador who has got the ability to serve them and who has in a remarkable measure the ear of the European inhabitants of South Africa.

Young India, 11-8-1927

366. THE HAVOC IN GUJARAT

The destruction wrought by the heavy floods in Gujarat appears to be of an unprecedented character. The meagre accounts I have seen in the Press supplemented by two telegrams from Vallabhbhai Patel and one from the Ashram gave me but a faint idea of the enormous damage done by the flood. I am handicapped, too, as I am writing this in an out-of-the-way place in Mysore where newspapers reach very late. When communications are thoroughly established, the total extent of the damage done will probably be found to be much heavier than the estimates made by responsible workers. Benevolent and wealthy gentlemen of Bombay and Gujarat have been as prompt in

their work of mercy as Nature has been furious in her work of destruction. Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel has already issued an appeal. I hope that there will be a liberal response to the appeal. A private telegram tells me that Sir Purushottamdas Thakordas has also, as is his wont on such occasions, started relief work. On occasions of such calamities when deepest emotions are stirred,many relief agencies are brought into being to render help. They must be all welcome. Not one agency can hope to overtake the whole work of relief over such a vast area. However, it will be the duty of several agencies to co-operate with one another, so as to avoid overlapping and so as to make every rupee go to the longest length and every grain of wheat find its way to the neediest hands. Let those whom God has blessed with ability to give remember the proverb : "He gives twice who gives the quickest."

Young India, 11-8-1927

367. WELCOME GOOD SAMARITAN

Someone gave C. F. Andrews the affectionate title of Dinabandhu. It certainly fits him. His overpowering ambition in life is to be friend of those in need, and the way he helps is by utter self-effacement. It is fitting therefore that the first city in India should have voted an address to be presented on his return which takes place on the 20th instant. I have no doubt that the address will be worthy of the occasion. But in the abundance of their affection let the members of the Corporation not forget, that Dinabandhu Andrews is not a monied man. He has almost literally nowhere to lay his hand on. He has no cupboard, no treasure chest, no house of his own. For his very few belongings he needs a caretaker. He never keeps anything for himself. Anybody may take away his box with its contents. When in South Africa, Pearson and I used to despair of him ever taking care of himself or things which could be called his own. To present him with a rich casket or any casket at all would be a cruelty to him.

But if the Corporation would spend any money it would be proper to vote a purse for him to be used for his life mission. He appreciates affection. But he is never so awkward as when he receives thanks and honours and wonders why he should be thanked or honoured at all. But however awkward he may feel, let the honour to be done to him be not a hole-and-corner affair. For whilst it is undoubtedly due to him for his magnificent work in South Africa, it

will also serve the purpose of reciprocating the goodwill that has been created in South Africa, and would be a demonstration of the fact, that in his work he carried with him the weight of opinion of all India, and that he was no less an ambassador for India than Sjt. Sastri.

Young India, 11-8-1927

368. UNITY IN VARIETY

The Polish professor[1] whose earnest questions I endeavoured to answer a few months back, having read my answer[2], sends me the following further questions:

1. Men are not equal. Do you also admit that there is a vast inequality between nations?
2. If this is true, do you think that representative elective bodies, called parliaments, which have brought Europe to the Great War, are really suitable for India?
3. Do you think that India may become one nation in a similar sense as Italy or France?
4. Is it right to suppose that the future of Asia depends on this unification of India, which alone could overrule the materialistic tendencies of Japan and China?
5. Is this not the real alternative for Asia, either superficial Europeanization as in Japan, or going back to ancient Aryan tradition which seems to be the rule for great Indian masters?
6. Has this recalling of original Aryan tradition also an importance for Europe?
7. Do you not see in European civilization, with all its faults, a new power which goes beyond all Hindu experience?
8. Is there, in all India, a single little town, like many French little towns, in which everybody is really free to follow his aspirations, all people are well-to-do, all have a very high level of education and sociability, and representatives of opposite tendencies meet in friendly intercourse? I know such towns in France and also in England. I wonder whether such a thing exits in India.

My correspondent has stated only a half-truth when he says, "Men are not equal". The other half is that they are equal. For,

[1] W. Lutostawski
[2] *Vide* "Truth is One", 21-4-1927.

though they are not all of the same age, the same height, the same skin, and the same intellect, these inequalities are temporary and superficial, the soul that is hidden beneath this earthy crust is one and the same for all men and women belonging to all climes. It would therefore be, perhaps, more accurate to say, that there is a real and substantial unity in all the variety that we see around us. The word "Inequality" has a bad odour about it, and it has led to arrogance and inhumanities, both in the East and the West. What is true about men is also true about nations, which are but groups of men. The false and rigid doctrine of inequality has led to the insolent exploitation of the nations of Asia and Africa. Who knows that the present ability of the West to prey upon the East is a sign of Western superiority and eastern inferiority? I know that the East meekly, and all too hastily, submits to this pernicious doctrine, and then makes an ineffectual attempt to imitate the West. There is, after all, a world of truth in the poetic statement, "Things are not what they seem.".

The second question does not seem to follow from the first. And seeing that I reject the doctrine of inequality in the sense used by the writer, I am unable to admit that the representative elective bodies are really unsuitable for India. But for the reasons, which I have stated in the *Indian Home Rule* and which in the main I have found no occasion during the past 20 years to revise, I should be extremely sorry, if India entirely copies the Western model. Representative elective bodies were not unknown to India before the European advent. But the contents of the words "representation" and "election" were, so far as I can see, far different from the European.

In my opinion, India is today one nation, even as Italy or France is; and this I maintain in spite of a vivid and painful knowledge of the fact, that Hindus and Mussalmans are murdering one another, that Brahmins and non-Brahmins are preparing for a similar battle, and that both Brahmins and non-Brahmins exclude from their purview the classes which both have left no stone unturned to suppress. But I have known similar quarrels in families and in other nations. It has often seemed to me that a family connection is necessary to establish a good ground for a quarrel. But it flatters me to be able heartily to endorse the proposition that the future of Asia depends upon a proper and demonstrable unification of India.

I do not, however, think that the alternative to superficial Europeanization consists in a complete reversion to the ancient Aryan

tradition. I hold with that great thinker, the late Justice Ranade, that there is no such thing as a literal complete revival of ancient tradition possible, even if it were desirable. In the first place, no one knows authoritatively what the ancient Aryan tradition was or is. It is difficult to state unerringly the period which can be described as the "Golden Age" and then to give a categorical description of that age. And I am humble enough to admit that there is much that we can profitably assimilate from the West. Wisdom is no monopoly of one continent or one race. My resistance to Western civilization is really a resistance to its indiscriminate and thoughtless imitation based on the assumption that Asiatics are fit only to copy everything that comes from the West. I do believe that if India has patience enough to go through the fire of suffering and to resist any unlawful encroachment upon its own civilization which, imperfect though it undoubtedly is, has hitherto stood the ravages of time, she can make a lasting contribution to the peace and solid progress of the world.

I gladly admit that a new power for good is slowly but surely arising in the West. Whether it will transcend all Hindu experience or not, I do not know. But I should welcome every fresh contribution to the enrichment of humanity, no matter where it comes from.

Lastly, I am unable to say anything about the glowing tribute that the learned professor pays to the self-contained French and English little towns. I know so little about English towns, and still less about the French. I own I have my doubts. But I know that if the professor could stand the almost forbidden exterior of Indian villages, I would undertake to take him to some of them where he would see a culture of a high order, and though he will miss the literary polish he will not miss the human heart and the human touch, and where, if he can accommodate himself to the strange Indian ways about exclusive eating and drinking, he will see amazing tolerance of opposite ideas and friendliest intercourse of the mind and the soul. Let me also remind the professor that the English and the French prosperity and amenities which such prosperity brings depend upon, what I must again repeat and what I would gladly avoid if I could, namely, exploitation.

Young India, 11-8-1927

369. 'HUMANIZING WAR'

I extract the following interesting paragraphs from an article headed "War" in the March number of the *Brotherhood* :

> Last time the women and children were only starved—it was done by a process cunningly disguised as "economic pressure"—but next time they are to be gassed to death. Aeroplanes will drop penetrating poisons which will exterminate civil population—Edison says that it should not be difficult to dispose of London's millions in three hours. In every civilized country the chemists are at work searching for some particularly deadly poisons. In England, says *Truth*, our Government is busy experimenting with improvements in poison gas and killing animals at the rate of two a day in the process. It obtained in one year 689 cats, guinea pigs, goats, mice, monkeys, rabbits and rats, and killed 618 of them with poison gas in search of improvements.
>
> Some idea of the horrors of the next war may be gathered from the fact that the range of guns has been doubled since the Armistice[1], and that machine guns are now available which fire 1,500 shots a minute. An automatic cannon will fire one and a quarter pound shells at the rate of 120 a minute, and there is a sixteen-inch gun which hurls a missile weighing more than a ton for a distance of twenty-seven miles. The Chemical Warfare Service in America has discovered a liquid three drops of which applied to any part of the skin will cause a man's death. One aeroplane, carrying two tons of this liquid, could kill the whole population over miles of territory. General Swinton, of the British Army, says : The great future weapon of war will be deadly germs. We have since the war discovered and developed germs which, dropped down upon cities and armies, will slaughter a nation in a day.
>
> If anyone is ever in danger of becoming unduly optimistic, let him remember that we spent in 1924 forty millions in education, a hundred and twenty one millions on armaments, and three hundred and sixteen millions on drink. The business of scientific killing is very expensive, and I told that enough nitrogen was thrown away in one small and indecisive battle in France to save India from a famine. The great world powers are still pouring out an incredible amount of their treasure upon armaments, although history so plainly teaches that increasing armaments do nothing but increase the likelihood of wars. Peace-loving America voted eighty-five million dollars for aviation expansion in a few minutes, and no one took the slightest notice of this forward movement in the race for armaments. The irony of the situation

[1] Of 1918

is, that while Great Britain is spending nearly twice as much money on armaments today as she spent in 1913, the victorious nations have relieved Germany of the burden of such expenditure, so that, in competing with her in industry and commerce they work under a severe handicap of their own creation.

I add to this the following from the *Lancet* (June 18, 1927) :

Since the arrival of the British troops, there have been many cases of influenza and pneumonia, but the question of venereal disease has been the most clamant one, and in spite of every possible precaution the number of those affected has steadily increased. . . . Numbers of prostitutes from North and South have flocked to Shanghai, most of them being Chinese (60 per cent), Russians (30 per cent), and Japanese (5 per cent). The majority of the brothels are in the French Concession and in Chinese districts bordering on municipal roads. The high venereal rate has give the Command much concern, and no stone is left unturned in the effort to lower it.

And yet there are intelligent men who talk, and gullible men who subscribe to the talk, of the "humanizing influence" of war!

Young India, 11-8-1927

370. WHEN SCIENCE AND ART ARE REAL

A friend sends me an extract from Anton Tchekov's stories which is worth reproducing. The extract runs as follows :

I have a very definite opinion on this subject, I assure you. To my mind, all these schools, dispensaries, libraries, medical relief societies, under present conditions, only serve to aggravate the bondage of the people. The peasants are fettered by a great chain, and you do not break the chain, but only add fresh links to it.

What matters is, not that Anna died in childbirth, but that all these Annas, Mavras, Pelageas toil from early morning till dark, fall ill from working beyond their strength, all their lives tremble for their sick and hungry children, all their lives are being doctored, and in dread of death and disease, fade and grow old early and die in filth and stench.

Their children begin the same story over again as soon as they grow up, and so it goes on for hundreds of years, and millions of men live worse than beasts— in continual terror, for a mere crust of bread. The whole horror of their position lies in their never having time to think of their image and semblance. Cold, hunger, animal terror, a burden of toil, like avalanches of snow, block for them every way to spiritual activity—that is, to what

distinguishes a man from the brutes and what is the only thing which makes life worth living.

You go to their help with hospitals and schools, but you do not free them from their fetters by that. On the contrary, you bind them in closer bonds, as by introducing new prejudices, you increase the number of their wants, to say nothing of the fact that they have got to pay Zemstvo for blisters and books and so toil harder than ever.

Yes, I am against medicine. It would be necessary only for the study of diseases as natural phenomena, and not for the cure of them. If one must cure, it should not be diseases, but the cause of them. Remove the principal cause,—physical labour—and then there will be no disease.

I do not believe in a sceince that cures disease. When science and art are real, they aim not at temporary and private ends, but at eternal and universal — they seek for truth and the meaning of life, they seek for God, for the Soul, and when they are tied down to the needs and evils of the day, to dispensaries and libraries, they only complicate and hamper life.

Scientific men, writers, artists are hard at work. Thanks to them, the conveniences of life are multiplied from day to day. Our physical demands increase, yet truth is still a long way off, and man still remains the most rapacious and dirty animal; everything is tending to the degeneration of the majority of mankind and the loss for ever of fitness for life.

I have not read the original story, but I suppose physical labour which the author refers to as the principal cause of diseases is not wholesome farm labour or any such labour, but the grinding toil which for the sake of eking a miserable livelihood the peasants of his experience must have been obliged to undergo. It would be interesting to know the original Russian word which has been rendered by the translator as “physical labour”.

The most telling passage in the extract is perhaps that which distinguishes real science and art from the ephemeral. Who can deny that much that passes for science and art today destroys the soul instead of uplifting it and instead of evoking the best in us panders to our basest passions?

Young India, 11-8-1927

371. TEST OF FIDELITY

A study of the chart of membership of the All-India Spinners' Association discloses a painful fact. Out of 1,980 members of the A Class, 1,255 have been found to be unsteady in their fidelity to their promise regularly to send their yarn quota. Let no one think that if it was an insignificant monetary contribution rather than that of self-spun yarn, the result would have been very different. Somehow or other people are neglectful in the performance of self-imposed duties, whose breach does not carry with it an immediate punitive consequence. But unless a nation contains a large enough number of men and women who would carry out their voluntary obligations, although their breach may not entail any felt punishment, it can make slow progress. Forfeiture of rights of membership of an organization which carried with it no pecuniary or other earthly loss is lightly regarded by the members, and some even consider that by belonging to such an institution they confer on it a patronage which should be treasured by the institution in question. But I warn the members, if there are any, against harbouring such notions about the All-India Spinners' Association. To belong to the Association should be considered a rare privilege, because by contributing half an hour's free and intelligent labour capable of being easily performed by any ordinary man, woman or child, a member becomes a partaker in the tremendous aggregate effect of the contributions. I would therefore urge the defaulting members to be as punctual in sending their quota as they would be in keeping the time for catching their train or attending their offices. Let them remember that apart from the intrinsic value of spinn-ing, there is no less value in cultivating regularly a daily remembrance of the condition of the dumb millions and a daily concentration over drawing an even strong thread as much for themselves as for the rest of the 300 millions of India. I understand that each one of the members has been sent a reminder. Let the defaulters please realize that each reminder costs at least half an anna over and above the salaries of men employed in attending to the writing and despatch of reminder cards. It has been suggested that some postpone sending their quota till several months' contributions are collected, so as to save postage. The saving of postage is a proper consideration. But those who would save postage should send their contributions in advance. To spin 12,000 yards in a month's time is not a very great strain as must be abundantly clear to every reader of

these pages. And if after having sent one lot in advance, the spinners continue to give 30 minutes regularly to the wheel, they will never be in arrears, and they will never feel the strain of the work, no matter how busy they may be otherwise. And if punishment has any appeal to them, let them remember that at the end of the first five years of the existence of the All-India Spinners' Association, it will descend surely and swiftly upon them, when the time comes for revising the constitution and conferring further privileges upon members.

Young India, 11-8-1927

372. NOTES

TRUE SACRIFICE

Two young men only the other day presented themselves before me and placed into my hands Rs. 10 being the commission they had earned in terms of the rules of the All-India Spinners' Association for hawking khadi. They were entitled to keep this money themselves. But they did not wish to retain this commission; for they felt the force of the argu-ment that there were millions who were much worse off than themselves. The young men went away promising to bring me more such refunds.

Whilst I mention this instance in appreciation of the self-sacrifice of these young men, no khadi-hawker is to infer from it that he is also expected to refund his commission, in other words, that every khadi-hawker is expected to hawk without any charge. I know that it is not possible for everyone to do so, and khadi work requires as many honest, industrious and intelligent hawkers as can be had. To recommend for all the standard that the two young men have chosen for themselves would be to restrict the number of khadi-hawkers, whereas the object is to attract as many young men for the work as possible.

After all the commission to be had out of khadi sales is not much and is not easily earned because it is not possible to command sales of khadi simply by[1] exhibiting it for sale. I know that hawkers have to go from door to door often even without any response whatsoever, and seeing that the commission is given only on actual sales, khadi-hawking means earning one's bread by the sweat of one's brow. Let the example of these young men therefore spur those who

[1] The source has "for".

are doing nothing for khadi to some effort, and let the example result in adding to the number of hawkers without their being expected to refund their hard-earned commission. There are no doubt many young men and young women who have plenty of leisure and do not need any pecuniary reward. They may follow the example of these young men and offer their services for hawking. Let would-be khadi-hawkers however understand that they cannot get khadi to hawk unless they are able to produce certificates of character, and are able to furnish security for the amount of khadi they may receive for sale.

FATIGUE TEST IN SPINNING

Satish Babu who after prolonged convalescence has returned to the Pratishthan works at Sodepur writes:

> One of the spinners here was encouraged to sit for continuous spining. He worked one day whole time for carding and making slivers. He was ready with the slivers at night, and sat for spinning from 9 p.m. to 7 p.m. the next day. He took three hours' respite, two hours for sleeping and one hour for eating, etc. In 19 active hours he spun 10,500 yards of 18 counts yarn including reeling. He may show better record in future.

It would be interesting to know the test of the strength and the evenness of this great quantity of yarn spun in 19 out of 22 consecutive hours.

VIRTUE OF TESTING YARN

Ever since the introduction of the system of testing self-spun yarn received by the All-India Spinners' Association there has been steady improvement in its quality. Following are some of the very striking results obtained :

NAME	COUNT	STRENGTH	EVENNESS
Sjt. V. K. Vishvanathan, Kerala			
Before test	26	31	83
After test	32	95	81
Shri S. M. Padmavatibai, Shimoga			
Before test	16	20	91
After test	25	80	89
Dr. M. Venkatrao, Gadag			
Before test	21	40	92
After test	19	79	88
Sjt. Motilal Roy, Chandranagar			
Before test	39	47	92
After test	33	78	95

Sjt. Dayaljibhai Shivji, Gujarat			
Before test	14	23	71
After test	20	74	93

The following are some names in whose case the test has been found to be uniformly good, the yarn being any day equal to the strongest mill yarn :

NAME	COUNT	STRENGTH	EVENNESS
Shri Gangabai Kunte, Bombay	30	98	93
Sjt. Ishvarlal Patel, Bombay	15	92	93
Dr. A. P. Kothari, Bombay	22	96	86
Sjt. Jogendra Chatterjea, Sodepur	30	96	92
Shri. Lakshmibai Gokhale, Bombay	33	95	84
Sjt. Govindbhai B. Patel (Juvenile)	15	87	93
Vithal Leladhar (Juvenile)	11	80	88

MILL 'KHADDAR'

A friend writes :

> I know you have several times alluded to what is mistakenly called 'mill khaddar', but apparently the mill-owners are still unable to resist the temptation of the name. The worst offender in this respect is . . . who openly quotes and advertises mill khaddar. This is for your information, and what action you may like to take in preserving the purity attached to the name khaddar.

What the correspondent says is unfortunately but too true. And I have been painfully aware of it. I had hoped that the mill-owners would give up the undesirable practice. But it was hoping against hope. Wherever I have gone people have drawn my attention to this unpatriotic conduct on the part of some mill-owners. The only comfort I have derived from the usurpation by the mill-owners of the name 'khaddar' is, that it is proof of the popularity of khaddar among the masses upon whose ignorance the mill-owners are playing. For I know that wherever the buyers have discovered the deception, they have cursed themselves and the mill-owners. The only remedy against this deception is for the buyers to beware, and for khadi lovers to educate the people so as to enable them to distinguish between real khaddar and its imitation.

HAND-SPINNING IN ALMORA

A correspondent sends me an interesting report of the progress that hand-spinning of wool has made in the schools conducted by the District Board of Almora. The following should prove both interesting

and instructive to those who believe in the introduction of *takli* spinning in municipal schools :[1]

> The elections of 1925 to the Almora District Board returned the Swarajists in a majority. Since then the Swarajist members have in various ways tried to give a national stamp to the institution, particularly its educational side. The most important work in that direction has been the introduction of national songs, national sentiments, khadi uniform and wool-spinning into the village schools.
>
> The village teachers of a number of District Board schools purchased wool at their own cost and thus spinning came into being. The Board, seeing the popularity of these voluntary and spontaneous efforts, constitued a spinning and weaving sub-committee and granted Rs. 3,000 at the beginning of 1926 for purchasing wool to be spun at District Board schools in the district. Some nineteen maunds of wool was purchased and distributed throughout the district in village schools. . . . The boys everywhere welcomed the *takli* or *katuna*, and the village schoolmasters did their best to make wool-spinning successful. . . . The Board deserves congratulations for giving this support, in spite of the opposition of conservatives. . . . The Board has ordered spinning classes to be held after school hours as the curriculum has no provision for this type of education. In order to enthuse the masses and to encourage the village students, several *katua dangals* (spinning matches) have been arranged at different centres of the district during fairs. Prizes (including khadi, khadi caps, national flags and national books) have been awarded to the best spinners. This feature has been very much appreciated by the people and has been of great educative and demonstrative value. Seeing the spinning of young schoolboys, the villages have been conscience-stricken and at many places the long-forgotten art of spinning is undergoing a revival. The villagers at several places have established their own looms to weave their hand-spun wool-yarn. So the spinning in schools is touching the masses as well. . . .
>
> Our experiments in wool-spinning convinced us that there was nothing better than *katua* or *takli* for wool-spinning— simple, light, inexpensive and practical. So *Katua* or *takli* is reigning supreme in the Board's schools as well. A small boy can make his own *katua* without any trouble or expense and play it at any time or any place whenever or wherever he likes. . . .

If this experiment is continued and spinning is properly supervised, it can not only become self-supporting but be even profitable. For if hand-weaving is not also done by the boys, spun wool should find a ready market; or it can be woven on behalf of the Board or the

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

school concerned, and the woven stuff either used by the boys themselves or sold in the open market.

Young India, 11-8-1927

373. WORTHY OF EMULATION

Shrimati Annapurnabai Ghare who contributed during the last *chaturmas* one lakh yards of yarn to the All-India Spinners' Association has again taken the same vow as last year, and is religiously at the wheel every day for fulfilling it. This means 833 yards per day for four months. If she is an average spinner, she would have to give to her *yajna* at least three hours per day to be able to spin good yarn. Will the other sisters copy the example? The *yanjna* no doubt requires faith in the wheel and love for the unseen millions.

Young India, 11-8-1927

374. LETTER TO M. ABDUL GANI

AS AT BANGALORE,
August 11, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. Probably before you knew even the existence of *Rangila Rasul*, I wrote very strongly against it in the pages of *Young India*. This was 3 years ago. I have taken no part in the present controversy because I do not approve of the tremendous agitation that has been got up after the judgment in the *Rangila Rasul* case. I think that the attack upon the judge is unfortunate. He may have committed an error of judgment, but surely has betrayed no prejudice. I understand he condemned the pamphlet in unmeasured terms. He simply thought that the law itself was not enough to bring the author of the pamphlet under its purview. The agitation for altering the law is sound, but the alteration will take place with or without agitation if the law is found to be defective.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

M. ABDUL GANI
KURNOOL

From a photostat : S.N. 12386-A

375. LETTER TO A. BAQUI

AS AT BANGLORE,
August 11, 1927

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am glad you have written to me about the *Rangila Rasul* agitation. Yours is the fourth letter of its kind. The *Rangila Rasul* pamphlet I saw nearly three years ago, and it gave me deep pain. I expressed it all in the pages of *Young India*. The agitation that is going on at present has appeared to me to be altogether unjustified and quite on wrong lines. If I wrote at all, I should have to write in condemnation of the agitation, although I should reiterate the opinion about the pamphlet itself. The attack against the judge is very unfortunate. I could not associate myself with a demand for his resignation or a demand for the release of the writers who insulted the judge. The only part of the agitation that is in my opinion correct is the demand for alteration of the law, if it is inadequate for the punishment of offenders against the religious sentiments of any class of people. But that agitation does not require all the bitterness that has been imported into it. Even without a whirlwind agitation, the Government is bound to set the law right if it is defective.

The correspondents mentioned by me have written to me to say that the Hindu Press has associated itself with the degrading sentiments of the *Rangila Rasul*. I have never seen such writing in any of the Hindu-edited papers that I get and read here. I have asked these correspondents to refer me to the writings mentioned by them.[1] But I have had no acknowledment from them. Have you seen any such writings mentioned by them? If so, please pass them on to me. I should certainly like to take some action on them.

I hope the College is doing well.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

A. BAQUI, ESQ.
KOATH P.O.
DISTRICT SHAHABAD (BIHAR PROVINCE)

From a microfilm : S.N. 12387-A

[1] *Vide* "A Letter", 10-7-1927, and "Letter to Gulzar Mohamad 'Aquil' ", 7-8-1927.

376. LETTER TO HELENE HAUSSDING

AS AT BANGALORE,
August 11, 1927

MY DEAR SPARROW,

I have your letter. You agitate yourself unnecessarily over the translation that was sent to you. Surely you have humour enough to take all such stuff lightly. I merely passed it on to you so that you might see what is written by your fellow-passenger about you. Why should we take notice of such writings especially when strangers write? So far as I am concerned, your repudiation is quite enough. I am not going to send your repudiation to the Press. I don't suppose that anybody now remembers the writing.

Are you now perfectly all right? I am doing a little bit of touring now and feel quite fit though not yet as strong as before the collapse. Krishnadas has just gone on Association's business to Bengal and incidentally to see his Guruji as also his parents. I am forwarding your letter to him which I know will delight him.

I want your assurance that you will never worry about it. All the nasty things that may be said about you need not worry you; for, after all the chief thing with which we should be concerned is to know what the inner voice tells us about ourselves.

With love,

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat : S.N. 12511

377. LETTER TO T. PARAMESWARA IYER

AS AT BANGALORE,
August 11, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I was trying to make time to reply to your letter undated enclosing papers about Bhadravati and Krishnarajasagar, and now I have got your second letter sending me more cuttings. But that was not what I wanted. I wanted you to give me, if you could spare the time, a very brief note containing unchallengeable facts and figures

which a busy man like me could go through easily and act upon.[1] I should have another breakdown if I attempted to study the papers you have sent.

I have read the article you had referred me to in your very first letter. It did not carry conviction and it did not appear to me to have been written dispassionately.

The quotation from Mr. Sastri's letter seems to me to be irrelevant. Whilst he congratulates you upon your sustained interest in the welfare of the State even after retirement, he is silent as to his own opinion on the Bhadravati works.

I do not return to Bangalore before the 21st instant. If I could find a little time I would be glad to make your acquaintance. Will it be too much for me to suggest that on my return, you should try to see me, and if I am not busy when you come, I shall certainly be delighted to meet you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. PARAMESHWARA IYER
RETIRED JUDGE
WHITE HOUSE
CHAMARAJPET
BANGALORE CITY

From a microfilm : S.N. 12631

378. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

DAVANGERE,
August 11, 1927

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS,

I now understand what you have done about Ram Binode. I think the whole arrangement is quite satisfactory. But apart from my own opinion, it pleases me to know that both you and Rajendra Babu are satisfied with Ram Binode's conduct and that you have no suspicions about his honesty.

I take it that you will have seen Suresh Babu, probably visited Comilla, and I would like you if you have not the thing in mind to go to Sodepur and visit the works and see Satis Babu and Hemprabha

[1] *Vide* "Letter to T. Paramasiva Iyer", 29-7-1927. Though the addressee's name is spelt differently in the two letters, it is evident from the contents that they are addressed to the same person.

Devi in particular so as to enable you to tell me from a personal visit how they are looking and how far Sodepur has progressed. You may also discuss with Suresh Babu and Satis Babu the opinion cited by you in your letter about khaddar. There is no doubt that middle men do get something. There is nothing wrong in it. But there is no doubt too that the spinning and weaving wages go direct into the pockets of the artisans whom we have in mind.

We are today in Davangere and we shall be away for 10 days in this district, reaching Bangalore on the 21st instant. Mysore State will be finally left on the 28th instant.

From a photostat : S.N. 14216

379. LETTER TO JAYANTI

August 11, 1927

CHI. JAYANTI,

Your letter. The flood has disturbed all time[-schedules]; so it is not possible that my blessings would reach you on your birthday itself. But take it that they have reached you on that very day. May you live long and become a pure worker and may your exalted hopes bear fruit! One thing you and all other pupils should do is to make your handwriting beautiful like pearls. This can be done easily. Just as singing out of tune is not music, so too bad handwriting is no writing. I am not competent to proffer this advice because I know that my own handwriting is no good. But just as a drowning man's warning not to go to a particular spot is heeded by the wise, I hope all of you wise pupils will take this warning from me. Words must be written separately. There must be some space between the lines. A line ought to run straight and every letter must be delineated as an artist draws a picture.

Now about the *Ramayana*. I would certainly pay more respect to Tulsi's *Ramayana* as a religious work. Valmiki's may excel in art, but I have not the slightest doubt that Tulsidas is richer in devotional spirit. Moreover, at present Valmiki's *Ramayana* is available in Sanskrit only. I have so far come across no Gujarati translation which re-creates the interest of the original. You must know that neither of the works is historical. True, Valmiki has portrayed a few historical men and women, but these are not clearly defined. I firmly believe that one cannot infer historical facts from them. But in the case of Tulsidas the question of historicity does not arise. We might say that he adapted Valmiki to suit his own age, but while doing so, having come under the spell of *bhakti*, he took such liberties as he wished to

and thereby he has done no harm but only done good to Hindu society. With the passage of time men and women of divine glory become gods and goddesses and are ultimately worshipped as such. This will always happen and that is right. A man being embodied can never worship God in any other form. It being so, whatever Tulsidas writes about Lord Ramachandra are only his own feelings. Tulsidas has portrayed God as beyond description, as inapprehensible by mere sense-organs and as also beyond attributes. If therefore we cannot swallow the killing of Vali, we should leave aside that passage or believe that while depicting it Tulsidas acted only in conformity with the beliefs of his own age and could not transcend them. As man progresses, his idea of God necessarily becomes subtle and pure, inevitably so. Therefore, we should regard the *Ramayana* rather as a devotional work than a historical record and while we read its fiction part we should ignore whatever we find contrary to morality. Tulsidas himself describes his work *Ramacharitamanasa* as full of faults. He gives a different reason for it but that he has regarded it as not without fault should suffice for us. Moreover, in his well-known verse beginning, "God created the world full of animate and inanimate objects with good qualities as well as bad", Tulsidas has taught us the art of looking at things. Since all human action is partly good and partly bad, we should, like the proverbial swan[1], take in the essence in the form of good qualities and leave alone the defects that spoil it. This is the golden rule that should apply to the reading of all books. We should humbly ask the teacher what we do not understand and we should leave aside what nevertheless we fail to understand; we shuld however never let our reason be clouded or our mind be corrupted. Whatever appears contrary to truth, non-violence and so on, should be rejected as unauthoritative although it may have been printed in an avowedly scriptural work.

Although this letter is written for you alone, regard it as meant for all of you and let them read it; and let the seniors too read it. For, I do not remember having written my thoughts on the *Ramayana* so clearly and concisely anywhere else, though I have explained them often here and there.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

[1] Which is supposed to separate and drink the milk from a mixture of milk and water

380. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

August 11, 1927

You have no reason at all to be anxious on account of Kantilal. You must have known of the step I have taken. I have already written to you that you should never worry about a matter which does not concern you. A further hint we can read in yet another verse : "therefore what is unavoidable thou shouldst not regret".[1]

You will find this verse in the second chapter. It means, you should not grieve over that which you cannot control. Thus the Lord assuaged Arjuna's grief. Generally, we act contrary to this. We weep when someone passes away. We are plunged in sorrow if our house is burnt to ashes; the flood almost robbed us of our sense, but death, fire, floods, etc., are inescapable. What is the use of grieving over them? But this statement does not mean that we should become hard-hearted. We should undertake such remedies as we can to put out a fire, to retrieve the loss caused by floods and to save the dying, but we should not let those events affect us in any other way. Now I have to take it that you cannot come here and that is right; but come when you are free and feel like it. Just come to me wherever I might happen to be.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 27

381. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

DAVANGERE,
Shravan Sud 13 [*August 11, 1927*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your letter only yesterday—that is, after seven days. I am glad that you sent me information about Chi. Kusum. If you come to know anything more, let me hear. I have of course written a letter to Kusum.[2] I have not so far received a reply to it. All of you must have been put on your mettle at the time of the floods. I was glad to hear this time that you maintain good health. Keep it up.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 586. Courtesy : Vasumati Pandit

382. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

AS AT BANGALORE,
August 12, 1927

I do not know that you would want to know Mr. Andrews' opinion about your work. But he has thought it worth while to spend money on cabling the following to me :

> Sastri's success unprecedented. Governor-General admirably supporting, also Ministers and officials.

It is difficult to trust Andrews with any monies for telegraphic charges, and yet I cannot summon sufficient courage to swear at him for this cable news. I am not going to make use of it for the Press. I never had any doubt about your success. All I want to be sure of is your health.

I see you are already telling the public that your term of office will not go beyond one year. Anyway I have your assurance that you will not run away even for the Commission if your presence is indispensable there at the end of the year which is fast spinning away its course.

There was too a good letter from Miss Schlesin from which I as tempted to quote, but I restricted the temptation and destroyed the

[1] Gandhiji was in Davangere on this date.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Kusumbehn Desai", 29-7-1927.

letter. Ere this reaches you, if she kept her promise, she must have seen you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

THE RT. HON. V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI
AGENT-GENERAL
SOUTH AFRICA
DURBAN

From a photostat : S.N. 12370

383. LETTER TO BAL KALELKAR

August 12, 1927

It is not enough merely to say that you do not like Kaka- saheb turning a recluse. When I wrote to you that one's son attaining the age of 16 becomes one's friend, I also meant that you had acquired the capacity to think independently and one who thinks independently should be able to give strong reasons for one's opinions whether to convince himself or others. He must give reasons why he likes one thing and does not like another. Having developed such faculty from their very childhood some men have become great such as the sage Dayananda, Chaitanya, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and other historic figures. Let us leave aside Hinduism and consider sannyasa independently. Sannyasa is a mental state and it is reflected in a man's actions. But if another man imitates these actions without the mental state, that will not be sannyasa. In this way, we all and the entire world have, to some small extent, to live a life of sannyasa and those who don't do so writhe in triple agony[1]. Sannyasa means abandon- ment of worldly pleasures. Complete abandonment constitutes complete sannyasa. Even a householder has always to observe some restraint or other. He who does not has to suffer; he becomes a burden to the earth and falls a prey to diseases of many kinds. Thus we can see that restraint or renunciation should grow with our progress in life and it is man's duty to develop restraint as much as he can. If you accept the above argument that restraint is a good thing, you will have to grant that for doing a good thing a husband need not seek his wife's consent or *vice versa*. There is only one way of maintaining the

[1] Due respectively to nature, fate and spiritual causes

sanctity of the marital tie, namely, husband and wife should both be willing partners in sensual pleasures. One who wants to progress abstaining from sensual pleasures should have the right to do so. Else there will be no progress in the householder's order, and this would halt the advancement of the whole world. Will you not, at least now, admit that Kakasaheb has a right to practise this kind of sannyasa? That renunciation will not harm Kaki or anyone else but actually it will be in her own interest. I believe that the religion of non-violence springs from the fact that the advancement of one promotes the advancement of all, and the fall of one implies the fall of all. We have therefore been enjoined to show compassion to every living being. If Kaki or you, through ignorance or infatuation, halt Kakasaheb's inclination towards sannyasa, it will harm, rather than benefit, you, him and society. After realizing the need for renunciation and attaining the strength for it, if Kakasaheb still holds himself back to please Kaki or you, he would be stifling his humanity. Would you let that happen? Please ponder over what I have written to you and then write to me whatever occurs to you.

I have to examine one more idea which you have expressed in your letter. You seem to differentiate between devotion to father and devotion to mother, but actually both are one. And a son may not discriminate between them. But the devotion of a wise son cannot be blind. Suppose a father is a drunkard, the mother is a woman of restraint and the father asks the son to help him with drinks. The mother entreats the son not to give such help. The son submits to his mother and does not help his father. Such a son has discharged his duty of being devoted to his mother and his father, though in doing so he hurts his father. This example does not point to the difference between the two devotions but explains the nature of intelligent devotion. This same argument would now apply to you. If Kakasaheb practises mental renunciation, it will promote the well-being of all of you. Kaki does not like this because of her ignorance and infatuation. If you accept that Kakasaheb's renunciation is right, your devotion to your parents would tell you to help Kakasaheb and to entreat Kaki to agree to his resolve and even if she does nto consent you should agree and have faith that ultimately Kaki too will appreciate this duty.

I can understand your desire to live with Kaki, but it is a delusion. In your letter you have already approved of *brahma-charyashrama* or sannyasa during the student days. In the olden times pupils used to leave their parents' homes and stay with their

preceptors. In the Ashram we try to bring back that state; you should help in this effort. One must learn to live with contentment and restraint while one's parents are away. I admit that the teachers do not yet have so much restraint, so much knowledge and so much love that pupils could easily forget their parents, but you know that we want to revive a thing that is dead. The teachers are trying hard and intelligent pupils ought generously to help them in their endeavours. Wherever the teachers are not able to fill the place of parents you should bear with them and cultivate patience. If even a few among you begin to do so, we shall be able to improve the Ashram.

Write to me always with the same frankness with which you wrote your first letter. True modesty consists in laying open one's heart before one's elders without reserve. We may make our language sweet and polite but if we try to repress our thoughts and hide them, we may commit a serious fault. Besides that would not be modesty at all.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

384. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, DAVANGERE[1]

August 12, 1927

Gandhiji said that khadi would in part rebuild the villages that were destroyed by modern industrialism and that it was the duty of prosperous merchants in cotton centres to help towards the revival of spinning. The khadi movement stood for even distribution of the good things of the world. Khadi represented *dharmik* political economy, whereas industrialism was *rakshasik* or Satanic economics. For it stood for the accumulation of wealth in the hands of the few.

I am going to do my best to prevent this Satanic economics from destroying us. I want all of you—Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians, and all—to help me in this work.

He dealt with cow-protection in which the people of Davangere were keenly interested and for which they had an efficient organization called the Prani Daya Sangha. He said that well-conducted dairies and good tanneries for hides of dead cattle were absolutely necessary for true cow-protection in India.

We should not depend as Hindus for carrying out the dharma of

[1] In reply to welcome addresses presented by the local Municipality and the citizens

cow-protection on compelling the Mussalmans to co-operate with us. We should be able to stand on our own legs and save the cattle. If we did not sell by reason of poverty and ignorance our cattle for slaughter, we can do more than by any such compulsion. The co-operation of the Mussalmans should be secured by love.

Dealing with the municipal address Gandhiji said that no programme of sanitation can succeed unless young and old, boys and girls were taught how to use and keep the latrines clean.

The Hindu, 15-8-1927

385. SPEECH TO ADI KARNATAKAS, DAVANGERE[1]

August 12, 1927

All these professions are noble, and I wish you to flourish in them. Playing on your pipes you can produce tunes which carry men nearer to God. The weavers' and the shoemakers' professions are as essential for your livelihood as for India, and I propose to address a few remarks to both. I ask the weavers to eschew foreign and even mill yarn. Ever since the growth of the mill industry in India, the handloom weavers are daily diminishing in numbers so that today their number is scarcely half of what it was some years ago. The objective of the mill industry is to monopolize all the weaving if possible and in consequence to rob the hand-weaver of his occupation. That was what industrialism did in Europe, but whereas the unemployed hand-weavers and hand-spinners found other employment there, they found none here and were reduced to destitution. I want you therefore to specialize in your profession, especially in weaving hand-spun yarn, and make your wives and children self-spinners so that you will have a colony of self-contained families.

I come to the shoemakers now. Here too as with the weavers there are things you may do and may not do. Just as the weaver may not touch foreign or mill yarn, the shoemakers must refuse to handle hide of slaughtered animals, and have hides of dead cattle cleaned and tanned by them. If it can be any encouragement to you, I may tell you that I have once done the shoemaker's work and can do it even today, and in our Ashram we have a tannery which takes charge of

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". In their address the *Adi Karnatakas* had said that they were mostly pipers, weavers, and shoemakers.

dead cattle's hides, tans them and sells them to shoemakers. I could provide you with such leather if you want. I want you to be not only shoemakers and earn your livelihood, but to be cow-protectors and earn merit. Being Hindus we should all hold the cow dear, and I want you to join me in the noble work of cow-protection. But how am I to make you understand this? Being Hindus you deny Hinduism every day.

I want you to take His Highness the Maharaja's Jubilee message to heart. A portion of it is distinctly addressed to you. Whilst a spirit of brotherhood should prevail as between the citizens of the State, His Highness emphasized :

> I pray that a similar spirit may extend itself to the dumb creation, and that we may see animals, and especially those we hold sacred, treated with ever increasing consideration for feelings which they cannot express.

Let us realize all the implications of that pregnant prayer. It is not so much an exhortation addressed to those who abstain from meat and beef, as to those like you who have no regard for the cow. It is equally intended for the Mussalmans and Christians, and if you feel anything like grateful to His Highness for his benevolent rule, I want you to abjure cow-slaughter and beef.

Young India, 25-8-1927

386. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

Saturday, August 13, 1927

BHAISHRI BHANSALI,

I got your letter. You must have got my telegram. I have a letter from Shri Chhaganlal Joshi. I gather from it that my letter made you unhappy and a little angry. Recall what you had written earlier to me. You had actually welcomed my criticism and my opinion and the fact that I had not sent you the former during your fast had hurt you. In your letter to Mirabehn you say that you want to realize God through renunciation, *samadhi*[1], etc. "Never is this steadiness of mind destroyed by excessive possessions or fear of calamities." This is the state you should cultivate. If someone vents his anger upon you and calls you an ignorant fool, even then you should forgive him. But this merely by way of preface.

[1] Yogic trance

My aim in writing this letter is to tell you that you should preserve calm while this question is being settled. You should understand that the managing committee, too, wishes to come to a decision on moral issues. That does not necessarily mean that you should leave the Ashram if it does not give its consent to your intended fast. I certainly cannot guess what decision the managing committee will arrive at. I do not at all insist that it should do what I wish that it should. I shall forward your letters to it. Take no decision in haste.

You say in your letter to Mirabehn that your letter to me was not an ultimatum. While handing it over to me, Mahadev at any rate told me that it was an ultimatum. On going through it, I too read an ultimatum in it. Do not read too much in the word "ultimatum". It only means a firm decision. In your letter you have really asked for my blessings, not for my permission. But now stick to your decision that you will take the next step after seeing me. I believe that we shall be carrying on this correspondence now to reach a decision on a moral issue.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 12962

387. SPEECH AT HARIHAR[2]

August 13, 1927

It is said that if God made man in His image, man made God in his own, and it is no wonder that what we see in our temples, at the present day, are lifeless images of us, lifeless devotees. If we would make them living images of God, we must tansform our lives, we must end our communal squabbles, and we must befriend the suppressed, and live pure lives. Hari is the Protector in the Hindu Trinity, and Hara is the Destroyer. When God finds that the rich oppress the poor, instead of taking them under their protecting wings, He then assumes His fearful aspect of Hara, and deals destruction all round. When the rich and the poor identify themselves with one another, then will Hari

[1] *Vide* also letters dated after July 26 and July 27 to the addressee and "Letter to Mirabehn", 27-7-1927.

[2] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The venue was opposite Harihareshwara temple.

and Hara unite, and it is my ambition to establish a real living image of Harihareshwara by presenting a charkha to the country. The charkha is the symbol of sacrifice, and sacrifice is essential for the establishment of the image of the deity.

Young India, 25-8-1927

388. TO VOLUNTEERS

A calamity such as that which has befallen Gujarat can be put to good or bad use. From such terible floods godfearing men learn humility, simplicity, compassion and similar virtues. They realize that one would do well, in this transitory world, to live with as much self-denial and self-control as one can. The wicked go out stealing at such times, rob people and indulge their evil propensities in all manner of ways.

Very often money given for help is also misused. A large number of volunteers is required for distributing relief over a large area. If they are greedy, they pocket the money which is entrusted to them. It would be foolish to expect Gujarat to be completely free from such malpractices. But it can certainly be expected of volunteers that they will have no greedy thoughts and, working wholly in a spirit of service, will win credit for themselves.

Volunteers are subject to weaknesses of another kind. They do not steal like thieves; but they feel some pride in being volunteers and, though in fact they are servants of the people, expect service from others as if they were their benefactors. They look after themselves before they help others and get angry with people who do nto carry out their instructions promptly. I hope that every volunteer will keep himself free from such weaknesses.

The volutneers should know that even the poor are contributing, at some personal sacrifice, towards the fund which is being collected. I am certain that we shall not be short of money. If, however, the money is not properly used, all our work will have been wasted.

Moreover, we should also guard against the danger of the really poor getting nothing and the assertive getting a lion's share. I have already had heartening reports of instances of persons not accepting help though they were in real difficulty, but I know from my previous experience that there are always people who will grab at whatever help is offered. It is as necessary that we do not, out of false compassion or

fear or weakness, give to people who do not need help as that we should see at any cost that help reaches those who really need it.

At a time of such terrible calamity, one becomes very generous and is inclined to give help to anyone who asks for it. I do not think that such undiscriminating help really benefits the people. The common rule is that everyone should bear the hardships which befall him. If all of us shoulder our own burdens, we would find very few in this world who are really helpless. But large numbers become a burden on others in various ways: they enjoy a greater share than is theirs by right, and that is why we see a great number of helpless and poor people in the world. Hence in a situation like the present one actual help and in the largest quantity has to be given only for a few days, and that consists in providing food and clothing for some time to those who need them. Afterwards, what is necessary is to help everyone to find a means of livelihood; there should be no need, by and large, of giving money to those who are sound in limbs.

After the *mahapralaya* a new creation comes into being. This flood may not be that, but it is of the same kind. If, therefore, the volunteers can take up reform work, if they have knowledge and patience, they can even create a new world. They can persuade people to sacrifice, as in a *yajna*, their baneful habits and can spread new ideas about building houses. The villages which have been completely ruined should be reconstructed according to a plan instead of being rebuilt somehow. Villages which suffer from frequent floods should be shifted and rebuilt on new sites. This work, however, cannot be accomplished by one person. It requires the services, by way of advice and active work, of leading social workers, of men and women of wisdom. It also requires the sincere co-operation of the administration.

My appeal, however, is addressed to Vallabhbhai and to bodies of workers of his type. More it is beyond my capacity to suggest at present.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-8-1927

389. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SHIMOGA,
August 14, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. Today is Sunday, and I am at an out-of-the-way place called Shimoga, where I have to pass four more nights visiting surrounding places during these days. I will have left this place by the time this reaches you. I hope now the riddle of the missing letter has been solved. I now know that even if I write the Monday letter on Sunday night after taking the silence, I should mark it Monday. But I want you to shed this anxiety about my letters. If they come, it is well. But it should be well also if they do not come, when you have the assurance that if anything untoward happens to me, you would be bound to know it by wire. That the contents of one letter may be lost or delayed in transmission need cause no worry, because I should remember and be able to reproduce anything of importance.

The Gujarat work is evidently being done in a most orderly manner. Of course if you had been there, you would have thrown yourself in the fray, but those also are as good as having thrown themselves in the fray who stand watchful at their post however remote it may be from the scene of a calamity.

What you describe of Vinoba is just like him. But my sympathy is with the orthodox resisters. This monthly untouchability is an old custom not altogether harmful, certainly not altogether superstitious. And it is difficult to draw distinctions between married and unmarried women in such matters. I have looked upon the restriction as a check upon man's lust. The confinement of the sick woman to a wretched miserable room, rags for dress, etc., is horrible, barbarous and can have no justification. But the sentiment of segregation during the monthly sickness should not be violently disturbed. I want you, therefore, to see the other side and not merely barely tolerate the attitude of people like Mogheji, but regard it with due respect as you would have them to regard your own opposite attitude. I am therefore hoping that Vinoba has been managing the thing gently and that he has not carried the orthodox inmates with him by sheer force of affection without producing a genuine conviction. And, even if they have willingly withdrawn their opposition, I would advise you to put a

voluntary restraint upon yourself during the monthly sickness. You may share this letter with Vinoba if you like so that he may understand my argument. Remember that my own opinion is the same as yours. My only plea is for respectful and intelligent toleration, and remember also that when you tolerate in this manner, you do not "suppress" yourself. Self-suppression comes and is necessary where blind superstition has to be tolerated. It should not be "revolting" to you to accept such untouchability. On the contrary, you should impose it on your self or accept it with grace and cheerfulness without thinking that the orthodox party is in any way unreasonable.

Now about future work : I accept your description of yourself as being illiterate. But I do not want you to remain so for ever. It should be not too late to do much to remove illiteracy. I should be satisfied if you could develop a taste for removing illiteracy, and to this end, you may take up a decent little grammar book and master it through and through. Similarly, for arithmetic. You should take up a very simple arithmetic book. If you think that constitutionally you will be unfit for both or either, I will say nothing and in any case I do not propose this addition during these two months which are fast running out, but I should like you to take these up later if they can be taken up as recreations.

To start with work in the kitchen will certainly be very nice, if only in order to discipline yourself in controlling your temper and suiting yourself to all kinds of people. In practice, we have found kitchen work to be the most trying of all.

I know that you have brought me boundless love. Everything else without it would have been perfectly useless, and with it everyting needful will be easy. But I am not going to speculate about the work. When you have finished your course there, I know that the way will be open both before you and me with sufficient clearness.

Bhansali has sent me copy of his reply to you. Do keep up the correspondence.

With love,

BAPU

[PS.]

This is Sunday. Monday's letter will be separate.

From the original : C. W. 5260. Courtesy : Mirabehn

390. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

August 14, 1927

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

At last you have come after working wonders in South Africa. I hope you have brought with you fair health.

I am writing this in an out-of-the-way place in Mysore. Here is my time-table. You will probably want to come to me at once. If you leave Bombay on 21st you can reach Bangalore on 23rd morning *via* Guntakal. You could of course overtake me at the places mentioned for 24, 25, 26. They are no distance from Bangalore.

I had your cable about Gujarat. Well, it seems to have been a divine purification. For, all the accounts I have received go to show that the people in the deluge area have risen to the occasion. But as yet it is too late to say what permanent effect it is going to have.

More when we meet.

With love from us all—Ba, Mahadev, Rajagopalachari, Gangadharrao, Devdas, Kaka, etc., etc.

MOHAN

From a photostat : S. N. 12371

391. LETTER TO A. I. KAJEE

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 14, 1927

MY DEAR KAJEE,

I continue to receive your useful letters. I am delighted that you are so happy over Sastriji's activities there. I am only hoping that the community will make the rightest use of him. I know that the community will not get another opportunity of redressing its grievances.

The judgement[1] of the Natal provincial division of the Supreme Court does not cause me any surprise. A dealer's licence has always been distinguished from a manufacturer's licence. For instance a carpenter surely must be able to sell furniture of [2]his own making without the necessity of the dealer's licence. If he is required to take out a licence, it will then be an artisan's licence.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

A. I. KAJEE, ESQ.
SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN CONGRESS
175, GREY STREET, DURBAN (NATAL)

From a photostat : S. N. 12372

[1] The reference is to the case of a Pathan trading as "Empire Furniture Manufacturing Co." *versus* the Durban Corporation in appeal against the refusal to renew his licence. The court had held that they had the right to interfere only in matters of retail or wholesale dealers and as this was a case of manufacturing licence they could not intervene.

392. LETTER TO SONJA SCHLESIN

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 14, 1927

DEAR MISS SCHLESIN,

I have your letter of 24th June. Herewith receipt for £21 s. 10. If you still remember your Gujarati, you will make out the Gujarati writing.

The cause of my illness so far as I can see it is the very terrific strain I put upon the body and the brain, addressing numerous meetings almost every day and motoring from place to place. The day[1] on which the breakdown occurred was one of very high tension, and little rest on the previous night. This is also the doctor's diagnosis. I feel however that I should have been able to prevent it. And if I had taken a complete fast on the day of the tension, I might have avoided it. As it was, I had put myself on half diet during those days.

The first volume of what you call the autobiography will be sent to you. The history of passive resistance struggle was published three years ago, but the English translation is not available. It is being published my Mr. Ganesan in quarterly instalments in his magazine *Current Thought*. It would be ultimately published, I expect, in book-form. But it will take time. Yo can have the Gujarati copy if you will make up your Gujarati.

My food at present is 30 ounces goat's milk with honey and any fruit that is available and generally home-made bread like Jewish passover cake unleavened. I take no nuts. Diet is restricted to five articles, that is to say, milk, grapes, oranges and bread will count as four articles, and if I add figs it will be the fifth.

I never knew that you had £150. I thought you had only £40. I shall await your impressions of the visit to Manilal and his wife.

I shall see your handiwork when Mr. Andrews returns and if he has not given it away or lost it. Whether you could get over the shock of your having me described as with one garment or not, your surmise

[1] March 26, 1927; *vide* "Discussion with Dr. Wanless", 26-3-1927.

was quite correct that a poor man could not consistently possess a tray such as you have described. You have unconsciously altered the sense of my letter by mere atrocious reading. For, I did not suggest as you make me suggest that I could identify myself with the poor by merely wearing one garment. But I do say that even that little thing is something. To understand the logic of such a step is probably expecting too much of you now. For, there was a time when you appreciated my change of dress I adopted in Durban for almost identical considerations. I look forward to your description of your visit to Mr. Sastri.

I quite agree with you that, if we are to do anything, our womenfolk should have the same facilities that men have for education, etc. And you will be interested to know that at the Ashram here we have over 40 women of all ages excluding little girls. They have a special class every day, and in my opinion they are making very wonderful progress. The utmost freedom is enjoyed by them at the Ashram.

Yours Sincerely,

Enclosure

From a photostat : S. N. 12373

393. LETTER TO S. GANESAN

AS AT BANGALORE,
August 14, 1927

MY DEAR GANESAN,

I have your two letters. Krishnadas is just now in Bihar. I am asking him to let you have the revised manuscript. I am glad that you seem to have tided over your difficulties.

I note the announcement with reference to your publishing scheme. It seems to read all right.

I hope that you will on no account embark on any speculative venture. Let everything be deliberate and well-calculated.

I understand that you have already published Mahadev's writings. But you do not seem to have sent any copy here.

I suggest your removing from your advertisement the reference to giving the Ashram 25% of profits.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. GANESAN
18, PYCROFTS ROAD
TRIPLICANE
MADRAS

From a microfilm : S. N. 19799

394. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

SHIMOGA,
August 14, 1927

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS,

Here are two letters from Ganesan. You may now send him the revised manuscript he wants. I understand that he has already published Mahadev's writings which he had announced though he had not sent a copy here as yet.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KRISHNADAS
110, HAZRA ROAD
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm : S. N. 19800

395. LETTER TO A. A. PAUL

SHIMOGA,
August 14, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter with enclosures. I am writing this from Shimoga though you may send your reply, if any, addressed to Bangalore which will be my headquarters till the 29th instant.

I like your scheme for inter-religion fellowship. I have not been able to read it with sufficient attention to be able to offer any useful criticism. The first reading of it appeals to me.

I shall be at your disposal when I am in Madras for all the time that Sjt. Rajagopalachariar may be able to spare for you and during that time we can discuss the scheme. You would also then have made some further advances as you will have held your committee meeting on the 22nd.

As I had finished dictating this letter, I got your letter of the 11th instant. I am glad that international fellowship is well on its way to formation in Poona. I know Professor Wadia well through correspondence.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S. N. 19801

396. LETTER TO M. F. KHAN

AS AT BANGALORE,
August 14, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have now found time to read your dialogue "What the little ones can do". It shows where your heart lies. But, whilst I do not regard myself to be a judge of art, as a journalist, I can say that the dialogue does not make interesting reading. There is no plot about it.

The verses quoted by you are interesting, and I might be able to make use of them. Please give me the name of the author.

Yours sincerely,

M. F. KHAN, ESQ.
PALAM ROAD
FRAZER TOWN
BANGALORE

From a microfilm : S. N. 19802

397. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

SHIMOGA,
August 14, 1927

I have replied to your telegrams. I have got your letters too. I can understand your importunity, but I am convinced I must not leave my present station. Personally I believe my going over there[1] would do some harm instead of doing any good. I can visualize the one loss resulting from Vallabhbhai putting aside his own powers and I can imagine others too. Even if I go over, we cannot collect all the funds, as you seem to think we can. Nor should we overdo our attempts to accomplish this task at this time. Marwaris should work through him alone who commands your confidence and I would regard that as proper. Confidence is certainly based on honesty and fitness too. They would not credit either me or you all who are my companions with as much ability as they expect in a businessman—and why should they? Bhai Amritlal is doing his work separately, and he has himself gained the confidence of certain people by dint of his ability

[1] Gujarat

and service. They would give him funds as long as he does something and I would regard that as right. You should adopt the same attitude in the case of the Hind Sevak Samaj. Our duty is to serve wherever we can reach easily.

You write that if I were to engage you on relief work you will get engrossed in it and discontinue the Conference work. I do not like this line of thought. How absurd that you would take up a job if I ask you to, else you would hold the Conference! At such a moment if you say that you must hold the Conference, you ought to do so—whatever I may think or in whatever other work I may wish to engage you—and when you wish to serve, why should you wait for signal from me? Why don't you join Bhai Amritlal's group? Or if he cannot cover the whole of Kathiawar, why do you not cover the remaining part? Of course, you can have the funds from Vallabhbhai after submitting your scheme to him; you can have it also from the Hind Sevak Samaj. It is Vallabhbhai's duty to cover those parts which are not served by others. If the satyagrahis, that is, Fulchand's army, wait for my orders, it will hurt me deeply and I shall regard them as unfit to launch satyagraha. How can those who miss opportunites of service launch satyagrah, that is civil disobedience? The fitness to go to jail should be backed by a proof of services rendered and self-purification. My permission and my authority relate to the launching of civil disobedience. I would not restrain anyone from offering satyagraha in the form of service or self-purification.

I have nothing to say about the Conference.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

398. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

August 14, 1927

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

Your letters still arrive after many wanderings.

I should get faithful account of Sastri's visit, but have not received one so far.

Sushila has asked a question about social service. Any work which we do for people's welfare and with sincere motives is social service. If in your family life you merely aim at enjoyment and do not think of society, that will be serving self-interest; if, on the other hand, you adopt simplicity for the sake of society, take care not to set a bad example to others and, when buying anything, consider whether it is morally right or wrong to do so, then that is social service. Going further, if your aim in helping in the press work is merely to save money, that is service of self. If, however, your aim is to learn that work and spend the money saved by your work for some public purpose, if it is that you should bring out the paper even at the cost of hardship to yourself, that is social service. Go a step further still; if, finding that your neighbour is ill, you sacrifice your comforts in order to nurse him and learn nursing work, that is social service. From these examples you can think of any number of others and extend the field of social service within the limits of your capacity. If, tired of India, Manilal lives in South Africa to enjoy the pleasures which that country offers, that is selfishness. If, believing that the paper conducted by his father was good and that his country stood to gain by his continuing to run it, he lives and forces you to live in exile without the aim of amassing wealth, he is rendering a great social service and you, too, are making a contribution to it.

Today we have come to a far-off place in Mysore State. About sixty miles from here is a waterfall like the Inanda Falls, but much bigger than that, which we are all going to see tomorrow. Devdas has stayed back in Bangalore. He will arrive here this evening with others. We shall remain here and collect contributions for about four days and then return to Bangalore. At the end of this month, we shall cross the boundary of Mysore State and enter Tamilnad.

My health continues to improve. I do not think we shall get back to the Ashram by the end of December. We positively wish to

return in January, since *Vasantapanchami*[1] falls at the end of that month and Ramdas' wedding has been fixed for that day. Whether Nimu turns out to be as wise as Sushila and gives Ramdas a life-companion exactly like yours and makes him a prisoner is still to be seen. Nimu of course is wise, but are there not degrees even of wisdom? How much distance is there between you two and who is better of the two, only the future will tell. For myself, I wish that both of you should reach the summit and that all the four of you should strengthen one another's moral character and stand foremost in the *yajna* of service. Ramdas has gone out to help in flood relief work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4725

399. SPEECH AT SHIMOGA[2]

August 14, 1927

There is sympathy, there is the suitable atmosphere, there is faith. What I now want is expert knowledge to fructify that faith. I know it from experience that where knowledge has not been combined with faith, faith has quickly evaporated, and glorious beginnings have ended in smoke. I want you, lawyers and businessmen, to bring to bear all the expert knowledge, that you do in your own departments, also in the new department that you are favouring. Study the economics and master the technique of spinning, and build up with the aid of experts in the various branches of cloth-production an organization equal to the splendid administrative machinery that the State has brought into being.

Young India, 25-8-1927

[1] The traditional beginning of the vernal season

[2] In reply to the addresses presented by the local Municipality and the citizens at a meeting held in the Jubilee Grove

400. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Monday, August 15, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

So you have the missing letter at last. Poor Mahadev![1]

You must not damage your eyes even for the sake of Hindi. What you need most however is conversation without restraint. Make your own dictionary as you proceed. Or annotate your printed dictionary. But of course I do not consider the London specialist's to be the last word about your eyes. Often the simplest remedies escape the specialist and he comes to the conclusion that as no alteration in the lens will answer, nothing else will. However, this can wait. When you return to the Ashram, you should let Haribhai examine you. He is reputed to be a good man for eye defects.

Your letter to Bhansali was not too strong. I liked its style.

If my letter of yesterday was not clear, you will of course write.

With love,

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 5261. Courtesy : Mirabehn

[1] Mahadev Desai inadvertantly addressed the letter to Sabarmati instead of to Wardha. Explaining this, in his letter to Mirabehn, dated September 12, he had written : "So many letters addressed to the Sabarmati Ashram the same day, and one only to Wardha!"

401. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day [*August 15, 1927*]

SISTERS,

Received your letter. Today we are in a place far off from Bangalore. It is less cold, but more green here. It is somewhat like Amboli.

Although I appear to be at work here, my thoughts hover round the Ashram and Gujarat. This is not a virtue, but a defect, since it shows undue attachment. What more could I have done had I been in the Ashram? How can I help Gujarat? And yet my soul is restless. You should guard yourselves against such attachment. But remember the conditions in which non-attachment is possible. He alone can remain untouched who is always absorbed in the performance of his duties. The stone may be indifferent, But we regard it as insentient. We on the contrary are sentient. It is only when we remain indifferent to our environment, because of complete absorption in our immediate duties, that we may be held to have succeeded in life. Such steadiness of mind does not come about suddenly. I have explained to you my own defeats clearly, so that you may learn to avoid them.

My language today is slightly difficult. If a word or an idea is difficult to grasp, you must make an extra effort to understand it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3661

402. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Silence Day, 1927[1]

I had your card but not the promised letter. What type of work are you doing in Matar and who are your co-workers? Maintain your peace of mind, no matter what work you do.

I wrote to your uncle[2] that Manibehn would come to him when he had learnt to ply the *takli* while sitting in his chair. He wrote in reply to say that Manibehn was a crank. I sent a rejoinder that, being a crank herself, she lived in company with another crank.

What is the name given to Yashoda's son?

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. MANIBEHN PATEL
MATAR

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 53

[1] The precise dates of this and the following letter are not ascertainable. But from the reference to the addressee's work in Matar, to Yashoda's son (born in May 1927) and to V. J. Patel who had "gone there with high hopes of being useful", it is presumed that they belong to the period when there were floods in Gujarat. They are, therefore, placed on the Silence Day after "The Havoc in Gujarat", 11-8-1927.

[2] Vithalbhai J. Patel

403. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Silence Day, 1927

CHI. MANI,

Your letter. Keep a record of your experiences of life in villages for future use. Never be impatient, despondent or uneasy. I have many questions to ask you but not now; I shall ask you when we meet or when your present task is finished. Write to me regularly. Do preserve your health.

I hope you met uncle.[1] He has gone there with high hopes of being useful. May these be realized.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 64

404. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

SHIMOGA,

Shravan Krishna 2 [*August 15, 1927*][2]

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL JOSHI,

I send you Shri Bhansali's letters along with this. You must have seen my telegram and letter[3] to him. You and others in the Committee should read these letters carefully and think over them. After doing so, hand them back to Shri Bhansali. The letter addressed to me, you may either file in the office or return to me.

Think over this matter quite impersonally. I believe that Shri Bhansali will keep the promise, given to me in a letter which he wrote before this, that he would await my return there; nevertheless, we must consider this thing for the future. My opinion is that we should not permit Shri Bhansali to fast, and that, if he fasts despite this, we can put up with it. We tolerate many things in the Ashram, but would not permit them if our permission was sought. There are also many things for which we would not give permission and which we would not

[1] Vithalbhai J. Patel; he was then Speaker of the Central Legislative Council. He came over to Nadiad when the province was ravaged by floods, and undertook an extensive tour of the flood-stricken areas.

[2] Gandhiji was in Shimoga on this date in 1927.

[3] Dated August 13, 1927.

tolerate. We should think in which category to place this idea of a fast. All of you should consider the point and do what you think proper. I cannot guide you from here, because in order to express an opinion it is necessary that I must talk things over with Bhai Bhansali and let the effect of the talk sink into my mind. Moreover, before you decide anything you should hold talks with Shri Bhansali in private and also in the presence of the Committee. Try to know the deepest thoughts of Lilabehn, and write to me if you like. There is no need for the slightest hurry to take a decision in this matter. If Shri Bhansali cannot keep his promise in the present letter and if, since I have suggested a reference to the Committee, you let me hear from you after a talk with the Committee and if he asks for the Committee's decision before my return, you will have to give it. But it is necessary in any case that he look to the convenience of the Committee. I also believe that we cannot decide this matter without consulting the absent members of the Committee too. This is so because, on the one hand, dharma suggests that even if we are not able to keep pace with an aspirant for *moksha* and a seeker after knowledge like Bhansali and we disapprove of a step contemplated by him, we should let him proceed, that is to say, we must keep him in the Ashram; on the other hand, dharma tells us that it is perhaps our obligation not to tolerate his proposed step in the Ashram even if we consider it not as immoral but merely as thoughtless and dangerous. We have thus to discover the point of balance between social conformity and individual freedom, and we cannot do this in a hurry. Explain our difficulties to Shri Bhansali and request him to respect our honest efforts, if for no other reason, at least in order that he may then more easily have the vision for which he is so eager. Keep me informed about this from time to time and, if necessary, even send me a telegram.

If Lala Mohanlal of Lahore is there and if he has been quietly and honestly doing physical work, let him do so and live there till I arrive. But this is my opinion only. Having observed his behaviour or having regard to the other arrangements in the Ashram, if you think that you cannot keep him, ask him to leave. Give him the accompanying letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 12965

405. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA

August 15, 1927

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

I cannot help writing to you today.

I do not like to interfere much in your course of thinking or way of work because you arrange your thoughts with great care. But very often the experience of elders helps even one who arranges one's thoughts carefully. I sometimes get into an argument with you with a view to helping you. I think we needs must stay in society in order to build up our character and we have even to bear with our leaders' temper. New principles do not come up every day before a philosopher; but conflicts of duty do crop up every day—ponder over the difference between the two. It is when duties conflict that a soldier obeys his general and he puts his own reason aside. The intelligence of one who always indulges in its exercise obstructs his self-realization. When a leader is not deliberately immoral, it is non-violence to submit to his intelligence. Non-violence is humbler that even a mango tree. It is said that a mango tree bends as it grows up. When non-violence grows fully, it acts like a cipher. Instead of attempting to prove its own point, non-violence lets everyone else prove his. Hence it has been sung : "When non-violence is established, in its vicinity all hatred is given up."[1] Who can hate a cipher and how?

You will lose nothing by subordinating yourself to Maganlal. Both yourself and Maganlal will benefit by submitting to his mistaken orders, whatever they be, because we have in doing so accepted a principle. Your subordinating yourself to him will be a means of correcting his error. I have experienced this thing myself many times. I have corrected the errors of my associates by subordinating myself to them and who knows how many errors of mine my associates daily correct by subordinating themselves to me? But what if they were to analyse my errors before me every day and annoy me? If that were so, where would they and I be today?

Think deeply over this letter. Do not again come back impatiently running to me. I wish and I pray that you may have peace.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

[1] *Yogasutra* by Patanjali

406. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

August 15, 1927

These smaller floods come to warn us. There will surely be the final deluge. None need doubt it. The magic of this illusory world makes a man forget all his sorrows. This is doubtless an advantage but that man wins who, mindful of the deluge and persuaded of the transience not only of himself but of the world, lives his life in a detached way. To gain this mastery constitutes man's highest achievement. Truly speaking, all of us are condemned to death the moment we are born, and yet why do we all—the young, the old and the children— drown ourselves in sensual pleasures? It is obvious that we do revel in them, but we should ask it with all the more earnestness. Then, one day, the answer even today: "Oh man, give up all trace of passion." But as long as the call does not come from the heart, the poor intellect is ineffectual.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

407. LETTER TO DEVESHWAR SIDDHANTALANKAR

AS AT BANGALORE,
August 16, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your long letter and the reprint of your articles. I shall try to find time for re-reading the articles.

I shall appreciate your English writing. I do not know whether I stated in my previous letter[1] that the English I wanted not for myself but for circulation amongst Mussalman and other friends, who claim to know the Koran and Islam intimately. My own reading I don't regard as in any way deep or learned. It was purely for my own satisfaction.

You seem to think that the *dasyus* do not give the same meaning in the Vedic times that the word Kaffir does in Islam. Not to go back to historical times, I would like you to look at the history that is being enacted in our midst. Do not thousands of Hindus regard Mussalmans as enemies to be converted or destroyed because they are

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Deveshvar Siddhantalankar", 22-5-1927.

Mussalmans? Do not many cultured Indians hate the British people as wicked? If somebody wrote a learned treatise today describing the relations between ourselves and the British and had not a boundless spirit of charity, would he not describe the British a *dasyus* or *atatayis* fit only to be destroyed at sight, and if that treatise [should] survive some periodic upheaval and afterwards become religious literature, posterity is likely to indulge in the same error that we do and say that those *atatayis* and *dasyus* of these times were not political exploiters but were wicked people as you now interpret the term wicked people, or would you say even now that the British as a people, are really wicked? Or take another instance : I know as the author of non-co-operation that many so-called non-co-operators hated co-operators as if they were wicked monsters and if the former had been allowed, they would have drawn these poor co-operators and certainly would have made short work of them. Supposing that some very learned non-co-operator of the type I described wrote a treatise, he would of course describe co-operators as wicked men. Would you accept that verdict or take to a free fight like the one that took place between Shwetambars and Digambars, first cousins as they might be called. Was not each wicked in the sight of the other? The fact is that immediately you accept the doctrine of slaying people whom you consider to be wicked, you really surrender the whole case and come under the same category as the writer or the writings on the Koran. I do not need to cite any history in support of what I am saying but I can supplement it if necessary.

I have considered you to be an honest seeker. I have contrary opinions to what you have given about Nanak Dev and Kabir. But this is after all a small matter. If I do reach your pamphlet, I shall gladly give you illustrative passages where I thought your translation was not just.

It is curious that Professor Sahgal did not write the Hindi letter which I certainly received. I knew the name from the letter. Yet unfortunately that letter I destroyed after replying. The only possible mistake is that somebody else might have written on his paper and in his name. But this is merely nothing and by the way I pass it on to you as a piece of information.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 12388

408. THE GUJARAT FLOODS [1]

GOOD IF TRUE

On reading the reports of flood relief operations as well as Swami Anand's article in *Navajivan*[2] I hesitated, and still hesitate, to believe in the examples there given of the people's heroism, solidarity and humanity, as false praise, exaggeration and self-deception are the order of the day in the country. But I have no reason to disbelieve these reports. Exaggeration, untruth and the like are studiously eschewed in *Navajivan*. The Swami knows this ever since the paper was started, and indeed it is this policy of the paper which induces him to interest himself in and work for it.

Therefoe so long as I have not any reason to consider the *Navajivan* reports as erroneous, I must take them to be true. And I tender my congratulations to Gujarat and the Gujaratis. For a moment one is almost tempted to welcome a disaster which has been the occasion for the people to display such virtues.

Catastrophes and calamities will now and then overtake the country. Wealth may be in our possession today and be lost tomorrow. We construct houses and make farms and gardens, and when these are destroyed, we can remake them. The distress will soon be forgotten.

But what if Gujarat along with the distress also forgets the virtues which she has realized in herself on the present occasion? We are everywhere familiar with momentary fits of heroism and renunciation. If Gujarat's present heroism proves to be only a temporary fit, the lesson of the floods will have been lost upon her. Let the Gujaratis, men as well as women, beware.

Let us convert the virtues of courage, patience and humanity in us, of which we have had a sudden glimpse, into a possession forever. Hindus and Mussalmans embraced one another as brothers. The higher classes sheltered and succoured the suppressed like blood-brothers. If we now give up these relations as only suited for the days of adversity, our last state will be worse than the first, and we will have passed in vain through this calamity, which is really the throes of a

[1] Translated by Valjibhai G. Desai from the Gujarati which, however, was published in *Navajivan*, 21-8-1927

[2] Dated August 7, 1927. *Vide* "Notes", 25-8-1927, sub-title "Too Good to Be True".

new birth. And such calamities there will be, so long as we have not experienced a true rebirth.

Gujarat's doings on this occasion amount in my view to pure swaraj. If the virtues now manifested by the people become a permanent feature of their daily life, Gujarat may be said to have acquired the fitness for, as well as the power to win, swaraj.

The havoc worked by the floods was of a most unprecedented character; before which even Dyerism pales into insignificance. Dyer killed or wounded a thousand or twelve hundred men. No one can tell the heavy toll of life exacted of the immense property destroyed by the floods. But we did not abuse the floods. We practised satyagraha against them. We purified ourselves. We did constructive work. We achieved Hindu-Muslim unity. We removed untouchability. We became self-reliant. We placed our all at the disposal of our brothers and sisters. We did not wait for a leader. Instead of falling back before the enemy, we bravely faced him, and set to work as if nothing had happened. If we had feared the floods, if we had wasted precious time in abusing them, if we had engaged in violent struggle with them, we would only have multiplied our troubles.

All honour to Gujarat for the proof she has given of her greatness.

BUT WHAT ABOUT ME ?

But has a Gujarati, who is away from the scene of danger and of achievement, the right thus to bestow praise and tender congratulations?

I received three wires and a letter asking me to come and lead the relief opeations in Gujarat. The letter was Swami Anand's and the wires were from Sarojini Devi, Chandulal, whom I mistook for Dr. Chandulal, and Devchand Parekh.

But I did not give myself to anxiety. I was fully confident of Gujarat's self-reliance, I had not the shadow of a doubt that monetary help would be forthcoming in an adequate measure. I whole-heartedly trusted Vallabhbhai to do the needful. I was in touch with him by wire. I wired to him informing him of the insistent calls I had received and asking him to let me know if he thought my presence necessary. Vallabhbhai at once wired me in reply, that though the distress of the people was beyond words, it was not advisable for me to come over to Gujarat in the present state of my health; that my effort to make Gujarat self-reliant and the oranization I had helped to set up therein

the people simply need to be independent of both the money-lender and the publican, of the first by ceasing to want credit and of the second by ceasing to drink.

A TRAVESTY

'The voluntary repatriation' described by Dr. Malan, the Union Minister[1], is anything but voluntary. It is stimulated, aided or induced. And if the process continues unchecked, it may presently become compulsory. A large number of men repatriated are said to be colonial-born. No colonial-born Indian to whom India is only a geographical expression will voluntarily repatriate himself. Again it is not voluntary repatriation when an agency is set up, probably paid by results, to collect repatriation recruits and when these recruits are detained in compounds pending repatriation. It seems to me that this detention in compounds is likely to be declared illegal if it is tested in a court of law. For detention without a guard would be useless. And placing a guard over free and innocent men would amount to wrongful confinement. I know of no regulation in 1914 that permitted the Government to detain such men in guarded camps. If repatriation is to be voluntary it must be free from the pestering attention of recruiting agents and there should be no detention in depots or camps.

THE TRUE GURU

In confirmation of my note on the definition of a guru, a correspondent sends the following interesting information:

> In connection with your definition of a guru, I am reminded of the beautiful lines of the poet-saint Ramadas. He said:
>
> विवेका ऐसा गुरू। चिन्ता ऐसा शिष्थ चतुरू ।
> जीवा ऐसा मित्र उदारू । भुवनत्रथीं पिलेना॥
>
> 'You cannot find a better guru than *viveka* or the power of discriminating from untruth, right from wrong or good from evil. There is no better disciple than *chitta* or mind, and no nobler friend than one's *jeeva* or soul.' In fact, Ramadas points out that man need not go outside himself in search of a guru. 'Be guided by your power of discrimination, derived from your implicit faith in God, keep your mind under control of such a power and nobly sacrifice the self.' This in essence is the advice of the Maharashtrian saint.

Young India, 24-6-1926

[1] Of South Africa

thing, new as I would be to the work, I should only make an exhibition of ignorant vanity.

And I am not here enjoying a holiday. According to my lights I am not here occupied in grappling with the fatal disease which is eating into the vitals not only of Gujarat but of India as a whole, a disease which is beyond all comparison very much more powerful and insidious than a week's deluge. It would not only be not meritorious but on the other hand a clear breach of duty on my part to give up this work for something else that is more tempting. We have the charge often levelled against us that we are apt to lose our heads in times of danger. To the extent that this is true, we must get rid of this shortcoming.

None of us, especially no leader should allow himself to disobey the inner voice in the face of pressure from outside. Any leader who succumbs in this way forfeits his right of leadership. There is much truth in the homely Gujarati proverb that "the person concerned can see things in the earthen pot and his neighbour cannot see them even in a mirror". I have not been able to see that it was my duty on the present occasion to run up to Gujarat.

The insistent calls I have received are evidence of a wrong attachment which we must surmount at all costs. I am nothing but a mere lump of earth in the hands of the Potter. Truth and Love — ahimsa—is the only thing that counts. Where this is present, everything rights itself in the end. This is a law to which there is no exception. It would be very bad indeed that Gujarat or India should look up to me and sit with folded hands. Let her worship Truth and Love, look up to that divine couple, employ servants like myself so long as they tread the straight and narrow path and check them when they swerve from it.

If I had come over to Gujarat, perhaps she would not have done what she has done and is still doing.

Invalided leaders or public servants should give up the hankering after active leadership or service. There is no place for a sick man in these operations for relief, which require only such persons as are able-bodied, can run up from place to place, and have the power of enduring hunger and thirst, heat and cold. Those who do not reach this standard would only act as a drag on a quickly marching army.

Finally, a servant of the people should never fear or give way to

bitterness if he finds himself a victim of misunderstanding, whether unintentional or wilful. The acts of men who have come out to serve or lead have always been misunderstood since the beginning of the world and none can help it. To put up with these misrepresentations and to stick to one's guns come what might—this is the essence of the gift of leadership. Misunderstandings have been my lot ever since I entered public life, and I have got inured to them.

In short, let Gujarat ever be, as it has been on the present occasion, self-reliant and self-helpful and proceed from achievement to achievement. Men like myself will come and go, but let Gujarat go on forever.

TO CO-WORKERS

A few words more to co-workers.

1. I take it that none of the workers will allow their pride to come in the way of their heartily co-operating with their compatriots.

2. Anyone who works for name and fame on an occasion like this incurs sin.

3. There should be the fullest co-operation between the various agencies at work.

4. Where Government offers help on our own terms we should freely accept it, as it does not involve any breach of the principle of non-co-operation. But all hair-splitting is out of place where the question is one of serving the people and serving them in time and to the fullest extent possible. If the money in the hand of the Government is available for *good use*, we should unhesitatingly ask for it and accept it.

5. Let us not forget that organizations are meant for the service of the people, and not the people for the service of the organizations.

6. I see that there are three agencies at work, the Provincial Congress Committee under Vallabhbhai, the Saurashtra Sevasamiti under Amritlal Sheth and the Servants of India Society under Sjt. Devadhar. Possibly there are others. But in any case we must prevent any overlapping and insure the closest co-operation among the agencies. Workers who have not still reported themselves should join the centre of work which is nearest to them or which they like best. Anyone who remains aloof either from angularity or from pride will dig his own grave. The people will fail to benefit by his services and will think lightly of him.

7. It would be really terrible if anyone in disregard of existing

organizations tries to start a fresh one. Seeing that time lost can never be regained, everyone should take his place at the point which he can reach the soonest.

Young India, 18-8-1927

409. BACKWARD CLASSES

Our woes are numerous. We have suppressed classes and we have also backward classes. The distinction between the two is that the suppressed classes as a rule include only the so-called "untouchables", whereas, the backward classes refer to those who are mentally and morally behind the other classes. I have made the acquaintance of one such class in Mysore. They are the Lambanis. Since the Belgaum Congress[1] one of them who has received a fair education has been exerting himself for their uplift. They had even a Conference last year and the State contributed a small sum towards its expenses. These appear originally to have come from Gujarat. They are otherwise recognized as gypsies. Their dialect corresponds to Gujarati. The address[2] which they gave me whilst I was passing Arsikere on my way to Hassan was written in Devanagari. The majority of the words in it were Gujarati. The curious student will see the specimens from the address reproduced in *Navajivan*. He will not fail to notice even the Gujarati grammar in the language of the address. The customs of these people I find described as follows in the address of the President of the Conference :

> I am told that the Lambanis are otherwise known as Vanjaris; and that they were the grain-carriers of India when it had no good roads and railways; they worship to this day their queen Durga, a wealthy Lambani lady of the 13th century, who brought grain from Nepal, China and Burma, and saved many lives in a continuous famine that raged for twelve years in India; their chief God is Balaji and Goddess Tulaja Bhavani, and their principal feast is *Gokulashtami*, the day of the birth of Shri Krishna. They long respected cows and Brahmins, and to this day they abjure animal food and liquor at death dinners; they cremate the married dead and bury the unmarried. They were as a rule a robust and well-built class, and peaceful and well-behaved.
>
> But, alas! their carrying trade has practically ceased since the opening of roads and railways. Some of them now deal in cattle; some have settled as

[1] Of 1924

[2] *Vide* "Speech to Lambanis, Arsikere Junction", 2-8-1927.

husbandmen, a few live by driving carts, a few others spin coarse hem *tag* and sell grass and fuel and work as labourers; some are under police surveillance, some are reputed to be robbers, cattle-lifters, kidnappers of women and children, manufacturers of false coin and distillers of illicit liquor. But these sinners can be reclaimed and should be reclaimed.

I understand that workers in their midst are now carrying on propaganda to combat the evil customs. Like all backward classes the Lambani womenfolk are heavily laden with cheap and tawdry ornaments devoid of all art. Like the Raniparaj, the reform amongst these people has gone side by side with the introduction of the spinning-wheel. The yarn which they presented to me of their own spinning was fairly good and fine. These Lambanis number roughly 45,740 in Mysore State alone, and there are many also in British Karnatak. There is work here for many a reformer.

Young India, 18-8-1927

410. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

BHADRAVATI,
August 18, 1927

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I expect that you received my letters[1]. I should like to have your reply.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

Reply to :

C/o Sjt. S. Srinivasa Iyengar,
Amjad Bagh,
Luz, Mylapore,
Madras.

From a photostat : G.N. 879

[1] Of July 9 and 24

411. SPEECH AT BHADRAVATI [1]

August 18, 1927

Your kind invitation, your purse and the iron casket remind me very strongly of my visit to Jamshedpur. But one thing that strikes me most here is that the whole undertaking is from top to bottom a self-contained one. The originator is a Mysorean, the staff and labourers are mostly Mysorean, at any rate entirely South Indians. That is a thing of which you and India may will be proud. You have given the lie to the statement made in some quaters that India has intellect but no practical genius. I hope and pray that the Iron Works may grow and add to the prosperity of the State from day to day. In a country rich in mineral resources we have a place for such undertakings and it is our duty to use these resources for the welfare of the people. I am sorry Sir M. Vishveshwarayya is not here, but his telegam of cordial welcome shows that his spirit is here.

A word now to you workers here, just as I did to those at Jamshedpur. There is as I have said need for your undertaking, but there is greater need for the work for which you have given your purse. Undertakings such as yours are necessary for the middle class and the rich, but you may not afford to neglect the helpless poor. There are two ways in which you can help—by contributing money for khadi, and by wearing it yourselves. Just as your works would have to stop if there was no market for iron, even so the khadi movement would be unprogressive if you did not wear the product of the poor man's labour. I appeal to the capitalist not to neglect the poor, whilst he may go on with his undertaking. In conclusion I hope that the relations between the officials and the workmen are sweet and friendly, and that care is taken to keep the liquor house and the gambling den miles away from your quarters.

Young India, 1-9-1927

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

412. APPEAL TO TAMIL NADU

August 18, 1927[1]

God willing, I expect to enter upon the long-deferred tour in Tamil Nadu in the beginning of September. Had there been no programme already fixed, I would have prolonged the rest and not undertaken any touring. But under Dr. Subbarao's advice, I took the risk of trying gentle touring in Mysore and though I am by no means as strong as I felt five months ago, the result of the tour in Mysore emboldens me to take up the Tamil Nadu tour.

But it will be impossible to keep to the original programme which was both intensive and extensive. It is necessary now to reduce the engagements in each place to the minimum as also the number of places to be visited. I have therefore asked Mr. Rajagopalachariar to confine the tour to principal centres in the hope that the neighbouring places that may have been omitted will bring their purses and send as many villagers as possible to the centers to be visited. It is a matter of no small grief to me that I cannot personally deliver the message of the wheel at all the places that had been fixed. But I can only do what is humanly possible. Indeed, if it was possible, I should love to visit every one of the seven hundred thousand villages of the motherland. But I have humility enough to recognize my very grave limitations and be content with what little God permits me to do.

I seek the co-operation, however, of all the lovers of khadi in order that its life-giving message can reach the remotest village. I hope that those who have the means will give, for and in the name of *Daridranarayana*, the most that they can, so that the organization which is slowly but surely growing in our villages and the revival the spinning-wheel has brought about may not die a lingering death.

I appeal to the Reception Committees in the places which are to be visited to cut down all unnecessary items, especially those of show, and also reduce the demonstrative expenditure to a minimum. Let every pie that the Committee may have to spend on ceremonial be saved and gained for the cause of the voiceless millions.

The Hindu, 19-8-1927

[1] Released from Chikmagalur on this date

413. LETTER TO S. D. NADKARNI

AS AT BANGALORE,
August 19, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter with very carefully written articles on untouchability. I have expected them to be up to your usual standard. I gave them for type-copying at once so that I could send the typed copies for any correction that you may want to make. But before sending them I had intended to read the articles, which I have now done, and whilst, as I have said, they are very carefully written, they are neither original nor as closely reasoned as I have known your writings to be. I haven't the time to give you a detailed criticism; but I would just point out the defect in your definition, which, in any case, seems to me to be ponderous.

Untouchability is no 'avoidance' but it is being untouchable on acount of certain characteristics of birth. In the other paragraph you have not kept close to the sub-heading which from the opening paragraphs one expects to be accurate and exclusive.

In the second article the texts do not seem to disprove untouchability, but seem to attack an excessive observance of it. If you will deal with the Shastras, it is really necessary to enter upon a deeper examination. When did the idea of untouchability arise and what is its extent? I wonder if you have read Pandit Satavalekar's treatise on this subject. In a way it is fairly exhaustive.

If you will write for *Young India* on this subject in a learned way, I would like you to study it more carefully, if you have the time, and produce something original, or write something popular and original ridiculing the extravagance of the practice as it obtains today—extravagance both in the manner and the extent of its application, even assuming that there is a warrant for untouchability in Hinduism pure and undefiled. I return your articles.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 12632

414. LETTER TO K. P. PADMANABHA IYER

AS AT BANGALORE,
August 19, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You have told me nothing new. My question was simple, whether you had made any experiments yourself, and, if so, with what result.[1] You have instead of answering that question given me a thesis of which I was not in need. People write to me giving me advice on all sorts of matters of which they have no personal knowledge. I had thought that you had perhaps some knowledge, being a qualified man.

I have read almost all the Western books on food reform. They are good only up to a point. Many of the observations have to be taken with the greatest caution, because of our different habits of life. The results obtained by experiments under Western conditions will not be the result necessarily to be obtained here. And then, I have also noticed that the experiments are not in every case faithfully described. Many data are omitted. The majority of us whether in the medical line or any other do not take a scientific interest in our professions, our only concern being to make money or somehow to get on in life. Hence is there an utter dearth of original research work.

Being unable now to make experiments myself, I would gladly receive aid from the experience of others. But it must be real experience and not book knowledge.

Perhaps the typed matter is your only copy, and I therefore return it to you.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 12633

[1] *Vide* "Letter to K. P. Padmanabha Iyer". 21-7-1927.

415. LETTER TO T. W. KALANI

AS AT BANGALORE,
August 19, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You should omit all novel-reading, and you should repeat Ramanama. Learn *Bhagavad Gita* if possible in the original. Take a cold bath every day. Sleep out in the open air. You shold retire to bed early and get up early in the morning at 4 o'clock and pray to God that He may give you strength to resist all evil thoughts. Do not brood over discharges when they occur. Find out each time the reason, and avoid the reason next time. Tell your father of the disease and tell him that it is perfectly useless for you to go to London till you have conquered these discharges and your thoughts.

Before you think of perfecting your English I would advise you to take to Hindi and Sanskrit and when you have got your mastery over both, you may certainly proceed further with your English.

Yours sincerely,

T. W. KALANI
OLD SUKKUR
(SINDH)

From microfilm : S.N. 19775

416. LETTER TO N. SETHURAMAN

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 19, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I do not think that a husband has any right to impose his own views on his wife or a parent on his grown-up children. But he is not obliged to provide things for them in which he himself does not believe. But if his wife has her own private means as she well may either from gifts given by the husband or his parents or the money she might have brought from her own parents, she has a perfect right to make what use she likes of these monies. So far as children of tender age are concerned, I am unable to say by way of general rule as to who should regulate their lives in the event of difference between husband and wife. Probably it is a matter of

mutual accommodation. Finally it is the law of love that should govern relations in a family life and no hard and fast rules can really be laid down for mutual conduct. What may be perfectly justified in one case may not be wholly justifiable in every other case apparently similar.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. SETHURAMAN
THIRUKKANNANGUDI
KIVALUR. S.I. RLY.

From a photostat : S.N. 19803

417. A LETTER

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 19, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. All my sympathies are with you. Your last state is simply due to excessive self-abuse. The vital fluid is evidently now passed even without stimulation. My advice to you is not to go to your wife at all at least for one year and not till you have acquired mastery of yourself, whether it is inside of the year or even beyond. You must not hesitate to tell your parents the reason for your abstention. When they understand how you have weakened yourself and become diseased, if they are at all wise, they will know the reason and trouble you no more in your attempt to rebuild your constitution. You must learn cooking for yourself, so that you may regulate your diet. Give up cycling. Walk to your college, seek the company only of good boys. Do not be in a hurry to pass your examination. Take your own time. Retire to bed early, and at that time of retiring, think good thoughts and pray to God for help with an implicit faith that there is a high power ruling our destination and responsive to our innermost cravings for betterment. Take gentle walks before retiring to bed, but without overfatiguing yourself. Jump out of the bed as soon as you are awake no matter when, and do not go to bed again before the next bed time unless you fell so giddy that you must sleep, in which case you will take as much sleep as may be necessary. Repeat the practice from night to night till you have won long sweet undisturbed sleep from 9 to 4. At 4 o' clock you will get up, have your mouth washed, and even a full bath if you can get your bowels to move at that time

and are not too weak to have the bath so early, and then read the *Bhagavad Gita* or any other religious book or simply utter Ramanama for half an hour or at least for five minutes if you cannot concentrate longer and for five minutes you will [pray][1], whether with or without concentration, always trying to concentrate. After this religious practice, you will take at least half an hour's walk out in the open. And then a cup full of fresh milk, boiled without sugar and you may have some fresh fruit if it is available, otherwise twenty dried raisins. Wash the raisins and chew them well. You will take no other food till 10 o' clock or 12 o' clock or whatever the time is when you may take a little chapati and some clean boiled vegetable without salt and nothing more. In the evening, before dark the same quantity of milk as in the morning and chapati with or without vegetable. If you don't take vegetable, you may take raisins or fresh fruit. If you do not know how to make chapati, you must learn it. Any green vegetable can be taken. Not starchy ones if possible. But when you cannot get green stuff, you may have potatoes or any other starchy vegetable and add to it fresh lemon's juice. Don't take any sugar or condiments. Keep your bowels in good order. And at the time of retiring at night take an earth bandage.

You may read with profit, perhaps, my *Guide to Health* and the booklet *Self-Restraint* v. *Self-Indulgence.*

If you have discharges either in night or in the day time you must immediately have a cold hip-bath. On no account must you practise self-abuse. On the approach of the least sensation, you must get up and walk briskly keeping your fist closed so tight as if you were about to hit anybody. Sit at the spinning-wheel for half an hour at least concentrating yourself on your work to God and do the spinning in a proper humble sacrificial spirit. It will compose you. Make a fixed determination to rebuild yourself and undo the past. Do not brood over the past and forget it and do not feel dejected if you have discharges, but resolutely refuse to be party to those discharges. Keep your mind ever occupied with nobler things and away from yourself.

Yours sincerely,

R. B. T.

BENARES

From a photostat: S. N. 19804

[1] The source has "have".

418. LETTER TO B. GOPALACHAR

CHIKMAGALUR,
August 19, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Here are the answers to your questions:

1. In my opinion State aid should not be asked and should not be given except on the following conditions:

Every school in which the head master is or teachers are prepared to learn carding and spinning and submit to an examination should receive Rs. 5 per month as an increase in the existing salary of the head master or the teacher in question, provided that he guarantees manufacture of five *tolas* of yarn of at least 6 counts per boy or girl per month, the increase to be drawn only upon certificates by the inspector of the required amount of yarn and a capital expense of annas four per boy or girl for spinning outfit.

Note: Unless some such provision is made, my experience is that expense incurred over the introduction of hand-spinning in schools becomes a mere waste. And it would be wrong to introduce spinning in schools unless there is a staff of qualified inspectors and itinerant teachers for teaching these school-masters, and, if necessary, in the preliminary stages even the boys and girls.

2. Spinning should be made compulsory only in such primary and middle schools where the majority of municipal or local board voters consent. Compulsion would be useless where there is no public opinion in favour of hand-spinning.

3. The unfortunate experience just now is that boys take to spinning more quickly than girls. Therefore, I would make no distinction, and it is wrong to introduce the idea amongst boys and girls that spinning is essentially meant for girls and not for boys. It is to be treated as a national duty and it is to be prized for its cultural advantages so far as the boys and girls are concerned.

4. The question of cotton-growing tracts is irrelevant to the consideration of introducing spinning in schools and cotton trees (that is, the *devkapas* variety) can be planted anywhere.

5. As I do not know the incidence of the education cess in Mysore, I am unable to answer the question.

6. Public sympathy and support can only be obtained by propaganda on behalf of the Industrial Department just as was done and is still being done in the matter of co-operation. Hand-spinning is really the greatest aid to co-operation.

7. As there are weaving sheds in the *Adi Karnataka* workshop conducted by the Government, all yarn manufactured in the schools should be sent to these sheds for weaving and a stipulated price should be paid by these institutions to the schools manufacturing yarn.

If you are serious about this matter and are convinced as to the absolute necessity of spinning becoming universal, you should give some attention to the study of the technique of hand-spinning, which you can easily do in a month's time if you devote a whole month to it, or in three months' time if you devote at least one hour per day before taking up questions. Merely putting questions in the Assembly and throwing the blame or the burden upon the Government is to damage the cause. For, after all the Government can only respond to the atmosphere around it. And Government after all is what the people make it. It has no power or capacity apart from the people.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. B. GOPALACHAR
R. A. MEMBER
TIRTHAHALLI
SHIMOGA DISTRICT

From a microfilm : S. N. 19805

419. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Shravan Vad 8 [*August 20, 1927*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. How old is Haribhai's widowed sister and how well educated? How about her constitution? Please let me have these and other facts about her. There was a letter from Kusum from Broach. She appears to be calm. Why did you have to stop studying with the help of Shri Mrityunjaya?

Did you not begin studying Gujarati some time ago? How much Gujarati does Uttamchand's wife know? We should not undertake a task beyond our capacity.

I should like to have the daily diary completed for the remaining period. What I get from it, I do not get from the letters.

I am all right. Our Mysore tour will end on the 29th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 592. Courtesy : Vasumati Pandit

420. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Silence Day, [After *August 20, 1927*]

CHI. VASUMATI,

Received your letter. It is good that you have started teaching. I did not mean that you should teach Gujarati only to the extent that you know it. I want much greater knowledge of perfect Gujarati. I expect a deeper study of grammar. But let that be. Teaching too is service for you. And everything done in a spirit of service yields fruit. Keep up your health. How have you arranged about your food ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 9365

[1] The year is inferred from the reference to the end of the Mysore tour.

421. REMARKS IN BELUR TEMPLE VISITORS' BOOK

August 20, 1927

I was thankful to be able to visit this glory of Indian architecture (sculpture?). I wish the temple could be thrown open to the so-called untouchables on precisely the same terms as to other Hindus.

The Hindu, 22-8-1927

422. SPEECH AT BELUR TEMPLE [1]

August 20, 1927

Who would not be drawn to this wonderful temple of Indian art? But a representative of *Daridranarayana* like myself may not indulge in that feast of eyes. All my time and my energy are consecrated to the service of the poor, and I confess that I should not have come to this place if Keshavdas had not promised a purse of Rs. 500.

Young India, 1-9-1927

423. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, ARSIKERE [2]

August 20, 1927

We do not know what Shri Krishna's life means for us, we do not read the *Gita*, we make no attempt to teach it to our children. The *Gita* is such a transcendental book that men of every creed, age and clime may read it with respect, and find in it the principles of their respective religions. If we thought of Krishna on every Janmashtami day and read the *Gita* and resolved to follow its teachings, we should not be in our present sorry plight. Shri Krishna served the people all his life; he was a real servant of the people. He could have led the hosts at Kurukshetra, but he preferred to be Arjuna's charioteer. His whole life was one unbroken *Gita* of karma. He refused proud Duryodhana's sweets and preferred humble Vidura's spinach. As a child he was a cowherd and we still know him by the name of Gopala. But we, his worshippers, have neglected the cow today; the *Adi Karnatakas* slaugthter cows and eat beef, and our infants and invalids have to go without cow's milk. Krishna knew no sleep or idleness. He kept sleepless vigil of the world, we, his posterity, have become

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Lettter"

[2] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The meeting was held at the Travellers' Bungalow.

indolent and forgotten the use of our hands. In *Bhagavad Gita* Lord Krishna has shown the path of *bhakti*—which means the path of karma. Lokamanya Tilak has shown that whether we desire to be *bhaktas*, or *jnanis*, karma is the only way, but that karma should not be for self but for others. Action for one's own self binds, action for the sake of others delivers from bondage. What can be the altruistic action which can be universally done, by Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians, by men, women and children? I have tried to demonstrate that spinning alone is that sacrificial act, for that alone can make us do something in God's name, something for the poorest, something that can infuse activity in their idle limbs. Lord Krishna has also taught that to be a true *bhakta* we should make no difference between a Brahmin and a scavenger. If that is true, there can be no place for untouchability in Hinduism. If you are still hugging that superstition, you can cleanse yourself by getting rid of it on this the sacred day of Krishna's birth. He who swears by the *Gita* may know no distinction between Hindu and Mussalman for Lord Krishna has declared that he who adores God in a true spirit by whatsoever name adores Him. The path of *bhakti*, karma, love as expounded in the *Gita*, leaves no room for the despising of man by man.

Young India, 1-9-1927

424. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

August 21, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letters. The longest Mysore tour is finished and next week I commence the Tamil land. The address will now be Madras. Mahadev will give it[1]. I leave for Madras on 30th morning. The post will be received here up to 29th instant.

I am not surprised at your fight with the devils. For us imperfect people this constant duelling is our only test and spur to action. So long as these fellows do not get the better of us in the end, all is well. Of course, I want to know you and see you as you are and only then will you be what you ought to be.

You shall certainly not stay there a day beyond the stipulated time and then the Hindi will have to take care of itself. But even during the remaining period, I do not want you to get sick over it. I

[1] C/o S. Srinivasa Iyengar, Amjad Bagh, Mylapore, Madras

would not mind even if you threw away every Hindi book and simply picked up what was possible without an effort. There should be no violence about this Hindi learning. Of course I would like you not to forget Urdu writing. But in all these things let there be no overstraining.

Yes, Vinoba is an extraordinary man. His weeping is an intense longing to be with the Maker. Do cultivate him as much as you can, draw him out when you can. You may not have opportunity of coming in close contact with him again. Ask him any questions you like.

About Gangu you may not worry. It is quite enough that you are still allowed by her to guide her. It does appear to me that she should live altogether apart from Valunjkar and stand on her own legs.

With love,

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 5263. Courtesy : Mirabehn

425. LETTER TO JAMNADAS

BANGALORE,
Silence Day [*August 22, 1927*][1]

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I got your letter. It is good that you wrote. I rather wish that you should write. Perhaps I can give you some peace of mind by replying to your letters.

I even understand your reasoning. I can now prescribe for you only one medicine : having placed before me all difficulties and shortcomings, you should have faith in me and cheerfully submit to my orders. If you see any error or defect in them, you should let the sin of that or the responsibility for that rest on my head. A soldier who knows his duty carried out scrupulously his general's orders, even when he sees the latter's error. He who has faith in his leader sees no error in him even when the world sees one. The first attitude is acquired by practice, the second is the fruit of *tapascharya* done in this or a previous life. In the first, it is reason which is active in the

[1] From the reference to the end of Gandhiji's Mysore tour; *vide* also the succeeding item.

second the heart.

I wrote about you to Nanabhai last week itself. The problem of money will be solved. If there are delays, bear them as inevitable. Have a frank talk with Nanabhai and do what he advises you. This is my order at the moment.

Come here whenever you wish to. Ask for money from the Ashram. Don't forget to take care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall be in Bangalore till the end of this month.

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 8595. Courtesy : Radhabehn Choudhri

426. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day [*August 22, 1927*]

SISTERS,

We returned here yesterday after completing our longest tour in Mysore. I am to leave Mysore by the end of this week, i.e., on Tuesday, the 30th instant. So letters which can reach me latter than Monday should be addressed to Madras. I do not know our exact address at Madras.

It is very good that you are going to contribute to the Flood Relief Fund by doing such work as sewing. Get the women labourers at the Ashram also to co-operate in this work. I do not mean that they should sew. But if they like, they can contribute a day's wages. It will be enough for the present if you get to know them on this pretext. If they are not willing, they need give nothing. If we realize even now that we have so far failed to enter into their life your contacts with them will increase in the future. We have to develop in ourselves the quality which enables us to look upon all as equals, as laid down in the *Gita*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3663

427. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

August 22, 1927

I have both your letters. As Kaka has gone to see the gold mines today, I could not show them to him. He will write to you as soon as he returns and thereafter he or I shall return the letters to you. Mahadev will write to you in addition to this, if necessary.

It was right that you wrote to me. It would have hurt me had you not written to me. I destroyed that letter as it was not worth preserving. My idea in destroying it was that the fewer the people who read it the better it would be.

I already knew the first part of what you wrote. That is to say, I knew the matter up to Maganlal's fast[1]. What was news to me was the breach of pledges by both even after the fast as also the experience of Ramdas. Indeed that has aroused my suspicion but my opinion is not based on it. It is based solely on the frequent violation of truthfulness. Even if one who commits such a breach is good in other respects, the Ashram which lays stress on *satya* cannot accommodate him. Moreover, the Ashram provides maintenance to a great extent. It is not our duty nor do we have the right to extend that maintenance to one who cannot serve the Ashram. The reason for this decision is therefore only the proved faults of Chi. Kashi in telling lies. But it is only if all of you can come to the same decision calmly that you should give effect to my advice. I am and am not in a hurry. I am not because in these matters we must act with full circumspection. I am in a hurry to the extent that once a decision is taken it is *adharma* to delay putting it into effect.

The Managing Committee ought certainly to read and understand this letter. It may, if it wants to, ask me anything. Certainly get from me whatever you need to in order to reach a decision.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Balwantrai Mehta", after 2-9-1927.

428. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

August 22, 1927

I write this separately for your convenience.

It is regrettable that you and Maganlal have not yet made it up with each other but I also see that it is inevitable. Since all of you have taken a clear pledge twice, neither of you can leave the place and be separated from each other. Neither you nor anyone else can sever the bond of marriage or spiritual relationship which has come to be formed between you. This is a moral issue. That a man can free himself from all bonds by abandoning morality is, however, a different matter.

That being so, we have to consider just how your relations can become cordial. We are all married people. We should consider how husband and wife behave with each other and should order our conduct accordingly. You should meet Maganlal's angry red eyes with calm affection and *vice versa*. If such mutual give-and-take is not possible, do as Ba did. When I opened the door for Ba, she asked me to pause and think and made me feel ashamed of myself and although she was ready to go out, she retracted her steps. Keep on repeating, "We can never be separated" like Govardhanbhai's[1] Kumud[2]. Thereafter, God alone knows how He will dispose of whichever of you is Pramadadhana[3], whether through death or otherwise. He stages a new play every day, so that He does not have to draw upon Govardhanbhai. Have faith in Him.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

[1] Govardhanram Madhavram Tripathi, author of *Sarasvatichandra*, a Gujarati novel.

[2] Heroine of *Sarasvatichandra*

[3] Another character from *Sarasvatichandra* to whom Kumud was married

429. LETTER TO GANGABEHN

August 22, 1927

I have your letter; Kakasaheb too read to me the one you wrote to him. I can understand your wish to tour with me and at the same time serve Kakasaheb, but I shall not encourage you in it.

1. Kakasaheb ought not to stand in need of so much service and Chandrashankar should make up for your absence. If that is not possible Kakasaheb should become too dependent.

2. If Ba needs the services of anyone, she should go to the Ashram. If one who serves me needs to be served by someone else such a one's service will not be service at all and I must give up such service.

3. Instead of benefiting by tours you would only suffer harm. With me one has to move from place to place, no studies will therefore be possible. It will be good indeed if I have with me some woman attendant, but she should have completed her studies. I see if Manibehn too remains longer, she would stand to lose. Her studies have already suffered. Deep in her heart she desired to stay. She is yet a child. As she had come here on business, she was allowed to stay.

You should of course be engrossed in your studies. When Kakasaheb gets settled, you may certainly stay with him, serve him and learn from him.

Now you should give up your reserve and learn reading and writing from anyone who can teach and offers to do it.

Self-knowledge can be had only from saints. Reading and writing should be learnt from wherever it is available. Hence give up your idea that you will learn only if a certain person will teach you. A girl full of passion would certainly entertain such an idea. You cannot have it at all. But I do understand that you feel shy of disclosing your ignorance. You should certainly shed such shyness. As Rasik knows Sanskrit well, why should I not learn it from him? And to us all other boys should be like Rasik.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

430. LETTER TO ANANDIBAI

August 22, 1927

CHI. ANANDIBAI,

Women must learn as part of elementary education at least their own mother tongue, Hindi if it is not their mother tongue, enough Sanskrit to be able to understand the drift of the *Bhagavad Gita,* elementary arithmetic, elementary composition, elementary music and child-care. Along with this, I think they should know well the processes up to the weaving from cotton. When a woman receives this education she should have an environment that will shape her character and enable her to see clearly the evils in society and to avoid them. I have not mentioned religious education separately as it is acquired by practice and would be covered by general reading. Truly speaking, it is a part of the elevating company of a teacher. This is about girls. The education of a widow or a married woman is of course a different matter.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

431. LETTER TO SHARDA [1]

Shravan Vad 10, August 22, 1927

CHI. SHARDA,

I have your letter. Life is full of difficulties. If we can, like the weaver, patiently unravel tangled yarn, only then can we weave the pattern of our life properly.

You should know that if the Managing Committee or Maganlal refuses to accommodate your brother in the Ashram that is after full deliberation and you should remain calm and not get angry with any of them. The Ashram is not an institution for correcting the

[1] The addressee had complained to Gandhiji that the Ashram would not admit her brother who had been turned out of the house by their father.

delinquent, but is one for giving good people education for service and for preparing a field for service. The Ashramites will be committing a sin if they believe that they are perfect; "good" only means those who are like them. They would not admit people who fail when measured by that yardstick. If we would turn the Ashram into a home for the disabled, it must have an altogether different set-up. You yourself can imagine this position. And once it is turned into a home for the disabled, which disabled person may not be admitted to it? A little thought will convince you that we shall not then be able to start and run dairies, tanneries, etc., but the whole pattern will have to change. Remember one thing. You have abandoned those family relationships which run counter to other larger relationships. Your father and your brother are a father and a brother to the same extent as those of comparable age in the Ashram or outside. Towards these you will have the same attitude as towards your own father or brother. Knowing this you should not grieve because your brother cannot join the Ashram. Will your brother be willing to go to some orphanage? Would he go to the Bardoli Ashram? I am not sure whether he will be admitted there, but as Bhai Jugatram is conducting a number of experiments there, he may perhaps fit into them. But even if by chance Bhai Jugatram keeps him, there will be the question of his maintenance. Will your father pay it? Consider the whole question calmly and objectively and write to me without reserve.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

432. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Silense Day [*August 22, 1927*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Pyarelal has arrived in great mental distress. It is just as well that Shankaran willingly agreed to go there and I pulled away Pyarelal to relieve congestion at the Ashram. Now he has to be treated. I shall do that. You shall not worry on that account. His suffering has been caused by separation. He cannot bear to be away from me. He puts up with it from a sense of duty but it upsets him. Hence I shall keep him with me for the time being. I did expect that Shankaran would satisfy you. It is good that he has adjusted himself there. Your health must be gradually improving.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Now my stay in Mysore is almost over. We shall start touring Tamilnadu on the 30th. Mahadev will give you the address. Till the 9th the address will be: c/o S. Srinivasa Iyengar, Mylapore, Madras.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The addressee got the letter on August 24, 1927 the silence day; i. e., Monday, prior to that was on August 22.

433. LETTER TO TRAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Shrauan Vad 10 [*August 22, 1927*][1]

CHI. TARAMATI,

I have your letter after many months. This is a real letter, because you have put down in it words as they came to you without anyone's help. If Mathuradas makes you write or corrects your writing I would consider it his letter. Am I concerned with your grammatical mistakes? I am only concerned with your feelings.

I wish all the three of you to take full advantage of the climate there. You yourself should get into the habit of walking more. You must make the body as strong as possible. You must also get into the habit of mixing with people and talking to them freely. That you serve the sick to the best of your capacity is certainly noble work. You must keep in close touch with Nargisbehn. Dilip must have grown beyond recognition

I am quite well. The body has not quite regained the former vigour, but it serves for work. It is given by God and He will take from it such work as He wills.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

434. FAREWELL MESSAGE TO STUDENTS

[After *August 22, 1927*][2]

I am not going to be satisfied with the students' performance merely by their donations to khadi, etc., no matter how great they are. I want them for the country body and soul. That would be some, not much, return for what they are receiving.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

[1] From the postmark dated August 24, 1927. *Shravan Vad 10* in 1927 corresponded to this date.

[2] The source has this after the entries for August 22.

435. LETTER TO KUVALAYANAND

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
August 23, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

My stay in Mysore comes to an end on the 29th. I leave for Tamil Nadu on the 30th, and for some time my headquarters will be Madras (Sjt. S. Srinivasa Iyengar, Amjad Bagh, Luz, Mylapore, Madras).

But this is written to send under your care Punjabhai, a worker in the Ashram. He has been suffering for some time from indefinable abdominal pains. You will hear from him the whole of the history of his case. Punjabhai is an abstemious man, will go through any rigour. I have considered his case to be specially adapted for yogic treatment. I, therefore, commend him to your attention.

Punjabhai does not know anybody in the place. If he can be accommodated at your Ashram, that would be ideal; but if he cannot, you will perhaps be able to tell him where he could stay. He must be a paying patient, because he has some means of his own and does not wish to become a burden upon anybody. At the Ashram also he pays for his own expenses. There need be therefore no hesitation about taking your charges.

I am keeping my strength and doing the tour without feeling the strain.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G. N. 5052

436. LETTER TO T. R. KRISHNASWAMI IYER

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
August 23, 1927

MY DEAR KRISHNASWAMI,

I have your letter. I am sorry to have to tell you that I have not yet tried the oils for the simple reason that I have been away, and I don't want to carry the bottles about with me and doctor myself on the journey.

The idea of cotton cultivation is good. But it has to be conceived

not in the interest of the buyers of cotton for the foreign market or even for the mills, but for the convenience of the spinners. Therefore cultivation has to be grown on particular portions of every holding just as indigo was grown on 3/20th of every holding in Champaran. It was a magnificent thing, only it was designed solely for the planter. And then you have to find out what variety should be grown, how tree-cotton would fare and so on. If, therefore, you will interest yourself in this, you have to study the whole of the question of cotton cultivation in all its phases. Such experiments have been made at the Ashram, and you may know further on the subject by correspondence with the Director of the Technical Department of the All-India Spinners' Association, Sabarmati.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. T. R. KRISHNASWAMIER,
SABARI ASHRAM
OLVAKOT

From a photostat : G.N. 6832.

437. LETTER TO KAMALA DAS GUPTA

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
August 23, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I know that many girls are now tending might be considered too simple. Let me however make my meaning clear. I do not by any means consider simplicity as synonymous with shabbiness, shoddiness or slovenliness; nor need a devotee of simplicity be devoid of a sense of taste or decency. What I have found is that the simplest things are the neatest possible and this neatness that comes from simplicity can be the common heritage of all mankind instead of the manufactured taste which has become the exclusive property of the monied few.

If you are sincere about your desire to go to the Ashram and earnest and yet gentle in your effort, you will certainly bear down the opposition of your parents. Until you can secure the permission of your parents, you can mentally live the Ashram life.

And why do you say that there is no way for Indian girls for leading a simple and pure life? Just think of the millions of the poor

girls. They can't afford to look elegant even for getting suitable matches; nor is it true that here in India all the girls are bound to marry. But the fact is that the vast majority want to marry, and in middle classes society to which we belong, the fashion is to think that girls are born only to marry. But I know that there are many girls who are now trying to remain unmarried. They have their parents' co-operation also. But it is a hard struggle in which they are engaged.

What made you think that I was stopping the writing of the autobiography? It is continuing.

I am in Bangalore up to the 29th instant. My address after will be : Care of Sjt. S. Srinivasa Iyengar, Amjad Bagh, Luz, Mylapore, Madras.

I would like you to see Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta and his wife Srimati Hemprabhadevi of Khadi Pratishthan at Sodepur. They both know the Ashram. They have lived there for some time. They will tell you all about it. You must not be in a hurry even though your parents may leave you free to go to the Ashram.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 12634–A

438. LETTER TO T. R. MAHADEVA IYER

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
August 23, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Herewith a copy of a letter received by me. I think that you should give up possession now without any ado whatsover.

Please let me know your decision so that I may write to them.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 12938

439. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
August 23, 1927

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS.

I have your letter. I have sent you a telegram in order to save you suspense. There is a moral undertaking to give the English manuscript[1] to Ganesan. He should therefore have it. But the terms are quite proper. I shall discuss them with him and deliver the manuscript after coming to terms. I shall vary them if necessary for his accommodation.

You have still the Bengali manuscript. So you will have to fix up something there.

We leave here on the 30th morning for Vellore.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 19771

440. LETTER TO DR. SATYAPAL

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
August 23, 1927

DEAR DR. SATYAPAL,

I have your letter. I understand what you say, but I do not appreciate your attitude towards Lalaji. There are many matters on which I do not agree with him, but his sincerity, his love of the country are undeniable. His self-sacrifice and unbroken record of service entitle him to our respect and affection and make him indispensable for any public work in the Punjab. You may know that even in the heyday of Non-co-operation, I used to say this very thing and used to tell co-workers that without Lalaji, I could and would do nothing in the Punjab and that my business was to convert Lalaji and that the Punjabis had a right to defer to Lalaji rather than accept the views of one like myself who was comparatively a stranger to them. If I were you therefore, I should go again and again to him and strive with him but not strive against him.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 19774

[1] Of *Seven Months with Gandhi*

441. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

[After *August 23, 1927*][1]

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. Over a remark of mine, Mahadev showed me your letter without waiting for your permission to do so.[2] No one should expect Mahadev to keep any secrets from me. It is beyong his power. Once we form a habit it becomes beyond our power to do something different. This conformity is worthy of being cultivated in regard to a good habit. One who meditates with a pure mind on non-violence ultimately becomes unable to commit violence, not physically but psychologically. Thought is itself the root of action. If there is no thought, there can be no action.

What if our separation has hurt me and still hurts me as much as it hurts you? You chose *shreyas*[3]. And so did I. Therein alone lies your good and mine and everyone else's. It should be the end of all education to make *shreyas* also desired. Hence if you believe that living in the Ashram will benefit you, learn to like it. In this cheat neither yourself nor me. When you come to like to live only in the Ashram, know that I shall be fully prepared to put you in another place. You should write to me without reserve. It may be that I may not understand or that in reply I may lecture you. One should learn to put up with one's elders' lecturing.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

[1] The source has this after the entries for August 23.

[2] Mahadev Desai had read to Gandhiji a long letter written to him by the addressee regarding her embarrassment in living in the Ashram.

[3] The better (as against the more pleasant)

442. LETTER TO A GUJARATI STUDENT

[After *August 23, 1927*][1]

It is quite proper that fasting has been extolled among us. But what kind of fasting is it? There is a religious dictum to the effect that the man who starves his body but leaves his mind uncontrolled is a hypocrite. We have ultimately to control the mind even in fasting. Fasting or not fasting is the same thing for a man who has conquered his mind. But conquest of the mind is so difficult. We can control the mind only by repeatedly controlling the body. My salutation to those who adopt this discipline of fasting and do so for self-purification.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

443. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU[2]

[*August 24, 1927*]

PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU

ALLAHABAD

YOUR WIRE. ANSARI'S STATEMENT UNFORTUNATE. BEING INTERIOR MYSORE HAVE BEEN WITHOUT TOUCH PAPERS. IF ANSARI SPONTANEOUSLY RETIRES SITUATION WILL CERTAINLY EASE. AM NOT SURE WHETHER I SHOULD ISSUE STATEMENT[3]. RETURNING BANGALORE TOMORROW MORNING.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 12873

[1] The source has this after the entries for August 23.

[2] In reply to his telegram of August 23; *vide* Appendix "Telegram from Motilal Nehru", 23-8-1927.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. M. A. Ansari", 26-8-1927.

444. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

August 24, 1927

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I have your letter and *raksha.* It is tied round my wrist while I write this.

This time the loss is so tremendous that if it is found necessary to seek aid for the workers from the co-operative society, I cannot object. Do whatever you all feel is proper. Aid can certainly be had from the Relief Committee[1]. See Vallabhbhai. Help can also be sought from the Bombay Committee.

I will leave Mysore State on the 30th. My address thereafter will be c/o Srinivasa Iyengar, Luz, Madras. I will let you know if there is a change of plan.

Manibehn left for the Ashram yesterday. Andrews will come to see me on Saturday. Today we are in a village in Tamilnadu.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32825

445. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Wednesday, [After *August 24, 1927*]

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

On reaching here, I received your letter. And I am now relieved of my worry. You should never hesitate to write. I can set right what is going wrong only when you write and tell me. There was only one interpretation possible of your letter. Even if by the Relief Committee you had meant the Bombay Committee, there is no comparison between the carelessness of the Bombay Committee and that of the Baroda Committee. It appears that the Relief Committee[2] is doing its work quite satisfactorily. It may have been lethargic about our work and possibly did not investigate the state of affairs thoroughly enough. But we should not lose our patience. For that reason, when no institution pays any heed [to the condition of workers] we may criticize the injustice it perpetrates. If the whole thing is over and done with, it is well and good. Even so, stick to my advice. Sooner or later,

[1] Gujarat Flood Relief Committee

[2] The Gujarat Flood Relief Committee.

we have to make workers independent and self-reliant. It is our duty to make them skilled in their work—we do not want them to remain helpless or make beggars of them. It is a difficult task. One does not get immediate credit for such work. We might even be shunned. All such risks are inherent [in such work] but we have to bear with them. It is our duty to act according to what we think we ought to do.

I am well. Do not pay any attention to what appears in the papers.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 32810

446. SPEECH AT KRISHNAGIRI [1]

August 24, 1927

MY CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I have to thank you for the address you have presented to me; also for the two purses. You have asked me to perform the unveiling of the portrait of the late Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das. I thank you for the honour you have done me by asking to perform the ceremony and I do so with the greatest pleasure. I hope that his life and work will be an inspiration for us. All. It can be said of him that he gave his life for the sake of his country, and he himself lived and died for it. This is not a meeting in which I can speak to you at length. There is too much noise and it will be cruelty on my part to inflict a speech on you. It does me a great deal of good and gives me a good deal of pleasure to see to many smiling faces about me. But when I see in those faces what you and I will never see, the faces which have not even the ability to smile, my heart sinks within me; and when we contemplate God residing in those people without smiling faces, we recognize in him *Daridranarayana*. It is for the sake of *Daridranarayana* that you have given these purses and so far as I have been able to see and think there is the conviction growing upon me that the only way you can render service to *Daridranarayana* is through the spinning-wheel. We are suffering from the chronic disease which can be called want of work and the only work you can

[1] In reply to addresses by the Union Board, the citizens and the co-operative society

find for the millions in the seven lakhs of villages is the spinning-wheel. But even the spinning-wheel has no force and no application unless you and I can make up our minds to discard all foreign cloth. You have done well in being exceedingly brief in your address. My faith in the other items of the constructive national programme is just as firm as in khadi. I know that the horizon before us is very black. But in spite of that horizon being black, there is hope. I reiterate my faith in the possibility and necessity of Hindu-Muslim unity. I reiterate also my belief that unless we Hindus rid ourselves of the curse of untouchability Hinduism will be waning.

I consider that total prohibition is the sacred duty of the State. In my opinion it is long overdue. If there is any country in the world which is immediately ripe for total prohibition, it is undoubtedly India; and if all of you unitedly demand total prohibition, prohibition can come without the slightest difficulty.

I was glad to receive this address from the co-operative society. May I humbly suggest to the co-operative society that their work, good as it is, is wholly incomplete and excludes the necessity of the population, unless they include the spinning-wheel and khadi in their programme. I am also glad that students have collected a small purse separately. They have done so at almost every place I visited. It gives me hope, because I regard their purse as an earnest of their determination to serve the poorest of their countrymen; and let me tell them from my experience that service to the country would be impossible unless they lead purse and abstemious lives.

I am glad to see so many sisters at this meeting. May I remind the men about me of the duty we owe to our sisters? We have been guilty of gross indifference, to put it mildly, towards our sisters. If we desire true national regeneration, we will have to reconsider many of our ideas about the status of women. Child marriage and child widowhood, wherever existing and in whatever form, are great evils in society. Surely it is a matter entirely resting within ourselves, and we shall have to answer both before God and the world if we do not wake up betimes and reform our own lives. In this vast assembly, I know everybody has not contributed to the purse. I want for this work every pie that can be willingly and intelligently given to me. I want the poorest, man and woman, boy and girl, to give whatever they can for the purse. As I have said in the beginning, let us know that there are men and women poorer than we are. I would earnestly ask you to

preserve complete silence while the volunteers go about collecting money. Those only should give who believe in the message of the spinning-wheel. But those who do not want to give, may remain in their places till collections are over. May God bless all those who are here and also those in whose name we propose to work.

The Hindu, 27-8-1927

447. STUDENTS AND THE "GITA"

The other day, in the course of a conversation, a missionary friend asked me, if India was really a spiritually advanced country, why it was that he found only a few students having any knowledge of their own religion, even of the *Bhagavad Gita*. In support of the statement, the friend who is himself an educationist told me that he had made it a point to ask the students he met whether they had any knowledge of their religion or of the *Bhagavad Gita*. A vast majority of them were found to be innocent of any such knowledge.

I do not propose to take up at the present moment the inference that because certain students had no knowledge of their own religion, India was not a spiritually advanced country, beyond saying that the ignorance on the part of the students of religious books did not necessarily mean absence of all religious life or want or spirituality among the people to which the students belonged. But there is no doubt that the vast majority of students who pass through the Government educational institutions are devoid of any religious instruction. The remark of the missionary had reference to the Mysore students, and I was somewhat pained to observe that even the students of Mysore had no religious instruction in the State schools. I know that there is a school of thought which believes in only secular instruction being given in public schools. I know also that in a country like India, where there are most religions of the world represented and where there are so many denominations in the same religion, there must be difficulty about making provision for religious instruction. But if India is not to declare spiritual bankruptcy, religious instruction of its youth must be held to be at least as necessary as secular instruction. It is true that knowledge of religious books is no equivalent of that of religion. But if we cannot have religion we must be satisfied with providing our boys and girls with what is next best. And whether there is such instruction given in the schools or not, grown-up students must cultivate the art of self-help

about matters religious as about other. They may start their own class just as they have their debating and now spinners' clubs.

Addressing the Collegiate High School students at Shimoga, I found upon enquiry at the meeting that out of a hundred or more Hindu boys, there were hardly eight who had read the *Bhagavad Gita*. None raised his hand in answer to the question, whether of the few who had read the *Gita* there was any who understood it. Out of five or six Mussalman boys all raised their hands as having read the Koran. But only one could say that he knew its meaning. The *Gita* is, in my opinion, a very easy book to undestand. It does present some fundamental problems which are no doubt difficult of solution. But the general trend of the *Gita* is in my opinion unmistakable. It is accepted by all Hindu sects as authoritative. It is free from any form of dogma. In a short compass it gives a complete reasoned moral code. It satisfies both the intellect and heart. It is thus both philosophical and devotional. Its appeal is universal. The language is incredibly simple. But I nevertheless think that there should be an authoritative version in each vernacular, and the translations should be so prepared as to avoid technicalities and in a manner that would make the teaching of the *Gita* intelligible to the average man. The suggestion is not intended in any way to supplement the original. For I reiterate my opinion that every Hindu boy and girl should know Sanskrit. But for a long time to come, there will be millions without any knowledge of Sanskrit. It would be suicidal to keep them deprived of the teachings of *Bhagavad Gita* because they do not know Sanskrit.

Young India, 25-8-1927

448. NOTES

INSOLENT REMINDERS

The trial of two young men in Madras, one a Hindu aged about 30 and the other a Mussalman aged 25, on a charge of having attempted to disfigure a statue in Mount Road, Madras, of General Neill of the Mutiny fame, has a deep significance. Their attempt reminds one of the abortive effort made in Lahore during the heyday of Non-co-operation to have the Lawrence statue, or at least the highly offensive inscription "the pen or the sword", removed. The Lahore attempt was on the part of the general populace. The Madras attempt was confined to two young men who went about their work with quiet

determination and without any fuss. The following statement made by the accused according to *The Hindu* report will be read with great interest:

> The first accused stated that he was born in Tinnevelly but lived in Madura. He knew what kind of punishment he would get before doing this act. They were prepared to undergo any thing for this. From his study of history he knew that Neill had done much harm to the country, and thought that his statue should not be there, and he (the accused) determined to destroy it. They had brought the hammer and the axe as they came from their place. They did not bring the hammer and axe for this particular purpose. After coming to Madras they went round the city for sight-seeing in the course of which they saw the statue. They remembered his history and so attempted to destroy it this morning. But the statue was neither bronze nor marble as they thought. As it was copper only some parts broke. After that the sergeant took them to the police station. For that offence they were prepared to take any punishment His Worship might think fit to impose.

Asked as to whether they pleaded guilty, they said that they were guilty "if they were bound by the law of the Government", but in their own opinion they "do not feel guilty".

It is impossible to withhold sympathy from these brave young men, alike for the motive which prompted the act and for the dignity with which they approached their trial. The report before me adds that the accused were unrepresented and did not even cross-examine the prosecution witness. There seems to be no doubt that as national consciousness grows, the resentment over the insolent reminders, which such statues are, of abused British prowess and British barbarity will grow in strength. A wise Government, however powerful it may be, will remove every such offensive reminder, and not goad infuriate public opinion into acts which, however regrettable and reprehensible they may be in themselves, will be held justifiable as a fitting answer to the criminal indifference to legitimate national sentiment. And every abortion of attempts to remove these running sores only adds to the bitterness, and widens the gulf that separates us and the British. Surely the Municipality of Madras which owns the statue should remove it.

TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE

Swami Anand has collected, in the issue of *Navajivan* of 7th August 1927, information about the heroic deeds of people all over Gujarat. In the sketches are given instances of Hindus and Mussalmans helping one another as if they had never quarrelled, also

of suppressed and suppressors living together under the same roof and sharing the same food, people saving one another at great personal risk. Whilst I was reading the sketches I was wondering if they could be all true. Then I remembered that it was *Navajivan* I was reading, and unauthenticated stories were inadmissible in its columns, and that Swami himsellf was, if it was possible, more careful than I about admitting anything doubtful. The sketches show from Bhavnagar to Broach—a wide enough area of distress—stories of unexampled self-help, self-reliance and mutual help. As Swami well remarks, for the moment the 'people exhibited every quality that makes a nation great and self-governing". There was no fear, no panic, but grim determination to battle with death. If the account is true,—I must still be cautious—it reflects the highest credit on all concerned. All were leaders and all were led. It was a spontaneous organization that came into being on the advent of distress.

The thing for the leaders to see to is, whether the lessons of the mighty deluge can be made permanent. Will the Hindu-Muslim friendship outlast the immediate need? Will the yoke of the suppressed be lifted for ever? Will the self be used to subserve the benefit of all in everyday transactions? Will the predeluge avarice remain under check in the face of the charity that is freely flowing Gujarat-ward? Will the stewards in charge of relief funds resist the temptation to steal or misappropriate trust funds? Will there be no feigning of distress and no needless applications for relief?

The answers to these many such questions can only be satisfactorily given, if the many leaders who are now operating will be good as gold. That would mean real change of heart and real penitence and purification. It is said that there is always, after a deluge of any magnitude, a reformation of life among the survivors. It may be that, extensive as the calamity was, it may not be classed as a real deluge warranting a sweeping reformation. Mankind is notoriously too dense to read the signs that God sends from time to time. We require drums to be beaten into our ears, before we would wake from our trance and hear the warning and see that to lose oneself in all is the only way to find oneself. Will Gujarat show enough advance to regard the recent floods as an all-sufficing warning to us to write a new and brilliant chapter in the history of this afflicted land of ours? Posterity will have every reason to distrust the contemporary accounts of heroism, self-reliance and mutual help, if the people of Gujarat are unable to show any lasting and demonstrable reformation.

Young India, 25-8-1927

449. THE LAW OF CONTINENCE

A friend sends me relevant extracts from *The Science of a New Life* by Dr. Cowen. I have not read the book. But the advice contained in the extracts[1] is certainly sound. I have omitted from the extracts certain paragraphs about food which are not of much value to the Indian reader. Let no one desirous of leading a pure and chaste life think that the practice of it is not worth pursuing because the expected result is not attained in a moment. And let no one expect perfection of body after successful practice of continence even for a long time. The majority of us who endeavour to follow the rules laid down for observing continence labour under three handicaps. We have inherited imperfect bodies and weak wills from our parents, and by an incorrect life we find ourselves to have further debilitated both our bodies and wills.When a writing advocating purity of life attracts us, we begin the reformation. Such reformation is never too late. But we must not expect the results described in such writings; for those results are to be expected only from a regulated life from early youth. And the third handicap we labour under is that in spite of the exercise of all the artificial and outward restraint we find ourselves unable to restrain and regularize our thoughts. And let every aspirant after a pure life take from me that an impure thought is often as powerful in undermining the body as an impure act. Control over thought is a long, painful and laborious process. But I am convinced that no time, no labour and no pain is too much for the glorious result to be reached. The purity of thought is possible only with a faith in God bordering on definite experience.

Young India, 25-8-1927

[1] Not reproduced here

450. THE BLIND SPINNERS

On reading an account of the blind spinner at the recently held Khadi Exhibition in Bangalore, a correspondent has sent me the following beautiful lines by Helen Hunt Jackson:

Like a blind spinner in the sun
    I tread my day;
I know that all the threads will run
    The appointed way;
I know each day will bring its task
And, being blind, no more I ask.
I do not know the use or name
    Of what I spin;
I only know that someone came
    And laid within
My hand the thread and said, 'Sir you
Are blind, but one thing you can do,'
Sometimes the threads so rough and fast
    And tangled fly,
I know wild storms are sweeping past,
    And fear that I
Shall fall, but dare not fly to find
A safer place, since I am blind.
I know not why, but I am sure
    That tint and place,
In some great fabric to endure
    Past time and race,
My threads will have; so from the first,
Though blind, I never felt accurst.

What a transformation there would be in our country, if all who can—who cannot? —will spin with the faith of the blind spinner. Can we not feel that every thread we spin will have place "in some great fabric to endure"?

Young India, 25-8-1927

451. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
August 26, 1927

CHI. MIRA

I have your letters. Pray do not worry about the possibility of my straining myself to write to you. When I write I do so because I must, and what I must do always gives me pleasure in the doing. When I become an instrument to pure and sensitive that it would react and respond to every circumstance around it, I shall cease to write or speak and yet my thoughts will work their way to hearts of those who need my guidance or assistance. But till that time is reached, I must make use of the less reliable and imperfect instrument of the pen and the tongue.

I still feel that you have unnecessarily excited yourself over the segregation. Why do you call it compulsory? For you it would be an act of purest love on your part. You know 14 Romans. There Paul, himself not a vegetarian, says to his congregation, "If meat offend thy brother abstain from it." I am quoting from memory,[1] therefore the words may not be the same, but the substance is the same. You will segregate yourself not because you feel yourself impure in any sense of the term, but you will do so for the same of your neighbours and for the sake of those women who belive in segregation from a right motive. I do not know that I have made my meaning sufficiently clear. The whole point is this. There are certain things not in themselves immoral which we do for the same of others and there are certain other things which being in themselves immoral we will not and must not do for the sake of the whole world. If self-imposed segregation appears to you as immoral, you must not do it even to please me. If however there is nothing immoral in it, then you will do it for the sake of your neighbours whom you will rightly consider to be ignorant to that extent. In the theory of it I am wholly at one with you. For a virgin, there should be no segregation whatsoever. Monthly sickness is no sickness for her. And while it comes, she takes note of it and changes her occupation but not her mentality. And even for married women after the necessity for precaution is understood by them, ceremonial segregation should have no meaning. I think I told

[1] The reference is to *I Corinthians*, viii. 13: "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh, while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend."

you that so far as I am concerned, I never respected the rule even with reference to Ba herself. And when I began to see things clearer, I never felt the call to have the rule observed. Radha and Rukhi certainly and all the other girls so far as I am aware do not observe it. Amina does not. Gomatibehn does and everybody respects her wishes even to the extent that when the women who do not observe it for themselves have the monthly sickness, they do not go near Gomatibehn. If then self-segregation appears to you to be a task, you need not observe it. But if you do not, you should observe it as a pleasurable duty for the sake of others and in any case, it is not now a matter of any practical value so far as you concerned; for, your next sickness probably does not come in Wardha at all. Or if it does, it is a question only of once whilst you are there. At Sabarmati nobody will want you to observe it. Amina does not observe it for anybody including Gomatibehn, nor is she expected to, much less will you be expected to observe it, even for Gomatibehn when she is there. So far as I know she has herself never asked anybody to observe it for her and in her presence. She is satisfied with the observance of it for herself. If the matter is still not clean you must continue to write and meanwhile to act as may seem proper to you.

Now about grammar and arithmetic. I understand and appreciate all you say. But, for the work in hand, a knowledge of figures and grammar as a science and as an aid to a knowledge of languages are necessary. You will therefore do both to the extent that you can tackle without feeling giddy. If you find that it is impossible for you take kindly to simple arithmetic and comparative grammar, we must do without it.

Andrews is coming here tomorrow. You must have known he arrived last week. If you have not already written to him, do please write now. Here is the further programme. But you will send your letters Care Sjt. S. Srinivasa Iyengar, Amjad Bagh, Luz, Mylapore, Madras, till I ask you to do otherwise.

I was weighed on Tuesday and my weight was lbs. $113\frac{1}{2}$. This is really very good. Up to now I have fared quite all right. It remains to be seen now how I shall take the Madras climate. It is almost like Bombay, a trifle hotter, but just as moist.

With love,

BAPU

[Encl.]

TAMIL NADU TOUR PROGRAMME

August

Stay in Bangalore up to 29th

30th Leave for Vellore in the morning

September

Ist Gudiyatham

2nd Arni

3-9 Madras (Sjt. S. Srinivasa Iyengar, Luz. Mylapore)

10-12th Cuddalore

13th Chidambaram

14th Mayavaram

15th Mannargudi

16th Tanjore

17th to 20th Trichinopoly

21st Pudukkottah

22nd-27th Karaikudi and Chettinad

28th-30th Madura including Tirumangalam on 30th

From the original : C.W. 5264. Courtesy : Mirabehn

452. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
August 26, 1927

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

I had your telegram. I hope you got my reply. Your published statement[1] is certainly an improvement on the original. But I cannot help thinking that it would have been better if you could have stayed your hand. But I fully recognize that you had no business to do so when the inner voice told you otherwise.

After having waited all these days, I felt that I should write just a brief thing for *Young India*. I send you a copy of the statement. If you think that I should not publish it, please wire. This letter should be in your hands at the latest on Monday. If I receive a wire from you disapproving of the statement, I shall cancel it. If the letter does not reach you before Tuesday, please wire direct to the Manager, *Young India* Office, Ahmedabad, asking him to withhold publication of the note. I am instructing the Manager not to publish the note if a countermanding wire is received from you. So much regarding the

[1] According to Ansari's letter of August 12, he had "asked the Councillors to unite and to confess to themselves that they are co-operating in the Councils and not non-co-operating" (S.N. 12872).

publication of my opinion[1] .

Whether the note is published or not, I feel that the suggestion made in it is the only proper course for you to adopt, unless of course, you feel strongly that those who enter the Councils must take up office and otherwise adopt the policy adumbrated in your statement, and that if you accept the Presidentship, you must actively work to that end. I recognize that you cannot take up an impartial attitude, if you must become an avowed propagandist of your own policy.

Three or four days ago when I had a long telegram from Motilalji, I thought that in view of your statement, spontaneous retirement on your part was perhaps the best way of dealing with the difficult situation that had arisen.[2] But I now feel that consistently with your views about the necessity of communal unity, you may not now retire. But I feel equally that if you are to make a Herculean effort for bringing about unity, you have to forget Council politics, adopt an attitude of absolute neutrality and act merely as an impartial chairman regulating proceedings of the Congress, All India Congress Committee, and the Working Committee, but not guiding or shaping the political programme and if you accept my suggestion, I think it would be necessary for you to make a very brief statement making it clear that whilst you adhere to the opinion expressed in your statement, you will not seek to impose that view upon the Congress but that you will confine your own activity solely to the promotion of communal unity.

Yours sincerely,

DR. M. A. ANSARI

1, DARYAGANJ, DELHI

From a photostat : S.N. 12874

[1] This was not published.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Motilal Nehru", 24-8-1927.

453. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

KUMARA PARK, BANGALORE,
August 26, 1927

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I had your letter as also your telegram. To the latter I sent a reply[1] from Krishnagiri which I hope was duly received. Having been in the interior of Mysore and continuously touring, I am considerably in arrears.

I have at last decided to issue a small note on Dr. Ansari's statement. Having championed his election I thought that I could not observe absolute silence. I shall watch the movement of the barometer and wherever I can do anything or write anything to purpose, I shall not hesitate.

So far I am not inclined to favour Jawaharlal's election, that is, assuming that Dr. Ansari retires. It is highly probable that he will take up the attitude suggested by you and me and merely become an impartial chairman. Nothing more will then remain to be done. If, however, a fresh election does become necessary, I shall watch events and Reuter's cable will inform you of the result. Please however send me your address in London so that I may write or cable in case of need. But I want you to leave India with a light heart, as I know you will do without any coaxing from me. Evidently we have not yet reached the freezing point.

I am fixed up in the South almost for the rest of the year. I send you herewith a copy of my programme up to the end of September though it will be safer probably to use the Sabarmati address from where telegrams are quickly repeated and letters as quickly redirected.

I hope you will have a nice time in Europe and return in time with Jawaharlal before the Congress week. You will please ask Indu whether she ever thinks of her old Indian friends and among them a frequent visitor to Anand Bhawan who would drink nothing but goat's milk and will eat all the choicest fruits leaving none even for little children.

Yours sincerely,

PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU
ALLAHABAD

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Motilal Nehru", 24-8-1927.

[PS.]

I am enclosing copy of my *Young India* notes. I have sent a copy to Dr. Ansari too for approval.

M. K. G.

From a photostat : S.N. 12875

454. PROBLEM OF CHILDREN OF MIXED UNIONS

An Indian living in the city of Mabuki in French Africa has written a painful letter, the substance of which is as follows :

> There is a very large number of children of mixed unions in this country. Both Hindus and Muslims are responsible for their birth. Coming here for trade, they live with any Negro women whom they choose. They do not look after the children which are born to these women. The children grow up somehow. When the traders who contract such unions return to India, they leave behind these women and their issue, making no provision even for their maintenance. When a person like me tries to look after their maintenance and wishes to establish an institution for that purpose, no one helps him. Will you not kindly tell us what is my duty and that of other Indians like me towards these children of mixed unions? Do you believe that by supporting children born of sin we only encourage sin and, therefore, we owe no duty towards them? If you do, consider this : These children will certainly get someone or other to look after them; God will not let them perish helplessly. If that is so, will they not grow up to be our enemies, and if they do, can anyone blame them? Can it not be said, rather, that those who bring such progeny into the world and leave it uncared for, bring into existence the instruments of their own and their community's destruction?

I have with my own eyes seen in Delagoa Bay and other cities the conditions described by this correspondent, and I have heard still more from clients and friends. There is no doubt that it is a painful state of affairs. Muslim friends display human feeling in such matters. Hindus become extremely hard-hearted in the name or under the pretext of religion. Muslims do not seem to consider it morally wrong to live with women professing other faiths than still form them. Thus they are not afraid of gratifying their desires but shrink from

accepting responsibility for the consequences. They feel it pollution to have to live with their own progeny, so that in the end they hand over the children either to Muslims or to Christians or, likely enough, just run away without entrusting them to anyone or leaving a single pie for their maintenance. The Negroes of Africa are simple-minded and ignorant and, therefore, do not know what their rights are. This state will certainly not last for ever. Some of them are bound to get education; they will then fight with hatred in their hearts, tell the poor women of their rights, incite their children to fight for legitimate or illegitimate causes and, though they themselves observe no distinction between morality and immorality, will have the sympathy of the world on their side in their fight illustrating the law that, no matter how strong a person is, he will sooner or later meet his match.

There are many straightforward ways of preventing such a situation from arising. The best course, certainly, is that a trader who cannot observe self-control should take his wife with him. If he goes alone and forms a union with a Negro woman, he should behave decently, treat her with love and accept the responsibility of providing for the children which may be born to her. He should understand that, under the law, he is bound to provide for the maintenance both of the woman and her children. But a lustful and shameless man has no thought of right and wrong and no sense of what is due to others; he lives like a man bereft of his senses, intoxicated with lust. How is he, therefore, likely even to read such articles? Even if he reads them, he will certainly not heed them. Hence social reformers like this correspondent should consider what their duty is. I am afraid society will have no choice but to shoulder the burden of the consequences of sin so long as there are wicked men and women in it, just as it eagerly reaps the benefit of the virtue of virtuous men and women. There is no man or woman who is completely free from sin; we are all a band of sinners. But society condones the sins of those who observe a certain decency in their conduct and regards them as virtuous people, whereas it looks upon those who cross the bounds of that decency as wicked. Thus society's definitions of the wicked and the virtuous are dictated by practical considerations.In God's court, however, all of us will be treated as sinners and will be punished in accordance with the nature of our sins.

Being in such a sorrowful plight, society must shoulder the burden of children of mixed unions. Accordingly, reformers living in Africa have two courses open to them : one which seeks the help of

courts and another which is independent of such help. They have a right to adopt both. The second course consists in a reformer seeking the help of other like-minded citizens and, without raising disputes about religion, establishing an institution to look after such progeny. If the fathers of the children desire to take charge of them and bring them up in their own faiths and if they are ready to pay the institution the expenses incurred on the children up to the day of their removal, the children should be handed over to them. Whenever the parents can be contacted, they should be requested to pay for the maintenance of the children and, if they refuse to pay though they have the means with which to pay, due legal steps should be taken against them. Side by side with this, efforts should also be made to bring about moral reform. If anyone who lives with a Negro woman is married and has a wife living in India, he should be persuaded to call her to Africa. But the friend who has written the letter says :

[1]Our countrymen do not wish to start any such institution. In my view, 75 per cent of the money earned in this land comes from immoral sources and, therefore, it is not spent on worthy causes. It is wasted in drinking or paying doctors' bills or Government taxes, or in all three ways.

Even if this is a true picture of the state of affairs, I advise this friend to work patiently and quietly.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-8-1927

455. WHO MAY TAKE 'DIKSHA'[2]

In the Jawra State there is a married woman of the Oswal community named Gulabbai. She has got a pamphlet printed in Hindi and has distributed copies of it to people. It seems from it that her husband, who is still young, has left his house with the intention of taking *diksha*, and written as follows to his sixteen-year-old wife :

The desire to take *diksha* has grown upon me during the past two years or so. I have been trying my best to obtain the permission of family members. Even after coming here, I wrote five or six letters, but I have not received the permission. Now I have decided to take *diksha* on my own responsibility.

This young man has a mother who is sixty years of age. In reply

[1] Initiation; vow of asceticism

to my request for more particulars, the gentleman who sent me this pamphlet has given the following information. I translate the letter, which is in Hindi, into Gujarati :

Gulabbai has had ordinary education. She can read and write Hindi. A friend drafted for her the pamphlet which expresses her feelings as she described them to him, and she has got it printed. She herself went to the press, accompanied by her brother, and got it printed. The husband can read and write Hindi fairly well. Financially the family's condition is difficult. No one has given him *diksha* so far.

I hope that no one will give *diksha* to this young man, and also that he himself will realize his duty. A Buddha or a Shankaracharya may take *diksha* at a young age, and his action will be admired by the people. If, however, every young man decides to follow the example of these great men, instead of shedding lustre on dharma and themselves they will disgrace both. When people take *diksha* in these days, we see nothing but cowardice in their action, and this is why even sadhus, instead of being men of light and power, are a majority of them weak and ignorant like us. Taking *diksha* is an act of courage, and it is the result either of very holy influences on a person in his or her previous life or wisdom born of experience in this life. A man who decides to take *diksha* without thinking of what will happen to his old mother and young wife should be so disinterested towards the world that the people round him cannot but see and understand his detachment. It does not seem that this young man who desires to take *diksha* is equipped for it in any such manner.

However, young men who feel very eager to take *diksha*, why should they not expand the meaning of the term *diksha*? In these times, we see few people who observe even the householder's dharma properly. It requires no small measure of courage to live, while being a householder, as if one had taken *diksha*. The real test lies in living so. I know many who have taken *diksha*; they frankly admit that they have not overcome sloth nor subdued the five senses. By taking *diksha*, these people have only acquired better means of meeting their needs of food and clothing. To live with one's family in poverty and meet its needs contentedly and preserving one's purity, following truth, looking upon all women other than one's wife as either a mother or a sister, to be moderate even in enjoying conjugal pleasure, to study scriptures and other holy books and to serve the country to

the best of one's ability—this is *diksha* of no mean order. *Diksha* means self-dedication. This is not achieved through outward show; it is a state of the mind and, though certain outward modes of living may be necessary to express it, they are valued only if they are true signs of inward purity and detachment. Without these, such outward modes are mere forms without life in them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-8-1927

456. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

BANGALORE,
August 28, 1927

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have no time today to write myself. I am dictating this letter while I am having my meal. After I sent the cable to you, I have not missed a single mail. Mr. Andrews is here. I shall write more by the next mail.

Sushila's health must improve.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4738

457. SPEECH TO VOLUNTEERS, BANGALORE [1]

August 28, 1927

The prayer over, each came one by one and received at Gandhiji's hands a copy of the *Bhagavad Gita* with his autograph. . . . There was considerable tremor in Gangadharrao's voice as he interpreted the blessings sentence by sentence in Kannada.

It is not by accident that things happen in this world. Why should we have met at this particular hour [4 a.m.], and on this particular day, and why should the *Gita* of all other books have been selected to be presented to you? Why, too, should we have read the third chapter of the *Gita* on this occasion? It was not for you that we selected this chapter; today was the day on which we read the third chapter. But some agency conspired to combine all these things, and

[1] From Mahadev Desai's article, "The Leave-taking"

we will see that it has been all in the fitness of things. A true servant gets up before sunrise, performs his ablutions and starts the day with prayer. Take it that your life of service begins from this auspicious hour. The exclusive devotion that you bestowed on me was only an occasion for the larger life of service that you are entering today. And the *Bhagavad Gita* provides you with a Code of Conduct. Whenever you are in trouble, doubt, depression or despair, you will trun to the Code and the Compendium. And what can be a better inspiration for you than Chapter III that we read this morning? It lays down that God created man, and at the same time imposed on him the duty of *yajna* or sacrifice. Both these words are derived from roots meaning that which purifies, and the Lord also said that "by sacrifice shall you propagate your kind". Sacrifice thus means service, and the *Gita* says that he who works only for himself is a thief. "Sacrifice ye for the gods, and pleased they will give you the reward of your sacrifice", says the *Gita*. To proceed a little further, sacrifice means laying down one's life so that others may live. Let us suffer, so that others may be happy and the highest service and the highest love is wherein man lays down his life for his fellowmen. That highest love is thus ahimsa which is the highest service. There is an eternal struggle between life and death, but the sum-total of life and death does not mean extinction but life. For life persists in spite of death. We have an ocular demonstration, positive proof of the unquestioned sovereignty of ahimsa, and this triumph of ahimsa is possible through sacrifice. There is thus no higher law than the law of *yajna*, the law of service, which is the law for the volunteer. Even for those whom you love most, even for me, you may not hate anyone else. If you do , it will not be love or service, but infatuation. If you have served me out of infatuation, this service will not be of avail. But I know you have not done so. You did not know me except by hearsay. You had never seen me, and you have during these four months never even come near me to receive a word of thanks from me. Yours was genuine selfless service. And let this service be to you an incentive to serve the cause I have been serving—the cause of *Daridranarayana*. And as I read in today's chapter a clear indication that the spinning-wheel affords us in India the highest instrument of universal service, I have placed the spinning-wheel before the country, and whenever your interest in the wheel flags you will turn to the *Gita* and replenish your faith. I know none of you, but I know full well the service you have rendered. It is not for me to reward you for it, it is beyond my power, and it is well

that it is so. God alone can give the reward, and it is His covenant that He always rewards service truly and selflessly rendered.

Young India, 8-9-1927

458. SPEECH AT OPENING OF GYMNASIUM, BANGALORE

August 28, 1927

FRIENDS,

I feel grateful for the opportunity you have given me for performing this auspicious ceremony of opening your gymnasium[1]. I am also thankful to the donor of the gift to you. He has chosen the right expression to his desire of keeping alive the memory of his son by giving you this gymnasium. That only shows he is anxious that the youth of the country should become strong and healthy. I know that in a land where engineers like Sir M. Vishveshvarayya had come forth to serve the motherland there would be engineers like Mr. Venkatasubba Rao to come forward to build this gymnasium. You know very well that just as the intellect requires exercise and development the body also requires exercise. But only a few have realized this and many giant intellects go about the country in enfeebled bodies. It does not appear to me that this is the right way of education. It is not right that they should neglect their bodies. It gives me much pleasure that you are alive to this necessity of affording your young men physical exercise. I have known your young men serving in the cause of khadi and I am glad they know of the importance of physical exercise. I am also gald that as you are trying to exercise your intellect outside your schools, you would be trying to give your bodies sufficient exercise in service outside your gymnasium. I hope that every one of you educationalists in your home would pay particular attention to this. I hope also that you would devote attention to physical exercise for your girls. Lastly I should like to remind you that walking daily in the morning hours is one of the good exercises you might adopt.

Before I declare the gymnasium open I should like to remind you also of the necessity of developing your spiritual side as you are going to develop your physical bodies. You know that in this gymnasium you are going to perform your physical exercises where Sri Hanuman is presiding and that under his direction yor are going

[1] Shri Krishnaswami Vyayama Shala at National High School

to develop your bodies. But the bodily strength of Sri Hanuman is only a second thing. The first is his spiritual strength, the great strength that he possesses on account of his *brahmacharya*. I hope you will remember this great spiritual strength that comes from *brahmacharya*. Have that *vrata* and may God bless you to develop into strong spiritual and physical sons and daughters of your motherland.

The Hindu, 29-8-1927

459. SPEECH AT TEXTILE LABOUR UNION [1],BANGALORE

August 28, 1927

FRIENDS,

You have given me addresses and a purse and I am thankful. I know of your difficulties, particularly in meeting here today and I am sorry that many of your Union members could not be present. But I know also that though many of you could not be present you have told them all of my work and the purpose for which I am in your midst. You have said in your address that you have given up drinking. That means you have realized the importance of your lives, that you have recognized the value of your relationship with your family, your country and your duty. In expressing my gratification at this I must ask you to leave the other evil habits like gambling, etc. You can do so only if you utilize the time in your improvement, and in educating yourselves. For, you must realize your duties and your rights as mill-workers and you can do so only by educating yourselves. Do not forget this as you will not forget your future or your ambitions, as labourers among your employers. For this you must cultivate good habits. You must rise early and pray to God for strength. You must know that this blessing is necessary and this could not be had by evil habits. You have given me a purse and it means to me that you realize there are many many poorer brethren than you. If so I only ask you to help these poor brothers and sisters of yours, to take the cloth spun and woven by them. If you wear khadi you will be really helping them. You could help them still more if you spin yourselves and make your relatives at home spin more. I can tell you that the workers in our place, Ahmedabad, are doing this and are helping in this great task. You can also understand that in the days of your strikes you

[1] Of Binny Mills

cannot do better than spin and earn your living. This is an important thing and I ask you to remember this. Before I take leave of you, workmen, I have one word to tell you. It is usually said that morals among workers are not very high or strict. I want every one of you to realize and hold every woman other than your wives as your own mothers and sisters. You must be morally very strong for therein lies your destiny. I hope you will not forget this. May God bless you with wisdom and strength.

The Hindu, 29-8-1927

460. SPEECH TO ADI KARNATAKAS, BANGALORE [1]

August 28, 1927

Soon after the function at the Labour Union was over, Mahatmaji and party motored to the *Adi Karnataka* Colony on the New Mysore Road. Many hundreds of *Adi Karnatakas* has assembled to receive Mahatmaji, many of them being women. They entertained the distinguished visitors with a few simple songs after which Mahatmaji said :

"ADI KARNATAKA" FRIENDS,

I am pleased to see you all today and I want to tell you two things. You should not eat flesh and you should not kill cows. This is against your dharma, the Hindu dharma and you are all Hindus. If you tell me you have got to carry on your trade in leather, then I ask you to do that using leather of only dead animals. Do not drink and commit sins. Wear khaddar and save your poor sisters and brothers. Do not forget this.

The Hindu, 29-8-1927

461. SPEECH AT CITIZENS' MEETING, BANGALORE

August 28, 1927

FRIENDS,

I am unable to raise my voice and therefore I request you to keep silent. For the last five months I have been staying here recouping my health but I am still not able to raise my voice sufficiently high. Friends, you have given me several addresses this evening and I thank you all and I thank you for the help you have all

[1] At Lal Bagh

given me. I can never forget your manifold kindness and I pray God to bless you all. Friends, you know after all I am a servant and I have to say very little. What I have to say to you this evening I have written it down for you to know. Of course it is in English, but let me tell you that using this medium of communication is not a thing to be proud of. I would rather you all knew Hindi, and that I had written it in Hindi, but I do not know when that time is going to come to us.

From His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore and his officials down to the people at the lowest rung of the ladder you have by the wonderful and unmerited affection bestowed upon me so closely bound me to you that to say thank you for the addresses and the purse that you have given me today seems to be a cold, almost insulting, formality. Though to the great benefit of my health I have stayed in your midst for over four months, your affection makes it difficult for me to be reconciled to the impending separation from you. The only return that is within my power to make to the Maharaja Saheb and you, his people, for the kind hospitality extended to me when I was so much in need of it is to make you co-sharers of my innermost thoughts about the well-being of this beautiful State.

It has done my soul good to watch the wonderful progress you have made in many directions. I have seen your educational institutions in Bangalore as well as in many other places that I was privileged to visit. I have seen the institutes specially designed for *Adi Karnatakas*. I have understood somewhat the workings of your Municipal administration. I saw with wonder and admiration Krishnarajasagar and the Bhadravati Iron Works, the two great monuments of Sir M. Vishveshvarayya's zeal and skill. (Cheers) I saw by deputy, for want of time, also Sivasamudram. These great undertakings have an undoubted place in your march towards economic progress. Wherever I have gone I have noticed cordial relations between the officials and the people. You have no Hindu-Muslim quarrels. You are unaffected by the misdoings in the North. I tender His Highness the Maharaja and you my hearty congratulations upon all these good things and many others that I could relate. And I consider it to have been my good fortune that I happened to be in this fair land at the time of the celebration of the Silver Jubilee of the beneficent rule of the Maharaja to share your rejoicings and to witness the manifestation of genuine regard shown by the people for His Highness.

But great though this progress is, it would be wrong to be satis-

fied with it. It seems to me to be confined to the middle class and not to take enough note of the peasantry, the backbone of Mysore as it is of the rest of India. The purses given to me everywhere for khadi demonstrate the faith of the citizens of Mysore in the message of the spinning-wheel and khadi. My wanderings in the different parts of Mysore have convinced me that it has a big future if the State and the people work out the spinning-wheel in a scientific spirit. I assure you, it requires a detailed organization and expert knowledge no less than the building and working of the great undertakings like the Bhadravati Iron Works; the difference is only that of degree. And even as the latter must fall to pieces if they do not receive skilled and vigilant attention, so must the spinning movement fall to pieces if it is not backed by expert knowledge and ceaseless effort. Do not let this great movement die for want of skilled and careful nursing. Hand-spinning raises the income of the peasantry by at least 20 per cent with an outlay which would be considered ridiculous compared to what has been required for some of the great enterprises, which are naturally the pride of Mysore. If you universalize the spinning-wheel, the benefit filtrates at a bound down to the poorest peasants. It creates an indissoluble bond between them and you, and it gives an honourable occupation to the peasantry during their leisure time which is estimated to be at least four months during the year. And it is a matter of great joy to me to find that the Department of Industries and the Co-operative Department are putting forth their effort in this direction. For, there is no industry greater than this and no co-operative effort complete without the organization of the spinning-wheel and all it means. And every one of you can extend your co-operation to the villagers if you will but use khadi for your clothing material.

But the spinning-wheel though it is the centre of rural prosperity is *not all*. If our cattle become an economic drag upon us, we cannot live. I do not know whether you have all noted the noble appeal made by His Highness the Maharaja in his reply to the jubilee address on behalf of the dumb creation. Let me reproduce the beautiful words :

> I pray that a similar spirit (of brotherhood) may extend itself to the dumb creation and that we may see animals, and especially those we hold sacred, treated with ever increasing consideration for feelings which they cannot express.

I read in this passage a delicately expressed wish that His

Highness's Mussalman, Christian and *Adi Karnataka* subjects should voluntarily protect the cow and her progeny from destruction. But in my humble opinion this question of cattle protection is not to be solved without hard thinking and harder labour. I feel convinced that it is possible to make cow-slaughter an economically unsound proposition. Today it is undoubtedly an economically sound proposition. This is an evil which no private agency can fully cope with. It is pre-eminently a matter for the State. It requires education of the people, in cattle-breeding, dairying and selection of breeding bulls. In my humble opinion, it is the duty of the State to protect the cattle-wealth of the country by a firm and enlightened treatment of the whole subject. I hold it to be one of the primary concerns of a State to see that its children and its people are provided with wholesome, cheap milk. I entirely associate myself with the remark made by Blatchford that the price and quality of milk should be standardized as much as are those of postage stamps. I do not suppose that many of you know what happens to the hide of dead cattle of Mysore. If you study the question as I have done, you will have many a painful revelation. Is it not a matter for shame that our foot-wear should be made of slaughtered hide and our dead-cattle hide should be exported from India to the tune, as I am told, of nine crores per year? Here there is work for an army of trained chemists to give the art of tanning its proper and legitimate status to the profit of themselves and the country. Again, only the State can deal with this very important branch of the cattle question.

But I must hurry forward to the next point to which I want to draw your attention. And here too I fall back upon the Maharaja's utterance. Here are his words :

> I pray that we may all be assisted in years to come to work together in a spirit of brotherhood for the same good end, so that with efficient administration, increased facilities for agriculture, industry and commerce, and equal opportunities for all, we may devote our common energies to raising Mysore to a level with the foremost countries of the world. It is my earnest desire that this spirit of brotherhood should be extended to the continuous improvement of the conditions of those who are less fortunate than ourselves, remembering that all communities alike are members of my people and children of our country.

The State cannot enforce brotherhood if the people don't believe in it. I was pained, as was the revered Pandit Madan Mohan

Malaviyaji, to learn that there were in this State erudite Sanskrit Pundits who will not teach the Vedas to *Adi Karnatakas* and who uphold the doctrine of inherent untouchability. If I could be convinced that untouchability, as we believe it today, is an integral part of Hinduism, I should not think twice before renouncing Hinduism. But I venture to state before my Hindu bretheren that though I have endeavoured, in my humble way, to understand Hinduism and live up to the letter and the spirit of it, I have found no warrant in it for the curse of untouchability. We sin before God and man to consider a single human being as untouchable because he is born under particular surroundings.

Closely allied with the question of untouchability is that of drink. The curse of drink could be driven out of this fair land if only the so-called higher classes would brother the so-called low classes. But here again, I know to my cost, having worked in the cause of prohibition for years, that without State aid much is not possible. Ignorant poor people will drink if drink is made accessible to them. If there is any spot on earth where total prohibition is easy of accomplishment, it is India, for the simple reason that the drink habit, thank God, has not yet acquired any respectability. It is still considered to be a degrading habit. I have met in my tours thousands of *Adi Karnatakas*. I met a party of Lambanis, I put them straight questions. There was not one hand raised in defence of drink, and the vast majority have undertaken to abjure both beef and drink. May God give them strength to keep their promise. But I urge you and the State to help them. Difficulties there are in the way, but man is made to face, battle with and conquer them.

Lastly, let me plead for child widows and child wives. They are also unhappily for us and to our shame made part of dumb creation. Our enlightenment or education will be counted as dust if this infamy is not removed wherever it may exist. Here is work for your Civic and Social Progress Association.

You will not consider me to be ungrateful for having invited your attention to what I think should be done in order to make Mysore a real model State so as to entitle it to be called *Ramarajya.* It is not as if the shortcomings to which I have drawn attention do not exist in other parts of India. Alas, they do exist and some of them perhaps in an intenser form than here. But it has been my privilege to notice greater progress in Mysore than elsewhere in many things, and

it has therefore created a desire for still greater.

More is expected of those who give much. I have found so much good in this State that I almost fancy that if you and the Maharaja together will it, you can make this State *Ramarajya*.

The Hindu, 29-8-1927

462. FAREWELL SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, BANGALORE[1]

August 28, 1927

After the meeting[2] was the prayer which had become an institution during our stay at Kumara Park. The last day's meeting was a treasurable experience for the presence of Mr. Andrews, and the Bjerrums who sang "When I survey the wondrous Cross", which Gandhiji said transported him to Pretoria where he heard the wonderful hymn sung for the first time, and also for the parting talk that Gandhiji gave to the congregation. "How many of you have been coming here regularly?" asked Gandhiji, and most of them raised their hands.

I am glad you have been coming. For me it has been both a joy, and a privilege, inasmuch as I have felt its elevating influence. I ask you to keep it up. You may not know the verses, you may not know Sanskrit and the hymns, but Ramanama is there for all, the heritage handed down from ages. And I tell you why I ask you to continue this congregational prayer. Man is both an individual and a social being. As an individual he may have his prayer during all the the waking hours, but as a member of society he has to join in the congregational prayer. I for one may tell you that when I am alone I do have my prayer, but I do feel very lonely without a congregation to share the prayer with me. I knew and even now know very few of you, but the fact that I had the evening prayers with you was enough for me. Among the many memories that will abide in my heart after I leave Bangalore, not the least will be the prayer meetings. But I shall have my congregation at the next place I reach, and forget the wrench. For one who accepts the brotherhood of man and fatherhood of God should find a congregation wherever he goes, and he may not hug or nurse the feeling of parting or separation. Please therefore keep up the prayer. You can form your own congregation in your own places, and as a last resource one's family can become one's congregation

[1] From Mahadev Desai's article, "The Leave-taking"
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

well enough. Do meet every evening at this hour, learn a few hymns, learn the *Gita*, do the best and the most you can for the purpose of self-purification.

Young India, 8-9-1927

463. TELEGRAM TO NON-BRAHMIN CONFERENCE [1]

BANGALORE,
[On or before *August 29, 1927*]

JUST READ LETTER. NON-BRAHMINS SHOULD CERTAINLY JOIN THE CONGRESS IN A SPIRIT OF SERVICE AND GOODWILL.

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-8-1927

464. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

August 29, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letters.

I read your message to Andrews. And we had a hearty laugh over his not understanding the word ã ãæ. To him it meant a Bengali sweet.

You will certainly have the three days all to yourself when you return to Sabarmati and the other times you want. You will confer with Maganlal and arrange your hours as may seem best. Only you must go slow and leave margin between periods especially in the initial stages.

You must have got my dictated letter[2] about segregation. Please do not give me up but tackle me again and again till you fully understand my meaning. And then too do not as I like but as you like.

Are you talking to Krishnadas in Hindi? I have not told you that your Hindi has been comparatively free from errors. The few I detect, I get no time to correct.

Andrews leaves with me tomorrow but he goes to Madras

[1] Released by the Associated Press of India under the date-line "Bombay, August 29". The Secretary of the Special Non-Brahmin Provincial Conference sent on the 29th the following reply : "Thankful for your advice. We join Congress to Non-Brahminize and thus democratize it."

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 26-8-1927.

dropping me at Vellore. I wonder if you ever got your beautiful map back!

With love,

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 5265. Courtesy : Mirabehn

465. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day, Bhadarwa Sud 2 [*August 29, 1927*][1]

SISTERS,

I have your letter drafted by Ramaniklalbhai.

You have not caught my point. There were several things implied in my letter. It is always so in letters. If they were all made explicit, this is what it would come to :

When we are engaged in a particular task, we should not think of other fields of service so long as they are not urgent. If we do, it must be regarded as *moha*[2]. Here I am doing a necessary piece of service as well as a sick man can do it. If at such a time I thought of Gujarat flood relief or of the Ashram problems and how I would solve them if I were there, it would be *moha*. If you were in such a condition, it would be true of you too. There is no question of one's being great or small. You are engaged there in doing service in your own way. Suppose I fall ill, very ill, or suppose there were floods here, as heavy as those in Gujarat, it would be madness for you to entertain a needless thought (of running down here), even though you are not considered as wise as I. That would not mean that you would have no feeling or sympathy for me or for the sufferers in the Madras floods. Sympathy there will be and must be, in which your feeling for others finds expression. But if you become restless about it, it is *moha*, and should be avoided. It is of course a different question to decide when it becomes one's dharma to rush to the help of another at the sacrifice of one's own duty. To do flood relief work, most of the members left the Ashram. That was clearly our duty. And yet, for those who could not go, there was no need to feel restless. Ask me if you still do not understand what I say.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3666

[1] The year is inferred from the reference to Gujarat floods.

[2] Infatuation

466. INTERVIEW TO THE ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

BANGALORE,
August 29, 1927[1]

Mahatma Gandhi, interviewed, by an Associated Press representative regarding the Viceroy's proposal to convene a conference, said that he was not over-enthusiastic about the official initiative in solving the Hindu-Muslim question but welcomed co-operation from any quarter in this matter.

The Tribune, 31-8-1927

467. LETTER TO SUMATI MORARJI

Bhadarva Sud 3 [*Tuesday August 30, 1927*][2]

CHI. SUMATI,

I am very happy to learn that you are ordering the *Navajivan* specially for yourself and that you have taken down the spinning-wheel from the loft and have started plying it. There is no need to tell you that it is very advantageous to do regularly whatever we do. The spinning-wheel may not arouse any interest. But if you ply it with the knowledge that it is for the sake of the poor,then it is bound to interest you. How can anyone who has pity in his heart help being interested in it?

Read *Navajivan* carefully. Do write to me if you have any doubts or questions.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: G. N. 1347

[1] Released from Bangalore on this date, which was Monday

[2] From the contents, it appears that this letter was written earlier than the letter of May 13, 1928 to Shantikumar Morarji, addressee's husband. *Bhadarva Sud* 3 in that year fell on Monday and corresponded to September 17, which cannot be accepted for the reason given above. In the year 1927 it fell on a Tuesday and corresponded to this date.

468. SPEECH AT VOORHEE'S COLLEGE, VELLORE [1]

August 30, 1927[2]

MR. PRINCIPAL, STUDENTS AND FRIENDS,[3]

At the outset I would like to express my very deep sorrow over the domestic affliction[4] that has befallen your Principal. I heard of it as soon as I reached here. I appreciate, Mr. Principal, the very courteous consideration that you have shown by not merely allowing this function to take place under your roof but also, in spite of your overwhelming grief, gracing this function by your presence and presiding at it. I ask you to regard me as a partner in your grief.

I thank all the students and others for the address that has been presented to me this afternoon and the purse for the Khadi Fund. This demonstration of your personal affection for me and your identification with the poorest of the land does not surprise me now, because it has become a common feature wherever I go throughout the length and breadth of our beautiful country. It has been a matter of the greatest joy to me and consolation in the face of many difficulties to find that the student world throughout India has a warm corner for me in their heart. The students have lightened my burden to a very great extent. But I cannot suppress from me the feeling that in spite of this personal affection that the students have shown to me everywhere and even identification with the poorest of the land, the students have yet to cover a vast amount of ground. For, you are the hope of the future. You will be called upon, when you are discharged from your colleges and schools, to enter upon public life to lead the poor people of this country. I would, therefore, like you, students, to have a sense of your responsibility and show it in a much more tangible manner. It is a remarkable fact and a regrettable fact that in the case of the vast majority of students, whilst they entertain noble impulses during their student days, they disappear when they finish their studies. The vast majority of them look out for loaves and fishes. Surely, there is something wrong in this. There is one reason which is obvious. Every educationist, everyone who has had anything to do

[1] This appeared under the title"What Students Can Do?" and with the introductory words : "The following is a verbatim report of Gandhiji's address to the students of Vellore."

[2] From *The Hindu*, 2-9-1927

[3] *ibid.*

[4] De Boer, the Principal of Voorhee's College, had lost his child.

with the students has realized that our educational system is faulty. It does not correspond to the requirements of the country, certainly not to the requirements of pauper India. There is no correspondence between the education that is given and the home life and the village life. But that is I fear a larger question than you and I can deal with in a meeting of this character.

Taking things as they are, we have to consider what is possible for the students to do and what more can we do in order to serve the country. The answer that has come to me and to many, who are eager to see that the student world gives a good account of itself, is that the students have to search within and look after their personal character. Purity of personal life is the one indispensable condition for building a sound education. And my meetings with thousands of students and the correspondence which I continuously have with the students in which they pour out their innermost feelings and take me into their confidence show me quite clearly that there is much left to be desired. I am sure that all of you understand thoroughly what I mean. In our languages, there is a beautiful word, equivalent for the word student, that is, *brahmachari*. *Vidyarthi* is a coined word and a poor equivalent for *brahmachari*. And I hope you know what the word *brahmachari* means. It means searcher after God, one who conducts himself so as to bring himself nearest to God in the least possible time. And all the great religions of the world, however much they may differ, are absolutely one on this fundamental thing that no man or woman with an impure heart can possibly appear before the Great White Throne. All our learning or recitation of the Vedas, correct knowledge of Sanskrit, Latin, Greek and what not will avail us nothing if they do not enable us to cultivate absolute purity of heart. The end of all knowledge must be building up of character.

An English friend in Shimoga, whom I did not know before, came up to me and asked me why it was, if India was really a spiritually advanced country, he did not observe in the students a real yearning after knowledge of God, why was it that the students, many of them, did not even know what the *Bhagavad Gita* was[1]. I gave what appeared to me an honest explanation and excuse for this discovery of his. But I do not propose to give that explanation to you nor seek to excuse this very great and grave defect. The very first and earnest request that I would make to the students before me here is that each

[1] *Vide* "Students and the *Gita*", 25-8-1927.

one of you should search within and wherever you find that my remarks are justified you will begin to reform and rebuild yourself, and those of you who are Hindus, and the vast majority are Hindus I know, will endeavour to understand the very simple, beautiful, and to me soulful message of the *Gita*. The experience, and I think I can say the experience without a single exception, of those who have really carried on this search after truth to render their hearts pure is that it is an utterly impossible effort, unless it is accompanied by a heart prayer to the Almighty. Whatever, therefore, we do, do not lose faith in God. I cannot reason out the thing for you, because really speaking, it is a fact which transcends reason. But I want you to cultivate a spirit of real humility and not summarily reject the experiences of so many teachers, *rishis* and others of the world and not regard them as so many superstitious men. And if you will but do this, all the rest that I want to say will be as clear as crystal to you. This will be to me the test of your sincerity of profession. If you have real faith in God, you cannot but feel for the humblest of His creation. And whether it is the spinning-wheel and khadi, or untouchability, total prohibition, or social reform in connection with child widows and child wives and many other similar things, you will find that all these activities are derived from the same source. I was therefore glad to find that you sympathize with and approve of the spinning movement, the struggle against untouchability and other things with which I am identified. I accept your assurance that henceforth you will do better in regard to khadi.

It is really the easiest thing in the world for you to make your choice once for all and say to yourself that you shall use henceforth nothing but khadi since it puts a few coppers into the pockets of those who need them most. In this one institution alone, I understand, you are more than 1,400. Just think what the 1,400 by giving only half an hour to spinning can add materially to the wealth of the country. Think also what 1,400 can do on behalf of the so-called untouchables, and if all the 1,400 young men were to make a solemn resolve, and they can do so, that they are not going to have anything whatsoever to do with child wives, imagine what a great reform you will make in society around you. If the 1,400 amongst you, or a respectable number even, devote your leisure hours or part of your Sundays to going amidst those who are given to drink and in the kindliest manner possible steal into their hearts, imagine what service you will render to them and to the country. All these things you can do in spite of the

existing faulty education. Nor do you require much effort for doing these things except that you have got to change your heart, and to use a current expression in the political world, alter the "angle of vision".

And I want you to turn this occasion to advantage, and you will do so if only you will consider the solemn circumstance under which we have met this evening and by reference to which I started my address. A mere man of the world would be justified, and he will be justified by the world, if he excused himself from attending a function of this character on account of domestic affliction. Surely there is something noble and majestic when a man instead of brooding over such sorrows, transmutes them into service for God and humanity. Every such act enables us to understand the essential oneness of humanity. May God enable you to understand the words that I have spoken to you. I thank you once more for your address and the purse and all that you have said.

Young India, 8-9-1927

469. LETTER TO T. R. MAHADEVA IYER

CAMP VELLORE,
August 31, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I can only repeat what I have said, that in my opinion it is better for you to give up possession. You will be morally in the right in giving up possession right, if those who feel are of your opinion are duly informed before you give up possession. Not to give notice and remain in possession is, in my opinion, indefensible. So far as I have been able to understand the intentions of the Committee, they are averse to going to arbitration on matters about which they have no moral qualms and no legal difficulty.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 12941

470. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, VELLORE[1]

August 31, 1927

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I thank you for the addresses and the purse containing Rs. 2,001 and odd. It is really with Vellore that the khadi tour in Tamil Nadu commences. Last week I went to Krishnagiri[2] and Hosur which are also in the Tamil province; but that may pass as part of the Mysore programme. Coming to Vellore, I am reminded of my first visit to this place accompanied by Maulana Shaukat Ali. And when I cast back my memory upon those times and now look at this assembly today, I cannot help feeling sad—sad not because you have in any way misbehaved yourselves but because of what is going on in the North. As a matter of fact my sadness is considerably reduced when I, on enquiry, discover that in your midst at any rate you have no such quarrels as are going on there, to distrub the even tenor of your life. My irrepressible optimism is strengthened by living in your midst and discovering that you stand untouched and unruffled by the misdoings of our countrymen in the North. For my hope will last as long as my faith in God lasts and even though Hindus and Mussalmans all over India were to fly at one another's throats, which God forbid, I hope that I shall still have the same strength that I possess today to declare in my own person that the day is coming when Hindus and Mussalmans will stand shoulder to shoulder, fight for their country's freedom and remain united for ever as brothers. I want you people of Vellore, men and women, to share that faith with me. I have no doubt that posterity will laugh at our barbarity and ask themselves how foolish and how mad we must have been that in the name God we should cut each other to pieces. But as you know I hold of equal importance with Hindu-Muslim unity the question of khaddar and the spinning-wheel. To spin for the sake of *Daridranarayana* and to use nothing but khadi for the same reason is as much an act of pleasing God as it is that Hindus and Mussalmans should remain united together. Just as Hindu-Muslim unity binds the two together so does the thread that is spun on the spinning-wheel bind the millions of paupers of India to us, the middle class. At the present moment it is true that we do not cut their throats but it is equally true that in a sense

[1] At Gandhi Maidan. C. Rajagopalachari translated the speech into Tamil.
[2] *Vide* "Speech at Krishnagiri", 24-8-1927.

we suck from the villagers their very life-blood. We are both directly and indirectly responsible for sucking the life-blood from the villagers. It is we the middle class people who are responsible for the condition of perpetual starvation to which the villagers have been reduced today. As traders we are directly responsible for that condition because instead of trading in the cloth manufactured by their sacred hands we worshipped Moloch, soiled our fingers with foreign goods and began to sell foreign cloth. I regard this as an act of treachery against those starving voiceless millions. And the rest of the middle classes are indirectly responsible for that starvation because they did not resist their temptation of buying the flimsy cloth that our neighbours offered to them in lieu of our own sacred cloth. And your purse I regard as but a slight token of your desire for repentance for the sins that we have committed. But I assure you that the penance will not be complete till all the traders have retraced their steps, given up trading in foreign cloth and they as well as others have taken to khaddar, however coarse it may be, and however expensive it may be.Real repentance counts no sacrifice too much. And how I wish that while leaving this the first place of my tour in Tamil Nadu I could go with the confidence that you have got the same sense of sorrow and grief for our starving countrymen and women and have the same consciousness of our sins towards them that I have. My remarks are as much applicable to the sisters to my right as they are to the men in front of me and my left. You the women of Vellore will not deserve to be daughters of the same land that was hallowed by the sacred feet of Sita. We men and women of India take the sacred name of Sita as among the seven *satis* early in the morning. If we do not follow the simplicity and the purity of Sita, what right have we got to take her name? It should be just as natural to us to wear khaddar produced in our villages as it is, thank God, for us to cook our own food and eat it in preference to the richest dishes that may be cooked in hotels and offered free of charge.

I attach the same importance to the question of untouchability. We Hindus are staking our religion and our reputation so long as we continue to regard a single human being as untouchable by birth. As human beings they have as much right to enter our temples, to send their children to our schools and and to help themselves with the same water from the same tanks which we use. I hope that if there is in this audience anyone who still hugs the belief in untouchability, he or she will revise that belief and understand there is no warrant whatsoever

for the curse in Hinduism.

Of equal importance, or almost equal importance, is the question of drink. I said almost equal importance not because the question of temperance is by itself of less importance to the man who has got to give it up, but because it affects a smaller number of people than untouchability. Those of us who are not given to the habit of drinking should not be satisfied so long as there is a single neighbour who is prey to that evil. You should devise and adopt all the gentle means that may be at our disposal to wean our falling brethren from their bad habit. If I were you I would not be satisfied till there is total prohibition in the land. If I were you, I would make the position of the Minister intolerable so long as he does not take up this question seriously and in right earnest.

I must not take up more of your time now. We have some work before us. You have given me this beautiful casket. I have received those silver plates presented to me with the addresses of the District Board and Municipality. It is now known all over India that I have nowhere to keep such plates and caskets in and that by my vow I am debarred from owning any possession on this earth. I regard these articles as having been given to me in order to enable me to auction them in your presence and to get what more money I can for *Daridranarayana*. They will therefore be put before you for auction, and I hope that those of you who can afford it will try to outbid one another. But all may not have come with enough money to take part in the bidding. For them there is another course. I know that all men and women present at this meeting have not contributed to this purse. It is possible that some of you who have contributed have not given to the best of your ability. In order to give you an opportunity to give anything you may wish to, at this meeting, volunteers would presently go in your midst to make collections. I hope that those of you who can and believe in spinning and khaddar will not spare yourselves in giving. Sisters all over India are in the habit of giving their jewellery also. I want all those who can to give for the sake of *Daridranarayana*. A pie given with a willing heart is just as welcome as the gold mohur. I thank you once more for your gift and for your addresses.

The Hindu, 2-9-1927

471. IS IT MARRIAGE?

I give the following from a letter received by me while I was hardly able to attend to any correspondence, that is, during the first days of my recent illness. I have omitted the names of parties though the correspondent gives every detail.

> During this marriage season there has been a heart-breaking marriage ceremony at Sadashivgad, Karwar. The bride is about 12 years and comes from a very poor family from Goa. The bridegroom is 60 years old. His first wife died about three years ago, leaving two children behind her out of eight or nine. The bridegroom is the founder of an English school. Last year he tried to secure a bride of tender age, but owing to the agitation in his community, the transaction was abandoned. This year he succeeded by offering rupees two hundred to the parents of the bride. What is to be done in the matter? Men like—[1] who are social reformers of the place do not raise their little finger against this inhuman act.

There seems to me to be no reason to doubt the accuracy of the statement made in the letter from which I have given the foregoing condensation. I wish it were possible to say that this is only a rare instance. Instances of this character occur often enough to call for a drastic remedy. One remedy is undoubtedly to publish every such case and expose it and create a healthy strong public opinion against repetition of such crimes against womanhood. But local agitation whenever such immoral alliances are impending is no doubt the most effective. According to this correspondent, the first attempt on the part of this old progenitor of eight children was frustrated because of timely agitation. I wonder why such an agitation did not take place in the present instance. Surely many people in the locality must have known about the attempt to secure possession of a girl of tender age for the old widower. I wonder why agitation was not set on foot immediately to save the girl from a life of torture and misery. But in my opinion, if local public opinion can be mobilized it is not too late even now to help the girl wife. I gather from the correspondent's letter that the widower seems to have been a kind of a philanthropist at one time. May he not be persuaded to put the girl away from him at the Seva Sadan or some such institution for education, and then, when she is of full age, be given the choice either of living with him or regarding the marriage bond as a nullity? But whether in the present

[1] As in the source

moribund condition of society such a step is possible or not, there is no reason why young men of undoubted character should not form themselves into bands of mercy pledged by all just and legitimate means to prevent child marriage and to promote wherever possible remarriage of child widows. The two things appear to me to go hand in hand. These bands of mercy to be able to do effective work must localize their activity. They will find then that in the course of a few years, they would become an irresistible force. The majority of our towns have after all a very small population each, and it is not impossible to know when immoral bargains such as the correspondent has drawn attention to are contemplated, or to know the child widows of their respective towns. There is no doubt however that a great deal of tact and exemplary self-restraint will have to be exercised by these bands of mercy. The slightest impatience or violence on their part will cause revulsion against them and frustrate the very object they have in view.

Young India, 1-9-1927

472. LEST WE FORGET

There is some danger of the calamities of Orissa and Sind being forgotten in the midst of the universal attention that the Gujarat floods have attracted. Probably the distress is more felt in Sind than in Gujarat and the most felt in Orissa, for it is the least organized and the poorest of our provinces. Gujarat has produced an army of workers whose numbers are already proving embarrassing to Sjt. Vallabhbhai. After all everywhere it is the merchant class that is freest with its purse and most able to organize relief in times of distress. Let those Gujaratis, who are not wanted for work in Gujarat, or who can be spared, turn their attention to the places where help may be most needed. The distress of Gujarat must not blind the Gujaratis to the need of the other provinces. The present distress must be utilized to make us less provincial and more national. We must feel one with the least and the remotest of the thirty crores of God's creatures who inhabit this land.

Young India, 1-9-1927

473. TRUE 'SHRADDHA'

A friend sends from Rangoon rupees twenty-five as donation for the propaganda of the spinning-wheel and writes :

> My father died on the 18th April 1927 at Tanjore (South India) while I was there on a short leave. When I was confronted with the question of "Sixteenth Day Ceremony", a slavish, meaningless imitation of *shraddha*, I resolutely refused to abide by the desire of my relatives simply because I have no belief in it as it prevails today. I do not believe in a departed soul waiting in *Pitruloka* or some such other unseen places for water or rice balls. Nor can I see any reason to attach any importance to the rites performed by a mercenary priest and in a language which is Greek both to me and the officiating priest. In short the whole affair seems to be a hoax designed to be practised on the religious susceptibilities of the people. But I can believe in *shraddha* as a thing offered in piety and devotion with a charitable intention. From a commonsense point of view the main principle and the original purpose of this ceremony ought to be charity. As you say in *Young India* dated 24-2-1927, "only two classes of people are entitled to charity and none else—the Brahmin who possesses nothing and whose business it is to spread holy learning, and the cripple and the blind." Our great immortal sage, Thiruvalluvar has said : "A Brahmin is that sannyasi who has an overflowing love towards all living creatures." Because I could not conceive of a man who has a better claim than you and a more charitable purpose than that of the spinning-wheel, I have sent you this amount. There is also another way of commemorating the memory of one's own parents. The same sage Thiruvalluvar has again said : "The gratitude of a son to his father must consist in the son conducting himself in the world in such a way as to excite from the world the approbation that his father must have performed a great *tapasya to* beget this son." I may add that I have this ideal at my heart.

I have omitted from the letter several personal references. Though I have performed *shraddha* ceremonies myself in my youth,I have not been able to understand their religious usefulness. This letter is not the first of its kind I have received. But not being able to understand the hidden meaning, if any, of the practices which are almost universal in Hinduism, I have hitherto refrained from dealing with them in these pages. The rule that the correspondent has chosen has however appealed to me. We do very often meekly submit to many conventional ceremonies although we may have no faith in them, and although they may have no meaning for us. Submission to convention in trivial matters in which there is no danger of deceiving

others or oneself is often desirable and even necessary. But submission in matters of religion, especially where there is a positive repugnance from within and a danger of deceiving our neighbours and ourselves, cannot but be debasing. There are today many religious ceremonies, which, whatever meaning and importance they might have had in ages gone by, have neither importance nor meaning for the rising generation. There can be no doubt that it is necessary for this generation to strike out an original path by giving a new form and even meaning to many old ceremonies. The idea of keeping green and of respecting the memory of one's parents is not to be given up. But it is hardly necessary on that account to retain the old conventions and forms, which have lost their reality and therefore ceased to have any influence on us. I therefore commend the example of the correspondent to those who are anxious to do only that which is right, and free themselves from self-deception.

Young India, 1-9-1927

474. HOW TO KEEP HEALTH

The Polish Professor with whom the reader is now familiar writing on my illness says :

> As I have been reading in *Young India* about your illness and discussion with 'jailors', let me tell you of my own experience how to prevent such breakdowns. Within the last nine months—September to May—I have visited 40 towns all over Poland, and lectured for 100 days at the rate of 3-7 hours a day. At the age of 64, I feel as young as 40 years ago whenever I stand before the public. My rules are :
>
> 1. No *worry* whatever. There is an an Almighty God who takes care of all, and nothing happens without His permission. I am not His chief steward, only a very humble servant with a clearly defined task, and have to look at that task, that small part of universal becoming. If there is somewhere on earth an earthquake or a flood or a famine, no real harm can happen to immortal souls, nobody can suffer without some advantage to him designed by God, and everywhere God has His servants who help so far as He permits them. Therefore worry is weakness of faith, and my faith being infinite I cannot worry.
>
> 2. *Much sleep* in every moment when I am not at work, even for a few minutes many times a day. Before falling into sleep always praying : Lord Jesus enlighten me, give me strength and joy. With this prayer a clear image

of joy, light, strength flowing into me. Such a sleep is prayer, is intercourse with the Highest and refreshing. When I wake up from such a sleep, I know exactly what I have to do, and I do it gladly.

The professor adds a third rule which is about fasting and diet. As it is incomplete, I have asked for further information before sharing it with reader. But there is no doubt that the two rules above mentioned about absence of worry and necessity for sleep are golden rules. There is nothing that wastes the body like worry and one who has any faith in God should be ashamed to worry about anything whatsoever. It is a difficult rule no doubt for the simple reason, that faith in God with the majority of mankind is either an intellectual belief or a blind belief, a kind of superstitious fear of something indefinable. But to ensure absolute freedom from worry requires a living utter faith which is a plant of slow, almost unperceived, growth and requires to be constantly watered by tears that accompany genuine prayer. They are the tears of a lover who cannot brook a moment's separation from the loved one, or of the penitent who knows that it is some trace of impurity in him that keeps him away from the loved one.

The ability to sleep during odd moments seems to be a necessity in old age. Whilst the first rule is applicable to all, young and old, the rule about sleep is not to be copied by youngsters. It is the privilege only of babies and old people. And to induce such sweet innocent sleep, it is surely necessary to put oneself in tune with the Infinite at every step. This sleep is not to be mistaken for the sleep of the sluggard or the opium-eater. But it is 'Nature's sweet restorer', a tonic for a brain that gets easily fagged in old age.

Young India, 1-9-1927

475. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

GUDIATHAM,
September 1, 1927

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I enclose herewith Jamini Babu's letter which please destroy after perusal. It gave me great joy to find all the good coming out of Jamini Babu. I know you will handle him in the gentlest manner possible.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 1575

476. LETTER TO KAILASNATH KATJU

GUDIATHAM (SOUTH INDIA),
September 1, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

My weakness of body is my excuse for dictating this letter. But for that weakness I would have gladly written myself. I thank you for your letter and the first instalment of your contribution to khadi. Your letter is so good and is likely to influence others. If you have no objection, I would like to publish that part of it which relates to khadi. But please do not hesitate to refuse permission if you would on any account not like the publication of the letter, whether with or without your name.

As for the black alpaca *chapkan* concerned, give me an order and I can have for you one made of very fine black khadi. It looks as good as alpaca. You may not know that in Madras many advocates and *vakils* wear khaddar *chapkans* even when they do not use khadi for other articles of dress and as it so happens, the khaddar *chapkans*, the poor practitioners find to be suitable because of their comparative cheapness. In your case I may not think of cheapness at all. If you give the order, I am not going to secure for you the cheapest but the most expensive and the most elegant.

Now a word about personal spinning. I quite agree with you that love of khaddar need not include personal spinning. But love of the starving millions does, for two reasons : first, because, personal

spinning renews our daily bond with them. Secondly, by personally spinning each known member of society creates a spinning atmosphere which makes it easier for workers to induce the unwilling, because unbelieving, villagers to take to hand-spinning. I would like to add a third reason which I know you would not despise. Every yard of well-spun yarn adds to the wealth of the country, be the addition ever so infinitesimal. You know what the lawyers do so often whilst awaiting their turn in the law courts. They either play with their pencils or with their paper-tape or worse still open out their little pen-knives and fidget with the edges of the desks at which they are sitting. I wonder if I could induce you to take up the little *takli* which could be made of silver, gold or ivory if you like, and put in a delicte little cylinder. *Takli*-spinning is easily learnt. Will you take to it? It will be, I know, laughed at in the beginning; then it will cease to attract notice one way or the other and if you could go through the two stages and persist, it will be copied by others. I hope you do not resent my saying all this to you. You have given me an inch with hearty goodwill and you must not be surprised if I now ask for more.

Yes, indeed, I demanded great sacrifices from lawyers. But looking back to 1920 and '21, I feel that I asked for nothing very extrordinary and I feel that I had a right to demand the largest measure of sacrifice from those to whose profession I once belonged.

The little ones now consider themselves too big to sit in my lap. Please, however, tell them that whenever I meet them again, am going to make them pay for still remembering me.

I am passing your cheque for Rs. 100/- to the Treasurer of the All-India Spinners' Association.

Yours sincerely,

DR. KAILASNATH KATJU

9, EDMUNTON ROAD

ALLAHABAD

From a photostat : S.N. 13275

477. LETTER TO GULZAR MOHAMAD 'AQUIL'

VELLORE,
September 1, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 19th ultimo. I enclose herewith copy of the article in *Young India*. The exracts you have sent me do not in any shape or form do[1] your point : that is to say, they do not show that Justice Dilip Singh was in any way prejudiced against Mussalmans or that he otherwise gave a decision which he did not believe to be absolutely correct. That other judges differed from him as to the interpretation of the law is nothing new in Indian experience or in the experience of the world. So long as the world lasts, there will be honestly different interpretations of the same laws. Indeed, one extract that you have collected clearly bears out my own opinion that Justice Dilip Singh was wholly unprejudiced. I still adhere to the opinion that much of the agitation over *Rangila Rasul* was uncalled for, unfortunate, avoidable. But as I have already intimated to you[2], I do not desire, unless I feel compelled, to take part in the controversy.

From a microfilm : S.N. 12390

478. LETTER TO S. G. VAZE

VELLORE,
September 1, 1927

MY DEAR VAZE,

It is curious your letter enclosing copy of the *Servant of India* came to me the very day that I read your signed article and the reference myself. The cutting was given to me by Andrews. When I read that cutting I thought of writing to you to tell you that whenever you expect me to deal with any question you should write to me. Much as I should like to, I really do not get much time to read any papers or books except to see a local newspaper for a few minutes daily. I remain somewhat posted with current events only because friends correspond with me on them. Now about the subject-matter of your letter.

Before it came I had discussed the East African among other

[1] Evidently a slip for 'prove'
[2] In letter dated August 7

questions with Andrews. It needs very delicate handling. I do not consider myself to be as competent to pronounce an opinion on the East African situation as I do on the South African. I had been given to write views on the East African question also not because of my being well posted with a knowledge of all the problems and local conditions but a long course of very serious study of the South African question has given me, so I fancy, the capacity for coming to a right decision. My own opinion is that we would be better without and representation in the East African legislature. Any representation that we might have will be exploited by the predominant European element for the purpose of robbing the sons of the soil of their just rights. I would, therefore, resist communal representation. If I can, I would retain for the Indian settlers the franchise on the same rights as the Europeans. But that can only be, if an educational qualification is accepted by the Europeans which they will resist because, they always in the colonies want the principle of "one man, one vote" to be established. What I am anxious for and what I would fight unto death for is our immigration and unrestricted rights to own landed property unlike as in South Africa and Rhodesia. We were the pioneers in South Africa. Our peasants, so far as I know, have done no harm to the Africans. We were, therefore, in large numbers, solely dependent upon their goodwill. In all fairness, therefore, Europeans have to reconvince us that having got the might on their side they may ride roughshod over our rights may be too true [*sic*] but then I should not compromise by a hair's breadth on these two fundamental questions. At the present moment whilst my opinion is an . . .[1] state so far as the political part of the question is concerned, I do not feel inclined to write to say anything in public unless on it becomes absolutely necessary. I know and it grieves me to know that our people in East Africa are not acting in the correct manner and that their leaders there are not selfless.

Yours sincerely,

S. G. VAZE, ESQ.
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
POONA CITY

From a photostat : S.N. 13276

[1] The source has a blank here.

479. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

[*September 1, 1927*][1]

MY DEAR MOTI BABU,

Though I have thought of you [more times][2] than I can count, I have not been able to make time for writing to you as I had nothing in particular to say to you. But today, by accident I find before me the fourth number of the *Standard Bearer*. I have according to my wont looked at the advertisements. Of course you know my ideas about advertisements and in a serious journal devoted to religious research and drawing inspiration from you, I should like omission of all advertisements, but in any case if there should be any, they should be a selected assortment. I was, therefore, distressed to find an advertisement for spermatone. The description of the medicine is not at all inviting and I do not know [whether][3] you know that such advertisements are partly responsible for enervating our youths. There are others, too, which I dislike but I have called attention to the most glaring one. You will now do what you think proper. I hope that khadi work is being developed as you had expected and that you are keeping well and further that you have no trouble from the authorities. I seem to have got over the collapse, at least for the time being and I have now seriously embarked upon a nearly four months' tour in the South. What was done in Mysore I do not count as anything.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. MOTILAL ROY
PRAVARTAK SANGH
CHANDRANAGAR

From a photostat: G.N. 11033

[1] From the G.N. Register
[2] Illegible in the source
[3] *ibid.*

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM BASIL MATHEWS

WORLD SERVICE TO 'THE FRIENDS OF BOYS' UNDER THE GUIDANCE
OF THE WORLD'S COMMITTEE OF Y.M.C.A.

January 5, 1927

SIR,

To the boys of the world we addressed a general questionnaire in which we asked— "Who in your opinion is the greatest living man?" Trained educationists and leaders of youth in over fifty countries aided us in this worldwide inquiry into the mind of boys. The response of hundreds of boys from a large number of countries—Asiatic, European, American and African—showed that "they consider you the greatest man living".

We are publishing a magazine for leaders of boys—*The World's Youth*— which circulates in 59 countries. It would be of unmeasured significance to them and to the boys they serve, to have direct from yourself, through the medium of this journal, a personal message as to the general principle that has guided your life. We assure you that this is no mere journalistic stunt. We are making the request sincerely believing that your compliance will mean very much for the advancement of what we both hope for—a stronger, cleaner, more heroic youth throughout the world.

We are convinced that your intimate statement of 100 words or more will be a factor of profound influence in the lives of thousands of boys, and we will be glad to convey back to you responses we receive from them, in which we know you will be interested.

Yours faithfully,
BASIL MATHEWS

From a photostat: S.N. 12476

APPENDIX II

GANDHIJI AT THE IMPERIAL DAIRY, BANGALORE

. . . On being told that there are many dairies in Bangalore, Gandhiji has been visiting one of them, the Imperial Dairy, for some days, trying to understand every little detail of its working, inspecting the cattle, eliciting information about their yield, the expenses of their upkeep, the nutrition given to them, the treatment and annual value of their manure, etc., etc. All this he thinks he must do in order to do

justice to his office as President of the All-India Cow Protection Association.[1]

.. . The short course of "lesson" that Gandhiiji had in the Imperial Dairy, thanks to the courtesy of Mr. Smith, was made interesting as much by the readiness of those in charge to give Gandhiji the best they could, as by the presence of Pandit Malaviyaji during a couple of visits. After giving a couple of days to the dairy processes, Gandhiji was shown the different cattle which are under the close observation of the expert, who measures every ounce of the nutrition that goes into their bodies, and every ounce of their droppings, to arrive at conclusions about the digestibility of different foods, their milking results, and so on. Mr. Smith himself explained the most important and the most simple method of storing grass and fodder in silos. "It is going to solve the question of fodder for cattle," he said, "It is most important and yet so simple, and because it is simple, people do not see its value." The different concrete and pit silos were shown, Mr. Smith going into minute detail and trying to show how, with a little carefulness, and irrespective of weather, the agriculturist can provide for his cattle against times of scarcity. The interest with which he showed us his cows, and gave the history of some of them, spoke eloquently of his love for the cow. "I was born and bred among them," said the good Scotchman with pardonable pride. "My father was a farmer and for twenty years examiner of students going in for the Dairy Diploma, and my mother attended to our home dairy herself. Let every agriculturist in India realize the value of cattle-breeding and cattle protection. Let us not export a single article of food for the cattle"—he might have added the cattle also—"and let us realize that the increased milking capacity of the cows does not affect the quality of the draught animals. On the contrary, put a number of bullocks before me, and I will show that the best of them are the progeny of the cows which have been your best milkers."

On the last day Mr. Smith expressed his desire to have a photograph of Pandit Malaviyaji and Gandhiji with their best cow "Jill", an Ayrshire and Montgomery crossbreed which has calved sixteen times, and given all these years an average yield of 10,000 lbs. of milk. She is naturally the pet of the Dairy. "She was born here, I was present at her birth," said Mr. Smith, "and have watched her growth all these years. We have all kinds of cattle diseases here, but Jill has never had one."

Young India, 23-6-1927 and 30-6-1927

[1] [1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter" (23-6-1927); what follows is from his "Weekly Letter" (30-6-1927).

APPENDIX III

TELEGRAM FROM MOTILAL NEHRU

ALLAHABAD,
August 23, 1927

MAHATMA GANDHI
BANGALORE

ANSARI PUBLISHED SLIGHTLY MODIFIED BUT EQUALLY OBJECTIONABLE STATEMENT DESPITE YOUR LETTER MY VERBAL AND WRITTEN ENTREATIES STOP ON ARRIVAL SIMLA FOUND OFFICIALS MODERATES RESPONSIVISTS JUBILANT SRINIVASA CHUCKLING WEAKER MEMBERS PARTY WAVERING STRONGER MEMBERS INDIGNANT BUT ALL THINKING ANSARI'S STATEMENT APPROVED BY YOU AND ME STOP HAVE CONSEQUENTLY ISSUED MILDEST POSSIBLE STATEMENT POINTING OUT SUICIDAL CHARACTER ANSARI'S STATEMENT AND APPEALING HIM FOLLOW YOUR ADVICE STOP RETURNING HERE FOUND SAME MISAPPREHENSION AND FEELING. SOME USEFUL SELFOPINIONATED CONGRESSMEN LIKE SHIVAPRASAD GUPTA THINK RESIGNING CONGRESS STOP ASSEMBLY MEMBERS CONGRESS PARTY REPRESENTING ALL PROVINCES WERE DRAFTING MANIFESTO AGAINST ANSARI'S ELECTION WHEN I LEFT STOP GENERAL DEMAND FOR JAWAHARLAL AS ONLY POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE DESPITE MY PERSUASIONS TO CONTRARY STOP MY STATEMENT WILL DISPEL MISAPPREHENSION ABOUT OUR APPROVAL AND LIKELY PROVOKE UNDESIRABLE CONTROVERSY STOP CONSIDER BEST POSSIBLE COURSE FOR ANSARI TO RETIRE AND INVITE FRESH ELECTIONS STOP GOING LUCKNOW FOR TWO DAYS ADDRESS CHIEF COURT RETURNING HERE TWENTYFIFTH LEAVING FOR BOMBAY TWENTYEIGHTH SAILING THIRTYFIRST WIRE YOUR OPINION AND ACTION YOU PROPOSE IF ANY.

MOTILAL NEHRU

From a photostat : S. N. 12873

1. LETTER TO BAL KALELKAR

ARNI,
September 2, 1927

CHI. BAL,

I got your letter and liked it very much. I could not reply immediately for want of time. I shall answer two of your questions. A *brahmachari* sacrifices all pleasures merely through faith or in obedience to his parents or a custom. There is obedience in his sacrifice, but not knowledge. And if he cannot bring himself to make for ever that sacrifice, he has freedom to enjoy pleasures within limits after completing his studies. A sannyasi makes the same sacrifice knowingly and willingly. He does not and cannot keep it open for him to return to pleasures after having abjured them. Both types of sacrifice are very essential to individuals as well as to society.

Now the second question. Non-violence means not harming anyone in thought, word or action out of ill will or selfishness. If we wish or do ill to any stranger in the interests of our parents, that is violence. We can see and prove with the help of our know ledge that wishing or doing ill benefits neither the world nor our parents. Hence I had written that it was my belief we dis cover nonviolence the moment we realize that its root is to be found in wishing well to the world as much as to ourselves. You will thus see that we can of course prove independently that one should wish well to the world, but if we abide by the dharma of non-violence the responsibility to wish well to the world as well devolves on us even in pursuance of that dharma. If we understand this from our very childhood, our reason would admit it and the heart too would like it. That is to say, if we continue for ever the sacrifice which we have undertaken in good faith during the stage of *brahmacharya* we become sannyasis. Shankaracharya did this in the past. Dayanada did it in our own age. That we all cannot do so is due to our shortcoming and that constitutes an obstacle to doing good to the world. But we cannot do such things merely by exercising our reasoning. But if, with the help of our intellect, we imprint it day after day on our hearts and if it gets so imprinted, the whole world will not, even if it tried, be able to stop us from sacrificing our all. If any special problems arise, do tell me. Read this to all the pupils if you can.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

2. SPEECH AT ARNI[1]

September 2, 1927

You love to get a little bit of a rag, or cocoanut, or anything that you can get as *prasadam* from temples from which, alas, all holiness has fled. I would ask you to transfer that spirit of humility and devotion to khaddar which is spun and woven in the living temple of *Daridranarayana*. Our temples have their proper place in our religion and society only in so far they enable us to reach out the hand of fellowship to the starving millions of India. But these very temples will be the instruments of forging our shackles if they become impassable barriers between the masses and us. If you will wear khaddar in true spirit you will purify yourselves and the temples. I need not explain to you now, how the removal of untouchability necessarily follows from this proposition.

Young India, 8-9-1927

3. SPEECH AT ARCOT

September 2, 1927

I am very thankful for the cordial reception and for the purse you have given me, but I am not satisfied with this amount. I know that there are many in this gathering who have not contributed to the Fund which is intended for our poor brethren. You must encourage spinning by wearing khaddar. I am very glad to find here that the Hindus and the Mussalmans have met together in mutual co-operation unlike in the North where communal hatred is prevailing.

Yesterday when I had been to a Hindu temple on my way I was given the *prasad* by the *gurukkal*[2]. I told him that I am a pariah and asked him whether he would allow a pariah inside the temple. He laughed at me and said that he would do it gradually. I appeal to all men and women who have assembled here to treat the so-called pariah as our equal and move with him freely.

Since I find no place to have this silver plate, I shall have it auctioned. Volunteers will come in your midst for collection and you

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] Temple priest

can give whatever you please. As I have to go to another place I shall conclude my speech, once more thanking you for your gifts and addresses.

The Hindu, 5-9-1927

4. LETTER TO BALWANTRAI MEHTA

[After *September 2, 1927*][1]

I have your letter. You may rest assured that I shall not take a decision hastily. I am now conveying all my doubts to everyone who should know them and am seeking assistance in coming to a decision. I make no distinction between K and Devdas. It is no pleasure to me to entertain any suspicion about K. K. and K are in fact related to me as children. Hence it is not at all possible that I shall decide anything in haste.

Your argument does not appeal to me. You may know that I myself am a proof before you that sex does not discriminate bet ween the young and the old. Even today I have to erect all sorts of walls around me for the sake of safety.

Despite this, I was in danger of succumbing a few years ago. Moreover, sexual desire does not bother about time either. Despite our belief that Bhai K's ideas about *brahmacharya*, etc., were pure it is no wonder if ultimately he succumbed to desire. A young man whose case was almost similar confessed to me in Bangalore. He is regarded as a *brahmachari*. He is a darling of his family. No one can suspect him as things stand. He studies in the intermediate class. He has not been able to save himself from a widow who is related to him. He came to me saying, "Save me from this fever." Despite having sworn to a friend, he fell again. Hence he sought refuge in me. What refuge could I provide? But that is a digression.

What I have learnt is this: K had closer relations with K and her family than warranted. Both were reprimanded and both were convinced. Both agreed not to have such intimacy. In spite of this, they were seen secretly meeting each other. So Maganlal went on a fast. Notwithstanding this, they again met secretly. If my information is correct, I cannot get over my doubt. And if K has committed this slip such a man can in no time succumb to temptations of money. But

[1] The source has this letter after the entries for September 2.

these are all my inferences based on a single premise. I cannot but have all sorts of doubt about a person who acts with deliberate dishonesty. I am still investigating. I am not unaware of Maganlal's opinion which you quote. You are also aware that I have great confidence in his judgment. I shall write to him too.

Now the question that either you or his father should reimburse the amount, if K has embezzled any, does not arise at all. I am considering only the ethical aspect of this question.

Whatever I shall now write for *Navajivan* cannot but reflect my doubt; hence if you let me have some draft I shall consider and publish it, if I can.

I have not made light of suicides. I know of only two occasions when suicide becomes a duty. There are many grounds for that opinion. A man who is helpless against indulgence and cannot control himself but has sense enough to bring about his end ought to do so. That would be his dharma. Likewise, when a beast of a man attempts to criminally assault a woman, it is her duty to save herself by committing suicide. Indeed I have very often quoted these two instances in the Ashram. And I think it is only proper. Even if K has committed all the three faults mentioned above, as far as the tenets of the Ashram are concerned the duty to commit suicide cannot be established nor that of running away. Atonement is the only duty in such a case but I know from the many letters K wrote to me that he has always opposed a number of rules observed in the Ashram.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

5. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

MADRAS,
September 3, 1927

MIRABEHN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA

YOU MAY GO BOMBAY FOR EXAMINATION APPENDIX AND EYES. WIRE CONDITION.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5266. Courtesy: Mirabehn

6. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

MADRAS,
September 3, 1927

TO

MIRABEHN

SAYTAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA

WIRE RECEIVED. DISTRESSED. GOD BE WITH YOU. EXPECT DAILY REPORTS. LOVE. ANDREWS JOINS.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5267. Courtesy: Mirabehn

7. SPEECH TO LABOUR, PERAVALLUR

September 3, 1927

FRIENDS,

I thank you for the address and the two purses. I congratulate you on having the club[1] whose main object is to advance the cause of khadi. The ingenious manner in which you are advocating its cause is worthy of imitation by all of us. For a poor man it is the most convenient form of getting a loan free of interest. But as in most things in this also the honesty on the part of all members is an indispensable condition. As you know, having myself become a labourer and having worked with them in their midst and for them for over 35 years I am deeply interested in everything connected with labour. I do not propose just now to deal with the disabilities that labour is labouring under in India and here in particular. As a matter of fact I know noth ing of your special hardship and special conditions. At the present moment what I wish to lay the greatest stress upon is what labour can do for itself.

The one curse with which it is afflicted from within is the terrible drink habit. If labourers do not get rid of it betimes they will be digging their own graves. When the drink habit possesses a man it turns him into a beast. He knows no distinction between the sister and his wife. I therefore advise you all to give up drink. I know what a

[1] Gandhi Club

severe temptation it is for a man who is once given to drink; but God has given man the capacity, if he will only use it, for conquering such defects and temptations. The other defect which I have found amongst the labourers is that they have no consciousness of the strength which is possessed by combination. Labourers must learn to consider that the welfare of all is the welfare of the individual. You must therefore cultivate amongst yourselves a real brotherly spirit. I have known that in many parts of India labourers squander their money in gambling. It is a vicious habit and you should give it up. The morale amongst the labourers in some parts of India is also not all as it should be. If as labourers we want to become a recognized force in the Indian society and in the political world also, it is absolutely necessary for us to recognize the binding tie of marriage and all the obligations that that tie imposes upon us. I have congratulated you upon having this club for the advancement of khadi. But instead of there being a hundred members in that club every one of you should belong to it. Remember that khadi binds us to those who are much poorer than yourselves. To throw away the foreign cloth or even your millmade cloth costs you nothing but the simple thought on behalf of the starving millions of people who are living in our villages. It has given me great pleasure to lay the foundation-stone[1] which I have just laid over the place there. May God help you to do the things I have suggested to you. If you will but do these things, you will find that the majority of your difficulties will disappear without any further efforts.

The Hindu, 5-9-1927

8. SPEECH TO STUDENTS, MADRAS

September 3, 1927

You have called your purse a small purse, much smaller than you had expected to raise. I also endorse the sentiment that this purse[2] is all too small for the students of Madras to present to me. And for what purpose? Not for buying a few collars or neckties for distribution among the modern students who may be in need—not intended for any small work. It is intended for the starving millions in 7,00,000 villages. And I am positive that you, the students, if you could possibly

[1] Of the building of the Madras and Southern Maharatta Railway Employees' Union at Perambur

[2] Of Rs. 1607

realize the meaning of the starvation of these millions, you could raise a far larger sum. If you knew the conditions of these starving millions, as I do expect you to know, you would have raised a much larger sum. However, for your comfort, let me tell you that you have done no less than the students elsewhere. Not only does your purse not suffer in comparison with purses received by me from students elsewhere, but it comes to me with assurance that your Chairman has given, that your purse is a token of your association with the khadi work I am doing. And, coming as it does with that assurance, I hold your purse very precious indeed, and it has given me additional joy to know that the largest amount collected by any single worker was by a lady student.[1] I wish indeed that all the young ladies of India will beat all the young men of India in the competition of service of the motherland. Why should not women be the first in the field in matters of service? Your purse should carry with it a lesson to you as it does to me. The lesson that the purse carries to me is, that taking all these moneys from the student world, I should realize more fully my responsibility not only to you but to the starving millions. The lesson that it should carry to you is that having given your mite to this purse, you should study the condition of these millions of villagers, in order to fit you all the better for their service. And if you do so, you will make this painful discovery that your education is paid for out of the life-blood of these millions. I hope that every student here also knows that the fees he pays for his education do not, in any way whatsoever, pay for the cost of his education. I hope that the students also know and realize that the education is paid for out of the drink and drug revenue.

Now, consider for yourselves what you owe to these men who pay for your education. I suggest then that you should render ceaseless service to these starving millions and that you should not be satisfied till this gnawing poverty is banished from our land. And, I have told you that khaddar is the easiest and the only way. I ask you not to allow your minds to be befogged by all kinds of specious reasoning that will be advanced against the spinning-wheel and against khadi in these days of rush for machinery. I do not propose to go into all the arguments for the spinning-wheel and khadi, but I commend to your attention a small book that has been published by the All-India Spinners' Association and which has been written by two students,

[1] Miss Ananda Bai of the Law College had collected Rs. 150.

Professor Puntambekar and Mr. N. S. Varadachari. You will find in that little book most of the arguments carefully marshalled, in order to show that khadi and khadi alone can become the only means of alleviating this universal misery of starving India. I want you to bear in mind the qualifications that I have introduced into the proposition with great care. Do not dismiss from your minds the words "universal" and "alleviation" and then raise an argument, which nobody has ever advanced, and then proceed to demolish it. And if you have understood this message of khadi, then you will not rest until you have discarded every inch of foreign cloth and substituted it by hand-woven and handspun cloth.

But, I have said that khadi is really the least part of your performance. It is the beginning of the service and the centre round which all other things can be built up. You will have to bring to bear, on this question of removing the awful distress among the villagers of India, an irreproachable character. You will never be able to put together the shattered fragments of society unless you have got this binding cement of character. I am sure that it will do your soul good to hear from me that students in Gujarat are, at the present moment, working wonders in those flood-stricken areas. They could not do so, if they had not love overflowing and outgoing to those people in distress, and character at the back of their service. Some of them have left off their studies and have gone into villages with pickaxes, shovels and baskets and have restored villages which were stinking with dead cattle and rotten grain to a habitable condition. They did not wait for the *Panchama* brethren to go to their assistance to remove these carcasses, but removed them themselves. And, I know, what has been possible for the few Gujarati students to do, it also possible of every one of you, boys and girls, to do, given the occasion. But I must not take up much of your time, nor tax myself unduly the very first day of my coming to Madras. There are many other things of which I should like to talk to you. I wish I had the time to give you that conversation. But I would like to make a little request to you. I gave to students in Vellore a fairly considered address,[1] and I understand that it has been reported almost verbatim in *The Hindu*. Probably some of you have already read it. But even if you have done so, I commend it to you for reading again carefully and I ask those who have not read it to get a loan of the paper or buy it and read it. You are the hope of

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Voorhee's College, Vellore", 30-8-1927.

the future and I should love to think that students all over India should realize their duty to the country to which they owe not only their birth, but also their education, derived as it is from the life-blood of the downtrodden villagers. Whenever the devil presses you and you simply think of yourselves and not of your country, just remember this thing, which I have told you this evening. Remember the debt you are incurring from day to day whilst you are receiving your education, and may the memory of that debt keep you from every temptation.

The Hindu, 5-9-1927

9. AFTER THE FLOODS

From the letters which I received regarding the flood-relief work and from the reports in *Navajivan* I observe that volunteers are doing their work conscientiously showing no signs of exhaustion. But I have formed the impression that all of us are not accustomed to doing physical work, that we feel aversion against certain types of work and that certain things are left undone or delayed or done with too much expense because we do not know how to do them. For example, I read the following in reports by some volunteers which are lying with me.

> The wells in this place stink.
>
> The basin at the top of the well in this place is about to crumble.
>
> A buffalo has fallen into the well here and the water stinks with the smell of her rotting body. But the poor Bhangis still use it.
>
> The grain which is rotting in this place gives off foul smell. The people dig up even that and eat it.
>
> We found the Bhangis here lazy. They do not work even when asked.

I have given these statements from different letters and all of them are not in the words of the writers themselves. I have not, however, twisted the writer's meaning in any of them.

I think that in our work we should not have one set of people to do the actual work and another to supervise. Our poor country can progress only if the supervisors and the workers are the same persons. The number of persons who issue orders should be the smallest possible. Of course we cannot do without overseers[1] altogether, but we should bear in mind that their function is largely to keep watch

[1] Gandhiji uses the English word.

against possible malpractices. Volunteers, too, need supervision. If no supervisor is appointed over a volunteer's work, he should ask for one to be appointed. Even so, our aim should be to get out of this unhappy condition of supervisors having to be appointed. In any case, supervisors and others, all should carry hoes and spades wih them. If these are not available, they should use their hands as much as possible.

I would, therefore, expect to receive reports as follows: 'In village 'A', the well emitted a foul smell. A bucket and rope were procured from the villagers and the well was cleaned up with the latter's help. Some potassium permanganate was obtained from a hospital nearby and mixed with the well-water. We then tasted the water and satisfied ourselves that it was pure.

'In village 'B' the basin platform round the mouth of the well was unusable, and so a hedge of thorny plants was put up round it with the help of villagers. This notice was put up on the hedge. 'The platform is in bad repair. No one should go near it.' There is another well in the village, and, therefore, there will be no hardship.

'We found only one well in village 'C'. Its basin was quite unusable. The village mason, therefore, was brought along and the basin repaired and made strong enough so that is could be used for the time being. The people have been advised to get it made stronger.

'In village 'D' a buffalo had fallen into the well. We saw that she could not be pulled out even if we tried. There was not much water in the well. With the consent and help of the village people, the well was filled up. As I had never lifted a weight or held a spade, my shoulders are aching and the palms are sore. But the foul smell which could be felt even at a distance of several hundred yards has ceased. When I see now boys playing on the spot where the well stood, I completely forget my pain. And the experience of real appetite is an additional benefit.

'We saw two wells in village 'E', the second being for the use of Bhangi friends. There was hardly any water in it. On inquiry, I was told that it usually contained only a small quantity of water, and that too full of dirt and mud. So I pleaded with the elders of the village. They agreed to let the Bhangis draw water [from the other well], but insisted on these conditions. 'The women in our families will not yet accept your idea of mixing [with Bhangis]. You may, therefore, fix certain hours when they may draw water from the well.' I welcomed

even this, little as it was. I thanked them. I got together Bhangi boys and, with their help, filled up the well in a little while and left the place.

'I found the Bhangis in village 'F' very lazy. I saw ankledeep slush mud round their wells. The refuse-heap was right near their dwellings. I tried hard to explain things to them, but in vain. I then asked for a spade. 'There it is', said one of them, and went away. Another said: 'Why do you waste your labour, dear Sir? We don't mind all this dirt and mud. We have always lived thus.' I said: 'I can't bear the sight of these things. Persons like me work hard for you, plead with people not to treat you as untouchables. But what can we do if this is how you behave?' The man said: 'Yes, that is certainly true. But we cannot help the slowness in our improvement.' I made no reply to this, but removed the mud, covered the ground with dry sand and single handed cleared out the refuse-heaps from near the dwellings. Occasionally a boy would come along, remove two spadefuls of the refuse and walk away. I called to mind the *Gita* teaching of disinterested service and left the place.'

The reader may think up more such imaginary reports, and should cherish the ambition to act in the manner suggested and demonstrate that these things can be done.

The substance of what one volunteer writes may be stated as follows :

> You were alone so far, but you are two now, for Kakasaheb has joined you. Should we not get some benefit of your being together? Will not one of you write and explain how to create a new world after the *pralaya*?

I have been trying to see that Kakasaheb's pen is active and dancing. Staying here, I cannot think of any suggestions to make about creating a new world. Those which occur to me do not seem worth putting down on paper. My appeal, therefore, to workers who are already active is this :

Instead of expecting us, invalids, to make suggestions from this distance, you who are on the spot should yourselves think out plans and execute them, limiting them to your villages. You should not wait for the whole of Gujarat to undertake reconstruction before you do so, but should effect what reforms you can in your own village if you can carry the local people with you. I give here a miscellaneous list of do's and dont's.

1. Do not build houses which look like slums.

2. Do not use tin-sheets.

3. Do not imitate America or England, for the climate there is different from ours.

4. Use only a minimum of stone and mortar.

5. In our country, we can build fine houses with straw, stalks, reeds and finely powdered, moistened earth.

6. The site must be cleaned and made level before a house is built.

7. There must be proper provision for ventilation.

8. If there is enough space, a separate shed should be pro vided for cattle. I saw an inexpensive and very hygienic arrange ment for them, which consisted of an enclosure in which they were not tied but were left free. A strong fence of sticks or wire could be put up for the purpose. There should be a small shed in the enclosure where the cattle can rest when they feel inclined to do so.

MISCELLANEOUS

1. Do not give people black, foreign caps, even if received as gifts for them. A thing which is unacceptable in itself should not be received even as a gift. A vegetarian would not accept meat because it was offered to him free.

2. Our aim in life is not to live merely for the sake of living. It should be, rather, to live for a good end, to awaken the soul sleeping in this body which is its house. The difference between dharma and *adharma* is this: One who follows dharma will refuse to live if he has to violate certain restraints for that purpose. One who follows *adharma* accepts no such restraints. He will sell himself, his wife and children and his country in order that he may live.

3. A trader may save and may also destroy. The merchants of Gujarat are doing both without knowing it. I have been observing that there is a shower of foreign and mill cloth. Now that the immediate shock of the heavy floods is over, I caution them and the people. It is Gujaratis and Marwaris who are responsible for the presence of foreign cloth among us. Both these classes of merchants should consider. If I were asked to choose between the destruction caused by foreign cloth and that caused by excessive floods, I know which I should choose. Let the reader know that one kills the body; this can be borne and is inescapable. The other kind of destruction kills the soul

and we can always escape it. Who will explain to Gujarat this profound difference between the two kinds of destruction? Man is always helpless in saving his body from destruction, and he is always free concerning the saving of his soul. That is why the various religions proclaim in the most emphatic words: "The *atman* is its own friend and its own foe."[1]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-9-1927

10. SPEECH AT Y.M.C.A., MADRAS [2]

September 4, 1927[3]

FRIENDS,[4]

The Chairman has asked me to give you a religious discourse. I do not know that I have ever given a religious discourse, or to put it the other way, I do not know a single speech of mine or a talk of mine, within my own recollection, which has not been a religious discourse. I think, if I am not deceived, that at the back of every word that I have uttered since I have known what public life is, and of every act that I have done, there has been a religious consciousness and a downright religious motive. My acts may have appeared to my audiences, or to the readers of the words that I have written, political, economic and many other things. But I ask you to accept my word that the motive behind every one of them has been essentially and predominantly religious. And so is it to be this morning.

When I asked what I was expected to speak about, I was told that I was to speak what I liked. Well, the message came to me this morning as I was on my way to this meeting and I propose now to think before you aloud.

I had very precious moments with a missionary friend in Vellore. I had a heart-to-heart talk[5] with the students of that place, and the next morning I was told something like this: 'Your speech was very nice. You talked of the things of the spirit. But how is it that in

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, VI. 5

[2] This was published under the caption "Two Speeches".

[3] From *The Hindu*, 5-9-1927

[4] *Vide* "Speech at Voorhee's College, Vellore", 30-8-1927.

the middle of the speech like King Charles' head with the renowned Mr. Dick, khadi came up? Can you explain what connection khadi can possibly have with spirituality? Then he went on, 'You spoke about temperance; that delighted us and it was certainly spiritual. You spoke about untouchability, a very fine subject for an audience spiritually inclined or for a spiritually inclined man to speak about. But both these came in your speech after your message of khadi. It seemed to jar on some of us.' I have given you the substance of the conversation in my own words but faithfully. I gave the answer that came to me at the time and this morning I want to amplify that answer.

It is quite true that I place khaddar first and then only untouchability and temperance. All these came at the end of the speech I gave to the students of Vellore, in which I made a fervent appeal for purity of life and told them that without purity of life all their learning would be as dust and probably a hindrance to the true progress of the world. Then I took up these three things and a few more by way of illustration. Throughout 35 years' unbroken experience of public service in several parts of the world, I have not yet understood that there is anything like spiritual or moral value apart from work and action. I have often repeated to audiences like this that great verse which has always remained with me ever since I read it: "Not every-one that says unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven but he who doeth the will of my Father who is in Heaven."[1] I have not reproduced that verse correctly but you know what that verse is and it is so true. I recall to my mind two brilliant instances of men in English public life who, in their own times, were regarded as very great reformers, and as pillars of spirituality. I am now talking to you of about 1889 and 1890 when many of you were not born. I used to attend temperance meetings in those days. I was interested in that reform. Those two pillars of spirituality were supposed to be great temperance workers, but they were workers with their speeches. They were always in demand when a harangue was required on temperance. I am sorry to have to inform you that I was a witness to their fall. Both of them were found out. They were no workers. The words God, Lord, Jehovah were on their lips always, but they simply adorned their lips, they were not in their hearts. They used the temperance platform for their own base ends. One of them was a speculator and the other was a moral leper. Perhaps you now

[1] *St. Matthew*, vii. 21

understand what I want to say. In India also, I am not able to say that the temperance platform is always a spiritual platform or that the platform of untouchability must necessarily be a spiritual platform. I have known, I know now as I am talking to you, that both these platforms are being abused today in this very land by several people. Others are using them aright. The moral I want to submit to you is that every act may be done, conceived and presented from a spiritual standpoint or it may have none of it at all. I want to claim before you today that the message of the spinning-wheel and khadi is supremely a spiritual message; and it is supremely a spiritual message for this land that it has got tremendous economic consequences as also political consequences.

Only the other day,an American friend, Prof.Sam Higginbottom, writing to me upon a subject in which both he and I are deeply interested, said,—I give you the substance of the letter—"I don't believe in a religion bereft of economics. Religion to be worth anything must be capable of being reduced when necesssary to terms of economics." I entirely endorse that remark with a big mental reservation. Not that Mr. Higginbottom also had not that reservation. But I must not claim to speak for him. The mental reservation is this, that whereas religion to be worth anything must be capable of being reduced to terms of economics, economics, to be worth anything, must also be capable of being reduced to terms of religion or spirituality. Therefore in this scheme of religion *cum* economics there is no room for exploitation and for Americanization as the technical term is known. As a distinguished son of India put it— he is no other than Sir M. Vishveshvarayya—whereas an Englishman owns 30 slaves, or is it 36,—I speak subject to correction—an American owns 33 slaves. Personally, I think there is no room in true economics which is convertible with religion for the owning of slaves whether they are human beings, cattle or machinery. There is no room for slavery in economics. Then I suggest to you that you cannot escape khadi and it has the largest limit. Temperance takes in its orbit a certain number of people. It blesses the man who converts the drunkard to teetotalism, and it undoubtedly blesses the drunkard who is so converted by the word of the reformer. Untouchability takes in its orbit at the most seven crores of people of this unhappy land, and not every one of us can do untouchability work. You may certainly give the untouchable education; you may dig wells for him and build temples. But these would not make him touchable unless the so-called touchables will

come down from their insolent heights and brother the untouchable. So you will see it is a somewhat complex problem for the man and woman in the street to handle. And as a man whose sole occupation in life is, be it ever so humble, to find out truth, I was searching for something that everyone can do without exception—everybody in this room—that something which would also remedy the most deepseated disease of India.

And the most deep-seated disease of India is undoubtedly not drunkenness, undoubtedly not untouchability, great as those diseases are and greater perhaps for those who are suffering from them; but when you examine the numerical content of this disease, you will find with me, if you take any census returns, or any authentic book on history, such for instance as Sir William Hunter's history, or take the evidence of Mr. Higginbottom given before a Commission only two years ago—he said that the largest number of people in India were poverty-stricken, and Sir William Hunter says that one-tenth of the population in India is living barely on one meal a day consisting of a stale *roti* and a pinch of dirty salt which perhaps you and I will not touch—that state of things persists in India today. If you were to go into the interior, outside the railway track, you will find as I have found that the villages are being reduced to dungheaps, the villagers are not there, vultures are to be seen because they could not support themselves, and were reduced to carcasses.

India is suffering from meningitis, and if you will perform the necessary operation and make some return to those starving millions today, I say there is nothing but khadi for you. And if, as men spiritually inclined, you will think of those less fortunate than you are and who have not even enough to support themselves or clothe themselves, if you will have an indissoluble bond between them and yourselves, I say once more there is nothing for you but khadi. But it jars, and the reason why it jars is that this is a new thing and is a visionary thing, a day-dream as it appears to many. The missionary friend of Vellore, whom I spoke about, told me at the end of our conversation, "Yes, but can you stem the march of modern progress? Can you put back the hands of the clock, and induce people to take to your khadi and make them work on a mere pittance?" All I would say is that this friend did not know his India. From the Vellore meeting I went to two places, Arcot and Arni. I did not see much of the people there, I assure you, but saw the villagers less well clad than I am. I saw them not in their tens but in their tens of thousands. They

were in their rage and their wages were practically nil for four months in the year. They gave me of their substance; I was hungrily looking at the thing they gave me. They gave me not pice; they gave pies.

Come with me to Orissa in November, to Puri, a holy place, and a sanatorium, where you will find soldiers and the Governor's residence during summer months. Within ten miles' radius of Puri you will see skin and bone. With this very hand I have collected soiled pies from them tied tightly in their rags, and their hands were more paralysed than mine were at Kolhapur. Talk to them of modern progress. Insult them by taking the name of God before them in vain. They will call you and me fiends if we talk about god to them. They know, if they know any God at all, a God of terror, vengeance, a pitiless tyrant. They do not know what love is. What can you do for them? You will find it difficult to change these delightful sisters (pointing to the ladies present) from their silk saris to coarse khadi woven by those paralytic and crude hands. Khadi is rough! It is too heavy! Silk is soft to be touched and they can wear nine yards of silk, but they cannot wear 9 yards of khadi. The poor sisters of Orissa have no saris; they are in rags. But they have not lost all sense of decency, but I assure you we have. We are naked in spite of our clothing, and they are clothed in spite of their nakedness. It is because of these that I wander about from place to place, I humour my people, I humour my American friends. I humoured two stripling youths from Harvard. When they wanted my autograph, I said, "No autograph for Americans". We struck a bargain, "I give you my autograph; and you take to khadi". They have promised and I rely on the word of an American gentleman. Many of them are doing this work—make no mistake about it, and they like it also.

But I cannot be satisfied, not till every man and woman in India is working at his or at her wheel. Burn that wheel if you find a better substitute. This is the one and only work which can supply the needs of the millions without disturbing them from their homes. It is a mighty task and I know that I cannot do it. I know also that God can do it. The mightiest and strongest matter is but a tiny affair for Him, when it pleases Him. He can destroy them all in the twinkling of an eye, as He has destroyed now thousands of homes in Gujarat and as He had destroyed thousands of homes a few years ago in South India. I carry this message of khadi and the spinning-wheel with the fullest faith in God, and therefore in His creation, man. You may laugh at me today. You may call this a sordid thing. If you like you may distrust

me and say this is some political schemer who has come to place his khaddar before us, but he has got many things up his sleeve. You may misinterpret me and my message. You may say: 'We are too weak to do these things and too poor'. I know it is possible for you to repel me by your arguments and make me speechless. But I shall not lose faith in you so long as I cannot lose faith in God. It is impossible for me to lose that faith, and therefore I cannot lose faith in the message of khadi and the spinning-wheel.

If I have not succeeded in opening out my heart to you, and if I have not succeeded in showing to you the rock-bottom spiritua- lity of the message of khaddar, I don't think I shall ever succeed in doing so. All I can say is I mean to succeed. My lips may not deliver the true message. God will do it all, in whose name I have delivered this message to you. God bless you.

Young India, 15-9-1927

11. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MADRAS [1]

September 4, 1927

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I thank you for the addresses that you have presented to me and the different purses. The general purse amounts to Rs. 13,235-2-6. Rs. 100 from Purasawalkam labourers, Rs. 52-0-11 from the staff of the Indian Industrial Company, Rs. 13 from Jam Bazaar, and additional collections from students Rs. 18. For all this I thank you. I wish that it was possible for me to speak on the various topics that engage the attention of the servants of the country at the present moment. Though I hold strong views on most of those questions, I do not propose at the present moment to deal with them. But let me reiterate my faith before this vast audience. I believe in non-violent non-co-operation as much as I ever did. So far as I can see, there is nothing but non-violent non-co-operation as an alternative to violence. My faith in the possibility and necessity of Hindu-Muslim unity is as strong as ever. But so far as I am concerned, I have nothing but heartfelt prayer for its early achievement. I ask this vast audience to pray for the success of the deliberations of the Hindu and Mussalman leaders that are to take place on the 6th instant[2] and thereafter at Simla.

[1] At Triplicane Beach

[2] At Delhi

My faith in the necessity of removing untouchability, which is a blot upon Hinduism, is also as green as ever.

I have been watching with very considerable interest the agitation that is going on in your midst on the part of some of the youths for the removal of the Neill Statue. To me it is like a cloud no bigger than a man's thumb. It is also like every other cloud capable of overspreading the Indian skies. I do hope that those who are owners of this statue will understand the significance of this movement although it appears to be trifling at the pre- sent moment. I appeal to the young men who are behind this movement, of whom I have no knowledge whatsoever, not to spoil a good case by a single, hasty and inconsiderate step.

You have invited the National Assembly to meet here in this great city during the year. Madras enjoys the unique reputation of having one of its most distinguished sons as President[1] of this great Assembly. I cannot tell you how much I miss his presence this evening. It is up to you and up to every citizen of Madras to make the coming session of the Congress a brilliant success. I know that you have here, unfortunately, dissensions between Brahmins and Non-Brahmins. In view of the great task that lies in front of you, I beseech you, everyone, to see to it that these dissensions are removed so far as it is humanly possible to remove them and that they are not allowed to interfere with the preparations that you must make in order to ensure the success of the national gathering. I look forward to the time when we shall not think of Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians, Jews, Parsis, etc., or Brahmins, Non-Brahmins, untouchables, etc., as warring elements in our midst. But I look forward to the time—so long as these diversities must continue—when we shall all regard ourselves as branches of one great beautiful tree called the undivided and indivisible Indian Nation. And I wish that this so-called benighted city in the so-called benighted presidency should enjoy the honour of having brought about this desirable result.

And now I will come to the business that has brought me to Madras and that will send me to the end of this Southern Presidency. How I wish I could convince every one of you here that khadi is really calculated to become the best cement to bind all of us together. How I wish I could convince you that in all our little quarrels and squabbles we take little or no account of the voiceless millions whom for the

[1] S. Srinivasa Iyengar

time being we misrepresent. How I wish I could convince you that our obstinacy in not seeing the obvious results that must come from the adoption of khadi makes the progress of khadi itself so lamentably slow. And owing to the slowness of the progress of khadi, some of you turn against me and tell me that khadi has no vitality. And ignoring your obstinacy, you make the advance of khadi not only slow but you make the advance of the country itself almost impossible. And in your impatience to reach the common goal you refuse to see that you are yourselves the greatest obstacle in our march. You refuse to see the simple thing that is in front of you and then not finding any other activity you give way to unmanly despair. I ask you, for the sake of the country, for the sake of the toiling millions, for the sake of God, to shake yourselves free from this lethargy.

I wish that I had the courage to keep this great audience waiting to hear more of what is swelling up in my breast. I therefore conclude with the prayer to God who is watching over us all that He may give us the wisdom to see the path that lies in front of us and the courage to tread that path.

The Hindu, 5-9-1927

12. SPEECH ON "GITA", MADRAS[1]

September 4, 1927

I thank you for the address and the purse. The purse is doubly welcome to me as also the address after the knowledge that I have now gained that Mr. Sastri was the Headmaster of this school. I congratulate you on having given to the Servants of India Society, Mr. Gokhale's successor, and to India one of her most brilliant and devoted sons. Your school professes to be a Hindu school, with emphasis on the word "Hindu". I suppose therefore I have a right to expect something characteristic of the Hindu about all of you. If you will live up to your name you would be expected to show Hindu culture at its best in every one of your acts. I wonder if all of you are able to say that you have read the *Bhagavad Gita*. Those who have, will please raise their hands, honestly of course (about 10 persons raised their hands). Now it seems to me that in the very test I have

[1] At Singarachari Hall, Hindu High School, Triplicane

applied the vast majority of you have failed. "If the salt loses its flavour wherewith shall it be salted?" I have given an English proverb, but there is a corresponding one which we know in the North and it is this: "When the ocean is on fire who will be able to quench the fire?" Will you not in all humility ask that question very seriously of every one of you? Will you not make a confession that you have been weighed and found wanting? Imagine a Christian High School and its Old Boys' Association being unaware of the contents of the Bible! Imagine a Mahomedan High School and the Muslim Old Boys' Association of that school not knowing the Koran, and don't you feel with me that every Hindu boy and, for that matter, every Hindu girl, should know the book in the Hindu scriptures which is equal to and should be in the estimation of the Hindu, the Koran and Bible? I hope therefore that now that your eyes have been opened publi-cly you will immediately set about correcting yourself and understanding the message of the *Gita*. I would like to know how many of you know the elements of Sanskrit. Those of you who do know it, please raise your hands (A number of hands was raised). Thank you.

Half, or perhaps a little more than half of you know Sanskrit. Then let me inform you that the Sanskrit of the *Gita* is incredibly simple. Those of you who know Sanskrit should tomorrow, if possible today, buy the *Gita*—and I understand you can get the book for a very small price—and begin to study the book. Have private *Gita* classes for yourselves. Those of you who do not know Sanskrit should study Sanskrit only for the sake of the *Gita*. If you have not got that much facility, then you should read *Gita* written in English or in Tamil, if there is a Tamil translation of it. I tell you that it contains treasures of knowledge of which you have no conception whatsoever. I suggest to you that at first you may begin to read the third chapter of the *Gita*. You will find there the gospel of selfless work expounded in a most convincing manner. Selfless work there is described characteristically by one beautiful word called *yajna*. If you will read the book with my eyes you will find charkha also described there. There is one passage which says that "He who eats without serving, without *yajna*, is a thief."[1] I want you not to go to the dictionary for finding out the meaning of the word *yajna*. Do not run away with the idea that by puchasing a few faggots of wood and then burning them with ghee to the accompaniment of certain hymns, you have

[1] III. 12

performed *yajna*. That the word has had that meaning at one time, there is not doubt about it; and when it did bear the meaning, it had its use. You will find in another part of the *Gita* an injunction almost that you must bring your intelligence and your reason to bear upon the meaning of the Shastras. Applying my reason to find out the meaning of this beautiful word I come to the conclusion that the *yajna* that you, I and these sisters and the old boys and the little girls can perform—it must be a *yajna* of that character in order to follow the context of the *Gita*—is nothing apart from the spin- ning-wheel. But I do not want to give you a discourse on the spinning-wheel. What I desire to tell you is that, if you will search that book through and through, you will find there men- tioned in such simple words, *brahmacharya*, *satya*, ahimsa, *abhayam* and others which ought to be the primary qualities of everyman of God. The last word I leave with you is that you should read that book with a prayerful spirit, not in a carping spirit, and to obey the dictates of that book.

The Hindu, 5-9-1927

13. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

MADRAS,
September 5, 1927

TO
MIRABEHN
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
WARDHA

SORRY FEVER PROVING OBSTINATE. PRAY TAKE PRESCRIBED MEDICINE. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5268. Courtesy: Mirabehn

14. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 5, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have just got Jamnalalji's wire. The fever seems to be proving obstinate. It is better for you not to object to the medicines that the doctors may prescribe. There are many delicate reasons why you may not object to medicines under the circumstances that face you today.

My fear is that probably your brain is overwrought. You may have brooded much over the segregation matter and your future plans at the Ashram. Our motto is 'Be careful for nothing'. Anxiety is the mother of many diseases. But whatever the cause, let the physical effect be treated by physical remedies such as medicines, etc. Control of the mind and freedom from all care must be cultivated side by side. No anxiety please about speaking in Hindi to everybody there. My advice and expectations are always conditional. The condition being "consistently with capacity". Of your own capacity you must be the final judge. On no account must health be placed in jeopardy. I suppose Krishnadas and Valunjker are nursing you. I assume that you are keeping altogether cheerful in the midst of this pain and trial.

May God be your Rock, Help, Strength and All.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5270. Courtesy: Mirabehn

15. LETTER TO AN INMATE OF THE ASHRAM

September 5, 1927

I have your letter. It was good you gave me all the details. I cannot doubt you.

We should observe a convention which does not run counter to morality. *Brahmacharya* is said to be protected by nine hedges. If you have not read of it, do so in Raichandbhai's book. We neglect some of those hedges. I am responsible for this. Hence such neglect is only tentative. But we do observe the rule of never being alone in the company of even our own sister. I fully see the need for this. That protects both.

A *brahmachari* should be utterly humble and should not trust himself. There are two reasons for such diffidence. One is that he himself may thereby remain pure and the other is that the sister who comes in contact with him may not entertain lustful thoughts even in her dreams.

All the world has a right to suspect a *brahmachari* and it ought to have this right. The world does not observe *brahmacharya*. The world believes that no one can conquer the passions which it cannot itself conquer and that is only right. Hence we should not be offended by the world's suspicion. Know that all who stay there are included in the world.

Others have slipped through the liberty which you have taken innocently. In the beginning they were innocent. Even if you yourself have reached the stage at which you can never succumb to passion, you should still observe the restraints for the sake of others. We come across many who claim to observe *brahmacharya*. Could we allow them all to take such liberties?

I myself have not yet been able to conquer passions. Do you not know this? If I am not able to assure myself or the world about myself, you should be all the more careful about yourself.

Desire is a scorpion. One never knows when it will sting. It is *ananga*[1]. So we cannot see it; we cannot catch it, even if we try. That is why a *brahmachari* has to remain ever vigilant.

What you write about Bhai Chhaganlal Joshi and others is not right. They are all making efforts. We do not live outside the world, nor do we wish to hate the passions in others; we only wish to be free from them ourselves and live on thus free.

You should therefore be vigilant. If you wish to ask me something more, do so.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

16. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day [*September 5, 1927*][2]

SISTERS,

I have your note.

You must have understood the point of my suggestion that you should develop contacts with the women labourers of the Ashram. Getting a couple of cowries from them for relief work is just an excuse. The chief purpose is that through such occasions you should establish a bond of fellowship with them. You should try to understand each other and should partake of each other's joys and sorrows. I do not mean that you should spend much time over this. It is really a matter of change of heart. It should be your desire that they

[1] Without body; in Indian mythology, sexual desire is symolized by a deity without a body. The body of the God of love perished in the fire from Siva's third eye.

[2] From the reference to taking interest in the women labourers at the Ashram

have the same food as we, and the same clothes, that they too get everything we desire and obtain for ourselves. And we should put this into practice as far as we can.

You will be overwhelmed if you try to give what I am saying a wide meaning. Words have at least two meanings—a narrow one and a broad one. We should try to comprehend the broader meaning, but begin cautiously to put into effect the narrower one, so that we are not crushed by the immensity of the task.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3664

17. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

[After *September 5, 1927*][1]

There are of corse many types of valour in the world. There should be an Indian type for an Indian Victoria Cross. If a Gango Teli[2] moves with his bullock in endless circles and crushes oil for society and does it selflessly, is it not great valour? The devout Gango became famous obviously because he had courage. Why did not Ghelo[3] the oilman attain fame?

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

18. LETTER TO NARAYAN MORESHWAR KHARE

Monday/Tuesday [*September 5/6, 1927*][4]

BHAI PANDITJI,

I have your letter.

Gangabehn informs me that one day when you missed the prayer because you had gone to sleep you fasted and have taken a vow that each time it happens again you will fast for the day. If that is so you have done right. However, along with the insistence on getting

[1] In the source this letter appears after the entries for September 5.

[2] Oilman

[3] A proper name also meaning 'silly'

[4] From the contents, which suggest that the letter was written earlier than the letter of September 14, 1927 to the addressee

up early you should also insist on going to bed early. Even for the sake of the children, we adults should inculcate this habit.

I am happy to know that the prayer is now going on well. I hope those who have resolved to attend it regularly will not absent themselves without reason. I feel that if this resolve is adhered to, it will have the most desirable results.

It is certainly necessary to observe the same kind of silence at the evening prayer as is observed at the morning prayer. One way to ensure this is that no one should talk till the prayer is over. I have myself not observed this rule. From now on I will. No one may come and sit down too early for the prayer. The prayer should begin not a moment later than the appointed time. Then there will be absolutely no need to detain anyone afterwards. As soon as one arrives for the prayer one should sit down in the proper posture and close one's eyes. Children should also learn to observe these manners. No one should sell *datun* before the prayer is over. I also feel there is need to stop the plying of *takli* during the prayer. I blame myself for encouraging the *takli*. But it is necessary to stop plying it during prayer time. Of course if everyone is sitting with the eyes closed there can be no question of plying the *takli*. It is necessary that everyone should be calm and attentive when the *Ramayana* is being recited. It is a question whether to keep the eyes closed or not at that time. The person who is leading the prayer will of course keep his eyes open. Another person whose duty it is to seat the guests, if there are any, and shoo away stray dogs, should keep his eyes open. It is necessary that persons on this duty should be changed every week. After the prayer, you may give news of the Ashram if there is any or if need be take up some discussion. Read this out to everyone and after due deliberation accept whatever is worth accepting. After deciding what to take, frame rules accordingly and get them printed. Sell the printed copies of the rules whenever necessary. It will be useful for a few days to read out these rules at the prayer meetings. You should always keep a few copies of the rules handy at the meetings, so that when a new person comes, the gate-keeper can respectfully give him one. These are some external remedies for bringing about concentration at the prayer meetings. It is only to this extent that we as a society can and should enforce control. The remedy for gaining control of inner self is. . .[1] and purity of our leaders. If even one person with a pure heart can

[1] A word is undecipherable here.

achieve concentration it is a rule admitting of no exception that its effect will be felt by everyone. It is a different thing that we always do not experience such effect. It is experienced by practice. The external remedies I have suggested will help us purify our inner selves if they are adopted with that purpose in view. Else we shall be dubbed hypocrites.

We have a collection of some very useful books, so pay close attention to the library. We should have a few copies made of the lists of contents of those books. The books which are useless, that is to say, which are not worth reading should either be discarded or burnt. Books should be listed both language-wise and subject-wise and there should be lists of contents. The thing to do is to engage a person exclusively for the library. I feel that the work is so important that if no one from amongst us can be spared, then a person who is not interested in any other activity except the library work and who abides by our rules should be employed on a salary basis or else we should keep only those books which are of use to us and send the rest to the library of the Mahavidyalaya. This whole questionneeds consideration. All of you should think over it. I shall discuss it with Kaka and others. This work is both urgent and not so urgent. I have both aspects in my mind. I have been thinking over it for a long time. Discuss it with Valji too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photos tat of the Gujara ti: C.W. 251

19. SPEECH ON PROHIBITION, MADRAS[1]

September 6, 1927

FRIENDS,

I am supposed to talk to you this morning about prohibition. I don't remember having talked to a select audience on 'Prohibition' in my life except at one time, although I can claim to be a staunch prohibitionist as I am a staunch khaddarite. My life has been so cast that I get little chance of talking on such matters to a select audience. The one reason for that flaw in me is that I am a crank or I am supposed to be a crank, and therefore very often before a select

[1] At Mani Aiyar Hall, Triplicane

audience I feel like a fish out of water. All cranks are necessarily extremists and where others feel the necessity for caution and moderation and such like about things that matter in life, I feel as if I am nowhere, as if I have no place. When someone says to me that in this practical world I must go slowly, I become impatient and tell him, "How can you go slowly in the matter of prohibition? You won't talk like that to a woman whose husband is drunkard." I have lived in a family where the husband happened to be a drunkard. That was in Pretoria in 1893. The lady tried to make ends meet and was always in dread as to what would happen when her lord and master returned home. If I had told her that "In this practical world we must go slowly", she would not have allowed me to continue as her cotenant. You may imagine me to be in that plight but not with one husband, not one but thousands of husbands. How can you ask me to wait? I become impatient, angry and, non-violent though I am, you will see fierceness in my eyes. I said the same thing to Mr. Anderson, the Secretary of the Temperance Association. I feel strongly about it. There are more things about which my feelings are strong and speech becomes useless for me. Those are really sacred things which I keep in my bosom and when opportunity offers itself I express my views strongly which the world cannot possibly mistake.

In this matter of prohibition we have some Englishmen with us, because they happen to be Missionaries or Christians. I do not know whether there are other Englishmen with us in this matter. They are all for some purpose too practical. They say we should realize the difficulties of Government. Why should I realize the difficulties of Government in this matter? The difficulties are purely financial and nothing else. There are three acid tests in this connection.

Not one Englishman has yet told me that prohibition is an impossibility in India except for finance. Everybody says: "Oh yes. You want to make India bear the burden of additional taxation by the introduction of prohibition, for the education of your children, etc." I would like India to become a pauper rather than that India should have lakhs and lakhs of drunkards in her midst in order to educate her children, or I would have Indian children illiterate rather than have drunkenness in the land as the price of their education. But when I am called upon to become a party to additional taxation I say "Hands off"; because there are other ways in which you can make up this financial loss. I think Government made the initial blunder of considering *abkari* as a source of revenue. It should never have been

considered a source of revenue and it is not to be a source of revenue. And my grievance is definite and tangible that this source of revenue should have been left in charge of the transferred departments to meet the charges of education, sanitation, etc., so that our ministers have to fall back upon this immoral, sinful and hideous source of revenue. There is nothing so sinful as this kind of revenue. It is difficult to contain myself and I have therefore to talk to you in a strained language.

I feel that so far as India is concerned she has a complete case for prohibition and not prohibition piece-meal in one or two districts. I have read the speech of the Madras Excise Minister. I am sorry I have had to write something criticizing that speech in the coming issue of the *Young India*.[1] The method of experimenting in one or two districts does not appeal to me. I shall not be surprised if he makes the experiment in one or two districts and if the experiment fails then it would be said that prohibition can never be tried and it can never be successful. You will try to do the right thing in the wrong manner and then denounce the right thing instead of the wrong manner. The country is in favour of prohibition. If it is a question of lakhs and lakhs of signatures in favour of prohibition it is merely a matter of organization. I have not found a single place where there has been really agitation against prohibition except when it is manufactured and financed also. There are States where territorial prohibition has been declared and where not a single man has come forward to say "we want a shop at least here." In one of the States, Europeans, who consumed whisky and brandy, are exempted. But, we are in this matter terribly handicapped; we have as our rulers or Governors those who do not consider drink as a crime or immorality. I have myself English friends who laugh at me when I talk of prohibition. I have great regard for them. They seem to think that if they drink in moderation they would not lose their sense and would not become brutes. I have myself seen these friends not only losing their sense but becoming brutes. I have seen many friends losing self-control when they drink. They are first-class men. But when they drink they become asses. It may be excusable to have spirituous liquor in countries near the North Pole. There is no need in this country at all for drink. Yet some agitation is going on here against prohibition. I had [from someone] a pile of anti-prohibition pamphlets published anonymously. They

[1] *Vide* "Total Prohibition", 8-9-1927.

constituted a hymn in praise of liquor. Radical, scriptural and all sorts of authorities have been quoted in favour of drinking in moderation and the whole thing has been presented in such an insidiously attractive form that a man who has not his wits about him may easily become a convert to the drink habit.

If you are a fierce prohibitionist like myself and if you will agitate from one end of the country to the other for prohibition, you will certainly succeed. Let us not fall into the financial trap that is laid for us. Our position should be absolutely clear. It is not our purpose to find out finances. Those who committed the initial blunder must retrace their steps. There is also a way out of the financial difficulty. Cut out 25 crores from the crores you spend upon military expenditure. The military expenditure has been jumping from day to day. If you prepare a chart it would show a staggering growth of that expenditure. You can cut out a heavy slice from that expenditure. I must not go into the political history of the question. Whatever deficit that is found in connection with the *abkari* revenue should be made good out of military expenditure and no other. There should be no additional taxation on this score. The result will be that in 10 years' time the revenue of the Government will increase enormously and that is the experience of countries where prohibition has been tried.

Do not believe the interested writings in newspapers that total Prohibition has been a failure in America. Scarcely an American who comes to India goes away without seeing me. These Americans and the literature published by the Prohibition League give the testimony that the sum-total effect of prohibition is to the good of the country although they have not been able to claim all the brilliant results that they had thought they would be able to have. There is no public opinion in America supporting the removal of prohibition. The Government is their own government and people are satisfied with the state of things there. The labourer leads a sober and honest life there. Is not that sufficient consideration for loss of revenue? Such a state of things exists in another part of the world, but not in India unfortunately. The experience of countries which have tried prohibition is that the people have become better and that the country has not been financially ruined. No ruin, no financial crisis will befall India if prohibition is introduced in India. It is the solemn duty of every one of us to see the use of drink wiped out of the land altogether if we possibly can. If I had the power and if I could have

my way, I would do so today.

I come to picketing. I confess that some pickets were violent; but the real reason for Government not tolerating picketing was the loss of revenue. People in Bihar all on a sudden became teetotallers and they were faithful to the pickets. In Assam the same thing happened. The opium dens were closed for the time being. It was a thing too terrible for Government to contemplate. There was ample evidence to show that picketing was useful and necessary and it conferred immense benefit upon India. It showed the possibility of prohibition. In America prohibition has created a tremendous spiritual upheaval. But the task of creating that spiritual consciounsness was great in America. But we in India have not the hundredth part of the difficulty that the Americans had to surmount. They had to surmount the American nature itself. Here it is not so for the atmosphere is favourable to prohibition. Therefore you need not go here cautiously. Arm-chair politicians who have no knowledge of the conditions of India do not distinguish between American and Indian life. They cannot see that we can attain prohibition if only you have the will and courage.

I make a distinction between opium and drink. Opium acts as an opiate and makes a man an idiot, whereas drink makes a man a beast. A woman would rather have her husband an idiot than a drunkard. I am willing to make an exception for the use of liquor or brandy for medicinal purposes. I make also the distinction between England and India. What is good enough for England is not necessarily good enough for India. If we allow this drink problem to continue, our posterity will curse us.

The Hindu, 6-9-1827

20. SPEECH AT HINDI PRACHAR OFFICE[1]

September 6, 1927

Gandhiji said it was superfluous for him to receive an address from the institution as he regarded it as his own.

Still I understand your view of the matter. This was till now a child being nourished and looked after by the generous people of the North. It has now become a youth who should look after himself and

[1] In reply to addresses, one by the members of the Hindi Premi Mandal and another by the staff and workers of the Hindi Prachar Press

become self-reliant. I meant that henceforward South India should collect enough money from here to make the institution self-supporting.

I appeal to the Marwaris, Gujaratis and other northern settlers here to regard this institution as their own and pay more attention to the work in all possible ways. Marwaris are businessmen by nature and I want them to instil that spirit in the workers of this institution and help to make this a prosperous and successful one. I would like them to go through the accounts which are open to the public and give necessary instructions, if any, for improvement.

Lastly I want to tell the *pracharaks* that they can do successful work in this, as in other works of this sort, only if they would lead ideal lives and possess sterling character. For workers of this kind the first essential quality required is firmness and determination to push on the work to a successful end. I am sure the *pracharaks* will all make this their life-mission if they have not already done so.

The Hindu, 6-9-1927

21. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*September 7, 1927*]

CHI. MIRA,

I anxiously wait for your wires and they come but not to present me with a clean bill.[1] But we must not grumble. Even illness must be turned to advantage and must be taken cheerfully. Your last wire has come just now to tell me that perhaps fever is under control. Let us hope it is. I often think of wiring to you but say to myself I have no right. But my prayers and my blessings are with you always.

"The same in happiness and misery!" is the teaching of the *Gita*.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5271. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] Mirahebn explains : "I had been having a severe attack of malaria. My temperature had been up to over 105."

22. DISCUSSION WITH NEILL STATUE VOLUNTEERS, MADRAS

September 6 and 7, 1927

We publish today, with the approval of Mahatma Gandhi, a full report of the Conference which the volunteers of the Neill Statue agitation had with Mahatma Gandhi during his stay in Madras on Tuesday and Wednesday. . . . The notes were taken by *The Hindu* representative and were revised by Mahatma Gandhi.

Some 20 members of the Tamil Nadu Volunteer Corps who are now en gaged in the agitation for the removal of the Neill Statue from the City on Tuesday afternoon conferred with Mahatma Gandhi on the subject for over an hour. The conversations were not over and they were continued the next day.

Mr. D. Kulandai introduced himself as the leader of these young men and told Mahatmaji how he came into this movement. He said he was horrified at the barbarous sentences which were inflicted upon these youths by the Magistrate and he felt it necessary to give his help and advice as a Congressman and a Secretary of the District Congress Committee. He was not under any pledge and was not courting arrest.

GANDHIJI: Are there one or two who have been sentenced to two years' R.I. in this connection?

The answer was in the affirmative and Mr. Kulandai added that as a result of their intervention the sentences were not too severe.

KULANDAI: So far 27 had gone to prison on this issue, two of whom are ladies. Most of those had taken part in what was called the Sword Satyagraha at Madura and the total strength of the corps was 200 drawn mainly from Madura and Ramnad districts.

Who conceived this plan of attacking Neill Statue?

And the reply was that Somayajulu and Srinivasavaradan were respon sible.

That was after the failure at Madura?

A VOLUNTEER: It was not a failure at all. We went into the streets freely with our swords and we were not arrested. We have thus successfully broken the Arms Act.

Mahatmaji could not contain his laughter and told them not to delude themselves into thinking that it was a success.

When the Government saw what you were carrying were merely tin swords and you had no public backing, they left you alone in order not to give you any advertisement; and it is therefore no use in saying that because you were not arrested it is a success to your credit.

When the Government removes the Arms Act and makes it possible for every Indian to carry arms you will have achieved your object. But remember that it is not possible. Not even a Swaraj Government can do without an Arms Act. Some check there ought to be.

Therefore, I would like you to believe that the Madura Satyagraha has failed. It is much better to own our failures, if we are to succeed henceforward.

Mahatmaji next put one or two questions to one or two of other volunteers to test their understanding of the real spirit of satyagraha.

That is why I asked you to define satyagraha. Unless you take up the definition from *Young India* and learn it, you are not going to succeed in a satyagraha campaign. If you are saturated with the true spirit of satyagraha, I will be at your back and the whole of India will be at your back.

One thing of practical value, I must tell you in this connection. You must not expect public associations to guide you or to identify themselves with satyagraha at the present moment. . . .

"Congress Committees included?" eagerly enquired one present.

Yes, at the present moment. I shall tell you why? The Congress has just now a very difficult task before it; and it cannot possibly handle these sectional movements. By sectional is not meant communal. If the Congress is called upon to help such movements, it will cut a sorry figure. The Congress has a status and a reputation to lose. Therefore it is much better for you young men not to expect the Congress or public bodies to immediately shoulder your movement.

You know the agitation in Cherala-Perala[1]. I sympathized with it. I was keeping myself in touch with that movement. I had even gone to that place because I used to entertain a high regard for it; and addressed a large public meeting. At that time I had influence in the Congress which I do not posses now. Whatever I said then that the Congress should do, it automatically did and hardly any arguments were required. Even in those days I said to Cherala-Perala: "The Congress is not going to shoulder your agitation. The Congress when it is ready will initiate its own civil disobedience. But it cannot take on itself a movement, initiated by others, however great it may be or however ably it may be conducted. It can only look at it from a distance. It can take credit if the movement is successful and can never

[1] *Vide* "Chirala-Perala", 25-8-1921.

share the discredit if it becomes unsuccessful."

Mahatmaji then gave a chapter from his life in South Africa.

I was Secretary of the British Indian Association, brought into being by me. And when I embarked on satyagraha campaign there, I did not want to break up that Association, in which were all kinds of men, by making it a party to that agitation and thereby risking its reputation. From the moment I launched on the agitation, the British Indian Association was kept aloof from satyagraha. Therefore a new association was brought into being called Passive Resistance Association with a separate fund and separate officers. When the full victory was gained the British Indian Association took the credit. That was why I had been able to carry through the struggle without much difficulty. Difficulties there were. I was hammered almost to death. If I had made the blunder of dragging the British Indian Association into the agitation, I would have cut the Association into pieces and there would have been no South African victory. And I would have missed Mahatmaship.

So, you yourself must say to the Congress: 'You may remain out, let us try our strength in this agitation. You may share the success that we may achieve but not the discredit if we fail.' I met Mr. Satyamurti this morning and told him also that the Congress cannot possibly today adopt the movement. It will have to study the movement and the men. Let us not sully the fair name of the Congress by any hasty or ill-considered act. But I tell you this also: that when you have proved your mettle and your merit the Congress must be at your back. If the Congress is not at your back under these circumstances, I would be the first to denounce the Congress. In the mean time I want you to be absolutely honest to yoursleves. Some persons told me, "Oh, oh, you don't know what they are. They are doing this for getting something in order to live, as they cannot live otherwise". Don't try to guess who the informants are and don't get angry. But falsify the accusation by your conduct.

A chit came at this stage giving the information that two of the youths who offered satyagraha had expressed their regret to the Magistrate and were let off with a fine.

"They are bogus volunteers," shouted one present.

I don't expect all of you to be sixteen annas in the rupee. Some wouldn't be a pie and a few not even that. The apology of the two does not therefore disturb me. And if they were bougus men you have

nothing to answer for.

KULANDAI: One difficulty I want to be cleared, Mahatmaji. Suppose the Government and the public know that the Congress is not supporting this movement, it is ten to one possible these boys will get more punishment and less support from the public. I went into this movement because, as I said, I was anxious as the Secretary of the District Congress Committee to save the honour and prestige of the Congress by not leaving these men in the lurch without sympathy or support.

I have already given in illustration of what I did in South Africa as Secretary of the British Indian Association.

KULANDAI: If the Government come to know that the Congress has no sympathy for this movement, all these boys would be clapped in jail.

It does not matter.

KULANDAI: Not only that, they will not get any support from the public.

Therefore my plan is to make you independent and self-supporting. We shall not take the name of the Congress, not until we have succeeded. You may take a leaf out of the book of our conquerors. Take the East India Company. It was not owned by the Crown. The Crown came afterwards. Therefore I say that the movement should not be conducted in the name of the Congress and with the authority of the Congress. As individual Congressmen you may carry on the fight.

A satyagrahi never acts hastily, exhausts all other resources before he resorts to civil disobedience. It is only then that the word 'civil disobedience' can be used and not otherwise. Yours may be civil disobedience, but if you have been hasty and have not exhausted all the other steps, then I say you should suspend your movement. I give you that advice so that public opinion may be consolidated in your favour, and so that you may be real satyagrahis. You should allow the public to take all the steps possible in their own way to remove the statue; and watch the Government whether they would do anything in the matter. If they don't do, then launch on satyagraha.

If you ask my opinion of what you should do, I shall give it. I should say you are right in your agitation, provided you fulfil the conditions I pointed out. I feel very much for you. It was by accident that I learnt of you and your movement in *The Hindu* and I at once wrote what I thought proper in *Young India*.[1] Now that I have seen you and talked to you, I shall try to do more. But before I can do so, I

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 25-8-1927, sub-title "Insolent Reminders".

want a guarantee that there is no dishonesty, no self-glorification at least about the leaders of the movement. The leaders may be cobblers or tailors, it does not matter. I want to make sure that our leaders are pure and above board and are not actuated by any expectation of any pecuniary reward. A satyagrahi must stand or fall on his own strength of will.

Don't give me an answer now. I shall give you another opportunity of meeting me. You consider carefully what I have said and tell me when you come back what your plan is. I want you to give me a list of all the volunteers you have, their age, address and occupation; and I want Mr. Kulandai as Congressman to give his certificate, if necessary, about the honesty of the movement and about the trustworthiness of the men in it. If you do not satisfy me in this simple test, you cannot go forward. You have already done spade work. The Neill Statue has got to go some time or other. The success will depend on our own strength. There is no danger in your slowing down.

Replying to Mr. M. S. Subramania Iyer, Mahatmaji said :

The present method might be a satyagrahic act or a violent act. It all depends on the motive. The motive would decide the character of the act. Damage to or destruction of an inanimate object is not always a violent act.

PAVALAR: Do you advise, Mahatma, to suspend the movement?

Yes, if you have not the real strength. But please consider well and tell me what you think, tomorrow.

When the conversations were resumed on Wednesday afternoon, one of the volunteers read the following statement as representing their opinion as a result of the discussions they had that morning and the previous night in the light of the advice given by Mahatmaji :

We have carefully considered your advice given to us yesterday and we have also had a discussion with Mr. S. Satyamurti last night. We have since reconsidered the whole matter this morning. We realize that the situation is a difficult and complex one. We would therefore prefer your advising us as to what we should do now. We will follow your advice. We only crave leave to place before you our considered views for your favourable consideration. We are very anxious that the enthusiasm roused by this movement should not be allowed to fade. We recognize that in order to carry on this struggle to a successful issue we must exhaust all other means of getting the statue removed, must rouse public enthusiasm and organize ourselves. We are afraid that if the movement be suspended without adequate provision being made for

keeping up the enthusiasm of the people for organizing the movement and for trying every available means of getting the statue removed the movement may die of inanition. We are anxious therefore that the enthusiasm now roused by the movement should be kept up by all legitimate and peaceful means and that if the movement is to be suspended it should be done as the result of your advice so stated publicly. Moreover, the suspension should be for the express purpose of resorting to this movement at the proper time on a more efficient scale, if necessary.

With a view to that we respectfully suggest that you should be pleased to give this movement a paragraph in *Young India* each week and speak about it in the course of your tour in Tamil Nadu. Moreover, we should like to have the strength of an assurance from you that at the proper time and if all other means fail you will yourself help us in this movement in all possible ways.

If these things secure your approval we agree for the suspension of the movement for three months as suggested by you. In the mean time we request you to use your influence with the local Congress leaders to give us the necessary help to keep up the agitation for the removal of the statue.

What is the necessary help?

VOLUNTEER: Delivering lectures, enlisting volunteers and strengthening our financial position—these are the ways in which we expect Mahatmaji to help us.

What is the financial assistance for ?

The volunteer replied that the volunteers, about a hundred of them, were scattered over Madura and Ramnad Districts. To encamp them, to feed and bring them to Madras money was required.

They are supporting themselves at present?

VOLUNTEER: Yes.

Therefore no money is required for their support at present?

Answer to this question also was in the affirmative.

I should imagine that no money would be required in the future even?

VOLUNTEER: We want money for propaganda work.

What propaganda work?

VOLUNTEER: Convening meetings to get support for the enlistment of volunteers.

Supposing the Congress holds meetings, you wouldn't require money. Your business really arises when you have to go to jail. The question of bringing volunteers to Madras is a small matter. You do not want all the thousand volunteers, even supposing you have that

number, to arrive at Madras at the same time. You are going to court arrest only in twos at the most. A true satyagrahi who is courting arrest and who is even prepared to die for his cause would not want any train fare from you. He is sure to find the train fare himself. If he has not the money himself, other people in his place are sure to find it for him. As for propaganda work, you need not do it yourselves; others will do it for you.

You must really leave finance out of your consideration. Money when required will come to you. But you must not insist upon it. And you must do only what is in your capacity to do and no more. I am interested in your cause because it is an appealing one. I do not want that it should get discredited. That is why I gave you an hour yesterday and another today. I repeat that you must erase financial consideration out of your mind. Otherwise, the thing will break down.

If you want to continue this fight with determination, you must do it in the gentlest manner possible. You must be absolutely honest and self-disciplined; there must be no bluster or violence. You must rely on the innate strength of satyagraha. Some day it is sure to gather irresistible strength. If you think you have not the required strength or patience in you, leave it at once. You have done your part. You have laid the foundation. The struggle will go on and the statue will go because it seeks to perpetuate terrorism of the worst type. The best place for it is the sea. Barring that it must go to England or some lumber room.

The second thing I want to tell you is that by a suspension of the movement if you are afraid of getting disorganized and disunited, I do not want you to stop. But if you do not think so and after three months you would still hold together, you issue a manifesto that you have suspended the struggle saying therein we have been so advised and therefore we have done so. We now expect the Congress and all the public associations to take up this thing in hand and do whatever they can, to have this statue removed. When it has become sufficiently demonstrated that this kind of agitation won't move the Government, it will be our turn to suffer. Then let it not be said against us that we have been hasty and that once having drawn attention to it, we did not give a chance for the removal of the statue. For these reasons we suspend satyagraha.

Then comes my part in the struggle. I cannot say I won't lead the struggle; nor am I able to say I shall certainly do so. It will depend

on how I feel at the time and how you yourselves have behaved in the mean time. In these matters I am guided by impulse—impulse is not the right word—I wish to say intuition, a sacred word. But all the support the *Young India* can give will be entirely yours. I shall do whatever I can to educate public opinion through its columns.

In answer to a question :

The final decision will rest with you and not with me. I would not absolve you from your own responsibility. Your are the originators; I can direct your energy in proper channel and give you advice. But if you accept my advice and use my name, then you will understand you will do it on my terms. I have given them to you already. I shall reduce them to writing if you want. If there is a departure from those terms by a hair's breadth even, I shall have nothing to do with it. The cause is good. It will be damaged if at the back of it are bad men. The movement must be a *bona fide* movement. If it is found that you speak one thing with your lips and mean another, I would not hesitate to denounce it.

To Satyamurti :

What do you say to this? Do you think that the Congress may or will take up this question in any way?

SATYAMURTI: I see no objection to the Congress taking it up. As far as I can ascertain from friends, the general feeling is that the movement must be supported. What we can do is that in the Corporation we can move resolutions and in the Legislative Council also. And I think we will. Besides that we will use the Press and the platform to create a feeling against the statue as representing terrorism as Mahatmaji put it. For this no financial responsibility need be taken by the young men. The Congress will find money. Is that right, Mr. Kulandai?

KULANDAI: That is one view of the subject.

SATYAMURTI: Even about Congress doing it?

KULANDAI: If this opportunity is lost the South Indian temperament is such that the whole thing will fizzle out. That is my own honest individual opinion. If the majority are for suspending it now and taking it up again after three months and if the Congress Committees will do the propaganda work as efficiently as they have been doing the work . . .

SATYAMURTI: That is for you, the Secretary of the District Congress Committee.

KULANDAI: My own honest impression is that the moment we give it up, the movement is lost for ever. Three months means never. The enthusiasm evoked in this presidency over this matter is genuine and it should not be allowed to die out. It is not

North Indian temperament, Mahatmaji.

I don't consider that North India is any better than South India. We are chips of the same block. Absolutely no difference.

A VOLUNTEER: Our only fear is from the incident which took place two days back. Every one of us may not be an absolute satyagrahi. We don't want demoralization to set in. We want to organize ourselves well, and we want to add more to our number by our further agitation and propaganda. We do not know who among us are real satyagrahis. We started the movement all on a sudden.

Therefore this is really a new ground for suspension.

VOLUNTEER: I do not want at the same time that the Government should be given rest. The agitation must go on in other ways to remove the statue. Ours is only a strategic retreat and no surrender. It is meant for us to go forward with redoubled vigour. We do not want to confess our inability becuse it would have a demoralizing effect.

This is a new situation. You are really now desirous of covering your weakness under my name.

VOLUNTEER: No, we are merely respecting Mahatmaji's opinion and advice: and we follow it, lest Mahatmaji should denounce us and lose real satyagrahis.

You said it may be a strategic move. That means you are not at present a well-organized body of real satyagrahis. You may say that it is a discovery you made after conversation with me, and you want to postpone the movement irrespective of all other considerations in order to make up for this defect. There is room for that honest strategy in satyagraha. In making an announcement of your suspension, you can state that after conversations with me you were ill-prepared to satisfy the test that I laid down and recognizing that unless you could fulfil that test, the movement would not succeed, you proposed to postpone this thing for 3 months, during which time you proposed to equip yourselves well so as to satisfy the test and that you would afterwards reopen satyagraha, if in the mean time the offending statue was not removed. That would be the correct satyagraha state. Or do you say you are now ready?

VOLUNTEER: We want the Neill Statue to be removed. If the hundred volunteers we have with us are exhausted, the movement will automatically stop. But the statue may not be removed. Thus we would have failed in our purpose. We want a continuous stream of volunteers coming up until the statue is removed.

You suspend in order to ensure a continuous stream. Suspension therefore is rquired on that ground. On the other hand, if you feel that you must finish the one hundred or twenty, do so and let it not be said

that your enthusiasm was allowed by suspension to cool down. But I must tell you again that in satyagraha there are occasions for suspension. Did I not suspend the Vykom Satyagraha?

You say there would be demoralization if you suspend satya graha stating you are not ready now. There is no such thing as demoralization in satyagraha. A satyagrahi relies upon his own internal strength and not outside support. But I would feel shocked if at the end of three months you are not ready and if the statue is still there, as is bound to be there, because you know the Government will not easily and without a tremendous effort.

Don't really suspend if have any fear of its fizzling out. If you want to suspend it, do it on this absolute frank admission that under the circumstances I have mentioned now, you want to suspend.

A VOLUNTEER: Why shall we not go forward?

Yes; I do not want to clamp the zeal of a single man among you. I am anxious to be cautious in this matter.

A VOLUNTEER: We want to ask you one question. That is whether Mahatmaji will give us his support?

Yes, I will support you so long as I find you on the straight road.

Another offer I will make, if you want. I have got complete notes of yesterday; and I believe today also notes are being taken. If you like, I will have them published. It is right for you to let the public know about it. If you don't want the publication, I shall not do so. I tell you there is no harm in publishing what has happened here; and there is no secrecy about it. Shall I publish them?

VOICES: Yes, yes.

A VOLUNTEER: We shall leave it to your choice to continue the struggle or leave it.

If I were in your place I will suspend the movement making this confession that we are not fully equipped and strong. If you make that confession, you must suspend the movement.

PAVALAR: Some are afraid and some are not. They want your advice, Mahatmaji.

I have given the advice that if I were you, I would suspend.

A VOLUNTEER: Do you permit us to proceed with our struggle?

I don't prohibit you; in that sense you have my permission.

A VOLUNTEER: You will bless the movement?

You have had my blessings; I shall bless you again.

ANOTHER VOLUNTEER: As for suspending the movement, if you advise us to suspend, we are prepared to suspend.

I cannot take any responsibility. You must not suspend in deference to anybody else. If you suspend, you will do so in response to your own inner voice.

VOLUNTEER: We don't find our inner voice asking us to suspend.

Then go on.

VOLUNTEER: We shall continue the struggle in the manner in which we are doing at present. Meanwhile we request you to give your support. We will conduct the movement in perfect satyagraha spirit and well-disciplined. But if ousiders of their own accord come in our way and cause disturbance, we request Mahatmji not to blame us. Further, we want you to write in *Young India*.

In *Young India*, certainly.

VOLUNTEER: We request you to advise some local Congress leaders to do propaganda work.

I shall certainly advise them. I have discussed the whole thing with Mr. Satyamurti. I suppose he will tell them. I shall publicly advise Congressmen; and you will find it in the notes also to which I have referred. You go on fearlessly; only don't have complications. Don't countenance violence or untruth. Either will spoil the cause.

In reply to another volunteer :

You will give me the list of volunteers, with their age, address and occupation. I shall scan the list. You must publish the list also to make the public know who are the authorized satyagrahis. If anyone offers satyagraha he does at his own risk. If more men come into your hand, publish their names also. When you go to the statue don't attract the public. Go there in the night, even dead of night, in order to avoid a crowd. Give, however, intimation to the police about the time you go there. If you come to know that the police give intimation of the time to the public or people whom they want to create mischief, then you would not inform the Police at all. Let not the public interfere with your work. If they want to take part, let them hold demonstration elsewhere, hold meetings, pass resolutions.

This closed the Conference and the volunteers withdrew.

The Hindu, 10-9-1927

23. SPEECH AT PACHAIYAPPA'S COLLEGE, MADRAS [1]

September 7, 1927[2]

MR. PRINCIPAL, STUDENTS AND FRIENDS[3]

I thank you sincerely for all the gifts you have given me for *Daridranarayana*. This is not the first time I enter this Hall. It was in 1896 that I entered this Hall in connection with the struggle in South Africa.[4] Dr. Subramania Aiyar of revered memory presided at the function. The reason why I recall this meeting is that I made the acquaintance of the students of India then for the first time. As you may know I am a matriculate, and therefore never had any college education worth the name in India. But when after the address was finished and the thanksgiving completed I went out to students who were lying in wait for me and took away from all the copies of the "Green Pamphlet"[5] that I was then circulating throughout India, and it was for the sake of those students that I asked the late Mr. G. Parameshwaran Pillai, who be-friended the cause and me as no one else did, to print copies and circulate them. With supreme pleasure he printed 10,000 copies of the Pamphlet. Such was the demand on the part of the students for understanding the situation in South Africa and it pleased me immensely, and I said to myself, "Yes, India may be proud of her children and may base all her hopes upon them." Since that time my acquaintance with students has been growing in volume and intensity. As I said in Bangalore,[6] "more if expected from those who give much, and since you have given me the right to expect much

[1] This was published under the caption, "Two Speeches".

[2] From *The Hindu*, 7-9-1927

[3] *Ibid*

[4] *Vide* "Interview to *The Statesman*", 10-11-1896, "Letter to *The Englishman*", 13-11-1896, "Interview to *The Englishman*", on or before 13-11-1896, "Speech at Public Meeting, Poona", 16-11-1896, "Statement of Expenses", 1896, "Telegram to the Viceroy", 30-11-1896, "Letter to *The Englishman*", 30-11-1896 and "Interview to *The Natal Advertiser*", 13-1-1897.

[5] *Vide* "The Credentials", 1896, "The Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa : An Appeal to the Indian Public", 4-8-1896, "Notes on the Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa", 22-9-1896, Speech at Public Meeting, Bombay", 26-9-1896, "Letter to F. S. Taleyarkhan", 10-10-1896, "A Letter", 16-10-1896, Letter to *The Times of India*", 17-10-1896, "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", 18-10-1896, "Letter to F. S. Taleyarkhan", 18-10-1896, "Speech at Meeting, Madras", 26-10-1896 and "Preface to the Second Edition of the 'Green Pamphlet' ".

[6] *Vide* "Speech at Citizens' Meeting, Bangalore", 28-8-1927.

more. I shall never be satisfied with all that you could give me! You have endorsed some of the work that it has been my privilege to do. You have mentioned with affection and reverence in your address the name of *Daridranarayana* and you, Sir (Principal), have—and I have no doubt with utmost sincerity—endorsed the claim that I have made on behalf of the spinning-wheel. Many of my distinguished and learned countrymen, I know, have rejected that claim, saying that the little bit of a wheel which was happily put away by our sisters and our mothers could never lead to the attainment of swaraj. And yet you have endorsed that claim and pleased me immensely. Though you, students, have not said as much in your address, yet you have said sufficient in it to warrant the belief that you have in your hearts a real corner for the spinning-wheel. Let not therefore this purse be the first and last demonstration of your affection for the spinning-wheel. I tell you it would be an embarrassment for me if it is the last demonstration of your affection; for I shall have no use for the money if the khadi that may be produced through the distribution of that money amongst the starving millions is not used by you. After all lip profession of faith in the charkha and the throwing of a few rupees at me in a patronizing manner won't bring swaraj and won't solve the problem of the ever-deepening poverty of the toiling and starving millions. I want to correct myself. I have said toiling millions. I wish that it was a true description. Unfortunately, as we have not revised our tastes about clothing, we have made it impossible for these starving millions to toil throughout the year. We have imposed upon them a vacation, which they do not need, for at least four months in the year. This is not a figment of my imagination, but it is a truth repeated by many English administrators, if you reject the testimony of your own countrymen who have moved in the midst of these masses. So then if I take this purse away and distribute it amongst the starving sisters, it does not solve the question. On the contrary in will impoverish their soul. They will become beggars and get into the habit of living upon charity. Heaven help the man, the woman or the nation that learns to live on charity! What you and I want to do is to provide work for those sisters of ours living protected in their own homes, and this is the only work that you can provide them with. It is dignified and honest work, and it is good enough work. One anna may mean nothing to you. You will throw it away in getting into a tram car and lazily passing your time instead of taking exercise for 2, 3, 4, or 5 miles as the case may be. But when it finds its way into the pockets of one poor sister it

fructifies. She labours for it and she gives me beautiful yarn spun by her sacred hands, a yarn that has a history behind it. It is a thread worth weaving a garment out of, for princes and potentates. A piece of calico from a mill has no such history behind it. I must not detain you over this one theme, great as it is for me, and though it engrosses practically the whole of my time. *This purse of yours will not be a help but a hindrance to me If it is not an earnest of your determination henceforth, if you have not it already, that you are not going to wear anything else but khadi.*

Let me not be deluded into the belief that you believe in this gospel of khadi, because you give me the purse and because you applaud me. I want you to act up to your profession. I do not want it to be said of you—the salt of India—that you gave this money merely to bamboozle me, that you do not want to wear khadi and that you have no belief in it. Do not fulfil the prophecy that had been made by a distinguished son of Tamil Nadu and a friend of mine. He has said that when I die I will not need any other firewood to reduce my corpse to ashes but the wood that will be collected out of the spinning-wheels that I am now distributing. He has no faith in the charkha and he thinks that those who utter the name of the charkha do so merely out of respect for me. It is an honest opinion. It will be a great national tragedy if the khadi movement turns out to be that and you will have been direct contributors to the tragedy and participators in that crime. It will be a national suicide. If you have no living faith in the charkha, reject it. It would be a truer demonstration of your love; you will open my eyes and I shall go about my way crying hoarse in the wilderness: "You have rejected the charkha and thereby you have rejected *Daridranarayana*." But save me and save yourselves the pain, the degradation and the humiliation that await us if there is any delusion or camouflage about this. This is one thing. But there are many things more in your address.

You have mentioned there child marriage and child widows. A learned Tamilian has written to me to address students on child widows. He has said that the hardships of child widows in this presidency are far greater than those of child widows in other parts of India. I have not been able to test the truth of this statement. You should know that better than I do. But what I would like you, young men around me, to do is that you should have a touch of chivalry about you. If you have that, I have a great suggestions to offer. I hope the majority of you are unmarried, and a fair number of you are also

brahmacharis. I have to say a fair number" because I know students; a student who casts his lustful eyes upon his sister is not a *brahmachari*. I want you to make this sacred resolve that you are not going to marry a girl who is not a widow, you will seek out a widow girl if you cannot get a widow girl you are not going to marry at all. Make that determination, announce it to the world, announce it to your parents if you have them or to your sisters. I call them widow girls by way of correction because I believe that a child ten or fifteen years old, who was no consenting party to the so-called marriage, who having married, having never lived with the so-called husband, is suddenly declared to be a widow, is not a widow. It is an abuse of the term, abuse of language and a sacrilege. The word 'widow' in Hindusim has a sacred odour about it. I am a worshipper of a true widow like the late Mrs. Ramabai Ranade who knew what it was to be a widow. But a child nine years old knows nothing of what a husband should be. If it is not true that there are such child widows in the presidency, then my case falls to the ground. But if there are such child widows, it becomes your sacred duty to make the determination to marry a girl widow if you want to rid ourselves of this curse. I am superstitious enough to believe that all such sins that a nation commits react upon it physically. I believe that all these sins of ours have accumulated together to reduce us to a state of slavery. You may get the finest constitution that is conceivable dropping upon you from the House of Commons. It will be worthless if there are not men and women fit enough to work that constitution. Do you suppose that we can possibly call ourselves men worthy of ruling ourselves or others or shaping the destiny of a nation containing 30 crores so long as there is one single widow who wishes to fulfil her fundamental wants but is violently prevented from doing so? It is not religion, but irreligion. I say that, saturated as I am with the spirit of Hinduism. Do not make the mistake that it is the Western spirit in me that is speaking. I claim to be full to overflowing with the spirit of India undefiled. I have assimilated many things from the West but not this. There is no warrant for this kind of widowhood in Hinduism.

All I have said about child widows necessarily applies to child wives. You must be able surely to control your lust to this extent, that you are not going to marry a girl that is under 16 years of age. If I could do so I would lay down 20 as the minimum. Twenty years is early enough even in India. It is we who are responsible for the precocity of girls, not even the Indian climate, because I know girls of

the age of 20 who are pure and undefiled and able to stand the storm that may rage round. Let us not hug that precocity to ourselves. Some Brahmin students tell me that they cannot follow this principle, that they cannot get Brahmin girls sixteen years old, very few Brahmins keep their daughters unmarried till that age, the Brahmin girls are married mostly before 10, 12 and 13 years. Then I say to the Brahmin youth, "Cease to be a Brahmin, if you cannot possibly control yourself." Choose a grown-up girl of 16 who became a widow when she was a child. If you cannot get a Brahmin widow who has reached that age, then go and take any girl you like. And I tell you that the God of the Hindus will pardon that boy who has preferred to marry out of his caste rather than ravish a girl of twelve. When your heart is not pure and you cannot master your passions, you cease to be an educated man. You have called your institution a premier institution. I want you to live up to the name of the premier institution which must produce boys who will occupy the front rank in character. And what is education without character and what is character without elementary personal purity? Brahminism I adore. I have defended Varnashrama Dharma. But Brahminism that can tolerate untouchability, virgin widowhood, spoliation of virgins, stinks in my nostrils. It is a parody of Brahminism. There is no knowledge of Brahman therein. There is no true interpretation of the scriptures. It is undiluted animalism. Brahminism is made of sterner stuff. I want these few remarks of mine to go deep down into your hearts. I am watching the boys whilst I am pouring out my heart. I have not come to appeal to your intellects but to your hearts. You are the hope of the country and what I have said is of primary importance for you.

In response to the request of a Calicut professor I shall now proceed to say something about cigarette smoking and coffee and tea drinking. These are not necessities of life. There are some who manage to take ten cups of coffee a day. Is it necessary for their healthy development and for keeping them awake, for the performance of their duties? If it is necessary to take coffee or tea to keep them awake, let them not drink coffee or tea but go to sleep. We must not become slaves to these things. But the majority of the people who drink coffee or tea are slaves to them. Cigars and cigarettes, whether foreign or indigenous, must be avoided. Cigarette smoking is like an opiate and the cigars that you smoke have a touch of opium about them. They get to your nerves and you cannot leave them afterwards. How can a single student foul his mouth by converting it

into a chimney? If you give up these habits of smoking cigars and cigarettes and drinking coffee and tea you will find out for yourselves how much you are able to save. A drunkard in Tolstoy's story is hesitating to execute his design of murder so long as he has not smoked his cigar. But he puffs it, and then gets up smiling and saying, "What a coward am I," takes the dagger and does the deed. Tolstoy spoke from experience. He has written nothing without having had personal experience of it. And he is much more against cigars and cigarettes than against drink. But do not make the mistake that between drink and tobacco, drink is a lesser evil. No. If cigarette is Beelzebub, then drink is Satan.

There is the Hindi Prachar office supported by people in the North. They have spent nearly a lakh of rupees and the Hindi teachers have been doing their work regularly. Some progress has been made but we have yet to make substantial progress. You can all learn Hindi in one year provided you give one hour a day. You can understand simple Hindi in six months. I can't speak to you in Hindi because most of you do not know it. Hindi should be made the universal tongue in India. You should know also Sanskrit, for then you will be able to read *Bhagavad Gita*. As students of a premier Hindu institution, you ought to be taught *Bhagavad Gita*. I would expect Mussalman boys also to read in this institution.

A VOICE: No *Panchama* is admitted.

This is a discovery to me. This institution should be flung open to *Panchamas* and Mussalmans. I would de-Hinduize this institution if a *Panchama* has no entry here. (Hear! hear!) The fact that this is a Hindu institution is no reason why a Mussalman or a *Panchama* could not receive education here. I think it is high time that the trustees revise their constitution. This is a petition from me, and earnest and a very God-fearing Hindu, saturated with the spirit of Hinduism, not from a petty-fogging reformer, but from one who is trying to live the best in Hinduism. Mr. Principal, you will please convey this petition to the proper quarters, and it will be a great joy to me to hear during my sojourn in this presidency that my petition has been heard.[1] I thank you for listening to this message.

Young India, 15-9-1927

[1] The principal of the College in his vote of thanks said that attempts were being made to throw open the College to all classes of Indians.

24. SPEECH AT ROYAPURAM, MADRAS[1]

September 7, 1927

FRIENDS,

I thank you for the address and purse for khadi. I am glad to find that you are taking interest in all that pertains to the Congress. And it pleases me to find your assurance that you are determined to do your share of work in making the forthcoming Congress a thorough success. The Reception Committee here has unanimously elected a tried servant of India to preside over the deliberations. He comes to his task with one great mission that he has set before himself. Dr. Ansari, Surgeon, and one of the best surgeons that India has produced, surgeon that he is, is bent upon healing the breach between Hindus and Mussalmans. I know that many Provincial Congress Committees gave their votes in favour of Dr. Ansari's name in the right hope that his chairmanship of the Congress will result in healing the deep wounds. But let us not make the mistake of supposing that because we have elected him our task is fulfilled. A patient's task is never fulfilled simply because he calls in for his assistance the wisest and best surgeon. He is expected to co-operate with his surgeon body and mind. He is expected to be faithful to the directions of the surgeon. We are the patients. Dr. Ansari is the surgeon whom we have invited. And if we do not co-operate with him in the great task that he has undertaken, the fault will not be his but ours. And since the greatest burden will fall upon the shoulders of those Congressmen who are in Madras and delegates that will flock in largest numbers from the South, it is a matter of great pleasure to me that you are determined to make this Congress a success. You have taken upon your shoulders a very great and grave responsibility. I underatand that Sjt. Srinivasa Iyengar is daily in telegraphic communication with the secretary here betraying his care and anxiety about the forthcoming session of the Congress. It is for the men and women of Madras to lighten his labours and make his task easy. We must not expect our leaders to do everything for us. It is often heard against us as a reproach that we, the rank and file, will not put the shoulders to the wheel. I would like Madras to remove the reproach.

You have declared your faith in the spinning-wheel and khadi. You tell me in your address that if arrangements are made for

[1] At Kalmandapam Maidan

supplying you with cotton and for taking all the yarn that may be spun off your shoulders, you will be able to organize spinning and weaving of khadi. If you are serious about this matter you have to go one step further. You must form your own committee and find your own cotton. Every spinner in order to be a good spinner has got to learn carding and make his or her own sliver. You should aim at weaving all the yarn that is produced; that is the best and cheapest method of producing khadi. If you cannot weave khadi for yourselves and if you give good, strong, even and weavable yarn the All-India Spinners' Association will certainly take up all the yarn that you can give.

I understand that this is a labour centre. To the fellow labourers I would say just one word. You must give up drink at any cost. And so must you gambling and vice. It is not a difficult task for the labourers to give up this great curse of drink which is sapping their vitality and morals. Indian labour has a bright future before it if it will only help itself. The best beginning in self-help is self-purification. Let the laourers also remember that there are millions who are, so far as finance is concerned, brothers infinitely worse than they are. And if they will but think of these brothers and sisters who are poorer and worse off than they are, they will at least adopt khadi. I know that all the men and the sisters here have not contributed to this purse. Volunteers will be presently going in your midst and if you desire to contribute something going in your midst and if you desire to contribute something please do so. No one need give a single pie unless she or he believes in khadi. The pies of the poor are just as welcome as the rupees of the rich if either is given with a willing heart.

There is a request made to me just now that I should talk about the Neill Statue Satyagraha. I have said what was in my mind at the meeting in the Beach.[1] I gave more than one hour yesterday and more than one hour today also to those volunteers who could come to discuss the matter with me. I have given them all the advice that I was capable of giving. You will find in a day or two the substance of the conversation in the papers; and the notes of this interview, as soon as I get them, will be revised by me and then there will be an authentic publication.[2] But this much I would like to declare here. The cause appeals to me most forcibly. I have not a shadow of doubt that that

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Madras", 4-9-1927.
[2] *Vide* "Discussion with Neill Statue Volunteers", 6 & 7-9-1927.

statue must be removed from that site. I have seen the inscription there with its false history.[1] The statue there is a standing insult to the nation, and the volunteers deserve congratulation for having drawn attention to the existence of the statue by their suffering. But every cause or many causes in this world have been ruined by bad management and bad handling. The volunteers, if they continue the fight, will have to take care that no dirt creeps into their movement. If satyagraha is a very fine weapon to handle, it is also a very dangerous weapon. It becomes a dangerous weapon if the slightest uncleanliness touches it. Just at the tiniest drop of poison makes the most wholesome milk unfit for human consumption, so it is the slightest touch of impurity spoils the battle of satyagraha and damages both the cause and those who are connected with it. If there is the slightest violence on the part of satyagrahi or if there is the slightest departure from truth, they will damage themselves and the cause. Satyagraha abhors secrecy. It is the openes form of warfare I have ever known. Similarly, satyagraha abhors cowardice. And he who preaches satyagraha with any selfishness about him damns himself. Satyagraha is a weapon which can be handled without the slightest financial support—because it is the essence of suffering. The greater the amount of suffering voluntarily undertaken, the quicker and purer is the success. If therefore the satyagrahis approach their task well, understanding these conditions and limitations and if they will fulfil all these conditions, let them rest assured that success is doubtless theirs. If they do not possess these qualifications and if they have no faith in these conditions let them give up satyagraha. I shall count it as bravery on their part, if they give up satyagraha because they cannot fulfil its conditions. It also requires a certain measure of bravery to own up one's mistakes or limitations and retrace one's steps. But if they will fulfil the conditions I have stated just now, they have my blessings and they will deserve the blessings and encouragement of every patriot.

The Hindu, 8-9-1927

25. TOTAL PROHIBITION

I ask you to realize the fact that the alteration of the present Abkari Act with regard to making, manufacture and possession of liquor, etc., must necessarily, to a large extent, lead to harassing of the people. You must be

[1] *Vide* "The Neill Statute and Non-Violence", 29-9-1927.

> prepared for such a harassment which is an inevitable concomitant of the policy of prohibition. I must count then upon your unstinted support. I do not want your support for picketing shops, to preach about the evils of drink and other kindred work. But I want your help in the matter of putting down illicit manufacture of liquor and kindred crimes.

This is an extract from the speech of the Madras Minister for Public Health and Excise reported in *The Hindu*. There is one more assistance the Minister has asked the people to render, i.e., submit to increased taxation. Of this I do not propose at present to say anything except that where the people are able, they should submit to further taxation on proof of necessity. No monetary cost is too great to pay for achieving total prohibition.

But at the present moment, I would confine myself to the extract quoted by me. I fear that the Minister has taken a wrong view of prohibition. In my opinion, it has not to be taken piece-meal. To be successful it should be taken as a whole. It is not a one-district question but it is an all-India question. I have not hesitated to give my opinion, that it was a wicked thing for the Imperial Government to have transferred this the most immoral source of revenue to the provinces and to have thus made this tainted revenue the one source for defraying the cost of the education of Indian youth.

But what pains me about the Minister's speech is his superficial treatment of a question which affects the well-being of the masses. Surely he is not serious about his scheme if he expects the people to do his police work. And why does he frighten the people by saying that *there must be harassment* if prohibition is tried? Is there harassment of the people because theft or manufacture of gunpowder are classed as crimes? Is not unlicensed distillation even now a crime? What the Minister implies therefore is that the men who today hold licences to manufacture or sell liquor will after the prohibition distil surreptitiously and that therefore they will be harassed. There need be in this no harassment of the people.

But it betrays want of imagination and lack of sympathy with the people, if the Minister believes that as a prohibitionist he has nothing more to do but to declare prohibition and prosecute those who will break his laws. I venture to submit that prosecutions are the smallest and the destructive part of prohibition. I suggest that there is a larger and constructive side to prohibition. People drink because of the conditions to which they are reduced. It is the factory labourers

and others that drink. They are forlorn, uncared for, and they take to drink. They are no more vicious by nature than teetotallers are saints by nature. The majority of people are controlled by their environment. Any minister who is sincerely anxious to make prohibition a success will have to develop the zeal and qualities of a reformer. He will then require precisely the help that the Madras Minister is reported to have scorned. In my humble opinion, he does need pickets and men and women who would "preach about the evils of drink" and do "other kindred work." It is just in these very things that he will want an army of volunteers who will be associated with him in reforming the life of the drunkard. He will have to convert every drink shop into a refreshment shop and concert room combined. Poor labourers will want some place where they can congregate and get wholesome, cheap, refreshing, non-intoxicating drinks, and if they can have some good music at the same time it would prove as a tonic to them and draw them. These can, by judicious management and association of the people, become paying concerns for the State. He who will handle the problem of temperance will have to give a more serious study to it than the Minister seems to have done. Let him study the methods adopted in America and tried by the great temperance organizations of the world. This study will give but limited help. For the Western conditions are widely different from the Indian. Our methods too, will have, therefore, to be largely different. Whereas total prohibition in the West is most difficult of accomplishment, I hold that it is the easiest of accomplishment in this country. When an evil like drink in the West attains the status of respectability, it is the most difficult to deal with. With us drink is still, thank God, sufficiently disrespectable and confined not to the general body of the people but to a minority of the poor classes.

Young India, 8-9-1927

26. OUR CULTURE[1]

GIFT FROM A PEASANT

I received while on tour the following from a poor peasant of U.P. It bears the date November 4, 1924. I have been all this time hoarding it among my papers. I give it here just as it was received. I do not even hold back the name, for there is not the slightest fear of

[1] A Gujarati version of this was published in *Navajivan*, 11-9-1927.

Ramchandra being flattered. It is most likely that he does not even read *Navajivan*. Even if he does, I am certain that one who has sent me these beautiful verses[1] of Tulsidas will nto become swollen with pride.

GIFT FROM BORODADA

I received another equally priceless gift from the late Borodada[2], which I always carry with me. He gave me the following verse, written out in his own hands, when I visited Santiniketan the last time[3] before his death.

I shall give the meaning :

> In the company of a saint, one's suffering turns into welcome happiness, death into immortality and a dull person into a man of perfect illumination.[4]

A supposedly uncultured peasant can, on occasion, quote verses from Tulsidas which fill one with the joy of knowledge and devotion, and another, a great poet, forgets his ego though he is a man of profound knowledge and seeks the company of saintly men. If the reader reflects over both these instances in a detached spirit, leaving out the reference to me, he will realize what our culture is and how we can make ourselves worthy of it.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 8-9-1927

[1] He who gathers up all objects of natural affection—mother, father, brother, son and wife, wealth, home, friends and family—like strands, and makes of them one strong rope to bind his soul to my feet; he who looks on all with an impartial eye and has abandoned all desire, and in whose heart is neither joy nor sorrow nor fear, such a saint abides in my heart like riches in the heart of an avaricious man. Saints like yourself are dear to me; it is only for their sake I am constrained to take on mortal form.

Those who worship the Personal and devote themselves to the good of others, and persevere in the ways of virtue and religious duty, and love the feet of the twice-born, are dear to me as my own life.

[2] Dwijendranath Tagore, elder brother of Rabindranath Tagore

[3] In May 1925

[4] "A dull person into a man of perfect illumination" is a paraphrase. The literal meaning is : "Nothingness into fullness."

27. SPEECH AT CONJEEVARAM

September 8, 1927

FRIENDS,

I thank you for the several addresses and also the purses. I congratulate the Municipality upon their efforts to reduce to practical shape the message of the spinning-wheel. I hope the boys and girls of the elementary school are learning spinning regularly and in a scientific manner. In many municipalities where this experiment has been tried, the spinning-wheels have practically remained idle because of want of personal interest on the part of councillors. And you will not make it a real success unless at least one or two of the municipal councillors will themselves become expert spinners sand keep a vigilant watch over what is being done in these schools. I wish also to draw you attention to the experience of other municipal and non-municipal schools that it is not the wheel which can be successfully worked but it is the *takli.*

You ask me to tell you what more can be done to serve the poorest of the land. You, the parents of the children who go to the schools, can see to it that your children are dressed in khadi. You can successfully induce the municipal employees from the highest to the lowest to wear nothing but khadi. Several municipalities have successfully performed this operation.

One of the addresses asks me to do something to heal the widened breach between Brahmins and Non-Brahmins. I assure you that I should heal the breach today if I had the power. I have told both Brahmin and Non-Brahmin friends that I am prepared during my tour to discuss the thing with you and assist in arriving at a solution, if it is at all possible. It is a spectacle humiliating to both Brahmins and Non-Brahmins. And really our capacity for swaraj can only be tested by your ability successfully to handle such problems. Beyond stating that I am always willing to assist, it is not possible for me to make any concrete suggestions.

Yours is a city renowned for its holiness throughout India. But unfortunately as in other places here also holiness has become but an empty name. Though you do something for khaddar and something more in some other directions, it does not make the city holy. Holiness is made of sterner stuff. It means purity of conduct and

purity of heart in the majority of its citizens. I wish to ask you to ask yourselves and answer the question whether you regard a single being as untouchable. Belief in untouchability and holiness are contradictory terms.

I received a letter today in this place asking me to dwell exclusively upon the question of child widows. Whilst it is not possible for me to deal with this great evil to the exclusion of every other, I am painfully conscious of the fact that you are not free from this evil. It is no credit to Hinduism that it has so many child virgin widows. If I had the power I the would certainly insist upon every parent getting married his child widow in his home. Child widow, again, is a contradiction in terms. Only a full grown woman who has been a consenting party to her marriage and who enjoyed the married life can become a widow.

Closely related to the question of child widows is the question of child marriages. It is an inhuman thing to give away in marriage a little girl under sixteen years. We do violence to our Shastras when we wrest from them a meaning which panders to our lust. Now, perhaps, you understand a little of what I mean by holiness. I hope that you, who are naturally and pardonably proud of this city, will bestir yourselves and take early and energetic steps to rid yourselves of the evils to which I have drawn attention. If you really feel for the poorest of the land as you claim to do in your address, you will not rest content until you have brought about total prohibition.

There is a note handed to me asking me to tell you something about the Tilak Swaraj Fund and the present Khaddar Fund for which you have given purses today. I gladly give you the information. So far as the Tilak Swaraj Fund is concerned, I may inform you that the audited accounts have been published and circulated on behalf of the All-India Congress Committee all over India. Anyone who is even now desirous of seeing how much was collected and how the fund was distributed, is entitled to get from the General Secretary a copy of the accounts. The manner of disbursements was in this way. A certain percentage went to the Central Fund in the hands of the All-India Congress Committee and the balance was kept with the respective provinces in which the amounts were collected. And the respective provinces have also, so far as I am aware, except in one or two instances, published audited accounts. You may also know that the largest amounts were collected in Bombay and these remained vested in a number of trustees specially appointed. Furthermore, very large

amounts of this fund were earmarked and these earmarked funds were administered by those donors who gave the funds so earmarked. It is my conviction that no fund of that magnitude has been so cleanly administered as the Tilak Swaraj Fund.

But that does not mean there has never been any misappropriation of these funds. Look at every other human institution. The Congress has had its share of faithless servants. But my examination has disclosed the fact that in the Congress there has been as defalcation. This refers to the Tilak Swaraj Fund and you are able to achieve it because of the extraordinary care that was taken in the appointment of responsible officers. You had in Seth Jamnalalji a treasurer who was not only inviolable, but whose vigilance was surpassed by a single treasurer on the face of the earth. When I say this of Seth Jamnalalji, I assure you that I speak from personal experience.

Now about the Khadi Fund of which also Seth Jamnalalji is the treasurer and Shankerlal Banker is the Secretary. I am entirely satisfied that it is impossible to find two better men than these friends for the administration of this fund. And over and above them is a Board consisting of picked men, who believe in the message of the spinning-wheel. These funds are kept in banks of first-class credit. There is a periodical inspection all over India of provincial accounts; and the accounts also are periodically audited both in the provinces and at the centres. It is open to anyone whether he is a contributor or not to see these accounts. The method of distribution of this bund is to confine the purses that are being collected to the provinces in which they are collected. But the Board does not follow that absolute rule. For instance, we have collected large amounts in Bombay but almost nothing has been spent in Bombay itself. Though very little has been collected in Orissa large amounts were spent in organizing khadi work in Orissa. Similarly more has been spent in Tamil Nadu than has been hitherto collected. This is an absolute rule that wherever there is great distress and there is a chance of working in the distressed area through able and honest workers, funds are always made available.

I always invite enquiries and searching enquiries about the finances of public institutions and it was in appreciation of that fact that I entered into an elaborate explanation of the question that was handed to me. I wish the public take much more and abler interest in the financial adiministration of all trust funds. I am painfully conscious of the fact that in spite of the care that I am capable of

devoting, it is not possible for me to do it unless I get vigilant assistance from the public to ensure absolute purity of the administration of numerous funds which the public have trusted me with. To ensure absolute correctness and purity of administration, without active and intelligent assistance of the public, is beyond the power of one single individual. I will gladly answer any further questions that may arise out of my explanation either now or by writing.

The Hindu, 10-9-1927

28. SPEECH TO ARUNDHATIYAS, PERAMBUR

September 8, 1927

In replying to the address, Mahatmaji exhorted this community of cobblers to carry on their trade with dead cattle hide instead of with hide of slaughtered animals. Mahatmaji said he himself had made shoes and could make fairly good shoes even now. He could not however make such a beautiful pair as the one they had presented him with.[1] Shoemaking was a respectable trade of which no one need be ashamed. He himself had now organized a tannery at Sabarmati where dead cattle hide was tanned.

Mahatmaji then asked the men to give up drink. Drink, he said, made beasts of men and was the enemy of the family. He also asked them to refrain from vices of all kinds. If they only follwed his advice in some details of their daily conduct, their status would be raised automatically in society.

Finally, Mahatmaji asked the men to remember that there were millions of people in rural India much poorer than they. They should sympathize with them and help them by wearing khaddar. It was as wrong for them to wear foreign cloth, as it would be for him to buy foreign shoes without encouraging local shoemakers.

The Hindu, 12-9-1927

29. SPEECH TO GUJARATIS AND MARWARIS, MADRAS

September 9, 1927

I thank you for the purse and the address. I am satisfied with the purse that you have given me because it is a sacred work. There is a special bond between myself and Gujaratis for Gujarat is my birthplace. Ever since I came to India my connection with Gujaratis

[1] Sandals made out of the hide of dead cattle were presented to Gandhiji and Kasturba.

and Marwaris has been one of increasing affection. Swaraj will have come to India if only the two communities had realized their duties as merchants and had given some place to selfless work in the course of their business. One of the reasons why India is still a slave country is the importation of foreign cloth and in the trade of foreign cloth you have a prime share. Therefore when you give money for the service of *Daridranarayana*, whatever you give will be unsatisfactory because your work has a bearing on India's povertystricken millions. You are taking away the money of the poor and the *prayaschitta* after the commission of the sin lies when you discharge your duties to those whom you took your money. So if you are going to perform the true dharma, I beg of you to take to khadi business. This is you work and not my work. Though I am myself born a Bania I have given up business. Therefore I have got to learn business from you. Moreover, the biggest business in India has now fallen into my hands and so if you take up this work from my hands, there will be no need to beg throughout the country. You have given me a welcome address in Hindi and I thank you for it. There is a Hindi Pracharak Sabha in South India. The money for it comes from North India now and then. In this work Marwaris have given large amounts of money. I beg of you now to make this your own work. You should not depend upon North India for finance and will have to do it actively yourselves. There is another duty still for you, cow-protection. Gujaratis and Marwaris have taken a prominent part. I must tell you that the work cannot be done by money alone. You have got the Shastra knowledge about this and that is more necessary than money. If you do not open dairies and tanneries in the various parts of the country this work can never be done properly. You are traders in all parts of India. You should make friends with all the people of the country. Do not think of them as strangers. Think of them as sons and daughters of the same country. If you think one a Punjabi, another a Bengali, Marwari, Gujarati and so on, no good will result. May God give you wisdom and desire to serve!

The Hindu, 10-9-1927

30. SPEECH TO WOMEN, MADRAS[1]

September 9, 1927

Mahatmaji first thanked the women of Madras for the welcome they had accorded in him and for the purse. Regarding the purse, he said he was not satisfied with the same. He also doubted whether all of them who had assembled there knew for what purpose they had given the purse, for it they had realized it they would have given much more. The money was not intended to be distributed among a hundred poor for charity but was going to be used for the relief of millions of starving people throughout India. He saw round him a large number of ladies with costly jewellery on their persons. They would no have realized that one bit of such jewellery would amount to a fortune to the starving millions. The toiling millions did not know what gold, diamonds, and silver were. Their jewellery was made of wood, stone and copper. Mahatmaji even doubted whether the women who had gathered around him had ever seen their sisters in the villages. He had a great mind to take some of them round those villages and show them the conditions in which some of their sisters lived. Then only they would realize the true significance of the movement he had set afoot, and the object of his mission. They had given a few hundreds of rupees but until they did some other things, that money would become useless. Millions of starving sisters were toiling all round the year and if more fortunate women had any affection for them they must wear khadi prepared by the poor people. Then they must show their self-sacrifice and spirit by spending at least half an hour a day and giving away the yarn. Mahatmaji said that he had been working for the relief of these poor millions and wherever he went he had received the full sympathy of all women. His work would be in vain if womenfolk of India did not co-operate with him. Referring to the welcome address, Mahatmaji said: It was a long one and he did not know whether all the women in the audience knew all subjects dealt with therein. They were all important ones and related only to the middle class people. He id not say that they must be disregarded on that account. He had no time to discuss all the subjects mentioned therein, but would say they had his entire sympathy. He would say only this thing that women had equal rights with men. Hindu Shastras made no differentiation between the sexes and had even symbolized God as *Ardha- nareeshwara.* The English saying that the wives were the better halves was quite true. India had produced many ideal women and among the seven great *satis* worshipped by Hindu woman evey morning to ward off her sins Sita stood foremost. That a better place was given to women was significant in the fact that people don't call "Ram-Sita" but call "Sita-Ram". Sita was an embodiment of self-sacrifice and dharma. Her sacrifices were

[1] At Singrachari Hall in Hindu High School, Triplicane

greater than those of Rama. If the Hindus were the true followers and worshippers of Sita and Rama they would not have allowed such disgraceful customs as were prevalent among their society. They would immediately try to purify their Hinduism. If they were determined to purify their society he would ask them first of all not to marry their daughters before they were 16 years old. The next thing they must do is to remarry young widows. It was a sin not to remarry such girls. Consent was necessary for a life contract and he believed that in early marriages there was no consent. He would then ask them to remove form their midst the custom of *Devadasis*. Such reforms as he had mentioned could effectively and easily be done by women's associations and not by male workers however capable they might be.

Continuing, Mahatmaji said that he was gratified at the fact that Dr. Muthulakshmi Ammal was the Deputy President of the Legislative Council. Though he was himself a non-co-operator, he believed that Dr. Muthulakshmi Ammal would do many things in the Council on behalf of the women of India. He would only request her not to completely adopt Western methods. She must instil the Indian atmosphere in the Council and never forget the interests of women. India's progress would be sure and certain if only the women of India worked for it.

In-conclusion, Mahatmaji said then the greatest problem in India at the present day was the relief of poverty among the millions of toiling masses scattered in thousands of villages in India. If educated and more fortunate women did not realize their duties to their less fortunate sisters and do something for their relief India would never progress. He believed that the spinning-wheel would do much in this direction. It must become the centre of their activities. The khadi movement was a women's movement and he hoped that they would take it up and relieve him of his duties. He prayed to God Almighty that He should give them courage and energy to take up this good work.

The Hindu, 10-9-1927

31. SPEECH ON C. R. DAS, MADRAS

September 9, 1927

FRIENDS,

I congratulate Mr. Satyamurti on having presented this portrait to the Mahajana Sabha and I congratulate the Mahajana Sabha upon having secured this very precious possession. If I may do so, I would like to congratulate myself also upon having received the honour of unveiling this portrait. But whilst I prize this honour, I cannot help confes sing to you that I am somewhat embarrassed, embarrassed because I am unveiling the portrait of one who unveiled my own.

There is some lack of adjustment in this thing. Not that anybody is responsible for this accident; but it is there. Because Deshbandhu unveiled my portrait it was impossible to avoid me, seeing that I happened to be in Madras when the portrait was presented. So it is quite in the fitness of things considered in that light. But all the same, there are things over which we have no control and yet which mar all our dispositions. The fact that I have brought to your notice really mars my joy, it makes it difficult for me to pour out my heart in connection with Deshbandhu Das but I must struggle through my performance in the best manner I can.

I want to lift myself and yourself out of the political setting that has been given to this function. Deshbandhu's name will always be remembered so long as time lasts and India lasts, as one of the liberators of India. There can be not a shadow of doubt about it. But Deshbandhu himself claimed and was entitled to far higher honour than that of being ranked as one of the liberators—though high that honour is. I came to know this secret of his life myself during his last days, about which you have just now heard as from his very magnificent letter that Mr. Satyamurti read to us.[1] All this strength was really derived from his spirituality and I consider his spirituality even greater than his politics. He consi dered that his politics were dependent upon and were deri ved from his spirituality, as I have said more than once in connection with another liberator of India, now no more, Lokamanya Bala Gangadhara Tilak. I think it was in writing about him or speaking about him, I said it had been a misfortune of some of the greatest sons of India to sacrifice their cherished ambition in order to realize what to them was a lesser ambition for the motherland. Lokamanya Tilak, if he had not been born in these times and in India, would have been considered a literary giant but that would not have been enough. He would have been considered a religious scholar, a man capable of giving *smritis* and giving living interpretations of old faiths. But that which was his highest ambition became subservient to the political work that he saw before him and that greatest work became a matter of leisure hours. All the best his

[1] The concluding paragraph of this letter of April 19, 1925; read : "No, my dear Satyamurit, I feel a broken man. I feel that my work is over and somebody is constantly calling me from the other side. I should love now to give up all this fight and worry and retire to seclusion. Surely the last few years—may be a very few—should be given to God. The work should be taken up by younger men—yours affectionately, C. R. Das."

energy could possibly give was given to the political emancipation of India. And so it was with Deshbandhu. When I had the honour of making his acquaintance in Lahore, I remember his having engaged me always whenever we had done with the report on which we were both engaged, in spiritual discussions. We used to talk about and think of things of permanent interest in life. I remember his having said once or twice in my presence that he could not possibly do these things in the thorough manner in which he wanted to.

I confess that I did not know Deshbandhu then as I knew him during his last moments at Darjeeling. I came closest to him there and I look back upon those few days of my association with him among the precious treasures of my memory. But in Lahore I unwittingly did an injustice to him by my thinking for one moment that this spirituality of his was a mere pastime as I have known it to be of so many other distinguished sons of India. But as our friendship, may I say, ripened, I came closer to him and I felt that I occupied a little corner in his heart also. And yet there were some cobwebs. God had designed that those cobwebs should be removed before his eyes were closed. He could not tolerate the idea of a seeker of truth remaining under any illusion what-soever or any misunderstanding whatsoever in connection with a man so good. I omit the word 'great' deliberately. Greatness without goodness counts for nothing in my estimation as I expect it counted for nothing in Deshbandhu's estimation. So I was privileged to enter his heart, understand him through and through and understand the depth of his devotion.

Reckless sacrifice he had. Reckless courage also he had. But all this beautiful recklessness of his was really derived from his very deep spirituality. He himself told me when he was in Darjeeling that he would not be satisfied and consider his work over unless the spiritual treasures he had locked up in his heart had been also delivered to India. That ambition of his was not destined to be fulfilled through no fault of his. Perhaps you do not know his childlike simplicity. I was amazed; his own partner in life was amazed at that incredible simplicity of his heart. In his search for spiritual consolation he placed himself under one who has and had very little education as we understand the word education. But in order to find tht real everlasting peace that a spiritual quickening gives, he was reckless and did not mind ridicule of his friends in going forward with that service. I cannot and dare not give you more details. I have given you just enough to share with me the belief that in Deshbandhu if we have lost

a great man, one of the greatest of India's patriots, we have lost also in Deshbandhu a very great spiritual teacher.

I have endeavoured to lift ourselves out of the political setting also because I know that if his spirit is brooding over our proceedings then I know that he shares to the fullest extent the ideas that I am expressing to you. It was another patriot of India, again now no more, who expressed this thought that a time comes in the life of every Indian when mere political battle jars on him and that he seeks to base everything on spiritual, livingly moral foundations. There is no distinction between spirituality and morality, if we rightly understand the latter term. Today somehow or other we have come to distinguish between the two and so I have added the adverb 'livingly' moral. This I heard several years ago; but ever since then, I have seen that utterance more and more exemplified in this manner.

I have introduced this thing for a deliberate purpose; and that purpose is: Let us have the political ambition that we live for the freedom of the country. Today it is impossible for an Indian worth the name even to exist without political ambition, because the political domination of India has unfortunately resulted in if not spiritual subjection, in spiritual *inanity*. And we have simply got the outer husk of spirituality; the kernel of it seems to have been entirely dried up. Let us not delude ourselves into the belief that this political ambition of us is going to serve this *Karmabhumi*, this *Devabhumi* as we flatter ourselves in calling Bharatavarsha. Let us not delude ourselves with the belief that this sacred land can ever be served by or can ever assimilate a political mesage unless it has got a spiritual foundation. It has got to be broadbased upon that foundation if it is to last and per meate the distant villages of India. That brings me to the appeal which the President of the Sabha made to me. I semed to have neglected politics, he said. But he corrected himself. "No, he did not". I accept that correction. I have not neglected politics. But having had the privilege of sitting side by side with Deshbandhu Das and having had the privilege of many conversations with Lokamanya and most of our leaders, I have understood the secret of achieving India's freedom, a I fancy. In having done so, I bide my time in endeavouring to translate politics in terms of spirituality. I must restate my doctrine even at the risk of being misunderstood. When I was challenged I had no hesitation in saying that I would sacrifice India herself on the altar not of freedom but of truth. There is a catch about this thing. The catch consists in this, that freedom which is inconsistent with truth is no

freedom whatsoever. But catch or no catch, when I wrote that,[1] I it jarred on some friends and it incensed some. But what could I do? I can only speak what I feel; or else I should be really worthless. So I have got to repeat really the beautiful language that Deshbandhu uttered on that occasion which was reproduced today, namely, that although he had boundless affection for me, he could only do what his soul could ascend to and not what I wished or asked[2]. And no man can do more. I cannot do more—I know that. When my soul ascends to things which you are in the habit of calling political, I shall not wait for an invitation; and I shall lead the cause. But till then, I must be content to contemplate on the treasures that have been left to us by Deshbandhu and his predecessors—spiritual treasures —and must continue to hold the belief that all the politics that may have been handed down to us from the west will be turned to dust in India, good as they might be in the West, if we cannot possibly reduce them to terms of spirituality.

And I consider it a great privilege for me that as my stay in Madras is about to close, I have not only got this privilege of un veiling the portrait of one whose memory I hold dear and near to me, but that I have also in that connection got the privilege of interpreting as I know the mission for which Deshbandhu lived and for which he gave his life. I have much pleasure in unveiling the portrait.

The Hindu , 10-9-1927

32. SPEECH AT ST. THOMAS MOUNT, MADRAS

September 9, 1927

SISTERS AND FRIENDS,

I thank you for the addresses[3] that you have given me and the purse. I thank you also for saving my time, when I am pressed for it, by waiving your right to read all the addresses. I congratulate the

[1] Presumably the *Young India* passage reproduced in, vide "A Candid Critic", January 20, 1927

[2] While unveiling a portrait of Gandhiji in the same Hall, C. R. Das had said : "I followed Mahatma Gandhi because my soul ascended to his. But I shall refuse to agree to anything which my soul does not ascend to. I have the highest respect, nay veneration, for the Mahatma; but I shall never trample my soul under my foot. The Mahatma knew that and I believe he respected me for that."

[3] By the Jain community, the general public and the Podu Jana Oozhiyar Sangham (Social Service League)

Sangham and its beneficial public activities. I note that you are conducting some schools, doing sanitation work and even the lighting of your streets. This is undoubtedly public service in the right direction but I hope your work is through. Sanitation, until substantially done, has been known sometimes to do more harm than good. It is only things that are well done that produce permanent and beneficial services. I am glad too to find that you have taken up the work of the spinning-wheel I hope you will keep all the wheels going regularly. I hope too that you will keep them in good shape. There is no reason why everyone living in these parts should not be dressed in khadi.

If there are any here who are given to drink habit, I hope you will urge them to give it up. Those who do not drink I ask them to go to their neighbours who drink and gently wean them from that awful habit. I wish that you would initiate a movement which will not end till total prohibition is carried out in the land.

I was also glad to receive an address from the Jain friends. To them also I would suggest that at the present moment the widest application of the doctrine of ahimsa is possible only through the spinning-wheel. It has been conceived and calculated to benefit the remotest village and the neediest people in the land. What ahimsa, what love can be deeper and faster than that which takes in its sweep millions of starving people!

I am glad that all your addresses make reference to untouchability. I hope you will rid yourselves of that curse in the quickest time possible. No religion can possibly countenance the considering of a single human being as an untouchable from birth.

I have been recently drawing attention to child marriages and child widows. It is high time that parents understand their duties by their children. It cannot be a right thing to give away girls of tender years in marriage, nor can it be right to treat the child as a widow when her so-called husband dies. It is the bounden duty of every parent to give in marriage such child widows as may be in his family. We have also in the South the immoral and the inhuman institution of *Devadasis*. If we would respect our womanhood as we are expected to respect them in the name of Sita, we have to get rid of this blot upon our society.

As you are aware I have still to prepare to leave Madras tonight and you will not expect me therefore to say anything further upon the

important subjects that will engage your attention. It is usual for me at such large meetings as these to give those who have not contributed to this purse and may be present here an opportunity, if they so desire and if they believe in khadi, of giving their mite.

The Hindu, 10-9-1927

33. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU", MADRAS

September 9, 1927

Unless I am deceived, the khadi spirit has come to stay.

Thus Mahatma Gandhi summed up to *The Hindu* representative impressions of his stay in Madras. . . .

Although the main theme of almost all my addresses in Madras has been khadi, if I am not deceiving myself, I have not noticed any weariness of spirit about the audience and everyone who has not appeared in khadi has invariably apologized. The financial response has also been satisfactory and khadi sales have been encouraging.

Of personal affection, I can have nothing to say. Even as long ago as 1896, Madras bestowed on me an affection for which I was wholly unprepared and entirely unworthy. That was my very first visit to Madras; and I knew nobody personally. Madras simply took me on trust.

I hope that the citizens of Madras will not postpone to the last minute the preparations for the coming Congress. They will give a practical demonstration of the wisdom as ascribed to the people of the South by Sir Brijendranath Seal, if before the session is held there is no Brahmin-Non-Brahmin quarrel. Of course, I expect the people here to give a good account of themselves in the matter of khadi during the Congress week.

The *Hindu* representative next enquired about Mahatmaji's views on Miss Mayo's book[1] which is agitating the public mind in India today; and Mahatmaji replied:

Under great stress and difficulty, I have just finished a long review of Miss Mayo's book. I entered upon it with much reluctance; and I did so, as many correspondents pressed me to give my own opinion. I could really ill afford the time to read the book, but when I saw I could not escape having to give the opinion, I read it from page to page; and having read it I am glad that I did so, because I saw that it

[1] *Mother India*

required a fairly exhaustive reply from me. As my writings have been profusely used by the lady, I owed it to the public and to her to express my frank opinion on her work.

You will not expect me to anticipate the contents of the article[1] in *Young India*.

The Hindu, 10-9-1927

34. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

CUDDALORE,
September 10, 1927

MIRABAI
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA

THANK GOD. DELIVERANCE. LETTER REGARDING POONA NOT RECEIVED. DO[2] WHATEVER JAMNALALJI SAYS AND COMMANDS[3] YOU. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 5273. Courtesy: Mirabehn

35. SPEECH AT Y.M.C.A., CUDDALORE

September 10, 1927

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I thank you for the address and also for the purse on behalf of the students for the Khadi Fund. Rev. Mr. Lange has invited me to speak to you on how the individual might grow so as to bring about his own advancement and of his surroundings or her surroundings and in doing so, told me that if I expected to address a meeting of saints, I would be sadly disappointed. As I had no such expectations, there is no occasion for me to be disappointed. But, had you been all saints, I assure you, I would have been deeply embarrassed. Being myself a very imperfect man—and this I say not in the language of courtesy, but in terms of truth—I can only address with any degree of usefulness an assembly of men and women similarly imperfect. But this I do own that I am constantly, minute after minute, striving after perfection and it gives me comfort to find myself in the assembly of

[1] *Vide* 'Drain Inspector's Report", 15-9-1927
[2] The source has "to".
[3] The source has "commends".

imperfect men and women who are similarly striving. It consoles me to find that many of them had succeeded in their striving and that therefore there is no reason why I should not succeed likewise, if my striving is prayerful and honest. And in the course of that striving, I fancy that I have made certain discoveries. And I am now endeavouring to the best of my ability to share the results of those discoveries with all I meet. And the one discovery that I have made is that really speaking, there is no distinction whatsoever between individual growth and corporate growth, that corporate growth is therefore entirely dependent upon individual growth and hence that beautiful proverb in the English language that a chain is no stronger than the weakest link in it. And if we realize in its fullness the truth of this homely saying, we would discover that no single lad in this assembly may hope to isolate himself from others and consider himself above them. When I recall my school days, I have a vivid recollection of boys who put on airs, because they were considered to be clever in their class. And some of them domineered over the rest because they had athletic skill and had physical powers. But I soon discovered also that their pride went before destruction. For the weaker ones, realizing their haughtiness, segregated them and regarded them as untouchables and so they really dug their own grave with their own hands. The first condition therefore of individual growth is utmost humility. And if we see at the present moment in our own land, some people in their insolence calling themselves superior and regarding others as below themselves in rank and regarding yet others as untouchables and unapproachables, those who are standing aloof from this strife are able to watch and see that these in their insolence are also digging their own graves. You will therefore see perfect correspondence between the individual and the corporation, and so I always say to students, young men and women, wanting to serve the country and to do big things: "First of all look after yourselves and make yourselves fairly good instruments of service." I hold it to be utterly impossible for any young man and any young woman to serve society unless they start with a clean slate, that is, a pure heart. But to say that we should have pure hearts is really easily said, but it is not equally easy to achieve and so, we have in the Christian scheme of life what is called new birth. The corresponding term in Hinduism is *dwija*, i.e., twice born. The meaning that the term *dwija* has come to bear at the present moment is a prostitution of language. Even this new birth among the many Christians I have seen,

has acquired the significance which, when the word was orginally used, it never bore. That new birth does not come from any outward circumstance nor through lip profession. It is an inward change which is unmistakable. It is a change which the person himself notices and so do his neighbours. It is a transformation of the heart and it needs no lip declaration. And that absolute transformation can only come by inward prayer and a definite and living recognition of the presence of the mighty spirit residing within. We call this by the name of Bhakti Yoga and rendered in English it means union with God by means of devotion and that yoga is possible alike for the lad, ten years old, as for an old man on the brink of the grave and when that transformation has come as a matter of fact, there is no falling back. But there is very often a subtle self-deception about the person noticing such a transformation about himself or herself, and so in order to make it easy for ourselves we have accommodated ourselves to a term called backsliding. As a matter of fact, this so-called transformation in such cases never was a transformation but a hallucination and the recognition of this fact keeps a man or woman fresh and humble, when the boy or girl who begins to say I am transformed will be found to be self-deluded. Therefore, whenever we notice any such upward lift or tendency to do better, let us be sanguine but let us not cease to strive. Instead of saying to ourselves in our pride, 'I have done with evil, I can never fall', let us humbly say to ourselves, 'I do not know, I must ever be on the watch.' There is irrevocable promise from God to mankind that no single effort made towards one's upliftment ever goes without its adequate result. But I am painfully conscious of the fact that I am saying these things to the young men before me without making my meaning clear. I am labouring under the load of the knowledge that I am almost speaking to the students in a foreign language, that is to say, not in the English language, but in an idiom which has become foreign to them. The very word God has lost its living touch and its living meaning.

I recollect a conversation I had with an extremely intelligent and somewhat learned young man only a few months ago and he said: "You so often talk and write about God but I must confess to you that I find no echo of what you say in my own heart." An English friend connected with one of the most noted dailies of England sent me a message also very recently admiring my work about untouchability, temperance and social reform but detesting, as he calls it, God's touch in the pages of *Young India*. And let me tell you that this English

friend is not a mean man but he is a most morally upright man. He is also a philanthropist. Similarly this young Indian who is living at the present moment—because I am in constant touch with him—is ever striving after perfection. But both consider that all that counts in this world and all that is required is self-effort, nothing more, nothing less. As against this, I can only say that at least 40 years' experience of conscious and upbroken striving shows to me that whilst self-effort is an absolute necessity, by itself it is an illusory thing. Without the living grace of the living God, all that effort is reduced to dust. I know instances of very dear friends of mine who were able by self-effort, as it appeared to them, to build themselves up, but they found, and I noticed, that because the effort was not touched by this living grace, they had become in an instant a living sepulchre. Before they knew where they were, subtle temptations surrounded them and they found themselves totally unprepared to resist them. And so, whether you understand my language or whether you do not, whether you understand the significance of the word God or whether you do not,I have really no other message for the young men and the young women of India. Do not be deceived by your own little intellect but do have some faith in the experiences of men living in all the climes of the world, in all the places of the world, proclaiming with one voice there is God. I tell you, I give you my assurance, that if you will be patient and exercise that faith, and believe in the definite presence of God within, in spite of yourselves, in spite of your intellect rebelling against your faith, in spite of your surroundings, believe in the presence of God, if you persist in that faith, you will find that some day it will become a living reality for you and it will be the surest shield of protection for you. If you want to know what faith like that can do for you, hear me. May God help you to understand somewhat of what I have been saying to you.

The Hindu, 12-9-1927

36. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CUDDALORE[1]

September 10, 1927

FRIENDS,

I thank you for all these addresses and the purses presented to me including the address I received from the Municipality this morning. Some friends disturbed my night's rest and that of my

[1]*Young India* published this under the caption, "Three Speeches". The first and the last paragraphs reproduced here are from *The Hindu*, 12-9-1927.

fellow-passengers and made life itself difficult for my co-workers. To those of them who are present here I should like to say a few words. They besieged the train practically at three stations where the train stopped for some time. They insisted upon my presenting myself at the window. I, on the other hand, insisted on not complying with their demands and so they became angry, terribly angry and the anger was vented upon those who were trying to protect me from all the terrible din and noise that they set up. Tired out, I was stretched on my bed but I was awake all the time at the pain of hearing these din voices. It was at times difficult to say whether the noise was the noise of affection or it was hooliganism, pure and undefiled. I know that these guards of mine would have been glad if I had got up and presented myself at the window. But it was really not possible for me to comply with the demand and I wish that those who were throwing their affection to me will be pleased not to disturb me, at least my night's rest. I do not call that true love. It is blind love which harms those who bestow it and on whom it is bestowed. I would urge those blind lovers of mine to follow the beautiful motto that I saw as I was being brought to this place. "Love the poor and you will love Gandhi." I give you my assurance that there is no poor man or poor woman in this vast audience than whom there are not millions much poorer in this land. I would like you to appreciate the fact that I am doing this tour under the greatest difficulties, I am doing this in spite of the warnings of some of my medical friends, but I feel I have taken this tour in obedience to the promptings of the inner voice. I have been instrumental in monies being collected in several places in this Presidency. These monies are made for the people about whom I just now talked to you. Every rupee collected means food for 16 poor spinners in villages. I tried to ascertain whether these purses collected in several places could be delivered to me without my going personally to those places to receive them, and found that it was not possible. Believe me as I do, that what I am doing is God's work and I feel that even at the risk of my life I should endeavour to travel to those places to unlock those purses which have been put away in the safe. I would therefore urge you all and the whole of the public to co-operate with me in reserving the little energy that is left in me in order to enable me to fulfil this self-imposed task and it is for that reason that I have strictly prohibited my co-workers from making any appointments whatsoever for interviews in rest time that is given to me and which I so much need at every place visited by me. You will

pardon me for my having entered upon what may appear to you to be a personal explanation. As a matter of fact it is nothing of the kind. It is a plea on behalf of the voicless millions for whom I am collecting this money and that brings me to the taking up of the message,which I left this morning when I was addressing the young boys at the Y.M.C.A. meeting. I was this morning dealing with the growth of the individual and I said then that the growth of the individual, if it is real, must be reflected in the growth of the society of which the individual is a member. And every internal takes an external and outward manifestation. A seed that has a capacity of growth within itself immediately goes underneath the ground, sprouts outward into a beautiful tree in a short time. The seed that has no vitality in it and therefore no capacity for growth dies underneath the earth, and so with individual and nations. If they have capacity for growth, of real life and character within them, it must be manifested by some definite, visible, outward signs. And speaking along these lines, it was in 1918 that I made a discovery—or call it re-discovery—that is, India was really one compact society or one nation and if the component parts of the society, the individuals, were also actuated with one mind and if they had feelings for the lowest and the humblest among them, they must show some universal sign which could be adopted by every man and woman, girl or boy. Hence you find me tirelessly preaching the message of the spinning-wheel which I have considered the message of *Daridranarayana*, and asking you to give me all your best for the charkha.

But I must hasten to the important part of the Municipal address. You have drawn my attention to the existence of the dissensions between the Brahmin and the Non-Brahmins and asked me to find out a solution. As a Non-Brahmin myself, if I could remove the dissensions by forfeiting my life, I should do so this very moment. But God is a very hard taskmaster. He is never satisfied with hasty forfeitures of life. It is a sacrifice of the purest that He demands and so you and I have prayerfully to plod on, live out the life so long as it is vouchsafed to us to live it. I have said, only very recently in Madras, that whenever you want me to take part in your deliberations, or want me to advise you, you will find me at your disposal. I have no clear-cut solution for this difficult question. I confess to you that I do not even now know the points of differences between the two. I tried to draw out some Non-Brahmins, who came to me on Nandi Hills, and they promised to see me in my tour and place all the points of

difference before me. I must confess to you that I am no wiser about the Brahmin side of the question. And wily as the Brahmins are, I admit they have not told me what the differences are, knowing fully well what my opinion would be about all these questions. As you are aware, though a Non-Brahmin myself, I have lived more with them and amongst them than amongst Non-Brahmin friends suspect me of having taken all my colourings from Brahmin friends. I have a shrewd suspicion that the Non-Brahmin friends consider that I am not to be accepted as a hope for a proper solution. And so I find myself in the happy position of being isolated by both the parties, a position which in the present state of my health suits me admirably. But all the same I give you my assurance that I for my part hold myself in readiness to be wooed by either party. And I assure you too that I shall not plead physical unfitness.

But I have for both the parties two counsels of perfection which I can lay before you. To the Brahmins I will say: 'Seeing that you are repositories of knowledge and embodiments of sacrifice and that you have chosen the life of mendicancy, give up all that the Non-Brahmins want and be satisfied with what they may leave for you.' But the modern Brahmin would, I know, summarily reject my Non-Brahmin interpretation of his dharma. To the Non-Brahmins, I say: 'Seeing that you have got numbers on your side, seeing that you have got wealth on your side, what is it that you are worrying about? Resisting as you are, and as you must, untouchability, do not be guilty of creating a new untouchability in your midst. In your haste, in your blindness, in your anger against the Brahmins, you are trying to trample underfoot the whole of the culture which you have inherited from ages past. With a stroke of the pen, may be at the point of the sword, you are impatient to wreck Hinduism of its bed-rock. Being dissatisfied and properly dissatisfied with the husk of Hinduism, you are in danger of losing even the kernel, life itself. You, in your impatience, seem to think that there is absolutely nothing to be said about *varnashrama*. Some of you are ready even to think that in defending *varnashrama* I am also labouring under a delusion. Make no mistake about it. They who say this have not even taken the trouble of understanding what I mean by *varnashrama*.'

It is a universal law, stated in so many words by Hinduism. It is a law of spiritual economics. Nations of the West and Islam itself unwittingly are obliged to follow that law. It has nothing to do with superiority or inferiority. The customs about eating, drinking and

marriage are no integral part of Varnashrama Dharma. It was a law discovered by your ancestors and my ancestors, the *rishis* who saw that if they were to give the best part of their lives to God and to the world, and not to themselves, they must recognize that it is the law of heredity. It is a law designed to set free man's energy for higher pursuits in life. What true Non-Brahmins should therefore set about doing is not to undermine the very foundations on which they are sitting, but to clean all the sweepings that gathered on the foundation and make it perfectly clean. Fight by all means the monster that passes for *varnashrama* today, and you will find me working side by side with you. My *varnashrama* enables me to dine with anybody who will give me clean food, be he Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Parsi whatever he is. My *varnashrama* accommodates a pariah girl under my own roof as my own daughter. My *varnashrama* accomodates many *Panchama* families with whom I dine with the greatest pleasure —to dine with whom is a privilege. My *varnashrama* refuses to bow the head before the greatest potentate on earth but my *varnashrama* compels me to bow my head in all humilitybe fore knowledge,before purity,before every person where I see God face to face. Do not therefore swear by words that have,at the present moment, become absolutely meaningless and obsolete. Swear all you are worth, if you like, against Brahmins but never against Brahminism, and even at the risk of being understood or being mistaken by you to be a pro-Brahmin, I make bold to declare to you that whilst Brahmins have many sins to atone for and many for which they will receive exemplary punishments, there are today Brahmins living in India who are watching the progress of Hinduism and who are trying to protect it with all the piety and all the austerity of which they are capable. Them you perhaps do not even know. They do not care to be known. They expect no reward; they ask for none. Their work is its own reward. They work in this fashion because they must. It is their nature. You and I may swear against them for all we are worth, but they are untouched. Do not run away with the belief that I am putting in a plea for Brahmins, *Vakils* and Ministers and even Justices of the High Courts in India. I have not thought of them in my mind at all. What, therefore, both Brahmins and Non-Brahmins, and for that matter everybody who wants India to progress has to do, is to sweep his own house clean. I therefore suggest to Non-Brahmins who have not yet lost their heads, to think out clearly what it is that they are grieved over and make up their minds and fight for all they are worth to

remove those grievances. I recognize however that I have this evening entered upon an academic discussion. Not knowing the merits of their quarrels, I do nothing else. But in my own humble opinon, I have indicated the lines of action for both and within the limits of your capacity, it is open to you to make use of them in any manner you like.

But in trying to grapple with this great problem do not forget the little things for which I am touring in Tamil Nadu. Little they may appear to you but I assure you, that they are great enough to engage the attention of every one of you. I simply summarize them for you without entering into the discussion.

Khadi I have already mentioned. Total prohibition, you can have today if you will act with one mind. Whilst we are quarrelling among ourselves, thousands upon thousands of our countrymen are selling themselves to the devil, they cannot get rid of the curse of drink. And we who witness all these damnations shall have to answer before God for our great criminal neglect of our neighbours. There was a Non-Brahmin lady only yesterday to ask you and ask all the people whom I shall have to see to rid society of the curse of the *Devadasi* institution. Think of the unmanly, unchivalrous manner in which men act towards their sisters. Do not forget these problems which are eating into the vitals of society in trying to fight out the dissensions between Brahmins and Non-Brahmins. And whether I look at Brahmins or Non-Brahmins and treat untouchables as a class of untouchables, I find this one common weakness and error that we, in our impatience, do not think of self-help and self-purification but simply resort to the process of mutual mud-slinging. Since I have no desire to take part in this mutual mud-slinging process, I simply come forward with the humble little things that I have spoken to you. Whatever you may do or may not do, I plead to you that you will not forget these things. I thank you once more for these addresses and purses and what is more for kindly listening to me. May God help you to understand the spirit in which the message has been delivered to you.

Young India, 22-9-1927

37. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Sunday [On or before *September 11, 1927*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. This time your handwriting may be said to have improved a little. Good handwriting and correct spelling are not important in themselves. But if they are not important, they also do not require much time to improve. Try, therefore, to improve them both.

I understand about Damodardas. Now you don't have to do anything in the matter. You should now devote yourself wholly to your studies and be satisfied.

My health is improving.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8821 Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya. Also G.N.

38. TEST FOR STUDENTS

I feel proud to read that students are making a fine contribution to flood relief work through physical labour. Our hopes of building a better future depend on them. If this foundation is weak, our efforts to put up a building will be wasted. I hope that no student, boy or girl, feels that he or she is unnecessarily sacrificing studies for this work. If they feel unhappy with such thoughts, their service will have been rendered out of weakness and unwillingly and it will be, in that measure, imperfect.

True education consists in such service. They will not have in a school or college the experiences which they are having in this kind of work. A student is a soldier. Just as a soldier's duty consists in carrying out sincerely the orders of his superiors, so a student's education consists in sincerely obeying his teacher's instructions. There may be error in these instructions, but the student will not have to suffer punishment for any such error. If he carries out the

[1] From the contents this letter appears to have been written before the letter to the addressee placed "before September 12, 1927" The Sunday prior to this date was September 11; *vide* "Letter to Gangabehn Vaidya", beforeSeptember 12, 1927.

instructions with a pure mind, he will remain untouched by the error. He will, however, enjoy the fruits, undreamt of by him, of sincere obedience. The injunction to work without thought of the fruit of work does not mean that such work bears no fruit. It always achieves results. In carrying out the teacher's instructions, the student is acting without any desire for the fruit of such obedience. His action has a happy reward in his spiritual progress. Everything done while carrying out the teacher's instructions is done at his instance, and so, if there is error in his instructions, it will be he who will reap the fruit of such error. We need not consider here how and when he may have to do this, or whether he will have to reap such fruit at all.

My only aim just now is to express my happiness at the service rendered by students and to give them encouragement; while doing this, I took the opportunity to discuss in brief what, in my view, is the duty of students.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-9-1927

39. "WHAT SHOULD I DO?"

A gentleman asks :

I am trying to get into a railway compartment; someone inside holds the door fast, though there is room, and does not let me get in. What should I do in this situation?

There are three courses open:

1.To complain to the railway authorities on the station;

2.if one has strength enough and courage, to force open the door and get into the compartment and, if necessary, to fight with that passenger who thought he owned the railway;

3.if one has courage and spiritual strength to plead with the bully and, if he does not respond, to forgo one's right and try to find a seat elsewhere. If one fails in that, one may let the train pass. One should have faith that this is for the good of that bully and of oneself. We have no right to ask when he will become reasonable.

All the three courses are legitimate, but the third one is purely of a spiritual character. The first two are practical, but they are not contrary to dharma.

I can imagine a fourth. Being a coward, one may be afraid of getting beaten up in a fight and may look for a seat elsewhere. This is *adharma*. It has, therefore, no place among the legitimate courses

open to one. The second question is this :

I am travelling in a train. I get down at one station to drink water. In my absence, someone enters the compartment and occupies my seat. He refuses to vacate it. What should I do ?

I think the answer to this is contained in the answer to the first question.

Such incidents are common during railway journeys. I have often been in such difficulties. On every occasion, I adopted the third course, and have never regretted having done so. In many cases, I remember, the bully's heart had melted. Let not the reader think that people would recognize me because I was a mahatma and would therefore yield. Most of the experiences of which I have the memory belong to a time before I became a mahatma.

But there is one condition for adopting the third course. The person who adopts it should have a living religious faith and should not merely imitate the behaviour of another. If one feels angry with the bully, one should realize that one is not fit to adopt the third course. Dharma is a matter of the heart. If we try to imitate another, there is every possibility of our falling instead of following dharma. I have often observed Guajarat's non-violence becoming timidity and cowardice. I, therefore, feel reluctant to discuss the third course, and there seems no need to discuss the first two. I do not need to explain that they are even and broad. The third is steep and narrow, and in climbing it we get out of breath, so that we can never discuss it too much. In Gujarat more than elsewhere, but generally in the whole of India, people are usually found to adopt the fourth course which is one of *adharma*, and so it is necessary to mention the first two. Anyone who adopts either of them may one day be taught to adopt the third, but I doubt if one who follows the fourth can learn the third.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-9-1927

40. REPLIES TO A STUDENT'S QUESTIONS

September 11, 1927

Q: 1. Which is the best education?

A: Knowledge of the Self.

2.What is the adornment of youth?

Brahmacharya.

3.What is the best characteristic of the people's culture?

Steadfast adherence to truth.

4.Wherein lies the ultimate fulfilment of life?

In Self-knowledge.

5. What is life's highest ideal?

Satyagraha.

6.What is the most praiseworthy quality in a woman?

Purity.

7.What is the most praiseworthy quality in a man?

Purity.

8. Which is your favourite book?

The Gita.

9.What is dearest to you?

Truth.

[From Gujarati]

From a manusript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

41. SPEECH TO ADI DRAVIDAS, CHIDAMBARAM[1]

September 11, 1927

SWAMI SAHAJANDANDA AND FRIENDS,

As you have given me an advance copy of the address, I know what it contains. As you have rightly remarked in the address, Nandanar[2] was one of the bright stars among the satyagrahis of India. I consider myself highly honoured to have had this privilege of laying the foundation of the doorstep of this temple. I consider it to be a great honour that the first act that I am called upon to perform after entering into Chidambaram is to lay the foundation-stone of the doorstep. I am hoping that this will be really a temple where we will be able to see God face to face as Nandanar himself did I pray that this may be a temple of freedom for everyone who would everyone who would visit this. But you should understand that Nandanar was trying to enter, by giving his life-blood, not in a temple built of stone and mortar only. Nandanar saw in the temple, which he was seeking to

[1] At Nandanar School

[2] An "untouchable" devotee who became one of the sixty-three Saivite saints of Tamil Nadu

enter, freedom in his own soul. And so by your own lives, the devotees of the temple will be expected to purify the inward atmosphere of which the visible stone and mortar should merely be the symbol. At the present moment I know many temples, whether they be dedicated to Vishnu or Siva, entered into and visited by thousands of the so-called Brahmins, which are no temples of God. Let this temple not be an addition to those numerous temples which today disfigure this holy land. But if you want to do that; those who will be in charge of this temple will have to purify their hearts of all anger. I am glad therefore to notice that in your address you do not seem to seek to destroy Hinduism itself as I see is being done in many places in the present time. I appreciate your idea not to trample underfoot Hindu traditions whether they be bad or indifferent. But as you have decided to make use of the good faculty of discrimination, and as you seek not to destroy that which is good but only that which is bad, let me congratulate you upon your determination to win status by sheer force of merit. You rightly claim to be the descendants of the original inhabitants of this ancient land and if it belongs to any single individual as a matter of right, that right is certainly yours and yours foremost. You are therefore entitled to every consideration. It seems that you are bent upon gaining strength by reform within. Let me draw your attention to one or two points.

There is that drink evil, common almost to every *Adi Dravida*. You must therefore try your level best to rid the community of this drink evil. If I am not mistaken *Adi Dravidas* are also given to beef-eating. Hinduism is a tolerant religion. But tolerant though it is, it is intolerant of beef-eating on the part of its devotees. You must therefore agitate and agitate till every *Adi Dravida* has given up beef-eating and the slaughter of cows. Make this temple at once a seat of devotion, centre of learning and a centre from which the force should spread to every *Adi Dravida* and subsequently to every Hindu and still more subsequently to every Indian. You have said in your address that khaddar itself cannot be successful without the removal of the curse of untouchability.

Here there is a confusion of ideas. The real untouchability will never vanish from this land until khaddar is worn. Let me inform you that there are even now people in India who are poorer and more downtrodden than many *Adi Dravidas*. Are there not many *Adi Dravidas* that I have seen in the course of my tour suffering for want of food? But in many parts of India I can show you many who are not

called *Adi Dravidas* but do not get even a single meal a day. This untouchability, of which you complain, has not to go so much as the untouchabilities of those dying millions. Their untouchability is in one way a far more serious affair than the one with which we are placed. So it pleases me to find mention made in your address to having a weaving institute for *Adi Dravida* boys and I appreciate your invitation to me to help this weaving institute. I shall do so with the greatest pleasure if you will fulfil the conditions that are imposed on every weaving institute which seeks my assistance. The first and the foremost condition I propose to mention to you is that in the weaving institute nothing but hand-spun yarn can be used. If you are serious about this, place yourself in correspondence with the Secretary, Mr. S. Ramanathan, who is in charge of the All-India Spinners' Association in this part of the country. You will find him accessible at all times, ready to render any assistance that is in his power. He and I exist for that purpose. As you are about to make this temple a centre of devotion let me also commend to you the two things which are necessary for our children, i.e., the learning of Sanskrit and Hindi which are necessary for our children, i.e., the learning of Sanskrit and Hindi which may be helpful in life.

The Hindu, 12-9-1927

42. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CHIDAMBARAM

September 11, 1927

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I thank you for all these addresses and the different purses. I thank you also for the delicate consideration with which you have saved the reading of all the addresses, as you are aware that I have to catch the train immediately after 7 o'clock and therefore speak against time. The saving of the time which therefore was caused by the saving of reading of the addresses is all the more appreciable. I tell you that it does not give me satisfaction when I have to go away from you in such a short time. Your fame had preceded my coming here through the beautiful story that Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar wrote through the pages of *Young India*. I know the fame of this place of yours. Ever since that time I know that Chidambaram must be a place of pilgrimage for me. I have never claimed to be the original satyagrahi. What I have claimed is the application of that doctrine on almost a universal scale. And yet it remains to be seen and

demonstrated that it is a doctrine which is capable of application by thousands and thousands of people in all ways. I know therefore that mine is an experiment still in the making. And it therefore always keeps me humble and rooted to the soil. In that state of humility I always cling to every example of satyagraha that comes under my notice as a child clings to its mother's breast. And so when I hear or read the story of Nandanar and his lofty satyagraha and his great success, my head bows before his spirit. All the day long I have felt elevated to be able to be in a place hallowed by the holy feet of Nandanar. It will not be without a wrench that I shall be leaving this place in a few minutes' time. But it gave me great joy and I considered it to be a great honour that the very first act I was called upon to perform was to lay the foundation-stone of the gateway of the temple that has been erected in memory of the great saint. How I wish that it could be said about the people of Chidambaram that at least they knew no distinction between Brahmins and *Panchamas*. If the people of Chidambaram would rise to that lofty height they would have done nothing more than what the *Gita* expects every Hindu to do. In the eye of God there are no touchables or untouchables. Brahmins are called Brahmins not for their superiority, not for their ability to lord it over others, but because of their ability to serve mankind by their knowledge and their ability to efface themselves in the act of service. Theirs is the privilege, theirs is the duty of serving their fellow-brethren. They cannot do so in its fullness unless they renounce every earthly reward. By his indomitable spirit and by his overwhelming faith in the infinite presence of God, Nandanar was able to bear down the haughty spirit of the haughty Brahmins and showed that he in spirit was infinitely superior to the persecutors who considered him the curse amongst mankind. But let the *Panchamas*, the *Adi Dravida* brothers and sisters, profiting by the example of Nandanar, live up to the spirit which they have inherited. Nandanar broke down every barrier and won his way to freedom not by freak, not by lustre, but by the purest form of self-suffering and did not swear against his persecutors. He would not even condescend to ask from his persecutors what were his dues. But he shamed them into doing justice by his lofty prayers and by the purity of his character, and, if I may commit it into human language, he compelled God Himself to descend and made Him open the eyes of his persecutors. What Nandanar did in his time and in his own person, it is open to every one of us to do today. I wish that you, my hearers, will catch

something of the spirit of Nandanar, and if so many of us could possibly imitate Nandanar and assimilate the spark of his spirit, we can make the land, a land again of holy people. I hope and pray that the temple with which the trustees have identified me today will keep green the memory of this great saint by keeping the atmosphere about the temple always pure. I would very much like to leave the atmosphere about this meeting at this stage filled with the spirit of Nandanar. But it would be wrong perhaps on my part if I do not say a few words showing how we can illustrate the spirit of Nandanar in our daily life.

In my humble opinion we cannot better translate that spirit than by clothing ourselves with khaddar in spirit. I am not saying we can imitate Nandanar by wearing khaddar merely. But I say that we must have the khadi spirit. Even a blackguard, even a prostitute will be expected to wear khaddar since he or she, the blackguard, must wear something as they eat wheat and rice in this country in common with us. But the khadi spirit means that we must know the meaning of what the wearing of khaddar carries with it. Every time that we take our khaddar garment early in the morning to wear for going out we should remember that we are doing so in the name of *Daridrana-rayana* and for the sake of saving the millions of India. If we have the khadi spirit in us we should serve ourselves with simplicity in every walk of life. Khadi spirit means illimitable patience. For those who know anything of production of khaddar know how patiently those spinners and weavers have to toil. Even so must we have patience while spinning the thread of swaraj. Khadi spirit means also equally illimitable faith. So must we have that illimitable faith in truth and non-violence ultimately conquering every obstacle in our way. Khadi spirit means fellow-feeling with every living being on earth. It means the complete renunciation of everything that is likely to harm our fellow creatures. And if we are to cultivate that spirit amongst the millions of our countrymen, what a land this India of ours would be!

I am well aware that khadi cannot compete with the other articles of commerce on their own platform and on their own terms. Even as satyagraha is a weapon unique by itself and not one of the ordinary weapons wielded by politicians so is khadi a unique article of commerce which will not and cannot succeed on terms common to other articles. If khadi is asked for in the khadi spirit that I have endeavoured to describe to you, khadi has illimitable capacities and it would outstand every other article that you see in India today. You

will therefore perhaps understand why I do not appreciate all these khadi purses that you are giving me. I know that if you had a tenth of the faith in the khadi which I have, you will not give a few hundreds or few thousands of your plenty but you will satisfy me till there is no money required for khadi. I was really distressed this morning when I discovered that a friend who is conducting a khaddar store here, not for making money but for the love of khaddar, is incurring a loss of Rs. 200 year after year. Surely it is the A B C of patriotism, it is the A B C of your love for these starving millions, that you should all wear khaddar. I was equally distressed to find Swami Sahajananda just as I came here telling me that the reason why his boys and girls were not clothed in khaddar was because the persons responsible did not patronize khaddar and it is just the reverse of the khaddar spirit which I have just described to you. In the face of these facts, you will pardon me for saying that even the intrinsic value of these purses of yours suffers. Let me pass on to the drink evil.

You must ask those here, who are given to the drink habit, to give up this cursed drink and those who are not given to the drink habit should not remain satisfied, if they have any real love for their less unfortunate brethren, till they have been rid of this curse and total prohibition is established in this land. So must you get rid of this disgraceful and immoral *Devadasi* institution. You should be no party whatsoever to child marriages and harbouring child widows in your homes. It is time that we should make these elementary reforms in our society without the slightest delay. I thank you once more for all these addresses and the purses and the patience with which you have listened to me.

The Hindu, 13-9-1927

43. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Silence Day [After *September 11, 1927*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN (VAIDYA),

I got your letter. There is nothing more to suggest regarding what you are doing. Your handwriting has improved. It will become steady with practice. There are still some errors in the language. Revise the letters after writing and have them corrected by others who

[1] From the contents; *vide* the preceding item

know more than you do. If you will be humble thus and particular about correctness of the language, it will improve gradually without any effort on your part. You will not have to spend a single minute for that.

"5.." should be written 500. A point is used to denote a nasal sound. A zero is indicated with a circle. Here is how you have written the numbers and how they should be written.

5. .	500
1. .	100
5.	50
5.	50
1.	10

Units should be placed under units, tens under tens and so on.

Blessing from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8823. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya. Also G.N. 11379

44. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 12, 1927

Unrevised

CHI. MIRA,

I could not help sending you a wire of thanksgiving yesterday. These have been somewhat anxious days. Though I have not written much nor telegraphed to you, my spirit has hovered about and watched over you. I knew that if I sent you a wire daily, you would like it but I thought that I must not. Letter-writing has been almost impossible these trying days. They leave me just enough time to attend to the programme before me. I have been pouring my soul out to the various audiences that leaves me little energy for anything else. On the top of that come the reading of Miss Mayo's book and the heavy article[1] on it.

But it has been matter of the greatest relief to me to know that Jamnalalji was with you. Thank God it all seems to be over now. It has been a good test.

[1]*Vide* "Drain Inspector's Report", 15-9-1927.

And Ramanama! If that has become a living reality with you it is a great thing indeed. But you shall give me your experiences when you are stronger. I want them all and I want to know also why you have been delirious or hysterical. Of course often we do not know.

Now you will go gently.[1] Take all the rest you need. Watch yourself and if any change in your food is necessary, make it. Find out the cause of the enlarged spleen. Stay in Poona as long as you like. Ask for the convenience you need. What you cannot mention to anybody else, you will mention to me. I am faring all right. Rajagopalachari protects me as much as any human being can. He wears himself out in trying to shield me. And I know that the strain is too much for him, but I do not interfere. If God wants this tour to be finished, He will keep those who must be, from all harm. You are therefore not to worry about me. Unless you think otherwise send this to mother.

With love,

BAPU

SHRI[MATI] MIRABEHN
C/O SETH JAMNALAL BAJAJ
KALBADEVI ROAD
BOMBAY

From the original: C.W. 5274. Courtesy: Mirabehn

45. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Silence Day [Before *September 12, 1927*][2]

CHI. GANGABEHN (VAIDYA),

I have your letter. Your Sanskrit writing is very good indeed. Your Gujarati writing too has improved.

I do not wish that you should spend more time in acquiring knowledge, but I would not consider such a desire on your part improper and would help you to fulfil it. If, comparing yourself with other women who are educated, you feel you lack and desire education like theirs, you have a right within limits to acquire it.

[1] Mirabehn explains : "After the severe attack of malaria, I was on my way to Poona for recouping my health."

[2] From the reference to the addressee's going for relief work; *vide* "Letter to Ashram Women", 12-9-1927.

If, however, your *atman* has come to be completely at peace with itself, I would wish that you should give yourself wholly to any one activity you like. But this is a matter of the heart. One can do nothing but keep on trying until the heart agrees to give up such efforts.

I see that flood relief work will keep you busy for some time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8822. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

46. LETTER TO JETHALAL JOSHI

Bhadrapad Krishna 1 [*September 12, 1927*][1]

BHAI JETHALALJI,

Your letter. I would advise you to see the Secretary of the Ashram and there take up some work if you find any. There is little possibility of my coming to the Ashram during this year.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1354

47. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

Monday, Bhadarva Vad 1 [*September 12, 1927*][2]

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I had duly received your letter about the problems of life. I have held my peace not to oblige you but because I must. I have understood what you write to me. If I can avoid it, I do not want to make a mistake. Since I did not want to pat myself on the back, I considered it proper to keep silent; but may I not say that you were the person responsible for that decision? But this is neither here nor there.

What I wanted to write to you was that you should take care of your health, because I expect many things from you. If you have not

[1] The year is inferred from the reference to Gandhiji's inability to go to the Ashram, as also from the discussion about the work to be taken up by the addressee.

[2] The year is inferred from the reference to Mayavaram.

read my last speech concerning Mysore, I can send a copy, the hope being that you may carry out as many as you can of the suggestions made in it.

I am getting along as usual. I am writing this from Mayavaram. I am not sending you my itinerary. It will be all right if you write to me c/o the Ashram.

Do you work on the spinning-wheel?

What progress had Lady Pattani made in accepting *pankora*[1] for her garments?

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3214. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

48. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day, Bhadarva Vad 1 [*September 12, 1927*][2]

DEAR SISTERS,

I should not say I have your letter—it was little more than a note. I learn that you have appointed Gangabehn Jhaveri as your President, since Kashibehn has gone to Rajkot. The fact that you can get as many presidents as you need is some proof of your ability to run your organi-zation. It would be a better proof still when you respect your President with all your heart and when all of you work in perfect unison in running the organization. Menfolk have not as yet been able to manage such things well. When we look at the affairs of our Ashram we find that we are not yet trained well enough to carry on the administration of the Ashram without quarrelling among ourselves. So it is not surprising if you also have not attained that stage. But if you persevere, I am sure you will acquire the necessary capacity. Try your best to get rid of factions and cliques. Only by striving for better things can we make progress.

It is good that Gangabehn senior has gone away on relief work.

My work continues to make progress, though slowly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3667

[1] A variety of coarse cloth

[2] From the reference to Gangabehn Jhaveri becoming President of the Ashram Women

49. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

[About *September 12, 1927*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN JHAVERI,

Even though I owe you no letter, I am writing this. It is good you have got the presidentship. Show yourself worthy of it. Give all your attention to its duties. If difficulties crop up, overcome them with courage. Don't be baffled by anything.

As I write this, I remember that as a matter of fact I owe you a letter. I did not, could not, reply to your question about Marathi. Take the help you need for learning Sanskrit, wherever available. Actually, since you know grammar, you can do a lot on your own. And the same is true about Hindi.

Improve your knowledge of Gujarati, Hindi and Sanskrit and then go ahead in reading. As for work, all other things come in after you have mastered the science of the spinning-wheel. That science of course includes ginning, carding, spinning, repairing the spinning-wheel, straightening the spindle, making a cord for connecting the wheel with the spindle, mounting the *sadi*[2] on to the spindle, etc. The body, too, should be well developed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3126

50. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*September 13, 1927*][3]

CHI. MIRA,

I have just a few moments for writing to you. There is no wire from you since Saturday. I therefore presume that you are quite well now and in Bombay. The Monday letter was sent to Bombay as per your instructions.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] A small piece of fine cloth wound around the spindle to secure the position of the cord or to prevent the disc from moving back

[3] From the reference to the "Monday letter". (which is the one dated 12-9-1927)

Your letter in your own hand after the illness was perfectly written and quite legible. In fact the writing was even better than usual.

Yes, the illness was a blessing. The weakness you will soon get over. If you go to Poona, you will take long walks and visit the dairy there in the company of one of our very best friends there. You will love Prof. Trivedi as you see him. You will befriend his boy Manu and you will see the Seva Sadan and the Society's quarters. But that by and by.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5275. Courtesy: Mirabehn

51. LETTER TO KATHERINE MAYO

AS AT SABARMATI,
ON TOUR,
September 13, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

It was through Mr. Karl Placht that I received some time ago a copy of your book. *Mother India,* which he sent me with your permission. I really get little time to read any literature but as your book attracted much attention here and gave rise to very bitter and angry comment, and as many correspondents drew my attention to the fact that you had made copious references to my writings and urged me to give my opinion upon your book I made time to read it through. I am sorry to have to inform you that the book did not leave on my mind at all a nice impression. I have asked the Publishers of *Young India* to send you a copy of my review[1] of your book. If you think that I have done any injustice to you take care to draw my attention to it I shall feel thankful to you. As I have not your address by me on my tour, I am taking the liberty of sending this to you through Mr. Karl Placht.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

MISS KATHERINE MAYO

From a copy: Katherine Mayo Papers. Courtesy: Yale University Library, New Haven, Connecticut, U.S.A.

[1]*Vide* "Drain Inspector's Report", 15-9-1927.

52. LETTER TO VIJAY SINGH PATHIK

Bhadrapad Krishna 2 [*September 13, 1927*][1]

BHAI PATHIKJI,

I got your letter today. I had sent a reply to your last letter. I am surprised that you did not get it. There has been no change in my attitude. If there was I would not conceal it. You may come over here whenever you wish to. I shall be touring till the 10th of October, not farther than one day's run from Madras. You will be able to locate me from Madras.

I have written nothing to the Government to save Abdul Rashid from the gallows. I have certainly asked Hindus to forgive him. What do you expect me to do for the Kakori case[2] prisoners? What people should I appeal to?

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From *Bapu, maine kya dekha, kya samjha*, p. 125

53. SPEECH AT MAYAVARAM

September 13, 1927

LADIES AND FRIENDS,

I thank for all these several addresses and the several purses. If you want me to make a fairly detailed reply to all the important points referred to in those addresses, it is necessary that you should keep perfect silence during the time when I am speaking.

At the outset I have to tender you the same apology that I tendered at Cuddalore; and that was to ask you, out of your generosity, to pardon me for my having been not accessible to all and sundry that came to me during my rest hours. If I could have had the strength, I would have loved to talk to the citizens in this town to

[1] The year is inferred from the reference to Gandhiji's tour programme and to Abdul Rashid, the assassin of Swami Shraddhanand.

[2] An armed dacoity committed on August 9, 1925 near Kakori railway station when cash and currency were plundered from the guard's van of a train going to Lucknow from Moradabad; one person was killed. The dacoity, it was alleged, had been committed by certain members of the Hindustan Republican Association of United Provinces, the object of which was the establishment of a 'Federated Republic of the United States of India'. Of the 21 accused, two were acquitted, three were sentenced to death, one to transportation for life and the rest to terms of imprisonment varying from five to 14 years.

cross-question them and to understand their several viewpoints; but in the present weak state of my health, such a thing is not possible.

Some of you may perhaps recall than this is not my first visit to Mayavaram. I have a vivid recollection of 1915, when I had the privilege of talking to some of you on swadeshi.[1] But I must not detain you by recalling to you my pleasant recollections of that time.

I congratulate you on your work towards the uplift of the so-called 'untouchables'. . . .

But I must this evening speak to you on a subject which is very dear to me, but on which I have not as yet spoken during this tour of mine. I would like to speak to you on that subject this evening because it was forced on my attention yesterday morning. I want to speak to you upon the santitation of this place. Your municipality very kindly presented me an address in which you have mentioned some of my activites in which I am interested as a humanitarian, as a reformer. I reckon sanitation also as one of the important things which a humanitarian or a reformer must tackle. Within three or four minutes' walk of the place where you have kindly housed me, I endeavoured unsuspectingly to go out for a walk thinking that it was a beautiful grove by the side of a lovely pond. A rustic bamboo foot bridge drew my attention to walk over it. I crossed it, turned to the right and walked with my companion but a few paces when you may imagine what I saw. What I saw was a sight too horrible to talk about; and the stench that was coming out of it was suffocating. I saw the water of that pond was being defiled in a disgusting manner, when, at the same time, a woman was filling her pot with that same water. And, in order to get the morning walk, I was obliged to go out for some distance in a motor-car. I felt deeply hurt; I felt as if I was wounded. It recalled to me the sights that I used to see in the principal streets of the Madras city itself in 1915. Surely there is something that is terribly wrong in this state of affairs. The first condition of any municipal life is decent sanitation and an unfailing supply of pure water. Do not for a moment consider that either of these two things require any great outlay of money. Both these things are capable of being secured without your having to spend any money at all, if only you have the will to secure them to the citizens. But it requires a vivid sense of your municipal duties. Membership of a municipal board

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Reception at Mayavaram", May 1, 1915.

must not be treated as a place of privilege. No man dare enter a municipality except in the spirit of a scavenger. But what I see so often in the papers is only wrangling over municipal elections and the fight between the Brahmins and the Non-Brahmins arising out of this wrangling. If you will only remember that you are the servants of the people of Mayavaram and not their masters and that you are entrusted with the solemn duty to keep the town in perfect sanitation for the benefit of the people, you will start with a shovel in your hand and set about keeping the water pure and preserving sanitation on the land given to the poor. You have got in your midst so many schools maintained by you; give them a holiday and ask the students of those schools to go about cleaning the streets and also telling the people themselves to keep the streets clean and the water pure. Surely our learning and all the lessons that we receive on sanitation in schools are useless, unless we reduce them to practice in our daily life; and I urge you not to say to yourselves that our people will not listen to these appeals and will not change their habits. The place where I was myself born had terribly impure dungheaps in the streets about fifty years back. But there came to that place an administrator; and, be it said to his credit, he was an Englishman. He removed the dungheaps in a day and there was no protest to his doing so from any of the people. Nor did he use his official authority to impose his imperious will on an unwilling people. But he reasoned with the people, bore down all opposition and carried out his reforms. I have cited this instance before you because I am a determined opponent of this British administration but we have yet got to learn much from the Britisher in the matter of sanitation. I ask you to shake off your lethargy, to take your courage in your hands; and you can easily carry out this reform.

I must now proceed to the very long and well argued address presented to me on behalf of the 'suppressed' society. That address isolates itself from other addresses of the kind, in that it refers not so much to the social disabilities, as it does to the civil disabilities of that community. It casts very serious reflections upon the landlord class. It charges them with having reduced their class to serfdom. It charges the administration with having closed the door against their holding even menial offices. It complains of want of assistance from everybody, except [for] a few isolated instances. It says that, whereas their average income is never more than Rs. 40 a year, their expenses are never less than Rs. 120 per year. It complains that, being rooted to the soil, they have to remain without any occupation at all for a major

portion of the year.

I do not know what truth there is in all these allegations. As it is, I can only give these friends of mine the consolation that I will endeavour to verify these statements in their address. Generally speaking, I may assure them of my fullest sympathy and I certainly associate myself with the remark that I notice in their address that they are the first holders of the land in this country.

But there is no cause for the spirit of despair that runs throughout the address. They, in common with the rest, cannot help profiting by the great awakening that has now come over the country. At the present moment, it is true that that awakening has taken a sad turn. In our blindness, we seem to think that each group, each section, each class, each caste should pull its way by itself without the one co-operating with the other. So we are torn by internal dissensions. But these dissensions are only temporary and are bound to die out; and, when the cloud is really lifted and the day dawns, the 'suppressed' classes are bound to partake in the rejoicings that will come in the wake. And in order to partake in the rejoicings at the time of the advent of that dawn, let them understand that, after all, everyone shall have ultimately to depend upon self-help. They have but to become conscious of their own strength which their numbers and their occupation give them; and they will become an irresistible force. Immediately they realize that they are slaves of nobody, and that, after all, without their labour, the lands they are cultivating will become a horrible wilderness, then the day is theirs.

But I would say to the landlord class, that if the allegations made against them in the address are true to any extent, it reflects the greatest discredit upon them. Let them not crush under their feet the shoulders on which they ride. Let them consider these labouring classes, who alone make their barren fields appear smiling with rich crops, let the landlord class consider these labourers as one of their own family and allow them to share in the happiness to which the labours of these people contribute so much. It is wrong, it is sinful to consider our own labourers as 'untouchables'. Let us wipe out this shame.

But I have yet to talk to you of another shame. I saw some friends this afternoon from whose class the *Devadasis* are drawn. I saw some of these sisters also and I engaged them in a very serious conversation. And, as I was talking to them and understanding the

hidden meaning of this thing, my whole soul rose against the system in its entirety. In calling them *Devadasis* we insult God Himself under the sacred name of religion; and we commit a double crime in that we use these sisters of ours to serve our lust and take, in the same breath, foul as it is, the name of God. To think that there should be a class of people given to this kind of immoral service and that there is another class of people in this country who perpetuate the continuance of such a system, makes one despair of life itself. And I assure you that, as I was talking to them, there was no evil in their eyes and that they were capable of as fine perceptions and as pure feelings as any other woman in the world. What difference can there be between them and our own blood-sisters? And if we will not allow our own blood-sisters for such immoral uses, how dare we then use these women for such purposes? Let the Hindus, who are connected in any way with this evil, purge themselves of it. The existence of such an evil in our society saps its foundations. The majority of these sisters, or all of them, have promised me to retrace their steps on certain conditions; and I promised them that I would make it convenient and possible for them to so retrace their steps. God willing, I shall fulfil my promise and let them also do their part. If they cannot fulfil those conditions, I shall blame not them, but the society in which their lot is cast. It is up to you to extend the hand of fellowship to these sisters. It is up to you to see that they are reclaimed from this life of shame. I know that, when again they have to face temptations, it may become a too irresistible force. But, if man will restrain his lust and if society should disapprove of this practice, it is surely possible that they will not go astray.

I thank you for giving me this very patient hearing. I know that you will excuse my straight talk to you this evening. Though, during the period of my stay here I have had every attention bestowed upon me by so many of the kind friends that were by my side, I must own that the two days of my stay here were sad days for me. This *Devadasi* problem which was brought to my notice yesterday and the state of insanitation that I personally observed, caused me intense grief; and in talking to you in the manner in which I did, I endeavoured to lighten my grief by making you share in it. I shall hope that you will share that grief and lighten my burden by following my suggestions.

As is usual at all these meetings, if you will continue to be silent, volunteers will go round to all of you making collections and you may pay them whatever you are willing to pay.

In answer to a question put to him by a member in the meeting at the time the volunteers were going round, Mahatmaji replied :

A friend has asked me, and very legitimately, how these purses that are being received are to be utilized. The usual custom is to utilize the purse collected in any province in that province itself. But, when it is collected in a very rich place as in Bombay, it is usual to spend it in a place where it is most needed. In the largest part of the country, all over India, all the money that is collected goes into the hands of spinners, carders and weavers. No one is called upon to leave his present occupation, if he has one, and to take to spinning or carding or weaving; so, it is only the poorest classes who are being served by the workers. It has not been as yet found possible to distribute the whole of the purses amongst the spinners, carders and weavers alone. The act of organizing the villages for weaving and spinning takes a portion of this money. It is impossible in a poor country like ours to get an army of workers who can afford to devote themselves to this act of organizing, without any remuneration being paid to them. Though we have in this movement scores of volunteers who not only do not get anything but themselves pay something towards this movement, it is not possible to get the 15,000 people, that we are now employing, for nothing. Roughly speaking, I may tell you that anything between twenty to twenty-five per cent of the total expenses is spent in the work of organization alone. The remaining seventy-five to eighty per cent of the money goes directly into the hands of the really famine-stricken poor as wages for the work that they do. And in this manner, throughout the length and breadth of India, 15,000 villages have been thus organized. Over 50,000 spinners all over India are at present getting each between one rupee and a rupee and a half a month[1], whereas, before hand-spinning came, they were getting nothing at all. And, as ten spinners feed one weaver, at least 5,000 weavers are each getting between Rs. 15 and Rs. 20 a month and, side by side with all this, has been resuscitated the old art of printing which had all but died out. And hundreds of printers, dyers, laundrymen and others are earning now an honest livelihood. The object before the All-India Spinners' Association is to reduce the organizing expenses from 25 per cent to somewhere about 15 per cent at least. Let me also inform you that 1,000 to 1,500 men, who are working to organize the villages, are living honest and useful lives; and I I repeat what I said elsewhere

[1] The source has "day".

that, if khadi becomes universal in India, it opens out a good source of livelihood to thousands of young men who are in want of employment. If it is possible to have achieved what had been done with but 15 or 20 lakhs of rupees, you may realize what will be possible if we get all the 60 crores[1] of rupees that are now being paid for the cloth imported from outside the country.

The Hindu, 15-9-1927

54. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*After September 13, 1927*][2]

CHI. MIRA,

I had four letters together yesterday and one I have today. I have so much confidence in Jamnalalji as a man and in Dr. Dalal as a surgeon and physician that I have no anxiety. Absence of wire from you means that no operation has been necessary as yet. You will buy the glasses that may be necessary.

Yes, the 9 o'clock silence[3] is a great thing. It was Kaka's suggestion. I had no hesitation about its adoption.

Subbiah is still on sick leave though he is now convalescent. He will take about a fortnight before he can rejoin me. Devdas came only today after leaving Subbiah at his father-in-law's.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5276. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] The source has "lakhs".

[2] In Mahadev Desai's letter to Mira dated September 12, 1927, he says that Devdas was attending on Subbiah who was ill.

[3] Explaining this Mahadev Desai in his letter dated September 8, 1927 wrote to Mira : "Bapu has decided to go into silence every evening at 9 p.m., that there may be no engagements and no interviews after that hour. The vow is tentatively for two months after which he will decide if it is to be continued for life. There are two exceptions, illness of self and others and travelling."

55. LETTER TO O. G. VILLARD

AS AT SABARMATI,
September 14, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and copy of Miss Mayo's book[1]. A friend of hers had already sent me a copy. I have now read it and written for *Young India* a fairly long review. I have asked the publishers to send you a marked copy of *Young India*. In the circumstances, I hope, you do not consider it necessary for me to write anything special. If, however, on reading my review you consider that there is any point requiring elucidation please let me know. I read your review with a great deal of interest.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD, ESQ.
20, VESSEY STREET
NEW YORK

From a photostat: C.W. 9228

56. LETTER TO N. M. KHARE

Wednesday, Bhadarva Vad 3 [*September 14, 1927*][2]

BHAI PANDITJI,

I got your letter about prayers. Since Kaka has written al ready I do not write more. There is but one ideal behind our prayers. But we must act according to the limits of our capacity. We should deceive neither the people nor our own selves. If many do not arrive at 4 o'clock, let us give up our claim that we hold the prayer at that hour, and keep the time that suits all. But once this hour has been fixed, everyone ought to attend. Those who are devoted to the present hour of 4 o'clock should keep up their practice themselves, get up at four and engage themselves in any activity which they choose.

If all the people do not like the *Ramayana*, by all means discontinue it.

[1] *Mother India*

[2] From the similarity between the contents of this and the letter dated "Mayavaram, September 13, 1927" from Mahadev Desai to Khare

Do not think about what I like, but take people's capacity into consideration and introduce whatever changes you wish. Do nothing in haste.

I see no advantage in extending the time for reading the *Gita*. At the most it takes five minutes to read three long chapters. I very much like the 14-day reading programme. But even in this matter, do what is agreeable to all of you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 252. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn Khare

57. SPEECH AT KUMBAKONAM

September 14, 1927

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I thank you for all the addresses and purses. Apart from the usual addresses, I see here an address from the Hindi Prachar Office, Kumbakonam. I congratulate you on having a branch of the Hindi Prachar Office of Madras here. Had Hindi been more popular in this part of the country, you could not have me speak in English and translate it into Tamil but to speak in Hindi and translate it. I understand that though a fair sprinkling of students are learning Hindi, it is still to be supported so far as the finances are concerned, from the central office. I think as a matter of fact, in an important centre like this there should be far greater earnestness for the study of Hindi and that the whole of the financial burden should be borne locally. It is now commonly recognized by all lovers of the country that if we are to establish a closer contact between the North and the South, a knowledge of Hindi has to be cultivated, especially among the leaders of the country.

I was pleased and grateful to receive the purse from the stu dents also. They were anxious that I should address them sepa rately. But they gladly relieved me of that responsibility when they realized that it would be a great strain on me to address two meetings separately. I am conscious you are aware that in many places I am obliged to address more than one meeting. I have to do so whenever it becomes inevitable for a variety of reasons. But wherever I can decently avoid these obligations, I do so. And I do so because I am anxious to go through the appointed tour without any breakdown. But though I

have not been able to address students separately, let them understand that my heart is always with them. I would like to impress upon the student world the necessity for having pure character. Without a pure character as a foundation, they would not be able to rise to the expectations that have been raised in the nation about the students. All the world over, whether today or in the distant past, the experience is that it is the rising generation that has been able to battle against the entrenched prejudices and superstitions. They are therefore to be found always in the forefront of reforms and the battle for freedom. For the rest, I would advise the students to study the different addresses that I have been giving to them wherever it has been possible during this tour.

To the Municipal and Taluk Board, I would respectfully commend the reply I made yesterday to the Municipal Council at Mayavaram. It was by accident that I happened to draw the attention of the Municipal Council to the terrible insanitation that I witnessed and as a matter of fact the remarks that I passed there are applicable to almost all the municipal councils in this presidency. Nevertheless my remarks do not lose any of their force, because the evil I draw attention to was almost universal. It is high time that municipal councillors understand the responsibility attached to the office. They must not be used as stepping-stones to fame or renown. In the course of having to advise different friends in different parts of India, it has been my painful duty to study the working of the many municipal councils, and I have discovered that much of their time is wasted in mutual recriminations and wranglings. I have noticed that in many municipalities corruption is rampant during election time, whereas every municipal councillor should consider himself a trustee and custodian of public health and public moral. I wish that the municipal councils take to heart blemishes that I have drawn their attention to and trust that they would make serious endeavour to remove those blemishes. This place is renowned for its holiness and learning. It is not difficult and it is not too much to expect to make this place a model so far as sanitation is concerned.

The mention of the learning that exists in Kumbakonam brings me to a subject on which I want to occupy a few minutes of your time. Unhappily at the present moment our learning—I mean the Sanskrit learning—has become synonymous with superstition. I understand that the very earnest remarks I made before the students in the Pachaiyappa's Hall have given offence to the pundits of this place.

They have written to me asking for an appointment. I have sent them the message—I do not know whether it reached them—that though I can ill afford I shall be glad to receive them at 8 o'clock this night. But I would like to appeal with all the earnestness at my command that whatever I said to the students was said after fullest deliberation and I see nothing to alter a single word in that. As a *Sanatani* Hindu, as I call myself to be one, I say with great deliberation that untouchability as we practise today has no warrant in Hinduism and that it is a blot on Hindu society. I say in all humility but with equal firmness that if we, Hindus, do not take care to rid ourselves of this blot, Hinduism itself is in serious danger of being blotted out. A religion whose two great maxims are "*Satyannasti paro dharmah*"[1], "*Ahimsa paramo dharmah*"[2], a religion that is broadbased on fundamental truth and fundamental love, cannot possibly tolerate untouchability because one is born in particular surroundings. I say also with greatest emphasis that there is no warrant in this Hinduism that I have defined to you for child widowhood. Marriage, it is universally acknowledged, gives a status and a change in life. There can be no such thing as a sacred bond on the part of a girl of tender years who is only fit to sit in her mother's or father's lap. And if fathers, who are blind to all affection springing out of parental love, give away their daughters of tender years in marriage, it is not marriage except a stone being married to a man. Therefore I say that there is no such thing as a child widow because there is no such thing as child marriage.[3]

I have no hesitation to repeat the advice that, if there are students who want to be married, they will be performing an act of charity towards the girls of India to seek out child widows when they have outgrown their childhood and they will be doing a service to the country if they make up their minds to end child widowhood by refusing child marriage. When a thing is manifestly immoral and repugnant to all reason and all sense of justice, it is wrong to seek shelter under Sanskrit texts of doubtful validity and doubtful authority. Shastras are given to elevate us and light our path towards perfection. Who can possibly offer a moral defence of the painful system of *Devadasis* and of the parent who would consign his daughter to a life of shame and infamy in the name of religion?

[1] "There is no religion higher than Truth."
[2] "Ahimsa is the highest dharma."
[3] What follows is from *The Hindu*, 16-9-1927.

I have been told that I am tender when speaking before Christian audiences or Mussalman audiences, whereas I am not at all tender about Hindu religion and Hindu weaknesses. If it is a crime, I plead willingly guilty. About Christianity and Islam I do not claim to know as well as I claim to know Hinduism. Christians and Mussalmans, no matter how open I may be, are likely to misunderstand me but there is no such possibility in Hinduism and I have no fear of being misunderstood by my Hindu people. Therefore courtesy demands that I should be tender before Christian and Mussalman audiences, but it would be totally wrong on my part to be tender in speaking to Hindu audiences about Hinduism and Hindu blemishes. Even as a skilful surgeon knowing his patient and knowing his defects ruthlessly uses his knife to cure the wound, as a reformer, claiming to be saturated at least as well as the tallest among the Hindus, it would be totally wrong if I out of false courtesy and false tenderness do not put emphasis on the defects and weaknesses which are ruining the Hindu society. And I am thankful to be able to say that during a long course of public life I have not been often misunderstood by Hindus or Hindu audiences; but whether I retain the affection of my countrymen or whether I forfeit their affection, the path of duty is absolutely clear before me. Taking all the care that it would be humanly possible for me to take not to give unnecessary offence and not to cause unnecessary displeasure, I must continue to give out what I feel and speak with absolute truth and absolute fairness and so I suggest as humbly as I can to all the learned pundits in this place and to every thinking Hindu, man or woman, to reconsider their views and understand the bearings of untouchability, child-marriages, child widows and *Devadasis* and ask themselves whether there can be any warrant for all these in a religion inspired by *rishis* who went into endless austerities and based their faith upon the teachings of the *Bhagavad Gita*.

I must now come to the spinning-wheel. I am glad that you are, as much as you can, supporting the spinning-wheel. I am glad that there is no difference of opinion about the necessity of the spinning-wheel. You have got in your midst the Saurashtra weavers. Your capacity for khadi service is limitless. But it is not enough that you give me some money when I appear before you. It is not enough that some of you wear khadi on occasions; but it is necessary if you have real fellow-feeling for these starving millions of India, you all throw away you foreign cloth and take to khadi to ward off suffering and

poverty. It is equally your duty to see that this curse of drunkenness is removed from this country. If we would but take personal interest in the welfare of our bretheren who are given to drink, you should insist upon total prohibition and, to my mind, the day is not far off when India would become dry.

As is usual in all meetings, volunteers will go in your midst and collect contributions from those who desire to contribute. It is usual also to auction all the jewellery and any costly thing that I might receive in the course of my journey and, I propose to auction the ring which I have got now. There was a silver plate which is from my kind host (Mr. Pantulu Aiyer) but unfortunately I have not brought it here.

The Hindu, 15-9-1927 and 16-9-1927

58. DISCUSSION WITH PUNDITS, KUMBAKONAM

September 14, 1927

Several leading pundits of this place had a Conference with Mahatma Gandhi last night. The pundits, it is understood, protested against the recent remarks of Mr. Gandhi about child widows and their marriage and the question of untouchability. They contended Mr. Gandhi's statement that those customs had no sanction in the Hindu Shastras was incorrect and that they could cite authorities.

Mr. Gandhi explained to them the proper way of upholding Hinduism was not by quoting isolated texts but by acting through the inner voice of conscience. Nothing that was opposed to truth and love could be dharma according to Hindu Shastras. He appealed to them to co-operate with him in his work of conserving Hinduism against the destroying influences of evil customs and not to help the destruction of Hinduism by putting obstacles in the way of reform.

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-9-1927

59. DRAIN INSPECTOR'S REPORT

On the lips of the good vice becomes virtue,

And even virtue appears as vice in the mouth of the evil-minded: this need not surprise us.

For, do not the mighty clouds drink the salt waters of the ocean and return it as sweet refreshing rain,

And does not the cobra, drinking sweet milk, belch it forth as the deadliest poison?

Rivers drink not of their own waters, the trees do not themselves eat the fruit which they bear.

Nor do the clouds partake of the grains they grow; even so the good devote their powers to the good of others.[1]

Several correspondents have sent me cuttings containing reviews of, or protests against, Miss Mayo's *Mother India*. A few have in addition asked me to give my own opinion on it. An enraged correspondent from London asks me to give him answers to several questions that he has framed upon the authoress's references to me. Miss Mayo has herself favoured me with a copy of her book.

I would certainly not have made time, especially when I have only limited energy,and caution has been enjoined upon me by medical friends against overwork, to read the book during my tour. But these letters made it obligatory on me to read the book at once.

The book is cleverly and powerfully written. The carefully chosen quotations give it the appearance of a truthful book. But the impression it leaves on my mind is, that it is the report of a drain inspector sent out with the one purpose of opening and examining the drains of the country to be reported upon, or to give a graphic description of the stench exuded by the opened drains. If Miss Mayo had confessed that she had gone to India merely to open out and examine the drains of India, there would perhaps be little to complain about her compilation. But she says in effect with a certain amount of triumph, "The drains are India". True, in the concluding chapter there is a caution. But her caution is cleverly made to enforce her sweeping condemnation. I feel that no one who has any knowledge of India can possibly accept her terrible accusations against the thought and the life of the people of this unhappy country.

The book is without doubt untruthful, be the facts stated ever so truthful. If I open out and describe with punctilious care all the stench exuded from the drains of London and say "Behold London", my facts will be incapable of challenge, but my judgement will be rightly condemned as a travesty of truth. Miss Mayo's book is nothing better,

[1] ुणायन्ते दोषाः सुजनवदने दुर्जनमुखे
गुणा दोषायन्ते तदिदमपि नो विस्मयपदम्।
महा मेघः क्षारं पिबति कुरूते वारि मधुरं
फणी क्षीरं पीत्वा वमति गरलं दुःसहतरम्॥
पिबन्ति नद्यः स्वयमेव नाम्भः स्वयं न खादन्ति फलानि वृक्षाः।
नादन्ति सस्यं खलु वारिवाहाः परोपकाराय सतां क्वविभूतथः॥

nothing else.

The authoress says she was dissatisfied with the literature she read about India, and so she came to India "to see what a volunteer unsubsidized, uncommitted and unattached, could observe of common things in daily human life".

After having read the book with great attention, I regret to say that I find it difficult to accept this claim. Unsubsidized she may be. Uncommited and unattached she certainly fails to show herself in any page. We in India are accustomed to interested publications patronized—"patronized" is accepted as an elegant synonym for "subsidized"—by the Government. We have become used to understanding from pre-British days, that the art (perfected by the British) of government includes the harnessing of the secret service of men learned, and reported to be honest and honourable for shadowing suspects and for writing up the virtues of the Government of the day as if the certificate had come from disinterested quarters. I hope that Miss Mayo will not take offence if she comes under the shadow of such suspicion. It may be some consolation to her to know that even some of the best English friends of India have been so suspected.

But ruling out of consideration the suspicion, it remains to be seen why she has written this untruthful book. It is doubly untruthful. It is untruthful in that she condemns a whole nation or in her words "the peoples of India" (she will not have us as one nation) practically without any reservation as to their sanitation, morals, religion, etc. It is also untruthful because she claims for the British Government merits which cannot be sustained and which many an honest British officer would blush to see the Government credited with.

If she is not subsidized, Miss Mayo is an avowed Indophobe and Anglophil refusing to see anything good about Indians and anything bad about the British and their rule.

She does not give one an elevated idea of Western standard of judgement. Though she represents a class of sensational writers in the West, it is a class that, I flatter myself with the belief, is anything sensational, smart or crooked. But the pity of it is that there are still thousands in the West who delight in 'shilling shockers'. Nor are all the authoress's quotations or isolated facts truthfully stated. I propose to pick up those I have personal knowledge of. The book bristles with quotations torn from their contexts and with extracts which have been

authoritatively challenged.

The authoress has violated all sense of propriety by associating the Poet's[1] name with child marriage. The Poet has indeed referred to early marriage as not an undesirable institution. But there is a world of difference between child marriage and early marriage. If she had taken the trouble of making the acquaintance of the free and freedom-loving girls and women of Santiniketan, she would have known the Poet's meaning of early marriage.

She has done me the honour of quoting me frequently in support of her argument. Any person who collects extracts from a reformer's diary, tears them from their context and proceeds to condemn, on the strength of these, the people in whose midst the reformer has worked, would get no hearing from sane and unbiased readers or hearers. But in her hurry to see everything Indian in a bad light, she has not only taken liberty with my writings, but she had not thought it necessary even to verify through me certain things ascribed by her or others to me. In fact she has combined in her own person what we understand in India the judicial and the executive officer. She is both the prosecutor and the judge. She has described the visit to me, and informed her readers that there are always with me two "secretaries" who write down every word I say. I know that this is not a wilful perversion of facts. Nevertheless the statement is not true. I beg to inform her that I have no one near me who has been appointed or is expected to write down every word that I say. I have by me a co-worker called Mahadev Desai who is striving to out-Boswell Boswell and does, whenever he is near me, take down whatever he considers to be wisdom dropping from my lips. I can't repel his advances, even if I would, for the relationship between us is, like the Hindu marriage, indissoluble. But the real crime committed against me is described by her at pages 387-8. She ascribes to the Poet "a fervent declaration that Ayurvedic science surpasses anything that the West can offer" (She has this time no quotation to back her statement.) Then she quotes my opinion that hospitals are institutions for propagating sin, and then distorts out of all recognition a sacred incident, honourable to the British surgeons and, I hope, to myself. I must ask the reader to excuse me for giving the full quotation from the book :

As he happened to be in the prison at the time, British surgeon of the

[1] Rabindranath Tagore

Indian Medical Service came straightaway to see him. "Mr. Gandhi," said the surgeon, as the incident was then reported, "I am sorry to tell you that you have appendicitis. If you were my patient, I should operate at once. But you will probably prefer to call in your Ayurvedic physician."

Mr. Gandhi proved otherwise minded.

"I should prefer not to operate," pursued the surgeon, "because in case the outcome should be unfortunate, all your friends will lay it as a charge of malicious intent against us whose duty is to care for you."

"If you will only consent to operate," pleaded Mr. Gandhi, "I will call in my friends, now, and explain to them that you do so at my request."

So Mr. Gandhi wilfully went to an "institution for propagating sin", was operated upon by one of the "worst of all", an officer of the Indian Medical Service and was attentively nursed through convalescence by an English Sister whom he is understood to have thought after all rather a "useful sort of person."

This is a travesty of truth. I shall confine myself to correcting only what is libellous and not the other inaccuracies. There was no question here of calling in any Ayurvedic physician. Colonel Maddock who performed the operation had the right, if he had so chosen, to perform the operation without a reference to me, and even in spite of me. But he and Surgeon-General Hooton showed a delicate consideration to me, and asked me whether I would wait for my own doctors who were known to them and who were also trained in the Western medical and surgical science. I would not be behind-hand in returning their courtesy and consideration, and I immediately told them that they could perform the operation without waiting for my doctors to whom they had telegraphed, and that I would gladly give them a note for their protection in the event of the operation miscarrying. I endeavoured to show that I had no distrust either in their ability or their good faith. It was to me a happy opportunity of demonstrating my personal goodwill.

So far as my opinion about hospitals and the like is concerned, it stands, in spite of my having subjected myself and my wards to treatment more than once by physicians and surgeons, Indian and European, trained in the Western school of medicine. Similarly I use motor-cars and rail-ways, whilst holding to my condemnation of them as strongly as ever. I hold the body itself to be an evil and an impediment in my progress. But I see no inconsistency in my making use of it while it lasts, and trying in the best manner I know to use it

for its own destruction. This is a sample of distortion of which I have a personal knowledge.

But the book is brimful of descriptions of incidents of which an average Indian, at any rate, has no knowledge. Thus she describes an ovation said to have been given to the Prince of Wales, of which Indian India has no knowledge, but which could not possibly escape it if it had happened. A crowd is reported to have fought its way to the Prince's car somewhere in Bombay.

> The police tried vainly to form a hedge round the car moving at a crawl unprotected nowthrough a solid mass of shouting humanity which won through to the railway station at last.

Then at the railway station while there were three minutes for the train to steam out, the Prince is reported by Miss Mayo to have ordered the barriers to be dropped and the "mobs" to be let in. The authoress then proceeds :

> Like the sweep of a river in flood, the interminable multitude rolled in, and shouted and laughed and wept, and when the train started, ran alongside the Royal carriage till they could run no more.

All this is supposed to have happened in 1921 on the evening of November 22nd, whilst the dying embers of the riots were still hot. There is much of this kind of stuff in this romantic chapter which is headed "Behold a Light".

The nineteenth chapter is a collection of authorities in praise of the achievements of the British Government, almost every one of which has been repeatedly challenged both by English and Indian writers of unimpeachable integrity. The seventeenth chapter is writen to show that we are a "world-menace". If as a result of Miss Mayo's effort the League of Nations is moved to declare India a segregated country unfit for exploitation, I have no doubt both the West and the East would be the gainers. We may then have our internecine wars. Hindus may be eaten up, as she threatens, by the hordes from the North-West and Central Asia—that were a position infinitely superior to one of ever-growing emasculation. Even as electrocution is a humaner method of killing than the torturous method of roasting alive, so would a sudden overwhelming swoop from Central Asia upon the unresisting, insanitary, superstitious and sexuality-ridden Hindus, as Miss Mayo describes us to be, be a humane deliverance from the living and ignominious death which we are going through at the present moment. Unfortunately, however, such is not Miss Mayo's goal. Her case is to perpetuate white domination in India on the plea

of India's unfitness to rule herself.

The picturesque statements that this clever authoress puts into the mouths of the various characters read like so many pages from a sensational novel in which no regard has to be paid to truth. Many of her statements seem to me to be utterly unworthy of belief and do not put the men and women to whom they are ascribed in a favourable light. Take for instance this statement put in the mouth of a prince :

> "Our treaties are with the Crown of England," one of them said to me, with incisive calm. "The princes of India made no treaty with a Government that included Bengali *babus*. We shall never deal with this new lot of Jacks-in-office. While Britain stays, Britain will send us English gentlemen to speak for the King Emperor, and all will be as it should be between friends. If Britain leaves, we, the princes will know how to straighten out India, even as princes should." (Page 316)

However fallen Indian princes may be, I should want unimpeachable evidence before I could believe that there can be in India a prince so degraded as to make such a statement. Needless to say the authoress does not give the name of the prince.

A still more scandalous statement occurs on page 314 and reads as follows :

> "His Highness does not believe," said the Dewan, "that Britain is going to leave India. But still, under new regime in England, they may be so ill-advised. So His Highness is getting his troops in shape, accumulating munitions and coining silver. And if the English do go, three months afterward, not a rupee or a virgin will be left in all Bengal."

The reader is kept in darkness as to the name of His Highness or of the enlightened Dewan.

There are many statements which Miss Mayo puts into the mouths of Englishmen and Englishwomen living in India. All I can say with reference to these statements is that if some of them were really made by the authors, they are unworthy of the trust reposed in them and they have done an injustice to their wards or patients as well as the race to which they belong. I should be sorry indeed to think that there are many Englishmen and Englishwomen who say one thing to their Indian friends and another to their Western confidants. Those Englishmen and English-women who may chance to read the sweepings gathered together by Miss Mayo with her muck-rake will recognize the statements I have in mind. In seeking to see an India degraded, Miss Mayo has unconsciously degraded the characters

whom she has used as her instruments for proving her facts which she boasts cannot be "disproved or shaken". I hope I have given sufficient *prima facie* proof in this article to show that many of her facts stand disproved even in isolation. Put together they give a wholly false picture.

Buy why am I writing this article? Not for the Indian readers but for the many American and English readers who read these pages from week to week with sympathy and attention. I warn them against believing this book. I do not remember having given the message Miss Mayo imputes to me. The only one present who took any notes at all has no recollection of the message imputed to me. But I do know what message I give every American who comes to see me: "Do not believe newspapers and the catchy literature you get in America. But if you want to know anything about India, go to India as students, study India for yourself. If you cannot go, make a study of all that is written about India for her and against her and then form your own conclusions. The ordinary literature you get is either exaggerated vilification of India or exaggerated praise." I warn Americans and Englishmen against copying Miss Mayo. She came not with an open mind as she claims, but with her preconceived notions and prejudices which she betrays on every page, not excluding even the introductory chapter in which she recites the claim. She came to India not to see things with her own eyes, but to gather material three fourths of which she could as well have gathered in America.

That a book like Miss Mayo's can command a large circulation furnishes a sad commentary on Western literature and culture.

I am writing this article also in the hope, be it ever so distant, that Miss Mayo herself may relent and repent of having done, I hope unconsciously, atrocious injustice to an ancient people and equally atrocious injustice to the Americans by having exploited her undoubted ability to prejudice without warrant their minds against India.

The irony of it all is that she has inscribed this book "To the peoples of India". She has certainly not written it as a reformer, and out of love. If I am mistaken in my estimate let her come back to India. Let her subject herself to cross-examination, and if her statements escape unhurt through the fire of cross-examination, let her live in our midst and reform our lives. So much for Miss Mayo and

her readers.

I must now come to the other side of the picture. Whilst I consider the book to be unfit to be placed before Americans and Englishmen (for it can do no good to them), it is a book that every Indian can read with some degree of profit. We may repudiate the charge as it has been named by her, but we may not repudiate the substance underlying the many allegations she has made. It is a good thing to see ourselves as others see us. We need not even examine the motive with which the book is written. A cautious reformer may make some use of it.

There are statements in it which demand investigation. For instance she says that the Vaishnava mark has an obscene meaning. I am a born Vaishnavite. I have perfect recollection of my visits to Vaishnava temples. Mine were orthodox people. I used to have the mark myself as a child, but neither I nor anyone else in our family ever knew that this harmless and rather elegant-looking mark had any obscene significance at all. I asked a party of Vaishnavites in Madras where this article is being written. They knew nothing about the alleged obscene significance. I do not therefore suggest that it never had such significance. But I do suggest that millions are unaware of the obscenity alleged to be behind it. It has remained for our Western visitors to acquaint us with the obscenity of many practices which we have hitherto innocently indulged in. It was in a missionary book that I first learnt that Shivalingam had any obscene significance at all, and even now when I see a Shivalingam neither the shape nor the association in which I see it suggests any obscenity. It was again in a missionary book that I learnt that the temples in Orissa were disfigured with obscene statues. When I went to Puri it was not without an effort that I was able to see those things. But I do know that the thousands who flock to the temple know nothing about the obscenity surrounding these figures. The people are unprepared and the figures do not obtrude themselves upon your gaze.

But let us not resent being made aware of the dark side of the picture wherever it exists. Overdrawn her pictures of our in- sanitation, child marriages, etc., undoubtedly are. But let them serve as a spur to much greater effort than we have hitherto put forth in order to rid society of all cause of reproach. Whilst we may be thankful for anything good that foreign visitors may be able honestly to say of us, if we curb our anger, we shall learn, as I have certainly

learnt, more from our critics than from our patrons. Our indignation which we are bound to express against the slanderous book must not blind us to our obvious imperfections and our great limitations. Our anger will leave Miss Mayo absolutely unhurt and it will only recoil upon ourselves. We too have our due share of thoughtless readers as the West has, and in seeking to disprove everything Miss Mayo has written, we shall make the reading public believe that we are a race of perfect human beings against whom nothing can be said, no one can dare say one word. The agitation that has been set up against the book is in danger of being overdone. There is no cause for fury. I would here close this review which I have undertaken with the greatest reluctance and under great pressure of work with a paraphrase of a beautiful couplet from Tulsidas :

> Everything created by God, animate or inanimate, has its good and bad side. The wise man, like the fabled bird which separating the cream of milk from its water helps himself to the cream leaving the water alone, will take the good from everything leaving the bad alone.[1]

Young India, 15-9-1927

60. SPEECH AT VALANGAIMAN

September 15, 1927

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I thank you for the address and the purse.It is a matter of very great joy to find that this is the birth place of Mr. Srinivasa Sastri. As you very properly say, he is one of the greatest sons of India. I have been asked to announce to you that the library is to be opened very shortly. I have been asked also formally to declare that library open from this place. I do so with the greatest pleasure. And I hope that all the old and young men will contemplate that noble life and try as much as is possible for every one of you to follow him in his lofty patriotism, sense of duty and in his untiring zeal. Service to the cause of the country is his motto. May you also learn to be true servants of the country.

I observe that there is a fair Muslim population here. I hope that you have always peaceful relations amongst yourselves. We Hindus

[1] डचेतन गुणदोषमय विश्व कीन्ह करतार
संत हंस गुण गहहिं पथ परिहरि वारि विकार।

and Mussalmans must learn to love one another, because we are all children of the same mother.

I am glad that you all believe in khadi. You must to a step further and translate it into action. All of you should wear it. You see the old lady (sitting by his righthand side) spinning before you. There are thousands and thousands of old ladies much poorer than the one before you, who can eke out a living if all of us will wear khaddar. I thank you once more for your address.

The Hindu, 16-9-1927

61. SPEECH AT NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, MANNARGUDI

September 15, 1927

PRINCIPAL, BOYS AND GIRLS,

I thank you for giving me this address as also this purse. Since you told me that you impart instruction in this school in Hindu religion, I would like all the boys and girls to signify by raising their hands how many know the *Bhagavad Gita*. No hands should be raised deceitfully. How many of those who have raised their hands understand the *Bhagavad Gita* in the original properly. (Only one raised his hand.) Now you have answered me honestly and I congratulate you upon it. The first step to knowledge is an open confession of one's ignorance. Having therefore congratulated you upon your open confession, let me also express my grief to you that so few of you have read the *Bhagavad Gita* and fewer still understand the meaning of it in the original. In my own opinion the Hindu boys and girls must commence with the reading of the *Bhagavad Gita* and therefore in a place where I am told that Hindu religion is taught, I should expect all hands to be raised in answer to the question that I had put. I can only hope that you will soon make up this defect. The South is better known more than any other part of India for the use of abundant *vibhuti* or *chandan*. And I see all of you either profusely smeared with *vibhuti* or having perfect geometrical *tilakam* on your foreheads with *chandan*. Whilst these marks may do much good up to a certain extent, without a proper backing behind these marks they are worthless. So far as I am aware, they do not, as they did when they were orginally invented, express the inner life. At the present moment it seems that the mere crust in the shape of these marks remains and the real kernel, the substance, has dried up. If you read the *Bhagavad*

Gita and pronounce it with exquisite correctness and answer all the questions of grammer also correctly I should not be satisfied with that performance. When I told you that you should read the *Bhagavad Gita*, I meant also that you should translate its teaching in your own individual lives. The divine author of the *Bhagavad Gita* is said to claim it as the substance, the essence of all the Upanishads and of all knowledge and you will find in the *Gita*, a beautiful verse which really means that a man who simply conforms to the outward form and misses the inner is an imposter, a hypocrite and humbug. I therefore ask the boys, I would urge the Principal and the teachers of this school also, to see to it that the inner secret, the essence of Hinduism is expressed in its fullness in this school and if you will read the *Bhagavad Gita* with the eye of devotion and an eye of faith you will discover as I have discovered that there is no room for Hindu-Muslim dissensions or Brahmin and Non-Brahmin dissensions. You will find also in the *Bhagavad Gita*, no warrant whatsoever for untouchability, child marriages, child widows, prostitution in the name of religion, as is practised by our own sisters and daughters who go by the name of *Devadasis*. If you will carefully read the third chapter of the *Gita* you will find also abundant testimony in favour of the spinning-wheel. If the parents and teachers will only make diligent researches they will not allow so many boys and girls, I see before me, dressed in foreign cloth. If you will take care to study the *Bhagavad Gita* in the manner I have suggested, you will find easy solution for many ills of life. I shall be glad to learn from the Principal in future that you have adopted my suggestion and that every boy and girl not only could read and understand *Bhagavad Gita* but is trying his or her best to live up to its message.

The Hindu, 16-9-1927

62. SPEECH AT FINDLAY COLLEGE, MANNARGUDI[1]

September 15, 1927

You state in your address that you read the Gospels daily even as I do. I cannot say that I read the Gospels daily, but I can say that I have read the Gospels in a humble and prayerful spirit, and it is well

[1] This was published under the caption "Three Speeches".

with you if you are also reading the Gopsels in that spirit. But I expect that the vast majority of you are Hindu boys. I wish that you could have said to me that at least your Hindu boys were reading the *Bhagavad Gita* daily to derive inspiration. For I believe that all the great religions of the world are true more or less. I say "more or less" because I believe that everything that the human hand touches, by reason of the very fact that human beings are imperfect, becomes imperfect. Pefection is the exclusive attribute of God and it is indescribable, untranslatable. I do believe that it is possible for every human being to become perfect even as God is perfect. It is necessary for us all to aspire after perfection, but when that blessed state is attained, it becomes indescribable, indefinable. And I therefore admit, in all humility, that even the Vedas, the Koran and the Bible are the imperfect word of God, and imperfect beings that we are, swayed to and fro by a multitude of passions, it is impossible for us even to understand this word of God in its fullness, and so I say to a Hindu boy, that he must not uproot the traditions in which he has been brought up, as I say to a Mussalman or a Christian boy that he must not uproot his traditions. And so whilst I would welcome you learning the Gospel and your learning the Koran, I would certainly insist on all of you Hindu boys, if I had the power of insistence, learning the *Gita*. It is my belief that the impurity that we see about boys in schools, the carelessness about things that matter in life, the levity with which the student world deals with the greatest and most fundamental questions of life is due to this uprooting of tradition from which boys have hitherto derived their sustenance.

But I must not be misunderstood. I do not hold that everything ancient is good because it is ancient, I do not advocate surrender of God-given reasoning faculty in the face of ancient tradition. Any tradition, however ancient, if inconsistent with morality, is fit to be banished from the land. Untouchability may be considered to be an ancient tradition, the institution of child widowhood and child marriage may be considered to be ancient tradition, and even so many an ancient horrible belief and superstitious practice. I would sweep them out of existence if I had the power. When, therefore, I talk of respecting the ancient tradition, you now understand what I mean, and it is because I see the same God in the *Bhagavad Gita* as I see in the Bible and the Koran that I say to the Hindu boys that they will derive greater inspiration from *Bhagavad Gita* because they will be tuned to the *Gita* more than to any other book.

Young India, 22-9-1927

63. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MANNARGUDI

September 15, 1927

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I thank you for your several addresses and purses on behalf of the *Daridranarayana*. I congratulate the Taluk Board on having given me an advance copy of the translation of its address in Hindi. I am looking forward to the time when everywhere I should be able to make myself understood through Hindi which is or should be the common language throughout India. At the present moment, as you know, there is almost a barrier between the North and the South. Public workers coming from the South find themselves at sea when they are face to face to speak in the North. I do not by any means suggest that Hindi should take the place of vernaculars but I do suggest that all public workers, leaders of public opinion, should know Hindi and should be able to express themselves wherever they go in the Hindi language. You all know that a committee from the North began its operation some six or seven years ago with a view to popularize Hindi in the South. Nearly one lakh of rupees have been spent by this committee, in order to teach Hindi to those who would learn it. The central office at Madras has received from the head office in Prayag the charter of self-government and it is now open to the leaders of public opinion, in the South, to extend the operation of this committee and make it self-supporting.

You have in all your addresses endorsed the work of the spinning-wheel and khadi that is being done throughout India. I had known long ago that Mannargudi was famous for its weaving and I should hope that in the near future there would be no weaver in Mannargudi who is not weaving hand-spun yarn. But the weavers cannot have enough well hand-spun yarn unless you go out in the villages and give work to so many who have so much idle time at their command from year to year. I saw this afternoon a band of workers living about 10 miles from Mannargudi, in a village called Palayur, where they are trying to introduce the spinning-wheel in the village and places surrounding it. They tell me that if they can secure sufficient workers, there is great scope in these villages for the introduction of the spinning-wheel. The remarkable address that I received at Mayavaram, on behalf of the peasantry had nearly six months during the year when they had no work to do. The address

further gives a startling information that the income of the peasantry in this rich district of Tanjore was no more than forty rupees, whereas the expenses were at 120. Making due allowance for exaggeration in this statement, if there is an exaggeration, there is no doubt whatsoever that the peasantry is living from hand to mouth and is in need of supplementary occupation.

The same address proceeded to inform me that the vast masses of toiling millions were considered to be untouchables. And as such they were unworthy of the attention by the middle class people. In order to prevent this atrocious state of affairs, I ventured to present India with the spinning-wheel and khadi. We, the middle class people, take no interest in them, we do not care what happened to their spinning-wheel and what happened to their industry. And so by our criminal indifference we allowed that industry to die an unnatural death. I ask you to approach the spinning-wheel with a new point of view. I also ask you to utilize khadi in order to form an indissoluble bond between the peasantry and ourselves and I am aware that we shall not succeed in our endeavours so long as we consider these toiling millions as untouchables. I had the pleasures, not umixed with pain, of listening to some of our learned Pundits, expounding the philosophy of untouchability, but I am happy to be able to say that these Pundits were open to conviction and open to arguments on behalf of these people.[1] Instead of brushing aside my arguments summarily, they were pleased to listen and grant that so far as the well-being of the people was concerned, the argument was all in my favour. If that much is admitted by all the Pundits of India, I should be indifferent to what interpretation they placed upon the Shastras. As a matter of fact for a layman like myself, it is quite enough for me to know that what is consistent with the highest good is the supreme Shastra and I should have no hesitation whatsoever in rejecting the Shastras which were inconsistent with our goal.

In connection with this I must mention the cause of the child widows. Let us not resort to mere arguments and babbling in the act of doing this simple justice to our little daughters. Let us be manly enough to regard every such child marriage as a nullity. So long as we allow a single child widow to remain unmarried when she reaches her proper age, we fail in our elementary duty to humanity. That really leads us naturally to a consideration of child marriages. . . .

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with Pundits, Kumbakonam", 14-9-1927

You will see that immediately you begin to think of these toiling millions of India and establish a loving bond between them and yourselves, it would be impossible for you to forget the drinkers. We the middle class people have been indifferent to those who are given to this cursed habit. In my humble opinion it is our duty to go out in the midst of these people and to try to redeem them from their ways. But I know how difficult it is for those brethren of ours to resist that temptation so long as there are toddy shops. It is therefore our bounden duty to secure total prohibition.

As is usual at all such meetings at the end of the proceedings volunteers go out with collection bags in order to collect contribution from those who have not contributed for the purses. Pies willingly given are just as welcome. This is essentially a matter of service of the poorest in the land. Every man or woman who is desirous to give should consider it his or her duty and privilege to be able to give to this cause. You may know, in answer to a question at Mayavaram, I explained[1] the full working of the organization under which the spinning-wheel work is being carried on. I wish that you would take a lively interest in the progress of this organization and its administration and understand the dis posal of the money that is entrusted to it.But I may inform you that over fifty thousand sisters are being served today in at least fifteen hundred villages, throughout the length and breadth of India. Of this the largest number is being served in the South. Nearly 20 lakhs of rupees have been invested in carrying on this organization and nearly 1,500 workers are carrying on this organization. The whole of the finance part of it is audited at the centre and in the province. I invite all those who are interested in this to study its working in all its many branches. It is for this service that I invite everybody in this land to give the best of his or her subscription.

The Hindu, 17-9-1927

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Mayavaram", 13-9-1927

64. SPEECH AT TANJORE

September 16, 1927

I had hoped on coming to Tanjore today to discuss the Brahmin-non-Brahmin question[1] here and I had the pleasure of having a brief discussion with some of the friends this afternoon. I am not free nor is it necessary for me to discuss and place before you the contents of our discussion. But I was exceedingly glad of this discussion. I now understand the movement perhaps a little better than I did before the discussion. I have placed my humble view before those friends, of which they are at liberty to make what use they like. But throughout the discussion I saw a note of one thing which seemed to oppress these friends. They seemed to think that I had identified myself with the notion of inherited superiority and inferiority. I assured them that nothing was farther from my thought and told them that I would gladly explain my meaning of *varnashrama*[2] more fully than I have done in order to remove the slightest misunderstanding as to this question of superiority. In my opinion there is no such thing as inherited or acquired superiority. I believe in the rock-bottom doctrine of Advaita[3] and my interpretation of Advaita excludes totally any idea of superiority at any stage whatsoever. I believe implicitly that all men are born equal. All—whether born in India or in England or America or in any circums tances whatsoever—have the same soul as any other. And it is because I believe in this inherent equality of all men that I fight the doctrine of superiority which many of our rulers arrogate to themselves. I have fought this doctrine of superiority in South Africa inch by inch, and it is because of that inherent belief that I delight in calling myself a scavenger, a spinner, a weaver, a farmer and a labourer. And I have fought against the Brahmins themselves wherever they have claimed any superiority for themselves either by reason of their birth or by reason of their subsequently acquired knowledge. *I consider that it is unmanly for any person to claim*

[1] For Mahadev Desai's catechism on the subject, *vide* Appendix "Brahmin-Non-Brahmin Question", November 24, 1927.

[2] The organization of society into four castes, and the division of life into four stages.

[3] The view that the atman, the self in man, is not distinct from the Brahman, the Absolute; literally, 'non-dualism'.

superiority over a fellow-being. And there is the amplest warrant for the belief that I am enunciating in the *Bhagavad Gita,* and I am therefore through and through with every non-Brahmin when he fights this monster of superiority, whether it is claimed by a Brahmin or by anybody else. He who claims superiority at once forfeits his claim to be called a man. That is my opinion.

But in spite of all my beliefs that I have explained to you, I still believe in varnashrama dharma. Varnashrama dharma to my mind is a law which, however much you and I may deny, cannot be abrogated. To admit the working of that law is to free ourselves for the only pursuit in life for which we are born. Varnashrama dharma is humility. Whilst I have said that all men and women are born equal, I do not wish therefore to suggest that qualities are not inherited, but on the contrary I believe that just as everyone inherits a particular form so does he inherit the particular characteristics and qualities of his progenitors, and to make this admission is to conserve one's energy. That frank admission, if we will act up to it, would put a legitimate curb upon our material ambitions, and thereby our energy is set free for extending the field of spiritual research and spiritual evolution. It is this doctrine of varnashrama dharma which I have always accepted. You would be entitled to say that this is not how *varnashrama* is understood in these days. I have myself said time without number that *varnashrama* as it is at present understood and practised is a monstrous parody of the original, but in order to demolish this distortion let us not seek to demolish the original. And if you say that the idealistic *varnashrama* which I have placed before you is quite all right you have admitted all that I like you to admit. I would also urge on you to believe with me that no nation, no individual, can possibly live without proper ideals. And if you believe with me in the idealistic *varnashrama* you will also strive with me to reach that ideal so far as may be. As a matter of fact the world has not anywhere been able to fight against this law. What has happened and what must happen in fighting against the law is to hurt ourselves and to engage in a vain effort; and I suggest to you that your fight will be all the more success ful if you understand all that our forefathers have bequeathed to us and engage in fighting all the evil excrescences that have grown round this great bequest. And if you accept what I have ventured to suggest to you, you will find that the solution of the Brahmin and non-Brahmin question also, in so far as it is concerned with the religious aspect, becomes very easy. As a non-Brahmin I would seek to purify

Brahminism in so far as a non-Brahmin can, but not to destroy it. I would dislodge the Brahmin from the arrogation of superiority or from places of profit. Immediately a Brahmin becomes a profiteering agency he ceases to be a Brahmin. But I would not touch his great learning wherever I see it. And whilst he may not claim superiority by reason of learning I myself must not withhold that meed of homage that learning, wherever it resides, always commands. But I must not go deeper into the subject before a large audience of this kind.

After all I must fall upon one sovereign remedy which I think is applicable for all the ills of life. And that is, in whatever fight we engage, the fight should be clean and straight, and there should not be the slightest departure from truth and ahimsa. And if we will keep our carriage safely on these two rails you will find that our fight even though we may commit a thousand blunders will always smell clean and will be easier fought. And even as a train that is derailed comes to a disastrous end, so shall we, if we be derailed off these two rails, come to a disaster. A man who is truthful and does not mean ill even to his adversary will be slow to believe charges even against his foes. He will, however, try to understand the viewpoints of his opponents and will always keep an open mind and seek every opportunity of serving his opponents. I have endeavoured to apply this law in my relations with Englishmen and Europeans in general in South Africa as well as here and not without some success. How much more then should we apply this law in our homes, in our relations, in our domestic affairs, in connection with our own kith and kin?

Young India, 29-9-1927

65. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[Before *September 17, 1927*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have received your letter. Your idea of staying some more time in the mountains is good. But we must leave Pattani Saheb's bungalow by the end of the year. Writing to him to give the bungalow on rent would simply mean not paying the rent. He will not ask for the bungalow to be vacated and he will not accept rent. Hence, even if it is desirable to stay in Panchgani you must look for another bungalow at

[1] From Gandhiji's itinerary given at the end of the letter

least for now. But why should you not stay at Mahabaleshwar now? Or you can go to other hill stations such as Almora or Simla, where accommodation is available. Solan has suited Dhiru. Almora has suited Prabhudas. There are hill stations even on this side. Bangalore is an ideal place if the height of 3,000 is considered sufficient.

Think about what we should do now and let me know. My health is all right.

17-22	Trichinapalli
22-27	Karaikudi
28-30	Madurai
October 1	Paramakudi
2-3	Virudunagar
4	Rajapalayam
5	Tinnevelly

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

66. SPEECH IN REPLY TO MUNICIPAL ADDRESS, TRICHINOPOLY [1]

September 17, 1927

FRIENDS,

I seem to have come to the end of my resources. The programme in Trichinopoly is much stiffer than I can comfortably go through. But I cannot afford to disappoint those who have arranged so many functions. Dr. Rajan, as my medical adviser, has therefore devised a plan whereby I can go through the functions, with as little strain as possible and that is to observe complete silence at these functions, with apologies for my inability to speak to you, as I should like to if my health permitted. It is with much pleasure I have laid the

[1] Gandhiji, who looked very tired, handed a written speech which C. Rajagopalachari read to the meeting. During Gandhiji's tour in South India and Ceylon, he received purses for the Khadi Fund. He also made on-the-spot collections and auctioned articles presented to him at the meetings. For a detailed statement of these collections, *vide* Appendix "Khadi Collections in South India and Ceylon", December 22, 1927.

foundation-stone of the market and I thank you for your address and commend my Mayavaram speech[1] to your attention.

67. APPEAL FOR INFORMATION

Shri Kantilal Harivallabhdas Parekh left the Satyagraha Ashram on the morning of Monday, the 25th July, 1927, and thereafter on the same day he was seen at several places in Ahmedabad. It is not known where he was on the 26th or the 27th; however, on Thursday the 28th some inmates of the Ashram saw him swimming, or rather being dragged by the current, in the Sabarmati. He is a good swimmer. In case he is hiding himself anywhere it will be an act of kindness if he himself or some acquaintance or relation of his gives some information about him. This good news will bring joy to his father and his old grandmother plunged in grief because of his absence.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-9-1927

68. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

September 18, 1927

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. I did write to Prafulla Babu. Here is Prafulla Babu's letter. I do not remember having pressed him to rejoin the Pratishthan. I have written as much to him. Let him now decide whether he remains on the Trust Board or not.

I look to you, as you have put it, to conquer Suresh Babu and everyone else. It is the best thing to blame ourselves when people cannot get on well with us. Boundless charity necessarily includes all or it ceases to be boundless. We must be strict with ourselves and lenient with our neighbours. For we know not their difficulties and what they overcome.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Mayavaram", September 13, 1927.

[PS.]

I hope you have sent the amount to Abhoy Ashram.

From a photostat: G.N. 1576

69. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

TRICHINOPOLY,
Silence Day [*September 19, 1927*][1]

SISTERS,

I get your notes regularly. I keep an eye on your work from here. One who works according to one's full capacity does all that can be expected of one. But in our work we should develop the *Gita* attitude which we want to have. That attitude is that, whatever we do, we do it selflessly in a spirit of service. The spirit of service means a spirit of dedication to God. One who does so, loses all idea of self. He has no hatred for anybody. On the contrary, he is generous to others. Even about the smallest piece of service you render, ask yourselves from time to time whether you have this same attitude.

Ramaniklalbhai raised a question on what I wrote to you about myself. You have not told me whether all of you understood what I said in reply. I wish that you would discuss what I write to you, and ask me about things to which you can find no answer.

My health continues to be good enough to let me carry on my work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3665

70. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

Silence Day [*September 19, 1927*][2]

CHI. GANGABEHN JHAVERI,

I have received your letter. Both my mind and my hand are

[1] Gandhiji was in Trichinopoly on this date.

[2] It appears from the contents that this letter was written after the letter to the addressee dated "About September 12, 1927". The first silence day after this date was September 19

tired by incessant writing. So I will not write much. You have been appointed President. You have got that position against your will. Bring credit to it. It is another matter if senior Gangabehn takes back the office. But your duty is not to give up the responsibility at this difficult time. Bringing glory to it is not beyond your capacity.

I do not know if Radha attends the prayers these days. But I have written her a strong letter to do so.

You must keep writing to me about the conflicts going on in your mind. It will be no burden to me. I shall continue helping you in whatever way I can from here.

Let us conquer falsehood with truth, harshness with tenderness, anger with love, impatience with patience, pride with humility. You women have got a special opportunity now to turn these words into reality. Do not miss this auspicious hour. I have forgotten to inform the elder Gangabehn that I have written to Surendraji.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N. 3122

71. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

Silence Day [*September 19, 1927*][1]

BHAI HARIBHAU,

Your letter. If Swami and Jamnalalji agree, you can count on me too. I cannot understand how *Hindi Navajivan* will be ready in time. But it is not for me to worry on that account.

How is Martand?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

On re-reading your letter I find that two points have been left unanswered. I shall write later about the article on khadi.

I might return to the Ashram in the month of January. It is a good idea to start an Ashram near Ajmer.

BAPU

BHAI HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA
KHADI KARYALAYA
AJMER

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 6058. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyay

[1] From the postmark

72. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

[After *September 19, 1927*][1]

DEAR HARIBHAU,

I have been able to read carefully your article about self-reliance in clothes only today. In my view it is not worth publishing. The readers are so raw that they do not make any comparison and are misled about a good thing by accepting what they like and discarding what they do not like. I think the article is not worth publishing because what you have shown as a disadvantage for the sales section is not a disadvantage. Rather, it is necessary and is a difficulty that helps the soul. If we want to do away with the sales section or make it less burdensome, we must lay great emphasis on self-reliance, expand it and find out its science. I have no doubt about it. Hence, give as much thought to this matter as possible and convey in public whatever experiences you have. But the sales section will have to be expanded to the same extent. Sales would always be needed for the cities. It would also be necessary for the other trade communities in the villages. It is not possible at all to improve the quality followed as a business. Ultimately, even the atmosphere of khadi would be preserved only by following this method. We cannot feel satisfied merely by that.

If you have not followed the meaning of what I have said write to me or ask me when we meet. I hope to be at the Ashram by the Ist of January. of yarn or have more varieties of khadi by the method of self-reliance. Both these things can and are being done as a business practice and would be so done in future as well. Moreover, honest, clever and industrious workers would also be produced only when these things are

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] From the contents; *vide* post-script to letter to the addressee dated September 19, 1927 (Preceding item).

73. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

TRICHINOPOLY,
[*September*] *20* [*1927*][1]

JAMNALAL SETH
CARE RAMNARAYAN
MANGALDAS RD., POONA

TELL MIRABEHN IF STILL THERE NOT BE HASTY. AM PERFECTLY WELL. GOD'S VOICE OFTEN INDISTINGUISHABLE FROM ECHOES OF OUR FEAR. IN THIS RAPID MARCHING IN HEAT HER PRESENCE IN HER DELICATE HEALTH HINDRANCE. IF SHE WANTS COME DESPITE MY WARNING SHE IS WELCOME.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 68

74. LETTER TO DILIP KUMAR ROY

September 20, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter which has been forwarded to me from the Ashram (Sabarmati)[2]. You have evidently imagined that I was living in a London hotel with all the facilities for communication and access to literature and plenty of leisure, so that I had only to read your letter and do the needful. I do not wonder at your making the mistake of so imagining from your place (in Austria) outside the Indian setting. As it was, your letter was received when I was convalescing at Bangalore. Here am I, travelling almost from day to day and I do not know how to give you satisfaction. From your letter I gather that even if I wrote anything now it would be too late. If you think that you would still want something from me I would send for the manuscript, try to read it and write something. Personally I think that you need nothing from me. Much of the reputation that I enjoy in the West is really undeserved, and I often think that if I went to Europe or America, the

[1] Gandhiji was in Trichinopoly on this date.

[2] The addressee says in his book *Among the Great* that he had reported to Gandhiji from Vienna about the keen interest in him all over Europe and had suggested that Gandhiji visit Europe once.

people there would be soon undeceived about their many exaggerated notions of me. You would believe me when I tell you that I write this not from any sense of false self-depreciation but that is what I truly believe.

M. K. GANDHI

Golden Book of Dilip Kumar Roy, p. 121

75. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

TRICHINOPOLY,
[*September 20, 1927*][1]

I observe that my first speech in Trichinopoly[2] has been misunderstood abroad, and has caused anxiety to friends. I would like to assure my friends, however, that there is not the slightest cause for any anxiety. My statement, that I had come to the end of my resources, had a local reference, and it was therefore properly understood in Trichinopoly. What I wanted to say was that I had hitherto taken up engagements up to the limit and that I could not comfortably go through a heavier programme in Trichinopoly. This was a warning to friends in Trichinopoly and to the committees in the places yet to be visited, that they should not have a multiplicity of engagements. One meeting a day is about all that I would have attended so far as my heart is concerned. Doctor Rajan overhauled me completely, and neither he nor I have any anxiety. The blood-pressure stands at where it was in Bangalore. Otherwise too, I am feeling quite well, and, if I do not allow myself to be overworked, I have no misgivings about my ability to go through the settled programme. Friends about me are taking extraordinary precautions for my protection, and I am myself wide awake. I hope therefore that there would be no anxiety felt about my tour; and I would request newspaper reporters and editors not to send or publish any reports about my health before submitting them to me, or to those who are in charge of me.

The Hindu, 21-9-1927

[1] Released to the Press on this day

[2] *Vide* "Speech in Reply to Municipal Address, Trichinopoly", 17-9-1927.

76. SPEECH AT NATIONAL COLLEGE, TRICHINOPOLY

September 20, 1927

I thank you for what I thought was an address and the purse. I should like to know how many of you understood what I thought was an address, the thing that was read first in Sanskrit. Those who understood it, please raise your hands.[1] Those who did not understand it, raise your hands.[1] I was ill prepared for such a performance at a students' meeting. Unfortunately, in our country, we have got altogether an overdose of humbug and spectacular effect and those who are responsible for this function should have erased all such things out of their proceedings which could not be understood by the vast majority here. (Applause.) This applause also seems to me to be entirely out of place. It is almost notice to me to stop talking, and next time there is applause, you will find that I will take it as notice to quit. Seriously speaking, students' life ought to be regarded as a very serious affair, and since students should all be sportsmen, the serious side of life should be taken by them in a sportsmanlike way. In order to make ourselves, including myself whom I regard as still a student, serious in a sportsmanlike manner, I suggest that next time you all, since the majority of you are Hindus, learn Sanskrit, so that if a Sanskrit verse is recited you should all understand it.

I am afraid that if I examined you again in another matter, you will make the same sorry exhibition that you made just a moment ago. Students of a national college would, for instance, be expected to know Hindi, but hardly one per cent of you would raise your hands if I ask how many know Hindi.

You talk of past February and say that a stirring appeal was made to you by Mr. Rajagopalachari and Shankerlal Banker on the economics of khadi. A stirring appeal is one that stirs us to the depths of our hearts, but if I ask you to raise your hands, you will again make a sorry exhibition and show that very few of you are wearers of khadi. If my surmise is correct it is wrong on your part to say that the appeal made to you in February was a stirring appeal. Compared to other purses, I do not regard your purse as a small purse at all, but I accept

[1] Only very few were raised.

[2] Many were raised.

your humble suggestion that your purse is really not up to the mark, and if you had been really stirred to the depth of your hearts, you could have collected much more than you have done. Instead of my illness being regarded as an interruption in the course of your collections, you would have used the additional time gained for collecting addtional moneys. My illness should really have given a point to the stirring nature of that appeal and you should have said to yourselves: "Now that this old man has become ill and he is really a capable organizer of khadi, let us put our shoulders to the wheel and make a double effort and therefore we shall double our subscriptions, put away our foreign cloth and all wear khadi." Instead of this obvious result following from the appeal, you tell me that my illness sent you to sleep; but it is never too late to mend, never too late to learn. Colleges are not closed down for ever. You still remain students. I shall presently leave Trichinopoly, but khadi won't have left Trichinopoly or India. *Daridranarayana*[1] still knocks at your doors. Khadi still awaits development at your hands. The khadi purse, you don't give me for my pleasure. You give it in the name of and for the sake of *Daridranarayana*. It has therefore a constant call on your purse. Let me then hope that you will not be remiss in your efforts on behalf of khadi, that you will make up your Hindi, because you have got a Hindi *Prachark*[2] here and that you will make up your Sanskrit, and let me also commend to your attention the addresses that I have given to students in other places and let me ask you to understand the message in those addresses.

The Hindu, 21-9-1927

77. SPEECH AT Y.M.C.A., PUTTUR

September 20, 1927

THE CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

With you I also miss the presence of Mr. Hayward. I had the pleasure of meeting him and having a brief chat with him before he went. I am sorry I shall not be able to give you anything like a speech, but as I was coming to this meeting this morning, I asked myself what it was that I would wish the Y.M.C.A. in India to be. As you are aware,

[1] God in the form of the poor
[2] Teacher; literally, 'one who spreads'

my association with Christian Indians is growing day by day. Ten years ago, I did not have the privileg of coming in such close contact with Christian Indians as I do nowadays, and I have noticed in coming in contact with so many Christian Indians and in contact with so many Christian Associations throughout the land that very often the word Christian is understood to mean European. I said to myself as I was driving here this morning how nice it would be if the Y.M.C.A. were not really synonymous with the Young Men's European Association. The word "European" has not to me, as to many millions of people, perhaps the same meaning and content as the word Christian, and I feel that very often Christianity itself becomes a restricted thing when it is mixed up with Europeanism. It is not at all, in my humble opinion, necessary for a single Indian to cease to be Indian, because he calls himself Christian. To accept Christianity, or a change in one's religion is acceptance of a new life; therefore, I should expect anyone who changes his religion with a true heart to broaden his own nationality. If he ceases to think of his neighbours, he is not likely to think of those beyond that limit of his neighbours. I say this to Christian and Muslim friends and all those whom I meet in India and who have made India their land, or to whom India is the land of their birth. Let these associations then be not forces of disruption, but forces for conserving all that is good, noble and honest[1] in this land. For the rest, I commend to your attention the remarks I made to the Y.M.C.A. in Madras[2]. I thank you for having given me this opportunity of meeting you.

The Hindu, 21-9-1927

78. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, TRICHINOPOLY

September 20, 1927

DEAR SISTERS,

It gives me much pleasure to be able to attend this meeting. I do not want to keep you for any length of time. I just want to say that you ought to take a leading part in the national movement that is going on at the present moment in India—I mean the khadi work and the message of the spinning-wheel. It is work that is designed to

[1] The source has "stand best". Perhaps Gandhiji had in mind the New Testament, Philippians, iv. 8.

[2] On September 4, 1927

deliver India from the gnawing poverty which she is suffering from. In this distress millions of our sisters are sharers. They need not be in that distress, if you and I will do our duty. They starve because they have no work in their own villages. Time was when they had no need to starve, for one hundred years ago every hut[3] in our villages had its own spinning-wheel. Whenever there was time left, our sisters living in villages used to spin yarn. Khadi that was woven out of this yarn was worn by all the people, rich and poor. One of then reasons why the spinning-wheel died out was that you and I left off wearing khadi. Now, the movement has been set afoot in order to reinstate the spinning-wheel in its original state, and the movement cannot be proceeded with, without your assistance. The assistance you can render is for all of you to discard your foreign saris and wear khadi. It is your duty and my duty to think of these poor people, but this work cannot proceed without money. You are therefore expected to contribute as much as possible, and all over India your sisters have been giving me their moneys and also their jewellery. I see that you state in your address that your jewellery is the result of your own thrift. I personally do not believe in it, for the jewellery has been given to you and not made out of your own moneys earned by your own labour, but your jewellery is undoubtedly *streedhanam*[1] and I want you to share it with the poorest of your sisters. If you will have India the land of holiness, then you should all become like Sita, and the beauty of Sita lay not in her personal appearance and in her jewellery but in her heart. A woman is adorable, not for the jewellery she wears, but for the purity of her heart. I therefore urge you, if you believe that khadi will solve all the distress of India, to a certain extent, to part with the money that you have brought and your jewellery also, if you can give it to the cause. If you will go a step further, I would ask you also to spare some time to turn the spinning-wheel. It is a fine occupation for women in their leisure hours and it would be much better for you to pass your time in this useful occupation than idle talk. Now, you will give what you can to the volunteers who will go in your midst.

The Hindu, 21-9-1927

[1] The source has “hamlet”.

[2] A woman’s private property over which she exercises independent control

79. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, TRICHINOPOLY

September 21, 1927

Mahatmaji, in the course of his speech, recalled the satyagraha days when he visited Trichy which gave him some of his best co-workers. Unity, which prevailed then among all classes, had given place to dissensions and in spite of many vicissitudes the country had passed through, khadi had remained absolutely steady. It did not admit of dissensions, because khadi permeated the masses, who had nothing of these dissensions. Trichy would have contributed much more but that money would be valueless, if khadi, produced by the sacred hands of villagers, was not used by them. When khadi became universal, it would not be necessary to extend monetary assistance. That khadi required a bounty showed they were not doing their duty by the starving millions, on whom depend their sustenance.

Mahatmaji then referred to the fouling of river water and said that, on one side of the sacred Cauvery is Trichinopoly and on the other Srirangam. What he was about to say was not peculiar to Trichy. It was common all over India. He wished to draw their attention to this because Trichinopoly had got an army of workers who could, if they would, tackle this very difficult problem. Continuing, he said:

I had the pleasure of having a talk with the Chairman of the Srirangam Municipality yesterday and the young men of Vivekananda Ashram at Srirangam this morning. Everybody admits that the sanitation of Srirangam is not in a good condition at all. In my humble opinion, the insanitation is not due to want of funds, nor is the fouling of river water due to want of funds. It is purely due to our criminal apathy. We refuse to see the dirt that is daily growing in front of us. It really requires an army of volunteers who would understand the ABC of sanitation and who would educate the people at large in the elementary laws of sanitary science. It cannot be right to wash our dirt in the same river from which we take our drinking water. Our river banks should be places of recreation for all, young and old, banks on which we could with the greatest safety and ease recline ourselves but it is just the river banks which we make unfit, even for walking with bare feet. It has become abundantly clear by this time that cholera comes out of filthy habits and nothing else. Immediately you cease to drink dirty water and take necessary precaution there is no fear of cholera. I understand that when the great floods overtook the South, as it has overtaken Orissa at present, cholera broke out in Trichinopoly and Srirangam and it was an infliction from

God Himself because we people drank the river water which was made dirty by ourselves. In my opinion we sinned against God and man when we did not take care to keep mother earth and our river water clean. We have poetry enough in ourselves to call earth "mother earth" and deify all rivers of India. What a sacrilege it is to dirty "mother earth" in the manner we are doing and to make the waters of all rivers, which we deify, filthy! It is really a simple matter for the youth of Trichinopoly and Srirangam to make up their minds to educate the people and to visit river banks from morning to morning till they have eradicated the evil from their midst. We do not need to become municipal councillors or have any appointment from any public body and the Government in order to do this work. Nor does it require a great deal of time. All that you need to do is merely to have a little bit of knowledge of sanitary science and a fixed determination to get rid of the evil which is undermining the health of the population. I hope therefore that you will all understand the humble message I have endeavoured to give you and do something to retrieve the honour of Trichinopoly and Srirangam and to make the Cauvery really sacred as we consider it.

Mahatmaji then referred to the eradication of the drink evil for which the young men had ample opportunities of service among the labouring population which was a great one here. Even as insanitation was undermining their health, the drink curse was undermining the health and morals of the labouring population. [Concluding, Gandhiji said:]

We have a real national awakening. It should express itself in all the necessary activities.

The Hindu, 21-9-1927

80 SPEECH IN REPLY TO CITIZENS' ADDRESS, PUDUKOTTAH

September 21, 1927

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I thank you for your address and your purse and more so for your having refrained from reading the address. I need hardly assure you that I have read your address. You say that you have been long waiting for a visit from me and waiting is reciprocal. You tell me in your address that you believe in the message of the spinning-wheel and khaddar and you tell me also that you here are really specially in

need of a message on spinning-wheel because of the poverty of the peasantry. I know from my experience of other parts of our country that what you state is literally true. You tell me also that your Legislative Council has passed a resolution making hand-spinning compulsory in your schools. I congratulate the Council upon having adopted that wise and very necessary resolution. How I wish that you and I and all translate our beliefs and resolutions into practice! To pass resolutions and to own beliefs is the easiest thing in the world; for, they cost the believers or the movers of resolutions nothing. But practice means organization, means learning how to do the thing and means going amongst people and a host of others. Now welcome rains have come and I assure you that I do not want to prolong my speech. I shall, however, close with a prayer that God will give you the strength and necessary wisdom to reduce your belief into practice. And if you have at all read my speeches during my Tamil Nadu tour I am sure you know what I would say if the rains did not threaten. For, the things that I have been talking in Madras and elsewhere are also common to you. Now that the rains seem to have stopped for a moment, I shall summarise some of them. . .[1]

The Hindu, 23-9-1927

81. LETTER TO PRAGJI DESAI

[Before *September 22, 1927*][2]

BHAISHRI PRAGJI,

I got your letter. You have been giving good help to Sastriji. Whatever the likely decision in your case, you need not feel worried. I am sure Sastriji must be doing something on his own to help you. Now that you have joined *Indian Opinion*, you must have given up the idea of earning money there. Am I right ? How is Medh faring? How is your health? Whatever happens, do not be tempted by the luxuries there, and keep away from untruth, secrecy and so on.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5042

[1] Then Gandhiji spoke on prohibition, untouchability, sanitation, Brahmin-non-Brahmin question and funds for charkha.

[2] From the text this appears to have been written prior to "Letter to Pragji Desai," 23-9-1927 and "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri," 22-9-1927.

82. "RANGILA RASUL"

In spite of the goading of correspondents, wise and otherwise, I have hitherto resisted the temptation to be drawn into the controversy that has arisen over this pamphlet. I have endeavoured patiently to deal with these correspondents by private correspondence. But of late the correspondence has increased beyond my capacity to deal with it privately. The last letter is from a Muslim professor in Bihar. He sends me a newspaper cutting containing a letter rebuking me in that even I had chosen to join in the conspiracy of silence observed by the leading Hindus in general. The professor wants me to "reply sharp". I gladly do so in the hope that my correspondents will be satisfied with my good faith and understand the reason for my silence. As I do not read newspapers, save a local one, I know nothing about the "conspiracy of silence" by Hindu leaders. The newspaper I read most frequently just now is *The Hindu* and I do remember having seen in it a strong article against the *Rangila Rasul*. So far as I am concerned, long before many Mussalmans knew even of the existence of the pamphlet, it came into my possession. In order to test the veracity of my informant, I read it and wrote the following note[1] in *Young India*, dated 19th June, 1924:

Then followed protests from Arya Samajists enclosing viler writing against Arya Samajists and the great founder Rishi Dayanand, telling me that *Rangila Rasul* and such writings were in answer to the Muslim writings referred to above. I thereupon wrote the following second note[2] (*Young India*, 10th July, 1924):

Thus I had anticipated the Mussalman wrath. But in the present agitation the meeting-point ends there. I could not approve of the turn the agitation took. I regarded it as excessive and inflammatory. The attack against Justice Duleepsingh[3] was uncalled for, undeserved and hysterical. The judiciary is by no means above being influenced by

[1] Not reproduced here; *vide* "Notes (subtopic - Inflammatory Literature)", June 19, 1924.

[2] Not reproduced here; *vide* "Notes (subtopic - Half a Dozen and Six)", July 10, 1924.

[3] Judge of the Punjab High Court who had on appeal acquitted the author of the pamphlet, prosecuted and sentenced by the lower courts under Section 153-A of the Indian Penal Code.

the Government, but it would be wholly unfit to render justice if it was open to popular attacks, threats and insults. So far as the Judge's integrity was concerned, it should have satisfied any Mussalman that he condemned the pamphlet, as he did, in unmeasured terms. His reading of the section ought not to have been made a cause for virulent attack against him. That other judges have taken a different view from Justice Duleepsingh is irrelevant to the issue. Judges have been often known before now to have given honest and opposite interpretations of the same law. The agitation for strengthening the penal section may be wise. Personally I question the wisdom. Any stiffening of the section will react against ourselves, and will be utilized, as such sections have been utilized before, for strengthening the hold of British authority over our necks. But if Mussalmans or Hindus want to agitate for unequivocally bringing such writings under the criminal law, they have a right to do so.

I hold strong views about Government protection. Time was when we knew better and disdained the protection of law-courts in such matters. To stop anti-Muslim writings like the *Rangila Rasul* is the work of Hindus as to stop anti-Hindu writings is the work of Mussalmans. The leaders have either lost control over mud-flingers or are in sympathy with them. In any case Government protection will not make us tolerant of one another. Each hater of the other's religion will under a stiffer law seek secret channels of making vicious attacks on his opponent's religion, or writing vilely enough to provoke anger but veiled enough to avoid the penal clauses of the law. But then I recognize that at the present moment we are not acting as sane nationalists or as men of religion. We are seeking under cover or religion to wreak mad vengeance upon one another.

My correspondents, both Hindu and Mussalman, should understand that I am just now out of tune with the prevailing atmosphere. I recognize fully that I have no power over the fighters whether Hindu or Muslim. My solution for removing the tension is, I admit, not suited to the times. I therefore best serve the nation by holding my peace. But my faith in my solution is as immovable as my faith in the necessity and the possibility of real Hindu-Muslim unity. Though therefore my helplessness is patent, there is no hopelessness is me. And as I believe that silent prayer is often mightier than any overt act, in my helplessness I continuously pray in the faith that the prayer of a pure heart never goes unanswered. And with all the strength at my command, I try to become a pure instrument for acceptable prayer.

Young India, 22-9-1927

83. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

SABARMATI,[1]
September 22, 1927

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I have now two letters from you to acknowledge. I am sorry you are still having trouble from the Transvaal friends. I hope, however, that you will not allow their defection to disturb your peace. I am watching things here and I would ask you not to worry over the notices that Aiyar and Co. may be able, now and then, to secure in the Press here of their activities. I suppose, I may safely say that no real stir will be made in India on the South African question unless I stir. That much credit, somehow or other, I still retain, and it is likely to survive your term of office. And so long as the Union Government continue to co-operate with you and do not reject your advances, I do not see what useful purpose can be served by my making a stir here

The result of the Pragji and Medh[2] case is unfortunate. I think that they are right in rejecting the offer of a temporary certificate. I do not attach any importance to C.I.D. reports about Medh. If he did anything criminal they should prosecute him, but not use against him C.I.D. reports. He may not be a perfect human being, but I do not think that he is in any way worse than the average Indian there or, for the matter of that, here. The way I look upon the case is this. The understanding of 1914[3] was that there should be no colour bar, at least in theory. Therefore the Immigration Law, to read, does not show any colour bar. In practice six men were to be admitted annually on the ground of educational qualifications, and, so far as I recollect, the question of domicile was not to affect them. For, they carried their qualifications in their own persons. As I am writing from memory I am writing under correction. You will, however, examine the position for what it is worth. I do hope that a way will be found of accommodating them. I am glad you like Phoenix and I should feel happy if it could really become, on occasions, a resting place for you.

[1] Permanent address

[2] Two prominent Indians of Johannesburg who, on returning after a period of residence in India, had trouble in getting their domicile certificates renewed

[3] The Smuts-Gandhi Agreement

Andrews described what might have been a serious accident as Kallenbach was driving you from Pretoria to Johannesburg at break-neck speed, and one of the tyres of his fashionable motor burst. I wish you could persuade Kallenbach to come to India, if only to see me and return to his business. Miss Schlesin has given me a fascinating description of her interview with you. When I was in Madras I tried to seek out Mrs. Sastri, but I learnt that she was at Lucknow.

With love,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, pp. 167-8

84. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KANADUKATHAN[1]

September 22, 1927

FRIENDS,

I thank you for this purse. I am both glad and sad to be in your midst. I want to have a heart-to-heart talk with you this evening. Being born in a Vaisya family, I suppose I may identify myself with you and claim to be a Chetti myself. I came in touch with your family life when I was in Rangoon with Dr. Mehta. I was at that time a youngster and as we walked through Mughal Street, he showed me the rows of veran-dahs and counters and pointed out people busily engaged practically the whole day long counting rupees on their wooden trays. He said that these were all Chettis and from their appearance and their verandahs I might make a mistake by thinking that these were all petty money-lenders. He said that they were not petty money-lenders but they were big money-lenders and some of them were fabulously rich. I had known some Chettis before this acquaintance with them in Rangoon and South Africa. I then knew some of them as my acquaintances but I did not know, as I knew in Rangoon, that you had monopolized practically the money-lending business in Rangoon. I then recall your acquaintance at close quarters in 1920[1] when I passed through Chettinad and made collections for Tilak Swaraj Fund. I well remember the extreme kindness that you showed me then and that

[1] Extracts from Gandhiji's speeches at Kanadukathan, Karaikudi, Amaravatipur and Devakottah were strung together by Mahadev Desai under the title "Message to Chettinad", in *Young India*, 6-10-1927.

[2] Actually 1921; *vide* "Speech at Kanadukathan", September 22, 1921.

you are repeating now. But at that time mine was really a hurricane tour and I had no leisure to think of anything else or to enquire into anything else and I was swaraj-mad. I am still for that matter swaraj-mad but God has chastened me. My little tin-pot plan for swaraj was not very evidently His. And He has now further blessed me with physical illness which makes it impossible for me to go on in that hurricane fashion. Thus it is possible for me to study your life and understand you better, much better, than I was able in 1920. The best and only way I can return your extreme kindness is to give you the result of my somewhat summary study. That study has been helped by two letters that I have from unknown friends in Chettinad giving me a description of your life.

But before I enter upon that let me urge you to make khadi your own much more fully than you seem to have done. If you wish it, you have the power of financing the whole of the khadi movement in Tamil Nadu and for that matter in the whole of India. As I have said to my Marwari friends, the Chettis of the North, I can say to you also that if you wish it you can really finance the khadi movement purely out of your superfluity. With your marvellous shrewdness you can even orga-nize khadi. And so you will forgive me if I tell you that all the purses that I have been receiving since this morning on my way to this place have not, in any shape or form, given me real satisfaction. Though the amount may be, I have not counted it, a few thousands, it is really but a drop in the ocean of your own wealth. If you really believe in khadi, if you have understood the message of the spinning-wheel then, but not till then, I want you to give not little out of your plenty but much out of your plenty.

And what is khadi after all? Khadi represents the cause of the starving millions and let not those who have either riches or power, in the pride of their riches or power forget these starving millions. I urge you therefore to befriend this great cause of the starving millions and make that cause your own. And if you will but do so, you will discard all your foreign cloth and foreign fineries and get if you will the richest khadi you want and the finest khadi your taste may demand.

When I saw your houses choked with foreign furniture, your houses furnished with all kinds of foreign fineries and foreign things, your houses containing many things for which in this holy land of ours there should be no room what so ever I told you at the outset that I had felt both glad and sad. I tell you that I have felt oppressed with this inordinate furniture. There is, in the midst of this furniture, hardly

any room to sit or to breathe free. Some of your pictures are hideous and not worth looking at. I recall the many signs and the many descriptions of the simplicity of even the rich men in the time of the *Mahabharata*. Let us not wear our wealth so loudly as we seem to be doing here. This temperate atmosphere and climate of our country really does not admit of this lavish display of all these things. It obstructs the free flow of pure air and it harbours dust and so many million germs that float in the air. If you give me a contract for furnishing all these palaces of Chettinad I would furnish them with onetenth of the money but give you a much better accommodation and comfort than you enjoy today and procure for myself a certificate from the artists of India that I had furnished your houses in a much more artistic fashion than you have done.

I say also that all these palaces are really built anyhow without any sense of co-operation amongst yourselves and any sense of social effect and social welfare. If you will but form a union of Chettis for the common welfare and for the welfare of the peasantry that is living in your midst you can really make Chettinad a fairyland that would attract all the people of India who would come, see and be satisfied with the ordinary life that you would be then leading. So much for the external part of your life.

I want to plead also for internal purity. I have the good fortune of enjoying the confidence of many moneyed friends and I have the information and I guess also that you, the moneyed Chettis, are not free from the weaknesses common to the men of wealth all through the world. But it need not be so. We have the celebrated instance of Janaka, the King rolling in riches and yet he was the incarnation of purity. I therefore plead for personal purity of life. It is really the element of manly life. Manliness for man is to regard every woman as his sister, mother or daughter according to her age, except his own wife. I want, therefore, fellow Chettis, to be as strict as it is humanly possible with themselves and conduct rigorous self-examination.

Let your charities be also wise. I understand that you spend lavishly on building temples. It is no doubt a good thing to build some temples but the building of temples could easily be overdone. It is a horrible superstition to think that, because we have built a building which we call a temple, God necessarily resides in it. I tell you I know many temples in India in which God no more resides than in a brothel. Some good friends like yourselves have given me some

money to build temples for the so-called untouchables. I have refused to spend that money in building a single temple for which I cannot get a holy man and for whose work I cannot get honest trustees.

The greatest charity at the present moment that I can conceive for any Indian to do is undoubtedly to promote this khadi work.

Our rich friends are fond of giving free dinners to the so-called poor people. I have often questioned the virtue of giving these dinners. The *Bhagavad Gita* says that that gift only is a good gift which is given to a worthy man.[1] Therefore it would be right to feed the blind, the maimed and those who somehow or other cannot work for a living. But I make bold to say that if all of you conspired together and set apart a fixed sum for feedng 50,000 men in the villages of India free of charge it would be a great sin. The man who has got good arms and good legs and honest work in front of him is not a man in need of free dinner. The greatest need of India is work for the starving villagers in their own homes; and I tell you that every rupee that you give for the promotion of khadi means 16 meals to 16 women after they have worked for those meals.

Almost equally great is the charity in connection with the criminal waste that is going on of cattle life in India. And he who conducts a good dairy and a good tannery saves several hundred cattle. So if you will make Chettinad an ideal place for you to live in and every people like myself to come and pass a weary day, I would expect not only to make Chettinad a model of sanitation but I would expect you to have good cattle depots, good warehouses where you will have all kinds of cattle stocked and I would expect you also to show an ideal model dairy which will supply yourselves and the poor people round you with good, nice and pure milk at cheap rates and I would expect you to build tanneries where hides of dead cattle should be secured and turned out into shoes for the rich and the poor. Similarly your charity should flow freely to the so-called untouchables whom all have hitherto trampled under foot.

I may still make further suggestions but I hope I have said enough to give you food for thought. I would ask you, as your sincere friend, to think well about the important matters on which I have spoken to you and not to dismiss them out of your consideration and it will give me great joy if I can but find that at least some of you have understood and appreciated my message. I am most anxious to bridge the gulf between the rich people of India and its paupers. I see no way of finding abiding happiness for this land unless there is a

[1] XVII. 20

living bond created between these two.

The Hindu, 24-9-1927

85. LETTER TO PRAGJI DESAI

Bhadarva Vad 13 [*September 23, 1927*][1]

BHAISHRI PRAGJI,

I have your letter. I have written to Sastriji about both of you[2]. He has been trying to do something. Be satisfied with what he does or speaks [on your behalf]. I have suggested one argument to him, which may perhaps help. It is that the timebar should not apply to anyone who seeks entry on the strength of educational qualification. Whatever you do, see that you do nothing of which you need feel ashamed in order to secure the right of residence and do not accept humiliating conditions. Be satisfied with what you can get consistently with your self-respect. It seems both of you have obtained the rights [of residence, etc.,] in Natal. There should not, therefore, be much difficulty in your securing other rights.

Your criticism of Andrews is not right. I see haste and impatience in it. It is impossible that Andrews should tell a lie to you. It may be that. . . 's[3] memory failed him or that Andrews misunderstood. When a man like Andrews is working for our cause with selfless devotion, it does not befit us to be angry with him or find fault with him.

I hope Medh and you are keeping good health. I have been travelling for some time now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5041

[1] The year is inferred from the reference to Pragji's case.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 22-9-1927.
[3] Illegible

86. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[*September 23, 1927*][1]

CHI. MANILAL,

I got your letter.

A letter for Pragji is also enclosed. Read it before you send it on to him, so that I may not have to write again to you about him. I think the words you have used in writing about Andrews are improper. Such words ought not to be used with reference to a worker like him. He has felt so concerned about the cases of Pragji and Medh that he even sent a cable to me about them. How can we attribute motives to him for having said what he felt? How can we criticize him for what he said in Delagoa Bay either? He who serves us may criticize us too, provided he does not let his criticism be exploited by others. In criticizing one's own people, is there anyone who can outdo me? If people blamed me for that, where would I be?

I am on a tour. It seems this whole year will be spent thus. I shall have to return to the Ashram in January to attend Ramdas's marriage. I have no time to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4723

87. SPEECH AT AMARAVATIPUR

September 23, 1927

FRIENDS,

I thank you for the purse that you have just given me and I hope you will excuse me for my ignorance about this place or its people and it was only upon my enquiry just now I came to know that this was the place that supplied national workers in this part of the country.

I have been saying to the rich people of India that if they would establish a living bond between themselves and the starving millions, they cannot do it better than by adopting khadi and the message of

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

the spinning-wheel. You have, therefore, certainly done will in giving me this purse for khadi. And I should like you to give not the least you can but the most you can. And if you have not given the most I suggest to all the rich people of this place that they should put their hands deep into their pockets and give what they properly consider a decent sum. But even though you may give the most you can in the shape of money, I would not consider that to be the best work or the most you can do for khadi.

If you believe in the message of the spinning-wheel then it is easy enough for me to convince you that you cannot do anything even by giving me all your wealth for khadi unless you are prepared to wear khadi; for unless we wear khadi it is perfectly useless to have it manufactured by the poor people. I would, therefore, ask every one of you who has not become yet habitual wearer of khadi to discard the use of all foreign cloth and adopt khadi exclusively for his use. And what I said to men applies to all sisters who are gathered around me.

I suppose as was done in Karaikudi here also you have fed poor people. If you have done so, while I am prepared to admit that it does credit to your heart I do not consider that it has really added any more to your merit. I am sure that many people of India do not want to make poor people beggars and paupers. And so what I said last night I repeat tonight that the best charity that moneyed people can make today is to support khadi organization. A rupee given to khadi means giving honest work to 16 women per day giving them also one anna each. And if you want to become a self-respecting people you should see that everyone gets honest work and gets an honest pay for the work that he or she does.

And may I repeat what I said last night that rich people need repeatedly to be reminded that after all personal purity of life is the best riches in the world? I know what terrible temptation riches put in the way of men constantly doing evil. I would like you, therefore, to examine, each one of you individually to examine, yourselves and eradicate wherever that evil exists in your breast. Amaravati means literally 'the abode of God'. How I wish you can make your town or your city really the abode of God. You can easily do so if you will be clean both outside and inside. If we honestly think within ourselves each one of us will be able to see that cleanliness like swaraj is really our birthright. The route leading to swaraj is self-control. And self-control means personal cleanliness.

But I have been watching during my stay in Chettinad that so far as outward corporate cleanliness is concerned, it is really lacking. If you all adopt concerted measures you can make your streets, your tanks and your surroundings spotlessly clean. And I have letters from friends in Chettinad which have told me that the inside also is not particularly clean. That uncleanliness is worse than the one that I see in the streets and ponds here. The outward uncleanliness and insanitation you can really set right in a few days' time if you organize yourselves, have a body of volunteers and workers and put your streets and tanks in a wonderful sanitary condition. The first essential condition of corporate life, that is city life, is that an absolutely clean supply of water is guaranteed to the dwellers of the city and its accommodation made perfectly clean and sweet. When I was on the Nandi Hills I saw that the tank from which drinking water was drawn by the dwellers on those hills was all day long well-guarded against pollution. Bathing tanks must be separate from the tanks that supply drinking water. I know that the inward cleanliness of which I have talked is a more difficult and intricate proposition than the sanitation that I have just talked to you about. But having been in my own days in possession of some amount of money I want to present you with my own recipe of how you can attain compara-tively [*sic*] personal cleanliness although you may possess riches. That recipe is nothing original that I am going to give you. It is really a part of our religion and it is this that no matter how much money we have earned we should regard ourselves as trustees holding these moneys for the welfare of all our neighbours. There is a verse which says that he who eats without sacrifice, that is without giving, is a thief.[1] If God gives us power and wealth He gives us the same so that we may use them for the benefit of mankind and not for our selfish carnal purpose.

I would also commend to your attention the question of untouchability. You rich people of Amaravatipur have a warm corner in your heart for those who are miscalled untouchables. It is sinful to call a single human being an untouchable because he is born in particular surroundings. Give them therefore wealth as if they are your own kith and kin, as really they are, and spend your riches for their well-being.

I would beseech you not to dismiss what I have told you this evening but treasure them and translate into practice whatever you are capable of. May God bless you!

The Hindu, 26-9-1927

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 12

88. MESSAGE TO EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE, TRICHINOPOLY

[Before *September 24, 1927*][1]

I wish the teachers will exercise the great power that they have over the youth of the country for the purpose of binding them to the starving millions by inducing them at least to use nothing but pure khaddar for their dress, but this they will not succeed in doing unless they set an example themselves.

The Hindu, 26-9-1927

89. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, KARAIKUDI

September 24, 1927

DEAR SISTERS,

It is a great pleasure to me to be able to see you this morning and I thank you for the purse that you have given me for *Daridranarayana*. But I am not sure whether all of you really know why you have given me this money. I am afraid some of you think that this money is being given to some rightful Mahatma for his own treasure. But if such is the belief entertained by any single one of you, I want to disabuse you of that belief. You have given this money for the sake of your own starving sisters and I am a humble instrument for carrying this gift of yours to these poor sisters, not in the manner in which you often fling money in the faces of the poor people. This money is not to be given to those poor sisters by way of charity but the money is to be given to them for the work they do. And they are starving not because there is no food in their village but because they have got no work for which they could get money and for such money they could get food. These poor sisters of yours and mine are without work for nearly six months in the year, because of your sins and my sins. If you and I do not eat *arisi*[2] that our agriculturists grow in this part of the country, what do you think will happen to those agriculturists? If instead of eating the *arisi* that they grow we were to

[1] The Trichinopoly District Educational Conference and the 37th annual meeting of the District Teachers' Guild was held on 24-9-1927.

[2] Rice

eat wheat that grows in Australia and is imported from Australia, what do you think will happen to those agriculturists? They will cease to grow *arisi* and starve because there is no money to be had for the produce of their labour. Now these millions of sisters of ours at one time spun yarn like this and it was woven into cloth that we used to wear and which we now call khaddar. That was the time when we wore khadi. Then came a time in the history of our unfortunate country when you and I and our ancestors went mad and sinned. They and we began to be deceived by all the foreign fineries that came from England, Paris and other parts of the world. And so these sisters finding no market for the products of their labour threw away their spinning-wheels and there was no other work to get in their villages. And so not having any work to replace this, they began to starve. Some very few of them left their villa ges and sold themselves to a life of shame. And remember that these were your sisters and my sisters. Some others went to towns and accepted factory labour for wages which you will not accept. Now you have given this money by way of some penance for the sin of ours. But this money is perfectly useless if you yourselves will not wear khadi. And so what I ask you all is to consider your own dharma and henceforth make a sacred resolve that for the sake of these poor sisters you will wear nothing but khadi. But then khadi needs something more than merely wearing cloth spun and woven by the sacred hands of these villagers. If you will, through this khadi, think of these poor sisters with a true heart, then khadi will be a symbol not only of your outward change but the whole heart will be changed. If you do that you will again revive the age of Sati and Sita. And that is what I am incessantly praying God to make you like. But even God cannot make us what we should be, against our own wills. God only helps those who are willing to help themselves and He is only waiting to make every one of you like Sita if you would only wish to become like Sita; but you don't wish it because you really consider that there are some people who are even untouchables to you; not so did Sita act. On the contrary, she regarded Guha as Nishadaraja[1] whom in our ignorance today we consider as untouchable. But if you will wear khadi in the khadi spirit, then you will not consider a single human being to be untouchable because he is born in particular surroundings.

Now you will even perhaps understand why I consider that you,

[1] King of the Nishadas, a tribe in the Vindhya mountains

the rich women of Chettinad, have not given for *Daridra- narayana* anything like enough money. I do not hesitate to ask sisters like you not only to give me money which really they got from their parents and husbands but I ask them to part with their *streedhanam* or their jewels. And I ask them to part with it on this condition that they should not again ask that the jewellery should be replaced. The real beauty of woman does not consist in her fine saris, in her diamonds and gold jewellery. Women's real beauty for that matter consists in the possession of a pure heart. May God give you that heart.

The Hindu, 26-9-1927

90. SPEECH IN REPLY TO ADDRESSES, DEVAKOTTAH

September 24, 1927

FRIENDS,

I thank you for all the addresses[1], and I thank the expert spinner, Sjt. Chokkalingam Chettiar, for presenting me with a specimen of cotton as it goes through all the different processes before it is turned out into yarn. I thank him also for giving me khadi prepared out of yarn of his own spinning and woven in this place by a weaver and I have exposed that. This beautifully fine khadi is for you to see and I have no doubt that through this khadi you can also see my face. I want to commence the proceedings of this meeting with an offer to you. This khadi I cannot wear for the simple reason that it would be against my profession that I want to have no more than any of the starving millions. God alone knows how far I permit myself all kinds of latitude under cover of my intense desire to do service. But I have not yet developed sufficient insolence in me to say that if I used this beautiful khadi I should be able to serve you more. Therefore unless you accept this sporting offer that I am about to make, this piece of khadi will go among the exhibits that have been collected by the All-India Spinners' Association. And it will be among some of the rare exhibits of the Association, but I would really like you to retain this beautiful piece of workmanship in your midst as an exhibit for yourselves or in order to adorn some of you, rich men. But if you propose to keep it as a trophy in your midst you will have to pay the

[1] The addresses were presented by the citizens, the Devakottah Union Board, and the students and the staff of the Nagarathar Sri Minakshi Vidyalaya High School.

sportsman's price for it. And to show how much I prize this piece of khadi which is on its way to approach the *shabnam* of Dacca, I cannot let you have it for anything under Rs. 1,000. *Shabnam* is a beautiful poetic name for Dacca khadi which our forefathers were in the habit of manufacturing there. *Shabnam* means evening dew and this mulmul was so called because someone mistook it for evening dew when it was spread in front of him. It was so fine and so beautiful. A few months ago there died in Bengal one Mr. Chatterjee who produced Dacca mulmul or khadi almost approaching this *shabnam*. Unfortunately for us he died but his workmanship exists and that khadi still remains as an exhibit in the Khadi Pratishthan in Bengal and the manager of the Pratishthan will not part with that khadi even for Rs. 5,000. I admit that these are or may be called fancy prices, but lovers of art, lovers of their country, lovers of patriotism do not mind paying fancy prices for their love. And there I finish this story of my sportsman's offer with which I commenced these proceedings. And in the end of my speech it would be seen whether there is anyone who prizes this beautiful piece of art for the money that I have suggested to you.

Here is also another piece of workmanship presented by my friend Sjt. Srinivasa Iyengar. This also, though not so fine as the preceding piece, is too fine for me to use personally. If you wish to pay a fancy price for it you can treat with me, but I shall not name my own price for fear of putting an undue strain upon your love. This is a finished scarf surely and much better than any silk that you get from Paris. You will forgive me for taking away so much of your time over my praise of two pieces of art. But that also shows to you how I am khadi-mad. When I begin to talk of khadi I can talk about it endlessly if I get patient listeners; for I know that in khadi lies the economic salvation of our starving brethren and sisters scattered in seven hundred thousand villages and I wish that I can induce you to think that life is a burden to you as it is a burden to me so long as there exists in India a single man or woman who starves for want of work. I am passing so many days, precious days, in Chettinad with the high hope of being able to evoke the best of your benevolence on behalf of *Daridranarayana*. I want you therefore to give the most that you can and not the least you have.

And if you have given the most financial assistance that you can, you will not have established a living bond between yourselves and these starving millions unless you will make khadi your own. And you

have an ocular demonstration that it is possible for you to have in this very place as fine khadi as you like in order to suit your tastes. What these two friends have been able to produce, many more can also do if they only strive. I hope therefore that you will, all young and old, men and women, boys and girls, make a sacred resolution that henceforth you will not buy any foreign cloth and that all your purchases will be in khadi, hand-spun and hand-woven. So much for khadi.

But there are other things that I would like to commend to your attention. I venture to suggest to you that you are not using your riches wisely though you seem to be using them profusely. You have erected huge palaces but you have not given any attention to your surroundings. I would like you therefore to ensure the purest supply of the purest water not only for yourselves but all those who are living in your midst. Your roads must be perfectly good. And all your tanks should actually be sweet-smelling, containing nothing but good, clear, sparkling, pure water. Your drainage must be in perfect state and all these things are really incredibly simple and if you will set your heart upon it you will find that it won't cost you anything that you will feel. If you will do all these things, well, you must get expert advice for all these things. But this requires a little sacrifice of personal inclinations and personal ease. It requires also a desire to live a corporate life—life not merely for self, but for one's own country. It requires also a fellow-feeling for all your neighbours including the poorest. And immediately you have given that bent to your inclination you will find that it will cost little effort and still less money and I assure you that you will be amply repaid for your pains.

But I was astonished this afternoon to learn that you will not even give a proper and decent education to your own children. Your one ambition in life is, I was told, to make them even at a tender age money-making machines. It cannot be right. By all means make them your worthy successors in office but before they embark upon stormy life let them have an idea of our own knowledge in the shape of our own culture, let their character be formed and let them know some thing of the history and the country of ours. As it is, I am told that you are tossed to and fro by all kinds of texts that are put before you by people parading to know the Shastras in the sacred name of Shastras. But let me tell you that every incantation whether it is in Sanskrit or whether it is in Tamil is not necessarily Shastra. My definition of true Shastra is the chosen word that giveth us life. Therefore any text, however ancient it may be described to be, which takes us along the path of perdition, which is therefore inconsistent

with truth or the universal law of life, is not Shastra. And hence have we been taught that Shastra comes really out of the mouth of people of character whom we describe as holy men, and not every man, who wears red-coloured robe and smears his forehead and the whole of his body with all kinds of marks and rolls out verses after verses from things which he calls scriptures, is a holy man. A holy man is one who never considers himself superior to any single creature on earth and who has renounced all the pleasures of life. But really in this *Kaliyuga*[1] we do not easily come across a holy man. Therefore it becomes doubly our duty to give a proper education to our children so that they may be able to discriminate between good and evil. And you who are rich and past the stage of education, to you I would like to say what I have been saying elsewhere also during these three days, whatever you do, don't spoil your purity of life. I hear all sorts of stories which I hope are largely exaggerated. But I know that generally speaking it is the experience of the world that possession of gold is as a rule inconsistent with the possession of virtue; but though such is the unfortunate experience in the world it is by no means an inexorable law. We have the celebrated instance of Janaka who, although he was rolling in riches and had limitless power, being a great Prince, was still one of the purest men of his age. And even in our own age I can cite from my own personal experience and tell you that I have the good fortune of knowing several moneyed men who do not find it impossible to lead a straight, pure life. What is possible for those few men is surely possible for every one of you. And I wish that my word can find an abiding place in your heart and I know how much good it will do you and society in which you are living.

Now I have to do the same thing that I did at every meeting. Before dispersing, volunteers go out and make collections from those who have not subscribed to the purse or who, after listening to me, come to the conclusion that they have not given enough. If there are any such men and women who believe in khadi, I want to give an opportunity to them to do so.

Whilst these collections were going on, Mahatmaji repeated that offer which he made at the beginning and asked if there were friends who were prepared to pay the reserved price for that piece of khadi if put up for auction. There being no response for this, Mahatmaji said that it would be sent as an exhibit to the All-India Spinners' Association.[2] Mahatmaji, in conclusion, said :

[1] The age of strife, opposed to truth and justice

[2] This was purchased by Shanmugam Chettiar for Rs. 1,001 at Karaikudi the next day.

One word to the students whom I must not forget. They tell me in their address that they proposed henceforth to give greater attention to spinning and those who have not taken up khadi proposed henceforth to take up khadi. I congratulate them on their decision and I pray to God that He will give them strength to follow up their resolution.

The Hindu, 26-9-1927

91. TALK TO YOUNG MEN

[On or before *September 25, 1927*][1]

You are telling me utter falsehoods. You do not know the man.

If Rajagopalachari is capable of telling lies, you must say that I am also capable of telling lies. I do say he is the only possible successor, and I repeat it today. You young men in trying to kill him will kill yourselves. The pamphlet shows how you are fed on lies—you are bringing up your movement on lies which means violence.

You may offer stubborn battle if you like, but build your foundation on truth. I am giving you this time only because I feel for the youth of the country.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

92. A LETTER

[*September 25, 1927*][2]

DEAR FRIEND,

From the facts stated by you and if there are no mitigating circumstances, the case is certainly one for regarding the ceremony as a nullity and leaving the girl free to marry a person of her choice. But in my opinion she may not make any choice before she reaches 21 without consulting her parents.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] This conversation was reported under this date-line.
[2] Copied under this date-line in the source

93. LETTER TO SURENDRA

[*September 25, 1927*][1]

CHI. SURENDRA,

I got your letter. Tell me about all the uncommon experiences you have there. Vasumatibehn did write to me about your listlessness. I was not at all worried though I was certainly surprised.

What is your method of going to the villages? Do you go there alone or with a companion? Have the floods[2] left any impression on the people's mind or is it altogether gone? During the floods all lived in harmony. Does it now seem a dream? Do the people help in the relief work? And those who accept help, are they generally honest?

What is Balkrishna's state? Chhotelal has again gone into silence.

I am quite happy. Though a great many things happen these days which trouble my mind, and some of them make deep wounds indeed, it is a battle which tests the soldier who is a seeker of *moksha*[3] and I have faith, therefore, that the wounds will heal. Even if they do not heal, is it not promise of the *Gita* that one who falls in this battle meets with nothing but good?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9416

94. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Sunday [*September 25, 1927*][4]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. If you find Panchgani more congenial, then do try for a bungalow there. It is a pity that we cannot ask for Pattani Saheb's bungalow. But I have no doubt that it is our duty not to ask for it.

[1] From Mahadev Desai's manuscript Diary
[2] In Gujarat
[3] Deliverance from phenomenal existence
[4] From the postmark

I had received your telegram concerning Manilal's brother. I am quite well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

PANCHGANI CASTLE

PANCHGANI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

95. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KARAIKUDI

September 25, 1927

FRIENDS,

I thank you for address and the different purses, the chief purse containing over Rs. 4,000. It is a good purse but not good enough for the people of Chettinad and it is certainly not good enough, when I compared it to the seventeen-rupee purse given to me by the *Adi-Dravida* boys. You can well afford to give four times as much whereas the *Adi-Dravida* boys could give four times as much whereas the *Adi-Dravida* boys could hardly afford to give as much as they have given. Nevertheless I am thankful for whatever you have been able to give for *Daridranarayana* out of a willing heart. I wish to start my remarks by repeating the offer I made yesterday, at last night's meeting. I want to expose to you this beautiful piece of art prepared in your own place, and the yarn of this beautifully fine muslin which I call khadi was spun by Mr. Chokkalingam of this place. I had the pleasure of seeing the very different processes through which he passed his cotton before he could draw his thread so fine as the threads from which this khadi piece is woven. And if you had witnessed his handicraft you would have envied with me and with me you would have also been proud of his art. I cannot make any personal use of so fine a piece of muslin. If therefore I cannot evoke your love of local art and love of the country, I must take this piece away and put it among the exhibits of the All-India Spinners' Association. But I would really like you to possess this piece of cloth. If you will do so, you have to pay a fancy price for it. Works of art all the world over carry always fancy prices and I have fixed the reserve price of this piece of cloth at Rs. 1,000;

but you may, if you wish, ask what is the artistic value about this piece of cloth or in other words you may, if you wish, enquire why is it that I value khadi so much as I do. I was told by one who has lived in your midst for years that there are in Chettinad many people who do not understand the message of the spinning-wheel nor do they understand how all these purses are to be utilized. I propose to devote a few sentences by way of explanation of the message of the spinning-wheel. It is designed to provide work for millions of starving men and women who are living in the seven hundred thousand villages of the land. Everyone who knows anything about India has testified that they have no work for nearly six months in the year and apart from the spinning-wheel it is impossible to find work for these millions of people, and so, through the spinning-wheel we can produce sufficient cloth to cover the whole of India. And I venture to suggest that anything produced by the hands of starving millions such as this muslin is necessarily a work of art. All art that is true and living must have some correspondence to the life that we live. True art must not debase life but it must sustain and ennoble life. And now you understand why I prize khadi so much. But it would be valueless if you and I do not wear khadi.

Now I shall tell you something about the organization which is producing khadi and selling it. There are 1,500 villages at least being served through this organization. In these 1,500 villages over fifty thousand sisters are receiving the benefit of the spinning-wheel and through this spinning-wheel nearly five thousand weavers are weaving the yarn spun by these fifty thousand women. Side by side with these spinners and weavers a class of men has been brought into being who do the special laundry work that is required in connection with the khadi as also dyeing and printing. The whole of the beautiful art of printing and dyeing which had become extinguished in Masulipatam and elsewhere has now been revived and has been given an honourable palce. It was through this organization that over seven lakhs of rupees were distributed amongst a network of workers. And if it is of any consequence to you to know, let me inform you that the vast majority of these artisans are non-Brahmins. This organization is being condcuted and controlled by a council of nine men, the majority of whom are again non-Brahmins, if you want to know that. Its president is a non-Brahmin who is miscalled Mahatma. (Laughter.) Its treasurer is again a non-Brahmin whose qualities as a treasurer are not to be surpassed by any treasurer on the face of the earth and its

secretary is another non-Brahmin, the son of a distinguished banker in Bombay. This organization is finding work for nearly 1,000 middle class men, the majority of whom are again non-Brahmins. It has also some workers who not only get no honorarium whatsoever but actually feed this organization. All the accounts of the central organization as also provincial organizations are periodically audited and those account may be inspected by friend and foe, donors or non-donors. No official of the organization gets more than Rs. 175 per month. No man or woman can approach this organization or belong to it unless he or she is dominated by a spirit of self-sacrifice. When I mentioned women, I have pleasure in informing you that there are several distinguished daughters of India who are working for this khadi, free of charge. For instance I may mention the three granddaughters of the Grand Old Man of India[1] and the distinguished sisters belonging to the great Petit family. The organization is operating with a capital of about 20 lakhs of rupees. But great as these figures may appear to yoy to be they are nothing when compared with what you and I should want them to be. If the khadi spirit possesses the whole of India we should be serving not 1,500 but 7,00,000 villages and not fifty thousand spinners but one hundred million spinners. It is for this work that I ask the rich people of chettinad not to give me some portion of their superfluity but a substantial portion of their substance. You may also now understand that when I put the reserve price Rs. 1,000 upon this beautiful piece of khadi I rather underrate than overrate.

Now I must repeat in a hurried fashion some of the most important local matters about which I have been talking during the last four days of my pleasant stay in your midst. I do urge you to look after your sanitation and your water-supply. Your palaces do not look to advantage at all in the midst of insanitary streets and tanks full of not pure sparkling water but foul water. I can show you how you can do these things at an incredibly small expense, not out of your capital but out of your savings.

I understand that some of your marriage customs are very bad. There is very often a price put upon the head of a bride as much as Rs. 30,000. I understand that you do not hesitate to spend as much as Rs. 50,000 per marriage; but this custom I consider to be immoral. There can be no price put either way in the matter of such a sacred

[1] Dadabhai Naoroji

contract as marriage. It must be as easy for a poor man to get a virtuous bride as for a rich man. Merit and mutual love are the sole tests for marriage contracts. The expenses for marriage ceremonies, though I do not consider them to be immoral, I regard them as a criminal waste. It is not becoming of a rich man to dangle his wealth before the multitude in the fashion in which he very often does. The art of amassing riches becomes a degrading and despicable art if it is not accompanied by the nobler art of how to spend wealth usefully. So, out of this marriage reform alone and putting a wise restraint upon your extravagance on these ceremonies, you can turn this Chettinad into a fairylnd. You can have if you will, without much effort, public parks, recreation grounds, water-works and profitable dairies that will give supply of cheap and pure milk to the poor people living in your midst. And as I tell you as a man of experience and as a fellow Chetti that you treble your earning resources if you conserve your health by wise sanitation, by an absolutely pure supply of water and by ensuring pure milk for the rich and the poor.

A lady doctor writing to me tells that I should remind you about the immoral custom that is prevalent in Chettinad and that prevents you from thinking of these things of public usefulness. She tells me that the rich people of Chettinad had a due share in perpetuating a hideous immoral custom of assigning girls of tender age to a life of shame under the name of religion. She tells me that there are many *Devadasis*[1] in your midst. If this is true it is really a matter for hanging our heads in shame. Let not possession of wealth be synonymous with degradation, vice and profligacy. And is it not a tragic irony that, in spite of these vices, you are also spending money lavishly in erecting what you flatter yourselves to believe as temples for gods to reside. Not every structure made of brick and mortar labelled temple is necessarily a temple. There are, I am sorry to say, many temples in our midst in this country which are no better than brothels. Do you know that in our religion it is not possible to call any single place a temple unless elaborate ceremonial of purification has been made inside that building and unless the spirit of God has been invoked by men full of piety, so that God may reside in that? And so, I would urge you to restrain yourselves and not lavishly spend in building temples but in the first place dedicate your own bodies to the service of God and for that reason first of all purify by ridding

[1] Female dancers attached to a temple; literally, ‘maids of God’

yourselves of the evils to which I have drawn attention. But I am gald to be able to inform you that I received only today a gratifying letter in which whilst the writer admits most of the evils to which I have referred just now he tells me that there are in your midst several noble-minded Chettis rich enough not only in gold but in treasure of virtue also. He tells me that there are in your midst several *brahmacharis*[1] going on with their godly life in a silent manner. He also tells with hope and pride that several young men were conducting against heavy odds a reform movement and I assure these young men that whilst the path of reform is not all roses and that, whilst it is bestrewn with countless thorns, success is theirs if they will persevere prayerfully and with a pure heart. I understood that they are gradually trying to solve one very difficult question that faces every one of you. I understood that a rigid custom has grown up in your midst whereby no Chettiar going either to Burma, Singapore or Ceylon takes his wife with him. I regard this bar sinister against your womanhood as a double drawback and a great sin. It exposes you when you leave homes to avoidable temptations and it deprives your life partners for a number of years of the privilege of your companionship and the opportunity of broadening their outlook by travelling to distant lands with yourselves. I wish these young men therefore very early success in their chivalrous fight and I urge the elders, to whom my voice may reach, to give every assistance to the young men in their endeavour to carry on the necessary reforms in your midst.

And now that silence prevails in this meeting and as this is perhaps the last meeting in Chettinad that I shall address, I should like to say a few words to the sisters in front of me. I am glad to see so many of you attending this meeting. I am afraid you have no notion that this message of khadi is a message principally devoted to the betterment of the condition of your starving sisters living in thousands of villages. I do not know how much men in India will have to pay for keeping you, the women of India, in darkness about so many things of the highest importance in life, both to men and women. But thanks to God that since the advent of the movement for reviving the spinning-wheel, thousands of women have learnt to come out of their homes and listen to the music of the charkha. And I would love to think that you, the women of Chettinad, had begun to think beyond the threshold of your houses or palaces. I would like you to realize

[1] Celibates

the deep and distressful poverty of millions of your sisters and I would like you independently, apart from your men, to part with your possessions, your rupees and your jewellery for the sake of these sisters and it fills me with gladness to be able to tell you that the response from the women of India has been spontaneous so far as this message is concerned and they have even given their moneys and jewelleries willingly and in many cases lavishly. But to give me money or your jewellery is by no means enough. If you will establish a living bond between yourselves and your starving sisters, it is absolutely necessary for you to discard your foreign fineries and adopt khadi permanently for your wear; because, if you do not wear the products of their labours, all the money that you give for khadi is a waste of effort.

The beauty of a virtuous woman does not consist in the fineness of her dress but in the possession of a pure heart and virtuous life. Millions of men and women all over India early in the morning invoke the blessed and immortal name of Sita in order that her name may surround them during the whole day with her protecting power, not because Sita wore costly jewels but because she bore a heart that was of pure gold and purer diamond. Sita did not remain in her palace when Rama went into banish-ment but she insisted upon accompanying him through all these eventful years of exile. Sita did not consider Nishadaraja, whom in our ignorance we consider today, to be untouchable but Sita embraced Nishadaraja and accepted with a grateful heart the services he nobly rendered. And I would like you to imitate Sita's virtues, Sita's humility, Sita's simplicity and Sita's bravery. You should realize that Sita for the protection of her virtues did not need the assistance of Rama, her Lord and master. The chronicler of the history of Sita and Rama tells us that it was the purity of Sita which was her sole shield and protection. And if you will but recognize the power that resides in your breast it is open to you by force of your purity, love and spirit of self-sacrifice to bend the haughty spirit of your men and shame them into forsaking the life of vices and debauchery. I would like you to develop the courage to insist upon accompanying your husbands wherever they go. May God give you that strength and goodwill.

I am now very nearly done and as is usual at all meetings I must follow the custom here also of asking those who have not yet contributed to this purse to do so if they believe in khadi and if they wish it. I would also urge those men and sisters here to give if they

wish as much as they can and therfore if there are those who have not really given enough I would like them if they believe in the statistics I have given and in the importance of the message of khadi not to be niggardly but give generously.

[after this,] the auction of the jewels, silver cups and rings, etc., presented to Mahatmaji commenced. . . . Mr Shanmugam Chettiar announced that he was willing to give for the muslin cloth presented to Mahatmaji at Devakottah his (Mahatmaji's) own fancy price of Rs. 1,000. . . . A small ring which was presented to Mahatmaji for a second time worth not even 10 rupees fetched a fancy price of Rs. 135.

Gandhiji became responsive to the mood of the audience exhibited during the course of the auction and was touched by their boundless affection for him and addressed a few words after the auction, a thing unusual. He said :

I shall never forget the scene. This will remain as one of the pleasantest memories in my life. I have had many a pleasant and unpleasant experiences in my life outside and this will remain among the very few pleasant remembrances and especially so because I have been saying ever since I have set my foot in Chettinad many unsavoury things to you. You might have easily misunderstood my word and my motive. But I have seen that the more harsh words I have spoken, the greater the affection you have showered on me. You have received me as a blood brother and taken the words I have said exactly in the spirit I have delivered them to you. That is really my joy. But I would like you not to forget the words that I have spoken to you but I want every word I have said to you to penetrate your hearts and if I hear that the word having remained in your heart has fructified I think it would give me much greater joy than if you give me millions. I have no use for your money except to serve you with it and it is a strange thing but it is true that I cannot serve you even with your own money if you do not give me your hearts. And so in order that your money which is in my possession may bear amble fruit I request you to do what I have asked you to do. You know that if you can do that, it will do good to you, it will do good to me and also the whole of India. May God bless you and give you the power to understand my message and act up to it.

The Hindu, 27-9-1927

96. MESSAGE TO " NEW INDIA"[1]

KARAIKUDI,
September 26, 1927

In wishing Dr. Annie Besant many happy returns of the day, I can say that my debt to her was first incurred in 1889-90[2] . It has been increased manyfold since. Cruel God has not yet answered my petition for the power to repay that debt.

The Hindu, 29-9-1927

97. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

September 26, 1927

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. Mahadev must have written to you about a Pratishthan travelling wheel for a local expert[3]. He spins very fine. He presented me with a piece of his thin muslin almost like Jogesh Babu's. I sold it for Rs. 1,000 to a local Chetti. It is for this expert that you will send the wheel. Please send it carriage paid and debit the whole cost to the A.I.S.A.[4] as per advice from me.

As soon as I get your improved pattern I shall use it and report to you. I am sorry about the Abhoy Ashram. They have not written to me.

I see that Nikhil is not yet out of the wood. I do hope he will be all right.

Have you considered the advisability of creating your stock after Mithubehn's style, doing fancy work on it and selling? Mithubehn has created a good market for her skill on khadi. I hope to do a lot of selling in Ceylon and possibly in Travancore. If you have anything that can go anywhere please send me a box for trial.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

[1] On the occasion of Dr. Annie Besant's birthday

[2] When Gandhiji was introduced to Mrs. Besant through her book *How I Became a Theosophist; vide Autobiography*, Pt. I, Ch. XX.

[3] Chokkalingam Chettiar; vide "Speech in Reply to Addresses, Devakottah" 24-9-1927.

[4] All-India Spinners' Association

[PS.]

You are living on Rs. 20 per month. I do not mind if you keep good health.

From a photostat: G.N. 1577

98. LETTER TO HEMAPRABHA DEVI DAS GUPTA

KARAIKUDI,
Ashvin Shukla 1 [*September 26, 1927*][1]

DEAR SISTER,

Your letter has reached me. How long will you grieve over Anil's death? It does no good, either for the departed soul or for us, to brood over his qualities. Why should we not look at the matter from this angle? Anil's soul is immortal. We were concerned only with his soul, not with his body. Had it been with the body we could have embalmed the corpse and preserved it for years. But we cremated the body upon the soul's departure. In order to realize this and put it into practice, we need no yogi nor anyone else. Yes, we needs must have faith in God and also in the immortality of the soul. Now let us forget Anil's body and try to emulate him.

Nikhil too seems to be a wonderful child. Do not let him overwork his body.

May God grant you wisdom and peace.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: 1650

99. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Aso Sud 1 [*September 26, 1927*][2]

SISTERS,

You won't find today's letter boring. I dared not write till now of certain things that were uppermost in my mind. We wrote to each other tactful letters. We wrote to each other as diplomats do, and not as ordinary human beings. Our letters were not real replies to each other,

[1] Gandhiji was in Karaikudi on this date.

[2] The year is inferred from the references to relief work and quarrels among the Ashram women.

but formal acknowledgments such as we get from the Government.

Today, I wish to write to you about the quarrels that are going on among you in the Ashram. You do not have mutual trust and respect and, there are petty intrigues among you all the time. You and I know of this, but neither dared to write. I thought I must cut through this studied silence. Why is there so much quarrelling among you? What is the cause of this trouble? Who is to blame? Find out the truth. Religion declares that as long as man harbours evil he is impure and unfit to stand before God. So the first duty of any of you who is impure is to confess the fact and thus purge yourselves of the evil. The immediate cause of this enquiry is a casual letter from Manibehn. It seems she had to go on relief work. So she left the Ashram. Now she pours out her distress in a letter. She could not bear to see the disunion prevailing in the Ashram. Please look into this, be watchful and try to bring credit to the Ashram.

If after reading this letter any of you desires to write to me separately, you are welcome to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3668

100. SPEECH AT SIRUVAYAL

September 27, 1927

FRIENDS,

I thank you for this address on palm leaves and this beautiful quantity of yarn and your purse. I need hardly say that the custom of presenting addresses on palm leaves is infinitely superior. You will not expect me to give you a long speech but I expect you to read the speeches that I have been making in Chettinad. But I do want to congratulate you on having this Ashram. I know that if workers in an Ashram are pure, selfless and self-sacrificing, such an Ashram will promote welfare in a variety of ways. I would, therefore, ask you to interest yourselves in its activities and if the activities commend themselves to you, to help it in every way. I understand that the Ashram has a Gurukul where boys are receiving training and that it is also conducting a school for untouchable boys and doing sanitary

service in the neighbouring villages and teaching the boys spinning. All these activities are very good. And I consider the work among the untouchables to be the most important of all. It is wrong and sinful to consider any person to be untouchable because he or she is born in a particular state. Untouchable children have every right to receive education and every facility as any other children. I would therefore like you to help this untouchability work as much as it is possible for you to do. Now I see in front of me all these boys who do not appear to be particularly healthy. The ought to receive good, pure milk for their food and they should have open air exercises and they should be weighed from time to time. I see also that their hair is kept low and it is not right. Personally, I am convinced that all our boys should be clean shaven. *Brahmacharis* are not supposed to grow hair. I see that the boys are dressed in khadi which is very good. But every detail about boys has got to be considered by those in charge of them. Teachers take the place of parents for the boys and they are therefore responsible for their good health, for their character and for their mental development. I see some girls also in front of me who are heavily and horribly ornamented. These heavy ear-pendants look not only ugly but they interfere with the proper development of all the features of the face. I wish that you mothers will discard all these ugly superficial ornaments. Remember that your beauty consists in your character and not in your ornaments or in your dress. You have really no use for these ugly and costly ornaments of yours. Either melt them or sell them and save your moneys or give your ornaments to a man like me for the sake of *Daridra- narayana*. You don't even wear khadi. You should all be like Sita with an absolutely pure heart, with simple khadi and with simple ornaments.

The Hindu, 29-9-1927

101. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, PAGANERI

September 27, 1927

It delights my heart to see so many sisters attending this meeting, almost the same number as men. As I said at the women's meeting at Karaikudi or elsewhere to the sisters there, the movement for which you have given these purses is essentially a movement for the freedom of the women of India. The full freedom of India will be an impossibility unless your daughters stand side by side with the sons in the battle for freedom and such an association on absolutely equal

terms on the part of India's millions of daughters is not possible unless they have a definite consciousness of their own power. Immediately the spinning-wheel is reinstated in all its glory and with all its implications in the millions of cottages of India, woman recognizes her definite power and her place in India's regeneration. For she is then able to say to men, 'you depend for your food and your clothes as much upon us as on yourselves.' 'We,' she may say, 'clean and cook your food, we spin the yarn from which khadi is prepared.' then she is clothed with dignity which is hers by birthright and of which we, men and traitors of our womanhood, have deprived her. For in our stupidity and in our ignorance we removed from each cottage spinning-wheels and became infatuated with the foreign fineries that came to us from the West and became greedy after the sovereigns and rupees that would dangle before us, and whether by its own design or by an accident, be it however it may, we, men, conspired to keep our daughters and sisters and our wives in utter ignorance and we denied them the education to which they had a right. In our ignorance we gave away our daughters in marriage at an age when they were able only to sit on the lap and play with us as brothers and sisters. By constant usage you yourselves, sisters, who are sitting in front of me, have come to think that it is the most natural thing for you to give away your daughters early in the so-called marriage and to keep them in dismal ignorance. The message of the spinning-wheel is designed to undo these terrible wrongs. The spinning-wheel gives the status to which a woman is entitled and it quickens the conscience both of men and women and enables man to understand his duty by the women of India. If my word has penetrated the hearts of men and women around me you will immediately understand why I consider these purses from you as not adequate for the purpose for which they are intended. I want you men and women to dismiss me from your minds altogether as a Mahatma dropped on you as a curse from heaven. But I want you to realize in all significance the fact that I come before you as a self-chosen humble servant and representative of *Daridranarayana*. I want you to understand that what you have given me is not given and not to be given to feed my vanity and my ambitions, but to clothe and feed *Daridranarayana* who is knocking every day, in season and out of season, at your doors. I have come to you to wake you up to a sense of duty by the starving millions on whom and on whose labour you and I are living. Even your money, your jewellery, your rings and

your necklaces can be of no earthly use to me unless both men and women will wear khadi and nothing but that. This collecting of purses for the spinning-wheel is only a brief and intermediate interval. When every man and woman in India naturally takes to khadi as they all take to the grains that are grown on India's plains there will be as little use for these collections as there is for collection in order to carry on propaganda for clutivating rice and wheat in India. And it is open to you today to shorten that interval as much as you like by adopting khadi, every one of you; and in order to saturate our atmosphere with the spirit of the spinning-wheel, it is necessary for you, all the sisters who are sitting in front of me, to take up the spinning-wheel and if you will, it can become a symbol of your purity and your independence. And it is equally necessary for men to take up the spinning-wheel as a sacrificial rite. I cannot cheapen khadi and I cannot popularize khadi unless I have an army of expert spinners from men who and who alone can penetrate the villages and reinstate the spinning-wheel by giving necessary instruction and by doing the organizing work.

And now let me repeat what I have said in other places in Tamil Nadu about the social reforms which await fulfilment at our hands. Men's lives must become pure. Faithfulness on the part of the husband towards his wife is just as much a sacred obligation as faithfulness on the part of the wife towards her husband. It is wrong, no matter what authority may be cited from the so-called Shastras, for a man to have more than one wife. It is wrong to sell daughters in marriage. It is a sin to have a child widow in one's house and it is equally sinful to give away a child in marriage or to refuse to call all such contracts or ceremonies as an absolute nullity. And it is wrong also to keep our boys and girls without proper education and it is a heinous crime to regard a single human being as untouchable because he is born in a particular group of family. If we had a true awakening in our midst we would deal with all these social evils and deal also with the insanitation around us.

The Hindu, 29-9-1927

102. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

MADURA,
[*September*] *28,* [*1927*][1]

MIRABAI
CARE HINDI PRACHAR
MADRAS

HOW ARE YOU? MAY GOD MAKE YOU STRONG PHYSICALLY MENTALLY SPIRITUALLY. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5277. Courtesy: Mirabehn

103. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 28, 1927

CHI. MIRA[2],

I could not restrain myself from sending you a love message[3] on reaching here. I felt very sad after letting you go. I have been very severe with you but I could not do otherwise. I had to perform an operation and I steadied myself for it.[4] Now let us hope all would go on smoothly and that all the weakness is gone.

I have your two missing letters just now, but of that later. I am writing this against the posting time. You won't worry about me on any account whatsoever.

With love,

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 5278. Courtesy : Mirabehn

[1] Gandhiji was in Madura on this date. *Vide* also the succeeding item.
[2] Superscription in this and other letters to Mirabehn is in Devanagari.
[3] *Vide* the preceding item
[4] The addressee describes the incident as follows: "I could not resist going once to see Bapu before returning to my work. But I had made a big mistake this time. I received a severe scolding and was soon packed off to Sabarmati." *Vide The Spirits' Pilgrimage, p. 96.*

104. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MADURA

September 28, 1927

FRIENDS,

I thank you for your addresses as also for the purses, I thank also the donors of these beautiful hand-spun yarn, and I thank you for the three pieces[1] of hand-spun and hand-woven khadi you do not see exhibited here. They were presented to me this morning and I cannot help mentioning these pieces of khadi also at this juncture. And if time permits and you have the patience you will see these khadi pieces exhibited before you and offered to you also to buy each with a reserve price. The khadi pieces are too artistic, too fine and too long for a self-chosen representative of *Daridranarayana* as I claim to be. I call them very beautiful pieces of art and I would tempt you if you would be tempted to take them from me and keep them as treasures in your beautiful town. At Karaikudi where I got two pieces of khadi[2], home-spun and home-woven, I sold one piece at Rs. 1,001 and the other at Rs. 101. And I mention these things to you in order to tell you that I had entertained much higher hopes of Madura than what Madura has up to now done. It shows that evidently you who could have done much better have not understood the full importance of the message of the spinning-wheel.

I wish to recall to myself and to you the scene that was presented to me in Madura now nearly seven years ago when I came here leaving behind me at Waltair my friend, fellow-worker and comrade, Maulana Mahomed Ali. Times, however, have changed now. That was a time when you and thousands of other people, as I was journeying from Waltair to Madura, noticed his absence and it brought even tears to many eyes. Today not only does nobody notice his absence or the absence of a Mussalman companion with me but probably you will be surprised if I summed up sufficient courage and audacity to take with me a Mussalman companion. Today the Hindu hand is on the Mussalman throat and the Mussalman hand on the Hindu throat. But I would be false to my God and to my country if in spite of these terribly black clouds overhanging us, I do not repeat in this ancient

[1] Presented by T. C. Chellam Iyengar

[2] Gandhiji got these pieces at Devakottah and sold them at Karaikudi.

city of yours my absolute and unchangeable faith in the possibility and necessity of Hindu-Muslim union. I know as certainly as I am sitting here that God will bless all our plans and He is going to bring concord out of this terrible discord. And so, those of you who have the same faith burning in your breasts as I have, I invite you to join with me in sending up a heart-prayer to God to cleanse our hearts and give peace to this thirsting land.

But there is yet another incident that happened during that visit of mine which also I want to recall to ourselves. You will remember that after having passed that memorable night in your midst after due prayer humbly offered to God I made a change, a very small change I admit, but nevertheless for me an important change in order to identify myself more closely with the starving millions. As I was travelling to Madura filled with the vivid scenes that took place at Waltair and asking the thousands of people who met me at the various stations at least to discard foreign cloth and take up khadi, one or more of the poor people remonstrated with me and told me that they had no money to buy khadi with. Though I do not think, so far as I recollect now, that the answers given to me were in every case honest, I nevertheless recognized the force of the remark made by some of these poor people who seemed to me to be in rags. I then discussed with the companions who were with me the propriety of the change I am about to describe to you. I passed a sleepless night then resolving within myself what I should do and asking God to guide me. And I made up my mind from next morning, at least for one year to discard the ordinary vest and long dhoti that I used to wear then and be satisfied with the shortest loincloth that it is possible for me to do with.[1] The year has rolled by, but seeing the necessity of the change, the change has persisted. I am quite aware that the change, unless it is a token of the change within, has no value whatsoever. But the more I have wandered about India and the more I have pondered over the distressful poverty and pauperism of the millions of villagers scattered throughout seven hundred thousand villages of this ancient land, the more necessary have I felt for one who claims to represent the masses to adopt a change of that character. And if you travelled with me to these villages where you see pauperism in its nakedness, you will recognize with me the necessity of throwing away many of your

[1] *Vide* "My Loin-Cloth", October 2, 1921.

superfluous pieces of dress.

The Municipal address[1] tells me that in your schools, to an appreciable extent, spinning has been successful. Whilst I congratulate the Municipality upon this achievement I must, to be true to you, tell you that it gives me no satisfaction whatsoever. If the people living in the few cities and towns of India were to realize that their life, their comfort, their very existence depend upon these semi-starved millions, they will not treat khadi and the spinning-wheel as a mere pastime, a thing for patronizing. Remember that India does not sustain her town life from wealth drawn from other countries. It has to depend essentially, being almost entirely an agricultural country, for the building up of her towns purely upon what is received from the villages. And after a careful study of the problem of India's poverty and the various remedies that have been suggested to remedy that poverty even partially, I have not been able to see anything approaching the spinning-wheel in usefulness. And it is, in my humble opinion, the sacred duty of the people within the towns to make some slight return to the villagers for what they are obliged to do for them. In my humble opinion this problem of the ever-deepening poverty of India is much more important than even the very important question of Hindu-Muslim unity and, for these parts of India, the very important question of Brahmin and non-Brahmin controversy. These questions are after all mere ripples on the surface of India's waters. The villages are untouched and unaffected by all these questions. And hence you find me in season and out of season talking about nothing but khadi, dreaming about nothing but the spinning-wheel and refusing to be moved from my purpose by these upheavals that are going on in our land. I wish that I could convince every Brahmin, every non-Brahmin, every Mussalman that whatever opinion he retains about these questions that I have mentioned to you, every one of these owes this elementary duty to these toiling masses.

My Nadar[2] friends in their address tell me that while they believe in the message of the spinning-wheel they have grave doubts about the proper distribution and use of the moneys that are being given to me. They tell me that they have read in a Tamil newspaper that over one lakh of rupees has been lost through maladministration or I do

[1] Gandhiji had earlier received an address from the Municipal Council, Madura, and replied to it at the public meeting.

[2] A community in Tamil Nadu

not know what. I really thank them for that reference in their address. And if the organization through which I am working this khadi propaganda and through which these moneys are being used is found wanting and careless about the use of these moneys, I confess that it is useless, it is mischievous, to give a single pie for them. And I am glad that whilst they are in doubt as to the proper distribution of these funds they have refused to contribute to the purse. But I am glad to be able to inform these friends and all of you who are present here that there has been no maladministration of the funds. Remember also that the All-India Spinners' Association came to exist only three years ago. Before that this khadi work was one of the items worked by the ordinary Congress organization. But even so nothing like one lakh of rupees has been lost. There are undoubtedly bad book-debts as there are in any organization. We have to deal with all sorts and conditions of men. And in spite of precautions taken, of securities exacted, some of them prove to be dishonest. And if you expect khadi organization to be cent per cent successful before you will part with a single pie, I am afraid that the organization must close. During my public life 35 years I have had the honour of controlling and conducting several organizations. But I must confess to you that I have not been able to conduct a single organization without incurring some loss. In the course of nearly twenty years' practice I came in contact with thousands of commercial men as my clients, and I have not met a single one who has not had some bad debts. And it is my conviction that this khadi organization will stand, in comparison with the tallest firm in the world, side by side with it in the matter of management. The organization is operating with a capital of nearly Rs. 2,00,000. It is serving fifteen hundred villages all over India, and it is feeding nearly 50 thousand spinners. And it finds the spinners on an average from one rupee to one and a half per month. And it utilizes only the spare hours of these spinners who have no other occupations during those hours. It finds work for five thousand weavers, dyers and washermen who are necessary for the develop ment of this business. The provincial accounts, also the Central accounts, are audited periodically by a public accountant. And these accounts are open to inspection by donors and non-donors, by friends and critics. And so if you are satisfied that the cause is good and those who are handling the cause are trustworthy and reliable men, I ask you to unloose your purse and give not the least you can but the most you can. And please remember that your donations are not everything. Even your

donations, however generous they may be, will be of no use to me unless you are prepared to wear khadi which I must present to you for acceptance, being the product of the labour of these spinners and weavers.

I now come to the students' address and I will refer to it only briefly. The students tell me that they are unable to learn Hindi because they have no time and because they can only regard education in terms of commerce. And so they have apologized for their ignorance of Hindi and for having presented their address to me in English language. Even as khadi has been conceived in terms of the millions so has Hindi been conceived in the interests of these very millions. And I was grieved to find this despondent note in the students' address. It is a bad outlook for any country whose young men lose hope. Students should realize that real education comes not in the college course or the high school premises but it comes outside. All of the successful men in the world, if you were to examine their history, you will find that they really learned the essential things of life outside school premises. And poor as we in India are, I must refuse to accept the proposition that education should be regarded in terms of commerce. Let the student world remember that after all they are a handful, a drop in this ocean of humanity Let them also remember that thousands upon thousands earn an honest and respectable livelihood although they have never entered a high school or college. Let them also understand that it is hurled as a reproach against the student world that the vast majority of the students when they are discharged from their schools or colleges only look forward to clerkships either under the Government or in some business firm. I regard it as a misuse of education. I admit that the educational system is rotten to the core. But taking things as they are, I have been endeavouring to show to students that it is possible for them to help themselves even in the midst of these adverse circumstances if they only think betimes. And so if I suggest to them that even whilst they go to schools which are being really paid for out of the taxes received from the millions, and as a matter of fact that immoral source of revenue—excise—they can make some return for the poor by adopting khadi and the spinning-wheel. Similarly when I suggest that if they regard themselves as citizens not only of the Peninsula south of the Vindhya range but citizens of the whole of India and if they want to have a living touch with the people north of the Vindhya range also they must learn Hindi, they retort that the Senate of the Madras

University should make Hindi compulsory in all schools and all the colleges. I admit the force of that retort, I admit that it is the duty of the Senate to introduce Hindi as a second language in all the curricula. But I am altogether unable to endorse the proposition that the students should feel resourceless and helpless and, sitting with their hands folded, refuse to learn Hindi unless the Senate has made this necessary reform. You have here a Hindi Prachar Office in Madura. It is open to any one of you to learn Hindi and you will find that it is incredibly easy to learn if you will only give one hour per day. And some of you will even discover that just as English has a commercial value so also Hindi has a commercial value in this land if you will use your education for commerce. But I understand that even the Hindi Office you are not able to make self-supporting. I draw the attention of the Municipality and of the citizens of Madura to this defect. Surely it is an activity for which it must not be difficult for you to find a few hundred rupees per year.

I must now hurry on to the other problems which are facing this country. I congratulate the Municipality upon its being able to tell me that so far as its schools and its offices are concerned there is no such thing as untouchability. And I am glad to note that you have a few thousand *Adi-Dravida* boys and a few hundred *Adi-Dravida* girls learning in your schools. But may I also suggest that it is possible for the Municipality to do much more for them? Have you provided them with decent quarters? Are you looking after their homes and their habits which because of our criminal neglect have grown round them? Are you trying to wean them from the drink curse? And I would like here to repeat what I have been saying throughout this Tamil Nad tour that it is necessary for us all, whether we are Brahmins, non-Brahmins and what not, to think of the child-wife and the child-widow. I have received some letters urging me to reconsider my views about child-widows, so far as South India is concerned. I have seen no reason to reconsider my opinion. And I consider that we, thinking men and thinking women, can- not sit still so long as there is a single child-widow to shame us. It is equally necessary for those who are leaders of public opinion to drive out this wretched, immoral *Devadasi* institution. Let us not insult our religious sense by covering this crime under the name of religion.

The Hindu, 30-9-1927

105. THE NEILL STATUE AND NON-VIOLENCE

A Gujarati friend thus remonstrates in a letter to a common friend :

> Sometimes Bapu's non-violence baffles one. He encourages the agitation for the removal of the Neill statue as he encouraged the one for the removal of the Lawrence statue. To me it looks very much like violence; for the agitation must beget hatred against Englishmen—the very thing Bapu wants to avoid. And where I can see no violence he sees it, as in carrying arms for removing the Arms Act. It appears to me that in the first case there is every risk of violent temper being begotten by apparently non-violent means. And this according to Bapu should be avoided. In the second case only a slight risk or possibility of violence is incurred in order to achieve a worthy end—just the thing I should have imagined Bapu would brave.

In order to do justice to the argument and make it easily intelligible to the reader, I have somewhat extended the argument put cryptically in the original Gujarati.

Non-violence is made of sterner stuff. There is no doubt that the agitation for removing the Neill statue and the like is likely to increase the feeling of hatred against the English. A reformer seeking to spread non-violence must take note of the fact and guard against hatred, but dare not on any account hush causes of hatred. Non-violence in the form of love is the activest force in the world. As the Gujarati poet Shamal says, "There is no merit in returning good for good; most men do this. Merit lies in returning good for evil." Merit here stands obviously for non-violence. Causes of hatred everywhere obtrude themselves on one's gaze. The seers of old saw that the only way of dealing with the situation was to neutralize hatred by love. This force of love therefore truly comes into play only when it meets with causes of hatred. True non-violence does not ignore or blind itself to causes of hatred, but in spite of the knowledge of their existence operates upon the person setting these causes in motion. Were it otherwise, the fight for swaraj by non-violent means would be an impossibility. For at every step the Swarajist is bound to expose to view the blemishes of foreign rule and the foreign rulers. The law of non-violence—returning good for evil, loving one's enemy—involves a knowledge of the blemishes of the 'enemy'. Hence do the scriptures

say : ""क्षमा वीरस्य भूषणम्–""—"Forgiveness is an attribute of the brave."

It is perhaps now clear why a believer in non-violence must endorse my non-violent agitation for the removal of the Neill statue and the like. But the carrying of arms is not permissible for a non-violent man, for he is expected not to use them. And the total removal of the Arms Act in my opinion will never be held to be a just cause. Hence carrying arms for the removal of the Arms Act can never fall under any scheme of non-violence.

It is now perhaps necessary to look a little closer into the Neill statue agitation. Here is the inscription on the front side of the pedestal of the statue :

James George Smith Neill
A. D. C. to the Queen
Lieut.-Colonel of the Madras Fusiliers
Brigadier General in India
A brave, resolute, self-reliant soldier
Universally acknowledged as the first
Who stemmed the torrent of rebellion in Bengal.
He fell gloriously
At the relief of Lucknow
25th September 1857
Aged 47.

The inscription at the back reads :

Erected by public subscription, 1860

I venture to suggest that these are untruthful statements. The inscription is false history. At the time of writing this article I have not by me Kaye and Malleson's volumes, but a friend has obliged me by procuring for me Thomson's illuminating monograph *The Other Side of the Medal*. It shows how false history is taught to us in schools and colleges. I take the following extracts from that book :

> These were General Neill's instructions to Major Renaud when he was hurrying with an advance guard to the relief of Cawnpore :
>
> "Certain guilty villages were marked out for destruction, and all the men inhabiting them were to be slaughtered. All sepoys of mutinous regiments not giving a good account of themselves were to be hanged. The town of Futtehpore, which had revolted, had to be attacked, and the Pathan quarters destroyed with all their inhabitants. All heads of insurgents, particularly at Futtehpore, to be hanged. If the Deputy Collector is taken, hang him, and have his head cut off and stuck up on one of the principal (Mahommedan) buildings

of the town."

According to Kaye :

> Again, apart from Neill's doings, and certainly when a Major was sent on by Neill towards Cawnpore, there is no doubt that people were put to death in the most reckless manner. And afterwards Neill did things almost more than the massacre, putting to death with deliberate torture, in a way that has never been proved against the natives.
>
> Sir George Campbell says : Neill is one of those people who have been elevated into a hero on the strength of a feminine sort of violence, and whose death much disarmed criticism at the time; but now that has passed into old history, I may say that, so far as I could learn from the most impartial sources, there was not much more in him. . . . I can never forgive Neill for his very bloody work and especially for his share in the mismanagement which caused the loss of the regiment of Loodiana. At Allahabad, by violence and mistrustful usage, he all but turned against us the Ferozepore regiment (only second to the men of Loodiana in my affection) which afterwards did such splendid service.

There is much more than can be quoted to show the true character of the "hero" in whose honour the statue was erected by "public subscription". Statues like these are a portent. They are an eloquent proof of what the British Government finally stands for—terrorism and falsehood. These are strong expressions, but they are as true as they are strong. Hence is it the duty of every Indian, every true Englishman, to oppose this terrorism and falsehood with all his might. But the way to oppose these with all one's might lies not through retaliation, responsive terrorism and falsehood, but by the exact opposite of the twins, that is to say, by meeting terrorism with non-violence and falsehood with truth. It may be a difficult way, but it is the only way if India and the world are to live. If therefore the young men who have launched upon the battle will follow it up honestly and non-violently, they deserve all sympathy, and it is well that the local Congress Committee has taken up the matter in earnest.

Young India, 29-9-1927

106. COW-SACRIFICE IN VEDAS

In *Young India* for June 2, was published an article by Sjt. C. V. Vaidya making valuable suggestions about saving the cow and her progeny. But in that article the learned writer gave his opinion that sacrificial cow-slaughter and beef-eating were prevalent in the Vedic age. Pandit Satavalekar sent me in Hindi a refutation of Sjt. Vaidya's statement about cow-sacrifice and beef-eating in Vedic times. As my purpose was merely to elucidate truth and not to have a newspaper controversy, I forwarded the article to Sjt. Vaidya. He promptly and courteously sent me his reply. I submitted it to Pandit Satavalekar who sent his rejoinder. I now give below the translations[1] by Mahadev Desai of Pandit Satavalekar's writings and the reply of Sjt. Vaidya in the original. Pandit Satavalekar has in two numbers of his *Vaidika Dharma* given a more detailed and exhaustive argument supported by copious extracts from the Vedas in support of his opinion. I refer the curious to these valuable articles. As a layman not knowing the original, I follow the excellent rule that when there is the slightest doubt, it is best to lean on the right side, the right side in this case being the belief that those who gave us the Vedas were not guilty of what appears to our age to be the crime of killing cows for sacrifice or food. The discussion has otherwise no bearing on the present age, because the veneration of the cow is too deeply embedded in the Hindu bosom to be affected by any opinion, however authoritative it may be, in favour of cow-sacrifice and beef-eating in the Vedic age. It has however more than an academic value for those who incline to the belief that whatever was done during those ancient times should be revived in this age by every legitimate effort. These may study Pandit Satavalekar's article referred to by me and Sjt. Vaidya's published writings which are available as well in English as in Marathi and Hindi.

Young India, 29-9-1927

[1] Not reproduced here

107. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*September 29, 1927*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

This is merely to tell you I can't dismiss you from my mind. Every surgeon has soothing ointment after a severe operation. This is my ointment.

Tell Ramdas I have just got his letter. He must quickly recover.

With love,

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 5279. Courtesy : Mirabehn

108. SPEECH AT SAURASHTRA CLUB, MADURA[2]

September 29, 1927

I thank you for your beautiful address and your purse. In all my tours I do not remember having used the adjective 'beautiful' in connection with any address that I have hitherto received. I called your address beautiful for a reason which perhaps you have not guessed. I called it beautiful because you have given me the original which is written in your dialect which is a mixture to Gujarati and Marathi showing that you have not forgotten your antecedents. Not that I am myself in love indiscriminately with all antecedents. Where they are bad, immoral, injurious, it is our duty to destroy and forget them. But this one of not giving up one's language or dialect is never a bad thing. And after all, the great Marathi language and Gujarati, these are today living tongues used by men who are leaving their mark on the history of our country. And I am glad also that you are keeping up the Devanagari script.

And therefore it gave me additional pleasure to understand from your address that in your High School, which is very well attended, Hindi has been made an optional language. As I refuse to recognize any barrier between the North and the South or the East and the West, I undoubtedly appreciate and like the idea of your all knowing Tamil.

[1] From the postmark

[2] Extracts from this speech were also published in *Young India*, 13-10-1927, under the title "The Fallacy of Handloom Weaving".

But that should be an additional accomplishment, an additional grace, not at the sacrifice of Hindi. I wish therefore that your committee may make up its mind to make Hindi compulsory in your High School. And as I expect you to know the value of Hindi more than our brethren in the South, I would like you to specialize in Hindi and finance the Hindi movement that is going on in the town. You are a wellknit, united, energetic, enterprising group of men and women in this town. Therefore this is a responsibility which you can easily shoulder and remove the burden from the people of the North[1] who have hitherto borne the Hindi propaganda in this province.

I am much touched by your reference to your connection to Rajkot, the home of my youth. But please remember that it is a difficult thing to claim such a title, because you have thereby created for yourselves a greater responsibility in connection with every activity of mine in so far as it is commended to your attention. What can be the use of a man having such a large number of kinsmen if he may not fall back upon them in the hour of peril. But it is possible for you, if you will, to claim a still closer kinship with me. For, though I am proud of being the son of a father who was the Minister of a State, I am, if it was at all possible, prouder still on having become a fellow-weaver with you. For whilst my father was weaving the destiny of a little State that was placed under his charge for the time being, you and I, if we wish to, can weave the destiny of this great land, the profession which with you is hereditary, but which I have adopted by choice. And in taking that greater pride in reminding you of this kinship I am doing no violence to the memory, the sacred memory of my father because I am following in his footsteps in ministering to the needs of larger classes of people. And this claiming of closer kinship with me brings me to an important paragraph in your address.

You ask me to encourage hand-weaving even through foreign yarn or mill-made yarn inasmuch as, so you say in your address, it is not possible today to find hand-spun yarn of the fineness you require and in the quantity you require. Now I shall tell you as a fellow-weaver why I cannot possibly endorse your recommen dation. If I endorse your recommendation I hope to be able to show you that it would be bad for you and bad for the class which I have in view and which you also should have in view. You should, keen and shrewd businessmen as some of you are, understand that every weaver who

[1] The source has “South”.

weaves yarn which is supplied by foreign mills or even by mills of India places himself at the disposal of and at the tender mercy of the mills. You as weavers should realize that this weaving, hand-weaving, which you are today controlling to a certain extent, will in time to come slip away from your hands as soon as the mills of the world or the mills of India are ready to weave the pattern that you are today exclusively weaving. Let me inform you if you do not know the fact already that various mill-owners of the world are making experiments in order to weave the pattern which are today your monopoly. It is no fault of the mill-owners that the mill industry is endeavouring day after day to take away the monopolies and take this trade in its own hands. To make continuous improvements in its machinery and to make continuous encroachments upon the handicrafts of the world is really the objective and the ideal of these great industrialists. Indeed, it is the condition of their very existence that they should try to take this trade also from off your hands. What has befallen the industry of spinning will most decidedly befall the industry of hand-weaving also if the weavers do not take a leaf out of my book. Let me inform you, and you don't know this, very few people in India know this fact that I began as you are now doing. I first became a weaver in 1915. I told you that I became first a weaver and then a spinner. I have woven with these very hands, I mean those foreign yarns and our mill yarns. But you will excuse me for claiming to know more than you do the secret of this business. As I was sitting—I can point out the spot where I was sitting—as I was sitting at my hand-loom and weaving this cloth—certainly not half as fine as any of you perhaps weave—but as I was sitting at this loom I was considering for myself where I should be and where thousands and thousands of weavers should be when mills are organized enough to weave this kind of cloth themselves. And as I was thinking of this thing my heart went out to the millions of starving sisters in our villages and I began, as I was weaving, to think of the lot of these sisters. I became sad and disconcerted, and together with my companions I began a diligent search for some spinner who would teach us hand-spinning and I began also to find whether there was a single village where I could find hand-spinning still going on. I knew nothing then of the fact that there were some sisters in the Punjab. But despair was creeping over me. I took shelter under a brave widow[1] of Gujarat. She was working in the cause of untouchables. I shared this

[1] Gangabehn Majmudar; *vide An Autobiography*, pt. V, Ch. XXXIX and XL.

deep sorrow of mine with this great sister. And I charged her to wander from place to place in Gujarat and not rest content till she had got those sisters, who still had the art of hand-spinning in their possession. And it was she who discovered at Bijapur in Gujarart a few Mussalman sisters who were prepared to spin if she would take their yarn from their hands. From that moment began the great revival which is now covering over fifteen hundred villages in India. And it was after this discovery that I decided not to weave a single thread of foreign yarn or mill-spun yarn in the Ashram of which I happened to be in charge.

I place for your consideration yet another important fact. If you will study the history of the hand-weaving movement in India you will discover that at the present moment several thousands of weavers have simply been obliged to abandon their trade. Weavers, all of your own trade, Saurashtras, are today working in Bombay as scavengers. Weavers in the Punjab are some of them hired soldires and some of them have taken to the butcher's trade. And so you will understand why I cannot possibly endorse you recommendation. That does not mean that you may leave off weaving from today. You do not need encouragement from me. But I venture to suggest to you that it is to your interest not to ask me to mix up this mill-spun yarn weaving together with this movement which I am leading in all humility. And it is equally to your interest to support this movement so that if it becomes stable, prosperous and permanent[1], every one of you would find a respectable living. I therefore suggest to you that if this hand-spinning movement grows apace it is likely that it may be of help to you.

But now in the midst of this disturbance[2] I must not prolong my speech. But I cannot help drawing your attention to the drink evil that I understand is eating the vitals of this community. You must really make a supreme effort to get rid of this evil.

The Hindu, 1-10-1927

[1] The source has "immovable".

[2] It had started raining.

109. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 30, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

The post is just due but the time for posting is also due. I fully expect something from you today. You are not going to think that you may not write more than once a week.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

For Ramdas[1]

From the original: C.W. 5280. Courtesy: Mirabehn

110. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

[*September 30, 1927*][2]

CHI. RAMDAS,

You must have recovered now. By all means take Vallabhbhai's permission and go to Amreli.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5280-2. Courtesy: Mirabehn

111. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, MADURA

September 30, 1927

Mahatmaji began by thanking the ladies for their address and the purse as also the many presents of yarn and other things made to him by several girls and women. He next asked them to learn Hindi which was the language spoken by their sisters in the North.

He asked them to remember that they had given him a purse not for his own use but for the use of millions of their starving sisters. Living in com fort as they were, he was sure they would find it difficult to imagine the distressing poverty of thousands of their sisters, with hardly one meal a day. There were others who had

[1] *Vide* the succeeding item.

[2] This letter was written on the back of the above.

hardly sufficient clothing to cover up their nakedness. He had talked to some of these poor sisters who had no second clothing whatever and had therefore to go on from day to day without bathing. Needless to say they had no jewels or ornaments worth mentioning. They might not have seen or tasted ghee, oil or milk. Millions of them had no work for nearly four months in the year. Perhaps they would not be inclined to believe what all he had said, but he would tell them that many foreigners too had observed these things and written about them. It was for these poor sisters that he had accepted the purse from them. The money was not to be distributed among them as charitable doles but was proposed to be given to them as wages in return for the yarn which they would be asked to spin. They would be supplied with charkha and cotton and the yarn would be purchased from them. He therefore considered the spinning-wheel as the greatest instrument for bettering the condition of their poor sisters. The spinning-wheel would give them a ray of hope and a sense of self-respect. It would be a means of binding together all the many millions of people in India. They should not rest content merely making a donation which would be of no use if they did not wear khaddar. If really they had sympathy with their poor sisters they should wear only khadi, spun and woven by them. It might appear at first sight that it is difficult to discard all foreign cloth but if they tried they would find it very easy of accomplishment. If they would like to be Sita he would advise them to give up rich garments and jewels and take to khadi. But before they parted with any of their jewels he would impose on them one condition, namely, that they should not ask their parents or their husbands to replace them. He said that three or four years ago he was presented by a lady with fifteen thousand rupees worth of jewels. He wanted them not only not to wear too many jewels but to be careful not to place their children in danger. For, he had come to know of an incident which took place some few days ago at Madura in which a respectable gentleman's daughter had been robbed of her jewels by some robbers. He also wanted them to remember that a woman's beauty did not consist in the jewels that she wore but in the possession of a pure heart. They should also teach this truth to their children and train them to build up their character by giving them proper education.

Again he would tell them that it is sinful to regard any single human being as an untouchable simply because he was born in particular surroundings. If they would copy Sita they would find that she did not regard even the king of the Nishadas as untouchable but gladly and gratefully accepted the services rendered by him. He had therefore no hesitation in saying that the evil custom of untouchability must disappear.

Yet another important matter about which he liked to talk to them was early marriages. They must realize that it was a barbarous system to marry girls at nine, twelve and even thirteen years. He considered such a thing to be immoral too, and urged that no girl should be married or induced to think of marriage before she had

attained her sixteenth year. He would even ask them not to heed the Hindu Shastras if they said that girls should be married before puberty. Taking the case of some of the girls under his control he said that though some of them were aged from seventeen to twenty years, the girls had never thought of marriage till then. On the contrary, some of them were having good education and at the present moment some of them were working for the relief of the distressed in the flood-stricken areas in Gujarat. He was also resolved not to think of their marriage until they themselves told him that they wanted to marry. But he would tell them that all these evil customs would disappear if they took to khadi. For the khadi spirit would make them pure and noble. They should not think that any small quantity of yarn spun by them would be a trifle but sould remember that every bit of it augmented the country's wealth. In that light he would ask all of them to take to khadi and spin yarn for the sake of *Daridranarayana.*

The Hindu, 3-10-1927

112. SPEECH AT TIRUMANGALAM

September 30, 1927

FRIENDS,

I thank you for your address and the purse given to me. In your address you have said that this place is one of the cotton centres. I note also that in this place there are many poor spinners, and you tell me that if there were sufficient encouragement it would be possible to work nearly 1,000 spindles. This spinning movement is undoubtedly designed to find work for every woman who has leisure hours and who wants to do some work for coppers. You tell me that it is not possible for you to find a market for all these yarns that can be produced by one dozen men. It shows that in your place or in your taluk you do not possess sufficient workers. You ask me to see to it that this place is made a second Tiruppur. But let me tell you that Tiruppur has made itself. It was not I nor any member of the All-India Spinners' Association that has made Tiruppur what it is today. It is true no doubt that the A.I.S.A. came on the scene to reap the fruit of the original workers. This is an essential work that the Union Board can do and should do and if you have in your midst a body of workers there is no reason why all the yarns that have been produced in this place cannot be sold in the market, and if you go forward and do khadi work, I am sure you cannot find the local market sufficient. The prices of the cloth produced in these parts will be fixed by the A.I.S.A. according to the nature of the cloth woven. I am touring in

all these parts of the country not merely for purse collections but to do khadi propaganda work. I would like the sisters who are sitting here to listen to this part ofmy speech. This poor country has some millions of men and women idling away their time for four months in the year. Being near the railway line, you are not half as poor as the poorest, on whose behalf I am touring and on whose behalf I am speaking to you this night. And they are so poor that the reports issued by the Government tell us that there are some people who are starving for want of food. I hope you will not make the mistake of thinking that if the railway line was brought near to every village in India the problem of distress will be solved. If you study the history of the railways you will find that this railway system of ours is simply sucking the village and leaves it absolutely dry. Railways, over the world, are necessary and may be prosperous to the people. This country is predominantly an agricultural country and therefore railways are a burden to the village people. If you wear khadi, the product that is produced by the poor villagers, then it will be a return for what we are sucking from them. I ask all the men and women assembled here to discard foreign cloth and use nothing but hand-spun and hand-woven khadi. I take this purse only on one condition, namely, that all of you will use only khadi in future. I would like the sisters who are sitting here to understand that the spinning movement is essentially a woman's movement. To me the spinning-wheel is a symbol of the liberation of Indian womanhood and I would like you therefore to co-operate with me in this effort not merely by giving your money or ornaments but also by wearing khadi. If you do not need spinning for your household work you can do it as a sacrifice. If you do it, it will add to the wealth of the country and the price of khadi also will become low.

The Hindu, 3-10-1927

113. DISCUSSION WITH A. VEDARAMA IYER[1]

[About *September 30, 1927*][2]

I plead guilty to the charge[3] but the Association has been conceived in a different spirit. I shall explain it to you. We may expend thousands of rupees on the starving millions, that is to say, in making spinners of them all, but we may not spend a single pice on employing agencies to promote voluntary spinning. Those who join the Association as voluntary spinners spin as a matter of sacrifice, and a sacrifice that needs external stimulation is no sacrifice at all. I know there are slackers, I know our defaulters' list is heavy, but I shall employ no agency to wake them up. Those who in spite of the apathy around them will continue to perform their sacrifice regularly and offer their quota to the motherland will be the salt of the national movement, and they will survive me and even the movement. But I do not exclude any voluntary agency. For instance, you may try to stimulate your friends as much as you like, in fact it is the duty of every member of the Spinners' Association to increase the membership and to see that every member pays his quota regularly. And for vakils like you, that is, for those who have faith in the cause, it is the easiest thing possible. You can entrust your clerk with the work, ask him to visit every member from time to time, collect their yarn quotas, and remind them if they are in arrears. In South Africa, I got my clerical staff to do most of the Congress work. And that not because I was a freak. Every lawyer if he interests himself in public work has to give his proper share to it. During the war there, for instance, every important lawyer had left his profession to go to the front, and I could almost read the magistrate's anger in his eyes as he saw me still linger on. And I tell you, I found it impossible to continue my practice for sheer shame. I felt that I must also go if I wanted to maintain my status as a lawyer.

Young India, 13-10-1927

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] *Ibid*

[3] A. Vedarama Iyer had complained that members of the Spinners' Association defaulted in paying their yarn quotas because there was no agency to supervise the payment.

114. TELEGRAM TO C. F. ANDREWS

MADURA,
October 1, 1927

C. F. ANDREWS
BHADRAK

SPINNING ESSAY[1] IS BEST AVAILABLE BUT YOU MUST NOT SEND[2] TILL YOU HAVE READ IT FULLY. WIRE IF HAND COMPLETELY HEALED.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 12833

115. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

October 1 [*1927*][3]

CHI. MIRA,

I had expected something from you yesterday but nothing came. You are not going to be moody at all nor nervous in trying to avoid nervousness. And do not always think what I would like and not like but do what you think is right even though it may turn out to be not as I would have liked. I want you to be strong in body, mind and soul!

You will not make your time-table too rigid without intervals of breathing time.

I should like to know your weight.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5299. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] *Hand-spinning and Hand-weaving—An Essay*, by S. V. Puntambekar and N. S. Varadachari; *vide* "Notes (sub-topic: Prize Essay on Hand-Spinning)", January 6, 1927.

[2] Presumably, to the Viceroy; *vide* letters to Andrews, 1-10-1927 and 11-11-1927.

[3] Inferred from the reference to addressee's nervousness; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 2-10-1927.

116. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

ON TOUR,
MADURA,
October 1, 1927

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have received your letter. This little injury of yours has given me a new meaning of, "Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you." I did unto you about your injury as I would have wished you to do unto me. But I see that I was hopelessly wrong in applying the principle to you. I should have done unto you, not only what I would have wished you to do unto me but I should have done unto you what was needed for you. Your need and not your wish should have been the determining factor. And if I had remembered as I should have done that yours was a very sensitive skin, easily liable to infection and difficult to heal after an injury I would have thoroughly scraped the wound, drawn fresh blood and then dressed it. As it was, I went by my own experience and that of others who had an equally responsive skin, and in doing so committed a great blunder. Thank God that you will come out with only some considerable inconvenience. But I do not know what I would have done with myself if there had been serious blood-poisoning, as there might have been.

Your reply to my telegram sent today, I hope, will relieve me from all anxiety. That telegram also gives you my opinion about the spinning essay. I know nothing better available but I do not consider it to be by any means the best that could have been produced. The writers are capable fellows but their *sadhana*[1] of the question is not, so far as I judge, of the highest. They have done what they considered was their best. But in the debilitating unoriginal atmosphere that reigns supreme in the country just now, no one has the capacity for hard thinking. Slugishness comes over us after a little effort and then the work becomes shoddy. I have therefore my doubts about the essay giving satisfaction to the Viceroy. And then, it is really written for the Indian reader, and not for an exacting reader like the Viceroy, who has an overburdening load of inherited and acquired pre-conceived notions and prejudices. I have, therefore, suggested to you that you should first of all patiently read it, not as a self-naturalized Indian but as an unsympathetic English critic, taking nothing for granted, wanting proof for everything. And if it gives you no satisfaction you should not send the essay to him at all. I had something prepared for Sir Henry Lawrence too. It has Pyarelal's and Mahadev's brains in it.

[1] Study and practice

But even that is not what I should want if I was an unsympathetic critic. But I had to be satisfied with what I could get. I am quite aware that this subject requires ceaseless industry of a patient seeker. But, unfortunately, I have no one whom I can set to that work, and so it languishes. I cannot tell you how this want of solid research taxes me. I do not half disclose my agony but I have unburdened myself to you somewhat as you have obliged me to confess my shame. I know that I ought to have been able to give you satisfaction and straightway send you a first-class unchallengeable and readable essay. Now I have sufficiently prejudiced you against the essay of which I was one of the judges. Read it with this prejudice and tell me what conclusion you have arrived at.

Up to now there is nothing wrong with me. What you read in the newspapers was all false. Every one of these news agencies deserves to be suppressed.

Of course, the light that you saw in Simla was correct. Orissa needed you. But I want you to become a hard taskmaster. If you are tak-ing part in the relief operations you must see whether the accounts are accurately kept. I have seen nothing yet published. And you must also insist upon every worker keeping a log-book, giving an accurate description of his doings from day to day. But what I would like you to do there is not so much immediate relief work but to find a way out of the annual calamity.

You are somewhat hard upon the Congress politics. Surely they have also a place in national evolution. If the Assembly and the Councils have a place, much more has the Congress. And this I am able to say although I have not the slightest sympathy with its present programme or present mode of working that programme. Neverthe-less it is a mighty institution—the only all-India institution with an unbroken record of forty years. I shall take little part in its deliberations but I must be present so long as I do not consider it to be an evil in the totality of its activities. Enclosed is my programme.

With love,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 2621

117. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

October 1, 1927

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter.

I learn from Jamnalalji's letter that you have returned from Europe with your health impaired. I think it is imperative that you

take rest somewhere and recoup it. I can certainly assist you in selecting a diet but for that you must stay with me for some time.

You did well in sending me your views on various matters.

It is not due to non-co-operation that two factions have come into being. The two camps were already there. What has arisen is only a change in form. My faith is firm that we cannot gain any strength except through non-co-operation. The public has been impressed by its miraculous power but has not enough strength yet to practise it. Hindu-Muslim differences are proving another obstruction in its way. I cannot seek any help from the Councils. The members, if so inclined, can help khadi and prohibition. But members can do nothing to remove selfishness, ignorance and indolence. The khadi and allied work is progressing slowly as well as rapidly. It is slow in the sense that we cannot show [quick] results and it is rapid because all that is done is pure and for that reason bound to produce good results.

My thirst for money is unquenchable. For khadi, untouchability and education work I required the minimum sum of Rs. 200,000. The experiment being conducted in dairying demands Rs. 50,000 at present. The Ashram expenses are of course there. The work never stops; but God gives funds after severe trials. I am content with that. Give me as much as you can for whichever work you have faith in.

My touring will continue up to the end of this year. I hope to reach the Ashram by January.

I have written a letter to Malaviyaji regarding the Hindu-Muslim question. In this matter something must be done through proper channels. I see no dharma in what is going on today.[1]

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6149. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] In the six months preceding, 25 riots were reported; the casualties being approximately 103 persons killed and 1,084 wounded.

118. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

October 2 [*1927*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

I have your postcard and the train letter. I have never been so anxious as this time to hear from you. For I sent you away too quickly after a serious operation. But the sending you away was a part of the operation. Poor Anna! He too tells me that you were gloomy and wants me to soothe you. Jamnalalji says I should have kept you with me. Well, you are going to belie their fears and be and keep quite well and cheerful. You haunted me in my sleep last night and were reported by friends to whom you had been sent to be delirious but without any danger. They said, 'You need not be anxious. We are doing all that is humanly possible.' And with this I woke up troubled in mind and prayed that you may be free from all harm. And your letter gave me great joy.

You are not disgraced. There is no watch over you. Chhaganlal and Krishnadas are to be your nurses and comforts. I know that you are going to get over your nervousness. The Hindi incubus is no more to worry you. I do not care if you do not speak a word of Hindi, though you know much by this time. So even there, there is no cause for disappointment. My confidence in your robustness is no doubt shaken but not my love. The robustness will come because you are a true striver.

Surendraji suggests that you should work separately. If that is necessary you will do so. No overstraining whatsoever about anything.

With love,

BAPU

The enclosed to Chh. Joshi.[2]

From the original: C.W. 5281. Courtesy: Mirabehn

119. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, VIRUDHUNAGAR

October 2, 1927

CHAIRMAN OF THE MUNICIPALITY AND OTHER FRIENDS,

I thank you for all these addresses and your several purses. I appreciated your courtesy in giving up your right of reading all your addresses. One of them, if you had insisted on reading, would have

[1] Inferred from the reference to Gandhiji's sending away the addressee; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 28-9-1927.

[2] This is not available.

taken probably half an hour. But I have endeavoured to read the translations which you were good enough to give me. At the outset I wish to congratulate you upon the harmonious relations between Hindus and Mussalmans. The existence of a well-managed library in your midst, the opening of a choultry[1], an association for redress of grievances of railway passengers, all these betoken healthy activity in this important centre. I understand that the Nadar friends have this place as their most important centre. I understand also that they are more and more coming forward day by day and taking their proper place in all the important movements that are going on in the country. You tell me that yours is a recently constituted municipality. I do not know that it is necessarily a disadvantage, for being a new municipality you have no heritage of sluggishness or indifference. You can cut out for yourselves a new and original path and if you desire it, you can lead in the matter of sanitation. We have on the Bombay side a very expressive equivalent for municipality in the Gujarati language. And that was a name when it was originally given to ridicule municipal service. It is really a name which exactly fits municipal servants. The literal translation of the word by which we know municipalities in Gujarati is "custodians of conservancy". In my opinion the beginning, the centre and the end of all municipal service consists in conserving the sanitation of the people entrusted to the charge of the municipality. And if I had the powers of an autocrat and was minded to utilize those powers I would immediately disband that municipality which did not receive cent per cent marks in an examination in connection with its conservancy work. If you can but keep your closets absolutely clean, if you can ensure a healthy and pure supply of water and the purest and precious free air and a supply of pure milk for your babies, you are in a position to conserve the health of those who are committed to your care. I know that the fashion is nowadays to give primary education the first place in the work of a municipality. In my opinion it is putting the cart before the horse. Primary education of its children must be undoubtedly an important item in the work of a municipality. But I have not a shadow of doubt that sanitation occupies the foremost place in its programme. There is a very fine Latin proverb which says that healthy mind is possible only in a healthy body. And I hold it to be impossible to give a healthy education to unhealthy children. In fact, sanitation is itself a first-class primary education for men, women and children. And I have given so much to a consideration of the true functions of municipal bodies in the hope that you, a new municipality, might be

[1] Lodging for pilgrims

able to do your work in a satisfactory manner in this direction. And let me give you my assurance based upon personal experience that all these sanitary matters do not require so much money as care, diligence and knowledge.

Closely allied with the matter of sanitation is the question of grievances of railway passengers. There was a time when I had almost qualified myself as an expert in the matter of expressing the grievances of railway passengers and enforcing redress. And having travelled in many parts of the world and understood all that third-class travelling was and having been a regular third-class passenger on almost all railways, I had exceptional opportunity of studying the condition of railway passengers. And whilst I believed then, as I believe even now, that for many things the railway management is criminally guilty in connection with the comfort of third-class passengers, I also came to the conclusion which I retain even now that for equally important matters railway passengers were themselves liable. I am fully aware of the fact that third-class passengers are the most paying customers of the railway and that the first-class passengers are practically a loss to the railways. I know that the Railway Board does not provide enough accommodation for third-class passengers; nor does it ensure primary sanitation on railway stations or in railway carriages for third-class passengers. All these things and many more I could mention if I had the time. They undoubtedly demand attention on the part of a reformer in connection with this matter. But let us turn the searchlight towards ourselves for a few moments. Our own neglect of sanitation in the railway carriages as also on the stations is no less than the negligence of the Railway Board. And I know that when I was organizing relief parties in connection with third-class railway passengers how difficult it was for me to enlist volunteers for doing the special work of carrying on education amongst the third-class railway passengers about the primary needs of sanitation. Every railway passenger traffic reformer has therefore to extend the activities of municipal boards. On this analogy that charity begins at home, the reformer must first commence with the passengers themselves and patiently and gently inculcate in them habits of personal sanitation and habits of consideration for their fellow-passengers. I suggest to this useful Association that this is a privileged work of which every reformer may be proud. . . .[1]

The Hindu, 4-10-1927

[1] Gandhiji then spoke about khadi.

120. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

October 3, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

This is the second letter I have taken up this morning. The post here has to be despatched at 11 a.m. The first letter[1] was to Devdas who is lying in Dr. Rajan's hospital, having undergone an operation for piles. He is much better now. Such was the report received yesterday.

The common kitchen causes some anxiety. Surendra tells me it is not going on well. If you have the energy and the capacity, you will go into this thing. If you have not, leave it alone. Nothing to strain you. Take only that which taxes your nerves the least.

I am glad you were able to go to Adyar. The aquarium and the other things you mention I have not seen.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5282. Courtesy: Mirabehn

121. LETTER TO SURENDRA

Silence Day [*October 3, 1927*][2]

CHI. SURENDRA,

I have your letter. If you have an inner inspiration to go to Baroda or anywhere else and if Chhaganbhai permits it, you may go. From this distance I can say nothing more.

The Ashram can make me neither unhappy nor happy in the future. I believe that its perfection or imperfection is a reflection of my own. I myself am the cause, therefore, of my happiness or unhappiness. If, moreover, this sense of 'I' melts away, there will be neither happiness nor unhappiness. Take these sentences together in trying to understand my meaning.

Only those who regard themselves as inmates of the Ashram are truly so. Prayers are compulsory for such persons and for other inmates who accept them as compulsory. It was only from your letter

[1] This is not available.

[2] From Mahadev Desai's manuscript Diary

that I learnt about Balkrishna's leaving. Where has he gone to?

And then you catch colds; well, I don't like this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9408

122. LETTER TO SURENDRA

[After *October 3, 1927*][1]

CHI. SURENDRA,

I got your letters. Do by all means observe the course of things. If I have any suspicion I will not let it pass. I shall indeed do some cross-examining when we meet. As for investiga- tions you alone can make them. It would be enough if you do not allow yourself to be easily satisfied. Our atonement should be reflected in our work. You must get rid of your colds. It does not matter whether you do it by administering copper sulphate or something else.

I should not write more at this time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9415

123. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

October 4, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have not omitted to write to you a single day after you left me but this may not reach you the day after the letter of yesterday (Monday) for now that I am going further South the distance between you and me is growing. There is however just a chance of this reaching you the day after yesterday's letter. It is too warm just now to let me write more and I must prepare for the meeting that is presently coming off. Heat notwithstanding, I am keeping quite well. Are you?

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5283. Courtesy Mirabehn

[1] From the reference to the addressee's "colds", *vide* the preceding item.

124. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day, Aso Sud 8 [*October 4, 1927*][1]

SISTERS,

Your reply to my last letter was what I anticipated even when I wrote it. The first step in self-purification is the admission and eradication of whatever hatred there is in one's heart. As long as we harbour ill will or suspicion against our neighbour and do not strive to get rid of it, we cannot learn our first lessons in love. In the Ashram, we must develop the strength to do at least this much.

Think well over the matter of prayers. I also believe that the seven o'clock meeting should not be given up. You accepted it as your special duty to make your class spiritually effective. For the present I can only suggest that those of you who have the will and the energy to attend the 4 a.m. prayers may do so, without entering into any discussion about it with others, and thereafter to keep up the habit, in spite of every hardship, as long as health permits.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3669

125. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

A[*so*] *Su*[*d*] 8 [*October 4, 1927*][2]

BHAISHRI VITHALDAS,

I saw your bulletin. You have done well in bringing it out. Now that you have started publishing it, make every effort to keep it up. Do not give more than one column in it to praise of khadi; fill it, rather, with news about khadi. Give news about the progress of khadi in different provinces. This will require the utmost perseverance and a great deal of information. If you can display these, the bulletin can prove to be of inestimable value.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9763

[1] The year is inferred from the reference to quarrels among Ashram women and their attendance at early morning prayer meetings; *vide* "Letter to Ashram Women", 26-9-1927.

[2] The source has the entry 4-10-1927, but not in Gandhiji's hand.

126. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

October 4, 1927

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. What you read in the newspapers about my health was not correct. I am keeping good health. Rajaji does not give me much work. Rarely does the programme get heavy.

I see that Prabhudas has still not recovered completely. Has he now given up worrying or does he still indulge himself in fanciful ideas? Improve your health to the optimum.

Devdas has made two mistakes and because of that, by his own voli-tion, he would spend sometime in Wardha. At present, he is in Dr. Rajan's hospital. He had symptoms of piles, so the doctor thought it proper to operate on him. Today is the fourth day of the operation. There is nothing to worry. Fairly good work is being done during the tour here. Sale of khadi is picking up on its own. So far, khadi worth about Rs. 80,000 has been sold in this province. It is expected to go upto Rs. 1 lakh.

I want Prabhudas to do one thing. He knows the *Gita* very well. In my view, among all whom I know, his Gujarati is the best and rendering the *Gita* into Gujarati does not require any translation from English. His vocabulary is also good. Whenever he has time, he should send me a translation of twenty *shlokas* of his choice. The translations need not be literal but should convey the full meaning. There are no doubt some chapters in the *Gita* which contain only twenty *shlokas*. He can select one of these if he wants.

I am sure you have my itinerary.

9-12 Trivendrum/Travancore
13 Cochin
14 Trichur
15 Palghat
16-17 Coimbatore
18 Polachi
19 Tiruppur
20 Gopi Chettipalayam
21 Erode
22 Salem
23-24 Tiruchengodu
25 Calicut

26-31 Mangalore
November 1 to 15-Ceylon

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I will reach the Ashram in the beginning of January.

From the Gujara ti origin al: S.N. 32896

127. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, RAJAPALAYAM

October 4, 1927

Mahatmaji addressed the gathering in Hindi which was translated into Telugu. After thanking them for the address and the purses he said they had given the money for *Daridranarayana*. But while receiving the money he had mingled feelings of joy and sorrow—joy that they had given money for the Khadi Fund and sorrow in seeing that in spite of strenuous work for the last six or seven years for the spread of khadi among them so few of them wore khadi. Mahatmaji could not see any reason why they, Andhra Kshatriya ladies, should adopt *purdah*. If they remained at home, never came out into the public, they would not be able to know what was going on in the world. He wanted them to throw off foreign cloth and wear only khadi. He saw that they were rich people but he would tell them that there were thousands of poor sisters who were suffering from want of even one meal per day. To them the charkha could give a livelihood. But then if they, the rich people, did not wear khadi, their poor sisters could not earn anything. He asked them to remember that every man, woman and child of this land had a dharma to fulfil, and that was to wear khadi. They should do their dharma even as Sita Devi did and if all of them tried to act like Sita, he would tell them *Ramarajya* would come into existence. If they could not entertain feelings of sympathy and love for their poor brothers and sisters, of what use was their life to them? Rajapalayam khadi was very fine and an effort was being made to spread khadi work by giving away a hundred charkhas free of cost. He would therefore ask them to wear cloth spun and woven by them. The money they had given would be spent for the production of khadi and also in supplying charkhas to those who wanted them. In conclusion Mahatmaji asked them to give money and jewels for the Khadi Fund, and in doing so he told them it was not ornaments but a pure heart which lent beauty to a woman. He advised them not to load their children with jewels but give them good education and training. He also asked them not to marry their girls before 16 or 17 years of age.

The Hindu, 6-10-1927

128. SPEECH AT KHADI VASTRALAYA, RAJAPALAYAM

October 4, 1927

There would be no difficulty in getting the money for this good work.[1] But you should not always be intent on profits. Even when a man invests capital as in a mill for making his own profits and giving huge dividends, some of you perhaps know that for some years he gets no return whatsoever. But I want you to have a higher objective in view than the mill-owners. That is to say, whilst you make it a point not to lose profits on capital you should never wish to make huge profits out of it.[2] Remember, the greatest business concerns in the world do not depend for profit on high rates but extensive business. The Bank of England is the largest financial corporation in the world and the most influential. It has a credit which perhaps no other such corpo-ration possesses and really the history of that corporation reads like a fairy tale. Some of the finest Englishmen have poured their life-blood in order to make that corporation what it is today. And it has acquired amazing confidence, because it has made it a point not to make huge profits on small outlays. Profits it does make, but that is because of its phenomenal outlay. You will therefore, I hope, not make big profits your objective, but have primarily the interests of spinners at heart. You will not quarrel among yourselves and if you develop real union and limit your personal ambition, there is no reason why you should not aspire after a credit even larger than that of the Bank of England. After all the clients of the Bank of England are rich men and big men and their names and accounts can be kept in a fairly large ledger, but there is no ledger big enough to contain the names of your clients. What I have said requires a longer sight, and it may appear to you that I am talking like a visionary. But I tell you I am not. If I can gain the confidence of the people of India I hope to make the A.I.S.A. the largest co-operative society in the world. That time may be far off but I am not going to lose hope. For you nothing more nor less is needed than that you enjoy the credit of all your clients and the people around you. And you will do so if you will not kill the goose that lays the golden eggs. You should make simple and understandable rules about the minimum profit and make

[1] Referring to the proposed amalgamation of three khadi-producing concerns with a total share capital of Rs. 30,000

[2] What follows is from "Weekly Letter", published in *Young India*, 13-10-1927.

them rigid and binding on your Association. I hope you will realize my expectations.

The Hindu, 6-10-1927 and *Young India*, 13-10-1927

129. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, RAJAPALAYAM

October 4, 1927

I thank you for the addresses and purses and also the yarn received from different places. It has given me great pleasure to be able to come to this very important khadi centre. I had the honour and the pleasure of meeting many spinners at work. Many of them were elderly ladies. Some of them are even seventy years old. I should not at all be surprised if the ages of these ladies were even more than what they said because they could only guess what their ages were. I enquired of them all what their earnings were per month and I was agreeably surprised to find some of them earned over Rs. 4 per month. That is much more than spinners earn in other parts of India. You will not therefore come to the conclusion that here you are paying higher wages to them than elsewhere. The reason is that they are more industrious, more skilful and are able to give more time to spin- ning. Unlike other spinners in other parts of India these ladies do their own carding or have their carding done by their relatives. It thus shows you the possibilities there are in the spinning-wheel. And yet I must tell you that these are not spinners who are really the poorest in the country. Some of them even belong to good families. My eyes are rigidly fixed upon those starving millions whose fringe even we have not yet touched. After having seen these sisters I was taken to another meeting of ladies who I was surprised to see were *purdahnashin*[1]. But they were not spinning at all. I understand that it was for the first time in their life that they at all met in an assembly. I do wish that you will tear down this *purdah* and make it possible and convenient for them to meet as often as possible for the common good of all. The contrast between these heavily bedecked ladies and the poor sisters who wee spinning was really terrible to contemplate. These *purdahnashin* ladies had altogether too many ornaments and very rich saris. I suggest to all these rich people that real goodness and purity never consist in heavy ornamentation and rich saris. Possession of riches should never be so loudly shwon in our lives. Possession of

[1] Observing *purdah*

riches is a trust to be discharged in the name of God and for the sake of all poor people. The sign of good breeding consists not in being richly bedecked but in doing works of charity, and works that are of a useful character to society. I had the honour of speaking to these ladies somewhat in this strain. But I know that it is not possible for them to take the first step without the help of their men. I therefore appeal to you to take the message of simplicity amongst the womenfolk. And I know nothing so powerful as khadi in order to simplify our lives. In every rich home where khadi has penetrated, it has revolutionized their lives. Khadi, somehow or other, does not go well with rich ornamentation. Hence have I called khadi a bridge between the rich and the poor. And I do hope that you will so order your lives and the lives of your womenfolk that there is some correspondence between their lives and the lives of the spinners whom I saw and the terrible contrast that today exists between the rich and the poor might be obliterated. After I finished these two meetings I saw the members of the khadi union—some 20 men who have banded together to devote a part of their moneys in order to develop khadi. And I have no doubt that it is a step in the right direction if the proper khadi spirit is prevalent amongst the members of this union. Everyone who enters into this khadi business must approach it in the spirit of trustees. The welfare of the millions of the spinners must be held predominant over every other thing. In ordinary commerce the maxim is that we look after ourselves and those with whom we trade have to look after themselves. The position in khadi trade is reversed. We, I who make these collections, traders who trade in khadi, organizers who go out to the villages, all of us have to consider ourselves to be the trustees for the welfare of the spinners for whom and whom alone we exist. This I hold to be a condition indispensable for the success of khadi. And even as a trustee deserves his commission so will all those who are engaged in developing khadi find at the end of it that they have not lost anything whatsoever for themselves, but, on the contrary, gained for the spinners and therefore for themselves. It is for this purpose that you have given me all these purses. If consi-dered in that light your purses need not be considered to be too heavy. You can never give too much for *Daridranarayana*. We, those who live in towns, subsist upon the labour of the toiling millions and it is through khadi that we can possibly work out this proposition of making some return to these toiling millions. I therefore tender my congratulations to the gentleman who has

presented over hundred spinning-wheels for these *purdahnashin* ladies. For that also is a step in the same direction. And if these well-to-do sisters will work at the spinning-wheel in the spirit of sacrifice, it will bless them and it will bless the poor spinners. And I hope that this place which has already shown possibilities of good khadi work will continue to make progress in this direction.

I may perhaps occupy your time for a while upon a matter which I was discussing with some Nadar friends yesterday at Virudhunagar. They are an enterprising trading community. They are prosperous and they are as charitable as they are prosperous. They have developed some very fine and clean tastes. They are running an extremely well-managed high school where tuition is free for all boys, whether they belong to the Nadar community or any other community. Their temples like their school are open to everybody. They have opened out gardens for the free use of the public. All this is worthy of imitation by all. You may therefore imagine my painful surprise when I was told that these clean living men were debarred from enter- ing temples between Madura and Tinnevelly. I felt ashamed of my Hinduism when I learnt this painful fact. In spite of my three visits to Madura I was not able to enter the great temple there. After having heard this painful story I felt that it was a blessing that I have never set my foot in that temple. Even as it is, whenever I visit a single temple even out of curiosity I feel a sense of deep humiliation because of my knowledge that that temple would not be open to the so-called untouchables. For my part I see not the slightest difference between a Nayadi[1] and myself. I should not care to enjoy a single right which a Nayadi cannot enjoy. And so as I go down south I delight in describing myself as a Nayadi. But still I have by force of habit come to understand that these so-called untouchables, unseeables and unapproachables cannot enter these so-called temples, though there is not the slightest justification for debarring them from entering into the house of God. But it was impossible for me to understand this senseless territorial prohibition against Nadars. I don't know whether you who are present at this meeting can or cannot do much in this direction. But there is one way in which every one of you can help if you wish to. For this senseless prohibition is after all a symptom of the same corroding disease. It comes really from untouchability and the curse of caste. I draw the sharpest distinction

[1] A community which was considered 'unapproachable'

between *varnashrama* and caste. Untouchability I hold to be an unpardonable sin and a great blot upon Hinduism. Caste I hold to be an obstacle to our progress and an arrogant assumption of superiority by one group over another. And untouchability is its extreme bad example. It is really high time that we got rid of the taint of untouchability and the taint of caste. Let us not degrade *varnashrama* by mixing it up with untouchability or with caste. My conception of *varnashrama* has nothing in common with its present distinction of untouchability and caste. *Varna* has nothing to do with superiority or inferiority. *Varna* is the recognition of a definite law that governs human happiness. And it simply means that we must treasure and conserve all the good qualities that we inherit from our ancestors, and that therefore each one should follow the profession of his father so long as the profession is not immoral. And anyone who believes that man is born in order that he might worship his Maker must recognize that he will be able to fulfil his purpose of life if he does not waste his time in finding new professions. You will therefore see that this conception of *varna* has nothing in common with caste. And, therefore, I would ask you to gird up your loins in order to fight this curse of untouchability and caste, and all the influence that you might have at your command in order to see that every temple is thrown open to all irrespective of caste. In closing our temples against anyone at all we forget that we are making God Himself 'untouchable'.

I must not now take up your time with the other matters which I have dealt with at such meetings during this tour. I propose to do some business with you. I have got some jewellery given to me by those sisters at the meeting. As you know, I have sold such pieces of jewellery at such meetings. For, I can make no personal use of any of these things. Nor can I carry with me heavy frames in which addresses are put. I have really no place even where I can hang them up. And whilst I am moving swiftly from day to day and from place to place it is a great trouble to carry these articles. I would, therefore, appeal to you to relieve me of these articles by bidding for them. I have no doubt that there are many in this meeting who have not contributed to these purses. And I doubt not that there are some who have not contributed enough. If after hearing me you have no doubt about the great value of khadi, the great service that khadi renders to the country, if you are satisfied that you should give not the least but the most you can, then you will please open out your purses.

The Hindu, 6-10-1927

130. LETTER TO SURENDRA

[About *October 4, 1927*][1]

CHI. SURENDRA,

I have your letter. About Sharadabehn it was just a slip of memory. Chi. Maganlal writes that she recovered long ago. I intend to write to her tomorrow.

You should certainly make any change that needs to be done about rising early in the morning; I should certainly not insist on this point. There is no doubt that the first requirement is that everyone keeps good health. Those who naturally wake up at 4 o'clock may do so and the others when the bell strikes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9413

131. LETTER TO SURENDRA

[After *October 4, 1927*][2]

CHI. SURENDRA,

I have your letter. I wrote you a short letter because I have not yet got back my original strength and where a few words would do I don't write more. I have felt not the least disappointment in conveying my consent nor am I angry. When seasoned persons like you, Balkrishna and others desired a change in the prayer timings, I agreed to it, regarding it as my duty not to oppose the move. I agreed to the proposal also because it would have been obstinacy to continue to insist on the 4 o'clock time now that I have become an invalid and it is no more certain when I would be able to reach there.

I might perhaps decide otherwise if I were there in person all hale and hearty. Yet I would not stick to the 4 o'clock time at the risk of my health. The 4 o'clock prayer is nothing immutable; it is not an end but only a means.

I have thoroughly understood your implications. Please take my consent for granted. I am neither disappointed nor disheartened. I

[1] From the reference to "rising early"; *vide* "Letter to Ashram Women", 4-10-1927.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

have withdrawn my insistence on the 4 o'clock time solely in consideration of the general good. I have explained things in detail to Maganlal. But do question me if you have any more doubts.

I am glad to get the letter from Balkrishna. I shall write to him when I get the time. Also tell Chhotelal that perhaps I may not be able to write to him today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9417

132. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Wednesday [*October 5, 1927*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

I suppose it is because I am fast moving away from Madras that your letters have not overtaken me. I expect a haul tomorrow. This is just to tell you that I am thinking of you.

Love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5298. Courtesy: Mirabehn

133. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KOILPATTI

October 5, 1927

Mahatmaji acknowledging all the welcome addresses and the purses expressed his thanks and said that he would auction what he received here at this place itself, at the close of the meeting, as he did in all other places. For, he did not wish to keep such things with him and further it was a difficult task for him to carry them from place to place. The people of this locality might easily have them by purchasing them at the auction, and the amount they thus paid would be utilized for the relief of the poor and the service of *Daridranarayana*.

Referring to the point stated in one of the addresses that the relationship between the Brahmins and non-Brahmins in South India was becoming as much

[1] The addressee, in her collection, has placed the letter at the end of 1927. During the first week of October, 1927, Gandhiji wrote to Mirabehn every day. There is a gap on the 5th which was a Wednesday. The contents connect this letter to those of the 4th and 6th of October 1927.

strained as that between the Hindus and Muslims in Northern India, Mahatmaji said that he had been trying to understand this problem and that he spared as much leisure as he could to the leaders of non-Brahmin movement to discuss the matter with him. He thought that by this time, he had understood the problem and he would try to eradicate the difference between these two communities and establish friendly relations between them by writing about this question in *Young India*.[1] More than that he would not do. For, he was not confident that the leaders of either community would act up to his advice. The leaders of both communities should meet together to discuss the points of difference and sincerely try to effect a reconciliation between them. The allegations of non-Brahmins against Brahmins were sometimes just. But sometimes they exaggerated the matter. He would accept all their reasonable statements. But he did not like the unreasonable hatred of Brahmins prevalent among non-Brahmins. He would concur with the non-Brahmins in their statement that the Brahmins were not doing their duties properly. But he could not accept the statement of the non-Brahmin leaders that the Brahmins had created all the evils. He was also not confident that the Brahmins would, on his advice, be willing to lose their ancient rights. But he would tell them that the struggle was quite unfair and was against the interests of their country. Above all he would urge upon the leaders of both communities to effect a fair and honest compromise among themselves. He would publish his opinions in *Young India* and he did not care as to their acceptance or rejection by others. . . .[2]

The Hindu, 8-10-1927

134. 'AN INDIGNANT PROTEST'

The head master of a Bengali school writes :[3]

Your advice and utterances to students at Madras[4], asking them to marry widowed girls only, have horrified us. . . .

This kind of advice will tend to destroy the tendency of the widows to observe lifelong *brahmacharya*. . . Your theory of marriage will overturn the Hindu theory of transmigration, rebirth and even *mukti*[5], and will bring down Hindu society on the same level with other societies which we do not like. . . . Examples of Ahalyabai, Rani Bhavani, Behula, Sita, Savitri, Damayanti will guide the Hindu society and we must direct it according to their ideals. . . .

[1] *Vide* "*Varnashrama* and its Distortion", 17-11-1927.
[2] Gandhiji then spoke on khadi and untouchability.
[3] Only extracts are reproduced.
[4] *Vide* "Speech at Pachaiyappa's College, Madras", September 15, 1927.
[5] Deliverance from phenomenal existence

This indignant protest leaves me unconverted and unrepentant. My advice will not wean from her purpose a single widow who has a will of her own and who knows *brahmacharya* and is bent upon observing it. But if the advice is followed, it will certainly bring great relief to those girls of tender age who know not the meaning of marriage when they were put through the ceremony. The use of the term 'widow' in their connection is a violent abuse of a name with sacred associations. It is precisely for the very object that my correspondent has in view that I advise the youth of the country to marry these so-called widows or not at all. The sacredness of the institution can be preserved only when it is purged of the curse of child widowhood.

The statement that the widows attain *moksha* if they observe *brahmacharya* has no foundation whatsoever in experience. More things are necessary than mere *brahmacharya* for the attainment of the final bliss. And *brahmacharya* that is superimposed carries no merit with it, and often gives rise to secret vice that saps the morals of the society in which that vice exists. Let the correspondent know that I am writing from personal observation.

I should be glad indeed if my advice results in elementary justice being done to the maiden widows, and if for that reason the other maidens instead of being prematurely sold to man's lust are given an opportunity of waiting for maturity in age and wisdom.

I have no theory of marriage that is inconsistent with a belief in transmigration, rebirth or *mukti.* The reader should know that millions of Hindus whom we arrogantly describe as belonging to the lower order have no ban on widow remarriage. And I do not see how if remarriage of old widowers does not interfere with that belief, real marriage of girls wrongly described as widows can interfere with that grand belief. I may mention for the edification of the correspondent that transmigration and rebirth are not mere theories with me but facts as patent as the daily rise of the sun. *Mukti* is a fact to realize which I am striving with all my might. And it is the contemplation of *mukti* which has given me a vivid for the belief that in the Vedic times there was any absolute ban upon remarriage of widows. But my crusade is not against real widowhood. It is against its atrocious caricature. The better way is not to regard as widows at all the girls I have in view and whom every Hindu who has a spark of chivalry in him is bound to relieve from their intolerable yoke. I therefore humbly but emphatically repeat the advice to every young Hindu to refuse to

marry any but these maidens miscalled widows.

Young India, 6-10-1927 consciousness of the wrong that is being done to these maiden widows. Let us not in our emasculation mention in the same breath as these modern injured maiden widows the immortal names of Sita and others referred to by the correspondent.

Lastly, whilst there is, and very properly, glorification of real widowhood in Hinduism, there is, so far as I am aware, no warrant

135. NOTES

A KHADI LOVER

Dr. Kailas Nath Katju[1], a distinguished advocate of Allahabad, sent me a letter some time ago referring to several matters, and in that letter avowed his love of khadi and enclosed the first instalment of his contribution to the A.I.S.A. I felt that the part of the letter that concerned khadi should be published by way of encouragement to other moneyed men, especially lawyers. I therefore wrote asking for his permission to publish his letter and incidentally expostulated with him about the foreign black alpaca and endeavoured to explain the value of sacrificial spinning. I am now able to publish below his two letters so far as they relate to khadi :[2]

The lawyers and other professional men may not be able to do much in other respects, but they can all follow Dr. Katju's worthy example by adopting khadi and contributing to the All-India Spinners' Association, which is always in want because of the growing demand for organizing more villages than the Association has on hand. It is not possible to produce an increasing amount of khadi without increasing the capital, and till khadi has become universal in India expenses of the organization must remain a recurring item.

A DOUBLE SIN

A correspondent, who sends his name for my information but adopts the pseudonym of 'A Bachelor', writes with reference to my article "Is It a Marriage?"[3] published some time ago a long letter

[1] 1887-1968; prominent Congress leader; sometime Home Minister, Government of India

[2] Not reproduced here; Katju had promised to send a monthly contribution to the Khadi Fund, spin regularly and use fine black khadi in place of foreign alpaca.

[3] Dated 1-9-1927

which I abridge as follows :

> I have read with interest the article in your paper of the 1st instant under the heading "Is It a Marriage?"? Though the names of the parties are omitted it is an open secret to the Gaud Sarasvat Brahmins from Karwar. As a member of the community in which the marriage in question took place I wish to place before the public and the Gaud Sarasvat Brahmins throughout India in particular the following few lines for their careful consideration :
>
> Is is no doubt a disgrace for a man to buy a girl. But there is another custom among us which is equally bad, for a father among us is obliged to buy a husband for his daughter and the amount received by the husband is called dowry. It is not settled to suit the purse of the parents of girls but it would be according to the hereditary income of the would-be husband or it sometimes depends upon the education he has received. The more a man is educated, the higher the degrees he has received, the more is he worth in the matrimonial market.
>
> A few months back the marriage took place in Bombay of a well-educated gentleman who is a high government official and it is said that a dowry of nearly Rs. 20,000 was presented to him. It is really a pity that the people who receive higher education are going lower and lower by resorting to the very practices they are expected to put down.

I have before me another letter on the subject from a member of the same community. It appears that those who wish to buy wives go to Goa in search, for it is there that poor Sarasvat Brahmins are to be found who are not ashamed to enrich themselves by selling their daughters to persons old enough to be their fathers or grandfathers. Thus the community commits a double sin. An educated young man is open to the highest bidder for is hand,and needy parents are open to negotiate the sale of their daughters, hardly out of their teens, to the oldest men (sometimes educated) who are prepared to pay the highest price. The only consolation that the Sarasvat community may derive, if it wishes to, and if it would postpone a dealing with the reform under some excuse or other, is that there are other 'castes' too that are not free from the same evil. The difference, if any, would be that of degree. But if the Sarasvat community would lead the reform, it will disdain to seek the doubtful refuge of the *tu quoque* and will, now that the evil has been exposed, set about ridding itself of the double sin.

Young India, 6-10-1927

136. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

October 6, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

This is from Tuticorin. I had expected something from you here. I have news from the Ashram of your safe arrival there. May God bless you.

Love,

BAPU

MIRABEHN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM

SABARMATI

From the original: C.W. 5284. Courtesy: Mirabehn

137. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, TUTICORIN

October 6, 1927

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I thank you for all these addresses and purses. I thank also Sarathambal and Saraswati Devi for their bangles. These sisters have anticipated my request to them which I make whenever and wherever I meet them. I thank also the donor of the new and beautiful ring, as also the donors of silver cups. All these and the framed addresses will be presently offered to you for sale. For, by this time all of you know that I do not use all these for my own person, and for the self-styled representative of *Daridranarayana* it will not be right to make any personal use of all these and I make no personal use but I welcome these gifts from you. I have a right to welcome such gifts.

I congratulate you on having a Hindi teacher in your midst and I have learnt with pleasure that not only boys and girls but also grown-up men and women are learning Hindi. But I understand that the expenses of Hindi tuition are not borne by you in their entirety. I think that, if it is so, it is a serious reflection upon your patrotism. As you know, for several years past the people in the north have been financing this Hindi Propaganda. But it is high time now that it became self-supporting. Surely it cannot cost you much money in order to support one Hindi teacher or two teachers among your midst. I may think therefore that you will take all pains to see that you pay

for all the tuition he gives.

I congratulate you also on your having a national school in your town and on having named it after Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak. It grieves me to hear from your address that you are unable to pay for the expenses of this school. It is something that there is no untouchability in your school, and also that you are teaching Hindi in that school. I do hope that patriotic citizens will look into the affairs of this institution and make it self-supporting. In your address you ask me to set apart a certain portion of the amount of collections here in this town to your school. I am sorry to have to inform you that it will not be possible for me to do so. However willing I may feel it will not be just and honest on my part to deflect even a moiety of the sum earmarked for a definite purpose. I may gladly, however, part with some sum of the collections if some citizens had given me the purse with a distinct request that a certain fraction of it might be given to your school. Even now if there is any citizen so minded to give any sum in that manner, I shall only be too glad to do so. That, however, is not the method by which you can support the institution though it would be something, but it behoves the citizens of Tuticorin to look into the existing state of affairs of this institution and make it absolutely an independent one.

I know from personal experience of several national schools how these institutions are conducted and how beautifully they are serving the national purpose. If you have taken any interest in the distress that has overtaken our countrymen in the north, you will find that the pupils of national institutions in these villages have been rendering great help in reclaiming the area and in relieving their distress to the extent and with the resources that lay in their power. But for the spontaneous and substantial voluntary service done by the pupils of the national schools in Gujarat, Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel would not have been able to do what he had done towards the relief of the flood-stricken people. I, therefore, ask the citizens of Tuticorin to keep the institution going.

There is a way for you to get some amount of help from the Khadi Fund. You know that there is the All-India Spinners' Association. If you will induce your pupils to take up hand-spinning and produce yarn you can send the same to the Association which will pay you a decent price and also try to help you in a way.

I have heard people saying that I have made no reference to the Tamil language during my tour in this Province, and to the necessity of learning it. I have even been accused on that account. I am sorry that I cannot endorse that tribute of rebuke. Those who have known me intimately will admit that the rebuke is uncharitable. I have dilated many time on the need of knowing the Tamil language before learning English and even as early as 1915 I have been asking the people to prefer Tamil to English. Before the year 1917 throughout India ten years ago I carried on a ceaseless agitation for the imparting of instruction to pupils in schools through the medium of the vernacular of the province and asking people to cultivate their vernaculars by speaking in their vernaculars and studying literatures in their respective vernaculars.

You very rightly draw my attention to the treasures that are to be found in *Tirukural*[1]. Let me inform you that some twenty years ago I began to learn Tamil with the desire and object of studying *Tirukural* in original. It has been a matter of deep sorrow to me that God never gave me time to finish studying the Tamil language. I am entirely in favour of the agitation for making the vernaculars as medium of instruction. We ought to learn the Tamil language and prefer it to English and place it above all other languages.

As you know I have mildly rebuked the Reception Committee of a place when they read their address in English instead of in Tamil, the language of their province. I hope, therefore, that you will not accuse me any more in regard to this matter as you know that I am for replacing English by Tamil in all schools and centres.

There is also an address from the fishermen in Tuticorin. They ask me to point a way out of a difficulty that faces them. I am sorry to confess that I have not read the Bill referred to in their address. It is entirely a matter for the local patriots to guide them. Having thus cleared the ground covered by the address, I will now come to my favourite subject that has brought me here. . . .[2]

The Hindu, 8-10-1927

[1] Ancient Tamil classic

[2] Gandhiji then spoke on khadi and untouchability.

138. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, TINNEVELLY

October 7, 1927

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I thank you for the numerous addresses of welcome and your purses and gifts. I thank you still more for refraining from reading all your addresses. I have had a somewhat taxing day and a still more taxing drive in the midst of terrific din and noise in Tinnevelly and it is late for me also. You can, therefore, now perhaps understand how I value your having waived your right of reading the addresses. You have given me so many gifts, large and small, that it will take some time before I dispose of them all in auction as I usually do at the end of the meeting. I need hardly tell you that I have read all your addresses, the translations of which were furnished to me. I value the assurance given in the address of the Indian Christian Association on behalf of their community that while formerly they might not have identified themselves with national movements, now they are identifying themselves more with these movements. Indeed, I have been watching with very great interest and pleasure this manifestation from Christian friends throughout the south. There is no doubt in my mind that it is as it should be. Acceptance of Christianity or any other faith should never mean denationalization. Nationalism need never be narrow or inconsistent with internationalism. That nationalism, which is based upon pure selfishness and the exploitation of other nations, is indeed an evil. But I cannot conceive of internationalism without a healthy and desirable national spirit.

I was glad to note in that address complete sympathy with the khadi movement. To me, it appears to be monstrous to see the slightest opposition to such an incredibly simple thing as khadi. For, after all, khadi is nothing but a desire to identify oneself with the starving millions of India. He or she, who has the slightest feeling or desire to serve these toiling millions, cannot help beginning with khadi. Only recently did Sir M. Visvesvarayya deplore the fact that millions of people in the villages who have so much time and leisure were sending their raw produce outside India and depriving themselves of the opportu nities to help themselves with their own efforts. Indeed, in this part of the country you have an unrivalled opportunity to turn the cotton you produce to good account. You see

here on the table these pieces of khadi whose history I will give you. There is in your midst a gentleman whose name is Mr. Aramvalarth-anatham Pillai. He and my kind host, Mr. Vishwanatha Pillai, have conspired to teach boys and girls in two schools simple spinning. And the labours of these boys and girls who are spinning on the *takli* are enough to produce seventeen yards in one month. And I hope that no one in this meeting despises this little production on the part of these boys and girls who have not known till now what it is to produce one yard. This is one of the countries possessing the largest manpower on the face of the earth. This manpower, according to the same high authority I quoted just now, remains unutilized. If all the schools throughout India were engaged only for a short time every day you can imagine the enormous increase in the productive capacity of the country, without any capital or any special skill in technical activity. I have got here nearly 85 yards of khadi all spun and woven here out of your own cotton by your own boys and girls. Here, there is historical cloth for you about which there is as much poetry also. The gentleman has presented me with one piece and asked me to use it and not to auction it at the meeting. I needed no encouragement from him to give him such a promise. As a matter of fact, every piece of cloth that I am using has its own history somewhat like the history of this cloth. It gives me a great joy to be able to know who was the sister or daughter who spun the yarn or whose was the hand that wove the clothes I wear. This is one very vast universal industry in India which not only takes its sweep over millions of our starving countrymen, but is one on which you can build great national activity and unite all the castes and communities of this country.

But these friends, while they have great faith in the future of khadi and its ability to solve to a great extent the deep and distressful poverty of the masses, have little faith now in the solution of the Brahmin-non-Brahmin question in this country. They fear, at least one of them fears, that is too much of the smell of the Brahmin about the khadi work in the Tamil Nadu. I have been therefore bound by them that whilst I may sell this khadi to you I should not utilize the amount for the khadi work in Tamil Nadu. I have given them that promise, for I need as much money as you can give me for khadi work in other parts of India. But I may inform you, that though there is undoubtedly this smell of the Brahmin in the khadi organization of Tamil Nadu, the large majority of spinners and weavers who are supported out of the movement are non-Brahmins. And let me also

give you my assurance as President and head of the All-India Spinners' Association that if I can get as many skilled workers on my terms from the non-Brahmins I will today dismiss all the Brahmin workers from the A.I.S.A. Let me further tell you that those few Brahmins who are serving the A.I.S.A. in the Tamil Nadu are almost every one of them capable of earning far more than the Association can ever give them. I give you my assurance that the A.I.S.A. is not a body which anyone may approach who has the slightest desire to enrich himself. It demands selflessness, self-sacrifice and purity of life. It would be impossible for me to work the A.I.S.A. on anything like the scale obtainable in the service of the Government. There are in the A.I.S.A. men who were at one time earning between Rs. 1,000 to 1,500 per mensem, who are now getting hardly Rs. 100 from the Association. If I begin to pay big salaries to such officers of A.I.S.A., I will have to file a petition in the Insolvency Court. (Laughter.) So you may take it from me that if there are Brahmins identified with the A.I.S.A., they approach it with the true Brahminical spirit. And I must confess to you, that non-Brahmin though I am, I have the greatest regard for the real and the true Brahminical spirit. If I can get a large number of men with that spirit, I can undertake with confidence to solve almost every one of the problems that afflict this country now. The root meaning of a Brahmin is one who knows God and the qualifications required of such a person are that he is an embodiment of learning, self-sacrifice and service. I admit that such Brahmins are not to be found everywhere in India. But I give you my own personal evidence that there are still in existence such Brahmins. And it is one of my businesses in India to get hold of every such Brahmin. It is my conviction that the A.I.S.A. does possess some Brahmins of very nearly the type I described to you. And personally I do not consider that it would be possible to conduct the great movement on the scale it is conducted now without the knowledge and self-sacrifice of such men. It I had the time and strength I would have spoken to you at greater length on this vexing Brahmin-non-Brahmin question. I venture to think that I have now a fair grasp of what this question is. I hope, as soon as I get the time, to reduce my views to writing. But whilst we may debate and discuss the Brahmin-non-Brahmin question, let us not forget the masses of India.

If I may put it in a nutshell, after all the Brahmin-non-Brah- min question also resolves itself into one of untouchability. And he who will successfully kill this cobra of untouchability will have laid the axe

at the root of the Brahmin-non-Brahmin question. For it is my clear conviction that it is this curse of untouchability which has crept into Hinduism and has poisoned Hinduism itself. After all, that untouchability which, in its most excessive and excruciating form, has given us the untouchables and unseeables, has been running through the core of Hinduism. The basis of untouchability is an arrogant assumption of superiority of one class over another; and once we have successfully dealt with the hydra-headed monster of superiority, I think, we have very little to fight about. I therefore invite you all to join me in this crusade against untouchability in every form. Whilst I am glad to find from your addresses and the talk I had this afternoon that your municipal schools are open to untouchables, I ask you not to be satisfied with that alone. When untouchability is really removed from our midst you will not find any untouchable quarter. The untouchables will have the same rights as the tallest Brahmin to enter the inmost sanctuary of any temple to which any Brahmin can go. They will have the same access that anybody else may have to public wells and public places. We shall then have no Brahmin tanks, non-Brahmin tanks and untouchable tanks. In the language of the *Bhagavad Gita*, the Brahmin and the Bhangi will be the same to the Lord. And do not by any means be misled into thinking, as one is often misled by learned men, that this saying in the *Gita* applies to men of exceptional glory or spiritual merit. When untouchability is really dead and gone you will not find in your midst what I am about to describe just now.

I have among the papers that I brought with me a painful letter that a resident of this place has written to me. He tells me that the water of your river Thamraparni is polluted by the citizens of this place. He tells me while the medical authorities are injecting into your bodies matter to prevent cholera, you yourselves are injecting the cholera germs into the river by polluting it in various ways. The address of this Municipal Council thanks me for having spoken openly and frankly on some defects of municipal administration at several places. And the councillors tell me that they hope to profit by these speeches. I do hope that this hope of theirs will be fulfilled in the near future. May I suggest to you that you begin your work by cleansing the river bank of all the filth that is deposited on it from morning to morning. You might have observed that I have connected this evil also with untouchability. I speak not only from my personal experience but from that of thousands of men in India. We have cultivated unfortunately a habit of not looking after our own

sanitation, because of untouchability. We, the so-called higher classes, will not look after our own sanitation. That, we consider in our arrogance and prejudice, is specially the work of untouchables. And having developed a kind of contempt for these countrymen of ours, we will not even look as to what or how they are doing the work. They, poor men, have never been told even the elementary laws of sanitation. And hence whether it is the river bank or any other place it remains as dirty as ever even after they are cleaned by them. You may not know that it was in order to remedy this grave and serious defect that I had to raise a corps of scavengers for the Congress work at Ahmedabad, not from untouchables but from Brahmins and the non-Brahmins. If you want to do the cleaning and the scavenging thoroughly and inexpensively, every one of you should be your own scavenger. A mother who does not do scavenging for her baby ceases to be a mother. A little thought will show you that every one of you who has got the welfare of your town in his heart will have to take the position of such mothers. It will delight my heart if it could be told in my tour that you have also resolved to do the scavenging work yourselves.

I must omit to refer to many other social questions that I love to talk about. I must not forget the promise that I gave to the Nadar friends of Virdhunagar. You have perhaps read in the papers about this territorial untouchability. That such a fine body of clean and enterprising traders should be debarred from entering the temples in the districts of Tinnevelly and Madura is a serious reflection on the Hindus of these districts. I wish that you could by some means or other get rid of this evil at the earliest possible time. Now the volunteers will go about collecting while I sell these things in auction. I hope those who buy these pieces of cloth will take pride in wearing them.

The Hindu, 10-10-1927

139. LETTER TO PRAGJI DESAI

October 8, 1927

BHAISHRI PRAGJI,

I have your letter. I had written to Sastriji and Andrews even before I got it. I have sent your letter to Deenabandhu[1] along with my recommendation. Personally, I do not believe that he could have done anything wrong. Whatever the explanation, he is certainly not likely to

[1] C. F. Andrews

have told a lie deliberately; we should, moreover, be grateful to him for any service he may render. Do nothing in haste. Since you have already lived in Natal, you need not take out a limited permit. But you may take out one if Sastri presses you to do so and undertakes to secure a few permits of more than a year's limit and if you really wish to stay in the Transvaal. That you are helping Manilal is very good indeed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5030

140. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

October 8, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I am not going to write to you every day. For I fancy you do not need any soothing ointment. The wound[1] must be healed by this time. And your letter from the Ashram reassures me.

Yes, you may take up the dairy work or whatever you like. How about your feeds[2]? Chhotelal's message is unacceptable. He must write and that fully.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5285. Courtesy: Mirabehn

141. SPEECH AT NAGERCOIL[3]

October 8, 1927

Whilst it gives me great pleasure to pay a second visit to this most beautiful part of India, I cannot conceal from you the deep grief I feel for the fact that in this fair land untouchability has a sway which it does not exercise in any other part of India. I feel deeply humiliated as a Hindu to find that it is in this enlightened Hindu State that untouchability appears in its most hideous form of unseeability and unapproachability. I speak with a due sense of my responsibility that

[1] The source has "world".

[2] "Food" in *Bapu's Letters to Mira*

[3] Published under the title "Message to Travancore"

this untouchability is a curse that is eating into the vitals of Hinduism, and I often feel that unless we take due precautions and remove this curse from our midst, Hinduism itself is in danger of destruction. That in this age of reason, in this age of wide travel, in this age of a comparative study of religions, there should be found people, some of whom are educated, to uphold the hideous doctrine of treating a single human being as an untouchable, or unapproachable, or unseeable because of his birth, passes my comprehension. As a lay, humble student of Hinduism and claiming to be one desirous of practising Hinduism in the spirit and to the letter let me tell you that I have found no warrant or support for this terrible doctrine. Let us not deceive ourselves into the belief that everything that is written in Sanskrit and printed is Shastra and has a binding effect upon us. That which is opposed to the fundamental maxims of morality, that which is opposed to trained reason, cannot be claimed as Shastra no matter how ancient it may be. There is enough warrant for the proposition that I have just stated in the Vedas, in the *Mahabharata* and in the *Bhagavad Gita*. I therefore hope that it will be possible for the enlightened ruler of Travancore to blot the curse out of the land during her reign. And what can be nobler than that a woman should be able to say to herself and her people that during her rule it has been possible for these people who have been suffering from age-long slavery to receive their full freedom?

But I know also her difficulties and those of her councillors. A government, be it ever so autocratic, is always timid and cau tious in moving in such reforms. A wise government will welcome an agitation in connection with such reforms. An unwise govern ment impatient of public opinion will use violence in putting down such agitations. But from my personal experience of Vykom Satyagraha I know that you have a Government which will not only tolerate but welcome agitation in order to strengthen its hands to achieve this reform. The real initiative therefore must lie with the people of Travancore, and that too not with the so-called untouchables miscalled also *avarna*[1] Hindus. To me the very word *avarna* Hindu is a misnomer and a reproach to Hinduism. In many cases the remedy or the initiative lies not with them but with the so-called *savarna*[2] Hindus who have to rid themselves of the sin of untouchability. Let me tell you that it is not

[1] Not belonging to any of the *varnas*

[2] Belonging to one of the *varnas*

enough for you to hold the belief passively that untouchability is a crime. He who is a passive spectator of crime is really, and in law, an active participator in it. You must, therefore, begin and continue your agitation along all lawful and legitimate lines. Let me, if my voice will reach them, carry my voice to the Brahmin priests who are opposing this belated reform. It is a painful fact, but it is a historical truth, that priests who should have been the real custodians of religion have been instrumental in destroying the religion of which they have been custodians. I see before my eyes the Brahmin priests in Travancore and also elsewhere destroying the very religion of which they are supposed to be custodians, from their ignorance or worse. All their learning, when it is utilized in order to sustain a hideous superstition, a terrible wrong, turns to dust. I wish therefore that they will recognize before it is too late the signs of the times and march with the events which are taking them and us voluntarily or involuntarily along the path of truth. All the religions of the world, while they may differ in other respects unitedly proclaim that nothing lives in this world but truth.

Let me also warn the impatient reformer that unless he keeps himself on the right, strait and narrow path, he will hurt himself and hinder the reform about which he is rightly impatient. I venture to claim that I have placed in the hands of the reformer a matchless and priceless weapon in the form of satyagraha. But then the conditions of successful satyagraha are fairly hard. If he has faith in God, faith in himself, faith in his cause, he will never be violent, not even against his most fierce opponent whom he would accuse rightly of injustice, ignorance and even violence. I state without fear of contradiction that truth has never been vindicated by violence. A satyagrahi therefore expects to conquer his opponents or his co-called enemies not by violent force but by force of love, by process of conversion. His methods will be always gentle and gentlemanly. He will never exaggerate. And since non-violence is otherwise known as love it has no weapon but that of self-suffering. And above all, in a movement like that of the removal of untouchability which in my opinion is essentially religious and one of self-purification, there is no room for hate, no room for haste, no room for thoughtlessness and no room for exaggeration. Since satyagraha is one of the most powerful methods of direct action, a satyagrahi exhausts all other means before he resorts to satyagraha. He will therefore constantly and continually approach the constituted authority, he will appeal to public opinion,

educate public opinion, state his case calmly and coolly before everybody who wants to listen to him, and only after he has exhausted all these avenues will he resort to satyagraha. But when he has found the impelling call of the inner voice within him and launches out upon satyagraha he has burnt his boats and there is no receding. Let me, however, hope that it will not be necessary in this land for people to undergo all the suffering for removing a wrong which is so patent.

You will be glad to learn that immediately I entered this place, the Commissioner of Police was good enough to call on me and we discussed this great question. There are at the present moment two questions pending so far as I am aware; one in connection with the roads about Tiruvarppu and the other in connection with Suchindram. So far as I am aware in both these places the reformers have the right on their side. I understand that at the first place satyagrahis have already commenced their battle. I think it is a hasty step. I have therefore sent them a telegram asking them to desist for the time being and to see me tomorrow at Trivandrum. And I propose, if I am given the opportunity, as I hope I shall be, to discuss both these questions with the authorities. Though this visit of mine to Travancore was intended to be confined principally to khadi or khadi collections, fate threw me into the untouchability fray immediately on my arrival. I shall not spare myself during the brief time that is at my disposal in endeavouring humbly to assist both the State and the people in arriving at an honourable settlement.

Young India, 20-10-1927

142. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

TRAVANCORE,
[*October 9, 1927*][1]

CHI. MANILAL AND CHI. SUSHILA,

I get your letters regularly. We should not think about Sastriji's weakness to which you refer. It is a kind of weakness from which practically no one in Government service can be free. I adopted non-co-operation with the Government only when I found that its system was altogether evil. It is but natural that, having grown in the atmosphere in which you have, you cannot bear such flattery. But

[1] From the reference to Devdas's operation for piles; *vide* also "Letter to Mirabehn", 3-10-1927.

respect for elders requires that, as far as possible, we should not criticize them. You did well, of course, in drawing my attention to his weakness, but do not permit your behaviour to Sastriji or your sincere respect for him to be affected in any way. We have few patriotic workers as upright and able as Sastriji.

Devdas has been operated upon for piles. He is in Dr. Rajan's hospital. It is now six days since the operation. He is progressing satisfactorily. Almost all the men in the Ashram are engaged in flood-relief work. We arrived in Travancore today. Ba has gone to visit Kanyakumari. (Mahadev and I have visited the place once. Kakasaheb is also accompanying her. He, too, has gone).

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4729

143. SPEECH AT TRIVANDRUM[1]

[*On or before October 10, 1927*][2]

As at Nagercoil, here too the best part of the day has been devoted to discussing this problem. Though it was partly a social call that I paid to the Dewan, we naturally began to discuss this thorny question. And if you found me coming to the meetings a few minutes late it was because I had gone to pay my respects to Her Highness the Maharani Regent, and I found myself again discussing this very question with her. I have always, after having paid the first visit to Travancore, looked forward to a series of visits to this enchanting land. Its most beautiful scenery, the location of Kanyakumari in Travancore, and the simplicity and freedom of the women of Travancore captivated me when I first came here. But the pleasure that all these thoughts and associations always gave me has been seriously marred by the thought that untouchability had assumed its most terrible shape in Travancore, and it has pained me to think that this evil has existed in that terrible form in a most ancient Hindu State, which has the privilege of occupying the first place in all India in educational progress. And this existence of untouchability in its

[1] Published under the title "Message to Travancore"

[2] According to Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter", Gandhiji was in Trivandrum on October 9 and 10, 1927 and he made the speech after he had met the Maharaja and the Maharani of Travancore; *vide* also "Speech at Nagercoil", 8-10-1927.

extreme form has always caused me so much pain, because I consider myself to be a Hindu of Hindus saturated with the spirit of Hinduism. I have failed to find a single warrant for the existence of untouchability as we believe and practise it today in all those books which we call Hindu Shastras. But as I have repeatedly said in other places, if I found that Hinduism really countenanced untouchability I should have no hesitation in renouncing Hinduism itself. For I hold that religion, to be worthy of the name, must not be inconsistent with the fundamental truths of ethics and morality. But as I believe that untouchability is no part of Hinduism, I cling to Hinduism, but daily become more and more impatient of this hideous wrong. So, when I found that this question was agitating Travancore I had no hesitation in plunging myself into it. If I have taken up this question, I have done so not in any way to embarrass the State. For I believe that Her Highness the Maharani Regent is solicitous about the welfare of her people. She also claims to be a reformer along these lines, and I fancy that I commit no breach of confidence when I tell you that she is eager to see that this wrong is removed at the earliest possible moment.

But then governments cannot afford to lead in matters of reform. By their very nature governments are but interpreters and executors of the expressed will of the people whom they govern, and even a most auto-cratic government will find itself unable to impose a reform which its people cannot assimilate. So, if I was a subject of Travancore State I should be entirely satisfied to know that my Government was willing to carry forward this reform as speedily as the people were willing to assimilate it. But having satisfied myself of that one thing, I should not rest content for one single moment till I had carried the message of reform from mouth to mouth and village to village. Well-ordered, persistent agi-tation is the soul of healthy progress, and so if I were you, I would not let the Govenment rest till this reform was carried through. Not allowing the Government to rest does not by any means mean embarrassing the Government. A wise government welcomes and needs the support and warmth and encouragement of such an agitation in order to achieve a reform which the Government itself wants. I know that when I was here last, I was told that the *savarna* (caste) Hindus were all most anxious for this reform of the abolition of untouchability in every shape and form. But I am afraid that the *savarna* Hindus have slept over their wish. They have not given a concrete form to their wish, and I believe that it

is the bounden duty of every Hindu in the State to wake up to a sense of his duty and to wake up his lethargic brethren also to a sense of their duty. And I have no shadow of a doubt that if the *savarna* Hindus could with one voice express their wish, this monster of untouchability would go. It would be wrong therefore to ascribe our own lethargy and slothfulness to the Government.

But reformers in every community and every country are to be counted on one's finger tips; and I know that the brunt of all such reforms falls upon the devoted heads of that small band of reformers. What are the reformers then to do in the face of this evil of such long standing is really the question one has to solve. The reformers all over the world have resorted to one or other of the two methods that I am about to mention. The vast majority of them have drawn attention to evils by creating wild agitation and resorting to violence. They have resorted to agitation that embarrasses the Government, that embarrasses the people and that disturbs the even tenor of the life of the citizens. The other school of reformers which I would call the non-violent school resorts to agitation of the gentle type. It disdains to draw attention by doing violence in thought, word or deed; but it draws attention by simple self-suffering. It never exaggerates. It never departs by a hair's breadth from truth, and whilst impatient of evil, does not mean ill even to the evildoer. I have given that a short name and I have placed it before this country as before South Africa in the name of satyagraha. Do not for one moment mix up satyagraha with civil disobedience. Civil disobedience is no doubt a branch of satyagraha. It comes not at the beginning but at the fagend. It presupposes immense discipline. It presup poses great self-restraint. It is based upon charity, and it never puts an unfavourable or unwarranted construction even upon the motives of its opponents. For it seeks not to coerce but to convert. You may therefore imagine my painful surprise when I found the whole of my doctrine and my remarks grossly misinterpreted by a friend who visited me in Virudhunagar[1]. I saw in the *Trivandrum Express* a report given by him of what had occurred between him and myself. It is a distortion from start to finish of the conversation that I had with him.

A VOICE: Shame.

But there is no warrant for crying "shame". The gentleman

[1] For the *Hindu* version of the interview, *vide* Appendix "Interview to C. Kuttan Nair", October 4, 1927.

who cried shame evidently does not know the virtue or meaning of charity. For, I do not for one moment suggest that the friend who saw me has consciously or deliberately distorted my meaning. I am prepared to believe the explanation that he gave me this morning. But I have drawn your attention to this prominently in order to illustrate what I mean by satyagraha and also to show you the danger of those who do not know this fine weapon dabbling in it. I am simply giving this example in order to warn the would-be reformer against undertaking this method unless he is absolutely sure of his ground and unless he has got more than the ordinary measure of self-control, and seeing that I am enamoured of this method of satyagraha, which I consider to be a matchless weapon, I do not want it to be misused or abused, so long as I can prevent it. I therefore advised this friend to keep out of this problem until he had understood what satyagraha really was, and unless he had assimilated the true spirit of it.

But this again is not intended to damp the zeal of even a single reformer. I am going into the problem so much in detail for the simple reason that I want you to work at it in order to get the quickest possible solution. I want therefore humbly to suggest that those of you who have had some experience of public life should take up this movement and make it their own and harness the energy and the will of the youths who are interested in this problem but do not know how to solve it. And I suggest also that you place yourselves in touch with the authorities and day after day worry the life out of them until this reform is achieved. For I am free to tell you that not only is Her Highness desirous of carrying out this reform but so is the Dewan himself. But belonging as he does to a different faith, you and I, Hindus, can appreciate his limitations. In my opinion, so far as the Government is concerned, it is on the side of reform; only the initiative will have to come from you and not from the Government. You will forgive me for having dealt with this very important question in a highly technical manner. I could not do otherwise as I have no other time at my disposal so that I could have convened a few of the leaders at a conference and discussed the pros and cons. I felt therefore that you would overlook the heaviness of my speech in connection with untouchability before a big audience as this.

One question was put to me arising out of this question this morning, and that was what was the bearing of varnashrama dharma upon untouchability. That means that I should say a few words about my conception of varnashrama dharma. So far as I know anything at

all of Hinduism, the meaning of *varna* is incredibly simple. It simply means the following on the part of us all the hereditary and traditional calling of our forefathers, in so far as that traditional calling is not inconsistent with fundamental ethics, and this only for the purpose of earning one's livelihood. I regard this as the law of our being, if we would accept the definition of man given in all religions. Of all the animal creation of God, man is the only animal who has been created in order that he may know his Maker. Man's aim in life is not therefore to add from day to day to his material prospects and to his material possessions but his predominant calling is from day to day to come nearer his own Maker, and from this definition it was that the *rishis*[1] of old discovered this law of our being. You will realize that if all of us follow this law of *varna* we would limit our material ambition, and our energy would be set free for exploring those vast fields whereby and wherethrough we can now God. You will at once then see that nine-tenths of the activities that are today going on throughout the world and which are engrossing our attention would fall into disuse. You will then be entitled to say that *varna* as we observe it today is a travesty of the *varna* that I have described to you. And so it undoubtedly is, but just as we do not hate truth because untruth parades itself as truth, but we sift untruth from truth and cling to the latter, so also we can destroy the distortion that passes as *varna* and purify the state to which the Hindu society has been reduced today.

Ashrama is a necessary corollary to what I have stated to you, and if *varna* today has become distorted, *ashrama* has altogether disappeared. *Ashrama* means the four stages in one's life, and I wish the students who have kindly presented their purses to me—the Arts and Science students and the Law College students—were able to assure me that they were living according to the laws of the first *ashrama* and that they were *brahmacharis* in thought, word and deed. The *brahmachayashrama* enjoins that only those who live the life of a *brahmachari*, at least up to 25 years, are entitled to enter upon the second *ashrama*, i.e., the *grihsthashrama*. And because the whole conception of Hinduism is to make man better than he is and draw him nearer to his Maker, the *rishis* set a limit even to the *grihasthashrama* stage and imposed on us the obligation of *vanap-rastha* and sannyasa. But today you will vainly search throughout the

[1] Seers

length and breadth of India for a true *brahmachari,* for a true *grihastha,* not to talk of a *vanaprastha* and a sannyasi. We may, in our elongated wisdom, laugh at this scheme of life, if we wish to. But I have no doubt whatsoever that this is the secret of the great success of Hinduism. The Hindu civilization has survived the Egyptian, the Assyrian and the Babylonian. The Christian is but two thousand years old. The Islamic is but of yesterday. Great as both these are they are still in my humble opinion in the making. Christian Europe is not at all Christian, but is groping, and so in my opinion is Islam still groping for its great secret, and there is today a competition, healthy as also extremely unhealthy and ugly, between these three great religions. As years go by, the conviction is daily growing upon me that *varna* is the law of man's being and therefore as necessary for Christianity and Islam as it has been necessary for Hinduism and has been its saving. I refuse, therefore, to believe that *varnash-rama* has been the curse of Hinduism, as it is the fashion nowaday in the South on the part of some Hindus to say. But that does not mean that you and I may tolerate for one moment or be gentle towards the hideous travesty of *varnashrama* that we see about us today. There is nothing in common between *varnashrama* and caste. Caste, if you will, is undoubtedly a drag upon Hindu progress, and untouchability is, as I have already called it or described it, an excrescence upon *varnashrama.* It is a weedy growth fit only to be weeded out, as we weed out the weeds that we see growing in wheat fields or rice fields. In this conception of *varna,* there is absolutely no idea of superiority and inferiority. If I again interpret the Hindu spirit rightly, all life is absolutely equal and one. It is therefore an arrogant assumption on the part of the Brahmin when he says : "I am superior to the other three *varnas.*" That is not what the Brahmins of old said. They commanded homage not because they claimed superiority, but because they claimed the right of service through and through without the slightest expectation of a reward. The priests, who today arrogate to themselves the function of the Brahmin and distort religion, are no custodians of Hinduism or Brahminism. Consciously or unconsciously they are laying the axe at the root of the very tree on which they are sitting, and when they tell you that Shastras enjoin untouchability and when they talk of pollution distance, I have no hesitation in saying that they are belying their creed and that they are misinterpreting the spirit of Hinduism. You will now perhaps understand why it is absolutely necessary for you Hindus who are

here and listening to me to energize yourselves and rid yourselves of this curse. You should take pride in leading the way of reform, belonging as you do to an ancient Hindu State. So far as I can read the atmosphere around you here, the moment is certainly propitious for you if you will sincerely and energetically undertake this reform.

Young India, 20-10-1927

144. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

October 10, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. Yes, I am satisfied with two letters per week from you. I should be satisfied with even one from you per week, as soon as I became free from all anxiety about you. I am that very nearly now. And so I too have dropped off writing daily to you.

Continue to discuss your plans with Krishnadas, Surendra, Chhotelal and others. Ask them to speak out their minds. You may appoint additional warders. Do not omit to go to Bhansali. He has taken a seven days' fast. This I had consented to long ago. I know that your presence soothes him.

Yes, you will come to Orissa if all goes well here as well as there. You have to keep fit.

I am writing to Mr. Smith about some books to be sent to you.

I met the Resident here yesterday. The first question he asked me was whether you were with me and then he spoke to me about your brother-in-law having replaced him whilst he was on leave. I told him you were with me for a few days in Chettinad.

I am finding the hair question somewhat difficult myself. The thing is good in itself, I have no doubt. I am not sure about its advisability. But I shall not think more about it. Let the women there give their final decision. Why does Mani oppose the removal? Let there be no haste over it. I wonder what Lady Slade will say about it? I would like you to discuss the proposal with her too. I know how keenly interested she is in everything about you.

You know that Maganlal has a fine collection of dairy books. You should look through some of them.

Love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5286. Courtesy: Mirabehn

145. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

ON TOUR,
October 10, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have been keeping your letter in front of me all these days. As your time for going to the Ashram, Sabarmati, is now nearing according to your letter, I write this to say how welcome you would be at the Ashram. But I regret to inform you that I shall not be there to receive you personally. I am just now touring in the south in connection with the message of the spinning-wheel and shall be so doing till the middle of November after which I shall be going to Orissa. I do not expect to be in the Ashram before the beginning of January.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

HORACE G. ALEXANDER, ESQ.
C/O J. S. HOYLAND, ESQ.
HOLYROAD
NAGPUR

From a photostat: G.N. 1404

146. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

TRIVANDRUM,
October 10, 1927

You need not despair. I know that you are awake and struggling. From my own experience I know that it is extremely difficult to remain unaffected by desire towards one's wife and, therefore, feel sympathy for you. You two will not, however, succeed in overcoming lustful desire towards each other till you give up being together alone, begin to sleep in different rooms and, if necessary, live completely away from each other for some time. You have not told me how far your wife co-operates with you. If you have her co-operation, your way is easy; otherwise, it is difficult. You must succeed in this struggle. And be sure that as your heart grows softer you will have increasing control over your desire. To submit to desire requires hardness of heart. He whose heart is filled exclusively by compassion for others has no moment free to give to lustful thought. That is why I have often said that a pure *brahmachari* will never yield to anger. The

instances to the contrary which we come across in the Shastras are of men who had no experience of real *brahmacharya* and observed it only in its physical aspect. If you reflect more deeply, you, too, will realize the truth of this statement.

All who feel concerned about my fast should give up their fear. Surely, I have not undertaken the fast because of Devdas. Their fear is the result of excessive attachment to me and of ignorance. I never undertake a fast led away by the impulse of the moment. When I do fast, it is for my own purification and peace of mind. A fast, instead of being regarded as a cause for concern, should be welcomed as a warning. A person who is sincere in his striving does not fear the watchfulness of his parents or friends, but welcomes it rather. People should look at my fasts in that light. I admit that the weapon of fast is often abused. For a votary of truth, however, fasts undertaken after due deliberation are extremely useful. I have no doubt about this in my mind. Do we not know that best things are liable to the worst abuse? Can people with a bad reputation deceive others as much as people looked upon as good have often done?

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

147. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[About *October 10, 1927*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have both your letters. I see there is an irreconcilable difference of opinion regarding X[2] in the Ashram itself. I would no more trouble you about this affair. I have been writing something to Chhaganlal Joshi. Having done this I shall observe silence for some time now and shall try to reopen this chapter in the month of January when I reach the Ashram. I still have my doubts. Innocent people do not commit suicide. X's letters to me make me suspicious. You know well that he was connected with the Jagannath incident. I did not succeed in subduing this rebellion on the part of X. I have, therefore, been harbouring a suspicion. I have a letter from Ramdas telling me about the reasons for his suspicion. These are not strong enough but

[1] From the references to errors in the dairy accounts and to X's disappearance from the Ashram

[2] Names not reproduced

the fact remains that Ramdas had his own suspicions. I think it horrid for X to have gone away without informing anyone. I don't think he is hiding himself anywhere. If this was the case, I would be relieved from a great misery. Because at the moment X as well as X and X whom I regard as my son and daughters are victims of my suspicion.

I do not need rectification of the dairy accounts. I want a co-ordinated report from both of you. The assurance you gave me at Bangalore is enough for me. But Narandas wrote to me there were 21 mistakes pertaining to figures and they pointed to the loss the dairy suffered. I do not say you are slow of improvement. My only concern was that if our mistake was such as would misrepresent the results, we should issue a clarification. Please therefore discuss the figures with Narandas and let me know the actual result.

I have your third letter, in which you ask me to go over there. As regards my health Mahadev has written [to you] yesterday. I have no complaint. What can we say about the Press? In case anything happens to me you shall certainly get a wire from someone.

I am quite anxious to go over there. That is the place for me whether the atmosphere is healthy or unhealthy; particularly since it is unhealthy. Where can I run away from that unhealthy atmosphere? I am myself to blame the most for the unhealthy atmosphere prevailing there, for I have never stayed there for any length of time. So I do not have to be persuaded to go there. I have got stuck here, because I must not leave my work here unfinished and we should, I think, get work out of the body as long as we can. I, therefore, expect to be there by the beginning of January.

"but never say die."[1]

"Never take a defeat even at the cost of your life."

Or,

"The way to Him is known to the valiant, it is not for the coward."

Or,

"Having become unattached to happiness and unhappiness, loss and gain, victory and defeat, you engage yourself in battle. In this way

[1] This and the subsequent quotations are presumably intended to encourage the addressee.

no sin will come to you."[1]

"It is only right to be strict with ourselves and magnanimous towards our opponents."

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 7768. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

148. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Aso Vad 1 [*October 11, 1927*][2]

DEAR SISTERS,

It appears my last letter has caused a good deal of commotion among you. That is perhaps why I have not as yet heard from you. I am glad of the commotion. I shall not feel satisfied if your relations with one another are merely on the basis of formal courtesy; nor should you be satisfied with it either. It should not be our desire just to get on together anyhow. We must become one in heart. We should not deceive ourselves or others, or the world. So what- ever is working in our hearts must be brought out into the open. Once the heart is thoroughly purified, it will take long for it to become impure again. But if any impurity is allowed to remain in the heart, even good thoughts will get sullied, just as water poured into a dirty vessel gets sullied. If we begin by being suspicious of someone, we end by suspecting everything he does.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3670

149. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

[*October 11, 1927*][3]

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your letter. Shri Amritlal Thakkar believes that the Conference[4] will not be held now. As you know, the one for this year could not be held. I feel that the Conference should now be given a new direction. In my present state of mind, I cannot fully associate

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 38

[2] The year is inferred from the reference to the strained relations among the Ashram women, *vide* "Letter to Ashram Women", 26-9-1927.

[3] From the postmark

[4] Kathiawar Political Conference

myself with its work; in fact I am afraid that I am likely to prove a bitter dose. Is it not, therefore, better to lay a new foundation and build afresh?

Blessings from

BAPU

ITINERARY

16-17	Coimbatore
18	Pollachi
19	Tiruppur
20	Gobichettipalayam
21	Erode
22	Salem
23-24	Tiruchengode
25	Calicut
26-31	Mangalore
Up to	November 19, Ceylon

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI PAREKH
BARRISTER, JETPUR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5692

150. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

Aso Vad I [*October 11, 1927*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN JHAVERI,

I have your letter. I forgot to write about the books altogether. You may read Manilal Nabhubhai's translation of *Shad-darshan Samuchchaya* if you can follow it. I am recommending it not for its language but so that you will learn to understand complex thoughts. You must also read Mansukhram's *Astodaya.* Some select articles by Navalram as well as the articles by Anandshankarbhai also should be read. Also Mahadev's translation of Morley's famous work. Many more books can be suggested. But it will take you several months to go through even this much. Even I found some portions of the *Shad-*

[1] The year has been inferred from the contents. *Aso Vad 1* in 1927 corresponded to this date.

darshan Samuchchaya difficult to grasp. You must study some comprehensive work on grammar. Bhai Narahari will be better able to guide you because he has made a special study of Gujarati and is still continuing it.

I do not think you will need any special teacher. You are certainly capable of reading by yourself. Whenever you cannot get the meaning yourself you can consult anyone who is available there. There is Ramniklal, there is Valjibhai.

What you have written about the feuds among the women is correct. But what amity is found at present is only a matter of courtesy. I have explained this in my letter to the women.[1] Hence I shall not write anything more here.

Keep in touch with Mirabehn. First, to give her warmth and, secondly, to get warmth from her. We have no other unmarried woman who has grown as much over the years.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3123

151. SPEECH AT QUILON[2]

October 11, 1927

Untouchability poisons Hinduism as a drop of arsenic poisons milk. Knowing the quality of milk, and the use of milk and knowing the quality of arsenic, we should be impatient with the man sitting near a pitcher of milk and trying to remove arsenic grain by grain, and we should throw the whole pitcher overboard. Even so do I as a Hindu feel that the curse of untouchability is rendering the milk of Hinduism altogether poisoned and impure. I feel therefore that patience in a matter of this character is not a virtue. It is impossible to restrain ourselves. Patience with evil is really trifling with evil and with ourselves. I have therefore not hesitated to say that the State of Travancore should lead in the matter of the reform and blot out the evil at a single stroke. But I know also that it was not possible even for a Hindu State to do away with this evil, unless it was backed and actively backed by its Hindu population. And so my appeal must be mostly to you rather than to the head of the State; and to every Hindu in this meeting I wish to make a definite personal appeal. You and I

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Published under the title "Message to Travancore"

have long neglected our duty to the so-called untouchables and un-approachables, and to this extent you and I have been false representatives of Hinduism. I ask you without the slightest hesitation summarily to reject the advance of every person who comes to you in defence of untouchability. Remember that in this age whatever one man or group of men and women do does not remain secret for any length of time, and we are daily being weighed and found wanting so long as we nurse untouchability in our bosom. You must remember that all the great religions of the world are at the present time in the melting pot. Let us not ostrich-like hide our faces and ignore the danger that lies at the back of us. I have not a shadow of doubt that in the great turmoil now taking place either untouchability has to die or Hinduism has to disappear. But I do know that Hinduism is not dying, is not going to die because I see untouchability is a corpse struggling with its last breath to hold on for a little while.

Young India, 20-10-1927

152. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

ON TOUR,
October 12, 1927

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have the two letters promised by you and the letter containing your reply to Nadkarni. The reply will be duly published.[1]

I am anxious to know what you thought of the Spinning Essay and what you said to the Viceroy.[2]

I do hope that your having sent in Sir Visvesvarayya's name will not be considered too late.

I hope you received my letter about Pragji and Medh. I had your telegram about Orissa.

I do not mind your spending twelve annas to tell me when your hand is completely restored.

With love,

MOHAN

From a photostat : G.N. 2622

[1] *Vide* "The Use of Tractors", *Young India*, 3-11-1927.

[2] For Gandhiji's earlier letter on the subject, *vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 1-10-1927.

153. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, ALLEPPEY

October 12, 1927

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I thank you for your addresses as also the several purses that have been presented to me on behalf of *Daridranarayana.* As I stated at Nagercoil, immediately on my entering the Travancore border, I found myself immersed in studying and assisting at a solution of the untouchability question. And on this the last day of my all-too-brief tour in Travancore for the purpose, I propose to devote the best part of my address to the same question. I wish indeed that I had more time at my disposal so that I could have stayed here longer and studied the question still better and given what assistance I could on the spot.

Being somewhat of an expert on this question, I feel that I could, however humbly it may be, render assistance both to the State and the people in arriving at a just solution. I am glad, as well as thankful, to be able to say that from Her Highness the Maharani Regent down to the officials of the State, they have received my remarks in the same spirit as I tendered. I could entertain no doubt whatsoever in connection with the *avarna* friends. For I regard myself as an untouchable amongst untouchables and I have not hesitated to call myself in several meetings a Nayadi. Probably some of you even do not know what a Nayadi is. To the eternal disgrace of the modern Hindu, Nayadi is the being who occupies the lowest state even amongst the so-called untouchables. His very sight is supposed to defile the *savarna* Hindus. So he is not only relegated to the gutter as we call it, but he is not permitted to present himself to the *savarna* Hindu. I had the painful duty of seeing some specimens of Nayadis when I was passing through the bazaars—I wonder if it was Cochin or Trichur. And I assure you that if I had the time at my disposal, if I had no other irons in the fire and if I had the courage, I would leave the haunts of the *savarnas* and give myself the pleasure of living in the midst of these unseeables, the Nayadis. That is a penance all too small for the great crime that we Hindus have committed against a portion of humanity and are continuing. But I flatter myself with the belief, or I deceive myself into the belief, that by not living in the midst of the Nayadis, I am doing a greater penance because of my

experiencing mentally the tortures that I feel by a sense of the great sin that has burdened Hinduism and Hindus today. I say with a full sense of my responsibility as a sane and sanatani[1] Hindu, as I call myself, that we Hindus will have to answer before God and man for this great sin if we do not wake up betimes and wipe it from our midst.[2]

I had a very long discussion with many of the Ezhuva leaders this afternoon, and I tell you that if I was not told that they were Ezhuvas I should not have known them to be such, nor could I see the slightest distinction between them and those who call themselves *savarnas*. Their pecuniary position is any day better than of many of the *savarnas*. Their educational qualifications leave nothing to be desired, and their personal cleanli ness appeared to be infinitely superior to that of many Brahmins and others whom I have seen during my travels from one end of the country to the other. And so when I faced these friends and read their address, I hung my Hindu head in shame, that these friends were considered untouchable and unfit to walk along some of the public roads in Travancore, and that these were the friends whose presence in our temples would defile the temple ground, and that these were the men who could not send their sons and daughters to at least some of the Government schools although they were as much taxpayers as the tallest in this assembly. For let it be remembered that as against these inhuman disabilities, they are not excused from paying the tax in the same measure that *savarnas* pay to the State. This then is in my opinion a cause to which it is the duty of many Hindus who feel for their religion to dedicate their lives, and I do hope that Her Highness the Maharani Regent, enlightened as she is, will not rest content until this disgrace is removed from Travancore, and from all the talks I had with Her Highness, with the Dewan, and the Commissioner of Police, and last but not least, the Devaswam Commissioner, I am leaving Travancore in the hope that at least the roads question will be solved to the satisfaction of all concerned, and it is in that fervent hope that I have not hesitated to advise the deputation today to suspend satyagraha, and I am glad to be able to say to this meeting that this deputation were kind enough to listen to my advice and suspend satyagraha

[1] Orthodox

[2] What follows is from "Message to Travancore", published in *Young India*, 20-10-1927.

whilst this question was being satisfactorily settled. God forbid that there should be any disappointment with reference to the hope that I carry with me. But I have told the friends that if the redress that is their due is not given in time, and if after they have exhausted all preliminary proposals they fail in getting relief, it will not only be open to them, but it will be their bounden duty, to resort to satyagraha in order to win what is their right. . . .

Let me reiterate to you the implications of the hope I am taking with me. Flimsy in one respect though I consider what is called the Vykom settlement to be, in other respects and from another point of view it is a settlement honourable alike to the State and the *avarna* Hindus. It is a settlement which I consider to be the bedrock of freedom. I call it a bedrock of freedom because the settlement is a document between the people and the State constituting a big step in the direction of liberty in one respect at least. But so far as the *avarna* Hindus are concerned it is in no sense a final settlement, it was the minimum that they permitted themselves to be satisfied with at the time and for the Government never to recede from. Government by that settlement erected for themselves a platform to make further advances from. Its interpretation therefore must be always in favour of the *avarna* Hindus. Nor can it ever be interpreted to curtail the liberties of non-Hindus. Applying this principle to the present trouble at Tiruvarppu it is not possible for Government to curtail any substantial right of Christians and other non-Hindus who have been using the roads there. It is therefore their bounden duty to throw these roads open to *avarna* Hindus, and any difficulty that there may be in the way of the roads being thrown open, it is for the Government to get over, and not for the *avarna* Hindus to accommodate the Government over. Similar though not precisely the same is the case now pending in connection with the roads round the Suchindram temple, and I am hoping that in the very near future the State will overcome all difficulties there may be in giving the relief I have suggested.

Subject to this I have given my advice to the Ezhuva friends to suspend their activities, and I venture to hope that in the circumstances the order the Government have thought it necessary to serve on Sjt. Madhavan will be withdrawn without delay. I think the order at least now wholly unnecessary, as also is the general order prohibiting the

holding of meetings within a certain radius of Tiruvarppu.[1]

MR. T. K. MADHAVAN: Mahatmaji, I am asked not to speak in the whole of the Kottayam district.

I made a mistake. The order prevents him from speaking in the whole of Kottayam. I think that in the circumstances I have mentioned the order is wholly unnecessary. And so is another general order prohibiting the holding of meetings within that radius.

One word to these *avarna* Hindu friends. I share to the full extent their grief. And if I could convince myself or somebody else could convince me, that by forfeiting my life today, I would secure the fullest charter of liberty to them, I should do so this very instant. But till that conviction is forced upon me, I content to live and work for this precious freedom. I therefore ask them to remember that whilst it is open to us to become impatient whenever we want to remove a gross abuse, it is necessary for us to hold ourselves in patience. Progress is absolutely assured whenever there is at the back of it truthfulness, self-sacrifice and an unalterable determination. The pages of history, which are open to anybody who cares to read them, show that those who have worked for reforms have worked away in the fullest disregard of consequences, but believing that work is its own reward and that it ensures the result which is hoped for. I therefore ask them to work in the spirit of the teaching of the *Bhagavad Gita*. It teaches us that it is given to mankind to work, work and work, but not to control the results. And with this unalterable promise given in that divine book, there is no occasion whatsover to lose hope or to become madly impatient. Let them also understand that today throughout the length and breadth of India, not one Hindu like myself is working in the same cause, but there are many Hindus, brilliant men, tried servants of India and tried workers known to the whole of the nation, they are also working to the best of their ability to the same cause. I have not a shadow of doubt that in the very near future, we shall all find that this untouchability which is a horrible nightmare is a thing of the past.

One word to the *savarna* Hindus. I have hitherto said what is the duty of the State and what is the duty of the *avarna* Hindus. But the duty of the *savarnas* is not less great; if anything, it is much greater. A State after all reflects the opinion of its subjects. The crime of

[1] What follows is from *The Hindu*, 15-10-1927.

untouchability is a crime committed by *savarna* Hindus. The penance therefore is due by them. And it is the duty of the *savarna* Hindus to help the *avarna* Hindus in every conceivable manner. If they will but extend their active sympathy to this cause and bestir themselves and worry the Government they will find that it is totally unnecessary for the *avarna* Hindus to resort to the terrible ordeal of self-suffering which satyagraha means. If they will take the credit for achieving this reform in Travancore, they should not wait till the cup of bitterness is full up to the brim and forces the *avarna* Hindus into a position which it will be our disgrace to put them in.

I come to another important subject before I come to khadi which has really brought me to Travancore this time. I wish to refer to the cursed drink habit. Let those who are addicted to this vicious habit understand that it is a habit which dehumanizes man. He who is under the influence of drink knows no distinction between wife and sister. Some of the greatest crimes in history have been committed by men under the influence of drink. I have myself had the pain of witnessing in South Africa many a man, otherwise considered to be the most respectable, wal-lowing in the gutters under the influence of drink. It is the duty of the sober people of Travancore to compel the Government to do away with this *abkari*[1] revenue. I hold it to be an immoral source of revenue. It is really your duty to agitate till the drink evil is abolished from this land. Let not this land of beauty, with which Nature has surrounded it, stink with the curse of drink. And if you realize, as Hindus, Christians or Mussalmans, the essential oneness of man and regard your neighbours as your own step-brothers and sisters, it is your duty to go into the midst of those who are given to the habit of drink and by gentle persuasion wean them from it. I hold total prohibition as an absolute necessity because so long as the temptation is put in the way of the person given to the drink habit, no amount of persuasion would keep him away from this habit. The movement therefore amongst those who are given to the habit and with the State go side by side.

It should not be necessary now for me to take up much of your time over the message of the spinning-wheel. Your purses are an earnest of your faith in khadi. But if you have convinced yourselves that your duty towards the poorest of the millions is discharged sufficiently by your having flung a few rupees in my face, you are

[1] Excise duty

sadly mistaken. I should not be able to use the purses that I have been receiving throughout the tour and they would be an unbearable burden to me, if you refuse to wear khadi for the manufacture of which through the sacred hands of the toiling millions I propose to work. I regard these gifts of yours therefore as your promise henceforth to use khadi for your household and use nothing else. You should also endeavour to organize the villages of Travancore through the spinning-wheel. In order to create the spinning atmosphere throughout the land, it is necessary for us all to spin by way of sacrifice and example. It is necessary also for the intelligent people to become experts in spinning if we are to organize the villages through the spinning-wheel. I was pleased to hear in Trivandrum that the State had already voted a certain sum for the introduction of the spinning-wheel in State schools. Inasmuch as the women of Travancore are dressed in spotlessly white clothing, Travancore is really the easiest place in India where khadi can become easily popular. Let me add one more reason why you should clothe yourselves from khadi made in Travancore. When you agitate for total prohibition you will have the argument flung in your face that the *abkari* revenue, which I understand amounts to over twenty lakhs of rupees, has got to be somehow or other found if the children of Travancore are to be educated. If forty lakhs of people of Travancore were to be clothed in khadi manufactured in Travancore itself, I assure you that you will be saving four times forty lakhs of rupees per year out of khadi. Study intelligently the economics of khadi and you will find that this replacing of *abkari* revenue

I hope that all these three things that I have suggested to you, and on which I have spoken to you, will abide with you after I have gone. I pray to God that He will give you the wisdom to understand my word and the power to act up to it.

The Hindu, 15-10-1927 and *Young India*, 20-10-1927

154. NOTES

TRUE EDUCATION

Professor Malkani sends the following wire from Ahmedabad:

Proceeding Bombay meet Sir Purushottamdas. Help from Central Fund urgently needed. Vallabhbhai promised support. Kripalani Vidyapith volunteers going Sind.

Sir M. Visvesvarayya is reported to have spoken as follows at the opening of the All-India Swadeshi Bazaar and Industrial Exhibition at

Poona on the 3rd instant.

> If my voice can have any influence with the universities, I would beg them, so long as our present economic inefficiency continues, to restrict admissions to literary and theoretical courses and induce the student population to covet degrees in agriculture, engineering, technology and commerce.

Whilst Sir M. Visvesvarayya has emphasized one grave defect of our present education which places exclusive emphasis on literary merit, I would add a graver defect in that students are made to think that whilst they are pursuing their literary studies, they may not do acts of service at the sacrifice of their studies, be it ever so small or temporary. They will lose nothing and gain much if they would suspend their education, literary or industrial, in order to do relief work, such as is being done by some of them in Gujarat. The end of all education should surely be service, and if a student gets an opportunity of rendering service even whilst he is studying, he should consider it as a rare opportunity and treat it not really as a suspension of his education but rather its complement. I therefore heartily welcome the idea of the students of the Gujarat National College extending their works of service beyond the confines of Gujarat. I remarked only the other day that we must not become narrowly provincial. Sind is not so well organized for producing an army of relief workers as Gujarat is. It is therefore expected of Gujarat to send volunteers to Sind or any other province wherever their services can be utilized. And after all, Gujarat in general and Gujarat national students in particular owe a debt to Sind in that she sent in the course of the Non-co-operation movement three distinguised educationists—Acharya Gidwani, Acharya Kripalani and Adhyapak[1] Malkani. If therefore Gujarat students will go to Sind, they will do nothing but a simple duty.

HELP FROM KANGRI GURUKUL

The response received by Gujarat to the appeal for help in her distress has been most gratifying. Among the early helpers were two institutions that I should like to mention, Gurukul Kangri and Shantiniketan, and knowing how their gitts will delight my heart they even sent telegrams to me advising me of their donations, which were sent directly to Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel. Acharya Ramdevji sends me

[1] Teacher

particulars regarding the four instalments sent on behalf of the Gurukul. He tells me that even more may be expected, and adds:

> The teachers have paid a percentage from their salaries, the *brahmacharis* have saved money by washing their own clothes instead of having them washed by dhobis as is done usually, and the *brahmacharinis* of the girls' school have saved money by giving up ghee and milk for a time.

Let those in Gujarat who are receiving relief and who are distributing relief remember what self-denial lies behind some of the donations received. The present self-denial of the Gurukul boys and girls reminds me of the practice of self-denial first in- augurated by the late Swami Shraddhanandji when he was Governor of the Gurukul, for helping our countrymen in South Africa during satyagraha there. Such acts of self-sacrifice are therefore what one would always expect on given occasions from boys and girls brought up in the traditions of the Gurukul.

ABOUT COW-PROTECTION PRIZE ESSAY

The reader will recall that in *Young India* of October 29, 1925, I published a note offering on behalf of Sjt. Revashanker Jagjivan Jhaveri a prize of Rs. 1,000 for the best essay on cow-protection in English, Sanskrit or Hindi, and similarly in *Navajivan* for December 13, 1925 a prize of Rs. 251 was announced on behalf of Sjt. Tulsidas Khimji for the best essay on the same subject in Gujarati. These were the terms:

> The essay should be delivered at Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, to the Secretary, All-India Cow-Protection Association, on or before March 31st 1926. (The time was since extended to 31st May). . . . It should deal with the origin, meaning and implications of cow-protection quoting texts in support. It should contain an examination of the Shastras and find whether there is any prohibition in the Shastras for conducting dairies and tanneries by association interested in cow-protection. It should trace the history of cow-protection in India and methods adopted to achieve it from time to time. It should contain statistics giving the number of cattle in India and examine the question of pasture land and the effect of Government policy about pasture land in India and suggest remedy to be adopted for securing cow-protection.

Acharya Anandashankar Bapubhai Dhruva, Sjt. Chintamani Vinayak Vaidya and Sjt. Valji Govindji Desai were appointed judges. I regret to announce that the judges have independently of one another come to the conclusion that no essay has been found to be worthy of the prize in terms of its conditions. I am sorry for the delay

in announcing the result of the competition for causes into which it is unnecessary to go. But I would ask those who have studied the question and who are interested in this important question to attempt an essay worthy of this subject. Let those who competed for the prize try again. The judges inform me that some competitors do give evidence of industry but they are of opinion that even these have not given to the subject the diligent research that it deserves and that hardly any has kept himself to the conditions laid down winning the prize.

Whilst the prize should be deemed as withdrawn, if any worthy attempt is made and the essays sent to the secretary, I do not anticipate any difficulty in inducing the judges to examine the essays or the donors to give the prizes if any essay is found worthy. If enough competitors send their names and qualifications in advance of their intention to make or remake the attempts, I hope to be able to reannounce the prizes, the conditions of course being the same as before.

Young India, 13-10-1927

155. HINDU LAW AND MYSORE

Sjt. Bhashyam Aiyengar of Bangalore writes :

> The principles of Hindu Law as at present administered are antiquated and opposed to our sense of equity and justice. I shall give a few instances[1] :

The prominence I have given to the foregoing need not imply that I endorse every one of the reforms suggested by the writer. That some of them require immediate attention I have no doubt. Nor have I any doubt that all of them demand serious consideration from those who would rid Hindu society of its anachronisms.

In pre-British days there was no such thing as rigid Hindu Law governing the lives of millions. The body of regulations known as *smritis* were indicative rather than inflexible codes of conduct. They never had the validity of law such as is known to modern lawyers. The observance of the restraints of the *smritis* was enforced more by social than legal sanctions. The *smritis* were, as is evident from the self-contradictory verses to be found in them, continually passing, like ourselves, through evolutionary changes, and were adapted to the new

[1] The correspondent mentioned ten injunctions relating to inheritance, widow remarriage, inter-caste marriage, adoption, etc., and suggested that the Mysore State should undertake the desired reforms through legislation.

discoveries that were being made in social science. Wise kings were free to procure new inter-pretations to suit new conditions. Hindu religion or Hindu Shastras never had the changeless and unchanging character that is now being sought to be given to them. No doubt in those days there were kings and their councillors who had the wisdom and the authority required to command the respect and allegiance of society. But now the custom has grown up of thinking that *smritis* and everything that goes by the name of Shastras is absolutely unchange-able. The verses which we find to be unworkable or altogether repugnant to our moral sense, we conveniently ignore. This very unsatisfactory state of things has to be, some day or other and somehow, changed if Hindu society is to become a progressive unit in human evolution. The British rulers cannot make these changes because of their different religion and their different ideal. Their ideal is to sustain their commercial supremacy and to sacrifice every other interest, moral or otherwise, for the attainment of that ideal. Unless therefore Hindu public opinion clearly demands it, and it can be made without any injury to their ideal, no drastic change in our customs or socalled laws will be attempted or countenanced by them. And it is difficult to focus Hindu public opinion on identical points in a vast territory like British India covering many schools of thought and law. And such public opinion as there is naturally and necessarily preoccupied with the struggle for political freedom. A State like Mysore however has no such limitations or preoccupations. In my humble opinion, it is its duty to anticipate British India in the matter of removing the anachronisms in the Hindu Law and the like. Mysore State is large and important enough to attempt such changes. It has become a progressively constitutional monarchy. It has a Legislative Assembly representative enough to initiate social changes. It seems already to have passed a resolution asking for the appointment of a committee to consider what changes, if any, are necessary in the Hindu Law. And if a strong committee representing orthodox as well as progressive Hindu opinion is appointed, its recommendations must prove useful and pave the way towards making the necessary changes. I do not know the rules of the Mysore Assembly governing the constitution of such committees, but there is little doubt that they are elastic enough to admit of appointing or co-opting members from outside the Mysore State. Anyway Sjt. Bhashyam Aiyengar has shown that a revision of the Hindu Law is absolutely necessary in several cases. No State is better fitted than Mysore for initiating the belated reform.

Young India, 13-10-1927

156. NEILL STATUE SATYAGRAHA[1]

In accordance with the promise made by the volunteers connected with this movement, they have sent me papers giving the particulars I had asked for. From them it appears that during the six weeks that the struggle had been on when the papers were sent to me, thirty volunteers had courted imprisonment. Of these 29 are Hindus and one Mussalman, one lady aged 35 and one girl aged 9, her daughter. Of these thirty, two aplogized and got themselves released. The apology of a few, if it does not become infectious, does not matter. 'Blacklegs' will be found in every struggle. The men who have gone to jail are not noted men. This is no loss, rather it is a gain in a satyagraha struggle which requires no prestige save that of truth, and no strength save that of self-suffering which comes only from an immovable faith in one's cause and from a completely non-violent spirit.

The volunteers must not be impatient. Impatience is a phase of violence. A satyagrahi has nothing to do with victory. He is sure of it, but he has also to know that it comes from God. His is but to suffer.

The papers give me an account of income and expenditure. The income is given in detail and amounts to Rs. 228-2-6. The expenditure amounting to Rs. 228-2-6 [*sic*] is made up as follows : Meals, etc., Rs. 71-7-9, conveyance Rs. 53-2-6, notices for meetings, etc.,Rs. 39-4-0, establishment and postal charges Rs. 21-8-9, lights at meetings Rs. 22-8-0. I am not satisfied with these expenses. I have asked for more details. But subject to correction, I would warn the satyagrahis against spending much on meals, conveyances and lights. I know that my own meetings are not free from extravagance in these items. The Congress work too is not unopen to the charge of over-expenditure. But it is better to illustrate what I mean by what happens to me, the self-styled representative of *Daridranarayana*. Where six oranges will do, sixty are brought; where one car will do, six are ready, and where a hurricane lantern will serve the purpose, incandescent burners are produced. Let the satyagrahis understand that they have to use every pice they get as a miser uses his hoards. I suggest their getting a local man of note to take charge of their moneys and a philanthropic auditor their accounts free of charge. Strictest honesty and care are necessary in the handling of public funds. This is an

[1]*Vide* also "The Neill Statue and Non-violence", 29-9-1927.

indispensable condition of growth of a healthy public life.

The third paper I have before me is their appeal to the public. A satyagrahi's appeal must contain moderate language. The appeal before me though unexceptionable admits of improvement. "Not only Neill but all of his nefarious breed must go", is a sentence that mars the appeal. General Neill is no more. What we have to deal with is the statue and not even the statue as such. We seek to destroy the principle for which the statue stands. We wish to injure no man. And we wish to gain our object by enlisting public opinion not excluding English opinion in our favour by self-suffering. Here there is no room for the language of anger and hate.

So much for the volunteers.

The public owe a duty to them. They may not go to jail but they can supervise, control and guide and help the movement in many ways. Agitation for the removal of the statue is agitation for the removal of but a symptom of a grave disease. And while the removal of the statue will not cure the disease it will alleviate the agony and point the way to reaching the disease itself. It is also often possible to reach a deep-seated disease by dealing with some of its symptoms. So long therefore as the satyagrahi volunteers fight the battle in a clean manner and strictly in accordance with the conditions applicable to satyagraha, they deserve public support and sympathy.

Young India, 13-10-1927

157. KHADI SAMPLES

The technical department of the A.I.S.A. reports to me that all the khadi depots have not furnished it with the particulars required with their samples, and some have not even sent their samples. Out of nearly 40 names of places from which samples have been received, nearly 20 have failed to comply with the requirements. I therefore give them below :

Each piece should be four square yards with a ticket bearing the following particulars :

1. Width in inches;
2. Length of piece in yards;
3. Number of strands in warp per inch, and count of yarn used for warp and number of strands in weft per inch;

4. Weight in *tolas* per square yard;
5. Cost price per yard; and
6. Sale price per yard.

Khadi depots should realize that these particulars are required as much for their benefit as for that of the khadi movement in general. It is impossible for the technical department to make generalizations, draw deductions, and guide khadi producers, unless it is assisted in its research work by the various khadi depots and other workers. Nor is it possible to evolve discipline unless there is quick response made to the head office by all subordinate organizations, and it will be impossible to enable the All-India Spinners' Association to realize its aim unless there is voluntary discipline evolved at all points of its activity.

Young India, 13-10-1927

158. SPEECH AT ERNAKULAM

October 13, 1927

FRIENDS,

I thank you for the address and your purses. It will be interesting for you to know how these purses stand; nearly Rs. 500 from the students and Rs. 400 and odd from the public. I hope that the public assembled here will understand the meaning of the difference and make it up before they leave this meeting. I am also glad to inform you that on behalf of the Darbar I received this morning a cheque for Rs. 500 from the Dewan Sahib, and I also received through the Consort of His Highness the Maharaja notes valued at Rs. 300 on behalf of the Maharaja's daughter Shrimati Vilasini Devi who is at present in England. What is more, I have also received a parcel containing fairly well-spun yarn, spun by her sister Shrimati Ratnam a portion of which was spun by the Consort of the Maharaja herself. Evidently, this fact that khadi is favoured by the Maharaja' household is responsible for the favourable atmosphere that I see in Ernakulam. And I was also exceedingly pleased to learn that Christains, Hindus, Jews and we have some Jewish friends among us, and even some of the Mahommedans are favouring khadi. But I was at the same time grieved to learn that there is not the same enthusiasm and love for khadi that existed here more than two years ago. That is in my opinion wrong. We have been often charged with developing a sudden enthusiasm which vanishes suddenly. I should

like you to belie that charge. And in my humble opinion khadi is preeminently an activity in which sustained effort and sustained enthusiasm is necessary.

And if I could but induce you to understand the tremendous importance that khadi has to millions of starving people living in 700,000 villages in the whole of India, you will understand that enthusiasm and effort are not only necessary but indispensable. Remember the fact that it is calculated to serve not the city dwellers but millions of starving people living in the villages.

He regarded it as auspicious that instead of being assembled in front of what promises to become one of the finest harbours of southern India, they were assembled there in the college grounds.

I propose to take this even as an earnest of the fact that the boys and girls studying in this institution are not going to neglect their starving brothers and sisters. And I know that if I can but harness the energy of the student-world, there will be no difficulty in making khadi universal in India and solving the distressful poverty of the masses. Let the boys and girls, and men and women of this beautiful State, remember that the education that the boys and girls received in big cities is got only from the toiling masses in the country. And let me just tell you that I have spread for your edification a little, very little khadi exhibition in front of me.

Here Mahatmaji exhibited some fine hand-woven and hand-spun saris and purses, some of them containing delicate embroidery. He explained that the saris were produced in Andhra Desh, and that they were such as the most fastidious lady could use. The exhibits supported, he said, not only the spinners who received from one anna to two annas a day, but also those who earned Rs. 1 to Rs. 2 per day. The embroidery, he explained, was done in Bombay where a class of nearly 150 girls was being conducted under the supervision of some rich Hindu and Parsi ladies of Bombay for whom it was a labour of love. The exhibits, he said, were very much superior to the flimsy calico that many of them wore and which the ladies of Travancore and Cochin always delighted to wear. The exhibits before him were packed with the spirit of patriotism and a religious sentiment. And he or she who wore the khadi of which he had spoken placed himself or herself directly in touch with the poorest of his or her countrymen.

I want you, therefore, to consider this khadi work as a privilege and not merely as a pastime. I want the boys and girls of this institution to take to it as a gospel of love, to work in the villages.

I wish to convey my thanks to His Highness the Maharaja for

extending to me the hospitality of the State, as also for the gift that he has sent me. The only return that I can make for this kindness is to give frankly my view of some of the things that exist in this State. It is not open for a man like me to render service in any other manner. I wish therefore to refer to the same problem that engaged my attention in Travancore because I find that the problem taxes you, the people of Cochin, in the same manner as it taxes the people of Travancore. You have untouchability, unapproachability and unseeability. And it is a matter of deep grief to me to find this in a State ruled by a Hindu ruler. That untouchability should exist in these Hindu States is most regrettable.

A VOICE : It is worse here than in Travancore.

When darkness reigns supreme, where is the use of fixing the extent of that darkness? I confess that there has been great amelioration in recent years. I recognize that there is a desire on the part of His Highness and his officers to accelerate the rate of this proress. It gave me great joy to find that one member of the royal household was engaged in conducting an institution for our Pulaya brethren. But it is impossible for me to be satisfied with this progress. And I would like His Highness the Maharaja and his officials to share with me the impatience over these age-long wrongs. As a ruler of the State His Highness may measure the progress with a little foot-rule and claim satisfaction. But as a custodian of the fair name of Hindu religion, he must not perpetuate these wrong which are corroding Hinduism. In fair weather a captain would be justified in sailing along at a moderate pace and yet hope that in proper time he would reach his port. But this barque of Hinduism is sailing essentially in cloudy and stormy weather. In common with the other religions of the world it is also in the melting pot. World eyes are centred on India's millions. They are eagerly waiting to see how we Hindus solve this question. And in this stormy weather it is suicidal to be satisfied with this slow progress. If we want to overtake the storm that is about to burst we must make the boldest effort to sail full steam ahead. It is impossible to wait and weigh in golden scale the sentiments and superstitions of the priests who have been the custodians of these for centuries. In the face of this evil which everyone seems to recognize, it is not possible to wait till these prejudices and superstitions vanish.

Mahatma Gandhi then referred to the practice in Cochin of keeping out the members of untouchable castes when the deities of temples are taken in procession

along public roads as if the untouchables had not paid for the upkeep of those roads. He said :

I was both amused and pained when turning over your *Hansard*[1]. I found a defence of the practice on the ground of immemorial custom. Having been at one time a lawyer in the enjoyment of some sort of practice I brushed up my memory as to what immemorial custom was. And I have a faint recollection of having read a case in which a judge is reported to have made a cutting remark that immemorial custom should never be pleaded to commit a crime against humanity. These immemorial customs have wrung with time [*sic*]. Sin is as old as Adam himself, but I have not read a single book which says that because sin has been handed down to us from generation to generation is ought not to be interfered with. I find several other titbits in the same proceedings over the right of using the public roads. I find that the Fort is not open to *avarnas* because a temple is located there and there are schools situated near temples not open to children of all classes.

He had the pleasure of meeting two Ezhuva friends the same afternoon and he had a long discussion with them over this question. He could understand and appreciate the depth of feeling with which they spoke to him over the question. The arguments advanced were the same here, in British India, and in South Africa and they were filled with righteous indignation over the existing state of things. He said that it was the duty of the *savarna* Hindus to move the State to do elementary justice to the untouchables.

Mahatma Gandhi then referred to the institution of *Devadasis* which reflected no credit upon them. He did not know whether any sanctity was pleaded for this abominable custom.

A VOICE : There are no indigenous *Devadasis*. They are all 'imported' ones.

MAHATMAJI : Imported wines are also prohibited. (Laughter.)

Mahatmaji said that if there was one *Devadasi* in the whole State that was a disgrace to every young man.

Continuing, Mahatma Gandhi referred to the drink-trade and observed that drink was an immoral source of revenue. If they were fired by the real national or social spirit it was their own fault that there was a single drunkard among them. There were two methods of removing drunkenness, viz, (1) to carry on a ceaseless agitation for total prohibition in the State, and (2) to carry on a reform movement among those who had fallen a prey to the drink hahit. Mere total prohibition was not adequate nor

[1] The reference is to the reports of the proceedings of the Cochin Legislative Council.

could mere reform movement succeed without total prohibition. The two must go side by side and no sacrifice of revenue should be considered too great. As regards revenue he said that if they could only manufacture all the khadi they required in the State itself, they could increase the earnings of the people by four times.

He concluded with an appeal to those assembled to remember his message. He wished that some of them should dedicate themselves to the khadi work or to any of the other items of work mentioned by him all of which were extremely important. He appealed to those present to contribute their mite to the Khadi Fund and voluteers who went round met with a very generous response. Mahatmaji said that ladies in Travancore and Cochin were not heavily ornamented; but he confessed, amidst roars of laughter, that he was a little jealous even of the little jewellery they wore. There were several people in the country literally starving so that they had no justification to adorn themselves with jewellery. Real beauty consisted, he said, in the purity of character, not in ornamentation.

The Hindu, 15-10-1927

159. LETTER TO W. H. PITT

ON THE TRAIN,
TRICHUR,
October 14, 1927

DEAR MR. PITT[1],

I was glad to receive your note and glad too that you over-slept yourself. The morning visit would have been an unnecessary formality. Please tell Mrs. Pitt how glad I was to be able to shake hands with her.

You must have seen my speech a Alleppey. Messrs Madhavan and friends have suspended their activity and will not take any forward step without consultation with me and of course I shall do nothing without first putting myself in touch with you. May I look forward to you to set the matters at Tiruvarppu and Suchindram right? It you want me to write to the Devaswam Commissioner I would gladly do so.

It will be a graceful act now to withdraw the orders of prohibition.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 14623

[1] Commissioner of Police, Trivandrum

160. SPEECH AT TRICHUR

October 14, 1927

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I thank you for the address and for several purses that have been presented to me. I was looking forward to the pleasure of this, my second visit to Trichur and whilst I am not able to say that all my expectations of Trichur have been realized, I have seen sufficient during the day, in the course of my talks with several friends and my visit to several institutions, to fill me with hope. It gave me very great joy and pleasure to find that in these school of Trichur, spinning had become very popular. I saw hundreds of boys and girls spinning either on the wheels or on the *takli*. But as I have said and written, this spinning must be taken with religious faith and in a service and scientific spirit. I had the pleasure of seeing the girls spinning in the institution conducted by Mrs. Swans, whose enthusiasm for the institution captivated me. But even here I miss the scientific handling of spinning. It would not matter in the slightest degree, if spinning was not at all introduced until raw cotton was available. But it is in danger of becoming very unpopular even at the hands of enthusiasts who, not knowing the technique of spinning, may mishandle it. I remember my own school days when geometry was extremely unpopular amongst the boys. The reason of its unpopularity was not in the boys but in the teacher himself. Not having a full grasp of the subject, he rattled away for all he was worth at the propositions which he drew up on the board before the boys who never followed him. Now, personally I consider that geometry is a most fascinating study and when I understood its fascination, I really could never appreciate objections that boys very often raised to that subject. But you will find if you were to go deep into such things that wherever a particular subject is uninteresting or could not be popular among the boys and girls, it is not the fault of the subject or of the boys and girls, but essentially of the teachers. But geometry which is a great science and which has thousands of votaries throughout the world is, and was in my time, in no danger of suffering harm if it happened to be handled by some idiotic teachers. But unfotunately for the toiling millions of India, hand-spinning is even now struggling for its very existence. Many economists brought up in the European school even laugh at me when I advocate spinning as a

scientific thing and a sign of beauty and art. And believing as they do, in the system of competition reigning supreme in this world as the final word on economics, they believes that spinning is merely a toy of mine, varily to be destroyed as soon as I retire from this world. You will, therefore, appreciate my great anxiety for this child, struggling for its very existence and you will forgive me if I warn you against mishandling this thing for me and I say this after a careful study of the subject since 1908; spinning is not one of the many handicrafts that boys and girls may learn or our people may take to, but it is in my opinion the central fact of the life of the starving masses of India. I have come to the conclusion that no solution of the deep and everdeepening poverty of the masses is possible without giving hand-spinning a central place in any scheme. Whilst, therefore, I tender my congratulations to the State for countenancing hand-spinning in the manner I have seen and whilst I congratulate the boys and girls, whom I saw today, as well as the teachers, on their having taken up spinning, I must beseech the State authorities and the teachers and the boys and girls and all those who have the welfare of the State in their keeping to give this subject their very serious attention.

We are making an experiment in Ahmedabad on nearly 1,000 boys belonging to the so-called untouchables and I can claim that we have attained a very fair measure of success. The experiment is being tried under the personal supervision and care of Shrimati Anasuyabai, herself brought up in a millionaire family, but I told you that in order to achieve the measure of success that has been achieved in connection with that experiment, many experts have to give many a precious hour to its development and it was there that we came to the final conclusion that in the schools it would be wrong to introduce the spinning-wheel, but that it would be necessary to confine hand-spinning to the *takli* only. I will not go through the different processes that we tried there but I will simply give you the results of that experiment. All the boys' *taklis* are carefully examined; every boy has well-carded sliver. The hands of the boys are often likely to get moist as they are handling the *takli*; they are instructed to see to it that their hands do not get moist. Every boy's yarn in carefully kept and tested for its twines and counts and strength, and we aw that in an incredibly short space of time, the results came up to 50 per cent higher. It is also found that the average speed too increased because of this testing. Every teacher was encouraged to learn this art by offering a small increment in his salary, if he would learn it, so that

now every teacher is a good carder, and a good spinner. The testing continues up to this day. The result is altogether encouraging during the time this experiment has been made. And we have found also by actual experience that the quantity that we so received from those boys is four or five times greater than the quantity that we were able to get from the spinning-wheels. Not because a boy sitting at the spinning-wheel would draw less than from the *takli*, but because a simultaneous spinning by all the boys at the spinning-wheel was found to be a physical impossibility. Spinning-wheels had a knack of going out of order in the hands of these mischievous youngsters times without number, and let me give out the secret to you that we found too that the boys and girls would remain boys and girls and would be mischievous. And there was no iron discipline in them not to do a little harmless mischief. But we understood that that mischief was a sign of overflowing energy. We, therefore, try to harness that mischief for this work and now we find these boys, if we were to go there, smiling away and singing away whilst they are spinning gladly and religiously for half an hour every day, and our goal is to enable every boy to spin enough during the year and more for his own requirements and something for the requirements of his family. Figures have been worked out, that if one half of the population of India were to give a portion only of its leisure hours from day to day, the whole of India can have more than enough of yarn for her requirements.

But I must not engage this great meeting with the details of hand-spinning. I simply ask you, seeing that you are coducting this very great experiment, to handle it very seriously, scientifically and skilfully. But if you are really serious and not playing at it and if you have the taste for hand-spinning that I have, or even some measure of the taste that I have, then I suggest to you that it is absolutely necessary for you to train the boys and their parents to wear khadi. You will understand me when I say that the reality of the experiment disappears immediately you acknowle-dge that the boys do not wear khasi. It therefore did give me pain to see, although I was scanning most carefully, that very few boys and girls that I saw at these institutions were wearing khadi. But the boys and girls are not likely to wear khadi nor are the parents likely to encourage their boys and girls unless the teachers themselves set the example. I know some very good parents, themselves inveterate smokers, trying to teach their children not to smoke. You may easily imagine the disastrous results

of this teaching on the part of these parents. The boys simply laugh at the teaching and smoke secretly. If, therefore, you really think as you seem to from all your talks, and all the addresses that I have received, that you have faith in the efficiency of hand-spinning for solving to a very large extent the problem of the poverty of the masses, it behoves you seriously to adopt khadi yourselves, and fill the atmosphere with the khadi spirit and the the spinning-wheel.

In this State where boys and girls are receiving so much education and boys and girls derived from all classes, Christians and Hindus and all others, who are in this State, it is really a very easy thing for you to make this beautiful State self-supporting, so far as its clothing requirements are concerned. We have it on the authority of Sir Dinshaw Wachha that the average clothing requirements of India are nearly 13 yards per year per head. I, therefore, calculate Rs. 4 for that quantity of cloth per head. You have to multiply the number of the population in the State and find out for yourselves what a vast sum you can save from year to year in the aggregate and that brings me immediately to the cursed drink problem.

It is amazing to me that where there is spread so much education, where there are so many educational institutions, where there are so many Chistians and Hindus, that this great evil is tolerated. If we really thought, as we should think, all the people in this land as our own blood brothers and sisters, this evil should not be allowed to exist for one single day. Can we contemplate with equanimity the terrible fact that our children depend for their education upon this immoral source of revenue to a large extent? I have heard from so many mouths the financial difficulty mentioned in achieving this reform of necessary total prohibition. I have presented you with a ready-made solution for that difficulty in the shape of the spinning-wheel. It is really the bounden duty of all of you to eradicate this evil by every legitimate means at your disposal, and if I talk in this strain of the drink evil, what am I to say about the evil of untouchability which appears in this fair land in the extreme and odious forms of unapproachability and unseeability?

I know that the State had done a great deal to help these so-called untouchables. I was delighted to find that a member of the royal house was looking after a Pulaya colony and that this colony received a substantial grant from the public purse. It was a joy to me to see the Secretary of the Y. M .C. A. in a neighbouring place who is

in charge of such a colony and which re ceives State aid to the extent of Rs. 300 or Rs. 400 a year. And I was equally delighted to understand from the Director of Public Instruction, with whom I had the pleasure of a heart-to-heart conver-sation, that nearly 50 per cent of the boys learning in the schools of this State belong to this untouchable class.[1] I thank you for the correction. I understand now that it is not 50 per cent of the boys who are studying in the schools, but 50 per cent [of boys] of the school- going age amongst the depressed or the untouchable classes. Even this statement, whilst not as satisfactory as the one I had made to you, is also satisfactory. And I would like to say, in parenthesis, that seeing that these boys, and girls also I expect, who have been so long neglected require special handling, and as they study in the ordinary schools of the State and very rightly so, the educational syllabus itself needs, in my humble opinion, overhauling. But whilst I tender my congratulations to the State and the people of this State upon the progress that has been made in this direction, I must confess to you my feeling that great as this progress may appear otherwise, with regard to the enormity of the evil that has spread into Hinduism even this progress is still insignificant. If we are to do enough penance or the sin we have committed before man and God, in treating a class of human beings, as good as ourselves, as untouchables, the rate of progress has to be much quicker than it has been. I had a graphic but painful description given to me by the Secretary of the Y.M.C.A. of the condition of the Nayadis. I must not take up your time by describing in detail the painful conversation. Probably you know much better than I do the wrong upon wrong that we Hindus have heaped upon our own kith and kin that wrong can only be somewhat washed away when we rise in indignation against ourselves and wipe out the evil. I know the argument that is advanced always in favour of patience and advanced also in favour of prejudices, however sinful that prejudice may be, but having seen the condition of these classes from one end of India to the other, I can only say to you that by talking in this fashion of philosophers about the progress and conditions of progress, we are getting tired. For me this question of removal of untoucha bility to the core is the acid test of Hinduism. Though the problem is capable of yielding either way enormous political and econo mic results, it is to

[1] Here Rao Saheb Mathai, the Director, intervened briefly to correct Gandhiji's statistics.

me preeminently a religious question. It is a question of self-purification for the *savarna* Hindus. I, therefore, feel that we are not doing our duty by these people when we talk of doing these things in easy stages. I would not be satisfied unless every one of us became a missionary for taking a ray of hope and comfort into the desolate homes of these people. You will, therefore, understand why I feel deeply hurt to find that on certain occasions when these people pass through public streets they are pushed away, that schools which may be in the precincts of temples are not open to the children of this class. I myself find it impossible to reconcile the prohibition orders against the entry of these men and women into our temples. To me it is not a place fit to live in where we have the impertinence to consider that God Himself can be defiled by the approach of His own creature. That temple from which a single human being is debarred, because of his being born in a particular sect, for me, ceases to be a temple itself. I, therefore, appeal to every one of you with all the earnestness and force at my command to do your duty valiantly by the people.

There is another evil also, which is corrupting society. I have a printed open letter, signed by some friends whose names I do not know and some I could not decipher, in connection with the *Devadasi* institution. Enclosed with that letter was a petition addressed to His Highness the Maharaja. This petition makes a painful reading. It describes how a few *Devadasis*, having been, in the first instance, brought into the State, have now developed into a growing institution. I do not know how far the statements made in that petition can be borne out, but all I know is that it is a well-reasoned petition from responsible quarters. It bears *prima facie* marks of credibility and that petition contains the statement that girls born of *Devadasis* and girls also adopted from other classes by *Devadasis* are actually, in the name of God, dedicated for purposes too awful to contemplate. The petition mentions a whole class of people who disgrace themselves and India by making use for unlawful purposes of these girls of tender age. I do not know how far it is possible for you to contradict the statements made in this petition. But it is for you, those who are leaders of public opinion in this State, those who are capable of moulding public opinion in this State, to study this petition. You will find that there is substantial ground for the complaints made in this petition. You should try to deal with this problem in a serious manner. The petition alludes with gratitude, and I think, very properly too, to the resolution of the Mysore Government taken as early as 1909, in order to deal

with this great evil which was in existence there at that time. I venture to think that it is a resolution worth copying by this State. It gives elementary justice to these unfortunate sisters of ours. You may also know perhaps that there is at the present moment a Bill being promoted by the lady member of the Madras Legislative Council on the same models, somewhat after the style of the Mysore resolution. The petition gives convincing reasons for the adoption of that resolution. I commend to all of you a serious study of this delicate question.

And that brings me to the students, both boys and girls, from whom I received the address and whom I saw this afternoon. It has been a matter of the greatest joy and comfort to me to find that I possess the confidence of thousands of students throughout the length and breadth of this land and I assure you it is the daily prayer going out from the bottom of my heart to the Maker of us all, that He may make me worthy of that confidence. I wish that I had ample time at my disposal to open out my heart to the students, boys and girls at this meeting. I know that I may never see you again in this life by my heart is always with you.

I have always felt that our education is imperfect and incomplete in a variety of ways. You have yourselves, in your address expressed the same opinion and you have expressed the ideal hope that my having come in your midst would set matters right in the matter of education. I wish that there was warrant for that hope. The alteration of the educational scheme is very important and from one end of the country to the other it is a tremendous problem. I have often written on it and some of the students of mature age are probably familiar with my views. I assume that they have not undergone the slightest change and with the march of time the intensity of my convictions has grown. But that is a solution which I dare not even discuss with you at the present moment. It rests with the educationists of the country and more than that it rests really on so many circumstances over which not even they have any control. And in speaking, therefore, to the boys and girls I have adopted a method which is easier of adoption and which is capable of being adopted by them without the slightest change in the present curriculum. Rightly or wrongly it is claimed by all educationists that education should be only secular.

Personally I have always dissented emphatically from that view but things being as they are it is necessary at some stage or other or

the students to receive some religious consolation, some religious instruction. Unfortunately the homes of those parents who send their boys to these schools have practically broken up. They have neither the fitness nor the willingness to give this necessary instruction to their boys and girls. That religious and moral atmosphere which we hope and believe at one time surrounded every home and hamlet in India is today conspicuous by its absence, but thank God that students need not feel helpless. If you have as every one of us ought to have the religious and moral impulse within us, it is possible to give ourselves the necessary training.

Let us understand what is meant by religious and moral instruction. In other words, it is nothing but character-building and every boy and every girl knows instinctively what character is. It needs no perental instruction, no priestly instruction to tell you that there is a God. Without that indispensable faith, in my opinion, building of character is an impossibility. It is the foundation of character. So I say to the boys and girls, "Never lose faith in God therefore in yourselves and remember that if you allow refuge to a single evil thought, a single sinful thought, you know at once that you lose that faith." Untruthfulness, uncharitableness and violence—all those things are strangers absolutely to that faith. Remember that we have in this world no enemy greater than ourselves. The *Bhagavad Gita* proclaims it in almost every verse. If I was to sum up the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount I find the same answer; my reading of the Koran has led me to the same irresistible conclusion. No one can harm us so much as we can harm ourselves. If you are, therefore, brave boys and brave girls you will fight desperately and valiantly against the whole of this group of evil thoughts. No sinful act was ever done on this earth without the prompting of a sinful thought. You have therefore to exercise vigilance over every thought growing up in your breast. Many students, both boys and girls, have often asked me or told me that whilst they understand with their intelligence the cause of such remarks that I have just now made to you, they find it impossible in practice to control their thoughts and drive them away. Thus they give up the struggle and give way to despair. Except for perfect beings, surely evil thoughts will arise some time or other in every breast. Hence the necessity for incessant prayer to God to keep us from sin; that is one process which does not do harm. The other process is actually welcoming evil thoughts when they come. That is the most dangerous and harmful process and it is that process against which I

invite you to fight with all your might and if you think of what I am saying, you will immedia tely discover that this really is the easiest thing to do. For every one of us can make up our choice as to the guests that we are to invite or encourage in our own breast. We may not be able to help the onslaught of the enemy but it is given to every one of us to die in the attempt to repel the onslaught. I suggest to you to take this home with you and see whether you do not, day after day, become successful in this strife. And there is another thing also along this line which I want to tell you and it is this.

If we will not think of ourselves but think of those who are less fortunate when compared with ourselves we shall find that we have no leisure whatsoever for harbouring evil thoughts. Hence I have invited every boy and girl to set apart at least half an hour to think of the poor millions. I have asked you to regard yourselves as trustees for these millions of population. I have asked you to establish a living bond which binds yourselves with these and if you uphold this you will find that you are always occupied and are always not at home to receive these unwelcome visitors. I tell you from my own experience and the experience also of many of my comrades how this one thought of incessantly working for India's poor millions keeps me and them from all harm. That is the spiritual secret of the spinning-wheel, but I do not care if the spinning-wheel does not appeal to you. All I suggest to you is that you must establish a living bond between yourselves and these paupers and you will find immediately that you have laid this surest foundation for building up your character. May God help you to understand what I have told you, may He give you the power to act up to it.

The Hindu, 17-10-1927

161. CONVERSATION WITH DEPRESSED CLASSES' DEPUTATIONS

October 15, 1927

Mahatmaji insisted on receiving both the deputations[1] together, as by so doing the Cherumas and the Ezhuvas would be brought together in the same hall.

Mr. P. C. Gopalan explained the grievances of the Ezhuvas in not being allowed to pass through Agraharam streets.

[1] Of the Depressed Classes Mission led by C. Seshayya and the Ezhuvas led by T. M. Chamiappan, Sukumaran and P. C. Gopalan

Mahatmaji enquired whether the restriction remained only for the festival days or on all the days of the year. Mr. Gopalan answered the restriction remained throughout the year in the Agraharam roads. . . .

Regarding an enquiry from Mahatmaji Mr. C. Seshyaya informed him that the admission of the Depressed Classes into the ordinary schools was a pious hope which existed on paper only.

Mr. Raghava Menon informed Mahatmaji that on account of the various social disabilities heaped on the Ezhuvas by the higher castes, some of the Ezhuvas had gone over to Christianity and Islam. But a check has been placed on such defections from Hinduism by the efforts of the Arya Samaj who have obtained a ruling from the Madras High Court that on public streets vested in a municipality all members of the public have equal rights and that one section of the community cannot interdict another section from the lawful use of the public streets.

Mahatmaji opined that the same problem existed everywhere in Kerala and so public conscience must be aroused.

Mr. P. C. Gopalan wished to know from Mahatmaji that, since all religions are equal, the Ezhuvas wished to know if they could embrance other religions to obtain redress of their wrongs.

Mahatmaji said that they must not leave the Hindu religion but must fight the cause with all reasonable force. If only they knew the utility of Hinduism the persecution of the so-called higher castes was nothing.

Mr. Chamiappan informed Mahatmaji that the majority of the Ezhuvas did not want conversion to other faiths, excepting a few. Their lands were in the ownership of the higher castes and that was the reason they were afraid to fight.

Mahatmaji said that if all of them were of one mind and with discipline and courage, they could win their social freedom.

Mr. Chamiappan brought to the notice of Mahatmaji that Congressmen themselves were not helping them in the struggle, let alone the general public. . . .

Mahatmaji said certainly he would talk to the Congressmen on that, but whether they would accept his advice or not he could not say. He added that some were Congressmen only in name.

Mr. Seshayya stated that . . . the ambition of the Cherumas was not temple entry but only to pass along public roads.

MAHATMAJI : Why not temple entry also? The question was a difficult one all over Malabar.

Mr. P. C. Gopalan wanted to know if the Ezhuvas could put up a tough fight, by using violence, meaning assault for assault.

Mahatmaji deprecated violence. As for him he would not file a complaint in a

court, but the Ezhuvas, if they chose, could. There was the Hindu Maha Sabha to which body they could appeal. Violence would spoil their cause. Satyagraha was a complete substitute or violence.

Mr. Gopalan submitted to Mahatmaji that the salvation of his community either lay in conversion to other faiths or non-participation in the fight for swaraj. Mr. Gopalan wished to know if there was any hope of having a purified Hinduism.

MAHATMAJI : Oh yes. Otherwise I would not be a Hindu and could not live.

In reply to another question whether Ezhuvas could join the Arya Samaj or Brahmo Samaj, Mahatmaji answered that they could do so if they wanted.

Then Mahatmaji enquired why a large number present there did not wear khadi. Mr. Chamiappan stated that Government was their only support for the moment in this social struggle and reminded him of the recent Government order against subscribing to the Khadi Fund and as such they did not wish to alienate that only support and sympathy. He appealed to Mahatma Gandhi to help them in their struggle.

Mahatma Gandhi promised to do his best. He informed his hearers that he was soon to lay aside khadi work to take up the solution of untouchability. He thanked them for having waited in deputations. He was just going to Sabari Ashram—where the removal of untouchability was going on—and thence on a visit to His Holiness Shri Shankaracharya of Kumbakonam Mutt, to have an interview, with a view to convert the Swamiji, if he could, to his view in the matter of the removal of untouchability.[1]

The Hindu, 17-10-1927

162. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, PALGHAT

October 15, 1927

FRIENDS,

I thank you for your addresses and the several purses. As you are aware, this is not my first visit to Palghat. I have vivid recollec tions of your kindness when I was here last. I am glad that the Taluk Board is devoting some of its attention to the spinning-wheel. I hope you will organize spinning in all your schools in a scientific manner. I had occasion yesterday in Trichur to see a number, nearly four or five

[1]*The Hindu* report adds: "Mahatmaji and party motored to the Nellichery village. Here he was met and received by Shri Shankaracharya of the Kamakoti Peetham, Kumbakonam Mutt. There was a heart-to-heart talk between the two great men. The interview lasted some 30 minutes and was strictly private." For a report of the meeting between Gandhiji and the Shankracharya, *Vide* Appendix "Interview with Shri Shankaracharya of Kanchi", February 12, 1948.

hundred, of boys and girls spinning. They belong to two high schools. Whilst I cannot say that the spinning was high-class spinning it was nevertheless an ennobling sight. But the pleasure of it was marred by the anomaly that the majority of the boys and girls, whilst they were spinning, were dressed in foreign cloth and not in khaddar. I hope that the same anomaly does not exist in your schools. It is necessary to understand the implications of the spinning-wheel. All the spinning that our boys and girls may do or even the millions of somewhat starved villagers may do, will be, you can easily realize, of no avail whatsoever, if we do not make use of the khadi to be produced from the yarn so spun. If then you really endorse, as you seem to do, the message of the spinning-wheel, I would respect- fully ask you to be true to it and adopt khadi for yourselves. Wherever I have gone throughout this tour I have found a hearty endorsement of this message; but a lip profession accompanied even by a solid purse will not relieve the distress of famishing millions in our 7,00,000 villages, unless we are prepared to wear khadi.

You have in your midst here an ashram, called Sabari Ashram. It was from this Sabari Ashram that I received this beautiful piece of khadi, where yarn is spun by the little boys whom I saw there and woven also by their little hands. I call it beautiful not because it is as fine or as soft as the calico that you are wearing. But I call it beautiful because of the history and the romance behind it. This piece of khadi puts you in touch at once with those boys and with the millions of villagers. It is even beautiful because of the significance that attaches to it. If a corpse was painted by the greatest painter and presented to us as a specimen of beautiful art, we would not touch it but we would shrink with horror from it. We fall down at the feet of our own mothers irrespective of whether her form is considered beautiful or not. For every one of us, I hope, there is no woman more beautiful than our own mother. The beauty comes then from the association which it carries with it. At the end of the meeting I shall test the sense of your beauty by offering this cloth to you. You may have seen, some of you at least, in the papers that in Chettinad, for a small piece of khadi, which was in reality exceedingly finer than this coarse khadi, I got Rs. 1,000 because it was prepared locally by a self-sacrificing artist and because it was woven also in the same place Devakottah.

I have a purse from the Viswabharati Reading Room that is being conducted in Palghat and a proposal has been received by me that I should formally declare open the khaddar depot which the

people associated with the Reading Room want me to open. I do so with great pleasure and I hope that it will receive the encouragement that it deserves from you all. I have got some khadi also from this depot which, if you can preserve the silence that prevails just now, at the end of the meeting it will be open for you to have. But pleasant though everything that I can say about khadi is to me, I must hasten to enter a subject which has been engrossing my attention throughout the Kerala tour.

I refer to the evil of untouchability known here in its extreme form, even of unapproachability and invisibility. It has been a matter always of deep grief to me whenever I have come to Karala to find that in a land so beautiful, almost unrivalled for its beauty in all India, there should be this untouchability in all its hideous forms. I had a long and serious discussion with a deputation from friends belonging to the Ezhuva and Cheruma communities. I ofer no apology for not knowing these intricate sub-divisions. It is enough for me to know that this is a hydraheaded monster. I assure you it gives me no pleasure whatsoever to understand all these kinds of gradations in untouchability that are prevalent here. When I hear of all this graded untoucability I feel deeply humiliated and ashamed. To add to my grief I had today an ocular demonstration of a thing, which I shall not be able to easily forget.

As soon as I arrived in Palghat, I heard a shrill voice in the neighbourhood of the house where I have been accommodated. In my innocence I thought that as this was a business centre this was the sound of some labourers working in a factory in order to ease themselves of the burden of carrying heavy loads as I am used to in Ahmedabad and Bombay. Within an hour after we reached Palghat, Mr. C. Rajagopalachari came to me and asked me whether I was hearing any strange sounds. I told him, yes. And he straightway asked me whether I knew what it was. He told me that that was the voice of a Nayadi and he added that was the sign that a Nayadi at a distance was begging. I asked him how far he could be. On hearing that he was within a stone's throw I hastened out to see who this man could be who was making all that sound. Well, you all know where I could have found him. He was not walking along the road, but he was at some distance from the hedge that guarded the road. I asked him to come near and he came near but not at the roadside of the hedge and told me that he dared not come on the roadside. He added that he never walked along the roads of Palghat. The rest of the story of this

miserable case I don't need to recite to you.

The man certainly did not look starved; but that to me was no matter for compliment to the Hindus. It was to me a sign of contempt, of degraded conscience shown by flinging a handful of rice in the face of this man whom we refuse to recognize as a human being and as a blood-brother. In flinging rice in the face of these people in the manner we do on Saturdays and Wednesdays of the week, in my humble opinion, we not only degrade human beings but also we put a premium on begging. I don't think that the virtue of charity demands that we should give meals, or food or money to men who are ablebodied, who have got two strong arms and legs as this man has. When I asked this man whether he would take up some steady labour and could put by this profession of begging, he tole me that he could not do so unless he had consulted his brethren. I leave it to you, everyone who has got intelligence enough, to work out the frightful results and consequences of this wrong. Some of the results of this kind of charity we are already suffering from in this poor country of ours. Two hours after this humiliating spectacle I had the pleasure of receiving the friends I had alreday referred to.

Some of them were as learned as the most learned amongst you. I could find no difference whatsoever between them and the tallest in this assembly and yet their addresses unfolded a tale of wrong which is enough to shame every one of us. They cannot go along some roads, public roads, although they are as much taxpayers as any of you, simply because they are classed as untouchables. Temple entry is an unthinkable thing. Some of them cannot walk along any road whatsoever and on the analogy of what the *savarna* Hindus have done, they have amongst themselves also, as I remarked before, gradations of untouchability. They appealed to me for help and I wish that it was in my power to give them the help that I should like to. For, as a Hindu I feel that I am a participator in the crime that we have done against them. I wish that I could convince the men and women who may be here that this is a terrible wrong we are doing to them, to ourselves and to our own faith. I wish I had the power to convince you that there is absolutely no warrant for such untouchability as we practise today in Hinduism. My whole Hindu soul rises in rebellion against this hideous wrong. I have searched our books in vain for any mention of Ezhuvas, Pulayas, Nayadis and what not. I have asked learned men here in Travancore and elsewhere in all humility to teach me how these men can be classed as untouchables and on what

authority. I tell you that there is absolutely no authority whatsoever for all these terrible deeds except that of custom. But nobody as yet had the hardihood to tell me that this immoral custom carried any religious sanction with it. If we were not too lazy to think out these problems for ourselves, if we had not surrendered our reason to superstition, we could remove this evil in the twinkling of an eye. I have found no warrant in Hinduism or in any religion or in any system of philosophy for the arrogation of superiority by one class of men over another. If we harbour this doctrine of inequality in our breast it ill becomes us to think of swaraj. We talk with our lips in a most learned manner of democratic institutions but in our heart of hearts we deny to others the elementary rights we propose with our lips. I ask all the learned men, all those who have the welfare of Hindus and Hinduism in their hearts to wake up betimes and deal a deathblow to this great demon. If you are nationalists and feel for the country and therefore feel for the lowest of our countrymen, go down to their haunts where the Nayadis and the Pulayas and all those men, miscalled untoucahbles, are living and give your whole life to their amelioration.

I was pained when these friends of the two deputations informed me that there were even some of the Congressmen who believed in untouchability and kept these men at a great distance. I should like to find that these men have been misin formed and that that charge cannot be sustained. But if there are any Congressmen who harbour untouchability in their hearts, as a Congressman expected to know something of the Congress creed and the Congress resolutions, I beg to inform you that such Congressmen should resign their membership. They should understand that the removal of untouchability is an integral part of the Swaraj Resolution that was taken up by the Congress at its first session under the new constitution. In my opinion that resolution has almost the sanctity of the Congress creed. To be true to the nation, to the Congress and to be true to ourselves, if we do not believe in the removal of untouchability it is open to us to challenge the Congress creed, to challenge that resolution or to move for its removal. You cannot be truthful if you harbour untouchability and still be a party to the resolution on untouchability. But I have put before you after all only a miserable, worldly view of a thing which does not admit of playing with. What does it matter whether you are a Congressman or no Congressmen? Is it not your duty—those who are Hindus—to give due consideration to

this great question and examine it in its religious significance? I regard the removal of this evil as really an acid test of Hinduism. In my own humble opinion the Brahmin-non-Brahmin question, the Hindu-Muslim question and so many other questions that afflict us today are but phases of this untouchability question.

If we, whom God has blessed with intelligence and privileges, would only understand that we are but servants of the lowest and poorest among our countrymen, all these questions that have arisen in our midst would disappear in a moment. It is impossible in the face of the great mass awakening that has taken place in this land, as all over the world, to sustain arrogance, insolence and superiority for one single moment.

I have turned myself inside out whether there can be any reasonable justification for all the wrongs from which these friends are suffering and I tell you I have not discovered a single justification. But I must not take up any more of your time. I only pray God that He may open the eyes of your understanding, that He may awaken your conscience and that He may bless you with power to go out into the midst of the people and bring them the solution and relief that they deserve.

I thank you for the great patience with which you have listened to me.

The Hindu, 18-10-1927

163. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, COIMBATORE

October 16, 1927

SISTERS,

If you don't stop that noise I can't talk to you. I thank you for the purse you have given me. There are only one or two things I want to talk to you. We all want *Ramarajya* in India. You can't get *Ramarajya* in India if you can't live like Sita. Sita was pure in heart and pure in body. I think and it is my opinion, that most of you, the vast majority of you, defile your body with foreign cloth. Not so did Sita Devi. Don't suppose for one moment that Sita Devi went in for or sent for foreign finery to decorate her body. On the contrary, we know that in Sita Devi's time, Sita Devi and all the women of India sat spinning and wore cloth woven by the men of India. And that was beautiful. There is enough in our ancient books to show that women

without exception span in those times with their own hands and that we made all the cloth we needed. The books tell us that in those days India's millions in villages and towns ate well and clothed themselves sufficiently. But you deck your bodies with foreign saris, while millions of our women are starving in our villages. I know that men, no less than women, are guilty of this. I know that Indian men initiated this habit of wearing foreign cloth. The fruit of this has been that men and women in the villages are daily becoming poorer and daily descending into deepening distress. Like Sita Devi, think day by day of the poor brothers and sisters of India. When you think of them I am sure that you will think it your duty to wear the khadi woven by their sacred hands. I will tell you another thing that Sita Devi did. She did not consider a single human being as untouchable. She and the great Rama willingly and gratefully accepted the services of Nishadaraja, who according to our false notions of today would be considered untouchable. Bharata, the great brother of Rama, embraced Nishadaraja warmly when Bharata observed that he had served Rama with devotion. You know Bharata, the king of *rishis* and sannyasis. Today we consider those who serve us, till our fields and clean our closets, as not fit to be touched by us. I tell you that it is not religion, but irreligion. And I wish that you should get rid of this stain of untouchability.

The third thing I want to talk to you about is *Devadasis*. Friends, I understand there are some of these sisters here. I consider the occupation of *Devadasis* to be immoral. They ought not to be found in that occupation. I see you have got your women's club or association. It is your first duty to look after these unfortunate sisters. If you band yourselves together and carry on an agitation in this matter, you can compel the men and women of Coimbatore into their duty in this regard.

You must take into your hands reforms of this character. You have heard the name of Dr. Muthulakshmi of Madras. She is your representative in the Madras Legislative Council. She is even its Deputy President. I had a long chat with her. Her view is, and others also think, that It is now high time to combat this serious evil of Hindu society. You here should do likewise.

There is another evil I should like to speak to you about. You give away your daughters in marriage before they can know what marriage can be. Do not get them married before they reach a ripe

age, at least before they attain the age of 16. I tell you that it is a sin to do so.

I have with me in Ahmedabad girls more than 16 years old and unmarried. They are as innocent as flowers in your home. They spend their time in doing many acts of service for society. They receive proper education there. They are not going to be married, unless they themselves desire it. Do not for one moment consider that this is not your work, but men's work. This is especially your work for the women. Wake up and work for the hapiness of the girls. The men cannot do it and won't do it.

To realize the truth I have told you, you need not go to colleges or read a single line. You can easily understand all this. This is what I call human education, what all women can achieve without knowing a single letter of the alphabet.

Now I must tell you, I am not satisfied with your purse. I can tell you what your sisters, the ladies of other districts, did for the movement. Malabar girls do not wear much jewellery like yourselves. Heavy jewellery I see only in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Desha. Malabar ladies parted with even the single bracelets, rings, etc., they wore for the khadi movement. And it is my standing request to them not to molest their husbands or disturb their parents for fresh jewellery to replace the jewels donated. If you feel for your poor sisters and if you like to, I would ask you to surrender your jewels for their sake. Gifts must be absolutely voluntary and willingly given.

Remember that the beauty of a woman does not consist in the beauty of her clothes and jewellery but in the purity of her heart. Whather you give me your jewellery or not, is a minor matter. But I do want you to bear the truths, that I have just told you, in mind. And I tell you from my experience that the desire for wearing much jewellery does no good. Husbands often ask me to advise you to revise your notions of jewellery and finery. I am free to tell you that there are husbands who have assured me that the wives who came to be influenced by my teachings, themselves rejoiced for such influence.

May God, through you, bless our land.

The Hindu, 19-10-1927

164. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, COIMBATORE

October 16, 1927

I thank you all for the presents and addresses that you have given me. I am sure you do not want me to mention the names of the bodies who have presented the addresses or of the donors and their gifts. What is given for the sake of *Daridranarayana* needs no mention. I may inform you that I have read very carefully all the translations that have been given to me of the addresses or their originals.

I will take up first of all the municipal address. My sincere thanks are dut to the Municipality for not only expressing their sentiments frankly, courteously and firmly but also or reminding me of the address which the municipality gave me when I paid my last visit to Coimbatore. Throughout my life I have gained more from my critic friends than my admirers, especially when the criticism was made in courteous and friendly language as the present one is. The first address I had the honour of receiving from this Municipality told me or rather questioned the utility of non-co-operation, especially regarding schools and public services. Many important, and some of them painful, events have happened since the birth of non-co-operation. I had two years of prayerful contemplation over the advice that I tendered the country for the first time in 1921. I have read and read with careful attention and open mind almost everything that has been written against non-co-operation and as a result of my observation I am able to inform you that not only have I not changed the views that I held in 1921 and that I expressed when I had the honour of meeting you last but have been confirmed more and more in those views. It is my humble opinion that, within the last two generations, our country has not gained as much as it has gained since the advent of non-violent non-co-operation. I entertain no doubt whatever as to the verdict of history over non-violent non-co-operation. It is also my certain belief that every student who left his school or college or every government servant who left what passes for public services has gained immeasurably and lost nothing by having done so. That public services in spite of non-co-operation have not been abandoned, that Government, schools have not been abandoned by our boys is no demonstration whatsoever of the failure of my doctrine, even as, because men and women are not all votaries of truth, truth cannot be challenged as to its efficacy or soundness; but I want to go a step

further and tell you that he who wished to study carefully and impartially current events will find ample testimony that several Government servants who left their jobs and several students who left their schools are giving a good account of themselves.

It is a small thing that millions of people rose to a man, as if by magic, one fine morning under the spell of non-co-operation? If co-operation is a duty I hold that non-co-operation also, under certain conditions, is equally a duty. I go further and contend that if this country of ours is to gain its freedom by non-violent means, there is no other means open but for them some day to take up non-co-operation. Believe me that if today I do not talk of non-violent non-co-operation it is not because my faith is not burning as brightly as ever but because as a practical man I do not find the atmosphere for working out that creed. I must not weary you with my arguments about my belief.

The present address of the Municipality in courteous but firm language enters a protest against the views that I have been expressing about varnashrama dharma. The signatories or framers of the address seem to regard varnashrama dharma as an unmitigated evil. I venture to reaffirm my belief that varnashrama dharma is not only not an unmitigated evil but it is one of the foundations on which Hinduism is built. In my humble opinion the framers of the address have mistaken the shadow for the substance. Instead of making, as I humbly believe, this serious blunder if they invited me to join them in a crusade against the travesty that passes for varnashrama dharma, they would have found me enrolling myself as a volunteer under their banners. I hold it as a low of our being and, whether we know such laws of our being or whether we do not, we have to obey them even as our forefathers obeyed the law of gravitation before it was discovered by a master mind. Nature's laws are inexorable. We may not disobey them and escape punishment. The conviction is daily forcing itself upon me that this India of ours and the rest of the world are suffering because of our breach of the law of varnasharma dharma. If Hinduism today seems to me to be in a fallen state it is not because of Varnasharma dharma but because of the wilful disobedience of that dharma. Varnashrama dharma defines man's mission on this earth. He is born day after day not to explore avenues for amassing riches and to explore different means of livelihood; on the contrary, man is born in order that he may utilize every atom of his energy for the purpose of knowing his Maker. It restricts him therefore for the

purpose of holding body and soul together to the occupation of his forefathers. That and nothing more or nothing less is varnashrama dharma and it is not possible nor desirable nor necessary that I should ignore that dharma because the majority of Hindus seem to deny it in their lives. Thus conceded, varnashrama dharma has nothing in common with castes as we know them today. That dharma therefore can never mean and has never tolerated untouchability. That dharma therefore has no idea of superiority or inferiority. Because many people, millions of people, take the name of God in vain and even insult God and man in the name of God Himself, shall we disown our God and find another name for Him? I therefore invite respectfully the framers of the address and the audience to join me in a crusade against the spectre of castes and the curse of untouchability and I promise that if you join me in this crusade you will find at the end of it that there is nothing to fight against in Hinduism. I have been praferfully studying the great non-Brahmin and Brahmin question which has been agitating so many able men in the South and I am daily driven to the conclusion that the question, in so far as it is a non-Brahmin question, is a phase of the battle against untouchability.

Let me then come to the address of the *Adi-Dravida* friends. Ever since my entry into Travancore this question has been engrossing my attention in some shape or another. To the *Adi-Dravida* friends I may give the assurance that all my attention is given to the solution of that question. I have been recently delighting myself in describing myself as a Nayadi and it is my regret that I have not had the courage to refuse the hospitality of Mr. R. K. Shanmugan Chettiar in his palatial house and go straight to the Nayadis and share their hospitality and live among them. But I wish to give this assurance to the *Adi-Dravida* friends that this curse of untouchability is fast going. It is true that the temple gates are not flung open to admit them. It is still too true that certain roads are barred against them. It is still too true that both untouchability and unseeability still exist in their hideous forms. But I also know that public opinion is daily gathering foce against this insufferable evil and it is my conviction that much earlier than any of us imagine this evil is going to be blotted out of Hinduism.

There is, however, one telling paragraph in the address of the *Adi-Dravida* friends and the paragraph is so important that I should like to read it out to you.

> The Government tempts our young men by locating liquor shope in or near our *cherries*—the living quarters of our community. If industrial institutions took the place of such shope and if social workers befriended us instead of *abkari* contractors,we have no doubt that our progress can be assured in a very short time. We therefore very earnestly appeal to you for help to organize industrial schools in or near our living quarters to save our community from ruin.

This paragraph gives us all food for reflection. To repeat what I said this afternoon, in spite of solid efforts put forth by so many members, the Government rejects the advice of the Municipality to close a few of the liquor shops within the limits of the Municipality. For me it is a first-class tragedy that such a simple proposition should have been shelved by the Government. I associate myself whole-heartedly with the paragraph I have just read out to you on behalf of the *Adi-Dravidas* and I wish you, the citizens of Coimbatore, will take up battle on behalf of all those who are given to the vice and rid your city of the curse of drink. I wish also that there would be some young men and women coming forward as volunteers to take the challenge of *Adi-Dravida* friends and start industrial schools for them instead of driving them to drink.

I now take up the Congress address. The Congress address invites me to take the lead again. Evidently they still have a lingering faith in the programme of 1920. Let them understand that I have never given up the lead. I am still wooing, but what shall I do if I do not find followers. But there is a better answer than I had given you. Let me tell you what I mean by leading. I made statements even before I went to jail that the only lead that could be given to the country by a man with non-violence as his creed is to pursue the constructive programme of the Congress. The most effective programme of the Congress is the message of the spinning- wheel and with the consent and permission of the Congress duly given to me, I am leading in that constructive programme as President of the All-India Spinners' Association. And the Spinners' Association is the creature of the Congress, a creature that works by dint of perseverance and systematic efforts to absorb the creator himself. Those who have real belief in the efficacy of non-violence for obtaining the freedom of their country cannot but believe in khaddar and put their shoulder to the wheel so that it may become universal in this country. They should talk of no other creed before this becomes an accomplished fact. If anyone asks me for a lead and ignores the lead I am really

giving, I really wonder whether the questioner has understood the implication of the struggle of non-violence. Remember that the Spinners' Association which is designed to serve 300 millions of people, including the poorest, invokes and requires the greatest administrative skill and the widest possible platform. Remember that it requires for its success on the part of the wokers ceaseless watch, ceaseless perseverance, indomita-ble faith in the face of sneers, in the face of opposition, in the face of malicious misrepresentations. In requires, on the part of the workers, an amount of sacrifice, unexciting and sustained beyond compare and if God helps India to run an organization of this character and carry it to the remotest village, we can imagine that with that one thing accomplished very little will remain to be done to make this land free. I have a growing faith in the capacity of India to respond to these efforts and whether you share my views about non-co-operation,varanashrama dharma and many other things in which I dabble, I ask you all to work for *Daridranarayana*.

Last but not the least to be mentioned are our own unfortunate sisters, the *Devadasis*. I understand that they are to be found even in your midst. Some of them were present at the women's meeting this afternoon. It reflects no credit upon our religion or on our country. A Bill is pending before the Legislative Council sponsored by Dr. Muthula-kshmi Ammal. It has been framed, so far as I can see, on the Mysore model. That enlightened State dealt with this question so long ago as 1909. I suggest two things before this is done. Let these young men or old men who are making unlawful use of these dear sisters refrain from making them the object of their lust. Secondly, let everyone join in the crusade against the existence of this system, whether it is by legislation or by creating an active enlightened public opinion against this evil.

You will pardon me if I have tired you out. All your addresses are serious and I felt that if I was to be courteous I should return as full an answer as I could possibly make. I ask you to consider the things that I have told you and to act according to whatever would commend itself.

The Hindu, 18-10-1927

165. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Silence Day [On or before *October 17, 1927*][1]

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

The time for my departure for Ceylon is approaching. When I was in Bangalore I had expressed the wish that you should accompany me on the tour. If you can free yourself from there do come. You will see that island and do khadi work among the women there. I would even like to take you with me on the Travancore tour but perhaps that will be too much. You will hardly come across another area in the country as beautiful as Travancore. I will leave for Ceylon by steamer from Mangalore on November 1 or October 31. So you will have to come to Mangalore. If Shankerlal can extricate himself from the work, he too may come along. I hope by then the work on workers' houses will be over.

I have not so far got the handkerchief you have sent.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: S.N. 32789

166. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

October 17, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have received all your letters. During the last week after the Monday letter I have not written to you so far as I can remember. It has been a perfect rush in Travancore and Malabar and an anxious time, all of my own making and seeking. I therefore needed rest. As soon as I mentioned the fact, Rajagopalachari cancelled three places and also his own Ashram where I was eager to go. But as I want to be fresh for Ceylon where I have promised myself a strenuous time I have reconciled myself to the cancellation. Needless to say there is nothing wrong with me. The rest is a mere precautionary measure. On 21st I move to Tiruppur which I leave on 24th night. The rest of the programme stands. The places to visit near Mangalore I do not know as yet. So you will write your letters to Mangalore to reach between 26 and 31st.

There should be no hurry about the hair cutting. I want you to

[1]As suggested by the contents

carry the ladies with you. I have much hope of your becoming a poweful influence among them. You must not therefore unncecessarily become a strange creature to them. They will appreciate the consideration you will show to their feelings even in a matter purely personal to yourself.

Your suggestions about the guest house were admirable. You may anticipate my approval in all such matters so long as you can accomplish them without a jar. We should tolerate any amount of carelessness and apparent dirt if insistence on their removal should mean discord. Dangerous insanitation should be put down, discord or no discord. You know what I mean.

Come near as many of the inmates as possible. And if you rule out the odd corners in Chhotelal, it will be a great blessing. I want you, in order that you can drink in the Ashram spirit and atmosphere, not to have any rigid time-table. Keep several unmortgaged hours so that you may be free to handle what comes your way.

Yes, do insist on scrupulous cleanliness in the dairy. But here again you will not sacrifice good fellowship for securing the highest standard. What has gone on so long without apparently doing harm may be endured a little while.

It was good you went to the Ambalals. Mr. Ambalal is so good, in spite of his obstinacy and often ignorant and harsh judgments.

No hard and fast vows beyond those that are necessary for the protection [of] the fundamentals need be now taken so long as I am in your midst. You will use your judgment as to what may be necessary either for your own growth or of the society in which you are living, when I am gone.

Please tell Mr. Saunders that it is difficult for me to write the book he suggests. It is so unlike me to write anything of an academic nature. And where is one to find the time when one lives from moment to moment!

In Ceylon, unless I write to the contrary, the address should be Colombo.

With love,

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 5287. Courtesy : Mirabehn

167. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

COIMBATORE,
Monday, October 17, 1927

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I have gone through the letter from Mr. Lawrence which I return herewith. You are doing good work. Do stay on, if you get leave form the Ashram. I haven't got your article. Perhaps it is lying with Mahadev. You must be aware of the commotion in the Ashram. You don't have to trouble yourself by worrying over it from all that distance. I am trying to clear the matter from here, but I am not worried. In the end peace will return. A water-mill can be operated where we have a waterfall. But to have one worked by an artificial fall would be like paying for a shave more than the head is worth. I am keeping well. I shall start on the 1st and leave Ceylon on the 19th. In the interval therefore address the letters to Colombo.

We will pass three days on sea. Prabhudas will recover soon, if he does not let his ailment or any other matter worry him. Nor must he excercise himself more than he can stand. He should stay in Almora as long as he likes. There is nothing wrong in not returning before he is sure of his health. Devdas has been at fault. It appears therefore that he will not go there or anywhere else. He proposes to go to Wardha. But the operation is yet . . .[1] so he is confined to bed. I think he will join me at Tiruppur on the 28th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 9188

168. LETTER TO KARIM MAHOMED MASTER

October 17, 1927

BHAISHRI K. M.

I have carefully gone through the book you sent to me. I doubt its usefulness. You have not gone deep. You have included some matters as being worthy of belief which even eminent Ulemas do not

[1] The source has a blank here.

accept. I shall not make a list of these here. If you believe in them, I can have nothing to say to you, but I for one would not recommend a book containing them to anyone who wishes to understand Islam.

There are a few things, moreover, which seem dangerous to me at this critical time. Read again pages 26-7. You mention there that God never forgives the crime of those who worship gods and goddesses, that there is nothing but hell for such perpetrators of evil and that it is the same whether one prays for them or not. What effect will this have on Muslim readers! Can they who read it and believe it tolerate even for a moment Hindus who worship gods and goddesses, or even mix with them? What effect will these pages have on Hindus who read them?

I have read the verses in question. I do not put upon them the interpretation which you do. If your interpretation is the correct one, I would bear with the verses but certainly regret them.

At the present time, I would rather that no person who wishes to write on Islam should do so unless he possesses wide knowledge and generosity of heart.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

169. LETTER TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

COIMBATORE,
October 17, 1927

I got all your three letters. The one about theft[1] reached me rather late, but even so it was three days ago. Since, however, your second letter, which was received before the first, did not ask for an immediate reply, I did not send a wire, and I could not get time before today to write. Your letter about truth was received yesterday. I saw from it that you were awaiting a reply to the letter about theft and, therefore, dispatched a wire[2] today. You must have got it. I could not, of course, explain everything in the wire.

[1] A thief was caught while lifting a trunk at the addressee's residence. In the lower court, he gave evidence against the accused but requested the magistrate to pardon the thief. In the mean time, he sought Gandhiji's advice, on receiving which he refused to give evidence in the Sessions Court.

[2] This is not available.

Though we live in society, there are matters in which we should not or cannot follow it. Society may punish a thief because it does not believe in non-violence or cannot follow it. But those who seek to follow it in their lives, who have the courage to follow it, should remain neutral [in such cases]. If they do not, they will learn nothing from their effort to follow non-violence and society will make no progress. If this view is correct, you certainly cannot go to the court to give evidence. You should go, however, if you are summoned. In this case, at any rate, you should courteously explain to the magistrate what you think to be your dharma, so that the latter will punish the thief independently of you or may even let him off for want of evidence.

So far the course seems clear to me. You have, however, no right to ask for mercy to be shown to the thief. When did you feel compassion for him? If you had felt it when you found him, you and Gomati[1] would not have felt afraid and run after him. You would have remained uncon-cerned if he had taken away anything. But we have not risen high enough for this. Fear has not left us nor the love of possessions. I, therefore, feel that compassion is out of place, because unnatural. We may strive, we have been striving to cultivate such compassion in us. But so long as compassion has not become a permanent sentiment in us, it cannot be regarded as springing from our heart and, therefore, genuine. If indeed it has become a permanent sentiment in our heart, we should take the thief in our hands, meet him and try to reform him. Nor can the court accede to such a plea for mercy. If the thief himself makes the request and promises to try to reform himself, the court may consider it. The court may accept our request too, if we offer to keep the thief with us so as to prevent him from being a danger to others. I do not feel inclined to go so far and ask for mercy towards him. I have not been able to think of a third alternative besides punishment and mercy. When compassion does not produce as much effect as even punishment, we should understand that it is not genuine or sufficiently strong. I have practically stopped taking interest in the Hindu-Muslim problem because I feel that the compassion in my heart is insufficient or is unnatural. Unnatural does not mean pretended, but only that it has not gone deeper than the intellect. If it had gone deeper than the intellect, I should have been able to discover an alternative to the method of

[1] Addressee's wife

reprisal. But I am not in such a condition as yet. I have been striving hard to cultivate that degree of intense ahimsa[1] in my heart. I must admit that up to the present I have failed. I have not accepted defeat however.

I should like to correct an error you have made. I am sure it is due to oversight. You say that the presentday law does not regard theft itself as crime, but that theft is a crime only when the thief is caught; surely it is not so bad as that. You would be right if you said that the thief who was not caught escaped punishment. But then, this must have been so even in the golden age. God alone can visit every theft with punishment, and those who believe in God actually hold that man has to suffer punishment for every transgression. I assume that you mean no more than this.

And now about the commotion in the Ashram. I am not surprised by it. Nor am I shocked. We are only making an attempt to cleanse our hearts and bring about complete understand ing among ourselves. Commotion like the one you mention is inevitable in such an attempt. These developments convince me that we did right in establishing an association. It is only through such experiences that we shall learn the right manner of working and discover new laws of community life, if there are any, which conform to the principle of non-violence. If any of us were a perfect being, he would have before now composed a new *smriti.* But the truth is that we are imperfect beings who are, nevertheless, making a sincere and devoted effort to become perfect. It would not pain me if we decided to start a new institution for those who could not live with us, provided the motive was sincere. There will be differences among us so long as we have not succeeded in cultivating true humility, that is, real non-violence. There will always be some who cannot live in harmony with the others. When such occasions arise, why should we hesitate to start a new institution, if it could be useful? If all of us are progressing towards non-violence we may unite again. If we do not, we shall only be playing on different branches of the same tree and, therefore, see unity even in our differences. Hence I think it necessary only that we make sure of this : that no one should be insincere, that we should not suspect one another's motives or believe others to be evil-minded and that no one should harbour selfish thoughts or wish to appear other than what he is.

[1] The word is underlined in the original.

I shall not now discuss the problem about truth. I have understood all that you have said, and I accept it too. However, there is another side, and a beautiful one to every one of the issues, and that should not be lost sight of. But I will take up this subject some other time. I am not impatient. I believe that both of us are seeking the same truth. I do not want, I do not like, that you should sit down to write your letters to me at a quarter past one at night; in fact I think it wrong of you to do so. It does not befit Gomati to insist that she will go through the treatment only if she gets your services. She ought to be able to accept the services of anyone who offers them sincerely.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

170. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

COIMBATORE,
Monday [*October 17, 1927*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I got both your letters. Please don't think that I feel hurt by what you and other women there write to me. It is but right that I should know everything that happens there. If I don't stay in the Ashram, I should help you through my ideas at any rate as much as I can.

You were the one that started the women's prayers. If you now don't take interest in them, wouldn't that be like the sea catching fire? It is your especial duty to attend them.

I wish to advise you all with regard to the conflicts among you which have arisen, without sitting in judgment over anyone. I will not form any opinion in my mind before I have talked with everyone. I have certainly not felt that Ramniklal is to blame in any way. I didn't send Radha's letter to him to inquire and ascertain the truth; I sent it so that all the women may understand the problem, come together and remove the misunderstandings. There was no reason for anyone to feel upset on reading that letter. Why should we be upset on

[1] From *Bapuna Patro—6 : G. S. Gangabehnne*; Gandhiji was at Coimbatore on this date.

discovering that someone thinks, justifiably, in a certain way about us? If we have done anything wrong, we should not feel upset when told about it, but atone for it and thank the person who drew our attention to it. If, on the other hand, the person has attributed anything to us without reason, whether he is an old man or a child we should look upon him as an ignorant person and forgive him. You may show this to the other women if you wish to.

And now your questions.

I have nothing to say about the comparison with gold.

You enjoyed peace in Bordi, Borivali and Matar because you were a guest there and were careful how you behaved. You lived there in an atmosphere created by you, or others treated you as a guest and changed the atmosphere to make you feel comfortable. But you look upon the Ashram as your home, you have made it so, and therefore you are not a guest there. You are all members of one family. It is in the Ashram, therefore, that you will be really tested. Anyone there may find fault with you, or no one may listen to you; but you must bear with it all. If you do, you will enjoy peace. In a place where there is no cause for losing peace, the peace which you enjoy is not real peace. What is the value of the peace which an opium-addict enjoys? You will have won peace only when you enjoy it in circumstances the opposite of peaceful. Be sure that, so long as you do not enjoy the profoundest peace in the Ashram, you have not won real peace; that, till then, you have not really become an inmate of the Ashram. She alone is an inmate of the Ashram who lives on in the Ashram when others have left it, and will remain there till her death. Unless the inmates live thus, the Ashram will not be a real Ashram. I have never believed that it is. We are trying to make it one.

Neither you nor any one of us can say that what you regard as self-development is really so. The Lord has said that he alone goes to Him who thinks of Him, is filled with peace, even at the moment of death. It is, therefore, at that moment that we shall be tested, but who will judge whether we have passed the test? The truth is that real peace cannot be described, it can only be experienced. Ask the countless people sunk in ignorance; won't we have to say that they enjoy peace? But in fact their peace is not the peace of knowledge. The peace of knowledge is like nothing else in our ordinary experience. Even the capacity to endure hunger and thirst, heat and cold, should not be regarded as a sign of peace. A good many murderers have

shown such capacity; but they draw their sword as soon as someone says a word to offend them. He alone enjoys real peace "who has no attachment and no aversion, no love for honour, for whom the pomp of wealth is nothing but a misfortune".[1]

Question me again if you have still not understood, and go on questioning till you do understand.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 8705. Courtesy : Gangabehn Vaidya

171. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day [*October 17, 1927*][2]

SISTERS,

I have your letter. I understand that all of you are disturbed but I am not worried by it. When I opened this question, I knew that you would feel agitated. But I found no other way of cleansing your minds of impurity. Be patient. Everything will turn out well, and we shall enjoy new and real peace. We are really one family. Now what do we do when there is unrest in the family? If both parties have goodwill, then each puts up with the other's anger, and tries to subdue one's own. That is what we should also do. If every one of you does her duty correctly, those who do not now do theirs, will also begin to do it; and if they do not, they will appear conspicuous as defaulters do. Make good use of this commotion and learn to be generous towards each other. To be generous means having no hatred for those whom we consider to be at fault, and loving and serving them. It is not generosity or love if we have goodwill for others only as long as they and we agree in thought and action. That is only amity or mutual affection. The use of the word 'love' is wrong in such cases. Let us call it friendship. 'Love' means friendly feeling for the enemy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3671

[1] *Ramacharitamanasa*, Uttarakanda

[2] From the reference to the strained relations among the Ashram women

172. TELEGRAM TO V. J. PATEL[1]

[COIMBATORE,
On or after *October 17, 1927*]

VITHALBHAI PATEL
NADIAD

NOVEMBER FIXED FOR CEYLON. DIFFICULT POSTPONE. HERE TILL TWENTYFIRST. THEN TIRUPPUR.[2]

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 12862

173. LETTER TO VIJAYA

Aso Vad 8, October [*18*[3],] *1927*

CHI. VIJAYA,

I was happy to read your letter. So was Ba. It is good news that both of you are now well. Chi. Mathuradas and Taramati are also well. Stay there for now. Devdas is gradually recovering.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Sabarmati Sangrahalya

[1] In reply to the telegram sent by Vithalbhai Patel, dated and received on October 17, 1927, which read : "Please adjust your programme so as to enable you be with me from second to eighth November. Very urgent. Dayalji starting with my letter to you."

[2] In reply to this telegram, Vithalbhai Patel wired back : "You will have to surmount all difficulties and accompany me second November. Please therefore adjust your programme accordingly and wire reply. Dayalbhai has already started." Vithalbhai was evidently sounding Gandhiji on behalf of the Viceroy. Viceroy's letter to Vithalbhai Patel, dated 13-10-1927, *inter alia*, said : "I am now in a position to say that I should like to invite Mr. Gandhi and Dr. Ansari to come and see me in Delhi; and I would therefore be grateful if you would ascertain from them whether they would be willing to respond to an invitation to do so." (*Vithalbhai Patel, Life and Times*, Book Two)

[3] The date in English in someone else's hand has "30" *Aso Ved 8* however corresponds to October 18

174. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

ON TOUR,
Asvina Krishna 8 [*October 18, 1927*][1]

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

What can I write? Why do you think you are in hell? And why live there? Have faith that Ramanama is our only resort and that all impurities of the heart will be washed away by the grace of Rama.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 185

175. LETTER TO MAGANTI BAPINEEDU

COIMBATORE,
October 19, 1927

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Good Narayana Raju sent me a wire on Monday about the passing of Annapurna and now I have the letter he informed me of. I knew nothing of this sad event. I had inquired about her only the other day of Desabhakta[2] and he told me she was ailing as usual. The wire therefore stunned me.

If you have lost a dear wife I have lost a dearer daughter. I don't mind your rebuke. You are entitled to chide me, to chide fate herself on your irreparable loss. But I ask you to share my belief that Annapurna whom you loved and I loved is not dead. Her imperishable soul must be, now that she cannot speak through her body, a greater reminder of our respective duties.

I do hope that you will follow in her footsteps and carry out her noble wishes. You ask me to give my name to the proposed committee. I may not do so for the simple reason that I have many daughters both dead and living. It would be too great a burden for me to carry if I began to become a member of committees formed to perpetuate their names. I must be satisfied with the endeavour to

[1] The year is inferred from the contents; *vide* "Letter to Rameshwardas Poddar", July 23, 1927.

[2] Konda Venkatappayya

become worthy of so many noble daughters. I am writing a note about Annapurna in *Young India*.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 11166

176. WHY I AM A HINDU

An American friend who subscribes herself as a lifelong friend of India writes :

> As Hinduism is one of the prominent religions of the East, and as you have made a study of Christianity and Hinduism, and on the basis of that study have announced that you are a Hindu, I beg leave to ask of you if you will do me the favour to give me your reasons for that choice. Hindus and Christians alike realize that man's chief need is to know God and to worship Him in spirit and in truth. Believing that Christ was a revelation of God, Christians of America have sent to India thousands of their sons and daughters to tell the people of India about Christ. Will you in return kindly give us your interpretation of Hinduism and make a comparison of Hinduism with the teachings of Christ? I will be deeply grateful for this favour.

I have ventured at several missionary meetings to tell English and American missionaries that if they could have refrained from 'telling' India about Christ and had merely lived the life enjoined upon them by the Sermon on the Mount, India instead of suspecting them would have appreciated their living in the midst of her children and directly profited by their presence. Holding this view, I can 'tell' American friends nothing about Hinduism by way of 'return'. I do not believe in people telling others of their faith, especially with a view to conversion. Faith does not admit of telling. It has to be lived and then it becomes self-propagating.

Nor do I consider myself fit to interpret Hinduism except through my own life. And if I may not interpret Hinduism through my written word, I may not compare it with Christianity. The only thing it is possible for me therefore to do is to say, as briefly as I can, why I am a Hindu.

Believing as I do in the influence of heredity, being born in a Hindu family, I have remained a Hindu. I should reject it, if I found it

[1] *Vide* "A Good Servant Gone", October 27, 1927.

inconsistent with my moral sense or my spiritual growth. On examination, I have found it to be the most tolerant of all religions known to me. Its freedom from dogma makes a forcible appeal to me inasmuch as it gives the votary the largest scope for self-expression. Not being an exclusive religion, it enables the followers of that faith not merely to respect all the other religions, but it also enables them to admire and assimilate what ever may be good in the other faiths. Non-violence is common to all religions, but it has found the highest expression and application in Hinduism. (I do not regard Jainism or Buddhism as separate from Hinduism.) Hinduism believes in the oneness not of merely all human life but in the oneness of all that lives. Its worship of the cow is, in my opinion, its unique contribution to the evolution of humanitarianism. It is a practical application of the belief in the oneness and, therefore, sacredness of all life. The great belief in transmigration is a direct consequence of that belief. Finally the discovery of the law of *varnashrama* is a magnificent result of the ceaseless search for truth. I must not burden this article with definitions of the essentials sketched here, except to say that the present ideas of cow-worship and *varnashrama* are a caricature of what in my opinion the originals are. The curious may see the definitions of cow-worship and *varnashrama* in the previous numbers of *Young India*. I hope to have to say on *varnashrama* in the near future. In this all-too-brief a sketch I have mentioned what occur to me to be the outstanding features of Hinduism that keep me in its fold.

Young India, 20-10-1927

177. TELEGRAM TO V. J. PATEL

October 20, 1927

DAYALJI JUST ARRIVED. ALSO YOUR WIRE. DIFFICULT ALTER CEYLON PROGRAMME. SHOULD GLADLY GO DELHI OR ELSEWHERE LATER IF INVITED. IN MY OPINION PRESENT JUNCTURE AM NOT HOPEFUL PERSONALLY RENDERING USEFUL SERVICE THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS. IF DESPITE MY LIMITATIONS IMMEDIATE VISIT DELHI CONSIDERED NECESSARY AM PREPARED POSTPONE CEYLON VISIT AND ATTEND DELHI PROVIDED INVITATION IS ANNOUNCED AND PUBLICATION AGREED STATEMENT PURPORT INTERVIEW IS PERMITTED. IF YOU CONSIDER THIS SATISFACTORY PLEASE REPEAT WHOLE TEXT PROPER QUARTERS BUT PERSONALLY URGE YOU KEEP ME OUT OF THIS BUSINESS. AM HERE TOMORROW TIRUPPUR UNTIL TWENTY- FOURTH CALICUT TWENTYFIFTH.

Vithalbhai Patel, Life and Times, Book Two, p. 777

178. TELEGRAM TO V. J. PATEL[1]

October 20, 1927

YOUR WIRE. THINK CONDITIONS NEITHER OFFENSIVE NOR HARD BUT DESIRABLE PUBLIC INTEREST. PLEASE WIRE FULL TEXT.

From a photostat: S.N. 12864

179. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

COIMBATORE,
October 20, 1927

MY DEAR BROTHER,

There is much fiery stuff coming from South Africa nowadays. Here is one cutting. I am watching what is happening but consider it wise not to say anything. But I shall not hesitate to intervene when necessary. What I find disturbing is a para in Manilal's letter which I translate below :

> I am not quite satisfied with his speeches.[2] He crosses the limits in praising the Empire and the benefits conferred by it on India. He thinks it necessary thus to please the Europ eans. He seems to believe that thus only shall we secure something here. The effect of these speeches cannot be good in India. He has therefore asked me not to print them in *Indian Opinion*.

I thought I must pass on to you this from Manilal. For he is a good boy and brave boy. Knowing my later views about the Empire, I am not surprised at his mentality. He has not the faculty of discrimination to see that we are like blood-brothers even though we do not hold the same views about the Empire. I have not said to him much about this letter of his beyond warning him against coming to

[1] This is in reply to V. J. Patel's telegram, dated 20-10-1927, which read : "Before I wire full text of your telegram to proper quarters request you once again to agree to respond to invitation without conditions. If you still maintain your attitude I will send full text and let you know reply. Please wire immediately."

[2] Srinivasa Sastri wrote to his brother from Pretoria on October 6, 1927: "I fully expected criticism of my sentiments about the Empire. People must make allowance for the difference in latitude and longitude. The public speaker whose conscience is not dead must be content very often to be guilty of *suppressio veri*. If he doesn't suggest a falsehood he does as much as is possible."

hasty judgements and telling him that you do honestly believe the Empire activity to be on the whole beneficial. But you will of course not hesitate to summon him before you and speak to him if necessary, as you would to your own son. I do hope that you are not going to worry over what appears now and then in some papers here or what people may be talking there. Pray do not hesitate to tell me when you want me to act. Of course you know that I do not follow the papers closely, especially when I am moving from day to day.

May God keep you in good health.

With love,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, pp. 169-70

180. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Asvina Krishna 10 [*October 20, 1927*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I did get your letter. But I could not reply owing to lack of time.

All my efforts to have you in the Ashram have failed so far. I have given up hope now. I do not also know what Chi. Mrityunjaya is to do. Now the only chance for you is to come by your own efforts. Talk to Father and it will be good if he can send you somehow. Do not be perturbed even if there is no opportunity to go to the Ashram. One of the *shlokas* we sing in the Ashram is as follows :

> Whose mind is untroubled in sorrows and longeth not for joys, who is free from passion, fear and wrath—he is called the ascetic of secure understanding.[2]

Or as Tulsidas says :

> One to whom glory and disaster are alike.[3]

If you have any further news of your husband, write to me. My health is all right. By the time this letter reaches you I shall be near Mangalore.

[1] The year is inferred from the tour programme.

[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 56

[3] *Ramacharitamanasa*, Uttarakanda

26-31 Mangalore

November 4-19 Colombo

Three days will be spent on sea.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 3330

181. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

Thursday, October 20, 1927

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letters.

I have conveyed to Sastriji your opinion about him expressed in your letter. I thought it best that he should know it. Someone has cabled to newspapers here unconnected extracts from his speeches in order to run him down. I am not surprised or pained by his praise of the Empire, since that is his view of it; were it not so, he would not have accepted service under it. Nevertheless, you can with due courtesy tell him whatever you think, so that if he wishes he may explain his attitude to you. Do not be hasty in anything you do.

Devdas has been operated upon for piles. He was operated upon by Dr. Rajan in Trichinopally. He is in the doctor's nursing home. He is quite well now. There is still a small wound, but it will heal soon. He will see me the day after tomorrow.

You should immediately send to the Ashram the money you owe for the goods sent to you. I have explained to you that you cannot delay paying this money, because the Ashram has no authority to supply goods on credit. Pay the amount, therefore, without delay.

How much weight has Sushila gained? How many miles can she walk now? How is her ear? Can she set the types with speed? Is the *Gita* being read?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I had a cable from Andrews informing me that he had wired to Natal about Pragji.

I got your letter just now. You write in it that you did not get a letter from me by one mail. You should get one by now. I did forget and missed one mail.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4726

182. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

[Before *October 21, 1927*][1]

BHAISHRI JETHALAL,

I have your letter. The figures published in *Navajivan* are merely those sent by the various branches of the Charkha Sangh. This does not mean that only so much khadi is produced annually all over India. I think the figures published are accurate. If they can be further corrected, do so. Keep writing to me in this manner. Send me brief reports of the work from time to time.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

SHREE JETHALALJEE
KHADI KARYALAYA
BIJOLIA P. MANDALGADH
MEWAR
RAJASTHAN

From the Gujara ti: C.W. 9841. Courte sy: Naraya n Jethal al Sampat

183. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

October 21, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I get your letters regularly. I do not prohibit you from writing as many letters as you like. I simply said that I should be satisfied so long as you gave me one per week. I should be anxious if I did not get even one. I should welcome one every day if you felt like sending one.

I wonder if you do not find moving about in the sun rather trying. Do you wear a sunshade? You must not hesitate to use a hat if you need one.

Though I take the place of mother or rather because I take that privileged place the natural mother should be more to you than ever before. My connection with you to be pure must strengthen all natural affections. Only, they should become purer and lose all selfish taint.

With love,

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 5288. Courtesy : Mirabehn

[1] From the postmark

184. LETTER TO SURENDRA

[After *October 22, 1927*][1]

CHI. SURENDRA,

I got your letter. *Pujya* Gangabehn[2] requests that you should give some time daily to the women's class. I approve of her request. Do give a little time, if you can spare it.

Sundaram[3] met me here today by chance. I had suggested to Devdas to go to the Ashram, but he preferred Wardha. I am afraid his wound will take some time to heal.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Balkrishna. . .[4]

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9412

185. TELEGRAM TO V. J. PATEL[5]

TIRUPPUR,
October 23, 1927

YOUR WIRE JUST RECEIVED. RECOGNIZE DIFFICULTY PUBLICATION AND IN VIEW APPARENT URGENCY MY PRESENCE WELL GLADLY RESPOND INVITATION IF

[1] From the reference to Devdas's wound; Gandhiji expected to meet Devdas on 22-10-1927. *Vide* "Letter to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi", 20-10-1927.

[2] Gangabehn Vaidya

[3] Tribhuvandas Luhar, a poet who had adopted this pen-name

[4] Two words in the source are illegible.

[5] In reply to Vithalbhai Patel's telegram, dated October 23, 1927, which read : "Received following telegram from Viceroy. Begins : '28 C. Thank you very much for your telegram of October 20th. I fully realize Gandhi's difficulties and would not suggest especially having regard to his health that he should alter his plans and take long journey unless I thought it important to see him. I should be quite willing if interview takes place that announcement of fact of invitation should be made but am afraid that I cannot agree to any statement regarding subject-matter of interview as this would inevitably impair confidential character of meeting. If I hear from you that in these circumstances he will come to Delhi I shall be happy to extend invitation to him. Please ascertain this and let me know by telegram. In mean time I propose, unless you see any objection, to invite Dr. Ansari without further delay to come and see me on November second.' Ends. Strongly advise and insist for country's sake permit me assure Viceroy that you would accept his invitation. Reply immediately."

RECEIVED TIRUPPUR TILL TWENTYFOURTH. TWENTY-FIFTH CALICUT. TWENTY SIXTH AND AFTER MANGALORE.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 12865

186. SPEECH TO STUDENTS, TIRUPPUR

October 23, 1927

In declaring the *Gita* class open Mahatmaji advised the students to get up at 4 o'clock in the morning and regularly read the *Bhagavad Gita* daily. He was anxious that they should begin the study of the *Gita* in right earnest. If they could not read Sanskrit they could go in for a Tamil translation of the *Gita*, but not the English one, because the English rendering could not impart the true significance of the *Gita*. He said that the third chapter is an important one in the *Gita*. [He continued :][1]

The *Gita* contains the gospel of karma or work, the gospel of *bhakti* or devotion and the gospel of *jnana* or knowledge. Life should be a harmonious whole of these three. But the gospel of service is the basis of all, and what can be more necessary for those who want to serve the country than that they begin with the chapter enunciating the gospel of work? But you must approach it with the five necessary equipments, viz., ahimsa (non-violence), *satya* (truth), *brahmacharya* (celibacy), *aparigraha* (non-possession), and *asteya* (non-stealing). Then and then only will you be able to reach a correct interpretation of it. And then you will read it to discover in it ahimsa and not *himsa*, as so many nowadays try to do. Read it with the necessary equipment and I assure you you will have peace of which you were never aware before.

The Hindu, 25-10-1927 and *Young India*, 3-11-1927

187. DISCUSSION ON VARNADHARMA[2]

October 23, 1927

A few young men[3] sought an interview with Gandhiji for a discussion on *varnadharma*. . . . They were troubled as to how the Brahmin could shed his

[1] What follows is from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter", published in *Young India*, 3-11-1927.

[2] From Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[3] Vithal Das Anandji Sait, M. N. Chikkana Chettiar, T. S. Kandaswami Chetti, T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar, K. S. Ramaswami Gounder, P. D. Asher and K. V. Venkatachalam Pillai

superiority so long as he continued to be a Brahmin.

Gandhiji said, taking an extreme case to drive the matter home :

Even Sita is not superior to a prostitute. Are you satisfied?

The friend said, "No, quite shocked." Gandhiji said :

I am, for Sita had no sense of superiority. Had she been proud of her purity she would have been nowhere. But she was not even conscious of it. She was pure, because it was impossible for her to be otherwise. Are the Himalayas conscious of their supreme heights? Not a bit of it. But if they were, they would crumble to pieces. Even so, *varna*, if it becomes synonymous with superiority, and an expression of egotism, will be nothing better than a halter round the neck. Max Muller put the spirit of Hinduism in a nutshell when he said : "India considers life as only one thing—DUTY—whereas others thought of enjoyment *cum* duty". *Varna* is nothing more than an indication of the duty that has been handed down to each one of us by our forefathers. In the West, when they talk of the amelioration of the lot of the masses, they talk of raising their standard of life. In India we need not talk of raising the standard of life. For, how can an outsider raise the standard, when the standard is within every one of us? We can only strive to increase man's opportunities of realizing and fulfilling his duties and of getting nearer to God. But you are today attempting the impossible task of uprooting the tree. Some of the branches and leaves, I admit, are rotten. Let us have the pruning knife and lop off those diseased branches, but let us not lay the axe at the root. You will be bad gardeners to destroy the tree under which you have lived and grown. Cut off the unnecessary excrescences, even if in the end the trunk with the root appears like a stubble, but if you keep the root intact and then fondly water it, it will some day grow into a fine big tree.

But as I said the tree cannot be destroyed, for the true Brahmin will stand all blows and yet stand erect in his sacrificial dignity. I will admit that there are few Brahmins today, few Kshatriyas, few Vaisyas and even few Sudras. For the Sudra too has an individuality. We are all slaves today. We cower today before the insolent might of a Dyer. Let us all aspire to fulfil each one of us his calling. Most of us will have to be Vaisyas, for it is the Vaisyas who hold us under their heels.

We will revere the Brahmin, not because of his superiority, but because of the superior service that he renders to us. It is because we are degraded today that one cannot think except in the terms of superiority and inferiority.

Young India, 3-11-1927

188. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, TIRUPPUR[1]

October 23, 1927

FRIENDS,

I thank you for all your addresses and all these purses, as also the different gifts of khadi and these two diamond earrings which have cut out the work for me and for you. Because, as you have known by this time, the valuable gifts are of value to me only on behalf of *Daridranarayana* and not for personal use. What little khadi I need for my own use I have already. And therefore, if you will have the patience, at the end of the speech I shall offer you all the khadi and these valuable earrings and these frames for your acceptance. You remind me that when some time ago I visited Tiruppur you called me khadi-king and you called this the capital of the khadi-king. It was a title which I accepted gratefully and in all humility and I recognized your claim to call this the capital of the khadi-king and inasmuch as I am not an exacting king, I am able to say that you have fairly earned the title that you gave to yourselves. You will retain the first place in all India in the matter of production. You have improved the quality of your khadi. But when I consider my own ambition and what it is that is required of you and of all India, I must confess that the progress, good relatively though it is, is not satisfactory. For, considering what we intend to do through the length and breadth of India, naturally this capital is expected to make use of all the cotton that is produced in the neighbouring areas. I expect you to have, by dint of service, such a hold upon the cotton cultivators that they would sell their cotton only to you and I expect you also by the same right of service to influence the poor villagers so that there will not be a single home left without a spinning-wheel working in it, and that there will not be a single weaver who weaves anything but hand-spun yarn. I do not want you to consider that this is beyond your reach. If you will retain the privilege of calling your town the capital of khadi you must have this ambition, and you will find that if you are actuated not by a motive of exploitation but by the simple motive of service to the poor villagers you will find that in no time you will acquire the influence that you should, both over the villagers and over the cotton cultivators

[1] Gandhiji's speech in English was translated into Tamil by C. Rajagopalachari, sentence by sentence.

and all this will be possible only if there is hearty co-operation between the different khadi merchants. You will also have to limit your own personal ambition about making money out of khadi. I have no doubt that khadi is a sound economic proposition. It can give you a decent living and moderate profits. There is, there should be, no room for individuals to get high rates of interest. I personally always suspect organizations which are capable of giving 25 per cent, give 20 per cent interest on their outlay. It may be safely laid down as a general proposition beyond challenge that wherever there are large and inordinate profits they have been obtained at the expense of the poor people. But the whole conception of khadi is that we, who are active in developing khadi, must regard ourselves as trustees for these starving villagers. Whatever is therefore earned beyond a respectable living must be returned to these villagers. And so long as this hand-spinning is strictly kept up, you will find that the king will stick to his little capital and advertise it for all it is worth.

But then there are other partners also in this company of *Daridranarayana* and these are the spinners and the weavers. The spinners, I know, are not in this meeting. I happened to know that there are some weavers here. I want to tell the weavers who are here and want them to give my message to those who are not here that I grieve to hear that there are some weavers here addicted to drink and gambling. In the firm of *Daridranarayana* there is really no room for drunkards and gamblers. Drink is an evil which has desolated thousands of homes throughout the world, and it behoves weavers who have anything to do with khadi that they at least will not defile their bodies with drink. A man under the influence of drink forgets the distinction between wife and sister. I hope, therefore, that the young men in Tiruppur will bestir themselves and work in the midst of those who are given to drink and by gentle persuasion wean them from the drink habits.

Gambling is a vice which degrades the gambler and leads him to innumerable crimes. It must, therefore, be given up. You know that this part of the South is noted for the crime of murder. Hardly a week passes but sees a few cases of murder and it is well known that wherever there is drunkenness and gambling murder is the necessary consequence. We should really be ashamed of ourselves that there should be any men in society who hold life so cheaply that they would take it on the slightest provocation or the slightest pretext. If there are philanthropists in society in this place, as I have no doubt

there are, I wish that they will study this crime, know exactly the causes and endeavour to remove this reproach from this fair district.

It gave me this morning the greatest joy and the greatest pleasure to meet the Head Master and some of the students of the Municipal High School. They asked me to open a *Gita* class, and in order to have the ceremony performed both the students and the staff came early morning at about quarter to four. I hope that these students will prove themselves worthy of this sacred study and they will not, having begun this great work, lag behind and neglect it. It is a step in the right direction. At the present moment there is a mania for literary education in this country. But little emphasis is placed upon character-building. Education which is not built upon solid foundation of character, in my humble opinion, is like a lifeless body. And for a Hindu boy I cannot conceive anything so fortifying as a reverent study of the *Bhagavad Gita*. If students will remember that they are to learn *Bhagavad Gita* not in order to be able to parade Sanskrit knowledge or a knowledge of the *Gita* itself, they will remember that they learn it to derive spiritual comforts from it and to solve all their difficulties through its aid. No man who engages in a reverent study of that book can help becoming a true servant of the nation and through it of humanity. Lokamanya Tilak has told us that *Bhagavad Gita* is pre-eminently a gospel of work and work that is absolutely selfless. And selfless work is nothing but service, nothing but sacrifice. I have ventured to suggest in spite of whatever might be said to the contrary that the true sacrifice of this age, sacrifice in terms of the *Bhagavad Gita*, is hand-spinning done for the sake of and in the name of the starving mil lions. And if the students will establish a living bond between themselves and the starving millions as they ought to do, they will find that there is nothing so powerful as the spinning-wheel to enable them to do so.

I was glad, therefore, to find in the municipal address the mention of the spinning-wheel in connection with the schools and I hope that the Municipality will carry its determination into effect in the near future. I must not now detain you over my remarks any longer, for, I will take some of your time in asking you to help me to dispose of these goods and volunteers will in the mean time kindly go out amongst the people and collect from those who believe in khadi and who have not paid for the Khadi Fund.

The Hindu, 25-10-1927

189. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

October 24, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have all your letters and they were all welcome.

You have inquired where the straying letter could have gone. I have not suppressed any. So you must get it in due course.

I am still without your weight.

I admit your analysis of Bhansali's[1] case. He is too good a man to resent any friendly criticism. You should therefore talk to him freely and see what you can do with him. Similarly Chhotelal. He must be broken in. Probably he will listen to you. I am so glad you are looking after all these sick people and reporting to me daily. I shall look forward to your report of your visit to the dairy and the pinjrapole.

The little rest I have taken is not even prevention. It was merely precaution. As a matter of fact I paid for the rest by having to do two omitted places during the Tiruppur visit. But this harmless interruption was a good test for your nerves. No news, even untoward, should affect you. You should not say to yourself, 'How nice if he had not gone there or taken more rest.' It should be enough for you to believe that I am taking all the care of myself that my nature will allow me. There is no doubt that I want rest. But who will give it to me? Do we get all we want? If we did, where would our faith have any play at all? Sufficient to know that not a blade moves but by His will. He will take care, if we will but trust Him, not after the manner of those who will take all the care that money can procure and then trust. That we must take some care is true. But men of trust will not do violence to their own nature and go out of their way to take precautions and adopt remedies which ordinary men have no means to command. The formula therefore is the less care the better and no more than the least of us can procure by reasonable effort. Judged by this standard, the care that I take of myself and that is being bestowed on me is out of all proportion and inconsistent with my profession of faith in God. You will thus see that everything I do in this direction appears to me to be exaggerated and I often feel that it would be a great benefit, if I could be neglected for a time. As it is, I am wrapped

[1] J. P. Bhansali, an inmate of Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati

in cotton wool.

It is very likely that there will be another interruption and I shall have to go to Delhi for a day or two. I may know in the course of the day.

Love,

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 5289. Courtesy : Mirabehn

190. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

October 24, 1927

DEAR SATIS BABU,

Your letter makes dismal reading but I do not mind. We may not attempt more than the atmosphere warrants or more than the purse allows. The chief thing is to reduce your stock. I shall see what I can do with your box when it arrives.

The new charkha has now been received. Though it shows extraordinary care in packing it has been received in a broken condition. The middle side has broken in two and the stopper is also damaged. But I had no difficulty in examining the wheel. Though it is better than the original, it is not equal to what Keshu has made and I am now using. It is much stronger than the one you have sent. The axle does not jut out of the box. The handle and the winder are made of metal. The spokes are much stronger. The hub too is made of metal. Although it has seen much rough usage it has not yet gone out of order. Before you make further improvements or standardize the pattern you should see Keshu's wheel. Have you much demand for the box charkha?

How are you keeping in health? Does the heart still give trouble?

I had heard about Shyam Babu before you gave me the news. I wish he would or could stick to this his latest. Did Sarat Babu get the consent of his wife? What more will he do, now that he has taken the robe? I prefer your sannyasa.

It is very likely that I shall have to go to Delhi and postpone the Ceylon visit for a few days. I should know for certain today or tomorrow.

Is Tarini better now? And the boy?

I had a full account about Abhoy Ashram. From it, it appears

that there was no aggression on their part and that the story about masked spears is a pure fabrication. These fabrications are just now the order of the day, the same as was the case during the War on the part of both the sides.

With love,

BAPU

Here is a letter from Capt. Petavel and the enclosure. This is not the first of its kind but one out of many. I remember you once reported adversely on his institution. Now he has come out with Dr. Ray's testimonial. I have this time asked him to see you and discuss the thing with you. Give him some time and show him the error of his ways unless you find him to be on the right path.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 1578

191. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

October 24, 1927

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have a letter at last written in your own hand.

I forgot to tell you that Sir Purushottamdas wrote to me saying he could not find time to go [to] East Africa. He suggested Sarojini Devi's name. It might be as well to send her. But think of it and tell me what you propose.

Capt. Petavel has been sending me letters after letters asking me to support his plan. Somehow or other he does not inspire me with confidence in himself. You have warned me against him. He now asks me to get someone to report to me upon his plan and work. In my despair I have told him I have referred the matter to you and Satis Babu. Do you feel like saying anything that I may use? He has now procured an enthusiastic certificate from Dr. Ray. The more certificates he gets, the more dissatisfied I become.

Gujarat has not got 30 lakhs in public subscriptions but a huge sum from the Government. I quite like the idea of the Gujaratis in Calcutta giving all the amount to Orissa. The question is whether you have good and capable men to use it. Gujarat has nearly 1,000 workers operating upon the collections.

The finger has caused me much worry. The stiffness is a new thing. I shall draw a sigh of relief when you can report perfect recovery.

It is highly likely that I shall have to postpone the Ceylon visit a bit and go to Delhi. I should know definitely by tomorrow.

With love from us all,

MOHAN

Sorab is on his way to India. I shall certainly talk to him about the memorial. I am quite at one with you that had Rustomji been alive, he would have sent the whole amount.

MOHAN

From a photostat : G.N. 2623

192. LETTER TO R. PARTHASARTHI

October 24, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I do not remember having ever approved of mill cloth especially foreign being exhibited side by side with khadi. What I have done is reluctantly to agree to exhibit khadi in a separate court notwithstanding the knowledge that Indian mill cloth will also be exhibited somewhere in the exhibition.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. R. PARTHASARTHI

12, ARUNDALE STREET

MYLAPORE

MADRAS

From the original : G.N. 10847

193. TESTIMONIAL TO M. R. BOB

TIRUPPUR,

October 24, 1927

M. R. Bob's services as driver were lent by Sjt. Shanti Narayan Rao of Bangalore. Bob motored me throughout my Tamil Nad and Kerala tour. He was most attentive and careful. He made not only a good driver but he became my truest friend when I was in need of one. The only reward I can give him is to pray that God may bless him for his services.

From a photos tat: C. W. 10974. Courte sy: M.R. Bob

194. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Monday [*October 24, 1927*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have Dr. Rajan's[2] letter about you today. There is nothing of note in it. There is a telegram from the Viceroy today and so I have to be in Delhi on November 2.[3] Hence, from Mangalore I shall either go back to Madras or, if I can get the booking on the steamer, I shall go to Bombay and from Bombay to Delhi. I shall have to get back to go to Colombo. I wish you now to be calm.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. DEVDAS GANDHI

C/O DR. RAJAN

TRICHY, S. INDIA

From the Gujara ti origin al: C.W. 10899. Courte sy: Awadha nandan

195. LETTER TO AWADHANANDAN

Monday, October 24, 1927

DEAR AWADHANANDAN,

You have indebted me by serving Ch. Devdas so well.

BAPU

SJT. DEVDAS GANDHI

C|O DR. RAJAN

TRICHY

S. INDIA

From the Hindi origin al: C.W. 10899. Courte sy: Awadha nanadan

[1] The postmark bears the date "October 25, 1927". The Monday prior to this date was October 24.

[2] Dr. T.S.S. Rajan who had operated upon Devdas Gandhi for piles

[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Viceroy", on or after October 24, 1927.

196. TELEGRAM TO VICEROY[1]

[On or after *October 24, 1927*]

HIS EXCELLENCY VICEROY

VICEROY'S CAMP

YOUR EXCELLENCY'S WIRE JUST RECEIVED. IN VIEW THEREOF I HOPE WAIT ON YOUR EXCELLENCY APPOINTED TIME.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 12866

197. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI

Dipavali [*October 25, 1927*][2]

BHAI CHAND,

Received your letter. For some time now don't fuss about the *Chandrayana* vow[3].

I am happy to learn that you have arrived at the Ashram. What work have you taken up?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 3269

[1] In reply to the Viceroy's telegram, dated October 24, 1927, which read : "I am anxious to have a talk with you on certain important and rather urgent matters and if it is convenient to you I should be very glad if you could come and see me in Delhi. The most convenient day for me would be Wednesday November second at eleven thirty. I realize that I am giving you very short notice and that this must inevitably cause you inconvenience but I hope it will not make it impossible for you to come. Please wire whether you can come on that date."

[2] Gandhiji had earlier asked him to go to the Ashram; *vide* "Silence Day Note to Chand Tyagi", March 21, 1927.

[3] The penance of gradually reducing the daily intake of food during the waning phase of the moon ending in a total fast on the 15th day, and increasing it similarly with the waxing moon to have a full meal on full-moon day

198. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Tuesday, Aso Vad Amas, Diwali [*October 25, 1927*][1]

SISTERS,

Your letter. Do not lose heart. Do not wait for the other person to set the example; don't say : 'Let everyone else first become good, then I too will be good.' On the contrary, the principle to be followed is : 'If I become pure, others will follow suit.' We have two proverbs which embody this idea. One says : "If you are good, the world is good", and the other : "As the individual, so the universe." If this were not true, one can never have any hopes for the world.

Rama is the support of the whole world. Sita is the mainstay of all women. So if every one of you strives with determination to be pure, and becomes devoted to her duty, you will find that everything else will straighten out in the end. 'Defeat' should never find a place in our dictionary.

I am waiting to see what new resolves you are going to make on new-year's day. Talk with one who does not talk to you; go to one who does not come to you; try to please one who is displeased with you, and all this not for their good but for your own. The world is a creditor; we are its debtors.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3672

199. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Diwali [*October 25, 1927*][2]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I see no harm in staying a week longer in Pattani Saheb's bungalow after taking his or his agent's permission. That it is so difficult to find accommodation in Panchgani even in

[1] The year is inferred from the advice to the addressees to make up their differences; *vide* "Letter to Ashram Women", 17-10-1927.

[2] The addressee received the letter on October 28, 1927. Diwali fell on October 25 in 1927.

winter is surprising. We would be so thankful if you could somehow recover completely. Will you never be well enough to live permanently in Bombay?

Devdas's wound is taking a long time to heal. According to the doctor it may take another week or so. The doctor said that a larger area than had been thought necessary had to be cauterized. Devdas's physical condition seems to be satisfactory. Yesterday he paid me a visit.

Rajaji has been keeping indifferent health lately. But he should be all right in a couple of days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: Pyarel al Papers . Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y. Courte sy: Belade vi Nayyar and Dr. Sushil a Nayyar

200. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Diwali, [*October 25, 1927*][1]

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I have received your presents. I started using them from the very day I received them. I have lost one handkerchief out of them. We are a big crowd here. It is surprising that some of the small things at least are saved.

I understand about Ceylon : I think your decision is right. You must understand that the days of sitting around with me are over. It seems criminal to have even a moment of external peace. Hence I must learn to find peace in turbulence. And what is true for me will also be true for my colleagues, is it not so?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photos tat of the Gujara ti : G. N. 11568

[1] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Anasuyabehn Sarabhai", on or before October 17, 1927.

201. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CALICUT

October 25, 1927

FRIENDS,

I thank you for all these addresses, these purses, gifts of yarn and books and a watch. I shall present these things for your acceptance and convert them into money. And here our friend has just sent me a copy of Rabindranath Tagore's *Sadhana*. He is a student and says: "My sole object in presenting this book, i.e., Tagore's *Sadhana*, is that you might auction it and the money so realized might be added to the students' purse."

I recall the time now, many years ago, when I had the privilege with my friend and brother, Maulana Shaukat Ali, to address a meeting of this character from this very beautiful beach. Since then, many changes and grave happenings have taken place in this country. We know also that, at the present moment, the horizon in the north appears as black as it can be. But I should be false to myself and false to my country if I did not, in spite of the blackness of the horizon, redeclare my immovable faith in the necessity and possibility of Hindus and Mussalmans living in this land as blood-brothers. God alone knows how this consummation, so much to be desired, is to be brought about. But then, we know how often God confounds man's plans and brings about events for which he is least ready. And I would invite those who have the good of the country at heart to share this living faith of man with me. And this reminds me of a somewhat remarkable letter that was placed in my hands this afternoon. I have not yet been able to know who the writer of that letter is. I was not able to read the whole of this long letter myself, but I asked a friend to give me the substance of that letter. And the substance of that letter is this. The writer says, 'It is all very well for you to ask Mussalmans and Christians to save the cow for you.' But the friend adds, 'What are you doing to the Hindus who are, in the sacred name of religion, killing day after day and year after year innocent animals and birds?' The rebuke is well deserved. I do not know how far this evil of sacrificing innocent animals and birds in the name of God prevails in this part of India. The writer little knows my sentiments about these things. Wherever I have spotted this evil, I have neither spared myself nor my hearers in condemning it. I know that this practice of

sacrificing animals and birds in the name of the Almighty is a sinful superstition. And it is time that the Hindus, wherever they may be, who are offering great sacrifices, stop this sinful practice. I should be always in association with any movement designed to stop this inhuman practice. I derive comfort from the knowledge that this practice is not increasing in this country. But it is day by day falling into disrepute. It was only the other day that Her Highness the Maharani Regent of Travancore stopped all such sacrifices, and what she has been able to do by decree, you can do by cultivating public opinion against this practice in this part of the country.

But I must hasten to other parts of my speech. I am glad that the students have come forward with their address. There is nothing new about their presenting me with the address. All over India, it has been my good fortune to enjoy the confidence and friendship of the student world. But I mention my pleasure over this address, because it contains a promise about khadi. The students have made a solemn promise in thier address, henceforth to use nothing but khadi. Let me remind the students of the sacredness of promises. It is the custom very often in our country as also elsewhere especially for enthusiastic students to make all sorts of promises. This habit of making promises is really a vicious habit unless it is accompanied by a firm determination to fulfil them at any cost. If my recollections serve me right, it was from a teacher in Calicut that I received a pathetic letter asking me to speak to the student world, and put an emphasis on some of their failings. Day after day, it is being realized by educationists all the world over that mere literary education, unless it is built upon a solid foundation of character, is not only of no avail but is a mischievous accomplishment, and the beginning of character-building is surely made by complete adherence to truth. And it is a departure from truth not to fulfil a promise which has been once made. It is not a bad thing not to make promises hastily and without due deliberation. But it is absolutely necessary, after having once made them, to abide by them and fulfil them even though we should have to die in the attempt. I therefore hope that the students, having made the promise, will abide by it.

But there are other things to which my attention was drawn in this letter, that the student world was thoughtlessly drifting and indulging in what might be superficially considered minor vices. My attention was drawn to the habit, which is spreading amongst students, of smoking and excessive tea or coffee drinking. These things may

appear insignificant; but I know from the experience of many students that these are by no means insignificant things. It is a symptom of want of self-restraint; and this want of self-restraint is undermining the constitutions of the student world throughout India. I, therefore, urge the students to think well over what I have said reconsider and recast their life. According to the Hindu conception, a student has to be and should remain a *brahmachari* so long as he is studying. If a student desires, as he ought to, to observe this self-control both in mind and body, it is necessary for him to deny himself all those things that are superfluous.

Coming to the other addresses I am glad that I find in every one of them, an enthusiastic endorsement of the message of the spinning-wheel. There is no doubt that, in abandoning home-spuns, we have committed a crime against Indian humanity, and it seems that Calicut was the very first offender in this respect; for I understand that it bears the name it does because Calicut was the first port where India turned to import calico from outside. But now I see your belief in the potency of khadi, and as you have told me that, whilst Calicut itself might appear a prosperous place, the country all round is groaning under poverty, it behoves you now to undo the mischief which Calicut commenced. And if you will be true to the profession you have made in your addresses I have to ask you the same thing that I have asked of the students, that you would all discard foreign cloth and take to khadi. But even that is not enough. You have to apply your talent to the organization and production of khadi in this very place. You, the citizens, including the students, can do so by doing sacrificial spinning and, having thus created the spinning atmosphere, you can take the gospel of spinning to all the villages round you and expect the villagers to spin for the whole of Malabar. And if you will but do so, you will find that you can add Rs. 4 per head per year to the wealth of the country and that you will do without replacing any other profitable occupation or without taking away from a single minute of your time which might be otherwise usefully occupied. And this is the penance we are expected to do for the sin that our forefathers committed.

There is again the great evil, concentrated or intensified in this part of the country, of untouchability known as unapproachability and unseeability. The sooner we Hindus get rid of it the better it is for us and Hinduism.

The drink evil is sapping the manhood of the poor people of the country. If we identify ourselves with the poorest of our country, it behoves us to work in their midst and try to wean them from the evil habit, and you must not be satisfied until you have brought about total prohibition in the land.

There are other things about which I have been speaking at other meetings. But I do not propose to take up your time with those other things important though they are. But I want to do some more business with you. I received some jewellery from the ladies here. I have a piece of hand-made khadi, beautiful in my opinion, given to me at Sabari Ashram which many of you know or ought to know. It is unostentatiously doing khadi work and doing work amongst the untouchables. I would like you to watch its activities, and, if they commend themselves to you, to support that Ashram. The spinning of the yarn, of which this piece of khadi is made, is done by one Brahmin, two Nayars, three Pulayas and four Thiyyas. It is woven also by the boys of the Ashram. So you have got a romantic history.

I already drew your attention to this book.[1] And here too, these books are useful books presented by a friend. And if you have the patience to be with me yet for a while and if you will bid for these things it will naturally take a little time. At the ladies' meeting a lady gave me a very beautiful timepiece. This is to be wound for eight days at a time, and it is in perfect order. There is this wrist watch and some rings, one of which is beautiful. And then, there are these frames which, it is well known, are expected to be taken up by the meeting. I propose to start with these frames. I have the copies of all these addresses supplied to me beforehand. Now we can start.

The Hindu, 27-10-1927

[1] A copy of *Sadhana* held in his hand

202. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Silence Day [After *November 25, 1927*][1]

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I have wired my reply to your telegram. I can't think of more. I thought of you a lot while in Ceylon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: S.N. 32811

203. TELEGRAM TO V. J. PATEL

October 26, 1927

REACHING BOMBAY TWENTYNINTH MORNING MANGALORE BOAT. PICE YOU BARODA THIRTIETH.[2]

Vithalbhai Patel, Life and Times, Book Two, p. 780

204. SPEECH TO ADI-DRAVIDAS, CALICUT

October 26, 1927

DEAR FRIENDS,

It has given me the greatest pleasure to be in your midst. I also liked the idea of your absolutely facing me so that I can have a good look at all of you.

It distresses me somewhat that we have got these different sections here. But, perhaps, it was inevitable—inevitable for my convenience. I had also hoped that I shall be able to see a much larger number of you as I have done elsewhere.

Now I have gone through the whole of your address, because I see a translation of it. You don't want me to give you my assurance that my whole heart is with you. And, if mere lip profession should make me one amongst you, I have even described myself as a Nayadi. But I know that at the present moment it is perhaps an impertinent profession. I have not come in touch with a single Nayadi, and on the

[1] From the contents the letter appears to have been written after November 25, 1927, till which date Gandhiji remained in Ceylon.

[2] On the way to Delhi for interview with the Viceroy

only occasion when I was able to see a Nayadi I was not able to get a touch of him, because of a fearful hedge dividing me from him. I could not induce him to come round the hedge and onto the road, where I and my friends were standing, and I made myself believe that then I had no time to pass nor walk along the hedge and then pass by it and go on to this friend. So, if anybody in this audience or elsewhere accused me of making empty professions, I should straightway plead guilty. But, side by side with pleading guilty, I should also unhesitatingly declare that I felt for them and felt for you as keenly as anyone can possibly do in this world. Well, I am rather afraid that this very long address you have not understood, nor has it been explained to you. And so, I propose to tell you what that address contains. The substance of it is that those who are called untouchables and unapproachables and unseeables are treated in the land of their birth as not merely outcastes, but as slaves; that they are property to be sold and bought; that you do not even enjoy the right of road that a human being should have in every part of the world, and that it was not without much difficulty that you were able successfully to get one girl admitted into a municipal school in Calicut. I do not know how far this last allegation, which is specific, is true; but I am quite aware that the substance of your address is true. And it is true, because, even we, who have gathered here and are witnessing this giving of address to me and my speech to you, have been and are neglectful of your interests. If we, who falsely call ourselves touchables, and what not, and arrogate superiority to ourselves, really felt for you as blood-brothers, these things could not stand for one single day. But there is a silver lining to this black cloud. Hindu conscience has been stung to the quick, and, at the present moment, a mighty movement is going on throughout the length and breadth of India to do some little reparation to you for the atrocious wrong that has been done to you. Many Indians who are known as great men are today interesting themselves in this matter. I have therefore no doubt whatsoever in my mind that the time is soon coming when these disabilities will disappear in their entirety. And I have no doubt also that if these disabilities do not disappear by some act of sacrifice and repentance on the part of the Hindus, Hinduism itself will disappear.

You have suggested, or it has been suggested on your behalf, in the addresses, that institutions should be established for you all over, which have residential arrangements for the instruction of your boys. The idea is no doubt admirable. You have yourselves mentioned the

name of Mr. Kelappan Nair. He is conducting one such institution. Not very far from here is also Sabari Ashram. But I know that these are all too short for their requirements. And I want to tell you, and tell everybody in this audience that if more institutions have not sprung into being, it is not due to want of funds, but it is due to want of workers. There are Hindus enough today in India, who are willing to give as much money as may be required, if they can be assured that there are honest, industrious, self-sacrificing and intelligent workers to do this work. But to the shame of *savarna* Hindus, it must be confessed that we have not many workers of the stamp I have described for this work, and I am also aware that locally there is not even money enough for this work. The largest amount of money required, even for this work, comes from the North. It should not be so, and, in order that this movement of reform, which is long overdue in Hinduism, may become really universal in India, it is necessary that local Hindus everywhere should come forward and organize this reform both with men and money. And for this purpose, I want to make a concrete suggestion. Contrary to my expectation, this meeting is more a meeting of *savarna* Hindus and others than of *Adi-Dravidas*. At the end, therefore, of this meeting, I propose to make an appeal not for the Khadi Fund, but for this particular kind of work; and I would use that Fund as a nucleus for a larger fund for work to be done in Kerala. And whatever may be collected at this meeting, I shall hold, in order that it might be handed over to a committee, that may be formed here locally, because I feel that it is not right that always for this class of work money should come from the North. Work so done cannot be considered to be really substantial. Whereas, what is necessary is that every Hindu should definitely heal this wrong, and, at least, make reparation by setting apart a certain sum from month to month or year to year for this work. And I can give you this assurance that whatever money that you may subscribe now, I shall not part with, unless I have seen a proper committee with a proper purse, set in working order.

Now so much for the part that *savarna* Hindus have got to play. But you have very properly said, or it has been very properly said for you in this address, that, after all, salvation must come from your own self. I have no doubt that, if you could only feel your strength, you could free yourselves today. But it has been stated, and properly stated in this address, that it is at the present moment beyond your capacity to feel this glow of strength. But there are some things which you can

do at once. If you are drinking you must give up drinking. If you are smoking you must give up smoking. If you are eating dead meat, carrion, you must give that up. You hold it to be intolerable for a Hindu to kill cows or to eat beef. That is one abstention enjoined most strictly upon every Hindu. And, in my own humble opinion, this abstention from cow-killing and beef-eating has a much deeper meaning than appears on the surface. I would like you, therefore, to give up this habit. I have just now heard from our host that many of you are giving up eating beef. And it gives me very great pleasure to hear this. I must apolo gize to you for even thinking that you have been eating beef. But as you will recall, I spoke conditionally. But I know that *Adi-Dravidas* in other parts of the South do eat beef. And if you will carry on this process of self-purification, little by little, you will find an evolution in yourselves, and you will also acquire self-confidence, which cannot possibly be gained by anybody.

Now, I do not propose to say anything more to you because I want to do the business that I have proposed for myself. But I shall hope that, since you have been brought here, or you have come here, those who have organized this meeting will more fully explain what I have told you, and you yourselves will go out into the midst of those who are related to you or known to you and carry my message to them.

Now, before I send out collectors in the midst of this meeting, I should like [the] principal men to announce their subscriptions themselves, if they have not got money enough in their pockets. Whatever is announced, I shall expect to be paid before I leave for Mangalore. I am an expert in making and organizing collections, and I know that it is a most dangerous thing to give credit for more than a few hours in the matter of collection. I want to exert no pressure, save the pressure of love. But, if you realize the significance of the speech I have made to you, I do not want you to give in niggardly fashion. I want you to consider this as your own work. Now, I leave this matter of collection in your hands.

At this stage, donations to the extent of about Rs. 380 were announced and paid on the spot. Whilst collections were going on, Mahatamaji read out a letter, which was handed over to him just then, and it was as follows :

> On the 5th instant I had occasion to go in the company of the District Scout Master and a Provincial Organizing Secretary of the Boy Scouts Association to the house of a lawyer. The agent of this gentleman received us

all kindly and offered seats in the verandah. Subsequently, however, the lawyer was given our visiting-card. His agent came out and told me that since from my name I appeared to be an unapproachable I should stand out in the courtyard. Out of self-respect I came away. I do not wish to encroach on your valuable time by offering criticisms on this occasion of the highly educated Brahmin gentleman. It will surely pain you to know that the lawyer mentioned is also one of the best Brahmins in the district. The particular instance, therefore, shows how deep-rooted is the vice of untouchability in this part of India. Mahatmaji carefully omitted all the names in the letter and said :

Of course it is a shameful thing. I believe that this instance must have happened, because I know myself that instances of this character have happened elsewhere also. It is certainly not creditable. But let us all who are here make some penance for those who are still harbouring unapproachability. I can understand a man full of superstition doing this; but I cannot possibly understand a man who has received college education such as it is, has become a lawyer, is practising and so on, and still having—what shall I say—the audacity or the ignorance or whatever adjective or whatever word you may wish to use and turn out a man, every inch of him a gentleman. This instance ought not to occur. However, I have mentioned this instance to you in order to make my appeal more effective.

My suggestion now is that the organizers of this meeting will not let the grass grow under their feet, but they will set about working today and form a little committee not for name, but for work, and substantial work. Send me the names of that committee. I am going today to Mangalore and as I had expected to go to Ceylon, I won't be able to go nor shall I be able to give four days to Mangalore, as I had expected to do. But, having received an urgent invitation from the Viceroy who wants me to go to Delhi on "urgent and important matters" as he puts in his telegram, I am also obliged to interrupt my journey to Ceylon and go to Delhi from Mangalore, and then I hope to return as quickly as possible, and go to Ceylon. But you can correspond with me in Delhi where I expect to reach on the 31st and I should be there for three days. I make the suggestion in order that you may lose no time. I want this committee to be a substantial committee and the committee should make it a point of honour to raise every penny that may be rquired for this work in Malabar itself. I know now enough of Malabar. I know that Malabar has that capacity for financing this, your purification movement.

And then having done that, the second thing I want to say now is

not in connection with this untouchability. But I cannot possibly leave this meeting without drawing the attention of these friends in front of me. Of course it hurts me to the quick to see a single person, who considers India as his or her land by birth or adoption, neglecting the poorest of the land by neglecting khadi. There are millions in our country, who are not called untouchables, but who have become untouchables because of semi-starvation. They have become untouchables because nobody goes to them. Nobody thinks of them. Nobody cares whether they are dying or whether they are living. Beasts and other animals at least get their food somehow or other. But these have become less than animals even, because they are semistarved. I want you therefore to think of them and in their name and for their sake not to invest a single rupee in buying any cloth but khadi, remembering that every rupee so spent means food for at least 16 women for one day.

And then I want you all to do a little spinning every day. If you do not know it, you should learn it. You can have clothes made out of yarn of your own spinning. I want to inform you that hundreds, possibly thousands, but I may not be able to verify the figure by thousands, but hundreds of the so-called untouchables have been reclaimed through the spinning-wheel. Many untouchables in the northern parts of India were weavers. But they were no weavers of find cloth or patterns but of simple coarse cloth, and, as Manchester calico came, they ceased to weave, because nobody would give them anything to weave. I know one family in the Ashram which has now made several thousands of rupees after this movement came, and that family consisting of husband, wife and one boy also working, and one child I think, they are at the present moment earning Rs. 75 per month, and have free lodgings. I can give you instances of many such families, though not earning so much as this family, but earning a decent living. Supposing that this movement dies, all these families will be again out of work. Supposing that this movement continues to progress much more than it is doing now, hundreds and thousands of such families can be set up. For, I know that there is no limit to our capacity for producing cloth even of the finest khadi. But somehow or other we seem unfortunately to have lost the will to love our country. And so you have more khadi than there is demand at the present moment in India. I want you *Adi-Dravida* brethren to alter this state of things because, after you, poor men like you are to be counted in millions. When khadi becomes the current coin in India our economic march cannot be stayed by any power on earth. Now I thank you all for responding to this appeal of mine.

The Hindu, 28-10-1927

205. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MANGALORE [1]

October 26, 1927

I am grateful to you for all the money which you have given me on behalf of *Daridranarayana* as also for the addresses. Since coming here I was very glad to find that some people spoke to me in my own language. I find that an address from the Arya Samaj in Hindi also was presented to me. If all the addresses had been in Hindi or at least in your own language, Kanarese, I would have been more glad. On this earth, God, Parameswhara, gives us sorrow and happiness. That Parameshwara has given me sorrow when I heard these addresses read in a foreign language. In this town I orginally wanted to stay with you for four days. I wish I had been able to do so. This day in the ordinary course of events I would have been in Nileshwar. When we reached Nileshwar Railway Station this afternoon I found thousands of people collected and in despair and my mind was very much aggrieved to disappoint them, and come here passing that station. I find some consolation in the fact that while serving the country I may have to disappoint so many by unavoidable change of programmes.

While I was in Tiruppur I received a telegram from the Viceroy. In that telegram His Excellency requested me to come up to Delhi in order to discuss with me some important matters. I think that by complying with that request also I may be able to do some service to the country. So it is that I had not the heart in me to refuse the invitation. I told you I have to go to Delhi and hence I am not able to stay in your midst long. So please excuse me. For what precise business I am going to Delhi to the Viceroy, why he has called me, and what important matter he wants to discuss with me, you might all be anxious to know. I am sorry to say that I myself do not know anything more about it. He has simply requested me to come even at a little inconvenience to myself. I have complete confidence that I will be able to finish my work in Delhi in two days. After that I want to go to Ceylon. If I get time and convenience when I come back, I will finish my full programme in your district.

I want to go to Ceylon and finish all the programmes that have been arranged there. I was to serve the *Daridranarayana* of Ceylon also as I have been serving here. So on account of all these reasons

[1] Gangadharrao Deshpande translated the speech into Kannada.

please excuse my abrupt departure tomorrow from Mangalore by sea.

Six or seven years ago I came here with my brother Maulana Shaukat Ali. That visit I will never forget. At that time Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs and all other in this country had been at peace. They trusted each other. There was perfect confidence between them. In Northern India, you have at the present time Hindus and Mussalmans fighting with each other and breaking each other's heads. This state of things should not continue. I am confident that good relations will be restored between them at no distant date.

In all your addresses you have mentioned about charkha and khadi and expressed your perfect confidence in the success of the movement. All the money you have given me is for that purpose. It is not enough if you say that you have faith in this movement. That will not make the movement successful. This khadi movement will succeed only if all of you we wear khaddar. I see many of you around me dressed in foreign cloth. Our country produces enough cotton and food products. If all our countrymen had only been consuming imported food materials then what would have been our condition today? It is the same if we wear foreign cloth. One of my sister told me that so long as she could not get very fine khadi she would not wear that dress. Now I will tell you of one instance. Suppose your mother or your daughter prepares food, even though it is not so nice you relish it will. In the same way the cloth prepared by your own brothers and sisters should be readily acceptable to you even if it be a little rough. As regards find khadi I can supply you khadi of whatever fineness you want. You can see how fine is the cloth on which the addresses were printed and the khaddar saris worn by my wife. You can also produce such fine khadi if only you take a little trouble and interest. What I would request you is this: this day onwards you should promise me that you will wear khadi only.

In your municipal address I am gald to find that spinning has been introduced in the schools maintained under their jurisdic tion. In these schools small children can make beautiful thread by means of *takli*. That is the best instrument to use in schools. You must teach them to spin in a scientific manner. I have noticed that those who are engaged in spinning khadi are very happy and contented. But all the members of the Municipal Council do not wear khaddar. They do not work on the charkha also, I know. So if they introduce the charkha in schools and ask the students to spin they would consider it as a

punishment. So in order to satisfy their students at least they should wear khadi.

There are certain evils in Hinduism like untouchability which I would bring to your notice. It is the duty of every Hindu to see that these vicious evils are immediately up rooted from the country if our Mother India is to attain salvation at all.

To the students who have gathered here I wish to say one word only. That is, the future of this country depends upon you alone. Because you are learning, it cannot be said that you are serving the country and the extent of your knowledge only has no relation to such service. I wanted to tell you two or three things more but I do not want to detain you.

Many of you may know that there is Hindi *prachar* work done by a disciple of the late revered Swami Shraddhanandji. He will teach Hindi to those who want to learn it. I would appeal to all of you, especially students, to learn that language. About the study of this language I have mentioned in several of my speeches in other places, and have also written a number of articles. Still if you want to hear more I will tell you a few words. If you desire to serve all India, if you want a bond of union between the northern and southern portions of this vast country, it is necessary that you should learn Hindi.

Finally, those who have not contributed enough money may do so even now. If there are my ladies who want to present any jewels to *Daridranarayana* they may do so. As regards my sisters I will tell you this—your ideal is Sita Devi. Just as she was beautiful in her natural form so also you should not desire the help of ornaments to aid your beauty. Moreover it is not good for you to wear ornaments while there are many of your sisters starving for food and work. Those who give a jewel worth Rs. 100 will provide food for sixteen hundred of their poor sisters for one day. These sisters do not beg. I do not give money to a beggar. I take full work from them. In Tamil Nadu, Travancore and other places many sisters and small children have given me various jewels and ornaments. I thank you all and may God bless you to understand what all I have said!

The Hindu, 28-10-1927

206. A GOOD SERVANT GONE

It was in 1921 at Bezwada that at a great ladies' meeting I saw the only khaddar-clad girl present there taking charge of the meeting, keeping order, and moving about with energy and decision. She was the first to give up, so far as I can remember, all her rich ornaments, bangles and a heavy gold chain. "Have you got the permission of your parents?," I asked her, as she was delivering all the ornamets to me. "My parents do not interfere with me and they let me do as I like," she replied. Annapurna Devi spoke English fluently. She had received her education at Bethune College in Calcutta. She went out amongst the huge mass of ladies for collections and brought ornaments and money. Ever since then she kept herself in touch with the movement—in fact dedicated herself to it. She was captain of lady volunteers at Coconada, and many have described in glowing terms her wonderful work at the time. Unfortunately even at this time she was not in robust health. She was married to Sjt. Magunti Bapi Needu, B.Sc. Whilst at Coimbatore I suddenly received a telegram several days after her death that she was no more. And now I have a letter from Sjt. Needu from which I take the following extracts[1] :

It is true, indeed, that I have lost more than a devoted follower. I feel like having lost one of my many daughters whom I have the good fortune to own throughout India. And she was among the very best of these. She never wavered in her faith and worked without expectation of praise or reward. I wish that many wives will acquire, by their purity and single-minded devotion, the gentle but commanding influence Annapurna Devi acquired over her husband. I appreciate his mild rebuke to me for Annapurna Devi having worn her body out in pursuit of the service of the Motherland. I doubt not that many young men and young women will have to imitate this good woman and die martyrs to duty before India becomes once more holy and free as millions believe her to have been in ancient times.

I have not been able to respond to the request to serve on the committee referred to in the foregoing extracts. For I have many

[1] Not reproduced here. The extracts gave a graphic description of Annapurna's steadfast devotion to Gandhiji, to khadi, non-co-operation and even to his dietetic experiments. The correspondent had asked for Gandhiji's consent to be included in a committee for her memorial.

interests, and I could not cope with the burden of being a member of hundreds of committees. I have never believed in becoming merely an ornamental member of any committee or belonging to it or the sake of lending my name. That there should be a local memorial to perpetuate the memory of one so brave, pure and patriotic like Annapurna Devi, I have no doubt. But the best memorial would be for her worthy husband to follow in the footsteps of his wife, and perpetuate her memory by finding his lost partner in the country's cause. For according to his own testimony Annapurna Devi had already lost herself in that cause.

Young India, 27-10-1927

207. A WORTHY EXAMPLE

The Vice-Chairman of the Municipality of Chanda (C.P.) writes as follows :

> This is the first Municipality in Central Provinces and Berar to exempt khadi from payment of octroi. Over and above this, from 1922 it has been regularly making an annual grant of Rs. 500 for khadi work which is being utilized for maintaining a 'Shuddha Khadi Karyalaya' here. This Karyalaya has now been affiliated to the All-India Spinners' Association. The yarn produced in it has been found to be the best in Maharashtra, with regard to its count, evenness and strength. Since 1922 the Municipality has been employing, for all its purposes, exclusively khadi manufactured in the Chanda Khadi Karyalaya. It is now considering a scheme for introducing khadi in its schools.

The resolution referred to reads :

> Resolved that all the hand-supn and hand-woven khadi certified for its genuineness by the All-India Spinners' Association be exempted from payment of octroi duty.

This is an example worthy of imitation by every munici- pality. The khadi work by this Municipality is no new love but it is well tried. It has survived the vicissitudes through which the other municipalities, large and small, have passed, and it has grown from year to year. The Municipality has been able to achieve this success because many of its members not only believe in the message of the wheel but reduce their belief into practice in their own lives. Th evolution of khadi in this Municipality has been natural in its stages. It commenced with a monetary grant, then they introduced khadi uniform for its servants.

This has been followed up by the removal of octroi duty on khadi, and it now proposes to introduce spinning in its schools. I hope that the introduction of spinning in the schools will be carried out in a scientific spirit, and that boys and girls will be induced to wear khadi before they are called upon to spin, and will be told why they should spin rather than do any manual work. I suggest, too, that the spinning will be on the *takli* and not on the wheel. Those boys who show great aptitude and take a keen interest in spinning may be supplied with spinning-wheels as loans to be worked not in the schools but in their homes, the wheels to be their property if they show continuous work for a period of one year. Both boys and girls should also be taught carding before they begin to spin, and their work should be tested daily and tabulated from time to time.

Young India, 27-10-1927

208. PROFITABLE COTTON CULTIVATION

A correspondent suggests that there should be a widespread movement to induce cotton cultivators to store a quantity of cotton for themselves to be converted into hand-spun yarn and finally into khadi for their own use. He also suggests that in non-cotton areas individual peasants should be encouraged to grow enough cotton as they grow vegetables for their own requirements. The correspondent contends that if this becomes popular, it will cheapen khadi for the peasantry. He says that in some parts of the South before the khadi movement came there were cultivators who followed this method. The correspondent thinks that Indian States are best able to promote this kind of cultivation of cotton.

There is much force in the correspondent's suggestion. The experiment of inducing cotton cultivators to retain sufficient cotton for their own needs is being tried in Bijolia (Rajputana), Bardoli and Kathiawar. But it has been found difficult in Kathiawar for the cultivators to resist the temptation of selling stored cotton when prices ruled high. This is not possible, until the cultivators appreciate the economics of khadi, and the fact that labour spent upon cotton during their leisure hours in subjecting it to the processes antecedent to weaving will bring about the same result that they achieve by selling cotton at a high price, and will in addition free themselves from the clutches of the speculator. This means that the All-India Spinners' Association will have to educate the cultivators in the economics of

khadi. There is no doubt that in order to overtake all the branches of khadi work it is necessary for khadi workers to come in close touch with the cotton growers, because even for buying cotton for the manufacture of khadi for town consumption, it would be necessary to come to touch with the cotton growers, and buy from them direct instead of buying in the market as is being done at present. If we would be independent of the speculator and the fluctuations of the cotton market and stabilize the price of khadi, we shall have to come in touch with the cultivator and induce him to deal with us directly. The greater the progress of khadi the more shall we find that our methods have to be far different from those hiterto adopted by the commercial world, which believes in selling at the highest price obtainable and buying at the cheapest rate possible. The world commerce at the present moment is not based upon equitable considerations. Its maxim is: 'Buyers beware.' The maxim of khadi economics is: 'Equity for all.' It therefore rules out the present soul-killing competitive method. Khadi economics are designed in the interest of the poorest and the helpless, and khadi will be successful only to the extent that the workers permeate the masses and command their confidence. And the only way of commanding their confidence is doing selfless work among them.

The correspondent's suggestion that the Indian States are more fortunately placed in the matter of storing cotton by cotton cultivators and growing enough for home consumption by other cultivators is no doubt true. The question however is: 'Who will bell the cat ?' The majority of the States are little concerned with the welfare of the peasantry. Their aim in life for the present moment seems to be to increase their revenue as much as possible and at any cost, and to spend the largest part of it for their own pleasures. Moreover they, like other capitalists, have little faith in khadi economics. A very cautious experiment is now being tried, in Mysore, of finding out the possibilities of the spinning-wheel as a village industry. One may hope that if that experiment is tried scientifically and patiently and is found to succeed, it would prove infectious.

Young India, 27-10-1927

209. REMOVING UNTOUCHABILITY

Sjt. S. D. Nadkarni in letter from Karwar, dated 10th September, says :

> Last week, my brother and I, helped by a band of young men, successfully organized, against many and unexpected difficulties, a खरा सार्वजनिक गणेशोत्, fl (i.e., real all-inclusive Ganapati festival), so called because we included the untouchables along with the other Hindus in our programme of processions, *puja, bhajan, arati, kirtan,* Puranareading and lastly a drama specially got written and staged twice during the festival. The drama is based on the real experience of the depressedclass member of our District School Board, who was refused admission into a school housed in a temple in a neighbouring village, while his Mussalman fellow-member and companion was admitted to inspect the school! Could you believe it? It was some of our own people (Hindu touch-me-nots) who tried to prevent the performance of the drama by setting up the local Muslims to petition to the authorities that the drama should be prohibited on the (totally false) ground that it was anti-Muslim. Could our people's opposition to a vital reform in our own community take a more suicidal course than this? But thank Reason and Justice, their attempts came to naught!
>
> With the help of Chitre Shastri of Poona (President of the Maharashtra Hindu Sabha) specially invited here for the purpose, we formed a local branch of the Hindu Sabha, with the object in particular of combating untouchability and securing admission to the untouchables into our public temples.

The opposition, and the manner of it, from the "touch-me-nots' as Sjt. Nadkarni calls the self-styled orthodox Hindus, to the presence of the so-called untouchables at the innocent performance organized by the reformers does not reflect any credit on them or their Hinduism, and it shows the lengths to which blind orthodoxy will go under the sacred name of religion. I congratulate Sjt. Nadkarni and his friends upon their having successfully taken the untouchable friends in their proces sion and admitted them to their theatrical performances. The only way to get rid of untouchability is for every reformer to do some such constructive work, be it ever so small, on behalf of the suppressed classes and by gentleness combined with firmness break down the double wall of superstition and prejudice. I hope that the reformers of Karwar will succeed in their efforts to gain for the untouchables admission to the temples.

Young India, 27-10-1927

210. MESSAGE TO SOUTH INDIA

[*October 27, 1927*][1]

I am leaving the South not without much regret. Wherever I have gone I have experienced richest affection from all kinds of people, not excluding those who consider themselves to belong to a different political school. Wherever I went I found a genuine faith in the message of the spinning-wheel. I am therefore leaving the South full of hope. I wish that I had more time at my disposal so as to enable me to overtake the many places whose invitations I was not able to respond to. I ask the people now to translate their faith into practice more than they have hiterto done, and they will discover a potency in khadi which they had not expected.

The Hindu, 29-10-1927

211. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

OMBAY

October 29, 1927

When asked by a representative of *The Indian Daily Mail* whether he would be prepared to accept the appointment of assessors on the Royal Commission or boycott it, Mahatma Gandhi said :

I have not given any thought to this question.

He said he was out of touch with events being away in South India and hence was not prepared to say anything about the rumours he was told about Indians being excluded from the Royal Commission.

Referring to the Unity Conference, Gandhiji said that he had not been specially invited to it, but being a member of the All-India Congress Committee and the Working Committee he would under ordinary circumstances have attended the Conference. He did not attend the Conference, because there was no way in which his services would be of any use.

The representative asked him: "As the question of Hindu-Muslim unity is important, don't you think that if you had lent your support to the deliberations of the Conference, it would have been of great assistance in arriving at an amicable settlement of the problem?"

[1] Gandhiji left Mangalore on the morning of October 27 to see the Viceroy on November 2.

[GANDHIJI]: I admit it is a very important question. If I had thought that I could assist the deliberations of the Conference, I would certainly have suspended my tour and gone to Calcutta. In short, I simply say that I hold strange views about the way of bringing about unity which in the present atmosphere cannot get accepted. Therefore, I can only be a hindrance rather than a help. So I felt that my abstaining was a kind of service.

Mahatmaji added that his "strange views" might be gleaned from the pages of *Young India*.[1]

[In reply to another question Gandhiji said :]

If someone invites me to consult me on some public matter I never reject the invitation.

He said he was not going to meet the Viceroy as a representative of anyone. Speaking about the Unity Conference at Calcutta, he said :

I was not invited to the Conference. In not inviting me Sri Aiyengar has only done me a kindness. He knows my views on the question and being a true friend he refrained from giving me unnecessary trouble. . . . I would have done no good by going. I have no sympathy for the attitude either of the Hindus or the Muslims and my presence at the Conference would have been only a hindrance.

Asked about his Southern tour Gandhiji said :

I have returned from this tour with hope. People evinced great enthusiasm about khadi—although they could have shown even greater enthusiasm.

Answering the critism evoked by his statement that in some Hindu temples God was present only as much as He was in brothels, Gandhiji said :

I am not prepared to withdraw a single word of what I said. In a way, it is the truth. God in omnipresent. He is present in thieves' dens, in toddy shops and in brothels. But to worship God we do not go to these places. For this purpose we look for a temple, trusting that the atmosphere there will be pure. I say that in this sense God does not dwell in some of the temples. Or if He does, it is only as much as in a brothel. If this statement of mine has hurt any Hindus I am sorry for it. But for the sake of truth and Hinduism I cannot either take away from or add to my statement.

[1] What follows is a translation from the Hindi daily *Aaj*, 31-10-1927.

Speaking about the statue agitation[1] Gandhiji said :

Since the Madras Council has turned down the resolution about removing the status, the youth of Madras should redouble their effort and those members of the Council who supported the resolution sould help them in every way. I cannot help saying that those who voted against the resolution have not understood the importance of this agitation. I am also sorry that the Europeans too obsturced the move.

The Hindu, 31-10-1927 and *Aaj*, 31-10-1927

212. NOTES

WNERLESS

A language which does not possess a universally accepted dictionary but admits all words in it may be regarded as ownerless. We have inexhaustible means at our disposal for checking spellings of English words. From huge dictionaries to the smallest and cheapest pocket-sized ones they are available. In all of them uniform spellings are to be found.

I have an impression that commonly accepted dictionaries are available for Hindustani and other language. Gujarati is the only language which has hitherto remained ownerless. I do not know of a single Gujarati dictionary which is commonly accepted or which contains all the words in the language. I have often made efforts in this direction but failed every time.

Some workers have been making efforts over several years to remedy this deficiency. Their work may now be regarded as having secured a good footing. Shri Narahari Parikh has taken upon himself the special responsibility for this. Kakasaheb Kalelkar is its founder-compiler. The approval of as many learned men as possible has been secured in regard to the principles that are being followed in the compilation of this dictionary[2]. It will be published under their seals and their signatures.

However, an increasing number of difficulties are cropping up as this work makes headway. Every lover of the language can help in

[1] For the removal of Neill statue in Madras; *vide* also "The Neill Statue and Non-Violence", September 29, 1927 and "Neill Statue Satyagraha", October 13, 1927.

[2] *Jodni Kosh*, published in 1929 with a preface by D. B. Kalelkar

solving some of these difficulties. The reader will see for himself how and in what particular manner he can help by reading Shri Narahari Parikh's appeal to the lovers of the language published in this issue. Without the assistance of a large number of persons this work cannot be accomplished as well as it should be. I hope, therefore, that everyone will give the best help he or she can.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-10-1927

213. INTERVIEW TO "INDIAN NATIONAL HERALD"

[On or before *October 30, 1927*][1]

A representative of the *Indian National Herald* questioned him as to what attitude he would take up at the Viceregal Conference, if he were faced with the proposition so much in the air, viz., that the Statutory Commission is to be composed of parliamentarians and Indians to act as mere assessors. Gandhiji replied :

How the Royal Commission should be constituted is as alien a subject to me as, say, the cure for tuberculosis which falls in the province of a medical expert. I have paid no thought to the subject of Royal Commission because it is distinctly outside the sphere of my knowledge, thoughts and activities.

Q. Would you accept a seat on the Royal Commission, if one was offered to you?

A. What is the use of asking me that question? I had once speculated what I would do if I were appointed Viceroy of India, but those days of speculation are gone.

In the end, the *Herald's* representative asked: "As a sure panacea for the country's ills, it has been suggested that you should be given dictatorial powers in all our national activities and be persuaded to play the Mussolini in India. How do you think that idea will work?"

Gandhiji returned a hearty laugh, then replied in all seriousness :

I have neither the ambitions of Mussolini nor can I have his powers. If dictatorship were thrust on me, I should cut a sorry figure as an Indian Mussolini. Moreover, you can't impose by force any reforms, social or otherwise. In other words, you cannot make people good by force.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 3-11-1927

[1] Gandhiji arrived in Bombay on October 29 and left for Delhi on the 30th.

214. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Sunday [*October 30, 1927*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

Your letters have been a great comfort to me, as they have enabled me to know all about the patients. I am gald you are clearing the kitchen thoroughly. I did write last Monday. You must have got that letter by now. More tomorrow.

Love

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope to be for a day at the Ashram during the return journey.

From the original: C.W. 5296. Courtesy: Mirabehn

215. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Monday [*October 31, 1927*][2]

CHI. MIRA,

This is being written on a moving jolting train. And I am disinclined to do any writing at all today. It is now 4 p.m. when I have ommenced the Monday letters. I have done a very fair amount of sleeping and an equal amount of listening to two friends.

I want you to tell me all you saw at the dairy and the pinjrapoles and the names of the ten. But perhaps there will be hardly time for you to write in reply so as to reach me in Delhi. For if I finish with the Viceroy on 2nd at the very first interview I shall hope to leave that very day for Sabarmati. Let us see. There is no warrant to hope much from the interview but I would not reject the advance on that ground.

I am looking forward to seeing both the serious patients absolutely free from fever. You should press both to take milk principally and keep their bowels in order.

Love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5290. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] From the references to Gandhiji's proposed halt at the Ashram and to a letter already written; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 24-10-1927.

[2] From the contents of the succeeding item; *vide* also "Letters to Mirabehn", 30-10-1927.

216. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Sud 6 [*October 31, 1927*][1]

SISTERS,

I tried to write in ink; but the train is moving so fast and is shaking so much that I cannot. And yet, how can I miss writing to you my Monday letter?

Never give up your efforts at unity. Success lies in the effort itself. God has promised that effort for good never goes waste and all of us have had some experience of this. You cannot now give up the store work. You should not, out of diffidence, give up work once undertaken. There is no reason either to feel diffident or to fear defeat. If a few of you gain experience and become expert in the work, there should be no hitch whatsoever; if you give up the store work out of a sense of defeatism, you will never be able to undertake any other work without any misgiving. Even if there are differences of opinion and petty jealousies, whatever work has to be done must be done. We should certainly not do less than what others do.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope to see you within three or four days.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3673

217. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

Silence Day, Kartak Sud 6 [*October 31, 1927*][2]

CHI. GANGABEHN JHAVERI,

I got your letter about the girl and her mother. I am sure Gangabehn[3] will be able to apply the correct remedy for burns. It is all to the good that one should lose faith in doctors, but the cause should not be the negligence of one of them. Carefulness is an

[1] Year and month inferred from the reference to the Ashram women's efforts towards unity and Gandhiji's hope to see them "within three or four days"

[2] The addressee was elected president of the Ashram women in September 1927.

[3] Gangabehn Vaidya

independent quality of character. We may, therefore, place ourselves in the hands of a doctor about whose carefulness we have no doubt at all and in whom we have faith, and then trust to God.

You should not be impatient to give up the Presidentship. It is certain now that I shall go to the Ashram for a day. You may tell me more then. Consider your position not as a privilege but as a responsibility. One should never pass on responsibility to someone else.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3124

218. LETTER TO PARASHURAM MEHROTRA

Tuesday, November 1, 1927

CHI. PARASRAM,

I have your letter just now. Rajkishori's[1] soul is certainly at peace. You must have fortitude. May God grant you peace and faith.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 2972. Courtesy: Parashuram mehrotra

219. SPEECH AT JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA, DELHI

November 2, 1927

The boys that were just introduced to you are grandsons of my friend and fellow-worker who was like a blood-brother to me, the late Ahmed Mahomed Kachhalia whom I naturally recall as I see the boys, and about whom I think I had better tell you something. Amongst the Hindus and Mussalmans that lived in South Africa in the days of satyagraha there was not a single Indian who could compare with Kachhalia in his bravery and his integrity. He sacrificed his all for the honour and prestige of his country. He cared not for his business nor for his wealth, nor for his friends, and plunged himself whole-heartedly into the struggle. Even in those days the cursed Hindu-Muslim differences now and then cropped up, but Kachhalia held the

[1] Addressee's wife who had passed away a few days earlier

scales even between the two. No one ever accused him of partiality for his community.

And he had learnt this great virtue of patriotism and tolerance not at any school nor in England, but in his own home, for he wrote even Gujarati with difficulty. Lawyers were amazed at the way in which he met their arguments and puzzled them, and his uncommon common sense was often very helpful to them. It was he who led the satyagrahis, and he died in harness.[1] He had a son called Ali whom he had trusted to my care. A lad of 11 he was wonderfully restrained, and a devout Mussalman. He never missed a day of fast during the sacred month of Ramzan. And yet he had not will towards Hindu boys. Today so-called religious devoutness in either is synonymous with a dislike, if not hatred, for other religions. Ali had no such dislike, no hatred. Well, both the father and the son are to me names to conjure with, and may their example inspire you.

In those days when Hindus and Mussalmans seemed to be one and ready to shed their blood for one another, and for their country, I appealed to the students to leave Government schools and colleges. The many years that have passed have left me utterly unrepentant for having asked those boys to come out of those institutions, and I am firmly of opinion that those who responded to the call served their land, and I am sure the future historian of India will record their sacrifice with approval.

But alas, today there are Muslims who go to mosques and offer prayers, and there are Hindus who visit temples, worship God and they are full of hatred against each other. They have begun to think that going to mosque or temple means that we should hate each other. But Ali, though a very religious soul, never thought so. I have related this story to you simply because I wish every one of you to be truly patriotic like the great Kachhalia and his loving son Ali. I pray to God to bless you with their noble heart.[2]

Hakimji has reminded you of that memorable day (11th October, 1920) , when Hindus and Muslims had sun their differences and they had united for ever, when students all over India were invited

[1] At this stage Hakim Ajmal Khan pointed out that Gandhiji was not audible on account of his low voice and hence Maulana Mohammed Ali be asked to repeat sentence by sentence what Gandhiji spoke. Mohammed Ali then related in brief what Gandhiji had already said.

[2] This paragraph is from *The Hindustan Times*.

to come out of all Government-owned or aided institutions. I know that I had a great hand in this invitation, but I make bold to say that even after seven years, I don't feel the least sorry for that nor do I think that I committed a blunder in that. I believe that those who gave up thier studies at the Government institutions did a great service to the country. I am sure that when the history of that period in India will be written the historian will no doubt have to write that those who boycotted Government institutions did great good to themselves and to their country.[1]

I am glad to find here some of the traces of those proud days, and I am very happy that you are trying your utmost to keep the flag flying. Your number is small, but the world never overflowed with good and true men. I sak you not to worry yourselves about the smallness of the number, but to remember that however few you may be the freedom of the country depends on you. Freedom has very little to do with your learning the letters or even with mere mechanical plying of the *takli*. If you have not the things essential for the freedom of India, I do not know who else has them. Those things are fear of God and freedom from fear of any man or a combination of men called an empire. If training in these two essentials cannot be had in your institutions, I do not know where else it can be had. But I know your professors, I know Hakimsaheb, and I am sure that these two essentials are being very carefully taught.

I do not mind the unsatisfactory state of your finances. In fact I am glad that we should be living from hand to mouth, so that we may all the better cherish our Maker and fear Him.

Mahatmaji laid great stress on the fact that if the University was doing good work, they must be confident that God will supply them with funds.[2]

Hakimji was quite right when he said that it was difficult for me to come to Delhi. But to come to you was a solace and a comfort. It is not to please you that I came here, but to please myself. I came with a selfish end in view, and that is to tell you that in spite of the storm of hatred and poison raging outside your Millia, in spite of Muslim running at the Hindu's throat and *vice versa*, you boys here will keep your heads cool, will not deny your Maker, will give no room in your hearts to hatred, nor even in your mind gloat over the country and its

[1] These paragraphs are from *The Hindustan Times.*

[2] *ibid*

religions going to wreck and ruin. That's the only hope that has drawn me to you.

You will have noticed that I have said nothing about khadi or *takli*. That is because even khadi and *takli* are nothing before the essentials I have talked to you about. You may ply your *takli* and wear khadi, but if you do not do the things I have told you, your khadi and *takli* will be of no account. But you will, I am sure, not forget what Hakimsaheb has told you about the necessity of wearing khaddar. You will bear in mind that it is by means of khadi that we are supporting 50,000 spinners today besides hundreds of weavers, washermen, carpenters, etc. Do not forget that many of these are Mussalmans. Without the charkha the Mussalman women in many places would have been starving. There is no other way of identifying with yourselves the Hindu and Muslim poor than that of wearing khadi.

Then Mahatmaji spoke very feelingly on the urgent need of building moral character. He said :

I meet thousands of students in my tour in the country. I find them entangled in ugly and dirty habits, which need no mention, because you all know. I pray God that He may save you from those dirty doings. When a man makes his hands, eyes and mind dirty, he is no more a man, but he becomes an animal.[1]

You should always abstain from doing any evil with hands, mind or eyes. If we want to be truly brave men then we must regard all women as our mothers, sisters or daughters, according to their age. Never cast a bad eye on any lady. We must be prepared to die for the honour of women. I know people forget this duty nowadays. I once again pray God to save you from this evil.[2]

Above all keep yourselves pure and clean, and learn to keep your promises even at the cost of life, and have the memory of the examples I have cited to you ever green in your hearts.

Concluding, Mahatmaji thanked the students for the purse and prayed that their University may live long and become India's freedom centre.[3]

Young India, 10-11-1927 and *The Hindustan Times*, 4-11-1927

[1] These paragraphs are from *The Hindustan Times*.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*

220. NEED FOR SELF-CONVERSION

Lokamanya gave us his message in four simple words. But there are even now people who question the proposition that swaraj is their birthright even as there are some who question the existence of God. The swaraj movement, therefore, is a movement to make us realize that swaraj is our birthright. In the midst of the many reminders that we already have of the existence of this need of self-conversion, the debate in the Madras Legislative Council on the Neill statue satyagraha came as an additional and emphatic reminder of that need. The innocent resolution asking for the removal of the offending statue was lost by an overwhelming majority. Almost all the Indian members, except the stalwarts, voted against the resolution. The motion showed the sharp difference between the Swarajist mentality and every other. This vote and the debate are a fresh demonstration of the fact that swaraj is delayed not so much by the obstinacy of the English 'rulers' as by our own refusal to recognize and work for our status. This agitation for the removal of the Neill statue is, in my humble opinion, a step towards our goal. National self-respect demands the removal not only of the Neill statue but of every emblem of our slavery, as I regard this statue to be. The agitation gains force by reason of the fact that it has no material gain as its objective. Swaraj will be within easy reach when millions of Indians unite in sacrificing themselves for the vindication of mere self-respect. Why does an Englishman feel personally insulted by and would die in the attempt to resent an insult offered to the Union Jack? It is not a sentiment to be despised or curbed. The method he adopts to resent the wrong is no doubt often barbarous, but if he ceased to cherish the sentiment itself, he would lose national solidarity and the power of sacrificing himself for the nation to which he belongs. Even so, if we were conscious of our birthright, it should be a matter for pride for us to know that there are young men who resent the presence in our midst of a statue that is an insult to the nation. Many Indian members who took part in the debate betrayed no such consciousness or pride. To them the young men who were fighting the nations's battle were ignorant men whose conduct was worthy only of condemnation. They saw nothing wrong in the statue standing in a prominent public place where there should be statues only of national heroes whose lives

would inspire and ennoble the nation.

It cannot be too clearly pointed out that this satyagraha is not aimed at General Neill as man. It would be just as appropriate and necessary if instead of General Neill it was General Virsingh whose statue was erected in order to perpetuate a reign of 'frightfulness'

There was in the debate a defence of the statue offered on behalf of the Europeans. It was cautiously, temperately and plausibly worded. Nevertheless it betrayed the European mentality. That for which General Neill stood was necessary for saving the Empire. And in order to cover the misdeeds of General Neill, it became necessary for the defender to vote down Mr. Thompson, the author of *The Other Side of the Medal*, as a neurotic, and to unearth a fulsome address presented to General Neill's regiment by 110 Hindus of Madras two years after the Mutiny. I have no means of ascertaining the circumstances in which the address was presented, but it does not appear to me to be at all strange that such an address was presented. For it is possible to quote such instances from contemporary events. Was not General Dyer presented with a similar address in Amritsar itself? And it would be strange if even now Sir Michael O'Dwyer, if he returned to India, did not find 110 Indians to present an address to him, if it was found necessary in the interest of good government. Have not the most unpopular Viceroys received addresses and trophies in our own times?

It is a matter of great pity to find Englishmen applaud sentiments in us which they would be ashamed to see expressed by Englishmen. I remember the wife of a Governor leading loud applause at a conference at which in speaking to a resolution on loyalty a learned Indian permitted himself to say that he considered every Britisher to be his teacher and that he owed all he was to Britain. The Madras performance was somewhat after that style and it grieved me.

But let not the adverse vote of the Madras Council discourage the young men who are fighting the battle against symbols of terrorism. They must not be angry against either Englishmen or the Indians who are now opposing the agitation. They must have faith in themselves and their cause, and they will convert the very men who are now opposing them. The agitation, of which they have laid the foundation, is bound to succeed, if they will keep it strictly non-violent and within the prescribed limits.

Young India, 3-11-1927

221. TELEGRAM TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

November 3, 1927

MITHUBEHN PETIT
BOMBAY

LEAVING AHMEDABAD TONIGHT FOR BOMBAY. FIFTH EVENING LEAVE [FOR] COLOMBO.

From a microfilm: S.N. 12838

222. TELEGRAM TO SOMASUNDARAM

November 5, 1927

SOMASUNDARAM
PROCTOR
89, DAM STREET
COLOMBO

SAILING EARLY MORNING TOMORROW BRITISH INDIA CARGO STEAMER. REACHING ABOUT TENTH.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 12838

223. TELEGRAM TO JALRUST, BOMBAY

November 5, 1927

JALRUST[1]
BOMBAY

LEAVING TONIGHT GUJARAT MAIL. MEET GRANT ROAD STATION. GOING DIRECT FROM STATION. TAKING BOAT FOR COLOMBO.

From a microfilm: S.N. 12838

[1] Presumably the firm of Jalbhai and Rustamji

224. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

November 5, 1927

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
GANDHI ASHRAM
TIRUCHENGODU

SAILING TOMORROW EARLY MORNING. REACHING COLOMBO ABOUT TENTH. WIRE COLOMBO. BRING LAKSHMI.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 12838

225. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

BOMBAY,
Sunday [*November 6, 1927*][1]

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

It was by sheer chance I got your letter, because the ship in which I was to sail [to Colombo] was delayed.[2] It was as well.

The use of the expression "Marwari interest" should not have pained you. And if it did, you should have told one like me then and there. I had used the expression only jokingly. I often use the word 'Kathiawari' in its derogatory sense. 'Kathiawari' suggests a crook. It does not at all mean that I am a crook. Being attached to you I shall not use even jestingly the word 'Marwari' in its derogatory sense, if you so wish. But I feel that you should not be afraid of such expressions. The idiom "when Greek meets Greek" is well known. But this does not mean that every Greek is treacherous.

For your information I may tell you that in Gujarat too there are many who exact exorbitant interest. Marwaris may be good or bad,

[1] From the reference to the ship to Ceylon being delayed
[2] *Vide* the succeeding item.

your body must get well like your heart; and you should be prepared to sacrifice the Marwari community for the sake of India.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

11-21 Colombo

22-25 Touring

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6150. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

226. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

November 6, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

Man proposes, God disposes. On reaching Bombay Shantikumar coolly told me the steamer was not going today but tomorrow. It was none of his fault. He came to know the postponement too late to let me know. It was open to me to take the train today. But I did not mind a day's delay. It will touch Tuticorin which we should reach on 9th or 10th.

I hope you are quite composed and that you have cleared up things with Krishnadas. I was not satisfied with my talks with Bhansali yesterday. His looks and his manners are changed. He was very good and sweet but there was a weirdness and an unnaturalness which pained me. I want you to cultivate him and help him gently out of his moods. But of course he needs most delicate handling.

I may not write tomorrow (Monday) as there will be no halting anywhere to post. I have taken special silence today to cope with correspondence.

Love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5291. Courtesy: Mirabhen

227. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

November 6, 1927

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I get letters from you regularly, but they are letters which I feel you write as a matter of social duty or to keep your promise. The letters which I used to write to my elders were not of this kind; I gave in them a detailed description of my life. Today Mira, aged thirty-two,

writes letters to me as long as ten to twenty sheets, though she writes as often as twice or thrice a week. She writes to her mother once every week and in those letters, too, she pours out her whole heart. One of you two at any rate should get time. If you wish you can write about many things, such as how your press is working, what difficulties you have to face, whether your expenses have increased or decreased, how large the circulation of the paper is, and so on. You can also, likewise, give information about the social and political conditions there. I may even be able to use your reports sometimes.

Why is it that Sushila does not get strong? Does she digest the food she eats? What is her diet? How much milk does she take? Do you obtain fresh milk, and cow's milk? What work does Sushila now do in the press?

I would have missed the mail this time, were it not that God saved me. For I was to sail for Colombo today. I would not have been able to catch the mail for South Africa from there. Today is Sunday. The mail leaves on Wednesday. Sorabji and his bride came to see me today and had my blessings. The marriage will take place on the 18th. There is much I can write about Harilal, but I don't wish to spend time on the subject today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4727

228. MESSAGE TO PEOPLE OF CEYLON

[Before *November 7, 1927*]

Though I am going to Ceylon as a self-chosen representative of *Daridranarayana* and therefore in the high hope of filling the begging-bowl, I have long looked forward to visiting the historic island. I nearly went there in 1901 but God had willed otherwise. I am a labourer and would love to make the acquaintance of Ceylon labourers to whom Ceylon owes its present condition.

The Ceylon Observer, 7-11-1927

229. TELEGRAM TO N. R. MALKANI

BOMBAY,
November 7, 1927

PROFESSOR MALKANI
NATIONAL COLLEGE
HYDERABAD (SIND)

IF THADANI DISENGAGES YOU MAY DEVOTE ENTIRELY RELIEF.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 880

230. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

November 7, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

Though I have nothing to say, I do not want to break the habit of writing to you on Mondays.

I take it that you are making notes from the dairy books you are reading. Now that you are in that line, I would like you to become an expert. You will have to have a mastery over figures too, if you can at all manage it. Only you must not make yourself sick over this or anything else. You will simply do what is fairly within you reach.

You will cultivate Chhotelal. He must get out of his awkwardness and moroseness. It is time he blossomed out.

Find out, too, the cause of Parnerkar's repeated illnesses. He must be will if he is to do much work.

Love,

BAPU

[PS.]

The voyage is very pleasant indeed.

From the original: C.W. 5292. Courtesy: Mirabehn

231. LETTER TO BENARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

November 7, 1927

DEAR BENARASIDASJI,

I received your two letters but could not reply earlier because I was touring.

I am very glad that you have taken up some steady work.

I am writing to the Ashram to dispatch the biography of Garrison available there. You will return it after use.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

It was good that you gave up the trip to Africa.

PANDIT BENARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

91, UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD

CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2558

232. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

Kartik Shukla 13 [*November 7, 1927*][1]

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

I have been able to read your New Year letter only now. We are all aboard the steamship bound for Ceylon. Kakasaheb too is with us. I am very happy to watch the good progress of your work and your delight. Ceylon will take about two weeks. After that Utkal, then Madras and the Ashram in January. I stayed in the Ashram for two days. There is a lot of malaria there. Devdas was operated upon for piles. He is well now.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. TULSI MAHER
CHARKHA PRACHARAK
NEPAL

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6532

233. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Monday [*November 7, 1927*][2]

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

Ramibehn accidentally met me in the train. She travelled with me from Mehmedabad to Nadiad. She talked about you all the time.

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's voyage to Ceylon
[2] From *Bapuna Patro—6 : G. S. Gangabehnne*, p. 13

She feels unhappy because you do not look after the children. I told her that, if the children were entrusted to you on your conditions and if no one interfered with you afterwards, you would certainly agree to take charge of them. She had nothing to say to this. I am sure you write to her from time to time. Her ideals are good. At present, she devotes all her time to acquiring knowledge of the letters.

See that you do not flee from the responsibility which has come upon you. It is now that the knowledge and experience you have gained are being tested. With patience, good temper and generosity of heart, you will be able to overcome all difficulties. Just as the sea accepts the water of all rivers within itself, purifies it and gives it back again, so you too, if you make yourself as the sea, will be able to accept all people. As the sea makes no distinction good rivers and bad, but purifies all, so one person, whose heart is purified and enlarged with non-violence and truth, can contain everything in that heart and it will not overflow or lose its serenity. Remember that you aim at being such person.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8706. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

234. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day, November 7, 1927

SISTERS,

I am writing this letter on board a steamer. It will be posted after two days, but since I always write to you on Mondays, I am doing so today.

This time I spent two very busy days in the Ashram. I felt tired, but I did not like to leave the Ashram.

You must have observed that your responsibilities are growing day by day. None of you should lose heart. Remain absorbed in your duties, and try to get peace even where there is none. Our joy must lie in our devotion to duty, and not in the success of our efforts or in the fact that circumstances are favourable. Narasinh Mehta has said: “If man had the power to do everything, no one would be unhappy, for he would destroy his enemies and allow only friends to live.” But man is a lowly creature. He becomes great only when he surrenders his ego and becomes one with God. A drop, if separated from the

ocean, serves no useful purpose; but staying in the ocean, it shares in bearing on its bosom the heavy burden of this huge steamer. In the same way, if we learn to be one with the Ashram, and thereby with the world and with God, we may be said to be bearing the burden of the world. But in such a state, the 'I' or 'you' ceases to be and only 'That' remains.

As the steamer is only a cargo steamer, it is very quiet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3675

235. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE

Monday [*November 7, 1927*][1]

BHAI MAMA,

It was only yesterday that I could read your article on the Antyaja Ashram at Vartej. I am writing this letter on board a ship bound for Ceylon. Since the article is very old now, I am not sending it to be printed in its present form. I shall see what should be done about it when there is an opportunity for writing about the *Antyaja* movement. How are things with you? Kaka is with me. My health is good enough.

11-21 Colombo

22-25 Jaffna

After that Orissa, and then Madras—at the time of the Congress Session.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

SJT. MAMASAHEB PHADKE

ANTYAJA ASHRAM

GODHRA, B.B. & C.I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3819

[1] From the postmark

236. LETTER TO G. N. KANITKAR

ON WAY TO LANKA,
November 8, 1927

MY DEAR KANITKAR,

I have gone through the report you left with me. It makes interesting reading. I hope that you will realize all the expectations raised in the report and that you will succeed in your attempt at turning out the best and the cheapest wheel.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 961. Courtesy: Gajanan Kanitkar

237. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

Tuesday, Kartak Sud 14 [*November 8, 1927*][1]

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I am writing this letter aboard a boat. I had duly received your long letter.

I felt that I need not have been called to Delhi. I think that it was not right to have called the others too. The Viceroy did not wish to know others' views; he wished only to express his own. I am not surprised by this strange procedure. It merely reflects the condition of the country.

Your remedy for the Hindu-Muslim problem is worse than the disease. If even the ordinary law is applied in a straightforward manner, many of the quarrels which occur today would stop. The problem was discussed at some length. I don't believe that unity between the warring factions can be brought about by declaring martial law. If it were not the policy of the Government to maintain its power by setting the two communities against each other, the Hindu-Muslim problem would hardly last a few months. The two communities would fight it out and then come to an understanding. But that is a long story.

I think it would be good for you to go away somewhere to rest in order to improve your health—rest not from work but from worries.

[1] On this date Gandhiji was on board s. s. *Colaba* bound for Ceylon.

I shall spend 15 days in Ceylon. After that, that is, on the 26th of this month, I shall leave for Orissa, from where I shall go to Madras during Christmas and then return to the Ashram in January. The Kathiawar Parishad[1] is likely to be held about the 15th or the 14th January.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3218. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

238. WAS IT A FAILURE?

Repeatedly does one read in the papers that non-co-operation was a perfect failure. Several courteous critics often apologetically broach the question in conversations, and gently tell me that the country would have made great progress if I had not led it astray by my ill-conceived non-co-operation. I should not refer to this subject, which may be said to have no bearing on the politics of the day, but for my belief that non-co-operation has come to us as an active force that may assume a universal form any moment, and but for the purpose of reassuring those who are bravely holding on in the face of criticism and scepticism. Let me, how-ever, admit the dangerous half-truth that non-co-operation entirely failed the moment it became violent. Indeed, non-co-operation and violence are here contradictory terms. It is a living belief that violence lived on itself and it required counter-violence for its daily maintenance that gave rise to non-violent non-co-operation. The fact, therefore, is that the moment non-co-operation became violent it lost its vitality and nation-building character. But in so far as it was and remained non-violent, it was a demonstrably complete success. The mass awakening that took place in 1920 all of a sudden was perhaps the greatest demonstration of the efficacy of non-violence. The Government has lost prestige never to be regained. Titles, law-courts, educational institutions no longer inspire the awe they did in 1920. Some of the best lawyers in the country have given up law for ever as a profession and are happy for having accepted comparative poverty as their lot. The few national schools and colleges that remain are giving a good account of themselves, as witness the great organization that came into being in Gujarat when the floods turned into a waste what was once a rich

[1] The Kathiawar Political Conference

garden. But for the students and teachers of national institutions and other non-co-operators the timely help that the afflicted peasantry of Gujarat received and so much needed would never have been at its disposal. It is possible to multiply illustrations of this character and prove that wherever there is real national life, a bond between the classes and the masses in India, non-co-operation is the cause of it.

Take again the three constructive items of the programme. Khadi is a growing factor in national regeneration and is serving over 1,500 villages through an army of nearly two thousand workers and is giving tangible productive relief to over fifty thousand spinners and at least ten thousand weavers, printers, dyers, dhobis and other artisans. Untouchability is a waning thing just struggling for existence. Hindu-Muslim unity of 1920-21 showed its vast possibilities. The violence, deceit, falsehood and the like that mark the rupture between the two great communities today are no doubt ugly signs, but they are a demonstration of crude self-consciousness. The process of churning that the movement of non-co-operation was and is has brought the dirt to the surface. And if non-violent non-co-operation is a living and purifying force, it will presently bring to view the pure unity that is invisibly forming itself under the very visible dirt that obtrudes itself on our gaze today. It is therefore clear to me as daylight that real swaraj, whenever it comes to us, will have to be not a donation rained on us from London, but a prize earned by hard and health-giving non-co-operation with organized forces of evil.

Young India, 10-11-1927

239. LETTER TO HARJIVAN KOTAK

ON THE BOAT "KAVERIMBA"

November 10, 1927

One should feel worried and ashamed even if there is involuntary discharge only once. It is certain that such discharge is the result of impure desires. I was told recently that a person who suffers from constipation may also get it. This is true, but constipation is also the result of impure desires. A man or woman who is free from such desires will not eat even a grain too much of food. Such persons never suffer from constipation.

But, then, there are two kinds of worry, one necessary and uplifting and another unnecessary and tending to drag us down. Despite worry and shame, we would remain cheerful if our lapse was

not intentional or if we did not take pleasure in it. Such worry may also be called vigilance. The second kind of worry is the remorse one feels afterwards though one had taken pleasure in the lapse when it occurred. Such worry preys upon one's mind and yet one sinks even deeper into the vice. A person who worries in this sense gets involuntary discharges more and more frequently, whereas the man who exercises vigilance gets them less and less frequently. You will perhaps understand now that a man who gets involuntary discharges cannot afford to remain unconcerned. He should sincerely strive to overcome his impure desires. If he can remain free from them during waking hours, he should not be frightened by involuntary discharges but should take them as a warning that impure desires are secretly eating him up from within, and he should ceaselessly struggle to save himself from them. If, despite his efforts, he cannot stop the discharges, he may have patience but ought not to give up the struggle. I am myslef not completely free from involuntary discharges. There was a period in my life when I remember to have remained free from them for many years but after I came to India and started taking milk they became more frequent. There are other causes besides milk. The atmosphere here revived memories of early life. There will be a chapter on this in the Autobiography. Read it.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

240. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

Kartak Vad 1 [*November 10, 1927*][1]

BHAISHRI DAHYABHAI,

I had your letter. I am going to Ceylon by sea and, having got some free time, am trying to overtake my correspondence. I could pay an unexpected visit to the Ashram for two days. With ceaseless effort, the ego is bound to melt away. Do come and see me when I return to the Ashram in January.

Blessings from
BAPU

BHAISHRI DAHYABHAI
DISTRICT CONGRESS COMMITTEE
DHOLKA, B.B. & C.I. RLY.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2699. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

[1] The year is inferred from the reference to Gandhiji's voyage to Ceylon.

241. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

AS AT SABARMATI
S. S. "CHINKOA"
November 11, 1927

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

It seems I have not written to you for ages. And it so appears because I have been having a glorious voyage from Bombay to Colombo. We reach there only tonight and I am dictating this on a cargo boat. I see that there is nothing like a cargo boat for quiet or for time for doing work if it is a clean boat. From Bombay to Tuticorin we had a very big, new, clean boat with ample room for moving about. I have changed into another cargo boat at Tuticorin in order to gain a day. It is also comfortable but not so roomy.

Well, I have seen the Viceroy.[1] I might not have gone at all but according to my wont I did not want to say a flat 'no'. We did not discuss khaddar but he has promised to invite me again for that discussion specially. He had in front of him the essay you have sent him. He is a good man with no power.[2]

I saw Ramchandran at Delhi and talked to him about the man you want for Jamshedpur. I was not able to see him for he was at Lahore. I am therefore unable to guide you. Ramchandran considers him to be a good man. Did you see Tehalramani? What did you think of him?

My programme having been interrupted owing to the Delhi visit I cannot be in Orissa on the 20th instant as I had expected to be. I must give about a fortnight to Ceylon. I shall, therefore, have to leave Ceylon for Orissa at the latest on the 26th or the 27th instant and reach there by the quickest route.

I hope your hand is now in perfect [working or][3] der. Kaka,

[1] For reports of Gandhi-Irwin meeting, *vide* Appendix "Gandhi-Irwin Interview", November 9, 1927.

[2] The Viceroy wrote to his father describing his first meeting with Gandhiji : "I have broken the ice and met Gandhi. He really is an interesting personality. . . . He struck me as singularly remote from practical politics. It was rather like talking to someone who had stepped off another planet on to this for a short visit of a fortnight and whose whole mental outlook was quite other to that which was regulating most of the affairs on the planet to which he had descended" (*Life of Lord Halifax*, pp. 246-7).

[3] The source is damaged here.

Pyarelal and Jamnadas[1] are with me besides Ba and Mahadev. And Rajagopalachari and Subayya are waiting for me in Colombo.

I told you that Devdas had an operation for piles. He must have been discharged on the 8th.

With love,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 2624

242. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

November 12, 1927

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

This voyage has given me a little time to overtake correspondence. I was thankful to hear of Savitri's safe delivery and her presenting you with a daughter. May the baby prosper. I hope Mother is quite well.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3177

243. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

ON BOARD SHIP TO COLOMBO,
Novemebr 12, 1927

CHI. NARANDAS,

Your letter of 16-10-27 is lying with me. I am replying to it in the ship which is carrying me to Colombo. You are right in what you say about the General Secretary. But such rules can be adopted only when an institution is running like an efficient machine. So long as we have not reached that condition, we should be content with what work we can smoothly do; only then will the institution take root. You may question me further when I arrive there in January. We shall certainly settle the Kathiawar matter than.

I suppose you know that Jamnadas is with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. NARANDAS GANDHI
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7713. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Youngest son of Khushalchand Gandhi, Gandhiji's cousin

244. AN ILL-MATCHED UNION OR CHILD-SLAUGHTER

The facts that have come to my knowledge regarding the ill-matched union that has taken place or is about to take place in Dhrangadhra State remind me of the essays on this subject which I read forty years ago. It is a matter of regret that such unions can take place even today.

The culprit in this case is a Brahmin servant of Dhrangadhra State. His name is Shri Keshavlal Damodar Bhatt. He is a revenue officer at Charadva. He is about fifty-five years old. He has three daughters. Four years ago he lost his wife and, now with the intention of remarrying, he has got himself engaged to a girl thirteen or fourteen years old.

The eldest son-in-law of this Keshavlal has sent me the correspondence that he had with the latter on this subject, in the hope that I would write something about it in *Navajivan* which might perhaps have some salutary effect on the old man or make him feel ashamed. As there is still time to wake up, let him do so and save himself from the great sin of child-slaughter.

Bhartrihari has stated from his own experience that those who seek the gratification of their desires know neither fear nor shame. If this lustful old father of three daughters has some fear or shame instilled in him in some manner, that young girl who is fit to sit in his lap as his grand-daughter will surely be saved.

Bhattji wrote the following letter[1] to his son-in-law on the 6th of October :

Prabha is Bhattji's youngest daughter and this good man has thought of remarriage at this advanced age only because he might feel lonely when she gets married. However, almost every one of his letters gives proof of his lust.

This elderly man, who, blinded by his lust, is about to remarry, exhibits his own hopes in greater detail in his second letter[2].

We find from this letter that Bhattji regards this betrothal as an auspicious deed. He informs his son-in-law of his desire to dress his

[1] Not translated here
[2] *ibid*

child wife in a *chundari*[1] made of Japanese silk, with checks in it—*chundari* of the same kind that was presented to Prabha, and he expects his eldest daughter Jeevi to perform the auspicious ceremony of presenting that *chundari* to his child wife.

However, both his elder daughters and his eldest son-in-law are against this sinful marriage and oppose it, and the latter requests his father-in-law to save himself from this sin. In reply to this, Bhattji writes to say as follows :[2]

Thus the rope remains twisted even when it burns. Even now, if the daughters and the son-in-law withhold help in this sinful act, Bhattji may save himself from the crime of child-slaughter, Dhrangadhra will be saved and so will the whole of India.

A strong public opinion is the only means to prevent such wicked deeds. In this case public opinion is represented by old Keshavlal's son-in-law, his daughters, people of his caste and his other neighbours. All these persons should not lose hope; they should plead with Bhattji with firmness and courtesy. The would-be bride's father, too, should be persuaded to desist from slaying his own child. If, in this manner, Bhattji does not receive any co-operation from anyone, this evil deed may yet be prevented from materializing.

Bhattji and those other old widowers like him who cannot control their lust should think of the plight of innumerable widows. The sex instinct is equally strong in men and women. Can the widowers not exercise self-control by thinking of widows leading lives of purity?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-11-1927

245. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

November 13, 1927

Q. Your photographs belie you. Is it that you refuse to smile when you are photographed?

A. I never have myself photographed.

[1] A silken sari for ceremonial occasions

[2] The letter is not translated here.

Q. I wonder whether they make your photographs from drawings!

A. Only the photographers know it.

[Asked about the progress of khadi, Gandhiji said :]

I have met with a fair amount of success.

Q. Do you think that the charkha will ultimately remedy the evils of industrialism?

A. So far as India is concerned, I have hoped in faith. I am hoping in faith that the charkha will be universal in India, and that it will correct many evils of industrialism.

[Asked for an expression of opinion on the Simon Commission, Gandhiji said :]

So far as I am concerned, my conscience in this matter is in the keeping of the President of the National Congress, and the Congress in general.

Q. If you are dissatisfied, would you advise a boycott?

A. I have no opinion in the matter, except that of the leaders of the Congress.

Q. Are you prepared to abide by whatever decision they make?

A. Yes, I shall accept it and if I cannot endorse it, I shall not resist it.

Q. Do you think the peace efforts of statesmen will be successful or do you think that the world is heading for another war?

A. It is a difficult question to answer. Appearances go to show that the world is preparing for another war, but one must hope that it may be possible to avoid it.

The Ceylon Daily News, 14-11-1927

246. SPEECH TO CHETTIAR COMMUNITY, COLOMBO

November 13, 1927

FRIENDS,

I thank you for all those purses[1] that you have presented to me in this eminently business-like manner. I feel again like standing in Chettinad. The very pleasant recollections that I have of my recent visit to Chettinad have become vivid and fresh before me this afternoon. Their generosity and kindness I shall never forget and you here in Colombo are but repeating all that I witnessed in Chettinad.

[1] For the Khadi Fund collections in Ceylon, *vide* Appendix "Khadi Collections in South India and Ceylon", December 22, 1927.

The only consolation that I have in receiving all these gifts and kindness from you is that it is all being done for the sake of *Daridranarayana*; and seeing that I regard myself as but a humble trustee for the millions of paupers of India I not only feel no shame or humiliation in receiving these gifts, but I feel impelled by your generosity and kindness to ask for more. Rich and generous though you may be it is really not possible for any single corporation to fill the millions of mouths of *Daridranarayana* and if there are any of you who have not given at all or given in a miserly fashion I appeal to you to open out your purses and give as much as you can on behalf of *Daridranarayana*. I can conceive of no better investment for wealthy Indians whether in India or outside; and let not your generosity end with merely giving money. If you will establish a living bond with these dumb millions you must wear khadi. It is produced by the hands of those starving men. If you will continue on these lines you will find that it will become necessary for you, if you are to have that bond continuously with the dumb millions, to purify your lives. And, wherever there is pure love there is charity and wherever there is personal purity there immediately arises cohesion in that society. You will find that one step in your advancement towards purity leads on to another.

You are in what might be considered a strange land. Geographically and officially speaking Ceylon is not considered part of India. You, as merchants living in this hospitable land, are expected to behave towards the indigenous population in an exemplary and honest manner. By your conduct will be judged the conduct of the millions of India. I hope, therefore, that your dealings with the people of this fair island are absolutely just and free from all reproach. Let your scales be absolutely correct, your accounts accurate, and, I hope that you regard every woman in this island as your sister, your daughter or your mother. Let possession of wealth not render us giddy. It must carry with it greater sense of responsibility if it is to be a blessing to the possessor and those from whom it is earned.

I must not detain you any longer. I have hardly commenced my work in Ceylon yet. In the course of my tour in this island I shall have many things to speak about and I would like you to follow whatever I might have to say in the different places where I may be taken and nothing will please me better than to find that when I have gone out of this island you have not forgotten the things that I may lay before you from the deepest recesses of my heart.

I thank you once more for all these generous presents and if there are any who want to pay they are at liberty to do so. Let me also inform you that if you want khadi you can get it at the place where I have been accommodated. May God bless you!

The Ceylon Daily News, 14-11-1927 and *With Gandhiji in Ceylon*

247. SPEECH AT VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY, COLOMBO

November 13, 1927

I thank you for your address and your purse. During the short time I had at my disposal I tried to glance through the report of the work of your Society and I beg to tender to you my congratulations on its many activities. Vivekananda is a name to conjure with. He has left on India's life an indelible impress and you will find at the present time societies named after him in many parts of India; and this is apart from the many branches of the Rama Krishna Mission.

But I see that I must not keep you long at this meeting. There are impatient crowds waiting outside. All that I would say at the present moment is that I wish every prosperity to this Society, and may I suggest that your activities will be incomplete unless you add to these the one thing that renders service to *Daridranarayana*? Your purse to me is a token of your appreciation of the message of the spinning-wheel. If Vive-kananda is the name of your Society, you dare not neglect India's starving millions, and the conviction is daily being driven home that without the spinning-wheel it is impossible to serve the starving millions of India. I have therefore no hesitation in making an appeal to the Indians, whe- ther they are living in India or outside, that they should carry with them on their persons an emblem of the living bond between themselves and the starving millions in their motherland.

I wish to say to my sisters on the right and the fashionable Indians living in Colombo, or for the matter of that in all Ceylon, that it is now possible, after six years of continued activity, to give you all the fineness you can reasonably desire, even in khaddar.

I pray to you that you will not despise the little service it is

possible for you to render to these starving millions of your countrymen and women by wearing khaddar, rather than foreign and mill-made cloth.

I thank you once more for your address.

The Ceylon Daily News, 14-11-1927 and *With Gandhiji in Ceylon*

248. LETTER TO SURENDRA

Sunday [On or after *November 13, 1927*][1]

CHI. SURENDRA,

I got your letter. Devdas was taken ill on the way. This led to some delay in Bombay, but I think now he would have reached Wardha. If you can get away from there by all means go to Wardha and comfort him as much as you can. You would naturally want to go to him and I don't want to stop you from it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9411

249. INTERVIEW TO "THE TIMES OF CEYLON"

COLOMBO

[On or before *November 14, 1927*][2]

Gandhiji, interviewed by *The Times of Ceylon*, said that his attitude towards the Statutory Commission would be determined by the Congress.

As regards boycott, he said it was his personal opinion as an individual that an active and general boycott would be an effective answer to the British Government.

Asked if he honestly believed that India would be happier if the British got out altogether, Gandhiji is reported to have said that he believed that the only solution of the problems, not only in India but also in Africa, was that it was better if the English remained as friends. India, he admitted, had internecine strife, but in the result India would ultimately free herself. There would be no half-way house.

Replying to another question, Gandhiji explained that non-co-operation was

[1] The letter seems to have been written after Devdas's discharged from the hospital on November 8, 1927; *vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 11-11-1927.

[2] The report of the interview was published under this date.

aimed at the forces of evil. Concluding, he declared :

We want friendship, but we do not want a master.

The Hindu, 15-11-1927

250. CABLE TO DHANGOPAL MUKERJEE

[*November 14, 1927*][1]

DHANGOPAL MUKERJEE
CARE
MRS. WALLER BORDEN
1020, LAKESHORE DRIVE
CHICAGO

YOUR CABLE. INDIAN LEADERS' PROTEST WHICH "TIMES" REFUSED PUBLISH WIDELY PRINTED IN INDIAN PAPERS. "MOTHER INDIA" IS DISTORTED ONE-SIDED PICTURE CONTAINS PALPABLE FALSEHOODS WILD EXAGGERATIONS SUPPRESSION RELEVANT FACTS. MANY WHOSE CONVERSATIONS AUTHORESS CLAIMS QUOTE HAVE PUBLICLY REPUDIATED THEM. BELIEF NOT UNWARRANTED DAILY GROWING THAT BOOK INSPIRED BY PEOPLE INTERESTED IN DEGRADING INDIA IN PUBLIC ESTIMATION IN WEST. MANY WELL-KNOWN ENGLISHMEN AMERICAN AND ENGLISH MISSIONARIES OF LONG EXPERIENCE HAVE REPUDIATED AND CONDEMNED BOOK.[2]

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 12551

251. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

November 14, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I got your two letters.

I liked the voyage very much and wished I had more of it.

[1] From an entry in the source and the reference to Katherine Mayo's *Mother India* which was published in 1927.

[2] In his reply dated 17-11-1927 the addressee informed Gandhiji of a Lecture Bureau's invitation to Sarojini Naidu to visit U.S.A. on a lecture tour to repair the damage done by Miss Mayo's book.

I leave Ceylon definitely on 29th istant. The first place to reach in Orissa will be Berhampur, Ganjam District. There are two routes: *via* Calcutta, *via* Raichur-Bezwada. I do not know which is cheaper or better. You will look up and decide. Surendra is familiar with both the routes, I fancy. I expect to reach Berhampur on 2nd December. So there won't be a month in Orissa as I had expected.

Your programme for cutting off the quantity of cloth required is drastic. You may have that for indoors but perhaps not for all occasions. The sari may be necessary for the very work you have to do. But I do not know. Let us hasten slowly. Anyway, I shall not interfere with your wishes in this matter.

Surround Bhansali with all the affection you can and let the latter work its way. Affection may succeed where argument fails.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5293. Courtesy: Mirabehn

252. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

COLOMBO,
Silence Day, November 14, 1927

SISTERS,

We reached Colombo on Saturday. I expected a letter from one or other of you, today being Monday. But it has not come yet.

This is a very pleasant land. Though it is outside India, it is exactly like it. Indians here are mostly from the South. The local inhabitants do not look very different from them. Women's dress here is very simple; in fact it may be said that men and women dress practically in the same way. Both put on dhotis in the manner in which Surendra does. Only, the dhotis here are dyed and have various designs on them. Both wear jackets, though there is a slight difference in cut. Women are never without jackets, whereas men are content often to come out with only dhotis on. Malabar has also similar dress, only the dhotis there are not dyed. These clothes are bound to be very cheap. Only if people in these two States begin to take a liking for khaddar, there will be no difficulty for them to adopt it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3676

253. SPEECH IN REPLY TO MUNICIPAL ADDRESS, COLOMBO

November 15, 1927

CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I want first of all to apologize to you for not standing up to speak to you. For years past I have been unable to address audiences standing; so you will not consider it discourteous on my part if I address you sitting and that I have not received your address standing. I am sorry also that at the present moment I have not a voice that would carry far, and I have also to apologize to you and to the citizens of Colombo for not having arrived here in time. But for that the blame must rest on stronger shoulders. I refer to His Excellency the Viceroy. It was he who invited me to go to Delhi, and if you want to pass a vote of censure on His Excellency the Viceroy I will certainly join you. But perhaps you will excuse His Excellency and, through him, me also.

The second cause of my delay was that I came as a passenger on two cargo boats and in spite of the efforts of the captains and the officers to bring me here as soon as they ever could, you will understand the limitations that are imposed upon cargo boats. Cargo boats have got to take care of their cargo rather than the passengers, who are interlopers.

It is a matter of great pleasure to me to receive this address at your hands. I was totally unprepared for it. Mine, if you will like to take it so, is a mercenary visit. I have come to Ceylon in reply to invitations from some of my own countrymen, and I have devoted this year which is about to expire to getting collections on behalf of the cause which is designed to serve millions of paupers in India. The temptation that these friends gave me was irresistible.

I very nearly came to this pearl among the islands of the world in 1901. You may not know that I have many Mussalman friends in South Africa. They are dear to me as life itself, and some of them urged me to come to Colombo on my way to India, and I would gladly have done so then, and then I would have come as a sojourner in your midst to appreciate the unrivalled beauties of this very beautiful island and to enjoy also your open hospitality. But I cannot say the same today; so that I was not prepared for this address because I hardly deserve it at the present moment.

But I am a lover of municipal life, and although it never fell to my lot to serve a municipality as a councillor, I came as a citizen into the closest touch with two great Corporations. I mean the Corporation of Durban and the Corporation of Johannesburg. And if you were to ask the mayors of these two Corporations, they will perhaps testify that I served them as much as a single citizen, humble like myself, could possibly do.

I consider it a great privilege for a person to serve any place where he has cast his lot. I have since been studying the methods of great Corporations throughout India, more or less closely, and I have been in search of an ideally conducted municipality in the East. I must confess to you that I have not yet found one in my own country. I should love to think that you are that ideal Corporation. But I am unable to say anything owing to my great ignorance of your achievements.

Yesterday I asked for a copy of the latest report of your administration, but it was not possible for me to go through the whole of the interesting document.

Having done spadework myself both in Durban and Johannesburg, I turned to pages referring to the plague and it gave me something of a shock when I read in those paragraphs that you were not yet immune from that curse. These two corporations, Durban and Johannesburg, had also their share of the plague. In Johannesburg it was of a most virulent type, but the Municipal Councillors counted no cost too great to protect the citizens against any further inroads. I won't take you into the very interesting history of how Johannesburg battled against the plague. Durban also did likewise, and it was in that connection that I had an opportunity of reading the very wonder ful history of the Corporation of Glasgow and how Glasgow poured money like water in order to make that great city plague-proof. And it succeeded. I don't know that since that one visitation Glasgow has had another. I am speaking under correction, but I hope that my impression is absolutely correct. I can say from first-hand knowledge of Johannesburg that Johannesburg has not had that visitation again. Of course, it has got a climate probably second to none in the world which is in its favour but the manliness of its citizens also stands out to its credit.

As you know Johannesburg is a cosmopolitan city. It has a great Bantu population, and it has its share of the Indian population. It has

also its ghettos, and still Johannesburg is immune.

Here I have found that your difficulty was with the Harbour Master—that it is too expensive to disinfect all the grain that comes or passes through this beautiful harbour of yours. I say that this Corporation should fight against these interests in order to make this city absolutely free from plague, and to invest passing visitors like me with a sense of perfect freedom. My medical adviser would tell me: 'In your dilapidated condition you must not go to a place like Colombo'—and if I was inclined to listen to my medical advisers I would not have come if I had read a report of that character before I came here.

The second thing I was reading in this interesting document was about your dairies. . . .

I notice that you import dried milk from New Zealand. You are finding room for dried constituents of milk, and, if I am to speak in that special language, you reassemble the constituents and sell that liquid but it appears under the name of milk. I wonder that your medical officer passes the stuff as milk at all. I was sent by friends whilst I was having my convalescence in the Nandi Hills a book on vitamins, and if these writers and distinguished specialists are truthful, they tell us lay people that milk is robbed of its vitamins when subjected to a certain temperature. I know something of the constituents of dried milk and I know that milk loses its vitamins when it reaches that dry stage. When you rob milk of its vitamins you rob it of half its richness. You have many dairies here. I want to throw out a suggestion here. You have inspectors, you have bye-laws, and you have some prosecutions. Why go through all this trouble and why not municipalize your dairies and take control of your milk supply, and, believe me, you will then conserve the health of your babies and you will conserve also the health of an old and dilapidated man like myself. I have no doubt that you have in Colombo very old men and that they stand in need of milk, and there is a very great labouring population for whom milk should be cheap. It should be standardized like your stamps, and the people should be able to get their milk absolutely guaranteed. And if you want to do that you cannot do better than municipalize your milk supply and make it accessible to the poorest man in Colombo.

The third thing and I have done. I know that you have got a very beautiful harbour. I have passed through your cinnamon gardens, a credit to any city in the world. I have noticed some of your

palatial buildings. They are very good indeed. But then do the dwellers in cinnamon gardens or those who reside in this city and do business in it require trustees to look after their welfare? I fancy not. They are trustees for those who cannot look after themselves. They are trustees, therefore, for the welfare of the labouring population.

I have not yet been able to visit your slums to be able to say at first hand what the condition of these slums is. But if you are able to tell me that your slums will be just as sweet-smelling as cinnamon gardens I will take it on trust and will advertise your city throughout my wandering and I will say: "Go to Colombo if you want to see an ideal municipality." But I hardly think that you will be able to get a certificate of merit from me. I refer to the condition of your slums. I have been going through some statistics about your labouring classes.

I think a place like Colombo which is certainly dry in one respect can easily afford to go dry in another respect. And if you, the trustees for the welfare of the citizens of Colombo, will make Colombo, dry if it is really possible for you to do so, you will earn the thanks not only of the citizens of Colombo and the thanks of a humble individual like myself, but the thanks of all Eastern municipalities.

May God help you to lead the way in the direction I have indicated. I thank you once more for the address that you have so kindly presented to me.

The Ceylon Observer, 15-11-1927 and *With Gandhiji in Ceylon*

254. SPEECH AT ANANDA COLLEGE, COLOMBO

November 15, 1927

MR. PRINCIPAL, TEACHERS AND BOYS,

It has given me great pleasure to be able to come to Colombo and Ceylon and to make your acquaintance. Wherever I go I love to see school children.

Here in Ceylon the majority of the boys come under the influence of Buddhist teaching. That great Master taught us what is known as the Right Path, and you, boys, come to institutions of this character to learn the Right Path. And to learn the Right Path is not merely to pack our brains with many things that sound nice, goods or sweet, but to do the right things. Well, the first maxim of the Right Path is to tell the Truth, to think the Truth and to act the Truth. And

the second maxim is to love all that lives. Gautama Buddha was so filled with mercy and kindness that it was he who taught us to love not only the members of the human family but also to love all life, to love all the animal world. And he taught us also personal purity of life. Therefore, if you, boys, are not truthful, are not loving and kind, and not pure in your personal conduct, you have learnt nothing in this institution. And which of the boys will tell me where Gautama Buddha was born?

A very small boy tot who was in front of the Mahatma replied : He was born in Kapilavastu.

MAHATMAJI : And where is Kapilavastu ?

THE BOY : It is in India.

MAHATMAJI : Then I suggest to you all, boys, that you owe something to Gautama's countrymen, and I am sorry to have to tell you boys, if you do not know it already, that in the land where Gautama lived and taught, and which he hallowed by his feet, there is dire poverty and distress. One reason why the sacred people of India, the millions of them, are so poor is because they have abandoned their ancient industry or have been deprived of it, I mean the spinning-wheel. Well, now, they can revive the spinning-wheel if everybody in India and others will wear what can be spun and woven from it. That cloth is called khadi.

Now, if you will render something unto Gautama for the great message of mercy that he delivered to you and to my countrymen, certainly wear khadi. So far as I know all the cloth that you little boys and others have worn has not been produced in Colombo or Ceylon, and seeing that you must buy some cloth in order to cover yourselves it is your primary duty to buy that cloth which is woven by the famishing millions, the countrymen of Gautama. And if you will do so you will then certainly act or begin to act according to the second maxim in the Right Path. What I have told you naturally applies with double force to your teachers and your parents. If you are clever, good and brave boys, you will discuss these things with your teachers and your parents and ask them: "What is it this strange man called Gandhi told you?" And if I am not mistaken they will endorse every word of what I have said to you. You have given this money to me for this very purpose, and I thank you and the teachers for giving me this money thinking of the famishing millions of India. To wear khaddar

is merely to follow up the step that you have taken today. May God bless you all.

The Ceylon Daily News, 16-11-1927 and *With Gandhiji in Ceylon*

255. SPEECH AT NALANDA VIDYALAYA, COLOMBO

November 15, 1927

MR. PRINCIPAL, TEACHERS AND BOYS,

I thank you very much for giving me this donation for the work which has brought me to this beautiful island. . . .[1]

And I suggest to you that if you will carry out this law of mercy that Buddha taught, and if you will make some return that you owe to Gautama you will, until you are able to produce your own khadi, wear khadi that is manufactured in India. My friend, the translator[2], proudly pointed out that the cloth he was wearing was manufactured in Ceylon. Well, I would prohibit you from buying a single yard of khadi manufactured in India as long as he is able to produce sufficient khadi manufactured in Ceylon, and you would certainly be still followers of the Buddha if you work with your own hands and manufacture khadi. If you will do that you will help the whole world by setting a noble example. But, meanwhile, I suggest to you that you will be doing the right thing and following up the step that you have taken by giving this purse if you all wear khadi, teachers and all. I thank you once more for this gift of yours, for inviting me to this school and I pray that God bless you.

The Ceylon Daily News, 16-11-1927 and *With Gandhiji in Ceylon*

256. SPEECH IN REPLY TO BUDDHISTS' ADDRESS[3], COLOMBO

November 15, 1927

I thank you very sincerely for the address that you have given to me. I appreciate the courtesy, in that you have supplied me with a translation of your address in advance. I am equally grateful to His

[1] Then Gandhiji spoke on the message of Buddha and khadi.

[2] J.S.P. Jayawardene, who translated the speech into Sinhalese

[3] Presented at the Vidyodaya College by the All-Ceylon Congress of Buddhist Associations

Holiness and the priests for the benediction that they have prono unced just now. I shall always esteem it as a great privilege that I have received this benediction this afternoon, and I can give His Holiness and the priests in the presence of this assembly the assu rance that I shall always strive to deserve that benediction. Your address mentions it and His Holiness also just now mentioned the fact about the Buddha Gaya temple which is situated in India. I have been interesting myself in this great institution for a long time, and when I presided over the deliberations of the Indian National Congress at Belgaum[1], I had the privilege of doing what was possible on behalf of the Congress in this connection. I had sent to me by some unknown friend in Ceylon [a report] of the controversy that took place in connection with what I did at the Congress. I did not think it proper to take part in that controversy nor do I desire even now to go into it. I can only give you my assurance that everything that was humanly possible for me to do to advance your claim I did and I shall still do. I can only tell you, however, that the Congress does not possess the influence that I would like it to possess. There are several difficulties raised in connection with the proprietary rights. There are technical, legal difficulties also in the way. The Congress appointed a Committee of the best men that were at its disposal to go into this matter and if possible even to come to terms with the Mahant who is at the present moment in possession of the temple. That Committee has already reported, and I take it that some of you have seen the report of that Committee. That Committee endeavoured to have an arbitration appointed, but it failed in its efforts to do so. But there is absolutely no reason to lose hope. However, I can tell you that all my personal sympathies are absolutely with you and, if the rendering of its possession to you was in my giving, you can have it today. In your address was mentioned another temple that is situated in Ceylon. I do not know anything about the controversy regarding this temple. I, therefore, like some of you to give me particulars about it, and tell me if there is anything that I can do in connection with it whilst I am in your midst. You may take it for granted that I should take a personal interest in it if I feel that there is anything that I can do, and I should do so not in order that I can oblige you, but in order to give myself satisfaction.

For, you do not know perhaps that one of my sons, the eldest boy, accused me of being a follower of Buddha, and some of my

[1] *Vide* "Belgaum Impressions [-II]", January 8, 1925.

Hindu countrymen also do not hesitate to accuse me of spreading Buddhistic teaching under the guise of sanatan Hinduism. I sympathize with my son's accusations and the accusations of my Hindu friends. And sometimes I feel even proud of being accused of being a follower of the Buddha, and I have no hesitation in declaring in the presence of this audience that I owe a great deal to the inspiration that I have derived from the life of the Enlightened One. Indeed, at an anniversary celebration in the new Buddha temple that has been erected in Calcutta I gave expression to this view. The leader in that meeting was Angarika Dharmapala. He was weeping over the fact that he was not receiving the response that he desired for the cause which was close to his heart, and I remember having rebuked him for shedding tears, I told the audience that though what passed under the name of Buddhism might have been driven out of India, the life of the Buddha and his teachings were by no means driven out of India. This incident happened, I think, now three years ago, and I have seen nothing since to alter the view which I pronounced at that meeting. It is my deliberate opinion that the essential part of the eachings of the Buddha now forms an integral part of Hinduism. It is impossible for Hindu India today to retrace her steps and go behind the great reformation that Gautama effected in Hinduism. By his immense sacrifice, by his great renunciation and by the immaculate purity of his life he left an indelible impress upon Hinduism, and Hinduism owes an eternal debt of gratitude to that great teacher. And if you will forgive me for saying so, and if you will also give me the permission to say so, I would venture to tell you that what Hinduism did not assimilate of what passes as Buddhism today was not an essential part of Buddha's life and his teachings.

It is my fixed opinion that Buddhism or rather the teaching of Buddha found its full fruition in India, and it could not be otherwise, for Gautama was himself a Hindu of Hindus. He was saturated with the best that was in Hinduism, and he gave life to some of the teachings that were buried in the Vedas and which were overgrown with weeds. His great Hindu spirit cut its way through the forest of words, meaningless words, which had overlaid the golden truth that was in the Vedas. He made some of the words in the Vedas yield a meaning to which the men of his generation were utter strangers, and he found in India the most congenial soil. And wherever the Buddha went, he was followed and surrounded not by non-Hindus but Hindus, those who were themselves saturated with the Vedic law. But the Buddha's

teaching like his heart was all-expanding and all-embracing and so it has survived his own body and swept across the face of the earth. And at the risk of being called a follower of Buddha I claim this achievement as a triumph of Hinduism. Buddha never rejected Hinduism, but he broadened its base. He gave it a new life and a new interpretation. But here comes the point where I shall need your forgiveness and your generosity, and I want to submit to you that the teaching of Buddha was not assimilated in its fulness whether it was in Ceylon, or in Burma, or in China or in Tibet. I know my own limitations. I lay no claim to scholarship in Buddhistic law. Probably, a fifth-form boy from Nalanda Vidyalaya would plough me in a Buddhist catechism. I know that I speak in the presence of very learned priests and equally learned laymen, but I should be false to you and false to myself if I did not declare what my heart believes.

You and those who call themselves Buddhists outside India have no doubt taken in a very large measure the teachings of the Buddha, but when I examine your life and when I cross-question the friends from Ceylon, Burma, China or Tibet, I feel confounded to find so many inconsistencies between what I have come to understand as the central fact of Buddha's life and your own practice, and if I am not tiring you out, I would like hurriedly to run through three prominent points that just now occurred to me. The first is the belief in an all-pervading Providence called God. I have heard it contended times without number and I have read in books also, claiming to express the spirit of Buddhism, that Buddha did not believe in God. In my humble opinion such a belief contradicts the very central fact of Buddha's teaching. In my humble opinion the confusion has arisen over his rejection, and just rejection, of all the base things that passed in his generation under the name of God. He undoubtedly rejected the notion that a being called God was actuated by malice, could repent of his actions, and like the kings of the earth could possibly be open to temptations and bribes and could possibly have favourites. His whole soul rose in mighty indignation against the belief that a being called God required for His satisfaction the living blood of animals in order that he might be pleased—animals who were his own creation. He, therefore, reinstated God in the right place and dethroned the usurper who for the time being seemed to occupy that White Throne. He emphasized and redeclared the eternal and unalterable existence of the moral government of this universe. He unhesitatingly said that the law was God Himself.

God's laws are eternal and unalterable and not separable from God Himself. It is an indispensable condition of His very perfection. And hence the great confusion that Buddha disbelieved in God and simply believed in the moral law, and because of this confusion about God Himself, arose the confusion about the proper understanding of the great word *nirvana*. *Nirvana* is undoubtedly not utter extinction. So far as I have been able to understand the central fact of Buddha's life, *nirvana* is utter extinction of all that is base in us, all that is vicious in us, all that is corrupt and corruptible in us. *Nirvana* is not like the black, dead peace of the grave, but the living peace, the living happiness of a soul which is conscious of itself, and conscious of having found its own abode in the heart of the Eternal.

The third point is the low estimation in which the idea of sanctity of all life came to be held in its travels outside India. Great as Buddha's contribution to humanity was in restoring God to His eternal place, in my humble opinion greater still was his contribution to humanity in his exacting regard for all life, be it ever so low. I am aware that his own India did not rise to the height that he would fain have seen India occupy. But the teaching of Buddha, when it became Buddhism and travelled outside, came to mean that sacredness of animal life had not the sense that it had with an ordinary man. I am not aware of the exact practice and belief of Ceylonese Buddhism in this matter, but I am aware what shape it has taken in Burma and China. In Burma especially the Burmese Buddhists will not kill a single animal, but do not mind others killing the animals for them and dishing the carcases for them for their food. Now, if there was any teacher in the world who insisted upon the inexorable law of cause and effect, it was inevitably Gautama, and yet my friends, the Buddhists outside India would, if they could, avoid the effects of their own acts. But I must not put an undue strain upon your patience. I have but lightly touched upon some of the points which I think it my duty to bring to your notice, and in all earnestness and equal humility I present them for your serious consideration.

One thing more and I shall have done. Last night the members of the Reception Committee asked me to speak at one of these audiences of the connection khadi had with Ceylon. I have not left much time for myself to expand this message before you, but I shall try to summarize it in two sentences. One thing is that you who regard Buddha as the ruler of your hearts owe something to the land of his birth, where millions of his descendants for whom he laboured and for

whom he died are today living a life of misery, living in a state of perpetual semi-starvation. I venture, therefore, to suggest that khadi enables you to establish a living bond between yourselves and the ruler of your hearts. If you will follow the central fact of his teaching and regard life as one of renunciation of all material things, all life being transitory, you will at once see the beauty of the message of khadi which otherwise means simple living and high thinking. Taking these two thoughts with you, I suggest to every one of you to dot the 'i's and cross the 't's and make out your own interpretation of the message of khadi. I thank you again for the great kindness that you have shown, for the address and for the benediction, and I hope that you have received the humble message that I have given to you in the same spirit in which it has been delivered. Regard it as a message not from a critic, but from a bosom friend.

Young India, 24-11-1927

257. SPEECH AT Y.M.C.A., COLOMBO

November 15, 1927

Addressing a huge gathering in the hall of Y.M.C.A., Colombo, Gandhiji welcomed the occasion as one more instance of the close touch, he was daily finding himself in, with Christians throughout the world [and said:]

There are some who will not even take my flat denial when I tell them that I am not a Christian.

The message of Jesus, as I understand it, is contained in his Sermon on the Mount unadulterated and taken as a whole, and even in connection with the Sermon on the Mount, my own humble interpretation of the message is in many respects different from the orthodox. The message, to my mind, has suffered distortion in the West. It may be presumptuous for me to say so, but as a devotee of truth, I should not hesitate to say what I feel. I know that the world is not waiting to know my opinion on Christianity.

One's own religion is after all a matter between oneself and one's Maker and no one else's, but if I feel impelled to share my thoughts with you this evening, it is because I want to enlist your sympathy in my search for truth and because so many Christian friends are interested in my thoughts on the teachings of Jesus. If then I had to face only the Sermon on the Mount and my own interpretation of it, I should not hesitate to say, 'Oh yes, I am a Christian'. But I know that at the present moment if I said any such

thing I would lay myself open to the gravest misinterpretation. I should lay myself open to fraudulent claims because I would have then to tell you what my own meaning of Christianity is, and I have no desire myself to give you my own view of Christianity. But negatively I can tell you that in my humble opinion, much of what passes as Christianity is a negation of the Sermon on the Mount. And please mark my words. I am not at the present moment speaking of Christian conduct. I am speaking of the Christian belief, of Christianity as it is understood in the West. I am painfully aware of the fact that conduct everywhere falls far short of belief. But I don't say this by way of criticism. I know from the treasures of my own experience that although I am every moment of my life trying to live up to my professions, my conduct falls short of these professions. Far therefore be it from me to say this in a spirit of criticism. But I am placing before you my fundamental difficulties. When I began as a prayerful student to study the Christian literature in South Africa in 1893, I asked myself, 'Is this Christianity?' and have always got the Vedic answer, *neti neti* (not this, not this). And the deepest in me tells me that I am right.

I claim to be a man of faith and prayer, and even if I was cut to pieces, God would give me the strength not to deny Him and to assert that He is. The Muslim says He is and there is no one else. The Christian says the same thing and so the Hindu, and if I may say so, even the Buddhist says the same thing, if in different words. We may each of us be putting our own interpretation on the word God—God Who embraces not only this tiny globe of ours, but millions and billions of such globes. How can we, little crawling creatures, so utterly helpless as he has made us, how could we possibly measure His greatness, His bound-less love, His infinite compassion, such that He allows man insolently to deny compassion, such that He allows man insolently to deny Him, wrangle about Him, and cut the throat of his fellow-man? How can we measure the greatness of God who is so forgiving, so divine? Thus though we may utter the same words they have not the same meaning for us all. And hence I say that we do not need to proselytize or do *shuddhi* or *tabligh* through our speech or writing. We can only do it really with our lives. Let them be open books for all to study. Would that I could persuade the missionary friends to take this view of their mission. Then there will be no distrust, no suspicion, no jealousy and no dissensions.

Gandhiji then took the case of modern China as a case in point. His heart, he

said, went out to young China in the throes of a great national upheaval, and he referred to the anti-Christian movement in China, about which he had occasion to read in a pamphlet received by him from the students' department of the Young Women's Christian Association and the Young Men's Christian Association of China. The writers had put their own interpretation upon the anti-Christian movement, but there was no doubt that young China regarded Christian movements as being opposed to Chinese self-expression. To Gandhiji the moral of this anti-Christian manifestation was clear. He said:

Don't let your Christian propaganda be anti-national, say these young Chinese. And even their Christian friends have come to distrust the Christian endeavour that had come from the West. I present the thought to you that these essays written by young man have a deep meaning, a deep truth, because they were them selves trying to justify their Christian conduct in so far as they had been able to live up to the life it had taught them and at the same time find a basis for that opposition. The deduction I would like you all to draw from this manifestation is that you Ceylonese should not be torn from your moorings, and those from the West should not consciously or unconsciously lay violent hands upon the manners, customs and habits of the Ceylonese in so far as they are not repugnant to fundamental ethics and morality. Confuse not Jesus' teachings with what passes as modern civilization, and pray do not do unconscious violence to the people among whom you cast your lot. It is no part of that call, I assure you, to tear the lives of the people of the East by its roots. Tolerate whatever is good in them and do not hastily, with your preconceived notions, judge them. Do not judge lest you be judged yourselves. In spite of your belief in the greatness of Western civilization and in spite of your pride in all your achievements, I plead with you for humility, and ask you to leave some little room for doubt, in which, as Tennyson sang, there was more truth, though by 'doubt' he no doubt meant a different thing. Let us each one live our life, and if ours is the right life, where is the cause for hurry? It will react of itself.

To you, young Ceylonese friends[1], I say: Don't be dazzled by the splendour that comes to you from the West. Do not be thrown off your feet by this passing show. The Enlightened One has told you in never-to-be-forgotten words that this little span of life is but a passing shadow, a fleeting thing, and if you realize the nothingness of all that

[1] The Y.M.C.A. had among its members Buddhist as well as Christian youth.

appears before your eyes, the nothingness of this material case that we see before us ever changing, then indeed there are treasures for you up above, and there is peace for you down here, peace which passeth all understanding, and happiness to which we are utter strangers. It requires an amazing faith, a divine faith and surrender of all that we see before us. What did Buddha do, and Christ do, and also Mahomed? Theirs were lives of self-sacrifice and renunciation. Buddha renounced every worldly happiness, because he wanted to share with the whole world his happiness which was to be had by men who sacrificed and suffered in search of truth. If it was a good thing to scale the heights of Mt. Everest, sacrificing precious lives in order to be able to go there and make some slight observations, it was a glorious thing to give up life after life in planting a flag in the uttermost extremities of the earth, how much more glorious would it be to give not one life, surrender not a million lives but abillion lives in search of the potent and imperishable truth? So be not lifted off your feet, do not be drawn away from the simplicity of your ancestors. A time is coming when those who are in the mad rush today of multiplying their wants, vainly thinking that they add to the real substance, real knowledge of the world, will retrace their steps and say: 'What have we done?' Civilizations have come and gone, and in spite of all our vaunted progress I am tempted to ask again and again 'To what purpose?' Wallace, a contemporary of Darwin, has said the same thing. Fifty years of brilliant inventions and discoveries, he has said, has not added one inch to the moral height of mankind. So said a dreamer and visionary if you will—Tolstoy. So said Jesus, and Buddha, and Mahomed, Whose religion is being denied and falsified in my own country today.

By all means drink deep of the fountains that are given to you in the Sermon on the Mount, but then you will have to take sackcloth and ashes. The teaching of the Sermon was meant for each and every one of us. You cannot serve both God and Mammon. God the Compassionate and the Merciful, Toleranceincarnate, allows Mammon to have his nine days' wonder. But I say to you, youth of Ceylon, fly from that self-destroying but destructive show of Mammon.

Young India, 8-12-1927

258. SPEECH AT MISSIONARY CONFERENCE, COLOMBO

November 16, 1927

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

You have very kindly lightened my task by letting this meeting know my wishes. I always welcome any invitation to a missionary body and I accept as a flattering compliment to be called a fellow missionary. Perhaps we may not give the same meaning to the word 'missionary'. Nevertheless, I like that compliment. I understand that you have a conference every month where the missionaries of Ceylon or Colombo meet and I understand also that you have anticipatd the day of the Conference in order that you may meet me and give me the privilege of meeting you. I appreciate that thoughtfulness also on the part of your Committee and in order to make it really a conference of that nature I would like you to ask me any questions that may occur now. That will really lighten my task. I don't want to give you any address. I have nothing new to say. I have been speaking to missionary conferences in Calcutta, in Bangalore and I also spoke to missionaries in Madras and I have nothing possibly to add to what I have already said. But it would be much better if you ask me questions arising out of anything that you may have read of my speeches delivered to those conferences or speeches delivered elsewhere on any subject or out of what you might have heard of me and from intimate fellowship that some of you have extended to me; I know that some of you have read about me in the papers. If you extend the same confidence you may ask me anything you like out of what you may have heard about me also and I assure you that I will not take it ill if you ask me questions that might be considered embarrassing in a drawing-room meeting. Let us not have a drawing-room meeting but a meeting between friends who are attempting to be closer friends still and dispel all the mists of misunder-standing.

Continuing, Mahatma Gandhi recalled a hymn that he had heard in Pretoria, "We shall know each other better when the mists have rolled away." Let them see that thre were no mists hanging about them.

There was a pause for questions and Mr. G. P. Wishard asked what Mahatma Gandhi thought of the doctrine of the possibility of the forgiveness of sins.

GANDHIJI : That is a very fine question indeed. It is a very old question and naturally occurs to every sinner and as I consider myself

to have sinned more often than I have wished—I have certainly never wished to sin—I know how much [need] there is for forgiveness. Some of you have read perhaps even my confessions of the very grievous sins into which I have been led and not once but often, often enough to make any man ashamed of himself. And so, for my own personal satisfaction too I have been obliged to investigate that question. Whether it is my Hindu upbringing or whether it is my close association with some Jain friends, so far as Jainism may be distinguished from Hinduism, whatever the cause might be, I have come to the conclusion, I suppose that is the safest word to use at this time of life, though, of course, it is never too late to mend, that there is no such thing as forgiveness on the part of God as we understand the word 'forgiveness' in mundane matters as a king, for instance, forgives lapses on the part of his subjects. I believe in the eternal nature and the immutability of God's laws. God and His laws, so far as I have been able to understand God's purpose, are not distinguishable as we can and do distinguish between kings, earthly kings and their laws, and yet in a sense thre is a forgiveness which is infinitely more definite than and superior to any forgiveness that may be given by a most forgiving king and that forgiveness is none else than a new heart. It is a definite promise of God which everyone who has the slightest desire can verify for himself or herself and so far as I have been able to see, the process takes place something after this type.

Continuing, Mahatma Gandhi said that if a man became conscious of his guilt and had the desire to wash himself of that guilt he began by prayer and supplication. The words 'prayer' and 'supplication' had a more extended meaning than in a mundane sense and then came a definit consciousness of God Who was within and, if they fulfilled the test that was necessary for that definite change in them and after that change came about, the sinner felt within himself as it were a wall of protection being built for him, but still he would feel that safety not because of any strangeness that he had but because of that living wall of protection which he saw growing in front of him and round him, below him and above him, so that he became sin-proof and guilt-proof.

It was a gradual process but it came to them as if by a sudden miracle and therefore they used the word 'grace' of God. He used that phraseology freely because there was a similar word in Hinduism. It was not taken bodily from the Christian teaching but it was a most familiar thing in all the writings of the Hindu teachers, as distinct from the priests. They had written down their own experiences and that was how they had related their experiences. He did not mind how he had arrived at that

process. If he had arrived at that process from his very close Christian contact, he would be delighted, or if he had come to that conclusion from his Hindu upbringing, he would still be delighted. His own purpose was to find if there could be escape from his sins, some escape from the crushing weight of that sinfulness, and therefore he felt that it was a gradual process till it came to such a fulness that they began to recognize it and then they said there was a sudden change, but personally he did not believe in a sudden change. There was really no such thing as a miracle in God's universe which was governed by definite laws which were unalterable. But seeing that they did not understand all those laws and seeing that God's processes were so mysterious and beyond their reasoning faculty, it was necessary for them to exercise patience and then they would be justified in calling it a miracle, but seeing the whole process in cold blood he did not think that God worked by a series of miracles and if he was right that the process was a gradual change then there were two things that went on in their own selves. One was that definite striving minute after minute, second after second, making persistent effort; and in the second place a difinite recognition of their utter helplessness without the help of that quickening spirit that revivified them and which he would call God. Thus, there was the help which they called the grace of God on one side and on the other side human effort, however, infinitesimal it might be. The two processes went on side by side.[1]

Gandhiji explained at length how there could be no forgiveness like the forgiveness that a criminal prays for and gets from an earthly king. It was a question of a change of heart brought about by true contrition and ceaseless striving for purification. In this connection Gandhiji referred to the case of the Plymouth Brother. . .[2] [and side:]

But the Plymouth Brother I met argued that there was no such thing as human effort. If you accept the fact of crucifixion sinfulness would go altogether. I was astounded as I knew and was intimate with quite a number of Christian friends who were making a definite effort. "Don't you fall?" I asked him. "Yes," he said, "but my strength comes from the fact that Jesus intercedes for me and washes my sins away." Well, I tell you, the Quaker friend who had introduced me to the Plymouth Brother felt no less astounded. Asking for forgiveness means that we should not sin again, and the grant of forgiveness means that we would have power to resist all temptation. It is only after a persistent, untiring effort that God comes to our rescue as a

[1] What follows is from "Ceylon Memoirs" by Mahadev Desai, published in *Young India*, 22-12-1927.

[2] *Vide An Autobiography*, pt. II, Ch. XI.

wall of protection and there is a growing consciousness that we shall not sin. In a famous controversy with Huxley, I remember Gladstone having said that when the difinite grace of God was pledged to us we became incapable of sin. Jesus was incapable of sin from birth, Gladstone said, but we could be such by constant striving. So long as there is a single evil thought coming to our mind, we must conclude that there is not complete forgiveness nor grace.

[Asked if Gandhiji's position in matters of faith was not like living in a sort of half-way house, he replied:]

I certainly admire the friend who made that criticism but he may be sure that there is no half-way house for me. I have been described as an intolerable wholehogger. I know that friends get confused when I say I am a sanatani Hindu and they fail to find in me things they associate with a man usually labelled as such. But that is because in spite of my being a staunch Hindu I find room in my faith for Christian and Islamic and Zoroastrian teaching, and therefore my Hinduism seems to some to be a conglomeration and some have even dubbed me an eclectic. Well, to call a man eclectic is to say that he has no faith,but mine is a broad faith which does not oppose Christians—not even a Plymouth Brother—not even the most fanatical Mussalman. It is a faith based on the broadest possible toleration. I refuse to abuse a man for his fanatical deeds, because I try to see them from his point of view. It is that broad faith that sustains me. It is a somewhat embarrassing position, I know, —but to others, not to me !

The Ceylon Daily News, 17-11-1927 and *Young India*, 22-12-1927

259. SPEECH TO LABOUR UNION, COLOMBO

November 16, 1927

MR. CHAIRMAN, FRIENDS AND FELLOW-LABOURERS,

I thank you for presenting me with your beautiful address and handsome purse for the cause which has brought me to this pearl amongst the islands of the earth. I have called myself a labourer in addressing you as fellow-labourers and I have done so for the simple reason that since 1904 I have been endeavouring to live to the best of my ability as a labourer myself. But long before that date I began to understand and appreciate the dignity of labour and it was long

before that date that I realized at the same time that labour was not receiving its due. And out of His infinite grace, God so fashioned my life that I began to be drawn closer and closer to labour and to its service. It, therefore, gives me great joy to be in your midst and to receive from fellow labourers an address and also a purse on behalf of those who are, materially speaking, infinitely worse off than yourselves. The use made by you in your address of the expression "Mother India" has touched me to my deepest recesses. The use of that expression derives great significance to me because I know all of you are not Indians. Perhaps to those of you—and you are in a majority in this Union or these Unions, so far as I understand—and, as I said, to all those of you who are not Indians, the significance that I attach to that expression and which I shall presently explain to you was not before your mind's eye when you made use of the expression. Legend—and legend at times is superior to history—legend has it that in remote times a king called Rama came to Lanka to rid this island of an evil king, and instead of exercising the rights of conquest by annexing this fair island to india, he restored it to Vibhishana, the brother of that evil king, and crowned him King of Lanka.

Rendered in modern language, it means that Rama, before trying the loyalty of the people of Lanka or the loyalty of King Vibhishana and putting either him or the people through a course of tutelage, gave them straightway complete self-government or dominion status. Many changes have taken place since that date, assigned to the period of this legend, in this place as also in India, and they have undergone many vicissitudes of fortune, but the fact remains that the millions in India, even to the present day, believe in this legend more firmly than in any facts of history. And if you, people of this beautiful island, are not ashamed of owning some connection with your next-door neighbour I would advise you and ask you to share the pride that millions of Indians have in owning this legend. And now you can understand why I told you that you, in my opinion a daughter State, in using the expression "Mother India" for India, had done well in expressing your allegiance to that country.

I would also point out that whether Rama of the legend ever lived on this earth or not, and whether also the ten-headed Ravana of the legend lived in Lanka or not, it is true that there is a Rama who is living today and there is also a Ravana who is living today. Rama is the sweet and sacred name in Hinduism for God and Ravana is the

name given in Hindu mythology to evil, whenever evil becomes embodied in the human frame. And it is the business, the function, of the God Rama to destroy evil wherever it occurs and it is equally the function of the God Rama to give to his devotees like Vibhishana a free charter of irrevocable self-government.

Let us all, whether we are labourers or otherwise, seek by ridding ourselves by the help of God Rama within us, of the ten-headed monster of evil within us, and ask for the charter of self-government. And you fellow-labourers who have still to receive your due are perhaps in greater need of Rama's help and Rama's grace in order that you might rid yourselves of evil and fit yourselves for self-government. Don't believe it if anyone tells you that it was I who secured the comparative freedom for the indentured labourers of South Africa or that it was I who secured freedom to the labourers of Ahmedabad or Malabar. They secured whatever they did because they complied with the rules, the inexorable rules, governing a self-government. They won because they helped themselves. And let me briefly tell you what in my opinion you should do to come to your own. Combination amongst yourselves in the form of unions is undoubtedly the first step. But I can tell you from experience that your very Union can become one of the causes of your bondage if you do not comply with other conditions which I shall presently mention to you. You should consider every one of you a trustee for the welfare of the rest of your fellow-labourers and not be self-seeking. You must live and remain non-violent under circumstances however grave and provoking. If you will be men and realize your dignity as such, you must give up drink in its entirety if you are given to that cursed habit. A man under the influence of drink becomes worse than a beast and forgets the distinction between his sister, his mother and his wife. And if you really believe me as your friend you will take the advice of this old friend of yours and shun drink as you would shun a snake hissing in front of you. A snake can only destroy the body but the curse of drink corrupts the soul within. This, therefore, is much more to be feared and avoided than a snake. You should also avoid gambling if you are given to that evil habit.

There is a still more delicate thing about which I was pained to receive a letter only yesterday or today from a friend who has given his signature. He tells me that the personal purity amongst labourers is somewhat conspicuous by its absence. He tells me that many of you, men and women, huddle yourselves together in small spaces

irrespective of any restriction that modesty imposes upon us and demands from us. One of the things that sharply distinguishes a man from a beast is that man from his earliest age has recognized the sanctity of the marriage bond and regulated his life in connection with woman by way of self-restraint which he has more and more imposed upon himself.

My dear friends, if you will realize your dignity as men and rise to your full height, as you ought to, you will bear this little thing in mind that I have told you, treasure it and give effect to it from this very night. If your means do not permit you to have separate and sufficient habitations so as to observe the laws of primary decency, you will refuse to serve under such degrading conditions and for such insuffi cient wages. I would honour you as brave men if you will accept a state of utter starvation rather than that you should labour on such insuf ficient wages as would render it impossible for you to observe the primary laws of morality. I do not care whether you are Hindus, or whether you call yourselves Buddhists, or whether you are Christian or Mussalman, the demand or religion is the same and inexorable that every woman other than your wife must be treated by you as your sister or your mother, whose body must be held as sacred as your own. I would advise you to use your Union as much for internal reformation as for defence against the assaults from without, and remember that while it is quite proper to insist upon your rights and privileges it is imperative that you should recognize the obligation that every right carries with it.

While therefore you will insist upon adequate wage, proper humane treatment from your employers and proper and good sanitary lodgings, you will also recognize that you should treat the business of your employers as if it was your own business and give to it honest and undivided attention. You must on no account neglect your children but you should give them decent education and bring them up properly so that they may be able, when they grow up, to play their parts on the human stage nobly and well.

Lastly, while you have done well in thinking of the unfortunate millions in India I would advise you to establish a living bond between them and yourselves, especially if you still consider that India is the Mother State, the Mother Country; you will for the sake of the few millions invest every pie or every cent that you may want to use for dress in khadi and nothing else. I thank you once more for your

address and your purse and for the patient attention with which you have listened to the few words I have said to you this evening. I also thank your volunteers who have been silently and unselfishly serving me to the best of their ability and showing me very delicate attention; although I did not acknowledge their service before, the matter did not escape my attention. I hope and pray that the words I have spoken to you this evening will enter your hearts and God will give you the wisdom and the strength to carry out such advice as may commend itself to you.

The Ceylon Daily News, 17-11-1927

260. A COTTON QUOTATION

Mr. Richard Gregg, with whose name that reader of *Young India* is familiar as the joint author of the booklet on *Takli Spinning*, sends the following usefull old quotation[1] which he has unearthed in the course of his researches.

Young India, 17-11-1927

261. VARNASHRAMA AND ITS DISTORTION

The reader will find in another column Sjt. Nadkarni's interest ing letter[2] on the Brahmin-Non-Brahmin question. I gladly respond to his invitation to explain my views on *varnashrama* more fully than I have done in my speeches during the recent Tamil Nad tour, which have been more or less fully reproduced in these columns.

Let me clear the issue by dismissing from consideration the celebrated story of a Sudra said to have had his head cut off by Rama by reason of his having dared to become a sannyasi. I do not read Shastras literally, certainly not as history. The story of the decapi tation of Shambuka is not in keeping with the general character of Rama. And whatever may be said in the various *Ramayanas*, I hold

[1] Not reproduced here. The quotation was from the English translation of Fra Paolino da San Bartolomeo's *A Voyage to the East Indies*, published in Rome in 1796. Among other things, it said: "It may in truth be asserted, that in spinning, weaving and dyeing the Indians excel all other nations in the world."

[2] For extracts from the letter, *vide* Appendix "Extract from S. D. Nadkarni's Letter", November 17, 1927.

my Rama to be incapable of having decapitated a Sudra or for that matter anyone else. The story of Shambuka, if it proves anything, proves that in the days when the story arose it was held to be a capital crime for Sudras to perform certain rites. We are in the dark as to the meaning of the word Sudra here. I have heard even an allegorical meaning given to the whole version. But that would not alter the fact of certain unreasonable prohibitions operating against the Sudras at some stage in the evolution of Hinduism. Only I do not need to join Sjt. Nadkarni in doing penance for the alleged decapitation of Shambuka, for I do not believe in a historical person by that name having been decapitated by a historical person called Rama. For the general persecution of the so-called lower orders of Hinduism, especially the so-called untouchables, I am, as a Hindu, doing penance every moment of my life. In my opinion, illustrations like that of Shambuka have no place in a religious consideration of the question of *varnashrama.* I propose therefore merely to say what I believe to be *varnashrama*, and I should not hesitate to reject the institution if it was proved to me that the inter-pretation put upon it by me has no warrant in Hidnuism. *Varna* and *ashrama* are, as Sjt. Nadkarni says, two different words. The institution of four *ashramas* enables one the better to fulfil the purpose of life for which the law of *varna* is a necessity. The law of *varna* prescribes that a person should, for his living, follow the lawful occupation of his forefathers. I hold this to be a universal law governing the human family. Its breach entails, as it has entailed, serious consequence for us. But the vast majority of men unwittingly follow the hereditary occupation of their fathers. Hinduism rendered a great service to mankind by the discovery of and conscious obedience to this law. If man's, as distinguished from lower animals's, function is to know God, it follows that he must not devote the chief part of his life to making experiments in finding out what occupation will best suit him for earning his livelihood. On the contrary, he will recognize that it is best for him to follow his father's occupation, and devote his spare time and talent to qualifying himself for the task to which mankind is called.

Here then the difficulty suggested by my correspondent does not arise. For no one is precluded from rendering multitudinous acts of voluntary service and qualifying one self for it. Thus Sjt. Nadkarni born of Brahmin parents and I born of Vaisya parents may consistently with the law of *varna* certainly serve as honorary national volunteers or as honorary nurses or honorary scavengers in times of

need, though in obedience to that law he as a Brahmin would depend for his bread on the charity of his neighbours and I as a Vaisya would be earning my bread by selling durgs or groceries. Everyone is free to render any useful service so long as he does not claim reward for it.

In this conception of the law of *varna* no one is superior to any other. All occupations are equal and honourable in so far as they are not in conflict with morals, private or public. A scavenger has the same status as a Brahmin. Was it not Max Muller who said that it was in Hinduism more than in any other religion that life was no more and no less then Duty?

There is no doubt that at some stage of its evolution Hinduism suffered corruption, and the canker of superiority and inferiority entered and vitiated it. But this notion of inequality seems to me to be wholly against the spirit of sacrifice which dominates everything in Hinduism. There is no room for arrogation of superiority by one class over another in a scheme of life based on ahimas whose active form is undefiled love for all life.

Let it not be said against this law of *varna* that it makes life dull and robs it of all ambition. In my opinion that law of *varna* alone makes life livable by all and restores the only object worthy of it, namely, self-realization. Today we seem to think of and strive for material pursuits which are in their very nature transitory, and we do this almost to the exclusion of the one thing needful.

If I am told that the interpretation put by me upon *varna* is not supported by anything to be found in the *smritis* which are codified Hindu conduct, my answer is that the codes of conduct based upon fundamental invariable maxims of life vary from time to time as we gain fresh experience and make fresh observations. It is possible to show many rules of the *smritis* which we no longer recognize as binding or even worthy of observance. Invariable maxims are few and common to all religions. The latter vary in their application. And no religion has exhausted the varieties of all possible applications. They must expand with the expansion of ideas and knowledge of new facts. Indeed I believe that the contents of words grow with the growth of human experience. The connotation of the words sacrifice, truth, non-violence, *varnashrama* etc., is infinitely richer today than it was during the known historic past. Applying this principle to the word *varna*, we need not be bound, it would be foolish and wrong to be bound, by the current interpretation, assuming that it is inconsistent with the requirements of the age with our notions of morals. To do otherwise will be suicide.

Varna considered in the manner above indicated has nothing in common with caste as we know it today, nor is prohibition as to interdining and intermarriage an essential part of the recognition of the law of varna. That these prohibitions were introduced for the conservation of *varnas* is possible. Restrictions against promiscuous marriage are necessary in any scheme of life based on self-restraint. Restraints on promiscuous dining arise either from sanitary considerations or differences in habits. But disregard of these restrictions formerly carried, or what is more, should now carry no social or legal punishment or forfeiture of one's *varna*.

Varnas were originally four. It was an intelligent and intelligible division. But the number is no part of the law of *varna.* A tailor for instance may not become a blacksmith although both may be and should be classed as Vaisyas.

The most forcible objection I heard raised in Tamil Nad was that, however good and innocuous *varnas* might appear under my interpretation, they must either be worked under a different name or destroyed altogether by reason of the evil odour that surrounds them. The objectors feared that my interpretation would be ignored and yet my authority would be freely quoted for supporting under cover of *varna* the hideous inequalities and tyrannies practised at the present day in Hinduism. They further observed that in the popular estimation caste and *varna* were mere synonymous terms and that the restraint of *varna* was nowhere practised, but the tyranny of caste was rampant everywhere. All these objections have no doubt much force in them. But they are objections such as can be advanced aginst many corrupted institutions that once were good. A reformenr's business is to examine the institution itself and to set about reforming it if its abuses can be separated from it. *Varna* is however not a mere institution made by man but it is a law discovered by him. It cannot therefore be set aside; its hidden meaning and potentialities should be explored and utilized for the good of society. We have seen that the evil is not in the law or the institution itself, but it lies in the doctrine of superiority and inferiority which are superadded to it.

The question too arises how the law is to be worked in these days when all the four *varnas* or sub-*varnas* break asunder all the restrictions, seeking by all means lawful and otherwise to advance their material welfare, and when some arrogate superiority over others who in their turn are rightly challenging the claim. The law will work itself out even if we ignore it. But that will be the way of punishment. If we

will escape destruction, we will submit to it. And seeing that we are just now engaged in applying to ourselves the sub-human rule of survival of the fittest, meaning the strongest (physically), it would be well to recognize ourselves as one *varna*, viz., Sudras, even though some may be teaching and some may be soldiering and some others may be engaged in commercial pursuits. I remember in 1915 the Chairman at the Social Conference in Nellore suggesting that formerly all were Brahmins, and that now too all should be recognized as such and that the other *varnas* should be abolished. It appeared to be then, as it appears to me now, as a weird suggestion.

It is the so-called superior that has to descend from his heights, if the reform is to be peaceful. Those who for ages have been *trained* to consider themselves as the lowest in the social scale cannot suddenly have the equipment of the so-called higher classes. They can therefore rise to *power* only by bloodshed, in other words by destroying society itself. In the scheme of reconstruction I have in view, no mention has been made of the untouchables, for I find no place for untouchability in the law of *varna* or otherwise in Hinduism. They in common with the rest will be absorbed in the Sudras. Out of these the other three *varnas* will gradually emerge purified and equal in status though differing in occupations. The Brahmins will be very few. Fewer still will be the soldier class who will not be the hirelings or the unrestrained rulers of today, but real protectors and trustees of the nation laying down their lives for its service. The fewest will be the Sudras for in a well-ordered society a minimum amount of labour will be taken from fellowmen. The most numerous will be the Vaisyas—a *varna* that would include all professions— the agriculturists, the traders, the artisans, etc. This scheme may sound Utopian. I however prefer to live in this Utopia of my imagination to trying to live up to the unbridled licence of a society that I see tottering to its disruption. It is surely given to individuals to live their own Utopias even though they may not be able to see them accepted by society. Every reform has made its beginning with the individual, and that which had inherent vitality and the backing of a stout soul was accepted by the society in whose midst the reformer lived.

Young India, 17-11-1927

262. READY-MADE KHADI CLOTHES

A Parsi friend makes some suggestions about ready-made khadi clothes which I expand as follows :

> Just as we have readymade khadi caps on the market, why not khadi vests and shirts both after the Indian and European styles? Surely our khadi shopkeepers should be resourceful enough to find the different varieties of clothes that are sold readymade and to have them made of khadi. The suggestion is worthy of consideration by khadi shops.

It will be one method of cheapening khadi and providing remu nerative employment for the town-dweller. If the khadi tailor has patriotism enough to take a trifle less than the market wage, the saving can go to reduce the price of khadi required for the articles. Miss Mithubehn Petit has found out ingenious patterns which she works on khadi and charges prices which her chosen customers gladly pay for the knowledge that they are not only supporting khadi but also girls who might otherwise have been without such a clean method of earning livelihood as khadi work provides for them. In Bihar and Tamil Nad, I saw tailors who were working exclusively on khadi. There is no reason why even educated Indians should not go in for tailoring with a view to serving khadi at the same time that they may be serving themselves.

Young India, 17-11-1927

263. SPEECH AT NEGOMBO

November 17, 1927

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I am deeply grateful to you for presenting me with this very beautiful and artistic address. Ever since my arrival in your beautiful island I have been surrounded with affectionate attention in all quarters and you have but added to the same by bringing me to this picturesque place and presenting this address. I hope that my countrymen who are living in your midst are living with you in peace and harmony. And I suggest to you who are from India that you will consider yourselves representatives of India's culture and tradition and live up to them. I would ask you, inhabitants of this island, to bear with them as your next-door neighbour, whenever you see shortcomings in them.

At the end of my talk I shall consider myself a happy and fortunate man if, as you have co-operated and made my mission happy, so also you have lived in mutual co-operation. It does not surprise me in the least that you, the hospitable people of Ceylon, recognize the usefulness and necessity of my humble mission. Indeed I would have been greatly surprised if you had not risen to the occasion and endeavoured to do your duty by responding to the dire call of millions and millions of the people who, everybody will admit, are living in a state of semi-starvation. I thank you once more for your address.

The Ceylon Daily News, 18-11-1927

264. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KURUNEGALA

November 17, 1927

. . . Mr. Tambiraja had referred to the political situation of Ceylon, and his expectations from the Reform Commission. If he [Gandhiji] expressed an opinion on the matter, he would be abusing the hospitality he had received. He, however, expressed a wish that the expectations of the country would be fulfilled, and hoped that when the deliberations of the Royal Commission were over, their finding would be to the entire satisfaction of the people.

There was another question, he said, about which he could freely express himself. That was with regard to temperance. During the short time he had, he had made an attempt to gather some idea about the statistics and it was with great pain he discovered that Ceylon was no better off than her neighbours across the sea. In his opinion one who was a slave to drink was no better than a beast. He wished the Temperance Union in Ceylon every success, and he hoped that they would not be contented until Ceylon was entirely "dry". There was one other thing he wished to touch upon. He had been informed that women belonging to certain castes in the island were not permitted to wear upper garments by those of higher castes. He hoped that the ladies who were present would consider it a personal insult if any woman is prohibited from wearing whatever garment she desired. In conclusion, he hoped that the people of this country would help their famishing neighbours in India by buying cloth turned out in India.

The Ceylon Daily News, 18-11-1927

265. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MATALE

November 18, 1927

I thank you for these addresses as also for the generous purses that you have presented to me.

You have in your addresses very kindly mentioned my wife also. But I am very sorry to have to inform you that she is not with me this morning. The fact is that we are not travelling in Ceylon to receive honours from you, but purely for the business which I have undertaken on behalf of the poor millions of India. As a matter of fact, people have often, as a gentleman did last night, mistaken her for my mother. For me, as for her also, I hope, it is not only a pardonable mistake, but a welcome mistake. For years past, she has ceased to be my wife by mutual consent. Nearly forty years ago I became an orphan, and for nearly thirty years she has been my mother, friend, nurse, cook, bottle-washer and all these things. If in the early hours of the day she had come with me to divide the honours, I should have gone without my food. And nobody would have looked after my clothing and creature comforts. So we have come to a reasonable understanding that I should have all the honours and she should have all the drudgery. I assure you that some of the co-workers will duly inform her of all the kind things that you have said about her and I hope that the explanation that I have tendered you will be accepted by you as sufficient excuse for her absence.

You will forgive me for having taken up so much of your time over a flimsy personal explanation, but if the men in front of me, and especially the women, will understand the serious side of the explanation and appreciate the secret of it I have no doubt that you will all be the happier for it.

I have no doubt that it is not necessary for me to draw the attention of a people whose country is dominated by the spirit of the Buddha to the fact that life is not a bundle of enjoyments and privileges, but a bundle of duties and services.

That which separates man from the beast is essentially man's recognition of the necessity of putting a series of restraints on worldly enjoyment.

I am therefore surprised to find that in this land of Buddha people are given, as they are given in other parts of the country, to drink.

In studying the statistics of this island, I found that the drink

revenue was a substantial part of the general revenue. I was still more shocked to discover that, unlike us in India, the drink habit did not carry with it a sense of shame and disrespectability.

You know that I belong to the country where Gautama was born, where he found his Enlightenment, and where he passed his life. Whatever the Ceylonese scholars in Buddhism may say to the contrary, I want you to take it from me that this drink habit is totally against the spirit of the Buddha. Because in this land, Hinduism, Christianity and Islam are represented in abundance, I tell you that in Hinduism drink is a sin; I know that it is equally held abominable in Islam. I am sorry to confess that in Christian Europe drink is not considered disrespectable, but I am glad to be able to tell you that hundreds, if not thousands, whose friendship I have the privilege to enjoy, have assured me that this drink habit in Europe is entirely contrary to the spirit of Christ.

I am in close touch with Christian America. You know how bravely these men in America are battling against the drink evil. I would therefore respectfully urge you all, whether you are Buddhists or Hindus, Christians or Mussalmans, to unite together in making a supreme effort to rid this country of this drink curse.

Whatever may be said about the medical necessity of drink in cold climates, everyone is agreed that there is absolutely no occasion for drink in the climate of a temperate zone like this.

One of the things to which I would like to draw your attention is the existence of untouchability in the most liberal religion in the world-Buddhism. I wish you would take immediate steps to declare every man to be absolutely equal with the rest of you. You are denying Buddhism, you are denying humanity, so long as you regard a single man as an untouchable.

Lastly, since you have been good enough to sympathize with my mission, I would ask you to broaden your sympathy by making your purchase of cloth in khadi alone, so long as your clothes are not manufactured in this beautiful island.

My barber friends have presented me with an address and a purse. It is a manifestation from fellow-workers of sympathy for the starving millions, which deeply touches me. I would be happier if those, who have, will always think of those, who have not.

I thank you once more for the addresses and the purses.

With Gandhiji in Ceylon, pp. 70-2

266. SPEECH AT DHARMARAJ COLLEGE, KANDY

November 18, 1927

It has been my good fortune to feel at home and make myself at home wherever I have gone in any part of the world, and had I not been able to do so, probably I should have died long ago without having had to commit suicide. But I feel doubly at home when I see my Parsi friends. You cannot understand this really. And you might also think that I am joking. It is not joking. It is serious, because of my having been in closest association with Parsis in South Africa and in India, and having had personally nothing but treasures of love from them. Even now you do not know, of course, but it gives me great pleasure to own before you that some of my best workers are Parsis, and they are those three grand-daughters of the Grand Old Man of India.

But I must not detain you on my personal and family affairs. I thank you very much for this purse and I like this opportunity of having come to you.

As I told the boys of the Trinity College a little while ago, your education is absolutely worthless if it is not built on a solid foundation of truth and purity. If you, boys, are not careful about the personal purity of your lives and if you are not careful about being pure in thought, speech, and deed, then I tell you that you are lost, although you may become perfect finished scholars.

I have been asked to draw your attention to one thing. Purity consists first of all in possessing a pure heart, but what there is in the heart really comes out also and is shown in outward acts and outward behaviour. And a boy who wants to keep his mouth pure will never utter a bad word. Of course, that is quite clear. But he neither will put anything into his mouth that will cloud his intellect, cloud his mind and damage his friends also.

I know that there are boys who smoke, and in Ceylon perhaps you are as bad as they are in Burma, though boys are becoming bad everywhere so far as this wretched habit of smoking is concerned. And of course, Parsis as you know, are called or rather miscalled, fire-worship-pers. They are no more fire-worshippers than you and though they see God through that great manifestation the Sun which is nothing but the God of Fire.

Some of you good Parsis never smoke, and you make it a point, whenever you have a number of boys in your care, to train the boys not to foul their mouths by smoke.

If any of you are smoking, you will henceforth give up that bad habit. Smoking fouls one's breath. It is a disgusting habit. When he is in a railway carriage, the smoker never cares whether there are ladies or men sitting about him who never smoke, and that the stench that comes out from his mouth may be disgusting to them.

The cigarette might be a small thing from a distance, but when the cigarette smoke goes into one's mouth and then comes out, it is poison. Smokers do not care where they spit.

Here Gandhiji related a story from Tolstoy to explain how the tobacco habit was more disastrous in its effects than drink and proceeded :

Smoking clouds one's intellect, and it is a bad habit. If you ask doctors, and they happen to be good doctors, they will tell you that smoke has been the cause of cancer in many cases, or at least that smoke is at the bottom of it.

Why smoke, when there is no necessity for it? It is no food. There is no enjoyment in it except in the first instance through suggestion from outside.

You, boys, if you are good boys, if you are obedient to your teachers and parents, omit smoking and whatever you save out of this, please send on to me for the famishing millions of India.

With Gandhiji in Ceylon, pp. 75-7

267. SPEECH IN REPLY TO MUNICIPAL ADDRESS, KANDY

November 18, 1927

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I am sorry that I have lost the voice that I had only some months ago. My voice is now one that will not carry very far, and if those who are sitting at the end of the hall cannot hear me, I hope they will forgive me for my physical inability. I do not know whether it is necessary to apologize to you also for my physical inability to stand up and speak to you. I thank you very sincerely for the address that you have given me and the mention made therein to some services that I have rendered to my country and mankind in general. I have

been reading today something of this ancient city and the struggles that the citizens have been undergoing, and a feeling of pain and sorrow has crept upon me. I have not yet finished this booklet, but I have read enough of it to realize the difficulties the citizens of this place are undergoing. I can only say to them through this audience that my whole heart goes out to them. I hope that all your best wishes will be realized.

As I said in Colombo, I am a lover of municipal life. I do believe that municipal service is a privilege and duty which every citizen should render to the best of his or her ability. That service can be rendered without becoming a member of the municipality. It is not given to everyone to be elected members. I do not suppose that you, in Ceylon, are different from the people in India and therefore I fear that here, as in India, places in the municipalities are often aspired to and if that is so, the sooner we get rid of this idea the better for us.

I do not know whether you have any slums here. I fear you are not without slums, but those who are municipal councillors owe their duty to the poor citizens more than to the rich ones. I have had municipal experience in Bombay, Calcutta and Allaha bad and almost all principal cities in India and I have noticed that those who are powerful and wealthy are able to have municipal service properly and promptly rendered to them, but, on the contrary, the poorest people hardly receive any consideration. I will be wrong if I let you understand that that is the condition in all Indian cities. No councillors have made it their duty to serve the poorest. I must also say that this state of things is improving though the improvement is painfully slow.

I venture to suggest to you that, in Ceylon, you are happier, much happier, than we are in India, in that you have not large masses of mankind to deal with. You have got a country second to none in physical beauty or climate. There is absolutely no reason why you should have plague, or the fear of plague. You should be able, as some of the municipalities in South Africa—I know South Africa even more than my own country—to keep off such visitations. I notice that the municipalities make it their business, like the Cape municipalities, to advertise their places and to draw people from all parts of the earth. They advertise their cities by making them gems of beauty and you here surpass even Cape Town in beauty.

The natural scenery that I see about me, in Ceylon, is probably unsurpassed on the face of the earth. If you will add to it by making all efforts humanly possible, you can certainly advertise this beautiful

spot and draw people from all parts of the earth much to their betterment and your own.

They have much to learn in this island which received enlightenment from the Great Buddha. You have a great religion which cannot be surpassed on the face of the earth. It is a religion which ennobles the noblest. It is professed by the largest number on the face of the earth but your religion, as it stands at present, is not at its best because you do not put forward an effort. It is your duty to do so.

You cannot begin better than by making up this beautiful place into a little paradise. I thank you again for your address of welcome.

The Ceylon Daily News, 19-11-1927; also *With Gandhiji in Ceylon*

268. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KANDY

November 18, 1927

I am obliged to you for these numerous illuminated addresses, costly caskets and many purses.

I had hoped to be able to speak to you at some length, but your kind presentations of the gifts and the reading of those addresses have taken up over forty minutes out of sixty allotted for this meeting.

It has given me the greatest pleasure to be able to visit this beautiful island of yours. I have come to understand some of the difficulties and sorrows of the people of Kandy during the few hours that I have been in your midst. I wish that it were possible for me to give you more than lip sympathy, but as it is, I have to be satisfied with assuring you of my hearty sympathy and with praying that your sorrows may somehow be alleviated.

You have, in one of your addresses, asked me to do something in order that you may have the Buddha Gaya restored to you. I can give you my assurance that I shall not fail to do everything that is in my power to restore the property to you (Cheers.). But I wish I could think that your applause was justified, because I fear that in spite of all my efforts my power to help you is much less than you seem to imagine.

I would therefore warn you against building much hope on my assurance and ask you to continue your effort to vindicate your right absolutely unabated.

I had hoped to be able to speak to you on the message on the spinning-wheel as it is applicable to you, but I feel that it is my duty to

occupy the few minutes at my disposal with more serious and more urgent problems before you.

I have heard and it has given me pain to learn that even with you, the followers of the Enlightened One, there is untouchability rigidly observed. I assure you that it is wholly against the spirit of the Buddha. And I would urge Buddhists and Hindus to rid the community of this curse.

There is again the drink curse prevalent in your midst, as it is in other parts of the world. In so far as I know it, it is opposed to the spirit of all the great religions of the world and most decidedly Buddhism.

I understand that you have the right of local option in your midst. It would give me the greatest satisfaction to learn when I have left your shores that you are making the fullest use of this right of local option in order to rid this beautiful island of this curse.

I was distressed to learn that the estates and the plantations were not covered by the right of local option. I hope that the information given to me is not true. But whether that information is true or false, I hope that my voice will somehow or other reach the great planters who ought to regard themselves as the trustees for the welfare of the labourers on whom depends their marvellous prosperity. I venture respectfully to suggest to them that it is their duty to take a personal interest in the social welfare of the labourers whose bodies and even their souls are entrusted to their care. I regard it as their duty not only to put no temptation in the way of their labourers in the shape of drink, but to make an active effort to wean them from their errors.

I see that the time allotted for this meeting is over and I must conclude by repeating my thanks to the people of Kandy for the extraordinary kindness that they have shown to me.

With Gandhiji in Ceylon. pp. 77-8

269. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BADULLA

November 19, 1927

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I thank you for your address and purse. It has given me the greatest pleasure to be in your beautiful island.

I see before me thousands of labourers from the neighbouring plantations. I wish that I had time to go in your midst and look at the surroundings in which you are living and your habitations and mode of life.

You may not all know that nearly a generation of my life has been passed either in the midst of labourers or in closest contact with them and nothing would have given me greater pleasure than to have passed a few days in your midst, understanding your wants and aspirations, but I hope that the cause which prevents me from doing so will be accepted as sufficient excuse for my not coming in your midst and living with you for a time.

The cause is that I am travelling just now as a self-appointed representative of millions in India who are infinitely worse off than any of you here. It is for their sake that these purses, that you have seen presented to me, have been given.

Every rupee of this purse will go to find employment in their own huts for 16 women, at least per day. These are men and women who cannot afford, even if they semi-starve, to leave their own homes, huts and fields. Out of the moneys that are being collected throughout the year nearly every year 50,000 women are being supported in their own homes through the spinning wheel industry.

Behind these spinners, several thousand weavers, dyers, printers, washermen and others are also being supported, who, but for this revival of spinning, would have been without any work.

This work is being done through the agency of an all-India organization called the All-India Spinners' Association which contains several self-sacrificing men, either sons of millionaires or of proved merit and integrity.

Whilst for this cause I gladly collect sums from moneyed men, it gives me great joy to be able to collect also from poor men like those of you who are sitting in front of me. Every cent, every anna received from a willing heart is just as welcome as the rupee or ten-rupee note received from a rich man.

I know that many of you who have graced this occasion with your presence have not had the opportunity given to you to subscribe to this fund. If my guess is correct, and many of you have not subscribed, I invite you, before you leave this meeting, to give your mite to this cause if you are so minded.

I am glad to be able to inform you that whilst I am making this appeal to the audience, a member has already sent me evidently all the money that he had in his pocket, Rs. 8 and odd.

But a more serious thing to which I wish to refer is that you should all establish a living bond with these starving millions by

wearing khadi which is produced by them out of these funds. All these moneys will be perfectly useless if I do not find customers for the khadi that I manufacture. I see that the response has already commenced before my appeal, and if every one of you put your hands into your pockets, and give your eyes to the men who are collecting and ears to me, I shall easily deliver the message I am about to give you.

There is an important matter which I want to discuss with you. A Western friend informed me this morning that hundreds of looms used to work here and he told me sorrowfully that owing to importation of foreign cloth and foreign yarn, all these looms were lying idle and this old industry had all but died out in this district.

I have told this gentleman that if he wants the assistance of experts in order to teach all the processes from ginning to hand-spinning, he can have it in Ceylon itself. There is near Colombo a family which has already learned all the processes and manufactures its own cloth from raw cotton.

There is no doubt whatsoever that if there are really needy men and women in this fair island, nothing can be better than that you should clothe yourselves out of cloth of your own spinning and weaving. I therefore hope that you will help this Rev. gentleman with all your hearts in his work and progress, and make use of all the industry and skill that he may place at your disposal.

I understood from another visitor this afternoon that you are without any organization here for doing this class of social work or political work of any nature whatsoever, and indeed nothing would please me better than to find that as one of the results of this meeting, you had such a working organization manned by selfless workers.

Still another friend came to me and asked me what was the message of the spinning-wheel for the people of Ceylon. He told me that there were men and women in this island who also needed work, and in answer to my cross-questions, he told me also that he wanted me to show a way whereby the youth of this fair land could be weaned from hasty and indiscriminate imitation of the West.

A fourth friend writes to me, saying that all the beautiful garments that I see on some of the women of Ceylon and all the faultless European style dress that I see on so many young men must not be taken by me to be an indication of the possession of wealth by the wearers. This correspondent tells me that many of these stylishly

dressed men often find themselves in the hands, I am sorry to say, of Chettis or Pathan money-lenders.

Well, the spinning-wheel has a message for all this class of people. To the starving man or woman who has no work possibly for him or her to do, the spinning-wheel says : 'Spin me and you will at least find a crust of bread for yourself.'

That is its economic message, but it has also a cultural message for one and all. The spinning-wheel says culturally to you and to me : 'Seeing that there are millions on the face of this earth who are compulsorily idle for want of work, and since I am the only instrument that can be placed in their hands without taking work away from a single mouth, will you not spin me for the sake of these millions and produce an atmosphere of honest industry, honest work and self-reliance and hope for all on God's earth?'

That is the cultural message the spinning-wheel addresses to all people of the earth, no matter to what country, religion or race they belong.

I assure you that slowly but surely this cultural appeal of the spin-ning-wheel is finding a lodgment in the remotest corners of the earth. I know Englishmen, Austrians, Germans, Poles, who have already accepted this appeal of the spinning-wheel. And I assure well-to-do men and women of Ceylon that if they will accept the cultural message of the spinning-wheel and try to make at least some part of their own clothing they will find themselves, at the end of the task, much taller than they are today.

The spinning-wheel has a third message which is metaphorical. It stands for simple life and high thinking. It is a standing protest against the modern mad rush for adding material comfort upon comfort and making life so complicated as to make one totally unfit for knowing one's self or one's God. It says appealingly every minute of our life to you and to me : 'Use me and you will find that if all of you unitedly make use of me, small and insignificant though I may appear, I shall be an irresistible force against the mad, indiscriminate worship of the curse called machinery.'

It is a standing rebuke to the men and women of Ceylon who go in for all kinds of fashions and styles and it tells them : '*Do not for the sake of your country ape the manners and customs of others which can only do harm to you and for heaven's sake do not wish to be what every one of the people of Ceylon cannot be.*'

I must now place before you one or two other subjects which I wish to dwell upon, and I want to tell you about the drink evil.

I know that many of you, labourers, are given to the drink habit. The drink habit is worse than a snake-bite. A snake-bite may poison a body to death, but the drink habit poisons and currupts the soul. I would therefore urge you to fly from that curse as you would fly from a hissing snake.

I would respectfully urge the employers of labour in this district to regard themselves as trustees for the welfare of their employees and try to wean them from the drink habit. It is their bounden duty, in my humble opinion, to close every canteen in their neighbourhood and take away every such temptation from their men. I can tell them from personal experience that if they will open for their men decent refreshment rooms and provide them with all kinds of innocent games, they will find that the men will no longer require this intoxicating liquid.

As I was passing today from Kandy to this place, I passed through some of the finest bits of scenery that I have ever witnessed in my life. Where nature has been so beneficent and where nature provides for you eternal and innocent intoxication in the grand scenery about you, surely it is criminal for men or women to seek intoxication from that sparkling but deadly liquor. I suggest to the followers of the Enlightened One that it is totally against the spirit of his teaching to consider that drink can possibly be taken by those who adore the Buddha.

I was deeply pained to hear that even many of you who are Buddhists observe the curse of untouchability. I understood from a very high officer that some of you Buddhists consider it an insult for an untouchable woman to wear upper garments. I have no hesitation in saying without fear of contradiction that if you believe in untouchability, you deny totally the teaching of the Buddha. He who regarded the lowest animal life as dear as his own would never tolerate this cursed distinction between man and man and regard a single human being as an untouchable.

I was equally sorry to hear that you, Hindus, had not left this curse in India itself, but had taken it with you even on entering Ceylon. I so wish that both the Buddhists and Hindus living in Ceylon would set about working and remove this curse from their midst.

I must devote a sentence or two to one very important thing which I had almost forgotten.

While I was in Colombo I received a letter which told me that the life of the men and women in the estates and in all huge workshops was not as pure as it ought to be. The letter went on to say that the relations between men and women were not what they should be.

What chiefly distinguishes man from the beast is that man from his age of discretion begins to practise a life of continual self-restraint. God has enabled man to distinguish between the sister, his mother, his daugther and his wife. Do not for one moment imagine that because you are labourers you are absolved from having to observe these necessary dis-tinctions and restrictions. If your huts are not so constructed as to enable you to observe the laws of decency and necessary privacy, I would request your employers to provide you with facilities to enable you to do so.

May God help you to understand the significance of these last words of mine!

With Gandhiji in Ceylon, pp. 79-85

270. 'BHUNDI BHUNCHHI'

Gujaratis living outside Cutch may not even have an idea of what "Bhundi Bhunchhi" means. A tax known by this name seems to be collected in Cutch alone. It is imposed on those persons belonging to the Meghwal caste[1] who remarry. The State gives a monopoly for the collection of this tax. It is said that those who hold such monopoly rights perpetrate many kinds of atrocities in order to increase their earnings.

When I was in Cutch,[2] I discussed this and many similar matters with Maharao[3] and I had certainly hoped that this tax would immediately be abolished. However, a letter from a reader in Cutch shows that my hopes in this matter seem to have been belied.[4]

Besides these, I do not reproduce other extracts in which the writer has stated facts which one would be ashamed to publish. I would like to think that even the above facts are somewhat exaggerated. However, there should be no tax on persons remarrying

[1] Traditionally regarded as untouchable
[2] Gandhiji was in Cutch from October 22, 1925 to November 3, 1925.
[3] The ruler of the then princely State of Cutch
[4] The letter has not been translated here.

and, that too on those of one particular caste. I did not come across a single officer in Cutch who defended this tax. Some of them gave unconvincing replies such as : "It has been in existence for a long time", "No one's attention has been drawn to it." We all then thought, however, that this tax would be surely repealed and the poor Meghwals would be relieved of this infliction.

This, however, did not materialize and the writer hopes for my help. I wish I had the capacity to convince Maharaoshri or his officers. If I had this capacity, I would immediately make use of it. There is a limit to the influence which newspapers can exercise. It is often found that the mahatmas can be influential only to the extent that they can be made use of. The satyagrahi's influence is also not unlimited. As a journalist I have no influence whatsoever in Cutch. As a mahatma my influence [in Cutch] is on the debit side and as a satyagrahi it will have to be tested when the time comes. Although the influence of a satyagrahi can be powerful, it is circumscribed by time, place and circumstances. At present my satyagraha would not benefit the Meghwals of Cutch. The circumstances are unfavourable, and, moreover, Cutch is beyond my field of activity. Hence the only way open to me is that of the weak—that of the poor—the way of persuasion and appeal. Through this article I make that appeal to the Maharaoshri and his officers.

To the people of Cutch, however, innumerable ways are open provided they have courage and compassion. It is not necessary for them to revolt or to adopt any drastic measures. The Indian people have always adopted the remedial measure of getting into a sulk. Whenever the ruler was unjust, the people resorted to this measure and thereby convinced the ruler of his injustice. Today we have lost the capacity for this even. The Mahajans have become quite insignificant. I remember times when the Mahajan was even more powerful than the ruler. The Mahajan unions now exist only in name. They are now motivated by self-interest and have become unjust and, whereas once they were the representatives and true protectors of the people, at many places they are now found to have become the exploiters of the people. This explains why the rulers and their officers are found to be unafraid of the people, and why they have become indifferent and act in a wilful manner. To educate the people is the only remedy for this situation.

This education does not imply schooling. It envisages some reformers who enter the battlefield in the spirit of 'do or die', do not give up their courtesy, observe graceful restraint, maintain their

seriousness and, by their own strength of character, overshadow both the ruler and the subjects and influence both of them. They can truly educate the people. It may, however, take a long time before the goal is achieved. But this alone is the straight and the shortest way.

So long as such reformers are not forthcoming, anyone who may think of a remedy which adheres to truth and non-violence should adopt it. The above mentioned writer has taken the step of approaching me. That is only a small step. If he wishes to do something better, he should familiarize himself with the Meghwals and make a detailed study of their hardships. Some of these hardships are such that close association with these people may remove them. Moreover, young people, rather than sit still, accepting defeat, should choose to go to places where immorality and injustice happen to be rampant. Anyone who with a pure heart and in a spirit of renunciation makes a serious effort, directly comes upon straightforward measures.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 20-11-1927

271. ABOUT THE CHARKHA SANGH

A Bihari gentleman living in Calcutta has put three questions to me in Hindi and asked me to give replies to them in *Navajivan.* As the questions are somewhat useful to Gujaratis also, I give them below in Gujarati.

The first question[1] denotes lack of faith in the Charkha Sangh[2] and ignorance of common rights of donors.

Even some of my friends who know me well and are very familiar with the members of the Charkha Sangh believe that this organization will be wound up after my death and khadi will come to a standstill. A critic has gone to the length of prophesying that my corpse will be burnt with the fuel of spinning-wheels. In these

[1]"What will happen to the funds collected for the All-India Spinners' Association after the latter is wound up? Those persons who have made, are still making and/or will make contributions will have no claim whatsoever over the funds. Hence, will these contributors be consulted before a final decision is taken in regard to the use of these funds?"

[2] Akhil Bharatiya Charkha Sangh, i.e., All-India Spinners' Association

circumstances, how can one blame this correspondent who, although he is a staunch supporter of khadi, has expressed these doubts? However, I would like to assure him and those like him that none will cremate my dead body with the wood of spinning-wheels. After my death, the members of the Charkha Sangh will work twice as hard as they are working now. I do not claim the sole monopoly of matchless faith in khadi. I do not find a single sign to suggest that khadi work will totally disappear from the country. I do, on the contrary, see certain signs of increasing faith in khadi. Moreover, the members of the Charkha Sangh Committee are devotees of khadi. They are independent-minded; some of them have sacrificed their all on the altar of khadi and they live for khadi alone. I cannot even imagine that such people will allow the Sangh to be wound up. Moreover, persons belonging to an organization should not lose faith in it, but should rather try always to develop the attitude which would enable them to remain loyal to it to the end and try to see that it continues to function although others may prove disloyal. I am absolutely sure that he Charkha Sangh has such loyal workers within its fold.

However, all created things will certainly perish. In ac cordance with this law perhaps the Charkha Sangh will one day cease to function. Destruction as such is no eveil. The destruction of an activity which is sacred is as good as a revolution. When we pull down a small temple and build a large one instead, we regard the former as having been renovated, and this is indeed true. In a similar manner, it is my firm belief that when the Charkha Sangh ceases to exist, its identity will be merged in a larger organization.

Anyone who contributes even a single pie to the Charkha Sangh will have a permanent right over it. This association can certainly not be wound up without the permission of the donors. In other words, their permission must be obtained if the funds belonging to the Charkha Sangh are to be used for any purpose other than khadi. Any donor may interfere if some member of the Sangh's Managing Committee wilfully misuses the funds or the name of the Charkha Sangh. An organization which is run with the help of donations is public property and not only the donors but the entire public have a right to see that it is properly run. It is because everyone is not aware of this simple fact, and even those who are aware of it are either lazy or self-centred, that dishonesty is practised in many institutions and funds are misappropriated. The public alone, however, is to blame for

this. Wherever society is unenlightened, lazy, indifferent or selfish, hypocrites and rogues take advantage of the situation and do what they like.

Now to the second question.[1]

It is quite true that there is a difference in the prices of khadi in Bengal and Bihar. But this is not because of the profit pocketed by middlemen. There is some difference in the procedure that is followed in these two provinces, hence the cost of khadi production is higher in Bengal. The main reason, however, is that the spinner and the weaver in Bengal have to be paid higher wages. The Charkha Sangh does exercise control and supervision over the institutions in Bengal. The very nature of khadi activity is such that for the present khadi prices will differ from province to province. Perhaps, the khadi produced in Gujarat is priced even higher than that produced in Bengal. It is certainly more expensive than khadi produced in Bihar. This is not because some middleman makes any profit out of it. Khadi produced in Rajputana is perhaps even cheaper than that produced in Bihar. Some varieties of khadi produced in Tamil Nad are certainly cheaper. I do not see any inconvenience arising out of this. Our aim is through khadi activity to enable poor persons to maintain themselves wherever they live. In doing so, the expense is higher at some places and lower at others. We should take care to see that the larger portion of the amount finds its way into the pockets of the poor. It is indeed one of the functions of the Charkha Sangh to see that this is done with the greatest care; in fact, this is being done. It should also be borne in mind that Bengal is the only province which uses almost all the khadi that it produces.

Now the last question :[2]

I know that there has been a reduction in the price of khadi all over the country. This applies to khadi in Bengal too. The price can

[1] "A pair of durable dhotis each measuring four yards (in length) is available for Rs. 3-8 in my province, Bihar, whereas such a pair is not available even for Rs. 4-4 in Abhoy Ashram or in the Khadi Pratishthan. Does this not confirm my suspicion that the organizers of these institutions earn some extra commission as the Akhil Bharatiya Charkha Sangh has no control over them? In Bihar, the entire activity (of khadi) is under the direct control of the Charkha Sangh."

[2] "Why is it that, although continuous attempts are being made day and night, no reduction can be made in the price of khadi? There has been no reduction at all in the price (of khadi) in Bengal in the past two years; it must be admitted of course that there has been some improvement in the quality of the cloth."

be said to have been reduced even where the quality has improved but there has been no corresponding increase in the price. Ordinarily, it may be said with regard to the whole of the country that, on an average, there has been a minimum of 25% reduction in the prices. At some places and in respect of certain varieties, the price has gone down by 50%. At present, more attention is being paid towards improvement in quality.

It is to be wished that all lovers of khadi take the same amount of interest in it as is shown by the Bihari lover of khadi. By taking more interest, they help in allaying doubts. Hence, I wish that those who have honest doubts should get them resolved through the columns of *Navajivan*.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-11-1927

272. SPEECH AT NUWARA ELIYA

November 20, 1927

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I thank you for your address and your purse. Everywhere my speeches have been interpreted both into Sinhalese and Tamil but here as I see the majority of you are Tamils I suggested to the Chairman of the Reception Committee to dispense with Sinhalese in order to save your time and my time and I hope that you will accept this arrangement. You, sir, have apologized for the simplicity of your address. There was not only no necessity for an apology, on the contrary you deserve my hearty congratulations for saving money. Claiming as I do to represent the famished and famishing millions of India, I cannot be too strict, nor can you be too strict about every farthing that you collect in saving anything else for the starving millions. I grudge every rupee that is spent on flowers and in ornamentation whatsoever. You will remember that every rupee that you so save means sixteen starving women getting their meals and it is on their behalf that I have come to your island to ask for your support. It has been a matter of great joy to me to find the people here liberally responding to my appeal. I understand that this purse represents the voluntary collections made by labourers and *kanganis*[1] and the like. I can make no return save empty thanks for this

[1] Labour contractors

generosity, but I do know that God will bless every one of you who has voluntarily contributed to this purse. Every cent, every rupee that you may spend on your pleasures, scents, toys, ornamentation and flimsy fineries is only so much waste, but you may depend upon it that every rupee, every guinea given to this cause will return to you tenfold and if there are in this assembly any people who have not yet contributed to this purse or not been approached by anybody I would ask them to silently send in their gift to me while I am speaking to you. I am emboldened to make this appeal, because of the very generous response the meeting at Badulla made to me and the appeal at the meeting itself. You know that every home in the numerous villages of India has become at the present moment dilapidated because the poor people had been deprived of the only industry they had to supplement their resources from agriculture. I hope that whilst the friends are making their collections no noise will be made, but please preserve silence while I speak, for I want to make a personal appeal to labourers whom I see in front and behind me from neighbouring estates surrounding this beautiful hill.

I want you, the labourers, to understand that I am but one of you and have been casting my lot with you ever since my visit to South Africa nearly 30 years ago. I want you to realize and recognize your own dignity as men and women. Do not despise yourselves or allow others to despise you because you are labourers. There never was and never is shame in honest labour. Without the existence of labour around these hills, their present condition would have been utterly impossible, but there are some well-defined conditions attached to your dignity, if you will preserve it. The first and foremost is that you must not go near the liquor shops. Drink is a devil in whose net you must not find yourselves. A man who comes under the influence of drink forgets the distinction between his wife and sisters. You should therefore, if you have not already given up, make a sacred resolve that you will not pollute your lips by the touch of that cursed water, but if after having fed and clothed yourselves and your families, you have got some money to lay by, keep it for a better purpose, keep it for educating your children, keep it for a rainy day when your hands and your feet can no longer work and the time comes for you to rest. All these savings would come in useful to you and I would ask you to use a portion of the same for people much poorer than yourselves in the name of God.

I know also that many of you are not leading pure lives. It is

wrong to live an impure life. God has made man so that he of all beings on earth can distinguish between women who are his sisters, daughters, mother and wife. Refuse to live under conditions which will make it impossible for you to live a life of discipline, purity and restraint. I wish that my voice will be heard by your employers, as I know that they will see to it that they take a personal interest in your daily life. I know that many of you use your idle hours, your spare hours, in gambling your time and money away. You must not use your idle hours in this criminal fashion. Since you have sufficient open air life in your plantations, I would advise you to employ your leisure hours to cultivate your minds and if you have leisure spend your time in spinning for yourself and for your family.

I understand when you come to this island you bring with you the curse of untouchability. I tell you that there is no warrant in Hinduism for untouchability. It is wrong to consider a single human being as untouchable, and if you will bear in mind all the things I told you, you will find yourselves better men and better women for having practised these things.

I am reminded by a letter received from Colombo that hookworm is prevalent in many of the estates in Ceylon. It is a disease wholly avoidable and it surprises me to find that your own employers have not been able to give you lessons to avoid this wretched disease. I know positively that this disease is due only to filth. The letter that I have received says that there are some remedies which are quite good and if there are such, you can certainly resort to them, but the better thing is to prevent the disease, seeing that it is so easily preventible and the chief thing is to regulate your sanitary life. Your methods of sanitation are not of the best kind, I am sorry to confess. I know that if planters will take proper measures to teach you sanitation, they will be doing their duty to themselves, to you and to humanity. That disease comes from polluting the water and using that water for all sorts of purposes. If you will only understand and learn the elementary lessons in sanitation and if you do not pollute the water which you drink by washing or dirtying it, you will never get hook-worm. I thank you again for your address and generous purse.

With Gandhiji in Ceylon, pp. 85-8

273. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

KANDY,
Monday, November 21, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letters.

Chhotelal should go out for a change, if he cannot improve. See what he will do. Tyagiji should principally live on milk if he will avoid another attack. Bhansali continues to cause me anxiety. Am glad Parnerkar has gone. It is better that he does not return till he is quite restored. Surendra will quite substitute you whilst you are away. I am due to reach Berhampur 2nd December. You will wire or write to Babu Niranjan Patnaick, Khadi Depot, Berhampur (Ganjam Dist.) the exact date and time of your arrival and the route. Do not burden yourself with more than two or three books on dairying. I do not think you will have so much time as you imagine for study in Orissa.

I remember having told you that you may not get books or things *ad lib* from mother. But the rule may be relaxed for dairy literature. She may send you all the books that experts of her acquaintance may recommend.

This is probably my last letter before we meet.

Love,

BAPU

From the original C.W. 5294. Courtesy : Mirabehn

274. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

November 21, 1927

DEAR SATIS BABU,

So you have lost a brother now. These deaths of dear ones teach us much if we would learn from them. Like births, they are ever with us. This knowledge is in the possession of everyone and yet how few of us are able to profit by it when the time comes. And somehow or other we Hindus who should be least affected by deaths are, or it seems to me to be, the worst off. Have you read the disgraceful wailings depicted in the *Mahabharata* over the war deaths? I write this not for you. I feel that you are comparatively composed. I [have

doubts][1] about Hemaprabha Devi. I would like you to translate this with your own commentary to her.

I never got the consignment of khadi you promised to send. If you had, I think I would have sold it all here. I reach Berhampur, Ganjam District, on 2nd December I expect. I leave Ceylon on 29th. Leave Colombo on 25th. Reach Jaffna 26th.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 1579

275. LETTER TO HAMAPRABHA DEVI DAS GUPTA

KANDY,

Monday [*November 21, 1927*][2]

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I hope you did not grieve over the death of Satis Babu's brother. Why rejoice over birth and grieve over death? This is the teaching of the *Gita*. I can see you suffer much because Nikhil is still keeping bad health. How can I console you? If we cannot utilize all our wisdom in such a situation, it is no use at all. Realize this and pass your time in the performance of your duty, looking upon it as the source of happiness and peace.

The Ceylon tour is certainly strenuous, but the country is very beautiful [and] the weather is cool. Therefore, it is not too much a strain.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 1660

276. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Monday, November 21 [*1927*][3]

SISTERS,

I have as yet received no letter from you. I have to wander about so much in Ceylon that it is difficult to get my mail direct from Colombo.

[1] The words are not decipherable.

[2] Gandhiji was in Kandy on this date.

[3] From the reference to the Ceylon tour

When I look at the Ceylonese women, I think of our Ashram women. I wrote to you upon the simplicity of the dress of ordi nary women. On the other hand, women of higher social standing have grown so fashionable that they put on nothing but silk and brocades. In my eyes, it does not suit them at all. I always ask myself, "Whom do these women want to please by putting on such clothes?" There is no *purdah* system here. Why women adorn themselves, you can tell better than I. But seeing all this, I felt that it was good that we had established the tradition in the Ashram of wearing the fewest possible ornaments. I cannot of course say that in the Ashram we put on no ornaments at all. Write and tell me if you don't agree.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3677

277. LETTER TO ASHRAM CHILDREN

November 21, 1927

The natural beauty of Kandy is so great that one would simply gaze for ever. There are hills, trees and greenery all round and nowhere does one see a dry spot. I very much enjoyed walking in solitude in such a place. Kakasaheb was talking to me on some matter. I was listening to him with my ears, but the eyes were engrossed in looking on God's play. I wonder why, with such temples in existence, men spend lakhs and crores of rupees in erecting big temples so that people may meditate in them on God. How far has the existence of temples helped religion? Think on this question and let me know your conclusion.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

278. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE

Monday [*November 21, 1927*][1]

BHAISHRI MAMA,

I have your letter. Did you wish your article about Vartej to be published as soon as I had the opportunity to read it? I never knew that Mithubai's speech was published. It is true, however, that articles regarding flood relief have gone to the press direct. If your note about Vartej was something special you should have marked it as such and sent it direct to me. If it is desirable to move among the *Antyajas* in the Panchamahals, don't you think you yourself could do it? One must know the right method of moving amongst them; mustn't one? Keep on imploring Nanabhai. If you write to Kaka he would write . . . says Kaka. Your . . . remains with. . . . However he . . . does not . . . to have forgotten the matter.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

BHAISHRI MAMA
ANTYAJA ASHRAM
GODHRA
B.B.C.I. RLY.
INDIA

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3818(2)

279. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, COLOMBO[3]

November 22, 1927

I am used to ladies' meetings where thousands of sisters came in their naturalness and there the hearts meet. I do not think I can say that about stiff meeting.

[1] From the postmark

[2] The source, a postcard, has been damaged.

[3] Published under the title "The Haunting Memory"; Mahadev Desai says of this meeting : "Gandhiji had looked forward to a meeting like one of those women's meetings in South India attended by thousands. But instead there was a meeting of little more than a dozen ladies in the drawing room of a stately palace. It was a misnomer to call it a public meeting. . . . For a moment it looked as though he would say nothing and go to the next function on his programme. But he saw that the ladies were not to blame. . . . So he gave them a talk."

He gave them a picture of the starving millions, and said :

When Mahendra came to Ceylon the children of the motherland were not starving either materially or spiritually, our star was in the ascendant and you partook of the glory. The children are starving today and it is on their behalf that I have come with the begging bowl, and if you do not disown kinship with them, but take some pride in it, then you must give me not only your money but your jewellery as sisters in so many other places have done. My hungry eyes rest upon the ornaments of sisters, whenever I see them heavily bedecked. There is an ulterior motive too in asking ornaments, viz., to wean the ladies from the craze for ornaments and jewellery. And if I may take the liberty that I do with other sisters, may I ask you what it is that makes woman deck herself more than man? I am told by feminine friends that she does so for pleasing man. Well, I tell you if you want to play your part in the world's affairs, you must refuse to deck yourselves for pleasing man. If I was born a woman, I would rise in rebellion against any pretension on the part of man that woman is born to be his plaything. I have mentally become a woman in order to steal into her heart. I could not steal into my wife's heart until I decided to treat her differently than I used to do, and so I restored to her all her rights by dispossessing myself of all my so-called rights as her husband. And you see her today as simple as myself. You find no necklaces, no fineries on her. I want you to be like that. Refuse to be the slaves of your own whims and fancies, and the slaves of men. Refuse to decorate yourselves, don't go in for scents and lavender waters; if you want to give out the proper scent, it must come out of your heart, and then you will captivate not man, but humanity. It is your birthright. Man is born of woman, he is flesh of her flesh and bone of her bone. Come to your own and deliver your message again.

And he cited for them the example of Sita difiant in her purity, and Miss Schlesin who with her defiant purity and innate fearlessness commanded in South Africa the adoration of thousands including amongst them fierce Pathans, robbers and questionable characters, and rounded off by telling them wherein true honour lies.

Do you know the hideous condition of your sisters on plantations? Treat them as your sisters, go amongst them and serve them with your better knowledge of sanitation and your talents. Let your honour lie in their service. And is there not service nearer home? There are men who are rascals; drunken people who are a menace to society. Wean them from their rascality by going amongst them as fearlessly as some of those Salvation Army girls who go into the dens

of thieves and gamblers and drunkards, fall on their necks and at their feet, and bring them round. The service will deck you more than the fineries that you are wearing. I will then be a trustee for the money that you will save and distribute it amongst the poor.

I pray that the rambling message that I have given you may find a lodgment in your hearts.

With Gandhiji in Ceylon, pp. 16-21

280. SPEECH AT ZAHIRA COLLEGE, COLOMBO

November 22, 1927

It has indeed given me great pleasure to be able to visit this College.

You have reminded me of the happy days I spent in South Africa. Those were days when my life was almost wholly cast in the midst of my Mussalman countrymen and it was early in 1893 that I found myself in the company of some of the finest Mussalmans it has been my good fortune to meet, as also to influence. It therefore does not surprise me that you have invited me to meet you in this hall.

Maulana Shaukat Ali when he returned from Ceylon gave me what he said was a message from the Mussalmans of Ceylon to hasten to Ceylon as soon as possible. But the work in which both he and I were engaged made it impossible for me to come here at that time.

Those of you who are in the habit of reading Indian newspapers will know that just before I embarked for Colombo I had the pleasure of meeting the professors and boys of the Jamia College at Delhi. I have not got the time to give you a set speech, because there are other appointments waiting for me, but I would summarize the speech[1] I gave to the boys in Delhi.

All the education that you are receiving in this great College will be reduced to nothing if it is not built on the foundation of a pure character.

As I was reading your magazines I could not help admiring the zeal with which the work was done here and the marvellous progress that has been made in a few years. But as I was reading the report that was read before the Governor on the occasion of the foundation-laying ceremony, I could not help feeling how nice it would be if we

[1]*Vide* "Speech at Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi", 2-11-1927.

could raise a foundation of good character so that stones on stones might be raised thereon and we might look back with joy and pride upon that edifice. But character cannot be built with mortar and stone. It cannot be built by other hands than your own. The Principal and the professors cannot give you character from the pages of books. Character-building comes from their very lives and, really speaking, it must come from within yourselves.

As I was studying Christianity, Hinduism and other great faiths of the world, I saw that there was a fundamental unity moving amidst the endless variety that we see in all religions, viz., Truth and Innocence. You must take the word 'Innocence' literally, that is, to mean non-killing and non-violence, and if you boys will take your stand definitely always on Truth and Innocence, you will feel that you have built on solid foundation.

I am grateful for the generous purse you have presented to me. It is meant for finding work for the starving millions of India. These consist of Hindus, Mussalmans and Christians. Therefore you have, by giving me this donation, established a link between these starving millions and yourselves, and in doing so you have done a thing which is pleasing to God. It will be a very feeble link if you do not know the purpose for which this is going to be used. These moneys are utilized for finding work among men and women for the production of cloth like that you find on my person. But all this money will be useless if you cannot find the people to wear khadi so manufactured.

It is possible now for us to satisfy every taste and fashion. If you will forge a lasting and continuing link with the masses of India you will henceforth clothe yourselves in khadi.

With Gandhiji in Ceylon, pp. 88-90

281. SPEECH TO PARSIS, COLOMBO

November 22, 1927

You have apologized for your inability to present me with a proper address. Your address is written on your hearts which you have laid bare before me.

A strange relationship binds me to the Parsis. The affection they have showered on me, a Hindu, wherever I have come in contact with them is something inexplicable and impregnable.

Wherever I have gone Parsis have not failed to find me out. When scarcely anyone knew me, when the burden of Mahatmaship

had not yet been imposed on me, a Parsi befriended me and made me his own. I refer to the late Parsee Rustomji of South African fame.

When the South African Europeans mobbed and lynched me on my landing at Durban in 1896 Parsee Rustomji harboured me and my family at grave risk to his person and property. The mob threatened to burn his house, but nothing daunted Rustomji who gave us shelter under his roof. Ever since, throughout his lifelong friendship with me he helped me and my movements and in 1921 his was the biggest donation to the Tilak Swaraj Fund from an Indian abroad.

Mr. (afterwards Sir) Ratan Tata sent me a cheque for Rs. 25,000 when I most needed it during the satyagraha in South Africa. And Dababhai Naoroji. How can I describe my debt to him? He took me to his bosom when I was an unknown and unbefriended youth in England, and today his grand-daughters are a tower of strength to me in my khadi work.

I ask you to continue the tradition of your forefathers, I ask you not to forget their simplicity and their frugal ways by aping the showy fashion of the West. Your community has been known throughout the world for its charity, and luxury-loving ease and extravagance go ill together with charity. I am glad to find that you here have retained some of your simplicity and your Indian ways. You are known for your business capacity and your people have made fortunes wherever they have gone. But remember that it is not their riches but their large-hearted charity that made them famous.

May God help you to keep up that tradition unbroken.

With Gandhiji in Ceylon, pp. 99-100

282. SPEECH TO CEYLON NATIONAL CONGRESS, COLOMBO

November 22, 1927

I thank you for the words that you have spoken about myself, and I thank you also for the pleasant reminder that you have given me of the ancient times when the connection between India and Ceylon was established. I do not propose, however, to take up your time by giving my own views upon what that connection means to India, means to you, and shall I say to the world. But I will say this that in my opinion the teaching of Gautama Buddha was not a new religion. In so far as I have been able to study those lofty teachings, I have come to the conclusion—and that conclusion I arrived long before

now—that Gautama was one of the greatest of Hindu reformers, and that he left upon the people of his own time and upon the future generations an in-delible impress of that reformation. But it would be wrong on my part to take up your time and my own, limited as it is, to consider that very fascinating subject. I therefore come to mundane matters relating to the Congress.

In India the Congress is a word to conjure with. It is an association with an unbroken record of over 40 years. And it enjoys today a reputation which no other political association in India enjoys, and that is, in spite of the many ups and downs which the Congress in common with all worldly institutions and associations has gone through. I therefore take it for granted that in adopting this name you are also, as far as may be and is necessary, following the traditions of the parent body if I may call the National Congress of India by that name. And on that assumption I venture this afternoon to place before you my views of what a Congress should be, or how the National Congress in India has been able to build up its reputation. I know that after all my connection with the Congress in India does not stretch over a period longer than 10 years—or I may now say, more accurately speaking, 12 years. But as you are aware that 12 years' association is so close, and I have been so much identified with the Congress that probably what I may say might be taken with some degree of authority. But in one way my association with the parent body is nearly 30 years old now.

It was in South Africa in the year 1893 when I went there that I dreamt about the Congress. I knew something about its activities, though I had never attended a single one of the annual sessions of that great institution. Just like you, as a youngster, I took my proper share in founding an association called the Natal Indian Congress after the fashion of the Indian National Congress, making such changes as were necessary to suit the local conditions. I shall therefore be able to give you the results of my experience of public life in connection with such institutions dating back to 1893. And what I learnt even so early as 1894 was that any such association, to be really serviceable, to deserve the name of being called 'national', requires a fair measure—I was going to say a great measure—of self-sacrifice on the part of the principal workers. I have no hesitation in confessing to you that that ideal I found to be very difficult to put into practice even in that little community, because we were after all a very small body of men and women in Natal, which is the smallest province of South Africa, where

we had a population of nearly 60 thousand Indians of whom the vast majority had no vote in the deliberations of the Congress.

The Congress however was a representative institution and fully representative of things that interested the people, because it constituted itself the trustee of the welfare of those men. But I must not linger over the history of that institution. Even in that small body we found bickerings and a desire more for power than for service, a desire more for self-aggrandizement than for self-effacement, and I have found during my 12 years' association with the parent body also that there is a continuous desire for self-seeking and self-aggrandizement; and for you as for us who are still striving to find our feet, who have still to make good the claims for self-expression and self-government, self-sacrifice, self-effacement, and self-suppression are really absolutely necessary and indispensable for our existence and for our progress.

I do not profess to have studied your politics during the brief stay that I have made here, I do not know the internal working of this organization, I do not know how strong it is, and how popular it is. I only hope it is strong and is popular. I hope you are free the blemishes that I have just mentioned. It is, I know, a pleasurable pastime (and I have indulged in it sufficiently as you know) to strive against the powers that be, and to wrestle with the government of the day, especially when that government happens to be a foreign government and a government under which we rightly feel we have not that scope which we should have, and which we desire, for expansion and fullest self-expression. But I have also come to the conclusion that self-expression and self-government are not things which may be either taken from us by anybody or which can be given us by anybody. It is quite true that if those who happen to hold our destinies, or seem to hold our destinies in their hands, are favourably disposed, are sympathetic, understand our aspirations, no doubt it is then easier for us to expand. But after all self-government depends entirely upon our own internal strength, upon our ability to fight against the heaviest odds. Indeed, self-government which does not require that continuous striving to attain it and to sustain it is not worth the name. I have therefore endeavoured to show both in word and in deed that political self-government, that is, self-government for a large number of men and women, is no better than individual self-government, and therefore it is to be attained by precisely the same

means that are required for individual self-government or self-rule, and so as you know also, I have striven in India to place this ideal before the people, in season and out of season, very often much to the disgust of those who are merely politically minded.

I belong to that body of political thought which was dominated by Gokhale. I have called him my political guru : not that everything that he said or did I accepted or accept today, but just because the moving force of his life (as I who came in the closest touch with him came to understand) was his intense desire to 'spiritualize politics'. This was his own expression in the preamble to the prospectus of the Servants of India Society, of which he was the founder and the first president. He makes the deliberate statement that he founded that Society in order to introduce spirituality into politics. He had studied the politics not only around him in his own country but had been a close and careful student of history. He had studied the politics of all the countries of the world and having been keenly disappointed to see a complete divorce between politics and spirituality, he endeavoured to the best of his ability, and not without some success—I was almost going to say not without considerable success—to introduce that element into politics. And so it was that he adopted the name of the Servants of India for his Society, which is now serving India in a variety of ways.

I do not know whether what I am saying commends itself to you or not, but if I am to show my gratitude for all the kindness that you have lavishly showered upon me during my brief visit to this beautiful country, if I am to show it in truth, I can only tell you what I feel and not what will probably please you or tickle you. You know that this particular thing—truth—is an integral part of our Congress creed. And we have therefore in the creed the attainment of swaraj by legitimate and non-violent means.

You will find that I have not been tired of insisting upon truth and non-violence at any cost. Given these two conditions, in my humble opinion, you can hurl defiance at the mightiest power on earth—and still come away not only yourselves unscathed but you will leave your so-called adversary also uninjured and unhurt. For the time being he may misunderstand the non-violent blows that you deal, he may misrepresent you also, but you don't need to consult his feelings or his opinions so long as you are fulfilling these two absolute conditions. Then it is well with you, and you can march forward with

greater speed than otherwise. The way may appear to be long, but if you take my experience extending over a period of 30 years uninterruptedly, without exception, I give you my assurance that it is the shortest cut to success. I have known no shorter road. I know that it very often requires great faith and immense patience, but if this one thing is fixed on our minds, then there is no other way open to a politician, if he is to serve not himself, but the whole nation. If once that determination is made, then comes faith and with that faith comes also patience, because you know that there is no better or shorter road.

I am afraid as we are in India, so are you cut up into groups and communities. I read casually only today something in praise of communalism. In India also we have this blight—we call it a blight, we don't praise it. Even those who believe in communalism say frankly that it is a necessary evil to be got rid of at the earliest possible moment.

In India we have to deal with 300 million people. But you have to deal with such a small mass of men and women that it is a matter for pain and surprise for me to find a defence—an energetic defence—of this communalism. But I know that it is totally opposed to nationalism. And you want, as you must want, swaraj. It is not the birthright of one country only; swaraj is the birthright of all countries—I feel constrained to say, the birthright even of the savage as of the most civilized man—how much more of people who have got a culture second to none in the world, a people who have got all that Nature can give you, have got resources in men and money and in natural gifts, who have everything that goes to make you a powerful nation on this globe of ours, yet at the present moment you seem to be far away from it.

I don't suppose that any of you flatters himself or herself with the belief that you have at the present moment anything like what I should consider self-government. And that self-government you will not have—I was going to say you cannot have—unless you speak with the voice of one nation and not with the voice of Christians, Mussalmans, Buddhists, Hindus, Europeans, Sinhalese, Tamils and Malays. I can't understand that.

As you, sir, said in your remarks that you represent all races and religions, I congratulate you upon that, and if you are really capable of vindicating that claim, all honour to you, and not only the Congress but you then deserve to be copied by us. We, an older institution, are

not able to vindicate that claim. We are striving; we are groping in the dark; we are trying to suppress provincialism; we are trying to suppress racialism; we are trying to suppress religionism, if I may coin a word; we are trying to express nationalism in its fullest form, but I am ashamed to confess to you that we are still far from it. But it is given to you to outstrip us and set us an example. It is easy for you, much easier for you than for us, but a condition indispensable for that is that some of you at least will have to give your whole time to this and not only your whole time but your whole selves and you will have to suppress yourselves.

As Gokhale said, politics had degenerated into a sort of game for leisure hours, whereas he desired that, for some at least, politics should be a wholetime occupation, it should engross the attention of some of the ablest men of the country. It is only when truth, fearlessness and non-violence are dominant factors that a person can devote himself unselfishly to the service of the nation.

I hope that in your Congress you have such a body of men and women, because woman must play her part side by side with man. As I said, in India our one limb is paralysed. Women have got to come up to the level of man. As I said to the ladies at a meeting today, they may not copy man in all the wildness of his nature, but they must come to the level of man in all that is best in him. Then in this island you will have a beautiful blend, then you will be worthy of what Nature has so profusely showered on you.

As I travelled from Kandy to Colombo this morning, I asked myself what the Congress was going to do in order to save Ceylon, whom God had blessed with enough natural intoxication, from the intoxication of that fiery liquid. I make a humble suggestion to you. If the Congress is to be fully national, it cannot leave this fundamental social question. In this temperate climate, where no artificial stimulant is necessary, it is a shame that a substantial part of your income should be derived from liquor. You may not know what is happening to the labourers whose trustees you are, whose will is only once expressed when they cast their votes in your favour. I saw thousands upon thousands of them at Hatton. I have lost all sense of smell, but a friend told me that some of them were stinking with liquor. They had gone mad over the fact that one of their own was going in their midst, and had broken the bounds of restraint. Well, I know what you will say. You will say it was the result of excess and that it is not bad to drink in

moderation. Well, I tell you, I have found so many making that claim and ultimately proving dismal failures. I have come from cities of South Africa where I have seen Africans, Europeans, Indians rolling in gutters under the influence of drink, I have seen proctors, advocates and barristers rolling in gutters and then the policemen taking them away in order to hide their shame. I have seen captains mad with drink leaving their cabin to the chief officer, or defiling the cabin where they were supposed to keep guard over the safety of their passengers. Claiming, as you do, allegiance to India, and endorsing, as you do, your connection with the story of the *Ramayana*, you should be satisfied with nothing but *Ramarajya* which includes swaraj. When the evil stalks from corner to corner of this enchanting fairyland, you must take up the question in right earnest and save the nation from ruin.

Then there is the other thing, untouchability. You consider the Rodiyas[1] as untouchables and their women are not allowed to cover their upper parts. It is high time for the Congress to take up the question of the Rodiyas, make them their own and enrol them as volunteers in their work. Democracy is an impossible thing until the power is shared by all, but let not democracy degenerate into mobocracy. Even a pariah, a labourer, who makes it possible for you to earn your living, will have his share in self-government. But you will have to touch their lives, go to them, see their hovels where they live packed like sardines. It is up to you to look after this part of humanity. It is possible for you to make their lives or mar their lives. The Indian National Congress deals with both of these questions. They are living planks in our programme. I urge upon you, if you want to make your Congress truly national and truly representative of the poorest and meanest people of Ceylone, you will add these items to your programme, if you have not already added them, and introduce a full measure of spirituality into your politics and everything else will follow; self-government which is your birth-right will drop in your hand like a fully ripe fruit from a laden tree. May this message produce its due effect and penetrate your hearts.

Young India, 1-12-1927

[1] The story goes that a Rodiya, whose duty was to provide venison to the king, substituted human flesh, and hence the caste was outlawed.

283. SPEECH TO TAMIL UNION, COLOMBO

November 22, 1927

I am deeply grateful to you for the address that you have given me, and also for the purse for my mission.

I know that everywhere I have gone in this fair island, Tamil friends have surrounded me with overwhelming kindness and given me of their best for the cause which has brought me here. It therefore gives me no surprise that you, the members of this union, decided to give a separate purse on your own behalf, but I know this also that you are well able to pay what you have paid, and it is possible for you, if you understood the full significance of my message, to pay even much more than you have done.

You, sir, have conferred on me a favour by asking me to tell this meeting how the funds that I am now collecting are being utilized and what I expect from the distribution of these funds.

There is in India an association called the All-India Spinners' Association. It has got its own constitution and its affairs are administered by a Council of nine, of which I am the President for the first five years of its existence. One of the millionaire merchants is the Treasurer of this Association. His name is Seth Jamnalal Bajaj. At the present moment he acts also on my behalf as Chairman of the Council. Its Secretary is a moneyed man's son named Shankerlal Banker. The other members of the Council are equally well knwon and known also for their self-sacrifice. This Council operates through its branches all over India. All accounts are periodically audited by chartered accountants.

Through this agency over 1,500 villages all over India are being served today, and in these villages at least 50,000 spinners who are Hindus, Mussalmans and in some cases even Christians and others are being given work through the spinning-wheel. Whereas before the advent of the spinning-wheel, they had no work whatsoever to do for four months in the year, now since the advent of the spinning-wheel, they got between one and two annas per day whilst they are working the wheel. Of these, the largest amount is spent in Tamil Nadu because the largest number of spinners are to be found in those districts of Tamil Nadu where there is almost chronic famine. Often women walk several miles to receive cotton or slivers and to deliver yarn and receive the money earned.

Behind these spinners several thousand weavers have been

reclaimed, as also dhobis, whose special function is to wash such khadi, dyers, printers, and traders.

Of this distribution over this vast area covering 1,900 miles long and 1,500 miles broad, nearly 1,000 workers of the clerical class are employed, earning anything between 20 to 30 or even 40 rupees per month. There are some who get even as much as Rs. 75 or even Rs. 150 per month, but these are very few. On the top of these are a band of honorary workers who get nothing whatsoever, but who give their work for the love of this service. All the provincial offices and subprovincial offices are also under supervision and are required to keep regular accounts which have to be periodically audited.

Through this agency over 20 lakhs rupees worth of khaddar was manufactured and sold last year. This work is capable of indefinite extension, provided we get men first and money next. Experience extending now over five or six years has told us that if we get sufficient monetary assistance from people, if we get willing customers and if we get a number of qualified workers, it is merely a question of time when we should be able to serve all the 7,00,000 villages in India. I have, therefore, not hesitated to call it the largest co-operative effort in the world.

Satisfactory though the results that I have described to you are, they are by no means brilliant or at all enough for the work or the end that I have in view, but it merely awaits conversion of all those who feel for India like yourselves. It may flatter my pride, but I know that it is not a satisfactory state of affairs so long as I have got to travel about in order to convert people to the creed, as it were, of khadi and to induce them to part with their superfluous cash. If you took this simple work of collecting funds and of finding customers for khadi from off my shoulder, I can assure you that I can utilize my talents as an expert spinner for organizing these villages and giving you the best and the cheapest khadi.

I know that you cannot be all spinning experts in a moment, but you can all become khadi experts in the sense of becoming khadi buyers and collectors of money. I am painfully aware that the country is making an uneconomical use of my abilities by compelling me to wander about from place to place in search of money and in search of custom for khadi.

I speak thus heart to heart to you for the simple reason that during my tour of Tamil Nadu from which I have come here and from which you are drawn I have been so overwhelmed with kindness

and generosity especially in Chettinad that you have created in me a passion for more.

You have, I understand, a sporting club and it is a good thing. I want you to become sportsmen also of the higher order. I want you to become sportsmanlike enough to share your riches with those who are famishing in India, not by flinging a handful of rice at them, but by finding work in the manner that I wish to train them for.

I would like you also to be sportsmanlike enough to share your abilities or capacity for service with those who are labourers in this island. That is social service which requires the abilities of many young men whom I see in front of me. I must not take up your time in order to relate my experiences of thousands of labourers I saw between Badulla and Hatton. On the one hand, I was glad to see them and on the other, it showed me how much there was for you, young men, to do for them who are bleeding away and do not know how to lead a pure life.

You have heard my message. If there are any who have not yet paid or not paid enough, please send your donations on to me and if you will establish a living tie between these poor millions and yourselves, you will follow up your donations by making a resolve henceforth not to buy any cloth which is not khadi.

I thank you once more for your generosity.

The Hindu, 28-11-1927 and *With Gandhiji in Ceylon*

284. SPEECH AT PANADURA

November 23, 1927

The Mahatma, having inquired about Mr. Arthur V. Dias, who was absent, said that he would wish to be face to face with the father of the temperance movement in Panadura. He had heard of this temperance worker who, he thought, was working in the same spirit as himself. He hoped the public of Panadura would strive further in the cause of temperance.

You will then earn not only the gratitude of the present generation but of generations to come. It has been my lot to be thrown among drunkards in various places. I have read copious literature relating to the evils of drink. I know of homes rendered desolate. I have known men, respectable men, ruined. And I have seen husbands turn monsters to their wives on account of that drink evil. A captain who was under the influence of liquor was nearly going to

imperil the whole crew of a ship where I was on board. You being in a tropical climate, there is no reason to warrant drinks. It is beastly—it is a sin against the Lord and humanity! The great labouring classes are becoming more and more useless under its deadly influence. Then there is untouchability, and among Buddhists also, in Ceylon.

He was informed by a certain gentleman of Kandy that there existed a sort of untouchability among Buddhists, although it was against Buddhism.

By whatever name you may call it, untouchability is bad. Where kindness has been taught, even to the very animals, there is no room for untouchability among men in Buddhism.

The Ceylon Daily News, 25-11-1927

285. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, GALLE

November 23, 1927

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I am deeply grateful to you for the addresses and the collections presented to me just now.

Ever since my landing on the hospitable shores of this beautiful island of yours, I have been the recipient of great blessings and not the least among them is the benediction just recited by a number of boys and girls. A few minutes ago I received an address from your Municipal Council too and to the best of my ability I propose to give a combined reply, but I know you will thank me if I be as brief as possible as I don't wish you to be in the sun.

I have nothing different to say to Municipal Councillors from what I have to tell you, the citizens of this town.

I propose to repeat the hope I have been repeating day after day since I arrived in this island.

I hope that you will do your utmost to rid yourselves of the curse of drink and caste distinctions from this island. Gautama Buddha, whose life was one of continuous renunciation, has preached that his followers should not foul their mouth and poison their body by the use of liquor. Islam denounced drink in unmistakable terms. So far as I have seen of Christianity there is no warrant in the Christian doctrine for the use of liquor and I can give you my personal testimony as a Hindu that my religion considers it a sin to take liquor.

Even in this island you have imported from your Motherland the bane of communalism, but I hope that in our life of work for God

and humanity we shall work shoulder to shoulder, as children of one common soil for the good of your country. Side by side with the sublime teachings of the Enlightened One, you have imported from India caste distinctions. Your adoption of the teachings of Buddha will remain incomplete, so long as you observe these distinctions. The spirit of democracy that now pervades the world demands that one should not be considered superior to another. All are sons and daughters of one divine essence.

Lastly, may I expect you to give a finishing touch to your donations and manifestations of regard to me by following the example of the Tiranagama Women's Association who, while giving me a reception at Hikkaduwa, intimated to me that they were going to organize a campaign to popularize khaddar among ladies.

It gives me great joy to see that Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims and Christians have united to help me to ameliorate the condition of the famishing millions of India. I pray to God that even as you have worked in unison on this occasion that you may work in unison for the good of your common Motherland.

With Gandhiji in Ceylon, pp. 103-5

286. SPEECH AT MAHINDA COLLEGE, GALLE

November 24, 1927

It has given me the greatest pleasure to be able to be present at this very pleasant function[1]. You have paid me indeed a very great compliment and conferred on me a great honour by allowing me to witness your proceedings and making the acquaintance of so many boys.

I hope that this institution will progressively expand, as, I have no doubt, it deserves. I have come to know enough of this beautiful island and its people to understand that there are Buddhists enough in this country, not merely to support one such insti tution, but many such institutions. I hope, therefore, that this institution will never have to pine for want of material support, but having known something of the educational institutions both in South Africa and India, let me tell you that scholastic education is not merely brick and mortar. It is true boys and true girls who build such institutions from day to day. I know some huge architecturally perfect buildings going under the

[1] Prize distribution

name of scholastic institutions, but they are nothing but whited sepulchres. Conversely, I know also some institutions which have to struggle from day to day for their material existence, but which because of this very want, are spiritually making advance from day to day. One of the greatest teachers that mankind has ever seen and one whom you have enthroned as the only Royal Monarch in your hearts delivered his living message not from a manmade building, but under the shadow of a magnificent tree. May I also venture to suggest that the aim of a great institution like this should be to impart such instruction and in such ways that it may be open to any boy or girl in Ceylon.

I notice already that, as in India, so in this country, you are making education daily more and more expensive so as to be beyond the reach of the poorest children. Let us all beware of making that serious blunder and incurring the deserved reproach of posterity. To that end let me put the greatest stress upon the desirability of giving these boys instruction from A to Z through the Sinhalese language. I am certain that the children of the nation that receive instruction in a tongue other than their own commit suicide. It robs them of their birthright. A foreign medium means an undue strain upon the youngsters, it robs them of all originality. It stunts their growth and isolates them from their home. I regard therefore such a thing as a national tragedy of first importance, and I would like also to suggest that since I have known Sanskrit in India as the mother language, and since you have received all religious instruction from the teachings of one who was himself an Indian amongst Indians and who had derived his inspiration from Sanskrit writings that it would be but right on our part to introduce Sanskrit as one of the languages that should be diligently studied. I should expect an institution of this kind to supply the whole of the Buddhist community in Ceylon with textbooks written in Sinhalese and giving all the best from the treasures of old.

I hope that you will not consider that I have placed before you an unattainable ideal. Instances occur to me from history where teachers have made Herculean efforts in order to restore the dignity of the mother tongue and to restore the dignity of the old treasures which were about to be forgotten.

I am glad indeed that you are giving due attention to athletics and I congratulate you upon acquitting yourselves with dis tinction in games. I do not know whether you had any indigenous games or not. I should, however, be exceedingly surprised, and even painfully

surprised, if I were told that before cricket and football descended upon your sacred soil, your boys were devoid of all games. If you have national games, I would urge upon you that yours is an institution that should lead in reviving old games. I know that we have in India many noble indigenous games just as interesting and exciting as cricket or football, also as much attended with risks as football is, but with the added advantage that they are inexpensive, because the cost is practically next to nothing.

I am no indiscriminate, superstitious worshipper of all that goes under the name of 'ancient'. I never hesitated to demolish all that is evil or immoral, no matter how ancient endeavour it may be, but with that reservation, I must confess to you that I am an adorer of ancient institutions and it hurts me to think that a people in their rush for everything modern despise all their ancient traditions and ignore them in their lives.

We of the East very often hastily consider that all that our ancestors laid down for us was nothing but a bundle of superstitions, but my own experience, extending now over a fairly long period of the inestimable treasures of the East has led me to the conclusion that, whilst there may be much that was superstitious, there is infinitely more which is not only not superstitious, but if we understand it correctly and reduce it to practice, gives life and ennobles one. Let us not therefore be blinded by the hypnotic dazzle of the West.

Again I wish to utter a word of caution against your believing that I am an indiscriminate despiser of everything that comes from the West. There are many things which I have myself assimilated from the West. There is a very great and effective Sanskrit word for that particular faculty which enables a man always to distinguish between what is desirable and what is undesirable, what is right and what is wrong—that word is known as *viveka*. Translated into English, the nearest approach is discrimination. I do hope that you will incorporate this word into Pali and Sinhalese.

There is one thing more which I would like to say in con nection with your syllabus. I had hoped that I should see some mention made of handicrafts, and if you are not seriously teaching the boys under your care some handicrafts, I would urge you, if it is not too late, to introduce the necessary handicrafts known to this island. Surely, all the boys who go out from this institution will not expect or will not desire to be clerks or employees of the Government. If they

would add to the national strength, they must learn with great skill all the indigenous crafts, and as cultural training and as the symbol of identification with the poorest among the poor, I know nothing so ennobling as hand-spinning. Simple as it is, it is easily learnt. When you combine with hand-spinning the idea that you are learning it not for your own individual self, but for the poorest among the nation, it becomes an ennobling sacrament. There must be added to this sacrament some occupation, some handicraft which a boy may consider will enable him to earn his living in after life.

You have rightly found place for religious instruction. I have experimented with quite a number of boys in order to understand how best to impart religious instruction and whilst I found that book instruction was somewhat of an aid, by itself it was useless. Religious instruction, I discovered, was imparted by teachers living the religion themselves. I have found that boys imbibe more from the teachers' own lives than they do from the books that they read to them, or the lectures that they deliver to them with their lips. I have discovered to my great joy that boys and girls have unconsciously a faculty of penetration whereby they read the thoughts of their teachers. Woe to the teacher who teaches one thing with his lips, and carries another in his breast.

Now, just one or two sentences to boys only and I have done. As father of, you might say, many boys and girls, you might almost say of thousands of boys and girls, I want to tell you, boys, that after all you hold your destiny in your own hands. I do not care what you learn or what you do not learn in your school, if you will observe two conditions. One condition is that you must be fearlessly truthful against the heaviest odds under every circumstance imaginable. A truthful boy, a brave boy will never think of hurting even a fly. He will defend all the weak boys in his own school and help, whether inside or outside the school, all those who need his help. A boy who does not observe personal purity of mind and body and action is a boy who should be driven out of any school. A chivalrous boy would always keep his mind pure, his eyes straight and his hands unpolluted. You do not need to go to any school to learn these fundamental maxims of life, and if you will have this triple character with you, you will build on a solid foundation.

May then true ahimsa and purity be your shield for ever in your life. May God help you to realize all your noble ambition. I thank you once more for inviting me to take part in this function.

With Gandhiji in Ceylon, pp. 105-9

287. SPEECH AT GIRLS' WEAVING INSTITUTE, AKMIMANA

November 24, 1927

[Gandhiji] said he was extremely gratified with having been presented with the address and the purse and he regarded it as an honour that he had been asked to lay the foundation-stone of the Akmimana Girls' Weaving Institute. He hoped the Institute would prosper. They might not all know that he, while in the course of acquainting himself with several useful matters, was also a weaver. In the course of learning spinning and weaving he discovered that any country that went in for weaving must also take up spinning. By this he meant that the weaving industry in terms of a country's self-reliance and self-dependence also included spinning and it would surprise them to hear that in the history of the great weaving industry in Lancashire itself weaving was preceded by spinning. He had not the time to dilate further on the subject but this much he would say that they in Ceylon required some kind of spinning and weaving as the motherland in India needed, if they aimed at making Ceylon a self-reliant and self-contained country.

The Mahatma also referred to the reference made in the address to the restoration of Buddha Gaya to Buddhists. He said that if someone who had the power gave him full authority and placed a pen in his hand the Buddhists would have Buddha Gaya restored to them that very minute. Unfortunately he had not the power to act as he would in the matter but he would assure them, he would try his best, his very best, to secure the restoration of Buddha Gaya to Buddhists as their very own concern, but above everything else they must not lose heart or relinquish hope. It was up to them to prosecute their quest since it was a well-accepted legal maxim that those who slept over obtaining their rights would never get them.

The speaker went on to say, referring to the subject of village life, that unless they banished drink their villages would be ruined. He was delighted to hear that morning that they had no taverns anywhere near those parts to disfigure their fair country. He would congratulate them on that achievement. He would entreat the number of Buddhist priests assembled in the hall to make every endeavour to put the people on the path of total abstinence. However, they should never be content with being just parochial. They should spread their activity further afield with a view to removing permanently and absolutely the curse of drink in order to save the lives of the population and leave the country unpolluted with drink.

Finally, he said the Buddha preached he doctrine of equality among persons. One's neighbour was as good as oneself. They would be unworthy devotees to their faith if they did not set about then and there to abolish caste distinctions.

The Ceylon Daily News, 3-12-1927

288. SPEECH AT MATARA

November 24, 1927

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I am deeply obliged to you for all the addresses you have been good enough to present to me and the various purses. Chauffeurs, barbers and other friends have given their purses here on this platform. I deeply appreciate these purses from poor people. That shows that they had not forgotten those that were much poorer than themselves; but there was one purse that had not been announced and that is the cheque from your representative Mr. Obeysekere for Rs. 500. There are two opinions about that cheque; one is mine and that is that he has concealed his gift because of his modesty. But there is another opinion weightier than mine, perhaps because it is based upon experience, and that is Mr. Obeysekere has been too stingy and he did not want this Rs. 500 to be announced to be compared with the chauffeurs' purse[1], but I being a beggar and also a trustee cannot possibly judge between Mr. Obeysekere and his own generosity or tinginess. That judgement I may leave to you as his constituency to whom he might have misrepresented or represented properly as the case may be. You will, however, all accept, my sincere thanks for these gifts you have given me on behalf of the famishing millions of India. I can only give you my assurance that every rupee thrown into the purse is much more fruitful than the rupee lying in your pockets, for one rupee in my hands means 16 meals for 16 poor women spinners in India, who but for that rupee might have gone without that meal.

As he was piloting me to his beautiful place Mr. Obeysekere informed me that attempts were being made at Matara in order to induce hand-weaving. I congratulate you on that step and nothing will please me better than to learn within a few months that you at least in this land are able to clothe yourselves out of the cloth woven with your own hands. But may I also ask you that whilst you are making preparations to clothe yourselves with cloth woven and spun in your own places, you will follow up your gifts by investing in khaddar whenever you have cause to buy cloth in future. Let me also point out to you that if you propose to become self-contained with reference to your clothing requirements, a foundation has to be made in hand-spinning.

Mahatmaji then went on to refer to the work of municipal and urban councils

[1] The Chauffeurs' Union had given a purse of Rs. 100.

and earnestly pleaded that the vices of drink and caste should have no place in a Buddhist country.

The Ceylon Daily News, 30-11-1927

289. SPEECH TO LAW STUDENTS, COLOMBO

[*November 25, 1927*][1]

I am glad you have put this question[2]. For, I may say that if I cannot speak on this subject with authority, no one else can. For throughout my career at the bar I never once departed from the strictest truth and honesty.

Well, then, the first thing which you must always bear in mind, if you would spiritualize the practice of law, is not to make your profession subservient to the interests of your purse, as is unfortunately but too often the case at present, but to use your profession for the service of your country. there are instances of eminent lawyers in all countries who led a life of self-sacrifice, who devoted their brilliant legal talents entirely to the service of their country although it spelt almost pauperism for them. In India you have the instance of the late Mana Mohan Ghose. He took up the fight against the indigo planters and served his poor clients at the cost of his health, even at the risk of his life, without charging them a single pie for his labours. He was a most brilliant lawyer, yet he was a great philanthropist. That is an example that you should have before you. Or better still you can follow Ruskin's precept given in his book *Unto This Last*. 'Why should a lawyer charge fifteen pounds for his work,' he asks, 'whilst a carpenter for instance hardly gets as many shillings for his work?' The fees charged by lawyers are unconscionable everywhere. I confess, I myself have charged what I would now call high fees. But even whilst I was engaged in my practice, let me tell you I never let my profession stand in the way of my public service.

And there is another thing which I would like to warn you against. In England, in South Africa, almost everywhere, I have found that in the practice of their profession lawyers are consciously or unconsciously led into untruth for the sake of their clients. An eminent English lawyer has gone so far as to say that it may even be the duty of a lawyer has gone so far as to say that it may even be the

[1] Gandhiji was in Colombo on this date.

[2] How to spiritualize the legal profession?

duty of a lawyer to defend a client whom he knows to be guilty. There I disagree. The duty of a lawyer is always to place before the judges, and to help them to arrive at, the truth, never to prove the guilty as innocent. It is up to you to maintain the dignity of your profession. If you fail in your duty what shall become of the other professions? You, young men, claiming as you have just done to be the fathers of tomorrow, should be the salt of the nation. If the salt loses its savour wherewith shall it be salted?

With Gandhiji in Ceylon, pp. 35-7

290. SPEECH AT YOUNG MEN'S BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION, COLOMBO

November 25, 1927

At the outset Gandhiji pleaded for toleration. He did not claim to be a scholar in any sense of the term. His first introduction to any religious study was through a single book, viz, Sir Edwin Arnold's *The Light of Asia*, which fascinated and engrossed him. Ever since, the spirit of Buddha had haunted him, so much so that he had been accused of being a Buddhist in disguise. And as he had said on a previous occasion he accepted the accusation as a compliment though he knew that if he made any such claim it would be summarily rejected by orthodox Buddhists. As one, however, who had imbibed the spirit of Buddhism, he would reassert in all humility, but unhesitatingly, if in a different language, what he said on the previous occasion:

There are some conditions laid down in Hinduism for a proper prayerful study of religions. They are of a universal character. Remember also that Gautama was a Hindu of Hindus. He was saturated with the spirit of Hinduism, with the Vedic spirit, he was born and bred up in those exhilarating surroundings, exhilarating for the spirit, and so far as I am aware, he never rejected Hinduism, or the message of the Vedas. What he did was therefore to introduce a living reformation in the petrified faith that surrounded him. I venture to suggest to you that *your study of Buddhism will be incomplete unless you study the original sources from which the Master derived his inspiration*, that is, unless you study Sanskrit and the Sanskrit scriptures. But your duty, if you are to understand the spirit of the Buddha and not the letter of Buddhism, does not end there. That study has those conditions which I am about to describe to you. Those conditions are that a man or a woman who approaches a study of religion has first of all to observe what are called the five *yamas*. They

are the five rules of self-restraint and I will repeat them before you. First, *brahmacharya*, celibacy; the second is *satya*, truth; the third is ahimsa, absolute innocence, not even hurting a fly; the next condition is *asteya*, non-stealing, not merely not stealing in the ordinary sense in which the word is understood, but if you appropriate or even cast your greedy eyes on anything that is not your own, it becomes stealing. Lastly, *aparigraha*—a man, who wants to possess worldly riches or other things, won't be fit really to understand the spirit of the Buddha. These are the indispensable conditions. There are other conditions, but I am going into these because these are the fundamental ones, and Gautama before he attained his knowledge had conformed to all these rules, and conformed, as few of his contemporaries had ever done, to the spirit of those rules. I humbly suggest to you that you will not understand the spirit of the Buddha unless you have also yourselves conformed to these rules and then prayerfully tried to ascertain what the Master meant. It makes no difference that you know of him through all the books that have been written, but even these very books, I make bold to assure you, you will understand and you will interpret with a new light, immediately you have gone, first of all, through these preliminary observances. Look what many critics of Islam have done—how they have torn the very book, that millions of Mussalmans swear by, to pieces and held up the teachings of Islam to scorn. They were not dishonest men who wrote this criticism, they were honest men, they were not men who were not trying to search the truth, but they did not know the conditions that they had to fulfil before they could make any religious study. Again look at what the critics of Hinduism have done. I read many of those criticisms, trying to enter into the spirit of the critics but came to the conclusion that they did not know the A B C of Hinduism and that they were grossly misinterpreting Hinduism. Take Christianity itself. Many Hindus have misinterpreted Christianity. They approach the Bible, the Old Testament and the New Testament in a carping spirit, with preconceived notions. But why talk of the Hindus? Have I not read books written by Englishmen who, pretending to consider themselves atheists, have turned the Bible upside down, and put all the fiery writings into the hands of innocent men and women and thereby done grave injury to the simple people who read them? I have laid these points before the young men of this association because I am anxious that *you should be the pioneers of presenting Ceylon, and through Ceylon the world, with a real Buddhistic revival, that you should be*

the pioneers in presenting a living faith to the world, and not the dead bones of a traditional faith which the world will not grasp.

The priests, whom I had seen by deputy, said they could not argue but that they could only say what the Master taught. It is all right, but today the spirit of enquiry is abroad. We have got to deal with that spirit. The world is trying to seek the truth, and thirsting for peace in the midst of this terrible strife. There is also the desire for knowing the truth, but as I have ventured to suggest to you, those, who made a scientific study of religion and those who gave their lives for arriving at the truth and those with whose bones the snows of the Himalayas are whitened, have left these treasures not merely for 300 millions of India, but they have left those treasures for everyone who cares to understand them, and they have said : 'We cannot deliver the truth to you.' It is incapable of being delivered through writings, it is incapable of being delivered with the lips, it is capable of being delivered only through life. It transcends reason. But it is not past experience. So they said : 'We tell you that such and such is the fact, but you will have to test it for yourselves. You will apply your reason, we do not want you to deaden your reason, but you yourselves, even as we, will come to the conclusion that reason which God has given is after all a limited thing, and that which is a limited thing will not be able to reach the limitless. Therefore, go through these preliminary conditions, even as when you want to study geometry or algebra, you have to go through preliminary processes, however trying and tiresome. Observe them and then you will find that what we tell you with our own experience will be also yours.'

I want to take you through only one illustration as to how the teaching of the Buddha is now not being observed. I have retained this part of my talk up to almost the very last moment except that I hinted at it in my speech at the Vidyodaya College.

You believe that Gautama taught the world to treat even the lowest creatures as equal to oneself. He held the life of even the crawling things of the earth as precious as his own. It is an arrogant assumption to say that human beings are lords and masters of the lower creation. On the contrary, being endowed with greater things in life, they are trustees of the lower animal kingdom. And the great sage lived that truth in his own life. I read as a mere youngster the passage in *The Light of Asia* describing how the Master took the lamb on his shoulders in face of the arrogant and ignorant Brahmins who thought

that by offering the blood of these innocent lambs they were pleasing God and he dared them to sacrifice a single one of them. His very presence softened the stony hearts of the Brahmins. They looked up to the Master, they threw away their deadly knives and every one of those animals was saved. Was this message given to the world in order to falsify it, as it is being falsified here? I feel that you who are the repositories of this great faith are not true to the spirit of the Master's teachings so long as you do not regard all animal creation as sacred, and you cannot do so, so long as you do not abstain from meat and delude yourselves into the belief that you are not guilty of the crime of that slaughter because someone else killed the animals for you. You entrench yourselves behind the wall of traditions. You say that the Master never prohibited meat-eating. I do not think so. If you would approach the teachings of the Master in the spirit indicated by me, and rub in the spirit of tradition, you will have a different vision and a different meaning. You will find that when the Master said, 'I do not prohibit you from meat eating', he was preaching to a people who were, in Christian parlance, hard of hearts. It was because he wanted to make allowance for their weakness that he allowed them to eat it, and not because he did not know the logic of his own teaching. If animals could not be sacrificed to the gods above, how could they be sacrificed to the epicure in us? When he prohibited sacrifice he knew what he was saying. Did he not know that the animals were sacrificed to be ultimately eaten? Why do they sacrifice thousands of sheep and goats to the Goddess Kali in Calcutta—be it said to their discredit and the discredit of Hinduism—in spite of having received this message from the Hindu of Hindus—Gautama? Do they throw the carcases away in the Hooghly? No, they eat every bit of the meat with the greatest delight, thinking that it has been sanctified because of the presentation to Kali. So the Buddha said, if you want to do any sacrifice, sacrifice yourself, your lust, all your material ambition, all worldly ambition. That will be an ennobling sacrifice. May the spirit of the Buddha brood over this meeting and enable you to measure and assimilate the meaning of the words that I have spoken to you.

Young India, 8-12-1927

291. SPEECH TO CEYLON INDIAN ASSOCIATION, COLOMBO[1]

November 25, 1927

I know you have here several political problems arising. The one maxim of conduct that I think should guide the life of those who come from another country to stay in the midst of a people of another country, as we do, is that we must throw in our lot entirely with the people of the country of our adoption. Their welfare must be our primary concern. Our own must be subordinate to theirs. That seems to be the only line consistent with dignity, and it follows along the lines of the great teaching that we should do unto others as we wish that they should do unto us. Thinking along these lines, as you know, I have repeatedly suggested to Englishmen in India that they should subordinate their own interests to the interests of the teeming millions of the country in which they are living, and nobody has questioned the propriety of that statement. There cannot be one law to govern the relations between ourselves and foreigners who come to our land and another law governing us when we go to another foreign land. And though I consider that Ceylon is not a foreign land and though it has given me the greatest pleasure to hear from the lips of the Sinhalese that they own India as their mother country, it is much better, when we wish to regulate our relations with them, that we regard them as foreigners. The safest rule of conduct is to claim kinship when we want to do some service and not to insist upon kinship when it is a matter of asserting a right. Indeed, I have applied this rule of life, which I call the golden rule of conduct, between communities and communities even in provincial inter-relations in India. For instance, whenever I have gone to Bengal or to Madras or to any other province but Gujarat, and wherever I have seen Gujarati settlements, I have not hesitated to submit to the Gujaratis that they must consider the welfare of the people of the province to which they go superior to their own. I know of no other method of preserving sweet relations in human affairs and I am fortified by my experience extending for a long period of years that wherever there has been an interruption in the observance of this golden rule which I have submitted to you, there have been bickerings and quarrels and even the breaking of heads. I

[1] The speech was translated into Tamil by C. Rajagopalachari.

have no doubt whatever that if you, my dear countrymen, will govern your conduct in accordance with the rule that I have submitted to you, you will cover yourselves with honour and glory and your conduct will redound to the credit of the whole of India whose deliverance we are seeking with all our might.

The Ceylon Daily News, 26-11-1927

292. SPEECH AT REDDIAR SANGAM, COLOMBO

November 25, 1927

I thank you for all these numerous addresses and equally numerous purses.

I see that as the time for my leaving Ceylon is drawing near, your hearts are extending and with your hearts, the frames of your addresses are also expanding. But you the Reddiar friends and others who really should have known me better might also have understood that if you gave me big framed addresses, you would also have to find me a place in which to keep these addresses in my Ashram at Sabarmati. If you, out of your generosity, offer to give me a few thousand rupees earmarked for the purpose of building such a house in which all your great and big addresses might be accommodated, I would have been obliged to say to you—if you have so much money to spare in order to enable me to build a house for these things—'Give me all this money and it will provide more food for the poor starving sisters in this world.' You should also have known that for years past I have declined to accept any costly gifts for my own personal use. As you at least should be aware, I have not hesitated at the very meetings where these addresses have been presented to sell them at auction without laying myself open to the charge of discourtesy. But in this beautiful island where I might be mistaken for a stranger I have out of delicate consideration for the feelings of the Sinhalese refrained from offering their addresses for auction. But here I know that you cannot possibly misunderstand me. Therefore I propose with your permission, which I anticipate, to convert them into money which will swell the amount of your purses and will go to feed so many hungry mouths. I regard your addresses really as a temptation for me to do this thing, and therefore I shall not take up more of your time or my time by making any elaborate speech.

I would leave one or who thoughts with you before I leave Colombo. Since you are earning your bread in this beautiful island, I

would ask you to live as sugar lives in milk. Even a cup of milk which is full up to the brim does not overflow when sugar is gently added to it; the sugar accommodating itself in the milk enriches its taste; in the same way I would like you to live in this island so as not to become interlopers and so as to enrich the life of the people in whose midst you may be living.

Take care that none of the vices we have in India are brought with you in this land in order to poison the life. Let us not bring with us to these shores the curse of untouchability. In the Kingdom of Great God there cannot be any superiority and inferiority. Let us make this world therefore the Kingdom of God instead of making it the kingdom of the devil, as sometimes it appears to become. Let our lives be absolutely pure, our eyes straight, our hands unpolluted and since you have so generously given me all these gifts, may I not ask you to make all your cloth purchases in khadi.

Friends, I would beseech you to join the great struggle against the curse of drink that is going on in this island. Not only will you refrain from drinking yourselves, but help the movement, and the communities themselves, to deliver them and establish complete prohibition in this land.

I thank you once more for all the kindness that you have showered on me which I shall never forget.

With Gandhiji in Ceylon, pp. 115-6

293. SPEECH AT FAREWELL MEETING, COLOMBO

November 25, 1927

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I thank you for the words that you have spoken about me and your good wishes on your own behalf and on behalf of the citizens of Colombo. I thank you also for this generous purse. Good as the purse is, as it is announced here, I know and you ought to know that it is not the only purse that the citizens of Colombo have gladly given to me. Throughout my stay in Colombo, little by little, various associations and individuals have not only given me in public but have also been coming to my residence and giving me their own purses. I count all these handsome donations also as part of this purse.

In one way my visit to Ceylon draws to a close today though technically speaking I will be leaving your hospitable shores on the

evening of the 29th from Jaffna. Somehow or other I feel that I am going to a different place in going to Jaffna. I am carrying away with me very pleasant recollections of your extraordinarily beautiful climate and equally pleasant recollections of the people of Ceylon. I assure you that I am leaving Colombo not without a heavy heart and if I could at all have managed it, I would certainly have stayed here longer. But I have in front of me a tour in Orissa, one of the most, or rather the most, afflicted parts of India. It is now suffering from a visitation of very heavy floods. I dare not therefore postpone that visit.

From His Excellency the Governor down to the pettiest official, from the great merchant class and other capitalists down to the poorest labourer I have experienced nothing but the warmest kindness and you, Sir, have truly stated that all the people without distinction of caste, colour or creed have united in showering their affection unstintedly upon me and so far as the object of my mission was concerned you have certainly realized fully the expectations that were raised by you.

I assure you that it would not require much pressure to bring me out again to Ceylon and as you have put it, for a leisurely stay if God spares that time for me and spares me for the purpose. But whether I am able to return to this fair island again or not you may be sure that my spirit will be always with you and I shall be watching your careers with a great deal of personal interest.

When I decided to visit your country, I had imposed upon myself a strenuous limit that I would not express myself upon your political problems nor do I desire at the present moment to do so. But I know that an important Commission is just now enquiring into your political condition. So far as time has permitted it, I have been endeavouring to follow its proceedings and I may be permitted to hope that its proceedings and its findings may be so wise and so good as to be an unmixed blessing to this one of the fairest spots on the earth.

Without dwelling upon the political questions I may be also permitted to express the hope that even as you have united in offering this welcome to a humble individual like me, you will unite for realizing your political ambition, sink all your differences, think not in water-tight compartments as Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, Mussalmans and what not, but think as one people of this great land and realize the highest of your political ambition. Personally, I have

never been able to understand why a numerical minority should ever consider that it will not have its claim properly examined and given to it, if it is not separately represented. It has always seemed to me that an attitude of that character betrays want of national consciousness.

I have this morning in addressing my own countrymen given expression to the view which I wish to repeat again that it is the duty of those who have made Ceylon the land of their adoption and where they make more than their livelihood, to subordinate their own interest to the general interest of the indigenous population, the Sinhalese. But I know that I must not go deeper into this subject.

I would like now to devote a sentence or two to the subject of which I have been ceaselessly speaking at all meetings, viz., the question of caste in connection with its concentrated evil, untouchability.

Everybody with whom I have discussed this subject has assured me that there is no warrant whatsoever for caste distinctions, let alone untouchability, in Buddhism, and yet, strange as it may appear, even among the Buddhists of this country you have water-tight compartments, you have superiority and inferiority even bordering on untouchability as in the case of the Rodiyas who, I was glad to be told this morning, were now no more than 600. I know that, if India may take pride in having sent you Mahinda and the message of Buddha to this land, it has also to accept the humiliation of having sent you the curse of caste distinctions. How I wish you could take more and more of the spirit of the Buddha if it is still to be found in India, and do away with the curse that you have inherited from that great land.

Nor is there the slightest warrant so far as I have been able to study Buddhism and conferred with the leaders of public opinion here, for the drink evil in your midst. It has delighted me to find that you have the right of local option in your midst and that you are taking advantage of that right, but I know from painful experience that this blighting curse is not one to be trifled with nor does it admit of any patience. I would therefore respectfully urge you to hasten the pace and rid this country of this great evil which is sapping the vitality as also the morality of at least the labouring population. I do hope that you are not going to make the mistake of giving favoured treatment to foreign liquors. I have known them to produce the same mischief that indigenous liquors do. So far as I have been able to observe conditions and discuss this question with many medical

friends with experience of temperance question, I have no doubt whatsoever that we who live in the temperate zone have no excuse for indulging in this intemperate habit.

I would now devote a sentence or two to the message of the spinning-wheel, in so far as it may be applicable to you. I know, and I am happy to know, that you in this land are strangers to the gnawing pauperism that we have in India and which starves millions of people from day to day. The spinning-wheel therefore has perhaps no economic importance for you but I have no doubt it has a great cultural value for this fair land. Its living message of simplicity is applicable to all lands and you will admit that if your boys and girls and even grown-up men and women devoted an hour every day to self-spinning and if you become self-reliant and self-contained regarding your clothing requirements, it would do not only no harm to you but would add dignity and self-confidence to this nation.

I have been watching not without considerable anxiety the craze for fashion which I see has seized your young men and women belonging to the higher classes. Little do they know how by becoming slaves to this hypnotic dazzle from the West they are isolating themselves from the poor of the country who can never aspire after such fashion. I cannot help thinking that it would be a great national catastrophe, a great tragedy, if you were to barter away your simplicity for this tinsel splendour.

But whether you appreciate this cultural side of the spinning-wheel or not, you have from many a platform voluntarily declared your allegiance to India by affectionately calling her the Mother-land. You have by your generous purses given tangible evidence of that allegiance. May I appeal to you to forge this link stronger and make it a living thing by finding in your wardrobe ample room for khaddar which will be produced as a result of your donations.

I have no power in me to make any the slightest return for the lavish kindness that you have showered upon me, but I have no doubt that the dumb and starving millions on whose behalf you have opened your purses will certainly bless you for the help that you have rendered to them, and as a self-appointed humble representative of those millions I can pray to the Almighty that He may bless you and endow you, the people of this fair island, with all the blessings that you may deserve. I also thank the volunteers and the members of the Reception Committee for all the kindnesses shown to me and my companions during our stay here.

With Gandhiji in Ceylon, pp. 117-21

294. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, JAFFNA

November 26, 1927

I am deeply obliged to you for all these addresses and various purses.

I appreciate the spirit with which you have refrained from insisting on reading all your addresses, but the Reception Committee had courteously and consideratiely provided me with copies of all the addresses in advance. I have carefully read all the addresses before coming to this meeting and one of them very correctly remarked that it was the young men of Jaffna who brought me to Ceylon.

In having come to Ceylon and having enjoyed the lavish hospitality of the Ceylonese, I am able to tell you that I have nothing but the pleasantest recollections of my visit to your fair island.

Having come to Jaffna, I do not feel that I am in Ceylon, but I feel that I am in a bit of India. Neither your faces nor your language are foreign to me. Though I cannot identify every one of you by your features I know that I have met many of you in India itself.

So I suppose, that was why you considered that you need not be satisfied with merely extending your lavish hospitality to me but that you might also exact some work from me. Whilst I was in the south and central parts of Ceylon, I was not overwhelmed with conundrums sent to me by correspondents, as I have been overwhelmed even in Colombo with correspondence from Jaffna presenting me with all kinds of conundrums.

I do not mention this to complain about it, but I mention this in order to tell you that I appreciate the motive that lies behind all this correspondence. It is, I know, a token of your confidence in my ability to assist you in arriving at a solution of some of your problems. It is also a demonstration of the friendship that I enjoy, because it is a special privilege of a friend, not merely to extend his hospitality, but to take his friend into his confidence.

You will, I know, forgive me if I do not straightway present you with a solution of the questions that have been propounded by the correspondents in their letters, but bearing in mind all that correspondence, I propose to imbibe from the atmosphere around me during the four days I am in your midst as much as I can of the inwardness of the many questions that have been presented to me. If I did otherwise, I feel sure that I should be unjust to you and unjust to

myself for having arrived at hasty decisions on questions on which I am not sufficiently enlightened.

I congratulate you upon your village communities. I have gone through the paper that was very kindly prepared for my edification on the progress and working of the several village organizations in your midst. I agree with the writers of that note that the successful working of these village organizations is undoubtedly a key to the attainment of final swaraj. Let me tell you from my own experience that a successful village organization does not depend upon good legislation, but it depends upon good men to work it. There will have to be a number of young men and even old men taking a deep and personal interest in their villages just as much as they do in their own families. After all, the truest test of nationalism consists in a person thinking not only of half a dozen men of his own family or of a hundred men of his own clan, but considering as his very own the interest of that group which he calls his nation.

From the book that was sent to me whilst I was in Colombo and the literature that I have since received, I have learnt enough of your activities to know that you have got all the material that will go to make for very successful village organization. You are a small well-built organization, containing people speaking the same language and possessing apparently very well-managed educational institutions. Apparently, you have not yet lost a love for all that was noble and good in ancient civilization. You have not yet evidently become giddy with the onrush of splendour from the West. It is therefore quite easy for you to become the architects of your own fortune.

It has given me the greatest joy to discover that you are nearly on the point of becoming perfectly dry. Your closing of the pestilential taverns and liquor dens is a great step in the right direction. You deserve the heartiest congratulations of not only the people of this place, not only the people of Ceylon, but of the motherland. It gives me additional joy to have your promise that you are determined to see that in the very near future you will have attained total prohibition, but I have discovered that you have internal difficulties in your way.

A correspondent has sent me a communication enclosing a pamphlet which is evidently designed to counteract the activities of those who are working for total prohibition. That pamphlet, I must confess, is ably written and, on the face of it, seems to claim to my painful surprise the support of some religious divines. In his eagerness

to be witty and smart, the author of the pamphlet has not, I am sorry to say, hesitated to wound the susceptibilities of those whose mission he has set about opposing. He does not hesitate to laugh at the very artistic plantain leaf on which rice and curds are beautifully and simply served, nor does he hesitate to laugh at the simple life of those who are satisfied with a mere dhoti to cover themselves and call them half nude. In spite of my attempt to be fair and just to him, I have not been able to discover the slightest connection between the serious subject of prohibition and his light-hearted laugh at the simplicity of his own countrymen, if the author of the pamphlet is an Indian.

But whether you have difficulties internal or external I hope that you will persist in your effort to secure total prohibition.

As I always believe in giving the critics their due and in learning from them what is worth learning, I would like to make two suggestions which have been derived from this pamphlet. The first thing is to avoid the slightest shadow of compulsion or untruth. No reform worth the name has yet been achieved by compulsion, for whilst compulsion may lead to seeming success, it gives rise to so many other evils which are worse than the original evil itself. But I must not be misunderstood. I do not regard legislation declaring total prohibition as in any shape or form compulsion. When there is honestly and clearly expressed public opinion in favour of total prohibition, it is not only the right of the people but it is the sacred duty of the people to declare total prohibition by legislation and take all effective steps to enforce that legislation.

Of instances of untruth cited by the author of this pamphlet are examples, as he suggests, of people taking part in prohibition meetings, themselves being given to the drink habit. If there are any such hypocritical people who are working this prohibition campaign, I have no doubt that the movement is doomed to fail. In a cause so eminently just, noble and humane I hope that you will take special precautions to rid yourselves of hypocrites.

The second suggestion which I shall place before you is that having obtained legislation you may not, you dare not sit still.

The writer of that pamphlet insinuates that prohibition in America has been a failure. I happen to know better from Americans themselves. Difficult, almost impossible, as prohibition for a big country like America may appear to us, it is not a failure, but it is gradually succeeding. Compared to the difficulties that the brave

reformers in America have to face, you have absolutely no difficulty to face in this land, but I would like you to take a leaf out of the book of those great reformers. They are not only not sleeping over the legislation which they have obtained after an incessant struggle stretching over a long period, but they are doing great, gigantic constructive work. For, when the drink evil takes possession of a man, it is the most difficult thing to wean him. Americans are therefore devising all kinds of means to deal with this class of people.

With the drunkard, the drink craze is a disease, and you will have to take him in hand, as you will an ailing brother or sister of yours who may be diseased. In the place of taverns you will have to give them refreshment rooms, and all kinds of innocent recreations in order to keep the drunkards busy at something in which they may be interested. If you, who have got all the facilities for achieving this reform, are entirely successful, you will set a noble example to all India.

Lastly, you will not be impatient or angry with the opponent who may be working against you. I do not know whether the same condition prevails in Jaffna as it prevails in India and other parts of the world, but I do know that in India, in England, in America, the anti-prohibitionists have not only on their side able unprincipled writers to help them but they have also brewers' money.

But if you will follow the prescription that I have ventured to place before our own country which you call the mother country, viz., of truth and non-violence, you will disarm all these clever writers in spite of the money at their back.

Now, I come to the depressed or rather the suppressed classes. I was delighted to receive two addresses from them. I must confess to you that I was not prepared to find this evil existing in your midst to any extent at all. I had thought that you left this evil in the mother country and that in this island you had turned over a new leaf. Living in a country over which the spirit of the Buddha is brooding, I had felt you would be free from this taint of untouchability. After all Gautama was a Hindu. He was no more than one of the greatest among Hindu reformers. Let no Hindu then be ashamed of learning from him the secret of human love. Let us realize that it is a sin to consider a single human being as inferior to ourselves or untouchable. If you believe in an all-wise and all-loving God, as you must believe, you will immediately fling the doors of your temples open to receive the

suppressed brethren.

To the suppressed brethren I would like to say one thing. I do not know how you stand over the drink question. I know that many of the suppressed brethren in India are given to the drink habit. If there are any amongst you who are given to it I hope you will give it up and if there are any who are given to eating carrion or beef, they would in order to be true to the Hindu faith give these up.

I have copious correspondence before me about a little storm in a tea cup, as I call the differences that have arisen between Christians and Hindus. This correspondence has given me a painful shock. I have not yet been able to understand the cause of these differences. I therefore do not propose to say much upon them. I would like to be told before I leave Jaffna that you have yourselves settled all your differences. Surely, you are after all numerically a small enough community to be able to handle these little differences in a satisfactory manner. So far as I have been able to understand from the correspondence, there is really very little reason even for a split between the two, but I shal hope to have to say more on a future occasion on this point. I can only here say that I invite everybody who is interested in this question to write to me freely, briefly and intelligently. It will give me very great pleasure and joy to be of any service to you in this matter.

Lastly, since you have been so generous in giving me your purses, and I know that many more purses are still to come, I beseech you to continue your love for the motherland and your sympathy for the starving millions of India by finding a place in your wardrobe for khadi. It will be a living bond between yourselves and the famishing millions. I know that our women are the greatest offenders in this respect, and I individually appeal to them to moderate their taste for fine and silken saris and be satisfied with what their famishing sisters can produce for them. Then and then only will they be somewhat representative of Sita whose sacred feet hallowed this land as the legend has it. I give them my assurance that they will not look any the less handsome, because of their khadi sari. I would like to give them a warning too that I expect a lot of jewellery from them before I have left these shores.

I must not forget one thing. You have overloaded me with heavy things. I thought that you who claim close kinship and intimacy with me knew that if you gave me heavily framed addresses, they would be returned to you and you would be made to pay for them. You have

not only spent upon heavy frames, but you have had your addresses illuminated. Unless you had all these things done with a mental reservation that you will be called upon to pay high price for these addresses, you have deprived the famishing sisters of so many rupees.

With Gandhiji in Ceylon, pp. 121-8

295. SPEECH TO STUDENTS' CONGRESS, JAFFNA

November 26, 1927

I thank you for the beautiful address that you have presented to me this evening. You have taken upon yourselves, and very rightly, the credit of bringing me to this fair island, but you must remember also that those who take credit for anything have also to take discredit if any mishap occurs.

It is very difficult for me this evening to give you a message for the simple reason that I do not know your Congress sufficiently, nor do I know sufficiently the composition of my audience but your worthy Chairman has informed me of the objects of your Congress. I shall try to give you some thoughts that occur to me on some of those objects.

If I understand him rightly, your first object is to revive ancient culture. You have then to understand what that ancient culture is and it must be necessarily culture which all students, whether they are Hindus, Christians, Buddhists or to whatever faith they belong, would be interested in reviving, because I take it that by ancient culture you do not want to confine yourselves purely to Hindu students. I take it that this Students' Congress includes all students, Hindus, Christians, Muslims and Buddhists. Though today it has on its rolls no Muslim student or Buddhist student, it does not much matter for my argument for the simple reason that your ultimate object is attainment of swaraj, not merely for the Hindus and Christians of Jaffna, but for all the inhabitants of this island of which Jaffna is but a part. What I have said with reference to the inclusion of students belonging to these religions must hold good. That being so, we hark back to the question, what ancient culture it is we want to revive. It must, therefore, be such as to be common to all these elements and such as to be acceptable to all these elements. Therefore, whilst that culture will undoubtedly be predominantly Hindu culture, it can never be exclusively Hindu. The reason why I say that it must be predominantly Hindu is because you who are seeking to revive ancient culture are predominantly Hindu,

and are all the while thinking of that country which you rightly and proudly delight to call your motherland.

In Hindu culture, I venture to submit, Buddhistic culture is necessarily included for the simple reason that Buddha himself was an Indian, not only an Indian, but a Hindu amongst Hindus. I have never seen anything in the life of Gautama to warrant the belief that he renounced Hinduism and adopted a new faith. My task becomes easy when I consider also that Jesus himself was an Asiatic, and therefore it becomes a question really to consider what Asiatic or ancient Asiatic culture is. For that matter then, Mohammed was also an Asiatic. Since you can only wish to revive all that is noble, all that is permanent in ancient culture or revival, you cannot revive anything antagonistic to any of these faiths. The question then amounts to this, to find out the common factor, the greatest common measure, belonging to all these great faiths, and thus you will come, according to my own estimate of things noble, to this very simple factor, viz., that you want to be truthful and non-violent, for truth and non-violence are common to all these great faiths. You cannot possibly seek to revive many of the customs that you and I might have even forgotten, that may have at one time formed part of Hinduism. I recall one great thought that the late Justice Ranade expressed when he was speaking of ancient culture. He told his audience that it would be difficult for any single person in the audience to say exactly what ancient culture was and when that culture ceased to be ancient and began to be modern. He also said that a prudent man would not swear by anything because it was ancient, but he told the audience that any culture ancient or modern, must be submitted to the test of reason and experience. I am obliged to utter this warning to this Congress of students who are to be makers of the destinies of this land because of so many reactionary forces gathering round us not only here, but throughout the world. I see from my own experience in India that many who are professing to revive ancient culture do not hesitate under the name of that revival to revive old superstitions and prejudices.

After apologizing for his low voice and the necessity for reproducing or translating his speech, Mahatmaji continued :

I was describing to you from my own experience some of the reactionary forces that had been set in motion in the motherland itself. Ancient tradition and ancient laws have been dragged almost out of the tomb to justify the hideous doctrine of untouchability. A similar

attempt, some of you may know, is now being made to justify the institution of *Devadasis*.

You will not, therefore, consider that I have given you an elaborate statement in warning you against being misled into wrongdoing under the name of revival of ancient culture. Perhaps, you will understand the significance of this warning coming as it does from a man who is himself not only a lover of ancient culture but has been endeavouring in his own life, to the best of his ability, to reproduce all that is noble, that is permanent in ancient culture. In trying to explore the hidden treasures of ancient culture, I have come upon this inestimable boon that all that is permanent in ancient Hindu culture is also to be found in the teachings of Jesus, Buddha, Mohammed and Zoroaster. So I have come to this workable arrangement for myself—if I find anything in Hinduism wherein the ancients agreed that is repugnant to my Christian brother or my Mussalman brother, I immediately begin to fidget and doubt the ancientness of that claim. So I came by a process of examination to this irresistible conclusion that there was nothing so very ancient in this world as these two good old things—truth and non-violence—and arguing along these lines of truth and non-violence, I also discovered that I must not attempt to revive ancient practices if they were inconsistent with, call it if you will, modern life as it must be lived. Ancient practices may have been perfectly good and perhaps absolutely necessary at the time when those practices were adopted but they might be entirely out of date with modern needs and still not be contrary to truth or non-violence. Then you can see how safe the road becomes in front of you and me when we summarily and merci lessly reject untouchability, the *Devadasi* institution, drunkenness, sacri fice of animals in the very name of God whom we call Compassionate, All-merciful, Forgiving. We can unhesitatingly and summarily reject all these things, because they do not appeal to our moral sense. So much with reference to the negative side of it, but there is a positive side to it which is just as important as the negative.

In putting before you the positive side let me draw for you one very necessary corollary to the doctrine of non-violence. I put it before my very dear friends, the reformers, a very small body of staunch workers in Chettinad. The corollary or deduction is this. If we accept non-violence, we must then not wish for anything on this earth which the meanest or the lowest of human beings cannot have. If that is a sound proposition, and I claim that it is a direct corollary from the

doctrine of non-violence, if you accept it and then if it is a sound proposition it follows that we may not barter away our ancient simplicity for anything on this earth. Now, you will perhaps understand my determined opposition to the modern rush, the hypnotic dazzle that seems almost to overcome us and overtake us and that is coming to us with such violent force, and the West. I have taken great pains in my writings as also in my speeches to distinguish between the modern methods adopted in the West, the multiplicity of wants and material comforts, and the essential teaching of the Sermon on the Mount. So, in the opening sentences of my speech I threw out the hint of what was to come when I told you that after all Jesus was an Asiatic, Mohammed was an Asiatic, to draw that sharp distinction between the preaching and message of Jesus and what is today going on in America, in England and other parts of the world. I have been able to live at least with thousands upon thousands of my Christian friends in South Africa and now, because the circle is growing ever larger throughout the world, so you Hindus and a handful of Buddhists here, if there is even a handful of Buddhists, well, if you will be true to your ancient culture, refuse to have anything whatsoever to do with this hypnotic dazzle even though it may come to you in the so-called Christian garb. If you have an immovable faith in yourselves, if you will also cultivate it inexhaustibly, you will find that the Christian friends, even though they come to you with the Western dazzle behind them, will shed all that dazzle and be converted to the doctrine of simplicity which alone can satisfy the test of the corollary that I have ventured to draw before this audience.

If you have closely followed my reason, you will at once understand the message, the imperishable message of the spinning-wheel. It is because I see in the spinning-wheel the hand of God working; it is because I see in the spinning-wheel the satisfaction of the needs of the meanest of human beings, that in season and out of season I think about it, work at it, pray about it and speak about it. If there is any other thing which can bring you nearer to the famishing people of the earth, that could put you at once on the level of the scavenger, I withdraw the spinning-wheel and hug the other thing. You will perhaps also understand that I go about from door to door shamelessly and ceaselessly with the begging bowl and beg everyone to put something into it if they will do so with a willing heart. I have now overstayed my time. I must not exhaust your patience and I must now therefore leave you to dot the ‘i’s and cross the ‘t’s of this

speech. I have to talk to the student world several other things, because I have the honour to enjoy their confidence, but tonight I must not go any further with my remarks.

I thank you from the bottom of my heart for all that you have done and are doing and if you will act in accordance with the paper that some of you sent me, when I was in Colombo, you will certainly have done a brave thing. There was one thing in that paper which I would have liked to correct, but I must seek some other occasion to do so. I thank you for the patience with which you have listened to me.

The Hindu, 1-12-1927 and *With Gandhiji's in Ceylon*

296. LETTER TO HARJIVAN KOTAK

JAFFNA,
November 27, 1927

Who are the persons for whom *brahmacharya* has proved to be a hard vow? I hope you yourself have not taken fright. Wake up and be on your guard. The whole world may perish, but a vow once taken ought not to be given up. Your idea of undertaking a fast is a good one. Try and see what peace you get through it. I hope you do not think about Sharada. Fix your thoughts exclusively on khadi. You will not find any-where in the world a woman like khadi; countless men may be wedded to her and yet she always remains a virgin. And a man who takes her alone as wife will still be an inviolate *brahmachari*. If you cultivate single-minded devotion to her, how can you get time to think of other things?

Why should you dwell in your mind on things which are not for you in this life? When a few persons like you and me keep firm in their vows, it is only then that we and the world can be saved from this conflagration.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

297. A LETTER

November 27, 1927

None of us can say how M's desire for sex-pleasure may die out. I know of course that it is not your duty to bring that about. It is not the duty of husband or wife to see that the partner's passion dies

out. The result should come through the free will of both. The world goes on, since all of us are sunk in passion. It is everyone's duty to control it. While striving to do so, some persons of extraor dinary strength are fortunate enough to cross to the other shore.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

298. DISCUSSION WITH CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES, JAFFNA[1]

November 27, 1927

Rev. W. A. Kathirgamer asked what would be the religious future of India and the share that Christianity would take in it and what Gandhiji wished it to be.

Mahatmaji replied that the first question was beyond his capacity to answer. The second question he could. For years past his wish had been that all religions should flourish in India in their true light, because he did not consider any one religion to be exclusively true. That being his position and having a tolerant nature all through his life, he had no like or dislike. He endorsed the appeal made by the Dewan of Mysore to missionaries and Mussalmans who believed in conversion to make the untouchables better Hindus. He thought that if all men belonging to the different great faiths became better by contact with one another the world would be a much better place to live in. So long as there were different points of view they would have large classifications such as Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism and in all of these religions no two persons thought alike. If, however, they examined the religion of . . . the respective parties from their own standpoints all should agree quickly. He did not expect the India of his dream to develop one religion only, but expected it to be respectful to all faiths working side by side without exciting the slightest suspicion on jealousy which he noticed even in Jaffna.

Rev. J. Bicknell asked : "You have been working towards Hindu-Muslim unity in India. Is there any likelihood of unity among them?"

MAHATMAJI : O yes. Most decidedly.

REV. BICKNELL : The one is a cow-worshipper and the other is a cow-eater; the one is an idol-worshipper and the other is an idol-breaker?

Mahatma Gandhi admitted that there were differences on the surface and as he was a bit of a cook he knew what happened when he took dirty salt and a bit of dirty sugar. Put them in the melting pot and add a little water. All the dirt would come up to the surface; and if he were an unskilled cook he would come to the conclusion that it was all dirt and therefore in his impatience he would throw it away; but being fairly a

[1] At the Missionary Conference

skilled cook he knew that the dirt should be easily removed from the surface and that pure crystals of salt and sugar could be separated. So it was with Hindus and Mussalmans. Today they were fighting like dogs, he might say, but they were fighting only to come together and they were fighting really not because one was an idol-worshipper and the other an idol-breaker, because the one was cow-eater and the other was a cow-worshipper; but it was the mutual fear which was working upon them and mutual distrust which was always the first-born of fear. That was what was happening today and unfortunately both the communities were ill-advised and both had forgotten the fundamental precepts of their respective faiths. The Hindu had undoubtedly forgotten the principle of ahimsa, although he was never tired of saying "*ahimsa paramo dharmah*". The Mussalmans seemed to think that in Islam there was ample room for violence as there was for non-violence, but when he cross-questioned his Mussalman friends they had stated that non-violence was always the law, but if they could not be non-violent, then it was permissible to be violent. In any case therefore non-violence was really common between the two. It was not Islam and Hinduism that were fighting, but it was the hooligans belonging to each faith. So when the hooligans were exhausted they would settle down, or if that did not happen, as a man of faith which could not be easily assailed, he was convinced that the good Hindus and the good Mussalmans, who were in the background, were of intensely prayerful nature and that their prayers would be heard and the hooligans would ultimately be confounded.

Q. Your work in South Africa interested me immensely and I rejoiced in the work that you did in South Africa. Are you satisfied so far with the result in South Africa?

MAHATMAJI: I was going to say "very much", but perhaps that will be too much to say; but very fairly satisfied. At the present moment things are looking pretty. The Rt. Hon. Sastri is doing very great work indeed.

To a question as to how the New Testament and the *Bhagavad Gita* were sources of inspiration and comfort to him. Mahatmaji said that he had derived very great consolation and comfort from the New Testament—from the Sermon on the Mount, because that was exactly working in his mind. He studied the *Gita* later and he had not been able to see any difference between the Sermon on the Mount and the *Bhagavad Gita*. What the Sermon on the Mount had done in a graphic manner, the *Bhagavad Gita* had reduced to scientific formula. It was in one way a scientific book, in another way it was not a scientific book because there was no scientific treatment but the *Bhagavad Gita* had deduced the Law of Abandon, or as he would call it the Law of Exclusive Love, not in the sense of love for some and not for others, but exclusive of all hate which he found argued out in the *Bhagavad Gita*. He gave the history of how

he read the Old Testament and then with great joy read the New Testament and how he came to the *Bhagavad Gita* so that they could draw their own conclusions as to the source of his inspiration.

The Ceylon Daily News, 1-12-1927

299. SPEECH AT INDIANS' MEETING, JAFFNA

November 27, 1927

Ever since I have come to Lanka the conviction has been growing upon me that I am not in Lanka but in India glorified. A glorified edition of India Lanka certainly is from a scenic point of view. Though I was prepared for the scenery in Lanka, the scenery I have actually witnessed has surpassed all my expectations and so I could not help saying at a recent meeting that Ceylon seemed to be a fragrant, beautiful pearl dropped from the nasal ring of India. If the people of Lanka are really, as they should be, inheritors of this culture of India, they also should represent in their lives a glorious edition of mother India.

After all, was not Gautama Buddha one of the greatest of Hindu reformers? And why should not the people of Lanka who have inherited and adopted the teachings of the great Master do better than the children of the motherland? Alas! today the source from which the strength of Lanka was derived in the days of your seems almost to have dried up. We of India seem at the present moment to have fallen on evil days. We are ourselves struggling for our very existence, so much so that according to English historians at least one-tenth of the population of India is living in a state of perpetual starvation.

It is in order to remove the sting of this growing, grinding pauperism that I have been ceaselessly wandering from place to place, exciting the sympathy of moneyed people on behalf of these men and women who do not know what a full meal can be. And it has been a matter of the greatest consolation, indeed, a sense that sustains me in spite of darkness surrounding us on all sides, that wherever I go I receive a ready response from our countrymen.

It causes me, therefore, no surprise that you have brought me here to meet you and given me your tangible sympathy. But you do not need to be told by me that the sympathy that you have given me in the shape of money is by no means enough. I can only take it as a token of your desire to render still more help, and therefore I must repeat for the thousandth time what I have been saying to every

audience, that you will not have done your elementary duty by these famishing brothers and sisters of ours unless you follow up your donations by a fixed determination never more to make your cloth purchases in anything but khadi.

And the sisters who are also to be found in this hall must really help and respond to the dumb appeal of the famishing millions. Neither they nor the men may contemptuously tell me that khadi is too dear, that khadi is not fine enough, that it does not satisfy their taste. I have not yet heard a single mother to complain of the want of beauty of her children nor have I ever heard a mother complain that her children were a burden upon her purse. If you really feel for these famishing millions, if you really believe that they are famishing and that they are your own blood-brothers and blood-sisters, how can you complain of the price or quality of khadi? What right have you to think of fashion or of prices when you find that there are millions of people hungry for food and can be fed by you if only you will wear khadi which is manufactured by their sacred but shaking hands?

Will you not take a leaf out of the book of Englishmen and Germans who taxed themselves, suffered untold privations and suffered all kinds of difficulties, including death, under circumstances too terrible to relate, and all for what they believed to be the honour of their country? How much more then should you deprive yourselves of your manufactured tastes and notions about fashionable dress and pay a little higher price for khadi when it is not merely the honour of your sisters which is at stake but when it is their very existence which is in danger.

I wish therefore that it was possible for you to besiege Sjt. Rajagopalachari with your orders for khadi and even for fine embroidered saris if you must have fashionable saris. But I must pass on to another subject.

Whenever I have gone to countries outside India and even to the different provinces in India, I have advised the people from other parts who have settled in those regions to subordinate their interests to the interests of the land to which they have migrated. Whether you are Hindus or Massalmans or Parsis, no matter to which province you belong, I feel it to be your bounden duty to live amongst the people of the land where you go, not as thorns in their sides, but like sugar in milk. You must be in the midst of such people as trustees of your own culture, and you should make common cause with those people alike in their joys as well as their sorrows.

With Gandhiji in Ceylon, pp. 134-6

300. SPEECH TO CEYLON HINDUS, JAFFNA

November 27, 1927

This is the last of a series of many meetings, whose number even I cannot now remember, that I have been addressing today.[1] Precious as all of them have been, this to me is the most precious, because you have conceived a meeting of Hindus specially to be addressed by me. This I take to mean that I must speak to you Hindus as a Hindu. And it gives me the greatest pleasure to have been invited to do so. As you know, though my claim has not been accepted by those who call themselves orthodox Hindus I persist in calling myself an orthodox Hindu. But by making that claim I, a votary of Truth, must not mislead you in any way whatsoever. If orthodox Hinduism consists in dining or not dining with this man or that man, and touching this man and not touching that man, or in quarrelling with Mussalmans and Christians, then I am certainly not an orthodox Hindu. But if orthodox Hinduism can mean an incessant search after what Hinduism possibly can be, if orthodox Hinduism can mean an incessant striving to live Hinduism to the best of one's lights, then I do claim to be an orthodox Hindu. I am also an orthodox Hindu in the sense in which the author of the *Mahabharata*, the great Vyasa, would have it. He has said somewhere in the *Mahabharata* to this effect : Put Truth in one scale and all sacrifices whatever in the other; that scale which contains Truth will outweigh the one that contains all the sacrifices put together, not excluding *rajasuya*[2] and *ashvamedha yajna*[3]. And if the *Mahabharata* may be accepted as the fifth Veda, then I can claim to be an orthodox Hindu, because every moment of the twenty-four hours of my life I am endeavouring to follow truth counting no cost as too great.

Having thus registered my claim in the presence of this audience, I now wish to tell you as an orthodox Hindu what in my humble opinion your duty is in Jaffna, and in Ceylon. First of all I want to speak to you about your duty towards the predominant population in this island. And I wish to suggest to you that they are

[1] Gandhiji had addressed nine gatherings before this meeting.

[2] A great sacrifice performed by an emperor (in which the tributory princes also took part) at the time of his coronation as a mark of his undisputed sovereignty

[3] A sacrifice in which the wanderings of a sacrificial horse established the extent of the jurisdiction of a conquering king

your co-religionists. They will, if they choose to, repudiate the claim. For they will say that Buddhism is not Hinduism and they will be partly right. Many Hindus certainly repudiate the claim of Buddhism to be part and percel of Hinduism. On the contrary, they delight in saying that they successfully drove Buddhism out of India. But I tell you that they did nothing of the kind. Buddha himself was a Hindu. He endeavoured to reform Hinduism. And he succeeded in his attempt to a very great extent and what Hinduism did at that time was to assimilate and absorb all that was good and best in the teachings of the Buddha. And on that account I ventured to say that Hinduism became broadened, and having assimilated the best of Buddhism, it is true that Hinduism drove out from India what might be termed the excrescences that had gathered round the teachings of Gautama. And the way in which you can demonstrate this to the Buddhists of Ceylon is by living the broadened Hinduism in their midst. The one thing that the Buddha showed India was that God was not a God who can be appeased by sacrificing innocent animals. On the contrary, he held that those who sacrificed animals in the hope of pleasing God were guilty of a double sin. So if you will be true to Hinduism, you will take care that you will not defile a single temple of yours by indulging in animal sacrifice. I am prepared to declare against the whole of Hindu India that it is wrong, sinful and cirminal to sacrifice a single animal for the purpose of gaining any end whatsoever, or for the purpose of propitiating God.

The second thing that Gautama taught was that all that caste means today—as it meant in his time also—was wholly wrong. That is to say, he abolished every distinction of superiority and inferiority that was even in his time eating into the vitals of Hinduism. But he did not abolish varanashrama dharma. *Varna* dharma is not caste. As I have said in so many speeches in South India, and as I have written fairly exhaustively on *varna* dharma in *Young India*, I hold that there is nothing in common between caste and *varna*. Whilst *varna* gives life, caste kills it, and untouchability is the most hateful expression of caste. You will therefore banish untouchability from your midst. I make bold to say that there is no warrant whatsoever in Hinduism for untouchability as it is practised today. If therefore you want to live your Hinduism in its purity in the midst of Buddhist countrymen, you will take care that you will not consider a single human being as an untouchable. Unfortunately the Buddhists in Ceylon have themselves borrowed this curse from Hindus. They should never have had this

institution of caste in their midst. For heaven's sake forget that some are high but others are low; remember that you are all Hindus—brothers in arms.

I have a letter from a Jaffna Hindu telling me that there are some temples in this place where you have dances by women of ill fame on certain occasions. If that information is correct, then let me tell you that you are converting temples of God into dens of prostitution. A temple, to be a house of worship, to be a temple of God, has got to conform to certain well-defined limitations. A prostitute has as much right to go to a house of worship as a saint. But she exercises that right when she enters the temple to purify herself. But when the trustees of a temple admit a prostitute under cover of religion or under cover of embellishing the worship of God, then they convert a house of God into one of prostitution. And if anybody no matter how high he may be comes to you and seeks to justify the admission of women of ill fame into your temples for dancing or any such purpose, reject him and agree to the proposal that I have made to you. If you want to be good Hindus, if you want to worship God, and if you are wise, you will fling the doors of all your temples open to the so-called untouchables. God makes no distinction between His worshippers. He accepts the worship of these untouchables just as well and as much as that of the so-called touchables, provided it comes from the bottom of the heart.

There are still certain things that demand your attention. You have to live at the present moment in a world which has Christians and Mussalmans, great communities owning great faiths. In Jaffna you have a very small Mussalman population, hardly two or three per cent. The Christian population is ten per cent. But you have to live your life in the midst of these, whether they are two per cent or twenty per cent. And if I know Hinduism aright, Hinduism is nothing if it is not tolerant and generous to every other faith. And since they are also as much inhabitants of this peninsula and this island as you, it is your duty to regard them as your brothers. Unless you do so, you will never evolve the truly national spirit that is necessary, and therefore you will not evolve the necessary Hindu and the humanitarian spirit. You have a right to control the education of your own children, and I am glad that you have got your own board of education. I would like you to strengthen that board in the right spirit as much as you can, but that should mean no jar whatsoever with the rival institutions of the Christian missionaries. If you have got an ably-manned staff of

educationist and provide the necessary facilities for the Hindu children, naturally all the Hindu children will come to your institution. And I can see no reason whatsoever for mutual jealousies in the matter of education as I understand there is somewhat. I was delighted to find that only up to recent time, Hindus, Christians, and Mussalmans were living in absolute friendship. A jar has been created only recently as between the Christians and yourselves. And seeing that you are in a vast majority, it is up to you to make advances and settle all your disputes. And if you will get rid of the wretched caste spirit which has crept into Hinduism, you will find that all the difficulties will disappear.

And remember that since you are in a vast majority, the responsibility rests on your shoulders to make Jaffna, and through Jaffna Ceylon also perfectly dry. Hinduism does not permit you to drink. And if the board of education will do its duty, you will encourage Sanskrit study in your schools. I regard the education of any Hindu child as incomplete unless he has some knowlege of Sanskrit. And so far as I have been able to see we have in Hinduism no book so compact and so acceptable all round as the *Bhagavad Gita.* If you will, therefore, saturate your children and yourselves with the spirit of Hinduism, you will endeavour to understand the spirit of the teaching of the *Gita*. You should also cultivate a common knowledge of the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*.

Lastly, I know no solution of the many difficulties that face the whole of the human family except the two things that I am saying everywhere. Speak the truth and remain non-violent also at any cost. I know as certainly as I know that I am sitting in front of you and speaking to you, that if I could but persuade you to understand the spirit of these two and act up to them, every one of our difficulties will disappear like straws before wind, and God will descend from His Great White Throne and live in your midst and He will say, 'You Hindus have done well'.

Young India, 15-12-1927

301. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

JAFFNA,
[*November*] *28* [*1927*][1]

TO
MIRABAI
ASHRAM
SABARMATI

HAS DOCTOR OPENED WOUND? BERHAMPUR OR NEIGHBOURHOOD TILL SIXTH. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5295. Courtesy: Mirabehn

302. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

November 28, 1927

CHI. MIRA,

What could be so bad with your foot? But all these visitations are part of the suffering and discipline. I have replied to your two wires[2]. You will not take any hasty step. If the foot requires doctoring, it would be better not to leave the Ashram. For I think I told you that there would be some touring in Orissa also. I shall not be allowed to rest in one place. But you will do what gives you most peace. If you cannot be happy, being there, you will come whether you are limping or well. And if you can restrain yourself, we meet in January in any case. But I am not going to interfere with your wishes. You will just do as the Spirit moves you.

The change you describe in your dress does not appear to be anything furious.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5297. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] Gandhiji was in Jaffna on this date.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

303. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

JAFFNA,

November 28, 1927

MY DEAR BHRRR[1]

Have read the story of Shireen and Farhad? Have you ever known lovers tire of hearing from or about the loved ones? Now do you wonder why I was thirsting for your letter? Similar is the story of how I discovered Raihana.

Now love.

Yours,

BHRRR

From a photostat: S.N.9560

304. LETTER TO SURENDRA

November 28, 1927

Devdas's state is extremely pitiable. Rajaji is not likely at all to let him marry Lakshmi, and rightly so. Lakshmi will not take one step without his consent. She is happy and cheerful, whereas Devdas has gone mad after her and is pining for her and suffering. If he had such love for God, he would have been revered as a saintly man and become a great dedicated worker.

But how can even Devdas act against his nature? He wishes to obey me, but his soul rebels against him. He seems to believe that it stand in the way of his marriage with Lakshmi and so feels angry with me. I do not know at present how he can be brought out of this condition. Try and see if you can help him recover peace of mind and explain to him his dharma. It is possible that I have not understood him and am, therefore, doing him injustice. See if you can give him peace of mind through a letter. I of course write to him frequently.

Personally, I clearly see that impure desires in his mind are the cause of his many diseases. Such desires secretly eat away person from within. I have no doubt about this. Devdas is right in believing that he is pleasure-loving, but pleasure-loving is rather a mild word.

[1] This was a form of greetings used by Gandhiji and the addressee for each other.

His thoughts run after sex-pleasure. Since he cannot see this clearly, it consumes him secretly.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

305. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

JAFFNA,
November 28, 1927

SISTERS,

This region is also part of Ceylon, but it is very different from South Ceylon. The people inhabiting this part are Tamils from India, and they observe Indian manners and customs. This part, therefore, does not look very different from South India. It is true that women here appear to live a little more freely than in South India.

There is a Gujarati couple here. The lady (Kashibai) belongs to a good family from Rajkot, and her husband is the son of the well-known Haragovinddas Kantawalla of Baroda. He is a Judge here. They are highly respected. Half the number of my meals come from Kashibai. So Ba may be said to be on a holiday.

We are leaving this place tomorrow. We are now going to a land of human skeletons, and I am anxious to see them in order to rouse my heart and to discover a still deeper meaning of the spinning-wheel.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photstat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3678

306. LETTER TO T. B. KESHAVA RAO

November 29, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am quite sure that everybody has the right to study and understand the *Gita.* I hope to deal with your letter[1] in the pages of *Young India* when I get the time.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 159

[1] Presumably Gandhiji discussed it in "Distortion of Truth", 8-12-1927.

307. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

Margashirsha Shukla 5 [*November 29, 1927*][1]

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

Your letter. I shall begin the return voyage tomorrow. Peace will certainly come to you by sincerely reciting Ramanama.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 189

308. SPEECH AT ST. JOHN COLLEGE, JAFFNA

November 29, 1927

If you had been looking forward to meeting me under this roof, I can say that I was no less looking forward to meeting you. Though I receive, and receive with thankfulness, money from millionaires, it is a source of much greater plesure to me to receive small gifts, no matter how small they may be, from boys and girls who are sitll making their lives. It gives me greater pleasure for two reasons. One is, the gift that spring from innocent boys and girls fructifies much more than gifts of those who may be considered worldly-wise men. The second reason is that gifts such as yours give me a keener sense of responsibility that perhaps I should otherwise have. . . .[2]

I have not the power to make any return for your kindness and your generosity. I can only pray to God that He may bless you for all the good things that you may do in life. I know that mere mental training is nothing if it is not accompanied by a true training of the heart. And may your heart extend in the manner that your minds may. I thank you once more.

The Hindu, 2-12-1927

309. SPEECH AT CENTRAL COLLEGE, JAFFNA

November 29, 1927

I am deeply grateful to you for the generous purse that you have given me on behalf of the semi-starving millions of India. You, Sir, sent me due notice yesterday of the very important question that

[1] Gandhiji started on his return voyage from Ceylon on November 30, 1927; the source bears a Ceylon postal stamp.

[2] Gandhiji then dwelt on khadi and untouchability.

you have repeated this morning[1] . I have many engagements between now and 10.30; therefore, and also for other reasons into which I do not want to enter, I would fain have avoided this question. But on the principle that has guided my life that I must take things as they come to me, unless I find it utterly impossible for me to cope with them, I propose to devote the very few minutes that I have at my disposal to answer that question.

I say in one sentence that for many many years I have regarded Jesus of Nazareth as one amongst the mighty teachers that the world has had, and I say this in all humility. I claim humility for this expression for the simple reason that this is exactly what I feel. Of course, Christians claim a higher place for Jesus of Nazareth than as a non-Christian and as a Hindu I have been able to feel. I purposely use the word 'feel' instead of 'give', because I consider that neither I, nor anybody else can possibly arrogate to himself the claim of giving place to a great man. The great teachers of mankind have had the place not given to them, but the place has belonged to them as a matter of right, as a matter of service that have rendered, but it is given to the lowest and the humblest amongst us to feel certain things about certain people. The relation between great teachers and ourselves is somewhat after the style of relation between a husband and wife. It would be a most terrible thing, a tragic thing, if I was to argue out intellectually for myself what place I was to give to my wife in my heart. It is not in my giving, but she takes the place that belongs to her as a matter of right in my heart. It is a matter purely for feeling. Then I can say that Jesus occupies in my heart the place of one of the great teachers who has had considerable part in finding that place in my heart. Leave the Christians alone for the present. I shall say to the 75 per cent Hindus receiving instruction in this College that your lives will be incomplete unless you reverently study the teaching of Jesus. I have come to the conclusion, in my own experience, that those who, no matter to what faith they belong,reverently study the teaching of other faiths broaden their own, instead of slackening their hearts. Personally, I do not regard any of the great religions of the world as false. All have served in embellishing mankind and are even now serving their purpose. A liberal education to all should include, as I

[1] The Principal of the College had asked Gandhiji what place he would give to Christ among the great world teachers not as a divine instructor, but as a man and a teacher.

have put it, a reverent study of other faiths, but I do not want to labour this point, nor have I the time to do so.

There is one thing which, as I am speaking to you, occurs to me, which comes to me from my early studies of the Bible. It seized me immediately I read the passage:

> But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.[1]

I tell you that if you will understand, appreciate and act up to the spirit of this passage, you won't even need to know what place Jesus or any other teacher occupies in your heart. If you will do the proper scavenger's work, clean and purify your hearts and get them ready, you will find that all these mighty teachers will take their places without invitation from us. That, to my mind, is the basis of all sound education. Culture of the mind must be subservient to the culture of the heart. May God help you to become pure!

The Hindu, 2-12-1927

310. SPEECH AT UNDUVIL GIRLS' COLLEGE, JAFFNA

November 29, 1927

It has given me very great pleasure indeed to meet you this morning. I do not at all appreciate the idea of your little gifts coming right from the bottom of your hearts having been merged in the general purse,but I am going to put the best construction possible upon the fact of your purse having been merged in the general purse that you, being more most than boys, do not want me to know that you had given anything at all, but having met thousands or tens of thousands of girls all through India, it is difficult for girls nowadays to hide from me any good things that they do. Now, there are some girls who do not mind even telling me the bad things that they do. Let me hope that of all these girls before me, there is not one single girl who does a bad thing. Not having the time to cross-examine you, I am not going to weary you with questions, but if there are any girls in our midst who do bad things let them know that their education is useless if they do bad things.

Your parents do not send you to school to become dolls; on the contrary, you are expected to become Sisters of Mercy. Do not make the mistake of thinking that only those may be called Sisters of Mercy

[1] *St. Mathew*, vi. 33

who wear a particular dress in hospitals. When she becomes a Sister of Mercy, immediately she thinks less of herself and more of those who are poorer and more unfortunate than herself, and you have done the work of Sister of Mercy in giving your mite to the purse that has been presented to me, because that purse has been presented for those who are unfortunately poorer than yourselves. Giving a little bit of money is easy enough; to do a little thing oneself is more difficult. It you really feel for the people for whom you give money, you must go a step further and wear khadi that these people manufacture. When khadi is brought before you and if you adore it, and say: 'Khadi ia a bit coarse, we cannot wear it,' then I know you have not the spirit of self-sacrifice in you.

It is such a very nice thing that here there is no distinction between high class and low class, touchables and untouchables and if your hearts are also working in that direction, and you do not consider yourselves superior to some other girls, it is a very good thing indeed. May God bless you !

The Hindu, 2-12-1927

311. SPEECH AT SIR RAMANATHAN GIRLS' SCHOOL, JAFFNA

November 29, 1927

It has given me great joy indeed to be able to come here this morning as if to put a finishing touch to the whole round of visit to different scholastic institutions in Jaffna. The exquisite taste and simplicity with which the whole of this ceremony has been arranged this morning, I assure you, has not escaped my observation. I appreciate also the generous purse of Rs. 1,111, which too unlike most purses is given in a khadi bag. To crown all, Lady Ramanathan has placed in my hands a kind telegram from Sir P. Ramanathan who himself is unable to attend this function. I should have always regretted if I had not been able to visit this institution, the monument of Sir Ramanathan's generosity and thoughtfulness. Lady Ramanathan had furnished me very considerately with an advance copy of your address and the report of this institution and two copies of your magazine.

Your promise in your address that you are going to observe this day as an annual function and devote it to collections for khadi work has touched me to the heart. I know that this is no idle promise on

your part, but that you are going to fulfil that promise religiously. If the famishing millions on whose behalf I am touring could possibly understand this determination on the part of their sister, I know it will gladen their hearts, but you will be pained to be informed by me that these dumb millions in whose behalf you have given me this purse and so many purses have been given in Ceylon would not even understand such things, if I attempted to tell them. No description that I can give you of their miserble life can possibly give you a proper perspective of what that position means.

This immediately brings me to the question—what are you to do for these and such people. It is easy enough to suggest a little more simplicity, a little more harness in life, but that would be merely tinkering with the question. Thoughts and thoughts like this brought me to the spinning-wheel. I said to myself, as I say to you now, that if you could but establish a living link between those famishing millions and yourselves, there is some hope for you, for them and for the world. Religious instruction you have, and very properly, in this institution. You have got also a beautiful temple. I see from your time-table that you begin the day by offering worship, all of which is good and elevating, but it may easily amount to a beautiful ceremonial and nothing else if that worship is not translated day after day into some practical work. So, I say, in order to follow out that act of worship, take up the spinning-wheel, sit at it for half an hour and think of those millions that I have described to you and say in the name of God: 'I spin for the sake of them'. You will find at once, if you do it with your heart, with knowledge, that you are the humbler and the purer for that real act of devotion. If you will dress not for show, but for covering your limbs, you will certainly not have any hesitation in wearing khadi and establish that bond between you and the millions. This is not all that I want to say to the girls of this institution.

If you will be deserving of the care and attention that Sir Ramanathan has bestowed upon you and that is being bestowed upon you by Lady Ramanathan and the staff working under her care, you will have to do many more things. I saw in your magazines mention made with some degree of pardonable pride of what some of the old schoolgirls had been doing. I saw notices after this style. So and so married so and so—four of five notices. There is, I know, nothing wrong in a girl who has come of age, about 25 or even 22 years old, in getting married. But I miss in these notices a single mention of a girl who had dedicated herself to service only. So I propose to tell you

what I told the girls of His Highness the Maharaja's College for Girls in Bangalore that we get a poor return for the great efforts that are being made by educationists and by lavish charities, if you all become mere dolls and disappear from life as soon as you are discharged from such institutions. A vast majority of girls disappear from public life as soon as they are discharged from schools and colleges. You of this institution have no such business. You have the example of Miss Emery and the example of others who have been superintending, and who have been, if I am not speaking incorrectly, maidens. Every girl, every Indian girl is not born to marry. I can show many girls who are today dedicating themselves to service instead of serving a single man. It is high time that Hindu girls produce or reproduce an edition, and if possible a glorified edition, of Parvati and Sita. You claim to be Saivites[1]. You know what Parvati did. She did not spend money for a husband, nor would she allow herself to be bought, and she to day adorns the Hindu firmament by being classed with one of the seven *satis*—not because of the degrees in an educational institution that she received, but because of her unheard-of *tapasya*. Here I understand that there is the fateful system of dowry where-by it becomes most difficult for young women to gets suitable matches. The grown-up girls—some of you are grown up—are expected to resist all such temptations. If you will resist these evil customs, you will, some of you, have to begin by remaining maidens either for life, or at least for a number of years. Then, when it is time for you to marry, and you feel that you must have a partner in life, you will not be in thirst of one who has money, or fame, or beauty of person, but you will be in search of one even as Parvati was, one who has got all the matchless qualities which can go to make good character. You know how Naradji described Siva to Parvati—a mere pauper smeared with ashes, no handsomeness about him and a *brahmachari;* and Parvati said—that is my husband. You won't have several editions of Siva unless some of you will be content to offer *tapas*, not for thousands of years as Parvati did. We frail human beings cannot afford to do it, but you can do so at least during your lifetime. If you will accept these conditions, you will refuse to disappear in the kingdom of dolls, but will aspire to be *satis* like Parvati, Damayanti, Sita and Savitri. Then and not till then, in my humble opinion will you have deserved an institution of this character. May God fire you with this ambition, and

[1] Worshippers of Siva

if you are inspired, may He help you to realize this ambition.

The Hindu, 2-12-1927

312. SPEECH AT TELLIPALLI WEAVING SCHOOL,JAFFNA

November 29, 1927

Mahatmaji congratulated the management in having established the weaving school but told them that it would not make a thorough success unless they introduced hand-spinning also. The success of weaving school was not to be measured by the necessity of those who were trained in it to make a few rupees per month, but was to be measured by the manner in which it could make the community rich and make the institution self-supporting. They would be thoroughly disappointed if they separated hand-spinning from hand-weaving and demanded wages for the former. He hoped that the spirit of Hindus and Christians in joining together to welcome him would continue to guide all their relations.

The Hindu, 2-12-1927

313. SPEECH AT JAFFNA COLLEGE, JAFFNA

November 29, 1927

It has given me the greatest pleasure to visit so many educational institutions in this peninsula of yours. Amongst these pleasures, not the least is visiting this, which, I understand, is the oldest educational institution in this peninsula. Moreover, I am given to understand that many old boys of this institution are today distinguished servants of the country. Lastly, I had the pleasure of meeting your Vice-Principal in Bangalore and the two secretaries of the Reception Committee are also old boys of this school. It always gives me pleasure to see the smiling faces of boys and girls. I know also that the work that I have the privilege of doing is today being done by so many grown-up boys who have given their all to the service of the motherland. Your purse therefore is very precious to me. I know that all the moneys, and by no means a small sum, that I have received from boys and girls, will bear greater fruit than the moneys received from old and wise men. Your money comes with the stamp of innocence upon it, and it goes also to millions or some of the millions of men and women who are innocent, and deliberately perhaps, because they cannot be otherwise. . . .[1]

The Hindu, 2-12-1927

[1] Then Gandhiji spoke on khadi, truth and love.

314. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, RAMNAD

November 30, 1927

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I am obliged to you for the addresses, all these yarn garlands and the various purses. Truly God is great. And if we have eyes to see we can see His greatness from moment to moment. At half past five when it poured in torrents, I had made up my mind that there would be no meeting. But my fears have been falsified, the clouds have cleared away and we see a large gathering here. I am not so arrogant as to suppose that God has disposed of these things just for my sake or for your sake. But I am humble enough to recognize the greatness of God in events as they march past us and make themselves accommodating to us. And we should be humble enough not to quarrel with God or think that He is not great enough when events seem to go wrong and everything seems to be in our way. If you like you have a demonstration of the nothingness of human wishes even as I am speaking,[1] and I would like you all, although you may open out your umbrellas to recognize the littleness of man and the greatness of God in the rain that seems to be threatning us. But I have not come here to lecture on the greatness of God. Nor does He require any advertisers like myself to advertise His greatness. It is written in indelible letters on the vast page of time. Let us therefore bow down our heads in reverence to Him and pass on to our work.[2]

I was looking forward to coming to this place as soon as I ever could, and it grieved me when I was within thirty miles of this place that I could not at that time come here. It therefore gives me great pleasure now to be able to fulfil the wish that I had to come here and receive your purse. Let me tell you that before I came here I went to a women's meeting. They wanted no speech; they would have no speech. They were, from what I could see of them, very poor women. All they wanted to do was to pay almost all they had. And if they had two coins tied in one of the corners of their saris, then one coin was given by themselves and another they made their babies to surrender. And it gave me great joy when I saw pice after pice coming into my lap. Those eyes and those hands showed me unmistakably that pice as

[1] There was a gentle shower of rain and several in the audience opened out their umbrellas.

[2] The rain had by now completely stopped.

they were, they were hearts'gifts and all that the possessor had. And perhaps you will agree with me when I say that the gifts of these pice were richer gifts than the calculated gifts made by the donors who put their donations in this purse that has been handed to me. I have brought in this incident and this comparison not in any way to criticize or belittle your purse. I have brought in this incident, one amongst hundreds that I have had the good fortune to witness, in order to give a physical, visible, striking demonstration of the fact that this is a movement on behalf of the paupers of India. I have brought in this incident also to show you that our women are not to be despised and not to be considered beneath the notice of man and to be treated only as slaves or objects of man's lust. I have brought in this incident to ask you to fill yourselves with the faith, the immovable faith of these simple sisters of ours. Lastly, I have brought in this incident in answer to the opening paragraph of your address.

You want me to take in leading the political struggle in India. As I said at Coimbatore, I feel that I am doing my humble best in the political struggle also, in as much as I devote my whole time to the spinning-wheel. But taking the word 'political' even in the sense in which you are using it, that spiritualizing of politics that you have mentioned in your address is impossible of achievement unless we have the faith of these simple sisters. It is no faith that calculates, that is afraid, that hesitates. When a child nestles itself in the bosom of its mother and feels absolutely secure, the child does not calculate and ask itself whether the mother is strong enough to protect it or not. And if those of us who are politically-minded, who are in the habit of attending meetings, speaking on platform or being spoken to, if those politically-minded people had that wonderful faith in the destiny of India, if they had that implicit faith in the simple message of the tiny charkha, I have no doubt that we would have been in possession of swaraj a long time ago. Let not the charkha be a solution of the economic problem of India. Let it tend at least to be a test of our faith. I have presented the matchless economics, the irrefutable economics of the charkha, to my calculating countrymen. But if we had faith there would be no necessity of demonstrating the economics of the spinning-wheel. It should be enough that it is a harmless thing; it is a somewhat useful thing for those who use it, that it has given some employment to some women; it is enough if these things are capable of enabling us to stretch forth our faith and for millions to swear by it. For it is easy enough for man or woman to see that if we

the millions can but pin our faith to some such thing as this, there is at once set free an energy on the part of the whole nation, a united energy such as would become irresistible. I have that faith in the charkha and therefore I am content to wait till there is that general awakening and a consequent general faith on the part of the people of this great but distressed land.

You mention in your address the Statutory Commission. Being in that beautiful scented island. I was isolated for nearly 17 days or more, strictly speaking 23 days, from all the happenings in India save for the scraps that I was able to pick up from the local papers in Colombo. Having reentered the country I shall pick up the threads of events. But meanwhile I can repeat what I said to the reporters in Ceylon, that in the matter of the Statutory Commission I had surrendered my conscience to the President of the Congress and the Congress in general.[1]

You ask me to make this a khadi centre. If it was at all possible I have no doubt that the Council of the All-India Spinners' Association will certainly open a branch here. I know that so far as spinning and weaving are concerned this is a favourable centre. But three things are necessary to enable the Association to open centres in various parts of the country—proper workers, a suitable atmosphere and money. Money is no difficulty, and even if there was you have now given a purse. Favourable circumstances there are. But everywhere workers are the greatest difficulty. Self-sacrificing, industrious workers who will study the technique of the spinning-wheel and the loom and of the khadi trade are very few in the country. And if you have honest workers of the qualities that I have described, I would invite you to correspond immediately with Sjt. Ramanathan, Secretary of the Tamil Nadu branch of the All-India Spinners' Association.

I was glad indeed to receive the two purses from the students of the school here. The address of the Raja's High School boys apologizes for the slenderness of the purse. And some of the boys in Ceylon have given as much as one thousand per school as the Ramanathan Girls' College gave only yesterday. The Students' purse, if the moneys are to be counted, is slender enough. But I don't count the slenderness or richness of the purse by its contents. If like the purse from the contributions of the sisters whom I have already described, if like that purse, the students' purse also represents all that

[1] *Vide* "Interview to the Press", 13-11-1927.

they could possibly save, then there need be no apology for the slenderness of their purse. Whereas, if the students have contributed stingily, let them reconsider their position and give the best they can. I was glad indeed of the promise in the students' address that they propose henceforth to buy as much khadi as they possibly can. Having made that promise, I ask them to fulfil it in the best manner possible. The students should know that they should realize that in their hand lies the future of the country. And that future is not hopeful at all if the students do not develop a fine character, if they do not possess pure minds and purer hearts and if they are not true to their promises. Let the students realize that all literary knowledge without the backing of a strong character is worse than useless.

Two words to this general audience. Those who are given to the drink habit must give up drink and all should work for complete prohibition in this land. And it is high time that we forget that there ever was any such curse like untouchability in this land. I tell you that I was ashamed when I discovered in Ceylon that our neighbours had also been tainted by this curse. And if we are really desirous of swaraj let us forget that some of us are superior to some others.

The Hindu, 2-12-1927

315. HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

Dr. Ansari told me when I was recently in Delhi that he heard in Calcutta from reliable men that I had lost faith and interest in Hindu-Muslim unity and that I was avoiding Mussalman friends such as the Ali Brothers. Dr. Ansari therefore proposed that in order to dispel any illusion and disarm suspicion, I should make a declaration of my faith before a public meeting in Delhi. I could not accept the proposal if only because the old Delhi of Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan and Swami Shraddhanandji had become the new Delhi of hooligans where it was difficult for me to stay and much more so to address public meetings. I however promised Dr. Ansari that I would clear my position as early as I could through these pages. This I do now.

My interest and faith in Hindu-Muslim unity and unity among all the communities remain as strong as ever. My method of approach has changed. Whereas formerly I tried to achieve it by addressing meetings, joining in promoting and passing resolutions now I have no

faith in these devices. We have no atmosphere for them. In an atmosphere which is surcharged with distrust, fear and hopelessness, in my opinion these devices rather hinder than help heart-unity. I therefore rely upon prayer and such individual acts of friendship as are possible. Hence I have lost all desire to attend meetings held for achieving unity. This however does not mean that I disapprove of such attempts. On the contrary, those who have faith in such meetings must hold them. I should wish them all success.

I am out of tune with the present temper of both the communities. From their own standpoint they are prehaps entitled to say that my method has failed. I recognized that among those whose opinions count, I am in a hopeless minority. By my taking part in meetings and the like I could not render any useful service. And as I have no other interest but to see real unity established, where I cannot serve by my presence I regard it as some service if I abstain.

For me there is no hope save through truth and non-violence. I know that they will triumph when everything else has failed. Whether therefore I am in the minority of one or I have a majority, I must go along the course that God seems to have shown me. Today non-violence as a mere policy is a broken reed. It answers well as a policy when there are no active forces working against it in your own camp. But when you have to reckon with those who believe in violence as a creed to be enforced under given circumstances, the expedience of non-violence breaks down. Then is the time for the out-and-out believer in non-violence to test his creed. Both my creed and I are therefore on our trial. And if we do not seem to succeed, let the critic or the onlooker blame not the creed but me. I know I am often obliged to struggle against myself. I have not become incapable as yet of violence in thought at least. But I am striving with all the might God has given me.

Now perhaps the reader understands why I am not found in the company of the Ali Brothers as often as I was before. They still hold me in their pockets. They are still as dear to me as blood-brothers. I am not sorry for having thrown in my lot with the Mussalmans in the hour of their need. I should do so again if the occasion arose. But though we have a common cause we have not common methods today. They would have had me at Simla and Calcutta.[1] Since the

[1] A Unity Conference of Hindu and Muslim leaders was held at Simla under the chairmanship of M. A. Jinnah in the beginning of September 1927; and another such conference was convened by the All-India Congress Committee in Calcutta on October 27, 1927.

Kohat riots[1] we have not been able to agree as to the reading of facts. But friendship that insists upon agreement on all matters is not worth the name. Friendship to be real must ever sustain the weight of honest differences, however sharp they may be. I regard our differences to be honest, and therefore let those who suspect a breach or even coolness between us know that my friendship with the Ali Brothes and other Mussalman friends whom the reader can easily name remains as firm as ever.

Young India, 1-12-1927

316. HELP FROM AMERICA

Owing to continuous travelling I have not been able to publish earlier the following letter from the Rev. John Haynes Holmes[2] :

> When the news came to me of the terrible floods which swept through your country in August, I published the story at once in *Unity*. I have followed this up now with a public appeal in co-operation with Professor Harry Ward, for contributions to what we are calling a 'Gandhi Relief Fund'. We are printing our appeal in various religious newspapers and liberal magazines, and I hope for some good results.
>
> Meanwhile, *Unity* has established its own Fund, and I am sending you herewith a money order representing exchange on the initial gift of $ 100.00. We will send along other funds as fast as they come in.
>
> May I express to you my profound sympathy over this great disaster which has befallen you and your people? I am particularly distressed that Ahmedabad should have suffered so terribly and that the Ashram should have been in the midst of the calamity. Any further information you can send me, may be of great help in raising further funds.

I am sure the reader will not look at the amount received from America. We have no right perhaps to expect any help from distant lands in our local calamities, such as the recent floods in Gujarat. It is therefore the motive behind the unsolicited and unexpected American contribution that counts.

Young India, 1-12-1927

[1] *Vide* "Kohat", March 19, 1925.

[2] American clergyman, author of *My Gandhi*

317. KHADI ECONOMICS

I have two pamphlets before me, one called *Economics of Khadi* by Sjt. Rajendra Prasad of Bihar, to be had of Bihar Charkha Sangha office, Muzaffarpur, for three annas. This pamphlet is the first of a series to be issued by Bihar Branch of the Charkha Sangha. The other is the report and accounts of the Gandhi Ashram, Tiruchengodu, conducted under the direction of Sjt. C. Rajagopalachari. This can be had from the Secretary, Gandhi Ashram, Tiruchengodu (S. India), for one-anna postage stamp.

The first is a sustained argument put in a popular style and in a brief manner so as to enable the average busy reader to understand the economics of khadi. I must not attempt to resummarize the argument which is itself a summary of the case for the spinning-wheel. But it may be stated that after examining all the arguments for and against, Rajendra Babu has shown that only the spinning -wheel can successfully displace foreign cloth, and only the spinning-wheel can give a supplementary occupation to the twenty-two crores and forty lakhs of agriculturists of India who without the wheel are living, and must continue to live, in a condition of semi-starvation because they are and must be in a condition of unemployment at least for 120 days in the year.

Sjt. Rajagopalachari's report is a a scientific study in facts and figures, and seems entirely to illustrate and fortify Rajendra Babu's argument. The reader will be interested to learn that 85% of the Ashram goes to the spinners and weavers, $9\frac{1}{2}$ % to the workers, and $5\frac{1}{2}$ % for other establishment charges. The report contains instructive and illustrative tables showing the earnings of spinners and weavers and dhobis, all of whom probably and the spinners certainly, but for the advent of the charkha,would not be getting the income they are receiving today. The report contains also a certified account of the income and expenditure of the Ashram activity. It devotes a page to show how the price one pays for khadi is distributed. Here are the figures:

Cotton grower	37 p.c.
Spinners and weavers	54 p.c.
Workers	6 p.c.
Other expenses	3 p.c.

and it says:

> *"Dress you must have, but if you choose to buy khadi, you help the reconstruction of rural India."*

This Ashram alone has distributed within $2\frac{1}{2}$. years Rs. 1,24,536 among the poorest villagers surrounding it, and that not by way of charity but against work done in their own homes. The Ashram maintains a free dispensary, which during the past 11 months attended to 10,145 patients. 148 operations were performed during the period. The patients included the so-called untouchables.

Young India, 1-12-1927

318. INTERVIEW TO THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MADRAS,
December 1, 1927

To the several questions put by the pressman Gandhiji declined any answer. He said:

I am too raw from Ceylon to answer any question. . . .

Gandhiji's attention was next drawn to his Ceylon statement[1] with regard to the Statutory Commission[2] that his conscience was in the keeping of the President of the Congress. Gandhiji was asked if he still adhered to that statement and whether he agreed to the Congress President's view that the need of the hour was a revision of the Gauhati programme in the direction of the revival of organized mass action on the issue of the policy underlying the appointment of the Statutory Commission.[3] Would the Mahatma personally lead such a movement? Gandhiji repeated his answer that for the past few weeks he had been out of touch with events in India. He did not want to say anything just at present before he had had time to study the question more fully. Gandhiji remarked:

My conscience is still in the keeping of Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar[4] until Dr. Ansari[5] mounts the throne at Madras.

The Hindu, 2-12-1927

[1] *Vide* "Interview to the Press", 13-11-1927.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "The Indian Statutory Commission".

[3] For extracts from the Viceroy's statement, *vide* Appendix "Extract from Statement by the Viceroy on the Indian Statutory Commission", November 8, 1927.

[4] The outgoing Congress president

[5] The President-elect of the Congress

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

BRAHMIN-NON-BRAHMIN QUESTION [1]

[A CATECHISM]

During Gandhiji's tour in South India Non-Brahmin friends in various places sought interviews with him, and discussed the various aspects of the Brahmin-Non-Brahmin question. The same questions were often asked at various places, but the scope of the answers depended on the receptivity of the questioners at each place. I have brought all of them together, and arranged them in the form of a catechism. This covers all the talks in Tanjore, Chettinad, Virudhunagar and Tinnevelly. I was not present during the conversations at Madura, but I think the collected talks will cover the topics discussed there also. I omit, of course, the references to the question in public speeches at Cuddalore, Tanjore and Coimbatore which I have already given in these pages, and I omit also talks already summarized, as for instance the one at Tirupur on superiority and inferiority.

—MAHADEV DESAI

CLEAR THE ISSUE

GANDHIJI : I want you to make your position clear to me, as I do not want to be told that I refuse to try to understand or sympathize with your viewpoint. The impression left on my mind is that the real cause of the movement is political.

NON-BRAHMIN FRIEND : The movement is older than the exponents of its political aspect. There is the social and the religious aspect as well.

A CHRISTIAN FRIEND : The rise of the Justice Party is due to the feeling that the Brahmins have a monopolizing tendency and hence cannot be trusted. I am speaking in reference only to the South Indian Brahmins of today.

[At this stage there were swift questions and answers. I summarize below Gandhiji's replies only.—MAHADEV DESAI]

GANDHIJI : But should you not in considering the question consider the course that Brahminism has taken in North India? In North India whatever status a Brahmin enjoys has been given him by the Non-Brahmins. He has no independent status. In fact the consideration in North and West India is not whether a particular leader is a Brahmin or a Non-Brahmin, but whether he can lead. In the Punjab Lalaji, a Non-Brahmin, is supreme as a leader. In the U.P. there is Malaviyaji, a Brahmin. In Bengal Surendranath Bannerjea, a Brahmin, was as much respected by the Non-Brahmins as by Brahmins. In Gujarat the Patel Brothers, Non-Brahmins, are as much

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Tanjore", 16-9-1927

respected by the Brahmins as by Non-Brahmins.

In South India you seem to have divided Hinduism not only into two camps, but divided India into Brahmins and Non-Brahmins, which term may include Mussalmans and Christians as well. Now I want you to have a clear-cut crystallized notion of your own aims and ideals.

Supposing your aim to be merely political, that of destroying the alleged Brahmin monopoly of places of power, I can perhaps understand your inclusive definition of the term Non-Brahmin, though even here I see many difficulties.

But if you aim also at reform, or the removal of religious and social disabilities, I should find it difficult to follow your definition of Non-Brahmin so as to include Non-Hindus. There is the question of untouchability or templentry, for instance. With the best of motives in the world, how can a Non-Hindu effectively interfere? May a Non-Muslims dictate the reform of Islam? I fear that all Non-Hindu interference in the matter of religion will be looked upon with the gravest suspicion.

I want you therefore to have the issue as clear-cut as possible. So far as your disabilities are concerned, there can be no question about them. They are there, and for their removal you have to offer stubborn battle. But have no illusions about the disabilities either. As to places of power, if I had any choice in the matter, I should strongly advise all Brahmins to leave them all for you, but when you raise the cry of Brahmin monopoly in Khadi Service I simply cannot understand it. The whole movement serves primarily the Non-Brahmin masses, practically all members of the executive committee of the A.I.S.A. are non-Brahmins. In South India can you in fairness contend that the Brahmins who are in Khadi Service have joined it for material gain? And so far as voluntary service is concerned, is it at all proper to raise the cry of monopoly? But even there, give me Non-Brahmins who will satisfy my requirements, and I promise that all Brahmins will vacate their places. So far as I know, the majority are there at considerable sacrifice.

THE LAW OF VARNA

QUESTION : We do not understand your emphasis on *varnadharma*. Can you justify the present caste system? What is your definition of *varna*?

ANSWER : *Varna* means pre-determination of the choice of man's profession. The law of *varna* is that a man shall follow the profession of his ancestors for earning his livelihood. Every child naturally follows the 'colour' of his father, or chooses his father's profession. *Varna* therefore is in a way the law of heredity. *Varna* is not a thing that is superimposed on Hindus, but men who were trustees for their welfare discovered the law for them. It is not a human invention, but an immutable law of nature—the statement of a tendency that is ever present and at work like Newton's law of gravitation. Just as the law or gravitation existed even before it was discovered so

did the law of *varna*. It was given to the Hindus to discover that law. By their discovery and application of certain laws of nature, the peoples of the West have easily increased their material possessions. Similarly, Hindus by their discovery of this irresistible social tendency have been able to achieve in the spiritual field what no other nation in the world has achieved.

Varna has nothing to do wish caste. Caste is an excrescence, just like untouchability, upon Hinduism. All the excrescences that are emphasized today were never part of Hinduism. But don't you find similar ugly excrescences in Christianity and Islam also?

Fight them as much as you like. Down with the monster of caste that masquerades in the guise of *varna*. It is this travesty of *varna* that has degraded Hinduism and India. Our failure to follow the law of *varna* is largely responsible both for our economic and spiritual ruin. It is one cause of unemployment and impoverishment, and it is responsible for untouchability and defections from our faith.

But in quarrelling with the present monstrous form, and monstrous practices to which the original law has been reduced, do not fight the law itself.

Q. How many *varnas* are there?

A. Four *varnas*, though it is not a rigid division inherent in *varna* itself. The *rishis* after incessant experiment and research arrived at this fourfold division—the four ways of earning one's livelihood.

Q. Logically, therefore, there are as many *varnas* as there are professions?

A. Not necessarily. The different professions can easily be brought under the four main divisions—that of teaching, of defending, of wealth-producing, and of manual service. So far as the world is concerned, the dominant profession is the wealth-producing, just as *grihasthashrama* is the most dominant amongst all *ashramas*. Vaisya is the keynote among the *varnas*. The defender is not wanted if there is no wealth and property. The first two and the foruth are necessary because of the third. The first will always be very few because of the severe discipline required for it, the second must be few in well-ordered society, and so the fourth.

Q. If a man practises a profession which does not belong to him by birth, what *varna* does he belong to?

A. According to the Hindu belief he belongs to the *varna* in which he is born, but by not living up to it he will be doing violence to himself and becomes a degraded being—a *patita*.

Q. A Sudra does an act which belongs to a Brahmin by birth. Does he become a *patita*?

A. A Sudra has as much right to knowledge as a Brahmin, but he falls from his estate if he tries to gain his livelihood through teaching. In ancient times there were

automatic trade guilds, and it was an unwritten law to support all the members of the profession. A hundred years ago, a carpenter's son never wanted to become a lawyer. Today he does, because he finds the profession the easiest way to steal money. The lawyer thinks that he must charge Rs. 15,000 as fees for the exercise of his brain, and a physician like Hakim Saheb thinks that he must charge Rs. 1,000 a day for his medical advice!

Q. But may not a man follow a profession after his heart?

A. But the only profession after his heart should be the profession of his fathers. There is nothing wrong in choosing that profession; on the contrary, it is noble. What we find today are freaks, and that is why there is violence and disruption of society. Let us not confound ourselves by superficial illustrations. There are thousands of carpenters' sons following their fathers'calling, but not even a hundred carpenters' sons who are lawyers. In ages gone by there was not the ambition of encroaching on others' profession and amassing wealth. In Cicero's time, for instance, the lawyer's was an honorary profession. And it would be quite right for any brainy carpenter to become a lawyer for service, not for money. Later, ambition for fame and wealth crept in. Physicians served the society and rested with what it gave them, but now they have become traders and even a danger to society. The medical and the legal professions were deservedly called liberal when the motive was purely philanthropic.

Q. All that is under ideal conditions. But what do you propose today when everyone is hankering after paying professions?

A. It is a sweeping generalization. Put together the number of boys studying in schools and colleges and determine the percentage of boys going in for the learned professions. Highway robbery is not open to everyone. The present seems to be an agitation for highway robbery. How many can become lawyers and Government servants? Those who can be legitimately occupied in earning wealth are Vaisyas. Even there when their profession becomes a highway robbery, it is hateful. There cannot be millions of millionaires.

Q. So far as Tamil Nad is concerned, all Non-Brahmins want to take up professions to which they were not born.

A. A reject your claim to speak on behalf of the 22 million Tamilians. I give you a formula—*Let us not want to be what everyone else cannot be*. And you can work out this proposition only on the basis of *varna* as I have defined it.

Q. You have been saying that the law of *varna* curbs our worldly ambition. How?

A. When I follow my father's profession, I need not even go to a school to learn it, and my mental energy is set free for spiritual pursuits, because my money or rather livelihood is ensured. *Varna* is the best form of insurance for happiness and for real

religious pursuit. When I concentrate my energy on other pursuits, I sell away my powers of self-realization or sell my soul for a mess of pottage.

Q. You talk of releasing the energies for spiritual pursuits. Today those who follow their father's professions have no spiritual culture at all—their very *varna* unfits them for it.

A. We are talking with crooked notions of *varna*. When *varna* was really practised, we had enough leisure for spiritual training. Even now, you go to distant villages and see what spiritual culture villagers have as compared to the town-dwellers. These know no self-control.

But you have spotted the mischief of the age. Let us not try to be what others cannot be. I would not even learn the *Gita* if everyone who wished could not do it. That is why my whole soul rises against learning English for making money. We have to rearrange our lives so that we ensure to the Millions the leisure that a fraction of us have today, and we cannot do it unless we follow the law of *varna*.

Q. You will excuse us, if we go back to the same question over and over again. We want to understand it properly. What is the *varna* of a man practising different professions at different times?

A. It may not make any difference in his *varna* so long as he gains his livelihood by following his father's profession. He may do anything he likes so long as he does it for love of service. But he who changes profession from time to time for the sake of gaining wealth degrades himself and falls from *varna*.

Q. A Sudra may have all the qualities of a Brahmin and yet may not be called a Brahmin?

A. He may not be called a Brahmin in this birth. And it is a good thing for him not to arrogate a *varna* to which he is not born. It is a sign of true humility.

Q. Do you believe that qualities attaching to *varna* are inherited and not acquired?

A. They can be acquired. The inherited qualities can always be strengthened and new ones cultivated. But we need not, ought not, to seek new avenues for gaining wealth. We should be satisfied with those we have inherited from our forefathers so long as they are pure.

Q. Do you not find a man exhibiting qualities opposed to his family character?

A. That is a difficult question. We do not know all our antecedents. But you and I do not need to go deeper into this question for understanding the law of *varna* as I have endeavoured to explain to you. If my father is a trader and I exhibit the qualities of a soldier, I may without reward serve may country as a soldier but must be content to earn my bread by trading.

Q. Caste, as we see it today, consists only in restrictions about inter-dining and intermarriage. Does preservation of *varna* then mean keeping these restrictions?

A. No, not at all. In its purest state, there can be no restrictions.

Q. Can they be omitted?

A. They can be, and *varna* is preserved even by marrying into other *varnas*.

Q. Then the mother's *varna* will be affected.

A. A wife follows the *varna* of her husband.

Q. Is the doctrine of *varnadharma*, as you have expounded it, to be found in our Shastras, or is it your own?

A. Not my own. I derive it from the *Bhagavad Gita*.

Q. Do you approve of the doctrine as given in *Manusmriti*?

A. The principle is there. But the applications do not appeal to me fully. There are parts of the book which are open to grave objections. I hope that they are later interpolations.

Q. Does not *Manusmriti* contain a lot of injustice?

A. Yes, a lot of injustice to women and the so-called lower 'castes'. All is not Shastra that goes by that name. The Shastras so called therefore need to be read with much caution.

Q. But you go by the *Bhagavad Gita*. It says *varna* is according to *guna* and karma. How did you bring in birth?

A. I swear by the *Bhagavad Gita* because it is the only book in which I find nothing to cavil at. It lays down principles and leaves you to find the application for yourself. The *Gita* does talk of *varna* being according to *guna* and karma, but *guna* and karma are inherited by birth. Lord Krishna says, "all *varnas* have been created by me—चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टम्," i.e., I suppose by birth. The law of *varna* is nothing, if not by birth.

Q. But there is no superiority about *varna*?

A. No, not at all, though I do say Brahminism is the culmination of other *varnas*, just as the head is the culmination of the body. It means capacity for superior service, but no superior status. The moment superior status is arrogated, it becomes worthy of being trampled under foot.

Q. *Kural* you know. Do you know that the author of that Tamil classic says there is no caste by birth? At birth, he says, all life is equal.

A. He says it as an answer to the present-day exaggerations. When superiority was claimed by any *varna*, he had to raise his voice against it. But that does not cut at the root of *varna* by birth. It is only the reformer's attempt to cut at the root of inequality.

Q. The recent practice is so distorted that may it not be the best thing to give it up altogether and begin on a clean slate?

A. Only if we were creators. We cannot by a stroke of the pen alter Hindu nature.

We can find out a method of working the law, not destroying it.

Q. When authors of Shastras created new *smritis*, why not you?

A. If I could create a new creation! My state then would be far worse than Vishvamitra's and he was far greater than I.

Q. So long as you do not destroy *varna*, untouchability cannot be destroyed.

A. I do not think so. But if *varnashrama* goes to the dogs in the removal of untouchability, I shall not shed a tear. But what bearing has *varna* as defined by me on untouchability?

Q. But the opponents of reform quote you in support.

A. That is the lot of every reformer. He will be misquoted by interested parties, but you also know that some of them want me to relinquish Hinduism. Others would banish me if they could from the Hindu fold. I have gone no-where to defend *varnadharma*, though for the removal of untouchability I went to Vykom. I am the author of a Congress resolution for propagation of khadi, establishment of Hindu-Muslim unity, and removal of untouchability, the three pillars of swaraj. But I have never placed establishment of varnashrama dharma as the fourth pillar. You cannot, therefore, accuse me of placing a wrong emphasis on varnashrama dharma.

Q. Do you know that many of your followers distort you teaching?

A. Do I not know it? I know that I have many followers only so called.

Q. Buddhism was driven out of India because Brahmins dominated the organization. Similarly they will drive Hinduism out, if it does not serve their end.

A. Let them dare. But I am certain that Buddhism has not gone out of India. India is the country that imbibed most of the spirit of the Buddha. Buddhism must be distinguished from the spirit of the Buddha as well as Christianity from the spirit of the Christ. They were successful in driving out Buddhism, because they had assimilated the central teaching of the Buddha.

Q. The same Brahmin who assimilated the good things of Buddhism has committed the worst crime, worse than the Amritsar wrong, by not allowing untouchables entry into temples and imposing on them cruel disabilities.

A. You are right to a certain extent. But you are wrong in fixing the guilt on Brahmins. It is the whole of Hinduism that is responsible. *varnadharma* having become distorted gave rise to untouchability. There was no deliberate wickedness, but the result was a human tragedy.

Q. But so long as you use the word varnashrama dharma it brings in with it the evil associations of today.

A. The moral is, destroy the evil associations and restore *varnadharma* to its purity.

Q. There is a state of utter confusion. How shall we go back?

A. All I have to say to you is do not destroy the foundation, let us try to purify. Instead you are trying to deliver a new religion to receive which no one is prepared. Brahminism is synonymous with Hinduism. That is to say, the only term we had for Hinduism was Brahminism, i.e., *Brahma Vidya*, and in trying to destroy that you are trying to destroy Hinduism. Fight the Brahmin inch by inch, when he encroaches on your right and try to reform him. But it is no use blackguarding every Brahmin. There are Brahmins and Brahmins. One is an out-and-out reformer, the other is an opponent of reform. You must range the best of the reformer Brahmins on your side, and with their help carry out the constructive part of your programme, which can bring about the salvation both of Brahmins and Non-Brahmins.

Fight the opponents of reform and tell them, 'We shall not call you Brahmins. You pursue wealth and power, and you are not learned and are not able to teach us the true religion.' Then you will not evoke any opposition from them. You will carry on a fierce agitation to bring about reform, you will boycott the schools and temples which discriminate against any Non-Brahmins. You will insist upon priests of pure character, of learning and without worldly ambition. You may build new temples it the old ones refuse to admit the so-called untouchables.

Then there is the question of inter-dining. I should not make that a ground for quarrel with anybody. But I should boycott a function where there was a dividing line.

Then I would fraternize with untouchables and try to deal by them as I should with a blood-brother, and break to pieces all little castes and sections. And therefore when I marry my boy I will go out of my way and seek a girl from other sub-sections. We are really so hide-bound today by wretched custom that you will not give me a girl to domicile in Gujarat, and you will not take a girl from Gujarat to settle in Tamil Nad.

Then I would give the untouchables religious education, a grounding in the principle of Hindusim and morality. They are leading a purely animal life today. I would induce them to refrain from eating forbidden food and live a pure and clean life. You can easily expand these questions and work out a big constructive programme.

WHAT HAS HINDUISM DONE FOR US?

Q. We see you swear by Hinduism. May we know what Hinduism has done for us? Is it not a legacy of ugly superstitions and practices?

A. I thought I had made it clear already. Varnashrama dharma itself is a unique contribution of Hinduism to the world. Hinduism has saved us from *bhaya*, i.e., peril. If Hinduism had not come to my rescue the only course for me would have been

suicide. I remain a Hindu because Hinduism is a leaven which makes the world worth living in. From Hinduism was born Buddhism. What we see today is not pure Hinduism, but often a parody of it. Otherwise it would require no pleading for me in its behalf, but would speak for itself, even as, if I was absolutely pure, I would not need to speak to you. God does not speak with His tongue, and man in the measure that he comes near God becomes like God. Hinduism teaches me that my body is a limitation of the power of the soul within.

Just as in the West they have made wonderful discoveries in things material, similarly Hinduism has made still more marvellous discoveries in things of religion, of the spirit, of the soul. But we have no eye for these great and fine discoveries. We are dazzled by the material progress that Western science has made. I am not enamoured of that progress. In fact, it almost seems as though God in His wisdom had prevented India from progressing along those lines, so that it might fulfil its special mission of resisting the onrush of materialism. After all, there is something in Hinduism that has kept it alive up till now. It has witnessed the fall of Babylonian, Syrian, Persian, and Egyptian civilizations. Cast a look round you. Where is Rome and where is Greece? Can you find today anywhere the Italy of Gibbon, or rather the ancient Rome, for Rome was Italy? Go to Greece. Where is the world-famous Attic civilization? Then come to India, let one go through the most ancient records and then look round you and you would be constrained to say, 'Yes, I see here ancient India still living.' True, there are dungheaps, too, here and there, but there are rich treasures buried under them. And the reason why it has survived is that the end which Hinduism set before it was not development along material but spiritual lines.

Among its many contributions the idea of man's identity with the dumb creation is a unique one. To me cow-worship is a great idea which is capable of expansion. Its freedom from the modern proselytization is also to me a precious thing. It needs no preaching. It says : "Live the life." It is my business, it is your business to live the life, and then we will leave its influence on ages. Then take its contribution in men; Ramanuja, Chaitanya, Ramakrishna, not to speak of the more modern names, have left their impress on Hinduism. Hinduism is by no means a spent force or a dead religion.

Then there is the contribution of the four *ashramas*, again a unique contribution. There is nothing like it in the whole world. The Catholics have the order of celibates corresponding to *brahmacharis*, but not as an institution, whereas in India every boy had to go through the first *ashrama*. What a grand conception it was! Today our eyes are dirty, thoughts dirtier and bodies dirtiest of all, because we are denying Hinduism.

There is yet another thing I have not mentioned. Max Muller said forty years

ago that it was dawning on Europe that transmigration is not a theory, but a fact. Well, it is entirely the contribution of Hinduism.

Today varnashrama dharma and Hinduism are misrepresented and denied by its votaries. The remedy is not destruction, but correction. Let us reproduce in ourselves the true Hindu spirit, and then ask whether it satisfies the soul or not.

Young India, 24-11-1927

APPENDIX—II

KHADI COLLECTIONS IN SOUTH INDIA AND CEYLON[1]

1. Collections in South India

Collections made during Gandhiji's tour in Tamil Nad, Kerala and South Kanara :

Chettinad

Karaikudi, Rs. 6,524-9-7; Devakotta, Rs. 4,218-13-4; Paganeri, Rs. 4,120-10-3; Kottayur, Rs. 2,532; Kanadukathan, Rs. 2,416-9-6; Kadiapatti, Rs. 1,267-11-6; Amaravatipudur, Rs. 1,186-6-1; Siravayal, Rs. 1,099-11-9; Kothamangalam, Rs. 701-4; Pallathur, Rs. 601; Nachiyapuram, Rs. 505; Nemathanpatti, Rs. 501; Kulivarai, Rs. 401; Nachandupatti, Rs. 301; Lakshmipuram, Rs. 250; Virachilai, Rs. 121; Panayapatti, Rs. 101; Jayakondapuram, Rs. 101; Manachai, Rs. 100; Mahanagari, Rs. 13; Total Rs. 27,062-12-0.

Madras City

Total Rs. 21,772-9-4.

Madura

Madura, Rs. 13,472-7-6; Tirumangalam, Rs. 782-13-8; Tevaram and Gudalur, Rs. 143-0-7; Kombai, Rs. 100; Total Rs. 14,498-5-9.

Coimbatore

Coimbatore, Rs. 4,720-15-9; Tiruppur, Rs. 3,117-2-6; Pollachi, Rs. 2,204-3-6; Gobichettipalayam, Rs. 1,231-15-11; Erasanampatti, Rs. 270; Vellakoil, Rs. 100; Kinattukadavu, Rs. 100; Avinasi, Rs. 34-11-9; Cheyur, Rs. 13-4-0; Total Rs. 11,802-5-5.

Trichinopoly

Trichinopoly, Rs. 8,132-12-11; Srirangam, Rs. 113-9-2; Lalgudi, Rs. 1,957-13-3; Karur, Rs. 896-10-3; Manachanallur, Rs. 151; Total Rs. 11,251-13-7.

[1] *Vide* "Speech in Reply to Municipal Address, Trichinopoly", 17-9-1927 and "Speech to Chettiar Community, Colombo", 13-11-1927.

Tanjore

Mayavaram, Rs. 3,282-3-2; Mannargudi, Rs. 3,040-14-11; Kumbakonam, Rs. 2,923-10-11; Tanjore, Rs. 1,041-7-10; Rajapayan Chavadi, Rs. 288-12-0; Valangiman, Rs. 201; Needamangalam, Rs. 104; Tiruvadamarudur, Rs. 79-12-0; Papanasam, Rs. 23; Morupatti, Rs. 15; miscellaneous, Rs. 5; Total Rs. 11,004-12-10.

Tinnevelly

Tinnevelly, Rs.3,165-6-0; Tuticorin, Rs.2,616-5-4; Koilpatti, Rs.1,416-11-1; Srivaikuntan, Rs. 1,016-4-0; Nanguneri, Rs. 654-1-6; Panagudi, Tisayanvilai, Selvamarudur, etc., Rs. 434-13-6; Sivagiri, Rs. 530-9-6; Shankarankoil, Rs. 227-14-0; Kalladakurichi, Rs. 142-6-11; Sivakasi, Rs. 79-8-0; Tentiruperai, Rs. 51; Kalugumalai, Rs. 51; Kariyalur, Rs. 34-8-0; Mudukumindam, Rs. 31; Sankarankoil, Rs. 16; Total Rs. 10,467-7-9.

British Malabar

Calicut, Rs. 4,113-9-4; Palghat, Rs. 2,236-2-7; Otapalam and Shornur, Rs. 1,205-15-0; Agatitera, Rs. 314-1-9; Taliparamba, Rs. 101; Ponnani, Rs. 69-15-0; Badagara, Rs. 542-5-6; miscellaneous, Rs. 11; Total Rs. 8,594-1-2.

Ramnad

Rajapalayam, Rs. 3,642; Virudhunagar, Rs. 1,832-14-6; Paramakudi, Rs. 1,179-7-8; Sattur, Rs. 516-9-3; Tirupatur, Rs. 431-15-6; Srivalliputtur, Rs. 66-8-6; Total Rs. 7,669-7-5.

North Arcot

Vellore, Rs. 2,626-11-11; Arni, Rs. 2,178-10-5; Gudiyatham, Rs. 1,312-4-2; Arcot, Rs. 626-15-3; Pallikondan, Rs. 76-2-6; Tiruvannamalai, Rs. 50; Total Rs. 6,870-12-3.

Travancore

Trivandrum, Rs. 2,389-4-9; Nagercoil, Rs. 1,253-2-1; Alleppey, Rs. 974-9-0; Quilon, Rs. 858-2-9; Haripad, Rs. 335; Karuvatta, Rs. 313-0-3; Kartigapalli, Rs. 235-5-3; Kayangulam, Rs. 105; Changannur, Rs. 111; Karunagapalli, Ochara, Ayagrampur, Tottapali, Rs. 80-2-3; Total Rs. 6,654-10-4.

Cochin

Ernakulam, Rs. 2,519-0-1; Trichur, Rs. 1,898-11-5; Cochin, Rs. 900; Ollur, Rs. 885-13-0; Tirupanithura, Rs. 272-5-6; Machad, Rs. 13-8-0; Total Rs. 6,489-6-0.

South Arcot

Cuddalore, Rs. 3,087-12-7; Chidambaram, Rs. 1,965-7-6; Tindivanam, Rs. 260; Total Rs. 5,313-4-1.

Chingleput

Conjeevaram, Rs. 1,410-13-9; Adambakkam, Rs. 1,219-9-3; Tiruvallur,

Rs. 775-13-5; Poonamallee, Rs. 369-3-4; Sripermbudur, Rs. 56-7-6; Total Rs. 3,831-15-3.

Salem

Krishnagiri, Rs. 2,201-1-7; Hosur and Shoolagiri, Rs. 705-10-0; Puduppalayam, Rs. 205-6-0; Total Rs. 3,112-1-7.

Pudukkotta

Total Rs. 1,156-11-0.

Miscellaneous, Rs. 299-5-5.

Grand total : Tamil Nad and Kerala, Rs. 1,57,851-13-0.

Karnatak

South Kanara and Miscellaneous, Rs. 5,944-6-5.

Received for Gujarat Flood Relief, Rs. 130; Total receipts Rs. 1,63,926-3-5.

Less bank expenses, Rs. 20-13-8, Rs. 1,63,905-5-9

In Urban Bank, Mylapore, Rs. 1,54,777-13-9; in Tiruppur Khadi Vastralaya, Rs. 5,810-5-0; in A.I.S.A., Erode, Rs. 3,317-3-0; Total Rs. 1,63,905-5-9.

Young India, 10-11-1927

2. Khadi Collection in Ceylon

(We give below a consolidated list of khadi collections in Ceylon during Gandhiji's tour. Donors and contributors are requested to scrutinize the list and draw attention to discrepancies or omissions, if any, to Sjt. C. Rajagopalachariar, Gandhi Ashram, Tiruchengodu. —Mahadev Desai)

Colombo : Sea Street Chettiars, Rs. 4,001.00; Sea Street Clerks, Rs. 2,335.50; Sea Street Cooks, Rs. 103.25; Indian Youth's Sangha, Rs. 101.00; Vivekananda Society, Rs. 2,050.00; Nalanda Vidyalaya, Rs. 400.00; Ananda College, Rs. 400.86; Kaili Merchants, Rs. 205.00; Maruthuvakula Sangha, Rs. 401.00; Hewavitarana, Weaving School, Rs. 330.50; Sindhi Merchants, Rs. 1,754.50. Ceylon Labour Union, Rs. 2,726.71; Nadar Sangham, Rs. 201.00; Sea Street Lodge, Rs. 102.00; Zahiria College, Rs. 400.00; Tamil Ladies' Union Rs. 1,445.00; Sinhalese Ladies, Rs. 1,000.00; Young Men's Hindu Association, Rs. 101.00; Colombo Tamil Union, Rs. 1,251.50; Parsis, Rs. 1,001.00; Vidya Vinoda Sabha, Rs. 629.20; Reddiyar Mahajana Sangham, Rs. 3,001.00; Gandhi Sangham, Rs. 75.00; Slave Island General, Rs. 1,101.00; Young Bharatars' League, Rs. 110.11; Marava Community, Rs. 351.00; Ceylon Indian Association, Rs. 1,801.00; Young Lanka League, Rs. 60.00; Young Men's Buddhist Association, Rs. 615.45; Law College, Rs. 320.00; Malayalis, Rs. 260.00; Proprietors of Rice and Curry Shops, Rs. 1,250.00; Clerks of Rice and Curry Shops, Rs. 550.00; Ceylon National Congress, Rs. 600.00; General Reception, Colombo, Rs. 6,408.00; Auction, Rs. 350.00.

Sjt. Velliappa Nadar, Rs. 76.00; Sjt. Phillipiah, Rs. 50.00; Mrs. H. C. Abeywardne, Rs. 50.00; Mr. And Mrs. W. D. Fernando, Rs. 500.00; Mrs. W. A. DeSilva, Rs. 500.00; Dr. A. T. Kuriyan, Rs. 15.00; Sjt. B. V. Bhimiah Chettiar, Rs. 50.00; Mr. Billimoria, Rs. 25.00; Mr. K. S. Narayana Aiyar, Rs. 25.00; Mr. A. E. DeSilva, Rs. 200.00; Mr. H. W. Periera, Rs. 100.00; Mr. Velayutham Pillai, Rs. 51.00; Miss Bandaranayake and others, Rs. 110.00; other miscellaneous collections, Rs. 365.85; Further collections general, Rs. 285.00; Total, (Colombo) Rs. 40,195.43.

Kurunagala : Chettiars Rs. 1,021.00; General, Rs. 1,500.00; Puttalam and Kalpitiya Clerks, Rs. 35.00; Kandigama and Hellipola, Rs. 112.00.

Negombo, Rs. 1,812.00; Kochukadawn, Rs. 432.00; Paligoda National League, Rs. 30.72.

Chilaw, Rs. 1,530.82; Nainamadama, Rs. 128.06.

Matale : Maruthuwakula Sangham, Rs. 55.00; Buddhist School, Rs. 25.00 General Rs. 1,093.20; Mr. Ponniah, Rs. 150.00; School foundation, Rs. 251.41; Total Rs. 1,574.61.

Kandy : Dharmaraja College, Rs. 111.00; Shri Rahula School, etc., Rs. 91.00; General, Rs. 4,500.00; Indian Youths' Sangham, Rs. 71.16; Maruthuwakula Sangham, Rs. 141.00; Indian Association, Rs. 1,187.50; Mr. P. S. Devadasu Pillai, Rs. 10.00; Miscellaneous Rs. 38.50; Total (Kandy) Rs. 6,150.16.

Pandarawela, Rs. 601.63; Diyatalawa, Rs. 103.00; Haputala, Rs. 351.50.

Badulla : General, Rs. 4,000.00; Y.M.C.A., Lunugala, Rs. 215.00; Meeting collections, Rs. 289.37; Miscellaneous, Rs. 35.60; Total Rs. 4,539.97.

Dikoya, Rs. 135.00; Talawakale, Rs. 315.00; Nannwaya, Rs. 150.00; Wellimada, Rs. 215.25; Dikawela, Rs. 500.00.

Nuwara Eliya : General, Rs. 4,097.15; Meeting collections, Rs. 555.31; Total Rs. 4,652.46.

Hatton : Carfax Labourers, etc., Rs. 100.00; Castlereagh Labourers, Rs. 135.00; Kanganis' Association general purse, Rs. 2,500.00; Bazar, Rs. 558.00; Miscellaneous, Rs. 210.00; Total Rs. 3,503.00.

Prigatana, Rs. 194.20; Wattawela, Rs. 230.50.

Nawalapitiya : General, Rs. 1,322.39$\frac{1}{2}$; Y.M.W.A., Rs. 39.61; Miscellaneous Rs. 77.90; Total Rs. 1,439.90$\frac{1}{2}$.

Kaduganchola, Rs. 45.00.

Gampola : General, Rs. 175.00; School, Rs. 51.00; Cooks, Rs. 41.00; Maruthuvakula Sangham, Rs. 41.00; R. Letchmanan Chettiar, Rs. 250.00; Miscellaneous, Rs. 16.34; Total Rs. 2,149.34.

Tekkala Mahajana Sabha, Rs. 364.00, Kadugannawa, Rs. 864.14.

Kegala : General, Rs. 762.40; Auction, Rs. 30.00; Meeting collections, Rs. 110.17; Total Rs. 902.57.

Attangalla, Rs. 210.00; Miscellaneous from Kandy to Colombo, Rs.162.68$\frac{1}{2}$.

Ambalangoida : Tamils, Rs. 265.85; Miscellaneous, Rs. 14.73; Total Rs. 280.58; Balpitiva, Rs. 50.00; Dadunduwa, Rs. 55.65; Tirangama, Rs. 129.21; Telawala School, Rs. 11.30.

Moratuwa, Rs. 588.90; Kalatura, Rs. 1,695.85; Horanna, Rs. 472.93; Panadura, Rs. 1810.00.

Galle : Udugama Kanganis, Rs. 200.00; Tamilians, Rs. 58.00; Mahajana Sabha, Rs. 180.45; Chettiars, Rs. 501.00; Kanakupillais, Rs. 351.00; Dramatic Performance, Rs. 200.00; Mahinda College, Rs. 465.00; Auction, Rs. 20.00; Miscellaneous, Rs. 16.00; Further collections general, Rs. 49.10; Total Rs. 2,040.55.

Matara : General, Rs. 899.45; Chauffeurs' Union, Rs. 100.00; School-children, Rs. 100.00; Maruthuwakula Sangham, Rs. 60.45; Miscellaneous, Rs. 30.00; Individual gifts : Mrs. Prasad, Rs. 50.00; Mr. N. Gunasekara, Rs. 50.00; Mr. J. B. Cardozo, Rs. 25.00; Mr. Sundaram Pillai, Rs. 25.00; Hon. Aweyasekhara, Rs. 500.00; Total Rs. 1,839.90.

Godagama, Rs. 150.00; Akmimana, Rs. 250.00; Ambalawatta, Rs. 21.60; London Ceylonese students by T.M.O., Rs. 53.00; another by M.O. Rs. 6.00; Ganeunulla, Rs. 200. 54.

Trincomalee, Rs. 392.00; Auction, Rs. 10.00; Total Rs. 402.00.

Palai, Rs. 20.51; Nathandiya Estate, Rs. 45.50.

Total for mofussil excluding Colombo and Jaffna : Rs. 46,529.54.

Jaffna : General, Rs. 1,957.10; Depressed Classes Service League, Rs. 180.00; Village Committees, Rs. 709.75; Meeting Collections, Rs. 32.49; Parameshwara College, Rs. 536.60; Manipari Hindu College, Rs. 501.00; Malayan subscribers through *Hindu Organ*, Rs. 852.50; Chunnakam, Rs. 651.46; Auction, Rs. 25.00.

Hindu College, Rs. 707.00; Kandarodai School, Rs. 223.59; Indians in Jaffna, Rs. 1,301.25; Vishvakarma Co-operative Society, Rs. 115.45; Chunnakam Depressed Class School Foundation, Rs. 10.00; Indians' meeting Rs. 47.06; Anurudhapura, individual, Rs. 30.00; Chavalacheri, Rs. 213.50; Koppai, Rs. 144.00; Tondamanuru, Rs. 400.00; Viyamagatunur temple, Rs. 90.81.

Valvettiturai, Rs. 470.25; Auction, Rs. 6.00.

St. Pedro, Rs. 1,014.49; Through Secretary, Jaffna Urban Council, Rs. 52.42; Chivateru, Rs. 259.57; Jaffna labourers, Rs. 594.98; Meeting, Rs. 48.95$\frac{1}{2}$; Chemma Street, Rs. 107.00; St. John's College, Rs. 258.80; Central College, Rs. 276.00; Ramanathan Girls' College, Rs, 1,111.08; Malakan English School, Rs. 101.00; Tellipalai, Rs. 617.20; Chulipuram and Chenkanai, Rs. 309.00; Victoria College, Rs. 280.00; Sithankarai School, Rs. 105.00; Vaddukkodai, Rs. 35.00; Jaffna

College, Rs. 600.00; Karainagar, Rs. 538.40; Jaffna Railway Station collections and through Lady Ramanathan, Rs. 129.60; Morlay and Kolapuram, Rs. 280.40; Island Kayts, Rs. 650.03; Pandateruvur English School, Rs. 31.32; Hospital matron and nurses, Rs. 10.00; Vavuniya, Rs. 125.00; Madavadri, Rs. 106.75; Auction, Rs. 1,147.00; Miscellaneous, Rs. 297.25; Total Jaffna collections, Rs. 18,291.05½.

Grand total Rs. 1,05,016.02½

Less deficit in value of sovereigns (54) at 7 cents	3.78
Bad coins	12.12½
Net total	1,05,00.12
	= 1,05,000-2-0

	Rs.	A.	P.
Deposited in the Bank (M.C.U.B.)	1,04,487	5	4
Cash on hand	148	9	5
Cheques awaiting realization having been returned as irregular	364	3	3
Total	1,05,000	2	0

Young India, 22-12-1927

APPENDIX III

INTERVIEW TO C. KUTTAN NAIR[1]

October 4, 1927

Mr. T. K. Madhavan has received a wire[2] today from Gandhiji asking him to start civil disobedience in regard to the ban on untouchables in regard to the use of Thiruvarppu temple roads.

Mr. C. Kuttan Nair, a co-worker of Mr. Madhavan, interviewed Gandhiji this morning at Virudhunagar in regard to the Thiruvarppu temple roads questions. Mahatma Gandhi went through all the papers which Mr. Kuttan Nair submitted . . . and after ascertaining the real facts . . . said :

From the facts before me, I have no hesitation in saying that a very strong case has been made out for starting satyagraha in the matter of opening out the roads to the *avarna* Hindus in Thiruvarppu.

Asked whether by satyagraha he meant that form that was adopted at Vaikom, he said emphatically "No". He said it should be comprehensive enough to include all

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Trivandrum", 10-10-1927.
[2] Not available

forms of civil disobedience. He said he was even for mass civil disobedience at Thiruvarppu, provided there is an atmosphere of non-violence. Failure on the part of the Travancore Government to follow up the Vaikom settlement in logical way resulted in the present muddle and that, he said, would strengthen the demand for temple-entry for *avarnas*. "Yes", he said, "temple-entry is coming."

Gandhiji promised to try to visit Thiruvarppu on his way to Ernakulam.

The Hindu, 6-10-1927

APPENDIX IV

INTERVIEW WITH SHRI SHANKARACHARYA OF KANCHI[1]

In the latter half of 1927, Mahatma Gandhi was touring the South to popularize Congress objectives and collect funds. Gandhiji, who had already heard about the Acharya through Mr. A. Rengaswamy Iyengar, Manager, *The Hindu*, and Mr. S. Satyamurti, decided to call on him. The historical meeting took place on October 15,1927 in a cattle-shed adjoining the Acharya's camp at Nellicheri in Palghat. Only a few persons were present, but no Press reporter.

Gandhiji paid his respects to the Acharya in the traditional Hindu style. The overwhelming saintliness of the sannyasi, clad in ochre-coloured khadi and seated on the floor, made a deep impression on Gandhiji mind. A spell of silence ensued. Then the Acharya spoke a few words in Sanskrit by way of welcome and asked him to be seated. Gandhiji sat down and said that he was not used to speaking in Sanskrit, but could understand the language somewhat, and wanted permission to speak in Hindi. Since the Acharya could understand Hindi, this arrangement suited both. Gandhiji spoke in Hindi and the Acharya in Sanskrit.

The Acharya expressed appreciation of Gandhiji's efforts to spiritualize politics, since healthy national life should be based on spiritual foundations and nations devoid of religion and dependent on materialistic forces were bound to perish. On the question of temple-entry for Harijans the Acharya thought that it might amount to a form of *himsa* to wound the feelings of those who still believed in the supremacy of Shastras and tradition. The discussion continued on spiritual matters; it was open-hearted and reflected mutual regard. There was no disputation or polemics. . . .

The conversation went on for about an hour. . . . On taking leave, Gandhiji said that he was immensely benefited by this visit, and that he would keep the Acharya's wishes in mind and fulfil them to the best of the capacity.

[1] *Vide* second footnote to "Conversation with Depressed Classes Deputations", October 15, 1927.

As Gandhiji would take no food after 6 p.m., Mr. C. Rajagopalachari went and reminded him about his meal at 5.30 p.m. But Gandhiji said : "This talk with the Acharya is my food for the day." Then the Acharya offered to Gandhiji a big citrus fruit which he gladly accepted, saying he had a special liking for the fruit.

Later at a public meeting held at Coimbatore the same evening, when Gandhiji was questioned about his discussion with the Acharya, he said that it was private and confidential and hence Press reporters were kept out.

[From Tamil]

Shri Jagadguru Divya-Charitram, pp. 121-3

APPENDIX V

GANDHI-IRWIN INTERVIEW[1]

I

. . . When he saw the Viceroy, the interview was a cold affair. Lord Irwin placed in his hands the Secretary of State's announcement regarding the Simon Commission, and when asked whether that was all the business, Lord Irwin said "Yes". Gandhiji felt that a one-anna envelope would have reached it to him. . . .

The History of the Indian National Congress, Vol. I (1885-1935), p. 315

II

In fact, Gandhi and Irwin had a long conversation at this first meeting at which they listened to one another with exemplary patience and courtesy. Gandhi was in good humour . . . promising to convert the Viceroy to khaddar.[2] He listened to Irwin attentively, and, after he had finished, developed his own general political philosophy at length. He saw no need for British tutelage. He was prepared to wait indefinitely rather than ask India to impair the self-respect she ought to have. Parliament, he said, should give India what India desired. Therefore he felt remote from all these things. Congress was trying to serve an idea—the idea of non-co-operation which would ultimately impress itself upon the mind of Parliament, Communalism would pass; the communities had been trying to absorb India.

It was Irwin's experience of the Mahatma's incoherent political technique. He found him vague . . . but without bitterness, and in conversation pleasantly reasonable. But there was little in his . . . discourse on which the Viceroy's practical mind could take hold. . . . Only when Gandhi and the others said that they attached

[1] On 2-11-1927; *vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 11-11-1927.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Irvin", 26-4-1928.

little importance to the procedure by which the representatives from the Indian Legislature would be invited to confer with the English Parliamentary Committee did Irwin seize the chance of telling them sharply that if they refrained from availing themselves of this opportunity, they would be committing a political blunder of the first magnitude and would hopelessly prejudice British opinion against their case.

Halifax : The Life of Lord Halifax, p. 246

III

It is believed in certain quarters that His Excellency the Viceroy was prompted by a mandate from Whitehall that India should accept as *fait accompli* an absolutely parliamentary Commission consisting of representatives of all British political Parties; and that those who might prove to be pestilential agitators should be told beforehand that the Government would stand no more bluff and nonsense.

Indians will, however, be associated in the work of the Commission in the capacity of assessors. Even in regard to the selection of assessors the communal clamour will be heard; but this can be silenced by appointing only official Indians as assessors. This is believed to be the substance of the Viceroy's lecture.

Mr. Gandhi said that such a Commission would be a failure as self-respecting Indian opinion could not but resent such deliberate insult. It can lead only to boycott of the Commission. However, to him, and to those of his way of thinking the Commission was not of any consequence, however well composed it might be and however liberal its terms of reference. Asked if he would advise his countrymen, particularly the Swarajists, to co-operate with the Commission in its investigation, Mr. Gandhi said that it was none of his business. He was not prepared to induce anybody to co-operate with the Commission. The Swarajists were all veterans in political warfare and not children to be dictated to. Mr. Gandhi, however, assured His Excellency that he would not himself initiate a movement for boycott of the Commission as he had long since abdicated the political functions of leadership to the Swarajists. Mr. Gandhi, in conclusion, said that he would not—as indeed he could not—prevent anyone from participating in the work of the Commission.

The Hindu, 9-11-1927

APPENDIX VI

EXTRACT FROM S. D. NADKARNI'S LETTER[1]

. . . What *varna* nearly always has been is the artificially maintained, hard-and-fast division, otherwise called 'caste'. Be it fourfold, as it was 'once upon a time', or

[1] *Vide* '*Varnashrama* and Its Distortion' 17-11-1927.

forty-thousand-fold, as it is today, it is in essence the same. It is a system of monopolies and restraints distributed according to mere birth. . . .

. . . Now, Mahatmaji, if you and I will be true Hindus, and not 'Vaishya' and 'Brahmin' only—for I own to 'Brahmin' parentage—then we are bound to worship the memory of Shambuka, the 'Sudra' ascetic of Rama's days, as the oldest asserter of religious freedom we know, and the first martyr on record in India or perhaps the whole world. Mahatmaji, are you prepared to do that with me? Thus only may the sting be taken out of the anti-Brahmin agitation, and a united Hinduism arise out of the ashes of this age-old struggle. I say, let Shambuka be vindicated, if Hinduism is to live yet and prosper. . . .

. . . If it were so, all Gandhis should stick to grocery and Ramanama, and never—take to social and political reform of their country, unless perhaps, after finishing the householder's life, they have formally entered upon the fourth *ashrama* at the prescribed age. Else, it would be trenching upon "the spiritual" of Brahmins and Kshatriyas for a Vaisya to take to politics! But would it be a salutary rule? And how stands the law of heredity? . . .

. . . If we but think over it, it will be clear as daylight that we have overdone the principle of heredity by investing it with tyrannous sanctions in the name of religion. . . .

. . . Just as you of Vasya parentage hold the Vaisyas as a class responsible for the economic downfall of India, so I who happen to be Brahmin by birth have no hesitation in declaring that the Brahmins as a class are responsible for the enslavement, both spiritual and economic, of all India. From those to whom much was given, much was expected. But alas, a narrow bigotry born of a short-sighted selfishness stood in the way of their giving of their best to the community. And great has been the fall of all Brahminists, and with them of the Brahmins.

Young India, 17-11-1927

APPENDIX VII

EXTRACT FROM STATEMENT BY THE VICEROY ON THE INDIAN STATUTORY COMMISSION[1]

November 8, 1927

When the Commission has reported and its report has been examined by the Government of India and His Majesty's Government, it will be the duty of the latter to present proposals to Parliament. But it is not the intention of His Majesty's Government to ask Parliament to adopt these proposals without first giving a full opportunity for Indian opinion of different schools to contribute its view upon them.

[1] *Vide* "Interview to the Associated Press", 1-12-1927.

And to this end it is intended to invite Parliament to refer these proposals for consideration by a Joint Committee of both Houses, and to facilitate the presentation to that Committee both of the view of the Indian Central Legislature by delegations who will be invited to attend and confer with the Joint Committee, and also of the views of any other bodies whom the Joint Parliamentary Committee may desire to consult.

In the opinion of His Majesty's Government the procedure contemplated fulfils to a very great extent the requisites outlined above.

Such a Commission, drawn from men of very British political party and presided over by one whose public position is due to outstanding ability and character, will evidently bring fresh, trained, and unaffected judgment to bear upon an immensely complex constitutional issue.

Moreover, the findings of some of its own members can count in advance upon a favourable reception at the hands of Parliament, which will recognize them to speak from a common platform of thought, and to be applying standards of judgment which Parliament will feel instinctively to be its own. For myself I cannot doubt that the quickest and surest path of those who desire Indian progress is by the persuasion of Parliament, and that they can do this more certainly through members of both Houses of Parliament than in any other way. The Indian nationalist has gained much if he can convince Members of Parliament on the spot, and I would therefore go further and say that if those who speak for India have confidence in the case which they advance on her behalf, they ought to welcome such an opportunity being afforded to as many members of the British Legislature as may thus to come into contact with the realities of Indian life and politics.

Furthermore, while it is for these reasons of undoubted advantage to all who desire an extension of the Reforms that their case should be heard in the first instance by those who can command the unquestioned confidence of Parliament, I am sanguine enough to suppose that the method chosen by His Majesty's Government will also assure to Indians a better opportunity than they could have enjoyed in any other way of influencing the passage of these great events. For not only will they, through representatives of the Indian Legislatures, be enabled to express themselves freely to the Commission itself, but it will also be within their power to challenge in detail or principle any of the proposals made by His Majesty's Government before the Joint Select Committee of Parliament, and to advocate their own solutions. It should be observed moreover that at this stage Parliament will not have been asked to express any opinion on particular proposals and therefore, so far as Parliament is concerned, the whole field will still be open.

IRWIN,

Viceroy and Governor General

India in 1928-29, pp. 372-3

APPENDIX VIII

THE INDIAN STATUTORY COMMISSION[1]

Whereas We have deemed it expedient that the Commission for which provision is made in Section 84A of the Government of India Act should forthwith be appointed for the purpose of inquiring into the working of the system of government, the growth of education, and the development of representative institutions, in British India, and matters connected therewith, and should report as to whether and to what extent it is desirable to establish the principle of responsible government, or to extend, modify or restrict the degree of responsible government then existing therein, including the question whether the establishment of second chambers of the local legislature is or is not desirable :

Now know ye that We, reposing great trust and confidence in your knowledge and ability, have on the advice of Our Secretary of State for India acting with the concurrence of both Houses of Parliament authorized and appointed, and do by these presents authorize and appoint you, the said Sir John Allsebrook Simon (Chairman); Harry Lawson Webster, Viscount Burnham; Donald Sterling Palmer, Baron Strathcona and Mount Royal; Edward Cecil George Cadogan; Stephen Walsh[2]; George Richard Lane-Fox and Clement Richard Attlee to be Our Commissioners for the purposes aforesaid.

And for the better effecting the purposes of this Our Commission, We do by these presents give and grant unto you, or any three or more of you, full power at any place in Our United Kingdom or in India or elsewhere in Our Dominions to call before you such persons as you shall judge likely to afford you any information, upon the subject of this Our Commission : and also whether in Our said Kingdom, or in India, or elsewhere in Our Dominions to call for information in writing; to call for, have access to and examine all such books, documents, registers and records as may afford you the fullest information on the subject, and to inquire of and concerning the premises by all other lawful ways and means whatsoever, including the appointment by the Commission with the sanction of Our Secretary of State for India, of any person or persons to make subordinate enquiries and to report the result to the Commission :

And We do by these presents authorize and empower you or any of you to visit and inspect personally such places as you may deem it expedient so to inspect for the more effectual carrying out of the purposes aforesaid :

And We do by these presents will and ordain that this Our Commission shall

[1] *Vide* "Interview to the Associated Press", 1-12-1927.

[2] Stephen Walsh having resigned for reasons of ill-health, Vernon Hartshorn was appointed in his place on December 7, 1927.

continue in full force and virtue, and that you, Our said Commissioners, or any three or more of you, may from time to time proceed in the execution thereof, and of very matter and thing therein contained, although the same be not continued from time to time by adjournment :

And We do further ordain that you, or any three or more of you, have liberty to report your proceedings under this Our Commission from time to time if you shall judge it expedient so to do :

And Our further will and pleasure is that you do, with as little delay as possible, report to Us under your hands and seals, or under the hands and seals of any three or more of you, your opinion upon the matters herein submitted for your consideration.

Given at Our Court at Saints James's the Twenty-sixth day of November One thousand nine hundred and twenty-seven; in the Eighteenth Year of Our Reign.

By His Majesty's Command

W. JOYNSON-HICKS

India in 1927-28, pp. 385-6

1. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CHICACOLE

December 3, 1927

You seem to be dividing all the good things with poor Utkal[1]. I flattered myself with the assumption that my arrival here is one of the good things, for I was going to devote all the twenty days to seeing the skeletons of Orissa; but as you, the Andhras, are the gatekeepers of Orissa on this side, you have intercepted my march. But I am glad you have anticipated me also. After entering Andhra Desh, I have been doing my business with you and I know God will reward all those unknown people who have been co-operating with me who am a self-appointed representative of *Daridranarayana*. And here, too, you have been doing the same thing. Last night, several sister came and presented me with a purse. But let me tell you this is not after all my tour in Andhra. I am not going to let you alone so easily as this, nor will Deshabhakta Konda Venkatappayya let me alone, because I have toured in some parts of Ganjam. I am under promise to tour Andhra during the early part of next year, and let me hope what you are doing is only a foretaste of what you are going to do next year.

You have faith in true non-co-operation. There is the great drink evil, eating into the vitals of the labouring population. I would like you to non-co-operate with that evil without a single thought and I make a sporting proposal, viz., that those who give up drink habit should divide their savings with me on behalf of *Daridranarayan.* Then I see that many of you are making chimneys of your mouths by the vicious smoke habit. You, who smoke, do not know what a filthy habit it is. I saw that many of the people, when I made the appeal, threw away their cigars and cigarettes. The elderly people by indulging in this vicious habit do not know what a legacy they are leaving to their children. You know, as I know, that many children steal money in order to satisfy their curiosity to somke. I ask you therefore to non-co-operate with the smoke habit, and again divide you savings with me.

So also must Hindus non-co-operate with the devil of un-touchability. I give you my assurance that devil is keeping us from God, and it is a barrier created for our own destruction.

[1] Another name for Orissa

Mahatmaji then proceeded to answer some questions handed to him by someone in the audience. The first question was: "What are the means now to be adopted by young men for the uplift of the Mother country?" Mahatmaji said:

There are many things that I can suggest, but there is one thing which is the easiest for them to do and that is khadi work. They can set apart a certain sum every month or every year to be devoted for khadi work. If they have the time, they can devote it to organizing khadi work in their own district. If they cannot do so or if they have given what is best in them. If they cannot do so or if they have not confidence enough to be able to do organizing work, they can give half an hour a day to spinning and their yarn to the All-India Spinners' Association and become a member.

The second question dealt with the educational and other qualifications required for a public worker. Mahatmaji said:

So far as educational qualifications are concerned, besides knowing the provincial vernacular, they must know also the *Rashtrabhasha*[1]—Hindi. But the other qualifications are even far more important. They must be strictly honest and their private character must be pure. Men whose eyes are not straight and whose heart is full of animal passion are not fit for doing political work. And in my opinion, unless he believes in truth and non-violence at any cost, he has no business to be a politician.

Answering the third question, Mahatmaji said :

Whilst all our leaders are conceiving and cooking all kinds of schemes, we, the rank and file, cannot do better than achieving the message of khadi to its fullest extent. It is not a small thing for you and me to take part in an effort to save sixty crores of rupees. You and I cannot pack the Councils, Assembly and Municipalities. Even if we would, we could not have all the qualifications. But every one of us is born with the qualification for khadi. It requires not much training except the training of the heart. By doing khadi work you will find that the power is descending upon you.

The Hindu, 9-12-1927

[1] National language

2. ESSAY ON KHADI

Readers will recall that essays in English were invited on the subject of khadi, in view of the prize announced by Shri Revashanker Jagjivan[1]. Accordingly, the essay written jointly by Professor Puntambekar and Shri Varadachari was awarded the prize. As this is well worth study, it has been translated [into Gujarati] for the Jamnadas Bhagwandas Memorial Series. Shri Chhaganlal Joshi of the Satyagraha Ashram has done the translation and it has now been published. It is priced at Re. 1. The total number of pages is 260. The translation runs into 215 pages, the rest being appendices. All the apppendices are useful. The last appendix gives a short history of khadi in Gujarat; in other words, it shows where khadi was formerly produced in Gujarat and how that priceless industry came to be ruined. The language used in the translation is simple. Gujarati readers will have no difficulty in understanding it. Those who wish to understand well the secret underlying the activity of spinning must positively go through this book.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-12-1927

3. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, BERHAMPUR[2]

Decembr 4, 1927

SISTERS,

You have presented two purses for the khadi work. I acknowledge your present with gratitude. You must not think that I consider some of you as Oriyas and some as Telugus. You should feel that all are Indians. Some say that they belong to Andhra and some say that they belong to Orissa. Let all of you belong to India. Let all of you share each other's misery and happiness. Only thus can you become like Sita. Sita did not consider herself a citizen of Ayodhya. She always considered hereself as belonging to the whole of India. I am really glad that you have written this welcome address in the national language, that is, Hindi. Let all of you give up foreign saris. Let all of you use only khadi. There is no necessity for a woman to wear beautiful saris and ornaments. The only thing a woman needs is purity. Let all of you wear khadi. Let all of you be pure and truthful.

[1] Revashanker Jagjivan Zaveri of Bombay

[2] In Orissa

You should not consider anyone as untouchable. In India, that is, Bharatvarsha, it is a great sin to consider anyone as an untouchable. For heaven's sake do not commit that sin. Love those who are poor, diseased and hungry. Let all of you prove that you love them by spinning yarn on the charkha for at least half an hour every day. I appeal to those who have not contributed anything towards this Khadi Fund to contribute money or ornaments.

[From Oriya]

The Samaj, 10-12-1927

4. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, BERHAMPUR

December 4, 1927

PROFESSORS, STUDENTS AND BROTHERS,

Our programme in this meeting will be unlike the programmes followed in other meetings. In our Satyagraha Ashram, for many years now, at 4.15 a.m. in the morning and at 7 p.m. in the evening, we hold congregational prayers. When the Ashramites go to other places this schedule is observed even there. Knowing that it is difficult to hold prayers at 7 p.m. in the evening regularly [during tours], we have ruled that prayer must be held at night before going to bed.

On Friday, December 2, it was very late in the night when we entered into Ganjam district. I forgot to pray before going to bed due to heavy work. When I woke up in the dawn, I trembled in fear. I could see that I had committed a great mistake before the Lord. So we decided that anyone forgetting to offer prayers must do some kind of penance. We also decided that wherever we were, we must remember the name of Rama at least once in the evening. I was scheduled to come to this meeting at 7 p.m. and we were supposed to pray together; but while coming the motor car from Chhatrapur I found that it was already 7 p.m. So I prayed by myself in the motor-car; but when we have decided on collective prayer, I beg you to pray here and now. Those students and others who have faith in prayer, let them pray with closed eyes. After the prayer, I will try to explain its utility. Those who are unwilling to pray, I request them to sit quietly.[1]

[1] The first two paragraphs are translated from *The Samaj*, an Oriya paper. What follows is from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter", published in *Young India*, 15-12-1927. Mahadev Desai adds: "The students' meeting had been timed at 7 p.m. Although we did not reach the meeting at 7 and had to have our prayers whilst in motion, Gandhiji decided to have the congregational prayer at the meeting. So we had it, the students keeping pin-drop silence. . . "

As food is necessary for the body, prayer is necessary for the soul. A man may be able to do without food for a number of days,—as MacSwiney did for over 70 days—but believing in God, man cannot, should not, live a moment without prayer. You will say that we see lots of people living without prayer. I dare say they do, but it is the existence of the brute which, for man, is worse than death. I have not the shadow of a doubt that the strife and quarrels with which our atmosphere is so full today are due to the absence of the spirit of true prayer. You will demur to the statement, I know, and contend that millions of Hindus, Mussalmans and Christians do offer their prayers. It is because I had thought you would raise this objection that I used the words 'true prayers'. The fact is we have been offering our prayers with the lips but hardly ever with our hearts, and it is to escape, if possible, the hypocrisy of the lip-prayer, that we in the Ashram repeat every evening the last verses of the second chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita.* The condition of the 'Equable in Spirit' that is described in those verses, if we contemplate them daily, is bound slowly to turn our hearts towards God. If you students would base your education on the true foundation of a pure character and pure heart there is nothing so helpful as to offer your prayers every day truly and religiously.

The Samaj, 10-12-1927 and *Young India,* 15-12-1927

5. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

BERHAMPUR,
December 5, 1927

JAMNALALJI BAJAJ,
ASHRAM
SABARMATI

MOHANLAL DID MEET. SENT HIM HOME BEFORE WIRES FROM YOU JAYADAYALJI.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 68

6. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

BERHAMPUR,
Silence Day [*December 5, 1927*][1]

SISTERS,

I got your letter written by Manibehn. I have very little time to write today. I am convinced that we should not permit jewels in the Ashram. As long as there is terrible starvation in our land it is a sin for us to keep or to put on a ring weighing even a grain. Our clothes must be just sufficient to cover our nakedness and to protect us against heat and cold. All of you should try to reach this ideal.

I shall not write today about how the desire for ornaments arises. It looks as though you have also not understood my question properly.

How is it that Lakshmibehn is ill? She never used to fall ill.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3679

7. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

December 5, 1927

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I missed one mail this time. I could not attend to things regularly while I was in Ceylon. There was plenty of travelling to do. When, however, I miss a mail you should not feel worried or followed my example. You will be free to miss a mail when both of you become as busy as I am if you have not learnt by then to get over my weaknesses. Truly speaking, however, a real heir is one who enhances the legacy he has inherited.

Sushila is right when she says that in the realm of art there can be no distinction between indigenous and foreign, but her statement calls for some reflection. Lovers of art take a superficial view of art and use it as a cover for many weaknesses. We should, therefore, examine what we mean by art. Not everything which appeals to the eye is art. What is accepted as art by many expert may not be art. I have read conflicting opinions about many paintings and statues

[1] Gandhiji was in Berhampur on this date.

expressed by art-critics who have become famous in the world. We should, therefore, think what art means. The book *What Is Art?* [1] has been translated [into Gujarati]. Sushila should read it. If you cannot get it there, Please write to me.

Devdas suffered very much during his illness. There is some affection in the nose. There was temperature again. He is better now. Ba has gone to stay with him. I am in Utkal today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4731

8. SPEECH AT CHHATRAPUR[2]

[On or before *December 6, 1927*]

I am pining for a day when all this unhealthy competition between sister languages of India will have ceased. Why should we not love all of them equally, as a brother holding a number of sisters in the same affection? The result of the wretched competition has been that we forget our vernaculars and are jealous of others, and fondly believe that English would take the place of the common language of India, and even of the vernaculars. Indeed a suggestion had come to me to address the meeting here in English. Well, I take this as disaffection towards the daughter language of the motherland, and an unhealthy affection for a foreign tongue. Not that I hate English, but I love Hindi more. That is why I am beseeching the lettered classes of India to make Hindi their common language. It is through Hindi that we can get into touch with and promote the growth of the other vernaculrs of the provinces. If our intellects and hearts had not been atrophied owing to our having to learn through a foreign medium, there would be no reason why we should not all be knowing five or six vernaculars. And my remarks regarding the competition between languages apply also to our narrow provincialism. It is that provi-

[1] By Leo Tolstoy

[2] Mahadev Desai says in his "Weekly Letter": "In Chicacole the youngsters sang the *Janaganamana.* The lines enumerating the provinces including Madras and Utkal were mutilated by some parochial Andhra who had dropped Utkal and added Andhra instead ! . . . The Chhatrapur meeting was the first quiet meeting we had after many noisy ones, and Gandhiji took an opportunity to animadvert upon this narrow spirit."

ncialism that has prevented the full growth of nationalism in us. The golden rule for the promotion of nationalism is that the stronger should help and sacrifice for the weaker as much as is possible. And now you will understand the rationale of khadi, which is intended to promote a healthy nationalism, and which embraces within its fold the poor and the downtrodden.

Young India, 15-12-1927

9. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Tuesday [*December 6, 1927*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I got your letter. I look forward to a letter from you on the due dates; if, however, I don't get one, I understand. Your name is always on my lips. When it becomes necessary to say anything unpleasant like a note out of tune, even then it will, in fact, be perfectly in tune since it will be the truth and truth is always in tune. Do not, therefore, omit to tell me what you think I must be told. I did not receive the letters which you mention. Letters addressed to me do not generally get lost, but these ones at any rate did not reach me. I am sure many errors remain in *My Experiments with Truth*. I exercise great care but, when memory betrays me, to whom shall I complain about the misfortune? Please to not omit to draw my attention to any fact, whether important or unimportant.

"So tenacious is life, it does not leave even now."[2] I do fear this. Mahadev, of course, sang the line for his own purpose. You may hear the history behind it when he narrates it to you. You have done very well in absorbing yourself in your present work.[3] It is also a good thing that you get an opportunity to visit the Ashram form time to time. Do continue to send your suggestions and criticisms. Give your very life in making a model village a really model one; men with real life will then come and live in it.

Ba has gone there, that is, to live with Devdas. There is no time to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7769. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

[1] From the reference to Kasturba Gandhi having gone to live with Devdas, it appears that this letter was written about the same time as "Letter to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi", 5-12-1927.

[2] The opening line of a song from Dadu, a Hindi poet of the 16th century

[3] The addressee had taken up constructive work in villages.

10. DISTORTION OF TRUTH

A correspondent has been endeavouring with the help of the head master of a high school to introduce the teaching of the *Gita* among its boys. But at a recent meeting convened to organize *Gita* readings a bank manager got up and disturbed the even tenor of the proceedings by saying that students had not the *adhikara*, 'qualification', for studying the *Gita*; it was not a play-thing to be placed before students. The correspondent sends me a long and argued letter about the incident and sends in support of his contention some apt saying from Ramakrishna Paramahamsa from which I cull the following :

> Boys and youths should be encouraged to seek God. They are like unpecked fruits, being totally untainted by worldly desires. Once such desires have entered their minds, it is very difficult to make them tread the path to salvation.
>
> Why do I love young men so much? Because they are masters of the whole (16 annas) of their minds which get divided and sub-divided as they grow up. One half of the mind of a married man goes to his wife. When a child is born it takes away one-fourth (four annas), and the remaining one-fourth (four annas) is scattered over parents, wordly honours, dress, etc. Therefore a young mind can easily know God. It is very difficult for old people to do so.
>
> The parrot cannot be taught to sing if the membrane of its throat becomes hardened with age. It must be taught while it is young. Similarly, in old age it is difficult for the mind to be fixed on God. It can be easily done so in youth.
>
> If a seer of adulterated milk contains a *chhatank* (sixteenth part of a seer) of water, it can be thickened into *kshira* (condensed milk) with very little labour and consumption of fuel. But should there be three *paos* (quarter seer) of water in a seer, the milk cannot be easily thickened and a large consumption of fuel will be required. *A young mind, being but slightly adulterated with worldly desires, can be easily turned towards God; this cannot be done with the minds of old people which are highly adulterated with such desires.*
>
> The tender bamboo can be easily bent, but the full-grown bamboo breaks when an attempt is made to bend it. It is easy to bend young hearts towards God, but the heart of the old escapes the hold when so drawn.
>
> The human mind is like a package of mustard seed. As it is very difficult to gather the seeds that escape out of a torn package and are scattered in all directions, so when the human mind runs in diverse directions and is occupied with many worldly things, it is not a very easy task to collect and concentrate

it. The mind of a youth, not running in diverse directions, can be easily fixed on anything; but the mind of an old man being totally occupied with worldly things, it is very hard for him to draw it away from them and fix it on God.

I have heard of *adhikara* in connection with the Vedas, but I never knew that the *Gita* required the qualifications that the bank manager had in mind. It would have been better if he had stated the nature of the qualifications he required. The *Gita* clearly states that it is meant for all but scoffers. If Hindu students may not read the *Gita* they may not read any religious works at all. Indeed the original conception in Hinduism is that the student life is the life of a *brahmachari* who should begin it with a knowledge of religion *coupled with practice* so that he may digest what he learns and weave religious conduct into his life. The student of old began to live his religion before he knew what it was, and this conduct was followed by due enlightenment, so that he might know the reason for the conduct prescribed for him.

Adhikara then there certainly was. But it was the *adhikara* of right conduct known as the five *yamas* or cardinal restraints—*ahimsa* (innocence), *satya* (truth), *asteya* (non-stealing), *aparigraha* (non-possession), and *brahmacharya* (celibacy). These were the rules that had to be observed by anybody who wished to study religion. He may not go to religious books for proving the necessity of these fundamentals of religion.

But today the word *adhikara* like many such potent words has suffered distortion, and a dissolute man, simply because he is called Brahmin, has *adhikara* to read and expound Shastras to us, whereas a man, if he is labelled an untouchable because of his birth in a particular state, no matter how virtuous he may be, may not read them.

But the author of the *Mahabharata* of which the *Gita* is a part wrote his great work for the purpose of meeting this insane objection, and made it accessible to all irrespective of the so-called caste, provided, I presume, that he complied with the observances I have described: I add the qualifying expression "I presume" for, at the time of writing, I do not recall the observance of the *yamas* as a condition precedent to a person studying the *Mahabharata*. Experience however shows that the purity of heart and the devotional frame of mind are necessary for a proper understanding of religious books.

The printing age has broken down all barriers and scoffers read

religious books with the same freedom (if not greater) that the religiously-minded have. But we are here discussing the propriety of students reading the *Gita* as per of religious instruction and devotional exercise. Here I cannot imagine any class of persons more amenable to the restraints and thus more fitted than students for such instruction. Unfortunately, it is to be admitted that neither the students nor the instructors in the majority of cases think anything of the real *adhikara* of the five restraints.

Young India, 8-12-1927

11. GOD'S TEMPLE

Here in Ceylon where I am writing for *Young India* amid surroundings where Nature has bountifully poured her richest treasures, I recall a letter written by a poetically inclined friend from similar scenes. I share with the reader a paragraph from that letter.

> A lovely morning! Cool and cloudy, with a drowsy sun whose rays are as soft velvet. It is a strangely quiet morning—there is a hush upon it, as of prayer. And the mists are like incense, and the trees worshippers in a trance, and the birds and insects pilgrims come to chant *bhajans*. Oh! how I wish one could learn true abandonment from Nature! We seem to have forgotten our birthright to worship where and when and how we please. We build temples and mosques and churches to keep our worship safe from prying eyes and away from outside influences, but we forget that walls have eyes and ears, and the roofs might be swarming with ghosts—who know!
>
> Good Gracious, I shall find myself preaching next! How foolish, on a lovely morning like this? A little child in the garden adjoining is singing as unconsciously and joyously as a bird. I feel inclined to go and take the dust of its little feet. And since I cannot pour out my heart in sound as simply as that little one, my only refuge is in silence!

Churches, mosques and temples, which cover so much hypocrisy and humbug and shut the poorest out of them, seem but a mockery of God and His worship, when one sees the eternally renewed temple of worship under the vast blue canopy inviting every one of us to real worship, instead of abusing His name by quarrelling in the name of religion.

Young India, 8-12-1927

12. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

December 8, 1927

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I am having such a hectic time that I have no leisure at all. Your letter has come to me here at an obscure place. Now you must leave Pattani Saheb's bungalow, and that without intimating him. You must inform him only after you have left. Isn't that what we decided in Bombay? If you must stay in Panchgani you must take whatever other accommodation you can get. My advice is that you should only go to Almora or some place that side. If Taramati refuses to go along, she must be left at Bombay. As for Dilip, now he can be taken even without her.

The fact that you got temperature again suggests that you are still in a delicate state of health.

I am all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

My address is uncertain at the moment. Hence the best thing is to write at Berhampur.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

13. SPEECH AT BANPUR

December 8, 1927

I thank you for your address and the purse you have presented. I had given up the idea of visiting Banpur, considering the advice of my doctors. But, when I learnt that the Police were threatening the villagers and warning that if they come to the meeting they would be trampled upon by horses and shot down by soldiers, I resolved to come to Banpur.

Why should you fear? A man who is innocent of crime need not fear. And remember that there would be no one to frighten you if you refused to be afraid. After all the policemen are our kith and kin. When they come to intimidate you, ask them what they want to achieve thereby. If they take you to jail do not resist them. If they abuse you don't abuse you don't abuse them but laugh away. If they belabour you, don't return blow for blow, but go and report the matter to the nearest representative of the people. I would warn you

against going to law for after all we do not want the police to be punished but to repent. But if you feel that you must go to law you may. Do not in any case be cowed down. For fear is worse than disease. The man who fears man falls from the state of man. Fear God alone. I am here until two o'clock tomorrow. You can come and tell me all you have to say.[1]

Your address mentions that you have got no khadi work here. Consult the khadi workers of other parts in your district, and till you can produce khadi locally, buy khadi made in Orissa.

The Hindu, 12-12-1927 and *Young India*, 22-12-1927

14. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

[BOLGARH,
December 10, 1927][2]

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I am now going through the whole programme. Sambalpore will be dropped. I am thankful you are not sending me to Jamshedpur. I am here till Monday. I reach Sakhigopal Monday night and Balasore Wednesday. The rest is uncertain. Yes, indeed, the Kharagpur victory was God's gift.[3]

With love,

MOHAN

[PS.]

I am better.

C. F. ANDREWS
BALASORE

From a photostat: G.N. 2625

[1] This paragraph is from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter" published in *Young India*.

[2] From the postmark

[3] In August-September 1927, the Bengal Nagpur Railway Administration decided to reduce the labour force in the Kharagpur Workshop by 1,600 hands. The workmen adopted passive resistance. The workshops were closed on 12th September and were reopened on 8th December when, as the result of an enquiry, some workmen who had been discharged were reinstated and in a few cases the compensation payable to the discharged workmen was enhanced (*India in 1927-28*, pp. 177-8).

15. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

BOLGARH,
December 10, 1927

MY DEAR C.R.,

You will be surprised to know that at least I have three days of quiet in a beautiful little village. Before that the Ganjam programme was worse if possible even than the Ceylon programme, though it yielded twenty thousand. Then a doctor came to take my blood-pressure. Niranjan Babu has made the same arrangements for examination of blood-pressure that you had. And when the doctor read 190, he got frightened and the whole of the programme has been rearranged. Hence the rest. Personally I am inclined to disbelieve the doctor's reading. However, even if it was wrong reading, it has done good. A new doctor who has come today from Cuttack has read anything between 155 and 165. His own reading is between 155 and 160. Mahadev and Pyarelal read 165. The diastolic is 90-100. If these readings are correct, the blood-pressure is the same as before, and there is nothing to worry. However I am not writing this to tell you about the blood-pressure. Enough for you to now that I am all right.

I am dictating this in order to send you the enclosed. If you can send someone to inspect the village and find out whether we can take up the proposition, please do so. In any case correspond with the writer Mr. G. Subramaniam yourself. I am sending him a postcard telling him that he may expect to hear from you.

I send you also Dr. Joseph's letter. His suggestion commends itself to me. I think we must do some wor in Nagercoil, and unless you have anything to the contrary, please enter into correspondence with him telling him that his suggestion is acceptable and that it will be put before the Council of the Association[1] and you will let him know at an early date. Meanwhile you may send the sample of yarn he wants. We ought to be able to take up the yarn, and if there are local weavers, we may be able to get it woven there. Please write to Dr. Joseph early. I have told him that his suggestion commends itself to me and that I have forwarded his letter to you for consideration.

I hope you have fixed up the quarters in Madras. Satis Babu was with me for a day. He will be in Madras and stay with us. You should

[1] All-India Spinners' Association

have ready a moderate amount, no more than one pound at the outside, of goat's milk butter.

Here is a letter from . . . .[1] Please ack. to him. I am not writing to him. His proposal seems to be quite good. Of course we will be with you.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 12647

16. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BOLGARH

December 10, 1927

Fear is more deadly than disease, such as cholera, smallpox or malaria. Disease wastes only the body, while fear destroys the soul; and men of fear cannot understand God. He who is godfearing, takes the name of God, cannot fear men. I cannot dismiss as untrue reports of friends who have informed me that you have been frightened by the Police and others who have told you that Government would arrest all those who came to me. I am aware of nothing for which Government should make arrests and for aught I know Government has not till now asked people not to contribute to funds raised by me. I understand that Orissa being poor, zamindars and officials want to keep people under fear for their own selfish interests. I have found something striking in the atmosphere since Banpur. I cannot make out how it will satisfy Government if people are kept off from me, or khadi work is interfered with, I cannot bear the thought that anyone should oppress another and feel ashamed that such poor unsophisticated people receive such treatment. I feel humiliated that whereas I cannot put up with oppression from foreigners, my own country's zamindars or officials have been frightening people. If the names of those who have been frightened are given to me I propose visiting them and if the names of the zamindars are also given I shall go and discuss the subject with them. Fear is more deadly than diseases, and I ask them to give up fear, so that the work of those who frighten might automatically cease. Give up drink, gambling and prostitution, so that you can be pure enough to attain God. Though I have not come to raise purses in Orissa I do not hesitate to beg even from the poor for the sake of khadi. May God bless you.

Orissa Government Records

[1] The source has a blank here.

17. LETTER TO ADA ROSENGREEN

AS AT THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI

December 11, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1] for which I thank you. You may translate the book *Self-restraint* v. *Self-indulgence*. As to the terms, I leave them to you. Whatever is given will be devoted to public use.

What you say about the women of the West is only partly true and true also perhaps to an extent for the women of India. But these are society women and very few. So far as the vast majority of women are concerned, they are too engrossed in their own occupations even to think of animal passions. It is reserved for man to become aggressive when animal passion forces him. What you say about passivity is unfortunately too true all the world over, and I do not know that the majority of women will ever be able to overcome that passivity. Perhaps the very construction of their bodies prevents the development of active resistance except under certain well-defined circumstances which are created by special culture. And it is because woman is passive that I have contended that it is man who is the more to blame than woman. And even the society woman of the West does not go beyond subtle attraction and blandishments. I have not known many cases of violence done by women to men. She has a remarkable capacity for controlling herself and pining away rather than be aggressive even under raging passion within her breast.

Your sincerely,

M. ADA ROSENGREEN

LIDINGO, SWEDEN

From a photostat: S.N. 12541

[1] Dated 28-9-1927, in which the addressee sought Gandhiji's permission to translate his book into Swedish.

18. LETTER TO HENRY NEIL

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 11, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your kind letter[1] and enclosures. I do not feel that I can really write anything that would suit you. You will therefore excuse me for not complying with your request.

So far as the question of child welfare is concerned, it is quite true to say that in the sense Lord Lytton means I have not interested myself in the problem, but in a sense, which I consider higher and which takes in not a few thousand children but millions of children, I am continually occupied in attending to their welfare. For, the hand-spinning movement is designed to affect the starving millions of this land including little children. And if I succeed, I know that the child welfare of the type known to you and Lord Lytton is assured.

With reference to the printed sheet by you, it is difficult to reply to it because the writer has seen the same thing from a different angle of vision. I have no desire therefore to enter upon a criticism of the writing which in accordance with your wish I return herewith.

Your sincerely,

JUDGE HENRY NEIL

From a photostat: S.N. 12545

19. LETTER TO THE SECRETARY, SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF MINORS, COCHIN

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 11, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Owing to continuous travelling I have been able to reach your letter only today. Whilst I have no hesitation about condemning the *Devadasi* institution, it would not be proper on my part to say

[1] The addressee, in his letter dated 8-10-1927, sought from Gandhiji "a full and complete statement as to the effects of the teachings of Christ on the people of India" and also his views on certain other matters.

anything about your appeal seeing that I do not personally know any member of your society. If you are unknown there, you are still more unknown to me. Your duty therefore is to make yourselves known by your honest and strenuous work. And I am sure that there will be benevolent men enough in Cochin to take up your cause.

Yours sincerely,

THE SECRETARY
SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF MINORS
COCHIN

From a microfilm: S.N. 12642

20. LETTER TO D. R. BHANDARKAR

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 11, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Owing to my continuous wanderings I have not been able to reply to your letter earlier. The time-limit you have given me makes it well nigh impossible for me to overtake the task imposed by you on me. Only Mahadev Desai can cope with the work, if I don't do it myself, but I have not the heart to add to the strain already put upon him. Neither he nor I have a moment to spare till February.

Yours sincerely,

PROF. D. R. BHANDARKAR
35, BALLYGUNGE, CIRCULAR ROAD
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 12643

21. LETTER TO J. N. JINENDRADAS

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 11, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your long letter. It is not possible to prevent or regulate by pressure of public opinion the emigration of people in distress from one place to another, and it would be wrong to prevent it by legislation. But wise ameliorative legislation in Ceylon can certainly

do a great deal to check evils inseparable from the immigration of poor labourers no matter to what race they belong. You should create a public opinion in Ceylon which would demand from the employers of labour a humane treatment, payment of adequate wages and construction of sanitary and commodious dwellings. Instead of regarding Indian labourers as foreigners, you should treat them as your own. After all the labourers go to Ceylon because they are wanted.

Yours sincerely,

J. N. JINENDRADAS
45, PARANAWADIYA ROAD
MARADANA, COLOMBO

From a microfilm: S.N. 12644

22. A LETTER

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 11, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I do not consider the embracing of Christianity as in any way essential for salvation. I do not believe in the exclusive divinity of Jesus Christ. I do not consider that the lives of all Roman Catholic bishops are above suspicion. In my opinion, it is taking a low view of marriage to think that it involves indulgence in animal passion at the instance of either partner. Marriage has far nobler uses. I am not aware that religion enjoins upon one partner the obligation to indulge at the instance of another. On the contrary, physical union is not permitted till both are equally desirous.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 12645

23. LETTER TO SRI PRAKASA

BOLGARH (ORISSA),
December 11, 1927

MY DEAR SRI PRAKASA,

You must forgive me for not replying to your letter for such a long time, but I have been worked beyond my strength and have had no time left for dealing with voluminous correspondence. It is only

because I am having enforced rest at an unknown and out-of-the-way village in Utkal, that I am able to deal with the arrears, and in the natural course I have come upon your letter. Here is the receipt sent to me with your letter from the Ashram.

The *Aaj* people should not complain. Complimentary copies have been sent only to well-known English papers. Even well-known friends have not been supplied with copies simply because after all *Young India* and *Navajivan* are at present very poor concerns. They do not command the circulation of 1920 and 1921, and yet the rigid rule of remaining self-supporting in spite of the handicaps in the shape of not taking advertisements, etc., is observed, and whenever there is anything left over from the running of these papers, the whole of it goes for public cause. Should *Aaj* then expect a free copy, it would be simply taking so much out of poor people's pockets. If, in spite of this explanation, you or the workers at the *Aaj* office expect a free copy, tell me and I shall ask Swami Anand to send one. Of course I know that *Aaj* is a leading paper on your side as is *Basumati* for instance in Calcutta. But so far as I am aware, no vernacular paper has had the English copy.

Do please take me in your confidence either by letter or by coming to me. I would love to share your burdens. Do regard me therefore as a friend who would treasure your confidence and endeavour to lighten your burdens. I am at Sabarmati in January. I am sorry I shall have to go to Kathiawr for a few days during that month.[1] But if you will be there for the whole of the month you can go with me to Kathiawar also and see that weird country.

Do take up the charkha regularly and once you have obtained mastery over it, you will not want to give it up, and it will be a faithful companion speaking to you only at your behest. But you will find all the joy in the handling of it only if you will connect it and through it yourself with the meanest of our people. And why should there be any shame in carrying on the *takli*, if there is no shame in identifying with the poorest. I suppose you do know that the shepherds in Almora and in many other parts of India carry their *taklis*, spinning wool wherever they go.

Yours,

SJT. SRI PRAKASA
BANARAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 12646

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Kathiawar Political Conference, Porbandar", 22-1-1928.

24. LETTER TO HARJIVAN KOTAK

BOLGARH, ORISSA,
December 11, 1927

When the mind is disturbed by impure thoughts, instead of trying to drive them out one should occupy it in some work, that is, engage it in purposeful thoughts. Or one may engross it in Ramanama, engage it in reading or in some bodily labour which requires mental attention too. Never let the eyes follow their inclination. If they fall on a woman, withdraw them immediately. It is scarcely necessary for anyone to look straight at a man's or woman's face. This is the reason why *brahmacharis*, and others too, are enjoined to walk with their eyes lowered. If we are sitting, we should keep steady in one direction. This is an external remedy, but a most valuable one. You may undertake a fast if and when you find one necessary.

It is not necessary for you to go to Satavalekarji. He will certainly teach you some *asanas*. If you wish to go to him to learn them, you may certainly do so. I know him very well. He is a fine man.

You should not be afraid even if you get involuntary discharges during a fast. Vaids say that, even when impure desires are absent, such discharges occur because of pressure in the bowels. But, instead of believing that, it helps us more to believe that they occur because of impure desires. We are not always conscious of such desires. I had an involuntary discharge in sleep twice during the last two weeks. I cannot recall any dream. I never practised masturbation. One cause of these discharge is of course my physical weakness, but I also know that there are impure desires deep down in me. I am able to keep out such thoughts during waking hours. But what is present in the body like some hidden posion, always makes its way, even forcibly sometimes. I feel unhappy about this, but am not nervously afraid. I am always vigilant. I can suppress the enemy but have not been able to expel him altogether. If I am truthful, I shall succeed in doing that too. The enemy will not be able to endure the power of truth. If you are in the same condition as I am, learn from my experience. In its essence, desire for sex-pleasure is equally impure, whether its object is one's wife or some other woman. Its results differ. At the moment, we are thinking of the enemy in his essential nature. Understand, therefore, that so far as one's wife is concerned you are not likely to find anyone as lustful as I was. That is why I have described my

pitiable condition to you and tried to give you courage. If Ba is as a mother to me now, this is the result of long struggle and God's grace. The legacy of that unclean life, however, afflicts me. I, in return, try to overcome it and, with God's grace, shall overcome it in this very life.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

25. A NOTE

[On or after *December 11, 1927*][1]

I have been thinking about him constantly. His wife is very intractable and very obstinate. On the whole therefore if he works at the Ashram, i.e., in Gujarat, for the time being, it will relieve- Narandas of some anxiety.

On further considering the matter, I think it will be better till we meet to postpone setting apart sums for mother and Kishan. I would make some other suggestions.

From the original: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

26. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

BOLGARH,
Silence Day, December 12, 1927

SISTERS,

There is profound solitude around me, but it is the solitude of a sick man's room. When I see the state of people here my heart burns within me, and I very much long to stay on here. If any of you is willing to come here, I would invite her to do so. All the women here observe *purdah*. The people have neither enough clothes to wear nor food to eat. When Mirabehn suggested, before I went to Orissa, that it was our duty to put on still fewer clothes, I felt embarrassed. But when I see things here, I feel that her suggestion was indeed proper. Women here put on only one dhoti, one half covers the lower part, and the other half the upper part of their bodies. They get neither milk nor ghee. They are terror-stricken. Because of some policeman's threat, they do not even come anywhere near me. I left Mirabehn in a house

[1] This was written on the letter-head of the All-Parties Convention, Allahabad which was held on 11-12-1927.

and went out; immediately about fifty women surrounded her and began to ask her questions. If someone of you is willing to work here among these women, she can, I am sure, do a great deal. But all this is about the future. For the present, all of you should get fully trained. 'Training' means forgetting oneself. If you do that, you can then go anywhere you like.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3680

27. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Silence Day [*December 12, 1927*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL

I had your letter. Today I am in an unknown village of Utkal. There is so much to do here that I myself feel like devoting some time. Tomorrow, I will reach the place where there were floods. What I will get to see there will be something different. Will you come here if I want to utilize your services? Perhaps it would be necessary to keep someone in the affected area to supervise the work. He has to maintain the accounts, too. Is there a marked improvement in your health there? Has the mental fatigue gone?

There are certain difficulties in Nimu's marriage[2] but I would not involve you in those worries. I am writing to Lakhtar. I expect to reach the Ashram on January 1 or before that.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Now send your letters to Madras. The best address is:

Hindi Prachar Office
Triplicane, Madras.

There, too, I would not stay for more than five days.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32862

[1] From the contents, from 'Silence day' in the dateline and from reference to Gandhiji's presence in an unknown village of Utkal; *vide* "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", December 10, 1927 and "Letter to Sri Prakasa", December 11, 1927.

[2] To Ramdas Gandhi, the youngest son of Gandhiji, They, however, got married on January 27, 1928.

28. LETTER TO RAMESHCHANDRA

ON TOUR,
December 13, 1927

BHAI RAMESHCHANDRAJI,

I preserved your letter till now in the hope of answering it. Only today can I do so.

Eating flesh and eating vegetables both involve violence but without the latter man can survive nowhere, while without the former he can ordinarily survive anywhere. If sensitivity to pain differs among creatures, the pain experienced by a cow in the throes of death cannot be experienced by plants. For all living beings, violence in some form is unavoidable. The votary of non-violence will commit the minimum of violence. The other religions do not enjoin flesh-eating; they just do not forbid it. It is well to know the custom in the other religions or even in Hindu dharma, but if our reason considers vegetarianism superior from the moral point of view, we must accept it. The votary of non-violence will progressively restrict himself, even in the use of vegetables. It is difficult, not impossible, to remain a vegetarian in places like Greenland. Even if proved impossible, it cannot establish the necessity of flesh-eating everywhere. Though our acts are seldom without a fault, we abstain from many on the basis of comparative merit. Abstinence is constantly on the increase in the life of a seeker after *moksha*, and it is essential too.

Eggs and milk differ. Eggs are not essential. Milk too is not essential for crores of people. I have eaten eggs in England under a delusion, as I ate meat in India. But on coming to my senses I left them and even in the company of vegetarian friends I accepted only those dishes that did not contain eggs. I have now come to know that a great number of unfertilized eggs are laid. This can be systematically checked and generally unfertilized eggs alone are eaten. But this cannot make eggs an item of our food.

Non-violence is a comprehensive dharma. Violence does not consist only in taking life away from the body. Abandoning *brahm-acharya* too is violence in my eyes. It is well known that a *brahm-achari* must abstain from fleshdiet, eggs and milk too. *Brahm-acharya* is more easily attainable with vegetable diet alone.

In conclusion, though the question of diet is very important for a religious man, yet it is not the be-all and end-all of religion or non-violence; nor is it the most vital factor. The observance of religion and

non-violence has more to do with the heart. He who does not feel the necessity of abstaining from meat for inner purification need not abstain from it.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6279

29. TELEGRAM TO SAKARCHAND

BALASORE,
December 14, 1927

SAKARCHAND SHETH
KENILWORTH COLLEGE
PANCHGANI

HOPE YOU ARE BETTER. WRITING. GOD BLESS YOU.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 7159

30. LETTER TO CAPTAIN J. W. PETAVEL

(CAMP) BALASORE,
December 14, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter written on the train. It is pathetic, for, though I believe that I have a most accommodating temperament, I see vital differences between us, where you seem to say only differences in mere matters of detail. Our outlooks appear to me to be wholly different. Whereas you have before your mind's eye that microscopic minority, the educated Indian, I have before my mind's eye the lowliest illiterate India living outside the railway beat. Important as the former class undoubtedly is, it has no importance in my estimation except in terms of the latter and for the sake of the latter. The educated class can justify its existence only if it is willing to sacrifice itself for the mass. Your scheme therefore makes no appeal to me. I have read Sir P. C. Ray's preface and I have read the other writings you have been sending me; but though I admire these great men, they cannot move me from my fundamental position. I want you therefore to recognize the fundamental difference between us and love me in spite of that difference if you can. For my part, the existence of that difference does not prevent me from loving you and therefore writing to you as often as I can in reply to your communications and striving

to make clear the differences between our temperaments so that we may quickly agree to differ and hope one day that one or the other will become a convert.

Yours sincerely,

CAPTAIN J. W. PETAVEL
BAGHBAZAAR
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 12648

31. LETTER TO RATILAL SHETH

Wednesday [*December 14, 1927*][1]

BHAI RATILAL,

Chi. Narandas has sent me your letter. It is good you wrote to me. Chi. Mathurads had given me news of Sakubhai's illness when I was in Bombay. But I did not think it was anything serious. Of course a T.B. patient has to be extremely careful. Therefore please make arrangements so that proper care is taken of him. Inform me regularly. Give the enclosed letter[2] to Sakubhai if you think it proper. I have sent a wire today. You will have received it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7155

32. LETTER TO SAKARCHAND SHETH

Wednesday [*December 14, 1927*][3]

BHAISHRI S. SAKUBHAI,

I have been distressed to read about the deterioration in your health. Get well quickly now. Illness is inseparable from the body. Therefore while we should try to overcome illness we must not be scared of it or worry on account of it. Illness can only end in death. That also is our companion from birth. Therefore we should ever be prepared to embrace it. Death is not extinction but only a change of state. I want you to ponder this so that fear of death does not make

[1] The letter evidently followed Gandhiji's wire to Sakarchand Sheth of the same date. December 14 in the year 1927 was a Wednesday.

[2] *Vide* the following item.

[3] *Vide* the preceding item

you get worse. Fear of illness makes our illness worse. If we remain light-hearted and cheerful it helps to overcome the illness.

I want you to get well soon and be free from anxiety.

Don't reply to this letter.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7156

33. INDICTMENT

Do you agree that it is the primary duty of an ideal Government and more so of a Great Soul to put down the wicked and to protect the righteous? If so, may we know how your political philosophy is consistent with this age-long dictum? Was not this the keynote of Shri Krishna's preaching to Arjuna on the battle-field of Kurukshetra?

Was this not the shrewd policy of the avataras[1], that brought about the dethronement of the renowned Bali, the destruction of Vali, and the annihilation of Jarasandha?

How can you expect ordinary mortals, and and that too large numbers at a time, to withstand the attacks of unscrupulous enemies without retaliation? In view of the above, are we not justified in considering your emotional preachings and teachings as impracticable and not within the realization of ordinary persons? Your temporary and piecemeal success in South Africa had been exaggerated greatly by your admirers, and the Indians of average intelligence, innocently (sheep-like) following your lead, have been entangled in difficulties, not realizing that the parrallel of South Africa does not hold good in the case of a vast country of different languages and religious sections like India. Have you not yourself realized, at the cost of the life-interests of a large number of young patriots, that all your talk of "swaraj within a year" has proved vainglorious? Don't you admit that your somersault[2] in the Bardoli[3] affair caused much havoc to the people of Guntur who boldly and manfully withheld payment of taxes for a considerable period,[4] in pursuance of your programme?

May we know the net result of your participation in the Khilafat agitation

[1] Vaman, Rama and Krishna

[2] *Vide* "Speech on New Congress Creed, Nagpur", December 28, 1920 and Appendix "Brahmin-Non-Brahmin Question", November 24, 1927.

[3] That is, suspension of satyagraha in Bardoli on February 12, 1922; *vide* "Working Committee's Resolutions at Bardoli", February 12, 1922.

[4] *Vide* "Note on Civil Disobedience in Guntur", before February 10, 1922.

and the consequent playing of the Congress into the hands of a few fanatical Mussalmans? Has not the Hindu-Muslim unity of which you spoke and wrote so much, and in the name which you appealed to all Hindus to join their Mohammedan brethren in the hour of their trial, proved a veritable castle of cards, the moment the need of the Mohammedans was over? Can you ever expect by your pious teachings to bring about any real unity between the bigoted and brave Mohammedans and caste-ridden and timid Hindus? Have you ever realized the fact that the communal feuds are increasing all the more, ever since you came into prominence in the Congress by virtue of your creed of non-violence?

Will you not admit that Pandit Malaviya, C. R. Das, Lala Lajpat Rai, Vijayaraghavachariar, Kelkar, Dr. Moonje and other all-India leaders were disgusted with your political philosophy, however much it might be garbed in the language of dharma?

Have you not recognized the leadership of that great soul Tilak at least at the beginning? But how is it, you are today raking up intricate controversies of a social and religious character, to the detriment of the national cause? Do you not realize that these tend only to accentuate dissensions all the more among the docile Hindus? Are you not thereby indirectly playing into the hands of the enemies of our cause, whose one argument against us is that we are socially unfit for poliitcal freedom?

It is worthy on your part to set up and encourage *Panchamas* to enter the holy temples of caste Hindus for whom and by whom they were built exclusively? Do you consider yourself to be a Trinetra (God Rudra) to set at naught those time-honoured customs at one stroke? Rcently, we are surprised to note that you have taken up the the cause of widows and boldly advised immature youths to marry widows. Don't you consider that Swami Vivekananda and others were prudent enough not to advocate widow marriage as they realized the the difficulties which confront us even in the case of the marriages of maids, as they are taking place today? May we know how far it will help to create harmony by mixing up such highly controversial problems with the question of swaraj which is purely political and on which all of us are expected to make a united stand?

Your charkha cannot be popularized in this advanced age of science. Don't you think that you will do well, in the light of practical experience, to confine your activities to the field of labour organizations?

As a real believer in ahimsa dharma is it not your clear duty to refuse addresses from municipalities which are harbouring slaughter-houses?

The foregoing is a condensation of a letter sent to me by a

correspondent while I was in Berhampur. As I have reason to think that the correspondent has boldly voiced what many are harbouring in their breasts, I feel that the indictment deserves an answer.

It is hardly necessary to answer he questions in detail. Many of us make the very serious mistake of taking literally what is accepted as scriptures, forgetting that the letter killeth and the spirit giveth life. The *Mahabharata* and the Puranas are neither history nor simple religious maxims. They appear to me to be wonderfully designed to illustrate the religious history of man in a variety of ways. The heroes described therein are all imperfect mortals, even as we are—the difference being one of degree only. Their alleged actions are not infallible guides for us. The *Mahabharata* sums up its teachings by declaring emphatically that truth outweighs everything else on earth.

But I do no seek to justify everything written under the name of scriptures. I take, as all to be true must take, the sum-total of the effect produced on me by a prayerful reading of such books. Thus I hold that my belief in truth and non-violence is derived from and bases on the scriptural teaching of the very books from which the correspondent presents me with conundrums. Nay more, my belief today having become part of my fundamental being is capable of standing independent of these books or any other Surely there must come a time in the life of a very religiously minded man when his faith must be self-sustained. Whatever therefore the avataras may be proved to have done or not done is of little moment to me. My experience daily growing stronger and richer tells me that there is no peace for individuals or for nations without practising truth and non-violence to the uttermost extent possible for man. The policy of retaliation has never succeeded. We must not be confounded by the isolated illustrations of retaliation, including frauds and force, having attained temporary and seeming success. The world lives because there is more love than hate, more truth than untruth in it. This is a proposition capable of being verified by everyone who will take the trouble to think. Fraud and force are diseases, truth and non-violence is health. The fact that the world has not perished is an ocular demonstration of the fact that there is more health than disease in it. Let us, then, who realize this, live up to the rules of health even in the midst of circumstances the most adverse.

My preaching and teaching are not emotional or unpractical, for I teach what is ancient and strive to practice what I preach. And I

claim that what I practise is capable of being practised by all, because I am a very ordinary mortal open to the same temptations and liable to the same weaknesses as the least among us.

The success in South Africa was complete according to the standard then aimed at. And what is true of small groups must be true of larger groups with correspondingly larger effort of the same types.

I have faith enough in my method to be able to prophesy that posterity will consider the years 1920 and 1921 as among the most brilliant in the pages India's history, and among them the Bardoli 'somersault' the most brilliant of all. The Bardoli decision has enabled India to look the world square in the face and to hold up her head. With her creed in the Congress constitution, it was the only correct, bold and honourable course for the nation to take. The battle for swaraj was no camouflage. And if any suffered involuntarily, they suffered because they played with fire.

The participation in the Khilafat agitation has made both the parties strong and has resulted in a mass awakening which would have otherwise taken ages. If real uniy is to come, it will come only by a due adherence to my teachings. The present Hindu-Muslim feuds and inter-Hindu feuds and even inter-Muslim feuds are a sign of the mass awakening. What we see happening today is nothing but the coming of dirt to the surface in the process of purification. Let the correspondent watch the process going on in a sugar refinery, and he will understand my meaning. This froth in the shape of feuds had come to the surface only to be thrown out in the end.

I am unaware of the fact that Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji and the other leaders mentioned by the correspondent are disgusted with my political philosophy. Of some at least I know to the contrary. But even if they are disgusted I hope that my faith will stand the strain of the disgust of all friends whose opinion I have learnt to value and cherish.

The correspondent betrays his ignorance of the Lokamanya when he imputes to him policies which I know he was never guilty of. I know that there were fundamental differences between us but not what the correspondent imagines. What we should learn from our heroes is not a slavish imitation of their actions which we may not know or understand. We need to assimilate their bravery, their great self-sacrifice, their equally great industry, their love of their country and a steady pursuit of their own ideals. We make fatal blunders when without relevance or without adequate knowledge we copy their

isolated actions.

I hold that without the social reforms that I am advocating, thank God, in common with many of our distinguished countrymen, Hinduism is in danger of perishing.

The charkhas is making steady progress in spite of the correspondent's unbelief. The charkhas work is my contribution to the ocean of labour.

When I receive addresses from municipalities, I claim to remain untouched by the slaughter in the municipal slaughter houses. On the contrary, their addresses give me an opportunity of preaching my doctrines to them, and I am happy to say that they never resent them and some of them even adopt the suggestions I humbly place before them.

Young India, 15-12-1927

34. LETTER TO H. A. J. GIDNEY

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 15, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your letter[1]. I have not any time at my disposal to send you a long message, but this I can say.

The present and the future policy of the Anglo-Indian community should be not to strive for recognition as Europeans, but strive to make common cause with India's masses to whom they owe everything. The fact of European blood should be treated as a handicap and turned to good account not by aping the superficial veneer of Europe, but by striving to assimilate the good qualities of the Europeans and sharing them with the masses. The attempt on the part of some Anglo-Indians to treat themselves as a class apart and wrest special privileges will be found in the end to be vain and inglorious.

Yours sincerely,

LT. COL. H. A. J. GIDNEY
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 12639

[1] Dated 25-11-1927; the addressee had asked for a message for the Christmas issue of the *Anglo-Indian Review*.

35. LETTER TO I. SANYASA RAZU AND OTHERS

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARAMATI,
December 15, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have secured from Deshbhakta Venkatappayya the names of these Andhra friends who gave proper legal guarantees for the moneys advanced by the Khadi Board, now Charkha Sangh, for khadi work. I understand that you are one of these guarantors and that there is difficulty in securing payment from you. I would make a fervent appeal to you to discharge your obligation which is not merely legal but also moral. And we who profess to serve the country are in my opinion more bound by moral obligations even than by those that are merely legal. I therefore hope that you will discharge this obligation as if it was a first charge upon all your assets and induce other friends to discharge their responsibility.

Your sincerely,

(1) IVVATURI SANYASA RAZU, DEVADI
(2) GADEY RAJAMANNAR, BERHAMPUR
(3) UNNAVA RAMALINGAM PANTULU, MUNICIPAL CHAIRMAN, BERHAMPUR
(4) MALLADI KRISHNAMOORTHY PANTULU, VAKIL, BERHAMPUR
(5) THAKUR RAMAKRISHNARAO (Now gone to Kashi)[1]

From a microfilm: S.N. 12649

36. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

BALASORE,
December 16, 1927

You acted very wisely in opening your heart before Jamnalalji, Maganlal and others. A person who has realized his or her own error, has changed into a new body, why should he or she feel ashamed of talking about the old one? Even sin is a disease. Conversely, every disease is a sin. You may feel embarrassment in talking about your mental appendicitis if I feel it in talking about my appendicitis. Yes, of

[1] Letter was not sent to him.

course, so long as we cling to the disease we shall feel shame, embarrassment and remorse. But, just as the body feels light after the cause of the disease has been expelled with an operation, so too should the mind.

[From Gujarati]

From a manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

37. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

December 16, 1927

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

Since Shri Govindji Cheda is under your charge, I do not worry about him. Kindly write from time to time, and tell me what Dr. Jivraj Mehta says, who is to perform the operation, etc.

You must have recovered by now.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

[PS.]

18-21 Cuttack

23 Madras

From a Gujarati original: C.W. 5011. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

38. ARTICLES ON COW-PROTECTION

Some readers have made a request that articles written by Shri Valji Desai on cow-protection, in Gujarati in the *Navajivan* and in English in *Young India*, may be published in book form. Shri Rameshwardas of Dhulia has promised to contribute Rs. 35 towards the expense. It is doubtful whether the book would fetch the cost of publication; hence it could be published only if other cow lovers contribute towards the cost. It is not possible for the *Navajivan* to undertake this venture without others' help. The funds at the disposal of the All-India Cow-protection Association are not sufficient to meet the expenses of its constructive activities; hence, I do not dare to meet the deficit out of these funds. The book will be published immediately if readers send in small contributions. If any profit is left over, it will be handed over to the *Gorakshamandal*[1]. The book will be brought

[1] All-India Cow-protection Association

out in Gujarati, English and Hindi, depending on the help that is recevied.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 18-12-1927

39. LETTER TO P. THIRUKOOTASUNDARAM PILLAY

CUTTACK,
December 18, 1927

MY DEAR THIRUKOOTASUNDARAM,

I received your letter[1] when I was about to finish the Ceylon visit. I could not reply to you earlier as your letter was mislaid and therefore escaped my attention. I have made full enquiry into the matter and I have come to the conclusion that Sjt. Varadachari counted the purse as soon as it was humanly possible. In rapid tours, it is not possible to count purses in the presence of donors or even during the night of the day on which the purses are received. The donors give purses only when they have full confidence in the integrity of the donees and their ability to choose honest instrumentsfor their keep as well as disposal. This is not the first time that the purses have been found to contain less than the amounts announced, and the deficiencies occur often without any fault of the persons who keep the purses before they find themselves into the hands of the donees. All the consolation therefore that I can give you is that you should not agitate yourself over the deficiency. It means no reflection on you, nor should it carry and reflection upon those who are associated with me in the conduct of the khadi organization.

Sjt. Varadachari is one of the most trusted amongst khadi workers and I assure you that you have no reason whatsoever to suspect his honesty or doubt his diligence. I had not known a more eiligent and honest worker in the All-India Spinners' Association. He tells me that he did count the purse at Palamcottah, but you were not available after he had counted the purse. There is evidently therefore some misunderstanding regarding the date of counting as understood by Sjt. Viswanatha Pillay. And if you are still not satisfied, you may

[1] The addressee had drawn Gandhiji's attention to a deficiency of Rs. 2,000 in the Palamcottah purse and requested him to make enquiries (S.N. 12640).

see me whilst I am in Madras and I shall try to give you a few minutes.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. THIRUKOOTASUNDARAM PILLAY
SINDUPOONDURAI
TINNEVELLY

From a microfilm: S.N. 12640A

40. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

CUTTACK,
Sunday [*December 18, 1927*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have been able to read carefully the copies of the articles on sugar and malaria sent by you only today.

Per capita = per head

The bone powder used for cleansing sugar seems to be harmless. Not a trace of it remains in the sugar. It is thrown out with the impurities. lt is not necessary to kill even a single cow for obtaining bones for this purpose. This should be regarded as the same thing as the use of bones for fertilizers. It is therefore wrong on our part to object to it on religious grounds. Sugar worth Rs. 18 crore is imported into India. The quantity would have perhaps increased now. It is impossible to produce sugar worth Rs. 18 crore in India. No one has ruined our sugar industry. We use up all the sugarcane we produce. The use of sugar has increased disproportionately in India as well as in the whole world. . .[2] Whatever sugar we produce is like a drop in the ocean. If you want to ask me more on the subject, please do. Write to me if you know more.

I am sending the copy of the article on malaria to *Navajivan*. There is some mistake in the copy. I constantly think about why we have not been able to control malaria in the Ashram but am unable to find a solution. I have talked to Kakasaheb. He is carrying on correspondence on the subject with Dr. Talwalkar. I feel it is due to our fields and the inept method of burying the night-soil of our

[1] From 'Cuttack' and 'Sunday' in the dateline, and Gandhiji's programme of reaching the Ashram before January l; in the year 1927, Gandhiji was in Cuttack from December 18 to 21, and Sunday was on the 18th. He reached the Ashram on the 31st of the same month.

[2] A few words here are iliegible in the source.

toilets. Only experiments can ascertain the causes. But how can we conduct the experiments? I intend to give more thought to this on reaching the Ashram. Only God knows how much I will be able to do.

I hope to reach the Ashram before January 1.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32867

41. LETTER TO GOPARAJU SATYANARAYANA MURTHI

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 19, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I cannot give you anything better than Ramanama. Each time you have the fear of ghosts creeping over you, you must think of Rama and they will disperse like mist before the sun. If I were you, I should not give to an able-bodied beggar whether he is a Brahmin or what not. If your body permits it, a cold bath early in the morning even in winter is a nice thing. I see no harm in cycling for a good purpose. If you want to go to the Ashram, you should write to the Secretary.

Your sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. GOPARAJU SATYANARAYANA MURTHI
VARAHAGIRI HOUSE
BERHAMPUR

From a photostat: G.N. 6090

42. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

CUTTACK,[1]
December 19, 1927

MY DEAR REHANA,

I have your letter. I must dictate today. This is being dictated in a jolting train which is taking us to Cuttack.

I now you are capable of living down Hindu prejudices. The poor servants know no better. I suppose the bitterness that you noticed amongst Mohammedan sisters is not absent amongst Hindu sisters of the same type. Your account of the unsuccessful attempts of these sisters to help themselves is very good, very funny and painful. How the riches spoil so many of us.

I hope the peeled potato was none the worse for the strain you put upon the poor thing. I am glad you have got over the 'blues'. You now that as a reader of the *Gita*, you have no business to have them at all.

With love,

BAPU

MISS RAIHANA TYABJI
C/O LALA RAGHUBIR SINGH
KASHMIRI GATE, DELHI

From a phototstat: S.N. 9606

43. LETTER TO S. HANDY PERINBANAYAGAM

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARAMATI,
December 19, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am glad of the enthusiasm for khadi. The only way you will keep it up is to work it in a thoroughly efficient business-like manner, and for this purpose, you must have someone who is an expert in all the processes. You have in Colombo Sjt. Jairamdas Jayavardana. If you want to train more workers, perhaps Sjt. C. Rajagopalachariar will be able to take one or two at his Ashram at

[1] The letter, which was dictated in the train which took Gandhiji to Cuttack, was probably typed and signed on this date.

Tiruchenogodu. I know that you will not allow the enthusiasm to die out on any account.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. HANDY PERINBANAYAGAM
JAFFNA COLLEGE
VADDUKKODDAI
CEYLON

From a microfilm: S.N. 12622

44. LETTER TO K. S. KARANTH

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 19, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Of course if you wish to publish your book, there is no harm. Perhaps my own experience is that it is better to wait for publishing such books till one has obtained greater and more accurate experience.

Your reference to different kinds of *asanas*[1] seem to me to have been taken from various books. I have been in courrespondence with the writers of such books and I have found that whatever they have written is not capable of being borne out fully either by their own experience or the experience of others on whom one can rely. But if you have confidence in what you have written, I have no desire to dissuade you from publishing the book. If *asana* and *pranayamas*[2] are really efficacious as they are claimed to be, why don't you give them a thorough trial yourself? I intended to do so myself but experts themselves dissuaded me owing to my illness.

I see no inconsistency between advocating *brahmacharya* and widow remarriage at the same time so long as I do not do so in connection with the same persons. Whilst I would like all young men to be and remain *brahmacharis*, I did not hesitate to advocate, countenance and even officiate at marriages of those who find it impossible to practise self-restraint. Of course when I advocate the marriage of child widows, I presume that they want the pleasure which all animals seek and some human beings only can restrain themselves from seeking. *Brahamacharya* is not a thing that can be superim-

[1] Yogic postures
[2] Breathing exercises

posed, and it is sinful to *compel* child widows to remain unmarried.

If the fallen sisters to whom you refer will not mind marrying a person belonging to any caste, there should be no difficulty and they ought not to object to any caste. My asking them to obseve celibacy, if they cannot secure a proper match, has a meaning. That is to say, if they will restrict themselves to a caste or a province, and yet lead a pure life, naturally they must observe celibacy or they must accept any person of any character.

You may publish a translation of *Self-restraint* v. *Self-indulgence*. But please ask the Manager of *navajivan* before you do so lest he might have given the permission to somebody.

I do not know what you wrote about Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. In spite of your information, it would not be wrong to say that he was an embodiment of ahimsa. He believed in that dharma and tried to follow it to the best of his lights. That he did something which to us toda with our fuller epxerience appears to be repugnant to the doctrine of ahimsa, does not take away from the merit of Ramakrishna inasmuch as he could not think out of the custom pravalent around him, so far as food was concerned. It is not[1] possible that future generations will condemn the eating of cooked food as contrary to ahimsa and yet the existing authorities of ahimsa will not be liable tocondemnation for not having discovered the inconsistency of eating cooked food. No person is able to practise completest ahimsa. Possession of a material frame involves a certain amount of unavoidable *himsa*. A votary of ahimsa therefore continually strives to reduce the extent of *himsa* to a minimum.

Please tell me if you want me to return the manuscript of your book.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. S. KARANTH
C/O, K. S. ACHARLU, M. A.
TEACHER, DAVANGERE

From a microfilm: S.N. 12652

[1] Perhaps “not” was a slip.

45. LETTER TO OLIVE DOKE

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 19, 1927

MY DEAR OLIVE,

I was delighted to hear from Miss Schlesin all about the family and your exploits. Now I would like to shake hands with Clement who is now Dr. Clement and to hear you singing to me "Lead Kindly Light". You may not remember the scene, I do and I could paint it if I was a painter, so vivid is the recollection of that scene.[1]

Your venturing out in the wilds of Africa does not appear at all strange to me, for, I should expect nothing less from Joseph Doke's children.

You must forgive this dictated letter. I had to choose between postponing writing to you and dictating. I have made a better choice. Please write to me occasionally.[2]

My love to you all,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 9227. Courtesy: C.M. Doke

46. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

CUTTACK,
Silence Day [*December 19, 1927*][3]

SISTERS,

God willing, there will be only one more Monday for me to write to you.

I have received Manibehn's letter. You suggest that I should discuss the question of dress in greater detail. I shall not do so now, but you may reopen the point when we meet. As long as we retain an attraction for fineries in the deepest recesses of our heart, it is useless

[1] *Vide* "Satyagraha in South Africa (Chapter XXII: Opposition and Assault)".
[2] The addressee acknowledged this letter on March 2, 1928 (S.N. 11968).
[3] From the discussion about dress and finery; also from Gandhiji's being in Cuttack on this date.

to give up wearing them or adopt any other change just to imitate others who have given them up. But if our infatuation for fineries passes off, and still the mind is drawn towards them, then we should make the necessary outward changes, whether through a sense of shame or by way of imitation of others, and ultimately root out this craving. Infatuation and things like that are our enemies; they harass us so much that we should protect ourselves against them with help secured from every possible quarter. I am writing all this for those who are honest and sincere. The *Gita* says somewhere that those who deny themselves pleasures and crave for them in their hearts, are foolish and deceitful. This refers to the hypocrite. To those who are really honest and sincere, the *Gita* says that they should constantly control the passions that agitate them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3674

47. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Silence Day [*December 19*][1] *1927*

CHI. NARANDAS,

Read the accompanying letter and reply to it, send it on afterwards to Shri Fulchand and request him to reply to it. He should send to me the original letter too, so that I may reply to it. Address the reply to me at Madras.

Purushottam must have completely recovered now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7713. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

[1] In 1927 Gandhiji reached Madras on December 23.

48. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

CUTTACK,
December 20,1927

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

These papers are for you to read and consider and to tell me whether there is anything in the suggestion.

Though the doctors say that the blood-pressure is high, I notice no effects of it. And three doctors and three instruments gave different readings yesterday—200, 180, 160! What is one to do when doctors differ? Anyway you should not be anxious.

Love,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 2626

49. LETTER TO M. FRANCES H. LUKE

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 20, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. I cannot think of anything better than that you should attach yourself to some hospital where you could easily come in contact with those whom you have in view.

I remember your visit to the Ashram. I am travelling just now and I have no photograph such as you want. You may not know that I never was photographed, but of course there are many snapshots available in the bazaar.

Yours sincerely,

M. FRANCES H. LUKE
THE MATRON'S OFFICE
ST. THOMAS'S HOSPITAL S.E.1.
LONDON

From a photostat: S.N. 12554

[1] Dated 26-9-1927; the addressee, an educated Englishwoman, had stated that she wanted to serve the downtrodden and the untouchables.

50. LETTER TO S. N. GHOSE

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 20, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am asking the Manager of *Young India* to put you under free list.

I do not write anything about your fight there because I am at sea myself as to what can be done. If you are a regular reader of *Young India* you must have noticed that I do not write an idle word. I feel so helpless about many things and therefore leave them. Believe me that it is not due to want of desire to help that I do not write.

Yours sincerely,

S. N. GHOSE, ESQ.
THE INDIA FREEDOM FOUNDATION
799, BROADWAY, NEW YORK (U.S.A.)

From a photostat: S.N. 12555

51. LETTER TO HELENE HAUSSDING

CUTTACK,
(ORISSA)
December 20, 1927

I have your letters which have remained unanswered owing to the constant tour in which I have been engaged. Nor have I much time to say anything useful beyond telling you that somehow or other I am still holding on though doctors tell me that my blood-pressure is rising. I hope to reach the Ashram early next year. I expect to hear from you any day that you have now thrown into the Danube all the weakness of the flesh that you took away from India and that your chirp is as vigorous as it was before you reached this land of sorrows.

MISS HELENE HAUSSDING
HERRSCHING A. AMMERSEE
BEI MINCHEN (GERMANY)

From a photostat: S.N. 12556

52. TALKS TO KHADI WORKERS, CUTTACK[1]

December 20, 1927

I

The directors should be as vigilant and as jealous of the interests of their concern as the directors of the Bank of England, one of the greatest co-operative corporations in the world. But they have to be even more unselfish than they, inasmuch as the khadi company was not for exploitation, but for service of the poorest in the land. Their ability lay in attention to the most minor details in mastering the science of spinning. It is impossible for them to achieve any result unless they were expert spinners and expert organizers.

Some of the questions you have asked showed how unpractical you are. Some of you want to know if I would have you put on loin-cloth and to have a particular diet. Well, I have no desire to regulate either your dress or diet. What I want you to do is to realize the spirit of the movement and shape your life accordingly.

To you who want to serve Orissa I say, make Orissa a khadi depot for the whole of India. And you cannot do so until all the spirit of rivalry goes out and all concentrate on production. There can be no rivalry between khadi and khadi. I can understand your objection to khadi from other provinces, but you should make no distinction between khadi produced in different parts of Orissa. Concentrate on unifying your efforts and co-ordinating your sales.

I heard the other day some young men talking of the development of agriculture. If someone can prove to me that it is practicable and for the millions we have in view now, and can keep all the impoverished population from poverty and want, I will change my opinion about spinning. But I warn you in the present conditions you will not be successful. I have been working to build a model farm. There are foolish friends to entrust me with money to indulge in experiment, and I squander money on them. I had a talk with the late Sir Ganga Ram and supplied him with all the information about my lands, but he could not present me with a ready-made workable plan

[1] These talks were delivered on 18th, 19th and 20th December, 1927. They are here reproduced under the date of the last talk. Mahadev Desai says about these talks: "Advice to those who wanted to run a khadi joint-stock company was on the lines to the Rajapalayam merchants"; *vide* "Speech at Khadi Vastralaya, Rajapalayam", 4-10-1927.

to improve our agriculture. I ask you to go to the villages and bury yourselves there, not as their masters or benefactors, but as their humble servants. Let them know what to do and how to change their modes of living from your daily conduct and way of living. Only feeling will be of no use just like steam which by itself is of no account unless it is kept under proper control when it becomes a mighty force. I aks you to go forth as messengers of God carrying balm for the wounded soul of India.

II

Do not be troubled by the question of the disposal of your production. I could, if need be, disengage you from the obligation of selling. Go on producing as much as you can. There cannot be a better field for the production of khaddar than Orissa. Only Orissa can make khaddar a proved proposition. Intuitively of course it was a proved proposition to me in 1908, but you should demonstrate it practically. Show to the world that you cannot exist without khadi. Don't derive your faith from me, but derive it from yourselves and then refuse to be moved even if Gandhi changes his faith. Show to the people that they must work if they want more food, and the work can be none else than you can give them and on your terms. Remember that you cannot go on indefinitely relying merely on the patriotism of the people. You must produce khadi which is in quality superior to any other cloth.

I ask you to remember that unless the people understand that khadi is their only salvation, unless they feel that they cannot be without khadi, you cannot succeed. Mind you, I am not conducting this campaign to bring about a boycott of foreign cloth for its own sake. It is a necessary condition of our living, and an incident of our producing our own cloth if we must live.

Go then to the villages and become villagers. The story that the schoolmaster revealed at Charbatia was an eye-opener. It was a typical village. What a field of operation he has! You can take charge of the village school, make the children flesh of your flesh and bone of your bone and work amongst the villagers through the children. You will enter into their sorrows, ask them why they send their men to those pestilential hovels in Calcutta instead of working for their bread in their own homes. Go and get into their homes, handle their wheels, their carding-bows, show them their defects, see how they live, teach them the elementary principles of sanitation. It is this spinning of a constructive type that can bring swaraj and it is in this land that the charkha can sing its finest music. Make every village self-contained, make every home produce and use its own khadi, and as for the

surplus khadi, take a written guarantee from me to sell it all if it is of standard quality. Remember that only that worker will be worth his salt who makes the village he lives in self-reliant. The upshot of it all is the personal equation. No learning is necessary, except learning in the school of love. Have we workers honest, true, defiant, and burning with love of the country?

III

One word, that I would like to leave with you, doubly afflicted people of this afflicted land, is that you will lose yourselves in the ocean of the submerged humanity about you. Because it is submerged, the problem is simple. The way is straight, even though it is narrow. And you must treat it in the right and prayerful spirit. We have been praying here for three days. Prayer brings a peace, a strength and a consolation that nothing else can give. But it must be offered from the heart. When it is not offered from the heart, it is like the beating of a drum, or just the vocal effect of the throat sounds. When it is offered from the heart, it has the power to melt mountains of misery. Those who want are welcome to try its power.

Young India, 29-12-1927

53. LETTER TO DEVI WEST

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 21, 1927

I have your letter[1]. The floods[2] have indeed made a terrible havoc, but it has also brought to the fore the best qualities of the people afflicted. An organization grew up all of a sudden which battled with the calamity with great decision and equally great success.

Miss Schlesin has been of late writing to me regularly, and of course she is as mad and as good as ever. Albert[3] never writes nowadays. I did however get accounts of him and know that he and his are doing very well indeed. Manilal and his wife have been writing to me regularly.

I am keeping fairly well. Perhaps I shall never regain the original health, but I am thankful for whatever strength God has yet left me.

[1] Dated 2-10-1927; the addressee had written to Gandhiji on his birthday.
[2] In Gujarat in July 1927
[3] W. West, addressee's brother

I hope you are getting *Young India* as also *Indian Opinion* regularly. If not, please let me know. Prabhudas is now much better. He is at a hill station with his father. The others whom you know are doing well. If you are photographed do send me one. I am sure all at the Ashram who know you and love you well, love to see you in the spirit if they cannot see you in the flesh. I have had a strenuous tour in the south of India including Ceylon as you must have seen. I hope now to reach the Ashram on or before new-year's day.

Yours,

MISS DEVI WEST
23, GEORGE STREET
LOUTH, LINCS

From a photostat: S.N. 12543

54. LETTER TO NIRMAL CHANDRA DEY

AS AT THE ASHRAM
SABARMATI,
December 21, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I can quite see that unless you have a living faith in God you cannot get rid of sinful thoughts much less sinful acts. The only way I can commend to you to have that belief is to realize man's littleness and therefore your own and persist in believing. . .[1] assuming that there must be a 'Being' who is perfect and who is responsible for the wonderful phenomenon, the world.

I have no capacity to argue with you about the origin of evil. It is enough for me humbly to recognize evil as evil and strive to combat it. For, I know that God in Whom I believe helps me always in the combat. Victory lies in striving. To find honestly a guru and the striving necessitates the living of a pure life.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. NIRMAL CHANDRA DEY
ENGINEERING COLLEGE HOSTEL, SHIBPUR
P.O. BOTANICAL GARDEN
HOWRAH

From a microfilm: S.N. 12653 A

[1] The source has a blank here.

55. LETTER TO VISHWAMBHAR SAHAI

AS AT THE ASHRAM
SABARMATI,
December 21, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry I am able to reach your letter only today. So far as my recollection serves me right, I have not given anyone any exclusive right to publish a translation of my *Guide to Health*[1] in Hindi or Urdu. I am aware that many people have published translations of that book both in India and in Europe. You should ask Messrs N. D. Saighal & Sons, Lahore, to show you my authority and if any such authority is produced to you, please send me a copy for my verification.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. VISHWAMBHAR SAHAI
PREM SAHITYA BHANDAR
MEERUT

From a microfilm: S.N. 12654

56. LETTER TO DEVICHAND

AS AT THE ASHRAM
SABARMATI,
December 21, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry I have not been able to reply to your letter earlier. Your enquiry is quite pertinent. The money that I collect or is sent to me for khadi must be spent on khadi, unless I may commit a breach of trust. But I do collect and receive moneys for untouchables which are used only for their uplift. I collect moneys in this manner for activities which are controlled by me directly or indirectly.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. DEVICHAND
PRESIDENT, DAYANAND DALIT UDDHAR MANDAL
HOSHIARPUR, PUNJAB

From a microfilm: S.N. 12655

[1] An English translation of a series of Gujarati articles on general knowledge about health published in *Indian Opinion* from January 4, 1913 to August 16, 1913

57. LETTER TO MANINDRA CHANDRA ROY

AS AT THE ASHRAM
SABARMATI,
December 21, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have been unable to deal with your letter earlier. I cannot help feeling that your judgement is warped according to your reasoning that there should be no effort on the part of mankind for self-improvement. A prisoner who is innocently convicted you would say should not try to secure his release. I see no distinction between a helpless innocent girl being given away in bondage to a person whom she has never known and a prisoner. Your arguments seem to be on a par with the first.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. MANINDRA CHANDRA ROY
HEAD MASTER
BERHAMPUR NATIONAL SCHOOL
BERHAMPUR, P. O. KHARGA

From a microfilm: S. N. 12656

58. LETTER TO T. K. RAMUNNI MENON

AS AT THE ASHRAM
SABARMATI,
December 21, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry I have not been able to reply to your letter earlier.

I would like you, if you can, to see me whilst I am in Madras. I do not want you hastily to throw up the job that you have.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. K. RAMUNNI MENON
CO-OPERATIVE OFFICER
POST PUTHIYARA
(MALABAR)

From a microfilm: S.N. 12657

59. LETTER TO PEAREYLAL

AS AT THE ASHRAM
SABARMATI,
December 21, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have not been able to deal with your letter earlier. I do not think you need a scheme so much as proper workers, and since you have Miss Gmeiner and Babu Jugal Kishore, I think you cannot do better than be guided by them. One mistake I would ask you to guard yourself against, namely, making the Widows Home a mere literary school where widows will have everything done for them. I should give the widows some industrial training and make them self-reliant and ultimately self-supporting. I shall also guard against making them sectional.

Yours sincerely,

PEAREYLAL[1], ESQ.
NO. 2, METCALF HOUSE ROAD
DELHI

From a microflim: S.N. 12658

60. OUR SHAME AND THEIR SHAME

The long deferred Orissa visit has come to fill the bitter cup of sorrow and humiliation. It was at Bolgarh, thirty-one miles from the nearest railway station, that whilst I was sitting and talking with Dinabandhu Andrews on the 11th instant, a man with a half-bent back wearing only a dirty loin-cloth came crouching in front of us. He picked up a straw and put it in his mouth and then lay flat on his face with arms outstretched and then raised himself, folded his hands, bowed, took out the straw, arranged it in his hair and was about to leave. I was writhing in agony whilst I witnessed the scene. Immediately the performance was finished, I shouted for an interpreter, asked the friend to come near and began to talk to him. He was an untouchable living in a village six miles away, and being in Bolgarh for the sale of his load of faggots and having heard of me had come to see me. Asked why he should have taken the straw in his

[1] Died in 1933; a philanthropist

mouth, he said that was to honour me. I hung my head in shame. The price of honour seemed to me to be too great to bear. My Hindu spirit was deeply wounded. I asked him for a gift. He searched for a copper about his waist. "I do not want your copper, but I want you to give me something better," I said. "I will give it," he replied. I had ascertained from him that he drank and ate carrion because it was custom.

"The gift I want you to give me is a promise never again to take the straw in your mouth for any person on earth, it is beneath man's dignity to do so; never again to drink because it reduces man to the condition of a beast, and never again to eat carrion, for it is against Hinduism and no civilized person would ever eat carrion."

"But my people will excommunicate me, if I do not drink and eat carrion," the poor man said.

"Then suffer excommunication and if need be leave the village."

This downtrodden humble man made the promise. If he keeps, it, his threefold gift is more precious than the rupees that generous countrymen entrust to my care.

This untouchability is our greatest shame. The humiliation of it is sinking deeper.

But this never-to-be-forgotten incident was only part of the shame and sorrow. Never since the days of Champaran (in 1917)[1] have I witnessed such death-like quiet as I did on entering political Orissa through Banpur. And I fear that the quiet of Orissa is worse than that of Champaran. There was spirit in the ryots of Champaran after a few days" stay in their midst. I doubt if the Orissa ryot would respond so quickly. I was told that the zamindars, the rajas and the local police had conspired to frighten the ryots out of coming near me. I had begun to flatter myself with the belief that the rajas, the zamindars and the pettiest police officials had ceased to distrust or fear me. The experiences of Orissa have chastened me. Being too weak to go about much, I sent my friends among the people and ascertained the cause. They brought the news that people were told, on pain of punishment, not to come near me or to take part in any demonstration in my honour. Such warnings have been issued before and in other provinces, but they have had little or no effect in normal

[1] The source has "1916".

times such as these. The ryots in Orissa, however, seemed to me to be living in a perpetual state of fear and liable to be acted upon by the slightest attempt.

This is a shame both we and the foreign rulers have to share. It is true that the rajas and zamindars and the petty officials are our own kith and kin. But the primary source of fright is in the rulers. Their system is based on 'frightfulness'. In the name of prestige they have compelled somehow or other the tallest among us to bend low. They have intensified, where they have not created, demoralization. They have known the existence of abject fear among the ryots. But they have done nothing to remove it and the causes, where they have not hugged the condition of things in the alleged interest of their rule. Whilst therefore they may not be directly responsible for the pathetic scenes I witnessed, they cannot be acquitted of a considerable share of responsibility for them.

But our shame is greater. If we were strong, self-respecting and not susceptible to frightulness, the foreign rulers would have been powerless for mischief. Those only who are susceptible to fear are frightened by others. And it has to be confessed that long before the British advent we were habituated to fear by our own zamindars and rajas. The present rulers have but reduced to a science what was in existence before in a more or less crude share. The workers in Orissa have therefore to teach the ryot to shed the oppressive nervous timidity bordering on cowardice. And this they will not do by swearing at the zamindar. the raja or the police officials. These latter become docile and even friendly when they find that the ryot has unlearned the unmanly habit.

Young India, 22-12-1927

61. NOTHING TOO SMALL

A friend sends me for publication a charkha dialogue. I am not printing it as I have discovered no plot about the story, but I gladly publish the following instructive verses the writer has quoted and put into the mouth of a little girl telling her little brother that they should begin to work the charkha for the sake of the poor even though they were youngsters :

Suppose the little cowslip
    Should hang its golden cup,
And say, 'I'm such a tiny flower,

'I'd better not grow up :'
How many a weary traveller
Would miss its fragrant smell?
How many a little child would grieve
To lose it from the dell ?

Suppose the glistening dewdrop
Upon the grass should say,
'What can a little dewdrop do?
'I'd better roll away :'
The blade on which it rested,
Before the day was done,
Without a drop to moisten it,
Would wither in the sun.

Suppose the little breezes,
Upon a summer's day,
Should think themselves too small to cool
The traveller on his way :
Who would not miss the smallest
And softest ones that blow,
And think they made a great mistake
If they were talking so?
How many deed of kindness
A little child may do;
Although it has so little strength
And little wisdom too.
It wants a loving spirit,
Much more than strength, to prove
How many things a child may do
For others by his love.

These beautiful verses apply equally to many of us grown-up people who talk no better than the little children in the imaginary story. We may not excuse ourselves from sacrificial spinning on the flimsy excuse that it is too little to be of use. Not for us thus to argue ourselves into laziness; ours is but to do our little best and leave to God to use it as He wills.

Young India, 22-12-1927

62. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

December [*22*][1]*, 1927*

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your letter. You are needlessly worried. I am hopeful that health will be restored. But if it does not happen and I remain bed-ridden then....

I began this letter four days ago. Just then the doctor[2] arrived and it was left there. I now take it up in Madras where I arrived today. We shall see about that. For the present let us resolve that on the Vasant Panchami[3] day you will be entering a new life and shouldering a new responsibility in the name of God and with His help.

Apparently there is nothing wrong with my health. But the blood-pressure is very high. There is no doubt of that. All I need is rest. It is not also true that I do not observe the rules about health which I prescribe for others. But I shall explain this to you one day if you ask me.

Today I wish to write about one point in your previous letter. Why should Nimu not do independent work? You know that millions of our poor people work like that. We have become sweepers and scavengers! What about Ramjibhai and Gangabehn? In countless peasant families both husbands and wives earn. In factories both men and women work. Here both Anna and his wife Gomatibehn take salaries and also do the Hindi work. By following this practice your family life will become not difficult but smooth and you will become an ideal couple. Thousands of people have children while they work. Yes, it is true. that they are not able to live in comfort. But you must ask me for further clarification on this point. I wish you to have a happy, simple, useful and interesting life. The circumstances are also favourable. Everything depends on your education and Nimu's. I wanted to train her but could not manage it. There were obstacles in the way. I fell ill and on returning to the Ashram could not cope with three obstacles at the same time. But Nimu is herself a good girl and hence I am not worried. The only question is how far your body will co-operate.

I shall not write anything more now. Imam Saheb has fallen ill

[1] Inferred from the reference to Gandhiji's arrival in Madras.

[2] Dr. M. A. Ansari

[3] January 27, 1928, on which day the addressee was to marry Nirmala

and has come here. I am going to meet him. I hope to reach the Ashram in January or earlier.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Motana n Man, pp. 3940

63. LETTER TO SUBHADRA TULJAPURKER

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 23, 1927

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,

I was unable to reply to your letter[1] earlier. I congratulate you upon your being able to recite the whole of the *Gita* without a mistake and for having earned prize for the recitation. The best way to study the *Gita* apart from recitation is to take it verse by verse, understand its meaning fully and apply it in the working of one's own life. Some time when I come to Bombay, perhaps you would come and recite some of the chapters to me.

Yours sincerely,

MISS SUBHADRA TULJAPURKER
N. P. PATHARE'S HOUSE
NEAR PORTUGUESE CHURCH
DADAR, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 12635 A

64. LETTER TO ZAIBUNNISA

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 23, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry I have not been able to reply to your letter earlier. I have the information from the Ashram that your drama has been received. But as you might have noticed I have been continually on the move. Although I expect to reach the Ashram in January, I have no notion when I shall get the time to go through your manuscript. All therefore I can promise to you is that I shall try my best to deal

[1] Dated 6-10-1927; the addressee was aged 16 years.

with it as early as I can. But if you propose to have it printed, I would ask you not to wait for my opinion, but send it to the press, if friends like Maulana Mazharul Haq and Dr. Syed Mahomed approve of it.

Yours sincerely,

BEGUM ZAIBUNNISA[1]
C/O SYED AHMAD ALI SAHAB
MAHALLA, SAHEBGANJ
CHAPRA

From a microfilm: S.N. 12637

65. LETTER TO PICHAPPA SUBRAMANIAM CHETTIAR

MADRAS,
December 23, 1927

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to hear from you the wedding for which you had to go away from me at Colombo had been duly celebrated. Please convey to the married couple my good wishes again and tell them that I expect them both to work for the service of the country.

Yes, the contributions from Ceylon were exceedingly good. I do not need to commend any particular thing to you, for I know that your whole heart is in khadi service which is the most universal and practical service of the country at the present moment.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. PICHAPPA SUBRAMANIAM CHETTIAR
AMARAVATI PUDUR
GANDHI NAGAR
RAMNAD DT.

From a microfilm: S.N. 12659

[1] A Muslim lady who wished to dedicate her Urdu play to Gandhiji

66. LETTER TO KAMALA DEVI

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 23, 1927

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I like your letter.[1] What you say about the girls and women of India is largely true. But you and other girls in your position can do a great deal in deal in order to remove the bondage. If you are firm in your resolve and at the same time gentle, I am sure that your father will let you follow your own bent of mind. But in order to achieve the result, you must be patient. Live there the life of simplicity that you have pictured to yourself in the Ashram at Sabarmati. After all mind is the greatest factor. And if your mind is married to the idea of simplicity and purity no power on earth can divorce it from their idea.

I note what you say about your idea of necessaries of life. Do you want me to speak to your father and even correspond with him? You should not be afraid to talk to your father freely and give him your full confidence.

Yours sincerely,

SRIMATI KAMALA DEVI
AKHIL MISTRY LANE
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 12660

67. LETTER TO S. G. DATAR

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 23, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and your communication on *shraddha*[2] and I have not published it because your viewpoint has been so often dealt with in the pages of *Young India*. In my opinion, the best *shraddha* that a son can perform in respect of his departed parents is to weave

[1] Addressee's parents wanted her to marry, but she wished to go and stay at the Ashram. *Vide* also "Letter to Kamala Das Gupta", July 10 and August 23, 1927.

[2] Ritual offering to the spirit of a deceased ancestor

into his life all the good qualities of his parents. To merely repeat the letter of the scriptures is to destroy their very soul.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. G. DATAR
PLEADER
BAGALKOT

From a microfilm: S.N. 12661

68. LETTER TO R. RAMASWAMI

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 23, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter enclosing an article on khadi. I do not think it is necessary to publish it in *Young India*. I therefore return it. In my opinion, khadi will not become popular by publishing general statements of the kind you have prepared. It requires organization and personal propaganda both of which are being attended to as far as is possible.

Yours sncerely,

SJT. R. RAMASWAMI
6, SHIVAPPA MANSION
DADAR, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 12662

69. A LETTER

AS AT THE ASHRAM
SABARMATI,
December 23, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Here is the receipt for ten rupees sent through you by your mother. Please thank her for the donation.

For one who wants to become a true *brahmachari*, he should avoid all exciting foods, exciting conversation, exciting shows and occupy his body in some useful labour such as spinning, carding, weaving, occupying his mind in reading or writing pure things, and

continuously think of God and believe that He witnessed all our thoughts and actions.

Yours sincerely,

SJT.
TEEON
OLD SUKKUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 12663

70. LETTER TO S. V. VISVANATHA IYER

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 23, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I was unable to reply to your letter earlier. I shall see what can be done with reference to your suggestion about having an examination. What, however, is now necessary is practical work rather than theoretical knowledge.

With reference to the ear ornaments, I have suceeded in inducing many women to dispense with them in spite of the prejudice you refer to. We have to deal with customs which have no moral basis or which are immoral, no matter how ancient they may be and how much backed they may be by prejudice.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. V.VISVANATHA IYER
VAKIL, TUTICORIN

From a microfilm: S.N. 12664

71. LETTER TO CHERUKANDY KUTTAN

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 23, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Here is a copy of the letter from the Commissioner for Immigration and Asiatic, Affairs, Pretoria, in reply to my enquiry. If

you can give me fuller information, I shall communicate with the Natal authorities.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. CHERUKANDY KUTTAN
ENGLISH COMPOSITOR
"MALABAR SPECTATOR" PRESS
CALICUT (S. MALABAR)

From a microfilm: S.N. 12665

72. LETTER TO K. KELAPPAN

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 23, 1927

MY DEAR KELAPPAN,

I have not heard from you as it were for ages. Here is a letter[1]; please read it and tell me if you know anything about this colony and, if you do not, you must visit it, and report.

What have you done about the committee that I proposed and what have you done with the fund left with you?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. KELAPPAN NAIR
PAYOLI
N. MALABAR

From a microfilm: S.N. 14624

73. SPEECH AT KHADI AND HINDI EXHIBITIONS, MADRAS

December 23, 1927

Mahatmaji, before declaring the Exhibition open, made a speech in English which was translated into Tamil by Mr. C. Rajagopalachari. He said that it was a great privilege to be called upon to open the exhibitions. He was not physically fit to raise his voice to such a pitch as to be heard by all. He was not going to make a long speech and he was not able, in his present state of health, to address such a large

[1] From V. K. Sankara Menon, Manager, Pulaya Colony, Chalakudi, a colony run by the Depressed Classes Development Society. He had invited Gandhiji's suggestions and advice.

audience. He need not dwell long on the necessity for khaddar for he was just returning from Utkal where he had seen with his own eyes emachiated men and women on account of starvation. To such people khaddar would do an immense good. If the people present at the meeting has seen those famished people of Utkal they would readily agree with him that khadi was the only thing that could save them from such a low condition. Khadi was a movement in which Tamils and Telugus, and people of the north and south of India could take part without any distinction of caste or creed. A visit to Utkal would make them instinctively support the khadi movement. The khadi exhibition by the side of the industrial exhibition looked like an ant before an elephant. In the bigger exhibition there were both foreign and indigenous articles. In the khadi exhibition they would find only indigenous goods, hand-spun and hand-woven and there was no competition here, the only competition being 'how shall I serve, how shall I serve best'. In the khadi exhibition they would find goods manufactured by poor men and women and those goods must have given food to a number of poor people. Manchester goods and Indian mill-made goods went to enrich English and Indian capitalists, whereas khaddar provided food for the poorest labourers who had no other means of living. The khadi movement had given food to seventy-five thousand spinners scattered in 2,000 villages and also six thousand weavers lived by weaving khaddar cloth. He had mentioned only spinners and weavers in connection with the movement and had not taken into consideration others engaged in printing, dyeing, etc., who were benefited by it. In addition to these poor people about one thousand young men belonging to middle-class had also taken up the khadi work. Khadi would also give employment to the unemployed and solve the problem of unemployment among the middle classes which was agitating the minds of many. Khadi would give work to the people of India—Brahmins and Non-Brahmins, Hindus and Mussalmans and the so-called untouchables. Very soon they would go round the stalls to see the exhibits for themselves. When they did so, he would ask them to go round the exhibition with a feeling of sympathy for the poor and to consider what amount of energy and time must have been spent upon those products by the poor people to earn something to keep body and soul together. They would also find that the cost of the khaddar products was much reduced.

Next to the khadi exhibition, they would find the Hindi exhibition. The Hindi movement was conceived in the interests of millions of Indians. Hindi or Hindustani was spoken by 21 crores of people and it was the mother tongue of many Mussalmans. It was the only language which could be inter-provincial. For some time past attempts had been made to propagate Hindi in South India. The Hindi Prachar Sabha had been instituted and had been giving instruction in Hindi to a large number of people in the Tamil Nadu and Andhra Desha. Many people in those two provinces had learnt Hindi and passed examinations. The Hindi exhibitions was to have been opened by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya but, he having not arrived, he (Mahatmaji)

had been asked to open the exhibition. He would ask them to learn Hindi and would inform them that it could be learnt easily. After learning it, they would find it a beautiful language.

With these words he declared the khadi and Hindi exhibitions open.

The Hindu, 24-12-1927

74. NOTE ON AN ARTICLE[1]

When shall we get rid of this stigma? Has even the last deluge[2] not opened the eyes of Hindus? Who created Dheds and Bhangis as low castes? When did the Brahmins and the Banias attain the status of higher castes?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-12-1927

75. THE INDRARAJ SPINNING-WHEEL

In the issue of the *Khadipatrika* dated 1-12-27 Shri Harjivandas Kotak has written an article on the place that khadi occupies in Kashmir. I would recommend the article to all lovers of khadi. Its merit lies in Shri Harjivandas's personal experience. He has written the article after having observed things for himself during his stay in Kashmir. Three facts become clear from this.

(1) The importance of the spinning-wheel,

(2) The place it still occupies in Kashmir,

(3) The ruin of this invaluable industry in Kashmir.

We can get proofs of the value of the spinning-wheel in the south in Nagercoil right up to Kanyakumari. We get these right up to Assam in the east and we have now found them as far north as Kashmir. In the west, we find them right up to Kathiawar. I do not mention Karachi in the west because Karachi is a new city and, it is natural that people there being enamoured of wealth do not realize the value of the spinning-wheel—although even there, because of the efforts of such lovers of khadi as the late Shri Ranchhoddas even up to this day, propaganda for the spinning-wheel is being carried on in a

[1] This note follows M. K. Pandya's article complaining that untouchables were forbidden to enter the temple of Ranchhodaraiji at Dakor and to bathe in the Gomati tank near the temple.

[2] Heavy floods in Gujarat

new manner and khadi is being used.

Shri Harjivandas's article reveals that the silk produced there (in Kashmir) is not hand-spun. Until this day some of us who are fond of good clothes wore Kashmiri silk under the impression that it was hand-spun; however, it is clear that those who wish to use clothes of only hand-spun cotton, silk or wool must give up the use of Kashmiri silk. One should spin oneself as much as is necessary to prepare what one wishes to wear of the finest stuff; one should get cloth of medium quality spun at the nearest possible place, while inferior cloth could be bought from whatever in an honest dealer sells under the name of hand-woven fabric.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-12-1927

76. WHAT SHOULD A HINDU WIDOW DO ?

A gentleman from Ajmer writes in Hindi to say :

> I wish you to answer the following questions of mine, in *Navajivan* :
>
> How should Hindu widows not wishing to remarry spend the rest of their lives?
>
> Maharshi Dayanand has written to say that they should practise celibacy, educate themselves and also educate young girls.
>
> Do you agree with this view? If so, keeping in mind the present plight of our country, what would you like to add to this?

Maharshi Dayanand did not hold that all widows should spend their time in learning and teaching; this could only be by way of an example. In this case teaching means imparting a knowledge of letters. This knowledge is necessary to some extent; in my opinion, however, the more important teaching is how to stave off starvation. And every day, I am more firmly convinced that this lies in the spinning-wheel. If we of the middle class who are educated, and who look upon ourselves as belonging to the higher castes give a thought to the condition of the poorer classes, nothing else but the spinning-wheel will occur to us. The spinning-wheel will be plied mainly by women as it is primarily they who have time to spare. Hence I have been crying from the house-tops at various places, day and night, that

it is through them that we would prevent crores of rupees from being drained out of the country and secure true swaraj—*Ramarajya*[1].

It is women who can readily approach others of their sex. Here in the Province of Orissa where I happen to write this, and where even the poorer women observe *purdah*, who can set aside *purdah* and approach them? I sent Mirabehn who has accompanied me to the women of a certain village. About fifty women surrounded her and became crazy with joy they started asking her about many things and the spinning-wheel came up for discussion. These women were absolutely naive, simple and ignorant. It is innumerable women of this type who should really be educated. Widows with pure character can readily impart such education, serve their own interest and, at the same time, help India solve its problems. Widows who are benevo-lently inclined can easily learn this work and do justice to it. However, an important prior condition for this is that they should be keen on going to villages and, while living there, should not get impatient. A widow who takes the vow of celibacy is not a helpless, crippled individual. If she is fit for self-realization, she is a strong independent woman capable of protecting herself. Compared with this, the education given to girls today is, I thing, of little consequence. If however a widow refuses to go to the villages, idles away her time or, year after year, runs' from one place of supposed pilgrimage to another, mistaking this for dharma, it is obviously better if she stayed even in the city and engaged herself in teaching children. She has before her the vast field of nursing the sick. Very few Hindu women take up the profession of nursing. Widows in Maharashtra are found undergoing this training. Outside Maharashtra, very few widows are prepared to undergo this training. However, the jobs that I have suggested should also be regarded only as examples. Every sensible widow who wishes to practise celibacy should seek out some useful activity for herself and devote her whole life to it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-12-1927

[1] Traditionally regarded as the ideal political order; literally, Rama's rule

77. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

December 25, 1927

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

I had a long chat with Malaviyaji. The resolution on the cow and the music as it stands does not satisfy him, nor does it satisfy me. I have suggested two formulas to which he agrees and thinks the Hindu Mahasabha will agree.

The first is this: the preamble instead of mentioning rights should say "without prejudice to the rights of either party, etc."[1]

The second which I consider to be the most important and the true solution is that Mussalmans should forgo cow-slaughter and the Hindus should forgo music before mosques. They should be part of legislation by common consent. Malaviyaji thinks that if the second proposal can be accepted by the Mussalmans, he will be able to carry the Hindu Sahba with him.

If you think that there is anything in the two proposals please postpone passing the unity resolutions and let us discuss the proposals in all their bearings.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 12391

78. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

December 26, 1927

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have altered your resolutions. The Orissa resolution should not be in the Congress. Because there are so many places that have suffered. The special poverty of Orissa is chronic. I shall see what can be done about Gregg's book proof-reading. I have not attended any sittings of the Congress Committee. Am having good rest. Doctors here see no special rise in blood-pressure. I leave tomorrow or the day after. Expect you at the Ashram on or before 13th January. Tucker is with me.

Love.

MOHAN

C. F. ANDREWS, ESQ.
SANTINIKETAN

From a photostat: G.N. 2627

[1] This suggestion seems to have been accepted; *vide* Appendix "Part B—Section 1 of the Resolution on Hindu-Muslim Unity", December 26, 1927.

79. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

CENTRAL STATION, MADRAS,
Silence Day [*December 26, 1927*][1]

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I got your letter. It is worthy of you. I had no doubt at all, and did not worry about the thing.

I hope to reach the Ashram on Saturday at the latest.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2832. Courtesy: Sharadabehn Shah

80. LETTER TO REVASHANKER JHAVERI

Monday [*December 26, 1927*][2]

RESPECTED REVASHANKERBHAI,

From Devdas's letter, received today, I gather that you, too, have fallen ill and have returned to Bombay. I intend to leave this place tomorrow and will arrive there on Thursday. If I don't I shall arrive on Friday without fail. May God protect you.

Pranam from
MOHANDAS

RESPECTED REVASHANKERBHAI
MANIBHUVAN
7, LABURNUM ROAD
GAMDEVI, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1266

81. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

MADRAS,
Monday [*December 26, 1927*][3]

DEAR SISTERS,

I have your letter. I had in fact intended to leave this place this very day. But now I do hope to leave tomorrow or Wednesday at any rate. That is, let us say we will meet at the latest by Saturday.

[1] From the postmark
[2] *ibid*
[3] From the reference to Utkal and Gandhiji's return to Ashram

I can understand that just now none of you can set out for Utkal. Ultimately many of the women workers must come from the Ashram.

I do not understand what you say about committing the mistake of having a telegram written for you. Well, now you will explain it when we meet.

We never forget the work that is dear to us. I have seen devout men and women offering all manner of service at temples with great love and interest. Out faith, it is said, is that the *yajna* of spinning enjoys pride of place among all forms of service. If you have any doubts regarding this, do by all means question me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7770. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

82. RESOLUTION ON INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

[*December 27, 1927*][1]

This Congress, while acknowledging the relief received by the Indian settlers in South Africa and regarding the signing of the Indo-Union Agreement as a token of the desire of the Union Government to Accord better treatment to the Indian settlers, cannot be satisfied till the status of the settlers is brought on par with that of the enfranchised inhabitants of the Union and appeals to the Union Government to consolidate the goodwill created between the two countries by repealing all class legislation, especially the Colour Bar Act of 1926, the clause in the Liquor Bill of 1927 prohibiting the employment of Indians as waiters in hotels and the Municipal Land Alienation Ordinances or Natal in so far as the latter involve racial segregation.

This Congress places on record its sense of deep gratitude to Deenabandhu C.F. Andrews for his great and humanitarian work in South Africa and East Africa in connection with the status of the Indian settlers in those countries.

Report of the Forty-second Indian National Congress at Madras, 1927, p. 59

[1] The resolution was drafted by Gandhiji. Dr. M. A. Ansari, the President, moved it at the annual session of the Indian National Congress at Madras on 27-12-1927. The resolution was carried unanimously.

83. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

December 28, 1927

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

The Cow Resolution has shaken me to the marrow. I could read it carefully only last night. The more I think of it, the more I shrink from it. The draft[1] I sent with M. A. Azad is no substitute. I have told the Maulana Saheb that it does not in any way satisfy me. The only solution that I can see is the one I have suggested. I would therefore urge you not to proceed with that resolution at all during this session. I must have a chat with the Mussalman friends who are here and whom I know, and place before them my awful position. But I won't trouble you at this stage. You have so many things on your hands. I am, however trying to see the Brothers. I came to help. I am now becoming a hindrance. My grief is indescribable.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 12392

84. A LETTER[2]

December 28, 1927

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHERS,

The cow resolution has left a deep scar on my heart. I would like to discuss it with you and explain to you my difficulty. I want you both and if possible Shwaib. You may bring the other friends who may be available.

With love,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 12393

[1] Presumably Part B—Section 1 of the Resolution on Hindu-Muslim Unity adopted by the Congress; *vide* Appendix "resolution on Hindu-Muslim Unity", December 26, 1927.

[2] Presumbly addressed to Maulana Mahomed Ali; *vide* the preceding item.

85. POLITICAL PRISONERS

Lala Dunichand of Ambala has sent me a copy of the statement published by him in England about political prisoners who are undergoing incarceration in the various jails of India. The statement contains nothing new for the Indian public and might easily have been fuller and more precise for the purpose intended by the author. In a convering note he administers to me a gentle rebuke for rarely mentioning these prisoners. If the absence of mention of these countrymen of ours means apathy or negligence on my part, the rebuke is well deserved. But I claim that I yield to no one in my desire to see these prisoners released. But the omission to mention these cases is deliberate. I hope that the pages of *Young India* do not contain any idle words. Whatever is written in these pages has a definite purpose. Time was when I used to analyse these cases and expose the injustice done in many of them. But that was when I had faith in the British system and when I used to take pride in its ultimate goodness. Having lost that faith, I have lost also the power of making an effective appeal to the administrators of that system. I can no longer write about British fair play and the British sense of justice. On the contrary, I feel that the administrators are precluded by their system from dealing out fair play or justice when their system is or seems to them to be in jeopardy. It is still possible, I admit, to secure justice from them when their system is not at stake in any shape or form. But when that system is or is felt by them to be in danger they lose not only their sense of justice and fair play but they lose their balance and no means appear to them to be too dishonourable or despicable for adoption to sustain it. Dyerism and O'Dwyerism[1] were no isolated phenomena. Only I was blind to them before Jallianwala. As a matter of fact, they have been resorted to in all climes and at all times whenever they have felt the need of them.

I am satisfied that the political prisoners who are held under restraint with or without trial, decorous or farcical, are so held in the interest of that system. The administrators would far rather discharge a murderer caught red-handed and found guilty of murder committed for private ends than discharge a political prisoner suspected of designs on their system, especially if he, the suspect, is believed to

[1] General Dyer and O'Dwyer were responsible for the massacre of Jallianwala Bagh in April 1919.

have violent means in view.

It seems to me therefore to be waste of time and inconsistent with respect to make any appeal to the administrators in behalf of the political prisoners Lala Dunichand has in view. And he has in mind the prisoners of the Gadr party, the Punjab Martial Law prisoners and the Bengal detenus. Nor need we be led astray by solitary discharges like that of Sjt. Subhas Bose. In spite of the agitation that was set on foot he would in all probability not have been discharged if his precarious health had not come to the rescue. Indeed, have they not said in the plainest language possible that they were released purely on grounds of ill health? Has not Earl Winterton[1] flatly declined to release the Bengal detenus in answer to the appeal to create a favourable atmosphere for their precious Statutory Commission?

Let those who still have faith in the system by all means make an appeal to the British sense of justice and fair play.

My course is clear. We have not yet paid anything like adequate price for the freedom we would fain breathe. I therefore regard these imprisonments as only a small part of the price we have to pay if we would have the freedom which is the birthright of man. And we shall have to march as willing victims to the slaughter-house and not helplessly like goats and sheep. We may do this violently or non-violently. The way of violence can only lead us to a blind alley and must cause endless suffering to unwilling ignorant men and women who do not know what freedom is and who have no desire to buy the valuable article. The way of non-violence is the surest and the quickest way to freedom and causes the least suffering and that only to those who are prepared for it, indeed would gladly court it. But suffering, intense, extensive and agonizing, there must be in every case. What we have gone through is but a sample of what is to come.

Therefore the task before those, who share my views about the inherent evil of the system, is to cease to appeal to the administrators, and ceaselessly and with unquenchable faith in our cause and the means to appeal to the nation. Not until the nation has developed enough strength to open the prison gates, can these prisoners be released with honour and dignity for it and them. Till then let us with becoming patience and courage submit to the imprisonment of the prisoners and ourselves prepare joyfully to share their fate. We shall certainly not hasten the advent of freedom by appealing to deaf ears

[1] Under-Secretary of State for India

for mercy and thus unconsciously inducing in the people a mentality that would dread the prisons and the gallows. Lovers of freedom have to learn to regard these as welcome friends and deliverers.

Young India, 29-12-1927

86. INTERVIEW TO "INDIAN DAILY MAIL"

BOMBAY

December 30, 1927

In reply to a question by the interviewer as to which of the three draft constitutions[1] drawn up by the Madras leaders he considered best suited to India, Mr. Gandhi said that he had no decisive opinion about the future Constitution of India. He, however, added :

The Constitution of India is not a matter for a single individual to decide.

Seated in the midst of his friends and disciples, playing the inseparable charkha, Mr. Gandhi politely invited our representative to put questions to him. "What are your impressions of the Madras Session of the Congress?", was the first question by the interviewer.

ANSWER: The Madras Session was a unique one inasmuch as it seems to have laid the foundation of Hindu-Muslim unity. This, I say, not because of the quality of the resolutions, but because of the manner in which they were presented and accepted. Pandit Malaviyaji's happy speech and the still happier response made by Ali Brothers appeared to me to be a good augury for future. I was not present when the scene of Maulana Mahomed Ali in ecstacy falling at Malaviyaji's feet and Maulana Shaukat Ali fanning him after he had finished his great speech took place; but it was described to me by the President of the Congress. It filled me with great joy and hope. I hope this spirit of cordiality and mutual trust will prove infectious and we shall be able to find such trust amongst the rank and file. Both Dr. Ansari and Mr. S. Aiyengar deserve the gratitude of the nation for this happy event.

Asked why he was not present when the Independence Resolution[2] was

[1] Submitted before the Madras Session of the Congress; the Working Committee was given power to confer with other bodies and place a revised draft before a Special Convention for approval.

[2] In a separate resolution, the Congress declared "the goal of the Indian people to be complete National Independence".

discussed, Mr. Gandhi said that he was not expected to be present at any of the meetings of the Committee because of his health. It was against the instruction of doctors and against the wishes of his friends that he had gone to Madras which he did only in order to help to the best of his ability Mr. Srinivasa Aiyengar and Dr. Ansari and to be available to them if at all it was necessary. He was not supposed to take any part in the deliberations of the Working Committee, Subjects Committee or even in the open Session. He never attended any of the Committee meetings except one informal meeting and attended the Congress at the opening only for a few minutes.

Our representative asked: "But is it true that you did not approve of the Independence Resolution?"

ANSWER: That is an open secret. But my disapproval of the Independence Resolution is based upon grounds that are not common to those who generally condemn the Independence Resolution. I dealt with the subject last year when the Independence resolution was passed and I have given my reasons for my attitude towards it. Let me, however, guard myself against any possible misunderstanding. I do not for one moment consider that India is not fit for independence, or that she is not ripe for it.

Our representative next mentioned the death[1] of Hakim Ajmal Khan and Mr. Gandhi made the following statement :

It is a great and grievous loss at this juncture. Hakim Ajmal Khan was one of the truest servants of India and for the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity he was one of the most invaluable men. I can but hope that what we did not do and learn during his lifetime we shall now learn after and by his death. If the accounts that have been published, viz., that Hindus took part in paying respect to the memory of the deceased in just as large numbers as the Mussalmans, are true, it is a very healthy sign and I hope that the spirit of brotherhood and friendliness that has been evoked in Delhi by his death will continue and become permanent and percolate throughout the length and breadth of the land.

For me the death of Hakimji is a deep personal loss. I entirely associate myself with the appeal issued by Dr. Ansari and other leaders that the National Muslim University at Delhi which Hakimji nursed with very delicate care should be placed beyond any risk by patriotic Indians subscribing to the Fund that Hakimji was raising for putting its finances on a firm footing. But, of course, the best monument to be raised to the memory of the great patriot would be to

[1] On 29-12-1927

bring about unbreakable unity between, Hindu, Mussalmans and other communities residing in India.

The Searchlight, 6-1-1928

87. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

December 31, 1927

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got both your letters. I have now returned to the Ashram, and shall know, therefore, what letters arrive. You gave at least one particular in your letter, and that was good. I understand what you say about Sastriji. You can boldly, but courteously, tell him what you may wish to. You have given a good description of your conversation with him.

I certainly like the idea of closing the Durban Office. Personally, I believe that, if the paper does not run on its own merit, we should not be too eager to continue it. If it runs on its own merit, it should without difficulty run even from Phœnix. Do not run it by incurring debts or simply for the sake of running it. In this matter, at any rate, please do accept my advice. If you find it difficult to stay there on this condition, both of you should return here. Do not wait till it is too late.

You have not replied to what I said about the money you owe to the Ashram. This is to remind you again.

And now to Sushila :

Your letters are dull. Manilal is justified in saying that, being very busy with work, he cannot write much, but you certainly ought to write. If you have interest in life, you will find much to write about. Sons and daughters fill sheets and sheets when writing to their parents about their happy and unhappy experiences, but your letters contain no more than a few lines. Your physique does not seem yet to have become stronger. If you wish, you may consult some doctor there. Do anything, but get strong. If you wish to return here, discuss the matter between you two. So far as I am concerned, you have my permission. It will also be for you to decide where you will live. You may live either here or at Akola. Think of me not as a father-in-law but as a father. In order that you may be able to do some service, it is also your duty to take care of your body. Do not neglect that duty.

I saw Nilkanth[1] yesterday. He has returned from Japan. You must have got his letter. Balubhai, too, saw me.

Let me know :

The time when you get up and the hours of meals. How often and what you eat. The day's time-table, the contacts you have made there, the expenses, etc. I had the cable signed by four of you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4732

88. A NOTE

[*1927*][2]

Pandit Satavalekar[3] is a famous name. He is a great scholar of Sanskrit. Although he is a Maharashtrian, he publishes a Hindi periodical[4] from Maharashtra and serves the cause of Hindi. He rejoices in the study of the *Vedas* and in discovering their hidden meaning. He cherishes ahimsa. He has sent to me the following thought-provoking letter[5] in view of the current controversy.

From a photos tat of the Hindi origin al: G. N. 1081

89. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Thursday, 1927[6]

CHI. MANI,

I don't like your having an attack of fever and the persistent weakness since then.Undertake nothing beyond your physical capacity. I do not know if there is still time for it, but I shall be glad to know if you are elected a delegate to the Congress.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] Mashruwala

[2] From the contents, it appears that this was written around mid-1927, when there began a controversy surrounding the subject of cow-slaughter.

[3] S. D. Satavalekar

[4] *Vaidika Dharma*

[5] Not available

[6] For this and the subsequent letters of 1927, precise dates are not ascertainable.

[PS.]

If you see any newspaper reports about my health, be sure that they are exaggerated. There has been at times a rise and at other times a fall in the blood-pressure during this tour.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 58

90. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

1927

CHI. MANI,

Should people leave the Ashram when they fall ill? I do not even know where you have gone. Now that you have run away you must at any rate get well soon. Remember you are free to join me if you are not at ease. Self-denial pays only to the extent that it is endurable. If it does not pay, it is no good. Every day I wait for some news of you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You know the tour programme, don't you?

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patetne, p. 57

91. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Monday [*1927*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Here is the letter from Rajendrababu. I had written to him that he might, if he liked, withdraw the case. But now it cannot be done because Baijnathji had already been told that it would be pursued. I am sorry about this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2881

[1] *Panchama Putrane Bapuna Ashirvad*, (p. 42) also places this along with letters for 1927.

92. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

Saturday, [*1927*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN JHAVERI,

Your letters come regularly and are a great help to me.

I knew that you would not misunderstand what I said to you about the diet.

You must win over Sarojini Devi with love. I have come to feel that she is a good-hearted lady.

Tell Pannalal that he should not spend money right now on building a new house, but should stay on Ashram land. He may pay rent or do whatever he thinks is right. A wealthy man should use the wealth in his possession as a trustee.

Your studies have now got into stride. All of you must give your utmost attention and gain as much as possible. One can progress a lot by doing this.

I am not defeated in our experiment with the children as I seemed to be with our women's wing. For the present, I can say that you have saved me from defeat.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3128

93. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

Silence Day, [*1927*][2]

CHI. GANGABEHN JHAVERI,

You stayed out for a sufficiently long time. You must have come back with greater peace of mind. I assume that you will have certainly improved your health. Make the Bal Mandir a beautiful place. Take care of Radha. She is without doubt an arduous worker.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: G. N. 3121

[1] From *Manavtana Prahari—Pannalal Jhaveri*
[2] *ibid*

94. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

[*1927*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I am glad to have your letter.

Why do you have that swelling in the leg? You must make your body strong as steel.

If you are willing, I want to take a lot of work from you. For that, you must be completely absorbed in your work. If you absorb yourself in your work, you can conquer your attachment and passion. In this age there is no greater religion than service. In my view it is the greatest religion in all ages.

If you wish to equip yourself for the religion of service, master all the aspects of processing cotton. You must know to recognize the quality of cotton. You must know how to repair the spinning-wheel. You must know how to prepare the *mal* for the spinning-wheel. You must know ginning and carding. You must know how to determine the count, the strength, etc., of the spun yarn. Then only can it be said that you have become an expert.

Along with these, your study of Gujarati, Hindi and Sanskrit should continue. I need countless such girls. A widow who can be put on the path of self-development is in my view a maiden.

Feel free to write to me, like a daughter writing to her mother. Nanibehn should get well.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3134

95. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

[*1927*][2]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I got both your letters. I have accumulated a pile of letters. I have been hoping every day to leave for the Ashram; meanwhile, I got your second letter.

You have done well in going back to the store. Put only as much

[1] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Ashram Women", January 17, 1927 and "Letter to Gangabehn Jhaveri", about September 12, 1927.

[2] From the contents; *vide* and "Letter to Gangabehn Jhaveri", about September 12, 1927

burden on your body and mind as you can bear.

Give up your eagerness to learn many languages or pursue other studies. It is more necessary to improve one's mastery over what one has already learnt. You should learn Sanskrit even if you have to work by yourself. Your Gujarati is good enough, but why can't you learn it as well as the most learned teachers? If a rope can make dents on a granite rock, why can't we train ourselves by constant practice? If you have not gone far in your study of Marathi and if you have no special reason for learning it, give it up, but only if the time you save on it can be given to Gujarati and Sanskrit.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3125

96. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Monday [*January 2, 1928*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got both your letters. On my part, I have tried my best to bring you here and am still trying. Let's see what God wills. Keep in mind the verse from the second chapter of the *Gita*: "Whose mind is untroubled in sorrows and longeth not for joys"[2].

My health is fair. I shall certainly be here for the next three months at least. Mrityunjaya[3] and Vidyavati[4] are both doing well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3303

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's proposed stay at the Ashram "for the next three months", the letter appears to have been written in the first week of January 1928; *vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 5-1-1928.

[2] II. 56

[3] Rajendra Prasad's son

[4] Mrityunjaya's wife, Prabhavati's sister

97. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

Not Revised

SATYGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 4, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I feel that you love me too well to resent what I am about to write. In any case I love you too well to restrain my pen when I feel I must write.

You are going too fast. You should have taken time to think and become acclimatized. Most of the resolutions you framed and got carried could have been delayed for one year. Your plunging into the 'republican army' was a hasty step. But I do not mind these acts of yours so much as I mind your encouraging mischief-makers and hooligans. I do not know whether you still believe in unadulterated non-violence. But even if you have altered your views, you could not think that unlicensed and unbridled violence is going to deliver the country. If careful observation of the country in the light of your European experiences convinces you of the error of the current ways and means, by all means enforce your own views, but do please form a disciplined party. You know the Cawnpore experiences. In every struggle bands of men who would submit to discipline are needed. You seem to be overlooking this factor in being careless about your instruments.

If I can advise you, now that you are the working secretary of the Indian National Congress, it is your duty to devote your whole energy to the central resolution, i.e., Unity, and the important but secondary resolution, i.e., boycott of the Simon Commission.[2] The Unity resolution[3] requires the use of all you great gifts of organization and persuasion.

[1] This was published along with the following note from Jawaharlal Nehru: "I returned from Europe in December 1927 and went straight to the Madras Session of the Indian National Congress. A number of resolutions were passed there at my instance. This letter was written by Gandhiji because he did not approve of some of my activities at this session."

[2] *Vide* Appendix "extract from Statement by the Viceroy on the Indian Statutory Commission", November 8, 1927.

[3] *Vide* Appendix "resolution on Hindu-Muslim Unity", December 26, 1927.

I have not time to elaborate my points, but *verb. sap*.

I hope Kamala is keeping as well as in Europe.

Yours,

BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, pp. 55-6

98. IN MEMORIAM

In the death of Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan the country has lost one of its truest servants. Hakim Saheb's was a many-sided personality. He was not merely an able physician who practised his art as much for the rich as for the poor. But he was a courtier patriot. Though he passed his time among potentates, he was a thorough-going democrat. He was a great Mussalman and equally great Indian. He loved equally Hindus and Mussalmans and was in turn equally respected and loved by both. Hindu-Muslim unity was the breath of his nostrils. His later days were soured because of our dissensions. But he never lost faith in his country or his people. He felt that both the communities were bound in the end to unite. Having that unchangeable faith, he never ceased to work for unity. Though he took time, he finally threw in his lot with the non-co-operators and did not hesitate to put in peril his fondest and greatest creation, the Tibbia College. He loved this College with a passion which only those who knew him well could realize. In Hakimji I have lost not merely a wise and steadfast co-worker, I have lost a friend on whom I could rely in the hour of need. He was my constant guide in the matter of Hindu-Muslim unity. His judge- ment, sobriety and knowledge of human nature enabled him for the most part to give correct decisions. Such a man never dies. Though he is no longer in the flesh with us, his spirit shall be ever with us and calls us even now to a faithful discharge of our duty. And no memo- rial that we can raise to perpetuate his memory can be complete until we have achieved real Hindu-Muslim unity. May God grant that we may learn to do through his death what we failed to do in his lifetime.

But Hakimji was no idle dreamer. He believed in realizing his dream. As he realized his dream about medicine through the Tibbia College, so he sought partially to realize his political dream through the Jamia Millia. When this national university was almost on the point of dying, he, almost single-handed, carried out a plan of removing the institution from Aligarh to Delhi. But the removal meant more worry

for him. He believed himself hence forward to be specially responsible for the financial stability of the College. He was the principal man to find support for it either from his own pocket or by way of contributions collected from personal friends. The immediate and indispensable memorial that the nation can raise is to put the financial condition of the Jamia on a stable basis. Both Hindus and Mussalmans are and should be equally interested in it. It is one of the four national universities still struggling for existence, the other three being the Bihar, Kashi and Gujarat Vidyapiths. When the Jamia was brought into being Hindus subscribed liberally to it. The national ideal has been kept intact in this Muslim institution. I commend to the attention of the reader the note[1] prepared by Sjt. Ramachandran[2] out of his own experience covering over twelve months. In Principal Zakir Husain it has a learned Principal of liberal views and undoubted nationalism. The Principal is ably assisted by a chosen staff some of whom have travelled abroad and possess foreign degrees. The institution has grown since its transfer to Delhi and if it is well supported, it promises rich results. There can be no doubt that it is the duty of those Hindus and Mussalmans who wish to honour the memory of Hakim Saheb, who believe in the constructive side of non-co-operation and who believe in Hindu-Muslim unity, to give as much financial assistance as is possible for them to give. Dr. Ansari, Sjt. Srinivasa Aiyengar, Seth Jamnalal Bajaj and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru have already issued an appeal in this matter. I am now trying through Principal Zakir Husain to find out the exact condition and placing myself in correspondence with Dr. Ansari, and as soon as I have collected enough information, I hope to lay it before the readers. In the mean time I invite subscriptions so as not to lose time. The subscriptions received will not be handed to anyone unless a proper committee is formed and an absolutely correct administration of funds is assured. I do hope that Hindus and Mussalmans swill vie with one another to well the subscription list.

Young India, 5-1-1928

[1] "What I Saw in the Jamia", published in *Young India*, 5-1-1928

[2] G. Ramachandran, a Gandhian educationist

99. THE NATIONAL CONGRESS

UNITY

The special feature of Dr. Ansari's speech was its intense hunger for unity. He knew that he was expected to bring it about. And if any single person could do it, it was certainly Dr. Ansari. He accepted the highest honour in the gift of the nation because he had confidence in the nation, the cause and himself. He certainly left no stone unturned to achieve his ambition. Stars favoured him. Sjt. Srinivasa Aiyengar helped him by his very recklessness. No other president would perhaps have dared as he did after the partial failure at Simla. But Sjt. Aiyengar was not the man to shrink. He took Dr. Ansari, the Ali Brothers, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and others with him and with his accustomed impetuosity carried his resolution. He was not committed to any formula. When the almost fatal flaw in the resolution about the cow and music was pointed out and a substitute submitted, he whole-heartedly, frankly and generously admitted the flaw and accepted the substitute as a great improvement on the original. The Mussalmans present rose to the occasion and, though not without some reluctance and hesitation at first, accepted the substitute without reserve. Pandit Malaviyaji had come with the full intention of accommodating himself to the general wish so far as it was possible for him. He knew and everybody realized that it was within his power to block the way. He did not. True, he had many amendments which he considered were necessary but he was not going to resist the resolution if his amendments could not be carried. Pandit Malaviyaji is probably the oldest Congressman. His loyalty to the Congress is beyond compare. His patriotism is of the highest order. But my Mussalman friends have hitherto always belittled my faith in his *bona fides* and nationalism as against communalism. I have never been able to suspect either even where I have not been able to share his views on Hindu-Muslim questions. It was, therefore, a great joy to me that the Ali Brothers warmly acclaimed his great speech on the unity resolution. So long as Hindu and Mussalman leaders distrust one another's motives, speeches and actions, there can be no real unity in spite of perfect resolutions. Let us hope that the trust generated at the meeting will continue and prove highly infectious. Maulana Mahomed Ali, in his joy over Malaviyaji's speech, said that the Mussalmans no longer wanted protection of minorities from Earl Winterton for it could be

better secured by Malaviyaji. If there be one Hindu who can guarantee such protection on behalf of Hindus it is Malaviyaji. But whether he can 'deliver goods' or not, I would like the Maulana and the other Mussalmans and all minorities once for all to renounce the idea of expecting or getting protection from a third party. It were better, if such protection be not given voluntarily by the majority, to wrest it by force from unwilling hands than that a third party should be invited to intervene and should weaken and humiliate both and hold the nation under bondage. The greatest contribution of the Congress then to me was this apparent change of heart.

So far as the vast mass of Hindus are concerned, they are interested only in the cow and music resolution. It was wholly bad in its original form. As it has finally emerged from the Subjects Committee and passed, all that can be said for it is that it is innocuous and that it is the best that could be had at this stage of the national evolution. But I for one cannot enthuse over it. I can only tolerate it as passable. Nevertheless it has great possibilities. If the appeal of the Congress penetrates the hearts of Hindus and Mussalmans and if each party spares the feelings of the other in terms of the claims advanced by each, peace is in sight and swaraj within easy grasp. A definite realization of the folly of fratricide and corresponding action will be the best and the most dignified answer to Lord Birkenhead's insolent flaunting of British might in the nation's face.

It is, therefore, profitable to examine the meaning of the Congress appeal. I know what would spare the Hindus' feeling in the matter of the cow. It is nothing short of complete voluntary stoppage of cow-slaughter by Mussalmans whether for sacrifice or for food. The Hindu dharma will not be satisfied if some tyrant secured by force of arms immunity of the cow from the slaughter. Islam in India cannot make a better gift to the Hindus than this voluntary self-denial. And I know enough of Islam to be able to assert that Islam does not compel cow-slaughter and it does compel its followers to spare and respect to the full the feelings of their neighbours whenever it is humanly possible. For me, music before mosques is not on a par with cow-slaughter. But it has assumed an importance which it would be folly to ignore. It is for the Mussalmans to say what would spare Mussalman feelings. And if complete stoppage of music before mosques will be the only thing that will spare the Mussalman feelings, it is the duty of the Hindus to do so without a moment's thought. If

we are to reach unity of hearts, we must each be prepared to perform an adequate measure of sacrifice.

If this much-to-be-desired consummation is to be reached, Dr. Ansari will have to send out peace parties with definite instructions to preach the message and secure for it the approval of the masses. Have we sufficient energy for the mission, have we enough honest, industrious and willing missionaries? Let us hope.

IRRESPONSIBILITY

Though I was not able to attend any of the Committee meetings, I could not fail to perceive that irresponsible talk and work were the order of the day. Indiscipline was not a rare feature. Resolutions involving great consequences were sprung upon the Subjects Committee and readily accepted by that august body without much thought or discussion. The Independence Resolution[1] that was rejected last year was passed almost without opposition. I know that its wording was harmless but, in my humble opinion, it was hastily conceived and thoughtlessly passed. I hope to deal with this resolution separately in an early issue.[2]

The boycott of British goods resolution was passed with an equally light heart. The Congress stultifies itself by repeating year after year resolutions of this character when it knows that it is not capable of carrying them into effect. By passing such resolutions we make an exhibition of our impotence, become the laughing-stock of critics and invite the contempt of the adversary.

Let me not be misunderstood. The Congress has a perfect right to boycott British goods if it so wishes. But as the most representative assembly in India, it has no right to expose itself to ridicule by using threats which it cannot carry into effect. I have singled out but two out of the several irresponsible resolutions passed by the Congress.

The conception behind the Congress constitution was to make it the most representative and authoritative body in all India, and by its commanding voluntary obedience on the part of millions, automatically, almost imperceptibly to replace the sham enslaving assemblies and councils and other foreign machinery masquerading under the name of representative bodies. But the Congress cannot become the irresistible force it was and is intended to be, if its resolutions are ill-conceived and are to remain merely paper resolutions having no

[1] *Vide* footnote to "Interview to *Indian Daily Mail*", 30-12-1927

[2] *Vide* "Independence *v*. Swaraj", 12-1-1928.

response from the people or having no correspondence to the popular wants and aspirations and if the members are not to observe the rules of discipline, decorum and common honesty. If they only knew, if they would regard themselves as servants of the nation, the members of the All-India Congress Committee have the rights and opportunities of service equal to those of the members of any parliament in the world. But at the present moment, we have almost sunk to the level of the schoolboys' debating society.

The Working Committee is the national cabinet. It has to enforce the resolutions of the Congress and the All-India Congress Com- mittee. It must, therefore, be the body responsible for bringing before the A.I.C.C. resolutions required for the attainment of the Congress goal. Any non-official resolutions sprung upon the A.I.C.C. must be carefully scrutinized and should have but a remote chance of passing, if opposed by the Working Committee. Every resolution, official or unofficial, must have behind it a working plan. When, therefore, an unofficial resolution is brought forward, the sponsor must be prepared to disclose his plan of action if his proposal is to be accepted. A resolution proposing the establishment in every village of a free night school for its adult population has everything to commend itself to a body like the Congress. But if the proposer has no definite feasible plan of action behind it, the A.I.C.C. would be justified and bound to reject it summarily. If then the Congress is to retain its prestige and usefulness, the members of the A.I.C.C. will have to revise their attitude and realize their great responsibility.

THE ELEPHANT AND THE ANT

In my humble opinion, the Reception Committee of the Congress at Madras committed a grave blunder by permitting and countenancing the so-called All-India Exhibition under its aegis. That it received Government patronage and *imprimatur* adds nothing to its merit, if it does not rob it of what little merit it otherwise might have had. The Congress long ago outlived Government favours and frowns. The ideals for which the Congress has been working since, say, 1918, to go no further back, were almost all ignored in the plan of this Exhibition. Let me point out what the All-India Exhibition contained. Among the pavilions were several assigned to foreign firms for exhibiting their wares, one assigned to machinery and mechanical contrivances, some to textiles containing foreign yarn, others to foreign clocks and watches. There was little of swadeshi, much of

foreign and British goods about the Exhibition, and this in the name of and under the patronage of a Congress which promulgates the gospel of swadeshi and which has on its programme a boycott of British goods! There was hardly anything to interest or instruct the villagers. The Exhibition represented not the rural civilization of India, but the exploiting city civilization of the West. It was a denial of the Congress spirit and was in marked contrast to the khadi and swadeshi exhibitions of the past six years. The textile court seemed to have been designed to ridicule khadi although the Congress still retains the khadi franchise and lends its name to the activities of the All-India Spinners' Association. As if the visitors were to be all English, all the notices were printed in English. Here is one designed to belittle khadi.

> Feed the poor and work the able.
> Let the charkha spin the weft
> And the mill the warp.
> In this combination lies the solution

Unless the author of this notice has a deliberately mischievous intention, he has demonstrated his ignorance of the evolution of khadi. The fallacy of charkha weft and mill warp has been often exposed and refuted in these columns. Suffice it here to say that the charkha would have died a well-deserved death if the policy of using charkha yarn for weft only had long continued. Experience has shown that the combination was bad in every respect.

Here is another equally, if not more, mischievous poster :

> To force a weaver to use hand-spun warp yarn
> Is like forcing him to fight a battleship with a knife.
> To cut a weaver off from best methods of work
> Is like cutting off his thumbs.

This poster betrays venomous prejudice against khadi and ignorance of the art of weaving and the condition of weavers. The writer forgets that all the world over, a time was when weavers took delight in using hand-spun yarn both for weft and warp and that the art then exhibited by the weaver has never yet been excelled. The writer could easily have corrected himself by visiting the khadi court outside the precious All-India Exhibition court. He would there have seen weavers actually working fairy tales on hand-spun warp with the same ease and facility that they would have with mill-spun yarn. It is easy of proof that, whereas mill-spun yarn must in time—not far off—

kill out the weaver, hand-spun yarn must revive and is reviving the weaver and has already rescued some of them from the butcher's trade and closet-cleaning work. Every ten hand-spinners mean an addition of one whole-time weaver, one whole-time carder, not to mention more work for dhobis, tailors, carpenters, blacksmiths, dyers, printers, etc.

The coming into being of this foreign and anti-India-spirit exhibition under the Congress aegis is an ocular and forcible demonstration of the irresponsibility to which I have already adverted. I do not think any Congressman deliberately countenanced this white elephant. Want of thought, want of care, want of responsibility are answerable for—I cannot help calling—this scandalous creation.

There was no doubt the ant of the Khadi Exhibition was happily thrown outside the elephant court. Rumour has it that the Madras Government would not have a Khadi Exhibition inside the all-india court. It certainly suited me. For, having gained a knowledge of what this all-india exhibition was, I would have found it difficult, if not impossible, even for opening the Khadi Exhibition to enter what was chiefly a foreign court—a reminder of national humiliation. The Khadi Exhibition on the other hand was, though like an ant, a work of indigenous art. It was a school for study and demonstration of the potency of khadi. There was beside it an Indian fine arts court, a result of the devoted labours of Dr. J. H. Cousins. No doubt there were a few other things purely Indian or a result of Indian enterprise in the so-called All-India Exhibition. But they only served to entrap the unwary and as a shield for the predominant foreign show.

Let future Reception Committees beware.

Young India, 5-1-1928

100. A CALL TO INDIA'S POETESS

Shrimati Sarojini Devi has received a call[1] from America chiefly for the purpose of undoing the mischief created by Miss Mayo's untruthful and libellous production. No writing undertaken in India can possibly overtake the mischief done by that sensation-monger who has the ear of a gullible public—hungering for and living on sensation. No serious American can possibly be taken in by Miss Mayo's scurrilous writings. The seriously-minded American does not

[1] *Vide* "Cable to Dhan Gopal Mukerjee", 14-11-1927.

need any refutation. And the general public that has been already affected by *Mother India* will never read the refutations, however brilliant, attempted in India. The idea, therefore, has been happily conceived in America of bringing out Sarojini Devi on a lecturing tour by way of reply to *Mother India*. If Sarojini Devi would respond to the invitation, her visit is likely to undo some at least of the mischief wrought by Miss Mayo's novel. That the Poetess would draw crowds wherever she goes and command a patient and respectful hearing need not be doubted. She is as sure by the magic of her eloquence to captivate American imagination as she captivated South African and paved the way for the Round Table Conference, and finally for the great work that the Right Honourable Srinivasa Sastri is doing in South Africa. Let us hope that the way would be clear for her to accept the invitation and that Dr. Ansari would be able to spare her for the foreign mission that seems to call this gifted daughter of India.

Young India, 5-1-1928

101. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 5, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

You must have received my letter sent with Jamnalalji. I had also sent a telegram asking you not to attend the Assembly till your health returned to normal. I wanted to mention this to the *pujya* Malaviyaji but we were so busy with other things that I did not remember you. I see no need of writing to him now. You must have sent the money to Jamnalalji? I have not yet heard about it.

The *pujya* Malaviyaji's speech had a magic effect and he proposes to make a mighty effort in this matter. Let us see what happens. Up to the end of March, I shall be at the Ashram itself. On the 17th I shall have to leave for Kathiawar on a five days' tour.[1]

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6151. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] For the Kathiawar Political Conference

102. FOREWORD TO 'SRIMAD BHAGAVADGEETHAI' [1]

SABARMATI,
Paush Shukla 14, 1984 [*January 6, 1928*]

I am not conversant enough with the Tamil language to be able to say anything on the merits of this translation of the *Gita.* But this I can certainly say, that no Hindu should let a single day pass without the study of *Shrimad Bhagavad Gita*. The translation will be of use to those who cherish the *Gita.*

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 11167. Courtesy: C. Vishvanathan

103. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Friday [*January 6, 1928*][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I cannot give a full reply to your letter just now. More when we meet.

The wool and sericulture businesses are good. We can take them up to a certain extent. Talk it over with me further.

I shall not have to give my blessings to Kusum, as I will not be attending that marriage. It seems to me that we must break the walls which divide the communities. But you may discuss this matter further with me. You may also talk to me about Navin and Dhiru. If Maneklal and others bear their own expenses, we should certainly keep them.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9167. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] A Tamil version of the *Bhagavad Gita* done in 1912 by Subramania Bharati, a Tamil poet and patriot, *Srimad Bhagavadgeethai* was published *in* 1928. Gandhiji wrote this foreword in Hindi at the request of Bharati's brother, C. Visvanathan.

[2] The letter was received by the addressee on January 7, 1928.

104. LETTER TO RATILAL

Friday [*January 6, 1928*][1]

BHAISHRI RATILAL

I passed on your telegram to the Committee here and then wired to Maganlal. We do feel Chi. Narandas's absence here. We must leave off our attachment to friends and relatives. I know that this is difficult to do, but we should try and overcome it as much as we can. Tell Sakubhai to have the utmost patience.[2] It is but the nature of the body to wear away. Tell Chi. Narandas that I got his letter.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7160

105. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 7, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have been waiting to hear from you. It is clear that you are not yet fit for travelling. This fever must have brought on additional weakness and retarded convalescence. I hope however that the fever has not recurred.

I am glad Jawaharlal and Bharucha passed some time with you.

You will have seen that I anticipated you about the precious exhibition and many other things.

How is Nikhil[3] and how did Hemaprabha Devi feel?

I seem to be keeping well.

With love,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1580

[1] As in the G.N. Register
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Ratilal", January 18, 1928.
[3] Addressee's son who was seriously ill and later died in July 1928

106. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

Saturday [*January 7, 1928*][1]

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL,

I have your letter. I am all right. You will be surprised to know that I have not yet been able to see Moti or the child. I am completely engrossed in my daily work. Come and pay a visit when you can. Kusumbehn told me that you were suffering from megrim. It is a bad disease. A mud-pack helps in curing it. The diet should of course be light. Kusumbehn's manner of working is a bit too fastidious. She has not yet chosen her work. She takes up whatever work she feels like doing. But there is no need to worry.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL CHOKSI

SEVASHRAM

BROACH

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12142

107. DISCOURSES ON THE "GITA"[2]

January 7, 1928

This chapter[3] is as sweet as the manner in which it has been sung. It is balm for people like us who suffer from inner torments. We are all troubled by evil desires, and the Lord holds out an assurance here to all those who seek refuge in Him that He will free them from such desires. We can also see from this chapter that at the time when the *Gita* was composed, distinctions of high and low had already made their appearance in the varnashrama system and some had come to be regarded as lower than others. In truth, however, can we describe anyone as higher or lower than others? Let him who is completely free from evil desires point an accusing finger at another. All of us are equal in this regard, and this chapter points out the unfailing means of winning-freedom from evil cravings, namely, total surrender to the

[1] From the postmark

[2] *Young India*, 12-1-1928, and *Navajivan*, 15-1-1928, also carried reports of the discourses which were delivered on January 6 and 7.

[3] IX

Lord. We should not of course conclude from this that such surrender will by itself, without further effort on our part, purify us of our evil. If a person who is dragged by his senses, against his will, to objects of pleasures turns to God for help, with tears in his eyes, as he ceaselessly struggles against them, the Lord will certainly free him from the evil desires which trouble him.

Another thought also arises out of it, but we shall consider it tomorrow.

That thought is that this also explains the means of expiation of one's sins. Such expiation consists not in fasting, but in *bhakti*, in self-surrender. I fully understand the usefulness of fasting but there are also limits to it. Fasting can never expiate a sin; it may, on the contrary, serve to cover it up. A sinner is one who has committed a sin, but *papayoni* means one born of sin itself and therefore the most wicked of all sinners. We cannot say to whom this notion first occurred, but everyone is assured of freedom through total surrender to the Lord. Expiation of sin consists in *bhakti*. Fasting may seem necessary sometimes as a means of filling the heart with *bhakti*, and everyone may decide for himself when it is so. The real means, however, is *bhakti*, and *bhakti* means reducing oneself to a cipher, erasing the 'I'. If we can do this, no matter how many our sins in the past, they will not stand in the way of our freedom. The thoroughly wicked mentioned in this chapter are none else but ourselves. We, who commit all manner of sins in our hearts and move in the world as respectable people, are sinners, all of us, and in this chapter the Lord holds out an assurance to us.

Chapter XIV contains a description of the three *gunas* and Chapter XV a description of *Purushottama*[1]. Thirty years ago I read Drummond's[2] book in which he had established by means of several examples that the rules of the material world apply to the spiritual world also. We see it proved in this world which is made of the three *gunas*. There are not three *gunas* but many; those three are the major divisions of the many. He who transcends those three becomes one with *Purushottama*. None has been born in this world who could exist with only one *guna*. Even if a man possesses a high degree of the *sattvik guna*, the latter still includes something of the *gunas* of *tamas*

[1] The Supreme Being

[2] Dr. Henry Drummond, author of *The Natural Law in the Spiritual World* and *The Greatest Thing in the World*

and *rajas*. The example of water occurs to me. In the form of ice, it remains like a stone. But when it boils and becomes steam, it rises in the sky. As ice it lacks the capacity to rise, but as steam, it ascends higher and higher. Its highest power appears in the form of steam. And finally, ceasing to be steam, it becomes a cloud and benefits the world in the form of rain. However, if steam becomes ice, it lies dead and still. Ice too has its uses. Melted ice flows in the form of rivers. It also causes floods but we are not concerned with that. It is a proven fact that without the sun, even water cannot turn into steam. But that shows that it cannot do without someone else's help. The long and short of what I want to say is that steam points to a state of *moksha*. It benefits the world in its state of *moksha*. This is how we should understand the meaning of these two chapters.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

108. ARTICLES ON COW-PROTECTION

The following are the details[1] regarding the Rs. 150/- received from Dhulia as aid towards publishing the articles on cow-protection.

In addition, the *Navajivan* has received Rs. 50-8-0, details[2] of which are given below :

The publication of this book will be taken up early. However, those wishing to serve the cause of cow-protection should bear it in mind that more money received by way of aid will bring down the selling price of the book.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-1-1928

[1] Not translated here

[2] *ibid*

109. THE EFFICACY OF MUD

In my book on health and hygiene[1] I wrote at length on the use of mud in treating ailments.Having read it, Shri Vithaldas Purushottam who has been giving a trial to this treatment writes to say :[2]

On reading this, I asked him to enlighten me about his own experience whereupon he wrote the following letter[3] :

The suggestions put forward in both these letters may be freely utilized in treating many ailments. I am of the opinion that mud cannot be placed directly on the skin where there is an wound or the skin has peeled off. It can certainly be applied in this manner on the lower part of the abdomen and those who do not benefit by using a pack of mud wrapped up in cloth may certainly place it directly over the skin. Even at present, I am experimenting with mud in ordinary cases and am getting good results. This remedy is so simple, inexpensive and so easy that everyone could make use of it within limits. True, the treatment of placing mud on the abdomen can be carried out only on an empty stomach. One should also remember that the mud should always be taken from a clean place. Ice is used for headache or fever; in such cases, mud is generally more efficacious than ice.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-1-1928

110. LETTER TO RAJA OF KANIKA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

January 8, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I was sorry that during my recent tour in Utkal I was not able to visit your Raj and see for myself whether there was anything in the allegations made to me about the oppression of the ryots. These allegations were vehemently repeated by many people during the

[1] "General Knowledge about Health"; later published in book form.

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had written that mud treatment was quite effective even in ailments like appendicitis and that he had personal experience in the matter.

[3] Not translated here

tour. But I have said nothing about them before putting myself in communication with you once more. Could you entertain the idea of a representative being sent to find me the truth about the allegations?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

THE RAJA OF KANIKA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13035

111. LETTER TO W. H. PITT

[*January 8, 1928*][1]

DEAR MR. PITT,

I wonder if you received a letter[2] to you now some weeks ago inquiring whether any headway was being made with the matters of Tiruvarppu and Suchindram? I am having constant inquiry.

M. K. GANDHI

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

TRIVANDRUM

From a microfilm: S.N. 13035A

112. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI, B.B.C.I. RY.,

January 8, 1928

DEAR MOTI BABU,

I was delighted to hear from you. I have often wondered why you had been silent. You must take care of yourself and preserve the body for future use. I am keeping well enough for the work. The reports were exaggerated.

Do please come to the Ashram as to your own home and stay as long as you like. You will tell me what conveniences you will need in the interest of your health. The weather just now is cold, dry and good.

As for the help for khadi work please continue to knock at the

[1] This letter is drafted on the reverse of the preceding item which is dated 8-1-1928.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to W. H. Pitt", 14-10-1927.

door of the A.I.S.A. You know that I am not exercising administrative control for reasons of health. You have therefore to convince Sheth Jamnalalji and Sjt. Shankerlal Banker. I shall speak to them. Of course the financiers of the A.I.S.A. are not over-flourishing. What I collected in Karnataka and Tamil Nad has to be spent mostly in those provinces.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 11034

113. MESSAGE TO JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA[1]

[Before *January 9, 1928*]

MY DEAR PROFESSORS AND BOYS,

Thakkar Saheb asks me to send you a message of hope, when the calamity in the death of Hakim Saheb has overtaken us. Let the deceased's spirit ever abide with us. Let us keep his memory for ever green by making the Jamia a living temple of unity. You must not lose hope. The Jamia cannot perish so long as the professors and the boys are true to it. For my part you have my promise that, God willing, I shall use all the powers that He may give me, for putting the institution on a sound financial basis.

With love,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-1-1928

[1] This was read out at a meeting of the staff and students of the Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi, held to mourn the death of Hakim Ajmal Khan.

114. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA[1]

[On or after *January 9, 1928*]

TIBBIA WELL PROVIDED. JAMIA BEING GROWING INSTITUTION REQUEST YOUR SUPPORT. REFERENCE UNITY THINK YOU ANSARI SHOULD TRAVEL HOLD JOINT MEETINGS PASS RESOLUTIONS DELHI OTHER PLACES. OTHERS MAY ALSO BE SENT ELSEWHERE SAME ERRAND. YOU MAY COMMENCE WITH BENARES.

GANDHI

Show me the clean copy before despatch. This telegram to be sent by the carriage that will presently come. If it does not, then it only be sent to Sabarmati.[2]

From a photostat: S.N. 14905

115. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

SABARMATI,
January 10, 1928

MY DEAR BHRRR,

Yes, Hakim Saheb's death is a serious national loss. Let us hope the nation will turn it to good account.

Wednesday or Thursday between 3.5 p.m. will quite suit me.

With love,

BHRRR

From a photostat: S.N. 9561

[1] In reply to the following telegram received from the addressee on January 9: "Thanks for letter. Lala Sultansingh of Delhi met me Calcutta told me Jamia Islamia would not appeal Hindus. Tibbia College will agree with this opinion but I will support whatever you decide. What do you propose regarding Hindu-Muslim work? Agree should not delay action."

[2] These were evidently instructions to a secretary.

116. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Monday [*January 10, 1928*][1]

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL,

It is good that you have started the mud-pack treatment. After moistening the earth once, you need not do it again. If the pack dries up and if it is still necessary to continue the application, you may prepare another pack. If the pack is about an inch thick, it does not dry up. A pack applied on the stomach at night remains damp the whole night. One applied on the head during the noon is likely to dry up. Never put a pack on the stomach during the day, because the process of digestion is going on then. My experience about fragrant, i.e., clean red earth is good, but you may use black earth if you can get only that. The only thing is that it should be clean.

You should be careful about two things only as regards blood-pressure. You should not overwork either physically or mentally, and the motion must always be clear. If you do not have a clear motion every day, take an enema or a laxative. Never strain. Eat very light food. One need not worry about blood-pressure at all, if there is no other complaint. Since, however, you have had an attack of paralysis, you should certainly be careful. In addition to what you are doing, you may certainly take the injections, if advised by the doctor, since they have helped you. The headache should certainly be cured by the mud-pack. Even for this purpose, however, the stomach should be light.

Prabodh seems to be a very fine boy. May God fulfil all our hopes about him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12143

[1] As entered in the source; however, January 10 was a Tuesday.

117. LETTER TO KANTIPRASAD C. ANTANI

SABARMATI,
[*January 10, 1928*][1]

BHAISHRI KANTIPRASAD[2],

I have received your book. It will be difficult for me just now to find time to read it carefully. The remedies for the evils of the Indian States are not different. I therefore find it hard to spare time for a study of their special problems.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Purusharthi Kantiprasad Antani, pp. 79-80

118. LETTER TO KUNVERJI K. PAREKH

Tuesday [*January 10, 1928*][3]

CHI. KUNVERJI,

I have your letter. Rami[4] will reach here today. Let me know what work is being done there and how it is progressing. Tell me how you found Rami this time and also make whatever suggestions you wish to.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9705

[1] From the postmark
[2] Kantiprasad Chandrashankar Antani, a political worker of Cutch
[3] As in the S.N. Register
[4] Addressee's wife

119. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI[1]

SABARMATI,
January 11, 1928

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I have your sweet letter. It reminded me of the head master in Tiruppur who, having been your pupil, told me that you were as much master of Sanskrit as of English. I did not know this. I have read Valmiki only in translation and that indifferently. It is Tulsidas I swear by. But I admit all you say and would yet hold that Sita did go to the forest in spite of Rama's wish to the contrary. And in doing so, she excelled herself. Similarly did Rama excel himself in carrying out the promise of Dasharatha. But I am arguing to no purpose. For we are alone in the homage we owe to Rama and Sita.

I am watching your movements and prize copies of your letters to Sir Mohammad Habibullah[2].

You will have to prolong your stay if you are to put your great work on a sure foundation. Please do.

With love,

M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, p. 171

[1] The following is an extract from a letter from Sastri to T. N. Jagadisan (1940): "Gandhi's letter to me on the *Ramayana* question is really in his best style. I was in South Africa at the time. In a speech to women in Travancore State, he had told them that Sita disobeyed her husband in following him to the forest, and that a husband's order could therefore be set aside when there was sufficient cause. I wrote protesting against the obvious misreading of Valmiki. . . ."

[2] Member, Viceroy's Executive Council and leader of the Indian delegation which went to South Africa in November, 1926

120. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

January 11, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. It would be enough if the Maulana can secure you more custom.

Love,

BAPU

SJT. SATIS BABU
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 1581

121. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 11, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

You letter.

I hope Chand[1] is out of the wood.

My point[2] is not that you had not thought out any of your resolutions, much less the Independence one; but my point is that neither you nor anyone else had thought out the whole situation and considered the bearing and propriety of the resolutions. The finest resolutions may be irrelevant or out of place. But you should read carefully my article on the Congress. The special article on Independence will be out tomorrow.

The Unity resolution need much working out.

Do come whenever you can and when you come bring your work here and give yourself enough time.

This is scrappy but can't give you more just now.

Yours,

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1928. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Eldest daughter of Vijayalakshmi Pandit
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 4-1-1928.

122. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, SABARMATI[1]

[Before *January 12, 1928*]

I have to give you this evening an instance of a folly of which three of us have an equal share. Or rather my share is the biggest inasmuch as I, as the head of the Ashram, am expected to be much more vigilant than anyone of you.

Mnay of us could not imagine what this would be. But he narrated it in vivid and, as he is wont to describe his mistakes, in exaggerated detail. Those who have seen Gandhiji's room in the Ashram will remember that between the wall which faces the river and the roof there is a piece of lattice work. It is meant for ventilation, but it also lets in the sun's rays straight on Gandhiji's face. So he asked one of us to put something there as a screen. This friend asked another who immediately brought in the carpenter with a board. He naturally thought a shutter would be better than a screen, and asked if Gandhiji would like it. Gandhiji agreed, but soon after the carpenter began his work, he seemed to have perceived that he had not done the right thing. . . .

Now this is not what we who are pledged to poverty may do. It ought to have occurred to me that a piece of cardboard or a piece of cloth would serve as well as this shutter which costs a couple of rupees and three hours' labour for the carpenter. The cardboard or the piece of old cloth would have cost nothing and anyone could have fixed it there with a couple of nails. It is in these simple little things that our creed is tested. The Kingdom of Heaven is for those who are poor in spirit. Let us therefore learn at every step to reduce our needs and wants to the terms of the poor and try to be truly poor in spirit.

Young India, 12-1-1928

123. SPEECH ON HUMILITY[2]

SABARMATI,

[Before *January 12, 1928*]

Well, I do not remember the exact words of the song. But no one can forget the substance of the song. It is not only the music, but the substance that has been haunting me the whole day. You do not come to prayer to listen to music, or to admire this man's or that

[1] From Mahadev Desai's article "The Week", which reported the speech under the caption "The Poor in Spirit"

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of a prayer meeting

man's voice, but in order that you may carry with you for the day something from what you hear to guide and inspire you in all your actions. If we do not do so, all our prayers would be like sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. What a great song was today's! Kabir, in his homely telling way, has described the treasures of the humble. It is not he that exalteth himself, but he that humbleth himself that shall see God, says Kabir. We have to be humble like the ant and not proud like the elephant.

Young India, 12-1-1928

124. SPEECH ON FORGIVENESS[1]

SABARMATI,
[Before *January 12, 1928*]

This talk of passive non-resistance has been the bane of our national life. Forgiveness is a quality of the soul, and therefore a positive quality. It is not negative. "Conquer anger," says Lord Buddha, "by non-anger." But what is that "non-anger"? It is a positive quality and means the supreme virtue of charity or love. You must be roused to this supreme virtue which must express itself in your going to the angry man, ascertaining from him the cause of his anger, making amends if you have given any cause for offence and then bringing home to him the error of his way and convincing him that it is wrong to be provoked. This consciousness of the quality of the soul, and deliberate exercise of it, elevate not only the man but the surrounding atmosphere. Of course, only he who has that love will exercise it. This love can certainly be cultivated by incessant striving.

Young India, 12-1-1928

[1] From Mahadev Desai's article "The Week", which reported the speech under the caption "The Essence of Forgiveness". It was preceded by the following paragraph: "One of the candidates for the Khadi Service went in one day with his own ailment. He said he was very much prone to anger and he wanted to cleanse himself with fasting. 'I warn you,' said Gandhiji, 'that fasting is not always a penance for sins. Humble surrender to God is the only escape from sin, and all fasting, except when it is undertaken to help that surrender, is useless. I would suggest a better remedy. Go and apologize to the man you were angry with, ask him to prescribe the penance for you and do that. That will be much better expiation than fasting.' The friend went and did likewise. But what should the man who has been wronged do in this case? Simply forgive? Forgiveness, we have been told, is the ornament of the brave, but what is that forgiveness? Passivity? Taking the blow lying down? Is that the meaning of not resisting evil? This was the subject of a talk one evening and I summarize it briefly :"

125. INDEPENDENCE v. *SWARAJ*

It is said that the Independence Resolution is a fitting answer to Lord Birkenhead. If this be a serious contention, we have little notion of the answer that we should make to the appointment of the Statutory Commission and the circumstances attending the announcement of the appointment. The act of appointment needs, for an answer, not speeches, however heroic they may be, not declarations, however brave they may be, but corresponding action adequate to the act of the British Minister, his colleagues and his followers. Supposing the Congress had passed no resolution whatsoever, but had just made a bonfire of every yard of foreign cloth in its possession, and induced a like performance on the part of the whole nation, it would have been some answer, though hardly adequate, to what the act of appointment means. If the Congress could have brought about a strike of every Government employee beginning with the Chief Judges and ending with the petty peons, not excluding soldiers, that act would have been a fairly adequate answer. It would certainly have disturbed the comfortable equanimity with which the British ministers and those concerned are looking upon all our heroics.

It may be said this is merely a counsel of perfection which I should know is not capable of execution. I do not hold that view. Many Indians who are not speaking today are undoubtedly preparing in their own manner for the happy day when every Indian, now sustaining the system of Government which holds the nation in bondage, will leave the denationalizing service. It is contended that it is courage, it is undoubtedly wisdom, to restrain the tongue whilst one is unprepared for action. Mere brave speech without action is letting off useless steam. And the strongest speech shed its bravery when, in 1920, patriots learnt to court imprisonment for strong speeches. Speech is necessary for those who are dumbstruck. Restraint is necessary for the garrulous. The English administrators chaff us for our speech and occasionally betray by their acts their contempt of our speeches and thereby tell us more effecti-vely than by words: ‘Act if you dare.’ Till we can take up the challenge, every single threatening speech or gesture of ours is, in my opinion, a humiliation, and admission of impotence. I have seen prisoners in chains spitting forth oaths only to provide mirth for their jailors.

Moreover, has independence suddenly become a goal in answer

to something offensive that some Englishman has done? Do men conceive their goals in order to oblige people or to resent their action? I submit that, if it is a goal, it must be declared and pursued irrespective of the acts or threats of others.

Let us, therefore, understand what we mean by indepen- dence. England, Russia, Spain, Italy, Turkey, Chile, Bhutan have all their independence. Which independence do we want? I must not be accused of begging the question. For, if I were told that it is Indian independence that is desired, it is possible to show that no two persons will give the same definition. The fact of the matter is that we do not know our distant goal. It will be determined not by our definitions but by our acts, voluntary and involuntary. If we are wise, we will take care of the present and the future will take care of itself. God has given us only a limited sphere of action and a limited vision. Sufficient unto the day is the good thereof.

I submit that swaraj is an all-satisfying goal for all time. We the English-educated Indians often unconsciously make the terrible mistake of thinking that the microscopic minority of English-speaking Indians is the whole of India. I defy anyone to give for independence a common Indian word intelligible to the masses. Our goal at any rate may be known by an indigenous word understood of the three hundred millions. And we have such a word in 'swaraj' first used in the name of the nation by Dadabhai Naoroji.[1] It is infinitely greater than and includes independence. It is a vital word. It has been sanctified by the noble sacrifices of thousands of Indians. It is a word which, if it has not penetrated the remotest corner of India, has at least got the largest currency of any similar word. It is a sacrilege to displace that word by a foreign importation of doubtful value. This Independence Resolution is perhaps the final reason for conducting Congress proceedings in Hindustani and that alone. No tragedy like that of the Independence Resolution would then have been possible. The most valiant speakers would then have ornamented the native meaning of the word 'swaraj' and attempted all kinds of definitions, glorious and inglorious. Would that the independents would profit by their experience and resolve henceforth to work among the masses for whom they desire freedom and taboo English speech in its entirety in so far as mass meetings such as the Congress are concerned.

[1] In his presidential address at the Calcutta Congress in 1906, Dadabhai Naoroji used the word 'swaraj' as a synonym for 'self-government'.

Personally, I crave not for 'independence', which I do not understand, but I long for freedom from the English yoke. I would pay any price for it. I would accept chaos in exchange for it. For the English peace is the peace of the grave. Anything would be better than this living death of a whole people. This Satanic has well-nigh ruined this fair land materially, morally and spiritually. I daily see its law-courts denying justice and murdering truth. I have just come from terrorized Orissa. This rule is using my own countrymen for its sinful sustenance. I have a number of affidavits swearing that, in the district of Khurda, acknowledgments of enhancement of revenue are being forced from the people practically at the point of the bayonet. The unparalleled extravagance of this rule has demented the Rajas and the Maharajas who, unmindful of consequences, ape it and grind their subjects to dust. In order to protect its immoral commerce, this rule regards no means too mean, and in order to keep three hundred millions under the heels of a hundred thousand, it carries a military expenditure which is keeping millions in a state of semi-starvation and polluting thousands of mouths with intoxicating liquor.

But my creed is non-violence under all circumstances. My method is conversion, not coercion; it is self-suffering, not the suffering of the tyrant. I know that method to be infallible. I know that a whole people can adopt it without accepting it as its creed and without understanding its philosophy. People generally do not understand the philosophy of all their acts. My ambition is much higher than independence. Through the deliverance of India, I seek to deliver the so-called weaker races of the earth from the crushing heels of Western exploitation in which England is the greatest partner. If India converts, as it can convert, Englishmen, it can become the predominant partner in a world commonwealth of which England can have the privilege of becoming a partner if she chooses. India has the right, if she only knew, of becoming the predominant partner by reason of her numbers, geographical position and culture inherited for ages. This is big talk, I know. For a fallen India to aspire to move the world and protect weaker races is seemingly an impertinence. But in explaining my strong opposition to this cry for independence, I can no longer hide the light under a bushel. Mine is an ambition worth living for and worth dying for. In no case do I want to reconcile myself to a state lower than the best for fear of consequences. It is, therefore, not out of expedience that I oppose independence as my goal. I want India to come to her own and that state cannot be better

defined by any single word than 'swaraj'. Its content will vary with the action that the nation is able to put forth at a given moment. India's coming to her own will mean every nation doing likewise.

Young India, 12-1-1928

126. TAKING UNLAWFUL LIBERTY

A Sindhi friend writes :

> I am enclosing herewith a cutting from the *Sind Observer* of Karachi wherein you will find your name among others used in support of medicines sought to be popularized and sold through the medium of such advertisements.
>
> I can hardly believe you could have spoken or written appreciatively of the medicines, mixtures, pills or potions of the pharmacy in question.
>
> I hope you would write in *Young India* about this matter.

I have seen the advertisement too. It is taking an unlawful liberty with my name and, I doubt not, the names of other leaders. It is remarkable the freedom these pharmacies take in order to find custom for their wretched traffic. In my opinion this use of names of persons without their permission is an illegality punishable in law. Since, as a non-co-operator, I may not seek the protection of the law, I must be satisfied with warning the public against being misled by the use of my name in connection with any drug whatsoever. My disbelief in drugs in general is as strong as ever notwithstanding the very limited use by me in recent times of one or two comparatively harmless and well- known opening drugs and quinine. I have no desire to see pharmacies multiplied in this country, I would rather see people freed from the slavery of drugs.

Young India, 12-1-1928

127. MADRAS KHADI EXHIBITION

Mr. Polak being in Madras during the Congress Week, I invited him to visit the Khadi Exhibition and give me his criticism. He has now sent me a letter from which I take the following extract [1] :

Though the criticism is not a considered opinion it will be useful to the organizers of future exhibitions. I do not share the view that educated Indians will not patronize khadi unless they have it supplied

[1] Not reproduced here. Polak had criticized the Exhibition for the bad site and defective arrangements.

to them on the same terms as machine-made cloth as to price, quality, durability, etc. Whilst they do expect a particular standard to satisfy their artistic taste, they are gladly paying extra cost, and are by no means insistent on equality with machine-made cloth in point of quality.

The knowledge that khadi supports the poorest of the land who would otherwise be without such support is a great determining factor with the educated and well-to-do classes in buying khadi. But that of course is no reason for khadi producers to be remiss in their attempt to improve the quality. Indeed the advance made in this direction is highly encouraging. The workers are not going to be contented with anything less than the excellence that khadi had when there was no machine-made cloth and which no machine has been yet able even to equal.

Young India, 12-1-1928

128. MUKUNDAN'S PENANCE

One of Chakravarti Rajagopalachari's ambitions seems to be to write touching stories for *Young India*. The one that follows has like all his stories a moral behind it. This one is an 'untouchable' story[1]. May it melt some stony 'touchable' heart!

Young India, 12-1-1928

129. MYSORE GOVERNMENT'S KHADI CENTRE

The Mysore Government have taken up an experiment in khadi production and have started work in real earnest at a centre called Badanval, taking advantage of help from the A.I.S.A. in regard to workers and plan of work. Sjt. Rajagopalachari has received a letter from one of the workers from which the following interesting account of progress of work is extracted.[2] It shows how easily khadi spreads if the work is started on right lines in rural areas where the need for a supplementary occupation is keenly felt.

Young India, 12-1-1928

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] The extracts are not reproduced here.

130. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 12, 1928

RESPECTED SISTER,

You must have heard about the three-day convention of the International Fellowship[1] we are going to hold here. We shall be grateful if you can make available your Ford car on the 13th, 14th and 15th. It should remain with us for the whole day. It will be a convenience if the guests want to go some where .

Bapuji has further suggested that Ambalalbhai and you should invite the guests for tea on the last day, that is, Sunday, in the evening at 3.30 or 4, or later at 7.30 or 8. I am enclosing the list of all the members. You may come here tomorrow or the day after and meet them and personally invite the Secretary of the convention, Mr. Paul[2]. But Bapu feels it would be nice if you could meet all of them and on the occasion of their visit invite a few of your friends in Ahmedabad.

Do send a reply.

Yours obediently,
MAHADEV DESAI

From the Gujarati Original: C.W. 11158. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

131. LETTER TO AMBALAL SARABHAI

SATYAGRAHASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Thursday, January 12, 1928

DEAR BROTHER,

Seeing your letter I should neither answer it nor go there. But I cannot help replying. We are both stubborn. We would both consider each other obstinate. Your obstinacy lies in writing to Gujaratis in English. I am obstinate in writing to Gujaratis in Gujarati. In the case of one of us the obstinacy will be justified.Shall we ask the poet Nanalal to judge? If not, I am willing to make

[1] For Gandhiji's address at the convention of the Council of Federation of International Fellowship held at Sabarmati, *vide* "Discussion on Fellowship", before January 15, 1928.

[2] A. A. Paul

Saraladevi the judge, provided she does not show partiality. I would certainly like to come to your place on Sunday. I am sure I am still the same as I was in 1915. Even then, though I used to be hard pressed for time, people dear to me did take my time by stealing or snatching it, and I let them do so. Even today they have not abandoned their ways and I am not able to go against them. What else can a non-violent man do? Hence, even though, mercifully, there is no illness in your family and even though to a Mahatma an occasion like Saraladevi's birthday is of no importance, I would come if I could manage it. I do not know what I would be having to eat, though I would certainly lose some time. But I am really sorry. Some twenty men and women belonging to the International Fellowship are starting their work in the Ashram from tomorrow. Sunday is the last day for them. So as soon as I return from my visit to the Vidyapith, I have to present myself among them. What can I do now? I have suggested that you should invite all of them one evening and call a few friends.[1] Surely, I can take that much liberty with you? But if this is in convenient I would not wish you to do it. The letter about your small car was also being despatched, but your letter came in the meantime and so I am sending that letter along too. You are free to take my time whenever you wish. Please do so.

Surely you do not think me such a fool as not to understand the affection dripping through your letter?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11120. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

132. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

[Before *January 15, 1928*][2]

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letters.

Only today I had a letter from Akola which gives the news of Sushila's miscarriage. Manilal has written neither to Ba nor me about it. There should be no shyness or hesitation in writing to me about such matters. It will not help you to keep back such things from me

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] It appears this letter was written before the Council of International Federation met in the Ashram; *vide* the succeeding item.

because of my views about them. In any case, I would come to know about the thing indirectly. I might feel hurt for a moment. People may hold the same views as I do about this matter and yet not be able to refrain from indulgence. If they could, would they ever marry? The wish to marry comes from the desire for self-gratification. Our *rishis*, however, tried to make marriage a means of learning self-restraint, or say that regulated through marriage a relationship which was unregulated. But man is more inclined towards self-gratification and he turned marriage also into another means of self-gratification. However, from a couple like you I can expect nothing more than that you should remain vigilant and constantly strive for self-control. There is, therefore, no need for you to keep me ignorant about the fruits of marriage.

Sushila must be better now. If after a miscarriage proper treatment is taken, its harmful effects can be controlled. You may trust me that one such treatment, and a very effective one, is the Kuhne Bath. It removes the cause of miscarriage and makes future deliveries easier and less painful. Sushila should have plain food and regular sleep, and should keep away from things that excite the body. I should like both of you to read Kuhne's book, as also Juste's. Dr. John Nicholson's book, too, is worth reading.

The Ashram has started filling up and in two days it will be full. Nearly thirty persons are coming. Among them there will be twelve to fifteen Europeans too. Ramdas arrived today. Rami, Manu came yesterday. Devdas is still in Bombay taking treatment for one of his bones.

I do not know why you did not get the chapters of the *Gita*. I have finished the translation. I will tell Mahadev.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4728

133. DISCUSSION ON FELLOWSHIP[1]

[Before *January 15, 1928*]

In order to attain a perfect fellowship, every act of its members must be a religious act and an act of sacrifice. I came to the conclusion long ago, after prayerful search and study and discussion with as many people as I could meet, that all religions were true and also that all had some error in them, and that whilst I hold by my own, I should hold others as dear as Hinduism, from which it logically follows that we should hold all as dear as our nearest kith and kin and that we should make no distinction between them. So we can only pray, if we are Hindus, not that a Christian should become a Hindu, or if we are mussalmans, not that a Hindu or a Christian should become a Mussalman, nor should we even secretly pray that anyone should be converted, but our inmost prayer should be that a Hindu should be a better Hindu, a Muslim a better Muslim and a Christian a better Christian. That is the fundamental truth of fellowship. That is the meaning of the wonderful passion, the story of which Andrews read out to you, of the song and verses that Khare, Shastri and Imam Saheb recited. If Andrews invited them to give their song and verses for mere courtesy or by way of patronizing toleration, he was false to the fellowship. In that case, he should not have done so, but I have known Charlie Andrews too well, and I know that he has given the same love to others as he has for his own, and thereby broadened his Christianity, as I broaden my Hinduism by loving other religions as my own. If however there is any suspicion in your minds that only one religion can be true and others false, you must reject the doctrine of fellowship placed before you. Then we would have a continuous process of exclusion and found our fellowship on an exclusive basis.

[1] Members of the Council of International Federation and their friends stayed in the Ashram and held discussions on "the fundamental objective of the fellowship". Mahadev Desai in his article "The Week" under the caption "The Foundation of Fellowship" records: "The discussion lasted for two days . . . . It led to a free and frank exchange of views ultimately bound to establish a better understanding. . . . There was no difference of opinion as to the object of all to work for the widest toleration, to combine and side with the forces of light against the forces of darkness, or as Deenabandhu Andrews said, those who blankly leave God out and become materialists. Everyone seemed to be agreed on this, but many seemed to run away from what would appear to be the necessary corollary of the proposition. This was defined by Gandhiji at some length at this and other meetings. . . ."

Above all I plead for utter truthfulness. If we do not feel for other religions as we feel for our own, we had better disband ourselves, for we do not want a wishy-washy toleration. My doctrine of toleration does not include toleration of evil, though it does the toleration of the evil-minded. It does not therefore mean that you have to invite each and every one who is evil-minded or tolerate a false faith. By a true faith I mean one the sum total of whose energy is for the good of its adherents, by a false I mean that which is predominantly false. If you, therefore, feel that the sum total of Hinduism has been bad for the Hindus and the world, you must reject it as a false faith.

Gandhiji's insistence on a member of the fellowship not even secretly wishing that a member of another faith should be converted to his own led to a general discussion on the question of conversion. Gandhiji again defined his position more clearly than before :

I would not only not try to convert but would not even secretly pray that anyone should embrace my faith. My prayer would always be that Imam Saheb should be a better Mussalman, or become the best he can. Hinduism with its message of ahimsa is to me the most glorious religion in the world—as my wife to me is the most beautiful woman in the world—but others may feel the same about their own religion. Cases of real honest conversion are quite possible. If some people for their inward satisfaction and growth change their religion, let them do so. As regards taking our message to the aborigines, I do not think I should go and give my message out of my own wisdom. Do it in all humility, it is said. Well, I have been an unfortunate witness of arrogance often going in the garb of humility. If I am perfect, I know that my thought will reach others. It taxes all my time to reach the goal I have set to myself. What have I to take to the aborigines and the Assamese hillmen except to go in my nakedness to them? Rather than ask them to join my prayer, I would join their prayer. We were strangers to this sort of classification—"animists", "aborigines", etc.,—but we have learnt it from English rulers. I must have the desire to serve and it must put me right with people. Conversion and service go ill together.

The next day early morning the friends met for an an informal conversation with Gandhiji when again the same question was asked by many of them.

"Would you have a ruling of such a character that those who had a desire to convert should not be eligible for membership?"

Personally, I think they should not be eligible. I should have framed a resolution to that effect as I regard it as the logical outcome

of fellowship. It is essential for inter-religious relationship and contact.

"Is not the impulse to proselytize God-given?", inquired another friend.

I question it. But if all impulses are God-given, as some of our Hindus believe, He has also given us discrimination. He will say, 'I have given you many impulses so that your capacity to face temptation may be tested.'

"But you do believe in preaching an economic order?", inquired one of the fair sex.

I do, as I believe in preaching laws of health.

Then why not apply the same rule in religious matters?

It is a relevant question. But you must not forget that we have started with the fundamental principle that all religions are true. If there were different but good and true health laws for different communities, I should hesitate to preach some as true and some as false. I am positive that, with people not prepared to tolerate one another's religious belief, there can be no international fellowship.

Moreover, physical analogies when applied to spiritual matters are good only up to a certain point. When you take up an analogy from Nature, you can stretch it only to a certain point. But I would take an illustration from the physical world and explain what I mean. If I want to hand a rose to you, there is definite movement. But if I want to transmit its scent, I do so without any movement. The rose transmits its own scent without a movement. Let us rise a step higher, and we can understand that spiritual experiences are self-acting. Therefore, the analogy of preaching sanitation, etc., does not hold good. If we have spiritual truth, it will transmit itself. You talk of the joy of a spiritual experience and say you cannot but share it. Well, if it is real joy, boundless joy, it will spread itself without the vehicle of speech. In spiritual matters we have merely to step out of the way. Let God work His way. If we interfere, we may do harm. Good is a self-acting force. Evil is not, because it is negative force. It requires the cloak of virtue before it can march forward.

Did not Jesus Himself teach and preach?

We are on dangerous ground here. You ask me to give any interpretation of the life of Christ. Well, I may say that I do not accept

everything in the gospels as historical truth. And it must be remembered that he was working amongst his own people, and said he had not come to destroy but to fulfil. I draw a great distinction between the Sermon on the Mount and the Letters of Paul. They are a graft on Christ's teaching, his own gloss apart from Christ's own experience.

Young India, 19-1-1928

134. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

Sunday [On or before *January 15, 1928*][1]

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I have your letter. I shall come there on the 24th or 25th. But I understand that they will take me directly to Vartej. Aren't you coming to Porbandar? Isn't there any remedy to put your health right. Mine is all right. One cannot rely upon newspapers even about this.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5905

[1] Gandhiji was in Vartej on January 23, 24, 1928 to lay the foundation-stone of a temple for untouchables.

135. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 15, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter which I appreciate more than anything else you could have written to me, because you are absolutely frank and I am glad for having written that article if only to draw from you what you have been keeping to ourself fall these long years. But of this later.

This I am dictaing merely to tell you that poor Brockway is in a bad way. I understand that he will have to undergo another operation of a far more serious nature and might have to stay in India for may more months. I understand too that he has come with an understanding with the A.I.C.C. arrived at by Father that his passage to and fro should be paid by the Congress. If that is so, I suppose we should defray his hosptial expenses also and perhaps these in any case seeing that he was coming to the Congress. I understand that he will be soon in arrears about his hospital charges. Will you please inquire and do the needful, even set the wire in motion if necessary.

I understand that the Madras Comittee has already paid nearly Rs. 400. The hospital charges alone are said to amount to Rs. 12 per day. I am writing to Srinivasa Iyengar also.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1928. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

136. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 15, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I remember Akhil Babu well. I am writing to him about the accident to his wife. I remember the incident you refer to. I have

[1] This letter is referred to in "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 17-1-1928, as not available.

always liked him. Whilst I accepted Monmohan Babu's repudiation, I thought none the worse of Akhil Babu. What you now say about Monmohan Babu certainly makes me sad.

Dr. Ray has sent me two letters. In the first he refers to khadi admiringly and in the second he declares his firm faith in it and looks forward to Jamnalalji's visit. If I can, I shall send you copies of the letters.

I am glad Hemaprabha Devi is cheerful now. It is strange Tarini should still be unwell. Can he not conduct his researches in a better climate?

With love,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1582

137. SPEECH AT CONVOCATION OF GUJARAT VIDYAPITH

January 15, 1928

Deenabandhu Andrews[1] is not only a good Englishman who has sacrificed everything for this country; he is also an artist, poet and fluent orator. Those who have studied his speeches and his deeds can realize that there is art in whatever he does. He is a poet because he understands what the future should be and what it may be. He is a fluent orator, not because he can speak volubly or because his style and pronunciation are excellent, but because all his words flow from his heart. One may form a certain impression on reading his speeches, but they must have made a different impression on his immediate listeners. Ordinarily we take it that one who can speak continuously for hours together is a fluent orator. Some may think that Mr. Andrews read out a written speech because he could not speak extempore. But it would be foolish to think so. He made his written speech so interesting that we got completely engrossed in it. It was so absorbingly interesting because his speech came straight from his heart.

He referred in his speech to the late Hakim Saheb. On a superficial view one may wonder what a convocation address has to do with the death of Hakim Saheb; reference to it would show a lack of artistic sense! I feel that in this very thing he has revealed his artistic skill and has achieved his aim. Andrews is quite old compared to you.

[1] C. F. Andrews delivered the convocation address.

He talked about his childhood. He spoke of the beginning of his training under Hakim Saheb. Hakim Saheb had become a well-known physician, and used to serve the rich and the poor through his knowledge of medicine; then it was that Andrews realized that he was taking training from him. He spoke from his own experience and said that he did not remember the lectures deli-vered by his teachers, but the greatest and the holiest thing he remem-bered was how one his teachers whose memory he cherished was able to penetrate his heart. It was to show this very purpose of education that he narrated the story of Hakim Ajmal Khan. Therein lies wonderful art. Compassion is certainly there in it. And while reading his speech he made us taste the sentiment of courage and in the end taught self-sacrifice.

Moreover, he narrated the story of his own life. Our hearts have sunk into the valoe of despondency and though at present we have these buildings we apprehend that perhaps two years hence only pigeons might haunt them. He understands this feeling of anxiety. I have not told him about this, but he is able to smell it in the air around us. Therefore he said to you, "You have buildings, money and land; you will go on receiving money in a province like Gujarat. But if I tell the origin of the college in which I had studied, you will be surprised and you will see a ray of hope, because it was started in a mere small cottage and that too by a brave widow, who had lost her husband on the very day of her marriage. She could have remarried, but she dedicated herself to the religion of service. She found out saints and sadhus and asked them to give education to students; she had huts built for them to stay in. From those very huts developed the present great Pembroke College which gave us poets like Spenser and Gray, outstanding statement like Pitt and philosophers like Browne." He has tried to comfort you by saying that his own college and your college have had a similar history, that if you work in patience your college too can produce great men. And the remedy that he has suggested is self-confidence. It is born of faith in God and patience. The finest things cannot be produced all at once. The seed-tree remains hidden in the ground and a big strong tree takes long years to grow. But the gardener knows that the tree will take its own time to grow, that he has to let the grass grow on the ground. The gardener does not get disheartened, because he knows. Andrews does not expect such knowledge from us, but he expects faith. He placed before us the definition of faith in the Bible, faith is the evidence of things not seen. If you have such faith, then the Vidyapith will never collapse. The

Vidyapith has not taken as many years to grow as Pembroke. You may well say: 'Here is our achievement; fifteen kumar mandirs[1] have been disaffiliated! And that some more may yet be disaffiliated! But if you have faith you will not be disheartened. The kumar mandirs had to be disaffiliated because we would not bend, we insisted on our conditions and said: 'If you wish the affiliation to continue, the students must spin; otherwise it will be terminated." A day may come when no one would stay here; only the chancellor would be sitting, he would be the teacher and the student; a spinning-wheel would be in front of him; then he may have a visitor; but if noone comes, monkeys at any rate would come and if he has faith he would speak to them like Vaidarbhi[2] and find comfort. What is the evidence of my faith? The only evidence is that it does exist. If anyone asks you then you may refer him to the one who is never tired of speaking about the spinning-wheel. If you have that much faith, then according to Andrews you can create not one but a thousand Pembrokes here. How can you compare England with India, a country which can hold many Englands within it? But do we have such courage? Do we have such patience? Without courage and patience, faith cannot be fruitful. We must always adhere to our principles and have confidence. We do not wish to behave like a deceitful businessman. He fixes the price and prepares the packets after seeing the customer. If we yield this much, then students will come; let us then be that much lenient. This kind of business will benefit neither the public nor the Vidyapith. If the teachers have faith, then they will speak with one voice. Even the student will chime in and say: 'What does it matter even if I am left alone, the teachers will pass on to me everything that they have. God is one, but in His creation there is infinite variety.' Thus, if one student, though all alone, clutivates fearlessness, there will be a hundred to follow him. That is the substance of Andrews's speech, the burden of his song.

You may take his speech as mine. Be proud of your college, cherish the Vidyapith and enlighten you life. Wherever you may be, remember the Vidyapith. Soon you will know what turn it will take in the future, but I want you to wait with faith and patience and I promise you that, so long as any one of us is alive, we will not let the Vidyapith close down. I am ready to die, to be buried alive, if the Vidyapith

[1] Boy's schools

[2] Damayanti, wife of King Nala, in the *Mahabharata*

lives. If you can bear the austerities of the Vidyapith, then rest assured that it will always offer a shelter for you; but if you cannot, do not blame me or the teacher but blame your fate. But if we fail to fulfil our pledge, then I must tell you that, although we are wedded to non-violence, you have the right to kill us.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-1-1928

138. MESSAGE TO SECOND GRADUATES' CONFERENCE

January 16, 1928

I regret I am not able to participate in the gathering of the Graduates' Association[1]. I hope that the graduates will make the Association a potent instrument of service and, while bringing credit to it as well as to themselves, will substantial contribution to the *yajna* of our motherland.

[From Gujarati]

Sabarmati, Vol. VI, Issue 4

139. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[2]

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 17, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I must dictate and save time and give rest to my aching shoulder. I wrote to you on Sunday about Fenner Brockway.[3] I hope you got that letter in due time.

Do you know that it was because you were the chief partner in the transactions referred to that I wrote the articles[4] you have criticized, except of course about the so-called 'All-India Exhibition'? I felt a kind of safety that, in view of the relations between you and me, my writings would be taken in the spirit in which

[1] Of Gujarat Vidyapith

[2] In reply to the addressee's letter, dated 11-1-1928; *vide* Appendix "Letter from Jawaharlal Nehru".

[3] *Vide* Addenda—2, "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 15-1-1928

[4] *Vide* "The National Congress", 5-1-1928 and "Independence *v.* Swaraj", 12-1-1928.

they were written. However, I see that they were a misfire all round. I do not mind it. For, it is evident that the articles alone could deliver you from the self-suppression under which you have been labouring apparently for so many years. Though I was beginning to detect some differences in viewpoint between you and me, I had no notion whatsoever of the terrible extent of these differences. Whilst you were heroically suppressing yourself for the sake of the nation and in the belife that by working with and under me in spite of yourself, you would serve the nation and come out scatheless, you were chafing under the burden of this unnatural self-suppression. And, while you were in that state, you overlooked the very things which appear to you now as my serious blemishes. I could show you from the pages of *Young India* equally strong articles written by me, when I was actively guiding the Congress with reference to the doing of the All-India Congress Committee. I have spoken similarly at the All-India Congress Committee meetings whenever there has been irresponsible and hasty talk or action. But whilst you were under stupefaction these things did not jar on you as they do now. And it seems to me, therefore, useless to show you the discrepancies in your letter. What I am now concerned with is future action.

If any freedom is required from me, I give you all the freedom you may need from the humble, unquestioning allegiance that you have given to me for all these years and which I value all the more for the knowledge I have now gained of your state. I see quite clearly that you must carry on open warfare against me and my views. For, if I am wrong I am evidently doing irreparable harm to the country and it is your duty after having known it to rise in revolt against me. Or, if you have any doubt as to the correctness of your conclusion, I shall gladly discuss them with you personally. The differences between you and me appear to me to be so vast and radical that there seems to be no meeting-ground between us. I can't conceal from you my grief that I should lose a comrade so valiant, so faithful, so able and so honest as you have always been; but in serving a cause, comradeships have got to be sacrificed. The cause must be held superior to all such considerations. But this dissolution of comradeship—if dissolution must come—in no way affects our personal intimacy. We have long become members of the same family, and we remain such in spite of grave political differences. I have the good fortune to enjoy such relations with several people. To take Sastri for instance, he and I differ in the political outlook as poles as under, but the bond between

him and me that sprung up before we knew the political differences has persisted and survived the fiery ordeals it had to go through.

I suggest a dignified way of unfurling your banner. Write to me a letter for publication showing your differences. I will print it in *Young India* and write a brief reply. Your first letter I destroyed after reading and replying to it, the second I am keeping, and if you do not want to take the trouble of writing another letter, I am prepared to publish the letter that is before me. I am not aware of any offensive passage in it. But if I find any, you may depend upon my removing every such passage. I consider that letter to be a frank and honest document.

With love,

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 13040; also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, pp. 56-8

140.LETTER TO R. RAMACHANDRA RAO[1]

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 17, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter is proof of the fact that a leopard cannot change his spots. I detected in it the old Collector parrying blows and making out a plausible case out of indifferent material. Let me take an analogy. The floor space that the English rulers occupy in India is infinitesimal, their numbers still more infinitesimal compared to the teeming millions. There are more "natives" in the Government employ than Englishmen. According to your reasoning, Englishmen will be able to call their rule therefore swadeshi rule. And yet you and I would repudiate any such preposterous claim. And it was certainly very clever of you to have 62 thousand square feet allotted to khadi part of the indigenous thing. Whilst I was glad that khadi was outside the elephantine court, it was disgraceful if what I was told by reliable men was true, namely, that the Government had stipulated that khadi should be outside that court. And, is it proper for you to say that I 'permitted' the exhibition of foreign textiles? Do you not recall the

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter of January 9 in which he had refuted Gandhiji's criticism of the Exhibition put up at the Congress Session at madras as being anti-Indian; *vide* "The National Congress", 5-1-1928.

very great reluctance with which, when I heard of the proposed exhibition of foreign textiles, I consented to hold the Khadi Exhibition? Do you not remember that I did not care to have the Khadi Exhibition at all during the Congress Week? I yielded only because you, an old friend, were insistent that I should hold the Khadi Exhibition and told me that you would be embarrassed if I did not hold it. After I gave you my consent to hold it, I received letters of protest, but having given my word, I did not wish to withdraw.

If this does not satisfy you and if your letter was written for the public eye, I would gladly print it and reply.

I need hardly assure you that in all I have written I had nothing personal against you. You were but one of the parties to the performance which in the present chaos is nothing extraor- dinary. I would even have kept silent but for the fear of the same thing being repeated at the next Congress. Out course, it may be repeated in spite of my warning and protest. If it is, I shall not accuse myself of cowardice.

Yours sincerely,

DEWAN BAHADUR R. RAMCHANDRA RAO, B. A., C.S.I.
SECRETARY, THE A.I.A.I.K. AND ARTS EXHIBITION
MADRAS CENTRAL URBAN BANK
MYLAPORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 13041

141. LETTER TO. GANESAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARAMATI,
January 17, 1928

MY DEAR GANESAN,

I had your telegram. I must not reply by wire. The whole of the translation of the History of Satyagraha[1] is now ready. You gave me the date when you could commence the printing, I want you to give me the date when you can finish. Please, therefore, give me the absolute date when you can get the History ready for sale. It must be all bound in khaddar cloth or it may be paper cover. Do not take this thing up unless you can cope with it both in point of time and finance. I am in a hurry to see the History out; for, without it I am

[1] *Satyagraha in South Africa*

hampered in writing the bio-graphical chapters[1].

As for *Self-restraint* v. *self-indulgence*[2], paper has already been bought and resetting has already commenced.

Please be quick and precise about this letter. I may tell you that you have not yet regained your lost prestige with Swami Anand and it is a pity. For, until you get that, it is difficult for me to help you as much as I want to.

You are printing Mr. Gregg's essay on hand-spinning. Please tell me when it is likely to be published.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13042

142. TELEGRAM TO DEWAN OF PORBANDAR

SABARMATI,
January 18, 1928

DEWAN SAHEB
PORBANDAR

AM GRATEFUL HIS HIGHNESS INVITATION. SHALL BE ACCOMPANIED BY PARTY OF TWENTY INCLUDING PRESIDENT PARISHAD[3] AND SEVERAL LADIES. ARRANGEMENTS HANDS RECEPTION COMMITTEE. MAY I ASK YOU CONSULT COMMITTEE?

GANDHI

From a microfilm: MMU. XX. 25

143. LETTER TO S. D. NADKARNI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 18, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your letter. I have kept some to your letters in my *Young India* file yet for use.[4]

[1] Of the Autobiography

[2] This was a collection of Gandhiji's writings on self-control, *brahmacharya* birt-control, etc., and included a series of articles published in *Young India* under the title "Towards Moral Bankruptcy"

[3] Kathiawar Political Conference

[4] *Vide* "Correspondence", 16-2-1928.

About the proposed *smriti*, I cannot yet see eye to eye with you. You often seem to emphasize the letter rather than the spirit. When I use the word 'inspired', I do not give it a technical meaning. When I feel 'inspired', you will find that nothing would deter me from giving a new *smriti* to Hinduism, and let me secretly tell you that I am aiming at such inspiration. Till then I must wait.

It gave me such pleasure to be able to see you face to face in Madras.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. D. NADKARNI

From a photostat: S.N. 13043

144. LETTER TO RATILAL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 18, 1928

BHAISHRI RATILAL,

I have sent you a wire. I got today a letter from Chi. Devdas in which he tells me that you are very unhappy. I can understand it. But you must have patience. I did not know about Sakubhai's children, etc. I know that he has left a big family. You are the only one who can give them courage. Birth and death are inseparable; why, then, should we rejoice at the former and mourn the latter? We shall have done our best if we do our duty and, when our own time comes, meet death with a smiling face. Be calm.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7161

145. A LETTER

January 18, 1928

BHAI . . .[1]

As long as the very sight of . . .[2] disturbs you, avoid even looking at her. All this must not be forced. Talk to me about this at the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original C.W. 1639. Courtesy: Ramaniklal Modi

146. AJMAL JAMIA FUND

I have now heard from Dr. Ansari regarding the fund to be raised in memory of the late Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan and for the purpose of putting the Muslim National University on a firm footing. Dr. Ansari authorizes me to say that he and Principal Zakir Husain join me in making this appeal. Sheth Jamnalalji Bajaj has consented to be the treasurer of the Fund. In the existing raw state of feeling between Hindus and Mussalmans, it has not been thought advisable to issue this appeal under many names. But our hope is that all those who revere the deceased's memory and who approve of the idea of connecting the proposed memorial with the National Muslim University will help the movement as if they were joint partners in this appeal.

In my humble opinion, it is the duty of Hindus and Mussalmans who believe in unity to perpetuate Hakim Saheb's memory in the tangible form proposed. It is their duty to ensure the stability of the Jamia, for it was a creation of the times when it was thought that the two communities were united for ever. And if the non-co-operating national colleges do not stand for, work for and finally ensure unity, nothing else can or will. I hope, therefore, that all the lovers of unity will liberally subscribe to the Fund.

There are today two hundred students studying in the central institution and seventy-four in the city branch. There are more-over two night-schools which draw nearly two hundred students. The Jamia

[1] Names are omitted.

[2] *ibid*

has a staff of twenty-three workers. The highest salary being paid is Rs. 265, the lowest being Rs. 35. The idea constantly before the Principal is to have volunteers who would draw just enough for their wants. The salaries amount in all to Rs. 2,300 per month, the house rent is Rs. 425 per month. The total monthly expenditure is Rs. 4,800. The regular income, including boarding fees Rs. 1,300, is Rs. 2,700. There is thus a deficit of Rs. 2,100. This was somehow met whilst Hakim Saheb was alive. Before the teachers create for themselves a name and a prestige enough to command help, the deficit must be met by the public. And the memorial cannot be considered lasting till the Jamia has a building of its own. The subscribers will, therefore, in deciding the amount of donation bear in mind what is required.

Dr. Ansari tells me that the Central Bank has generously offered to receive subscriptions for the Ajmal Jamia Fund and to cash all cheques and drafts at par in all its branches. The address of the treasurer is 395, Kalbadevi Road, Bombay.

Finally, all donations received will be held by the treasurer on behalf of us four as trustees and will be given only after a proper trust-deed is created on behalf of the Jamia.

Young India, 19-1-1928

147. TO NO-CHANGERS

I see that the news that there was to be at Sabarmati a meeting of 'No-Changers' some time this month has found its way to the Press. Prehaps this was inevitable. But I am sorry to have to inform all concerned that the idea has been dropped for the time being at any rate. Many No-Changers have been long suggesting such a meeting with a view to the formation of a programme and a general interchange of views. The demand became insistent at Madras when the No-Changers who attended the Congress felt that on several resolutions they should have a definite joint policy and that they should be able to act as a distinct party within the Congress. Though I was not enamoured of the idea of forming a party, I was not averse to the calling of a meeting of No-Changers for the purpose of discussion. But as I came to the drafting of a circular letter, I saw that it was a difficult performance and it was an equally dfficult thing to select the names of invitees. I found both to be hopeless tasks. On going into the thing deeper, I found that the convening of such a

meeting might embarrass Dr. Ansari and make the working of the national programme of boycott more difficult by drawing the attention of country away from the boycott and distracting it by a discussion of matters that may well await a better opportunity. I discovered further that the formation of a 'No-Change' party without me in it was not likely to function fully and vigorously so long as I was alive, available and retained a fairly healthy and active mind. And the idea behind the suggested meeting was to form a party in which I need not take any part. It may be theoretically possible, but in practice reference would always be made to me for opinion on many matters, which opinion would be more likely to be faulty than it would be if I was present at the discussion from which the matters for opinion might have risen. These considerations made me incline to the view that the meeting might at least be postponed. Vallabhbhai, with whom I first shared my revised opinion, agreed with me. Other friends came to the same conclusion on other and independent grounds. The idea of the meeting, therefore, remains under suspension for the time being.

I hope that the suspension will not disappoint the No-co-Changers. I am not sure that it is not a better arrangement. Whilst non-operation as a national programme is partially suspended, individual non-co-operators have an opportunity of testing the strength of their faith. Their faith will be all the stronger for standing alone without the warmth of a party. When anything assums the strength of a creed which non-co-operation must be with those who still remain true to it, it becomes self-sustained and derives the needed support from within. Let us also have faith in the country that, when a forward movement becomes possible, all those who left non-co-operation will rejoin it whole-heartedly. I have no forward step to suggest at the present moment. Anything intermediate I can suggest may disturb the joint programme that various parties in the country are trying to evolve. Meanwhile, I can only invite the attention of No-Changers to the great constructive programme of khadi. Those who do not appreciate it do not understand the most potent and the most operative part of non-co-operation, viz., non-violence. Non-co-operation without non-violence can never rise to the dignity of a creed and becomes merely one among many strategies in a campaign. Non-violent non-co-operation has been conceived as an infallible remedy replacing all others. And khadi is the corner-stone of its positive side. Here is a reluctant testimony in favour of khadi given by Mr. Harcourt Robertson in the

Daily Despatch. The writer is claimed by the editor to be "one who has spent many years in British India where he was engaged in occupations demanding an intimate knowledge of market conditions and the Indian psychology". I am indebted to *The Leader* of the 12th instant for the following:[1]

> He (Mr. Robertson) ascribes the heavy drop in the amount of British cotton fabrics purchased by India not to post-war dislocation and economic stress, nor to the poverty of the masses, . . . nor to famines . . . but to the competition of Indian and Japanese mills and most of all to khaddar. . . . He regards khaddar as the real enemy. . . . He says:
>
> "Khaddar is a native-made cloth, woven on primitive looms from hand-spun yarn by unskilled, amateurish workers. It is coarse, stiff, full of knots and faults, and always looks dirty—yet there is a positive vogue for it, even wealthy natives taking a pride in garments made from it. For khaddar represents in concrete form the slogan of the rapidly growing Nationalist party: 'India for the Indians'. Not a penny of the money spent on it leaves the country. He who wears it helps to feed India's starving millions, proclaims his country's independence and shows himself a patriot of the first water. . . . Khaddar is one of the weapons used by, and, indeed, invented by, Mahatma Gandhi in his fight against foreign rule in India. Half saint, half fanatic, and wholly patriot, Mahatma Gandhi now speaks, in his person and through the native Press, to the very hearts of India's educated classes. Non-co-operation is not dead in India because it is no longer talked. It has now reached the stage of silent and dangerous activity. . . . Let Mr. Gandhi's missionaries once rope in the masses, and India will no longer be a poor buyer, she will be no buyer at all. . . . The blow is aimed not only at cotton. It is a definite attempt to ruin the market for all British goods."
>
> These remaks cannot but hearten those who have been working, under the inspiring leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, for the spread of khaddar . . . . Mr. Robertson is alarmed and . . . he suggests that something should be done to give wide publicity in India to ideas such as "Lancashire fabrics of Indian cotton", "India's best customer is Lancashire", "To buy Lancashire cloth is to help India's cultivators". . . . It is not by interested propaganda but by substantial concessions to the national demands of Indians that the relations of the two countries can be placed on a healthy footing and the causes which are operating to the detriment of Lancashires's trade with India removed.

Needless to say that khadi is not a threat. It is the breath of national life like swaraj. The khadi movement like swaraj cannot be

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

given up against any concessions however generous. To give up khadi would be to sell the masses, the soul of India.

Young India, 19-1-1928

148. LETTER TO V. K. SANKARA MENON

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 19, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

With refernce to your letter I send herewith Sjt. Kelappan's report[1] which please return after perusal with such remarks as you may wish to make.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

SJT. V. K. SANKARA MENON
PULAYA COLONY, CHALAKUDI
(MALABAR)

From a microfilm: S.N. 14627

149. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 19, 1928

DEAR DR. ROY,

I thank you and Dr. Sircar for your letter and the medicine you have kindly sent me. You know my repugnance to medicine. I would not take anything that contained something taken from the human body except mother's milk. The tabloids sent by you contain kidney and pancreas. Isn't this something taken from a human body? Supposing that it is taken from a sub-human animal, my objection will still stand. You know my weakness for dietetical experiments. And ever since your discovery of excess of uric acid in my system, I have felt impelled to make a radical dietetic change. The comparative stability in the Ashram has given me the opportunity and I am now taking simply fresh fruits and nuts. The diet now consists of raisin-tea,

[1] About the Pulaya Colony; *vide* "Letter to K. Kelappan", 23-12-1927.

which means about 40 raisins boiled and the skin and seeds removed. This I take three times a day, and I add to it half an ounce of almond paste each time and twice two *tolas* of coconut milk and one or two oranges each time. Coconut milk is prepared by pounding a fresh ripe coconut and extracting the juice by adding a little water and straining it through a stout piece of khadi. This I had been doing for a fortnight without any way comming to harm. The bowels are much more regular. I have not been weighed nor have I had the blood-pressure taken, but the feeling about me is good. I have purposely refrained from taking the blood-pressure and weight beacuse it seems to me to be of no consequence, if I otherwise keep fit.

As you have taken so much interest in my health, I thought I owed you the information of the change I have made and the reason why I will not take the medicine so thoughtfully sent by you. I wish Indian medical men would make original researches and explore the possibilities of dietetic changes. It may be that the general body of people will not take to what may be called austere ways of treating diseases, but may not poor fanatics like myself have a corner in the minds and hearts of medical men? Has Indian medicine no fresh contribution to make to the medical science? Or must it always rely upon the patented nostrums that, together with other foreign goods, are dumped down upon this unfortunate soil? Why should the West have a monopoly of making researches?

This letter is not written to you for acknowledgement and reply unless you want to give me any direction. You may therefore throw it into the waste-paper basket if there is nothing more to be said to me by way of advice and guidance.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN ROY

CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13044

150. LETTER TO SURESH CHANDRA BANNERJI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 19, 1928

MY DEAR SURESH BABU,

I have your letter[1]. I am glad at the happy termination of the Comilla afair. Is it a reform from within or a reform super-impossed?

With reference to my health, I have not seen my way to taking the medicine sent by Dr. Roy. It is something extracted from the human body and I have the greatest repugnance to taking any such medicine. But I have made radical change in my diet. I am now living on simply fruits and a little almond-nut paste and coconut milk. So far I have not come to grief.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13045

151. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 20, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have read Malaviyaji's reference to foreign-cloth boycott and mills. I recollect your reference to mill-cloth and influenza. I hope to deal with boycott in *Young India*[2].

I have now tested the new travelling-wheel. The spokes have become shaky and the axle never moved freely and it remained as rigid as when you first saw it. You should have someone there constantly working at the wheel to test results. I want you to produce a perfect wheel and this you will not do unless one person always works at it and suggests improvements.

With love,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1584

[1] Dated 11-1-1928, which said: "As a result of satisfactory compromise of all communal cases at Comilla, we have all been acquitted. . . . I hope as a result of this . . . perfect harmony and peace will prevail at least for some time to come. . . . "

[2] *Vide* "Boycott of British Goods", 26-1-1928.

152. LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Pausa Krishna 13 [*January 20, 1928*][1]

BHAISAHEB,

I had sent a reply[2] to your telegram. Now I want your opinion regarding the Jamia Fund.

You have raised the subject of boycott of foreign cloth. But in the same context you also mention mill-cloth. How shall I convince you that, as long as the mill-owners do not come to terms with us and we are not able to control their prices, their help will be not only useless but positively harmful. On the contrary, what happened in Bengal will be repeated and the public will lose faith in the power of boycott.

You will please tell me if you find any difficulty with my language or my handwriting. I shall write in English only if I am helpless. For my part, I perfect my imperfect *Rashtrabhasha.*

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8682

153. LETTER TO HEMAPRABHA DEVI DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

January 20, 1928

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I am very happy to learn that you are tranquil. I have no faith in the *shraddha* at it is performed these days. On the day of Anil's *shraddha* take only fruits. Regard the occasion as a sacrifice and do extra spinning. Recite the "Uttarakanda" from the *Ramayana* and meditate well over the twelfth chapter of *Bhagavad Gita.*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1653

[1] From the reference to Jamia Fund; *vide* also the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Madan Mohan Malaviya", On or after 9-1-1928.

154. SPEECH AT KATHIAWAR POLITICAL CONFERENCE, PORBANDAR[1]

January 22, 1928

With a view to avoiding the possibility of any misunderstanding between the rulers and the ruled, and with a view to fuller recognition of its own limitations, as also in confirmation of the custom which has been for some time in operation, this Conference resolves that it shall not pass any resolution condemning or criticizing any individual State.[2]

Moving the above resolution Gandhi said:

Young people would not appreciate the restriction imposed today, but I must realize my responsibility before I suggest that swaraj means the right to make mistakes. Not only have I thought over it and then suggested it, but I have drafted the resolution myself. Day before yesterday I advised the Subjects Committee not to pass the two resolutions criticizing individual States when the resolutions were moved in the Committee. It came to me as an after thought that the advice given by me should hold good for some time more for the same reasons for which it was tendered. It we do not resolve to this effect, our existence is in jeopardy. But one may also argue why we should have such a restriction only to postpone the death. The Committee would have turned down the resolution if it had been sponsored by any other person, but the Committee and the Kathiawaris have added to my responsibility by reposing faith in me. I hope you would do the same by passing the resolution. Young people will have to tolerate words such as 'misunderstanding', etc., which are found in the resolution.

At the Bhavnagar Session of the Conference[3] the question of only Jamnagar and Gondal States was discussed. I had met the Jamsaheb and had discussions with him. I know what the issue was and it, but due to pressure of work, I could not derive full benefit from the discussions. I cannot say at the moment whether I won or lost. I have

[1] This was the fourth Conference.

[2] This resolution is reproduced from "Weekly Letter", published in *Young India*, 26-1-1928. According to Mahadev Desai, Gandhiji was "the author of the resolution".

[3] Held on January 8, 1925; Gandhiji presided; *vide* "Presidential Address at Kathiawar Political Conference, Bhavnagar".

suffered defeat at the hands of Thakore of Gondal; even then I did not allow any criticism of him individually.

At present the Conference is weak, lame and blind, and because I hold that we should not indulge in personal criticism I demanded here as well as in Bhavnagar that in the Conference no resolution or criticism on individual States should be allowed. The participants as well as the office-bearers of the Conference should be vigilant about such resolutions. They should do what is worthy of them. The ruler and the subjects should love each other and, in spite of their eagerness to point out to the ruler his shortcomings, they should put curbs on their speech and pen. Such restraint would help us a lot. Knowing our weakness, we should in future also adhere to the restraint which we have accepted in the two conferences. A person who is conscious of his inadequacy feels relieved when he confesses it before the world.

If someone asks me what the brave people would do after the imposition of the restriction, I should say that such brave people have no place in the Conference. Their place is outside the Conference. They may form another association but this Conference is not meant for satyagrahis. Even the congress is not for them. This Conference does not restrain them. They may criticize but should not malign others. If I am asked what should be done if there is maladministration in a particular State, my answer would be that we should acquire the courage to criticize the State. If the subjects being docile bear everything quietly, we should go to work amidst them in order to help them. Injustice is there, but we should find out some other platform for its redress. The princes are mutual friends and they won't allow any one of them to be criticized. Of course, the Conference as such cannot indulge in the criticism or censure of individual States.

Apart from such criticism, you have enough work to do for khadi and for redressing the injustice inflicted on *Antyajas* by the *sanatanis* which is more severe than the injustice prevailing in the princely States.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 29-1-1928

155. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

VARTEJ,
January 23, 1928

MIRABAI
C/O JAMNADAS GANDHI
OPPOSITE MIDDLE SCHOOL
RAJKOT

RHONA'S[1] WIRE SAYS FATHER DIED PEACEFUL FRIDAY NIGHT. PEACE LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5300; also G.N. 8190. Courtesy: Mirabehn

156. SPEECH AT VARTEJ[2]

January 24, 1928

If a Hindu does service to an untouchable he does not at all oblige the latter, he obliges only himself. The Hindus, who were responsible for the existence of their so-called untouchable brothers, have committed many sins. Whatever they may do by way of self-purification and expiation for these sins would be inadequate. Therefore, whenever I have a chance to serve the untouchables, I consider it a God-sent opportunity to do some slight atonement for past sins. No one should feel elated, thinking that since he does some service he has no need at all for expiation. I want to make it clear to you that we are all jointly responsible for the ill-treatment given by a single Hindu. It is a universal rule that the whole world is responsible for the sin committed by any one person. Both Hindus and Muslims should accept this rule. As long as there are barriers of caste and community in this world, the group as a whole is responsible for sin of every individual member.

A temple is not merely an edifice of brick or marble, nor does it become a temple by the installation of the image of a deity. It can be called a temple only when life has been breathed into the image. There may be hypocrisy in calling the priest and making sacrificial

[1] Sister of Mirabehn

[2] A village in the then princely State of Bhavnagar in Saurashtra. Gandhiji laid the foundation-stone of the temple of Rama for the untouchables.

offerings at the time of laying the foundation of the temple. The truth is that those who made a pious resolve to build a temple should, from that very moment, spend their life in deeds of penance and should surrender to the temple the fruits of all their good deeds. The managers and the priests of the temple should be leading a life of austerity so that one's heart is moved as soon as one enters the temple. If this is not going to be that type of a temple, if sufficient purity of heart and mind is not behind it, it is merely a building and, take it, it is a burden on the earth. Since it would be called a temple, the area occupied by it would go waste; it can be put to no use and it may turn out to be a pernicious institution and even a haunt of many sins. I have laid the foundation-stone of this temple in the belief that no such defects are here. To lay the foundation-stone as soon as the idea of constructing a temple occurs and then to live in the hope of erecting a temple some day is not good. Nothing is achieved in haste; the plants of religion do not grow fast. True faith, industry and patience are the prerequisities for this.

I should lie to say only this to the untouchable brethren: the Hindu precept which says that no one can go to heaven before death is perfectly true. You have to work yourselves for your own uplift. Do not believe that the caste Hindus are helping you; by serving you they are in fact helping themselves. If you wish to show your mettle, wake up. Give up those faults for which the Hindus blame you and shun you. Please make it a rule that those amongst you who are given to drinking, meat-eating and so on do not enter the temple. Do not point to the defects of the so-called high-caste Hindus. As the saying goes, "those in power can do no wring", the world will forgive them but not you. Whatever may be the defects of others, you must try to remove your own.

[From Guarati]

Navajivan, 29-1-1928

157. SPEECH AT MORVI[1]

[*January 24, 1928*][2]

I sincerely thank the Maharaja Saheb, the people and members of the Modh[3] community for having welcomed my companions and myself and for presenting me with an address. I should, at any rate, tell my brothers belonging to the Modh caste that I have no right whatsoever to accept an address of welcome from them. Not even in my dreams have I imagined that I have in any manner served this caste as such; there are some gentlemen who believe that I have not only not served this caste but rather have caused it some harm. If I accept this allegation for the moment, your address merely suggests your large-heartedness. However, I am not content with this large-heartedness because, although it may be a sign of generosity, there is always an implicit understanding between the giver and the receiver of an address of welcome that the giver blesses and approves of the work that is being done by the receiver. I hesitate to accept your address, as there is no such understanding between us.

There is a purpose behind what I am saying about your small caste; for I believe that these small barriers must be broken down. I am clear in my mind that there is no room for castes in the Hindu faith; I say this to those belonging to the Modh or any other caste who happen to be present here. In the true Shastras there is no reference to castes; there is a reference only to the four *varnas,* God has washed his hands off after creating these four *varnas.* There is not even a trace of castes in the *varnadharma.* I wish to tell all of you, and plead with all, through the Modhs, that you should forget the barriers created by caste. Make use of the castes that exist today in destroying the caste system, offer them to the sacrificial fire and, if there is anything in them that teaches you self-control, practise it. A foul smell is emitted by such puddles if we do not clear them. The doctors advise us to fill up puddles. In addition to giving off a foul smell, they breed mosquitoes and these in turn prove fatal. You must realize that these caste puddles are likewise fatal to man. You must realize that God would never create such a deadly organization. You will be happy if

[1] One of the princely States in Saurashtra

[2] From the reference to Ramdas Gandhi's marriage which took place on January 27

[3] Gandhiji belonged to this sub-caste of Banias.

you act upon these words which I speak out of my own experience. Time goes on, doing its own work. You can go and raise your hand against it if you wish to, but you must realize that it is all futile. If we foolishly delay things, trying to defend these barriers against the march of time, it would be like the game of trying to throw dust on the sun and throwing it in our own eyes. I would not have spoken thus to you nor would I have had the occasion to do so if you had not presented me this address. Do not regard this as an insignificant matter. For many years now we have been steeped in superstition and ignorance; do not give these the name of knowledge. Comparative studies of different religions are being made in the world today, and if you examine these without any prejudice, you will find that these castes act as barriers to progress, to dharma, to swaraj and to the *Ramarajya* of which I speak so often. I would like to ask you: 'What are the achievements of the Modh caste that should prompt us to sing its praises exclusively?' We find that many cases there is a contradiction between our thoughts and actions. Our conduct is at variance with our proclaimed beliefs. This is like the track remaining even after the disappearance of the snake. Make a Bhagiratha-*prayatna*[1] to bring about conformity between your beliefs and your conduct. In return for the address of welcome that you have given me I would ask you to make this effort. If you also accept the implicit understanding of which I spoke, I shall feel that I did well to have accepted your address and to have been born in your caste.

I have been making the most sincere efforts to bring about conformity between my thought and action and hence it was that the Modh caste used to boycott me, although the Modhs realized later on that I did not deserve boycott as I never even thought of taking any advantage of the caste system. I wish to carry forward this attempt of mine to break down caste barriers. Perhaps you do not know that I got one of my sons married outside my caste and have lost nothing by doing so. My son got bride from a devout Vaishnava family, for which he is grateful to me. I could claim that by doing so I have stolen a gem belonging to another caste. I ask those belonging to the smaller castes to hand their daughters over to me, if the latter cannot be married off. I shall get them married to good upright boys belonging to other castes, the marriage expenditure being no more

[1] Mighty effort, like that made by Bhagiratha to bring the Ganga down to the earth

than a *tulsi* leaf or a hank of yarn. If other castes do not hesitate to hand over their girls to me who has adopted an untouchable girl as daughter, why should you have any fear? I am getting my son[1] married to a Modh girl after three days. I carry on my duties in this manner and find no difficulty in doing so.

In this way, through the Modh caste, I wish to ask all those who recognize such barriers, to break them. The eighteen *varnas* are mere myth; there are only four *varnas*, so divided on the basis of their occupational aptitudes. The customs in respect of eating and drinking with others are a part of untouchability, whereas the *varnas* are like a beautiful tree under the shade of which mankind can find shelter and nourishment for itself. The system of *varnas* is the dharma of self-control; there is no economic consideration involved in it but its object is to enable people to practise their dharma. Sages and ascetics have conceived and organized it as a thoroughfare on which one could tread the path of one's dharma, whereas it has now become the means of furthering our self-interest, our vices, and the gratification of our senses. Try to preserve the *varna* system in its pure form.

In my opinion swaraj and *Ramarajya* are one and the same thing; however, I do not often use the latter expression before audiences of men. This is so because, in this age of rationalism, if one who talks of the spinning-wheel to women talks also of *Ramarajya*, this would appear to our intelligent young men as idle sermonizing. They want swaraj, not *Ramarajaya*, and of swaraj too they give strange definitions which, in my opinion, are absurd. But today, while I am standing before the Maharaja Saheb and his subjects, when the former has poured out his heart to me for an hour, I also feel like speaking out my mind before him. The conce-pt of swaraj is no ordinary one; it means *Ramarajya*. How will that *Ram-arajya* come to be established? When will it come into being? We call a State *Ramarajya* when both the ruler and his subjects are straightforward, when both are pure in heart, when both are inclined towards self-sacrifice, when both exercise restraint and self-control while enjoying worldly pleasures, and, when the relationship between the two is as good as that between a father and a son. It is because we have forgotten this that we talk of democracy or the government of the people. Although this is the age of democracy, I do not know what the word connotes; however, I woudl say that democracy exists where the people's voice

[1] Ramdas Gandhi

is heard, where love of the people holds a place of prime importance. In my *Ramarajya* , however, public opinion cannot be measured by counting of heads or raising of hands. I would not regard this as a measure of public opinion; the verdict of the *panch* should be regarded as the voice of God. Those who raise hands are not the *panch*. The *rishis* and the *munis* after doing penance came to the conclusion that public opinion is the opinion of people who practise penance and who have the good of the people at heart. That is the true meaning of democracy. It is not democracy but something else that is reflected in the support secured by someone like me who makes a vote-catching speech. The democracy that I belive in is described in the *Ramayana*—in the essence that is derived from my simple and straightforward reading of it. What was the manner in which Ramachandra ruled? The rulers of today assume that it is their birthright to rule and they do not recognize the people's right to voice their opinion. However, you rulers who may be regarded as the descendants of Rama, do you know how he ruled? You may also be regarded as the descendants of Krishna. And what did Krishna do? He was the most perfect servant; at the time of the *rajasuya yajna*, he washed everyone's feet. That he actually washed his subjects' feet may be fact or legend, that custom may or may not have been prevalent at the time; its under-lying implication, however, is that, at the sight of his subjects, he bowed to them or rather bowed to their wishes. This very matter has been diffe-rently presented in the *Ramayana*. Through his secret agents Ramachandra elicits public opinion and finds that Sita is the object of censure in a particular washerman's home. He was well aware that this adverse criti-cism was groundless; Sita was dearer to him than his own life, nothing could lead to a difference between him and her; nevertheless, he renounced her, realizing that it was improper to let such criticism continue. As a matter of fact, Ramachandra and Sita had become one; they lived for and in each other; nevertheless, he thought it necessary to endure the physical absence of that very Sita for whom he led an army to battle, whose presence he desired day and night. Rama honoured public opinion in this manner; his rule is called *Ramarajya*. Even a dog could not be harmed in that State, as Ramachandra felt that all living beings were part of him-self. There would be no licentious conduct, no hypocrisy, no falsehood in such a State. A people's government would function in such a truthful age. The ruler forsakes his dharma when this age ends. Attacks will then be made from outside the State

Germs from outside attack the body when the blood becomes impure. Likewise when society as a body gets corrupted, people who are like its limbs are subjected to external attacks.

However, when there is a bond of affection between the ruler and the ruled, the people as a body can face attacks. The authority exercised by the State should be one of love; the sceptre does not signify the exercise of brute force but rather a bond of love. The word 'Raja' is derived from the root 'raj' which means 'that which is befitting'. Hence Raja implies one who does credit to the office. The people are not as wise as he is. He has bound the people to himself with the bonds of affection and he is a servant of his servants. Shri Krishna was such a servant and he was subjected to kicks like a servant. Hence I tell the rulers and the chiefs that if they wish to be known as the descendants of Rama and Krishna, they should be prepared to put up with their subjects' kicks. They should put up with the latter's abuses; although the people may act in an irresponsible manner, the ruler cannot do so. If the rulers did, the world come to an end.[1]

Can not this country which is primarily agricultural with seven lakhs of village in it, save itself from this machine age? It consists of living machines and saving them is the only means of saving the country. They are the cow and her progeny, human beings and their descendants. If those who have living machines at their disposal and who can always add to this wealth, would become worshippers of the machine age, they will be cursed by humanity. If this country, which was once ruled by mighty emperors and which has thirty- three crores of living machines in it, starts worshipping this machine age, you must conclude that we are descendants of Ravana and not of Rama. These are harsh words but they are inspired by love and come from the heart. The maharaja Saheb sopke to me sincerely. Wherever I come across sincerity, I forget myself and reciprocate with all my heart. If not today, after my death, you will realize that what I said was right. You will be cutting your own throats the day you give too much importance to the machine age. If some Chengiz Khan invades us in future and through slaughter reduces the 33 crores to 3 lakhs, we may then need machines just as Britain and the United State need them. Moreover, these two countries have established the practice of

[1] What follows was addressed to the Jains who formed a large part of the population of Morvi.

robbery. Whom are you going to rob? There is no reason why our country should remain poor when it has so much natural beauty, good climate, a variety of plant life and an inexhaustible store of other resources. We have become our own enemies. It is for this very reason that I keep insisting upon khadi.

I request you to maintain an eternal bond of mutual affection. What the ruler is like will depend on his subjects and *vice versa.* What can the ruler do if the people, are dishonest, cowardly, deceitful and wicked? If the ruler is a good man, his soul may perhaps be spared; but he cannot save his subjects. If they cannot protect their women themselves, how can the ruler do so? In a town of the size of Morvi with a population of twelve to fifteen thousand—for whose good and to what end should there be so many factions and so many disputes? You should give up these things. There is no dharma other than truth and non-violence. Why should you, who are devotees of non-violence, indulge in intrigues? Passion and malice are nothing but violence. Non-violence does not merely consist in sparing the lives of bed-bugs or flies. That indeed is non-violence in its lowest from. The world is sanctified by one out of whose heart love flows constantly like a stream—these are not my words but the words uttered by Mahavira, the words uttered in the *Gita*. I have had just a slight experience of this. My mission is fulfilled by my endeavours to practise truth and non-violence. You will save yourselves if you practise these. However, your khadi or your cattle cannot be spared if you give in to hypocrisy or deceit. You will find it easy to practise what I have preached if you have a vision of the stream of truth, of the Ganga of non-violence.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-1-1928

158. BOYCOTT OF BRITISH GOODS

It is not at all surprising that the nation should wish to show resentment of the studiously insulting and defiant acts of the British Government. Every new discovery in the direction adds fuel to the fire. The latest is the abhorrence the late King Edward VII and his son, the present King, are reported to have betrayed of 'natives' and that in connection with Lord Sinha. The representatives of the nation have for years past endeavoured to demonstrate their resentment by bringing about a partial or complete boycott of British goods. It is the nation's right to bring it about if it so wishes. There is no doubt that it will produce a great effect if it could succeed to the necessary extent.

But it has been my misfortune or good fortune consistently to oppose the cry for the boycott of British goods. Though I adhere to the fundamental ground that the proposed boycott is contrary to non-violence, I wish to confine myself at present to an examination of its possibility. The fact that we have hitherto made no headway whatsoever with it, in spite of the agitation for so long a time, is proof presumptive of its very great difficulty. If we were to take even such a simple instance as soap, we shall discover that we have made no progress even in the boycott of British made soap. The Committee appointed by the Congress recommended certain articles for boycott. So far as I am aware, no such effort has yet been made in the direction of excluding even one such article from the nation's use. The use of a punitive boycott lies in the effectiveness. Anyone studying the articles of import will soon discover the utter futility of spending labour on achieving the boycott of most of these articles from the standpoint of creating an impression on the British Government. It should not be forgotten that for all these long long years, we have not been able to have a body of specialists devoted to this single task. It is the fashion in some quarters nowadays to blame me for the failure of any and every resolution that the Congress passes. I am told that a particular resolution does not succeed because I oppose it or do not work at it. There can be nothing more humiliating for a nation than to be in such an impotent state. Surely boycott of British goods was conceived and vehemently advocated before I returned from South Africa. The real and the more natural reason for the failure of the British goods boycott resolution lies in the obvious fact that no committee of

experts has yet been able to arrive at a satisfactory plan of working it out. It has been suggested that we can succeed if China has succeeded. Yes, we can if we have the will, the courage and the opportunity to regulate the boycott by armed force, by creating an army of open revolutionaries, by forcing for that specific purpose a strike of dock labourers and others connected with the handling of British goods. It seems to me that even if we have the will, we have neither the means nor yet the capacity for managing such an open armed revolution. And neither those who have advocated boycott of British goods nor the special Committee appointed by the Civil Disobedience Inquiry Committee have ever contemplated armed force. I hold, therefore, that it will be more consistent with national dignity, prestige and welfare to give up the cry, proved to be useless, and almost impossible, of boycott of British goods. The permanent necessity of advocating true swadeshi in all things capable of being produced at home is untouched by the argument against the punitive boycott.

But there is no cause whatsoever for despair. We have a means ready made and most effective of signifying our resentment over the series of wrongs being continuously heaped upon our devoted heads. If we have the will, I claim that we have the present capacity of achieving a complete boycott not merely of British cloth but of all foreign cloth. And if we do this, we not only successfully demonstrate our resentment, but we serve the masses in a manner we have never done before and we secure their co-operation in a national effort. We have got an army of workers for doing this work. We have experts who have first-hand knowledge of the thing. There is no division of opinion on the propriety of the thing. The only thing that retards our progress towards the completion of boycott of foreign cloth is our own disbelief. It is strange but tragic that through our ignorance we believe more in the possibility of achieving a boycott of certain British goods than of foreign cloth.

But even this boycott of foreign cloth cannot be achieved without a well-thought-out and prepared plan. If it is the mere boycott we want rather than the higher and the more permanent result in the shape of the economic well-being of the masses, we can do so quickly enough if we receive the co-operation of mills on our terms. Without honest and hearty co-operation of our weaving and spinning mills, to attempt to achieve the boycott with mill-cloth would be to court suicide and to run into the arms of profiteering mill-owners. If indigenous mill-cloth is to play a part in this national effort, the mills

must come to terms with the Congress as to the kind of production and the prices to be charged. The mill agents should with the consent and co-operation of their shareholders cease to be merely trustees for themselves and shareholders, but both should become trustees for the whole nation. Then, with khadi, foreign cloth can be successfully and permanently banished from the land. But it is possible, even without the co-operation of mills, though less easy in point of time, to achieve the boycott of foreign cloth through khadi alone. Mills will still play a part, but that will be in spite of the owners. Khadi will put an effective check on their head, it will prevent a famine of cloth and it will give life and hope and work to starving millions, reinstate weavers of plain cloth in their ancient calling and will eventually, but within a short time, lead to a replacing of foreign cloth and regularizing of mill profits. Time limit can be determined by the strength of the nation's will and its capacity for sacrificing a little of its taste for fine cloth and a little money never beyond the capacity of individual users of cloth.

Young India, 26-1-1928

159. "KHADI GUIDE"

The *Khadi Guide* issued by the All-India Spinners' Association is a valuable publication containing useful introduction, the constitution of the A.I.S.A. and details of work done in the provinces where khadi is being produced. No lover of khadi and no honest sceptic should be without it. The volume is priced eight annas. It can be had of the All-India Spinners' Association, Mirzapur, Ahmedabad, and all the principal khadi depots for $9\frac{1}{2}$ --anna stamps.

Young India, 26-1-1928

160. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SABARMTI,
January 26, 1928

JAWAHAR NEHRU
ANAND BHAWAN
ALLAHABAD

YOUR LETTER. MINE[1] WAS WRITTEN MERELY GIVE YOU RELIEF FREEDOM. HAVE NO DESIRE PUBLISH ANYTHING FROM YOU. DO BRING FATHER IF AT ALL POSSIBLE.

LOVE.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1928. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and

161. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD MISHRA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 26, 1928

BHAI RAJENDRA PRASADJI MISHRA,

Your son has come to me and says that although he and his wife wish that she should give up *purdah*, you oppose this step. He asks me what his duty is. I have told him that, for the present, he should obey you, and engage a tutoress for his wife. One can be sent from here. I would advise you to allow the couple to act in accordance with their own wishes. In this age *purdah* is not practicable, nor is it necessary. In ancient times this evil custom did not exist.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8025

162. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 27, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I am watching the interest you are taking in these amnesties and

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 17-1-1928.

the deductions you are drawing. At the present these appear to me to be inevitable whilst we are dependent upon the Government for everything.

I have not yet got your article, but before this letter is posted, I hope to have secured it and read it. If there is anything to criticize, the criticism will go with this letter.

The cutting from *Forward* is very interesting and somewhat painful reading. I had read Lala Dunichand's original article. If Lala Dunichand reads the flaring headlines in *Forward*, he would either laugh or cry. I hope he will only laugh as I have done. This cutting is one more illustration of the irresponsibility of which I have written in the pages of *Young India*.[1]

With love,

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

[PS.]

Your article has not yet come to hand.[2] I have now your second letter. I am sending word to Capt. Petavel. I hope your visit to Mymensing was successful and that you felt nothing the worse for it.

From a photostat: G.N. 1583

[1] *Vide* "The National Congress", 5-1-1928.

[2] The letter bears the following remark from A. Subbiah: "The article, since the above note, was handed over to Bapuji."

163. LETTER TO DR. B. S. MOONJE[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 27, 1928

DEAR DR. MOONJE,

You have been quite discreet in writing to me. I would also agree with your general proposition. But can we enforce it only among Muss-almans, or can we begin the reform with them? Have we not got in the country innumerable purely Hindu institutions? Moreover, this Muslim University has no bar against the entry of Hindus. As a matter of fact, there are already discharged Hindu graduates of this University who are doing good national service. There are some Hindus in it even now studying. Thirdly, even a sectional institution may be called national if its outlook is national and is in reality utilized for national advancement. I would like you, therefore, if you can, to support this memorial to Hakimji.

Sharddhanandji Memorial stands on a different footing and in one respect a higher footing, because of the circumstances in which Swamiji met his death. But the memorial as it has been conceived cannot be claimed to be national. It is a purely Hindu memorial. For, the *shuddhi* work as also untouchability are things for Hindus alone to look after. The two, therefore, have to be kept separate. Each has its own special object.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 12394

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter, dated January 18, in which, referring to the fund for Jamia Millia, he wrote: "I have long been of opinion that it is such sectarian institutions which, amongst other causes, have been mainly responsible for emphasizing and exaggerating sectarian separateness, culminating eventually in such deplorable Hindu-Muslim tension. . . . I shall be pleased to associate with any national scheme of a memorial to our revered and beloved late Hakimji as. . . with any similar memorial to our revered late Swami Shraddhanand. . . . But better still, let there be a common memorial to both Swamiji and Hakimji which shall proclaim to the world that both Hindus and Muslims have. . . resolved upon bringing about heart-to-heart unity conceived in nationalism pure and unalloyed, thus spurning the hated communalism ruthlessly and contemptuously aside . . . " (S.N. 12394).

164. LETTER TO F. W. STEINTHAL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 27, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. I should be delighted to see you on Tuesday next between three and five in the afternoon. Monday you are welcome, but I shall be silent, as it is a day of silence for me. And rather than that I should miss you altogether, if you have to go away on Monday night, I would suggest your coming on Monday. Although I cannot speak to you, you will be able to say to me what you like.

Yours sincerely,

REV. F. W. STEINTHAL
C/O SALVATION ARMY SOLDIERS' HOME
DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13051

165. SPEECH AT WEDDING OF RAMDAS GANDHI[2]

SABARMATI,
January 27, 1928

Exactly at 9.30 a.m. all gathered on the prayer ground and Gandhiji blessed the couple in a brief speech which was as solemn as the occasion itself. It was a most moving scene in Gandhiji's life. Those present could see that Gandhiji on such occasions could be as human as any of them. He was nearly moved to tears as he referred to Ramdas and Devdas as two of his sons who had been brought up exclusively by him and under his care. The consciousness that the son had never deceived him, and had hidden none of his faults and failings from him nearly choked him with a feeling of grateful pride.

You have confessed your faults to me, but they have never alarmed me, for your frank confession has exonerated you in my eyes. I am glad that you would rather be deceived by the whole world

[1] Dated 23-1-1928; the addressee and his wife were missionaries having spent about 30 years among Bengali students and Santhal villagers and were leaving India for good. They had expressed a desire to see Gandhiji.

[2] From Mahadev Desai's "The Week", which reported this speech under the caption "A Solemn Ceremony"

that deceive anyone. May you live always in the same truthful way.

You will guard your wife's honour and be not her master, but her true friend. You will hold her body and her soul as sacred as I trust she will hold your body and your soul. To that end you will have to live a life of prayerful toil, and simplicity and selfrestraint. Let not either of you regard another as the object of his or her lust.

You have both had part of your training here. Let your lives be consecrated to the service of the Motherland, and toil away until you wear out your bodies. We are pledged to poverty. You will, therefore, both earn your bread in the sweat of your brow as poor people do. You will help each other in daily toil and rejoice in it.

I have given you no gifts. I can give none except a pair of *taklis* and copies of my dearly beloved *Bhagavad Gita* and *Bhajanavali*. Let the cotton garlands be a shield of protection for you. Could I have procured rich gifts for you from friends, the world would rightly have ridiculed my conceit, but today it will bear testimony that I have given you only such things as become one in my position.

Let the *Gita* be to you a mine of diamonds, as it has been to me, let it be your constant guide and friend on life's way. Let it light your path and dignify your labour. May God give you a long life of service !

Young India, 2-2-1928

166. SPEECH AT ASHRAM, SABARMATI[1]

January 27, 1928

In the evening he [Gandhiji] referred to the public aspect of the question. He dilated on the pernicious system which had divided the four original *varnas* into numerous castes and sub-castes and hoped that the wedding[2] just celebrated would perhaps be for the Ashram the last as between parties belonging to the same caste. It behoved people in the Ashram to take the lead in this respect, because people outside might find it difficult to initiate the reform. The rule should be on the part of the Ashram to discountenance marriages between parties of the same caste and to encourage those between parties belonging to different sub-castes. He wished girls could be kept unmarried up to 20 and even 25. Towards the end he again came back to the solemn significance of the ceremony.

Do not think that the Ashram has as its object the popularization

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "The Week"

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

of marriage. It has and will have the promotion of lifelong *brahmacharya* as its object. It countenances marriage only to the extent that it serves as an instrument of restraint rather than of indulgence. And those who are for a life of restraint must order their lives differently from those who are for indulgence. Remember that there is always a limit to self-indulgence but none to self-restraint, and let us daily progress in that direction.

Young India, 2-2-1928

167. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

[*After January 27, 1928*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Your letter. Babuji[2] must have recovered by now. What can I say to you? I am almost helpless.

I had been to Kathiawar for a few days. Mrityunjaya and Vidyavati both accompanied me then. Their health is quite good at present. The wedding of Ramdas and Nimubehn took place on Vasant Panchami[3]. It was all done in a very simple manner.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3340

[1] From the reference to Ramdas Gandhi's marriage which took place on this date.

[2] Brijkishore Prasad, addressee's father.

[3] The spring festival which falls on the fifth day of the bright half of the lunar month *Magha*

168. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

[After *January 27, 1928*][1]

CHI. NIMU,

You have taken a vow not to write to me, haven't you? This is not correct. You have not kept your pledged word and now Ramdas writes and tells me that you would come only if I send for you. Is this not a very strange way of behaving? Do you wish to look upon me as a father-in-law? Why should you think it necessary to be sent for, in order that you may come to me? I will expect you to come over in reply to this letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

169. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 28, 1928

MY DEAR C.R.

I have your letter[2]. I wish you will cease to worry about me. I can only give you my assurance that I shall do nothing wilfully to impair my health. But you know my nature. I cannot exist without dietetic experiment if I am fixed up at any place for any length of time. You know too that it has always been my intense longing to revert to fruit and nut diet or at least a milkless diet if I at all could. I find now that I can easily do so and so I have done it. Now that I can pull on with it, it would be difficult for me to go back to milk until I am satisfied that it is not possible to do without milk. I can only tell you that I shall not do anything obstinately. In accordance with Dr. Muthu's instructions I am not having the blood-pressure taken at all, but I am flourishing.

I discovered in Kathiawar that I could bring my voice to almost

[1] Ramdas and Nimu got married on January 27,1928. This appears to have been written some time after their marriage as suggested by the words "Do you wish to look upon me as a father-in-law?"

[2] Dated 23-1-1928

the original pitch without fatigue and without any discomfort. It was a well-thought-out, very rapidly delivered speech[1] lasting for full one hour, and there was no trace of exhaustion after it. Surely, that was some test of my progress. And I was able to talk, not merely attend committee meetings for two nights, successively lasting up to 11 o'clock.

About work too, I cannot say that I am not doing very strenuous work, but it is not beyond my capacity.

What has given Lakshmi her fever? I hope that she is all right now.

I hope to send you Rs. 5,000/-for untouchability work soon.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 13050

170. LETTER TO R. B. GREGG

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 28, 1928

MY DEAR GOVIND,

I am glad you are now in Poona. I hope that your recovery will be rapid. I shall look forward to your coming here as soon as you can. I would like you to dismiss from your mind the idea that you owe anything either to the doctors or to me. After all, we are on this earth to serve one another without expectation of reward.

Please remember me to the Khambhattas, and when you write to me next tell me how Khambhatta is doing.

With love to you all,

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

RICHARD B. GREGG, ESQ.
C/O F. P. POCHA, ESQ.
8, NAPIER ROAD
CAMP, POONA

From a photostat: S.N. 13056

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Kathiawar Political Conference, Porbandar", 22-1-1928.

171. LETTER TO HEMAPRABHA DEVI DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

January 28, 1928

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. There is no need to learn Urdu, but if you fail to understand any word used in *Navajivan* and no one in the Ashram can explain it, write to me. Prepare your own dictionary in this way.

Do not worry about Nikhil. Those who have faith in prayer should have no anxiety whatever. One implication of prayer is that every day we place our all, even our worries, at the feet of God. After that there is no place for worries.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1654

172 SPEECH AT GUJARAT VIDYAPITH[1]

January 28, 1928

It is not my intention to disqualify the graduates or to say that the executive committee has not functioned well . . . . The reason for forming a non-elective trust is that it should, instead of being opportunistic, pursue its aims. And if it does not have the strength to do so, it should entrust the work to those who have it. If its members cause delay in handing over their functions, we can either resort to satyagraha or they can be punished for wasting the people's money. The middle path would be that of going to the courts. I am not on the committee, because I do not wish to remain on committees. I have resigned from the managing committees of the Ashram and the Charkha Sangh. Now I do not wish to take work by means of authority—with iron hands—but through love, by touching your heart. By not re-maining on the committee, I want to show others who are not on it that their responsibility is not less.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 5-2-1928

[1] A meeting of the Senate of Gujarat Vidyapith was held to frame a new constitution and remodel the institution. Gandhiji who was Chancellor presided. *Vide* also "Gujarat Vidyapith", 2-2-1928.

173. A SISTER'S DIFFICULTY[1]

[*January 29, 1928*]

A sister writes :

> A year ago I heard you speaking on the supreme necessity of every one of us wearing khadi and thereupon decided to adopt it. But we are poor people. My husband says that khadi is costly. Belonging as I do to Maharashtra, I wear a sari nine yards long. Now if I reduced the length of my sari to six yards, there would be a great saving, but the elders will not hear of any such reduction. I reason with them that wearing khadi is the more important thing and that the style and length of the sari is absolutely immaterial, but in vain. They say that it is my youth that puts all these new-fangled notions into my head. But I expect that they will agree to the proposed reduction in length if you are good enough to write to me, saying that khadi ought to be used, even at the cost of style of clothing.

I have sent the desired reply[2] to the sister. But I take note of her difficulty here, as I know that the same difficulty is encountered by many other sisters as well.

The letter in question bears witness to the strong patriotic feeling of the writer, for there are not many sisters who, like her, are ready to give up old styles or old customs on their own initiative. The number of such sisters and brothers is legion as would gladly have swaraj if it could be attained without suffering any discomfort or incurring any expenditure and in spite of their sticking to old customs, regardless of their propriety or the reverse. But swaraj is not such a cheap commodity. To attain swaraj implies the cultivation of a spirit of self-sacrifice, including the sacrifice of provincialism.

Provincialism is a bar not only to the realization of national swaraj, but also the achievement of provincial autonomy. Women perhaps are more responsible than men for keeping up this narrow spirit. Variety is worth cherishing up to a certain limit, but if the limit is exceeded, amenities and customs masquerading under the name of variety are subversive of nationalism. The Deccani sari is a thing of beauty, but the beauty must be let go if it can be secured only by sacrificing the nation. We should consider the Kachchhi style of short sari or the Punjabi *odhani* to be really artistic if the wearing of khadi can be cheapened and facilitated by their means. The Deccani,

[1] Translated by V. G. Desai from the Gujarati original published in *Navajivan*, 29-1-1928

[2] This letter is not available.

Gujarati, Kachchhi and Bengali styles of wearing sari are all of them various national styles, and each of them is as national as the rest. Such being the case, preference should be accorded to that style which requires the smallest amount of cloth consistently with the demands of decency. Such is the Kachchhi style, which takes up only 3 yards of cloth, that is, about half the length of the Gujarati sari, not to mention the saving of trouble in having to carry a smaller weight. If the *pachhedo* and the petticoat are of the same colour one cannot at once make out whether it is only a *pachhedo* or full sari. The mutual exchange and imitation of such national styles is eminently desirable.

Well-to-do people might well keep in their wardrobes all possible provincial styles of clothing. It would be very courteous and patriotic on the part of a Gujarati host and hostess to put on the Bengali style of dress when they entertain Bengali guests, and *vice versa.* But such procedure is open only to the patriotic rich. Patriotic people of the middle and poorer classes should take pride in adopting that particular provincial style which cheapens as well as facilitates the wearing of khadi. And even there they should fix their eye upon the clothing style of the poorest of the poor.

Swadeshi does not mean drowning oneself in one's own little puddle but making it tributary to the ocean that is the nation. And it can claim to contribute to the ocean only if it is and keeps itself pure. It is therefore clear that only such local or provincial customs should have a nation-wide vogue as are not impure or immoral. And when once this truth is grasped, nationalism is transmuted into the enthusiasm of humanity.

What is true of clothing is equally true of language, food, etc. As we might imitate the dress of other provinces on a suitable occasion, so might we utilize the language and other things. But at present all our energy is wasted in the useless, impossible and fatal attempt to give English the pride of place to the neglect, conscious or unconscious, of our mother tongue and all the more so, of the languages of other provinces.

Young India, 2-2-1928

174. KATHIAWAR POLITICAL CONFERENCE

The Conference met and is now over. I have no comments to offer on Shri Thakkar Bapa's[1] speech, on the attendance of the public, on the welcome given by the reception committee, on the gentleness and courtesy of the honourable Rana Saheb[2], on his presence in the Conference or the hospitality that he extended to the guestes. Sheth Devidas left nothing undone so far as the reception was concerned. He acted very well on behalf of Sheth Omar Haji Amod Zaveri who had been elected the chairman of the reception committee and did not hesitable to spend his own money in providing a welcome. The speech of the President was worthy of the priest of Bhils and the Dheds. The resolutions passed by the Conference were innocuous. These did not interest me as they did not reflect any firm determination or power to put them into actual practice. It seemed that many of those who put forward the resolutions thought that with the mere moving of them their duties were discharged. I realized that this was not a khadi conference and inwardly experienced a sense of defeat. I was alone concentrating on that subject. I realized that I had been unsuccessful; my faith in khadi, however, did not waver. I do not, therefore, wish to spell out my sorrow.

I wish to comment on one resolution alone. I am the author of that resolution and I feel that, by framing it and getting it passed, I have served the Conference and Kathiawar. That resolution runs as follows:[3]

The acceptance of this resolution became possible because of my devotion to truth. I found that this Conference could be held in Porbandar only because of some implicit understanding with the honourable Rana Saheb and that for some years to come it would be possible to hold such conferences only with such an understanding. This reflected the measure of the weakness of the Conference. No conference should be helpless to this extent. There is something wrong somewhere when such helplessness is found to exist. However, it is not got rid of by hiding it from view. Those who try to be

[1] Amritlal V. Thakkar of the Servants of India Society, who presided over the Conference

[2] The ruler of Porbandar

[3] For the text of the resolution, *vide* "Speech at Kathiawar Political Conference, Porbandar", 22-1-1928.

secretive about their sickness merely increase its intensity; they ignore remedial measures and become their own enemies.

There were two occasions in the Subjects Committee when the members introduced two resolutions criticizing individual States. I cannot claim that there was no reason for introducing these resolutions. However, I clearly saw that it was beyond the power of the Conference to admit such resolutions or act on them. The committee ruled out these resolutions. However, I felt that the Conference could not continue to function long if it brought forward such resolutions. Hence, I advised the Conference to declare to the world its own weakness, its own limitations. I suggested that, by proclaiming the truth, the Conference will soon overcome its weakness and save itself.

This was a very bitter pill for the Subjects Committee to swallow. I, too, did not like to give such advice; however, I could see clearly what my dharma was. One should act in accordance with the truth, whether it happens to be pleasurable or painful. Does not true happiness often appear to be like poison? Although some members did not approve of this resolution, they as well as others accepted my advice because of their generosity and far-sightedness.

Thereby, my responsibility has increased. I know that I will be blamed if this resolution leads to any undesirable consequences. Not only am I not afraid of these but I believe that, if the Conference implements that resolution in good spirit and does everything that is implied by it, the result must necessarily be rewarding. Restrictions which are volun-tarily imposed, self-control which is voluntarily practised, are always beneficial to anyone who undertakes them. There is no other condition which need be applied to a restriction thus voluntarily undertaken.

If the Conference abides by this resolution in thought, word and deed, it will thereby increase its capacity to fulfil its obligations within its province. Before this restriction was imposed, rulers were hesitant to allow the Conference to be held, for fear of personal criticism and censure. As the members were not clearly aware of their limitations, they made attempts, apparently glamorous but in fact futile, to rid the States of their individual shortcomings and, by doing so, were inattentive towards those tasks which, though apparently without glamour, were capable of being carried out. Now, they will either perform these useful, though uninteresting, tasks or shut up shop. As no one likes to become bankrupt, let us hope that the office-bearers of

the Conference will accomplish, willingly or unwillingly, those tasks which are worth accomplishing.

No one will interpret the above resolution to mean that in passing it we admit before the world that the States do not deserve any criticism. We should not speak ill of anyone. Although these States deserve criticism, we do admit that as we live within the boundaries of Kathiawar we do not have the capacity to criticize at the moment any State in Kathiawar or even elsewhere. We have imposed the restriction for this very reason and in the hope that we shall be able to develop the strength to make such criticisms in the future. The Committee of the Conference has the right, or rather the duty, to utilize the means at its disposal for the redressing of any grievances that it may find in any State, without bringing in resolutions in the Conference to that effect and without making any criticism against any individual State either directly or in an indirect manner at the Conference. For instance, at the time when the Conference is in session, any member of the Subjects Committee can describe the drawbacks of any State in Kathiawar to his fellow-members and ask for the guidance of the Committee on the matter. The only restriction is that he cannot move a resolution on it in the session of the Conference. He could meet that rulers or their officers and request them for redress, or if the grievances prove to be untrue he should declare them as such. In other words, the Committee can approach each and every State through proper channels, in a friendly manner. There is a possibi-lity that if the States in question, after having come to know the idea behind this restriction, have not suddenly started acting in an irrespon-sible manner and do not wholly disregard public opinion, they would wel-come this step taken by the Committee and would even use it as a shield. Here we should bear in mind that the Committee should not take undue advantage of such an investigation and publicly discuss the facts which have come to light; it should suffer in silence even if it cannot gain access to the States in question or gets no satisfaction even after gaining access, and realize that the remedy for the disease lies beyond its powers.

The outcome of such limited interference, or investigation if you wish to call it by that name, depends on the tact, industry and courtesy of the Committee. It will be able to achieve nothing if it forms preconceived notions about those States and becomes prejudiced against them. It should have the self-confidence to melt the hearts of rulers. Such self-confidence can be acquired only through

supreme service to both the ruler and the ruled. Both should be served in a dispassionate manner for their ultimate good and not in order to placate them. The members of the Committee should not even dream of serving their own self-interest through such service. The belief that we do not wish to do away with the existence of Indian States but only ask for an improvement in these is at the very heart of this idea. The Conference does not deserve to be held in the States at all if the idea behind it is to put an end to the system of princely States.

It is change and not destruction that can be brought about through non-violence. Democracy can be realized through the rulers; neither the ruler nor the ruled should be destroyed and whatever is good in both these can be harmoniously harnessed. In short, the relationship between the two should be one of dharma and not of brute force. The modern trend is towards destruction, whereas ancient culture is in favour of growth and nurture. Non-violence achieves the good of all, whereas violence bases the prosperity of one upon the destruction of another. Democracy is not an advantage in all respects nor is monarchy altogether harmful. Each has its own uses and it is the duty of the Political Conference to find these out, for it wishes to reach its goal by following the path of truth and non-violence.

Let us examine what the Conference can do. Khadi, the service of the untouchables, social reforms, etc., are of course there. By taking up these activities the Conference should nurture democracy. Administrative problems are not few—prohibition, education, the railway department, storage of rain water for the whole of Kathiawar, preservation of trees and their multiplication, introducing uniformity in the excise levy throughout Kathiawar as well as uniformity in its administration. Other matters, too, which would be advantageous to both the ruler and the ruled can be enumerated. Such matters are of the utmost importance and Kathiawar can subsist on these alone. By disregarding them Kathiawar will bring about its own ruin.

In order to accomplish these tasks, the help of the officer class is required more than that of the rulers. If the former are selfish or narrow-minded, even the reforms decreed by the rulers cannot be brought about. The officers are the limbs of the rulers and the officer class means the people. The ruler would necessarily improve if the people improve; however, the larger section of the public which is vocal, happens to belong to the officer class. Hence, so long as that section does not give up its self-interest and adopt the path of

morality, so long as it does not cease to worry over earning its livelihood, so long as these fearless persons do not comprehend the nature of public activities and take interest in them, there is little hope of any true reforms being introduced in the Indian States. The greater part of the effort of the Political Conference should, therefore, be directed towards and concentrated on the people, as it is the people who are like roots whereas the rulers are like fruits. If roots become sweet, fruits are bound to be sweet too.

Moreover, if the Kathiawar Political Conference is destined to add prestige to itself, there should be separate Conferences of State people in each of the more important States; these conferences may certainly criticize their own States in all matters, within the bounds of decency. These conferences should develop their own strength; even in order to do so they should engage themselves in constructive activity. The development of its strength depends on this.

Selfless and fearless workers are required for these activities. Where to find them? It those that are there, whatever their number, would keep on doing their duties silently, their number would multiply. No one should entertain the cowardly thought: 'What could I achieve all by myself?'[1]

So far I have addressed my words to the people. If the rulers could realize it, the above-mentioned resolution has greatly added to their responsibilities. To this day, they avoided and some even ignored the Conference for fear of its criticism and harsh words against them. However, in my humble opinion, they should respect the Conference by appreciating its civilized nature, satisfy its demands and use it as a bridge between the people and themselves. The evidence I have before me leads me to believe that it is not the case that all the States in Kathiawar are above criticism. I have been told that there are some very major shortcomings in these. They should come to recognize this age. The chaos that is there in the world and has affected India too, is an important symptom. It is certainly harmful in its chaotic form; however, the purpose underlying it is an honest one. People worship morality, although they follow consciously or unconsciously a path that deviates from it. They are tired of the blind forces of authority; they have become impatient. And, in their impatience, although they may forget that the remedy adopted by them is even more dangerous than the disease itself, they are eager for reforms and for moral power.

[1] The following paragraph was addressed to the rulers.

Though devotees of truth and non-violence like myself can see that morality will not be attained by their means, they are also aware that, if those in authority do not take this warning, destruction awaits them. It is necessary for rulers to take this warning. Let not perversity foreboding destruction prevail with them. I am kept alive by my unwavering faith that India will never take to the path leading to moral death. May the rulers prove my faith to be correct.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-1-1928

175. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

A worker asked whether a school for untouchables should be started in State 'A'. Gandhiji replied:

I have heard at many places and from many persons that 'A' is an unholy State; if that is true, we should not go there for any sacred work. The only exception to this would be the work of removing the unholiness of that State. As we have been living under British rule, it has acquired a certain kind of prestige; however, as we wish to break up this unjust administration from within, no other alternative is open to us. Otherwise, for any good person to go or to live in an unholy State in order to carry out any other sacred work would amount to his going there to increase the prestige of that State.

Q. Is it necessary to have an all-India satyagraha organization for introducing reforms in Indian States?[1]

A. No. There were 60,000 people associated with my work in South Africa; how many of them continue to be satyagrahis today? However, all the twenty-two of you have been selected for the purpose of giving a helping hand whenever it becomes necessary. Whenever you take up the work—and you will not do so without exercising discretion—you will find many other people who will join hands with you. If you are discreet satyagrahis the all-India satyagraha organization that you envisage is not necessary. The talent that lies hidden within you and in the country will manifest itself when occasion arises.

Q. How should the Satyagraha Dal grow in numbers and in quality?

[1] This and the following questions were asked by members of the Satyagraha Dal.

A. Every satyagrahi should remain alert. He should not be idle or lazy, he should not be lethargic or sick, so that he can be introspective. He should keep on evaluating his own contribution to the activity which he has chosen for himself. The commander-in-chief must maintain a record of the work done by each soldier.

Q. At present many persons are engaged in running schools for untouchables and in such other activities.

A. I would ask such satyagrahis how far they have been able to convert these children to satyagraha, to what extent they have been able to become one with the children. If I may ask the children who these persons are, they should reply that they look upon their teachers alone as their fathers.

There are satyagrahi doctors amongst you. Shall I tell you what a satyagrahi doctor should be like? He would treat the poor before all others and would disregard me and others like myself who can get the services of doctors whenever they wish to. He would ask a poor man whether he required a set of false teeth because he has lost his natural ones. Such a doctor should not worry how he could thrive in his profes-sion if he did not find people with bad teeth. You should look up *Hind Swaraj* for a detailed description of a satyagrahi doctor[1]. Such an individual should not even hope to make a living from his profession. Dr. Wanless has per-formed thousands of operations, people donate thousands of rupees to his institution, but he does not take a single pie out of it. Sam Higgin-bottom was the agricultural expert of the Scindia. He received a salary of Rs. 4,000 a month for his advise; did he, however, take a single pie of it for his personal expenditure? Yes, we do have our Dr. Chandulal[2]; he acts in a similar fashion, he knows his own job very well, he does not take a single pie for himself and the poor can readily approach him.

The satyagrahi should dedicate himself to his chosen field of activity in a spirit of purity, and adhere to it. His unflinching faith will be recognized by his truthful adherence to something which he has regarded as true although it may be untrue. Tulsidas has said: "The shell appears as a piece of silver and the sun's rays appear as a sheet of water—such is the character of illusion. Though it is ever non-existent, one cannot get rid of it."

[1] *Vide* "Hind Swaraj (Chapter XII: The Condition of India (Continued): Doctors)".

[2] Chandulal Desai, a dental surgeon and Congress leader of Gujarat

Since we act as if the world is ultimately true, we should remain absorbed in such actions as would bring about the good of the world. That alone is beneficial.

Q. Supposing State 'A' has so deteriorated that satyagaha needs to be practised there, should we set up our camp in it?

A. No, your duty is to muster strength, remaining outside it and to educate public opinion in State 'A' while doing so. When you find that you have grown in strength and that a part of the fortress of State 'A' has given way, if it appears that some Vibhishana can be found there, only then should the Satyagraha Dal invade it. Despite such an attack the Dal should bear goodwill towards the ruler whild maladministration is the reason for this attack. The Satyagraha Dal can set up its camp there when all these factors are present. Meanwhile, you can educate the people of that State. You can create an awareness of their sorry plight amongst the large number of people who visit your place. You should train people of that State through boycott or by not going there even though you may have relations living there who may be celebrating a wedding or some such auspicious occasion.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-1-1928

176. LETTER TO V. S. BHASKARAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 29, 1928

MY DEAR BHASKARAN,

I have your telegram and your letter. I cannot help saying that you have been hasty in resigning. You joined the Khadi Service not to please anybody but to serve the country, and no man who joins an institution for a good cause may leave it because of an injustice felt by or done to him[1] personally. A conscientious man would regard as his own the institution to which he belongs, and, therefore, will carry out all the obligations without insisting on his rights.

If there is an injustice done, you should discuss it with Sjt. Rajagopalachariar. I, therefore, cannot approve of your running to the

[1] The source has "felt or done by or to him".

Ashram because you feel that you are not treated there properly. If there is any room left for reconsideration, I would like you to reconsider your position.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13057

177. TELEGRAM TO PUNJAB CONGRESS COMMITTEE, LAHORE[1]

January 30, 1928

GENERAL SECRETARY

PUNJAB PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE

LAHORE

HOPE EFFORTS WILL BE COMPLETELY SUCCESSFUL.

GANDHI

The Tribune, 1-2-1928

178. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

January 30, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have now got and read your statement. It is fairly accurate. I have doubts as to one or two things. You have signed it. Is it the original? Or is it copy of a statement sent to some paper? I may not print it in *Young India*.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1585

[1] This was sent in connection with the boycott of the Simon Commission and the hartal in protest against the visit of the Commission.

179. LETTER TO ALICE VARLEY

January 30, 1928

DEAR FRIEND[1],

I was pleased to receive your letter. It was a pleasure to see you all. Do please come when you wish.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MISS VARLEY

BENTINCK HIGH SCHOOL

VEPERY

MADRAS

From the original: C.W. 10158. Courtesy: Marjorie Sykes

180. NOTE TO RAMANIKLAL MODI

[*January 30, 1928*][2]

CHI. RAMANIKLAL,

It is true that Chhaganlal is sick, but I came to know about this only when I got your note just now. The meeting can be held tomorrow at 4 o'clock. I have given an appointment to Anasuyabehn from 3 to 4. Alternatively, it can also take place in the evening at 7-30. I do not think I shall be able to work on the draft rules[3] today. But I shall prepare them before the meeting.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 14578

[1] The addressee had been a participant at the convention of the Council of Federation of International Fellowsllip.

[2] This was in reply to the addressee's letter, dated January 30, 1928, requesting Gandhiji to prepare a draft of the Ashram rules and suggesting that a meeting be held on January 31 to consider the draft.

[3] *Vide* "Satyagraha Ashram", 14-6-1928.

181. LETTER TO D. N. BANERJI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 31, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. If you are absolutely clear in your mind about non-violence, it is your duty to make that statement before the judge decline to give evidence and cheerfully suffer the consequence. You should believe that it would be the duty of a judge administering a penal judgment to punish those who do not obey laws of thecountry in which they live. And, in this instance, there can be no question of civil disobedience either, because the law of punishing witnesses who do not answer questions will be enforced even after swaraj.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. D. N. BANERJI
94, BARADEO
BENARES CITY

From a photostat: S. N. 13058

182. LETTER TO ELISABETH KNUDSEN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 31, 1928

DEAR MISS KNUDSEN,

I have your letter. I am conducting no hydropathic establishment. I give Kuhne's baths to some people in the Ashram and that is all. If you can come at all, come to the Ashram. You will be welcome guest and you will teach massage to some of the sisters here as also men. You will of course have to pay nothing for your board-ing and lodging, and you will sta102y as long as you like. Life here is very simple, perhaps even harder, 103but I know that that matters little to you.

Yours sincerely,

MISS ELISABETH KNUDSEN
ADYAR
MADRAS

From a photostat: S. N. 13059

[1] Dated 23-1-1928; the addressee had asked Gandhiji's advice whether he should give evidence in a criminal case.

183. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Silence Day [*January 1928*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

Regarding Khadi, I will not be able to do more from here. What you say in your letter you have done is sufficient. Since our idea in promoting its growth is a mixed one, it is but right to do nothing more for the present. Tell Jamnalalji this when he arrives there. Meanwhile you may do what you can.

Look into the error in the figures about milk[2] and set it right. I hope Purshottam has completely recovered by now[3]. How is Kanu?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 33215

184. SPEECH TO STUDENTS OF GUJARAT VIDYAPITH[4]

[*February 1, 1928*][5]

I have not come to take you by storm, not in the Caesarean spirit of *veni, vidi, vici.* But I have simply thrown myself in your midst, so that you can make whatever use you like of me on the eve of the changes that are impending. It would perhaps be better if I said that I have come to clear a long-standing debt I have long owed to you as your Chancellor to come and stay in your midst and identify myself with you as much as I could. But I have never been able to do so. I am thankful to the Giver of all good for having given me this opportunity of spending some time with you.

I have not come to create any disturbance in the even tenor of your lives. I do not insist on your attending the four-o' lock morning prayers. If you are convinced that prayer is an essential thing in one's life and that it is best to begin one's day with prayer in

[1] As supplied in the source. Also *vide* the following footnotes.

[2] Also *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", about October 10, 1927.

[3] Also *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", December 19, 1927.

[4] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[5] According to a report in *Navajivan,* 5-2-1928, Gandhiji arrived at the Vidyapith in the evening of January 31 and spoke to the students at the prayer meeting next morning.

the early hours of the morning, you will attend it. If you do not, I shall certainly be sorry, but will not resent your absence. In the same way, I should like you to accompany me every evening to the Ashram to attend the evening prayer there. That also you will do if the spirit moves you, and if you feel that your work will permit you to do so. I want you to go there, not because I want you to join the Ashram, though I would be glad if you did so, but because I want you to understand and identify yourselves somewhat with the Ashram. For I make no secret of it that the Ashram is the best of my creations. I can myself point out numerous defects in it, and can add many more from your own experience. But I assure you that I am more conscious of them than anyone else and yet I hold that, with all its shortcomings, it is the best of my creations. I would have me and my work judged by the Ashram more than by anything else. Hence I would love you to attend the evening prayer daily. But this is a mere suggestion to be rejected or adopted out of your own free will.

Let me not live in your midst as a burden, but as a friend, and, if possible, a guide if you will.

I am willing to give you a quarter of an hour every day or two periods every week just as you might desire. I am not sure what I shall read with you, but that also I shall leave to you to decide.

Young India, 2-2-1928

185. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 1, 1928

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. I wish you would lose your diffidence. Keep pressing Thakkar Bapa[1] on. His letter to Sir P.[2] should bear greater weight than mine, as his will be backed by experience. But you may keep me in touch. When there is anything I can do through *Young India*, you should tell me. But then you should send me a brief statement of work done and expectations.

You have to tell me whether you are ready, when you are free, to take up the all-India untouchability work. But you know the

[1] Amritlal V. Thakkar of the Servants of India Society
[2] Purushottamdas Thakkardas

consequence. You may have to be continuously on the move. I want you to act with the greatest deliberation and decision.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 881

186. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

Wednesday [*February 1, 1928*][1]

CHI. RAMDAS,

Bravo! Now that you have become a family man, you must need stop writing to me! That will not do. Things are going on quite well here. The mail is going just now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

187. MISS MAYO AGAIN

Miss Mayo is clearly trading upon her knowledge that what we in India write can at best reach but a few hundred Americans, and that what she writes reaches thousands. She therefore feels per- fectly free, just as it suits her, to misquote, half-quote or distort other people's writings or speeches intended to contradict her. She has done me the honour again of referring to me in her article in *Liberty* attempted to discredit my writing about her compilation, *Mother India* This she has felt called upon to do, I suppose, because I enjoy a certain amount of credit among cultured Americans, and lest therefore their judgment may be affected by my article. But in her article in *Liberty* she has outdone herself. Her reference to my secretaries is a clever attempt to hoodwink the unwary reader. All that could be inferred from my repudiation of the statement that I had two secretaries (whether always or not is not the point) is that Miss Mayo was at least a careless writer if not a wilful perverter of truth. But the manner in which she

[1] From the reference to Ramdas having "become a family man", the letter appears to have been written on the Wednesday following Ramdas's marriage on January 27, 1928 which was a Friday. The Wednesday following, fell on February 1.

[2] *Vide* "Drain Inspector's Report", September 15, 1927.

described the secretaries leaves the reader under the belief that I have always two secretaries. Her adherence to the statement that I did give her the message she ascribed to me proves her to be guilty of a gross suppression of truth. She seems to have thought that I would not have a copy of the corrected interview between her and me. Unfortunately for her I happen to possess a copy of her notes. Here is the full quotation referring to the hum of the wheel:

> My message to America is simply the hum of this wheel. Letters and newspaper cuttings I get from America show that one set of people overrates the results of non-violent non-co-operation and the other not only underrates it, but imputes all kinds of motives to those who are concerned with the movement. Don't exaggerate one way or the other. If, therefore, some earnest Americans will study the movement impartially and patiently, then it is likely that the United States may know something of the movement which I do consider to be unique although I am the author of it. What I mean is that our movement is summed up in the spinning-wheel with all its implications. It is to me a substitute for gunpowder. For it brings the message of self-reliance and hope to the millions of India. And when they are really awakened, they would not need to lift their little finger in order to regain their freedom. The message of the spinning-wheel is, really, to replace the spirit of exploitation by the spirit of service. The dominant not in the West is the note of exploi-tation. I have no desire that my country should copy that spirit or that note.

The first sentence only of the foregoing extract, which Miss Mayo quotes without the most important commentary on it, is intended to ridicule me. But the whole paragraph, I hope, makes my meaning and message clear and intelligible. I wrote my article on her book whilst I was travelling. Had I had the notes before me, I should have quoted from them, and thus added force to my article. I claim, however, that the message as it appears in the full paragraph quoted is not different from what I have stated in the article Miss Mayo attempts to shake.

Whilst, therefore, even in "the trivial quibble" as she rightly calls the subject-matter of her contradiction, she is, I trust, proved wholly unsuccessful, I claim that even if my memory had betrayed me, my conclusive reply to her is left unanswered and untouched. Having no case, she has followed the method of the pettifogging lawyer who vainly tries to discredit a hostile but unshakable witness by making him state things from memory which might be found on

verfication to be not quite accurate. It gives me pain to have to say that her article in *Liberty* proves her to be not only an unreliable writer, but an unscrupulous person devoid of sense of right and wrong.

Young India, 2-2-1928

188. GUJARAT VIDYAPITH

This National University, the first of its kind established when non-co-operation was at its height, has been struggling for existence for the past three or four years. The attendance of boys has gone down considerably. Several schools affiliated to it have closed or sought Government recognition. There would be nothing to worry over this decline, if there were no internal causes for it. But most of us including myself have felt that we have not done all we might have for this most useful national work of reconstruction. But whilst, if all had been vigilant, the defections might have been not so large as they have been, there are for the decline causes over which no one had any control. And though the quality of the work already done might have been easily better, what has been achieved is such as any institution would be proud of. I make bold to assert that but for the Vidyapith, Vallabhbhai Patel would not have been able to command the valuable assistance he did of so many workers during the late disastrous floods[1]. Indeed, the Vidyapith volunteers went even to Sind in order to assist Professor Malkani who has been doing heroic work there in connection with the Sind floods. I hope some day to deal the Vidyapith graduates' work of which an accurate but brief analysis has been prepared by a graduate proud of being owned by it. Sufficient for the time being to make the confession of our neglect both avoidable and unavoidable and to state that we seem now to have been roused from our slumbers.

The preliminary cleansing step was taken on Sunday[2] last when the Senate handed over charge of the valuable property and the still more valuable responsibility connected with the Vidyapith to a Board of Trustees by means of a resolution of which I give the translation below:

[1] In Gujarat, in July 1927
[2] January 29, 1928

"This meeting of the Senate of the Gujarat Vidyapith is of opinion that

1. By having established the Gujarat Vidyapith in connection with the non-co-operation movement and by maintaining it in spite of a set-back in the movement, Gujarat has rendered essential service to the nation.

2. The Vidyapith has however continued year after year to suffer in point of numbers.

3. The Vidyapith could have achieved better results in point of quality, had the internal conditions been favourable; and,

4. The Vidyapith has now reached a stage in its evolution, when, in order to make it work more effectively and in order to ensure an unswerving observance of the principles hereinafter enunciated, the administration of the Vidyapith should be entrusted to a Board of Trustees.

5. Therefore, and in pursuance of the resolution for the reconstruction of the Vidyapith passed by this Senate on the 4th of December 1927, the Senate appoints a Board of Trustees called the Gujarat Vidyapith Mandal to be composed of those who, from the list herein below, pledge themselves to subscribe to and observe the principles hereinafter enunciated; hands over charge of all the institutions connected with the Vidyapith, along with their property, movable and immovable, as also all the rights and responsibilities pertaining thereto, to the said Vidyapith Mandal; and authorizes the Mandal to add to its membership subject to the same qualifications so as not to exceed 25; and authorizes it to exercise all other rights including that of filling vacancies caused by resignation, death, or dismissal of any member for breach of the pledge or similar other reason, the latter to take place by a vote of four-fifths of their number.

NAMES OF MEMBERS

1. Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel
2. „ Nrisimhaprasad Bhatt
3. „ Kaka Kalelkar
4. „ Shankerlal Banker
5. „ Mahadev Desai
6. „ Abdul Kadar Bavazir

7. „ Manilal Kothari
8. „ Kishorelal Mashruwala
9. „ Narahari Parikh
10. „ Valji Desai
11. „ Hariprasad Vrajrai Desai
12. „ Jugatram Dave
13. „ Gokulbhai Bhatt
14. „ Sukhlalji Pandit
15. „ Parikshitlal Mazmudar
16. „ Gopalrao Kulkarni
17. „ Mama Phadke
18. Shrimati Manibehn V. Patel

PRINCIPLE

1. The principal object of the Vidyapith shall be to prepare workers of character, ability, education and conscientiousness, necessary for the conduct of the movements connected with the attainment of swaraj.

2. All the institutions conducted by and affiliated to the Vidyapith shall be fully non-co-operating and shall therefore have nothing to do with any help from Government.

3. Whereas the Vidyapith has come into being in connection with swaraj, and non-violent non-co-operation as a means thereof, its teachers and trustees shall restrict themselves to those means only which are not inconsistent with truth and non-violence and shall consciously strive to carry them out.

4. The teachers and the trustees of the Vidyapith, as also all the institutions affiliated to it, shall regard untouchability as a blot on Hinduism, shall strive to the best of their power for its removal, and shall not exclude a boy or girl for reason of his or her untouchability nor shall give him or her differential treatment having once accorded admission to him or her.

5. The teachers and the trustees of and all the institutions affiliated to the Vidyapith shall regard hand-spinning as an essential part of the swaraj movement and shall therefore spin regularly, except when disabled, and shall habitually wear khadi.

6. The language of the Province shall have the principal place in the Vidyapith and shall be the medium of instruction.

EXPLANATION. Languages other than Gujarati may be taught by direct method.

7. The teaching of Hindi-Hindustani shall be compulsory in the curricula of the Vidyapith.

8. Manual training shall receive the same importance as intellectual training and only such occupations as are useful for the life of the nation shall be taught.

9. Whereas the growth of the nation depends not on cities but its villages, the bulk of the funds of the Vidyapith and a majority of the teachers of the Vidyapith shall be employed in the propagation of education conducive to the welfare of the villagers.

10. In laying down the curricula, the needs of village-dwellers shall have principal consideration.

11. There shall be complete toleration of all established religions in all institutions conducted by and affiliated to the Vidyapith, and for the spiritual development of the pupils, religious instruction shall be imparted in consonance with truth and non-violence.

12. For the physical development of the nation, physical exercise and physical training shall be compulsory in all the institutions conducted by and affiliated to the Vidyapith.

NOTE. Hindi-Hindustani means the language commonly spoken by the masses of the North, both Hindu and Mussalman, written in the Devanagari or the Persian script.

But drastic as this step is, it may mean nothing if it is not to be followed up by quick, persistent and vigilant effort. Such effort may for the time being even result in further defections. The Senate, now the Board of Trustees, have been quite aware of the possibility. They want quality and feel that if the quality is assured, quantity will come in its own time. They are prepared to sacrifice everything to quality. It would be wrong to use donations of those who have given and will give in the belief that the principles for which the institution has professed to stand will be worked out in practice in so far as it is humanly possible. As reformers the trustees would belie their trust if they sacrifice principles for holding the institution together anyhow. Personally I have no fear as to the result if the trustees remain staunch, as I have every reason to believe they will.

On the surface there wold appear to be a descent from democracy to oligarchy. As a matter of fact it is not. The large elected body could not be sustained when the principles for which the elected

Senate for the time being stood were in the melting-pot. A democracy's ideals and principles vary with the times. A refor- mer's principles are rigid and fixed. When non-co-operation ceased to be national, those who believed in it as a creed, the only final solution for the removal of India's fetters, were bound to save the creed by working it to its logical conclusion in their own lives. Hence did the Congress bring into being an independent self-governing body styled the All-India Spinners' Association, composed of those who had a living faith in the message of the wheel. The unwritten understanding was that the Association would work out the programme of khadi so as to become in process of time a tower of strength to the parent body. The permanent trust has been created in the hope of evolving a truly democratic institution. And there is a democracy such as the world had never seen if khadi becomes a truly national institution. Even so has the Senate emerged as a Board of Trustees pledged to work out its present ideals so as to make national education a living force, so as, that is to say, to cover every village in Gujarat, to enable the students to realize the dignity of labour equally with the dignity of learning, to produce national servants who will serve the nation in her villages. The Senate, when after a full discussion it came to the resolution on Sunday, has no less, a hope, the Trustees shouldered no less a responsibility. No oligarchy can arise from a voluntary surrender such as the Senate's was. It gave up its powers to a permanent body when it was in posession of the fullest powers and in a position to exercise them to the fullest extent. It was an act of self-denial whose virtue has to be proved by the Trustees. Theirs is an awful responsibility. But, with proper consecration, it will sit lightly on their shoulders and Gujarat as well as India will be the gainer thereby. They will be judged not by the quantity of result turned out but by the quantity and the quality of self-service put in.

Young India, 2-2-1928

189. APPEAL TO PEOPLE OF BOMBAY

I hope that the boycott[1] will pass peacefully and show the nation's strength of purpose.

GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-2-1928

[1] Of Simon Commission which was appointed "for the purpose of inquiring into the working of the system of Government"; *vide* also "After Hartal?", 9-2-1928.

190. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Friday [*February 3, 1928*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter after many days. It is very good that you vacated Pattaniji's bungalow. Shankar writes that the new place is well provided with facilities. You have done well in not making a written or oral commitment.

Ramdas was married on the Basant Panchami day. The couple are still here. Devdas is also here.

I am keeping good health. For the present, I am experimenting with my original diet. It suits me. I take dried as well as fresh fruit. I have been taking this diet for nearly a month now. I shall be here only till the end of March.

Taramati has lapsed into silence after writing one letter.

What is the distance you are able to cover when you go for walks.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

191. LETTER TO KUVALAYANAND

[*February 3, 1928*][2]

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your kind letter. I have not abandoned the yogic exercises at all. *Shavasan* I take perhaps indifferently. The breathing I am taking as prescribed by you. But I have made a radical change in my diet. You know my dislike for milk for religious reasons. Having no travels on hand, I am trying the nut and fruit diet. It is now nearly a month. I am taking three times one *tola* of almonds pounded to a milky substance with stewed oranges or raisins each time. Twice I take half a coconut grated and squeezed so as to get the milk out of it with

[1] The addressee got the letter on February 5, 1928. The Friday preceding that date was February 3.

[2] The source has "3-1-1928" which appears to be a slip for "3-2-1928". Gandhiji would have started his dietetic experiment after returning to the Ashram on December 31, 1927. From the reference to his having carried on the experiment for "nearly a month" it appears this lettr was written on February 3, 1928.

stewed unripe pawpaw or unripe banana. The unripe banana I started only today. Since this change, I have not had any opening medicine and the bowels have been much better than before. Probably you don't like this change. But if you can bear with me and can guide me, please do. If you have any more ex-ercises to recommend, please tell me. On the strength of Dr. Muthu's advice, I have not had blood-pressure taken at all for a month.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5054

192. MESSAGE TO PUBLIC MEETING, AHMEDABAD[1]

February 3, 1928

I hope this meeting will not disperse without deciding to do something concerete. The Congress Committee has entrusted us with such a task; if we fail to achieve this definite goal of boycott of foreign cloth, we would be ridiculed.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 5-2-1928

193. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Magha Shukla 14 [*February 4, 1928*][2]

BHAI RAMESHWARJI,

Your letters keep coming and every time I pray for your peace.

You did well in sending some money for the memorial to Hakimji.

By and by, if you make the effort, you will visualize truth and ahimsa. If your father-in-law is addicted to bhang, be kind to him, and if opportunity occurs, try to cure him of his depraved habits. In the present circumstances when the evil customs like child-marriage and

[1] Held to protest against the Simon Commission and to endorse the resolution passed by the All-Parties. Conference at Banaras. The message was read out by Vallabhbhai Patel, who presided.

[2] From the reference to the memorial to Hakimji (Hakim Ajmal Khan) who died in December 1927

so on are rampant, such unequal alliances are inevitable.

Jamnalalji is absolutely right in advising you to go to Wardha and I also like the proposal to keep Babu at Wardha Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 193

194. LETTER TO REVASHANKER JHAVERI

AHMEDABAD,

Monday [*February 6, 1928*][1]

RESPECTED REVASHANKERBHAI,

Chi. Chhagan[2] and others came here day before yesterday. They had a long talk with the Thakore Saheb of Morvi. He has promised to lift the excise duty from cotton used in making khadi. He has also asked me for a man who will work for cow-protection. They talked about you too. The Thakore Saheb said that you should stay in Morvi and do all this work with his help. I also think that you should spend a part of your time there, if not all. From what Mirabehn told me I see that now you are keeping well. What news of Dhiru[3]?

Regards from

MOHANDAS

REVASHANKER JAGJIVAN JHAVERI

MANIBHUVAN

LABURNUM ROAD

GAMDEVI, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1267

[1] From the postmark

[2] Chhaganlal Mehta, son of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

[3] Son of Chhaganlal Mehta; he had been suffering from T. B.

195. LETTER TO KANTIPRASAD C. ANTANI

Maha Vad 2, February 7, 1928

BHAISHRI KANTIPRASAD,

All I can say about the problems of Cutch is that those problems can be solved only by the people of Cutch themselves.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Purusharthi Kantiprasad Antani, p. 80

196. LETTER TO NANABHAI MASHRUWALA

ASHRAM,
Maha Krishna Paksha 2 [*February 7, 1928*][1]

BHAI NANABHAI,

I have your letter as also the letters of Sushila[2] and Amina. Sushila has spread a sweet atmosphere around her and is winning everyone's love. I hope you are keeping well.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6675

[1] The year has been supplied from the G.N. Register
[2] Addressee's daughter

197. LETTER TO RAMAKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

ASHRAM,
Magh Krishna 2 [*February 7, 1928*][1]

DEAR RAMAKRISHNA,

I have your letter. I could read it only today. Convey my blessing to the couple. May they live long and may both devote parts of their lives to some service or other.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

RAMAKRISHNAJI
KRISHNA NIVAS
KATRA KHUSHALRAI
DELHI

From the Hindi original: Brijkrishna Chandiwala Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

198. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

ASHRAM,
February 7, 1928

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter does make me anxious. Medicines would certainly cause tiredness. In my view total fasting is the first step. I have nothing to fear from it. Fasting can do no harm and should be undertaken not for a day or two, but for ten to fifteen days. If you decide to fast, you must stay here. I can send for one or two friends who are well versed in the technique of fasting. There is enough accommodation. The weather here is fine these days. If you wish to invite the specialist on fasting to Pilani, that too can be arranged.

It is my firm belief that on no account should you go to Delhi. I am writing today to *pujya* Malaviyaji and Lalaji to this effect. Regarding the memorial to Hakim Ajmal Khan, I have published an appeal in *Young India*[2] and *Navajivan*; I want donations from you and your friends. If you are not inclined to give a big sum and if you permit, I would take out a substantial portion from the Rs. 75,000

[1] From the postmark

[2] *Vide* "In Memoriam", January 5, 1928 and "Ajmal Jamia Fund", January 19, 1928.

already donated by you. I leave it to you to have your name published or not. Please write to me without hesitation if you do not wish to give anything out of that.

Do not be alarmed by the reports of my health in the newspapers. There is not much cause for anxiety. Doctors do try to frighten me, but I remain unaffected by it.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6153. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

199. MESSAGE TO MEETING AT GUJARAT VIDYAPITH, AHMEDABAD[1]

February 7, 1928

Having submitted to the doctors I may not attend the meeting. Acharya Kripalani is going away. I hold that he is not in reality leaving the Vidyapith, because his spirit will be here. He will come here occasionally to deliver lectures and he also promise to come as helmsman if the time comes. My connection with Acharya Kripalani dates back to the time of my arrival from South Africa. I wish all would follow him in his spirit of dedication, his simplicity and his devotion to duty.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 12-2-1993

200. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

February 8, 1928

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. I shall see to your notes appearing in the next issue of *Young India*.[2] They were too late for the issue that is being printed today.

If you are ready for untouchability work, I am equally ready to

[1] The message was read out by Ambalal Sarabhai, who presided over the meeting in place of Gandhiji. The meeting was held to bid farewell to J. B. Kripalani who was leaving for Banaras to join and Gandhi Ashram there.

[2] *Vide* "Flood Relief Work in Sind", 16-2-1928.

take you up. We shall discuss plans and operations as soon as your work there is finished.

Don't be alarmed about the reports of my health. Doctors' instruments do give alarming readings, and therefore I have agreed to take full rest. Hence, such correspondence as I am permitted to undertake is dictated. But, personally, I feel that there is nothig vitally wrong. No doubt I am weak, but that is an old complaint.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 882

201. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

February 8, 1928

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I hope you have not become nervous over the news of my health. There was nothing in it, and there is nothing in it now so far as I can see. But as doctors themselves are frightened, I am taking all precautions and taking full rest. I am doing only a little bit of correspondence and that also by dictating.

Let me remind you that you have yet to finish the Shraddhanand series[1].

Here is a copy of a letter from Kanikaraj. You will know its meaning fuller than I can.

I hope you will be going with Chhaganlal to Orissa so that he may know exactly what you would want him to do.

My love to everybody at the Ashram.

From a photostat: S.N. 13065

[1] Three instalments of this had already appeared in *Young India*, 22-9-1927, 29-12-1927 and 5-1-1928.

202. LETTER TO MRS. L. C. UNNI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 8, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your two letters both of which I have kept by me for answer. It gave me great joy to see you in Calicut and it gave me much pleasure to receive your letters and to learn that my writings had given you some little help. I am delighted to find that you are regularly spinning. And seeing you are doing it in a religious spirit, I would like you to learn how to test the strength and the fineness of your yarn. If you are a reader of *Young India*, you will find the directions in the back numbers. I would ask you also to read the "Prize Essay on Hand-spinning"[1].

If you succeed in keeping early hours of the morning, I have no doubt that they will give you a peace and a joy which are not to be had in any other manner, provided, of course, that the very first thing done in the morning is to put oneself in tune with the Infinite. It is like putting oneself with perfect confidence in one's mother's lap.

I hope that your vegetarianism is agreeing with your health. If it does not, you must tell me what you are eating. I might be able to give you some guidance.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. L. C. UNNI
LAKSHMI VILAS
CALICUT

From a photostat: S.N. 13066

203. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

February 8, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter. Some digestible preparations can be made with oil. But this experiment cannot be conducted from a distance. At present fasting is the most essential and the best remedy for you. I have no doubt about it.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6154. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1]*Hand-spinning and Hand-weaving* by S. V. Puntambekar and N. S. Varadachari

204. AFTER HARTAL?

With great deliberation and not without the exercise of great self-restraint have I hitherto refrained practically from writing anything about the boycott of the Statutory Commission. I recognized the force of the appeal made to me by the *Leader* of Allahabad not to meddle with or influence the boycott movement, but to let the various parties manage it themselves. I recognized that my interference was bound to bring in the masses more prominently into the movement and might possibly embarrass the promoters. Now that the great demonstration is over, I feel free to say a word. I tender my congratulations to the organizers for the very great success they achieved on the hartal day[1]. It did my soul good to see Liberals, Independents and Congressmen ranged together on the same platform. I could not but admire the courage of the students of Government colleges in absenting themselves from their colleges for the sake of the national cause. All the world over students are playing a most important and effective part in shaping and strengthening national movements. It would be monstrous if the students of India did less.

My object now is to draw attention to the fact that the very success of the hartal will be turned against us if it is not followed up by sufficient and persistent action. We must belie the prophecy of Lord Sinha that the hartal was but a passing cloud. Let us bear in mind that, notwithstanding our opposition, the Commission, backed as it is by British bayonets, will go its own way. Where it cannot get *bona-fide* recognition, it will be manufactured for it. Did not a so-called deputation on behalf of 'untouchables' welcome the Commission as its true deliverers? Claiming to know the untouchables more than the members of the deputation, I make bold to assert that they no more represented the untouchables than would a party of Japanese, for instance.

If then we are to ensure a complete boycott, not only will there have to be a joint organization by all the parties for carrying it out and possibly picketing, wherever the Commission goes, but there must be some further demonstration of the nation's strength. Even though mine may be a voice in the wilderness and even at the risk of repeating a thousandth time the same old story, I suggest that there is

[1] February 3, 1928

nothing before the nation other than boycott of foreign cloth which can be brought about effectively and quickly. But like all great undertakings, it requires planning and organizing. It requires sustained and vigilant effort by a party of earnest, able and honest men and women exclusively devoted to the task. It is not an easy task. If it was, it would not produce the great results that are promised for it. It must evoke the best in the nation, before it is accomplished. But let us also frankly recognize that if we cannot organize this one thing, we shall organize nothing else.

Let me make my own position clear. I have no desire even now to interfere with the present evolution of the national movement except through occasional writings. This is written, therefore, by way of a humble appeal to the different parties who are jointly acting in order to vindicate national honour.

Young India, 9-2-1928

205. NOTES

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

Though through the heroic efforts of the Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri the social status of our countrymen in South Africa has undoubtedly improved and life is becoming less unbearable for self-respecting Indians, reminders come now and then from that sub-continent that much yet remains to be done before the Indian settlers enjoy the ordinary civic rights and feel their position safe. The latest shock comes through a cable just received from Mr. Albert Christopher, the new Deputy President of the South African Indian Congress. Mr. Christopher was one of the volunteers who served as well during the Boer War as during the late War. He is South Africa born and has just returned after finishing his education in England. The cable runs as follows:

> Second reading Liquor Bill now going through Parliament notwithstanding strong protest. Bill seeks deprive three thousand Indians their families and dependents of livelihood ultimately drive them out of country. Bill direct conflict letter spirit Cape Town Agreement. Clear racial legislation. Indians greatly alarmed Government's attitude. If Bill passes Cape Town Agreement smashed. Earnestly appeal your immediate interven-tion.

Even the respectable South African Press agrees with the opinion of the South African Congress that the Bill violates the

Agreement which resulted from the Round Table Conference. That it is aimed even at those who are already earning an honest livelihood in hotels and bars is unquestioned. If the Union Parliament persists in the Bill, it simply means that being the stronger party to the contract, it can safely commit breach of contract whenever it wills. Our hope lies in Sjt. Sastri's gentle diplomacy saving not only the situation, but the honour of the Union Government, the Union Parliament and the white people of South Africa in spite of themselves. He, however, needs energetic support from the Indian Press and the Indian public.

A PARALLEL FROM CHINA

A friend sends me a cutting from the *New York Times* containing the report of an interview with Mr. Ku Hung-Ming, one of the most prominent Chinese, referring to the cultural greatness of the Chinese people and its being belittled by foreigners. And referring to the inroads of foreign merchants upon China, Mr. Ku says:

> "I was similarly blind when I first returned from my long years abroad," he admits with disarming frankness. "At first I was ashamed to admit I was Chinese; now I am so proud of my heritage that I am conceited enough to think the rest of you are all barbarians.
>
> "You see, our main trouble is economic. You Americans, for instance, thought a great influx of Chinese labourers would upset your industry and lower your standard of living. You acted promptly and shut your door against Chinese.
>
> "But we in China have suffered an invasion of your foreign machines and of cheap machine-made goods, and those things have ruined us, just [as] an influx of several million Chinese coolie labourers would have ruined your industrial scheme.
>
> "When I was a young man, for instance, even the women in our own families spun and wove. At the time fully 100,000,000 Chinese women spun and wove. Then came cheap foreign cotton goods and these 100,000,000 women have no productive life, but must live on the labours of their menfolk. We are prevented from following your example of shutting the door by the fact that the treaties forbid our taking any action. We do not have even tariff autonomy.
>
> "If I were an artist, I would draw you a cartoon which would show you what I think of the unequal treaties.
>
> "Picture a Chinese prone upon the ground and a foreigner standing over him holding him down with his foot. 'Get up,' say the foreigner. 'Take your foot off first,' says the Chinese. 'No, you get up first,' says the foreigner,

putting more weight upon the foot."

AJMAL JAMIA FUND

The following sums only have been hitherto received in answer to the appeal in these pages:

Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj	Rs. 1,000-0-0
Sjt. Rameshwardas, Dhulia	,, 51-0-0
,, Pyare Ali, Bombay	,, 100-0-0
Total	Rs. 1,151-0-0

This is as yet a poor response. Ofter the response to appeals made in these pages is an indication of the manner in which the people receive certain movements. Evidently the strained relations between the two communities are keeping the general body of readers from responding. May I hope that wherever there are men and women who believe in Hindu-Muslim unity, believe in Hakimji as a great patriot, and in the necessity of supporting the Jamia, they will not only themselves soon send in the contributions, but will also canvass them among their friends and neighbours? Every subscription big or small will be acknowledged in these pages.

TO THE FRIENDS IN KARNATAK AND ANDHRA DESH

Inquiries are being made as to whether the proposed tours in these provinces have been altogether abandoned. I may state in answer that, though under pressure from Sjt. Gangadharrao Deshpande and Deshbhakta Konda Venkatappayya, I have postponed the tours, I have no idea whatsoever of abandoning them altogether. If health permits and God otherwise wills it, I propose to undertake them after the monsoons are over. But it is safe not to build hopes on any fixed season. Sufficient for me to give the assurance that I would like to tour in these and the remaining province at an early date, if it is at all possible. Meanwhile those who have already collected purses should send them either to me or to the organizers.

KHADI IN THE PUNJAB IN 1885

I extract the following valuable information that Sjt. Balaji Rao of Coimbatore collects for me from time to time from several books. The extract is taken from a Monograph on the Cotton Manufacture in 1885 by E. B. Francis:[1]

[1] The extract is not reproduced here.

That the remuneration earned by the spinners was low did not baffle the good workers, for, as the author says, they worked during the leisure hours and whatever they earned was so much gained. If the things are different now, it is because the tastes have become vulgarized and foreign cloth, under an insidious system of indirect protection, has been dumped down on this unhappy land.

Young India, 9-2-1928

206. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 11, 1928

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

Don't you worry about my health. Doctors will frighten one. This time the registered blood-pressure does not seem to produce any impression on me. I am keeping fairly [fit]. I have strength to walk, and I only lie on my back because doctors are impera-tive and tell me that some blood-pressure cases are most illusive and specially dangerous when the patient himself feels no visible effects.

This letter I am dictating in connection with Ajmal Jamia Fund. Whilst you are in the midst of all the big people, I want you to buttonhole them and get them to subscribe, no matter how much. I fear that there will be little spontaneous response or it will come when noted men and women have subscribed. If I had not become bedridden, I would have done lobbying this side of India. And I have not yet lost hope of being able to do it. I am not at all sure of your scheme of deputations going round succeeding. I know it is cruel to ask you to spare the time when it is occupied between your practice and direct Congress work. But you have got to find it for this work too.

If you have not seen my article "After Hartal?"[1], please look at it. Unless you take up this universal and possible thing, boycott of foreign cloth, the energy created by the boycott of the Statutory Commission will be all waste of effort. Every negative action without corresponding positive action becomes useless in the end.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13069

[1] Dated February 9, 1928

207. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 11, 1928

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I am again on my back, and I suppose these ups and downs will some day decide the final issue. The funny thing about the blood-pressure this time is that I notice nothing myself. But I am obeying the doctors as far as it is possible.

I had your telegram. I was sorry we could not meet before you put yourself in harness again. But I suppose it was inevitable.

Jawahar was telling me that you were keeping none too well. I hope however that you were thoroughly restored during the voyage.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13070

208. LETTER TO A. FENNER BROCKWAY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 11, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter with enclosures. I do continue to hear about the progress of your health through Paul and others. But I was more than pleased to have your own letter and to know that you were on the road to complete recovery and that you were able yourself to write long letters.

Yes, the violence during the Madras hartal was most unfortunate. The slightest relaxation of control precipitates violence.

I had a letter from Mr. Runham Brown. I sent a reply saying that I would not be able to go. I still feel that my work outside is also better done from the Indian platform. It can be said of it that it is still in too experimental a stage to make any confident claim about it, and if anything definite can be said about it with complete confidence, it would be itself a very striking object-lesson in no-war. But I am keeping both the letters for reconsideration. I shall watch also how the blood-pressure behaves, and if I find meanwhile any prompting from the inner voice in the direction of going, I shall not hesitate to say yes.

The youth movement is a decided attraction.

I was delighted to hear from Mrs. Brockway. I am writting to her directly.

Yours sincerely,

A. FENNER BROCKWAY, ESQ.
GENERAL HOSPITAL
MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 14943

209. LETTER TO LILLA BROCKWAY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 11, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

It was good of you to write to me. I should have cursed myself if I had not made time to go to your husband whilst I was in Madras. It was a severe disappointment to all of us here not to have him during the Congress session, but it was a great joy that he and his companions in the car had such a miraculous escape.

I was much touched to see Mr. Brockway's eyes moistening when his sister mentioned your cable. Such spontaneous demonstrations of human love bring us nearer to divine.

You must try to come to India one of these days. You will excuse this dictated letter, for doctors have advised me to lie on my back.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 14237

210. LETTER TO HAROLD F. BING

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 11, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your very kind and very warm invitation through Mr. Fenner Brockway. I wish it was possible for me to say straightway

'yes' to you, but there are fundamental difficulties which I have mentioned to Mr. Brockway. However, I am keeping your invitation by me and shall allow it to soak into me, and if I can see my way clear, to accept it. I shall write to you further in the matter.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

HAROLD F. BING, ESQ.
THE BRITISH FEDERATION OF YOUTH
421 SENTINEL HOUSE, SOUTHAMPTON ROW
LONDON, W.C. 1

From a photostat: G.N. 1015 and 3770

211. TALK WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF BARDOLI TALUK[1]

[Before *February 12, 1928*]

Kalyanji opened the talk, told him that they had practically covered the whole of the taluk, which was unanimous so far as the fight was concerned, but that they would prefer to refuse payment of the increment over the old assessment.

GANDHIJI. I don't quite understand that.

KALYANJI. 22 per cent enhancement has been imposed. The people say they would like to pay the old assessment and refuse the 22 per cent increment.

G. That is most dangerous. Government will fight you with the help of your own money and recover the increment in a moment. No assessment can be paid until the increment is cancelled, and you must plainly say to Government: 'Declare the enhancement cancelled and then take the old assessment which we are prepared to pay.' Are the people prepared to take up this attitude?

K. I am not quite sure about the bigger places like Bardoli or Valod, for the Vanias in these places are naturally afraid that Government might deprive them of their lands and transfer them to their original occupants, the Raniparaj people. But the other villages are quite solid.

G. That's all right. But is their cause just and their case unassailable?

KALYANJI: Certainly. Naraharibhai has demonstrated it in his articles.

G. I do not know. I have not read the articles with care. But remember that you will have to keep the whole country with you, and

[1] Representatives of Bardoli. Taluk sought Gandhiji's advice at the request of Vallabhbhai Patel, who was to lead the Bardoli Satyagraha.

the first condition is that your cause must be perfectly just. Then there is another point. The people may be ready to fight. But do they know the implications of satyagraha? Supposing Vallabhbhai is removed with the rest of you, will they stand together?

K. That is more than I can say.

G. Well, you will have to ascertain that. But what does Vallabhbhai say?

Sjt. Vallabhbhai had just arrived. He said he had studied the case and had no doubt that the cause was just. Gandhiji said :

Well, then, there is nothing more to be considered. Victory to Gujarat!

The Story of Bardoli, pp. 28-9

212. LETTER TO RICHARD B. GREGG

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 12, 1928

MY DEAR GOVIND,

I have your postcard. I am glad you won't have to be in Poona much longer now. I seem to be gaining ground—so the doctors think. Personally I feel I have not lost any. Of course I did lose weight, but then I did so with my eyes open. I could not conduct the difficult experiment of reverting to fruits and nuts without having to lose weight. But I am now conducting it under better auspices and with doctors watching. So this little collapse is perhaps an advantage and it has imposed upon me a rest which perhaps I needed.

I note the correction in the date about the spinning in Sind.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13071

213. LETTER TO MRS. HARKER

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 12, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The expenses at the Ashram need not be more than Rs. 20 to 30 per month. But what is more necessary to know is whether you can stand the life of the Ashram. It is so different

to all you have been hitherto used to that I should be nervous about your taking to the Ashram life. And now the cold weather on this side of India is practically over. We are having hot afternoons already and I wonder whether you can stand the summer of Sabarmati. Temperature goes up sometimes to 112, even 115. Sabarmati is not very far from Jacobabad, the hottest place in India. Why not reproduce wherever you are the ideals for which the Ashram stands? Then you have the Ashram without its obvious limitations, and you can add to or modify the ideals as much as you like.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. HARKER
3 SONEHRI BAGH
NEW DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13072

214. LETTER TO GIRDHARILAL

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 12, 1928

DEAR LALA GIRDHARILAL,

Your letter has been read to me. There need be no anxiety about my health. So long as God wants some work through this body, it will stand all trials and tests. I am obeying doctors fully and taking complete rest, though personally I do not seem to feel the want of it. I know that you will come whenever I want you, however pressing your other engagements may be. The thought that there are friends realy to help me is itself a great consolution.

At the present moment there are enough nurse friends about me. I seem to, and doctors too, think that I am making steady progress.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13073

215. LETTER TO ROMAIN ROLLAND

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

Mira has translated your latest letter for me.

My whole soul goes out to you in your grief especially because it comes over a letter which makes you suspect me of hardness of heart. I appreciate your desire to find me correct in all I do and think. I do indeed want to stand well with you, but I must be true to myself if I am to continue to deserve your warm friendship.

Let me first tell you that Mira's letter reflected her own views though they were found to coincide with mine. Neither Mira, so far as I know her, nor I had the remotest idea of judging those two good peasants.[1] Their action was undoubtedly one of heroism. What we had in our minds was the heroism of a war-resister, and from the record sent by you and as it was interpreted to me by Mira, I missed that particular type of heroism which a war-resister demonstrates in his own life. Joan of Arc was a heroine. So were Leonidas and Horatius. But the heroism in each case was of a different type, each noble and admirable in its own sphere.

In the answers given by the peasants, I do not notice any definite repugnance to war as war and a determination to suffer to the uttermost in their resistance to war. These peasant friends, if my recollection serves me right, are heroes representing and defending the simple rustic life. These heroes are no less precious than those of a militant war-resister type. We want to treasure all this heroism, but what I feel is that we will serve the heroes and the cause of truth better if we treated each type separately.

You have curiously raised the question of my participation in the late War.[2] It is a legitimate question. I had answered it in the last autobiographical chapter as if in anticipation of your question. Please read it carefully and tell me at your leisure what you think of the

[1] Romain Rolland, in his reply dated March 7, wrote: ". . . I understand what you say regarding those two devout peasants of Savoi. I bow before your reasons, though at the same time I believe that there are very few men and women—at least in Europe—with whom 'war-resistance' is not always mixed with other elements of thought, because almost every thought, be it ever intense, is not in man completely pure. . ."

[2] *Vide An Autobiography*, Pt. I.V, Ch. XXXVIII.

argument.[1] I shall treasure your opinion.

Lastly, I do want to reach perfection, but I recognize my limitations, and the recognition is becoming clearer day after day. Who knows in how many places I must be guilty of hardness of heart, and I should not be surprised if you have noticed want of charity in my writings in more places than one. I can only tell you that the lapses are there in spite of my prayerful effort to the contrary. I suppose it was not without reason that the early Christians considered Satan to be not merely an evil principle but evil incarnate. He seems to dominate us in every walk of life and man's mission is to overthrow him from power.

This letter of yours to Mira makes me more and more anxious to see you in the flesh, and there is just a distant hope of my being able to do so this year if I keep good health and if otherwise the inner voice guides me towards Europe. I am seriously considering two invitations, and the desire to meet you may precipitate my decision in favour of accepting those invitations.

Yours sincerely,

ROMAIN ROLLAND

From a photostate: S. N. 14942

216. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. But if you had come you would have caused me no worry and I would have enjoyed your companionship. I do not Press now because the finest part of the cold weather is gone. But if you can stand the dry heat of this place, you are welcome at any time.

[1] To this Romain Rolland replied: "Pardon me if I say to you that, in spite of all my desire to enter into your thoughts and to approve of them, I simply cannot do so. . . "

My health is improving. You will see more about it in *Young India*.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. BABU MOTILAL ROY

CHANDERNAGORE

(BENGAL)

From a photostat: G.N. 11035

217. ON THEIR TRIAL

What happened to the students during the Rowlatt Act agitation is repeating itself now. During those precious days, one of them wrote to me that he felt like committing suicide because he was rusticated. A student now writes:

> The students of. . . heard the mother's call and responded to it. We observed hartal on the 3rd. For this courageous deed of ours, we are being fined Rs. 2 per head. The poor students are losing their freeships, half-freeships and scholarships. Please write to Mr. . . . the Principal, or advise him through *Young India*. Tell him we are no criminals, we have committed no crime. Tell him we listened and responded to the mother's call, we saved her, to our utmost, from dishonour. Tell him we are no cowards. Please come forward to our aid.

I cannot follow the advice to write the Principal. If he is not to lose his 'job', I suppose he has to take some disciplinary measures. So long as educational institutions remain under the partronage of the Government, they will be, as they must be, used for the support of the Government, and the students or the teachers who support anti-Government popular measures must count the cost and take the risk of being dismissed. From the patriot's standpoint, the students did well and braverly in making common cause with the people. They would have laid themselves open to the charge of want of patriotism, if not wrose, if they had not responded to country's call. From the Government standpoint, they undoubtedly did wrong and incurred their severe displeasure. The students cannot blow hot and cold. If they will be with the people's cause, they must hold their scholastic

[1] Gandhiji had fainted while spinning on February 5, and had been advised complete rest

career sub-servient to the cause and sacrifice it when it comes in conflict with the interest of the country. I saw this quite clearly in 1920 and subsequent experience has confirmed the first impression There in no doubt that the safest and the most honourable course for the student world is to leave Government schools and colleges at any cost. But the next best course for them is to hold themselves in readiness to be thrown out whenever a conflict occurs between the Government and the people. If they will not be, as they have been elsewhere, leaders themselves in the revolt against the Government, they must at least become staunch and true followers. Let their facing of the consequences be as was their response to the nation's call. Let them not humiliate themselves, let them not surrender their self-respect in trying to re-enter colleges and schools from which they may have been dismissed. The bravery of their response will be counted as bravado, if it succumbs on the very first trial.

I hear that, during the days preceding the hartal, the students discarded foreign cloth and very largely patronized khadi. Let it not be said of them that this was but a passing show and that they have, on pressure from without or temptation from within, discarded khadi as quickly as they discarded foreign cloth. To me foreign cloth for this country means foreign Government. I wish this was accepted as a self-evident proposition.

Young India, 16-2-1928

218. MY HEALTH

It is a matter of great sorrow to me that my health should cause anxiety to many friends. Hitherto I have allowed Mahadev Desai, subject to censorship, to write whatever he has wished about my health, seeing that the break-downs, important or unimportant, occurred whilst I was travelling, and were supposed to be due to fatigue, and because those who were in charge of me during the travels had a responsibility about my bodily condition. But circumstances have now altered. I am having a respite from travels and onerous public duties. I am taking part only to the extent that I wish in reorganizing some of the activities in Gujarat, specially educational, for which I am perhaps predominantly responsible. I have, therefore, felt called upon to take up what has been a hobby of a lifetime, namely, dietetic experiments. They are to me as important as many of the most important activities which have engrossed me from time to time, and it was in the course

of these experiments that the present so-called break-down has occurred. The alarming registrations of doctors' instruments have had no reponse in my own feeling. But I have accepted the statement of medical friends that very often blood-pressure patients feel no evil effects, although they may be stealthily present in the body and must, therefore, be guarded against. Happily, however, even these instruments registered last Sunday a very great improvement, a fall from 214mm. systolic to 178mm. and a rise from 120mm. [*sic*] diastolic to 118mm. I am also taking the rest prescribed by Dr. Haribhai Desai and his medical companions, and carrying on my dietetic experiments under their observations and guidance. Dr. Muthu who seems to have made special study of dietetics is also kindly guiding me by correspondence.

Having given all this information, I would implore newspaper correspondents to curb their pen and kindly to forget me and my health for the time being. And I would ask anxious friends not to worry about my health, accepting my assurance that I am in no hurry to die and that, therefore, I shall be taking all the care of my body that is humanly possible for me, and is consistent with the ideals to which the body is dedicated and which I hold to be more precious than the body. Let the friends rest assured that, if the nation has any use for this body of mine, it is because a serious attempt has been made for many a long year to hold it in trust for those ideals. I would ask them also the share my belief, which I hold even at the risk of being dubbed a fatalist, that not one hair of anyone's body can be touched without His will and that when He has no use for our bodies, He defies all the care, attention and skill that money, prestige, patriotism, friendship and what not can summon to one's assistance. This belief does not mean that I do not want to take advantage of the assistance that medical friends all over India ungrudgingly and most generously render to me. I take that assistance gladly and faithfully. For God has given me no inkling of His intentions, but He has imposed upon me the duty of taking care of the body consistently with other more imperative obligations which, in my opinion, He has imposed upon me in common with the rest of humanity.

Young India, 16-2-1928

219. FLOOD-RELIEF WORK IN SIND

I gladly publish the following first instalment[1] of notes by Prof. N. R. Malkani about the distress in Sind which was truly no less acute than in Gujarat. But as I have already remarked before, Gujarat attracted the widest attention not merely because of its being the store-house of India's donors, but also, and perhaps more, because it found an army of workers under Vallabhbhai Patel ready and determined to handle and organize the task of relieving distress. Sind no less than Orissa suffered because they could not produce such an organization. But no lack of organization can be allowed to excuse any avoidable misery. The public should know that Prof. Malkani is himself personally organizing the relief operations under the supervision of the Central Committee which, I hope, is giving him all the assistance he may need.

Young India, 16-2-1928

220. CORRESPONDENCE

If for nothing else, I cannot refrain from publishing the foregoing[2] for its subtle wit and sarcasm. Unfortunately for me, I am responsible for the phrase 'blot on Hinduism', notwithstanding my claim, often repudiated I know, to be a sanatani Hindu. If the institution of war, in spite of its being contrary to the spirit of the Christian teaching, may be said to be a blot upon Christianity because war is universal in Christendom, untouchability may safely be regarded as a blot Hinduism in spite of the contention of a growing number of Hindus that untouchability has no place in true Hinduism. If the expression pains some Hindus, it is a healthy sign. When it pains the majority of Hindus and they repudiate the charge, there will be no occasion to repeat it. And if it is a blot, why may not a Mussalman who believed in the truth and purity of Hinduism hold with his Hindu co-member that it is a blot ?

Young India, 16-2-1928

[1] This is not reproduced here.

[2] The letter, dated February 9, from S. D. Nadkarni is not reproduced here. The correspondent had taken exception to the expression "blot on Hinduism" with reference to untouchability in a resolution on reorganization of the Gujarat Vidyapith. He had suggested that it could be changed to "blot on humanity" or deleted altogether.

221. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 18, 1928

MY DEAR C. R.,

Herewith Kelappan's letter. I have asked him to discuss his scheme with you. Whatever you think is feasible should be done. You will not hesitate to sanction anything for fear of funds being exhausted. All I am anxious about is that whatever work is done is substantial and honest.

I hope you are now not worrying about my health. I have not yet taken any vow about the milk and I am not going to do anything unless I find the experiment to be absolutely successful. And not only I am carefully watching myself, but so also are the Ahmedabad doctors. It is open to them to veto the experiment at any time they like and I have promised to stop it. But I want you, instead of thinking of somehow dodging and making me to take milk, find out doctors or physicians who will help me to arrive at a proper, purely vegetarian diet which will be more than a substitute for milk. I am sure it is perfectly possible. Do please therefore think over my suggestion.

Have you heard from Singapore friends at all? If we are to go, I should like to start during the first week of April, because the hot weather commences in right earnest in April in Ahmedabad and it would be better to avoid it. And then there is the talk of a visit to Burma from Singapore. I should like to negotiate it and, if that also is to be done, there is very little time left. And then there are two invitations from Europe to go there during July and August.[1] I am inclined to accept them. The idea is cooking in my brain. One is from the World's Youth Peace Movement. It seems to be an important movement managed by a good organization. You may also consider the propriety or otherwise of accepting these invitations.

Lakshmi must not have a relapse.

From a photostat: S. N. 13063

[1] *Vide* "Letter to A. Fenner Brockway", 11-2-1928.

222. LETTER TO AYLMER MAUDE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 18, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I shall consider it a privilege to do whatever I can in connection with Tolstoy's works being popularized in India. I hope at an early date to notice your letter in the pages of *Young India*.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

M. AYLMER MAUDE
HON. ORGANIZING SECRETARY
THE TOLSTOY SOCIETY
CHELMSFORD (ENGLAND)

From a photostat: C.W. 4514. Courtesy: Aylmer Maude

223. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 18, 1928

MY DEAR CHILD,

I had your two letters under one cover. It did appear to me that you had forgotten me entirely, and yet I knew that that wasn't possible. . . .[2] was looking a picture of health when I saw her at Madras, and she told me all about you.

You must have heard about the relapse in my health. I am now under strict orders not to do any serious work involving mental or physical strain. Except for spinning, therefore, I am on my back. I am dictating this whilst spinning. But there is no cause for anxiety. I am getting better and hope soon to be allowed to move about.

Yes. The Ashram remains what you have seen it to be. The population is daily increasing and we have too few houses to accom-

[1] *Vide* "Tolstoy Centenary", 1-3-1928.
[2] The original is damaged here.

modate all the inmates.

I am asking for a complimentary copy of *Young India* to be sent to your address, and I shall see that as many back numbers as can be spared are also sent.

I am so glad that all of you are flourishing in health. What is Menon doing in England? Please send my love to him when . . .[1] whom you know is in the Ashram just now. She has come to pass a few days on her return from Delhi where she had gone to attend a women's conference. Mirabai is here and keeping very good health indeed.

With love.

BAPU

MRS. ESTHER MENON
14 ASYLVEY
TAAROAK, DENMARK

From a photostat: S.N. 14241

224. LETTER TO VIOLET

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 18, 1928

MY DEAR VIOLET,

I have your letter. I am very glad you have written to me so rankly and fully. Bad though this proposed wedding of the ex Maharajah of Indore is, I would like you to understand the distincion between that wedding and the Simon Commission. The Simon Commission is a public thing, whereas the wedding is a private affair. A wedding cannot affect the future of three hundred millions of India but the doings of the Simon Commission are calculated for better or for worse to affect the future of the whole of India. You can now understand the public resentment over the Simon Commission. Nobody thinks anything of the misdeeds of private Englishmen or other white men. But when an Englishman does anything wrong in his official capacity, it is immediately resented and quite properly too. If you have not yet understood or do not appreciate the distinction I have made, please write to me.

[1] The original is damaged here.

You ask me whether I would again come to Ceylon if one lakh rupees worth of khadi is taken up by the people there. I have no doubt that the generous people of Ceylon are quite capable of taking up more than a lakh rupees worth of khadi because there is nothing strange about [it], but what will induce me to come back to Ceylon is another donation to khadi. Buying of khadi is merely exchanging, valuable as that is, and donation to khadi enables me to widen the sphere of work among the poorest classes.

Yours sincerely,

SHRIMATI VIOLET
C/O MRS. LILY MUTHUKRISHNA
CASA-DEL-MAR
ALEXANDRIA ROAD
WELLAWATTE

From a photostat: S.N. 13075

225. HAKIM AJMAL KHAN MEMORIAL

Readers know that this memorial is with regard to the Nationalist Muslim University in Delhi. This Vidyapith is not meant exclusively for Muslims. Hindus may also join it. The teachers too are not exclusively Muslim; Hindus and Christians also are there. However, as in the case of the Gujarat Vidyapith, where the students are mostly Hindus, since Muslim students rarely join it, so at the Jamia Millia too, few Hindus are enrolled. If the authorities of the Gujarat Vidyapith could be blamed for the reluctance of Muslim students the authorities of the Muslim university can also be blamed for the reluctance of Hindu students to join them. Considering the present vitiated atmosphere we should be content and grateful to God if the management and the staff of both the institutions are free from rancour and mutually accomodating. It is my belief that just as the Gujarat Vidyapith will contribute substantially towards the attainment of swaraj and will help to safeguard it, that is, in implementing such constructive programmes as Hindu-Muslim unity, etc., so too will this Vidyapith at Delhi. This prophecy of mine may or may not come true but if we owe anything to Hakim Saheb, and if it brings us credit to have a memorial to him for ever with us, we should all, to the best of our abilities, contribute to his Fund. The Fund is growing at less thana snail's pace, from which I gather that the Gujaratis do not respond to this cause as they do to other causes. I regard it my duty to say that

this is not the correct attitude. Those who wish to achieve Hindu-Muslim unity should help this cause. Everyone is inclined to contribute to a popular cause. People remain indifferent to a fund which is not popular, though it be beneficial in the long run, if there is no one to rouse them. This is my appeal to that indifferent class. It is not that the readers of *Navajivan* always encourage only what is popular. The readers of *Navajivan* have contributed in other ways, if not in the form of money, to funds that were not popular but would increase people's strength. They must now show that liberal spirit and power of discretion. Let not the Jamia Millia be crushed between the two opposing forces. Since the Jamia Millia does not nourish the present atmosphere of hatred, the general Muslim masses appear indifferent towards it, and if the Hindus too should be indifferent under the presumption that Muslims alone should support it, the Jamia Millia would be nowhere and Hakimji's memorial would meet with the same fate. It is the special duty of Swarajists, Hindus as well as Muslims, not to let this happen. I hope the readers of *Navajivan* will observe this dharma. I suggest donors should not rest content after giving in their personal contributions but should also try to collect as much as possible from their neighbours.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-2-1928

226. TO THE PEASANTS OF BARDOLI

There is not a corner of India familiar with the word 'swaraj' which is not also familiar with Bardoli. The country has, therefore, a right to expect something distinctive and courageous in all the tasks that are undertaken by this taluk. You have taken the very grave step of offering satyagraha. You have now no alternative but to prove yourselves worthy of it. No one could have found fault with you if you had not taken that step. However, having once taken it, you will make yourselves an object of ridicule in the eyes of the whole of India if you beat a retreat now. No one can blame Bardoli for the postponement of the fight for swaraj that it had pioneered. People in a far-off province committed an act of indiscretion and the Bardoli movement had to be postponed. I have not the slightest doubt that it was all to the good. However, on this occasion, I think it is proper to remind you that thereafter you have not been keeping to the extent you should your vows about khadi, untouchability and so on. And,

because of this laxity on your part, I have my doubts about how far you will adhere to the pledge you have taken this time. I hope you will dispel this fear by your determined conduct.

Shri Vallabhbhai Patel had given you a clear warning. It is not in his hands to make a success of your struggle. The key to success is in your own hands. Even if he goes to the gallows, Vallabhbhai cannot fulfil your pledge. As the saying goes: "One cannot go to heaven unless one dies." So also one has to fulfil one's own pledges. I do not think there are two opinions about the justice of your cause. If, however, you do not have the strength to prove it you will not triumph despite its justice. If you understand it, rather than till the land only to pay the *vighoti*[1] it would be saving yourselves a great deal of trouble if those who collect this tax confiscated your land. If the Government will not listen to you and you do not bow down to them—and if the Government aims at ruining you, it will not send you to jails, but will rather seize your property. As in Kheda, here too they would confiscate your utensils and your land. Nevertheless, you have one invaluable thing which they cannot attach and that is your soul, your self-respect. If you put your person and all your property in one scale and your self-respect in the other, the latter will always be found heavier. Satyagraha is the *mantra* for safeguarding it. Victory is is yours if you are prepared to withstand whatever loss you may incur while safeguarding it and you will prove worthy of having a leader like Vallabhbhai; moreover, you yourselves will be included in the catergory of the courageous. You must see to it that by fulfilling your pledge you enhance your own prestige as well as that of Vallabhbhai, Gujarat and the whole of India.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 19-2-1928

[1] Land revenue

227. LETTER TO DR. C. MUTHU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 21, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

A son of a valued jeweller friend has a tubercular bone. He has been treated in a sanatorium in Solon from where he is now being brought to Bombay. The father would now like to place his son under your treatment if you would handle the case. He can be sent anywhere you may advise. If you think that he should be examined by you in Bombay before you could finally decide, the father is well able to bear the expenses. I shall thank you if you can let me know by wire your advice in the matter, and in order to save time, repeat it to Sjt. Revashanker Jagjivan Jhaveri, 7 Laburnum Road, Gamdevi, Bombay, whose telegraphic address is "Morality".

I do want to write to you about my diet, but of this later. I seem to be doing well.

Yours sincerely,

DR. C. MUTHU
EGMORE
MADRAS

From a photostat: S. N. 13076; also G.N. 1271

228. LETTER TO ALICE MCKAY KELLY

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 21, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

What you tell me and what I read about the poisonous influence of *Mother India* distresses me, but I take comfort in the thought that untruth is always overcome by truth and that book is full of untruth.

I know that Mr. Dhan Gopal Mukerjee is doing good work.

I have forwarded your cheque for five dollars to the Manager, *Young India*, and I hope you are now receiving your copy.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. ALICE MCKAY KELLY
130 EAST 40TH STREET
NEW YORK CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 14244

229. LETTER TO ROHINI POOVIAH

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 21, 1928

MISS ROHINI POOVIAH,

Your letter was an unexpected pleasure. As I am under orders not to work and have still to lie on my back as much as possible, I must not dictate much beyond telling you that I have often thought of you and wanted to know what you were doing. I do hope that you will get something suitable in the near future. Do please keep me informed of your movements and I shall forgive all your past crimes. Sita has promised to look in now and then. Are you keeping good health?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13077

230. LETTER TO KUNVERJI K. PAREKH

[*February 21, 1928*][1]

CHI. KUNVERJI,

I have your letter. I am better. Chi. Rami and others will leave along with Ramdas on Thursday morning. They will stop at Rajkot and be with you in two or three days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati S.N. 9706

[1] From the S.N. Register

231. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

Tuesday [*February 21, 1928*][1]

BHAI RAMESHWARDASJI,

Your letter. Certainly, do leave the boys at the Wardha school. They will be well looked after in the Ashram. Be at peace by imprinting Ramanama in your heart.

I am keeping good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 194

232. LETTER TO NORA S. BAILLIE[2]

February 22 [*1928*][3]

I have your letter for which I thank you. In reply I can only say we must each approach and worship God in accordance with the light He has vouchsafed to us.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 14222

233. LETTER TO DEVI WEST

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

February 22, 1928

The card you mention in your letter is now missing. You must please therefore send the one you have. I am glad you are now getting *Indian Opinion* regularly. Ramdas was married now nearly a month ago. He and his wife are leaving tomorrow for Rajkot where he expects to settle down. You must have read the account of the wedding in the pages of *Young India*.[4] It was a magnificently simple affair. It could not have been made simpler.

I am personally feeling quite all right, but doctors being anxious have imposed complete rest on me. I must not, therefore,

[1] From the postmark

[2] Wife of the Rev. A. A. Baillie, Superintendent of the Indian Mission in Natal

[3] This note was in reply to a letter of the addressee dated December 12, 1927.

[4] *Vide* "Speech at Wedding of Ramdas Gandhi", January 27, 1928.

dictate a long letter. Devdas is here. He is going to Delhi shortly. Chhaganlal has gone to Orissa to serve the poor people there.

Yours sincerely,

MISS DEVI WEST
23 GEORGE STREET
LOUTH, LINC.
ENGLAND

From a photostat: S.N. 14246

234. LETTER TO HENRY NEIL

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 22, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1].

Under British rule, millions of children are starving for want of nourishing food and they are shivering in winter for want of sufficient clothing. And this I say not of the cities of India, which contain but a microscopic minority of the population of India, but I say this without fear of contradiction about the seven hundred thousand villages of the country scattered over a surface 1,900 miles long and 1,500 miles broad.

I suppose your first question 'under non-Christian Religions' is included in the second. But, if your first question relates to India before British rule, I can only give you my inference that the little ones were infinitely happier than they are now under British rule.

Your third question is difficult to answer. Which Jesus have you in mind? The Jesus of history? Not being a critical student of history, I do not know the Jesus of history. Do you mean the Jesus whom Christian England and Christian Europe represent? If so, your question is, it seems to me, already answered. If you mean the mystical Jesus of Sermon on the Mount who has still to be found, I suppose the

[1] Dated January 3, 1928; it read: ". . . Please tell me the condition of the poor children of India, under their non-Christian religions, and under British rule. Then in contrast please tell me what you think would be the condition of these children if Jesus was in full control of India and the people followed His teachings. . . ." (S.N. 14224).

condition of India's children will be a trifle better than it is now when men conform to the precept of Love.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

JUDGE HENRY NEIL, ESQ.
C/O AMERICAN EXPRESS CO.
RUE SCRIBE
PARIS-FRANCE

From a photostat: S.N. 14248

235. LETTER TO L. LE MONS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI
[*February 22, 1928*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 2nd December which was received some days ago with a postal order for Rs. 1,190. Please convey my thanks to the donors for their donation for khadi as also for their assurance that a similar donation will be renewed from year to year.

Yours sincerly,

MONS. L. LE MONS
BACLIEU
FRENCH COCHIN CHINA

From a photostat: S.N. 14249

236. LETTER TO P. C. GHOSH

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 22, 1928

MY DEAR PROFULLA BABU,

I have been able to reach your letter only today lying on my bed, though, accurately speaking, I am just now not on my bed, but at the spinning-wheel for which and which alone and for prayer I am

[1] The letter was dictated by Gandhiji in English on February 22 and given to Mirabehn to translate into French. The French version was signed by Gandhiji on February 24.

allowed to leave it. And whilst I am spinning or whilst I am lying on my back, I dictate some little correspondence and in this condition I am trying to overtake arrears. In doing so, I came upon your letter.

I am glad about the compromise[1]. I hope that now there will be no more violent scenes.

What you say about the Congress is largely true.[2] And those who believe in constructive work and non-violence have to counter-act the talkative activities and falsities by silent, dignified, unrevengeful work and that alone. I do not make of the Congress a fetish, but the oldest political institution we have in the country has to be approached with becoming respect and tenderest feeling. All public institutions have their ups and downs. Has not the House of Commons got its hypocrisy and humbug? I know that it is no model for us, but for the British nation, modelled as it is, it would be wrong to decry the House of Commons. They can only mend it wherever it is possible, unless there are Englishmen who consider the civilization that the House of Commons represents is worthless. Personally, I still cling to the ideal that the Congress represents, and, therefore, generally observe silence where I cannot serve and I ask you and co-workers who are non-violent non-co-operators to do likewise. We have to be non-violent even towards erring co-workers, erring Congressmen.

Yours sincerely,

DR. PROFULLA CHANDRA GHOSH
ABHOY ASHRAM
COMILLA

From a photostat: S.N. 13046

[1] Arrived at between the Hindu and the Muslims at Comilla as a result of which all case pending in courts were withdrawn

[2] The addressee, in a letter dated January 19, had written: "Humbuggism is writ large on the Congress . . . . The Congress President and the working General Secretary are the two best illustrations of the doctrine that 'we are a nation of talkers' . . . Personally I have lost all faith in the Congress which I consider a place for bluffers" (S.N. 14046).

237. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

Monday [Before *February 23, 1928*][1]

I had asked Mahadev to ask you to fix the last date for receiving the essay on cow-protection. If it has not been fixed, please fix it and announce it. Give again the same names of the examiners and the rules, etc., which were published earlier.[2] Settle both about the Gujarati and the English. Appoint a graduate of 15 years' experience and ask him to join for a fixed date. Please draw my attention to any factual errors in the narrative[3] that you may notice. If it were in my hands to fix the happy day on which my death would be celebrated, I would announce it right now. I would feel no sinking of the heart in doing so, but, on the contrary, would say, 'Behold this *trikaldarshi*[4]*!'* Who can have such good fortune, though? Yes, the mind certainly keeps on asking if I am eager to live on even after March 18, 1928. And the reply it gets is that even today I have no such eagerness. If living without attachment be considered weakness, let it be so considered. For my part, as long as I live I will at least go on spinning, if I cannot sew.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7400. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

238. FIGHT SQUARE IF YOU MUST[5]

The foregoing is dealt with below. The headline 'Fight Square If You Must' is, in my opinion, a more correct rendering of निदान धर्मयुद्ध करो instead of 'At Least Wage a Religious War' in the authorized translation.

Young India, 23-2-1928

[1] From the reference to the apprehensions about Gandhiji's impending death on March 18, 1928, the letter appears to have been written before the publication of the article "The Origin of It", 23-2-1928

[2] *Vide* "Notes (About Cow-Protection Prize Essay", October 13, 1927.

[3] *Satyagraha in South Africa*, written in Gujarati by Gandhiji, the English translation of which by the addressee was published in 1928

[4] One who can see the past, present and future

[5] This was a article published in *Swarajya*, 15-9-1927, a translation of which was published in *Young India*. For Gandhiji's comments, *vide* the following item.

239. REMINDING OF OLD TIMES

Sjt. Shankarrao Dev and Sjt. V. B. Harolikar were convicted the other day at Poona under Section 124-A and sentenced to undergo imprisonment for two years with hard labour. There were two charges against them: waging war against the King (Section 121) and attempting to excite disaffection against the Government established by law in British India (Section 124-A). Sjt. Dev as editor of *Swarajya* wrote the article which was the subject-matter of the offence and Sjt. Harolikar was the publisher. I print elsewhere the authorized translation of the offending article as produced before the court by the prosecution. Though it admits of improvement, it cannot be called an unfair presentation of the original.

The accused will not be defended by counsel though free assistance was volunteered by Dadasaheb Karandikar and other lawyers of distinction. Friends advised them to be defended. They were told that everybody nowadays sought legal advice without any slur being cast on them. But these non-co-operators were adamant. They did not care what others did. They were non-co-operators on principle and therefore did not wish to listen to any advice based on prudential considerations. I knew Sjt. Dev in Yeravda. He with Sjt. Dastane had undertaken a severe fast from which it was difficult for me to wean them. I tender my congratulations to these friends on their firmness in abiding by their own convictions. For I am convinced that of such will the Kingdom of Swaraj be made. They have undoubtedly brought swaraj nearer by their crystal-like sacrifice. Let no one think that such solitary individual sacrifice has no place in national upbuilding, or that it does not produce great consequences. Indeed, it is the purest sacrifice alone that will count in the end. It lays the surest and the purest foundation of swaraj.

The article is undoubtedly written to promote disaffection against the existing Government. To promote such disaffection is the bounden duty of every nationalist. Every Congressman is, I hope, an avowed enemy of the existing Government. We have no quarrel with men, but if we are worthy of swaraj, we must destroy the existing system of Government by all legitimate and peaceful means. The recent debate in the Assembly on the Statutory Com- mission was an object-lesson in disaffection in which all parties, be it said to their eternal credit, whole-heartedly joined. The late Harchandrai Vishandas

risked his life in travelling to Delhi for the sake of registering his vote in favour of disaffection. One daily comes across stronger articles than Dev's in point of disaffection. His is a reasoned appeal to Hindus and Mussalmans to disown the protection of a Government that enslaves the country and if fight they must, fight fairly, squarely, honourably. I have read the article more than once and whilst I may not use the same language, there is nothing in the argument that I cannot adopt. A prejudiced critic may cavil at the verse quoted from the *Mahabharata*. But, read together with the context, its meaning is clear. We have no King. We have a rule masquerading under the sacred name of law. Rulers are many. They come and go. The rule abides. But it is a corrupt, mischievous, soul-destroying rule which has to be ended at any cost. The cost that Dev and people like him are prepared to pay has to be consistent with their creed of non-violence. They seek to establish the rule of real law not by killing other people, however misguided or cruel they may be, but by being themselves killed, if need be, in the attempt. This is the necessary limitation imposed upon them by their very conception of swaraj. It is, therefore, most difficult for me to understand why these two innocent workers were singled out for prosecution, or shall I call it, persecution. If they are fit for imprisonment, Lala Lajpat Rai and company are surely fit for transportation, if nothing worse. If it be said that the Assembly gives members privileges for statutory crimes which ordinary mortals outside do not enjoy, there is then, perhaps, no one who is guilty of such calculated and deliberate disaffection towards the 'Government established by law' as I am. The whole of my being is worked in order to achieve the destruction of this Government and to that end to spread disaffection as wide as possible, and I think I can lay a fair claim to having a somewhat larger audience than Dev and Harolikar. But real consistency, justice and courage are hardly to be expected of governments that are based upon exploitation sustained by violence.

Young India, 23-2-1928

240. HANDLOOM v. *SPINNING-WHEEL*

Apropos of the contention often thoughtlessly advanced than the handloom is the only thing worth preserving and that it can only be preserved through the use of mill-spun yarn, Sjt. C. Balaji Rao writes:

> An effective answer to those who, in order to belittle the charkha, would exalt the handloom, is given here. Lord Curzon was voicing the opinions of his departmental scientific advisers when he declared at the Delhi Durbar that it was inevitable that the handloom should be superseded by the powerloom, just as the hand punkah was being superseded by the electric fan.

Of course, Lord Curzon's dictum need not be accepted as a conclusive answer if the longevity of the handloom can be sustained through mill yarn or any other means save the spinning-wheel. And these pages, I hope, are daily making it clear that hand-spinning can save the handloom in spite of the prediction of Lord Curzon. Indeed, if the wheel regains its ancient status in our national life, the handloom and many other domestic industries must revive automatically.

Young India, 23-2-1928

241. THE ORIGIN OF IT

I observe that newspaper paragraphs have been going round that I have predicted my own death by the 12th of March next and that, as a consquence, I am in a despondent mood. It is also stated that I am my own astrologer. I would have passed over this delicious morsel of news but for the fact that many anxious friends have taken it seriously and have, therefore, been upset. If the enquiring friends had only followed my advice never to depend upon newspaper paragraphs, but always to ascertain, at their source, the truth of statements seen in the Press, they would have been spared all that anxiety. The correspondent who set the news in motion could also have spared the enquirers considerable anxiety if he had been good enough to test the truth of statements made by him. But if the correspondents became more scrupulous about statements they may make, their occupation would be largely gone. I may then state for the information of friends that I am not an astrologer, I know nothing of the science of astrology and that I consider it to be a science, if it is a science, of doubtful value, to be severely left alone by those who have any faith in Providence. Nor

am I in a despondent mood, despondency being foreign to my nature. What precisely, however, did happen was this. When I was convicted six years ago and was asked what I thought about the prospects of swaraj, I said that it was highly likely that there was the hand of God in the limit of six years and that during that time either we should win swaraj or that I should die and that six years' time was long enough time for the country to win her freedom. This statement was based upon an observation of the state of things as then prevailed in India. I never attached any importance to it beyond this that I should myself leave no stone unturned to contribute so far as an individual could to the attainment of our freedom. The statement was on a par with the conditional statement made by me in 1920 about attainment of swaraj within one year.[1] That statement has served the purpose, if of nothing else, of giving satisfaction to my critics of laughing at my folly and to me that of seeing a tremendous effort being made by the country during that eventful year. I did not hesitate to say at the end of the year, when the Congress was held in Ahmedabad, that whilst we had not been able to achieve statutory swaraj, the freedom that politically-minded India gave itself and the unity that seemed to exist among the various communities amounted to substantial swaraj, and that if the people had carried out the conditions mentioned by me at Calcutta and Nagpur, they could have even attained statutory swaraj within the year. But even as I remained unaffected, in spite of the failure to attain statutory swaraj within the year specified, so do I remain unaffected in spite of the approaching termination of six years which, by the by, is not the 12th of March but the 17th of March next[2] . Not only am I not preparing for the imminent approach of the dissolution of my body, but I am making every effort to put it in as good order and condition as is possible, and have already fixed some provisional appointments for the coming summer and the rainy season. After all the relevant portion of my talk six years ago, twice repeated to friends, was the attainment of India's freedom. Nothing depends upon the death of an individual, be he ever so great, but much depends upon the freedom of India. Let us, therefore, all forget individuals and concentrate upon attaining that precious freedom which will never be

[1] *Vide* "Swaraj in One Year", September 22, 1920 and also Appendix "Congress Resolution on Non-Cooperation", December 30, 1920.

[2] Gandhiji was sentenced to six years' imprisonment on March 18, 1922; *vide* "The Great Trial".

showered upon us from Downing Street or elsewhere, but which can be ours the for taking any day even inside of the 17th of March. No great preparation save a mental revolution is necessary for us—Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis, Sikhs, Christians and Jews and others—to feel as one indivisible nation and as having a common stake in the country, nor is more than a mental revolution required for Hindus to forget that anyone is to be considered superior to any other and to regard the so-called 'untouchables' to be their own kith and kin, nor is much effort required if we but make the resolve to achieve complete boycott of foreign cloth. I repeat what I have said so often, at the risk of exciting laughter, that if we achieve this triple programme, no power on earth can prevent us from attaining our birthright. It is for us to work out our own salvation as it is in us to compass our own undoing.

Young India, 23-2-1928

242. LETTER TO URMILA DEVI

ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 23, 1928

MY DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. The newspapers wholly exaggerate the real thing. So far as I am aware, there is nothing wrong with me. Of course, I am weak because of my non-milk fruitarian experiment. But I am under strict medical observation and making the experiment under their watch and with their permission. There is therefore not the slightest cause for anxiety.

I am sorry about your eyes. You must not work them beyond their capacity. Mahadev just now lives between Bardoli and Sabarmati. He is helping Vallabhbhai. He went to Bardoli last night and won't return before Monday morning.

You will see something from me in the current issue of *Young India* with reference to the 12th of March also.[1] Really newspaper reports do more harm than good. But I must not give you a long letter. Doctors want me to take complete rest and I am carrying out their instructions almost to the letter. I write or dictate just a little correspondence and confine myself to editing *Young India* and

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

Navajivan, and for the most part remain lying on bed except for spinning, attendance at the prayer meetings and a few minutes' walk early in the morning and in the evening.

Yours sincerely,

SHRIMATI URMILA DEVI

KALIGHAT

From a photostat: S.N. 13081

243. LETTER TO GAURISHANKER BHARGAVA

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

February 23 [*1928*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

It is really not possible for me to attend the wedding. Apart from every other thing, doctors' instructions are peremptory. But I am glad about the proposed wedding. I hope that the ceremony will pass off without a hitch and that the bride and bridegroom will have many happy years of useful service to the country.

Ramdas is not here, and it is not convenient for Devdas to leave Sabarmati just now.

Yours sincerely,

PANDIT GAURISHANKER BHARGAVA

'PHUL NIVAS'

CIVIL LINES

AJMER

From a microfilm: S.N. 13082

[1] This letter has been found placed among 1928 papers.

244. LETTER TO BOYD W. TUCKER

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 24, 1928

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your very delightful letter which I deeply appreciate. I must not however accept your advice. 'Resist not evil' with me has never meant passive resistance. The word 'passive resistance' I have described as a misnomer for the resistance which I have known and offered. The paraphrase of 'resist not evil' means resist not evil with evil, and therefore necessarily means resist evil with good. And, if at the present moment, I do not seem to be actively resisting evil, it is a mere appearance. For, if you are a constant reader of *Bhagavad Gita*, you will recall the passage, "He who sees action in inaction and inaction in action sees truly."[1] Or is there not the corresponding English saying "He also serves who waits and prays" or something like that? Anyway such is absolutely my position today. If I could see my way clear leading to boycott movement, do not imagine for one moment that I would sit still for a single moment. But the way is not clear. It may clear any day. I want a living faith on the part of known workers in the boycott as I have prescribed from time to time in the pages of *Young India*. I am positive that no other boycott can possibly succeed, as I am equally positive that this boycott must succeed if there is enough work behind it. Huge demonstrations that have been taking place in Calcutta are good in their way, but not good enough for me. There is no reality behind them. They have their use too, but they cannot enthuse me as an active soldier.

I hope I am clear. If not, do please tackle me again. I am anxious for you to understand me and my movement through and through.

Yours sincerely,

REV. BOYD W. TUCKER
COLLINS HIGH SCHOOL
140 DHARAMTALA STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13084

[1] IV. 18

245. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

SABARMATI,
February 24, 1928

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I received your first letter today and the second letter three days earlier. I have given them to Mahadev for everyone to read. You have done a good job if you have seen in a short period all those institutions as closely as possible.

Look after your health and for doing so, you have to use a mosquito-net. Do not have the least hesitation in using it there. You might come across people who would criticise it the first day, the next day the same people would praise you for your well-maintained health, and on the third, they would follow your example. Mosquito-net is just an example.

Do not hesitate to write to me. I have always liked your letters. Reading your handwriting is never a problem.

I knew that you were hesitant to go to Orissa because of my health, but it is your dharma to overcome that hesitation and to help you in that is my dharma. I believe that my health is very good. The experiment with milkless diet seems to be successful so far. I take 8 *tolas* of wheat, 3/4 *tola* olive oil, 4 *tolas* almonds, one *seer tandarjo*[1] and 6 to 9 oranges. I still need to increase my diet. If I can do that gradually, I hope to regain part or entire weight I have lost.

Chi. Ramdas and Nimu have gone to Rajkot. From there, they will go to Amreli and will be back here in 15 days.[2] Jamnadas is tempting Ramdas, so he may stay on there. He may even stay there if he has to live permanently in Amreli. He will make a final decision on coming here. These days he is cheerful and free from worries.

Brian Gabriel is here for the last two days. He will leave on Sunday. Govindji (Gregg) is coming for ten days. Others too, keep on coming and going. Do not worry at all about my health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 32907

[1] Also *vide* "Letter to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi", February 26, 1928.
[2] *ibid*

246. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 25, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. I did indeed know that Congress Committees were practically sleeping. It would be a great thing if you can put life into them without giving rise to any suspicion about your notice.

What is this British goods boycott demonstration? And what are these ten thousand volunteers? I see Dr. Ray also has been in this thing. Please let me know the inwardness of this movement.

I do not at all mind your having gone third class if it agrees with you. I am glad you are giving Kuhne's baths to Nikhil. Why not consult Bose. He is a water-cure specialist. You know he had an institution in Bow Bazaar where I used to go for my treatment. At that time Bose was away, but Mazmudar used to give me massage and electric bath. Often the simple remedy succeeds where specialists fail.

The meaning you have given to the word '*sankara*' is original, but thoroughly in keeping with my definition of 'varna', and, after all, my definition is the literal definition of the Veda. The third chapter is undoubtedly the key chapter of the *Gita*. The first two are introductory and the last fifteen a commentary. I think I told you that for some time now in the Ashram we have been reciting the *Gita* every day, the whole of it being finished every fortnight, Chapters VII and VIII, XII and XIII, XIV and XV, and XVI and XVII being recited each pair one day.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13085

247. LETTER TO Y. BHASKARE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 25, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am very sorry I am under strict medical orders not to take up any new burdens however slight they may be and even to reduce the existing responsibilities to the lowest possible minimum. I do not therefore in this circumstance comply with your request.

Yours sincerely,

MISS Y. BHASKARE
WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION
742 NEAR PETIT HALL
POONA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13087

248. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 25, 1928

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRAN,

I have opened your telegram to Mahadev. As I know nothing about your correspondence with him, I am not taking any action upon it. Mahadev is at present in Bardoli. He returns on Monday at the latest when he will tell me all about your telegram and I shall do whatever is needful.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RAMACHANDRAN
NARAYANATH THAIKAD
TRIVANDRUM

From a microfilm: S.N. 13589

249. LETTER TO A. A. PAUL

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 25 [*1928*][1]

MY DEAR RAJAN,

Here is a letter from a lady. As I expect you to deal with it and acknowledge the letter, I am not writing to her.

Your sincerely,

A. A. PAUL, ESQ.
KILPAUK
MADRAS

From a copy: S.N. 13086 M

250. LETTER TO REVASHANKER JHAVERI

SABARMATI,
February 25, 1928

RESPECTED REVASHANKERBHAI,

I have Dr. Muthu's wire today; I sent you one[2] on receiving it, and you must have got it. If Dhiru has arrived by now, I think it advisable that you should wire to Dr. Muthu that he should come. He is right in saying that he cannot come to any conclusion without an examination. I do not know what his fee is, but whatever it is, it is necessary that you should cheerfully pay it.

My health is better. But the doctors still keep me in bed. I hope you are well.

On Thakore Saheb's request, Shri Parnerkar, who knows veterinary science, was sent from here to examine his cattle and explain the scientific method of feeding them.

Respectful greetings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1272

[1] The letter is among the S.N. paper for 1928.
[2] This telegram is not available.

251. WHO WILL RESCUE THIS HUMAN COW?

A gentleman, nearly 70 years old, belonging to the Brahmabhatt caste was married four times. All four wives are dead. He has no son, only a daughter who is fifteen. She has already been married. He now wishes to marry for the fifth time in order to have someone to run his household and fulfil his desire for a son. This gentleman has been abroad. He held a decent post in the Gaekwar's State. He has lost his eyesight owing to cataract. This, much-married old man is waiting for some cruel father who is prepared to sell his daughter. Some young men of the Brahmabhatt community are trying to save the meek cow from being sent in this way to the slaughter-house. One of them wrote a letter to the old man in order to persuade him not to commit such an act. The gentleman has replied to it at length. A copy of this has been sent to me. I give below extracts[1] from it :

I publish this letter at the risk of being considered foolish. If there is an absence of feeling for young girls in the Brahmabhatt community, if sensitive people in the community lack courage and if there is no such thing as public opinion in it, no one will be able to prevent this ill-mat-ched union. However, the handful of kind-hearted young men or women belonging to that community must not neglect their duty. Reform, if it is to be carried out in a peaceful manner, can be carried out only through love and patience. We must put up with anger in any form if it is the re-sult of self-interest. We should not be dazzled by anyone trying to impress by his knowledge. Within the last one year, two such marriages could be prevented through diligence and by arousing public opinion. An engagement that had already taken place was broken off whereas in this instance there has only been talk of an engagement. If public opinion can be created the meek cow is likely to be rescued from being slaughtered.

Let us now examine the letter from this gentleman, who had been to England. I am unable to understand what he intends to prove by giv-ing instances of men becoming fathers at an advanced age. His arguments are the same old ones that have always been advanced by sinners. In novels, we have come across murderers describing the benefits of murder in beautiful language. And we have also come across robbers singing praises of their deeds. These acts may well have benefited those who committed them; but they have not benefited the world. Let us take the practice of ill-matched unions. In the instances

[1] Not translated here

which have been cited in the above extract, the men concerned may well have seen in it advantage to themselves. However, these old men of experience who are motivated by self-interest and a desire to gratify their lust are misinterpreting these instances in trying to get their own acts approved. This gentleman does not have the time and does not feel the need to think what these young girls must have thought when marrying these old men, how often they must have sighed. If one old man has the right to marry a girl of thirteen or fifteen, all old men should have this right and, if all of them were to follow this practice, we can easily imagine what consequences it would have on the people. Nowhere in the world have wise men been known to commend ill-matched unions. They have been condemned in all countries and in India we actually see the many evil consequences that follow from them. Hence, I hope this gentleman would review his own letter, written in an angry and impulsive mood, in a new light and gain control over his lust. And, if the cannot do it, he should look for a widow who is prepared to marry him of her own free will.

The craving for a male offspring needs to be given up. It cannot be said that this desire is always noble. Amongst a people where the birth and death ratio is regularly balanced it is noble to restrain rather than indulge the desire for a son. In India today because we are slaves, everyone is in a state of fear, and because we have lost the capacity to protect ourselves, our relatives as well as our property, I regard it as a sin to beget children.

Now about the desire to be nursed. What a misconceived idea that only one's own people can render this help. I regard it as the limit of audacity to grab an innocent girl by bribing or luring her father and then regarding her as one's own. Instead of calling that girl one's own, it would be nearer the truth to say that 'a slave girl has been bought'. As for service one can still get good loyal servants if one is prepared to pay well. I wish to leave aside now the other atrocious ideas in the letter. If he happens to read this article, I humbly request him to calmly reflect on it and save himself from the misadventure on which he is about to embark.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-2-1928

252. STUDENTS' NOBLE SATYAGRAHA[1]

In referring to the universality of satyagraha I have time and again observed in these columns that it is capable of application in the social no less than in the political field. It may equally be employed against Government, society, or one's own family, father, mother, husband or wife, as the case may be. For it is the beauty of this spiritual weapon that, when it is completely free from the taint of *himsa* and its use is actuated purely and solely by love it may be used with absolute impunity in any connection and in any circumstances whatever. A concrete instance of its use against a social evil was furnished by the brave and spirited students of Dharmaj (in Kheda District) a few days back. The facts as gleaned from the various communications about the incident received by me were as follows :

A gentleman of Dharmaj, some days back, gave a caste dinner in connection with the twelfth-day ceremony of the death of his mother. It was preceded by a keen controversy about the subject among the young men of the place who shared with a number of other local inhabitants their strong dislike of this custom. They felt that, on this occasion, something must be done. Accordingly, most of them took all or some of the following three vows :

1. Not to join their elders at the dinner or otherwise partake of the food served on that occasion.
2. To observe fast on the day of the dinner as an emphatic protest against this practice.
3. To bear patiently and cheerfully any harsh treatment that might be accorded to them by their elders for taking this step.

In pursuance of this decision, quite a large number of students, including some children of tender age, fasted on the day on which the dinner was given and took upon themselves the wrath of their so-called elders. Nor was the step free from the dangers of serious pecuniary consequences to the students. The 'elders' threatened to stop the allowances of their boys and even to withdraw any financial aid that they were giving to local institutions, but the boys stood firm. As many as two hundred and eighty-five students thus refused to take part in the caste dinner and most of them fasted.

[1] The Gujarati original, of which this is a translation, was published in *Navajivan*. 26-2-1928.

I tender my congratulations to these boys and hope that everywhere students will take a prominent part in effecting social reform. They hold in their pocket, as it were, the key to social reform and the protection of their religion, just as they have in their possession the key to swaraj—though they may not be aware of it owing to their negligence or carelessness. But I hope that the example set by the students of Dharmaj will awaken them to a sense of their power. In my opinion, the true *shraddha* of the deceased lady was performed by these young men fasting on that day, while those who gave the dinner wasted good money and set a bad example to the poor. The rich, monied class ought to use their God-given wealth for philanthropic purposes. They should understand that the poor cannot afford to give caste dinners on wedding or on funeral ceremonies. These bad practices have proved to be the ruin of many a poor man. If the money that was spent in Dharmaj on the caste dinner had been used for helping poor students, or poor widows, or for khadi or cow-protection or the amelioration of the untouchables, it would have borne fruit and brought peace to the departed soul. But, as it is, the dinner has already been forgotten, it has profited nobody and it has caused pain to the students and the sensile section of the Dharmaj public.

Let no one imagine that the satyagraha has gone in vain because it did not succeed in preventing the dinner in question from taking place. The students themselves knew that there was little possibility of their satyagraha producing any immediate tangible result. But we may safely take it that, if they do not let their vigilance go to sleep, no *shethia*[1] will again dare to give a post-mortem dinner. A chronic and long-standing social evil cannot be swept away at a stroke; it always requires patience and perseverance.

When will the 'elders' of our society learn to recognize the signs of the times? How long will they be slaves to custom instead of using it as a means for the amelioration of society and the country? How long will they keep their children divorced from a practical application of the knowledge which they are helping them to acquire? When will they rescue their sense of right and wrong from its present state of trance and wake up and be *mahajans*[2] in the true sense of the word?

Young India, 1-3-1928

[1] Rich man
[2] Leaders

253. LETTER TO WILFRED WELLOCK

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 26, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sending you an autographed volume of the so-called autobiography. You will be interested to know that all the bound volumes are bound in khaddar and every rupee invested in khaddar means at least twelve annas into the pockets directly of the poorest people.

Yours sincerely,

WILFRED WELLOCK, ESQ.
VICTORIA AVENUE, QUINTON
BIRMINGHAM

From a photostat: S.N. 14250

254. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 26, 1928

MY DEAR BROTHERS,

I have been duly receiving the duplicates of your semi-official notes for Sir Habibullah. Manilal and others too keep me informed of your movements. Already urgent letters are being received to implore you not to leave South Africa at the end of your year. They say you are already counting your months. And they are trembling in their shoes, and more than them am I trembling, and perhaps, my tremble is weightier because of the absence of shoes. For I really feel that except for grave reasons of health it would be a national tragedy for you to leave South Africa at the present moment. And I am sorry to have to say—but it is true—that no one else can successfully replace you at the present moment. The familiarity that your stay in South Africa might have produced has certainly not bred contempt; on the contrary, it has gained greater respect for you from those whose respect counts for the work. And just as you have gained influence amongst the Europeans, you have gained staunch adherents amongst

our own countrymen. You may not desert them. Do please therefore let me have a reassuring letter. Of course I don't know what the Government may want you do to. *Verb. sap.*

With love,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

If you were here, you would not appreciate our politics just now.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: G.N. 8814; also S.N. 11963

255. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 26, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

I have your letters. I am sensing all that is going on in Delhi and can understand every word of what you have said in your letter. I can't give you an adequate conception of my grief as I follow the Conference proceedings from day to day and read between the lines. Father's illuminating letter only confirmed my own reading from a distance. Then came Kripalani's letter yesterday to Krishnadas, and yours has come today to put the finishing touch.[1] What a miserable show we are putting up against the insolence of Lord Birkenhead and the crookedness of the Commissioners? I had not expected much from Sir John Simon, but I was not at all prepared for his resorting to all the known tricks of bureaucracy, and this the latest trade on untouchables adds to the ugliness of the whole picture. However, we have to be patient. You must therefore patiently go through the agony and mend where you can.

[1] In his letter, dated Allahabad, February 23, Jawaharlal Nehru had written: "I wrote to you a few hours ago and informed you that I hoped to be in Sabarmati on Monday or Tuesday night. Immediately after I received a summons from Delhi to go there and remain there for the next fortnight or more to assist in constitution drafting. . . . Personally I have had enough of this All-Parties Conference. Afte ten days of it, the strain was too great for me and I fled to avoid riot and insurrection! I feel better already after a three-day absence, but another dose of all the parties may go to my head. I am thus not at all desirous of attending the meetings in Delhi. But I do not know what might happen. I shall wire to you from Delhi" (S.N. 13079).

Do come as early as possible. I hope Kamala is keeping up her strength, if not actually adding to it. I wonder if Father has told you that, before you came, when Father was with me in Bangalore, he and I had contemplated your stay in Bangalore because of its magnificent climate during summer. There are just four weeks of somewhat trying weather, but you could always go to Nandi Hill only 35 miles from Bangalore where you have delightfully cool weather. In no case should Kamala be allowed to lose what she gained in Switzerland.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13079

256. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

February 26, 1928

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letters. I also got the cable, to which I have already replied. If I were seriously ill, I would certainly have had a cable sent to you. Others, too, would have cabled, but do you think a man who was so seriously ill would wait till the steamer had arrived? Even in case of such illness, therefore, it would be best for you to suppress the desire to abandon your work and run back home.

Ramdas and Nirmala have gone to Rajkot, and from there they will go to Amreli. They have decided, both of them, to take up some work connected with my activities and devote themselves wholly to it. The place of work too will be decided before the 16th of March.

Devdas is still here. He is keeping well. Brian Gabriel left for Bombay today after staying here for three days. This letter will be carried by the same ship by which he sails.

I wish to see Sushila restored to perfect health. Which book in English is she studying? Send me a sample of her handwriting.

Tell Mr. Kallenbach that I am waiting for him to come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4734

257. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

Phalgun Shukla 6 [*February 26, 1928*][1]

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

Your letter. Illness is such a thing that most often one never knows whence and how it comes. Do not be sorry on this account, but make further introspection and be thankful to God even for the illness. Try to remove your own shortcomings if you notice any. Keep writing to me. If necessary, do take milk.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI TULSI MAHER

CHARKHA PRACHARAK

SHRI TULSI BHADURJI

Via VIRGUNJ

RAXAUL, BIHAR

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6533

258. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

February 27, 1928

MY DEAR RITCH,

I was glad to receive your long letter though a business letter. Unlike you, I am going to commence with domestic business. I was distressed to hear from Miss Knudsen, who by the way is staying with me at the present moment, that you had lost one of your legs. But she was unable to give me the reason for it. You shall give it. And how is Mrs. Ritch doing? And what about Erick and Harold? The daughters' names I forget. I hope they won't accuse me of want of chivalry. What are they all doing? For me, I am dictating from a sick-bed, not that I feel anything particular within me, but doctors have warned me against exerting myself either physically or mentally for some time yet. Mrs. Gandhi is keeping quite well. Harilal has practically forsaken me. He drinks, eats and makes himself merry. But he is a brave boy in

[1] From the postmark

one sense that he makes no secret of his vice and his rebellion is an open rebellion. If he had not done his creditors down, I would not have minded his other lapses as I mind this betrayal of his creditors. Manilal you know is in Phoenix and Ramdas and Devdas are assisting me in my work. Polak is in India just now, travelling about his business. I met him for a few minutes in Madras and he is likely to call at the Ashram before he re-em-barks for London. Andrews is a frequent visitor to the Ashram and he is due here about the third of March. This Ashram is a big, growing affair. We are at the present moment supporting a population of about two hundred, quite a little village by ourselves. And not only do we go through all the processes of cotton till it comes out as cloth, we are conducting a little dairy, a little tannery and we are having a little bit of farming. We have some fruit-trees and we grow our own vegetables. We grow some grains and enough fodder for cattle. We have as a rule one or two Europeans with us and there is a constant stream of such visitors. Life is very simple, and yet not simple enough for the Indian setting. You can't have any notion from that distance of the grinding poverty of the masses. And if we could only sustain ourselves well enough for our work in less, I would straightway reduce our expenses which amount to a pound per month on an aver-age including clothing but excluding rental. Of course we are paying no rent. We have nearly 75 boys and girls for whom we are condu-cting what I may call a model school making tuitional experiments.

Now for business. My own opinion is that neither Andrews nor Sastri could have got more than they have. I quite agree with you that these Union Ministers will be driven to getting out of the bargain. But if Sastri is permitted to remain in South Africa for any length of time, I am inclined to think that his correct, that is, his righteous, diplomacy will triumph over the crooked diplomacy of South Africa. If we are to achieve the full result of the struggle of 1906 to 1914, we must act on the square and cleanse our stables, and I feel sure that if those who have entered surreptitiously will cease to be greedy, will make a clear confession and truthfully, not encourage any single fraudulent entrant in future, the position can be saved and the condition of the resident population steadily improved. If, however, the desire is not only to cover surreptitious entries already accomplished, but to leave the door open for more, I think that the community will be unable to remain in South Africa with any degree of self-respect. It will hold on some-how or other I have no doubt, it will be difficult to wipe out such a

large and resourceful community, but it would be a sordid existence; whereas I would like the Indians of South Africa to play an honourable part not merely for the upbuilding of South Africa but for the upbuilding of India itself. If we play the game in South Africa, it is possible in course of time to secure full rights of citizenship. You may share this letter with any friend you like.

With regards to you all,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 11965

259. LETTER TO K. BALASUBRAMANIAM

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

February 27, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The more I think of it the more confirmed I become that boycott of British goods is a useless cry. I have not contemplated boycott of India's mills. All I have said about them is that they do not need any advertisement as khadi does, even as an old established trade needs no advertisement whereas a new one does.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. BALASUBRAMANIAM

6 LAKSHMI VILAS

MAMBALAM (NEAR MADRAS)

From a photostat: S.N. 13088

260. LETTER TO K. NARASIMHA IYENGAR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 27 [*1928*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

With reference to your letter of the 18th ultimo, I am asking the manager to exchange [with] you *Young India*. I have not seen the Supplement which you say you have sent.

My message to you is that an Indian journal outside India has a need for double caution. I hope that your journal instead of pandering to the evil tastes of the people wherever they exist will stand out boldly for social and moral reforms and show the emigrants that it is their duty to represent the best of Indian culture in the land to which they may migrate and to keep up the bond between themselves and the motherland by adopting khaddar at least.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. NARASIMHA IYENGAR
MANAGING EDITOR,
"THE TAMIL NESAN"
212 BATU ROAD, KUALA LUMPUR
(F. N. U.)

From a photostat: S.N. 14251

[1] The letter under reply was dated January 18, 1928.

261. LETTER TO PRAGJI K. DESAI

February 27, 1928

CHI. PRAGJI,

I have your letter. It is a pretty difficult problem in which you have been caught up. All the difficulties will be solved if you have patience and scrupulous regard for truth. Do not, for the sake of immediate gain, lend your name to falsehood. I have conveyed my views to Mr. Ritch.[1] I had a long letter from him, which I have read with care. I do believe that we can still save the situation, if only people will stop the practice of bringing in unauthorized persons. Try to keep Sastriji for another year. I will also try from this end. How is Medh faring? What do you think now will be the result of your case?

My health is good; there is no cause at all for worry. Try to suppress your desire to return to Bardoli.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5031

262. LETTER TO RATILAL

Monday [*February 27, 1928*][2]

BHAISHRI RATILAL,

Narandas withheld your reply for some day in order not to trouble me.

It would be enough if you gave Chi. Surajbehn, in addition to Raichandbhai's articles, canto XI of the *Bhagavata*, the *Balkand* of Tulsidas's *Ramayana* and some of the books published by Navajivan Karyalaya. I think it essential that there should be less reading and more reflection and practice.

Chi. Chhagan and Lilavati promised on leaving that they would come again and stay longer. If they keep their promise and come, I certainly wish to discuss the matter with them. They have assured me that they will keep the promise.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7162

[1] *Vide* "Letter to L. W. Ritch", 27-2-1928.

[2] As in the G.N. Register

263. LETTER TO DHIRU JHAVERI

Monday [*February 27, 1928*][1]

CHI. DHIRU[2],

It is good that you came. Be true to your name and have patience[3]. God will protect you. Dr. Muthu has a reputation for succeeding and if he comes he might be instrumental in your getting cured. But whether you are cured or not, learn to bear suffering in patience.

It is good that Mother has joined you there. Give my *pranams* to her. You need not reply. I get and will continue to get news about your health from your father or Manibhai.[4]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1279

264. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN CHOUDHRI

February 27, 1928

BHAI RAMNARAYAN,

Your letter to hand. I had no idea of what was being written about me in *Shraddhanand*. I glance at one or two newspapers for a few minutes only. I do not want that anyone should defend me. Moreover, it hurts me that someone should be attacked on my account. You can use this letter as you like. I am writing to *Pratap*.[5]

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[From Hindi]

Bapu: Maine Kya Dekha Kya Samajha?, p. 161

[1] From the contents. The addressee had been suffering from tuberculosis and had been brought to Bombay from Solan at this time for treatment under Dr. C. Muthu; *vide* also "Letter to Dr. C. Muthu", February 21, 1928, "Letter to Revashanker Jhaveri", before and on February, 1928.

[2] Son of Revashanker Jagjivan Jhaveri

[3] 'Dhiru' is short for 'Dhiraj' which means patience.

[4] Addressee's brother

[5] *Pratap*, in an editorial, had "caustically criticized" an article by Vinayakrao Savarkar in *Shraddhanand*. Gandhiji's letter to *Pratap*, however, is not available.

265. LETTER TO REVASHANKER JHAVERI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

[Before *February 29, 1928*][1]

RESPECTED REVASHANKERBHAI,

I have your letter.

You did well in sending a telegram to Dr. Muthu. I have had good experience of him. He has a great reputation. Send me a telegram when you hear that he is on his way, so that I may write to him again. I have in any case to reply to his wire.

If you find him a friendly person, consult him about your health too. Swelling indicate weakness of the heart. It is proper that you have stopped physical movements. But you need fresh air the most.

Manilal[2] wants Chi. Jeki[3] to join him immediately. He seems to be doing well in Aden. He has also paid Jeki's fare to Thomas Cook. He is suffering from hydrocele and wishes to be operated upon in Aden, that is why he wants her there. I believe that he would have called her even if he had not been suffering from the disease. He wants the children too. Jeki is completely at home here. The kids are making great progress in their studies. All of them keep fit. But I feel that, since Manilal wants her, it is Jeki's clear duty to go to Aden. She, too, is ready to go. Let me know your opinion about this, so that I may act accordingly.

I am keeping well.

Respectful greetings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1273

[1] It is clear from the contents that this was written before February 29; *vide* "Letter to Revashanker Jhaveri", 29-2-1928.

[2] Manilal Doctor, husband of Jayakunwar

[3] Jayakunwar, daughter of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

266. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 29, 1928

MY DEAR BHRRR[1],

You are a good young man of twenty-five to brave the Government and the heat of Bardoli. No defeat if you please.

Yours,
BHRRR

From a photostat: S.N. 9562

267. LETTER TO DUNICHAND

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 29, 1928

DEAR LALA DUNICHAND,

I have your letter delivered through Lala Suraj Bhanu. I have put him on work which he had least expected and told him that he is not likely to take to the Ashram life unless he became a labourer pure and simple. But he seems to have taken to it very gracefully and pleasantly.

Now about your donation. I did not know that you were a pucka bania by choice. But you little knew that you were dealing with a still more pucka bania voluntarily acting as the agent of *Daridranarayana*. You say that you had announced a donation to the Ashram of Rs. 500 on the marriage of your son and you propose, to use the language of law, wrongfully to divert part of the funds to the payment of a debt voluntarily incurred by you with Sjt. Manilal Kothari. How can a donation be utilized for discharge of a debt whether moral or legal? And what connection can you promise to pay the All-India Spinners' Association have with the Ashram which represents multifarious activities—tanning, dairying, farming, experiments in hygiene, cotton-growing, ginning, carding, spinning, weaving, dyeing, printing, carpentry, smithy, conducting educational experiments, looking after widows, taking care of so-called untouchables, etc.? And why such a donation, not paid on the date on which it was announced,

[1] This was a manner of greeting between Gandhiji and the addressee.

should not carry double interest in the hands of the donor who from date of announcement becomes a trustee? You will please deal with these conundrums before I can deal with your cheque finally. And I would ask you in deciding this question to consult Mrs. Dunichand, who, when I had the pleasure of being under your roof, was found to be less bania-like than you have proved to be.

Yours sincerely,

LALA DUNICHAND
ADVOCATE
KRIPANIVAS
AMBALA CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 13080

268. LETTER TO B. RAJARAM PANDIAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 29, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. If you have the courage of your convictions, then of course you will not send the two boys to the school and make either private arrangements for them or send them to a national school. I must at the same time say that I do not like the tone of the letter you adopted, and it would have been far more dignified if you had frankly told the head master that you did not send your boys because of the national declration of boycott. The boys would have been sent out of the school, it is true; but it would have been a courted and, therefore, dignified dismissal.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. B. RAJARAM PANDIAN
BHASKARA VILAS PALACE
RAMNAD

From a photostat: S.N. 13090

269. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 29, 1928

DEAR MOTILALJI,

Jawahar had prepared me for your letter.[1] I am sorry that our meeting is delayed. But I am glad that you are staying there if per chance some tangible result may be achieved. What a sorry exhibition we are making of ourselves in the face of this organized insult to a whole people. But I suppose we have to make the best of a very bad job. I do hope that the Committee of twenty is being fully attended. We are engaged in an unequal duel; on the one hand are clever whole-timers acting with one mind and with the greatest deliberation; on the other we are part-timers having many irons in the fire and having almost as many minds as our numbers. My hope however is in the justness of our cause

I hope your eyes are not causing you much trouble.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13083

[1] In his letter of February 24, Motilal Nehru had written: ". . . I am sorry it will not be possible for me and Jawahar to leave for Sabarmati on the 26th. The very day that I wrote to you giving the points of agreement and disagreement between the various parties, Mr. Jinnah announced that it was wrong to say that anything had been agreed upon by the Muslim League which had not yet formally appointed its representatives to the Conference. He added that he was no doubt personally of the opinions he had expressed, but he felt that, in the absence of definite authority from his League, he was not competent even to bind himself with those opinions. Thus it was that the long sittings and elaborate discussions occupying ten days came practically to nothing. It was also found that the attendance at the Conference was thinning away from day to day until it came down to 14 on the 21st. The Executive of the Muslim League is meeting on the 26th and Mr. Jinnah has promised to do his best to bring them round to his point of view. In all these circumstances, I thought it was futile to go on with the Conference and suggested that a sub-committee be appointed to go into the whole question and make its report as soon as possible to an adjourned sitting of the Conference. This was agreed to and the Conference was adjourned to the 8th March, a committee of 20 being appointed to enter upon their work at once. We have a large field to cover, but will either be able to get on better after the 26th or give up the attempt. I feel that my presence here is necessary till either of the two contingencies I have mentioned happens. . . . I shall write or wire as soon as I am free."

270. LETTER TO PADMARAJ JAIN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 29, 1928

DEAR PADMARAJ BABU,

I have your letter. My views have been frequently and unequivocally expressed in the pages of *Young India*. I have no notion of what is being done there at the present moment. But I suggest your seeking advice from Pandit Malaviyaji who knows more of the inwardness of the present movement than I do lying on a sick-bed. As you will notice, therefore, I am simply satisfying myself with an expression of my general views on swadesi, boycott, and the like.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. PADMARAJ JAIN
BENGAL PROVINCIAL HINDU SABHA
160 HARRISON ROAD
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13089

271. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Wednesday [*February 29, 1928*][1]

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your letter. A chemist told me that if oil is frozen, the acid in it separates out and only the fat remains.

There was indeed good news concerning Morvi. If Revashankerbhai agrees, we can make him the president. If he falls ill, we can then elect someone else. I find this the best solution.

Since Fulchand and the others have gone to Bardoli, who is helping you now? What have you done about the Antyaja School at Morvi? I also want you to do something for implementing the resolutions of the Parishad[2]. I do not know the English word for

[1] From the postmark
[2] Kathiawar Political Conference

chilgoza[1]. If I get some, I will send you a little as sample. I'll also try to find out its English name.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5695

272. LETTER TO REVASHANKER JHAVERI

Wednesday, February 29, 1928

RESPECTED REVASHANKERBHAI,

I got your letter, as also your wire. On getting the wire, I wrote a letter to Dr. Muthu only yesterday, addressed C/o you. You must have passed it on to him. If you have not sent a telegram or have not been able to write a letter even today, intimating the result of his examination, inform me by wire. I have also written to Dr. Muthu requesting him to write to me in detail.

Chi. Jeki is not at all keen on going to Aden. She is ready to do what we advise her to do. But we must consider what our duty is in regard to her. Is it right for us to keep Jeki with us against Manilal's wishes? What would the doctor[2] wish in these circumstances? If I were free to decide myself, I would certainly support Jeki in her desire not to go. But I feel that the doctor would not wish that, nor perhaps would you. I cannot bear to see the miserable condition of women. I would, if I could, save every woman from the burden which her husband in his sensuality puts upon her. However, if God let things happen according to our wishes, the world would certainly turn upside down; we should, therefore, do whatever we can while keeping ourselves detached.

Respectful greetings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1274

[1] Pine seed

[2] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

273. FOREIGN PROPAGANDA[1]

I have no desire to start any hot controversy over the question of foreign propaganda, but I publish the foregoing as it summarizes the views of many workers who hold them in no sense weakly because they do not express them in public. If the pure Non-co-operation of 1920 is not witnessed on an extensive scale at the present moment, it is most decidedly going deeper with some and everything that is happening today in the land goes to strengthen their belief. But they cannot make themselves felt by being vocal in season and out of season. On the contrary, they feel that they serve the cause of swaraj better by observing silence where they cannot serve by speech and helping humbly and actively wherever they can.

Young India, 1-3-1928

274. CHAOS v. *MISRULE*

An esteemed friend writes :[2]

> It is not often that I intrude upon your expressions of political opinion. But a sentence of yours in a recent editorial, repeating a heresy uttered by you long ago, compels me to ask you whether you have measured your words with the care that one expects of an expounder of moral issues. You declare that you would accept chaos in exchange for freedom from the English yoke. That an Indian should desire and work for freedom from any foreign yoke is perfectly natural, normal and healthy. That anyone in his senses should exchange any kind of orderly government for chaos is simply incomprehensible, for the one implies some sort of discipline, whether imposed or stimulated, whereas the latter is the very negation of self-discipline. . . .
>
> If non-violence be, as you claim it to be, creative, purposeful, and divine in its nature, then chaos cannot be its consequence or characteristic. If you have used the term with deliberation, then I should comment that you have rendered no service to mankind, who need rather a reminder that they should acquire the cosmic vision rather than the chaotic one to which they are already prone. . . .

There is no mistaking the earnestness running through the letter. And I have so much regard for the friend's views, that if I could have

[1] For C. Rajagopalachari's article bearing this title, *vide* Appendix "Foreign Propaganda", March 1, 1928.

[2] Only extracts are reproduced here.

suited mine to his, I would gladly have done so.

But I must say that my choice was deliberate. Chaos means no rule, no order. Rule or order can come, does come out of no rule or no order, but never directly out of misrule or disorder masquerading under the sacred name of rule or order. My friend's difficulty arises, I presume, out of his assumption that the present Government of India represents "some sort of discipline whether imposed or stimulated". It is likely that our estimates of the existing system differ. My own estimate of it is that it is an unmitigated evil. No good therefore can come out of this evil. I hold misrule to be worse than no rule.

Nor need my words cause any confusion in the minds of the ignorant or the violent. For I admit my correspondent's contention that chaos can be the result only of violence. Have I not often said in these pages that if I were compelled to choose between this rule and violence I would give my vote for the latter though I will not, I could not, assist a fight based on violence? It would be a matter for me of Hobson's choice. The seeming quiescence of today is a dangerous form of violence kept under suppression by greater violence or rather readiness for it. Is it not better that those who, out of a cowardly fear of death or dispossession, whilst harbouring violence refrain from it, should do it and win freedom from bondage or die gloriously in the attempt to vindicate their birthright?

My non-violence is not an academic principle to be enunciated on favourable occasions. It is a principle which I am seeking to enforce every moment of my life in every field of activity. In my attempt, often frustrated through my own weakness or ignorance, to enforce non-violence, I am driven for the sake of the creed itself to countenance violence by way of giving mental approval to it. In 1921 I told the villagers near Bettiah[1] that they had acted like cowards in that they had instead of resisting the evil-minded Amlas left their wives and homes on their approach. On another occasion I expressed myself ashamed of a priest who said he had quietly slipped away and saved himself when a ruffian band had entered his temple to loot it and break the idol. I told him that if he could not die at his post defending his charge non-violently, he should have defended it by offering violent resistance. Similarly do I hold that, if India has no faith in non-violence, nor patience for it to work its way, then it is better for her to attain her freedom from the present misrule even by

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Bettiah", December 8, 1920.

violence than that she should helplessly submit to a continuing rape of her belongings and her honour.

Look at the shameless manner in which, for sustaining the spoliation of India, British statesmen (?) are setting one party against another. They have suddenly discovered the untouchables, for they seem to fear that the Hindu-Muslim dissensions alone might not prove enough secu-rity for retaining possession of the 'most glorious diadem in the British Crown'. They are trying to set the helpless princes against the people. Sir John Simon finds it necessary to play the same game. The penetrating intellect he is said to possess does not penetrate the very thin veil that covers the frauds that are set up for his edification and he finds nothing seriously amiss in the Indian atmosphere. This sort of 'orderly discipline' has unmanned and unnerved the people as nothing in their previous history has ever done.

My own position and belief are clear and unequivocal. I neither want the existing rule nor chaos. I want true order established without having to go through the travail of chaos. I want this disorder to be destroyed by non-violence, i.e., I want to convert the evil-doers. My life is dedicated to that task. And what I have written in the previous paragraphs directly flows from my knowledge of the working of non-violence which is the greatest force known to mankind. My belief in its efficacy is unshakable, so is my belief unshakable in the power of India to gain her freedom through non-violent means and no other. But this power of hers cannot be evoked by suppressing truth or facts however ugly they may for the moment appear to be. God forbid that India should have to engage in a sanguinary duel before she learns the lesson of non-violence in its fullness. But if that intermediate stage, often found to be necessary, is to be her lot, it will have to be faced as a stage inevitable in her march towards freedom and certainly preferable to the existing order which is only so-called but which is like a whited sepulchre hiding undiluted violence underneath.

Young India, 1-3-1928

275. TOLSTOY CENTENARY

Mr. Aylmer Maude than whom there is no better English authority on Tolstoyan literature writes :

> Knowing your interest in Tolstoy, I am sending you copy of a circular just issued to members of the Tolstoy Society, as well as copy of a letter by Bernard Shaw.

We are anxious that this Centenary Edition should find a place in public libraries and also that its publication should enable us to give assistance to members of Tolstoy's family, who are in distress since the Russian Revolution.

Should you have an opportunity of mentioning the Edition to librarians or members of the committee of any of your Indian libraries, the Committee of the Tolstoy Society would feel greatly indebted to you.

I take the following from the printed notice of the Tolstoy Society:[1]

The Secretary is Miss L. E. Elliott, Ladywell House, Great Baddow, Chelmsford, England.

Anyone can become a member of the Tolstoy Society by paying at least £1-1-0 and an associate by paying a minimum subscription of 2s. 6d.

Young India, 1-3-1928

276. THE COW-PROTECTION BIBLIOGRAPHY

The foregoing list[2] has been prepared by Sjt. V. G. Desai out of his extensive study of the literature available on the question of cow-protection in terms of the objects of the All-India Cow-protection Association. It is not suggested that a study of all the foregoing literature is necessary for the lover of the cow or even that it is all valuable. The list is intended to help the careful student.

Young India, 1-3-1928

277. KHADI NEAR MEERUT

Dr. Ray gave me soon after his recent visit to Meerut an account of his impressions. I take the following from his letter :[3]

. . . I was taken to a village 20 miles north of the town where the peasants are comparatively prosperous. . . . In almost every house I visited the mother, the daughter and sometimes the daughter-in-law were found basking in the sun and spinning 10 to 12 count yarns. The coarse cloth woven in the village itself is used by the local people and ready-made sliver hawked about. In the field also side by side with the standing crops there are patches of cotton cultivation.

[1] The notice about the publication and price of Tolstoy Centenary Volumes is not reproduced here.

[2] This is not reproduced here.

[3] Only extracts are reproduced here.

The march of 'civilization' has not yet fully overtaken the unfortunate villagers, but they have begun to taste of it. . . . The Banaras Gandhi Ashram with the help of a local band of devoted sacrificing workers is doing its level best but funds and proper organization are both badly needed.

The hum of the wheel need not die either in the Punjab or elsewhere in India, if we would be true to our trust. The band of workers from the Banaras Ashram who attracted Dr. Ray's attention are working in and near that district to put khadi on a stable foo-ting. Now that he parent of the Ashram, Acharya Kripalani, is in the midst of his workers, there should be redoubled zeal on their part and greater support and appreciation from the public.

Young India, 1-3-1928

278. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

Friday [On or after *March 2, 1928*][1]

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I am happy to learn that there has been some improvement in Nikhil's health. Rest and water-treatment may bring about a complete cure.

Study the *Ramayana* well. Recite the quatrains and couplets over and over again and meditate on them. Keep your mind absolutely calm and never give way to depression. This is the teaching of *Gita*. This is the purpose of Ramanama. Those blessed by God do not regard sorrow as sorrow. Daily we chant here the verse :

विपदो नैव विपद: संपदो नैव संपद:
विपद्विस्मरणं विष्णो: संपन्नारायणस्मृति:

It means that sorrow is not sorrow, happiness is not happiness. Sorrow is forgetting Vishnu; happiness is remembering Narayana.

He who has Narayana in his heart, how can he know sorrow?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1651

[1] From the reference to water-treatment of Nikhil the letter appears to have been written after the one to Satis Chandra Das Gupta dated February 25, the Friday following which was March 2.

279. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 3, 1928

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have your letter. I have discussed it with Jawaharlal, but he suggests, and I agree, that it will be better for me to reduce to writing the views I have expressed to him so that there may be no misunderstanding about the correct interpretation of my views, and so that he may also know whether he understood me correctly.

ELECTORATE: I am of the same opinion that I expressed years ago at Delhi that we should not be party to separate electorates or to reservation of seats, the latter should be by mutual voluntary arrangement if such is necessary. But unless the Mussalmans agree, there is no going back by us on reservation of seats. The Congress is committed to it. I think, therefore, that we must simply adhere to the Congress resolution and expect Hindus and Mussalmans to carry out that resolution. If the All-Parties Conference cannot discover another method acceptable to all, we must simply work out the Congress formula.

THE CONSTITUTION: Personally I am of opinion that we are not ready for drawing up a constitution till we have developed sanction for ourselves. Any constitution that we may arrive at must be a final thing in the sense that we may improve upon but we may not recede from it even by an inch. There seems to be no atmosphere for arriving at such a constitution. I would personally therefore prefer instead of a constitution, a working arrangement between all parties upon which all may be agreed. This would be not a constitution but chief heads of it, as for instance, the Hindu-Muslim arrangement, the franchise, the policy as to the Native States. If we are to make this thing popular, I should bring in total prohibition and exclusion of foreign cloth as an indispensable condition. Of course we should guarantee equality of treatment of all religions as also of the so-called untouchables. I am not exhaustive in the list of things on which there should be an agreement, but I have simply given a few things by way of illustration. I think that if we go beyond such a general agreement, we would be making mistake. In any case, I do hope that the Conference will not break up without doing anything, and even if it does, the Working

Committee should take the matter in its own hands and issue its own authoritative statement on behalf of the Congress on all the matters for which the Conference has been convened.

SANCTION: More important than the two foregoing things, in my opinion, is the sanction. Unless we have created some force ourselves, we shall not advance beyond the position of beggars, and I have given all my time to thinking over this one question, and I can think of nothing else but boycott of foreign cloth with the assistance of mills if possible, without if necessary. I hold it to be prefectly capable of attainment within a measurable distance of time if we can create sufficient public opinion in its favour. Iwould have exclusive concentration upon this thing if I had my way. Though I have said nothing in public, I do not at all like what is going on in Bengal. So far as I can see, it is doomed to failure and I can see much harm coming out of that failure; and unlike boycott of foreign cloth, it is valueless, unless it succeeds to the extent we want. Jawaharlal and I have given most of our time to a consideration of this question. And he will explain it all to you. As soon as he can be dispensed with, I would like you to send him back for further discussion of this problem if we do not finish before he leaves for Delhi.

I see that I am not to expect you here in the near future.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13095

280. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SABARMATI,
March 3, 1928

JAMNALAL BAJAJ

WARDHA

MAY GO DELHI IF NECESSARY. HEALTH EXCELLENT. BEGAN TAKING MILK FROM YESTERDAY FOR MORAL REASONS.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 68

281. HAWKING KHADI IN GUJARATI

Shri Vithaldas Jerajani writes to say :[1]

It was necessary to undertake such work in Gujarat. Now that it has begun, it will help in creating a khadi atmosphere if it gains a foothold. I take it for granted that help from local workers will be available everywhere in Gujarat.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-3-1928

282. CATTLE IN KATHIAWAR

An expert in cattle breeding writes from Kathiawar to say :[2]

This letter deserves the attention of rulers (of Indian States) and their officers. The several methods of cattle-protection shown here have been discussed in various ways in the letter itself. However, I mention them here as they have been stated with reference to the local conditions by a person who has lived in Kathiawar. The cows and bullocks of Kathiawar were at one time famous. It is a matter of shame for every State in Kathiawar that today they are being sent to the slaughter-house and that economically they are regarded as a burden.

This reform requires neither a large sum of money nor any great courage. It is only a matter of giving up lethargy and sparing a little time from politics. It requires no great effort to get scrub bulls castrated or to regulate cattle fodder. The States should train some students by offering them scholarships. In the mean while, they should carry on the work with whatever help they can get.

The heads of pinjrapoles too should take note of the above suggestions. Infirm cattle ought to be looked after. However, it is a thousand times more important to prevent useful cattle from being sent to the slaughter-house.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-3-1928

[1] The letter, which dealt with the door-to-door sale of khadi in Gujarat, is not translated here.

[2] The letter is not translated here.

283. SATYAGRAHA IN BARDOLI

In this issue the reader will find the letters exchanged between the Government and Shri Vallabhbhai. In a way this correspondence is a sorry chapter. So far as I can see, the facts mentioned by Shri Vallabhbhai or the arguments that he has based on them lack nothing. The Government's reply is marked by cunning and equivocation and amounts to a snub. It makes one sad that power thus makes a person arrogant and that he in his arrogance loses his humanity and forgets himself. Although we may have known thousands of such instances of human weakness, each new one is bound to cause pain. This is because though man is not free from fault, at heart he wants to do good. Hence he is pained by insolence, discourtesy, etc., from others.

I shall not enter into the correctness or otherwise of the facts and the arguments. The reader may not have before him all the literature which would enable him to examine the pros and cons; if he has it, he may not have the patience to read and reflect upon it. However, Shri Vallabhbhai's demands will be found reasonable by the disinterested reader even on the basis of justice alone. Vallabhbhai does not insist that his arguments should be accepted by the Government. What he in fact says is that, while the Government is on one side, the people are on the other. There is a difference of opinion between the two regarding the facts themselves. There should be a third party to arbitrate in this dispute. Whatever award is given by this party will be accepted by Vallabhbhai on behalf of the people.

This is the crux, the essence, of Vallabhbhai's letter. The question that now arises is whether there could be such arbitration to settle disputes between the Government and the people. Is not the former the supreme authority? In matters relating to law, even this Government is theoretically prepared to stand in the dock in a court of law. The Government regards the question of land revenue as extra-judicial.The reason for this is beyond the common man's powers of comprehension. Let us not enter into the intricacies of this argument at this moment.

However, if the question of land revenue is outside the jurisdiction of courts, what could Vallabhbhai do but ask for arbitration? Should he advise the people to appeal to the Government and then sit quiet? Even if he wished to give such advice, the people had not left the door open to him; they had already appealed to the Government.

Vallabhbhai would not help them make such appeals, so they approached those who would. Having been unsuccessful there, they returned to Vallabhbhai to make him accept their leadership in offering satyagraha.

In accordance with the rules of satyagraha, Vallabhbhai approached the Government with a polite offer of peace. He said that the Government might not be wrong, it was possible that the people might have misled him. He asked the Government to appoint an arbitrator and ask him to dispense justice. He hoped the Government would not claim infallibility. The Government, by committing the grave mistake of rejecting this proposal, cleared the way for the people to offer satyagraha.

The Government, however, claims that Vallabhbhai is an outsider and does not belong there, that he is an alien and, if he and his alien friends had not entered Bardoli, people would have certainly paid up the revenue—that is the trend of the Government's letter.

This is like the thief trying to punish the policeman. As long as Bardoli is in India neither Vallabhbhai nor anyone else amongst us will understand how either he or any Indian living within the territory between Kashmir in the north and Kanyakumari in the south and between Karachi in the west and Dibrugarh in the east, can be called an outsider. It is the British officers of the Government who are foreigners, outsiders who do not belong here, and, to speak more plainly, all the officers—whether they are black or white—who serve this foreign, outside authority belong to this category. Those who owe their livelihood to the Government would of course be on its side. Even persons like Drona and Bhishma had to tell Yudhishthira that they were on the side of those who provided them their livelihood. How crooked of this foreign Government, to call a person like Vallabhbhai an outsider in Bardoli! This is like darkness at noon! It is because of such things that people like me regard it a sin to be loyal to such a Government, and practise non-co-operation. How can we hope for any justice where such gross impertinence prevails? Who can teach justice to this Government? Only a satyagrahi. The Govern-ment cannot be vanquished by intellectual arguments. For the mighty, reason lies in might. It weighs justice at the point of the sword.

This sword becomes blunt when it meets the sword of the satyagrahi. If the satyagrahis of Bardoli are capable of standing by

truth, either an arbitrator will be appointed, or Vallabhbhai's arguments will be accepted and he will cease to be considered an outsider and come to be accepted as a 'native'.

The other questions arising out of this correspondence will be dealt with later. It is enough for the people of Bardoli to remember that it is for them to win or lose the game.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-3-1928

284. LETTER TO REVASHANKER JHAVERI

Sunday [*March 4, 1928*][1]

RESPECTED REVASHANKERBHAI,

I have your letter. Please keep me informed about whatever you do for Dhiru. Will you yourself have to go with him or will someone else go? Do you need anyone from here? I understand about Jeki.

Respectful greetings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1276

285. LETTER TO PRESIDENT, PREM MAHAVIDYALAYA TRUSTEES

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

March 5 [*1928*][2]

THE PRESIDENT

PREM MAHAVIDYALAYA TRUSTEES

BRINDABAN

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your wire that the Trustees of the Prem Mahavidyalaya had unanimously decided upon Adhyapak Jugal Kishore acting in Acharya Gidwani's place. You are welcome to Sjt. Jugal Kishore's services for twelve months.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13097

[1] From the postmark

[2] From the contents it is clear that the letter belongs to 1928; *vide* "Prem Mahavidyalaya", 8-3-1928.

286. LETTER TO A. J. SAUNDERS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 5, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and money order for Rs. 50. Will you please convey my thanks to the students and tell them that I hope this is merely the first instalment of their gift on behalf of *Daridranarayana* and that they are wearing khaddar habitually?

Yours sincerely,

A. J. SAUNDERS, ESQ.
BURSAR
THE AMERICAN COLLEGE, MADURA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13096

287. LETTER TO V. S. BHASKARAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 5, 1928

MY DEAR BHASKARAN,

I was glad to receive your letter. Of course I forgive you for all the mischief you have done. But your letter only confirms what I heard about you, and it was undoubtedly wrong.

You now ask me with my influence to restore the money that you withdrew and say that you will accept penance in the way of fasting and what not. That would not be correct penance. You must now submit to what Ramanathan or Rajaji may say without in any way being influenced by me. That is the correct position for you to take. And, if you can't have the money restored you should submit to their judgment cheerfully and expect to earn it by honest means in future.[1]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. V. S. BHASKARAN
C/O POSTMASTER, RANIPET

From a photostat: S.N. 13098

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to V. S. Bhaskaran", January 29, 1928.

288. LETTER TO R. NORA BROCKWAY

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 5, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter and to find that Mr. Brockway was doing so well. I hope the recovery has been progressively rapid.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is here at the present moment and I have shared your letter with him.

Yours sincerely,

MISS R. NORA BROCKWAY
ST. CHRISTOPHER'S TRAINING COLLEGE
KILPAUK
MADRAS

From a photostate: S.N. 13099

289. LETTER TO ROLAND HAYES[1]

March 5, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

Mr. H. Chattopadhyaya writes to me saying that you are likely to visit India in the near future. If you do and if you visit Gujarat, please regard this little Ashram as your home.

Yours sincerely,

MR. ROLAND HAYES
C/O THE AMERICAN EXPRESS CO.
PARIS

From a photostat: S.N. 14253

[1] American Negro singer

290. LETTER TO W. B. STARR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 5, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your kind letter enclosing your donation, for both of which I thank you. There was no occasion for you to apologize for the smallness of the donation. The smallest donation in monetary value is a big thing when it comes from a big heart as I am sure yours has done.

The question of reform of the legal profession is a big one. It does not admit of tinkering. I am strongly of opinion that lawyers and doctors should not be able to charge any fees but that they should be paid a certain fixed sum by the State and the public should receive their services free. They will have paid for them through the taxation that they would have paid for such services rendered to citizens automatically. The poor will be untaxed but the rich and the poor will have then the same amount of attention and skill. Today the best legal talents and the best medical advice are unobtainable by the poor.

Yours sincerely,

W. B. STARR, ESQ.
MANAGER
HIGHLAND SPRINGS FARM
CISCO, TEXAS (U.S.A.)

From a photostat: S.N. 14254

291. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

March 6, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. The resolutions seem to be good. I hope they will be followed up by action. I do not like the idea of having the membership open to those who may love khadi or work for it for pay even though they may not wear it.

With love,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1586

292. WAR AGAINST WAR

A correspondent writes:

> My excuse for writing this is that the autobiographical chapter about your attitude towards war as a follower of truth and ahimsa has apparently stirred the thoughts of many, and abler people would be writing to you about it. But I wish to present some aspects that have struck me. Is it not a fundamental doctrine that to the true disciple of truth and ahimsa, there can be no tampering with bad things even though one connot resist them? War is a necessary evil as some say, but that is no excuse for supporting it in the hope that after it there will come to the world a realization of the wickedness of waging war. It cannot be. On the contrary, the callousness of man is increased further in intensity and the feeling about the sacredness of life is destroyed. The anarchist could argue just as you do and say: "We cannot stop European aggression and terrorism. We cannot resist terrorism by mass force. But if we can only domonstrate to them the wickedness of such methods by using them against them, they will see the folly of their attitude and we shall become free, and we shall also save the world from terrorism. So long as *himsa* is resorted to by our rulers and so long as we hate terrorism, what is the harm in using these weapons provided we do not allow them to obsess us?" Has the Great War actually done any good to the nations and particularly to the victors? Materially, morally, and socially they have lost heavily as a result of the victory. Their moral standards have all been upset and the strife after the life of the moment, and the disregard for truth and honesty in international dealings is becoming more and more apparent every day. Can any good come out of a war, however 'righteous' it may be? Are we not bound to oppose it and invite suffering for the cause rather than in any way acquiesce in it either passively or actively? Do you not believe that the pacifists served the cause better than those who actively engaged in the War? What you say might represent the state of your mind in 1914 when you thought there was a sense of justice in the British mentality. Do you now feel that it was right? If another war was declared tomorrow, would you volunteer your help to England in the hope that you would be making things better after the war? I know I have not presented the case in the best way but you can understand what it is that I am trying to tell you, and I shall be glad to have your reply.

I agree with the correspondent that he has not presented his case 'in the best way', but he does represent a type of readers who will not read carefully even writings that are meant to be serious simply because they happen to be found in a weekly journal. If readers like

the correspondent will re-read the chapter in question they will be able to deduce from it that:

1. I did not offer my services because I believed in war. I offered them because I could not avoid participation in it at least indirectly.

2. I had no status to resist participation.

3. I do not believe that war can be avoided by taking part in it even as I do not believe that evil can be avoided by participation in it. This however needs to be distinguished from sincerely helpless participation in many things we hold to be evil or undersirable.

4. The anarchist's argument is irrelevant as his participation in terrorism is deliberate, voluntary and preconceived.

5. The War certainly did no good to the so-called victors.

6. The pacifist resisters who suffered imprisonment certainly served the cause of peace.

7. If another war was declared tomorrow I could not with my present views about the existing Government assist it in any shape or form; on the contrary, I should exert myself to the utmost to induce others to withhold their assistance and to do everything possible and consistent with ahimsa to bring about its defeat.

Young India, 8-3-1928

293. PREM MAHAVIDYALAYA

This creation of Raja Mahendra Pratap has a proud record and is one of the very few pre-non-co-operation institutions that were created and have lived without Government aid, recognition or affiliation. Like all such undertakings it has had to pass through many vicissitudes but has come out scatheless through them all. Recently it celebrated its anniversary. Dr. Ansari presided on the occasion. The report before me states that "the proceedings began with a *takli* demonstration and hoisting of the national flag by Dr. Ansari and singing of the flag-song by the volunteers of the Hindustani Seva Dal followed by *Vande Mataram*". The report then proceeds :[1]

Principal Gidwani had every reason to anticipate my support for an institution for which he was able to claim so much. The reader

[1] The excerpt is not reproduced here.

may not know that Principal Gidwani is going to Karachi to join his new post under its Municipality. Sjt. Jugal Kishore's services have been loaned to the trustees by Acharya Kripalani's Ashram at Banaras. But it is understood that though Sjt. Jugal Kishore will act on behalf of Acharya Gidwani, the latter will continue to be interested in the Mahavidyalaya and guide its destinies in so far as it is possible.

Young India, 8-3-1928

294. NOTES

THE SUPREME ARBITER

In answer to the blind adherence one often sees given to everything written in Sanskrit verse and going under the name of Shastra, Sjt. S. D. Nadkarni sends me the following verses taken from sources universally regarded as authoritative and supporting the final authority of reason :

अपि पौरुषमादेयं शास्त्रं चेद्युक्तिबोधकम्।
अन्यत्त्वार्षमपि त्याज्यं भाव्यं न्याय्यैकसेविनाम्॥
युक्तियुक्तमुपादेयं वचनं बालकादपि।
अन्यत्तृणामिव त्याज्यमप्युक्तं पद्मजन्मना॥

'A Shastra, though man-made, should be accepted, if it appeals to reason; and the contrary one rejected, though claiming to be inspired. We should be guided by our sense of the just alone. A saying sound in reason should be accepted, though it proceed from a child; and the contrary one rejected as a straw, though it purport to proceed from the God Brahma.'

—From *Yogavasishtha* (*Nyaya-prakaranam*)

समयश्चापि साधूनां प्रमाणं वेदवद् भवेत्।

'A convention adopted by the good shall be as good an authority as the Veda.'

—From the *Madhava-Smriti* (otherwise called the *Madhaviya Vyakhya*)

The verses show that the Shastras were never intended to supplant reason but to supplement it and never could be pleaded in defence of injustice or untruth.

FOR THOSE WHO WOULD SUCCEED

There is so much despondency on the one hand and bluster retarding success on the other, that I gladly reproduce the following maxims handed by a friend and intended to cheer the despondent and warn the blusteres. There is practically nothing impossible for those

who would persevere in the face of the heaviest odds. Nothing is possible for those who would brag, bluster and merely make a brave show. Here are the maxims:

Every noble work is at first impossible. —CARLYLE

Success in most things depends on knowing how long it takes to succeed. —MONTESQUIEU

Victory belongs to most persevering. —NAPOLEON

Perpetual pushing and assurance put a difficulty out of countenance, and make a seeming impossibility give way. —JEREMY COLLIER

Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel.

The nerve that never relaxes, the eye that never blanches, the thought that never wanders, these are the masters of victory. —BURKE

However discordant or troubled you have been during the day, do not go to sleep until you have restored your mental balance, until your faculties are poised and your mind serene. —CARTWRIGHT

Young India, 8-3-1928

295. OBITUARIES[1]

THE LATE LORD SINHA

To the many tributes that have been paid to the memory of this distinguished servant of India I respectfully tender my quota. Lord Sinha's contribution to the making of modern India will always rank high whenever the estimate of such contributions comes to be made. His advice in all matters of State was always sought and esteemed. The country is the poorer for Lord Sinha's death.

A GREAT REFORMER

Death has removed from the public life of Gujarat in Sir Ramanbhai Nilkanth a man of great purity of character, a reformer of equally great zeal and intrepidity, a public worker of singular constancy and a scholar who has made a permanent contribution to Gujarati literature. In common with the numberless Gujaratis I tender my respectful condolences to the bereaved family.

Young India, 8-3-1928

[1] *Vide* also "My Notes", 11-3-1928.

296. BARDOLI AND GOVERNMENT

The illuminating correspondence that has passed between Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel and the Government of Bombay regard- ing the assessment in the Bardoli Taluk affords food for reflection to the public worker and reveals in its true light the nature of the Government under which we are living. Vallabhbhai is not unknown to fame or to the Government. They have been obliged to acknowledge his worth as a public worker of great capacity, integrity and industry. They have acknowledged his great work in the Municipality of Ahmedabad. Only the other day he received unstinted praise for his philanthropic services in connection with the floods in Gujarat.

But his work seems to have counted for nothing when they found him engaged in an activity calculated to cause them embarrassment and possibly loss of prestige and what is the same thing to them loss of land revenue. Their prestige they need for the sake of their revenue. They are no believers in empty prestige.

And so in their very first letter in the matter, they thought it becoming to insult Sjt. Vallabhbhai by calling in question his professions of goodwill and describing him as an outsider in Bardoli. The last letter emphasizes the insult by leaving no doubt that His Excellency the Governor too was party to it. Sjt. Vallabhbhai had courteously assumed in his letter that whilst His Excellency might be identified with a policy enunciated in Government communications, he need not be identified with the manner of expression, more especially the insulting language often adopted by civilian secretaries incensed over any the least resistance or independence betrayed by the public in their correspondence with them. That the Governor has chosen to become a party to the unwarranted insult shows how difficult it is for Governors, however well-intentioned and impartial they may be reputed to be as the present Governor is, to escape the bureaucratic coil. 'Pride goeth before destruction and haughtiness before a fall.'

But Vallabhbhai has a back broad enough to bear the wordy insults that the bureaucracy may choose to heap upon him from its safe and entrenched heights. My reason for dwelling on the insult is to draw attention to the utterly irresponsible nature of the Government that dares to insult a public worker of the foremost rank.

But let us see for the moment what it is that has upset the Government. Land revenue is a close preserve beyond the pale of law such as it is. The regulation of assessment rests entirely with the executive authority. Every attempt hitherto made to bring it under

popular or judicial control has failed The Government must somehow or other meet the ever-growing expenditure, bulk of which is military. Land revenue lends itself to arbitrary increase as it affects the largest class and a class that has no voice, a class that can be squeezed without wincing. There would be an end to irresponsible government if the governed are either allowed to have a say in their taxation or to resist it successfully. Bardoli does not appreciate the increase made in its assessment. Its people approached the Government with petitions and exhausted all the means that are regarded as constitutional to secure redress. Having failed they invited Vallabhbhai to advise them and if necessary to lead them in resisting the Government through satyagraha.

Vallabhbhai investigated their case and though he found it to be just, sought to approach the Government with a view to save them embarrassment and spare the people prolonged suffering and suggested and honourable course, i.e., suggested that if the Government did not admit the justice of the people's case, they should appoint an *impartial* tribunal to investigate the case on either side and assured the Government that the people would abide by the decision of such a tribunal. This reasonable suggestion the Government has scornfully rejected.

The public, therefore, are not called upon to accept the popular version as against that of the Government. They are asked merely to support the demand for the appointment of an *impartial* tribunal and failing such appointment to support their heroic resolve peacefully to resist the assessment and suffer all the consequences of such resistance even including confiscation of their land.

Sjt. Vallabhbhai has rightly distinguished the proposed satyagraha from the swaraj satyagraha. This campaign cannot be properly deemed to be a no-tax campaign launched for the attainment of swaraj as Bardoli would have done in 1922. This satyagraha is limited in scope, has a specific local object. Every man has the right, nay, it is his duty to resist an arbitrary unjust levy as the Bardoli assessment is claimed to be by its ryots. But though the object of the proposed satyagraha is local and specific, it has an all-India application. what is true of Bardoli is true of many parts of India. The struggle has also an indirect bearing on swaraj Whatever awakens people to a sense of their wrongs and whatever gives them strength for disciplined and peaceful resistance and habituates them for corporate suffering brings us nearer swaraj.

Young India, 8-3-1928

297. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 8, 1928

MY DEAR MURIEL,

This will be presented to you by Mr. Rajendra Prasad, one of the best among my co-workers. You will show him all your activities and know all about me and the Ashram from him.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

MISS MURIEL LESTER

From a photostat: G.N. 6566

298. LETTER TO ROMAIN ROLLAND

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 8, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

Mr. Rajendra Prasad is one of the best among my co-workers. He is going to London to fulfill an old engagement.[1] He cannot return to India without paying his respects to you.

Sincerely yours,
M. K. GANDHI

Romain Rollan d and Gandhi : Corres pondence, p. 102

[1] Rajendra Prasad was to go to London to assist in the appeal filed in the Privy Council by the Maharaja of Dumraon; *vide* "Europe-Goers Beware", August 30, 1928.

299. LETTER TO SIR DANIEL M. HAMILTON

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 9, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

Our common friend Rev. Mr. Hodge tells me that you were complaining of absence of acknowledgment from me of the handwoven scarf you have kindly sent me as also your two papers on the banking system. I have a vivid recollection that when I was convalescing in Bangalore last year I sent you a brief note of thanks. Evidently that letter has miscarried.[1] Please therefore regard this as a token of my thanks for your kind gift and for the very interesting papers which you sent me.

Your description of the Scotch banking system was very instructive for me. I have now received a copy of your evidence before the Statutory Commission. I know that I shall read that with interest.

Yours sincerely,

SIR DANIEL M. HAMILTON
THE WARREN HILL
LOUGHTON, ESSEX
ENGLAND

From a microfilm: S.N. 12907

[1] However, *vide* "Letter to J. Z. Hodge", July 13, 1927.

300. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 9, 1928

DEAR SISTER,

I got your loving letter. Doctors will certainly advise me to go for a change of air, but I am sure I have told you what I am greedy about. As I have explained, I wish to take a change and also do my work at the same time, and I have been writing to friends with that end in view. Ordinarily, I would certainly love to be your guest. I shall keep your invitation in mind if I go to Sinhgadh for a change. I am keeping well.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4811. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

301. LETTER TO REVASHANKER JHAVERI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 9, 1928

RESPECTED REVASHANKERBHAI,

I had asked Mahadev to write to you but I am afraid that he forgot to mention one thing in the letter. Mahadev is not here so that I can ask him. I wanted him to write about Dr. Ansari. There is no doubt that Dr. Ansari is a very intelligent man, but he has no special knowledge of this subject. He has a high opinion of a Swiss doctor's remedy, which consists in serum drawn from many horses. That doctor charges £1,000 for one tube, but the serum does not necessarily benefit everyone. Nor do all doctors in Europe accept this man's treatment as scientific. I don't think we need go in for it. We should put Dhiru in the hands of a good doctor and then rest content.

I have now started taking milk. I keep good health.

Respectful greetings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1278

302. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 10, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your two letters. They only confirm the fears that were raised in me on reading the sensational reports about boycott and I feel sorry that Dr. Ray signed the manifesto which he knew was perfectly useless.

I do not like the proposal contained in your article. I think we must not be mixed up with the use of foreign yarn under any circumstances whatsoever. We must leave it to regulate itself or to those who have not a living faith in khadi. If we mix ourselves up with the use of foreign yarn, you will see that we shall have surren-dered our position. I want you to consider this well and confine your assistance and activity to the supply of khadi if they want it. Our own mills may come in if they wish to and if they will develop the national spirit. But even there, our institution will have to be most cautious.

I am glad that Hemprabhadevi, Nikhil and Tarini have gone to Giridih. I received a very despondent letter from Hemprabhadevi. She was herself reported to be unwell. Please let me know all about her condition.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1587

303. LETTER TO IDA S. SCUDDER

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 10, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I am thankful to you for remembering Mrs. Gandhi and me in connection with the opening ceremony of your building. You will be interested to learn that there is no hospital and no institution where there is a ward endowed in my name. If there was, it would be a fraud. For, how can a ward be endowed in my name when I have not one

farthing to pay for it. If I can induce friends to endow wards of beds, the endowment should be in their names. But I can think of none of whom I can speak about endowing a hospital ward. All influence is exhausted in asking them to endow spinning-wheels and institutions for the so-called un-touchables or for a member of the dumb creation, the cow.

Yours sincerely,

MISS IDA S. SCUDDER

VELLORE

From a photostat: S.N. 13093

304. LETTER TO DUNICHAND

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

March 10, 1928

DEAR LALA DUNICHAND,

I have your letter. As a man may not look a gift horse in the mouth, I must accept your terms and waive the interest[1] to which the Ashram is legitimately entitled. Be sure that Sjt. Kothari is not as lenient as I am and, unless you pay your debt to him in time, he is likely to charge a proper bania interest and I shouldn't wonder if he insists upon compound interest.

About Lala Suraj Bhanu, I see that the Managing Board here are disinclined to let him come with his wife. A letter is being posted to him with reasons for their decision. And, if it is true that he desires to go on a cycling tour after a time, the Ashram is hardly the institution where he should recuperate for such a tour. It is designed for those who choose some humble occupation contributing to national uplift and go on with it with dogged pertinacity irrespective of results.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13094

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dunichand", 29-2-1928.

305. LETTER TO BHUPENDRA NARAYAN SEN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 10, 1928

MY DEAR BHUPEN,

I have your letter. I think the best course is for you to refund the loan and then put in an application for a grant and let the grant be considered on its merits. I would personally feel inclined to favour the grant, but I have undertaken not to influence the Council unless it refers matters to me.

I hope you are keeping good health

Yours sincerely,

SJT. BHUPENDRA NARAYAN SEN
E-76 COLLEGE STREET MARKET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13100

306. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 10, 1928

DEAR DR. ROY,

What is this bill[1] and where should I pay it from if I am expected to do so? For I am myself living on public charity. I may not use Ashram funds for a private purpose. It is no [small] indulgence that I give myself the benefit of expert assistance and advice which I cannot place equally easily at the disposal of every inmate of the Ashram. But for me to pay Rs. 46 or anything at all for analysis of my blood or any other constituents of the body would be the last straw. If, therefore, this bill has got to be paid, the payment has to come out of your generous pocket.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN ROY
36 WELLINGTON STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13102

[1] *Vide* the following item.

307. LETTER TO A. S. MANNADI NAYAR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 10, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I have forwarded it to Dr. Roy with a letter[1] copy of which I enclose herewith. You will appreciate the moral difficulty that faces me. Though I have claimed to be the richest person perhaps in the world, you will realize at the same time the depths of my poverty. I quite recognize that between Dr. Roy and myself you should not be made to suffer. But if you cannot get relief from him or from Captain Basu, you will treat this incident as a lesson never to have anything to do with Mahatmas or those who use their names. Mahatmas are the most slippery customers treading on this overburdened earth.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. A. S. MANNADI NAYAR
PROFESSOR OF BIOCHEMISTRY
MADRAS MEDICAL COLLEGE
MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 13101

308. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 10, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have again to acknowledge with thanks a further contribution of 10 dollars for the relief fund. All these amounts have been passed on to the Secretary of the Relief Fund Committee. But I hope that you have adopted some means of conveying to the donors my sincere thanks for their generosity.

About the general situation here, I would warn you against going by newspaper reports. Whilst there is the bitterest resentment

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

over the Commission camouflage, we are not yet organized enough to offer effective non-violent resistance though I have faith enough that that resistance is inevitable and is coming some day not very far [off].

Yours sincerely,

REV. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES
12 PARK AVENUE AND 34TH STREET
NEW YORK CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 15181

309. LETTER TO RAMI GANDHI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 10, 1928

CHI. RAMI,

So this time I did get a letter from you. I hope all of you are keeping well. Chi. Kumi is arriving tomorrow. Tulsidas is going to Bombay. Chi. Devdas has gone to Delhi. I am keeping well. Give up the habit of beating children and getting angry with them. You can take a lot of work from them by amusing them. Food habits should be regular.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9708

310. MY NOTES

THE LATE SIR RAMANBHAI

Sir Ramanbhai has passed away leaving Gujarat in tears. Ramanbhai embodies the history of modernism in Gujarat. Ramanbhai stands for social reform. Ramanbhai was the friend of the poor. He was the warp and woof of the civic life of Ahmedabad. His service to the Gujarati language was of a very high standard. His high moral code never failed to leave an impression on whosoever came into contact with him. Ramanbhai's humour permeates his works. He did not however look upon life as something of a jest. He found the fulfilment of his life in devoting it to the performance of duty. Ramanbhai would indeed help any good cause. In matters of national welfare he always contributed his full share.

He never hesitated or spared himself in anything that he regarded as service. In spite of his serious illness and in spite of severe differences in political matters he recognized the value of Vallabhbhai's service to the municipality and he unfailingly co-operated with him to the utmost whenever occasion arose. There could hardly be a public institution in Ahmedabad which did not wish to have Ramanbhai's name associated with it.

The loss of such a jewel of Gujarat will not be felt by his family members alone; the whole of Gujarat shares this grief of separation.

Nowadays, it has become customary to underestimate the quiet, unostentatious service of persons who do not take part in politics, especially in active politics. In my humble opinion this is a mistake though time will certainly rectify it. He who wipes the tears of even a single widow, who saves a single young girl from the immolation miscalled marriage, who renders selfless service to a single *Antyaja*, serves the country and society in a pure manner, and it is likely that, when the fight put up by a valiant political warrior is forgotten, this other service done in some obscure corner will still keep bearing fruit. That service which is accompanied not by ovations but by God's blessings is indeed true service. Such was the service rendered by Ramanbhai. He received his share of ovations too, but why describe what Ramanbhai never cared for! He was a brave warrior. Who has not seen him stick to his views as well as his own place amidst the whistling and shouting of young men? Let us pray that we inherit his virtues.

LORD SINHA

India has suffered a great loss in the death of Lord Sinha. He was a pillar of India. He had reached the highest office on the strength of his intellect. Although it is true that that office has little value in this age of non-co-operation, the abilities that were required in order to reach it have much value. Lord Sinha did not go out of his way to seek office. It could be said on the contrary that offices came seeking him. However, I do not wish to discuss here the various offices that he held at different times. The reader must have come to know of these from other newspapers. I wish to give a short account of my acquaintance with him.

I saw him for the first time at the Congress in 1915. This was my second experience of the Congress. At this session, I came to know only of his intellectual powers. Everyone appreciated his erudite

speech. His criticism of the Empire carried weight. Everyone on the Congress Working Committee admired the way in which he transacted business.

We cannot all emulate his intellectual powers. There was however one quality of his, of which I came to know at a reception in his honour, which we could all imitate, and that is his humility.

I came to know more of this quality at the time of Deshbandhu Das Memorial Fund. All of us felt that the association of his name with the raising of this Fund would indeed be welcome. Persons belonging to all parties felt that, if his name was associated with it, it would facilitate the raising of the Fund and that this would make people from all parties readily associate themselves with it. I was among those who approached him. He was in indifferent health at that time; but he would meet people whenever necessary. He willingly agreed to the inclusion of his name and also agreed to give all possible help. On these occasions, I became well aware of his humility, his courtesy and his greatness and I felt that India would add to her prestige if all our elder statesmen possessed these qualities. I noticed that he did not crave for respect but was always eager to show respect to others. Those who do not crave for respect deserve it; privileges cling to those who try to shake them off. Lord Sinha happened to be in this happy situation. May all of us inherit that humility and that courtesy.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-3-1928

311. WHO WILL ACCEPT THE ANTYAJAS' HUNDI?

This *hundi*[1] should have been put out earlier. But as the saying goes the affairs of the sick are managed in a sickly manner and its publication was delayed. It is therefore expected that those who are prepared to accept it would send in their contributions, along with the interest, to Bhai Mulchand Parekh. Not all Hindus like to serve the *Antyajas*. Hence I hope that those who regard untouchability as a disease of the Hindu faith will remember that they have a twofold duty to help this cause.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-3-1928

[1] An informal bill of exchange or a cheque. Here Gandhiji uses the word to describe his appeal for funds.

312. LETTER TO JANE HOWARD

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 12, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your long letter. I endorse every word of what you say about Mrs. Gandhi and the wretched incident I have related in the autobiographical chapters.[1] Of course you have not imagined that I am in any way proud of recalling the brutality or that I am today capable of any such brutality. But I thought that if people recognize me as a gentle peace-loving man, they should also know that at one time I could be a positive beast even though at the same time I claimed to be a loving husband. It was not without good cause that a friend once described me as a combination of sacred cow and ferocious tiger.

It would have been a pity if you had burnt your beautiful letter as at one time you thought you should. You have certainly not appeared to me to be rude or ill-mannered but most natural and on that account lovable. I do indeed wish that I had come in closer contact with your dear brother, but I knew him enough to love him and to appreciate his sterling worth.

Yours sincerely,

MISS JANE HOWARD
'ROSEMARY'
50 PANDORA ROAD
MALVERN
JOHANNESBURG
(TRANSVAAL, S. AFRICA)

From a photostat: S.N. 11967

[1] *Vide An Autobiography,* Pt. IV, Ch. X.

313. LETTER TO B. W. TUCKER

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 12, 1928

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I like the manner in which you are combating my views. I discovered the difference between us even in Orissa. For me, there is no difference between the individual and the social position. At the same time there is ample room for the compromise of the nature suggested by you, for the simple reason that I ever compromise my own ideals even in individual conduct not because I wish to but because the compromise was inevitable. And so in social and political matters I have never exacted complete fulfilment of the ideal in which I have believed. But there are always times when one has to say thus far and no further, and, each time the dividing line has to be determined on merits. Generally speaking where the sum total of a movement has been evil, I have held non-co-operation to be the only remedy and where the sum total has been for the good of humanity, I have held co-operation on the basis of compromise to be the most desirable thing. If I seem to be holding myself aloof from some of the political movements just now, it is because I believe their tendency to be not for the promotion of swaraj but rather its retarding. It may be that I have erred in my judgment. If so, it is but human and I have never claimed to be infallible. You will see this point somewhat developed in a recent autobiographical chapter dealing with my participation in the late War.[1] Tell me now if I have answered your question, even if I have not solved the puzzle.

Andrews is here and will be for a few days longer. How nice it would be if you could come and pass a few days of quiet with me so that we could discuss the important problems you have been raising in your letters. This is however not to say that you may not discuss them through correspondence. Please do, so long as it is necessary.

Yours sincerely,

B. W. TUCKER
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13104

[1] *Vide An Autobiography,* Pt. IV, Ch. XXXVIII.

314. LETTER TO J. B. KRIPALANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 12, 1928

MY DEAR PROFESSOR,

With reference to a letter by the Secretary to the Association dated 1st March, I want to say that in spite of all the difficulties in our way we must aim at getting a complete list of the spinners who bring their yarn to the common bazaar. I hold it to be absolutely necessary for the movement itself. If we are to really serve these spinners, we must establish direct contact with them. It may take a little time but our work is incomplete till we know our spinners and know them in their own homes and see how they work, where they get their cotton, how they pass their time otherwise and so on and so forth. If we would consider this to be a necessary part of our work there will be no question of sparing or not sparing workers, just as there will be no question as to the keeping of our accounts or knowing the quality and the quantity of yarn we receive. I have no time to say more to you. I speak to you on other matters through Krishnadas. I hope there is no trouble about the seat of operation now.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13105

315. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 12, 1928

DEAR SISTER,

I have received all your letters.

You must be well be now. Even if you are not I wish you to be healthy. God has ordained that our mind must be "un- troubled by sorrows and long not for joys".[1] It is on such occa- sions that we have to use our learning; that is its true purpose. You should give up thinking constantly of Anil. His body was composed of the five elements, and in them it has merged. The soul is immortal. Then why

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 56

worry? Let us say with Mirabai: "Let what must happen happen." It is Rama's will that is done, in this belief we must rest content. Keep reading carefully in Tulsidas's work on the power and glory of Ramanama. May Ramanama sustain us in life and may we have it on our lips when we die. Let this be your constant prayer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: G.N. 1655

316. LETTER TO TREASURER, AJMAL JAMIA FUND

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

March 13, 1928

THE HON. TREASURER

AJMAL JAMIA FUND

395/97 KALBADEVI ROAD

BOMBAY

DEAR SIR,

RE: Ajmal Jamia Fund

Your letter dated 10th inst.

I am sorry to say that you have not replied to my letter of the 3rd instant. Mr. Zakir Husain, Jamia Millia, Delhi, has under instructions from Seth Jamnalalji been sending to us copies of lists sent to you of donations received by him for the above Fund and deposited by him in the Central Bank of India, Delhi. We have published his first list on 8th March in *Young India*. He has sent us another one for Rs. 1,492-13-0 which we are publishing in the forthcoming issue of *Young India*. We have added to the list the names you have sent to us on 3rd as also on 10th instant. We would request you to compare the lists up to now published in *Young India* with your account books and let us know if there are any discrepancies so that we may correct the same in the next issue. You will please advise us also as to whether we could publish the lists that are being sent by Mr. Zakir Husain from time to time. Or if not, would you kindly [send them so as to] reach us not later than Monday every week?

I wonder how you were able to get Rs. 1,559-0-0 as per the list

sent by you on 3rd March when you have taken Rs. 1,254-0-0, the amount previously acknowledged in *Young India*.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 14911

317. WHAT CAN OUR MILLS DO?

Everybody is anxious that at this critical juncture in our history, we should be able to exhibit some real strength. It is being more and more realized that such strength can be developed and shown only through boycott of foreign cloth as distinguished from British cloth. In this boycott it is possible for our mills to play an important, indeed a decisive, part if they wish.

Some day or other they will have to choose between this alien Government and the people. There is no doubt that to a large extent they are dependent for their existence upon the toleration if not the goodwill of the Government. Thoreau told the truth when he said that possession of riches under an evil government was a sin and poverty was virtue. The riches of the rich are always at the disposal of the government of the day whether it is good or bad.

But if the mills are dependent for their existence on the toleration or goodwill of the Government, they are no less so on the toleration or goodwill of the people. They can afford to ignore the people only so long as the latter remain ignorant, supine or disunited. But the past seven years have not been lived in vain by the nation. The mass awakening that has taken place will never die. No one can tell when and how the people will show their strength.

But the mills occupy a privileged position. By showing a little courage, a little consideration for the true interests of the nation and by exercising a little self-sacrifice they can serve both the Government and the people. They can convert the government and advance the people's cause.

This is now in my humble opinion they can do it:

They can standardize their prices taking the lowest average of a number of top and lean years.

They can come to terms with the leaders organizing boycott as to the qunatity and quality of cloth required for the nation.

They can refrain from manufacturing those varieties that can be easily and immediately produced by khadi organizations, thus freeing

their energy for manufacturing more of the varieties they can at the present moment more easily manufacture than the khadi organizations.

They can limit their profits to a minimum and let the surplus, if any, be devoted to the fulfilment of the boycott or, if that be unnecessary, to the improvement of the condition of the labourers.

This would mean all-round honesty, perseverance, mutual trust, a voluntary and honourable triple alliance between labour, capital and the consumer. It would mean capacity for organization on a vast scale. And if we are to attain boycott of foreign cloth through non-violence, we shall have some day or other to fulfil the tests just enumerated by me.

In my humble opinion we are eminently fitted for the task. The organization required for the purpose is not unfamiliar to us. The only question is, have we the will? Have the mill-owners enough vision, enough love of the country? If they have, they can take the lead.

Let me redeclare my own faith. For boycott to be swiftly brought about a combination between khadi and truly indigenous mills is desirable, but not absolutely necessary. I use the words truly indigenous, because we have bogus mills in India which are Indian only in the sense that they are located in the country but whose shareholders, whose management, whose spirit are mainly, when not wholly, foreign. But if the indigenous mills cannot or will not lead or join national movement, I am convinced that khadi alone can achieve the boycott if the politically-minded India has the will, the faith and the energy required for the purpose. We have not enough horsepower expressed through steam engines, oil engines or electricity, but we have an inexhaustible reservoir of manpower lying idle and pleading to be used, and essentially qualified for the purpose. Oh, for a faith that would see and use this supply of living power!

Young India, 15-3-28

318. HOW TO DO IT?

Notice has already been taken in these pages of the West Khandesh Zilla Mandal of which Sjt. Shankarrao Dev is the founder president and guardian angel. This Mandal has village reconstruction as its principal activity, and has become convinced that spinning must be the centre of every activity connected with reconstruction, if it is to prosper and respond to the deep poverty of the masses. All its work is

as thorough as it can be made. Sjt. S. V. Thakkar has been training himself for some time before settling down in a village for reconstruction service. He has been travelling together with Sjt. Balubhai Mehta in those centres where such activity is going on. The brief report he has presented to the president of his Mandal is worth reading. I therefore reproduce the main part of it for the guidence of those who do this work:[1]

Young India, 15-3-1928

319. NOTES

A.I.S.A. MEMBERSHIP

The foregoing summaries[2] tell their own tale. There is a drop from the figures of 1927 in all the three classes. The reason is that there has been little or no canvassing for membership because the policy of the Association rightly has been not to incur any expenses over sacrificial spinning. It loses all merit when it requires to be canvassed and stimulated through paid agency. But the membership can be easily doubled if every member were to undertake to find one new member. It is worthy of note that whilst the membership has decreased, there has been a marked increase in the production and sale of khadi as well as in the number of spinners who spin for hire.

For the information of juveniles, I reproduce below the resolution of the Council of the Association. National schools can do a great deal for increasing the number of juvenile members:

> Resolved that a B class of juvenile members of the Association be created, consisting of persons below 18 years of age who habitually wear khadi and contribute to the Association an annual subscription of 2,000 yards of self-spun yarn well-twisted and uniform.

INSTRUCTIVE FIGURES

I have been always repeating at public meetings that 50,000 spinners were being served by the All-India Spinners' Association in 1,500 villages. This statement was based on the figures compiled by the All-India Spinners' Association on the basis of yarn production and was made in 1927. Since then more than a year has passed. An attempt was made to arrive at the total number from direct evidence,

[1] The report is not reproduced here.

[2] Not reproduced here

i.e., by taking a census of spinners and incidentally of weavers and carders supported by the All-India Spinners' Association. The table[1] appended to this note gives those figures. It will be seen that all the provinces have not made their returns to have all the organizations in the provinces that have sent their figures been able to comply with the requirements of the All-India Spinners' Association. The figures given below are therefore in every way an underestimate and yet they are a decided advance upon 50,000 spinners and 1,500 villages. But this is merely a foretaste of the possibilities of a movement which awaits the tangible support of an enlightened public opinion. There is an illimitable scope for production of khadi if demand can only be guaranteed.

Young India, 15-3-1928

320. STILL AT IT

The autobiographical chapter dealing with my participation in the late War continues to puzzle friends and critics. Here is one more letter:[2]

No doubt it was a mixed motive that prompted me to participate in the War. Two things I can recall. Though as an indi- vidual I was opposed to war, I had no status for offering effec- tive non-violent resistance. Non-violent resistance can only follow some real disinterested service, some heart-expression of love. For instance, I would have no status to resist a savage offering animal sacrifice until he could recognize in me his friend through some loving act of mine or other means. I do not sit in judgment upon the world for its many misdeeds. Being imperfect myself and needing toleration and charity, I tolerate the world's imperfections till I find or create an opportunity for fruitful expostulation. I felt that if by sufficient service I could attain the power and the confidence to resist the Empire's wars and its warlike preparations, it would be a good thing for me who was seeking to enforce non-violence in my own life to test the extent to which it was possible among the masses.

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] Not reproduced here. Referring to Chapters XXXVIII and XXXIX of Part IV of the Autobiography the correspondent had asked: "What impelled you to participate in the War? Was it right to join the War with the hope of gaining something? I do not know how to reconcile this with the teaching of the *Gita* which says that we should never act with a view to the fruits of action."

The other motive was to qualify for swaraj through the good offices of the statesmen of the Empire. I could not thus qualify myself except through serving the Empire in its life-and-death struggle. It must be understood that I am writing of my mentality in 1914 when I was a believer in the Empire and its willing ability to help India in her battle for freedom. Had I been the non-violent rebel that I am today, I should certainly not have helped but through every effort open to non-violence I should have attempted to defeat its purpose.

My opposition to and disbelief in war was as strong then as it is today. But we have to recognize that there are many things in the world which we do although we may be against doing them. I am as much opposed to taking the life of the lowest creature alive as I am to war. But I continually take such life hoping some day to attain the ability to do without this fratricide. To entitle me in spite of it to be called a votary of non-violence, my attempt must be honest, strenuous and unceasing. The conception of *moksha,* absolution from the need to have an embodied existence, is based upon the necessity of perfected men and women being completely non-violent. Possession of a body like every other possession necessitates some violence, be it ever so little. The fact is that the path of duty is not always easy to discern amidst claims seeming to conflict one with the other.

Lastly, the verse referred to from the *Gita* has a double meaning. One is that there should be no selfish purpose behind our actions. That of gaining swaraj is not a selfish purpose. Secon-dly, to be detached from fruits of actions is not to be ignorant of them, or to disregard or disown them. To be detached is never to abandon action because the contemplated result may not follow. On the contrary, it is proof of immovable faith in the certainty of the contemplated result following in due course.

Young India, 15-3-1928

321. LETTER TO NILRATAN SIRCAR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 16, 1928

DEAR SRI NILRATAN SIRCAR,

I have established in connection with the Ashram a little tannery where I am not making use of power-driven machinery. The idea is to have a model tannery to serve the village population. Can you or anyone in your big undertaking help me with literature on tanning to be of use for the little enterprise commenced at the Ashram and give me any hints for my guidance?

May I ask you to share this letter with Mr. Das of the Research Tannery if you have not proposed it yourself and procure for me similar assistance from him?

We are all at the Ashram without any knowledge of conducting tanneries, and what I want to do is to learn from the beginning, i.e., how to skin dead cattle and treat hide from the very commencement as it comes out of the carcass.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 11394

322. LETTER TO MADHUSUDAN DAS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 16, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

After a great deal of thought and bother I have established at the Ashram a little bit of a tannery without any power-driven machi- nery and without skilled assistance save that of a man who has received a rough-and-tumble experience of tanning in America and who is a crank like myself. Though I did not succeed in sharing your troubles and taking the load off your shoulders in connection with your own great national enterprise, your inspi-ration is partly responsible for the establishment of this little tannery at the Ashram. Can you please help me with a list of literature on the subject, a handbook on tanning and the like? If you think that there is nothing like it in English, will you

out of your own wide and varied experience write out something that may be of use for propaganda, just a few hints? What is happening at the Tannery? Who is in charge? I may add that my idea is to make the Ashram Tannery a model for villages so that the villagers may be able to treat their own dead cattle and make use of the hide themselves. I have asked many people without success as to how I can skin dead cattle. Everybody knowing anything of tanning has something to say about hides after they are received from the village tanner; but nobody has yet told me if I take charge of a dead animal I can skin the carcass economically and hygienically and make use of other contents such as bones, intestine, etc., for purposes of manure.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. MADHUSUDAN DAS
MISSON ROAD
CUTTACK

From a photostat: S.N. 11395

323. LETTER TO A. T. GIDWANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 16, 1928

MY DEAR GIDWANI,

I see you are already in harness. Brij Krishna, who was here when I received your letter, has promised to send you name and address of a good man after he reaches Delhi. He went today and expects to be in Delhi in two days' time.

You must get Gangabehn now to write to me. I hope you will all keep much better health than you did at Brindaban.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. A. T. GIDWANI
6 QUEENS ROAD
KARACHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13107

324. LETTER TO V. S. BHASKARAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 16, 1928

MY DEAR BHASKARAN,

I have your letter. I am glad the matter is now settled and that you are not to suffer any appreciable pecuniary loss.

I hope you will get a satisfactory letter from Rajaji.

What are you doing now?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13108

325. LETTER TO SHANKER

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 16, 1928

MY DEAR SHANKER,

I have your letter. I have, so far as letters are concerned, neglected you entirely; but you have never been out of my mind especially because I am myself taking an active part in the conduct of the kitchen and I give early in the morning about an hour shredding vegetables which is my contribution to the joint work. Giriraj was feeling weak and overworked. He has therefore gone to the model village which is being constructed these days and Pyarelal has taken his charge for the time being.

I am keeping well. I am sorry to say that I was obliged to revert to the milk diet though there is hope of my being able to return to fruits and nuts.

The massage that you saw me take is still being taken. The Swedish lady's massage is in addition. It is a very simple thing.

Tell Mathuradas that I get no time to write.

From a photostat: S.N. 13109

326. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU

SABARMATI,
March 17, 1928

PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
DELHI

THANKS WIRE. PLEASE MAKE CLEAR THAT IF I GO EUROPE I GO NOT FOR HEALTH BUT RESPONSE INVITATIONS AND PRINCIPALLY MEET ROLLAND. LIKELY RECEIVE MORE INVITATIONS WHICH I MAY ACCEPT. THERE SHOULD BE NO RESTRICTIONS AS TO PLACE OR OTHERWISE. THERE ARE LIKELY TO BE THREE COMPANIONS .

GANDHI

From the original: Motilal Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

327. LETTER TO VIOLET

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 17, 1928

MY DEAR VIOLET,

I have your long and interesting letter. I honour your opinion but I cannot agree with you. It surprises me however to find that you do not see any distinction between a private person committing a private wrong and a public person or a corporation committing a public wrong. How can people gag individual conduct in the manner you suggest? That is a matter of social reform and therefore of individuals living correct lives and [not] letting them, i.e., lives, afflict and inflict their surroundings.

Yours sincerely,

[SHRIMATI VIOLET
C/O] MRS. LILY MUTHUKRISHNA
445 HAMDEN LANE
WELLAWATTE
COLOMBO
CEYLON

From a photostat: S.N. 13110

328. LETTER TO N. D. BHOSLE[1]

SABARMATI,
March 17, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have now heard from Mr. Jayakar and I see from it that Sir Purushottamdas is no longer the president. This, however, is the opinion he forwards to me :

> He is however of opinion that the scheme is a useful one. He suggests one caution to you that any help that you may be inclined to give, if it is to take the form of a collection of funds, should be conditioned that its control in the way of investment or disbursement should be in the hands of a few men of your own choice whose veracity and judgment could be implicitly trusted. He assures that the scheme has a strong potentiality of being useful to the community, and deserves your support. The funds at present in the hands of the office-bearers are only a few hundred rupees, and unless they are supplemented it well be difficult for the institution to commence its work.

It therefore resolves itself into what I have suggested all along the line that there should be a proper trust-deed. I can now only suggest that you should see Seth Jamnalalji when he comes to Bombay which he will do in two or three days. I am giving him all the papers and if he is satisfied about the trust, I shall be in a position to do something.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Jayakar Private Papers, Correspondence File No. 422. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] This was written in connection with the addressee's plan for a hostel for the depressed-class students at Bombay. Later a copy of this letter was sent as an enclosure to "Letter to Baban Gokhalay', 22-12-1928

329. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[*March 17, 1928*][1]

NEWSPAPER REPORTS ABSOLUTELY INCORRECT. I AM QUITE WELL.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 91

330. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[*March 17, 1928*][2]

I got your wire just now. This time the newspaper reporters have perpetrated a crime. They should be prosecuted for that. But what can we do, since we are non-co-operators? I am quite all right.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 91

331. THE WEAPON OF BOYCOTT

It has been reported that the satyagrahis of Bardoli are getting ready to use the weapon of boycott against those who agree to pay the revenue to the Government. This weapon is a powerful one and the satyagrahi can use it only within limits. Boycott can be violent as well as non-violent. It is only the latter kind that a satyagrahi may use. At the moment I will only give examples of the two forms of boycott.

Non-violent boycott may mean not accepting any service. Refusal to serve may involve violence.

Non-violent boycott may include a refusal to dine at the house of the person boycotted, refusal to attend marriages and such other functions at his place, doing no business with him and, taking no help from him.

On the other hand, refusing to nurse the boycotted person if he is sick, Lot allowing doctors to visit him, refusing to help in performing the last rites if he happens to die, refusing to allow him to make use of wells, temples, etc., all this is violent boycott. Deeper

[1] From the source
[2] *ibid*

reflection will reveal that non-violent boycott can be continued for a long period and no external force can prove effectual in terminating it, whereas violent boycott cannot continue for long and external force can be used in a large measure to put an end to it. Ultimately violent boycott only does disservice to a movement. Many such instances can be quoted form the era of non-co-operation. However, on this occasion, the distinction that I have pointed out should be enough for the satyagrahis and the workers of Bardoli.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-3-1928

332. TELEGRAM TO N. R. MALKANI

SABARMATI,
March 19, 1928

MALKANI FLOOD RELIEF COMMITTEE

HYDERABAD SIND

YOU SHOULD RESIGN.[1]

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 883

333. LETTER TO JAL KHAMBHATTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 19, 1928

CHI. JAL,

I am sorry to hear that you are not well. Have faith that not a leaf falls without God's will, and so, trusting to Him, meditate on Him and have patience. If it is His will, you will be all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5013. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

[1] *Vide* "Letter to N. R. Malkani", 20-3-1928.

334. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

March 19, 1928

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I got your letter only today. You certainly have my blessings for your son. I see no reason why you should feel nervous and run to Europe. We must have trust in God. If some good doctor there is prepared to take the risk, I see no harm in getting the operation performed locally. Have you consulted junior Deshmukh? Tell Chi. Jal to be brave. Write to me again and let me know the developments. How is your health now?

If no doctor there is prepared to take the risk and if you do not feel at peace, certainly go to Europe. Do not treat my letter as a prohibitory order. I only wish to explain to you that we must do nothing in haste and, realizing that this body is perishable, should not be excessively attached to it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5012. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

335. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

March 19, 1928

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

Of course you come whenever you can and stay as long as you will.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 9607

336. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 19, 1928

MY DEAR C. R.,

I have your letter. You are out of court about your dietetics for your hopeless protest, namely, your spinning yarns about almonds and poor groundnuts, the food of the Himalayan race. Take notice that the experiment is only suspended to enable me to return to it, unhampered by the weight of so-called medical opinion. I lived on raw groundnuts for at least 6 years without coming to grief of the sort referred to by you. But of this later.

What about Europe? My anxiety is to meet Rolland. He appears to be the wisest man of Europe. He takes an unusual interest in me and feels grieved if he thinks that in any single thing my opinion is wrong. It seems to me that it would be a tragedy if we do not meet. This is the cause that moves me above all else. The rest is thrown in.

I do not know what Andrews has written to you. But your opinion will have with me as much weight as Andrews's. Therefore say without fear what you will have me do.

Many are grieved that I did not die on the 17th. . . . Perhaps I am one among them. Perhaps I did die a kind of death. We shall see.

From a photostat: S.N. 13111

337. LETTER TO M. R. MADHAVA WARRIER

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 20, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is difficult to guide you from this distance. But I suggest your going as slow as possible but steadily. If you will launch out on an ambitious scheme, you will find that it would prove to be embarrassing in the long run.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. R. MADHAVA WARRIER, B.A., LL.B.
PRESIDENT, MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
QUILON
TRAVANCORE

From a photostat: S.N. 13115

338. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 20, 1928

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. You must have had my telegram.[1] I couldn't possibly reconcile myself to the idea of your remaining in the College simply for the sake of being able to draw upon it for your maintenance. I see no harm in Flood Relief Fund supporting you. I am in correspondence with Thakkar Bapa about it and if it can be done without in any shape or form compromising your present position, it should be done. Whether you receive the money through me or the Flood Relief Committee, it would be from a public fund. We must get rid of there being shame in honorary services being paid in the sense in which we use the word 'honorary'. The labourer is worthy of his hire, and, all service is honorary when the servant takes no more than his hire. That your hire has to be above the normal inother parts of India is unfortunate but inevitable. If your honorarium can

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to N. R. Malkani", 19-3-1928.

not be decently drawn from the Flood Fund, I shall hold myself responsible for it. But I want you to tell me how much you will require.

Thakkar Bapa tells me that he is going to send you a good worker from the Bhil Ashram and that he had left one with you already. But if you have anybody particularly in mind, please do not hesitate to name him and I shall see whether he can be spared.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 884

339. LETTER TO SURESH CHANDRA BANERJI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

March 20, 1928

MY DEAR SURESH BABU,

I have seen the letter from the Secretary regarding the number of spinners served by you. Do you not see that it is as essential for you to reach your spinners as it is for you to keep your books in a thoroughly good order? If you do not take this precaution, you will find that the organization will one day collapse like a house of cards. It does not matter whose yarn in the particular week day you have received but it does matter that you send some reliable person to the people who are actually spinning and find out their condition and talk to them. Surely, it is neither an impossible task nor a very elaborate one. When the spinners who come to the middle men to sell their yarn return home you have simply to follow them to their homes and, if they avoid you once, they won't avoid you always. They will give you their confidence immediately they cease to distrust you. You must have some middle men at least who are fairly honest and who will not mind taking your messenger to the very homes from which they receive their yarn. And if this very simple thing is beyond your capacity, you are manifestly at the mercy of the middle men to whom it is open any day to stop their custom or to impose conditions which will be either impossible of acceptance or hurtful to your self-respect. I wish therefore that you will realize the importance of the suggestion which Mr. Banker has been making from time to time at my instance.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13113

340. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 20, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

I have received your two letters. I write just now only to fulfil the promise to send you a message for the friend you mentioned.[1] He has now written directly to me, but as I promised the message to you, here it is.

I hope you are following my articles on boycott and mills. I am having conferences with the mill-owners also. Whether they will come to anything I do not know. But if anything appears to you wrong or weak you will please let me know.

How is Kamala doing? Where are you going to keep her during the hot season?

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13116

341. MESSAGE TO MARCELLE CAPY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 20, 1928

There can be no living harmony between races and nations unless the main cause is removed, namely, exploitation of the weak by the strong. We must revise the interpretation of the so-called doctrine of "the survival of the fittest".

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13117

[1] *Vide* the following item.

342. LETTER TO MARCELLE CAPY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 20, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Before I got it, I had received your message through our common friend Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. As I was under promise to him before I received your letter, I have sent my message[1] through him.

Yours sincerely,

MARCELLE CAPY
78 RUE DE L'ASSOMPTION
PARIS (FRANCE)

From a photostat: S.N. 14264

343. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 20, 1928

DEAR DR. ROY,

I have your letter for which I thank you.

The news in the Press about Dr. Ansari's visit was wholly libellous. It upset so many friends and I had to answer cables even from Johannesburg and Siam. You have now I suppose seen the correction that Dr. Ansari's visit had nothing to do with my health. If it had, you as one of the keepers of my body would also have certainly known something about it directly from the Ashram. Dr. Ansari came with Jamnalalji and Dr. Zakir Husain purely in connection with the National Muslim University and as he came he brought the instrument of torture and was bound to examine me. Upon examination he found me in a satisfactory condition, systolic registering 149 and diastolic 92 in the morning and in the evening s. 152 and d. 98.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN C. ROY
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13120

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

344. LETTER TO ZAKIR HUSAIN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 20, 1928

MY DEAR ZAKIR,

I have your letter and copy of Lord Irwin's letter.[1] Lord Irwin's letter makes it doubly useful to send the letter principally in accordance with the draft[2] made by me. Of course it will require necessary changes. I hope you will send me copy of the letter that Dr. Ansari may finally write.

I do not know whether Devdas has drawn your attention to the fact that the sanitary condition of the quarters requires careful attention. I would like you to ask Devdas to point out the defects he might have noticed.

I hope you will lose no time in issuing invitations[3] and following up the programme we jointly discussed and settled when you were at the Ashram.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13119

[1] With his letter, dated March 17, 1928, Zakir Husain had sent to Gandhiji a copy of the then Viceroy Lord Irwin's letter, dated March 16, 1928, addressed to Dr. Ansari which *inter alia* read: ". . . I would willingly subscribe to it on the general grounds that the late Hakim Ajmal Khan had devoted his life to the relief of the sick and that a memorial of the kind proposed seemed to me well fitted to perpetuate his memory. I have now learnt from Hakim Ajmal Khan ['s son] that an appeal is afoot and I am therefore associating myself with it. . . ."

[2] This is not available.

[3] Zakir Husain had written in his letter: "I hope to issue the invitation to members of Jamia Foundation Committee as soon as Dr. Ansari is back" (S.N. 14913).

345. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 20, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

It is a sad thing this boycott movement. I want you to read carefully my article on mills and boycott[1]. I am keeping myself in touch with mill-owners also. If you detect a flaw in my argument, you will not hestitate to draw my attention to it.

The telegram about my health was wholly libellous this time because it was absolutely without any foundation. So far as I know, I have never been in better health. Dr. Ansari and Jamnalalji came to discuss the Ajmal Khan Memorial in connection with the National Muslim University and nothing else.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13121

346. LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI

ASHRAM,
Tuesday [*March 20, 1928*][2]

CHI. RADHIKA,

I got your beautiful postcards. Remember all that I have told you. Take great care of your health, and love everyone. Rukhi is improving, but there is bleeding whenever she tries to walk. The doctor has examined her. You need not worry about anything on the side. Tell Durga also to write, and see that she does.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8668. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhari

[1] *Vide* "What Can Our Mills Do?", 15-3-1928.
[2] From the postmark

347. INTERVIEW TO ALICE SCHALEK

March 20, 1928

Mahatma Gandhi received Miss Alice Schalek on the 20th of March in the Ashram at 4 o'clock. When she entered, he said :

Please excuse me for my remaining on my seat, I cannot stand up.

MISS S.: May I ask some questions?

GANDHIJI: Of course, please do.

Q. Does your influence grow of decline?

A. A question difficult to answer, but I fancy it is growing, so far as the masses are concerned.

Q. Is it true that in your meaning the British have done no good to India? And you even regard the railways harmful?

A. Partly true. The total effect of the British rule in India has been nothing but evil. The railways have done more harm than good.

Q. Have they not been useful in famines?

A. They may serve a temporary useful purpose. But they have generally served to carry away from the villager what he needs for himself.

Q. But he gets money for it?

A. But he cannot eat the money. If you were in the desert of Sahara and you had only as much water as you needed for keeping you alive, would you sell it for any amount of gold?

Q. But are not they selling only what is superfluous?

A. They sell their birthright when they sell their raw produce. They do so because they know no better. If you have my welfare at heart, would you advise me to sell raw hide and get from you manufactured shoes, or to sell my cotton and purchase manufactured cloth? I am asking my countrymen to store their cotton and spin it into yarn and make their own cloth.

Q. They say that where there are railways there is no starvation. In case of famine, they take food-quickly from a place where it is in abundance to a place where it is needed.

A. Those who laid out the railways did not think of the welfare

of the people. They thought of the interest of the distant shareholders or principals. The advantage, in case of a famine, is small when we think of the counterbalancing disadvantages. It is like a robber robbing me of my all and then offering me back a trifle.

Q. Would India have been better if railways had not been here?

A. I have no doubt, other conditions being satisfied.

Q. How can the railways be made useful?

A. The policy should be so conceived as to be consistent with the real interests of the people, that is to say, they should enable people to remain self-supporting as they were before the railways came. Today they are being pauperized both in mind and body. They knew how to make the best use of their raw material. They used to turn their cotton into cloth, their hide into shoes, their corn into bread. Today the process is being reversed. I cannot consider anything more [harmful] than that millions should have to export their raw material which they can manufacture at home, and import finished products. The railways can usefully serve to transmit the finished products manufactured by the villagers from one part of the country to another.

Q. There should be a large movement to teach the people to do all these things?

A. There was ample interprovincial trade before.

Q. Is not the foreign method cheaper?

A. No. Even if it was, our own product would be cheaper at a higher cost. For instance when we in the Ashram first began to grow our vegetables they cost us more than the market vegetables. But now we grow them better and cheaper than elsewhere and our own inmates get work also.

Q. May I speak frankly? I was told in Bengal that khaddar is more expensive and coarser than British cloth and that women who pledge themselves to wear khaddar have their underwear made of foreign cloth.

A. If khaddar is coarser, patriotism demands that measure of sacrifice. There is no doubt that we have made a considerable advance on what we used to produce some years ago and we have been able to effect considerable reduction in prices. As for the ladies you were told about, I can only say that it was not proper for them to use any foreign cloth if they were pledged to wear khadi.

Q. What are your aims and ideals?

A. I want perfect freedom for my country through non-violent and truthful means.

Q. Do you think you can reach so far through non-violence?

A. My own conviction is that we shall obtain it only through non-violence and not otherwise. I think it more possible of attainment through non-violent than through violent means.

Q. What do you mean by freedom?

A. I want the freedom to make mistakes, and freedom to unmake them, and freedom to grow to my full height and freedom to stumble also. I do not want crutches.

Q. Don't you think the British have been very helpful to India?

A. They have been most harmful in every essential particular. By "they" I mean the British Government.

Q. And why?

A. Because they have sapped the economic, mental and moral growth of the people.

Q. Don't you think they have helped in India's economic growth?

A. According to the reports of Government officials themselves, India is poorer today than it was fifty years ago. A few individuals may have become rich, but generally poverty is deepening. There has been a little transfer of wealth, but no general prosperity of the country.

Q. Government say there were never before so many purchasers.

A. It is wrong if they mean that people could not buy then and that they can buy now. It is true in the sense that whereas people did not buy many things in those days, they do so today, and there are more goods to buy.

Q. But what is the sense of boycotting British goods? England does not give preference to her own goods. There is free competition for all the nations of the world.

A. No. It is wrong. It only appears as though there was free competition. England does give preference to her goods in a variety of insidious ways. There is apparent freedom, but no true freedom. But even if the British were impartial in favouring foreigners, I would have my quarrel with them. I want preference for Indian interests.

Q. How?

A. By prohibiting import of all foreign cloth and by levying a heavy tax on all imports that can be manufactured in the country.

Q. Buy your cost of manufacture will be much higher.

A. High and low prices are no necessary indication of the prosperity or depression of a country. It is infinitely better that I grow my vegetable even if the cost is a trifle higher than that I should depend for them on someone else. Then I shall try to reduce the cost by judicious and skilful management. The gain in skill, comfort and the knowledge that we grow our vegetables is much greater than the little gain we might have in getting vegetables cheap in Ahmedabad. Even in the matter [of] producing cloth we could do it in no time and quite cheap if we were left to our own resources.

Q. There is no country in the world which is free from foreign competition.

A. Pardon me. Germany was one. Germany erected a prohibitive tariff wall on all foreign sugar and then successfully produced its best sugar. Every nation protects its infant industry by bounties and tariffs.

Q. Do you mean to say that all foreign imports must be stopped and that India must use only indigenous goods?

A. We may have from foreign countries all the things we cannot produce, e.g., we may have iodine from Britain or Germany, we may have pearls from Arabia, diamonds from Johannesburg, lever watches from England and good readable books from England, America and all countries in the world. Indeed I should have need[les] and pins—dangerous weapons both!—from foreign coun-tries, and quite a number of other things I can mention. And we may profitably export to other countries whatever they need, but we should never impose anything on anybody. For instance I may grow opium, but would not think of imposing it on China or America.

Q. But if you make your own things, would you not have to face the labour question?

A. Why? If it arises, it will solve itself.

Q. Would you do it all on capitalistic basis or communistic basis?

A. On a nationalistic basis, in the interests of the people.

Q. But who will finance the industries?

A. We. Our finance consists in our own men and women, and

we have got them in their millions.

Q. Should your industry be run by the State or by the country?

A. It does not matter how it is run, provided it is run in the interests of the millions, not of a class. That principle assured, I should not mind who nominally runs it.

From a photostat: S.N. 14284

348. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD,
March 20, 1928

Interviewed regarding the report from Delhi stating that he had practically accepted the invitation to attend the Youth's Conference at Vienna and that he would shortly leave for Europe, Mahatma Gandhi said that the statement was altogether premature. He added that nothing had as yet been fixed and he was not clear in his own mind whether he should go.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-3-1928

349. LETTER TO FRANZ RONO[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 21, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I can only say to the youth that they should turn their tremendous energy of youth through spending it in sacred service but not dissipate it through speeches and writings and the like which are becoming so much the fashion nowadays.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 1426

[1] Secretary of Weltjugendliga, the Austrian division of the World Federation of Youth for Peace. In his letter, dated March 10, 1928, he had requested Gandhiji "to send a few lines of guidance" (S.N. 14225).

350. LETTER TO T. DE MANZIARLY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 21, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

It was a pleasure to receive your letter after such a long time. I am sending you the two books you mention and I am adding a third—Hand-spinning Essay, the *Guide to Health* and *Takli Teacher*.

Now about the 2nd paragraph.[1] I would just like to say that whilst I am a passionate devotee of simplicity in life, I have also discovered that it is worthless unless the echo of simplicity comes from within. The modern organized artificiality of so-called civilized life cannot have any accord with true simplicity of heart. Where the two do not correspond, there is always either gross self-deception or hypocrisy.

Yours sincerely,

T. DE MANZIARLY

From a photostat: S.N. 14267

351. LETTER TO MRS. JOSEPH A. BRAUN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 21, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

It was thoughtful of you and the members of your club to send me through Mrs. Sharman a cheque for Rs. 70. I value the gift for the heart that prompted it. I am utilizing the same for supplying the needs of one who had devoted himself to propagate the message of the spinning-wheel.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. JOSEPH A. BRAUN
RFD 3
BIRMINGHAM
MICHIGAN, U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N. 14268

[1] The addressee in his letter dated December 27, 1927 had written: ". . . You know how I would like to see mankind realizing the necessity of becoming more simple, to have more time and more energy to be spent on truer things. . ."

352. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 21, 1928

CHI. PUNJABHAI,

I have your postcard. Do come on Saturday evening. If I cannot spare time for you in the evening, I will do so on Sunday and will let you return at the time fixed by you. I hope you are now completely all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4009

353. NOTES

CHARKHA A PROVED WANT

Akbarpur in U.P. is a little place where Professor Kripalani's khadi band worked for seven years. For reason into which I need not go, this band had to withdraw from Akbarpur. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru describes the touching scenes that followed the withdrawal and how the centre had somehow to be kept up. The following from his letter to the All-India Spinners' Association will be read with interest:

> I have told you already that the Gandhi Ashram has left Akbarpur. We have taken charge temporarily because we felt that pending your decision we ought to carry on. If we had not taken charge there would have been a break and it would have been more difficult to start afresh. Besides, on sentimental grounds also it was a little difficult to abandon the place. It has been a well-known centre for so many years and a large number of weavers and others are intimately connected with it. To leave it suddenly would have had a bad effect on the whole neighbourhood and upset the economy of a great number of poor households who were dependent on it. Indeed, we were told that some touching incidents were witnessed when the Gandhi Ashram announced that they were closing up. Many old women spinners who used to sell their yarn at a distant centre, finding this centre closed, trudged up many miles to headquarters and wept when they found that their yarn was not to be bought. Many weavers with their wives and families came up to the Akbarpur office and said they would perform satyagraha. For seven years they had been working for the Ashram and now they were being left in the lurch. You will realize how difficult it was

for us to refuse to take charge under these circumstances. But of course, sentimental considerations cannot decide the question. Akbarpur possesses some marked advantages and at the same time a very great disadvantage. As a weaving centre it is famous and even now some of the finest weaving in India is done at Tanda in the neighbourhood. Unhappily this fine weaving—called *jamdani* work—is done with foreign yarn. On the other hand, there is very little spinning done near Akbarpur if the centre is to be worked it will be necessary to bring yarn from elsewhere. The Gandhi Ashram, I believe, used to get their yarn chiefly from across the border in Bihar, also from Muzaffarnagar. For us it will be easier to get it from the Northern Districts of the U.P.—Moradabad, Bijnor, etc. The cost of sending the yarn is not great.

If khadi became as current as ghee or grain, there could never have been a thought of withdrawing from any centre. If we had funds and workers we would have representatives not only in 1,600 villages but in 7,00,000 villages. This is no impracticable ambition, when we remember the fact that there are at least two representatives of the alien Government in each of these villages. If anyone before the British advent had suggested any such thing, he would have been laughed out of court. But reflection should show that the restoration of the wheel in every one of the villages is not half as laughable as the hope of imperial Britain being represented in the republican villages of India would have been in the 17th century. What the women near Akbarpur are reported to have said demonstrates what a felt want the charkha fills or can fill in every village of this ancient land. It is no credit to our patriotism that the able weavers of Akbarpur have to fall back upon foreign yarn for their far-famed *jamdani* which it was their pride nearly half a century ago to weave out of yarn spun by the sacred hands of their own sisters living next door to them. It won't be long before the spinners in our villages are able to spin as fine and as strong yarn as any foreign yarn now infesting our market.

CAN IT BE TRUE?

The president, Arya Samaj, New Delhi, writes:[1]

The Baghat State is situated in the Simla Hills and its ruler is an enlightened Hindu chief. . . . The population of the State is about ten thousand and mainly consists of Rajputs, Kanets and Brahmins. The other tribes are Kolis, Chamars, etc., who are regarded as menials. Although the Kolis chiefly

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

> live on agriculture yet the social disabilities to which they are subject are numerous. . . . Moved by the inhuman treatment which these people suffer at the hands of their Hindu brethren, the Arya Samaj, Simla, brought them into their fold with a view to raise their status in life and invested them with the sacred thread, inasmuch as by occupation they are Vaisyas. . . . This seems to have given umbrage to the caste Hindus who challenged the right of their being invested with the sacred thread. A summary trial consequently held on the 6th January 1928 by the Chief of the State himself and on the subsequent day on the plea of antiquity and customs, the poor kolis who were ten in number were sentenced to undergo six months' imprisonment in addition to a fine of Rs. 200 each. No opportunity was given to these unfortunate persons to defend themselves, nor was permission given to the Pandit of the Arya Samaj who happened to be present on the occasion to explain the point of view of the Arya Samaj in this matter. It is now reported that they are being coerced in the jail to take off their sacred thread.

The information contained in the foregoing seems to me to be unbelievable. The Kolis can in no way be considered to be untouchables or to be of the suppressed or the depressed classes. If they are their own farmers, according to the definition of the different varnas, they are born Vaisyas and have every right to wear the sacred thread. But assuming that they have no right in religion, I was totally unprepared for the news that the wearing of the sacred thread would be considered a crime punishable in law in any State. Equally unthinkable it is that the unfortunate men who thought that they had passed through some desirable or meritorious religious ceremony were denied even the right of defending themselves and producing their witnesses. And, if the statements about the punishment and farcical trial are true, I should not at all wonder if the sacred thread had been forcibly taken off their persons. I would invite the president of the Arya Samaj to send further details, if any, in corroboration of the charges brought by him against the Baghat State and I would invite the State authorities if they wish to send me their version of the incident which I shall gladly publish.

Young India, 22-3-1928

354. FOREIGN CLOTH BOYCOTT—SOME QUESTIONS

A friend intimately connected with mills and desirous of having our mills contributing their full quota to the foreign cloth boycott movement asks :

> 1. On what basis do you want prices standardized? For remember all mills are not alike. Some are bad, some are good; some use more sizing than others, some have more reserve than others; Bombay mills make less profits than upcountry ones. These difference are illustrative of many others that might be stated.

The one general answer that may be given is "where there's a will there's a way". The mills will contribute their quota only when they get rid of inertia, think "furiously", and that too in terms of the nation, not merely the pockets of share-holders, directors or agents. But by way of making my position in this matter clearer I may say that all the mills who will join the boycott movement will have to pool all the differences and arrive at a standard price which would at least mean a large slice off from the present profits of at least some mills. If their patriotism is sound and progressive the flourishing ones will cover the losing ones, avoidable differences will be avoided. In the scheme I have in view the mills need never lose in the aggregate and they must not profit at the expense of the buyer.

> 2. Only some mills will undertake not to manufacture khadi. But what about those that only spin low counts? What is your test of khadi?

This is a matter of *common* honesty and arrangement between khadi organizations and mills. At present I am sorry to have to say that even some good mills are not ashamed to label their cloth 'khadi' simply in order to take an illegitimate advantage of the growing khadi atmosphere in the mofussil. If a workable arrangement is come to, I expect that there will be a line of demarcation for the time being between the cloth to be manufactured by khadi centres and mills. The manufacture of cloth will be controlled as it often is in times of war. What in a war based on violence we do by compulsion, in this war based on non-violence we shall do by choice. Our ability voluntarily, i.e., merely under pressure of public opinion, to arrange boycotts, etc., will be the outward but indispensable test of our non-violence if we have any in us.

> 3. How will profits be regulated? You know as well as I do that prices of cotton fluctuate with irritating irregularity.

This assumes our inability to control the cotton market. Surely if the largest manufacturers of the country combine in the patriotic effort, they will control the cotton market. America rules our cotton prices because we stupidly, thoughtlessly, and selfishly send out our cotton. But boycott means that we shall control the movement of cotton, as we shall control many other things, if we are to achieve complete boycott, as we must if we have developed the true national spirit and have confidence in ourselves and the nation.

4. If you lay much stress upon honesty, perseverance, mutual trust, etc., you are doomed.

As I have no bayonet at my command and would not have it even if I could command it, I must press for the qualities which the friend fears are at a discount. I do not share his fear—what is more I have patience enough to wait for the development of those qualities if they are not available in sufficient measure today. For this nation will never come to her own unless we exhibit them as a nation. I know too that we shall take much longer to discipline ourselves for violence, fraud and the like than we shall for truth and non-violence and all that they imply.

The friend then draws my attention to the following omissions in my previous article :[1]

(a) The mills that join the scheme may not use foreign yarn or foreign artificial silk as many now do.

(b) They may not insure with foreign companies.

(c) They may not import foreign cloth and lable it 'swadeshi'.

I had assumed that (a) and (c) were a foregone conclusion. I should not care to insist on (b) if the insistence would hamper the proposed joint venture. Much as I should like indigenous insurance enterprise, I am convinced that it is the foreign cloth that blocks the way as nothing else does. If we can put this Himalayan obstacle out of the way, we shall easily cope with hillocks.

Young India, 22-3-1928

[1] *Vide* "What Can Our Mills Do?", 15-3-1928.

355. DIFFERENCE STATED

I gladly publish the foregoing.[1] It was made clear at those meetings of International Fellowship[2] that I had meant the principal religions of the world and I had maintained that all were true more or less and that all were necessarily imperfect. Here therefore there is agreement. But Mr. Ireland's letter leaves on the mind the impression that there is a fundamental difference between him and me regarding conversion, no matter by what name it is called. Let me extend the analogy of fragrance, faulty as all analogies are in their very nature. The rose imparts its fragrance not in many ways but only one. Those who have not the sense of smell will miss it. You cannot feel the fragrance through the tongue or the ear or the skin. So may you not receive spirituality except through the spiritual sense. Hence have all religions recognized the necessity of that sense being awakened. It is a second birth. A man with intense spirituality may without speech or a gesture touch the hearts of millions who have never seen him and whom he has never seen. The most eloquent preacher if he has not spirituality in him will fail to touch the hearts of his audience. Therefore I venture to think that most of the effort of modern missions is not only useless but more often than not harmful. At the root of missionary effort is also the assumption that one's own belief is true not only for oneself but for all the world; whereas the truth is that God reaches us[3] through millions of ways not understood by us. In missionary effort therefore there is lack of real humility that instinctively recognizes human limitations and the limitless power of God. I have no feeling that from a spiritual standpoint I am necessarily superior to the so-called savage. And spiritual superiority is a dangerous thing to feel. It is not[4] like many other things which we can perceive, analyse and prove through our senses. If it is there, I cannot be deprived of it by any power on earth, and it will have its effect in its own due time. But if in matters of medicine and other natural sciences, I feel my superiority over others, a thing of which I may be legitimately conscious, and if I have love for my fellow beings, I would naturally share my knowledge with them. But things of the spirit I leave to God and thus keep the bond between fellow beings and myself pure, correct and within limits. But I must not carry this argument any further.

[1] The letter from W. F. Ireland of Cambridge Mission is not reproduced here.

[2] *Vide* "Discussion on Fellowship", Before 15-1-1928.

[3] *Vide* "Two Corrections", 29-3-1928.

[4] *ibid*

My first feeling was not to publish Mr. Ireland's letter but to send a brief reply to him privately. But my regard for him has prompted me to comply with his wish without any ado knowing full well that this is not a matter which admits of any conclusive argument especially from my side and in view of the position herein described by me.

Young India, 22-3-1928

356. FIJI FOR THE FIJIANS[1]

Though what Deenabandhu says is the truth and nothing but the truth, I fear that if the British Imperialist rulers offer the Indian emigrants in any part of the world sufficient inducement, they will succumb and imagine that they are "equal partners", not knowing that they are but "jackals". But the hope lies in Imperialists never offering enough inducement and the native wit of the Indian emigrants seeing through the thin veil of Imperial *maya*.

Young India, 22-3-1928

357. LETTER TO P. K. MATHEW

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 22, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry that I was unable to reply to your letter till now. I would like you to read the back numbers of *Young India* to understand that spinning-wheels are not good for schools. *Taklis* should be introduced in schools. Experience has shown that they give much better results in every way than the spinning-wheel for the reasons stated in the pages of *Young India*[2] and you need no special buildings and no expenditure worth the name.

Yours sincerely,

P. K. MATHEW, ESQ., B.A., B.L.
CHRISTAVA MAHILALAYAM
ALWAYE
(TRAVANCORE)

From a microfilm: S.N. 13124

[1] C. F. Andrews's article bearing this title, is not reproduced here.
[2] *Vide* "Takli on Schools", 11-11-1926.

358. MARRIAGE OF THE OLD AND CHILD-MARRIAGE

A gentleman from Surat writes to say:[1]

His criticism of child-marriages is largely correct. If the writer goes through the articles in the previous issues of *Navajivan*, he will see that they have often severely criticized child-marriages. And I also know that these articles have averted some child-marriages. However, there is still room for a great deal of reform. Society is not as much averse to child-marriage as it is to marriage with old men. In my opinion both these are equally objectionable. Hence, there is no difference of opinion between this correspondent and myself with regard to condemnation of child-marriage. If I had the authority or if my pen had enough power, I would use it to prevent every child-marriage. Parents who marry their children at a tender age become their enemies and are responsible for making them dependent and weak.

However, the correspondent's intention appears to be to uphold marriages of old men while discrediting child-marriages. The advantages of marrying an old man as stated by the correspondent seem to be ludicrous and also to ignore completely the poor girl or if there is any consideration for her it is only for her financial condition. The writer appears to forget that consent of the girls who are married off to old men is never secured; perhaps, in his opinion, it is needless to think of it. The correspondent seems to be wholly oblivious of the fact that marriage is a religious rite and, worse still, he fails to remember that marriage with an old man amounts to a doubly culpable child-marriage, as in all such cases not only is the bride a child but the old man who despite age contemplates marriage can only be deemed a child, or something worse. Although the husband may be living it is a kind of widowhood for the girl. Society is least likely to be harmed if old men who cannot control their passions or who for some other reason wish to marry, do so with old or mature women prepared to enter into such relationship with them.

CONGRATULATIONS

The result of the above-mentioned article has been that a poor girl has been spared as the elderly gentleman who was going to marry her realized his mistake on reading the article and gave up

[1] The letter is not translated here.

the idea of another marriage. I congratulate this gentleman on this welcome result. Let us hope that whenever in the future he is moved by passion he will restrain himself, thinking of the girl's good and of society, and even the country and also remembering God. This case should infuse greater enthusiasm in soical workers. We find from this as well as other instance that have since occurred that social and other injustices can be prevented if timely steps—restrained yet firm—are taken against them.

WILL ANOTHER COW BE SAVED?

Some young girls have been rescued from being sold off to old men. Bearing this in mind a gentleman from Ranpur writes to say :[1]

On the strength of this letter, I do request this Modh Vanik gentleman of Bhavnagar not to go through this marriage. At the age of 55, he should shrink from the thought of marrying a girl young enough to be his grand-daughter.I hope leaders of the Modh community of Bhavnagar will take all steps needed to prevent this marriage. In fact in such cases wherever people in general are alert, not only the leaders of small castes, but the entire public and even the State itself, should act as protectors of the young girls and it is their dharma to rescue girls who are being sold in this manner. Young men are their guardians and if they don the armour of virtue, humility and courage and do their duty they will be able to rescue all the poor young girls and there is no doubt they can.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 25-3-1928

359. LETTER TO RICHARD B. GREGG

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 26, 1928

MY DEAR GOVIND,

I have your chatty letter. I am glad you were able to walk all that distance without any discomfort. I am getting well. I note what you say about the enema. The doctors who guided me in Bangalore insisted upon permanganate, but the solution is very weak. It is just rose colour that is required.

[1] The letter is not translated here.

How is Ganesan getting on with your book ? When is it likely to be ready?

With love to you all,

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13128

360. LETTER TO K. S. ACHARYA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 26, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Simplicity is a matter of herat. But lest we deceive ourselves, the ideal is not to possess anything which the poorest on earth do not.

Yo cannot force you wife to abandon ornaments against her will, but you must seek to conquer her through selfless love devoid of animal passion and through your own daily-increasing self-denial.

Without denying your father and being always ready to serve him, you can live separately from him and bring up an untouchable boy in the manner you suggest.

I am afraid it will not be possible for me to take your sister because she would not know Hindustani. You should give her there all the training that she needs.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. S. ACHARYA
ASSTT. MASTER
GOVT. HIGH SCHOOL
DEVANGERE

From a microfilm: S.N. 13127

361. LETTER TO N. RAMA RAO

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 26, 1928

N. RAMA RAO, ESQ.
SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
SECRETARIAT, BANGALORE

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your letter enclosing a copy of Sjt. Pujari's report on the Badnaval Spinning Centre. This work was noticed in the pages of *Young India*.[1]

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13130

362. LETTER TO H. M. PEREIRA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 26, 1928

MY DEAR PEREIRA

The address is as printed above. There is no code address. Gandhi, Sabarmati, finds me.

Yours sincerely,

H. M. PEREIRA, ESQ.
225 OAK STREET
BELLORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 14271

[1] This was in C. Rajagopalachari's article "A State Khadi Centre", *Young India*, 8-3-1928.

363. LETTER TO DR. P. S. KITCHLEW

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 26, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your warm invitation. But if only for health reasons I must not attend the Conference. It would delight my heart if your prophecy comes true and there is a heart union established between Hindus and Mussalmans and Sikhs of the Punjab. I know that then Hindu-Muslim unity is assured and my faith in the power of that unity is such that I would say swaraj is assured.

Anyway I hope that the Conference will not forget or neglect khadi.

Yours sincerely,

DR. P. S. KITCHLEW
CHAIRMAN
RECEPTION COMMITTEE
THE 13TH PUNJAB PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE
AMRITSAR

From a photostat: S.N. 13129

364. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 26, 1928

I have your letter. Before I decide anything I await Romain Rolland's letter. The argument given in your letter to Mahadev I had anticipated. But this is not a love letter. This is written to send you the enclosed letter from Dr. M. E. Naidoo. Please deal with it yourself and at once. I have told him that you would reply to it.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1
SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
GANDHI ASHRAM
TIRUCHENGODU

From a photostat: S.N. 13131

365. LETTER TO PRATAP S. PUNDIT

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 26, 1928

MY DEAR PRATAP,

I haven't got you to build me a tannery, but all the same I have now got something which passes as a tannery because I have got a crank like myself who knows much about the business to do the work. I would like you when you come to Ahmedabad to look at it. But I would like you to send me some literature on tanning which a layman may understand and do something with, or tell me where I can get it.

Yours sincerely,

PRATAP S. PUNDIT

From a photostat: S.N. 15363

366. LETTER TO M. PIGGOTT

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 27, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You say Rs. 3,000 is so little to me, and they are much to the widow and her boy. You little know that I am poorer than the widow. For I do not possess any property over which I can go to any court of law much less to Privy Council. I have no money of my own. I am a humble trustee holding some funds for well-defined trusts. I may not deviate the funds without exposing myself to the charge of breach of trust. You should approach a monied man.

Yours sincerely,

M. PIGGOTT, ESQ.
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat: S.N. 13132

367. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 27, 1928

DEAR MOTILALJI,

The expected letter being registered was received only today. It is a long letter. He[1] would like me to go to Europe, but he himself is not likely to be in his place before June. I expect a reply to another letter from him. I am in no hurry to go. I would therefore like to await further news from him. Somehow or other I can't put my heart into this proposed visit. My heart is in the boycott. If we cannot negotiate the boycott, I am supremely content to go on with the khadi programme. I would like you to visualize the marvellous effect that the khadi movement has produced. If the mill-owners had been honest, we should have made enormous strides.

I have now got the figures for khadi production by the mills. Here they are for three years.

The figures are for nine months ending December.[2]

	1925	1926	1927
Lb.	22,887,970	27,236,337	33,977,851
Yards	65,048,487	74,313,280	94,380,368

You will observe how rapidly the mills have been progressing towards khadi. 94.3 million yards in one year! It means all that money taken away from the mouths of the paupers. It shows also the potentiality of the khadi movement.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13133

[1] Romain Rolland
[2] *Vide* also "A Mill-owner on Boycott", 5-4-1928.

368. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

Tuesday [*March 27, 1928*][1]

BHAISHRI BHANSALI,

You know that I have discussed the matter with Lilabehn[2]. She is of the same opinion as the others. Despite all the opposition, I find the general opinion is that if you wish to stay on you may do so. But that can only be if you believe that all these well-wishers are in the wrong. It is quite contrary to the rules of the Ashram if you think it wrong to work even as sacrifice. But I do not insist on your accepting my opinion and doing accordingly. Return this letter after reading it, as also the others. If you wish, I will give you a copy of each.

Ponder deeply over all these things, and then, if you wish, we will discuss the matter personally. I do not wish to put any kind of pressure on you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photos tat of the Gujara ti: S.N. 12966

369. SPEECH AT SWEEPERS' MEETING, AHMEDABAD [3]

March 27, 1928

After having listened to these *bhajans* I feel that there is no difference between you and me. At present my health is such that I cannot attend any function and the doctors too have forbidden me to attend meetings. Because I am here today, do not think that I am fit. After a long interval and for the first time since I returned to Ahmedabad, I am attending a meeting and that too because Shri Banker and others insisted that I should give some advice to the Bhangis of the city.

Truly speaking, you are the high-caste Hindus. Your sacrifice is very great. The so-called caste Hindus are more responsible for your blemishes than you are. You come to have these because they forsook you. I wish you would get rid of these vices now. I can clean

[1] From S.N. Register

[2] Addressee's widowed sister-in-law

[3] The meeting was held at 7.30 p.m. at Maganbhaini Vadi. Among those present were Kasturba Gandhi, Vallabhbhai Patel and Anasuyabehn Sarabhai. *Bhajans* were sung at the commencement of the proceedings.

latrines better than you do, but you prevent me from doing it; this is a grave mistake. Why should you prevent others from doing it?

The caste Hindus regard your work as low and of little value but my honest opinion is that it is the best. As long as one cannot do that work well, one cannot be said to have served well. What is the condition of the streets and lanes of Ahmedabad? I say this because I clean everything myself. You should feel that by doing this work, you render the greatest and the most important service to the city. Why do you object if others participate in such service?

If I had my say I would get the lanes and latrines of Ahmedabad cleaned by High School boys and make the city so beautiful that I could proudly invite everyone to visit it. The key to this lies in your hands. Regard this as an act of service and perform it with diligence because the city's health depends mainly on it. If you realize this you can remove many of the difficulties faced by Vallabhbhai[1], and you will receive applause from the citizens and at the same time you will put your betters to shame.

I have no faith in your claim that the evil of drinking has decreased. I think out of every sixteen persons two abstain from drinking and fourteen indulge in it. I do not believe that anyone runs into debt for food; they do so only for indulging in pleasures. You must get rid of all these addictions.

You should teach your children not to eat left-overs. You too should take a vow to the same effect. You should accept only that which can be accepted without humiliation. In this way you will be able to train your children well. It does not matter if you are not educated, but you must learn how to count so that no one can deceive you. You must also cultivate habits of personal cleanliness. From the leaders of society you have only to learn self-purification. For that you must give up all your addictions. If, in spite of the khadi cap that you wear, you have addictions, you will disgrace the cap. I will also get you good help from the Municipality and from the rich men of Ahmedabad when you do something on your own.

[From Gujarati]
Prajabandhu, 1-4-1928

[1] Vallabhbhai Patel was at the time President of Ahmedabad Municipality.

370. LETTER TO T. K. MADHAVAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 28, 1928

MY DEAR MADHAVAN,

I have your letter. You have given me a doleful picture of the state of things there. My advice just now is for you quietly to cultivate public opinion there. From what you write it appears to me that the Government is not unsympathetic but it is timid and too sensitive to orthodox opinion. You should tell me also whether you are ready to offer satyagraha at Suchindram or Thiruvarppu.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. K. MADHAVAN
S. N. D. P. YOGAM
VAIKOM
(TRAVANCORE STATE)

From a microfilm: S.N. 12893-a

371. LETTER TO M. DEWANDAS NARAINDAS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 28, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your two letters. I shall need much more information than you have given in your letter before I can place you name before the Managing Board. You must state your age, whether your parents are alive, what is your future aim. In no case can you be admitted until you have tested yourself in Karachi for at least 6 months

(a) By first spinning for at least one hour daily from slivers carded by yourself;
(b) by learning, if you do not know it, Hindi so as to be able to speak and write correctly;
(c) by wearing khaddar to the exclusion of all other cloth;
(d) by securing the free permission of your parents.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. DEWANDAS NARAINDAS
STU. STD. VII
NEW HIGH SCHOOL
KARACHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 13136

372. LETTER TO RAMI GANDHI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
March 28, 1928

CHI. RAMI,

I have your postcard. You must always write in as beautiful a hand as you have written this time. Next time you write, let me know your daily time-table of work. Write to me how you find the climate there. There is a talk of my going to Europe, but nothing is fixed yet. Even if I go, it will take some time. Do you get any time there to read? Chi. Radha has gone to Bihar as a tutor to a Bihari girl, and Durga has gone with her in order help her.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9709

373. LETTER TO H. N. VENN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 28, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your welcome letter. Mr. Andrews has forgotten to tell me about your intention to see me at the Ashram. I shall be delighted to see you on the 8th April. If it is the same thing to you please make it 4 p.m. instead of 5. But I shall be ready for you at 5 o'clock also.

Yours sincerely,

H. N. VENN, ESQ.
MAIDEN'S HOTEL
DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 11970

374. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 28, 1928

MY DEAR C. R.,

I have your letter about the proposed European visit. I have myself no heart in it, nor have I any confidence in myself about making it successful; but an interview with Rolland still remains an attraction. All the reputation I enjoy in the West is borrowed from him and I feel that if I meet him face to face, there may be disillusionment on many points. It may be that we should come closer than we ever were. I do attach considerable importance to our knowing each other much better than we do.

I quite agree with you that there is nothing to gain from the health point of view. I might possibly suffer, and health is no consideration, whatsoever in the proposed trip. From that point of view any hill station in India would be infinitely superior for me.

I feel also with you that the withdrawal of my presence is likely to unsettle things a bit especially in Bardoli. Foreign cloth boycott can certainly make no headway during my absence. But now that you are all gathering together at Calcutta. I would like you to discuss the proposed visit at the Council meeting. I am most anxious that I should not become exclusive and should be humble enough to arrive at truth no matter from what source it comes.

I am sorry about the defalcations, but I shall accept your warning not to disturb myself or discuss them.

I understand what you say about Ramachandran. I want you to write him a warm letter and go out of your way to draw him towards you. He is kind of 'Chetty' also, for he did wonderfully well in the way of khadi at Jamia.

I must not forget one thing, though, about your reference to the defalcations. If the defaulter gives you Rs. 500 and tenders an apology for publication, you should be entirely satisfied. But this is an unconsidered opinion of a layman.

What do you say to my exploit in conducting an exclusively milk experiment? I do not want to be told you swooned at my saying it is a literally milk-and-water experiment.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13123

375. LETTER TO DR. ARULMANI PICHAMUTHU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 28, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

Your insured little parcel preceded your letter and I was wondering from whom it was. Mahadev guessed it correctly. I congratulate you on the manner of your disposal of the precious jewels. I hope to take notice of the gift in some shape or form without disclosing name in *Young India*.[1]

Yours sincerely,

DR. ARULMANI PICHAMUTHU
PANTHADI NO. 1
MADURA

From a photostat: S. N. 13134

376. LETTER TO SAM HIGGINBOTTOM

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 28, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

When I had the pleasure of being shown over your farm on the banks of the Jumna, I remember having seen a contrivance whereby you heated your water by the sun heat. Will you please tell me whether it was merely the tank put on your building and exposed to the full sun or whether you concentrated by some mechanical contrivance the rays of the sun on to the tank?

Yours sincerely,

SAM HIGGINBOTTOM, ESQ.
AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTE
ALLAHABAD

From a photostat: S.N. 13137

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 5-4-1928, sub-title, "Women and Jewels".

377. 'THE TRIUMPH OF RACE HATRED'[1]

I am sure that the Amsterdam International, if it was placed in the same condition as the White Trades Union of Johannesburg, would not behave otherwise than the latter; nor would it have acted otherwise than Mr. Ramsay MacDonald or Mr. Lansbury if its members had found themselves in their position.

Young India, 29-3-1928

378. THE DOCTRINE OF FRIGHTFULNESS

In answer to a question put by a member of the late Hunter Committee, General Dyer admitted that Jallianwala was designed to create frightfulness. In making the admission the late General enunciated no new doctrine. Indeed "the ablest Civil Service in the world" has laid the foundation of its greatness on frightfulnesses.

In pursuance of this well-known policy, according to the information received at the time of going to press it appears that summary steps are now to be taken against the farmers of Bardoli in order to compel submission. For eight preliminary notices of forfeiture have been served upon certain satyagrahis of Bardoli. The names of these seem to have been carefully chosen, for all of them happen to be banias of note. The choice has been so made presumably because banias who have the reputation of being weak and timid are expected to yield under notices of forfeiture. What can be more natural, officialdom would argue, than that banias weakening, the others must follow suit. Satyagrahis need not be surprised at this first show of frightfulness. They have been repeatedly told to expect forfeitures and worse. Let them now show their strength if they have it in them.

Young India, 29-3-1928

[1] C. F. Andrews's article, on which Gandhiji comments, is not reproduced here. He had written that the International Labour Movement in Europe in its bulletin entitled "The Triumph of Race Hatred" had condemned the South African Trades Union Congress of white workers for its refusal to affiliate the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (I.C.W.U.) of coloured workers which was already affiliated to the Amsterdam International, that is, International Federation of Trades Unions. Andrews had also regretted the action of Ramsay MacDonald and the Labour Parliamentary party in England in acquiescing in the appointment of the Simon Commission on a racial basis.

379. THE NATIONAL WEEK

The national week comes upon us with seasonlike regularity and has found us more or less wanting since after 1922. The 6th April to 13th April should be regarded as days of privilege, introspection, intense national activity and self-purification. These precious seven days should be days of stock-taking and heart-searching. The morning of 6th April 1919 found an India awakened to a sense of her dignity. Hindus, Mussalmans and others composing the nation felt themselves united like blood-brothers as they are in reality, if they would but recognize themselves as sons of the soil.

6th of April 1919 found an India endowed with a true spirit of swadeshi which culminated in khadi and which is now feeding according to the latest figures over 90,000 poor spinners.

The spirit thus awakened continued to advance during 1920 and 1921 and we seemed to be within an ace of statutory swaraj.

But that swaraj did not come and there was a set-back. Apparently since then there has been only an ebb. Hindus and Mussalmans are flying at each other's throats.

Instead of swadeshi we have the cry for boycott of British goods pending settlement as if support of Japanese goods including Japan's cheap calico can ever be a substitute for swadeshi, i.e., khadi, exclusive of all foreign cloth. After much research, reasoning and experience, we seemed in 1920-21 to have come to the conclusion that the only practical, effective and necessary swadeshi was khadi, not pending any settlement but for all time or such time as we could discover a better and more paying occupation for the starving millions. I have seen no new argument in support of boycott of British goods only as distinguished from foreign goods. No new situation has arisen to warrant the belief that boycott of British goods is a practical proposition and that the use of foreign cloth other than British is not almost equally detrimental to the best interest of India.

Would that those who are supporting the cry of boycott of British goods will seriously think over their programme, and, if necessary, revise their plan and join the khadi movement with the whole-hearted conviction that it and it alone can bring about complete boycott, not merely of British cloth but of all foreign cloth.

But whether they do so or not, I am sure they do not make of support to foreign cloth other than British cloth a matter of principle. And if I am right in my supposition, let them support the sales of

khadi during the National Week. If they will but study the progress of the khadi movement during the past seven years that it has been going on, they will discover that the charkha has more potency than they have ever dreamt of. It is potent enough, if it receives the whole-hearted and active support of politically-minded India, to bring about boycott of foreign cloth even without the assistance of our mills. With the active and organized support of the latter, boycott of foreign cloth becomes a much easier proposition. Indeed the mill-owners hold the trump card if only they would play it for the sake of the nation. They have at their disposal a ready-made extensive organization, which, if they devote it to the service of the nation, can simplify the campaign of boycott and arm the nation with the power it so much needs.

And why will not Hindus and Mussalmans recall those precious seven days and shed all fear, mutual distrust and weakness?

Let me not forget the so-called untouchables, the classes that we Hindus have been guilty of suppressing. Shall we not have the vision to see that in suppressing a sixth (or whatever the number) of ourselves, we have depressed ourselves? No man takes another down a pit without descending into it himself and sinning in the bargain. It is not the suppressed that sin. It is the suppressor who has to answer for his crime against those whom he suppresses.

Young India, 29-3-1928

380. NOTES

SPECIAL FOR NATIONAL WEEK

Sjt. Vithaldas. Jerajani (Khadi Bhandar, Princess Street, Bombay) writes :[1]

I do hope that there will be an adequate response to Sjt. Jerajani's legitimate wish and hope. Bombay has always been sensitive to national moods. Bombay laid the foundation of the national khadi movement by opening the first khadi bhandar. The figures given in the letter are instructive. The great drop in 1925 is to be

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had given the figures of sale of khadi during the National Weeks from 1922 to 1927. He had hoped that in view of greater variety, improvement in the quality of khadi and a greater swadeshi spirit there would be greater response in the coming National Week. He had also announced a discount of one anna per rupee on khadi purchased from April 1 to 15. *Vide* also "The National Week", 1-4-1928.

accounted for by the fact there was another large khadi store opened in Kalbadevi Road. Nevertheless the figures for the other years are an eloquent proof of the statement that Bombay is the proper barometer for the politically-minded India. The figures for 1927 show a decided improvement upon 1926. Will Bombay rise to those of 1922? Not that even such a rise will be anything commensurate with what is required for the boycott we want and can have if we would but show the necessary measure of sacrifice and determination.

Another notice I have is from the Shuddha Khadi Bhandar, Richey Road, Ahmedabad. That Bhandar also proposes during the National Week to give discount from one anna to four annas in the rupee according to the variety required.

I hope that all khadi organizations whether owned by the Association or certified will put forth special efforts to bring khadi to the notice of the public and that the public will make a liberal response.

KHADI TOUR IN BENGAL

It is perhaps necessary to emphasize in Bengal that the khadi tour organized by Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta is also the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial tour. Sheth Jamnalalji, Sjt. Rajagopalachari, Sjt. Manilal Kothari and Sjt. Shankerlal Banker are about to tour in Bengal as from the 5th of next month in the interest of khadi, which an all-India committee decided on the death of Deshbandhu should be the centre and the circumference of an all-India memorial for the late Chittaranjan Das, the uncrowned king of Bengal. There is a wave of swadeshi passing over Bengal at present. But I suspect that the true meaning of swadeshi is missed in the forest of words that surround that simple but life-giving word. Let us adhere to its root-meaning and we shall discover nothing but khadi in it. Swadehsi is “of one’s own country”. Among things of the villagers’ daily use, cloth is the only thing that is “not of one’s own country”. That which they can easily make themselves is also cloth. Hence the swadeshi that they can realize and without which they must starve is khadi and nothing else. Hence is khadi the only real swadeshi for every patriot. I hope therefore that Sheth Jamnalalji and his companions will be whole-heartedly assisted by Bengal wherever they go. Every yard of khadi bought and every donation given to the Memorial is so much help to the boycott movement and to the poorest in the land.

BOYCOTT AND STUDENTS

The Principal of a college writes :[1]

> The promoters of the boycott movement are dragging the students into their movement. . . . When the students leave their schools and colleges and join any demonstration, they mingle with the rowdies of the place and have to be responsible for all the outrages of the badmashes and often receive the first blows from the policeman's batons. They, besides, incur the displeasure of the school and college authorities whose punishment they have to submit to; they further disobey their guardians who might refuse to finance them further, which spells their ruin. I can understand youth movements which aim at doing such constructive work as teaching the ignorant peasants, spreading knowledge of sani-tation, etc., during holidays; but to see them turn against their own parents and teachers and walk along streets in questionable company and help the breaking of law and order is a sorry spectacle. May I request you to advise the politicians not to draw the students from their legitimate work to make their demonstration *more effective*? . . .

The correspondent has written in the hope of my condemning the participation by the student world in active political work. But I am sorry to have to disappoint him. He should have known that in 1920-21 I had not an inconsiderable share in drawing students out of their schools and colleges and inducing them to undertake political duty carrying with it the risk of imprisonment. I think it is their clear duty to take leading part in the political movement of their country. They are doing so all the world over. In India where political consciousness has till recently been unfortunately confined in a large measure to the English-educated class, their duty is, indeed, greater. In China and Egypt it was the students who have made the national movement possible. They cannot do less in India.

What the Principal might have urged was the necessity of students observing the rules of non-violence and acquiring control over the rowdies, instead of being controlled by them.

MACAULAY'S DREAMS

A friend sends me the following quotation from Macaulay's *Life and Letters* :[2]

> On the 7th March 1835 Lord William Bentinck decided that "the great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.
[2] *ibid*

literature and science among the natives of India;" two of the orientalists retired from the Committee of Public Instruction; . . . and Macaulay entered upon the functions of President. . . .

"Our English schools, said Lord Macaulay, "are flourishing wonderfully. . . . The effect of this education on the Hindoos is prodigious. No Hindoo who has received an English education ever remains sincerely attached to his religion. . . . It is my firm belief that if our plans of education are followed up, there will not be a single idolator among the respectable classes of Bengal thirty years hence. . . ."

I do not know whether Macaulay's dream that English-educated India would abandon its religious beliefs has been realized. But we know too that he had another dream, namely, to supply through English-educated India clerks and the like for the English rulers. The dream has certainly been realized beyond all expectations.

PEACE AMIDST STRIFE

Before now I have shared with the reader some of the beautiful things that a friend sends me from time to time for my Monday silence. I am tempted to share with him the following further instalment which has been lying with me in my jacket for a long time. All but the last two are extracts from Buddhistic writings. The last but one is from Emerson and the last of all is a Hindu proverb.

Like a beautiful flower full of colour, without scent, the fine words of him who does not act accordingly are fruitless.

A mind unshaken by life's vicissitudes, unstirred by grief or passion, is the greatest of all blessings.

There never was, there never will be, a man who is always praised, or a man who is always blamed.

As a solid rock is not shaken by the wind, so wise men falter not amidst blame or praise.

Let us live happily, then, not hating those who hate us.

Let us live free from hatred among men who hate.

Let us live happily, then, free from ailments among the ailing.

Let us dwell free from afflictions among men who are sick at heart.

Let us live happily, then, free care among the busy.

Let us dwell free from yearning among men who are anxious.

Let us live happily, then, though we call nothing our own.

We shall become like the bright Gods, who feed on happiness.

The greatest prayer is patience.

Never in this world does hatred cease by hatred.

Hatred ceases by love: this is always its nature.

Reverence and lowliness,

Contentment and gratitude,

The hearing of the Lord at due season.

This is the greatest blessing.

As a mother, even at the risk of her own life, protects her son, her only son: so let a man cultivate goodwill without measure among all beings.

Let him cultivate goodwill without measure toward the whole world, above, below, unstinted, unmixed with any feeling of differing or opposing interests. Let a man remain steadfastly in that state of mind all the while he is awake, whether he be standing, walking, sitting or lying down. This state of heart is the best in the world.

By rousing himself, by earnestness, by restraint and control, the wise man may make for himself an island which no flood can overwhelm.

As the bee—injuring not

The flower, its colour, or scent—

Flies away, taking the nectar :

So let the wise man dwell

Upon the truth.

Ye taught my lips a single speech

And a thousand silences.

Even Buddha was once a cart-horse, and carried the loads of others.

Young India, 29-3-1928

381. ON FASTING

The reader is familiar with the letters of a Polish professor from which I have published extracts from time to time in these columns.[1] In one of his letters referring to my fasts he writes :[2]

I publish this as being of use to the reader who is interested in such researches. The physical and moral value of fasting is being more and more recognized day by day. A vast number of diseases can be more surely treated by judicious fasting than by all sorts of nostrums including the dreadful injections—dreadful not because for the pain they cause but because of the injurious by-products which

[1] *Vide* "Truth is One", 21-4-1927 and "Unity in Variety", 11-8-1927.

[2] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had narrated his experiments in fasting and said that it not only increased bodily activity but also spiritual enlightenment.

often result from their use. More mischief than we are aware of is done by the drug treatment. But not many cases of harm done by fasting can be cited. Increased vitality is almost the universal experience of those that have fasted. For real rest body and mind is possible only during fasting. Suspension of daily work is hardly rest without the rest that the over-taxed and overworked digestive apparatus needss in a multitude of cases. The moral effect of fasting,while it is considerable, is not so easily demonstrable.[1] For moral res-ults there has to be perfect co-operation from the mind. And there is dan-ger of self-deception. I know of many instances in which fasting underta-ken for moral results has been overdone. To a limited extent it is a most valuable agent if the person fasting knows what he is doing. There was considerable force in the warning given by the Prophet against his disciples copying his fasting over and above the semi-fasts of Ramzan."My Maker sends me food enough when I fast, not so to you," said the Prophet. Of what use is a spiritual fast when the spirit hankers more after food the longer the body is starved?

Young India, 29-3-1928

382. TWO CORRECTIONS

Two lamentable errors have crept into the footnote to Mr. Ireland's letter printed at page 93 in *Young India*[2] of the 22nd instant. About the middle of the column one reads: "God reaches earth through millions of ways not understood by us." The stenographer heard "earth" when "us" was spoken. The sixth line after this one reads: "It is like many other things which we can perceive", etc. The context would show that "not" is obviously omitted from the sentence. It should read: "It is not like many other things", etc.

Young India, 29-3-1928

[1] The correspondent had written: "Whenever I have a moral or intellectual difficulty, I fast. . . . Once I had a difficulty with a printer who delayed my work in order to print other more profitable things. By fasting I succeeded in changing his mind. . . ."

[2] *Vide* "Difference Stated", 22-3-1928.

383. LETTER TO ROMAIN ROLLAND

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 30, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

Though the translation of your very kind and energetic letter has been with me for three days, I am able to reach it only at the last moment. But I cannot let the post go without sending you a line if only to thank you for your friendly frankness.

The matter you have discussed is of tremendous importance. It is never out of my mind, if only because it is for the vindication of ahimsa that I love to live and should equally love to die. But I see that I have not been able clearly to explain my position. I must not however enter into any argument. If God enables me to meet you this year we shall prayerfully discuss the matter and possibly come to a joint conclusion. Before deciding finally I propose to await your cable or letter as the case may be.[1]

Meanwhile please accept my best thanks for your cordiality and concern for me.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Romain Rollan d and Gandhi : Corres pondence, pp. 105-6

[1] Gandhiji finally decided against the European tour when he had a letter from the addressee in April in which he wrote that he did not regard it as necessary that Gandhiji should drop all his important work and go to Europe to meet him

384. LETTER TO URMILA DEVI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 30, 1928

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. You are never without troubles. But they should be treated as chasteners. Dhiren's case is difficult to advise upon.[1] Idealistically he should disobey every order of externment and internment and submit to any punishment that may be givento him. But that is a matter for himself to judge. Before he can disobey the orders I have in mind, he must have the inner conviction that disobeying is a duty and imprisonment for disobe-yance not a task but a matter of joy. And such joy is possible only when one considers such imprisonments as conducive to individual as well as national growth. But what actually should be done I cannot really confidently say. You know Dhiren better than I do and after all Dhiren will be largely guided by what you would have him to do. You must also consider to what extent you will be able to bear his imprisonment and sufferings, and then come to a conclusion. Of course Dhiren if he submits to the externment order is due to come to the Ashram and stay as long as he likes. There is always work for young men like him.

Nothing is yet fixed about the proposed visit.

Yours sincerely,

SRIMATI URMILA DEVI
4A NAFAR KUNDU ROAD
KHALIGHAT, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13126

[1] The addressee had written: ". . . There is trouble about Dhiren also. The Government propose to extern him from Bengal. I do not think that catastrophe can be avoided. He can of course refuse to sign the order, but in that case he will be liable to prosecution which might result in 3 years rigorous imprisonment. . ." (S.N. 13126).

385. LETTER TO SECRETARY, ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 30, 1928

TO
THE SECRETARY
A. I. S. A.
AHMEDABAD

DEAR SIR,

With reference to your letter No. 2169 dated 28th instant regarding private agencies, it is difficult to give an opinion straightway. I do consider it necessary to acquire greater control over private agencies. Before I can advise, it will be well to obtain concrete suggestions from the Tamilnad Agency.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13139

386. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 30, 1928

MY DEAR SHANTIKUMAR,

You must continue to send me all new additional facts and figures. I enclose herewith the combined balance-sheet sent by you the other day.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13125; also C.W. 4786. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

387. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 30, 1928

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. You must not hesitate to write to me about your wants, and any other matter. I shall try to meet you as far as possible, but you might be called upon to face privations. Bickerings at home too may be a national servant's lot.

Thakkar Bapa saw Sir Purushottamdas about your salary and Sir Purushottamdas considers your receiving salary from the Central Committee as the most natural thing and Rs. 150 as quite reasonable. Now I shall have to ask for Rs. 200. I don't anticipate any difficulty.

I am trying to find out whether Jethalal or Parshatlal can be spared. Kalyanji and Naraharibhai it is impossible to spare. Narahari has his own work chalked out for him and Kalyanji must be buried in Bardoli. But I have an able businessman just now free for such work. He is Jaisukhlal Gandhi. He was in charge of Amreli Khadi Karyalaya. It is now being rearranged and Jaisukhlal is being made free. Your letter under reply comes just in time to keep him free. But it is necessary to send him to Amreli for winding up the head office and despatch all the stock here. This is likely to take a fortnight. I have just had a talk with him as to whether he is prepared to do the thing. He is agreeable provided I let him go to Amreli straightway and wind up the business there. I have sent a wire[1] to you today. If I do not receive your reply at once, you will have to give a fortnight to be counted after receiving your final reply.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

SJT. N. R. MALKANI
PEOPLE'S FLOOD RELIEF COMMITTEE
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat: G.N. 951

[1] This is not available.

388. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

March 30, 1928

I have replied to your cablegram. Nothing is yet certain. I am not clear in my own mind as to what I should do. I am now in correspondence with M. Romain Rolland. His final reply will help me to come to some decision. If the visit to Europe is decided upon and if I reach in time I would gladly perform the opening ceremony[1]. But so far as I can see I can't possibly reach in time. There seems to be no occasion to leave India before May if at all. I may therefore suggest your making other arrangements.

As for staying with you, of course, I would love to do so if you can harbour me and my companions, because if I do come I shan't be alone.

Yours sincerely,

MISS MURIEL LESTER
KINGSLEY HALL
POWIS ROAD
BOW
LONDON, E. 3

From a photostat: S.N. 14949

[1] Of the Handicraft Room on July 7

389. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Ramanavami [*March 30, 1928*][1]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. I have not been able to take a decision as yet about going to Europe. I am not keen on it. The desire to meet Romain Rolland is certainly there. But I am awaiting his letter in this connection. A letter has come, but it does not incline me to go. If at all I go, it will be in May and I shall be back in October. I shall try to stay with you in Mussoorie even if it is for only a few days. I want to remain here up to April 13[2].

Please let me have your opinion on what I wrote inviting the co-operation of mills in the boycott of foreign cloth.[3]

Write in detail about your health. Are you now able to eat anything?

Yours,

MOHANDS

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6155. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

390. SPEECH AT ASHRAM ON RAMANAVAMI DAY

March 30, 1928

The Rama of whom we sing is not the Rama of Valmiki, nor even the Rama of Tulsi—although his *Ramayana* is very dear to me and I consider it an incomparable work, I never seem to have enough of it once I start reading it. Today, however, we shall not think of Tulsidas's Rama or the Rama of Girdhar's *Ramayana*, much less Rama of Kalidasa or Bhavabhuti. There is great beauty in Bhavabhuti's *Uttararamacharita*. However, here is not the Rama whose name we may recite to cross to the other shore or whose name we may repeat in moments of despair. If someone is suffering unbearable pain I tell him to repeat Ramanama. If someone is unable to sleep I tell him too to repeat Ramanama. This Rama is not the son

[1] From the contents it is clear that the letter was written in 1928.

[2] Last day of the National Week

[3] *Vide* "What Can Our Mills Do?", 15-3-1928.

of Dasharatha or the husband of Sita. In fact he is not the embodied Rama. The Rama that dwells in our hearts cannot possibly have a physical form; the heart is no larger than a thumb and the Rama who dwells in some niche there could not have a body, nor could he have been born on the ninth day of the month of *Chaitra* in a certain year. He is birthless. He is the Creator, the Lord of the universe. Hence the Rama whom one wishes to remember, and whom one should remember, is the Rama of one's own imagination, not the Rama of someone else's imagination.

If we keep this in mind, many doubts that trouble us would not arise at all. Many times we wonder how the Rama who slew Vali could be called the Perfect One. I too come across many such questions, and I am amused. What great achievement is there in having slain someone, by fair means or foul, or to have destroyed the ten-headed Ravana, if ever there was one such. In this modern age, even if a Ravana is born, not with twenty but countless hands, a child standing behind a cannon can, by firing a single ball, send all his arms and heads flying. We would not regard such a child superhuman; we would look upon him as a big mons-ter. I believe that we do not wish to acquire the strength of a super-mons-ter. We would not attain peace by worshipping him. We should worship Him, the Inner Ruler, who dwells in the hearts of all, yet transcends all and is the Lord of all. It is He of whom we sing: *Nirbalke bal Rama*[1]. The song also mentions Draupadi's despair. Now, what had Draupadi to do with an embodied Rama? Yet, the poet has sung that Rama saved Draupadi's honour. The Rama mentioned here is the One who is common to all and yet comprehended by none. It is this Rama whom we remember. Between this Rama, the Inner Ruler, and Krishna there is no difference.

We celebrate the festival of Rama's birth so that we may practise some self-restraint, and the children may enjoy innocent pleasures and learn some lesson by reading the *Ramayana*. Man, who is himself embodied, cannot easily conceive God in any other form. His imagination cannot go farther. Therefore he conceives God as being incarnated in human form. Hinduism has boundless tolerance. Hence God has been described as descending in the forms of a fish, a boar and a man-lion. In this way having superimposed a form on God, men conceived Him as having a body and then imagined Him as taking birth. And when we speak of His

[1] Rama, strength of the weak', the opening words of a popular song

avatars to protect dharma whenever dharma declines and *adharma* flou-rishes, it is true only in the manner and to the extent which I have just described; how else could we say that the birthless One took birth? There is no reason to believe that any historical figure was the incarnation of God or God as a historical figure was born in human or any other form. If a person is endowed with all the qualities of God, he may be called an incarnation of God. It was because of their divine qualities that all those great men of the past were regarded by people as either plenary or partial incarnations. And yet, knowing this, different devotees have described the same God in the Rama of Valmiki or Tulsidas and there is no harm in singing those *bhajans*. If we bear in mind what I said earlier, we would not be deluded. If someone wishes to confuse us confronting us with conundrums, we should tell him that we do not worship embodied Rama as conceived by anyone; we worship our own Rama who is flawless and formless. As we cannot reach Him direct, we sing *bhajans* that describe Him as personified, and then try to apprehend Him in His purity.

So long as we are unable to see through the wall of the body, the qualities of truth and non-violence will not become fully manifest in us. When we think of pursuing truth, we must stop mistaking the body for ourselves, for we shall have to die in the pursuit of truth. The same is true of non-violence. The body is the root of ego. One who has attachment to the body cannot free himself of the ego. I cannot become wholly free of violence so long as I have the feeling that this body is mine. One who desires to have vision of God will have to transcend the body, to despise it, to court death.

It is only when we master these two qualities that we can be saved, that we can practise *brahmacharya* and so on. How can we do without truth if we wish to practise such vows? The face of truth is hidden by a golden lid.[1] Why should we fear to speak the truth or to act truthfully? How can we catch a glimpse of truth so long as we do not remove the glittering lid of untruth? If anyone commits an offence, are we willing to love him instead of getting angry with him? Although we sing that this world is insubstantial, do we know at all what the word implies?

"If you wish to know me," says Rama, "you must flee the world." But the body cannot be wished away. Having trained ourselves to look upon the world as unreal, we may go about our

[1] *Ishopanishad*, v. 15

business as a matter of duty all the time and still find Rama. That is the teaching of the *Gita*. This is why I regard the *Gita* as a spiritual dictionary. Tulsidas teaches us the same truth through beautiful poetry.

The key, however, is the one that I have given, namely, that the Rama in our hearts is the Ferryman who will take us across. We cannot all create poetry as Tulsidas did. But we can fill our life with poetry by bringing God into it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-4-1928

391. SPEECH AT GATHERING OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS, AHMEDABAD [1]

March 31, 1928

Mahatmaji, addressing the students, expressed satisfaction that his suggestions had been carried out. He however regretted that the boys were not as clean as they ought to be. Putting on khaddar, he said, indicated that they were clean both bodily and in their hearts.

The mill-owners, Gandhiji continued, were not extending their helping hand by becoming liberal in donating money. He was conferring with the mill-owners and requesting them to pay all the money subscribed by them to the Tilak Swaraj Fund for the benefit of the children unconditionally without interfering in any way in the administration of the schools, which must be solely left to the Labour Union. Even if they did not give any money these schools would go on.

God is great and if you have faith in Him you would get money from any source, provided you have true ideals.

To teachers, Gandhiji said that they must not make any use of books for imparting education, as books spoiled eyes and blunted the intellect. He himself had experienced that. He understood that in Russia they were conducting one thousand schools for peasants and that they were giving education without the aid of books by making all possible use of the senses. He asked them to clean their own houses and streets themselves and not to depend on others for doing the same.

Concluding, Mahatmaji asked them to make their schools ideal in every way, so that the boys and girls of the mill-owners might envy them and the mill-owners might be tempted to send their children to the labour schools. On truth depended the foundation of education, and they must always resort to truth.

The Hindu, 31-3-1928

[1] A spinning demonstration by the students of the schools run by the Ahmedabad Labour Union was held in the morning.

392. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 31, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have for a long time wished to write to you just a line. I was told that I could look forward to meeting you at Madras. But that was not to be.

Will you kindly tell me why you have preferred the cry of boycott of British goods, principally British cloth, to boycott of foreign cloth and why also boycott of British cloth only pending settlement?

I hope you have regained your original health.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13143

393. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 31, 1928

MY DEAR SHANTIKUMAR,

I have your letter. The terms that I think the mill-owners should agree to are as follows :

(1) The prices should be regulated by a special committee representing all interests.

(2) The production both as to kind and quantity should also be regulated by the said committee.

(3) Mills should cease to sell any mill-cloth under the name of khadi and should cease within three months at the outside of the date of acceptance of terms to manufacture any cloth that is likely to compete with khadi and to this end the committee will specify from time to time what the mills may not manufacture.

(4) Mills will organize not only the sales of mill-cloth but they

will sell khadi also through the agencies thus organized.

(5) Mills should use no foreign yarn, no foreign silk, no foreign wool nor artificial silk.

(6) Mills should whole-heartedly identify themselves with the boycott of foreign cloth movement and to this end should put forth all their energy towards gaining control over piece-goods merchants, other middle men and cotton market in so far as it may be possible.

(7) If a clear understanding is arrived at with mills, khadi depots will naturally become agencies for the sale of mill-cloth under terms laid down by the said committee.

(8) Mills should hand to the said committee such funds as may be required from time to time for propaganda. This, in my opinion, may not exceed one lakh of rupees.

This letter is being hurriedly dictated. You mill therefore please supplement these conditions with those stated in the two issues of *Young India*[1] if there is any omission. You will not publish this letter in any case, and, you will please remember that these are only my own personal views, and if anything substantial is to come out of these talks, [th]ere will have to be a formal meeti[ng of a]ll concerned.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. SHANTIKUMAR

BOMBAY

From a photostat: C.W. 4787. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

[1] *Vide* "What Can Our Mills De?", 15-3-1928, and "Foreign Cloth Boycott—Some Questions", 22-3-1928.

394. LETTER TO RAI HARENDRANATH

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 31, 1928

DEAR SIR,

I have your kind telegram. I am extremely sorry that I shall be unable to attend the Conference. I however wish you all success and hope that the Conference will not forget khaddar which represents the dumb millions.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RAI HARENDRANATH
CHAIRMAN, RECEPTION COMMITTEE
BENGAL PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE
CHANDRI, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13142

395. SATYAGRAHIS, BEWARE!

When member of the Hunter Committee asked General Dyer the leading question with reference to the Jallianwala Bagh: "Was it your idea to instil fear of the Government in the minds of the people by acting ruthlessly?" the latter, enthusiastically accepted the suggestion and replied in the affirmative. However, the reign of terror had not begun with General Dyer. It is the legacy of tradition and the monopoly of Indian bureaucracy. It can, however, be said that General Dyer gained notoriety for this repression. Hence we know it also as Dyerism. As bureaucracy is dependent for its very existence on a policy of Dyerism, it does not hesitate to seek shelter under the latter when occasion arises. According to it such an occasion has arisen in Bardoli. Hence it may be said to have launched repression on the bania satyagrahis who are regarded as cowardly and submissive. Eight of these satyagrahis have been served with notices that if they do not pay up their land revenue stipulated therein before the 12th of April, their lands will be confiscated. The notice served on one bania gentleman shows the amount of revenue due as Rs. 160. Perhaps we could not have found fault with the Government if it had confiscated land worth Rs. 160, but to confiscate land worth thousands of rupees for the sake of Rs. 160 is nothing but repression. Under this policy,

on certain occasions, the punishment for a slap is not ano-ther slap but the gallows. We shall call anyone who extorts a thousand rupees for a debt of one rupee a tyrant, a ten-headed Ravana.

What reply will the banias, who are said to have forethought, give to this? Will they betray cowardice or prove themselves worthy of having joined the army of satyagrahis?

Vallabhbhai has warned not once but repeatedly that the Government has by legislation acquired the right to confiscate land, to imprison people, etc., and that it has time and again given proof of the fact that it will not hesitate in the least to exercise those rights. Hence neither they nor others should be flabbergasted by this notice of confiscation. They should have faith that the Government will not be able to derive any benefit from the land which would be confiscated in this manner and that it would not go to a traitor who would come forward to purchase it if it is auctioned. Land which has been filched in this manner is like unprocessed mercury which is bound to erupt as boils.

Land is not more precious than one's pledge or one's self-respect. There are myriads of landless people in this country. During the last floods, many people's lands were eroded and layers of sand have now been deposited over them. Just as Gujaratis withstood the wrath of the heavens with courage and fortitude, may the satyagrahis of Bardoli similarly put up with this wrath of the Government and may they stand by their pledge!

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-4-1928

396. THE NATIONAL WEEK

The forthcoming National Week is the ninth of its kind. In this Week, we should take stock of the progress made by us. However, instead of that we find despondency in many places. For us this Week is the time for calculating the national sum total of achievement, for introspection and for self-purification, for uniting the hearts of Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and other, for Hindus to welcome in their midst those men and women who have been regarded as untouchables and to serve them, and for Hindus, Muslims and others to take exclusively to khadi and boycott foreign cloth.

However, today we seem to have forgotten these limbs which

sustain the nation. Those who have aith in any of these causes are making efforts to promote them. But now all this is not beinng done on an extensive scale. Today we do not hear people say, as they used to do in the past, that swaraj cannot be secured without these.

An attempt should be made during the National Week to bring about a change in this state of affairs. Those who have an unswerving faith in constructive activity should make great efforts in this direction, irrespective of whether some or all national institutions make such an effort; it is only from such efforts that an allembracing activity will and must start again. None should entertain any doubts that khadi is the one visible activity that can be taken up by children, men, women, Hindus, Muslims and all others. The talk of boy-cott is everywhere in the air. However, there seems to be some confu-sion regarding boycott at the moment. Some persons advocate the boy-cott of British goods, others of British cloth alone and that too until such time as a peaceful solution is arrived at, while yet others advocate the permanent boycott of foreign cloth. All these things cannot go on at the same time. After the first two intentions had been proclaimed for twenty years, the people found on deeper reflection in 1920 that the only way of boycotting foreign cloth which was possible as well as obligatory was to replace it by khadi. Moreover, this idea of boycotting foreign cloth does not depend on any conditions but holds good for all time. And that which is everlasting is beneficial even in small measure whereas that which is dependent on conditions is beneficial only if it materializes in an appropriate measure. If the latter brings bout only partial results, it may even prove harmful.

Hence we ought to free ourselves from this delusion and make constant efforts to carry on propaganda for khadi for the sake of boycotting foreign cloth or, in other words, for the sake of the poor of India. In order to do that :

1. those who do not already wear khadi should do so and advise others to do likewise;

2. all should spin as much as possible and inspire others to do likewise;

3. all should contribute as much as possible for this cause and collect funds from neighbours.

In this connection, what Shri Vithaldas Jerajani writes is worth

nothing :[1]

The figures given here are worth pondering over. Bombay is the barometer for gauging the feelings of politically-conscious India. It is not too great a venture for Bombay to reach the figures of the first year. That is like a drop in the ocean in the matter of making the boycott a success.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-4-1928

397. MY NOTES

ORISSA'S PLIGHT

I give below an extract[2] from Shri Chhaganlal Gandhi's letter:

The reader should remember that these starving children who wander about aimlessly, who pick up from the sand and eat banana skins which have been thrown away, are our own brothers and sisters. if we proudly call India our mother, we cannot but look upon these forlorn children as our brothers and sisters. What can swaraj mean to them? What will they say if we ask them to define swaraj? Shall we fill their stomaches by throwing uncooked rice at them by way of alms? Shall we let them pick up banana skins from the sand? Shall we let them eat rotten grain? Or shall we make human beings of them by making them industrious and providing them with some occupation? In my humble opinion, swaraj lies hidden in the search for a remedy for the starvation in Orissa.

CHEAP KHADI

The person in charge of the Shuddha Khadi Bhandar on Richey Road has sent the following note[3]:

If we wish to boycott foreign cloth, the stock of khadi lying in this small shop will be sold out on a single day of the week. One such shop should not have much difficulty in meeting its expenses.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-4-1928

[1] The letter is not translated here; *vide* "Notes", 29-3-1928, sub-title, "Special for National Week".

[2] Not translated here. It gave a harrowing picture of Orissa in the grip of famine.

[3] Not translated here. It contained the rates of rebate offered on different varieties of khadi during the National Week from April 6 to April 13. *Vide* also "Notes", 29-3-1928, sub-title, "Special for National Week".

398. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

April 1, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. Of course the mill-owners would gladly give whatever may be wanted if only we would undertake to advertise their wares; but it is not possible for us to do so unless they accept our terms. Copy of the latest correspondence will interest you. You will please treat the whole thing as strictly confidential.

I wish Hemprabhadevi could be induced to give up her moroseness which creeps upon her so often even against her will.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 2

From a photostat: S.N. 13144

399. LETTER TO OTTAMA BHIKKHU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

April 1, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I am sorry indeed that anybody should have mentioned anything to you about my proposed visit to Burma. Even if I come to Burma I do not expect any contribution from Burmese. If I come I should certainly hesitate to express my views on the political situaion until I had studied it and could speak on it with confidence.

Yours sincerely,

REV. OTTAMA BHIKKHU

SHWEZADY KYAUNG

AKYAB

From a photostat: S.N. 13145

400. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 1, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

I have your letter.

The enclosed copies will tell you what progress is being made in the negotiations with the mill-owners. I however agree with you that nothing will come out of them at the present moment. But the negotiations may fructify on due occasion. There was a time when the mill-owners were absolutely defiant about boycott propaganda. I shall write to you after these negotiations are finished.

Though Romain Rolland's first expected letter has arrived and [he] warmly looks [forward] to my proposed visit, it does not enable me to come to a decision. As the time for arriving at a fixed decision is drawing nearer, my diffidence is growing. There may be however a cable from Rolland next week and it may decide my fate.

Meanwhile there is no going to Singapur. I am fixed up here for the time being. If I do not go to Europe, I am due to go to Burma and pass there two months, going to a hill-side and making collections during my stay there.

I am quite of your opinion that some day we shall have to start an intensive movement without the rich people and witout the vocal educated class. But that time is not yet.

You do not tell me where Kamala is to pass the summer months.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13147

401. LETTER TO H. M. AHMAD

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 1, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am passing it on to a friend[1] who is better able to reply to your questions than I am, and I have asked him to write to you directly.

Yours sincerely,

H. M. AHMAD, ESQ.
SCHUHUMANNSTR. 17
BERLIN N.W. 6

From a microfilm: S.N. 14276

402. LETTER TO SHUAIB QURESHI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 1, 1928

MY DEAR SHUAIB,

You never write and I somehow copy your bad example. An opportunity has now offered itself to break through that undesirable practice.

I enclose herewith a letter. You are better able to answer the two qustions than I am. I have told Ahmad that I have passed the letter on to you. Please therefore answer his two questions as briefly as you can.

What are you doing? How are you feeling? I do expect great things from you.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13148

[1] *Vide* the following item.

403. LETTER TO SADASHIVAM

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 1, 1928

MY DEAR SADASHIVAM,

Sjt. Jeevanlalji of Calcutta requires rest and change. He has been advised to go to Bangalore. Will you please secure a small bungalow or a flat on monthly terms? It should be well lighted, well ventilated and roomy. The more isolated it is the better, as it is required for recuperation. The sanitary surroundings should be perfectly good. If such a bungalow is available, before closing I want you to telegraph to me giving me the situation and terms. I would like you to give this matter early attention.

Sjt. Jeevanlalji's Madras agent—he has a branch of his business in Madras—will see you perhaps in this connection. You will then please help him.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13149

404. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Aprril 1, 1928

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have been regularly receiving your letters. But I never get the time to write to you. I had your telegram also. There is the expected letter from Rolland. He seems to like the idea of my going and has been already prompting associations to send me invitations. But as the time for deciding is nearing, I am growing more and more diffident. I am still waiting before coming to a final decision for his expected cable.

Mr. Mukul Dey is here and began operation immediately he came.

I have not been able yet to talk with Ambalal. I will not fail to do so. I hope it is not a case of phthisis with Rati's wife. Can't you persuade Gurudev to take a long rest in Europe? There is no reason for him to age so quickly.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13150

405. LETTER TO RAMJI DAS JAINI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 1, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I fear that it is distance that lends enchantment to the Ashram. I do not know that at your age and with your habits already formed you could exchange your comparatively soft life for the comparatively hard life of the Ashram. But if you are seriously desirous of being in the Ashram, you should first of all study its constitution and then come and live in it for a few days and see for yourself its life.

I am sorry I have no copy of the constitution at the present moment. But it is reproduced in Natesan's publications of my writings and speeches. The constitution has undergone alterations but nothing of a substantial nature. You will notice in it that it is necessary for the inmate of the Ashram to live the life of a celibate.

Yours sincerely,

RAI SAHEB RAMJI DAS JAINI
P.O. MAJITHA, DT. AMRITSAR

From a microfilm: S.N. 13138 a

406. LETTER TO REMINGTON TYPEWRITER CO.

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 1, 1928

MESSRS REMINGTON TYPEWRITER CO., LTD.
YUSUF BUILDING
CORNER OF CHURCHGATE STREET AND ESPLANADE
BOMBAY

DEAR SIR,

I am in receipt of Rem. Portable No. 61625 which I had sent you for slight repairs and adjustments.

I am exceedingly glad to say that the machine is working to my entire satisfaction.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13146

407. LETTER TO SATYANANDA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 3, 1928

DEAR SATYANANDA BABU,

I have your letter. It give me joy to think that you do remember me occasionally. You will have seen from the pages of *Young India* that I am trying my best to induce mill-owners to shoulder the burden of bringing about a boycott of foreign cloth. We may not go beyond the negotiations at the present moment. But the ground will have been prepared for future action, if we can do nothing just now.

I am not at all sure in my mind as to the propriety of going to Europe. I am therefore still vegetating and still awaiting for the call from within. The next fortnight will perhaps decide the matter. If, however, the negotiations take a concrete shape, of course I do not go because I flatter myself with the belief that a ssuccessful prosecution of the boycott will demand my continuous presence in India.

Yours,

From a photostat: S.N. 13155

408. LETTER TO RAMI GANDHI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 3, 1928

CHI. RAMI,

I have your letter. The handwriting this time cannot be considered good. The lines are not straight. You should improve your health. Look forward to doing a good bit of khadi work during the National Week.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9707

409. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 4, 1928

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your telegram. I am sending not Jaisukhlal Gandhi but Mathuradas who is bringing this letter. He is perhaps better fitted for the work because his knowledge of English is better and being a Cutchi knows the language and habits of many people there. Of course he is a well-tried worker. He has been working in connection with khadi for many years now and has a wide knowledge of mercantile business. He was born and brought up in Malabar. He really came with Lakshmidas. He has been just now taken up by Kakasaheb for the Vidyapith in order to develop the charkha work. Therefore he is loaned to you from the Vidyapith and his honoranium will be paid by the Vidyapith. His travelling expenses are being paid just now on your account, that is, the Committee's account, but if there is any difficulty about paying his railway expenses, you will please tell me. I take it that you won't want to keep him beyond 15th of May. If you do want anybody beyond that time, I will have to send you someone else because he will be wanted by Kakasaheb on the first of June and before that he would want to go to Calicut to bring his family.

About your own honorarium, I have now a letter from Thakkar Bapu who says you old him also that you would want no more than Rs. 150. What is this? I do not mind the Rs. 200, but I want to know how you came upon Rs. 150 and why afterwards you had to increase your demand? I am anxious for all of us to be deliberate and firm in all we do. The only hope I see of our regeneration lies in some at least developing decision, forethought and the like. You are not to take this amiss, nor to revert to Rs. 150 unless you can clearly do so whilst you are doing relief work. But if you find that you made a miscalculation or if you fixed Rs. 150 without previous consultation with Mrs. Malkani and others concerned, you must humbly make the admission and ask for Rs. 200. You understand why I write all this, don't you? I want you to come up to my expectations.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

SJT. N. R. MALKANI

From a photostat: G.N. 927

410. LETTEER TO A. A. PAUL

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 4, 1928

MY DEAR RAJAN,

You have put me a very difficult question. But after giving very careful consideration to the whole of your argument, I incline towards your accepting an honorarium for whole-time work in connection with the Fellowship. You will not be able to put your whole soul into it if your attention is divided between two trusts. One or the other or both must suffer, especially when there is likely often to be a conflict between the two. On the pinciple that the labourer is worthy of his hire, I see no ethical objection against your accepting an honorarium for your work for the Fellowship.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. A. A. PAUL
7 MILLER ROAD
KILPAUK
MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 13160

411. LETTER TO B. SHIVA RAO

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 4, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The enclosed is the best I can do for you.[1] You want an article. You might as well get blood out of stone as get an article from me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. B. SHIVA RAO
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
ADYAR
MADRAS 3

From a photostat: S.N. 13158

[1] *Vide* the following item.

412. MESSAGE TO "NEW INDIA"

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 4, 1928

I wish *New India* many years of useful service to the country. May its revival hasten the advent of swaraj.

413. PRAYER SPEECH AT ASHRAM

[*April 4, 1928*][1]

The first lesson in emulating Hanuman is to apply all one's senses to the task in hand. In order to do this, one's vision must remain unwavering and pure. The eyes are the lamp of the body and, one may add, of the soul also. For inasmuch as the soul dwells in the body, it can be looked at through the eyes. A man might through his speech present a false show and deceive others, but his eyes would reveal him. If he does not have a steady unwavering look in his eyes, his real nature will be betrayed. Just as physical ailments are diagnosed by examining the tongue, spiritual maladies may be detected by looking at the eyes. Hence children should be taught to look straight, right from their childhood.

Hanuman's eyes had a steadfast gaze and showed that, just as Rama's name was ever on his lips, it filled his heart and pervaded every fibre of his being.

I like the custom of installing Hanuman in our gymnasiums; this however does not mean that we wish to gain physical strength alone or that we worship merely Hanuman's physical strength. We should certainly become physically strong; but we should also know that Hanuman did not have the physique of a giant, he was the son of Vayu[2], hence his body was as light as a flower and yet wiry. However, Hanuman's distinctiveness lay not in his physical strength but in his devotion. He was an incomparable devotee and servant of Rama. He found fulfilment in serving Rama like a slave and he performed with the speed of wind whatever service was asked of him. We therefore worship Hanuman and instal him in gymnasiums because though we

[1] According to *Prajabandhu* the speech was made on April 4 in connection with Hanuman Jayanti.

[2] Wind-god

do physical exercise we are going to become servants—servants of India, servants of the world and, through these means, servants of God. It is through this humble service that we shall catch a glimpse of God.

Hence we should not even say that we worship Hanuman only for his *brahmacharya*. Every servant has to practise *brahmacharya*; how can anyone who has taken the vow of service enjoy the pleasures of sense? It is necessary for one to practise self-control even to render the limited service to one's parents; it cannot be rendered if anyone yields to his passions as I did. Similarly, how can anyone who would serve the Ashram, serve men and women, boys and girls, how can he afford to gratify his sensual desires? And serving the Ashram is such a small matter; it is like a drop in the ocean. Hence anyone who would serve the world should flee his desires.

However, mere fasting and penance are not sufficient to keep away from pleasures of sense; this can be achieved through a Hanuman-like devotion. Hence the key to *brahmacharya* and all other virtues is found in single-minded devotion. Every evening we recite :

विषया विनिवर्तन्ते निराहारस्य देहिनः।
सवर्जं रसोऽप्यस्य परं दृष्ट्वा निवर्तते॥[1]

The senses of him who fasts may well be quietened,but this does not help in controlling the desire for gratifying the passions; the mind very often becomes more restless when the senses become weak; then the mind runs more after the objects of pleasure; that too is calmed by the vision of Rama. This is the message of Hanuman, the lesson to be learnt from his life.

Yesterday I used an adjective which I had never used previously to qualify *brahmacharya*. I said that Hanuman's *brahmacharya* was *sattvik*, and, while praising *brahmacharya*, I mentioned three distinct types of it—*sattvik*, *rajasik* and *tamasik*. Whereas Hanuman's *brahmacharya* was of a *sattvik* nature, Meghnad's was *rajasik*. One who practises the latter type of *brahmacharya* has anger and pride. Total surrender is the mark of the *sattvik* type. It cannot be said that either of these two was inferior to the other in physical strength. Hanuman however could defeat Meghnad becaue the latter was full of pride, while Hanuman was full of devotion and so possessed additional

[1] When a man starves his senses, the objects of those senses disappear from him, but not the yearning for them; the yearning too departs when he beholds the Supreme. *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 59

strength.

We should, therefore, keep our vision pure, our hands and feet pure and our speech pure and, by doing so, develop the capacity to imitate Hanuman to some extent. We certainly wish to improve our physique by practising *brahmacharya*, but the under-lying motive is that we wish to become devotees of Rama even through the means of our body and thereby serve the world. It is not that if we took care of the outer the inner would automatically take care of itself. However, if we keep on taking care of the physical side and if this is not a mere veneer, the mind too will one day become steadfast and only then shall we be as good as Hanuman.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 8-4-1928

414. REMEMBER THE UNTOUCHABLES

Within two days of the publication of this issue, the National Week will be on us. We used at one time, in the process of self-purification, to picket liquor dens. I am reminded of those days as I go through the following paragraph from an address received from the members of the Coimbatore Adi-Dravida Association :[1]

> The old order has not changed even to a small extent, and even our souls are despised by the other Hindus so that we are not allowed to worship in temples the one God. . . . The churches and mosques have their doors wide open to receive us and the missionaries in charge of them extend us a hearty welcome. The Government tempts our young men by locating liquor shops in or near our *cheries*, the living quarters of our community. If industrial institutions took the place of such shops and if social workers befriended us instead of *abkari* contractors, we have no doubt that our progress would be assured in a very short time. We, therefore, earnestly appeal to you for help to organize industrial schools in or near our living quarters to save our community from ruin.

We need not consider during the National Week what the Government has done or not done, but we are bound to consider what we have done and what we can do. Whilst there is no doubt that public opinion against untouchability has been strengthening day by day, public action still remains weak. We have not even been able to induce the keepers of public temples to throw their doors open to the

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

suppressed classes nor have we been able to replace a single liquor den with an industrial school or a refreshment room where, instead of the fiery liquid, they can receive health-giving nutritious drinks and other refreshments in clean surroundings.

Young India, 5-4-1928

415. BAGHAT STATE AND SACRED THREAD

With reference to my note in *Young India*[1] of 22nd March last about the treatment of Kolis in Baghat State, president of the Arya Samaj, New Delhi, writes :[2]

The president is no other than Rai Saheb Lala Ganga Ram, the well-known philanthropist and public worker of Delhi. Lala Ganga Ram's letter seems to leave little doubt about the correctness of the allegations made in the previous letter published in these pages. I had hoped that his informants had exaggerated the happenings in Baghat State and that it had not treated as a crime the wearing of the sacred thread by the so-called untouchables. I have before me a copy of the letter written to Lala Ganga Ram by the Prime Minister of the State. It runs :

> In reply to your letter dated the 10th January 1928, I regret that the State is unable to supply you the copy of the judgment, as Arya Samaj is not a party to this suit.

I cannot help remarking that the reply is in extremely bad taste. It is a bad copy of some English officials' laconic and stereotyped replies which they ordinarily send to correspondents who ask inconvenient questions. But these estimable gentlemen as a rule respect rank and status and do not crudely invent things to suit their replies. The Prime Minister of Baghat State has dared to ignore Lala Ganga Ram's status in society (I mean apart from his title) and for the sake of insulting him has imagined what Lala Ganga Ram has never said in his letter. For the never asked for a copy of the judgment in the case nor claimed to be party in the case against the unfortunate Kolis. This is essentially matter for the Hindu Mahasabha to take up. I do not know whether the Sabha countenances the wearing of the sacred thread by the so-called untouchables. Whether it does or not, it cannot possibly approve of coercion being used against those who choose to wear it. Immediately the thread becomes a monopoly

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 22-3-1928, sub-title, "Can It Be True?".

[2] The letter is not reproduced here.

carrying with it a punishment for its breach, it will cease to be sacred. It was sacred because and when the wearers were men of learning and piety. It will soon become a mark of degradation if the alleged example of Baghat State proves infectious.

Young India, 5-4-1928

416. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE A.I.S.A.

The All-India Spinners' Association has issued its second annual report. It is a thoroughly businesslike and instructive document. The letterpress occupies 31 octavo pages. The appendices occupy 24 pages. If I may advise the reader, I would suggest his reading the appendices first. They will give him a detailed analysis of the income and the expenditure of the Association duly audited and certified. He will discover at a glance how over 20 lakhs of rupees have been laid out for the promotion of the greatest, because the most extensive, national industry. If he will study the figures carefully, he will perceive the value of investing a portion of his income in this industry, and the return he would get for his investment would be the prosperity of the poor villagers on whose toil his own income depends. Among the appendices he will find also the resolutions of the All-India Spinners' Association defining its general policy, conditions on which loans are granted, conditions on which credit sales may be conducted by its depots and on which bounties are given to private khadi dealers and commissions to khadi hawkers. He will also find in them the constitution of the All-India Spinners' Association, the names and locations of different agencies and other information of value.

Having glanced through the appendices, let him go through the report if he has a half-hour or an hour to spare and he will know the way khadi has progressed. He will know the condition of the All-India Deshbandu Memorial Fund. Whereas the total production during 1925-26 was Rs. 23,76,670, in 1926-27 it was Rs. 24,06,370 and the sales during the same period were Rs. 28,99,143 and Rs. 33,48,794, respectively. Investors in khadi may therefore derive comfort that khadi is not a losing but a substantially progressive proposition. As against 50,000 spinners according to the previous report, there were 83,339 serving 5,193 weavers during the year under report. As against

1,500 villages, now there are 2,381 villages where hand-spinning is done through the agency of the Association. And just as the figures about spinners and villages were understated in the last report, so are they under-estimated in the report under notice. There are 177 khadi production centres of which 62 are departmental, 41 aided and 74 independent. There are 204 centres of which 115 are departmental, 44 aided and 45 independent, and the total number of workers under the direct control of the Central Office and in aided organizations is 748. This does not include those working in the independent organizations. Of improvement in the quality of yarn the report states :[1]

It is satisfactory to note that whilst there is improvement in the quality, the prices have undergone steady reduction. The following information about the special khadi service furnished by the Technical Department will be read with interest :[2]

I must skip over the other instructive paragraphs of the report. I hope I have given sufficient information to what the appetite of the reader for possessing the report itself which can be had at the office of the All-India Spinners' Association, Mirzapur, Ahmedabad, for 4 annas worth of postage stamps.

Young India, 5-4-1928

[1] The extracts quoted are not reproduced here.
[2] *ibid.*

417. SASTRI'S SELF-DENIAL

The decision of the Right Honourable Srinivasa Sastri to remain in South Africa beyond his term will gladden the hearts of the Indian settlers as it has pleased and eased the minds of those here who are interested in the South African question and who have been anxiously following the course of events in that sub-continent. Familiarity in Sjt. Sastri's case instead of making the Europeans indifferent or lukewarm has made them look to the Agent General as their friend and peacemaker. By his punctilious impartiality combined with firmness wherever necessary Sjt. Sastri has inspired them with trust as well as respect. The grateful Indians have not been slow to discover and appreciate the worth of this distinguished countryman and they were urging him to prolong his stay, if it was at all possible. Let them now demonstrate their affection and appreciation by becoming united and by being correct in the observance of all their part of the agreement. I tender my congratulations to Sjt. Sastri on his self-denial. For I know how anxious he was to return home at the end of his term.

Young India, 5-4-1928

418. A MILL-OWNER ON BOYCOTT

An Ahmedabad mill-owner writes:[1]

The letter is refreshingly candid. I wish that the other mill-owners would take the view that this correspondent takes of the possibility of standardization of prices and necessarily therefore of cloth. It is refreshing too to find that fluctuations of cotton prices do not much affect prices of cloth. And I would add in spite of the correspondent's view to the contrary that it is possible to control cotton prices if it is possible for us to boycott foreign cloth. For prices of our cotton are dominated by America only because we export large quantities of cotton and that too to the market for which America also caters. If we consider it to be possible, as it has proved to be possible, to appeal successfully to the patriotism of the buyer of cloth it is equally possible to make a successful appeal to that of the grower of cotton. Indeed the importance of foreign cloth boycott is derived from the knowledge that for it to succeed all the component parts of the nation have voluntarily to join the movement. It cannot succeed

[1] The letter is not reproduced here.

unless there is willing and hearty co-operation from the vast mass of the village population. My faith in the movement persists because I know the masses to be sound. Only the classes block the way because of their want of faith. If they will only shed their fear and their unbelief and lead the movement, the masses will follow. *And this boycott is the only thing in which it is possible for the masses actively to join without having to make much sacrifice.*

I do not share the view of the correspondent that artificail silk may be used with impunity in the manufacture of cloth in our mills. His com-parison of foreign dyes and foreign size with artificial silk is hastily made. Just now we contemplate boycott only of foreign cloth, not of dyes and size. All foreign yarns therefore, whether silk, wool or cotton, nautral or artificial, must be taboo; or if foreign artificial silk yarn may be used with impunity why not foreign cotton or wool or natural silk yarn?

But with foreign cotton it is a different thing. We need not exclude from use foreign cotton, for it is a raw product. What we *must* boycott for the sake of the starving masses living in enforced idleness for at least four months in the year is foreign yarn and cloth which the masses can spin and weave in their cottages.

The indigenous mill-cloth too would be intolerable if it displaced these mases without finding for them an equivalent industry. The mills have a place in the economy of national life only to the extent that they supplement the national industry of handspinning in millions of our cottages. They will be a hindrance if they compete with them and supplant them. Their natural tendency no doubt is to supplant both the village spinner and the village weaver. It is only when the mill-owners, mill-agents and their share-holders become truly national and conduct their affairs not to exploit the masses but for their benefit first and their own profits after, that they will be able to appreciate and not merely to join but of lead the boycott movement. That, if they take a long view of the matter, they have nothing to lose and much to gain has been made clear by the foregoing letter. Indeed it is a self-evident proposition. Boycott of foreign cloth, if it is the best assurance of steady work for the masses, is also an equal assurance to the mills of steady profits in the long run.

But the history of the mill industry at least during the past seven years of the mass movement does not fill one with much hope of the

mills rising to the occasion and realizing their duty to the nation. Instead of looking upon khadi with favour and fostering it, our mills have entered into an unfair, unpartriotic and illegitimate competition with khadi. The following are the figures of khadi manufactured by our mills during the respective years :

	1925	1926	1927
Lb.	2,28,87,970	2,72,36,337	3,39,77,851
Yards	6,50,48,487	7,43,13,280	9,43,80,368

They have sold this enormous quantity of coarse cloth as khadi and have not hesitated in some cases shamelessly to use the charkha label, etc., with the deliberate purpose of exploiting the khadi atmosphere created by Congreass organizations. It gives one pain to have to say that the mills that thus manufactured coarse cloth and palmed it off as khadi did a distinct disservice to the nation.

If their eyes are now opened and if only to do belated reparation for the grave wrong done by them to the nation, they will head or at least join the boycott movement on the terms suggested by me or others equally effective.

This painful discovery of the figures has however a bright side to it. It is a revelation even to an optimist and khadi expert like The Ashramme of the hold that khadi has acquired over the people. It shows that a much larger number that we are aware of has in obedience to the nation's call changed their taste and preferred to buy and use coarse cloth instead of the fine cloth they used to wear before. They have undoubtedly often paid higher prices than they used to. They have bought mill khadi largely under the mistaken belief that it was genuine and that it had the *imprimatur* of the Congress. An ardent lover of the mases has in these figures and my legitimate deductions therefrom much food for thought and equal cause for hope. As for my feared visit to Europe, I may assure the correspondent that I do not propose to visit Europe if an effective scheme of boycott materializes in the very near future.

Young India, 5-4-1928

419. NOTES

AFRICANS AND INDIANS

Deenabandhu Andrews, when he was here recently, drew my attention to what the Poet had written in the Press in connection with a movement in the Transvaal said to be going on on behalf of Indians to isolate themselves from the Africans and wanted me to give my opinion on it. I do not think that any importance need be attached to the alleged movement. For I feel that it has no bottom. Indians have too much in common with the Africans to think of isolating themselves from them. They cannot exist in South Africa for any length of time without the active sympathy and friendship of the Africans. I am not aware of the general body of the Indians having ever adopted an air of superiority towards their African brethren, and it would be a tragedy if any such movement were to gain ground among the Indian settlers of South Africa. Needless to say, I entirely associate myself with the opinion so forcibly expressed by the Poet condemning the movement. If, as has been stated on behalf of the leaders of the socalled movement, "It is humiliating to the Indian sentiment and to the Indian national honour and civilization to think that our Agent General is trying to bring us down to such a low level", it will ill befit us to repudiate such a sentiment when it is expressed by the South African whites in respect ouselves. And what is more, the South African whites are able to translate their contempt The Ashramand prejudice against us into action whereas ours towards the South Africans can only react against ourselves.

WOMEN AND JEWELS

A lady doctor in Tamil Nadu sends a letter accompanying her gift referred to in it. As the letter, in my opinion, enhances the value of the gift and is likely to serve as an example to others, I compress its contents as follows, omitting the names of the donor, the Raja and the place :

> Just a few lines to tell you that I sent you yesterday a parcel of diamond ring and a pair of ear-rings which were given to me about 12 years ago in remembrance of service in the palace. . . when the heir was born to the Raja. It grieved me much when I came to know that the Raja did not have even the courage to invite you to his palace when you passed by and I was told that it was due to fear of the Government. You can imagine my feeling when after your visit I looked at these jewels which before used to travel with me. Now

when I looked at them, bitterness rose in my breast and then it turned into deep sympathy for the starving millions about whom you spoke when you were here. I said to myself, 'Are not these jewels made out of the people's money? And, what claim have I to keep them as my own?' I then made up my mind to send them on to you. You could use them for khadi service and so help some of the starving millions. I feel sure that it is a better use to make of them than that they should remain in a corner of my box. A friend has valued them at Rs. 500. They are therefore insured for that amount. I only hope that some generous person will give you more than the actual price, knowing the circumstancs in which these things are being sent to you. You may make what use you like of this letter.

It is remarkable how we imagine fears even when there is no cause. There are many Rajas who have openly and willingly supported khadi and therethrough the cause of the poor from whom, after all, as my correspondent correctly puts it, they derive their riches. It is true that khadi has a political significance; but we have not yet come to the stage when support of khadi can be safely declared by the Government to be criminal. Every philanthropic movement can be truned to political use, but it would be a sad day when on that account it is boycotted even as to its philanthropic aspect. But it is only fair to state that the Raja to whom reference has been made by the lady doctor is not the only one who is afraid of supporting khadi or showing ordinary courtesy to a public servant like me. It is well The Ashramhowever that the Raja's boycott of me has stimulated the gift. But I would like all the sisters who may chance to see this note to realize that it is not necessary to be able to emulate the fair donor to have occasions like the one that set her athinking about her duty to the starving millions. Surely it is easy enough to realize that so long as there are millions of men and women in the country starving for want of food because of want of work, the sisters have no warrant for possessing costly jewels for adorning their bodies or often for the mere satisfaction of possessing them. As I have remarked before now in these pages, if only the rich ladies of India will discard their superfluities and be satisfied with such decoration as khadi can give them it is possible to finance the whole of the khadi movement, not to take into consideration the tremendous moral effect that such a step on the part of the rich daughters of India will produce upon the nation and particularly the starving masses.

It give me joy to publish the following appeal by Sjt. V. M. Joshi, President of Karve Jubilee Committee :[1]

Professor Karve is not an ordinary man who is satisfied if he satisfies an indulgent public which, if it proves itself exacting and imperious at times, issues a certificate of merit ninety-nine times out of hundred if some little service is rendered to it during recreation hours. Prof. Karve has obeyed a master that is never generous, never indulgent and ever exacting, though invariably just. This master is his own conscience. His self-effacement, his single-minded devotion to duty, his exhaustless energy, his honesty in all circumstances, his faith in the midst of opposition, his irrepressible optimism are a national asset of the first magnitude. There may be two opinion about the work to which he has devoted his great gifts but there can be only one opinion about the gifts themselves. And the latter are any day far more valuable and lasting than the work itself. The organizers of the Jubilee have set before themselves a very modest task to collect Rs. 25,000 to be presented to Prof. Karve for his work. It is a sum that should readily come forth from the numerous men and women who have come under the influence of this giant among silent and selfless workers or who have profited by his labours of a lifetime.

Young India, 5-4-1928

[1] The appeal is not reproduced here.

420. LETTER TO DR. C. MUTHU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 5, 1928

DEAR DR. MUTHU,

I have your kind note. I wish your enterprise every success. So far as I have understood your method, it is to treat phthisis patients [by] open air and dietetic treatment. As you know I have a horror of drugs and the like. I therefore welcome every honest effort to replace them with drugless and what might be termed natural methods of curing a disease which need never find an abode in this sunny soil of ours.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13161

421. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 5, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

You will see my article[1] on mills in the current issue of *Young India*. The latest move is on their own to start a Swadeshi League without reference to us. Do not think anything concrete is going to come out of my effort. By all means let them prosecute their own plans. So far as I can see, we must confine our attention to khadi hawking.

No final decision has yet been arrived at about the European visit. I am shirking it and making it depend upon some further indication from Rolland which I should have next week.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13162

[1] *Vide* "A Mill-owner on Boycott", 5-4-1928.

422. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 5, 1928

DEAR SHANTIKUMAR,

I have you letter. I shall a wait further developments.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4788. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

423. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 6, 1928

MY DEAR KHAMBHATTA,

I have your radio from Aden. I did not know when I replied that it was a radio message. I therefore sent a telegram[1] to your Bombay address. Mr. Kapadia received the telegram and acknowledged it. I hope that Jal took the voyage comfortably and that he and you all profited by it.

I am sending you herewith a letter[2] to Austrian friends who will guide you in the choice of a doctor should you decide to have the operation in Vienna.

May God bless Jal. With love to you all,

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13167

[1] This is not available.
[2] *Vide* the following item.

424. LETTER TO FREDERIC AND FRANCISCA STANDENATH

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 6, 1928

DEAR FRIENDS,

The bearer, Mr. Khambhatta, is a dear friend and co-worker. Under advise from his doctors he has gone to Europe in order to have his only son examined and, if necessary, operated upon. I know that you will give him all the help and guidence you can in the choice of a good surgeon, etc.

Yours sincerely,

DR. AND MRS. STANDENATH
GRAZ (IN STYRIA)
TRAUTMANSDORFGASSE I
(AUSTRIA)

From a photostat: S.N. 14281

425. LETTER TO M. M. SINGH

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 6, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is not usual to receive in the Ashram people who are unknown to any of the members. I would therefore like you, if you seriously want to be in the Ashram, to write to the Secretary of the Managing Board giving all the particulars about yourself. I may also inform you that at the present moment the Ashram is overcrowded.

Yours sincerely,

SARDARINI M. M. SINGH
UPTON HOUSE
NEW CANTT. ROAD
DEHRA DUN

From a microfilm: S.N. 13163

426. LETTER TO M. DEWAN NARAINDAS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 6, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. If human relations were regulated according to rules of arithmetic, what you propose would be suitable. But just as pressing 30 meals into 10 will not be the same as taking the 30 meals regularly from to day, similarly will 6 months' spinning compressed into 15 days not do. The idea is to test one's powers of sustenance and discipline.

Nor will it be enough for you to offer saytagraha against your parents and wrest an unwilling consent from them. You must get that consent by diligence and force of character.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. DEWAN NARAINDAS
C/O KRISHNA COTTAGE
NEW HIGH SCHOOL BUILDINGS
HASSAN ALI EFFINID ROAD
KARACHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 13164

427. LETTER TO Y. R. GAITONDE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 6, 1928

MY DEAR GAITONDE,

I thank you for your prompt opinion. I shall await the books you promise.

You say that if a drum is introduced an engine would be necessary. But I understood from the American friend of whom I spoke to you that the drum could be worked with man-power or even animal-power without difficulty and with little expense. And do you think that a drum is necessary for the development of the little tannery?

Yours sincerely,

Y. R. GAITONDE, ESQ.
C/O B. 12 AMBEWADI
GIRGAUM, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 11397

428. LETTER TO GANGA RAM

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 6, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

You will notice I have again returned to the subject of the Kolis in the Baghat State.[1] It is a shocking thing. When I received your first communication, I had no idea that my correspondent was my old friend the Rai Saheb. When, therefore, I made the discovery, it gave me pleasure.

Who is this Dewan and what is the position of the Baghat State? What is its population? Is there any public opinion? How is the State reached? Have the Kolis given up the thread out of fright?

Yours sincerely,

LALA GANG RAM
ARYA FARM
DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13165

429. LETTER TO S. RADHAKRISHNAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 6, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your kind letter. Nothing is yet certainaboutt he proposed European visit. It is difficult for me to make up my mind.

As to the article you want, I would ask you to take pity on me. I am so thoroughly washed out and have to give so much time to *Young India* and *Navajivan* that I have very little left for managing any more writing.

Your sincerely,

PROF. S. RADHAKRISHNAN
49/I.C. HARISH MUKERJI RD.
BHAWANIPUR
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13166

[1] *Vide* "Baghat State and Sacred Thread", 5-4-1928.

430. LETTER TO J. B. PENNINGTON

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 6, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your two letters for which I thank you. I have been so busy that it has not been possible for me to overtake your book.

As to Miss Mayo's performance, there is no argument left for me to advance, if you think that ther is no distinction between my writting in *Young India* and Miss Mayo's book. If your experience of India coincides with with Miss Mayo's, no argument can possibly convince you to the contrary.

Yours sincerely,

J. B. PENNINGTON, ESQ.
5 EWELL PARK GARDENS
EWELL, SURREY

From a photostat: S.N. 14280

431. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 6, 1928

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRAN,

In continuation of my letter I send you herewith the enclosed. I am anxious now that you should adopt the suggestion as early as possible.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13591

432. LETTER TO CHARLIE U. MORSELOW

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 6, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I do not perform any miracles nor do I believe in miracles. I would advise you to be content with what God gives you bearing in mind that there are many who are in a worse plight than you are. And, after all, physical blindness is not half as bad as moral blindness. And, whilst we have no positive control over physical infirmities, we have over the moral infirmities. If, therefore, there is any such thing as miracle, it should be attempted after one's moral welfare.

Yours sincerely,

CHARLIE U. MORSELOW, ESQ.
P.O. BOX 123, WATERLOO
NEW YOUK, U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N. 14282

433. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

April 7, 1928

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. I did not need your budget. I must not ask you to cancel your policy. I simply passed on to you what was burdening my mind. My inquiries must not oppress you. We all must try to look as we are. And if we could do that we would not worry over any questions. The Rs. 200 I shall find and that without any loss of self-respect. But you must always let me have the privilege of expecting the highest from you. Why should you worry about dowries? You are going to pay not a farthing. Why should the daughters be married in an Amil family necessarily? You must train the girls from now to forget that they belong to a caste. They belong to India and if you believe in my view of varnashrama, the matter becomes simple.

Of course you do not need to pay him anything beyond his, say, fare and food there.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 885

434. LETTER TO I. P. THURAIRATNAM

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I wish the Students' Congress all success. I hope that the students will not forget the starving millions of the parent country and the most effective manner in which they can help is to identify themselves with them by adopting khadi.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. I. P. THURAIRATNAM
SECY., STUDENTS' CONGRESS
CHAVAKACHCHERI, CEYLON

From a microfilm: S.N. 13172

435. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 7, 1928

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

Better a dictated letter than none. My congratulations to Sohaila and many kisses on both the cheeks, on the lips, on the forehead and in the centre of the head of the baby.

I wish I had time to hear more of your songs.

Yours sincerely,

MISS RAIHANA TYABJI
CAMP BARODA

From a photostat: S.N. 13169

436. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 7, 1928

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

I have your letter. I resign myself to your letter to the Viceroy. Of course I entirely agree with you that if the States will give us assistance we shall receive it gladly. But I know that they dare not give it to an institution that is frankly a creation of non-co-operation and nursed in its atmosphere. But if they do with the certain knowledge that it is a non-co-operationg institution, we should gladly accept their assistance.

The proposed European visit is causing me much trouble just now. I can't make up my mind. I know that I should not be so undecided like this. But what is the use of my hiding my weakness? I can't account for it myself. However, I should come to a decision in the course of the next frotnight at the latest. Improvement in health has no attraction for me. The meeting with M. Romain Rolland and a quiet conference with the chief men of Europe is what would take me to Eruope. Let us see how God leads me.

What is the use of Begum Ansari and Zohra wanting me to stay in their new abode? All the time I am there, they keep themselves at a safe distance hiding themselves behind the *purdah*. If they want me to be there, they will have to expose to view their superfluous bangles and other jewellery so that I can ease them of the superfluities and turn them to good account.

So far as the Jamia collections are concerned, I suspect that we shall do nothing beyond getting collections from personal friends, and, in order that this can be done it is necessary to have that constitution and trust-deed. Do please therefore expedite it as soon as you can.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S. N. 13170

437. LETTER TO MRS. SAM HIGGINBOTTOM

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

It was good of you so promptly to reply to the enquiry addressed to your husband.[1] Please send my regards when you write to him.

Nothing is yet certain about my proposed visit to Europe. But even if I go to Europe I hardly think I shall be able to combine both Europe and America during the few months alone which I can allow myself.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13171

438. LETTER TO A. A. PAUL

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 7, 1928

MY DEAR RAJAN,

Here is my message for the May issue of the *News Sheet.* If I agreed to give you a message for every issue, I could only have been in a drunken state and promises made in such a state are valueless.

I never knew that Joseph has lost a brother-in-law. It was good you gave me the information.

I hope you received in due course my reply[2] to your previous letter.

Yours sincerely,

A. A. PAUL, ESQ.
7 MILLER ROAD
KILPAUK
MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 13173

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sam Higginbottom", 28-3-1928.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to A. A. Paul", 4-4-1928.

439. MESSAGE FOR "NEWS SHEET" [1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 7, 1928

True promotion of Fellowship is to be found in silent acts of fellowship. One such little act, therfore, is more than tons of professions.

From a microfilm: S.N. 13172

440. LETTER TO JOSEPH

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 7, 1928

MY DEAR JOSEPH,

Rajan Paul tells me that you have lost a brother-in-law. My sympathies are with you and your widowed sister. Tell Mrs. Joseph that thought I have not said one word since, I have never forgotten the last scene when I left your house. I shall ever treasure the affection of which that scene was a testimony.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13168

[1] Of the International Fellowship

441. LETTER TO S. GANESAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 7, 1928

MY DEAR GANESAN,

I have your letter with Dr. Marie Stopes's review. I do not propose to publish it in *Young India* as it seems to me to be more an advertisement of her books and her methods than a serious review of the chapters seriously written.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1 file

SJT. S. GANESAN
18 PYCROFTS ROAD
TRIPLICANE, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 13174

442. LETTER TO ALICE SCHALEK

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter with your notes of the interview.[1] The notes required considerable revision. I therefore send you a clean copy.

Yours sincerely,

MISS ALICE SCHALEK
AUSTRIAN JOURNALIST
NERON'S HOTEL
LAHORE

From a photostat: S.N. 14284

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Alice Schalek", 20-3-1928.

443. LETTER TO S. A. WAIZE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April, 8, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I would love to take up your sister. But I doubt whether she would be able to stand the rigorous life of the Ashram. We have very little room at present. If, therefore, she coms, she will have to share a room with some sister or sisters. Then she will have to take part in the Ashram labours. The weather in Ahmedabad is very hot during this time of the year. And if she does not know Hindustani quite well, she will be at sea. If in spite of these drawbacks—drewbacks as they may appear to her—she is desirous of comming, please let me know and I shall place your letter before the Managing Board. And you will also let me know for how long your sister desires to stay here.

Yours sincerely,

S. A. WAIZE, ESQ.

From a photostat: S.N. 13176

444. LETTER TO NARAYANA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 8, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I have no doubt that you should resist the idea of marriage until you yourself are quite ready.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. NARAYANA
27 THIRD CROSS ROAD
BASAVANGUDI P.O.
BANGALORE, S.I.

From a microfilm: S.N. 13178

445. LETTER TO J. B. KRIPALANI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April, 8, 1928

MY DEAR PROFESSOR,

You know perhaps that Krishnadas is not here at present. He has however sent me your letter of the 25 March. Why do you say that the Spinners' Register will mean purchasing yarn from cottage to cottage? I have not suggested any such thing at all.[1] What I have suggested is that we should know the spinners with whom the middle men deal. We do not want to do away with the middle men altogether. We must not be at their mercy either, nor must we be in the dark as to what is actually paid to the spinners. The Register, therefore, has to be taken periodically. Once we know who the spinners are, where they are, what they get and what they do, you need not bother about them again, say for six months. As a matter of fact there should be no difficulty in your coming in touch with the middle men themselves The Ashramand with the spinners through them. I don't know whether I am even now clear. Not knowing the practical working of these, there may be difficulties of which I have no knowledge. You will then write to me about those difficulties and I might be able to make concrete suggestions for overcoming them.

About the want of capital, I am going to confer with Jamnalalji and Shankerlal. You do not say definitely how much you require. Is Babu Shivaprasad Gupta ready to advance that sum without interest if repayment is guaranteed and if he is, what will be the period of such loan?

The last paragraph of your letter is bad. You can't afford to give way to despair under any circumstances. You have to hold on to the Ashram no matter what difficulties face you. You dare not take up any other work. Please write regularly.

Are you now thoroughly restored, or is there still some

[1] Gandhiji had called upon units of the All-India Spinners' Association to collect data regarding the spinners supplying yarn to the A.I.S.A. depots. *Vide* "*Letter* to J. B. Kripalani", 12-3-1928 and "Notes" 15-3-1928, sub-title, "Instructive Figures".

difficulty? If there is you should now find Dr. Ansari comparatively free.

Yours sincerely,

PROF. KRIPALANI
GANDHI ASHRAM
BENARES CANTT.

From a photostat: S.N. 13177

446. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 8, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

I have your letter. I do not remember Father having told me that he would be back in Bombay to confer with the mill owners during the last week of this month. But he and I discussed the question of foreign cloth boycott at length and he had a conference with Seth Lalji, Shantikumar, Seths Ambalal, Kasturbhai and Mangaldas. It was a good conference, but nothing defenite was done. I have now heard that the mill-owners are going to start their own Swadesh League which means of course that we are not coming to any terms.

The AshramI had a long discussion with Lalaji today, for he was here for two days. He is enthusiastic about boycott of foreign cloth. I have supplied him with literature. He even suggested that I should invite a few leaders and confer with [them] about boycott. I told him I had not the courage to do so. He is of opinion that if intense boycott propaganda is to be taken up, I must not go out of the country, wherein of course I agree; but I cannot take up intense propaganda unless politically-minded India is wholeheartedly with me and unless the agitation about temporary boycott of British cloth, principally British cloth, is given up. We have, therefore, come to this provisional arrangement that if anything concrete takes place by spontaneous action on the part of the known leaders, I should give up the idea of going to Europe. On the other hand [if] nothing of that kind happens and if otherwise I see my way clear, I should proceed and that Lalaji and others who are minded like him should cultivate an atmosphere for intense propaganda about foreign cloth boycott with or without the Assistance of mills. I therefore suggest that you should confer with

Dr. Ansari and others. I suppose they will all go to the Punjab and pass the resolution about foreign cloth boycott through khadi. I would warn you against any mention of indigenous mill-cloth. You can simply say: "Whereas the only effective means of immediately demonstrating the united strength of the nation lies through boycott of foreign cloth, this Conference urges all concerned completely to boycott foreign cloth and adopt hand-spun and handwoven khadi even though such adoption may necessitate revision of one's taste about dress and some pecuniary sacrifice.' You will also let me know the result of private discussions you may have with friends and advise me as to whethere I should give up the idea of going to Europe. Dr. Ansari should really be able to decide.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13179

447. LETTER TO SHANKARAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April, 8, 1928

MY DEAR SHANKARAN,

I was thinking of you only early this morning, that is, just after prayer when talking to Pyarelal and here is your letter.

Suppose that there is a colony of orphans shipwrecked on an island, that they are all unmarried males, that they have never known that they ever had any parents, suppose further that they have a knowledge of letters and that from their reading they under-stood that they had all parents; suppose then that they in the course of their readings coem upon a philosophical book called "Our Spontaneous Origin", should the orphans feel convinced philosophically that they were all spontaneous creation? Just as the supposed philosophical book would not unsettle the conviction of the majority of the unsophisticated orphans, so should the philosophical book that you have read about the non-existence of God not unsettle your belief in God. If you will admit the fact of your having parents, how can you escape the fundamental fact of the First Cause? Having made sure of that, I am indifferent whether you call that First Cause God or some other thing. And having been also convinced of that fact it is wholly

unnecessary to inquire how that First Cause disposes of justice or to inquire about the injustice that we seem to see around us. There are endless theories. I believe in that of cause and effect, that is, of the law of karma. It seems to answer all a man's doubts. But if they do not answer yours,you must wait, watch and pray and you will some day have the light. But if you do not believe in the First Cause, there is no hope. For to whom should you pray then? Therefore hold fast to your belief in God, never mind the reasoning. Can you reason out the existence of your parents? Will you not say, 'Whether I can reason or not the existence of my parents is an absolute fact with me'? If you cannot prove it to the satisfaction of your inquirers, you will say 'my reasoning is at fault but not the fact'. Even so must you say to yourself, 'Though I may not be able to reason out the existence of God, I must accept the experience of and the belief of mankind in the First Cause'.

If even now you are not satisfied, you must ask me again.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13175 and 13180

448. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 8, 1928

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

For the last so many days or even months, I have wanted to write to you but how was it possible for me to find time for it ? This, too, I am dictating immediately after the morning prayers. I have got the shawl sent by you and when the time comes, I shall certainly use it. But in this season, the occasion will never come. I am getting fully acquainted with your activities and am pleased with them. I even rejoice in them. But do remember that you are not to pursue any activity at the cost of your health for, your first duty in going there lies in improving your health. However, if you can make use of your activities in improving it, I do not have to warn you. Do not have so much attachment for the activities that they ruin your health, and in order to regain it, you have to sacrifice your activities. It is like a saint losing both the worlds. Remember that the efforts to improve your health are also meant to excel in devotion to your duty.

Nothing has yet been decided about my going to Europe. It has been left to me to decide but I do not have the confidence to take a decision in this matter[1]. I do not know what is good. I do not at all like going there, but in a week or two, I will decide this way or that. You are dreaming of paying a visit here. Forget about it. It is attachment. You are not fully aware of our wish to rub shoulders with the crores of suffering and half-starved people. Before spending each rupee, you must reckon that with that money, sixty-four persons can comfortably have their second meal. Moreover there is no need to risk your health by coming here in this weather. We meet through letters; that is no less grace of God.

You are inviting Kashi. The above argument applies in her case also. Only warm climate suits Kashi. The cold climate which you enjoy, which gives you strength, enfeebles Kashi. As far as service to her is concerned, there is hardly anything you could do. Besides, you The Ashrammay not even be able to do that, and for one's own help, one cannot call one's parents. Moreover, you have made that relation virtuous. Treat any invalid woman you see there as your mother and help her. Consider such service as service rendered to Kashi. In the same way, treat every invalid man as your father. The spinning-wheel makes us do the same. It teaches us to render pure, selfless and dedicated service to numerous invalid and helpless parents, brothers, brothers-in-law and sons and daughters. Day by day, you are gaining proficiency in rendering such service. I am reminded of you by the figures you had given me about the growing business of lanterns, etc., here. I find from Devdas's letters that he is doing very good work in Jamia. Do not hesitate to write to me whenever you feel like doing so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: S.N. 32928

[1] After a lot of deliberation, Gandhiji ultimately dropped the idea of visiting Europe

449. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

[Before *April 10, 1928*][1]

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letters. I do not think that I have missed any mail recently. It is good that Sushila is progressing in her studies, but I am worried about her health. I should like her to make every effort to acquire good health.

Nimu is here at present. Ramdas is on a tour hawking khadi. Afterwards he will go to Jamnadas's school. Both of them will work there. Devdas has gone to Delhi.

A proposal is being discussed about my going to Europe. I cannot make up my mind. The matter will be decided within a week.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Pragji that I got his letter. I have no time to write to him a separate letter. It appears that the cases of both have been decided now.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4722

450. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

April 10, 1928

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have no time today to write myself. This is the National Week, and so I give as much time as I can spare and the body can endure, to spinning. Hence I am dictating this letter. You must have settled in phoenix by now. I like your staying there. It would be enough if Sushila went to the town twice or thrice to take her lessons. As a matter of fact, knowledge of a language as well as other knowledge can be acquired by one's own effort. I hope that Sushila is now completely all right. Yesterday Mr. Wayne met me. We talked The Ashramabout his meeting Manilal. I did not engage him in any particular discussion, but I got the impression that he went away from here with

[1] *Vide* the following item.

some useful ideas.

Ramdas is hawking khadi in Kathiawar. Nimu is here. Devdas is teaching spinning, etc., at Jamia Millia in Delhi. These days the spinning-wheels are working non-stop in the Ashram. Kishorelal was ill, but is now reported to be recovering with common remedies. You must be getting letters from there, so I do not write about anything there.

Do you spend any time in studying the *Gita*?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4735

451. LETTER TO ALBERT GODAMUNNE

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

April 11, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter about your brother. I meet him every day because nowadays I sit with the diners in the common kitchen where he also takes his meals. I am glad you have written to me about him. I shall keep my eyes on him, but I must also tell you that I have not nowadays got the time to come in close contact with so many inmates in the Ashram. Therefore my observation of your brother will be limited.

The money order has not yet been received, but it will be in due course.

Yours sincerely,

ALBERT GODAMUNNE, ESQ.

PROCTOR AND NOTARY

10 PAVILION STREET, KANDY

From a microfilm: S.N. 13157a

452. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 11, 1928

MY DEAR C.R.,

I send you the enclosed with copy of my reply. You will do whatever may be necessary. Perhaps you know these parties.

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
C/O KHADI PRATISHTHAN
SODEPUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 13183

453. LETTER TO R. R. AITHEN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 11, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I fear that I am unable to give you any useful guidance. I have not even been able to visualize your organization. But if you are desirous of coming to Ahmedabad, I shall be able to see you any day next week except Monday at 4 p.m.

Yours sincerely,

R. R. AITHEN, ESQ.
GENERAL SECRETARY,
INTERNATIONAL PEACE CAMPAIGN
150 WATSON HOTEL
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 13185

454. LETTER TO SADASHIVA RAO

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 11, 1928

MY DEAR SADASHIVA RAO,

I have your three letters. My capacity for help in matters such as you relate is much less than my willingness. Though I know so many monied friend, I may not use my influence in the manner you suggest. You have therefore to paddle your own canoe and face the difficulties bravely. What does it matter if you are left without shelter? Do not millions live like that? And your daughters have received a training which should enable them to give a good account of themselves without your having made any provision for them. I want you therefore to discharge yourself like a man in the crisis that has overtaken you.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13184

455. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 11, 1928

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letter. What a pity Gurudev is so ill and has developed blood-pressure. This phthisis in India is a horrible business. If there is any truth in the theory of ultra-violet rays—so do I think there is—no one in India should suffer from that wretched disease.

You will remember that you have to finish the Shraddhanand series.

I have not yet met Ambalal, but I have not forgotten our conversation.

C. F. ANDREWS
SANTINIKETAN

From a photostat: S.N. 13152

456. A SEASONABLE PRODUCTION

Readers of *Young India* are familiar with the name of Richard B. Gregg, an American lawyer who was attracted to India over two years ago by the message of khadi and who has been studying the movement in a most minute manner ever since his arrival in India. After a years's labour, he has written a book on the movement which treats khadi in an almost original manner. Every statement he has made is supported by facts and figures and footnotes give the authorities upon which Mr. Gregg has drawn. The book is published by S. Ganesan, 18 Pycrofts Road, Triplicane, Madras, and is priced at Rs. 1-8-0. From cover to cover it occupies 225 pages of which 165-225 contain seven appendices. The book contains 12 chapters. Let the reader also understand that Mr. Gregg, when he writes of villages, writes of things he has somewhat seen. The three opening paragraphs of his introduction show the reader the way in which Mr. Gregg has worked :[1]

It was in order to remove this poverty that Mr. Gregg was driven to an examination of the various schemes proposed to that end and he was forced to the conclusion that the spinning-wheel was the only real solution. The author says:[2]

> This little book is a statement of how the project looks to one who had seven years of practical work and study in industrial and labour problem in America (much of it in cotton mills), together with two and a half years' study in India of the khaddar movement. The latter period included observation both in the villages and at the headquarters of the movement. The investigation was undertaken primarily to clarify my own thinking. . . .

The originality of Mr. Gregg's examination of the problem consists in his approach to it from the engineering aspect which is the title of the first chapter, and he has no difficulty in showing that the The Ashrammaterial prosperity of a country is increased not merely by accumulation of power or machinery but by the right use of it.

[1] The paragraphs quoted are not reproduced here. Gregg had written: "In former days India was regarded as a very rich country, and prior to the Mohammedan conquest at least, the wealth was widely distributed among her people. . . . But now, although India is still considered a source of much wealth, the Indian people are ranked among the poverty-stricken of the world, . . . as Professor Gilbert Slater of Madras University says: 'The poverty of India is a grim fact.' "

[2] Only an extract is reproduced here.

This is how he opens his argument :

Following Mr. Ford's idea that the right use of power is more important than any particular kind of machinery, let us briefly examine the fundamentals of physical power and its utilization and then apply that as a test for the validity of the khaddar proposal. We will first state the whole engineering argument in brief, and then consider it in a more detailed fashion.

All physical power is derived ultimately from the sum. Coal and petroleum are, in effect, reservoirs from the stream of solar energy of past ages converted and stored up by vegetation. Water-power comes from the action of sunshine evaporating water from the oceans and transporting it to the land and rivers in the form of clouds and rain. Even the mechanical energy of horses and cattle and man himself comes from food obtained from plants activated by sunshine. All the power used in modern industry and in the economic activities of man in past ages came from his using some part of the never-ending stream of solar energy. The old *Rigvedic* hymns sang rightly of *Savitar* the Sun god: "*Savitar* . . . Lord of every blessing;" and "God *Savitar*, the good-eyed, hath come hither giving choice treasures unto him who worships" (*R.-V.*, x. 149; i. 35).

Any scheme which utilizes and efficintly transforms solar energy to a greater degree than was being done before is sound, from an engineering standpoint, and also from an economic point of view.

We do not usually think of the charkha as a machine, but it really is so. It uses the available mechanical energy of a man, woman or child for producing material goods. The handloom does likewise. The mechanical energy is derived from the food eaten by the person. Though in a different degree, manner and mode, the process is the same as that occurring in a steam engine or hydraulic power plant, namely, the transformation of solar energy into mechanical motion.

There are today great numbers of unemployed Indians. They are, in effect, engines kept running by fuel (food), but not attached to any machines or devices for producing goods. Mr. Gandhi proposes to hitch them to charkhas and thus save a vast existing waste of solar energy.

If we want to increase the use of mechanical power in India, this is the quickest and cheapest way. The 'engines' are all present; a man is as efficient a transformer of fuel energy into mechanical motion as a steam engine is; the spinning and weaving machinery to be used is nearly all ready at hand in The Ashramsufficient quantity to supply all needs. Any additional needs can be quickly and cheaply produced in India by artisans who need no further training in technical skill for this purpose; the speed and quantity of output possible

with charkha and handloom are more closely adapted to the needs of the Indian market and Indian producers than any other type or machinery; no foreign capital is needed to purchase the machinery, and therefore there will be no expensive interest payments or difficulties arising from absentee control; the maintenance of such a factory is inexpensive and can be done entirely by available workers without further training: the amount of training needed for operatives is a minimum and of a sort more easily acquired than for any other type of machinery; the 'fuel' or power cost for the man-charkha system will be nothing above the present food bill of the nation; the material to be used is available in practically every Indian province at a minimum of transportation cost; and the market is everywhere.

I must resist the temptation to quote from the other chapters. But if the foregoing excerpts have at all proved tempting for the reader, let me assure him that he will find that the chapters that follows are fully interesting and deeply instructive. Let me close this hasty review with giving the names of the remaining 11 chapters. It will be admitted that they are suggestive enough.

Chapters

II	Engineering details
III	Competition between mill-cloth and khaddar
IV	Factors tending to decrease competition
V	Increased purchasing power
VI	Decentralized production and distribution
VII	Unemployment
VIII	Some cotton technology
IX	Does it work?
X	Various objections
XI	Comparison of khaddar programme with other reform schemes
XII	Money price criteria
	Conclusion

Young India, 12-4-1928

457. PLACE OF KHADI

Lovers of khadi have been writing to me energetically warn- ing me against coquetting with mill-owners in the vain hope, as they call it, of securing their active co-operation on terms beneficial to the nation in the prosecution of the campaign of boycott of foreign cloth. I appreciate their warning. Some of them are tried and experi-enced workers in the khadi movement. But I do not give up hope of the mill-owners some day or other coming round to the national view. After all as an out-and-out believer in the method of non-violence, I may not let a single opportunity to slip of converting the mill-owners to the nationalistic view, even as I may not pass by a single occasion of converting Englishmen to the Indian view of Indian's good. After all, if we are to win our freedom by non-violent means, we shall have to knock at the doors of those who put obstacles in its way and plead with them to remove them. And even as in a bloody revolution those who are supposed to stand in the way are made to pay the last penalty whether they are countrymen or otherwise, so in a non-violent revolution are they, whether countrymen or foreigners, required to face satyagraha, if they will not listen to reason and wil obstinately stand in the way.

I therefore see no harm in having stated the conditions on which mill-owners can co-operate with the nation. It would have been wrong not to have done so. And if they accept the terms, I know that khadi, i. e., the masses have nothing to lose. For if the mills work not for exploiting the masses as they now do, but for serving them, they will supplement the products of the cottage spinning-wheel and the handloom and not supersede them as they now do. There is no doubt that if they hesitate to accept the terms stated by me, they will do so because the logical consequence repels them even as the logical consequence of Englishmen really becoming servants of the nation repels them. I would therefore ask khadi lovers not to be afraid of my so-called 'coquetting'. If we are strong in our faith, if khadi has the inherent vitality we claim for it, if it is the need of the masses, and if we persist in our effort with them, they will not fail to realize it. Khadi will fail only when khadi lovers falter in their faith or if their faith is based on a mere shadow, i.e., if there is no grinding poverty among the masses, if they have no leisure hours during the year, or if, though The Ashramthey have spare hours, the spinning-wheel is not the most

suitable and practicable occupation conceivable for many millions.

It is because of the implicit faith I have in khadi in terms of the propositions just stated and of the strength born of that faith that I am 'coquetting' with the mill-owners. It is quite likely, it is perhaps now practically certain, that no immediate good will come out of these negotiations. But they will serve for further action or guidance if we have not meanwhile already achived boycott of foreign cloth.

It is therefore profitable to inquire, even at the risk of repetition, what place khadi has in any scheme of boycott. In my opinion, boycott of foreign cloth is both necessary and feasible only because it affects and benefits the masses and can be achieved only if they co-operate. Boycott of foreign cloth would have but a temporary value if it could be obtained solely by the indigenous mills. And I hold it to be impossible in the near future to enforce the boycott through the single agency of mills. In my opinion, it is khadi alone that has made such boycott a practical proposition. Indeed it is so practical that if the politically minded India were to take up the sales of khadi, it is possible to manufacture in a year all the khadi that may be required by the nation even though there may be not a single yard of mill-calico—foreign or indigenous—available. I affirm this on the basis of the assumption that the villages will mostly manufa-cture their own khadi and the organized centres will manufacture for those who are not self-spinniers. Experience of past seven years shows that if there is a sudden famine of cloth in the country and if the masses are encouraged they have sufficient skil and the indigenous machi-nery for manufacturing their own khadi. No doubt a revolution-ary change in the mental outlook and sartorial tastes of politically minded India is necessary. I have no doubt that if the bulk of them do not respond now, they will have to do so when they realize that khadi has become irresistible. And to make it irresistible khadi workers have to work away with steadfastness, honesty, scientific skill and precision. I have 'coquetted' with mill-owners and discussed the possibility of immediate boycott of foreign cloth in association with them, in order to show that if they mean it they can give themselves the privilege of serving the nation at the same time that they serve themselves. Meanwhile, let none doubt that khadi is silently and imperceptibly revolutionizing the national taste and will bring about the boycott in its own good time, if it not anticipated by some such combination as I have ventured to suggest.

Young India, 12-4-1928

458. NOTES

BREACH OF PROMISE?

When I was in Berhampur, Ganjam District, last year, I was taken to a temple which I was told was open to all including the so-called untouchables. I was accompanied by some untouchable friends. A few weeks after I received a letter that the trustees had declared prohibition against the entry of untouchables. I was loath to believe the statement. I, therefore, inquired and here is the reply to my inquiry :[1]

If the information is correct, it is clear breach of promise by the trustees—a promise that was publicly made not merely to me but to the public of Berhampur through me. I wonder whether the trustees have any defence of explanation to offer. The untouchables have undoubtedly a clear case for offering satyagraha in this case. I do hope however that the public of Berhampur will redeem their self-respect by insisting on removal of the bar, if the bar does as a matter of fact exist.

"HUMAN SPIDER OF MAJORCA"

I am indebted to Sjt. C. Balajirao of Coimbatore for the following interesting press clipping[2]:

Young India, 12-4-1928

[1] Gandhiji's letter, dated March 22, 1928, is not available. The correspondent, whose letter is not reproduced here, had written tht the trustees of the temple were putting even greater restrictions than before on untouchables and that the latter had started losing faith in the untouchability movement of the Congress.

[2] Not reproduced here. It was about a "human spider" spinning hundreds of yards of thread in a minute with an instinctive skill handed down through fifteen generations.

459. SOUTH AFRICA INDIANS

The following letter, dated 24th February, 1928, addressed on behalf of the Minister of the Interior to the Secretary, South African Indian Congress, records the concession granted by the Union Government regarding the alleged fraudulent entries:[1]

If the condition regarding wives and children in clause (c) of the letter is not overstrictly enforced the concession should work well.[2]

Young India, 12-4-1928

460. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 12, 1928

MY DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have your letter. I did not write without full knowledge of what was being done on behalf of mill-owners. They are starting a separate organization which will have nothing to do with us. However I am quite at one with you what we should leave no stone unturned to secure their full co-operation. I am doing all I can at this end and you will let me know what success you have with Sir Purushottamdas. But I would like you to study the possibilites of the charkha movement. It is not so hopeless as you seem to think. Let me put the position in a nutshell. Mills by themselves cannot achieve the boycott within the time that will satisfy the politician buy mills if they play the game together with charkha can do so within a time that will satisfy the most sanguine expectations of any patriot. The charkha by itself can achieve the boycott within a reasonable period, the pace being dependent upon intensity of the work put in by the politicians. And as a khadi manufacturer, I am open to negotiate with anyone for supplying almost an illimitable quantity provided he does not bind me to the quality beyond a certain limit and does not mind the cost.

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The concession was that subject to certain conditions the Union Government would "refrain from the full enforcement of section 10 of Act 22 of 1913 as amended by section 5 of Act 37 of 1927 in the case of an Indian who proves . . . that he entered a province of the Union, other than the Orange Free State, prior to the 5th July, 1924".

[2] The condition was that those wives and children, who were not already brought to the Union of South Africa before July 5, 1927, would not be admitted.

I send you a copy of the report of the Spinners' Association[1] and a little pamphlet which latter you can read in 5 minutes but which gives you some very telling figures. The only thing that hampers the progress of khadi is the want of demand and want of capital.

I am yet awaiting the expected reply from Romain Rolland. If he does not cable, I may get a letter from him next week.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S. N. 13182

461. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

Thursday [*April 12, 1928*][2]

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have decided to hand over to the All-India Spinners' Association, the Kathiawar khadi work and all the equipment and debts relating to it. Taking responsibility for this work upon ourselves means my worrying about the money problems. I feel that there should be a regular resolution about this. You should therefore get such a resolution passed in the Committee or get the consent of members through a circular.

It seems that Revashanker Anupchand wishes to take possession of Manasukhlal's house in lieu of the debt which the latter owes him. If you know anything about this matter, please let me know. Valji says that you are of the opinion that Revashanker cannot take possession of the house.

What happened about the Morvi Antyaja School?

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: G. N. 5729

[1] *Vide* "Annual Report of the A.I.S.A.", 5-4-1928.

[2] From the postmark

462. SPEECH TO TRAINEES AT KHADI VIDYALAYA, AHMEDABAD [1]

[Before *April 13, 1928*][2]

The idea of the Khadi Seva Sangh was mine. I felt that just as the Government has an organization, its *naukarshahi*,[3] it would be good for us also to have an organization of workers. The Government's *naukarshahi* is called '*shahi'*[4] because its members, although they are servants, function as rulers. But we are not *'shahi'* because we have to do real service. For admission to this organization a course The Ashramof fixed period was prescribed because in order to be a khadi worker training and proficiency are required. The science of khadi is a serious affair; its scope is extremely vast, because through this science we want to serve the 33 crore people of India and through them the whole world. It is an empirical science; astronomy, on the contrary, is not an empirical science. The science of khadi is empirical because its experiments and conclusions are accessible to experience. Thirty-three crores of people can have direct experience of it. Hence its scope extends to where name of God reaches.

The vastness of this science can be realized from the fact that all the things that are done in textile mills we have to do in our homes. Those who run these mills have had to read a number of technical books the study of which is essential for acquiring proficiency in the work. Take only one process. Just as in the mills they have to test cotton, we too have to do it. These knowledge which they require as to the strength of cotton, cotton-gathering, etc., is also required by us. Our very first lesson is about cotton and it is a very important one. There are indeed many things which we have to do but which the mills are not required to do. For example, the mills do not have to bother whether in ginning the cotton-seeds remain intact or are broken, but we cannot afford to be careless in the matter. We want that the seeds should retain their properties. We want to feed these to the cattle and extract oil from them. Mills have nothing at all to do with all these

[1] The Khadi Vidyalaya was run at the Ashram for candidates selected for admission to the Khadi Seva Sangh.

[2] According to the source the speech was delivered during the National Week, i.e., between April 6 and 13.

[3] Bureaucracy

[4] "Royal"

things.

However rich we may be in resources, and however persistent in our efforts, it is all useless without a purpose. That purpose is national service. And it is so vast that one can go as deep into it as one chooses. There is no end to the labours of the mills because they have a selfish motive, they have to earn money. In their set-up there is scope for punishment as well as for reward and, after all, what is the principle of reward if it is not one of punishment? In our case there is no selfishness and no punishment. But it is not proper that since there is no selfishness we should not work as much as they do in mills. Our work is as deserving of efforts as it is selfless. The more love and labour we pour into it, the quicker will be our victory. Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose takes a leaf from a plant and very carefully and minutely examines it to see how many sections it has, whether it has organs of sense and whether it can feel as human beings do. He then places the results of his experiments before the world. Does he do this The Ashramfor money? No Then does he do so for fame? No. He does it without any selfish motive. But his objective is gaining knowledge, whereas our experiments are not purely for the sake of knowledge. Ours is an empirical science and we want to se its actual results. We have to observe carefully how much cotton is obtained from a given quantity of raw cotton, how much yarn is prepared out of that cotton and how much cloth is woven out of that yarn. And in this way we can calculate how many people have to put in how much labour in order to meet the cloth requirements of the whole country.

Acquire as much knowledge as you can in order to gain mastery of this science and carry out as many experiments as necessary. For this, you should have enthusiasm, interest and dedication. The person who cultivates this science with devotion will be granted the inner light by God.

But it is not enough for us merely acquire knowledge of this science. Mere knowledge would be useful in mills only. We need character in addition to this knowledge. You have come here not for earning your livelihood but with a desire to serve, to dedicate your life to the cause of khadi, and for this character will be very essential. How will you go among the people without character? Who will accept your service? Nobody bothers about the character of people working in mills but everybody will enquire about your character. You have to go to the people as servants, not as tyrants. If possible, you have to be

labourers living in their midst. For doing this a disciplined life is needed.

And cleanliness will be the first sign by which you can show your character. The impression which you will be able to create in the people by strict observance of the rules of cleanliness, you will not be able to do in any other way. And what is desirable is that you should not follow these rules for the sake of following them but it should become impossible for you not to follow them. You should so mould your nature that cleanliness becoemse a part of it; if you find uncleanliness anywhere you should be unable to bear it. Uncleanliness anywhere, whoever may be responsible for it, should become an eyesore to us and unless it is removed we should find no joy in living.

We wish to offer ourselves as oblation in the national *yajna*. In order to do so we have to become pure and clean. Does it do any The Ashramgood burning a dirty thing? But if your burn something fragrant, the atmoshepre is purified and the perfume spreads. Therefore let us become pure like sandalwood and offer ourselves up in this sacrifice. This is the purpose for which this Ashram has been established. Let the Ashram become the incense in the national sacrifice and remove the foul smell wherever it may be found. This is our ideal. Indeed, this is not the Ashram's ideal only, but that of every khadi worker.

And are you aware what a high place your work occupies? If someone asked me what the place of khadi in relation to service of the cow or tanning was, I should surely say that it had the first place. According to the grand simile of Tulsidas, this is the most benevolent activity, even though it seems dull:

साधु चरित जिमि सरिस कपासू।
निरस बिसद गुनमय फल जासू॥

How monotonous spinning appears! The Punjabis tell me that it is a women's work and that they cannot do it. Then there is neither honour nor profit in khadi work. If one becoemes expert in dairying or tanning, one can get big emoluments. But in khadi there is no such attraction because it is the work of millions of people. We requires seven lakh workers in order to organize khadi work throughout the country. How can we afford to give them high salaries? Perhaps seven

lakh cow workers or tanning experts may not be required by the country, but it would not do to have less than this number for khadi work. 'This work is so important and it is required on such a big scale. Despite its seeming monotony, there is hardly any other work more intresting than this. If you start taking lots of interest in it, you would adorn yourself, the Ashram and the country as well.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 19-4-1928

463. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 13, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

You will see how I have used your letter to sustain the case for khadi.[1] I am anxious to receive your account of the tour that is now going on and more so to hear from you how it is affecting your health.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 1588

[1] The reference presumably is to "Place of Khadi", 12-4-1928.

464. LETTER TO A. ELLINGS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 13, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have cordial letter. I have not had the courage to decide whether I should respond to the Euroean invitations or not. I am therefore waiting for an expected letter from Europe before I make up my mind. And such being the case, I do not know whether you want any statement from me. But I may say that I will devote all the time I can spare to the development of the message of spinning-wheel.

Yours sincerely,

A. ELLINGS, ESQ.
NEWS EDITOR,
"THE ENGLISHMAN"
9 HARE STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13187

465. LETTER TO MRS. BLAIR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 13, 1928

DEAR MRS. BLAIR,

I was delighted to hear from you after such a long time. It was good of you to think of the starving millions during the National Week. I can quite understand your inability at your time of life and in that uncongenial atmosphere around you to be able to spin steadily and well. But it does my heart good to find you ever thinking of the poor countrymen. Did you sell any khadi during the National Week?

Yours sincerely,

MRS. BLAIR
MALL VILLA 3
DARJEELING

From a microfilm: S.N. 13189

466. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 13, 1928

I have your second cable. I see that after all you belong to a rich country. I, belonging to a pauper country, think fifty times before sending cablegrams and each time say to myself one rupee means 64 hungry mouths fed per day after an hour's work each. For one-sixty fourth of a rupee buys sufficient flour to give one meal to one of the starving millions. When therefore we meet, if we do, I am going to ask you to account for all the cables that you have been spending money on although you represent the poor people of Poplar.

I can't summon up sufficient courage to make up my mind whether to go to Europe or not to go. I am therefore waiting. for an expected letter from Romain Rolland. The expected letter will compel me to make up my mind finally. I don't know why I have difficulty in making up my mind about the European visit in spite of your glowing letter.

Yours sincerely,

MISS MURIEL LESTER

From a photostat: S.N. 14955

467. LETTER TO T. NAGESHA RAO

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 13, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am sorry I was unable to overtake it earlier. The only thing I can advise you to do is to live absolutely apart from your wife, take clean unstimulating diet, live in the fresh air the whole of the 24 hours, and fill up your waking hours with healthy activities and, when the body is tired, with healthy reading and thinking. You will produce little impression upon your pupils until you have gained mastery over yourself.

Yours sineerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. T. NAGESHA RAO
TEACHER
BOARD HIGH SCHOOL
PUTTUR, S. CANARA

From the original: C. W. 9205. Courtesy: T. Nagesha Rao

468. A LETTER TO S. RAMANATHAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 13, 1928

MY DEAR RAMANATHAN,

Here is a long letter I am obliged to send you. From the correspondence copies enclosed by. . . [1] with his letter, I presume that you have got conclusive proof of his dishonesty.[2] Before I can send him a final answer, I want to know whether there is any written or printed contract which. . . [3] signed and, if he did, whether it has any clause regarding automatic forfeiture of security. If there is no such written agreement about forfeiture, are you justified without the intervention of court in declaring forfeiture.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1 file

From a microfilm: S. N. 13593

469. A LETTER [4]

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 13, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You should know that I am now no longer in charge of the administration of the Association[5]. Seth Jamnalal Bajaj is the administrative head, but I am interesting myself in your case and have written to Sjt. Ramanathan. As soon as I hear from him, I hope to write to you again. Meanwhile let me say that from the perusal of the papers sent by you, there seems to me to be a very strong case against you. If Sjt. Ramanathan has positive proof of bribery and corruption, I should wonder what defence you could have.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S. N. 13592

[1] Name omitted
[2] *Vide* the following item
[3] *ibid*.
[4] Addressee's name is omitted; *vide* the preceding item.
[5] The All-India Spinners Association

470. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 14, 1928

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

I have your letter. If the meeting of the representatives of mill-owners comes off and if you give me due notice, I shall be present. But up to now there is no intimation from Motilalji.

I am in constant touch with the representatives of millowners and so far as I am aware nothing is going to come out of these negotiations. The mill-owners have decided upon a separate organization of their own from which they wish to eschew politics altogether. Sir Purushottamdas has declined to be president even of this association. And I understand that he has come to the conclusion that the mill-owners will do nothing substantial at the present moment. Mr. Birla writes to me almost in the same strain, though he wants the boycott campaign without the mill owners. After having had so many The Ashramchats and so much correspondence with the latter, I incline to the same view. But that does not mean that we should not have the conference Motilalji has in in view.

You will keep me informed of what is going on. I would like you to read all I have written about the mills in the pages of *Young India*. If you have not the articles I can send them to you.

I wish you will settle the Jamia constitution without delay.

Yours sincerely,

DR. M. A. ANSARI
AHMEDABAD PALACE
BHOPAL

From a photosat: S.N. 13191

471. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 14, 1928

BHAISHRI VITHALBHAI,

This letter is in reply to yours. If the boycott becomes universal, we do not have enough *chhayal*[1] and dhotis. We can meet the demands of those who will go about, if need be, in a *langoti*[2], but wear nothing except khadi. To those, however, who are not ready to go to this extent but will take part in the boycott of foreign cloth if they can get some other cloth in its place, we may supply mill-made dhotis and saris. This means that the mills cannot manufacture any other cloth except what we decide and that, even in their shope, khadi will be sold as a substitute for the kinds of cloth which they do not manufacture. I can realize that the mills will not agree to this, but we cannot come to any understanding with them as long as they do not agree. My demand means that the mills should accept the permanent place of khadi. If you do not understand this point, please ask me. I do not want you to come here, leaving your work unattended there. You may discuss the matter when you have occasion to come here and get the necessary opportu nity.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9764

[1] Women's upper garment
[2] Codpiece

472. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 13, 1928

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your letter. I understand about Manasukhlal although I am very much confused. I am of the opinion that if a person has incurred debts he himself or his wife or children have to right to keep anything from the wealth amassed by him. But I do not know the facts of this case. And that reminds me: may I know if something has been done about the memorial to him? It is necessary to pass the following resolution about khadi :

"As the Kathiawar Political Conference has many occupations, it does not have enough men and money to bear the responsibility of the khadi activity. Gandhiji who hitherto used to shoulder the economic responsibility does not have the physical means to do so. The All-India Spinners' Association is willing to shoulder the responsibility. Therefore the Committee of this Conference hands over the entire administration, all its money and the entire responsibility of the Kathiawar khadi activity to the All-India Spinners' Association."

Did Mulchandbhai get money for the *Antyaja* movement? Bhai Fulchand is not with you, so who helps you now? What other work of the Conference is going on at present?

Vandemataram from
BAPU

PS.

One can see that you sold quite a good amount of khadi.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5729

473. SERVICE OF THE SUPPRESSED [1]

The servant of the suppressed serves both himself and the society, as the oppressor ultimately oppresses himself, and the engineer is always hoist with his own petard.

We were on the point of being pariahs of the world, having treated the bulk of our brethren as untouchables. We are however likely to escape that catastrophe, as the Hindu society is trying to remove this blot in various ways and in many provinces. By far the biggest and most successful of these efforts is perhaps the one conducted by Anasuyabehn in Ahmedabad.

I addressed two meetings last month, one under the auspices of the Sweepers' Mahajan and the other a gathering of the children of the Labour Union schools.[2] Most of these children belonged to the suppressed classes. I take the following[3] from the report that was read at the meeting :

I do not know of workmen's children elsewhere receiving education under such orderly and careful organization and in such numbers.

The mill-owners ought to welcome the enterprise. On the contrary they are reported to have threatened to stop the monetary help they are at present giving. I do hope not only that it is a false alarm, but that they will yearly add to their contributions. In doing so I should humbly think they will be doing nothing beyond what they owe to their workmen.

A noteworthy feature of the enterprise is the large contribution of the workmen themselves towards the expenses, the ultimate aim being to conduct these schools wholly at their own expense. This of course presupposes their economic betterment, a stimulation in them of the desire for sacrifice and for the education of their children. In the mean while, the mill-owners and other philanthropists should keep the enterprise going.

[1] The Gujarati original, of which this is a translation by Mahadev Desai, appeared in *Navajivan*, 15-4-1928.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Gathering of Students and Teachers, Ahmedabad", 31-3-1928.

[3] Not reproduced here

The sweepers' meeting[1] was remarkable for the things it brought to light. I heard them sing their songs with flawless pronunciation. They were comparatively unlettered, but no one who listened to their songs could say that they belonged to the suppressed classes. But they are indebted, underpaid, and addicted to drink. Most of them beg and live on leavings from plates given to them by Hindus of higher castes. Their condition makes the conclusion irresistible that we the so-called high caste Hindus are responsible for their failings, and only the inherent strength of Hinduism is responsible for their good points. Hinduism has helped them to retain some of their culture in spite of the oppression they have laboured under. They would never have been reduced to their present state if we had regarded them as our own kith and kin.

Anasuyabehn may carry on welfare work among them, but who will look to their housing? I have seen the hovels they live in. It is the duty of the mill-owners and the municipality to provide them with better houses, and even if the former fail in their duty the latter may not do so, for better housing is essential as much for the health of the city as for that of the workmen.

UNTOUCHABLES AMONG UNTOUCHABLES

I addressed a third meeting[2] which was full of painful experience. There is a suppressed class night-school under the Gujarat Vidyapith conducted by the students of the Vidyalaya. They take considerable pains over the school, which until a short time ago had a very large attendance of Dhed children. The teachers thought of the sweepers' children and induced the sweepers to send their children to the school but as soon as these came, most of the Dheds withdrew their children form the school! The teachers therefore turned to me to find a way out of the situation. So I went there. Very few Dhed parents attended the meeting. One of them whom I tried to tackle said frankly, taking his stand on the traditional religion: "How may a Dhed touch a sweeper?" "But if the touch of the sweeper pollutes the Dhed, why should the higher castes touch the Dheds?," I asked. "We never ask them to do so," he quickly rejoined, and floored me.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Sweepers' Meeting, Ahmedabad", 27-3-1928.
[2] No report of this meeting is available.

This is how we are hoist with our own petard. If untouchability had been allowed go to on unchecked, each one of us should have considered the other untouchable and we should have been doomed. But thank God, in spite of the orthodox Dheds and Banias and Brahmins, the snake of untouchability is breathing its last.

The teachers of course ought to adhere to their resolve. They should not be angry with the Dheds, but neither should they let go a single sweeper boy for the sake of the Dhed boys. Let them shower all their love and attention on the sweeper boys, and there their duty ends. Their determination and faith will melt the hearts of the Dheds, who, as soon as they find the sweepers' children growing in cleanliness and character, will not help sending their own children too. The anti-untouchability worker has to begin at the lowermost rung of the ladder. There are, I know, some 'reformers' who are apt to think: 'Better reform and serve our own castes before we reform and serve the Dheds.' This way of thinking betrays impatience and ignorance, impatance because we fight shy of obstacles, and ignorance because we forget that all other reform of Hinduism is nothing worth until the main reform, viz., the removal of untouchability, is achieved. This blot poisons the whole system, even as a drop of arsenic would poison a tankful of milk. Remove this and you open the door for other reforms, retain this and you render other reforms nugatory. The disease of a consumptive unless the root cause is tackled remains just the same whether you remove or do not remove a few abscesses on his body.

Young India, 19-4-1928

474. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

SABARMATI,
Sunday [*April 15, 1928*][1]

CHI. MANI,

I haven't heard from you since you went there[2]; this is not good. Let me know your daily programme of work there. Write your experiences.

Read the enclosed letter and let me know if you wish to go to Ceylon[3]. How did you celebrate the [National] Week?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 65

475. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

April 16, 1928

MY DEAR MIRABAI,

I was thinking to hear from you about Padmaja. Tell her she has to be well quickly or she will cease to be regarded as a brave girl. How long does she expect to be there? What about your visit to America?

I have become a coward. I can't decide whether to go to Europe or not.

With love,

THE SPINNER

MRS. S. NAIDU

From a photostat: S.N. 13192

[1] From the source
[2] Bardoli
[3] For khadi propaganda

476. LETTER TO ANNIE BESANT

SABARMATI,
April 16, 1928

DEAR DR. BESANT,

I thank you for your note. I may not join the movement of which you write. I feel we are having too many institutions and organizations without increasing men and women to work them.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13193

477. LETTER TO U. RAJAGOPALA KRISHNAYYA

April 16, 1928

BHAI RAJAGOPALA,

God being Almighty can bring about anything.

Violence should not be answered with violence.

One cannot gain knowledge of dharma from a historical interpretation of the *Mahabharata*. And the *Mahabharata* in certainly not history.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 9238. Courtesy: U. Rajagopala Krishnayya

478. CABLE TO RAJENDRA PRASAD[1]

[On or after *April 16, 1928*]

RAJENDRAPRASAD

JAYAWATI

LONDON

SUCCESS CONFERENCE.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 14381

479. CABLE TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI [2]

AHMEDABAD,
April 17, 1928

RT. HON. SASTRI

PRETORIA

THINK CERTIFICATES AT SETTLEMENT 1914 SHOULD REMAIN UNAFFECTED.[3]

GANDHI

From the photostat: S.N. 11974

[1] It was sent in reply to a cable, received on April 16, seeking a message for the Youth Conference.

[2] This was sent in response to the following cable dated April 13, 1928, from SAIC (South African Indian Congress), Johannesburg: "Developments regarding new immigration law very serious. Clause 5 if fully put into operation will undermine rights secured by struggle to even registration certificate holders whose claims go back to the beginning. If any flaw may be found suggestive of illicit entry condonation is offered conditional upon surrender certificates presently held in exchange for letters conferring rights of holder temporary permits and excluding rights wives and children must be applied for before first November. Thereafter inquisition deportations and demoralization of community inevitable. We have urged that line be drawn 1914 at least to narrow field and preserve something of spirit of Gandhi-Smuts Settlement. Implore you cable Sastri to press for at least this concession. Reply urgent" (S.N. 11974).

[3] In reply Sastri sent a cable on April 18, 1928, reading: "Your cable. Last night Minister already announced condonation conditions without special treatment for certificated before 1914" (S.N. 11974).

480. LETTER TO K. MADHAVAN NAIR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 17, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. There is a confusion of thought about your action. If it was good for your friend to have the Law Membership, it was good both from a public point of view as well as a private point of view; and if it was legitimate for you to congratulate him in your private capacity, it was equally legi- timate for you to congratulate him publicly and in your public capacity. You will not congratulate privately or publicly a friend upon being appointed a hangman, the post might carry a large salary and distinction on the part of those who might appoint him. Did we not think at one time that members of the present Government were very much like hangmen? It was really a matter for condonation[1] that a friend was offered and accepted Law Membership. But you may not share my view about the judgment of the present Government and those working it. If that is so, you may publicly defend your private conduct and take the risk of any odium that may be temporarily attached to it. After all, the approbation of your own conscience must be all-sufficing.

You are quite correct in saying that if our private judgment and feelings were to be suppressed, we should become hypocrites. It would be a bad day for us if servants of the public were to become hypocrites.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. MADHAVAN NAIR, M.L.C.
CALICUT

From a photostat: S.N. 13186

[1] Slip for 'condemnation'?

481. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 17, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

I have your letter. Do you know that even when you wrote to me that you were going to the Punjab, I did not know that you were going as the president of the Conference? When Dr. Kitchlew wrote to me, he said nothing about who the president was to be. However I was glad when I learnt that you presided.

Of course I notice everywhere what you noticed at the Conference. I wonder if you have noticed what I sense everywhere, utter absence of seriousness and disinclination to do any concrete work demanding sustained energy.

Do you find any hope in the Punjab for Hindu-Muslim unity?

About the European visit, I can give you no definite news yet.

The fiasco about mills you know everything [of] by this time from Father.

From a photostat: S.N. 13194

482. LETTER TO SIR. DANIEL M. HAMILTON

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 17, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your cordial letter and invitation. If I go to Europe, I would certainly love to under your roof and discuss with you things of mutual interest.

I do indeed like your paper on modern finance. If there is any other literature bearing on it that you would like me to study, please guide me, and if you could find time to write for me a popular article or a series making banking easy for people to understand I would gladly publish the article or the series in the pages of *Young India*.

Yours sincerely,

SIR DANIEL HAMILTON
BALMACARA, KYLE
ROSS-SHIRE
SCOTLAND

From a photostat: S.N. 14293

483. LETTER TO HANS KOHU [1]

April 17, 1928

I have your letter. This proposed European visit is a matter of great concern for me. I am awaiting M. Romain Rolland's letter before I can finally decide.

From a photostat: S.N. 14951

484. MESSAGE TO STUDENTS' CONGRESS, CEYLON

April 18, 1928

A message was received from Gandhiji wishing the Congress success and expressing the hope that the students would not forget the starving millions of the mother country, the most effective manner of helping whom was by wearing khadi.

The Hindu, 19-4-1928

[1] He was connected with the Peace Association, Jerusalem.

485. OFF THE TRAIL

Remarkable are the attempts made by and on behalf of the Government to befog people's minds and take them away from the main point by raising side issues and discovering or professing to discover flaws in evidence produced in support of the main point. It does not suit the Government to admit that its history is a history of the ruin of India's industries and India's manhood. One of such recent attempts is to discredit the oft-told story in the Press and on the platform about the cutting off by the weavers of their own thumbs in order to escape the East India Company' myrmidons who sought to compel them to wind silk. If the weaver has no thumb he cannot do the work expected of him. And the way the history has been discredited is by digging out the credentials of William Bolts on the strength of whose evidence the late Romesh Chandra Dutt First made the statement regarding the cutting off of thumbs. The writer of the refutation is not able to say that William Bolts gave false evidence, but he says that William Bolts had no character to keep and that therefore his evidence is not worthy of credence. And he further says that he was a dismissed servant of the Company under its resolution which described him as "a very unworthy and unprofitable servant of the Company, his conduct has been distinguished by a tenacious adherence to those pernicious principles relative to the rights of inland trade, in which he appears to have been so conspicuously oppressive". Who does not know the tricks of pettifogging lawyers to discredit witnesses by proving their bad character as if a man with a bad character was ever incapable of making a true statement? I make bold to say that whatever the character of William Bolts, his testimony about the cutting off of thumbs need not be discredited unless it can be otherwise disproved, and there has been nothing brought forward to show that that testimony is unworthy to be believed. On the contrary, what is more likely than that weavers in order to escape harrowing and continuous oppression would once for all render themselves physically unfit to do the work imposed upon them under unbearable punishment? After all, the evidence of William Bolts is only part of the story of the ruin of India's industries told by Romesh Chandra Dutt with such deadly effect and supported by the evidence of a variety of witnesses, the cumulative effect of whose evidence becomes irresistible. The main point is whether the industry was or was not

ruined with the greatest deliberation. If it was, it makes little difference if the evidence of one witness is rejected and it will lie ill in the mouth of the criminal to say that out of a hundred witnesses one has told an untruth. But as I have said in this instance, there is nothing relevant brought forward to show that William Bolts's testimony is not to be believed. Let me however put before the reader a few relevant extracts from Dutt's first volume of the *Economic History of India*. He says :

> It will appear from the facts stated in the last two chapters that large portions of the Indian population were engaged in various industries down to the first decade of the nineteenth century. Weaving was still the national industry of the people; millions of women eked out the family income by their earnings from spinning; and dyeing, tanning and working in metals also gave employment to millions. It was not, however, the policy of the East India Company to foster Indian industries. It has been stated in a previous chapter that, as early as 1769, the Directors wished the manufacture of raw silk to be encouraged in Bengal, and that of silk fabrics discouraged. And they also directed that silkwinders should be made to work in the Company's factories, and prohibited from working outside "under severe penalties by the authority of the Government". This mandate had its desired effect. The manufacture of silk and cotton goods declined in India, and the people who had exported these goods to the markets of Europe and Asia in previous centuries began to import them in increasing quantities.

So much was the importation of silk and cotton goods from England stimulated by these methods that whereas in 1794 it was £156, in 1813 it rose to £108, 824. In 1813 the Company's charter was renewed and important evidence was taken at the enquiry prior to renewal. "In respect of Indian manufactures," says the author, "they—the Commons—sought to discover how they could be replaced by British manufactures, and how British industries could be promoted at the expense of Indian industries."

The commercial policy of England is thus described by Henry St. George Tucker :

> What is the commercial policy which we have adopted in this country with relation to India? The silk manufactures and its piecegoods made of silk and cotton intermixed have long since been excluded altogether from our markets; and of late partly in consequence of the operation of a duty of 67 per cent, but chiefly from the effect of superior machinery, the cotton fabrics, which hiterto constituted the staple of India, have not only been displaced in

this country, but we actually export our cotton manufactures to supply a part of the consumption of our Asiatic possessions. India is thus reduced from the state of a manufacturing to that of an agricultural country.

Here is another testimony of the same character by H. H. Wilson :

> It is also a melancholy instance of the wrong done to India by the country on which she has become dependent. It was stated in evidence (in 1813) that the cotton and silk goods of India up to the period could be sold for a profit in the British market at a price from 50 to 60 per cent lower than those fabricated in England. It consequently became necessary to protect the latter by duties of 70 and 80 per cent, on their value, or by positive prohibition. Had this not been the case, had not such prohibitive duties and decrees existed, the mills of Paisley and Manchester would have been stopped in their outset, and could scarcely have been again set in motion, even by the power of steam. They were created by the sacrifice of the Indian manufacture. Had India been independent, she would have retaliated, would have imposed prohibitive duties upon British goods, and would thus have preserved her own productive industry from annihilation. This act of self-defence was not permitted to her; she was at the mercy of the stranger. British goods were forced upon her without paying any duty, and the foreign manufacturer employed the arm of political injustice to keep down and ultimately strangle a competitor with whom he could not have contended on equal terms.

According to Thomas Munro "the Company's servants assembled the principal weavers and placed a guard over them until they entered into engagements to supply the Company only."

The author then proceeds :

> When once a weaver accepted an advance he seldom got out of his liability. A peon was placed over him to quicken his deliveries if he delayed, and he was liable to be prosecuted in the courts of justice. The sending of a peon meant a fine of one anna (about $1\frac{1}{2}$ d.) a day on the weaver, and the peon was armed with a rattan, which was not unoften used to good purpose. Fine was sometimes imposed on the weavers, and their brass utensils were seized for its recovery. The whole weaving population of villages were thus held in subjection to the Company's factories. . . . The control under which the weaver population was held was not merely a matter of practice, but was legalized by Regulations. It was provided that a weaver who had received advances from the Company "shall on no account give to any other persons whatever, European or Native, either the labour or the produce engaged to the Company"; that on his failing to deliver the stipulate cloths, "the Commercial Resident shall be at liberty to place peons upon him in order to quicken his

deliveries'; that on his selling his cloths to others, the weaver "shall be liable to be prosecuted in the dewani Adalat"; that "weavers, possessed of more than one loom, and entertaining one or more workmen, shall be subject to a penalty of 35 per cent on the stipulated price of every piece of cloth that they may fail to deliver according to the written agreement"; that landlords and tenants "are enjoined not to hinder the Commercial Residents or their officers from access to weavers";' and that they "are strictly prohibited from behaving with disrespect to the Commercial Residents" of the Company.

Is it to be wondered at if weavers living under such intolerable restraint broke loose from it by cutting off their own thumbs? To revive an industry that was thus deliberately destroyed and which supplemented the resources of millions of people is the sacred duty of every Indian who loves his country and should be considered a privilege by every Englishman who would repent of the grave wrong done to a great country by his ancestors. But instead of repentance, we see a painful persistence in the policy initiated 150 years ago and an equally painful effort made by every means possible to bolster up the wrong.

Young India, 19-4-1928

486. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 19, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. You tell me nothing about your own health. I hope you are keeping well. Does this our mean more khadi sales? Is there a great response from the people addressed,
or, are the collections from individuals?

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1589

487. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

April 20, 1928

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have your letter. I am daily making fresh discoveries which go to show that we may expect nothing from the mill-owners at the present stage. They will yeild only to pressure and the pressure of the Government is more felt than that of the Congress. But we may not be impatient. We need not put boycott of Indian mill-made cloth in the same category as that of foreign cloth. A negative attitude about mill-cloth will be quite enough to keep the mills under wholesome check. A positive boycott will only stir up bad blood without bringing us any nearer boycott of foreign cloth. We shall never, unless a sudden manifestation of mass energy comes into being, succeed in reaching the millions. In spite of all we may do, for the time being the latter will therefore be buying Indian mill-cloth and, further, there will be keen competition between Lancashire mills and Japanese on the one hand and Indian mills on the other. We have therefore to concentrate our effort on changing the mentality of the townspeople and those few villagers whom we are controlling and bringing them round to the adoption of khadi. If we set about doing this, the meassage of khadi will percolate the masses. Then both our and foreign mills will feel the brunt. That will be the time for our mills to come in line with us. The moment they do so we can complete boycott of foreign cloth inside of six months. The programme definitely therefore has to be this :

We leave Indian mills severely alone. We carry on a whirl- wind compaign for boycott of foreign cloth through khadi, asking people to count no sacrifice too great in adopting khadi. We must have faith in ourselves and in our people and believe that they can make this which appears to me to be small sacrifice. But I confess that at the present moment I do not visualize the organi- zation that is needed to carry on the boycott. The politicals who are in possession of the platform do not mean to do any serious business. They will not

concentrate on any constructive work. Jawahar in a letter truly describes the atmosphere when he says: "There is violence in the air." We read and hear so much about the boycott of British cloth in Bengal, but the letters I receive almost every week show that there is no real boycott. There is no organization behind it, there is no will working behind it. All things considered, what will you advise me to do?

The expected letter from Romain Rolland is due next Tuesday at the latest. I must after that come to a decision quickly. Supposing that Romain Rolland predisposes me in favour of the European visit, what would you have me to do in view of the talk of the boycott? Would you want me for the sake of the boycott not to go to Europe? I shall accept your decision whatever it may be. I am not personally keen on the European visit, but if all is plain sailing in India and if Romain Rolland wants me to visit Europe, I should feel bound to accept the European invitations. Will you please wire your decision? Jawahar will be with you and probably you will know Doctor Ansari's mind.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S. N. 13197

488. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 20, 1928

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your letter. After having read Revashankerbhai's letter, how can I press him to accept the proposal? Or do you wish only to use his name and do not expect him to do any work? If that is what you wish, then we should find out a temporary vice-president who is a good worker. It is certainly desirable that you should go to Bombay for all this work. Maybe Revashankerbhai could suggest to you in the

course of discussion the name of such a vice-president or of somebody else as president. Tell me now what you want, so that I may act accordingly.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5691

489. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

April 20, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[1] I cannot resist you, but I take you at your word. I send you a single sentence as follows :

Tolstoy's greatest contribution to life lies, in my opinion, in his ever attempting to reduce to practice his professions without counting the cost.

Thanks for your inquiry about my health. I appear to be keeping well at the present moment.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 14287

[1] The addressee had written: "The special issue of *Unity* in commemoration of Tolstoy Centenary would be incomplete if it did not contain a tribute from your pen."

490. LETTER TO PETE MATOFF

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 20, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I suppose I shall receive your book[1] in due course.

I shall feel deeply interested in whatever you may write to me about the condition of the Doukhobors in their new home.[2]

I am sorry I do not keep any photograph of myself. I am editing a weekly newspaper called *Young India* of which I send you the latest issue.

I shall be interested also to know more about the new leader[3] who has just come to you from Russia.

Yours sincerely,

PETE MATOFF, ESQ.
THRUMS, B.C.
FREE CANADA

From a photostat: S.N. 14288

[1] *Message of the Doukhobors*

[2] The addressee had written that Doukhobors "were persecuted in Russia [in] 1895-96 for burning fire-arms and other destructive elements" and "in 1899 were permitted to migrate to Canada"

[3] Peter P. Verigin

491. LETTER TO KASTURBHAI LALBHAI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
April 20, 1928

BHAISHRI KASTURBHAI[1],

I do feel a little hesitant in writing this letter to you but Bhai Ambalal is not here and you do know me a little. I therefore venture to write to you. Enclosed herewith is . . .[2] to Dinabandhu Andrews. Talking about that, I told him that all right, I would beg for money from somewhere. He had in fact asked for ten thousand rupees. Of this, five thousand hewanted for his expenses in Europe. I am not very clear about all this. Whatever it may be, Birla brothers have paid expenses to Kavivar. . .[3] It seems that that amount will not be enough to accommodate Andrews. As far as possible, I do not want to go out of Gujarat to collect money for Andrews. Can I approach you with a begging bowl? If, for whatever reason, you do not want to give anything, please do not hesitate to say 'no'. I consider it my duty to go with a begging bowl wherever I can. But it is also my dharma not to feel bad if people refuse to give anything. If you feel like saying 'no', please do say so without any hesitation. Only then I. . . .[4]

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33140

[1] Kasturbhai Lalbhai, Agent, Raipur Manufacturing Company
[2] The source is damaged here.
[3] The source is damaged at these places.
[4] *ibid.*

492. LETTER TO S. GANESAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 21, 1928

MY DEAR GANESAN,

I have not understood the last paragraph of your letter which I take first, though I understand that you will be unable for some time to bring out Mr. Gregg's book. It will be terrible if that happens after the long notices that have been taken in *Young India* of that book. Please wire on receipt of this when if at all you are likely to bring the book out.

You need not apologize for having sent the book on *Self-Restraint* v. *Self-Indulgence* to Dr. Stopes. Indeed having reviewed her books and even advertised them, you were bound to send my book to her. There was nothing wrong in it, but you are certainly under no obligation to publish her review of my book, unless of course you independently think that it is a good and well-arguedreview. And if you do not publish her review, you will be rendering her a service by telling her straightway why you decline to publish it.

Now about yourself. The only thing I can suggest to you is to become absolutely firm about your resolution and you will find that all your difficulties will vanish. Our difficulties really arise when we are tossed to and fro by our weakness and indecisive action. A decisive, firm, clear action is like the glistening sun which not only dispels all darkness but destroys all disease germs. The vast majority of our ills and our difficulties arose from our doubting state.

I shall have decided about the European visit next week and if I decide to go, it will be somewhere in the middle of May or it may be the first week. Do come when you like. But before you come try to finish all your announced commitments.

I am glad you have ceased to advertise birth-control publications.

Yours,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13199

493. LETTER TO SHANKARAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 21, 1928

MY DEAR SHANKARAN,

I have your letter. So you are now president of a Congress Committee. This is very good. And I am glad that Girdharilal is taking such keen interest in khadi.

I am forwarding your letter to Sjt. Vithaldas Jerajani for attention.

I quite agree with you that in khadi organizations there should be no indifference, certainly never any cheating. I am asking Vithaldas what terms can be offered.

If you believe in the First Cause, you must regard the 'why' of the First Cause as a futile question. Whilst it is laudable and legitimate to bring everything under the dominion of reason we must be humble enough to recognize that there must be things beyond reason, seeing that man is an imperfect being.

I am glad you are making yourself serviceable all round. I entertain no fear about your being lax in the duty entrusted to you.

I have not been able to decide anything about the European visit.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13200

494. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA, ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 21, 1928

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. You should start working gradually; there is no need to over-exert yourself. Do not be at all nervous if Nikhil's condition deteriorates. And whenever you do feel agitated, recall this verse that we always chant: "Whose mind is untroubled in sorrows and length not for joys, who is free from passion, fear and wrath—he is called the ascetic of secure under-standing."[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIMATI HEMPRABHADEVI
RUBY LODGE
P.O. BURGANDA
GIRIDIH
EAST INDIAN RAILWAY

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1656

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 56

495. CABLE TO DOUBLEDAY DORAN CO.

[After *Aprill 21, 1928*][1]

CONSULT REVEREND HOLMES "UNITY" AND MACMILLAN PUBLISHER WHO HOLDS RIGHTS PUBLICATION ENTIRE BOOK.

From a microfilm: S.N. 14745

496. LETTER TO JULIA ISBRUCKER [2]

[Before *April 22, 1928*][3]

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 7th ultimo. If I go to Europe at all and if I find the time and have the health for it, I shall gladly attend the Conference.

From a photostat: S.N. 14944

497. CLERKS v. *WORKING MEN* [4]

Sheth Ranchhodlal Amritlal has sent me the following scheme[5] of Industrial Insurance for clerks :

I understand little of insurance, but I take it that in this age of insurance any scheme of industrial insurance devised for the benefit of the clerical workers would be to their good. Only an insurance expert can offer helpful criticism of the scheme, and I take it that Sjt. Ranchhodlal has framed the scheme in consultation with some large-hearted expert.

There cannot be two opinions as to the fact that mill-owners, no less than other business and commercial firms, ought to take a paternal interest in the welfare of their employees. The relations between the employer and the employee have been up to now merely those of the master and servant, they should be of father and children. I therefore welcome the scheme.

[1] The addressees, in a cable, dated April 21, 1928, had sought permission to publish an American edition of *An Autobiography*.

[2] Secretary, Inter-religions Conference for Peace, The Hague

[3] This letter was evidently written before April 22, on which date Gandhiji decided not to go to Europee. *Vide* "Letter to C.F. Andrews", 22-4-1928.

[4] The Gujarati original, of which this is a translation by Mahadev Desai, appeared in *Navajivan*, 22-4-1928.

[5] Not reproduced here

Medical relief should not, in my opinion, be free. It should be genuine, prompt and cheap. Free aid is likely to undermine their independent spirit. Sometimes free aid is rendered perfunctorily and sometimes it is abused, from both of which evils the clerks should be saved.

The main grievance of the clerk and the working man is low pay and indifference to his welfafre. The measures suggested in the scheme will be a direct and simple redress of the grievance, and I welcome them.

The condition of clerks is, in certain respects, undoubtedly much more pitiable. I have a vivid picture of their condition before my mind. It was given to me in 1915 in Calcutta by the Marwari Clerks' Associa-tion. It was a tragic tale of their helplessness. The number of clerks is small, their power of endurance and their capacity for union is feeble. Whereas the clerk is the only earning member of his family, practically all the members of the workingman's family are wage-earners. The clerks must bestir themselves to improve their own condition. They must unite, and must educate their dependants, especially their wives, to engage in some gainful occupation. They have lost all self-confidence and are helpless. Those who are honest, competent in their work, conscien-tious and hard working need not despair of finding a suitable situation.

True social economics will teach us that the workingman, the clerk and the employer are parts of the same indivisible organism. None is smaller or greater than the other. Their interests should be not conflicting but identical and interdependent.

Young India, 3-5-1928

498. LETTER TO ELISABETH KNUDSEN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 22, 1928

DEAR MISS KNUDSEN,

I was wondering why I have not heard from you for such a long time. I am glad you have been having such success in Karachi. Owing to the National Week I suspended both the oil massage and your massage, and owing to pressure of work since, I have not been able to resume them. But in spite of the suspension I increased nearly two lb. in weight. As soon as the pressure decreases I hope to recommence massage.

Gangabehn is neither better nor worse. For the last two days she has been having some fever. The Calcutta patient left about ten days ago. Mr. Kothari is in Darjeeling at the present moment.

Yours sincerely,

MISS ELISABETH KNUDSEN
C/O DR. THIRANANDANI
"NEW TIMES" BLDGS.
KARACHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13201

499. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 22, 1928

You will be perhaps sorry to hear that I have decided not to go to Europe this year. There was not call for me to go in answer to the various invitations, but I felt that, if Rolland considered it worth while my going to meet him in furtherance of the common cause, I would go and incidentally respond to invitations from Europe. Now there is the expected letter from him. I send you a copy so that you can better understand my decision. Rolland's hesitation to let me go to Europe principally for the sake of meeting him shows that as an artist and as the interpreter of my message he does not regard it as necessary that I should leave all my important work here and go to Europe to meet him. And as there is no call in him to ask me to go or to accept my

offer to go, I feel that if my letter to him was truthful, that is to say, if the deciding motive was to see him, I should consider his letter to be God's guidance in answer to my prayer. As days went by I was hardening my heart feeling more reluctant to go to Europe at the present moment and was feeling also that I had nothing to give to Europe, whereas my hands were absolutely full here. The call of the Ashram is incessant. It is becoming clearer day by day that if I am to do justice to the Ashram, which I claim to be my best creation, and if I cannot give it the whole of my time, I must at least give to it the major part of my time.

I had Burma in my mind if I did not go to Europe. But now I feel that I don't want to go to Burma either and I shall pass the summer in the Ashram, if Burma does not want me.

The heat does not trouble me. I am getting on quite well. And, of course, there are many other things which I can attend to if I am here. On the whole, therefore, I think that I must not go. But I can make this provisional decision that if everything goes well, I would go next year giving myself ample time from now to make all my preparations and dispositions so that I can go without difficulty, and then, perhaps, if I could do so and if the way is clear, taking America also to save time.

I had a long chat with Ambalal. He said that he had sent his own subscription but that he could not move further unless there was a proper balance-sheet published. He was dissatisfied with the account-keeping and he seemed to be keen on a Gujarati committee because he said that the bulk of the money was found by the Gujaratis. So far as I could see I could not move him in his decision. But he said that in giving his opinion he was more guided by other donors than by his own instinct.

Marichi described to me the condition of your teeth or rather your toothlessness. To be toothless is by no means a great deprivation and it is decidedly a gain when one's teeth are a source of disease rather than of health.

Remember that you have to finish the Shraddhanand series. You should write something on Gregg's book.

I hope Gurudev is much better now.

From a photostat: S.N. 14958

500. LETTER TO SECRETARY, ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 22, 1928

THE SECRETARY
A.I.S.A.
AHMEDABAD

DEAR SIR,

I have your letter about the loan guaranteed by Mr. Prakasam. I have written to him.[1]

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13594

501. TELEGRAM TO MATHURA PRASAD

[Before *April 23, 1928*][2]

YOUR LETTER. RAJKISHORI RAMNANDAN MAY ACCOMPANY RADHA WHEN SHE IS READY RETURN. PLEASE CONTINUE WIRE MAGANLAL'S CONDITION DAILY. WHAT IS CAUSE DELIRIUM?

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 14651

[1] This letter is not available.
[2] Maganlal Gandhi passed away on April 23.

502. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Sunday [Before *April 23, 1928*]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Bhai Ramlal is a very good worker. He is honest too, but is very short tempered. As an atonement for this, I am sending him to you. He has to serve you and do all the work you entrust to him. He has liked the work. If you do not like the arrangement or instead of finding his presence helpful, you find it burdensome, write to me. I will call him back.

As you have difficulty in getting milk and milk products, I am sending *pedas*[4] from here. Do not eat them as *pedas* but make powder of one or two, add warm water to it and mix it. That will become milk and serve its purpose. Similarly, soak *gol papadi*[5] in water, make gruel of the liquid and take it . If you like the preparations, ask for the amount you would like to have. Do not neglect your health. Do not hesitate to write to me about your health and other difficulties.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32861

503. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Tuesday [Before *April 23, 1929*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have received your telegrams. Knowing you well, I was not at all upset by your telegram. The other telegrams proved your faith right. As long as I am destined to take work from you, no harm will come to you. I personally feel that you should not leave Utkal. I would not like you to leave the place after falling ill. Many old priests live there. Where could they go? We belong to the place as much as we belong to the Ashram or Rajkot. After improving your health in Calcutta, if you feel strong enough to go back, do so. I have sent Ramlalji with that hope. Do not feel self-conscious unnecessarily, ask for the facilities you need, look after your health and render service. However, these are my views. Do what you want and what is within your power. My duty is to encourage you and your duty is to imbibe from it what you can. There is so much to write but where is the time?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32859

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's advice to the addressee not to leave Utkal (Orissa), the letter appears to have been written *before* the letter to Maganlal Gandhi dated April 23, 1928, wherein Gandhiji wrote that the addressee "had left Orissa" as he fell ill and had gone to Almora

504. LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI

[Before *April 23, 1928*][1]

CHI. RADHIKA,

I understand your condition from your letters to me and to others which they give me to read. Everybody will feel reassured if you keep on writing like this. I have received letters from Bhai Ramnandan also in which he says he will take proper care of you. There is a letter from Brij Kishore Babu from Patna, in which also he says that he will go to your village[2] and arrange everything. You have to show courage. You should not, therefore, be disheartened by difficulties but should overcome them with patience and bear those that cannot be overcome. Do let me know of even the smallest difficulty. You must not lose heart. One of the purposes in sending you out is that you should have some experience of the world and be tested by it. We may also in this way have a measure of our strength and weakness. In this vast land of ours there are countless ways of living and all kinds of hardships. We have to live in the midst of all this and reform things wherever there is scope for reform; look at the thing in this light.

Nothing is decided as yet about my going to England.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 11617

[1] The letter has "April, 1928" noted on it. It must have been written before the addressee's return to the Ashram following the death of her father Maganlal Gandhi at Patna on April 23, 1928

[2] The addressee had gone to Bihar to teach a Bihari girl.

505. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

April 23, 1928

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

As I write this letter, I have before me a telegram from Patna informing me that Maganlal is on his death-bed. Radha is there by chance. The friends at Patna are doing their best for him. Any moment there may be a telegram about his passing away. What mystery of God's will is this, that he whom I regard as my heir is preparing to go away, leaving his inheritance? If only all of you who remain behind could follow in Maganlal's footsteps!

I get the letters of both of you. Wayne must have given you my message. I think I have already informed you that he met me.

Ramdas is still in Kathiawar hawking khadi. He should return in four or five days. Chhaganlal fell ill and has, therefore, left Orissa and gone to Almora. Prabhudas is already there on grounds of health. But now he is doing khadi work all the time.

I want a sample of Sushila's English handwriting and language. What is her weight now? What painting is she engaged on at present?

If Sorabji spends beyond his means, do not forget your duty, as a friend, of restraining him. Never take advantage of his spend-thrift nature. Always remain within the bounds of propriety. I have dropped for the present the idea of going to Europe.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have just received a telegram saying that God has taken away Maganlal.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4736

506. TELEGRAM TO BRIJKISHORE PRASAD

[*April 23, 1928*][1]

RECEIVED FINAL WILL OF GOD. SEND RADHABEHN WITH ESCORT. RAJKISHORI MAY ACCOMPANY. FUNERAL SHOULD BE SIMPLEST TYPE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 14651

507. TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[*April 23, 1928*]

MAGANLAL PASSED EARLY MORNING. DO NOT GO. WIRED FOR RADHA BEING SENT UNDER ESCORT.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 14651

508. TELEGRAM TO RADHA GANDHI

[*April 23, 1928*]

RADHA

CARE SHAMBHUSHARAN

EXPECT YOU TO BE BRAVE. SUBMIT GOD'S WILL AND SING RAMANAMA. YOU ARE COMING WITH SUTIABLE COMPANION. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 14651

[1] This and the telegrams which follow were evidently sent on receipt of the news of Maganlal Gandhi's death on April 23.

509. TELEGRAM TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

[*April 23, 1928*]

KHUSHALBHAI GANDHI

RAJKOT

MAGANLAL DIED MORNING AT PATNA. YOU KNOW HE WAS MORE TO ME THAN TO YOU. YOU MUST NOT GIVE WAY TO GRIEF. HIS IS A NOBLE DEATH. NARANDAS LEAVING TONIGHT. INFORM SHIVLALBHAI'S PEOPLE.

MOHANDAS

From a photostat: S.N. 14651

510. TELEGRAM TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[*April 23, 1928*]

MAGANLAL DIED MORNING PATNA. RADHA WILL RETURN IMMEDIATELY. NO GRIEF PERMISSIBLE. MUST KNOW HOW TO ENFORCE OUR OWN TEACHING. YOU SHOULD CONTINUE REST.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 14661

511. TELEGRAM TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

April 23, 1928

JAMNADAS GANDHI
CARE JIVANLAL CO.
KANSARA CHAWL
KALBADEVI
BOMBAY

MAGANLAL DIED MORNING. NO GRIEF ALLOWED. NO INTERRUPTION ALLOTTED PROGRAMME.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 8697. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

512. LETTER TO SHRINATH SINGH

Vaisakha Shukla 4 [*April 23, 1928*][1]

SHRINATH SINGHJI,

I have your letter. I am acquainted with the Birla boys; hence I sent a message to them. It would take up all my time if I started sending messages to every newspaper and every editor that asked for them even though they may not be known to me.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

SHRINATH SINGHJI
EDITOR, "BAL SAKHA"
INDIAN PRESS LTD.
ALLAHABAD,

From Hindi: C.W. 2973. Courtesy: Shrinath Singh

[1] The letter bears the postmark 24-4-1928.

513. LETTER TO KUNVERJI KHETSHI PAREKH

Silence Day [*April 23, 1928*][1]

CHI. KUNVERJI,

I have your letter. Consider with Jaisukhlal what should be done if the work at Balara stops. I did not understand your intention in the last paragraph. If however you have an offer of a better-paid job and you feel inclined to accept it, I will not force you to remain in the khadi work. If you remain in khadi work, you should do so merely in a spirit of service an without any thought of money, as Ramdas does. No one should feel that he is acting under coercion from anyone. I certainly like your work. Personally, I should like to keep you in the Ashram. But a proposal is under discussion just now that only those who observe *brahmacharya* should be allowed to live in the Ashram. Nothing has been decided finally. But I believe that there would be no difficulty in fixing you up at some other place if not in the Ashram.

Maganlal expired in Patna.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9710

[1] From the postmark

514. LETTER TO SANTOK GANDHI

[After *April 23, 1928*][1]

CHI. SANTOK,

Seth Ghanshyamdas Birla is willing to employ Keshu, so you need not worry now about him. God will certainly ensure that he prospers. All of you should get absorbed in work. Take care of your health.

Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8672. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

515. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Sunday [After *April 23, 1928*][2]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have received all your three letters. l am unhappy that you are so very unhappy. Till today, I never worried on your account. I had assumed that you would neither feel hurt nor would misunderstand me. Now you have felt a little hurt. I assume that it will only be momentary. About Radha and Santok, do as you think best. I withdraw my opposition. I have sent two letters to that effect to Chhaganlal regarding Santok and Radha. I have written to him about Sanabhai also. I have also asked him why, after deciding to keep him, he changed his mind. You may pour out all your sufferings to me but never lose your self-possession. I do not have more time today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original S.N. 33325

[1] Radhabehn Chaudhri states that this letter was written shortly after Maganlal Gandhi's death on April 23, 1928.

[2] From the nature of reference to Santok and Radha, wife and daughter respectively of Maganlal Gandhi, addressee's elder brother, the letter appears to have been written after the death of Maganlal in Patna on April 23, 1928. *vide* also the following item.

516. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Tuesday [After *April 23, 1928*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

What shall I write to you? Improve your health. There is no urgency for going to Utkal. Whenever you decide to go, do see me before going. Kashi herself, at the moment, does not feel strong enough to go there. Both of us believe that she will not be able to bear the cold there.

I am touched by your beautiful letter to Joshi.

The very next day of [Maganlal's] death, I started a movement that Santok should give away whatever property she has. I had talked about it to Maganlal many a time. I have started the move with the help of Keshu. While talking to Khushalbhai about the *shradha*[2], I asked him to do the same. I could not talk to him at length as there was some distraction. However, on this matter, I solicit the help of all you brothers. The property is meant for all of you but none of you need it. Then why should you keep it? I will no doubt talk to Narandas too. I remember that you too have something with you. I wish that you would dispose it off. For whom do you need it? Both your sons are able and of self-sacrificing temperament. Kashi and you will never be in trouble. The thought as to what will happen to the Ashram when I am no more, is a mean one and should never be entertained.

I have written all this in a great hurry.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32857

[1] From the reference to Santok, and to the death, presumably of Maganlal Gandhi; Maganlal had died at Patna on April 23, 1928.

[2] Performance of the last rites for the dead

517. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
[After *April 23, 1928*][1]

BHAI TULSI MAHER,

What you write about Maganlal is true. Let us be more vigilant than ever. Do not be elated or depressed by the ebb and flow in your work but do as much as you can without attachment.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6534

518. CABLE TO SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN COMMUNITY [2]

April 24, 1928

HEALTH GOOD. RECEIVED SASTRI'S SATISFACTORY REPLY.[3] MAGANLAL DIED YESTERDAY.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 11977

[1] It is likely that this letter was written after the death of Maganlal Gandhi.

[2] This cable was sent in reply to the South African Indian Community's cable which read: "Inform health."

[3] In his long cable, Sastri had stated that the understanding arrived at the Settlement of 1914 would not be challenged and that the South African Ministers would not knowingly go back on previous promises. For the text of Sastri's cable *vide* Appendix "Cable from V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", April 24, 1923.

519. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 24, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

I have your letter. Of course you know already the calamity that has befallen me on the death of Maganlal. It is well-nigh unbearable. However I am putting on a brave front.

I had not read the resolution asking the Congress to drop "peaceful and legitimate means" and change the expression into "by all possible means". Independence I can swallow, "by all means" is unswallowable. But I suppose we shall have to develop stomach strong enough to swallow any poison. I hope however that you will not allow yourself to be exploited beyond your wish and capacity.

The mill-owners, it has now become obviously clear, wanted to do a deal with the Congress. But I am not sorry for these abortive negotiations. They have cleared the atmosphere.

The expected letter from Romain Rolland was received on Sunday. He will not bear the burden I wanted him to do. So I am not going this year. But you will read about this in the pages of *Young India*.[1]

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13203

[1] *Vide* "To European Friends", 26-4-1928.

520. LETTER TO KARNAD SADASHIVA RAO

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 24, 1928

MY DEAR SADASHIVA RAO,

I have your letter which I like very much. Let your daughters put themselves in touch with me. They have got to be brave, if they will not become worse than *purdanusheens*[1]. For those who will have the butterfly existence are, in my opinion, worse than *purdanusheens*. And those who will become real servants of the nation have to accept voluntarily poverty as a blessing and not a mere tolerable position.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SADASHIVA RAO KARNAD
KODAIBAIL
MANGALORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 13202

[1] Those who observe *purdah*

521. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA[1]

SABARMATI,
April 25, 1928

SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
SODEPUR

YOUR TELEGRAM[2] WORTHY OF YOU. BEST SERVICE YOU CAN RENDER TODAY IS BUILD UP YOUR BODY SO AS TO SPARE ME ANOTHER SHOCK.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1590

522. TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[*April 25, 1928*][3]

RETURN HERE WITH RADHA.

From a photostat: S.N. 14649

[1] This was written on the back of the addressee's telegram dated April 24, 1928, to which it was sent in reply.

[2] It read: "Maganbhai's place cannot be filled but if wanted my ready serve you there."

[3] This was written below the telegram to Satis Chandra Das Gupta; *vide* the preceding item. It appears both the telegrams were sent on the same day.

523. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[1]

April 25, 1928

ABANDONED EUROPEAN VISIT BEFORE MAGANLAL'S DEPARTURE. JAMNALALJI MUST GO PILGRIMAGE. LET ME DESERVE INHERITANCE LEFT BY MAGANLAL.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 14683

524. MY BEST COMRADE GONE

He whom I had singled out as heir to my all is no more. Maganlal K. Gandhi, a grandson of an uncle of mine had been with me in my work since 1904. Maganlal's father has given all his boys to the cause. The deceased went early this month to Bengal with Seth Jamnalalji and others, contracted a high fever whilst he was on duty in Bihar and died under the protecting care of Brijkishore Prasad in Patna after an illness of nine days and after receiving all the devoted nursing that love and skill could give.

Maganlal Gandhi went with me to South Africa in 1903 in the hope of making a bit of fortune. But hardly had he been store-keeping for one year, when he responded to my sudden call to self-imposed poverty, joined the Phoenix settlement and never once faltered or failed after so joining me. If he had not dedicated himself to the country's service, his undoubted abilities and indefatigable industry would have made him a merchant prince. Put in a printing press he easily and quickly mastered the secrets of the art of printing. Though he had never before handled a tool or a machine, he found himself at home in the engine room, the machine room and at the compositor's desk. He was equally at ease with the Gujarati editing of the *Indian Opinion*. Since the Phoenix scheme included domestic farming, he became a good farmer. His was I think the best garden at the settlement. It may be of interest to note that the very first issue of *Young India* published in Ahmedabad bears the marks of his labours when they were much needed.

[1] This was sent in reply to the following telegram from C. Rajagopalachari: "Jamnalalji gone Patna. Returning tomorrow. You may resent suggestion but prayerfully press your going Europe now leaving scene of desolation in Jamnalalji's hands who must postpone pilgrimage remain Ashram. Wire reply Martaluminium."

He had a sturdy constitution which he wore away in advancing the cause to which he had dedicated himself. He closely studied and followed my spiritual career and when I presented to my co-workers *brahmacharya* as a rule of life even for married men in search of Truth, he was the first to perceive the beauty and the necessity of the practice and, though it cost him to my knowledge a terrific struggle, he carried it through to success, taking his wife along with him by patient argument instead of imposing his views on her.

When satyagraha was born, he was in the forefront. He gave me the expression which I was striving to find to give its full meaning to what the South African struggle stood for, and which for want of a better term I allowed to be recognized by the very insufficient and even misleading term "passive resistance". I wish I had the very beautiful letter he then wrote to me giving his reasons for suggesting the name ‚ŒÊª„U which I changed to ‚àÿÊª„U.[1] He argued out the whole philosophy of the struggle step by step and brought the reader irresistibly to his chosen name. The letter I remember was incredibly short and to the point as all his communications always were.

During the struggle he was never weary of work, shirked no task and by his intrepidity he infected everyone around him with courage and hope. When everyone went to jail, when at Phoenix courting imprisonment was like a prize to be won at my instance, he stayed back in order to shoulder a much heavier task. He sent his wife to join the women's party.

On our return to India, it was he again who made it possible to found the Ashram in the austere manner in which it was founded. Here he was called to a newer and more difficult task. He proved equal to it. Untouchability was a very severe trial for him. Just for one brief moment his heart seemed to give way. But it was only for a second. He saw that love had no bounds and that it was necessary to live down the ways of 'untouchables', if only because the so-called higher castes were responsible for them.

The mechanical department of the Ashram was not a continuation of the Phoenix activity. Here we had to learn weaving, spinning, carding, and ginning. Again I turned to Maganlal. Though the conception was mine, his were the hands to reduce it to execution. He learnt weaving and all the other processes that cotton had to go through before it became khadi. He was a born mechanic.

[1] *Vide* "Satyagraha in South Africa (Chapter XII: The Advent of Satyagraha)".

When dairying was introduced in the Ashram he threw himself with zeal in the work, studied dairy literature, named every cow and became friends with every animal[1] on the settlement.

And when tannery was added, he was undaunted and had proposed to learn the principles of tanning as soon as he got a little breathing time. Apart from his scholastic training in the High School at Rajkot, he learnt the many things he knew so well in the school of hard experience. He gathered knowledge from village carpenters, village weavers, farmers, shepherds and such ordinary folk.

He was the Director of the Technical Department of the Spinners' Association, and during the recent floods in Gujarat, Vallabhbhai put him in charge of building the new township Vithalpur.

He was an exemplary father. He trained his children—one boy and two girls, all unmarried still—so as to make them fit for dedication to the country. His son Keshu is showing very great ability in mechanical engineering, all of which he has picked up like his father from seeing ordinary carpenters and smiths at work. His eldest daughter Radha, eighteen years old, recently shouldered a difficult and delicate mission to Bihar in the interest of women's freedom. Indeed he had a good grasp of what national education should be and often engaged the teachers in earnest and critical discussion over it.

Let not the reader imagine that he knew nothing of politics. He did, but he chose the path of silent, selfless constructive service.

He was my hands, my feet and my eyes. The world knows so little of how much my so-called greatness depends upon the incessant toil and drudgery of silent, devoted, able and pure workers, men as well as women. And among them all Maganlal was to me the greatest, the best and the purest.

As I am penning these lines, I hear the sobs of the widow bewailing the death of her dear husband. Little does she realize that I am more widowed than she. And but for a living faith in God, I should become a raving maniac for the loss of one who was dearer to me than my own sons, who never once deceived me or failed me, who was a personification of industry, who was the watchdog of the Ashram in all its aspects—material, moral and spiritual. His life is an inspiration for me, a standing demonstration of the efficacy and the supremacy of the moral law. In his own life he proved visibly for me

[1] The source has "cattle".

not for a few days, not for a few months, but for twenty-four long years—now alas all too short—that service of the country, service of humanity and self-realization or knowledge of God are synonymous terms.

Maganlal is dead, but he lives in his work whose imprints he who runs may read on every particle of dust in the Ashram.

Young India, 26-4-1928

525. A MORAL STRUGGLE

> I am a husband aged 30. My wife is about the same age. We have five children, of which two are fortunately dead. I know the responsibility for the rest of our children. But I find it difficult, if not impossible, to discharge that responsibility. You have advised self-restraint. Well, I have practised it for the last three years, but that is very much against my partner's wish. She insists on what poor mortals call the joys of life. You from your superior height may call it a sin. But my partner does not see it in that light. Nor is she afraid of bearing more children to me. She has not the sense of responsibility that I flatter myself with the belief I have. My parents side more with my wife than with me and there are daily quarrels. The denial of satisfaction to my wife has made her so peevish and so irritable that she flares up on the slightest pretext. My problem now is how to solve the difficulty. The children I have are too many for me. I am too poor to support them. The wife seems utterly irreconcilable. If she does not have the satisfaction she demands, she may even go astray or go mad or commit suicide. I tell you, sometimes I feel that if the law of the land permitted it, I would shoot down all unwanted children as you would stray dogs. For the last three months I have gone without the second meal, without tiffin. I have business obligation which prevent me from fasting for days. I get no compassion from the wife because she cosiders I am a humbug. I know the literature on birth-control. It is temptingly written. And I have read your book on self-restraint. I find myself between the devil and the deep blue sea.

The foregoing is a faithful paraphrase of a heart-rending letter from a young man who has given me his full name and address and whom I have known for some years. Being afraid to give his name, he

tells me he wrote twice before anonymously hoping that I would deal with his communications in the pages of *Young India*. I receive so many anonymous letters of this type that I hesitate to deal with them, even as I have considerable hesitation in dealing with this letter, although I know it to be perfectly genuine and know it to be a letter from a striving soul. The subject-matter is so delicate. But I see that I may not shirk an obvious duty claiming as I do claim a fair amount of experience of such cases and more especially because my method has given relief in several similar cases.

The condition in India, so far as English-educated Indians are concerned, is doubly difficult. The gulf between husband and wife from the point of view of social attainments is almost too wide to be bridgeable. Some young men seem to think that they have solved it satisfactorily by simply throwing their wives overboard, although they know that in their caste there is no divorce possible and therefore no remarriage on the part of their wives possible. Yet others—and this is the far more numerous class—use their wives merely as vehicles of enjoyment without sharing their intellectual life with them. A very small number—but daily growing—has a quickened conscience and are faced with the moral difficulty such as my correspondent is faced with.

In my opinion, sexual union to be legitimate is permissible only when both the parties desire it. I do not recognize the right of either partner to compel satisfaction. And if my position is correct in the case in point, there is no more obligation on the part of the husband to yield to the wife's importunities. But this refusal at once throws a much greater and more exalted responsibility on the husband's shoulders. He will not look down upon his wife from his isolent height but will humbly recognize that what to him is not a necessity is to her a fundamental necessity. He will therefore treat her with the utmost gentleness and love and will have confidence in his own purity to transmute his partner's passion into energy of the highest type. He will therefore have to become her real friend, guide and physician. He will have to give her his fullest confidence and with inexhaustible patience explain to her the moral basis of his action, the true nature of the relationship that should subsist between husband and wife and the true meaning of marriage. He will find in the process that many things that were not clear to him before will be clear and he will draw his partner closer to him if his own restraint is truthful.

In the case in point I cannot help saying that the desire not to

have more children is not enough reason for refusing satisfaction. It appears almost cowardly to reject one's wife's advances merely for fear of having to support children. A check upon an unlimited increase in the family is a good ground for both the parties jointly and individually putting a restraint upon sexual desires, but it is not sufficient warrant for one to refuse the privileges of a common bed to the other.

And why this impatience of children? Surely there is enough scope for honest, hard-working and intelligent men to earn enough for a reasonable number of children. I admit that for one like my correspondent who is honestly trying to devote his whole time to the service of the country it is difficult to support a large and growing family and at the same time to serve a country, millions of whose children are semi-starved. I have often expressed the opinion in these pages that it is wrong to bring forth progeny in India so long as she is in bondage. But that is a very good reason for young men and young women to abstain from marriage, not a conclusive reason for one partner refusing sexual co-operation to the other. That co-operation can be lawfully refused, it is a duty to refuse, when the call for *brahmacharya* on the highest ground of pure religion is imperative. And when such a call has clearly come, it will have its healthy reaction upon the partner. Assuming, however, that it does not produce such reaction in time, it will still be a duty to adhere to restraint even at the risk of losinng the life or the sanity of one's partner. The cause of *brahmacharya* demands sacrifices no less heroic than, say, the cause of Truth or of one's country. In view of what I have said above, it is hardly necessary to state that artificial control of births is an immoral practice having no place in the conception of life that underlies my argument.

Young India, 26-4-1928

526. TO EUROPEAN FRIENDS

It is not without deep sorrow that I am now able to announce that the much-talked-of visit of mine to Europe is not to come off this year at any rate. To those in Austria, Holland, England, Scotland, Denmark, Sweden, Germany and Russia who had sent me kind invitations I can only say that their disappointment will be no greater than mine.

Somehow or other I dread a visit to Europe and America. Not that I distrust the peoples of these great Continents any more than I distrust my own, but I distrust myself. I have no desire to go to the West in search of health or for sightseeing. I have no desire to deliver pubic speeches. I detest being lionized. I wonder if I shall ever again have the health to stand the awful strain of public speaking and public demonstrations. If God ever sent me to the West, I should go there to penetrate the hearts of the masses, to have quiet talks with the youth of the West and have the privilege of meeting kindred spirits—lovers of peace at any price save that of Truth.

But I feel that I have as yet no message to deliver personally to the West. I believe my message to be universal but as yet I feel that I can best deliver it through my work in my own country. If I can show visible success in India, the delivery of the message becomes complete. If I came to the conclusion that India had no use for my message, I should not care to go elsewhere in search of listeners even though I still retained faith in it. If, therefore, I ventured out of India, I should do so because I have faith, though I cannot demonstrate it to the satisfaction of all, that the message is being surely received by India be it ever so slowly.

Thus whilst I was hesitatingly carrying on the correspondence with friends who had invited me, I saw that there was need for me to go to Europe, if only to see M. Romain Rolland. Owing to my distrust of myself over a general visit, I wanted to make my visit to that wise man of the West the primary cause of my journey to Europe. I therefore referred my difficulty to him and asked him in the frankest manner possible whether he would let me make my desire to meet him the primary cause of my visit to Europe. In reply I have a noble letter from him through Mirabai (Miss Slade) wherein he says that in the

name of truth itself, he will not think of letting me go to Europe if a visit to him is to be the primary cause. He will not let me interrupt my labours here for the sake of our meeting. I read in his letter no false humility. I read in it a most genuine expression of truth. He knew when he wrote his reply that my desire to go to Europe to meet him was not for a mere courteous discussion but in the interest of the cause as dear to him as to me. But evidently he was too humble to bear the burden of calling me merely so that in furtherance of the common interest we might by mutual talks understand each other better. And I wanted him to shoulder that very burden, if he felt that truth required us to meet each other face to face. His reply therefore I have taken as a clear answer to my prayer. Apart from this visit, I felt within me no imperative call.

I have taken the public into my confidence as, against my wish, the fact that a visit to Europe during this season was under serious contemplation was published in the papers. I regret my decision but it seems to be the correct one. For whilst there is no urge within to go to Europe, there is an incessant call within for so much to do here. And now the death of my best comrade seems to keep me rooted to the Ashram.

But I my say to the many friends in Europe, that next year, if all is well and if they still will have me I shall try to undertake the postponed tour, under the strict limitations mentioned by me and this I shall do whether I am ready to deliver my message or not. To see my numerous friends face to face will be no small privilege. But let me conclude this personal explanation by saying that if ever I am privileged to visit the West, I shall go there without changing my dress or habits, save in so far as the climate may require a change and self-imposed restrictions may permit. My outward form is I hope an expression of the inward.

Young India, 26-4-1928

527. FOUR MONTHS' WORK

The Vaishya Vidyashram, Sasavane, which started the consturctive programme in right earnest last year has sent the following report[1] of work during four months ending *Chaitra* :

The foregoing resume of four months' increasing work is proof, if proof be still necessary, of what earnest effort can do. Where the wheel is reported to have failed, it was not the wheel that failed, but the wheel mesters that failed because they had no faith. Schoolboy all the world over will respond to honest endeavour as the boys of the Sasavane Ashram have done. And from the figures that are published from time to time in these columns, anyone who cares can work out an arithmetical calculation showing how many children working, say, at least one hour per day at the weel or the *takli* can spin enough yarn to clothe the whole nation. Oh for an imagination that will visualize the simple beauty of the wheel as a sure solvent of the economic distress or the country!

Young India, 26-4-1928

[1] Not reproduced here

528. CABLE TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI[1]

SABARMATI,
April 26, 1928

RT. HON. SASTRI
MARITZBURG

I LEFT SOUTH AFRICA JULY 1914. ALL UNDER-STANDING BETWEEN UNION GOVERNMENT AND ME COULD ONLY BE PRIOR MY DEPARTURE. PERSONALLY I COULD ASK FOR NO PROTECTION FRAUDULENT ENTRANTS BUT I SOUGHT AND RECEIVED PROTECTION FOR THOSE WHO HAD RECEIVED FRAUDULENT PAPERS BECAUSE AS I PROVED CONCLUSIVELY TO GOVERNMENT THAT THEIR OFFICERS WERE PARTY TO FRAUD AND THAT IT HAD BECOME DIFFICULT FOR EVEN HONEST MEN TO ENTER EXCEPT THROUGH BACKDOOR. YOU WILL SEE THEREFORE THERE IS DISTINCTION BETWEEN NATAL AND TRANSVAAL. FRAUD WAS NO DOUBT EVERYWHERE BUT NEVER IN SUCH WHOLESALE ALMOST OPEN MANNER AS IN TRANSVAAL AND INITIATED BY CORRUPT AND CORRUPTIBLE OFFICIALS. CLAIM NO FIRST-HAND KNOWLEDGE OF EVENTS AFTER MY DEPARTURE BUT ON GENERAL GROUNDS SINCE HABIBULLAH DEPUTATION OPENED NEW CHAPTER AND NEW VISION AND YOUR INSTALLATION EMPHASIZED AND SECURED STABILITY FOR NEW VISION THINGS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED ON MERITS APART FROM PREVIOUS ASSURANCE DIRECT OR IMPLIED AND I FEEL ALL THOSE WHO ENTERED BEFORE SMUTS-GANDHI SETTLEMENT SHOULD HAVE FULL UN-CONDITIONAL PROTECTION. AFTER ALL NUMBER CAN ONLY BE SMALL. HAVING GIVEN MY OPINION, I KNOW WHATEVER YOU DO WILL BE BEST AND HONOURABLE UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES. I SHALL THEREFORE CONTINUE TENDER YOU ALL SUPPORT IN MY POWER ESPECIALLY IN YOUR DEALING WITH TRANSVAAL INDIANS. POSTING COPIES SIR MAHOMED TREATING CONFIDENTIALLY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 11974

[1] This was sent in reply to Sastri's cable dated April 24, 1928, for the text of which *vide* Appendix "Cable from V. S. Srinivas Sastri", April 24, 1928.

529. LETTER TO MAHOMED HABIBULLAH

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 26, 1928

DEAR FRIEDN,

At the instance of our common friend Mr. Sastri, I send you herewith copy of cables that have passed between us. If there be[1] anything that is obscure in the position that I have taken up in my cable[2], please do not hesitate to ask for my explanation.

Though I am treating the whole of this telegraphic correspondence as strictly confidential, I am taking the liberty of sending copies to Mr. Andrews who knows everything about the matters concerning the position of our countrymen in South Africa.

Yours sincerely,

Encl.

HON. SIR MAHOMED HABIBULLAH
MEMBER, VICEROY'S COUNCIL
SIMLA

From a photostat: S.N. 11977

[1] The source has "are'.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

530. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 26, 1928

I have your wire as also Gurudev's regarding Maganlal. It is perhaps the greatest trial of my life. But so far it appears that He who has subjected me to the ordeal is giving me the strength to go through it.

Now therefore to the business. Here are copies of cables exchanged between Sastri and myself. Please tell me if I have erred anywhere in my reply. And if you have got the papers referred to by Sastri in his cable of date after my departure from South Africa after July 1914, please send them to me by registered post, especially the arrangements of 1915 and the recent bill.

C. F. ANDREWS
SANTINIKETAN

From a photostat: S.N. 11978

531. LETTER TO S. GANESAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 26, 1928

MY DEAR GANESAN,

Here is the preface[1] to the *History of Satyagraha in South Africa*.

Sjt. Desai is anxious that you should send a proof copy of the whole book, cover and all, as it is to be issued, and that this you should do before finishing the binding of all copies. He tells me that whoever looks after the printing in your office, is extremely careless and tells me sometimes important corrections made by him have not been carried out. He is anxious that such mistakes should be avoided for this book.

I have already telegraphed[2] to you that you may dedicate it to Maganlal Gandhi.

[1] This appears to be a slip for "foreword"
[2] The telegram is not available.

I have your letter about the advertisement. Much as I would like to advertise the publications, I am afraid I must not do so. But if I can do it in some other way, I would gladly adopt it. There is a way, perhaps, of taking Mr. Gregg's book off your hands. What is its cost price? Have you to pay anything to him?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13205

532. LETTER TO LORD IRWIN

SABARMATI,
April 26, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

At the interview in Delhi,[1] I promised to send you literature on khadi. I delayed sending the other pamphlets pending the publication of Mr. Gregg's volume. The other pamphlets represent the conclusions of two very well-known lawyers of Madras and Bihar.

You were good enough to say that when you had more leisure you would like to discuss the potency of khadi with me. If you have the leisure and still the inclination I am at your service.

I am,
Your Excellency's Friend,
M. K. GANGHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
SIMLA

From a photostat: S.N. 13596

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to C. F. Andrews" & "Letter to C. F. Andrews", October 1, 1927 and Appendix "Gandhi-Irwin Interview", November 2, 1927.

533. LETTER TO J. B. PETIT

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 26, 1928

DEAR MR. PETIT,

Whilst I was thinking of applying to you for a contribution for the expenses I am incurring in connection with the position of emigrants abroad, I received a long confidential cablegram from the Rt. Hon. Sastri to which I have been obliged to send a reply which has cost me Rs.92-4-0. I do not know how prolonged this cable correspondence will be.

Whilst I have not Mr. Banarsidas with me, I have Pandit Totaram Sanadhya of Fiji, whom I dare say you know at least by repute. He is staying at the Ashram with his wife. He is draw- ing regularly Rs. 50, and he is allowed to incur extra expenses in connection with Fiji. All the expenses are kept and even accounts are published. I send you a copy herewith. Totaramji gives his spare time to teaching Hindi to the children in the Ashram. I would like the Association[1] to take this burden off my shoulders. If the Association would not care to bear the whole of the honorarium paid to Totaramji, it may halve with me. I send you also the account published by Totaramji of his work and issued for private circulation.

I am managing all the expenses connected with Ashram activities through the generosity of private friends, but I think that the expenses on account of activity in connection with the emigrants should be borne by the Association. I would therefore like you to consider this letter as if it was divided into two parts, the first with reference to the general expenses which in my books amount to roughly Rs. 5,000 to date. I could send you an extract from the Ashram ledger to show how the account is made up,—secondly, the expenses that I am now incurring regarding cables.

I shall be thankful for whatever the Committee of the Association considers a legitimate charge upon its funds.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 12859

[1] Imperial Citizenship Association

534. LETTER TO KASTURBHAI LALBHAI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 26, 1928

BHAISHRI KASTURBHAI,

I have your letter. I will be ready on Tuesday at 6.15 and wait for your friends in order that I may reach there and present myself.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujara ti origin al: S.N. 33138

535. LETTER TO JUGALKISHORE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 27, 1928

MY DEAR JUGALKISHORE,

I was glad to receive your letter after such a long absence. I was wondering how you were faring at the P. M. V.[1]

My plan about the spinners' register is not half as ambitious as you think, though we cannot be too accurate nor too insistent on every worker coming in the closest touch with the spinners and yet, strange as it may appear though we represent spinners above everybody else, our workers are least in touch with them! But even if we do not come in such close contact with them and understand their lives as we understand our blood-sisters, we should at least know who and where they are, who are supplying us with their yarn. I have therefore said that we should trace the residence and names of every spinner whose yarn is received in the bazaar. Let us at least have that very rudimentary contact with them. This does not require the elaborate register mentioned by Satis Babu in his Manual. Even he is not able to enforce that register when he buys yarn at the Feni Bazaar. His register was and is in complete operation at his Atrai Dept. where he brought into being the spinners for the first time and kept touch with them. The largest quantity of yarn however received by him is at

[1] Prem Mahavidyalaya

the Feni Bazaar. My register therefore is really a census register to be taken once for all or periodically. You see therefore you do not require the staff suggested by you for my simple measure.

Nobody has complained that the Gandhi Ashram will not give this list. I think I saw the argument advanced by Dhiren about the difficulty of tracing every spinner and I wrote combating that argument and showing a way out of the difficulty. The difficulty raised by Dhiren was not raised by him alone. It is a difficulty common to almost all and all are gradually getting over the difficulty.

I quite agree with you that in order to establish a living contact with the spinners, we must have women workers. Tell Shanti Devi I would like her to make a start.

Now about your scheme. I like the general idea. How far you can give effect to it there, I do not know. Because after all you want honest and able teachers who know their work. We have not too many as yet. But make out your scheme and send it to Jamnalalji unofficially in the first instance and see how it appeals to him.

Tell me how Bharat is doing there and how spinning is going on among the students.

By this time you know about Maganlal's death.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13204

536. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

April 27, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I got both your letters. But even today there is not time enough for a full reply.

About Maganlal, what shall I write? I find it harder to bear this loss than to drink the cup of poison, but God has been most compassionate to me for I am calm.

What can we do about the boycott until the educated class is ready for it? One sees clearly enough now that it is useless to expect anything from the mills.

I am happy to hear that your health is improving; the happiness is of course tinged with self-interest. How could I help it?

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6156. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

537. LETTER TO FREDERIC AND FRANCISCA STANDENATH

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

April 27, 1928

DEAR FRIENDS,

I have received all your letters including the last dated March 28th. I do not think I replied to the previous letter because in it you led me to expect another to tell me definitely what the passage would be and whether there would be any difficulty about your passports. In your recent letter whilst I understand all about the passports, there is no reference to the fare required. If you give me a definite idea, I would be able to approach friends and ask them to give me the amount.

So far as the assurance[1] from me is required, please produce

[1] The British Passport Control Office for Austria had written to the addressees: "If, however, you are travelling to India at the express invitation of Mahatma Gandhi, it will only be necessary for you to submit his letters of invitation containing the statement that he is prepared to guarantee your expenses" (S.N. 14301).

this letter which gives you the assurance that throughout your stay with me, there will be no difficulty about your support, and that you would be coming to India at my invitation.

Now of course I do not want you to come before November or December, for the simple reason that this is the hot season and the heat continues more or less to the end of October.

You will see that I have abandoned the contemplated European visit for reasons fully given in *Young India*.[1] If I keep good health next year my coming to Europe ought to be a certainty. This may mean some change in your programme. But I do not want you to cancel your visit to India; for my desire is that you should see India with your own eyes and compare it with the India of your imagination. So, if you can at all come, I would like you to come irrespective of my proposed visit to Europe.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 14302

538. MESSAGE WITH AN AUTOGRAPH[2]

SABARMATI,
April 27, 1928

God is Truth. The way to reach Truth is through the loving service of all that lives.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 14263

[1] *Vide* "To European Friends", 26-4-1928.

[2] This was sent to Byron N. Clark of the University of Vermont, Burlington, who was also the Secretary of the State Committee of the Y.M.C.A.

539. LETTER TO KALYANJI MEHTA

April 28, 1928

BHAISHRI KALYANJI,

You know I cannot attend the Conference. I am sorry I cannot, but just now I am helpless. The contribution of the Raniparaj men and women to the present movement is as much a matter of satisfaction to us as it is worthy of them. I regard this move- ment as one for developing fearlessness and for self-purification. How can they who call themselves Raniparaj live in fear? In the sacrificial effort of self-purification, how could they afford to have vices like drinking, gambling and wearing foreign cloth? I trust, therefore, that the Raniparaj men and women will give increasing importance to the spinning-wheel, use more and more khadi and abstain from drinking and give up other vices.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2683

540. THE MEANING OF VOLUNTARY POVERTY [1]

Sjt. Chhaganlal Joshi is the Secretary to the Managing Committee of the Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati. He had a university scholarship for post-graduate study in economics and ever since he gave up that scholarship to take part in the non-co-operation movement he has been in the Ashram. About a fortnight ago he had a summons from a first class magistrate to appear as witness in a criminal case. The policeman who came to serve the summons behaved most carelessly. He came shouting for Chhaganlal Joshi. This I heard and directed him to Sjt. Chhaganlal Joshi. He gave him the summons. Sjt. Chhaganlal asked him to wait until he had read it, but "take it if you care" he said and went away.

Sjt. Chhaganlal read out the summons to me. He seemed to be knowing nothing about the case, and he did not know what to do. He had no time of his own, nor had he any money for railway fare. For all his time and money belonged to the Ashram, as every member is

[1] The Gujarati original of which this is a translation by Mahadev Desai appeared in *Navajivan*, 29-4-1928.

supposed to have given his all to the Ashram. The money in possession of the Ashram is all public money ear-marked by the donors for the purpose for which it exists, and could certainly not be utilized for railway fare to respond to a summons. And so Sjt. Chhaganlal Joshi was in the predicament of the pauper of Orissa, the only difference being that whilst the latter could receive and use for himself whatever others gave him the former could not use a donation except for the purpose of the Ashram. Herein lies the beauty as well as the restraint of voluntary poverty.

What then would an Orissa pauper do if he was served with a sum-mons as in this case? The policeman had not cared to explain to him the meaning of the summons, nor to pay him the railway fare to enable him to go to the court. In the present case the magistrate's court was some miles away from Ahmedabad near a station on the Prantij line. The Oris-sa pauper would be absolutely helpless and would not know what to do.

So Sjt. Chhaganlal decided to sit still and suffer the consequences. Otherwise his voluntary poverty would have no meaning, nor could he serve the poor if he did not behave like them.

This inevitable inability to respond to the summons was interpreted by the magistrate as contempt of court and he issued a warrant of arrest against Sjt. Joshi. The man serving the warrant said: "We will not arrest you, if you promise to attend on the due date."

"I would willingly promise," said Sjt. Joshi, "provided I got the railway fare and allowance."

The man had no authority to make the payment and so he produced Sjt. Joshi before a first class magistrate in Ahmedabad. The latter had no time to go into the ase. Sjt. Joshi explained how he failed to obey the summons, but the magistrate trained in the traditions of the bureaucracy said :

"I am afraid I can do nothing. I am prepared to release you on bail, and you may if you like agitate later on."

If he was prepared to give bail, without getting the fare and the allowance, why should he not have obeyed the original summons?

The sun was blazing overhead when Sjt. Joshi was ordered to proceed to the police station. He refused any longer to walk and the policemen in charge were compelled to hire a carriage. Ultimately Sjt. Joshi was taken to Talod under a full police escort and produced before the magistrate. The moment the magistrate saw Sjt. Joshi he

realized his mistake, paid him the fare and allowance and released him on parole.

It is reported that this simple act of courage had a very good effect on the people of Talod who were greatly delighted.

Those who have accepted voluntary poverty can by acting in the manner of Chhaganlal Joshi easily hasten the end of the injustice and tyranny that seems today to be the lot of the poor.

The thoughtless discourtesy of the magistrate in the case was remarkable. He issued summons without the least inquiry and having done so did nothing to provide the man summoned with the wherewithal to obey the summons. I am told that it is not the practice to pay the witnesses railway fare and allowance in advance. If that is the case, it means terrible hardship for the poor. The issue of warrant in the case betrayed the magistrate's criminal negligence. He had no evidence of the proper service of the summons.

He did not care to inquire whether Sjt. Joshi had at all received the summons. One can only imagine what terrible injustice lies hidden in this Government's department of "justice".

It is difficult to say what would have happened in Talod had Sjt. Chhaganlal been the dumb pauper of Orissa. What a shower of abuse he might have received and how fiercely the magistrate might have bullied him! The man who had been so much sinned against might have been branded as a sinner.

Though the Government is responsible for this reckless and insolent behaviour towards the poor, one cannot help observing that the Indian officials who behave in this fashion have absolutely no excuse to do so. It is possible that this high-handedness was there even in pre-British days. But a wrong does not become right if it can be proved to be pre-British. And if even Indian officials do not mend their ways, those who have accepted voluntary poverty ought to correct them through satyagraha.

Young India, 3-5-1928

541. SOUL OF THE ASHRAM

When Shri Vallabhbhai received the news of Maganlal Gandhi's death, he wired: "The soul of the Ashram has departed." There was no exaggeration in this. I cannot imagine the existence of Satyagraha Ashram without Maganlal. Many of my activities were started because I knew that he was there. If ever there was a person with whom I identified myself, it was Maganlal. We often have to consider whether certain matters will hurt another person, even if that person be one's own son or wife. I never had to entertain such fear with regard to Maganlal. I never hesitated to set him the most difficult tasks. I very often put him in embarrassing situations and he silently bore with them. He regarded no work as too mean.

If I were fit to be anyone's guru, I would have proclaimed him my first disciple.

In all my life I gave only one person the freedom to regard me as his guru and I had my fill of it. The fault was not his, as I could see; only I had imperfections. Anyone who becomes a guru should possess the power of conferring on the pupil the capacity to carry out whatever task is assigned to him. I had not that power and still do not have it.

But if Maganlal was not a disciple, he was certainly a servant. I am convinced that no master could possibly find a servant better or more loyal than Maganlal. This may be a conjecture, but I can assert from my experience that I have not found another servant like him. It has been my good fortune always to have found co-workers, or servants if you like, who were faithful, virtuous, intelligent and industrious. Still, Maganlal was the best of all these co-workers and servants.

The three streams of knowledge, devotion and action continuously flowed within Maganlal and, by offering his knowledge and his devotion in the *yajna* of action, he demonstrated before everyone their true form. And because in this way each action of his was full of awareness, knowledge and faith, his life attained the very summit of sannyasa. Maganlal had renounced his all. I never saw an iota of self-interest in any of his actions. He showed—not once, not for a short time but time after time for twenty-four years incessantly—that true sannyasa lay in selfless action or action without desire for reward.

Maganlal's father entrusted all his four sons to me one after

another for serving the country. Maganlal was entrusted to me in 1903. He accompanied me to South Africa to earn a living. In 1904, I invited him along with other friends to embrace poverty in order to serve the country. He heard me calmly and embraced poverty. From that time on until his death, his life was an un-interrupted flow.With each day I realize more and more that my mahatmaship, which is a mere adornment, depends on others. I have shone with the glory borrowed from my innumerable co-workers. However, no one has done more to add to this glory than Maganlal. He co-operated with me fully and with intelligence in all my activities—physical or spiritual. I see no better instance than Maganlal of one who made a tremendous effort to act as he believed. Maganlal was awake all the twenty-four hours esta-blishing unity of thought and action. He used up all his energy in this.

If I have not exaggerated, consciously or unconsciously, in this sketch, one can say that a country in which dharma can be so embodied must triumph and so must its dharma. Hence I wish that every servant of the country should study Maganlal's life and if it commends itself to him imitate it with deter-mination. What was possible for Maganlal is possible for every man who makes the effort. Maganlal could become a true leader because he was a true soldier and I find those who could put up with his fire weeping around me now.

This country, as also the world, is in need of true soldiers. Service of the country, service of the world, self-realization, vision of God—these are not separate things but different aspects of the same thing. Maganlal realized the truth of this in his own life and made others do so. Those who are curious can study his life and find this out.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 29-4-1928

542. LETTER TO KUNVERJI KHETSHI PAREKH

Sunday [*April 29, 1928*][1]

CHI. KUNVERJI,

I have your letter. I have never felt that you have taken up khadi work for the sake of money, and my question arose only from yours. Will you always be able to live contented doing khadi work? You certainly know there is no financial gain in this. It provides plain bread. I assume from your letter that you will not be able to live in the Ashram if a rule is adopted that only *brahmacharis* can do so. Even in that case I believe there will be no problem in employing you in khadi work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9711

543. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 29, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. I have told you the way I want you to assist me. You offer to come to the Ashram, and yet, at the end of your letter, you are obliged to say, "I am afraid for a long time, I won't be physically fit." No, your *sadhana* is to make yourself physically fit and, therefore, it is better for you to be where you are, and convalesce. I would even suggest your going to Giridih and be at the side of Nikhil.

[1] From the postmark

The idea of burying yourself in a village in order to develop it makes a forcible appeal to me. There, perhaps, you can rest your limbs better than anywhere else, if you have a clean water supply and if you will use a mosquito-net.

I have heard that you do not use milk. If this is true, it is bad. You won't serve the cause by wearing away the body without cause.

Love.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1591

544. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 29, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of condolence. God's will be done.

As to the other part of your letter, what can I do in Bombay? I have no confidence in my abiliy to assist. My solution of the problem is so different from what is generally expected. I am more than ever convinced that the communal problem should be solved outside of legislation and if, in order to reach that state, there has to be civil war, so be it. Who will listen to a proposal so mad as this?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR
KODAIKANAL

From a photostat: S.N. 13207

545. LETTER TO LAJPAT RAI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 29, 1928

DEAR LALAJI,

I have your characteristic letter. I am glad you had an ocular demonstration of what form untouchability takes in the south. I wish you could have been there longer to see the unapproachables and the

invisibles face to face, and to talk to them.

And in this connection let me tell you what an important part khadi is playing in reaching even the unapproachables and invisibles, because it is khadi that makes it possible to establish contacts which before were impossible or unthinkable. However this is by the way and written not to influence you in favour of khadi through a side issue.

I am therefore glad that yu are making a serious study of the subject. And I am glad, too, that you are determined not to come to any hasty decision. Whatever conclusions you may ultimately form, I would like you to feel about them as you feel about untouchability. No argument against untouchability from the so-called *sanatana* quarters or any quarter could possibly dislodge you from the position you hold. I would like you therefore to make a thorough study of the problem before coming to any conclusion whatsoever.

I want you for khadi. I know what a gain it would be. But I do not want you as a patron on whose certificate I may trade. I want you as a fellow-worker who will not be dislodged from his position and who would be working for the cause of khadi to the best of his ability. For the present, therefore, I would like you, after you study, to discuss the subject with me if you have any doubts before you commit yourself. By all means carry on correspondence with me or those who may be hostile to khadi, but I would like you to promise that you will not commit yourself before discussing with me the criticism that may apear to you to be convincing and unanswerable. Let me assure you that there are in the khadi movement people who have made a thorough study of the subject and who will leave khadi without a moment's hesitation if they found that the premises on which they proceeded were insupportable.

Yes, indeed, Maganlal's death is the heaviest blow I could have received. But in the battle for freedom, we have little time to shed tears over the departure of the dearest.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13597

546. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO GANGADEVI

2.5 a.m. Monday, April 30, 1928

There is no need to take a purgative. I do not wish to give milk today either. Continue to take juice of orange and grapes. Take as much water as possible. Take hip-bath and massage with ice. Take through the nose water with salt and soda mixed, and apply mud-pack to the stomach today also.

From copy of the Hindi: Benars idas Chatur vedi Papers . Nation al Archiv es of India

547. LETTER TO RAVISHANKER MAHARAJ

Silence Day, April 30, 1928

BHAISHRI RAVISHANKER,

You are fortunate. You are satisfied with whatever food you get, cold and heat make no difference to you, you cover yourself if you get some rags and now you are the first lucky one to go to jail. If God would permit an interchange and if you are generous I would surely change places with you. Victory to you and the country!

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2935. Courtesy: Ravishanker Maharaj

548. LETTER TO TARABEHN JASWANI

SABARMATI,
Mondy [*April 30, 1928*][1]

CHI. TARA,

I have your letter. When I go for my daily walk, I think of you. Take great care of your health. Remain firm in all your vows. Write to me from time to time.

You must have heard about Maganlal. I hope you get *Navajivan* regularly.

Blessings to Chi. Divali.

I shall read your questions now and write to you about them in my next letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. TARABEHN DHIRAJLAL JASWANI
C/O BHAI MOHANLAL KHANDERIA
WANKANER

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8780

[1] From the postmark

549. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 1, 1928

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. I hope to write about mill-cloth in the next issue of *Young India*.[1] I am writing to Jairamdas now.[2]

I have now to try to deserve the legacy left by Maganlal.

You will please tell me in good time whether you would want me to send Jaisukhlal after Mathuradas leaves. Having taken up flood relief work, I take it you will not in any way put it in jeopardy by taking an active part in any other thing however attractive it may be. Remember the *Bhagavad Gita* verse :

श्रेयान्स्वधर्मोविगुण: परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात्।
स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेय: परधर्मो भयावह:॥[3]

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 886; also S.N. 13212

[1] *Vide* "Mill-cloth *v*. Khadi", 10-5-1928.

[2] This letter is not available.

[3] III. 35. Better one's own duty, bereft of merit, than another's well-performed; better is death in the discharge of one's duty; another's duty is fraught with danger.

550. LETTER TO S. RAMANATHAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 1, 1928

MY DEAR RAMANATHAN,

I have your letter about . . . .[1] I see your law is at fault. If you have no writing from . . . , I am sure that we cannot pay ourselves for any loss incurred owing to the negligence or fraud of workers, even though the latter may have furnished cash security. Do you not see that it is a dangerous doctrine? If such were the law, employees would be at the mercy of employers who would be judges and executioners combined. What may appear to an employer to be negligence or fraud, may not honestly appear to be that to an employee and may not be such even in law. A well-ordered society, therefore, requires unequivocal written documents, if securities furnished by employees are to be appropriated for patent negligence or fraud. Whatever, therefore, you do about . . . I suggest that you should take a written document from all the employees from whom you have taken securities.

About . . . , I suggest that you state the facts that you may have in your possession in proof of his dishonesty, tell him that you hold the security as guarantee for the damage sustained in accordance with the custom of the association and in accordance with the verbal agreement between him and yourself and offer to take him to a court of law if he wishes or to submit it to arbitrators, one to be appointed by him and one by us.

I promised to write to . . . after I had heard from you. I will await your answer before writing to him.[2]

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

SJT. S. RAMANATHAN
SECRETARY,
A. I. S. A., TAMILNAD
ERODE

From a microfilm: S.N. 13593

[1] Name omitted

[2] A copy of this letter was sent to Secretary, A.I.S.A., Ahmedabad, along with Ramanathan's letter.

551. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 1, 1928

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

Your letter flatters me,[1] but I must not succumb to my pride. Apart from the fact that as a non-co-operator I may have nothing to do with the University that is in any way connected with Government, I do not consider myself to be a fit and proper person to deliver Kamala lectures[2]. I do not possess the literary attainment which Sir Ashutosh undoubtedly contemplated for the lecturers.

You are asking me to shoulder a responsibility which my shoulders cannot bear. I am keeping fairly fit. I am biding my time and you will find me leading the country in the field of politics when the country is ready. I have no false modesty about me. I am undoubtedly a politician in my own way, and I have a scheme for the country's freedom. But my time is not yet and may never come to me in this life. If it does not, I shall not shed a single tear. We are all in the hands of God. I therefore await His guidance.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13210 a

[1] Dr. Roy had requested Gandhiji to deliver lectures at the Calcutta University. The earlier lecturers were Annie Besant, Srinivasa Sastri and Sarojini Naidu.

[2] Instituted by Ashutosh Mukherjee

552. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

Tuesday [*May 1, 1928*][1]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. I do not have the courage to let you come here. Nor is it necessary for you to come. I have suggested to Devdas that he should go and be with you. If you send me a specimen of your model of the spinning-wheel, I will ask someone here to work it. I will obtain Keshu's report. Lakshmidas, who also is here now, may also see it. I may suffer your coming here when the weather is colder. Do come in the winter. Besides, Chhaganlal is there, and even for his sake, it is essential that you remain there. I certainly cannot let Chhaganlal come here. When his health is completely restored, he will of course come. My proposed visit to Europe has been cancelled, and so that reason also for your coming here does not exist. Moreover, as it is, you have been doing some work there and so, you need have no scruples in staying on there.

What can I write about Maganlal? Khushalbhai and Devbhabhi have arrived. They are bearing the loss with great fortitude. Some changes have been taking place in the Ashram these days. You must be getting an account of them.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The figures of the account marked by me in the accompanying pamphlet do not seem to be correct. Go through them and then let me know. Return the pamphlet to me. I wish to write something about it.

From the Gujara ti origin al: S.N. 32994

[1] From the reference in the letter to the cancellation of visit to Europe which Gandhiji announced in *Young India* of April 26, 1928, *vide* "To European Friends". The Tuesday following this announcement fell on 1st May. The reference to Khushalbhai and Devbhabhi's arrival and their "bearing the loss" of Maganlal's death "with fortitude" also indicates that the letter may have been written on 1st May, 1928. Maganlal had died in Patna on April 23, 1928.

553. SPEECH AT OPENING OF CRECHE, AHMEDABAD[1]

May 1, 1928

Perhaps it is quite appropriate that this creche is being opened by one who calls himself a labourer, though let me confess to you that it was not without some hesitation that I accepted the invitation when it was brought to me by Sheth Kasturbhai, not because I did not like the object, but because I was so preoccupied, and nothing would have pleased me better than that you should have got this function performed by someone more deserving than myself preferably a mill-owner. But my regard for Sheth Kasturbhai prevailed and I had to yield.

When I established my Ashram in Ahmedabad the consideration which weighed with me was not merely that it was the capital of Gujarat, nor that it was a busy commercial centre but that it was a great centre of textile industry and I felt that I could reasonably count on the help of the mill-agents and be able to render some service to the city. Today I am glad to be able to say that these expectations of mine have not been altogether unfulfilled. Though I have a recollection of some bitter experiences I have also a number of sweet recollections of my relations with the mill-owners. I have not yet given up hope of Ahmedabad. I still expect great things of it. It has much to accomplish yet, and among other things, speaking as a labourer myself, and as one who has tried to enter into the innermost feelings of the working class I say that Ahmedabad has much to do yet towards the amelioration of the condition of the labouring class.

My connection with the labour of this place is not of yesterday. It is as old as my first coming to this city, and so I make bold to tell you that you have not yet done your part towards your labouring population. In some cases the labourers have not been provided with even the primary amenities of life. There are exceptions, however. Some mill-owners have made some effort in the direction, and the present one is an instance in point.

The sentiments about the welfare of the mill-hands that Sheth Kas-turbhai has just now uttered before you reflect credit on him and the city of Ahmedabad. Sheth Kasturbhai was delighted with Port Sunlight, and rightly. But Port Sunlight cannot be our ideal. Messrs Lever Bros. represent to my mind the minimum standard that an

[1] Kasturbhai Lalbhai, Agent, Raipur Manufacturing Company, had requested Gandhiji to perform the opening ceremony.

employer must do for his employees. To do less would be a discredit. But we cannot afford to rest content with that. We must think in terms of our own civilization, and if the picture presented to us in the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* of the social conditions prevailing in the ancient times be correct, our ideal would seem to go much farther than Port Sunlight. I have read a lot of li-terature about Port Sunlight, and I am an ardent admirer of their welfare work, but I maintain that ours is a higher ideal. In the West there is still a watertight division between the employer and the employees. I know it is impertinent to talk of our ideal, while the curse of untouchability still stalks through the land. But I should be untrue to myself and be failing in my duty to you if I did not place before you what I regard as the highest ideal. The relation between mill-agents and mill-hands ought to be one of father and childeren or as between blood-brothers. I have often heard the mill-owners of Ahmedabad refer to themselves as 'masters' and their employees as their servants. Such loose talk should be out of fashion in a place like Ahmedabad which prides itself on its love of religion and love of ahimsa. For that attitude is a negation of ahimsa, inasmuch as our ideal demands that all our power, all our wealth and all our brains should be devoted solely to the welfare of those who through their own ignorance and our false notions of things are styled labourers or 'servants'. What I expect of you therefore is that you should hold all your riches as a trust to be used solely in the interests of those who sweat for you, and to whose industry and labour you owe all your position and prosperity. I want you to make your labourers co-partners of your wealth. I do not mean to suggest that unless you legally bind yourselves to do all that, there should be a labour insurrection. The only sanction that I can think of in this connection is of mutual love and regard as between father and son, not of law. If only you make it a rule to respect these mutual obligations of love, there would be an end to all labour disputes, the workers would no longer feel the need for organizing themselves into unions. Under the ideal contemplated by me, there would be nothing left for our Anasuyabehns and Shankerlals to do; their occupation would be gone. But that cannot happen until there is a single mill-hand who does not regard the mill in which he works as his own, who complains of sweating and overwork, and who therefore nurses in his breast nothing but ill will towards his employers.And where is the difficulty?

You have told us and it is recognized everywhere that the mill-

owners stand only to gain by doing all this. Messrs Lever Bros. lost nothing by doing all that they did. They felt so encouraged that they even tried to create another Port Sunlight in Natal. As our experience gradually broadens we are beginning to see more and more clearly that the more we give to our workers the more we stand to gain. From the moment your men come to realize that the mills are theirs, no less than yours, they will begin to feel towards you as blood-brothers, there would be no question of their acting against the common interest and the need for having a heavy supervisory establishment over them.

You have given me credit for keeping the city of Ahmedabad free from a labour upheaval such as Bombay is at present passing through. Well, I cannot quite disclaim that credit, for does anyone among you for a moment doubt that things would have been otherwise here, but for the work that Shrimati Anasuyabehn and Sjt. Shankerlal have been doing? It is true perhaps that you the mill-owners of Ahmedabad are more tactful than the Bombay mill-owners. In case of an upheaval you do not employ hooligans to crush your men as some employers in the West do, and I fancy that you have deliberately abjured that weapon of suppressing the aspirations of labour. My critics tell me that this is all moonshine, and that you would not hesitate to resort to such means, if you could. But I believe that they are mistaken and I want you to prove by your conduct that they are mistaken. I hope you will help to bring near the time when the sort of work that Sjt. Banker Shrimati Anasuyabehn are doing would be rendered needless, and pending that consummation give them all the help, all the encouragement that they need in their work.

Now perhaps you understand why I have dared to appropriate a little credit for the peace that prevails here today. It belongs not to me but to Shrimati Anasuyabehn and Sjt. Shankerlal Banker. They live, move and have their being among the labourers, which I am unable to do. If you aid the efforts of these friends you will find there will not be much need left for erecting creches like this one or for providing medical relief. I do not wish to detract from the merit of these efforts of yours, but I ask you whether any well-to-do man would care to send his children to a creche like this. Our endeavour should be to bring about a state of things under which there would be no occasion for a mill-hand's baby to be torn from its mother, and when a factory hand's child would receive the same opportunities for education that our own children have.

Young India, 10-5-1928

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

RESOLUTION ON HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY[1]

PART A—POLITICAL RIGHTS

This Congress resolves : (1) That in any future scheme of constitution, so far as representation in various legislatures is concerned, joint electorates in all the provinces and in the Central Legislature be constituted; (2) That, with a view to giving full assurances to the two great communities that their legitimate interests will be safeguarded in the Legislatures such representation of the communities should be secured for the present, and if desired, by the reservation of seats in joint electorates on the basis of population in every province and in the Cental Legislature :

Provided that reciprocal concessions in favour of minorities may be made by mutual agreement so as to give them representation in excess of the proportion of the number of seats to which they would be entitled on the population basis in any province or provinces and the proportions so agreed upon for the provinces shall be maintained in the representation of the two communities in the Central Legislature from the provinces.

In the decision of the reservation of seats for the Punjab, the question of the representation of Sikhs as an important minority will be given full consideration;

3(a) That the proposal made by the Muslim leaders that the reforms should be introduced in the N.W.F. Province and British Baluchistan on the same footing as in other provinces is, in the opinion of the Congress, a fair and reasonable one, and should be given effect to, care being taken that simultaneously with other measures of administrative reform an adequate system of judicial administration shall be introduced in the said provinces;

(b)(i) That with regard to the proposal that Sind should be constituted into a separate province, this Congress is of opinion that the time has come for the redistribution of provinces on a linguistic basis—a principle that has been adopted in the constitution of the Congress;

(ii) This Congress is also of opinion that such readjustment of provinces be immediately taken in hand and that any province which demands such reconstitution on linguistic basis be dealt with accordingly;

(iii) This Congress is further of opinion that a beginning may be made by reconstituting Andhra, Utakl, Sind and Karnatak into separate provinces;

4. That, in the future constitution, liberty of conscience shall be guaranteed

[1] Passed at the annual session of the Indian National Congress at Madras on December 26, 1927; *vide* letters to Ansari, 25-12-1927 and 28-12-1927.

and no legislature, Central or Provincial, shall have power to make any laws interfering with liberty of conscience;

'Liberty of conscience' means liberty of belief and worship, freedom of religious observances and association and freedom to carry on religious education and propaganda with due regard to the feelings of others and without interfering with similar rights of others;

5. That no bill, resolution, motion or amendment regarding intercommunal matters shall be moved, discussed or passed in any legislature, Central or Provincial, if a three-fourths majority of the members of either community affected thereby in that legislature oppose the introduction, discussion or passing of such bill, resolution, motion or amendment.

"Intercommunal matters" means matters agreed upon by such a joint Standing Committee of both communities—of the Hindu and Muslim members of the legislature concerned appointed at the commencement of every session of the legislature.

PART B—RELIGIOUS AND OTHER RIGHTS

This Congress resolves that :

1. Without prejudice to the rights Hindus and Mussalmans claim, the one to play music and conduct processions wherever they please and the other to slaughter cows for sacrifice or food wherever they please, the Mussalmans appeal to the Mussalmans to spare Hindu feelings as much as possible in the matter of the cow and the Hindus appeal to the Hindus to spare Mussalman feelings, as much as possible in the matter of music before mosques.

And therefore, this Congress calls upon both the Hindus and Mussal-mans not to have recourse to violence or to law to prevent the slaughter of a cow or the playing of music before a mosque.[1]

2. This Congress further resolves that every individual or group is at liberty to convert or reconvert another by argument or persuasion but no individual or group shall attempt to do so, or prevent its being done by force, fraud or other unfair means such as the offering of material inducement. Persons under eighteen years of age should not be converted unless it be along with their parents or guardians. If any person under eighteen years of age is found stranded without his parents or guardian by persons of another faith he should be promptly handed over to persons of his own faith. There must be no secrecy as to the person, place, time and manner about any conversion or reconversion, nor should there be any demonstration of jubilation in support of any conversion or reconversion.

Whenever any complaint is made in respect of any conversion or reconversion, that it was effected in secrecy or by force, fraud or other unfair means,

[1] This section, according to *The Hindu*, 27-12-1927, was originally drafted by Gandhiji and adopted with a few verbal changes by the Congress.

or whenever any person under eighteen years of age is converted, the matter shall be enquired into and decided by arbitrators who shall be appointed by the Working Committee either by name or under general regulations.

The resolution was moved by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and was seconded by Mr. Abul Kalam Azad.

The resolution was put and carried unanimously.

Report of the Forty-second Indian National Congress at Madras, pp. 61-2

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

ALLAHABAD,

January 11, 1928

MY DEAR BAPUJI,

The Working Committee is now meeting in Banaras and so I cannot go to Bombay or Sabarmati for some time.

I am loath to inflict another letter on you so soon after my last but I am very much troubled by your criticisms of the Congress resolutions and I feel I must write to you again. You are always very careful with you words and your language is studiously restrained. It amazes me all the more to find you using language which appears to me wholly unjustified. You have condemned in general language the proceedings of the Subjects Committee and specially selected some resolutions for greater criticism and condemnation. May I point out that it is always unsafe to judge on hearsay evidence? You were not present yourself and it is quite conceivable that the opinions you may have formed after a personal visit to the Subjects Committee may have been different. Yet you have chosen to condemn and judge unfavourably the whole Committee, or at any rate a great majority of it, simply basing your judgment on the impressions of a few persons. Do you think this is quite fair to the Committee or the Congress? You have referred to discipline and to the Working Committee as the National Cabinet. May I remind you that you are a member of the Working Committee and it is an extraordinary thing for a memebr on the morrow of the Congress to criticize, and run down the Congress and its principal resolutions. There has been a general chorus of congratulation on the success of the Madras Congress. This may be wrong or without sufficient basis but undoubtedly there was this general impression in the country and atmosphere counts for a great deal in all public work. And now most people who thought so feel a bit dazed at your criticisms and wonder if their previous enthusiasm was not overdone or mistaken.

[1] *Vide* Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru, 17-1-1928.

You have described the Independence Resolution as "hastily conceived and thoughtlessly passed". I have already pointed out to you how the country has discussed and considered this question for years past, and how I have personally thought over it, discussed it, spoken about it in meetings, written about it and generally been full of it for the last five years or more. It seems to me that under the circumstances no stretch of language can justify the use of the words "hastily conceived". As for "thoughtlessly passed" I wonder if you know that the resolution was discussed in the Subjects Committee for about three hours and more than a dozen speeches for and against were made. Ultimately as you know it was passed almost unanimously both in the Committee and the open Congress. Were all the people in the Committee and the Congress who voted for it "thoughtless"? Is this not rather a large assumption? And why should it not be said with greater truth that the small minority opposed to the resolution were mistaken? You mention that last year the resolution was rejected by the Committee. I do not know what inferene you draw from this but to me it seems obvious that this can only mean that the Committee and the Congress have been eager to pass it in the past as in the present but refrained from doing so out of regard for you. I hope will agree with me that it is not healthy politics for any organization to subordinate its own definite opinion on a public issue out of personal regard only.

I am not referring here to the merits of the resolution. But I shall only say this that after prolonged and careful thought a demand for independence and all that this implies has come to mean a very great deal for me and I attach more importance to it than to almost anything else. I have thought over every word you said the other day in Madras on this question and it has merely confirmed me in my opinion. But I doubt if anyone outside a small circle understands your position in regard to this. I am sure that none of the others—liberals, etc.,—who want dominion status think in the same way with you. Yesterday Sir Ali Imam addressed a meeting here on the Simon boycott. I also spoke for a few minutes and like King Charles' head independence cropped up and I laid stress on it. After the meeting Ali Imam told me that I did well in laying stress on this; he and his friends would probably come round to this position sooner or later but for the time being they had to be a little restrained as they wanted to carry many people with them. I am sure most liberals welcome the Independence Resolution, whatever they may say about it, as they feel that it strengthens their position. But whether they like it or not, it passes my comprehension how a national organization can have as its ideal and goal dominion status. The very idea suffocates and strangles me.

I took no special interest in the resolution on the boycott of British goods chiefly because I felt that it would meet with your strong disapproval and the boycott could not succeed unless a more or less unanimous effort was made. But I have no doubt that it can be made into a partial success if there was some unanimity in our own ranks. You must have read about the wonderful effectiveness of the boycott in China.

There was nothing special in China which we have not got and there is no fundamental reason why we cannot succeed where they succeeded. But granting that it is not likely to succeed is it such a laughing matter after all? Has our boycott of foreign cloth by khaddar succeeded so remarkably? Has our spinning franchise succeeded? They have not but you do not hesitate to them on the country and the Congress because you felt, and rightly, that they would be good for the nation even if they did not wholly succeed.

I remember how Kelkar, Aney and Co., even as members of the Working Committee, used to make fun of the Congress resolutions on khadi, and it is very painful for me to think that you are also ridiculing important Congress resolutions. The Kelkars and Aneys do not count and I do not care what they say or do. But I do care very much for what you say and do.

Having singled out two resolutions for your special condemnation you casually refer to the others as "several irresponsible resolutions". Excepting the Unity Resolution every other resolution of the Congress may come under this heading. And so the labours of the 200 and odd persons in the Subjects Committee and the larger number in the Congress are summarily and rather contemptuously disposed of. It is very hard luck on the unhappy persons who, though wanting perhaps in foresight and intelligence, did not spare themselves and tried to do their best. We have all sunk to the level of the schoolboys' 'debating society' and you chastize us like an angry school-master, but a school-master who will not guide us or give us lessons but will only point out from time to time the error of our ways. Personally I very much wish that we were more like real schoolboys, with the life and energy and daring of schoolboys, and a little less like the right honourable and honourable gentlemen who are for ever weighing the pros and cons and counting the cost.

You know how intensely I have admired you and believed in you as a leader who can lead this country to victory and freedom. I have done so in spite of the fact that I hardly agreed with anything that some of your previous publications—*Indian Home Rule*, etc.,—contained. I felt and feel that you were and are infinitley greater than your little books. Above everything I admire action and daring and courage and I found them all in you in a superlative degree. And I felt instinctively that, however much I may disagree with you, your great personality and your possession of these qualities would carry us to our goal. During the N. C. O. period you were supreme; you were in your element and automatically you took the right step. But since you came out of prison something seems to have gone wrong and you have been very obviously ill at ease. You will remember how within a few months or even weeks you repeatedly changed your attitude—the Juhu statements, the A.I.C.C. meeting at Ahmedabad and after, etc.,—and most of us were left in utter bewilderment. That bewilderment has continued since then. I have asked you many times what you expected to do in the future and your answers have been far from satisfying. All you

have said has been that within a year or eighteen months you expected the khadi movement to spread repidly and in a geometric ratio and then some direct action in the political field might be indulged in. Several years and eighteen months have passed since then and the miracle has not happened. It was difficult to believe that it would happen but faith in your amiazing capacity to bring off the improbable kept us in an expectant mood. But such faith for an irreligious person like me is a poor reed to reply on and I am beginning to think if we are to wait for freedom till khadi becomes universal in India we shall have to wait till the Greek Kalends. Khadi will grow slowly, and if war comes it will grow very fast, but I do not see how freedom is coming in its train. As I mentioned before you our khadi work is almost wholly divorced from politics and our khadi workers ae developing a mentality which does not concern itself with anything outside their limited sphere of work. This may be good for the work they do, but little can be expected from them in the political field.

What then can be done? You say nothing,—you only criticize and no helpful lead comes from you. You tell us that if the country will not even take to khadi how can we expect it to do anything more difficult or daring. I do not think the reasoning is correct. If the country does not go ahead politically by one method, surely it is up to our leaders to think of other or additional methods.

Reading many of your articles in *Young India*—your autobiography, etc., —I have often felt how very different my ideals were from yours. And I have felt that you were very hasty in your judgments, or rather having arrived at certain conclusions you were over-eager to justify them by any scrap of evidence you might get. I remember how in an article on the "Two Ways" or some such title—you gave some newspaper cuttings from America about crimes and immorality and contrasted American civilization with Indian. I felt it was something like Katharine Mayo drawing conclusions from some unsavoury hospital statistics. Your long series of articles based on the French book—"Towards Moral Bankruptcy"—also made me feel the same way. You misjudge greatly, I think, the civilization of the West and attach too great an importance to its many failings. You have stated somewhere that India has nothing to learn from the West and that she had reached a pinnacle of wisdom in the past. I certainly disagree with this viewpoint and I neither think that the so-called *Ramaraj* was very good in the past, nor do I want it back. I think that western or rather industrial civilization is bound to conquer India maybe with many changes and adaptations, but none the less, in the main, based on industrialism. You have criticized strongly the many obvious defects of industrialism and hardly paid any attention to its merits. Everybody knows these defects and the utopias and social theories are meant to remove them. It is the opinion of most thinkers in the West that these defects are not due to industrialism as such but to the capitalist system which is based on exploitation of others. I believe you have stated that in your

opinion there is no necessary conflict between capital and labour. I think that under the capitalist system this conflict is unavoidable.

You have advocated very eloquently and forcefully the claims of the *Daridranarayana*—the poor in India. I do believe that the remedy you have suggested is very helpful to them and if adopted by them in large number will relieve to some extent their misery. But I doubt very much if the fundamental cause of poverty are touched by it. You do not say a word against the semi-feudal zamindari system which prevails in a great part of India or against the capitalist exploitation of both the workers and the consumers.

But I must stop. I have already exceeded all reasonable limits and I hope you will forgive me. My only excuse is my mental agitation. I did not want to become the secretary of the A.I.C.C. as I wanted perfect freedom to say and do what I considered necessary. But Ansari pressed me on the ground that many of my resolutions and specially the Independence Resolution, had been passed by the Congress and I thus had full freedom to work on my own lines. I could not answer this argument and had to accept. Now I find that every effort is being made to belittle and ridicule these very Congress resolutions and it is a painful experience.

Yours affectionately,

JAWAHARLAL

From a phototstat : S.N. 13039

APPENDIX III

FOREIGN PROPAGANDA

BY C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

Before the Non-co-operation movement, Indian political activity largely consisted of propaganda in Great Britain. A great deal of money, comparatively, was spent on it and was considered well spent. When Gandhiji took up the guidance of our national affairs there was a change of outlook. A grasp of the essentials of national strength was the first result of his programme and it marked all our political thought at the time. We understood the natural laws that governed the sanctions needed for the non-violent enforcement of national demands. An almost exclusive spirit of self-reliance was the natural consequence. The cultivation of favourable opinion in foreign parts including Great Britain was valued at its correct worth and distinct efforts to that end were practically given up, and opposed vigorously whenever the question was raised. So intense was the work in India and so marked were the results that the tables were soon turned, and instead of Indians going to do propaganda in Great Britain and foreign parts, India attracted numerous foreign visitors; and the British Government was forced to undertake counterpropaganda in foreign parts. In India itself the Government had to give up its self-confidence and organize its own propaganda among the people in order to resist or at least postpone the effects of the

national upheaval.

With the stoppage of aggressive non-co-operation, however, there has been a reversion in Indian thought. Slowly but steadily the cry for foreign propaganda is gaining in volume again. The internal situation also, namely, the difficulties in the way of united national action, has naturally led people to turn to easir outlets of activities abroad. To those who still hold to the creed of non-co-operation and who look to emancipation only from within, this turn of the national gaze and energy to East and West is a symptom of growing weakness and a cause for anxiety. The vision is bound to be cluded and constructive efforts are bound to be prejudicially affected by the growing tendency to this diversion. Not only does it divert attention but some of the best workers will be drawn bodily into this channel of pleasanter though futile work.

Pre-non-co-operation foreign propaganda was mostly propaganda in Britain. But one of the permanent results of the efforts of these eight years is loss of faith in Britain. The last vestiges of faith that stuck to the British Labour Party have been also destroyed. The present harking back to foreign propaganda is therefore not for propaganda in England, but for the cultivation of contacts and friendship with other foreign nations. We are told that it is very desirable to develop intimate association with the German and Russian people. We are told that the Latin races of Europe present a favourable field for propaganda. France, Italy, Spain and Portugal are mentioned. Even Scandinavia is not forgotten, being important neutral soil. We are told, again, that the need of the hour is to link India up with other countries suffering under like imperialistic exploitation. We are asssured that the hope of India is a federated Asia rising against Western domination. This change of attitude in regard to foreign propaganda had naturally its echo in the proceedings of the All-India Congress Committee where foreign affairs dominated the atmosphere, and many resolutions were adopted calculated to form a basis for international friendships.

It would be narrow-mindedness, indeed, and show us to be lacking the spirit of culture and humanity to refuse to have dealings with other nations if we were better circumstanced. But what would be civilization and culture and broad-mindedness under favourable circumstances would bee mere helplessness under existing conditions and would lead to nothing beneficial. Friendship with other nations can grow and be beneficial only if as in personal friendships it is not cultivated on the mere expectation of advantages, all on one side. If we seek honourable friendship with others there must be something for us to give them while we seek something from them. If we are in effect truly unable to help others and only ask for something at their hands it would not conduce mutual esteem; nor can a healthy alliance grow. If we are able really to help others, it must be by a supreme effort of national assertion which can and must, if well directed, produce far more marked results at home. The

nations, whose friendship we go to woo, must find something to learn or something to gain from close association with us. If we have going on amidst us some movement of dynamic value, some revolutionary effort or some great constructive activity worthy of copy or study on others' part, we would be seeking friendship on honourable, if not equal, terms. But we cannot be ever living either on the capital of our ancient culture or on the history of the Gandhian movement.

The link of mere friendship of slavery is not likely to be a real or useful bond. Why do we turn to Russia, China or Turkey? It is to simply the greatness of the past history of these nations that attracts us. If that alone were offered we would hardly be interested. But it is because we believe that there are great movements now going on in those countries which furnish matter for useful study or admiring observation, that some of our people go to those countries. Similarly if we seek international friendship with such nations, we should have something to offer to them of value. Otherwise we would only be beggars and should expect to be treated no better.

But then, it may be said, this is to ignore world politics. There are wars coming on. The nations of the world are ever seeking to subvert one another's plans, and India is an important piece on the board. We are not so helpless internationally as we may be internally in our own affairs. This needs clearing up and plain talking. Are we in for a war and the formation of alliances with those likely to fight England, or do we expect other countries to go to war over us? If the powers abroad go to war, they do it with gunpowder and ships. Are we ever likely usefull to participate as a nation in such war? Is it contemplated that India and other slave nations in the East may enter into a treaty, some time in the future, to rise in revolt helping each other against the common foe? Is India to expect, under any contingency arising in a world war, to render active assistance to a belligerent power against England? What, to put only one argument, is the chance of our ever achieving anything in this way? Is it practical politics of the remotest kind, disarmed as we are?

We do not want arms, it may said: we can do a great deal by passive resistance. The only weapon in our hand is non-co-operation with the British Government during a war or peace. Here we come back to the old position. The Indian fight against England if it is to be by non-violent means depends entirely on its own strength and can never be converted into an international affair. In a non-violent struggle it is not easy, if at all possible, to obtain any material help from abroad It must be conceived and organized and fought only on a basis of complete self-reliance.

Non-material moral help we can get from foreign countries. This we shall do not by any propaganda, foreign or domestic, but exactly in the measure that we do solid constructive work and develop internal strength.

Young India, 1-3-1928

APPENDIX IV

CABLE FROM V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

MARITZBURG

April 24, 1928

GANDHI

SABARMATI

CONFIDENTIAL. SAIC'S CABLE TO YOU FROM JOHANNESBURG ALARMED YOU UNNECESSARILY. NATAL CONGRESS LEADERS DISAPPROVE. THEIR DESIRE WAS TO ASK DEFINITE QUESTION, WAS IT PART OF YOUR UNDERSTANDING WITH SMUTS THAT HOLDERS OF CERTIFICATES AT THE TIME THOUGH OBTAINED FRAUDULENTLY, SHOULD BE UNCHALLENGED? IF THIS BE SO, I CANNOT UNDERSTAND WHY GOVERNMENT PUBLISHED CONDONATION SCHEME IN 1915 AND KEPT IT OPEN TILL 1916 OFFERING PROTECTION PAPERS TO FRAUDULENT ENTRANTS BEFORE 1ST AUGUST 1910. IT SEEMS POLAK EARNESTLY ADVISED FULL ADVANTAGE BE TAKEN OF THIS OFFER TO CLEAN UP BUT ONLY A FEW DID SO. DEPARTMENT WILLING THAT PEOPLE ONCE CONDONED NEED NOT APPLY NOW FOR CONDONATION. BUT THE TRANSVAAL CONGRESS LEADERS DEMAND FRAUDULENT CERTIFICATES AT 1914 SETTLEMENT SHOULD BE IMMUNE WHETHER OR NOT HOLDERS THEREOF OBTAINED CONDONATION UNDER 1915 NOTIFICATION. IF THIS PART OF YOUR UNDERSTANDING PLEASE IMMEDIATELY CABLE SO. FROM MY PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE OF MALAN, SCHMIDT, VENN, AND PRING, I AM THOROUGHLY CONVINCED THEIR GOOD INTENTIONS AT PRESENT. THEY WILL NOT KNOWINGLY GO BACK ON PREVIOUS PROMISE. REGARDING INTRODUCTION OF FAMILIES, THE NUMBER OF ENTRANTS BEFORE 1914 STILL WITHOUT FAMILIES MUST BE SMALL. NOR IS THERE GOOD REASON WHY IF FRAUDULENT ENTRANTS AFTER 1914 REMAIN WITHOUT FAMILIES, THOSE BEFORE 1914 SHOULD BE EXEMPTED FROM THAT DESIRABILITY. DEPARTMENT ASK WHY FRAUDULENT ENTRANTS IN NATAL AND CAPE BEFORE 1914 SHOULD BE TREATED WORSE THAN SIMILAR PEOPLE IN TRANSVAAL. THEY ALSO FEAR THAT THERE BEING NO REGISTRATION CERTIFICATES IN THESE PROVINCES IT IS EASY FOR ANYONE TO CONTEND HE CAME BEFORE 1914. REMEMBER BEFORE SECTION 5 CAN BE EMPLOYED AGAINST ANYONE, BURDEN OF PROOF OF FRAUD RESTS ON GOVERNMENT. IT IS NOT TRUE THAT REGISTRATION AND OTHER CERTIFICATES MUST BE SURRENDERED IN EXCHANGE FOR PROTECTION CERTIFICATES. BY EXPRESS PROVISION PARTIES ARE ALLOWED TO RETAIN THESE DOCUMENTS. TRUE THAT PROTECTION

CERTIFICATES WILL COME UNDER REGULATION UNDER SECTION 25 IMMIGRATION ACT 1913 WHICH SANCTIONS TEMPORARY PERMITS. DEPARTMENT ARE ADVISED BY LAW OFFICERS THAT MINISTER CANNOT IMPOSE CONDITIONS OF RESTRICTIONS IN THE CASE OF PERMANENT PERMITS UNDER SECTION 25, BUT CAN DO SO ONLY IF PERMITS ARE TEMPORARY, THE PROPOSED PROTECTION OF CERTIFICATES CONTAIN A PROMISE THAT THE MINISTER WILL NOT CANCEL THEM EXCEPT WHEN HOLDERS ARE CONVICTED OF DEPORTABLE CRIMES. DEPARTMENT CONTEND THAT THIS PROVISION MAKES THE CERTIFICATES PERMANENT IN REALITY. QUESTION OF FORM OF CERTIFICATE IS STILL UNDER DISCUSSION AND I HOPE TO GET SATISFACTION FROM DEPARTMENT IN CASE LEGAL OPINION IS ADVERSE TO PRESENT FORM. I HAVE POSTED LONG MEMORANDUM. PLEASE SUSPEND JUDGMENT UNTIL YOU READ IT. I AM UNABLE TO SEE HOW RESULTS OF PASSIVE RESISTANCE STRUGGLE ARE NULLIFIED BY PRESENT CONDONATION SCHEME. PLEASE POST COPY OF THIS CABLE TO SIR MAHOMED HABIBULLAH. ALSO OF SAIC'S CABLE TO YOU AND THE CABLES BETWEEN YOU AND ME.

SASTRI

From a photostat: S.N. 11974

1. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 2, 1928

MY DEAR BHRRR,

You were right in your surmise about absence of any letter from me.[1] God is great and good and even merciful.

I am following the events in Bardoli. Every word of what you say is well deserved by Vallabhbhai. Don't flatter yourself with the belief that if the Government invite you as their guest, they will house you at Sabarmati. The Ashram is too near for the Sabarmati guest house.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9563

2. NECESSITY OF DISCIPLINE

Some workers in the Khadi Service write :[3]

Here there is an obvious confusion of ideals. Distorted notions of superiority and inferiority have given rise to indiscipline in almost all the national organizations. Many people think that to abolish distinctions of rank means passport to anarchy and licence. Whereas the meaning of abolition of distinctions should be perfect discipline,—perfect because of voluntary obedience to the laws of the organization to which we may belong, i.e., the laws of our being. For man is himself a wonderful organization and what applies to him applies to the social or political organizations of which he may be a member. And even as though the different members of the body are

[1] Following the death of Maganlal Gandhi, Gandhiji had not sent any letter to the addressee.

[2] Abbas Tyabji who was at the time assisting Vallabhbhai Patel in the Bardoli struggle had, while giving an account of the arrest and trial of Ravishanker, mentioned the possibility of his own arrest.

[3] The letter is not reproduced here. The workers had complained that though they were required to attend Khadi Office punctually the Secretary himself was not punctual. They had asked: ". . . Why should this inferiority and superiority prevail among workers in the same field?"

not inferior to any, they are voluntarily subject to the control of the mind, whilst the body is in a healthy state, so have the members of an organization, whilst none is superior or inferior to any other, to be voluntarily subject to the mind of the organization which is the head. An organization which has no directing mind or which has no members co-operating with the mind suffers from paralysis and is in a dying condition.

The correspondents who have signed the letter I have reproduced to not realize that if they do not accept the elementary discipline involved in giving regular attendance, that Khadi Office of which they are members cannot work profitably to its purpose, i.e., service of *Daridranarayana*. Let them realize that the voluntary discipline of a khadi office should be much stricter than the compulsory discipline of a Government office. If the chief of the Khadi Office concerned does not attend always in time, it is highly likely that he is engaged in khadi work even when he is not at his office. For whilst the staff has fairly regular hours the chief has no hours of receration. If he is honest and realizes the responsibilities of his high office, he has to work day and night in order to make khadi what it should be. It is one thing to come into a going concern, totally another to enter a newly-formed organization intended to be the largest of its kind in the world. Such an organization requires the vigilant, intelligent and honest watch not of one worker but of thousands. These workers have to come into being by belonging to the existing organizations and imposing on themselves the hardest discipline of which they way be capable.

Young India, 3-5-1928

3. THANKS

Friends from far and near have overwhelmed me with their kind messages in what has been to me the greatest trial of my life. It was foolish of me but it is nevertheless true that I had never contemplated Maganlal Gandhi's death before mine. The cables, telegrams and letters I have received from individuals, associations and Congress Committees have been a great solace to me. The senders will forgive me for not making personal acknowledgments. I assure them all that I shall try to become worthy of the affection they have bestowed upon me and of the silent devotion with which Maganlal Gandhi served the ideals he held in common with me.

M. K. G.

Young India, 3-5-1928

4. LETTER TO VIRUMAL BEGRAJ

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 4, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You do not want me to answer your questions as a lawyer; for my law may not be accepted. But as a layman, it seems to me that neither the Bava nor his widow nor the Brahmin in the other case have any right to the properties mentioned by you and held under the circumstances described by you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. VIRUMAL HEGRAJ
"SINDHI" OFFICE
SUKKUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 13214

5. LETTER TO P. T. PILLAY

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 4, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I do not consider the burning of *Manusmriti* to be on a par with the buring of foreign cloth. Burning of foreign cloth is like burning a thing that is injurious; but the burning of *Manusmriti* is at best like the burning of an advertisement for foreign cloth showing nothing but childish rage. Moreover, I do not regard *Manusmriti* as an evil. It contains much that is admirable, but in its present form it undoubtedly contains many things that are bad and these appear to be interpolations. Whilst a reformer would therefore treasure all excellent things in that ancient code, he would expurgate all that is injurious or of doubtful value.

If we are to attain swaraj by effort from within, I do consider removal of untouchability like achieving Hindu-Muslim unity as a condition precedent to the attainment of swaraj. But when the English rulers resist the demand for swaraj because we have not attained fully removal of untouchability, I rgeard their resistance as hypocritical and illegitimate.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. TIRUKOOTASUNDARAM PILLAY
SINDUPPONDURAI
TINNEVELLY

From a microfilm: S.N. 13211

6. LETTER TO L. CRANNA

[*May 4, 1928*][1]

The reference to me in the last paragraph of your letter, I am grieved to say, is a fabrication from beginning to end.[2] I should be sorry to learn that the Dean of Bristol had indeed spoken as reported.

L. CRANNA, ESQ.
C/O Y.M.C.A.
SINGAPORE

From a photostat: S.N. 14345

7. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

Vaisakha 15, May 4, 1928

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I shall see Punjabhai with regard to Raichandbhai's writings. Yes, do translate Mr. Gregg's book[3] into Hindi. There is little hope of getting any funds from Charkha Sangh in this connection. The article on khadi in C.P. will appear in *Navajivan*. I shall try to give a synopsis in *Young India*.[4]

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI HARIBHAU
KHADI KARYALAYA
AJMER

From Hindi: C.W. 6059. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

[1] This was an enclosure to "Letter to L. Cranna", 13-7-1928. The addressee in his letter of May 18 had referred to it as of this date.

[2] Cranna had earlier sent Gandhiji as letter addressed to "Sustaining Members" enclosing a cutting from *Central Christian Advocate*, which read :

"'A friend of mine, said the Dean of Bristol, lately, 'told me recently a striking story of Mr. Gandhi. After one of his foreign tours as a champion of Indian interests, he was received by a tremendous meeting of people in Calcutta. He was the popular hero of the day and the place was crowded with, I think, 15,000 Bengalees who had come to welcome him. My friend was the one Englishman present. For three hours the orators of Bengal spoke in praise of themselves and Mr. Gandhi: and then came the great moment, when Mr. Gandhi rose and all this vast assembly settled themselves on their haunches waiting for their great orator to speak. His speech consisted of one sentence, and one sentence only: 'The man to whom I owe most and to whom all India owes most is a man who never set his foot in India—and that was Christ.' And then he sat down.'"

Cranna had asked: "Has this your confirmation?"

[3] *Economics of Khaddar*

[4] An article by Mahadev Desai appeared in *Hindi Navajivan*, 10-5-1928, and a summary by Haribhau Upadhyaya in *Young India*, 9-8-1928, under the title "Khadi in Central India".

8. INDULGENCE IN THE NAME OF DEVOTION

Thanks to Shri Jaydayalji Goenka, an attempt is nowadays being made to create a spirit of devotion in the Marwari society. With this object in view *bhajan* groups have been formed and *bhajan bhavans*[1] are also being run. One such *bhavan* called Govind Bhavan has been started in Calcutta. At Shri Jaydayalji's instance, a certain gentleman was put in charge of it. He indulged in debauchery in the name of devotion. He accepted puja from women; women regarded him as God and worshipped him; he gave them his left-overs to eat and debauched them. The simple-hearted women believed that having physical relations with one who had attained self-realization could not be regarded as sinful.

Although the incident is painful, it does not surprise me. All around us we find people who gratify their lust under the guise of devotion. And so long as the essence of devotion is not understood, is it surprising that robberies are committed in the name of religion? It would be surprising if false devotees did not bring evil.

I am a votary of Ramanama and the *dwadashamantra* but my worship is not blind. For anyone who is truthful, Ramanama is like a ship. But I do not believe that anyone who repeats Ramanama hypocritically is saved by it. Instances are cited of Ajamil and others; they are poetical creations and even there there is a hidden meaning. Purity of sentiments has been attributed to them. Anyone believing that Ramanama would calm his passions is rewarded by repeating it and is saved. The hypocrite repeating Ramanama in pursuit of his passions is not saved but is doomed—

"A person will meet the fate conforming with his sentiment."

Devotees should bear two things in mind :

One, that devotion does not merely consist in repeating the name but also in sacrificial activity that must constantly go with it. There is a belief nowadays that worldly activities have no connection with dharma or devotion. This is untrue. The truth is that all activities in this world are related to dharma or *adharma*. The carpenter who practises his trade merely in order to earn a living, steals wood and spoils his work is guilty of *adharma*. Another practises his trade for the good of others, say, for making a bed for a sick person, does not

[1] Institutions for *bhajans*

commit any theft and works to the best of his abilities and repeats Ramanama while working. This constitutes work done in pursuit of dharma. This carpenter is a true devotee of Rama. A third carpenter, whether deliberately or through ignorance, gives up his trade in order to repeat Ramanama, begs for himself and his children, and if asked to make something for a sick person says: "For me there is only Rama. I would know no sick man and no happy man." This carpenter is a degraded creature fallen into the well of ignorance.

Man does not pray to God through speech alone but through thought, word and deed. If any one of these three aspects is missing, there is no devotion. A fusion of these three is like a chemical compound. In the case of the latter, if a single ingredient is not present in its proper proportion, the expected result does not follow. The devotees of today appear to think that the limits of devotion are reached in the use of beautiful language and hence ceasing to be devotees become mere rakes and corrupt others too.

In the second place, how and where should man, who has a physical form, worship God? He is omnipresent. Hence the best and most understandable place where He can be worshipped is a living creature. The service of the distressed, the crippled and the helpless among living things constitutes worship of God. The repetition of Ramanama is also meant to help us learn to do so. If Ramanama does not thus result in service, it is both futile and a sort of bondage, as it proved in the case of the man in Govind Bhavan. Let this instance serve as a warning to all devotees.

Now a few words to the women. The man who makes others worship him necessarily becomes depraved; but why should the women become so? If they must worship human beings, why should they not worship an ideal woman? Moreover, why worship any living being? The saying of the learned Solon is worthy of being carved in one's heart—"No man can be called good while he is alive."[1] Those who were good one day have become wicked the following day. Moreover, we cannot even spot hypocrites. Hence God alone should be worshipped. If a human being has to be worshipped he should be worshipped only after his death. This is so because after his death we worship only his virtues, not his physical form. It is necessary that men repeatedly, insistently and courteously point this out to our gullible sisters.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-5-1928

[1] The saying attributed to Solon, however, is: "Call no man happy till he be dead."

9. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

Silence Day, May 7, 1928

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

What shall I write to you this time? There has been no change at all in my routine work, nor do I think constantly about any particular matter, and yet I feel that a change has come over my life these days. Imperceptibly and involuntarily, a struggle is going on within me. Maganlal's soul rules over my heart. The thought of his death fills me with a kind of happiness. Ba, I and all of us had always believed that I would die first. Had it happened so, I feel, as I see the unmanageable growth of our activities, that he would have been crushed by their weight. We are all thinking how to limit them. I do not know if any of us will be able to cope with the work. But I put my trust in God. He who has steered the ship so far will steer it in future too. No matter if Maganlal has died or others die. All of us will die but the truth which we have thought and lived will never die.

I don't think I can write to the others today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4737

10. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 7, 1928

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. I hope you are properly fixed up now. Anyway you will insist on finding for yourself the comfort your health way demand.

I have carefully gone through the revised translation. It is very good.

You should occasionally go to Vallabhbhai's meetings if he desires.

Love.

BAPU

PS.

Surendra took charge of the tannery yesterday.

SHRI MIRABEHN
SWARAJ ASHRAM
BARDOLI
Via SURAT

From the original: C.W. 5301. Courtesy: Mirabehn

11. LETTER TO BRIJRISHNA CHANDIWALA

May 7, 1928

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Your letter. Hip-baths should not be given up. Yes, do go to Almora. Stick to the same diet as in Delhi, but there is no harm in eating more if you have the appetite.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2357

12. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 8, 1928

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have your letter. As I have no power in me to resist you, I have sent you just now a wire[1] saying I would be in Bombay as desired by you. But as I have said in my wire, I have really no confidence in myself to render active service at the present moment. My views are like that of a mad man. Here, Maganlal's death has cast upon me a tremendous burden; but it is a task which pleases me and which, if I can consolidate, is likely to be of great service to the country if not now certainly in the near futrue. And to tear myself away from that work even for a day in the vain hope of doing something in Bombay is not a pleasant contemplation. But unless you countermand your orders, you will find me in Bombay on 16th.[2]

If none of these big political bodies which you mention want a constitution for swaraj, what can we do? We won't be able to force the situation; for we have not the ability to carry things by storm.

I have no faith in a legislative solution of the communal

[1] This is not available.

[2] In his letter of May 3, Motilal Nehru had written: "Dr. Ansari has instructed Jawahar to call a meeting of the Working Committee on the 16th May. . . . It will be for the Woring Committee to go thoroughly into the various aspects of the situation and fully make up its mind as to what is in the best interest of the country to do at the present moment. When we have so made up our minds we can press our views on the all-Parties or some-Parties Conference whatever it is going to be with confidence born of conviction. . . . I simply want you to be in Bombay, while these meetings are being held, to be accessible to those who might wish to consult you."

question. And who will listen to my drastic views on almost every matter? But apart from my views, will it be good statesmanship to have the meeting in Bombay unless we can be sure of a representative attendance? It might be as well to ascertain beforehand whether those whom we would like to attend the meeting would do so or not, and, in the event of negative replies, to convene a meeting of the Working Committee only to decide upon the future pro- gramme. I throw out this suggestion for what it is worth. As I am not *au fait* with the full situation, I know that my opinion should not carry much weight. You must be the sole judge.

Of mills when we meet.

Yours sincerely,

PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU
ANAND BHAVAN
ALLAHABAD

From a photostat: S.N. 13218

13. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*May 9, 1928*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter. Never mind the cold bath if you took all the precautions after. The bath in the circumstances you mentioned was almost inevitable. In future it is better to remember that a sponge in such circumstances is better. Tell Pyarelal to write to me. Chhotelal has taken up his work.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5302. Courtesy: Mirabehn

14. MILL-CLOTH v. *KHADI*

A friend writes in effect :

> Several Congressmen are nowadays advocating the use of indigenous mill-cloth side by side with khadi. There is a movement to give mill-cloth a place in Congress khadi shops. Will you not give your clear opinion on this point? I know what it is but all Congress workers do not. They would like to have your guidance especially in view of your recent articles on the part the indigenous mills may play in the boycott movement.

The Congress resolutions on khadi are unequivocal. For those therefore who wish to respect them there is no course open but to

[1] From the postmark

avoid the use of cloth manufactured in our mills. But in these days of growing anarchy, it is idle to quote Congress resolutions either to support or to oppose particular conduct on the part of Congressmen.

Let us therefore re-examine the question of Congressmen optionally using indigenous mill-cloth in the place of foreign cloth, or hawking such mill-cloth. We know the experience of Bengal. The swadeshi movement of Bengal during the partition days suffered a check because of the greed and dishonesty of mill-owners. They inflated prices and even sold foreign cloth in the name of swadeshi. There is no warrant for the belief that they would behave better on this occasion. Indeed the facts about spurious khadi that I have brought to light show that the mills will not be slow to exploit the swadeshi spirit for their own benefit as opposed to the larger benefit of the consumer.

But even if the mills were to play the game, Congressmen will not need to use mill-cloth or to advertise it. The mills playing the game means their advertising and selling khadi, their assimilation of the khadi, spirit, their recognition of the predominance of khadi over mill-cloth.

It must be definitely realized that mills alone, even if they wished, cannot in our generation displace foreign cloth. Therefore there be in the country an agency that would devote its attention, so far as boycott of foreign cloth is concerned, exclusively to khadi propaganda. That agency has been the Congress since 1920. Khadi production and khadi propaganda act at once as a check upon the greed of mills and also, strange as it may appear, as an indirect but very effective encouragement to mills in their struggle against foreign competition. Exclusive devotion to khadi on the part of Congressmen enables khadi to find a foothold and enables mills effectively to carry on their operations where the Congress has as yet no influence worth the name. Hence it is that the mills have never resented the khadi propaganda. On the contrary many of their agents have assured me that they have benefited by the khadi propaganda inasmuch as it has created an anti-foreign-cloth atmosphere enabling them to sell their comparatively coarser-count cloth. Stop exclusive khadi propaganda, play with mill-cloth and you kill khadi and in the long run you kill even mill-cloth, for it cannot by itself stand foreign competition. In a competition between indigenous and foreign mills the one disturbing factor of healthy mass sentiment will be wholly wanting, if there was no khadi spirit.

Last but not least the inestimable value of khadi consists in its

capacity for tremendous mass education, mass uplift and sub- stantial relief of growing starvation. Whereas mill-cloth affords no work and no financial help to the masses, every yard of khadi means so much work and money to the masses who are being doubly ruined for want of work and wages. Therefore for every patriotic lover of the country there is no escape from exclusive use of and propaganda of khadi.

Young India, 10-5-1928

15. MORE OF MILL-OWNERS' CREED

The figures I gave the other day of spurious khadi manufactured by our mills were for nine months only.[1] I have now obtained them for ten months. Here are the magic figures :

Figures of the Production of Khadi, Dungri or Khaddar for Ten Months, April to January :

	1925-26	1926-27	1927-28
Lb.	2,58,22,442	3,11,95,169	3,70,36,206
Yards	7,32,44,238	8,54,31,611	10,30,61,072

This shows that they manufactured one crore yards for month, meaning at least 20 lakhs of rupees worth of khadi per month. This means a year's output of genuine khadi. This is taking money directly out of the mouths of the poor people through a movement that was designed for helping the starving millions. Baseness could go no further. The mill-owners could have served the country if they had made common cause with khadi and helped it directly instead of trying to kill it by unfair and dishonest competition. Their action is on a par with of marchants who sell to a gullible public artificial ghee claiming it as genuine product. Like the Government they have traded on the ignorance of the people and like all their predecessors in kind they will find, if they do not retrace their steps that they played the trick once too often. It is possible to fool some people for all times but it is not possible to fool all the people all the time. It should not be necessary for capital to be dishonest for its growth.

Young India, 10-5-1928

[1] *Vide* "A Mill-owner on Boycott", 5-4-1928.

16. DEADLY MARCH OF CIVILIZATION (?)

"Although at the time of writing (1917) foreign cloths are being imported to a certain extent into the Shan States, it is the custom for all Shan women to weave cloth for their own garments and those of their families. . . . The cotton from which the cloths are made is grown locally and prepared by the women. . . . In Shan villages nearly every house has a loom made sometimes of bamboo, sometimes of heavy wood, and generally kept on the ground in the open space beneath the living rooms. The raw cotton is prepared by drying the balls in the sun, extracting the seeds by passing them through the usual small two-roller gin and then opening it out by catching the partly cleaned cotton up from the revolving basket in which it is placed, by means of an instrument shaped like the bow of a violoncello. After the cotton fibres have been separated in this way they are made into slivers and wound round a stick about 8 in. long and $\frac{3}{4}$ in. thick, from which the cotton is converted into thread by a form of spinning jenny." From *Burmese Textile* from the Shan and Cachin Dt. . . . Notes from Bankfield Museum, by Laura E. Start 1917.

But for the hypnotic spell under which the intoxicating education of our times drives us to live, we would consider it a sacrilege to deprive people of their own existing honourable occupation in the distant, vague and often hope of bettering their fleeting material condition. If civilization means change of form merely without regard to substance it is an article of doubtful value. And yet that is what the foregoing paragraph sent by Sjt. Balaji Rao means. Under the guise of the civilizing influence of commerce the innocent people of Burma are being impoverished and reduced to the condition of cattle. As Sjt. Madhusudan Das has pointed out, people who merely work with cattle and forget the cunning of the hand by giving up handicrafts are impoverished not only in body but also in mind.

Young India, 10-5-1928

17. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

May 10, 1928

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I have your letter. I have already written to you in reply to your telegram. Do not grieve about your son Jal. His soul is immortal. It was, moreover, a highly advanced soul and, therefore, you may be

sure he is happy wherever he is now. If we suffer it is because of our selfish attachment to transitory things. Improve your health if you can. I do not know anyone connected with Kuhne. If you find his place, he will do for you what he does for others. You can of course make use of my ordinary letters.

To both of you,

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7540

18. LETTER TO MRS. E. BJERRUM

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 11, 1928[1]

I must try to answer your questions today.

What you say about prayer at the Ashram is largely true. It is still a formal thing, soulless; but I continue it in the hope of it becoming a soulful thing. Human nature is much the same whether in the East or in the West. It does not therefore surprise me that you have not found anything special about prayers in the East and probably the Ashram prayer is a hotchpot of something Eastern and something Wes-tern. As I have no prejudice against taking anything good from the West or against giving up anything bad in the East, there is an unconscious blending of the two. For a congregational life a congregational prayer is a necessity and, therefore, form also is necessary. It need not be considered on that account to be hypocritical or harmful. If the leader at such congregational prayer meetings is a good man the general level of the meeting is also good. The spiritual effect of an honest intelligent attendance at such congregational prayers is undoubtedly great. Congregational prayer is not intended to supplant individual prayer, which, as you well put it, must be heart-felt and never formal. It is there you are in tune with the Infinite. Congregational prayer is an aid to being in tune with the Infinite. For man who is a social being cannot find God unless he discharges social obligations and the obligation of coming to a common prayer meeting is perhaps the supremest. It is a cleansing

[1] It appears the letter was dictated on May 10 and dispatched the next day after revision.

process for the whole congregation. But, like all human institutions, if one does not take care, such meetings do become formal and even hypocritical. One has to devise methods of avoiding the formality and hypocrisy. In all, especially in spiritual matters, it is the personal equation that counts in the end.

The roll call is not the ordinary roll call. It is a note of the results of the daily *yajna*, that is, sacrifice. Everyone says what he has spun. Spinning has been conceived in a sacrificial spirit. The idea is to see God through service of the millions. The day must not close without every member of the congregation confessing whether he or she has or has not performed the daily sacrifice to the measure of his or her promise. It is therefore not business at the end of the prayer, but it is the finishing touch to the prayer. It is not done at the beginning of the meeting, because those who are late should have the opportunity of registering their sacrifice. Remember, too, this is a sacrifice not intended to be made in secret. It is designed to be done in the open.

In my opinion, Christianity or the message of Jesus is a response to the human want even as are the messages of Krishna, Buddha, Muhammad and Zoroaster. Though they were designed and delivered at different places and at different times, they have also a universal value. According to the needs of the time one message puts more emphasis on one thing than upon another. A man of religion will not hesitate to profit by all these messages and according to his predilection derive more comfort from one than from another.

I do believe that real art consists in seeing the hidden beauty of moral acts and effects and, therefore, much that passes for art and beauty is, perhaps, neither art nor beauty.

I think I have now answered all your quesitons. You will please remind me if I have missed any and you will not hesitate to write to me again if I am anywhere obscure or unconsciously evasive.

My love to both of you.[1]

Yours sincerely,

MRS. E. BJERRUM
UNITED THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE
BANGALORE

From a photostat: S.N. 13221 and 15365

[1]*Vide* also "Interview to Mr. and Mrs. Bjerrum", before July 14, 1927.

19. LETTER TO MARY J. CAMPBELL

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 11, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your kind letter for which I thank you.

The only message I can think of sending to the World Convention of Temperance Women is that the sisters assembled should study the facts about every country in which temperance movement is being carried on by them and then and not till then may they expect a proper solution. For I find that many movements of reform lack this very simple foundation of facts. I take India by way of illustration. Very few temperance societies realize that total prohibition in India is impeded not by the people but the policy of the existing Government.

I thank you for your sympathy in my loss and reciprocate your wish that we may some day meet.

Yours sincerely,

MISS MARY J. CAMPBELL
DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13220

20. LETTER TO S. GANESAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 11, 1928

MY DEAR GANESAN,

I am asking the Manager, *Young India*, to supply you with the list you require if he has not any objection.

I see no objection to your turning the concern into a limited company if you can find sufficient friends to support you. I cannot reconcile myself to your getting a loan carrying a big interest.

What I mean by offering to take Mr. Gregg's book off your shoulders was that if it would be of any help to you I might try to have the books bught out.

Yours sinerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13221

21. LETTER TO ANNE MARIE PETERSEN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 11, 1928

MY DEAR PETERSEN,

I was glad to have you letter. I know that if you did not write it is not for want of affection but it is because of affection. I have you often in my thoughts.

Yes, Maganlal's death is a heavy blow, if I am to consider this to be a Godless universe and we a purposeless creation; but when I realize that the hand of God is in everything, the grief itself turns to joy and gives me zest for greater service, greater dedication.

Yours sincerely,

MISS MARIE PETERSEN
KODAIKANAL

From a microfilm: S.N. 13222

22. LETTER TO S. N. MITRA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 11, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The only thing I can advise the students to do is that they should at least boldly adopt khadi and spinning irrespective of cost and consequences if they would at all identify themselves with the poorest at whose expense they are being taught in Government colleges and schools.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SACHINDRA NATH MITRA
5/2 KANTAPUKUR LANE
BAGBAZAR
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13600

23. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

May 11, 1928

BHAI DEVCHANDBHAI,

Bhai Bhagwanji was here and he told me that it would be better if an arbitrator is appointed to settle the dispute between Revashanker

and Manasukhbhai's wife. He suggests Krishnalal Jhaveri's name for the purpose, but will accept any other name which you may propose. I am sure you will agree to this proposal.

Vandemataram from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5699

24. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 11, 1928

CHI. MIRA,

I am glad your fever has left you. You must be strong and send me your weight. You are there under Vallabhbai's jurisdiction. If he wants you, you may stay on and take part in the struggle to the extent desired by him. You may come whenever you like to fetch your things if you are to stay there beyond your programme as originally mapped.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5303. Courtesy: Mirabehn

25. LETTER TO T. B. KESHAVARAO

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 12, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Nothing would please me better than to dot India with model dairies and model tanneries after my conviction; but unfortunately I have not been able to convert even the existing cow societies to my view. In spite of repeated letters to them individually, they have not responded even to the extent of supplying the Secretary with the information wanted.

The monetary help received also is not much, as you can notice from *Young India*. The substantial help received has been from personal friends only, not from the general public. Every donation and yarn contribution is published periodically in the pages of *Young*

India. Both the tannery and the goshala in the Ashram are partly helped by the funds collected.

I think this deals with all your questions.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. B. KESHAVARAO
PRANIDAYA GNYANAPRASARAKA SANGHA
DAVANGERE, MYSORE STATE

From a microfilm: S.N. 13223; also G.N. 161

26. LETTER TO NIRANJAN SINGH[1]

May 12, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. There is no objection to your publishing a Punjabi translation of "My Experiments with Truth" as long as nothing is omitted from the book.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 13215

27. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 12, 1928

DEAR MOTILALJI,

As every day spent at the Ashram just now is precious to me, I propose to be in Bombay not on the 16th but the 17th instant. Jawahar expects me to be in Bombay not earlier. You yourself tell me in your wire that you will be in Bombay in the afternoon of the 16th. Unless therefore you want me in Bombay on the 16th, I propose to reach there on the 17th, that is, if you do not absolve me from the obligation altogether.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13224

[1] The addressee was Professor of Chemistry, Khalsa College, Amritsar.

28. LETTER TO SHANKARAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 12, 1928

MY DEAR SHANKARAN,

I have your letter. I am glad you have written. But you are mistaken. I do not want to turn all into Maganlals. That would be an impossible task. But I am trying to put the Ashram on a basis such that it becomes easy of management. If we have a common kitchen, it should be common to all, should it not? But there too I shall be doing nothing without the consent of the general body of the people. In any case under the present constitution I can do nothing except through the Managing Board in which I have no voice officially. That everbody still listens to me is of course true. I wish you were here whilst these changes are being made. But you are on duty. That is as good as being here.

I cannot send you to Bardoli unless I can replace you, which it is not possible to do just now.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 13225

29. LETTER TO LAJPAT RAI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 12, 1928

DEAR LALAJI,

I have your letter. Please do not think that I used the term "patronizing" in any offensive sense.[1] Let me reiterate what I have said and want to say. I want you not as a distant admirer of khadi and khadi movement. I want you to throw yourself heart and soul into it with a full deep conviction just as you have thrown yourself into untouchability movement. You are not satisfied with merely recounting the merits of removal, but you are devoting your great energy to the eradication of the evil. And so I want you not to wait for the hostile criticism that may appear in the Press, but to ask those who are likely to be hostile critics to let you have their views, unless of

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lajpat Rai", 29-4-1928.

course a second and serious reading of the literature, especially of Gregg's book, has made your conviction unshakable. I know that your health cannot permit you to engage in a hurricane tour. But you know what I want, and that you can give me only if you have an immovable heart conviction.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13226

30. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 12, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I am glad you have given me the details of your diet. I am inclined to think that you should omit gram powder. It is not easy to digest especially when the gram is fried. You take it I suppose for its protein. Why not take the more digestive wheat in the form of well-cokked chapati or even baker's bread. It seems to me that you are not taking enough milk. A cup of milk I suppose means eight ounces, and if you take it twice, it means one pound only, not sufficient for the work you do. You should take at least two pounds of milk.

I do not know that you need rice. If you do, take it by all means. There is very little fruit in your diet. Occasional oranges won't do. We want vegetable vitamins just as much as we are supposed to require animal vitamins. And the vegetable vitamins are to be had principally from fresh fruits or fresh vegetables, the latter uncooked are not so easily digestible as fresh fruits, and the moment you cook anything you lose part of the vitamins.

How about the water treatment—hip-baths? They ought to put you right with the food I suggest. And if you will take a liberal diet and occasional fast, you will do a great deal of good.

From what you tell me, we must be prepared to lose Nikhil. I should so love to put him under the treatment of an experienced nature-cure man.

Jamnalalji tells me you would like to pass a few days with me. That you can do any time. I would have even Nikhil here and if he must die, he may do so here. But the weather may be too trying for him and for you all.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 13227

31. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
Wednesday, May 12, 1928

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your letters. In my view, there is hardly a young man as fortunate as you. I have been watching you from your childhood and I have felt that God has created you for great service. There can be many kinds of service. But you have been destined to serve the sick. You have to serve me as well as Ba, Sundaram, the Naidu brothers, etc. I have never had the feeling that you have shirked that service. Hence I see only go23od for you. Your lack of faith in the *atman* hinders you, makes you indifferent but it also makes you humble. So, I welcome the fact that you are called upon to serve Kanti.[1] I know that even if you did not ask for it, you certainly welcome it.

Keep writing to me daily. Many people here are laid up at the moment. Even so this year there is comparatively less illness. Read to Kanti the letter addressed to him and Kishorelalbhai's letter about him.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Sansmarano, pp. 87-8

32. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

May 12, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I got your letter.

Jamnalalji is here. I shall speak to him about exercise. He needs it.

Which *asanas* are you practising? My health may be said to be fair.

It would be good if Satis Babu was given assistance. He is so self-sacrificing and pure.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6167. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

[1] Kanti Parikh had been injured during communal riots in Surat.

33. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI

May 12, 1928

BHAISHRI BHAGWANJI,

I have of course written to Devchandbhai.[1]

I have carefully preserved your article on God. I hope to write about it some day.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5811

34. CELEBRATING PENANCE

A friend writes to say :[2]

I congratulate this friend on showing so much courage and disregarding an unworthy practice. If other Jains, Vaishnavas, etc., follow this example, welfare activities in the country will be helped and pleasures enjoyed in the name of religion will be somewhat curtailed.

We are so much given to enjoyments that we convert the purest of pure activities into excuses for them. Putting aside the spiritual benefits of fasting, we seek greatness thereby and then make fasting an occasion for indulging our palate.

Indeed those who would practise austerities should abstain from proclaiming the fact with beat of drums or causing others to do so and they should not become proud. And if relatives and such others wish to put such penance to good use, they should quietly and without a motive make that an occasion for making donations to worthy causes.

There is another point too in this friend's letter. Institutions like orphanages and children's homes expect donations for a feast on such occasions. This is a deplorable custom. By establishing orphanages, orphans should be given a sense of belonging. And if these latter are given this sense of belonging, they should never be fed

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Devchand Parekh", 11-5-1928.

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had referred to the practice current among Jains of celebrating the end of a religious fast on *Vaishakh Sud* 3 by feasting on a lavish scale, accepting gifts and singing as at a wedding. The correspondent had however refrained from such celebration and saved Rs. 201, which he sent to Gandhiji to spend on any cause he liked.

on meals which have been begged from others. It is one thing to obtain donations for running orphanages and another to feed its inmates with whatever donors wish to give them. In the one case the purpose is to run an institution while in the other the self-respect of the orphans is touched. Moreover, institutions accepting such meals endanger the health of their inmates, make them fussy about food and cause them harm. Hence if such institutions insist upon donations instead of meals and if donors insist upon not giving feasts by way of donations, they will be contributing to public welfare.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 13-5-1928

35. THE YAJNA IN BARDOLI

So far Vallabhbhai has not asked for any financial assistance for the *yajna* that is going on in Bardoli; now, however, the time for that has come. Satyagrahi soldiers like Shri Ravishanker and Shri Chinai are in prison. Others too will follow them as they ought to. If the people have any fire in them and if the Government does not wish to yield till the end, not a single soldier will remain outside prison nor a single landowner will own any property our remain outside prison. All wars are alike up to a certain point, whether they be satyagrahi in nature or those involving brute force. Both certainly involve sacrifice. In the Great War in Europe, soldiers on both sides were ruined, the warriors of both sides lost their lives. Myriads of people in Germany were rendered homeless. However, here the similarity between brute force and satyagraha ends. The satyagrahi ruins himself. He deliberately gives up the momentary pleasure of ruining the enemy and finds happiness in his own renunciation. Hence a satyagrahi struggle may be called a *yajna*. It involves self-purification.

In this sacrifice, financial support has chiefly come till today from Bardoli itself. Whatever contribution has been sent by anyone voluntarily has been accepted. To do so hereafter would be beyond our capacity. Tomorrow the people of Bardoli may have no homes, no possessions, no fields, no cattle. In such circumstances, Vallabhbhai has a right to ask for outside assistance. Everyone should read Vallabhbhai's leaflet appealing for funds and those who aprove of this movement in Bardoli and those who see purity and courage in it should contribute all they can.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-5-1928

36. PRIMARY EDUCATION–I

Among the aims of the Gujarat Vidyapith is that its activity should be primarily concerned with village education. Village education today has broadly come to mean primary education. The task of this Vidyapith is not to turn out schoolteachers or clerks but to train village workers. If the Vidyapith must be near a city, its task is to contribute towards changing the attitude of the city if possible. In other words, the cities which today flourish on the ruins of villages should so change that they serve the villages.

Whether or not the cities change, the Vidyapith must convert to this viewpoint as many as possible of the young men and women there.

Hence it is necessary that primary education should be considered from various points of view.

I wish to dwell on only one idea in this article. From many years of reflection and quite a few experiments, I have come to the conclusion that primary education should be given for at least a year without using any text-books and even after that pupils should make the minimum use of them.

When a child is learning the alphabet, when he is trying to master the forms of numerals and letters, his senses remain dormant and his intelligence, instead of blossoming, becomes stunted. A child starts learning immediately after birth but it does so mainly through the eyes and ears. It learns language as soon as it starts speaking. Hence the child is as its parents are. If the latter are cultured, the child pronounces words correctly and imitates the right ways of the home. This alone constitutes his true education and were it not that our civilization has become so disrupted, children would be receiving the best education in the home itself.

But we are not yet in such a happy situation. There is no alternative to sending children to schools.

However, if children must go to shcools, these should feel like homes to them and their teachers should be as parents. The education given also should be similar to that which is im- parted in a cultured home. In other words, children must receive their primary education from teachers through the spoken word. By receiving education in this manner can a child gain in a year through his eyes and ears ten times the knowledge he can acquire through the alphabet.

The child will have got a general knowledge of history and geography in the first year through play and in the form of stories. He will have learnt some poems by heart with their correct pronunciation. He will have memorized his tables. Moreover, as the child will not be burdened with having to identify letters of the alphabet, his mind will be kept from withering and his eyes will not be misused.

The child's hand, instead of being used to form crooked letters on a slate and trying to understand the difficult symbols that are letters, would rather be engaged in drawing geometrical lines and recognizing pictures. This is the primary education of the hands.

And if we wish to impart primary education to the crores of children of Gujarat and of India, we shall not be able to do so in any other way.

Under the present circumstances, it is impossible for this country to see that books reach crores of children. I admit that if it is necessary to supply children with books in order to give them primary education, we should try to do so, whatever the cost. However, if books are regarded as superfluous and harmful, the practical argument may be put forward. What is unnecessary or harmful from an ethical standpoint is also found to be impractical. In a civilization that is from flaws, the ethical and the practical are not opposed to each other and should not be.

It is clear that such education cannot be given by the teachers of present-day primary schools. These teahcers may thrash the children and make them learn the alphabet and perhaps a few numbers. The poor teacher himself does not have the general knowledge which I visualize for the child in the first year. When the teachers themselves do not know how to speak the language in its pure form, how can the children learn it from them?

We shall consider this idea in the second part.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 13-5-1928

37. LETTER TO P. V. KARAMCHANDANI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 13, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your kind letter. I had heard of the radium treatment.[1]

I thank you for your offer to send me the bottles in your possession. But I shall not avail myself of your offer as, apart from my disinclination to take medicine internally, at the present moment I do not seem to be suffering from much blood-pressure.

Yours sincerely,

CAPTAIN P. V. KARAMCHANDANI, I.M.S.
INDIAN MILITARY HOSPITAL
PISHIN
BALUCHISTAN

From a photostat: S.N. 13228

38. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

Sunday, May 13, 1928

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

Even if you don't ask for my blessings, you have them. May you live long and render much useful service. What present did Sumati give you on your birthday? Does she spin saily? Is she a habitual wearer of khadi? Does she constantly think of the poor? If she gives you such presents on every birthday, both of you will reap the reward of goodness and the poor will prosper.

I will use your cheque in accordance with your wishes.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4704. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

[1] The addressee had suggested the use of radium chloride for treatment of Gandhiji's blood-pressure.

39. LETTER TO LORD IRWIN

SABARMATI,
May 16, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I deeply appreciate your letter containing reference to my loss. I am just reminded that Maganlal Gandhi was presented to you at Nadiad last year.

I am,
Yours Excellency's Faithful friend,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13386

40. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[*May 16, 1928*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. No doubt your work there is going on well. Shall I use the information in the newspaper now? The other alternative is that you or Prabhudas writes on the work and I give that write-up in the paper.

I am so fascinated by the work there that I feel like buying a small plot there and start a small Ashram so that those who are keeping indifferent health could go there for change of air, and at the same time the work could go on. I do not at all want Prabhudas to risk his health. And he has found his work there.

Hope you have taken complete rest there. Now I want you to come here. According to my plan, you could arrive here in the beginning of June[2]. After staying here for a week, you may go to Orissa. Kashi insists on accompanying you. Let her do so. Bhai Jivram is already in Orissa. I can understand it if he or Gopabandhubabu want you to hasten up. But I would not like you to go in a hurry and fall ill. Let the things take their own course. You must go after taking

[1] From Gandhiji's Bombay programme mentioned in the postscript; Gandhiji left Ahemedabad for Bombay on May 16, 1928.

[2] The addressee came and met Gandhiji on 6th June; *vide* "letter to Vasumati Pandit", June 6, 1928.

as much rest as you can.

The other things can be taken care of when Krishna or someone else writes to you. There are so many things happening.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am going to Bombay today for four days. Mahadev and Chhotelal will accompany me. Devdas would have reached there.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32899

41. THE ONLY ISSUE

The Bardoli campaign is going on merrily. At the rate the forfeiture notices are being served, practically the whole of the Taluk of Bardoli should be in Government's possession and they can pay themselves a thousand times over for their precious assessment. The people of Bardoli if they are brave will be none the worse for dispossesion. They will have lost their possessions but kept what must be the dearest of all to good men and women—their honour. Those who have stout hearts and hands need never fear loss of belongings.

But forfeiture notices having failed the Government, are now adding to them the imprisonment of workers. They are holding. mock trials such as we saw during the Punjab martial-law days. The prosecutor is asking for and the obliging special magistrate is giving deterrent sentences which are all rigorous. These too like dispossession will do good to the willing victims. Suffering willingly undergone never harms the sufferer.

What however goes against the grain is dishonesty and insolence of office. The Commissioner, Northern Division has written a letter to a correspondent is full of insulting insinuations and untruths.

It is an untruthful insinuation to suggest that the campaign was started by Kheda agitators. It was started by the Bardoli people themselves and the only person whose help and advice they sought was Sjt. Vallabhabai Patel whom I presume the Commissioner knows somewhat. Whether he can truthfully be called agitator in the sence intended by Commissioner must be left to the reader to judge.

It is untruthful to say that the officers of the Government are subjected to "spying, mobbing and other indignities".

The workers are described as "the swarm of agitators living on

them (the people of Bardoli) and misguiding them". This is an insult for which under better times and if the nation was conscious of its strength the Commissioner would be made to offer a public apology. Let him know that those whom in his anger and intoxication of power he calls a "swarm of agitators" are honourable servants of the nation giving their free services to Bardoli at considerable sacrifice. Among these, besides Vallabhabhai Patel who is a Barrister, are the hoary-headed Abbas Tyabji, another Barrister and an ex-Chief Judge of Baroda, Imamsaheb Bawazir, who is practically a fakir needing no support from Bardoli, and Dr. Sumant Mehta and his equally cultured wife. Dr. Sumant Mehta who has been ailing for some time has gone to Bardoli at considerable risk to his health. These four by the way do not belong to Kheda at all. Then there is the Darbarsaheb of Dhasa and his intrepid wife Bhaktiba who for the sake of their country have sacrificed their estate. They are not living upon the people of Bardoli. There are doctors Chandulal and Tribhuvan-das, again not of Kheda. Add to these Fulchand Shah, his wife, and his lieutenant Shivanand (already in jail). These again do not belong to Kheda and have for years dedicated themselves to silent service. It is the wail of Bardoli that has called these and others whom I can name. If the Commissioner has any sense of honour about him he will volunteer an apology to these ladies and gentlemen. In fact the Kheda workers are in a hopeless minority among the numerous workers.

The Commissioner pompously trots out the adverse vote of the Bombay Council and conveniently suppresses the two previous votes of the Council that had gone against the Government and that were by them treated as beneath contempt and beneath notice.

The Commissioner suppresses the very relevant truth that before resorting to direct action the people of Bardoli tried every means known as constitutional to get redress and hopelessly failed.

The Commissioner throws dust in the eyes of the public when he suggest that if the sorely tried people of Bardoli give up their campaign he would gladly investigate the case of any village that may be found to have been wrongly grouped. He suppresses the truth that the point at issue is not the wrong grouping of this village or that; the point at issue is the palpably wrong method of assessment. *And the people of Bardoli do not insist upon their point being accepted but they do insist upon an independent and impartial tribunal being appointed to investigate the justice of their complaint and to abide by*

the judgment of that tribunal whatever it may by. Here there is no shirking of payment, no question of redress of individual hardship. The question is one of principle. The people of Bardoli deny the right of the Government to dictate without proper investigation any increase in the assessment. Let me add that this is no no-tax campaign launched for any political end. This is a campaign directed towards a well-defined specific grievance affecting the people of a whole Taluk.

It is therefore the height of impudence and gross untruth for the Commissioner to say :

> No one is more anxious than I that the poor cultivators should not be ruined by the swarm of agitators who are living on them and misguiding them.
>
> There are five taluks in Kaira District from which these agitators come, the revision settlements of which have been postponed for 2 years on account of floods. Nearly half a crore of rupees has been advanced by Government in Kaira District for flood relief in the last 7 or 8 months. If they succeed in Bardoli, the recovery of Government assessment and *takavi* in Kaira District would be imperilled.

If the "agitators" succeed, it will not be the *takavi* to Kheda that will be in jeopardy. If it is withheld by the borrowers the Government will find the arch-agitator Vallabhbhai Patel to be their unpaid collector of the loans. What however will happen if the agitators succeed is that the Government officers will not dare to insult honoured servants of the people and utter untruths as the Commissioner, Northern Division has done and that the people will be able to have some redress against grossly unfair and unjust assessment as the Bardoli assessment is claimed to be.

One word to the people. The Government in their wisdom and in order to emphasize the fact that this rule is sustained by the policy of *divide et impera* have drafted in the midst of an over-whelmingly large Hindu population Mussalman officials and Pathan hirelings. As satyagrahis the people can easily checkmate the Government. Let them treat the officials and the Pathans as friends. Let them not distrust or in any the slightest manner fear or molest them. They the officials are our countrymen, the Pathans are our neighbours. Ere long the Government will discover their mistake and know that the honour of a Hindu is as dear to a Mussalman as to a Hindu and *vice versa.* The people of Bardoli have the chance of demonstrating this in a concrete manner. Let them vindicate the law of satyagraha which is also the law of Love and they will melt even the stony heart of an autocratic Commissioner.

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42. SUPPRESSED CLASSES AND BAGHAT STATE

After all the Rana Saheb of Baghat did receive on the 5th instant a deputation on behalf of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Punjab, consisting of Rai Saheb Lala Ganga Ram, Pandit Chamupati, M.A., Dewan Ram Sharan Das of Ludhiana, Pandit Dharmavir Vedalankar and Lala Shankar Nath, Advocate, Simla, to discuss the situation that had arisen out of the recent attitude of the State in the matter of wearing of the sacred thread by Kolis, reclaimed by the Arya Samaj.

The deputation has been permitted to issue the following agreed statement of what happened at the interview :

> The members of the deputation thanked Rana Saheb for the cordial hospitality extended to them, and explained the position of the Shastras and the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha in this behalf. His Highness gave a patient hearing to their representation and assured them that his State gave perfect liberty to all well-established religious societies to propagate their religion among his subjects. The members expressed their gratitude for the courtesy with which their representation was heard and the encouraging reply vouchsafed to them and withdrew.

The agreed statement betrays too much caution and great timidity on the part of the State. The State would have gained in public estimation by a frank confession of the wrong done to the suppressed classes and the insult offered to a great religious organization. However let us be thankful for small mercies. The wrong and the insult will be forgotten if the letter and the spirit of the promise made by the Rana Saheb are fulfilled.

Young India, 17-5-1928

43. MAGANLAL GANDHI MEMORIAL

The Council of the All-India Spinners' Association passed the following resolution at its meeting on the 12th instant :

> Resolved that a khadi museum be organized in memory of the late Sjt. Maganlal K. Gandhi and that an appeal be made for rupees one lakh for this purpose, the location of the Memorial and other details of the administration to be decided by the Council.

The numerous messages of condolence sent to me from all parts

of India and distant South Africa show the place that the deceased found in the affections of the public. A silent worker so good and popular as the deceased deserves a memorial. The Council of the All-India Spinners' Association after deep consideration came to the conclusion that there could be no better memorial to the deceased than that a khadi museum be established at some suitable place. The deceased himself had conceived the idea and as was his wont had utilized a room in the Satyagraha Ashram for a miniature museum. But the manner in which khadi has progressed requires a permanent and commodious building and a collection worthy of the deceased and the movement. Such a museum cannot cost anything less than one lakh of rupees. Hence the minimum amount ofone lakh fixed by the Council. A khadi museum to be a house of serious study and instruction is capable of limitless expansion. With one lakh of rupees the Council hopes only to make a modest yet substantial beginning and give permanent shape to the scheme the deceased had in view. In accordance with the response the public may make, the museum may have a full set of books dealing with the past and the present of cotton culture, the specimens of the finest to the coarsest khadi produced in the past and in the present, the specimens of spinning-wheels, hand-gins, carding-bows and handlooms from the most ancient obtainable to the most modern. There may be a plot of ground attached to the museum where experiments can be made in cotton-growing to suit not the world market and the princes of exploitation but the humble villa-ger. This latter was being done by the deceased at the Satyagraha Ashram. The cotton grown at the Ashram has become very popular with spinners. Home-grown cotton, which is well picked and which does not need to un-dergo the devitalizing process of pressing, saves immense labur and time for the carder and enables the spinner to draw a stronger thread. These and many other things can be done at the proposed museum if the response is liberal and exceeds the minimum fixed by the Council.

The machinery to give effect to the scheme is to be the All-India Spinners' Association which is a growing organization of men determined upon doing solid and constructive work.

The venue of the museum is not fixed as the Council has a choice of more places than one. Sabarmati naturally occurs first to the mind. And if it is found to be otherwise the most convenient spot, no doubt it will be chosen by the Council. It hopes to make the Museum

as businesslike as was the deceased himself. No false sentiment will therefore be allowed to weigh with the Council in the choice of the venue.

All subscriptions will be acknowledged in these columns. Payments may be made either to the Secretary, Sjt. Shankerlal Banker, Mirzapur, Ahmedabad, or to Sheth Jamnalalji Bajaj, 395, Kalbadevi Road, Bombay, or to the Manager, Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati.

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44. KHADI IN HYDERABAD STATE

It is a matter for joy that the Princes of India are recognizing the place of khadi in national economy. The latest comer in the line is the Hyderabad State. The Department of Industries in the Nizam's dominions recently sent its inspector to study the technique of khadi at the Staygraha Ashram and sent also two young men to learn the various processes. The young men were not able to finish the course, as the climate and perhaps the life at the Ashram did not agree with them. The point is that a beginning has been made, the inspector Moulvi Mahomed Ali was full of enthusiasm and he seemed to realize as never before the importance of the spinning-wheel. Let me hope that the Department of Industries will keep in touch with the Technical Department of the A.I.S.A. and organize the charkha work in Hyderabad in a proper businesslike manner, as it is being done in Mysore, where the other day the Dewan Mr. Mirza Mahomed Ismail personally inspected the khadi work being done through the suppressed classes. Sjt Pujari who escorted the Dewan tells me that he admired the work and appreciated the fact that besides being a supplementary occupation for the peasantry the spinning-wheel seemed to give substantial uplift to the suppressed classes.

Young India, 17-5-1928

45. THE FACTS ABOUT INDIA: A REPLY TO MISS MAYO

It is not without regret, certainly not without hesitation, that I find room for the following chapter and more to follow.[1] I doubt if replies to Miss Mayo have not been overdone. If I was convinced that the readers of Miss Mayo's libel read the refutations that have been

[1] These articles by C. F. Andrews are not reproduced here.

and are being published I should have much less hesitation in publishing Deenabandhu Andrews's reply. But I fear that the refutations do not reach her readers and therefore lose much of their value. Miss Mayo represents an evil principle. No nation can be a world menace. India certainly is not. But writers like the authoress of *Mother India* are a world menace. And I am not sure that they can be dealt with by mere counter-writings however pure and able they may be. In other words the question that is troubling me is whether lying tongues and pens can be checked merely my truthful tongues and pens. Is not something quite different and nobler necessary to be done if the evil propaganda of Miss Mayo is to be successfully checked? But I have no ready-made effective substitute for the writings as such as Deenabendhu Andrews's. And as he is a co-sharer with me in the principle that *Young India* connotes and even after second thoughts he persists in thinking that there is still room for his refutations, I am no longer able to resist him. I know that he will be satisfied, as I shall certainly be, if even one man or woman who before believed Miss Mayo's caricature comes to be disillusioned by his chapters.

Young India, 17-5-1928

46. *LETTER TO TREASURER, AJMAL JAMIA FUND*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,[1]
SABARMATI,
May 18, 1928

THE TREASURER
AJMAL JAMIA FUND
395 KALBADEVI ROAD
BOMBAY

DEAR SIR,

AJMAL JAMIA FUND

Your letter of the 10th May. I have to draw your attention to a discrepancy in the totalling in the copy of the list sent to us on 21-4-28. You have put in down as Rs. 6,935-1-0, whereas on actual totalling it comes only to Rs. 6,884-9-0. Therefore there is a difference of Rs. 50-8-0. Kindly compare the figures published in

[1] Gandhiji was in Bombay on May 18, 1928.

Young India of this week with your books and find out the discrepancy and let me know so that the same can be rectified in the coming issue.

The following names and their donations have been omitted from the list, "Further Collections in the Week". This was done, because we deemed it much better to give the collections made from the members of the Ashram in a lump sum. The Secretary is sending you a complete list in which you may include the omitted figure also.

Names and donations ommited :[1]

Unfortunately in this week's *Young India*, a mistake in the figures in the list published has crept in. The totalling in actuals exceeds by eight annas. I am looking into the original list sent to the press and I hope to find the mistakes and rectify the same in the coming issue.

When sending the new list you will kindly send us a complete list including the last one sent by you for publication in this week's issue, that is, the list sent by you after your letter dated 10th May. Please omit the names of the Ashram donors. It is thought better to contribute a lump sum in the name of the Ashram rather than small sums in the names of the individuals. If you want the list to be published it must reach us before Monday.

Yours faithfully,

From a photostat: S.N. 14923

47. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

BOMBAY,
May 18, 1928

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
JAI LODGE, PANCHGANI

PROBABLY LEAVING TOMORROW EVENING.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Here followed a list, which is not reproduced.

48. TELEGRAM TO MAHOMED ALI

[On or after *May 19, 1928*][1]

DELIGHTED RECEIVE YOUR WIRE. HOPE PROGRESS KHADI WILL BE GUARANTEED BY MAHARAJA SAHEB.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 13599

49. PRIMARY EDUCATION–II

The problem is how to impart the education we discussed in the last issue and wherefrom to get the teachers to impart it. This is the real problem regarding education. The Government Training College has not solved this problem. It has not even solved the problem of the three Rs—that is, reading, writing and arithmetic. Even of these three so little is learnt that neither the pupils nor the public profit much by it.

Hence this task has to be taken up by the National College. It is the duty and the right of the latter to find new methods in the field of education which would sustain the national cause. And in my humble opinion, we can take these methods in a very small measure from Europe and in an even smaller measure from the current trends in India. In every country education is for the preservation of its independence.

Hence we shall have to conduct new experiments in our education. In doing so, we may well make ourselves familiar with the experience in Europe; but we should not conclude that all that if found there is good or what is good under the conditions prevailing there will be good for us. One of the conclusions that emerges from this is that we should regard with suspicion the methods practised in the Government schools. Since the education imparted by the Government is fatal to swaraj as well as to our civilization, it is possible that if we follow the opposite methods in many matters we may find

[1] This was sent in reply to a telegram received on May 19 from Mahomed Ali, Inspector, Industries, Aurangabad, which read: "Khadi Exhibition spinning demonstration succesful by your blessings. Maharajah Bahadur kissed your yarn and sends best salaams and promises to spin. Your blessings required."

the right path. Let us take an example.

The medium of instruction there is English, hence we must conclude that the medium of national education cannot be English.

They put up huge expensive buildings in which to give education. We should realize that this is improper. Our School buildings should be simple and inexpensive.

Stress there is purely on literary learning and India's industries are ignored. We know that this is improper.

In that form of education, teaching of religion, that is, religion not of any particular community but universal religion, has no place. We know that this leads to a negation of education.

The history that is taught in Government schools is, if not false, written from the British standpoint. The very same facts have been interpreted differently by German, French and American historians. Contemporary events are interpreted by the Government in one way and by the people in another, as in the case of the massacre in the Punjab.

The economics taught in Government schools upholds the British system while we, on the other hand, view it differently. Government schools make a plea for the town civilization, whereas the villages are the soul of our national civilization.

In Government primary schools, their teachers, with the minimum amount of knowledge, are employed without regard to their character and on the minimum salaries possible, whereas in national primary schools, the teachers being self-sacrificing and persons of character and learning (and not because they are in in a sorry plight), should accept the smallest salaries.

We can now have an idea of the kind of education that should be given in the city schools.

Our pupils should live in villages, lend stability to village civilization, be familiar with the needs of villages, rid them of such faults as they may have, teach their children not to become city-dwellers but to remain villagers, i.e., to become farmers. Hence so long as the existing system of education in the cities is not basically changed without fear, we shall not attain one of the basic ideals of the Vidyapith nor may we be said to practise it.

Let us take only one example: In Ahmedabad itself we are running a university, a new Gujarati school and a Vinay Mandir. We shall have the right to run them only when we attempt to make villagers out of the children who study in them, when we succeed in making them take interest in village life, when we make them understand the latter, and, finally, when those of them who are about

to leave the Vinay Mandir or the University, spread out into the villages and start serving the villagers.

We shall consider next how this can be done.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-5-1928

50. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Silence Day [*May 21, 1928*][1]

CHI. MANI,

I read your note about Sharadabehn in you letter to Chi. Kanti. I felt slightly unhappy. I think about the matter every day. I inquire about it from everyone coming from there. Mirabehn has told me much. How can I write all that? But I have note given up hope. I rest in the belief that everything will be all right. Write to me when you feel like doing so. From what Vallabhbhai told me in Bombay I could see that he was satisfied with your work there. I felt so happy. But then, that is not enough for me. I want to see in you maturity, equanimity, contentment, discrimination, modesty, firmness, scrupulous regard for truth, earnestness, study and meditation. Without these yours will not be a life that becomes a virgin and dedicated social worker.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MANIBEHN PATEL
SWARAJ ASHRAM
BARDOLI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, pp. 65-6

51. LETTER TO ZAKIR HUSAIN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 23, 1928

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter, which I prize for its absolute frankness.

I would personally have preferred a declaration of emphatic non-co-operation; but I am not prepared to advise you to abandon the institution because you have a milder declaration. After all, it is not the declaration that so much matter as action when the testing time

[1] As in the source

comes. The fate of the institution will depend ultimately not upon the trustees but upon the professors who are giving their all to it.

I know your pecuniary difficulties. I am helpless. I discussed the thing with Dr. Ansari in Bombay and he told me that he hoped to send you some money from Bombay. I could not ask Jamnalalji to send you further advance unless everything was in order.

I do not at all like the large body.

Dr. Ansari has promised to come to Sabarmati immediately after Id. If he does, I shall re-discuss the thing with him.

Yours sincerely,

DR. ZAKIR HUSAIN
JAMIA MILLIA
KAROL BAGH
DELHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 14925

52. HISTORY OF SOUTH AFRICAN SATYAGRAHA

Sjt. S. Ganesan, the enterprising publisher of Madras, has now brought out a translation from the original of my History, if it may be so called, of Satyagraha in South Africa. The translation has been carefully made by Sjt Valji Gavindji Desai. The volume is well printed, is bound in khadi, covers 511 pages and is rightly dedicated by the publisher to the late Maganlal Gandhi. The book contains 50 chapters and covers practically the whole of the period of my stay in South Africa. Those numerous readers who are following "The Story of My Experiments with Truth" cannot afford to be without this volume, if they will rightly understand the implications of truth as they have occurred to me and the very wonderful and matchless force which I have called or rather which Maganlal Gandhi called 'satyagraha' otherwise rendered as 'love-force', 'soul-force', 'truth-force', as distinguished from the force connoted by the term 'passive resistance'. Satyagraha is not conceived as a weapon merely of the weak. It is the strongest force that one can possibly imagine or wish for and is a complete substitution for brute force. Those who will understand how the former worked in South Africa in the face of all odds should possess this volume. It can be had from S. Ganesan, Publisher, Triplicane, Madras, S. E., price Rs. 4-8-0.

Young India, 24-5-1928

53. ANDREWS'S TRIBUTE

From the tribute sent by Deenabandhu Andrews to the memory of Maganlal Gandhi, with whom he had come in close contact, I take the following[1], omitting personal references.

Young India, 24-5-1928

54. BUYING MERIT

A correspondent draws my attention to the institution of lotteries in Goa for the purpose of supporting hospitals. The correspondent tells me that lakhs of rupees are spent by people in British India in these lotteries in the vain hope of suddenly becoming rich without effort and yet gaining heavenly merit. Here is an extract from an advertisement sent by the correspondent :

> Behold the sick. He that giveth to the poor lends to God. Then why not help our poor by staking a rupee at this drawing? It is a comely way of exercising charity.

The advertisement contains a portrait of a hoary-headed reverend gentleman.

It would be interesting to know the condition of the hospitals built with the monies gained from these lotteries. Meanwhile it is worth while to examine the ethics of founding charitable institutions with monies collected by an appeal to man's greed, enhancing it by a promise of merit if the purchaser of such a lottery ticket should fail to get the tempting prize or prizes as lakhs of purchasers must fail.

As it is, the haste to be rich without working and waiting for the happy day pervades the atmosphere. Everyone who spends a rupee on the race course or in a lottery ticket erects the pyramid of his hope on the foundation of the ruin of a multitude of such hopes of men and women having equal right with the few lucky (?) winners of prizes. It is difficult, however, to single out the lottery system for criticism, when the gambling spirit possesses even those who are ranked among the most respectable. The share-market is nothing but a feverish gamble. And yet who is free from that fever? Every man who finds himself rich in a day by manipulating the share-market knows that the sudden accession of wealth means desolation of many a widow's home. Only

[1] Not reproduced here

the relatives of the widows who bought shares had, no doubt, almost the same kind of hope that the clever speculator of our imagination had.

Cotton, rice and jute are, strange as it may appear, objects of such speculation. The system of lottery is but a crude extension of the same gambling spirit. It is no doubt good to treat the lottery as disrespectable, but it is better to make the acquaintance of the spirit that is common to the lottery and the share-market and thus deal with the root cause of the disease rather than its worst symptom. It is, therefore, to be wished that the worst symptom will enable us to reach the root cause and deal effectively with it.

But it is a far-off hope. Let not my mention of the pervasive nature of the disease make a single person connected with these lotteries seek justification for his participation in the lottery system.

And the caution is all the more necessary when the lottery is in connection with a charitable institution. Surely it is bad enough to want to be rich without deserving, but it is positively wrong to connect charity with a gamble. Those who throw away rupees in lotteries must not think that they gain merit even whilst they are hoping to satisfy an unlawful ambition. We may not hope to serve God and Mammon at the same time.

And why do the Christian conductors of the Goan hospitals degrade religion by exploiting the evil tendency of human nature? Do they imagine that they please God by attempting to support a hospital by making lakhs of people morally diseased? Are they not robbing Peter to pay Paul? What will it profit them to heal a few bodies if at the same time they wound a thousand times more souls?

Young India, 24-5-1928

55. SPINNING IN MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS

The Secretary, Khadi Board, Jalgaon, sends me a well-prepared tabulated report of *takli* and charkha-spinning in its municipal schools. The report covers the period between 15th June, 1927 and 15th February, 1928. 149 girls and 126 boys were spinning either on the *takli* or the wheel. The time allowed was from 25 minutes to 50 minutes per day. The total output was 4,48,000 yards. The maximus speed on the *takli* was 125 yards per hour and on the wheel 325 yards. This is a creditable record. What has been possible in the Jalgaon Municipal schools is possible in all the municipal schools. It

can be shown that if the nation willed it, it could get all the yarn it needs through it schools-going children and teach them self-repect and self-reliance during their scholastic life, a period which some falsely think is one of irresponsibility and indulgence. I note that only boys spinning on the wheels do their own carding. The implication is that the others do not. It is being more and more realized that the secret of good spinning is not merely good but perfect carding. This can be attained only if everyone cards for himself or herself. If it is learnt truly it is easily learnt. Another suggestion I venture to offer is that no time should be lost in turning all the yarn spun into khadi and for that purpose either one of the promising boys should be trained or one of the teachers should learn the art of weaving. Failing that the local weaver should be induced to weave such yarn.

Young India, 24-5-1928

56. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 24, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. Here is a copy of my letter to Mr. Sen Gupta.[1]

Yours,

Encl. 1

From a microfilm: S. N. 13640

57. LETTER TO J. M. SEN GUPTA

May 24, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I hear that you are having a grand exhibition at the time of the forthcoming Congress at Calcutta. But I am told also that it is not to be confined merely to absolutely genuine swadeshi but that it is to contain all exhibits—foreign and otherwise. Can this be true? I should have bought that you will have khadi as the centre-piece and round it you will have exhibits of those things that are absolutely swadeshi from start to finish and that you will not only exclude foreign cloth

[1] *Vide* the following item.

and all foreign things but also indigenous mill-cloth. Such has been the history of the Congress Exhibitions since the Ahmedabad Session. The first painful departure from this practice took place at Madras last year. I hope Calcutta won't repeat the mistake.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. SEN GUPTA
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S. N. 13606

58. LETTER TO MAHOMED HABBIBULLAH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 24, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter enclosing copy of Sjt. Sastri's cable[1] for my confidential information.

Yours, sincerely,

SIR MAHOMED HABIBULLAH
VICEROY'S COUNCIL MEMBER
SIMLA

From a photostat: S. N. 11987

59. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

May 24, 1928

MY DEAR PRAKASAM,

I have your letter. Mr. Banker reminds me that the money was given to you at my instance whilst I was convalescing at Juhu. Of course you got it for khadi work, but surely you don't mean to suggest that because you got it for khadi work, you are not personally

[1] Sastri's cable from Cape Town read: "In continuation of my telegram dated 24th April 1928, No. 202, I have been obliged to cancel the tour in Transvaal and come to Cape Town to interview the Minister of Interior regarding condonation scheme. Have urged 1914 lines which Gandhi and Patrick Duncan favour. Department of Interior is keen on the scheme being operated notwithstanding recent judgments reported in my telegram dated April 27th No. 214. Indians Transvaal greatly agitated especially the Gujaratis but might be pacified by the 1914 line. Minister promised consideration but I have misgivings.

Please send copy of this confidentially to Gandhi by post."

liable? In fact the money was advanced because of your personal guarantee. If you question the correctness of the interpretation will you accept arbitration? The Council of the A.I.S.A. has a duty to perform. You will therefore recognize their difficulty and mine.[1]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. PRAKASAM
"SWARAJYA"
BROADWAY, MADRAS G. T.

From a microfilm: S. N. 13607

60. A LETTER[2]

May 24, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

You will now have heard from Mr. Ramanathan, and I trust that if you are not satisfied about the reasons for withholding the amount of security deposited by you, you will accept arbitration.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S. N. 13608

61. LETTER TO S. RAMANATHAN

May 24, 1928

MY DEAR RAMANATHAN,

I have your letter about . . . . It is quite correct. I have written to . . . as per enclosed copy.[3]

I send you herewith connected papers.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S. N. 13609

[1] A copy of this letter was forwarded to the Secretary, All-India Spinners' Association.

[2] Addressee's name is omitted.

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

62. LETTER TO MEHAR SINGH RAIT

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 24, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I fear that so long as we are without swaraj, we must resign ourselves to the disabilites such as you are labouring under.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 808

63. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 24, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

Ram Binod is giving great trouble. He has not yet discharged his obligation to the Association. Is it possible for you to make an appeal to him?

What is Krishnadas doing?

How are you keeping?

With love,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1592

64. LETTER TO F. H. BROWN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 25, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter. I remember very well our meetings in London, when I visited it with the South African deputation.

[1] The addressee had been deported from America. His American wife also had lost her citizenship "by marrying a Hindu" .

With reference to the permission for an English edition of "The Story of My Experiments with Truth", the permission was given last year to the Macmillan Company of New York.

The second volume of the book is not be published just now. It will take some time, because I do not know how the chapters of Indian experience will run. I have no definite plan mapped out. I am, therefore, unable to say how many more chapters I shall have to write, and it is for that reason that publication of the second volume has been suspended.

I thank you for your condolence.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

F. H. BROWN, ESQ.

DILKUSHA

FOREST HILL, LONDON, S.E. 23

From a copy: S.N. 14317; also C.W. 4440. Courtesy: F.H. Brown

65. LETTER TO JANAKDHARI PRASAD

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

May 25, 1928

DEAR JANAKDHARI BABU,

I have your letter. There should be nothing between God and us, if we are to be nearest to Him. Love between husband and wife is a hindrance, for that love as we understand it, is necessarily exclusive and necessarily personal.

2. Faith in God cannot be reasoned out. It does not come from the head but from the heart, and, things of the heart are spontaneous and instinctive. Our very weakness and limitations should inspire faith in the Perfect and the Limitless. And if we have that faith, we would necessarily be without troubles, miseries and the like.

3. Why do you say that you are not serving the public cause because you are drawing Rs. 50 per month? Everyone who serves the Charkha Sangh undoubtedly serves the nation. It would be foolish to expect in this poor country to work without even being fed. That other people have no regard or love for you because you are not a flourishing lawyer is no cause for sorrow. But it is a good cause for

congratulation, if you can be happy without wealth and public esteem.

Why should Babu Vindeshwari Prasad seek your protection? If he has the conviction that it would be right in giving up his practice, he should delight in earning his starvation wage as millions of our countrymen are doing. If he is repentant that he gave up his practice, he should resume it.

As for your children the true education that you can give them is to bring them up as honest labourers. And that education can profit them and the country; and instead of your children being a burden on you, will be blessing to both.

I hope your wife has completely recovered. Let me say that the Ashram constitution is undergoing a drastic revision and at the present moment, the desire is not to take any more for at least one year. Therefore, if your wife should desire to come here during the next one or two months, please write to me before you think of sending her.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 51

66. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

May 25, 1928

I have your letters. I asked Mahadev to keep you duly informed and tell you everything about Maganlal's death. I have not the time to dictate much. This is just to say how much I appreciate your cable and your letters.

I have now taken up my abode in Maganlal's room.

Mahadev must have given you the cause. Maganlal went on duty to Calcutta. Then he went to Gaya, from there to see Radha at the place where she had gone to tear down the *purdah* in a family. On the way he contracted a chill, developed pneumonia and surrounded by kind friends who did all that was humanly possible for him, he died in peace after nine days' illness.

H. S. L. POLAK, ESQ.
42, 47 & 48 DANES INN HOUSE
265, STRAND, LONDON, W.C. 2

From a photostat: S.N. 14316

67. LETTER TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

Friday, Jeth Sud 6, 1984 [*May 25, 1928*]

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I have read both your letters carefully.

What I said, and the manner in which I said it, does not seem to have been correctly reported to you.

There is nothing new in the changes I have suggested. I have not made any change in the definition of an Ashram inmate. The only significance of the change is that we should strive hard to follow the ideal which we have always kept before us.

I never put pressure on anyone, and have never wished to do so. I have recently refused to do that on two friends who wish to run separate kitchens for themselves. I, therefore, see no compulsion in regard to anything. I employ earnest argument (with love) and try to explain everything clearly.

I am of the view that those who have joined the Ashram should conform to the moral growth or changes in the Ashram. They cannot say that they will obey certain rules only and that, if new rules are made and applied, it would be breach of contract. No institution can continue to exist on that condition. There can be fixity only about concerete matters, such as salary, period, etc. At the Ashram, however, generally speaking, we have no restrictions other than moral.

Even so, we decided to enforce the rule about *brahmacharya* only after all the inmates had been invited to discuss it and everyone had accepted its necessity. I did say, when reading out this rule, that those who could not or did not wish to observe it, could leave the Ashram.

The common kitchen is functioning satisfactorily at present.

I shall not inflict anything more on you. I have written even this unwillingly. Really speaking, you should not, in your present illness and from that distance, strain yourself thinking about the changes taking place here. Maybe it is morally wrong for you to do so.

How are you now? There is of course no question of your staying at Santa Cruz. You are fit enough to come here. You can take your treatment even here. The climate here is certainly better than there. If, however, you decide to come, I hope you will not think of going away again.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11802

68. TELEGRAM TO HARILAL DESAI

[After *May 25, 1928*][1]

RECEIVED LETTER. IMPOSSIBLE PAY ENHANCED PORTION BEFORE ENQUIRY. ORIGINAL ASSESSMENT CAN BE PAID IF INDEPENDENT OPEN INQUIRY WITH RIGHT LEAD EVIDENCE CROSS QUESTION CROWN WITNESSES GRANTED FORFEITED LANDS RESTORED SATYAGRAHI PRISONERS DISCHARGED. PEOPLE WILL ACCEPT DECISION ARBITRATION COURT WIRE REPLY: BARDOLI VALLABHBHAI.

From a photostat: S.N. 12705

69. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

May 26, 1928

CHI. MAHADEV,

You send me enough every time. How did all of you imagine something which had not occurred to me even in my dreams? On that occasion, the day before yesterday, I did not aim my remarks against anyone in particular. I opened the subject in a general way as affecting all eighty people. Even in my mind I did not, and do not, blame, or think harsh things about those who cannot join the common kitchen; where was the question then of my saying such things in the meeting? It should be enough, therefore, if I say that there was no violence in my heart. I said harsh things only on that evening. On that occasion, I was not at all pained by the opposition. I was unhappy because of the weakness displayed by all. I liked Narahari's frankness very much indeed, but I did not like that he and others should have lost the use of their reason. If it was I who had deprived them of their reason, what a worthless fellow I must be? As I tried to think what my duty in these circumstances was, and as I realized it, I awoke and was immediately at peace. Do you know that I have put on two pounds in nine days? Can you imagine what peace of mind this means?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11448

[1] The telegram was sent by Vallabhbhai Patel in reply to the addressee's letter of May 25. It was drafted by Gandhiji.

70. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 26, 1928

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have been receiving your letters regularly. I told Mahadev to write to you also which I hope he did. He has to go to Bardoli for two days in the week to help Vallabhbhai. He is therefore away today.

I always think of you, but never get the time to write to you. And I do not feel disturbed as I know you never expect letters from me.

My whole heart goes out to Gurudev.[1] I do hope that he will be strong enough to take up the voyage giving himself full rest on the Continent and return with renewed vigour. And I hope too that incidentally you would rest your wearied limbs and still more wearied brain. But I have my doubts about your being able to do so.

I am concentrating my attention on overhauling the Ashram and bringing it more in line with its ideals. We are therefore conducting the common kitchen on a large scale. About 80 sit together at meals where they attempt to consecrate themselves to more service. But more I must not say for want of time.

Did Mahadev tell you that I had taken up my abode in Maganlal's little room. And it makes me feel happy and enables me more fully to commune with his spirit.

With love,

MOHAN

From a photostat: S.N. 13392

[1] Tagore had fallen ill on his way to London to deliver the Hibbert lectures at the Oxford University.

71. LETTER TO SAMUEL R. PERRY

[After *May 26, 1928*]

DEAR FRIEND,

I was thankful for your letter of 26th May last. I do not remember having received the book *Does Civilization Need Religion*?[1] It has given me joy to have so many friends and sympathizers in the Far West.

Yours sincerely,

SAMUEL R. PERRY

From a photostat: S.N. 14043

72. PRIMARY EDUCATION-III

The problems of primary education or village eduction can be solved only when we thoroughly change the curricula of the Vidya Mandir and the University and when the teachers have understood my viewpoint.

Today we hesitate to effect certain changes for fear of losing pupils, for fear of public opinion or from a sense of false prestige. If we had no hesitation these Vidya Mandirs would produce a fine set of people who would serve the villages and this would somewhat atone for the sins of the cities.

The pupils of these Mandirs would become first-class spinners, carders and weavers; they would have the best knowledge of cotton-growing, they would know carpentry to suit the needs of the village; in other words, they would know how to make good spinning-wheels, they would know how to repair—if not make—bullock-carts, ploughs, etc., they would know sewing enough for the needs of the village, their handwriting would be as beautiful as pearls, they would have a basic ability to write, they would know Indian multiplication tables, they would be familiar with ancient literature like the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* and their modern spiritual meaning; they would know village games; they would be familiar with the rules of hygiene, they would be good home-doctors, i.e., they would be able to diagnose common ailments and prescribe remedies for them; they would know how to clean village dumping-grounds, ponds wells and so on. In

[1] By Reinhold Niebuhr

other words, education in these schools would be such that it enables the pupils to serve the villages in every way and the expenses incurred should be regarded as having been incurred on primary education. Only when we do so and are able to do so, can we be said to have truly entered the villages.

But directly such a question is raised, such a change brought about and such an ideal proclaimed, our Vidya Mandirs will become empty. Should such a contingency arise I would be willing to welcome it in the cause of truth. But so long as the ideal of the Vidyapith regarding village education remains what it is, not to do this would amount to untruth and betrayal.

However, it is my belief as well as my experience that if we remain steadfast in our objective, the public will in the end understand it and help in advancing it. If we looked into the causes of failures—so called or so considered—we would find that those who believed in the ideals were themselves disloyal, half-baked and half-hearted. He who doubts will perish, but people instead of taking his doom for what it is think that it was his ideal that was wanting in some way and so failed.

It is my firm belief that if our Vidya Mandirs had teachers with faith and a spirit of self-sacrifice, they would overflow with pupils. People can recognize a genuine thing. Often it seems to tate time, but that is merely an illusion. It is a rule without an exception that the straight path is the quickest.

An institution which panders to people's weaknesses and their love of pleasure may fill in no time. So what? That certainly does not prove its success. One consequence may however flow from the acceptance of my viewpoint. Those pupils who have come in the hope of getting the same kind of education as is imparted in Government schools, those who have come in the hope of acquiring fitness to lead a city life, would be disappointed and leave our Mandirs. But it would be as well. We as well as they would be saved from a false situation, would be able to render true service to one another. I should like to close this series by dilating a little more on the idea with which I started it. And then I hope to discuss a few questions I have before me on this subject.

If the view that a knowledge of the alphabet should be totally avoided during the first year of primary education is correct, some of its desirable consequences ought to be apparent in the Vidya Mandirs and the University.

Nowadays the cult of bookish knowledge has increased a great deal. New books are being published every day. Anyone who has any command over language, anyone who has reflected even a little, becomes eager to put his ideas into print and believes that in so doing he is rendering national service. Consequently, an unbearable burden is placed on the brains of pupils and the pockets of their guardians. The pupil's intellect becomes confused. Their brains stuffed with a multitude of facts have no room for any original thought. And even facts instead of being properly arranged lie about in disorder in these brains like things in the house of an idle person. They are of no use either to themselves or to the public.

Hence in my opinion the numerous books that are published nowadays should not be given to the pupils. Even literate puplis should receive the larger part of their education orally from the teachers. They should read the minimum number of books but should reflect on what they read and while doing so translate into practice whatever they find acceptable. By doing so, the life of the pupils will become interesting, thoughtful, wise, steadfast, pure and energetic. Such education befits a poor nation and will prove useful to the pupils and the public.

Hence the solution to the serious problem before the Vidyapith depends on the capacity of its present teachers to imbibe its ideals and to make a mighty effort to put them into practice.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-5-1928

73. LETTER TO KARNAD SADASHIVA RAO

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 27, 1928

MY DEAR SADASHIVA RAO,

I hope you are now completely free from the after-effects of malaria. I hope to be at the Ashram practically throughout the year. But I never know when I might have to move out owing to unforeseen circumstances. When therefore you propose to bring your daughters here, you will ascertain my movements beforehand.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SADASHIVA RAO
KODAIBAIL
MANGALORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 13229

74. LETTER TO Y. ANJAPPA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 27, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The only thing I can suggest to you now is that you should send a statement of the account and expenditure of your Company and samples of all khaddar you are producing and such other information that you can send from there to enable the All-India Spinners' Association expert to examine the condition of your concern.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. Y. ANJAPPA,
C/O YADGIR AND CO.
TOBACCO BAZAR
SECUNDERABAD (DECCAN)

From a microfilm: S.N. 13230

75. LETTER TO SATYANANDA BOSE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 27, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

The suggestion that you make is not new. It has been discussed from several points of view. But personally I have felt that the time has not come for us to take the lead. Meanwhile, good work in this direction is being done by the Poet Rabindranath Tagore. His work in contributing to an all-Asia awakening is of the greatest value. For us lesser men I feel that we would strengthen our position only by developing forces from within.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SATYANANDA BOSE
78 DHARMATOLLA STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13231

76. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 27, 1928

MR DEAR C.R.,

I just read your pencil notes "Unsold Stock". The views about khadi are purely introductory. The views about Hindu-Muslim unity are entirely unseasonable and are likely to be misrepresented if not resented. You must therefore keep them under lock and key for the time being.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 13232

77. LETTER TO C. RANGANATHA RAO

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 27, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

When I was in Bangalore you had sent me the charkha turned out in the Government Workshop. You were turning out good spindles also if I remember rightly. Could you please ascertain through your Engineering Foreman whether there is any machine which turns out absolutely true spindles and whether that machine or any such machine can straighten out absolutely correctly spindles that may become bent or crooked? At the Ashram we are doing it without the use of a machine. It is a laborious process and can be mastered only by a few and imposes a terrific strain upon the eyes of the mender if he has to correct many in a day. I shall esteem any information that you can give me or procure for me in this matter.

I wonder what progress the wheel is making in your Department.

Yours sincerely,

C. RANGANATHA RAO SAHEB, ESQ.
DIRECTOR OF INDUSTRIES
GOVERNMENT WORKSHOPS, BANGALORE

From a photostat: S.N. 13233

78. LETTER TO GANGA PRASAD

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 27, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I did read your book through. And whilst I could say that you had taken much trouble over it, you had not proved authorities to their original sources. But in this respect most of our authors are sinners. We are easily satisfied with proofs that would support our own preconceived notions or theories.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GANGA PRASAD
TEHRI

From a microfilm: S.N. 13234

79. LETTER TO BHOJRAJ KHUSHIRAM

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 27, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. If you have real purity of heart and real love for your father and for the girl to whom you are married, you will by force of purity and love bear down all opposition and convert the girl. Whereas if it is merely a matter of your not liking the girl and the proposed *brahmacharya*, a matter merely of convenience, it is your clear duty to carry your wife with you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. BHOJRAJ KHUSHIRAM
FISH MARKET
ROHRI (SIND)

From a microfilm: S.N. 13235

80. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

[*May 28, 1928*][1]

CHI. MANI,

You yourself are proving that it is not without reason that I think you to be a fool. I have never taken as gospel truth what Mirabehn tells me. That lady is pure-hearted. . . . Had you been here, I could have talked to you personally. As you were not here, I told Lakshmidasbhai. But I cherish the hope that one day you will stop being a fool and become wise.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, pp. 66-7

81. DRAFT OF LETTER TO HARILAL DESAI[2]

[*May 28, 1928*]

DEAR,

A full wire was sent to you under my authority from Ahmedabad.[3] I enclose copy which speaks for itself. As probably our methods of work and service clash, what may be a satisfactory minimum to me may be an exorbitant demand in your estimation.

What can be the use of any inquiry if the enhancement is to be paid up? Government have ample security for its collection if in the event of a decision unfavourable to the people the enhanced rate is not quickly paid up by them.

Please note that the terms of reference will also have to be agreed upon. Any reference will not do.

It must be a point of honour for any self-respecting agent of the people to insist upon the release of prisoners and lands especially when they are illegally punished or forfeited.

Lastly you would best serve the cause by refraining from any action, if you cannot act strongly and do not feel the strength of the

[1] As in the source

[2] The draft is in Gandhiji's hand. Mahadev Desai, reproducing the letter with a few verbal variations in *The Story of Bardoli,* says that it was sent by Vallabhbhai Patel.

[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Harilal Desai", After 25-5-1928.

people as I do. Whilst I want to shut no door to an honourable settlement, I am in no hurry to close the struggle without an honourable settlement or without putting the people to the severest test they are capable of fulfilling. I would have a brave defeat rather than an ignominious compromise.

Now you will perhaps understand that I am not anxious to run to M[ahabaleshwar] or Poona. You will please therefore not send for me unless you think my presence indispensable.

From a photostat: S.N. 12705

82. CABLE TO SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN CONGRESS[1]

[On or after *May 29, 1928*]

SAIC

JOHANNESBURG

SETTLEMENT COVERED BY CORRESPONDENCE. STRONGLY ADVISE PUTTING FULL CASE BEFORE SASTRIJI AND THEN ACCEPT HIS GUIDANCE.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 11989

83. LETTER TO SHANKARAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

May 30, 1928

MY DEAR SHANKARAN,

You are quite right. We must not take parcels of foreign or mill-cloth for the Bardoli people, nor are they in need in that manner. They are not starving. The expenses are not connected with feeding or clothing them. The expenses incurred are in supporting the larger number of volunteers and carrying on extensive propaganda.

Your sincerely

From a photostat: S.N. 13396

[1] This was in reply to the cable dated May 28 received the next day. It read: "You cable to Hon. Sastri on illicit entrants not explicit. Did you obtain protection for all entrants in Transvaal who were in possession of registration certificates fraudulently obtained up to 1914? Could Congress be justfied in declaring Government as having committed a breach of 1914 Settlement if Government now calls upon all fraudulent documents holders before Settlement to come forward for condonation? Please reply urgent" (S.N. 11989).

84. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

May 30, 1928

MY DEAR C. R.,

I did not argue with you about the reason for not publishing your tribute to the Abhoy Ashram. About the labourers, I think I gave you my reason. About the Abhoy Ashram, your tribute is well deserved. But instead of benefiting them, the tribute was likely to rouse all kinds of jealousies and I felt that it was better not to rouse any jealousy.[1]

From a photostat: S.N. 13397

85. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

May 30, 1928

MY DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have you interesting letter. The milk diet will surely do you much good. I am sure that the hip-bath will benefit you. If Nikhil cannot bear hip-bath, try an earth bandage on the abdomen, six inches long and three inches in width. It might be good to keep Nikhil for a time on milk without sugar and distilled water only, giving him enema regularly every 24 hours if the bowels do not move. He should take as much milk as he can comfortably, but no more. I have been trying it here in a rather bad case with considerable success. You may consult a medical friend about this treatment.

I hope you will succeed with Mr. Birla. I am anxious that he should help you far more for the soundness of your khadi propaganda than for the help you may render in his business. The latter is undoubtedly good and he should have all the assistance you can give. But khadi, if it is to succeed, can do so only on the strength of its merits and that of the business-like character of its organizations.

[1] Rajagopalachari had in article commended the efforts of the workers at Abhoy Ashram (Comilla) in connection with the riots in late 1927. *Vide* also "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 27-5-1928.

Did I tell you or send you an extract from one of Mr. Birla's letters in which, whils the praised you much for your love of khadi and your immense self-sacrifice, he was not convinced of the soundness of the Pratishthan or of the khadi propaganda as you had explained it to him? This was more than a year ago. I tell you this to emphasize what you say in the following sentence in your letter: "If he is convinced that the work as carried on by me here deserves his fullest support, I do hope that he will spend lakhs as he spends thousands." He is a man like that. If he is convinced, he is quite capable of giving unlimited help.

With love,

BAPU

SJT. SATIS CH. DAS GUPTA
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
SODEPUR

From a photostat: G.N. 1593

86. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

SABARMATI,
Wednesday [*May 30, 1928*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letters. Talk with the Principal gently from time to time about the uncleanliness and take measures to remove it. Here things are going on fairly well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 475. Courtesy: Vassumati Pandit

[1] From the postmark

87. BARDOLI ON TRIAL

One may hastily think that the Government is on its trial in Bardoli. But that would be a wrong opinion. The Government has been tried and found wanting scores of times. Frightfulness' is its code of conduct when its vital parts ar affected. If its prestige or its revenue is in danger, it seeks to sustain it either by means fair or foul. It does not hesitate to resort to terrorism and cover it with unblushing untruths. The latest information that Pathans are now being posted in villages with instructions to surround the houses of the villagers day and night need not cause either surprise or anger. The surprise is that they have not yet let loose in Bardoli a punitive police and declared martial law. We ought by this time to know what a punitive police or martial law means. It is evident that by the latest form of 'frightfulness' the Government is seeking to good people into some act of violence, be it ever so slight, to justify their enactment of the last act in the tragedy.

Will the people of Bardoli stand this last trial? They have already staggered Indian humanity. They have shown heroic patience in the midst of great provocation. Will they stand the greatest provocation that can be offered? If they will, they will have gained everything. Imprisonments, forfeitures, deportations, death, must all be taken in the ordinary course by those who count honour before everything else. When the terror becomes unbearable, let the people leave the land they have hitherto believed to be theirs. It is wisdom to vacate houses or places that are plagueinfected. Tyranny is a kind of plague and when it is likely to make us angry or weak, it is wisdom to leave the scene of such temptation. History is full of instances of brave people having sought exile in preference to surrender to *zoolum.*

Let me hope however that such a step will not be necessary. One hears rumours of intercessions by well-meaning friends. They have the right, it may be even their duty, to intercede. But let these friends realize the significance of the movement. They are not to represent a weak cause or a weak people. The people of Bardoli stand for an absolutely just cause. They ask no favour, they seek only justice. They do not ask anyone to consider their case to be true. Their cause is to seek an independent, open, judicial inquiry and they undertake to abide by the verdict of such a tribunal. To deny the tribunal is to deny justice which the Government have hitherto done. The means at the

disposal of the people are self-suffering. In such a cause then minimum and maximum are almost convertible terms. Those who rely upon self-suffering for redress of a grievance cannot affort to rate it higher than it actually is. Those, therefore, who will intervene will harm the people and their cause, if they do not appreciate the implications of the struggle which cannot be lightly given up or compromised.

The public have a duty to perform by the satyagrahis. The response is already being made to Vallabhbhai's appeal for funds. It will be remembered that he refused to make the appeal as long as it was possible to refrain. The imprisonments have made the appeal imperative. I have no doubt that the response will be quick and generous. Equally necessary is the expression of enlightened public opinion. Let the public study the facts carefully and then cover the whole of the land with public meetings. I like the suggestion made by Sjt. Jairamdas that June 12th or any other suitable day should be proclaimed as Bardoli Day when meetings representing all parties may be held to pass resolutions and make collections in aid of the sufferers of Bardoli.

Young India, 31-5-1928

88. UNTOUCHABILITY IN THE SOUTH

Though untouchability appears in its worst and crudest form in the extreme south, that is Kerala, not much, at least not enough is being done by the reformers in the south to stamp out the evil. They will not even finance the movement to the extent that is necessary and possible for them. When, therefore, I started collections during my visit to Calicut amongst the people locally, I was glad to find that the South Indian colony in Bombay signified their intention of making a much more substantial collection than was made in Calicut and giving it to me when I passed through Bombay. In continuation of their promise a deputation came to me in Bombay during my recent visit and assured me that they had not forgotten it but that they were waiting for a favourable season for making the collections. One of them now writes :

> Many a young man with meagre salary is wasting his money in races and other city inducements, and if only we could wean them from their present tendencies, much could be expected of them for their own benefit as well as for the benefit of the city of Bombay.

I hope that this reform movement will take deep root amongst the South Indian young men. I would advise them not to wait for a "favourable season". For any time is a favourable season for doing good work or begging or giving in a good cause. No cause can be better than the cause of the untouchables, the "unapproachables" and the "invisibles". If the young men from the south living in Bombay will only deny themselves some of the costly luxuries such as smoking, races, visits to teashops, etc., there will be a fat collection. Every religion enjoins the setting apart of a certain portion of one's income for charitable purposes. Unfortunately young men nowadays in most cases have given the go-by to religion. But if the practice of invariably allocating a certain portion of one's income to charitable purposes can be revived, causes such as those of the untouchables need never wait for a "favourable season"

Young India, 31-5-1928

89. LETTER TO S. N. MITRA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 31, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. In my opinion, I have solved the question put by you through the suggestion I have made if it can be accepted because students while they are studying cannot do more or better than personally spinning and adopting khaddar for their use and wear. And if they cannot do this much, they are not likely to do anything else that may be of substantial benefit to the country.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 13612

90. LETTER TO G. N. KANITKAR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 31, 1928

MY DEAR KANITKAR,

I had your letter. I am surprised that you have fixed a date for the meeting without consultation with Jamnalalji and then you expect him to attend the meeting. Surely it was due to him as President that you should have first conferred with him as to the date and the agenda and then issued your circular. Jamnalalji is now telegraphing to you to appoint another date when he will certainly attend.

With reference to the dispensary, all I told you was that there should be no difficulty in giving the Rashtriya Shikshan Mandal a lease of the premises, if the Council of the Association approved of the terms, etc. And this could happen only after an unconditional transfer of all the rights of the Swavalamban Pathashala in connection with the property and the Charkha Sangh.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. N. KANITKAR
341 SADASHIV PETH
POONA CITY

From a photostat : S.N. 13613

91. LETTER TO A. T. GIDWANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 31, 1928

MY DEAR GIDWANI,

I was wondering when I should hear from you. I was therefore delighted when Girdhari handed me your letter.

The personal things you call petty are of as much interest to me as Bardoli, for I love to know all about co-workers. I understand your desire to throw up everything and rush to Bardoli, but there is no occasion for it as yet. When it does arrive, you will find me summoning you without the slightest hesitation. I know that like a good soldier that you are you will promptly respond to the summons. As it is, Vallabhbhai has enough workers.

I am glad that you are keeping much better health and I know that Gangabehn has shed all her moroseness. But tell her she must not forget her Gujarati. And if she is not doing so already she must help you in your work. She can do a great deal in going to girls' schools, organizing them and teaching them *takli*, etc.

The communal trouble is always and everywhere with us. I hope that it will not prove beyond your strength to cope with.

Yours, sincerely,

From a photostat: S. N. 14475

92. LETTER TO MANAGER, IMPERIAL BANK OF INDIA, AHMEDABAD

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 1, 1928

THE MANAGER,
IMPERIAL BANK OF INDIA
AHMEDABAD

DEAR SIR,

Please hand to the bearer the sum of Rs. 65-1-8 in accordance with receipt duly signed and enclosed herewith.

Yours faithfully,

Encl. I receipt

From a photostat: S. N. 13400

93. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

June 1, 1928

Do keep writing to me without expecting a letter from me.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 90

94. LETTER TO V. J. PATEL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
B. B. C. I. RLY.,
June 1, 1928

BHAISHRI VITHALBHAI,

I have your letter. I have not yet actually received that letter of yours but I read it in the newspapers. It will produce a good impression. What shall we say or do about Harilal Desai? I am writing to Mahadev at Bardoli to send you at copy of Vallabhbhai's letter. We must keep on doing our work. You are doing your part very well. Is not God Himself *Karta-harta.*[1]

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 14436

95. LETTER TO KEVALRAM

Saturday, before 4 a.m., June 2, 1928

BHAISHRI KEVALRAM,

I have your letter. I wanted to reply earlier but owing to lack of time I could not write till today. I hope your health has improved by now. You should take great pains to regain your health completely.

Knowing your nature, I fear that you will not be able to put up with the charges already made and the changes yet to be made in the Ashram.

To all those who take responsibility, both men and women, *brahmacharya* is essential.

Gradually everyone has started coming to the common kitchen. At present 90 dine there.

Labourers are gradually being reduced. Therefore everyone has to put in more manual labour.

There is talk about giving up buffalo milk and ghee and of living only on cow's milk produced at the Ashram.

If at all you come back you ought to be ready to do weaving.

[1] He who does and undoes

The *Niyamavali*[1] is almost ready. I shall send you a copy as soon as it is.

Harihar and Taranath have left [the Ashram] because of the *brahmacharya* clause.

Both of you should think deeply before deciding to come and stay in the Ashram and I would be very happy if you could fully observe the rules.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 11803

96. LETTER TO TARABEHN JASANI

June 2, 1928

CHI. TARA,

I do not have even a moment's respite. So I could not write to you. I am snatching some time especially to write this.

1. Devotion to God means rendering selfless service to all Gods's creatures.

2. The purpose of such devotion is self-realization.

3. Actionless devotion is no devotion; it is merely delusion.

4. . . .[2]

5. By being a burden on others one does not pursue devotion, one only denigrates God.

6. It is devotion of a pure kind if a man, after seeing to his essential needs, spends all the remaining time in the service of all living creatures. It is possible for one to reach the stage where one can serve by thought alone. But none of us have reached that stage. Therefore, for a man of flesh and blood, service of all that lives is the only way of devotion. Such service must be selfless, altruistic.

7. God means pure consciousness that pervades this world and without which not a single business of the world can go on for a single moment.

[1] Book of Rules; *vide* "Satyagraha Ashram", 14-6-1928.

[2] Illegible in the source.

There were more questions you wanted me to answer, but I cannot find the letter. If you remember you may ask me again.

Be careful of your health. Manu is waiting, so I shall not write more. Who has sent the invitation form Rangoon? . . .[1] Do not worry but keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

There are many changes here now.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8781

97. IMPORTANCE OF BARDOLI

The lustre of the Bardoli Satyagraha increases day by day. Whose heart would not jump for joy at seeing Shri Vithalbhai Patel's letter which I have just received? A translation of it is published in this very issue. However, the fulfilment of the expectations with which he has written that letter lies in the hands of the Bardoli satyagrahis themselves. The Government's notice too has been published along with Shri Vithalbhai's letter. The gist of the note is that the so-called satyagrahis are no satyagrahis but cowards, and, because they are cowards, they secretly go and pay up their revenue dues. There are other such points mentioned in the note, which deserves to be considered by the satyagrahis. The Government has built its castle of hopes of the people's weaknesses, whereas the Himalayas of the hopes of the satyagrahis and their well-wishers like Vithalbhai rest on the styagrahis' courage and determination. Being built by man, a castle crumbles. The Himalayas being a gift of God, will stand firm and if they should fall it would be the end of everything. It is indeed true that man forges his own fetters and he himself can break them. The *yajna* at Bardoli is intended to prove this.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-6-1928

[1] Illegible in the source.

98. QUESTIONS ON EDUCATION–I

Having written the three articles on primary education, it is now easy for me to answer the following questions :

Q. 1. You once said reducing the burden imposed by English on students would amount to saving so many years of their life. If we interpret national education to mean nation-wide education, how much would be the burden imposed upon society? How much, that is, in terms of years?

A. Let me first explain the meaning of the phrase "reducing the burden imposed by English". It is not my contention that students should not be taught English at all. But let us learn English as a foreign language in the same way that a Frenchman learns it. If we learn English only to that extent, we shall not have to carry the burden of thinking in English, speaking or writing it with correctness. In my opinion, at least five years of the student's life are wasted in carrying this burden. Not onle this. Because of the strain caused during these five years, his capacity to think is affected, he becomes enfeebled in the body and, like blotting-paper absorbing ink, he starts merely imitating in a superficial manner. How much a person would learn if he spent five years in getting the knowledge he needs through his mother-tongue! How much time he would save thereby! He would readily learn the best thoughts in his won language and be spared the burden of learning the difficult pronunciation of a foreign language.

Q. 2. Child education at one end and university education at the other are very expensive. Can these both be included in national education? Alternatively, do you have any scheme for providing equally solid education at a lower cost?

A. I have tried to show in those three articles how child education could become inexpensive, almost self-supporting. If we can fashion a university education which will aid primary education, it can be made inexpensive and students can acquire the necessary knowledge useful to the nation. If the phrase "solid education" implies eduction similar to that provided by Government schools, the question is irrelevant, as I do not regard that education as solid. The education given in the national university or primary schools is distinct from that provided by Government schools and is very often of a novel and original kind. It is therefore solid in its own way.

Q. 3. Advocates of tradition try to inculcate in pupils devotion for the guru. They tell the pupils that learning can be acquired only by pleasing the guru and in no other manner; that if one does not please the guru, does not serve him and attend on him he may out of slyness withhold knowledge; that one should always be flattering him to keep him from wicked in this way. Is this a definition of *gurubhakti*?

A. I am a believer in *gurubhakti*. However, every teacher cannot become a guru. The guru-disciple relationship is spiritual and spontaneous, it is not artificial, it cannot be created through external pressure. Such gurus are still to be found in India. (It should not be necessary to warn that I am not speaking here of gurus who give *moksha*.) The question of flattering such a guru just does not arise. The respect towards such a guru can only be natural, the guru's love is also of the same kind. Hence the one is alwarys ready to give and the other is always ready to receive. Common knowledge, on the other hand, is something which we can accept from anyone. I can learn a lot from a carpenter with whom I have no connection and of whose faults I am aware; I can acquire a knowledge of carpentry from him just as I purchase goods from a shopkeeper. Of course, a certain type of faith is required even here. I cannot learn carpentry from a carpenter if I do not have faith in his knowledge of that subject. *Gurubhakti* is an altogether different matter. In character-building, which is the object of education, the relationship between the guru and his disciples is of utmost importance and where there is no *gurubhakti* in its pure form, there can be no character-building.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-6-1928

99. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

June 3, 1928

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I am enclosing herewith a draft of the reply to the Governor. [The struggle] is developing well. May you live long. Write or wire

when you need me. There are constant reports that you may be arrested. You will get some rest if you are. If you are not, haven't we taken a vow never to rest?

BAPU

VALLABHBHAI PATEL
SWARAJ ASHRAM
BARDOLI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p.13

100. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

SABARMATI,
Silence Day [*June 4, 1928*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I receive your letters regularly. You should acknowledge receipt of mine. I am just not able to write regularly. I am writing this at four o'clock in the morning. The bell has started ringing now.

There is scope enough yet to improve your handwriting. I read out one of your letters to the sisters here. As far as possible go to bed before 9 and get up at 4. Do you take exercise or not? Use some insecticide for killing bugs. If you can make any suggestions about keeping things clean, do so. How many Gujarati girls are there? Now 90 people dine in the kitchen. The number keeps on increasing, but others must be writing to you about all this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 476. Courtesy : Vasumati Pandit

[1] From the postmark
[2] *Vide* "Indians in South Africa", 7-6-1928.
[3] *Vide* "Cableram to South African Indian Congress", On or after 29-5-1928.

101. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

SABARMATI,
June 4, 1928

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

You are posting me regularly with the events on your side. They help me much.

I am writing this week a cautious article[1] in *Young India* on the two judgments. If possible, I shall send you an advance copy.

Pragji has written a long letter to me. He is a good man. I have acted upon your cablegram and cabled[3] to our friends there that they should rely of you for guidance.

I do hope you are keeping well.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 8815

102. BARDOLI DAY

SABARMATI,
June 5, 1928[2]

I hope that the Bardoli Day, that is, 12th June next, will be observed throughout India in an earnest and becoming manner. The best way to do so is wherever it is possible to suspend all work and devote the day to collection of funds for the satyagrahi sufferers and for helping Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel and his band of workers in carrying on the struggle, and have mass meetings where further collections should be made and resolutions passed supporting the demand of the satyagrahis and condemning the coercive measures of the Government. I do not think that there should be a call for volunteers, because Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel has already enough for his requirements. Offers have been received from all parts of the country. And if more are required, I have no doubt that there are volunteers ready all over the country. Friends from Maharashtra, Sind and elsewhere have already sent me messages that Vallabhbhai could rely upon almost an

[1] *Vide* "Indians in South Africa", 7-6-1928

[2] The date is from *The Bombay Chronicle*, 6-6-1928, which carried a brief report of this item.

unlimited number. There may be unwarrantable optimism in this language, but after due allowance is made, there is no doubt that enough men and women, if necessary, will be forthcoming when and if the call comes.

Young India, 7-6-1928

103. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

Tuesday [*June 5, 1928*][1]

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

Enclosed herewith is Sumant's letter. Now I do not know what to do. I see there is need to reply to his charge. I shall call him here if you wish. But is would be better if you yourself talked it out with him if he has not altogether lost good sense.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4705. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

104. LETTER TO CHHOTALAL MANSINHA

ASHRAM,

Jeth Vad 3, Tuesday [*June 5, 1928*][2]

BHAI CHHOTALAL,

I have your letter. We cannot discuss the suicide of the late Acharya Bhatt in *Navajivan.* Hindu society can be reformed by everyone adopting the necessary changes in his family.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 27588

[1] From the postmark
[2] As noted on the letter

105. LETTER TO V. J. PATEL

ASHRAM,

Wednesday, Jeth Vad 4 [*June 6, 1928*][1]

BHAISHRI VITHALBHAI,

I have received Swami's letter. I feel that we certainly cannot agree to the condition that the farmers should from today put into the bank the money which they will have to pay if the decision of the committee to be appointed goes against them. I see Vallabhbhai's as well as the farmers's lack of trust in it. At present the farmers are putting up a fight saying that the enhanced revenue is unjustifiable. The Government has no reason to believe that they would not pay or Vallabhbhai would not help them even if the decision of the committee by which they would themselves agree to abide went against them. Therefore, at least for the sake of our self-respect, we cannot agree to the condition that we deposit the money in the bank. All the terms of agreement will be made in pubic. Even Vallabhbhai's terms of agreement will be made in public. The people will certainly pay up the revenue without the additional amount, that is, nearly five lakhs. To collect the remaining money should be very easy for the Government. I smell a rat in the talk of somehow recovering the additional amount first.,It will never satisfy us if they appoint a committee in name only. The committee should be impartial and open. We have not the slightest right to be so spiritless after the people have shown so much strength. If ultimately the people are to lose, they will do so. We should have no hand in their discomfiture.

You can judge better than I when and at whose invitation you should go to Mahabaleshwar. I do not think that now I have left any part of Swami's letter unanswered.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] *Jeth Vad* 4 seems to be an error for *Jeth Vad* 3 which was a Wednesday and corresponded to June 6.

106 LETTER TO BECHAR PARMAR

ASHRAM,
Wednesday, Jeth Vad 4 [*June 6, 1928*][1]

BHAISHRI BECHAR,

I have your letter. One reply to it is that if any occupation goes against morality, it must be given up. The other is that there are only four varnas and there is nothing wrong with any of them. Therefore one should stick to one's own varna and give up whatever immoral practices one's parents might have adopted, so that one could take up some other occupation whilst yet belonging to one's own varna.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5572

107. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

ASHRAM,
Wednesday, Jeth Vad 4 [*June 6, 1928*][2]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I do get your letters. You must have got mine.[3] Gangabehn and Manibehn have gone to Bombay. At present more than 90 people dine in the common kitchen. Lilabehn too has come here for 15 days. Bhai Chimanlal also dines there. The work is proceeding well. Balkrishna is here at present. Chhaganlal and Prabhudas paid me a visit yesterday. We get buffalo's milk and mostly buffalo's ghee only; therefore the question of giving up ghee in the Ashram is under discussion. You should find some simple way to overcome the problem of latrines. In any case earth must be used at the end.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 578. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

[1] From the discussion regarding the varnas, continued in his letter to the addressee dated 23-6-1928, it would seem that this letter too was written in 1928, in which year *Jeth Vad* 4 corresponded to June 6. Wednesday however was *Jeth Vad* 3.

[2] From the postmark

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Vasumati Pandit", 4-6-1928

108. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

ASHRAM,
June 6, 1928

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I got your letter. I too hold that *asanas* are benificial. But my experience is that specific knowledge is needed to choose the *asanas*.

It now seems that I shall remain in the Ashram during August. Do come.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

SHRIYUT GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
BIRLA PARK
BALLYGUNGE
CULCUTTA

From Hindi: C.W. 6159. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

109. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL VORA

Jyaishtha Krishna 3 [*June 6, 1928*][1]

BHAI CHIMANLALJI,

Your letter. Five articles mean just five and no more. If two articles are taken as medicine they have to be counted as two Salt is not a separate article. My present diet consists of goat's milk, vegetable, wheat, lemon and almonds. Turmeric is counted separately. If some-thing is added to quinine even that would make two items, and so forth.

My belief is that by human effort one can within limits lengthen or shorten one's life. Ultimately it is God who does everything but He uses someone as His instrument.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI CHIMANLAL GULABCHAND VORA
SHRIMALI MOHALLA
RATLAM

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6300

[1] From the postmark

110. THE TWO SIDES

The communique of the Government of Bombay on the Bardoli Satyagraha is in keeping with the letter of the Commissioner, Northern Division, which I had the painful duty of criticizing only the other day.[1] This communique opens with a repetition of the insult that Sjt. Vallabhbhai and his co-workers are outsiders. Instead of being described as such they described as "persons who do not reside there" (in Bardoli). The communique then shamelessly refers to the fact that when the attempt at distraint had failed, the Government resorted to an "organized attachment of buffaloes and movable property." Sjt. Vallabhbhai's publicity department has shown what the attachment of buffaloes has meant. The communique further triumphantly refers to the fact that "forty Pathans were obtained to assist the Mamlatdar and Mahalkaris in the work of attachment and the care of animals attached.". The publicity department has again shown us what the introduction of Pathans has meant. Even without the assistance of the department, we could have guessed the meaning of this introduction. Whether it is the Government or private people who employ Pathans, people know why the services of these friends are enlisted. Lest, however, the accepted meaning might be attached to the enlistment of Pathans, the com-munique proceeds : "Unfounded allegations have been made against these Pathans. Government are satisfied that their conduct has been exemplary in every respect". Who does not laugh at this explanation? If, as the Government contend, the Pathans have been employed in order to replace the Vethias who are alleged to be under threat of excommunication, it is relevant to ask why Pathans have been chosen instead of Vethias from other places or some other mild-mannered men. The Government pooh-pooh the notion as incredible that "five parties, each of five Pathans, working under the eye of a responsible officer of Government, can terrorize a population of 90,000 persons". Again experience of the people of India shows what one Pathan armed with authority can do in a whole village. It is no doubt humiliating to think that Pathans or anybody else can terrorize large masses of men, but unfortunately it is a fact of daily occurrence in this fearridden, terror-stricken India. And I would consider the Bardoli struggle to be well fought, even without any further result, if the people of Bardoli shed

[1] *Vide* "The Only Issue", 17-5-1928.

their fear of men and authority and turn the Pathans into friends.

But the communique is not satisfied with a recital of the coercive measures taken in respect of movable property; it refers to forfeiture of lands. The Government are not ashamed to own that "up to date of the communique 1,400 acres of such land have been disposed of under forfeiture notices and that about 5,000 acres more will be disposed of in due course unless the arrears due thereon be sooner paid", and unnecessarily add that "such lands once disposed of would never be returned". There are several other statements in the communique which are open to criticism, but I forbear.

The communique announces some insulting accommodation for those who would pay the assessment on or before the 19th instant. It is for the people of Bardoli to return the only answer open to self-respecting men and women. When they embarked upon this struggle, they knew the cost of resistance. I have little doubt that they will not fail to render a good account of themselves when the last heat of the struggle commences as they did during the opening stages.

In marked contrast to the communique comes the letter addressed to me by Sjt. Vithalbhai Patel announcing a handsome monthly donation of Rs. 1,000 so long as the struggle lasts. Throughout his brilliant career as the Speaker of the Assembly Sjt. Vithalbhai Patel has upheld the rights of the people. Occupancy of office has not in the slightest degree made him lose his head or compromise the honour of his country. Whilst he has acted with strict impartiality, he has neither hesitated not been afraid to act on behalf of the people wherever the holding of his office has permitted him to do so. The alien rulers have established a slavish tradition that those who are in the pay of the Government must in all circumstances refrain from showing their sympathy for the people when the latter engage in any fight with the Government, and this even when the Government act in a manner contrary to laws promulgated by themselves. Sjt. Vithalbhai Patel has broken through that unhealthy and slavish tradition and has been able to do so because he has accepted his office not for its honour, not for the salary it brings him, but, as he puts it in his letter, as a trust on behalf of those who have elected him to the office. It must be remembered that the Speaker is not a statutory servant of the Crown. He is a popular representative and without taking an active part in political controversies and the like, he has a perfect right to show his sympathy for the people. Having

been elected as the Speaker, Sjt. Vithalbhai ceased to be a party man; but he did not and could not cease to be representative of the combined parties who called him to preside over their deliberations. I therefore tender him my congratulations for the manly stand he has taken up on behalf of the people. If entry into legislative bodies created by the alien Government can be held at all justifiable, he has shown to those who may enter these bodies and accept office the way to act nobly and fearlessly.

Young India,7-6-1928

111. CASH v. *CREDIT*

The Secretary, All-India Spinners' Association, writes as follows:

> The credit sales of the provincial branches of the Association amount to Rs. 1,54,488-13-8$\frac{1}{2}$ representing 15 per cent of the capital invested in these branches, and this is in spite of the resolution passed by the Council putting a ban generally on credit sales. This is largely due to the misgivings of our workers. They fear that the sales will go down if credits are completely stopped. The fear is groundless. The Tamilnad has done away with all credit sales, and it after all shows the largest sales amongst all the khadi depots throughout India. You may inform your various branches and the public that past experience shows that khadi work loses through these credit sales as well by reason of the purchasers making default as b reason of the locking up of capital which is none too large.

I entirely endorse the warning uttered in the foregoing letter. So long as khadi remains an infant national industry requiring delicate nursing and protection from the public, there should be no credit sales in khadi depots. We must simply rely upon the support of a patriotic public and if we cannot command cash sales, we may regard the disinclination to pay cash as a sign that khadi does not enjoy the benefit of public protection. But my own personal experience throughout my extensive wanderings has shown that people gladly pay cash for khadi when they require and receive credit in respect of their other purchases. To pay cash for khadi that the people want is the least protection that khadi is entitled to. Managers of sale depots must not be afraid of losing custom if they do not give credit. They must rely upon their ability to carry on propaganda in their neighbourhood in favour of khadi for commanding cash sales. And in no case are they warranted in giving credits in spite of instructions

from headquarters to the contrary. Discipline demands that if they have no confidence in themselves to carry on khadi depots successfully without being able to give credit, they should give such notice to the head office and ask to be relieved of their charge. The head office should be trusted to know what is best on the whole for turning khadi into a business proposition as quickly as possible.

Young India, 7-6-1928

112. INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Two very important cases have been decided recently by the Transvaal Provincial Division of the Supreme Court on South Africa. One of them, *S. B. Medh* v. *Immigrants Appeal Board*, though important in itself, affects only a few special cases of Indians who received exemption certificates under the Smuts-Gandhi Settlement as being educated Indians. It was contended by the Union Government that the exemptions were not complete. I need not go into greater detail. The Court has now found that the exemptions were complete in the sense submitted on behalf of the appellant.

The other case, *Days Purshottam* v. *Immigrants Appeal Board*, has farreaching consequences for the Indian settlers. The judgment in this case lays down that section 5 of Act 37 of 1927 does not possess retrospective effect. Hence certificates obtained by fraudulent means do not become cancellable at the will of the Immigration Board or the Immigration Officer. If this judgment stands, holders of certificates even though they were originally tainted will remain undisturbed. This is a great victory for the settlers. I have no desire to see fraud in any shape or form protected. But the case of these settlers is not one of ordinary fraud. In many cases, at least up to 1914 the Asiatic Office was a corrupt department and it made it practically impossible for *bona-fide* entrants to enter unless they resorted to some crooked means so as to satisfy the greed of the Asiatic officers. Where Government officials are privy to fraud, it ill becomes that Government to punish the helpless victims.

Cables from the South African settlers tell me that the Government are appealing against the two decisions. I venture to suggest to the Union Government that it would be more in keeping with their conciliatory attitude and the spirit of the new understanding that they do not seek to deprive the Indians of the advantage the two appeals give them. The judgment in the first appeal protects only a

few individuals. And in their case there is no question of fraud. The judgment in the second appeal protects a fair number of those who are already in the Union. It will be no serious calamity for the Union to have to absorb a few more Indians than the Government had counted upon. The Union Government should remember that these appeals are very expensive affairs especially for the poor Indians. It is hardly fair for an organized powerful Government to take successful citizens through appellate courts and thus exhaust them into submission or worse. It may be well to possess a giant's strength, but it is admittedly wrong to use it against dwarfs.

The settlers will do well not to set much store to their success in these two appeals. They have in Sjt. Sastri a great friend and adviser. Let them press their suit as much as ever before him but having done so let them abide by his advice. He will use in their behalf all the influence he has acquired with the Union Government. I welcome their cables. I appreciate the trust they repose in me. But my power to help them from this distance and in the changed circumstances I found myself in 1920 is much too limited to be of value. Their strength therefore lies in their unity, moderation and reliance upon one who is not merely Agent General for the Government of India but is their true and powerful friend and guide.

Young India, 7-6-1928

113. LETTER TO SIR KISHUN PARSHAD

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

It gave me joy to hear from the lips of Babu Rup Narayan of the great interest you have been taking in the khadi movement and of the fact that you had already commenced spinning yourself. I commend to your attention the manner in which the movement is being handled by the Mysore State. I have no doubt that if it is properly taken up it will be a blessings to the poor agriculturists in the Nizam's Dominion.

Babu Rup Narayan tells me that I am to expect a sample of your yarn and your eldest son's. I am looking forward to the receipt of the

samples. And if you will permit me, they will go to our Museum where samples of yarn spun by distinguished persons are collected.

Yours sincerely,

H. E. MAHARAJAH SIR KISHUN PARSHAD

YAMINUS-SULTANATH

CITY PALACE

HYDERABAD (DECCAN)

From a microfilm: S.N. 13614

114. DRAFT OF LETTER TO SIR LESLIE WILSON

[*June 7, 1928*][1]

I thank you for your prompt reply to my letter of the 4th instant.

It is evident from your letter that we are working at cross purposes. I fail to see why because I hold an important public position, I might not write to another holding an equally important public position a friendly letter drawing his attention to what I might consider to be a serious breach of law or official duty on the part of his officials. The fact that the holding of the position I occupy prevents me from entering into proofs of statements I might make does not mean that I have no warrant for making such statements or that I might not make them confidentially to a fellow official and that in the public interest.

If you will re-read my letter of the 4th instant, you will find therein that I have not said that I have no proof of the statements I have made; on the contrary, I have given you the sources of my information. Is it not up to you now to adopt the only possible course, if you really want to have those statements proved, namely, to appoint a committee of enquiry? Tell me how otherwise you are to be satisfied about the correctness or otherwise of the statements I have made to you.

With reference to the third paragraph of your letter, there is no question of my not believing you. I simply quoted your own letter to show that at the time you wrote to me that letter, you had made no enquiry. You evidently seem to think that the letter of the Commissioner is not open to objection, whereas I venture to suggest

[1] This was enclosed with the following item.

that it is highly offensive and if it does not set at nought all law, it does set nought all order and decency and is bereft of all official responsibility. And the last paragraph of your letter of the 17th ultimo, which is clear, shows that you had made no enquiry at the time you wrote that letter into the allegations made by me.

As to the fourth paragraph of your letter, let me assure you that my letter was in no way written in haste. It was a deliberate statement made by me with the full sense of my responsibility.

In conclusion, let me ask you these two questions :

Do you propose to take any notice of the letter of the Commissioner, Northern Division, to which I have drawn your attention?

Do you propose to make any enquiry into the allegations to which I have drawn your attention?

Statements which I believe and for which ample proof can be given if the Committee of enquiry is appointed are as follows :

(1) In many cases of attachment no *panchnamas* were prepared, no receipts given and no account was rendered of the property attached.

(2) Buffaloes were attached without identifying the owners.

(3) Property exempted from attachment under Civil Procedure Code has also been attached.

(4) Attachment during night.

(5) House-breaking by breaking through hedges, removing doors off their hinges, etc.

(6) Torturing of milch cattle and selling them for a trifle. Buffaloes valued at Rs. 1,200 were sold for Rs. 216.

(7) A Pathan caught in the act of stealing.

(8) Pathans molesting and acting indecently before women.

(9) Pathans otherwise wounding the susceptibilities of the people.

(10) Arbitrary notifications by the Collector or the District Superintendent.

(11) Irregular procedure of the trials of satyagrahis.

I have taken only a few samples out of many supplied to me.

I need hardly say that whilst my letters being purely of a friendly nature have been meant to be confidential, if you think that

the correspondence between us may be made public, I have on my part no objection whatsoever thereto.

H. E. SIR LESLIE WILSON

GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 11447

115. LETTER TO V. J. PATEL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

June 7, 1928

BHAISHRI VITHALBHAI,

Herewith a draft of the reply to be sent to the Governor. You may make any change in it you want to. I see no need to send everything that Swami has put down. I have taken some of the points from it. I very much wish that the entire correspondence is published; but how is that to be done? The Governor seems to be binding himself more and more with every letter that he writes.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 14441

116. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[After *June 7, 1928*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your wire. I have taken whatever was good. Lack of humility would be the least reason. I did not at all like the style of the article. I shall analyse it when you come. This article has almost the same drawback which disqualified Swami's. But I do not know if you have a different opinion or expectation about your article; therefore if I have erred in my estimate, we shall both have to put up with it.

Vallabhbhai will be pleased to see Rameshwar Birla's letter. I enclose herewith the Governor's letter to Vithalbhai along with the draft of a reply.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] From the reference to the draft reply to Governor's letter, it is clear that this was written after June 7.

[PS.]

I have destroyed those of your letters which were fit to be destroyed. You will see them all here.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11447

117. LETTER TO J. B. PENNINGTON

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 8, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I know that however much we may differ, if I am ever able to come to England, I am sure of a hearty greeting from you.

A friend did write to me saying that I should not reject the advances of Sir John Simon if he wanted to see me, that he was a simple-minded, honest Englishman, who never stood on cere- monies and was likely to seek me out. If he had done so, I would certainly have gladly greeted him at the Ashram. I was uninterested, as I still am, in the Commission. And, therefore, I did not feel called upon to seek an interview with him. You know the geography of Western India. Ahmedabad is in an out-of-the-way corner, and therefore I may not expect busy people like Sir John Simon to go out of their beat to see individuals like me who can be of no assistance to them in their work.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 14325

118. LETTER TO SVENSKA KYRKANS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 8, 1928

MESSRS SVENSKA KYRKANS
DIAKONISTYRELSES BOKFORLAG
STOCKHOLM 7

GENTLEMEN,

With reference to your letter of the 8th February, you are at liberty to publish an unabridged Swedish translation of the first volume of the "Story of My Experiments with Truth".

Any payment you make will be utilized for the furtherance of some of my public activities.

Yours faithfully,

From a photostat: S.N. 15034

119. LETTER TO T. DE. MANZIARLY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 8, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and the magazines for which I thank you.

I take you at your word and send you this "very short" article if you will call it so.

"My belief in the possibility of Hindu-Muslim union is unchangeable in spite of the fact that if anyone were to ask for my reasons for that belief I should not be able to give them."

Yours sincerely,

MADAME T. DE MANZIARLY
21 RUE DU CHEMIN VERT
COURBEVOIE
SEINE

From a photostat: S.N. 14324

120. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 8, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. Our course is clear. If the Congress Exhibition is to be a replica of the Madras Exhibition, there should be no khadi exhibition at the time of the Congress.[1] I have not yet heard from Mr. Sen Gupta.

I am anxious to know the medical report about Nikhil. He ought to pull through under the hip-bath treatment, perfect rest and milk diet.

I send herewith an extract from Sir Daniel Hamilton's letter. Do you know anything of the property in Sunderbans?[2] And if you do, what is the condition of the people there and how many inhabit the property?

With love,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 8916

[1] For Gandhiji's views on the Madras Exhibition, *vide* "The National Congress (subtopic - The Elephant and the Ant)", January 5, 1928.

[2] In his letter dated May 16, 1928, Sir Daniel had written : "On my property in Sunderbans of Bengal I want to make handicraft compulsory as well as book-learning. I want the children to be taught spinning, weaving, carpentry and improved agriculture."

121. LETTER TO MRS. RACHEL M. RUTTER[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 8, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. What you say about Miss Mayo is only too true. There are people who will not stop at anything however untruthful it may be.

I am taking the liberty of quoting in *Young India* that part[2] of your letter which refers to Miss Mayo. I am not making use of your name.

Mr. Andrews is just now in Colombo, nursing the Poet who on his way to Europe had to disembark owing to sudden illness.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. RACHEL M. RUTTER
IRESON LANE
WINCANTON
SOMERSET, ENGLAND

From a photostat: S.N. 14323

122. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 8, 1928

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

Jamnalalji has passed on your letter to me. What shall I write to you ! Do not lose patience, be calm and do not insist on doing anything that is beyond your capacity. We still have a saintly man like Shankerrao, consult him and act or if you stay in Wardha do what Jajuji advises.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 195

[1] English missionary who had visited Gandhiji when he was convalescing at Juhu, Bombay, in 1924

[2] This was published in *Young India*, 29-6-1928, under the title "An Impertinence".

123. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

June 9, 1928

CHI. VASUMATI,

I am getting all your letters. If no other arrangement can be made about a latrine and if there is difficulty in taking an enema, use a commode and clean it yourself. It would be cheaper to get one made there than going in for an English article. Commodes are used in many houses in Dehra Dun. Make whatever improvements you can without creating any ill will.

Chi. Kamala did not open your trunk. It was Gangabehn who had it opened for something and at that time she asked Prabhavati to see if there was a *thali*[1] in it. Gangabehn had entrusted to Prabhavati the job of opening the trunk. I don't see in this any cause for you to feel unhappy. Kamala says that she never ransacked the trunk. She has told me to inquire of Prabhavati and further to confirm it and I intend to do so. But I do not think that Kamala has hidden anything. I shall question Prabhavati too for your satisfaction.

The work here goes on satisfactorily. Now it is there o'clock in the morning.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Improve your Hindi a great deal.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 477. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

124. LETTER TO TAIYABALI

ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 9, 1928

BHAISHRI TAIYABALI,

I have your letter. I congratulate you on your resigning your job for the sake of your self-respect.

Articles on khadi are published in *Navajivan* from time to time. But it would not be proper to write articles bearing on individual communities.

[1] Metal plate

Put up with criticism from your relatives. What profession have you taken up now?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From Gujarati: C.W. 7758. Courtesy: Lalchand Jeychand Vora

125. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

ASHRAM,
June 9, 1928

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. Nikhil has come to Sodepur; in a way I am glad. I am inclined to believe that a milk diet, hip-baths, fresh air and perfect rest will cure him. In any case, don't worry. What God has given He can take away when it pleases Him. How is Tarini? Other patients suffering from tuberculosis should, if they can afford it, be sent to a hill-station.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1657

126 LETTER TO KEDARNATH BANNERJEE

[After *June 9, 1928*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

I have no doubt that even if it should cause temporary pain to your father you should leave him and go where you can earn a decent livelihood so as to help your people.

Yours sincerely,

KEDARNATH BANNERJEE
NAYA GANJ
CAWNPORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 14056

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter dated June 9, 1928.

Q. 4. Nowadays the teacher's task has in fact been reduced to that of a postman or a foreman. It consists only of placing books written by educationists in the hands of pupils and of supervising whether they make use of these or not. In addition to this, what other skill do you expect the teachers to possess?

The science of education has been developed to the extent where the term 'teacher' may be defined as one who can clarify the meaning of difficult passages and prepare abstracts of long chapters. Why should we not now accept this ideal?

A. I keep on feeling that teachers in the true sense of the word are essential, no matter how good the text-books are. A good teacher would never content himself with summarizing or explaining the meaning of difficult passages. Time and again, he would go beyond the text- books and present his subject to the pupil in a vivid manner in the same way as an artist does. The best text-book may be compared to the best photograph. However, just as a painting by an artist although second rate is invariably superior to a photograph, similar is the case with a real teacher. A true teacher introduces the pupil to his subject, creates in him interest for the subject and enables him to understand it independently. In my opinion, one who explains difficult passages and prepares abstracts can never be regarded a good teacher. Our endeavours should be to turn out true teachers who could be infused with a spirit of service. It is not that stray instances of such teachers are not be found even today.

Q. 5. At the time of the educational conference at Broach you said although primary education might be free, it should not be compulsory and that even a good thing should not be compulsorily enforced on a nation which was not independent. If today the educational structure were to come within your control, would you or would you not see that your educational system in which khadi and other national crafts have a place of primary importance was made compulsory?

A. I don't think I have as yet the courage to make compulsory the educational system that I have conceived. I think our country has no need of it for many years to come, because although primary education ought to be made compulsory, many conditions that go before it remain to be fulfilled. I feel that if we put before the people the type of education that will further their growth and also meet with

their approval, they will readily welcome it without any effort on our part.

Q. 6. Do you believe that teachers have a right to give any kind of religious instruction which is in accordance with their viewpoint?

A. Teachers who teach under a common administrative system have no right to impart religious instruction according to their own viewpoint.

As in the case of other subjects, religious instruction too must be given in accordance with the scheme provided by the administrative authorities. Every teacher will have his own method of teaching within that framework; however, such instruction may be imparted only in accordance with the ideals that have been laid down by the authorities with regard to religion. It is true that instruction in other subjects can be imparted by one who has read certain books on these subjects. That is not the case of religious instruction. It is never given through books. The method of imparting this instruction is quite different from that followed in the case of other subject. Whereas the latter is communicated through the intellect, the former can proceed from one's heart alone. Hence so long as the teacher is not steeped in religion, he should not impart religious instruction. Although in this manner the means of imparting religious instruction are different, nevertheless it is necessary to have a certain amount of understanding about the way in which it is to be done. In other words, one cannot impart education which would encourage violence where non-violence has been accepted as the supreme dharma. Or, instruction antagonistic to other religions cannot be imparted where the ideal of love, tolerance and compassion towards all religions has been accepted as the ideal. In short, there can be no place for a state of anarchy with regard to religious instruction where its necessity has already been accepted.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 10-6-1928

128. THE YAJNA AT BARDOLI

The satyagraha being offered at Bardoli is certainly a kind of *yajna*. All altruistic work is directed towards the welfare of others. Since the peasants of Bardoli are fighting not for their individual interest but for the benefit of society and for their self-respect, it is a *yajna*. Offerings are made every day. The news of the latest of these

has just come in. It is as follows :[1]

This can be regarded as a fitting rejoinder to the Government's notification. I congratulate the patels and the talatis on showing courage in this manner. I hope that they will remain steadfast in this decision and well never repent of it.

It is imperative that people get over the glamour or Government service. Anyone whose limbs are intact and who is industrious finds no difficulty in earning his bread honestly. If instead of welcoming the opportunity to rob people which a Government employee gets, if we considered it as something wrong and avoided it, the limbs of the Government would be weakened. Our own people are the limbs of the Government. If they get out, its ammunition and aeroplanes would be rendered useless.

The Government's notification is full of untruth, arrogance and contempt for the people. I hope no peasant of Bardoli will be lured by the temptations it holds out.

The Government has fully exploited and is still exploiting the fourfold method of *sama, dama, danda, bheda*.[2] Amongst these punishment is the least blameworthy since we can recognize it. Having endured it, we can spare ourselves its dread.

The other three are subtle. Thse involve temptations. Just as a fish while trying to lick the bait on the hook gets caught in it, unsuspecting and timid people get caught up in these poisonous triple strands. The temptation offered to people who would pay up their revenue before the 19th of June constitutes the policy of bribery. The people have a right to expect that not one peasant will break his pledge by succumbing to this bribe. Let Bardoli ensure that the stamp of courage and forbearance which it has impressed upon the whole of India is never erased. The policy of *bheda* is even more hateful than bribery.

Many kinds of rumours are afloat. Some say the Government desires a settlement, others claim that the people are weakening; yet others say that people have started secretly paying up revenue dues; some others say that but for fear of ostracism, people are prepared to

[1] This is not translated here. It stated that about 40 patels and eight talatis had resigned in the two preceding months as a protest against the Government's policy of repression. In their latest notification the Government threatened to take stricter action.

[2] Appeasement, bribery, (threat of) punishment and divisiveness

pay up their dues; some assert that people refrain from paying up their dues for fear of the outsiders like Vallabhbhai and his colleagues, and that these poor people would like to pay up their revenue and live in peace.

All this amounts to a policy of *bheda*. I do not mean to say that anyone specifically plans this so. But a policy based on these four tactics operates by itself. All those who are in the Government's service know that rise in their salaries and their position is implicit in their being amenable to the policy of the Government. Bhishma, Drona and others too had to point to their stomach before Yudhishthira. Hence, as the movement gathers momentum, the policy of alienation will be intensified. All satyagrahis should avoid this snare. They should give credence to no rumour. They should put before Sardar whatever they come to hear and should then forget all about it. A satyagrahi should have only one consolation. His task is accomplished when his pledge is fulfilled. More he should not ask for and with less he should not be satisfied. He should be resolved to sacrifice what is dearest to him at the altar of his pledge. What could such an individual have to do with rumours? Moreover, need he be misled or tempted by the words of anyone who has the audacity to make an outsider of their beloved Sardar? Sardar will tell them when a settlement is about to be made.

And he should not be misled by the tald of people secretly paying up their dues. A few weak individuals are to be found in every community. It has been my experience that although only a few give in secretly, their number is exaggerated. It therefore befits a satyagrahi not to believe this talk of secret paying -up. He should believe that others also have the same strength that he himself has. But he should not feel despondent if after all some people do give in secretly. Dharma is for them who observe it.

God's way is for the brave; it has no room for the coward.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-6-1928

[1] The first line of a song by Pritam, a Gujarati poet

129. BARDOLI DAY

The 12th of June has been fixed for expressing sympathy with the satyagrahis of Bardoli and helping them in other ways. How should we observe this day? All struggles involving satyagraha call for self-purification. A satyagrahi tries to make his truth triumph through his own purity and through his penance and he has faith in his endeavours. Hence let us attain the utmost degree of purity on the 12th of June and ask God to give us the strength to bear any sufferings so that truth may triumph. This can be regarded as first-class help. Moreover, since Bardoli is in Gujarat, that province, realizing that it has a special responsibility towards it, should start on the 12th of June a *yajna* for selfpurification. If possible, on that day everywhere people should absolutely voluntarily stop their routine business—their means of livelihood—and collect funds to help the struggle in Bardoli. Huge meeting should be held at various places in the evening and resolutions should be passed expressing sympathy with the struggle and condemning the Government's anarchical policy. Further, at all such meetings contributions should be collected from those who have not been approached for such contributions during the course of the day, and have come to attend the meeting.

[Form Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-6-1928

130. GOD OR GURU—WHO IS GREATER?

Under the above heading a gentleman has sent me the following article :[1]

I have no knowledge of what the writer has said about the Marwari devotee. I am not acquainted with the three verses from *Siddhanta Rahasya*[2] whose purport he has given. But there is no doubt that a belief of the kind he has discussed does exist in Hinduism. I myself sing the following verse every morning :

> Guru is Brahma, Guru is Vishnu, Guru is God Siva,
> Guru verily is the supreme Brahman; to that Guru I bow.

I am convinced there are strong reasons for the Hindu belief concerning the greatness of the guru. That is why I have been looking for the true meaning of the word 'guru' and saying time and again that I am in quest of a guru. The guru in whom Brahma, Vishnu and Siva merge and who is the Supreme Brahman Himself cannot be an embodied man with his humours and diseases. He will possess the powers of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. In other words, He can only be an ideal being. This guru, our desired god, can only be God who is the embodiment of Truth. Hence the quest for such a guru is the quest for God. If we look at the matter thus, the meaning of all that the writer has said is easily understood. One who can show us God is certainly fit to be guru and may be said to be greater than God. We see God's creatures suf-fering in many ways. Anyone who can free us from this web would de-serve a place superior to God's. This is also the meaning of the saying : "The servant of Rama is greater than Rama." The meaning of all these great utterances is so simple that if we examine them with a pure heart we shall not be led astray. Every such great utterance has an indispensable condition attached to it. One who frees us from desire, anger and so on, initiates us into the religion of love, frees us from fear, teaches us simplicity, gives us not only the

[1] This is not translated here. The writer had referred approvingly to Gandhiji's view that no living being should be worshipped and no man could be called good while yet alive (*vide* "Indulgence in the Name of Devotion", 6-5-1928.), but had pointed out that, according to Hindu tradition, God could be reached only by the grace of the guru and therefore one could worship the guru. He gave the instance of a Marwari devotee from Calcutta being received by the crowds in Bombay with drums and cymbals.

[2] A work of Vallabhacharya

intelligence to establish identity with the poorest of the poor but also the heart to feel such identity, is certainly, for us, more than God. This does not mean that such a servant of God by himself is greater than God. If we fall into the sea we shall be drowned. However, if we drink, when we are thirsty, a jugful of water from the Ganga which flows into the sea, taking it from near the source, that Ganga water is more to us than the sea. But the same Ganga water is like poison if taken at the point where the Ganga meets the sea. The same is true with regard to the guru. To accept as guru one who is full of conceit and arrogance and hungering to be served is like drinking the poisonous water of the Ganga that carries all manner of filth into the sea.

Today we practise *adharma* in the name of dharma. We cherish hypocrisy in the name of truth and degrade ourselves as well as others by pretending to be possessed of spiritual knowledge and usurping all kinds of worship. At such a time dharma consists in refusing to accept anyone as guru. It is doubly sinful, when a true guru cannot be found, to set up a clary figure and make a guru of it. But so long as a true guru is not found there is merit in going on saying "Not this. Not this.", and it may one day lead to our finding a true guru.

There are many hazards in trying to go against the current. I have had, as I continue to have, many experiences—bitter and sweet—of this. I have learnt but one thing from these, viz., that whatever is immoral and must be opposed should be opposed, even if one is all alone in opposing it. And one should have the faith that if the opposition is truthful it will one day surely bear fruit.

A devotee who is after eulogy or worship, who is offended if not given honour, is no devotee. The true service of a devotee is to become a devotee oneself. Hence I oppose, wherever possible, the worship of human beings which is in vogue nowadays and urge other to do likewise.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-6-1928

131. WHAT DOES SELF-CONTROL REQUIRE?

A gentleman who wishes to enter into an argument writes to say :[1]

It is my experience that self-control which requires another's consent cannot last for any length of time. Self-restraint needs only the consent of one's own inner voice. It owes its strength to soul-force. And that self-control which has its roots in knowledge and love cannot but leave its impress on its surroundings. Ultimately the other party too bcomes agreeable to it. This is true also of husband and wife. If the husband has to wait till the wife is ready or *vice versa,* most probably neither will be able to shake off the desire. In many instances where one partner relies on the other for practising self-control, it finally breaks down because of this lukewarm attitude. If we go deeper into the matter we shall find that when one partner waits for the other's consent, he is not really prepared for self-control or is not truly keen. It is for this very reason that Nishkulanand has said : "Unless attachment goes renunciation cannot stay." If the latter requires attachment to go along with it, one who wishes to practise self-control may require the consent of the other who does not.

The above correspondent has a straight path before him. He is yet unmarried, and if he is really determined to practise *brahmacharya* why should he marry at all? His parents and other relatives will of course say from their own experience that for a youth to talk of *brahmacharya* is like churning the ocean and, saying so, holding out threats, displaying anger and meting out punishment, they would try to dislodge him from his pious resolve to practise *brahmacharya.* However, one to whom breach of *brahmacharya* is the highest punishment and who would not do it even to secure an empire, how can such a one get married, giving in to anyone's threats? My article from which the above passage has been quoted was not meant for those who are not so firmly determined and who have not set such great store by *brahmacharya.*

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 10-6-1928

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had asked whether a spouse wishing to observe *brahmacharya* should not first seek the concurrence of the other party.

132. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 10, 1928

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. Don't expect anything long from me just now.

I am glad Mathuradas's work was as sound as you describe it to have been. I had no doubt about his ability in the direction. He is a fine worker.

I am glad too that you are discovering potency of khadi in more directions that one. But of course your chief work is to make flood relief thoroughly businesslike. If you need any help from here in the shape of workers, you will not hesitate to tell me. I may not be able to cope with your demand, but at least let me have the option of saying no.

Ignore the Hindu-Muslim question. Let experts devote themselves to it.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. NARAYANDAS MALKANI
CENTRAL FLOOD RELIEF COMMITTEE
HYDERABAD, SIND

From a microfilm: S.N. 13410

133. LETTER TO JANAKDHARI PRASAD

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 10, 1928

DEAR JANAKDHARI BABU,

I have your letter. The word 'labour' covers the work of service such as you are doing.[1] But it cannot cover artistic, literary or other pursuits for pleasure.

[1] The addressee had asked : 'What is the meaning of 'honest labourers', Do you use it in the sense of manual labourers or in the wider sence? Is there any room for literary, artistic, aesthetic pursuits?"

I see that your reference was to the eldest son of Vindheshwari Babu. I am sorry for the mistake.

Of course I do not anticipate any difficulty about your wife.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 52

134. LETTER TO ARTHUR MOORE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

June 10, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I must apologize to you for not having acknowledged your telegram. And meanwhile I have your letter[2] before me. Since receiving your telegram, I have been having cuttings from *The Statesman*, which I am keeping on my desk. I have read the first two articles with interest. I have not yet reached the rest. The fact is I hardly get any time to attend to anything outside my beat.

If I can usefully take part in the discussion that you have inaugurated, I shall not fail to do so. But I confess to you that neither the Statutory Commission nor constitution-making interest me much. I am concentrating my attention upon the means of attainment of swaraj. Neither the Statutory Commission nor constitution-making appeals to me as part of the means.

Yours sincerely,

ARTHUR MOORE, ESQ.
EDITOR,
"THE STATESMAN"
6 CHOWRINGHEE
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13411

[1] The addressee had written : "I shall certainly write to you before I think of sending wife to the Ashram."

[2] The addressee had written : "Is it not possible that we could collectively clarify our ideas by a friendly discussion during the course of this summer, and, perhaps, arrive at some agreement, or approach to agreement, as to the lines of a future constitution? My idea is that this discussion should be conducted without regard to the Statutory Commission, so as to bring into it both those who are willing to co-operate with Commision and those who are not."

135. LETTER TO SADANAND

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 10, 1928

MY DEAR SADANAND,

I have your letter with a copy of my so-called contribution to the Anglo-American Newspaper Service.

I have sent nothing to this Service or any other Service on the topic mentioned in this copy. But on going through the copy sent by you, I observe that it is an indifferently-taken newspaper report of a speech I delivered in Colombo during my Ceylon visit.[1] A fairly good report of that speech appears in Mahadev's booklet[2] on the Ceylon tour. I am glad you did not publish it and referred the copy to me for confirmation.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13413

136. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 10, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

If your interpretation of the Pabna settlement is correct, what a great tragedy? And yet I must remain dumb. I thought that we had outlived this dread of imprisonment. Evidently we have not. How is Nikhil? Hemprabhadevi must give me a weekly letter. Did [I tell][3] you I wrote to Dr. Ray?

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1594

[1] Gandhiji visited Ceylon in November 1927
[2] *With Gandhiji in Ceylon*
[3] The paper here is discoloured.

137. SPEECH AT GUJARAT VIDYAPITH, AHMEDABAD

June 11, 1928

At present you students are perhaps in a disturbed mood. You invited me to stay here so that your state of suspense may end or for some other reason, and I agreed, hoping to ease or to end this state. But all or most of those who extended the invitation have proved to be cowards. Having invited me they turned me out. The conditions laid down when I was called again were such as would not be acceptable to a self-respecting man like me. By breaking them, you let slip a good opportunity to come closer to me. But we are not separated. The aims of the Vidyapith form a bond between you and me. I wanted you to assimilate these ideals, but then I could no succeed.

You might have gone through these aims during the vacation. If you had thought over them, you must have understood quite a few things. If you did not utilize your holidays in that way you must have come back as you went home. I have often said in the Vidyapith that you should never strive to increase your numbers. I do not mean to say that we would not like large numbers, but their absence need cause no disappointment to us, it must not give rise to a feeling that it is all over or that we have lost the game. We may be fewer number or more but our real strength lies in the acceptance of these ideals and in practising them to the extent it is humanly possible. Even if there are few such students, we can surely accomplish what we want to through the Vidyapith, that is to say, freedom, not final deliverance, but deliverance in the form of swaraj; the freedom for which the Vidyapith has been established will be surely won. If we are false we shall not get swaraj. You will see that the changes which have taken place and which you will find taking place hereafter had to be introduced with some hesitation lest they prove burdensome to you. What a pitiable condition this is! This is worthy neither of you nor of us. What is needed is a categorical assurance from you to the teachers and the management that you will not hesitate in the least to implement these principles; you will never swerve from the path of duty. There has been no such assurance and I have come to ask for it. The work will shine forth if from the very beginning of the term you free your teachers from worry. There should not be even an iota of falsehood in your work. You will bring credit to the Vidyapith only if

you do not deceive yourselves, your teachers, your elders and your country. You can ask your teachers for an explanation for every single matter. It is their duty to solve your problems. If you fail to do it and just mark time, then the administration of the Vidyapith will be out of tune. The functioning of the Vidyapith should be as smooth as music. The ground note of the *tanpura* produces only gross music. It is only one whose life is full of music who can be said to know music in the true sense. Even a child would know this music of life, if its parents have guided him correctly. Crying is the only speech known to the child, even that, if harmonious, sounds well. The students should have the sweetness of a child. It is easy to obtain this state if you are truthful. India's swaraj can be won through the students if they are truthful in their conduct. There is no need to prove that swaraj is to be achieved only through the way of truth and non-violence, as this is inherent in the principles of the Vidyapith. One who doubts it has no place here; or if he does he should have his doubt cleared at the earliest opportunity.

The difference between a Government school and our school should be understood. Some of our students have gone to jail and more will follow. That is a credit to the Vidyapith. Can the students of a Government school dare help Vallabhbhai? Or after helping him, can they remain in the college without deceiving their teachers? Then, whatever their education, what use is it? What use is education stripped of its essence? What is a counterfeit rupee worth? The man who cheats by circulating it deserves to be punished. The position of the students of a Government school is like that of this counterfeit rupee. Our school certainly has preserved that essence; besides, it is going to increase.

Another difference should also be borne in mind. I have pointed out many times that there can be no comparison between the education imparted in a Government college and that given to you. You will be lost if you enter that maze. We shall not be equal to them. We do not want to teach English the way it is taught there. But we want to give the students a deep understanding of literature through the Gujarati language. We want to ensure the spread of the Gujarati language, to see that it shines forth, that it is able to express our deepest thoughts. To have to use English words while talking in Gujarati is a perverse and utterly shameful state. In no other country do we find such a state of things. We shall later impart such knowledge of the English literature as would be necessary. Whatever

knowledge we acquire at present will be obtained through Gujarati only. We shall learn science also through our own language. If we cannot coin new technical terms, we shall adopt English words but their explanation will be in Gujarati only; thus our language will acquire force and whatever adornments we want to use would come naturally to our tongue and pen. We ought to get out of this ludicrous state as soon as we can. What I have written about this in *Navajivan* you may take as the last word. How much has the nation to suffer because knowledge is imparted through English! This is one instance of the fact that we have failed in our dharma, and in our conduct too.

The second instance relates to economics. The economics taught there is inadequate. If you are inquistive, you will find that the economics taught in German, American or French languages differs from one another. From the talk that I had with a Hungarian visitor, I gathered that the economics of his country must be quite different. Each country has its own science of economics, based on the local conditions. It is not right to assume that one country's economics is true for the whole world. Why are the economics taught today ruining India? We do not know Indian economics, we have to discover it.

The same is true of history. The teachers should consider what the history of India could be. A Frenchman writing a history of India will write it in a different way; so would an Englishman. An Indian looking into original records and studying Indian conditions would certainly write it differently. Do you believe as absolutely true the English accounts of the Anglo-French conflicts? Whoever wrote them might have written them correctly, yet they are written from his own point of view. He would narrate only those incidents wherein the English won. We too would do the same. The French too would do the same. In fact we would write an altogether different history of India. An English scholar would interpret the *Mahabharata* in one way, an Indian in another, and in a still different way if he sincerely followed it. Vincent Smith has a style and erudition, what he writes therefore looks well, but it is not correct. English scholars themselves point out that there is in it much that is not true and that much has been left out. The same can be said about William Wilson Hunter. Here history would not be taught from books. If the teacher has made an extensive study of India and has observed for himself, if he is a patriot, he will teach history in a particular way. But if he has stuffed his mind with histories written by Englishmen he is going to take you nowhere; nor has he himself found a way. He is under the malignant influence of

Saturn!

In our institution, everything will be taught in a way opposite to that in a Government school. Our teacher will solve mathematical problems in a different way. Gregg is composing a novel science of mathematics for the Indian children whom he teaches. Our teacher should not teach with the help of the distance between Manchester and Liverpool. He should frame his examples from conditions here, so that our history and geography too maybe learnt from this. We have to reconstruct everything, mathematics, history, economics, geography. If you students do not help in this, what can the teachers do? And if the teachers themselves are immature it is obvious that the principles will crumble.

Do not give up your faith, patience and perseverance. If you have faith in the teachers and the principles, you would not be faint of heart, nor even if your strength is small, and you will bring glory to the Vidyapith. You will compel your teachers to give you all that they have. If you are studious, you will be able to pester your teachers with questions about what I have spoken. If you take enough interest here is plenty of interesting work, you will have vigorous bodies, vigorous minds and vigorous souls.

You come here to enlighten your souls. Hence if you take interest in vocational training that is provided here, even if you have no flair for vocations, you will acquire one. But it will not be possible if you go about your work mechanically. If you take interest you will see that it also is a science by itself. If you work intelligently, you will find that there is a lot of interest in it. You will be able to prove that there is a science behind it. Resolve that you want to become a weaver, a carpenter, and win freedom for India; that you do not want to take up a job nor be a teacher. Determine to live by labour, by weaving khadi, by becoming a khadi worker.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-6-1928

138. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

June 11, 1928

DEAR SISTER,

I received Rs. 100 from you two days ago. I got your letter only today. If we can still see to it that your name is not published, we shall do so. This will be possible only if it has not yet been published.

I am keeping well. When will you come again?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4812. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

139. LETTER TO S. MURATORI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

June 13, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

With reference to your letter of 15th May, I have no objection to your publishing an Italian translation unabridged of the firs volume of "The Story of My Experiments with Truth".

I do not make any special conditions, but anything you may care to give will be utilized for the furtherance of my public activities.

Yours sincerely,

S. MURATORI, ESQ.

C/O ITALIAN CONSULATE

BALLARD ESTATE

BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 14747

140. SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM

This Ashram was opened on 25th May, 1915. A constitution was drawn up when it was founded. It underwent a revision during my incarceration. The copies were exhausted long ago. My colleagues and I found it desirable to recast the constitution in view of the many changes and ups and downs that the Ashram had undergone. Its unexpected expansion too made the old constitution out of date. The burden of preparing the first draft fell on my shoulders. Though pressure of work was ample excuse for the delay, I know that my subconscious self shirked the task. I was not clear as to the changes that were to be made. But my colleagues would give me no peace and Maganlal's death hastened the completion. The following constitution is the result of the joint labours of the main workers. It is published purely as a draft, though pending revision it is to be accepted as a binding constitution by the Managing Committee. It is published in order to secure the opinion of friends and critics known and unknown of the Ashram. Any criticism or suggestions that may be sent will be thankfully received. I may be permitted to mention that the Ashram represents a prayerful and scientific experiment. The observances are many but they have been tested for the past 13 years of the existence of the Ashram. Whilst it is impossible to claim their perfect fulfilment by any one of us, the workers have in all humility tried to enforce them in their lives to the best of their ability and with more or less success. The curious will find that the new draft bears very close resemblance to the original constitution as it was drawn up in 1915.

Founded on *Vaishakh Sud 11th, Samvat 1971*,—May 25th, 1915,—at Kochrab, and since removed to Sabarmati.

OBJECT

The object of this Ashram is that its members should qualify themselves for, and make a constant endeavour towards, the service of the country, not inconsistent with the universal welfare.

OBSERVANCES

The following observances are essential for the fulfilment of the above object :

I. TRUTH

Truth is not fulfilled by mere abstinence from telling or practising an untruth in ordinary relations with fellow-men. But Truth is

God, the one and only Reality. All other observances take their rise from the quest for and the worship of Truth. Worshippers of Truth must not resort to untruth, even for what they may believe to be the good of the country, and they may be required, like Prahlad, civilly to disobey even the orders of parents and elders in virtue of their paramount loyalty to Truth.

II. NON-VIOLENCE OR LOVE

Mere non-killing is not enough. The active part of Non-violence is love. The law of Love requires equal consideration for all life from the tiniest insect to the highest man. One who follows this law must not be angry even with the perpetrator of the greatest imaginable wrong, but must love him, wish him well and serve him. Although he must thus love the wrongdoer, he must never submit to his wrong or his injustice, but must oppose it with all his might, and must patiently and without resentment suffer all the hardships to which the wrongdoer may subject him in punishment for his opposition.

III. CHASTITY (*Brahmacharya*)

Observance of the foregoing principles is impossible without the observance of celibacy. It is not enough that one should not look upon any woman or man with a lustful eye; animal passion must be so controlled as to be excluded even from the mind. If married, one must not have a carnal mind regarding one's wife or husband, but must consider her or him as one's lifelong friend, and establish relationship of perfect purity. A sinful touch, gesture or word is a direct breach of this principle.

IV. CONTROL OF THE PALATE

The observance of *brahmacharya* has been found, from experience, to be extremely difficult so long as one has not acquired mastery over taste. Control of the palate has, therefore, been placed as a principle by itself. Eating is necessary only for sustaining the body and keeping it a fit instrument for service, and must never be practised for self-indulgence. Food must, therefore, be taken, like medicine, under proper restraint. In pursuance of this principle one must eschew exciting foods, such as spices and condiments. Meat, liquor, tobacco, bhang, etc., are excluded from the Ashram. This principle requires abstinence from feasts or dinners which have pleasure as their object.

V. NON-STEALING

It is not enough not to take another's property without his permission. One becomes guilty of theft even by using differently

anything which one has received in trust for use in a particular way, as well as by using a thing longer than the period for which it has been lent. It is also theft if one receives anything which one does not really need. The fine truth at the bottom of this principle is that Nature provides just enough, and no more, for our daily need.

VI. NON-POSSESSION OR POVERTY

This principle is really a part of No. V. Just as one must not receive, so must one not possess anything which one does not really need. It would be a breach of this principle to posses unnecessary food-stuffs, clothing or furniture. For instance, one must not keep a chair if one can do without it. In observing this principle one is led to a progressive simplification of one's own life.

VII. PHYSICAL LABOUR

Physical labour is essential for the observance of non-stealing and non-possession. Man can be saved from injuring society, as well as himself, only if he sustains his physical existence by physical labour. Able-bodied adults must do all their personal work themselves, and must not be served by others, except for proper reasons. But they must, at the same time, remember that service of children, as well as of the disabled, the old and the sick, is a duty incumbent on every person who has the required strength.

VIII. SWADESHI

Man is not omnipotent. He therefore serves the world best by first serving his neighbour. This is swadeshi, a principle which is broken when one professes to serve those who are more remote in preference to those who are near. Observance of swadeshi makes for order in the world; the breach of it leads to chaos. Following this principle, one must as far as possible purchase one's requirements locally and not buy things imported from foreign lands, which can easily be manufactured in the country. There is no place for self-interest in swadeshi, which enjoins the sacrifice of oneself for the family, of the family for the village, of the village for the country, and of the country for humanity.

IX. FEARLESSNESS

One cannot follow Truth or love so long as one is subject to fear. As there is at present a reign of fear in the country, meditation on and cultivation of fearlessness have a particular importance. Hence its separate mention as an observance. A seeker after Truth must give up the fear of parents, caste, Government, robbers, etc., and he must be

frightened by poverty or death.

X. REMOVAL OF UNTOUCHABILITY

Untouchability, which has taken such deep roots in Hinduism, is altogether irreligious. Its removal has therefore been treated as an independent principle. The so-called untouchables have an equal place in the Ashram with other classes. The Ashram does not believe in caste which, it considers, has injured Hinduism, because its implications of superior and inferior status, and of pollution by contact are contrary to the law of Love. The Ashram however believes in varnashrama dharma. The division of varnas is based upon occupation, and therefore a person should maintain himself by following the hereditary occupation, not inconsistent with fundamental morals, and should devote all his spare time and energy to the acquisition and advancement of true knowledge. The ashramas (the four stages) spoken of in the *smritis* are conducive to the welfare of mankind. Though, therefore, the Ashram believes in vasrnashrama dharma, there is no place in it for distinction of varnas, as the Ashram life is conceived in the light of the comprehensive and non-formal sannyasa of the *Bhagavad Gita.*

XI. TOLERANCE

The Ashram believes that the principal faiths of the world constitute a revelation of Truth, but as they have all been outlined by imperfect man they have been affected by imperfections and alloyed with untruth. One must therefore entertain the same respect for the religious faiths of others as one accords to one's own. Where such tolerance becomes a law of life, conflict between different faiths becomes impossible, and so does all effort to convert other people to one's own faith. One can only pray that the defects in the various faiths may be overcome, and that they may advance, side by side, towards perfection.

ACTIVITIES

As a result of and in order to help fulfilment of these observances, the following activities are carried on in the Ashram :

I. WORSHIP

The social (as distinguished from the individual) activities of the Ashram commence every day with the congregational morning worship at 4.15 to 4.45 and close with the evening prayer at 7 to 7.30. All inmates are expected to attend the worship. This worship has been conceived as an aid to self-purification and dedication of one's all to

God.

II. SANITARY SERVICE

This is an essential and sacred service and yet it is looked down upon in society, with the result that it is generally neglected and affords considerable scope for improvement. The Ashram therefore lays special stress upon engaging no outside labour for this work. The members themselves attend to the whole of the sanitation in turns. New entrants are generally first of all attached to this department. Trenches are sunk to the depth of nine inches and the nightsoil is buried in them and covered with the excavated earth. It thus becomes converted into valuable manure. Calls of nature are attended to only at places assigned for the purpose. Care is taken that the roads and paths should not be spoilt by spitting or otherwise.

III. SACRIFICIAL SPINNING

Today India's most urgent problem is the growing starvation of her millions, which is chiefly due to the deliberate destruction by alien rule of her principal auxiliary industry of hand-spinning. With a view to its rehabilitation in national life, spinning has been made the central activity of the Ashram, and is compulsory for all members, as a national sacrifice. The following are the various branches of work in this department :

1. Cotton cultivation;
2. workshop for making and repairing spinning-wheels, spindles, carding-bows, etc;
3. ginning;
4. carding;
5. spinning;
6. weaving cloth, carpets, tape, rope, etc.;
7. dyeing and printing.

IV. AGRICULTURE

Cotton for the khadi work and fodder crops for the cattle are the chief activities of this department. Vegetables and fruit are also grown in order to make the Ashram as far as possible self-contained.

V. DAIRY

An attempt is being made to convert into a model dairy the Ashram dairy which supplies milk to the inmates. Since last year this dairy is being carried on in consonance with the principles of and with the pecuniary help of the All-India Cow-protection Association, but as

an integral part of the Ashram itself. There are at presnet 27 cows, 47 calves, 10 bullocks, and 4 bulls. The average dairy output of milk is 200 pounds.

VI. TANNERY

At the instance of and with the help of the All-India Cow-protection Association, a tannery has been established for the tanning of dead-cattle hides. There is attached to it a sandal and shoe-making department. The dairy and tannery have been established because the Ashram believes, in spite of the claim Hindus make to the protection of the cow, that Indian cattle will further and further deteriorate and ultimately die out, carrying man along with them, unless vigorous attention is paid to cattle-breeding, cattle-feeding and the utilization in the country of dead-cattle hides.

VII. NATIONAL EDUCATION

An attempt is made in the Ashram to impart such education as is conducive to national welfare. In order that spiritual, intellectual and physical development may proceed side by side, an atmosphere of industry has been created, and letters are not given more than their due importance. Character-building is attended to in the smallest detail. 'Untouchable' children are freely admitted. Women are given special attention with a view to improving their status, and they are accorded the same opportunities for self-culture as the men. The Ashram accepts the following principles of the Gujarat Vidyapith :

1. The principal object of the Vidyapith shall be to prepare workers of character, ability, education and conscientiousness, necessary for the conduct of the movements connected with the attainment of swaraj.

2. All the institutions conducted by and affiliated to the Vidyapith shall be fully non-co-operating and shall therefore have nothing to do with my help from Government.

3. Whereas the Vidyapith has come into being in connection with the swaraj movement, and Non-violent Non-co-operation as a means thereof, its teachers and trustees shall restrict themselves to those means only which are not inconsistent with truth and non-violence and shall consciously strive to carry them out.

4. The teachers and the trustees of the Vidyapith, as also all the institutions affiliated to it, shall regard untouchability as a blot on Hinduism, shall strive to the best of their power for its removal, and shall not exclude a boy or a girl for reason of his or her

untouchability nor shall give him or her differential treatment having once accorded admission to him or her.

5. The teachers and the trustees of and all the institutions affiliated to the Vidyapith shall regard hand-spinning as an essential part of the swaraj movement and shall therefore spin regularly, except when disabled, and shall habitually wear khadi.

6. The language of the province shall have the principal place in the Vidyapith and shall be the medium of instruction.

EXPLANATION. Languages other than Gujarati may be taught by direct method.

7. The teaching of Hindi-Hindustani shall be compulsory in the curricula of the Vidyapith.

8. Manual training shall receive the same importance as intellectual training and only such occupations as are useful for the life of the nation shall be taught.

9. Whereas the growth of the nation depends not on cities but its villages, the bulk of the funds of the Vidyapith and a majority of the teachers of the Vidyapith shall be employed in the propagation of education conducive to the welfare of the villagers.

10. In laying down the curricula, the needs of village dwellers shall have principal consideration.

11. There shall be complete toleration of all established religions in all institutions conducted by and affiliated to the Vidyapith, and for the spiritual development of the pupils, religious instruction shall be imparted in consonance with truth and non-violence.

12. For the physical development of the nation physical exercise and physical training shall be compulsory in all the institutions conducted by and affiliated to the Vidyapith.

NOTE. Hindi-Hindustani means the language commonly spoken by the masses of the North—both Hindu and Mussalman—and written in the Devanagari or the Arabic script.

The Ashram school has so far sent forth 15 boys and 2 grils.

VIII. KHADI TECHNICAL SCHOOL

A separate technical school is conducted which prepares candidates for the Khadi Service on behalf of the All-India Spinners' Association. There are at present 33 students from various provinces under training. 205 students have so far availed themselves of this

school. The curriculum is as follows :

SYLLABUS OF STUDIES

I. 21 WEEKS' SPINNING :

1. To learn to spin with fingers only.
2. To learn the principles of twist.

3. To learn spinning efficiently to be able to spin strong and even yarn as follows :

Time	Count	Yards	Strength	Evenness	Quality of Cotton
1 hour	6	250	50	80	Inferior
„	9	250	50	80	„
„	12	300	60	90	Fair
„	16	300	70	90	Good
„	20	300	70	90	„

and to finish the following quantities within the period set apart :

1 week, preparation and practice.

4 weeks, 6 counts 5 lb.

3 weeks, 9 counts $2\frac{1}{2}$ lb.

4 weeks, 12 counts $4\frac{1}{4}$ lb.

4 weeks, 16 counts $2\frac{3}{4}$ lb.

4 weeks, 20 counts $2\frac{3}{4}$ lb.

1 week extra

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21 [Total]

4. Testing correctness of spindle and its correction.
5. Spinning on *takli*.
6. To learn to guess approximately the count of any yarn.
7. To learn to find out by calculation counts of yarn.
8. To learn to reel properly the yarn spun on the spindle.
9. To know the names and measurements of all the parts of a spinning-wheel.
10. To learn to twist a strong *mal* out of one's own yarn.
11. To learn the principles of examining cotton.
12. To study *Charkha Shastra* and *Takli Teacher*.
13. To learn to spin on one's own provincial charkha.

II. 7 WEEKS' CARDING :

To go through the whole carding course :

(a) To learn to equip a carding-bow.

(b) To learn to adjust cushion.

(c) To learn to make the carding mat.

(d) To learn to distinguish various qualities of guts.

(e) To finish carding and rolling in following quantities within the specified period :

Large bow, 18 lb. in 2 weeks.

Medium bow, $22\frac{1}{2}$ lb. in 3 weeks.

Bardoli and ordinary small bow, 8 lb. in 2 weeks.

(f) To be able to card and sliver as under :

Large bow, 3 lb. in a day of 8 hours.

Medium bow, 2 lb. in a day of 8 hours.

Bardoli and ordinary bow, $1\frac{1}{4}$ lb. in a day of 8 hours.

Practice with crude bows also.

III. 2 WEEKS' GINNING :

To learn ginning to be able to gin 32 lb. of seed cotton in a day of 8 hours.

To gin 100 lb. of seed cotton after threshing seed cotton.

Foot gin to be taught.

Andhra process to be taught.

Process of untouchable spinners.

IV. HANDLOOM WEAVING : Days

1. Piecing thread 2

2. Tape-making 20 yards including twisting yarn for warp and opening yarn for weft. 10

3. Bed-tape-making 75 yds. including all the processes as above 15

4. Carpet-making

Three *asans* without design 24¢¢ ¥ 24¢¢ each including twisting yarn for for warp and opening yarn for weft.

Three *asans* with designs including all the processes.

Two carpets on handloom 2 yds. ¥ 30¢¢ each including all the processes as above. 45

V. PIT-LOOM

5. Weaving 6 count double thread coarse texture 20 yds. ¥ 30¢¢ reed 5 dents per inch including soaking and drying yarn, winding bobbins, warping, sizing, piecing, etc. (doubling also). 20

6. Weaving 6 count double thread close texture 10 yds. ¥ 30¢¢ reed 8 or 9 dents per inch including all the above processes (doubling also). 20

7. Weaving 9 count double thread close texture 10 yds. ¥ 30¢¢ reed 12 dents per inch including all the processes. 10

8. Weaving 6 count single thread close texture 10 yds ¥ 30¢¢ reed 18 or 19 dents per inch including all the processes. 12

9. Weaving 9 count single thread close texture 10 yds. ¥ 30¢¢ reed 18 or 19 dents per inch including all the processes. 12

10. Weaving 12 count single thread close texture 10 yds. ¥ 30¢¢ reed 21 dents per inch including all the processes. 14

11. Weaving 16 count single thread close texture 10 yds. ¥ 30¢¢ reed 24 dents per inch including all the processes. 15

VI. FLY-SHUTTLE

12. Weaving 12 count single thread ordinary texture 10 yds. ¥ 42¢¢ reed 17 dents per inch.

Weaving 16 counts single thread ordinary texture 20 yds. ¥ 45¢¢ reed 20 dents per inch.

Weaving 20 counts single thread ordinary texture 10 yds. ¥ 50¢¢ and 10 yds. ¥ 54¢¢ reed 22 dents per inch including all the processes. 72

13. Weaving design cloth (yarn to be used of 1 to 6 counts).

Drill	10 yds. ¥ 30¢¢	16 dents per inch	8
Honeycomb	10 yds ¥ 30¢¢	12 dents per inch	8
Twill	10 yds. ¥ 30¢¢	16 dents per inch	8

14. Heald-making and reed-repairing.

Twisting yarn 4 lb.	3
Heald-making from the beginning.	15
Reed-repairing.	5

15. Colours.

Dyeing and printing in accordance with the publications of Dr. P. C. Ray and Sjt. Bansidhar Jain.

Prominent foreign colours in printing and colouring to be included. 24

VII. CARPENTRY

1. Making *aterans* of 3 varieties and tool-sharpening. 30
2. Making *takli* cases and spindle-holders. 30
3. Making middle-size carding-bow, Bardoli and ordinary spindle and *takli*. 30

NOTE. Side by side with the course as above, classes are conducted in Hindi, accountancy, and the khadi essay and bulletins, and there are arranged besides lectures by members of the Working Committee of the A.I.S.A. as well as other leaders.

The average monthly food bill per student amounts to about 12 rupees.

MANAGING COMMITTEE

Since *Ashadha Sud* 14th, *Samvat* 1982 (24th July 1926) the Ashram has been managed by a Committe. This Committee is at present constituted as follows :

Sjt. Mahadev Haribhai Desai (Chairman)
„ Imam Abdul Kadar Bawazir (Vice-Chairman)
„ Vinoba Bhave
„ Chhaganlal Khushalchand Gandhi
„ Narahari Dwarkadas Parikh
„ Lakshmidas Purushottam Asar
„ Ramniklal Maganlal Modi
„ Chimanlal Narsinhdas Shah
„ Narandas Khushalchand Gandhi
„ Surendranath
„ Chhaganlal Nathubhai Joshi (Secretary)

The Committee is empowered to fill up any vacancy caused in it by resignation, death or otherwise.

Election shall be by a majority of at least three-fourths of the existing members.

The Committee shall have the right to elect two more members to it.

The quorum shall be composed of at least three members.

The Committee shall have charge of the entire administration of

the Ashram.

NOTE. In accordance with their express wishes Gandhiji and Kakasaheb are not on the Committee.

MEMBERS OF THE ASHRAM

Members of the Ashram shall be such persons as believe in the object and obey the rules and regulations of the Ashram, and who shall be constantly endeavouring to observe its principles, and be faithfully performing the duties assigned to them by the Managing Committee or by the Secretary on its behalf.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Only such persons shall be eligible for membership of the Managing Committee, who are over 21 years of age, who have lived in the Ashram for not less than five years and who have pledged themselves to lifelong service through the activities of the Ashram.

IMPORTANT RESOLUTIONS

The Managing Committee has passed the following important resolutions :

1. Responsible workers of the Ashram, and also residents in the Ashram, whether temporary or permanent, shall all observe *brahmacharya*.

2. Persons desirous of admission to the Ashram shall have observed the rules of the Ashram in their own homes for the period of one year. The Chairman shall have the power of granting exemption from this rule in special cases.

3. It being undesirable that any further kitchens should be started in the Ashram, newcomers, whether single or married, shall dine in the common kitchen.

TO GUESTS

The number of visitors and guests has steadily increased. Such arrangements as are possible are made for showing visitors round the various activities of the Ashram.

Persons wishing to stay in the Ashram are requested to write to the Secretary for permission before coming, and not to arrive without having received an affirmative answer to their enquiries.

The Ashram does not keep a large stock of bedding and eating-utensils. Those intending to stay in the Ashram are therefore requested to bring their own bedding, mosquito net, napkins, plate, bowl and drinking-pot.

No special arrangements are made for visitors from the West. But for those who cannot dine comfortably on the floor, an attempt is made to provide them with a raised seat. A commode is always supplied to them.

Guests are requested to observe the following rules :

1. Attend the worship.

2. Keep the dining hours shown in the daily routine given below.

BRANCH

The Ashram has a branch at Wardha, which observes nearly the same rules, but which is independent of the Ashram in respect of management and finance. Sjt. Vinoba Bhave is the Manager of the branch.

EXPENDITURE

The average monthly expenditure of the Ashram is Rs. 3,000 and is met by friends.

PROPERTY

The Ashram possesses land, 132 acres 38 *gunthas* in area, of the value of Rs. 26,972-5-6, and buildings worth Rs. 2,95,121-15-6, which are held by the following Board of Trustees :

1. Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj
2. Sjt. Revashanker Jagjivan Jhaveri
3. ,, Mahadev Haribhai Desai
4. ,, Imam Abdul Kadar Bawazir
5. ,, Chhaganlal Khushalchand Gandhi

The present population of the Ashram is as follows :

MEN

55 workers in the Ashram.
43 teachers and students of the A.I.S.A. Technical School.
5 professional weavers.
30 agricultural labourers.

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133 Total.

WOMEN

49 sisters in the Ashram.

10	professional labourers.
7	weavers.
66	Total

CHILDREN

35	boys.
36	girls.
7	babies.

78	Total	Grand Total 277

DAILY ROUTINE

a.m.	4			Rising from bed
„	4-15	to	4-45	Morning prayer
„	5-00	to	6-10	Bath, exercise, study
„	6-10	to	6-30	Breakfast
„	6-30	to	7	Women's prayer class
„	7	to	11-30	Body labour, education and sanitation
„	10-45	to	11-15	Dinner
„	11-45	to	12	Rest
„	12	to	4-30 p.m.	Body labour, including classes
p.m.	4-30	to	5-30	Recreation
„	5-30	to	6	Supper
„	6	to	7	Recreation
„	7	to	7-30	Common Worship
„	7-30	to	9	Recreation
„	9			Retiring bell

NOTE. These hours are subject to change whenever necessary.

Young India, 14-6-1928

141. IMMOLATION OF BARDOLI

Bardoli suffers through the lawlessness of the Government of Bombay and it suffers through self-imposed suffering. Both the instance will be found in Mahadav Desai's notes on Bardoli. The Government are using a Nasmyth hammer to crush a fly. For the sake of, to them, a paltry sum of Rs. 1,00,000 which the enhancement represents, they are resorting to force, untruth, flattery and bribery. These are strong expressions, but none too strong for the doings of the Government. Then force is on the surface for anyone to see. Authority makes a show of force even when it is unable to command it. In the present case it has force enough and to spare. This method is the least dangerous for it is visible. The other three are mischievous because they are invisible. The insolent letter of the Commissioner, N. D., the evasive communique of the Government are instances of untruth by way both of commission and omission. We shall know at the end of the chapter the instances of flattery and bribery. We know how those who degraded their manhood during the Punjab martial-law regime got titles and promotions. History will repeat itself in this as yet miniature edition of the Punjab. I do not mention here the subtle forms of flattery that the Government resort to when they want someone to do some questionable deal for them. Most governments resort to these four methods but what pains one most is that all these forces should be set in motion by the Bombay Government in order to bend the proud spirit of people known for their docility and innocence. It is a base calumny to suggest that they are law-breakers. If a man can lawfully repudiate a liability which he does not admit, why may not men lawfully repudiate a liability which they contend is unjustly imposed upon them by a State? And why may not the State adopt, and be satisfied for the collection of what it considers to be its dues with, the same civil measures that are open to individuals?

But this suffering to which the people of Bardoli are being wantonly subjected is raising them since they had prepared themselves for it. The brave stand taken by the simple peasants has undermined the very prestige to prop up which the Government are making the frantic efforts described from week to week in these pages.

But more purifying than this suffering imposed by godless and insolent authority is the suffering which the people are imposing upon themselves. I refer to the resignations of sixty-three patels and eleven

talatis of Bardoli and Valod. It is not a small thing for these people to give up their posts which hitherto they have used not unoften in order to make illegitimate addition to their ordinary emoluments. It is more difficult for people such as these to give up their positions than for big Government officers to do so. But suffering as well as bravery is the badge of the humble. I tender my respectful congratulations to these patels and talatis. Let them know that their sacrifice has commanded the admiration of all India. It is sacrifice such as theirs that will in the end give us our freedom. We are salves to our desire for office under the Government. The latter knowing our weakness exploits it to the full for consolidation of its own power. But if we would only believe that He who has created us is bound to support us, if we would but do His will, i.e., work with our honest hands and feet, we should never starve, we should never walk on all fours before authority.

Young India, 14-6-1928

142. WHAT IS THE BARDOLI CASE?

The following epitome of the case has been prepared in response to many calls for the barest summary of the case for the busy reader.[1] Though the case has been stated in ample detail in these pages, the following summary will be helpful to those who want to work for the satyagrahis, but who may not know what the case exactly is and who may have no time to go through the files of papers. The summary is necessary because of the ever growing interest excited by the heroic sufferings of the people of Bardoli.

Young India, 14-6-1928

[1] For the article by Mahadev Desai, *vide* Appendix "What is the Bardoli Case?", June 14, 1928.

143. A.I.S.A. MEMBERSHIP

The Director of the Technical Department of the All-India Spinners' Association sends me the following comparative table[1] :

The table is an instructive study. Whilst the business side of khadi shows a steady though slow improvement in quality, quantity and price and whilst the number of paid spinners is increasing, sacrificial spinning is steadily on the decline, except in Bihar and Ajmer. It either shows that the deep conviction about the power of hand-spinning to ameliorate the condition of the masses and to bring the middle class in healthy contact with the masses is lacking, or the latter, though they have the conviction, are too lazy or indifferent to make the smell but continuing measure of sacrifice required of them. It is curious that even the national institutions such as in Gujarat are not supplying their full quota of voluntary spinners and that the workers even in the Khadi Service are disinclined to take the trouble of spinning that brings them no return. Is it to be wondered at that the progress of khadi is not commensurate with the national requirements? Let khadi workers and khadi lovers take note.

Young India, 14-6-1928

144. LETTER TO RAMDEV

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 15, 1928

DEAR RAMDEVJI,

I have delayed replying to your letter in the hope of being able to persuade Ba to go to Dehra Dun. But she will not be persuaded. She seems to have lost all interest in what is going on about her. The momentous changes that had been recently made in the Ashram have also, I am afraid, preyed upon her mind. She is not now keeping over well either. Mental and physical fatigue has crept upon her. In spite of all this I tried my best but failed. I am sorry to have to disappoint you. But you will recognize how helpless I am. After all she is a free agent and has been always treated as such.

[1] Not reproduced here

I am glad you are now all right.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 13416

145. LETTER TO RICHARD B. GREGG

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

June 15, 1928

MY DEAR GOVIND,

I have your letter. Your argument is convincing. And since the inner voice tells you that in pursuit of the very goal we hold in common your place just now is in America rather than in India, I can have nothing to say. I wish you every success in America. And since I accept your conclusion, I do not need to say anything more.

I hope to be at the Ashram throughout the year, except in December. There is just a possibility of my having to go to Burma in October. But if that is so, it would be about the end of that month. You will know in good time if that is to happen. On no account should you go away without our meeting.

I am looking forward to seeing your Science Primer.

I wish I had the time to describe the momentous changes that have been made in the Ashram. If I find that there is time I shall describe them to you, otherwise you will see them for yourself in full working order.

I hope you are now perfectly strong and well.

RICHARD B. GREGG

KOTGARH, SIMLA HILLS

From a photostat: S.N. 13417

146. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Friday [*June 15, 1928*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. I have written to Pandit Abhayji[2] about the state of affairs at the Gurukul. I feel that reform can be brought about only if some man is there. There was a theft here. Surendra was beaten up, even Shankerbhai got a slight beating. A sum of Rs. 200 was stolen from the store. A number of changes are taking place in the Ashram. There is no time to write more. Surendra is in good health. Mahadev fell off the top of the well and got badly hurt.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VASUMATIBEHN
KANYA GURUKUL
DEHRA DUN

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 478. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

147. LETTER TO S. RAMANATHAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 16, 1928

MY DEAR RAMANATHAN,

I have your touching letter. Its sincerity endears you all the more to me, if more is possible.

I do not agree with some of the views you have expressed in your letter, but that is now irrelevant. That you implicitly believe in what you say is what matters. For my part, I do feel that we should not now strive with you but let you part company with all goodwill. But I am sending your letter to Rajagopalachari which I know you will not mind and taking notes with him.[1]

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 13620

[1] From the postmark
[2] Abhaydev Sharma
[3] *Vide* "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 17-6-1928.

148. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 16, 1928

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRAN,

I was delighted to hear from you from Tiruppur.

Yes, you must master everything, the smallest detail. For khadi is nothing but attention to the tiniest fibre. Whether it is spinning or whether it is weaving or carding, we have to begin with the very fibre. And so is it with reference to accounts in connection with khadi.

You must write to me regularly, and therefore I would like you to tell me how often you would write, whether once a week, or once a fortnight, so that I may know on a particular date like South African mail your letter has got to arrive.

You must read the Ashram constitution[2] carefully and pass on your suggestions. The constitution as you know appears in this week's issue of *Young India*.

Mahadev hurt himself severely whilst he was fetching water from the Ashram well. He slipped and fell on his back. He is better now.

The Ashram has undergone many important changes, one of which is that there are hardly any labourers of the labour type now. The cow-shed and fields and every such thing has to be attened to by the inmates. And the common kitchen has gone up to 94. We had two serious burglaries. One was a visit by 50 robbers who surrounded the Tannery and belaboured every male inmate in the hope of getting something. But there was little to be had there. Poor Surendra came in for a fair beating. But he is all right now.

SJT. RAMACHANDRAN
A. I. S. A., TIRUPPUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 13621

[1] *Vide* "Satyagraha Ashram", 14-6-1928.

149. NOTE ON KHADI WORK DURING VACATIONS

I publish an article here—without making any changes—sent to me by the office-bearers of the Takli Mandal of the National School in Bombay with the approval of Shri Gokulbhai. Let me draw the attention of all school-teachers to it. I offer my congratulations to the Takli Mandal on utilizing their vacation so well. All students studying in a National School should join the Takli Mandal. Much more can be achieved by making its activity still more interesting.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-6-1928

150. MY NOTES

JOURNALIST ROBBERS

The proprietors and editors of some newspapers seem to be engaged in robbery. They make it their profession to rob people's money by inventing all sorts of pretexts, by making unfounded allegations against innocent persons and threatening them. Some accept bribes and try to justify dishonest practices and in this manner dupe the innocent public. A friend from Calcutta has informed me of one such instance. A journal published there has been taking advantage of the publicity given to the immoral practices at Govindbhavan, and is making allegations against many families and persecuting the simple folk of the Marwari community. Having concocted indecent incidents which never took place, they implicate certain family people in them. The friend who has sent me this filthy paper wants me to write something about such journals so that they may mend their ways. I have no such hopes for my article. It is therefore not addressed to them but to those families who are being maligned and blackmailed by such journals.

There is a saying in English that knaves prosper among fools. This saying is based on experience. The critic at last tiresand gives up criticizing those who are not cowed down by any criticism. We are too much given to a false sense of shame and a needless fear of public humiliation. Hence anyone is able to frighten and blackmail us. If someone maligns us or makes false allegations against us, we are somehow scared as if we merited such criticism and allegations. Whereas the correct attitude is that whatever the criticism against us, if

it is not just, we should not be cowed down by it or worry over it.

ABOUT TRUTHFULNESS AND OTHER VOWS

An inmate of the Ashram had suggested some additions he considered essential, to the Book of Ashram Rules and as they have a subtle import and are helpful in the observance of the vows, I give below their gist. Each vow has been finally supported by a quotation from the Hindu Shastras. These have been deliberately omitted from the Book of Rules because the Ashram believes that the principles implicit in the vows are not a monopoly of Hinduism but are common to all faiths. However, the statements which have been quoted in support are beautiful and are therefore given here for the reader's information.

TRUTH

As brevity is the armour of truth, it is contained in it. 'Truth alone will triumph and not untruth.'

NON-VIOLENCE

Non-violence is the limit set by all religions. 'Sin cannot be answered by sin.'

THE VOW OF BRAHMACHARYA

This vow implies complete control of all senses. 'Those wishing to attain God practise *brahmacharya*.'

ASTEYA

'One who enjoys the gifts of God without offering them to Him is verily a thief.'

APARIGRAHA

'Enjoy it after giving up its possession.'

THE VOW OF FEARLESSNESS

Fear and morality are mutually contradictory concepts. Fearlessness is the foundation of *daivi sampad*[1]. 'He alone becomes fearless who dispels fear in others.'

ASVAD

To eat food with a veiw to gratifying the palate is violence. 'Purity of diet leads to purity of heart, this in its turn strengthens *atman's* awakening which in its turn destroys all bonds.'

SWADESHI

Just as non-violence sets the limit for dharma, so swadeshi

[1] Divine heritage

sets the limit for conduct. Even death is to be preferred in the discharge of one's own dharma.

BODILY LABOUR

'When one exerts one's body without any desire one commits no sin.'

ABOLITION OF UNTOUCHABILITY

Salutation to all—high and low.

TOLERANCE

Forbearance means tolerance towards all religions.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-6-1928

151. THE GOVERNOR AND BARDOLI

Shri Munshi's correspondence with H.E. the Governor gives a vivid picture of the existing system of government. On the one hand, the Government writes long argumentative letters in order to humour Mr. Munshi so that he does not go over to the people's side, while on the other it writes specious untruths attempting to prove the people wrong. It still insists on denying what has been repeatedly and clearly put forward by the people, as if untruth by frequent repetition can become truth!

Only one point stands out in the whole letter : the Government is not prepared to change its land revenue policy. If the revenue policy is changed, the most expensive Government in the world would cease to function or, alternatively, its expenses would be in proportion to the people's capacity to bear them.

The Governor maintains that no independent inquiry can be held as between the Government and its people. By saying so, he is throwing dust into the eyes of the Britishers. An independent inquiry too will be officially conducted. Although the judiciary is independent of the executive, it is nevertheless a Government department. No one has demanded that the committee be appointed by the people. But the people have asked for the appointment of neutral persons to conduct an inquiry into the case regarding the collection of land revenue in Bardoli, in a manner similar to that followed in law-courts. This does not imply that the Government should give up the business of governing. However, it does imply the Government's giving up its high-handed autocratic ways. And if the

people are to have swaraj and if they want to obtain it, this autocracy must be summarily done away with.

From this standpoint, the struggle in Bardoli has now assumed a wider significance or the Government has fortunately for us lent it this significance.

Shri Munshi's argument or his admission that satyagraha is an illegal weapon is indeed painful. It could now be regarded as a recognized weapon. When it was employed in South Africa, Lord Hardinge had defended it. The Government of Bihar had accepted it in Champaran and appointed a committee. Shri Vallabhbhai had used the very weapon in Borsad and the present Governor himself had honoured it and had met the people's grievances. One fails to understand why this weapon should now be regarded as illegal.

However, the relevant question at the moment is not whether satyagraha is legal or illegal. If the people's demand is reasonable it does not become less justified on account of their way of putting it forward.

Bringing about a solution to this problem is in the hands of the satyagrahis of Bardoli alone. It will be solved in only one way if their sacrifice and their courage are real. If the people do not pay the revenue, the Government will either have to write it off or appoint a committee. The fact that the people's honour rests in their own hands is borne out from this correspondence.

On the 12th, the people of Bardoli were praised everywhere. From outside Bardoli people can for the present do one thing only and that is to give financial help and express their sympathy. Financial help is coming in freely from all quarters. Until now a lakh of rupees has come in. The whole of India solidly supports Bardoli's demand. But an autocratic government bows only to force. The people have wisely given up the use of brute force. Bardoli has been making use of soul-force in the form of satyagraha. The might of the Government is negligible before it. Will Bardoli honour its pledge?

It is necessary to examine a suspicion that arises out of the Government's letter and the records of its Information Depart- ment. In H.E. the Governor's letter the reason for withdrawing the Pathans has been stated to be deference to the people's wishes, whereas the Government's Information Department claims that there is likely to be little use of the Pathans now that the monsoon has set in. The Governor [alone] would know what lies behind the two divergent accounts. Let us, however, understand the inwardness of the reason

given by the Information Department. During the rainy season instead of resorting to confiscation and such other measures, that is, instead of resorting openly to a policy of repression, there is the likelihood and the fear that it will resort to secret negotiations with the people. There is a possibility that it will invite the people, send out secret agents, hold out temptations, coupled with threats, and adopt measures to divide them. I hope people will beware of this muffled blow.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-6-1928

152. QUESTIONS ON EDUCATION—III

Q. 7. Do you not feel that just as it is necessary for students to now three or four languages, it is also necessary for them to be informed about the dogmas, rituals, injunctions and superstitions of all the prevailing religions?

A. If we wish to create among students respect, tolerance and love for every religion—which is indeed religion and not irreligion, we should certainly instruct them in their principles. I do not consider it very necessary to have a knowledge of the superstitions and rituals. In a country lie India anyone who goes about with his eyes eyes and ears open can see for himself the superstitions and rituals. If we wish to adopt that which is virtuous, we should not at all insist upon a knowledge of the superstitions and rituals of every religion. It is possible that a good deal of the students' time will be taken up by our insisting on their gaining a minute knowledge of whatever rituals and superstitions are to be found in our religion and trying to introduce any necessary reforms in them.

Q. 8. Since you believe in the system of varnas, do you not accept that persons of different varnas should be given different kinds of education?

A. I do not feel that there should be different kinds of education for the different varnas. There is much in common among them and our education should be, as it is at present, common to all. One of the aims of education is to make men of students and he who has become a man will easily understand the norms that apply to and should govern human beings. My conception of the varnas is that they are based on occupations and as the four varnas have to earn their living through their own occu-pations, the special features of

each should be hereditary. Moreover, I do not interpret the varna-dharma to imply that one varna can never have the virtues of the other three. A Brahmin will not earn his livelihood by ser-ving like a Shudra; nevertheless, if he cannot serve or is ashamed to do so he is no Brahmin. True knowledge is unattainable without disinterested service. And although the Shudra will not live on the food received in the begging-bowl after teaching the Vedas and other scriptures, neverthe-less, in a well-ordered society, he too will have a knowledge of the Vedas.

Q. 9. Is is true that you say that vocational training includes all education and intellectual training is merely a frill of education? If this is so why do you welcome college education?

A. It is as much true as it is false. Where there is blind worship of intellectual education, I would certainly say that vocational training covers everything. In my definition of education, there is no wall of brick and cement separating intellectual training from vocational training, but the latter includes the former, that is, it provides scope for the development of the intellect. I would make bold to say that a true development of the intellect is not possible without vocational training. The knowledge a mason requires to earn his livelihood is not education at all in my opinion. His education should comprise a knowledge of the place of his vocation in society, of bricks and their importance, of the need for houses and what they should be like and how closely they are connected with civilization. We often wrongly believe that intellectual education implies a general knowledge of events. A full development of the intellect is possible without such knowledge. The educationist who turns the student's brain into a storehouse of innumerable facts has himself not learnt the very first lesson in education. It must have been clear by now what is said in the question is both true and false. It is false if you accept my view of intellectual and vocational education. It is true if these are regarded as mutually exclusive, if there is misconception concerning education and if in framing the question this misconceived education has been kept in mind. It should now be understood why and under what conditions I welcome university education. The university which I visualize will consist of masons, carpenters and weavers who will be truly intellectual social workers,—they will not be only masons, carpenters and weavers having a knowledge of their trades sufficient merely for them to earn their livelihood. From this university I look forward to seeing a Kabir arise from the weavers, a Bhoja Bhagat from

the cobblers, an Akha from the goldsmiths and a Guru Govind from the farmers. I regard all these four as having received intellectual education.

Q. 10. If vocational training is all that education is, why do you not entrust the Vidyapith to a committee of carpenters, blacksmiths and weavers; let them then engage professors for intellectual education as expert servants.

A. The answer to this question is covered by the answer to Question 9; nevertheless, it has been reproduced with a view to clarifying my meaning further. If I had with me weavers, etc., like Kabir, I would certainly hand over the reins of the Vidyapith to them and these professors who impart intellectual education would not be ashamed to serve under them but rather consider it an honour to do so. It is because we have not regarded vocational training as part of education that those practising the trades are regarded as inferior and we get little or no help from the latter in social service work.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-6-1928

153. LETTER TO RAMANANDA CHATTERJEE

June 17, 1928

DEAR RAMANANDA BABU,

The only excuse for not acknowledging your letter together with the registered book-packet[1] is that I have been altogether overwhelmed with work and I am in arrears with my correspondence. Mahadev Desai who generally attends to part of the correspondence, moves between Bardoli and Ahmedabad and therefore he is unable even to look at it. And there have been other causes to make me short-handed even whilst I am overwhelmed with work.

I am keeping the manuscript in front of me in the hope of being able to read it the very first opportunity I can get. But when that will be is more than I can tell.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RAMANANDA CHATTERJEE
PRABASI PRESS
91 UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13419

[1] The manuscript of *India in Bondage: Her Right to Freedom* by Dr. J. T. Sunderland was sent to Gandhiji for comments.

154. LETTER TO SURENDRANATH BISWAS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 17, 1928

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[1] My heart is with you, but no my head. As you know I have always been against workers living above their means and incurring debts and then finding themselves in trouble. I regard it as a vicious habit. How can I help you? Or better still, the only help I can give you is to advise you even to face the insolvency court, or to approach your creditors, surrender everything to them and then live the life of a labourer pure and simple. I see no other way for us educated men, if we are to serve India truly.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SURENDRANATH BISWAS
P 14 A NEW PARK STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13421

[1] The addressee had written that he had incurred certain debts as Chairman, Reception Committee of the Bengal Provincial Conference held in Faridpur in 1925. He had also incurred certain debts in his private capacity. Several suits were pending against him and he was for some time put under arrest. Appealing to Gandhiji, he wrote : "May I have the indulgence of begging of you a letter of introduction? I want you to write only that you attended the Conference and heard the Reception Committee had incurred debts for defraying the expenses, that I was the Chairman of the R.C. and am known to you and that I as the Chairman need help from the generous public to pay off the debts."

155. LETTER TO FLORENCE K. KREBS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 17, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I shall be pleased to see you whenever you can come to the Ashram. I am not likely to leave the Ashram during the year. And when you come, you will of course stay at the Ashram, if you can manage with very simple vegetarian fare and comparatively simple life.

Yours sincerely,

FLORENCE K. KREBS[1]
CARE POST MASTER
SRINAGAR
KASHMIR

From a photostat: S.N. 13422

156 LETTER TO N. C. BARDALOI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 17, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

Mr. Banker has given me your letter. It has caused me pain. The loan was given to you for a definite purpose at the instance of Rajendra Babu. And why should [you] mistake discipline for dictation? Can an organization be run successfully when everybody wants to work without interference from headquarters which gives loans to workers? Surely, there must be a higher code of honour regulating the relations between a volunteer organization and its voluntary workers than between a purely business organization run for profit and its employees.

But your last sentence simply amazes me. You say you will not take any responsibilities, when you took responsibility at the time you

[1] An American traveller, who studied Eastern religions and wrote articles for magazines

borrowed well knowing the conditions under which the loan was given. And why should you want the presence of an agent from the A.I.S.A. to help you? I can only say that the loan is a debt of honour even more than a debt in law, which it certainly is, and that you should honourably discharge it.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. N. C. BARDALOI
SANTI BHAVAN
GAUHATI (ASSAM)

From a microfilm : S.N. 13623

157. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 17, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. I am not worrying about Nikhil. Personally, I have resigned myself to his approaching death. What worries me is the shock that it will give to Hemprabhadevi. Although she has been writing to me bravely, I know what the actual fact will mean to her and must mean to you also. But having gone through the purgatory in the death of Maganlal, I am emboldened in asking you to steel your hearts against giving way to grief. He who gives must have the right to take away. And, after all, there is no taking away. "Death is but a sleep and a forgetting." Maganlal is living in a more real sense now than when he was in the flesh. Every change that he himself would have desired but perhaps could not have carried out is now in the course of being made in the Ashram with a hearty will by the co-workers.

I wish I had the time to describe these to you.

To have a separate exhibition of our own side by side with the Congress Exhibition, will savour of active opposition, which I think we may not offer. I am quite clear about refraining from taking part in it, if mill-cloth is admitted. But I am not at all clear about the propriety or the advantage of having an exhibition in opposition to the

[1] A copy of the letter was sent to the Secretary, A.I.S.A.

Congress Exhibition, for it can be interpreted in no other way. I would like you therefore to think over this thing seriously.

The order from the Calcutta Corporation is a good stroke.

With love,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 8917

158. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
B.B. & C.I. RLY.
June 17, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

I have your two letters. The news about Kamala and Indu is disturbing. I am hoping to have more definite information from you. I am tempted to suggest for both, and certainly at least for Kamala, the poor man's remedy, and that is hip-bath and sitz-bath according to Kuhne's system, and dieting together with sun-bath. But I know that this is not practicable and that she will have to go through the ordinary treatment.

I hope that there will be an agreed draft constitution in a complete from brought out by the Committee.

Mahadev had a serious fall from the platform of the Ashram well. He is bed-ridden but better.

From the original : Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

159. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 17, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your warm letter as also your kind cheque. I know that Vallabhbhai will very much appreciate it.

I agree with you that it will be a tragedy if the All-Parties Committee does not bring out a full-fledged constitution. I know that Motilalji is keen about it and therefore I am hoping that we shall have

a constitution from this Committee.

I did get from the *Hindu* Office the cutting containing your interview. I read it with much interest, but I do not agree with your remarks about Mr. Das. It is however now unnecessary for me to discuss the reasons for my dissent. Your affection for me which I see running through that interview and which I have always prized was no new discovery for me.

I am asking the Manager, *Young India*, to send you the required information.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13424

160. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

June 17, 1928

Herewith letter from Ramachandran which you would like to see and appreciate.

Navajivan has been converted into a Trust. I have included your name as one of the trustees. I hope you do not mind this. The trustees are :

Sjt. Dattatreya Balakrishna Kalelkar
„ Shankerlal Ghelabhai Banker
„ Jamnalalji Bajaj
„ Mahadev Haribhai Desai
„ Vallabhbhai Jhaverbhai Patel
„ Chhaganlal Khushalchand Gandhi
„ Chakravarti Rajagopalachari
„ Mohanlal Maganlal Bhatt

Many changes have been made in the Ashram. Two burglaries have also taken place, one of a serious nature. I have asked Subbiah to describe all these to you.

Here is Ramanathan's letter and my reply.[1]

Encls. 3 (5 sheets)

From a photostat: S.N. 13622

[1] *Vide* "Letter to S. Ramanathan", 16-6-1928.

161 LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 17, 1928

CHI. VASUMATI,

It was very good that you had the chance to see Sahasradhara. The word is not *sahastra*, it is *sahasra*. Giving up of buffalo's ghee and milk applies to the Ashram only. It does not apply when one goes elsewhere, although one who has well understood the distinction will give it up wherever he may be. At present sufficient cow's milk is available at the Ashram. Arrangements have been made to get cow's ghee from somewhere.

I dictated this letter before four o'clock in the morning. I received a second one in the course of the day. I let Kamala read the part containing the apology. Nowadays I get up early, at three o'clock, [otherwise] I could not cope with my work. Chi. Kusum also insists on getting up at that time and I do not object.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 480. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

162. LETTER TO V. J. PATEL

June 17, 1928

BHAISHRI VITHALBHAI,

Vallabhbhai, Swami and Jamnalal have arrived. I am enclosing the draft herewith. I feel there is no need for us to go any deeper into the matter. Just now let him do what he likes. If the satyagrahis are true, victory is theirs and finally if they prove to be weak, then it will be morning when they wake.

The saying that weak friends are no better than enemies is being proved.

Everyone is extremely pleased with you work at present. May you live long and do much.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : S.N. 14445

163. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

June 18, 1928

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I had read the news that you had reached safely. This is a letter of supplication. I have some lean cattle and dry cows and some calves; it costs a lot to keep all of them in the Ashram. If you can keep them in your estate it would be less expensive. I can pay the expenses if you wish. If you think that this can be done, please send Bhai Joshi here. This idea occurred to me just because he is there. After he has come and seen and given you the report, if you think it proper you may offer shelter to the Ashram cattle. I am making this experiment on behalf of the Cow-protection Society. Does Lady Ramabai remember the spinning-wheel?

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5908; also C.W. 3222. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

164. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

ASHRAM,
June 18, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I enclose with this two letters from friends[1] in Austria. Both are most deserving. I consider it necessary to invite them to India and make them acquainted with the country. For such purposes I do not wish to make use of your donation. Bhai Jugalkishoreji takes pleasure in such matters. If you deem it proper, send him all the letters. We have to send them £200. If he wishes to make this donation the amount will have to be sent promptly.

Your health, I trust, is good. Read the Ashram rule[2] carefully and do send whatever suggestions you consider proper.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6160. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

165. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

[Before *June 19, 1928*][3]

CHI. RAMDAS,

I must regularly get your letters. They should also describe things.

Vasumatibehn has left to join the Kanya Gurukul at Dehra Dun. At present, eighty men, women and children have their meals in the joint kitchen. The kitchen will shift tomorrow to the hostel kitchen. The present kitchen will cease to be a kitchen and will be turned into a women's section. Such things happen all the time. There was problem of lack of space which has been solved for now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Mr. and Mrs. Standenath
[2] *Vide* "Satyagraha Ashram", 14-6-1928.
[3] From the contents, chiefly the reference to shifting of the joint kitchen to the hostel kitchen; *vide* "Letter to Pyarelal Nayar", June 19, 1928.

166. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 19, 1928

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I continue to get your letters. But I cannot say that they satisfy me. You always say that both of you are pressed for time; it is difficult for me to conceive what great work you have on hand. But we both derive comfort from the proverb that it is better to have someone to call uncle than to have no uncle at all. I had hoped for something better from Sushila but even if she lacks Manilal's physical fitness she must have at least reached his level of wisdom. But must you take on each other's defects, and not virtues? I shall be pleased if you cast aside this great lethargy and you will be benefited too. Other letters from Africa and elsewhere always contain more news than is to be found in your letters. I must get a reply to my previous letter in which I have reminded you of the debts to the Ashram. If you want you may coolly contemplete the fact that the debt will be entered in the Bad Debts list but I cannot. At present significant changes are taking place at the Ashram. I have no time to describe them now. These days I get up before the four-o'clock morning prayers and dictate many letters, for only so can I cope with it somewhat. Whilst dictating this, the four-o' clock bell has rung, so I stop.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4739

167. LETTER TO PYARELAL NAYAR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 19, 1928

MY DEAR PYARELAL,

I dictate this because I am spinning and I want to save the few minutes that will be required for writing to you in Gujarati.

I am eager to write to you at once to tell you that your arti- cle is A 1. I have read it through, though hurriedly. But I find nothing in it jarred and it is just the kind of thing that was wanted for "outsiders", not in the Government sense, but in our sense. No one else, I am confident, could have written the article, because no one else would have the penetration that you have. You have shown why the struggle has been possible and how the splendid organization has come into being. I only hope that the article will be copied widely by the Indian Press. This article shows, and I never had any doubt ever since my reading of your essay which was published in *Young India*, what capacity you have, if you will only have confidence in yourself. Between you and Mahadev I can safely forget all about [*Young*] *India* and perhaps never write a single line. However, let me hope and wait.

Mahadev is all right now. He will be up and doing in one or two days. He is doing even now. You know what the cause was. He had a fall at the well where he was fetching water. We have very few labourers in the Ashram. You know that we had one robbery and one burglary. There were nearly 50 robbers. Surendra and Shankerbhai came in for a fair beating alongside the workers at the Tannery. And I was so happy to find these two amongst those who were beaten. The burglary was committed in the store-room two days after the robbery, though I do not think that they are interrelated.

There are many other startling changes. The common kitchen has expanded to nearly 100 and the place where I was staying is turned into women's quarters. My office is in Maganlal's room. The kitchen has been transferred to the kitchen attached to the Chhatralaya. I take my meals with the rest there. The other things you must learn from Imam Saheb if you open out to anybody at all.

I hope that you are keeping your body in perfect form. Devdas has returned to Almora.

From a photostat: S.N. 13427

168. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 19, 1928

DEAR MOTILALJI,

Sen Gupta writes to me saying that I should move the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee to vote for you as President of the coming Congress. Of course the idea appeals to me. But be- fore I make any move at all, I should like to know your own opinion about it. Perhaps it is not yet time for Jawahar to occupy the throne. And if the Committee that you are managing brings up something substantial, it would be as well for you to wear the crown. Sen Gupta suggests Malaviyaji as an alternative. I will await your reply before writing to Sen Gupta.[1]

I was disturbed about Kamala's health. Jawahar gave me bad news. And he told me that doctors thought that Indu also required attention. Doctors never scare me. But I should like to feel that there is nothing wrong with Kamala and certainly nothing wrong with Indu.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13624

169. LETTER TO K. S. SUBRAMANIAM

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 19, 1928

MY DEAR SUBRAMANIAM,

I have thought over Subbiah's requirements and I feel that he should have a clear Rs. 100 and if he has to live in a rented house, his rent up to Rs. 20 should be extra. This arrangement should be retrospective as from 1st of May. Therefore he should have the extra Rs. 15 paid to him, half by the Association and half by the *Young India* Office. I am writing to Mohanlal to the same effect. You will

[1] *Vide* "Letter to J. M. Sen Gupta", 21-6-1928.

require Jamnalalji's and Mr. Banker's sanction. Please receive the same and make the payment. I do not need now to worry any more over this or to write to Mr. Banker or speak to Jamnalalji.

Blessings from

SJT. K. S. SUBRAMANIAM

A. I. S. A., MIRZAPUR

AHMEDABAD

From a microfilm: S.N. 13428

170. LETTER TO SHANKARAN

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

June 20, 1928

MY DEAR SHANKARAN,

I have your letter. The list has always remained with me and the acknowledgment was printed in *Navajivan* without the list having been got from me. I knew of the acknowledgment appearing in *Navajivan* only from your letter. About *Young India* I was myself looking over it and therefore I corrected the mistake yesterday and have the whole list printed, which you will see in *Young India* of this week. It was all done before your letter came. I hope however to see that all the names appear in *Navajivan*. I say I hope because I am so rushed just now that I may forget it.

Mahadev had had a somewhat serious fall at the well where he was drawing water. He was laid up for 5 days. He is better now and in two three days he will be quite restored.

Now about your questions : Even though the cause for which a donation was given may have been fulfilled, the balance left cannot be used at the will of the donee, even though the cause for which he uses it is superior to the cause that is fulfilled. For, what the donee may consider superior may be bad cause in the estimate of the donor. I have just now an instance of that character on which I had to decide yesterday. A gentleman gave Rs. 10,000 in connection with national schools to Jamnalalji. That amount of money is still unused. Jamnalalji wants to make use of that money for national education, but for national education which includes the untouchables. This is a superior cause as you, Jamnalalji and I would consider. But I have advised that without the donor's permission, seeing that the money is

still unused, it cannot be used. And the donor is certain not to give his permission because of the disturbing introduction of the so-called untouchables. If Jamnalalji utilizes the money for a purpose which the donor had never intended, he would be wrong and guilty of the breach of the vow of *asteya*.

With reference to the second question : I take your own case. You have reduced yourself to comparative poverty by throwing overboard your job. Surely, you are the richer for it. And if your personal wants are still further reduced, you would be richer again. It is better that a man gives the whole of himself than that he must retain a part for himself and a part for society. And when a man reduces his wants to nil, he has given away his whole self.

I hope now the thing is clear. I am keeping well.

From a microfilm: S.N. 13429

171. ACCUSED JUDGING

The Director of Information has entered into a remarkable refuta-tion of the allegations made in these pages by Mahadev Desai regard- ing the conduct of the Pathans.[1] Mahadev Desai having had a serious fall at a well whilst he was drawing water is laid up in bed and is therefore unable to write out his weekly notes and therein take notice of this refutation. But the Director's refutation does not need a specialist. The admissions made in it are damaging to his cause, which is the Government's, and his refutations are unconvincing, where they are not utterly worthless.

But before I examine the Director's communiques, let me make one point clear. What is it that the Government is after in publishing these communiques through the Director of Information? Does it seek to substitute its own courts of law and become judge in cases against its own officers? I freely confess that so far as the public are concerned, the allegations made by the Satyagraha Publicity Office are *ex-parte*, unproved statements. But for this Publicity Office there is no other course open to it. Satyagrahis, even if they have no compunction about going to courts of law, cannot go to the Bardoli courts, where they know they can get no hearing, much less justice, because their complaint is not against private individuals but against Government officers, and that too during a regime which very nearly

[1] This appeared in *Young India* issues of May and June, 1928.

approaches martial law. The satyagrahis have therefore no other course open to them but to acquaint the public with the extraordinary nature of the coercive measures that the Government has adopted. What however can be the meaning of counter-allegations by the Director? What can be the value of his denials? He is not in the same plight as the satyagrahis. The Government has all authority. If the allegations made by the Satyagraha Office are untrue, the Government has its own remedy. The Government little realizes that it has lost all credit and that even where statements made on its behalf are true, they are suspected by the people as untrue. Such is its black record. If then the Government has evidence to show that the allegations are untrue, let it appoint an impartial open committee of enquiry and the Satyagraha Office will under take to prove every statement made by it and apologize and otherwise suffer where its statements cannot be sustained. But the Governor's long and copious letters to public men leave no room for any such hope. I therefore welcome the resolution that Sjt. Munshi has adumbrated in his powerful letter addressed to the Governor announcing his resignation. I tender my congratulations to Sjt. Munshi for his resignation and more for his brave letter. I hope he will carry out his resolve to get together a committee of investigation. Let him get the soundest men and if I may venture to suggest, let him take a leaf out of the Government book and get colleagues drawn from the various communities. Let him get one Parsi, one Mussalman and if possible one Christian, whether English or Indian, and let there be for this self-appointed committee a proper reference within which it would work, and if it would take a little more trouble, I would suggest that it should not confine its investigations merely to the coercive measures but extend them to the case of the satyagrahis regarding the enhanced assessment. I hope too that the committee will invite the Government to send its witnesses to present its case. That the Government may not condescend to send witnesses to such a committee is highly likely. If it does not, it would provide one more cause for its condemnation.

Now for the Director's communiques. The Governor says that the Pathans are to be withdrawn in order to "remove any misunderstanding". The Director says that they are being withdrawn as owing to the impending rains their service would be no longer required. Which statement is the public to believe? And if the Pathans are not required because of the impending rains, why is a glorified edition of the Pathans in the shape of armed police with a special

officer and working under special magistrate required? The people will be excused if still suspect behind the withdrawal of the Pathans a sinister design still further to encompass the satyagrahis of Bardoli and awe them into subjection.

Another communique denies that one of the Pathans was only the other day caught red-handed in the act of theft. The denial is set forth in the language of a judge as if the Director had both the complainant and the accused present before him and had come to the definite conclusion. I have before me the statement submitted to Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel, as President of the Railway Union, by the Pathan watchman at Bardoli station who caught the man red-handed, along with the knife and the stolen salt. He states therein that the police authorities were trying to water down evidence and coercing him to withdraw the complaint. But the Director comes to the following pontifical conclusion : "The police have found the case to be one fit to be classed as untrue." No wonder because the railway Pathan will not lend himself a tool in the hands of the police. Of equal value is the statement that "the Deputy Superintendent of Police can definitely state that the photographs taken by non-co-operators were not taken during the commission of the so-called theft". But the admission that the accused Pathan was on the railway platform, that he did pick up handful—as a matter of fact two bundlefuls—of salt sufficiently damages the Government. Who does not know that when people caught red-handed are sought to be protected, the acts witnessed are watered down by a corrupt police? In this instance salt became waste and came to be picked up from the ground. And since it is inconvenient to have a Pathan with a knife, possession of a knife by the Pathan is denied. I have had the good fortune to know Pathans in South Africa. I have had equally good fortune to know many here. Their bravery when they are not spoiled is unquestioned. But I cannot recall a Pathan without a knife. But the so-called non-co-operators do not claim implicit trust in their allegations. They claim an impartial investigation. Not so the Director of Information. He claims the authority of a judgment for his statements.

The second denial is just as embarrassing to the Director as the first. It is not denied that the Pathan threatened Kalyanji, but it is denied that he threatened to stab him. The threat, it is said, was held out because the Pathan objected to being photographed. The Director gratuitously adds that non-co-operators are well aware that the Pathans object to being photographed. I am one of the non-co-operators. But

I have not known a Pathan yet to raise such objection and I have known many Pathans to have been photographed and I have known some who had been eager to be photographed. I understand from Sjt. Vallabhbhai that the very Pathans were, until they discovered that the camera was being used to discredit them, anxious to be photographed. He further assures me that if he got the opportunity he wants, he would be able to show how and where the objection was manufactured. And we all know that the King of the Pathans, His Majesty Amanullah, has willingly submitted to the tortures of photographers. But in the forest of words that the Director has brought into his assistance, one thing stands out clear, namely, that Kalyanji was threatened. By the way, let me make this clear, that the satyagrahis in Bardoli are not today offering non-co-operation. On the contrary they want to co-operate with the Government in finding out the truth about assessment. As non-co-operators they could not have asked for a committee. They could simply have repudiated the authority of Government. But they have not done so. Their satyagraha is merely confined to securing justice from the Government of the day.

The third refutation is about the pulling of a woman by a Pathan out of her house. It is admitted that a Pathan stood in an open doorway. It is not stated why he should have stood in an open doorway in a private house. It is admitted also that a woman came forward to say that she had been pulled and pushed by a Pathan trying to enter the house. The valuable information is then given to the public that this woman a few days afterwards excused herself to Mr. Benjamin who taxed her with the falsehood by saying : "What was I to do?" Surely cross-examination of the woman is here required before any value can be attached to Mr. Benjamin's statement.

The fourth refutation is about the indecent behaviour of a Pathan. Here too the fact of the nudity of the Pathan is not denied. But what is stated is that there was no indecent intention behind indecent appearance. And the absence of indecent intention is sought to be inferred from the practice of the villagers answering calls of nature at all kinds of places in villages. An intelligent public can easily draw its own inference from such a denial.

Of the same type is the denial about another Pathan exposing himself before two girls.

In the sixth refutation about the indecent assault committed on a

woman the assault is haltingly admitted. But the Director naively says : "It is possible that someone acted as Rehmat states, but there is no evidence that the man (if any) was a Pathan", as if the evidence of Rehmat herself to the effect that it was a Pathan who committed the assault is of no consequence. The Satyagraha Office has the statement made by the cartman who rescued Rehmat to the effect that the assailant was a Pathan employed by Government.

I have taken only a few samples from the communiques and I have analysed the one that has special reference to *Young India*, for I claim for this journal such absolute impartiality and insistence upon truth as is possible for erring human beings. All the writers in *Young India* have to append at least their own initials. Sjt. Mahadev Desai is himself a lawyer. By over ten years of practice of the profession of journalism he may be claimed to be a fairly trained journalist. As such he must among several qualifications possess that of being able to sift fact from fiction. He goes periodically to Bardoli in order to see things with his own eyes and hear with his own ears. It may be presumed that he has a reputation to lose. I therefore felt constrained while he was on his back to study his notes which are the subject-matter of the refutation as also the Director's notice of his notes and I at once saw that Sjt. Mahadev Desai had nothing to be ashamed of and that the Director's refutations did not contain anything to shake Mahadev's estimate of the facts that he observed in Bardoli.

The Director is conveniently silent about the brutal beating of the buffaloes by the Pathans who in one instance battered a poor beast to death. And does he know that though he proclaimed in one of his com-muniques that the resignations given by the talatis and patels were under duress, the patels and talatis have emphatically repudiated the calumny?

The communiques as also the Governor's letters make much of the fact that the Government could not be blamed for having brought in Pathans, as Banias in Bardoli had also Pathans as their watchmen. Neither the Governor nor the Director seem to know that nobody in Gujarat relishes the idea of anyone hiring the services of Pathans as watchmen, etc. Not that the people of Gujarat have any ill will against them, but there is a sinister motive behind the hiring of Pathans, and those who hire such service do not take care to pick out the noblest amongst them. On the contrary, they take good care to get hold of men who may be capable of doing the greatest mischief. And if the selfish Banias and others do not mend, they and the rest of the people

of Gujarat will have to pay a heavy price for getting hold of bad characters and exploiting them for their own purposes, be they Pathans or others. But when a Government copies a practice that is known to be essentially bad and distasteful to the people in general, it heaps wrong upon wrong and should not be surprised if it comes in for an extra dose of blame. There could be no other meaning in the Government sending Pathans to Bardoli than the meaning that attaches to the hiring of the services of Pathans by private individuals. And what inference can the Governor or the Director want the public to draw from the fact that some Pathans are not foreigners? Surely both must have the sense to know that the objection raised in Bardoli was not against Pathans as such. The word 'Pathan' there has a different connotation. As used by the people in Bardoli it means an essentially bad character, —a hooligan. The people of Bardoli would welcome all the good Pathans from wherever they may come. And after all, it was a railway Pathan who came to the rescue and made the statement to Vallabhbhai about a fellow Pathan. The objection then is not to the race but to the character of men posted in Bardoli. Therefore the situation is not altered in the slightest degree by the Government's withdrawal of Pathans, when they have sent instead an armed police. Let it not be said of the Government that if the people of Bardoli resented whips in the shape of Pathans, they received scorpions in the shape of armed police backed by special magistrates.

Young India, 21-6-1928

172. BARDOLI BUNGLE

The more the Government excuses itself in the Bardoli case, the more it accuses itself. The long letters of H.E. the Governor written to Sjt. Munshi make confusion worse confounded and do not improve its position even in the estimation of a constitutionalist as Sjt. Munshi claims to be.

The Governor's letters altogether evade the issue. His Excellency claims that another inquiry has already been made and assures his correspondent that "there is not one member of Government who is not fully satisfied as to the justice of Government's action and in fact I should use the word 'generosity' ".

This is moving in a circle. If the Government were to make fifty inquiries of the type mentioned in the correspondence, they would not improve matters for it. On the contrary, these inquiries would prove its

perverse determination to give a stone each time the Bardoli people ask for bread. They do not want a hole-and-corner inquiry in which they are not usefully and effectively represented and which is not open and independent. They contend that what the Government regards as just, even generous, the people believe to be unjust and oppressive. They contend, and these columns have attempted to show why, that Mr. Jayakar's and Mr. Anderson's reports are worthless, full of misstatements and errors even of calculation.[1] They undertake to substantiate their contention before an open, impartial and independent committee.

The Government proudly and with fatiguing reiteration tell the public that they accepted neither Mr. Jayakar's rate of assessment, i.e., 30 per cent increase, nor Mr. Anderson's, i.e., 29 per cent increase (a generous reduction indeed upon 30 per cent) but that they reduced the increase to 20 per cent. And now we are informed by the Governor that this reduction was not only just but even generous. What the people want is not generosity but justice pure and simple, and they submit that even the 20 per cent increase is unwarranted by facts, unwarranted by the condition of the agriculturists. His Excellency on the other hand protests that if a committee was appointed, it would be found that the increase should have been much higher. If that is the sincere belief of the Government, why does it not accept the very reasonable prayer of the people for the appointment of a proper committee by whose decision they declare they are willing to abide?

When the people challenge the findings of officers of the Govern-ment, it is monstrous, it is insulting to throw in their teeth the reports of other officers who base their conclusions upon mere documents often varnished and more often superficial. If the Governor is desirous, as he professes to be, of acting on the square, let him accept the honourable offer sealed and sanctified as it is with, the sufferings of the people for whom His Excellency makes in his letters profuse avowal of anxious sympathy.

But, declares the Governor, the "outsiders", whom the Commissioner, N. D., has made famous by his insulting libel, stand in the way of the full flow of that sympathy. If they are in the way of the agriculturists, "who", the Governor claims to "know well", "would

[1] *Vide* "What Is the Bardoli Case?", 14-6-1928.

all pay up the assessment as many are now doing, if they are allowed to", why does he not summarily remove these objectionable tresspassers? The Government has been hitherto always found to be resourceful enough to remove all the "tall poppies" it has discovered inconveniently in its way. Why then is it leaving alone this (in the elegant language of the Commissioner, N.D.,) "swarm of agitators from Kheda living on the poor people of Bardoli" and allowing the innocent peasants to become a prey alike to the "agitatiors" and the Pathans now to be replaced by the organized police drafted into Bardoli?

The Governor is in such a hurry to justify his 'constitutional' position and discredit Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel and his faithful companions, that forgetful of his statement in one letter that there were 40 Pathans, in another he says there were only 25. But of the Pathans I shall have to say more in another article.

The Governor seeks to justify the assessment in Bardoli on the ground that the people of Chorasi who are similarly assessed have not resisted the enhancement. I know nothing of the case of Chorasi. But I do know this that many a wrong has been submitted to before now by the people of India earning for them (in their case) the uncomplimentary title of "the gentle Hindoo". It may be that the people of Chorasi are too weak to resist the levy, whereas the people of Bardoli having been under healthy influence for the past six years have found themselves strong and willing enough for sufferings that must be entailed in resisting a Government that has become notorious for its unscrupulousness and frightfulness.

Here is the naked paw. Says His Excellency :

> Why should Government give up its undoubted right of administration to, as you suggest, the decision of some independent committee? I am anxious to meet the situation in every way that is possible, but no Government would be worth the name of Government which allowed such a thing to happen.

"The undoubted right of administration" is the uncontrolled licence to bleed India to the point of starvation. The licence would be somewhat controlled if an independent committee were appointed to adjust the points in dispute between the people and the executive authority. Let it be noted that the independent committee does not mean a committee inde-pendent of the Government. It means a committee appointed by the Government of men known to be

independent of official pressure and authorized to hold the enquiry in the open with the right to the aggrieved people to be duly and effectively represented. But such an open enquiry means the death knell of the secret, autocratic revenue policy of the Gove-rnment. Where is, in the modest demand of the people, the slightest "us-urpation of the functions of Government"? But even the least check upon the utter independence of the executive officers is enough to send the Government into a fury. And when the British lion is in a fury in British India, God help the "gentle Hindoo". Well, God does help the helpless and He only helps when man is utterly helpless. The people of India have found in satyagraha the God-given infallible *gandiva* of self-suffering. Under its stimulating influence the people are slowly waking up from the lethargy of ages. The Bardoli peasants are but showing India that, weak as they are, they have got the courage to suffer for their convictions.

It is too late in the day to call satyagraha unconstitutional. It will be unconstitutional when truth and its fellow—self-sacrifice—become unlawful. Lord Hardinge blessed the South African satyagraha and even the all-powerful Union Government gracefully bent before it. Both Lord Chelmsford, the then Viceroy, and Sir Edward Gait, the then Governor of Bihar, recognized its legitimacy and efficacy and an independent committee was appointed resulting in adding to the prestige of the Government and resulting in the ending of a century-old wrong. It was then recognized in Kheda and a settlement, reluctant, half-hearted and incomplete as it was, was made between the Government agents in Kheda and those who were guiding the movement and the people. The then Governor of the Central Provinces condescended to treat with the Nagpur Flag satyagrahis and released the prisoners and recognized the right claimed by the satyagrahis. Last but not least Sir Leslie Wilson himself when he was yet untouched by the atmosphere of the "most efficient service in the world" recognized its efficacy in Borsad and granted the Borsad people relief.

I wish both His Excellency the Governor and Sjt. Munshi will take note of these facts that have happened within the past fourteen years. Satyagraha in Bardoli cannot now be suddenly declared unconstitutional. The fact is the Government have no case. They do not want their revenue policy to be challenged at an open enquiry. If the Bardoli people can stand the final heat, they will have the open

enquiry or the withdrawal of the enhancement. It is their undoubted right to claim for their grievance a hearing before an impartial tribunal.

Young India, 21-6-1928

173. NOTES

A NOBLE SOUL GONE

As I am writing for *Young India*, I have a wire from Nilkanth Babu advising me of the death at Sakhigopal of Pandit Gopabandhu Das who was one of the noblest among the sons of Orissa, the land of sorrows and tears. Gopabandhu Babu had given his all to Orissa. I heard of him and his sterling character and steadfastness when Sjt. Amritlal Thakkar was sent to Orissa in 1916 to distribute relief to the famine-stricken. Sjt. Thakkar used to write to me how Gopabandhu Babu braved inconvenience and disease in struggling to help the helpless. He gave up his practice and his membership of the Legislative Council during the Non-co-operation days and never wavered. What was more for him was to stake the existence of his dearest creation, the Satyavadi School. He braved the taunts of some of his closest friends and persisted to his eternal honour in what they considered to be his folly. His one ambition in life was to see dismembered Utkal united and happy. He had lately become a member of Lala Lajpat Rai's society and was planning to make khadi an efficient vehicle for the economic relief of poverty and flood-stricken Orissa. The country is the poorer for the death of Pandit Gopabandhu Das. Though he is not in our midst in the flesh, he is in our midst in the spirit. Let that noble spirit guide the workers of Orissa, let his death result in a larger dedication to service, greater effort, greater self-effacement and greater unity among the scattered workers who are too few for the national requirements. I tender my condolences to the relatives and the many disciples of the deceased patriot.

A SHAME UPON YOUNG MEN

A correspondent sends me a newspaper cutting showing that recently in Hyderabad, Sind, the demand for bridegrooms has been increasing at an alarming rate, an employee of the Imperial Telegraph Engineering Service having exacted Rs. 20,000 as cash dowry during betrothal, and promises of heavy payments on the wedding day and

on special occasions thereafter. Any young man who makes dowry a condition of marriage discredits his education and his country and dishonours womanhood. There are many youth movements in the country. I wish that these movements would deal with questions of this character. Such associations often become self-adulation societies, instead of becoming as they should be, bodies representing solid reform from within. Good as the work of these bodies is at times in helping public movements, it should be remembered that the youth of the country have their reward in the public appreciation they get. Such work, if it is not backed by internal reform, is likely to demoralize the youth by creating in them a sense of unwarranted self-satisfaction. A strong public opinion should be created in condemnation of the degrading practice of dowry and young men who soil their fingers with such ill-gotten gold should be excommunicated from society. Parents of girls should cease to be dazzled by English degrees and should not hesitate to travel outside their little castes and provinces to secure true, gallant young men for their daughters.

A TRIBUTE

In a letter to Mahadev Desai thus writes Mr. H. S. L. Polak about the death of Maganlal Gandhi :

> I can fully enter into your appreciation of the disaster that has befallen the Ashram by Maganlal's sudden passing. It was as though I had lost an own brother. You, of course, know far better than I how tremendously important he was to the life and purposes of the Ashram, and how much he symbolized its ideal and practical character. It seems incredible that this dear, cheerful, smiling brother, with whom I had exchanged so close and affectionate an embrace on my last day at the Ashram, should have passed in the physical form from among us so suddenly. He has died, as gallantly as any knight of old, on the battlefield.
>
> Maganlal and I, as you know, worked closely and always harmoniously at Phoenix. Indeed, cheerfulness and harmony were the keynotes of his character, and a supple courage that adapted itself to meet the needs of each new trial. Of late years we met only upon my occasional visits to India, and then only for brief periods, but I always felt refreshed and stimulated by this renewal of an old and affectionate comradeship.
>
> He has left a noble and shining example for us all, and I feel very sure that, though he be absent really in the flesh, his spirit will move among you

perhaps more really than if he had remained in the form that was so familiar and dear to us.

Many of us in the Ashram are realizing the truth of the last observation.

Young India, 21-6-1928

174. LETTER TO J. M. SEN GUPTA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 21, 1928

MY DEAR SEN GUPTA,

I have your letter about the President of the forthcoming Congress. I like your suggestion. But before deciding upon the thing finally, I want to know Panditji's own mind. I have therefore written to him in the matter[1] and, as soon as I hear from him, I hope to write to you further and more definitely.

I had your letter about the Exhibition. It does not satisfy me. But evidently in this matter we shall have to agree to differ. As you know I hold very strong views about swadeshi. But if they do not commend themselves to Bengal, I must wait till Bengal it converted or I collapse. However, I may not argue with you. I shall watch the developments there. I see no difference between what you write to me and the information that was given to me. Let me conclude by saying that I am not against machinery as such, but I am opposed to machinery that may be designed to displace the masses without giving them any adequate and satisfactory substitute.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13626

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Motilal Nehru", 19-6-1928.

175. LETTER TO ETHEL ANGUS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 22, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. If I succeed in going to Europe next year and if it is at all possible, I should certainly accept your kind hospitality. I have no doubt about it that I have many friends in England as in other parts of Europe.

Mr. Rajagopalachariar is making steady progress with his Ashram in the South. I am taking the liberty of sending your letter to him and I know that he will read it with interest and joy.

I thank you and Rev. John Todd Ferrier for his books. Much as I should like to read the several books that friends send me, it is difficult to find time to read them. But I have glanced through some of the books sent by you. The argument about purity of food naturally makes a forcible appeal to me.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 14334

176. LETTER TO RAMLAL BALARAM BAJPAI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 22. 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I have gone through the article of Miss Mayo, which you sent me. I have no desire to reply to the libel. If there are people who believe in this story invented by Miss Mayo, no repudiation on my part can give any satisfaction to such people.

Thank you for your kind enquiries about my health. I am keeping fairly well.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RAMLAL BALARAM BAJPAI
209 SULLIVAN PLACE
BROOKLYN
NEW YORK
U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N. 14337

177. LETTER TO K. SRINIVASAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 22, 1928

MY DEAR SRINIVASAN,

I have your letter and the cheque for Rs. 11. You certainly deserve upbraiding if the money that you got for yourself was not needed by you.

It gives me great joy to find that you are keeping you promise. I wish you will not be ashamed of spinning before your friends. If you believe it to be good, let them see what you are doing.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. SRINIVASAN
MARCONI WIRELESS COLLEGE
CHELMSFORD
ESSEX

From a photostat: S.N. 14338

178. LETTER TO DEVI WEST

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 22, 1928

I have your letter. I had the charming photograph[1] also. I call it 'charming' because it is lifelike.

What you say about Maganlal is too true.

[1] Of the addressee

I wish I had the time to describe the many changes we have made in the Ashram. Prabhudas had just now descended from the hills where he was convalescing. Krishnadas is here and so are Chhaganlal and his wife. His parents are also here for the time being. Devdas is in the hills, I am keeping fairly well. It is possible that we may meet next year. If all goes well, I might visit Europe next year.

From a photostat: S.N. 14339

179. LETTER TO HORACE ALEXANDER

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 22, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have long delayed replying to your letter, as I have hoped to send you a fairly lengthy reply. But I see that I am not likely to get sufficient leisure for attempting a very full reply in the near future.

What you say about silent prayer and congregational silence I understand and I appreciate also in theory.[1] When I was in South Africa, I attended several such meetings. But I was not much struck with the performance. In india, it will fall flat. After all, there are many ways of worship and it is not necessary to graft new ways, if old ones will answer. I am myself not satisfied with what we are able to do in the Ashram. I cannot procure a devotional mood all of a sudden or in an artificial manner. If some of us in the Ashram really have that mood whilst at prayer, it is bound to have its effect in due course. It is because of the belief that there are some earnest souls in the Ashram who approach the prayer time in a proper devotional mood, that I have persisted in retaining the congregational prayer meetings in spite of odds and sometimes even severe disappointments. I may be partial, but my own experience is that our prayer meetings are very slowly but surely growing in dignity and strength. But I am painfully aware of the fact that we are far far away from what we want to achieve. Nevertheless, I shall bear your suggestions in mind. I have already discussed them with friends.

You seem to think lightly of my having invited suggestions with reference to sanitary matters. In my own humble opinion we

[1] The addressee, who had earlier visited the Ashram, had written suggesting observance of united silence on the pattern of Quakers.

needlessly divide life into water-tight compartments, religious and other. Whereas if a man has true religion in him, it must show itself in the smallest detail of life. To me sanitation in a community such as ours is based upon common spiritual effort. The slightest irregularity in sanitary, social and political life is a sign of spiritual poverty. It is a sign of inattention, neglect of duty. Anyway, the Ashram life is based upon this conception of fundamental unity of life.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

HORACE G. ALEXANDER, ESQ.

WOODBROOK

SELLY OAK

BIRMINGHAM

From a photostat: G.N. 1405

180. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

June 22, 1928

I have decided to help Ganesan to the extent of Rs. 8,500 by way of loan against the security of four publications : 1. *Satyagraha in South Africa*, 2. *Gandhiji in Ceylon*, 3. *Seven Months with Gandhiji*[1], 4. *Economics of Khaddar*. But I would like you to help him and guide him. He was inclined to throw up the sponge and retire from the publishing business entirely. I thought that was unmanly and I have advised him to brave all difficulties and survive the storm. I have advised him to secure your guidance. I also suggested to him that he might get Natesan's help. But I leave all that to yu. If you will think that he should do so, you will introduce him to Natesan, whom you know so well.

The books are to be stored with Harihar Sharma. If you have any other advice on the point, you will tell me.

From a microfilm: S.N. 13433

[1] The title of the volume by Krishnadas is *Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi*.

181. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 22, 1928

I have your two letters. Maganlal's death has not only upset all my plans but has prompted me to make what may appear revolutionary changes in the Ashram. I must not therefore give you a long love-letter.

If all goes well and the friends in Europe still want me, I hope to find myself in readiness to go next year.

I can understand your being ill in India, but why should you be ill there. I expect you to return with your original bloom and vigour.

How long do you both expect to be away? Where is Menon studyng?

MRS. ESTHER MENON
HAVE, ASNAES
DENMARK

From a photostat: S.N. 14336

182. LETTER TO BEN M. CHERRINGTON

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 22, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You altogether overrate my ability to help you. I however try to answer your questions to the best of my ability.

Yours sincerely,

BEN M. CHERRINGTON, ESQ.
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
UNIVERSITY OF DENVER
DENVER
COLORADO
U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N. 14335

[ENCLOSURE][1]

I have never had occasion to study the history of the foundations in the West. My knowledge of them being too cursory to be of any value.

In my judgment, the growing need of the times however is restoring to the things of the heart, that is, moral well-being, its true place in life. Social science, according to my view, should therefore be approached from that moral standpoint. No tinkering will answer the purpose. Your foundation[1] therefore, if it is to be true to itself, should be utilized for subverting the system under which the extraordinary accumulation of riches has been possible in America. It would seem then that if you adopt my suggestion, it becomes for the most part independent of monetary help.

In view of my answer to the first question, I need hardly answer the second. But I would say independently of the first that the organization of the foundation round industrial, racial and international relationships would be any day preferable to the tradi- tional academic departments. If the view underlying my answer to the first question is accepted, you will have to do original research work.

In view of the foregoing the answer to this is unnecessary. It would certainly be wise to have all nations, races and classes represented. If you can take care of the youth, the citizens will right themselves.

I should lock up in fairly commodious but not too comfortable rooms a few professors and students and insist upon their finding a way out of the present intolerable position, if you hold with me that the present is an intolerable position.

I am unable to answer this.

The idea is good. Perhaps the most effective way of securing the proper type or exchange of visiting members would be to send out a representative to the countries from which you may want such members so that he may come in direct touch with the living institutions of the country or countries in question.

From a photostat: S.N. 14262

[1] The questions, to which these are Gandhiji's answers, are not available.

[2] The source has "function".

183. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 23, 1928

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. As I dictate this, the four-o'clock bell is ringing. Jaidevji has been guilty of a moral lapse; therefore I am atoning for it by going on a three days' fast. Today is the second day. I shall break the fast on Monday morning. Except for a slight weakness I feel nothing. Therefore there is no cause for worry at all. Does the climate there suit you? Correspondence is going on with Gurukul Kangri regarding better organization of Kanya Gurukul.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 479. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

184. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 23, 1928

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I am dictating this letter to you at four o'clock in the morning. From this you can imagine how rushed I am. Mahadev is still confined to bed with the injuries he had suffered. The papers about Sumant have only been placed on the table but I have not been able to read them. Of course, the one to read them is myself. I have so much trust in you that I believe that whatever satisfies you will satisfy me. Bhai Sumant's letter has not created a good impression on me because I saw anger in it and rage. But I shall write what I feel after I read it. I believe that in this connection I shall not be able to do anything either through Sumant or in any other way. That is why I have not insisted on disposing of the papers you sent me by putting aside other matters. I do not think I shall be able to go to Poona just now. If I do go, I should wish to stay in your hut. Premlilabehn has long ago taken a promise that I should stay in her hut. I have retained

a proviso that I shall go only if I do not have to go elsewhere for work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4787. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

185. LETTER TO BECHAR PARMAR

ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

June 23, 1928

BHAISHRI BECHAR,

If the sons of a carpenter go in for business it would not be considered proper. Only laboures are to be included in the caste. I consider carpenters, cobblers, etc., as Vaishyas. It is difficult to reply to the fourth question because there has been an intermingling of castes but we can say in general that everyone should stick to his occupation if it is not against morality and has been carried on from generation to generation. He who is considered worthy of being admitted to the Satyagraha Ashram will board at the Ashram only if he has no other means of subsistence. The Managing Committee has decided not to admit any newcomer for one year except under special circumstances since a lot of changes are made and are still being made at the Ashram. You will see in the *Niyamavali* that if you approve of the regulations, you will have to stay outside for one year and observe them. If you wish to be admitted at the end of the year you will have to know and live the Ashram life from today. If at all you wish to join the Ashram at any time, first of all you should stay there for two or three days.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5571

186. QUESTIONS ON EDUCATION—IV

Q. 11. In the aims of the Vidyapith it has been said that the progress of India depends upon its villages and not its cities. It this is so, why do you wish to convert our city boys? You are free to give village education to village boys, but city boys want to live city life. Why would you not give them the kind of education that suits them? Moreover, the funds for the Vidyapith come form cities. We shall say nothing if you carry the ideals of the Vidyapith to the villages and collect money, foodgrains and cotton.

A. Fortunately, this question is not asked by many city-dwellers or many students living in cities. How can city people, who are beginning to repent, talk in terms of village children getting village education at their own expense? The Vidyapith was born as a result of city people turning their attention to villages. The city-dwellers themselves took over running the Vidyapith after their eyes opened. If it is intended chiefly to serve the villages why should the villagers pay money for running it? Today even the educational machinery of the villages has necessarily to be run by the city-dwellers. the very same allegations that the city-dwellers level against the Government can be levelled against us by villagers: 'You city-dwellers have robbed us in the past and still continue to do so. We shall be grateful to you if you will stop doing so. We are prepared to let bygones be bygones.' We woke up when a few among us city-dwellers understood this. We became aware of the grave injustice that we have done to the villages and we decided to make atonement for it. The first part of this consists of non-co-operation with the Government with whose strength and support it was and still is possible to suck the life-blood of the villages. And the second part consists in our learning to save ourselves from the results of co-operation as we gradually understand the essence of non-co-operation. If we offered non co-operation and then sat down with folded hands, it could be said what we had not understood the meaning of non-co-operation. It is not enough not to help one who robs us of our belongings; it is also necessary to stop him from doing so and make him give up the loot. Then alone can we be said to have non-co-operated with the robber. Non-co-operation can be violent or non-violent, warlike or peaceful, one involving brute force or soul-force. We have chosen the latter alternative in each case and hence we

have come to the conclusion that some of us city-dwellers who have robbed the wealth of the villages and live comfortably because of it should, by way of atonement, serve the villages in some way and offer them something in return. The Vidyapith was born as a result of this trend of thought and it is because some of us are awake and are votaries of truth that we are day by day realizing the secret of non-co-operation and, to that extent, are making the Vidyapith purer. It will now be understood why the main part of the funds contributed by the city-dweller should be used only for the purpose of educating villagers and that this can be done at present only by the graduates from the cities who have been trained the Vidyapith.

It is my belief that if would be a betrayal of the people's trust in us if we used the funds received in the name of the Vidyapith for some other purpose. Those who donated money did so under the impression that it would be used to impart a type of education different from that which is currently given and which would be of the type described by me.

Q. 12. Over the past eight years, the stress of the Vidyapith has been on the abolition of untouchability. How many *Antyajas* have become *vinitas* or *snatakas* as a result of this?

A. I find the question strange and ignorant, for abolition of untouchability never meant, and should never mean, that we make graduates of youths regarded as untouchables. It is possible that some of them obtain these degrees in course of time. That is as it should be. It is also in the fitness of things that the Vidyapith should always be ready to help such individuals. But to turn untouchables into graduates does not in any way form part of the programme for the abolition of untouchability. The Vidyapith has proved its partiality for and its adherence to the cause of abolition of untouchability by forgoing thousands, if not lacs, of rupees and risking its very existence and by letting go help in the running of its administration from some individuals who were otherwise quite able to give such help.

Q. 13. We see clearly that the absence of *brahmacharya* has led to physical and mental enfeeblement of the nation and endeavour and enterprise have slackened. Why then have you not permitted the use of the word *brahmacharya* in the last clause about the aims of the Vidyapith?

A. The questions is well put. It is not proved that the absence of *brahmacharya* alone is responsible for the physical and mental

weakening of the nation and the slowing of sustained industry and enterprise. Why should we belittle such a diving things as *brahmacharya* by linking it with physical exercise, which, however good, is a transitory thing as compared to the former? The Westerners do not practise *brahmacharya,* yet they are not weak physically or mentally. Their untiring industry and spirit of adventure are worthy of imitation. It can be said of Gurkha, Pathan, Sikh, Dogra and British soldiers—all of whom have fine physique—that none of them are *brahmacharis.* Thes will outdo the students of our gymnasia in physical exercise. We can cite many such examples, to prove that physical strength, a certain kind of mental strength, ceaseless diligence and adventure—all the four of these can be attained without practising *brahmacharya.* The *brahmacharya* of my conception— one that leads to the attainment of the Brahman — is distinct from the above. It is both the means and the end; hence in order to practise it, I am perpared to sacrifice my body. One who is enamoured of the physical self will hardly be able to practise unbroken *brahmacharya.* Citing the examples of the *brahmacharya* of Bhishma and others here would be misleading. If we take too literally the events described in the *Mahabharata,* the *Ramayana,* etc., we shall be led along the path of untruth and fall headlong into a chasm. We shall certainly rise if we understand their inner meaning and put it into practice.

The body is not thing to be thrown away. It is a thing to be peserved. If it has become the abode of Ravana, it is also the Ayodhya of Rama; it is also Kurukshetra. We must not, therefore, ignore it. It is necessary to keep it strong and healthy and so it must have exercise. When we say this do we not give exercise its due? We preserve truth, and this amount of inducement is sufficient and has been sufficient to make exercise popular among students. On the other hand, if we try to establish an inevitable connection between exercise and *brahmacharya,* not only shall we be guilty of exaggeration but there will be real danger that a student who happens to lag behind in his exercises, instead of correcting the error in his reasoning, will blame *brahmacharya* and give it up.

Brahmacharya does not require the support of the desire for physical strength. Its necessity can be proved in other and much better ways. The West may have physical strength as well as mental strength but where does it have spiritual strength? Why envy that possession of someone by virtue of which we find that they readily succumb to passions, cannot tolerate any opposition at all, and use their will-

power, diligence and courage for the purpose of robbing another nation and destroying it? And why imitate them? Since all their strength is related to what is opposite of *brahmacharya,* it has proved to be fatal to the progress of the world in the right direction. That is why I have called it monstrous. Here I do not wish to run down the West. There are many Westerners who are worshippers of truth and morality. There are a number of *brahmacharis* there too. They understand the agonizing Western urge that I am describing here. Hence we can understand and describe the outcome of all the the Western tendencies while at the same time having a feeling of love and respect for the Westerners. Had the Western civilization been built on the ideal of *brahmacharya,* the state of the world would have been very different today and instead of being pitiable would have been attractive.

In this way, realizing the frightful results of lack of *brahmacharya* in the world, it is desirable that we should put the ideal of *brahmacharya* independently before the people. Full development of the soul is impossible without *brahmacharya.* Without it, man may act like a well-fed but wild horse without reins, but he cannot become civilized. Without it, wholesome as well as continuous activity and noble courage are impossible. Without it, the mind may well appear to be strong; however, it will be slave to a thousand passions and temptations. And though a body that has been developed without *brahmacharya* may well become strong, it can never become completely healthy from the medical point of view. It is not necessary to put on flesh and develop the muscles. It has been my experience over a long period that without *brahmacharya* it is impossible to have body which, even though lean, can withstand the rigours of heat, cold and rain and remain totally free from diseases.

I can cite innumerable instances from my own life as well as that of my colleagues of how every passion destroys the strength and soul of man. Hence I for on would say that although the body may collapse or be wasted anyone who cares for the *atman* ought to preserve *brahmacharya.*

The reasons for the physical and mental weakness of our students are quite different. Child-marriages, the fact of ourselves being the fruit of child-marriage, family responsibilities, lack or inadequacy of wholesome diet due to poverty are some of them. Let not the reader commit the error of equating lack of *brahmacharya*

with child-marriage. Very great efforts are required to rid the students of the evil habits that they have formed in their childhood. Evil customs of society must be reformed; the artificial burden imposed by education must be lightened. But since this is an altogether different subject, I shall not discuss it here. I shall say only that our students will not be able to improve their physique by physical exercise alone. We can obtain the desired results only if a simultaneous effort is made on all fronts.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-6-1928

187. AT THE HOUR OF DOOM

The policy that the Government has been following in regard to Bardoli would seem to suggest that the hour of its doom is near! H.E. the Governor's letters to Shri Munshi evoke sorrow, pity and laughter. When anyone holding a high office writes lengthy, discursive letters in his defence, we wonder why such a person should do such a thing; we feel sorry for him and then, since we cannot possibly take pity on him, we feel like laughing at him.

H.E. the Governor has surpassed his predecessors in writing letters and advancing arguments and has got entangled in his own arguments. In other words, we may say that his subordinates who draft his letters have gradually got him into a knot. If instead of defending the increase in land revenue, the Governor appointed the committee demanded by the people, the misconceptions of the people as well as those of their supporters would be cleared. The Governor is like a person who claims to possess something and though in a position to show it refuses to do so, and since he persists in his claim is treated as an impostor and laughed at.

Moreover, the head of the Information Department of the Governor who has come out in support of the latter has gone to the most absurd lengths. He has tried to refute the details cited by Mahadev Desai in his report on the misbehaviour of the Pathans. It has been customary for the people to cry out when they are subjected to atrocities. However, the Government seems to have adopted a novel practice. The ruler, instead of conducting an impartial inquiry into the people's protests summons the culprit to his presence, listens to his one-sided story and, having dismissed the complainant, thinks he has done his duty. Why should the Government appoint a *panch* as

demanded by the people to determine whether their grievances are real or otherwise? How can the guilty officials permit the appointment of such a *panch* ?

The Government says that no one protests when some Banias of Bardoli engage Pathans as watchmen; then what harm is there in the Government doing likewise? This is much like trying to shield one offence with another. And how does the Government know that the people do not resent Banias and others engaging Pathans? The fact is that the people are harassed by the tendency which is growing in Gujarat of engaging Pathans for duty as watchmen and the like. Those who engage them, as well as others, cannot in the end escape punishment for it. The point that the Government wishes to make, viz., that all Pathans are not outsiders, shows its absolute naivete. The people do not resent the Pathans as such, they can have nothing against this community, they cannot be against outsiders merely because they are outsiders. They will always respect those among the Pathans who are courageous and noble. Here the word Pathan implies disreputable characters, hired murderers. Unfortunately, there are among the Pathans those who perform such evil deeds. They come down from their mountains into India in search of wealth. Indians, especially the unarmed, timid and peace-loving people of Gujarat, are afraid of such Pathans. Good, courageous and noble Pathans would not come to India looking for employment as watchmen or gatekeepers. Banias and others look for Pathan servants, and employ them because of their capacity for harassment. Since Gujaratis can stand up to Gujaratis, timid Banias get on satisfaction by employing them and do not regard themselves well-protected. Because of their short-sightedness they do not see the harm implicit in this. However, what is the meaning of a powerful Government like the British Government imitating timid people and employing Pathans against the people? Could this not be an instance of the mind turning perverse at the hour of doom? I do not recall even this Government having acted thus before.

But what surpasses the Governor's letter and the notes of the Chief of the Information Department is the Collector's advice to the farmers. This leaflet of "good advice" asks the farmers to be courageous and not to let themselves be caught in a trap. I find in it nothing but falsehood from beginning to end and I feel pained. The Collector regards saytagraha as *duragraha*. This officer has thought up a novel way to deal with Vallabhbhai and other leaders. They are

described as “persons who have no agricultural land to lose”. The Collector, in the arrogance of his position, fails to see that their honour is a thousand times dearer to them than land that the good of the cultivators is even dearer to them than their own hon-our. Having tried to discredit the leaders by putting words into their mou-ths and ignoring them in every way, the Collector has given to the farmers of Bardoli and Valod the sinister advice to pay up their revenue dues without delay and violate the pledge that they themselves have taken and reiterated several times. The least that the farmers of Bardoli and Valod can do by way of answering this immoral and degrading advice is not to pay their dues until their demands are conceded. Land, household goods and livestocks frequently come and go; but a pledge once broken cannot be retrieved just as that which has been spat out cannot be swallowed again.

We have had a true picture of the Government’s unreasonableness in the Governor’s correspondence with Shri Munshi. As a result of this, the latter went to Bardoli, saw the people’s plight at first hand and wrote a strong and cogent letter to the Governor—on all of which he deserves to be congratulated. He has done well to proclaim his intention to form a committee and look into the matter if the Government does not appoint a committee of inquiry. If that committee gets the co-operation of leaders of all the major communities inquires into the matter without delay, the satyagrahis would get a good opportunity to put their case before public. It is desirable that this commitee should not be content with only making an inquiry into the policy of repression but should also look into the people’s grievences regarding land revenue. There is absolutely no doubt that an inquiry conducted by such a committee will help greatly in solving this problem.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-6-1928

188. CATTLE-BREEDING

The reader is aware that experiments in cattle-breeding are being carried on in the dairy attached to the Ashram. The occasion has not yet come for describing these experiments fully. One of the aims of these experiments, however, is to breed good bulls. Two such bulls are ready in the Ashram now. Those who are keen on service to the cow or improvement of her progeny are advised to come and see these bulls and, if they wish to buy them, to meet the secretary and inquire about their price and so on.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-6-1928

189. 'A DICTIONARY'

An inmate of the Ashram who has read its Book of Rules criticizes the vows in the following manner and then gives his own definitions under the caption "A Dictionary".

> Although the difinitions of the Ashram vows are exhaustive they cannot be readily understood. It is not quite clear as to what one is expected to do, hence I have put down the meanings as I have understood them or, one may say, I have prepared a dictionary of vows.
>
> TRUTH : One must renounce artificiality at any cost and discover one's inmost nature.
>
> NON-VIOLENCE : One must not forsake any creature—man or beast. Whenever there is friction and consequent suffering one should not try to make the other party suffer but take all the suffering on oneself.
>
> BRAHMACHARYA : One should calm down all passions—whether subtle or gross—when they are about to overflow. One should always be cheerful. One should be engrossed all the twenty-four hours in holy matters.
>
> ASVAD : One should sit down to a meal only when one is extremely hungry and get up when one's stomach is only half-full. One should not touch food which has been prepared by many persons with a great deal of trouble and which is likely to add to one's temptations.
>
> ASTEYA : One should reduce one's need to the very minimum. Today's needs ought indeed to be fewer than yesterday's
>
> APARIGRAHA : On every Diwali and Holi day one must get rid of any money in excess of Rs. 25 that one may have in one's possession. No one

should have more money than he would require for a year's expenses.

Why expenses for a years?

BODILY LABOUR : One should not spare oneself.

SWADESHI : One should not be disloyal to one's neighbours.

FEARLESSNESS : People are not awed by one who does not awe people.

ABOLITION OF UNTOUCHABILITY : An intense feeling that anyone regarded as wretched and miserable is not more so than oneself.

TOLERANCE : Giving up of the arrogant belief that what one cannot perceive does not exist.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 24-6-1928

190. LETTER TO SADANAND

SABARMATI,
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
June 24, 1928

MY DEAR SADANAND,

I have your letter with the enclosure.

I did have the pleasure of seeing the Assam Planters. But I have no recollection whatsoever of having told them that I was satisfied with the condition of the labour in their plantations. On the contrary, I remember having told them that my hurried visit would not permit of giving a definite opinion about the special condition of labour in the Assam Plantations and having told them what was my test of the proper condition of labourers.

I never agreed nor was there any occasion for agreement that I should abstain from political agitation among the labourers. For, it is my invariable custom not to carry on political agitation among labourers. I confine myself in dealing with labourers to their own special grievances as I did in Champaran and have done since in various parts of India.

You may make what use you like of this letter.

Yours, sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13430

191. LETTER TO LILY MUTHUKRISHNA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 24, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

Enclosed are the addresses[1] of Muthukrishna's wife and children. His brother-in-law Mr. Pillay gave these addresses. He is the Indian Interpreter in the Durban Magistrate's Courts.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13435

192. LETTER TO NILKANTH

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 24, 1928

DEAR NILKANTH BABU,

Every arrangement had been made to pack off Chhaganlal on Friday. But that very day an unforeseen circumstance prevented me from sending him to you. I am now detaining him, but I hope not indefinitely.

Sjt. Amritlal Thakkar is expected to be with you just for a short time to console the bewildered workers. But I am trying to lay my hands on someone who can take the place of Chhaganlal, if I cannot send him. But tell me meanwhile whether you would really want someone during the rainy season? Can you do much charkha work during that season? I would appreciate a telegraphic answer whether you want someone immediately and whether you can take a substitute for Chhaganlal Gandhi.

I hope you have all recovered from the shock and are continuing Gopabandhu Babu's work with added zeal.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13436

[1] These are not available.

193. LETTER TO K. NATARAJAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 24, 1928

DEAR MR. NATRAJAN,

With reference to your leaderette in the *Indian Daily Mail* of . . . I would like to say just this: Whatever might have been your impression of the conversaton between us when you kindly offered a donation for the Bardoli fund, I never wished to convey to you that I was collecting for Bardoli sufferers only, but I did include Bardoli sufferers in my estimate. But Sjt. Vallabhbhai tells me that there are no Bardoli suferers as yet worth mentioning. He says that they, the peasants of Bardoli, are too proud to accept help so long as it is possible for them to avoid it. Indeed in the initial stages of the struggle, it was they who supported the numerous workers who in Mr. Smart's language are no better than a "swarm of agitators living on the poor people of Bardoli". But when the struggle became intense, forfeitures became the order of the day and when buffaloes, the real wealth of the peasantry and the mainstay of their agriculture, became a fit prey for the *japti* officers, it was no longer possible for the people of Bardoli and Valod taluks to sustain the ever-growing expenditure. Hence it was that Sjt. Vallabhbhai issued a public appeal for pecuniary help to which our countrymen have made so prompt and so generous a response. But Sjt. Vallabhbhai is anxious that we should accept no contributions from those who do not sympathize with the struggle and want to confine the use of their donations only to the sufferers. For he contends that it is wrong to accept such help when the largest portion of the donations has to be utilized for carrying on the work of the publicity office and for maintaining the many volunteers who receive and ask for no pay but who must be fed. I am therefore reluctantly obliged to inform you that I may not accept your donation unless you could see your way to remove the restriction and support the struggle on merits. I may add that since reading your article I have seen most of the principal donors who had paid me personally and they tell me they were under no impression that their donations were to be restricted as you seem to think they were and they have confirmed my

impression that the donations were to be used for the purpose named above and that they have paid because they are in full sympathy with the struggle.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. NATARAJAN
EDITOR,
"INDIAN DAILY MAIL"
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 14446

194. LETTER TO V. J. PATEL

June 25, 1928

BHAISHRI VITHALBHAI,

I have your letters. You should know that I get your letters one day late. The short one should have reached me on Saturday and the long one yesterday on Sunday but I got them both late. It is not customary for letters to be opened at the post office but it is of course necessary to know if they are, or is it that they were posted late there?

I like everything you say in the long letter. We should certainly maintain the dignity of the Sardar in the proper way but of course not at the cost of the people's interest. Like you I believe that the Government will have to come to a settlement. Haven't you seen the *Statesman* article? It acknowledges the weakness of the Government's case.

Whatever you are doing, while yet a speaker, is enough for the present. I do not feel it is time yet for you to give up that position.

I have found out the cause for the late arrival of your letters. You address them to Ahmedabad, while it should be Sabarmati.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 14447

195. LETTER TO RAMNATH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 27, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is unfortunately true. But we have not yet been able to arrive at a stage when we can manufacture khadi thread. It will take some time.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RAMNATH
OVERSEER
P.O. SHEIKHAWAHAN
BAHAWALPUR STATE

From a microfilm: S.N. 13432

196. LETTER TO GOVARDHANBHAI I. PATEL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 27, 1928

MY DEAR GOVARDHANBHAI,

I have your letter.[1] Whilst it sets forth the substance of the conversation between you and me and then between Sheth Mangaldas and me, I would put my own view in this language :

It is open to the donors, and the donors are invited by the Labour Union, to appoint a committee of inspection which will have the powers of scrutinizing and inspecting the working as well as the expenses of the schools conducted by the Union and it will be open to

[1] The addressee had, among other things, written : "I and Sheth Mangaldas have understood from personal discussions with you that you entertain certain objections on principle regarding the joint administration. . . . At the same time, I understand that you advise us to appoint our own committee which may be called a Committee of Inspection with powers to scrutinize and inspect the working as well as the expenses of the Labour Schools. The conditions and suggestions made by this Committee, from time to time, will be given effect to by the Labour Union, and in the event of their non-compliance on the part of the Labour Union, the grant to the Labour Schools will cease automatically."

the donors upon receipt of report from any such committee to prescribe conditions or make suggestions in connection with the schools and in the event of these suggestions and conditions not being carried out by the Labour Union to suspend the grant made to the schools, provided that the donors before suspending any such grant will hear what the Labour Union might have to say by way of explanation regarding conditions and suggestions, that is, if they are unable to carry them out.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GOVARDHANBHAI I. PATEL
MEMBER, AHMEDABAD MILLS
TILAK SWARAJ FUND COMMITTEE
LALAVASA'S STREET
SANKDISHERI
AHMEDABAD

From a microfilm: S.N. 13439

197. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 27, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. I understand your anxiety to check the anti-Gandhian spirit. But you will have to fight it in the Gandhian spirit and that would be to let the anti-force expend itself without resistance. I won't be able to explain what I mean through correspondence. I am certain that your business is not to expend your energy in resisting but to devote it to consolidating your own constructive work. The question you have raised is not new. It cropped up at Belgaum when I presided and I said to the non-co-operators that they must not resist, in spite of the protest of Shyam Babu and several others. I have seen nothing since to change my view. But we must discuss this personally. When I feel that the time has come, I shall certainly write upon it.

Kshitish Babu's letter I like very vell. There is not a superfluous word in it. That kind of public instruction is not included in the non-resistance I have suggested.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 8918

198. LETTER TO RICHARD B. GREGG

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 27, 1928

MY DEAR GOVIND,

I have your letter. I am passing on your letter to Narayandas with reference to your suggestion regarding the constitution[1] and sending a copy also to Shankerlal.

Mahadev is still bedridden and will have to be so for some time. He has developed shooting pain in the part affected.

I am not likely to leave the Ashram at least before October, if them.

Yours sincerely,

PS.

I miss an index to your great work[2] . I wonder if you have the time to compile it. I know I must not inflict this work on you. But unless I ask Varadachari or Mahadev, both of whom are just now overworked, I do not know to whom else I should go. Each time I trun to the book, I miss the index.

From a photostat: S.N. 13434

[1] Of the Ashram
[2] *Economics of Khaddar*

199. A CORRECTION

Miss Schlesin of whom mention has been made in the aut biographical chapters[1] tells me that she is not, as I have stated, principal of a girls' school but that she is a teacher at a High School. The error has given her pain for which I am sorry. I may at once say that she is in no way responsible for the error.

Young India, 28-6-1928

200. THE DOOM OF PURDAH

A reasoned appeal signed by many most influential people of Bihar and almost an equal number of ladies of that province advising the total abolition of the *purdah* has been just issued in Bihar. The fact that over fifty ladies have signed the appeal shows that if the work is carried on with vigour, the *purdah* will be a thing of the past in Bihar. It is worthy of note that the ladies who have signed the appeal are not of the Anglicized type but orthodox Hindus. It definitely states :

> We want that the women of our province should be as free to move about and take their legitimate part in the life of the community in all particulars as their sisters in Karnatak, Maharashtra and Madras in an essentially Indian way, avoiding all attempts at Europeanization, for while we hold that a change from enforced seclusion to a complete Anglicization would be like dropping from frying pan into fire, we feel that *purdah* must go, if we want our women to develop along Indian ideals. If we want them to add grace and beauty to out social life and raise its moral tone, if we want them to be excellent managers at home, helpful companions of their husband and useful members of the community, then the *purdah*, as it now exists, must go. In fact no serious step for their welfare can be taken unless the veil is torn down and it is our conviction that if once the energy of half of our population, that has been imprisoned artificially, is released, it will create a force which, if properly guided, will be of immeasurable good to our province.

I know the evil effects of the *purdah* in Bihar. The movement has been started none too soon.

The movement has a curious origin. Babu Ramanandan Mishra, a khadi worker, was desirous of rescuing his wife from the oppression of the *purdah*. As his people would not let the girl come to the

[1] Pt. IV, Ch. XII

Ashram, he took two girls from the Ashram to be companions to his wife. One of them, Radhabehn, Maganlal Gandhi's daughter, was to be the tutor. She was accompanied by the late Dalbahadur Giri's daughter Durgadevi. The parents of the girl wife resented the attempt of the Ashram girls to wean young Mrs. Mishra from the purdah. The girls braved all difficulties. Meanwhile Maganlal Gandhi went to see his daughter and steel her against all odds and persist in her efforts. He took ill in the village where Radhabehn was doing her work and died at Patna. The Bihar friends therefore made it a point of honour to wage war against the *purdah*. Radhabehn brought her charge to the Ashram. Her coming to the Ashram created additional stir and obliged the husband who was already prepared for it to throw himself in the struggle with greater zeal. Thus the movement having a personal touch promises to be carried on with energy. At its head is that seasoned soldier of Bihar, the hero of many battles, Babu Brijkishore Prasad. I do not remember his having headed a movement that has been allowed to die.

The appeal fixes the 8th of July next as the date on which to inaugurate an intensive campaign against the system which puts a cruel ban on social service by one half of Bihar humanity and which denies it freedom in many cases and even the use of light and fresh air. The sooner it is recognized that many of our social evils impede our march towards swaraj, the greater will be our progress towards our cherished goal. To postpone social reform till after the attainment of swaraj is not to know the meaning of swaraj. Surely we must be incapable of defending ourselves or healthily competing with the other nations, if we allow the better half of ourselves to become paralysed.

I therefore congratulate the Bihar leaders on their having earnestly taken up the struggle against the *purdah*. The success of such a reform especially, as of all reform generally, depends upon the purity of the workers. A great deal will rest with the ladies who have signed the appeal. If notwithstanding their having given up the *purdah*, they retain the original modesty of India's womanhood and show courage and determination in the face of heavy odds, they will find success quickly awaiting their effort. The campaign against the *purdah* if properly handled means mass education of the right type for both men and women of Bihar.

Young India, 28-6-1928

201. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

SABARMATI,
Thursday [*June 28,1928*][1]

CHI. RAMDAS,

I received your letter. There can be no discourtesy in anything you write. Rather, I welcome such letters from you.

In my view, [Jayadevji's][2] misbehaviour was serious enough. But it would not be right to ask him to leave for that reason. So far, we have not sent away anyone. With what face, then, can I send him away? I have not sentenced myself to leave any time when I may have been guilty of some lapse. Nor would I be pleased if a superior or an elder relation sent me away. How, then, can I all at once send away anybody else for his lapse?

It is possible that the work I am doing may continue only so long as I live. Even so, what? I should do what seems clear as daylight to me and not leave the burden of making changes in it on those who come after me. They will do what they are able to do. If they wish to introduce changes, they will do so, or would wind it up altogether if they so wish. The Ashram cannot exist without a common kitchen for all.

[How can I agree to your going for formal education? But then you know you are quite free to do as you please][3]. I keep you tied to myself with the soft string of love. You have to stretch it just a little to break it. As for me, I do not need to test its strength. All that I am doing is to hold on firmly to one end of it, lest it might break altogether if you stretch it a little too strongly. . . .[4]

Manilal has not enough money to be able to ask you to join him in S. A.[5] It seems rather that he is in debt. I am unhappy that he

[1] From the postal cansellation mark; also, June 28 in 1928 corresponded to a Thursday.

[2] Square brackets as in the source

[3] *ibid*

[4] The rest of the paragraph is illegible.

[5] South Africa

has still not repaid the money he owes to the Ashram. However, I will never stand in the way of any of your good resolves.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

202. LETTER TO PARVATI

ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
June 30, 1928

CHI. PARVATI,

I have received a cablegram from South Africa to the effect that Pragji has won the case. I hope you are keeping well. Write to me sometimes. Though I may not be able to share your joys and sorrows, I would like to hear from you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5032

203. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 30, 1928

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I have also received Dr. Muthu's book. How did you think of sending it at this late stage? Mahadev is slowly improving.[1] He has suffered a lot of pain. It is surprising that in spite of having so much pain he had no fever at all. There is scanty rain where you are but here there is not a drop. Why is Taramati bored at Panchgani? Why should she be bored when you and Dilip are there? However, even if she wants to go, I wish you would not go to Bombay right now.

It seems to me that now the Government will have to come to a

[1] Mahadev Desai had few days earlier slipped at a well while drawing water.

settlement about Bardoli.[1] Sir Purushottamdas and Lalji Sheth came to see me. They promised to do nothing that would weaken our demands. I do not know what is happening now. But the source of Satyagraha is to be found in people's courage, firmness and calm. Is that not so?

If you can think of any corrections and alterations in the rules, let me know.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

204. LETTER TO TARABEHN JASWANI

June 30, 1928

CHI. TARABEHN,

After you reached Rangoon, I have had no letter at all from you. Divali has written that she will send you a box spinning-wheel and I have told them to send it to you. There must be at least one spinning-wheel. Do you keep good health? One must take good care. Recently a lot of changes have taken place here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8782

[1] For the settlement reached on the issue on August 6, 1928, *vide* "All's Well", August 9, 1928.

[2] For the draft constitution of the Satyagraha Ashram, *vide* "Satyagraha Ashram", June 14, 1928.

205. DRAFT INSCRIPTION FOR JALLIANWALA BAGH MEMORIAL[1]

This ground was hallowed by the mingled blood of fifteen hundred innocent Sikhs, Mussalmans and Hindus who were martyred by British bullets on 13th April, 1919. The ground was acquired from the owners by public subscriptions.

From a microfilm: S.N. 15369

206. QUESTIONS ON EDUCATION–V[2]

Q. 14. Ever since you made your entry into the public life of this country, there has been a tendency to approach you and get your views of a problem whenever a person or persons have been in doubt and have failed to reach a clear-cut conclusion. People are eager to know from you whether a certain thing on a certain occasion is right or not. I am only describing the situation as it really is. It shows that all your activity is basically of a religious nature. Would it be right that, when you are no more, these decisions be delivered by a body of persons by a majority vote if necessary? If not, is it not necessary to create what may prove to be a continuous line of knowledgeable men, versed in the precepts of dharma?

A. I do not deem it worthy that people should approach me and ask me to pronounce judgment on disputable points. It is true that all my activities, whatever their outward form, are fundamentally religious. But the fact that I am asked to pronounce judgment on every disputed matter shows that people have either not understood the principles which I follow in shaping my conduct, or they have doubts about them. And because I am known as a Mahatma or respected as a good man, and our people are credulous and not given to thinking for themselves, they continue to put all forms of questions to me. This may gratify my sense of pride or even help me up to a point in doing my work, but it does not appear to me that it helps in any appreciable way either the people or the questioners. Indeed, I

[1] This was an enclosure to "Letter to Mulkaraj", 1-7-1928.

[2] For the earlier questions and answers in this series, *vide* "Questions on Education - I", 3-6-1928, "Questions on Education - II", 10-6-1928, "Questions on Education - III", 17-6-1928 and "Questions on Education - IV", 24-6-1928.

have often felt how nice it would be if I stopped making any pronouncements and did whatever suggested itself to me silently. But in that case I must first stop this weekly that I am now conducting, as also severely cut down much of my present correspondence. That, however, would need a courage which I do not feel within myself. But, there is the great friend of man, the Lord of Death, who can extend his invitation to me at any time and put a stop to all this chatter on my part whether I agree or not.

I do not see any wrong in bodies or associations of men following my principles and giving their opinions on disputed questions by a majority vote when I am no more, or even now whilst I am alive. But as in the case of individuals so also in that of groups they must be inspired by the ideal of dharma.

Q. 15. The education in the Vidyapith is divided into three distinct stages: the primary, the secondary and the higher. How far would it be right to name these respectively as education for the village, education for the city, and education for those who would take up social service work?

A. I do not like the meanings suggested here by the correspondent to the primary, the secondary and the higher education respectively. Why should we want village people to be satisfied merely with primary education? They too have a right to receive secondary and higher education—those of them at least who want it. And the boys in the cities cannot do without primary education. The object of all the three should be the prosperity of the villages.

Q. 16. Why do you always attach so much importance to music?

A. It is sad that the study of music is generally neglected in our country today. Without it, the entire educational system seems to me to be incomplete. Music brings sweetness to the individual and to the social life of the people. Even as *pranayama*[1] is necessary for the regulation of breath, so is music for disciplining the voice. Dissemination of the knowledge of music among the people will greatly help in controlling and stopping the noise which is a usual feature of public meetings in this country. Music pacifies anger and its judicious use is highly helpful in leading a man to the vision of God. It does not mean shouting and shrieking a tune anyhow like a rigmarole, nor does it mean the singing of stage songs. I have already

[1] Breath-control

referred to its ordinary meaning above, but its deeper meaning is that our whole life should be sweet and musical like a song. It goes without saying that life cannot be made like that without the practice of virtues such as truth, honesty, etc. To make life musical means to make it one with God, to merge it in Him. He who has not rid himself of *raga* and *dwesha*, i.e., likes and dislikes, who has not tasted of the joy of service, cannot have any understanding of celestial music. A study of music, which does not take account of this deeper aspect of this divine art, has little or no value for me.

Q. 17. The art of painting means expression of the emotions of the artist through line and colour. If this definition of painting were to be accepted, would you include painting as an essential part of the scheme of national education which should be universally taught to all?

A. I have never disparaged drawing and painting, though I have certainly deprecated the blots of ink and colour passing under its name. I doubt if painting as defined by the artist could be made universal. There is this difference between music and painting: While painting can be learnt only by a few who have a natural aptitude for it, music must be and can be learnt by all. In painting too, drawing of straight lines and the figures of animate and inanimate objects can be taught to all. It is certainly useful and necessary and I want it to be taught to every child before it is taught the alphabet.

Q. 18. Some people are of the view that such subjects as grammar, compound interest, higher geometry, etc., which the learners are apt to forget in after years, should not be included in the courses to be framed for purposes of national education. Do you agree to this? If you do, why should not Urdu also I be put in the same category? When Hindus and Muslims feel the urge to come into close contact with each other and to understand each other's culture, then only will the knowledge of Sanskrit and Urdu prove useful and lasting. Knowledge of Urdu will be put to active use and hence increase only when there is respect for and a desire to learn the culture of which Urdu is the vehicle. Until then it is bound to remain no more than a religious rite like the worship of Ganesh—a formal affair without any practical value.

A. I do not understand why grammar, compound interest and higher geometry have all been classed together. I have always believed that grammar is absolutely necessary for the mastery of a

language, and that grammar and higher geometry are highly interesting subjects. Both provide innocent, intellectual entertainment. I will, therefore, accord a place to both these subjects in national education for those who go in for higher education or wish to study the science of language. In the same way, he who wants to be good at accounts cannot do so without learning compound interest. Therefore, all the three things mentioned by the correspondent in the question will have their due place in the syllabus for national education. The point is that there are things which are common to all schemes of education. Today, we have to differentiate between Government education and National education because the former is detrimental to national development. But there are many things in Government schools which will and must also be in our schools. Thus, though there are points of similarity between the two, the atmosphere in Government schools strengthens the bonds of slavery and is used at critical moments to suppress us. Therefore, such schools are to be renounced. Besides, as we have already seen, a portion, at least, of the education imparted there is wholly unnecessary; it is just a burden and nothing more. But I am straying from the subject under discussion. I have thought it fit to offer this clarification under the impression that I might not have grasped the point behind this question.

Urdu stands apart from the above-mentioned subjects; the question of its study must be considered separately. Hindus and Muslims will ultimately unite but in our national schools we must continue to strive unremittingly to bring them closer together. For this, we must acquaint ourselves with each other's religion. If the students forget whatever little of Urdu they learn, evidently they are not serious about its study and must be learning it only because they must. But this can also be said about Hindi. Only God knows how interest in Hindi or Urdu can be created among the students, but there is no doubt in my mind that its knowledge is necessary for the progress of the nation.

Q. 19. Students should have full freedom; there should be nothing which will obstruct their free growth; to achieve this objective the teachers should have no prejudices for or against anything; while they teach they should so conduct themselves as though they have no partiality for any particular rule or habit or principle. This ideal for a teacher is coming to be accepted in many places. Do you accept it?

A. What has been said above can be supported as weal as

opposed. If it does not help in preserving the real essence, it should be opposed, and if it does help, the students may well be allowed full freedom and the teachers remain as detached and neutral as they like. They may do what they wish with a view to securing the independence of the students, the only condition being that they must mix with the students to the extent of being one of them. In the language of Akha[1], I will say to them:

> Live in the world as you like,
>
> But keep constantly before your mind
>
> The aim of attaining to God at any cost.

An ideal teacher never had nor should he ever have any other aim before him.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-7-1928

207. FAIR DEALING

Shri Vithaldas Jerajani writes:[2]

Many such instances can be given. It can be proved that this kind of dealing ultimately brings profit to the business man. In spite of that, many business men resort to unfair ways, and fall because of an intense desire to make money. But a khadi worker or a khadi seller must have endless patience. Khadi has no other support except truth, patience and faith. Hence khadi stores should take note of the suggestion made by Shri Jerajani.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-7-1928

[1] Akha Bhagat, a Gujarati poet

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that a Maratha labourer had purchased a short-sleeved khadi shirt but had come back with it and was readily given a fresh. one in exchange, Thereafter, he purchased a khadi coat as well.

208. MY NOTES

DEFINITION JUSTIFIED

A reader, while sending his criticism of the Satyagraha Ashram regulations[1], suggests the following definition of nonviolence:

> Ahimsa means a desire not to hurt anyone, from the tiniest insect to God.

And he suggests the following for self-help:

> One should not heedlessly get service from another. One should not needlessly serve another.

The definition that he has given for ahimsa is worth considering. And what he has suggested in respect of self-help, though not pertinent, is proper in these days. Very few have the desire to serve others without any reason and there are not many such occasions too. But the aim here is to put a stop to the giving of alms out of a religious sentiment and to such false service, and that seems but proper.

PROFESSOR'S MARRIAGE TO A YOUNG GIRL

A reader writes:[2]

The writer has sent me the name and address of this professor. This is not an easy reform to bring about. The reformer has to make a determined attempt to change the environment wherever possible without distinction of educated and uneducated. We should not feel disheartened about the uneducated if the educated class fails to respond. Wherever possible, it is necessary to arouse public opinion against child-marriages. From such examples, we see every day that modern education has very little to do with spiritual progress. And if we go deeper, we even find that on such matters public opinion is indifferent, and to some extent it even approves of such worthless customs. If that were not so, how would any organization tolerate a man who married a girl fit to be his daughter? And that a professor? Why should students study at all under that type of professor? There

[1] *Vide* "Satyagraha Ashram", June 14, 1928.

[2] The letter is not translated here. It cited the case of a professor-widower of 45 who had married a girl of 14, despite his having five children including a married daughter.

are instances of a professor having been boycotted because he had insulted just one student. A professor who contracts child-marriage certainly dishonours students and his own society. But the students, society and all tolerate this outrage. It becomes almost impossible to commit a particular sin if society is not prepared to tolerate it. Therefore, public opinion should be patiently educated against such cruel practices as child-marriage, etc., and where peaceful boycott is possible, that weapon should be used in awakening public opinion. And in accomplishing these tasks if the young people are themselves pure and disciplined, they can help a lot.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-7-1928

209. A VOLUNTEER'S DILEMMA

A gentleman writes from Bardoli Satyagraha camp:[1]

The circumstances in which this gentleman is placed confront many in this country. The rule is that one who accepts selfless service as one's duty would sacrifice one's family for its sake. But even though we know this fundamental rule, we do not always find a straight principle to guide us in our conduct. Ordinarily the man oscillates between duty to his family and duty to his country. Under ideal conditions these two duties are not incompatible, but in the present situation we often see only conflict between them. That is so because love of family is based on selfishness and the family members are worshippers of selfishness; therefore, as a normal course it may be suggested that one should plunge into the service of the country after providing for the needs of the family in accordance with the poor living conditions in India. No one can serve the nation by leaving the family to fend for itself. But what can be called a family? And even in a family, who is to be maintained? This article is not meant for him who deceives himself by regarding all his fellow-castemen as his family. Nor is it meant for him who wishes to feed the able-bodied members of the family who sit at home. He who wishes to serve the country will continue his work by remaining above reproach in such

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had asked what would happen to his dependants, if he took up national work or joined the satyagraha fight without a wage. For a summary of the Bardoli case, *vide* Appendix "What is the Bardoli Case", June 14, 1928.

matters. It is my experience that the families of such people do not have to starve. It is the right of those who are engaged in the service of the nation to earn enough to meet their needs; and by virtue of that right hundreds of selfless workers support themselves and their dependants.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-7-1928

210. A TRUE WORKER[1]

In the death of Pandit Gopabandhu Das, India and especially Utkal has lost a true and sincere worker. He was a gem of Orissa. When ten years ago, (Shri Amritlal Thakkar had gone to Utkal to help during the famine, he used to write from time to time about the high-mindedness of Babu Gopabandhu Das and his unceasing labours and love for the people. During the days of Non-co-operation, Gopabandhu Babu was a member of the Legislative Assembly and used to practise law. Instead of accumulating wealth through his profession he founded a school in Sakhigopal which, although popular, had connections with the Government. He fully appreciated the principle of non-co-operation and severed its connections with the Government. He gave up his legal practice and accepted a life of utter poverty; he also resigned from the Legislative Council. It was not difficult for him to give up both these; it was, however, a great sacrifice on his part to sever the connections of his most cherished school (which had truth for its motto) with the Government and jeopardize its very existence, disregarding the warning given by his friends. Yet, never have I known him to have a thought of regret for what he had done. Once when the school was almost without any students, the pressure from his friends almost weakened him. He once again applied to the Government to restore the school's affiliation, but when the Government laid down compromising conditions, he at once repented his weakness in making the petition. The Government, by offering such terms, proved its own unworthiness and spared Gopabandhu Babu an undesirable relation-ship, for which he was grateful to God. The weakness of those who have a simple and pure heart sometimes proves to be their strength. And so it was with Gopabandhu Babu's weakness. When he spoke about this to me, on

[1] *Vide* also "Notes", June 21, 1928.

the one hand I could see in his eyes and in his speech? his love for his beloved school and, on the other, his extremely candid admission of weakness. This combination appeared to lend him splendour. And when last year he took me to Sakhigopal during our tour of Utkal, it pained me to see the large buildings of the school, set in a beautiful grove, now in ruins. But I saw no sign of despondency in him. He had, during the last four years, realized the great value of khadi in eliminating the poverty of Utkal. He was doing khadi work and discussed with me how to give it greater impetus. Gopabandhu Babu had joined Lalaji's Servants of the People Society and was its Vice-President. Let us hope the social workers in Utkal will take up the work of Gopabandhu Babu. The noble live beyond their death, while others are as good as dead even while living. We do but grieve over the physical disintegration of saintly persons like Gopabandhu Babu because we look at it from a selfish point of view; but such separations should not pain those who can see with a clear vision that God is not without mercy and dispenses justice. We cannot follow their purity during their lifetime. But we ought to obtain such strength by remembering, in the true sense, his virtues. We find this happening in innumerable instances. That is why we shed the fear and sorrow of death when free from delusion and thus prove the immortality of the soul.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-7-1928

211. MESSAGE TO BROACH DISTRICT CONFERENCE[1]

[*July 1, 1928*]

Those who help Bardoli, help themselves.

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-7-1928

212. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 1, 1928

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letters. Sushila, believes that she is not fit to write to me. Anyone who sincerely admits in this manner his or her unfitness will strive to the utmost to become fit. I wrote[2] to you rebuking you about the money which you owe to this place. That letter of mine you must have got during the same week in which you wrote to me about it. I had already written by then what I wish I did not have to. I should like you to become vigilant.

Even an ordinary person should observe certain proprieties.

Everyone here is all right.

I dictate this letter at four in the morning.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4740

[1] Held on July 1. K. F. Nariman presided; Vallabhbhai Patel, Jamnalal Bajaj, Abbas Tyabji and H. J. Amin were among those present. The report adds: "The Conference passed several resolutions supporting the cause of the people of Bardoli, congratulating the people of that taluk for putting up a strong fight in what they believed to be a matter of principle, exhorting the people of Broach not to buy any lands confiscated by the Government, congratulating those members of the Bombay Legislative Council who resigned on the Bardoli issue and calling upon the Hon. Dewan Bahadur Harilal Desai, the Hon. Dehlavi, the Hon. Sir Chunilal Mehta and the Thakore Saheb of Kerwada to resign."

[2] On June 19, 1928; *vide* "Letter to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi".

213. LETTER TO GOVARDHANBHAI I. PATEL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 1, 1928

DEAR GOVARDHANBHAI,

I have your letter[1]. I really do not see that I had added any new conditions. I have told you that what you have stated in your letter might be re-put in my language. If the donors wish the Committee of Inspection to have absolute powers,[2] I do not mind that at all.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GOVARDHANBHAI I. PATEL
LALAVASA'S STREET, SANKADI SHERI, AHMEDABAD

From a microfilm: S.N. 13446

214. LETTER TO R. M. DESHMUKH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 1, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 23rd June.

The suggestion[3] you make does not appear to me to be practicable. Experience has taught khadi workers that unless hand-spinning is organized by experts, it will fail. The Association will not be able to take up any yarn that may be offered to it. It can only take hand-spun yarn that is tested, that is fairly even and therefore yarn that is wound according to the instructions. And I do not think that you will be able to offer to the Association hand-spun yarn that would satisfy these conditions. Moreover if you expect to popularize hand-spinning by sporadic effort and propaganda, it will fail. I

[1] Dated June 29, this was in reply to Gandhiji's letter of June 27; *vide* "Letter to Govardhanbhai I. Patel", June 27, 1928.

[2] Govardhanbhai had written: "It would not be obligatory for the Committee [of Inspection of Labour Schools] to refer to the donors their suggestions, etc., before asking the Labour Union to comply with them, . ." (S.N. 13442).

[3] Explaining the difficulties in marketing hand-spun yarn, Deshmukh had suggested in his letter (S.N. 13627) that in order to enable the Co-operative Department to make hand-spinning la subsidiary industry in Central Provinces, the All-India Spinners' Association, rather than the Central Banks, should undertake to purchase all such yarn as the members of the co-operative societies produced.

therefore suggest to you that you examine the conditions under which the thing is being organized in Mysore and take up hand-spinning after the Mysore style. The special feature of that organization is that a certain district has been handed over to the Association for organization. The organization is financed by the Mysore State. Whether, if you make any such offer to the Association, it can take up or not is a question I have not yet examined nor does the occasion for examination arise until you have any concrete proposal.

Yours sincerely,

HON. R. M. DESHMUKH

MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE, CENTRAL PROVINCES, NAGPUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 13631-A

215. LETTER TO MULKARAJ

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 1, 1928

DEAR LALA MULKARAJ,

I have your two letters, one being a copy of your letter to Pandit Malaviyaji regarding the misunderstanding[1] that has arisen between the Sikhs and the Committee[2]. My advice is that you should promptly and finally deal with this matter. And I do not think that merely fencing[3] will set the matter right, though I agree that fencing is a necessity. There must be a proper and satisfactory settlement of this matter between the Sikhs and the Committee.

With reference to the second letter, I enclose herewith my draft of the inscription[4] to be put on the tablet.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. LALA MULKARAJ

SECRETARY, JALLIANWALA BAGH MEMORIAL FUND, AMRITSAR

From a microfilm: S.N. 15369

[1] About the boundary line

[2] Jallianwala Bagh Memorial Fund Committee

[3] An iron fencing of the Jallianwala Bagh memorial ground from where bamboo *jafris* erected by the Committee had been forcibly removed by some Akalis and others (S.N. 15367)

[4] *Vide* "Draft Inscription for Jallianwala Bagh Memorial", 1-7-1928.

216. LETTER TO SHAH MOHAMMED QASIM[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 1, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is not possible for me to notice your letter in *Young India* without verification. I am now making inquiries[2] and if I feel that publication of your letter or dealing with it in any way will serve any useful purpose, I shall certainly write about it.[3]

Yours sincerely,

SHAH MD. QASIM SAHEB
C/O SYED MD. HUSSAIN, P.O. NURHUT (GAYA)

From a microfilm S.N. 12395-A

217. LETTER TO SECRETARY, JODHPUR STATE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 1, 1928

DEAR SIR,

The enclosed letter[4] has been received by me for publication. But before I do so, I should like to have a reply to the letter on behalf of the State. I shall be obliged if you will kindly let me have a brief reply.[5]

[1] In reply to his letter dated June 9, 1928, complaining that the Muslims of Jodhpur had not been allowed to sacrifice goats on the Id Day.

[2] *Vide* the following item.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Shah Mohammed Qasim", 11-7-1928.

[4] *Vide* footnote 5 on the preceding page.

[5] In his letter dated July 5, 1928, the Secretary wrote: "Against the standing orders of the State a sacrificial he-goat was taken by a couple of Mohammedans through an open street populated by orthodox Hindus. It has been an old practice with Hindus in the State to take hold of sacrificial he-goats when they are taken out openly through their headquarters, make them *Amar* by putting iron rings in their ears and maintain them for their lives. That he-goat was thus taken possession of by the Hindus, made *Amar* and made over to the Police for protection because Mohammedans got excited over their religious conduct. The Police kept the he-goat in the City Police Station but the Mohammedans numbering about 3,000 besieged that place and demanded the animal back by show of criminal force. The assailants scaled the walls of the Police Station with lathis and swords in their hands and were about to attack the Police when Military was called who dispersed them. No casualty happened" (S.N. 12397-A).

Please return the letter at the time of acknowledgment.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure: 10 sheets

From a microfilm: S.N. 12396

218. TELEGRAM TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

SABARMATI,
July 2, 1928

JAMNADAS GANDHI
OPPOSITE MIDDLE SCHOOL, RAJKOT
COME IMMEDIATELY FOR TWO DAYS.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 8698. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

219. LETTER TO BECHAR PARMAR

July 2, 1928

BHAISHRI BECHAR PARMAR,

The drawbacks which you think belong to the barber's profession are probably to be found in all professions. If everyone, however, clings to his own profession for a living, there would be minimum friction.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5567

220. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN PATHAK

July 2, 1928

BHAI RAMNARAYAN,

I have preserved your letter of April 18 till this day with the idea of writing to you when I got a little time. I certainly felt unhappy at your leaving the Vidyapith[1]. I do believe, however, that though you

[1] Gujarat Vidyapith

have given up direct connection with it, you will always help as much as you can an institution which you have served. I trust you are keeping good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6110

221. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

July 2, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter and the *hundi*[1] for Rs. 2,700 have been received. I am in touch with China no doubt but I am not inclined to send them a wire. It would smack somewhat of arrogance. I intend to visit China if I live long enough. They want to invite me after things have cooled down a bit.

I always shrink from asking for financial assistance from you and your brothers because you give me whatever I ask for. I understand [what you say] about Dakshinamurti. The fact is that there are plenty of worthy causes in the country but not so many donors. A good cause is not held up but enough new donors are not forthcoming. Fresh tasks are always mounting.

You are right in saying that the value of the Ashram rules depends only upon those who follow the rules. The money has been sent to the Austrian friends[2].

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 6158. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

[1] Bill of exchange

[2] Frederic and Francisca Standenath; *vide* footnote 1 to "Letter to G. D. Birla", June 18, 1928.

222. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

July 3, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

I have your letter. Yes, Father wrote to me all about Kamala and Indu.

It is clear that we have not got the atmosphere for a proper settlement. Look at the Kharagpur horror! There will have to be more pitched battles before the parties come to their senses.

I wish you will not feel lonely. Let us recognize that the task before workers is not as easy as we thought at one time it was. I would like you not to lose patience and take up some plodding work with a living faith in it. Let The Song Celestial be your guide-book.

With love,

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1928. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

223. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 3, 1928

BHAISHRI BEHRAMJI,

I did get your letter about Maganlal. I have ceased to think about his death.[1] His soul is present and working in the Ashrameven today. Try and improve your health vastly. Remain cheerful both of you.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRIYUT BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA
LIFE'S NATURE CURE HEALTH HOUSE, ENGLAND

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 4370. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

[1] Maganlal Gandhi passed away on April 23, 1928; *vide* "My Best Comrade Gone", April 26, 1928.

224. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 3, 1928

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your letters. You have given a good description of the celebration there, but you could have given a still better one. You did well in narrating the whole story to Devsharmaji. Here, too, the position about rain is the same. There has been only one shower so far—it was yesterday—and even that was not sufficient for farmers to start sowing.

Mahadev seems likely to recover and be on his feet in a day or two now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 481. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

225. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 4, 1928

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. What are these two parties over the separation of Sind? I mean Jethmal[1] and others on the one hand and Jairamdas[2] and company on the other? Which are the newspapers you refer to?

You think that it is enough, if the dowry is limited instead of being unlimited. And what about the poor parents who can't pay Rs. 3,000, the lowest figure mentioned by you?

Please congratulate on my behalf the girls who are helping you in khadi-hawking. It certainly requires special bravery on the part of a Sindhi girl to wear khadi in Hyderabad and then to hawk it.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 887

[1] Jethmal Parasram
[2] Jairamdas Daulatram

226. LETTER TO SRI PRAKASA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 4, 1928

MY DEAR SRI PRAKASA,

I have your letter. Do please come whenever you can. I am not likely to move out of the Ashram for some months yet.

I am dividing your cheque equally between Maganlal Memorial and Bardoli.

I am delighted that you have at last joined the Association. I shouldn't be content till you belong to the "A" class. "B" class is certainly not for such as you.[1]

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13450

227. LETTER TO B. W. TUCKER

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 4, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Surely there was nothing in your previous letters to be ashamed of. Though I could not accept your judgment[2], I certainly appreciate the affection underlying your criticism. The attitude[3] that you have taken up with the Deputy Commissioner

[1] The reference is to the All-India Spinners' Association. According to its Constitution, "A class shall consist of persons . . . who deposit regularly from month to month . . . 1,000 yards of self-spun yarn", and the B class of those "who pay an annual subscription of 2,000 yards of self-spun yarn . . ." *Vide* "The Constitution of the All-India Spinners' Association", September 24, 1925.

[2] Tucker, an American Missionary of a Calcutta school, had written in his letter (S.N. 13440) dated June 28: "I have been heartily ashamed of the critical attitude. . . those criticisms were most of them the products of the weaker side of my nature and an effort to justify some of my attitudes about which I have much uncertainty in my own mind and heart. . . ."

[3] Tucker had written: "I was utterly astonished when I met Mr. Wares [Deputy Commissioner] to have him tell me that the offence which I had committed was that I had attended political meetings . . . that attendance at such meetings was a violation of the undertaking which the Board of Foreign Missions in America had given on behalf of its missionaries . . . if I did not cease attending such meetings . . . our school in Calcutta . . . would lose the Rs. 175 per month of grant from the

appears to me to be correct. Indeed the conduct of foreign missions in India does not in any way appeal to me. It is more expedient and mundane than correct and religious. How can a religious body accept the terms that have been imposed upon foreign missions? The English missionary effort is frankly political. It is in alliance with the Government and takes its code of conduct generally from the Government. Such at any rate is my reading. I expect that one of the reasons which determined Andrews[1] in giving up the Cambridge Mission was its over-secularity. But here too I write under correction. My own judgment is wholly independent of Andrews's attitude. The present crisis that has overtaken you, I, therefore, regard as a blessing in disguise. And if you have the conviction and the strength, you will sever your connection once for all. And, in my opinion, you will be all the fitter for becoming a messenger of Truth.

I understand what you say about my proposed visit to the West.[2] If the external circumstances are favourable and if I keep good health, I hope to go next year.

Yours sincerely,

REVEREND B. W. TUCKER
"THE MANSE", DARJEELING

From a photostat: S.N. 13451

Government and that the Government would complain to the Missionary Board to withdraw me I have already communicated the report to Bishop Fisher and the Secretary of the Board in America, and have told them that I have no inclination to accept this order. If they insist that I conform to the demand of the Government, there is no honourable course for me to take but to resign as a missionary of the Board. . .."

[1] C. F. Andrews

[2] Tucker had written: "I agree with your plan not to deliver public lectures but only to meet selected individuals and groups. It will not only save you from the severe strain . . . but it will also enable you to make your message and personality felt in larger measure. . ."

228. LETTER TO P. C. GHOSH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

July 4, 1928

MY DEAR PROFULLA BABU,

I have read the resolution[1] you have sent me. It does not betray either humility or the khadi spirit. I do not know what is humiliating in the letter written by Jamnalalji of which you have sent me a copy. Do you notice any humiliation in the language of the letter or do you derive it from the statement made in the letter? I do not nowadays know what is being done at the Council meetings. I therefore know nothing about the sanction of the ten thousand rupees, except that I might have noticed it when the resolutions were sent to me in due course. But I have no recollection now. Jamnalalji is not at the Ashram. But reading the letter as an outsider, I can see nothing wrong either about its manner or its matter. Supposing that nothing had been collected and that-all the ninety thousand rupees had only remained as promises, could Jamnalalji have given you ten thousand rupees? I know this that at the present moment the Association has not any surplus funds. I should expect you to be careful, patient and not distrustful. After all the Council has no easy job before it to manage. Instead of passing resolutions in condemnation of the Council you should have appreciated its difficulty and corrected its error where it might have been found to be in error. If I were you, I should withdraw the resolution without being asked. But, if you feel that you no longer need any assistance and if you feel unconvinced that you have been hasty in your judgment, you will of course stick to your resolution.

Yours sincerely,

DR. P. C. GHOSH

SECRETARY, ABHOY ASHRAM, COMILLA

From a photostat: S.N. 13631-B

[1] "Whereas the letter dated Bombay, the 13th June 1928, of Seth Jamnalal Bajaj, the acting President, A.I.S.A., over the loan of Rs. 10,000 sanctioned in its Council meeting at Bashirhat Is in contravention of the spirit with which the resolution was adopted in the aforesaid meeting and whereas the treatment accorded to us is humiliating and whereas injustice has been done to us in the past and is being done even now, this meeting of the members of the Abhoy Ashram resolves that the said loan of Rs. 10,000 be refused with regret and that no further loan be taken from the A.I.S.A. in future" (S.N. 14448).

229. LETTER TO MASOOD JUNG BAHADUR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 4, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for a copy of your Convocation Address at the Karve University. I had the cutting made for me from the papers which contained extracts from it and you might have noticed in *Young India* I have already dealt with the subject matter[1] of your address. I shall now give myself the pleasure of reading it through as soon as I find a few spare moments.

Yours sincerely,

NAWAB MASOOD JUNG BAHADUR
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
H.E.H. NIZAM'S GOVERNMENT, HYDERABAD, DECCAN

From a photostat: S.N. 13449

230. THE CURSE OF FOREIGN MEDIUM

The spirited plea on behalf of the vernaculars as media of instruction of Nawab Masood Jung Bahadur, Director of Public Instruction, Hyderabad State, recently delivered at the Karve University for Women, has evoked a reply in *The Times of India* from which a friend sends the following extracts for me to answer:

> Whatever is valuable and fruitful in their writings is directly or indirectly the result of Western culture . . . Instead of sixty, we can go back a hundred years and yet say that from Raja Ram Mohan Roy down to Mahatma Gandhi, every one of the Indians who have achieved anything worth mentioning in any direction was or is the fruit directly or indirectly, of Western education.

In these extracts what is considered is not the value of English as the medium of higher instruction in India but the importance and influence of Western culture to and on the persons mentioned. Neither the Nawab nor anyone else has disputed the importance or the

[1] *Vide* the following item.

influence of Western culture. What is resented is the sacrifice of Indian or Eastern culture on the altar of the Western. Even if it could be proved that Western culture was superior to Eastern, it would be injurious to India as a whole for her most promising sons and daughters to be brought up in Western culture and thus become denationalized and torn from the people.

In my opinion, whatever reaction for the better the persons named in the extracts had upon the people at large was due to the extent they retained their Eastern culture in spite of the adverse influence of the Western. I regard as adverse the influence of Western culture in this connection in the sense in which it interfered with the full effect that the best in Eastern culture might have produced on them. of myself whilst I have freely acknowledged my debt to Western culture, I can say that whatever service I have been able to render to the nation has been due *entirely* to the retention by me of Eastern culture to the extent it has been possible. I should have been thoroughly useless to the masses as an Anglicized, denationalized being knowing little of, caring less for and perhaps even despising their ways, habits, thoughts and aspirations. It is difficult to estimate the loss of energy caused to the nation by her children being obliged to resist the encroachments of a culture which, however good in itself, was unsuited for them whilst they had not imbibed and become rooted in their own.

Examine the question synthetically. Would Chaitanya, Nanak, Kabir, Tulsidas and a host of other reformers have done better if they had been attached from their childhood to the most efficiently managed English schools? Have the men named by the writer of the article in question done better than these great reformers? Would Dayanand have done better if he had become an M.A. of an Indian university? Where is among the easy-going, ease-loving, English-speaking rajas and maharajas brought from their infancy under the influence of Western culture one who could be named in the same breath as Shivaji who braved all perils and shared the simple life of his hardy men? Are they better rulers than Pratap the intrepid? Are they good specimens of Western culture, these Neros who are fiddling in London and Paris whilst their Romes are burning? There is nothing to be proud of in their culture which has made them foreigners in their own land and which has taught them to prefer to waste the substanceof their ryots and their own souls in Europe to

sharing the happiness and miseries of those over whom they are called by a higher Power to rule.

But the point at issue is not Western culture. The point at issue is the medium of instruction. But for the fact that the only higher education, the only! education worth the name, has been received by us through the English medium, there would be no need to prove such a self-evident proposition that the youth of a nation to remain a nation must receive all instruction including the highest in its own vernacular or vernaculars. Surely, it is a self-demonstrated proposition that the youth of a nation cannot keep or establish a living contact with the masses unless their knowledge is received and assimilated through a medium understood by the people. Who can calculate the immeasurable loss sustained by the nation owing to thousands of its young men having been obliged to waste years in mastering a foreign language and its idiom of which in their daily life they have the least use and in learning which they had to neglect their own mother tongue and their own literature? There never was a greater superstition than that a particular language can be incapable of expansion or expressing abstruse or scientific ideas. A language is an exact reflection of the character and growth of its speakers.

Among the many evils of foreign rule this blighting imposition of a foreign medium upon the youth of the country will be counted by history as one of the greatest. It has sapped the energy of the nation, it has shortened the lives of the pupils, it has estranged them from the masses, it has made education unnecessarily expensive. If this process is still persisted in, it bids fair to rob the nation of its soul. The sooner therefore educated India shakes itself free from the hypnotic spell of the foreign medium, the better it would be for them and the people.

Young India, 5-7-1928

231. OUR TOBACCO BILL

A correspondent who is interested in a variety of reforms asks what the nation pays for her tobacco bill. I find that we pay for unmanufactured tobacco and cigarettes 213 lakhs of rupees per year. The cost is increasing every year. The import of unmanufactured tobacco which was 1_ million lb. in 1923 rose to 5 million in 1927. There was a corresponding increase in the import of cigarettes. If the references I have consulted are reliable, we do not export any of our own tobacco. Therefore the value of that considerable crop has to be added to the figures quoted above. If every smoker stopped the dirty habit, refused to make of his mouth a chimney, to foul his breath, damage his teeth and dull his sense of delicate discrimination and made a present of his savings to some national cause, he would benefit both himself and the nation.

Young India, 5-7-1928

232. AN AMERICAN TRIBUTE

One of the many American friends who visit and sometimes stay at the Ashram writes thus[1] to Mrs. Maganlal Gandhi:

> The memory of the two days I spent in 1925 at the Ashram, and particularly, in your hospitable home, stays with me like a benediction. . . . Mr. Maganlal Gandhi, whom I have always considered one of the rarest and most beautiful souls I ever met. Though so true an Indian, he had a sympathy and understanding broad as life itself. He seemed the very embodiment of that spirit of satyagraha which I had come to know through the writings of Mahatma Gandhi, in Young India. Strength, purity and sweetness radiated from him like perfume from a flower....
>
> One felt in his presence . . . that every gift, every ability, every part of his being had been laid upon the altar, consecrated to God for the highest purpose to which man as a human being can aspire. Not that he talked religion or stressed piety—even the tone of his voice showed the same, practical, efficient man of affairs that he was about the Ashram; but religion was the spring from which the current of his life flowed, and the sanctity which emanated from his presence was the sanctity that comesfrom surrender of

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

self—the constant habit and purpose of living and doing for others. . . .

It was worth going round the world to have met him alone, when one considers all that his life means to India from the support which he gave and still continues to give to the work of the great Mahatmaji.

But I am well aware that words of commendation for the dear departed, whatever their sincerity, or the sympathy they seek to convey, are of little avail in assuaging grief like yours. I must remind you, however, that the potency for good of a soul like that of Mr. Maganlal Gandhi cannot wholly leave the sphere of its usefulness here on earth It abides in a thousand tangible ways and will be there to comfort you, even though the bodily form be removed by death. But more truly than in any other way he will be with you in your children—your two beautiful daughters and your son, who will take up the work and carry it on—the great work to which the life of your revered husband was so nobly consecrated.

Young India, 5-7-1928

233. LETTER TO BHUPEN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 5, 1928

MY DEAR BHUPEN,

I had your letter enclosing a cheque for Bardoli fight.

You remind me that you have received no acknowledgment of your previous letters. The fact is I am terribly in arrears with reference to my correspondence. And even today I had to make a search in the file and take your letter out of the order in which the letters are lying and in which I am dealing with them in order to be able to reply to you. I hope to write something about the Santhals in Young India. Don't ask me to do anything beyond that. I must not give you a letter to the Birlas, nor am I able to do anything else whilst I am buried in the Ashram where I must remain buried for the time being.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13454

234. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 5, 1928

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have received your letter. Why does Dilip have to be seen by a doctor? Have you found any reason for the plague breaking out in Panchgani? At Deolali there is only Pranlal's bungalow. Is it not possible to have accommodation there? I hope you do not have to climb up and down while you look for a bungalow. Or, can Shankaran not do it? Here the rains have been very well received.

I had dictated this letter at 4 o'clock in the morning. While I sign it, another letter from you has arrived.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
C/O SHETH PRANLAL WEVKARAN
BANGANGA ROAD
BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

235. MESSAGE TO "THE HINDU"[1]

July 6, 1928

I gladly add mine to the many tributes that will be paid to The Hindu on its Golden Jubilee. I consider The Hindu to be one of the best, if not the best, among the Indian owned dailies throughout India.

From a microfilm: S.N. 13456

[1] For its Golden Jubilee Commemoration Number, October 4, 1928

236. LETTER TO A. RANGASWAMY IYENGAR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 6, 1928

MY DEAR RANGASWAMY,

Here is my humble message[1] for the Jubilee Souvenir Number.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. A. RANGASWAMY IYENGAR
"THE HINDU" OFFICE, MOUNT ROAD, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 13457

237. LETTER TO E. C. DEWICK

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 6, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your cordial letter. As owing to the death of Maganlal Gandhi all my plans have become upset, I am not sure whether I would be able to attend the Federation meeting in Mysore. But I will not finally make up my mind against the idea of going to Mysore.

Yours sincerely,

REV. E. C. DEWICK
2 INFANTRY ROAD, BANGALORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 13455

238. LETTER TO P. RAMACHANDRA RAO

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 6, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You will see the constitution and rules of the Ashram in Young India of June 14th.[2] Much as I should like to have your daughter in the Ashram, I very much fear that she won't be able to stand the comparatively rigorous life that is being led at the

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] *Vide* "Satyagraha Ashram", June 14, 1928.

Ashram. Then she would be terribly handicapped for want of knowledge of Hindi. She will have nobody to talk to in English or Kanarese. And then there is not that literary atmosphere about the Ashram which your daughter might crave for. There is a studious attempt to create an atmosphere of labour in the Ashram. Lastly you will notice from the Ashram rules that as we have made great changes, the desire is not to take new admissions for one year. Some time is required for settling down.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. RAMACHANDRA RAO
CLOTH MERCHANT
TUMKUR (MYSORE STATE)

From a microfilm: S.N. 13458

239. LETTER TO M. P. SRINIVASAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 6, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. In my opinion, you are not bound to marry against your will, even to please your parents. But you are bound to vacate the house if your father is so desirous. Obedience to parents has well-defined limits. Disobedience becomes a virtue when the orders are repugnant to the moral code.

I do not know of any book on fasting that can be of any use to you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. P. SRINIVASAN
SUB-EDITOR, TAMIL "SWARAJYA"
2 VALLABHA AGRAHARAM, TIRUVATEESVARANPET
TRIPLICANE, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 13459

240. LETTER TO SAMANDLAL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 6, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. As the Ashram is just now undergoing many

changes, the Committee of Management has thought it desirable to restrict for the time being even temporary admissions as far as possible and since your main object is to learn spinning, I can tell you that you will be able to learn it easily in Madras as you will find many there to help you.

Yours sincerely,

BABU SAMANDLAL
C/O SJT. M. G. KARNIKAR
90 IMALI BAZAAR, INDORE (HOLKAR STATE)

From a microfilm: S.N. 13461

241. LETTER TO M. M. ASLAM KHAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 6, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You will please excuse me for not being able to give you anything. Without knowing a magazine, it is very difficult for me to frame anything be it ever So short.

Yours sincerely,

M. M. ASLAM KHAN
SUFI MANZIL, PINDI BAHAUDDIN, PUNJAB

From a microfilm: S.N. 13462

242. LETTER TO ANAND SWARUP

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 6, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Permission has already been granted for translations of “My Experiments with Truth” in Urdu and Hindi.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. ANAND SWARUP
ADVOCATE, H.C., SAHARANPUR, U.P.

From a microfilm: S.N. 13463

243. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 6, 1928

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

I have had a full chat with Dr. Zakir Husain. The position is certainly very precarious. The liabilities are accumulating and the money collected for the Jamia Millia Fund cannot be released till a proper trust-deed is made, which is the condition in the original announcement. The constitution framed is acceptable neither to Jamnalalji nor to me, nor is it in accordance with the terms we discussed when you were here. What is to be done in the circumstances? I feel that the new Committee should surrender all the powers to the professors who have pledged themselves to become life-workers, or the committee should become an active working body and take charge of the institution so far as the financial liabilities are concerned. But from what Dr. Zakir Husain tells me and from what I can see for myself, the Committee will not act swiftly and effectively. And if it neither acts nor surrenders full control to the working professors, I can see nothing but a lingering death for the Jamia and that would be a terrible tragedy. One would not mind it if it was inevitable. What should happen to the Ajmal Jamia Fund collected up to now is difficult to say. If a trust-deed acceptable to us four collectors cannot be made, the only way possible in order to release the fund is to publish the constitution that has been framed and call upon the donors to signify their wish whether they want their donations to be given to the Committee under the constitution. of course, this is a most unsatisfactory thing and hardly a step that can be taken, if we will cherish the memory of Hakim Saheb[1] and value the good of the Jamia. Is it then not possible to give the full control to the working professors and then they can frame a proper trust-deed and release the fund already collected and make an effort to collect more?

Yours sincerely,

DR. M. A. ANSARI
1 DARYAGUNJ, DELHI

PS.

Dr. Zakir reminds me that I have said nothing in this letter about the time-limit. Time in this case is of the essence. I therefore hope that you will come to some definite conclusion long before so that there

[1] Ajmal Khan

may be either a decent burial to the Jamia or that the Jamia may resume its work with some degree of safety.

From a microfilm: S.N. 14930

244. LETTER TO R. S. KADKIA

July 6, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is not possible to give you a detailed reply to all the questions you have put, but it is possible to give you a general reply, namely, that wherever you can curtail your requirements so as to bring yourself to a level with the poor you should do so, and, in considering your requirements, you should as a rule decide against yourself. And if you do so, you are likely to reach the real minimum.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. S. KADKIA
CONGRESS OFFICE, HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat: S.N. 13460

245. LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 6, 1928

DEAR BROTHER,

I got your letter after the Governor of Kabul had already seen me. We had a very affectionate and cordial interview. I was however sorry that I did not know of his coming beforehand.

I enclose herewith a copy of my letter[2] to Dr. Ansari. It speaks for itself. Dr. Zakir Husain has seen it and he agrees with its terms.

Yours sincerely,

MAULANA SHAUKAT ALI
CENTRAL KHILAFAT COMMITTEE, DONGRI, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 13465

[1] In reply to his letter dated July 3, requesting Gandhiji to meet Ali Ahmed Khan, Governor of Kabul

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. M. A. Ansari", 6-7-1928.

246. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 6, 1928

DEAR BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. Your balance-sheet is all right but you need to try still harder. Remain where you are and try to observe the rules to the best of your ability. Inspire your wife also to try and practise the ideal of self-control. You will not succeed so long as you only try to reason with her. Cravings of the body cannot be quietened by arguments. But when she sees in you firmness combined with love, she cannot but be infected by your aspiration. Do not give up the job hastily. But the moment you find that you may be violating truth for the sake of the job give up the latter as we would let go a serpent we may find on our hands.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAISHRI BHAGWANJI PURUSHOTTAMDAS
C/O VRAJLAL PRADHAN & CO.
PROMA, BURMA

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9792. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

247. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA[1]

[After *July 6, 1928*][2]

DEAR BHAGWANJI,

Come when all your expectations have died out and only a sense of duty is left behind and there is perfect agreement between you two.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9789. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter enumerating his difficulties in joining the Ashram and from the contents appears to have been written after the preceding one.

[2] *ibid*

248. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 7, 1928

CHI. VASUMATI,

I get your letters regularly. I see that it is a difficult task to persuade the people there to improve the cleanliness. How can anything be done in a matter like this so long as the head of the institution is not keen about it? All the same, you should slowly try to bring about changes in a manner which will cause no friction. You should never get upset, but should show infinite patience.

You must have come to know that Prabhavati fasted for four days to cure her rheumatism. It is impossible to say yet whether the rheumatism has disappeared.

A prolonged discussion is going on regarding the common kitchen.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. VASUMATIBEHN
KANYA GURUKULA

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 482. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

249. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 7, 1928

BHAI HARIBHAU,

Read the accompanying letter and let me know what truth it contains. The correspondent has told the story about Bihar, but it concerns Rajputana. Probably, therefore, you will be able to say more about it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 6060. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

250. MONKEY NUISANCE

A reader writes to say:[1]

This problem is worth giving a thought to. It is not only farmers who are harassed by monkeys. In places like Prayag, Vrindavan, etc., monkeys harass even the citizens a great deal. People who are thus troubled would not be displeased if the animals were killed or removed by someone.

Although I thus admit that monkeys are a nuisance, I cannot immediately suggest the remedy of killing them.

There can be no comparison between a rabid dog and monkeys. The former is bound to die from the disease itself. Anyone who kills it saves it from the torture and spares others the danger of contracting the disease while in the case of monkeys, there is no question of doing good to them by killing them. Again, it is not as if the nuisance of monkeys cannot be prevented without killing them.

It is often seen that, wherever there is this monkey nuisance the fault lies with us. Monkeys are petted, they are given food and are treated in many ways which encourage them to take liberties with us. Monkeys are a very intelligent species. They understand us immediately. I had seen in Vrindavan that in aIl Indian locality they would fearlessly continue to destroy things, while in the area occupied by Europeans there is no trace of monkeys because they are afraid that they would get a beating if they went there. Tile threat of beating is also a form of violence. There is no need to concern ourselves here in solving that complex problem. The question is only whether or not monkeys can be saved from the final form of violence—that of killing. I feel that so long as the situation is under our control, we may perhaps be able to spare them capital punishment.

Readers must know that nowadays trade in monkeys is being carried on a large scale. Thousands of monkeys are exported to Europe for making various kinds of experiments on them and in fact many cruel experiments are made on them before they are killed. Therefore, it is but proper to adopt whatever measures we can to prevent an increase in their number.

Now remains the question of death penalty. I realize that, if it is our dharma to protect fields and, if there is no other way of protecting

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had asked Gandhiji whether monkeys might be killed in the same way as rabid dogs.

these from the nuisance of monkeys, then the necessity to kill them does arise. But that is not non-violence. The slaughter of animals even for the sake of saving fields involves violence. That some such forms of violence are part and parcel of human life and are unavoidable is a fact that we encounter at every step. It is difficult to say when the killing of monkeys becomes actually inescapable, but it is not difficult to find out ways to spare ourselves this slaughter. If in spite of those remedies the nuisance does not diminish, each should work out his own dharma. There can be no uniform general rule for the killing of monkeys. Violence is never an independent dharma. There is only one such dharma and that is non-violence. Violence is a measure of the degradation of man; non-violence is his highest achievement.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-7-1928

251. MY NOTES

STUDENTS' SACRIFICE

Students are contributing to the Bardoli Satyagraha Fund by saving money on their food and clothing and by working; that is a good sign. One more example of such sacrifice is that of the students of the Kutchi Visa Oswal Jain Hostel. They have informed me that they had stopped drinking milk for a month and thus saved Rs. 220, which amount their association has donated to the Fund. For this sacrifice the students deserve thanks and the Bardoli satyagrahis should note that, having accepted such sacrificial help, they have a duty to adhere more firmly to their pledge. It is no exaggeration to say that, at present, the honour of India rests in their hands.

WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS DO?

Three students write to say: "We wish to serve the country. Do please let us know through *Navajivan* how we can do this while continuing our studies and remaining where we are". These students have sent their names, addresses and age, and add: "Do not publish our names and addresses, etc. Don't even write to us. We are not even in a position to receive your letters." It is difficult to give advice to such students. What advice can be given to those who cannot even receive a reply to their own letters? Nevertheless, this much can be said that purity of soul is itself a good service to the country. Have these

students acquired purity of soul? Is their heart pure? Have they been able to stay away from the polluted atmosphere prevalent amongst students? Do they practise truth, etc.? The very fact that they are unwilling to receive a reply implies that something is amiss. Students should learn to shed such fears. They should learn to put forward their views before elders with boldness and determination. Do students wear khadi? Do they spin? They are taking part in national service even if they do this. Do they serve a sick neighbour in their free time? Do they spare some time to clean up, by their own efforts, any filth in their neighbourhood? Many such questions can be asked, and if students can answer them satisfactorily, even today they will have a place of honour among public servants.

MARRIAGE OF OLD WITH YOUNG

Last week I had to tell the story of a professor's marriage with a young girl.[1] This week some Bhatia friends have written to me about the marriage of a wealthy Bhatia. This octogenarian has got married to a young girl by giving Rs. 25,000 or 30,000 to her father. In this marriage, it is difficult to say who is more to blame—the eighty-year-old man who has married for the fifth time a young girl or the father who for greed of money has sold off his daughter like a helpless cow being sent to a slaughter house I have heard that some Bhatia gentlemen made efforts to thwart this greed, but the eighty-year-old bridegroom, proud of his wealth, turned them out.

Only last week, I thought out the remedy to prevent such cruelty. I can think of no other method but creating non-violent public opinion and non-violent boycott. And this would mean not only boycott by the caste, but by the whole society. All relations with such people should be severed, except when helping them when they need food, or during illness or in case of death. Without this, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to awaken such men out of their lust.

CHILD-WIDOW

The reader will recollect that I had written a few weeks ago about the intention of Shri Muljibhai Barot to marry a young girl. Later I had congratulated Shri Muljibhai on having given up the idea of this marriage, because of the article in the *Navajivan* and the

[1] *Vide* "My Notes", 1-7-1928, sub-title, "Professor's Marriage to a Young Girl".

criticism of the Brahmabhatt caste. Subsequently I received a letter that the announcement was nothing but a fraud and that Shri Muljibhai had got married secretly without the knowledge of his caste. I had decided to write about this last week, but could not do so for want of time. Now news has come that Muljibhai has passed away leaving the young girl a widow. We would not wish the death of a person whether good or bad. We wish that the bad may develop good sense—on the principle of wishing to others what you wish for yourself.[1] But what about the young widow? It is for society to consider this question. Even if a fourteen-year-old girl declares that she wishes to remain a widow, this has no meaning. Such a girl would certainly wish to remarry if cruel public opinion is not against her doing so. The leaders of the Brahmabhatt caste should rush to the rescue of this poor girl. If the leaders have not understood their duty, the young men of the caste should patiently convince them and rescue the young girl. If the leaders are not convinced, but if the relatives are, then too, such problems can be solved. But to solve such problems the well-wisher himself should possess the requisite qualities. He should have purity of mind and heart and also patience. These qualities are required for the achievement of swaraj through peaceful means; these very qualities are needed also for the solution of such problems as the marriage of young widows and so on.

HAWKING KHADI

Shri Rishabhdas, of Wardha Khadi Bhandar, writes of his experience while he went round hawking khadi:[2]

All hawkers of khadi must be having such experiences. Shri Malkani has written in one of his letters that selling khadi from door to door is for him a valuable training in politics. For others it is a training for developing patience. For Rishabhdas this training leads to further strengthening of his faith in God. But faith in God is not something so easily attainable. Rishabhdas and his colleagues got success immediately, but God puts many of his devotees to a test even unto death. A true devotee does not link his faith in God with the achievement of success. Success and failure are one and the same to him.

[1] आत्मवत् सर्वभूतेषु

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that, while selling khadi from door to door in Maharashtra, he had received further confirmation of his faith in God.

The contribution of the method of *svavalamban*[1] towards carrying out propaganda for khadi should not be underestimated. There is no doubt that this is popular and that it is the most straightforward course of action. Shri Jethalal Govindji who is working for khadi in Bijolia and who is a staunch advocate of this system writes to say:[2]

According to him other methods should also be adopted along with this one. But very few have made a scientific study of the method of self-reliance, and even fewer have had any experience of it. Therefore, wherever this system is practised, it would prove very useful if khadi workers write about their experiences. Everyone can propagate this system at least in his neighbourhood. But as the saying goes, 'one cannot go to heaven before one's own death'; similarly anyone who does not produce his own khadi cannot carry on propaganda for others adopting this principle.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-7-1928

252. LETTER TO SHIV DAYAL SWHANEY

July 8, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am sorry that you, a young man of 27, should give way to despondency. You should be brave and surmount all domestic difficulties You may not leave your wife and children as you propose. Suicide is undoubtedly a sin, which you must not commit on any account. It is no use coming to the Ashram in the expectation of peace. Peace we must find wherever we are. But as I have said in my telegram to you, you should consult Lala Lajpat Rai and act I accordance with his advice. It would be difficult from this distance for me to guide you. I shall be glad to hear in reply to this is letter that you have regained your elasticity and that you have shed your weakness.

[1] The principle that one should spin enough yarn to meet all one's needs by way of cloth; literally, 'self-reliance, self-sufficiency'

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that, the requirement of cloth per head being very small, farmers and agricultural labourers, if trained, could produce all that they need.

The balance of the money sent by you has been transferred to the Bardoli Fund.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SHIV DAYAL SAWHNEY
C/O PANDIT MULKRAJ
OVERSEER, CAMP, LELLPUR, PUNJAB

From a microfilm: S.N. 13467

253. LETTER TO AMBALAL SARABHAI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 8,1928

DEAR BROTHER,

A district conference is to be held here regarding Bardoli. It has been unanimously decided to invite Shri Kelkar[1] to preside over it. I feel that it would add to the effectiveness of the conference if you could agree to be the chairman of the reception committee. If you have no objection to it in principle, I would urge you to accept the position. I feel there is need at the present juncture for us to express our unanimity of views.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11121. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

254. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 10, 1928

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. Your efforts seem to produce good results. The more your words are inspired by love, the more the effect they will have. You should work for the in institution[2] there as if it were your own. After having drawn people's attention to the drawbacks there, you should adopt a generous attitude so that they may not feel hurt but, on the contrary, may thank you.

[1] N. C. Kelkar
[2] Kanya Gurukula; *vide* "Letter to Vasumati Pandit", 7-7-1928.

I trust you are keeping very good health. Instead of telling you about the things here in just one sentence, I have asked Kusum to write to you. You will, therefore, have the maximum information and, since she will write at the same time that I do, unnecessary postage will also be saved. I am sure you have made it a practice to keep account of every pie that you spend there. If you have not, you should start now.

Ramdevji, too, writes to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 483. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

255. LETTER TO HAFIZ MOHAMMED ABDUL SHAKOOR[1]

July 10, 1928

I am opposed to the purdah system if only because men do not put themselves behind the purdah.

From a microfilm: S.N. 13441

256. LETTER TO SHAH MOHAMMED QASIM

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 11, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

With further reference to your letter of 9th ultimo, I enclose herewith a copy of a letter[2] received from the Jodhpur Darbar in reply to my enquiry.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure: 2 sheets

SHAH MOHAMMED QASIM
C/O SYED MOHAMMED HUSSAIN
P.O. NURHUT, GAYA

From a microfilm: S.N. 12397

[1] According to S.N. Register this was a reply to Hafiz Mohammed Abdul Shakoor's letter dated June 28, 1928, from Madras asking Gandhiji for his views on *purdah* among Muslims.

[2] *Vide* footnote 3 to "Letter to Secretary, Jodhpur State", 1-7-1928.

257. LETTER TO MANAGER, INDIAN PRESS LTD.

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 11, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and the book called *The Coming Renaissance*[1]. I am very sorry to have to tell you that I have not a minute to spare for reading and reviewing the book. Nor is [it] usual for me generally to review books in the pages of *Young India*. Do you wish me to return the book?

Yours sincerely,

THE MANAGER
THE INDIAN PRESS LTD., ALLAHABAD

From a microfilm: S.N. 13471

258. LETTER TO K. R. BHIDE

July 11, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Your Father will be welcomed to the Ashram whenever he comes. But either he or you will please inform the Secretary of the Ashram beforehand when he may be expected.

With reference to your questions, you can answer them for yourself if you are a constant reader of *Young India* or *Navajivan*. If you are not, I should suggest your searching the files of these papers.

I think it is possible for you to receive training at the *Young India* office if you can begin work as a common labourer. But this depends more upon the manager than upon me as I do not interfere with the management of the press.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. R. BHIDE
LIMAYE BUILDING, CHIKALWADI, BOMBAY-7

From a microfilm: S.N. 13473

[1] By P. M. L. Varma

259. LETTER TO B. M. TWEEDLE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 11, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and the packet of pencils. You have correctly guessed when you say that I might not approve of your method of raising funds for clearing your debt[1]. It would seem to me to be easier to make a direct appeal for a donation than to sell a particular thing at double or treble its cost price. In either case an appeal to one's charitable instincts has got to be made. Why then mix it up with the selfish instinct? But I may not argue.

As required by you I am reposting the box.

Yours sincerely,

MISS B. M. TWEEDLE
WESLEYAN MISSION VILLAGE INDUSTRY
TRIVELLORE, CHINGLEPUT DISTRICT, SOUTH INDIA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13472

260. LETTER TO GOVARDHAN BHAI I. PATEL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 11, 1928

DEAR GOVARDHANBHAI,

I thank you for your letter[2]. I regret the decision of the Committee.[3]

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13475

[1] On account of the new school building.

[2] Dated July 7 in reply to Gandhiji's letter of July 1. Govardhanbhai had written: "The subject-matter of my recent correspondence with you was placed before the meeting of the contributors to the [Ahmedabad Mills] Tilak Swaraj Fund for their consideration.... The meeting rejected the proposal for a Committee of Inspection and reaffirmed their previous resolution for a Committee of Joint Administration quoted in my letter to you of the 26th June 1928. . . ."

[3] A copy of this was forwarded to Shankerlal Banker for information.

261. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 11, 1928

DEAR PRAKASAM,

May I not have a reply to my last letter[2]?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. PRAKASAM
"SWARAJYA", MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 13634

262. LETTER TO SHANKARAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 11, 1928

MY DEAR SHANKARAN,

I have your letter and the cheque sent to Chhaganlal Joshi. The names will appear in due course.

There is no breach of *asteya*[3] when the donor's consent is obtained for the use of his donation for a cause other than the one or which it was originally meant.

On the principle that a labourer is worthy of his hire, a worker may be considered to have reduced his wants to nil when he is satisfied with the minimum of food and clothing and accommodation and then too if he makes no condition that he should be fed and clothed against service. The institution that takes work from him will feed him and clothe him for its own sake. One who has surrendered himself completely will cheerfully face starvation, if starvation is to be his lot. After all self-surrender is a mental attitude. The millions who starve helplessly have surrendered nothing because their minds do not co-operate with their enforced starvation.

I am sending you this letter before knowing your new address. I hope you will receive it.

From a photostat: S.N. 13469

[1] A copy of this was forwarded to Secretary, A.I.S.A., Ahmedabad, with reference to his letter.

[2] Dated May 24, 1928

[3] Non-stealing

263. LETTER TO S. A. SAHASRABUDDHE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 11, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have all your letters. I do not necessarily acknowledge all the correspondence I receive, if only for want of time. I do not notice in *Young India* all the functions that may take place with reference to men dead or alive whom I may admire.

I have not altered my opinion that I have expressed before about Shivaji and other heroes. But because they are not my gurus nor my models, I am not blind to their heroism nor to the important part they have played in the world drama.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. A. SAHASRABUDDHE
ZAVBA'S WADI, PAREKH BUILDING
GIRGAON, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 13470

264. LETTER TO M. B. NIYOGI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 11, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. I am glad that Sjt. Awari is keeping well.

I know that he holds very strong views about khadi. My own opinion is that after having explained his position if he is still compelled by the jail authorities to wear the uniform made of non-khadi, he ought not to make it a point of hunger-strike. I see no harm in his agitating for uniform made of khadi and I think that you should help him in this direction. His objection cannot be to the jail

[1] Dated July 7, which read: "Manchar Shah Awari of Nagpur had led a movement known as Sword Satyagraha and was sentenced to four years' rigorous imprisonment. . . . Mr. Awari insists that he should be permitted to wear his own khaddar clothing. . . . The jail authorities are prepared to allow him to use his own khaddar next to skin but insist on his wearing the jail uniform over it. Mr. Awari is not agreeable. . . . I request you to give your opinion on the point whether wearing private khaddar clothing next to skin and jail uniform over it, offends against the vow to wear khaddar; and whether death is a better alternative to acceptance of the compromise proposed by jail authorities."

uniform, but his objection is and can be to the kind of cloth of which the jail uniform is made. He can even offer to have khadi uniform made at his expense. Without his prompting, I do not see with you should not see the authorities and have this very simple matter regulated without any fuss.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. B. NIYOGI
ADVOCATE, CRADDOCK TOWN, NAGPUR

From a photostat: S.N. 13474

265. N0TES

EDUCATION FOR SERVICE

A friend sends the following interesting extract from *The Service of Motherhood* by M.E.D. Smith:

> Our educational methods have been far too slipshod. It has, for instance, been too much the practice at our universities to let the young men learn if they choose, but if they find study distasteful, then to allow them to idle their time away almost at their own pleasure. It seems strange that it should have been overlooked what a wrong was thereby being done to the nation, for wrong it assuredly is, since every member of a nation is born into it to serve, not to be a mere passenger. For the slack methods pursued certain of our educational heads are much to blame. Blind to the needs of the hour and dwelling in an atmosphere of aloofness and self-complacency, they have failed to appreciate the real aim and the vital importance of education. Let us hope that in the future it will be accounted as great a disgrace to omit to take advantage of opportunities for learning as it now is for a soldier to desert his post.

Be it remembered that this is said of national education as of national military service. It will be as wrong to serve in an army of hirelings drilled and paid to crush the spirit of their kith and kin as it would be to belong to an educational institution designed to subserve the purpose of a foreign domination.

KASHI VIDYAPITH

Principal Narendra Deva of Kashi Vidyapith, Benares Cantonment, sends the following[1] for publication:

[1] The extract which is not reproduced here gave the date of reopening of the Vidyalaya, subjects taught, minimum qualifications for admission, etc.

This is one of the few national institutions that still retains its existence, thanks mainly to Babu Shivaprasad Gupta's faith and generosity.

ARE WE GETTING POORER?

Professor Sam Higginbottom sent me some time ago for answer a series of questions[1] on India's poverty. As his inquiry was serious and as I know him to be desirous of helping us to solve this difficult problem, I thought that instead of merely giving my own answers, I would seek the assistance of experts in the matter. Letters were therefore addressed to a few such friends asking if they would make time to give their considered opinion. Professor C. N. Vakil of the University of Bombay has kindly sent me his opinion in a series of articles[2]. The first instalment the reader will find elsewhere in this issue.

ALL-INDIA COW-PROTECTION ASSOCIATION[3]

A general meeting of this Association will be held at the Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, at 3.30 p.m. on 25th instant to consider the following resolution[4]:

> "In as much as the All-India Cow-protection Association has not been able to command public attention and sympathy commensurate with the all-India character it has claimed, and inasmuch as its activities have been confined to the slow spread of the objects of the Association and especially to helping to conduct a dairy and tannery at the Satyagraha Ashram in terms of the objects of the Association, and inasmuch as the subscriptions and donations are mainly confined to those who are interested in the experiment, and inasmuch as the numerous goshalas and pinjrapoles which were expected to respond to and be affiliated to the Association have failed to do so, the existing members of the Association hereby resolve to disband it and to adopt the less pretentious title of Cow-protection and Preservation Society and to entrust the affairs, management and

[1] *Vide* "Our Poverty", 6-9-1928.

[2] Entitled "The Poverty Problem in India". These were published in *Young India* on July 12, 19 and 26, August 2 and 9, 1928.

[3] Formed by Gandhiji on April 28, 1925

[4] For resolution as amended and adopted at the meeting, *vide* "Service, not Protection", 2-8-1928.

control of the funds and stock of the Association to the following Committee of Management of the Society with full powers to disburse the funds, conduct the said experiments, to add to their number and otherwise carry out the objects of the Association and to frame a constitution and rules for the management of the Society and to make such amendment thereof as may from time to time be required."

It is unnecessary for me to write anything more on the reason for bringing forward the resolution. Sjt. Jamnalalji and I have felt for a long time that we were not doing justice to the Association or thepublic by running it under the ambitious general title without showing work or results in keeping with the high title. The funds too are principally those that he has received from personal friends and some received by me for the experiments, which I believe are most important if the cow is to be saved from destruction. It therefore seems that it would be proper and more honest to make the Association a small society of those who are interested in and approve of the methods advocated in these pages for the preservation of the cow. The funds at the present moment are about Rs. 17,000, the stock consists of a few books mostly gifts received by me. The current monthly expenditure is about Rs. 55. The liability of the Association is to disburse such expenses as may be incurred by the Ashram for the purpose of conducting the experiments entrusted to it.

Young India, 12-7-1928

266. AWAKENING AMONG STUDENTS

The message of Bardoli has not yet been fully delivered. But incomplete as it still is, it has taught us lessons which we shall not easily forget. It has revived our drooping spirits, it has brought us new hope, it has shown the immense possibilities of mass non-violence practised not from conviction, but like most virtues with most of us as a policy. The descriptions I have heard from eye-witnesses of the wonderful demonstration held in Bombay in honour of Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel, the spontaneous offering of Rs. 25,000, the affectionate besieging of his car, the showering of gold and bank notes on him as he was passing through the huge crowds, the ovation that signalized his entry into the theatre are proof of what Bardoli has wrought in the space of a few months by its courage and sufferings.

Marked as the awakening has been throughout India, it has been more marked amongst the students and the most among the Bombay students. I tender my congratulations to Sjt. Nariman and the brave lads and lasses on whom he has acquired such a wonderful hold. And among the students the eye-witnesses single out the three Parsi girls, Miss Davar and Misses Bhesania, who by their boundless enthusiasm and courage are said to have electrified the student world in Bombay. Mahadev Desai has a letter from a student in a Poona College whose students on the 4th instant spontaneously observed the Students' Bardoli Day, stopped all work and made collections to which there was a willing response. May this manifestation of courage on the part of the students of Government colleges and schools never die out nor fail at the crucial moment. The letters being received from students of self-denial practised by them for the sake of paying their humble mite to the Bardoli funds are most touching. The students of the Gurukul Kangri, Vaishya Vidyalaya, Sasawane, a hostel in Ghatkopar, Supa Gurukul near Navasari and several other institutions which I cannot recall at the time of writing have been either doing labour to earn a few rupees or denying themselves milk and ghee for a month or less.

It would have been monstrous if the lesson that the rustics of Bardoli, especially the illiterate women whom we have hitherto refused to count amongst the fighters for freedom, have been teaching us by their silent suffering and cool courage, had been wholly lost upon us. It can be said without fear of contradiction that it was the students of China who led the fight for freedom in that great country, it is the students in Egypt who are in the forefront in Egypt's struggle for real independence. Students of India are expected to do no less. They attend schools and colleges or should attend not for self but for service. They should be the salt of the nation.

The greatest obstacle in the way of students is fear of consequences mostly imaginary. The first lesson therefore that students have to learn is to shed fear. Freedom can never be won by those who are afraid of rustication, poverty and even death. The greatest fear for students of Government institutions in rustication. Let them realize that learning without courage is like a waxen statue beautiful to look at but bound to melt at the least touch of a hot substance.

Young India, 12-7-1928

267. LETTER TO BARBARA BAUER

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 13, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. I don't know how the story about miraculous powers possessed by. me has got abroad. I can only tell you that I am but an ordinary mortal susceptible to the same weakness, influences and the rest as every other human being and that I possess no extraordinary powers.

Yours sincerely,

MISS BARBARA BAUER
BIG SPRING, TEXAS, U.S.A.

From a microfilm: S.N. 14349

268. LETTER TO DR. JOSIAH OLDFIELD

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 13, 1928

MY DEAR FRIEND,

What a joy to receive your letter[2] after so many years.

You must have seen in the Press that I could not make up my mind to go to Europe this year. I have a mind to do so next year. If I do I have no doubt that we shall meet somewhere. But whether I shall be able to come to your Hospital as a friendly visitor or as a patient to receive medical and nursing care I do not know.

Yours sincerely,

DR. JOSIAH OLDFIELD
LADY MARGARET HOSPITAL, DODDINGTON, KENT

From a photostat: S.N. 14352

[1] Dated May 24, 1928, which read: "My request of you is this: To resurrect my dear brother who recently passed away.... I know you can accomplish it in a Master's way.... I know you are endowed with these Divine Powers . . ." (S.N. 14314).

[2] Lated June 20, 1928, which read: "Pray . . . be sure of a very hearty and warm welcome if you can spend any time under my care here .. . If you need any medical or nursing care we will gladly give it to you. . ." (S.N. 14331).

269. LETTER TO L. CRANNA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 13, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

With reference to your letter[1] of the 18th May last, the letter written to "Sustaining Members" to which I sent you the reply[2] was addressed by yourself to me. It bears your signature. I enclose herewith the original.

It is amusing how misrepresentations some of which appear to me to be wilful, are made about me and my belief in so many papers—even those which profess to be conducted on Christian lines.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure: 1

L. CRANNA, ESQ.
C/o Y.M.C.A., SINGAPORE

From a photostat: S.N. 14345

270. LETTER TO ADA ROSENGREEN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 13, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and the German book[3]. I think I have told you that I do not know German.

Nothing is yet settled about my visit to Europe next year.

I hold strong views about divorce. My own opinion is that if husband and wife do not agree temperamentally and there is always a jar between them, they should live in voluntary separation. But I do not accept the propriety of either party remarrying. Being a believer in the necessity of celibacy, I naturally incline to the view that the

[1] Which read: "I am at a loss to know how my letter to Sustaining Members got into your hands, and would be very grateful to you if you would enlighten me" (S.N. 14313).

[2] Dated May 4, 1928, *vide* "Letter to L. Cranna", May 4, 1928.

[3] Prepared by the Neutral Committee which had investigated the cause of the World War.

greater [the restraint] the man or woman exercises the better it is for himself or herself.

Yours sincerely,

M. ADA ROSENGREEN
LIDINGO, SWEDEN

From a photostat: S.N. 14346

271. LETTER TO H. N. MORRIS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 13, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and a copy of Helen Keller's book, *My Religion*.

I am not unfamiliar with Helen Keller's name and work. But I am sorry to have to inform you that I get not one moment to read much that I should like to read. The book you have sent me therefore still remains unread. But of course it will be read with interest by the inmates of the Ashram.

As you must have seen in the papers, I have to abandon the idea of visiting Europe this year. It is just probable that I may pay that visit next year.

Yours sincerely,

H. N. MORRIS, ESQ.
140 WITHINGTON ROAD, WHALLEY RANGE, MANCHESTER

From a photostat: S.N. 14347

272. LETTER TO SAMUEL M. HASSAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 13, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I consider myself unfit to guide you in choosing your course in medicine.

Your name has been duly sent to the Manager, *Young India* Office.

With reference to the Hindu-Muslim unity, etc., I agree with you that there should be a perfect union between the different communities and a great effort is being put forth in order to bring about that unity.

Regarding *Mother India* I refer you to my article[1] in *Young India* dated 15th September, 1927.

When you return to India you will be welcome to the Ashram.

Yours sincerely,

SAMUEL M. HASSAN, ESQ.
GENERAL CHEMISTRY SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY, SYRACUSE, U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N. 14348

273. LETTER TO W. COLDSTREAM

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 13, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your cordial invitation. If I succeed in my desire to visit Europe next year, I have no doubt that we shall meet somewhere and I shall be glad of the meeting. But whether I shall be able to accept your hospitality or not is more than I can say at the present moment. The possibility is that I shall not be master of my engagement.

Yours sincerely,

W. COLDSTREAM, ESQ.
69 WEST CROMWELL ROAD, LONDON, S.W. 5

From a photostat: S.N. 14350

[1] Entitled "Drain Inspector's Report" dated September 15, 1927.

274. LETTER TO MRS. CAMEBUS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 13, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Mrs. Anasuyabai has told me all about you. It is not possible to encourage you to come here. And in any case I would like you not to come except for a trial and unless you have sufficient means to take you back provided the climate does not agree with you. I feel, however, that it is better for you to remain where you are and do such service as may fall to your lot.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. CAMEBUS[1]
34 DE CRESPIGNY PARK, LONDON, S.E. 5

From a photostat: S.N. 14351

275. LETTER TO ABID ALI JAFFERBHAI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 13, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

Here is the message for your Annual:

Those who live in places outside India such as Singapore should bear in mind that they are the trustees for the honour of the nation to which they belong and therefore their conduct should be above board and absolutely honest with strangers in whose midst they are living. They should also retain the bond with the poorest in the motherland by the use of khadi.

Yours sincerely,

ABID ALI JAFFERBHAI
YOSUF BUILDING-C, MOUNT ROAD, MAZGAON, BOMBAY 10

From a photostat: S.N. 14568

[1] Teacher and social worker

276. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

Unrevised *July 13,1928*

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

Enclosed is a letter from Jamnalalji. Come on receipt of it so that we can talk it over.

Subhas Bose has written a letter of complaint from Calcutta. I have not been able to find time so far to reply to it.[1] You should not worry about anything. We must do what we can. I wish you would not burden yourself with too much work. Come to me any time you wish. I can spare a little time for you. How nice it would be if you could come daily and have one meal or both meals here? Even that one meal fills me with peace. For it is not merely a meal but the leavings of a *yajna* —it is my keen desire and attempt to make it so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 32728

277. LETTER TO U. K. OZA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 14, 1928

MY DEAR OZA[2],

I have your letter[3]. You have put upon me a burden which I am ill able to bear. The proposal you make seems to me to be attractive,

[1] For Gandhiji's reply to Subhas Chandra Bose, *vide* "Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose", July 18, 1928.

[2] Editor, *Democrat*, Nairobi; General Secretary, East African Indian National Congress.

[3] Dated June 27, 1928, suggesting terms of settlement between Indians and Europeans of East Africa on the question of common electoral roll. Oza had added: "The European community agree to a common electoral roll for both the communities. The voters' qualification should be based on a residential, age and educational or property qualification. The educational test should be reading and writing of English. The Indian view has been expressed to the effect that the property should be definitely possession of real estate valued at £1,000. I differ and think it should be lower. . . . The above proposals were first to be put before the Congress and if they were approved of, prominent Indians and Europeans were to affix their signatures to them and issue them as a joint manifesto outlining a fair basis of settlement of the Indian question in Kenya" (S.N. 12855).

but I am unable to guide you offhand. I can only say therefore that the local men are the best persons to decide. The caution that I would like to utter is that whilst the local men are the best persons to decide, they are expected in anything they may do, not to compromise the dignity or the honour of the nation as a whole.

With reference to the last paragraph[1] of your letter experience has hardened my faith in ahimsa. From all that is happening around me, I do not learn the lesson of himsa but of *himsa*. I may be totally wrong, but I have no knowledge or feeling of wrong about me.

I have sent you a cable saying "wait".

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 12855-A

278. LETTER TO S. G. VAZE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 14, 1928

MY DEAR VAZE,

Here is a copy of a letter from Oza. With my reply. I do not feel safe about guiding and I have told him as much. But you have studied the situation locally. Can you guide him?

I am writing to Benarsidas[2] also. I have cabled Oza asking him to await reply.

I was greatly pleased with your Bardoli report[3].

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. G. VAZE
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY, POONA

From a microfilm: S.N. 12861

[1] Which read: "I believe you will soon have to lead a strong youth movement and personally I think that you will have to lay aside non-violence also. Do you not see the gathering clouds all around?"

[2] Banarsidas Chaturvedi

[3] The report was prepared by Hridayanath Kunzru, Vaze, Editor of *The Servant of India*, and Amritlal Thakkar, all members of the Servants of India Society. For a summary of the report by Mahadev Desai, *vide* Appendix "Bardoli Report", before July 14, 1928.

279. LETTER TO BANARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

[*July 14, 1928*][1]

BHAI BANARSIDAS,

Here is a letter from Oza. I am in no way qualified to advise him. You can write something on this subject to him.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Hindi]

Banarsidas Chaturvedi's correspondence with A.I.C.C. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum

280. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 14, 1928

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I got your letter. Were it not that Mahadev is ill and confined to bed, I would probably have sent him to the station for his own satisfaction. But now I am sending none. However, Chi. Kusum has to go to the station to meet her friends and so I take the opportunity to tell you through this note that all of us are looking forward to your arrival.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 3223. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

281. MY NOTES

THE SCORPION OF PASSION

A student from Calcutta writes to say[1]:

It has been my experience as well as that of my associates that if a husband and wife voluntarily observe *brahmacharya*, they can experience maximum happiness and see it increase every day. There is no difficulty in demonstrating the glories of *brahmacharya* to an uneducated wife or, we may say, that *brahmacharya* knows no distinction between the educated and the uneducated. It is simply a matter of having moral strength. I know some uneducated women who observe *brahmacharya* although they are married. A husband who observes *brahmacharya* is better able to protect the virtue of his wife even in a corrupt social environment. Absence of *brahmacharya* does not prevent a wife from deviating from the path of virtue, but instances can be cited where it has provided a cover to a wife's depravity.

The power of *brahmacharya* is immeasurable. It is my experience in many cases that he who observes *brahmacharya* is himself not free from lust and is hence unable to impress his wife with his endeavours. Lust is a clever fellow; hence he does not take longto discover his friends. A wife who is not free from lust and is not yet ready to shed it, perceives at once the passion hidden in her husband's heart and secretly laughs at his feeble and fruitless endeavours while she herself remains fearless. None should doubt that the *brahmacharya* which is constant and full of pure love burns up the lust of the other person and reduces it to ashes. Among the many beautiful images which I saw at Belur, there was one where the craftsman had given passion the form of a scorpion. This latter had stung a woman. Its intensity had made her naked and thereafter lifting its tail and lying at the woman's feet in the pride of its victory, it smiled at her. There is the pleasant coolness of *brahmacharya* in the eyes, in the touch, in the speech of a husband who has conquered this scorpion. Within an instant, he cools off and pacifies the lust around him.

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had asked Gandhiji how one could observe *brahmacharya* with regard to one's wife.

I take the following extract from a sister's letter[1]:

There is justification in this sister's argument. But the remedy is the same that I have already pointed out.[2] Society may well boycott the man who practises debauchery. But if we accept the plea that as long as society does not boycott an adulterous man we should not boycott an old man who marries a child-bride, it will take a long time to prevent such ill-matched unions. There is no doubt that debauchery is to be condemned. Both parties are willing partners in debauchery and when one of them wishes to get out of this sin he or she can do so. In the case of a union of an old man and a child-bride, there is room neither for reform nor for atonement because dharma itself comes in the way of stopping that *adharma*. Dharma proves as a sort of shield to this so-called conjugal relationship. Moreover, when *adharma* assumes the guise of dharma, it is not less blameworthy but more so because hypocrisy is added to it.

It is a matter of regret that society is as unconcerned about unions of old men and child-brides as it is about adultery. Hence, without confusing the two issues, the said sister, other sisters and young men should take the question of such unions in hand and build up public opinion against them. Those who wish to bring about this necessary reform should of course be pure themselves. It is the verdict of law that "those who wish to seek justice must purify themselves and then enter the temple of justice." Experience fully supports this rule.

TO HIM WHO IS GOOD, THE WORLD IS GOOD

When I felt sad on hearing people being found fault with, a friend startled me by repeating the following[3]. As I liked the verses immensely, I share them with the reader in order to make him a partner in my enjoyment:

When we knew not our own state

We kept looking at others' failings,

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent, referring to Gandhiji's advice that society should boycott old men who married child-brides, had asked how that could be done when many people considered such unions as permitted and proper. She added that there were men who though married kept mistresses and society did not boycott such men.

[2] *Vide* "My Notes", 8-7-1928, sub-title, "Marriage of Old with Young".

[3] Urdu verses

But when we saw our own defects
There was none bad in our eyes.
Says Zafar that he is no man who
However brilliant and self-controlled
Does not remember God in his hour of happiness
But forgets Him in his anger.

I hope that "poets" will not rain poems on me because I have made bold to quote this verse. I know that we cannot bring about inner purity by means of beautiful poetry; hence poems rarely find a place in *Navajivan*. But there is a story behind the use of the above poem and hence it has been presented to the reader in the hope that at any rate after having seen their own failings, people will stop finding fault with others.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-7-1928

282. QUESTIONS OF A GRADUATE

"SILK AND TIGER-SKIN"

A graduate of the Vidyapith writes to say:[1]

I have no doubt that from the point of view of ahimsa silk and tiger-skin should be given up. Similarly, things like pearls too should also be given up. It seems that people in the age in which the custom of wearing silk and tiger-skin was prevalent, did believe in the dharma of ahimsa, but still continued to use these things. This is because at that time they realized the usefulness and necessity of silk and tiger-skin and hence despite their faith in ahimsa, they used both these. Despite their belief in the principle of ahimsa our predecessors made sacrificial offerings of animals, and we find some people doing so even now. Those who sacrifice animals state on the authority of the Shastras that violence done for the sake of *yajna* cannot be termed

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent wondered how silk and tiger-skin could be considered sacred by people who professed nonviolence.

violence. Similarly, those of us who eat a strictly vegetarian diet, destroy vegetables which have life in them, and believe that this does not affect our ahimsa.

The moral we derive from all this is that human beings cannot altogether abstain from *himsa*. Even those living only on air and water are guilty of *himsa* to some extent. Therefore, we can make a rule that the use of anything which involves *himsa* should as far as possible be abandoned. And while practising such renunciation, we should not criticize but extend charity to those who do not do so.

Although, as mentioned above, we needs must be simple in our habits of eating and dressing, and although our dharma is to save the lives of lower beings, yet we should realize that the ahimsa practised in such self-control is not everything but only a small part of dharma. We find every day that a person who meticulously practises this type of ahimsa can also be guilty of great *himsa*, and may have no sense of ahimsa at all. From the fact that, following inherited traditions, we use certain things for eating and dressing we cannot claim that we practise ahimsa towards these objects. Let the material results be the outcome of ahimsa which is practised through tradition or necessity; in itself, however, ahimsa is a noble sentiment and can only be attributed to the person whose mind is non-violent and is overflowing with compassion and love towards all beings. A person who does not take non-vegetarian food even today because he has never done so, but loses his temper every moment and robs others regardless of morality or immorality? And is unconcerned about the happiness or unhappiness of those whom he robs, such a person can in no case be regarded as non-violent but may be said to be guilty of great *himsa*. Diametrically opposed to him is the person who eats meat in accordance with inherited traditions, but is overflowing with love, free from anger and hatred and treats everyone as equal; he is truly non-violent and deserves to be revered. While considering ahimsa we always think of it in terms of eating and drinking; that is not ahimsa, that is a state of unconsciousness. That which gives *moksha*, that which is the supreme dharma, in whose presence ferocious beasts shed their violence, an enemy sheds his hatred, a hard heart is softened, this ahimsa is a supernatural power and it is only attained by a few after great effort and penance.

CAPITAL AND LABOUR

The second question of the graduate is as follows:[1]

The distinction between capital and labour is not a recent one. It has been in existence since ancient times. In this age it has reached an acute stage because there is a great awakening in the labour class. Again there has been an increase in the number of capitalists in this age, and capitalism has assumed a fierce form. In olden days the king was the principal capitalist, besides a few who came into contact with him. But in our times there has been a sudden increase in the number of capitalists. How can it be said that the world is progressing in such circumstances? But the way to mend the situation is not through hatred of the capitalists, that is by using force against them. I believe that capital and labour will always remain in greater or smaller proportions. I believe too that we can, by conscious effort, reduce a good deal the differences between the two. The words of a Chinese king quoted by the graduate are as good as gold. In this world, someone has to carry the burden of whoever sits idle. Therefore, it is a sin to sit idle even for a moment; if we understand this, we will be able to resolve many of our problems and, just as it is wrong for anyone to sit idle, so it is for anyone to take or hoard more than one needs. If people starve, this is the reason.

PURPOSE OF KHADI

The third question of the graduate is as follows:[2]

That is surely one of the purposes of khadi; but there are many others also, i.e., To provide the agricultural class with some occupation which can be widely practised at home during spare time; to boycott foreign cloth; to ensure that there is an increase in the spirit of co-operation amongst the people; to provide thousands of middle-class people with an honest livelihood and, if crores of people understand the message of khadi, they would realize that the strength to achieve independence is readily available in it.

With the success of khadi the supremacy of the mill will surely end.

[1] Whether in view of capitalists continuing to enjoy comforts at the expense of labour, the world can be said to be progressing.

[2] Whether there is any purpose underlying the khadi movement other than the proper distribution of wealth and whether as a result of this movement the machine age will eventually come to an end.

The graduate has asked several other questions, but I feel there is no need to answer them. Those questions are regarding past life, rebirth and destiny. These questions have been raised since times immemorial. I would advise the graduate to have patience in order to find solutions to such problems. Whatever answers I give, ten other questions could be asked in reply to them and thus the battle of wits will continue for ever. The royal road is for us to keep ourselves engaged in doing the duty that lies before us, and to be patient and hopeful that God will solve spiritual problems. We have a clear understanding of sin and righteousness; the dharma, that we should do good deeds and avoid sinful ones, has been handed down to us through the ages. We should remain satisfied with this. The battle between fate and strenuous human effort is always on. While doing a good deed we should rely on the latter. The Gita has suggested this easy road. One should do one's duty without expectation of reward.

Lastly, I would suggest to the graduate to improve his handwriting. Good handwriting is a beautiful art. It is the outward mark of good breeding. I found some difficulty in reading his letter. I could not myself learn to write a neat hand. No one pointed it out to me during my student-days, nor was I taught to do so, and, afterwards I did not find the time to improve it. But, because I give trouble to many who have to read my handwriting, I have, out of self-pity, taken the trouble to read the graduate's letter. Graduates and all students should take a lesson from my mistake and learn to write a hand as beautiful as pearls, at least for the sake of their friends.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-7-1928

283. AN ARMY AGAINST AN ANT

While on the one hand the Bardoli enquiry[1] conducted by Pandit Hridayanath Kunzru, Shri Vaze and Shri Amritlal Thakkar has ended the doubts of the few Indian leaders who still had doubts and has enlisted public opinion without exception in favour of the satyagrahis, there is on the other hand a rumour circulating that the Government is mobilizing a large army to attack the ant. Some persons claim that the Imperial Government, sitting on the Simla heights, is charging the Bombay Government with incompetence for allowing leadership to pass into the hands of Sardar Vallabhbhai, and is now issuing orders from Simla as if the Bombay Government had not itself fully exploited the four weapons of *sama, dama,* etc. It is also rumoured that the present discontinuance of the work of the police and attachment officers portends the ominous lull before the storm. These are the faint and distant echoes of the Government's preparations of a new and more aggressive strategy.

But the Bardoli satyagrahis should remain utterly unaffected by such rumours. If they are false, the Government will be less to blame and the satyagrahis be tried less. If they are true, the cup of the Government's sills will be filled to the brim, and the satyagrahis will get the desired opportunity to prove their worth.

Someone has said, "One who is forewarned is ever at ease." On the basis of this, satyagrahis should be fully prepared. If the rumour is true and the Government takes an unexpected step by launching a sudden attack and creating confusion amongst the satyagrahis, it could break up their ranks, and whatever has been gained so far would be instantaneously lost.

Where the commander is awake all the twenty-four hours, what need is there to give a warning? What need is there to wake up those who are already awake? Eternal vigilance is one of the inevitable conditions of satyagraha. Moreover, satyagrahis do not have to concern themselves with the problem of different kinds of strategies. The satyagrahi's strategy remains the same for all ages, all places and all circumstances. After all, can even the rich have more than two eyes however much they want to? A satyagrahi learns his first and last lesson with his oath; therefore, the work of the commander and his

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Bardoli Report", before July 14, 1928.

army becomes simple, straightforward and easy. Satyagraha is a wonderful remedy needing no modification. One 'No' from the satyagrahi is capable of eradicating the thirty-six diseases. Let the Government confiscate our property, attach all our land, imprison us, exile us, put us to the sword or blow us with cannonballs. One who cannot pass any of these tests cannot be considered a true satyagrahi. A satyagrahi's vow can never be observed in parts because truth is not composed of parts. Truth is only one, whole and indivisible and stays as such for all time, past, present and future. Truth can be compared to an arch. If even one brick of the arch comes off, the whole arch crumbles. Because a counterfeit coin is accepted at ninety-nine shops, it does not acquire the worth to be accepted in the hundredth shop. It was a false coin from the very moment of its making—only its real test was delayed.

Similarly if a satyagrahi is unable to pass the final test, he was never a satyagrahi. He might be anything else. The nation might have gained by whatever sufferings he has undergone; he too might have gained from the self-denial; however, he cannot be ranked among satyagrahis, he cannot receive the certificate of being a satyagrahi. In words similar to Solon's, it can be said of a satyagrahi: "Do not regard anyone as a satyagrahi before his death."

The satyagrahis of Bardoli should remember this statement and carry it into their hearts.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-7-1928

284. THE ALPS OR THE HIMALAYAS?

The swadeshi sentiment does not end merely with khadi. One, moved by this, will get one's wants supplied from near at hand, that is, from one's own native land. Such a one is content with this and, dissatisfied with his hut will not envy another's palace, nor strive in vain to acquire one.

This thought struck me when I read a beautiful description[1] of a scene near Almora in the Himalayas, which a friend has sent me:

The Alps is a mere kid compared to the Himalayas. The people of Europe have a right to be crazy over the Alps. They derive joy in

[1] This is not translated here.

its valleys and gain health. They do not have to come to the Himalayas and, if they do, they do so only after paying their debt to the Alps. We who are educated, do not know the Himalayas, do not know and do not care to know the miraculous health-giving properties of the plants which grow on them. We take no note of the fact proved by Ayurveda that the very air of the Himalayas is medicinal. We take no pride in the beauty of the Himalayas.

How splendid it would be if young men were made to travel on foot in the Himalayas! How much would that add to their health, their span of life, their knowledge, their national pride and their skills! Even students with average means could undertake such a trek.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-7-1928

285. EQUANIMITY IN HONOUR AND DISHONOUR

The Secretary of the Nadiad Taluk Congress Committee has asked me to write a note on the addresses presented to Shri Lakshmidas Purushottam Asar and Imam Saheb Abdul Kadar Bawazeer by the residents of that taluk on June 24. Normally, such events are not mentioned in *Navajivan*. Workers have to face both honour and dishonour. When no note is taken of dishonour, how can honour be recorded? Moreover, both of them are inmates of the Ashram. How can notice be taken of the addresses presented to them? If they need the encouragement of an address or notice of it, they cannot continue as inmates of' the Ashram. But an important point behind this welcome address certainly merits notice. Neither of these workers knows English and neither has learnt Gujarati at school. Both of them have studied in the school of experience and yet Shri Vallabhbhai would never have been able to complete successfully the important relief work without these and many other workers who like them were unlettered in English. Shri Lakshmidas has by his capacity for work charmed Sir Purushottamdas. In every aspect of the relief work the latter could notice Shri Lakshmidas's "scrupulousness in accounts, his impartiality, his great ability and his administrative capacity". Our experience of this relief work as well as that which we are gaining in Bardoli shows us clearly that for running the administration under swaraj, we shall not need many learned men with a knowledge of English or capable of delivering speeches but we shall

need workers who love the people and know their language, who understand their needs, who are truthful, dutiful, industrious, poor, fearless and indifferent to honours.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-7-1928

286. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 15, 1928

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have your letter[1]. Fortunately Vallabhbhai came here for the District Conference. I had a full chat with him. He thinks that it is not possible for him to wear the crown at least for this year, as even if the Bardoli struggle is finished there will be an immense amount of consolidation work to be done which will require his undivided attention. I think he is right. He is therefore out of the question. The more I have thought about yourself, I feel the more that you should be reserved for a more propitious occasion and I thoroughly agree that we should give place to younger men. And amongst them, there is no one even to equal Jawahar. I have therefore telegraphed to you saying that I am recommending his name for adoption by provincial committees, unless I receive a wire from you to the contrary in reply to my wire.

I have your circular letter today to the members of the Committee. Indeed I should go further and under the constitution reserve for the future parliament the right to revise on the score of justice and equality the obligations that we might be called upon to shoulder. Whether we have the strength today to carry out even the milder suggestion made by you is another question. But as you say, we must at least speak out our mind.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13636

[1] Dated July 11, suggesting Vallabhbhai Patel or, alternatively, Jawaharlal Nehru for the Congress Presidentship (S.N. 13633)

287. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 15, 1928

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your letters. You must bear as inevitable what you cannot remedy there. Think which verses in the *Gita* teach us to do this, and tell me if you spot them. Whenever you are in difficulty, look into the *Gita*. If you go on doing this, you will find the work a veritable Kamadhenu. I may die any day. The *Gita* will be with you till the hour of death, and is your provision even for the journey beyond. Have patience and love for every teacher and pupil who does not behave properly towards you, and you will win them over. Be content with whatever you can teach in the time which Vidyavatiji spares for you. Why cannot you use the *takli* instead of the spinning-wheel? For persons like us the spinning-wheel is a means not of livelihood but of *yajna*. Explain this to Vidyavatidevi. As you should not reply back, or even feel angry, when anyone criticizes you, irrespective of whether the criticism is right or wrong, so you should not when you hear any criticism of me.

It is raining much here. One may actually say that the rains obey our wishes. It will take some time before Mahadev is all right and on his feet, but he is improving every day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 484. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

288. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 15, 1928

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got the letters from both of you. I get no time these days and so dictate most of the letters between three and four in the morning. This I find convenient. I have to give much of my time to the problems of the common kitchen. I do that because the experiment seems to me an extremely important one and it is essential that I pay attention to it. At present about a hundred persons take their meals in

it. Despite this large number, there is no noise at meal-time and complete peace is preserved. One cannot be sure, though, how long this will last. We have shifted the kitchen and merged it with the one in the Hostel, and the room formerly used for the purpose is now occupied by women. If you were here at present, you would thus see the Ashram changed in many ways. Chi. Chhaganlal has handed over about Rs. 10,000 which he had accumulated and now observes the vow of non-possession quite strictly. He had the fullest co-operation of Chi. Kashi in this act of self-sacrifice. That family has now joined the common kitchen. Mahadev had Rs. 4,000 with him, and he has handed over that amount. The separate kitchens which still remain will have closed down by the next *Kartik Sud* l. There are only a few of them.

Harilal came and stayed here for one day. Ramdas and Rasik are still at Bardoli. The *Gita* recitation is kept up every day. The eighteen chapters are finished in fourteen days.

I was prompted by love in writing what I did about the Rustomji case in the "Autobiography".[1] I have omitted other names but given this one; my aim in giving certain names is that they should be remembered as long as the "Autobiography" is recognized as an important work. I follow what you say about Miss Schlesin[2]. But, then, isn't she half crazy? She has written a sort of wild letter even to me. Ask me again if you do not follow my point.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4741

[1] Pt. IV, Ch. XLVII, published in *Young lndia*, 12-4-1928

[2] Sonja Schlesin; *vide An Autobiography*, Pt. IV, Ch. XII; also "A Correction", June 28, 1928.

289. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

July 16, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your loving letter. The fact is that its language will further prevent me from stretching out the begging bowl. But has a beggar prudence? Therefore whenever I am helpless I shall be at your doorstep.

It now appears that some settlement will come about in Bardoli.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6161. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

290. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

July 17, 1928

DEAR SISTER,

Your letter to hand. If you are really calm that will give the girl her peace.

Nikhil's problem is a deep-seated one. If you have given up your attachment for his body, please do not at any cost deceive Nikhil. If he does not wish to take a medicine prepared from meat, he should not be compelled to do so. And he should not be restrained if on doctor's advice he wants to take it. It should be left entirely to Nikhil. If however you have any doubts on this matter, then it becomes your duty to persuade Nikhil to take the medicine. It is mentioned in the books which are described as Shastras that there is no harm in taking wine or meat in the name of medicine. Among vegetarians too there are many who see nothing wrong in taking meat, etc., In the name of medicine. Do not act impulsively.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1658

291. LETTER TO VIJAYA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 17 [*1928*][1]

CHI. VIJAYA,

I was very glad to read your letter. It will be God's grace if Prabhudas recovers. Do keep writing to me. Because of the plague at Panchgani, Mathuradas is also thinking of coming there.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. VIJAYABEHN
LILAVATI SANATORIUM
BLOCK NO. 2
DEVLALI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy Sabarmati Sangrahalaya

292. LETTER TO C. S. VISHWANATHA IYER

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 18, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. There was a letter before also. Unfortunately I have not been able yet to go through the manuscript[2] that is always lying in front of me. But I am so overwhelmed with work and new responsibilities that it is not possible to tell you when I shall be able to go through your manuscript. All I can tell you is that I am desirous of going through it.

[1] The year has been inferred from the reference to the outbreak of plague at Panchgani; *vide* "Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", September 2, 1928. The source, however, has "1925", obviously a slip.

[2] Of the *Gita* translations

I am under the impression that you had a copy of the manuscript that you gave me. If you are in a hurry to have your manuscript returned, please do not hesitate to tell me, but if not, I would love to keep it till I have found time to read it.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. S. VISHWANATHA IYER, *VAKIL*
90 EXTENSION, COIMBATORE

From a microfilm; S.N. 13478

293. LETTER TO K. VENKATAPPAYYA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 18, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your long letter regarding C. V. Rangam Chetty. Of course I did not want you to give me such an elaborate thing. So far as I am myself concerned, I never doubted the propriety of your action, according to your own best judgement.

Personally I do not think we should insist upon exclusion of khadi manufactured in other provinces. I discussed the thing with Shankerlal[1] today and he promised to write to you more fully.[2]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KONDA VENKATAPPAYYAGARU
GUNTUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 13642

294. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 18, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and I have a letter from Satis Babu too giving me chapter and verse in answer to your letter of which you had very

[1] Shankerlal Banker

[2] A copy of this with Venkatappayya's letter was forwarded to Secretary, A.I.S.A., for necessary action.

correctly sent him a copy. Whilst I do not know much about the manner in which Satis Babu is carrying on propaganda to educate public opinion in favour of his view, I must confess as I have said in my letter to Sjt. Sen Gupta that I share the view Satis Babu takes of the Exhibition. In my opinion, we must not take in everything, even in the shape of machinery unless we are absolutely certain that it is beneficial and requires encouragement without which it would not be taken up by the public. I do not believe in distracting public attention by introducing in the Exhibition, even things that may be beneficial but that may not require Congress patronage for use by the public. Thus, for instance, I would not have in the Exhibition watches which we do not manufacture but we do need but which the various manufacturers have ample means of advertising. But in this matter we may differ in our opinion and if such is the case, there is no reason why each opinion should not be put before the public without leading to bitterness or acrimony. If there is anything definite against Satis Babu showing that he has been unscrupulous in his propaganda, I would gladly write to him about it.

I hope that there is no trace whatsoever of the illness you have contracted whilst you were under detention in Burma. I have received your telegram[1] about Pandit Motilalji. Motilalji himself is disinclined to accept the honour. I share his view and subject to Sjt. Sen Gupta's consent I had prepared an article for publication in the forthcoming issue of *Young India*. But on hearing from him in answer to my wire I cancelled the article and I shall say nothing about the election in the pages of Young India or elsewhere unless Bengal friends would let me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13641

[1] Dated July 17, which read: "Bengal unanimous in favour of Motilalji's Presidentship. Kindly recommend him otherwise pray remain neutral" (S.N. 13640).

295. LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 18, 1928

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I had just received your letter. Your matter-of-fact description of your sister and her death tells more than an adjectival description could have of the grief you have felt over the loss of one who was not merely a sister to you but a friend in need. But I know I do not need to commend to you God's care and mercy. You have enough and independent faith in you and therefore do not stand in need of prompting from without. Whilst I share to the full your condemnation of the English officials, I cannot like you exonerate the Nawab for his heartlessness even in the face of death.[1]

I hope you will win your High Court case.

I understand and appreciate what you say about the Jamia.[2] But I fear that unless you give Dr. Zakir Husain a free hand, the Jamia will collapse. There are risks to be run either way. If you keep the unmanageable large committee of control, Dr. Zakir Husain and his associates must starve. If you give the control to a small body who can be easily approached and brought together by Dr. Zakir Husain and have not an equivocal constitution like the present one but an unequivocal emphatically non-co-operation constitution, there is just a chance of tiding over the difficulty. You will now decide between the two courses, or you may think of a third. The Ajmal Fund which after all is small enough cannot be parted with unless the Jamia is put upon a firm and on an acceptable footing. Dr. Ansari was coming here for this purpose and if he could have come, it might have been better for us three to meet. As it is I would not worry you to come to Ahmedabad just to discuss this point without Dr. Ansari. You have

[1] In his letter dated July 16, Shaukat Ali had written that the Nawab of Rampur had sent him a "nasty telegram" in reply to his request for permission to visit his sister's grave.

[2] Shaukat Ali had written: "I flank all moneys as are being collected for the 'Ajmal Memorial' should be given for the payment of the debts of the Jamia, and keep it going up to the time as we were able to get big sums or endowment. What is the use of sitting over the moneys while the Jamia was getting ruined? *I want the Jamia to live*, as without it we will have no place to educate our children. . . ."

stated your view with absolute clearness, and I do not expect to be able to influence your decision, and I know that whatever you do in Delhi would be done according to the best of your judgment and belief.

Your remarks about Motilalji make painful reading.[1] I am unable to pass any judgement, but I do feel that he is incapable of wilfully coming to a perverse decision. Do you expect me or want me to do anything in this matter? If you do, do not hesitate to tell me what and if I can see eye to eye with you and have the ability to do it, you may depend upon my doing it.

Yours sincerely,

MAULANA SHAUKAT ALI

SULTAN MANSION, DONGRI, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 13465

296. LETTER TO V. J. PATEL

July 18, 1928

BHAISHRI VITHALBHAI,

I got your letter. We shall have known the outcome[2], whatever it is, before you get this letter. I had a full discussion about the matter with Vallabhbhai on Sunday.

Let the outcome be what it is, you should certainly pay a visit to Rangoon. That is the spirit in which we should carry on our work.

That your relation with Motilalji have been kept up is of good augury.

Please write to me from time to time even during the journey. I have written to Maganlal Pranjivandas at Rangoon. I suppose you will be staying with him.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[1] Shaukat Ali had written: "Apparently there is no change in the attitude of Panditji and he wants the Madras Resolution to go and the Mussalmans to give up the Reservation of Seats and the Separation of Sind also....I am afraid, if Panditji insists on adopting the Mahasabha formulas, then the position of Moslem Congressmen would be most unpleasant. . . ."

[2] Of Bardoli Satyagraha

[PS.]

Let the monthly contributions you send go on accumulating. When you have any suggestion to make, do so.

I do not wish to spend the sum without your consent. Interest on it is of course being credited regularly.

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 14452

297. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 18, 1928

BHAI HARIBHAU,

Read the accompanying letter. Inquire into the matter, and reply to Kamalakar direct.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 6061. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

298. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 18, 1928

BHAISHREE JETHALAL,

I got your postcard. Largely it is only the English-educated people who are politically conscious. If they believe in khadi, a khadi atmosphere will be created in the country and no one will find any other cloth in India.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9842. Courtesy: Narayan Jethalal Sampat

299. FOR SOUTH AFRICA INDIANS

A cable from the Secretary, South African Indian Congress, Johannesburg, says:

> Condonation scheme accepted. Illegal entrants in the Union now in India must either return before 30th September next or send applications to reach before that date the Commissioner, Asiatic Affairs, Pretoria. After sending applications they must return to the Union before 30th March, 1929. Give wide newspaper publicity all parts India.

This ends the agitation that was going on in South Africa in respect of the condonation scheme and was making the Rt. Hon. Sastri's position difficult and causing an anxious time in South Africa as well as here. Let those Indians, who have domiciled rights in South Africa, are holders of certificates and are desirous of availing themselves of the right of return, make haste to send their applications so as to reach the Commissioner of Asiatic Affairs, Pretoria, on or before the 30th September next, unless they propose to proceed to South Africa themselves so as to reach there before that date. Each applicant should give full particulars, giving name, address, occupation, date and number of certificate and disclose all relevant facts. The application should be sent by registered post in good time. I wish that I could give more definite guidance. Not having got the application form[1] or any text of the scheme[2] before me, I am powerless to do so. And whilst I hope to publish further informationas fast as I get, et no one delay sending his application pending the receipt of further and fuller information.

Young India, 19-7-1928

300. NON-CO-OPERATION OR CIVIL RESISTANCE

Fear has been entertained in Government circles that the movement going on in Bardoli is one of non-co-operation. It is necessary therefore to distinguish between non-co-operation and civil resistance. Both are included in the wider term 'satyagraha' which covers any and every effort based on truth and nonviolence. The term 'non-co-operation' was designed to include among other things the

[1] *Vide* Appendix "South African Condonation", August 9 and 16, 1928.
[2] *ibid*

items named in the programme of 1920 at the special session of the Congress at Calcutta[1] and re-affirmed the same year at Nagpur[2] with the object of attaining swaraj. Under it no negotiation with or petition to the Government of the day was possible except for the purpose of attaining swaraj. Whatever the Bardoli struggle may be, it clearly is not a struggle for the direct attainment of swaraj. That every such awakening, every such effort as that of Bardoli brings swaraj nearer and may bring it nearer even than any direct effort is undoubtedly true. But the struggle of Bardoli is to seek redress of a specific grievance. It ceases the moment the grievance is redressed. The method adopted in the first instance was through conventional prayer and petition. And when the conventional method failed utterly, the people of Bardoli invited Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel to lead them in civil resistance. The civil resistance does not mean even civil disobedience of the laws and rules promulgated by constituted authority. It simply means non-payment of a portion of a tax which former the aggrieved ryots contend has been improperly and unjustly imposed on them. This is tantamount to the repudiation by a private debtor of a part of the debt claimed by his creditor as due to him. If it is the right of a private person to refuse payment of a debt he does not admit, it is equally the right of the ryot to refuse to pay an imposition which he believes to be unjust. But it is not the purpose here to prove the correctness of the action of the people of Bardoli. My purpose is to distinguish between non-co-operation with attainment of swaraj as its object and civil resistance as that of Bardoli with the redress of a specific grievance as its object. This I hope is now made clear beyond doubt. That Sjt. Vallabhbhai and the majority of the workers under his command are confirmed non-co-operators is beside the point. The majority of those whom they represent are not. National non-co-operation is suspended. The personal creed of a non-co-operator does not preclude him from representing the cause of those who are helplessly co-operators.

Young India, 19-7-1928

[1] *Vide* "The Non-COoperation Resolution", September 5, 1920.

[2] *Vide* Appendix on "Congress Resolution on Non-Cooperation", December 30, 1920.

301. SPINNING IN SAWANTWADI

The following report[1] prepared by Sjt. S. P. Patwardhan[2] has been lying in my file for some time. It will be read with interest by the general reader and with profit by khadi workers.

Young India, 19-7-1928

302. BY-PRODUCTS OF KHADI

On the 14th instant the Gandhi Ashram conducted by Sjt. C. Rajagopalachari near Tiruchengodu in Tamil Nadu had a free dispensary opened by Dr. Ray. From the report read at the meeting it appears that round khadi as the centre, removal of untouchability and of the drink evil, rural sanitation and medical relief have sprung up. The Ashram serves 175 villages among which annually 45,000 rupees are distributed through khadi. Removal of untouchability is done through the personal service of the 'untouchables' exactly on the same terms as the rest. The Ashram now proposes as soon as funds permit to dig five wells and build cottages for them. They need Rs. 10,000, five being for five wells. The wells are a sore need as the 'untouchables' "have to go long distances and suffer many humiliations and hardships to get their daily pot of water". In 15 months the Ashram gave medical relief to 28,095 men and women. The need for expansion became so great that they had to build a proper dispensary at a cost of Rs. 5,000. It was to open this that Dr. Ray travelled all the way to the Ashram. The hospital cost Rs. 200 per month which was supported from khadi work. But now the need for donations is felt. I must give in its own language the report of sanitation work:

> The people are very conservative in their habits and are impervious to new ideas. Under these conditions we thought our campaign for sanitation should begin with the children. A children's bathing scheme was started on February 18, 1928 under which all the children in the neighbourhood below twelve years were offered an oil-and-soapnut bath on Saturdays and a soap-bath on Tuesdays. The doctor and other members of the Ashram attend to this work personally, oiling and removing the vermin from the children's hair and

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] A devoted khadi worker who had worked in the National School of the Ashram and later went to work in Konkan

rubbing them down clean and tidy. Only the untouchables have taken advantage of the scheme. At first a very large number of these children came and it was a happy sight to see them being bathed and made clean and tidy. But many of them have later stopped away as the novelty wore off. Only about twenty children are regularly attending every week. We hope, however, that if we persist, a large number will take advantage of the scheme.

Such are the few among the many by-products of Khadi. Let scoffers take note. And let friends help the Ashram which is slowly but surely penetrating the masses through their real service by making them self-reliant and self-supporting.

Young India, 19-7-1928

303. LETTER TO T. R. PHOOKAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 19, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

Till you not now pay the long-overdue account due by you to the All-India Spinners' Association? It is Rs. 319-2-3.[1]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. R. PHOOKAN
GAUHATI (ASSAM)

From a microfilm: S.N. 13644

304. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 20, 1928

MY DEAR PRAKASAM,

Your letter astounds me. Evidently your code of public business and mine are as poles asunder. I have never known the interpretation you put upon a personal guarantee given by a public man in connection with a public transaction. What I have seen in India and South Africa is quite different from what you enunciate. Public men even when they have given verbal assurances about *bona fides* of

[1] A copy of this was forwarded to Secretary, A.I.S.A., Ahmedabad, with reference to his office letter No. 3783 dated July 18.

transactions have paid from their own pockets when the transactions have turned out to be not as expected by the assurers, on the strength of whose expectations investments were made by public corporations such as the Spinners' Association. Only the other day a man paid nearly Rs. 21,000 out of his own pocket and has nearly ruined his own pecuniary prospects, because the moneys were entrusted to his care on the strength not merely of his honesty but a belief in his capacity for judgement. No extensive public business would be possible, in my opinion, upon the terms that you suggest should guide public men and their dealings.

In view of this fundamental difference, the questions of fact that you raise need not be discussed. If I could possibly bring you round to my view of public dealings and public honesty, I would gladly go into the facts you suggest, and, if any injustice has been done on that score, ample redress will be given to you. I am sorry for the shape that the correspondence between you and me has taken over the transaction.

I suppose in fairness I must tell you that Sjt. Shankerlal Banker told me only the other day that the guarantee signed by you was . . .[1]

From a microfilm: S.N. 14453

[1] The source is incomplete. Replying to this in his letter dated July 25, Prakasam wrote: "I quite agree that our experiences and course of public business and public honesty are in this matter 'as poles as under'. I have known so many cases in which such clauses of personal guarantee have been inserted in the documents to serve merely as penal clauses of threat to keep parties on good behaviour, without any intention of enforcing them: . . . I am talking only as an ordinary mortal and I have no claim to place myself on a higher level with one in your position. You must excuse me for differing from you in my last letter. I said I was agreeable to an arbitration but in your closing sentence you said that you had advised Sjt. Shankerlal Banker to take such action as he might be advised by his lawyer. I know already that the Khadi Board has been preferring latterly law-courts to arbitration. I am sorry that you could not take a more dispassionate view in the matter. With kind regards. . . ."

305. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 20, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your two letters.

It does not matter if you have sent nothing for Bardoli. Enough contributions are pouring in. If I am hard up I shall certainly bother you. There is now little possibility of an agreement. It is all right if it comes about and none the worse if it does not. The reins of satyagraha rest in the hands of God alone. Vallabhbhai is here today.

I shall write again in *Navajivan* on the boycott.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6162. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

306. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA ON BARDOLI

AHMEDABAD,
July 20, 1928

Interviewed by a Press representative on the Bardoli question, Mr. Gandhi said that his views were the same as those of Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel. It was, he added, a matter of deep regret to him that there was a possibility of the negotiations failing but if they did, the fault would be, so far as he could judge, entirely the Government's.

The communique that was published after the Surat Conference[1] baffled him. He

[1] Held on July 18; as representatives of the agriculturists of Bardoli, Vallabhbhai Patel, Abbas Tyabji, Sharada Mehta, Bhaktilakshmi Desai, Mithubehn Petit and Kalyanji Mehta met the Governor of Bombay, who put the following conditions for a settlement:

"Firstly either the full assessment shall be paid forthwith or the *difference* between the old and the new assessment *be paid into the treasury on behalf of the peasants*.

Secondly that the movement to withhold land revenue shall be abandoned.

If these proposals were accepted, Government would be prepared to take steps by the establishment of a special enquiry *into the alleged errors of the official calculations of facts,* either by a Revenue Officer who had nothing to do with the present case, or by a Revenue Officer with a Judicial Officer associated with him, it being the duty of the latter to decide any *disputed questions of facts or figures . . .*" (*The Story of Bardoli,* p. 159)

missed there the friendly and trustful spirit that was essential for an honourable compromise. To a lay mind like his, this insistence upon the deposit of the enhanced part of the assessment seemed inconceivable, and if he could so put it, absurd. It passed comprehension how the great Government could possibly demand such a deposit from people who were under their jurisdiction and control.. On the other hand, it was not difficult to understand why the people were definitely against making any such deposit. For them, it was a point of honour. In waiving the deposit, the Government stood to lose nothing. There were several points in the communique on which it was easy to enlarge, he should seek another channel[1] for placing his views before the public.

Asked if he realized that the failure of the negotiations might lead to very serious consequences to the peasants of Bardoli, Mr. Gandhi said that nothing more serious could befall the people of Bardoli than that they should break the pledge they had taken deliberately and repeated times without number.

Asked whether he thought that all the suffering and sacrifice involved in this struggle would ultimately result in any good either to the people of Bardoli or to the country at large, he said that he certainly thought so; the greater the sacrifice, the greater the gain to the country and the people of Bardoli.

Asked if he was in entire agreement with all the methods adopted by Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel in his campaign, Mr. Gandhi said that he was in perfect agreement with all the methods pursued by Mr. Patel. He knew absolutely nothing to warrant the charge, which he could only call a libel, that Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel had in any way directly or indirectly countenanced violence.

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-7-1928

307. LETTER TO SHANKARAN

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
July 21, 1928

DEAR SHANKARAN,

I have been waiting to hear from you about . . .[2] The need is rather urgent as we are likely to have our hands over full now that we are promised hot repression as a result of the breakdown of negotiation. We shall know the final upshot in a couple of days.

You will be amused to learn that I made my first acquaintance in

[1] *Navajivan* and *Young India; vide* "Evil Genius of the Government", 22-7-1928, and "An Appeal to Government", 23-7-1928.

[2] As in the source

life with pick-pockets last night. I had gone with Kalyanji and Mithubehn to Surat with some important despatches that were to be delivered to Vallabhbhai who was going to Bombay by the Kathiawar Mail.[1] As the train was to arrive at past midnight towards the small hours of the morning we all three waited in our car outside the Railway Station and as may naturally be expected, casually dozed off, though mosquitoes and bugs did not permit that blissful experience to last for more than a quarter of an hour or so at the outside. When the train arrived I jumped out of the car but when I plunged my hand into my pocket for my watch I found to my utter surprise that the spectacles case in which I used to keep the watch and the chain was not there. It appears that some consummate member of the light-fingered gentry had practised his art upon me in the brief interval that I had gone to sleep. It was a wrench to part with the memento owing to its association and especially the yeomen service that it had rendered me during the last two years.

How are you faring in your enterprise as a house agent? So far as 1 am aware Rattan Terrace is the only bungalow besides the Windy Hall that is worth going in for at Devlali. But maybe that some new bungalows have been erected during the last four years. In view of the uncertainty of your movement I am sending it to your Bombay address.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13260

308. LETTER TO G. V. SUBBA RAO

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 21, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am sorry that I shall not be able to write anything useful about the late Gopalakrishnayya. I could not write

[1] To meet his brother, Vithalbhai Patel, who was leaving for Burma

anything about him without having to criticize his conduct in several matters. I have therefore considered it wise not to say anything about the deceased.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3625

309. LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENT, AHMEDABAD CENTRAL PRISON

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 21, 1928

SIR,

The Manager of the Satyagraha Ashram has handed me your letter of the 20th instant containing the information that three strangers with two dogs were crossing the jail fields at 7.30 p.m. On some day not mentioned in your letter under reply. Though the two paragraphs of your letter show no connection with the Ashram, the third paragraph asks the Superintendent of the Ashram to enquire into the matter and instruct the persons whoever they may be not to trespass into Government fields and you end with the threat that "otherwise it might lead to unnecessary troubles". Will you please tell me how the Ashram is to enquire into a matter with which it has no connection and instruct persons whom it does not know about an occurrence whose date is not given? And may I know the meaning of the threat contained in your letter under reply? But I may point out to you that much to the annoyance of the inmates, some persons from the Jail did trespass into the Ashram grounds during the evening of the 19th instant, and fortunately for the Jail officials, the Ashram has by its constitution rendered itself powerless to punish such trespass. But if you have any desire to keep your own subordinates under discipline and prevent them from molesting inoffensive neighbours, you can have all the evidence you may need in order to establish the charge I am making.

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to G. V. Subba Rao", 27-7-1928.

I may mention further for your information that I read out your letter to the inmates of the Ashram at the prayer meeting at 7 o'clock yesterday evening, and I was told that the occurrence you refer to might have happened on the previous evening and that, at the time you mention, those who are in the habit of going out for a stroll in the direction of Sabarmati Station did see some persons with two dogs walking towards Wadaj in haste. These persons have no connection whatsoever with the Ashram.

Whilst I am replying to your letter of the 20th instant, I take the opportunity of adverting to another letter of yours dated the 21st May last. I acknowledge the friendly tone of that letter, but I cannot help saying that your conviction that no violence was used by the Jail Warder in question could only rest on very slender basis. I wonder how you could arrive at a definite conviction without hearing both the parties. I was astounded on reading your letter of the 21st May to find that you seem to rely more upon the word of your warders than on that of men occupying some status in society and having no reason to bring a false charge against anybody.

You should also have known that the parties referred to in the second paragraph of that . . .[1]

From a photostat: S.N. 13483

310. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[2]

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 21, 1928

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. Why do you let yourself be so affected by the injustice prevailing in the world? Does not the world itself mean selfishness? How would the world go on without selfishness? That is why the *Gita* teaches detachment. How would selfishness avail one

[1] The source is incomplete.

[2] An incomplete version of this letter has appeared under July 5, 1928, which appears to be an incorrect date.

suffering from tuberculosis or some such disease? But should I talk such wisdom to you? What is surprising is that you were upset by the behaviour of the owner of the bungalow[1] towards you. Write to me when things are settled. I have not detained Shankar. You have done well to resist the temptation of coming here. It will be very good if you come in winter.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
18 BANGANGA ROAD
WALKESHWAR, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

311. CABLE TO RAJENDRA PRASAD[2]

[On or after *July 21, 1928*]

RAJENDRA PRASAD
CARE JAYAWATI, LONDON

APOLOGIZE MY ABSENCE.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 14753

[1] At Devlali

[2] In reply to his cable dated July 21, which read: "Propose attending Vienna Conference. Cable instructions care Jayawati."

312. PROHIBITION OF SILK

Apropos what I have written[1] in *Navajivan* about silk and tiger's skin, Kakasaheb sends me the following reasons[2] for prohibiting silk, which are worth considering.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-7-1928

313. EVIL GENIUS OF GOVERNMENT

When the Governor of Bombay went to Simla, and I saw newspaper reports about this visit, I felt that the change that Shri Vallabhbhai was anxious to bring about in the Government had taken place. But, from the results of the deliberations at Surat,[3] it appears that the Government's heart has not yet softened; how then can one talk about a change? That heart has become harder than a stone.

I see bad motives in every line of the Government's circulars which are published in all the newspapers. Even after five hours of deliberations, the problem defied solution. Apart from what we read in the newspapers, there is not a single new point in the Government's Press Note. Not even an effort has been made to understand what the satyagrahis of Bardoli demand.

Just as a child who, in his innocence, lets go a useful object and

[1] *Vide* "Questions of a Graduate", 15-7-1928, sub-title, "Silk and Tiger-skin". Gandhiji had expressed the view that from the point of view of ahimsa, both silk and tiger-skin had to be given up.

[2] Not translated here. D. B. Kalelkar had pointed out that all people in the world used skins of animals in olden times, that in the Vedic period sages used to sit upon deer-skins while performing *yajnas*, that *Kshatriyas* and dutiful kings went ahunting and killed deer and tigers for protecting crops and cattle. Since skins of dead animals and of animals killed for food could not be thrown away, they were freely used. As animals were currently being killed merely for their skins these latter ought to be discarded from the point of view of ahimsa. Kalelkar had made the further point that our ancestors were not unaware of silk though he held that originally there was no silk in India. As the people did not know that it came from China and was produced from the body of insects, they must have welcomed it. Once the people liked a thing, it was difficult to discard it. However, the moment this fact became known, they gave it up.

[3] *Vide*, footnote 1 to "Interview to Associated Press of India on Bardoli", 20-7-1928.

asks for a toy, the Government is giving up a useful thing like justice and is clinging to the toy of prestige. And the more the Government tries to cling to this prestige, the further it recedes. At the end of the struggle, the Government will incur disgrace rather than earn a good name.

The enquiry to which the Government has consented is different from what the satyagrahis want. They do not demand an enquiry in order to examine omissions, commissions or any factual errors. Those mistakes are apparent to anyone who sees the pages of the Enquiry Committee's reports. It is their contention that the Enquiry Committee has not carried out the enquiry according to the provisions of law. Therefore they want that the entire enquiry should be conducted afresh. So long as this is not done, people would not get justice, whatever type of enquiry is undertaken. Hence the terms of reference for the enquiry should be made clear at the very outset. The people of Bardoli or Valod do not say that there has been injustice only in two or three cases, but that the whole enquiry is full of mistakes. The case of the satyagrahis is that the Government does not have adequate basis in their rules and regulations for collecting revenue on a higher assessment. Hence, the burden of proof that there is such justification falls on the Government. This should have been clearly stated in the terms of reference of the Enquiry Committee, but this was not done.

Again another condition is absolutely necessary. The Committee should also enquire whether Government was justified in adopting a policy of oppression in the collection of revenue.

Whatever redress can be given to the people should be with regard to the hardships suffered by them as a result of this policy. They lost health; their cattle became weak, some of them died. Misfortunes such as these are inevitable in a satyagraha struggle. People should not ask for compensation in these matters. But what of those who are in jail, of those whose land has been confiscated and of those whose property has been sold away at ridiculously low prices? Hence, if a settlement is indeed to be arrived at and if the Government wishes to do justice, no sooner is the document for the settlement[1] drawn up than the following should be done:

1. Satyagrahi prisoners should be released.
2. Land attached (whether sold or not) should be returned to

[1] For the terms of Bardoli Settlement, *vide* Appendix on "Bardoli Settlement", before July 22, 1928.

the owners.

3. The market price of buffaloes, liquor, etc., Which have been auctioned or sold should be paid back.
4. If *talatis* or *patels* have been dismissed from service, they should get back their posts, or permission should be granted to those who had tendered resignations to withdraw them.
5. Other punishments inflicted on account of satyagraha alone should be revoked.

None of these is to be found in the Government's Press Note. I do not know of any other truce in which there has been such a one-sided decision as the Government has taken in this case. These are the conditions which must be laid down in regard to the enquiry before it actually begins.

However, the Government continues to demand that the excess of revenue be kept in deposit. If it wants to persist in this demand, where was the need to invite Shri Vallabhbhai to Surat? What need was there for H.E. the Governor to take the trouble to visit Surat? The Government holds that the reasons for this demand are clear enough. It appears to me that, except the Government, no one has any clear notion about these reasons. It does not seem that any impartial individual has favourably considered this demand for depositing the amount of the additional assessment. English newspapers like *The Pioneer* and *The Statesman*, which are the mouthpieces of the British, also favour the policy adopted by the satyagrahis and congratulate them on not overstepping their limits. I have found it impossible to understand why the Government is clinging to its obstinate demand for the excess revenue being kept in deposit. It should not have the misapprehension that, if the people lose the case, they would not; pay the increased revenue; because the Government always has the means for collecting it. Underlying this obstinacy is an absence of faith in Vallabhbhai and the people. How can he or anyone who loves self-respect tolerate such an insult? This obstinacy of the Government brings to the surface its meanness and wickedness.

The path of the satyagrahi is well-defined. He should always be prepared for a just settlement; if this is not achieved, he should not be disappointed, but should always be ready to fight for it. The satyagrahi is fortunate in that, in his struggle, there is absolutely no need for any ammunition or external weapon. Therefore he is ready whenever it falls to his lot to take part in a struggle.

On seeing the Government Note, Vallabhbhai felt no necessity to continue any longer negotiations for a settlement. However, although prepared for battle, the satyagrahi should, as mentioned above, not give up the hope for a settlement. Hence he would not forgo a single opportunity for it. It is the profession of a satyagrahi to melt even a stone-like heart.

The farmer of Bardoli should not look up to Surat, Bombay or Simla. He has to look up to God, to the All-knowing, and keep his pledge, and for its fulfilment be ready to embrace death or ruin himself. His pledge should be kept even at the cost of life.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-7-1928

314. MY NOTES

MY RELATIONS WITH BARDOLI

There is no need for me to explain to the readers of *Navajivan* my connection with the Bardoli struggle. But it has become necessary to state it clearly because a dangerous rumour has been spread lately. Let it be known to the readers that I have associated myself with the Bardoli Satyagraha from its very beginning. Its leader is Shri Vallabhbhai and he can take me to Bardoli whenever he needs me. Not that he needs my advice; but, while taking any important decisions, he consults me. He does all the work whether small or big on his own responsibility. I do not go to attend the meetings, etc., But this is an understanding reached between him and me before the struggle began. My health does not permit me to carry on all kinds of activities. That is why he has taken a vow not to take me anywhere in Ahmedabad or elsewhere in Gujarat without sufficient justification, and he has kept this vow to the letter. I have full sympathy with all the steps undertaken in the struggle. I have full sympathy with the steps that may be taken by Vallabhbhai in the dangerous situation which may possibly arise now. And if he is arrested, I am fully prepared to go to Bardoli. Neither he nor I have seen any need for me to go to Bardoli or take any active part so long as he is there. Where complete mutual trust exists, there is no room for outward show or politeness.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE SPINNING-WHEEL

Bhai Fulchand, the soul of the Wadhwan Rashtriya Educational

Society, has been in the Bardoli struggle right from the beginning. He is at present working in Vedchhi. He writes from there:[1]

Those who have no faith in the spinning-wheel may question the claim that Bhai Fulchand has made for the spinning-wheel and say that the same result can be achieved by any other kind of industry. Although it is true that a good deed produces good results, nevertheless, there is always some difference between one type of industry and another. Some occupations build up a man's physique, others strengthen the mind, yet others bring peace, while some make him restless. I have already quoted the opinion of an experienced teacher of Scotland that working on the spinning wheel is such an occupation that, if a restless and unsteady person takes to it, he becomes peaceful and steady. A fiery-tempered person will be able to give up anger. Moreover, the nature of the sentiments underlying an activity determines the qualities which it generates. If the activity of the spinning-wheel is carried on by a saintly couple and if they make the spinning wheel the means for spreading the spirit of saintliness amongst the people, this quality would then be visible in this activity. The advantages of the spinning-wheel which are seen in Vedchhi may not be seen everywhere. Hence it can be said that the fearlessness and frankness which Bhai Fulchand notices around Vedchhi owe their existence not to the spinning-wheel, but to Bhai Chunilal and his wife. They have spun their good qualities around the spinning-wheel. It can certainly be claimed that they were able to spread these qualities through the spinning-wheel with much greater ease than they could have done through any other means.

The same is true of the Bhajan Mandali. Through a Bhajan Mandali, fraud can be spread, and such a Bhajan Mandali can also be an everlasting medium for the spread of purity. There is no doubt that the Mandali has played an important role in the Bardoli struggle, and the root of these two activities is in religion. If the Bardoli struggle had not been carried on through the medium of religious sentiment, the success that it has achieved today would never have been gained.

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had described the beneficial results following the introduction of the spinning-wheel in Vedchhi and propaganda done by the Bhajan Mandali for khadi, prohibition and other good causes.

Consciously or unconsciously people crave for religion. They saw religion in satyagraha and in the commander of the satyagrahis; hence, they followed him and we can see signs that they will do so to the end.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-7-1928

315. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

July 22, 1928

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have got out of bed just now at 1 o'clock, through mistake. You have spotted the verse[1] correctly. What is it which brings on fever? You do not get it merely because you may have gone out in the rain. The body must have been predisposed to it. One may certainly point out someone's mistake, but that should be done out of love. You must have received the umbrella. The common kitchen is flourishing.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. VASUMATIBEHN
KANYA GURUKULA

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 485. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

316. A LETTER

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 22, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I had full discussion with Sjt. Gulzarilal[2] who has just returned from Bombay after a preliminary study of the strike situation. He had a conference with the principal leaders of the Strike Committee. Unfortunately you were absent. The head men of the strikers came to Ahmedabad with a note from you addressed to the Labour Union.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vasumati Pandit", 15-7-1928.
[2] Gulzarilal Nanda

They saw me and asked me to actively assist them in making collection and even advise the Union to contribute from their Union funds. I told them I could not do so, because I did not believe in strikes being continued through doles of charity or public donations, and told them that my method was to make the strikers self-dependent by inducing them to find some work during the strike. I told them too how the first big Ahmedabad strike after my settling in Ahmedabad was organized and conducted.[1] I told them further that I had not studied the situation in Bombay and that I do not know exactly what the strikers' case was, nor did I know the leaders in the movement except you. Such being the case, I told them that I could not give active help, but that it was open to them to go amongst the mill-hands and collect what they wish to pay and I assured them that I would not directly or indirectly influence the mill-hands against payment.

But it was thought that the position should not be left at that and that as a direct appeal was made to the Union here, it was necessary to make a study of the question. Hence the visit of Sjt. Gulzarilal to Bombay. My discussion with him has not satisfied me that the Labour Union could go further than it has done. I now want your guidance, knowing my views now as you do, what . . .[2]

From a microfilm: S.N. 13237

317. AN APPEAL TO GOVERNMENT[3]

By the time this appears in print probably the Bombay Government would have made its final decision on the Bardoli question. I am framing this appeal on Monday afternoon when probably the Governor is making his statement before the Council. I know too that the appeal will fall on deaf ears. But as a satyagrahi, it is not for me to yield to my fear but to do what is right in disregard of consequence. As one intimately connected with the movement, it is perhaps my duty to appeal to the Government to desist from a course which has been universally condemned and which, so far as I am able

[1] The reference is to the Ahmedabad mill-hands' strike in 1918

[2] The source is incomplete.

[3] Written on "Monday", July 23, 1928; *vide* also "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 24-7-1928.

to judge impartially, cannot be defended on any ground whatsoever.

The offer made at Surat is less than what according to reliable rumour had been offered privately. The conditions named by Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel have been the conditions always contemplated by him and in various ways conveyed to the Government. He has asked for nothing that has not always been done in honourable settlements. If it is acknowledged, as it has been acknowledged even in unexpected quarters, that the people of Bardoli and Valod have undergone terrible sufferings for the sake of what to them is a matter of principle, they have not done so merely to have an inquiry by a subordinate revenue official into individual cases which the inquiry proposed by the Government amounts to in fact; nor can the people be expected to forgo valuable land which they contend has been wrongly forfeited; nor yet can they as honourable men and women leave in the lurch those who have been wrongly made to suffer. The Government offer means that although the people have done wrong in refusing payment of the enhancement, they would graciously reopen individual cases if the people will cease to do wrong and if they will deposit the very amount which they say is wrongly imposed on them. This is a position which no leader worth the name can possibly subscribe to, when he has no conviction of such wrong on the part of the people and when on the contrary he has the deep conviction that the people are altogether in the right and the Government hopelessly in the wrong.

But Sjt. Vallabhbhai does not make, like the Government, impossible conditions. He does not ask the Government to own themselves to be in the wrong. His letter reduced to one sentence asks the Government to refer the question of right or wrong to a committee of the Government's choice with the only reasonable proviso that it will adequately represent the people. And in making his counter proposal he asks the Government to recognize the natural and logical consequence of such an impartial committee, viz., to revert to the *status quo ante bellum.* I venture to suggest that he would be guilty of a gross breach of trust if he asked for or took less. In his proposal there is no humiliation intended or implied of the Government. His reasonableness and anxiety to come to any honourable compromise limits him to the barest minimum. For it is surely open to him to raise the whole question of the revenue policy of the Government and ask for damages for the terrible losses suffered by the people during the past four months without any fault of theirs.

Two courses are open to the Government—either to bow to the public opinion of all India and accept Sjt. Vallabhbhai's offer or in order to uphold a false prestige to reassert the doctrine of frightfulness. If it is not too late, I appeal to the Bombay Government to take the way of truth.

Young India, 26-7-1928

318. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU[1]

July 23, 1928

FEAR YOU SHOULD SHOULDER BURDEN ESPECIALLY FOR BENGAL'S SAKE. WIRED SEN GUPTA.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13645

319. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

July 23, 1928

HAVE WIRED MOTILALJI HE SHOULD WEAR CROWN SPECIALLY FOR BENGAL'S SAKE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13645

[1] In reply to Motilal Nehru's letter dated July 19 which concluded: "Please wire your decision about the 'crown' after considering the enclosed correspondence and the communications you may have received." Motilal Nehru had forwarded two letters (S.N. 13646) which he had received. One of them was dated July 16 from Subhas Chandra Bose reading: "I cannot tell you how disappointed the whole of Bengal will feel if for any reason you decline Congress President ship. Your close association with the work and policy of Swaraj Party is one of several reasons for which your name is universally acceptable in this province...." And the second one was dated July 17 from J. M. Sen Gupta reading: "Yesterday I received a telegram from Mahatmaji telling me that you were disinclined to accept the President ship of the Congress. The news came to me like a shock. . . . We are unanimous in sending a reply by wire telling Mahatmaji in strong terms to press you to get over your disinclination... . We must have you.... You must come and lead us in this political crisis at home and abroad...." *Vide* also "Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose", 18-7-1928.

320. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
July 23, 1928

CHI. RAMDAS,

Rasik has written to me that you have been put in charge of the kitchen and that in consequence the work has been proceeding very smoothly. You do have the requisite qualities for that work. In answer to a query from Girirajji one Monday in January I had writtten that the person in charge of a kitchen which stresses self-control must possessthe qualities of a *sthitaprajna.* I am now more confirmed in that view. Such a person should always be alert. He must not get angry. He must put up with everybody's anger. He must treat everyone alike. It will not do if he serves nice things to some and worthless things to others. His mistakes can have grave consequences. If he does not have an orderly mind his work will suffer. If he has not conquered the palate he will prevent other people acquiring restraint. And he steals. Therefore, running a kitchen based on the principle of restraint is like demonstrating the meaning of the verses about detachment. One thing which is not required in running a kitchen with restraint is scholarship. But God's grace is so bountiful that scholarship is required in very few jobs. No freedom is possible without prudence. Millions have achieved salvation without scholarship. And scholarship has often led to downfall in some cases. Go deeper and understand the implication of the management of the kitchen being entrusted to you. Read the enclosed letter and then pass it on to Rasik.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Sansmarano, pp. 142-3

321. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 24, 1928

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I think we should give the briefest reply to the Governor's speech[1] in which he has tried hard to mislead the people. A long reply to such a thing would be harmful. Hence, I send a short one.[2] I wrote an article[3] in *Young India* yesterday. I did not feel like revising it in the light of the speech and stopped writing any further. Whatever you tell us from there will suffice us. We shall see to it next week. But today one thought keeps dwelling in my mind. The 14 days ahead are very critical; therefore not one word should be uttered from our side which may impede the settlement if at all there were to be a settlement. So I suggest that you come here for a few days if you are not needed there or, if you wish, I shall join you there. Now they must arrest you; therefore I must reach there in advance. The decision on these two points should be yours. On them not I but you are responsible because I do not know the state of affairs there.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 13-4

322. CROWN OF THORNS

The Congress crown has ceased to be a crown of roses. The rose petals are year by year falling off and the thorns are becoming more and more prominent. Who should wear such a crown? Father or the son? Pandit Motilalji the weather-beaten warrior or Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the disciplined young soldier who by his sterling worth has captured the imagination of the youth of the country? Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel's name is naturally on everybody's lips. Panditji says in a private letter that he as the hero of the hour should be elected and the Government should be made to know that he enjoys the

[1] In the Council on July 23
[2] *Vide* "Notes" 26-7-1928, sub-title, "Sjt. Vallabhbhai's Reply".
[3] *Vide* "An Appeal to Government", 23-7-1928.

fullest confidence of the nation. Sjt. Vallabhbhai is however out of the question just now. His hands are too full to allow of his attention being diverted from Bardoli. And before December comes upon us he may be a guest in one of His Majesty's innumerable prisons. My own feeling in the matter is that Pandit Jawaharlal should wear the crown. The future must be for the youth of the country. But Bengal wants Motilalji to guide the Congress barque through the perilous seas that threaten to overwhelm us during the coming year. We are torn within and are encircled by an enemy that is as unscrupulous as he is powerful. Bengal has special need of an older head and one moreover who has proved a tower of strength to her in the hour of her trial. If India as a whole has no easy time before her, Bengal has still less. There are a thousand reasons why Panditji should be chosen to wear the crown of thorns. He is brave, he is generous, he enjoys the confidence of all parties; Mussalmans acknowledge him as their friend, he commands the respect of his opponents and often bends them to his view by his forceful eloquence. He has moreover deep down in him a spirit of conciliation and compromise which makes him an eminently worthy ambassador of a nation that is in need of and is in the mood to take an honourable compromise. It is these considerations which actuate even the dare-all Bengal patriot[1] to want Pandit Motilal Nehru as the helmsman for the coming year. Let the impatient youth of the country wait a while. They will be all the stronger for the waiting.

Young India, 26-7-1928

323. NOTES

SJT. VALLABHBHAI'S REPLY

Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel has issued the following statement[2] to the Press in reply to His Excellency's Council speech on the 23rd instant:

> I must confess that I was unprepared for the threatening deliverance of His Excellency the Governor. But threats apart, I want to remove the confusion that the speech is consciously or unconsciously intended to create. The Governor says in effect

[1] Subhas Chandra Bose; *vide* "Telegram to Subhas Chandra Bose"? 23-7- 1928.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 24-7-1928.

that if civil disobedience is the issue, he is prepared to meet it with all the power which Government possesses, but "if the only question to be dealt with is the justice or injustice of the re-assessment, then Government is prepared to submit the whole case, after the revenue now due to the Government has been paid and the present agitation ceases, to a full open and independent inquiry as outlined in the statement which has been published". I venture to point out that civil disobedience has never been the issue. I know that there is no unanimity of opinion amongst all parties about the wisdom or legitimacy of civil disobedience. I have my own opinion which I hold strongly about it. But the Bardoli people are not fighting in order to have the right of civil disobedience vindicated. They are fighting by way of civil disobedience or whatever name the method adopted may be given-in order to induce the Government either to waive the enhancement, or if they are not convinced that the enhancement is improperly made to appoint an impartial, independent inquiry to find out the truth. The only question therefore is that justice or injustice of the re-assessment. And if the Government are prepared to have that question examined by a "full, open and independent inquiry", they must surely accept the logical consequence of the proposition they themselves lay down, namely, not to insist upon the payment of the enhancement which is in dispute and to restore the people to the condition they occupied before the struggle commenced. I warn the public also about the qualifying clause that is attached to "the full, open and independent inquiry", viz., "as outlined the statement which has been published" is a dangerous clause. For what is promised in the Surat communication is not "a full, open and independent inquiry" but a mockery of it. The Surat statement contemplates a very limited inquiry to be conducted by a revenue officer assisted by a judicial officer to investigate errors of calculation and fact and totally different thing from "a full, open and independent inquiry". I hope therefore that undeterred by the threats contained in the Governor's deliverance, public opinion will concentrate only on the one point that I have mentioned.

There is in Wardha a well-known and very well decorated shrine dedicated to Shri Lakshminarayana. It was built by Seth Jamnalalji grandfather. It is a private temple made accessible to the public. Jamnalalji has been endeavouring to have this temple available to the so-called untouchables also, as he has been trying with great success to have wells in Wardha made accessible to them and generally to procure for them all the facilities available to the other classes. He had difficulty with the trustees in bringing them round to his view that this select temple should be thrown open to those whom blind orthodoxy has suppressed. Success has at last attended his effort. On the 17th instant the trustees unanimously passed the following resolution:

> Whereas the question of admitting the so-called untouchables inside the temple of Shri Lakshminarayana has been before the Committee on several occasions and they have been unable to come to a firm decision till now; and whereas the most representative body in India, namely, the Congress has insisted upon the removal of untouchability and whereas the Hindu Mahasabha has considered it necessary and just that all public temples should be made accessible to the so-called untouchables, and whereas the well-known leaders of public opinion in India have expressed the same opinion, the trustees hereby resolve, regard being had to the foregoing facts and after full consideration of the religious and the social condition of the country, that the above-named temple dedicated to Shri Lakshminarayana in Wardha be declared open to the 'untouchables' and that the managing trustee, Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj, be authorized to enforce this resolution in such manner as may appear to him to be best.

Accordingly a printed notice was widely circulated in Wardha that from the 19th instant, that is, two days after the resolution, the temple would be declared open for the 'untouchables'. It is stated that although there was no organized effort made beyond circulating the foregoing notice, nearly l,200 men and women and children including 'untouchables' visited the temple without the slightest untoward incident having occurred. It is most significant that in an important centre like Wardha a celebrated temple could be flung open for the 'untouchables' without orthodoxy raising its voice of protest or some people in the name of sanatana dharma creating a disturbance at the time of 'untouchables' trying to cross the sacred and hitherto forbidden threshold of a Hindu shrine. It is a striking demonstration

of the tremendous headway that the movement against untouchability has made. It shows too what quiet determination and persistence can do to create healthy public opinion in favour of a genuine movement for reform. I congratulate Sheth Jamnalalji and his fellow-trustees on the bold step that they have taken and hope that this example will be followed all over India.

PURDAH IN BIHAR

The organized demonstration against the *purdah* that was held in many important centres in Bihar on the 8th instant was, a Bihari friend's letter tells me, successful beyond the expectations of the organizers. *The Searchlight* report of the Patna meeting opens thus:

> A unique spectacle was witnessed at the mixed meeting of ladies and gentlemen of the 8th July held at Patna in the Radhika Sinha Institute on Sunday last. In spite of heavy rains that fortunately stopped just at the time of the meeting, the gathering was unexpectedly large. In fact half of the spacious hall of the Radhika Sinha Institute was crowded with ladies, three-fourths of whom were such as had been observing *purdah* a day before, nay, an hour before.
>
> The following is the translation of the resolution adopted at the meeting: We, the men and women of Patna, assembled hereby declare that we have today abolished the pernicious practice of *purdah*, which has done and is doing incalculable harm to the country, and particularly to women, and we appeal to the other women of the province, who are still wavering, to banish this system as early as they can and thereby advance their education and health.

A provisional committee was formed at the meeting to carry on an intensive propaganda against *purdah* and for the spread of women's education in the province of Bihar. A third resolution advised the formation of Mahila Samitis in every town and every village of the province. And a fourth resolution was passed to the effect that Mahila Ashrams should be started at different places where ladies might stay for certain periods and receive a training so as to become 'good wives', 'worthy mothers' and 'useful servants' of the country. Over 5,000 rupees were promised on the spot for the purpose and I see many ladies among the donors, giving anything between Rs. 250 and 25. The paper publishes reports of similar meetings in several places in Bihar. If the campaign is well organized and continued with zeal, the *purdah* should become a thing of the past. It should be noted

that this is no Anglicizing movement. It is an indigenous conservative effort made by leaders who are conservative by nature and are yet alive to all the evils that have crept into Hindu society. Babu Brijkishore Prasad and Babu Rajendra Prasad who from far-off London is keenly watching and supporting the movement are no westernized specimens of Indian humanity. They are orthodox Hindus, lovers of Indian culture and tradition. They are no blind imitators of the West and yet do not hesitate to assimilate whatever is good in it. There need therefore be no fear entertained by the timid and the halting ones that the movement is likely to be in any shape or form disruptive of all that is most precious in Indian culture and especially in feminine grace and modesty so peculiar to India's womanhood.

ASHRAM CONSTITUTION AND RULES

Since the publication of the draft constitution and rules of the Satyagraha Ashram, there has been a constant demand for copies. Postage alone amounts to not an insignificant item. Those who would possess a copy of the constitution will kindly send one anna stamp to cover the charge of packing and posting.

A CORRECTION

Sjt. Gokulbhai Patel who was the bearer of cheques for Bardoli from Santa Cruz and Vile Parle draws my attention to a mistake occurring in the acknowledgement made in *Young India* of these gifts. The names that should have appeared under the heading Vile Parle have appeared under the heading Santa Cruz. I am sorry for the mistake. In spite of all the care taken to ensure accuracy on the part of an overworked staff, mistakes will occur. The generous reader will forgive them when they are not wilful or worse.

Young India, 26-7-1928

324. LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENT, AHMEDABAD CENTRAL PRISON

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 26, 1928

SIR,

I have your letter of the 24th instant. I have no desire to enter into a prolonged correspondence. Your letter does not enable me to alter the view expressed in mine of the 21st instant.[1] If you do not think that the persons whom you saw were inmates of the Ashram, I fail to see how the Ashram could be called upon to enquire who the parties were and warn them. And I fail also to understand that a trespasser is not a trespasser if he is treated courteously by those against whom he commits a trespass. You may be interested to know we try to treat courteously even thieves and robbers.

You will pardon me for not referring to Sjt. Kothari or Sjt. Kalelkar to prove the civility of your officials when I have your own correspondence in front of me.

Yours faithfully,

From a photostat: S.N. 13486

325. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
[Before *July 27, 1928*][2]

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter also. We should not at all worry on account of Nikhil. If God does not wish to take any service from Nikhil in this birth. He may well take him away.

Love of children or husband or friend, all mean the dame. We should sublimate all loves into the love of God because ultimately we all have to merge in God as rivers merge into the sea. Where then is Ganga or Yamuna? If you can regard all boys as Anil and Nikhil, your grief will be no more. Those who are attached to self have sons

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Superintendent, Ahmedabad Central Prison", 21-7-1928.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Hemprabha Das Gupta", 27-7-1928.

to be counted as one, two, three and so on. Those who are not have innumerable sons.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1652

326. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

July 27, 1928

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

The within writing is a copy of the cable sent to you in reply to yours. I have no time to spare just now. Subbiah has gone to Madras to put his pregnant wife with her parents. Mahadeo is still laid up though he is otherwise quite well.

I am sending you five copies of Autobiography.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2628

327. LETTER TO G. V. SUBBA RAO

July 27, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I shall most certainly keep an open mind. You shall see me whenever I come. Nothing would please me better than to find myself to have been in error regarding the deceased friend whose many merits I was not unaware of.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. G. V. SUBBA RAO
INDIAN BANK, BEZWADA, SOUTH INDIA

From a photostat: G.N. 3626

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to G. V. Subba Rao", 21-7-1928.

328. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

[*July 27, 1928*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I felt worried yesterday and, therefore, sent a wire. Having received the reply today, I am at ease. The fever has lasted very long. Keep up your courage. Do not get frightened. Do not forget our principle of looking upon every place which we visit as our own home and accepting any service that is absolutely necessary. False pride and false shame are our enemies. I must get a letter from you every day and you should write or dictate every detail in it. Today is the last day of the seven-day fast undertaken by Nanibehn for the sake of her health.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. VASUMATIBEHN
KANYA GURUKULA

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 486. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

329. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

July 27, 1928

DEAR SISTER,

What shall I say to you? We were all prepared for Nikhil's passing away. He is relieved of his pain. He was such a wise and sober lad that he must have attained divine life. Satis Babu has amazed us all by his absolute calm. I expect the same calm from you all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1659

[1] From the postmark

330. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 28, 1928

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I had expected to hear from you after you reached Deolali. You will all be in good health. How is Dilip? Is not this bungalow the same you had stayed in earlier? How is the weather there?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
WINDY HALL
NASIK ROAD
DEVLALI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

331. GOVERNOR'S THREAT

It seems that the governing class in India refuses to learn even from experience. They act as if they are not aware that the people have got over the fear of threats. Not only threats make no impact on hundreds of thousands of people, but also a do-or-die class has now come into being on which even the carrying out of threats has no effect whatsoever. What can punishment inflicted by the State do to those who have given up the fear of death and the infatuation for possessions? What effect can a threat have upon those who love their self-respect above everything else? Hence the Governor's threat and Earl Winterton's full endorsement of it cannot have any influence on the people of Bardoli. On the contrary, I learn that it has made the latter more resolute.

But it is not our intention to analyse the Government's threat. We are aware that the Government has the ability to implement it; it will not allow us to forget this even if we wish to. Our prestige lies in assuming that the Government will act in accordance with its threats and in being prepared to welcome its wrath. The people of Bardoli should inscribe on their doors the proverbial saying, "He who is on

his guard is always happy", and they should always be on their guard. Vallabhbhai had warned the people at the very beginning of the struggle, saying:

> If you wish to offer resistance, you will have to face perils. The Government will seize your possessions, confiscate your land, sell yourpossessions at ridiculous prices, evict you from your land; it may even shoot you down. Yet do not turn your backs but receive the showers of bullets on your chests as if they were flowers.

Those who remember these words need no further warning.

But we are not concerned with the wrath of the Government. It is the ruler who has the monopoly of getting angry; we do not want to be angry at the wrath of the Government. A satyagrahi has no right to be angry. We wish to win over anger by an absence of it in ourselves. Even if the Government utters angry words, we do not wish to swerve from the path of truth. Whether the Government gets angry or not, our demand should remain the same. The Governor has made a speech as fiery as the lava of a volcano. Although the unintelligible Government Note issued at Surat is regarded as its final word, we keep hearing a talk of settlement. We need not worry whether the Government has a hand in these or not; but even if there is a single door open to settlement, we should be eager to enter through it. When people who are determined to sacrifice their lives give up discretion, they are no longer fearless men but indiscreet, ignorant persons. He who unnecessarily sacrifices himself is considered either insane or stupid, and his death not being a courageous one is of no advantage either to himself or to anyone else.

Although the people of Bardoli and Valod have the right to make more demands, they have not acted on that right. But now that the Government has crossed all bounds of decency, they cannot make any more demands. The satyagrahis need:

1. An independent and impartial committee to hear their complaints and give justice.

2. Implementation of the conditions which should form the basis of such a committee, i.e., (a) release of those who have been imprisoned in connection with the struggle; (b) release of lands which have been confiscated in connection with the struggle; and (c) restoration of the direct losses suffered by the people and by other individuals for the sake of the people.

The satyagrahis have every right to demand compensation for

the indirect loss that people have suffered in respect of their cattle and property, yet they do not do so. If they ask for it, it would not be regarded as a sign of compromise. A satyagrahi always starts satyagraha after preparing himself to sacrifice his life and property. Hence, the satyagrahi will not ask for any compensation for any indirect loss which has resulted from the policy of repression.

Once the Government accepts the above demands of the people, it would become the people's dharma to pay the revenue arrears at once. I take it that the people have always kept themselves in readiness to pay them. At some time or other, these will have to be paid. A newspaper report has reproduced a telegram sent by a gentleman from Bombay who has offered to pay the additional levy of land revenue against the injustice of which the satyagraha movement was started. If he has decided to present that sum to the Government, no one can stop him. If the Government feels satisfied by such a gift, we have no grudge against it. Whether that gentleman of Bardoli Taluk, settled in Bombay, has done harm to himself or to the people by offering that money cannot he judged today. If the Government is satisfied with the paying up of what should be regarded as an insignificant increase in assessment and, if it is possible to arrive at a settlement, it is the dharma of the satyagrahis to do so.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-7-1928

332. MY NOTES

WE OURSELVES SHOULD DO IT

A young gentleman writes from Cambay:[1]

I regard feasts given at marriages and similar occasions as pardonable, but would consider feasts given at the ceremony performed at the time of *simant*[2] as shameful, and also would consider it sinful to give a feast after anyone's death, whether it is for the 12th or the 13th day, whether it is for the old or the young. All feasts seem to me meaningless and uncivilized. I cannot understand why we allow the daily needs of the body to become means of enjoyment. My weakness may tolerate such things, but if we do not become slaves to tradition, we would not attend feasts given after death or at the *simant* ceremony. Our own conduct may be something commendable, but we should not feel hurt if parents, wives or grown-up children do not follow it. We cannot force our views on them. We should have the faith that, if our conduct is pure, others will be affected by it. I do not know: what the Jain sadhus do, but if they remain indifferent about the evil customs of society, I have no doubt that it is improper.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-7-1928

333. BOYCOTT OR NON-CO-OPERATION

A friend writes:[3]

Nowadays, when there is restlessness, violence and impatience in the minds of the people, even the best of things are misused. At such a time, if we use the words boycott and non-co-operation and if we use individual or collective adjectives before these words, it is bound to be

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had asked whether Gandhiji could do something in order to influence the wives and elders of those young men who, as a result of reading *Navajivan,* had given up attending feasts given on occasions such as death, *simant,* etc. He had also wished to know whether it was proper for Jain sadhus not to condemn such feasts.

[2] Religious ceremony held during first pregnancy

[3] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that it was likely that people might boycott the entire family of an old man who married a young girl, whereas the proper thing would be to boycott the individual alone.

misunderstood. Hence, we should merely suggest the limitation of each thing and, while putting it into practice, fully bear in mind those limitations and be satisfied. Even in individual boycott or non-co-operation, there ought not to be the slightest degree of *himsa*. I do not suggest hatred towards those who in old age marry young girls. These persons are to be pitied. When the passion of enmity possesses a man he loses his senses. The most sacred relationships are obliterated. This intoxication is even worse than that of drink. Therefore, remembering our own weaknesses and faults, we should pity the old men who are full of lust. But to pity them and to co-operate with them are two distinct things. True compassion has no room for blind love or infatuation. Hence, anyone who has erred is guilty of an offence against society and it is extremely important that he should be made to realize it. And that realization can be brought about only through boycott or non-cooperation. It may be imparted either by punishing the offender or by depriving him of rights which society has given him on certain terms. There is a difference between depriving them of the rights and punishing them. It is one thing if I employ a person as a servant, believing that he is honest, and dismiss him upon finding him to be not. But it is another if I give him physical punishment, or deprive him of his house, etc., or register a complaint with the authorities and get him punished. And if I do not punish him or get him punished, would I at all tolerate such treatment to his family or relatives? Actually, when the element of punishment or violence enters into boycott or non-cooperation, it ceases to be a powerful weapon, because the one who inflicts it becomes an offender himself while the latter, believing that he has done *prayaschitta* for his acts becomes more confirmed in his viciousness and ready to repeat the offence, if occasion arises. It is because of this that till today the infliction of punishment or violence has not prevented sin or crime. I have therefore suggested in all my writings that the reformer should be pure and respectful and that all his acts should be non-violent or full of love. Thus I; have suggested that boycott should mean that we do not accept any service from the one who is boycotted; that we put up with inconvenience and deny him any special rights. However, we should render him service when the need arises. The person who is boycotted thus cannot attend a community feast. If we have made him a professor, that position should be taken away from him. If he is a teacher and we happen to be studying under him, we should discontinue doing so. If he happens to be our tenant, he should cease

to be one. But if he is ill, he can avail himself of our services. If he is suffering from hunger for no fault of his, we should give him food. This is Just by way of illustration. In short, we should think consciously and should never wish or do to others what we do not wish done to ourselves.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-7-1928

334. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

July 29, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I do hope Kamala and Indu are flourishing. I had your wire and letter. The Presidential business is now finished.

I write this to consult you about Bhuvarji. He asks the Ashram to give him Rs. 20 per month and for this he wants Rs. 100 in advance. I would like you to tell me how he is working and whether he is giving you satisfaction. The A.I.S.A. will not and cannot give him anything. Do you advise the Ashram to supply his needs? What is the nature of work he is doing?

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1928. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

335. LETTER TO JETHALAL JOSHI

July 29, 1928

BHAISHRI JETHALAL,

It is certainly not a fast if you eat fruits. The aim behind a fast may be purification of the body or of the mind or of both. A fast contributes very little to purification of the mind. You will find the replies to the other questions in *Niyamavali*[1].

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 1352

[1] Booklet on rules for the inmates of the Ashram

336. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

July 29, 1928

CHI. VASUMATI,

Your illness has lasted too long now. How is your cough? I feel all the time that the courses of treatment employed in the Ashram and its air would help you to recover in the shortest possible time. But you must cling to that place with a firm mind. I hope you are not swallowing too many medicines. Though I write thus, I don't wish that you should remain there anyhow. If at any time you wish to come over here, please write to me. I must get a report of your health every day.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Please tell Vidyavatiji that I got her letter.

CHI. VASUMATIBEHN

KANYAVIDYALA

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 487. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

337. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

July 30, 1928

BHAI CHHAGANLAL JOSHI,

Keep this in the office. If you have anything to say about this matter, please do. It would be worth while to consider the last item in the Managing Committee.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 11804

338. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

July 30, 1928

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter. Rest assured that I am ready to start on the very day that I get your message that I should do so. I suppose you intend to send your call before the fourteen days' sand runs out of the glass, that is, before Sunday. If I am right, it is not necessary to send

Mahadev today. I cannot say that he is completely all right. Whatever the state of his health, he will of course accompany me. If, however, you require his presence immediately, send a wire and he will start tomorrow. He is not so bad now that he cannot go. He takes care when sitting down or getting up and walking. My only aim is to save him from the jerks in the train for as many days as possible.

I shall think and decide tomorrow what we should do about the workers' school. Krishnalal has arrived here. The money which is lying with the Provincial Committee may remain where it is. He may do what he likes in the matter. My idea was that the Ashram should take possession of it. I have not given up that idea, but we shall think about the matter when we meet if there is still time for it then. At the moment, you have one foot in the stirrup and who knows when you will be astride the horse?

Improve your health. There was another cable from Andrews as follows:

> *Times, Guardian* both published my communication. *Guardian* gave friendly editorial. Cable further important developments.[1]

I am now thinking what further information we can cable.[2]

There was a letter from Munshi. Mahadev will enclose with this a copy of my reply to him.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 14454

339. LETTER TO AMBALAL SARABHAI

July 30, 1928

RESPECTED BROTHER,

You have there an amount of Rs. 1,21,000 in the name of either Vallabhbhai or Punjabhai. I would like you to transfer the money to Shri Jamnalalji's account. If it is not inconvenient will you please do

[1] The source has this in English.
[2] *Vide* the following item.

this on receipt of this letter? The purpose of writing this letter is to save the interest on the amount. There is no intention of keeping any money in Vallabhbhai's name at the moment .

Vandemataram form

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11122. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

340. CABLE TO C. F. ANDREWS[1]

[On or after *July 30, 1928*]

SITUATION WORSE. GOVERNMENT SEEMS DETERMINED HUMILIATE SATYAGRAHIS AND THEIR LEADERS AND INSIST ON ABJECT ACCEPTANCE BY COUNCIL MEMBERS REPRESENTING SURAT DISTRICT OF UNINTELLIGIBLE TERMS WELL KNOWING THESE MEMBERS HAVE NO INFLUENCE IN BARDOLI. SITUATION THUS FORCED HOPELESSLY UNREAL. BARDOLI PEOPLE REPORTED ABSOLUTELY FIRM. READY FOR ANY SUFFERING. PAPERS PREDICT ARREST VALLABHBHAI AND CO-WORKERS ON EXPIRY GOVERNOR'S ULTIMATUM. EXPECT REACH BARDOLI ANY DAY UPON VALLABHBHAI'S CALL.

MOHAN

From a microfilm: S.N. 13264

341. LETTER TO VALLABHAI PATEL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 31, 1928

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. Today I was expecting a wire calling me there. I had held myself in full readiness.

I am not writing much just now as Bhai Nariman and Haribhai are expected here. Our line is clear. We can give up neither the *talatis* nor the lands. The Enquiry Committee's enquiry must be comprehensive. We cannot afford to let its scope be restricted in any way. Let Kaye and Davis be appointed if you think fit. Please wire the date on which you expect me there.

[1] In reply to his cable dated July 28; *vide* the preceding item.

Manibehn came and saw me. She is much pulled down. It is good that you have sent her. For the present she will live in the city. She says she will come on the fifth. Bhai Nariman and Haribhai have come and met me. I think it desirable that you should go if you receive a call through the members of the Legislature. The conditions [of agreement] are what we have drafted.[1]

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 14

342. LETTER TO BEHCHAR BHAWAN PARMAR

Wednesday, [*July/August, 1928*][2]

BHAI BEHCHAR BHAWAN,

I have your letter. It seems to me that you should be able to earn an honest livelihood from your traditional occupation itself. In my view, there is nothing shameful about following the useful occupation of a barber. There is nothing lowly about it.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 5569

343. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 1, 1928

CHI. VASUMATI,

I am dictating this before three in the morning. I trust you have not become nervous because of illness. Keep cheerful. If you feel despondent, forget your suffering and recover cheerfulness by reciting:

दु:खेध्वनुद्विग्रमना: सुखेषु विगतस्पृह ।
वीररागीभयक्रोध: स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यते ॥[3]

[1] *Vide* "Evil Genius of Government", 22-7-1928.

[2] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Bechar Parmar", July 2, August 6 and August 15, 1928.

[3] A Bihar woman who had come to be trained at the Ashram with Rajendra Prasad's recommendation

and meditating on its meaning. What is the name of the doctor who attends on you? What does he permit you to eat just now? I suppose you know that Nanibehn's fast has ended. I may have to go to Bardoli in a day or two.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. VASUMATIBEHN,
KANYA GURUKULA

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 488. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

344. LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA DESAI

August 1, 1928

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA,

I have had many letters from you but have not been able to reply to them. I do get news about you through Chi. Rasik.

Rasik has lost nothing by leaving school. He will learn more through experience here than he would have by attending school. There is no reason, therefore, to feel sorry at his having given up studies.

I had indeed expected that you would keep up the Ashram atmosphere there. I hear that Prabha has forgotten it as completely as you have kept it up. Take care of your health. Read what you can. Continue reading of the *Ramayana*. And of course there are carding and spinning.

Chi. Santok and Rukhibehn will arrive there towards the end of this week. Meet them occasionally. Write to me from time to time.

To all you sisters,

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 4907. Courtesy: Hari-ichchha Kamdar

345. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

August 1, 1928

CHI. NARANDAS,

Mirabehn has made slivers of the finest quality out of five *tolas* of cotton and given them to me. You credit them under whichever head you may decide and debit them in today's account against Behn Rajkishori. I have given them to her.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11806

346. SERVICE, NOT PROTECTION

Although the meeting (for 25th July last) of the All-India Cow-protection Association was advertised in *Young India* and Hindi and Gujarati *Navajivan* and although circular letters were sent to the members individually, even defaulters, there was an attendance of not more than perhaps a dozen, the majority being from the Ashram itself. This was an eloquent testimony, if any was needed, in support of the preamble of the draft resolution that was published in these pages and unanimously adopted by the meeting. Here is the full text of the resolution as amended and carried at the meeting:

> Inasmuch as the All-India Cow-protection Association has not been able to command public attention and sympathy commensurate with the all-India character it has claimed, and inasmuch as its activities have been confined to the slow spread of the objects of the Association and especially to helping conduct a dairy and tannery at the Satyagraha Ashram in terms of the objects of the Association, and inasmuch as the subscriptions and donations are mainly confined to friends who are interested in the experiment, and inasmuch as the numerous *goshalas* and pinjrapoles which were expected to respond to and be affiliated to the Association have nearly entirely failed to do so, the existing members of the Association resolve to disband it, and not retaining the existence of the Association in any shape

or form, to adopt the less pretentious title of Go Seva Sangha (Cow Service Society) and irrevocably to entrust the affairs, management and control of the funds and stock of the Association to the following permanent Standing Committee of management of the Society, viz.,

M. K. Gandhi (Chairman), Revashankar Jagjivan Jhaveri (Treasurer), Jamnalalji Bajaj, Vaijnathji Kedia, Manilal Vallabhji Kothari, Mahavirprasad Poddar, Shivlal Mulchand Shah, Parameshvariprasad Gupta, Dattatreya Balkrishna Kalelkar, Vinoba Bhave, Chhaganlal Khushalchand Gandhi, Chhaganlal Nathubhai Joshi, Narandas Khushalchand Gandhi, Surendranath, Chimanlal Narsinhdas Shah, Pannalal Balabhai Jhaveri, Yashvant Mahadev Parnerkar, Valji Govindji Desai (Secretary), with full powers to disburse the funds, conduct the said experiments, to add to their number, to fill up vacancies caused by the resignation or the death of a member, to expel a member by a majority vote and otherwise carry out the objects of the expiring Association and to frame a constitution and rules for the management of the Society and to make such amendments thereof as may from time to time be required.

The name suggested in the published draft for the much smaller body that was to take the place of the All-India Association was 'Cow Protection Society'. The eagle eye of Sjt. Jamnalalji detected the incongruity in the name. He rightly argued that the very small body of persons mostly unknown to fame could not arrogate to themselves the function of protecting the cow, they could only and in all humility endeavour to serve the cow to the best of their ability. He therefore suggested the proper title, Go Seva Sangha, literally, Cow Service Society. This was acclaimed by those present as the better title.

Ther eader may know that the majority of the members of the new Society are inmates of the Ashram and then too only those who are either actually conducting the dairy and the tannery experiment or are specially interested in it. The rest are those who whole-heartedly believe in this class of constructive work as the only real means of saving the cow from inevitable destruction. It will be the duty of these workers to try to interest the shepherds and the *govals* in the science of cattle preservation. If this numerous body of men and women could be induced to take a more intelligent and humanitarian view of their occupation than which there can be nothing more honourable,

half the battle is won. There is at present a close race for life being run between the cow and man in India. And if the cow is not scientifically bred and profitably used, she must eat us or be eaten by us. Whilst therefore the ambitious title and the equally ambitious constitution are withdrawn the work survives only to be done in an intenser form. I hope therefore that those who have hitherto sent donations in cash or kind to the defunct Association will help the successor. The Managing Committee will at no distant date publish the new constitution and rules. But donors need not wait for it for sending their donations.

Lastly, although it was proper for the old Association to be disbanded it may be claimed that its existence was not altogether purposeless. It was instrumental in putting before the public valuable literature on the subject in a popular, cheap and handy form. Above all it succeeded in removing to a large extent the Hindu prejudice against tanneries. Whereas four years ago everyone laughed at the idea of tanneries being any part of a scheme of cow-protection, now everybody recognizes at least in theory their tremendous importance in cow-preservation. Again, four years ago, no one worth mentioning thought of constructive work in connection with cow-protection. The all-pervading idea was hat the cow could be saved if the Mussalman could be induced not to slaughter her for Bakr Id. Now almost everyone recognizes that without the constructive work of the kind mapped out by the defunct Association the cow cannot be saved.

But before it is taken up in practice by the public at large, an ocular demonstration of the feasibility of the constructive method has to be given. That is the work inherited by the Go Seva Sangha from the parent body. I know from four years' experience how difficult it is, what patient study and labour it requires. It asks therefore for the help and prayer of those who will serve the cause of the cow — the chosen representative of the dumb creation, so idolized by Hindu humanity and yet so ill used by reason of its ignorance and superstition.

Young India, 2-8-1928

347. SELF-SUPPORT IS SELF-RESPECT

The suggestion has often been made in these columns that in order to make education compulsory or even available to every boy or girl wishing to receive education, our schools and colleges should become almost, if not wholly, self-supporting, not through donations or State aid or fees exacted from students, but through remunerative work done by the students themselves. This can only be done by making industrial training compulsory. Apart from the necessity which is daily being more and more recognized of students having an industrial training side by side with literary training, there is in this country the additional necessity of pursuing industrial training in order to make education directly self-supporting. This can only be done when our students begin to recognize the dignity of labour and when the convention is established of regarding ignorance of manual occupation a mark of disgrace. In America, which is the richest country in the world and where therefore perhaps there is the least need for making education self-supporting, it is the most usual thing for students to pay their way wholly or partially. Thus says the *Hindustanee Student*, the official bulletin of the Hindustan Association of America, 500, Riverside Drive, New York City:

> Approximately 50% of the American students use t summer vacation and part of their time during the academic year to earn money "Self-supporting students are respected", writes the bulletin of the California University. With reasonable diligence a student can devote from 12 to 25 hours per week (during the academic year) to outside work without seriously interfering with college work of 12 to 16 units (credits) involving 36 to 48 hours a week . . . A student should have some sort of practical knowledge of the following: carpentry, surveying, drafting, bricklaying, plastering, auto-driving, photography, machine-shop work, dyeing, field work, general farm work, instrumental music and so on. Such common work as waiting on table for two hours, etc., is available during the academic years, which relieves a student from expenses for board. A partially self-supporting student by working during the summer vacation may save up from $150 to 200. Kansas, N.Y. University, Pittsburg, Union University, Antioch College offer 'co-operative' courses in Industrial Engineering by which a student can earn one year's tuition fees working in industrial plants for which he also receives credit for his practical experience.

> The University of Michigan has under consideration the opening of similar co-operative courses in Civil and Electrical Engineering. One year more is required to graduate in engineering by pursuing co-operative courses.

If America has to model her schools and colleges so as to enable students to earn their scholastic expenses, how much more necessary it must be for our schools and colleges? Is it not far better that we find work for poor students than that we pauperize them by providing free-studentships? It is impossible to exaggerate the harm we do to India's youth by filling their minds with the false notion that it is ungentlemanly to labour with one's hands and feet for one's livelihood or schooling. The harm done is both moral and material, indeed much more moral than material. A free scholarship lies and should lie like a load upon a conscientious lad's mind throughout his whole life. No one likes to be reminded in after-life that he had to depend upon charity for his education. Contrarily where is the person who will not recall with pride those days if he had the good fortune to have had them when he worked in a carpentry-shop or the like for the sake of educating himself mind, body and soul?

Young India, 2-8-1928

348. LIMITATIONS OF SATYAGRAHA

Sardar Sardul Singh is an esteemed worker. His open letter advising me to invite sympathetic civil disobedience for Bardoli demands a reply especially because it enables me to clear my own position. If Bardoli Satyagraha were a campaign of lawlessness as the Government paint it, nothing would be more tempting or more natural than sympathetic satyagraha and that too without the limits prescribed in the Sardar's letter. But the Sardar rightly says:

> I find in prominent Gujarat workers a tendency to allow Bardoli peasants to be kept isolated. This impression has been created in my mind by the reports of Sjt. Vallabhbhai's speeches and your writings. Friends think that any more scruples on this point go beyond the limits of practical politics.

The Sardar's impression is correct. In order strictly to limit the scope of the struggle to the purely local and economic issue and to keep it non-political Sjt. Vallabhbhai would not let Sjt. Rajagopalachari and other leaders to go to Bardoli. It was only when the Government gave it a political character and made it an all-India issue by their coercive measures that the reins were loosened and Vallabhbhai

could no longer prevent public men from going to Bardoli, though where his advice or permission was sought, he said, "Not yet."

I do not know what Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel would say to the Sardar's suggestion but I can say, "Not yet." Time has not come even for limited sympathetic satyagraha. Bardoli has still to prove its mettle. If it can stand the last heat and if the Government go to the farthest limit, nothing that I or Sjt. Vallabhbhai can do will stop the spread of satyagraha or limit the issue to a *bona-fide* re-inquiry and its logical consequences. The limit will then be prescribed by the capacity of India as a whole for self-sacrifice and self-suffering. If that manifestation is to come it will be natural and incapable of being stayed by any agency no matter how powerful. But so far as I understand the spirit of satyagraha and its working, it is the duty of Sjt. Vallabhbhai and myself to keep to the original limits in spite of the Government provocations which are strong enough even as they are to warrant the crossing of the original boundary.

The fact is that satyagraha presupposes the living presence and guidance of God. The leader depends not on his own strength but on that of God. He acts as the Voice within guides him. Very often therefore what are practical politics so-called are unrealities to him, though in the end his prove to be the most practical politics. All this may sound foolish and visionary on the eve of what bids fair to become the toughest battle that India has hitherto had to face. But I would be untrue to the nation and myself if I failed to say what I feel to be the deepest truth. If the people of Bardoli are what Vallabhbhai believes them to be, all will be well, in spite of the use of all the weapons that the Government may have at its command. Let us wait and see. Only let the M.L.C.s and others who are interested in compromises not take a single weak step in the hope of saving the people of Bardoli. They are safe in the hands of God.

Young India, 2-8-1928

349. N0TES

FOREIGN PROPAGANDA

I observe that my cablegram[1] to Deenabandhu Andrews has given rise to the opinion that I have changed my views and that I have now begun to pin my faith to foreign propaganda. Let me hasten to clear any such misunderstanding. My views about foreign propaganda remain what they were in 1920 and before. My cablegram to the Deenabandhu was in reply to his. A close friend though he is, I never worried him over the Bardoli affair. But when he sent me a cable asking me to acquaint him from time to time with particulars, I could not resist him. And if this is called foreign propaganda, I should still prosecute it and advise others to do likewise with their friends in England or elsewhere. But when it comes to sending people from here or establishing an agency for such propaganda my soul rebels against it and tells me that we are beating the wind. The foreign public is not eager to listen to our talk or writings however cogent and truthful they may be. They expect and would eagerly learn about our deeds. The field for our propaganda is here and now. And when we have made good our position in our own country, the rest will follow.

INDIAN SHIPPING

The tragic history of the ruin of the national village industry of cotton manufacture in India is also the history of the ruin of Indian shipping. The rise of Lancashire on the ruin of the chief industry of India almost required the destruction of Indian shipping.

It will be remembered that in 1923 the Indian Mercantile Marine Committee was appointed in order to explore among other things the means of encouraging indigenous shipping "by a system of bounties, subsidies, etc." Its timid and overcautious recommend ations provide for the reservation of the coastal traffic for Indian shipping. Sit. Sarabhai Haji now seeks through two bills to secure legislative effect for the recommendations of the Committee. One bill aims at the abrogation of unhealthy monopolies and the other aims in five years at the passing of all the tonnage of the coastal traffic into the hands predominantly of Indians. Both the bills are necessary and

[1] *Vide* "Cable to C.F. Andrews", on or after 30-7-1928.

both should pass without delay or difficulty. I am an out-and-out protectionist. I hold that every country, especially a poor country like India, has every right and is indeed bound to protect its interest, when it is threatened, by all lawful protective measures and to regain by such measures what has been wrongfully taken away from it. I have my doubts about anything substantial being done under the existing system through legislative effort. But I take up the same position that I have always maintained regarding organized industries such as mills. I should welcome and support all action that would protect them against foreign aggression or free them from foreign competition especially when the latter is grossly unfair as it is in the case of foreign shipping and foreign piece-goods. I therefore wish Sjt. Sarabhai Haji every success in his very moderate effort. He might quite justly have gone further than he has.

Young India, 2-8-1928

350. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*August 2, 1928*][1]

MY DEAR MIRA,

You will keep your health and never deny yourself what may be needed for it; nor need you attend the kitchen if the noise there gets on your nerves. In every case, never go beyond your capacity. That too is a breach of truth. And of course you are not to worry over my being away from you.

No news from this side yet. Vallabhbhai is well. No summons yet for him to go to Poona.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

You will look after Dharm Kumar and Satyadevi.

From the original: C.W. 5328. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8218

[1] This letter appears to have been written soon after Gandhiji's arrival at Bardoli on August 2 and before Vallabhbhai Patel reached Poona on August 3 for negotiations regarding Bardoli.

351. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
Thursday [*August 2*][1] *1928*

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I had believed that what Parnerkar[2] had written regarding the demand of that cow-protection worker, the one with the books of accounts, was among my papers. But I do not find it among the papers here. Please inquire about it. I do not know if it is lying somewhere in my room. Please look for it and let me know.

Have you drafted the constitution of the Cow Service Society? Please keep it ready when I return there.

I trust you take good care of your health.

BAPU

From the Gajarati original: C.W. 7395. Courtesy: V.G. Desai

352. LETTER TO SANTOK GANDHI

August 2, 1928

CHI. SANTOK,

It is true that I have made you suffer, but you may say that I have done so in the manner of a vaid[3]. Since I shrank from hurting Manjula, she has again fallen ill. Though I have caused you suffering, I take satisfaction in the thought that I have always wished the good of you all. I would expect hundred per cent satisfaction from you. I should like you both, mother and daughter, to return here with a happy heart. Write to me from time to time. You need not worry about Keshu and Radha.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8670. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhari

[1] Gandhiji was in Bardoli on this date.
[2] Y. M. Parnerkar
[3] Physician practising Ayurvedic system of medicine

353. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

BARDOLI,
August 2, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

What shall I write to you? Go on working as devotedly as you have been doing. Take care of your health. I shall require a diary of the whole day's work from day to day. Shower love on Dahyabhai. I was extremely pained to see a touch of falsehood in him. I shall look forward to getting regular letters from you. Spread your fragrance in the school and the kitchen. See that Dahibehn does not feel hurt. About things here I can write nothing today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1755

354. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

August 2, 1928

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I had hoped to meet you, but you could not come. You should lighten your work. I hope you have made convenient arrangement for sleeping at night. Find some time every day and give me an account of the state of your mind. Don't work beyond your capacity and don't make others work beyond theirs. Consult Chi. Chhaganlal about everything you wish to do.

Preserve the utmost peace in the kitchen. Women should cultivate the ability to work without making noise.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G.S. Gangabehnne, p. 14

355. LETTER TO BANARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

August 2, 1928

BHAI BANARSIDAS,

I have your letter. The reply[1] sent to Bhai Oza is just the right one. There is no need to send a wire as I had sent one already.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

SJT. BANARSIDAS CHATURVEDI
VISHAL BHARAT KARYALAYA
91 UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD, CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2563

356. DISCUSSION IN BARDOLI[2]

August 2, 1928

On the eve of starting for Bardoli Gandhiji said:

I am going to Bardoli in response to the command of the Sardar. Of Course Vallabhbhai often consults me, but does not a commander consult even a private serving under him? I am going to Bardoli not to take Vallabhbhai's place but to serve under him.

On coming to Bardoli he maintained the same attitude and has emphasized it at several places so as to burn the lesson of discipline deep into the minds of all engaged in public work.

Peasants from various places came wading through water and mire to pay their respects to Gandhiji. "We have surrendered our head to the Sardar, not our honour (literally, nose)," said a group of them.

Gandhiji said:

Then you may be sure that your honour is safe but a great test is still to come. When you have stood the final heat, victory is yours. But tell me one thing. Supposing Vallabhbhai is taken away and others also with him, won't you he Cowed down?

"No fear," said one of them with firmness, "Vallabhbhai has done enough to turn our iron into steel, and we know that the only thing we have to do is to be true to

[1] *Vide* "Letter to U. K. Oza", 14-7-1928.
[2] From Mahadev Desai's "Bardoli Week by Week"

our word, even if the very heavens fall."

Gandhiji was delighted. Some friend suggested that he should visit some of the villages. "Not unless Vallabhbhai wants me to do so" was the reply. It was only at Vallabhbhai's desire that Gandhiji visited Sarbhon and Rayam and met there hundreds of peasants from scores of villages in the vicinity.

Young India, 9-8-1928

357. PREFACE TO "SELF-RESTRAINT V. SELF-INDULGENCE"[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[2]
August 3, 1928

It is gratifying to note that the third edition of this volume is required by the public. I wish that I had time to add one or more chapters to the volume, but I cannot delay publication so that I might add the chapters. I would have done so if I could be sure of finding the time needed for it.

From what, however, I have discovered from the letters that regularly come to me from inquirers, I would like to issue this definite warning: Those who believe in self-restraint must not become hypochondriacs. The letters that come to me show that many correspondents brood over their ill-success in the exercise of self-restraint. Like everything else that is good, self-restraint too requires an inexhaustible store of patience. There is absolutely no reason to despond, and there must be no brooding. There should be no conscious effort to drive away evil thoughts. That process is itself a kind of indulgence.

The best prescription perhaps is non-resistance, i.e., ignoring the existence of evil thoughts and a continuous pre-occupation with duties that lie in front of one. This presupposes the existence of some kind of all-absorbing service requiring the concentration of mind, soul and body upon it. "Idle hands some mischief still will ever find to do", is never so applicable as in this case. Evil thoughts, much more, evil deeds, are impossible when we are thus pre-occupied. Strenuous labour in accordance with one's physical capacity is, therefore,

[1] A draft (S.N. 14063) of this is available at the Sabarmati Sangrahalaya, Ahmedabad.

[2] Permanent address

absolutely necessary for those who will obey the law of self-restraint which is indispensable for individual as well as universal progress.

M. K. GANDHI

Self-Restraint v. *Self-Indulgence*

358. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY[1]

August 3, 1928

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I see I omitted to reply to your question about the American Consul's letter. Of course, the whole thing is a fabrication. I do not know who Estelle Cooper is or Nazimova.

Vallabhbhai has called me to Bardoli whence I am writing this.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. BIDHAN ROY
36 WELLINGTON STREET, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: C.W. 2787

359. LETTER TO D. F. MCCLELLAND[2]

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
August 3, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and the enclosure[3]. You will excuse me for the delay in replying—I was so busy.

Dr. Gullick's question is very relevant. My own opinion is that

[1] In reply to his letter (S.N. 13651) dated July 26, "enclosing a copy of a communication from the American Consul". For the American Consul General's letter to Gandhiji and the latter's reply, *vide* "Letter to Robert Frazer", 10-8-1928.

[2] In reply to his letter (S.N. 13485) dated July 23, 1928, requesting Gandhiji to give his opinion on a question received by the addressee from Sydney L. Gullick, Secretary to the Commission on International Justice and Goodwill of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, "asking for a judgement after careful investigation as to whether the sore point lies in the race discrimination feature or in the fact of exclusion. . . ."

[3] A printed appeal to the citizens of United States to amend the immigration laws so as to put an end to the Asiatic exclusion.

it is not the 'open door' that is wanted but really courteous treatment, not a mere declaration. And, if it is really courteous treatment that is really to be accorded, it is not difficult to find a legal formula wherewith an "Asiatic Invasion", as unrestricted immigration of the Asiatics is called, can be effectively checked while no Indian, whose competition need never be feared, would be excluded, or, admitted only after undergoing humiliating and discriminative treatment.

I need not now answer the question as to whether hundred Indians a year or more or less will answer the purpose. The number counts for nothing, the manner means everything.

Yours sincerely,

D. F. MC CLELLAND, ESQ.

YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION, ESPLANADE, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 13894

360. LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,

August 3, 1928

I had your long typed letter[1] which you left at your office when you went to Delhi, the other day. I have carefully read your letter and I like it for its frankness. I do not share the view you have about Motilalji. He may be mistaken but he is sincere and frank.

As for me I can only say that I am what I was in 1920 and 1921. I can only hope that when the occasion arises God will give me the strength to prove the claim I have so often made, namely, that I am friend and brother to every Mussalman.

From a photostat: S.N. 13895

[1] Referring to this in his letter (S.N. 13484) dated July 23, 1928 Shaukat Ali had written: ''You will get the typed letter from my office but without my signature. That will give you a reply to your last letter. . . ."

361. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DAULATRAM

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
August 4, 1928

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

I have been too busy to attend to your letter of 2nd June. It is only because Vallabhbhai has called me to Bardoli that I have got a little breathing time to overtake arrears.

I do find a flaw *in your argument. You will* not decrease the consumption of foreign cloth through our mills unless they come under our control, if only for the simple reason that they will, as before, palm off foreign cloth upon you as swadeshi when they find it cheaper than their own cloth or when they run short of their own cloth. There is no shorter way than the straightest way. Has not Euclid taught us that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points? You know that I tried hard to come to terms with the mill-owners but it was of no use.

JAIRAMDAS DAULATRAM
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a microfilm: S.N. 13910

362. LETTER TO CHIRANJIVALAL MISHRA[1]

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
August 4, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

I still write about British rule because it affects us in all departments of life. My condemnation of that rule does not make me blind to the virtues of the British people. If India is ever to gain swaraj,

[1] In reply to his letter (S.N. 13850) dated june 26, 1928, criticizing Gandhiji's denunciation of British rule. Chiranjivalal had also written: "My humble idea is that the more a man is religious, the more he is disqualified as a soldier in the fight for freedom of the country. Religion is an unnecessary evil and a drag on the political side. . ."

she will do so, not by copying other nations, but by finding out a way specially suited to her needs. India's progress towards swaraj would be more rapid if she was more religious.

Yours sincerely,

CHIRANJIVALAL MISHRA, *VAKIL*
HIGH COURT, JAIPUR CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 13909

363. LETTER TO VISHVANATH SINGH

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
August 4, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

I have no hesitation in saying that, if you propose to remarry you should marry the girl-widow although she lived with her husband for some time. I agree with you that it is inadvisable for a widow who has children to remarry.

Yours sincerely,

VISHVANATH SINGH, ESQ.
12 HORI SARKAR LANE, BARABAZAR, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13908

364. LETTER TO ABDUL QUYUM[1]

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
August 4, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

I do not know any Nature cure specialist in the Punjab. But you do not need any. Sun-bath in the early morning when the rays of the sun are bearable on the naked body and simple unstimulating diet is

[1] In reply to his letter (S.N. 13873) dated July 4, 1928, requesting Gandhiji to suggest a Nature-cure specialist to cure him of his tubercular glands.

all you need. And if this treatment does not cure you nothing else is likely to.

Yours sincerely,

SHEIKH ABDUL QUYUM
BATALA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13906

365. LETTER TO BHUPENDRANATH GHOSH[1]

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
August 4, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter, enclosing suggestions for amending the Ashram Rules published in *Young India*. They will be carefully considered when revision is taken up.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13907

366. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRAN

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
August 4, 1928

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRAN,

I had your letter dated 8th ultimo. You must give me a regular fortnightly letter. It is only because Vallabhbhai has called me to Bardoli that I am able to overtake arrears.

Devdas is in Delhi. Surendra is now trying to become an expert tanner. The common kitchen has now 150 diners. Ba, Mahadev and Pyarelal are in Bardoli, apart from others.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13905

[1] In reply to his letter (S.N. 13879) dated July 9, 1928, suggesting that the Satyagraha Ashram should be self-contained and not maintained by contributions from friends

367. LETTER TO CHOWDHARY MUKHTAR SINGH

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
August, 4 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1].

Whist there is an undercurrent of truth in your letter there is, I am afraid, much confusion of thought. If a people will not become industrious and self-supporting by following a useful occupation they will never be able to throw off [the] foreign yoke. Prosperity is totally different from ability to support oneself by dint of labour.

Yours sincerely,

CHOWDHARY MUKHTAR SINGH[2]

From a microfilm: S.N. 13904

368. LETTER TO D. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
August 4, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

If you have the strength of mind you will certainly wear khadi even if you incur the displeasure of your employers. Our duty is to so act as not to cause injury to others. Duty is a debt and discharge of a debt does not carry any reward with it unless of satisfaction with oneself.

We pray to feel strong and purified.

Yours sincerely,

D.C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
L/78/3 CORAL MERCHANT STREET, MADRAS[3]

From a microfilm: S.N. 13903

[1] Dated July 10, 1928, which read: "In a country governed by foreigners whose aim is not only power but economic exploitation also, is it not a waste of time to work for economic regeneration of the country? . . ." (S.N. 13880)

[2] Pleader, Meerut; Member, Legislative Assembly

[3] An employee of an English firm

369. LETTER TO GIRWARDHAR[1]

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
August 4, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your booklet[2]. I do not know whether I shall ever get the time to read it.

1. There are no courtyards specially reserved for women in these parts as in Bihar.

2. Though there is no special courtyard or room reserved, males do not have free access to the females.

3. Women at public meetings have special enclosures reserved for them, as a rule.

4. Many educated women do dislike manual labour.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13902

370. LETTER TO VISH NATH TIKOO

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
August 4, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

It is wrong to say that we cannot produce hand-spun cloth for all the people. The moment the people have the will, they can

[1] A *vakil* of Samastipur (Bihar) who in his letter (S.N. 18872) dated June 30, 1928, had asked Gandhiji the following questions: "(I) Has every Hindu house there a courtyard with rooms reserved for females as in our Province? (2) Has any friend and acquaintance of the males free access to the Zanana Compartment there? (3) In public meetings do the females sit together or promiscuously with males? (4) Have the educated females there a dislike for household manual labour like cooking, etc., or they continue to do the work themselves? (5) Do the females jointly sit with males in the outer apartments amongst their friends, acquaintances and clients, etc., or do they come out on rare occasions when necessity requires it?" It appears that Gandhiji did not answer the fifth question

[2] In Hindi entitled *Gram Sudhar* for being reviewed in *Young India* and *Navajivan*

manufacture all the cloth they need and that far more economically than any that can be bought in the market.

Yours sincerely,

VISH NATH TIKOO

SHALA KADAL, SHRINAGAR, KASHMIR

From a microfilm: S.N. 13898

371. LETTER TO PYARELAL CHOPRA

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
August 4, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

You should not give up milk. You can use uncooked green vegetables if you take them in very small quantities, not more than 1 oz. per day to start with. You need not give up wheat. It is possible to take wheat uncooked after soaking it in water overnight in order to soften it.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. PYARELAL CHOPRA

HEAD CLERK, IMPERIAL BANK OF INDIA, DARBHANGA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13901

372. LETTER TO MATHURA PRASAD

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
August 4, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry not to have been able to reply to your letter earlier.

I am unable to guide you in the matter mentioned by you. It is likely that, if you try, you may get some help from the Government.

MATHURA PRASAD

BHABUA (BIHAR)

From a microfilm: S.N. 13900

373. A LETTER

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
August 4, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

Only great pressure of business has prevented me from acknowledging the correspondence from Orissa. All my plans having been upset, I was obliged at the eleventh hour to put off sending Chhaganlal Gandhi to you. You may have him as my nominee on your board and carry on all correspondence with him. I do not know when I shall be able to send him to you. I having been called to Bardoli, the uncertainty has become still more uncertain. I can only say that I shall not delay sending him a minute more than I can help.

My suggestion to you is not to take any step about khadi without previous consultation with me through Chhaganlal Gandhi and to consult with him directly, if I am put away by the Government.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13911

374. LETTER TO T. K. MADHAVAN

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
August 4, 1928

MY DEAR MADHAVAN,

Your letter of 30th May last has lain with me all these months unanswered; but I have been helpless. It is only because I have been called to Bardoli that I have a little time to attend to arrears.

Please let me know what progress you have made. I have not yet been able to go through the judgment. Why don't you see Rajagopalachari yourself? He will help you in whatever way he can. I hear, however, that at the present moment he is far from well.

Yours sincerely,

T. K. MADHAVAN, ESQ.
ORGANIZING SECRETARY, S.N.D.P. YOGAM[1]

From a photostat: S.N. 14054

[1] Sri Narayana Guru Dharma Paripalana Yogam

375. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

August 4, 1928

MY DEAR BHRRR,[1]

It is not for me to like or dislike. When all are locked up, things will take their own course. But more when we meet. Please tell Raihana I began Gopi's diary and had to leave it to come to Bardoli.

Yours,

BHRRR

From a photostat: S.N. 9564

376. A LETTER

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
August 4, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry, I have been unable to reach your letter before now.

We have evidence enough of the majority of mankind that their ancestors do not show, to our knowledge, any dissatisfaction because the rites that the Hindus perform are not performed for them. The references in the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* do not prove that at one time the rites referred to in them were performed by us. To me, it seems that real reverence to our ancestors and remembrance of them should consist in copying their virtues. Personally I perform no rites in connection with my father, nor do I keep the anniversary, for I endeavour to think of my parents and copy their virtues in my life from day to day.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13896

[1] This was a form of greeting between Gandhiji and the addressee.

377. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

SWARAJ ASHRAM,
Saturday [*August 4, 1928*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I am alarmed by your letter. It seems you are seriously ill. Please ask the doctor to write to me and tell me what he thinks about the illness and what treatment he is giving. Is it necessary to send anyone from here?

I am at Bardoli just now. Write to me at this address.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. VASUMATIBEHN
KANYA GURUKULA

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 489. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

378. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
August 4, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

I got your letter. I shall certainly require a well-maintained diary. If you write every day, you will grow used to the practice. You certainly know how to keep a diary. Surely, it does not require any great ability to note down the work done, the thoughts which occurred and the experiences one had!

I have given in the letter to Chhaganlal (Joshi) what news I could about Bardoli. I may say that at present I am practically enjoying rest.

How is Rajkishori?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1756

[1] From the postmark

379. SPEECH AT SARBHON

August 4, 1928

Gandhiji accompanied by some prominent local workers motored to Sarbhon yesterday where, besides the volunteers of Sarbhon and the *patels* and *talatis* who had resigned and the representatives from 25 villages comprising Sarbhon division had gathered together in the Swaraj Ashram to meet him. In explaining the object of his visit Gandhiji said that he had come there only to congratulate them and to learn more about their achievements. . . . Addressing the *talatis* Gandhiji said:

I hold that the *talatis* have shown greater spirit and valour in this fight than any other section. May I express the hope that you will maintain the same fine spirit when peace comes as you have shown in this fight? For I have noticed that *talatis* often tyrannize over the poor villagers and harass them. It is up to you to set them at their ease so that they might learn to regard you as friends and helpers, not as objects of terror. For the rest, the people have understood the secret of unity and combination, and once that lesson is learnt victory becomes an easy matter.

He next had a short talk with the representatives of the 25 villages of Sarbhon division numbering about sixty, in the course of which he said:

Although your leaders would be the last persons to stand in the way of an honourable settlement they are bound to reject any settlement that is abject or humiliating. We are all anxious for peace, but we want peace with honour, a peace that would be worthy of the satyagrahis and the cause which they represent. Some representatives of Bajipura the other day told Vallabhbhai that they had pledged their all to him but not their honour.[1] My advice to you is that you should surrender your honour to nobody in the world. As for Vallabhbhai, he would be the last person to wish you to do so. For he holds his own honour dear and the honour of others is as dear to him as his own. No one can deprive another of his honour if he is determined not to surrender it. A time may shortly come when Dr. Sumant[2], Abbas Tyabji and all the local workers and volunteers may be snatched away from you and clapped into jail. Then will come your real test. Let each one of you when that hour comes defend the citadel of his honour with his last breath, for that is the meaning of swaraj. The substitution of a brown for a white bureaucracy won't bring us swaraj.

[1] *Vide* "Discussion in Bardoli", 2-8-1928.

[2] Sumant Mehta

Swaraj will come to us only when we have developed the capacity to safeguard our honour. And if you make truth and non-violence your shield then I tell you that whatever be the end of this struggle you will come out of it with your honour unscathed. The Government may riddle you with bullets or turn you out of your homes. You must be prepared for both. Only remember what Vallabhbhai told you, that a soldier receives bullets on his chests not on his back.

As for being deprived of your hearth and home what fear can you have so long as you have sound limbs with which to do labour. It is after all not Government that gives you your daily bread but He who watches over all creation. You have already achieved much and if you can stand the last heat unflinchingly the world will ring with fame of your deeds. But if you fail in the crucial test your fall will be as great as your present success. Even so in 1922 you came within an ace of success but you could not maintain that position and the result was that you sank back into the morass till Vallabhbhai by his penance and sacrifice again raised you to the old heights. He has done his part. It now remains for you to do yours.

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-8-1928

380. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
Saturday, August 4, 1928

CHI. MANI,

Swami[1] is not here, but I read your letter to him. Do not insist on coming here. It is the duty of a soldier to keep fit and obey the commander willingly. We can improve our health soon enough if we apply our mind to it.

Father, Mahadev and Swami have gone to Poona. They must have started from there today. A wire was expected from Poona, but it has not yet arrived. One cannot say yet whether or not there will be a settlement. I feel that the Government is not in a sufficiently strong position now to prolong the fight. Public opinion is against it and

[1] Anandananda

ithas made many mistakes. I visited Sarbhon today. There has been no rain for some days. Most of the people here are leaving for Surat today.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 67-8

381. MAGANKAKA

Under this heading, Prabhudas Gandhi has written a good, detailed and yet very brief biographical sketch[1] of the late Maganlal Gandhi. There is truth in it and also a command over the language. Because of the blending of truth and simplicity of expression the account in my opinion can also be said to be outstanding from the point of view of art. All of us have to learn much from the life of the late Maganlal Gandhi because he was a living example of the saying: "Practise as you preach." This account is given here since it cannot but benefit Gujaratis.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-8-1928

382. LACK OF COTTON OR EFFORT?

The Secretary, Children's Conference of Kasunda, situated in the Manbhoom region of Bihar, writes:[2]

The writer is a Gujarati and takes interest in the life of the children of Bihar and in khadi. I congratulate him on doing so. But I am grieved by what he says in his letter, that due to want of slivers and cotton, the plying of charkhas has had to be stopped. Those who have the means to procure charkhas can obtain cotton from anywhere and there should be no need to get slivers from elsewhere. I have often written in *Navajivan* that those who do not know how to card and make slivers cannot be said to know spinning. Only those can be said to know how to make the flour *rotis* who know how to knead, make

[1] Not translated here

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that the spinning-wheel had ceased to operate in certain parts of Bihar for want of slivers.

rolls and roast *rotis.* Similarly, only those who know how to card cotton, make slivers and spin can be called spinners. In fact, all the three processes constitute a single activity. Perhaps it would not be improper to call slivers the thickest of yarn. The process of carding is easy and beautiful. It does not take much time to learn it. Hence, my reply to the writer of the above letter is that slivers should be available in the village of Kasunda itself. It is not due to want of cotton or slivers that plying of charkhas has had to be stopped but rather due to want of effort, and in this fact I also see the absence of a genuine love for the charkha. I hope that wherever charkhas are plied as *yajna* spinners would immediately learn how to card cotton and make slivers.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-8-1928

383. SETTLEMENT OR WAR?

Reports of a settlement are coming in from all quarters, and, behind it, are also heard the echoes of a battle. At one time we hear that the Government is firm and is not prepared to change even one of the points in the talks held at Surat, while at other times we hear that the Government is eager to arrive at a settlement, that it is ready to yield as much as possible and would fight only if it cannot help it.

God alone knows which of these two versions is correct. A satyagrahi remains indifferent towards both, but at the same time should be prepared to face either. He should not let go a single opportunity for a settlement but should always be prepared for a battle. He should never adopt devious ways. He should not have the *chakravyuha*[1] of Abhimanyu, he should have only one golden, straightforward path, which even a child can see. He has nothing to hide, he can have recourse to no underhand dealings; what then has he to think about? It is immaterial for him whether on Monday he gets the news of a settlement or of Shri Vallabhbhai's arrest.

If satyagrahis have fully learnt their lesson under the leadership of Shri Vallabhbhai, they would not be scared at all at his arrest or that of other leaders and, while allowing things to take their own course,

[1] An impregnable phalanx of the Kaurava army which Abhimanyu alone was able to destroy

would remain steadfast in their determination.

Those who are trying to bring about a settlement have a right to do so; it is the dharma of every citizen to take a hand in preventing an unnecessary war. But if they get involved in efforts at a settlement out of misplaced pity for satyagrahis, they will harm the nation and prove that they do not understand the satyagrahis. The latter do not need pity, they do not hanker after it; what they crave for is justice. Hence, it is possible that the efforts of those who seek pity for satyagrahis by regarding them as weak, may be in vain. If the demands of the satyagrahis are just, it is the dharma of the mediators to make a determined effort to see that justice is done to them. In order to do so, it is essential for the former to understand the demands and the struggle of the satyagrahis. A satyagrahi enters the struggle by regarding sorrows as joys. Therefore no one has the right to enter into any negotiations on his behalf out of distress for his sufferings. It is my confirmed belief that those who intervene in such a manner prolong the struggle rather than shorten it.

A satyagrahi always desires to educate public opinion. Therefore he wishes to make his facts fully known. In spite of this, those, who in their ignorance, build tabernacles of truce with imagined facts, would find that these will burn down with a single spark of the match-stick of truth, just like tents made of paper. Those who wish to bring about a compromise need to have the faith that persons prepared for suffering will never be guilty of exaggeration; they have taken to the path of satyagraha only as a last resort, after all the other avenues had been closed to them. The satyagrahis of Bardoli and Valod fall into this category. They have resorted to satyagraha after all other methods had failed.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-8-1928

384. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
[*August 5, 1928*][1]

MY DEAR MIRA,

Your letters. I am using your name freely in order to stop the noise in the kitchen. It does not matter if you incur a little displeasure of some sisters for the time being. You should discuss this question freely with them.

Chhotelalji says you have a violent dislike for the monthly course regulation of which he says you knew nothing. Is this so ? I thought we discussed it[2] and you agreed that it was necessary to placate those who had scruples. You may discuss this with Chhotelalji and let me know what you have understood.

It is almost certain that a compromise will be announced *tomorrow or on Tuesday*. But I shall be detained for some days longer for the new order of things to settle down.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5304. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8194

385. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

BARDOLI,
Sunday, August 5, 1928

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have no news today. I intend to send a wire tomorrow to inquire. If you need anyone to help you, you should not at all hesitate to write and tell me so. Your health should not get worse. I did not follow your remark about being confined to bed for a month. I personally do not understand the suggestion about gram soup.

Most probably there will be a settlement of the Bardoli problem.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 490. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

[1] From the reference to the announcement of the compromise regarding Bardoli
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", August 14 and 26, 1927.

386. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

BARDOLI,
Sunday, August 5, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

I got your letter. It is strange that you should have a headache. Take care.

If you have any explanation why . . . bhai[1] does not admit his error, think over it and let me know. Is it possible that you misunderstood at any time what you were told? Personally, I have again written to say that . . . bhai[2] should be relieved. Write and let me know what arrangements have been made for the Bal Mandir[3].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1757

387. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
August 5, 1928

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I did not write to you till now as there was no news. Today Mahadev has returned from Poona. Valjibhai got off at Surat. A compromise will most probaby be arrived at. All our conditions have been accepted. However, we will know for certain either tomorrow or on Tuesday, so for the time being this is meant only for you find our friends. Mahadev tells me that Vallabhbhai feels that I may have to stay here for about a fortnight should there be a compromise. I have letters from Gulzarilal and Desai. The Provincial Congress Committee is meeting in Surat today. I have written asking Vallabhbhai to finalize things.

I am fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S. N. 32777

[1] The names are omitted in the source.
[2] Infant school
[3] From Mahadev Desai's "Bardoli Week by Week"

388. SPEECH ON DISCIPLINE, RAYAM

August 5, 1928

I cannot speak as the order of the Sardar is clear. If he had been here and asked me to speak I should have done so. But today I cannot do anything more than congratulate you on your bravery and on your unity. I was glad to see the spinning demonstration, but I cannot even speak about the charkha. It should be a principle with us implicitly to obey the commands or instructions of one whom we have chosen to be our Sardar. I admit I am Vallabhbhai's elder brother, but in public life no matter whether one is father or elder brother of the man under whom one serves, one must obey his instructions. It is not a new law. It used to be a law even in ancient times. It was that spirit of discipline which made such a mighty personality as Lord Krishna humbly serve as Arjuna's charioteer and serve as the meanest of the menials on the occasion of King Yudhishthira's Rajasuya Sacrifice. Icannot therefore do anything more than congratulate you. It was Vallabhbhai who made you famous throughout India. But it was Government who made you famous throughout the world. May you achieve even greater things in future.

Young India, 9-8-1928

389. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

BARDOLI,
August 6, 1928

JAMNALALJI
CARE "PRATAP", CAWNPORE

PRACTICALLY FINISHED. SATISFACTORY. AM STAYING HERE.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 69

390. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
August 6, 1928

MY DEAR MIRA,

Your letter. Of course I am not going to force you to do anything. But evidently my memory has gone to the dogs. I seem to have the clearest possible recollection that I talked to you and you to have said that for their sakes one had to do as they desired.[1] But either I simply fancy I spoke to you when I did not or something terribly wrong has happened. Whatever the case, you must set yourself at ease. You shall be suited completely.

The settlement is practically finished but I shall have to be some days here to watch.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Hope Kusum is all right now.

From the original: C.W. 5305. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8195

391. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

BARDOLI,
Silence Day, August 6, 1928

SISTERS,

It seems a settlement has been practically reached. So I hope to return early. Vallabhbhai wants to keep me here for a few days. Tomorrow we expect more authentic information about the settlement.

I have been thinking about the kitchen. I have been considering how you can be made to take full interest and work wholeheartedly in it. I feel that for this purpose you must shoulder the entire burden of the kitchen. You should get what help you need. But you can take up the responsibility only when you feel within you enough strength to do so. The noise in the store-room and the kitchen must definitely

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 5-8-1928.

cease. If Mirabehn were there, she would find it difficult to work with so much noise; even Chhotelalji would be disturbed. Those who sing the *Gita* verses about being steadfast in wisdom must cultivate the habit of working quietly. While making *chapatis* or cleaning the rice, why can we not get fully absorbed in our work and do it silently ? But when you say that time will not pass unless you are talking, I become helpless. Even then I should say that you need not make quite so much noise. Why can we not, while working, reflect on the significance of some verse we may have learnt that day? Think of all this, and do only what you think best.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3681

392. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
August 6, 1928

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I got your letter. Need I thank you?

No one need worry about me at all. God will keep me all right for His own purpose so long as He wants me to work, and when He gets displeased even a thousand physicians will not be able to help me. But now a settlement seems certain.

Nevertheless, Vallabhbhai desires that I should stay here for a few days more.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Don't worry about coming to the Ashram. If you can find the time to come, you will undoubtedly be welcome.

From the Gujarati original: G.W. 3224. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

393. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Monday [*August 6, 1928*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got three postcards together today. They report fairly satisfactory progress. I had already sent a wire earlier. I know that there you should follow the doctor's instructions. May God restore you to health very soon.

A settlement about Bardoli is almost certain. But I shall have to stay on for a few days longer.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. VASUMATIBEHN
KANYA GURUKULA

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 491. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

394. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

BARDOLI,
August 6 ,1928

CHI. KUSUM,

Mirabehn writes and tells me that you have still not recovered. There is no letter today from you and that confirms what she says. I hope you are not brooding over things?

A settlement is almost certain. I shall, therefore, return in a few days. Nevertheless, I shall have to stay here a little longer than I had expected. Vallabhbhai desires that I should.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1758

[1] From the postmark

395. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

August 6, 1928

CHI. RAIHANA,

Your first Gujarati letter was very good indeed. If you write thus often and improve your handwriting, your Gujarati will become really very good. Since there is a settlement now, what work can I give you here?

Vandemataram to everyone.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9608

396. LETTER TO BECHAR PARMAR

August 6, 1928

BHAISHRI BECHAR,

I got your transparently sincere letter. Even though you may be a teacher, why should you not draw water for others? Or work as a barber? You should not mind if the Government dismisses you or people criticize you for that. I want you to remain a teacher simply in order that, though working as one, you should do physical work and give up false shame. There is nothing wrong if, remaining detached, you shoulder the burden of family responsibilities. Never think of running away.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 24749

397. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
August 6, 1928

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

Please excuse the delay in replying.

If one working in a subordinate position really possesses higher merit than his senior, the latter will recognize his talent. But then there is one condition; the subordinate must have perfect humility and patience.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 762

398. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
Silence Day [*August 6, 1928*]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I get your nice letters regularly. Your handwriting and expression are both good. Do not fall ill by struggling to reach the kitchen at five. It will do if you go at half past five. I shall now return in a few days. How is Vidyavati's[1] health? How is the Bal Mandir Hindi class getting on? Maintain a regular daily diary.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3331

[1] Addressee's sister

399. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
August 7, 1928

MY DEAR MIRA,

I did not wire as the papers announce the settlement. I won't worry about the monthly untouchability till my return. I know the defect to which you have drawn my attention. If the chief men are strong the Ashram will settle down to its peace.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5306. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8196

400. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

BARDOLI,
Tuesday, August 7, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

I got your letter. I find it difficult to understand you. I know that you would not use the language of humility when writing to me. I do not believe that you cannot keep a diary.[1] Your saying that your letter became too long and that you do not know how to make a letter brief is also false humility. All your letters are good. I personally would not be able to shorten them, and I know fairly well the difference between a long and a short letter. If, therefore, you really have a high opinion of yourself, get rid of it and stop self-depreciation if you are making a show of it as a mere formality.

The matter about . . . bhai[2] seems to have been settled now. It seems that he has admitted his error. His admission has not been conveyed personally to me, but it seems he has admitted his error before Surendra and Chhotelal. Your part in the affair was indeed very good.

The programme for the Bal Mandir seems all right. If you can adhere to it, the project is bound to prosper.

[1] *Vide* ''Letter to Kusum Desai", 4-8-1928.
[2] The name is omitted in the source.

Take care of your health.

I expect to reach there by the end of this week or in the beginning of the next. When do you get up these days?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1759

401. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

August 7, 1928

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your letter, as also Vidyavatiji's wire. Please tell her. If, after you have recovered, Ramdevji takes you to Hardwar, there is no harm in going with him and consulting a vaid. It may perhaps do good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 492. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

402. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
August 7, 1928

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I got your letter.

Though a settlement has been reached, I shall remain here a few days longer.

It is good that you attend the prayers regularly. You may work as much as you wish, but you should take rest at intervals and keep yourself calm. Do not work any time in a restless state of mind. Cultivate Mirabehn's company a great deal and ask her to pull you up. She should do it every time she hears you shouting It will not be many days before you get used to working on silently and with a cheerful mind, and you will also get less tired then.

Make Krishnamaiyyadevi work regularly. You will be able to win her over through love.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 14

403. A LETTER

[Before *August 1, 1928*][1]

I have both your letters. Why do you ask me for anything? When you went to jail I wrote nothing either to you or for the newspapers. Still you do not forget me. Such is your love. My own love stopped me from writing but I have kept myself posted with news of you. Your way and mine appear to differ in many respects, but what does it matter?

Now the message: The best way to keep the memory of Lokmanya alive is to attain swaraj. Why not let us die in the quest for swaraj? In my opinion the Bardoli way is also the way to swaraj.

I hope you are now fully restored.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 16009

[1] The year has been inferred from the reference to the Bardoli Satyagraha. The message in the letter seems to have been sent for B. G. Tilak's death anniversary on August 1.

404. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
August 8, 1928

CHI. MIRA[2],

Subbiah arrived here last night. I am therefore going to dictate instead of writing to you.

If the event occurs before I reach there, you should be served in your room. Will that suit? And, if you do not want it even to be guessed by anybody, you may be served even as from now.

There is no question of segregation at any other time or at the prayer meeting. The question has reference only to the kitchen and the dining-room.

I thoroughly appreciate the spirit with which you are conducting this enquiry. Of course I have much to say upon the matter. But I don't want to deal with it through correspondence.

I hope to be there on Sunday or some time early next week.

I have not misunderstood the remark you made about the inmates of the Ashram.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5307. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8197

405. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
Wednesday, August 8, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

Your reply to Sharada was not only well pointed but it also contained a deep meaning.

My reply is that I do not know—the daughters themselves should know—who is nearest to my heart. I write to any one of them to whom I think I have to and also try to write to those who want me

[1] Permanent address

[2] The superscription in this and other letters to Mirabehn is in Devanagari script.

to write to them. Show this to Sharada and let me know if she wants me to write to her.

If thefts take place in the women's wing, you should be able to discover the thief. You should have mentioned in your letter the things which had been stolen.

Send me a list of the things stolen and of the owners. Also let me know whom you suspect.

I may arrive there on Sunday. If I do not I shall be there early next week at the latest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1760

406. ALL'S WELL

It is a matter for sincere joy that the settlement has at last been reached[1] over the Bardoli Satyagraha. All's well that ends well. I tender my congratulations both to the Government of Bombay and the people of Bardoli and Valod and Sjt. Vallabhbhai without whose firmness as well as gentleness the settlement would have been impossible. The reader will note that the satyagrahis have achieved practically all that they had asked for. The terms of reference to the Committee of Enquiry are all that could be desired. True, there is to be no inquiry into the allegations about the coercive measures adopted by the Government to enforce payment. But it, was generous on the part of Sjt. Vallabhbhai to waive the condition, seeing that the lands forfeited including lands sold are to be restored, the *talatis* are to be reinstated and other minor matters are to be attended to. It is well not to rake up old wrongs for which, beyond the reparation made, there can be no other remedy. The inquiry into the assessment question will be carried in a calmer atmosphere for the waiver of the clause about the coercive processes.

Let not the satyagrahis sleep over their well deserved victory. They. have to collect and collate material to prove their allegations about the assessment.

And above all, if they are to consolidate their position, they must

[1] On August 6, 1928 at Poona; for the terms of settlement, *vide* Appendix on "Bardoli Settlement".

proceed with constructive work with redoubled vigour. Their strength lies in their ability and willingness to handle this difficult, slow and unpretentious work of construction. They have to rid themselves of many social abuses. They must better theireconomic condition by attention to the charkha. It was the charkha that led to the awakening among them. They must remove the reproach of drink from their midst. They must attend to village sanitation and have a properly managed school in every village. The so-called higher classes must befriend the depressed and the suppressed classes. The greater the attention given to these matters, the greater will be their ability to face crises like the one they had just gone through.

The noble band of volunteers who had the privilege of serving under Vallabhbhai deserve the highest praise for their devotion and splendid discipline. The task is not yet finished. Those who can spare the time must help the Sardar in his constructive work.

Young India, 9-8-1928

407. NOTES

LATE JUSTICE AMEER ALI

I tender my respectful condolences to the relatives of the late Justice Ameer Ali who was not the least among the friends and helpers of the cause of the Indian settlers in South Africa in the protracted satyagraha struggle of 1906-14.

SOUTH AFRICAN CONDONATION

Just at the time of going to Press I have before me a copy of *Indian Opinion* containing the supplement giving full particulars regarding the condonation scheme[1]. I have time just now only to give below the form of application[2] to be made so as to reach the Department of Interior (Immigration and Asiatic Affairs) before 1st October next.

Let those who wish to return to South Africa send their applications betimes. I hope to publish other papers and information next week.

[1] *Vide* Appendix on "South African Condonation", before August 9, 1928.
[2] *ibid*

MAGANLAL MEMORIAL

The reader will be glad to know that Sjt. Mulji Sikka has donated the sum of Rs. 10,000 to the Maganlal Memorial. The love of this family for khadi is well known and has been often enough exhibited in a variety of ways.

A CORRECTION

In *Young India* of 19th July last appears an acknowledgment of Rs. 2,000, sent through Lala Lajpat Rai to the Bardoli Fund. In this the sum of Rs. 500 has been acknowledged as from "othercontributors". The amount, however, was a personal contribution from Lalaji himself. I am sorry for the blunder, but when numerous entries have to be made daily and when they pass from hand to hand such omissions often become inevitable in spite of all efforts to avoid errors.

Young India, 9-8-1928

408. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

August 9, 1928

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your long letter today. You don't seem to have become completely free from your illness. If you want anyone to be sent from here, let me know. It appears that I shall be able to leave Bardoli on Sunday.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

If you find your hair to be a source of trouble to you, have no hesitation in having it cut off.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 493. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

409. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
August 10, 1928

CHI. MIRA,

I hope to move from Bardoli at the end of the week. I have your letter. For the time being, it is best to have your food served in your room and not to have anything to do with the kitchen. I have much to say about the argument you have advanced. But as I hope to reach the Ashram on Monday morning, I do not wish to argue the position through correspondence. I am not perturbed over the position you feel you have to take up.

We had a death of a very brave young girl at the Swaraj Ashram who was quite all right yesterday and came in order to meet her father who is at the Sabarmati Jail and whose discharge was imminent. She developed violent pain in the abdominal region. Doctors could not diagnose. She died peacefully early in the morning.[2] And so, though I am mechanically doing today's programme, I am holding silent converse with the God of Death and making the meaning of death more clear for myself.

More when we meet.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5308. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8198

[1] Permanent address

[2] Narrating the incident, Mahadev Desai wrote: "She had come all the way from Vankaner on foot . . . At three o'clock in the morning she said: 'Pray call Mahatmaji to my bedside. I want to have his last *darshan.'* Gandhiji soon came. She had lost her eyesight, but as soon as Gandhiji accosted her, she said: 'I cannot see you, but I recognize your voice. Will someone fold up my hands? I want to do my last obeisance to Gandhiji.' Next she asked for Vallabhbhai, and before daybreak she passed away" *(The Story of Bardoli,* pp. 140-1).

410. LETTER TO ROBERT FRAZER

BARDOLI,
August 10, 1928

I have your letter[1]. Dr. Bidhan Roy wrote to me about its subject-matter and I trust you have had a reply.

The whole story is a fabrication from start to finish. I know nothing of the parties mentioned therein.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13487

411. LETTER TO CHARLES FREDERICK WELLER[2]

August 10, 1928

I do like your emphasis upon appreciation rather than toleration. Whether you are now ready to launch out in Chicago, etc., is more than I can tell. It must be a matter of your own feeling and experience. I can only say generally, in all such matters, try after depths rather than extent of service.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 14333

[1] Dated August 2, which read: "I beg to inform you that a telegram was lately addressed to the President of the United States of America by Estelle Cooper Gandhi, reading as follows: 'Mahatma Gandhi has informed me to inform you Nazimova has left him no alternative but to declare boycott on all American goods and call general strike on all American plantations which employ darker-skinned people. Boycott lifted only when Nazimova deported and Katherine Mayo presented for criminal libel here.' I would be greatly obliged if you would inform me who Estelle Cooper Gandhi is and whether the above telegram was sent with your knowledge and approval. I would also be pleased to receive any comment that you may care to make in regard to this matter." *Vide* also "Letter to Dr. B. C. Roy", 3-8-1928.

[2] Executive President, League of Neighbours; associated with Fellowship of Faiths and Union of East and West. In his letter dated June 21, 1928, Weller wrote: "One of my long-time ambitions is to visit India . . . to organize meetings in which Hindus will pay tributes of appreciation to the Mohammedan faith, Mohammedans to Hinduism and Christians to both, . . 5"

412. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Friday [*August 10, 1928*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your long letter giving all the details. It is very well written. I know now all that I wanted to know. I wish to make no suggestion. The doctor is a good man; why should I interfere with his treatment? Personally, though, I would not approve of gram soup, and that too spiced.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 494. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

413. LETTER TO OLIVE DOKE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[2]

August 11, 1928

MY DEAR OLIVE[3],

I was thankful to receive your letter giving me detailed news about yourself and your brave and wonderful work. I was thankful too to hear about Clement[4] and Comber[5].

You want to know something about my boys. Harilal, the eldest, has become a rebel. He even drinks and makes himself merry and is honestly of opinion that I have gone astray in all I am doing. Manilal is in Phoenix keeping up *Indian Opinion*. He was married two years

[1] From the postmark
[2] Permanent address
[3] Daughter of Rev. J. J. Doke
[4] Brothers of the addressee
[5] From Mahadev Desai's "Bardoli Week by Week"

ago and took his wife with him. They are both happy. Ramdas and Devdas are with me helping me in my work. Ramdas was married a year ago. Devdas is still unmarried. I am conducting here a fairly big institution. The enclosed will give you its constitution and its composition.

When you write to the different members of the family please send my love to them all and accept it for yourself.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MISS O. C. DOKE

KAFULAFUTA, P.O. NAOLA, N. W. RHODESIA (SOUTH AFRICA)

From a photostat: C.W. 9226. Courtesy: C. M. Doke

414. SPEECH AT VALOD[1]

[*August 11, 1928*][2]

Even amongst the satyagrahis there were not wanting people who were dissatisfied with the result and addressed notes to Gandhiji and to the Sardar to say that they would have preferred a fight to the finish to a half-hearted compromise.

In reply to these impatient men of Valod Gandhiji said:

You will recognize that I am the *acharya*[3] of the science of satyagraha, and as such I tell you that no victory could have been cleaner, straighter and more decisive. What if your Sardar was not taken into confidence by Government? Every one of your conditions has been fulfilled and you want nothing more. You need not care as to how and through whose instrumentality the settlement was brought about. A satyagrahi is satisfied with the substance, he does not fight for the shadow. And why do you talk of a fight to the finish? Because you did not get an opportunity of proving your mettle against the worst odds, against power and shot? Well, it does not behove a satyagrahi to wish that his opponent should stoop to brutishness in order that his own bravery may be proclaimed to the world. A satyagrahi always prays that his opponent's heart may be converted by the grace of God and not that it may be rendered more stony. And

[1] From the Bombay Secret Abstracts, p. 552, paragraph 1353(3)

[2] *ibid*

[3] Preceptor

why are you impatient? The bigger battle is still before us—the battle for freedom of which the campaign was planned in 1921 and which has yet to be fought.

Young India, 16-8-1928

415. 'RAMA, THE STRENGTH OF THE WEAK'

It is an exaggeration to say that the satyagrahis have triumphed, for there is nothing like defeat for a satyagrahi. He gives up only when he is dead. Nevertheless, from a practical point of view it could be claimed that the satyagrahis of Bardoli have won. Everyone will praise those who fight unto death; however, no one will claim that they have, therefore, been victorious. The satyagrahis of Bardoli can be said to have been victorious, since their demands have been conceded.

From the practical point of view, the credit for this victory may be due to anyone. From the standpoint of the satyagrahis and from that of Vallabhbhai, it is due to God alone. Vallabhbhai has indeed tendered it. A satyagrahi offers up his all to God when he enters the battle-field. No credit or discredit, therefore, can be attributed to him. He appears to be weak in the eyes of the world. He has no physical strength inasmuch as he has no weapons. What comparison can there be between the strength of the people of Bardoli and the might of the British Empire? Whereas the people of Bardoli are like ants, the latter is like an ele-phant; but it is when the satyagrahi becomes like an ant that God saves him, as He saves the ant which is about to be crushed under the elephant's foot. This is what has happened in Bardoli.

Let us proceed after thus expressing our thankfulness to God.

No settlement could have been brought about had His Excellency the Governor not chosen to do so. Having disregarded his own strongly-worded speech, he adopted a conciliatory policy and conceded the demands of the satyagrahis. He deserves to be complimented for this.

However, the settlement would have been impossible had Vallabhbhai Patel not acted in such a large-hearted manner. The game was in his hands. He waived his right to insist upon an inquiry into the high-handed policy that had been adopted at the time of the collection of land revenue. He could have taken up a legalistic attitude on other minor matters, but he refrained from doing so. However, his

greatest sacrifice was the one which involved his ignoring his own position. He completely left himself out of consideration. To this very day, Vallabhbhai has not been officially informed of the settlement that has been arrived at. He has learnt about it only through letters from friends and from the reports in newspapers. However, he is concerned with the essence of the thing and not with how it is done, hence he can be indifferent about prestige. A satyagrahi does not require any personal recognition or, if in certain cases he seems to lay stress on such recognition, it is for the sake of the people's honour. Hence, just as there could have been no struggle without Shri Vallabhbhai Patel, similarly, no solution would have been possible without his consent.

In the third place, the credit certainly goes to the men and women of Bardoli. Without their courage and their fortitude, the struggle would not have gathered momentum and would not have had a happy end.

It is not the case that others do not deserve to be complimented. It is not the purpose of this article to compliment those who deserve to be complimented. Compliments have been offered to all from various quarters. If the principal actors have been mentioned, that has a bearing on my purpose in this article.

That purpose is to consider the future. Victory would be futile if in order to celebrate it we eat sweets and then rest comfortably, and the people would revert to their previous habits. And while considering the future, we must bear in' mind the Governor, Vallabhbhai Patel and the people of Bardoli.

The satyagrahis have always claimed that there was no justification for an increase in land revenue, and that the soil of Bardoli could hardly bear even the burden of the old revenue. We asked for a committee to examine this matter and this demand has been conceded after much suffering on our part. The people have now to collect evidence and prove that they cannot bear the burden of any additional revenue, that, on the contrary, it should be reduced. It is also for the people to prove that the reports on which the Government had relied did not deserve to be relied upon.

However, in addition to this, the constructive work which should follow in the wake of the people's awakening is of the greatest importance. Taking advantage of the wonderful awakening that has taken place among the women, the superstitious and harmful customs

that are prevalent among them could be eradicated. The spirit of unity that has been generated among the men should be utilized for uniting them further and for ridding them of the harmful practices prevailing among them. People's behaviour towards the Raniparaj, the Dublas and the *Antyajas* should undergo a change. Attempts should be made to make permanent the boycott of liquor which has come about as part of this struggle. It is necessary to make a determined effort to bring about a total boycott of foreign cloth. In this cotton-growing area, spinning-wheels are not yet being operated in every home; this state of affairs should change. The awakening among the people can be made permanent and the people self-supporting only if these and similar other activities are undertaken.

Boycott has played an important part in this struggle. While peaceful, non-violent boycott has an undoubted place in satyagraha, violent, malicious boycott has no place in it. Hence it will be necessary to withdraw boycott wherever it had been employed. Pure boycott does not spread hatred but, on the contrary, increases love. Those who displayed weakness should not be reproached for their weakness. There should be no anger against those officers who misbehaved, nor should they be flattered. People, while preserving their independence, should behave courteously towards the officials. The *talatis* have demonstrated their courage. They will now resume their offices but the people will hope that, though carrying out their duties faithfully, they will be respectful and loyal to them too.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-8-1928

416. MY NOTES

SACRIFICE BY GIRLS

Smt. Vidyavati Devi of Kanya Gurukula, Dehradun, sends the following letter[1]:

The draft sent is for more than Rs. 300, of which Rs. 200 represent the sacrifice of the girl students. I thank these young girls. May God preserve their spirit of service.

[1] Not translated here. The letter stated that the girls of the Gurukula had saved the money by going without sweets and fruits for a month.

LARGE DONATION TO THE VIDYAPITH

Shri Nagindas Amulakhrai has always taken interest in national education. He has even donated money to it frequently. He has now contributed one lakh of rupees. He had gifted this large amount in order that it should be utilized, at my discretion, for increase of knowledge. With his consent I have entrusted it to the Vidyapith and nominated five representatives to look after its administration. I compliment Shri Nagindas for this donation. It is my belief that, having regard to the task we wish to accomplish through the Vidyapith, people cannot contribute enough to its funds. We may not be able to see today tangible results of the existence of the Vidyapith. However, a time will certainly come when everyone will take note of the contribution made by the Vidyapith in the cause of national growth for its aim is worthy and selfless workers are engaged in promoting it.

BIG CONTRIBUTION TO THE MAGANLAL GANDHI MEMORIAL

Shri Mulji Sikka, who has a large business in Nipani and Gondia, has contributed a sum of Rs. 10,000 towards this memorial through Shri Manilal Kothari. I compliment him for doing so. This gentleman has often given proof of his love for khadi. Contributions for this memorial are gradually coming in. Naturally, Bardoli attracted the people's attention and their contributions. I did not, therefore, write about this memorial. Now that the first half of the Bardoli chapter is over and Shri Mulji Sikka's generosity has provided me an opportunity, I draw the attention of all who love khadi and appreciate the value of Shri Mulji's services to this memorial.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-8-1928

417. OUR CONSERVATISM

A young man writes to say:

> There are about a thousand Jains in our town. Amongst these, there are about 150 widows and 250 bachelors. Forty of the latter are between forty and sixty years of age. They cannot marry unless they can spend thousands of rupees. Something between five and twenty thousand rupees has to be spent in order to get a bride. This leads to an increase in immorality. The Jain sadhus take no steps in this matter. If questioned on this subject, they reply by saying that this is a worldly problem and that, by trying to solve it, they would be violating the orders of Mahavira. Could you not write something on this subject?

Another reader writes to say:

> A friend of mine is about forty-two years old. Although he is married he has no children. He, therefore, wishes to remarry and ruin the life of a twelve or thirteen-year-old girl. How can he be made to overcome his infatuation?

I deal with these letters together as our conservatism lies at the root of both problems. Some persons believe that things are all right as they are, that it is not necessary for us to think about their propriety or otherwise and that it is sinful to raise doubts about customs that have come down through generations. When to this line of argument is added lust, evil customs become good ones! Our young men require a great deal of strength and moral purity if we are to free ourselves from such a pitiable condition. They can cultivate public opinion through their *tapascharya* and satyagraha and put to shame those who are blinded by lust. A small community like that of Jains need not remain small. Jain youths should insist on marrying girls outside their community. The Jains mostly belong to the Vania caste or are Vaishyas. They need not even go outside the Vaishya class. There are crores of Vaishyas in India, and a deserving man should not find it difficult to get a bride from amongst these. Such a person should vow not to give or receive a single pie by way of dowry. Moreover, Jain young men should be ready to marry those among the 150 widows who were widowed in childhood. So long as they can marry such widows, they should not even look for unmarried girls.

I believe that at present it is futile to hope for much from Jain and other sadhus and religious teachers. The question of livelihood

is a big problem for them too, or rather they have made it one. Hence they do not go against public opinion and readily advocate reforms. Some who are exceptions to this rule attempt to introduce reforms, but people are not ready to listen to them. These latter sadhus do not possess the necessary strength of character to have an impact on the people. Others will automatically be saved if the sadhus as a class are reformed, but impostors have entered their fold and many sadhus spread irreligion or superstitions under the guise of religion.

It is a difficult task to reason with that other man of forty-two years who, though he has a wife living, wishes to marry again. Who can convince him that begetting children is not a part of dharma, whereas it is man's dharma to be satisfied with one wife. One should learn to regard as one's sons all boys who are old enough to be so. In a poverty-stricken country like India, innumerable children are without parents and grow up somehow. Under such circumstances, if every person who has no son, brings up and rears one such child as his own, he would be doing a meritorious deed and reap the benefit of having a son without indulging in the sexual act. Adoption is a common and widely acknowledged practice among Hindus.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-8-1928

418. UTILITY OF MACHINES

The late Shri Maganlal wrote to me many letters which were of value for the public, but, in accordance with my habit, I used to tear them up. Moreover, I had never expected that he would die before me. About fifteen days before his death, he wrote to me a letter which I still have with me, and I give below a part of it which is of public interest:[1]

Both these criticisms deserve consideration. People should not rush to any kind of exhibition. They can reap some benefit from exhibitions only if they have some knowledge about the articles exhibited and if they exercise discrimination regarding their value.

[1] The letter is not translated here. Maganlal had loubted the utility of machines and implements exhibited at agricultural criticized and criticized the Government's discriminatory customs policy which encouraged the imports of steam or oil-driven machines at the cost of machines which could be worked by hand or with the help of bullocks.

Who can calculate the loss we have suffered as a result of our giving up some of our age-old household implements without sufficient knowledge about them? Just as it is absurd to say that all that is old is good, similarly, it is equally absurd to conclude that, just because a thing is old, it is useless. No one is opposed to machinery. Our opposition is to its misuse, or its excessive use. I did not know at all that there is a fifteen per cent duty on machines which are operated by living beings and a five per cent duty on those operated by mechanical power; perhaps, many of the readers too may be ignorant of this fact. However, I am not surprised to know about this discrimination for it was only when I saw such discrimination being practised by the Government in every sphere of its activity that the idea of non-co-operation occurred to me.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-8-1928

419. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

BARDOLI,
August 12, 1928

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have your letters. I shall write no more about the dryness of your letters.

This is the reply to Sushila's question about Sudama. We know nothing about whether or not he was a historical character.

I do not remember what the *Bhagavata* says about Sudama. We have what Narasinh Mehta and Premanand have written about him. The stories told by both of them are imaginary. The pictures drawn by the two poets are their own inventions. We cannot, therefore, take every word in the narrative seriously and pronounce judgement on any aspect of the story. To me both the husband and the wife seem beautifully drawn characters. The poems were composed to illustrate the power of *bhakti*[1]. In composing them, the poets have shown the wife as a worthy lady who tries to safeguard the interests of her family and worries about it. Sudama, who is under the spell of *bhakti*, lets his affairs manage themselves. The wife wants to protect her children and so she tries to wake up the detached Sudama. He hesitates, because a devotee of Godmakes no selfish prayer. But his wish, though

[1] Devotion to God

seemingly selfish, is in fact unselfish. Prompted by his wife, he went to Krishna without any expectation and came away as he had gone. We should, therefore, read the poem to enjoy the sentiment of *bhakti*. We cannot draw any conclusions from it about what the relation between a husband and a wife should be. We may use our reason to decide that question, and act in the manner that seems best to us. An attempt to judge old examples in the light of modern reason is not only futile and unnecessary but may be actually harmful sometimes. We should base our conduct in this age on independent moral principles.

I like Manilal's independence in what he thinks about Sastriji[1], but I see an error in his view. There should be a different standard for judging every individual. If we judge a horse by the standard applicable to an elephant, we would be doing injustice to both. Both may be good or bad in their respective spheres. An elephant or a horse may be treated to have failed in the test if it fails when judged by the standard applicable to itself. If we judge Sastriji by the standard of satyagraha, we would do him injustice. If we look to the service which he renders to the nation, though in Government service, we shall see that he has no equal. If, then, he were to plunge into the field of satyagraha, he would probably have no equal there too. It is my belief that no one else would give as much satisfaction, through his uprightness, as Sastriji does. In my view, he sincerely follows his conscience in everything he does.

I learn from him that Sushila now speaks fairly good English. I would expect such information about you from yourselves.

Now that a settlement about Bardoli has been reached, I am returning to the Ashram. Ba and Mahadev are with me. Subbiah joined later. Pyarelal, Ramdas and Rasik have been here from the beginning. It is to be decided now what they are to do. Devdas is in Delhi working in Jamia Millia. Prabhudas is at Almora.

Rule has now been made to have one common kitchen only in the Ashram, and, therefore, very few are left now who have their meals by themselves. They, too, will have stopped doing that before the next year. At present, about 140 persons take their meals in the common kitchen.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4742

[1] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri

420. LETTER TO VIDYAGAURI R. NILKANTH

Sunday, August 12, 1928

DEAR SISTER,

What you write about Vallabhbhai is indeed true. He has done credit to the whole country. To make a speech on the occasion of the Brahmasamaj centenary celebrations will be a burden as I am very busy in my own activities, yet I dare not say 'no' to you. But if you still insist on a speech from me, I should make it clear that I have no time to write it. And then will there be the time for a speech on the 20th, i.e. Monday ?[1] I shall reach Sabarmati only tomorrow morning. You will receive this only on my reaching there. You may send it on if you like it. I shall come over in case you wish me to. I have shown your letter to Vallabhbhai.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]
Vidyabehn Nilkanth Jeevan Jhanki

421. SPEECH TO VOLUNTEERS, BARDOLI[2]

[*August 12, 1928*][3]

We have begun today's proceedings with prayers to God. We have been already warned that one should never feel proud of one's triumphs. But that is not enough. Even to say that the people of Bardoli won honour by their courage is not sufficient. It is true that we have won the victory because of the indefatigable efforts of Sardar Patel, but to say that is also not enough, because we would have never won if he did not have loyal, hardworking and sincere co-workers.

It is a rule of satyagraha that we should not consider anyone our enemy. But there are people who would treat us as their enemy even though we do not regard them as our enemy. We should not wish to destroy such people but should seek to bring about a change of heart in them.

[1] Gandhiji, however, accepted the invitation to speak at the Ahmedabad Prarthana Samaj on the occasion of the Brahmo Samaj centenary celebrations; *vide* "Speech on Brahmo Samaj Centenary Celebration, Ahmedabad", August 20, 1928.

[2] This appeared under the title "Immortal Words".

[3] From *Young India*, 13-9-1928

Many a time the Sardar has told you and the Government that as long as there is no change of heart in the Government officers, a settlement is impossible. Now that a settlement has been arrived at, there must have been a change of heart at some level. A satyagrahi should never pride himself on having achieved anything by his strength. A satyagrahi is a cipher, and his strength is the strength of God. He should have on his lips only the words ''Rama, strength of the weak". God will help him only when he gives up the pride of his strength. If there is any change of heart, we must thank God for that. But even that is not enough.

We must believe that a change of heart took place in the Governor. Had it not occurred, what would have happened? We are not worried about anything that might happen. We had taken a pledge that we would not be intimidated even if guns were brought out against us. If we celebrate our victory and rejoice today, it is pardonable. But, at the same time, I want to tell you that the credit for the happy outcome goes to the Governor. If he had persisted in the same stiff attitude that he had taken up in his speech in the Assembly and had not yielded, if he had desired to shoot down the people of Bardoli, he could have killed us. On the contrary, it was your pledge not to raise a hand against them even if they had tried to kill you. It was your pledge neither to show them your back nor to raise a stick or even a finger against their bullets. So the Governor could have razed Bardoli to the ground if he had so willed. Had he done that, then too Bardoli would have won, but that would have been a different kind of victory. We would not have been alive to celebrate it, but the whole of India and the whole world would have celebrated it. However, we should not wish any of us, even the officers, to have such a stony heart. Let us not forget these things in this mammoth meeting of Bardoli Taluk where the people who took the pledge[1] of 1921 have got together. I have made these introductory remarks in order to drive out any pride that might be hidden in ourselves.

It is from a distance I wished for your success. I was not one of those who came and worked amidst you. Vallabhbhai had me in his pocket and, if he had desired, he could have brought me here at any minute, but I cannot take the credit for the victory. This is your and your Sardar's victory and the Governor has a share in it; and if that is so, his officers and the members of the Assembly also have a share in

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Congress Session, Ahmedabad - I", December 28, 1921.

it. We must acknowledge the share of all those who sincerely desired a settlement. We must of course thank God for this victory. But God remains aloof and uses us mortal creatures as instruments to get His work done. We should, therefore, give due credit for the victory to all other people who contributed towards it. If we do so, very little credit will remain for us to claim and it is best that that should be so.

This is the fulfilment of only the first half of your pledge. The latter part has still to be made good. We have got what we demanded from the Government. It has given what it could. Now you have immediately to pay off the revenue dues on the old basis. Do that soon. Moreover, befriend those who had opposed us. Befriend also the officers of those days who are still in your taluk. Otherwise, you will be said to have violated your pledge. For the fulfilment of the first half of our pledge we had to approach the Government; but its latter part we have to fulfil ourselves. Not to have a bad word for anyone, and not to harbour anger towards anyone constitute the fulfilment of the remaining part of our pledge.

Let us go still further. This pledge of ours is a new and a small one—it is only a drop in the ocean. The pledge which was taken in this district in 1922 was a formidable one. That still remains unfulfilled. You have gone through this training to fulfil that pledge. I pray to God and ask of you that you fulfil that pledge.

Fulfil your pledge under the banner of none else but the Sardar, under whose leadership you have fulfilled the first part of the pledge so magnificently. You will never find such a self-sacrificing leader as he. He is like a blood-brother to me, but I do not hesitate to give him this testimonial.

I do not consider it difficult to face a bullet in the chest, but to work daily, to fight the self at every moment and to purify one's soul is a difficult task. Two different sorts of people can face bullets in two different ways. A criminal commits a crime and faces a bullet, but can one achieve swaraj thus? He alone who faces a bullet after self-purification can win swaraj, and this is a difficult thing to do. It is difficult to provide food, drink, clothing and work to those who lack them. Most of you probably do not know how pitiable is the condition of the people of Orissa. I have often talked particularly to the sisters about the skeletons of that Province. If I try to describe their conditions to you, tears will come to your eyes as well as mine. You may think this an exaggeration, but if I take you there you will

see the conditions with your own eyes. It is difficult to put flesh on those skeletons, but that is our pledge.

You are in debt as long as your pledge remains unfulfilled. May God give you and all of us the strength and the good sense to fulfil it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-8-1928

422. SPEECH AT BARDOLI[1]

August 12, 1928

I want to remind you that the pledge you took in 1922 after a searching cross-examination[2] still stands unredeemed. That pledge was not taken only once but has been reaffirmed many times since then. The letter to the Viceroy was withdrawn, but the pledge was not revoked. After consultation with the people, an association was alsoformed in the taluk to work for the fulfilment of that pledge. That was the origin of the constructive work which is being carried on in Bardoli. It is not that all this has been achieved smoothly, without any hindrance. What kind of difficulties the volunteers have had to face and how Bhai Narahari[3] had to undertake a fast are part of history. I do not want to go into it today. No one can be complacent as long as this pledge remains unfulfilled.

Although you have assembled here to celebrate a festival, utilize the occasion for self-examination so that you may not forget your duties. Volunteers should celebrate festivals only in this manner. The victory is only a drop in the ocean. Where there is such leadership and where there are such disciplined volunteers, I do not consider this victory a difficult achievement. We did not wish to seize power from the Government. We only wanted a particular injustice to be redressed. In such circumstances, I believe that in no other way is justice as easily secured as by satyagraha.

The country need not have been amazed at the outcome of the

[1] This was published in *Young India* under the title "Work as You Have Fought". The first five paragraphs and the eighteenth (the second one under the sub-title "Remember Our 'Skeletons' ") are translated from *Navajivan*, 19-8-1928, where they appeared under the title "Immortal Words".

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Bardoli Taluka Conference", January 29, 1922.

[3] Narahari Parikh; he fasted because the people of a village under his charge refused to make amends for their cruel behaviour towards the Dublas.

struggle. If none the less it was, there is an explanation for it. Our faith in satyagraha had been shaken. India did not have before now such an overpowering example of success. It is true that there were the instances of Borsad and Nagpur. I have not stated it anywhere else, but I believe that the victory at Nagpur, too, was complete. Fortunately or unfortunately, we did not then have anyone like the representative of *The Times of India* to publicize our struggle. His vilification has made Bardoli famous not only in India, but in the whole world. Otherwise we have done nothing great. We would be said to have done something great when we make good the unfulfilled pledge of 1921. It is Bardoli's responsibility to do so. I was about to say that the blot on Bardoli would be removed only when we fulfil our pledge, but I restrained myself. We cannot call it a blot because what we could not achieve in Bardoli has not been achieved elsewhere either. But whether you describe the work as a responsibility to be undertaken or a blot to be removed, it still remains to be done. This struggle would be helpful in accomplishing that and that is why I have welcomed it.

How fortunate are we that we got an opportunity for such a struggle in Bardoli itself and that we succeeded completely in it! We got all we had asked for. We could have demanded the fulfilment of more conditions than we actually did. As one of the terms we could have demanded an inquiry into allegations about the coercive measures adopted by the Government while collecting the revenues. But We did not make such a demand and that was Vallabhbhai's generosity. A satyagrahi is satisfied if he gets the essential thing, he is not greedy or obstinate about other things.

What should we do now? We should make this celebration an occasion for self-examination. Those volunteers who had come here only for the struggle and had intended to go back when it was over should do so. But those who are not bound to go and who have impressed Vallabhbhai should stay here and should know that they are fit for doing this work only. This work will test their worth.

FIGHTING NOT THE ONLY WORK

You are labouring under a great delusion if you think that fighting by itself will bring swaraj. Let me tell you that even veteran warriors, men of the sword, do not make fighting the sole concern of their lives. Garibaldi was a great Italian General, but he drove the plough and tilled the soil just like an ordinary peasant whenever could get respite from fighting. Again, what was Botha, the South African

General? A farmer among farmers, like any in Bardoli. A great keeper of sheep as he was is flock numbered forty thousand. As a judge of sheep he could hold his own against any expert and even won a diploma for sheepkeeping. Although he won laurels as a General, fighting occupied a very small part of his life which was mostly devoted to peaceful constructive pursuit. He thus showed constructive talent of; mean order. And General Smuts? He was not merely a distinguished General, but a lawyer by profession, being at one time farmer Attorney-General of South Africa, and an excellent farmer to boot. He has an extensive farm near Pretoria and his fruit orchard is among the finest in South Africa. All these are instances of men who though they made their mark in the world as Generals were none the less keenly alive to the value and importance of steady constructive work.

South Africa was not from the very first the rich, prosperous country that it is today. When the colonists arrived there, they found before them an undeveloped country. They cleared the waste and established a prosperous colony on it. Do you think they did it by mere dint of fighting? No. The development was the result of patient constructive labour. Will you follow Vallabhbhai's lead in his constructive campaign just as you did when he led you against the Government; will you take up the burden of constructive work, or will you hang back? Remember, if you fail in this, all the fruits of your victory will be lost and the peasant's last state will be worse than their first in spite of one lakh of enhanced assessment that they might save as a result of this struggle.

REPAIR AND RECONSTRUCTION

Look at the condition of the roads in your taluk. The local volunteers can clean them up and set them in proper order by a couple of days' effort if they like. And once they are set in order, it should not need more than half an hour's instruction daily to teach the villagers how to keep them in a fit condition. You may doubt, but you may take it from me that there is a very close connection between this sort of work and swaraj. Driving out the English will not by itself establish swaraj in India. Of course we must fight when our liberty is interfered with. But what next? Do we want the swaraj of barbarism, freedom to live like pigs in a pigsty without let or hindrance from anybody? Or do we want the swaraj of orderliness in which every man and everything is in his or its proper place? Only yesterday I had to

motor from Vankaner to Bardoli, the journey well nigh finished me. The road was so wretched. This reminds me of a similar incident that once happened in Champaran. The road was bad, but the volunteers there put their shoulders to the wheel and forthwith made the necessary repairs without waiting for anybody's help. Do not think that I am complaining about roads because of yesterday's experience. We ought to learn to keep our roads in good repair.[1] It is no use saying that this is the duty of the Government and not yours. The Government has no doubt many a grievous sin to answer for. Let us not impute our sins also to the Government or use the latter's lapses to justify ours. Enough unto the day is the evil thereof. Surely the Government cannot prevent us from repairing our roads if we want to.

VILLAGE SANITATION

Then, may I ask you what you have done to popularize the principles of sanitation and hygiene in the villages? It involves no complications as in untouchability. It only puts to the test our sincerity and depth of feeling towards those amongst whom we live. We shall be unfit for swaraj if we are unconcerned about our neighbour's insanitation and are content merely to keep our own surroundings clean. With the wonderful awakening and the spirit of co-operation that has come over the men and women of Bardoli, you should be able to convert it into a model taluk. By a general clean-up of the village surroundings, you should be able completely to eliminate the danger of scorpions and poisonous reptiles that infest this taluk. And I want to burn the lesson deep in your mind that all this will constitute a distinct step towards swaraj.

TEMPERANCE

Not less important is the work in connection with the liquor habit. It has got to be primarily done by us. The utmost that the Government can do or be made to do in this respect is to cease issuing toddy licences, but it can hardly wean the drunkard from his evil habit. That part of the work will still have to be undertaken by Phulchandbhai and his Bhajan Mandali, even if the Government were to screw up its courage and forgo 25 crores of excise revenue by adopting a policy of total prohibition. Are you prepared to shoulder the burden? Are you prepared smilingly to take lathi blows on your

[1] This and the preceding sentence are from *Navajivan*.

bodies should it be necessary in the course of your work? Can you guarantee that your pickets will not disgrace themselves by rowdyism and worse as some of them did in 1921?[1]

HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

Again are you prepared to work for and lay down your life to establish Hindu-Muslim unity? Will you be able to keep your heads cool and offer pure satyagraha when communal passions run high and people lose their heads?

KHADI

Then again, have you an abiding faith in the spinning-wheel? Have you recognized that our present struggle would have been impossible unless the spinning-wheel had paved the way? Do you realize that but for khadi work our 3 workers would not have been able to win the confidence of the Raniparaj people and acquire the influence that they have over them? And if you have, are you prepared to train yourselves as spinning experts, to go on turning the spinning-wheel without fuss or bustle with the name of Rama or Allah on your lips? Today there are hardly half a dozen men in the country who know how to correct a spindle. The problem is as old as the khadi movement. The Mysore Government has made several attempts to produce absolutely true spindles, but has met with little success. Lakshmidasbhai is even at present carrying on correspondence in this behalf with Germany. Yet anyone by application can learn to correct a spindle. Just imagine what an increase it would mean in the output of khadi even with the existing wheels if we could solve this and a few other small questions of a like character. Will Vallabhbhai be able to interest you in this work or do you tell me that these are mere fads of a faddist and that Vallabhbhai knows better than to foist them upon you? You may say so if you like, but again I tell you that there is no other way to swaraj than this.

REMOVAL OF UNTOUCHABILITY

I come next to the problem of untouchability which includes the question of the Dublas. Will you be able to bring together and establish harmonious relations between the Dublas and the Ujali population? Do you realize that unless this is done, you will never be able to found real swaraj? Or dare you hope that you will bring round

[1] In Bombay on November 17, during the visit of the Prince of Wales

the refractory by main force once swaraj is established?

You cannot shirk these and like problems if you want to utilize your victory to win freedom for all India. By all means take up any other constructive work, if you can think of any, if the work that I have suggested does not appeal to you. One cannot go on fighting always. But an outlet must be found for our stored-up energy and that can only be through constructive work. We have a lot of corporate cleaning-up to do yet, a host of social evils to purge out. Miss Mayo's book[1] has been justly condemned as being written with a malicious motive. It is full of deliberate misstatements and palpable falsehoods. But I am not prepared to say that there is no basis in fact for anything she says. Surely, some of the evils mentioned by her do exist in our midst, though the inferences that she has drawn from them are wholly unjustifiable and unwarranted. Child-marriage, the marriage of young girls with aged men, the inhuman treatment often accorded to our widows are painful and grim realities that stare us in the face. How do we propose to deal with these evils?

NOT ENOUGH

The way in which the Hindus, Mussalmans and Parsis of this taluk stood shoulder to shoulder together in the course of the struggle was splendid. All honour to them. But can we lay our hand on our heart and say that a real and abiding heart-unity between the various communities in this taluk has been established? Would you have been able to keep together without the consummate tact of the Sardar and the presence of an Abbas Tyabji or an Imam Saheb in your midst? Are you sure that you will be able to remain unaffected even if the whole country is plunged into an orgy of communal hatred? Well, I doubt.

ORGANIC SWARAJ

An act of Parliament might give you constitutional swaraj. But it will be a mere chimera that will profit us but little if we are unable to solve these internal problems. In fact, ability to solve these problems is the alpha and omega of real swaraj, the swaraj of the masses that we all want.

[1] *Mother India*

REMEMBER OUR 'SKELETONS'

Then I should like to know how your volunteers here have handled funds, like a spendthrift or like a miser. Have they been able to remain free from the but too common weakness of being lax with regard to the use of public funds? I take it that there has been no extravagance or reckless expenditure in your case. But what we need is Spartan simplicity. I shall be only too glad to be told that the strictest standard of economy was observed throughout. Nothing will give me greater satisfaction than to find that you have learnt to do better in this respect than is usual with volunteers in general.

Ours is the poorest country in the world. Moreover, our Government is the most extravagant in the world save that of America. If we observe the working of the hospitals here, we shall find that money is spent in them according to standards prevailing in England. Even the hospitals in Scotland would not spend so much money. Col. Maddock told me that in Scotland they could not afford to throw away the used bandages as we do here, that they were put to use again after they had been washed. England can afford to act in that manner. They have left their country for adventure and they have found in ours a field for exploitation. Our true standard can be ascertained by what the majority of people get to wear and to protect themselves with. We must assess our needs on the basis of that standard and spend money accordingly. If we do not do that, we will lose ultimately.

WORK IN FAITH

All this requires faith and patience and hope. It may not be given to an old man like me, who has almost come to the end of his journey, and is therefore anxious to see swaraj established in India, to live to witness the fulfilment of his hope, but surely you, who are in the prime of your life, should work in the hope of seeing swaraj established in your lifetime. You must turn the searchlight inward. Have you a genuine love and sympathy for the dumb masses whose cause you are out to serve? Have you completely identified yourselves with them and their sufferings? Do you feel like taking up the broom and cleaning their latrines if they are dirty?

This is a stupendous task and requires all the volunteers that we can have. But they must first learn the lesson of discipline, of rendering implicit obedience to the orders of the chief, of taking up the meanest task that might be entrusted to them with cheerfulness, alacrity and zeal. If we do all that we shall win the battle of swaraj as easily as this fight.

Young India, 13-9-1928

423. SPEECH AT SURAT[1]

[*August 12, 1928*][2]

For a satyagrahi nothing can be truer than to say that no one but God is to be thanked and praised for the triumph of the Bardoli Satyagraha. Indeed we need say nothing more. But I know that that is not going to give us satisfaction, for the conviction has not yet gone home to us that we are but instruments in His hand and He uses us as He wills. We have not yet learnt the virtue of surrender to God. Man is yet part man part beast, indeed more beast than man and so his ego is not satisfied with praising God alone. In fact in remembering Him on occasions like this we feel as though we were obliging Him. Following our animal nature therefore we may congratulate our Sardar, his companions and his volunteers and the men and women of Bardoli. Vallabhbhai alone would not have won the battle without the faithful co-operation of his co-workers. But even so should we thank His Excellency the Governor, the officials, and M.L.Cs for their having helped in bringing about a happy settlement. We should be lacking in humility, we should be so much the less satyagrahis if we failed in our duty to render our thanks to those who were opposed to us.

The vast gathering of the citizens of Surat, seated before me on wet earth, with so much inconvenience to themselves, reminds me of 1921. I still remember the words I addressed to you in 1921 on this very spot.[3] Possibly some of you also can recall what I said, and I

[1] This appeared under the title "Remember 1921" with the introductory words: "The following is a condensed summary of Gandhiji's speeh at Surat on the occasion of the Bardoli victory celebrations."

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 14-8-1928

[3] *Vide* "Speech on Swadeshi, Surat", October 12, 1921.

propose to remind you how we have failed to do the things that we decided to do seven years ago. The lesson of Bardoli will have been lost on us if Bardoli and Surat go to sleep over the Bardoli victory after having had victory celebrations and dinners. Vallabhbhai has been telling the Bardoli people that it is easier to fight Government than to fight our own people, for we naturally make—and should make, if we were men—mountains out of molehills of Government's injustice. But we fight shy as soon as we are face to face with our own drawbacks and shortcomings. I therefore reminded the Bardoli people,[1] who had fulfilled the first half of their pledge, of the second half, viz., of paying up the old assessment. That I know will be done in the course of a few days. But what next? How will you husband the tremendous stores of energy and enthusiasm that you have brought into being during the satyagraha campaign? How will you utilize the unprecedented awakening that has come amongst the women of Bardoli? How will you serve them, how will you identify yourselves with them and help to remove their misery? Satyagraha includes civil disobedience, civil resistance to the tyranny of blind authority, but the capacity of resistance presupposes self-purification and constructive work. If I were to ask you to render account of what you have done since 1921 in the direction of self-purification and constructive work I know you and I would have to shed bitter tears.

I want to tell you that I continue to be what I was in 1921. I have the same inexorable conditions to place before you, conditions which are a *sine qua non* for peace, prosperity, swarajya, *Ramarajya,* or the Kingdom of God that we are hankering after. What right have the Hindus and Mussalmans of ease-loving Surat to talk of swaraj, so long as they run at the another's throat in the name of God, and then run to the courts to seek Justice? If you are truly brave, you may fight one another on equal terms, but you may not seek the protection of courts of justice. The English and the Germans fought on fields of battle, but did not go to law-courts. There is some bravery in free and fair fighting, but none in running to law-courts. Let the Hindus and Mussalmans fight a pitched battle, if they will, let them fight fair and clean and decide their issues. Their names will then go down in history. But this fighting, followed by protracted wrangles in lawcourts, is not bravery. Our present ways are not ways of bravery but of cowardice. True bravery lies in laying down one's life for the

[1] *Vide* "Speech to Volunteers, Bardoli", 12-8-1928.

sake of religion, in voluntary surrender of non-essentials. That is the lesson of Bardoli, and it will have been lost on us if we lose ourselves in the frenzy of victory celebrations. Until we who have sprung from the same soil and are children of the same motherland, though belonging to different faiths, learn to love one another as blood-brothers, victories like that of Bardoli will be of no avail.

Another item is the purification of Hinduism. Have you purged it of its deepest stain? True swaraj I repeat is impossible without self-purification. I do not know any other way. Call it my limitation, but then it is the limitation of satyagraha If there is any other way, I do not know it, and anything won by means other than those of self-purification will not be swaraj but something else.

The third and the last thing in our programme is the duty of men of all religions and all races towards the skeletons of the land. The charkha, I may repeat *ad nauseam,* is the only remedy. I have come across a strong justification of the charkha from a strange quarter. Sir Lallubhai Samaldas in his review of the ponderous Agricultural Commission's Report has shown how the Commissioners have shunned like an untouchable even the mention of the word spinning-wheel in the chapter on subsidiary industries. How is it that they have fought shy of a thing which provides the only occupation to the starving millions? I submit that the potency of the spinning-wheel lies in that very fact. They might have at least criticized it and even ridiculed it. But no. They could not contemplate with equanimity its infinite possibilities. (A heavy shower of rain.) Well I have really done, and need say nothing more.

Young India, 16-8-1928

424. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
[Before *August 13, 1928*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Does Vidyavati take a steam [bath]? She should be made to lie wrapped in a sheet soaked in cold water. Soak the sheet in clean, cold water, wring it well and spread it on the bed. Let Vidyavati lie on it,

[1] From the reference to reaching Sabarmati Ashram on Monday, August 13, 1928; *vide* also "Letter to Prabhavati", 6-8-1928.

then wrap the rest of the sheet around her and cover her with a woollen blanket. The face would be left uncovered. She should lie on the sheet naked to the waist. If the body does not warm up in this position and she feels the cold she must leave the bed. I have an idea that Gangabehn knows about this bath because I had instructed her about it. Leave it if you have not understood it. Bathing in water in which neem leaves have been boiled may do some good. I suspect Vidyavati does not stick to her diet.

I am glad to learn that *Ma* is better.

Tell Kamlabehn Gandhi that I am not replying to her letter as I shall reach the Ashram on Monday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3326

425. TELEGRAM TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA[1]

[*August 13, 1928*]

NANABHAI MASHRUWALA

AKOLA

ASHRAM DEEPLY GRIEVED BALUBHAI'S DEATH.[2]

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 14757

[1] In reply to a telegram dated August 13, 1928, which read: "Sorry Balubhai died suddenly Bombay morning. Nanabhai, Kishorelal." *Vide* also the two following items.

[2] *Vide* also "Passing away of a Silent Worker"? 19-8-1928.

426. LETTER TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

Monday [*August 13, 1928*][1]

CHI. KISHORELAL[2],

What shall I say to comfort Nanabhai or you? Both of you look upon death as a friend. Our grief can only be due to our selfishness. Before his death, Balubhai wrote to me a sweet letter. It was about Bardoli. In fact he wished to go there, but, since the doctor did not permit it, he contented himself with a letter. You will do a wrong if you do not ask for any service which the Ashram can render. We can even look after the children.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2659. Courtesy: Kanubhai Nanalal Mashruwala

427. LETTER TO NILKANTH MASHRUWALA

Monday [*August 13, 1928*][3]

CHI. NILKANTH,

I had no wire from you, but I received one from Akola. Balubhai's soul rests in peace. We may shed tears through selfishness, but you at any rate have learnt the truth about the highest good of human life. Use your wisdom at this juncture and, displaying patience yourself, comfort others. Ask for any service we can render from here.

Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9172. Courtesy: Nilkanth Mashruwala

[1] From the postmark

[2] Youngest brother of Balubhai Ichchharam Mashruwala

[3] From the reference to the death of Balubhai, addressee's father; *vide* also the two preceding items.

428. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter enclosing the circular about the Exhibition. I see now what you are aiming at and I can appreciate your standpoint. But I am sorry I cannot endorse it. According to the circular you will be free to admit many foreign exhibits and mill-cloth. The only difference between Madras and Calcutta would be that Calcutta will exclude British goods, whereas British machinery was exhibited at the Madras Exhibition. In the circumstances I would personally like to abstain from identifying the All-India Spinners' Association with the Exhibition.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE
BENGAL PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE
1 WOODBURN PARK, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 1595

429. LETTER TO DR. S. C. BANERJEE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 14, 1928

DEAR SURESH BABU,

I got your two letters in Bardoli front where I have just returned. I shall certainly deal with your report in the pages of *Young India*[1]

With reference to the Exhibition I am in touch with Sjt. Subhas Babu. I enclose herewith a copy of my latest letter[2] to him. I must confess that I do not like the idea surrounding the forthcoming Exhibition. If I had my way I should not exhibit not only British goods but also foreign goods unless they are so valuable and yet so

[1] *Vide* "Abhoy Ashram", 27-9-1928.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

unknown as to require a special advertisement through the Congress Exhibition. And I should certainly not exhibit mill-cloth; for, mills neither need nor deserve any advertisement from us.

Yours sincerely,

DR. SURESH C. BANERJEE
COMILLA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13658

430. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 14, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter.

Here is a copy of my letter[1] to Sjt. Subhas Bose in reply to his letter.

I have just returned from Bardoli.

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR

From a photostat: S.N. 13655

431. LETTER TO R. B. GREGG

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 14, 1928

MY DEAR GOVIND,

I have your letter. As soon as I receive the manuscript of your Science notes[2] I shall certainly go through them and then hand them to Kaka for his opinion too.

With reference to the publication, whilst I appreciate your arguments[3], somehow or other my inner being dislikes the idea. However I shall be able to judge better after I see the notes.

[1] Dated August 14, 1928
[2] A booklet entitled "Science for Kiddies"
[3] In favour of giving the booklet to Macmillan & Co.

I hope you will not make yourself sick with overwork before you leave for America. I would like you to leave in a perfectly healthy condition.

The index and everything else can wait if you cannot easily find time for them.

I never thought that you did not know that Andrews was in England. He had the intention even whilst he was here of going to America. Of course you will meet him there. He is going there in September.

Yes, Bardoli is a great lesson. It has revived faith in nonviolent methods and in power of the masses.

My love to the Stokes.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13489

432. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

[Before *August 15, 1928*][1]

RAJAGOPALACHARI

YOU MUST GO WITH SHANKERLAL TO BANGALORE AND BOTH BE INTERNED TILL YOU ARE RESTORED.

BAPU

From the original: S.N. 32763

433. LETTER TO GIRDHARILAL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 15, 1928

DEAR LALA GIRDHARILAL,

Yes, all you say about Bardoli is true. The praise is well deserved by the satyagrahis and above all Vallabhbhai.

I like the idea of your saving the few annas by resisting the temptation to send a telegram. But it shows also that you have lost

[1] From the addressee's telegram dated August 15, 1928, which read: "Thanks letter, telegrams. Taking all care fixing up Bangalore. No assistance wanted yet."

again. I would so like you not to go in for ambitious schemes and be satisfied with what little God may give you.

Yours sincerely,

LALA GIRDHARILAL

'DIWAN BHAWAN', DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13492

434. LETTER TO JETHALAL JOSHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 15, 1928

BHAISHRI JETHALAL,

I have your letter. Think more deeply about *brahmacharya* and strive to observe it. You need not be in a hurry to start eating with others or to take the vow of [non-] possession. Peace is found in ceaseless service. We cannot give the best service without perfect humility. Being without desire is to look forward to nothing and how can one who has renounced expectation be ever disappointed? One should read regularly the Bhagavad Gita and the Ramayana to cultivate such a state of mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1345

435. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Wednesday [*August 15, 1928*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your letters. You now can say that you have recovered. It would be very good indeed if the hakim's treatment restores you to health and cures you permanently of your disease. I have not received Ramdevji's letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. VASUMATIBEHN

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 496. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

[1] From the postmark

436. LETTER TO BECHAR PARMAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 15, 1928

BHAI BECHAR,

I have your letter. I do not know if you have lost your fitness for barber's work, and, even if you have, I think you ought to learn it again in case you have to turn to it. If you were not a teacher, I would not have asked you to become one; on the contrary, I would have dissuaded you from such an intention. Since, however, you are already a teacher, I have been advising you not to give up that work with this thought in my mind that you would regard its-value as a means of livelihood as secondary and devote yourself entirely to service through it. As a teacher, you have opportunities of service. If you use them properly, you will easily be able to practise self-purification. If while doing service as a teacher you can overcome false shame, learn the value of physicallabour yourself and teach it to the children under your charge, you will progress spiritually and also benefit the children.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5575

437. TELEGRAM TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

[*August 15, 1928*][1]

SHANKARLAL BANKER, MADRAS

DO PLEASE GO WITH RAJAJI TO BANGALORE AND TAKE REST MEDICAL TREATMENT THERE.

BAPU

From the original: S.N. 32725

[1] From the reference to Rajagopalachari's going to Bangalore; *vide* the preceding item.

438. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 15, 1928

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

I have your letter. The beauty of the Himalayan region needs no description. Many changes are coming about in the Ashram. Kishorelal's elder brother Balubhai has passed away. The sample of khaddar is good. How much does it cost?

Blessings from

BAPU

From photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6535

439. SOUTH AFRICAN CONDONATION

In continuation of what I wrote[1] last week about the condonation scheme I now publish for the information of those who have rights of residence in South Africa the following relevant correspondence[2] from the supplement to *Indian Opinion*, 13th July last:

The following is the form[3] of Condonation Permit to be issued to a condonee under the Regulations published in the Union *Government Gazette* dated 29th June, 1928:

I need not warn the reader that I shall be unable to give individuals any guidance beyond the publication of the relevant papers. I can only refer the parties interested for further information to the Transvaal Indian Congress, Natal Indian Congress, or the Cape Town British Indian Council as the case may be.

Young India, 16-8-1928

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 9-8-1928, sub-title, "South African Condonation".

[2] *Vide* Appendix "South African Condonation", before August 9, 1928, sub-titles, "I. Form of Application", and "II. Correspondence".

[3] *ibid*

440. A SIGN OF THE TIMES

Bardoli is a sign of the times. It has a lesson both for the Government and the people—for the Government if they will recognize the power of the people when they have truth on their side and when they can form a non-violent combination to vindicate it. By such recognition a wise Government consolidates its power which is then built upon people's goodwill and co-operation not merely in act enforced by brute power but in speech and thought as well. Non-violent energy properly stored up sets free a force that becomes irresistible. So far as I have been able to see, there is no doubt that the settlement has been wrung from an unwilling Government by the pressure of a public opinion that was ever gathering force in geometrical progression. It is said that His Excellency the Governor was most willing from the commencement to concede the satyagrahis' demands but that his advisers were equally determined in their opposition. If that is so, whilst it reflects credit upon the Governor, it bodes ill for the Government; for the British Government is not individualistic, it is a powerful organization capable of working irrespective of individuals. It has persisted without Gladstone and Disraeli, without Kitchener and Roberts. The organization behind the Government in India is the Civil Service. What the Sardar of Bardoli wanted was a change of heart in the Civil Service. What one is told and observes is that the Civil Service is not satisfied with the settlement. If it was satisfied the persistent campaign of lies carried on about the Sardar and his doings would have stopped. Whilst I was in Bardoli, I constantly heard the complaint through inspired newspaper paragraphs that Vallabhbhai Patel had not carried out his part of the settlement, and I knew that he was carrying it out as fast as he could and had already carried out that part of it about which the complaint was made and before it was made. I can only say that the Government, if it is true that the Civil Service is resisting the settlement, is doomed, assuming of course that the non-violence of Bardoli is an organization capable of being sustained without particular individuals.

Let us therefore turn to the people of Bardoli. The lesson that they have to learn is that so long as they remain united in non-violence they have nothing to fear, not even unwilling officials. But have they learnt that lesson, have they recognized the unseen power of non-violence, have they realized that if they had committed

one single act of violence, they would have lost their cause? If they have, then they will know from day to day that they will not become a non-violent organization unless they undergo a process of what may be called continuous corporate cleansing. This they can only do by engaging in carrying out a well-thoughtout constructive programme requiring combined effort and promoting common good. In other words before they can claim to have become a non-violent organization, they must receive education in non-violence not through speeches or writings, necessary as both may be, but through an unbroken series of corporate acts, each evoking the spirit of non-violence. Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel knows what he is about. He has set for himself this more difficult task of constructive effort or internal reform. May God grant him therein the same measure of success that has attended the struggle against the Government.

Young India, 16-8-1928

441. THE NEHRU REPORT

Pandit Motilal Nehru and his colleagues[1] deserve the highest congratulations for the very able and practically unanimous report they have been able to bring out on the question that has vexed all parties for the past long months. The report is well got up, accessible in book form and printed in bold type. No public man can afford to be without it. It is signed by Pandit Motilal Nehru, Sir Ali Imam, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Sjt. M. S. Aney, Sardar Mangal Singh, M. Shuaib Qureshi, Sjt. Subhas Chandra Bose, and Sjt. G. R. Pradhan. About M. Shuaib Qureshi's signature however there is the following note at the end of the report:

> Mr. Shuaib Qureshi was unfortunately unable to be present at the last meeting of the Committee when the draft report was considered. The draft however was sent to him and he has informed us that in regard to the recommendations contained in Chapter III he is of opinion that one-third seats in the Central Legislature should be reserved for Muslims. Further, he says: "I agree with the resolution adopted at the informal conference of July 7 but do not subscribe to all the figures and arguments produced in its support."

The report covers 133 pages, appendices 19 pages. The report is

[1] Sub-committee appointed by the All-Parties Conference held in Bombay on May 19, 1928 "to determine the principles of a constitution for India" (India in 1928-29, p. 26)

divided into ten chapters, of which four deal with the communal aspect, reservation of seats, re-distribution of provinces and Indian States. The seventh chapter contains the final recommendations of the Committee. I must not attempt to summarize the report, if only because it has come into my hands at the moment of sending the last articles for *Young India*. I have not even the time to study the report in full beyond having a cursory glance through it. But the great merit of it is that the All-Parties Conference Committee has at last been able to produce a unanimous report bearing weighty representative signatures. In the matter of the constitution the main thing was not to present perfect recommendations but to secure unanimity for the recommendations that might in the circumstances be considered the best possible. And if the practical unanimity arrived at after strenuous labours by the Committee is sealed by the Conference about to meet at Lucknow,[1] a tremendous step will have been taken in the direction of constitutional swaraj as distinguished from what might be termed organic swaraj. For if the country arrives at a workable unanimity about the questions that have been agitating it for years, the next thing would be to work for the acceptance of our demands. And we have arrived at such a step in the country's history in our evolution that if we can secure real unanimity about any reasonable proposal, there should be no difficulty in securing acceptance. I hope therefore that the Conference will meet at Lucknow with a fixed determination to see the thing through and that the members who will be there will not engage in a critical examination of the report with a view to tear it to pieces but with the determination of arriving at a proper settlement. And if they will approach the report in that spirit, they will endorse the. recommendations, except for valid reasons which would appeal to any sane persons. In thus commending this report to the public, I tender my congratulations to Pandit Motilal Nehru without whose effort there would have been no Committee, there would have been no unanimity and there would have been no report.

Young India, 16-8-1928

[1] On August 28, 1928; *vide* "After Lucknow", 6-9-1928.

442. NOTES

FOR BARDOLI FUND DONORS

The generous and spontaneous response that has been made to the appeal for funds for Bardoli Satyagraha is a sure index to the India-wide popularity of Bardoli Satyagraha. The settlement of the Bardoli question and the consequent stoppage of satyagraha render it unnecessary to keep the fund open any longer. The public are requested therefore not to send in fresh contributions to the fund. This however does not mean that no more money will now be required. The work in connection with the inquiry has still to be done and will involve some amount of expense. And if the tremendous energy generated during the satyagraha campaign is not to be frittered away, the constructive work must be done with redoubled vigour. The balance left will therefore be utilized first for the expense that might be incurred in connection with the inquiry and secondly and simultaneously for constructive work in the two taluks. There is no doubt that the organization of the campaign became possible only because constructive work had been going on in Bardoli for the last seven years. I am aware that there are places where Congress Committees and individuals have more funds collected for Bardoli but they have chosen to send these amounts in instalments. I need scarcely inform them that they should forward whatever is now in their hands either to the Ashram at Sabarmati, or Swaraj Ashram at Bardoli, or Navajivan Office or Congress Office in Ahmedabad. I understand that Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel has already arranged to have the accounts to date properly audited and published.

SOUTH AFRICA'S CONTRIBUTION

A friend writes from South Africa:

> Reuter cabled from India that the South African Indians are sending every month five lakhs of rupees for the Bardoli no-tax campaign. A mischievous thing, besides being a gross exaggeration. The prejudice caused by the remittance of moneys to India will now be deepened and given a sharp edge. So far as I have been able to ascertain, about £500 have been sent in all for the Bardoli fund.

It has not been without pain that I have followed the campaign of lies that has gathered round the Bardoli struggle. Nothing was

evidently considered too mean or too palpably absurd to damage a cause which had no secrecy about it and which was intended to cause no injury to a single soul and which had no direct political aim. Without verification and probably from malice prepense the falsehood that lakhs of rupees were being received by satyagrahis from South Africa was given currency. Well, the cause of satyagraha was not damaged by the false statement. But the cause of Indians in South Africa can be easily damaged if the white colonists can be persuaded to believe that vast sums of money are being sent from South Africa to Bardoli and that to sustain an agitation which they may dislike. I hope however that not much notice was taken of the statement in South Africa. Anyway I can corroborate what the correspondent says. Anyone can look at the accounts lying at Bardoli of receipts for the Bardoli Fund and he will find that the correspondent's information is much nearer the truth than the inflammatory statement cabled to South Africa.

Young India, 16-8-1928

443. OUR JAILS

In spite of my two years in Indian jails, I see that others who have been in them for much shorter periods than I have more knowledge of their working than I. The satyagrahi prisoners who were recently discharged tell me of the many hardships which can be avoided if there is some consideration shown to the prisoners as human beings. The experiences of a satyagrahi prisoner in the Surat Jail are that the prisoners are all cooped up in a small ill-ventilated and ill-lighted room, the food served is hardly digestible and not much facility given to the prisoners for keeping themselves clean.

The prisoners at the Sabarmati Central Prison give me more details. The flour issued is gritty, the dal is pebbly and often contains animal dirt The satyagrahis were inclined to excuse the jail authorities for this defect saying it was the fault of the prisoners who had to do the cleaning and the grinding. I am unable to adopt the view. I feel that the authorities are bound to attend to the cleaning of foodstuff either by having it done outside or by effective supervision. It is futile to expect the prisoners especially in the way they are kept to do this or anything well or conscientiously. Instead of taking the most important work of cooking through them, it would be better and more

economical to have the cooking and the preparatory work done through reliable agency and take from the prisoners other tasks of a more remunerative nature and involving no danger to health.

Nor was unclean food indifferently cooked the whole of the complaint on this head. A kind of dry fermented stinking cabbage was rationed as green vegetable. From what the friends described I could gather that this cabbage was a kind of human silage copied from cattle silage, cabbage being re-vitalized by subjecting it to high fermentatior If the information given to me is correct, I can only say that the prison authorities are playing with prisoners' lives entrusted to their care.

Among the prisoners discharged were three in a weak condition; one a student who had completed his full term was discharged in a precarious condition. His condition was so far gone that in spite of all the loving attention being bestowed upon him by the Mahavidyalaya professors and students and skilled medical assistance he is not yet out of danger. I was informed that for several days in spite of his fever he was kept on coarse jowari bread for a time. I should not at all wonder if this indigestible bread caused intestinal inflammation.

I shall be glad to publish any explanation that the authorities may have to give in regard to these allegations.

I know that conditions being as they are prisoners may not expect the comforts of home life. I know too that satyagrahis may not grumble at their lot which in a way is of their own seeking. Nevertheless even a satyagrahi whether he complains or not should receive human treatment and should get food that is suited to his constitution and that is, above all else, clean and cleanly prepared.

Young India, 16-8-1928

444. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHARM, SABARMATI,
August 16, 1928

DEAR MOTILALJI,

Your report is a great document. I am hoping that the Conference that is to meet at Lucknow will give it all the serious consideration it deserves and not light-heartedly begin to tear it to pieces. The intrinsic merit of the report is so great as to ensure full

attendance at Lucknow.[1]

Before I got your warning I began to think out what could be done for the next year. But I must confess that I have not yet been able to hit upon anything to my liking. Lucknow might give me the inspiration.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13660

445. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 16, 1928

BHAISHRI NANABHAI,

I got your letter, as also Nilkhanth's. I got Kishorelal's letter too. The more I reflect, the more I feel that Balubhai has not left us at all. Can the fragrance spread by him vanish? Nevertheless, I understand that one may feel grief at his passing away. Please look upon me as sharing in that grief. Tell Nath that I sent a wire to Kishorelal yesterday asking him to stay on in Akola.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I dictated this letter at three in the morning. Later I got your letter written from Bombay.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2660. Courtesy: Kanubhai Nanalal Mashruwala

[1] *Vide* also "The Nehru Report", 16-8-1928.

446. SPEECH AT AHMEDABAD[1]

[*August 16, 1928*][2]

For me there should be no need to attend this function or to say a word. When Vallabhbhai is presented with an address and I am there, and am asked to say something, that means that we both of us have got together and with your permission and in your presence have formed a mutual admiration society of which we both have become members. The intelligent citizens of Ahmedabad should never tolerate this.

Vallabhbhai is a Patel by name and by fame. By achieving the victory of Bardoli he has made that fame his for ever. Have you ever heard of anyone presenting an address to a business man who upholds his reputation? How many addresses have you presented to Seth Mangaldas for the bills of exchange which he honours? I do not know what you would do if he did not honour them.

If you really want to congratulate the satyagrahis, I wish you understood the implications of the triumph and digested as much as suited your constitution. You may imitate the experiment, if you can, but I may tell you that imitation is not easy. As every individual has his individuality, events have theirs. Rather, therefore, than imitate an experiment, you should appreciate its inherent meaning and try to translate it in life. Non-co-operation, satyagraha, civil disobedience are constantly on our lips, and as many good things have been done in their name, some undesirable things have also been done. Let those who give these names their liployalty realize their true meaning and implications. The fact that satyagraha is on every lip is an indication of the fact that all parties desire swaraj, but mere repetition of the word satyagraha or empty praise of it means nothing. You have to work for it, if you are to achieve anything.

A thirsty man cannot quench his thirst by his merely shouting that he is thirsty. He should work to construct tanks and sink wells, or fetch water from them. In other words, his thirst can be quenched only by his working to that end. Similarly, it will not help if you feel

[1] From Mahadev Desai's "Meaning of Bardoli"; the first two paragraphs and the fourth one are translated here from *Navajivan*, 19-8-1928, where they appeared under the title "Immortal Words".

[2] From the Bombay Secret Abstracts, p. 539, paragraph 1314

satisfied merely by hearing at this meeting the praises of satyagraha. I, therefore, request you to understand the meaning of satyagraha.

It is not Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel who has triumphed in Bardoli, it is truth and non-violence that have triumphed. If you think that they have rightly triumphed, you must adopt them as your weapons in every walk of life. I cannot promise that you will have success every time you try them. God has not made us omniscient so that we may be able to see whether we have achieved ultimate success or not. The poet who realized this truth has left us the legacy of his immortal phrase: "Immortal hope lies hidden in a thousand despairs." All we have to do is to work without hope of fruit or reward. If therefore you follow Sjt. Vallabhbhai's example and pursue truth and non-violence with his devotion, you may be sure that there will not be friends wanting to congratulate you.

Young India, 23-8-1928

447. CABLE TO RAJENDRA PRASAD[1]

[On or after *August 16,1928*]

RAJENDRA PRASAD
JAYAWATI
LONDON
SUCCESS CONFERENCE[2].

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 14381

[1] In reply to his cable from London, received on April 16, 1928, which read: "Youth Conference invite your message. Cable."

[2] The World Youth Congress held at Eerde in Holland

448. LETTER TO C. A. ALEXANDER

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 18, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your prompt reply[1]. I have now heard from Mr. Saklatwala too.[2]

Many thanks for your enquiry about my health which I am glad to say is quite good.

I have now returned to Sabarmati.

Yours sincerely,

C. A. ALEXANDER, ESQ.
GENERAL MANAGER, THE TATA IRQN AND STEEL CO. LTD.
JAMSHEDPUR (*via* TATANAGAR)

From a microfilm: S.N. 12778

449. LETTER TO URMILA DEVI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 18, 1928

DEAR SISTER,

You must have seen in the papers that I have returned to the Ashram. You may now come whenever you like with Dhiren. I can understand and even appreciate Dhiren's disappointment. Everything however comes to those who wait, and if Dhiren has patience and qualifies himself, he may hope to take part in the final struggle which

[1] Dated August 11, which read: "I . . . wish to say that the reference from your speech was put in a leaflet prepared at our head office in Bombay by Mr. [N.B.] Saklatwala, the Chairman, and others whom you know...." (S.N. 13239)

[2] In his letter (S.N. 14457) dated August 15, Saklatwala had written: "I should regret it very much if we had improperly used your name in connection with this unfortunate [labour] dispute . . . In the hope of showing the men our position and the importance of keeping the Works in operation . . . and we did not think that we were unjustified in these circumstances in using your name in the hope of creating a peaceful atmosphere. . . ."

must come sooner or later if the time of its advent can be accelerated by those who wish to take part in it. I hope that Sudhir is now thoroughly restored.

Yours sincerely,

SHRIMATI URMILA DEVI

4-A NAFAR KUNDU ROAD, KALIGHAT, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13493

450. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

Margasher Sud 6, [*August 18, 1928*][1]

BHAI BENARSIDAS,

Your article on Fiji will be published. I would not like to publish an article on the subject of separate managements for the establish ments. The publication of such an article would be harmful to our cause.

Kunwar Maharaj Singh is to leave on December 21.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 2577

451. ADHARMA IN THE NAME OF DHARMA

A gentleman writes from Mathura:[2]

As the Hindi is easy to understand I have not translated the letter. To show what the Shastra-knowing Brahmins of the North think of the devoted but misguided Vaishnavas of Gujarat, I have reproduced the above letter in the writer's own words. To spend thousands of rupees in serving sweets and considering it a religious act shows what things have come to at the present

[1] From the reference to Kunwar Maharaj Singh's departure, presumably for South Africa, it is inferred that the letter was written on this date, which corresponds to *Margasher Sud 6; vide* "Letter to M. R. Jayakar", September 21, 1928 and "Letter to Benarsidas Chaturvedi", October 10, 1928, and "Letter to Sir Mahomed Habibullah", November 9, 1928.

[2] The letter is not translated here. The letter dealt in detail with the waste of money and food in the name of religion, the ill-treatment of cows and scarcity of milk products in Mathura.

time. Feeling the pain of others is the central point of Vaishnava dharma. But simple-minded Vaishnavas have turned it into a means of enjoyment. As in the other parts of the country, in Govardhan[1] too the cattle wealth is being destroyed. The shortage of ghee and milk mentioned in the letter has been experienced by all the pilgrims. The rich Vaishnavas of Gujarat should heed this letter, wake up and save themselves from the adharma being perpetrated in the name of dharma.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-8-1928

452. IN CONFORMITY WITH SHASTRAS

We get evidence from all parts of India which proves how untouchability is losing its hold. Bharatbhushan Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya is a pillar of sanatana dharma. He has written the following letter to Shri Jamnalalji in connection with the Lakshminarayana temple in Wardha.[2]

Jamnalalji has also received similar expressions of opinion from Shri Pramathnath Tarkabhushan Sharma and Shri Anandshankar Dhruva. Will those who claim to follow the sanatana dharma still cling to the practice of untouchability?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-8-1928

453. PASSING AWAY OF A SILENT WORKER

We all know of leaders who sit or stand on platforms—stand up to speak. Although so many of us would Like to crowd the platform till it breaks, we would even then look and be lie a drop in the ocean. Since, however, those who rise high on platforms have no more value than a drop's as compared to the ocean's, soldiers who never wish to rise high on to platforms but are pleased to remain in the ocean, that is, the common people and render service while remaining obscure are

[1] A town near Mathura

[2] The letter is not translated here. Malaviya had congratulated Jamnalal Bajaj on throwing open the temple to all Hindu communities and digging a well from which all were permitted to draw water. *Vide* also "Notes" 26-7-1928, sub-title, "A Triumph of Justice".

the only genuine workers. Balubhai Ichchharam Mashruwala who lived in Bombay was one such worker. He had both wealth and intelligence and used them silently in the service of the people. Balubhai's entire family is cultured. He did not rest satisfied with spending all his resources of body, mind and wealth in rendering service wherever he could. He passed on this noble training to his youngest brothel Kishorelal, made him a lawyer and dedicated him to the service of the nation. This cultured public servant passed away last week.[1] May God grant peace to his soul and give us innumerable such workers who would render silent service. Before dying, he wrote a letter[2], which I publish here as an expression of his love for the country, for truth. and for non-violence.

Shri Kishorelal has given a very moving description of him in his letter[3] to me, and this too I give here:

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-8-1928

454. GOVERNMENT'S POWER v. *PEOPLE'S POWER*

Bardoli has proved that the power of the people is greater than that of the State as conclusively as that two and two make four. It can further be claimed that such success depends solely upon the people's capacity to remain peaceful and their capacity to offer peaceful resistance.

The power of the State is derived solely from its capacity to punish. Those persons who rid themselves of the fear of this punishment, despise such punishment and, without opposing the power of the State violently, act as if it did not exist, will always triumph. The people of Bardoli could not secure justice so long as they were afraid of being punished by the Government. As soon as they rid themselves of that fear, they realized that the officers were dependent upon the people and not *vice versa.*

The people also saw that, if they opposed the Government's violence by similar violence, the former would always succeed, whereas, if they suffered it, it lost its efficacy. They also found that this punishment was limited to their persons and possessions, and that it left their hearts wholly untouched. They freed themselves from its fear by surrendering their hearts to their Sardar.

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Nanabhai I. Mashruwala", 13-8-1928.

[2] Not translated here

[3] *ibid*

From this we find that the people require neither physical nor intellectual strength to secure their own freedom; moral courage is all that is needed. This latter is dependent on faith. In this case, they were required to have faith in their Sardar, and such faith cannot be artificially generated. They found in the Sardar a worthy object of such faith and like a magnet he drew the hearts of the people to himself.

We, therefore, find that a satyagraha movement is bound to succeed if it gets a leader who is cultured, self-sacrificing and can feel the pulse of the people, and if the people remain loyal to him.

Truth and non-violence were the principal factors in this struggle. The people's demand was just and for securing it they did not resort to untruthful means. There were many provocations to the people to become violent and resort to violent measures, but they remained completely peaceful. This is not to say that the people had accepted non-violence as a principle or that they did not harbour anger even in their minds. But they understood the practical advantage of non-violence, understood their own interest, controlled their anger and, instead of retaliating in a violent manner, suffered the hardships inflicted on them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-8-1928

455. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

SABARMATI,
August 20, 1928

MY DEAR LOTUSBORN[1],

You may not fade. You must bloom. Though I never write you are constantly in my mind.

Love.

M. K. GANDHI

SHRIMATI PADMAJA NAIDU
TUBERCULOSIS SANATORIUM
AROGYAVARAM
CHITTOOR DIST.
S. INDIA

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Literal meaning of 'Padmaja'

456. SPEECH AT BRAHMO SAMAJ CENTENARY CELEBRATION, AHMEDABAD[1]

August 20, 1928

I do not think I am at all fitted to say anything on this great occasion, but I consented to come because of the great esteem in which I held the late Ramanbhai and because I could not resist Shrimati Vidyagauri. I am unfit to say anything today for many reasons. I have read nothing of or about Raja Ram Mohan Roy. What I know about him is based on what I have heard from his admirers. I do not claim to have studied the history of the Brahmo Samaj either. I made a desperate effort to read something today, something from a brochure on Ram Mohan Roy that we have in our library, but I could not find a moment for it. I therefore contented myself with the prayer that God might give me the right word to acquit myself of the task.

Although, then, I cannot claim to have studied the history of the Brahmo Samaj, I do claim to have a close connection with the members of the Brahmo Samaj extending over several years. It dates as far back as 1896 when I first visited Calcutta. In 1901 I came in contact with several eminent members of the Brahmo Samaj through Gokhale and Dr. P. C. Ray. I used to visit occasionally the Samaj Mandir, and listen to the sermons of the late Pratap Chandra Mozumdar. I also came in touch with the late Pandit Shivnath Shastri.

These experiences were enough to convince me that the Brahmo Samaj has rendered a great service to Hinduism, and that it has rescued the educated classes of India, especially Bengal, from unbelief. I have always regarded it as a movement essentially designed for the educated classes. Though religion in India sometimes takes the form of superstition, wooden formalism and hysterics, I cannot escape the conviction that a man cannot long remain an unbeliever in India. But the faith of the educated class in the early part of the nineteenth century was in danger and it was Ram Mohan Roy who came to their rescue. I have heard that he had come under the influence of Christian missionaries and Kakasaheb told me that he had made a deep study of Persian and Arabic. There can be no question about his scholarship or

[1] This was published under the. title "Brahmo Samaj's Contribution to Hinduism" with the following introductory note by Mahadev Desai: "Speaking on the 20th August at the Ahmedabad Prarthana Samaj on the occasion of the celebration of the centenary of the foundation of the Brahmo Samaj, Gandhiji delivered an address of which the following is a condensed translation."

about his catholicity. He made a deep study of Hinduism, especially the religion of the Vedas, and then allowed himself to be influenced by the essential principles of Christianity and Islam. As a result he saw that there was for him no escape from inaugurating a new movement to liberalize the existing Hinduism which had been overgrown with superstitious weeds. Sacrifice of animals and social evils were flourishing in the name of Hinduism. How could the educated class tolerate it? It was open to Ram Mohan Roy to rest content with individual dissociation from the evils. But he was a reformer. He could not afford to hide his light under a bushel, he gave public expression to his views, secured a following and founded the Brahmo Samaj in 1828.

But it would have languished, had not a man of great spiritual gifts like Maharshi Devendranath Tagore joined it. It is for the future historian to estimate the Tagores' contribution to the intellectual and spiritual life of Bengal, India, and even the world. Rabindranath Tagore's contribution in the direction has been stupendous. We cannot adequately estimate it, even as men living in the valleys of the Himalayas cannot adequately visualize their sublimity. And the Tagores received their inspiration from the Brahmo Samaj. The Brahmo Samaj liberated Reason, and left room enough for Faith. There was once a danger of the Brahmo Samaj severing its tie with Hinduism or the religion of the Vedas but the Maharshi's *tapasya*[1] and knowledge rescued the Brahmo Samaj from that catastrophe. It is due to him that the Samaj remained part of Hinduism.

One may not measure the contribution of the Brahmo Samaj from the number of its adherents. The Brahmos are indeed very few but their influence has been great and good. The service of the Brahmo Samaj lies in its liberalizing and rationalizing Hinduism. It has always cultivated a toleration for other faiths and other movements, it has tried to keep the fountain source of religion pure and to hold up the ideal of pure worship of the Supreme Being.

Not that there is nothing for me to criticize in the Samaj, but this is not the occasion for it. My desire is to place before you whatever is best in the Brahmo Samaj. Let this celebration awaken the religious instinct in you. True religion is not narrow dogma. It is not external observance. It is faith in God, and living in the presence of God; it means faith in a future life, in truth and ahimsa. There prevails today a

[1] Spiritual discipline

sort of apathy towards these things of the spirit. Our temples appear today to be meant only for the simple and the ignorant. Few visit real temples of God. Let the educated class take up the work of reform in this direction.

We have rightly honoured Vallabhbhai over the Bardoli victory. But you may not know his greater victory. Vallabhbhai realized his 'Vallabha' (God) in Bardoli. He saw that nothing but faith in God could keep together the thousands of men and women bound to their pledge. It is through religion that he found his approach to the hearts of those simple illiterate men and women.

I am inundated with letters from young men who write frankly about their evil habits and about the void that their unbelief has made in their lives. No mere medical advice can bring them relief. I can only tell them that there is no way but that of surrender to and trust in God and His grace. Let us all utilize this occasion by giving the living religion in our lives the place it deserves. Has not Akho Bhagat said:

Live as you will, but so
As to realize God.

Young India, 30-8-1928

457. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 21, 1928

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have your letter. I have written for this week's *Young India* too on the forthcoming Conference[1]. But I thought it was better for me not to deal with the body of the report but rather emphasize the importance of avoiding theoretical criticism and appealing to the Mussalmans and Hindus not to insist upon the pound of flesh. What is the use of my dealing with the recommendations? My mind just now refuses to think of the form except when it is driven to it. For, I feel that we shall make nothing of a constitution be it ever so good, if the men to work it are not good enough. Anything reasonable therefore appears to me to be acceptable if only we have unanimity, because in the matter of the constitution, unanimity seems to be the most

[1] *Vide* "All Eyes on Lucknow", 23-8-1928. For the earlier article, *vide* "The Nehru Report", 16-8-1928.

important thing. But I can say in general terms that you have succeeded wonderfully with Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Sir Ali Imam. I was not prepared for the endorsement of the franchise for instance, or of your solution of the Native States. But I see that the Hindu-Muslim question is still to be a thorny question.

With reference to myself I do not at all feel like moving out of Sabarmati just now. Indeed I should like to bury myself in Sabarmati and do whatever I can through writing in *Young India* and *Navajivan* and through correspondence. I have more than enough work for me in the Ashram, I do not know whether you are aware that Bardoli was possible because the Ashram was in existence. The majority of the workers in Bardoli owe their preparation to the Ashram directly or to its indirect influence. If I could but make of the Ashram what I want, I should be ready to give battle on an extensive scale.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13667

458. LETTER TO BEHRAMJ1 KHAMBHATTA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 21, 1928

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I have your letter, as also the sum of Rs. 100. There was no particular intention in publishing your name in the list of acknowledgments. It is enough for you to know that you do not crave publicity. If the name is published, that will certainly do you no harm. This time we have taken greater care. We should thank God if your ailment is cured. Write to me about it from time to time.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5017. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

459. LETTER TO AMBALAL SARABHAI

August 21, 1928

DEAR BROTHER,

I have a calf here that is suffering terrible pain. It has broken a leg. Now it has developed sores all over the body. The veterinary surgeon has given up all hope. I have therefore decided to have it shot. Please send one of your guards with a gun if possible. We have people in the Ashram who can use a gun but we have not kept a gun here.

Vandemataram form

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 11123. Courtesy : Sarabhai Foundation

460. LETTER TO AMBALAL SARABHAI

August 21, 1928

DEAR BROTHER,

Your letter is beautiful. Your sentiments are even more beautiful. I had been waiting for the doctor and the injections having abandoned the idea of using a gun. Your letter has made me check myself. I will not now make use of your gun. I do not share your fear. The question is deeper than the one you have raised I shall not discuss it here beyond saying that it is not merely one of relieving pain.[1] What is our duty towards animals and other living creatures that are disabled and suffering pain? Where does compassion which underlies Hinduism take us? But to me that is not a matter for discussion. It concerns my deepest feelings. I shall take no step without proper thought. The act of killing has to be postponed at least for today.

Vandemataram form

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11124. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

[1] For Gandhiji's arguments for killing the ailing calf, *vide* "Letter to Bhogilal", September 22, 1928 and "The Feary Ordeal", October 4, 1928.

461. 'THE TRUE CAPITAL AND THE FALSE'

Sir Daniel Hamilton is a big proprietor, owns large estates in the Sundarbans, and is a careful student of banking and the cooperative movement. He has written many papers during the past twelve months on Indian banking and has been kind enough to send them to me from time to time. I invited him to write in a popular style on banking for the readers of *Young India*. He readily consented and followed up his tentative promise with speedy performance. The result is a paper entitled "Man or Mammon? Or The True Capital and the False". I have divided the paper in five parts, the first of which appears elsewhere[1] in this issue of *Young India*. I do not pretend to know anything of banking. I am sorry to have to confess that I was never able to make time for studying Indian finance, important though I hold the subject to be. I am therefore unable to pronounce any opinion upon Sir Daniel Hamilton's argument. It is however sufficient for my purpose that Sir Daniel has written apparently without bias and with great sincerity. I commend Sir Daniel Hamilton's articles to the readers of *Young India* for careful study and shall be pleased to publish any criticism that Indian financiers may care to offer.

Young India, 23-8-1928

462. ALL EYES ON LUCKNOW

The Nehru Committee report has rightly attracted universal attention. All the leading Indians who have spoken upon it have blessed it. The critics have been obliged to write about it with marked restraint and often involuntary admiration. It has set everyone thinking.

All eyes are naturally therefore centred on Lucknow where Dr. Ansari has invited the All-Parties Conference to meet. A report that has compelled such attention is bound to draw a large and representative gathering.

What will the Conference do? It will be easy enough to render the proceedings of the conference nugatory and reduce to nothingness the labours of the Nehru committee. Mussalmans may destroy the great edifice built by patient effort on the ground that they have

[1] Not reproduced here. The other four parts appeared weekly in successive issues.

not got all they wanted. Hindus may vow never to yield an inch and thus make an advance impossible. Political theorists may pick big holes in the report. But they will all be wrong if they approach the report from their individual standpoints. We shall not easily get again anything so good as the report bearing the representative signatures it does.

Let all therefore approach the report from only one standpoint, i.e., the national. There is room enough under the constitution devised by the Committee for all to rise to their full height. Every legitimate interest has its protection guaranteed if it has enough vitality in itself for expansion. The franchise is the broadest possible.

Of course the impatient extremist will be dissatisfied. Let him know that the report represents the largest common measure possible for parties often representing opposite views. It will be anti-national to resist to the breaking point what is offered by this representative report.

Apart however from the standpoint of expediency, I venture to suggest that the report satisfies all reasonable aspirations and is quite capable of standing on its own intrinsic merits. All therefore that is needed to put the finishing touch to the work of the Nehru Committee is a little forbearance, a little mutual respect, a little mutual trust, a little give and take and much confidence not in our little selves but in the great nation of which each one of us is but a humble member.

Young India, 23-8-1928

463. NOTES

HINDI-HINDUSTANI

That Sir T. Vijayaraghavachari should deliver a public lecture at the Hindu High School in Triplicane, Madras, on the "Place of Hindi in Indian Education" is a sign of the times and proof of the efficacy of the work done by the Hindi Prachar Office in Madras which has carried on Hindi propaganda for the last seven years. The lecturer had no difficulty in showing that the fact that of the 300 million people of India, l20 million spoke Hindi and 80 million more understood it and that Hindi was the third most widely spoken language in the world "was by itself a strong reason for everyone learning Hindi". The learned speaker rightly thought that "six months would be a suffi-

cient period for learning the language well." He contended that "the place of Hindi in Indian education must be compulsory. It ought to be a compulsory language in school, college and university." He concluded:

> We are all eagerly looking forward to the day when we shall all be Indians first and Madrasis or Bangalis next. The day will be hastened if Madrasis, who are the worst offenders in this respect, begin to learn Hindi in larger number.

The people of the South have every facility afforded to them through the Hindi Prachar Office of learning Hindi. Surely if we have real love of India as we have of our respective provinces, we would all learn Hindi without delay and avoid the humiliating spectacle of carrying on our proceedings in the popular assembly, i.e., the All-India Congress Committee, predominantly, if not often wholly, in English. Let me repeat once more what I have often said that I do not contemplate the suppression of provincial languages by Hindi but addition of Hindi to the former so as to enable provinces to establish a living contact with one another. This must result also in enriching both the provincial languages and Hindi.

BARDOLI—A VICTORY OF PEACE

The following poetic bit from a love-letter of Shrimati Sarojini Devi's bears reproduction:

> A pastoral vision of quiet beauty is spread all around me; the sunset has dyed the clouds in the west in the glowing colours of flame, and in the east in the tender colours of flowers; the low hills have taken on every dreamlike shadow steeped in blue and purple, and the undulating valley just below is settling down to rest, gathering the wandering sheep, hushing the wild doves and wild hawks to slumber, collecting the little groups of peasants and labourers to their thatched huts under the boughs of sheltering trees.... Soon all the denizens of the secluded colony set in the heart of such sylvan beauty will be at rest, each in his or her own bed, and soon the nightfall will wrap the hills and valley and woods in a velvet darkness.... But the darkness, alas, does not always bring comfort to the suffering. No sleep . . . What poignant vigils does the night witness, that the world never knows? . . . How many such poignant vigils have the people of Bardoli kept night after night? . . . But I rejoice that tonight the darkness will bring dreams of sweetness to those whose spirit was so unwearied in battle through long and terrible weeks.... The sleep of the satyagrahi when his work is over is indeed a gift of the gods. Do you remember the words of the German philosopher: "Let your work be a battle, let your peace be a victory." So it has been at Bardoli. The peace has indeed been a victory of peace and peaceful ways.

I have just finished the last page of the English version of your moving and vivid history of the South African Satyagraha when the post brought the papers with the longed for and joyful news of the Bardoli settlement . .,. honourable to both sides. As I wrote to 'Sardar' Vallabhbhai a month ago, I have always felt and known that satyagraha in its deep authentic sense is literally "the treasure of the lowly"—Maeterlinck's beautiful phrase, of those who are content with realities and not seekers after false values and false standards.... Your dream was to make Bardoli the perfect example of satyagraha. Bardoli has fulfilled itself in its own fashion interpreting and perfecting your dream.

Young India, 23-8-1928

464. LETTER TO DR. JOSIAH OLDFIELD

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 24, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to have your letter. Though I could not visit Europe this year, if all goes well, I expect to do so next year, when I have no doubt we shall meet somewhere. Of course if you anticipate your proposed visit[1] to India, we shall meet here no doubt.

Yours sincerely

DR. JOSIAH OLDFIELD
LADY MARGARET HOSPITAL, DODDINGTON, KENT

From a photostat: S.N. 14366

465. LETTER TO B. DE LIGT

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 24, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter enclosing an English translation which you have very kindly made for me of your open letter. I am so busy that I have not had the time to go through the open letter, but I hope to go

[1] The addressee in his letter (S.N. 14365) dated July 30, 1928, had written that he might visit India again on a lecture tour upon the "Relation of Men to Animals".

through the whole of it and let you have my reply as early as I can. I may find it necessary to give you the reply through the pages of *Young India*.[1] If I do, I take it you will not mind it.

Yours sincerely,

B. DE LIGT,[2] ESQ.
ONEX (GENEVA), SWITZERLAND

From a microfilm: S.N. 14386

466. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 24, 1928

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letter. I expect a longer one later.

Bardoli victory was indeed a victory for Truth and Non-violence. It has almost restored the shattered faith in non-violence on the political field. Vallabhbhai has never shone so brilliantly as in this campaign.

You say you are enclosing an article on Gopabandhu Das, but I have received nothing on him from you. His death is a terrible loss. There is no one in Orissa to equal him in self-sacrifice and self-effacement.

Gregg did not know that you had left for England and that you were about to leave for America. Gregg himself is leaving for America in November.

We are all keeping well at the Ashram. Devdas is in Jamia Millia. Rasik and Navin are going there to help Devdas. I hope you are giving yourself rest and that you will return as fully restored as is possible for one of your temperament.

I note that you do not want me to collect more for your expense

[1] *Vide* "My Attitude towards War", 13-9-1928.
[2] Author of *The Conquest of Violence*

in America. Sarojini Naidu expects to leave for America in September.

With love,

Yours,

MOHAN

C. F. ANDREWS, ESQ.

C/O AMERICAN EXPRESS CO., 6 HAYMARKET

LONDON

From a photostat: G.N. 2629

467. LETTER TO SIR DANIEL HAMILTON

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

August 24, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I was unprepared to receive your paper so promptly. I have divided it into five chapters,[1] first of which has already appeared. I send you a copy of it herewith.

I lent Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas your papers and asked him to let me have his criticism on them. He sent me a frank letter. With his permission I am sending you a copy of it. For a layman it is difficult to understand these different viewpoints. It has always appeared to me an enigma, why financiers differ as much as lawyers and doctors even as to fundamentals.

You will be glad to learn that the Bardoli struggle has ended satisfactorily.

Yours sincerely,

ENCLOSURE: 1

Sir Daniel Hamilton

From a photostat: S.N. 13238

[1] *Vide* " 'The True Capital and the False' ", 23-8-1928.

468. LETTER TO WILLIAM H. DANFORTH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 24, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter as also for the parcel of your food products sent through Mr. B. N. Birla. He sent me also a copy of the book you have written on your Indian experience.

As my menu is limited and as I do not eat things of whose composition I have no knowledge, I have not been able to try any of the delicacies you have kindly sent me. But I have distributed your biscuits amongst the Ashram inmates. If it is not a secret, I would like to know how the corn flakes are prepared and whether anything beyond wheat is used in preparing the flakes. Is it not the same thing as the wheat flakes prepared at Dr. Kellogg's Battle Creek Sanatorium?

Yours sincerely,

W. H. DANFORTH[1], ESQ.

From a photostat: S.N. 14384

469. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 25, 1928

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letters. You should now recover complete health. If that is at all possible, you ought to make it so. You write *kef*, but the real word is *kaph*. It is an English word and means what we call *galafo*[2]. The word *kaph*, however, has become part of our language and we can freely use it. *Kef* means intoxication, and the word is not taken from English.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. VASUMATIBEHN

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 497. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

[1] Of the Ralston Purina Company, Missouri, which manufactured food products
[2] Phlegm; the Gujarati word *kaph* is from Sanskrit.

470. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

August 25, 1928

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

Chi. Navin is to be sent to Jamia Millia to help Devdas. Therefore, release him for that institution. If more time is required for the purpose, we shall think about it when I return there. Chi. Rasik is already free. He, too, has to go to Delhi. It is necessary for both to get trained in carding, etc., so that they may be proficient in these processes.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 14762

471. LIMITS OF SATYAGRAHA[1]

A correspondent impatient to stop the marriages of aged men with young girls writes:

> This evil requires drastic remedies. Twenty-five young men of character should form themselves into a band of satyagrahis, proceed to the place of the marriage eight or ten days before the event and plead with both the parties, with the heads of the caste organization, and with all concerned. They should parade the streets with suitable placards condemning such marriages and produce an atmosphere of opposition to the proposed marriage. They should persuade the people of the town or village to declare a peaceful boycott against the parties to the marriage, and court arrest or whatever other punishment that comes to them.
>
> Thus the satyagrahi band would soon become a power in the locality, and these marriages would be a thing of the past.

The suggestion looks attractive, but I am afraid it cannot be of use on more than one occasion. Where lust and cupidity join hands the slaughter of the innocents becomes almost impossible to avoid. As soon as lustful old candidates for brides and the greedy parents get scent of the invasion of the satyagrahi band, they will evade the band by performing the wedding secretly, and they will find enough priests and wedding guests to help them in the ceremony. The readers of *Navajivan* may be aware of an incident that happened some time

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 26-8-1928. This is a translation by Mahadev Desai.

ago. The old man in that case feigned contrition, and successfully threw dust into the eyes of all by a hollow public apology. The reformers were delighted, but before they had finished congratulating themselves the old man managed to get secretly married. What happened in one case may happen in many cases. We should therefore devise other means to grapple with the evil. I have an idea that it may be easier to reach the greedy father of the bride than the slave of his lust. There is a great necessity for cultivating public opinion in the matter. The parents who readily sell away their girls, out of cupidity, should be sought out and pleaded with, and caste organizations should be persuaded to pass resolutions condemning such marriages. Evidently such reforms cannot be carried out all at once by the same band in large areas. Their field must needs be circumscribed. A satyagrahi band in Cape Comorin will, not be able to prevent a monstrous marriage in Kashmir. The reformers will havetherefore to recognize their limitations. We may not attempt the impossible.

Love and ahimsa are matchless in their effect. But in their play there is no fuss, show, noise or placards. They presuppose self confidence which in its turn presupposes self-purification. Men of stainless character and self-purification will easily inspire confidence and automatically purify the atmosphere around them. I have long believed that social reform is a tougher business than political reform. The atmosphere is ready for the latter, people are interested in it, and there is an impression abroad that it is possible without self-purification. On the other hand people have little interest in social reform, the result of agitation does not appear to be striking, and there is little room for congratulations and addresses. The social reformers will have therefore to plod on for some time, hold themselves in peace, and be satisfied with apparently small results.

I may here throw out a practical suggestion. The most effective means of creating an atmosphere against the marriages of aged persons with young girls is to create public opinion against the actual marriage and to set in motion a peaceful social boycott against the aged bridegroom and the greedy father of the bride.

If a successful boycott can be carried out even in one single instance, parents will hesitate to sell their daughters and old men will hesitate to run after young brides.

It will not be easy to wean lustful old men from their lust. They

may be therefore induced to marry old widows, if they must marry. In Europe old men easily seek out old widows.

In conclusion, we must be clear about our objectives in opposing these marriages. It cannot be our object to wean old men from their lust; if it is we will have first to deal with lustful young men. But that is a tall order. Our objective can be only to save young girls from the clutches of lustful old men and the cupidity of their parents. The reformer must therefore address himself to carrying on a crusade against the sale of brides. It is the bride's parents who have to be reached. Let the satyagrahi therefore chalk out the field of his activities, have a census of all girls of a marriageable age living in that area, let him get into touch with their parents, and awaken them to a sense of their duty towards their daughters.

Let not the reformer go outside these limits if he wants to achieve success. The scheme proposed in the correspondent's letter easily transgresses these limits.

Young India, 6-9-1928

472. MY NOTES

EXPLOSION OF MATRICULATES

A correspondent writes to say:[1]

This question is well worth asking. It has often been answered in this paper. The lure of a Government stamp makes slaves of us. Hence I have suggested that it is our duty to leave Government schools. But who will free the students from this infatuation? How can one secure, without a Government stamp, a job where there are chances of getting a bribe? The student will be unable to free himself from this infatuation so long as he does not willingly accept work involving physical labour and value it more than literary education. This is one of the reasons why the spinning wheel has been given such importance. It is a widely accepted symbol of manual labour. In the first issue of *Navajivan* a picture was given which contained figures of the spinning-wheel and the plough. As the status of the spinning-wheel improves, physical labour and honourable poverty will

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had drawn attention to the increasing number of matriculates in the country and the problem of their employment.

automatically find the place that they deserve. This does not imply that everyone should earn a living by means of the spinning-wheel, but it does imply that everyone should do so by means of productive labour. It is the atmosphere of the schools which is responsible for an increase in the students' love of British ways of life and their love of British goods. Only a handful of students remain unaffected by the atmosphere.

FIRES CAUSED BY THE PRIMUS STOVE

The same correspondent writes as follows about the Primus stove:[1]

It is true that the Primus stove has enslaved the minds of Gujarati women. I also believe that this stove is not as necessary as it is generally believed to be. It is undoubtedly true that a Gujarati woman's sari lends grace to her, but it does cause great inconvenience to the working women. It seems to be a fact that the sari is responsible for the accidents through the Primus stove in which Gujarati women have been involved. If I could persuade these women, I would rid them of their fascination for this stove and have them imitate the tucked-up sari worn by the brave women of Bardoli. In my opinion, the sari draped in that manner is no less graceful. It also gives full freedom of movement while working and, looking at the matter more deeply, we see that it affords better protection to women inasmuch as they are more fully clad in this dress. Those who have seen the women of Bardoli at work would testify that they could do no work in the field if they wore the sari with one end of it hanging in front of them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-8-l928

[1] The letter is not translated here.

473. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 26, 1928

MY DEAR PRAKASAM,

I have your letter[1]. If you can get Justice Venkatasubba Rao to be the sole arbitrator in the matter between you and the All India Spinners' Association, it will be quite good. You may therefore please try to get his consent and let me know the result.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. PRAKASAM
"SWARAJYA", MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 13672

474. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 26, 1928

Keshu is anxious to make up his English as early as possible. He knows a fair amount. My idea is that if he can be kept with the Bjerrums, he should do well. Will you please advise? If you think that my suggestion is good, you may see the Bjerrums yourself. Or, if anything or something else or some other place than Bangalore is better, please let me know.

Do tell me how you and Shankerlal are getting on. You must both get well.

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR
C/O KHADI VASTRALAYA, FORT, BANGALORE CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 13496

[1] Dated August 14, 1928, which read: "I suggest the name of Mr. Justice Venkatasubba Rao of the Madras High Court to arbitrate in the matter in his personal capacity . . ." (S.N. 13657). *Vide* also "Letter to T. Prakasam", 20-7-1928.

475. LETTER TO JETHALAL JOSHI

Second Shravan Sud 11 [*August 26, 1928*][1]

BHAISHRI JETHALAL,

I got your letter.

What you say about children is true.

Your suggestion regarding malaria is worth considering.

Concerning the calf, the issue was not only about non-violence. According to my definition of non-violence, there was certainly no violence in killing it. The question was whether or not it was a duty to kill it. I felt that it was.

You can get slivers for a few days, but you should learn quickly [to make them yourselves].

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1346

476 LETTER TO PANNALAL JAIN

SABARMATI,
Bhadrapad Shukla 11 [*August 26, 1928*][2]

BHAI PANNALALJI,

I have your letter. Your complaint is just. But there are difficulties in increasing the size of *Hindi Navajivan.* With great difficulty it has only just started paying its way. It attempts to give a summary of all useful articles. This attempt will be redoubled hereafter.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI PANNALAL JAIN

KALYANMAL MILLS, INDORE

[From Hindi]

Madhyapradesh aur Gandhiji, p. 150

[1] The year is determined from the reference to the mercy-killing of a calf at the Ashram.

[2] From the postmark

477. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

August 27, 1928

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have your letters. You would naturally get all the news about Balubhai, and so I write nothing. If we remember and cultivate in ourselves the virtues of our good relations, they though dead live on and society progresses continuously. Ordinarily we see the opposite of this happening. That is so because of our lethargy. We believe that by selfishly mourning over a death we have done our duty and thus deceive ourselves. If we look upon death in the manner I have indicated, we would never mourn it but turn it into a means of self-purification.

Ramdas returned to Bardoli yesterday. He now wants to settle down there and join in constructive work. After he has settled down he will ask Nimu[1] to join him. Navin[2] and Rasik will go to Delhi in a few days to help Devdas there.

We are all right, all of us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4743

478. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Silence Day [*August 27, 1928*][3]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. Pay up the bills of the doctor and the hakim. You should know from time to time the amounts as they *become due*. If your health does not improve there at all, it would be better for you to come away here. Tell Vidyavatiji that, rather than stay there and be a burden on her, you had better return to the Ashram. After your health has completely recovered, you may return there if necessary. Or, they may send a student from there who will learn the work in the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9251

[1] Wife of Ramdas Gandhi
[2] A pupil in the Ashram school
[3] From the postmark

479. LETTER TO PERIN CAPTAIN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 28, 1928

DEAR SISTER,[1]

I have your letter. I propose to write about your letters in the next issue of *Young India*.[2]

Narandas must already have sent you the list of the stuff at the Ashram.

Mahadev has been reminded about Rs. 45-13-6. Subbiah will write to you about it. I have not written to Mithuben yet, but I will soon, as also to Fulchand about Rs. 37-4-0. I shall speak to Kakasaheb about the embroidery thread.

If there is any khadi exhibition at Calcutta, you will certainly know in due time.

This exhausts your list. Don't you come again only for two days.

SHRIMATI PERIN CAPTAIN
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 13501

480. LETTER TO EMMA HARKER

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 28, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your letter. You can come and see the Ashram for yourself. But I know that the Ashram life will not suit you in any shape or form. It is really too simple and too hard for one brought up like you. It is hard even for those who have been for a long time here. And it is a life of continuous body labour.

Yours sincerely,

EMMA HARKER
2 BELGRADE TERRACE, KARACHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 13502

[1] The source has this in Gujarati, *Vahalan Behn*
[2] *Vide* "Notes", 13-9-1928, sub-title, "Rashtriya Stri Sabha and Khadi".

481. LETTER TO N. C. BARDALOI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 28, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I referred your letter[1] to the A.I.S.A. Office and here is the statement[2] prepared by the Office. I do not wish to judge. But I want you to see the correct position for yourself. There should be no laxity in the handling of public funds. And resentment of discipline, I hold to be a grave fault with us. Without discipline, Bardoli would have been a perfect fiasco. There were over 100 workers under Vallabhbhai and they all acted as one man. I am not aware of a misunderstanding having ever arisen. There were over 1,000 workers at the time of flood relief last year. It was the same thing then as in Bardoli.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. C. BARDALOI
SANTI BHAVAN, GAUHATI

From a microfilm: S.N. 13673

482. LETTER TO VARADACHARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 28, 1928

MY DEAR VARADACHARI,

The enclosed letter and my reply will speak for themselves. Subbiah fortifies the complaint made by the correspondent and says that the Tamil Nadu Khadi Depot gives no encouragement whatsoever to voluntary spinners. This should not be.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure: l

From a microfilm: S.N. 13674

[1] Dated June 23, 1928 (S.N. 13628)
[2] Giving, year-wise the quantity of khadi produced in India from 1925 to 1928

483. LETTER TO R. DORAISWAMY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 28, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I must draw your attention to the fact that my definition of a "spinner" applies to voluntary spinners, not to paid spinners. I know from experience that not much time has to be given to doing one's own carding and that those who do spinning for the love of it should generally be able to find time for doing their own carding a small quantity. I have done it myself, though in order to save every minute of my time I have given it up, because there are so many to supply me with slivers. But for the sake of accuracy, I propose to do my own carding, even though I am now supposed to be in a very weak state of health, and publish the result in *Young India*. You should certainly be supplied with spindles from the Tamil Nad Branch as also from the Satyagraha Ashram or Bardoli. There is however a great difficulty in having an unlimited supply of true spindles, because straightening taxes the eyes of workers, so much so that one man who used to straighten up 60 spindles per day very nearly lost his eyes. At the Ashram and at Bardoli, therefore, not much encouragement is given to those who want true spindles. Straightening can be learnt by application. Once a person learns it, he can straighten his own spindle in a very short time and straightening once in a way does not tax the eye at all. Attempts were being made by the Association to get a piece of machinery whereby true spindles can be turned out. But in spite of all effort, up to now such a machine has not been found. I am however forwarding your letter to the Tamil Nad Branch in order that whatever is possible might be done in order to help voluntary spinners.

R. DORAISWAMY
KHADI AGENT, KUMBAKONAM

From a microfilm: S.N. 13675

484. LETTER TO B. G. HORNIMAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 28, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

To get an article from me is like drawing a live tooth. I can only therefore send you a message, and here it is!

The way to constitutional swaraj may lie through Lucknow, the way to organic swaraj, which is synonymous with Ramarajya lies through Bardoli.

Yours sincerely,

B. G. HORNIMAN, ESQ.
"THE INDIAN NATIONAL HERALD"
POST BOX NO. 800, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 13497

485. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 28, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. I don't need to say anything about the Puja Exhibition. You will manage things there as may seem best to you.

I hope the change you have made at Sodepur about food is not too drastic for the men. Let there be no unnecessary haste. What is possible with difficulty in Gujarat may be almost impossible in Bengal.

The little water-works you installed here is working fairly satisfactorily. But the water is soon exhausted. I wonder if the tanks are to be kept open. And should they not be cleaned from time to time? And if they should, is it not a somewhat laborious process? Have you any instructions?

It gives me joy to find that you are getting on so well with Mr. Birla. It must mean a great load off your brain so far as the finances are concerned.

Yes, if you can devise a charkha that will give a greater yield, it would certainly be a gain.

How is Hemprabha Devi keeping?

From a photostat: S.N. 13498

486. LETTER TO K. S. KARANTH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 28, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The question seems to me to be easy of solution. It is the Brahminical life that is referred to. Brahman there does not refer to a division, but it refers to a state in the same person. Brahman is one who knows God, and it is possible for a Shudra to develop self-realization. He has then reached the Brahminical stage, and the man born in a Brahmin family may be able to do nothing if he has no knowledge of God.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. S. KARANTH
VASANTA, P.O. KODAIBAIL, MANGALORE

From a photostat: S.N. 13499

487. LETTER TO ROHINI POOVIAH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 28, 1928

MY DEAR ROHINI,

I was delighted to receive your note. I am glad you are now fixed up. I hope that you won't have to leave that place.

The common kitchen is going on merrily though we have still tough problems to solve from day to day. We have nearly 160 diners together. It is something to conduct such a big kitchen without paid labour.

As you must have seen I have not gone to Lucknow, nor am I likely to pass through Allahabad in the near future.

Do write to me from time to time.

Yours sincerely,

SHRIMATI ROHINI POOVIAH

LADY PRINCIPAL, CROSTHWAITE GIRLS' COLLEGE, ALLAHABAD

From a photostat: S.N. 13500

488. EUROPE-GOERS BEWARE

Now that so many people have begun to go to Europe and the interest in India and Indians has since the days of Non-co-operation grown, there is a growing demand on their time on the part of European public bodies and political parties. Not one of us was however prepared for what befell Babu Rajendra Prasad. Rajendra Babu went to London some months ago to fulfil an important legal engagement. Having finished his case he did a bit of travelling on the Continent and among other things attended the War Resisters' Conference in Vienna. Prompted by a stranger, he accepted another engagement in the neighbourhood. There was some days ago in *The Bombay Chronicle* a cable to the effect that a meeting at which Babu Rajendra Prasad was speaking on peace was broken up by Fascists and that he was seriously assaulted. In the absence of any cable from Rajendra Babu, I refused to believe in the assault. The same day that I saw the Press cable, I had a cable from Rajendra Babu asking for a message[1] for the Youth Conference in Holland. This removed all suspicion about the assault; but by the last mail I received a letter from Austrian friends, a professor and his wife, containing a graphic description and confirmation of the assault reported in the Press. I reproduce below the relevant portion of the letter which moreover contains a warning important for all who visit the Continent:

> Though very rejoiced at your letter of introduction of Mr. Rajendra Prasad I was terrified by a postscript of one—whose name we had never heard before at the backside of your letter. In your kind letter there was no word about any meeting, but at the back, this Mr. . .[2] wrote: "Comrade Raj. Pr. will

[1] *Vide* "Cable to Rajendra Prasad", On or after 16-8-1928.

[2] Omissions as in the source

speak at the Steinfelder Sale, and requests you to meet him there." I was very much astonished and terrified. For, in the "Steinfelder Sale", which is a beerhouse, there was on the same day a meeting of 'International Women's League for Peace and Freedom'. I did not know this League. This letter came into our hands at 9 in the morning of the 1st August, and we tried the whole forenoon to find out whether this meeting guaranteed security, but we could not find in any directory or telephone-book any address or name of the members of this League. So we went to the station to fetch brother Prasad, to take him with us to our home.

Mr. Prasad did not know the circumstances of this meeting and did not know enough of this Mr.... He agreed with this Mr.... to speak at the meeting in which were concentrated from the surroundings and the town the followers of war and violence in order to disturb this women's meeting. Not knowing anything, . . . and myself went there with Mr. Prasad to satisfy his obligation. Mr.... was not at the meeting, no one was there of the Women's Committee, the hall was full of smoke, the tables full of beerglasses, men were yelling—there was no one of that Committee though it was already quarter of an hour later. Going to the Women's Committee table, we were suddenly attacked even before the beginning of the meeting, and though guarding him with our own bodies, we could not prevent brother Prasad from being injured. After our injuries we came to know: (1) that he was taken to be one . . ., the name of whom we had never heard, who had to speak at this meeting; (2) that Mr.... was an anarchist and editor of an anarchistical newspaper! We are very sorry at all this. Not only because of our wounds—fortunately my double-quilted khaddarhat and my hair-knot caught up many of the blows with wooden lathis and chairs and glasses, nevertheless, brother Prasad was slightly hurt on the head, on the forehead and upon one hand, and . . . was injured with a chair-leg on the cheek under one eye. This small wound of. . . and a small wound on the forehead of Mr. Prasad could be dangerous for the eyes, perhaps also a stab with a knife which I caught up with my hand and which was soon healed. I do not know whence I had the strength to hold up so many blows in order to make a way out through perhaps a thousand men beating us three, and insulting me because I was protecting the men, I had only one hand to hold up the blows, with the other hand I held Mr. Prasad whom . . . and myself had between us, . . . trying to save his Gandhi cap which was finally lost. Our hands and feet were covered with blue spots, and for two days I had a slight commotion in the brain. All were crying: "Slay him down," ... it was dreadful .... We have kept the good brother in our home and dressed his wounds. On the next day he felt well, and we travelled with him by railway one hour before leaving him. The next day we received a letter from him reporting that he was feeling well, and

that the doctor had examined his small wounds and fortunately found these all right. Today he is staying at Monsieur Romain Rolland's in Villeneuve, to whom I have written an explaining letter. Now I beg you to say to all Indian brothers, who are starting for Europe or staying there, not to be implicated in any strange movement. Your principles of non-violence, etc., are torn from their setting and misused by political parties. The Indian brothers are too good and too credulous; for instance we have heard: when one European says to an Indian brother, that he (the European) is a vegetarian, the Indian brother in his goodness believes that this European is a follower of your principles in the whole, but such a European can be also an anarchist, etc. I entreat you. to warn-the Indian brothers against having intercourse with strange people.

These friends deserve the warmest thanks of the relatives and the numerous friends of Rajendra Babu for their bravely defending his person at peril to their own lives. The incident shows the essential identity of human nature and it shows that gentleness, self-sacrifice and generosity are the exclusive possession of no one race or religion.

But it is the warning contained in the letter which is much the most important part of it. There is no doubt that there is a desire on the part of all sorts of Continental parties to exploit for their own purposes Indian visitors, especially if they happen to hold a position in the public life of India. It is therefore a good thing to bear in mind the Shakespearian warning: "Give thine ear to everyone, thy voice to none." There must be on. the part of Indian visitors an estimable desire to advertise the Indian cause by speaking to European audiences. It is as well however to know that exemplary self-restraint in everything will advertise the Indian cause much better than any amount of public speaking. Character is any day more eloquent than speech.

Young India, 30-8-1928

489. N0TES

WANTED A PUBLICITY DEPARTMENT FOR KHADI

A correspondent writes to Sjt. Vithaldas Jerajani of the All India Spinners' Association, Khadi Bhandar, Bombay:

> I am thankful for the parcel along with your Bill No. 307 dated 27-7-1928. It has given me full satisfaction and the clothes are admired by friends. I feel that the message? of khadi has reached only a small fraction of the people, and that in the matter of publicity, the movement lags behind even ordinary firms. Those who would like to purchase khadi have got nothing for guidance as there is a very small number of shops in a province and that too does very little work in the way of publicity. I am sure money will not be wasted if you were to enlarge and illustrate your price list. The creation of a publicity department for khadi will not be a superfluous thing. If and when you approve of this idea and action is taken thereon, I shall be glad to remit an amount of Rs. 100 as a contribution towards the fund required for the purpose.

There is much truth in the correspondent's charge. The All-India Spinner's Association has concerned itself more with perfecting the internal organization than with external effort such as advertisement, feeling that perfection of the internal organization will be its own advertisement. The Association has therefore been chary of spending money on publicity work. But, if sufficient response is made by khadi lovers towards the expense of publicity work, I have no doubt that the Council will gladly take it up. Let it however be known that publicity work to be thorough is a costly affair. Generally, the cost of publicity is included in the price of the material advertised. The All-India Spinners' Association has been averse thus to increasing the price of khadi. It is therefore necessary that if the publicity work is to be organized, the cost should come from those who appreciate the virtue of khadi and have the means of defraying it. If therefore there are others like the correspondent who will shoulder the burden of the publicity department, let them send me their contributions earmarked for the purpose. If sufficient response is not made and if the donors so desire, the donations will be refunded.

THE SPINNING-WHEEL IN MYSORE STATE

Sjt. Pujari of the All-India Spinners' Association who is assisting the Mysore State authorities in organizing hand-spinning in that State

sends me a letter from which I extract the following information:

The work was started on the 1st of November 1927. The movement has gained stability. At the end of July last, 1,000 wheels were at work in 60 villages, supplying 52 looms; and the production of July amounted to Rs. 2,000.

Sjt. Pujari says:

I can assert from my experience of nine months

1. that a subsidiary cottage industry in these parts is a felt want;

2. that the tiny wheels supply that want as nothing else can;

3. that it has been possible to do this thing because of State encouragement and because the spinners and weavers are assured of a steady demand for their yarn and khaddar;

4. that given similar conditions in other parts of India, the same results should be obtained;

5. that hand-spinning keeps the village revenue in constant circulation flowing from the *raiyats'* cottages to the State and from the State to the *raiyats;*

6. that it is the best method of utilizing the free energy of the vast agricultural population which is now running to waste in the 6,85,000 villages of India;

7. and lastly, that hand-spinning adds to the daily earnings of the villager three pies per hour that he spends at the wheel, a by no means negligible addition to the earnings of a population whose income per head is estimated at not more than 0-1-7 per day.

Sjt. Pujari adds:

What a blessing it would be if other States of India were to copy the noble example of the Mysore State.

I echo the wish.

TORTURE OF BULLOCKS

An English lady writes:

I am much distressed and perplexed by the habitual torture of bullocks by the inhabitants of this country, chiefly Hindus, who call themselves protectors of the cow! The sight of the dislocated, mutilated tail joints of the overburdened creatures toiling along roads is one never to be forgotten by a visitor to this country. The way the hands of the drivers, made filthy by cruelty, grasp and twitch the very backbone of the shrinking creatures at the tail socket, when the tail itself is a broken twisted abomination, is a sight

which brings shame on the Hindu religion. Can you do nothing through your paper *Young India* on behalf of these creatures, as also on behalf of the tormented fowls carried by the legs head down for miles to their destruction? I enclose a picture of English oxen at work. The Indian has adopted the motor-car for himself, why not the harness for his bullocks?

Whilst it is true that this fair visitor to India has indulged in a hasty generalization by accusing the inhabitants of India of habitual torture of bullocks—for it is not very inhabitant, not even every tenth man who ill uses bullocks—there is no doubt that some drivers in the cities are guilty of the practice referred to in the letter, and there is no doubt also that the passer-by goes his way totally oblivious of the torture and there is truth too in the statement about the inhuman carrying of fowls. It is possible to say of us who talk about ahimsa that we strain at a gnat and easily swallow a camel. We would be agitated if a rabid dog was shot, but we are indifferent, if not willing witnesses to the cruelties such as are mentioned in the letter I have reproduced. We seem to think that we have fully carried out the doctrine of ahimsa so long as we do not actually kill. In my opinion, this is a travesty of ahimsa; every act of injury to a living creature and every endorsement of such act by refraining from non-violent effort wherever possible to prevent it is a breach of ahimsa. Here, there is work for religious organizations that would be faithful to their convictions to conduct a crusade against cruelties to lower animals practised in the cities. The change from the yoke to the harness is undoubtedly desirable.

A KHADDAR-CLAD HIGH SCHOOL

Dr. P. B. Datta of Chittagong sends the following interesting report[1] of a High School in which all boys and teachers have been using khaddar for the last four years.

BERAR IN 1897

Major R. V. Garrett writing in 1897 in his monograph on cotton fabrics in the Hyderabad Assigned Districts says:

> Berar is famous for its cotton, but certainly not for its cotton fabrics, which are limited for the most part to common cloths of rough and inferior quality, and used by the poorer classes only. (p. 1)

[1] Not reproduced here; it gave an account of the complete adoption of khaddar by Durgapur High School, Chittagong, and its wholesome influence on surrounding villages. The report also narrated the agricultural activities of the school and its plans to have a goshala and a workshop.

Spinning is carried on all over the provinces and is not confined to any particular castes or localities. (p. 1)

One woman cannot spin more than I lb. of country yarn a week, the value of which is eight annas; about half this sum represents the intrinsic value of a week's spinning. The work is, however, undertaken as affording domestic employment for the women during their leisure hours at home. (p. 2.)

What was true of Berar in 1897 is still more true now. For the infatuation for the sale of raw cotton grown in Berar is so great that the women have left the spinning-wheel and there is not much hand-spun yarn woven in Berar. Indeed if Berar could be made truly industrial, not a pound of cotton need leave Berar except in the finished state of khadi manufactured in the cottages of the villagers without in any way interfering with their other occupations.

CO-OPERATIVE KHADI-PURCHASE

G. V. R. writes from Nagpur:[1]

AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Mr. Diwan A. Mehta brought a collection (Rs. 270) made from among the Indian passengers on board s.s. *Pilsna* to be handed to me on the condition that if the Bardoli struggle was over the money should be utilized for some social work of my choice. I have earmarked the donation for untouchability work, and I thankfully make this acknowledgment here as it could not very well appear in the Bardoli fund collection list that is printed from week to week as supplement to *Young India*.

Young India, 30-8-1928

490. LETTER TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

ASHRAM,
August 30, 1928

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I have read both your letters to Ramniklal[2]. He will send you a copy of the revisions. Your letter has had no effect on me, since you

[1] The letter is not reproduced here; the correspondent had written about the formation of co-operative khadi-purchase clubs by the railwaymen, and their advantages.

[2] Ramniklal Modi

have assumed that only the name is being changed, whereas I have in mind a change in character along with the change in name[1]. I could clearly see that even a regular inmate of the Satyagraha Ashram could not fully observe its vows. To us the name was not merely a word which sounded pleasing to our ears and the world's, it connoted certain qualities. If we cannot show the qualities implied in the name, we must give it up.

What is the use of an institution in which persons like Mahadev, Chhaganlal or Ramniklal cannot stay or can stay only in fear? And how can it be claimed that such an institution is worthy of carrying on activities dedicated to great ideals? If you suggest that the name with its moral significance may be retained but the moral discipline may be tightened in order to accommodate persons like Mahadev and the others, I would ask why we should be so attached to the name. Is it not a violation of truth for somebody practising *vanaprastha* dharma to claim that he is a sannyasi? It would be worthier for a *vanaprastha* to show in addition to the virtues proper to his stage the qualities of a sannyasi. The fact, however, is that all of us, men and women, are barely able to exhibit in ourselves the virtues of the *vanaprastha* dharma.

. . . Kaka has gone on a three-day fast of expiation. The expiation is for a lapse by a worker whom Kaka had trained and believed to be a good man. The fast will end on Tuesday.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/10

[1] The reference is to the proposed change of name from Satyagraha Ashram to Udyog Mandir. *Vide* also "Satyagraha Ashram", November 4, 1928 and "handicap of Mahatmaship", November 8, 1928.

491. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU[1]

[*August 31, 1928*]

WIRE RECEIVED. GOD BE THANKED. MAY YOU BE BLESSED TO CARRY THIS BRILLIANT SUCCESS TO FINAL STAGE OF ACHIEVING OUR GOAL.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13678

492. LETTER TO HARDAYAL NAG

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 31, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letters. It is pressure of work that has prevented me from writing to you earlier.

I realize the importance of your suggestion. But I am quite certain that Vallabhbhai would have been a square man in a round box, if he had been elected President of the Congress. And events are proving that Pandit Motilalji is the wisest choice.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. HARDAYAL NAG
CHANDPUR

From a photostat: S.N. 13503

[1] In reply to his telegram dated August 31, 1928, which read: "Hearty congratulations. Complete success. All recommendations adopted. Hindu-Muslim differences about representation settled. Punjab problem solved. Hindus Muslims agreed about Sind. Temper of parties excellent. Returning Allahabad tomorrow, Proceeding Simla third."

493. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 31, 1928

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. I have already written[1] to you concerning the fees of the doctor and the Hakim. I have also told you to come over here if you do not feel comfortable there. If, however, you can conveniently go to Mussoorie and if you feel very much better there, why should you not go and get fine health? After that, if you find it difficult to stay on in Dehradun, you may come away here. This is only a suggestion I am making. If, however, you are no more interested in staying on there and are not in a condition to work, you should return here immediately. You should not think it necessary to ask me again for my permission about this. I suppose it is not necessary for me to write anything to Vidyavati. Whatever happens, you should never get nervous, nor should you, out of false shame, agree to do anything beyond your capacity. If we act with humility and undertake only what is within our capacity, then only will our work shine and bring fruit. This is the meaning of *shreyan swadharmo vigunah*[2].

I got your letter after I had finished dictating so far. Now that you have decided to leave that place, there is no need to change your plan. But there is no harm, either, in going to Mussoorie, if you can and if you wish to. Since you wish to stay for a day in Delhi, you may go and see Devdas if you feel inclined. He is in Jamia Millia, which is in Karol Bagh. Jamia Millia is a Vidyapith of our Muslim friends. Navin and Rasik will leave [for Delhi] on Sunday to help Devdas there. They will reach there on Monday.

I have not revised this letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 499. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vasumati Pandit", 27-8-1928.
[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, XVIII. 47

494. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

[*After August 31, 1928*][1]

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I get your letters regularly. I try to write every fortnight, but maybe occasionally I miss a week.

You will remember Sastriji more after he has left. You will not get any other person as straightforward as he to serve as Agent there. I go over possible names again and again but none appeals to me. If we start looking for weaknesses, shall we find anyone free from them? Hinduism has ascribed shortcomings even to Siva. Tulsidas says however:

> Everything in the world, animate and inanimate, has its virtues and defects;
>
> The saints who are like the swan, accept the good that is milk and ignore the evil that is water.

Devdas is in Delhi, and now Navin and Rasik have gone to help him. Both are doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4730

495. LETTER TO JUGALKISHORE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 1, 1928

MY DEAR JUGALKISHORE[2],

I have your letter. It is a most difficult thing to suit you. We have not yet been able to produce the type of teacher you want. Those who have received education are not eager to learn spinning and weaving. The few who have given themselves that training are so engaged that it is difficult to remove them. If you have any person in mind, please tell me. All the same, I shall bear what you have said in mind and if I can come upon the teacher you want, I shall let you

[1] From the reference in the last paragraph to Navin and Rasik going to Delhi; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] Principal of Prem Mahavidyalaya, Vrindavan

know.

I take it that you are flourishing there. When you next come to the Ashram, you will find it somewhat transformed. We have now practically only one huge kitchen, where over 150 men, women, children take their meals.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

[PS.]

Upon inquiry I find that one name has been already sent to you through Jamnalalji.

From a microfilm: S.N. 13679

496. LETTER TO B. W. TUCKER[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 1, 1928

MY DEAR BOYD,

Your letter has been on my file for some days.

I think you have stated my position fairly correctly except that the way in which you have put it may cause a misunderstanding. I did not say that I would not desire that others should accept my viewpoint. But I did say that I would not desire that others should accept my religion. Evidently you have used the word viewpoint as synonymous with religion. I do not. Whilst I would not press my religion upon others, I would press my viewpoint upon others, as every one of us must. Religion is a matter of feeling or the heart and, therefore, not a matter for argument, and I would hold everybody's feeling as dear as my own, because I expect him to do so with reference to my feeling. Viewpoint is a matter of reasoning, the mind, the intellect. It may shift from time to time without touching the heart. Change of religion is a change of status. Change of viewpoint is an accident often due to external causes. My feeling about the existence of God cannot be easily altered. My viewpoint regarding the connotation of the term may vary from time to time and expand with the expansion of my

[1] In reply 10 his letter (S.N. 13491) of August 15, 1928, which read: "There is one question that was raised at the Council of the International Fellowship held at Sabarmati last January, about which I would appreciate some further explanation

reason. Religion is beyond explanation and it seems to me to be impertinent for anyone to touch another's religion. A viewpoint must always be capable of explanation. I have entered upon this distinction because it enables me to explain my position about religion more clearly than by any other means. I do not want you to become a Hindu. But I do want you to become a better Christian by assimilating all that may be good in Hinduism and that you may not find in same measure or at all in the Christian teaching. I can't explain why I delight in calling myself and remaining a Hindu, but my remaining does not prevent me from assimilating all that is good and noble in Christianity, Islam and other faiths of the world.

I wonder if I have explained my position to your satisfaction. If not please ask.

All you say about Bardoli is quite true.

Yours sincerely,

REV. B. W. TUCKER
PRINCIPAL, COLLINS HIGH SCHOOL
140 DHARMTALA, STREET, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13505

497. AHIMSA IN EDUCATION[1]

For some time past Gandhiji has been following the practice of giving weekly talks to the students of the Gujarat Vidyapith. He used on these occasions to invite questions from students and teachers which he would answer. Before their interrogatories could be exhausted, however, he had to take up the reading of *Hind Swaraj* with them at their request. But as some of the questions received by him are of general interest he proposes to deal with them in the pages of *Navajivan*. The substance of one is given below.

—MAHADEV DESAI

One of the questions put to me was as follows:

> The moment one begins to talk of ahimsa, a series of trifling questions are mooted, e.g., whether it is permissible to kill dogs, tigers and wolves, snakes, lice, etc.. and whether one may eat brinjals or potatoes or else the questioner engages in a disputation over the. question of maintaining an army or of offering armed resistance. Nobody seems to trouble to inquire how the principle of ahimsa should be worked out as part of education. Will you kindly

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in Navajivan, 2-9-1928.

shed some light on this question?

This is not a new problem. It has been discussed threadbare in these columns off and on in one shape or another. But I know that I have not succeeded in making it absolutely clear to my readers. The task, I am afraid, is beyond my capacity. But I should be thankful if I could succeed in contributing somewhat to its solution.

The introductory part of the question shows that questions be betraying a narrow outlook are often put. By unnecessarily exercising ourselves over conundrums about the justifiability of man's killing creatures and animals of a lower order, we often seem to forget our primary duties. Every one of us is not faced every day with the question of killing obnoxious animals. Most of us have not developed courage and love enough to practise ahimsa with regard to dangerous reptiles. We do not destroy the vipers of ill-will and anger in our own bosom, but we dare to raise futile discussions about the propriety of killing obnoxious creatures and we thus move in a vicious circle. We fail in the primary duty and lay the unction to our souls that we are refraining from killing obnoxious life. One who desires to practise ahimsa must for the time being forget all about snakes, etc. Let him not worry if he cannot avoid killing them, but try for all he is worth to overcome the anger and ill-will of men by his patient endeavour as a first step toward cultivating universal love.

Abjure brinjals or potatoes by all means, if you will, but do not for heaven's sake begin to feel yourself self-righteous or flatter yourself that you are practising ahimsa on that account. The very idea is enough to make one blush. Ahimsa is not a mere matter of dietetics, it transcends it. What a man eats or drinks matters little; it is the self-denial, the self-restraint behind it that matters. By all means practise as much restraint in the choice of the articles of your diet as you like. The restraint is commendable, even necessary, but it touches only the fringe of ahimsa. A man may allow himself a wide latitude in the matter of diet and yet may be a personification of ahimsa and compel our homage, if his heart overflows with love and melts at another's woe, and has been purged of all passions. On the other hand a man always overscrupulous in diet is an utter stranger to ahimsa and a pitiful wretch, if he is a slave to selfishness and passions and is hard of heart.

Whether India should have an army or not, whether or not one may offer armed resistance to Government, these are momentous

questions that we shall have to solve one day. The Congress has in its creed already furnished an answer to them in part. But important as these questions are, they do not much concern the man in the street, they do not touch the aspect of ahimsa with which an educationist or a student is concerned. Ahimsa in relation to the life of a student stands quite apart from these questions of high politics. Ahimsa in education must have an obvious bearing of the mutual relations of the students. Where the whole atmosphere is redolent with the pure fragrance of ahimsa, boys and girls studying together will live like brothers and sisters, in freedom and yet in self-imposed restraints; the students will be bound to the teachers in ties of filial love, mutual respect and mutual trust. This pure atmosphere will of itself be a continual object lesson in ahimsa. The students brought up in such an atmosphere will always distinguish themselves by their charity and breadth of view, and a special talent for service. Social evils will cease to present any difficulty to them, the very intensity of their love being enough to burn out those evils. For instance, the very idea of child-marriage will appear repugnant to them. They will not even think of penalizing the parents of brides by demanding dowries from them. And how dare they after marriages regard their wives as chattel or simply a means of gratifying their lust? How will a young man brought up in such an environment of ahimsa ever think of fighting a brother of his own or a different faith? At any rate no one will think of calling himself a votary of ahimsa and do all or any of these things.

To sum up: Ahimsa is a weapon of matchless potency. It is the *summum bonum* of life. It is an attribute of the brave, in fact it is their all. It does not come within reach of the coward. It is no wooden or lifeless dogma, but a living and a life-giving force. It is the special attribute of the soul. That is why it has been described as the highest dharma (law). In the hands of the educationist therefore it ought to take the form of the purest love ever fresh, an ever gushing spring of life expressing itself in every act. Ill-will cannot stand in its presence. The sun of ahimsa carries all the hosts of darkness such as hatred, anger and malice before himself. Ahimsa in education shines clear and far and can no more be hidden, even as the sun cannot be hidden by any means. One may be sure that when the Vidyapith is filled with the atmosphere of this ahimsa, its students will no more be troubled by puzzling conundrums.

Young India, 6-9-l928

498. MY NOTES

PRICE OF A BRIDEGROOM

A correspondent writes as follows about the cruel hardship of finding a husband:[1]

It is indeed an evil custom for the father to sell his daughter, but the very limit of depravity is reached when the bridegroom accepts money from the bride's father as a price for the favour of marrying her. The father of a daughter should vow not to pay this penalty, the daughter should be permitted to grow up and a grown-up girl should not even look at a mercenary young man. Marriage is not one's supreme duty in life. Marriages which have been contracted with a mercenary motive are not marriages but base deals. Young men in this age should shun such deals. They should realize that enjoying the good things of life or receiving education by fleecing the father-in-law is a sin.

TYRANNY OF SADHUS

One of the questions asked by the correspondent is as follows:[2]

Those who tyrannize people in this way do not deserve to be called sadhus. In this country where people are deceived by garments, those who wear the saffron robe or wear only a *langoti* are worshipped as sadhus. No one can become a sadhu by virtue of his dress alone. Thousands of persons who are the very opposite of sadhus dress themselves like sadhus and roam around this country. Villagers need not be afraid of persons who pose as sadhus or have been proved to be the very opposite. They should know how to recognize genuine sadhus and rid themselves of the fear of the wicked. They should cultivate the strength to oppose them. It is necessary for educated persons to go into the villages in order to rid them of the two enemies of fear and superstition. Sardar Vallabhbhai has pointed out to the whole of India the royal road for entering the villages. A good many such activities will now be carried on as in Bardoli as part of the constructive programme and the people will be taught new object lessons.

[1] The letter is not translated here.
[2] *ibid*

The following is the last question[1] asked by this correspondent:

I have known from childhood the aversion of the Jains to eating tubers and bulbs. However, I have been unable to understand why they are forbidden by religion. One can understand the idea that there is a larger number of living creatures clinging to such roots, but I do not see non-violence in making such subtle distinctions. The Jain who, although he has never eaten potatoes, etc., deceives people every day, is far more guilty of violence than the honest business man who eats potatoes regularly. The violence committed by the latter proceeds from his intellectual attitude and does not touch his heart whereas he who deceives others kills his own soul. Self-control as such is good. It is commendable for mankind, steeped in violence though it is, to practise some non-violence in its eating habits. It is proper that we should deliberately cultivate compassion even for plant-life. It is necessary to give up pampering the palate in order to acquire control over one's senses. Though admitting all this, though I am accustomed to a life of self-denial and though I have happy and close associations with jains, my heart positively refuses to see any great religious merit in avoiding the use of potatoes, etc. Not eating them seems to have no connection at all with one's character. I feel that our ancestors must have started making subtle distinctions between what should be eaten and what should not be eaten at a time when the religious spirit was at a low ebb. Those who wish to give up potatoes, etc., in deference to common practice may do so. But such practice cannot be made the basis of one's religion and the matter should not become a subject of dispute between a husband and wife.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-9-1928

499. RURAL EDUCATION SCHEME

Following the announcement of Shri Nagindas's gift of rupees one lakh, he has been receiving letters concerning the gift and making suggestions. He has passed these on to me, and I, in turn, have handed them over to Kakasaheb Kalelkar. The reader will find published in

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had asked Gandhiji to comment on the belief prevalent among Jains that it was sinful to eat potatoes, onions, etc.

this issue that part of Kakasaheb's letter to Shri Nagindas which deals with the scheme itself and explains it, so that Gujaratis may not remain in the dark about how and in what manner that gift is going to be utilized. From this the reader will see that the scheme is divided into three parts.

1. In the first place, it consists in training some students to become teachers or workers who will be able to serve the people, or rather, educate them. It is obvious that such service, if it is to benefit the people, should necessarily be rural service.

2. Secondly, establishment through these teachers of rural schools, which would be mobile in the first instance and become permanent later on.

3. Thirdly, preparing suitable literature and getting it prepared by others.

Readers will see that the scope of this scheme is both ambitious and large. Shri Nagindas's philanthropy will have borne fruit if it is implemented.

This task cannot be accomplished in a hurry. The scheme seeks to break new ground. Till now education has served the needs of city-life, if it has served any purpose at all. I deliberately say "if it has served any purpose at all". I fear, or rather I hold, that since education so far has not been of a national character, it is found not to have served even the needs of city life. It was planned to support foreign rule, and that is what we find it has done, This character of our education has resulted in preparing a bureaucratic class of servants and copy-writing clerks. The scheme described above has to make its way through this atmosphere. Hence its implementation will necessarily take some time.

Kakasaheb has estimated that its implementation will take ten years and that is not too long a time. It may conceivably happen that during this period, the public comes to be fired with widespread enthusiasm similar to that of 1921 which would also be of a permanent nature, and the required number of students and persons fit to impart education are immediately available. If that happens, we may safely hope that the task will be completed within a shorter period. The programme should be framed in conformity with present circumstances. Kakasaheb is determined not to take up anything in haste without due deliberation. He wishes to proceed gradually but on a sure foundation, as an educationist should do.

Not only is Shri Nagindas's gift large in itself, but I also find from his letter that he has handed over all his savings to be used for educational purposes. This increases further the value of his contribution and adds to my responsibility as well as Kakasaheb's. Both of us were already conscious of it. We indeed expect to get a great deal for the nation from the Vidyapith. However, after having learnt of the history of Shri Nagindas's gift, we are all the more anxious to put it to the best possible use. We certainly pray for God's help in doing so. We expect help from the people of Gujarat as well. If this Vidyapith succeeds as expected, that would naturally have an effect on other Vidyapiths and on the whole country. I do not imply by this that other national Vidyapiths aim at anything less, but it does certainly imply that they have not had the same resources which the Gujarat Vidyapith has enjoyed, and hence the public has a right to expect greater results from the latter.

Those who are interested in national education and approve of the aims of the scheme described above may rest assured that due attention will be given to any suggestions which they address to the head of the Gujarat Vidyapith at Ahmedabad. I would request everyone to refrain from troubling Shri Nagindas. The reader will see that he has retained no control over the manner in which his gift may be spent.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 2-9-1928

500. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 2, 1928

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. The plague in Panchgani is a matter of shame for us as human beings. By our way of living we have turned a beautiful health resort into a dirty place and we have neither strength nor courage left to make it plague-free. You have plenty of time. You can find out its cause. I like your idea of living in places such as Matheran. Shankar will have completely recovered. He seems to have gone into silence.

Blessings from

BAPU

501. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

September 2, 1928

CHI. BRAJKISAN,

I did get your letters but there is hardly any time for letter writing although I get up at three o'clock these days. We may eat anywhere but we must not break our rules; we may eat what is permissible for us when we go to a friend's place, so as not to put him to trouble. At least rice or *chapati* is always there. We can eat it with salt and be thankful to the friend.

I shall write to Lala Shankerlal regarding the Bardoli Fund. How are you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2358

502. LETTER TO VIJAYA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 5, [*1928*][1]

CHI. VIJAYA,

I have your letter after a very long time. How nice it would be if Dr. Prabhudas fully recovered. What a coincidence that you all went there and also Mathuradas and Shankar. Ramdas is staying in Bardoli, Devdas is in Delhi. Navin[2] and Rasik[3] have also gone to Delhi.

Blessings from

BAPU

MRS. VIJAYABEHN
LILAVATI SANATORIUM
BLOCK NO. 2
DEVLALI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Sabarmati Sangrahalaya

[1] The source has "1925". However, from the contents the letter appears to belong to "1928".

[2] Navin Gandhi

[3] Son of Harilal Gandhi

503. HELP UTKAL

Sjt. Niranjan Patnaik who represents the All-India Spinners' Association in Utkal writes a letter from which I take the following:

> For some months past the selling work of the Utkal Branch of the All-India Spinners' Association has not been quite satisfactory. Production work is going on quite well, the present rate of production being about Rs.1,000 a month. At your suggestion we have started two new centres in the more distressed areas,—at Aul in Cuttack District and Tihidi in the Balasore District—these two centres have now on their rolls nearly 300 spinners and their yarn production up to date has come to nearly nine maunds (I maund = 80 lb.) most of which is 12s to 15s and some even 20s. The sales, however, are low. Last year we sold on an average Rs. 2,741 per month; during the current year, though we sold nearly Rs. 20,000 worth a few weeks before and during your visit to the province, there was a fall subsequent to that. That is, though the current year's average monthly sale would be nearly Rs. 3,500, the sale during the last few months went down even below Rs. 2,000 per month. The result is that our khadi stock is now nearly Rs. 40,000. Last year our gross profit was 10.3 per cent, and our prices this year also are fixed on that basis. I take a typical variety of production and show below what relation the cost of production bears to sale price:
>
> Shirting piece 10 yds. x 45 inches: This weighs 4 lb. 28 tolas and contains about 26 threads per inch of 8s and 9s.

1.Cost of cotton 5 lb.	Rs. 2-8-0
2.Spinning wages (allowing reduction of 2 _ *tolas* per lb.)	” 1-4-0
3.Weaving wages @ 3 as. per yd.	” 2-0-6
4.Washing	” 0-3-0
5.Freights, from spinning centre up to sale depot (last year's basis)	” 0-4-8
Primary cost of production	” 6-4-2
Sale price @ Re. 0-10-9 per yd.	” 6-11-6
	Difference Re. 0-7-4

This hardly allows an anna in the rupee for establishment charges of production centre, sale or for supervision. During your last visit to Utkal you asked us not to worry over the question of sales but to put our energies solely in production work. I have requested the Secretary of the All-India Spinners' Association to help us to sell our stock. If you consider that the matter might usefully be mentioned in the columns of *Young India*, kindly help us.

Having faith in khadi and faith in the people I did tell Niranja

Babu during my Utkal tour last year that he should concentrat on production. It was not possible to see those blank eyes of skeletons and stand still when one had work for them. The reader will be surprised to learn that Utkal khadi is not cheaper than khadi from the other provinces except perhaps Gujarat. The reason is that the people being more helpless than elsewhere, every new introduction carries more cost than it would in ordinary circumstances. The tendency however is to bring down the prices as efficiency and production grow. Meanwhile, appeal must be made to the philanthropy and patriotism of the people to take up this khadi and thus help the paupers of Orissa. The analysis of cost given in the letter shows that the bulk of the money goes directly into the pockets of the poor people. Only Rs. 0-7-4 out of Rs. 6-l1-6 go towards part payment of overhead charges which too after all, pay the middle-class workers who man the khadi service. Thus in khadi production there is no overlapping. It means pure addition, be it ever so slight, to the wealth of the country, and a fresh avenue of honourable employment for honest middle-class young men without the necessity of their having to pass through English schools and produce at least matriculation certificates if not higher. There are two ways of helping to clear the surplus stock, either by buying the khadi for personal use or by paying a bounty towards reduction of the price of the khadi so that it could be sold at cheaper rates to poor local people. I hope those who understand the condition of Orissa and appreciate the value of khadi in national economics will adopt one of the two courses suggested by me. The address of the head office of the Utkal Branch of the All-India Spinners' Association is Swaraj Ashram, Berhampur, B. N. Rly.

Young India, 6-9-1928

504. AFTER LUCKNOW

The most brilliant victory achieved at Lucknow[1] following as it does closely on the heels of Bardoli makes a happy conjunction of events. Pandit Motilalji is today the' proudest man in India and has every reason to be so. But even he could have done nothing if

[1] Where the All-Parties Conference met from August 28 to 30 and unanimously endorsed the Nehru Committee Report in favour of Dominion self-government for India

everyone had not conspired to make the proceedings a success. It would have been easy for the Hindus or the Mussalmans to block the way. The Sikhs could have done likewise. But no one had the heart to destroy the patient labours of the Nehru Committee. Little wonder that Pandit Malaviyaji the irrepressible optimist said that swaraj would be attained in 1930.

The honours for the happy result must however be shared with Pandit Nehru by Dr. Ansari. His invisible help was much greater than his visible and tactful guidance of the proceedings at Lucknow. He was ever at the beck should call of the Nehru Committee. He used all his unrivalled influence with the Mussalmans in disarming their opposition. Hindus could not resist his transparent honesty and equally transparent nationalism. The Liberals led by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru lent a weight to the Conference which it would otherwise have lacked. I join Dr. Besant in her wish that they would re-enter the national organization. They need not lose their identity even as the Hindu and Mussalman organizations do not lose theirs.

The mention of the Liberals brings us to the future work. There is still much diplomatic work to be done. But more than the diplomatic work is that of forging the sanction. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru truly observed that whether it was Dominion Status or Independence, a proper sanction would be necessary if the national demand was to be enforced. Bardoli has shown the way, if the sanction has to be non-violent. The Congress creed has non-violence as its integral part. There is no denying the fact that non-violence had receded in the background before Bardoli. But even as the Nehru report has made unanimous demand possible, Bardoli has brought back the vanishing faith in non-violence.

If then we are sure of the sanction, we need not worry whether swaraj is otherwise spelt Dominion Status or Independence. Dominion Status can easily become more than Independence, if we have sanction to back it. Independence can easily become at farce, if it lacks sanction. What is in a name if we have the reality? A rose smells just as sweet whether you know it by that name or any other. Let us therefore make up our minds as to whether it is to be non-violence or violence and let the rank and file work for the sanction in real earnest even as the diplomats must work at constitution-making .

Young India, 6-9-1928

505. OUR POVERTY

It is to be hoped that the reader has followed the carefully and ably written articles of Prof. C. N. Vakil which he recently contributed to this journal on the problem of India's poverty. Prof. Sam Higginbottom sent me a circular letter propounding the following four questions:

1. What are the tests of poverty?
2. Whether India is richer or poorer today than 25 years ago or a longer period.
3. Is poverty in India general or confined to particular groups?
4. Causes and remedies.

As a layman I could but give my evidence on the questions without carrying conviction to a critic. I therefore had the important and pertinent questions circulated among economist friends with a request to answer them in some detail if they could make time for the purpose. Prof. Vakil promptly responded with the articles to which I have drawn attention. The series is really not concluded. When I came upon the last chapter dealing with the remedies, I observed that it admitted of re-writing with a view to fuller and more accurate treatment. I am now trying to induce Prof. Vakil to re-write the chapter if he can possibly find the time and has the inclination. If he does send me anything the reader may expect a further instalment[1]. Meanwhile, he may regard the series as concluded.

The articles show clearly and I venture to think conclusively that India is poorer today than 25 years or a longer period ago and that the poverty is general and not confined to groups. Prof. Vakil has applied two tests for approving his proposition. He has shown that though during the past 40 years our average income has increased in the ratio of l to 2.74 (and he has accepted top figures in every case) the cost of living has increased in the ratio of 1 to 3.78; in other words we are poorer today to the extent of 2/7 than we were 40 years ago. He then examines the population figures and arrives at the same conclusion by showing that, whilst the population has increased, the capacity for coping with the increase has not only not kept pace with the increase but has probably deteriorated.

[1] C. N. Vakil's new series of articles under the title "Remedies of Poverty" appeared in *Young India* dated September 27, October 4, 11 and 18, 1928.

Prof. Vakil has enumerated the following six causes for this growing poverty:

1. Not enough work for the vast mass of the agricultural population during the off season.

2. The social system which imposes the burden upon one person of supporting a large family.

3. The presence of a large number of able-bodied beggars miscalled sadhus.

4. Enervating climate.

5. Resignation to fate and consequent want of determination to fight against poverty.

6.Faulty educational system.

Whilst these are contributory causes or more or less value, With the exception of the first none seems to me to go to the root of the matter. There is no doubt enough in the chapters to show that foreign exploitation of India is a cause of poverty. But in collecting the causes the Professor has evidently felt some delicacy about mentioning what is obviously a primary cause. This exploitation is a hydra-headed monster taking a variety of shapes to suit given occasions. The marine, the military, the currency, the railway and the revenue policy of the foreign Government is directed deliberately to promote an exploitation such as the world has never before witnessed. Poverty of India will never be removed so long as the exploitation continues unabated. Even the spinning wheel or any other subsidiary occupation that may be provided for the millions of peasantry will bring only partial relief, if the terrible drain, as Dadabhai Naoroji called it, is not stopped. He, therefore, who would explore the remedies for removing poverty has to tackle first the question of stopping the continuous drain.

Young India, 6-9-1928

506. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

Mr. Andrews is abridging "My Experiments with Truth" for an English firm. I have not interfered with his work thinking that it does not in any way affect the Macmillan Company. But on rereading the agreement between the Macmillan Company and me, I find there is

just a possibility that the Company may think that any publication of an abridgement will interfere with the contract. If so, please let me know. Personally I feel that the contract is of no value to the Macmillan Company seeing that the chapters are still running on and are likely so to do for many more months. If the Company desires it, I am quite willing to cancel the agreement. I am not at all anxious to make money from the publication of the chapters in book form. But I would like not to interfere with interim abridgements, etc., being published. If the Macmillan Company will at once publish the chapters in several volumes, they may then control abridgements or selections; but if they will not publish them in volumes, nor cancel the agreement, they should not mind abridgements being published in England or elsewhere outside India till the whole thing is ready for delivery into their hands.

Yours sincerely,

REV. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES
12 PARK AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY (U.S.A.)

From a photostat: S.N. 14769

507. LETTER TO C.F. ANDREWS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 7, 1928

Subbiah just reminds me that the abridgement that you are preparing of the autobiographical chapters might possibly be an infringement of the contract with the Macmillan Company of New York. I do not think it is any infringement until I have reached the end of the chapters and delivered a copy of the Macmillan Company. However, I enclose for the sake of precaution a copy of my letter to Rev. Holmes for your guidance.[1]

I agree with you that nothing is to be expected from the Simon Commission.

Sarojini is soon to leave for America. She is coming here tonight. Gregg is most anxious that when you go to America, you should see his people. If I can trace their address, it will go with this letter.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

I am trying to send you copies of *Young India* from the time the autobiography volume[1] ceased.

You will insist on overworking yourself and then keeping unwell. I told you in Cape Town in 1914 that you needed a curator; I still maintain that opinion.

Mahadev is gone to Simla with Vallabhbhai who needed a change and whom Vithalbhai wanted to be with him for a few days.

C.F. ANDREWS, ESQ.

112 GOWER STREET, LONDON, W. 1.

From a photostat: S.N. 12780

508. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 7, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

Having read in the papers that beriberi has again broken out in Calcutta, I got nervous and telegraphed to you this morning suggesting a change for yourself and Hemprabha Devi. Of course you could always come here, and your time will not be wasted. As a matter of fact a spinner's time is nowhere wasted. I want you therefore to consider my suggestion seriously.

About the Exhibition, I am advising all khadi organizations that so far the decision is that khadi is not to be represented at . the Congress Exhibition.

The hand-pump you installed is causing trouble. It seems to me that without a proper mechanic at your disposal, it is not safe to have these mechanical contrivances. The hand-pump suddenly refused to work the other day and we were without water and unprepared for the emergency. Today the lift bucket broke down and there was again water famine, and men having once wound themselves up that there is to be no water-drawing, there is always a disinclination to revert to it. I know that these difficulties will not occur where there is a mechanical atmosphere. I give you this information so that you may give me what

[1] The reference is to Parts I, II & III of *An Autobiography* comprising Vol. I which was published in August 1927. The last instalment of this had appeared in *Young India*, 12-5-1927. Chapter I of Part IV appeared in the subsequent issue.

guidance you like in the matter. Having got the pump I won't easily give in.

For the more ambitious scheme[1] you have mapped out, I shall wait till I feel safe over the hand-pump.

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR

From a photostat: S.N. 13510

509. LETTER TO K. SADASHIVA RAO

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 7, 1928

MY DEAR SADASHIVA RAO,

1 have your letter. If we will serve the country and not think of ourselves, we will rejoice even when the world pelts us or ill-treats us. And I am sure that you will feel all the better and stronger if you will take the shock in good grace and really feel that a load is off your back.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SADASHIVA RAO KARNAD

KODAIBAIL, MANGALORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 13511

510. LETTER TO DHAN GOPAL MUKERJEE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[2] I have never quoted Tolstoy or any other author without acknowledgment in any of my writings. And I do not remember having often quoted authors in my writings; not because I would not, but because my reading is so poor and capacity for

[1] For tube-well water-supply for Sabarmati Ashram

[2] The correspondent, in his letter of August 14, had *inter alia* requested Gandhiji to write in *Young India* giving an account of the latter's relationship with Tolstoy. For Gandhiji's speech touching on this point, *vide* "Speech on Birth Centenary of Tolstoy", 10-9-1928.

reproducing what I have read is still less.

The vow of celibacy was undoubtedly taken after I had acquired considerable acquaintance with Tolstoy's teachings. And, whilst it is as a general statement quite true that my life is based upon the teachings of the *Gita,* I would not be able to swear that Tolstoy's writings and teachings did not influence my decision about celibacy.

So much for your satisfaction. I hope at some date to deal with your vital question in the pages of Young India.

Yours sincerely,

DHAN GOPAL MUKERJEE

From a photostat: S.N. 14378

511. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 7, 1928

I have your letter as also Millie's[1]. I was glad to hear from her directly after a long long time, and I was so glad that you were able to meet Kallenbach. I must not even try to write to her a separate love-letter. Life with me is becoming more and more strenuous and exacting. But I seem to be flourishing in spite of it all.

Devdas is in Delhi teaching carding, spinning and Hindi to the boys of the National Muslim University. Ramdas is in Bardoli and was [there] when satyagraha was going on, He is now taking part in the constructive work such as temperance, spinning, social reform, etc.

The Welsh model spinning-wheel[2] did not come last week. It may come tomorrow.

I wonder if Leon remembers me at all.

Yours sincerely,

H. S. L. POLAK
265 STRAND, LONDON, W.C.2

From a photostat: S.N. 14380

[1] Mrs. Polak
[2] For spinning wool

512. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

September 7, 1928

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your letter. Please do not be tardy in writing to me. We have left behind us expressions like Devdas's sister-in-law. There is nothing improper in referring to Nimu by her name. Here, I have no time even to write letters.

Vasumati has arrived.

Blessings from

BAPU

RAMDAS GANDHI

SWARAJ ASHRAM

BARDOLI

From Gujarati original : Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

513. SPEECH AT DEAF AND DUMB SCHOOL, AHMEDABAD

September 7, 1928

My association with this school dates back to the year 1915. Despite numerous engagements, I have come here at the request of Seth Mangaldas and Pranshankar. This is a small school for the deaf and dumb, but I have undertaken the task of running a school for thousands of the deaf and dumb and of removing the privation caused by ignorance. A person like Seth Mangaldas cannot get away with it by merely donating a small sum. One business man of Ahmedabad alone can run such a school. Ahmedabad has the capacity to run many such schools. We can show our gratitude to God for gifts of speech and sight by rendering some service to such deaf and dumb persons. Shri Pranshankar gave you a report of the school but did not tell you how it came into existence. One of his own sons was deaf and dumb and because he was convinced that he should receive an education, he began teaching him; later on because he combined the welfare of others with self-interest, this school came into existence. It should be a common thing to combine social service with self-interest. But it is difficult to persuade people in Ahmedabad where everyone has started accumulating wealth, to do welfare work while pursuing

their own interest. Shri Pranshankar has given figures to show there are only three schools for the 70,000 deaf and dumb in the province and out of two lakhs of deaf mutes in India only 500 are looked after. From this we see that their education has been neglected. We enable them to fill their stomachs by giving them alms but neglect the important task of educating them. There is a saying that an idle man rides on the shoulders of two. We should not make these deaf mutes mere idlers but should train them to make a living. Ahmedabad should not look elsewhere for help for such schools but on the contrary it should give generous donations to deserving outsiders. Talking of Ahmedabad, I will draw your attention to one more matter. I have just come across a book written by Dr. Hariprasad[1] for the Gujarat Vernacular Society. He says in it that of all Indian cities Ahmedabad has the highest death rate. Since among countries India has the highest death rate, it follows that death rate in Ahmedabad is the highest in the world. I receive visitors from America, England and different parts of the world and I have to bow down in shame when they talk of the dirty lanes and streets of Ahmedabad. We should improve this state of affairs. We can make Ahmedabad a beautiful city if we use our intelligence and physical strength. Finally, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to lay the foundation-stone of this school and hope that the school would prosper from day to day. Let the educated class make money, but instead of amassing wealth for themselves they should give its benefit generously to others—this is my humble prayer.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 9-9-1928

514. LETTER TO M. ZAFARULMULK

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 8, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I hope that your propaganda will succeed in making your scheme popular. When you do come, you shall certainly discuss it with me to your heart's content.

With reference to the constitution I agree that it is entirely

[1] President of the Youth Association, Ahmedabad

Western. But I have not bothered about its being Western or Eastern. If we have a true awakening in us, we shall be able to turn it as we will and make it serve our purpose instead of becoming slaves to it. The constitution is the logical outcome of the institutions we have at present. An Assembly man could not give any other constitution than what has been produced, and, if we succeed in getting the logical result of the present mode of Government of India and if it does not suit the genius of the people, you may depend upon it that they will destroy it and raise another into being. What is necessary is to remove the force that is weighing us down. And seeing that we have a tolerable agreement upon a passable constitution, it would be folly in my opinion to reject that constitution. Such is my justification for whole-heartedly recommending it to the country.

Yours sincerely,

M. ZAFARULMULK

LUCKNOW

From a photostat: S.N. 13512

515. LETTER TO S. C. BRAHMACHARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 8, 1928

DEAR FRIENDS,

I am sorry that it is not possible for me to send you *Young India* or *Young India* literature free. The management does not encourage such applications if only because of the number received daily. Of Course you know that *Young India* is not a business concern. It is a Concern just as philanthropic as the Ramakrishna Mission. *Young India* therefore carries a very limited Complimentary list.

Yours sincerely,

SRI SHRADDHA CHAITANYA BRAHMACHARI

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, GARRISON ROAD, DELHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 13513

516. LETTER TO R. D. PRABHU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 8, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. If bath Conciliates the Inamdar, you will take it, not because you believe in the necessity of it but for the sake of the Inamdar, and therefore for the sake of the untouchable brethren whom you want to serve.

If the Mahratta boys leave the school because the Manar boys are also learning there, you Will not mind the former leaving the school, but you Will persist in teaching the Mahar boys at any cost.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. D. PRABHU

VINZANE, P.O. HALKARNI, MAHAL CHANDGAD, DT. BELGAUM

From a microfilm: S.N. 13514

517. LETTER TO P. A. WADIA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 8, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have seen your letter to Mahadev who has gone to Simla with Vallabhbhai Patel. I should love to join the Retreat[1] if it is at all possible. But so far as I can see at present, there is no chance of my being able to do so. However you do not need a positive reply so far in advance. I would like you not to build anything on the hope of my coming. Take me as a chance visitor if I can at all come, and therefore I would like you to remind me when the time draws near.

I have read with interest your remarks about the proposal to divide India into provinces on a linguistic basis. My feeling is that we will not be able to foster the national instinct by any superim position from without. I therefore feel that we shall lose nothing by

[1] Proposed to be organized by International Fellowship at Bombay

recognizing the natural linguistic divisions unless the desire is to replace the different languages by one language, both for the classes and the masses.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13515

518. MESSAGE TO "KHADI VIJAY"[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 8, 1928

"Khadi Vijay" means victory of khadi. It is good that there should be a monthly devoted to khadi, but it will be better if people especially the mercantile class will devote themselves to khadi. Then victory for khadi is assured.

From a microfilm: S.N. 13516

519. LETTER TO GANGADHAR RAO

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 8, 1928

MY DEAR GANGADHAR RAO,

Here is the message[2] for Sjt. Nanjappa which Kaka tells me you want for him.

I hope you have got over your dejection as also your illness and that you are now looking twenty years younger for your victories in Poona. I hope that this new khadi spirit will last.

Your sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13517

[1] This was an enclosure to the following item.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

520. LETTER TO CHINTAMANI B. KHADILKAR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 8, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Yours is essentially a case for satyagraha. You are a member of a club whose other members have committed a breach of their own pledge. If, therefore, you have the courage, you will offer satyagraha without being in any way irritated against them. But before you do so, you should reason with them and use every effort to persuade them to redeem their promise. If they do not respond, you will then carefully consider what form your satyagraha can possibly take.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. CHINTAMANI BALWANT KHADILKAR
FERGUSSON COLLEGE, HOSTEL ROOM NO. 332
DECCAN GYMKHANA, POONA CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 13518

521. 'WHAT DO CHILDREN UNDERSTAND?'

A student of the Gujarat Vidyapith writes to say:[1]

I have been unable to go through the articles from which extracts have been given in this letter. It is not always possible to interpret rightly a passage taken from an article without reference to the context. Nevertheless, it is not difficult for me to reply to the question without reading the original article, as the idea in the passages quoted above is based on my own experience. In this context, the reader should understand a child to mean not a child of two but a child of the age at which he or she is normally admitted to school.

From the fact that children fall asleep when I read the *Gita*, it cannot be concluded that their understanding is deficient. It may be said that I am unable to create interest in my reading the *Gita*, it may even be the case that the child is tired at that time. I have often seen children asleep while they are being taught arithmetic, told amusing

[1] Renunciation

stories or when taken to see a play. I have also seen adults dozing while the *Gita* or other scriptures are being read. Hence, when considering the question posed above, we should leave out of account the fact of children falling asleep or displaying lack of interest.

These doubts should not arise in the mind of anyone to whom it is as clear as daylight that the child's soul existed before he or she was born, that the soul has no beginning and knows no such states as childhood, youth and old age. It is because of our connection with the physical form, because of the current trends of thought and because of our disinclination to go deep into the matter that we conclude that the child knows only how to play or, at the most can write the alphabet and, going further, can memorize the tongue-twisting names of the rivers, etc., of Europe and America and understand the history and learn the names, although difficult to pronounce, of the kings, plunderers and killers of various countries.

My own experience is the very opposite of this. The ideal of soul, truth and love can easily be put before children in language which they can understand. I have heard not one but many children, who have no knowledge of the world, ask about a dead person:

This letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that Gandhiji's writings showed that he expected too much from children.

"Where has this man's soul gone?" A child who asks this question can easily be taught about the soul. Crores of illiterate Indian children realize the distinction between truth and falsehood, between love and hate, from the very age that they begin to understand things. Is there a child who would not recognize the nectar-like stream of love or, the embers of wrath glowing or blazing from his parents' eyes? The student who has put the question seems to have forgotten his own childhood. I therefore wish to remind him of the fact that he had experience of parental love before he acquired a knowledge of the alphabet. Love, truth and the soul would have been forgotten long ago had these required language in order to reveal themselves.

The passages quoted by the correspondent do not advise putting abstract truth before children. but explain that we should exhibit before them immortal virtues like truth and prove to them that they, too, have them. In brief, formation of character should have priority over knowledge of the alphabet. If this order is reversed, the attempt would be like putting the cart before the horse and making it push the cart with its nose, and would meet with the same success as the latter

course. It is because he realized the truth of this that Darwin's contemporary, the scientist Wallace, said at the age of ninety that in basic moral standards he saw in the so-called educated and reformed nations no progress over the Negroes who are regarded as uncivilized. If we were not under the spell of the various external temptations that exist today, we would realize the truth of Wallace's statement and plan and frame our educational curriculum in a different manner.

I will ask a counter-question in reply to the question regarding the ten-headed Ravana. Which of the two ideas can be more readily explained to a child? Is it easier to convince him that a ten-headed creature which could never have been created existed in the form of Ravana, or is it easier to make him aware of the ten-headed Ravana who lives secretly like a thief in the heart of each one of us? In believing that the child is devoid of imagination and intellectual powers, we do him grave injustice and belittle ourselves. To say that a child does understand does not imply that he understands things without our explaining them to him. Despite every effort to convince a child to that effect, he will not accept the idea that a human being with ten heads can actually exist, whereas he will understand the idea of the ten headed Ravana who has entered our hearts as soon as it is explained to him.

I hope now that the student will not ask me why I do not feel ashamed to read Tulsidas's *Ramayana* and Vyasa's *Gita* before children. I do not wish to teach the children the philosophical implications of the idea of karma, *tyaga* or *sthitaprajna*[1] I do not believe that I myself have acquired such knowledge or rather I know I have not. Perhaps I would not understand books which are full of philosophical discussions about karma, etc., and, even if I do understand them with difficulty, I would certainly be bored. And when one is bored one may even fall asleep. However, when I think of spinning or doing work as sacrifice for the benefit of the millions and giving up self-indulgence so that I might do that, sweet slumber would seem like poison to me and I would wake up. It is my unshakable faith, based on experience, that if the *Gita* and such other works are explained in a simple manner to children, the effort will certainly benefit them in later years.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-9-1928

[1] Of steadfast intellect

522. LUCKNOW

If the Bardoli victory is part of history, so will be the victory at Lucknow. Bardoli has shown the way to organic swaraj—to *Ramarajya*, while Lucknow has opened the gates of constitutional swaraj. Both things were essential. Whereas learned and politically astute leaders were required for the Lucknow swaraj, the ordinary, illiterate masses served the purpose for the Bardoli swaraj. While the intellect played the chief role in the one case, faith did that in the other. The fact that the meeting at Lucknow was held immediately after the victory at Bardoli was not deliberately contrived. Hence those who have faith in God would look upon it as an indication of His will. Pandit Motilal deserves to be complimented for the people's victory in Lucknow. Were it not for his single-minded devotion to the cause, his ability, his hard work and his faith, the task would not have been accomplished. The success consists not in the leaders having devised the best constitution, but in their achieving unity over a constitution which preserves everyone's self-respect and safeguards the rights of all. Meetings of various parties were being held for many months. But it was only in Lucknow that they bore visible fruit. This success must be attributed to Pandit Motilalji.

Dr. Ansari's name must be added to his. Everyone could see that by means of his tact and patience he kept the followers of various parties together. However, it is only a few who know of the work that he had been doing behind the scenes for the past few months. Success would not have been possible if Dr. Ansari had not stood by the Nehru Committee whenever that was necessary. He took full advantage of his love for the Muslims. It was impossible for any Hindu to question his ardent patriotism. He could thus win the confidence of all.

The presence of the members of the Liberal Party and that of Sir Ali Imam and Dr. Besant added to the distinction and importance of the gathering.

However, just as the Sardar cannot go to sleep after the victory at Bardoli, similarly Panditji and the other members cannot rest after the Lucknow triumph. Bharatbhushan Madan Mohan Malaviya's happy prophecy about swaraj being established in 1930 will not come true if the remaining tasks are not completed without delay. God helps only those who are awake, not those who slumber. There is of course the task of mobilizing public opinion behind the Nehru constitution. But

the more important task is that of developing the strength to get that constitution accepted. Pandit Jawaharlal had reminded the meeting of this fact even at Lucknow. Whether you are in favour of Dominion Status or of Independence, it will be necessary to cultivate the strength to secure either. Without this strength neither can be won. Swaraj is not going to descend on us from the heavens. It will not be received as a gift from the British Empire either. It can only be the reward of our own efforts. The very word swaraj means effort by the nation. What does a goat know of swaraj? Can she taste its sweetness merely because lions and other beasts of prey let it alone? If not the lion, his cousins will be there to eat her up. We are in the same position. No one will be able to stand in our way when we have developed the strength to win swaraj. Everyone's freedom is within his own grasp.

There are two alternatives before us. The one is that of violence, the other of non-violence; the one of physical strength, the other of soul-force; the one of hatred, the other of love; the one of disorder, the other of peace; one that is demoniac, the other that is godly. Bardoli has taught us an object-lesson in peace. The path of peace is the one mentioned in the Congress pledge. But, before the victory of Bardoli, the nation seemed to have lost faith in peaceful methods. After that victory, it seems to have recovered it. If we want swaraj, we shall have to strive hard and follow one of these two courses. As they are incompatible with each other, the fruit, the swaraj that would be secured by following the one would necessarily be different from that which would be secured by following the other. In either case the result will be known as swaraj, but its contents would be different in the two cases. We shall reap as we sow.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-9-l928

523. TEMPERANCE WORK IN SURAT DISTRICT

Shrimati Mithubehn Petit, by whose initiative a temperance league has been set up for the Surat district, has sent the following note[1]:

Sardar Vallabhbhai has very often said that he had received strong support from Mithubehn. This Parsi lady, who had never before suffered any hardships, lived in peasant homes as one of them. She was content with their simple food and, despite her frail constitution and despite the absence of the comforts she was accustomed to, she managed to keep physically fit and work ceaselessly day and night. Through her own bravery she has taught the lesson of courage to the men and women of Bardoli; her untiring efforts have put young men to shame. Being in love with khadi she went from door to door hawking khadi and created interest in the people for it. As she cannot remain idle for a single moment, Vallabhbhai has given her the name 'Chanchalbehn'[2]. This lady discovered that liquor was consumed in large quantities in the Surat District. She also saw that most of the owners of liquor booths were Parsis. She, therefore, decided to take up temperance work in the entire Surat District, and now, through her initiative, the league referred to above has been established. From the names of the members of the executive committee I could see that Mithubehn intends to exact hard work from them. I hope that they will not spare themselves. Mithubehn will not let them easily. If this league succeeds in its aim, its success will be a very valuable contribution to the constructive work undertaken in Bardoli, and it will not only save lakhs of rupees in the Surat District, but will also have an effect throughout the country. Not only are twenty crores of rupees thrown away every year through the consumption of liquor, but it also destroys the moral character of millions of people and ruins innumerable families. Anyone who has really developed interest in khadi immediately sees this. Mithubehn has seen it and her heroic spirit has now inspired her to take up this gigantic task. May God grant her good health and strength.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-9-1928

[1] Not translated here. It gave the names of the members of the league.

[2] Literally, 'the restless one'

524. CASTE-DISTINCTIONS AT MEALS IN NATIONAL HOSTELS

One of the letters in Kakasaheb's increasingly large mail dealt with the subject of caste-distinct or at meals. He has sent me a copy of his reply to it. I give below his ideas in his own words, as they will be of value in guiding the hostels:[1]

Kakasaheb wishes to tread the ground carefully. As far as possible, he does not wish to hurt the feelings of either the students or their parents; hence he says: "Only Brahmin cooks prepare meals in the hostel. As our rules of purity demand that meals should be prepared in a particular manner, these are observed by the employment of Brahmin cooks." In my opinion, it will not be possible to insist upon having Brahmin cooks for long. It is not true that only Brahmins—in the sense in which the word is used here—are capable of observing the rules of purity. Moreover, it is also not a fact that Brahmins will necessarily abide by these rules. I have seen many Brahmin cooks who are dirty and who violate the laws of hygiene. Everyone who keeps his eyes open will see them. I have also come across many Non-Brahmin cooks who know and observe the rules of cleanliness and hygiene. Hence if we bear in mind the original meaning of the word Brahmin and regard anyone who abides by the laws of purity as a Brahmin, all national hostels will readily be able to follow the rule laid down by Kakasaheb. If, only those who are Brahmins by birth are regarded as such, we shall not get many Brahmin cooks who will abide by the rules of purity and those who are available will demand such high salaries and act in such a headstrong manner that it will become impossible to keep them in employment. As the Vidyapith worships truth and non-violence, it should declare the position as it really is in our hostels. It cannot close its eyes to facts either within itself or in the outside world. Hence Kakasaheb has stated that caste-distinctions at meals have no place in the hostels of the Vidyapith. Such distinctions imply distinctions of high and low. The varna system, on the other hand, has nothing to do with distinctions of high and low. The Brahmin who claims to be high falls and becomes low. The world raises high those who regard themselves as low and lead a common man's life. Where is the room for high and low when *moksha* is the ideal, when non-violence is the

[1] Kalelkar's reply is not translated here. He had stated that the hostels of the Vidyapith did not approve of or encourage such distinctions.

supreme dharma and we believe in the oneness of the *atman* in all? Hence, I think all that we can say in regard to national hostels is that every effort will be made to observe in them all the rules of cleanliness, which means that the true Brahmana dharma will remain their ideal. We cannot have as our ideal the practice of Brahmana dharma which concerns itself with outward forms and lacks the true essence, for it is an evil and, therefore, to be shunned.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-9-1928

525. MY NOTES

DISREGARD FOR THE LIVING QUERN

A volunteer who works in Bardoli writes to say:[1]

The complaint which this volunteer makes can be made about many other classes of people. The teeth are an important gift of nature. They are a living quern. Anyone who ignores it, shortens his life. Grain that has been once ripened by the rays of the sun needs no other form of cooking. However, ever since man learnt to enjoy tasty food with his palate, he started cooking again what had already been cooked once, with the result that his life-span was shortened. It may well be that we cannot all at once give up a bad practice which has come down to us from ancient times and cannot altogether dispense with the oven, however, we could save a great deal of time and money if we make minimum use of it. We can never eat sun-ripened grain in the same quantities as we eat it in cooked form. We cannot eat as much of dry food as we can eat food which is soaked and crushed. Nature has provided us with nectar in our palate in order to moisten dry food, and with teeth for the purpose of grinding it to paste. We ignore both these gifts by becoming slaves of our palate, and thereby we not only commit a crime but also needlessly burden our intestines and shorten our lives, and even during this short life-span we fall a prey to many diseases. Hence, although we may not be ready to eat uncooked, sun-ripened grain and be satisfied with it, we should form the practice of carefully chewing cooked food when eating it. Even

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had drawn attention to the common practice of villagers eating wheat or bajri cakes soaked in milk, without chewing them properly.

rice can be chewed, and green vegetables can certainly be eaten uncooked. Doctors recommend the latter. We get from uncooked vegetables the nutrients that we require. They are known as 'vitamins' in English, and doctors claim that these vitamins are destroyed as a result of cooking, and that their destruction leads to ill-health.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-9-1928

526. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION[1]

A student of the Gujarat Vidyapith writes:

> What concrete form ought religious instruction to take in the Vidyapith?

To me religion means truth and ahimsa or rather truth alone, because truth includes ahimsa, ahimsa being the necessary and indispensable means for its discovery. Therefore anything that promotes the practice of these virtues is a means for imparting religious education and the best way to do this, in my opinion, is for the teachers rigorously to practise these virtues in their own person. Their very association with the boys, whether on the playground or in the class-room, will then give the pupils a fine training in these fundamental virtues.

So much for instruction in the universal essentials of religion. A curriculum of religious instruction should include a study of the tenets of faiths other than one's own. For this purpose the students should be trained to cultivate the habit of understanding and appreciating the doctrines of various great religions of the world in a spirit of reverence and broad-minded tolerance. This, if properly, done, would help to give them a spiritual assurance and a better appreciation of their own religion. There is one rule, however, which should always . be kept in mind while studying all great religions and that is that one should study them only through the writings of known votaries of the respective religions. For instance, if one wants to study the *Bhagavata* one should do so not through a translation of it made by a hostile critic but through one prepared by a lover of the *Bhagavata*. Similarly to study the Bible one should study it through

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 9-9-1928. This is a translation by Pyarelals.

the commentaries of devoted Christians. This study of other religions besides one's own will give one a grasp of the rock-bottom unity of all religions and afford a glimpse also of that universal and absolute truth which lies beyond the "dust of creeds and faiths".

Let no one even for a moment entertain the fear that a reverent. study of other religions is likely to weaken or shake one's faith in one's own. The Hindu system of philosophy regards all religions as containing the elements of truth in them and enjoins an attitude of respect and reverence towards them all. This of course presupposes regard for one's own religion. Study and appreciation of other religions need not cause a weakening of that regard; it should mean extension of that regard to other religions.

In this respect religion stands on the same footing as culture. Just as preservation of one's own culture does not mean contempt for that of others, but requires assimilation of the best that there may be in all the other cultures, even so should be the case with religion. Our present fears and apprehensions are a result of the poisonous atmosphere that has been generated in the country, the atmosphere of mutual hatred, ill-will and distrust. We are constantly labouring under a nightmare of fear lest someone should stealthily undermine our faith or the faith of those who are dear and near to us. But this unnatural state will cease when we have learnt to cultivate respect and tolerance towards other religions and their votaries.

Young India, 6-12-l928

527. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DAULATRAM

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 9, 1928

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

I have your letter. I have glanced at the speech of which you have sent me a copy. Personally, I do not mind Devanagari and Urdu being optionally used. For, ultimately that script will survive whose users have greater vitality. The fact however is that I do not trouble myself about these things. I believe in subscribing to any solution that the leaders may evolve, so long as it does not commit me to a breach of any fundamental conviction.

Of course I admired your yielding on the Sind question. But I was curious to know what made you yield, because I knew that you had very strong conviction about it.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13519

528. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 9, 1928

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRAN,

I. have your letter. My decision is this. Do not accept your own certificate about your completion of apprenticeship. Let Rajaji judge. If he says you can start in Kerala, do so by all means; but if he does not, wait till he is convinced. I am sure that it is the best thing for your work. If your own conclusion is sound, you should have confidence in your ability to carry conviction to Rajaji. Personally, I have no misgivings about success of khadi in Kerala, if the right stamp of men concentrate their energy upon khadi. Of course I like the idea of your becoming a member of the Gandhi Seva Sangh.

Mahadev is in Simla, Vallabhbhai having taken him there to write the history of Bardoli Satyagraha. Rasik and Navin Gandhi have gone to Delhi to help Devdas in his work in the Jamia.

From a microfilm: S.N. 13520

529. LETTER TO HUGO BUCHSER[1]

September 9, 1928

I have no ability to write articles to order, nor have I any ambition in that direction.

M. K. G.

From a microfilm: S.N. 14382

530. A LETTER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 9, 1928

CHI. BHAI,

What you write about the children is perfectly correct. They may forget what we tell them or what they read, but they will consciously or unconsciously remember what we do and act accordingly. That is especially true for the Ashram since we always stress that only what we practise counts.

To a woman her home and kitchen are all-important. She rules through her kitchen. She therefore behaves like a millionaire who works all through the day to preserve and increase his millions. When she loses the subtle power she enjoys through the kitchen, she will be reconciled to the common kitchen and be satisfied with whatever is cooked in it. But now I have given up pressing any of my views on others.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/1

[1] In reply to his letter from Geneva, as "representative of most important European daily papers", requesting Gandhiji to send him from time to time articles for publication abroad, and guaranteeing a very high recompense

APPENDIX I

WHAT IS THE BARDOLI CASE?

BY MAHADEV DESAI

In the matter of revision settlements there has been calculated flouting of public opinion and of resolutions of the Legislative Council during recent years. In pursuance of the advice of the Joint Parliamentary Committee, "that the process of revising the land revenue assessments ought to be brought under closed regulation by a Statute", the Bombay Legislative Council passed by a large majority in March 1924 a resolution to the effect that a committee be appointed to consider the question of regulating revision of assessment by legislation, and that "no revision be proceeded with and no new rates under any revised settlement be introduced till the said legislation is brought into effect". The first part of the resolution was carried out by Government appointing the Land Revenue Assesment Committee, but the second part was ignored, and revision settlement of one taluk after another was proceeded with in the teeth of the resolution. In the mean time the Land Revenue Committee had set and published its report, and the Bombay Legislative Council in March 1927 passed by a very large majority another resolution recommending to the Governor in Council to give immediate effect to the resolution of March 1924 by effecting necessary legislation after taking into consideration the Report of the Land Revenue Assessment Committee, and "pending such legislation to issue orders to the revenue authorities concerned not to collect the assessment enhanced in revision after the 15th March 1924". The legislation suggested by the Land Revenue Assessment Committee is at present before the Legislative Council, but revision settlements have gone on, almost with the deliberate intention of frustrating the very object of the legislation when it should ultimately come to pass. Bardoli is only one of several taluks where there should have been no revision and no levying of new rates in the terms of these resolutions. This is a fundamental preliminary objection to the revision settlement in Bardoli, apart from the merits of the case.

I shall briefly discuss the merits. The new Bardoli revision settlement was prepared by Mr. Jayakar who submitted his recommendations in November 1925. He recommended 30 per cent enhancement. The Settlement Commissioner Mr. Anderson disagreed with the basis on which Mr. Jayakar had made his recommendation, adopted a new basis, and recommended 29 per cent. Government disagreed with the recommendations of both and fixed 22 per cent. The original assessment of the taluk which was Rs. 5,14,762 is under the new revision something over Rs. 6,20,000.

As against this the agriculturists of Bardoli contend that the taluk is assessed right up to the full limit and that there is absolutely no case for enhancement. The occupants in the taluk are divided as under according to the size of their holdings :

1	to	5 acres	10,379
6	to	25 acres	5,936
26	to	100 acres	829
101	to	500 acres	40

It may be safely assumed that all the occupants having not more than 25 acres cultivate their own land and that those with larger holdings lease their land to the agriculturists. This means that 16,315 occupants actually cultivates 1,27,045 acres which is the total occupied area, i.e., each occupant cultivate on an average something like 8 acres of land. It is inequitable to go on the strength of rents—economic or uneconomic—enjoyed by a very small fraction, i.e., 869 large landholders. The land revenue assessment ought to be fixed having regard to the value of the land held by the 16,315 agriculturists and to the profits of agriculture enjoyed by them under See. 107 of the Land Revenue Code. The agriculturists of Bardoli contend that assuming the average yield per acre and assuming the very high standard of prices adopted by the Settlement Officer as accurate (though the prices have considerably gone down since the report), an agriculturist cultivating 8 acres of land (the average) does not earn profits entitling the Government to make any increase in the existing rate of assessment. They are prepared to prove this statement and they maintain that even if the basis of 50 per cent of the profits be accepted, no increase is warranted, and if the basis of 25 per cent of the profits be accepted, a considerable reduction in the existing rates would be necessary.

They thus rely for their contention on the actual conditions obtaining in the taluk, but they also rely on attacking the value and accuracy of the Government reports. They contend, *inter alia,* that Mr. Jayakar, the Settlement Officer, made no enquiry worth the name, visited few villages, afforded no opportunities to villagers of making representations pertaining to the question of increasing the assessment, and prepared a perfunctory survey. He prepared the most essential statistics in his office, without exercising the slightest scrutiny and relied for his recommendations of 30 per cent on the sole basis of rise in the value of gross produce. The perfunctory nature of Mr. Jayakar's inquiry, if inquiry it could be called, is enough to render it valueless. But Mr. Anderson seriously questioned the value of Mr. Jayakar's report on another and very substantial ground which was pointed out be the people's representatives also. He rejected the most vital part of Mr. Jayakar's report—viz., where he bases his recommendations on the value of gross pro-duce—as "irrelevant" and "positively dangerous as affording no justification for his pro-posals and suggesting arguments against them". In the circumstances Mr. Anderson's ob-vious duty was to suggest to

Government a fresh inquiry. But he overshot the mark and proceeded to make his own recommendations on the basis of rental statistics—a basis of which the equity has been seriously challenged by several high-placed Government officials, and the statistics themselves have in the present case been seriously challenged as lacking scrutiny. If Mr. Jayakar drove a coach and four through the Settement Manual, in making no real inquiry, Mr. Anderason went one better in contravening the Settlement Manual which lays down that rents should be only one of the factors to be considered and that even when they are taken into account, "they cannot be used as the basis for definite conclusions. . . unless they exist in considerable volume and unless their reliability has been carefully tested". Mr. Anderson grossly erred (1) in exclusively relying on the rental statistics and (2) in assuming that the two essential conditions for their being of any value and been satisfied. In one place, Mr. Anderson charges Mr. Jayakar with having made "no attempt to compile statistics showing the area rented and the area cultivated by its owners," and yet proceeds on Appendix H and wrongly arrives at the conclusion that "*at least half* the total area is held by landlords who do not cultivate it". The error is based on his hastily assuming seven years' statistics—42,923 acres—as one years's statistics and on his utter disregard of Mr. Jayakar's own estimate of land held by non-agriculturists, which is 23,995 acres, i.e., about 18 per cent of the total area—a more plausible, though not a strictly accurate estimate, because not based on inquiries on the spot.

For these reason both Mr. Jayakar's and Mr. Anderson's reports are worthless and the rate of 22 per cent fixed by Government is absolutely arbitrary as it is based on no fresh or accurate data.

The satyagrahis of Bardoli have therefore pledged themselves to pay no assessment until either

1. the enhancement is cancelled; or
2. an independent impartial tribunal is appointed to examine the whole case.

Young India, 14-6-1928

APPENDIX II

BARDOLI REPORT

In their report, absolutely pruned of epithets and adjectives, and as closely reasoned and concise as it could be, they addressed themselves to the consideration of four questions: "As the enhancement is based on rents which land-owners demand from their tenants it is of utmost importance to determine whether the table relating to the rents paid by the tenants has been prepared with due care so as to exhibit economic rents only. If it is found to be seriously defective, all conclusions drawn from it must be regarded as valueless. Again, it seems reasonable that before competitive rents are accepted as the foundation of the settlement policy, it should be determined what proportion of the cultivated area is in the hands of tenants paying cash rents. The third question which demands consideration is whether abnormal periods have been excluded in inquiring into the course followed by rents during the currency of the old settlement. Lastly, we have to consider to what extent the Land Revenue Code and the Settlement Manual justify almost exclusive reliance on rental value for the purpose of determining new assessment rates." And after a study of the Code and the Settlement Manual and after personal. investigation and inquiries made in several villages from the people concerned, they found

1. That the table was seriously defective inasmuch as mortgage transactions, or rents not realized in full, or conditional sales had not been excluded, and no allowance was made for rents, charged in consequence of improvements made at the cost of the occupant according to Section 107 of the Land Revenue Code.

2. That the cash-rented area may be taken to be in the neighbourhood of 20 per cent and that looking to the fact that "94 per cent of the occupants and owners cultivate themselves" in 1895, even a proportion of 30 per cent as the land cultivated by tenants appears surprisingly large today.

3. That the boom period covering the years from 1918-19 to 1924-25 should have been excluded according to the statement made by the Revenue Member himself. 4. That the Settlement Commissioner relied on insufficient and unscrutinized rental statistics as his "one true guide", not to check the results of the indirect inquiry, but to avoid having to consider and allow for an increase in the cost of cultivation, and that he used them not "to prevent the enhancement-from going too high" (in the words of Settlement Manual) but to enhance the assessment rates.

In view of the foregoing findings Sjts. Kunzru, Vaze and Thakkar came to the conclusion that "the demand for a fresh inquiry is fully justified" and that "recent announcement that revision settlement of the Viramgam taluk will be reconsidered makes the case for the reconsideration of the settlement of the Bardoli taluk unanswerable."

Sjt. Vaze issued an additional statement in which he laid special emphasis on the fact that "the present struggle in Bardoli is a purely economic one; it is no part of a general scheme of mass civil disobedience.... My observation satisfies me that the leaders of the movement are actuated by no other motive in carrying on the campaign than to undo, by using their best endeavours, what they genuinely believe to be a cruel wrong to the peasantry of Bardoli. It would be both inexpedient and unjust for Government to invest the movement with a wider political significance which it does not bear."

The report appealed to leaders of all schools of political thinking, ranged the sympathy of the few remaining waverers among Indian newspapers definitely on the side of the satyagrahis, and was instrumental more than anything else in bringing about a consensus of opinion among all circles including the Liberals about the justice of the people's demands and the minimum that was due to them.

The Story of Bardoli, pp. 148-9

APPENDIX III

BARDOLI SETTLEMENT

THE SETTLEMENT DOCUMENTS

The Letters Exchanged between the Surat M.L.C.s and the Government Regarding the Terms of Settlement

1

The following letter was addressed by the members of the Legislative Council representing Bardoli taluk and Surat district to the Hon'ble the Revenue Member:

POONA

August 6, 1928

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE REVENUE MEMBER

SIR,

With reference to your letter dated August 3, 1928, we are glad to be able to say that we are in a position to inform Government that the conditions laid down by His Excellency the Governor in his opening speech to the Council dated 23rd of July will be fulfilled.

Yours sincerely,

A. M. K. DEHLAVI

BHASAHEB (Thakore of Kerwada)

DAUDKHAN SALEBHAI TYEBJEE

J. B. DESAI

B. R. NAIK

H. B. SHIVDASANI

M. K. DIXIT

2

Announcement of the Enquiry

Government thereafter announced the following enquiry:

The enquiry will be entrusted to a Revenue Officer and a Judicial Officer, the decision of the Judicial Officer to prevail in all matters of difference between the two, with the following terms of reference:

To enquire into and report upon the complaint of the people of Bardoli and Valod

(a) that the enhancement of revenue recently made is not warranted in terms of the Land Revenue Code;

(b) that the reports accessible to the public do not contain sufficient data warranting the enhancement and that some of the data given are wrong; and to find that, if the people's complaint is held to be justified what enhancement or reduction, if any, there should be upon the old assessment.

As the enquiry is to be full, open and independent, the people will be free to lead as well as test evidence before it with the help of their representatives including legal advisers.

3

The following further letters were exchanged between the members of the Legislative Council representing the Bardoli taluk and the Surat district and the Hon'ble the Revenue Member:

POONA,
August 7, 1928

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE REVENUE MEMBER

SIR,

Now that the principal point about the Bardoli question is settled satisfactorily we hope and trust that Government will

(a) release all satyagrahi prisoners,

(b) restore all lands forfeited,

(c) Reinstate all *talatis* and *patels* who resigned their offices.

Yours sincerely,

A. M. K. DEHLAVI
DAUDKHAN SALEBHAI TYEBJEE
BHASAHEB (THAKORE OF KERWADA)
BHIMBHAI R. NAIK
H. B. SHIVDASANI
J. B. DESAI
M. K. DIXIT

4

The following letter dated 7th August 1928 was addressed by the Hon'ble the Revenue Member to the above members of the Legislative Council:

GENTLEMEN,

With reference to your letter dated the 7th instant, Government, in exercise of their prerogative, will release all satyagrahi prisoners and will be pleased to issue orders granting your second request.

The *talatis* and *patels* will be pardoned if they apply in the proper form.

Yours sincerely,

J. L. RIEU

N.B.—The price paid for the lands which were sold by Government and were transferred to R. B. Naik as stated in para 86 of the Report was about Rs. 11,000 or double the assessment in respect thereof. The excess of assessment thus received was also remitted by Government to the individual cultivators with the result that the land was restored to them without their being out of pocket to any extent.

The story of Bardoli, pp. 230-2

APPENDIX IV

SOUTH AFRICAN CONDONATION

[I. FORM OF APPLICATION]

(Name).....known in India as .....of(address in Union) ..... (Occupation) .....

1. Registration Certificate, Domicile Certificate, or other certificate No. of applicant.....
2. Village and country of birth of applicant.....
3. Name of father of applicant .....
4. Date and place of first entry of applicant into the Union.....
5. Name of wife (if any) and present whereabouts.....
6. Children (if any) .....

Mother Name of child Sex Where born Age Present whereabouts

I,.....
having been duly cautioned, hereby solemnly and sincerely declare that the above questions have been interpreted to me in .....which questions I hereby declare to understand and that I have answered them truthfully.

Signature (in Roman characters or thumb print)
of applicant.....
Address in full.....

Interpreted by me,.....
Signature.....

Declared before me at.....this .....day of.....

Thumb impression of applicant .....
Left.....Right.....

MAGISTRATE, OR IMMIGRATION OFFICER WHO IS
COMMISSIONER OF OATHS

[II. CORRESPONDENCE][1]

LETTER FROM C. S. SCHMIDT TO P. K. DESAI

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA,
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
CAPE TOWN,
February 24, 1928

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 6th January, 1928, in which you convey to the Honourable the Minister of the Interior the following resolution passed at the eighth session of the South African Indian Congress, held at Kimberley in January, 1928:

> That this eighth session of the South African Indian Congress in conference assembled, as representing the Indian community of South Africa, hereby assures the Union Government, on its own behalf and also on behalf of its constituent bodies, viz., the Transvaal Indian Congress as representing the Indian community of the Transvaal, the Cape British Indian Council as representing the Indian community of the Cape Province, and the Natal Indian Congress as representing the Indian community of Natal, that it will stand by

[1] What follows is from *Young India*, 16-8-1928.

and will generally honour the Agreement arrived at between the Indian and Union Governments at Cape Town, and in the spirit in which it has been conceived, and declares as it has always done that it will not tolerate any illicit entry of Indians into the Union.

In view of this assurance, and as an act of grace to mark the appointment of the Right Honourable V. S. S. Sastri, P.C., as the first Agent of the Government of India in the Union, the Union Government has been pleased to refrain from the full enforcement of Section 10 of Act 22 of 1913 as amended by Section 5 of Act 37 of 1927, in the case of an Indian who proves to the satisfaction of the Minister of the Interior that he entered a Province of the Union other than the Orange Free State prior to the 5th July, 1924, subject to the following provisions:

(a) Every Indian who has illicitly entered the Union must apply, on his own behalf or through the South African Indian Congress or a body affiliated thereto, in the Transvaal to the Commission for Immigration and Asiatic Affairs, Pretoria, and in the Cape and Natal Provinces to the Principal Immigration Officers at Cape Town and Durban respectively and shall furnish such particulars as may be required by these officers. Such application must reach the officers mentioned on or before the 1st of October, 1928. Indians who are in possession of registration certificates or certificates of domicile or other documents authorizing them to enter, reside or remain in the Union or any Province thereof, obtained by fraudulent representations made by them or on their behalf, must apply for the Protection Certificate or authorization to retain the documents in their possession referred to in paragraph (b) hereof.

(b) If the Minister is satisfied that an applicant comes within the terms of this concession he will direct that a Protection Certificate be issued to the applicant in the prescribed form or authorize him to retain the documents illegally obtained. No application will be entertained from any individual whose case does not fall within the terms of this concession.

(c) The Protection Certificate or the documents he has been authorized to retain under paragraph (b) above will preserve to the holder all the rights enjoyed by him at the date of the commencement of Act 37 of 1927, viz., 5th July, 1927, and the holder will be regarded as having entered the Province concerned in terms of Section 25 of Act No. 22 of 1913, but if he has not already brought his wife and/or children to the Union, such wife and/or children will not be admitted.

(d) An Indian whose entry into the Union or any Province thereof was illegally made, and who, after the 1st November, 1928, is not in possession of a Protection Certificate or who has not been authorized to retain his documents in terms of paragraph (b) above will be dealt with in accordance with the law irrespective of the date of his entry.

(e) The Minister reserves the right to apply the provisions of the Immigration

Law in the case of an Indian who illicitly entered the Union prior to the 5th July, 1924, and who has after that date been convicted of a deport. able offence.

You are authorized to publish this letter if you so desire.

I have the honour to be

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

C. S. SCHMIDT

SECRETARY FOR THE INTERIOR

P. K. DESAI, ESQ.

HONORARY GENERAL SECRETARY, SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN CONGRESS

P.O. BOX 5339, JOHANNESBURG

LETTER FROM V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI TO D. F. MALAN

MOUNT NELSON HOTEL,

CAPE TOWN,

May 14, 1928

DEAR DR. MALAN,

At my interview with you the day before yesterday I brought to your notice the strong desire on the part of the Transvaal Indian community that the 1914 Line should be drawn in the operation of the Condonation Scheme. I ask leave again to commend the idea to you and to remind you that it has the support besides of two such persons as Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Patrick Duncan.

In addition, my countrymen would like to be assured on three subsidiary points. I trust if it be not inconvenient to you, you will enable me in your reply to say that I have your authority in giving them the assurances:

1. No Indian who has once been condoned in the past for fraudulent or illegal entry will be required to apply on this occasion for condonation. His right to introduce his family will not be in jeopardy.

2. The minor sons of the men now to be condoned will be allowed to obtain registration certificates in the ordinary way.

3. In case the Protection Certificate is found in future defective in law or inadequate to preserve the rights of the holder you or your Successor will take such steps as may be necessary, legislative or other, to make it fully efficacious.

In your reply I beg you will not be guided in the least by the loose language which I have used, but will pay attention to the substance of my request.

Yours sincerely,

V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

THE HONOURABLE DR. D. F. MALAN, M.L.A.

MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR, CAPE TOWN

LETTER FROM D. F. MALAN TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,

CAPE TOWN,

May 16, 1928

DEAR MR. SASTRI,

With reference to your letter of the 14th instant on the subject of the Condonation Scheme, I have given careful consideration to the points you have raised and have to advise you as follows:

1. 1914 Line— I regret that I am unable to accede to the wish of the Indian community. There is nothing in the Smuts-Gandhi Agreement to suggest that all illegal and fraudulent entries to the date of that Agreement were condoned, and there is no justification for the proposed "1914 Line."

2. Previous Condonations— I agree that an Indian whose illegal or fraudulent entry has been condoned under any earlier condonation scheme need not apply for condonation under the new scheme provided he is the rightful holder of a document attesting to such condonation.

3. Registration of Minor Sons of Condonees.— Such minor sons who have been permitted to enter the Transvaal will be allowed to obtain registration certificates in the ordinary way.

4. Amending Legislation—My advice is to the effect that the proposed form of Condonation Permit will protect the rights of the holders in terms of the Condonation Scheme but should it be found that the permit does not safeguard the rights of the holder, I am quite prepared to introduce amending legislation to make the permit efficacious.

Yours sincerely,

D. F. MALAN

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

AGENT TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, PRETORIA

[III. FORM OF CONDONATION PERMIT]

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA, IMMIGRATION AND ASIATIC AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

Immigrants Regulation Act No. 22 of 1913 as amended by Act No. 37 of 1927

Subject to the conditions and requirements stated hereunder, the illegal entry of.....into the Province of..... ..... is condoned and he is permitted to remain in the said Province.

CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

This permit is issued subject to the following conditions and requirements and to the provisions of the Immigrants Regulation Act No. 22 of 1913, as amended by Act No. 37 of 1927, and the Regulations thereunder.

(a) This permit is valid until it is cancelled by the Minister.

(b) This permit preserves to the holder all the rights and privileges enjoyed at the date of commencement of Act 37 of 1927, viz., 5th July, 1927, and the holder is regarded as having entered the Province of ..... in terms of Section 25 of Act 22 of 1913 except that he will not be permitted to claim the rights and privileges conferred by Section 5(f) and (g) of the said Act, that is to say that if his wife and/or children have not been admitted at date hereof he will not be permitted subsequently to introduce any of such persons.

(c) This permit entitles the holder to retain any registration certificate, certificate of domicile or other document authorizing him to enter, reside or remain in the Union or any Province thereof; provided that if this permit is cancelled by the Minister such document or documents shall be dealt with under the provisions of Section 10 of Act 22 of 1913 as amended by Section 5 of Act 37 of 1927. The documents referred to in this paragraph are as described below, viz.[1]

(d) The Minister undertakes not to cancel this document unless the holder is subsequent to the 5th July, 1924, convicted of an offence as specified in Section 22 of Act 22 of 1913 as amended by Act 37 of 1927 and the holder shall forthwith be

[1] Not given in the source

dealt with in terms of Section 10 of Act 22 of 1913, as amended by Section 5 of Act 37 of 1927.

.....

COMMISSIONER FOR IMMIGRATION AND ASIATIC AFFAIRS

(Date Stamp)

I..... agree to the above con conditions.

Holder'ssignature.....

Witness.....

Place.....Date.....

The conditions of this permit have been interpreted/read over by me to the holderin..... .....Signature of interpreter..... Left thumb impression.....Right thumb impression.....

Young India, 9-8-1928 and 16-8-1928

1. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 10, 1928

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS,

Your letter about Ram Binod gives me much relief. I am sending copies to Jamnalalji and others. You do not say anything about re-ported purchases by Ram Binod. Is there any truth in those allega-tions?

I received the Bengali edition of *Seven Months*[2]. Is it selling

well? The English edition badly lacks an index. There are mis-prints too.

How are you keeping in health and how is Guruji?

The Ashram is undergoing many drastic changes of which per-haps Giriraj writes to you.

With love,

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 13654

2. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 10, 1928

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

I have your letter. But I have never held that one who is actually a soldier—and not one in outward appearance should'also be a *jnani*[3]. But I would certainly say that anyone who was not a soldier, or could not become one, could never be a jnani. The same is true about being a *brahmachari*. We do not see in life that anyone who has mastered one of his senses is necessarily a man of knowledge, but all of us hold that immorality is impossible in a *jnani*. I do not

[1] In reply to his letter dated August 30, 1928, wherein he had absolved Ram Binod of the charges of having misused funds placed at his disposal for khaddar work in Berar

[2] *Seven Months* with Mahatma Gandhi, by the addressee

[3] Man of knowledge

think I need to be a *jnani* to be able to put my hands on the shoulders of girls when walking without being disturbed by the touch. A father with many daughters who has pure feelings towards them may still be sunk in ignorance in other respects. He may even have impure feelings towards other women. It is but natural that I should have fatherly feelings for the girls in the Ashram. I have cultivated this state of heart over the years. Though I have, thus, pure feelings towards them as towards most women, I am not in a position to claim further that I have always experienced such pure feelings towards every woman. My present condition is cer-tainly pure, but, so long as I have not become completely free from every kind of impure feeling, I cannot say that I feel no fear about the future too. I have never believed or felt myself to be a *jnani*. On the contrary, I realize my state of ignorance every day. I have never felt that I am committing the slightest wrong in putting my hands on the shoulders of girls, for I know that they are but daughters to me. That being so, it is also not true that I have done them harm by my conduct. I have felt that through such intimacy I have entered their heart and that in consequence they have become purer in their feelings towards men. I have also considered the matter from the point of view of the effect of my conduct on society. There is certainly a belief among Hindus that even a father should shrink from touching his daughter. This seems to me a wrong notion, an enemy of *brahmacharya*. That *brahmacharya* which enter-tains such fear is no *brahmacharya*. Rishyashringa's[1] *brahmacharya* is not our ideal. Nevertheless, for the past three weeks I have practically given up putting my hands on the shoulders of girls regarded as grown-up, for the doubt which occurred to you occurred also to other inmates of the Ashram. In such a matter I need not insist on my own point of view. Putting one's hands on the shoulders of girls cannot be a matter of principle, and therefore as soon as the issue was raised I discussed the matter with everyone and gave up the practice. 'The girls have felt a little hurt by this, but on the whole they are reconciled to it and in time will get completely reconciled. No one, of course, should imitate my practice. Anyone who has fatherly feelings towards girls will not shrink, when necessary, from touching them in a manner befitting a father and the world also will not censure him.

[1] A character in the *Ramayana*. He had no acquaintance with women and was lured away by the first woman he met.

I do not understand what you write about . . .[1] and why you are pained by the matter. You admit that you made a mistake in writing to him and advising him to follow my advice and in asking me to guide him. After that, where was the need for me to discuss the matter with you? Moreover, how could I believe that you could tell me anything more than what . . . would about his relation to his wife? Despite what you write and tell me, I believe that my advice to . . . was the right one. I have sent him there with the advice, and in the hope that, if he was sincere in the vow of *brahmacharya* which he had taken in regard to his wife, he would even now observe it. He has gone there to demonstrate that he is a brother and a friend of his wife. This is my view of the matter, which he has completely under stood. If, instead of behaving as a brother, he acts like a husband, you may assume that his vow of *brahmacharya* in regard to his wife was insincere. It was only waiting for an opportunity to be broken. I suppose you have not overlooked the fact that he was never free from impure feelings towards other women. If. . . still writes to you about himself, I suggest that you should come and see me in the matter. I had suggested this course to you even earlier. I think it best that you should give up the attempt to guide . . . independently. If you do not understand what I have said in this letter, ask me again. You should have no doubt at all, I have none, about the rightness of my advice to . . . If you have any, however, or feel any doubt later, ask me again and again.

I very much liked your caution regarding the common kitchen. Our ideal of the Ashram is that even visitors should observe *brahmacharya* while they stay in it. This rule is made categorical in the new set of rules. That has naturally added to the number of those taking their meals in the common kitchen. How can we say that even those who take the vow of *brahmacharya* are not *brahmacharis* of their own will? I, however, believe your statement that many have joined the common kitchen out of their respect for me. The kitchen has led to a new idea during the past few days. There is no suggestion that it should be abandoned, but a proposal is being discussed whether those who cannot sincerely be its members and cannot whole-heartedly adopt its other implications should not leave the Ashram.

I shall await your letter regarding the effect of the use of linseed oil. How do you obtain fresh linseed oil? Do you obtain a day's or a

[1] Name omitted

month's requirement, at a time? Do you get oil pressed by an indigenous or an English mill? If it is oil pressed in an indigenous mill and if you know the process through which the seed is passed before it is pressed, please let me know. If you do not know this, get the information and let me have it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 801. Courtesy: Balkrishna Bhave

3. SPEECH ON BIRTH CENTENARY OF TOLSTOY[1]

September 10, 1928

My present state of mind does not at all permit me to join in celebrating any day or festival. Some time ago a reader of *Navajivan* or *Young India* asked me a question: "You have stated[2], writing about *shraddha*, that the right way of performing the *shraddha* of our elders, on their death-anniversary day, is to recall their virtues and make them our own. May I ask you, therefore, how you observe the *shraddha* days of your elders?" I used to observe these days when I was young, but I don't mind telling you that now I do not even remember the dates on which they fall. I do not recall to have observed any such day during the past many years. Such is my unhappy state of mind, or rather, you may say, my charming or, as some friends believe, profound, ignorance. I believe it is enough if we fix our attention every minute of the day on the task in hand, think about it and do it as methodically as we can. We thereby celebrate the death anniversary of our elders as also the memory of men like Tolstoy. If Dr. Hariprasad had not drawn me into the net, it is quite likely that I would have arranged no celebration in the Ashram on this day, the 10th: it is even likely that I would have forgotten the day altogether. I had letters three months ago from Aylmer Maude and others engaged in collecting Tolstoy's writings, requesting me to send an article on the occasion of this centenary celebration and to draw the country's attention to this date. You must have seen an abstract of Aylmer Maude's letter, or perhaps the whole of it, published in *Young*

[1] The speech was delivered at a meeting held in the Ashram under the auspices of the Ahmedabad Youth Association. An English version of the speech appeared in *Young India*, 20-9-1928.

[2] *Vide* "True Shraddha", 1-9-1927.

India.[1] Afterwards I forgot all about this matter. This is an auspicious occasion for me, but I would not have felt sorry if I had discovered that I had forgotten it. All the same, I welcome the opportunity which members of the Youth Association have offered of celebrating this day in the Ashram.

I wish I could say that, like Dattatreya, I had accepted many persons in this world as my gurus, but I am not in that position. I have said, on the contrary, that I am still in search of a guru in religious matters. It is my belief, which grows stronger day by day, that one must have especial fitness to find a guru. A guru comes unsought to him who has it. I lack such fitness. I have described Gokhale as my political guru. He had satisfied all my expectations of a guru in that field. I never doubted or questioned the propriety of his views or instructions. I cannot say that of anyone as a guru in religious matters.

And yet, I would say that three men have had a very great influence on my life. Among them I give the first place to the poet Rajchandra, the second to Tolstoy and the third to Ruskin. If I had to choose between Tolstoy and Ruskin and if I knew more about the lives of both, I would not know to whom to give preference. At present, however, I give the place to Tolstoy. I have not read as much of Tolstoy's life as many others may have, and in fact I have not read very much of his writings either. Among his works the one which has had the greatest effect on me is *The Kingdom of God Is within You*. The title means that God's Kingdom is in our heart, that if we search for it out-side we shall find it nowhere. I read the book forty years ago. At that time, I was sceptical about many things and sometimes entertained atheistic ideas. When I went to England, I was a votary of violence, I had faith in it and none in non-violence. After I read this book, that lack of faith in non-violence vanished. Later I read some of his other books, but I cannot describe what effect they had on me. I can only say what effect his life as a whole had on me.

I attach importance to two things in his life. He did what he preached. His simplicity was extraordinary; it was not merely outward; outward simplicity of course he had. Though he was born in an aristocratic family and had all the good things of life to enjoy, had at his disposal all that wealth and possessions could give a man, he changed the direction of his life's voyage in the prime of youth. Though he had enjoyed all the pleasures and tasted all the sweetness

[1] *Vide* "Tolstoy Centenary", 1-3-1928

which life can offer, the moment he realized the futility of that way of life he turned his back on it, and he remained firm in his new convictions till the end of his life. I have, therefore, stated in some message I have sent that Tolstoy was the very embodiment of truth in this age. He strove uncompromisingly to follow truth as he saw it, making no attempt to conceal or dilute what he believed to be the truth. He stated what he felt to be the truth without caring whether it would hurt or please the people or whether it would be welcome to the mighty emperor. Tolstoy was a great advocate of non-violence in his age. I know of no author in the West who has written as much and as effectively for the cause of non-violence as Tolstoy has done. I may go even further and say that I know no one in India or elsewhere who has had as profound an understanding of the nature of non-violence as Tolstoy had and who has tried to follow it as sincerely as he did.

I feel unhappy about this state of affairs, I do not like it. India is *karmabhumi*[1]. The sages and seers of this country have made the biggest discoveries in the sphere of non-violence. But we cannot live on inherited wealth. If we do not continue to add to it, we would be eating it away. The late Justice Ranade has cautioned us against this. We may complacently quote the Vedas and Jain literature and talk profound things, or propound great principles and strike the world dumb, but people will not believe in our sincerity. Hence Ranade pointed it out as our duty that we should add to our inheritance. We should compare it with the writings of other religious thinkers and if, as a result of such comparison, we discover anything new or find new light shed on a subject, we should not reject it. We have, however, failed to do this. Oar religious heads are always one-sided in their thinking. There is no harmony between their words and deeds. We do not have among us men who, like Tolstoy, would speak out the plain truth irrespective of whether or not that would please the people or the society in which they work Such is the pitiable condition of this our land of non-violence. Our non-violence is an unworthy thing. We see its utmost limit in refraining somehow from destroying bugs, mosquitoes and fleas, or from killing birds and animals. We do not care if these creatures suffer, nor even if we partly contribute to their suffering. On the contrary, we think it a heinous sin if anyone releases or helps in releasing a creature that suffers. I have already written and explained that this is not non-violence, and I take this occasion, when I

[1] Land of duty, contrasted with *bhogabhumi*, land of enioyment

am speaking about Tolstoy, to repeat that that is not the meaning of non-violence. Non-violence means an ocean of compassion, it means shedding from us every trace of ill-will for others. It does not mean abjectness or timidity, or fleeing in fear. It means, on the contrary, firmness of mind and courage, a resolute spirit.

We do not see this non-violence in the educated classes in India. For them Tolstoy's life should be a source of inspiration. He strove hard to put into practice what he believed in, and never turned back from his chosen path. I do not believe that he did not find that stick[1]. He himself said, of course, that he had failed to discover it, but that was his humility. I do not agree with his critics that he did not find that stick. I might perhaps agree if anyone asserted that he did not fully act upon the principle of non-violence of which he had had a glimpse. But, then, has there been anyone in this world who could act upon the principle of non-violence fully while he lived? I believe it impossible for one living in this body to observe non-violence to perfection. While the body endures, some degree of egotism is inescapable. We retain the body only so long as egotism persists. Bodily life, therefore, necessarily involves violence. Tolstoy himself said that anyone who believed that he had realized his ideal would be lost. From the moment he believed that, his fall would begin. The further we travel towards an ideal the further it recedes. As we advance in its search, we realize that we have one step after another to climb. No one can climb all the steps in one leap. This view does not imply cravenness of spirit or pessimism but certainly there is humility in it. Hence our sages and seers said that the state of *moksha* meant utter emptiness. He who aspires after *moksha* must develop a state of such emptiness. One cannot attain this without God's grace. That state of emptiness can only remain an ideal as long as one lives in this body. The moment Tolstoy saw this truth clearly, grasped it with his intellect and started on his journey towards the ideal, he had found the green stick. He could not describe it, but could have only said that he had found it. If, however, he had in fact said that he had found it, progress in life would have been over for him.

The seeming contradictions in Tolstoy's life are no blot on him or sign of his failure. They signify the failure of the observer. Emerson has said that a foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds.

[1] In his introductory remarks, Dr. Hariprasad had said that Tolstoy had failed to find the green stick with many virtues which his brother had advised him to discover.

We would be utterly lost if we tried to live and show that there was no contradiction in our lives. In trying to live in that manner, we would have to remember what we did yesterday and then harmonize our actions today with that; in trying to preserve such forced harmony, we would have to resort to untruth. The best way is to follow the truth as one sees it at the moment. If we are progressing from day to day, why should we worry if others see contradictions in us? In truth, what looks like contradiction is not contradiction, but progress. And so, what seems to be contradiction in Tolstoy's life is really not contradiction, but only an illusion in our minds. Only the man himself knows how much he struggles in the depth of his heart or what victories he wins in the war between Rama and Ravana. The spectator certainly cannot know that. If the person slips ever so little, the world will think that there was nothing in him; this, of course, is for the best. One should not condemn the world on that account and so the saints have said that we should rejoice when the world speaks ill of us, but tremble with fear when it praises us. The world cannot act otherwise than it does; it must censure where it sees evil. But, whenever we examine the life of a great man, we should bear in mind what I have explained. God is witness to the battles he may have fought in his heart and the victories he may have won. These are the only evidence of his failures and successes.

By saying this, I do not wish to suggest that you should cover up your weaknesses, or, when they are as big as hills, think that they are as small as grains of sand. What I have said is in regard to other people. We should look upon others' weaknesses, huge as the Himalayas, to be as small as mustard seeds and ours, as small as mustard seeds, to be as big as the Himalayas. When we become aware of the slightest lapse on our part or seem to have become guilty of untruth, intentionally or otherwise, we should feel as if we were burning, as if we were caught in flames. A snake bite or a scorpion sting is of little consequence; you will find many who can cure them. Is there anyone, however, who can cure us of the sting of untruth or violence? God alone can do that, and He will do it only if we strive in earnest. Hence, we should be vigilant against our weaknesses and magnify them to the utmost, so that, when the world censures us, we should not think that people were mean-minded and exaggerated our faults. If anyone pointed out a weakness in Tolstoy, though there could hardly

be an occasion for anyone to do so for he was pitiless in his self-examination, he would magnify that weakness to fearful proportions. He would have seen his lapse and atoned for it in the manner he thought most appropriate before anyone had pointed it out to him. This is a sign of goodness, and I think, therefore, that he had found that stick.

Tolstoy drew people's attention to another thing through his writings and his life, and that is the idea of "bread labour". It was not his own discovery. Another author had mentioned it in a Russian Miscellany; Tolstoy made his name known to the world and also put before it his idea. The cause of the inequalities we see in the world, of the contrasts of wealth and poverty, lies in the fact that we have forgotten the law of life. That law is the law of "bread labour". On the authority of Chapter III of the *Gita*, I call it *yajna*. The *Gita* says that he who eats without performing *yajna* is a thief and sinner. Tolstoy has said the same thing. We should not distort the meaning of "bread labour" and forget the real idea. Its simple meaning is that he has no right to eat who does not bend his body and work. If every one of us did bodily labour to earn his food, we would not see the poverty which we find in the world. One idler is the cause of two persons starving, for his work has to be done by someone else. Tolstoy said that people came forward for philanthropic service, spent money for the purpose and earned titles as reward for their service, but he said it would be enough if, instead of all this, they did a little physical work and got off the backs of others. That is true indeed. In that lies humility. To do philan-thropic service but refuse to give up one's luxuries is to act in the way described by Akha Bhagat, "Stealing an anvil and gifting a needle". Can we hope thereby to go up in a *viman*[1] to heaven?

It is not that others have not said what Tolstoy said, but there was magic in Tolstoy's language, for he acted upon what he preached. He who was accustomed to the comforts of wealth started doing physical labour. He used to work on the farm or do other labour for eight hours a day. That does not mean that he gave up literary work. In fact, after he started doing physical labour his literary work came to have greater life in it. It was during spare time in this period of *yajna* that he wrote what he described as his most important work, *What Is Art?* Physical labour did not tell upon his health, and he believed that it sharpened his intellect. Students of his works will bear testimony that he was right.

If we wish to benefit from Tolstoy's life, we should learn these

[1] Flying machine

three things from it. I am addressing members of a youth association, and I wish to remind them that they have to choose between two paths in life: one of self-indulgence and the other of self-restraint. If you think that Tolstoy lived and died well, you will see that there is only one right path in life for all, especially for the young—and that is the path of self-control. That is particularly true in India. Swaraj is not something to be won from the Government. If you examine the causes of our degradation, you will see that we are more responsible for it than the Government. You will then see that the key to swaraj is in our hands, and not in England nor in Simla nor in Delhi. It is in your pocket and mine. Our lethargy is responsible for the delay in remedying the degradation and listlessness of our society. If we overcome that, there is no power on earth which can prevent us from raising ourselves and securing swaraj. We ourselves choose to lie helpless on the path and refuse to lift ourselves out of that condition. I should like to tell the members of the Youth Association that this is a golden time for them, or from another point of view, a hard time, a time of trial, if I put it in a third way. It is not enough that they pass university examinations and secure degrees. They will have secured real degrees only when they pass the examination of life and stand the test of hardships and difficulties. This is a period of transition, a golden time for you. You have two paths before you: one leading to the north and another to the south, one to the east and another to the west. You have to choose between the two. You must consider which path you will choose. All kinds of winds—poisonous winds, in my view—are blowing into the country from the West. There are, of course, some beautiful currents too, like Tolstoy's life. But these do not blow with every ship that arrives! You may say 'with every ship' or 'every day', for every day a ship arrives in the Bombay or Calcutta port. Along with other foreign goods, foreign literature too arrives. Its ideas intoxicate people and draw them to the path of self-indulgence. I have no doubt about that. Do not be vain and believe that your thoughts, or what in your immaturity you have read in books and understood from them, are the only truth, that what is old is barbarous and uncivilized and that truth lies only in things newly discovered. If you suffer from such vanity, I don't think you will bring credit to your Association. If you have still not fulfilled my hope that you have learnt humility, culture, a sense of propriety and purity from Sarala Devi, do so in future. Do not be puffed up because you have been praised for some good things you have done. Run away from praise,

and don't think that you have done much. If you collected money for Bardoli, worked hard and sweated for the cause, if a few of you went to jail for it, I ask you, as a man of experience, 'Is it much that you have done?' Others may say that you have, but you should not rest satisfied with what you have done. You have to purify your inner life, and it is from your conscience that you have to obtain a real certificate. Truly speaking our *atman* too is generally asleep. It was said by Tilak Maharaj that in our languages we have no word corresponding to 'conscience'. We do not believe that everyone has a conscience; in the West they do. What conscience can an adulterous or dissolute man have? Tilak Maharaj, therefore, rejected the idea of conscience. Our seers and sages of old said that one must have an inner ear to hear the inner voice, that one must have the inner eye, and must cultivate self-control to acquire these. Hence, in Patanjali's treatise on yoga the first step prescribed for the student of yoga, for one aspiring after self-realization, is the observance of the disciplines of *yama-niyama*[1]. There is no path but that of self-control for you or me or others. Tolstoy showed this by leading a long life of self- control. I wish and pray to God that we should be able to see this as clearly as daylight, and should leave this meeting with a resolution that we shall learn the lesson of self-control from Tolstoy's life.

Let us resolve that we will never give up the pursuit of truth. To follow truth, the only right path in this world is that of non-violence. Non-violence means an ocean of love, whose vastness no one has ever been able to measure. If it fills us we would be so large-hearted that we would have room in it for the whole world. I know this is difficult to achieve, but not impossible. Thus we heard the poet say, in the prayer with which we commenced, that he would bow his head only to him who was free from attachment and aversion, who had overcome all desires and who was the perfect embodiment of non-violence, that is, love, whether he was named Shanker or Vishnu or Brahma or Indra or whether he was Buddha or Siddha[2]? Such non-violence is not limited to refraining from killing disabled creatures. It may be dharma not to kill them, but love goes infinitely further than that. What does it profit a person that he saves the lives of disabled creatures, if he has had no vision of such love? In God's court, his work will have little value.

[1] Rules of moral and ethical discipline

[2] One who has attained spiritual realization

The third thing is bread labour—*yajna*. We earn the right to eat only by putting the body to hard work, by doing physical labour. *Yajna* means any work done for the service of others. It is not enough that we do physical labour; we should live only in order that we may serve others, and not that we may run after immoral and worldly pleasures. If a young man who has trained his body with rigorous exercise spends eight hours every day in such exercise, he is not doing 'bread labour'. I do not belittle your doing exercise and training your body; but such exercise does not constitute the *yajna* which Tolstoy has advised and which is described in Chapter III of the *Gita.* He who believes that this life is for *yajna*, for service, will day by day give up running after pleasures. True human effort consists in striving to realize this ideal. It does not matter if no human being has succeeded in doing that to perfection; let the ideal ever remain distant from us. We should walk and break stones, as Farhad did for Shirin, our Shirin being the ideal of non-violence. This certainly holds our little Swaraj, but it holds everything else too.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-9-1928

4. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI[1]

[After *September 10, 1928*]

It will do if you send the Shraddhanand money to the Secretary, C/o *The Hindustan Times*, Delhi.

I have not got any letter from Bhai Purushottam.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine

[1] In reply to his letter dated September 10

5. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

SABARMATI,
September 11, 1928

MY DEAR PADMAJA,

I was so happy to have Mother with me for a few hours before [her] sailing for her great mission.[1] Naturally we talked a lot about you. I see you are now allowed to move about. If doctors permit you it would be a good thing for you to accept Mrs. Ambalal's invitation to pass some time with her. Ahmedabad has a dry climate. And if you came and were strong enough to do some work there is enough here to occupy you. I did not at all like the idea of your working on the permanent staff of *The Hindu.* You will not do the work. It was good and brave of you to have let Mother go to America. And having let her go, you must make up your mind not to be unwell at all.

With love,

M.K.G.

SHRIMATI PADMAJA NAIDU
TUBERCULAR SANATORIUM
AROGYAVARAM
CHITTOOR DIST.

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

6. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHANA CHANDIWALA

September 12, 1928

CHI. BRIJKISHORE[2],

I have your letter. If your nephew has grown so overbearing it will do him good if one just has nothing to do with him. If you think it necessary, let him be paid a monthly allowance.

[1] Sarojini Naidu left for the United States of America on September 12, 1928, on a propaganda mission. For details *vide* "Notes" sub-title "Foreign Propaganda And Sarojini Devi", 13-9-1928 and "My Notes" sub-title Sarojini Devi", 16-9-1928

[2] A slip for "Brajkisan" as this letter is included among Brijkrishna Chandiwala's original letters

Build up your body. For this, the mind too has to be healthy!

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2359

7. MY ATTITUDE TOWARDS WAR

Rev. B. de Ligt has written in a French journal called *Evolution* a long open letter to me. He has favoured me with a translation of it. The open letter strongly criticizes my participation in the Boer War[1] and then the Great War[2] of 1914 and invites me to explain my conduct in the light of ahimsa. Other friends too have put the same question. I have attempted to give the explanation more than once in these columns.

There is no defence for my conduct weighed only in the scales of ahimsa. I draw no distinction between those who wield the weapons of destruction and those who do red-cross work. Both participate in war and advance its cause. Both are guilty of the crime of war. But even after introspection during all these years, I feel that in the circumstances in which I found myself I was bound to adopt the course I did both during the Boer War and the Great European War and for that matter the so-called Zulu "Rebellion"[3] of Natal in 1906.

Life is governed by a multitude of forces. It would be smooth sailing, if one could determine the course of one's actions only by one general principle whose application at a given moment was too obvious to need even a moment's reflection. But I cannot recall a single act which could be so easily determined.

Being a confirmed war resister I have never given myself training in the use of destructive weapons in spite of opportunities to take such training. It was perhaps thus that I escaped direct destruction of human life. But so long as I lived under a system of Government

[1] *Vide* "Indian Ambulance Corps", 13-12-1899, "Indian Ambulance Corps in Natal", 14-3-1900,"Indian Ambulance Corps", 18-4-1900, and "Speech at Calcutta Meeting", 27-1-1902.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Under Secretary for India", 14-8-1914, "Circular Regarding Training Corps", 22-9-1914 and "Letter to India", 4-11-1914; and also "Letter to J. L. Maffey", 30-4-1918 and "Appeal for Enlistment", 22-6-1918.

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Congress Meeting", 24-4-1906, "Indian Volunteers", 23-6-1906 and "Indian Stretcher-Bearer Corps", 19-7-1906.

based on force and voluntarily partook of the many facilities and privileges it created for me, I was bound to help that Government to the extent of my ability when it was engaged in a war unless I non-co-operated with that Government and renounced to the utmost of my capacity the privileges it offered me.

Let me take an illustration. I am a member of an institution which holds a few acres of land whose crops are in imminent peril from monkeys. I believe in the sacredness of all life and hence I regard it as a breach of ahimsa to inflict any injury on the monkeys. But I do not hesitate to instigate and direct an attack on the monkeys in order to save the crops.[1] I would like to avoid this evil. I can avoid it by leaving or breaking up the institution. I do not do so because I do not expect to be able to find a society where there will be no agriculture and therefore no destruction of some life. In fear and trembling, in humility and penance, I therefore participate in the injury inflicted on the monkeys, hoping some day to find a way out.

Even so did I participate in the three acts of war. I could not, it would be madness for me to, sever my connection with the society to which I belong. And on those three occasions I had no thought of non-co-operating with the British Government. My position regarding that Government is totally different today and hence I should not voluntarily participate in its wars and I should risk imprisonment and even the gallows if I was forced to take up arms or otherwise take part in its military operations.

But that still does not solve the riddle. If there was a national Government, whilst I should not take any direct part in any war, I can conceive occasions when it would be my duty to vote for the military training of those who wish to take it. For I know that all its members do not believe in non-violence to the extent I do. It is not possible to make a person or a society non-violent by compulsion.

Non-violence works in a most mysterious manner. Often a man's actions defy analysis in terms of non-violence; equally often his actions may wear the appearance of violence when he is absolutely non-violent in the highest sense of the term and is subsequently found so to be. All I can then claim for my conduct is that it was, in the instances cited, actuated in the interests of non-violence. There was no thought of national or other interest. I do not believe in the promotion of national or any other interest at the sacrifice of some other interest.

[1] *Vide* "The Fiery Ordeal", 30-9-1928, sub-title "When Killing Is *Himsa*".

I may not carry my argument any further. Language at best is but a poor vehicle for expressing one's thoughts in full. For me, non-violence is not a mere philosophical principle. It is the rule and the breath of my life. l know I fail often, sometimes consciously, more often unconsciously. It is a matter not of the intellect but of the heart. True guidance comes by constant waiting upon God, by utmost humility, self-abnegation, by being ever ready to sacrifice one's self. Its practice requires fearlessness and courage of the highest order. I am painfully aware of my failings.

But the Light within me is steady and clear. There is no escape for any of us save through truth and non-violence. I know that war is wrong, is an unmitigated evil. I know too that it has got to go. I firmly believe that freedom won through bloodshed or fraud is no freedom. Would that all the acts alleged against me were found to be wholly indefensible rather than that by any act of mine non-violence was held to be compromised or that I was ever thought to be in favour of violence or untruth in any shape or form. Not violence, not untruth, but non-violence, Truth, is the law of our being.

Young India, 13-9-1928

8. CONDONATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa Indian Congress sends me the following cable:

> Would-be condonees who were unable to leave India by the last boat may cable Comasia (telegraphic address of Commissioner of Asiatics), Pretoria, intention of applying for condonation giving registration domicile or identity certificate number before thirtieth September. Please give wide newspaper publicity throughout India.

This cable was sent to the Press as soon as it was received. Only those who are covered by the scheme published in these columns[1] may cable the particulars asked. I would strongly dissuade others' from spending good money uselessly.

Young India, 13-9-1928

[1] *Vide* "Bardoli Settlement", 6-8-1928

9. NOTES

FOREIGN PROPAGANDA AND SAROJINI DEVI

I am no believer in foreign propaganda as it is commonly understood, i.e., in the sense of establishing an agency or even sending peripatetic deputations. But the foreign propaganda that Sarojini Devi would carry on during her tour in the West would be the propaganda that would tell more than anything that could be done by an established agency whose very existence would be unknown to the indifferent and would be ignored by those whose opinion would matter to us. Not so India's Nightingale. She is known to the West. She would compel a hearing wherever she goes. She adds to her great eloquence and greater poetry a delicate sense of the true diplomacy that knows what to say and when to say it and that knows how to say the truth without hurting. We have every reason to expect much from her mission to the West. With the instinct of a gentlewoman she has gone with the resolution not to enter upon a direct refutation of Miss Mayo's insolent libel[1]. Her presence and her exposition of what India is and means to her would be a complete answer to all the untruth that has been dinned into the ready ears of the American public by agencies whose one aim is to belittle India and all that is Indian.[2]

RASHTRIYA STRI SABHA AND KHADI[3]

For years past this Sabha has been doing valuable propaganda for khadi among the fashionable citizens of Bombay and elsewhere through introducing artistic designs in khadi. Through this work the Sabha is supporting in the city of Bombay over 250 needy girls of all classes. It has five centres through which the work is distributed. Naturally these girls have to be paid regularly from month to month. Under the cash system insisted upon by the All-India Spinners' Association the Sabha is obliged to pay cash for all the khadi it buys. Experience has shown the Sabha that it must insist upon cash payment if it has to pay cash for work done and khadi bought. Moreover, all the sisters who are engaged in organizing this work are volunteers. It is therefore but right that they should expect khadi lovers who

[1] The reference is to *Mother India.*

[2] This was followed by a note entitled "First Offshoot of Bardoli", not reproduced here, as it had already appeared in *Navajivan,* 9-9-1928; *vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 22-4-1928

[3] A Gujarati article on the same subject appeared in *Navajivan,* 16-9-1928.

patronize their labours to pay cash for the orders they send. Shrimati Perinbai Captain has addressed on behalf of the Sabha a circular letter in which she commends to the buyers of the articles prepared by the Sabha the necessity for cash payment. There is no doubt that the Sabha deserves encouragement for the philanthropic and useful service it is rendering. Cash payment is the least encouragement that the Sabha has the right to expect. Those who buy these articles help not only the poorest among the villagers but also the needy girls of our cities.

Young India, 13-9-1928

10. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 14, 1928

MY DEAR C. R.,

I have your letter. I may not pay Rs. 60 for Keshu's board and tuition. At the same time I admit that Mr. Cox's terms are quite reasonable. Do please thank both Mr. Bjerrum and Mr. Cox. I am now making some other arrangements. I have not made up my mind what to do and Keshu is not here at present. When he returns from Rajkot, I shall know what to do.

What is this that is going on in the Mysore State about the Hindu-Muslim trouble? The *Times*[1] has almost always sensational headlines and equally sensational reports utterly discrediting the State. Is it all truthful, or is it a plot against the State? Do you know anything about what is appearing in the *Times*?

Mahadev returns about the 20th. I hope you are both making steady progress.

From a photostat: S.N. 13522

[1] *The Times of India*

11. LETTER TO N. PATNAIK

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 14, 1928

DEAR NIRANJAN BABU,

Here is my message:

"I hope that the tour of Orissa by Sir P. C. Ray and Satis Babu will bear, as it ought to bear, ample fruit. You should be able to sell out the bulk of the accumulated stock. Poor as the villagers of Orissa are, those who live in the cities are not so poor as not to be able to buy the khadi you have, if only they have the will and love for the poverty-stricken in the land."

Yours sincerely,

SJT. NIRANJAN PATNAIK
SWARAJ ASHRAM, BERHAMPUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 13683

12. LETTER TO DR. S. C. BANERJEE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 14, 1928

DEAR SURESH BABU,

I have your letter. This is what you said in the letter dated 7th August in answer to which I sent the telegram:

> Herewith I am sending a copy of our Ashram report for 1927. We shall be much obliged if you can kindly give publicity to it in some issue of *Young India* with suitable comments.

It is this report that I sent for so as to enable me to deal with it in the pages of *Young India* as you desired.[1] I am still without that report.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13684

[1] *Vide* "Abhoy Ashram'', 27-9-1928.

13. LETTER TO K. S. SUBRAMANIAM

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 14, 1928

MY DEAR SUBRAMANIAM,

I have gone through the circular letter[1]. You will find in the enclosed the additions I have made.

With reference to the figures as to spinners, I think that it is necessary to have the census taken from year to year and as accurately as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure: 1

SJT. K. S. SUBRAMANIAM
A.I.S.A., AHMEDABAD

[ENCLOSURE]

ADDITIONS TO THE CIRCULAR LETTER DATED JUNE 22, 1928

No. 28. Add after "Progress made":

also information as to whether spinning is done on wheels or *taklis*, and what is done with the yarn spun.

To have the following as Item No. 32:

The average condition of spinners, weavers, carders, giving how many days in the year they work at the rate of how many hours, their other occupation if any, and what is the average earning from their other occupation, when they are not spinning, or weaving or carding.

From a microfilm: S.N. 13686

14. LETTER TO KIRBY PAGE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter with a translation copy of Rev. B. de Ligt's open letter. The writer sent it himself two weeks before your letter was received. He also wanted me to send my reply for his journal. But I

[1] Of the All-lndia Spinners' Association

thought that I would reach a wider circle of readers, that is, those who are in the habit of reading my writings, if I attempted a brief reply in the pages of *Young India*. This, therefore, I have done.[1] It was the best I could do in the time at my disposal. You may of course copy it for your paper. I send you a marked copy of *Young India* containing my reply.

Yours sincerely,

KIRBY PAGE, ESQ.
"THE WORLD TOMORROW"
52 VANDERBILT AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 14368

15. LETTER TO B. DE LIGT

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have now attempted a reply in the pages of *Young India* of which I send you a marked copy. You may of course translate it in *Evolution*. If the reply does not deal with any point you have raised, you will please not hesitate to tell me so.

Yours sincerely,

REV. B. DE LIGT
ONEX, GENEVA

From a photostat: S.N. 14395

16. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

September 15, 1928

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

This will be presented to you by Mr. Mahomed Khan who was with me in South Africa. He is at present on the Railways. He has been ailing for some years. He once wanted a note to Hakim Saheb which I gave him. He tells me that Hakim Saheb's treatment gave him relief for the time being. He has again a relapse. He now wants a note to

[1] *Vide* "My Attitude towards War", 13-9-1928.

you, which I gladly give. I know you will give him what advice is possible.

Yours sincerely,

DR. M. A. ANSARI

1 DARYAGUNJ, DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13524

17. AHMEDABAD AND ITS DEAF AND DUMB

If, although I live near Ahmedabad, I hardly write anything about it, it is not because of my unwillingness but because of my inability to do so. I have often felt the urge to participate in the life of this city, but it has subsided every time. Friends suggested that l should enter the municipality and work in it. I should certainly like to, but I never had the courage to try. Let no resident of Ahmedabad believe that now, on the brink of death, I have acquired that courage. I have mentioned this only in order to admit that I have still to repay the debt that I owe to Ahmedabad.

Shri Pranshankar Desai is running a school for the deaf and dumb in Ahmedabad. I have been acquainted with it since 1915, i.e., ever since I came to live here. From that very time I have believed that such institutions should be located outside the city. This school will now move outside the city. In accordance with the wishes of Sheth Mangaldas, its foundation-stone was laid by me last week.[1] In my opinion, we are late by twenty years. The school was started twenty years ago. However, the choice of its site did not lie with Shri Pranshankar. It rested with the ruling deity of Ahmedabad. Speaking in today's terminology, it depended on the temper of the city. Just as those with a religious sentiment believe that the body has a soul, similarly they may also attribute a soul to the physical form of the city too, and regard it as its ruling deity. As the ruling deity of Ahmedabad is miserly, he has huddled its residents together within a small area, has kept them in insanitary surroundings and thereby polluted its air. That deity alone knows how suffocated he must feel by keeping these human beings in misery! In his essay on hygiene, Dr. Hariprasad has stated that amongst the cities of India, Ahmedabad occupies the first place so far as the death rate or, in other words, so far as

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Deaf and Dumb School, Ahmedabad", 7-9-1928.

insanitation is concerned.

If the wealthy and the educated wish, they can change the face of Ahmedabad. The biggest Jain firm is in Ahmedabad. It is said that the firm of Anandji Kalyanji is wealthier than any other firm in the world which can be described as a religious body. Ahmedabad is the capital of Gujarat and it is also the headquarters of the Jains. It claims a monopoly of compassion for all living beings. However, it has still to learn real compassion. Looking after cattle in some manner in crowded localities is a narrow form of such compassion and its least expression. The latter should be as wide as the ocean and, as the life-sustaining oxygen spreads its fragrance from the ocean all the hours of the day, so should the oxygen of compassion do and give happiness, peace and good health to human beings and all other living creatures. However, it is not Jainism alone which enjoins the gift of health. The Vaishnavas claim no less that they, too, regard it as their duty, and Islam accords no less honour to it. There are followers of these faiths too in Ahmedabad. All of them share equally in Ahmedabad's shame.

There is so much wealth in Ahmedabad that it could turn this capital of Gujarat of Gujarat which is famed for its beauty into physically and spiritually the healthiest place in India.

Nature has gifted Ahmedabad with such air and water that it could become a health resort. Its residents, however, pollute both these. The hospitals, temples, schools and orphanages of Ahmedabad should be removed to places outside the city. Its narrow lanes should be relieved of the congestion in them. There should be small open spaces in the city. We ought to have fragrance spreading all around in-stead of the stink that now pervades the city.

This task is not beyond the capacity of Ahmedabad's citizens. It does not require crores of rupees to be spent. Moreover, it has been the experience of all cities in the world which have become prosperous that the amount spent is recovered twice over. It is true, of course, that the expenditure must be incurred wisely, in a spirit of charity and with pure motives. What is true of human beings is also true of cities. Their freedom lies in their own hands. The people's attitude and public opinion must change. In order to change them, leaders must make sacrifices. One person, Chamberlain, changed the face of Birmingham. Ahmedabad, too, needs a Chamberlain of its own. Or, as in France where the soldiers of the revolution fought without a leader,

here too, if a Chamberlain does not come forward, cannot an organization like the Youth Association make sacrifices to purify the atmosphere in Ahmedabad and make its foul air fragrant?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-9-1928

18. KHADI PROPAGANDA FUND

Shri Gopaldas Mathurawala has contributed Rs. 100 to this fund and while sending the amount he writes to say:

> You may use this amount for the propagation of khadi or for any other purpose. In no circumstances need it be returned.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-9-1928

19. MY NOTES

SAROJINI DEVI

Sarojini Devi left the shores of India last Wednesday to proceed to the United States of America. Many hope that, by establishing agencies in Europe, America and other continents or by sending our representatives there from time to time, we can present a true picture of India, to the people of the West and thereby remove the false image of our country that is being projected there, but such hopes have always been disappointed. By adopting such a course, we would be misusing public funds and the time of persons whose services could be much better utilized at home. However, if anyone's visit to the Westcan be worth while it would certainly be that of Sarojini Devi or the great poet Rabindranath Tagore. Sarojini Devi is well known in the West through her poems. She is gifted both as a poet and as an orator. She is also eminently tactful. She knows how to say the right thing at the right place and time. She has mastered the art of speaking the truth without hurting others. Wherever she goes, people are compelled to listen to her. She won the hearts of the Englishmen in South Africa by making full use of her powers there and, through her great success, smoothed the way for the delegation led by Sir Mohammed Habibullah. The task there was a difficult one. But, recognizing her own

limitations and accepting them, she avoided going into legal intricacies and adhered to the main facts; she thereby accomplished her task with fine success and raised the prestige of India. She will accomplish something of a similar nature in the U.S.A. and other countries. Her very presence there will act as a reply to the falsehoods spread by Miss Mayo. Her courage is as great as her other qualities. While going abroad she requires neither a co-worker to assist her nor a secretary. She is fearless and goes wherever she wishes to. This fearlessness of hers is not only worth emulation by other women but it even puts men to shame. We can certainly hope that her Western tour will be fruitful.

KAKA'S IMPATIENCE

While sending me the prose-poem entitled "Yamunarani", which appears in this issue over Kakasaheb's signature, he writes to say:[1]

Kakasaheb has become impatient to impart true education to Gujarat. If this was not the case, after having written in praise of Gangamaiya two years ago, and having postponed the praise of "Yamunarani" so far, why should he suddenly insist that it should be published in this very issue? Moreover, he has left me with no freedom to refuse his request, since he has declared his intention of sending Gujarati rendering of the Sanskrit verses directly to the Dress and so bound my hands. In acting in this way, Kakasaheb has presumed that I am as impatient as he for the education of Gujarat. He was entitled to do so. Shri Nagindas and Shri Punjabhai's sacrifices have made us both impatient. To me, the Vidyapith does not mean only the structure of bricks on the west hanks of the Sabarmati, or the handful of men and women students who receive a literary education and training in crafts in it. It is the task of the Vidyapith to spread true education among the old men and women and the boys and girls in villages. True education means a knowledge of one's true essence and conduct which befits such knowledge. It is Kakasaheb's aim to make such education available even to those who are illiterate. Hence this article, which was written some time ago, finds a place in *Navajivan* now. It is intended that lovers of the language and patriotic men and women would read it, understand it and persuade others to read it or explain it to them. The article is difficult for all readers to understand. The title itself is frightening. How many of us know the

[1] The letter is not translated here.

Kalindi to be the river Jamuna? Only a few persons in the villages would know the Jamuna as the Yamuna. However, as with the passing of time the patriotic sentiment grows the people will be more eager to have *darshan* of the Ganga and the Jamuna. All cannot go there, but they will get pleasure in reading such articles which will bring the Ganga and the Jamuna to their doorsteps and give them the feeling of having actually seen the rivers. The reader would earn the same merit as by bathing in the Ganga, if he purifies himself by entering into the spirit of these articles, whereas those who live on the banks of the Ganga and pollute its waters every day may be evil-doers and be piling up sins on their heads instead of accumulating merit.

To anyone who reads these articles in the spirit suggested above my advice is that he should keep a map beside him while reading them. The Vidyapith is preparing a dictionary[1] such as has never been attempted in the Gujarati language, so that such articles are easily understood. Till it is in the reader's hands, he should somehow find the meanings of words and make up his own dictionary.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, l6-9-l928

20. BLIND FAITH

It is the khadi cause that Shri Harjivan Kotak is serving on behalf of the Charkha Sangh in Srinagar, the capital of Kashmir. But the heart of a khadi worker certainly melts at the sight of misery wherever he sees it. Hence, when the pilgrims to Amarnath suffered hardships due to excessive rain, he sent me a telegram. when I asked for details, I received the following reply':[2]

What a contrast between Amarnath and lorries! There was a time when pilgrims travelled on foot from Kanyakumari to Kashmir and then, after suffering many hardships, ascended Amarnath. Even in those days, there was danger to life. We have no figures about the number of people who in those days lost their dear lives while in quest of religious merit, as there were no figures about other things. That was a true pilgrimage.

[1] *Sarth Jodanikosh*

[2] This is not translated here. About 5,000 men, women and children, going on a pilgrimage to Amarnath, were caught in torrential rains which lasted a week and disrupted all communications.

Today, motor-lorries unload pilgrims at the foothills of Amarnath, just as they would unload goods and the pilgrims on their part regard it as a meritorious deed to travel in such comfort. The remaining distance has to be covered by foot or on horseback and this the pilgrims somehow manage to do. They would readily accept if anyone was prepared to carry them right up to their destination or go in an aeroplane if it would take them straight to the top of Amarnath.

Thus, human beings, while hankering after comforts, undergo hardships and even court death yielding to religious sentiments. This involves blind faith. Such faith craves for happiness but is prepared to undergo hardships, whereas pure, genuine faith finds happiness in undergoing physical suffering and hence it realizes that, while reaching Amarnath by aeroplane satisfies one's curiosity, it cannot be called a pilgrimage. Those having genuine faith would go walking barefoot and would disregard thorns, heat or cold, the danger from tigers or wolves and even though they might not reach Amarnath, they would acquire the same merit. Although the four ways of travelling by plane, by car, by train or on foot are open to them, they would feel happy in choosing the fourth alternative. When people acquire such determination, their dharma would acquire an altogether new form. Then it would make no distinction between the pilgrimage to Amarnath and that to swaraj. They would regard it as a religious merit to suffer hardships while going to Amarnath and also regard it as such to be sent to the gallows for the sake of swaraj. Those who retreat do not know their dharma.

A servant of the people has before him the unlimited field of the people's faith through which he can serve them. Vallabhbhai has discovered this. He taught the people that it was their dharma to offer non-violent resistance to the Government. The people were attracted by the word dharma; they truly found their dharma in *satyagraha* and they understood the true meaning of pilgrimage. True pilgrimage is within the heart, it consists in cheerfully accepting and enduring hardships.

The reader will see that I have not asked for help for relieving the suffering of the pilgrims to Amarnath and I have not even expressed sympathy for them. There is no possibility of any assistance reaching them; whatever little could be given would have been locally available. Those who have lost their lives are gone and those who have survived will be safe when they reach the foothills. The incident that

took place at Amarnath is a common occurrence to those people who climb great mountain-peaks.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-9-l928

21. HOW TO CELEEBRATE FESTIVALS

On the occasion of the festival of *Paryushan* two gentlemen from Bombay have sent me a bill of exchange worth Rs. 75, for being utilized in any good cause. This sum will be used for the benefit of our *Antyaja* brothers and sisters. While celebrating festivals, we generally waste money on ourselves, on indulging in pleasures, on good food and drink for ourselves and our friends. Instead of that, it is better to follow the practice adopted by these gentlemen and others mentioned in *Navajivan*. Our dharma as well as our wealth, our self-interest as well as the public good would be better served if the whole or part of the amount spent on pomp and feasts during deaths, marriages, births, etc., is saved and a half of this is given away for the service of the community. Many people are prevented from doing so only by fear of public opinion. It is to be hoped that those who are not afraid of the bogy of public opinion and have understood what I have said will follow the example mentioned above.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-9-l928

22. NOTE TO CHAND TYAGI

September 16 [*1928*][1]

It is better to die rather than ever to forsake truth.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3271

[1] As in the G.N. register.

23. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

ASHRAW, SABARMATI
September 17, 1928

VALLABHBHAI PATEL
HOTEL CECIL, SIMLA

LYALLPUR PEOPLE SAY YOU HAVE AGREED PRESIDE[1] IF I CONSENT. HAVE NO IRREVOCABLE OBJECTION IF YOU THANK YOU CAN SPARE TIME AND HAVE INCLINATION.

BAPU

Frog a photostat: S.N. 14863

24. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, PUNJAB POLITICAL CONFERENCE

ASHRAM, SABARMATI
September 18, 1928

SECRETARY
PUNJAB POLITICAL CONFERENCE
LYALLPUR

YOUR WIRE. WIRED[2] VALLABHBHAI WHO SAYS HE HAS NEITHER INCLINATION G NOR TIME PRESIDE. AM POWERLESS UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 14864

25. LETTER TO SATIS DAS GUPTA

September 18, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letters. I say nothing more, as I expect we shall meet on 25th.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1596

[1] Over the Punjab Political Conference
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

26. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 18, 1928

CHI. DEVDAS,

When I address someone with 'thou' in speaking, it is even more appropriate and expressive of love to do so in letters also. That is why sometimes you cease to be 'you' and become 'thou'. True love does not speak and often does not even act, and yet it cannot but be felt. Though I thus know that 'you' and 'thou' are mere external forms, I have adopted a certain style of addressing persons in letters which I have now started following in writing to you children, too.

It is quite true that these days my letters have ceased to be letters. Both physically and mentally I am so much tied up that I am unable to see even the people in the Ashram whom I want to see. And writing letters gets indefinitely postponed. Today I have put off writing several important letters and am devoting the little time left before the prayers to writing this.

In my quest for truth I have realized that as for me I can find it only through experience, that is, not by giving up action in the world but by remaining non-violent while continually engaged in action. I have been utterly drained in getting the recent changes in the Ashram adopted. You know very well how much I am interested in women's progress. But except for two or three there were no women staying in the Ashram of their own choice. Even those who do cannot be said to understand even cursorily the rules of the Ashram. Do all the men do so?

Then what can we expect about the deeper meaning of the rules? Even I who was the author of the rules do not know their full meaning, though I am realizing it more and more clearly every day. Thinking over the problem and discussing it, I saw that in following and enforcing the rules and building up the Ashram we have, unknowingly and unintentionally but most certainly, oppressed the women. They could neither leave their husbands nor the Ashram. Though perfectly willing to stay, they are equally unable to observe the rules.

It seemed to be a sin to show the slightest leniency in the observance of the rules if the Ashram continued in its original form. I regard the rules that have been framed as essential elements of

Satyagraha. In fact they have been kept a little mild so that they are within the capacity of all. Hence, as we progress towards truth, these rules should be made more stringent. I therefore felt that if we wished to keep the women with us, the Satyagraha Ashram must take a different form. Hence the Ashram will now remain only as a symbol and an ideal in our minds without any external activities. The Ashram has been therefore handed over to the new agency that has been created. The Ashram land also will be transferred to it at a nominal rent. The Ashram will thus exist at present in an almost invisible form. But as the burden on the others will in this way be lightened, that on those who have taken the vows will increase, for even in the new Udyog Mandir it is the same persons who will be working. They will have to be guardians of the vows and make their contribution to the Udyog Mandir in that spirit. The underlying hope is that if the Ashram inmates have the true spirit of the Ashram in them, the Udyog Mandir itself will be reborn as a more perfect institution. This is enough for the present, as I must now leave for the prayer.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/4

27. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

September 19, 1928

DEAR SISTER,

I have read the Khan Bahadur's letter. You should send him the following reply:

'Gandhi says that although he takes the deepest interest in the subject, he does not think that any useful purpose can be served by his expressing an opinion on the questions asked.'[1]

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11131. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

28. PRISON TREATMENT

The Director of Information in his communique dated 12th September, 1928, has attempted a reply to the article[2] in *Young India*

[1] This is in English.
[2] *Vide* "Our Jails", 16-8-1928.

of 16th August regarding the food served out to prisoners at the Sabarmati Central Jail. He boldly says that these statements are incorrect. It is perfectly clear from the communique that he has not made the inquiry himself but his opinion is based upon the statements supplied to him by the very parties who are accused of neglect. It is unnecessary for me to refute the statement that the health statistics in the prisons of India compare favourably with the statistics of the population living outside. This is an admitted fact, for the simple reason that the laws of sanitation are undoubtedly better enforced in the prisons than outside. But better sanitation does not prove more humaneness or more consideration for the prisoners. My point is that there is absence of the human touch about the whole of the prison system. And it seems to me to be wholly beside the point to mention that the general health of the inmates of prisons is better than outside, and I claim that even this statement becomes untenable when applied to the class of prisoners from whom satyagrahis are drawn. It was open to the Director to say, if he had so chosen, that the satyagrahis knew that there would be no humanity to be found inside the prison walls. Statements such as I made in the article in question had point. Because the claim is often made that the prisoners in Indian prisons are treated humanely and that as much consideration as is possible to give to prisoners is given in these jails.

With regard to the specific statements made in the Director's communique I can only give extracts from the statements made by the released prisoners, every one of whom I hold to be far more reliable than all the jail authorities put together. The statements were made by the satyagrahis on their discharge from the jail in reply to my request about the treatment, and when I saw with my own eyes the shattered constitution of Sjt. Chinai whom I knew to be in possession of excellent health and when I saw a Vidyapith lad Dinkar suffering from an obstinate fever which, but for the extraordinarily good nursing and able medical aid he had the good fortune to receive after being discharged from the prison, might have proved fatal.

I shall take the first extract from the statement made by Sjt. Sanmukhlal, a well-known man of Valod who got dysentery twice as a result of bad food:

> The greens served out were wretched beyond description.... *Luni* simply stank in one's nostrils so much so that I had to discontinue taking it. When it was exhausted, radishes and a hotchpotch of dry leaves like those of cabbage,

etc., were substituted in its place with the result that soon after many prisoners began to suffer from bowel complaints in large numbers. But nobody could muster sufficient courage to lodge a complaint about it to the Superintendent. I even heard from some prisoners that one of the prisoners was given bar-fetters for several months for making such a complaint....

Things improved a little after some time.... Pumpkin and onions and later *turiya* and *gowar* were introduced in the vegetable fare; the *gowar* and *turiya* were hard and stringy being over-ripe, but even so were picked out and regarded by the prisoners as a delicacy.

The *juwar* bread was only half-baked and so full of grit that it could hardly be chewed and had to be swallowed. This was especially the case when the grinding stones of the flour mills were freshly dented. As a result of this food I got dysentery, almost half of our number sharing the same fate with me.

Sjt. C. L. Chinai in his statement repeats the same story:

The food did not agree with me and I began to get stomach-ache and finally had diarrhoea, sometimes getting as many as 30 or 35 motions in a day. Whenever I took the greens they invariably gave me darrohea. Thus I began fast to lose my weight. When I complained about it to the doctor he said that I should give up taking the greens if I wanted to keep fit, which I did and from that time till the end remained on bread and water only. I did not complain about it to the Superintendent because he never paid any heed to the complaints of the prisoners regarding food. I even heard that there had been cases of prisoners being punished for making such complaints. Therefore nobody dared to take the matters before the authorities.

Even Sjt. Ravishankar Vyas with his iron constitution was driven to say in his statement:

The greens consisted of dry, tough, Ieathbry leaves with an admixture of pumpkin. To eat it was to court certain stomach-ache.

Sjt. Chinai was given hard labour beyond his capacity and consequently he had attacks of giddiness, but for twenty days hecould not get the medicine that he needed. He lost over 20 lb in weight during his incarceration. Similarly, Govind Gosain who was already in a poor state of health when he was sentenced came out of jail in such a weak condition that he could scarcely keep steady on his legs.

I have given only the briefest extracts from the statements in my possession. If the authorities are serious, I shall have much pleasure to send them all the statements and any further proof that they may need. Refutations such as the Director of Information has made, I feel sure, carry no weight with the public, certainly do not improve the

condition of the prisoners, nor make for humaneness in the prisons. The first condition of humaneness is a little humility and a little diffidence about the correctness of one's conduct and a little receptiveness. One misses all the three in the Director's refutation.

Young India, 20-9-1928

29. HOW I DISCOVERED THE SPINNING-WHEEL

A friend who has been studying the All-India Spinners' Association organization after having studied a centre in Karaikudi (Tamilnad) writes:

> This (Uttukuli) is a heavy production centre for hand-spinning and weaving. I have half picked up this work here. There are about a thousand spinners. I have gone about the villages and met many of them in their own little cottages. Every day that passes makes me marvel the more as to how you discovered the spinning-wheel. I am very much tempted to ask if you could not kindly tell in the pages of Young India when and how exactly you re-discovered the wheel. It is so little and so big at the same time. It reminds me of the rain drops—each so tiny by itself but together "the mighty ocean". Nothing is more wrong than to think that you have asked India to spin and that India has begun to spin driven to do so by you. The truth is rather that the millions in the villages have driven you to it—to be their agent for disposing of all their yarn. I am daily watching crowds of old women and girls coming with their yarn. They come with smiling faces, their precious yarn clutched to their hearts. And khadi is retouching slowly into life just those vital parts of our national being that have been touched almost into death by this most soulless of exploitations. I realize now as never before the truth of your words when you said that the world would some day accept khadi as the noblest of your works.

He is right when he says that the toiling, starving millions drove me to it. It was in London in 1909[1] that I discovered the wheel. I had gone there leading a deputation from South Africa. It was then that I came in close touch with many earnest Indians—students and others. We had many long conversations about the condition of India and I saw as in a flash that without the spinningwheel there was no swaraj. I knew at once that everyone had to spin. But I did not then know the distinction between the loom and the wheel and in *Hind Swaraj*[2] used

[1] The source has "1908".
[2] *Vide* "Hind Swaraj", 22-11-1909.

the word loom to mean the wheel. This is what I have said in the concluding chapter of the I booklet:

> We will get nothing by asking; we shall have to take what we want, and we need the requisite strength for the effort and that strength will be available to him only who:
>
> 2. if a lawyer, will give up his profession, and take up a handloom (spinning-wheel);
>
> 8. although a doctor, will take up a handloorn (spinning-wheel);
>
> 10 if a wealthy man will devote his money to establishing hand looms (spinning-wheels). and encourage others to use hand-made goods by wearing them himself.

The words are as true today as they were in 1909 when the booklet was written. Today not only are lawyers, doctors and others spinning by way of sacrifice but they are also organizing the movement. But alas, they are yet far too few for the purpose of waking the millions from their helpless lethargy. The vast majority are still standing aside. I-hey seem to be waiting for a catastrophe greater than the one that is happening in front of them. They seem to await the simultaneous destruction of millions to produce in them a shock that would move them to action. Be that as it may, there is no organic swaraj until the starving millions feel its glow. They will not feel it until the living contact is established between them and us the vocal class who literally bleed them in order that we may live.

But to return to the wheel. Though the wheel was discovered to the mental vision in 1909, it saw work only in 1918, after three years' patient and strenuous effort. The first khadi vow (very much adulte-rated to suit the fashionable sisters of Bombay) was taken in 1919[1]. The wheel found a place in the Congress programme in 192l[2]. The history of the movement since then is an open book still being written in the lives of the two thousand odd organizers and nearly seventy thousand spinners in whose lives the wheel has brought a ray of hope. Were we not under the hypnotic and desolating spell of the city civilization, we would realize through our hearts that only a little combined, conscious and honest effort in the shape of work is required to take the wheel to every cottage in India. Multiply the return of one wheel by say one hundred million and the result will

[1] *Vide* "The Swadeshi Vow", 13-5-1919

[2] *Vide* "Working Committee's Resolutions at Bardoli", 12-2-1922

convince the most confirmed un-believer of its potency. But probably he will refuse to be willing and say:"What you say is true as an arithmetical problem, it is wholly untrue as a practical proposition" You can only take a willing horse to the trough. But a true spinner must have unlimited patience. He does not give in. The answer to the question propounded by the friend therefore perhaps should be:"The wheel is still being discovered." I know that it shall be one day, for there are some in this country who are prepared to pay for the discovery with their lives.

Young India, 20-9-1928

30. COW-PROTECTION TRUE AND FALSE

I commend this powerfully written article[1] to the attention of everyone who would know the inwardness of cow-worship in India.

Young India, 20-9-1928

31. MY NOTES

Thursday [*September 20, 1928*]

HINDU-MUSLIM FIGHT IN GODHRA

On Wednesday, I received a postcard from Godhra informing me that, in the fighting that took place there between Hindus and Muslims on the occasion of the *Paryushan* festival, Shri Wamanrao Mukadam, Shri Purushottamdas Shah and some other Hindus have been seriously injured. Today, that is, on Thursday, at the time of writing this, I received a telegram informing me of Shri Purushottamdas's death. I am aware of my inability to do anything besides expressing my sympathy to the bereaved family and I am sorry on this account. Hence 1 write nothing these days on this subject near my heart. I do not believe I have the right to say anything on it. I have come to the conclusion that the medicine I have is wanted by neither side. I have no other medicine with me except non-violence and love. At present it is not possible for me to explain the efficacy of this medicine to anyone. Hence I believe and am aware that silence is proper for me. My silence is my sole contribution to the efforts for

[1] By Pyarelal. For extracts, *vide* "Cow-Protection True and False", 20-9-1928

unity. But this silence does not mean indifference. As I believe in prayer, I ceaselessly pray to God to give wisdom to both the communities and ordain that unity of hearts be established among them. If this prayer is sincere, I am bound sooner or later to find some means of ending this enmity.

DISCOUNT IN KHADI PRICES FOR A LIMITED PERIOD

The organizer of the Shuddha Khadi Bhandar on Ritchie Road in Ahmedabad writes to say that khadi will be sold at a reduced rate as follows[1] from the 10th to the 20th of October:

Besides these, some other varieties such as shawls, saris, prints, towels, handkerchiefs, dhotis, caps, fine as well as coarse khadi of small and large widths and woollen material of various types will be sold at a discount ranging from 6_% to 12_%.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-9-1928

32. TELEGRAM TO AMRITLAL THAKKAR

[*September 20, 1928*][2]

AMRITLAL THAKKAR

GODHRA

DEEPLY DISTRESSED SHAH'S DEATH PRAY CONVEY CONDOLENCE FAMILY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 14776

33. CABLE TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

[*September 20, 1928*][3]

RIGHT HONOURABLE SASTRI

PRETORIA

PRAY INTEREST YOURSELF ABOOBAKER'S PRETORIA

[1] The table of rates is not reproduced here.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] From a typewritten copy (S.N. 11987)

PROPEPRTY. OMER JHAVERI HIS BROTHER WILL SEE YOU. PROPERTY WAS MATTER PUBLIC SETTLEMENT OF 1908. IT MUST BE PRESERVED FOR HEIRS AND SUCCESSORS.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 11961

34. CABLE TO OMER JHAVERI

[*September 20, 1928*]

OMER JHAVERI

DURBAN

CABLED SASTRIJI. SEE HIM.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 11961

35. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 21, 1928

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letters. I am not taking any interest in the Statutory Commission. I see no truthfulness about anything emanating from the Commission. Sir John Simon's letters have a false ring about them) and if he is not wilfully untruthful, he is certainly kept absolutely in the dark about the true nature of things.

Mahadev is returning today from Simla. I am glad he had a little bit of rest and detachment from the routine work. In Simla, of course, he wrote the chapters for his forthcoming book on Bardoli.

Vallabhbhai too is returning today from Simla, as also Swami. They were all however fed up with the Simla atmosphere.

Devdas is in Delhi. Krishnadas is with Ram Binod in Bihar. Pyarelal and Subbiah are here. Mirabehn goes next week on a brief tour. She wants to see the khadi depots. I do hope you will not overwork

yourself there;

Here are some letters received from Italy.

Love.

MOHAN

C. F. ANDREWS, ESQ.

112 GOWER STREET, LONDON, W.C. 1

From a photostat: G.N. 2630

36. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 21, 1928

MY DEAR JAYAEKAR,

I have your letter. Mahadev has talked to me about the offer made to you. He sent me a brief letter also but asked me to wait till his arrival before I replied. I am able therefore to sleep over the thing and after the fullest consideration have come to the conclusion that you should not accept the offer. I am of opinion that the Viceroy should consult Sastri[1] himself as to his successor; but if he does not do so, Maharaja Kunwar Singh should go. It is a most difficult job and can only be filled by one who has the conviction that connection with the British Empire is good and should last. It is difficult to explain the reasons behind this proposition, but I am sure you will have no difficulty in understanding my viewpoint.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 1995

37. LETTER TO E. C. DEWICK

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 21, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and copies of the July and the April numbers of the *Student World.*

I note what you say about the Conference[2] at Mysore in Decem-

[1] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, Agent-General of Government of India in South Africa

[2] Of the World's Student Christian Federation

ber. I am yet unable to give you any definite reply. And, of course, I have warned you against building anything on the hope of my being able to attend the Conference.

Yours sincerely,

REV. E. C. DEWICK
5 RUSSELL ROAD, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13529

38. LETTER TO CHOITHRAM P. GIDWANI

September 21, 1928

DEAR DR. CHOITHRAM,

It is impossible for me to move out of the Ashram at the present moment and Vallabhbhai's hands are really full. In my opinion, it is better to spare Vallabhbhai just now. Let him work up the constructive programme in Bardoli. It is really more difficult than the struggle with the Government. All the same I shall put your letter before Vallabhbhai and ask him to write to you.

Yours sincerely,

DR. CHOITHRAM P. GIDWANI
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat: S.N. 13530

39. LETTER TO DHANWANTRI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 21, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letters. The message that I can send to the Students' Union is:

"Do not fear the Government or any other power that may come in your way. Go forward and build a strong link between yourself and the toiling millions who do not even know the meaning of the word education."

Yours sincerely,

SJT. DHANWANTRI
SECRETARY, LAHORE STUDENTS UNION, LAHORE

From a photostat: S.N. 13531

40. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

September 21, 1928

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS,

I have your postcard. . .[1] is a scamp. He is not truthful when he says that he has walked all the way from here to Calcutta to meet you. He has been going to several places; among them was Brindaban from where he wrote saying that he was practically fixed up. He is good-hearted but he is thoroughly untrustworthy.

I showed your letter[2] about Ram Binod to Rajendra Babu who was here on his return from Europe. He is of opinion that some step will be necessary.

SJT. KRISHNADAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 13689

41. LETTER TO AMY TURTORE

September 21, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter as also the beautiful piece of linen. Here is a sample of what is being done here.

I thank you also for your prayers. I am forwarding our correspondence to Mr. Andrews.[3]

Yours sincerely,

M. AMY TURTORE
CAMOLLIA, 47 SIENA, ITALY

From a microfilm: S.N. 14398

42. LETTER T0 JETHALAL JOSHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 21, 1928

BHAI JETHALAL,

The means of overcoming desire explained in the *Gita* is God's grace, and that is obtained through worship of Him.

[1] Name omitted
[2] Dated August 30; *vide* "Letter to Krishnadas", 10-9-1928.
[3] *Vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 21-9-1928.

About your intention to join the Vidyapith, you should meet Kakasaheb. The highest salary it pays is Rs. 75. If you can live within that figure, perhaps Kakasaheb can accommodate you. According to me, you cannot live in the Ashram unless you agree to observe *brahmacharya*.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1344

43. LETTER TO J. S. AKARTE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 22, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. There is no doubt about it that the more young men stand up against child-marriage and enforce their opposition whenever they get an opportunity, the sooner the evil will be removed. I have so often noticed this matter in the pages of young India that I do not think it necessary to deal with the special case of your caste.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. J. S. AKARTE
SENIOR B.A. CLASS, HISLOP COLLEGE, NAGPUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 13532

44. LETTER TO N. LAKSHMI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 22, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. For the present I can only suggest to you that you should continue your reading of the *Gitanjali*, and add to it a brief reading of the *Gita.*

Your questions do not need any answer if you are a regular reader of *Young India*.

Yours sincerely,

SRIMATI N. LAKSHMI
MEDICAL SCHOOL, VELLORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 13533

45. LETTER TO RAMANAND CHATTERJEE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 22, 1928

DEAR RAMANAND BABU,

I thank you for your letter. I am ashamed to have to confess that I have not yet been able to approach Dr. Sunderland's manuscript. I have kept it on my desk and it always stares me in the face. But I do not know when I shall be able to go through it.

I will keep the corrections you have sent me with manuscript.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RAMANAND CHATTERJEE
EDITOR, "MODERN REVIEW"
91 UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13534

46. LETTER TO BHOGILAL

September 22, 1928

BHAISHRI BHOGILAL,

This is my argument, in the fewest possible words, about my deliberately killing the calf.[1]

1. The calf was in great pain. It had been under doctors' treatment and they had given up all hopes. We could give it no help. Four or five men were required to turn it on its side, and even then this caused it pain. In this condition, I thought that dharma lay in killing it.

2. I see dharma in applying to human beings, in similar circumstances, the rule which I apply to other creatures. There are fewer occasions of acting in that way towards human beings, because we have more means of helping them and more knowledge for doing so. But history tells of occasions, and we can imagine others, in which there might be non-violence in killing a person, in the same way that there is non-violence in an operation performed by a surgeon.

3. The argument that he who cannot create life has no right to destroy it and that no one can violate another's dharma does not apply in a case like this. That argument can be advanced only for the

[1] *Vide* "The Fiery Ordeal". 30-9-1928.

purpose of preventing violence, that is, cruelty. It may be itself an act of violence to advance such an argument to a person about whose non-violent motives we have no doubt at all, for it is likely to confuse the reason of such a person if he is not vigilant enough and may dissuade him from performing an act of non-violence.

4. It is necessary to bear three points in mind in order to understand the non-violence of the act in question: (I) It is ignorance to believe that every act of killing is violence. (2) As there is violence in killing, so also there is violence in inflicting what we regard as lesser suffering. (3) Violence and non-violence are mental attitudes, they concern the feelings in our heart. A slap given through anger is pure violence, whereas a slap given to a person bitten by a snake to keep him awake is pure non-violence.

Many other arguments can be deduced from this. If you wish to ask me any question exclusively concerning dharma, please do. You can use this letter in any place and in any manner you wish to. My only aim in life is to discover dharma, know it and follow it. I do not wish to breathe a single moment if I cannot do that.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 11811

47. ATROCITIES BY OFFICIALS

A correspondent from Dholka writes:[1]

Such atrocities should be a matter of surprise, if not in India, at any rate in Gujarat. It is in the fitness of things that the Dholka Taluk Committee has undertaken the task of putting an end to the atrocities of the police. The Congress Committees are committed to such work. However, it is the least part of the work of these committees to register a complaint before the collector or to go to the law-courts and demand justice. However, where this becomes inevitable, such work may certainly be done. The real task to be done is to follow the example of Bardoli. That is to say, to live among the people and give them training in fearlessness. Such training cannot be imparted by

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that an orphan lad suspected of theft was severely beaten by the police. Farmers were harassed in order to extort tax. When the incidents were reported to the authorities the people did not come forward to tell the truth.

means of speeches alone, but by being fearless oneself and infecting the others with such fearlessness. In order that this feeling may spread, some kind of useful constructive activity must be carried on amidst the people, without which one cannot come into contact with them, enter into their lives and win their confidence. The fact that khadi activity is the most effective one for coming into contact with every family living within one's area is becoming increasingly clear every day. While carrying on such activity, one must come into contact with the talati and the police as well. Since they too wear clothes, the message of khadi should reach them also. The atrocities of the police and the talatis can be ended by an appeal to their hearts. Such atrocities will not be averted if one policeman or talati is punished. However, a change may be brought about in their conduct if they are made aware of the fact that although they hold the posts of policeman or talati, they are nevertheless the friends or rather the servants of the people. The local police and the talati of Bardoli became friendly with the people as soon as the latter became fearless. Boycott is a much better weapon of non-co-operation than either punishment or complaint; however, this weapon should be used only by those who know no fear. Hence I would request the Dholka Taluk Committee to continue their task of seeking justice from the law-courts or the collector if they regard this as inevitable but, at the same time, vigorously and patiently to take up the task of making the people fearless. It will find from experience while doing so that office work and constructive work cannot be combined. In trying to do the one, the other will have to be given up. It is perhaps necessary to introduce well-known leaders to the people in cases where the latter feel suppressed and timid.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-9-1928

48. POLICY OF MAKING KHADI SELF-SUPPORTING

I would like to draw the attention of readers to the article entitled "Khadi Work in Bijolia" appearing in this issue. It has been published as it was sent by Shri Jethalal with no changes—except for a few minor verbal changes. I hope no one will be scared by the length of the article. Shri Jethalal is one of the very few persons among us who are crazy about khadi. By this word, the *Gita* implies one who

loses one's heart and soul in one's work. The country is in dire need of persons who are wholly dedicated to the work which they have taken up as a form of public service. Moreover, in this field we have achieved success sooner in Bijolia than elsewhere. It is the duty of every worker in the cause of khadi to know how and to what extent this success has been achieved. I have published the entire article for this reason. The reader will see clearly that at the root of the success of this work lie unflinching devotion to khadi and the resultant patience and determination. The following portion of the article deserves to be noted by everybody.

> It must be stated here that we had decided to practise such discipline as if we had gone crazy about khadi, or that we did not know or understand anything except khadi. The people did not welcome the preaching of khadi; they would hesitate to commit themselves as it was something which involved action. We saw with our own eyes conditions which deprived one of one's humanity—disease, immorality and social and political unrest. As soon as we stopped talking about our subject and the conversation turned to other subjects, we ceased to take any interest in it. We used to think that the strength of our argument regarding khadi would be lost if we took interest in other matters.

It is only such devoted persons who joyfully put up with "the cold of a winter morning, the fierce heat of a summer afternoon, and the continuous downpour during the monsoon as well as knee-deep mud" that can take the message of khadi to the people. In the words of Shri Jethalal, the leisure hours of the farmer are the ''active season" for khadi workers and the success of the task depends upon doing what has to be done just in that particular season.

[From Gujarati]

Navajavan, 23-9-1928

49. NATIONAL SCHOOL AT BOMBAY

The handful of national schools which have survived in the country are comely to the eyes of a spectator even as a little lake would look beautiful in a dry arid desert. The national school at Bombay is one of these. That school has had to function in the face of many difficulties, which persist even today. The chief among them is lack of funds. There are difficulties in the way of the Vidyapith subsidizing these schools wholly under strict rules. It has been a

policy of the Vidyapith not to provide any aid to schools where the teachers are unable to collect funds. If the Vidyapith itself is to become self-supporting at any time, it will have to be increasingly strict in its adherence to this rule. It is necessary to understand the meaning of the word "self-supporting" in this context. It implies a school which can meet its own expenses with ease on the strength of the reputation enjoyed by its Principal and the other teachers. The best form of self-support is for the students of such national schools to earn through their own efforts enough to meet the expenses of their schools. Such self-support is not beyond my visualization. In the United States of America, innumerable students earn enough to pay their fees and their schools subsist upon them. In India, many schools running under Government patronage bear their own expenses and those who run them earn fairly good money. The reason for this is obvious. Government-sponsored education has a set market value and the demand for this education exceeds the Government's capacity or intention to provide it. National education has yet to have its market-value determined. If this had been done, we would have been enjoying swaraj today. However, the "self support" that I visualize is higher than that of the schools which are run under Government patronage, as it is also distinct from that which is to be found in the U.S.A.

This country needs an industrial climate. In the education of this country, the vocational aspect should constitute its dominant part. When this takes place, the students who will go on learning a craft will support their schools through it. Shri Madhusudan Das had conceived such a plan with regard to his tannery in Cuttack. The plan was a fine one. But it did not materialize as the prevailing atmosphere in the country provided no encouragement to vocational training or a tannery. Why should not carpentry be an indispensable part of our higher education? Education without a knowledge of weaving would be comparable to the solar system without the sun. Where such trades are being properly learnt, the students should be able to meet the expenses of their own schools. For this scheme to succeed, the students should have physical strength, will-power and a favourable atmosphere created by the teachers. If a weaver could become a Kabir, why cannot other weavers become, if not Kabirs, at any rate, Gidwanis, Kripalanis or Kalelkars? If a cobbler could become a Shakespeare, why cannot other cobblers become, if not great poets, at any rate, experts in the fields of chemistry, economics and such other subjects?

It is very necessary to understand that, by regarding vocational training as something that is opposed to intellectual education, we are labouring under a great misapprehension and that thereby we are retarding the progress of the people. The Vidyapith has taken in hand the task of explaining this fact. In the mean time, those who have faith in national education should help institutions like the national school in Bombay to the best of their ability. And if the citizens of Bombay will not provide this help, who else will? I hope that no one will excuse himself on the ground that business in Bombay is slack. The citizens of Bombay may be suffering from many shortcomings, but I have not yet discerned in them that of miserliness. Hence I hope that the patriotic citizens of Bombay will fill Acharya Gokulbhai's purse and free him from worries.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-9-1928

50. COMMUNITY FEASTS

Shri Manilal Chhatrapati writes from Jambusar to say that on the occasion of a *simant* in his family, he finally gathered the courage not to hold a feast for his own caste-members. I congratulate him on it. Such courage in Congress workers should not be regarded as a matter of surprise. There is only one thing that is required for developing such courage: Disregard of or unconcern at being declared outcaste. To be excommunicated implies that one cannot attend caste-feasts, etc., and one cannot marry one's sons or daughters within that caste. When we wish to boycott all feasts, we should consider ourselves fortunate if we receive no invitations at all. Moreover, if one's sons and daughters cannot be betrothed within one caste, cast barriers can readily be broken down. If the country is to rise, those barriers have necessarily to be done away with. Hence reformers like Shri Manilal Chhatrapati need fear nothing. These feasts reduce civilized persons to the level of aborigines, they are a crushing burden for the poor and are a blot on our country. The fact that even those who are well off long for these feasts is something certainly unbecoming. Hence, with more reformers like Manilal Chhatrapati, these customs will gradually decline. A portion of the money that is saved on such feasts should be used by reformers for public service and in the wholesome service of those who wish to remain within the bounds of the caste. Wherever the

mahajan acts out of ignorance, it forfeits its high status and no longer deserves respect. Hence those who give donations must be careful to see that the amount given for reforms within the caste is properly utilized.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-9-1928

51. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 23, 1928

BHAISHRI NANABHAI,

I have your letter. I cannot decide which day is my birthday. Formerly there was only one day, now there are many days. According to the Tilak calendar, the birthday falls on a particular date. I did not know about this at all. According to the Christian calendar, it falls on another date. According to the Sanatana, the Saur and the Sayan calendars, it falls on still other dates. And yet more methods of reckoning may be discovered in future. If everyone would celebrate the day by spinning, as you do, I would not grumble even if every day was my birthday. Bombay does not seem to agree with Kishorelal. Manilal and Sushila seem to be completely absorbed in each other in Phoenix.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6676

52. LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI

SABARMATI,
September 24, 1928

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Mahadev has just returned from Simla. He tells me you have written in the papers that I sought by every means at my disposal to keep Shuaib out from the Nehru Committee. I have not been following the disputes between you and Dr. Ansari. I have read and that cursorily only one of your letters to the Press. Hence my missing the above titbit. Well, it is news to me that I tried to keep Shuaib out. I do

not even remember what I said about him and others. All I know is that I never dreamt of keeping Shuaib out of anything. I have too much regard for his honesty and independence to wish to keep him out. And you ought to know my nature. I never even keep out opponents and if I want to, I say so. What led you to think that I wanted to keep Shuaib out with a purpose?

If it is merely a matter of feeling, time alone coupled with my own future conduct can cure you of the feeling.

Having heard the story from Mahadev, I thought I owed it to you to set you right, if my word could do so.

1 must confess that the only letter of yours to Dr. Ansari that I read, I did not like at all. I thought it was so unnecessary. But I did not feel it right to say anything to you about it. I know you to be too good not to make amends if and when you see your error. Even your errors make you lovable so long as I retain the opinion which I do, that you are truthful and fear God. Why should I worry over what I may hold to be your error, seeing that I err often enough and need the indulgence of friends and foes alike?

With love,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13692

53. TELEGRAM TO SHYAMNARAIN[1]

[*September 25, 1928*]

SHYAMNARAIN

PROSECUTING INSPECTOR, MEERUT CITY

ARRIVED SAFE. DETAINING PENDING YOUR ARRIVAL.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 14780

[1] In reply to his telegram dated September 25, which read: "My son Sarupnarain aged eighteen thin sallow left college. Please detain. Coming."

54. TELEGRAM TO CHOITHRAM P. GIDWANI[1]

[*September 25, 1928*]

DR. CHOITHRAM
HYDERABAD (SIND)
VALLABHBHAI GONE BARDOLI. DIFFICULT LEAVE POST.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 14781

55. LETTER TO KANTI PAREKH

Wednesday [On or before *September 26, 1928*][2]

CHI. KANTI,

Newspapers declared you dead and Kishorelalbhai also believed you to be dead. Ramdas will read out to you his letter accompanying this, or, if you are able to read, you may do so yourself. It will make you laugh, but at the same time prove Kishorelalbhai's prediction about you true. Chhaganbhai also has believed you to be an ideal student of the Ashram. You know that I have hesitated to believe so. But my hesitation can make no difference to my love for you. We all very much wish that you may live long and be an ideal man and ideal servant. You certainly have the strength to become one.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6268

56. 'STARTLING CONCLUSIONS'

William R. Thurston, according to the publisher's preface, was a Major in the United States army, which he served for nearly ten years. And, during these years, he had varied experiences in several parts of

[1] In reply to his telegram dated September 25, which read: "Letter received. Request spare Vallabhbhaiji for a day only."

[2] From the contents, this and the following letter appear to have been written before the one to the addressee and to Kalyanji Mehta dated October 2, 1928; *vide* "Letter to Kalyanji Mehta and Kanti", 2-10-1928 and "Extracts from Letter to Kalyanji Mehta", 3-10-1928 The Wednesday preceding was September 26.

the world, including China. During his travels he studied the effects of marriage laws and customs, as a result of which he felt the call to write a book on marriage. This book which is called *Thurston's Philosophy of Marriage* and was published last year by the Tiffany Press, New York, contains only 32 pages of bold type, and can be read inside of an hour. The author has not entered into an elaborate argument but has simply set forth his conclusion with just a dash of argument to support his conclusions which the publisher truly describes as "startling". In his foreword, the author claims to have based his conclusions on "personal observation, data obtained from physicians, statistics of social hygiene and medical statistics," compiled during the War. His conclusions are:

> 1. That Nature never intended a woman to be bound to a man for life, and to be compelled to occupy tie same bed or habitation with him, night after night, in pregnancy and out, in order to earn her board and lodging, and to exercise her natural right to bear children.
>
> 2. That the daily and nightly juxtaposition of the male and female, which is a result of present marriage laws and customs, leads to unrestrained sexual intercourse, which perverts the natural instincts of both male and female, and makes partial prostitutes of 90% of all married women. This condition arises from the fact that married women have been led to believe that such prostitution of themselves is right and natural because it is legal, and that it is necessary in order to retain the affections of their husbands.

The author then goes on to describe the effects of continual ''unrestrained sexual intercourse" which I epitomize as follows:

> (a) It causes the woman to become highly nervous, prematurely aged, diseased, irritable, restless, discontented, and incapable of properly caring for her children.
>
> (b) Among the poorer classes it leads to the propagation of many children who are not wanted.
>
> (c) Among the higher classes, unrestrained sexual intercourse leads to the practice of contraception and abortion. *If contraceptive methods under the name of 'birth-control' or any other name are taught to the majority of the women of the masses, the race will become generally diseased, demoralized, depraved and will eventually perish.* (The italics are the author's.)
>
> (d) Excessive sexual intercourse drains the male of the

vitality necessary for earning a good living. *At present there are approximately 2,000,000 more widows in the United States than there are widowers. Comparatively few of these are war widows.* (Italics are the author's.)

(e) The excessive sexual intercourse incident to the present married state develops in the minds of both male and female a sense of futility. *The poverty of the world today, and the slums of the larger cities are not due to lack of profitable labour to be performed, but to excessive, unrestrained sexual intercourse, resulting from present marriage laws.* (Italics are the author's.)

(g) Most serious of all from the standpoint of the future of the human race is sexual intercourse during pregnancy.

Then follows an indictment of China and India into which I need not go. This brings us to half of this booklet. The next half is devoted to the remedy.

The central fact of the remedy is that husband and wife must always live in separate rooms, therefore, necessarily sleep in separate beds, and meet only when both desire progeny, but especially the wife. I do not intend to give the changes suggested in the marriage laws. The one thing common to all marriages throughout the world is a common room and a common bed, and this the author condemns in unmeasured terms, I venture to think, rightly. There is no doubt that much of the sensuality of our nature, whether male or female, is due to the superstition bearing a religious sanction that married people are bound to share the same bed and the same room. It has produced a mentality, the disastrous effect of which it is difficult for us, living in the atmosphere generated by that superstition, properly to estimate.

The author is equally opposed, as we have already seen, to contraceptive methods.

S. Ganesan, the enterprising publisher of Madras, has obtained the permission of the author to reprint the booklet for circulation in India. If he does so, the reader can possess a copy at a trifling price. He has secured also the rights of translation.

Many of the other remedies suggested by the author are, in my opinion, not of practical use to us, and in any case require legislative sanction. But every husband and wife can make a fixed resolution from today never to share the same room or the same bed at night and to avoid sexual contact, except for the one supreme purpose for which it is intended for both man and beast. The beast observes the law invariably. Man having got the choice has grievously erred in making

the wrong choice. Every woman can decline to have anything to do with contra-ception. Both man and woman should know that abstention from satisfa-ction of the sexual appetite results not in disease but in health and vigour, provided that mind co-operates with the body. The author believes that the present condition of marriage laws "is responsible for the greater part of all the ills of the world today". One need not share this sweeping belief with the author to come to the two final decisions I have suggested. But there can be no doubt that a large part of the miseries of today can be avoided, if we look at the relations between the sexes in a healthy and pure light and regard ourselves as trustees for the moral welfare of the future generations.

Young India, 27-9-1928

57. KHADI WORK IN BIJOLIA

The following[1] is a summary of an elaborate report prepared for the khadi workers by Sjt. Jethalal Govindji, the indefatigable worker who has specialized in the self-help method of khadi production. Sjt. Jethalal Govindji swears by his method. Whether one agrees with him or not, one cannot help admiring the single minded zeal with which he has worked out his method. His exclusive absorption in his self-imposed labours is worthy of emulation. It is the spirit that defies defeat. The experiences of such a worker cannot but be of value to every national servant.

Young India, 27-9-1928

58. ABHOY ASHRAM

This is one of the efficient institutions of Bengal to which many young men have dedicated themselves for national service. The readers of *Young India* cannot be unfamiliar with the Abhoy Ashram as it has been noticed in these columns more than once. The report for the year 1927, now before me, is published in pamphlet form, is well illustrated, covers 35 pages, and furnishes a record of continuous progress. Dr. Suresh Chandra Banerji is the President of the governing body, and Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ghosh is its Secretary. It has 13 members who are under the vows of fearlessness, truth, love,

[1] Not reproduced here; *vide* also "Policy of Making Khadi Self-supporting", 23-9-1928.

non-appropriation, labour, purity and patriotism. The creed of the Ashram is self-realization through the service of the motherland. Its headquarters are at Comilla, and its activities are spinning, medical relief, removal of untouchability, national education, dairying and agriculture. Khadi is the largest among these activities? Through it, the Ashram distributed last year over Rs. 66,000 among artisans, of which Rs. 28,000 went to the weavers, Rs. 27,000 to the spinners, over Rs. l,200 to women who did embroidery work upon khadi, over Rs. 3,000 to washermen and over Rs. 6,000 to tailors. Its sales amounted to over Rs. 1,42,000 during the year under notice. The khadi department was worked at a profit. The cost of production and sale was 13% of the total sales. The profit earned was over Rs. 1,200. The khadi department absorbs 63 whole-time workers, who work in 20 centres scattered throughout the province. And "as khaddar organization naturally becomes the pivot for nation building institutions to grow round it", reading rooms, libraries, elementary schools, gymnasiums and other social service organizations are being reared up in the khadi organization established by the Ashram. I must omit the very interesting details about the medical department, untouchability work, national education, etc., and commend to the reader the report itself. The report goes on to state that if the Ashram is to continue to grow, it requires pecuniary assistance for the various departments. The total amount is estimated at Rs. 61,000 of which Rs. 10,000 are required for the dyeing department, Rs. 40,000 for the expansion of khadi work, Rs. 3,500 for agriculture, Rs. 2,500 for dairy and Rs. 5,000 for additional buildings which a growing institution like the Abhoy Ashram must always need. It need hardly be mentioned that the majo-rity of the workers are all living on bare maintenance. The Ashram in fact represents the spirit of sacrifice, of which Bengal is probably among all the provinces the finest repository. I would invite the reader to procure the report, read it and give this great institution all the help he can.

Young India, 27-9-l928

59. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*September 28, 1928*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

Just to tell you I have your letter. Do you know that Jamnalalji has lost his father? No decision has yet been arrived at. It will be to-

[1] From the postmark

morrow I hope. The oven is finished. Chhotelal is better.

Love.

BAPU

SHRIMATI MIRABAI

ASHRAM, HATUNDI, AJMER (RAJPUTANA)

From the original: C.W. 5309. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8199

60. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM SABARMATI,
September 28, 1928

CHI. RAMDAS[1],

I have received your letter. I will not reply fully to it just now. The bell for prayer has been struck.

If you are content to aquit yourself well in doing the duty which may have come to you unsought, a good many of the knotty problems will get solved. Solving such problems one by one will result in all of them being solved.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

61. LETTER TO KANTI PAREKH

Sunday [On or before *September 30, 1928*]

CHI. KANTI,

I did not worry at all on receiving the wire about your having been wounded. But I prayed to God that you should have been wounded an innocent man. Many of us will have to be wounded in that manner. It is better that we should be wounded rather than other innocent people. Wish well even of the assailant. You have learnt that lesson here. I have received today Bhai Kalyanji's letter giving all the details. Your wound is serious but not dangerous. I have forbidden Jayanti[2] and Indu[3] to be upset. We are learning in the Ashram not to grieve when our dear ones are wounded or die. Many lovers of God

[1] The letter is in a different hand but the subscription is by Gandhiji.
[2] Addressee's brothers
[3] As placed in the Diary

have strengthened their love during such periods of compulsory rest. You should do the same.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11828

62. 'THE FIERY ORDEAL'[1]

The killing of an ailing calf in the Ashram under circumstances described below having caused a great commotion in certain circles in Ahmedabad and some angry letters having been addressed to Gandhiji on the subject, Gandhiji has critically examined the question in the light of the principle of non-violence in an article in *Navajivan*, the substance of which is given below. P.

I

WHEN KILLING MAY BE AHIMSA

An attempt is being made at the Ashram to run a small model dairy and tannery on behalf of the Goseva Sangha. Its work in this connection brings it up, at every step, against intricate moral dilemmas that would not arise but for the keenness to realize the Ashram ideal of seeking Truth through the exclusive means of Ahimsa.

For instance some days back a calf having been maimed lay in agony in the Ashram. Whatever treatment and nursing was possible was given to it. The surgeon whose advice was sought in the matter declared the case to be past help and past hope. The suffering of the animal was so great that it could not even turn its side without excruciating pain.

In these circumstances I felt that humanity[2] demanded that the agony should be ended by ending life itself. I held a preliminary discussion with the Managing Committee most of whom agreed with my view. The matter was then placed before the whole Ashram. At the discussion a worthy neighbour vehemently opposed the idea of killing even to end pain and offered to nurse the dying animal. The nursing consisted in co-operation with some of the Ashram sisters in warding the flies off the animal and trying to feed it. The ground of the friend's opposition was that one has no right to take away life which one cannot create. His argument seemed to me to be pointless here. It

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 30-9-1928.

[2] The Gujarati original has ''ahimsa".

would have point if the taking of life was actuated by self-interest. Finally in all humility but with the clearest of convictions I got in my presence a doctor kindly to administer the calf a quietus by means of a poison injection. The whole thing was over in less than two minutes.

I knew that public opinion especially in Ahmedabad[1] would not approve of my action and that it would read nothing but *himsa* in it.

But I know too that performance of one's duty should be independent of public opinion. I have all along held that one is bound to act according to what to one appears to be right even though it may appear wrong to others. And experience has shown that that is the only correct course. I admit that there is always a possibility of one's mistaking right for wrong and *vice versa* but often one learns to recognize wrong only through unconscious error. On the other hand if a man fails to follow the light within for fear of public opinion or any other similar reason he would never be able to know right from wrong and in the end lose all sense of distinction between the two. That is why the poet has sung:

> The pathway of love is the ordeal of fire,
>
> The shrinkers turn away from it.

The pathway of ahimsa, that is, of love, one has often to tread all alone.

But the question may very legitimately be put to me: Would I apply to human beings the principle I have enunciated in connection with the calf? Would I like it to be applied in my own case? My reply is yes; the same law holds good in both the cases. The law of यथा पिंडे तथा ब्राहांडे (as with one so with all) admits of no exceptions, or the killing of the calf was wrong and violent. In practice however we do not cut short the sufferings of our ailing dear ones by death because as a rule we have always means at our disposal to help them and because they have the capacity to think and decide for themselves. But supposing that in the case of an ailing friend I am unable to render any aid whatever and recovery is out of the question and the patient is lying in an unconscious state in the throes of fearful agony, then I would not see any *himsa* in putting an end to his suffering by death.

Just as a surgeon does not commit *himsa* but practises the purest ahimsa when he wields his knife on his patient's body for the latter's benefit, similarly one may find it necessary under certain imperative circumstances to go a step further and sever life from the body in the interest of the sufferer. It may be objected that whereas the surgeon

[1] Words "especially in Ahmedabad" are not in the Gujarati original.

performs his operation to save the life of the patient, in the other case we do just the reverse. But on a deeper analysis it will be found that the ultimate object sought to be served in both the cases is the same, *viz.*, to relieve the suffering soul within from pain. In the one case you do it by severing the diseased portion from the body, in the other you do it by severing from the soul the body that has become an instrument of torture to it. In either case it is the relief of the soul within from pain that is aimed at, the body without the life within being incapable of feeling either pleasure or pain. Other circumstances can be imagined in which not to kill would spell *himsa*, while killing would be ahimsa. Suppose for instance, that I find my daughter—whose wish at the moment I have no means of ascertaining—is threatened with violation and there is no way by which I can save her, then it would be the purest form of *ahimsa* on my part to put an end to her life and surrender myself to the fury of the incensed ruffian.

But the trouble with our votaries of ahimsa is that they have made of ahimsa[1] a blind fetish and put the greatest obstacle in the way of the spread of true ahimsa in our midst. The current (and in my opinion, mistaken) view of ahimsa has drugged our conscience and rendered us insensible to a host of other and more insidious forms of *himsa* like harsh words, harsh judgments, ill-will, anger and spite and lust of cruelty; it has made us forget that there may be far more *himsa* in the slow torture of men and animals, the starvation and exploitation to which they are subjected out of selfish greed, the wanton humiliation and oppression of the weak and the killing of their self-respect that we witness all around us today than in mere benevolent taking of life. Does anyone doubt for a moment that it would have been far more humane to have summarily put to death those who in the infamous lane of Amritsar were made by their torturers to crawl on their bellies like worms? If anyone desires to retort by saying that these people themselves today feel otherwise, that they are none the worse for their crawling, I shall have no hesitation in telling him that he does not know even the elements of ahimsa. There arise occasions in a man's life when it becomes his imperative duty to meet them by laying down his life; not to appreciate this fundamental fact of man's estate is to betray an ignorance of the foundation of ahimsa. For instance, a votary of truth would pray to God to give him death to save him from a life of falsehood. Similarly a votary of ahimsa would on bent knees implore his enemy to put him to death rather than humiliate him or make him do things unbecoming the dignity of a

[1] 'Non-killing' would be nearer to the Gujarati original.

human being. As the poet has sung:

> The way of the Lord is meant for heroes,
>
> Not for cowards.

It, is this fundamental misconception about the nature and scope of ahimsa, this confusion about the relative values, that is responsible for our mistaking mere non-killing for ahimsa and for the fearful amount of *himsa* that goes on in the name of ahimsa in our country. Let a man contrast the sanctimonious horror that is affected by the so-called votaries of ahimsa, at the very idea of killing an ailing animal to cut short its agony with their utter apathy and indifference to countless cruelties that are practised on our dumb cattle world. And he will begin to wonder whether he is living in the land of ahimsa or in that of conscious or unconscious hypocrisy.

It is our spiritual inertia, lack of moral courage—the courage to think boldly and look facts squarely in the face that is responsible for this deplorable state of affairs. Look at our pinjrapoles and goshalas, many of them represent today so many dens of torture to which as a sop to conscience we consign the hapless and helpless cattle. If they could only speak they would cry out against us and say, "Rather than subject us to this slow torture give us death." I have often read this mute appeal in their eyes.

To conclude then, to cause pain or wish ill to or to take the life of any living being out of anger or a selfish intent is *himsa*. On the other hand after a calm and clear judgment to kill or cause pain to a living being with a view to its spiritual or physical benefit from a pure, selfless intent may be the purest form of ahimsa. Each such case must be judged individually and on its own merits. The final test as to its violence or non-violence is after all the intent underlying the act.

II

WHEN KILLING IS HIMSA

I now come to the other crying problem that is confronting the Ashram today. The monkey nuisance has become very acute and an immediate solution has become absolutely necessary. The growing vegetables and fruit trees have become a special mark of attention of this privileged fraternity and are now threatened with utter destruction. In spite of all our efforts we have not yet been able to find an efficacious and at the same time non-violent[1] remedy for the evil.

The matter has provoked a hot controversy in certain circles and I have received some angry letters on the subject. One of the corres-

[1] The original has "blameless".

pondents has protested against the ‘‘killing of monkeys and wounding them by means of arrows in the Ashram”. Let me hasten to assure the reader that no monkey has so far been killed in the Ashram, nor has any monkey been wounded by means of “arrows” or otherwise as imagined by the correspondent. Attempts are undoubtedly being made to drive them away and harmless arrows have been used for the purpose.

The idea of wounding monkeys to frighten them away seems to me unbearable though I am seriously considering the question of killing them in case it should become unavoidable. But this question is not so simple or easy as the previous one.

I see a clear breach of ahimsa even in driving away monkeys, the breach would be proportionately greater if they have to be killed. For any act of injury done from self-interest whether amounting to killing or not is doubtless *himsa.*

All life in the flesh exists by some *himsa*. Hence the highest religion has been defined by a negative word ahimsa. The world is bound in a chain of destruction. In other words *himsa* is an inherent necessity for life in the body. That is why a votary of ahimsa always prays for ultimate deliverance from the bondage of flesh.

None, while in the flesh, can thus be entirely free from *himsa* because one never completely renounces the will to live. Of what use is it to force the flesh merely if the spirit refuses to cooperate? You may starve even unto death but if at the same time the mind continues to hanker after objects of the sense, your fast is a sham and a delusion. What then is the poor helpless slave to the will to live to do? How is he to determine the exact nature and the extent of *himsa* he must commit? Society has no doubt set down a standard and absolved the individual from troubling himself about it to that extent. But every seeker after truth has to adjust and vary the standard according to his individual need and to make a ceaseless endeavour to reduce the circle of *himsa*. But the peasant is too much occupied with the burden of his hard and precarious existence to have time or energy to think out these problems for himself and the cultured class instead of helping him chooses to give him the cold shoulder. Having become a peasant myself, I have no clear-cut road to go by and must therefore chalk out a path for myself and possibly for fellow peasants. And the monkey nuisance being one of the multitude of ticklish problems tha stare the farmer in the face, I must find out some means by which the peasant’s crops can be safeguarded against it with the minimum amount of *himsa.*

I am told that the farmers of Gujarat employ special watchmen

whose very presence scares away the monkeys and saves the peasant from the necessity of killing them. That may be but it should not be forgotten that whatever efficacy this method might have, it is clearly dependent upon some measure of destruction at some time or other. For these cousins of ours are wily and intelligent beings. The moment they discover that there is no real danger for them, they refuse to be frightened even by gun shots and only gibber and howl the more when shots are fired. Let nobody therefore imagine that the Ashram has not considered or left any method of dealing with the nuisance untried. But none of the methods that I have known up to now is free from *himsa*. Whilst therefore I would welcome any practical suggestions from the readers of *Navajivan* for coping with this problem, let the intending advisers bear in mind what I have said above and send only such solutions as they have themselves successfully tried and cause the minimum amount of injury.

Young India, 4-10-1928

63. CURING SEX OBSESSION

It is desirable that every man and woman should carefully study the translation published in this issue of the substance of the new book[1] on marriage written by an author named Thurston. Among us, starting from boys of the age of fifteen right up to men of fifty or, in the case of girls, starting from an even younger age up to women of fifty, the belief is current that it is not possible to live without the gratification of our sexual desires. Hence both the sexes are in a continuous state of excitement. They do not trust each other and a man changes colour when he sees a woman and *vice versa.* Because of this, certain customs have become prevalent, as a result of which both men and women have lost their vitality and have become sickly and listless and our lives have been reduced to a state which is unworthy of human beings.

Even in the Shastras which came into being in such an atmosphere, such commands and beliefs are found which result in a man and a woman having to act as if they were enemies of each other. This is so because sexual desires are aroused or there is a fear of their being aroused when a member of either sex catches a glimpse of a member of the other sex.

Because of this belief and because of the customs that have been

[1] *Thurston's Philosophy of Marriage; vide* "Startling Conclusions", 27-9-1928.

forged on the basis of this belief, one's life is spent in the gratification of sexual desire or in thinking about it, with the result that life becomes as bitter as poison.

As a matter of fact, because, of his powers of discretion, man should have greater strength for renunciation and should be able to exercise more self-control than animals. Despite this, it is our every-day experience that man fails to observe the limits observed by animals in their relationship with members of the opposite sex. Ordinarily, the relationship between a man and a woman should be similar to that between a mother and a son, a sister and a brother or a father and a daughter. It is obvious that the relationship between husband and wife can be something in the nature only of an excep-tion, and a man would be afraid of being with a woman and *vice versa* only if a brother and a sister need be thus afraid. On the contrary, in actual practice even the relationship between a brother and a sister is not free from inhibitions. And they are taught to cultivate such inhibitions.

It is absolutely necessary to save ourselves from this pitiable condition, that is, from this atmosphere polluted by sexual desire. The ignorant fear that we cannot free ourselves from this has taken deep root in us. True manliness lies in destroying it, and we should acquire the confidence that it is possible to so.

Thurston's little book helps greatly in such an. effort. I for one feel that this writer's theory—that, at the root of this desire are the current beliefs regarding marriage and the customs, both in the East and in the West, based on them—is correct. For a man and a woman to sleep alone at night in one room and share a bed between them is fatal to both and is a potent means of universalizing the reign of sexual desire and making it permanent. For religious preachers and reformers to preach self-control when all married couples behave like this, is like trying to patch up the sky. It is not surprising that the measures adopted for practising self-control are futile in an atmosphere where sex is so predominant. The Shastras proclaim that the sexual desire should be indulged in only for the purpose of procreation. This commandment is being violated every moment and yet people look for other causes for the resulting diseases. This is an action similar to that of a person who, while carrying his child on his hips, searches for it in the whole town. If this fact which is clear as daylight is understood, we would do the following:

1. Men and women would take a pledge today that they would not sleep in privacy and would not engage in procreation without mutual consent. Whenever possible, they should sleep in separate rooms. Where this is not possible due to poverty, they should sleep on

separate beds, set far apart, and have some friend or relation to sleep between them.

2. Understanding parents should not give their daughter in marriage unless she is going to be provided with a separate room and a separate bed. Marriage is a kind of friendship. A man and a woman become partners in joys and sorrows, so that as soon as they are married, on the very first night they should not give in to the gratification of their sexual desire and lay the foundation of the ruin of their lives. Children should be given such training.

The new, wonderful beneficent and peaceful conception that is implied in the acceptance of Thurston's theory deserves to be pondered over and it is necessary to understand the changes that ought to be made in the prevalent ideas on marriage. We can profit from this discovery only if this can take place. If those who have been able to understand this discovery have children of their own, they should accordingly alter their children's education and the atmosphere in their own homes.

We should not require Thurston's testimony or his support in order to realize the harmful nature of the tremendous propaganda that is being carried on at present for the use of artificial methods of birth-control side by side with the gratification of sexual desire. It is surprising how this method can be adopted in India at all. It passes my understanding how educated persons suggest this method in the prevalent enervating atmosphere in this country.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-9-1928

64. MUSIC IN GUJARAT

The reader is aware of the fact that the National Music Association has been functioning en Ahmedabad for the last few years. Dr. Hariprasad Desai is the President of the Association and the well-known musician Shri Narayan Moreshwar Khare, is its Secretary. This Association has been steadily carrying out its work in Gujarat. All Gujaratis are or should be aware of the fact that as compared with Bengal, Maharashtra and the Southern provinces, Gujarat lags far behind in respect of music. Not only are Gujarati men and women less musical but ordinarily even boys and girls cannot sing in tune even a simple song. It follows then that there can be no difference of opinion on the need for propagation of music. Moreover, the music that is being taught by the musician Shri Khare is fully conducive to improvement in moral standards and is steeped in the spirit of prayer.

Although this Association gets some assistance from Ahmedabad, it is not enough or adequate, either because the people have not fully realized its need or, maybe, the propaganda carried on by it has not been sufficiently popular. As both Dr. Hariprasad and the musician Shri Khare wish to see a simultaneous increase in financial assistance and in popularity and as the support from the wealthy class is meagre, they have formulated a new scheme from which I quote the following paragraph:

I hope that the citizens of Ahmedabad will welcome this scheme and that a hundred members will be enrolled immediately. Those who wish to have any further information should write to Shri Khare at the Ashram address.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-9-1928

65. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

September 30, 1928

DEAR MOTILALJI,

Mahadev gave me your message. But as there was nothing definite to say and as I have been overwhelmed with work in connec-tion with the Ashram, I did not write to you before now.

Mahadev tells me that you want me to attend the All-India Congress Committee's meeting. What shall I do there? What can I do? I know that that part of the national work is also useful, but my heart has gone out of it and I become more and more inclined to give my time to what is concisely understood as constructive work. I do not mention khadi alone, because I am giving such attention as I can to other items of constructive work not even mentioned in the Congress programme And I see that everywhere strength of mind has got to be evoked and to the extent that it is, the power of resistance is developed. Lucknow seems evidently to have left the masses untouched. Today riots are going on in Gujarat which never before knew Hindu-Muslim rioting. News has just arrived that a brave Ashram lad was nearly done to death yesterday. Whilst he was in a press building, the goondas broke into that building, indiscriminately assaulted every-

[1] Not translated here. The scheme was to popularize Indian music, both vocal and instrumental, by arranging a weekly concert covering various *ragas*, and holding it at various times in the morning, in the evening or in the night, according as a *raga* demanded it. It was to start functioning after a hundred members had been enrolled at an annual fee of Rs. 12.

one who was in it and then set fire to it. A noted *Vakil* of Godhra was fatally wounded and Waman Rao who is a member of the Bombay Council and whom you know was seriously assaulted. Every day some fresh rioting news comes from some place or other.

I know that in spite of all this, the constitution-building work must be done. I only want to tell you that these riots largely unfit me for such work. Indeed, I am contemplating absence even from the Congress if you could permit me to remain away. There is a double reason: the prevailing atmosphere and the decision of the Calcutta Committee to copy the Madras type of Exhibition.[1] The Council of the All-India Spinners' Association has decided to abstain from being represented at that Exhibition. Much though I feel the error in using Madras Exhibition as a type, I do not want to criticize it in the public. If I go to Calcutta, my presence will either embarrass the Committee or my silence will embarrass me.

I have now given you what is today oppressing my mind. You will now decide firstly, whether you want me for the All-India Congress Committee in Calcutta and secondly, whether you want me to attend the Congress in December.

You and Vithalbhai worked wonders in Simla.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13695

66. A LETTER

[*September, 1928*][3]

DEAR SISTER,

He who wishes to follow truth will endure everything in patience. When we are firm and remain unbending in our firmness, opposition by others cannot last long. It subsides after some time. That is what is meant when we say that untruth is non-existent. Un-truth is not constant. It changes its form from moment to moment, while truth is constant, and abides in its essence for ever. Knowing this, you should keep patience even if confined to the home. One's test lies in so remaining patient. Mother-in-law's and father-in-law's anger and opposition have to be overcome by courtesy and gentleness and by service.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 325/72

[1] *Vide* "The National Congress"

67. INTERVIEW TO W. K. HALL[1]

[Before *October, 1928*]

Mr. Hall . . . tells how he presented a series of questions to Mr. Gandhi, the first of which referred to "the choice of a life career" which would "make the greatest contribution to society". On this point, Mr. Gandhi said:

The vital consideration is not so much the choice of one or another profession as the achieving of self-realization. . . . In facing the problem of a career, a man should emphasize, above all else, the spiritual aspects of life. With this uppermost in his thoughts, he should test his own potentialities, discover how he can best meet the peculiar needs of the local community in which he finds himself, and apply himself to meeting those needs to the utmost of his ability.

Q. What relation should religion and character bear to education in our present-day programme?

A. Education, character and religion should be regarded as convertible terms. There is no true education which does not tend to produce-character, and there is no true religion which does not determine character. Education should contemplate the whole life. Mere memorizing and book-learning is not education. I have no faith in the so-called systems of education which produce men of learning without the backbone one of character.

What fitting substitute can the Western nations find for militarism?

Militarism is essentially self-assertion. I should therefore substitute for self-assertion self-abnegation.

But what is meant by the term "self-abnegation"?

The sense in which Christ understood it: "He who loseth his life shall find it."

What is the way out of the present seemingly hopeless antagonism between religious factions in all parts of the world?

Charity. We must learn toleration and respect for others. Every religion in some measure satisfies the spiritual needs of men. If a religious act, such as to tomtoming, annoys me, I should not try to have it prohibited, but should realize that it ministers to other people's needs, and remove myself from the scene of disturbance.

I have ceased to declare myself publicly on this issue. My views are well known. As the French proverb has it, "He who excuses himself accuses himself". I believe that by maintaining silence, my message is more forcibly conveyed than by constant admonition.

[1] Of the *North American Review.* The interview took place in the Ashram at Ahmedabad.

There is, however, no need of despairing of this or any other issue where the right is involved. The world is moving on the right course. When you consider that our mortal lives are mere specks in relation to the whole of time, you may appreciate that the world may be progressing, even when progress is not apparent. I am supremely hopeful.

The Indian Review, October, 1928

68. SPEECH ON ANNIE BESANT'S BIRTHDAY, AHMEDABAD

October 1, 1928

Speaker after speaker paid glowing tributes to Dr. Besant, whose 82nd birthday was celebrated here this evening; Mahatma Gandhi presided.

Gandhiji observed that they could celebrate Dr. Besant's birthday properly only if they followed in her footsteps. She had always put her precepts into practice and had the courage of her convictions. There was indomitable will and unflinching determination in her utterances.

Gandhiji asked the gathering to follow Dr. Besant's simplicity of life and her power of introspection. He declared:

If you keep that same will-power and determination even in small things, you will achieve great things. India wants swaraj, but where is her fitness? She is in chains and only when you break those chains and become fit for it will you get swaraj, and then no power on earth can resist her.

It was Dr. Besant, declared Mahatmaji, who bridged the gulf between religion and politics. Bereft of religion politics would be like a body without soul. Without religion swaraj would be of no avail. It was Dr. Besant, concluded Gandhiji, who had awakened India from her deep slumber. To Dr. Besant there was nothing impossible in this world. Determination, simplicity, sacrifice and penance—these were the chief characteristics in her life; and Gandhiji fervently appealed to young men of India to take a vow to put these into practice in their lives.

The Hindu, 2-10-1928

69. LETTER TO SRI PRAKASA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 2, 1928

MY DEAR SRI PRAKASA,

Your yarn is better than before, but it is not yet up to the mark. You must get someone from Kripalani's Ashram[1] to show you the

[1] Gandhi Ashram, Banaras

proper way or come here to learn.

With reference to the Benares incident[1], I have purposely omitted it as many other interesting chapters of my life. Indeed as I proceed with the chapters, my embarrassment increases, because the chief actors are still alive and they are much before the public. I sometimes almost feel that I should now cease writing the further chapters and yet dare not do it till I have reached the special session of 1920[2]. Of course I myself regard that event in Benares as one of the proud events of my life. I was really unprepared for it, and I do not yet know where I got the strength to stand the trial. I can say about so many incidents in my life "Thy faith has made thee whole."

I duly received the cheque sent by you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SRI PRAKASA
SEVASHRAMA, BENARES CANTONMENT

From a microfilm: S.N. 13538

70. LETTER TO DR. P. C. RAY

October 2, 1928

DEAR DR. RAY,

Here is the series of articles contributed to *Young India* by Prof. C. N. Vakil on India's poverty.[3] Prof. Vakil wrote to me saying that you wanted the series. It took some time in collecting the articles as some of the issues containing the articles were not easily available.

I hope you are keeping well.

Yours sincerely,

DR. P. C. RAY
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13539

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Benares Hindu University", In his letter dated September 20, Sri Prakasa had said: "I was eagerly expecting a chapter in your autobiography on the laying of the foundation-stone of the Benares Hindu University and your putting all the princes to flight as you declared, 'Princes, go and sell your jewels', in your speech. I 'complained' of the omission to Seth Jamnalal. He said I should write to you. I do so in the hope that that beautiful chapter may still come and the great incident recorded for ever."

[2] Of the Indian National Congress held at Calcutta

[3] *Vide* "Notes", 12-7-1928, sub-title, "Are We Getting Poorer?".

71. LETTER TO NANAKCHAND

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 2, 1928

MY DEAR NANAKCHAND,

I was delighted to receive your letter. I am glad that you are doing well. You must now become strong, healthy and hardy. Though you have got there access to all the luxuries of life, you must rigorously deny them to yourself and evolve a strong will and a strong constitution before you think of coming here again. You have seen something of the Ashram life. You can practise there whatever has commended itself to you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. NANAKCHAND, B.A.,
C/O SHAMLAL, ADVOCATE, ROHTAK

From a microfilm: S.N. 13540

72. LETTER TO ANNIE BESANT

October 2, 1928

DEAR DR. BESANT,

I have the note signed by you as Secretary of the Madras Committee formed to support the report of the All-parties Conference at Lucknow. My sympathies are all with you in your endeavour, which I know will cost you much time and trouble; but I am sure that the time and trouble given to popularizing the report will not be lost. For, having at last got a document with the imprimatur of all parties, it will be a great national tragedy if the report is not acclaimed by the public.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. BESANT
ADYAR, MADRAS
[PS.]

Wish you many returns of the day.[1]

M.K.G.

From a photostat: S.N. 13699

[1] Dr. Annie Besant's 82nd birthday fell on October 1.

73. LETTER TO KALYANJI MEHTA AND KANTI

[*October 2, 1928*][1]

BHAISHRI KALYANJI,

I have your letter and Kanti's. I was very happy. You did very well in supplying milk. We wish to overcome hatred through love. Give me detailed news about Kanti from time to time.

CHI. KANTI,

You acted in a wonderful manner. Let your heart be always as tender as you showed it this time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2681

74. EXTRACTS FROM LETTER TO KALYANJI MEHTA

[On or *before October 3, 1928*][2]

Mahatma Gandhi has written a letter to Mr. Kalyanji, Congress worker of Surat, about the Surat riots. Gandhiji says that he does not feel aggrieved that Kaviti[3] (a Congress volunteer) was wounded in the not, but that he feels that he has no strength at all to render any help in such riots. Gandhiji observes:

But I have been sustaining my life in the hope that from such weakness new strength will arise.

Gandhiji requests Mr. Kalyanji to send him daily reports and asks him not to be angry with Mahomedans even mentally. Gandhiji concludes:

Whenever humanity is mad, it acts in the same way. If we but keep cool, we will achieve something some day.

The Hindu, 5-l0-l928

75. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SABARMATI,
October 3, 1928

CHI. MIRA,

I have your wire. I had your postcard too. Did you get mine? I was glad you were able to wire "very well". I was a bit anxious. You will know all about Kanti Parekh from Prabhudas. Please tell him I

[1] From the postmark
[2] The report appeared under the date-line ''Ahmedabad, October 3".
[3] Perhaps, 'Kanti'; *vide* the preceding item.

have his letter. I must not reply today. The Udyog Mandir resolution was accepted by the meeting but much yet remains to be done.

Love.

BAPU

SHRIMATI MIRABAI

C/O PRABHUDAS GANDHI, SHAILA KHADI SHALA, ALMORA, U.P.

From the original: C.W. 5310. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8200

76. LETTER TO BABAN GOKHALE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 3, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

You know that the Depressed Class friends have been intending to build a hall and a hostel as also a school for Depressed Class children. They came to me when I was convalescing at Juhu. I told them that I would gladly interest myself in the matter if they raised some money themselves and I told them too that I would endeavour to beg some money myself. They made many attempts more or less successful and they showed me many draft copies of the trust-deed necessary for the purpose. The latest I enclose herewith. They leave me to suggest the names of other trustees beyond two from among themselves. The names of the two are Sjt. Ramachandra Satvaji Nikaljey and Sjt. Jayaram Tabaji Gaikwad. I would like you to interest yourself in this matter. Go through the whole thing yourself, see the site, meet all the principal members and then advise me. I would like you also to become the Secretary of the trust and one of the trustees. You may suggest to me the other names. I would like you to see Sir Purushottamdas and ask him whether he has promised to give Rs. 5,000 and whether he will give that money and become one of the trustees. Suggest some other names also to me. I would myself suggest Sjt. Gokulbhai Bhatt of the Rashtriya School and Kishorelal Mashruwala, Shrimati Avantikabai Gokhale, Seth Jamnalal Bajaj; Sjts. Jerajani and Yeshwant Prasad Desai. That would become a business-like trust. Sir Purushottamdas can become the Chairman. If Mr. Jayakar joins, he will be a good addition. But you may omit these names altogether and make your own original suggestions. I have in mind Rameshwar Birla. He may not consent to be one of the trustees though he has given me ample funds for this class of work, and for this very work too I expect from him a fairly good sum if I can convince him that this would be a living trust and that you or some person like you

would act as the Secretary. More you will ascertain from Sjt. Bhonsle who carries this letter.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. BABAN GOKHALE
GIRGAUM, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 14736

77. LETTER TO FULSINH

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 3, 1928

BHAI FULSINHJI,

I have your letter. I thank you for writing to me immediately what you know about the monkeys. Have you made sure that in both cases the nuisance can be stopped? Kindly make still more detailed inquiry and let me know.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 227

78. MISTAKEN HUMANITY?

Sjt. Jamshed Mehta is rightly accepted as the truest man of Karachi. Almost every good public movement there claims him as its own. He devotes practically the whole of his time to public movements. He is one of the best representatives of theosophy. His honesty and independence are as unquestioned as his patriotism. When therefore such a man commits an error of judgement or runs counter to public opinion, his friends feel sore at heart. Sjt. Jamshed Mehta, who is the President of the Karachi Municipality, seems to me to have committed an error of judgement. Though a lover of khadi he recently felt called upon to move on behalf of an absentee member a resolution about khadi which drew forth very strong opposition from the members. Another matter was his attitude about a product that has been introduced from Europe into India as vegetable ghee.

Many common friends have drawn my attention to the controversy that has been going on in Karachi on these topics and invited me to express my own views on them, I suppose, in the hope that they may either influence the President who knows my regard for him, or if they do not influence him, may at least prevent some of the Karachi public from being misled into wrong action owing to what the

correspondents consider to be the erroneous views of the popular President. Whether my views produce any such influence or not, opinions on these questions of Sjt. Jamshed Mehta deserve a patient and respectful examination.

I

He tells me that he moved the khadi resolution in order to test the feeling of the Municipality and withdrew it when he saw that the members were opposed to it. I copy the resolution and the argument from the local Press:

> This Corporation resolves to cancel its resolution No. 304 dated 2nd July, 1924 because compulsory purchase and use of hand-spun and handwoven khaddar *in all cases* has frequently resulted in pure waste of Municipal money in different departments of the Municipality.
>
> In moving the above resolution, the President at the outset assured the house that he himself was actually in favour of popularizing the use of khadi but during the last three years the Corporation had spent no less than one lakh of rupees for encouraging this cottage industry but his honest opinion was that the poor menials wearing khadi supplied by the Corporation were undergoing great hardships. The Councillors were doing great injustice to themselves and to the ratepayers by spending such an enormous amount on khadi which did the wearers little good. It was really a cruelty to ask the sweepers to wear this heavy cloth and go in the streets. Moreover white khadi became dirty soon and the poor peons had to spend lot of money for washing. The colour was tried but found useless. The Corporation could give only two suits and they had to suffer much for keeping them clean. The President emphatically observed: "I tell you it is really a cruelty. We have spent nearly a lakh of rupees but Rs. 85,000 is really wasted. Our purpose has not been served. Unless and until we give them a better and lighter khadi of a superior quality at double the present cost, we should not think of giving khadi suits. The stuff we are now giving our peons is enough to bring tears in one's eyes."

Let us examine this argument. In judging the Municipal employees as he did by his own standard, I feel that the President has done the employees and the cause of khadi a serious injustice. His judgement is very like that of a delicate lady judging the appetite of her weather-beaten guests by her own or like that of an ant measuring out a few particles of flour to the elephant and feeling that she had meted out to her guest an exact measure—we know that the measure in each case would be false. The delicate lady and the ant would be right in their measure if they had guests of the same species finding themselves in the same circumstances.

In the Karachi case, the measure adopted by the President is wrong because the Municipal employees have not been delicately

brought up like the mover of the resolution. The President's measure is doubly false, first because the sweepers do not need the same fineness in their dress material as the President and secondly because they do not want the same style of dress which educated Indians have from fear, ignorance or ambition imitated from the rulers. I venture to suggest that the Councillors should revise their notions of decency and equip their employees with garments of a style in keeping with the climate and the manners of the country. They need not then fear to use the coarsest khadi. And they Will save Municipal money, promote the comfort of the employees, revive true art and will at the same time serve the poorest of their countrymen whom they cannot reach save through khadi. If the President would do unto the employees as he would that they should do unto him, let him for a moment step into their shoes and see how he would feel and his measure would be right.

But assuming that the employees must have an unnatural uniform in order to suit Municipal vanity, it is not difficult to pick up fine khadi nowadays if the Municipality will pay the price, nor is it impossible to have khaki-coloured khadi for the purpose.

The cheapest and the most patriotic method will be to train the girls and the boys of the Municipal schools and for the Councillors to train themselves to spin fine yarn and have it woven locally. The other citizens will then copy the patriotic and industrious example of the Councillors and if say one-third Karachi devotes only half an hour to philanthropic spinning, there would be many times more than enough khadi to clothe the employees.

One valid objection may he taken to this course being adopted, namely that khadi thus produced will not support the paupers in whose interest it has been recommended to public corporations. Whilst the objection is sound so far as it goes, it must not be forgotten that if any city takes up spinning in the manner suggested by me, it will be very substantial though indirect service of pauper India in that the moral effect of such sacrificial spinning will be so pervading that there will be pro-duced a spinning atmosphere that would make the irresponsive masses take to it for supplementing their present income which is admitted to he altogether inadequate for human sustenance. Where the average daily income is less than seven pice, the addition of even one pice per day will be a princely addition.

But this may be treated as a counsel of perfection not worthy of consideration by practical business men. Anyway I know that the idealist President will not dismiss my suggestion quite so summarily. But for those who will not seriously and scientifically organize

home-spinning in the manner suggested, I submit that no expense incurred for khadi need be considered as waste, no discomfort suffered on its account too much, when it is borne in mind that every pice spent upon khadi goes directly into the pockets of the needy and that even of this at least 85 per cent goes into the pockets of the poorest artisans including the semistarved spinners.

But says the President:

> Why not supply the employees with uniform made of swadeshi mill cloth and save over sixty per cent of the price paid for khadi?

This is an argument I had least expected from Sjt. Jamshed Mehta the friend of the poor. Surely, if every Municipality gave a bounty of 60 per cent to khadi, it would not be wrong to do so assuming that it had the power so to do.

And I have repeatedly shown in these pages that there can be no comparison between khadi and mill-cloth even as there can be none between the home-made chapati, however costly it may he and troublesome to make, and cheap, easily prepared machine made biscuit. Mill-cloth needs no protection or patronage from the public in the sense that khadi does. Indian mill-cloth gets preference as it ought to when khadi is unavailable at any cost, when machine-made cloth becomes a necessity and when the choice lies only between foreign cloth and swadeshi mill-cloth. Khadi it is clear must displace both. Khadi has no established market like mill-cloth. It has not even become as yet a bazaar article. Every yard of khadi bought means at Ieast eighty-five per cent in the mouths of the starving and the poor ones of India. Every yard of mill-cloth bought means more than 75 per cent in the pockets of the capitalists and less than 25 per cent in the pockets of the labourers who are never helpless, who are well able to take care of themselves, and who never starve or need starve in the sense that the helpless millions starve for whose sake khadi has been conceived. Indeed I should be surprised if the Municipal employees, whose supposed discomfort owing to wearing coarse khadi has moved the humanitarian Sjt. Jamshed Mehta to action, would not, if they were informed of the great national importance of khadi, themselves prefer it to swadeshi mill-cloth however comfortable the latter may be to wear. Khadi in my opinion is cheap at any cost *so long as it functions to find work for and through work feed the millions.*

II

Sjt. Jamshed Mehta is not only a humanitarian, he is an ardent vegetarian and dares to incur the wrath of friends for the sake of his principles. He has somehow come to the conclusion that the product known as vegetable ghee which enterprising foreign manufacturers

have introduced into the Indian market is preferable to what passes as genuine ghee but what is according to him almost always adulterated with animal fats. Though I yield to none in my enthusiasm for vegetarianism and personally always avoid the bazaar ghee and would, if I could get some medical encouragement or could summon sufficient strength of mind, avoid even goat's milk ghee, I could never bring myself to use the chemically doctored vegetable product which is generally palmed off on the gullible public as ghee.

So far as I have been able to examine medical authorities, they show that there is no effective vegetable substitute for ghee or animal fats, these being rich in vitamin A which they say is absolutely necessary for a person to keep in good health. We therefore arrive at this (for vegetarians) painful conclusion that whilst Sat adulterated ghee is bad from the vegetarian standpoint, from the medical it is harmless. The only proper course for jealous food reformers like Sjt. Jamshed Mehta is to move heaven and earth to ensure a never failing supply of pure ghee and to that end I invite him to join the Goseva Sangha if he has no other and more expeditious method of reaching the common goal. Let him municipalize the milk and ghee supply of Karachi and run an efficient Municipal dairy. Vegetable ghee deserves only to be boycotted at all cost. For it is itself often adulterated and unlike adulterated ghee equally often injurious to health being chemically treated and in almost every case it is worthless as a food. In this country which abounds in oil seeds, the fresh seed oils are infinitely superior to the prepared vegetable fats whose basis is mostly coconut. Everyone in India can prepare for himself good vegetable ghee from an undried cocoanut which can be procured cheap in any bazaar.

Young India, 4-10-1928

79. SPINNING IN ANCIENT INDIA

Sjt. C. Balaji Rao of Coimbatore, the indefatigable khadi lover, sends me the following interesting extracts[1] which he has copied from Dr. Shamashastri's learned translation of Kautilya's Arthashastra (period 321-296 B.C.). These extracts, besides giving much valuable information on the manners of our countrymen during that period, show that spinning was a State concern as it should be today. The inexhaustible man-power that is running to waste in the country merely awaits utilization for want of organization.

Young India, 4-10-l928

[1] Not reproduced here

80. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 4, 1928

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I cannot trace your previous letter. With reference to yours of the 27th ultimo I see that you will be free from the relief work at the latest at the end of this month I know that you have work for you in Sind, and I know too that you will make your presence felt, no matter where you are working. The only question is what should be your final choice. Of course I had set my mind upon you as the Secretary for the All-India Suppressed Class Association to be formed. But *I* cannot guide you in this matter. Your own instinct must be the best guide. After all *you* must make the choice, and therefore you must choose that work which is most to your liking and for which you may consider yourself to be the most fitted. If Sind needs you and you feel that you should bury yourself in Sind, I do not mind it; only you must make your final choice in so far as it is humanly possible.

I note what you say about your daughter. I do not like the thing overmuch. But I am sure that you have done the best that was possible in the circumstances. If it was not tragic, I should have a hearty laugh over your considering the expense of Rs. 2,000 a little thing. We poor people of the new age consider Rs. 10 a trifle too much. Ramdas's marriage cost me probably one rupee, that is, one or two cocoanuts and two *taklis* for the bride and the bridegroom, two copies of the *Gita* and two copies of the *Bhajanavali*. Rs. 2,000 in Gujarat will be considered a fairly large sum even outside the Ashram limits. I do not think that even Jamnalalji spent Rs. 2,000 over Kamala's wedding two years ago. But I know that if I measured Sind by the Gujarat footrule or the footrule of the new age, it would be a hopelessly false measurement. I suppose, for you, it is progress from perhaps Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 2,000, and if you were to go from Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 20, you would perhaps have to renounce your mother-in-law and to have a divorce from your wife. Considered from that point of view, Rs. 2,000 is perhaps not a bad bargain.

I hope you all keep good health.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

SJT. NARAINDAS MALKANI
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat: G.N. 888

81. LETTER TO D. B. KRISHNAMMA

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 4, 1928

MY DEAR KRISHNAMMA,

I was delighted to receive the album and the frame. Some of the reproductions are very striking. You will show me the originals when, if ever, I come to Rajahmundry.

I hope you are keeping quite well.

Yours sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

SHRIMATI D. B. KRISHNAMMA
RAJAHMUNDRY

From a microfilm: S.N. 14787

82. MESSAGE TO LAHORE STUDENTS' CONFERENCE

[Before *October 5, 1928*][1]

Do not fear Government or any other power that may Come in your way. GO forward and build a strong link between yourselves and the toiling millions who do not know even the meaning of the word 'education'.

The Hindustan Times. 7-10-1928

83. TELEGRAM TO ANNIE BESANT[2]

[*October 5, 1928*]

DR. BESANT

YOUR WIRE. AM CONVINCED IT WILL BE DISASTROUS IF NEHRU CONSTITUTION BREAKS DOWN FOR WANT COUNTRY'S SUPPORT WHICH CAN BE GIVEN WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO ATTEMPTS MADE REALIZE INDEPENDENCE GOAL. WHILST I AGREE THAT MAXIMUM AGREEMENT AMONG PARTIES NOT ALWAYS ESSENTIAL WE SHOULD STRIVE FOR

[1] The message appeared under the date-line "Lahore, October 5". The conference was to meet at Lahore on October 6.

[2] In reply to her telegram received at Sabarmati on October 5, which read: "Srinivasa Iyengar interview Free Press calls on Congressmen keep aloof from All-Parties Conference ground independence not accepted goal in draft resolution. Expresses disbelief in working for maximum agreement among political parties. Feel that clear lead by you for immediate publication essential for success. Tomorrow's conference started solely strengthen hands executive Lucknow Conference."

IT IN MATTERS LIKE THIS WHERE NO NATIONAL INTEREST IS COMPROMISED.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13700

84. LETTER TO SHANKARBHAI MANEKLAL DESAI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 5, 1928

BHAI SHANKARBHAI[1],

I have your letter. Give this message from me to all who may come on the Rentia Baras day[2] that if they want to perpetuate Haribhai's memory in Kapadwanj they should perpetuate the work that he did. Whatever the difficulties none of the activities started by him should be abandoned or neglected.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro—3: Kusumbehn Desaine, p. 82

85. TELEGARM TO MOTILAL NEHRU [3]

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
[*October 6, 1928*]

MOTILAL NEHRU
ANAND BHAVAN, ALLAHABAD

YOUR WIRE. DOCTOR BESANT ALSO WIRED. SENT FULL REPLY[4] YESTERDAY. HOPE ALL WILL GO WELL.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13702

[1] Brother of Harilal M. Desai. He established the Sevasangh at Kapadwanj in memory of Harilal Desai who had passed away in July, 1927. For details *vide* also "Death of a Satyagrahi", 7-8-1927

[2] Literally, 'Spinning-wheel 12th,' Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram era; the day was celebrated by non-stop spinning.

[3] In reply to his telegram (S.N. 13799) dated October 5, which read: "Srinivasa Iyengar improperly interfering with Madras Provincial All-Parties Conference Mrs. Besant holding tomorrow by calling upon Congressmen keep aloof as independence resolution not accepted. Conference called simply to adopt Lucknow decisions as maximum agreement reached cannot possibly compromise Congress. Srinivasa declared disbelief in working for maximum agreement. Kindly wire to him to desist. Have wired Ansari and am issuing Press Statement."

[4] *Vide* the preceding item.

86. TELEGRAM TO T. R. PHOOKAN[1]

ASHRAM SABARMATI,
October 6, 1928

T. R. PHOOKAN
GAUHATI

BEING TOO OVERWORKED REPLY. SUGGEST YOUR APPROACHING MONEYED CONGRESSMEN.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 13549

87. 'WHAT ARE WE TO DO?' [2]

Two weeks ago I wrote in *Navajivan* a note on the tragedy in Godhra, where Sjt. Purushottam Shah bravely met his death at the hands of his assailants, and gave the note the heading "HinduMuslim Fight in Godhra"[3]. Several Hindus did not like the heading and addressed angry letters asking me to correct it. I found it impossible to accede to their demand. Whether there is one victim or more, whether there is a free fight between the two communities, or whether one assumes the offensive and the other simply suffers, I should describe the event as a fight if the whole series of happenings were the result of a state of war between the two communities. Whether in Godhra or in other places, there is today a state of war between the two communities. Fortunately the countryside is still free from the war fever which is mainly confined to towns and cities, where, in some form or other, fighting is continually going on. Even the correspondents who have written to me about Godhra do not seem to deny the fact that the happenings arose out of the communal antagonisms that existed there.

If the correspondents had simply addressed themselves to the heading, I should have satisfied myself with writing to them privately and written nothing in *Navajivan* about it. But there are other letters in which the correspondents have vented their ire on different counts. A volunteer from Ahmedabad who had been to Godhra writes:

> You say that you must be silent over these quarrels. Why were you not

[1] In reply to addressee's telegram (S.N. 13543) which read: "My letter from Simla regarding decree for Rs. 13,500 against us for Congress dues. Please devise means to save."

[2] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan* 7-10-1928. This is a translation by Mahadev Desai.

[3] *Vide* "My Notes", 20-9-1928.

silent over the Khilafat, and why did you exhort us to join the Muslims? Why are you not silent about your principles of ahimsa? How can you justify your silence when the two communities are running at each other's throats and the Hindus are being crushed to atoms? How does ahimsa come there? I invite your attention to two cases:

A Hindu shopkeeper thus complained to me: "Mussalmans purchase bags of rice from my shop, often never paying for them. I cannot insist on payment, for fear of their looting my godowns. I have therefore to make an involuntary gift of about 50 to 75 maunds of rice every month."

Others complained: "Mussalmans invade our quarters and insult our women in our presence, and we have to sit still. If we dare to raise a protest, we are done for. We dare not even lodge A complaint against them."

What would you advise in such cases? How would you bring your ahimsa into play? Or even here would you prefer to remain silent?

These and similar questions have been answered in these pages over and over again, but as they are still being raised, I had better explain my views once more at the risk of repetition.

Ahimsa is not the way of the timid or the cowardly. It is the way of the brave, ready to face death. He who perishes sword in hand is no doubt brave, but he who faces death without raising his little finger and without flinching is braver. But he who surrenders his rice bags for fear of being beaten is a coward and no votary of ahimsa. He is innocent of ahimsa. He, who for fear of being beaten, suffers the women of his household to be insulted, is not manly but just the reverse. He is fit neither to be a husband nor a father, nor a brother. Such people have no right to complain.

These cases have nothing to do with the inveterate enmity between Hindus and Mussalmans. Where there are fools there are bound to be knaves, where there are cowards there are bound to be bullies, whether they are Hindus or Mussalmans. Such cases used to happen even before the outbreak of these communal hostilities. The question here therefore is not how to teach one of the two communities a lesson or how to humanize it, but how to teach a coward to be brave.

If the thinking sections of both the communities realize the cowardice and folly at the back of the hostilities, we can easily end them. Both have to be brave, both have to be wise. If both or either deliberately get wise, theirs will be the way of non-violence. If both fight and learn wisdom only by bitter experience, the way will he one of violence. Either way, there is no room for cowards in a society of men, i.e., in a society which loves freedom. Swaraj is not for cowards.

It is idle therefore to denounce ahimsa or to be angry with me on the strength of the cases cited. Ever since my experience of the

distortion of ahimsa in Bettiah in 1921,[1] I have bee nrepeating over and over again that he who cannot protect himself or his nearest and Dearest or their honour by non-violently facing death, may and ought to do so by violently dealing with the oppressor. He who can do neither of the two is a burden. He has no business to be the head of a family. He must either hide himself, or must rest content to live for ever in helplessness and be prepared to crawl like a worm at the bidding of a bully.

I know only one way—the way of ahimsa. The way of *himsa* goes against my grain. I do not want to cultivate the power to inculcate *himsa*. As ahimsa has no place in the atmosphere of cowardice prevailing today, I must needs be reticent over the riots we hear of from day to day. This exhibition of my helplessness cannot be to my liking. But God never ordains that only things that we like should happen and things that we do not like should not happen. In spite of the helplessness, the faith sustains me that He is the Help of the helpless, that He comes to one's succour only when one throws himself on His mercy. It is because of this faith that I cherish the hope that God will one day show me a path which I may confidently commend to the people. With me the conviction is as strong as ever that willy-nilly Hindus and Mussalmans must be friends one day. No one can say how and when that will happen. The future is entirely in the hands of God. But He has vouchsafed to us the ship of Faith which alone can enable us to cross the ocean of Doubt.

Young India, 11-10-1928

88. THE TANGLE OF AHIMSA[2]

My article "The Fiery Ordeal"[3] has brought down upon me the ire of many an incensed critic. Some of them seem to have made the violence of their invective against me a measure of their solicitude for ahimsa. Others, as if to test my capacity for ahimsa, have cast all decorum and propriety to the winds and have poured upon me the lava of their unmeasured and acrimonious criticism, while still some others have felt genuinely grieved at what seems to them a sad aberration on my part and have written to me letters to unburden their grief to me. I have not the time to reply to all the letters that have been sent to me, nor, do I feel it to be necessary. As for the acrimonious

[1] *Vide* "Dyerism in Champaran", 15-12-1920

[2] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 7-10-1928. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

[3] *Vide* "The Fiery Ordeal"

letters, the only possible purpose that they can serve is to provide me with some exercise in forbearance and non-violence. Leaving aside such letters, therefore, I shall here try to examine some arguments that I have been able to glean from other and soberly written communications.

I am always prepared to give my best consideration to letters that are brief and to the point and are neatly written out in ink in a clear legible hand. For I claim to be a humble seeker after truth and am conducting *Navajivan* not merely to teach but also to learn.

To come now to the objections and the counsels addressed to me by my correspondents they may be summed up as follows:

l. You should now retire from the field of ahimsa.

2. You should confess that your views about ahimsa are imported from the West.

3. You must not express views even when they are correct if there is a possibility of their being misused.

4. If you believe in the law of karma then your killing of the calf was a vain attempt to interfere with the operation of that law.

5. What warrant had you for believing that the calf was bound not to recover? Have you not heard of cases of recovery after the doctors have pronounced them to be hopeless?

Whether I should retire or not from the field of ahimsa, or for the matter of that from any other field, is essentially and solely for me to judge. A man can give up a right, but he may not give up a duty without being guilty of a grave dereliction. Unpopularity and censure are often the lot of a man who wants to speak and practise the truth. I hold it to be the bounded duty of a satyagrahi openly and freely to express his opinions which he holds to be correct and of benefit to the public even at the risk of incurring popular displeasure and worse. So long as I believe my views on ahimsa to be correct, it would be a sin of omission on my part not to give expression to them.

I have nothing to be ashamed of if my views on ahimsa are the result of my Western education. I have never tabooed all Western ideas, nor am I prepared to anathematize everything that comes from the West as inherently evil. I have learnt much from the West and I should not be surprised to find that I had learnt something about ahimsa too from the West. I am not concerned what ideas of mine are the result of my foreign contacts. It is enough for me to know that my views on ahimsa have now become a part and parcel of my being.

I have publicly discussed my views in the matter of the calf, not necessarily because I believe them to be correct, but because they are

to the best of my knowledge based on pure ahimsa and as such likely to throw light on the tangled problem of ahimsa.

As for the problem of the monkeys, I have discussed it publicly, because I do not know my duty in the matter, and I am anxious to be enlightened. Let me assure the readers that my effort has not been in vain and I have already received several helpful suggestions from my correspondents. Let me further assure them that I would not proceed to the extreme length of killing unless I am absolutely driven to it. It is because I am anxious to be spared this painful necessity that I have invited suggestions for dealing with these persistent and unwelcome guests.

I firmly believe in the law of karma, but I believe too in human endeavour. I regard as the *summum bonum* of life the attainment of salvation through karma by annihilating its effects by detachment. If it is a violation of the law of karma to cut short the agony of an ailing animal by putting an end to its life, it is no less so to minister to the sick or try to nurse them back to life. And yet if a man were to refuse to give medicine to a patient or to nurse him on the ground of karma, we would hold him to be guilty of inhumanity and *himsa*. Without there-fore entering into a discussion about the eternal controversy regarding predestination and free will I will simply say here that I deem it to be the highest duty of man to render what little service he can.

I admit that there was no guarantee that the calf would not recover. I have certainly known cases that were pronounced by doctors to be hopeless and were cured afterwards. But even so I hold that a man is bound to make the utmost use of his reason, circumscribed and poor as undoubtedly it is, and to try to penetrate the mists of ignorance by its light and try to act accordingly. And that is precisely what we do in countless cases in our everyday life. But strangely paradoxical as it may seem, it is nevertheless a fact that the moment we come to think of death the very idea frightens us out of our wits and entirely paralyses our reasoning faculty, although as Hindus we ought to be the least affected by the thought of death, since from the very cradle we are brought up on the doctrines of the immortality of the spirit and the transitoriness of the body. Even if it were found that my decision to poison the calf was wrong, it could have done no harm to the soul of the animal. If I have erred I am prepared to take the consequences of my error, but I refuse to go into hysterics because by my action I possibly cut short the painful existence of a dying calf say by a couple of hours. And the rule that I have applied to the calf I am prepared to apply in the case of my own dear ones as well. Who knows how often we bring those we love

to a premature end by our coddling, infatuation, wrong diagnosis or wrong treatment? The letters that I have received from my correspondents more than ever confirm me in my conviction that in our effusiveness over matters like this we forget the elementary duty of kindness, are led away from the path of true love, and discredit our ahimsa. The fear of death is thus the greatest obstacle in the way of our realizing the true nature of ahirnsa.

Young India, 11-10-1928

89. LETTER TO G. K. DEVDHAR[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 7, 1928

MY DEAR DEVDHAR,

This letter will serve to introduce to you Shrimati Urmila Devi who is the only surviving widowed sister of the late Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das. Her only son is studying at the Agricultural College in Poona. In order to supervise his education and be near him, she has broken up her home in Calcutta and intends to settle down in Poona. I told her that it would be better for her and would fit in with her spirit of service if she stayed at the Seva Sadan and did some work there or stayed at Professor Karve's University, whichever she preferred or whichever was possible. I would therefore like you to discuss with Shrimati Urmila Devi the possibilities of her being able to render service and otherwise advise her. Of course she has no desire to ask you to go out of your way to accommodate her in the Seva Sadan. She would like to feel that she would really be of service to the institution if she decided to stay there at all.

At first I thought I would give a separate letter to Prof. Karve. But whilst dictating this, I thought that I would confine myself only to this letter and leave you to introduce Shrimati Urmila Devi to Prof. Karve and let her see both the institutions and make her choice, if a choice is at all open to her. And naturally what I have said regarding the Seva Sadan applies equally to Prof. Karve's Home.

I have known Shrimati Urmila Devi intimately for several years and I know how eager she is for doing some service.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13544

[1] Of the Servants of India Society

90. LETTER TO ROLAND J. WILD

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter. I am sorry Mr. Wilson has not been able to visit Sabarmati. I am sending you a telegram tomorrow, today being Sunday, as follows:

"Your letter. You will be welcome any time. Advisable your coming Ahmedabad before going Bardoli. Letter follows."

I expect to be in the Ashram during the whole of the month. You will be therefore welcome whenever you arrive. On Mondays I take my silence as you may be aware.

I wonder if you will stay with us at the Ashram. Ours is you may know a meagre board and extremely simple life as it may appear to you. But if you can accommodate yourself to the life of the Ashram, of course we should all be delighted to have you in our midst.

I quite agree with you that it will be better for you to visit the Ashram before going to Bardoli.

Yours sincerely,

ROLAND J. WILD, ESQ.
ASSISTANT EDITOR, "THE PIONEER", ALLAHABAD

From a microfilm: S.N. 14463

91. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

SABARMATI,
[*October 7, 1928*][1]

CHI. RAMDAS,

Your letters serve just the purpose of giving information about the services you have rendered. I have learnt more about the causes of fever from Vallabhbhai. If the fever is not related to the wound, there is nothing to fear. You did well in saving an *anna*. But due to an oversight on my part, I spent one *anna* in posting the same letter to Manilal. That means a day's wage of a spinner is lost. But hardly anyone atones for that. One cannot go to heaven without dying oneself. I cannot atone for my sins through representatives. I have to do it myself. The true atonement for one's sin is not to commit that

[1] From the postmark

sin again. I have to find the remedy to make up for my negligence. In fact, I have found it out. Let us see when it bears fruit.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RAMDAS GANDHI
PATIDAR ASHRAM
NANPURA, SURAT

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

92. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Monday, October 8, 1928

CHI. MIRA,

I receive your letters regularly. Pray do not be afraid of length. I want to know everything about you and your doings. It pleases me immensely to find you happy and well and gaining all the experience. I am glad you spoke firmly to Jethalal. It would be a good thing if he sticks to his promise.

The Ashram is settling down to the new change. It is yet too early to prophesy. Two varieties of cooking, spiced and unspiced, commenced today. I do not know the members in each division.

The clouds having dispersed, the days are very hot nowadays.

The Austrian friends[1] have now learnt carding and they insist on bringing all their slivers to me. So I am again overloaded. Chhotelal had an attack of malaria. He is better and permitted to do some work. Vimla has again got the fever.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5312. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8202

[1] Frederic and Francisca Standenath

93. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

October 8, 1928

CHI. MIRA,

After I wrote to you at Almora,[1] I got your wire. I am however letting that letter go to its destination. It is fairly long but there is nothing much in it.

Malarial fever is still with us. Chhotelal's bakery is ready. He has been making experiments.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5311. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8201

94. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

October 8, 1928

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

Though no one likes to lose his mother, I do not propose to send you my condolences. Your mother died happy in the thought of having brought up good and dutiful children and having lived a godly life. A death such as hers is to be envied. I hope both of you are keeping well.

With love,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3208

95. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

Unrevised October 8, 1928

MY DEAR SATIS BABU,

I am fatigued and overworked. Arrears are increasing and they worry me. Hence the delay in replying.

I was working out a solution for Hemprabha Devi and Tarini. Meanwhile came your letter about their disposal. I was unwilling to have them in the Ashram. For I knew that it did not suit her last time. And I could not hit upon another place. Tarini was none too happy in Wardha. Some place must be thought out in or near Bengal. I am no further forward even now.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

How happy I should feel if they could go to Comilla. I expect you to conquer Abhoy Ashram even though the Pratishthan has to suffer or to die. Only, the death or the suffering must be conscious and voluntary, not[1] mechanical and forced. This reflection arises out of your remarks about Utkal. So far as I can see, various organizations will come into being as khadi progresses. It is a condition of its growth. But the central or chief provincial organization has so to shape its course that by force of character and ability, it commands attention and respect. One difficulty with the Pratishthan is that it has not many self-sacrificing volunteers. This is due to your own upbringing. Your own personal sacrifice was phenomenal and so you carried few with you from the environment that you had created in the chemical works. Your sudden change of life had to take root and grow into a big tree before it could cover saplings. That you have only now begun to do. I remember the conversation we had in Atrai, how you dispensed with volunteers and got paid men and made of the famine work a success. If your upbringing had been otherwise, you would have made of the work a success with the volunteers. Success of ahimsa depends upon the successful organization of voluntary workers. And khadi is an attempt at working out ahimsa on a fairly large scale. We will succeed if we have patience and *tapasya* enough.

I hope my meaning is clear. This letter must not put you out or dishearten you. I want it to Trace you for the future difficulties. My letter is intended to be e stimulant. When I began it, I had no notion of the length it would run to or what it was to contain.

Let Utkal be a lesson that Dr. Ray should not be taken for any fixed programme. It is really too much to expect him to go through a sustained effort in khadi. He has too many irons in the fire, too many calls upon his time and he is now not a youth. The marvel is that he is still available for tours, etc.

Why not Giridih again for Hemprabha Devi and Tarini? You must send them to a salubrious climate.

With love,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13701

[1] The source has “but”.

96. LETTER TO CHHOTALAL TEJPAL

October 9, 1928

BHAISHRI CHHOTALAL,

I have your letter. I have not received your hook. I will go through it when I get it. Please send to Mr. Clayton Pragji Desai's address (Box No. 5390, Johannesburg), so that I need not write.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

SHRI C. TEJPAL
ARTIST, RAJKOT

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2587

97. LETTER TO MOTIBHAI

ASHRAM,
October 9, 1928

BHAI MOTIBHAI,

You have raised a relevant question. The feeling of high and low has become deeply ingrained in us. The use of the singular in speaking to persons is its least expression. The feeling is the least in the Ashram, but I see that it is there. Continue, both of you, to exercise self-restraint to the best of your ability.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/12

98. LETTER TO HASAN ALI

ASHRAM,
October 9, 1928

DEAR HASAN ALI,

I do not at all believe in the *Shuddhi* and *Tabligh* movements as they are being carried on today. But I have repeatedly said that if the Arya Samjists do wish to carry on *Shuddhi* nobody can stop them. Nobody can forcibly prevent anyone from doing a thing so long as that thing is not against morality.

The moment I cease to be an optimist I shall no longer be able to live. Some day the Muslims are sure to co-operate. Even today many of them are doing so.

Since you are determined, God will certainly help you to obser-

vez observe the vow of *brahmacharya.* Frugality in eating and non-stimulating food is a good external aid. The real means is heart-felt prayer.

I have read some literature of theosophy, I like its general principles, but not its occult experiments. I am unable to believe in the Jagadguru and in Krishnamurti. I am not interested in the subject.

I do not believe in the traditional practice of *shraddha.* But I do consider it right and necessary to pray for the dead as for the living. I see great confusion about the meaning of the law of karma. It only means that no action is without its effect. But new actions mix with the old and continually produce new and mixed results. And since the individual souls are intimately related to one another, their actions also are so related. Prayer is a new action producing good result.

Fasting without water certainly involves greater self-control. But from the point of view of health water is necessary. One cannot fast without water for many days. I have observed in many Muslim friends during the *roza* that they almost wipe out the merit of fasting for sixteen hours without water by eating at night anything and everything in any quantity they like. Praying for God's forgiveness does not wipe out a sin, but it purifies the soul, and if one feels genuine repentance one desists from sin in future.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/14

99. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 10, 1928

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

I have your letter[1]. Pashabhai also wrote about the same thing. I think that the matter is too trivial for you to worry over. You must dismiss it entirely from your mind.

With love,

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 9610

[1] Dated October 5. Raihana, daughter of Abbas Tyabji, had formed a Youth League in Baroda. Another woman was chosen President. Later the members disapproved of a certain action of the President and courteously asked her to explain it, whereupon the latter turned abusive. Some members wanted to expose her behaviour in the papers. Raihana was hesitant about taking such an action and wrote to Gandhiji for advice (S.N. 13542).

100. LETTER TO GIRDHARILAL[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 10, 1928

DEAR LALA GIRDHARILAL,

Do you know anything about this lady?

Yours sincerely,

LALA GIRDHARILAL
LAHORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 13280

101. LETTER TO VINAYAK

ASHRAM,
October 10, 1928

BHAISHRI VINAYAK,

We cannot forcibly stop anyone from committing sin. So long as men and women feel immoral craving of the flesh such incidents will continue to take place in spite of all efforts to prevent them. The duty of you all is to live a life of self-control and continually increase the purity of the surrounding atmosphere and your own ability for service.

From a copy of the Gujarati: KusumbehN Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/15

102. LETTER TO BANARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

October 10, 1928

BHAI BANARSIDAS,

I have two letters from you to be answered.

I sent over for *Young India* the one about ''Chocolate''[2], adding my note to it. I did not read the book. My note was based

[1] The enclosure to this letter is "The Widow", a story by Katherine published in a magazine. In 1921 during the foreign cloth boycott movement a poor widow, Sita, possessing a single sari—of foreign make—was threatened with leprosy if she kept it. Later demented by fear of leprosy and enforced nakedness she hanged herself.

[2] A collection of Hindi short stories by 'Ugra' (Pandeya Bechan Sharma) which gave rise to a controversy in Hindi circles when the addressee condemned it for obscenity. Later he retracted his condemnation and quoted from Gandhiji's letter in the second edition of that book.

solely upon your letter. I thought it was not right to make comments in this way; a book ought to be read. I finished it today. The impression I formed is not the same as yours. The purpose of the book, I think, is pure. I do not know if its impact is good or bad. The author has aroused disgust at inhuman conduct. I shall now have your letter taken off the chase.

What shall I write about Maharaj Kunvar Singhji[1]? I have been thinking a lot. Writing alone will serve no purpose. Sastriji is making efforts. I am vigilant.

Only the Bihar Government can, if it chooses, do something in the case of Parbhu Singh; otherwise what can be done? I do not wish to take part in this affair.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

SJT. BANARSIDAS CHATURVEDI
91 UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD, CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2521

103. GOD IS

Correspondents often invite me to answer in these pages questions about God. That is the penalty I have to pay for what an English friend calls the God stunt in Young India. Whilst I am unable to notice all such questions in these columns, the following compels an answer:

> I read your *Young India* of May 12, 1927, p. 149, where you write, "I think it is wrong to expect certainties in this world, where all else but God that is Truth is an uncertainty."[2]
>
> *Young India,* p. 152: "God is long-suffering and patient. He lets the tyrant dig his own grave, only issuing grave warnings at stated intervals."[3]
>
> I humbly beg to say that God is not a certainty. His goal ought to be to spread truth all round. Why does He allow the world to be populated by bad people of various shades? Bad people with their unscrupulousness flourish all round and they spread contagion and thus transmit immorality and dishonesty to posterity.

[1] Gandhiji obviously means Kunvar Maharaj Singh whose name along with Kurma V. Reddi's was being considered to succeed V. S. Srinivasa Sastri as Agent-General in South Africa

[2] *Vide An Autobiography,* Pt. III, Ch. XXIII.

[3] *Vide* "Notes", sub-title Evils of Machine-Milling, 12-5-1927

Should not God, omniscient and omnipotent as He is, know where wickedness is by His omniscience and kill wickedness by His omnipotence there and then and nip all rascality in the bud and not allow wicked people to flourish?

Why should God be long-suffering and be patient? What influence can He wield if He be so? The world goes on with all its rascality and dishonesty and tyranny.

If God allows a tyrant to dig his own grave, why should He not weed out a tyrant before his tyranny oppresses the poor? Why allow full play to tyranny and then allow a tyrant, after his tyranny has ruined and demoralized thousands of people, to go to his grave?

The world continues to be as bad as it ever was. Why have faith in that God who does not use His powers to change the world and make it a world of good and righteous men?

I know vicious men with their vices living long and healthy lives. Why' should not vicious men die early as a result of their vices?

I wish to believe in God but there is no foundation for my faith. Kindly enlighten me through *Young India* and change my disbelief into belief.

The argument is as oId as Adam. I have no original answer for it. But I permit myself to state why I believe. I am prompted to do so because of the knowledge that there are young men who are interested in my views and doings.[1]

There is an indefinable mysterious Power that pervades everything. I feel It, though I do not see It. It is this unseen Power which makes Itself felt and yet defies all proof, because It is so unlike all that I perceive through my senses. It transcends the senses.

But it is possible to reason out the existence of God to a limited extent. Even in ordinary affairs we know that people do not know, who rules or why and how he rules. And yet they know that there is a power that certainly rules. In my tour last year in Mysore I met many poor villagers and I found upon inquiry that they did not know who ruled Mysore. They simply said some god ruled it. If the knowledge of these poor people was so limited about their ruler, I, who am infinitely lesser than God than they than their ruler, need not be surprised if I do not realize the presence of God, the King of kings. Nevertheless I do feel as the poor villagers felt about Mysore that there is orderliness in the Universe, there is an unalterable Law governing everything and every being that exists or lives. It is not a

[1] What follows, excluding the last sentence and the stanza from Newman, was recorded on October 20, 1931, by the Columbia Broadcasting Company, London, during Gandhiji's stay in Kingsley Hall.

blind law; for no blind law can govern the conduct of living beings and, thanks to the marvellous researches of Sir J. C. Bose, it can now be proved that even matter is life. That Law then which governs all life is God. Law and the Law-giver are one. I may not deny the Law or the Law-giver, because I know so little about It or Him. Even as my denial or ignorance of the existence of an earthly power will avail me nothing, so will not my denial of God and His Law liberate me from its operation; whereas humble and mute acceptance of divine authority makes life's journey easier even as the acceptance of earthly rule makes life under it easier.

I do dimly perceive that whilst everything around me is ever changing, ever dying, there is underlying all that change a living Power that is changeless, that holds all together, that creates, dissolves and recreates. That informing Power or Spirit is God. And since nothing else I see merely through the senses can or will persist, He alone is.

And is this Power benevolent or malevolent? I see It as purely benevolent. For I can see that in the midst of death life persists, in the midst of untruth, truth persists, in the midst of darkness light persists. Hence I gather that God is Life, Truth, Light. He is Love. He is the supreme Good.

But he is no God who merely satisfies the intellect if He ever does. God to be God must rule the heart and transform it. He must express Himself in every the smallest act of His votary. This can only be done through a definite realization more real than the five senses can ever produce. Sense perceptions can be, often are, false and deceptive, however real they may appear to us. Where there is realization outside the senses it is infallible. It is proved not by extraneous evidence but in the transformed conduct and character of those who have felt the real presence of God within.

Such testimony is to be found in the experiences of an unbroken line of prophets and sages in all countries and climes. To reject this evidence is to deny oneself.

This realization is preceded by an immovable faith. He who would in his own person test the fact of God's presence can do so by a living faith. And since faith itself cannot be proved by extraneous evidence, the safest course is to believe in the moral government of the world and therefore in the supremacy of the moral law, the law of truth and love. Exercise of faith will be the safest where there is a clear determination summarily to reject all that is contrary to Truth and Love.

But the foregoing does not answer the correspondent's

argument. I confess to him that I have no argument to convince him through reason. Faith transcends reason. All I can advise him to do is not to attempt the impossible. I cannot account for the existence of evil by any rational method. To want to do so is to be coequal with God. I am therefore humble enough to recognize evil as such. And I call God long-suffering and patient precisely because He permits evil in the world. I know that He has no evil in Him, and yet if there is evil, He is the author of it and yet untouched by it.

I know too that I shall never know God if I do not wrestle with and against evil even at the cost of life itself. I am fortified in the belief by my own humble and limited experience. The purer I try to become, the nearer I feel to he to God. How much more should I be, when my faith is not a mere apology as it is today but has become as immovable as the Himalayas and as white and bright as the snows on their peaks? Meanwhile I invite the correspondent to pray with Newman who sang from experience:

> Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,
> Lead Thou me on;
> The night is dark and I am far from home,
> Lead Thou me on;
> Keep Thou my feet, I do not ask to see
> The distant scene; one step enough for me.

Young India, 11-10-1928

104. LETTER TO KHURSHED NAOROJI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 11, 1928

I have your long letter, and I am glad you have written to me so fully. There is no cause whatsoever for losing hope. Yours is a new venture. It may therefore take time. But I do want you to add Indian music to your accomplishments, if it is at all possible to do so.

Do come again and pass a few days at the Ashram with me. Nothing can be finer than that you should be able to take to the Ashram life, but I know that it is a very difficult thing for you to do.

At present we have an Austrian couple. Wife knows both vocal and instrumental music. She seems to be very accomplished. She speaks English only indifferently. She is very fond of sacred music. How I wish you could meet her and hear her.

MISS KHURSHED NAOROJI
NAPEAN SEA ROAD, MALABAR HILLS, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 13546

105. LETTER TO JUGALKISHORE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 11, 1928

MY DEAR JUGALKISHORE,

Your letter has been in my file for a long time, but I have been helpless. It is only today whilst everybody is spinning and I have also to spin much longer than on ordinary days that I have been able to find time for overtaking the arrears of correspondence.

Your scheme is good, but reads very ambitious. Two things occur to me. You offer Rs. 75 to those who are married and Rs. 30 to those who are unmarried. I think that you should abolish the distinction, and offer the same thing to either. You may say that you will consider the cases of married people on merits. And if the wives of such people are also prepared to do the village work, stipend may be increased. You should also have a pledge from all about khadi, untouchability, temperance, etc. And instead of saying Hindi preferably, you should make Hindi compulsory. I think you should firmly refuse to take those who do not know Hindi well. You are quite right in saying that your sphere of work will be in the U.P. Why therefore burden yourself with any student who does not know Hindi well?

I am not publishing the scheme just now. In any event, you do not expect me to publish it in full. Let me know if it has already been sanctioned and in working order and if it is, I will gladly notice it in the pages of *Young India*.

I hope both of you are keeping well and doing well.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13703

106. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU

October 12, 1928

MOTILAL NEHRU
ALLAHABAD

SORRY HEAR YOUR FEVER. WIRE CONDITION ALSO KAMALA'S.

GANDHI

From handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

107. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

October 12, 1928

VALLABHBHAI PATEL
SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI

EXPECTED LETTER RECEIVED REPUDIATING CATEGORICALLY ANY UNDERSTANDING. BETTER COME HERE CONSIDER FURTHER
STEPS.

BAPU

From handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

108. TELEGRAM TO MEERUT POLITICAL CONFERENCE

October 12, 1928

SECRETARY, POLITICAL CONFERENCE
MEERUT

SORRY UNABLE ATTEND. WISH CONFERENCE EVERY SUCCESS.

GANDHI

From handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

109. LETTER TO ELIZABETH KNUDSEN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 12, 1928.

DEAR MISS KNUDSEN,

I was delighted to receive your letter after such a long time.

I endorse your rebuke about roses. You are not aware evidently of the tremendous movement that is going on in India at the present moment for the uplift of women.

I hope you are doing and keeping well.

Yours sincerely,

MISS E. KNUDSEN
Y.W.C.A. BUILDING, KARACHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 13548

110. LETTER TO SIR M. V. JOSHI[1]

October 12, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter which was received only yesterday. As I have already intimated in reply to a previous enquiry through Shrimati Saraladevi Ambalal Sarabhai, I very much regret that I shall be unable to give evidence before your Committee. I hope you will therefore please excuse me.

Yours sincerely,

SIR M. V. JOSHI
AGE OF CONSENT COMMITTEE, CAMP AHMEDABAD

From a photostat: S.N. 13550

111. LETTER TO R. N. SHRIVASTAVA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 12, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. Evidently we look at the same thing from opposite points of view. You think that killing in self-defence is not *himsa*, whereas the killing of the calf for its own good, no matter how mistaken it might afterwards be discovered to be, is *himsa*. Here I see no meeting ground. I regard even the killing of a snake to be *himsa*. That I may not be able to avoid it, being afraid of the snake, does not make the act of destruction any the less *himsa.*

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RUP NARAYAN SHRIVASTAVA
C/O SHETH JAMNADAS, M.L.A., JUBBALPUR, C.P.

From a photostat: S.N. 13551

[1] In reply to his letter (S.N. 13545) dated October 9, requesting Gandhiji to give evidence before the Age of Consent Committee at his convenience during their stay at Ahmedabad from October 15 to 19. The Committee was appointed by the Government, following discussions on the Child-marriage Bill introduced in the Central Legislative Assembly, to examine and report on the question.

112. LETTER TO S. SUBRAMANIAM

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 12, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am sending you the sandals and the *veshti*[1] you are so insistent on, deducting the postage from your donation.

With regard to the good saris and good *veshtis*, they can be had from the Khadi Bhandar, Princess Street, Bombay. I do not think is any V.P. system with Malaya. You will therefore have to send them cash before they can execute the order.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. SUBRAMANIAM
GOVERNMENT ENGLISH SCHOOL, SEGAMAT, JOHORE, MALAYA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13552

113. LETTER TO ISAAC SANTRA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 12, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I shall certainly go through the pamphlet when it comes to me. But I prefer doing this kind of work in my own way. At the present moment I am averse to mixing up with any Empire thing because I distrust the Empire.

Yours sincerely,

ISAAC SANTRA, ESQ.
OFFICER-IN-CHARGE LEPROSY SURVEY
C|O POST MASTER, JAMNER, EAST KHANDESH

From a microfilm: S.N. 13553

114. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 12, 1928

I have your letter before reaching Prabhudas's place. It delights me to find you enjoying your travel and writing so cheerfully about it. I want you to return in full vigour and complete cheerfulness.

There are signs at the Ashram of winter approaching. The nights are now very cool and we require a fair amount of covering. Malaria

[1] Dhoti

is on the increase at the Ashram. Rajkishori is down with Sever and so is Sarada. Chimanlal and little Sarada had been down for the last three days.

As usual yesterday all the Ashram people, labourers included, had the fruit repast together. We numbered over 300. The repast consisted of dates, groundnuts, bananas and *kismis*[1].

From the original: C.W. 5313. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8203

115. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI
October 12, 1928

MY DEAR BHAI,

I have your letter of well-deserved rebuke. But it was Ganesan's oversight pure and simple. The sending was not done through the Ashram. Ganesan is the publisher and he is a very careful man. But somehow or the other he forgot to send a copy[2] to you. Andrews got a copy or copies because he cabled.

And for your rebuke about the omission of Gabriel Isaac, I don't know that the name was omitted. I have just looked up the index to the English translation. I missed his name in the index. But of course that is no proof of the fact that the name is not to be found in the History[3]. But even if it is omitted, of course it is an unintentional omission. I have often talked about him and his sacrifice to the Ashram people. I often think of him and his goodness and simplicity. But I can't account for the omission, if there is an omission. I dare say that some other dear names also have been omitted quite unintentionally.

The confusion about the jails does not much worry me. These inaccuracies are bound to be found when a man with a crowded past beyond, recalls events that happened ten years before the time when he begins to recall them. Is it not enough that the substance of the History is absolutely true and that it is free from any bias? Such is the testimony given by those who have read the book. And I dare say you too will give me the same testimony.

Probably by this time you know the nature of the Memorial to be erected to the memory of Maganlal. But if you have missed that

[1] Raisins
[2] Of *Satyagraha in South Africa; vide*
[3] Dated May 17, 1928; *vide* "Notes"sub-title Mill 'Khaddar'.

number of *Young India* I may tell you that it is to be a khadi museum in a specially erected building worthy of Maganlal's love for khadi and his technical knowledge. Subscriptions are coming in very slowly because of the interruption of Bardoli, which naturally absor-bed the attention of those who would otherwise have paid far more liberally to the Maganlal Memorial and that was as it should have been.

I have the beautiful Dutch postcard.

All goes well at the Ashram which is undergoing several changes at the present moment. When they are fully developed you will know all about them through *Young India*. Mira has gone out touring in the spinning area. It is wonderful how she makes herself feel at home in the villages she visits. The Hindi that she has picked up is proving of good value.

At present an Austrian couple are staying here. They are extremely good people. The husband is a professor in a Medical College in Graz and the wife is a fine singer and a finer philosopher. From the commencement of their marriage they have led the life of *brahmacharya*. The merit is all the wife's. She says she never had any sexual desire. They are a wonderful couple in more ways than one.

Ramdas is in Bardoli, Devdas in Delhi. Chhaganlal is here, Mahadev, Pyarelal, Subbiah and the rest of course.

With love from us all,

Yours sincerely,

H. S. L. POLAK, EST.
42, 47 & 48 DANES INN HOUSE
265 STRAND, LONDON W.C. 2

From a photostat: S.N. 14394

116. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 12, 1928

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letters. You will see in your copy of *Young India* your article, "The Land of Rishis"[1].

The question of Sastri's successor is proving very troublesome. I do not know what the Government of India is doing. But I am

[1] *Vide* "An Ashram of Rishis", 21-10-1928.

getting a little nervous. It is difficult to replace Sastri and, if they use the post for favourites, all the great work that Sastri has done can be easily undone.

At the Ashram all is well except that we have the malaria of the season rather trying while it lasts.

MOHAN

From a photostat: S.N. 14409

117. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDIU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 12, 1928

MY DEAR MIRA,

I have your letter. Here is Padmaja's[1] reply to my letter. What can I do now when doctors themselves advise her not to leave the sanatorium? I shall write to her again and write to her from time to time and keep myself in touch with her. You must fulfil your engagements without any anxiety. God will take care of her, better than you and I, and use us as His instruments whenever He wills.

I hope you will keep good health during your tour. I expect to hear from you from time to time.

The political atmosphere is none too calm, none too clear. Poor Motilalji has his work cut out for him.

SHRIMATI SAROJINI NAIDU
C/O THOMAS COOK & SONS, NEW YORK, U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N.14410

118. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 12, 1928

MY DEAR CHILD,

I had your letter after a long lapse of time. It was therefore doubly welcome. I hope that this finds you in better health and that if there was an operation that it was quite successful and has left no ill effects.

The Ashram is undergoing many changes at the present

[1] Addressee's daughter

moment. You will see them all described in the pages of *Young India* when the time comes. Except for malaria which is seasonal for this time of the year, everything goes well here.

Remember me to Menon when you write to him.

MRS. ESTHER MENON

From a photostat: S.N. 14411

119. LETTER TO PARAMANAND K. KAPADIA

ASHRAM,
October 13, 1928

BHAISHRI PARAMANAND,

I got your letter only yesterday. All your letters are good. They are well reasoned and are never discourteous. There can, therefore, be no question of impropriety in them. However, your letters do have one defect. They are too long for me. I have thought about most of what you say, and I would therefore grasp your point even if you put it concisely, and if I did not understand I would ask. This preface was prompted by your letter, as long as a pamphlet, placed before me by Kakasaheb nearly fifteen days ago. I have kept it in my file, so I see it every day, but being much too long it remains unanswered for want of time. Even this I do not say as criticism of you but only as an explanation of my having missed reading your previous letter. Now the reply to your letter.[1]

You must have observed that I give new meaning to old words or enlarge their old meanings. I do not do that arbitrarily or to suit my purpose, but because I think it right to do so. The words of poets are inexhaustible in their meaning. The word *kavi* originally meant an enlightened person. The perfectly enlightened person is the perfect poet. If, therefore, I do not draw the right meaning of old words or sayings, I would have to waste my energy in, starting a new religion and would also be guilty of killing the souls of those words. I have realized that even words have souls. If, therefore, you wish, you can compel me to admit that I may be giving a new meaning to the word ‘ahimsa’. It seems to me an exaggeration to describe ‘ahimsa’ as the supreme dharma in the sense you give to the word. But I have never quarrelled over the meaning of words. Hence if my purpose can be served without the word ‘ahimsa’, I will certainly give up its use.

Even at the time of the killing [of the calf] the risk was indeed

[1] For extracts from the addressee’s letter and Gandhiji’s more detailed reply, *vide* “Jain Ahimsa”, 25-10-1928

there that people would draw wrong conclusions from my action. But I felt that the discernment of the true meaning of ahimsa had become so weak that I must do what I did even at the risk. And how could I hide having done something when the occasion required otherwise?

As for the question about the daughter I would only say I would not kill her thinking that I would otherwise commit a sin, but I would kill her if I thought that she would ask for the gift of death if she could speak. I do not at all subscribe to the belief that under no circumstance is a person willing to give up his or her life. I smell cowardice in it and it is against the experience of many people. If man is indeed so much attached to life, he can make no progress. How then can he ever attain *moksha*? I have seen in innumerable cases that such attachment is very much less in other countries.

As for the nuisance of the monkeys I see that I would again have to quarrel about the meaning of 'ahimsa'.[1] May I leave that discussion? How about keeping the question for a full discussion some time in future when we meet? I have much to say about the three principles you have put forward. If I get the time I will discuss the contents of your letter in *Navajivan.*

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N. 11595

120. A CRUEL CUSTOM

A Kathiawari gentleman writes to say:[2]

This difficulty is a genuine one in all Hindu households and not only in Kathiawar. If a young husband who has become conscious of his dharma wishes to save himself, he should find a way to do so. He should politely reason with his parents and bring home to them the true nature of marriage. If he has any difficulty in convincing them, he should insist upon living apart from his wife so long as he cannot live independently. Where there is a will, there is a way. Man can add to his stature by finding out ways to solve difficultes and can also develop his human estate.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-10-1928

[1] For Gandhji's views on the issue, *vide* also "Monkey Nuisance", 8-7-1928

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had complained that in Kathiawar married couples living with parents did not see much of each other during day time and asked how husband and wife could exchange ideas and how the husband could obtain the wife's consent to continence.

121. COWS IN BARDOLI

A Bania gentleman from the Bardoli taluk writes to say:[1]

If the above facts are true, this also should be taken up as an essential activity in the constructive work that is being done at persent in Bardoli. It has been repeatedly pointed out in Navajivan how great harm is done to an ox if it is not castrated. There is no doubt that almost an equal quantity of milk can be got from the cow as from the buffalo, but this result can be achieved only if the cow is reared in a scientific manner. On the whole, if we wish to spare ourselves the slaughter of the male buffalo, we should turn our full attention to an improvement in the breeding of cows. It can easily be proved that the cow and her progeny are far more useful than the buffalo and her progeny. We have paid no attention to the fact that successive generations of cows will become enfeebled if a cow is served by any and every ox. If the problem of the cow could be solved as a result of the great awakening in Bardoli, the people there would have significantly added to the services they have rendered through their satyagraha.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-10-1928

122. SAD PLIGHT

A young man writes:[2]

Though this young man has furnished his name, he wishes for a remedy through the columns of *Navajivan,* since there are many others like him. I have no panacea to offer. I regard this as a kind of disease. I know that many people suffer from it. I shall indicate what has benefited some persons.

Faith in God is the most essential thing in this. And those who have this faith ask for God's help in their helplessness and receive it. Rather than get involved in such arguments as whom should one pray

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that in Bardoli and other taluks it was mostly the Raniparaj community that maintained cows. The higher castes preferred buffaloes. They also refused, on sentimental grounds, to get calves castrated and let even very young or weak oxen go free in the village to meet cows through a misplaced sense of piety, which resulted in the progressive degeneration of the cow's offspring.

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent, a young man of nineteen and married, was unable to shake off the habit of self-abuse which rendered him weaker day by day.

to, is God free thus to help, and if He is, why does He not avert the disease before He is prayed to, since He dwells in everyone's heart and should become aware of the disease, etc., etc., we should regard His ways as inscrutable and, following the example of others who have saved themselves by taking refuge in Him, we should have faith and offer heartfelt prayers to Him.

Effort on our part is as essential as prayer. A prayer without effort becomes a mere show. It is empty. Mere mechanical repetition of words which do not proceed from the heart is futile. Moreover, anyone who makes an effort immediately gains self-confidence. Constant physical work is essential to such effort, no matter how light that work may be. Reading material should be such as to nurture pure thoughts. Privacy should be altogether shunned. It is imperative to give up co-habitation with one's wife. Having taken all these measures, one should totally forget about one's disease and, if one is constantly occupied in physical activity, one will not even be reminded of it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-10-1928

123. A CONUNDRUM[1]

Some fiery champions of ahimsa, who seem bent upon improving the finances of the Postal Department, inundate me with letters full of abuse, and are practising himsa in the name of ahimsa. They would if they could prolong the calf controversy[2] indefinitely. Some of them kindly suggest that my intellect has suffered decay with the attainment of sixtieth year. Some others have expressed the regret that the doctors did not diagnose my case as hopeless when I was sent to the Sassoon Hospital[3] and cut short my sinful career by giving me a poison injection in which case the poor calf in the Ashram might have been spared the poison injection and the race of monkeys saved from the menace of destruction. These are only a few characteristic samples from the sheaf-fuls of 'love-letters' that I am receiving daily. The more I receive these letters the more confirmed I feel in the correctness of my decision to ventilate this thorny question in the columns of *Navajivan*. It never seems to have struck these good people that by

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 14-10-1928. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

[2] *Vide* "The Fiery Ordeal", 30-9-1928.

[3] Where he was operated upon for appendicitis in January 1924; *vide* "Interview to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 12-1-1924

this unseemly exhibition of spleen they merely prove their unfitness to be votaries or exponents of ahimsa and strike it at the very root. I turn however from these fulminations to one from among a batch of letters of a different order that I have received and I take the' following from it:

> Your exposition of the ethics of the "calf-incident" has cleared up a lot of my doubts and shed valuable light on the implications of ahimsa. But unfortunately it raises a fresh difficulty. Suppose, for instance, that a man begins to oppress a whole people and there is no other way of putting a stop to his oppression; then proceeding on the analogy of the calf, would it not be an act of ahimsa to rid society of his presence by putting him to death? Would you not regard such an act as an unavoidable necessity and therefore as one of ahimsa? In your discussion about the killing of the calf you have made the mental attitude the principal criterion of ahimsa. Would not according to this principle the destruction of proved tyrants be counted as ahimsa, since the motive inspiring the act is of the highest? You say that there is no *himsa* in killing off animal pests that destroy a farmer's crops; then why should it not be ahimsa to kill human pests that threaten society with destruction and worse?

The discerning reader will have already perceived that this correspondent has altogether missed the point of my argument. The definition of ahimsa that I have given cannot by any stretch of meaning be made to cover a case of manslaughter such as the correspondent in question postulates. I have nowhere described the unavoidable destruction of life that a farmer has to commit in pursuit of his calling as ahimsa. One may regard such destruction of life as unavoidable and condone it as such, but it cannot be spelt otherwise than as *himsa*. The underlying motive with the farmer is to subserve his own interest or, say, that of society. Ahimsa on the other hand rules out such interested destruction. But the killing of the calf was undertaken for the sake of the dumb animal itself. Anyway its good was the only motive.

The problem mentioned by the correspondent in question may certainly be compared to that of the monkey nuisance. But then there is a fundamental difference between the monkey nuisance and the human nuisance. Society as yet knows of no means by which to effect a change of heart in the monkeys and their killing may therefore be held as pardonable, but there is no evil-doer or tyrant who need be considered beyond reform. That is why the killing of a human being out of self-interest can never find a place in the scheme of ahimsa.

To come now to the question of motive, whilst it is true that mental attitude is the crucial test of ahimsa, it is not the sole test. To

kill any living being or thing save for his or its own interest is *himsa* however noble the motive may otherwise be. And a man who harbours ill-will towards another is no less guilty of *himsa* because for fear of society or want of opportunity, he is unable to translate his ill-will into action. A reference to both intent and deed is thus necessary in order finally to decide whether a particular act of abstention can be classed as ahimsa. After all, intent has to be inferred from a bunch of correlated acts.

Young India, 18-10-1928

124. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

Aso Sud 1 [*October 14, 1928*][1]

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I have your letter.

There is no question of one confined to bed spinning. Even your pledge exempts you from that obligation during illness. If you give up spinning through lethargy or on the pretext of being too busy, I would certainly have some harsh words to say, would even consider employing satyagraha against you provided I loved you enough for the purpose. I would not make any such unreasonable demand on you that even during illness you should continue spinning. If, moreover, Lady Pattani is now spinning, as you say, with sincere faith, to me it is as good as your spinning. But I have doubt about her spinning with such faith. I regard your certificate as partial, so that I myself should test her sincerity. You also tell me that she does not always wear *pankoru*. If one has sincere faith, would one omit to wear it any time? *Pankoru* is a household word among us. She may wear *pankoru* of any thinness she likes; I don't take this word to mean necessarily coarse cloth. It means cloth made from yarn of whatever quality spun by our sisters and daughters. It is in your hand to spin yarn that is fine. Well, I have addressed this letter to Ramabehn, it seems.

Here are a few of the things I expect from you. You should provide in your budget for expenditure on things manufactured in your State, as you provide for expenditure for collecting revenue. At present, that expenditure is borne by me. But how much longer can I afford it?

Please prepare and send me a report, for public or for my

[1] The year is inferred from the reference to articles on running a dairy which appeared in *Young India*, 27-9-1928 and 11-10-1928.

information, of the results of the law enforcing prohibition in your State.

The State should run a model dairy in accordance with the principles explained by the Government Dairy expert in his articles in *Young India*. I am sure you will incur no loss through it in the end.

You can take up these things even while you are bed-ridden.

After you have been able to attend to them, you may ask me for more suggestions.

But one thing I should say above all else. Leave the bed. You will think this a difficult task and so do I. But to succeed in that, along with doctors, you should consult a few quacks too. One of them is Kuvalayananda. It seems you know him. I have not been able to assess the value of his work. There is one other quack like him. He does not know anything about yoga and employs water-treatment. If you wish to collect persons of that kind round you, all I can do to help you is to inquire about them. After you have heard them, follow any of their treatments which appeals to you and seems harmless. There is no reason why you should remain bed-ridden. Am I also not one of these quacks?

But at present I am useless. In any case, Rama is there, the greatest Vaid. If my efforts to know Him had succeeded, I would have certainly sent Him to you. But, alas, will I ever see such a lucky day?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3217. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

125. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

Silence Day, October 15, 1928

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I got your letter. Mirabehn has written to me in detail about the shortcomings in Jethalal's work. She says that Jethalal has agreed to rectify the mistakes. You should go on goading him.

I have understood the balance-sheet drawn up by you. I would advise you not to make sub-divisions of untruth. Exaggeration, half-truth, conniving at untruth—all this is untruth. We generally treat ourselves generously, whereas we ought to be parsimonious. We should magnify our own faults, small as mustard grains, into big mountains.

I have also observed something like this in regard to

brahmacharya. What we often condone as violation of mental brahmacharya is in fact violation of physical *brahmacharya*. For instance, unclean touch is always a violation of physical *brahmacharya*, and so is unclean joking. Unclean means prompted by impure thoughts.

I need not say this to you. But it has become necessary now to explain it to all inmates of the Ashram. When I examine my own life, I see this laxity in myself too, and that is why I caution you. The truth is that a pure life is a new birth, and one does not get it without God's grace.

"As long as the elephant relied on his own strength so long he failed."[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 6062. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

126. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE

Monday [*October 15, 1928*][2]

BHAISHREE MAMA,

I was distressed to hear the news about Dalsukhbhai. Please console his relatives on my behalf. I very well remember Dalsukhbhai's affectionate face. The void left by his passing can never be filled. But we must all shoulder the responsibility. Tell his relatives that those who knew Dalsukhbhai share their grief. You have not given any address, so I send this letter through you.

Blessings from

BAPU

MAMA SAHEB
ANTYAJ ASHRAM
GODHARA
B.B. & C.I. RY.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32842

[1] The allusion is to the legendary Gajendra, king of elephants, who was rescued by Krishna from the clutches of a crocodile.

[2] From the postmark, October 15 was a Monday.

127. LETTER TO VIPIN BIHARI

October 15, 1928

BHAI VIPIN,

I have your letter. It is almost impossible for me to go or send someone. I congratulate you all on being able to persuade Sadhu Vaswani[1] to come over to Motihari. It is needless to tell the students of Bihar that true learning means increasing purity of life, i.e., being simple and straightforward.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI VIPIN BIHARI

RECEPTION COMMITTEE, STUDENTS' CONFERENCE

MOTIHARI, BIHAR

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9128.

128. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

October 15, 1928

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

Your letters come in regularly. By now your wife must have fully recovered. There is only one way of attaining peace of mind—to impress Ramanama upon the heart.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 196

129. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

October 15, 1928

CHI. BRAJKISAN,

Your letter. Similar doubts have been expressed in many other letters. I have answered them in *Navajivan*,[2] so I write nothing here. I hope you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2360

[1] T. L. Vaswani

[2] *Vide* "The Fiery Ordeal", 30-9-1928. The article appeared in *Hindi Navajivan*, 4-10-1928.

130. LETTER TO KARIM GOOLAMALI[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 16, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You are in the same boat as the Vaishnavites, a sect to which I belong by birth. And these sectarian abuses can only be dealt with by the members of the respective sects. There seems to me to be no royal road to reform except through constant striving and levelling up of public opinion.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

KARIM GOOLAMALI, ESQ.
KHARADHAR, KARACHI

From a photostat: G.N. 233

131. LETTER TO DR. C. MUTHU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 16, 1928

DEAR DR. MUTHU,

I have your letter. You won't ask me to sign any appeal please. You won't find my name in any appeal save those which I have mysel inaugurated, for the simple reason that if I sign one I should have to sign many, and I do not like the idea of having to do so. I hope however that you will be able soon to finish the sanatorium and realize your ambition.

Yours sincerely,

DR. C. MUTHU
9 MONTEITH ROAD, EGMORE, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 13555

132. LETTER TO ROY HOPKINS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 16, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter enclosing a cheque for £5 for a short article that you want me to give you on 'peace'. I have not a moment

[1] The typewritten office copy (S.N. 13556) of this letter bears the note:

to spare just now to write anything beyond my own appointments, and I hope I am humble enough to realize that the world is not waiting to know from me anything about the ways of securing peace for which it is thirsting.

I return the cheque you have kindly sent me. Even if I write anything I should not do it for remuneration, having never done it. Having written for some papers, I have received moneys on several occasions which have gone as contributions to the upkeep of public activities I am engaged in. Nobody is likely easily to get from me any writing because I am so chary of writing for anybody or any paper. You will therefore please forgive me for returning your cheque and also for my inability. to write for you.

Yours sincerely,

ROY HOPKINS, ESQ.
MANAGING DIRECTOR, LONDON GENERAL PRESS
8 BOUVERIES STREET, LONDON E.C. 4

From photostat: S.N. 14388

133. LETTER T0 RUKHI GANDHI

October 16, 1928

CHI. RUKHI,

You would like, wouldn't you, that I should reply immediately? You were wise in keeping silent about the bullock. As you are keeping well and doing good work there, I do not feel eager to ask you to come over here.

Live as you will, but so

As to realize God.

Keshu seems to have settled down well. About Radha, I cannot say anything yet. We are having a good malaria exhibition these days.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. RUKSHAMANI
C/O KHUSHALBHAI GANDHI
OPPOSITE MIDDLE SCHOOL.
NAVA PURA, RAJKOT

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8761: Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhari

134. SASTRI'S WORK

A graphic letter received this week from an eye-witness describes the now famous Klerksdorp incident of which the South African Press is full. Though nothing remains or needs to be said from the political standpoint after the full, free and frank apology from the Union Government, too much cannot be said of Sjt. Sastri's generous and courageous behaviour in the face of a plot which might have proved fatal in its result. The letter before me shows that this true son and representative of India stood his ground without the least nervousness even when the lights were put out by the party that had come led by the Deputy Mayor to break up the meeting he was addressing. And when the firing of an explosive had made the meeting hall too suffocating for the audience, Sjt. Sastri went outside and, as if nothing untoward or serious had happened, finished his speech without even referring to the incident. Popular as he had already become among the Europeans of South Africa before this incident, his cool courage and generous behaviour raised him still further in their estimation.

And as he wanted no fame for himself (few men would be found shier than Sjt. Sastri of fame), he turned his popularity to the advancement of the cause he has represented with such singular ability and success. During his all too brief stay in South Africa he has immensely raised the status of our countrymen in that part of the world. Let us hope that they will by their exemplary conduct show themselves worthy of him.

But Sastri's contribution to the solution of the difficult and delicate problem of South Africa does not rest merely upon what was after all an accident. We know nothing except through the results of the inner working of the ambassador's office in which he had to exhaust all his art of a diplomacy that comes from a conviction of the correctness of one's cause and that spurns to do or countenance anything wrong, mean or crooked. But we do know how unsparing he has been in the use on behalf of his cause of the gifts of eloquence, scholarship, both English and Sanskrit and great and varied learning with which nature has lavishly endowed him. He has been delivering to large and select audiences of Europeans lectures on Indian philosophy and culture which have stirred European imagination and softened the hard crust of prejudice which has hitherto prevented the general body of Europeans from seeing anything good in the Indian. These lectures are perhaps his greatest and the most permanent contribution to the Indian cause in South Africa.

It must be a serious problem for the Government of India to

choose Sjt. Sastri's successor. He has persistently withstood all pressure to prolong his stay in South Africa. Letter s from South Africa show me how our people dread Sjt. Sastri's impending departure. It will be a calamity if a worthy successor is not found to continue the mission so successfully inaugurated and represented by Sjt. Sastri. Tradition has, I hope, been set up at the Viceregal Lodge of treating the office of India's Agent in South Africa as neutral ground which the Government and popular parties may jointly tread. It is to be hoped that the successor to be chosen will be one who will commend himself equally to the Government and the people, and who will truly represent not merely the Government of India but the people as well.

Young India, 18-10-1928

135. TELEGRAM TO N. C. KELKAR[1]

October 18, 1928

APART OTHER REASONS I WOULD BE EXCUSED EVEN FOR SAKE OF SUCCESS SUCH CONFERENCE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13705

136. LETTER TO PERIN CAPTAIN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 18, 1928

I have your two letters. You will certainly come with me to Calcutta and sell whatever stuff you like, but not at the Exhibition.

Mrs. P. Byramji did meet me when I was in Nagpur and buy a lot of khadi. But beyond this I cannot say. That is all. Where is the question of trusting when our rule is to sell only for cash?

I have had a chat with Kakasaheb. He tells me he has no recollection of having made you any promise or told you anything about his ability to sell khadi for you at the Vidyapith. And he can have no customers for embroidered khadi. Did he tell you he had any

[1] In reply to his telegram of October 17 from Poona which read: "Supposing we decide to hold Bombay Presidency All-Parties Conference at Poona on Saturday 27th for one day before Simon Commission's departure to uphold and popularize Nehru Report and Lucknow resolutions could you consent presiding? Informing final decision after your wire."

bhandar?

I am keeping quite well.

MRS. PERIN CAPTAIN

From a microfilm: S.N. 13559

137. LETTER TO L. V. PATTANAYAKA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI
October 18, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. *Karmabhumi* means to me a land not of enjoyment of pleasure but enjoyment of work by way of sacrifice.

My authority for saying that Sita was spinning is based upon a fact that, in her times, as history tells us every household had a spinning-wheel. There is no reason to believe that Sita's household was an exception.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. L. V. PATTANAYAKA
P.O. DIGAPAHANDI (GANJAM)

From a microfilm: S.N. 13560

138. LETTER TO YAJNESHWAR PRASAD

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 18, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you.

With reference to the boy who is suffering from tuberculosis, if he is old enough to judge for himself, I think he should use his own discretion and take whatever he considers is not objectionable from the religious standpoint. If, however, he is too young to decide for himself, it is proper for him to submit to his father's wishes.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. YAJNESHWAR PRASAD
790 NAI BASTI, QUEEN'S ROAD, DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13561

139. LETTER TO BINA DAS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 18, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter which has been with me for some time now. I have nowhere advocated the use of physical force even for self- defence. What I have said is that the use of physical force is preferable to cowardice, that is to say, it is wrong not to use force when we have a mind to do so but which we do not use because we fear to die. What I do advocate is the courage to die whether for self-defence or whether for the cause of one's country.

Yours sincerely,

SHRIMATI BINA DAS
7 RAM MOHAN ROY ROAD, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13562

140. LETTER TO URMILA DEVI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 18, 1928

I have your letter. You are never without your full share of worries. I hope however that Dhiren is now fairly restored to health.

Devdhar can be found at his house or at the Seva Sadan. When he is in Poona, I think he always goes to the Seva Sadan.

We have many patients suffering from malaria at the Ashram just now. It is nothing surprising because it is the season. It never worries us because the treatment is only one: fast while the fever lasts and quinine preceded by some opening medicine.

SHRIMATI URMILA DEVI
JANHAVI VILLA, P.O. DECCAN GYMKHANA, POONA

From a photostat: S.N. 13563

141. LETTER TO T. R. PHOOKAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 18, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. What appeal can I issue for you to take? What I have suggested is that you should personally go to moneyed Con-

gressmen and ask them to help you out of the difficulty.[1] I feel that that is the only proper course for you to adopt, and I feel also that those Congressmen who have money should bear the burden. I suggest your taking an audited account to them.

You are at liberty to make whatever use you like of this letter for approaching Congressmen.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. R. PHOOKAN
GAUHATI (ASSAM)

From a microfilm: S.N. 13564

142. LETTER TO MAHARAJA OF NABHA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 18, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[2] I had a visit too from Sjt. Ganesan. I regret I am unable to help you. I have given you my reasons and I gave them to those friends who came to see me on your behalf.

Yours sincerely,

H. H. THE MAHARAJAH OF NABHA
THE OBSERVATORY, KODAIKANAL, SOUTH INDIA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13565

143. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 18, 1928

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have your two letters.

Of course I shall obey your wishes about attending the Congress at Calcutta.

I did not refer to the Exhibition incident with a view to securing

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to T. R. Phookan", 6-10-1928.

[2] In his letter of September 19, Gurucharan Singh, deposed Maharaja of Nabha, had requested Gandhiji to help him get justice and separation from Government.

your intervention.[1] I would not in any way whatsoever like to be interfering with the local discretion. I simply told you of my own difficulty. I have certainly not objected to machines as such at all. My objection was and is to the exhibition of Indian mill-cloth. Regarding machinery my argument is that we may not exhibit any and every machinery but that we may certainly exhibit such machinery which we ourselves know to be desirable for the cultivators and which has not yet obtained vogue in the country.

I quite agree with you that we have to go on with the political work in spite of the riots.

I had your reassuring telegram about your own health and Kamala's. You will have to be in an absolutely good form in Calcutta because you will have more than enough to do there.

Yours sincerely,

PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU
ANAND BHAVAN, ALLAHABAD

From a photostat: S.N. 13707

144. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

October 19, 1928

CHI. MIRA,

I have been having your perfect letters. They please me and relieve me of all anxiety. You will not mind my not sending you anything long or regular just now. About Prabhudas, Chhaganlal will be wiring you.

Love.

BAPU

SHRIMATI MIRABAI
JAMIA MILLIA, KAROL BAGH, DELHI

From the original: C.W. 5314. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8204

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Motilal Nehru", 30-9-1928.

145. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

October 19, 1928

MIRABEHN
CARE DEVDAS
KAROL BAGH, DELHI

REGARDING PRABHUDAS USE YOUR OWN JUDGEMENT AND DO WHAT YOU THINK BEST.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5315. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G. N. 8205

146. LETTER TO B. G. HORNIMAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 20, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your first letter which I reached after the allotted time was passed and so remained silent about it. I received your second letter yesterday and there was no time to acknowledge it there and then. If you pass 24 hours with me in the Ashram you will never ask me for an article even of five words, let alone 100 words. It have neither time nor energy for anything more than what just now engages my attention. You will therefore please excuse me for disappointing.

Yours sincerely,

B. G. HORNIMAN, ESQ.
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 13566

147. 'AN ASHRAM OF RISHIS'

An article under this heading which has been sent by Deenabandhu Andrews has been published in *Young India*[1].

In a city called Marburg in Germany, there is a university which has been called an ashram of *rishis* by Deenabandhu in this article. It contains a readable description of an elderly professor who leads the life of a *rishi* there. The Vedas are studied on an extensive scale in the Marburg University. And the Vedas seem to have made such a deep impression on the lives of the professors who study them that they

[1] Dated 11-10-1928

themselves lead the life of *rishis.* Professor Otto seems to be pre-eminent amongst these professors. Here is a description of him:[1]

> At the house of Professor Otto, where I was staying, it was indeed a happiness to be his guest, even for a short time. He has never married. He has spent his whole life in Vedic scholarship. His hair is white, and his sister, who is nearly the same age as himself, now keeps house for him. She treated me as a mother while I was there, looking after all my wants, in a very touching manner. Almost from the very first, the glowing, ardent love for India in Professor Otto's heart became visible to me through the animation, which lit up his face, while he related to me his experiences on his different visits. Yet his own health had suffered terribly in India. The malaria, which had infected him as early as 1912, never wholly left his system; and after his visit to India last year, he became a complete invalid for many months, Iying on his back with heart weakness. He has not even yet recovered. Yet still India remains the land of his early dreams, and he has studied every feature of India's civilization with minutest care. Above all, he has studied deeply the Hindu religion, not only in the Vedas, Upanishads and Gita, But also both in its Puranas and in its modern forms of worship. His knowledge of Indian detail was to me amazing. This has been due to the fact, that in one way or other his whole life has been spent in research. Sanskrit is almost[2] like his own mother tongue to him; and he can use it when necessary as a second language.

I have here translated the description of only one of the *rishis.* We should admit with shame that the zeal, the earnestness and the perseverance with which some scholars in Europe and, especially in Germany, pursue the study of such treatises as the Vedas are something almost totally absent in this country today. It is very seldom that we come across anyone emulating the life of a *rishi.* And where do we see now *brahmacharya* being readily practised solely for scholastic reasons, without any accompanying ostentation? And when a sister remains a spinster in order to be a companion to her brother and to run his home, is this not something that delights one and creates a sacred atmosphere? The other day an American professor had narrated his experiences in *The Times* of Bombay. He too is a student of Sanskrit. He writes that he had come to India full of hopes; however, he had been disappointed after coming to India, seeing things for himself and meeting Sanskrit pundits. His article contains exaggerations, is full of hastily-formed judgements and is coloured by the atmosphere created by Europeans living in India. But allowing for all this, I see a grain of truth in what remains, and I feel ashamed. If

[1] The following description has been taken from Andrews's article in *Young India.*

[2] The source has "about".

there had been a true religious awakening in us, if we had the fervour to preserve whatever was true, good and beautiful in our ancient civilization, our condition would have bean very different today. *Rishis* could live fearlessly in forests. *Brahmacharya* was something that they could readily practise. Today we cannot live safely even in cities. *Brahmacharya* appears to be something strange and wonderful to us and we shall with difficulty come across a true *brahmachari* if we search for one. How then can we find any women who have taken the vow of celibacy? Hence for a moment one feels that the *rishis* have started living in scattered corners of Europe and no longer live in this country which once was their abode.

This is not to suggest that anyone who reads this article should go over to Germany or some other place and try to become a *rishi.* That too will be futile. I cannot visualize an Indian going to Germany and becoming a *rishi.* It is right for Indians to imitate the good qualities of a person like Professor Otto and, while remaining in India, to revitalize the institution of *rishis* here. It can be claimed that the Arya Samaj has made superhuman efforts in this direcuoi But those attempts are like a drop in the ocean so far as India is concerned. It is only when even mightier efforts are made that we shall be able to find the lost key to our ancient civilization

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-10-1928

148. SIMPLE-MINDEDED LABOURERS

From a letter which I have received from Panchmahals, it appears that immoral and greedy agents lure simple-minded Rajputs and others and recruit them for serving in the tea-gardens of Assam. Thus I have received affidavits concerning twelve labourers. It is obvious from this that under the pretext of giving them work in the neighbourhood of Baroda, young men and women were taken as far away as Assam.

The question is not whether they are happy or otherwise in Assam, but how anyone can be deceived and taken so far away. The persons who signed the affidavits inform me that they had to go leaving behind their fields. These poor persons had gone in the hope of being employed as labourers in nearby places and now they have been ensnared, and have had to leave behind their worried relations.

There is only one way of preventing this situation. The agents deceive the labouring classes and lure them with false temptations for the sake of their commission. If this commission business is entirely

stopped, no one will be deceived any longer. The owners of tea-gardens in Assam have the right to recruit labourers in a proper way by laying down proper conditions. Let them advertise in an honest manner. But the practice of recruiting labourers through agents should be terminated. Agents receive commission in respect of every labourer they recruit. It is rumoured that the amount is Rs. 10 per head. Hence the agent who can deceive thirty labourers every month earns Rs. 300 a month. This is no small temptation. Hence, no matter what warning the owners give to the agents, the latter are hardly going to be deterred from practising such devious means.

As a matter of fact, if a job is worth while and sufficiently tempting, intermediaries should not become necessary. Experience indicates that they become necessary only when a job involves hard labour, the wage is meagre, and it involves going far away from one's home for the job. That the job may be at a distance from home is inevitable. There is no doubt, however, that labourers will go on their own if the conditions relating to wages, etc., are tempting. If the sums paid as agents' commission, etc., are spent on providing better facilities to the labourers, the incidents of hardships to which these affidavits bear witness will be done away with.

However, whether the owners withdraw their agents or not, public servants who come to know of these hardships should spread knowledge of the true facts among the people and warn them against being caught in the grip of the agents.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-10-1 928

149. MY NOTES

WHEN SHOULD PUNISHMENT BE AWARDED?

A teacher of the Vinaymandir has put the following questions[1]:

In my opinion, it is simply improper to subject students to any form of punishment. By doing so, the feelings of respect and pure love that teachers should have for students disappear. The method of teaching students by punishing them is being progressively abandoned. I know that occasions do arise when even the best of teachers cannot but inflict punishment. However, this should be an exception and should not in any way be commended. If the best of teachers has

[1] Not translated here. He had asked whether pupils should be given corporal punishment for not studying or for moral lapses, especially in national schools.

to resort to beating, this should in fact be regarded as a drawback in his art. Although an individual like Spencer has looked upon every punishment as improper, he has not always been able to put his theory into practice. After replying to this question, I need not answer in detail the other questions.

Ordinarily, punishment is not compatible with non-violence. Of course, I can conceive of instances in which punishment cannot be regarded as such. These, however, should be regarded as irrelevant so far as teachers are concerned. For instance, if a father who is extremely unhappy punishes his son, it is a case of punishment given out of love. The son, too, would not regard it as an act of violence. Or, when in some cases a delirious patient has to be smacked by the person nursing him, it is not a violent act but a non-violent one. But these instances do not help teachers at all. A teacher has to develop the technique of teaching students and maintaining discipline amongst them without resorting to beating. We have before us instances of such teachers who have never beaten their students. Punishments other than corporal would be to make the student ashamed of himself, make him alternately sit down and stand up, make him hold his toes, abuse him, etc. I feel that teachers should discard all these methods.

To repent after punishing a student in order to improve him is no repentance at all. Moreover, teachers who believe and make their students believe that punishment leads to the latter's improvement, end up by making such a belief take root in society. And this belief creates the illusion that reforms can be brought about through violence. In my opinion, teachers of national schools who deliberately punish their students are indeed guilty of violating their pledge.

BOLSHEVISM[1]

Q. What is your opinion about the social economics of Bolshevism and how far do you think they are fit to be copied by our country?

A. I must confess that I have not yet been able fully to understand the meaning of Bolshevism. All that I know is that it aims at the abolition of the institution of private property. This is only an application of the ethical ideal of non-possession in the realm of economics and if the people adopted this ideal of their own accord or could be made to accept it by means of peaceful persuasion there would be nothing like it. But from what I know of Bolshevism it not only does not preclude the use of force but freely sanctions it for the expropriation of private property and maintaining the collective State

[1] The translation of this question and answer is reproduced from *Young India*, 15-11-1928.

ownership of the same. And if that is so I have no hesitation in saying that the Bolshevik regime in its present form cannot last for long. For it is my firm conviction that nothing enduring can be built on violence. But be that as it may there is no questioning the fact that the Bolshevik ideal has behind it the purest sacrifice of countless men and women who have given up their all for its sake, and an ideal that is sanctified by the sacrifices of such master spirits as Lenin cannot go in vain: the noble example of their renunciation will be emblazoned for ever and quicken and purify the ideal as time passes.

THE LATE SHRI DALSUKHBHAI SHAH

Reporting the death of the Godhra lawyer, Shri Dalsukhbhai Shah, last week, Mamasaheb writes as follows:[1]

I had personally known the late Dalsukhbhai. I was fully aware of his gentlemanly qualities. Following close upon the heels of Shri Purushottamdas Shah's death, this second loss that Panchmahals has suffered is really to be regarded as too much. Both these men lent glory to the public life of Panchmahals and were true servants of the people. However, whether at the right time or untimely, all of us have to meet our death. As Mamasaheb writes, it is the task of the youth to make this loss bearable. Moreover, as Chi. Nagindas, the eldest son of the deceased, is a graduate of the Vidyapith, his responsibility has doubled. As a son he must glorify his father's name and add to the legacy of nobility of character that the latter has left. It now becomes his special duty to add to the prestige of the Vidyapith by filling up the void among the public servants of Panchmahals. May God give him strength to full this task, give courage to the family of the deceased and grant peace to the soul of the departed.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-10-1928

150. JAIN AHIMSA?[2]

A Jain friend who is reputed to have made a fair study of the Jain philosophy as also of the other systems has addressed me a long letter on ahimsa. It deserves a considered reply. He says in effect:

Your interpretation of ahimsa has caused confusion. In the ordi-

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had said that the deceased was an ideal lawyer who earned his livelihood in an honest way, span for his own requirements of khadi and gave up practice during the noncooperation days.

[2] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan,* 21-10-1928. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

nary sense of the term himsa means to sever life from body and not to do so is ahimsa. Refraining from causing pain to any living creature is only an extension of the original meaning which cannot by any stretch of language be made to cover the taking of life. You would not understand me to mean from this that I regard all taking of life as wrong in every possible circumstance; for I do not think that there is any ethical principle in this world that can be regarded as absolute and admitting of no exception whatever. The maxim "Ahimsa is the highest or the supreme duty" embodies a great and cardinal truth but it does not cover the entire sum of human duties. Whilst therefore what you have termed "non-violent killing" may be a right thing it cannot be described as ahimsa.

I am of opinion that just as life is subject to constant change and development, the meanings of terms too are constantly undergoing a process of evolution and this can be amply proved by illustrations from the history of any religion. The word *yajna* or sacrifice in the Hindu religion for instance is an illustration in point. Sir J. C. Bose's discoveries are today revolutionizing the accepted connotations of biological terms. Similarly if we will fully realize ahimsa we may not fight shy of discovering fresh implications of the doctrine of ahimsa. We cannot improve upon the celebrated maxim, "Ahimsa is the highest or the supreme duty" but we are bound, if we would retain our spiritual inheritance, to explore the implications of this great and universal doctrine. But I am not particular about names. I do not mind whether the taking of life in the circumstances I have mentioned is called ahimsa or not, so long as its correctness is conceded.

Another poser mentioned by this friend is as follows:

> I have been unable to follow you in your description of the imaginary killing of your daughter in the hypothetical circumstances described by you.[1] It may be right to kill the ruffian in such a case, but what fault has the poor daughter committed? Would you regard the pollution of the poor victim as a disgrace to be avoided by death? Don't you think that in such circumstances even if the poor girl for fear of public ignominy and shame begs to be put out of life, it would be your duty to dissuade her from her wish? As for me, I do not see the slightest difference between a case of dishonour, rape, and a case in which one has had one's limbs cut off by force.

My reason for putting my daughter to death in circumstances mentioned by me would not be that I feared her being polluted but that she herself would have wished death if she could express her desire. If my daughter wanted to be put out of life because she was

[1] *Vide* " The Fiery Ordeal", 30-9-1928.

afraid of public scandal and criticism I would certainly try to dissuade her from her wish. I would take her life only if I was absolutely certain that she would wish it. I know that Sita would have preferred death to dishonour by Ravana. And that is also what, I believe, our Shastras have enjoined. I know that it is the daily prayer of thousands of men and women that they might have death rather than dishonour. I deem it to be highly necessary that this feeling should be encouraged. I am not prepared to admit that the loss of chastity stands on the same footing as the loss of a limb. But I can imagine circumstances in which one would infinitely prefer death even to being maimed.

The third poser runs:

> I cannot understand why the idea of wounding a few monkeys in order to frighten away the rest instead of straightway proceeding to kill them off should be regarded as intolerable by you. Don't you feel that the longing for life is strong even among the blind and the maimed animals? Don't you think that the impulse to kill a living creature because one cannot bear to see its suffering is a kind of selfishness?

The idea of wounding monkeys is unbearable to me because I know that a wounded monkey has to die a lingering death if left to itself. And if monkeys have to die at all by any act of mine, I would far rather that they were killed summarily than that they were left to die by inches. Again it beats my comprehension how I am practising ahimsa by thus wounding the monkeys instead of killing them outright. It might be a different thing if I was prepared to erect a hospital for wounded monkeys. I concede that the maimed and the blind would evince a longing for life if they have some hope of getting succour or relief. But imagine a blind, ignorant creature, with no faith in God, marooned in a desert place beyond the reach of any help and with a clear knowledge of his plight, and I cannot believe that such a creature would want to continue its existence. Nor am I prepared to admit that it is one's duty to nurse the longing for life in all circumstances.

The fourth poser is as follows:

> The Jain view of ahimsa rests on the following three principles:
>
> "No matter what the circumstances are or how great the suffering, it is impossible for anyone deliberately to renounce the will to live or to wish another to put him out of pain. Therefore the taking of life cannot in any circumstances be morally justified.
>
> "In a world full of activities which necessitate *himsa*, an aspirant for salvation should try to follow ahimsa engaging in the fewest possible activities.
>
> "There are two kinds of *himsa*—direct such as that involved in

agriculture, and indirect as that involved in the eating of agricultural produce. Where one cannot altogether escape from either, a votary of ahimsa should try to avoid direct *himsa*."

I would earnestly request you critically to examine and discuss these three Jain principles of ahimsa in *Navajivan*. I notice that there is a vital difference between your view of ahimsa and that of the Jains. Whereas your view of ahimsa is based on the philosophy of action, that of the Jains is based on that of renunciation of action. The present is an era of action. If the principle of ahimsa be an eternal and universal principle untrammelled by time and place, it seems to me that there is a great need to stimulate the people's mind to think out for themselves as to how the principle of ahimsa that has so far been confined to the field of renunciation only can be worked in present-day life of action and what form it will take when applied to this new environment.

It is with the utmost reluctance that I have to enter into a discussion of these principles. I know the risks of such discussion. But I see no escape from it. As for the first principle I have already expressed my opinion on it in a previous portion of this article. It is my firm conviction that the principle of clinging to life in all circumstances betrays cowardice and is the cause of much of the *himsa* that goes on around us and blind adherence to this principle is bound to increase instead of reducing *himsa*. It seems to me that if this Jain principle is really as it is here enunciated, it is a hindrance to the attainment of salvation. For instance a person who is constantly praying for salvation will never wish to continue his life at the expense of another's. Only a person steeped in ignorance who cannot even remotely understand what salvation means would wish to continue life on any terms. The *sine qua non* of salvation is a total annihilation of all desire. How dare, then, an aspirant for salvation be sordidly selfish or wish to preserve his perishable body at all cost? Descending from the field of salvation to that of the family, one's country, or the world of humanity, we again find innumerable instances of men and women who have dedicated themselves to the service of their family, their country or the world at large in entire disregard of their own life and this ideal of utter self-sacrifice and self-abnegation at present is being inculcated throughout the world. To hang on to life at all cost seems to me the very height of selfishness. Let however nobody understand me to mean that one may try to wean another even from such sordid egoism by force. I am adducing the argument merely to show the fallacy of the doctrine of will to live at all cost.

As for the second, I do not know whether it can at all be described as a principle. But be that as it may, to me it represents a truism and I heartily endorse it.

Coming to the third principle in the form in which it is enunciated by the friend, it suffers from a grave defect. The most terrible consequence of this principle to me seems to be this that if we accept it then a votary of ahimsa must renounce agriculture although he knows that he cannot renounce the fruits of agriculture and that agriculture is an indispensable condition for the existence of mankind. The very idea that millions of the sons of the soil should remain steeped in *himsa* in order that a handful of men who live on the toil of these people might be able to practise ahimsa seems to me to be unworthy of and inconsistent with the supreme duty of ahimsa. I feel that this betrays a lack of perception of the inwardness of ahimsa. Let us see, for instance, to what it leads to if pushed to its logical conclusion. You may not kill a snake but if necessary, according to this principle, you may get it killed by somebody else. You may not yourself forcibly drive away a thief but you may employ another person to do it for you. If you want to protect the life of a child entrusted to your care from the fury of a tyrant, somebody else must bear the brunt of the tyrant's fury for you. And you thus refrain from direct action in the sacred name of ahimsa ! This in my opinion is neither religion nor ahimsa. So long as one is not prepared to take the risks mentioned and to face the consequences, one cannot be free from fear and so long as a man has not shed all fear he is *ipso facto* incapable of practising ahimsa. Our scriptures tell us that ahimsa is all conquering. That before it, even the wild beasts shed their ferocity and the most hard-hearted of tyrants forget their anger. Utterly inadequate and imperfect as my own practice of ahimsa has been, it has enabled me to realize the truth of this principle. I cannot once more help expressing my doubt that Jainism subscribes to the third principle of ahimsa as enunciated by this friend. But even if Jain doctrine is just as it is stated by the friend, I must say, I for one cannot reconcile myself to it.

Now to come to the question of renunciation *versus* action: I believe in the doctrine of renunciation but I hold that renunciation should be sought for in and through action. That action is the *sine qua non* of life in the body, that the Wheel of Life cannot go on even for a second without involving some sort of action goes without saying. Renunciation can therefore in these circumstances only mean detachment or freedom of the spirit from action, even while the body is engaged in action. A follower of the path of renunciation seeks to attain it not by refraining from all activity but by carrying it on in a perfect spirit of detachment and altruism as a pure trust. Thus a man may engage in farming, spinning, or any other activity without departing from the path of renunciation provided one does so merely

for selfless service and remains free from the taint of egoism or attachment. It remains for those therefore who like myself hold this view of renunciation to discover for themselves how far the principle of ahimsa is compatible with life in the body and how it can be applied to acts of everyday life. The very virtue of a dharma is that it is universal, that its practice is not the monopoly of the few, but must be the privilege of all. And it is my firm belief that the scope of Truth and ahimsa is world-wide. That is why I find an ineffable joy in dedicating my life to researches in truth and ahimsa and I invite others to share it with me by doing likewise.

Young India, 25-l0-1928

151. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 21, 1928

I am publishing your appeal[1]. But I am not satisfied with it. It is too scrappy and without anybody to it. You ought to have given the population in the area affected, the nature of distress and the amount required. How are the people to respond to a general appeal of the type you have framed? It evidently betrays fatigue, haste, worry and overwork. If you want a good response you must send me an appeal worthy of yourself.

How are you doing now?

I hope the calf controversy[2] provides some amusement for you, if it provides no instruction. If I took seriously all the correspondence that comes to me I should have to drown my self in the Sabarmati. As it is, the correspondence affords both entertainment and instruction.

Your sincerely,

C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR

From a photostat: S.N. 13567

152. LETTER TO C. L. CHINAI

ASHRAM,
October 21, 1928

BHAISHRI CHINAI,

I have your letter. If I know the way even dimly or if others show it to me, I am ready to take the risk and try to bring about an understanding between the two. But I am afraid that today except for

[1] *Vide* "Famine in the South", 25-10-1928.

[2] *Vide* "The Fiery Ordeal", 30-9-1928.

a handful of non-co-operators, I have lost the confidence of the Hindus and the Muslims. Both trust in physical strength. The Muslims believe that they have it. The Hindus have been trying to acquire it. Till they have had enough of this mutual fighting, neither side will sincerely wish for peace. They will not even tolerate interference by a person like me, and I can understand their not tolerating it. In such a situation, silence seems to be the best course for me. Peace will not be brought about by persons like you, who take no part in the riots or in inciting them, merely wishing for it. It is also, therefore, useless for me to think of intervening out of respect for their wish. The only way for the Hindus to overcome whatever cowardice they have in them is for such of them as are aware of the weakness to shed it and try to help others also to do so. This can be done in two ways: by striving for either physical strength or spiritual strength. There is, of course, cowardice even in physical strength. This they will hardly admit today, and it is not surprising that they will not. And if a person who has no understanding of spiritual strength also lacks physical strength, he is bound to be an impotent coward. So long as one has the strength to die and is ready to do so, one need not worry in the least. One may try to stop the fighting wherever one can. But one must know one's limitations. We are not the judges of the world. Nor is it for us to shoulder its burden. There is an invisible power which does both. If we but surrender ourselves to it, we would know our duty from moment to moment.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/19

153. LETTER TO GIRDHARILAL

October 21, 1928

BHAISHRI GIRDHARILAL,

I have your letter. Regarding Ashat Ikrani I can only say that it was wrong to have got him married at all. The mistake can still be rectified if the false fear of public opinion is given up. In other words that woman should be freed completely. If after that she lives with either of the two men to satisfy her passion, I would still in common usage call it adultery. In saying this I have not considered the questions of caste or community or custom. I am indifferent to both.

The problem about Makranis[1] is easy to understand.

I am not aware of anyone having so far tried to reform the Makranis. In Kathiawar, moreover, state affairs are carried on wholly

[1] Belonging to the Makrana community in Saurashtra

on the basis of untruth. There is no rational policy in them. Both the rulers and the people seem to me like the Makranis. The people called Makrani about whom you write are but the external forms of the inner Makranis I am writing about. So long as that remain reality has not changed, the conditions are bound to remain as you describe them. They may change outwardly somewhat, but will not completely disappear. For that to happen both the rulers and the people must give up the Makrani spirit. I hope you will not ask me what one should do in the meantime. There is no room for such a question.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/20

154. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

Silence Day, October 22[1]*, 1928*

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your letter. Ba is better. There is no cause for worry. Nimu arrived yesterday. She is all right. The moment she arrived, she joined in nursing Ba. Others who were ill have almost recovered. You must have got the news about a daughter having been born to Sushila.

Nanabhai has sent a cable that she should be named "Dhairyabala".

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6854

155. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

Silence Day [*October 22, 1928*][2]

BHAI NANABHAI,

I got your letter. There was a cable here too. I asked them to send it to you by post. I felt happy to read your remarks on non-violence in your letter.

I do wish to reply to you, but shall do so when I get some time.

Kishorelal is leaving for that side on Friday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6677

[1] The source has 21, *vide* also the following two items.

[2] The cable mentioned in the letter was presumably from Manilal Gandhi, giving news about Sushila Gandhi having given birth to a daughter; *vide* the following item.

156. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

October 23, 1928

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have your letter, as also the cable. By the time you get this, Sushila will have left her bed and Dhairyabala will have learnt to smile. I had a letter from Nanabhai only yesterday, in which he said that he had sent a cable about the name of the baby. This time too if I had not thought of your letter just now, that is, at 3.30 a.m., I would not have written this. It was thus that I missed the last mail. I get very little time these days to write letters and therefore get up at 3 in the morning, sometimes even at 2, and dictate letters.

I wrote[1] you about Rasik and Navin having gone to Delhi. Ramdas is still in Bardoli. Nimu is here. Ba is ill. There is no cause for worry.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4744

157. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 23, 1928

CHI. MIRA,

I have your wire. Nowadays for me to secure Mondays for love-letters is an impossibility. You must therefore manage without my regular letters. But I must hear regularly from you.

Things are going on fairly well here though I cannot say they are quite settled.

Mahadev has to leave for Bardoli today in connection with the inquiry. He will be away for perhaps a week or longer.

The bakery is making steady progress. Pyarelal has discovered a way of puffing wheat. As soon as it is fully puffed I propose to send you a packet.

Associated Press had a short message about you in the Press. It is perhaps a report of the meeting referred to by you.

Love.

BAPU

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Manilal and Susnila Gandhi", After 31-8-1928.

[PS.]

Did I tell you Gregg is here?

MIRABEHN

From the original: C.W. 5316. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8206

158. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 23, 1928

MY DEAR BROTHER,

You have been very good and very kind. Your regular letters have put me at ease and have enabled me to deal with complainants.

You have worked wonders. You have asked me not to press you to prolong your stay and I have religiously refrained and advised our people there to do likewise. But I am trembling to contemplate the future. I hear all kinds of ugly rumours. It will be a tragedy if the post is given not to the best man but to a favourite. I have no name round which to build public opinion. May God keep you for many a year to come.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 11994

159. LETTER TO RAJPAL

ASHRAM,
October 23, 1928

BHAISHRI RAJPAL

I have your sorrowful letter. The day I summon up courage to kill the monkeys I will certainly be committing violence. But how can I hide my weakness? I cannot follow the path of non-violence by doing so. Rather than that out of a desire to be counted a great man I should be guilty of untruth, it is better that people should know me as I am. Do I not commit violence even today through weakness or ignorance? When I fumigate mosquitoes buzzing over puddles of water, they die; when I use a disinfectant to make water drinkable, the germs are killed. If a snake is discovered in a place where it cannot be caught I allow it to be killed. There is no limit to the violence I thus commit. But I take comfort in the thought that my aspiration for

perfect non-violence is sincere. Do ask me again if you still have any doubt.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/21

160. LETTER TO PERIN CAPTAIN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 24, 1928

I now understand what you mean. Mridula has not yet opened her bhandar. If she does and if she will stock your khaddar, there is nothing to prevent her from doing so. In what way can Kakasaheb help you?

The difficulty about Andhra is that so many manufacturers have proved false. Hence the necessity of exercising the greatest vigilance.

MRS. PERIN CAPTAIN
ISLAM CLUB BUILDINGS, CHOWPATTY, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 13569

161. LETTER TO PRATAP DIALDAS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 24, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. What you want and your wife want, to do is not birth-control but abortion. Abortion is a crime in law and in fact, it is likely also permanently to injure your wife's health. I would therefore strongly dissuade you both from the step. Birth-control is prevention by artificial methods of conception, a totally different thing from abortion, which means destruction of the conceived embryo. The only way therefore I can suggest to you is to allow the pregnancy to take its own course and when the child is born to nurse it tenderly. For future protection you should resolutely decline to share the same bed or the same room with your wife and you should avoid all privacy.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. PRATAP DIALDAS
C|O DIALDAS MULCHAND
MAIN BAZAAR, HYDERABAD

From a microfilm: S.N. 13571

162. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 24, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I owe a reply to your two letters. Of course if there were only corn fields, monkeys will not give so much worry as they are giving now. What I have to do is to solve the question in Such a manner as to be of use to others. It would be no solution to ask people to have only corn fields. The logical consequence of notree campaign means no rain and no fruit. The greatest need of India so far as agriculture is concerned is more trees and more fruit trees.

So far as cattle are concerned, I quite agree with you that the ideal is to do without them. That again means doing without agriculture. And in so far as agriculture is concerned, it is not merely the cattle that are concerned, but there is so much inevitable destruction of life in the pursuit of agriculture. All that one can aim at is minimum of destruction and kindly treatment of cattle. I would like you not to worry about this question. And that brings me to your previous letter.

It is in the field of khadi that your ahimsa would be displayed in its fullness, and it is there that you have to solve the question. I know that you will do nothing mechanically, nothing in haste, and things will take their own course and come rightly.

If Hemprabhadevi can come to the Ashram and take her share in the common kitchen and the other activities to the extent that her body allows, I should feel delighted. She can come when she chooses.

Our circular about the Exhibition has gone to all the affiliated and aided organizations.

You will let me know the result of your having sent samples of your khadi to the Karachi Municipality.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR

From a photostat: G.N. 1597

163. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM MAVJI

[Before *October 25, 1928*][1]

BHAISHRI PURUSHOTTAM MAVJI,

It is three o'clock in the morning. I have read your letter carefully from beginning to end. I think the articles[2] I have been writing these days answer your questions. I therefore advise you to get those articles if you do not have them and read them and ponder over them. Nevertheless, I briefly answer your questions here.

It is not true without exception that no living creature likes to die in any circumstances. I have seen with my own eyes persons laid on the floor as dead rising up alive. I have also heard of instances of persons sitting up on the pyre. But we can act only on the basis of what we assume to be true to the best of our knowledge. The reason for killing the calf was not that I could not bear to see its pain, but that, seeing the pain, I could not help it in any other way. I assumed that it would wish to be delivered from that pain, for I have known many men who so wished to be freed in similar circumstances. One may err in assuming such a wish in a particular case, but in countless situations, Nature has provided man with no other means but to make certain assumptions. I am dictating this letter on the assumption that I shall be alive till the letter is finished and that it will give you some comfort. But it is quite conceivable that I might die before the letter was finished or, possibly, instead of giving you comfort and peace, it might pain, displease and trouble you still more. But even if that was its effect, God would forgive me, because I started writing the letter with the purest of motives.

My answer to your question whether the calf was in unbearable pain is implied in what I have said above. But one more point is that in such matters self-deception is quite possible.

I can also reply that in a way I knew it for certain that the calf was going to die. But I know that you mean otherwise in your letter. You have not said that I could not know for certain from its pain that it would die. But that is what you think. However, I knew that its life was definitely going to end, if not because of the pain then through some other cause. If therefore I committed any error in acting on my assumption its only effect has been to alter the hour of death a little. It need not be necessary for me to try to become omniscient in order to save myself from the sin of altering the hour of death. Where the intention is not to give pain but to relieve pain by ending life, an

[1] In the Diary this letter is placed before the item that follows.

[2] *Vide*

ignorant man not only has the right to try but it is also incumbent on him to do so.

Please do not have the slightest fear that I would hastily decide to kill the monkeys. But I see that I have gained much by starting the discussion, and so have other people through it. Obeying our desire to live, we knowingly destroy many living things. We know that it is wrong to destroy life in that way. I for one knew it and yet I am unable to overcome the desire to live though I know well enough that the desire is not good. I am therefore trying gradually to wean myself from it. I believe that all of us should do the same. That is our dharma too. It is quite impossible to keep the monkeys away from the fields without harassing them in some way. Even brandishing a stick at them is inflicting pain on them. Every day I drive away the mosquitoes to protect myself from their nuisance. That too is inflicting pain on them. Though knowing this, out of my desire to live, I give pain to countless creatures. I therefore daily pray to God to deliver me this very day from this body and from the necessity of having to be in a similar body which cannot be kept alive even for a moment without giving pain to some living creature, and till I am so delivered, to take from this body such service as He may wish for the good of others, at least as penance by me for the sin of living. But God's ways are inscrutable. Even at this moment when I am praying thus, I am giving pain in some way or other to countless creatures. Innumerable creatures are eagerly waiting to settle in the space I now occupy. But what can I do? One cannot free oneself from the body merely by wishing it. To bring it about one must strive hard to live in a spirit of penance. While engaged in such an endeavour I have to accept innumerable troubles like that of the monkeys and I solve the problems according to my lights and to the best of my ability. I do not wish to deceive the world or myself in any way.

You did well of course to write the letter.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/22

164. 'DEATH IS REST'[1]

When I am overwhelmed with correspondence betraying in every line fear of death and consequent travesty of ahimsa, it refreshes me to come across the following beautiful dialogue a friend sent me on Maganlal Gandhi's death:

[1] An article by Gandhiji on the same subject with an additional concluding paragraph appeared in *Navajivan*, 4-11-1928.

Tzu Kung said to Confucius,— "Master, I am aweary, and would fain have rest."

"In life," replied the sage, "there is no rest."

"Shall I then never have rest?" asked the disciple.

"You will," said Confucius. "Behold the tombs which lie around; some magnificent, some mean. In one of these you will find rest !"

"How wonderful is Death!" rejoined Tzu Kung. "The wise man rests, the worldly man is engulfed therein."

"My son," said Confucius, "I see what you understand. Other men know life only as a boon; they do not perceive that it is a bane. They know old age as a state of weakness, they do not perceive that it is a state of ease. They know Death only as an abomination; they do not perceive that it is a state of rest."

"How grand," cried Yen Tzu, "is the old conception of Death! The virtuous find rest; the wicked are engulfed therein. In death, each reverts to that from which he came. The ancients regarded death as a return to, and life as an absence from, home. And he, who forgets his home, becomes an outcaste and a byword in his generation."

It is not reproduced to defend the infliction of death *penalty* on any living being or thing. But it is given here to show that death is *not* a terror *in all circumstances* as many correspondents contend and that it may be a deliverance in certain cases, especially when it is *not inflicted as a penalty but administered as a healing balm.* "Death is but a sleep and a forgetting," says the English poet. Let us not seek to prop virtue by imagining hellish torture after death for vice and houris hereafter as a reward for virtue in this life. If virtue has no attraction in itself, it must be a poor thing to be thrown away on the dung heap. Nature, I am convinced, is not so cruel as she seems to us, who are so often filled with cruelty ourselves. Both heaven and hell are within us. Life after Death there is, but it is not so unlike our present experiences as either to terrify us or make us delirious with joy. "He is steadfast who rises above joy and sorrow," says the *Gita*. "The wise are unaffected either by death or life." These are but faces of the same coin.[1]

The concept of non-violence in our religion is framed from the standpoint of the pain that we may cause another individual. Why should there be any outcry where death is caused either accidentally or deiberately but without any thought of causing pain? If there is not the fear of death behind that outcry, what else is it? And fear of death does not become man. Where there is this fear, supreme human

[1] What follows is translated from *Navajivan*, 4-11-1928

endeavour in the form of non-violence is impossible.

Young India, 25-10-1928

165. FAMINE IN THE SOUTH[1]

Salem, Coimbatore and other areas in the Tamil country whose peasant population depend on the unsteady rainfall of the central districts are having one of their very worst years. Reports from khadi centres show a terrible increase in rural unemployment. With October, the season for agricultural work generally begins and the peasant women in the khadi areas usually close down their spinning for the next four months. A certain number spin all the year round, but the majority who can work in the fields generally leave the charkhas during this time. But this year instead of a fall in the number of spinners there is an increase and a great rush for cotton at our depots.

The reader must remember that this rush is for a wage of one anna a day.

When will the intelligentsia of India and the well-to-do realize that the cloth that we wear is not mere covering or adornment, but a vital part of the national economy, a channel for distribution of national resources; and that clogging this is death? We can give substantial relief to the people at Pudupalayam and other famine-stricken areas where we have been enabled to set up khadi centres if only people will help us by a quick and generous consumption of the khadi that we produce. Ready consumption means room for more spinning and distribution of much needed relief among the Starving people. Sjt. Santanam desires to organize the maximum spinning in the Pudupalayam area in this period of distress there, and if we get public sympathy and support, he hopes to organize sale of food grains and seed at cheap fixed prices, the deficit being met from famine relief fund to be raised. . .

The way the public can help is

(a) by sending liberal orders for khadi;

(b) by sending donations either for distributing grams free or at rates within the means of the famishing people, or for supporting spinning centres where initial outlay will be a necessity.

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

I hope that this appeal will receive a generous response. The appeal is evident]y written in a hurry and without possession of full facts. But past experience shows that in such cases a general description draws a picture less terrible than a mere narrative of 'facts reveals. The reader will therefore not wait for a detailed report before he opens his purse-strings. I hope too to be able shortly to give a rough forecast of the requirements. Let the reader remember also that

[1] From the appeal by C. Rajagopalachari, only excerpts are reproduced here.

the best help that can be rendered" is to help to clear the stock of khadi that is being and will be manufactured. When khadi becomes current coin, though scarcity of rainfall will be always with us, there need be no distress such as would compel people to live on charity. While hand-spinning is being organized on a national scale, some charitable relief will be found necessary to meet emergencies. For all the famine-stricken people are not ready or able to spin, nor has the nation provided facilities in every village for willing spinners.

Young India, 25-10-1928

166. TRUE HOLIDAY-MAKING

A correspondent invites me to warn those who care against turning during the forthcoming Divali holidays good money into fireworks, bad sweets and unhygienic illuminations. I heartily respond. If I had my way I should have people to do housecleaning and heart cleaning and provide innocent and instructive amusements for children during these days. Fireworks I know are the delight of children, but they are so because we the elders have habituated them to fireworks. I have not known the untutored African children wanting or appreciating fireworks. They have dances instead. What can be better or healthier for children than sports and picnics to which they will take not bazaar-made sweets of doubtful value but fresh and dried fruit? Children both rich and poor may also be trained to do house-cleaning and whitewashing themselves. It will be something if they are coaxed to recognize the dignity of labour if only during holidays to begin with. But the point I wish to emphasize is that at least a part, if not the whole, of the money saved by doing away with fireworks, etc., should be given to the cause of khadi, or if that is anathema, then to any other cause in which the poorest are served. There cannot be greater joy to men and women young and old than that they think of and associate the poorest of the land with them in their holidays.

Young India, 25-10-1928

167. HOW WE LOST INDIA[1]

It was at Jalpaiguri just before Deshbandhu's death that I said to a mercantile audience in reply to an address from the merchants that we had lost India through merchants and that we should regain it also

[1] An article by Gandhiji on the same subject appeared in *Navajivan*, 4-11-1928

through them.[1] If illustrations of the truth of this statement were wanted, a striking one is furnished by the following circular letter from a mercantile association to other similar bodies:

> As you are aware, trade in Manchester piece-goods and yarn has much gone down in recent times and is still showing a marked tendency to decrease. It has been noticed that business men are not taking as keen an interest in this trade as they used to do formerly. As a result of this indifference, our countrymen are steadily losing what was as it still may be a source of great profit and income to them. The Marwari community, along with other commercial communities, being very greatly interested in the piece-goods and yarn trade, my Committee adopted a resolution in their meeting of the 7th instant, to fully investigate into the causes of its depression with a view to taking definite steps for the rehabilitation of this important branch of trade.
>
> As the matter is one of general interest, my Committee consider it advisable to meet the representatives of different public bodies interested in the trade in a conference in order to take concerted action if possible.

The circular is dated 19th July[2], 1928. I do not know the outcome of the effort. We are however just now not concerned with its result. The fact that there should be in our midst respectable bodies of merchants engaged in devising means for sustaining the trade in Manchester yarn and piece-goods, at a time when the whole country is trying to boycott *all foreign* cloth, is a portent which should be taken notice of by every national worker.

Enough evidence has been adduced from time to time in these pages that India is held by the English for their commerce and that by far the largest imports consist of piece-goods. Surely no committee or commission is required to prove that so long as this exploitation of our country is permitted by us, India will be held by the British by every means at their disposal. What we need therefore above all is not so much conversion or expulsion of the British residents or rulers as the conversion of our own merchant princes and their dependents who are selling their country for their own interest.

Nor need our merchant princes ruin themselves for the sake of the country. India will want all the quantity of the cloth and yarn that they are now importing. They have but to apply their undoubted ability to the manufacture of this quantity in our seven hundred thousand villages. In doing so they will naturally benefit themselves. I admit that they will have to give up commercial gambling, speculation and palaces out of all proportion to their surroundings, and be

[1] *Vide* "Spee ch at Public Meeting, Jalpaiguri", 10-6-1925

[2] *Navajivan* article has July 7.

satisfied with an income bearing some relation to the condition of those for whom and with whom they would trade. In other words, instead of taking part as they are now doing in bleeding the villages, they would be making some tardy return to those on whom their prosperity has depended. The story of the belly and the members has an eternal application. The toiling millions are the belly. The merchants and others are the members. They must wither if the belly is starved. Those who have eyes can see that the belly has been shamefully starved for a long enough period. The withering of the members must follow soon as night follows day. Let us then repent before it is too late.

Young India, 25-10-1928

168. "ECONOMICS OF KHADDAR"

Mr. Richard B. Gregg, the author of *Economics of Khaddar*, is a painstaking student. He has found additional material to support his thesis and discovered some printer's errors in his volume. He has sent me these additions and corrections[1]. The reader will not mind my sharing these additions and corrections with the students of Mr. Gregg's volume. They will also be glad to know that he is now compiling a detailed index for it so as to facilitate the study and research of khadi lovers.

Young India, 25-10-1928

169. LETTER TO ALAVI

ASHRAM,
October 25, 1928

BHAISHRI ALAVI,

I have your letter.

It was not my duty to know more about Khilafat than I did. Khilafat was not merely Turkey. To me Khilafat had a much deeper meaning and the fight for my conception of Khilafat is still going on. The only difference now is that we no longer have to fight over the issue with the British. Ask me more about this when we meet some day. I would not be able to explain the matter more clearly. Where there is trust it is not proper to ask too many questions. The important thing is that even the British Prime Minister had recognized the claim

[1] Not reproduced here

of the Muslims to be just. The other Governments wanted to annex Turkey.

I will certainly now read the book on the Muslim Saint.

As for the calf I will only say that the argument that we have no right to kill a creature the sight of which gives us pain if our personal interest is not involved does not apply here. The question here was about one's duty to kill. Think over this difference. At the back of the American's action was his distrust of the people. He believed that people would not look after his daughter. And the girl was not unconscious. I think there is a lot of difference between her case and that of the calf. I have not been able to read that article in *Navajivan* again. Do write to me if you have still not been able to see the difference. I will then try to read that aricle and find time to write to you a more detailed reply.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/23

170. MESSAGE TO LITERARY CONFERENCE

October 26, 1928

Where Anandshankerbhai is the President, success is assured. I hope that lovers of literature will not forget the poor of Gujarat and that Anandshankerbhai will not let them do so.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 28-10-1928

171. LETTER TO SVENSKA KYRKANS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 26, 1928

MESSRS SVENSKA KYRKANS
DIAKONISTYRELSES, HOKFORLAG, STOCKHOLM 7 (SWEDEN)

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am surprised that you have not yet received my letter[1]. The purport of my letter was that you were at liberty to translate the Autobiography in the Swedish language and that whatever you sent me would be utilized for some public purpose.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 12783

[1] Dated June 8, 1928; *vide*

172. LETTER TO F. B. FISHER[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 26, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your letter from Hingham. I have got the book also, called *Understanding India*. I do not know when I shall get the time but as soon as I do, I shall read Mrs. William's book.

I reciprocate the hope that we shall meet one another some time next year.

Yours sincerely,

REV. F. B. FISHER
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, 3 MIDDLETON STREET, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13509

173. LETTER TO HARRIETTE ASHBROOK

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 26, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I have also the book by Mrs. Williams. As soon as I can get the time, I shall read the book and let you have my opinion. But I am so overwhelmed with work that I do not know when I shall get the time to read the book.

Yours sincerely,

HARRIETTE ASHBROOK
COWARD MCCANN, 425 FOURTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

From a photostat: S.N. 14390

[1] In reply to his letter dated September 7, which read: "Mother India has created a terrible sensation in America. It has been difficult to know just how to meet the situation.... There is now coming off from the press a book by Gertrude Marvin Williams called *Understanding India,* which I believe will help in many ways to correct the wrong impressions which Miss Mayo has given. . ."

174. LETTER TO HORACE HOLBY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 26, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter sending me the magazine *World Unity*.

I have instructed the Manager to put you on the exchange list. You are certainly at liberty to copy whatever you like from *Young India*, and if I find something in your magazine I might consider to be of value for the readers of *Young India*, I shall take the copy with due acknowledgment.

Yours sincerely,

HORACE HOLBY, ESQ.
EDITOR, "WORLD UNITY"
4 EAST 12TH STREET, NEW YORK

Copy to the Manager, *Young India*, for necessary action.

From a microfilm: S.N. 14397

175. LETTER TO J. B. PENNINGTON

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 26, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter. I wish I could find the time to read the book you refer to.

With reference to the problem of poverty I wish you were able to see the India that I know. I am sure you will soon change your view about India's poverty apart from the reasons for it. I have forwarded your criticism to Mr. Vakil.[1]

I do hope that you have still many years in front of you.

Yours sincerely,

J. B. PENNINGTON, ESQ.
3 VICTORIA STREET, 3 WESTMINSTER, S.W.

From a photostat: S.N. 14404

[1] Pennigton had mentioned that C. N. Vakil had overlooked the fragmentation of land, a result of the Hindu Inheritance Law, as a major cause of poverty in India.

176. LETTER TO SIR DANIEL M. HAMILTON

October 26, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I am sending a copy of it to Sir Purushottam Das.

You will have noticed that I published your paper in the pages of *Young India*. Several economist friends have interested themselves in it. I am expecting at least one criticism.

I hope you received the issues of *Young India* containing your article.

Yours sincerely,

SIR DANIEL HAMILTON
BALMAOARA, BY KYLE, ROSS SHIRE, ENGLAND

From a microfilm: S.N. 14418

177. LETTER TO W. H. PITT

October 26, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to hear from you after such a long time and under other circumstances.[1]

I quite agree with you that the death of Mr. Krishna Pillay[2] was a great loss.

The untouchability question in Travancore is still hanging fire. But untouchability, it is undoubtedly going steadily though ever so slow.

I hope both you and Mrs. Pitt are enjoying yourselves there.

Yours sincerely,

W.H. PITT, ESQ.
LIDDINGTON, SWINDON, WILTS

From a photostat: S.N. 14423

[1] Pitt, who was Police Commissioner of Travancore till April 1928, began his letter (S.N. 14422) dated June 15 thus: "My dear Mahatmaji, I am all but a private citizen, and no longer bound by official conventions, so I am using your spiritual title to address you, instead of just Mr. Gandhi!"

[2] Commissioner, Travancore Devaswom

178. LETTER TO S. GANESAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 26, 1928

MY DEAR GANESAN,

Here is a letter from Spain. Please send him the information he wants, and the books you should send only when he sends the money for them.

Mr. Gregg is here and he complains of absence of any letter from you, even regarding business enquiries. He tells me that you have not even sent a book to Mr. Roy in Shantiniketan. I have now sent a copy to Mr. Roy from here. Why all this negligence?

With reference to your letter about Bharati's songs, I have sent you a wire[1] today.

I wrote also to the Maharajah of Nabha some time ago.[2]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. GANESAN
18 PYCROFTS ROAD, TRIPLICANE, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 13573

179. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

October 26, 1928

DEAR SISTER,

Your letter came into my hands only today. I believe Ramdas hasz has been carrying out your orders. All the same, I am sending your letter to him.

You have undertaken a big task. But you always succeed in your ventures, and so everything will be all right. I am sure you take care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

MITHUBEHN

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2707

[1] Not available
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Maharaja of Nabha", 18-10-1928.

180. LETTER TO BHULABHAI DESAI

October 26, 1928

BHAISHRI BHULABHAI[1],

The Bardoli Inquiry Committee[2] will meet in the beginning of November. I think it is desirable that the case should be represented by an eminent and experienced advocate like you, so that the Committee may think twice before doing flagrant injustice. Can you spare the time? I do not insist that you should be present at every hearing. It will be enough if you remain present at the first two or three meetings to represent the ryots' case and thereafter attend the meetings only when you consider it necessary.[3] This letter will be delivered to you by Mahadev who will tell you more. I have written along similar lines to Bahadurji[4] also but Mahadev will use that letter, if necessary, only after meeting you.

Vandemataram form

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Gujarati original: Bhulabhai Desai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

181. TELEGRAM TO MRS. S. R. DAS

[On or after *October 26, 1928*][5]

MRS. S. R. DAS

CALCUTTA

MY DEEPEST SYMPATHY IN YOUR LOW WHICH IS SHARED BY YOUR NUMEROUS FRIENDS AMONG WHOM I COUNT MYSELF AS ONE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13585

[1] Eminent advocate of Bombay

[2] Appointed by Government to investigate and report on the people's complaint that the enhancement of assessment in Bardoli Taluka was unwarranted.

[3] The addressee consented to be the ryots' advocate and made the preliminary argument on behalf of the ryots when the Committee began its inquiry in November.

[4] D. N. Bahadurji; *vide* "Letter to D. N. Bahadur", 27-10-1928

[5] S. R. Das, Law Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, died on October 26.

182. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised October 27, 1928

CHI. MIRA,

I have been writing since 2.30 a.m., Kusum having got malaria. There are so many now ailing. Chhaganlal Joshi's whole family is ailing; Narandas has a relapse, Ba had a severe time; Pyarelal is prostrate; Chhotelal is threatening again; even the strong Surendra has not escaped. There are others who need not be mentioned. Standenath I must not forget. He had a bad attack. So you may imagine the time I am having. Mahadev is in Bardoli.

Well, in spite of the catalogue, God seems to want work from me and keeps me fairly fit. But who knows—?

Things are moving steadily. The calf incident has occupied my attention a great deal. It has done much good in that it has set people thinking.

(Here I had to stop for the prayer).

4.15 p.m.

Harjivan Kotak sends the enclosed telegram[1] from Srinagar. If you do not go to Nepal I would like you to retrace your steps and visit Kashmir. You should see it for its mountains as well as its khadi work.

Pandit Motilalji is here today.

I expect to go to Wardha during the last week of November.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5317. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8207

183. LETTER TO K. S. SUBRAMANIAM

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 27, 1928

MY DEAR SUBRAMANIAM,

I have your letter. I am wholly unable to advise without having a chat with the members of the Council[2]. I do however feel that Pandit

[1] Dated October 27, which read: "Wish Mirabehn includes Srinagar in her tour if possible and you permit." It contained the following remarks in Gandhiji's 'land: "Write to him directly, Harjivan Kotak, A.I.S.A. Depot, Srinagar" (C.W. 5318).

[2] Of the All-India Spinners' Association. Subramaniam had enclosed a draft circular on behalf of the Association purporting to inform all khadi organizations not to participate in the Exhibition to be organized at the Calcutta Congress on account of differences between the Association and Reception Committee of the Congress as to the inclusion of mill-cloth in the Exhibition.

Jawaharlal Nehru is right when he says that he cannot do justice to the Agency as he has so many other calls on his time.

I return herewith Pandit Jawaharlal's letter sent by you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. S. SUBRAMANIAM
ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION, AHMEDABAD
395 KALBADEVI ROAD, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 12784

184. LETTER TO D. N. BAHADUR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 27, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

You know that the Bardoli Inquiry commences next month. I am most anxious that the ryot's case should be represented before the Committee by some eminent Counsel. Could you find the time to study the case and represent the cause at the opening of the Inquiry? I do not expect you to be present at all its sittings. But I would like you, if you have the time and the inclination, to guide the advisers generally and appear before the Committee whenever occasion requires your presence.

Mahadev will personally hand this note to you. I am sending a similar note to Bhulabhai[1]

Yours sincerely,

D. N. BAHADURJI, ESQ.
RIDGE ROAD, MALABAR HILL, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 13575

185. LETTER TO KALYANJI MEHTA

Saturday [*October 27, 1928*][2]

BHAISHRI KALYANJI,

It is said that the Secretary of *Hindu* is hand-cuffed and ill-treated in other ways. Write to me to tell me what you know about this.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] Bhulabhai Desai
[2] From the postmark

[PS.]

Kanti must have left the bed now.

BHAISHRI KALYANJI

PATIDAR ASHRAM, SURAT

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2680

186. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

Saturday [*October 27, 1928*][1]

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your letter.

Let me know what work you are now busy on. It is good that you joined the Mandal of Mithubehn.

Ba is getting impatient to send Nimu there. Nimu has not asked for anything. But today Ba was insistent and hence I write this much to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I read the accompanying letter after writing this one. But now I do not have to give you any guidance. Under the tender care of Mithubehn you will have no discomfort.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6858

187. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Saturday [*October 27, 1928*][2]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I receive your letters after long intervals. I would be happy if without straining yourself you could come here for a day, but only if it does not cause you any physical strain at all. There is an epidemic of fever around here these days. It seems in this season the peasant families do become afflicted with fever. You must follow Dr. Jivraj's advice and spend one more year in the peaceful atmosphere of a hill

[1] From the postmark

[2] *ibid*

resort.

Mahadev is at Bardoli this year. He will be in Bombay on Sunday. I should be very happy if your programme of going to Almora materializes. Prabhudas was immensely benefited.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
VICTORIA LODGE
MATHERAN (G.I.P. RLY.)

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

188. FAMINE IN THE SOUTH

There is no end to the misery in the South. On the one hand, there is a severe draught around Salem, while on the other, we hear of floods around Kakinada. We have still to learn of the extent of damage caused by the floods. Meanwhile the appeal that Shri Rajagopalachari has issued with regard to the drought has been published in *Young India*.[1] From this it is seen that the crops have been damaged owing to water scarcity and that the farmers are worried. There is a sudden rise in the number of women who wish to spin. Whereas last September, 2,473 women came to the Gandhi Ashram in order to take cotton, this September the number went up to 6,423. The amount of yarn received during the month last year was 4,785 pounds, while the amount received this year was 12,802 pounds.

This activity is the purest means of helping the famine-stricken population and, if it is firmly established, the people would not suffer despite the famine. At present famine causes hardship because the farmers are rendered unemployed and are without an income. They would be free from anxiety if they could be assured of the security provided by a subsidiary occupation. At this time, there are two ways of helping the people, first by buying the khadi that is produced in this famine-stricken area and second by offering them unconditional financial assistance. I hope to publish hereafter the figures relating to the famine. Those who wish to share in this privation now may contribute as much as they can or purchase khadi.

[From Gujarati]

Navajiv an, 28-10-1928

[1] *Vide* "Famine in the South", 25- 10-1928.

189. THE GUJARAT VIDYAPITH

It was a very important speech that the principal had prepared on the day the Diwali vacation started in the University and the Vinay-mandir and read out at the farewell gathering. Although it was a long speech, its effect was that of a brief one because it contained no figurative language or repetition. Its speciality lay in its crystal-clear truth. No attempt was made to hide any drawbacks or to dismiss them as unimportant. Despite this the report of this term of 112 days may be considered as very hopeful. The speech indeed contains a brief outline of many activities. It is obvious from this that even the minutest detail has not been overlooked. Amongst these, the sections dealing with agriculture and practical training in crafts cannot but attract our attention. In the field of agriculture, growing fruit trees and cotton is an altogether new experiment. The activities of ginning, carding, spinning, weaving and carpentry are the ones that are most striking amongst the crafts. At least two hours a day are devoted to the crafts. In order to do proper justice to the crafts, it will be necessary to devote more time to them as no craft can be mastered without a great deal of practice and a craftsman's hands cannot become experienced without a full amount of work. Proficiency in a craft cannot be developed in the same manner as a mental activity. After reading a little, the mind can develop without further reading as it can continue to think while being engaged in any other activity. Being a purely physical activity, a craft can be developed only while it is being practised; hence it requires complete familiarization with it. Moreover, the middle classes are not in the habit of practising any craft; hence, in order to form that habit, they require specially to cultivate familiarity with it.

Another point in the speech which attracts our attention is the reference to the dictionary which is getting ready. The present chaotic state of spellings acts as a hindrance to the development of the language. Kakasaheb hopes that this dictionary will be ready by March. If this task is accomplished, an important piece of work as yet unaccomplished will have been completed. Amongst all the languages of India, Gujarati is found to be the only one in which laxity in regard to spellings is possible.

A new experiment which has been referred to in the speech is that of developing fellow-feeling towards one's servants. If we cannot do without servants, the alternative is to establish cordial relations with them by putting them on the same footing with ourselves. Kakasaheb hopes to establish such relations by running a class for servants. His good intentions will be fulfilled if the students carry out this task in an

honest manner.

Despite these new activities, knowledge of the alphabet has not been neglected. Anyone who goes through the speech will clearly see that sufficient attention is also being paid to this aspect. In other Words, a careful attempt is being made to put before the students who are being trained by the Vidyapith all that is required to turn them into village workers. Whether they will be receptive to this or not will depend on their enthusiasm. This latter factor in its turn is dependent upon the art of the teacher.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-10-1928

190. THE FAIR AT WAUTHA

This fair is held every year in Wautha on the full-moon day in the month of *Kartik.* Following is the notice which has been issued with regard to it by Shri Dahyabhai Patel on behalf of the taluk committee:[1]

This appeal involves a request for two things: one is for volunteers and the other for funds. I am confident that assistance of both sorts will be forthcoming. While sending in this appeal, Shri Dahyabhai writes that he has received a sum of Rs. 300 from the provincial committee. The other contribution that has so far been received amounts to only Rs. 31. The minimum expense amounts to Rs. 500. Hence I hope that the balance will be readily forthcoming. I consider it remarkable that the public can be served through the expenditure of such a small sum. I have found that volunteer bodies incur large expenses on such occasions.

It is not always the case that people enjoy only innocent pleasures at such fairs. Dahyabhai has described the ideal. It is the task of the volunteers in such fairs to see that purity is maintained. It is often found that at fairs

l. limits of decency are transgressed,

2. gambling is practised,

3. there is fighting,

4. wicked persons resort to ill-practices, and

5. many inedible things are eaten and things which should not be sold are sold.

[1]The appeal is not translated here. It asked people to serve as volunteers to look after the huge crowd of pilgrims and to send contributions towards expenses.

It is impossible to stop these practices at once in a crowd of thousands. However, reforms can be brought about by making an attempt on every occasion. On such occasions, dealers of foreign cloth sell large stocks of foreign cloth too. Propaganda for khadi can well be carried on instead. If all this is to be achieved, preparations should be made in advance, and there should be a large number of good, intelligent and self sacrificing volunteers. If these steps are taken, such fairs can be well utilized for educating the public.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-10-1928

191. MORE ABOUT AHIMSA[1]

I

A correspondent writes:

> I have read your article "The Fiery Ordeal"[2] over and over again but it has failed to satisfy me. Your proposal about the killing of monkeys has taken me aback. I believed that a person like you with his being steeped in ahimsa would never swerve from the right path even though the heavens fell. And now you say that you might kill off the monkeys to protect your Ashram against their inroads. Maybe that my first impression about you was wrong. But I cannot describe what a shock your proposal about the killing of the monkeys has given me, and may I also confess, how angry it has made me feel against you? Would you kindly help me out of my perplexity?

I have received several other letters too in the same strain. I am afraid people have formed an altogether exaggerated estimate of me. These good people seem to think that because I am trying to analyse and define the ideal of ahimsa I must have fully attained that ideal. My views regarding the calf and the monkeys seem happily to have shattered this illusion of theirs. Truth to me is infinitely dearer than the 'mahatmaship' which is purely a burden. It is my knowledge of my limitations and my nothingness which has so far saved me from the oppressiveness of the 'mahatmaship'. I am painfully aware of the fact that my desire to continue life in the body involves me in constant *himsa*, that is why I am becoming growingly indifferent to this physical body of mine. For instance I know that in the act of respiration I destroy innumerable invisible germs floating in the air. But I do not stop breathing. The consumption of vegetables involves *himsa*

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 28-10-1928. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

[2] Dated 30-9-1928

but I find that I cannot give them up. Again, there is *himsa* in the use of antiseptics, yet I cannot bring myself to discard the use of disinfectants like kerosene, etc., to rid myself of the mosquito pest and the like. I suffer snakes to be killed in the Ashram when it is impossible to catch and put them out of harm's way. I even tolerate the use of the stick to drive the bullocks in the Ashram Thus there is no end of *himsa* which I directly and indirectly commit. And now I find myself confronted with this monkey problem. Let me assure the reader that I am in no hurry to take the extreme step of killing them. In fact I am not sure that I would at all be able finally to make up my mind to kill them. As it is, friends are helping me with useful suggestions and the adoption of some of them may solve the difficulty at least temporarily without our having to kill them. But I cannot today promise that I shall never kill the monkeys even though they may destroy all the crop in the Ashram. If as a result of this humble confession of mine, friends choose to give me up as lost, I would be sorry but nothing will induce me to try to conceal my imperfections in the practice of ahimsa. AlI claim for myself is that I am ceaselessly trying to understand the implications of great ideals like ahimsa and to practise them in thought, word and deed and that not without a certain measure of success as I think. But It know that I have a long distance yet to cover in this direction. Unless therefore the correspondent in question can bring himself to bear with my imperfections I am sorry I can offer him but little consolation.

II

Another correspondent writes:

> Supposing my elder brother is suffering from a terrible and painful, malady and doctors have despaired of his life and I too feel likewise, should I in the circumstances put him out of life?

My reply is in the negative. I am afraid some of my correspondents have not even taken the trouble to understand my article. In propounding their conundrums they forget that whilst I have certainly compared the case of an ailing human being with that of an ailing calf and recommended the killing of the former in exactly similar circumstances, in actual practice such a complete analogy is hardly ever to be found. In the first place the human body being much more manageable in bulk is always easier to manipulate and nurse; secondly man being gifted with the power of speech more often than not is in a position to express his wishes and so the question of taking his life without his consent cannot come within the rule. For I have never suggested that the life of another person can be taken against his will without violating the principle of ahimsa. Again, we do

not always despair of the life of a person when he is reduced to a comatose state and even when he is past all hope he is not necessarily past all help. More often than not it is both possible and practicable to render service to a human patient till the very end. Whilst, therefore, I would still maintain that the principle enunciated regarding the calf applies equally to man and bird and beast I should expect an intelligent person to know the obvious natural difference between a man and an animal. To recapitulate the conditions the fulfilment of *all* of which alone can warrant the taking of life from the point of view of ahimsa:

l. The disease from which the patient is suffering should be incurable.

2. All concerned have despaired of the life of the patient.

3. The case should be beyond all help or service.

4. It should be impossible for the patient in question to express his or its wish.

So long as even one of these conditions remains unfulfilled the taking of life from the point of view of ahimsa cannot be justified.

III

A third correspondent writes:

> Well, the killing of the calf is all right so far as it goes. But have you considered that your example is likely to afford a handle to those who indulge in animal sacrifices and thus accentuate the practice; do you not know that even those who commit these deeds argue that the animals sacrificed gain merit in the life to follow?

Such abuse of my action is quite possible, and inevitable so long as there are hypocrisy and ignorance in this world. What crimes have not been committed in the world in the sacred name of religion? One therefore need not be deterred from doing what one considers to be right merely because one's conduct may be misunderstood or misinterpreted by others. And as for those who practise animal sacrifice, surely they do not need the authority of my example to defend their conduct since they profess to take their stand on the authority of the Shastras. My fear however is that proceeding on my analogy some people might actually take into their head summarily to put to death those whom they might imagine to be their enemies on the plea that it would serve both the interests of society and the 'enemies' concerned, if the latter were killed. In fact I have often heard people advance this argument. But it is enough for my purpose to know that my interpretation of ahimsa affords no basis whatever for such an argument, for in the latter case there is no question of serving

or anticipating the wishes of the victims concerned. Finally, even if it were admitted that it was in the interest of the animal or the enemy in question to be summarily dispatched the act would still be spelt as *himsa* because it would not be altogether disinterested. The fallacy is so obvious. But who can help people who seeing see not, or are bent upon deceiving themselves?

Young India, l-11-1928

192. THE STUDENTS' INTERROGATORIES[1]

(Before Gandhiji commenced reading *Hind Swaraj* with the students of the Gujarat Vidyapith they had addressed him a string of questions for answer. As some of these questions are of general interest Gandhiji had dealt with them in the columns of *Navajivan*[2]. The following assortment out of them will be found useful by the readers of *Young India* .P.)

UNDER SWARAJ

Q. What in your opinion ought to be the basis of India's future economic constitution? What place will such institutions as savings banks, insurance companies, etc., have in it?

A. According to me the economic constitution of India and for the matter of that the world should be such that no one under it should suffer from want of food and clothing. In other words, everybody should be able to get sufficient work to enable him to make the two ends meet. And this ideal can be universally realized only if the means of production of elementary necessaries of life remain in the control of the masses. These should be freely available to all as God's air and water are or ought to be; they should not be made a vehicle of traffic for the exploitation of others. Their monopolization by any country, nation or groups of persons would be unjust. The neglect of this simple principle is the cause of the destitution that we witness today not only in this unhappy land but other parts of the world too. It is this evil that the khadi movement is calculated to remedy. Savings banks and insurance companies will be there even when the economic reforms suggested by me. have been effected but their nature will have undergone a complete transformation. Savings banks today in India though a useful institution do not serve the very poorest. As for our insurance companies they are of no use whatever to the poor. What part they can play in an ideal scheme of reconstruction such as I have postulated is more than I can say. The function of savings banks

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan,* 28-10-1928.

[2] *Vide* "My Notes", 21-10-1928.

ought to be to enable the poorest to husband their hard-earned savings and to subserve the interests of the country generally. Though I have lost faith in most Government institutions, as I have said before, savings banks are good so far as they go but unfortunately today their services are available only to the urban section of the community and so long as our gold reserves are located outside India they can hardly be regarded as trustworthy institutions. In the event of a war all these banks may become not only utterly useless but even a curse to the people inasmuch as the Government will not scruple to employ the funds held by these banks against the depositors themselves. No Government institution can be depended upon to remain loyal to the interests of the people in emergency, if they are not controlled by and not run in the interests of the people. So long therefore as this primary condition is absent banks are in the last resort additional links to keep the people in chains. They may be regarded as an unvoidable evil and therefore to be suffered to exist but it is well to understand where we are in respect even of such harm. less looking institutions.

FOREIGN *v.* SWADESHI

Q. What is your opinion about the importation of foreign goods other than cloth into India? Are there any foreign commodities which you would like to see immediately laid under prohibition? What do you think should be the nature of India's foreign trade in the future?

A. I am more or less indifferent with regard to trade in foreign goods other than cloth. I have never been an advocate of prohibition of all things foreign because they are foreign. My economic creed is a complete taboo in respect of all foreign commodities, whose importation is likely to prove harmful to our indigenous interests. This means that we may not in any circumstance import a commodity that can be adequately supplied from our own country. For instance I would regard it a sin to import Australian wheat on the score of its better quality but I would not have the slightest hesitation in importing oatmeal from Scotland, if an absolute necessity for it is made out, because we do not grow oats in India. In other words I would not countenance the boycott of a single foreign article out of ill-will or a feeling of hatred. Or to take up a reverse case, India produces a sufficient quantity of leather; it is my duty therefore to wear shoes made out of Indian leather only, even if it is comparatively dearer and of an inferior quality, in preference to cheaper and superior quality foreign leather shoes. Similarly I would condemn the introduction of foreign molasses or sugar if enough of it is produced in India for our needs. It will be thus clear from the above that it is hardly possible for me to give an exhaustive catalogue of foreign articles whose impor-

tation in India ought to be prohibited. I have simply inculcated the general principle by which we can be guided in a]l such cases. And this principle will hold good in future too so long as the conditions of production in our country remain as they are today.

Young India, 15-11-1928

193. SPEECH AT THE NEW GUJARATI SCHOOL, AHMEDABAD

October 28, 1928

This school owes its existence to Shri Indulal Yajnik, and we would be failing in our duty and be deemed ungrateful if we did not remember him while mentioning it. We cannot forget his major contribution towards creating an interest in Gujarat and its (the school's) activities. This school is the result of his endeavours. The teachers have carried on its work; they need to be congratulated on this. The principal of the school has made a reference to its connection with the Vidyapith. The school has nothing to do with the organizing committee of the Vidyapith. It is my sad experience, however, thatVidyapith and such other institutions do not function well if we do not narrow down the field of their activities, and the present limited scope of the Vidyapith is to ensure its progress and not retard it. I assure you that not the slightest injury will be done to those schools which render service to the nation. The Vidyapith exists in order to foster the educational activities which are being carried on in Gujarat. Its present endeavours are to make all schools self-reliant and to rid them of sluggishness and inertia. So far as this school is concerned, there is no such apprehension; otherwise, I would not have come at all today. I expect much from the students and teachers of this school.

You have enacted a very good play dealing with sacrifice. Luther sacrificed himself for freedom's sake. Similarly, there is a need to risk death for the sake of the national schools, regardless of whether one meets with death or not. We are brave at the outset, but are always ready to abandon our pledge because we lack faith in our work. So long as we lack such faith, we shall be unable to make India's prestige enduring as we want to do.

The Goddess of Independence is like an angel of death. She sits with her mouth open, inviting everyone to enter it. If we are not prepared for this, we shall be unable to fulfil our cherished desires. It is good for you to play, jump and make your bodies and minds healthy, but do not forget the basic difference between national and

governmental schools. The education given at the latter may be good, but one thing these will not give you. Even today I proclaim loudly that those schools are fit to be abandoned by us. You should be determined to offer at the feet of Mother [India] whatever art and physical prowess you acquire in this school. Patriotism should be so taught here that every student should decide that, when he grows up, he will serve the country. If you do so while adhering to truth and ahimsa, it will include service to the family as well. I bless the children and request the teachers to put fully into practice the ideals they have accepted. So long as they do not do this, the children will be unable to respond to them.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 4-11-1928

194. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

Silence Day [On or before *October 29, 1928*][1]

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have your letter. I was disappointed with the draft for an organization to promote swadeshi. I smelt in it merely a commercial spirit. From one point of view, however, what is happening is good. The draft shows the mill-owners as they are, and what can be better than that we should seem what we are?

I should certainly like you to keep yourselves away from this move, if you can. I am surprised to know that Shri Jaisukhlal is associating himself with it. You may, if you wish, show this letter to him and to anyone else who is likely to appreciate my views.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4706. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

[1] From the postmark

195. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*October 29, 1928*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

I have a moment to spare while the vegetables are being made ready for shredding.[2] Now that you are in Bihar I wonder what you will do about Malkhachak khadi work. Krishnadas is living at that place. You will do as the spirit moves you. I am simply telling you *what is which*. Rajendra Babu may not want you to see the place as it has no connection with the A.I.S.A.

Chhotelalji's bread is making much headway and cookery is greatly simplified.[3] But this you will see for yourself when you return. You will keep yourself in touch with Devdas and the Jamia.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I must not forget to tell you that I have commenced my own carding. I have begun with the medium bow.

BAPU

SHRIMATI MIRABAI

KHADI DEPOT, MUZAFFARPUR, BIHAR

From the original: C.W. 5319. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8209

196. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Silence Day, October 29, 1928

CHI. MAHADEV,

I got your letter, but not the [instalment of] Autobiography. I am sure I shall get it tomorrow, but all the same Pyarelal has undertaken to keep a translation ready. He is all right now. Kusum, too, is all right, but she is still confined to bed. As for me, God keeps my cart going; does not He? Has He stopped anyone's till this day? There is no special merit, therefore, in the fact that mine jogs along.

It was good that Bhulabhai immediately agreed.[4] If the reports of Anderson and others stand superseded, the burden does not lie on

[1] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira,* Mirabehn explains: "Bapu used to take part in the cutting and shredding of the vegetables for the common kitchen."

[2] "Chhotelalji had successfully built a brickoven and learnt the art of preparing baker's bread without using yeast" (Mirabehn).

[4] *Vide* "Letter to D. N. Bahadur", 27-10-1928.

us. It is for the Government to justify the increase.

There was a letter for you, which I am sending with this. I could not read the signature. I hope you have not forgotten about bread and bread-making[1].

Parikshitlal wants to know whether you gave him a copy of *Antyaja Sarvasangraha.* Did you?

Ba has left her sick-bed. She is still weak of course. She is very much reduced. Radha and Santok have gone to Rajkot. They will return after Diwali. Mirabai has reached Muzaffarpur.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Motilalji came yesterday and left today. All the time we talked about the Congress. I am sending the preface separately to Jugatram.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11446

197. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA[2]

AHMEDABAD,
October 30, 1928

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
BIRLA PARK, CALCUTTA

MAHADEV BARDOLI. ON GENERAL GROUNDS INVITATION SOUTH AFRICAN JOURNALISTS ADVISABLE.

GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 7878. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

198. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 31, 1928

CHI. MIRA,

I have your two letters at the same time, one about the Ashram and one describing your Meerut visit I sent you two letters to the

[1] The source has the last four words of this sentence in English.

[2] Government of India had asked for G. D. Birla's views on a suggestion made by V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, to invite to India a group of journalists from South Africa to give them an idea of Indian culture. Birla, in his letter dated October 27 addressed to Mahadev Desai, had requested him to ascertain Gandhiji's opinion.

Muzaffarpur address, one on Sunday and the other on Monday.

I don't know how the news about the Ashram appears in the papers. Anyway most of it is all false. If there was any violent change I would have surely written to you. I have not dealt with even the change of name in the paper because Mahadev and others were anxious that I should not even announce change of name in the Press. Now, of course, I shall be obliged to do so. But the committee of the Udyoga Mandir would not relax the rule about *brahmacharya*, so that the fundamental rule about *brahmacharya* and all fundamental rules remain as they were. So does the common kitchen remain a fixture irrevocably for at least one year. At the end of the year only, it is now possible to reconsider the question of the common kitchen in the light of the experience that will be gained. The kitchen is going on merrily.

The Gandhi Ashram people in Meerut want carding demonstration and demonstration of other processes at the time of a fair that is to be held on 21st November. If you are not going to Nepal, it might be well to retrace your steps and go to this fair and give them what help you can and then proceed to Kashmir. Apart from everything else, I would like you to visit Kashmir and that you will do only while there is some khadi work going on. And you can take the help of Devdas, Rasik and Navin for arranging the demonstration, in which case it won't be necessary to send anybody from here, and as we are terribly short-handed at the present moment, it will be very inconvenient to send any from the Ashram. Yet I am anxious to help the Meerut people. Having known my views, you will do what suits you best. I have not held out any hope to Muzmudar who is the one to write the letter.

With love,

BAPU

SHRIMATI MIRABEHN
C/O KHADI DEPOT, MUZAFFARPUR (BIHAR)

From the original: C.W. 5320. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8210

199. LETTER TO R. KRISHNIER

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 31, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have seen your letter to Subbiah. I do not think I can go through Bombay to Wardha. Bardoli is the most direct and less expensive route. You may therefore send your collection to me at the

Ashram as I do not know when I am likely to be in Bombay.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. KRISHNIER
82/24 MIRANDA BUILDING, DADAR

From a microfilm: S.N. 13577

200. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

October 31, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. I can understand Bipin Babu's attitude.[1] But I stand unmoved. The position is becoming clearer to me day by day, and we must learn to forget that life is everything and that death is nothing. Indeed, we must learn to regard death as a thing of joy.

If the Exhibition is going to be what you suggest,[2] we are well out of it.

You say nothing about Tarini's health in this letter of yours.

Yours sincerely

SAT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS
KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR

From a photostat: S.N. 13578

201. LETTER TO J. YESUTHASEN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 31, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Not all feel the existence of a prevailing spirit or the power of endurance when they are in intense pain; but some undoubtedly do. It is quite true to say that the Creator puts an end to suffering by death when suffering is beyond endurance. The state of

[1] Enclosing a cutting of Bipin Chandra Pal's article in *Englishman* criticizing Gandhiji's views in the calf controversy, Das Gupta had in his letter remarked that there was an attempt in the article to shape out a philosophy of "the joy of the mere fact of living", a favourite theme with the author.

[2] The Calcutta Congress Reception Committee had adopted a resolution to the effect that Indian mill textiles and needlework on foreign fabrics could be displayed in the Exhibition to be conducted during the forthcoming Congress session at Calcutta.

endurance is a question of degree. And if we do not consider death under every circumstance imaginable a terror, we may under well-defined conditions anticipate it without infringing upon the rule of ahimsa.

Yours sincerely,

J. YESUTHASEN, ESQ.
BELMONT, COONOOR, NILGIRIS
From a photostat: S.N. 13579

202. LETTER TO E. C. DEWICK

October 31, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I had fully intended to he with you all at the time of the Federation in December.[1] But I see that it is not to be. I am thoroughly washed out and I have accepted the invitation of Jamnalalji to be in Wardha for a month just for rest before proceeding to Calcutta during the Congress week. Will you please forgive me?

Yours sincerely,

REV. E. C. DEWICK
5 RUSSELL STREET, CALCUTTA
From a photostat: S.N. 13580

203. LETTER TO N. K. S. NOWLAKHA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 31, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

Shankerlalji has sent your letter to me. I distinctly remember having replied to your letter now over three months ago and therein I stated that the best thing would be to see Satis Babu about your scheme, because I do not know how I shall be able to guide you from here. If that is not the letter but some other letter you are referring to, please let me know and I shall attend to it at once.

I hope you are doing well.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. K. S. NOWLAKHA
NOWLAKHA BHAWAN, AZIMGANJ (BENGAL)
From a microfilm: S.N. 13581

[1] *Vide* "Letter to R. C. Dewick", 21-9-1928.

204. LETTER TO JACOB SORIS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 31, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I understand that you collected some fund during my visit to Ceylon. These funds went to Allahabad instead of Ahmedabad and the Allahabad office returned them to you and since then the funds are held up there. As your subscriptions were earmarked for khadi, I hope that you will not divert the funds but send them to me for khadi.

Yours sincerely,

JACOB SORIS, ESQ.
MESSRS PAUL SORIS & CO., BADULLA (CEYLON)

From a microfilm: S.N. 13582

205. LETTER TO KARSANDAS CHITALIA

[*October, 1928*][1]

BHAISHRI KARSANDAS,

Just as a person suffering from jaundice sees the same disease in other people, I may be unjustifiably suspecting in you weaknesses and limitations which others saw in me long ago and which I myself have now slowly begun to see. You and I have to ask ourselves one question: will our respective institutions continue to run in the same or almost the same way after our death? If we feel the slightest doubt about this, we should wake up. If you feel that in your absence Surajbehn or Lakshmibehn or the two together will be able to carry on the work of the Bhagini Samaj, all will be well.

Vandemataram form

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/12

206. CONDOLENCES

I tender my respectful condolences to Mrs. S. R. Das and her family on Sjt. S. R. Das's[2] death. Though I had little in common with the deceased in politics, I could not but recognize his phenomenal

[1] As placed in the Diary, between letters of October 10 and 21, 1928
[2] Law Member, Viceroy's Executive Council

generosity and his open-heartedness. Many do not know how this great man beggared himself so that no worthy cause might knock in vain at his door.

Young India, 1-11-1928

207. NOTES

'FREEDOM TO THE FREE'

Whilst we are cutting one another's throats in the name of reli-gion and some of us running to the Statutory Commission[1] in the vain hope of getting freedom, a friend sends me the following from James Allen to remind us that even in the land of so-called freedom, the real freedom has still to come. Here is the passage:

> All outward oppression is but the shadow and effect of the real oppression within. For ages the oppressed have cried for liberty, and a thousand man-made statutes have failed to give it to them. They can give it only to themselves; they shall find it only in obedience to the Divine Statutes which are inscribed upon their hearts. Let them resort to the inward freedom, and the shadow of oppression shall no more darken the earth. Let men cease to oppress themselves, and no man shall oppress his brother. Men legislate for an outward freedom, yet continue to render such freedom impossible of achievement by fostering an inward condition of enslavement. They thus pursue a shadow without, and ignore the substance within. All outward forms of bondage and oppression will cease to be when man ceases to be the willing bond-slave of passion, error, and ignorance.

The outward freedom therefore that we shall attain will only be in exact proportion to the inward freedom to which we may have grown at a given moment. And if this is the correct view of free- dom, our chief energy must be concentrated upon achieving reform from within. In this much-needed work all who will can take an equal share. We need neither to be lawyers, nor legislators to be able to take part in the great effort. When this reform takes place on a national scale no outside power can stop our onward march.

Young India, 1-11-1928

[1] Simon Commission

208. IN TEN YEARS?

Professor C. N. Vakil's instructive articles published[1] in these pages are supplementary to the series he recently wrote on poverty[2] and should be read together. I coaxed him to give the reader something more definite on remedies of poverty than what he had done in the article which I ventured to withhold and which he expanded into the four articles above referred to. I do not think that the programme sketched by the learned Professor can be finished in ten years. Perhaps it is impossible to devise a ten years' programme of improvement to cover a vast and impoverished country like ours.

Let us however glance at Professor Vakil's remedies for India's central disease. He rightly says that the problem is how to increase production of wealth and how to distribute it equitably among the people, principally therefore, I presume, among the starving millions. To this end the learned writer

1. would recast small uneconomic holdings,

2. would pay off the debts of the ryot through mortgage and co-operative banks,

3. would revise the revenue law and graduate the land tax so as to bring it in a line with the income tax leaving a minimum of income from land free of tax,

4. would re-employ the population displaced through the recasting of uneconomic holdings by bringing under the plough cultivable waste, i.e., 23 per cent of the total area available and by nationalizing and thus developing large industries,

5. would draw small and large capital by putting the banking system on a basis more in keeping with the requirements of the country than it is now,

6. would improve labour conditions so as to avoid war between capital and labour,

7. would deal with such social abuses as child-marriages, etc., which give rise to over-population and unfit progeny,

8. would radically reform the educational system so as to spread education among the masses and have it answer the needs of

[1] On September 27, October 4, 11 and 18

[2] In *Young India*, July 12, 19, 26, August 2 and 9; *vide* also "Notes" sub-title Are We Getting Poorer", 12-7-1928 and "Our Poverty", 6-9-1928

the people,

9. and would cut down the military expenditure and stop the drain from the country by manning the services with indigenous talent.

This is not an unattractive programme. But as I was re-reading the articles, the question continued to force itself upon me, "Who will bell the cat?" There is hardly an item here which can be tackled without government aid. And a government that is admittedly based on exploitation of the governed will not and cannot, even if it will, undertake the proposed changes with the despatch necessary to create an immediate impression. It can undertake irrigation schemes costing crores, it will not undertake sinking wells costing lakhs. What therefore Professor Vakil wants first is a summary programme of swaraj and having been chiefly instrumental in getting it, he can command the appointment of commissioner of banishment of poverty department.

This however is a heroic remedy and Pandit Motilal Nehru and the co-signatories to his report are the men to tackle it. Our author's [task] was but to place a scheme before any government that would deal with the most pressing problem before the country.

But I had hoped that the learned Professor, especially when he wrote for *Young India*, would have examined the one sovereign remedy that has in season and out of season been advocated through these pages and has, so far as it has gone, been tried with no inconsiderable success. True, the Professor has hidden the tiny wheel in a little unseen arc of his circle of suggestions. I claim for it not a point in a circumference but the centre from which can radiate innumerable other things including many the learned writer has in view. But the fact is, whereas it was possible for him with patient research carried on in a well-stocked library to write convincing essays to prove India's deep and deepening poverty, it was impossible without a close study of a group of villages with an open and receptive mind to spot the seat of the disease and to know the capacity of the patient to bear the remedy. A Gregg[1] took a year of reading and living among the villagers to know the remedy and prove its worth with a freshness of outlook all his own. The cardinal facts to realize are that there is already terrible, forced unemployment among the toiling millions in that they have no work for at least four months in the year. Once that is realized, surely it follows that not a moment should be lost in bringing work to these millions so as to utilize their

[1] Richard B. Gregg

idle hours. The other fact to realize is that if the average income of the inhabitant of this land is seven pice per day, i.e., less than two English pennies per day, at the present rate of exchange, the average income of the toiling millions must *ipso facto* be much less. He who adds two pice per day to their income and that without any great capital outlay makes a princely addition to their income and in addition revives the dying hope within the breasts of these millions. The further merit of this programme is that it is now in operation without government aid. But it needs much greater encouragement and admits of infinite expansion. Pyarelal has shown[1] elsewhere in this issue of *Young India* what America wrought through the wheel during those times of her Revolution. I invite the economists of India to study the movement on the spot. They have nearly two thousand villages to select from for their study and let them then condemn the movement if they can, or give it not a niggardly place that prudence or patronage can grudgingly afford but the central place it deserves.

Young India, 1-11-1928

209. TELEGRAM TO LAJPAT RAI

November 1, 1928

HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS. WIRE DETAILS ASSAULT AND CONDITION OF HEALTH.[2]

The Tribune, 3-11-1928

210. INTERVIEW TO "THE CIVIL AND MILITARY GAZETTE"[3]

November 1, 1928

I could still lead India. I shall only lead India when the nation comes to me to be led, when there is a national call.

I shall not go before then. I shall not go unless I am certain of my power over the masses. I could [not] lead India again [until I]

[1] In "A Leaf from American History".

[2] For the addressee's reply, *vide* "The Inevitable", 8-11-1928.

[3] Released by the Free Press of India from Lahore. In a message from Ahmedabad dated November 6, 1928, Associated Press of India said: "Mahatma Gandhi states that the interviews with him which recently appeared in the *Pioneer* and *The Civil and Military Gazette* are inaccurate in many respects. He says that he proposes to deal with the matter in *Young India*." *Vide* "Fact and Fiction", 8-11-1928.

realized that they are numerous enough to pursue a policy of non-violence, nor until I could control them. But I see nothing on the horizon at the moment. That would not make me at all anxious to take that position. Perhaps it will not be in my lifetime. It may be in the time of my successor.

I cannot name one at this moment. There must be one who could lead India today but I cannot name him. Truly I should be ashamed to remain inactive but it may be necessary in my lifetime. It may be there will come a man, but not now.

The Hindustan Times, 3-11-1928

211. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

SABARMATI,
November 3, 1928

MIRABEHN
CARE KHADI BHANDAR, MUZAFFARPUR

YOU MAY PASS REMAINING TIME BIHAR BENGAL. MUST KEEP PERFECT HEALTH. NO NEED RUSHING.

BAPU

From the original: G.N. 8211; also C.W. 5321. Courtesy: Mirabehn

212. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 3, 1928

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. I shall read the report as soon as I get a moment.

If you are yourself an expert typist, you may certainly bring the typewriter with you. You will give me the exact date when I may expect you and give me also the terms you want. I have forgotten all about them.

Mahadev is not here but in Bombay in connection with the Bardoli Inquiry[1].

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. R. MALKANI
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat: G.N. 889

[1] *Vide* "Evil Genius of Government", 22-7-1928

213. LETTER TO G. S. SHARMA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 3, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You must not ride the karma theory to death. Every creature is not only weaving his own new karma, but is acted upon by millions of karmas of others.

I regard the destruction of the body of the calf [1] as unselfish, because I was not afraid of rendering service. Only, I saw that I could render no service.

About the mosquitoes. There is no harm in using a mosquito-net of foreign make. Mosquito-net is not a piece of clothing. I treat it in the same way I treat an umbrelIa. Of course it is possible to get khadi mosquito-nets, but they are dear.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. S. SHARMA
LECTURER IN ACCOUNTING, SANATAN DHARMA COLLEGE
NAWABGANJ, CAWNPORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 14547

214. LETTER TO DR. B. C. R0Y[2]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 3, 1928

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I have your letter. I had a chat about the Exhibition with Pandit Motilalji when he was here last Sunday. He showed me too your telegram. I shall repeat what I told him in the course of my conversation. I am sorry that you find my letter to be "vague and guarded". I tried to be as clear as I could with the facts before me. Guarded I should never have to be in writing to friends like you. But my letter was certainly concise and necessarily so.

Now for the purport of the conversation. Whilst your offer to Panditji and repeated in your letter flatters my pride, I would not like you, an esteemed co-worker, to give up your views or principles in order to please me. Such things can only be done once in a lifetime, and even when such personal concessions are accepted, they harm the

[1] *Vide* "the Fiery Ordeal"

[2] For addressee's letter, *vide* "Letter from Dr. B. C. Roy", 28-10-1928

acceptor, harm the giver and damage the national cause in question. And let me put you absolutely at ease by telling you that I have before Panditji undertaken, all being well, to attend the Congress unconditionally.

I am sorry I cannot say so with reference to the representation of the All-India Spinners' Association at the Exhibition. My argument is this: whilst it is wrong to think that I dislike all machinery as such, I do feel that we are not competent judges of the usefulness or otherwise of machinery however small it may be for the toiling millions. We shall acquire that faculty for judgment when we draw to the Congress stout-hearted and knowing farmers and other business men. Let me tell you that in the Ashram we have a variety of simple machinery in the way of ploughs, grass-cutting machines, grinding-mills, etc. But I am sorry to have to inform you that not much of our investment in this line has proved profitable or promising. This has happened because we are all amateur farmers. And this is a judgment which I give you after an experience extending over a period of 13 years. Therefore I would say, if you have got the courage, you will scrap every bit of machinery for the time being, especially foreign, and you will concentrate your energy upon having your Exhibition with khaddar as the centre-piece and a small but a sufficient number of genuine swadeshi articles of a useful nature.

I have an irreconcilable opposition to the Indian textiles being exhibited in any shape or form. My reason is absolutely simple. The textile manufacturers refuse to come to terms with us. I do not blame them because if they come to terms with us, they have to sacrifice all prospects of Government assistance save what is forced from it by an active public opinion. Moreover these textiles need no advertisement from us. They have got an army of advertisers, inspectors, selling agents and what not. And, lastly, to put mill textiles side by side with khadi is deliberately to put khadi in the shade by inviting undesirable comparisons.

I remind you that the very first exhibition of this type was undertaken at the Ahmedabad Congress in 1921.[1] It drew huge audiences. The entrance fee, a paltry sum, left a good surplus. Wherever there is good and efficient management of exhibitions of an educative character, they are not only useful and instructive but they are remunerative. Such was the case in Bihar. One indispensable condition of Congress Exhibitions should be that we should never undertake them for finding our expenses and leaving besides a handsome sum

[1] *Vide* "The Congress and After" sub-title The Substance

for conducting the business of the year to come. Unfortunately this very undesirable thing was done in Madras exposing us to an evil temptation. I wish that Bengal which has abundant patriotism, self-sacrifice and fine sentiment will rise superior to such temptations.

If this letter seems to you to be lacking in detail, do write to me again. Let there be no mistake about it. I want to take part in the Exhibition. But I can only take part in it consistently with the national interest as I understand it. But I have said to myself that if I cannot take part in the Exhibition, I am not going to say one word of criticism either during the Exhibition or after. I did not feel called upon to impose any such silence on myself in Madras, because the circumstances were different and so I expressed my views freely at the time of opening the Exhibition[1] and still more freely in a leading article[2] in *Young India* after opening it.

I have a string of letters asking me to give my views freely and now about the forthcoming Exhibition. I have hitherto resisted all these correspondents as I hope to, to the end. I therefore plead with you not to be deterred from your purpose which you may hold to be based on an inviolable principle in the interest of the nation. I assure you that I shall tender the same respect for your principles as I would crave from you and all for mine, however erring they may appear to others.

With reference to the Hospital[3], I am glad it is flourishing. I shall certainly perform the opening ceremony of the new ward, and so far as possible make time for it.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY
32 WELLINGTON STREET, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 14853

215. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 3, 1928

DEAR MOTILALJI,

You are now in the thick of the fight, but at the time you receive this letter, the fight will have been over. I am hoping and praying that

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Khadi and Hindi Exhibitions, Madras", 23-12-1927

[2] *Vide* "The National Congress"

[3] Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das Memorial Hospital

you will come out just as successful in Delhi as you did in Lucknow[1].

I enclose herewith a copy of my letter[2] to Dr. Bidhan Roy about the Exhibition difficulty. I do not need to send you a copy of his letter, because what he writes was contained in the telegram that you read to me. My reply needs no explanation.

How is Kamala faring now ? You will keep yourself fit for the culmination in December.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. l

PANDIT MOTILALJI

CARE DR. ANSARI, DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13716

216. LETTER TO SIR MAHOMED HABIBULLAH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 3, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I knew Sjt. Sastri's suggestion.[3] I do think that the South African journalists' coming to India is likely to result in a better understanding.

Yours sincerely,

SIR MAHOMED HABIBULLAH SAHEB BAHADUR, K.C.I.E.

MEMBER, VICEROY'S COUNCIL, NEW DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 11997

217. LETTER TO URMILA DEVI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 3, 1928

I have your letter. I sent Dhiren, before I received your letter, my message to him through you.

Here is a letter received by me from Devdhar. I hope you have already met him.

Mahadev is still in Bardoli looking after Bardoli Inquiry

[1] At the All-Parties Conference held on August 28, 1928

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] Of inviting a group of journalists from South Africa

affairs.

I hope the climate of Poona is agreeable to you.

Yours sincerely,

SRIMATI URMILA DEVI

JANHAVI VILLA, DECCAN GYMKHANA, POONA

From a photostat: S.N. 12978

218. LETTER TO V. K. U. MENON

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 3, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am glad you are helping Krishnaswami. I know Kurur Nilakantan Nambudripad. He is a good man. But I have no knowledge of his business ability, nor am I able to judge the selection of a place. Generally speaking, work like that done in Bardoli can be best done in British India proper. But I would ask you to correspond with Sjt. Rajagopalachariar, Tiruchengodu, South India, and be guided by him.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. V. K. U. MENON

10 SATTAR BUILDINGS, MAHIM, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 12979

219. LETTER TO POST MASTER, SABARMATI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 3, 1928

THE POST MASTER

SABARMATI

DEAR SIR,

With reference to your inquiry I may state that the letter referred to in your enquiry was duly delivered at the Ashram and was received by Sjt. C. N. Joshi who is authorized to receive all documents registered or otherwise on my behalf. You may inform the writer of the letter that it does not follow that because letters addressed to me are received at the Ashram they are necessarily all read by me.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 12980

220. LETTER TO BALAJI RAO

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 3, 1928

MY DEAR BALAJEE RAO,

I have your letter enclosing extracts from the *Indian Textile Journal*. I have read Sjt. Talcharkar's work very carefully. Not being convinced of his argument, I entered into correspondence with him. He is still unable to convince me that charkha yarn is on the whole stronger than mill yarn. In the Ashram we made series of experiments and they went to show that in order to produce hand-spun yarn superior to the mill-spun, we have to take extraordinary precaution which an ordinary spinner has no facility of taking. Sjt. Talcharkar's is a theoretical proposition, appearing sound to read but failing in practice. You can well understand how anxious I should be to know and prove that the average charkha yarn is stronger than the average mill-spun yarn.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13715

221. LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 3, 1928

DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

I have your letter[1]. I have read it carefully. I shall want much stronger proof than you give me to sustain your indictment of Dr. Ansari and Motilalji. You may not see eye to eye with them, but we may not impute motives to those who differ from us. But I shan't argue with you. I know some day you will see the light or if I am under a delusion I shall have my ignorance dispelled, because I have no other end to serve but that of truth, nor, if I know you well, have you any other end.

Yours sincerely,

MAULANA SHAUKAT ALI
CENTRAL KHILAFAT COMMITTEE
SULTAN MANSION, DONGRI, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 13711

[1] Dated October 23, 1928; for excerpts, *vide* "Extracts from Shaukat Ali's Letter", 23-10-1928

222. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

A[so]Va[d] 6 [November 3, 1928][1]

BHAI VALJI,

I can trust you always to find some cow-protection work to keep you busy. Get all the information from Bhai Nagindas. I am sure that the accounts will have to be kept by you. For the present, you will have to do all the work, the sweeper's as well as secretary's. If the work increases, we shall incur further expenditure. Enrol more members, if you can. I take it that you will hunt up literature on the origin of the cow-protection movement and try to write on the subject. Correspond with *shastris* and with Anandshankerbhai in regard to this. I think there are some books on the subject in the Ashram; go through them.

Collect literature on the trade in hides and skins. I should like you to become a dairy expert[2] (give me the Gujarati equivalent of this —*dudh shastri*[3]?) and an expert on hides. Acquaint yourself with what is being done in the Ashram in these fields. Study the goshala here.

What more can I say? Do everything as if the entire responsi-bility is yours. I said at the very beginning that my taking up cow- protection work meant that I would find out a good secretary, explain my principles to him, make him work in accordance with them and let him use my name. May I expect you to be such a secretary?

Are you living in peace now? Take care of your health.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

PS.

I send with this Gregg's letter and the list of books accompanying it. Read whichever of them you can get. If we have to secure any of them from outside, we shall try and get them from some source. In any case, file both the letter and the list.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7397. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

223. HOW WE LOST INDIA

Just a few days before Deshbandhu's death, while replying to an address of welcome given by the business community of Jalpaiguri, I

[1] The year is inferred from the reference to cow-protection movement.

[2] Gandhiji uses the English expression.

[3] *Dudh: milk, shastri*: expert

had said that we had lost India through our merchants and we should regain it also through them. This is not the task of a lawyer, a doctor or a soldier. Many Englishmen proudly say that they took India with the help of the sword and are holding it with the strength of the sword, but there is less than fifty per cent of truth in this statement. If the merchants so desire, they can blunt the edge of that sword. If illustrations of the truth of this statement were wanted, a striking one is furnished by the following circular letter from one mercantile association to another:[1]

It is characteristic of the British people that they give up their hold on the country from which they can obtain no wealth. They did so in the case of the Transvaal in the year 1884, and when they saw wealth there they launched a war in 1900 in order to gain possession of it. They gave up Somaliland when they could not make money there. They do not want a country for the sake of possessing it but for the sake of carrying on trade with it. That is why Napoleon criticized them and called them "a nation of shopkeepers".

British rule, therefore, does not subsist on might, but it would be more correct to say that it functions with the help of our merchants. If our merchants give up the temptation to trade with Britain in cloth, or if the people give up wearing foreign cloth, the British would have no reason to hold on to India.

But is the spirit of sacrifice present in the merchant community? It is found that a man makes many sacrifices, but is seldom prepared to sacrifice that from which he earns money. Merchants are well known for their generosity. But when they are asked to give up their business, they feel aggrieved. Lawyers will be ready to donate thousands of rupees, but there would be few men like Das, who would be ready to give up their legal practice. Doctors will donate large sums but only a few would be prepared to give up their profession.

Despite this, if we want real independence, merchants would have to give up their business and be prepared to serve the country. Such sacrifice will be regarded as their *prayaschitta*[2]. If it is true, and indeed it is, that we lost India because of their greed, then we will get back India only through their sacrifice.

But the sacrifice that I expect from merchants is in fact very small. All I ask for is a change in their business, and not its ruin. I ask for their trade to be carried on within limits. In spite of the boycott of foreign cloth, the business in khadi amounting to crores of rupees

[1] For the circular letter and the two paragraphs succeeding it, *vide* "How We Lost India", 25-10-1928

[2] Atonement

would be carried on by business men alone. Without these latter, people would be unable to carry on transactions. The term business implies transactions. Anyone who is good at social intercourse, is a good business man. A merchant is one who enables people to establish contacts with one another.

Today, the ability of the business man is being misused. He earns five per cent while giving away ninety-five to the foreigners. I ask him to put his abilities to good use. He should give ninety-five to the people and keep five for himself. By doing so, he will get his share of five per cent and his earnings will be regarded as pure. The crores that he makes today is tainted money. It is possible that under the new order the crores that fall to the share of a few today may be distributed amongst hundreds of business men. However this should not be regarded as a matter of regret. Everyone will agree that it would be a better scheme if many have a lakh or a thousand instead of a few having crores. And it is my firm opinion that if business men do not understand these simple and commonplace calculations it would be almost impossible to prevent anarchy, plunder and revolution in India. The poisonous wind of anarchy blowing from the West cannot be kept out by, any other means.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-11-1928

224. THE ASSAULT ON LALAJI

This country is poor, there is trouble within it and repression from without, there seems to be deep darkness all round and yet it appears to be fortunate. The symbol of this good fortune is the assault on Lalaji by the police in Lahore. Lalaji was not at fault. The procession which he was leading also was not at fault. Lalaji had full control over the procession, hence the fault or whatever it was of the procession or of Lalaji consisted in the decision they had made. That decision was to offer peaceful opposition to the Simon Commission when it arrived. In order to demonstrate this opposition, the procession was going up to the barrier set up by the police. It had reached the barrier and was uttering deafening cries of "Simon, go back". Besides Lalaji, this procession included other leaders such as Lala Hansraj, Dr. Alam and others.

As this demonstration and the people's determination irritated the police, they decided to teach Lalaji a lesson and assaulted him. The police deserved no credit that the assault did not assume grave proportions. How easy was it for the injury to be inflicted on the eye

instead of near it? To fate alone, and not the police, can be given the credit for the injury to the chest being of a relatively light nature instead of a serious one! According to newspaper reports, the police spared no pains to demonstrate their skill in wielding the lathi.

Lalaji has emphatically stated that the statement made by the police in their own defence is absolutely untrue. The police claim that the procession rushed into the small space that had been left vacant for a passage and that it resorted to stone-throwing. Lalaji denies both these charges and affirms that the police may file a libel suit against him if they wish to do so. He is prepared to prove his own case.

Let us now see if the police are prepared to take up this challenge.

The attention of the public and that of the world is attracted only when warrior leaders such as Lalaji are injured; the assault on Lalaji has drawn and will yet draw a great deal more attention than would have been drawn by the death of an unimportant individual.

We shall have to be careful and see to it that the people by resorting to violence do not lose the game in which victory is within their grasp. If the atrocities of the Government continue despite the innocence of the people, the ship of the Government will sink of its own accord. Hence I hope that the people will not transgress the limits at any place and fully respect all the appeals for maintaining peace that are made by the leaders.

I congratulate Lalaji. He has been well known for many years as the "Lion of the Punjab". The Government's police have themselves helped on this occasion to add to his prestige and the above assault is an addition to the many services he has rendered to the country.

The following telegram[1] has been received from Lalaji after the above article was written:

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-11-1928

225. MY NOTES

TRUE INDEPENDENCE

At a time when we are cutting one another's throats in the name of religion and are competing with one another in running to the Simon Commission, and so on, in the hope of securing independence, it is worth noting what the British writer James Allen says about

[1] Not translated here. *Vide* "The Inevitable", 8-11-1928.

independence in England. A friend has sent an extract from his article the sum and substance of which is as follows:

> As a matter of fact, all acts of repression from without are nothing but a reflection of the atrocities that are perpetrated within. Although for thousands of years men have been craving for freedom, the thousands of laws made by him have been unable to win it for him. The truth of the matter is that freedom alone can bestow freedom. That freedom consists in following the immutable laws framed by God which have been inscribed on our hearts. No one can harm him who has attained the freedom of his soul. If people cease to be cruel to themselves, they will be unable to be cruel towards others. People frame laws for their external freedom, whereas they worship slavery in their hearts. Thus, they run after an external shadow and ignore the real thing within their souls. Man's bondage in all forms and all his atrocities will be automatically eradicated when he frees himself from slavery to his passions, his ignorance and his shortcomings.

This implies that external freedom will always be the means of measuring the freedom of the self within. Hence we often find that laws made to grant us freedom often turn out to be shackles binding us. Hence the dharma of those workers who wish to attain true freedom is to try and attempt an improvement in the self. If we understand this simple and straightforward fact, we shall not even utter the word 'legislature' but engage ourselves in constructive activity day and night. All can take part in such activity. It is not necessary to become either a lawyer or a legislator in order to do so. What strange blindness it is that those who are elected as legislators to represent the people should seem, and in fact are, their rulers! If we are not under an illusion, we would have no fear of the Government or the legislatures, lawcourts or the armies which subsist on it. And no power can come in the way of our upliftment and our independence when we have reformed ourselves in the above manner.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-11-1928

226. BUFFALOES FOR SLAUGHTER

Shri Nagindas Amulakhrai, Vice-president of the Sarvajanik Jivadaya Khatun, Ghatkopar, writes as follows:[1]

I have gone through the letters which have been mentioned in the above letter. The reader will feel; as I do, that the municipality is slaughtering buffaloes for the sake of slaughter. The killing of buffaloes whose meat is not eaten by anyone is merely a chaotic state of affairs and it is a matter for surprise that citizens of Bombay tolerate it. This is not a problem which concerns the Hindus alone, but one which concerns all citizens—Muslims, Parsis, Christians and Jews alike. Moreover, it is not one which involves the Department of Animal Welfare alone, but one which involves public welfare and the health of children. On the one hand, the country is becoming increasingly poorer; on the other hand it is being robbed of its cattle-wealth because of the indifference of citizens as for example in Bombay. To slaughter milk yielding cows and buffaloes or to allow their calves to die of hunger and thirst is nothing but robbery and the cause of this robbery is the insignificant income that the municipality derives from it! According to the calculation made by Shri Nagindas, a minimum loss of rupees two crores and twenty lakhs is suffered because of this thoughtless slaughter. And finally, in a country which would have the facility to provide milk in the same way as it provides water, we have to drink imported milk which contains no food value. It is a matter of no small shame for us to have to consume imported milk and to have vegetable oil sold as ghee, because of shortage of fresh milk. In Bombay and other cities, there is a lot of useless clamour, but apart from societies for animal welfare, no one else thinks of raising a protest and launching an effective movement in such an extremely important matter.

As has been suggested in the above letter, the cure for this malady is simple and straightforward. Not a single cow or buffalo will be taken to the slaughter-house if the pens are removed from the city and if the municipality undertakes to supply milk specially to Bombay, whatever the expense it might have to incur in doing so. Is it not a matter for surprise that the farmers of Bardoli welcome the buffaloes which are regarded as useless in Bombay and hope to make

[1] The letter is not translated here. The gist of the correspondent who enclosed other letters was that about 20,000 buffaloes were slaughtered annually in Bombay and Kurla, though this quantity of meat was not required. The Bombay Municipality issued licences to slaughter animals every day and made a yearly profit of Rs. 3 lakhs. The supply of condensed milk from Holland aggravated this problem.

a profit out of them? What is possible in Bardoli should not be impossible in Bombay.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-11-1928

227. THE ALCHEMY OF THOUGHT

The well-known writer, Professor Jacks, has written a book whose title may be interpreted as Alchemy of Thought. Pyarelal has written an article based on this book in the current issue of *Young India* which deserves to be pondered over. Hence this article, which itself is based on the one just mentioned, has been published for the convenience of Gujarati readers.

The alchemy of thought implies that the latter acts as an alchemist. No one can tell whether any alchemist has been able to transmute iron into gold, but thought continuously performs this function. By entertaining a particular thought, man becomes the victim of fear and turns pale; by entertaining its opposite thought, his countenance becomes flushed with pleasure. I shall feel sad if I think, 'I am having a spasm of pain, all will be over with me now.' However, if I ignore the spasm and say to myself, 'What is there in a spasm after all, it will pass away presently' I shall continue to be cheerful. Perhaps a stranger from abroad comes to my house and I suspect him. I assume that he is a murderer and am terribly scared. My son comes and tells me: 'This gentleman is an old family friend, we do not know him as he has been living abroad since his childhood. He is a guest in our house today and has come here to convey some good news.' On hearing this, I regain my composure. Now I embrace with respect one whom I had feared before. All this is the alchemy of thought. Within a fraction of a second, thought can make a king or pauper of us. Such is the empire of thought. Thought is infinitely more powerful than either speech or the bodily processes. Physical activity is the coarsest form that thought assumes, while speech is one of its coarser forms. Both these activities limit thought. It is indeed proper that it should be so. If this were not the case, the world would surely be destroyed. However, this is to prove the power of thought. Hence it may be said that, when devoid of thought, speech or action is something mechanical and it has no value.

Following this line of argument, Professor Jacks goes on to say that a great and all-pervading element like religion is not a game whose rules are laid down in books, it is not a treasure chest which contains affirmations and negations, it is not a collection of

prohibitions. Anyone who wishes to do his dharma, to practise non-violence and to follow the dictates of morality has to walk on the razor's edge. For him there are no lectures on non-violence nor any dictionary of spellings which would enable him to obtain a hundred per cent marks in the test on non-violence. Observing one's dharma is not such a safe thing. It is a gem that lies buried in the mine of experience. Only a few among millions of seekers succeed in digging it out. Mr. Jacks says that dharma is not for those who ask for a guarantee of safety. The field of religion lies between doubt and certainty. One who believes or asserts that this indeed is religion or that this alone is religion does not know what religion is. One who wants to know the meaning of dharma, while admitting that a particular action may or may not be according to dharma surrenders to his inner voice and continues to conduct himself with determination and calmness. Not being omniscient himself, on the one hand he is determined and, on the other hand, he humbly allows for the possibility that he may be making a mistake.

This learned gentleman goes on to say:

> Just as we can repeatedly affirm in arithmetic that two and two make four, similarly, in the science of morality, we cannot affirm with conviction that this alone is our duty. The deeper meaning behind dharma or non-violence does not lie in results which can be proved; their mystery is revealed in going beyond such proofs and by taking certain risks where such proofs are impossible.

In our language this is known as faith. Dharma is something that is based on faith. Faith constitutes proof for that which cannot be proved by the five senses. Hence it is only by respectfully honouring the dictates of our inner voice that we may hope to have direct perception of dharma at some time in the future. Hence Mr. Jacks says:

> A man who becomes ready to listen to his own inner voice only after subjecting it to a test may be said to have abandoned it and he has failed to recognize the spiritual powers that are within him. Finally, he reaches a state which is so devoid of morality that it may be said of him that he has no such thing as an inner voice.

Therefore, what should man do when he comes across misery or oppression ? The author says:

> For me there are only two alternatives, either to experiment or to do nothing. Hence it becomes my dharma to carry out experiments after studying the situation as much as

possible. However, there is the danger that I may have made an error in my calculations. Even if on the day of judgment, I am told that my experiments are wrong, I shall lay down my life in order to complete them. I shall face the risk of there being a possibility of error in certain experiments in order to prove the truth of that which appears to be true to me.

This writer is of the opinion—and we too find—that many truths have been discovered through experiments in which such risks of mistakes were incurred, for such errors arise from pure motives and devotion to truth and mistakes that have been unintentionally made are forgotten in course of time.

Man has been called a creature full of errors. One of the definitions of swaraj is that it is the right to make mistakes and it is true. So long as I do not see my mistakes I must practise the dharma which I consider to be true; if giving in to external pressure I fail to do so, my cowardice and the false image I create will destroy me.

Further, Mr. Jacks suggests that a society in which external rules of morality are alone regarded as binding may well appear to be well-organized in a certain way, the people may be outwardly happy and peaceful, but that society is devoid of courage, of the boldness to make experiments, and of the spirit of research and hence the path of its progress is blocked. The importance of great principles lies in the fact that their meaning is unlimited. Only if we keep digging in that boundless mine can the world be lit up by those principles and also make progress. However, our society at present appears to be bound in shackles. It seems that our dharma is limited to singing praises of our forefathers and observing some outworn, external rituals.

But dharma is not such a lifeless thing. Non-violence is a living force or power. No one has been or will ever be able to measure its limits or its extent. Non-violence means universal love, it implies compassion for all living beings and the resultant strength to sacrifice oneself. Since many mistakes may be made while this love expresses itself we cannot give up the quest for the whole of this dharma. Even the mistakes committed while seeking the pure path take us a step forward in the quest.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-11-1928

228. SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM

The draft rules[1] of the Ashram were published some time back in *Navajivan*. I had invited outside opinion on these; a big controversy had also begun in the Ashram itself. Suggestions were made to introduce vital changes in it. Some of these were even implemented. Despite this a shocking, fictitious report appeared in the newspaper before the time came for publishing these rules. So I must put before the readers the changes[2] which are being tried at present.

As the name of the Satyagraha Ashram is suggestive of its qualities, it has always been our endeavour to stick to truth and to rely on its support alone. It cannot be said that we have always succeeded in our efforts. It cannot be claimed that all the inmates of the Ashram have worshipped truth. It can definitely be said that on the whole truth has been adhered to. Even in difficult situations, many in the Ashram, the young as well as the old, have adhered to it.

Ashramites have found one handicap in insisting upon truth. Many difficulties were experienced in minutely observing the rules with a strictness that would do credit to the Satyagraha Ashram. We did not find ourselves capable of coping with the subtler meanings of the rules, a fact which we gradually realize. Hence we arrived at the decision to keep those very rules intact but to change the name. We could hardly find anyone with the mental attitude in which one does not even feel the desire for possessions, in order to do credit to the Satyagraha Ashram. In observing truth in a manner that would do credit to the Ashram, one should never exaggerate even in a state of swoon. In spite of holding this belief we found it difficult to be always free from this fault. Though we realized that for the observance of *brahmacharya*, one should be free even from the thought of lust, we found that our control over our minds was very ineffective. In order to practise ahimsa which would do credit to the Ashram, we should have no anger in us, we should harbour no jealousy of one another. We should have the strength to affectionately embrace a thief if he happens to come along. Let snakes, etc., kill us, but we must have the strength to refrain from killing them. We found ourselves far removed from such ahimsa. Thinking on such lines we decided to maintain the Ashram as an ideal and run all its external activities under another name. Industry and physical work have always been the outward manifestations of the Satyagraha Ashram and we can claim that they have brought considerable credit to it. We therefore, assumed the

[1] *Vide* " Satyagraha Ashram"

[2] *Vide* also "Handicap of Mahatmaship", 8-11-1928.

name of Udyoga Mandir. Satyagraha Ashram would entrust its work to this Mandir and keep for itself a small ground for prayers which are necessary for its existence.

These changes are being implemented since a month or so ago. The managing committee of the Mandir has the right to make whatever changes it wants. Nevertheless, after much thought, it has decided to stick to the rules of the Ashram. The only difference is that these rules will remain as ideals and every member will constantly strive towards their fulfilment. The report that those who are not prepared to observe *brahmacharya* will now be able to join the Ashram is baseless. The managing committee has especially deliberated over this question and decided that without *brahmacharya* the Udyoga Mandir cannot be maintained in the spirit of yajna. Industry of any kind whatsoever does not find a place in the Ashram but only such industries are taken in hand which can sustain the poorer classes among the people, raise them economically and enable them to make progress. The managing committee has unanimously arrived at a firm decision that these activities could be carried on only if the men and women who take part in it observe *brahmacharya*. And this is indeed so. Not a single activity in the Ashram can be pursued for economic gain. These activities are developed solely from the standpoint of how best they could be pursued by the people. Those men and women who are engaged in enlarging their families or satisfying their lust can neither obtain nor impart this training.

The outcome of all this is that those who are working at present in the Satyagraha Ashram in accordance with its rules will carry on the very same activities in the name of Udyoga Mandir. This change of name was necessary for the sake of humility and truth. The organizers will again accept the name Satyagraha Ashram when they gain self-confidence.

Of course one vital change has been introduced which seemed to be impossible for the Satyagraha Ashram. During the last three months an experiment is being made of running a single kitchen for the entire Ashram. Control of the palate is one of the rules of the Ashram. Accordingly spices, etc., were not used. Some found this very difficult. It was felt that it would be undesirable to do away with a common kitchen. Hence while retaining it, two varieties of food, one spiced and the other unspiced, were introduced. When families cooked separately they used spices in the Ashram. According to the new rules spices had no place, but now they have been included.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-11-1928

229. LETTER TO JEHANGIR B. PETIT

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 4, 1928

You were good enough 13 years ago to take me to the institution for the support and instruction of the blind and to the J. J. Parsi Hospital. I have a half orphan coming from Junagadh. His father is dead, mother is alive. They have no means. Someone directed them to me saying that I might find for them an institution which might accommodate this young man and give him instruction and shelter. He knows no other language but Gujarati. Will you please let me know as early as you can whether your institution can conveniently shelter this blind youth?[1] He had a virulent attack of small pox seven years ago and he lost his eyesight.

The widowed mother and the blind son are hung up here in Ahmedabad. I hope that this young man will realize his life's ambition through some such philanthropic institution like yours.

Yours sincerely,

JEHANGIR B. PETIT, ESQ.
ORGANIZER OF THE INSTITUTION FOR THE SUPPORT
AND INSTRUCTION OF BLIND
PETIT BUILDING, 359 HORNBY ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 12984

[1] In his letter dated November 7, 1928, the addressee replied that they were prepared to admit the boy into the Victoria Memorial School for the Blind, Tardeo, provided that he did not belong to the untouchable class according to the rules of the school.

230. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
November 4, 1928

MY DEAR LOTUS-BORN,

This is merely to acknowledge your letter and tell you that you are ever present in my mind. Does the medical prohibition still continue?

With love,

M.K.G.

SRIMATI PADMAJA NAIDU
TUBERCULOSIS SANATORIUM
AROGYAVARAM
S. INDIA

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

231. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

Sunday [*November 4, 1928*][1]

CHI. MRIDULA,

Mahadev is presently in Bombay in connection with the Bardoli Committee. I am well. I have no fever so far. Even if I get it, I would still be better than I was yesterday. I have received the fruit.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 11264. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

[1] Evidently, the letter was written in November, 1928, when Mahadev Desai had to look after the Bardoli Inquiry affairs and had been in Bombay and Bardoli in the first week of November. The Sunday during this period fell on November 4; *vide* also "Letter to N. R. Malkani", 3-11-1928 and "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 5-11-1928

232. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

Monday [*After November 4, 1928*][1]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I got your letter. Chhaganlal has replied in detail. I fully appreciate your and Devdas's being upset. However, the step that has been taken is worthy of our vow of truth. We have no right to retain the name which we cannot live up to. We need not blame anyone for not being worthy of the name, or rather, I should be blamed first and then the others. Everybody tried to give his or her best, but even then they could not live up to the name. Who, then, could be blamed? We will be able to justify the name 'Udyog Mandir'.

My unsteadiness is the cause of my growth. According to me, it is not unsteadiness but rather different responses of my inner voice to changing circumstances. If that is how I view myself, I must view in the same manner the institution of which I am the moving spirit. Necessary changes in the imperfect creations of imperfect men are both a cause and a sign of their growth.

You should do your work there unhurriedly. Do not mind it if you are unable to carry through the plan you had in mind. And never enter into deep waters. Show everything to Mirabehn. Santok has unex-pectedly arrived here today. Jamnalal has been here of course.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S. N. 33008

233. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*November 5, 1928*][2]

CHI. MIRA,

I hope you got my wire[3]. You must [not][4] wear yourself out. There is no occasion for rushing. And do not deny yourself what you

[1] From the reference in the letter lo 'Udyog Mandir'; Gandhiji announced the change of name of the Ashram from 'Satyagraha Ashram' to 'Udyog Mandir' in *Navajivan* in its issue dated November 4, 1928. *Vide* "Letter to Amarnath", 14-12-1928

[2] From the postmark

[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Mirabehn", 3-11-1928.

[4] An inadvertent slip

may definitely need for your health. If you see any report about my ill-health do not be alarmed. I had a slight attack of malaria. There is nothing today.

Love.

BAPU

SHRIMATI MIRABAI
KHADI DEPOT, MUZAFFARPUR, BIHAR

From the original: G.N. 8212; also C.W. 5222. Courtesy: Mirabehn

234. LETTER TO PRATAP S. PANDIT

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 5, 1928

MY DEAR PRATAP,

I thank you for your prompt response to my request. Yes, Surendraji is one of the oldest inmates of the Ashram and among the most trusted. He tells me in his letter that you were all kindness; but he adds that he will not be bound to keep the secret[1] he had evidently in mind. The fact is that the Ashram must not possess any secret of any trade. But the Ashram will naturally respect all the confidence that might be given to it. Anyway, perhaps there are so many other things that you will teach Surendraji before he is ready to receive your secret. Meanwhile, I shall correspond with him and provide you with his own undertaking. And when he gives it to you, you may depend upon the undertaking being scrupulously observed. It would be such a joy to me when you are able to certify that Surendraji can handle the tannery of the kind, you know, I want.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. PRATAP S. PANDIT
WESTERN INDIA TANNERIES LTD., POST BOX NO. 403, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 11400

[1] In his letter dated November 1, 1928, the addressee had said: "Sjt. Surendra brought your letter of introduction. . . . I understand he has been in your Ashram for a long time and as such we can trust him not to disclose our secrets to our competitors" (S.N. 11399).

235. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*November 5, 1928*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have not been careful about writing this letter when it was due. Do not feel nervous if you hear news of my illness. I took some quinine yesterday. There is no fever today. I don't think I shall get any now.

Last week I did not, after all, get [a chapter of] the Autobiography. It does not matter though, since Pyarelal is pouring out translations. Both he and Subbiah, however, are practically ill. Subbiah is running temperature today. There was a letter calling away Nirmala, so that she could help in the illness. Durga has written back to know [whether it is absolutely necessary that Nirmala should go]. If it is indeed necessary, I will send her.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MAHADEV DESAI
SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 1143

236. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

Silence Day, November 5, 1928

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I got your letter. I have not been able to go through all the appendices.

Mahadev does not seem to have conveyed the message. We are experimenting here with bread-making. We also wish to start bee-keeping. Please find some useful books on 'bread-making',[2] and 'bee-keeping'[3]. I wrote to Mahadev about a book on bread-making.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4707. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

[1] From the postmark
[2] Gandhiji uses the English expressions.
[3] *ibid*

237. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 6, 1928

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. You must have already received my letter and my blessings. If the climate of Matheran suits you better than that of Deolali, nothing like it. Then I would not be keen about Almora. I shall leave here on the 23rd and proceed to Wardha via Bardoli. Hence I shall not be passing through Bombay. Mahadev is still at Bardoli. He will reach here tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
VICTORIA LODGE
MATHERAN

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

238. LETTER TO WILLIAM SMITH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I was pleased to receive your letter. I have glanced through the report of the Council of Justice to Animals. I do not think that the kind of work done by the Council will be much appreciated in India.[1] But I can see no harm in an agent of the Council coming to India and asking those who are engaged in slaughter of animals to do so with human[e] methods of killing.

I have never forgotten the promise I made to you that I would give you an article about our dairy. I hope to redeem it some day. I have been too busy with the inner organization of the Ashram and other preoccupations to spare a few hours for the report I promised to prepare for you.

Yours sincerely,

WILLIAM SMITH, ESQ.
IMPERIAL DAIRY EXPERT, BANGALORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 12925

[1] The addressee had asked whether "a society of this kind should be recommended to operate in the country".

239. CABLE TO ARYA SAMAJ, SUVA[1]

[On or after *November 7, 1928*]

ARYA SAMAJ
SUVA

CALF DYING GREAT AGONY. PAINLESSLY KILLED BY MEDICAL ADVICE ASSISTANCE.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 14723

240. THE INEVITABLE

> Thanks. Assault unprovoked and deliberate. Received two severe injuries but not serious, one on left chest, other on shoulder, other blows warded by friends. Satyapal, Gopichand Hansraj, Mohammad Alam, others received blows and injuries. No cause for anxiety. — Lajpatrai.

This was the prompt reply Lalaji sent me upon my wire to him of congratulations and enquiry.[2] Lalaji earned the title of Punjab Kesari, i.e., the Lion of the Punjab, when most of the present genera- tion were in their teens. All these years he has survived the title. For whatever may be said of him or against him, he still remains the unchallengeable leader of the Punjab and one of the most beloved and esteemed leaders in all India. He has been President of the National Congress, enjoys a European reputation and is one of the few public men who think aloud at the risk of being often misunderstood and more often being considered indiscreet. He remains incorrigible; for he cannot harbour anything in his breast. He must speak out just as he thinks. When, therefore, I read the headline "Lalaji assaulted" and discovered how and why, I could not help saying: "Well done! Now we shall not be long getting swaraj." For whether the revolution is non-violent or violent, there is no doubt about it that before we come to our own, we shall have to learn the art of dying in the country's cause. Authority will not yield without a tremendous effort even to non-violent pressure. Under an ideal and complete non-violence, I can imagine full transformation of authority to be possible. But whilst an ideally perfect programme is possible its full execution is never possible. It is therefore the most economical thing that leaders get assaulted or shot. Hitherto obscure people have been

[1] This was in reply to a telegram received on November 7, 1928 which read: "*Fiji Times* reports you ordered killing calf. Hindus perturbed. Wire truth."

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Lajpat Rai", 1-11-1928.

assaulted or done to death. The assault on Lala Lajpat Rai has attracted far greater attention than even the shooting of a few men could have. The assault on Lalaji and other leaders has set the politically-minded India athinking and it must have perturbed the Government. I am loath to think that the local Government as a body knew anything of the contemplated assault. If they did and the assault was part of a deliberate plan as in the days of yore, it is so much the worse for the Government. Then of course the Government can only pretend perturbation. I would not mention such a possibility in ordinary circumstances, but holding the view that I do about the Government—the view being based on experience —whilst I should be sorry, it would not surprise me if a discovery was made that the assault was part of a deliberate plan. I admit, that the provocation, viz., the very fact of the boycott, no matter how peaceful, was quite enough without the fraudulent story concocted by the police. I call the police version fraudulent because I would any day trust Lalaji's word against a host of interested witnesses that the police can bring to its assistance. If I was not convinced that this system of Government is based on force and fraud, I should not have become the confirmed non-co-operator that I am. Indeed Lowes Dickinson in his essay "War, Its Causes and Cure" has shown from sufficient evidence that a war cannot be conducted without fraud. *Pari passu* this Government of ours which professes to hold India by the sword and whose foundations were laid in fraud cannot be sustained without either, except when it undergoes transformation and is based upon popular will and confidence.

Nor are we to think that the Punjab incident is to be the last of the barbarities committed during the pendency of the Statutory Commission. The boycott of the Simon Commission is a continuing sore for the Commission and the Government. Sir John Simon and his colleagues cannot be contemplating this boycott with equanimity. They have not the courage to acknowledge defeat. The boycott itself has been given additional momentum by the unprovoked assault on the Punjab leaders. The Government will therefore feel itself bound to suppress the boycott by any means that it can command. The Punjab incident therefore I regard as the first trial of strength, the strength of non-violence against violence. Lalaji had no difficulty in restraining the vast crowd behind him in spite of the police provocation. And if throughout the stay of the unwelcome Commission in India, this non-violent policy can be successfully and efficiently carried out, the Government will find much of its occupation gone and the people would have had a striking demonstration of the effectiveness of mass non-violence. The moral therefore I would have national workers to draw from this incident is not to be depressed or taken aback by the

assault, but to treat it as part of the game we have to play, to turn the irritation caused by the wanton assault into dynamic energy and husband it and utilize it for future purposes.

Young India, 8-11-1928

241. FACT AND FICTION

A friend has sent me a cutting from the *Pioneer* purporting to be a report of an interview with me and I have seen a Press message in the Bombay papers giving a summary of a further report. Both have grieved me. It would have been nice if Mr. Wild[1], who is the author of these reports, had submitted proofs to me before publishing his reports. The late Mr. Saunders of the *Englishman* used to send to interviewed persons proofs for correction or confirmation of the interviews taken by his reporters. I wish that his very laudable and desirable practice was universally followed. It was all the more necessary for Mr. Wild to follow the practice as he had come to the Ashram as an honoured guest sent by his chief and as he had taken no notes while he was interviewing me. Whilst clever reporters have been known to recall from memory an accurate substance of what they had heard without taking notes, even the cleverest will fail to reproduce in full the very words of his victim if he will take no notes. Mr. Wild has been guilty of sins both of omission and commission. He omitted to send me proofs and although he took no notes, he has professed to reproduce my own words. The result is a series of unfortunate misrepresentations. In many respects the reports are a travesty.

I do not however propose to examine the reports in detail. I would content myself with correcting one mischievous representation. Mr. Wild makes me say that "there is not a man in India today whom he (I) can name as a national leader". I could never be guilty of making such a false, arrogant and impertinent statement. Fortunately for India, she has not one but scores of national leaders who are able to give a good account of themselves and who need no certificate from me or anyone else. Probably Mr. Wild has confused the question of successor[s] with leaders. I was taken aback when he put me the question about [a] successor. For I have never thought of successors. I believe that a successor will come without effort when one is needed. But a successor even a poor scavenger or spinner may have. He need not be a leader. Once when I was called upon to name a successor I named Gulnar, the daughter of Maulana Mahomed Ali. But she is no

[1] Of *The Civil and Military Gazette; vide* "Letter to Roland G. Wild", 14-11-1928.

longer now fit to occupy the coveted place. She is no more a baby. My notions of [a] successor remain as primitive now as they were seven years ago when the question was first put to me.

Young India, 8-11-1928

242. HANDICAP OF MAHATMASHIP

The difficulties and afflictions of a "mahatma" are no less serious and very often much more serious than those of misters and *shriyuts*, not excluding knights and baronets. More than once in my life have I had to battle against these difficulties and afflictions created by unfriendly critics and not unoften through misunderstanding on the part of friends who will not take the trouble of ascertaining the true situation after personal inspection but will unhesitatingly accept as gospel truth any rumour that may appear in print.

Now what has appeared in the Press about the Satyagraha Ashram was wholly unauthorized.[1] When one important change in the Ashram was adopted, opinion was divided as to whether without giving a trial to the great change, we were called upon to take the public into confidence. I yielded to the express wish of some of my trusted co-workers not to announce the change. When I accepted their advice, I knew the consequence. I knew that nothing happening about anything connected with me could escape the attention of newspaper reporters. The published report is altogether misleading.

Here are the plain facts:

The constitution of the Ashram has not suffered any vital change except in its name. The reported change about *brahmacharya* for which I have received from some quarters undeserved congratulations and for which anxious friends have shown nervous concern was never made. I did leave it absolutely free to my co-workers to make whatever change they wished. After full delibe-rations among themselves over the proposal to relax the *brahm-acharya* vow and at the discretion of the Managing Committee to admit married people unprepared for the observance, they came to the unanimous conclusion that the change could not be made. I must deal at a future date with the reasoning behind this very important decision.

The other reported change relates to the introduction of spices in the Ashram. In the beginning, the Ashram had only one joint board when the food was prepared without spices. Later when many families joined the Ashram separate kitchens were set up for them and they

[1] *Vide* also "Satyagraha Ashram", 4-11-1928.

were free to use spices. But it was decided some months ago to revert to the joint kitchen. We tried for some time to do without spices but as I held the joint kitchen to be an important thing for corporate life and as many, if they had separate kitchens, would revert to spices, it was decided to have two varieties of food in the joint kitchen, spiced and unspiced. We want to give all the assistance and freedom the women folk need. Many of them have come to the Ashram because they are the wives of their husbands. They have not yet been able to argue out all the pros and cons of everything they do.

The real change in my opinion is the change in the name. It has caused the original founders of the Ashram many an anxious night. We claim to be votaries of unadulterated truth and so new possibilities of the definitions of fundamental truths have dawned upon us. The name Satyagraha Ashram was adopted deliberately and with the intention of giving the fullest effect to its meaning. But the progressive realization of the meaning of the name made us conscious of our unworthiness to bear it. And so we resolved upon voluntary self-suppression and we chose a name in keeping with the evolution of the corporate life at the Ashram. If the Ashram has done nothing else, it has at least demonstrated the necessity and usefulness of labour undertaken not for self only but for the whole nation. Therefore the name Udyoga Mandir, I felt, more answered our present evolution than Satyagraha Ashram. The co-workers accepted the suggestion though not without considerable hesitation. 'Industrial Home' is a poor rendering of the original as 'Dominion Status' or even 'independence', is a poor substitute for 'swaraj' which alone can signify the great mass longing of India as an individual nation. We do not take up any industry that comes our way. We select only such as we must carry on as a consecration, a *yajna* (sacrifice) or a *kurbani*. An industrial home connotes a conglomeration of industries which may appeal to some but which have no universal application. The word 'Mandir' has sacred associations and so has 'Udyoga' read in the light of the *Bhagavad Gita*. I must therefore invite friendly critics with the poetic instinct to present me with an English expression that will exactly fit in with the expression Udyoga Mandir. Till I get some good equivalent it must remain untranslatable.

But the Satyagraha Ashram does not entirely disappear. Whilst it divests itself of its external activities and allows the use of the ground on which the Ashram stands to the Udyoga Mandir—the possession to be resumed at will—the Ashram retains the open prayer ground and therefore its most life-giving activity hoping some day to be able to reabsorb the activities now surrendered. The name Satyagraha Ashram has so many sacred associations, that only the hope of reverting to it

intact has reconciled us to the change of name to the extent indicated.

There is one thing more which I may not omit. It has been openly stated, more secretly whispered, that Mahadev Desai has been appointed Chairman of the Managing Committee owing to the inmates having lost confidence in me and as a concession to weakness. This is altogether untrue. The Managing Committee, if the reader will recall the previous description of the Ashram in these pages, was appointed long ago. I ceased for a long interval officially to guide its deliberations. Then at the invitation of the Committee, I took up the active guidance. But when the change in name came, the responsibility of the Chairman seemed to be eased a bit. Hence I withdrew and Mahadev Desai became Chairman once more. The virtual control of the Ashram however still remains with me and will continue to do so, so long as I continue to deserve the affection of my comrades.

Young India, 8-11-1928

243. VILLAGE ENGINEERS

Mr. Richard B. Gregg, the author of the treatise on *Economics of Khaddar*, who was at the Ashram for a few days before sailing for America, gave a couple of discourses to the students of the Technical School of the All-India Spinners' Association at Sabarmati. The first dealt with solar power and was a resume of his chapter in the treatise to which I must refer the reader. Below is given a summary[1] of the second prepared by one of the audience:

Young India, 8-11-1928

244. LETTER TO JEHANGIR B. PETIT

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 8, 1928

DEAR MR. PETIT,

I thank you for your very prompt reply. I am sending you now the blind boy.[2] His name is Daya Arjun. He belongs to Junagarh. He is a blacksmith, not an untouchable.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

JEHANGIR B. PETIT, ESQ.
PETIT BUILDING, 359 HORNBY ROAD, FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 12984

[1] Not reproduced here
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Jehangir B. Petit", 4-11-1928.

245. LETTER TO JEHANGIR B. PETIT

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 8, 1928

DEAR MR. PETIT,

Here is a Copy of the letter[1] I have given to the blind boy. I am posting it to your Fort address as I have asked the boy to take the original to the School. But as you might not have gone there and might not have yet given instructions at the School, I am writing this to you so as to enable you to do the needful.

Yours sincerely,

JEHANGIR B. PETIT, ESQ.
PETIT BUILDING, 359 HORNBY ROAD, FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 12990

246. LETTER TO SATYANANDA BOSE[2]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 9, 1928

DEAR SATYANANDA BABU,

I have your letter. When I am in Calcutta,[3] I shall be beseiged as I always am by interviewers and friends seeking advice. I am dreading even now the visit to Calcutta in the present physical state.[4] I would therefore like to be excused from having to preside at the Social Conference. I am coming to Calcutta simply for the sake of Pandit Motilalji.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SATYANANDA BOSE
4 NUNDY STREET, BALLYGUNGE, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 12985

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] In reply to the addressee's letter dated November 4, 1928, wherein he had requested Gandhiji to preside over the Indian Social Conference to be held in Calcutta during the Congress Week.

[3] To attend the A.I.C.C. meeting on December 26, 1928

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 5-11-1928.

247. LETTER TO SHANKARAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 9, 1928

MY DEAR SHANKARAN,

I have your letters. But I have been too busy to be able to reply. I don't need now to tell you everything about the Ashram. You will see everything in the pages of *Young India* and *Navajivan*.

I had a touch of fever, but I am all right now.[1]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SHANKARAN
VICTORIA LODGE, MATHERAN, DISTRICT COLABA

From a photostat: S.N. 12991

248. LETTER TO KARIM GOOLAM ALI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 9, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Any interference by an outsider of the kind you suggest is bound to be misunderstood and valueless. Of what value for instance can be to Hindus a balanced opinion from an eminent Christian divine about the misdeeds of Vaishnavite Maharajahs ?

Yours sincerely,

KARIM GOOLAM ALI, ESQ.
KHARADHAR, KARACHI

From a photostat: S.N. 12992

249. LETTER TO A. SAMBUNATHAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 9, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You will have read all about the Ashram constitution in the pages of *Young India*.

I certainly think that you should not have resorted to abuses in respect of the women. You should have observed perfect silence.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 12-11-1928.

About the *Gita*, you should procure a Tamil translation which can be easily read.

I am too busy just now to write out my own correspondence.

Yours sincerely,

A. SAMBUNATHAN, ESQ.
C/O T. RATNASABHAPATHY MUDALIAR, ESQ.
32 OFFICE VENKATACHALA MUDALI STREET
TRIPLICANE, MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 12993

250. LETTER TO SIR MAHOMED HABIBULLAH[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 9, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and for taking me in your confidence regarding the appointment of a successor to Sastriji.

The proposal to appoint Sir K. V. Reddi does not appeal to me at all. I have not the honour to know the gentleman. As you tell me he is a party man, it would be fatal to appoint a party man. The Agent has to enjoy the confidence of all the Indians there and of all the parties here. I hardly think that Sir K. V. Reddi will be able to possess that confidence.

The appointment is a most difficult task and it is not an easy thing to replace Sastriji. My own suggestion to you is that you should appoint yourself.[2] You know all that Sastriji has done. Therefore there will be perfect continuity. You proved your mettle in South Africa when you led the Deputation.[3] So far as I am aware you are not a suspect as a party man. The next few years are most important in the life of the little Indian community in South Africa and any mistake in the appointment will prove disastrous. If, therefore, you have sufficient courage and humility to appoint yourself, the whole diffi-

[1] In reply to his letter dated November 5, 1928, which read: "Sir K. V. Reddy who was a member of the first Ministry in Madras . . . is not perhaps as well known throughout India as Sastri or Jayakar. I happen, however, to have known him intimately now for many years. His lack of renown is really due to the fact that he is comparatively young and that his work has been confined to his own presidency. But both in the sphere of Local Self-Government and his larger field of administration as Minister, he distinguished himself by his earnestness, honesty and patriotism" (S.N. 11998).

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Mahomed Habibullah", 16-11-1928.

[3] *Vide* "Honourable Compromise", 24-2-1927

culty is solved. But if you will shirk the duty or your going is utterly impossible, I suggest your making a desperate effort to secure Prof. Paranjpye. If that fails, in spite of Sastriji's advice that no officials should be appointed you should have Kunwar Maharaj Singh. I mention his name not because I know him or have ever met him but because Charlie Andrews swore by him as the man next to Sastriji if Sastriji could[1] not be secured as the first Agent.

If all the three proposals fail, then I would say you should ask Sastriji to appoint his own successor. I can't go any further. May God help you to a right decision. You must not throw away my first suggestion.

Yours sincerely,

SIR MAHOMED HABIBULLAH SAHEB BAHADUR, K.C.I.E.
MEMBER OF VICEROY'S COUNCIL, NEW DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13282

251. LETTER TO NIRANJAN PATNAIK

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 9, 1928

DEAR NIRANJAN BABU,

The people of Sambalpur are pressing me to take Sambalpur[2] even if for a day on my way to Calcutta. What do you say to this ?

Have I not sent you a copy of a letter[3] from Bijolia about the Utkal khadi work? Thinking that I have sent the letter, I have been waiting for your reply.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. NIRANJAN PATNAIK
SWARAJ ASHRAM, BERHAMPUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 13719

[1] The second page of the letter ends here but the source has page three of some other letter interpolated.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Achyutananda Purohit", 27-11-1928.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Niranjan Patnaik", 27-11-1928.

252. LETTER TO C. V. RENGAM CHETTI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 9, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I wish you could soften down a bit. In any event at the present moment I am not in active charge of the affairs of the Association and I am too much preoccupied in the commitments I have undertaken to attend to anything else. But another non-Brahmin, that is, Seth Jamnalalji is in charge, and I assure you that he is a shrewd and capable business man. If you convince him of your case, he will not hesitate to intervene.

Yours sincerely

SJT. C. V. RENGAM CHETTI
NARAYANAVARAM

From a microfilm: S.N. 13720

253. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE

Friday, November 9, 1928

BHAISHRI MAMA,

I got your letter. I was a little ill and that has delayed this reply. I think this is not a case of Ghanchis[1] against Hindus, but one involving four well-to-do business men. I see no need for us to do anything more about it. It is plain that the Bhangi student was not a votary of non-violence. He adopted a course which he thought best, and I do not think we need do anything more about it. Even if you think it is a case between Ghanchis and Hindus, your ultimate aim is to win over the former by and by. I would not mind even if a few inmates of the Ashram laid down their lives. Anyone who professes non-violence will not deserve a certificate until he passes the supreme test.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3821

[1] A community in Gujarat traditionally engaged in oil pressing

254. LETTER TO F. W. WILSON[1]

November 10, 1928

I have your letter for which I thank you. Perhaps you have seen what I wrote in *Young India*[2] about Mr. Wild's articles which make painful reading.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 12987

255. LETTER TO VIOLET

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 10, 1928

MY DEAR VIOLET,

I have your letter. Hinduism should certainly be purged of all the evil and superstition that have crept into it. Nothing then need be a substitute for it. It is, in my opinion, an all-embracing and all-sufficing religion.

I hope your aunt is quite well now.

Yours sincerely,

[MRS. VIOLET
C/O] MISS BABA GUNASEKERA
55 HAMPDEN LANE, WELLAWATTE, COLOMBO

From a photostat: S.N. 12994

256. CRUELTY IN GUISE OF JUSTICE

Offshoots of the riots between Hindus and Muslims in Surat still continue. Although the fighting with sticks and daggers has ceased, the battle now goes on in the law-courts. I am still receiving letters on this subject. However, I am in no position nor have I the ability to become a party to this dispute. Nevertheless, when I received two or three letters about a certain matter, I considered it my dharma to investigate it. This related to a complaint that the editor of

[1] In reply to addressee's letter dated November 7, 1928, which read: "I am most sincerely sorry if I have published anything which is either inaccurate or which conveys a wrong impression. I published (in *The Pioneer*) what Mr. Wild wrote in all good faith, supposing that he had arranged with you as to what he was going to say."

[2] *Vide* "Fact and Fiction", 8-11-1928.

the local daily *Hindu*, Shri Chimanlal Joshi, was taken to the court in handcuffs. As I could not believe this report, I inquired of a trustworthy friend about it. The latter writes:[1]

Even a person accused of murder should not be treated in this manner; how then can a gentleman be subjected to such treatment? No Hindu-Muslim problem is involved in this case. No Muslim who has a soul would tolerate such treatment of a Hindu. Similarly, no Hindu who has a soul would tolerate such cruelty towards a Muslim. If cruelty is inflicted and tolerated in this manner, law-courts should be sealed as justice would be defamed. Hence this case deserves to be considered dispassionately.

Can an accused who has not yet been convicted be led in this way like an animal? One fails to understand the reason for such conduct. If it is said that this procedure was followed because the allegations against him were of a serious nature, it will amount to sentencing the accused before he is tried. Moreover, one has not heard of any punishment in the Penal Code which involves the putting on of manacles. To do so is not in itself a form of punishment. However, if the prisoner is unruly or if he tries to use his hands threateningly or attempts to escape, he is handcuffed so as to prevent him from resorting to either course. In the present case, there was no danger of the accused, Shri Chimanlal Joshi, raising his hands threateningly or running away. Hence we cannot but conclude that he was handcuffed merely by way of cruelty and for insulting him. It is necessary for both Hindus and Muslims to protest against such callousness.

It is clear that the prison too is in a primitive condition. Previously, too, I had received a protest in this matter and I had commented on it.

Let Hindus and Muslims of Surat fight one another to their hearts' content in the name of Ishwar or Allah; but how can they conclude that neither of these gods exists and tolerate such cruelty and barbaric conduct?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-11-1928

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had confirmed that Chimanlal Joshi had been handcuffed and made to walk five miles to the court, because the police superintendent had forgotten to order removal of the fetters. The condition of bathrooms and lavatories in the prison was awful.

257. LETTER TO ABHAY SHARMA

November 11, 1928

BHAISHRI ABHAY SHARMA,

Your letter. It was not our intention to send away Balbir[1] without a cause. Even though he sleeps near me, I keep him under others' supervision as well. I entrusted him to Somabhai, then to Narandas. At present he is with Krishna Nayar and Gangabehn. Now he tells me that he is being overworked. I see . . .[2] used to devote quite some time to the charkha work but used little brains. He did work on the farm but could impress none with his diligence. He could not satisfy Gangabehn, moreover she suspected him of being a flatterer. His habit of faultfinding has no limit. For this reason he was always too eager to hear all casual talk. Mirabehn . . . .[3]

I had referred to the Arya Samaj at the Brahmo Samaj function. I mentioned the good as well as bad points because it was pertinent. I do not know what was reported in the newspapers. I made no reference in *Navajivan* because I had no wish to be unnecessarily involved in a controversy. My views are the same as before. The Arya Samaj has done great service but has all the same shown a lack of liberalism.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6757

258. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

November 12, 1928

CHI. MIRA,

I have your indictment of the Ashram people. You will have read my account in *Young India* of the changes.[4] If you still retain the horror of return to the Ashram, you shall certainly remain outside and meet me whenever I go out of the Ashram. Wherever you are, I know you will be doing my work. And you will be doing it all the more where you are happy and well. There are so many centres of khadi. You may choose whichever you like.

The Austrian friends will be soon going. They have to sail on 21st. They leave here on 18th or 17th.

[1] A student of Charkha Sangh who had come to learn khadi work

[2] *Vide* "Handicap of Mahatmaship", 8-11-1928.

[3] Some words here are not legible in the source.

I had a touch of malaria. I am free now, have been for the last six days. I am just now living on fruit alone. Mahadev has come for two days. He goes back to B[ardoli] tomorrow.[1]

Purbai has gone to Orissa. Chhaganlal and his wife will also be going there presently. Krishnadas is now in Sodepur. Rajendra Babu is here and undergoing fasting cure for asthma. Gregg has sailed for America.

Pyarelal and Subbiah have had their innings of malaria. They seem now to be free though weak.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: G.N. 8214; also C.W. 5324. Courtesy: Mirabehn

259. LETTER TO RAMI GANDHI

November 12, 1928

CHI. RAMI,

I read your letter to Ba. I hope your fever has gone now. Here too everyone has had it. I was also caught. Ba and Nimu too had it. Rasik is in Delhi at present and Ramdas is in Bardoli. As you know, Devdas has been in Delhi for a long time now. Navin too has gone there. I trust the children are happy. Chi. Sushila has given birth to a daughter. I shall be leaving for Wardha on the 22nd or the 23rd accompanied by Ba. To both of you a good New Year.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Greetings from Ba.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9712

260. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Amas, November 12, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Having been unable to write to you for so long, I feel ashamed while penning this. Your letters did come.

I do not want to write more as we shall now meet at Wardha.

I had sent a cable in connection with the present hardships in

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Urmila Devi", 14-11-1928.

South Africa.

The incident of the calf and the monkeys did annoy me but it was a good opportunity of understanding human nature and of controlling my temper.

Mahadev told me many things about you and it gladdened my heart, although I am already acquainted with much of it.

I propose to reach Wardha on the 24th instant.

The rest when we meet.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Jamnalalji is going to Bombay today. Mahadev is at Bardoli these days. He has come here for three days.

From Hindi: C.W. 6165. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

261. LETTER TO LAKSHMINARAYAN M. PANDYA

November 12, 1928

BHAI LAKSHMINARAYAN,

I have your letter. When we find two leaders divided in their views, and hold both in equal respect, we should accept the view which appeals to our conscience.

During student-life, one should not take active part in politics.

We should feel respect for our teachers and emulate only their good qualities.

I do not respect the traditional practices observed during an eclipse.

Please take this as my message.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

BHAISHRI LAKSHMINARAYAN MOJILAL PANDYA
NAGARWADO, LUNAWADA

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2658. Courtesy: Lakshminarayan M. Pandya

262. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Amas, Silence Day [*November 12, 1928*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

Today is the new moon day, and also my silence day. I am therefore writing this letter for the pleasure of doing so. I had preserved the statement of account sent by you. I examined it today in the smallest detail. I do find a few things about which I would like to have further explanation, but on the whole there is nothing to object to. My New Year blessings to you that you may follow the path of goodness and keep good health. The same to Navin and Rasik. My health is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI DEVDAS GANDHI

JAMIA MILLIA, KAROL BAGH, DELHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2126

263. LETTER TO NANABHAI R. MASHRUWALA

Amas [*November 12, 1928*][2]

BHAI NANABHAI,

I have preserved till this day your sincere letter on the subject of non-violence. When I took it up today, which is both the new moon day and my silence day, in order to reply to it, I asked myself whether it was really necessary that I should engage you in a discussion on this subject. When we are bound to each other through a tie of the heart, we shall in time understand what both of us mean. If either of us is in error, the error will be plain to all and we shall honestly admit it. Since I feel thus, I will not engage you in a futile discussion. If you can leave Akola and come to Wardha, please do so. If you wish we shall have a little talk over the matter.

My blessings to all of you.

BAPU

SHRI NANABHAI MASHRUWALA

AKOLA, C.P.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6678

[1] From the postmark

[2] *ibid*

264. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

Amas, Silence Day [*November 12, 1928*][1]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have been writing since three and a half in the morning. Having finished the paper, l have resumed the writing. Today is *amas*.

One's body endures only as long as the sense of 'I' lasts. That sense of 'I' is bound to remain so long as the body lives. We have to get out of this state and learn to rid ourselves of the sense of 'I'. Whatever we have done so far with the sense of 'I' is done. But no more of it now. Live in Tadikhet reducing yourself to zero and go on doing daily whatever work comes to hand or you can think of. Do not build castles in the air. Ponder over 'One step enough for me'. Go on praying, 'The night is dark and I cannot see my way. Guard your child.' Instead of being angry or unhappy when somebody insults you, you should rather be pleased. Your duty to Shantilal is simple. If you have not bound yourself to keep him for one year, you should not let him remain for a year. It is obvious that in Tadikhet, you cannot afford to keep him that long. The lesson to be drawn from this is that an agreement even with a friend should be reduced to writing, not because we do not trust him but because memory is a tricky affair.

You should under no circumstances let your health deteriorate. If your work with Mirabehn is over, run to Almora. Chhaganlal and Kashi are at Rajkot. Ramdas has settled down in Bardoli.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S. N. 32981

265. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

SABARMATI,
November 13, 1928

MIRABEHN
KHADI BHANDAR, MUZAFFARPUR

YOU MAY ATTEND. SENDING COTTON. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: G. N. 8215; also C.W. 5325. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] From the combination of *amas* and *Silence Day* in the dateline; *vide* "Letter to Devdas Gandhi", 12-11-1928

266. LETTER TO A. GORDON

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

You will forgive me for delaying to reply to your letter of 21st September for such a long time. The fact is that every admission to the Ashram is regulated by a Committee of Management to which I have referred your letter, and I have just learnt the decision of the Committee that in the present state of the Ashram, it is not possible to keep disabled men, the scope of the Ashram being entirely different. I am sorry indeed that the Ashram is not able to provide shelter for the young man,[1] but I am sure you will appreciate the difficulty of the Committee of Management.

But will you be prepared to send him to some other institution if I can find one[2] that will take charge of him? Of course I should not recommend a single institution about whose ability to take proper care of such cases I was not myself sure.

Yours sincerely,

REV. A. GORDON

CANADIAN BAPTIST MISSION, VUYYURU, KISTNA DISTRICT

From a photostat: S.N. 12974

267. LETTER TO ROLAND J. WILD

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[3] enclosing the cuttings. You perhaps have seen my comment upon them. And many things you have put into my mouth and views you have ascribed to me I fail to recognize myself, and some of them are so palpably absurd that I cannot imagine how

[1] In his letter dated September 21, 1928, the addressee had said that M. Moses, aged 20, an outcaste and an orphan, had a paralysed leg, which was removed after an operation, had studied up to 8th standard in Vuyyuru Boarding School and could do tailoring, weaving or mat-making.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 28-11-1928.

[3] Dated November 7, 1928

you came to attribute them to me. Do you not think you owed it to me to show me the proof ?

Yours sincerely,

ROLAND J. WILD, ESQ.
"THE CIVIL AND MILITARY GAZETTE"
P.O. BOX NO. 36, LAHORE

From a photostat: S.N. 12988

268. LETTER TO URMILA DEVI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 14, 1928

Mr. Devdhar sends me copy of letters written to you and reports to me that you have been laid up in bed at Dr. Sen's house.What could the matter be with you? And how are you now ? Who is Dr. Sen

Mahadev was here for three days. He went last night to Bardoli and expects to return on Friday or Saturday.

Yours sincerely,

SHRIMATI URMILA DEVI
C/O DR. SEN
C/O METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE, POONA

From a photostat: S.N. 12997

269. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 14, 1928

Here is a letter and copy of my reply.[1] You will either write to the complainant yourself or enable me to send him a further reply.

I have your telegram which surprises me. I could not possibly go to the length you suggest. Enclosed is a copy of the letter[2] I sent to Sir Mahomed Habibullah. Please discuss the subject no more with anybody and destroy the enclosed.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
KHADI VASTRALAYA, ESPLANADE, MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 12788

270. LETTER TO K. SANTANAM

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 14, 1928

MY DEAR SANTANAM,

I have your letter. The best thing I could do was to forward your letter to Sjt. Ambalal Sarabhai.[3] Beyond that you won't expect me to go.

I am sorry about Krishna.[4] I hope she will soon be well. Is her illness the reason for her long silence?

I note what you say about Punjab politics.[5]

Yours sincerely,

PANDIT K. SANTANAM
THE LAKSHMI INSURANCE CO. LTD.
P. O. BOX. NO. 30, LAHORE

From a photostat: S.N. 12996

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Kannayiram Pillay", 29-11-1928.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Mahomed Habibullah", 9-11-1928.

[3] In his letter dated November 10, 1928, the addressee had requested Gandhiji to put in a word regarding his Lakshmi Insurance Co., Ltd., to Ambalal Sarabhai who was thinking of insuring his employees in his various concerns.

[4] She had been unwell for two months.

[5] The addressee said that he was not taking very active part in politics at that time chiefly due to the fact that there were local factions in the Congress.

271. ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION

The Association has now been at work for over two years. It has made steady progress on the business side. Its organization is being gradually perfected. Its finances are on a sound footing. It takes or makes no commitments beyond its ability. But on the score of membership, it has not proved attractive. I confess that not much effort has been made to attract members. The Council has thought it unwise to spend public money in carrying on propaganda in that direction, feeling that those who realize the national importance of hand-spinning and the dignity of labour would of their own accord join the Association. Such however has not been the case. People have not been attracted to the constructive side of national work nor have they developed the capacity for unassuming steady work. Many even of those who joined in the beginning have fallen off.

Nevertheless the Council does not feel disposed to alter the terms of membership but is of opinion that some day or other public workers are bound to realize the importance of hand-spinning for the nation and therefore for themselves, and that some day it will be recognized as a matter of shame for anybody not to spin even as it would be today a matter of shame not to protest one's loyalty to the country or not to attend on due occasions public meetings.

But even though the membership has not increased and has not attracted those who would work a big financial corporation like the Association, its finances have grown. It is therefore thought advisable to appoint a permanent Board of Trustees in whom the funds should be vested. With that end in view Sjt. Jamnalal Bajaj, Sjt. C. Rajagopalachari and Sjt. Rajendra Prasad have drafted the following resolutions:

> I. Whereas the All-India Spinners' Association was founded on 23rd September 1925, as an expert and independent organization for the development of hand-spinning and khaddar and it was endowed with assets by the Indian National Congress for the said purpose:
>
> Whereas the first Executive Council of the All-India Spinners' Association under the constitution so framed was to hold office for five years and authorized not only to deal with its assets and to raise further funds for the purposes of the Association, but also to make such amendments in the constitution as may be considered necessary in the light of its experience:
>
> Whereas the Executive Council since its establishment has raised and in view of the increasing work of the Association must continue to raise from time to time considerable funds from the public:
>
> Whereas it is found necessary often to enter into agreement, raise funds

by way of loans on the security of its assets, and make commitments going beyond its own lifetime:

And whereas for these and other reasons, the experience of the last three years has shown that it is desirable to amend the constitution so as to vest the funds and all the assets of the Association in a permanent Board of Trustees who shall hold them for the purposes of the Association and who shall also be the Governing Body of the Association:

It is hereby resolved as follows:

1. That the funds and assets now held by the All-India Spinners' Association and its various Branches henceforth vest in a Board of Trustees who shall also be the Executive Council of the Association.

2. That the said Board of Trustees and Executive Council shall consist of the undermentioned twelve persons who shall hold office for life, provided they continue to be members of the Association, and three other persons elected annually by the members of the Association from among its A-Class members, provided that for this purpose no one who has not been on the rolls continuously for two years at the time of election shall be entitled to vote.

Names of members of the Board of Trustees and Executive Council: . . . . . .[1]

3. That any vacancy occurring by reason of resignation, death or otherwise shall be filled up by the remaining members from amongst A-Class members of the Association:

II. Resolved that if any member fails to send his yarn quota for six months he shall cease to be a member.

III. Resolved that the constitution be amended to embody the foregoing provisions.

IV. Resolved that a meeting of the members of the Association be convened as early as possible to elect three members to the Board of Trustees and Executive Council under Resolution I, clause 2.

It is being circulated among the members of the Council and will be placed before it for adoption at a special meeting to be convened at Wardha on the 18th December next.

I heartily endorse the proposal. One striking feature about the proposal is that it introduces an element of election in the appointment of trustees. This was not contemplated by any of us when the Council was self-formed. The idea is to make the All India

[1] As in the source; for list of trustees, *vide* "All-India Spinners' Association", 27-12-1928.

Spinners' Association a democratic body as early as it is possible to do so. I invite suggestions from the readers of *Young India* on the proposal.

Young India, 15-11-1928

272. AS EVER

The Punjab Government's communique over the unprovoked assault on Lalaji and other leaders exculpates the police from all blame which means that the old policy of excusing the police and the military, no matter how they act, continues to reign supreme as ever. This is not to be wondered at. So long as the Government remains irresponsive and irresponsible to the popular will, so long must it be subservient to the police and the military.

The departmental inquiry proposed by the Government is a further eyewash. It is preposterous to expect Lalaji and the other leaders to stultify themselves by leading evidence before a committee which the people have every reason to distrust. If the Government had been really anxious to know the truth about the incident, they would have appointed a representative committee of a judicial nature which would inspire public confidence and whose findings would command respect. I congratulate Lala Lajpat Rai and his friends on having decided not to lead evidence before the departmental committee. Lalaji has thrown down the challenge. He courts a libel action and undertakes to prove a case which the Government had the hardihood summarily to brush aside.

But the question that arises from this incident is much larger than the mere demonstration of the truth of Lalaji's version. For the public, so long as the Government do not prove otherwise beyond doubt, Lalaji's version stands. The larger question is how are the people to remedy the evil of irresponsible Government. The assault and the bolstering are but a symptom of the great disease of bondage. I wish that we could all seriously deal with the root of the evil rather than set about cutting off the branches which sprout forth like Ravana's heads as soon as they are cut off. In other words we have to develop sufficient strength to resist the main disease.

I dare not enter into the question of remedies. My own remedy is well known. My purpose just now is not to insist upon its acceptance or the acceptance of any particular remedy. I simply plead that it is up to all the leaders of public opinion seriously to concentrate upon finding an expeditious and effective remedy for dealing with the evil of foreign domination.

Young India, 15-11-1928

273. NOTES

FOR REST

After having been at the Ashram, now Udyoga Mandir, for nearly eleven months I propose to go to Wardha during the last week of the month to pass a quiet time at the Satyagraha Ashram there. As usual the newspapers have anticipated me and the date of my departure. They have announced 15th instant as the date. Already correspondents are on my track asking for interviews. I may say that I do not reach Wardha before 24th instant nor leave Sabarmati before 22nd instant.[1] But when I go to Wardha I go there for rest and not for appointments. I would therefore request people living in that neighbourhood to excuse me from all appointments and allow me to have the rest which perhaps I deserve.

KARACHI SWEEPERS

With reference to the discussion that took place recently in Karachi Municipality on the question of khadi wear for its employees, the President of the Sweepers' Union has now sent me the text of a resolution passed by the Sweepers' Union. It runs as follows:

> The Union notes with regret the discussion regarding khadi uniforms in a recent Municipal meeting and thanking sincerely the President of the Karachi Municipality for the solicitude shown by him for the sweepers, most respectfully and humbly begs to draw his attention to the fact that as agriculturists sweepers have been wearing *pankorun*, i.e., khadi, for a long time and that the khadi uniforms are not at all inconvenient to them. On the contrary they (the sweepers) appreciate the national sentiment signifying the use of khadi and sympathize with their brothers and sisters, who get much-needed supplementary income by spinning and doing other processes. This Union therefore urges on the Municipality to continue khadi uniforms in future.

I wonder whether this resolution was passed only by half a dozen sweepers or whether it was known and explained to all the sweeper employees of the Municipality. The Secretary informs me that it was fully explained to the sweepers before the resolution was passed. It is a resolution which I can gladly commend to all the municipal employees. No compulsion superimposed upon them about khadi or anything else can possibly last; but if an educative propaganda such as has been carried on amongst the sweepers of Karachi were to be carried amongst the employees of municipalities through-

[1] Gandhiji actually left on November 23; *vide* "Telegram to G. D. Birla", 22-11-1928.

out India and if they were to ask for khadi uniforms, no municipality will be able for any length of time to resist such a demand. I therefore congratulate the Sweepers' Union upon their resolution.

"GOD IS"

Having read this article in *Young India* (11-10-1928) a reader sends the following bracing quotations from Emerson:

> A little consideration of what takes place around us every day would show us that a higher law than that of our will regulates events; that our painful labours are unnecessary and fruitless; that only in our easy, simple, spontaneous action are we strong and by contenting ourselves with obedience we become divine. Belief and love—a believing love will relieve us of a vast load of care. O my brothers, God exists. There is a soul at the centre of Nature, and over the will of every man, so that none of us can wrong the universe.
>
> The lesson is forcibly taught that our life might be much easier and simpler than we make it; that the world might be a happier place than it is; that there is no need of struggles, convulsions, and despairs, of the wringing of the hands and the gnashing of teeth; that we miscreate our own evils. We interfere with the optimism of Nature.

If we would but have a little faith we would see God and His love everywhere about us.

GREENS AND DIETETIC AHIMSA

A friend writes from Calcutta:

> You have observed in one of your previous articles on dietetics that it is undesirable to cook the greens since cooking destroys their vitamin contents. Now the Jains believe that all vegetable fare with the exception of ripe fruit contains countless germs invisible to the eye which by setting up putrefaction give rise to a variety of diseases unless the vegetables are cooked. Jain sadhus do not even take water unless it is previously boiled. This view is thus in direct contradiction to your view. Which of these views can be correct? Would you throw some light on the matter?

I have already expressed my opinion on this point in *Navajivan*.[1] If one may take ripe fruit without cooking I see no reason why one may not take vegetables too in an uncooked state provided one can properly digest them. Dieteticians are of opinion that the inclusion of a small quantity of raw vegetables like cucumber, vegetable marrow, pumpkin, gourd, etc., in one's menu is more beneficial to health than the eating of large quantities of the same cooked. But the digestions of most people are very often so impaired through a surfeit of cooked fare that one should not be surprised if at

[1] *Vide* "My Notes", sub-title Disregard for the Living Quern

first they fail to do justice to raw greens, though I can say from personal experience that no harmful effect need follow if a *tola* or two of raw greens are taken with each meal provided one masticates them thoroughly. It is a well established fact that one can derive a much greater amount of nourishment from the same quantity of food if it is masticated well. The habit of proper mastication of food inculcated by the use of uncooked greens, therefore, if it does nothing else, will at least enable one to do with less quantity of food and thus not only make for economy in consumption but also automatically reduce the dietetic *himsa* that one commits to sustain life. Therefore whether regarded from the viewpoint of dietetics or that of ahimsa the use of uncooked vegetables is not only free from all objection but is to be highly recommended. Of course it goes without saying that if the vegetables are to be eaten raw extra care will have to be exercised to see that it is not stale, over-ripe or rotten, or otherwise dirty.

Young India, 15-11-1928

274. LETTER TO K. M. VAIDYA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 15, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am tired out. I have no desire to accept any engagement this time whilst I am at Wardha. I want to give myself as much quiet as possible. I would not have the energy to give an address worth listening to. You will please therefore excuse me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. M. VAIDYA
BEHIND HITAVADA PRESS, CRADDOCK TOWN, NAGPUR

From a photostat: S.N. 12998

275. LETTER TO EVELYN C. GEDGE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 15, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I wish I could do something for the friend you mention.[1] But it is difficult for me to suit him. All the work we

[1] Miss Gedge had a student, Mrs. Cama, at her settlement whose husband had lost his job in the Provincial Civil Service on the charge of accepting a bribe. He had undergone a sentence at Sabarmati Jail and now upon his release needed rehabilitation in some job. Miss Gedge had suggested that Gandhiji might offer him a job or arrange to obtain one for him through Mr. Ambalal Sarabhai.

have at the Ashram is principally physical labour such as spinning, weaving, farming, dairying and payments we make are also very small.

Yours sincerely,

MISS EVELYN C. GEDGE
UNIVERSITY SETTLEMENT
VACCHAGANDHI ROAD, P.O. 7, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 12999

276. LETTER TO MADELEINE R. HARDING

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 15, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter enclosing the introduction from Rev. F. B. Meyor. I should have been delighted to meet personally one bringing a note from Mr. Meyor, and I hope that it will still be possible for us to meet some time. When you write to Mr. Meyor, please send him my kind regards and tell him that the meeting in Johannesburg to which he refers in his note is still fresh in my memory.

Yours sincerely,

MISS MADELEINE R. HARDING
JOSHI VILLA, NAINITAL

From a photostat: S.N. 13000

277. MESSAGE TO ANDHRA CONFERENCES

[On or before *November 16, 1928*]

I wish every success to the Conferences[1] and I hope, in a poor district like yours, the wheel will have its due appreciation.

The Hindu, 16-11-1928

[1] Which were to begin on November 17, 1928 at Nandyala

278. LETTER TO LONGMANS GREEN & CO. LTD.

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 16, 1928

MESSRS LONGMANS GREEN & CO. LTD.
39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON E.C. 4.

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter addressed to Swami Anand about the Autobiography. The rights of English publication were given by me some time ago to the Macmillan Company of New York. Mr. Andrews is now engaged in doing something of the kind of work you propose. I would therefore refer you to Mr. Andrews, 112 Gower Street, London S.W.I.

Yours faithfully,

From a microfilm: S.N. 14844

279 LETTER TO DEVI WEST

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 16, 1928

I have your letter and the photographs for Ba. I have not the time to say anything more about the activities here, but I am keeping in touch with you through the pages of *Young India*. I have therefore satisfied myself with simply sending you my love.

Yours sincerely,

MISS DEVI WEST
23 GEORGE STREET, LOUTH, LINCOLNSHIRE

From a photostat: S.N. 14406

280. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 16, 1928

I have your two letters. I was delighted to have your description about the opening ceremony[1]. I hope you will flourish more and more. Do keep me in touch with your movements.

I should certainly be delighted to see Mrs. Winifred Dickenson[2]

[1] Of the new prayer hall

[2] A friend and co-worker of the addressee who was coming over to India to teach in a school near Madras

when she comes.

I don't need to give you any information about the Ashram because you must glean everything about the Ashram from the pages of *Young India*.

Yours sincerely,

MISS MURIEL LESTER
KINGSLEY HALL, POWIS ROAD, BOW, E. 3
ENGLAND

From a photostat: S.N. 14414

281. LETTER TO SIR MAHOMED HABIBULLAH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 16, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your kind letter. I am sorry that it is not possible for you to accept my first suggestion.[1] I appreciate your objection.[2]

From your letter I gather that the decision about Sir K. V. Reddi had already been taken.[3] I am afraid I shall not be able to support the appointment, and may feel called upon to oppose it. You might have seen in the papers that the matter has already leaked out. I have myself received a letter asking me to protest against the proposal. But I do not yet see my way clear to take any step. Have you ascertained from Sastriji his opinion about the appointment of Sir K. V. Reddi ?

Yours sincerely,

SIR MAHOMED HABIBULLAH SAHEB BAHADUR, K.C.I.E.
NEW DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 14854

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Mahomed Habibullah", 9-11-1928.

[2] In his letter dated November 9, 1928, the addressee had said: "My domestic difficulties, however, are such that it is impossible for me even to think of making sojourn outside India for any length of time. A motherless unmarried daughter and a young son in school are living obligations which must claim my attention during the rest of what is left to me of my life, at least until they are suitably settled" (S.N. 12786).

[3] In his letter he had also said: "It was after the most careful survey of the whole situation that we decided to select Reddi."

282. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT RAI

November 17, 1928

LALA AMRIT RAI

LAHORE

YOUR WIRE[1] STUNS ME. LALAJI'S DEATH CALAMITY FIRST MAGNITUDE. MY DEEPEST SYMPATHY WITH YOU MOTHER OTHER MEMBERS FAMILY. HOPE GOD WILL GIVE YOU STRENGTH FOLLOW HIS FOOT-STEPS.

GANDHI

From handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

283. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

November 17, 1928

VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI

LALAJI DIED THIS MORNING HEART FAILURE. HOLD CONDOLENCE MEETING THERE.

BAPU

From handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

284. LETTER TO HARRY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 17, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letters. I would like you first of all to tell me what you want to confer with me about. I cannot possibly trouble you to come to Sabarmati or to Wardha where I expect to proceed shortly.

With reference to your intention to stay at the Ashram for some days, I am sorry that it will not be possible. The Ashram or rather the Udyoga Mandir is under the control of a board of management.

Yours sincerely,

HARRY, ESQ.
C/O S. K. GHOSH, ESQ.
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER'S OFFICE, NAGPUR

From a photostat: S.N. 12790

[1] *Vide* "The Lion of the Punjab Sleeps", 18-11-1928.

285. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 17, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

Your letter frees me from all anxiety. So long as you are willing to act as Agent, no change need be made, and certainly not whilst there is rumour of your being spirited away. When that event happens, we shall see. Personally I like the idea of Kripalani becoming Agent when you can no longer shoulder the burden. We shall discuss the matter further if you can come to Wardha on the 18th December or we shall do so in Calcutta.

Sitla Sahai wanted to be in the Ashram for some months for mental adjustment more than anything else. He has domestic and other worries preying upon him. He wanted a quiet time and he is having it.

I am sorry about Kamala.[2] Evidently she never completely recovered in Switzerland. I am glad you are taking her to Calcutta. She will at least have the best advice possible.

I hope you are not overworking yourself. Lalaji's death is a great calamity.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
ANAND BHAWAN, ALLAHABAD

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1928. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library; also S.N. 12791

[1] In reply to his letter dated November 14, 1928, which read: ". . . for various reasons it would be desirable for the A.I.S.A. Council to have a more competent person than myself as agent in the U.P. . . . I did not mean that I want to get rid of the responsibility of the work. . . . But if it is possible to make better arrangements I shall welcome them.

". . . . The only person I can think of in the U.P. is Kripalani. He is practically a U.P. man now, is well known in khadi circles here and is a whole-timer. . . .

"There is no immediate hurry in this matter. I wanted the A.I.S.A. Council to consider it largely in view of the rumours of the impending arrest" (S.N. 12787).

[2] In his letter Jawaharlal Nehru had said: "Kamala has been giving us a great deal of anxiety."

286. LETTER TO PERIN CAPTAIN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 17, 1928

I have your two letters by me. Mahadev is not here. I am quite out of the wood now though still somewhat weak and have to be careful.

I do not know where I shall stay in Calcutta. Nothing is yet decided, but you will stay with me no matter where I am accommodated. You need not therefore bother about your lodging in Calcutta. Kindly tell me who will be coming. The date of my reaching Calcutta I shall let you know in good time from Wardha and perhaps you will join me by the train that will take me to Calcutta.

MRS. PERIN CAPTAIN
ISLAM CLUB BUILDINGS, CHOWPATTI, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 12792

287. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 17, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. Having allowed Vakil to deal with poverty I cannot very well refuse admission to his articles[1] on remedies. They have done one good. He is interesting himself in this question and he has stimulated a little more interest. My criticism[2] disposes of his main argument.

I wonder whether you know that Anil Baran Roy has been writing to the *Chronicle* violently against khadi. The article is almost of a same style as the *Welfare* article that appeared some years ago.

About the Social Conference. I had a letter from the Conference people and I was obliged to say no.[3]

When I come to Calcutta I shall be delighted to go into the Pratishthan affairs and see what should be done.

[1] Entitled "Remedies of Poverty"; these were published in *Young India* on September 27, October 4, 11 and 18, 1928.

[2] *Vide* "Notes" sub-title Are We Getting Poorer and "Our Poverty", 6-9-1928

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Satyananda Bose", 9-11-1928.

I am glad Baidyanathji[1] is coming in close touch with you. He is a good-hearted man and wants to do active service. I must suggest to him coming either to Wardha to discuss his scheme or postpone the discussion till after I am in Calcutta, only there may be no time in Calcutta for a quiet discussion. It is difficult for me to sketch a scheme without cross-examining Baidyanathji and finding out what is exactly at the back of his mind.

I am glad Krishnadas is there with you. I hope he is keeping well. Please give my love to him. I would like him to stay with you for some time if the climate at Sodepur agrees with him.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR

From a photostat: S.N. 12793

288. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN PATHAK

November 17, 1928

BHAI RAMNARAYAN,

I have your letter. Even sitting still in a cave is a form of action. In that too, there may be attachment or other such evils. So long as we live in the body, we cannot escape exercising the will, that is, action. It is not true that patriotic service is necessarily characterized by attachment. Our *purushartha*[2] lies in striving to overcome whatever weaknesses we see in ourselves.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RAMNARAYAN NAGARDAS PATHAK
SHRI GANDHIJI ANTYAJA ASHRAM
CHHAYA (PORBANDAR)

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2784. Courtesy: Ramnarayan Pathak

289. LETTER TO JAL KHAMBHATTA

November 17, 1928

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I have your letter. It is good news indeed that you have returned and are all right. I am very happy to know that your health is comp-

[1] Kedia
[2] Endeavour

letely restored. Please let me know if you have had any new experiences about water treatment. Be careful and preserve the health you have recovered. My blessings to you both.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5018. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

290. LETTER TO NAGINDAS DALSUKHBHAI SHAH

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 17, 1928

BHAISHRI NAGINDAS,

I have your letter. If you come on Tuesday at 4.30, we shall talk.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

SHRI NAGINBHAI DALSUKHBHAI SHAH
VAKIL DALSUKHBHAI SHAH'S HOUSE
GODHRA

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32845

291. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

November 17, 1928

I got the sad news from the deceased patriot's son early this morning. I regard Lalaji's death at this juncture to be a national calamity of the first magnitude.[1] His place is difficult and impossible to fill. Not many public men can today show an unbroken record of public service of such long standing as Lalaji's. Whatever might be said to the contrary, it has been my firm conviction that he was a friend of Mussalmans and sincerely desirous of promoting Hindu-Muslim unity. How I wish that this truth could be realized by us all and that Lalaji's death could be turned to good account by the nation by establishing unity and promoting perfect toleration for which Lalaji always stood. I know that in his heart there was neither rancour nor ill will for anybody. His life was an open book. As a

[1] *Vide* also "Telegram to Amrit Rai", 17-11-1928.

comrade, it was a privilege to work with him; as a friend he was ever faithful. To the student world he was a tower of strength. I know that many will gladly bear testimony to his wise counsel, guidance and patronage. I know that there would be a memorial to the memory of the deceased but I can imagine no truer memorial than work for swaraj and all it implies with redoubled zeal.

The Hindu, 19-11-1928

292. TRIBUTE TO LAJPAT RAI [1]

AHMEDABAD,
November 17, 1928

Mahatmaji said that Lalaji's death had left a gap which it was difficult to be filled. His was a glorious death and he died a patriot. Mahatmaji asked the inmates to take lessons from Lalaji's life and emulate his high sense of duty.

I do not believe that Lalaji is dead, but he lives.

The Tribune, 20-11-1928

293. SOME MORE POSERS IN AHIMSA [2]

Letters in connection with the calf incident still continue to pour in. But I have had my full say already and such letters as needed a reply I have already answered. I however feel in duty bound to deal with some posers addressed to me by some correspondents. Not to do so might lead to consequences not warranted by my action.

I

One of them writes:

> My baby is four months old. It fell ill a fortnight after its birth and there seems no end of its ailment in sight. Several vaidyas and doctors have tried their skill upon him, but in vain; some of them now even decline to administer any medicine to him. They feel, and I feel with them, that the fate of the poor thing is sealed. I have a big family to maintain and I feel myself reduced to sore straits as I have an accumulation of debts. Nor can I any longer bear to see the terrible sufferings of the baby. Would you kindly tell me what I should do in the circumstances ?

[1] Released by Free Press with the following introduction: "After prayers in the Satyagraha Ashram this evening Mahatma Gandhi, addressing the inmates of the Ashram, feelingly communicated the sad news of Lalaji's death."

[2] This is a translation by Pyarelal of Gujarati items which appeared in *Navajivan*, 4-11-1928 and 18-11-1928.

It is clear that this friend has not been reading *Navajivan* carefully or he would not have asked this question. There would be no warrant for taking the life of the baby even if all the doctors in the world were to pronounce the case to be hopeless because it would always be possible for its father to nurse it. He can soothe the baby in a variety of ways, its size unlike the calf's being manageable. It is only when every possible avenue of service however small is closed and the last ray of hope of the patient surviving seems extinct that one is justified in putting him out of pain, and then too only if one is completely free from the taint of selfish feeling. In the present case, not only is the service of the ailing baby possible, but the main consideration that, on the father's own admission, weighs with him is the personal inconvenience involved in nursing the baby. Largeness of the family or one's pecuniary difficulty can never serve as a justification for putting an end to the life of an ailing patient and I have not the slightest doubt that in the present instance, it is the bounden duty of the father to lavish all his love and care on his suffering baby. There is however one thing more which he can do: if he has sense enough to see it, he should resolve forthwith to lead a life of perfect self-restraint and further stop procreating irrespective of whether his present baby survives or not.

II

Another friend writes in the course of a Hindi letter:

> I am the manager of. . . goshala. There are in my charge some 500 head of cattle. They are all utterly useless for any purpose and are simply eating their head off. Out of these from 350 to 400 animals on the average are constantly at death's door, destined to die off one by one in the long end every year. Now tell me what am I to do?

As I have already explained, giving the short shrift, from considerations of financial expediency, can never be compatible with non-violence. And if it is a fact that not a day passes in this goshala without some animal or other dying painfully in the manner of that calf in the Ashram, it makes out a strong case for closing the goshala at once for it betrays fearful mismanagement. The calf in the Ashram was reduced to such piteous plight only as the result of an accident but daily instances like this should *ipso facto* be impossible in a well-managed institution. The duty of the management in the present case is thus clear. It is incumbent upon them and upon the organizers of all similarly placed institutions to devise the most effective means of nursing and ministering to the needs of diseased and ailing cattle. I

would also recommend to them for careful study and consideration my description of an ideal pinjrapole and the way it ought to be managed that I have given more than once in these pages.

III

Writes a Kanbi friend:

> There is a grazing-ground for the cattle near our village. It is overrun by a herd of deer about five to seven hundred strong. They work havoc upon all our cotton saplings. We are in a fix. We can easily get rid of them by employing professional watchmen who would kill them for the venison they would get. What would be your advice to a man in my condition? Again when insect pests attack our crops the only way to deal with them is to light a fire of hay which means making a holocaust of the insect pests. What course would you suggest in these circumstances ?

This question is of a different order from the other two questions; it falls under the category of the monkey question, not the calf question. I am unable to guide anyone in the path of *himsa*. In fact no person can lay down for another the limit to which he may commit *himsa*. This is a question which everybody must decide for himself according to the measure of his capacity for ahimsa. This much however I can say without any hesitation that to use the analogy of the monkeys to justify the killing of the deer would only betray a laziness of thought and lack of discrimination; the two cases are so dissimilar. Besides, I have not yet decided to kill the monkeys, nor is there any likelihood of my doing so presently. On the contrary it has been and shall be my ceaseless anxiety to be spared that painful necessity. Moreover there is quite a number of ways of keeping off the deer from the fields which would be impossible in the case of elusive creatures like monkeys. Whilst therefore reiterating what every farmer knows from his daily experience also to be true, viz., that destruction of small insects and worms is inevitable in agriculture, I am unable to proceed any further, but must content myself by stating generally that it is the sacred duty of everybody to avoid committing *himsa* to the best of one's power.

IV

Still another friend writes:

> You say that an absolute observance of ahimsa is incompatible with life in the body, that so long as a man is in the flesh he cannot escape the commission of *himsa* in some form or other as the very process of our physical existence involves *himsa*. How then can ahimsa be the highest virtue, the supreme duty? Would you set forth as the highest religious ideal a code of conduct which is altogether impossible of being fulfilled in its

completeness by man? And if you do, what would be the practical worth of such an ideal?

My humble submission is that, contrary to what this writer says, the very virtue of a religious ideal lies in the fact that it cannot be completely realized in the flesh. For a religious ideal must be proved by faith and how can faith have play if perfection could be attained by the spirit while it was still surrounded by its "earthly vesture of decay"? Where would there be scope for its infinite expansion which is its essential characteristic? Where would be room for that constant striving, that ceaseless quest after the ideal that is the basis of all spiritual progress, if mortals could reach the perfect state while still in the body? If such easy perfection in the body was possible all we would have to do would be simply to follow a cut-and-dry model. Similarly if a perfect code of conduct were possible for all there would be no room for a diversity of faiths and religions because there would be only one standard religion which everybody would have to follow.

The virtue of an ideal consists in its boundlessness. But although religious ideals must thus from their very nature remain unattainable by imperfect human beings, although by virtue of their boundlessness they may seem ever to recede farther away from us, the nearer we go to them, still they are closer to us than our very hands and feet because we are more certain of their reality and truth than even of our own physical being. This faith in one's ideals alone constitutes true life, in fact it is man's all in all.

Blessed is the man who can perceive the law of ahimsa in the midst of the raging fire of *himsa* all around him. We bow in reverence before such a man; he lays the whole world under debt by his example. The more adverse the circumstances around him, the intenser grows his longing for deliverance from the bondage of flesh which is a vehicle of *himsa* and beckons him on to that blessed state which in the words of the poet,

> Even the Great Masters saw only in a trance
>
> Which even their tongue could not declare,

a state in which the will to live is completely overcome by the ever active desire to realize the ideal of ahimsa and all attachment to the body ceasing man is freed from the further necessity of possessing an earthly tabernacle. But so long as that consummation is not reached a man must go on paying the toll of *himsa* for *himsa* is inseparable from all physical existence and it will have its due.

Young India, 22-11-1928

294. IN QUEST OF REST

As already published in the newspapers, I hope to reach the Wardha Satyagraha Ashram not on the 15th but on or about the 25th of this month. I do not, however, expect to do anything there in addition to carrying out my daily routine. As I wish to get as much rest as possible, no one should expect an interview with me there or request me to make speeches. In view of the present state of my health I shall hardly be able to complete in my spare hours the amount of work that I am taking with me to Wardha. I would request all kindly to bear in mind this appeal of mine.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-11-1928

295. THE LION OF THE PUNJAB SLEEPS

As the pages of *Navajivan* were going to the printing machine on Saturday, the following telegram was received from Lala Lajpat Rai's son: "Following a heart attack this morning, Lalaji has fallen asleep." Lalaji's death means the dissolution of a great planet from India's solar system. Lalaji was the lion of the Punjab, a brave son of India, a true public servant and a true patriot. It is well-nigh impossible to make a precise assessment of Lalaji's services of half a century. At this critical juncture for India, Lalaji's loss is irreparable. Despite this, I would request the people not to be overcome with grief but rather to imbibe his great virtues—his courage, sacrifice, for bearance, generosity, bravery and patriotism, and make a superhuman effort to secure that swaraj for which he lived and died. Blessed indeed is the country which gave birth to such a gem of a son as Lalaji. May God grant peace to his soul and fortitude to his family. The whole of India shares their sorrow.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-11-1928

296. MISUNDERSTANDING

A misunderstanding seems to be afloat in Ahmedabad that a deputation consisting of gentlemen belonging to the pinjrapole had come to reason with me regarding calves and monkeys. This is not a fact. The truth of the matter is that I had asked them to see me in connection with the pinjrapole and the nuisance of dogs. They had kindly come over and while they were with me, I told them of my

dilemma in regard to the killing of calves and about monkeys and this led to a pleasant little conversation between us.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-11-1928

297. DIFFICULTIES OF A BOY

A lad of sixteen and a half writes :[1]

Many young men must be in such a pitiable plight. What a denial of freedom that they cannot even get letters addressed to them? I do not believe that parents do any good to their sons and daughters who have reached the age of sixteen by imposing such restrictions upon them for keeping a watch upon their activities in this manner. Such young people who have not still outgrown their cradles cannot, it is clear, worship the Goddess of Independence. Those who live in such a deplorable condition cannot by themselves understand the nature of their dharma. Dharma is not something that can be practised simply by imitating others. It implies supreme effort on the part of oneself.

Where the environment is so weak, what advice can I give the youth, except to offer civil disobedience? If this young man has courage, he will courteously point out his dharma to his mother. If the mother forbids him to go to a national school, he may not do so but he should at least never go where the atmosphere is unhealthy. He should sit at home and practise whatever trade he can; he may spin, card or sew; he can buy a few carpenter's tools and practise carpentry; he can read good books and reflect upon them, he can find out the essence of these, he can read to his mother all about Prahlad from the *Bhagavata*, he can go out for walks daily, do exercise and create a pure and fearless atmosphere around his physical and mental self.

A boy of sixteen and a half should never lead the life of a householder. Hence he should politely tell his mother that, until he is twenty-one or twenty-five, she should give up the idea of his living with his wife. If this young man and others like him in a like situation inform their parents of their worthy resolve and at the same time are not disrespectful towards the latter and serve them, they will improve

[1] The letter is not translated here. The boy had written that he had been married at the age of sixteen. His elder brother took him to the pictures and gave him cheap novels to read. As a result, he had bad dreams, and became weak in body. Reading a book *Better Path or Moral Destruction* helped him to cure to some extent. He wanted to attend a national school, but his mother would not hear of it because untouchable boys also went to it.

themselves, the parents too will learn a new lesson and the country and dharma will thereby benefit.

This young man seems to know that human effort by itself is futile. Nothing can be achieved without God's grace. Not a blade moves without His will. This is something that can be perceived directly. Hence those young men who wish to make this effort must realize its limitations and pray to God every day with unflinching faith regarding their worthy resolves. They may well pray to God as Rama or as Krishna or by any other name that is familiar or dear to them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-11-1928

298. I HAVE NOT DONE ANY KILLING

A gentleman writes:[1]

I have not read this Jain newspaper. However, if any gentleman who had come to see me has written as above, it is, indeed, a matter of regret. Moreover, it is for me a matter of even greater regret if anyone believes such a story after my denial in *Navajivan*.[2] The four gentlemen should have realized that I who have on certain occasions advocated the killing of monkeys could not conceivably hide the fact had I killed some. However, who can shut the mouths or stop the pens of those who are bent on speaking or writing ill of others? I repeat here that nowhere in the Ashram or on behalf of the Ashram have monkeys been killed, beaten or injured. There is no doubt in my mind regarding this matter of killing of monkeys or employing others to kill them, as there is still a strict ban on it. I cannot say the same with such certainty about injuring them, because bows and arrows have been used for a day or two and catapults are still being used. As soon as I realized the possibility of a serious injury resulting from the use of bows and arrows, their use was, as I have already written, discontinued. The catapult is still being employed now but I find that the monkeys merely play with it. Nevertheless, I believe that at times it may certainly cause an injury. I do not know, however, of a single instance in which a monkey has been injured in the Ashram as a result of the use of either of these weapons. The killing of monkeys is something that I do not contemplate doing in future either. I know

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had referred to a report in a Jain newspaper that four Jains had seen monkeys killed by Gandhiji despite the latter's assertion to the contrary in *Navajivan*.

[2] *Vide* "The Fiery Ordeal", "The Tangle of Ahimsa" and "More About Ahimsa"

that it involves violence. Hence I shall think again and again before indulging in such an extreme act of violence and I shall also try to find out as many ways as I can of sparing myself that form of violence. Despite this, I can give the assurance that the world will certainly come to know, if ever an occasion arises in my life, when I employ violence.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-11-1928

299. ANTYAJAS OF KARACHI

One of the good results of the discussion that took place recently in the Karachi Municipality on the question of khadi is that the President of the Sweepers' Union has now sent me the text of a resolution passed by the Sweepers' Union. It runs as follows :[1]

When this resolution was sent to me for publication, the question arose in my mind whether it was passed with understanding by a large number of *Antyaja* brothers or whether it had been passed for the sake of appearances alone by a handful of them getting together. Moreover, as sweepers were regarded as farmers, the question also arose whether there was any truth in it or was it done for the sake of prestige. So I enquired through the secretary and received the following reply[2]:

This clarification enhances the importance of the above resolution. And whenever similar resolutions are passed in such associations, their value increases when this is done with understanding and after due deliberation. Because, if such resolutions are passed without proper understanding or if those who pass them or frame them do so for the sake of demonstration, not only do they lose their impact with the passage of time but they are also harmful. Nowadays many such resolutions are passed merely for outward show. I, therefore, felt the need to exercise the above caution. I hope that the *Antyaja* brothers will act according to the resolution that they have adopted. And if they do so, both they and the country will benefit. It is not enough if they wear khadi when working in the municipality, but if they have the feelings for khadi which they have expressed in

[1] For the text, *vide* "Notes", 15-11-1928, sub-title, "Karachi Sweepers".

[2] Not translated here. The secretary of the Antyaja Sangh had informed Gandhiji that sweepers had been regarded as farmers because farming was their original profession and that, although the resolution was passed by the managing committee, it had been explained to the general body and in any case the importance of khadi was being constantly explained to the *Antyajas*.

the resolution, they will give place to khadi alone even in their homes. It is the task of the Antyaja Sangh to see that durable and cheap khadi is made available. Recently in Mysore, a khadi co-operative association has been set up, and such associations can have within them a khadi store on a co-operative basis and obtain khadi at much cheaper rates. Or, one can also follow the practice adopted in Madras where people are able to get khadi at cheaper rates by the system of chits. There is a saying in English: "Where there is a will there is a way." The truth of this has been proved by experience. Our Bhangi brothers and their leaders can take to heart this saying.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-11-1928

300. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

November 18, 1928

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

I got your telegram. I am not interested in expression of regret. I have received several telegrams from the Punjab and some friends are coming from there for consultations. Rest assured that I shall do all that is necessary.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 7511. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

301. SPEECH AT CONDOLENCE MEETING, AHMEDABAD[1]

[*November 18, 1928*][2]

My position is somewhat awkward. My relationship with Lalaji had become so close that just as one feels embarrassed to praise some friend, comrade or brother, I too feel awkward to praise him today. Even so, I feel that I should say a few words. I first met Lalaji in 1914 in England; then his love for the country left a deep impression on me. Although I had heard of him earlier through newspapers, since I always have little faith in them I did not straightway take their reports as true. When he returned to India in 1920, he was elected President of the Indian National Congress. Since then I came into close contact with him. There was a difference of opinion between us at the Calcutta

[1] On the bank of Sabarmati

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 19-11-1928

Congress, but that did not affect our relations at all. How could it, when Lalaji concealed nothing in his heart and expressed everything frankly? Young people have to draw a lesson from Lalaji's life. He has left a will. In a message only fifteen days ago, he had said that he had only a few days more to live, that he had grown old and that he did not want to take much part in the agitation concerning the attack on him. That was the work of young people and they should do it.

Lalaji chanted the *mantra* of swaraj for fifty years. Youths should take up his work of swaraj. In the work of winning swaraj, Lalaji neither enjoyed peace and happiness himself nor did he allow others to do so. In his time it was not fashionable to go to jail or to undergo a sentence of transportation. At that time there was no fearlessness about going to jail as there is today. I was not in India when Lalaji was exiled from the country. He betrayed no weakness during or after his exile. We must observe the dharma which Lalaji has laid down in his will. Various suggestions will be made to make Lalaji's memorial a lasting one. All will be in vain if there is not one about winning swaraj. Winning swaraj is the true memorial to Lalaji.

In the resolution Lalaji has been mentioned as the guardian of the poor and there is significance in it. His heart melted wherever he saw misery. His language was certainly strong, but there was no contempt in it. Lalaji's heart was full of universal love. He concealed nothing from the people, why should he conceal anything from his co-workers? Lalaji was such a kindhearted person that his heart melted if he saw anyone unhappy either in India or abroad. He did not have the slightest enmity towards the Muslims. It was his innermost desire that the Hindus and the Muslims should live as brothers. He wanted that in India there should be neither Hindu rule nor Muslim rule but a rule of all the people. Lalaji's life began with religious activity and social reforms but he felt that as long as India did not get independence, nothing could be done about religious or social reforms. Like Lokamanya Tilak, he was compelled to plunge into politics.

The duty of everyone—young and old—is to free the country from the yoke of dependence. If we do not make our contribution in shouldering that burden, praising Lalaji would only amount to imitating bards and minstrels. He went on working for swaraj single-mindedly for fifty years without ever getting disappointed. Till the last days of his life, he kept on thinking about swaraj. May God give us the strength to achieve the object for which he expended his whole life.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 25-11-1928

302. TELEGRAM TO SATYAPAL[1]

November 19, 1928

SATYAPAL

YOUR WIRE. WOULD LIKE YOU OMIT FEEDING POOR.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 13326

303. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*November 19, 1928*][2]

CHI. MIRA,

Too busy to say much. Though I disagree with you in your estimate of the people here, I should be entirely satisfied for you to choose a place in Bihar to work in. The people of Bihar are certainly among the most attractive on earth. The Austrian friends left today.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Your next letter should be to Wardha. I leave here on Friday reaching there Saturday afternoon.

BAPU

SHRIMATI MIRABAI

KHADI DEPOT, MUZAFFARPUR, BIHAR

From the original: G.N. 8213; also C.W. 5323. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] In reply to his telegram dated November 19, 1928, which read: "Provincial Congress requests Doctor Ansari to announce twenty-ninth November Kriya Day of Lala Lajpat Rai to be observed by whole of India as Lajpat Rai Day and to observe following programme. Morning prayer meetings evening procession and public meeting feeding of poor. Please support this in Press."

[2] From the postmark

304. AWARD ON THE LABOUR UNION SUBSCRIPTION[1]

AHMEDABAD
November 21, 1928

The Labour Union shall supply each mill with a list of its members working in the mills and the subscription at the rates prescribed by the Union shall be collected on all pay days from all working people included in the list. In case a dispute regarding the fact of membership or resignation of a member in the mill is not settled between the Labour Union and the mill and regarding which the Mill-owners' Association and the Labour Union also do not come to an amicable settlement, the matter shall be submitted to arbitration and the subscription shall continue to be collected and paid to the Labour Union till the final settlement. The Union shall refund the subscription of any operative in respect of whom it is proved that he was not a member at the time of collection. The arbitrators hold that the current practice in the matter of collection of subscription involves the possibility of indiscipline. The arbitrators, therefore, urge that the formation of a Labour Union must have the fullest support of mill-owners and there should be no subscription of any sort.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-11-1928

305. LONG LIVE LALAJI[2]

Lala Lajpat Rai is dead. Long live Lalaji. Men like Lalaji cannot die so long as the sun shines in the Indian sky. Lalaji means an institution. From his youth he made of his country's service a religion. And his patriotism was no narrow creed. He loved his country because he loved the world. His nationalism was international. Hence his hold on the European mind. He claimed a large circle of friends in Europe and America. They loved him because they knew him.

His activities were multifarious. He was an ardent social and religious reformer. Like many of us he became a politician because his zeal for social and religious reform demanded participation in politics. He observed at an early stage of his public career that much reform of the type he wanted was not possible until the country was

[1] The Arbitration Board consisting of Mahatma Gandhi and Sheth Mangaldas Girdhardas gave the award in the dispute submitted to them for settlement by the Mill-owners' Association and the Labour Union regarding collection of subscription of members of the Labour Union.

[2] An article by Gandhiji on the same subject appeared in *Navajivan*, 25-11-1928.

freed from foreign domination. It appeared to him, as to most of us, as a poison corrupting every department of life.

It is impossible to think of a single public movement in which Lalaji was not to be found. His love of service was insatiable. He founded educational institutions; he befriended the suppressed classes; poverty wherever found claimed his attention. He surrounded young men with extraordinary affection. No young man appealed to him in vain for help. In the political field he was indispensable. He was fearless in the expression of his views. He suffered for it when suffering had not become customary or fashionable. His life was an open book. His extreme frankness often embarrassed his friends, if it also confounded his critics. But he was incorrigible.

With all deference to my Mussalman friends, I assert that he was no enemy of Islam. His desire to strengthen and purify Hinduism must not be confounded with hatred of Mussalmans or Islam. He was sincerely desirous of promoting and achieving Hindu-Muslim unity. He wanted not Hindu Raj but he passionately wanted Indian Raj; he wanted all who called themselves Indians to have absolute equality. I wish that Lalaji's death would teach us to trust one another. And we could easily do this if we could but shed fear.

There will be, as there must be, a demand for a national memorial. In my humble opinion no memorial can be complete without a definite determination to achieve the freedom for which he lived and died so nobly. Let us recall what has after all proved to be his last will. He has bequeathed to the younger generation the task of vindicating India's freedom and honour. Will they prove worthy of the trust he reposed in them? Shall we the older survivors—men and women—deserve to have had Lalaji as a countryman, by making a fresh, united, supreme effort to realize the dream of a long line of patriots in which Lalaji was so distinguished a member?

Nor may we forget the Servants of People Society which he founded for the promotion of his many activities, all designed for the advancement of the country. His ambition in respect of the Society was very high. He wanted a number of young men all over India to join together in a common cause and work with one will. The Society is an infant not many years old. He had hardly time enough to consolidate this great work of his. It is a national trust requiring the nation's care and attention.

Young India, 22-11-1928

306. CONDOLENCES FROM OVERSEAS

'Anavil Yuvaks' send me the following message from Port Louis Mauritius:

Deeply regret Lalaji's death. Irreparable loss national cause. Tender heartfelt condolence bereaved family.

Transvaal Khatri Mandal, Johannesburg, sends the following:

Khatri community deeply mourns death great patriot Lalaji. Kindly convey message condolence to bereaved family.

Patidar Society, Johannesburg, cables:

Patidar community mourns death great patriot Lala Lajpatrai. Kindly convey Society's condolence to bereaved family.

Young India, 22-11-1928

307. AJMAL JAMIA FUND

I know that this Fund has to work under a heavy handicap. It has to cut its way through the hard rock of prejudice. Why should a Hindu pay to perpetuate the memory of a Mussalman and for a fund principally devoted to a Muslim cause will be the argument of many a *kattar*[1] Hindu in these times of mutual hate. Why should a Mussalman subscribe to a fund in memory of one who was pro-Hindu and for an institution partly supported by the idolatrous Hindu will be the argument of a *kattar* Mussalman against supporting the Fund. In spite, however, of this double handicap I must continue to ask for subscriptions for this memorial. The constitution of the Jamia Millia has undergone a radical and desirable change and is placed on a better footing. And I am happy to be able to announce the subscription for this fund of Rs. 10,000 already paid up from a Hindu friend whose trust, I confess, is largely based on my own. I know no other way of promoting nationalism, toleration and friendliness except by trusting and hoping in spite of appearances to the contrary. It matters little that one may have been deceived before or may have built hope on a paper foundation. Hope to be worth anything must "spring eternal in the human breast". Trust can have no limits. It must always give the benefit of the doubt. It is better to suffer a million disappointments than not to have trusted where mistrust was a mistake. A man who permits himself to be deceived is never the loser. Indeed he is the gainer in the end, not the so-called successful deceiver. A thousand deceits would leave me unrepentant. My personal experience is that in

[1] Diehard

spite of some very hard knocks which I can recall at the time of writing, I have no cause to regret the trustful nature with which the world around me has credited me. It is my conviction that I and those whom I have involved in my trustfulness have lost nothing, if we cannot prove to have always gained. A man loses only when he loses his soul and that can never be lost through another man's deceit.

Young India, 22-11-1928

308. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

AHMEDABAD,
November 22, 1928

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
BIRLA PARK, CALCUTTA

LEAVING FOR WARDHA TOMORROW MORNING. EXPECT YOUR AND MALAVIYAJI'S REPLY NOW WARDHA. IN VIEW THIS CALAMITY[1] WOULD LIKE YOU HASTEN YOUR COMING WARDHA IF AT ALL POSSIBLE.

GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 7879. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

309. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

November 22, 1928

Even it we put truth on one scale of the balance and all other qualities and something besides on the other, truth will have more weight. This is the verdict of experienced people and we should not doubt it at all.

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11176. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

310. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Thursday [*November 22, 1928*][2]

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

Your letter. Your decision to have khadi as the hub and impart education through khadi is very much to my liking. If I get from you

[1] The passing away of Lajpat Rai

[2] Gandhiji left Sabarmati Ashram on November 23, 1928. Thursday fell on November 22.

any khadi news of public interest I shall certainly publish it in *Navajivan*.[1]

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 754

311. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

November 23, 1928

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

Chi. Santok[2] cannot at present live according to the rule of Rs. 12 which I have suggested, and so she has decided with Chi. Radha[3] and Chi. Rukhi[4] to live permanently in Rajkot. She says that they will need Rs. 60 every month in Rajkot. Though I think this figure exorbitant, I do not wish to hurt her and have therefore agreed to let her have it. While thinking about the matter last night, I felt that the most straightforward course was to treat this sum as pension and pay it from the Ashram account.

I am hoping that Chi. Santok and the girls will be able to bring down this sum to a lower figure.

I hesitated to come to this decision and it has even pained me. At the moment I console myself with the hope that one day they will sincerely accept the ideals of the Ashram and come and live in it.

This case should be treated as an exception. The reasons why I have come to this decision in regard to Chi. Santok are plain. We cannot, therefore, regard this case as a precedent to go by and make similar arrangements in future for other families. Others can get maintenance from the Ashram only if they live in it.

The sum in question should be paid from month to month till I decide otherwise. After my death, the Managing Committee may consult Jamnalalji and change the decision if it so wishes.

Chi. Santok will be staying in the Ashram for ten days more. If during this period she asks for anything else, please consult me. My understanding is that she cannot ask for anything beside what is agreed.

Send one copy of this to me and give one to Chi. Santok.

[1] A report sent by Moolchand Agrawal regarding the progress of khadi in Rajasthan was published in *Young India*, 29-8-1929, under the title "Self-spinning in Rajputana". A similar report was later published in Hindi *Navajivan* too.

[2] Wife of Maganlal Gandhi

[3] Daughters of Maganlal Gandhi

[4] *ibid*

It will be enough if you pay the sum to Chi. Narandas every month.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 8-9

312. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[*November 23, 1928*][1]

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. The money asked for by Chhaganlal and intended for the women may be sent out of Women's Fund. Other help required for Orissa may be sent out of the Famine [Relief] Fund with Vallabhbhai and the small balance in the Orissa account lying in the Ashram.

Write to Vallabhbhai. It should be possible to meet Chhaganlal's demand from the Fund with him, since the work which Chhaganlal is doing is all famine relief work. Shri Vithalbhai has written to me and told me that we can draw more from the money he has contributed to the Famine [Relief] Fund. If there is any difficulty in this, pay from our funds.

Pay from the Ashram funds, in addition to Rs. 12, expenses for four students. See Krishnamaiyadevi[2]. Do not omit to do this through oversight.

I wrote to Shardabehn and told her to leave the Ashram in certain circumstances. The letter you have sent is not a reply to my letter. I should certainly be happy if she feels sincerely disinterested in worldly things.

I have been consuming five *tolas* of linseed oil. I shall be able to eat less from today since I have started mixing some almond oil with milk. I do not worry about the taste at all. Nor is it that the oil does not suit me. But I have not been able to gain weight with oil and *rotli* only, and so from today I have added almonds and fruit. If you require linseed oil, please write to me so that I may send fresh supply from time to time.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 9-10

[1] As in the source

[2] Widow of a Congress worker from Nepal to whom Gandhiji had given shelter in the Ashram along with her son and four daughters.

313. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Friday [*November 23,1928*][1]

BHAI CHHAGANLAL,

I forgot to write about one thing. Call in Dr. Talwalkar or Dr. Kanuga to examine Kashi[2]. I am afraid she has got dysentery. If that is so, she will have to be given injections of ipecacuanha. Place this suggestion of mine before the doctor whom you call in.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 10

314. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

SURAT,

November 23,1928

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL JOSHI,

Read the accompanying letter and hand it over to Parnerkar. After careful thought but with firm decision take whatever steps seem necessary in regard to Jethalal.

Gangadevi has asked for sewing work; give it to her. If nothing else, let her make caps of all sizes and covers of large pillows. I will sell them. If I cannot easily find customers for them, then let her make, if she knows how to, large handkerchiefs with borders, and as many as she can.

When Champabehn arrives there, get her to work with Gangadevi. I am sure you have arranged for someone to sleep near the women's wing. Look after Harasukhrai and also give me news of him from time to time.

I trust you have made the required arrangements for Amina[3].

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] As in the source

[2] Wife of Chhaganlal Gandhi

[3] Daughter of Abdul Kadir Bavazeer

[PS.]

Do everything with complete faith and the utmost courage. The burden of winning over Narandas lies on you. Do not think that it is a difficult task.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 10-1

315. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Friday, November 23, 1928

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I felt unhappy when leaving you. You are bearing with great courage the burden which has fallen on you, but I see all the same that it has disturbed your equanimity a little. The *Gita*, however, teaches us that we should in no case lose our equanimity.

You may certainly take any quantity of milk that is necessary for your health. Do not feel that you are doing anything wrong in that.

I have left Kusum[1] there. Make her work. She works methodically. You will not at all find it difficult to mix with her freely. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 15

316. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

November 23, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

You should understand that I shall always be where my work calls me.

One should accept as they are the rules and conditions for membership of an organization or an institution. If we live as memb-ers of an organization, it becomes necessary for us to obtain the perm-ission

[1] Widow of Haribhai Desai who was Gandhiji's secretary during the early days of Satyagraha Ashram

of others for doing a number of things. Freedom does notmean licence, nor does it mean being dependent on one individual only.

Anyone who lives in a community should submit to its restrictions. This is what an institution means. Anything different from this means the rule of one person. I wish that you should reflect and understand the meaning of this, compose yourself and be devoted to your duty.

Take proper care of your health.

Cultivate friendship with everyone.

Give complete satisfaction to others in regard to Manu, by working in the Bal Mandir and, if you find it congenial to do so, in the kitchen.

Write to me regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1853

317. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Friday, November 23, 1928

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I can understand your misery. Physical separation will however always be there. Shake off anxiety and be firm and devoted to your duty.

Keep writing to me. Go to Dwarka only if you want to, otherwise don't.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3343

318. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

[After *November 23, 1928*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Work as much as you wish to but don't let it tell on your health. Never grieve over separation. We will always be confronted with the separation from loved ones. "What is unavoidable, thou shouldst not

[1] From the reference to "separation" in this and the preceding letter

regret."[1] If you don't understand the meaning of this verse ask Chi. Purushottam. It is from the *Gita.*

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3325

319. MESSAGE TO KHADI WORKERS, AMALNER[2]

[After *November 23, 1928*][3]

Gandhiji after asking a few questions about the details of their work and emphasizing the necessity of self-carding, said to them.

Our scriptures say that not to begin any enterprise is the first degree of wisdom but it is folly to give it up after having commenced it. Now that you have commenced your project after due deliberation I hope you will see it through.

Young India, 13-12-1928

320. DISCUSSION WITH SHANKARRAO DEV[4]

[After *November 23, 1928*]

I have no doubt about it, there are more actual spinners and more genuine khadi wearers in India today than there were in the "white cap" days of 1920-21, and as for organized khadi production it has grown by tenfold at least. But the thing is, we do not see the wood for the trees. Otherwise, where is there another organization in India which is functioning in nearly 2,000 villages as the A.I.S.A. is doing? It is a compact body, it has influence over the masses because it has established a living contact with them. But the khadi worker

[1] *Bhagavad Gita,* II. 27; quoted in Sanskrit in the source.

[2] From Pyarelal's "Wardha Letter" which explained the work of the Samarth Udyoga Mandir, Mukti (W. Khandesh), thus: "They are trying to organize khadi production on what is known as the 'integrated system'. The underlying idea is to develop the internal economics of hand-spinning and hand-weaving by assembling as many processes of cloth manufacture as possible under the same roof to be performed as far as possible by the same family. The system has been tried with great success at Bijolia and would mark a new era in the development of khadi organization if it could be successfully introduced elsewhere too."

[3] Gandhiji left Sabarmati on November 23, 1928, and reached Wardha on November 24.

[4] From Pyarelal's "Wardha Letter"; Shankarrao Dev travelled with Gandhiji as far as Jalgaon and the discussion turned on the theme "Is khadi really making headway?"

must bide his time. His faith is on trial today. He must refuse to be diverted from his purpose by exciting politics. I have no doubt that the country will remember this perennial source of strength at no distant date. See how one leader after another turns to it for consolation in the darkness of despair. Deshbandhu Das remembered it and declared his faith in it a week before his death, and when a damp fell around the path of Lalaji he too turned to it for strength. You know how he told Mahadev at Simla that he had become a complete convert to khadi and was learning how to spin? I have no doubt that in its hour of darkness it will be khadi alone that will come to the nation's rescue.

Young India, 13-12-1928

321. REPLY TO MARWARI DEPUTATION, WARDHA[1]

[After *November 24, 1928*]

Gandhiji: Is your objection religious and fundamental or is it on the score of social tradition?

We are no learned pundits, our objection is based on the latter ground.

In that case you should bear with Shethji. If you objected to Shethji's dining with such 'untouchables' as were addicted to drink or led unclean lives I could understand you, but for lack of moral courage to hold that food is polluted by the mere touch of one born in a so-called untouchable family, though otherwise he may be a pure and righteous man, is a negation of religion. I admit that social tradition should be respected when it is meant for the protection of society even though personally one may not feel any need for following it, but to respect a tradition even when it becomes tyrannous spells not life but death and it should be discarded.

Jamnalalji has chosen a wider field of service. He cannot exclusively identify himself with any particular community. The world is his family and he can serve his community only through the service of humanity. So let Jamnalalji go his way. One can overcome opposition only by love, untruth by truth, not by compromising truth. See the state of society we are living in, it is full of falsehood,

[1] From Pyarelal's "Wardha Letter" under the sub-title "At Grips with Orthodoxy", which explained that Jamnalal Bajaj had caused a flutter in the orthodox Marwari community by throwing open the Lakshminarayan temple at Wardha to the so-called untouchables for which he was excommunicated by the diehard section of his community. The excommunication had left him altogether unrepentant and he had gone a step further by partaking food cooked by the so-called untouchable boys recently at Rewari. It was to understand Gandhiji's views that a deputation of Agrawal Marwaris waited upon him.

hypocrisy, hatred. Our *panchas* should be the Gangotri[1] of our society. But today they have become corrupt. What would be left of the sacredness of the Ganges if its stream were polluted at the very source? Let us therefore try to purify our *panchas*, by doing penance, by suffering for right's sake. That is what Jamnalalji is doing. You should give him your blessings even if you cannot follow him. For, a day will come when not only you but even the orthodox section will recognize that by his action Jamnalalji rendered the truest service to Hinduism and the future generation will thank him for it.[2]

Young India, 13-12-1928

322. INFLUENCE OF MUSIC[3]

A student of the Gujarat Vidyapith asks:

What has been the influence of music on your life?

Music has given me peace. I can remember occasions when music instantly tranquilized my mind when I was greatly agitated over something. Music has helped me to overcome anger. I can recall occasions when a hymn sank deep into me though the same thing expressed in prose had failed to touch me. I also found that the meaning of hymns discordantly sung has failed to come home to me and that it burns itself on my mind when they have been properly sung. When I hear *Gita* verses melodiously recited I never grow weary of hearing and the more I hear the deeper sinks the meaning into my heart. Melodious recitations of the *Ramayana* which I heard in my childhood left on me an impression which years have not obliterated or weakened. I distinctly remember how when once the hymn "The path of the Lord is meant for the brave, not the coward" was sung to me in an extraordinarily sweet tune, it moved me as it had never before. In 1907 while in the Transvaal I was almost fatally assaulted, the pain of the wounds was relieved when at my instance Olive Doke gently sang to me "Lead Kindly Light".

Let no one infer from this that I know music. On the contrary it would be more correct to say that my knowledge of music is very elementary. I cannot critically judge music. All I can claim is that I have a natural ear for good homely music.

I do not mean to suggest either that because the influence of music has been uniformly good on me it must act similarly on others.

[1] Source of the Ganga in the Himalayas

[2] Also published in *Navajivan*, 16-12-1928

[3] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 25-11-1928. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

On the contrary I know that many people employ music to feed their carnal passions. To sum up, therefore, we may say that the influence of music will differ according to temperaments. As Tulsidas has sung:

> The Lord of Creation created everything in this world as an admixture of good and evil. But a good man selects the good and rejects the evil even as the fabled swan is said to help himself to cream leaving the water in the milk.

Young India, 10-1-1929

323. MY NOTES

PLAN FOR CATTLE DEVELOPMENT

An experienced *gosevak*[1] from Kathiawar writes:[2]

This scheme is good and deserves to be put into practice. However, if indeed I had the capacity for inspiring people which this correspondent imagines that I have, I would convert all the States of Kathiawar into places for serving the cow ideally. But, like the people, the States too do not like the constructive work very much. Moreover, such tasks could be easily accomplished if the States were not eager to accumulate wealth, if they opposed cruel customs and cultivated public opinion. Students should be given such problems to study in national schools. Such problems will be solved with less difficulty when the educated classes come into contact with villages.

A CRUEL CUSTOM

A gentleman from Visavadar writes:[3]

I must admit my ignorance of the practice mentioned in this letter. It is clear that this practice should be ended wherever it is prevalent. Our superstitions have been added to our ignorance of cattle-rearing and hence our task has become doubly difficult. There are wise men in every village. They do not have the leisure to examine minutely the question of how the people can be made happy. They know that the task of increasing the cattle wealth is not one which brings in huge profits but one which at the outset entails a large

[1] Worker for cow-protection

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had suggested a scheme for preservation of milch cattle including cows and buffaloes, and wanted Gandhiji to persuade one or two States to take up this work of scientific cattle-rearing and set an example for others to follow.

[3] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had referred to the custom of a weak male calf being branded and driven away.

expenditure. Hence who can create an interest in it? Nevertheless, the above-mentioned scheme deserves consideration at the hands both of the ruler and the ruled. Hence after keeping it in my files for many months, I venture to publish it in the columns of *Navajivan* today.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-11-1928

324. TELEGRAM TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

Express SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
November 25, 1928

DR. ANSARI
PALACE, BHOPAL

PROPOSE ISSUING LALAJI MEMORIAL APPEAL[1] OVER YOUR SIGNATURE MALAVIYAJI'S AND GHANSHYAM DAS BIRLA'S AS SECRETARY TREASURER. APPEAL WILL BE FOR FUNDS TO BE DEVOTED TO ADVANCEMENT LALAJI'S POLITICAL WORK. YOU THREE WILL CONSTITUTE TRUSTEES WITH AUTHORITY DETERMINE EXACT USE FUNDS. PRAY WIRE WARDHA. AUTHORITY ATTACH YOUR SIGNATURE APPEAL.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13339

325. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

WARDHAGANJ ,
November 26, 1928

MIRABAI
KHADI BHANDAR, MUZAFFARPUR

YOUR LETTERS. YOU MAY COME. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: G.N. 8216; also C.W. 5326. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] *Vide* "Apeal for Lajpat Rai Memorial Fund", 26-11-1928.

326. TELEGRAM TO DR. B. C. ROY.

[*November 26, 1928*][1]

DR. BIDHAN
36 [WELLINGTON STREET]
CALCUTTA

MOTILALJI WROTE LAST WEEK YOU HAD DECIDED ACCEPT MY VIEW ABOUT EXHIBITION. HEARD NOTHING FROM YOU. WIRE REPLY[2] WARDHA.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13319

327. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

WARDHA,
November 26, 1928

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I experienced no difficulty at all in the third class. There was no crowding in the trains during any part of the journey. All of us could sleep for the whole night. Other passengers vacated their seats for us. Since, however, the compartment was never crowded, they suffered no inconvenience because of us. I was extremely happy. In first and second classes I always feel like one imprisoned, besides feeling guilty. I felt happy within and at least thirty rupees were saved for the poor.

As it was my wish that this time I would join in all the Ashram activities here, I had all the three meals of the day in the company of the other Ashram inmates and ate the food served to me, which was the same as what they had. Here after the midday meal everyone helps in cleaning the grains. I too joined in this work. Ghanshyamdas Birla has come here and he too joined. Wonderful peace prevails here at mealtime and when people are working.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 11-2

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 27-11-1928; *vide* also "Letter to Motilal Nehru", 28-11-1928.

[2] The reply dated November 28, 1928 read: "Your wire. Reception Committee meeting tonight. Hope that after mill textiles are banned you and A.I.S.A. will take part in Exhibition. Kindly wire your ideas."

328. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

WARDHA,
Silence Day, November 26, 1928

DEAR SISTERS,

We reached Jalgaon an hour late. Consequently we missed the connecting train and reached Wardha late.

I may at once draw your attention to one thing I see here. I am, of course, dining in the Ashram kitchen here. By now I have had three meals; there was an utter absence of all noise. It was perfectly quiet and I thought at that time of the loud din in our Ashram kitchen. There was no noise here of clattering vessels or of people talking. Of course, in our Ashram we have children, while here there are none. That does make some difference, and yet you can teach children not to make noise and you yourselves can withstand the temptation of talking. That we cannot put a stop to the noise in our kitchen is one of our great failings.

I keenly feel the separation from you, because much remains to be done for getting more work from you. You should complete what remains unfinished.

Of course you understand your duties. The kitchen, Bal Mandir (kindergarten) and prayers are even now going on; if you undertake any other responsibility besides these, never give it up out of a sense of failure. To become fit for it the most necessary condition of all is this:

Whatever work you once undertake, carry it out fully, never give up what you have offered to do. If you have to be absent, then make some arrangement for your work; and if no arrangement can be made, do not leave it and go.

Keep ever cheerful; be calm; and make it a point to carry on your share of all the activities of the Ashram equally with men, and as well as men. This is not at all beyond your capacity. You need only desire it, and strive for it.

Blessings from

BAPU

Letters to Ashram Sisters, pp. 61-2

329. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Silence Day [*November 26, 1928*]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Do you expect a letter from me by every post? What a girl! Well, I shall try to write.

All the news about me is in the letter to Ashram women and to the [Udyoga] Mandir.[1] So, I will not write more today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3324

330. APPEAL FOR LAJPAT RAI MEMORIAL FUND[2]

November 26, 1928

The following appeal has been issued over the signatures of the President of the Congress, Dr. Ansari, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji and Sheth Ghanshyamdas Birla:

APPEAL FOR FIVE LAKHS

TO THE CITIZENS OF INDIA

It is but meet that there should be a national memorial to the revered memory of a patriot so brave, so great and so self-sacrificing as Lala Lajpat Rai. We the undersigned have therefore taken it upon ourselves to make an appeal to the generous public for funds, which we hope will meet with universal response. If we expect large donations from the rich, we know that Lalaji's spirit would find the greatest solace from the coppers of the poor. We propose to announce later the exact manner in which the funds will be used, but we constitute ourselves as trustees for the funds with power to associate others with us in their administration. We may, however, generally state that we shall use them for the advancement of Lalaji's many political activities to which he so nobly gave the best part of his life. We shall naturally bear in mind his great creation and the instrument of his operations—the Servants of the People Society.

We have fixed the sum of Rs. 5,00,000 (five lakhs) as the mini-

[1] *Vide* the preceding two items (Ashram was being called Udyoga Mandir).

[2] The appeal was drafted by Gandhiji and carried corrections in his handwriting; *vide* also "Telegram to Dr. M. A. Ansari", 25-11-1928. The appeal was published in *Young India*, 29-11-1928.

mum that a grateful country should give to Lalaji's memory. Regard being had to the bad times through which we are passing, we have chosen the lowest sum consistently with Lalaji's all-India greatness and the cause to which the monies are to be devoted.

Subscriptions should be sent to Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla, 8 Royal Exchange Place, Calcutta, who has kindly consented to act as Secretary and Treasurer for the Fund.

M. A. ANSARI
MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA
GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA

26th November, 1928

I have seen also the appeal issued by the President of the Congress fixing the 29th instant for observing in memory of the deceased patriot. I heartily endorse both these appeals, and I trust that meetings will be held throughout the country at which subscriptions will be collected in aid of the proposed memorial. Indeed it would be a striking demonstration if a fixed determination was made by all the public workers to finish on the memorial day the collection of five lacs which the distinguished signatories have asked for as the minimum.

I know that the time left for organizing such an effort is short; but where there is one will and one purpose no time is too short. Let the public recall the palmy days of 1920-21 when not five lacs but even 10 lacs were collected in one single day. After all the crore was collected practically in one month. If trusted volunteers will set apart the 29th for this one single item and go out collecting, there should be no difficulty in making up the amount.

Let the collectors remember that they have all to make their return immediately to Sheth Ghanshyamdas Birla at the address given in the appeal. If the collectors will send me the names intimating that they have sent the collections to Sjt. Birla, I shall see that the names are duly acknowledged in *Young India*. They are free to send the collections to *Young India* office from which they will be forwarded to the treasurer. If however the task of collecting the full sum in one single day is considered in our present disorganized state to be beyond our capacity let the collection committee prolong the period for collecting their quota.

In the absence of any other rule, I suggest each district or taluk fixing its own quota according to its own population. That is the least that can be done. The fairest way is for each district, taluk or circle to fix its own quota, in no case less than the minimum on the basis of population and to fix its own period within which to finish that

collection. I suggest also a resolution at each meeting to do some constructive work in terms of swaraj for which the local workers may be best fitted, provided that there is a determination to carry out that resolution. The memory of the deceased patriot will not suffer if no such resolution is passed, but it will suffer so long as the memory is a trust in our charge if after having passed resolutions we forget all about them.

M. K. GANDHI

From photostats: S.N. 13340 and 13341; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 28-11-1928

331. LETTER TO DWARKADAS

WARDHA,
November 26, 1928

DEAR DWARKADAS,

I have your letter. I think it is difficult to give any advice without meeting the lady. For the present I can only say that she should be patient and, giving up the idea of dying after her husband, she must dwell on his virtues.

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/27

332. LETTER TO MADHAVJI

WARDHA,
November 26, 1928

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

From your age I guess that you are married. If so, you should avoid sex with your wife for some time. If you have any other weakness, you should give up that also. Your asthma will certainly be cured.

Another fast will certainly benefit you. Drop the evening meal. Do not take any salt at all for the present. In fruit do not eat anything sour. Tomatoes are not necessary. Try to live on *mosambi*, sweet grapes and milk. Take boiled fruit in case of constipation.

Brown bread is more easily digested than our *chapatis*. Butter is lighter than ghee and probably contains more vitamins. For two or three months you should live in a place with a dry climate. Marwar, Cutch or Kathiawar would be good, except for the ports.

If you do not know *pranayam* learn it. Do it every day on empty stomach. Have Kuhne's bath also every day on an empty stomach. You should take sun-bath in the morning before nine o'clock. Sun-bath has to be had without any clothes on. You can cover the head if you feel the heat. I do not think Calcutta is good at all for sun-bath.

You must go for a walk every clay. On rising in the morning drink a glass of warm water immediately after brushing your teeth.

Avoid sugar. You may take honey with water.

One can live only on fresh fruit if confined to bed. But if one wants to be active, it will be sufficient to take a little milk along with fruit.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary: S.N. 32577/27

333. LETTER TO GURUPRASAD

WARDHA,
November26, 1928

DEAR GURUPRASAD,

You should not leave either home or your wife. You should continue to live there and sleep in in a separate room. You should make some arrangement to educate your wife. I feel after reading your letter that you will not be able to save yourself by running away. You have got to solve the problem remaining where you are. You will succeed if you try. But even if you do not succecd, you need not at all lose heart. Tell yourself that that is the way of the World. It will be enough if you do not give up trying.

From a copy of the Gujarati : Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S. N. 32577/25

334. OUR DUTY[1]

November 27, 1928

I hope there will be a prompt and whole-hearted response to the appeal which the Congress President, Dr. Ansari, Bharat Bhushan Pandit Malaviya and Sheth Ghanshyamdas Birla have made to the people in regard to the Lalaji Memorial. There is an English proverb to the effect that he who gives quickly gives double. There is a similar saying among us: "Prompt charity brings greater spiritual merit." Both these sayings are the result of the experience of wise men of

[1] *Vide* also "Lalaji Memorial", 29-11-1928.

different countries. We have forgotten that saying. Today it is said about us that we always wake up late, that is to say, instead of giving donations or taking action at the right time, we allow time to pass and then become impatient and bewildered and somehow get through charity or work. As a result, this does no credit to us and its value is reduced by half. I hope that this will not happen with regard to this memorial. For a memorial that is to be raised to a popular leader like Lalaji, funds ought to come forth for the asking.

I trust no one will question why there are only three signatories to the appeal. There was difficulty in finding more names and there was a fear that, if time elapsed, the 29th would pass by; moreover, procrastination in such matters is dangerous.

In fact, if the magic is not there in Lalaji's name, the power of three, or even thirty, signatures cannot attract funds. Even great men can get money only for a good cause.

Hence, donors have merely to assure themselves about the safety of their money and its good deployment. From this point of view, nothing could possibly be said against these three persons. Moreover, every donor must rest assured that where a man like Ghanshyamdas Birla is treasurer and secretary, the accounts will be properly kept.

Having thus known the amount needed for the memorial and its guardians, the duty of every patriot and everyone desiring swaraj is clear. Everyone should contribute his share to the Fund according to his capacity. It is my request that the whole sum should be subscribed by the 29th. I am writing this article on the 27th. Though I have said that the entire sum should be subscribed by the 29th, I do not entertain great hopes about it. Hence I write this article assuming that the whole sum has not been collected by the time the reader has this article in his hands and, if my fears prove true, those who have not given their share or who have not got their neighbours to subscribe, should get that money in time and forward it to the treasurer. If anyone wants to subscribe through *Navajivan*, he can do so. His contribution will be acknowledged in *Navajivan* and it will be forwarded to the treasurer.

I hope that every man and woman will contribute his or her share to this Fund. The number of students attending schools and colleges alone is 27,00,000. If all of them donate half the amount of their monthly pocket-money and make a sacrifice of their enjoyments to that extent, they can contribute a huge sum without any effort. It will be more creditable if 5,00,000 men, women, labourers, *Antyajas* and students together donate Rs. 5 lakhs than if five or ten rich men give that amount. It is evident that our strength to win swaraj will grow

in proportion to the increase in our capacity to collect big amounts by virtue of the numerical strength of those able to pay only small sums. One need hardly say that the value of Rs. 5 lakhs received from 5 lakhs of men and women is very much greater than the same sum received from a few wealthy persons. Thus we serve two purposes in collecting funds by taking a little from many people. Hence I hope that, keeping this in mind, every volunteer will collect as much as possible from his friends and relatives.

I also hope that our *Antyaja* brethren will not forget this work. Even if they donate copper coins, they will bring credit to the memorial and to themselves. Lalaji commenced his life with service of the *Antyajas* and, till the end, he got his followers to do this work. I hope our *Antyaja* brethren will not forget this fact.

I hope no one will waste his time in commenting that if the memorial had some other object in view it would have looked better or brought in more funds. In this world nothing done by man is perfect, and there is always room left for criticism. But it will be considered improper to waste time criticizing a good work that has been commenced, or not to assist it because the memorial does not fall in line with one's ideas. It is the dharma of all those who hold that there should be an all-India memorial to Lalaji and that those who have visualized it and ask for contributions towards it are worthy men, to contribute to the best of their ability and make others do so and only afterwards engage themselves in other national activities.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-12-1928

335. TELEGRAM TO S. SRINIVASA IYENGAR[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
November 27, 1928

APPEAL FOR LALAJI MEMORIAL ISSUED[2] SIGNED BY ANSARI, MALAVIYAJI, BIRLA. PLEASE ORGANIZE COLLECTIONS TWENTYNINTH.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13343

[1] Identical telegrams were sent also to Jawaharlal Nehru, Rajendra Prasad and Jairamdas Daulatram.

[2] *Vide* "Appeal for Lajpat Rai Memorial Fund", 26-11-1928.

336. LETTER TO KISHANCHAND BHATIA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,

November 27, 1928

DEAR LALA KISHANCHAND,

Sjt. Banker has sent me a copy of your letter[1] about fixing a Lajpat Rai week for khadi hawking and collections. Nothing would please me better than to do this. But I have not the slightest desire to exploit the great name of Lalaji for khadi or anything else. I can therefore only fix the week if all the members of the Servants of the People Society sincerely desire and feel as Lalaji felt during the recent months that khadi should be the centre of all constructive work in terms of millions. I therefore had not even dreamt about doing anything in the name of Lalaji. But now that you have mentioned it and Dr. Gopichand approves of your suggestion, I discussed it somewhat with Lala Jagannath. You may show this letter to the other members of the Society and if they all sincerely desire the fixing of a week for khadi propaganda and if they will make khadi the central activity in future, I will gladly fix the week. If they have no such faith, I am sure it will be wrong to adopt your proposal. Let khadi wait for the psychological moment which must arrive some day, if even some of those who are now in charge of khadi organizations in various partsof the country have a living faith in khadi are sincere and are devoting all their spare energy to its success.[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

LALA KISHANCHAND BHATIA
A. I. S. A., PUNJAB BRANCH
ADAMPUR DOABA (JULLUNDUR)

From a photostat: S.N. 13344

[1] Dated November 21, 1928

[2] A copy of this was forwarded to the Secretary, A.I.S.A., Ahmedabad, for information with reference to his letter No. 748 of November 24, 1928.

337. LETTER TO ACHYUTANANDA PUROHIT

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,

November 27, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I do propose to come to Sambalpur on my way to Calcutta.[1] I hope that you will organize a good khadi demonstration and a good collection for the All-India Spinners' Association.

I am unable just now to fix the exact date, but it will be somewhere near the 20th December and I shall try to give you two days—the day on which I reach there and the next day.

I remember your telling me how I can reach there, but I shall thank you to let me have the timings again.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. ACHYUTANANDA PUROHIT, PLEADER

SAMBALPUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 13735

[1] The addressee had requested Gandhiji to visit Sambalpur as it had been left out during the Utkal tour in December 1927.

338. LETTER TO NIRANJAN PATNAIK

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
November 27, 1928

DEAR NIRANJAN BABU,

I saw your letter to Mahadev. Mahadev is not with me as he had to be in Bardoli with reference to the Bardoli Inquiry. There is no change in my eating periods. Food also almost remains the same. I have cut down the quantity of milk, but no elaborate precautions should be taken to ensure the quantity of goat's milk or fruit. The less expense undergone about personal comfort the better pleased I shall be. Every anna spent on such things is an anna lost to the poor. Let the Sambalpur Committee also know this working of my mind.

I have discovered that the letter I thought I had sent, after all never went to you. I am now trying to have it translated and forwarded to you.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13736

339. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
November 27, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your two letters. I note what you say about Baidyanathji.

Rajendra Babu did send a reply to the *Chronicle* about Anil Babu's writings. They may not have any effect on your side, but in Bombay they might have some effect, especially as the Chronicle gave his contribution a place of honour. But I quite agree with you that generally all these superfluous writings betraying hostility may be safely ignored.

With me confusion is getting worse confounded with regard to the Exhibition. Motilalji writes to me that the Committee has accepted my view of what an Exhibition should be. But I have heard nothing from Dr. Bidhan. I therefore telegraphed to him yesterday[1] and I am now waiting for his reply. The cutting you sent me is certainly bad.

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Dr. B. C. Roy", 26-11-1928.

I am sorry about Krishnadas. Tell him he must be well and strong. When I come to Calcutta I want to see him in good health.

The progress you have made in the common kitchen is quite encouraging.

We have now installed our own bakery in the Ashram. You will remember I talked to you about it. The bread turned out is extremely good and has proved popular and saved much time, labour and fuel. Making chapatis occupied the best part of the time of the workers in the kitchen. Chapatis still remain, but bread has supplemented them with many. All eat bread only for breakfast and the evening meal. For the mid-day meal many still take chapatis.

I hope Hemprabhadevi is keeping well and cheerful. Tarini must really build up his shattered body.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1599

340. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

November 27, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

I have both your letters. I was indeed afraid that you would get fever. See that you do not get it again. It would help if you take *chiretta* or Sudarshan powder regularly; or else you may take quinine from time to time and also Kuhne baths. Ba told me today that, after you had recovered, you used to eat cashew nuts. If this is true, it would make me unhappy. I expect you to control your palate. You will be a good girl if you give up the habit of eating things every now and then.

You thought it strange that you had to obtain permission from two or three persons. The Secretary's permission should of course be obtained. But it is also necessary to obtain the permission of the head of the department in which you are working. In a big institution, the Secretary cannot take upon himself the responsibility of granting leave to everyone. The application for leave should be made to him through the head of the department concerned. Anyone who understands his or her responsibility towards the institution will apply for leave only if circumstances are convenient. I did not say all this to you to put you off. I thought you had immediately grasped my point. I am pained to know that you had not, and that you still think that I was putting you off. Now that I tell you that I was not trying to put you

off, you will feel surprised and think the procedure rather strange.

Anyone who wants to do all work in love has no choice but to reduce himself or herself to zero. How often have I explained this to you? Love is the utmost depth of humility. Today I stop this discussion here.

Ba is worrying about Manu. Who will help her now to wash and dress her hair and to wash her clothes? She goes on asking these and no end of similar questions. I have told her that I am sure you are looking after these things either by yourself or with somebody's help.

Sarojini Devi must be doing her share of work. Does she remain cheerful?

A handkerchief of mine is left behind there. Prabhavati probably knows where it is. Inquire about it. If you get hold of it, keep it somewhere carefully.

I will not like it if you let your health suffer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1854

341. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

November 27, 1928

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I got both your letters. Chi. Santok cannot be given any money for the grain she is returning. That grain and whatever else she has in her possession is the property of the Ashram. Explain this patiently to Chi. Rukhi, etc., or ask Narandas to do that. If truth is combined with love, your decision will always be correct. But do not fail in your duty out of fear of committing mistakes.

The persons who had been working with Narandas are leaving him one by one. Put others in their place, if necessary. It is essential that you two should work in complete harmony. How this can be brought about is for you to consider.

Gangabehn never told me what you write to me concerning . . . behn[1]. I am shocked by what you write. Despite that, however, we should continue to serve her in a disinterested spirit. If Shripatrao stays on, it would be very good indeed. I intend to write about milk

[1] The names are omitted in the source.

tomorrow. I am trying today to secure ghee. So far nothing has been fixed.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 12-3

342. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Tuesday [*November 27, 1928*][1]

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I don't have time today to write at length. I was very much pained to read about the affair concerning. . .[2] My pain is all superficial, so it has not disturbed me in my work. All the same, the thing fills me with anguish. I have written a letter to him. Probably he will show it to you.

More in the next letter.

You should not lose courage. Acquit yourself well in the post you have accepted. May God help you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 64-5

343. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

November 27, 1928

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have both your letters. Do go to Dwarka if you wish to. Do not at all take to heart my absence. Some day this body is bound to leave for ever. Why be distressed over separation from it? We should find happiness in devotion to a cause for which our passing away would have a meaning.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3341

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] *ibid*

344. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
November 28, 1928

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I have your telegram.[1] I sent the following reply:

"Your wire. Having read Exhibition advertisement see great conflict our ideals. Would therefore urge you go your way leaving me alone.—Gandhi"

Before your telegram was received, early in the morning today I dictated a letter to Pandit Motilalji from which I extract the enclosed apposite paragraph.

There remains very little for me to add to it. I have seen the advertisement sheet about which I would like to say one word. It contains no restrictions as to exhibits. It offers among other items a riotous worship of goddess Vani. The Exhibition authorities are said to have approached all local Governments for exhibits. Apart from this indiscriminate permission for all and sundry exhibits, I am unable to endorse the approach to local Governments one of which only the other day dealt shamelessly by one of the bravest sons of India and which had the temerity to bolster up the unprovoked assault. Nor am I in a mood to go in for enchanting music and riotous displays. But I have no business to interfere with your programme. You are the best judges of what is good for the nation from your own standpoint. Only I should find myself absolutely lonely in that Exhibition. There is a clear clash of ideals. I do not expect through correspondence to convert you nor will you expect to convert me. It is surely better therefore to leave me out of account. I would not on any account have you to deflect yourself from your course, simply for the sake of pleasing me.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN ROY
36 WELLINGTON STREET, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13303

[1] *Vide* footnote 2 to "Telegram to Dr. B. C. Roy", 26-11-1928.

345. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
November 28, 1928

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have your letter of the 15th instant. I waited all these days for a confirmation from Dr. Bidhan Roy or Subhas, but I have none up to the time of dictating, that is, 28th morning. I wired on Monday to Dr. Bidhan. There is no reply. Meanwhile I have seen a cutting which I send you herewith. They are evidently inviting local Governments' co-operation. Evidently now all distinction has vanished and the Exhibition will be a more spectacular display than an instructive effort designed to educate the poor cultivator and the other public. There is a gratuitous mention there of khadi. But there is no room in this Exhibition for me or khadi in the real sense. Evidently it will not exclude either foreign cloth or foreign anything. I cannot say I am not grieved over this, but I do not want you to carry the matter any further. I write this letter merely for your information. I do not seek your intervention for a mechanical change of opinion or for a mechanical respect for my wishes. I must cut my way through these grievous difficulties with patient toil. After all Dr. Bidhan and Subhas represent a definite school of thought. Their opinion is entitled to my respect as I expect theirs for my own. That which is in the interest of the people will prevail in the long run. Who can decide beforehand which is the correct opinion in terms of the multitude?

I see you are having no end of difficulties with Mussalman friends regarding your report. But I see you are unravelling the tangle with consummate patience and tact. May your great effort be crowned with full success.

From your note I gather that the Convention will meet not on the 22nd December but on the 26th, 27th and 28th, the dates on which the Muslim League is to meet. Or, am I to understand that the Convention will formally meet on the 22nd and continue its session till the 28th? I do not see the slip referred to in the note. Hence the little confusion in my mind. Surely, you do not want me to be in Calcutta all these days.

From our conversation at Sabarmati I had understood that you would want me for the Congress and not the Convention. For myself I do not know what possible service I can render at the Convention. There is utter confusion in my mind created by the kaleidoscopic scenes going on before one in the country. All I can say is that I do not envy your position. But I know you are as much at home with

such things as I am with the charkha. And if you will agree to the arrangement, I should be content to remain at the wheel and leave you to the joys of meandering through the intricate paths of diplomacy. But my fate is in your hands until you give your decision. Meanwhile I drink in the peace and the silence that Jamnalalji has provided for me in Wardha.

You will have seen the appeal about Lalaji Memorial. After much telegraphing to the Punjab friends, I decided that there should be no more signatures to the Memorial than the three that have appeared. It would have taken a long time to have got the consent of all the men who were mentioned as signatories. They insisted upon at least your and my name appearing together with the three. But I vetoed the proposal anticipating your approval of the veto. You will however please do whatever you can for the Fund, due regard being had to your taxing appointments.

I see that you have to begin with the first letter of the alphabet about Kamala's treatment. I am glad, however, that she will be in Dr. Bidhan's capable hands, and he will have Sir Nilratan at his beck and call in case of emergency.

Yours sincerely,

ENCL. 1

PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU

ANAND BHAWAN, ALLAHABAD

PS.

Since dictating this I got Dr. Bidhan's wire to which I have sent the enclosed letter[1].

From a photostat: S.N. 13302

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

346. LETTER TO T. K. SRINIVASAN [1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[2]
November 28, 1928

MY DEAR SRINIVASAN,

I have your letter. I do not propose to deal with it in the pages of *Young India* for I am sure no one else is likely to draw the deduction that you and your sister seem to have drawn from my writings. The whole of the case for a humanitarian ending of a creature's life is based upon the assumption that whether belonging to the human species or a lower order if they had consciousness such a creature would not wish to live as I had assumed the calf would not in the circumstances in which it was placed and that there was no other service possible. In your sister's case you and many others are at her beck and call and you all consider it, and that rightly, a privilege to render what service you can and relieve her pain be it ever so little. Her momentary wish to have her life put an end to was purely philanthropic out of regard for the convenience of her nurses. She was wrong in her reasoning. What she considered was an inconvenience to her nurses was a privilege, or should be, in the latter's estimation. And if she desired death, the nurses could not comply with her desire, for that compliance would be tantamount to shirking of an obvious duty.

The question of karma does not arise at all in either case. This has been repeatedly explained in the pages of *Young India*. If we were to bring in the law of karma in such matters, we would put an end to all effort. The working of the law of karma is an incessant, ever-going process; whereas you and your sister evidently assumed that certain actions were set in motion and that the motion in that straight direction continued uninterrupted without the operation of any further actions coming into play. The fact indeed is that every activity in nature is constantly interfering with the law of karma. Such

[1] In reply to his letter dated November 21, 1928, which read: "My sister aged 20 who is suffering from paralytic attack has had all kinds of treatment from various medical experts. No doctor has yet given hope of recovery. . . . She happened to be near me when I was reading your article on the killing of the Ashram calf. She said in an appealing tone, 'Will you allow me to end my life? . . .' She paused for a while, and after some reconsideration said, 'Oh, how can I escape from my karma? I cannot avoid it; I can only postpone it by death. I suppose, then, Gandhiji is not right in killing the calf.' . . . May I request you to consider the matter in *Young India* as I believe that many others may share the same opinion" (S.N. 13729).

[2] Permanent address

interference is inherent in the law. For the law is not a dead, rigid, inert thing, but it is an ever-living, ever-growing mighty force.

Yours sincerely

SJT. T. K. SRINIVASAN
SAKTI NILAYAM, PALAIYUR, *Via* MUTHUPET

From a photostat: S.N. 13307

347. LETTER TO GIRDHARILAL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
November 28, 1928

DEAR LALA GIRDHARILAL ,

I had your long telegram and now I have your long letter redirected to me from Sabarmati. It is for that reason perhaps that I miss *The Tribune* cutting which I have not yet seen. Lala Jagannath tells me he sent no telegram to *The Tribune* or any other paper. Without knowing the contents of the cutting it is difficult for me to say anything more.

About the memorial you will have seen the appeal[1] signed by Dr. Ansari, Pandit Malaviyaji and Sheth Ghanshyamdas Birla. I do not think that it is possible to support the Congress out of these funds. Nor should any appeal in the name of a great person be made on behalf of Provincial Congress. Each organization must really stand on its own merits and command the confidence of monied men in its own province. Anyway that is my firm conviction. I do not know what view the signatories will take of your proposal. It comes upon me as a surprise. The only way in which, in my opinion, these funds should be utilized is first to put Lalaji's own creation—the Society—on a firm footing and support such political activities of his, which have an all-India character. There may be other provincial or sectional memorials, but even these can't include the support of a growing and varied organization like a Provincial Congress Committee.

Yours sincerely,

LALA GIRDHARILAL
DIWAN BHAWAN, DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13345

[1] *Vide* "Appeal for Lajpat Rai Memorial Fund", 26-11-1928.

348. LETTER TO DR. SATYAPAL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
November 28, 1928

DEAR DR. SATYAPAL,

I had your wire as also your letter. I have not been writing to you as I had no time. You will see from *Young India*[1] that I have noticed your telegram and made suitable comments upon it. Your telegram is excellent if it fulfils the condition I have laid down in my note in *Young India*. My caution was necessary because, if my recollection serves me right, in the communication that I had from you some months ago during Lalaji's lifetime, you had represented yourself as the injured party. If you still have that sense of injury, your telegram is meaningless. What we want at this critical period in our history is not a mechanical unity, that is a superfluous thing, but a heart unity which can't break under any strain. No other unity, no patched up truce, will answer our purpose when a supreme heroic effort is necessary.

Yours sincerely,

DR. SATYAPAL
42 NISBET ROAD, LAHORE

From a photostat: S.N. 13346

349. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[2]
November 28, 1928

I enclose herewith Rev. Gordon's letter. The lame young man whom he mentions is evidently otherwise a capable man. Can you take him up? He won't be a burden and it will be a good thing if we can accommodate him. The Committee at Sabarmati was afraid to have him and as Mr. Gordon says the young man could not have been happy either not knowing Hindi. If you think that he can be taken please write to Rev. Gordon.

I expect to see you here next month. You will do whatever is

[1] *Vide* "Good if True," 29-11-1928.
[2] Permanent address

possible regarding the Lalaji Memorial. You will have seen the appointment of the new Agent General[1]. No comment is necessary.

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

GANDHI ASHRAM, TIRUCHENGODU

From a photostat: S.N. 13738

350. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
November 28, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

I have your letter. I shall be sorry indeed if you have to enter the Municipality again, unless you enter it on condition of perfect obedience being rendered to you. If you have to go in for the purpose of settling disputes, it is not worth while. My conviction is that you cannot combine all-India work with solid municipal work. Solid municipal work is a thing complete in itself and requires all the energy that a man can give it and I would not like your work to be anything but solid.

I was to have gone to Mysore to attend the Christian Convention. That was the hope I had given to friends during the middle of the year, but I informed them about a month ago that my going was impossible, if I was to have any rest at all.

The news you had given me about Kamala is bad. I like the idea of her being under treatment in Calcutta. She will have there the best medical advice possible.

I do hope that you will find time to attend the meeting here.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ANAND BHAWAN, ALLAHABAD

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1928. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library; also S.N. 13739

[1] K. V. Reddi; *vide* "Letter to Sir Mahomed Habibullah", 9-11-1928.

351. LETTER TO SARSI LAL SARKAR[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[2]
November 28, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and the booklet[3] for which I thank you. If you knew how pressed I am for time, you would not ask me to read anything outside my line of work.

I hope you do not want me to develop further the theme of the chanting of Ramanama and the so-called autobiographical chapters I am writing.

Could you please send me a brief summary, if not a translation, of the Poet's letter[4] referred to in your letter? I am sorry to say that it has escaped my attention as I must confess to my shame I do not read Bengali.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SARSI LAL SARKAR
177 UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD
SHYAMBAZAR P.O., CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13740

352. LETTER TO PRESIDENT, LATENT LIGHT CULTURE

AS AT SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 28, 1928

THE PRESIDENT
LATENT LIGHT CULTURE, TINNEVELLY

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am sorry that I have not yet been able to reach your book and now that I am again on the move I do not know when I shall be able to look at it. I would really not trouble you to send me the lessons that you have kindly offered to send. I shall have no time to read them. And I do not think that the other members of

[1] In reply to his letter dated November 19, 1928
[2] Permanent address
[3] On Tagore's poems
[4] On charkha

the Ashram, busy as they are, will have much time at their disposal to tackle new things.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13741

353. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

November 28, 1928

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I have shown your letter to Jamnalalji. He would prefer that you should join the Gandhi Seva Sangh. To me it is the same either way. You certainly have the right to draw money from the Ashram, but Jamnalalji thinks that if you come over to the (Gandhi Seva) Sangh, you will be of some help in shaping it. I see only one difficulty in this. If you join the Sangh you should attend the one or two meetings of the Sangh which take place every year. If your health can stand that strain, then there is no harm in joining. From this point of view, the decision will have to be yours. Do not think of any other difficulties. That is, if you can undertake a little travelling occasionally, do join the Sangh. Your activities there will continue as at present. It will mean that you will continue to belong to the Ashram, but will also, in addition, be a member of the Sangh. After I hear from you either by letter or wire I will write to Jamnalalji's firm to arrange about the money.

Tara and Shanti are here at present. I met Nanabhai on the way. I have asked him not even to come here. His health is bad indeed.

I have written to Bhai Karsandas about Surajbehn. I had expected her to be much more patient.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10709. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

354. LETTER TO BALBIR TYAGI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
Wednesday [*November 28, 1928*][2]

CHI. BALBIR,

You should have sent me a letter. Why haven't you written? You should write at least once a week.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6635

355. WHO SHOULD WEEP?

I have before me notes of Acharya Kripalani's speech delivered at Jabalpur at a public meeting from which I take the following striking extracts[3] to show what the British people have lost through Lalaji's death. Though the vast majority of them are today ignorant of Lalaji's genuine friendship towards them, a day will come when they will realize what service patriots like Lalaji have rendered to them.

But there is another party which should participate with us today in this our immense loss though it may be unconscious of what it has lost. Our rulers have a vast empire at stake. And in Lalaji they have lost a friend true and sincere, a friend who helped them even every time that he was punished and insulted by blind and intoxicated authority.

It was in the Partition agitation days that Lalaji was deported without trial by the Government and yet when he returned he resisted the overtures of the so-called extreme wing of the Congress politicians. He helped the Moderates headed by Phirozeshah and Gokhale. Though he was injured the most yet he turned the left cheek to the nominal Christians who no more remember the virtues of their Master. . . .

Once more during the Non-co-operation movement he was sent to jail on a charge which could not bear the light of law and justice. But when he was discharged from jail he again helped his persecutors. He pleaded for entry into the Councils for what is called discriminate support.

. . . Well therefore might the British people weep, and weep they would were

[1] Permanent address

[2] From the printed letter-head it is evident that this letter was written in 1928. As Balbir lived in Sabarmati Ashram, *vide* "Letter to Abhay Sharma", 11-11-1928, Gandhiji must have written this after reaching Wardha on November 24. Wednesday following this fell on this date.

[3] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

they not dazzled and blinded by the pride of power.

If even after the departure of such trusty Indian friends, tried and true, the Englishmen persist in their obstinacy, a time may come when the Indian generations to be will vow eternal enmity to England. It may even be the kind of enmity that Christians vowed and carried out through centuries against the Jews for the Christ who was crucified. It is quite possible that their domination may come to be viewed as a crucifixion of a whole nation and might rouse the worst passions of the generations yet unborn. Let therefore the Empire take thought and take heed, make up while yet there is time for the night cometh when the die will have been cast and retreat and compromise will be out of the question.

Young India, 29-11-1928

356. LALAJI MEMORIAL

I invite the attention of readers to the appeal for five lakhs issued over the signatures of Dr. Ansari, Pandit Malaviyaji and Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla. Signatures have been purposely restricted to those only without whose signatures no memorial can be considered truly national. There was great difficulty in choosing other names. Nor was there time enough to consult all the parties whose names should appear, if some of them might. After all if the prestige of Lalaji's name is not enough to induce the public to subscribe liberally, no names however many or distinguished they may be are likely to fetch subscriptions. The only assurance therefore the public need have in respect of memorials such as this is that the appeal must be from those whose names are a guarantee of good faith and honest administration. The three signatories are more than ample guarantee of these essentials.

I hope that the response will be quick and generous. It is to be wished that all those who have come under Lalaji's benign influence will send in their mite. The Memorial will gain in weight for small subscriptions making up the total of five lakhs. If we can collect five lakhs from five lakhs men and women, this collection by itself will be substantial propaganda for swaraj. And if the minimum sum fixed by the signatories to the appeal is made up principally of small subscriptions, no pressure will be felt by anyone during these hard times. If monied men have a special duty in such matters, the others are not on that account absolved from their duty of contributing according to their ability.

I suggest therefore to the various associations and societies that they make immediate collections from all on their rolls or under their influence. We have at least 27,00,000 students in high schools and

colleges. They can always save from their pocket money enough to make a very substantial sum. Nor should the suppressed classes lag behind in tendering their quota.

We often waste time and energy in debating and wrangling over a multitude of suggestions and rehearse many possible improvements. Let such critics remember that perfection is not possible in human undertakings. Let us therefore try to do well things even though we may think of better things so long as what is presented to us for acceptance is not open to any fatal objection and especially when it comes from tried and trusted leaders.

Any subscriptions sent to the *Young India* office will be acknowledged in these columns.

Young India, 29-11-1928

357. GOOD IF TRUE

Dr. Satyapal sent me on 22nd November, 1928, the following telegram:

> Lala Lajpat Rai's death causes irreparable loss to Punjab. I offer my most humble and affectionate salutations to the great departed leader at this deplorable and critical juncture. I on my behalf and of other friends who differed from Lalaji assure friends who were offended for differing from Lalaji that we hereby sink all differences and resolve starting with a clean slate. We bear no ill will, we have no prejudice and we offer our hearty co-operation in all political movements started by Lalaji and we place ourselves unreservedly at the disposal of such friends. We offer hearty invitation to all these friends who have remained away from the Congress to join hands with us vigorously to pursue the campaign of swaraj, for which Lalaji lived and died. Henceforth in sacred memory of Lalaji we resolve to present a united front, even if it be possible by our complete surrender.

It reflects great credit upon its authors, if the sentiments expressed in the telegram are heartfelt. I am obliged to utter this note of warning because I have known so many such deathbed repentances that one is never sure whether they are heartfelt or whether they are due to the impulse of the moment, or what is worse, outward pressure. The authors will never be able to bury the hatchet if inside their hearts they feel that their opposition to Lalaji was justified and warranted by circumstances and dictated by no selfish consideration or other unworthy motives but by the purest patriotism. If such was the case there would be no cause for repentance. One can only be just to the memory of a dead man, one cannot wipe from one's memory the wrong he might have really done. Repentance presupposes conviction

of one's own error. If then the authors feel that on the whole they wronged Lalaji in his lifetime or that the motive for their opposition was mixed then the repentance is genuine and should last. Subject to this reservation, I tender my congratulations to Dr. Satyapal and his companions on this patriotic message and hope that there would be a strong, sustained and united effort in the Punjab to carry on the mission bequeathed by Lalaji. In many respects it is possible for the Punjab to give the lead to the whole of India, if only the Punjab wills it, and if party feeling and communalism disappear in that land of five rivers. If the Punjab Press, instead of indulging in vituperation and innuendoes as a portion of it does, will but educate public opinion along right lines, I have no doubt that the rest of India will follow. Nothing can be a greater monument to the memory of Lalaji than that the Punjab should lead all India along the right path.

Young India, 29-11-1928

358. 'A BLOT ON BOMBAY'

Shri Nagindas Amulakhrai of Ghatkopar Sarvajanik Jivadaya Khatun has sent to the President, Municipal Corporation, the following reasoned letter on the question of milk supply to Bombay:[1]

Bombay has been called Bombay the beautiful. If Bombay means merely Malabar Hill and Chowpati and beauty is to be referred only to the exterior, then Bombay is certainly beautiful. But if the heart of Bombay is penetrated, like most of our cities it is ugly both in appearance and reality. The indifference of city fathers to the milk supply of their city is truly criminal and the facts carefully compiled in the foregoing letter do constitute a "blot" on Bombay the beautiful. But it seems to me to be useless merely to blame the members of the Municipality. They are after all what the voters make them. If Bombay is to have a cheap supply of pure milk the education of the voters should be undertaken on a wide scale. They should be taught never to vote for any candidate who does not pledge himself to secure a proper milk supply for the city in the quickest possible time. In the language of Blatchford milk should be treated like postage stamps. It should not be left to private enterprise but should be the first care of every municipality.

Young India, 29-11-1928

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had quoted authoritative opinions explaining that high price of milk was due to the faulty system of stabling animals in the heart of the city, their 'costly feeding' and their 'premature slaughter'.

359. HAND-SPINNING IN MYSORE

No State in India has so systematically encouraged hand-spinning as the State of Mysore. I have before me a copy of the note prepared by Sjt. G. Ranganatha Rao Sahib, the Director of Industries in Mysore, for submission to the State Sub-committee "constituted to consider the question of hand-spinning," I give the note[1] below in full:

I congratulate the Director and the Sub-committee on the thoroughness with which they are handling this very important national supplementary cottage industry. Naturally the Director is cautious in his note. Equally naturally every step taken in organizing hand-spinning is being taken with deliberation and due thought. The result is that even from the very commencement the Department has been able to avoid loss on capital. The Department did not disdain to profit by the labours of the All-India Spinners' Association or to accept the technical assistance offered by it. It is quite clear from the report that the field to be covered by the wheel is vast enough to engage the attention of many workers in the field. I hope that the experiments that are being carried on to perfect a village carding machine will succeed. The machine to be of value will have to be such as to be capable of being worked by the villagers. My own humble opinion is that it is not possible to improve upon the carding-bow now in use in our villages. The Technical Department of the All-India Spinners' Association tried to introduce small changes in the original bow, but the foundation seems to be incapable of alteration, if we bear in mind the purpose for which the bow is intended. What is more, if the cotton to be carded is good, well-picked and well-cleaned, carding with the bow becomes an incredibly easy, simple and quick process and capable of being undertaken by even delicately built men and women. And my own experience is that no more than five minutes need be given to carding and sliver-making for an hour's spinning of thirty counts. Half a *tola* of thirty counts gives 320 yards, fine average speed for a good spinner. To card half a *tola* of cotton will not require more than five minutes for a tolerably good carder. And if the thousand spinners whom the Director mentions could be coaxed to learn carding, they could prepare their own slivers and add a little more to their earning per hour, because it will be possible to give spinners who are their own carders a little more wage than to those who spin with slivers prepared for them.

[1] Not reproduced here. It described an attempt in village Badanval "to test by intensive work, the practicability of introducing hand-spinning as a subsidiary occupation to our agriculturists".

Whilst tendering my congratulations to the Mysore State upon its zeal on behalf of the poorest *raiyats,* I venture to remind the well-to-do citizens of Mysore and also the officials that khadi will not find an abiding place in the homes of the people of Mysore unless these two classes adopt khadi for their own wear. They now know that it is possible to get as fine khadi as they wish to possess. Let them not confuse the minds of the unsophisticated villagers by leading them to think that the so-called higher classes are not prepared to practise what they preach. Let them remember the words of the *Bhagavad Gita:*

> The simple folk imitate the action (not the speech) of excellent men.[1]

Young India, 29-11-1928

360. MORE CONDOLENCES OVERSEAS

The following cablegrams have been received from the Kathiawar Arya Mandal and the Saurashtra Hindu Association, Durban, and the Indian Union, Glasgow University, respectively:[2]

Young India, 29-11-1928

361. LETTER TO J. KRISHNAMURTI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
November 29, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[3] for which I thank you. I hope that you are completely restored. It will certainly give me much pleasure to see you whenever you can find the time. I am in Wardha up to the 20th December at least, then I shall be in Calcutta for about a week and then I hope to find myself in Sabarmati.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. J. KRISHNAMURTI
C/O R. D. MORARJI, ESQ.
VASANT VIHAR, MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 13006

[1] III. 21

[2] These are not reproduced here; all these organizations had sent condolences on the death of Lajpat Rai.

[3] Dated November 22, 1928, which read: "I was so greatly looking forward to seeing you . . . but most unfortunately I have had to cancel my whole tour on account of my having a bad cold. . . . I hope I may have the pleasure of meeting you soon."

362. LETTER TO M. K. GOVINDA PILLAI & WIJNANA CHANDRA SEN

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 29, 1928

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

I have your letter. Please give me your respective ages, whether you are married, whether you have parents, whether you know any other language beyond Malayalam, what training you have received in English and where you were trained. What certificate does the head of your institution give you? And you should send all the other particulars which I should know.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. K. GOVINDA PILLAI
SJT. WIJNANA CHANDRA SEN
ARYA SAMAJ, KOTTAYAM (TRAVANCORE)

From a photostat: S.N. 13008

363. LETTER TO KANNAYIRAM PILLAI

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 29, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

As promised in my last letter to you, I made enquiries and I am now satisfied that in mentioning certain depots there was no question of favouritism. Only those depots were mentioned where large sales were expected. The leaflet was circulated only in the places which were on the list. There was no question of slighting private merchants. The Charkha Sangh Vastralaya does sell in retail full dhotis and pieces. You should really discuss your grievances with Sjt. Varadachari with and under whom you are working.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KANNAYIRAM PILLAY
TAMIL NAD KHADI VASTRALAYA, TIRUPPUR (S. INDIA)

From a microfilm: S.N. 13292

364. LETTER TO HANNA LAZAR

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 29, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your very touching letter. I am glad that you have given me your confidence. It is very difficult for me to guide you from this distance without knowing full circumstances. But, generally speaking, I would say 'no divorce'. But if your temperaments are incompatible, you should live in voluntary separation.

In any case, I hope you will have mental peace.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. HANNA LAZAR
WEST BANK, VICTORIA STREET, OUDTOBAARA, C. P.

From a microfilm: S.N. 13743

365. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
November29, 1928

I have your cable redirected to me from Sabarmati. It was received on the 26th. At first I found it difficult to understand it. I thought you did not know anything about Lalaji's death. But then I saw that you had alarming telegrams about Lalaji's death being due to the injuries received. My own opinion is that the physical injury was not serious, though, having been received in the region of the heart, it might have proved fatal. And the injuries would have been very serious had it not been for the intervention of friends who surrounded him bravely and received the blows themselves. But there is no doubt that Lalaji received a nervous shock from which he never completely recovered. All his writings, all his speeches after the incident are eloquent proof of my statement. Government's indifference and elaborate statement summarily dismissing Lalaji's challenge ignoring even Lalaji's name added fuel to the fire that was raging in his breast. He did not feel so much the personal wrong as the wrong done through him to the whole nation. The prostration of the people made the insult all the more galling. You will see in the pages of *Young India* the appeal issued for a national Memorial for Lalaji. Sheth Ghanshyamdas Birla has started it with a handsome donation of Rs. 15,000. I am hoping that the appeal will meet with generous response.

I am in Wardha at least up to the 20th December. I shall have to

be in Calcutta for a few days. Then I want to go back to Sabarmati. I have not the courage yet to bury myself there. Somehow or other I feel that I must go out for a while and then there is the often postponed European visit. If you have altered your views and think that I should not visit Europe, you will cable so. Your negative decision would be final for me. If you mean yes, you need not cable, because there may be many things in spite of my wish to go to Europe that may prevent me. The going therefore will take its own course.

I enclose herewith copy of a letter received from the Macmillan Company. Having got the copyright, they evidently want the pound of flesh. I wish I had not entered into this. I entered into it because of Rev. Holmes. But it is all right. Perhaps they will give the permission to you. I shouldn't mind if they would only publish the *Autobiography* in volumes. I have no notion when the whole thing will be finished, even though I am omitting many important events and trying to hurry on to the Non-co-operation days. I want to break off after the Special Session at Calcutta, because the events are too fresh and there are so many contemporaries whom I must describe, if I am to write further. I feel too that it would be advisable for me to stop at that stage for thenceforward my life has been too public. Therefore there is no need for further elucidation. And then of course there is *Young India,* a clear mirror through which anybody who cares can look at me.

Mahadev I had to leave at Bardoli this time because of the Bardoli Inquiry which is getting on quite nicely.

I hope you are doing quite well.

I have received your article though belated on Gopabandhu Babu. You will of course send me your reminiscences of Lalaji.

I have your correction about Miss Mayo. It will go in the forthcoming issue of *Young India.*[1]

Bristol Times cutting is shocking, but such is modern journalism and such is also the notion about truth of fliers through the air !

C. F. ANDREWS, ESQ.
112 GOWER STREET, LONDON W.C. I

From a photostat: S.N. 15099

[1] Published on December 6, 1928; it read: "I regret that an inaccuracy came unawares into my first article on Miss Mayo's book about India. I had been informed by an authority, on whom I implicitly relied, that Miss Mayo had been 'employed' to write a book for propaganda purposes just after the War. I find now that the word 'employed', which implied some monetary payment, was inaccurate and I wish to withdraw it with an apology."

366. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 29, 1928

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter.

If the meaning you read in 'win over Narandas'[1] is correct, I admit that it should hurt you. But you should never have read that meaning in the remark. How can you know the context in which it was made? It was in continuation of a conversation with Chhaganlal. It is plain that there are reserves between you two. Chhaganlal is the Secretary. He knows his weakness, and I know it too. If at all, I should advise him. The remark 'win over Narandas' was intended to suggest to him that it was his duty to try to understand you, to listen to your point of view and to accommodate himself to you. It does not imply any defect in you. If I had wished to imply any defect in you, I would not have said 'win over'. Instead, I would have said 'reform Narandas through love', or something to that effect, and I would also have first drawn your attention to your defect. I have observed no such defect in you and, therefore, there was no question of my drawing your attention to it. I certainly do not wish that you should remain silent or should not draw attention to any errors you may observe. If you fail to draw attention to them, I would blame you for that. Do you understand my meaning now? Please let me know if there is any other point which requires to be clarified. You can show this letter to Chhaganlal. I think it would be better if you do so. But I leave it to you to decide whether or not you should.

I wish to make a few inquiries about Chalala[2]. I shall, therefore, write about it afterwards.

Pass on the accompanying letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

How is Purushottam? Did he derive any benefit from Jivan[3]? How is Jamna?

From Gujarati: C.W. 7722. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chowdhari

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 23-11-1928.

[2] A centre of constructive work in Saurashtra

[3] An Ayurvedic tonic

367. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Thursday, November 29, 1928

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I am sure you have sent the accompanying papers to me through some mistake. I often receive papers like these which need not have been sent to me.

In your letter you make no suggestion concerning Shankerlal's letter. Should I get another resolution passed here?

I will inquire a little further into the Chalala affair and then write to you. I return with this the letters of . . . behn[1] and . . .lal[2]. It is certainly a painful chapter.

The reason why Mahavir, Durga and Maitri fall ill frequently is nothing but their food.

I wanted to write to you about myself when I had leisure. There is no trace of impatience in the experiments I am making. It was all along my intention to experiment with the use of oil after coming here. I had not been taking fruit even when I was there. Even then I ate nothing but fruits during the journey. Here, too, I do not exclude fruits altogether.

Today being Lalaji Day, and for other reasons, I have eaten only fruits. The only material difference is that I take no milk.

I naturally feel sometimes that I should compete with all of you. But you have no reason to feel worried about this. No one here feels worried. Everyone knows that I will attempt nothing beyond my strength. It is many years since I overcame the attachment to life; this is not a new thing.

It is enough that you keep on striving. You should never worry that you will not be able to attain the level which you say I have done. It is easy enough to attain that level; in any matter in which you find it difficult to do so, put yourself in God's hand. If you stop worrying, your efforts will succeed better. If you lack fitness for anything, you will acquire it by patiently striving for it. If even after this, you have any questions to ask me, ask them.

The problem of Chi. Santok and Keshu is difficult. I have been thinking what to do. At any rate, this sum cannot be paid against wheat.[3] I will write about this later.

[1] The names are omitted in the source.

[2] *ibid*

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 27-11-1928.

You have done well in relieving Somabhai. He cannot be continued for six months, or even for one month.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro- 7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 13-4

368. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[NOVEMBER 29, 1928][1]

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I have finished the letter to be read in the presence of everyone. Since you have succeeded in obtaining cow's ghee, I now wish to take no hasty step.

On a day such as Lalaji Memorial Day, may we not reckon the wages for all forms of labour at the same rate? It would be better to apply this rule to items where it can be easily applied. For that purpose, a register such as I have suggested should be maintained. That is, the wage per hour should be fixed at one or three-quarters of an anna, and the register should show the quantum of work per hour for each kind of labour. For instance, for spinning 300 yards per hour, or any other figure that you may fix, and similarly for grinding grain, weaving, digging, cleaning grain, cleaning land, weaving *Pati*[2], carpentry, etc., calculation would become easy if we had such a table. Everyone maintains a diary, so that we can count up the value of everyone's work for our information. My point is that, if we accept the principle I have suggested, we can thus scientifically examine its working.

I have been thinking about Krishnamaiyadevi. You will have to play a prominent part in this matter. You should speak to her if she shirks work or does anything improper.

It is necessary that you should write to me about what you hear concerning Shardabehn. Sometimes the stories we hear are false. What is the nature of Gangabehn's discontent?

I like the idea that one day in the week everyone should work for a fixed number of hours. There should be no dirt anywhere in the [Udyoga] Mandir.

I shall have a talk with Mirabehn. The issues of "Mandir

[1] "Lalaji Memorial Day" mentioned in this letter fell on this date.

[2] Bed-tape

Samachar" for both the weeks have been got up so badly that it is impossible to read them.

I see no harm in drawing Shamalbhai's expenses either from the Mandir or from the Vidyapith. Kaka may do what will give him better peace of mind. I believe Kaka cannot join in the experiment of living within Rs. 12 [a month]. For one thing, he is not an expert in experimenting with his body so that he can take any kind of liberty with it.

There is no letter from Bal. I was taken aback to learn what he had demanded. I was ready to be told that he had asked for something more than Rs. 12, but not as much as Rs. 20. You need not hurt him. I shall thrash out the point with him.

I understand what kind of an agreement we should have with the Spinners' Association. I shall now write to Shankerlal. You need not worry on this account. You are also doing right in collecting opinions. Think about all aspects objectively.

Cultivate such health that you should never catch cold or any such infection.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 14-6.

369. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

WARDHA,
November 29, 1928

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I got your letter and the books sent by you. The books are being used. We now make bread in the Ashram. If you come across a simple book about making biscuits, please send it. The book on bread contains no information about making biscuits.

I am making inquiries in regard to Shri Jerajani's brother. If you come to know about anyone else who knows bee-keeping, please let me know.

I am taking some steps in regard to Sumant. If the facts are as stated by you, I will certainly write in the papers.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4708. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

370. LETTER TO SURENDRA

November 29, 1928

CHI. SURENDRA,

I have your postcard. I am pleased by your single-minded devotion to the tannery. If you become an expert in that work, you will be able to do the highest service both to the world and to human beings. Our men of dharma have taken no interest in this field at all, for modern Hindu society has committed the great sin of regarding that work as, from its very nature, tainted with *adharma*. We should atone for this sin by infusing the spirit of dharma in that work. I have been discussing the problem of cow-protection with some rich persons here. These discussions also lead me to the same conclusion. Give me from time to time a detailed description of your experiences there, so that I may gradually get the complete picture. I suppose I told you that Chhotelal had accompanied me here.

My work here is progressing satisfactorily. If you have not started keeping a diary, please do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3093

371. LETTER TO SITARAM PURUSHOTTAM PATWARDHAN

WARDHA,
November 29, 1928

DEAR APPA,

You have raised a good question about the calf. We have of course to give up the fear of death as also of pain. This is true for oneself, but it cannot be applied to others. Our duty is ourselves to shed fear of death and other pains and help others when they are in pain. Thus, on the one hand we have to shed the fear of pain and on the other to follow the dharma of compassion, of relieving others of their pain. The same about death. Some pains can be relieved only through death. If we wish to shed the fear or death, we should have no hesitation in seeking or giving relief from pain through death. At any rate we should not consider it a sin. Why should we have hesitation in hastening the moment of death—that is, where the motive is to help?

Thereby we are not violating any law of nature. . .[1] Everybody who is born is sure to die. We are only changing the moment . . . [2]

It was necessary to turn the calf on its side and I wanted to do so too. But it was impossible without giving it more pain. So it was impossible to act on the wish. In the case of a child it is always possible to carry out such a wish. If you still do not follow my point, ask me again. Let me know if you do not receive the money from the Charkha Sangh.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/32

372. ADDRESS TO ASHRAM INMATES, WARDHA[3]

November 29, 1928

Our scriptures tell us that childhood, old age and death are incident only to this perishable body of ours and that man's spirit is eternal and immortal. That being so, why should we fear death? And where there is no fear of death there can be no sorrow over it either. It does not therefore behove us to shed tears over Lalaji's passing away but to emulate and copy his virtues. The central feature of his character was his burning passion for service of the motherland and he began his career with the service of the most downtrodden of his countrymen, viz., the so-called untouchables, whilst he was still a youth. It may not be given to everybody to emulate his career in the Assembly which was but a small incident in his career, but all can develop the spirit of sacrifice which ran like a continuous thread through his life. And sacrifice means self-purification. I would like you therefore on this solemn occasion to resolve to make an ever-increasing effort for self-purification. Through it you will be serving yourselves, your country and the world.

Young India, 13-12-1928

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] Two sentences following are unintelligible in the source.

[3] From Pyarelal's "Wardha Letter" under the sub-title "Lajpatrai Day", which explained: "The 29th November, the day of national mourning over the loss of Lalaji, was duly observed here. . . . The inmates of the Wardha Ashram observed the national day after the poor man's way by doing manual labour and contributing the day's wages and denying themselves a week's ration of *gud*, the only item of luxury in their gheeless menu."

373. LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
November 30, 1928

DEAR BROTHER,

I have your letter. I had your speech at Cawnpore read to me. I do not see substantial difference between the Associated Press report and the report[1] you have sent me. All the terrible threats and still more terrible exaggerations that are in the English report are to be found in the Urdu report. The slavery of the Hindus, the digging out of eyes, the challenge, the unequivocal indictment against the Hindus are all there in their nakedness. If you can spare the time, I would like you to read the cutting that I sent you, or if you have destroyed it, get another copy, and you will see almost every sentence of English report in the report you have sent me. And tell me if you will still call the speaker as per English report "a cad and a very crude performer", and, if you will do so, I would like you to tell me why and show me the difference between the English report and the Urdu in my possession.

No, the speaker at Cawnpore is not the Maulana with whom I have been so long familiar and with whom I have passed so many happy days as with a blood-brother and bosom friend. The Maulana of Cawnpore is an utter stranger to me. The Maulana I have known vowed that he was so bound to the Hindu for his help during the Khilafat agitation that he would put up with him, even if he ravished his sister, that so far as he and the Mussalmans under his influence were concerned, he was out to suffer at the hands of the Hindus who had done so well. Well, I do not ask him to suffer to the extent that he promised; but I do plead with him on bended knees to revise his Cawnpore speech, admit: that he was out of sorts and bravely apologize to his Hindu brother for wounding his feelings as the Cawnpore speech undoubtedly does. If the Hindu has been a slave of old, you are co-sharer in his slavery by ties of blood, by acceptance of indissoluble partnership. You chose in 1920 to be co-sharer with the Hindu in his virtues as well as his vices for eternity, in his strength as well as his weakness.

I would go all the way with you in accusing the Hindu of his many misdeeds; but I am unable to hold with you that he has been ever the aggressor, ever the tyrant and his Mussalman brother always the injured victim. If I had at all felt like that, you would have found me proclaiming it from the house top. But I am not going into a

[1] Which appeared in Hasrat Mohani's paper *Khilafat,* 18-11-1928

controversy with you. I simply want to tell you that, in my opinion, all your incitement is wrong, your judgment is one-sided and that the Mussalman is at least equally guilty with the Hindu, if not on the whole more so. Assuming that you will impute honesty of motive and statement to me, I would ask you to make room for doubt as to the correctness of your judgment. In your Cawnpore speech you are too terribly dogmatic and emphatic. The assumption of infallibility is unworthy of you. I ask you to disown it for friendship's sake.

One personal thing, I must correct. The Khilafat Committee did pay for a time for my expenses at your instance, not on my request, and certainly not for the reason that you state, for the simple reason that I have never travelled at Congress expense on any single occasion, even when I have done exclusively Congress work. My travelling expenses have always been borne by friends. And when I accepted your offer, I had Rs. 25,000 placed at my disposal by a common friend, whom you know, purely for my travelling as he was most anxious that I should never stint myself about these, nor draw upon any public funds for them. I had given you this information, but I agreed with you that it would be more graceful if I let you pay my travelling expenses. But in the manner in which you now put the matter, I feel inclined to offer to return the whole of these expenses with interest if you will accept them without being insulted or offended. I think that Mahadev will have somewhere a record of these expenses.

Let me also correct another grave error. The Tilak Swaraj Fund is a matter of audited record. Every pie received is accounted for in the printed accounts which have been before the public now for years. You will perhaps be painfully surprised to discover that let alone 20 lacs there are not even two lacs received from Mussalmans for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. I do not make a grievance of this, but I want you to hold truth as a sacred thing. And if you want me to produce the handsome figures of Hindus who have paid to the Khilafat coffers I shall gladly do so and perhaps it would be another surprise for you. I wish you could recall those stirring days of our joint peregrination from shop to shop where Hindus vied with one another to pay even to the Khilafat Fund as to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Do you want me to furnish you with a sample list? If am erring, I would like you to correct me not by a counter assertion but by figures. But if you have none, I want you to tender an apology not to me, not to the public, but to God for having been betrayed into a hasty but painful error.

I had the report of your version of the Cowasji Jehangir Hall meeting read to me. The conduct of the audience was disgraceful beyond words. I have always held this imitation of the West as a

degraded and degrading thing unworthy of us. This wretched imitation may yet prove our undoing. You were entitled to a respectful hearing. Above all at a condolence meeting such conduct was criminal. In spite of what I consider to be a temporary aberration on your part the meeting should have remembered your many and brilliant services to the Motherland. But here my agreement with you ends. I refuse to endorse the deduction that you have drawn in favour of your theory of universal condemnation of Hindus. A purely Mussalman audience has been known before now to behave no better. The conduct of the meeting in question was symptomatic not of Hindu mentality but of the present mentality of city Indians. You and I, Mussalmans and Hindus, have to club together to eradicate this growing evil from our midst and no to fling mud against one another. Just as you remained unmoved in the meeting so should you have remained unmoved when you reached home and found yourself surrounded by friends. You should have laughed at the incident as I have so often generously seen you laugh at such incidents and forgive contrary to my wish what you have called the pardonable indiscretions of exuberant youths. Have you not said so often, let them do so, they have been too long under slavery?

I have done. Personally if you are still your old self, I have no anxiety to see our correspondence in print.[1] But if you think, that there is nothing left for you but war to the knife, by all means publish the correspondence. But if you are still the old gentle brother that I have known you to be, then read this letter again and again if the first reading does not satisfy you. Read it with Mahomed Ali. I am in no hurry. Then lay aside all other work and both of you come down to Wardha, you with a determination still to hold me in your pocket. You will find me easy enough to carry. I am fast losing weight. But if after mature joint deliberation you cannot take any such heroic step, then publish this correspondence and spare me the painful necessity of having to make some statement to the public. And believe that, whether you feel my presence in your pocket or not, I am there. My unchangeable creed is non-violence and universal brotherhood. Therefore I repeat what I have said from a thousand platforms that mine is a unilateral partnership and therefore my partnership with you and the other Mussalmans is indissoluble. Though they may disown me a million times, I shall still be theirs when occasion demands it. May God help so that I am not found wanting.

I appreciate your decision about All-India Spinners' Associa-

[1] In his letter dated November 25 Shaukat Ali had asked: Have I your permission to publish the correspondence or a portion of it . . .", (S.N. 13733).

tion. I won't misunderstand it. Your decision is right and your resignation will be accepted. But I would expect you to come back to the Association when you feel that spinning is part of your duty not only as a nationalist but also as a Mussalman, that you owe it to the millions of your countrymen not merely because you are an Indian but equally because you are a Mussalman, that is, if my reading of Islam is correct.

Yours sincerely,

MAULANA SHAUKAT ALI
THE CENTRAL KHILAFAT COMMISSION
SULTAN MANSIONS, DONGRI, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 13744

374. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Friday [*November 30, 1928*]

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I had no letter from you today.

I have thought about the Chalala matter. For the present, let the work go ahead according to the budget prepared by Jaisukhlal. I mean by this that you should make the required sums available from the balance in the khadi account. These sums should be debited in the Chalala account and should be recovered from the proceeds of the sale of Amreli khadi lying with us. We would not have to pay anything if all that stock could be sold off immediately. All that I have to decide, therefore, is this: how to help Chalala so that it would not matter if it incurred a loss up to Rs. 800 during the next year. The loss should be met from the profit from Amreli khadi and not by raising the price of Chalala khadi. If you are required to undertake responsibility for anything more than this, let me know.

If you require Shripatrao's help in the Ashram, by all means ask him for it.

The inmates of the Ashram here did physical labour yesterday[1] to be able to contribute something to the Lalaji Memorial Fund and have decided to give up eating jaggery for a week from today. They were served gruel every morning containing three *tolas* of jaggery per head. Instead of jaggery, salt is being added now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 14822

[1] November 29; *vide* "Address to Ashram Inmates, Wardha", 29-11-1928.

375. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

November 30, 1928

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have had a letter from you after a long time. I can forgive you everything. Certainly you need not spin nor keep a diary. I certainly observe a difference of temper between us but what does that matter? How can I expect that you should look at everything through my eyes, or that your eyes and mine should be alike? I may not give up the spinning-wheel, because I have come to regard spinning as a form of *yajna*. There are other items in our daily programme of work, and I see their results from day to day. It gives me pleasure to see them. The results of the spinning-wheel *yajna* are a matter of faith. Has anyone observed personally that our spinning ends the poverty of the poor? But my faith tells me that it does, and so I keep apart some time for the *yajna* from the other tasks of our daily programme. If I did not do so, I would regard myself guilty of the sin of theft.

About the diary, there is another reason. I keep it because it is part of the discipline of the Ashram, or to be correct, of the [Udyoga] Mandir, to do so. A diary may not be necessary for me, but it is so for others and, therefore, I would not confuse their minds by not keeping one myself.

If anything in the rule which I follow with regard to Santok is not clear to you, please bear with it to that extent. The problem has perplexed me very much indeed.

I do not suffer any hardships. The atmosphere here is very congenial for the work I am doing. I will certainly not do anything at the cost of my health. Do not jump to conclusions from any rumours you may hear. If you have any apprehensions, write to me. If I had time, I would myself write to you about everything. I am not determined to continue at any cost the experiments in which I am currently engaged. The only change I have made is giving up of milk once again. Give it up, and resume it again—this will go on, like ebb and flow alternating with each other, for, as you know, I am not at all happy that I take milk.

I have not received a specimen of the diary. Ghanshyamdas is still here, as also Jagannathji. There are daily additions to the other company.

Tell Ramdas that he should write once in a while.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11442

376. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

November 30, 1928

BHAISHRI RAMNIKLAL,

I send the accompanying cutting for you to read. Will the average Jain accept the views expressed in it? Do you know the editor of *Jain Jagat?* He has also written a pleasant letter to me.

Write to me and give me news about the health of you both.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4143

377. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 30, 1928

CHI. NARANDAS,

You must have received the letter I wrote to you yesterday. Can we not supply every month ten to twenty pounds of yarn of between 30 and 40 counts to those women in Poona who want fine yarn? We should feel ashamed if we cannot. If we cannot obtain the quality from anywhere, why cannot we spin fine yarn of that quality in the Ashram? Do not all of us spin one *tola* of yarn every day? Everyone should spin fine yarn and sell that quantity. If necessary, we may supply cotton to all.

In the yarn I spin at present I easily attain a count of 30. To make one *tola* of 30 counts, we should have 480 (lengths of thread). I see, therefore, that we may not be able to maintain that average. But cannot we maintain an average of one half *tola*? The cotton which I spin is grown locally from American seed. I am collecting more information about it.

I enclose a letter from Mirabehn for your information. We should not mind her anger, but should appreciate her sincere criticism. There is no limit to her frankness of heart. She is arriving here today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 7723. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chowdhari

378. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

November 30, 1928

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR) ,

Prabhavati informs me in her letter that you are not keeping good health at present. If this is true, the cause must be mental agitation and the heavy burden on you. Please lighten that burden. Reduce physical work at any rate. If you fall ill, I shall blame you alone. The path which you should follow is clear and you must not deviate from it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8710. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

379. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[After *November 30, 1928*][1]

BHAI CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter. I sign the one regarding Shardabehn and return it. We must now think what to do about her. I shall not be able to send the letters to you today. I have not been able to read them all.

We ourselves require Narandas's opinion about the Chalala matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro- 7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 64

[1] From the reference to Chalala matter; *vide* also "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 30-11-1928.

380. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM,
[After *November 1928*][1]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I got your letter of 26th August. The reason why I got it so late is that it came into my hands after it had wandered among others who read it first one after another. One naturally forgets about a letter which has not been filed. That is what happened in the case of your letter. And once it is filed, it comes into one's hand when its turn comes. However I take it that the delay has caused no inconvenience to you.

As long as you keep yourself within the amount sanctioned by the Managing Board for the expense, you should continue to carry on that same activity in the manner you think fit. I am of the opinion that you do not need the Board's legal consent for that. Even so, I will place your letter before the Board. However, if you can immediately proceed to Bageshwar, you should do so. I see no difficulty in your doing so. Do not do anything in haste.

If necessary, you may lend upto Rs. 200 for completing the construction of the building. Keep in mind the idea of buying some land in Bijoria as a branch of the Ashram and putting up buildings on it, but first test it on the anvil of experience and determine whether it is sound or unsound. You will be able to decide more easily after you have settled down at Bageshwar and, if you remain firm in that idea, I will consider it and have it considered by others also. I will of course not worry about your health, but at the same time, I will be apprehensive that you might not steadily cling to your work. You can remove that fear only by convincing me by your conduct. However, do not sacrifice your health by being over enthusiastic for, if you do so, it will harm your work and we should regard that consideration as more important than the question of your health. The point is that one should look upon one's health as a trust and take as much care of it as possible. You have done well to tell me in your letter that the cow is being neglected for the sake of the pine-tree gum. I will have to think over it. You, on your part, should forget about such things after you have passed them on to me and, regarding them beyond your field of

[1] In the letter, Gandhiji asks Prabhudas to proceed immediately to Bageshwar near Almora. Prabhudas was in Almora in April 1928 and the storm referred to in the last paragraph may have been about the change of the name of the Ashram from Satyagraha Ashram to Udyog Mandir. The change was effected in November 1928; *vide* "Satyagraha Ashram"

work, not let them weigh on your mind. God has not given the necessary strength to any individual or organization to fight all injustice. If He were to do so, He would Himself have produced His rival. We should believe that He is not so stupid as all that and dance in our own circle.

One more storm is raging in the Ashram these days. But it is through such storms that it is purified. I am therefore calm. I do not have the time to give you a description of it. You may read something about it in the Ashram magazine. The rest you will know from what Chhaganlal or Kashi might be writing to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 33052

381. A GOOD BEGINNING[1]

Subscriptions for the Lalaji Memorial have begun well with Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla heading the list with Rs. 15,000 at Wardha. The fact that a strong provincial committee has been formed in the Punjab and had at the time (lst instant) of writing this already had Rs. 25,000 on their list also augurs well. I wish all the provinces will follow suit and fix their own minimum and set about collecting that sum. Whilst I suggested a method of finding one's quota on the basis of population, it was obviously not intended to apply to those provinces, districts or cities which could bear a far larger proportion. It would be ridiculous for instance for Bombay to fling at the treasurer of the Fund its quota on the basis of population. Its quota can only be fixed according to its world-wide name and fame. Unfortunately we have in our country terrible contrasts. There are the submerged not tenth but fifth who are living in semi-starvation and who can therefore give nothing. Their burden has to be shouldered by the cities and the other prosperous areas.

The rapidity with which the subscriptions for the Memorial are collected will be a measure of people's earnestness about preserving the memory of the Lion of the Punjab whose roar we shall hear no more. But let us remember that even twice the amount asked by the distinguished signatories to the appeal will not meet the requirements of the present day. Evidence is daily gathering round us that if we are to vindicate national honour which was stabbed when Lalaji was so brutally assaulted, we have to devise some means of hastening the

[1] Written on December 1, 1928

advent of swaraj. One such means and the mildest is to finish the work that Lalaji was doing. He had undertaken to popularize the Nehru Report. Surely an effort in this direction is worth making and is quite feasible. To secure unanimity of approval for the Report is but a step in the national march. By itself it will not give even dominion status. But we shall surely need unanimity about some demand of ours before we devise common action to enforce the demand.

In my humble opinion any discussion on the respective merits of dominion status and unadulterated independence is irrelevant to our present purpose. Everybody seems to agree that if we get dominion status it would be a long step in the direction we want to go. But the independence group seem to argue that it is certain that we are never going to get dominion status and that since dominion status is not our final goal, why waste national energy on a fruitless errand and why not straightaway work for independence pure and simple? There would be considerable force in the argument if the attainment of dominion status was an impossibility and if unanimity on independence was possible. As it is, if we can take action for independence with a fair chance of success, the same action plus unanimity which the Nehru Report has made possible on the issue of dominion status should surely make its attainment more possible than that of independence. All therefore I plead for is not cessation of independence propaganda on the part of those who are enamoured of the enchanting formula but whole-hearted support for dominion status even as a stage in their progress. I claim that the two are in no way incompatible provided of course dominion status for India does not mean something quite different from what it means for South Africa or Canada. Memory of Lalaji and reason then demand consolidation of public opinion on the Nehru Report, and that now. For let it be borne in mind that that report is not a permanent or final document. It is a compromise the best attainable which representatives of most parties have endorsed. If public opinion cannot be now focussed upon it, all the effort spent upon it will be reduced to nought and the great document will be out of date and out of place. Its value depends purely upon its immediate acceptance by all the great national organizations.

Young India, 6-12-1928

382. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

December 1, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

May I not say that you are a little fool? Why should you feel hurt because I asked you? If you feel hurt like this every time, I can ask you nothing.

I want to see you what I have imagined you are. I have no time today to write more. I can have no doubt that you would look after Manu properly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1761

383. LETTER TO FULCHAND

WARDHA,
December 1, 1928

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I have your letter. I for one consider animals and birds as much entitled to live as myself. But though knowing this, I am unable to overcome the desire to live. I have exhibited this cowardice of mine by starting the discussion about the problem of the monkeys.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/33

384. TELEGRAM TO SHANKERLAL BANKER[1]

[On or after *December 1, 1928*]

SHANKERLAL BANKER

NO OFFICIAL INTIMATION RECEIVED. OTHER OBJECTIONABLE FEATURES RETAINED. ANY CASE TOO LATE ORGANIZE DECENT SHOW.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13306

[1] In reply to his telegram, received at Wardha on December 1, 1928 which read: "Referring Calcutta Reception Committee resolution excluding mill-cloth from Exhibition. Bihar inquiries whether participation permitted. Kindly wire final decision."

385. TELEGRAM TO K. SANTANAM

[On or after *December 1, 1928*][1]

HOPE YOU WILL TRY COLLECT SUBSCRIPTIONS WHEREVER YOU CAN.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13306

386. "A YOUNG HEART"[2]

A correspondent who signs himself "A young heart" has addressed me a long letter dealing with a number of subjects. This anxiety to keep the writer's name secret betrays cowardice or lack of moral courage, alas, fast becoming but too common amongst us. It ill becomes those who aspire after swaraj. I would appeal to our young men to shed this moral weakness and speak out their thoughts with courage and yet with humility and restraint. Even if they cannot be sure of their sense of discrimination and courtesy, let them express their thoughts in the language that comes to them naturally. Cowardly silence will not only not teach them discrimination or courtesy but it will demoralize them into the bargain.

REGARDING THE CALF

To come now to the questions adverted to by "A young heart" in his letter: The first one is about the yet unfinished calf episode. After observing that it was a grievous error on my part to have killed that calf, he goes on to give his arguments which I will skip over as they have already been answered in *Navajivan.* He then sums up:

> In short if the poor calf had the tongue to speak it would certainly have implored you to spare it the poison injection and let it die a natural death after drawing its allotted number of breaths. It seems to me that in an excess of pity for the suffering animal you betrayed yourself into a great error and soiled your pure hands with the blood of aninnocent calf. I am sure that on further reflection the truth of my observation and the magnitude of your mistake will become clear as daylight to you. It would be improper to say anything more to one like you who has seen truth face to face, still I cannot help adding that in case you ever discover your error and according to your nature confess it to the world, the world would feel grateful

[1] In the source this and the preceding item appear on the same sheet.

[2] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan,* 2-12-1928. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

to you and further misunderstanding on the subject would be prevented. As it is, your action is bound to be misinterpreted and the sin of it all will be on your head. The sooner, therefore, you confess your error the better it would be for you and the world. May God vouchsafe to us all light and understanding!

Let me hasten to tell this writer and all those who think like him that I am not in a position to avail myself of their advice. But this much I can promise that the moment I discover that I was wrong I will in all humility confess the wrong and also make for it all the amends possible. Let me also admit that my error, if an error it is found to be in the long run, would be deemed to be no light one as I shall in that event have been guilty of committing an irreligious act—be it in ignorance—in the name of religion. Such a thing would be reprehensible in anybody; in me not the least. For I know that for good or for evil, my conduct is likely to influence many. I have thus a full sense of my responsibility.

But whilst I have not the slightest desire to minimize my responsibility in the matter, I believe that if in spite of the best of intentions one is led into committing mistakes, they do not really result in harm to the world or, for the matter of that, any individual. God always saves the world from the consequences of unintended errors of men who live in fear of Him. Those who are likely to be misled by my example would have gone that way all the same even if they had not known of my action. For in the final analysis a man is guided in his conduct by his own inner promptings, though the example of others might sometimes *seem* to guide him. But be it as it may, I know that the world has never had to suffer on account of my errors because they were all due to my ignorance. It is my firm belief that not one of my known errors was wilful. Indeed what may appear to be an obvious error to one may appear to another as pure wisdom. He cannot help himself even if he is under a hallucination. Truly has Tulsidas said:

> Even though there never is silver in mother-o'pearl nor water in the sunbeams, while the illusion of silver in the shining shell or that of water in the beams lasts, no power on earth can shake the deluded man free from the spell.

Even so must it be with men like me who, it may be, are labouring under a great hallucination. Surely, God will pardon them and the world should bear with them. Truth will assert itself in the end.

REGARDING THE MONKEYS

The other question touched by "A young heart" in his letter is regarding the monkeys. He writes:

All that I wish to write regarding the monkeys is that you will, pray, not entertain the idea of killing them even in a dream. If they threaten your crops you may adopt such measures for keeping them from mischief as other farmers do, as for instance pelting them with stones, shouting, etc., but for heaven's sake do not recommend their killing for a paltry few measures of grain. It would be wanton selfishness to compass such destruction for a trifling gain. There cannot be two opinions in this matter: Hindus will always regard your action as *himsa* pure and simple. It is only on such occasions that one's ahimsa is put to the test. Is it not monstrous to deprive a fellow-creature of life for the sake of a miserable little crop? What selfishness and what cruelty! How can such an iniquitous suggestion proceed from your lips at all? Well, you may by your superior brute force kill the monkeys but remember you will have to pay the price for it one day, and before the Great White Throne all your subtle arguments will avail you nothing. In the name of mercy, therefore, I humbly beseech you not to besmirch your hands by such cruel deeds.

That this question should be put to me in this way at this late hour of the day surprises me. I have already admitted that there would be violence in killing the monkeys. But what these professors of ahimsa do not seem to realize is that even so there is *himsa* in stoning or otherwise torturing them. By restricting the meaning of ahimsa to non-killing we make room for nameless cruelties in this country and bring the fair name of ahimsa into disrepute and if we continue like this we shall as a nation soon forfeit our proud title as specialists in ahimsa. What I want is not only to be saved from killing the monkeys but from stoning or otherwise hurting them as well. That is why I have invited suggestions from such readers of this journal as believe in ahimsa. But instead of helping me, most readers have responded only by bombarding me with angry criticisms without even troubling to read my articles, much less to understand them; and even "A young heart" has not been able to avoid this pitfall. I can understand an honest difference of opinion, but what can be the use of advice based on assumptions not in the least warranted by my writings?

THE HINDU-MUSLIM QUESTION

The third question adverted to by "A young heart" is that of Hindu-Muslim unity. I cull the following sentences from his observations:

Thinking that your efforts at establishing Hindu-Muslim unity have proved fruitless you are sitting with your lips almost sealed in this matter. That does not seem to me to be right. You may keep your silence on the question of unity, but do not you think that it is your duty to ascertain facts whenever there is a communal disturbance and after full consideration to express your opinion on merits? You may not take an active part but how will

> it injure the interests of the country if after giving an impartial hearing to both the sides you frankly speak to whomsoever might appear guilty in your eyes? The attitude that you have taken up with regard to the Godhra riot and Surat is, to be frank, hardly proper. Where is your valour gone now which you displayed abundantly on other occasions by calling a spade a spade? Good God! I am really surprised at this attitude of yours. I humbly ask you to advise the Hindus, if they cannot observe ahimsa as defined by you, to fight, in self-defence, those who assault or murder them and their dear ones without cause.

I have already explained my position in this matter. I trust it is not out of fear that I do not air my views on this subject nowadays. But when it may be out of place for me to write or when I have not sufficient material to form an opinion or when the matter does not fall within my province, I consider it to be my duty to maintain silence. At present neither of the two parties is prepared to accept my solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem. There is therefore no occasion for me to express my opinion.

There remains the question of expressing opinion on the riots that have taken place or might take place in the future. When the subject itself, as I have already pointed out, has gone out of my province, there can be no question of my expressing an opinion on events that may arise. Again, if I proceed to express opinion on such matters before scrutinizing what both the parties might have to say on them, my conduct would be justly held to be improper and even impertinent. There would also be the danger of my misjudging. And how can I set out to make an inquiry into a question when I know that I have no ready solution for it?

Let no one however run away with the idea, from this, that I have washed my hands of this question for good. I am simply biding my time like an expert physician who has faith in his remedy. It is my firm belief that mine alone is the sovereign remedy for this seemingly incurable communal disease and that in the end one or both the parties will willy-nilly accept my cure.

In the mean time those who want will fight, in spite of whatever I might say. Nor do they need any prompting from me. This I have said repeatedly; I do not want any cowardice in our midst. The heroism of ahimsa cannot be developed from cowardice. Bravery is essential to both *himsa* and ahimsa. In fact it is even more essential in the latter for ahimsa is nothing if it is not the acme of bravery.

Young India, 3-1-1929

387. HOW TO MEET BASE INNUENDOES[1]

What should a public worker holding a responsible position in public life do if he is subjected to dishonest and malicious innuendoes or is falsely accused of misappropriation of public funds? Should he bring an action for libel against his calumniator in a law-court? Will it not be his duty as a responsible public worker to do so, and is it not likely that if he fails to do so some unwary people would be deceived? And if one may in no circumstance bring an action in a law-court, is there not a real danger that unscrupulous persons might take shelter behind a brazen silence and defy public scrutiny into their malpractices while pretending to follow your advice? Again if recourse to law-courts must be ruled out altogether, does it not follow that some other remedy against the evil of unrestrained libel should be found?

These are some of the questions arising out of the case of a prominent public worker that I have been called upon to answer. My reply is that slander and misrepresentation have always been the lot of public men. The way to overcome the opponent is by non-resistance and that is the remedy needed in the present case. Nor is a successful action in the law-court by any means a conclusive proof of a man's innocence, for do we not meet everyday instances of scoundrels who use the certificates of law-courts as a cloak to hide their sins and to continue with impunity their practices? Again can any penalty that a law-court may inflict stop the poison of evil tongues from spreading? Would not what was said openly before be now, for fear of penalty, propagated secretly and in whispers and thus be rendered all the more insidious? My advice, therefore, generally speaking, is that one should take no notice of baseless and malicious imputations, but pity the calumniator and always hope and pray for his ultimate conversion. As for the public it can always take care of itself against dishonest servants. Corruption will be out one day however much one may try to conceal it, and the public can, as it is its right and duty, in every case of justifiable suspicion, call its servants to strict account, dismiss them, sue them in a law-court, or appoint an arbitrator or inspector to scrutinize their conduct, as it likes. Therefore instead of suing one's calumniator in a law-court for false allegations of corruption, the best and the only right course would be for the public to prevent actual corruption from taking place by maintaining a sleepless vigilance and for the servant to keep the public on the *qui vive*.

If this course is found to be insufficient and some further action is felt to be necessary, the author of a libel can be called upon to bring his charge before a *panchayat*. The aggrieved party can offer

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 2-12-1928. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

at the same time to appear before it to vindicate its position. Of course this remedy would be useless when the calumniator is an altogether unscrupulous person. For he will never agree to appear before the *panchayat*. But where allegations are made by respectable persons offering to produce evidence in support, reference to a *panchayat* would be found to be most useful.

'But what about the villain who fakes a silent *hauteur* to mask his villainy,' one may ask. My reply is that if the people are vigilant and wide awake such a person will not be able to maintain his mask for long, while, if on the other hand they allow their vigilance to go to sleep, not all the law-courts in the world will be able to prevent the practice of villainy. For we daily see how law is unable to touch gentlemen rascals dressed in spotless white, and going about in motor-cars. The fact is, as Carlyle has observed, that the fool and the scoundrel go always hand in hand. Where there is one the other is bound to be. But a true and just man need not worry on that account. Let him remember and ponder over what Dadu has sung:

My reviler is like a respected and dear brother unto me.
He labours for my good for nothing,
And helps to purge me of my countless sins
And comes to my aid without expectation of reward.
He loses his own soul but that of others he saves;
He is my dear friend—my saviour;
O Ramdev, pray to God for his long life—may he live for ever.
My reviler is my greatest benefactor, says Dadu,
For he brings home to me my littleness.

It is enough if one is true to one's own self: one can then safely let the "turbid streams of rumour flow".

Young India, 6-12-1928

388. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

ASHRAM, WARDHA,
December 2, 1928

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. You are right in what you say about labour and your method of counting the payment is also correct. When such paid labour is required, those who can put off their other work may offer to do such labour after finishing the work which they do as sacrifice. They may let go their study on that day and utilize the time

in labour. The labour which they put in should be of a useful nature, otherwise it would amount to our giving them some charity out of the Ashram funds.

Here, too, it has rained. They say it is normal in this part. You did right when, having missed the post, you did not send a telegram and thereby saved 12 annas.

My letter had two sheets only. You should not have found the continuity broken at any point. I put down the figure 3 for the third page. I do not write the page number on the back, but keep it in mind.

I know that the cloth-lined envelope is very costly. I have not succeeded in getting Subbiah, Pyarelal and Mahadev to use it, but this is how it should be used. It should be opened with a knife and closed every time with a fresh slip of thick paper. On the side on which the address is written, a piece of thick paper should be pasted afresh every time. If used thus, we can make such an envelope last a long time. Do you not know that in prisons some such device is followed in order to save expenditure even on ordinary covers?

If you are not troubled by the question raised by Shankerlal, I certainly am not. If Narandas works in obedience to you and the organizational set-up, our purpose and that of the organization will be met. When Shankerlal raises the question with me, I shall discuss it. The question before me is not how to satisfy him but how to satisfy you. You should, be able to do your work smoothly and may ask me for whatever help you need for that purpose.

It was good news that Shankerbhai has recovered. Tell him that he should not fall ill again.

Have you given any sewing work to Gangadevi? If you have not, please do.

I got today's post in the afternoon. Chi. Narandas is upset. I send his letters to you. If all of you agree, let them all remain [in the Ashram] on the basis suggested by Chi. Narandas and let Radha's name be counted for payment. I have objection against this arrangement, too, but I do not wish to be obstinate. I would certainly not hurt Narandas.

I thought it was decided to retain Shanabhai. If there is nothing more than suspicion against him, it would not be proper to ask him to leave.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro- 7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 18-9

389. TELEGRAM TO DR. B. C. ROY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA
[*December 3, 1928*][1]

DR. BIDHAN ROY
36 WELLINGTON STREET, CALCUTTA

RECEIVED LETTER WHICH IS VARIANCE WITH PUBLISHED REPORTS ABOUT EXHIBITION. SEEMS TO ME TOO LATE NOW FOR ASSOCIATION DO JUSTICE TO EXHIBITION. BUT AM LIFTING BAN LOOK TO YOU SEE LOCAL KHADI ORGANIZATION.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13316

390. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
[*December 3, 1928*][2]

KHADISTHAN
CALCUTTA

RECEIVED OFFICIAL LETTER ABOUT EXHIBITION LIFTING BAN. YOU MAY ARRANGE KHADI COURT IF POSSIBLE .

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13318

391. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, A. I. S. A., AHMEDABAD

[*December 3, 1928*][3]

CHARKHA
AHMEDABAD

HAVE JUST RECEIVED OFFICIAL LETTER. THOSE EXHIBITORS WHO WISH MAY ATTEND. MAKING PRESS STATEMENT[3].

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13317

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. B. C. Roy", 3-12-1928.

[2] In reply to his telegram received on December 3 at Wardha; *vide* also "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 3-12-1928.

[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Free Press and Associated Press", 3-12-1928.

392. TELEGRAM TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

[*December 3, 1928*]

BANKER
MIRZAPUR, AHMEDABAD

ASSOCIATION BHANDARS SHOULD EXHIBIT IF THEY CAN.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13307

393. TELEGRAM TO FREE PRESS AND ASSOCIATED PRESS

[*December 3, 1928*][1]

FREE PRESS, ASSOCIATED PRESS

VIEW BENGAL COMMITTEE'S DECISION GANDHIJI ADVISES THOSE KHADI ORGANIZATIONS PARTAKE CONGRESS EXHIBITION WHO CAN DURING SHORT TIME LEFT DO SO.

From a photostat: S.N. 13319

394. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
December 3, 1928

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

Your letter makes sad reading. It is remarkable you accuse me of not having dealt fairly by the Committee whereas I should be the accuser. I had felt that I had shown the most delicate consideration to the Committee and in the attempt had suppressed myself. Lest at the last moment the Committee might feel offended, I have forced myself on your attention and tried to argue with you all and then to let you decide what you liked without exposing you to any criticism from me in the Press.

But to business now. If the published reports are true, your letter is not. Here is a tit-bit. The Exhibition authorities have approached all local Governments for exhibits! But perhaps you do not know what has happened.

Nor do I like this deference to Panditji's wishes. I have prom-

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 3-12-1928.

ised that I shall attend the Congress in any event. Why should the Committee not work out its policy unhampered by personal considerations? Why should there be a public misunderstanding because I do not attend the Exhibition or the A.I.S.A. is not represented?

But there it is. You have rescinded your previous resolution. I have therefore wired to you and the Secretary of the A.I.S.A. as also Satis Babu, the Bengal Agent. I do not know how far it will be possible to organize the khaddar court. You will please now get hold of Satis Babu and other workers and do whatever is possible.

My grief was there. Your decision and letter have not eased it. There is an unreality about the whole thing. O God, lead us from the unreal to the Real.

There is nothing personal in this letter. It is the outpouring of a troubled soul.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY
36 WELLINGTON STREET, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13758

395. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

December 3, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have all your letters. The whole affair is bad. But we must not resist. Therefore I have wired you.[1] Please inform the other centres. You should now do whatever is possible. I have sent a wire[2] to Shankerlal too and issued a brief Press message[3]. Here are copies of correspondence.

No more today but love of which you will need now much.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 8921

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 3-12-1928.
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Shankerlal Banker", 3-12-1928.
[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Free Press and Associated Press", 3-12-1928.

396. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
December 3, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

My love to you. It was all done bravely. You have braver things to do. May God spare you for many a long year to come and make you His chosen instrument for freeing India from yoke.[1]

Yours,

BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, p. 68

397. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

WARDHA ,
Silence Day, December 3, 1928

SISTERS,

I have your letter written by Gangabehn. There is some point in what you say about the noise. But the responsibility for it lies not only with the children but also with the adults. Again, it should not be difficult for you to observe silence or to make the children observe silence while dining or working. The main point is this: You should not think that if there is no talking, time will hang heavily while dining or working; or that the children cannot be kept quiet. There are millions of men who do their work quietly. You know, do you not?, that labourers in big factories are forced to keep silent while working. Why cannot we voluntarily do what they have to do under compulsion?

Hereafter Kakasaheb will be with you once a week. Do you still insist on Valjibhai too coming there? If I press him, he will come; but I know that he is always too busy and so, as a rule, I do not like to put any more burden upon him, if I can help it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3683

[1] Explaining this in his book, Jawaharlal Nehru had written: "I think this letter was written soon after the incident at Lucknow when many of us demonstrated peacefully against the arrival of the Simon Commission there. We were severely beaten by the baton and lathi blows of the police."

398. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Silence Day [*December 3, 1928*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your letter. You are busy doing more work even than when you were in the [Udyoga] Mandir. I am happy that you are doing it in the right spirit. Write to me when you can.

I have sent Harker's article for inclusion. She asks questions about *Young India*. I suggest that you yourself should reply to her.

As for other news, please be satisfied with what Pyarelal and Subbiah tell you in their letters.

I have read your note and understood the views you express in it. I am certainly not unhappy that you do not write[2] or spin. I would feel hurt if I thought that you were not doing something through lethargy. A sincere person may or may not do a particular thing, it is all the same. I include you among such sincere persons.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Send on the accompanying letter to Manilal at his present address.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11445

399. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

WARDHA,
December 3, 1928

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

Sushila has asked us to suggest a name for the baby girl. But Nanabhai has already cabled the name and, therefore, there is no need to give her another name. The name "Dhairyabala" is also a good one. It requires many other virtues to be able to cultivate patience[3] which has no taint of lethargy in it. Bhartrihari described patience as father. "He whose father is patience and mother is forbe-

[1] From the reference to Emma Harker's article "The Lion of the Punjab" which appeared in *Young India*, 6-12-1928. The preceding Silence Day was on 3-12-1928.

[2] That is, keep a diary; *vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai," 30-11-1928.

[3] *Dhairya* means 'patience'.

arance, whose wife is undisturbed peace of mind", etc. If you do not know the full verse, please let me know and I will give you the text.

Tara and Shanti were here for four days. I met Nanabhai on the way [to Wardha]. Kishorelal will stay for the present at Vileparle.

With me are Ba, Pyarelal, Subbiah and Chhotelal. Mahadev has had to go and stay at Bardoli.

We are all right, all of us.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

If you can, collect contributions there for the Lalaji Memorial Fund.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4745

400. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Silence Day [*December 3, 1928*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I get your letters regularly. I am writing to Babuji[2] about you.

Are the children regular in coming to Bal Mandir? Are they attentive? Has Bimla fully recovered now?

I think it is time for you to leave for Dwarka.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3338

401. MY NOTES

December 4, 1928

LALAJI MEMORIAL

The reports that I have received while writing this on the 4th December are hopeful. By contributing Rs. 15,000 on his own behalf at the Wardha meeting, Shri Ghanshyamdas Birla has made a good beginning. A committee consisting of worthy persons has been for-

[1] From the reference to Prabhavati's proposed trip to Dwarka; *vide* also "Letter to Prabhavati", 9-12-1928.

[2] Brij Kishore Prasad

med in the Punjab and it hopes to collect a good amount. I hope that Gujarat and the Gujaratis will as usual contribute a share which will be worthy of them. If we have genuine feelings for the "Lion of the Punjab", if we accept the worthiness of this Memorial and if we have confidence in those who have formulated the scheme for this Fund as well as in the trustees, it should not take long for it to be fully subscribed. And it is a matter of prestige for us that not much time should elapse before this is done. Hence it is my hope that Gujarat will pay up whatever is to be subscribed as soon as possible. The students of Shraddhanandji's Gurukul had years ago, by sending for the South Africa struggle Rs. 300 to Rs. 400 earned as wages for working as labourers, answered the question of what should be done in such cases by students and salaried workers, who do not have large sums of money to spare and are hardly able to make both ends meet. Some can contribute their share by working as labourers, while for those who are unable to do so, or though being able do not find such an opportunity, the way is open on such occasions to give up certain pleasures for a specific period of time. If they are addicted to anything, they can save money by giving up their addiction for a short or long period or they may give up an item of food, as was done by the women-teachers and girls of Kanya Gurukul in Dehra Dun at the time of the struggle in Bardoli. Hence there are many ways open to those who wish to contribute to this Fund. We have formed an evil habit that we do not contribute anything until someone approaches us for funds. It is to be hoped that no one will wait for people to approach him for donations in the case of a memorial for a patriot like Lalaji.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-12-1928

402. LETTER TO ACHYUTANAND PUROHIT

WARDHA ,

December 4, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter as also your telegram. I have not said anything to you because I am unable to fix the date. It will be somewhere between the 20th and 23rd instant.

There will be besides my wife three or four with me about whom you need not worry to make any special arrangements. They will stay where you put me up. No special arrangements are necessary for me either. I would like you to save every pice you can of the funds that

you may collect. You need not send for any fruit for me. Ordinary simple food will do. All that you may arrange to have ready is two pounds of goat's milk. One thing I do need is a commode kept in a clean place. You will please not send for any fruit from Calcutta.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13009

403. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
December 4, 1928

MY DEAR PADMAJA,

You must not mind this dictated letter. It is better that I dictate than that I delay writing to you. What on earth are you doing with your health? Is it not more your mind that is at fault? Why can't you make up your mind to be and remain healthy? This set back in your health is bound to trouble the poor old songstress[2] in America. You must become a good daughter.

SHRIMATI PADMAJA NAIDU
HYDERABAD

From a photostat: S.N. 13013

404. LETTER TO DR. B. S. MOONJE

WARDHA ,
December 4, 1928

DEAR DR. MOONJE,

I have just received your letter. If you want an early date and if it is convenient I suggest Thursday next at 4 p.m., i.e., 6th instant; if that day is not convenient, 11th Tuesday at 4 p.m.

Yours sincerely,

DR. B. S. MOONJE
NAGPUR

From a photostat: S.N. 13014

[1] In reply to her letter dated November 16, which read: "I have been very bad for the last fortnight" (S.N. 13001).

[2] Sarojini Naidu

405. LETTER TO H. M. JAGANNATH

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 4, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The signatories to the appeal propose to raise five lakhs to be utilized for the promotion of the political activities of Lala Lajpat Rai. These naturally include the welfare of the suppressed classes. You may know that some workers of Lalaji are devoting their energy exclusively to the service of the suppressed classes.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. H. M. JAGANNATH
PRESIDENT
THE ALL INDIA ARUNDHATEEYA CENTRAL SABHA, MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 13016

406. LETTER TO SIR MAHOMED HABIBULLAH

WARDHA,
December 4, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. You will note that I have not said one word as yet about the appointment and I propose to retain my silence as long as I can.

Yours sincerely,

SIR MAHOMED HABIBULLAH KHAN BAHADUR, C. I. E.
MEMBER, VICEROY'S COUNCIL, NEW DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15094

407. LETTER TO SECRETARY, KHALSA DIWAN SOCIETY, VANCOUVER

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 4,1928

THE SECRETARY, KHALSA DIWAN SOCIETY
SIKH TEMPLE, VANCOUVER B. C.

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. We were all wondering what this money was for and from whom.[1] I now enclose receipt for the amount which will be utilized as desired by you.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 15116

408. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

Tuesday [On or after *December 4, 1928*][2]

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I received both your letters concerning non-violence. I have preserved them. I am despatching the matter about Bhai Bechardas for *Navajivan*. That article could have been more clearly written. Had the tales been given, they would have been useful to scholars. But now I shall not take more of your time in this matter. It is absolutely essential to bring light to the present atmosphere of darkness and depression. I have received another pure-hearted letter from the editor of *Jain Jagat*. He writes that the material provided by him is insufficient. He writes that the present idea of non-violence lacks clarity of conception and is devoid of spirituality. I for one experience this at every step . . . Pure behaviour is the only true means to get over that deficiency. Therefore the article does not interest me. If pure non-violence does not enter our practice, what purpose can be

[1] The addressee had sent Rs. 1,000 for the Bardoli struggle without specifying for what purpose it should be spent. Meanwhile the struggle had come to a successful conclusion. Thereupon he wrote that the money might be used for relief of those who suffered during the struggle in Bardoli.

[2] From the contents this letter appears to have been written about the same time as the letter to the addressee dated November 30, 1928; *vide* "Letter to Ramniklal Modi", 30-11-1928. The Tuesday following that date was December 4.

served by learned articles? If we can keep our behaviour pure the scholarship of the whole world will come to our help. Hence, preserve your health and allow yourself as little as possible to be dragged into the whirlpool of thoughts. In fact I would say that you should not allow yourself to be so dragged. We should certainly devote ourselves to the thoughts that are necessary to improve our behaviour. The rest of the thoughts are mere whims. I do wish you would give me news of your physical state.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4185

409. LETTER TO SIR JAGDISH CHANDRA BOSE

WARDHA,
December 5, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I am stupid and live as in a well not knowing what goes on outside its walls. I came to know of your birthday only yesterday. Though late, pray let me add my greetings to the many you have received. May you be spared long to enable India to share your ever increasing power and greatness.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: G.N. 8736

410. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

ASHRAM, WARDHA,
December 5, 1928

BHAISHRI VITHALDAS,

I got your letter. I understand the position about honey. I have been witnessing good evidence of our economic, physical and intellectual poverty.

You have thought more than I have about methods of khadi propaganda. If you get financial help in your efforts, you will be able to do better work. That is, you will be able to look after the khadi work in the whole country. See that you acquire excellent health. Instead of remaining in Bombay and getting crushed under the burden of work there, you should better go to Matheran and improve your health. I trust you are not grieving over Velabehn's passing away.

Remember Narasinh Mehta's utterance:"Welcome the snapping of the bond, I shall cultivate *bhakti* for Shri Gopal the more easily."

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9765

411. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Wednesday [*December 5, 1928*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I can get no time at all to write to you. But you should not behave as if you, too, had resolved not to write this time.

Do you remember I gave you a wire about Surajbehn's husband to be sent to Karsandas? I am sure I gave it to someone. But Karsandas does not seem to have received it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I could not send to you any matter from *Young India*. From the articles which appear you may translate any which seem to you worth translating and inform me immediately.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11441

412. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

WARDHA,
Wednesday, December 5, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

I got your letter. I expect to get from you detailed news about the Ashram. Does the kitchen run punctually? Is the noise less? Does everybody help Gangabehn? Is anyone ill? How does Balbir behave? How does Padma fare?

You want to hear about me. If I get some time, I would certainly write. As it happens, however, I get no time here even to talk with anyone. I keep Pyarelal also very busy with work, so he too cannot

[1] From the reference to Mahadev Desai's failure to send the wire to Karsandas (*vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 9-12-1928.), it is evident that this letter was written before the other.

spare time. Be patient for a while.

Prabhavati must have left now, and so I do not write to her.

If I knew that Vidyavati[1] was there, I would have written to her. If she is there tell her that she ought not to fall ill.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1762

413. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Wednesday [*December 5, 1928*][2]

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I would advise you to show to Narandas all the letters I write to you. This will make your path easy and will help him too. I have written to him advising him that he should not keep aloof.

If Santokbehn wishes to leave for Rajkot, let her do so. You may certainly see her and try to dissuade her. I shall be happy if she likes the Ashram atmosphere and decides to stay on. But I would not like her staying in such a condition of mind that I would have to strive every day to keep her pleased and contented.

It is natural and desirable that one's relations should become one's co-workers in national work. The difficulty comes only when the motive is of self-interest. Once we are convinced that we are pursuing no personal interest, we can invite all our relations to join us; if they do join, it will be only to offer themselves as oblations in a sacrifice.

Rama's co-workers were his relations, and so were Yudhishthira's. The co-workers of Prophet Mahomed, too, were his relations. Jesus's co-workers included a brother of his. Lord Salisbury had surrounded himself with relations. When he was criticized for that, his reply was: "If not my relations, whom else shall I sacrifice? In whom, if not in them, should I put my trust? If I had more relations who were worthy of the honour, I would sacrifice them too. For me, this is a sacrifice and not a means of amassing wealth."

Balfour was a relation of Lord Salisbury's. We find innumerable instances of a contrary nature, too, in which relations are fixed up in

[1] Prabhavati's sister, daughter-in-law of Rajendra Prasad

[2] From the reference to "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 29-11-1928. Wednesday following November 29 fell on this date.

places to help them serve themselves. The upshot of this is that to one who is prompted by unselfish motives, relations and non-relations are the same. When one is prompted by selfish motives, what difference does it make if the co-workers are not relations? Even so, all of us, as you say in your letter, should be careful. I am convinced that my experiment has not cost me anything. You may also believe this to be true about our equals. In our country, equals cannot easily work together, because the spirit of self-sacrifice has not yet been fully developed.

I have not understood exactly your question about the goshala. You will have to explain it further before I understand it.

We should let Lahoriram stay with us as long as he is not confined to bed and goes his way. It will be another matter if he cannot control his palate. If we are convinced that he is a good man, we cannot send away a person who has joined us. The case would have been different if we had not admitted him when he first came.

It should be enough if we keep ourselves ready to lay down our lives when robbers raid the Ashram. God will preserve our honour. The best thing would be that one of our men should go and work among the robbers.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS .]

I have not revised the letter after writing it. The envelope arrived yesterday in a torn condition. It should have been tied up with a string.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 16-8

414. NOTES

'HER EYES AS OUR EYES'

Mr. N. M. Bell is the joint editor of a tiny monthly called the *International Sunbeam* published at 2 shillings per annum at 59 Mary's Road, Christchurch. He has favoured me with a copy of his monthly which contains the following interesting article.[1]

India sees life through different windows than we do; but her

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

eyes are as our eyes, and she has the same desires as we have.

Total world disarmament, the only material safeguard of peace, should be the outward and visible sign of that inward mental disarmament on which alone outward peace can rest secure. So long, however, as one people is actually subjecting another to itself by superior military might, even the very first step towards this inward mental disarmament has not been taken.

What has this got to do with India? Everything.

When the Russian delegates made their historic proposals for total world disarmament before the Special Disarmament Committee of the League of Nations, what really prevented Great Britain from agreeing? India. In India are some 70,000 British troops and some 1,40,000 native levies, costing some £70,000,000 a year keeping some 350,000,000 Indians subject to British rule. When the Egyptians make their periodic attempt to secure peaceably the independence of their country from British domination, what prevents Britain from granting their request? India. The Suez Canal is the main route to India.

Disarmament would mean to Great Britain the loss of the 'brightest jewel' in the British imperial crown . . . It is a disagreeable saying, but true, that *empires rest on armaments*. . . .

Young India, 6-12-1928

415. ITS GORY CAREER[1]

The certificate granted by the Punjab Government to the police seems to have emboldened the Lucknow police to outdo the Punjab police in the free use of the baton and the spear. The Lucknow police seem according to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to have even used brickbats in order to disperse an utterly innocent crowd. Granted that the processionists were defying orders supposed to be legal, the police, I hold, were not justified in charging the processionists unless injury on the part of the latter to person or property was imminent. I rely implicitly on Pandit Jawaharlal's narrative. According to it the crowd was orderly and well behaved. It was not out to do any harm to anybody. Its motive was known to be a peaceful demonstration against the entry into Lucknow of a Commission that has been imposed upon the people against their will. The exercise by the police of punitive powers in such circumstances was arbitrary, uncalled for and brutal. The behaviour of the crowd in the face of this provocation and in the face of a cowardly assault upon their chosen leader Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and his companions was amazingly exemplary.

[1] *Vide* also "The Blood-stained Path,', 9-12-1928.

Their self-restraint was as great as their leaders'. I claim that no crowd outside India would have retained the calmness that the Lucknow crowd did.

But this calmness is probably mistaken for cowardice by the brave Commissioners who under the protecting wing of an armed police seem to be bent upon continuing their blood-red progress. Innocent blood was spilt in the Punjab and severer injuries seem to have been inflicted by the police in Lucknow on an equally innocent crowd. Two men are said to have been so badly injured as to be in danger of losing their lives. Difficult as the conduct of the English Commissioners is to understand, that of their subordinate Indian colleagues is still more difficult to understand. They do not seem to perceive the widening gulf between them and the people whom they are supposed to represent and whom (some of them flower of the nation) they are content to see trampled under horses' hoofs, charged with batons and driven with spearheads like cattle for the heinous offence of daring to demonstrate against this unwelcome Commission. Well did the enraged father and patriot Pandit Motilal Nehru give a warning to the Government, that "if a violent disturbance takes place in this city or any other part of the country, the responsibility for that would fall upon such officials as misbehaved themselves for the last three days at Lucknow". My fear is that the Government do not mind, if they would not actually welcome, such a disturbance. If a disturbance takes place, they will have another opportunity of showing the red claws of the British Lion and of terrorizing a docile people into abject submission to their imperious will.

For if the Government do not desire an outbreak of violence on the part of the people and if the Commission will persist in their peregrinations, they should notify to the latter that they should instead of going from place to place summon witnesses to a central place and finish their work. But such wisdom and a consideration for popular will are hardly to be expected of the Government.

The duty before the people is clear, to continue their non-violence in the face of the gravest provocation. Then one may safely regard these great demonstrations as so many lessons in non-violence preparatory to the final struggle in which people will willingly and valiantly lay down their lives without the slightest retaliation. That day is fast coming, faster than most of us imagine. So far as I can see, sacrifice of precious lives will have to be made before we come to our own, whether in a struggle wholly non-violent or predominantly violent. I am hoping and praying that non-violence will be maintained even up to the last heat.

Young India, 6-12-1928

416. "FAULT OF MAN"

I know it is very easy of us to give advice; but only those who live amongst the nuisance can realize how destructive monkeys are, and as one who has suffered some small loss at their small, mischievous hands I can sympathize.

And yet is it the fault of man or monkeys—this impasse? Why do monkeys come into the cities, near the dwelling places of men, risking, poor wretches, their lives, and the lives of their dearly loved babies for food?

Said an official to me just recently at Mt. Abu: "The monkeys are too dreadful a nuisance, and yet we are not allowed to shoot them. They get worse and worse every year, I wonder why."

And yet the reason is obvious. From every jungle tree. Jamboo, Karenda and Bod, we see man, with perfect disregard for everything but his own selfish purposes, stripping the trees of their fruit *to the last berry*.

The Bhils of Abu take down hundreds and hundreds of baskets, one sees them rotting at Abu Road.

The sahibs' butlers have learnt to make Karenda jam; it costs only the sugar and the picking.

Man encroaches ruthlessly on the rights of animals and birds, but punishes with severity any encroachment by them on *his* supreme rights.

Do the gods treat men thus? I see in the misery that presses on man . . . the awful reckoning due to this continual encroachment on the privileges of bird and animal.

It is nature's retribution: a retribution that has already come to the sailors on ships who shot the 'Stormy Petrel' whose appearance warned them of storm, shot them to extinction. Men destroyed birds in thousands and saw their dear ones in the grip of the malarial mosquito whose larvae are now too many for man's scope.

Thus writes a fair correspondent who is a lover of bird and beast. Unfortunately for me she adds to my difficulty, does not solve it. Knowing the wrongs done by my kind, am I to give up agriculture and seek the cave, or am I to prevent the monkeys' encroachment? The natural consequence of her reasoning which I do not deny is that the monkeys should have full play of my garden' in other words I should grow for them what my fellowman has robbed them of !!!

Young India, 6-12-1928

417. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

WARDHA,
December 6, 1928

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

Panditji is anxious that I should be by his side as early as possible after his arrival in Calcutta and that I should be staying as near him as possible. He now wires saying that the Reception Committee has arranged to accommodate both of us under the same roof. As you know I have always a large party with me. I am sure therefore that it would be inconvenient for the Reception Committee to accommodate that party under the same roof as Panditji's. I therefore suggest that you reserve a little accommodation for me so that if necessary I may detach myself from my party and stay with Panditji. But if the Committee does not mind, I propose to accept the offer of Sjt. Jiwanlal to accommodate the whole of my party. I have accordingly telegraphed to you today.

I do not know to whom I should really write officially. If necessary therefore you will pass on this letter to the proper quarters.

As at present arranged I reach Calcutta on the morning of the 23rd by Calcutta Mail.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY
36 WELLINGTON STREET, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13312

418. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

WARDHA,
December 6, 1928

I have your letter. Thank you for the consideration underlying it. But I have no choice about volunteers. Any volunteer would do.

I have written to Dr. Bidhan Roy[1] already saying that while some accommodation might be reserved for me under the same roof as Motilalji's, seeing that he wants me near by him, I am accepting the invitation of Sjt. Jiwanlal for myself and party to be accommodated by him. My party would be really too unwieldy for you to take care

[1] *Vide* the preceding item,

of and not all of them would need to be taken care of.

Mohanlal Bhoot may attach himself to me as he has always done so.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE
1 WOODBURN PARK, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13313

419. LETTER TO NIRANJAN PATNAIK

WARDHA,
December 6, 1928

DEAR NIRANJAN BABU,

I have sent you a telegram today about Sambalpur. I leave here on the 20th by passenger and reach Sambalpur on the 21st evening, and leave Sambalpur on the 22nd evening. No great preparations about my comforts need be made. Only goat's milk might be made available. No fruits are to be brought from Calcutta.

I send you now translation of a letter from Sjt. Jethalal Govindji. You have known him through the columns of *Young India*. He is the organizer of the Bijolia centre on the self-sufficiency plan. I would like you to read his letter side by side with the figures you gave me in one of your letters which I reproduced in *Young India*[1] and tell me where he has erred.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure: 1

From a microfilm: S.N. 13762

420. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

WARDHA,
December 6, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

You must have got my telegram[2] about the Exhibition. The whole thing is finished now. You will do what you can. I wonder if they are giving you a free hand.

[1] *Vide* "Help Utkal", 6-9-1928

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 3-12-1928.

I reach Sambalpur on the 21st instant, leave there on the 22nd and reach Calcutta 23rd Mail. I shall have to put up with Jiwanlal. Panditji wants me to be available at Calcutta from the 23rd and I am anxious to give him all the help that I can. He is shouldering a tremendous burden.

As you know Sjt. Birla has been with me all these days and we have been discussing many matters, khadi, etc. I suggested to him that he should take up all surplus khadi to relieve the congestion wherever there may be, so as not to interfere with production. He entertains the idea favourably and may make a cautious beginning at once.

He asked me whether, if he made the beginning with Calcutta and started a khadi shop where he could collect khadi from all parts of India, whether you would not object. I told him that in the circumstances placed by me before him, there was not likely to be any objection on your part.

I have revived my original idea of pooling the prices. But you will consider this proposition and if you think that there is any objection, you will please let me know.

Mahavir Prasad whom perhaps you know and who is a very enthusiastic honest worker and who is at present in Gorakhpur has offered to undertake the responsibility of running the new store for Sjt. Birla. He is proceeding today to Calcutta. I have asked him to see you and discuss things with you. This letter will be in your hands 24 hours after he reaches there.

I hope you and Hemprabhadevi are keeping quite fit in spite of the strain that both of you must be undergoing.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR

From a photostat: S.N. 13762

421. LETTER TO R. VENKATRAM

WARDHA,
December 6, 1928

MY DEAR VENKATRAM,

I have your letter and the issues of your journal. You fairly guessed my general view about journalistic ventures. If you watched me working for full 24 hours, you would have pity on me and not ask me to read any journal quite apart from my attitude. Much as I should

like to, I am much obliged to deny myself the pleasure of reading the literature that is pouring upon me from all sides. You will please therefore excuse me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. VENKATRAM
EDITOR, "INDIAN STATES JOURNAL"
EMPIRE BUILDING, FORT, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 13763

422. LETTER TO ACHYUTANAND PUROHIT

WARDHA,
December 6, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I telegraphed to you today as I was able to fix the date of departure only today. I hope to leave Wardha by the passenger train on the 20th instant reaching Jarsuguda at 13.53 in the afternoon of the 21st instant. There is a train according to your letter immediately after from Jarsuguda for Sambalpur and I should leave Sambalpur the evening of the next day (22nd instant).

That gives a day and a half which I hope is quite enough. I must reach Calcutta on the 23rd instant,

I am unable to give you the number and names of the party that will accompany me, because I am not yet sure whom I should take with me. But you may take it that there will be at least three with me including my wife.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13764

423. LETTER TO WILLIAM I. HULL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
December 6, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

The Secretary of the Ashram, now Udyoga Mandir, has forwarded your letter to me. I shall be delighted to meet you and Mrs. Hull in Calcutta some time after the 23rd instant. My address in Calcutta will be: C/o Sjt. Jiwanlalbhai, 44 Ezra Street, Calcutta, where perhaps you would enquire about the time we can meet.

Thanks. I had Miss Adam's introduction forwarded to me from Sabarmati.

There will be no difficulty to buy a visitor's ticket and this can be done after your arrival in Calcutta as you would be reaching Calcutta early enough for making all arrangements. The Congress meets as you know on the 29th instant.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13765

424. LETTER TO WILLIAM SMITH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
December 6, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

When I was in Bangalore you kindly gave me the names of some trustworthy and well-trained young men who could be had for starting dairies. I have not got the correspondence with me and it may be that the young men whose names you gave are already suited. Could you oblige me with giving me such names and their addresses and their requirements if you know them again? Having received their names I shall put myself in touch with them. I want at least two.

I await your observations upon the little experiment I am conducting at Sabarmati.

I am in Wardha till 20th instant, after which my address for the rest of the month will be 44, Ezra Street, Calcutta.

Yours sincerely,

WILLIAM SMITH, ESQ.
IMPERIAL DAIRY EXPERT, BANGALORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 13766

425. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

WARDHA,
December 6, 1928

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I see nothing suspicious in the fact that Chi. Santok retained those bills with her against the price of the wheat. I can understand how Chi. Narandas may have seen this in a different light.

The capacity for self-sacrifice of Chi. Santok and her children cannot be compared with yours or of anybody else. In such matters we can make no comparisons. The sacrifice by one person of all he possessed may seem insignificant in comparison with a small sacrifice by another person. It makes me unhappy that I do not get from Santok and hers as much as I had expected. This last episode, too, is painful. But in this case I do not wish to go further than Chi. Narandas would like and so I have loosened the reins. If, now, Radha works for payment, let her do so.

You, on your part, should always tell me what you think right and, in all matters in which you may exercise your freedom, you should do so. If you act thus, you will feel that your burden of responsibility has become much lighter. After having taken certain steps, never enter into a discussion about them with anyone. It is another matter if you explain the matter to me, when that is necessary. Instead of comparing yourself with anyone, consult your *antaratman*[1]*;* when that is pleased, when your actions or words are not prompted by partiality or aversion, have no fear at all.

About Shanabhai your decision should be accepted as final. I have written to Shankerlal to see you in connection with the weaving section and decide everything in consultation with you. It is three days since I wrote to him. I agree with your view of the matter. All that remains to consider is how to solve the difficulties that may arise in doing what you suggest. Since the problem has come up, I will solve it once for all.

The news that Kusumbehn still gets fever worries me. I think the fact that I have not brought her with me is also a contributory cause of the fever. Mental agitation aggravates every disease. I have observed that its effect is more pronounced in malaria and similar diseases. She has remained behind, though she was extremely eager this time to accompany me. I do believe that from her own and from every other point of view it was desirable that she should remain there. That is why I insisted that she should stay behind.

Here Chhotalal has once again been confined to bed. In his case, too, the mind has had an important share. He has made other mistakes too. The bakery here is ready, but the first lot of bread turned out was not good. How is bread-making progressing there?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro — 7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 20-1

[1] Inner self

426. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

Thursday, December 6, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

How is this? Fever again? Mental agitation is certainly a contributory cause. I have even left with Ramniklalbhai some Italian pills. If they do not have an adverse effect on you, you should take them for some time. Many persons take these pills in place of quinine. You were probably present when Motilalji praised them. It was he who sent those with Ramniklalbhai. Use them and see if they help you. If you do not wish to take them, I believe you must take quinine for some days. If you take Kuhne bath at the same time, the toxic effects of quinine, if not altogether counteracted, will at any rate be mitigated. My further advice is that, till you are completely all right, that is, for ten days at least, you should live only on milk and fruit. Spend as much as you like. In cases like yours, exclusion of fruit from the diet should be regarded as a crime. You know that during the first spell of fever also it was fruit which had helped you. I assume that you will do what I have suggested.

While the fever is on and as long as the weakness persists, do not be too eager to do physical work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1763

427. TELEGRAM TO KHADI SHOP, SRINAGAR

December 7, 1928

KHADI SHOP
SRINAGAR

YOUR WIRE. KHADI BHANDARS FREE TAKE PART EXHIBITION.

GANDHI

From handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

428. TELEGRAM TO BANARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

December 7, 1928

BANARSIDAS CHATURVEDI
91 UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD, CALCUTTA

YOUR WIRE. ACCEPT PRESIDENTSHIP ON CONDITION SAMMELAN MORE BUSINESSLIKE THAN SPECTACULAR.

GANDHI

From handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

429. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
December 7, 1928

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have your two letters. The last enclosing a copy from Subhas Bose. But before he wrote I had already capitulated on the receipt of Dr. Bidhan's letter copy of which is in your possession together with my answer. You will have seen that I have also sent instructions to khadi organizations to take part in the Exhibition in so far as at this late time in the day, it is possible for them to do so.

Yours sincerely,

PANDIT MOTILALJI NEHRU
ANAND BHAVAN, ALLAHABAD

From a photostat: S.N. 13774

430. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

WARDHA,
December 7, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. I know the difficulties you raise, but this is again a case of self-suppression. I have said my say. We simply take such part in the Exhibition as is possible and with such detachment as we are capable of.[1] It is quite clear that the Committee had expected to

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 13-12-1928.

make a good deal out of mill-cloth exhibition and therefore it is a great thing from their standpoint to have done away with mill-cloth.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13775

431. LETTER TO AKSEL G. KNUDSEN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
December 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND

I wish indeed that I could at once comply with your request. But it is really almost a physical impossibility. The word 'almost' is a polite superfluity. Whilst therefore you have my good wishes, you will please excuse me. But you may select anything you like from my writings for your journal.

Yours sincerely,

AKSEL G. KNUDSEN
BREDGADE
90 SKERN, DENMARK

From a photostat: S.N. 13776

432. LETTER TO BHAGWAN DAS

December 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I hope by proper treatment you may yet get rid of your tuberculosis.

I send you a copy of *Navajivan*. If you wish to become a subscriber, you can do so. And if you are able to read Gujarati, why do you not write in Gujarati?

We are trying here for freedom as much as possible.

Yours sincerely,

BHAGWAN DAS, ESQ.
C/O AUSTRALIA-INDIA LEAGUE
SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA

From a photostat: S.N. 15073

433. LETTER TO CARLO LUCCARO

December 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I am sorry to have left upon you the impression when you came to see me that I was not pleased to receive you. You had come outside the time for visitors and therefore I was unable to give you much time.

Yours sincerely,

CARLO LUCCARO, ESQ.
TAORMINA
SICILY, ITALY

From a photostat: S.N. 15087

434. LETTER TO FRANCISCA STANDENATH

December 7, 1928

I have your letter subscribed also by Satyavan. Of course you will wear exactly what you like instead of my musts and must-nots. Do keep on smiling.

I am just now in Wardha. Mirabehn has come here to see me. She will presently be on the move again. Ba is with me. We are all well.

I hope both of you are happy there. You must be happy.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. FRANCISCA STANDENATH
GRAZ

From a photostat: S.N. 15091

435. LETTER TO KLAAS STORM

December 7, 1928

MY DEAR STORM[1],

Every letter that comes from you gives me delight and pleasure. I am so glad that you are getting on so well. I was delighted to have the card containing a portrait of your teacher and his family.

Do continue to write to me from time to time.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 15107

436. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

December 7, 1928

MY DEAR BHAI,

I have your letter as also the contribution to the Maganlal Memorial. I do not know what other object to commend to your attention. There is of course the untouchability work and there is women'[s] work and there is the general national education work. There is tannery in terms of cow-protection, Hindi propaganda, agricultural improvement; these are the spending departments apart from the activities that can be properly called political. For me the foregoing constructive activities are an integral part of solid political work. The other, that is, the destructive type is absolutely useful and necessary, but it takes up the least part of my time.

What you tell me about Leon does surprise me. With the strictly abstemious life free of excitement that Millie lived when she was bearing Waldo and Leon and the hygienic and natural upbringing that the two boys had, I cannot understand the premature death of Waldo and the trouble with Leon. I suppose that the deadly poisonous atmosphere of London is responsible for shattering even such splendid constitutions as those of your boys. I am glad that Leon has recovered from the serious part of the disease and I hope that he will regain his hearing completely. How I wish it was possible to give Leon an open air life instead of the wretched solicitor's desk.

I am glad you were successful about British Guiana.

The model of the Welsh spinning-wheel had not arrived when I

[1] A trainee in the House of Brotherhood in Holland, an institution which was opened to carry on peace propaganda by Kees Bocke, an engineer and missionary

acknowledged it. It did arrive safely for which many thanks. I have at the Ashram a full wheel of that type. It was sent by some German friend.

The calf incident has provided me with much instruction and an equal amount of amusement. It has thrown on me a tremendous amount of work in that I have to go through dozens of letters or rather essays on ahimsa. The majority of which were not in ahimsa but *himsa* tone. I do not know that I ever held a different view from the one I have now expressed though I had not as clear a perception of it as I seem to have now. You may not remember that when West brought to me a cat whose head was full of maggots and was living in tortures, I endorsed his suggestion that the poor animal's life should be ended by drowning and it was done immediately. And at the Ashram too I allowed Maganlal to destroy rabid dogs.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 15108

437. LETTER TO V. G. TCHERKOFF[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[2]
December 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I hope in the near future to deal with the objections so gently raised by you. Even if I don't convince you in the reply that I may attempt, you will please believe me that expediency[3], as I understand the word, has no place in my scheme of life. Whatever I have done in connection with war I have done believing it to have been my duty for the moment.

Yours sincerely,

V. G. TCHERKOFF, ESQ.
PRESIDENT, MOSCOW VEGETARIAN SOCIETY
OULITZA OGAREVA 12, MOSCOW 9, U.S.S.R.

From a photostat: S.N. 15109

[1] A friend and follower of Tolstoy whose 'objections' were dealt with by Gandhiji in *Young India*, under the title "My Attitude towards War", 7-2-1929

[2] Permanent address

[3] The source however has 'experience'.

438. LETTER TO GERTRUDE MARVIN WILLIAMS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
December 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

Your book[2] came into my hands long before your letter. It came with several requests from friends to read it. I have been carrying it with me in the hope of snatching a few moments to be able to read it, but I have not yet succeeded in finding the time. As soon as I do, I shall certainly read the book and let you have my opinion.

Yours sincerely,

M. GERTRUDE MARVIN WILLIAMS
35 EAST 30TH STREET, NEW YORK CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 15111

439. LETTER TO A. MIRBEL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[3]
December 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

It was a perfect pleasure to receive your letter in such good English. I have no difficulty about understanding what you wrote.

Mirabehn is just at present with me, but she has decided for the time being to travel from village to village in the several provinces of India with a view to understanding still more fully the message of khadi as also to assist the khadi movement with the technical knowledge that she has now gained.

Any little thing that you can send for babies will be accepted with grateful pleasure.

Mrs. Gandhi, Devdas and all the rest are quite well.

I am glad that you are trying to observe *brahmacharya*. I am at present staying in the Satyagraha Ashram, Wardha, which is a branch of the parent body. I return to Sabarmati in January.

Yours sincerely,

A. MIRBEL
126 RUE DE DOUAI, LITTLE NORD (FRANCE)

From a photostat: S.N. 15112

[1] Permanent address
[2] *Vide* "Letter to f. B. Fisher", 26-10-1928
[3] *ibid*

440. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
December 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter as also copy of the Macmillan Company's. I must confess that I do not like the tone of their letter. But I suppose they cannot look at this transaction in any other light but that of a business job, whereas I think I have told you I have never entered into any business transactions about my writings. Nor did I enter into this transaction from any pecuniary motive.

Mr. Andrews is in direct correspondence with you and between you two you may do what you can with the Macmillan Company.

The Macmillan Company are mistaken in thinking that the autobiographical articles will be handed to them in a compressed form. When the chapters come to an end, they will be handed to them just as they are. For I should not have the leisure to compress them, and even if I tried, I should not know how to do so for the Western reader.

I am forwarding copy of your letter to Mr. Andrews.

Yours sincerely,

REV. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES
12 PARK AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 15122

441. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[2]
December 7, 1928

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letter. I think I sent you a copy of the letter from the Macmillan Company, but not that of the letter from Rev. Holmes. I am now sending you copies of both in order to avoid any mistake. You will enter into communication with Holmes and do whatever you like. Personally I don't want anything from the transaction and, if you can get something for the Pearson Memorial, by all means get it.

You will see from my letter[3] to Holmes that I do not like at all

[1] Permanent address
[2] *ibid*
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

the manner in which the Macmillan Company are looking at this transaction. But I suppose they cannot look at it in any other way.

I am keeping fairly well. If you are going to British Guiana, Fiji and South Africa, I don't suppose you will be back before the middle of next year. But I don't mind that if you will promise to keep well and return stronger and healthier.

Love.

MOHAN

ENCL. 3

C. F. ANDREWS, ESQ.

112 GOWER STREET, LONDON W. C. 1

From a photostat: G.N. 2631

442. LETTER TO MESSRS LONGMANS GREEN & CO., LTD.

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,WARDHA,

December 8, 1928

MESSRS LONGMANS GREEN & CO., LTD.

BOMBAY

DEAR SIRS,

I note what you say in your letter dated 3rd December that you do not publish or sell Morris' *Imperialism*. I should however thank you to let me know whether you could procure it for me from some other book-seller, or let me know its publisher's name as also whether it is likely to be available from any other bookseller in India.

In the mean time I should feel obliged if you could send me per V.P.P. at your earliest convenience the following books:

1. Lambert's *Imperialism*
2. Adam's *Law of Civilization and Decay*

I would also request you to send me a free catalogue of books on cotton and cotton industry.

Yours faithfully,

From a photostat: S.N. 15113

443. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Saturday [*December 8, 1928*][1]

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. You should go on patiently doing what you can.

The Hasmukhrai chapter does not surprise me. In outbursts of enthusiasm he wishes to do many things, but cannot do them. I would advise you not to entrust him with outdoor work. If he becomes engrossed in the industrial activities of the Ashram, he will probably forget other things. Let him leave whenever he wishes to. I have no doubt that he is a really good man.

If Shardabehn can sincerely and wholly dedicate herself to service, I would regard the mistakes she has made as the fruit of God's grace towards her. Certainly, she has ability. I am awaiting her letter.

If Radha is ready to work and if the family wishes to stay on, fix her pay. I cannot say whether, after my rather strong letter, they will stay. I expected Radha's letter today.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have written[2] to you regarding Kusumbehn. If you feel that by being forced to remain there she will become weaker day by day and if she is very keen on going over here, let her come.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 22

444. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

WARDHA,
Saturday, December 8, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

You never get well how is that? If your only wish is to come to me and if you think you will get well then please do come. I have written to Bhai Chhaganlal [Joshi] about it.[3] But think about

[1] As in the source

[2] *Vide* ''Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 6-12-1928.

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

Prabhavati. At present, however, your first duty is to take care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1764

445. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[After *December 8, 1928*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. I both like and do not like your suggestion. I like it if Santok, Radha and Rukhi have their heart in the Ashram, if they can tolerate a simple life and like the common kitchen. If, however, they are ready to identify themselves with the Ashram, they should indeed have faith in its ideals and try to live within Rs. 12. They could tell me if they found the sum too small. We would certainly not let anyone fall ill and die. If there is excessive expenditure on account of Manjula, it is certainly not Kashi who will meet the excess. What I yearn to see in them is faith in the Ashram and readiness to live in poverty. I have not seen these in them, nor in others. When I don't see them in Santok and Radha and Rukhi, I naturally feel hurt. We should not allow the atmosphere in the whole Ashram to be spoiled because of their attitude. If the Ashram life does not suit the other inmates, they may leave it. If it does not suit Santok, even then the Ashram must provide for her maintenance. This is how I feel in the matter. But what you brothers say will be final with me. Even among the brothers, it is for you to think over the matter and guide the other brothers and me. I have already written[2] and explained that Radha should be paid a regular salary. I have written to her, but she has not yet replied to my letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-9: Narandas Gandhine, p. 46

[1] From the reference to a regular salary to be paid to Radha, this letter seems to have been written after "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 8-12-1928.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi," 8-12-1928.

446. NOTES[1]

AN UNNATURAL FATHER

A young man has sent me a letter which can be given here only in substance. It is as under:

> I am a married man. I had gone out to a foreign country. I had a friend whom both I and my parents implicitly trusted. During my absence he seduced my wife who has now conceived of him. My father now insists that the girl should resort to abortion; otherwise, he says that the family would be disgraced. To me it seems that it would be wrong to do so. The poor woman is consumed with remorse. She cares neither to eat nor to drink, but is always weeping. Will you kindly tell me as to what my duty is in the case?

I have published this letter with great hesitation. As everybody knows such cases are by no means unfrequent in society. A restrained public discussion of the question therefore does not seem to me to be out of place.

It seems to me clear as daylight that abortion would be a crime. Countless husbands are guilty of the same lapse as this poor woman, but nobody ever questions them. Society not only excuses them but does not even censure them. Then, again, the woman cannot conceal her shame while man can successfully hide his sin.

The woman in question deserves to be pitied. It would be the sacred duty of the husband to bring up the baby with all the love and tenderness that he is capable of and to refuse to yield to the counsels of his father. Whether he should continue to live with his wife is a ticklish question. Circumstances may warrant separation from her. In that case he would be bound to provide for her maintenance and education and to help her to live a pure life. Nor should I see anything wrong in his accepting her repentance if it is sincere and genuine. Nay, further, I can imagine a situation when it would be the sacred duty of the husband to take back an erring wife who has completely expiated for and redeemed her error.

THE TRAGEDY OF A YOUNG COUPLE

A young man writes:

> I am fifteen years of age. My wife is seventeen. I am in a great fix. I was opposed to this ill-assorted union all along, but my father and my uncle instead of paying heed to my protest only flew into a temper and began to

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 9-12-1928. The translation is by Pyarelal.

scold me and call me names, and the father of the girl just for the personal satisfaction of securing a rich alliance married his child to me although I was at that time of tender age and younger than she. How stupid! And why could not my father leave me alone instead of forcing an incompatible match upon me and landing me into a pit? Could I have understood at that time the implications of the thing I would never have suffered myself to be married. But that is now all over and done. What would you now advise me to do?

The correspondent has given his name and address in full but wants the reply to be given to him through *Navajivan* as he is afraid that my letter may not be permitted to reach him. This is a deplorable state of things. My advice to this young man is that if he has the courage he should repudiate the marriage. For neither he nor the girl in question could possibly have had any idea of the vows that were administered to them at the *saptapadi*[1] ceremony when they were married. Since their marriage they have never lived together. It is up to the young man therefore to take his courage in both hands and brave the prospect of being driven out of his home as a result of his repudiation of the so-called marriage. And I would beseech the respective parents of the couple, if my words can reach them, to have pity on their innocent children and not to force a cruel tragedy upon them. A boy of fifteen is just a stripling. He should be going to school or attending a workshop, not be saddled with the duties of a householder. I hope the parents of the couple in question will wake up to a sense of their duty. If they do not, it will be the clear duty of the boy and the girl respectfully to disregard parental authority and follow the light of reason and conscience.

Young India, 3-1-1929

447. THE BLOOD-STAINED PATH

The Government and the Commission do not appear to be satisfied with the senseless beating up of Lalaji and his colleagues. It seems that the Central Government has adjudged the Punjab police to be innocent and given the latter a certificate to this effect. This has provided encouragement to the police in Lucknow, because, if the police in Lahore had no reason to assault Lalaji and his colleagues, the police in Lucknow had even less excuse for attacking Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and his colleagues. And whereas the police in Lahore used only lathis, their counterparts in Lucknow were found to have used spears besides lathis against innocent and unarmed persons. Further, it

[1] An essential ritual in Hindu marriage; literally, ‘seven steps’

also seems from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's account that they demonstrated their courage by showering stones on the people too. Two of these persons are in a critical condition.

In this manner, the Commission's path is stained with the blood of the innocent. The members of the Imperial Commission have, through country-wide strikes, black-flag demonstrations and processions, received due notice that the people do not welcome the Commission although it may have met with the approval of selected Government officials and a few peasants. Some witnesses too may go over to their side. It would be a matter of surprise if from among the population numbering crores in a vast country like India, a few people could not be found to welcome or assist the Commission. It is, however, clear that the majority of the people who take part in politics do not welcome it. The fact that, despite this, it goes round touring from one city to another amounts to nothing but an exhibition of authority. The Commission need not travel from one city to another in search of witnesses. Neither has it to conduct any police inquiry nor make any investigations on the spot, but merely to examine witnesses who have been nominated for that very purpose. It can do this task at smaller cost, with less trouble and without irritating the people who are sufficiently enraged. It looks, however, as if it is ashamed of following this course of action. It wants garden parties to be given for its members, it wants addresses of welcome and deputations to wait on it. All this pomp and show cannot be accomplished by remaining at one place.

However, if the Commission does not realize its limitations and if the Government does not wish to see any violation of law and order, the Government should serve a notice to the Commission, that the people are displeased by its arrival in various cities, that the majority of the people cannot tolerate its presence, that disturbances may break out in cities upon its arrival there, and that therefore it should work sitting at one place. If the Government issue such notice, the Commission would sit in one place but the Government does not wish to have a peaceful atmosphere; it wishes to exercise its authority. Hence it wishes to take round the Commission in procession from one city to another, even at the cost of suppressing the people.

And if my guess is correct, the warning that Pandit Motilal has given the Government will have little effect. Panditji's warning runs as follows: "Your Performance in Lucknow is such that, if any, disturbances now occur there or at any other place, your officers, who for the last three days have been behaving in an atrocious manner, will bear the sole responsibility for them." There is no doubt that despite the indignities perpetrated by these officers, despite the fact that

public leaders have been beaten up, the peaceful atmosphere that the people have maintained can be maintained in India alone. In any other part of the world outbreaks of violence would definitely follow such insults. Some people may well regard this as cowardly conduct. I believe that underlying this is the people's training in peaceful conduct. It is my belief that the people have, to some extent, learnt the lesson of peace which they are being taught since the year 1920. Both the Pandits—father and son—have drawn the very same conclusion and in their speeches have laid emphasis on the need for peace.

If the inferences drawn by Pandit Motilal, Pandit Jawaharlal and me are correct, the peace that has been maintained in Lucknow and Lahore is a good sign. We shall get our verdict much sooner than is generally believed. That verdict may be one which is delivered peacefully or otherwise. The present state of suspense is not going to last long. However, it is also evident that swaraj cannot be secured by the leaders merely suffering blows. There is no alternative before the public but to make great sacrifices, whether violent or non-violent. It is my prayer to God that the people may make sacrifices for upholding the pledge of non-violence which they took in 1920, so that India will gain a prime place in world history in lessons of peace. This so because this world which is filled with violence sorely needs peace, and if today there is any country on the horizon which can show the path of peace it is only India.

While thinking of the blood-stained journey of the Commission, there is one painful fact which is a matter of shame and should not, cannot, be overlooked. Perhaps it may be regarded as something understandable that the insult to the people does not have any effect on the Commission's British members. But it is a matter of shame and sorrow that those Indians who have been appointed subsidiary members of the Commission are putting up with this insult and holding on to their positions. We can see a reflection of our own weaknesses in the behaviour of these members. They are aware that members of all prominent political parties in India have boycotted the Commission. How will the people be able to forget the fact that they have ignored such a boycott?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-12-1928

448. GOOD CARDING

At one time the processing of cotton had become so very common that in all the languages of the world many proverbs and figures of speech which were based on it came into use. If anyone is hypercritical, we say to him: 'You spin yarn which is too fine.' If anyone goes on talking uselessly and is also critical of others, we say: 'Why do you keep carding in this manner?' This indicates that in the art of spinning and carding people knew exactly when the limits had been exceeded either way. As we have forgotten that knowledge today, we have also forgotten the many subtle verbal usages in our language drawn from the processing of cotton. Now as that activity is being revived, those who regard it as a sacrificial act are trying to exalt it as well and are engaged day and night in thinking out ways and means of improving and expanding it. They are aware of the fact that, along with these additions and improvements, the capacity is being gained to supplement the meagre income of the poor. With this idea in view, one who spins in order to serve writes:[1]

Till now I myself was under the impression that cotton could be carded well only by drying it. This correspondent is an experienced person. He has made a careful study of the art of carding cotton. He teaches others and I find his argument well grounded. Hence this letter of his has been published in order that we may learn from the experience of experts like him. I hope that those who are interested in such activities and those who spin regularly will write of their experiences and I suggest that those who spin for sacrificial purposes should imitate the interest taken in this activity by the above writer. Those who perform their sacrificial acts should not do so merely as an onerous duty to be done with; they would take the greatest interest in the activity if they hoped to have daily *darshan* of God in it; they would make it more interesting and would be sorry if they were prevented or had to refrain from doing that activity on any particular day. I have seen devoted Vaishnavas worshipping their Master. Every day they add some adornment to the image. They prepare many kinds of delicacies as offerings and feel upset if while travelling or due to ill health they cannot perform this worship. They either give up all food or at least subsist on the very minimum until they can perform their worship. Nowadays ostentation, false pride and the desire to enjoy oneself have crept into it and it has become part of this worship.

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had condemned the common practice of drying cotton in the sun prior to carding.

That form of worship has therefore become the subject of adverse criticism and those performing it instead of purifying thems-elves very often suffer from lack of character. Such rituals which have originated in the purest of sentiments are being continuously misused in the world. Hence Narasinh Mehta has sung:

> What if one has put on a caste mark or worn a string of *tulsi* beads? What if one counts one's beads and repeats the name of God? All these are merely tricks to earn one's living.

May the great sacrifice of spinning never fall into disrepute.This depends on the purity and understanding of those who perform it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-12-1928

449. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

WARDHA,
December 9, 1928

CHI. MAHADEV,

I got your letter. I have no doubt that your experience will prove very useful. I have some share in Mrityunjaya's[1] foolishness. He asked me whether he could write to me to inquire if he would get an agency in case some newspaper reporters accompanied me. I thought there was no harm. I had never expected such a long business letter. How can I protest now that this is too sharp a thrust?

Trivedi had sent to me, about a month ago, the original of the extract he has sent to you. I have preserved it for use on an appropriate occasion.

I have gone through the portion about the spinning-wheel in R. B.'s speech. I will make use of it.

It would be surprising if Vallabhbhai did not do what he asked others to do. He is out to win swaraj through Bardoli, and he can succeed in that only if he identifies himself completely with the cause. Tell him that before asking you to learn riding he himself should do that. He is not too old for it.

My health is fairly good. In my experiment, which I am carrying on with great caution, I have now included milk of almond and fruits. Your forgetting to send the wire to Karsandas[2] is certainly unpardonable. I had to suffer much for your lapse. Karsandas was in extreme distress. Surajbehn did not receive help when she needed it

[1] Son of Rajendra Prasad

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 5-12-1928.

urgently. But I have always forgiven even unpardonable lapses by you. Hence I forgive this too. Please do not make such a mistake again. In future, even if such a task is entrusted by me, you may tell me that you would be happier not to be burdened with it when you had come to spend only a day or two with me. I remember now that there was no one in the verandah at that time except you, and so I placed the wire in your hand. But do not grieve over the matter now. I have dwelt on it at this length only in order that you may be careful in future. You had also forgotten to give my message to Shantikumar, but that was about a small matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11440

450. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

WARDHA,
Sunday, December 9, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

I got your letter. In a sense your inference is correct. At present, I may be said to be busier than I used to be there. I do not get up early in the morning. I go to bed before nine in the evening. However, I used to have some leisure when I was there. Here, on the other hand, I am all the time writing or dictating something, with my head bent low, and even then I can hardly cope with the work. Of course I do not let the work exceed my strength. It cannot weigh me down with worries. I do the best I can. As a rule I go out for a walk twice a day. In this matter I am able to follow the rule more regularly here.

You ought to improve your health. Do not for any reason miss the benefit of milk and fruit. For the present, live only on these two. If, in addition, you take a little quinine daily, you should not get fever again. For some time eat nothing which is of no benefit to your body.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1765

451. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Sunday [*December 9, 1928*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI

Your letter. Mrityunjaya's letter mentioned Friday as the probable day of your leaving for Dwarka. But having waited for a day and knowing well your nature, I have written.

Do only as much as you can. Do not fall ill through your desire to work to excess. Half the period is over now. I hope to come in January. Learn the rest from the letter to Kusum.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3323

452. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Sunday [*December 9, 1928*][2]

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. You need not be in a panic if Lakshmidas or Mahadev cannot go over there. After all, it is for the Secretary to shoulder the burden.

I can understand Lakshmidas's view of our relation with the Spinners' Association.[3] Both the views, yours and his, can be supported, but your view will be regarded as final since it will be for you to carry out the arrangements decided upon. Whatever arrangements are preferred by the person in charge of a piece of machinery must be made. But the important thing, as I see from here, is that there should be harmonious relations between you and Narandas.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I also feel that Shardabehn's letter is not clear. If you have a talk with her, you will be able to understand her mind better.

[1] From the reference to letter to Kusum Desai; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] As in the source

[3] The relation of the Ashram with the office of the Spinners' Association located in the Ashram

See that you do not imitate others and attempt anything beyond your strength. Take as much milk and other things in your food as you require. God protects my life, for my experiments are inspired from within. What you attempt will be at present imitation. Your duty is to build a strong body with whatever food is necessary for the purpose and to devote yourself to your work. My experiments have not, so far, come in the way of my work. On the contrary, I believe, that they have helped it, for I have gained through them serenity of mind.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 23

453. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

ASHRAM, WARDHA,
December 9, 1928

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have your letter. I have credited into the Lalaji Memorial Fund the cheque which you sent.

I see no need for sending the Parsi or the Irish lady to the Ashram. It will suffice if they write out the various methods of making biscuits which they know. Even though no ghee or oil may have been added, the biscuits must be light.

I read in the *Times*[1] about the 6th or 7th (December), a review of a pamphlet about how to recognize poisonous snakes. I forget the author's name. The review appeared in the "Current Topics". If you can get the pamphlet there, please send a copy.

In regard to Sumant, Shankerlal writes and tells me that it is not necessary to publish any statement about him in newspapers. He has been dismissed.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have got the name of the book:

Poisonous Terrestrial Snakes of British India and How to Recognize Them by Colonel Wall issued by the Bombay Natural History Society.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4790-a. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji.

[1] *The Times of India*

454. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[Before *December 10, 1928*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I send with this a newspaper which contains a report about the Hyderabad State and also a letter from Babu Rupanarayan. I have taken an extract from the report which was relevant to my purpose and drafted a note[2] and sent it for publication in *Young India*. In my note I have also given a framework of the co-operative scheme advocated by Rupababu. Read it and think over the matter and write to me if you wish to suggest any changes.

As regards spinning yarn of five counts, why do you say that we cannot spin yarn of over 20 counts? If you do not get there cotton of the required quality for spinning fine yarn, we get here any quantity of cotton grown from American seed. These days I spin yarn of not less than 30 counts. I find no difficulty in doing so. I do not get even tired in carding the cotton. I hardly take 15 minutes to card 3/4 *tola* weight of cotton and making a sliver from it. I spin yarn of 30 counts from that sliver. I, therefore, require only 3/8 of a *tola* weight of cotton. I have not got the strength of the yarn tested yet. I have told Chhotelal to get it tested. It may not perhaps come to much, but it should be good enough after some experience. That we should spin fine yarn is an old idea of mine. I believe that we should wear whatever coarse khadi we can get and should spin fine yarn and give it to those who require it. Think over this.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-9: Narandas Gandhine, p. 48

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji spinning yarn of 30 counts and not having got the strength of the yarn tested, the letter seems to have been written before "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 11-12-1928.

[2] *Vide* "Khadi in Hyderabad State", 20-12-1928.

455. A MESSAGE

WARDHA,
December 10, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

Your wire and letter were received simultaneously. Here is the message:

"Our patience is proverbial. Let it not be said by the future generations it was the patience of the coward."

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 14609

456. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

WARDHA,
December 10, 1928

BHAISHRI VITHALDAS,

I have your letter. Do you remember that you received a letter from Bareilly suggesting that there should be a separate department for khadi propaganda and that you sent that letter to me? I thereupon wrote in *Young India* on this subject. In response to that, I received one or two hundred rupees. Ever since that time, I have been thinking about the subject of propaganda. But, then, who would undertake this work? As I reflected over this problem, I thought of you. You are already doing something in Bombay. Moreover, you know from experience about the kinds of khadi produced in the country. Probably, therefore, you will understand what propaganda work needs to be done and you will be able to do it. That is why I asked you because you understand more about the problem [than others are likely to do].

If you still do not follow me, please write to me.

I have not yet been able to finish the article about Kashmir.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9766

457. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

WARDHA,
Silence Day, December 10, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

I got your letter. It is good that you have started taking quinine every day. What about hip-baths? It is very necessary to take them. They will definitely counteract the toxic effects of quinine.

You can accept service from Kanti[1]. One who is always ready to serve may certainly accept service from others. This will do for today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1766

458. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

WARDHA,
December 10, 1928

SISTERS,

I have the letter written on your behalf.

You will get information about me from the letter written to the whole Ashram.

All that is required to put a stop to the noise in the kitchen is a firm determination. Once you make such a determination the noise will definitely cease.

If you are not at home with your kitchen work as yet, let me remind you that you cannot think of doing any other for another year. It is best therefore that you make up your mind to like your work.

But the painful incident that has just occurred must set all of you thinking. The incident is not now a secret and it should not be hidden. Therefore I want to discuss it here. Not one but at least three of you were involved in it. It is needless to point the finger of scorn at any of these three because all of us, whether men or women, might be guilty of such misconduct at some time or other or have already been guilty; I want you to learn two lessons from this incident. In the first place we must stick to our kitchen work for it is through it that we came to know about the misconduct. If we live in the shelter of

[1] Harilal Gandhi's son

a home, we can never know our capacity for sin. We realize the extent of it only when a suitable opportunity presents itself. Here such an opportunity occurred, aided by [bad] company. The result was the emergence of the latent sin. The kitchen has in this way proved useful. Secondly there was not enough courage to do things openly, so theft and lying were resorted to. Why should we not do a thing we want to do boldly? Why should we be afraid of appearing as we actually are?

If we like tasty food, why hide the fact? Craving for tasty dishes is no sin. The sin lies in hiding the craving and in secretly indulging in it. Everyone, man or woman, is at liberty to eat whatever he or she desires. That was one of our objects in converting the Satyagraha Ashram into an Udyoga Mandir. Anyone may satisfy his craving for good food, the only restriction is that the good food must be prepared in the common kitchen. None should cook delicacies whether secretly or openly in one's private rooms. One may go out and eat a delicacy at a friend's place, there is nothing to hide in this, or one may keep eatables such as dried fruits and so on in one's room. It is better if such freedom is not availed of, though there is no restriction on such freedom. My earnest request to you is this: Always appear what you really are; whatever you do, do it openly. Never allow yourselves to be unduly influenced by another; if you ever promise to do a thing, never act contrary to it.

Everyone that does kitchen work must strictly follow her routine. It does not look as though you had as yet been able to remove the fears of Gangabehn senior. Every single activity in the kitchen must go on regularly like clockwork.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this letter.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3684

459. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

WARDHA,
December 10, 1928

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I think all of you would like me to give in my weekly letter the details of my experiments in diet. I started feeling considerably weak from the last Wednesday or Thursday. As I had told you, I did not wish to persist in my experiments if I lost weight because of them. Vinoba, too, felt a little unhappy, for he saw my weakness; the weight also had gone down. On Friday, I started taking oranges and other fruits and included in the diet almond-milk. My weight was taken yesterday and it had increased by one pound. The weakness had begun to disappear from the vary day that I included almond-milk and fruits in the diet; there is no trace of it now. I still see, therefore, no need to include milk. I have continued oil. I see no harm done to anyone here through it. The loss of weight and the weakness may be ascribed to no other cause but the sudden reduction of protein in my diet. The only things which are excluded now are milk and ghee. My objection is especially to goat's milk. If I can give it up, I shall have peace of mind. I have no aversion to fruits, fresh or dry. In giving them up I was prompted only by the consideration of expense. I will not, however, insist on excluding either at the cost of my health. All of you will see that the results so far are beneficial. Nevertheless, I wish to make no predictions about the outcome of the experiment. We can judge nothing in fifteen days. We can come to some conclusion only if the same condition is maintained for three months. Let no one, therefore, give up milk in a fit of enthusiasm. But anyone who wishes to try the effect of milk and linseed oil may do so. It is the experience of many here, including of course Pyarelal and Chhotelal, that fresh oil is harmless. It has done Pyarelal and Chhotelal no harm whatever. Subbiah has joined them now, and so has Vasumatibehn. These two have not been in the experiment for many days. It seems, however, that linseed oil, if anyone wishes to experiment with its use, must be fresh. It should not be warmed. You may get the seeds pressed in *ghani*[1] there. The oil can be sent from here, but the railway freight is excessive. If sent by goods train, it will take a long time to reach there. You can instal a *ghani* for about Rs. l00, or Rs. 150. But the best course just now is to arrange with the owner of a

[1] Indigenous oil-mill

ghani in the city. Of course I do not insist that this matter be taken up. We experience many difficulties, and they will remain; that is why I merely set down here the effects of excluding ghee and make a suggestion about how to get the oil. Two other effects of the oil have been observed, and they are these: it acts as a laxative and stimulates appetite. It is Pyarelal's experience that, instead of weakening, it stimulates appetite. It is the experience of the people here that it acts as a laxative. Personally I can say nothing positive about its having such an effect.

And now another subject.

The noise in the kitchen there must stop. I expect to see this outward reform when I return there. It should not be difficult for anyone never to speak, unless quite necessary, while eating. It should also not be difficult to keep the children quiet.

My second suggestion is that some restriction should be placed on the quantity of vegetables served. Whatever the vegetable that is cooked, the quantity per head should not exceed 10 tolas. According to medical science, more than this quantity of green vegetable is not required. I hear that attendance at prayers is again becoming thinner. It should not be necessary for me to explain at this hour of the day that no one should expect someone else to stimulate his or her interest in prayers. The interest should be felt within. As the body needs food and feels hungry, so the soul needs and feels hungry for prayer. Prayer is a form of communication with God. So long as our need for attendance at prayers is not the same as that for attendance at meals, for which we require no one to goad us, so long our faith in God is weak; or, though we subscribe to the rules of the Ashram we do not observe them and to that extent we are unfaithful to it and violate the vow of truth. Anyone who realizes this will not remain absent at prayers—whether morning or evening—without some strong reason.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 24-6

460. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

December 10, 1928

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

On Mondays I write letters in the early morning. The post comes later. I have got today's.

The more attentively you listen to the *antaratman*, the purer will your decisions be, you will become purer, more fearless and calmer, and your health too will improve.

I have written to Vidyavatibehn and told her that. . .[1] [of] Berua[2], who is a votary of truth, will never disappoint me.

Even the fanciful experiments of Prabhudas[3] do not displease me. If nobody else, I shall help to get his woollen khadi sold. Acquaint him from time to time with your views and those of Narandas.

Chhotelal has now recovered. If only he would agree, I would send him away. He is a bit conceited and often interferes with affairs for which he has little aptitude. I am patient with him because he is a lover of truth and *brahmacharya*. Though violent by nature, he sincerely believes in non-violence. I see his many weaknesses every day, still I think well enough of him to be patient with him. And so we cling to each other.

I hope the bread which you make there is good.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 26-7

461. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Silence Day, December 10, 1928

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. Please do not spoil your health by working beyond your strength. And do not feel hurt whether others work or do not work or whether they respect you or insult you. Only when you can do this can it be said that your *tapascharya* in the kitchen has succeeded. As you become less sensitive, the work will be done more smoothly and others, too, will help you. Acknowledge whatever help they give. If you see insincerity and false show in anyone, non-co-operate with that person.

How many persons take their meals in the kitchen these days? Do you run short of milk? Do all the persons come for the meals in

[1] As in the source

[2] Name of a village in U. P.

[3] Son of Chhaganlal Gandhi

time? Is there a little more quiet now? Are you gaining on weight? I put on one pound during this week.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 16

462. LETTER T0 BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

December 10, 1928

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. The experiment[1] I am conducting was necessary for my mental peace; I am careful [about it].

On the 20th I leave this place for Sambalpur. I shall reach Calcutta on the 23rd. I hope to reach the Ashram in January.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

What shall I do about the Fund?

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2361

463. LETTER TO ASHRAM CHILDREN

WARDHA,
December 10, 1928

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

Your club has grown. You have elected a little boy as president and appointed another little boy secretary. Now bring lustre to your club and let the president and the secretary be worthy of their positions.

Do remember this: 1. Never depart from truth in whatever you do. 2. Always maintain cleanliness and tidiness. Know the difference between cleanliness and tidiness. A pupil who washes his towel preserves cleanliness. But if he then puts it anywhere crumpled up he is not tidy. Tidiness means that as soon as the towel has dried it should be properly folded and carefully put in its place.

[1] Of giving up milk and taking almond-milk, oil and fruits; *vide* also "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 10-12-1928.

3. Whether you are in the school-room or in the kitchen, for us both are school, and therefore there should be no noise in either place.

4. Keep the rule in everything.

5. Everyone should go for physical exercise and do it according to his capacity.

6. The *yajna* of spinning should be performed everyday. Spinning includes carding. I have suggested to Nara 0ndasbhai that everyone should spin yarn of 30 counts.[1] There is a great demand for yarn of that count and we should be able to meet it.

Blessings form

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/35

464. LETTER TO DURGA GIRI

WARDHA ,
December 10, 1928

CHI. DURGABEHN[2] (BALMANDIR),

What have you done? Will you pass the test when I come there? Have you stopped bring troublesome in class? Are everybody's eyes, ears and nails kept clean? Like the body, do you also keep the mind clean? We should not speak untruth even if we have to die. Do you remember that story about the axe of gold? Do you understand that truth is a million times more precious than an axe of gold?

Let those who are creating noise in the kitchen raise their hands and promise not to do so in future and keep the promise.

The boys and girls ought not to quarrel with one another. The older children should never harass the younger ones. What more may I write?

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/38

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 10-12-1928

[2] Daughter of Dalbahadur Giri

465. LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

WARDHA ,
December 10, 1928

BHAI SAHEB,

I was pained to learn from Ghanshyamdasji that you are being indifferent to your health. You have vowed to live long. You are not going before the attainment of freedom. Then, how is it that you are not taking the necessary care of your health?

I shall meet you in Calcutta.[1]

Your younger brother,

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Hindi : Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/39

466. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL ROY

WARDHAGANJ,
December 11, 1928

MOTILAL ROY
CHANDERNAGORE

YOU HAVE NOT LOST BUT GAINED YOUR WIFE. BEING DISEMBODIED SHE WILL CLAIM GREATER AFFECTION. MAY YOU AND SHE HAVE PEACE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 11036

467. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

WARDHA,
December 11, 1928

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

The issues of "Mandir Samachar" which I get are still illegible. If there is any defect in the machine, please get it repaired. If the fault lies with the person who takes out copies, find out what it is.

On getting my yarn tested, I find that its count is 30, evenness 93 and strength 68. These days the yarn I spin is uniformly of 30

[1] Where Gandhiji was to attend the Congress session in December

counts. I cannot draw more than 160 lengths an hour.

Are you now taking more cow's milk? Does everyone write his or her diary regularly?

I wrote this last night.

Tuesday

I have got your letter.

I questioned Keshu and he tells me that he did not write what you attribute to him. He merely described my condition and suggested that it would be better if Santok and others left the Ashram. I believe that in such matters Keshu keeps himself within limits. Whether or not he does, you should do your duty with firmness. I have stated my views clearly. Give them the facility which Chi. Narandas has suggested and then let them live as they choose.

Do not attach too much importance to what Shankerlal says. That is his manner of speaking. We should admit, however, that there is some truth in what he says and remove our shortcomings.

The members of every institution which has acquired prestige in society tend to become proud. We are not free from this defect. I shall not, however, feel hurt if the office of the Spinners' Association is finally removed from the Ashram. Our aim is to carry a burden, to do our duty, and not to enjoy authority. When one burden becomes light, we may, if we have the necessary strength, accept another. If the khadi section of the Spinners' Association is removed from the Ashram and if we can lend to it the services of our men, we may do even that. But the position is this: the decision in the present case is to be arrived at jointly by you and Narandas. If you two can unite as milk and sugar mix and become one, the department will work and be a success. If there is a gulf between you, it will never work. In that case, it may as well be removed from the Ashram. I am neutral in this matter.

There is no harm if the totals of the entries in regard to spinning are read on Friday. None of us understood whom you meant by Makarani[1].

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have not read the letter after finishing it.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 27-8

[1] A woman belonging to Makarana community in Saurashtra; Gandhiji had given this name to Ramabehn, the addressee's wife. *Vide* also "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 20-12-1928.

468. LETTER TO KUSUM AND PRABHAVATI

December 11, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

I have your letter, and Prabhavati's too. Take this letter as meant for both of you. There is little time now before the post is cleared and I have plenty of work lying before me. You have not done right in stopping oranges. It will do you good even if you take them for a week. I think they are necessary for your health, and there is no doubt that they suit you. Papaya cannot take the place of oranges. Lemon and honey do, but only in some degree, as I see from my own experience here.[1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I understand what you say about yourself too. There was a letter from Vidyavati today. I wrote to her a long letter only yesterday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1767

[1] What follows was written in Hindi.

469. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

WARDHA,
Tuesday [*December 11, 1928*][1]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I got your letter about Rajagopalachari. I like the suggestion. But it is difficult to say whether Rajaji's constitution will stand the strain of this work. Anyway I shall write to him.

How is your health now?

Yours,
MOHANDAS

SHRIYUT GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
8 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLACE, CALCUTTA

From Hindi: C. W. 6163. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

470. TELEGRAM TO DR. B. C. ROY

WARDHA,
December 12, 1928

DR. BIDHAN ROY
36 WELLINGTON STREET

PARTY ABOUT TWENTYFIVE CAN EASILY STAY TENTS. BUT PLEASE LET ME ACCEPT JIWANLAL'S HOSPITALITY.

GANDHI

From handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

[1] This letter is presumably the reply to the addressee's letter of December 8, requesting Gandhiji to induce C. Rajagopalachari to accept the position of the Honorary General Secretary of the Prohibition League of India, in succession to Rev. Herbert Anderson.

471. A LETTER[1]

WARDHA,
December 12, 1928

DEAR FRIENDS,

I have now gone through the copy of the memorandum signed by you all. I have explained what I consider to be the implications of truth and ahimsa. In the memorandum you mention non-co-operation of the Congress which is based on ahimsa, and you mention in the eighth article ahimsa and *satya* as the foundations of religion and yet I saw in our discussion that some of you believe in both truth and non-violence as a policy or, if you like, a temporary creed obligatory only whilst you were attached to the national schools. I have endeavoured to show you that national schools whose foundation is truth and ahimsa cannot be built up when the teachers are half-hearted even regarding the very foundation. At the critical moment they are bound to fail. While, therefore, I honour you for your convictions and the brave manner in which you have stated them, I want you to appreciate my difficulty in trying to find financial support for your institution in any extraordinary manner. It must be also, I suggest, then a matter of honour for you whether you would ask for or accept money through one who is absolutely wedded to truth and ahimsa and for whom they are not a temporary creed but matters of life and death.

In the circumstances, I would like you to consider the whole position and you discuss amongst yourselves what you would have me to do and then Sjt. Tijaray and others who do not believe in truth and ahimsa as their final creed should come over to Wardha and discuss the thing with me and come to a final conclusion. My desire is to help the school to the best of my ability. But I see that there is a moral difficulty which I had not foreseen.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13781

[1] A. R. Tijaray, Principal of Tilak Vidyalaya, Nagpur, in his letter dated November 15, 1928, had invited Gandhiji to inaugurate the annual lecture series of the institution which were to be held between November 20 and 25, 1928. This letter seems to be addressed to the staff and students of the institution.

472. LETTER TO N. C. CHUNDER

WARDHA,
December 12, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I do hope that you are not going to drag me to the Indian National Social Conference.[1] In many respects though I am claimed as a social reformer, I am really a back number and perfectly useless.

In spite of the great weight attached to Sir Sivaswami Iyer's matured views, I am in no sympathy whatsoever with artificial birth-control methods advocated by him so energetically. You may not know that I oppose them uncompromisingly as I consider them to undermine the very moral foundations of society. But of course I have no desire whatsoever to engage in a platform controversy and air my views before the Social Conference. I would therefore ask you to put me out of sight and out of mind for the Social Conference.

Yours sincerely,

N. C. CHUNDER[2], ESQ.
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13782

473. LETTER TO NARGIS CAPTAIN

WARDHA,
December 12, 1928

I had your letter and the cheque. I know you do not expect any letters from me, though you may write an occasional letter to me. I certainly like this one-sided arrangement.

But are you keeping better now? Are you stronger? I have certainly not been more ill than you had believed. As a matter of fact, the illness was only a slight derangement.

Do write to me whatever you like. Are you not coming to Calcutta? Or are you not strong enough? But, if you don't come, do write the promised long letter. I shall try to read it and I shall not

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Satyananda Bose", 9-11-1928.
[2] Chairman, Reception Committee of the Conference

attempt to reply to it unless there is something arising from it which I must say.

MISS NARGIS CAPTAIN
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 13783

474. LETTER TO E. C. DEWICK

WARDHA,
December 12, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I was indeed sorry that I could not be with you in Mysore, but it was not possible. I tried but failed.

I would indeed be delighted to meet Dr. Mott[1]. The only suitable time is likely to be between 7th to 15th January, 1929. So far as I am aware, at present, I am likely to be in Sabarmati during those dates, and, if I am, I should be delighted to receive Dr. Mott at the Ashram. It is however just likely that after Congress I might have to go to Burma when the whole of my programme will be disturbed.

My present dates are: up to the 20th at Wardha, from 23rd to the end of the year Calcutta. My Calcutta address would be C/o Sjt. Jiwanlalbhai, 44 Ezra Street, Calcutta.

Yours sincerely,

REV. E. C. DEWICK
MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 13785

475. LETTER TO ROLAND J. WILD

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
December 12, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I had hoped to be able to give you a reply in full. But I have not been able to get hold of the articles you sent me. I have not them by me in Wardha and I have just discovered that the cuttings that you were good enough to send me were passed on to the Austrian friends who have left India. If you could kindly send me the cuttings again, I would certainly tell you where, in my opinion, I was misrepresented, no doubt quite unconsciously, by you.

[1] Dr. John R. Mott, Chairman of the World Student Christian Federation

If you will send the cuttings to my present address at Wardha, I shall get them more quickly than if you send them to Sabarmati. I am in Wardha till the 20th instant and then go to Calcutta where my address is:

C/o Sjt. Jiwanlalbhai, 44 Ezra Street, Calcutta.

Yours sincerely,

ROLAND J. WILD, ESQ.
"THE CIVIL AND MILITARY GAZETTE", LAHORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 13786

476. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

WARDHA,
December 12, 1928

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have been unconscionably long in replying to your letter. But I know that there was no hurry. In all my plans Jamnalalji is ever with me. I showed your letter to him and told him what I expected of you. He was delighted, but he asked me whether I had made clear to you what the Ashram life means. I told him I had so far as I knew and so far as I could. You know what it is. You know that the vow of *brahmacharya is* obligatory and there is only one kitchen at the Ashram, now Udyoga Mandir. Jamnalalji doubts whether your wife would be able to put up with the Ashram life as it has developed and is developing.[1]

I would therefore like you to confer with your wife and make it absolutely plain to her. Go through every clause of the Ashram constitution which is binding on the Udyoga Mandir. For you to come to the untouchability work is to throw in your lot with the Ashram and make complete surrender to the cause for life, because the work is to be developed through a secretary who would give his whole time and attention to this one cause to the exclusion of everything else. Jamnalalji thinks that it is no use your coming to this work unless you think that the work will be sufficiently interesting for you to absorb your whole time, and that your wife would be in sympathy with your being so occupied. Please confer with her and let me know what

[1] In his letter dated November 14, 1928, the addressee had written: "I have consulted my wife about the terms of my future employment. . . . in the Ashram" (S.N. 13723).

conclusion you jointly come to.

I am here till 20th. I reach Calcutta 23rd instant where my address will be C/o Jiwanlalbhai, 44 Ezra Street, Calcutta.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

SJT. N. R. MALKANI
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat: S.N. 890

477. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Wednesday, December 12, 1928

CHI. MAHADEV,

I understand your difficulty. We cannot suspend publication of the papers for a week. I am preparing from now on. I, therefore, don't think that it will be difficult to publish them. I count on three columns by you. May you win success after success there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11437

478. LETTER T0 KUSUM DESAI

Wednesday [*December 12, 1928*][1]

CHI. KUSUM,

I got your letter and also Prabhavati's. Follow any treatment you like, but do recover and I shall be happy. I have no time to write more today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1768

[1] *Vide* also the following letter.

479. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Not Revised *December 12, 1928*

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. There is no reason for panic. Write thus to your father-in-law:

"Your wish ought to be a command for me. My father wants me to act in accordance with your command. I am faced with a conflict of loyalties since your son keeps writing from America telling me to live in the Ashram and study. He also wants me to study English too very well. I am quite comfortable in the Ashram. Bapuji treats me like a daughter. Ba too is good to me. Arrangements have been made for my stay in the women's section after Rajbanshi Deviji[1] leaves this place. I am quite safe in the women's section. I therefore wish to stay in the Ashram as your son bids. But then I shall do as you say. And I may assure you that you need not worry on my account. While I live here I am quite alert, there are many women in the Ashram and I am on good terms with them all."

You may, if necessary, improve upon the language. Inform your father also regarding the developments. Give all details to Mrityunjaya and send him a copy of your husband's letter.

Whatever happens you should be unperturbed. Remember the *shloka:* "Hold alike pleasure and pain"[2], etc. Be courageous and recite Ramanama.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3342

[1] Wife of Rajendra Prasad and mother of Mrityunjaya

[2] *Bhagavad Gita,* II. 38

480. THE PITFALLS [1]

Describing the incidents of Lucknow in a private letter Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru writes:

> An incident which took place yesterday morning might interest you. I have not mentioned it in my statement. Soon after the mounted and foot police had driven us back near the station, a young man, whom I took to be a student, came to me and said that he could bring me two revolvers immediately if I wanted to use them. We had just experienced the baton and lathi charges and there was a great deal of anger and resentment in the crowd. I suppose he thought that it was a favourable moment to make the offer. I told him not to be foolish. Soon after I found out quite casually that this particular person was known to be in the C.I.D.

Pandit Jawaharlal was safe as he has no secrets. If he finds any use for revolvers in his scheme for the freedom of the country, he will not need the offer from the outsider to lend him one. He will carry it himself openly and use it effectively when in his opinion the occasion has arrived. So he was safe from the blandishments of the C.I.D. And what applies to Pandit Jawaharlal applies in a measure to all Congress-men. For happily the Congress politics abhor secrecy. Con-gressmen have ceased to talk with closed doors; they have shed the fear of the C.I.D.

But the C.I.D. will not be itself if it does not have emissaries whose business among other things it is to expose people to temptations and entrap them in the nets prepared for them. It is difficult to imagine an occupation more debasing and degrading than this, and yet it has been reduced to a science by the chief governments of the world and has attracted to it some of its cleverest brains. Britain takes perhaps the first place in this occupation. Lying in the C.I.D. is cultivated as a fine art. Ponsonby's[2] *Falsehood in War Time* gives a

[1] Gandhiji writing on the same subject in *Navajivan*, 16-12-1928, began thus: "Wherever we turn, the Government has cast their nets far and wide. We do fall into one or the other deadly traps. Some of them are open, some are concealed, and some are tempting. The liquor bars are the open traps, the hidden traps are the C.I.D.; schools, legislative assemblies, courts, etc., are the tempting traps . . . I know this much that only God can save us from these. And to ask for protection of God one should have extreme faith and unlimited determination." He concluded: "If we create in ourselves the spirit of dedication then we can deliver our country this very moment and the liberation of many countries of the world lies in our liberation."

[2] Member, House of Commons

painful record of lying on the part of all the powers that were engaged in the pastime of mutual destruction on the false plea of philanthropy. It is a black record of crimes committed by the nations of whom Britain was not the least but probably the greatest offender. She could have stopped the War if she had been less greedy and less selfish.

Wherever you turn in India you encounter pitfalls. To me every institution—be it the most philanthropic—run by and in the name of the Empire in India has an unmistakable taint about it. That we run to and hug most or some of them is no test of their goodness. It is test of our helplessness, short-sightedness or selfishness. We have not the courage to sacrifice much, in order to save ourselves from criminal participation in sustaining an Empire which is based on fraud and force, and whose chief, if not one, aim is to perpetuate the policy of ever-growing exploitation of the so-called weaker races of the earth.

In a way the C.I.D. is the least dangerous of the traps so cleverly laid by the builders. Those whose exterior is attractive are really the most dangerous of all. We often fall into one of these enticing but deadly traps, before we hardly know where we are. It was for some such reason that the Romans said:"Beware of the Greeks, specially when they bring you gifts." When an enemy comes to you bearing the look of philanthropy, he is to be most dreaded. Would that the youth of the country learnt this simple truth and avoided the pitfalls into which they daily fall even whilst they are cursing the Empire and hoping to deliver the country from the intolerable yoke which is not only ruining the nation economically but is also causing unfathomable moral mischief.

Young India, 13-12-1928

481. JUSTICE RUN MAD

I reproduce elsewhere in this issue the first instalment of a sample of the translation of the Tamil songs of the late Bharati, the Tamil poet, whose songs were the other day confiscated by the Madras Government acting under instructions, or, it is perhaps more proper to say, orders from the Burma Government. The Burma Government it appears in its turn suppressed these songs not by any order of court but by executive declaration. It appears that under that declaration the books of this popular Tamil poet which have been in vogue for the last 30 years and which, as appears from the evidence before the High Court of Madras, were under consideration by the Education Department of Madras for introduction in the school curriculum, are liable to confiscation in any part of India. I must confess that I was

unaware of any such wide executive powers being held by Provincial Governments. But these are days in which we live and learn. This was no doubt a matter falling under the jurisdiction of the Education Minister. But it is becoming daily more and more clear that these Ministerial offices are a perfect farce, even as the legislative chambers are and that the Ministers are little more than clerks registering the will of the all-powerful I.C.S. Therefore the poor Education Minister could do nothing to save these popular books from confiscation. Probably at the time the confiscation took place, he had even no knowledge, or if he had, he was not even told what it was that he was really signing. In due course however the confiscation attracted public attention. Pandit Harihara Sharma of Hindi Prachar Karyalaya and publisher of Bharati's songs, on behalf of his poor widow, could not sit still under the confiscation. He therefore moved the public and the matter was naturally debated in the Legis-lative Council which condemned the confiscation. Pandit Harihara Sharma even petitioned the High Court for an order to set aside what was clearly an illegal confiscation, and because of some understanding that the order of confiscation will be withdrawn, that the books will be returned and that the Madras Government will make reparation to the poor widow, the petition has been withdrawn. But the wrong still remains. One can only hope that the expectations of Pandit Harihara Sharma will be fulfilled and that the wrong will be remedied by the return of the books. But whatever reparation is made by the Madras Government, the sense of wrong will abide and so will the sense of in-security created in the public mind by the action of the Madras Government in slavish obedience to the Burma Government.

Young India, 13-12-1928

482. LETTER TO SARASI LAL SARKAR

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 13, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I shall certainly bear your suggestion[1] in mind and try to enter into a greater self-analysis wherever possible. I have to deal with a concrete question of that character and if you are following the pages of *Young India* fully, you will notice it.

[1] In his letter dated December 1, 1928, the addressee had said that in his opinion the psychological factors were very real things in Gandhiji's life but he did not deal with these factors in his autobiographical and introspective writings.

If you can without inconvenience get hold of the journal[1] referred to by you, I would certainly look at it and if I find anything to controvert, I shall do so.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SARASI LAL SARKAR

177 UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD, SHYAMBAZAR P.O., CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13790

483. LETTER TO SUHASINI NAMBIAR

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 13, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

You have given me a big commission. Whatever answer I may give will be incomplete unless I enter into details for which I have no time. I am sorry. But if you will refer to the pages of *Young India*, you will certainly find the majority of these questions answered and for the rest you will he able to frame your own answers after having read the *Young India* articles. They are to be had in book-form, except the current year numbers, from Sjt. S. Ganesan, 18 Pycrofts' Road, Triplicane, Madras.

Yours sincerely,

SHRIMATI SUHASINI NAMBIAR

441 1ST ROAD, KHAR, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 13791

484. LETTER TO DR. H. W. B. MORENO

WARDHA ,
December 13, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. Why do you think that those who make no mention of Anglo-Indians take no interest in them or their doings? You don't think that because I make no mention of many important things in the pages of *Young India* I am not interesting myself in them. Sometimes mention means not a friendly

[1] *International Journal of Psycho-analysis* published from London, in which Berkely Hill, Superintendent, European Mental Hospital, Ranchi, had published a paper about the unconscious ideas in Gandhiji's mind concerning charkha.

interest but hostility. I could offhand tell you of a dozen things in which I am deeply interested, but which never found any mention in the pages of *Young India* or in my speeches.

My views remain the same that I expressed to you when I had the pleasure of meeting you in Calcutta.

If you have anything special in mind which you think I should deal with please do not hesitate to tell me.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13792

485. LETTER TO REVA DATTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
December 13, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your long letter containing interesting information.

It was a severe disappointment to me that I could not join the Convention[1] at Mysore, where I expected to see many friends. But I could not make time for it.

It is just likely that I should be in Calcutta on the 2nd January and I should be delighted to meet you in Calcutta.[2] My own dates after then would be uncertain, though according to present arrangements, I should expect to be the whole of January at Sabarmati.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. R. DATTA
C/O MRS. HENSMAN
LOCOCK'S GARDENS, MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 13793

[1] Of the World Student Christian Federation

[2] In her letter dated December 7, 1928, the addressee had said that she would be in Calcutta from January 2 to 20, 1929.

486. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

WARDHA,
December 13, 1928

MY DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. I am passing on your reflections on pooling[1] to Ghanshyamdasji.

I am glad you are already in touch with Mahavirprasadji. If you have not known him before, I would like you to come in intimate contact with him. He is an extremely fine man sharing most of our ideals, if not all of them.

Krishnadas is here now, and I am drinking in all the many things that he has to say about you and Hemprabhadevi and Sodepur in general. Only you and Hemprabhadevi may not kill yourselves with work. Those who work in the *Gita* spirit never overwork themselves, because they work with complete detachment and compete detachment means utter freedom from anxiety. When we work purely as His instrument with an absolute self-surrender there can be no cause for anxiety or fretfulness whatever the result or however black may be the horizon for the time being. Jesus summed up the same lesson in one sentence: "Be careful of nothing." Krishnadas tells me Hemprabhadevi is wearing out her body. She may not do so and let her not deny herself the ordinary creature comforts which may be essential for keeping her body up to the mark.

[1] In his letter dated December 10, 1928, the addressee had written: "If it is intended to reduce the price of the khaddar of any Province then it may be done by mixing with local khadi the cheaper khadi of other Provinces. But the pooler in this case is to guarantee sale of all the production of the Province in which the pooler operates. . . . The pooler in this instance wants to dispose of as much as possible without disturbing the local market. Pooling can be applied here by keeping the local prices as the standard and buying some dearer and some cheaper khadi from outside and selling them at the local standard price along with the local khadi. . . Injurious pooling is pooling in a producing Province without taking the responsibility for the disposal of its whole output. For example, Mr. Jerajani may buy the best khaddar from all over India, pool the prices and sell at a standard price at Bombay. This is harmless in Bombay where there is no local khadi."

I note what you say about the Exhibition.[1] I do not mind it. It is enough we do not resist and hold ourselves in readiness to help where need be and this we must do in a spirit of utter goodwill and without irritation.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR

From a photostat: S.N. 13794

487. LETTER TO KALI KRISHNA NARAIN

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 13, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am of opinion that these demonstrations if they continue to be disciplined and strictly non-violent, they have an immense educational value and therefore should not be abandoned, so long as there is a guarantee as perfect as is humanly possible that there will be no violence on the part of the demonstrators whatever the nature of the provocation.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KALI KRISHNA NARAIN
LUCKNOW

From a photostat: S.N. 14827

488. LETTER TO MATHURADAS

WARDHA,
December 13, 1928

CHI. MATHURADAS,

The way before you is not clear. Read the accompanying letter. I have even suggested to Ram Sahay that he should have a talk with you. Show unlimited love. If you exercise patience and do not give up in despair, ultimately victory is yours. Do not be easily satisfied with

[1] The addressee had also said: "The Exhibition authorities have not communicated with me. . . . Agents of the Committee went about the country and secured non-Association khaddar from Bengal, Bihar, Andhra, etc. They arranged to run spinning shows also in the same way. That the A.I.S.A. is coming now is something additional and therefore the old arrangement continues."

your work. Show love to both; that is what is meant by an equal mind. When we give bread to a hungry person and advise another suffering from indigestion to fast, in both cases we are prompted by love; this, therefore, is showing an equal mind and treating an ant and an elephant with equal consideration. Do not assume, in dealing with him, that your new method has succeeded completely. If you patiently explain it to those who insist on following the old method and carry them with you, there will be minimum friction.

Whether the method adopted is the old or the new one, it must be followed faithfully. Write to me from time to time about the difficulties which you experience. Never feel worried in the smallest measure. If you feel at any time that my conclusions are based on inadequate data or incorrect reasoning, draw my attention to the fact. You may have faith in the principles which I lay down, but the conclusions which I draw from certain facts cannot be a matter of faith.

Faith has no place in a matter which can be grasped by reason. Hence, whenever you see my ignorance as regards facts and find the reasoning vitiated by that ignorance, please do correct me. If you make this a regular practice, I shall be able to write to you more freely and guide you better.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4213

489. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

December 13, 1928

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have started from today using 'Chi.' in place of 'Bhai'; let this be a permanent change.

It was not my fault that you received no letter on the 11th. I did write to you. You must have received two letters on the 12th. This happens sometimes when letters are given to be posted when it is about clearing time.

It is a serious illness indeed which Ramabehn has brought with her. Do not get nervous. Take necessary measures to get her cured and everything will be all right. Other illnesses, too, will go in their due time. For Kailas's illness, it is Dahibehn and Nanubhai who are responsible. Even children's stomachs cannot bear any burden for ever. The same is true about Dharmakumar. The moment he is all right, he starts taking all sorts of liberties. As for Velanbehn, illness is

part of her constitution. She, too, cannot control her palate, and Sabarmati's water will not let us take any liberty. From one point of view, this is for our good.

I see nothing wrong in charging to the khadi section the expenditure of Rs. 12 on account of those inmates of the Ashram who are being trained exclusively for khadi work.

Whatever difficulties, internal or external, you may have to face, see that you are ever vigilant. Do not lose patience, and do not undertake any task beyond your strength. Go on doing silently whatever is necessary, and you will feel no burden.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 29

490. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

Thursday [*December 13, 1928*][1]

CHI. RAMABEHN,

You have returned to the [Udyoga] Mandir with illness in the family. By the time you get this letter, the children will no doubt have recovered. If, however, you cannot bring them up well, that will be a discredit to you and to the Mandir. You should give to the children not what they ask for but what is good for them. In refusing to give them what they ask for, you need not be harsh with them. You can reason with them. I have often explained this to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 277

[1] From the reference to Ramabehn and children's illness; *vide* also the preceding item.

491. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Thursday [*December 13, 1928*][1]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter about Lalaji. I am happy to learn that khadi work is progressing. In this connection there is a letter from Satis Babu. I send it to you for perusal. You need not return it.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6164. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

492. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

ASHRAM, WARDHA,

December 13, 1928

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

Your letter to hand. Neither I nor anyone else has forgotten you. I did not write simply because there was no occasion. What you write about Lalaji is quite correct. You are happy and the hopes of success in the work are ever increasing. I am therefore not worried on your account. God alone knows whether we are actually successful or not. Our duty is only to have faith. These days I am at the Wardha Ashram. Ba and others are with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI TULSI MAHER, CHARKHA PRACHARAK
KOBA HALL, PATAN, NEPAL

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6536

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 13-12-1928.

493. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

[About *December 13, 1928*][1]

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter.

I want you to be in good health no matter how you manage it. You must not overstrain yourself.

I shall try to treat Sodepur on the same footing as Sabarmati. It is because I have my doubts about the feasibility of conducting the same experiments there as at Sabarmati and Wardha that I cannot regard it as such. I do not wish to spoil Sodepur by carrying on experiments there on the lines of Sabarmati. The existence of Sodepur is for the sake of khadi, while that of Sabarmati is for experiments in truth, etc. This does not mean that Sabarmati is superior. I merely defined the fields of work at the two places. I do desire to make experiments at Sodepur, similar to those at Sabarmati. But all this lies in the hands of God. Whatever be the state of affairs at Sodepur, you are in my eyes an Ashram inmate.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1646

494. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

WARDHA,
December 14, 1928

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

Here is a wire from the A.I.S.A. Agent in Kashmir. I know from personal experience that a great deal of stuff from Kashmir passes on as hand-spun and hand-woven, but the yarn is foreign. There is no question of swadeshi mill yarn in Kashmir. It is either foreign or hand-spun. The foreign yarn was fast displacing the hand-spun. The A.I.S.A. Agent has just gone to stop the rot. How far it can be stopped remains to be seen. But in any case his being posted there has resulted in exposing many a fraud.

[1] The activities of the Sodepur Ashram were being expanded during the year 1928. By December the addressee was apparently trying to immerse herself in work. *Vide* also "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 13-12-1928.

May I hope that nothing will be exhibited which is not certified by the A.I.S.A.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

DR. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY
36 WELLINGTON STREET, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13301

495. LETTER TO AKOOR ANANTHACHARI

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Much as I should like to ventilate the grievances referred to by you, there are so many such grievances that it seems to me utterly useless to pick up this one with any hope of getting redress. Such grievances will not be redressed unless the atmosphere around us is purged of weakness and helplessness.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. AKOOR ANANTHACHARI
GOWTHAMA ASHRAM
CHENGADU VILLAGE, WALAJAPET

From a microfilm: S.N. 13797

496. LETTER TO RUP NARAYAN SHRIVASTAVA

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. The calf incident was an isolated case with which I was called upon to deal personally. The rats qestion is too big a question for me to handle. You will therefore excuse me for not dealing with it in the pages of *Young India*.

Yours sincerely

SJT. RUP NARAYAN SHRIVASTAVA
C/O SETH JAMNADAS, M.L.A.
JUBBULPORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 13799

497. LETTER TO HARI KRISHAN DASS

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Unless I see the text of the definite promise[1] said to have been made by the British when your town was founded, it is difficult for me to give you any advice. But of course before adopting satyagraha, if it ever becomes advisable, you will exhaust all the constitutional means at your disposal and if you have a strong case, you will also approach good Mussalmans and seek their intervention. By way of example I give you the name of Dr. Ansari.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. HARI KRISHAN DASS
EDITOR, "THE BIJLI", FAZILKA

From a photostat: S.N. 13800

498. LETTER TO DR. SACHCHIDANAND SINHA

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I am still keeping your articles on my file.

The supersession of the Gaya District Board did seem to me an extraordinary step on the part of the Minister. I have never been able to find the slightest justification for it, and I hope that you in Bihar have been able to find an effective remedy against such gross abuse of power.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SACHCHIDANAND SINHA
PATNA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13802

[1] That no cow-slaughter would be permitted in the town

499. LETTER TO J. D. ATRE

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is clear that you have not read my articles carefully. B's life cannot be taken by A, because A must be credited with sufficient intelligence to know that B when he seeks to commit suicide is temporarily insane. A must arrive at his own judgment and not rely upon another's, and certainly not upon the one who may be suffering from insanity.

Yours sincerely,

J. D. ATRE, ESQ.
38 ZAOBA'S WADI, BOMBAY 2

From a microfilm: S.N. 13803

500. LETTER TO V. N. KHANOLKAR

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am now corresponding with the khadi bhandar. I quite agree with you that if slivers are supplied, they must be good and workable.

You tell me in your letter that you cannot card, but in the concluding portion you ask for one pound of cotton. Is it carded cotton that you want, or cotton for carding?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. V. N. KHANOLKAR
GANESH BHUWAN, KHAR, DISTRICT THANA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13804

501. LETTER TO AMARNATH

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am sorry you have lost your wife. I hope that you are now much more cheerful and resigned than you were

when you wrote your letter. If I were you I would not trouble to know the destiny of the soul of your wife. But you should trust that wherever the soul is now lodged, it is well with her.

As to your second question, it is well if your wife lived in detached love in which case, there will be no pangs of separation as there should be none. For we all meet in Him if we yearn for the union with the Divine. Though we seem to be separated one from the other, yet considering the common source we are one and not merely as husband and wife or parents and children but as all life.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. AMARNATH
BATALA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13805

502. A LETTER

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. There is no reason whatsoever for you to grieve over your disease, for impotency is also a disease. But if you live in the fresh air, take a moderate amount of exercise, eat unstimulating food, i.e., milk, wheat, green vegetables without condiments and some fresh fruit, and take Kuhne's baths for sufficient length of time, you may regain your vitality. But you must not be anxious about it.

It will be certainly sinful for you to put an end to your life.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13808

503. LETTER TO C. N. DEVARAJAN

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry I have not been able to reply to your letter earlier. And I am equally sorry to find that there is distress in Jaffna. There is a Government Famine Relief Fund. I do not think that there is any constitution about it. There is a permanent small fund kept by Sjt. Devdhar of the Servants of India Society, Poona. It is a voluntary fund. You may be able to get further information from him if you

write to him. I would also like you to write to Sjt. C. Rajagopalachariar (Gandhi Ashram, Tiruchengodu), who did much work during the South Indian flood time.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. N. DEVARAJAN
MANIPAY, JAFFNA (CEYLON)

From a photostat: S.N. 15119

504. LETTER TO JEROME DAVIS

AS AT SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I appreciate your warm letter. It is not want of funds that is keeping me from going to America. The question is far deeper than one of finance. My expenses have been offered by Indian friends, if I would but go. My difficulty is whether there is a call of duty, whether, that is to say, I have a message to be delivered personally. I wonder if my function is not limited to let the message drip down to America through the life that I am privileged to live in India supplemented or interpreted through my writings. I do not feel the inner urge.

But I have undertaken, if everything is quite clear before me, to go to Europe about the end of April next. Whether I should then take America and whether I should have the time, if I felt the call, is a different matter.

Let me also tell you that friends like Dr. Ward are of opinion that I have been right up to now in my decision not to go to America. They think that I would be a nine days' wonder, would be perhaps lionized for a few days, but that the message for which I stand and which I am trying to live will be lost upon the people.

Yours sincerely,

JEROME DAVIS, ESQ.
YALE UNIVERSITY, 1110 EDWARDS HALL
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT, U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N. 15120

505. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHA,
Friday, December 14, 1928

CHI. MATHURADAS,

It is surprising that there was no letter from you until today. I too feel tempted by your account of the place. But where do I have such luck? Only yesterday Jamnalalji and I were talking about you. He was thinking of sending his son to you for some time. I am well. Have I written to you that Mahadev is not with me? There is no time to write more.

Blessings from,
BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
EVERGREEN
MATHERAN

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

506. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 14, 1928

CHI. NARANDAS,

There is a Marwari youth[1] who is a B.Sc. and is at present serving in a mill in Amalner; now it is time to get him married. He must be about 22. When Maganlal was alive, I had expressed the view that he must be a pleasure-loving man and very rich, and that, therefore, we should not think about the matter. The proposal, therefore, was not pursued. I have now met him. In my judgment, he is a suitable match for Rukhi. He is not very rich, but is quite well-to-do. His father lives in England; he has to make up the losses which he has incurred. This youth is a lover of khadi and wears khadi. Please ascertain from the mother and the daughter now whether they desire this match. He is a Vaishnava. He will not interfere with Rukhi's way of life. I advise the match. If you think it necessary, you may consult Khushalbhai[2] too; afterwards let me know your decision in time, so that I may pursue the matter further when I visit Calcutta. Neither the

[1] Banarasilal Bajaj
[2] Addressee's father

young man himself nor anyone else knows who is the girl I have in view and to which place she belongs.

Are things all right with you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7724. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

507. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI

Friday [*December 14, 1928*][1]

CHI. KASHI,

I keep worrying about you. It is in your hand to remove my worry. You should unhesitatingly ask for whatever your body needs. Only if you do so, will the kitchen deserve to be called a kitchen and continue to function as at present. This is a matter not of a day or two but of all days. Hence, you should start procuring right from today the facilities you need.

Somewhat similar is the case with Nimu. It is not easy to know her needs. You should find out her inclinations and see that her health improves.

Mix with all the women, get to know them and so arrange things that they live peacefully.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33093

508. LETTER TO RAMDAS AND NIRMALA GANDHI

[WARDHA ,

December 14, 1928][2]

CHI. RAMDAS AND NIMU,

I have received your letters. There was not the least note of disappointment in my letter. There was no reason either, for me to be

[1] From the contents, it is evident that this letter was written about the same time as the one to the addressee dated December 17, 1928, but since Gandhiji here does not mention the likelihood of his leaving Wardha, it presumably *preceded* that letter. The Friday preceding the Monday on which that letter was written, fell on December l4.

[2] Place-name and date as supplied in the source

disappointed.

I should like both of you to find time to go out for walks. I look upon it as your good fortune that old people come to you and you have opportunities of nursing the ill.

Do write to me regularly. How can you be lazy about it? One ought not to be lazy about anything, certainly not in writing letters to one's elders.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum ant Library

509. LETTER TO DIRECTOR, PUSA INSTITUTE

WARDHA,
December 15, 1928

THE DIRECTOR
PUSA INSTITUTE

DEAR SIR,

Could you please let me know whether you have bee-keeping on the Pusa Farm, and if so, whether instruction is given there in bee-keeping and whether there is any literature about bee-keeping in India?

Yours faithfully,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13810

510. LETTER TO JAGANNATH

WARDHA,
December 15, 1928

MY DEAR JAGANNATH,

I dare say Balwantrai Mehta has been writing to you directly. He is already in harness and has made a good beginning.

I write this to you to find out whether scientific bee-keeping is done in the Punjab and if so, where and to what extent and whether it is possible to put oneself in touch with any expert in bee-keeping. I

have just heard that bee-keeping is an extensive occupation in the Punjab.

Yours sincerely,

LALA JAGANNATH

2 COURT STREET, LAHORE

From a photostat: S.N. 13811

511. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

December 15, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

I have your letter. The news that you have recovered completely has lifted a burden off my mind. Do not fall ill again.

Things are all right with me, more or less. The work is certainly heavy, but I do not feel the burden.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

From Monday there will be crowds of people here. How many dine in the common kitchen?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1769

512. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

December 15, 1928

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. You may certainly credit half of Sanderstone's £15 in the khadi account and half in the *Antyaja* account.

I should very much like to permit the Bihar lady to come and stay, but that cannot be done at present. We must, however, get ready to admit such women. Let us be fit for that without delay.

Yes, I thought so. There is a mention of my having given the title of Makarani to someone,[1] but I soon forget such humorous inventions of mine. Convey to Ramabehn my apologies.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 30

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 20-12-1928.

513. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

[*December 15, 1928*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Your letter. Consult Chhaganbhai about Suryamukhi Devi. Write from Dwarka too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2339

514. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

December 15, 1928

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI

I have your letter. Owing to overwork I was unable to write earlier. You should continue with both the jobs, khadi as well as teaching, although I would not call it unswerving devotion to khadi. For that reason my devotion too cannot be regarded as such.

There is nothing artificial about such devotion.

People like you will serve khadi while teaching. Bhai Jethalal thinks of nothing else. There is room enough for both.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

SHRI MOOLCHANDJI

KHADI ASHRAM, REENGUS, RAJPUTANA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 751

515. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

[After *December 15, 1928*][2]

CHI. KUSUM,

I do not have the time today to write a long letter. Your health is now all right. Maintain the improvement in your health. There is no

[1] From the reference to Suryamukhi Devi from Bihar this letter appears to have been written at the same time as the preceding letter.

[2] In *Bapuna Patro–3: Kusumbehn Desaine*, the letter has been placed between those of December 15 and 17, 1928.

letter about Padma[1] yet. But I shall have no objection if she comes to stay there and behaves well. You would know the real state of things.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1770

516. SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF KHADI

A gentleman from Mombasa who is a khadi lover has written the following letter[2] to Shri Vithaldas Jerajani, who has sent it over to me:

The implication of this is that those who are proficient in the art of producing several articles of cloth from mill-made yarn should take an interest in khadi and get yarn produced which is twisted in varying degrees. This is a task which can be accomplished. It is being carried out to some extent but only in a very small measure. So far very few persons who have a knowledge of the techniques used in mills have taken any interest in khadi, while those who are engaged in furthering the cause of khadi have not made a study, from the standpoint of khadi, of mill-made cloth and the techniques involved in making it. Many people believe through ignorance that nothing whatever can be learnt from the industrial techniques used by mills, while others have assumed that khadi of any quality would pass muster. Despite this, compared with the first pair of dhoti woven in the khadi cause in 1918 at the Satyagraha Ashram, the price of which was fixed at seventeen annas a yard, which was the actual cost, the khadi of today is vastly different in both quality and price. Hence it may be claimed that some workers in this movement have also paid attention to the quality of khadi. The late Shri Maganlal was the first to begin a systematic study of this matter. It has borne good results. That study is still being continued; however, I must admit that further improvements are needed. There is no doubt that much more improvement can be made if, as the above writer suggests, those who know the mill techniques devote even a little of their time to improving khadi. In order to carry out widespread propa-ganda for khadi, the maximum possible variety of quality and design should he introduced. Nevertheless, something will in the end remain where the limits of both will be marked out and the one cannot and need not resemble the other. For instance, there are some artistic achievements of khadi

[1] Daughter of Sitla Sahai

[2] Not translated here. The writer had suggested that the quality of khadi should be improved by drawing on the experience of textile experts.

which the mills have to this day not been, and will never be, able to imitate. Similarly, the same quality of khadi cannot be produced in bulk as the fine-looking cloth amounting to crores of rupees which the textile mills can produce at a low cost. And there will be no need to produce it either. Mill-made cloth is produced, whether there is need for it or not, simply in order to make people use it and in order to earn larger profits. Khadi can only be produced in the quantity in which it is required. Khadi cannot have and will never have the capacity for mass production with the intention of making people wear it. That advantageous limit will always be there with regard to khadi because man is not a gross machine which can be worked beyond a certain limit. However, it is the special task of the organizers of the centres run by the Charkha Sangh to adopt all possible improvements in the quality of khadi. Let those who are dimly aware of this become fully awakened to it. Let us hope that those who are familiar with the techniques of mill-made cloth will start taking an interest in khadi and devote their time to it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-12-1928

517. LETTER TO DR. B. S. MOONJE[1]

WARDHA,
December 16, 1928

DEAR DR. MOONJE,

I have your letter. If Malaviyaji is too old, don't you think that I am also running a neck to neck race with him? And I am possibly even more kind, more mild, more pliable, more docile, in your sense of these words, than he is. How can a Mahatma living up in the clouds give any lead? But why is a Mahatma wanted at all for "the rough and tumble of a hard matter-of-fact struggle"? And what about men like you who are daily growing younger? Why not let the poor Mahatma have his lonely greatness upon earth be done with? But joking apart, I do want to do my humble share in the service of the religion I profess to own and about this we must talk when you and I have more leisure

I have glanced through your address[2] and like many things this has also a sting in its tail. If you will take the analogy of Afghanistan,

[1] In reply to his letter dated December 14, 1928, inviting Gandhiji to lead the Hindus

[2] To All-Parties Conference organized to support the Nehru Report, as Chairman, Reception Committee

why do you expect Mussalmans to be Hindus in Hindustan? Afghans don't expect Hindus to be Mussalmans, but they may expect them to be like Afghans, that is, like the inhabitants of Afghanistan. The corresponding term, therefore, is Indian. For the service of India, Mussalmans, Jews, Christians should be Indians even as Hindus should be Indians. Whilst each group will follow its own religion intact without interfering with those of their fellow groups. Surely that for-mula is quite enough for you and every one of us.

Yours sincerely,

DR. B. S. MOONJE
NAGPUR

From a photostat: S.N. 13814

518. LETTER TO HONORARY SECRETARY, ALL-INDIA PRESS CONFERENCE

WARDHA,
December 16, 1928

THE HON. SECRETARY
ALL-INDIA PRESS CONFERENCE
34 BOWBAZAR STREET, CALCUTTA

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your circular letter. I now understand the meaning of your telegram. Though you do me the honour to consider me a journalist, I can hardly adopt it. In any case I consider myself as quite unfit to guide you on the three questions put by you.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13815

519. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
Sunday [*December 16, 1928*][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your letter. The diet experiment which I made in the Ashram had certainly pleased Rajaji, for it included only *rotli,* milk, ghee and vegetables. He does not care very much for fruit. He will not

[1] In "Letter to Kusum Desai", 15-12-1928, Gandhiji speaks of crowds gathering at Wardha "from Monday", December 17, 1928.

probably like the experiment I am making here. They use oil in the food here, and so I too have started taking it. I do not wish to do anything at the cost of my health. If oil does not suit me, I will stop it.

Kusumbehn can come here for the Gujarati work. She can certainly do justice to it but I felt that she should remain in the Ashram. There is Pyarelal here who attends to some of the Gujarati work. He ought to improve his handwriting. Since Keshu is with me, I can use his services too for this work, if necessary, though in fact I have brought him here for the sake of his studies and his health.

You did well in sending Navin and Rasik to Meerut. They should should write and describe their experiences there.

Pyarelal, Chhotelal, Subbiah, Ba and Keshu are with me here. Many others will come not from the Ashram but from outside. Ghanshyamdas Birla arrived here only yesterday. Haribhau came today. So I expect we shall have good company here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2042

520. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

Sunday [*December 16, 1928*]

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have your letter. I have received the book about snakes.[1] If I want another copy, I shall write to you. What was the accident which befell grandmother, and how? Tell her that she has many more years still to live.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Gokibehn that I got her letter.

SHRI SHANTIKUMAR

SHANTI BHUVAN, PEDDER ROAD, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4710. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Shantikumar Morarji", 9-12-1928.

521. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

December 16, 1928

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. I am thinking over. There is no cause for anxiety. I have no time to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3344

522. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU [1]

December 17, 1928

MOTILAL NEHRU
ALLAHABAD
DON'T UNDERSTAND RAJAGOPALACHARI'S SUGGESTION BUT HE MAY REPRESENT SEVA SANGH. JOSHI[2] ASHRAM BANKER[3] SPINNERS.

GANDHI

From handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

523. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

December 17, 1928

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Your latest letter brings tears of joy to my eyes. Indeed you have surpassed all my expectations and those of most who have known you, your worth [and] your love for the country and humanity.

About the new appointment the less said, the better. I had long correspondence with Sir Mahomed. But he opened it after everything

[1] In reply to his telegram dated December 15, 1928, which read: "At Rajagopalachari's suggestion, I invite representatives of Gandhi Seva Sangh, All-India Spinners' Association and Satyagraha Ashram to All-Parties Convention, Calcutta, as they don't fall under invited organizations. Kindly wire names representatives"
(S.N. 13813).

[2] Chhaganlal Joshi

[3] Shankerlal Banker

was done. He wanted me to bless it. I told him as I did not know the gentleman, I could not bless it.[1] I suggested that they should have your nominee. It was no good. I therefore suspended my judgment and imposed silence on myself. It still continues.

May God keep you for many a long year to come. Well, you are coming to the turmoil. But you wanted to. You shall have it with a vengeance.

With love,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 8816

524. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

WARDHAGANJ,
Silence Day, December 17, 1928

CHI. MAHADEV,

Today is silence day and so this is just to tell you that I remember you. Now that three of us have applied ourselves to work for *Young India* and *Navajivan*, I don't think there will be any difficulty. There is plenty of other material here.

Rani is coming this evening. Miss Royden is also coming. Subbiah does not remember the wire you speak of.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11438

525. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

WARDHA,
Silence Day, December 17, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

I got both your letters. You were of course forgiven. If I believe a girl to be foolish, she will certainly be forgiven her foolishness, but it ought to be pointed out to her. To excuse yourself by saying that you did not know how to express yourself in words may not be foolishness, but people call it cleverness or smartness.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Mahomed Habibullah", 9-11-1928.

I read today of your getting fever again. There is pride in working beyond one's strength, and the foolishness of doing so is plain enough. Those who have an iron constitution may work beyond their strength, that is, there is no work indeed which is beyond their strength. Those who have reduced themselves to a cypher and trust everything to God, they alone can work like that. When you have such faith and can live like a cypher, you may work as much as you like. For the present, work within limits.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1771

526. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

WARDHA,
Silence Day, December 17, 1928

SISTERS,

There has been no letter from you today. But I gather from your previous letters that there is now comparative quiet in the kitchen. Do not rest till you establish perfect quiet there. This job is mainly yours. Take upon yourselves the responsibility of making the kitchen attrac-tive in every way. It can be regarded as an ideal part of an ideal school only when everyone can eat in perfect peace, when all do their work out of a sense of duty and a love of perfection and remain content with whatever is served in it. The whole institution is a school as you know, and the kitchen is a school too. There the food should be scientifically stored, cooked and eaten. Thus in every detail there should be cleanl-iness and a spirit of discipline. We do not go there or dine there for sense gratification. The body is a temple of God; as such it has to be kept clean and preserved through nourishment. If you adopt such an attitude all the quarrels we see in regard to kitchen work will dis-appear. In my letter addressed to the whole of the Ashram, I have made four suggestions. Think over them and try to practise whatever appeals to you.

Kailas, Sheela and other children must not fall ill. If any child is ill, do not think it is the concern and responsibility of its mother alone but assume responsibility for it yourselves. It should be the normal practice in our Ashram whenever a mother is not able or does not know how to nurse a sick child, for anyone who knows the job to

offer to look after the child. No mother should feel that she is alone with no one to help her.

I have nothing more to say.

Blessings from

BAPU

PS.

Received both your letters.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3685

527. LETTER TO TARABEHN

December 17, 1928

CHI. TARA,

I have a letter from you after a long time. Of course the last letter [between us] was yours. You ought to recover your health completely. I am at present in Wardha. Ba is with me. Among others are Pyarelal, Subbiah and Chhotelalji. Vasumatibehn was here for some time before I came. Within four days I shall leave for Calcutta. You can write to me c/o Jiwanlalbhai.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. TARABEHN

C/O MESSRS MOHANLAL KALIDAS & CO.

14 MUGAL STREET, RANGOON

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8783

528. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

December 17, 1928

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. Why should you get upset because of children's illness? These things come and go. Sometimes we may even lose one of the children. God gave them and He may take them back; there is nothing strange in this. Besides, everyone in the world has to go along the royal road sooner or later, why, then, should we grieve if anyone leaves early? And rejoice if someone leaves late? There is no difference between Umi's[1] soul and that of a calf. Both are diamonds

[1] Addressee's daughter

from the same mine, drops from the same ocean, leaves of the same tree. One need not be afraid of whooping cough. It always disappears in due time. If we do not harass the child with too many medicines while the attack lasts, he or she lives through the attack all right. Hot water and hot milk—everything hot. The bowels should move regularly. [Give her] light massage with oil on the chest and put her in sunshine early in the morning.

Do not be sure of Chhotelal arriving there till you actually see him of course he will arrive.

Gangabehn should put her feet in hot water with soda bicarb mixed in it and massage them long with vaseline before going to sleep. Besides this, she must put on shoes, of any type, during day time. Since we now look upon the hide of a dead cow as sacred, there will be no harm even if she wears light slippers—not *chappals*—made of it. It will be enough if the slippers meant for use in the kitchen always remain in the kitchen. Slippers of rubber are also available. Slippers of hessian get wet and dirty, and they cannot be washed. Slippers made from leather can be washed.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I do not consider the last issue, too, of "Ashram Samachar" as properly cyclostyled. I leave this place on the evening of Thursday, the 20th. On 21-22 in Sambalpur and on 23 in Calcutta, at Jiwanlal's place. Address the letter to Sambalpur only once, or not at all.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 30-1

529. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Silence Day [*December 17, 1928*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letters. It was impossible to write yesterday.

You have displayed much firmness and patience. That is how we should always act. You are on the potter's wheel, and I am sure God will mould you well. Do not lose heart in regard to *brahmacharya*. Surely it is a difficult task. If we believe that we can succeed in it merely by our own effort, [we should remember that] in the story of

[1] As in the source

the Yaksha,[1] as we saw, the god of wind found it impossible to blow away even a straw by his own strength. But even the most difficult task becomes easy when human effort is supported by divine grace. Both of you should strive, but leave the result to God and you will surely get it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 31

530. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI

Silence Day [*December 17, 1928*][2]

CHI. KASHI,

Do something about Nimu's and Bachu's constipation. Bachu is likely to benefit by gentle massage of his abdomen. Similar exercise will benefit Nimu too.

Did you send that chain to Talwalkar? I think we shall be leaving this place (Wardha) on the 20th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S. N. 33092

531. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

[*December 17, 1928*][3]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Your nice letters in a beautiful hand come quite regularly and I am highly pleased.

You must not be dejected. Not many days remain for me to return to the Ashram. A few days will pass in your visit to Dwarka and the journey back.

[1] In *Kenopanishad*

[2] Gandhiji here says he would leave Wardha on 20th. In 1928, he left Wardha for Sambalpur on December 20. Monday, i.e., Gandhiji's silence day, prior to that date, fell on December 17.

[3] From the reference to "Kusum's falling ill again", this letter seems to have been written along with the one to Kusum Desai dated 17-12-1928. Year and month from the reference to the addressee's proposed visit to Dwarka.

Ask Vidyavati to write to me; I want to write to her but do not for lack of time.

I feel a little worried over Kusum's falling ill again.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Who will be responsible for nursing Kusum in your absence?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3321

532. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

[Before *December 18, 1928*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Your letter. Your presence there spares me any anxiety on Kusum's account. Rajendra Babu came yesterday. I hope a telegram has been sent cancelling the Dwarka trip. There is no time now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3315

533. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Tuesday [*December 18, 1928*][2]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I wanted to write about many things today, but have no time.

I do not know what Santok wants. If she wishes to stay on and lives contentedly, it would be very good indeed. You and Narandas should decide about this. It will be best if you leave this decision to Narandas. I will write about Devdas later. I had read Mirabehn's letters. I will write to the Gurukul in regard to Balbir.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 32

[1] From the reference to Rajendra Prasad who came to attend the A.I.S.A. meeting held on December 18 and 19

[2] As in the source

534. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

WARDHA,
Tuesday, December 18, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

I cannot help but get angry with you. Who allowed you to eat everything? Why should you give up coffee? If you attempt to do so in my presence, I will help you. Why do you make such experiments in my absence? May I once again beg you to live on milk and fruits and pick up health? If you wish to eat anything else, ask for my permission.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1772

535. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 19, 1928

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. You may certainly go to Rajkot if you find that necessary. I have experimented with earth treatment for *bamblai*[1] and found it succeed. I cannot say whether the experiment will suit Khushalbhai at his age.

I have made my point of view clear in regard to Santok. If what I think is wrong and if she likes the Ashram, its inmates and its mode of life, I will like nothing better than that she should live there. How can I possibly be happy that she should live elsewhere? If, however, I have to try every day to keep her pleased, the situation will be intolerable to her, to me and to other inmates of the Ashram. I do not want to see her take the last seat; I want to see her in the front seat. But how can she take the first number in the Ashram unless she learns self-sacrifice, gives up love of pleasures and selfishness?

If Rukhi is ready for a match with this Marwari youth, I may proceed further in the matter. I shall certainly obtain a photograph. By "meeting", do you mean that she wants to see the youth or talk with him? In either case, I see nothing wrong in her meeting him. I shall not feel hurt even if she rejects the match. In this case, I believe

[1] A boil in the arm-pit

it my duty to respect her wishes fully. Please let me know if you want any other details. I have no time today to write about other matters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7725. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

536. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

WARDHA,
December 19, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

What shall I tell you now? The doctor's advice to you to eat everything is not correct and should not be followed. If you drink plenty of milk and eat plenty of fruits, your illness will certainly disappear. There is no harm in taking a little coffee with the milk for some time. You should work very little, have enough sleep, and see that you have regular motions. It is my firm belief that if you look to all these things, you cannot but recover health. Do not be afraid to take quinine. If the doctor sends you something to counteract the toxic effects of quinine, there is no harm in taking that.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1773

537. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Wednesday [*December 19, 1928*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter and the statement of accounts. I will show them to Jamnalalji. I feel unhappy all the time over the affair of Sharda, Kashibehn and Shakaribehn. When I think of Sharda's courage, I both smile and cry. She seems to have put her courage to wrong use. Do you not agree that my boasted skill in understanding people is nothing of the kind? It is good that I knowsome of my imperfections well enough and God opens my eyes to the rest. He will save.

These clouds trouble me; still bigger ones will come. Remain

[1] As in the source

vigilant. Do not lose heart. Try to fill the place which Maganlal did. Do not give up hope even when all round you lose it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Do not worry about my experiments. I am in God's keeping. With this is a letter from Mirabehn. Henceforward, credit the money received[1] to her name. The expenses incurred for her should of course be debited to the Ashram account. Do not debit it against this money.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro- 7; Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 32-3

538. LETTER TO JETHALAL

December 19, 1928

BHAISHRI JETHALAL,

I got your letter. I have written to Chi. Narandas at the Ashram. He will reply to you. If his reply does not satisfy you, then write to me.

Blessing from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1347

539. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[After *December 19, 1928*][2]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

We had received through Krishnadas a gold watch costing Rs.500/-. He is here at present. He tells me that if we still have the watch, a friend of the donor is ready to pay that sum for it. If we have it, let me know.

Speak to Krishnamaiyyadevi[3] and tell her in strong words that if

[1] From Mirabehn's father, who used to send £50 every month during the early years of her stay in the Ashram

[2] From the contents it appears that the letter was written towards the end of the year 1928, evidently after December 19. Gandhiji's letter dated December 19, 1928, to the addressee (*vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 19-12-1928) acknowledges receipt of his "letter and the statement of accounts," saying that they will be shown to Jamnalal Bajaj.

[3] Widow of a Congress worker from Nepal; Gandhiji gave her and her children shelter in the Ashram.

she behaves as she does, she will have to leave the Ashram. Stop paying her cash; instead, supply within Rs. 12/-, such of her needs as you approve of. Do this with immediate effect. Ask her to state the amount she has spent so far. Request all the inmates of the Mandir[1] to have no dealings with her and to give her no facilities. If they feel that you or I are doing her injustice, they should tell you so. All the vegetables which grow should be supplied to the Mandir. If she does not wish to grow them on that condition, she may not. I will of course write to her.

If she cannot digest bread, why does she eat it? She will certainly not digest it if she does not chew it properly or eats it in excess. She will also not digest it, of course, if it is not properly baked. Do people think that it is too dear at one anna a loaf?

Jamnalalji has looked into the figures sent by you. He was sorry to know that the account books were either damaged by moths or lost. Who was at fault in this? Cannot we, however, add up the income from the beginning to this day from the available records, like pass books, etc. If we can, we shall also be able to make up the account of expenditure. Make a greater effort in this regard.

We have no option but to bear the expenditure being incurred on Manjula.[2] But take care and see that the expenditure is justified. For how many days more will she have to go? Of course she is not to be paid Rs. 12/- separately. Has she recovered her health? Is the injury to her eye healed?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5486

540. DISCUSSION WITH A CAPITALIST [3]

[Before *December 20, 1928*]

God forbid that India should ever take to industrialism after the manner of the West. The economic imperialism of a single tiny island kingdom (England) is today keeping the world in chains. If an entire nation of 300 millions took to similar economic

[1] Udyog Mandir, under which name the Satyagraha Ashram had begun to run all its external activities, while still maintaining its ideal as an Ashram.

[2] Daughter of Vrajlal Gandhi

[3] From Pyarelal's "Wardha Letter"

exploitation, it would strip the world bare like locusts. Unless the capitalists of India help to avert that tragedy by becoming trustees of the welfare of the masses and by devoting their talents not to amassing wealth for themselves but to the service of the masses in an altruistic spirit, they will end either by destroying the masses or being destroyed by them.

Young India, 20-12-1928

541. DISCUSSION ON KALI TEMPLE[1]

[Before *December 20, 1928*]

He next turns to a khadi worker who is also accompanying him. He must agree to go to Calcutta[2] where he is wanted in spite of his disinclination. If we could transform Calcutta we should transform the whole of India, he argues. He himself would go there and make it the centre of his activity, but . . . And he then gives out this sorrowful secret that he has harboured in his bosom all these years of his life. It is the Kali temple.

There lies my difficulty. I cannot bear the sight of it. My soul rises in rebellion against the cold-blooded inhumanity that goes on there in the name of religion. If I had the strength I would plant myself before the gate of the temple and tell those in charge of it that before they sacrificed a single innocent animal they should have to cut my throat. But I know that for me to do so would be an unreal, a mechanical thing today because I have not yet completely overcome the will to live. And till I can do that I must bear the cross of my imperfect existence.

Young India, 20-12-1928

542. DISCUSSION WITH A TEACHER[3]

[Before *December 20, 1928*]

A deputation of the teachers of a national school has come to wait upon Gandhiji. . . . In the course of conversation one of the teachers lets out that he holds non-violence as a creed only for individual conduct. In the political field he holds to non-violence only as a temporary expedient. Gandhiji starts as at a snake in the grass. ‘Are there many other teachers in your school who think like this?’ he quietly asks. But his countenance betrays what is passing in his mind. The teacher notices this and tries to explain his position. True, he believes in non-violence in politics

[1] From Pyarelal’s “Wardha Letter”
[2] For the Indian National Congress session
[1] Gandhiji left Wardha on December 20, 1928.

pas a policy but a policy is as good as a creed while it lasts, if it is sincerely and conscientiously adhered to. For the time being therefore there is no difference between his position and Gandhiji's. As for the future, if he should feel like changing his policy he would surely obtain the permission of the school authorities first for doing so. But the explanation fails to satisfy Gandhiji.

Don't you see the difference, with you non-violence is only an intellectual proposition, with me it is an article of faith, the first and the last. You try to make a distinction between individual conduct and social conduct. I do not see how it is possible. Where is the line to be drawn? And who is to decide where the one ends and the other begins? यथा पिंण्डे तथा ब्रहाण्डे'As with the individual so with the universe.' You say that your abandonment of non-violence would be conditioned by the permission of the school authorities. But let me tell you that in the circumstances postulated by you there should be no room for asking such permission. For then, you would be bound to sacrifice your school at the altar, according to your belief, of your country just as I would my country at the altar of truth and non-violence. And I would honour you for doing so. No, I do not want to blame you. You must follow the light of your convictions. I am only trying to view the question from a different angle. There are at present a number of national institutions in the country with truth and non-violence as their creed. I have my eye upon them constantly. For a time is fast coming, it may, as I wrote in *Young India* the other day, come much sooner than most people expect, when the country will be put upon its trial, and will have to make its final choice. I count upon these institutions in that hour to give a good account of themselves. Maybe a mere handful of workers as we are, we shall have to make a holocaust of ourselves to testify our faith. So far I had believed that I was absolutely safe in your hands. But I now see where I stand. But that need not make you feel unhappy; it is a question for me only to think about.

There is a deep note of sadness in his voice as he utters these words. . . .

Young India, 27-12-1928

543. SPEECH TO KHADI WORKERS[1]

[Before *December 20, 1928*][2]

We must distribute production and centralize sales for the time being. We must try the experiment of pooling prices of khadi produced in various centres to bring down the average. Look at the figures of mill khadi. . . .[3] What does it indicate? A revolution in the people's taste. They are prepared to make a sacrifice. They ask for coarse cloth. But they are being foully deceived by the mill-owners who do not hesitate to exploit their patriotic sentiment. Spurious khadi is being palmed off on them as Gandhi cloth, even my portrait is put upon it. Could there be a greater fraud or a worse betrayal? But the moral for us in this is that we must increase our production. And to do this we must bring about a general reduction in khadi prices by pooling. Do they ever think what a fierce resentment it will cause among the masses when they discover, as they are bound to one day, that they have been betrayed at every step? I should not be surprised, if in a frenzy of anger they should in that event rise against the mill industry in general.

Young India, 27-12-1928

544. THE ETERNAL DUEL

A friend writes:

> In the article entitled "The Tangle of Ahimsa" appearing in *Young India* of October 11th, you have stated most forcefully that cowardice and ahimsa are incompatible. There is not an ambiguous syllable in your statement. But may I request that you tell us how cowardice can be exorcised from a man's character? I notice that all characters are but the sum total of habits formed. How are we to undo our old habits and build the new ones of courage, intelligence, and action? I am convinced that habits can be destroyed, and better and nobler habits can be formed giving birth to a new character in a person. It seems to me that you know prayers, discipline, and studies by which a man can attain asecond birth. Won't you kindly tell us about them? Do give us your know-ledge and advice in one of the numbers of *Young India.* Please help us by giving an account of the method of praying and working by which a

[1] From Pyarelal's "Wardha Letter"
[2] Gandhiji left Wardha on December 20, 1928.
[3] As in the source

man can recreate himself.

The question refers to the eternal duel that is so graphically described in the *Mahabharata* under the cloak of history and that is every day going on in millions of breasts. Man's destined purpose is to conquer old habits, to overcome the evil in him and to restore good to its rightful place. If religion does not teach us how to achieve this conquest, it teaches us nothing. But there is no royal road to success in this the truest enterprise in life. Cowardice is perhaps the greatest vice from which we suffer and is also possibly the greatest violence, certainly far greater than bloodshed and the like that generally go under the name of violence. For it comes from want of faith in God and ignorance of His attributes. But I am sorry that I have not the ability to give "the knowledge and the advice" that the correspondent would have me to give on how to dispel cowardice and other vices. But I can give my own testimony and say that a heartfelt prayer is undoubtedly the most potent instrument that man possesses for overcoming cowardice and all other bad old habits. Prayer is an impossibility without a living faith in the presence of God within.

Christianity and Islam describe the same process as a duel between God and Satan, not outside but within; Zoroastrianism as a duel between Ahurmazd and Ahriman; Hinduism as a duel between forces of good and forces of evil. We have to make our choice whether we should ally ourselves with the forces of evil or with the forces of good. And to pray to God is nothing but that sacred alliance between God and man whereby he attains his deliverance from the clutches of the prince of darkness. But a heartfelt prayer is not a recitation with the lips. It is a yearning from within which expresses itself in every word, every act, nay, every thought of man. When an evil thought successfully assails him, he may know that he has offered but alip prayer and similarly with regard to an evil word escaping his lips or an evil act done by him. Real prayer is an absolute shield and protection against this trinity of evils. Success does not always attend the very first effort at such real living prayer. We have to strive against ourselves, we have to believe in spite of ourselves, because months are as our years. We have therefore to cultivate illimitable patience if we will realize the efficacy of prayer. There will be dark-ness, disappointment and even worse, but we must have courage en-ough to battle against all these and not succumb to cowardice. There is no such thing as retreat for a man of prayer.

What I am relating is not a fairytale. I have not drawn an imaginary picture. I have summed up the testimony of men who have by prayer conquered every difficulty in their upward progress, and I have added my own humble testimony that the more I live the more I realize how much I owe to faith and prayer which is one and the same thing for me. And I am quoting an experience not limited to a few hours, or days or weeks, but extending over an unbroken period of nearly 40 years. I have had my share of disappointments, uttermost darkness, counsels of despair, counsels of caution, subtlest assaults of pride; but I am able to say that my faith—and I know that it is still little enough, by no means as great as I want it to be—has ultimately conquered every one of these difficulties up to now. If we have faith in us, if we have a prayerful heart, we may not tempt God, may not make terms with Him. We must reduce ourselves to a cipher. Barodada[1] sent me a precious Sanskrit verse not long before his death. It means impliedly that a man of devotion reduces himself to zero. Not until we have reduced ourselves to nothingness can we conquer the evil in us. God demands nothing less than complete self-surrender as the price for the only real freedom that is worth having. And when a man thus loses himself, he immediately finds himself in the service of all that lives. It becomes his delight and his recreation. He is a new man never weary of spending himself in the service of God's creation.

Young India, 20-12-1928

545. DINABANDHU'S TRIBUTE

Dinabandhu Andrews writes as follows from Manchester on Lalaji's death:

> The news of the death of Lala Lajpat Rai was a very terrible shock to me for it was absolutely unexpected. I reached Birmingham very late on Saturday night and my brother told me about it. Since then I have referred to it and made clear in the *Manchester Guardian* how great the loss must be both to India and to England, and indeed to the world of humanity; for he was the friend of the oppressed in every country and knew no racial barriers. What I am now waiting to hear is how far the death was caused by injuries received at the railway station at Lahoreat the time of the boycott of the Simon Commission. This is not at all made clear in the newspapers here, which are very guarded in

[1] Dwijendranath Tagore, elder brother of Rabindranath Tagore

their utterances, though there is just a hint about it.

I may add that he cabled to me for correct news to which needless to say I sent a suitable reply.[1]

Young India 20-12-1928

546. NOTES

LALAJI'S MEMORY

With reference to my note on Dr. Satyapal's telegram[2] which was published in these columns, Lala Dunichand of Ambala writes :[3]

> The publication of Dr. Satyapal's telegram in connection with Lala Lajpat Rai's death in *Young India* of November 29, 1928 and your comments thereon have induced me to write this letter to you which I hope you will be able to publish. I am one of those who had been devoted to Lalaji for nearly all their life and it was only during the last elections that serious and even acute differences had arisen between him and myself. . . . But the blows received by him at the hands of the police and his death shortly after that have naturally and rightly changed altogether my mental attitude towards him and his work. . . . Now I look upon the sum total of his life-work too great to let me entertain any kind of ill will and his life too sacred to be remembered with anything but feelings of genuine respect. I feel as if quite a different kind of relations have sprung up between him and myself after his death. If the question of our differences with him is viewed in this light, we who differed from him and those who differed from us on account of him can again become comrades in the fight for winning freedom for our country.

This is undoubtedly the correct attitude to take and I hope that everybody who had some differences of opinion with Lalaji will adopt the same attitude and work for the common cause.

INDIA'S AMBASSADRESS IN AMERICA

The readers of *Young India* will be glad to share with me the following letter[4] from Mr. R. E. Hume, son of Dr. R. A. Hume of Nagar, regarding the fine work that is now being done by Devi Sarojini Naidu in America:

[1] *Vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 29-11-1928.

[2] *Vide* "Good if True", 29-11-1928.

[3] only excerpts are reproduced here.

[4] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

You will be pleased, I am sure, to receive this message concerning the successful start of our friend Mrs. Sarojini Naidu in her visit to the United States.

I heard her at her first appearance in New York city. And I have been testifying that I have never heard either from man or from woman the equal of her platform performance for the beauty and flow of English diction and for the structure and sequence of English sentences. . . .

However, more beautiful and significant than the grammatical structure of English sentences were the beauty and goodness and truth of her utterances. I rejoice that Mother India is being presented to America in the person of this charming and potent woman, who is perceiving the spiritual side of American life, and who is similarly conveying to the people here the spiritual side of the Indian people. . . . But I am especially happy thus to report to you promptly the very successful realization of your plan for Mrs. Naidu to visit the United States as an ambassadress from the women and people of India.

AJMAL JAMIA FUND

A Mussalman friend asks the following questions and asks me to reply to them in *Young India*:

I read *Young India* with intense interest especially the news of Islam. But I am puzzled to hear some undesired news about Ajmal Jamia. Will you kindly reply to the following queries and oblige me?

1. On what principle is the Jamia being carried on?
2. Whether it is solely for Mussalmans or the members of every caste and creed are admitted into it?
3. If they are also admitted, how do they manage for their boarding, lodging, etc.?
4. How many and who are the members of the managing body, is there any other than Mussalmans upon it?
5. The Fund which is being collected by you is handed over to the institution or is still with you?
6. If it is still with you, when do you intend to use it and how?

Here are the answers:

The Jamia is carried on, on the broadest principles. The correspondent should study the constitution a copy of which he will get upon application to the authorities in Delhi.

It is in practice solely and naturally for Mussalmans, but members of every caste and creed are freely admitted.

I believe that such students have to make their own boarding arrangements.

Sheth Jamnalalji is one of the trustees. The others are Mussalmans.

The Fund is in the possession of Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj who is the treasurer.

Young India, 20-12-1928

547. WANTED HINDI TEACHERS[1]

> The Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha invites applications from educated young men whose mother tongue is Hindi and who are willing to serve as Hindi teachers in South India for a period not less than 2 years. . . . Letters may be addressed to the Secretary, Hindi Prachar Sabha, High Road, Triplicane, Madras.
>
> W. P. IGNATIUS

I hope that there will be sufficient young men from the North to respond to this appeal.

Young India, 20-12-1928

548. EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS [2]

To a national worker who has been ordered off to far away Orissa where at present cholera is raging, Gandhiji writes:

And do not be afraid of cholera. . . .[3] observe proper precautions. . . .[4] If in spite of all precautions the worst befalls, there is no help for it. There is no place in the world entirely free from danger. . . .[5] But do as the inner voice prompts you.

To another struggling soul he writes:

With the help of Rama we have got to overcome the ten-headed Ravana of passions within us. Success is bound to be ours if we have faith in Rama and surrender ourselves to His grace. Above all do not lose self-confidence. Avoid indulgence of the palate.

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.
[2] From Pyarelal's "Wardha Letter", sub-title "Tit-Bits"
[3] As in the source
[4] *ibid*
[5] *ibid*

To another he says:

There is a world of difference between spinning for sacrifice and spinning for recreation. I would advise you to observe a religious silence while spinning. It would give you spiritual peace and if you make it a point always to spin at a particular fixed hour, it will automatically regulate your other appointments too and help you to a well-ordered life.

To still another he writes:

You may not force the wearing of khadi on your mother if she is unwilling. But if your faith in khadi is genuine and strong enough it is bound to prove infectious.

To another correspondent again:

My sovereign panacea (for communal troubles) is well known. If either of the parties were completely to purge itself of ill will and patiently bear any injustice that the other side might inflict, a real heart unity between the two was bound to be established in the end. The injustice would come to an end and both sides would become brave. Today they are pitiful cowards.

Young India, 20-12-1928

549. KHADI IN HYDERABAD STATE

At a Co-operative Conference held the other day in the Hyderabad State, the Finance Minister, Sir Hyder Nawaz Jung Bahadur, delivered an address from which a friend sends me the following translation of his reference to the spinning-wheel:

> But the most important thing to which I wish to draw your attention is our home industries. To preserve and help them is the supreme duty of co-operative societies. If co-operative societies could be organized to distribute domestic implements and raw materials amongst the people, it would be a great boon to the country. For the sake of illustration, I would mention spinning and weaving. If they could be revived in our towns and villages, it would be a great achievement. Quite till the other day, spinning and weaving were commonly practised in our homes. Not only in the huts of the poor but also in the homes of the rich and well-to-do, young girls and their matrons used to utilize their leisure time by spinning; and a variety of things for household use, like carpets, sheets, coverlets, table-cloths, etc., were prepared out of the yarn thus spun. Respectable widows who have no other means of livelihood used to support themselves and their children by spinning and sewing. By popularizing this occupation, you would not only augment the slender resources of the people but by providing them with useful work for

filling their spare time save them from falling a prey to many a temptation. I hope that the energetic officials of our Department will make a beginning in this direction this year. I shall carefully go through the next year's report to see how many of us have taken to this good work. . . .[1]

We should never forget that man isolated from society is but an animal. He rises to his full estate which has been described as 'little less than the angels' only through mutual aid and co-operation with his fellow-beings. So long as you stand apart, self-sufficing units, so long as 'I' am 'I' and 'you' are 'you', we are only glorified animals called men. When 'I' and 'you' combine to form 'we' we develop a divine force and the process of developing this force is spelt co-operation.

I congratulate the Minister on his pronouncement and trust that the State of Hyderabad will compete with that of Mysore in the spread of the spinning-wheel. Co-operation in spinning is easy and an indispensable thing if khadi is to be placed on a stable basis. A hand-spinning co-operative society will start with a cotton depot where bag cotton, not pressed cotton, will be stored for converting into cards. It will have carders, if the spinners do not themselves card in the initial stages. This depot will keep the necessary furniture, i.e., hand-gins, carding-bows, spinning-wheels, accessories and necessary tools with facility for repairs. The depot will be a distributing, receiving and selling depot and will distribute cotton or slivers as the case may be. It will receive against cash-payment yarn spun by the members and sell to the members khadi woven from their yarn or bought from other places. It will sell khadi at special prices to the spinning members and at ordinary prices to the public. If such societies are formed under State patronage and with State aid, partial or in full, there is really no limit to the possibilities of mass co-operation. Only this presupposes a khadi atmosphere among the officials; in other words, the officials must be converts, lovers and trustees of the masses, not their lords and masters, for whom the masses are born to toil and sweat on starvation wages. If the Finance Minister infects his officials with the zeal which his address shows there is a great future for the people of the State. And Hyderabad unlike Mysore is a vast cotton area.

Young India, 20-12-1928

[1] As in the source

550. TELEGRAM TO MANAGER, ASHRAM, SABARMATI

December 20, 1928

MANAGER

SABARMATI ASHRAM

SHIVABHAI'S SUGGESTION ABOUT MOTHER QUITE GOOD. NO CASTE DINNER PERMISSIBLE BUT MAY PAY CASTE LUMP SUM FOR EDUCATION OR OTHER BENEVOLENT USE.

BAPU

From handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

551. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

WARDHA,
December 20, 1928

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Today too, I am sure I shall not be able to write a letter which will satisfy me. Preparations are going on for leaving the place. Finding some spare time, I am dictating this letter.

First I shall remove a misunderstanding. I certainly did not apologize to Ramabehn for applying to her the name Makarani. I have always been indulging in such jokes, and the victims of the jokes have always enjoyed them. I apologized to her because I forgot this beautiful joke and, when you wrote to me that Makarani had arrived, I had to ask you whom you meant. Is this not an unpardonable lapse?

What will you say of a father who gives pet names to his children through affection and then forgets them? The poor children may for-give the father, but how can the father forgive himself ? All that I can say in my defence is that my family is a large one and is growing in size. Such mistakes, therefore, are likely to occur again. Explain all this to Ramabehn, for the name Makarani will now cling to her for ever.

I stop the work here. Jamnalal's whip[1] is here.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 33-4

[1] To restrain Gandhiji from overwork

552. A LETTER[1]

WARDHA,
December 20, 1928

. . . Since you have resolved to dedicate yourself completely to service how can I send you away? I do not wish to punish you. It is not for man to punish anybody.... I want to guide you to better ways and, when you Commit unpardonable mistakes, to suffer the punishment myself. I am suffering the punishment now in that I have been pained. Do not give me such pain in future.

. . . also wrote to me about the jewellery. There seems to be a discrepancy in what you said in your earlier letter and what you say in the present letter. But that does not matter.

You will now have to be ready for strictness on my part. I am not any longer going to be soft with you as I have been so far. You will limit your expenditure to . . . rupees as far as possible. But I will do everything necessary for your health.... It will not be for you now to judge ... or somebody else will have to do that. But of course not at the cost of your health. I would hate any expenses except those on your food. For food I will give more than . . . if necessary. Let me know what you eat at present. . . .

If you have overcome your mental tension, you are sure not to fall ill.

Ask me if you wish for further clarification. . . . Keep writing to me.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/42

553. A LETTER[2]

WARDHA,[3]
December 20, 1928

You are really in a moral dilemma. You had a hand in fixing the engagement.... It seems to me that you should write to ... that she should wait till she is eighteen. . . . You may send Chh.'s letter to her. If she is not willing to wait even that long and in spite of Chh.'s letter is keen on getting married right now, you may convey . . .'s wish to her and against your better judgment give her away in marriage on her condition in Uphota and wash your hands of the affair. You

[1] Omissions in the letter are as in the source.
[2] Omissions in the letters are as in the source.
[3] *ibid*

should make all this clear to . . . and say that you have been solely guided by the girl's and her mother's wish. If she agrees, give her in marriage by way of atonement since you had a hand in arranging the engagement. Be clear in dealing with her mother also. This is how I see your duty. But you will be the best judge of what is right.

From a copy of the Gujarati : Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/41

554. SPEECH AT WARDHA ASHRAM [1]

December 20, 1928

You have all set out to become expert spinners, weavers and carders. But that is not enough. Every turn of the spinning-wheel, every throw of the shuttle, every stroke on the cardingbow should awaken a responsive echo in your soul. The task that lies before you is tremendous. You have to reach and establish a living contact with not a few hundred, not a few thousand but millions of the poor that are scattered over the seven lakhs of villages in India. Till that work is accomplished you dare not rest. Then, if you want really to serve the country you must keep your bodies and minds pure so as to make of yourselves a fit instrument for carrying out His work. If you awake every morning with His name on your lips and invoke His aid to help you in your struggles during the day and at night time before retiring take stock of the day's failures and lapses, make a confession of them to your Maker and do a sincere penance for them—the only fitting penance for a lapse is to make a firm resolve not to allow it to happen again—you will thereby build, as it were, a solid wall of protection round you and gradually temptations will cease to assail you.

In the end whilst I shall always recall this period of my stay in your midst with joy and satisfaction, my feeling is not free from a regret; and that is, that in spite of my being in your midst for all these days I have not been able to play with the children of the Ashram, to know them individually by their names, to win their personal friendship and confidence as I would have liked to do. But what could I do? I was so hard pressed by work.

Young India, 10-1-1929

[1] From Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", which explains: "The period of grace and privilege of our stay at the Wardha Ashram came to an end on the 20th December, 1928 and it was not without a wrench that Gandhiji bade goodbye to his peaceful surroundings to plunge into the seething cauldron of Congress politics in Calcutta. Leave-taking was a touching affair. Gandhiji poured all the poignant pathos of the parting in a few brief sentences that he addressed to the inmates of the Satyagraha Ashram after the evening prayer."

555. INTERVIEW AT NAGPUR STATION[1]

December 20, 1928

[QUESTION]: What would be your attitude towards a political war of independence?

[ANSWER]: I would decline to take part in it just as I would refuse to support the British Government in any war that it might engage in tomorrow.

But in South Africa you supported an alien Government in its war against the Boers, although it was at that time oppressing the Indians; again in 1914 you supported the British Government in its War against Germany. How is the situation altered since then that you should refuse to support your own country in a war of independence?

The situation today is radically different for me from what it was at the time of the Boer War or the War in 1914. On both the occasions I was a believer in the Empire. I thought that in spite of its lapses the sum total of its activity was beneficial to the world. And though I was against war at that time as I am now, I had no status or strength to refuse to participate in war. I suppressed my private judgment in favour of the duty of an ordinary citizen. My position is wholly different now. I have become by force of circumstances a teacher of non-violence. I claim to enforce my teaching in my own life to the best of my ability and I feel that I have the strength to resist war in my own person.

Then you would not support a national militia?

I would support the formation of a militia under swaraj if only because I realize that people cannot be made non-violent by compulsion. Today I am teaching the people how to meet a national crisis by non- violent means. But it is one thing to adopt non-violence for a specific purpose in a time of crisis, and quite another thing to advocate its adoption by all for all time as a philosophy of life. Not that I consider such adoption to be impossible. But I lack the strength for such a mission. I may not therefore resist the formation of a

[1] From Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", which explains: "It was a late hour and the friends had come at the fag-end of an exceptionally busy day for Gandhiji . . . and engaged him in an absorbing conversation on some of the burning questions of the day."

national militia. Only I cannot join it myself. I feel quite clearly within me that a militia is unnecessary but I have not the word that would carry convic-tion to others.

If that be your view, surely you would like our youth to avail themselves of the University Training Corps that have been organized by some universities?

To receive military training under the present Government is to train yourself into a limb of the present system, a limb that is liable to be used against your own people at any time. A Gurkha is an Indian, blood of our blood and bone of our bone, yet he would shoot his own countrymen when ordered to do so.

But our young men will be educated people, they will never consent to do such an unpatriotic act?

You are welcome to that belief if you like but let me tell you that you are living in a fool's paradise. You little realize the demoralizing effect of environment. How many people can you point out in the country today, who having gone under the Government's influence have been able to escape from its hypnotic spell and to keep their independence intact. The British rulers know the workings of human nature. They know that a vast majority of men when they come under a system conform to it especially when it is full of promise for self-aggrandizement. There are educated Indians enough in the Gove-rnment employ who do the will of their masters even though it may be, as it often is, against national interest. And you do not seem to attach any importance to the fact that the young men who join the corps have to take the oath of allegiance.

Young India, 10-1-1929

556. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

December 21, 1928

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

The fact that you did not get a letter on Sunday means that Kanti is not there. He wanted me to write a personal letter to him, which I wrote and enclosed yours in the same cover. This time there has not been a single day without my writing a letter to you. I can leave you without one only when all your worries disappear and the atmosphere there becomes completely purified. I certainly yearn for a time when I need not write letters to anyone in the Ashram. Such a day will also come. At present, to write letters is no burden to me.

For the Orissa matter you will have to write to Vallabhbhai.

Indu Parekh should go to Calicut or stay in Bardoli. He should stop his studies completely.

Umi must now be out of danger. You need not worry even if she is suffering from pneumonia. The treatment for both is the same, rest and hot water. If she feels hungry, give her milk and fruit juice. I shall write a detailed reply later.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 34

557. SPEECH AT SAMBALPUR[1]

[*December 22, 1928*][2]

I have only one request to make to you and all others concerned, and that is that whatever days of life on this earth are now left to me, they should be utilized for advancing what I regard as the most fruitful work of my life—and that is khadi—and not frittered away for mere demonstrations. You are at liberty to hold your own view as to what the most fruitful activity of my life is but then you should leave me alone.

Referring to the deepening poverty of the country, he said:

[1] From "Weekly Letter" by Pyarelal. The meeting was held in the morning on the sandy bank of the Mahanadi.

[2] From the reference to the meeting in the following item

While on the one hand the Government is despoiling the country by an evergrowing burden of taxation, the trader is mulcting it yearly of 60 crores of rupees by dumping foreign cloth on it. Is it any wonder that between the upper millstone of taxation and the nether one of exploitation the masses are being ground to powder? In fact it would be a surprise if things were otherwise.

He then went on to describe how three great leaders to whom Utkal owed a deep debt of gratitude, namely, the late Deshbandhu, the late Lalaji and the late Gopabandhu Das had in their lifetime affirmed an unequivocal faith in khadi as a means for village reconstruction and combating poverty of the Indian masses and how that faith had grown and deepened as they approached the end of their earthly journey. The only way in which Utkal could do justice to their memory was by taking to khadi in right earnest and insuring Utkal against the ravages of nature and of man by its means. Sambalpur had vast potential resources for khadi work in its weaving population. What he therefore wanted of them was to convert Sambalpur into a flourishing khadi centre.

Young India, 10-1-1929

558. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

SAMBALPUR,
December 22, 1928

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

After finishing the work at a meeting,[1] I had my meal and am now working at the spinning-wheel. I have some quiet time and so have sat down to reply to your letter which was received here. I had kept aside the other letters with the intention of replying to them in detail. You may, therefore, expect a reply to every point.

So far I have been able to keep to third-class travel, and all of us have been travelling in great comfort. From Nagpur, we were given one section of the carriage, the label "reserved" put on it, so that we experienced no difficulty on the way.

In the meeting here, I sold khadi to my heart's content. There are a number of Gujaratis here. They gave more than eight hundred rupees. I expect that they will make up one thousand before I leave this place. The untouchables here gave me self-spun yarn and also khadi woven by themselves.

The question of agency was discussed in the meeting of the Spinners' Association. I did not have to sit through it. But I had liked

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

your suggestion in principle and, therefore, pressed it at the meeting. All the members have approved of it. It has now been finally decided that, if we are to keep the agency, it will be not in the name of an individual but in the name of the institution. They may let the agency remain with the institution so long as they are satisfied with its work. I have told them that if they find some other arrangements more convenient, they may certainly make it, and that, if they do so, it will not displease me or any of us. The committee should do fearlessly what they find, on an objective consideration of the matter, to be in the best interest of khadi. A subcommittee has been appointed to take a final decision, and it will do so and inform us. Narandas is included in that committee. The matter will be settled in a few days.

The Mandir will get some money for the expenses which are incurred for Devdas and others. You should pay Devdas's bills. If you have anything to say with regard to the actual figures of expenditure, you may draw my attention to them or make a suggestion directly to Devdas.

Mirabehn and Chhotelal have stayed back in Wardha. Mirabehn will return to the Ashram after completing the work she has started in Bihar. Chhotelal will go to Bombay in a few days and return to the Ashram after learning some details there about bee-keeping. It has been decided that he should finally return there. All the same, it will be good if you and Gangabehn keep up your efforts to attract him there. I suppose those two have gone out to Savali to see the work being done there. Chhotelal gained five pounds in Wardha. Vasumati's weight, too, has gone up and is still increasing. She has gained nearly eight pounds at least. The causes for the increase in the weight of both are oil and mental peace.

Umi must have recovered now. In whooping cough the most important remedy is proper nursing. And we hear of more and more instances of the wonderful effect of sun-bath. This field, of restoring health through the sun, has hardly been explored so far; all the facts about the power of its rays have not been fully investigated yet. I for one believe that innumerable diseases can be cured mainly through different treatments with the sun's rays. Revashankerbhai's Dhiru recovered through such treatment. One of his bones was infected from within. About one pound of pus used to flow out every day. He has now recovered completely through treatment with the sun's rays. Hence complaints like weakness, cough, getting out of breath with the slightest exertion, etc., can certainly be cured by treatment with the sun's rays.

Kishorelal, too, has come to Wardha. But I may say that as he

arrived I left. We could, therefore, have no talk. His health may be described as so so. I keep very well. Keshu's low fever has gone and he has gained 4_ pounds in weight.

More in the next letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised the letter.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 35-7

559. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

SAMBALPUR,
December 22, 1928

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

Chi. Chhotelal, who has been asked to learn bread-making, had read the literature sent by you and, after observing an ordinary bakery, learnt the work, but it cannot be said that he has mastered the process. It would certainly help if he gets an opportunity of seeing a good bakery and watching the process followed there and the ingredients which are mixed. It would also be good if those ladies demonstrate once the method of making biscuits. Chhotelal will be going there hoping that he will get an opportunity to observe these things and in order to learn about bee-keeping from Vithaldas's brother. Give him whatever help you can. Arrange for him to see a bakery, if you can. If the Tatas have a bakery of their own, probably the manager of the Taj Mahal will help in getting him an opportunity to see it. Please do not be upset if I again and again entrust you with tasks like these. Grandmother must have recovered completely now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4791. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

560. LETTER TO MOHANLAL MISRA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
December 22, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. There is an association for the very purpose you mention. It was founded by the late Sir Ganga Ram. I suggest your writing to the Association (Lahore). They have on their list some suitable names.

I think that both the bride and her advisers ought to go a step further and not confine themselves to sub-castes. It ought to be enough if a suitable person can be found from among Brahmins all over India.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. MOHANLAL MISRA
145 NEW MANDI
MUZAFFARNAGAR
U.P.

From a photostat: S.N. 13022

561. LETTER TO BABAN GOKHALAY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[2]
December 22, 1928

MY DEAR GOKHALAY,

Here is a letter from Mr. Bhosle and my reply to him. If you think that they will raise a decent sum and a board of trustees can be formed in which you could have a deciding voice, it may be possible for me to find ten to fifteen thousand rupees. But it would be impossible to get the whole 40 thousand rupees that are required[3].

I do feel that the hostel to be of any use to these friends has to be in Bombay. They do not live in the suburbs and they cannot afford to go there. It is tragic, but it is true that the suburbs are meant not for the poor but for the well-to-do.

[1] Permanent address

[2] For the construction of a hostel and a hall for depressed classes; *vide* "Letter to Baban Gokhale", 3-10-1928

[3] *ibid*

If you have leisure I would like you to take special interest in this thing, in forming the trust, seeing people like Mr. Velji. I suggest as trustees you, Mr. Velji, Revashankerbhai, Kishorelal Mashruwala, Jamnalalji, Avantikabai, Bhosle, Nekaljay, Sir Purushottamdas and Devdhar if he will come in.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 2

From a microfilm: S.N. 13817

562. LETTER TO K. T. PAUL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
December 22, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I shall be in Calcutta from tomorrow probably for a week. I shall be staying with Sjt. Jiwanlal, 8 Pretoria Street.

I have the summary of the proceedings of the Conference as also the text of your speech. The speech I have not yet been able to read. As soon as I get the time, I shall certainly read it and if there is anything I have to say on it I shall gladly do so.

Mr. Dewick wrote to me[2] before you about Dr. Mott. I would also like to meet him. My movements during January and February will be determined in Calcutta.

Yours sincerely,

K. T. PAUL[3], ESQ.
5 RUSSEL STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13818

[1] Permanent address

[2] For Gandhiji's reply to Dewick, *vide* "Letter to E. C. Dewick", 12-12-1928.

[3] Chairman of the Committee for Arrangements of the World Student Christian Federation

563. MY NOTES

FOR LOVERS OF SPINNING

With reference to the article[1] which suggests that ginned cotton need not be dried in the sun before carding, Shri Lakshmidas writes:[2]

This important suggestion has been made, thanks to a mistake I had made out of ignorance. I have now come to realize the distinction between *kapas* (unginned cotton) and *ru* (ginned cotton); however, before acquiring that knowledge I had used the two terms as synonymous. Hence, in the article mentioned above, I happened to write *kapas* instead of *ru.* In this manner, good results come out of innocent mistakes.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-12-1928

564. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[Before *December 24, 1928*][3]

I have your letter. You should not mind Shankerbhai having written you that letter. It expresses his anger and his frankness. The anger will subside, let us cherish his frankness. At every step you should learn something. You will succeed in your task only if you become a cipher. No one will judge you by a low standard. Swallow all bitter pills; if you do, your body and mind will be as strong as copper.

You did the right thing in arranging for Manjulla to stay in the town. We certainly cannot request a car every day. I have had full experience of Ranchhodbhai's goodness. I am, therefore, not surprised

[1] *Vide* "Good Carding", 9-12-1928.

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had pointed out that Gandhiji in his note on carding had mentioned unginned cotton instead of ginned cotton and that cotton could be ginned only after it had been dried in the sun and threshed and cleaned, whereas ginned cotton had neither to be threshed nor dried. He had also suggested that in making slivers the stick used should have a circumference equal to the length of the fibres of the cotton, for only then could the strands easily separate from the sliver while the yarn was being twisted.

[3] From reference to the illness of the addressee's children, this letter appears to belong to December 1928 (*vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 17-12-1928 and "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 22-12-1928) and since the girl Umi succumbed to her illness on December 24, this must have been written earlier than December 24.

to learn that he himself comes with the car every day. Tell him that I would have been surprised if he had not done that.

There was nothing about the children in your letter. I believe, therefore, that they are improving. Do not take even a seemingly dangerous illness as really so. Never become panicky. We know a most effective remedy. Whether it is children or grown-ups who are ill, give them nothing except water make the nature of illness is not known.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5485

565. TELEGRAM TO PRINCIPAL, GUJARAT VIDYAPITH

December 24, 1928

PRINCIPAL
VIDYAPITH
AHMEDABAD

CONSULTED VALLABHBHAI. LET ELEVENTH STAND.[1]

BAPU

From a copy: S.N. 2456

566. TELEGRAM TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

December 24, 1928

CHHAGANLAL
UDYOGA MANDIR
SABARMATI

YOU HAVE DONE BRAVELY. HOPE NOW RAMA REALIZES UMI'S[2] SOUL NOT DEAD AND ALL ASHRAM CHILDREN HERS.

BAPU

From a copy: S.N. 2456

[1] The seventh convocation of the Gujarat Vidyapith was held on 11-1-1929.
[2] Who died of pneumonia

567. TELEGRAM TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON

December 24, 1928

PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON
PUNJAB NATIONAL BANK
LAHORE

JUST HEARD YOUR LOSS. GOD GIVE YOU PEACE. YOU WILL COME IF POSSIBLE.

GANDHI

From a copy: S.N. 2456

568. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[CALCUTTA,]
December 24, 1928

CHI. MIRA,

I have your note. This is Xmas eve. If Xmas has a special memory and special meaning for you, may you have on that day a purer and greater grasp of the realities of life. You have a sound heart and, therefore, all will be well with you. I knew you were happy and at peace in Wardha and to see you so made me happy.

Motilalji had work cut out for me as soon as I reached the station. So I was able to spin only at night.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5327. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8217

569. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

CALCUTTA,
Silence Day, December 24, 1928

SISTERS,

Today I have time only for a short letter.

I have written a letter to Durgabehn[1]. Please read it because it applies to all of you. You women should learn a lesson from the death of Umi. All the children of the Ashram are the children of all of you. If any of them dies, take it that God has taken it away. If new ones are

[1] Wife of Mahadev Desai

born, take it that God has sent them to you. Even if new births do not add to the number of children in the Ashram, the coming of new families add to their number. If we learn to cherish equal love for all of them, we shall not feel the pain of separation from Umi, though we should strive to understand its deeper meaning.

We shall meet soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3668

570. A LETTER[2]

CALCUTTA,
December 24, 1928

CHI . . . .

You should surely not leave if you are not getting fever, if your mind is at peace and if you have become accustomed to the work there by this time. It is true that the Bal Mandir does not belong to anyone and everyone. But the Bal Mandir should be the finest part of the [Udyog] Mandir. The experiment we are conducting is unique. Treat it as an experi-ment in non-violence. If all of you sisters shower love on the children, they will dance as you wish and will teach you the art of teaching them. Nothing is impossible for love. Let none of you therefore, think of leaving the Bal Mandir without reason. If you identify yourself with it, your physical illness will also vanish.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/44

571. LETTER TO RAMA C. JOSHI

CALCUTTA,
[*December 24, 1928*][1]

CHI. RAMA,[2]

You are being tested well. Since it is natural for you to feel pain at the loss of Umi[3] it should of course be so regarded. But we have been trying to forget the habit of grieving over the loss of our dear ones. why should we grieve when we know that union is bound to end

[1] From Kusumbehn Desai's Diary

[2] Wife of Chhaganlal Joshi

[3] Urmila, addressee's daughter, news of whose death from pneumonia had just reached Gandhiji; *vide* "Telegram to Chhaganlal Joshi", 24-12-1928

in separation? We feel it natural to grieve because we have got into that habit. There are certain communities which do not feel so. Among the Muslims death causes the least grief. Grief over death is thus not a universal rule. It does of course seem to be regarded as natural by the Hindus. Being contrary to the teaching of the *Gita*, the habit needs to be given up. the first chapter refers to the difference we make between our people and other people. Shri Krishna abolishes that distinction. In the Ashram we have been trying to forget it. You should regard your present misfortune as an occasion for succeeding in our attempt. To whom do the children in the Ashram belong? Loving those children and serving them, you will not feel the loss of Umi and the strength of worldly desires in you will diminish.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 276

572. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Silence Day [*December 24, 1928*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have received your letters. Father is here, his health is fair. I have not been able to see him so far. I am glad to know that you are getting well acquainted with Kusum.

You need not keep anything from her. Being firm herself she can advise you correctly. However much other people may dissuade you, always inform me if anyone falls ill.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3319

[1] From the reference to the growing acquaintance between Kusum and the addressee, this letter appears to have been written in 1928, and Gandhiji hoped to meet addressee's father in Calcutta where he had gone to attend the session of the Indian National Congress.

573. LETTER TO V. G. JANARDAN RAO

CALCUTTA,
December 26, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I have transferred it to Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla who will correspond with you directly.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. V. G JANARDAN RAO
GURU RAJA VILAS
SRIRAMPET, MYSORE

From A copy: S.N. 26908

574. SPEECH ON RESOLUTION ON NEHRU REPORT, CALCUTTA CONGRESS— I [1]

December 26, 1928

Mahatma Gandhi in an introductory speech delivered in Hindustani before moving the resolution said that the gravity of the situation demanded that he should also put his views before the country. Although he liked to speak in Hindustani, circumstances demanded that he should move the resolution in English. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru then read out the text of the resolution.

This Congress having considered the constitution recommended by the All-Parties Committee Report[2] welcomesit as a great contribution towards the solution of India's political and communal problems and congratulates the Committee on the virtual unanimity of its recommendations and whilst adhering to the resolution relating to Complete Independence passed at the Madras Congress adopts the constitution drawn up by the Comm-ittee as a great step in political advance, specially as it represents the largest measure of agreement attained among the important parties in the country, provided however that the Congress shall not be bound by the constitution, if it is not accepted

[1] At the Subjects Committee Meeting

[2] As a result of the All-Parties Conference's resolution, a committee was appointed under the chairmanship of Motilal Nehru to draft the principles of a constitution before 1-7-1928. The report of this Committee, known as the Nehru Report, was submitted at the All-Parties Conference held at Lucknow from August 28 to 30, 1928. *Vide*

on or before the 31st December 1930 and provided further that in the event of non-acceptance by the British Parliament of the constitution by that date the Congress will revive non-violent non-co-operation by advising the country to refuse taxation and every aid to the Government.

The President is hereby authorized to send the text of this resolution together with a copy of the said report to His Excellency the Viceroy for such action as he may be pleased to take.

Nothing in the resolution shall interfere with the propaganda for familiarizing the people with the goal of independence in so far as it does not conflict with prosecution of a campaign for the adoption of the said Report.[1]

(2) Meanwhile the Congress shall engage in the following activities: (a) In the legislatures and outside every attempt will be made to bring about total prohibition of intoxicating drugs and drinks; picketing of liquor and drug shops shall be organized whereve desirable and possible. (b) Inside and outside legislatures methods suited to respective environments shall be immediately adopted to bring about boycott of foreign cloth by advocating and stimulating production and adoption of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar. (c) Specific grievances, wherever discovered and where people are ready, shall be sought to be redressed by non-violent action as was recently done at Bardoli.

(d) Members of legislatures returned on Congress tickets shall devote the bulk of their time to the constructive work settled from time to time by the Congress Committee. (e) Congress organizations shall be perfected by enlisting members and enforcing strictest discipline. (f) Measures shall be taken to rid the country of social abuses. (g) Measures shall be taken to remove disabilities of women and they will be invited and encouraged to take their due share in national upbuilding (h) It will be the duty of all Congressmen, being Hindus, to do all they can to remove untouchability and help the so-called untouchables in every possible way in their attempt to remove their disabilities and better their condition. (i) Volunteers shall be

[1] To this, amendments were moved by Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose. Their aim was to put no time-limit, nor, even by implication, to accept for India Dominion Status as contemplated in the constitution drawn up by the All-Parties Conference (at Delhi). Subsequently, this resolution was withdrawn. For the resolution approved by the Congress, *vide* "Speech on Resolution on Nehru Report, Calcutta Congress-II", 28-12-1928.

enlisted to take up village reconstruction in addition to what is being done through the spinning-wheel and khaddar. (j) Such other work as may be deemed advisable in order to advance nation-building in all its departments and in order to enable the Congress to secure co-operation in national efforts of the people engaged in different pursuits. In order to finance the activities mentioned in the foregoing programme every Congressman with a monthly income of Rs. 100 and over shall contribute five per cent of his monthly income provided that in special cases exemption may be granted at the discretion of the Working Committee.[1]

Continuing, Mahatmaji said:

Friends, I hope I shall not detain you for many minutes in my introductory remarks. It is an open secret that we have in our camp sharp differences of opinion as to the lead Congressmen should receive in connection with the epoch-making Report. I call it an epoch-making Report of the All-Parties Constitution Committee. We have the Delhi resolution[2] and the first thing that strikes anybody would be why not affirm or reaffirm the Delhi resolution dealing with this question.If it could have been done consistently with national interest there would have been an end to all new resolutions and certainly I would not have troubled you. I must take you in confi-dence and tell you that the President himself felt that the Delhi resolution required rethinking and revision. Some of us putting our heads together came to the conclusion that the Delhi resolution was a self-contradictory resolution. So we cast about to find a middle path so that consistently with honesty and with desire to accept the Nehru Report we should frame another resolution. This resolution is the result of it. Even as it is, this resolution is an attempt to satisfy and if not to satisfy at least to conciliate those schools of thought that are prevailing in the Congress with regard to the Report. That we have two schools of thought is no matter of misfortune or grief.

I suggest to you that the purpose of Congressmen should be to adopt the Nehru Report in the same spirit in which it was received by the whole of India at the time it was published. Let me recall to you that at the time of its publication it was not only enthusiastically

[1] This clause on constructive programme was later passed, after a few amendments, as a separate resolution; *vide* "Speech on Constructive Programme, Calcutta Congress", 1-1-1929

[2] Passed by the All-India Congress Committee at Delhi on November 3, 1928. It reiterated the demand for Complete Independence and accepted the Nehru Committee recommendations for the settlement of communal differences.

received by the nation but it commanded, it extorted, the unstinted admiration of our critics, of our opponents and of outsiders who were disinterested spectators. It is, if you choose to do so, open to you to say that we shall not accept the Report, but I say it would be bad if we came to such a conclusion hastily. But if after the first flash of enthusiasm had died out and after a careful study of the Report we come to the conclusion that the best interests of the nation will not be served by accepting the Report, it would be your bounden duty, though painful, to reject it. I suggest to you either we should give our wholehearted support or we should not support it at all. It is a document which is not an end in itself but the beginning of the end. It is a document which is designed to bring together as many important parties as it is possible with a view to concentrating their attention and efforts upon some common purpose in connection with our political advance.

When the Committee approached its labours you must know that the horizon was dark. I know myself there were tremendous difficulties and there was a time when there was nothing but despair staring the members in the face, but Dr. Ansari and your President were not men who would give in easily to despair. They fought the tide of despair and how successfully you know and the world knows.

You the Congressmen are the authors of this Convention and in the same breath that you adopted complete national independence as your goal you asked the Working Committee to have the Convention of all parties with a view to framing a scheme of swaraj as I call it or call it a constitution that would be acceptable to the majority of the parties and you had a committee consisting of the most eminent men in the country known for their services to the country and you imposed on Congressmen the labours of bringing together all these men and getting them to go as near the Congress goal as they could possibly do. This must have been in your minds at the time you thought of the Convention, and at the time of asking the Working Committee to call a Convention into being.

That being so I suggest that unless there are overwhelming reasons for you not to accept the Report, it must be accepted by you. You cannot take this Report piecemeal or chop it up, for it is an organic whole. Just as you cannot chop a body and say I will have so much of the body and will not have the other half, so you do not chop this Report and say you will accept this part and not the other one. As Dr. Ansari has pointed out if you attack the central theme of the Report you stab the heart itself and the centre is what is known as Dominion Status. I suggest to you that it will be a grievous blunder to Independence against Dominion Status or compare the two and

suggest that Dominion Status carries humiliation with it and that Independence is something that is triumphant. I do not want to go into the controversy just now. I simply say to you as a man of business wanting to serve the nation, wanting to educate the masses and influence the masses and desiring to enlist active co-operation of the masses in order to vindicate the honour of the nation. I suggest if you seek to do all these things you will think fifty times before you will go to the masses and compare these two things. Don't run to the hasty conclusion that the distinguished authors of the Report had the interest of the country less at their heart than any of us, or most of us. Do not run away with the hasty conclusion that they want anything else than Complete Indepen-dence for the country. The word 'independence' is much abused and is an equally misunderstood word. The contents of that word would vary with the strength that the nation can call to its aid from time to to time. ("Hear, hear.") Independence of Nepal is not attained in the same way as independence of America. Then there is independence of the feudatory States—they flatter themselves sometimes with the belief that they are independent and they are sometimes called semi-independent States—they adopt the role of independence in their relations with their subjects. That is a species of independence. Let us not therefore make too much of that one word and let us not belittle the other two words (Dominion Status). I as a tried worker, as one who knows something of the masses, desire to warn you against confusing the mind of the nation. For you will simply entrap them and leave them in trap holes. Beware of doing any such thing.

I suggest that the utmost that a man desires—independence—has been given to him by this resolution. The Madras resolution gives you the goal of the Congress. It tells you that Independence shall be the goal, but it has not declared independence. You are not now working for independence of the type that the authors of that resolution had in their mind. In one way we are all striving for independence. The Congress creed is the creed of independence. I challenge anybody to deny that. That is the process of evolution, but some of us consider that we should have the word 'independence' incorporated in the same resolution of the Congress so that we can put it before the nation. By all means have it, keep that word; but in considering this resolution I desire to tell you that, in the process of working, the very pace of independence is accelerated by it and not retarded. You might have easily slept over the goal you set before yourselves in Madras. But here by this resolution you dare not sleep over your goal; for at the end of two years you will have to work out your independence and practically you will have to declare indepen-dence. Some of us,

and I include myself among them if I survive two years, may have to die in order to give a good account of ourselves for the sake of achieving independence and it may be till it is achieved, you will have to see our carcases. I yield to none in my desire to attain completest independence. So long as there is any one man who can interfere with my freedom or with the nation's freedom it is intolerable and I consider that I live in vain. The fire of independence is burning within me as much as in the most fiery breast of anyone in the country but the ways and methods may differ and it may be that when I am nearing my destiny on this earth you may say, 'For independence we may wait for fifty years'. If it is so, you will tell me and point out that I am weakened and you will then not listen to me but hiss me out of the Congress platform. And I shall consider myself unworthy to serve the nation. I want to dedicate what little strength I may have to the nation and not my weakness. For my weakness I shall answer before my Maker. For my strength it is all at your disposal. Do not run away with the idea for a single moment that I want to suggest anything less than what the nation can have today or what the nation should have tomorrow. Therefore I suggest that if really you want to work out the resolution of the Madras Congress for Independence you have got the amplest possible scope in this resolution but with one Supreme condition that having called the Convention into being you must be faithful to that Report as you will be faithful to your goal.

I would ask you to interpret that Report in terms of that goal and feel that the authors of that Report have also the goal of Independence in view and remember that the Chairman of that Committee which brought out the Report is the President of your Congress. I do not want to dissect this resolution at this stage but I want you to dismiss, in considering this resolution, all personal factors. I do not want you to become my patron. I want you to treat me as a comrade marching side by side with you and I also want you to outbid me in the march towards the goal. You may say, 'Doctors have ordered rest for you, you can take well-deserved rest, we shall run and if you march side by side with us we may have to crawl.' I say crawling we have buried in that wretched lane at Amritsar. We shall never crawl. I do not ask you to consider this resolution in any patronizing spirit, nor does your President stand in need of any patronage. I can swallow patronage, but not he. Eliminate therefore all considerations and make your own choice.

The Report is merely the commencement of the end. There is a lot of work to be done to achieve the purpose behind it. There is much spade-work even in this Congress. The Muslim League, Hindu Mahasabha and every other organization has got to do its duty before

we can launch out that Report upon the wide ocean. It is necessary for you to chalk out a resolution which will satisfy all needs of that Report and not merely say: 'All right, we accept the Report lest anybody should be offended or in order that diplomats may go on with diplomacy and steal something for us.' It will not come by stealing. Freedom has never come by stealing. It has come by bleeding and you will have to bleed even for getting what is attempted in that Report.

I therefore want you to accept that Report whole-heartedly with the fixed determination to work for that goal. I do not want to wash down your goal. I want you to sustain your goal. If you wish you may misinterpret it or interpret it in any other way. I hope you will approach consideration of this resolution in a national spirit and if I may also say in a prayerful spirit.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 27-12-1928

575. UNITY IN THE PUNJAB

With reference to my note[1] in *Young India* on Dr. Satyapal's telegram he has sent me the following letter[2] which I welcome:

> I am deeply obliged to you for your letter of 28th November[3] (in reply to my telegram and letter) and also for the valuable comments made by you thereon in *Young India*.
>
> I wish to assure you that every word of that telegram is heartfelt and sincere and is not prompted by any momentary impulse and interested reason, or any outward pressure. . . . The passing away of Lala Lajpat Rai throws a very heavy burden of responsibilities on the shoulders of the nationalist workers and they cannot afford to have any split in that camp. . .
>
> One point however I want to make quite clear. I have not been able to appreciate the idea of your finding 'repentance' on our part in that telegram. I have read the telegram several times over and still have not been able to find any words which signify any repentance on my part for my having opposed Lala Lajpat Rai during his lifetime when I felt it necessary to do so. . . .
>
> I pay my heartfelt tribute to the memory of Lala Lajpat Rai but that does not mean that I subscribe to everything he advocated or championed. . . .

Young India, 27-12-1928

[1] *Vide* "Good If True", 29-11-1928.

[2] Only extracts are reproduced here.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Satyapal", 28-11-1928

576. CURSE OF ASSASSINATION

The assassination[1] of the Assistant Superintendent Mr. Saunders of Lahore was a dastardly act apart from whether it had a political motive behind it or not. Violence being in the air, there will no doubt be silent and secret approbation of the act, especially if it is discovered to have had any connection with the assault on Lalaji and his utterly innocent comrades. The provocation was great and it became doubly great by the death of Lalaji which was certainly hastened by the nervous shock received by him from the disgraceful conduct of the police. Some will insist, not without considerable justification, on ascribing the death even to the physical effect of the injury received by the deceased in the region of the heart. The provocation received also additional strength from the Punjab Government's defence of the police conduct. I should not wonder if the assassination proves to be in revenge of the high-handed policy of the Punjab Government.

I wish however that it was possible to convince the hot youth of the utter futility of such revenge. Whatever the Assistant Superintendent did was done in obedience to instructions. No one person can be held wholly responsible for the assault and the aftermath. The fault is that of the system of Government. What requires mending is not men but the system. And when the youth of the country have the real determination they will find that it is in their power as it is in nobody else's to kill the system.

English books have taught us to applaud as heroic deeds of daring, even of freebooters, villains, pirates and train-wreckers. Newspapers fill columns with exciting stories real or, in their absence, imaginary, of such deeds. Some of us have successfully learnt this art of applauding as heroic anything adventurous irrespective of the motives or contemplated results behind such deeds.

This cannot be regarded as anything but a bad omen. Surely there is nothing heroic about a cold-blooded robbery accompanied by murder of an innocent wealthy pilgrim carrying treasures for distribution in well-conceived charity. There is equally none in the deliberate secret assassination of an innocent police officer who has discharged his duty however disagreeable its consequences may be for the community to which the assassin belongs. Let us remember that the administrators of the system have held on to the system in spite of previous assassinations. After all the story of the building of the British Empire is not itself wanting in deeds of valour, adventure and

[1] On 17-12-1928. Later, Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev were accused in the Lahore conspiracy case and sentenced to death.

sacrifice worthy, in my opinion, of a better cause. If we may regard the assassination of Mr. Saunders as a heroic deed the British people would be able to answer this one, I hope, solitary act of so-called heroism with countless such acts enough to fill a volume. But it is time we began irrespective of nationalities to regard deeds with mean motives or meaner consequences with nothing but horror, indignation and disapprobation, no matter how daring they may be. I know that this means a new valuation of such terms as heroism, patriotism, religiousness and the like. No one, I hope, regards the assassinations of Presidents Cleveland[1] and Carnot[2] as reflecting any credit upon the assassins or the nations in whose cause the mad men carried out their evil plans. Islam is not better for the assassination of so many Caliphs or, to take a modern instance, for the assassination of the late Swami Shraddhanandji. Nor has Hinduism been ennobled by the frenzied deeds one occasionally reads about of so-called protectors of the cow. The curse of assassination and kindred crimes is not advancing the progress to humanity, religion or true civilization.

Let the youth of India realize that the death of Lalaji can only be avenged by regaining her freedom. Freedom of a nation cannot be won by solitary acts of herosim even though they may be of the true type, never by heroism so-called. The temple of freedom requires the patient, intelligent, and constructive effort of tens of thousands of men and women, young and old. Acts such as we are deploring decidedly retard the progress of this quiet building. When it does nothing else, it diverts the attentions of countless builders.

Young India, 27-12-1928

577. ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION[3]

The draft constitution proposed by Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj, Sjt. C. Rajagopalachariar and Babu Rajendra Prasad for the All-India Spinners' Association as circulated amongst the members of the Executive Council of the Association and published in the papers was considered by the Council of the Association at its meetings held at Wardha on the 18th and 19th instant and was finally adopted with slight amendments.

The following were appointed as trustees for the permanent

[1] Stephen Grover Cleveland (1837-1908), twenty-second and twenty-fourth President of the United States of America

[2] Marie Francois Sadi Carnot (1837-94), fourth President of the French Republic

[3] Presumably signed by Gandhiji without revising

board: 1. Mahatma Gandhi, 2. Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj, 3. Sjt. C. Rajagopalachariar, 4. Sjt. Gangadharrao Deshpande, 5. Sjt. Konda Venkatappayya, 6. Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel, 7. Sjt. Jawaharlal Nehru, 8. Sjt. Manilal Kothari, 9. Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta, 10. Babu Rajendra Prasad, 11. Sjt. Shankerlal G. Banker.

The twelfth seat was kept vacant. The elections of the remaining three trustees retirable annually will take place in the due course.

Copies of the constitution can be had from the central office at Ahmedabad.

Young India, 27-12-1928

578. A SINDH CURSE

The Amils of Sindh are probably the most advanced community in that province. But in spite of all their advance, there are some serious abuses of which they seem to have a monopoly. Of these the custom of *deti-leti*[1] is not the least serious. I have more than once remarked upon it in these columns. My attention was drawn to this abuse during my very first visit to Sindh and I was invited to speak to the Amil friends about it. Though no doubt isolated work has been done in the direction of removing this abuse, no organized effort seems to have been made to end the evil. The Amils are a compact little community. The seriousness of the evil is not questioned by anybody. I have not known a single Amil to defend the vile custom. It has persisted because it is a custom patronized by the educated youth among the Amils. Their mode of life is above the means they can honestly command. Hence they have thrown all scruples to the wind and do not mind degrading themselves by prostituting the institution of marriage for their own base ends. And this one vicious habit has told upon the quality of their national work which otherwise by their intellect and education they are capable of doing to the great benefit of the country.

In order to put an end to this evil, a provisional committee has already been formed now of which Acharya A. T. Gidwani has accepted the presidentship. This is as it should be. When he undertook to go to Sindh from Brindaban it was naturally expected that he would throw himself with zest into all desirable movements that conduce to national well-being. It is to be hoped that the provisional committee will soon become a permanent organization and under his able leadership the reform which is already belated will make steady

[1] Dowry

progress.

The Secretary, Sjt. Mirchandani, asks me for suggestions. The only suggestion that I can think of just now is that this organization should create a public opinion against *deti-leti* that would become irresistible. Your educated Amils are able to squeeze the poor parents of marriageable girls only because there is no active public opinion against the custom. There should be work done in the schools and colleges and amongst the parents of girls. The parents should so educate their daughters that they would refuse to marry a young man who wanted a price for marrying and would rather remain spinsters than be party to the degrading terms. The only honourable terms in marriage are mutual love and mutual consent.

Young India, 27-12-1928

579. MILK FOR BOMBAY

A friend on reading the article 'A Blot on Bombay' in *Young India* (29th November) writes to Mahadev Desai as follows:[1]

I am afraid that the writer of the letter has misunderstood the article in question. No one has suggested that the question of the slaughter of cattle in Bombay or of the supply of pure milk will be solved by shifting the stables from the city of Bombay to the suburbs of Bombay. What is required and what has been suggested is that Bombay should bravely face the problem as behoves it. Surely the Gujaratis who are not living in Bombay are not the philanthropists who might be expected to come to the rescue of Bombay and solve one of its tremendous and equally urgent problems. The Municipality of Bombay has to take the initiative and make the move and if need be enlist the sympathy and co-operation of philanthropically-inclined Gujaratis. I fear that even if anybody outside Bombay wanted to come to the rescue, he would require special facilities from the Bombay Corporation. But we have not in this country the requisite capacity for private enterprise which would take great risks involved in a big venture that the supply of milk to a large city like Bombay undoubtedly is. Let it be also known that such private effort has been made before now in Bombay and it failed. I think that failure had definite causes. There was not sufficient grit and ability behind those ventures. But I submit that no cost is too great, no enterprise too risky for the Municipality of Bombay to undertake in order to ensure a supply of cheap and pure milk for its citizens and to rid Bombay of

[1] This is not reproduced here.

stables which are a source of danger to its health and which must be always coming in the way of any radical measure for dealing with malaria and other diseases which are rampant in Bombay. I freely admit that Bombay has to travel outside its radius for the organization of a vast dairy scheme. But that every city in the world has done for many of its wants.

Young India, 27-12-1928

580. TELEGRAM TO LABOUR UNION, AHMEDABAD

December 27, 1928

LABOUR

AHMEDABAD

YOUR LETTER. REACHING AHMEDABAD FOR CERTAIN BEFORE 11TH JANUARY.[1]

BAPU

From a copy: S.N. 2456

581. LETTER TO DR. H. W. B. MORENO

8 PRETORIA STREET,
CALCUTTA,
December 27, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your kind letter. I am so hemmed in that in this place of long distances, much as I should like to, it is not possible for me to go to your house. But if you could take the chance of finding me at the above address, please come tomorrow, the 28th instant at 8 p.m.

Yours sincerely,

H. W. B. MORENO, ESQ.
PRESIDENT, THE ANGLO-INDIAN LEAGUE
2 WELLESLEY SQUARE, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13024

[1] In the dispute between the workers and the management of the Gujarat Ginning Mill, Gandhiji was a member of the Arbitration Board.

582. LETTER TO RAJA OF KANIKA

8 PRETORIA STREET,
CALCUTTA,
December 27, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Much as I should like to send you an appointment, I am so much pressed for time that I hardly know whether I could give you an appointment before the Congress meets. I would therefore ask you to tell me briefly in writing what you want to say.

Yours sincerely,

THE RAJA OF KANIKA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13822

583. LETTER TO HOWARD HANLEHURST

AS AT SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 27, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I would not take the responsibility of advising you to come here. Though there is no movement in India called by the name[1] that your movement bears, the spirit of brotherhood is there and works away silently. I fancy that your abilities can be more economically and usefully employed in your natural environments.

Yours sincerely,

HOWARD HANLEHURST, ESQ.
CHESTER-LE-STREET, ENGLAND

From a photostat: S.N. 15101

584. A LETTER

AS AT SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 27, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter received during Christmas week. I send you therefore my very best wishes.

I welcome your questions. So long as we indirectly sustain a system and derive our own support from it, so long are we bound to

[1] Brotherhood of the World Association of Youth

give it even direct support, unless we feel that the system being bad presents and effective opportunity for destroying it. The question when the opportunity is effective can only be determined in every individual case by one's own strength of conviction and corresponding self-confidence. At the time of my participation in the Boer War and the late War, I saw neither the effective opportunity nor had I the confidence. Seeker after God which is Truth does not bother when the opportunity is effective or about self-confidence. God gives him the light when his time has come. All that man can do, is required to do, is to keep himself pure, humble to the extent of becoming a cipher in very truth. The light at the correct time is assured for him. Such a seeker confines himself to progessively narrow participation in a system in which he finds himself and from which he is too unable to extricate himself wholly at a bound.

I think that the second question is partly if not wholly answered in the foregoing. I can only add that a silent prayer is often more effective than the spoken word consciously uttered. Therefore in irresponsive surroundings like those of the Wall Street a reliance must be placed exclusively upon silent prayer accompanied by the strictest uncompromising conduct.

I am not absolutely sure of the European visit. But if I do go to Europe next year and if there is a call from within to go to America and if I have the time I would certainly go. But here again I am following my tried prescription within for light and guidance.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 15127

585. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS[1]

CALCUTTA,
December *27, 1928*

Being in the midst of all turmoil I have not much time to send you a love letter much as I should like during this Christmas week. Tucker[2] has been constantly with me and was anxious to join the morning prayer on Christmas day and give appropriate hymns, but could not as his friends failed him at the last moment.

I am dictating this just for one thing, and that is Lalaji's book.

[1] In his letter dated 28-11-1928, the addressee had enquired about the publication of an English edition of Lala Lajpat Rai's *Unhappy India,* and expressed concern about the misunderstanding created in the West by Miss Mayo's *Mother India.*

[2] Boyd William Tucker

After very careful consideration I have come to the conclusion that it is unnecessary just now to publish an abridgement of *Unhappy India*. Lalaji's wish about the circulation of a thousand copies in Britain should be respected, not by presenting copies gratis to anybody except those who may want it but by keeping a stock there for sale. The third edition printed here is a well-got-up volume attractively bound. It may be sold even cheap. But it is the Indian copy which should be circulated there.

I do not attach much importance to replies to Miss Mayo's calumny, however able and true they may be, and certainly not much importance will be given in the West to an Indian contribution. What must however be done is to present the West with a very brief and attractive volume containing the life and selections from all Lalaji's writings. Such a volume will illustrate the truth that the most forward nationalists of India have not been haters of the West or of England or in any other way narrow but that they have been internationalists under the guise of nationalism. Such were Lalaji, Tilak, Das. I hardly need to mention many others. It may serve the cause of humanity if the truth can be brought out that the men who have been persecuted and practically done to death by this wicked Government had deserved a better fate.

I have perhaps not yet made absolutely clear what I want to say. But I have no doubt you have understood it.

Ba, Mahadev, Subbiah, Pyarelal, Krishnadas, Chhaganlal, Jamnadas, Keshu, Jamnalal and Rajagopalachari and several others whom you know intimately are with me.

C. F. ANDREWS, ESQ.
112 GOVER STREET
LONDON W.C. 1

From a photostat: S.N. 15128

586. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Friday [On or before *December 28, 1928*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Your letters come regularly. There are many Bombay friends travelling up and down. Some of them may escort you. I shall write to Mrityunjaya.

I am very careful in conducting my experiment of taking oil. I shall give it up if it does any harm.

Ba is slightly indisposed today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3317

587. SPEECH ON RESOLUTION ON NEHRU REPORT, CALCUTTA CONGRESS—II [2]

December 28, 1928

When Pandit Motilal called upon Mahatma Gandhi to move the new resolution a member objected to this procedure so long as the original resolution[3] and the amendments had not been withdrawn.

The President ruled that Mahatmaji might take the permission of the house to substitute his resolution. All other amendments would be considered as amendments to the substituted resolution.

Thereupon Mahatma Gandhi in moving the withdrawal of his original resolution made an important statement giving an idea as to what had happened behind the scenes. He said:

Before I move the resolution which has been circulated to you, I beg leave of the house to withdraw the resolution which I had the honour of moving the other day and to which so many amendments have al-ready been moved. I know that in asking for permission to withdraw my resolution I owe to the house an apology. You have been

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 10-12-1928, mentioning the experiment in taking oil and "Letter to Kusum Desai", 30-12-1928, which mentions Prabhavati's absence from the Ashram.

[2] At the Subjects Committee meeting

[3] *Vide* "Speech on Resolution on Nehru Report, Calcutta Congress-I", 26-12-1928.

put to consi-derable inconvenience and trouble and a great deal of time has been given to the consideration of the amendments. I was going to say that a great deal of time was wasted but it would not be proper to call it a waste of time, because the consideration of these propositions has enabled you to understand more fully than ever before the mental condition of many of the national workers. It is perfectly correct to insist upon leave being granted for the withdrawal of the resolution into which I had put so much force and to which I attach a great deal of importance, but the national life is a perpetual struggle whilst it is growing. It is a struggle not only against the environments that seek to crush us but also a struggle between our own ranks. Often the struggle between our own ranks is more prolonged, more exacting and even more bitter than the struggle against the environment which is outside ourselves. You may depend upon it that we who were behind the resolution which will be withdrawn and those who were behind the principal amendment of Pandit Jawaharlal put their heads together and wanted to avoid a conflict. Mr. Sambamurthi was sur-prised why Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was not here today. He may very well be surprised and I propose to take you into confidence. He was, as he said at the outset, not in sympathy with much that was going on in our midst. He has become impatient to throw off the yoke. Every twenty-four hours of his life he simply broods upon the grievances of his countrymen. He is impatient to remove the grinding pauperism of the masses. He is impatient against capitalists who are in the country exploi-ting the masses as he is against the capitalists who rule over this country and exploit and bleed this country in the words of late Lord Salisbury. I may tell you frankly that he is not in sympathy even with this resolution which I seek to substitute for the resolution which will be withdrawn if you give permission. He thinks this resolution itself falls far short of what he wants but, a high-souled man as he is, he does not want to create unnecessary bitterness. Bitterness and worse he is prepared to face if face them he must. He sees deliverance out of it by seeking to impose silence upon himself and remaining absent. Hence you find that even though he is a Secretary, and a faithful and diligent Secretary of the Congress, he feels that it is better for him this morning to absent himself than be a helpless witness to proceedings with which he is not in sympathy. I am sorry because I do not share his discontent over this resolution, while I share all his grief, the intensity of grief over the pauperism of our country and the slavery which is grinding us down. I do not share his belief that what we are doing at the present moment is not sufficient for the present needs of the country. But how can he help feeling dissatisfied? He would not

be Jawaharlal if he did not strike out for himself an absolutely unique and original line in pursuance of his path. He considers nobody, not even his father, nor wife, nor child. His own country and his duty to his own country he considers and nothing else.

Now you understand why he is absent and now perhaps you will also understand why I have to perform the painful duty of with drawing the resolution which I moved, not because I am sorry for that resolution, not because I am not in love with that resolution, not because the one I am now going to move is a better resolution by any means; I hold that that was far superior to the resolution which is now in my hand. But as I have said, our life is a perpetual struggle against oppressive environments and a perpetual struggle within our ranks. If we want unity, then adjustment and readjustment, a series of compromises honourable to both parties and to variety of opinions, is to be effected. We invest every occasion with the importance of a sacred *siddhanta* or principle from which not an iota should be removed. Many of the things which we call by the name of principles are no more principles than so many details which we do not call principles, and therefore this resolution is a result of attempts on the part of all parties in this house or those parties who are interested in that resolution and its principle amendments. It is a resolution of compromise between them, of a series of adjustment and readjustment between them. Hence, I feel that I am doing nothing wrong, not only that I am doing nothing wrong in asking for permission to withdraw that resolution although I consider it far superior to the resolution which I will presently move before you, but because I know that our national interest will be better served by the resolution which I consider far inferior to the former resolution because it will hold all parties together. They are no more inclined to divide the house than I was or Pandit Motilal was. Both of us were for dividing the house because we thought that we would win, but what would that victory mean if it increased the bitterness, if it increased the weakening of our national unity and our national forces?

There were not three or four people behind my original resolution but two parties behind it and even the principal amendment of Pandit Jawaharlal was a compromise. Even that fell far short of what he held to be dear to him, but he said, “If I could keep together all the different elements in the county I would waive my objection and move this resolution.” Hence you see that even that resolution was a result of compromise just as this is. Therefore if you still think that you will shoulder the responsibility and you consider that the interest of the country will be better served by not allowing me to withdraw that resolution, of course you can shoulder that responsi-

bility, but remember what it means. I now leave the proposition in your hands.[1] (Applause)

There are in our midst today those who would stop at nothing, who in their impatience do not mind if they rush headlong even to perdition. What are we to do? What am I to do—a man approaching his end? What am I to say to those flowers of the country who prize its liberty just as much as I do, if not perhaps much more? What am I to say to it? Am I to say I shall no longer come with you because I consider that my principle is better, my method is better, therefore you shall work out your own destiny; you shall work out that without my services? I assure you, it is not without a considerable pain, that I have taken up this position. I could have defied them just as they could have defied me, but they say: 'We do not do it, because we want your services also, if we get them; but not altogether at your price. We want you to pay the same price to us also. We want you to meet us also.' I could not possibly resist it without stultifying myself and without degrading myself. Although I feel it was a better resolution, I will move this with all the force at my command and with all the insistence that I put into the original resolution. This resolution, therefore considering the circumstances, becomes really, for the time being, superior to the resolution that I moved and hence I ask for your leave to withdraw that resolution and let me put before you this resolution for your consideration.

If after what I have told you, if after I have taken you into the secrets and if after I have told you of something which induced me to withdraw my resolution, if after all that you do not want that my original resolution be withdrawn and if you care to take that serious responsibility upon your shoulders, you can say that the resolution shall not be withdrawn. Then your vote will be tantamount to your voting for that resolution. But I warn you against that serious responsibility.[2]

The President asked the house to signify its desire whether leave be allowed to Mahatmaji to withdraw his former resolutions and move the present agreed one. This was given by the whole house with show of hands. There were only four dissentients.

Mahatmaji then moved his resolution:

> This Congress, having considered the onstitution recommended by the All-Parties Committee Report, welcomes it as a great contribution towards the solution of India's political and communal problems, and congratulates the Committee on the

[1] Here a member raised a point of order that Gandhiji should not be allowed to make a speech in withdrawing the resolution.

[2] After the speech, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya opposed the withdrawal of Gandhiji's former resolution.

virtual unanimity of its recommendations, and, whilst adhering to the resolution relating to Complete Independence passed at the Madras Congress, approves of the constitution drawn up by the Committee as a great step in political advance, especially as it re-presents the largest measure of agreement attained among the important parties in the country.

Subject to the exigencies of the political situation this Congress will adopt the Constitution, if it is accepted in its entirety by the British Parliament on or before December 31,1929, but in the event of its non-acceptance by that date or its earlier rejection, the Congress will organize a campaign of non-violent non-co-operation by advising the country to refuse taxation and in such other manner as may be decided upon.

Consistently with the above, nothing in this resolution shall interfere with the carrying on, in the name of the Congress, of the propaganda for Complete Independence.

In moving the substituted resolution Mahatma Gandhi said:

Friends, I don't want to inflict a long speech upon you but I must confess to you that I have not been able to collect my thoughts, my brain is muddled and I have got to put my thoughts together as I proceed. It is really a fact that my brain is muddled. A physician will tell you what happens to a man who has to undergo an all-night vigil and that anxiously following the delicate proceedings as I had to do in a little tent nearby when the Convention Committee was meeting to which I was dragged, not called, by our Chairman. I had hoped that I would not have to attend that Committee, but a peremptory summons came and I had to jump into a car that brought me to the place which I could not leave before half past two in the morning after which it was no longer possible for me to go and sleep.

You will now see what I mean when I say I have got a muddled brain.

The resolution that I have the honour of moving, you have already heard. I want you first of all to consider what has been omitted from the original resolution. It is necessary to do so not in order to commend this resolution to your attention because I know that this resolution having been accepted by the two parties, large parties in this house, it does not need any commendation. Even if I merely place this resolution before you I feel it is absolutely safe in your hands. There may be a few who may vote against it but it is not my purpose merely to get this resolution passed. That is the least important part of it. But my purpose is to draw your attention upon what is expected of you, why you are having this resolution and not

the original resolution passed and what is expected of the party which is instrumental in having the first resolution watered down. You will find there is a glaring omission for which I am sorry. That is the omission in connection with the sending of the resolution to the Viceroy. I could understand even whilst I was drawing that clause that when it would be read to you some of you would be shocked and say to yourselves: 'Thou too, non-co-operator!' I rehearsed that to myself. But a non-co-operator, the author of non-co-operation, has brought in that clause and if I could even now convince you how important that clause is and if you ask me to restore it I would gladly restore it. I have no time. You do not know how pressed some of us are for time. I had no time even to discuss the reason for putting down that clause to the original proposition. I said to myself when I drew up that clause if I discovered any reluctance on your part I would gladly destroy it. But I want to put my case before this house not because of my reputation as non-co-operator—because that is well able to take care of itself, because there is still action left behind it—but because I want the house to understand the implications of non-co-operation as also the implications of this very resolution.

Somebody has said that this resolution is a challenge and so it is. It is open to the British Government to interpret this as an insolent challenge if they wish. We need not be afraid of it. But if there is the slightest trace of change of heart about these in the governors then it is open to them also to understand the yearnings of the nation which is trying to rise, which is trying to throw off the yoke of thraldom. It would be better for them; it will be better also for the world because they represent a big nation. But we cannot help if they will not put correct interpretation upon this resolution. But as I said if it is a challenge it is also a threat. I am not frightened of going even to the House of Commons. I am not even frightened of going to the Viceroy. But when could I go there? Only when it is honourable for me to do so quite consistently with the creed of non-co-operation. I non-co-operate with the evil, I do not non-co-operate with the good. I do not non-co-operate with persons, I non-co-operate with measures and when measures commend themselves to me I co-operate with them. If the Viceroy today asks me to go to him to discuss things of importance for the country on a footing of equality I will go there barefooted and still defend my non-co-operation. If the time comes—and time must come, it is possible for you to hasten that time—it will be possible for you to hasten that day you have put before you, if you only work out that programme and approach the resolution in the spirit in which it ought to be approached. It is possible for you to have summons to go to the House of Commons and then you will go as

non-co-operators, not as co-operators. Then you will go as national delegates who are required to come to some reasonable terms in respect of what we are demanding. It won't be something degrading to us, it won't be something which is a right of the House of Commons to give and for you to take as beggars. It will be then a matter of "high contracting parties", as the term goes and as it is described, even as South Africa went.

I have been quoting to you things about South Africa, because not being a student of history which is written in dead pages but being a student of history which is now being written, I know more of South Africa than of any other country because I lived there. I tell you that General Botha and General Smuts fought so gallantly and bravely extorted the admiration of King Edward who sent a message saying: "I do not want to fight any longer with these gallant people." It was then that these gallant generals went to England. But as what? They went as delegates and ambassadors of that nation to vindicate their honour, to gain their liberty not on terms dictated by the House of Commons but on terms they had settled at a Convention just like this. Have we got the bravery of those generals?[1]

Have we got a General Botha in our midst who is prepared to sacrifice 20,000 acres of his valuable property and so many thousands of his sheep? You do not know perhaps that General Botha was one of the experts of the world in knowing a good sheep from a bad sheep. He was as free with these things as he was free with his life-blood. Have we got a General Botha? Have we got a General Smuts who is just as ready to tuck up his sleeves and work underground as to shoulder his rifle when the country demanded? I feel we have. If we had not I would not place this resolution before you. I would simply retire to Sabarmati.

Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya asked me: 'What is it that has brought you again out of your den? Is it again to coquet with the Swaraj Party because you were in love with Pandit Motilal Nehru? Is it still your lingering love for Motilal that has brought you?' These are not his exact words. This is the substance of what Dr. Pattabhi said. You will, therefore, take this with some degree of reservation. I told him I would give an explanation of it. It was no lingering love but the burning love for my dear comrade. When he said:'You were instrumental in putting this crown of thorns upon my head, you will now have to come and see how many bruises that crown of thorns caused to my head and you will have to come and share some of those bruises,' I would be guilty of breach of friendship, I would be guilty of breach of duty to

[1] What follows is from *Forward*, 29-12-1928.

the nation, if after having pressed them to take their share at this critical juncture in the history of the country, I had not responded to his call and said: 'I shall come on the day you fix and I shall leave on the day you ask me.' (Applause) You now understand why I have come here and you now understand the importance I attach to this resolution, compromised though it is, weaker though it is, than the original resolution.

Then coming to this clause about the Viceroy; that is because it was a necessary sequel to that resolution as it is a necessary sequel to this resolution. This resolution is really without its crown, but we are today suffering from what is known in psychology as inferiority complex. We have King Charles' head dangling before our eyes every five minutes. You know the celebrated Mr. Dick who could not possibly think of anything without imagining the head of King Charles. This brand of inferiority is marked on our foreheads, on our breasts. It is always dangling before us and worrying us to death. That we see in every-thing and there is the apprehension lest we might weaken ourselves. Now we are strengthening ourselves. It was, as some papers put it, an ultimatum. But it was a performance of courtesy. I expected those who are the trustees of the honour of the British nation to understand the implications of this resolution, I want them to understand the yearnings of the nation, and therefore I perform this delicate task, the delicate courtesy, of transmitting this resolution to them to do what they like with it. I understand what all these proceedings mean.

I do not want to leave anything open to them to say 'we do not know anything about this resolution'.

Do not make any mistake about it, that this All-Parties Constitution is not a demand to be considered by the British nation, but do not go away with the idea that this is a document which is never to be considered by them. It is not a thing to be submitted to the Simon Commission, but this is a document to be considered by the British Government, by the Imperial Government, by the Viceroy and those who are today supposed to be ruling the destinies of India. It has been drafted for this purpose. I say it is also a Charter of Independence as we consider it today. Friends, I think I warned you against drawing any distinction between Dominion Status and Inde-pendence. I call it Independence. I had to say last night "for heaven's sake, do not depart from this document" nor can you contemplate a departure from this document. It is a sacred document. It is nothing more, nothing less. If it is a sacred document, you cannot possibly depart from it. Then you will have a special session of the Convention and the Congress to consider the desirability of removing even a comma if

necessary. Having given that sacred character to that docu-ment it does not mean that it has got to be kept in a treasure chest. It is a document which must be circulated and above all to Viceregal ranks. Do not leave it open to them to say: 'You have not sent this for our consideration. Even if it was an ultimatum you should have sent it to us.'[1]

I did the same thing in regard to Bardoli. I wrote a letter addressed to the Viceroy but within 24 hours of that letter I had the painful duty of withdrawing it and reshaping it as I considered this was necessary because of the further events[2]. If I was suffering from the fever of inferiority complex I could have given an interview to the Press representatives and expected the Viceroy to send me an answer. But I took the proper course. Similarly, I want to take a proper course in regard to this resolution for thereby you will not weaken but strengthen your case if you are going to do anything at all.

I again repeat that the Nehru Report has got to be considered by the British Parliament and by the Viceroy if it is to result in anything whatsoever. The authors of the Nehru Report knew it. You know it and I know it. It would be a sign of weakness, it would be undignified, not to recognize it. If the Viceroy is a worthy representative of his King and his nation, he will take note of this resolution even though it does not contain the clause which I should have liked to be inserted but from this platform I declare if he cares to read my remarks which I do convey to him that it will be proper for him to take this resolution to heart and to understand that at least some of us mean to vindicate every word of what is contained in it. ("Hear, hear") If you cry "hear, hear" then I ask you to restore that clause for submission to the Viceroy. (Cries of "No, no") If you say "no" then I say you are suffering from inferiority complex. I have had some experience of it myself in South Africa where I was addressed as a cooly.[3]

I now address my remarks to the impatient young men who have insisted upon 1929 and also to those who want December, 1930. When I put down 1930, I counted the consequences. So many friends have been coming to me and asking me:"If we vote for this resolution and if we vote for this programme, will you repeat what you did in 1920[4], will you take virtual control of national affairs?" I said I have

[1] What follows is from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 29-12-1928.

[2] The tragedy of Chauri-Chaura on February 4, 1922; *vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 1-2-1922

[3] What follows is from *Forward*, 29- 12-1928.

[4] *Vide* "Speech Replying on Non-Co-Operation Resolution, Calcutta", 8-9-1920and "Swaraj in One Year", 22-9-1920

not got the strength today to fight single-handed. But I will if you come to terms with me and if you will bear the yoke. The yoke will be much tighter and much heavier than it was in 1920. It is a seasoned yoke and it has not worn out by usage. It becomes stronger and stronger by usage. If you give me the discipline that I shall exact, then certainly I will give you my work, so much of it as my frail body can give. Today I have come to perform a sacred duty to my country and after that my back is turned upon Calcutta and I retire to Sabarmati. I say to you that beyond putting this resolution before you, you may not expect anything unless these inexorable terms are granted to me by you, not unwillingly but of your own accord. It will be no use dragging me, no good asking me to take control unless you mean every word of what you say.

I thought two years was a shortening of time to organize our forces, in order to give battle if we must give battle to the Government. One year is nothing, one year will be required to create the discipline in our ranks. Our Congress roll today is nothing but a bogus affair. Let us face facts. It is worth nothing. If I went with inspectors to examine the Congress registers it would be a sad disappointment for me. We want a living register of the Congress. We want to be in a position to say even from day to day, so many more members are enrolled, so much more yarn given, so many more four-anna bits given and whatever it is, but I would expect the figure to come to our Central Office from week to week if not from day to day, showing enhanced subscription and increasing membership.

That will take one year and one year more will be required for giving ourselves confidence and courage, and for consolidation of communal unity. Communal unity is not yet in sight. Much has got to be done. The whole of last night was spent in trying to bring about communal unity. We want some time for the atmosphere to clear. I hold therefore that two years is all too short a time. But I said to myself: 'What does it matter if all these impatient young men want me to share the discredit of showing nothing at the end of one year? I will share it.' I have given the warning that if they do not give a good account of themselves in terms of this resolution and no other, they will earn discredit and I shall gladly share it with them as a comrade and a party to this document. But I give them a warning from this public platform. Let them give themselves night in, night out and day in and day out to work out the constructive part of the programme in terms of the resolution in order to hasten the march towards our goal.

I now come to the Madras Congress approval. It would have needed no commentary on my part but for a discussion we had in the tent. I simply want to clarify the issues. Independence we may

reiterate from a million platforms in the name of the Congress, but we must not treat the report of the All-Parties Committee as something separate from Independence. By approving it, you are not weakening your struggle for Independence. You are using that document as a stage and as a big stage in your progress towards Independence and as you harangue upon Independence from your platforms, it will be your duty, if you are true to this resolution of approval to your constitution, to say, 'We want you to treat this Nehru Report in terms of our goal and consolidate the Nehru Report in the struggle for Independence.' Do not consider the Nehru Report as an excrescence to be deplored but regard it as an integral part of the struggle. I tell you that this resolution commits you to that attitude of mind. Unless you do that, the Nehru Report really will be a halter round your necks, and it will be always like King Charles' head coming before you and you will always seek to hide it behind you. And if somebody says, 'what about the Nehru Report?' you will omit all mention of it or pretend you did not hear him or had forgotten all about it. If that is your attitude towards the Nehru Report, then do not approve it because approval means that you like it, you appreciate their labour, you feel that they have discharged the national trust and they have discharged the trust on behalf of those who want independence and nothing else. They have worked on behalf of them as much as they have worked on behalf of those who are still frightened of Independence, who cannot stand the glare of Independence and they have worked for both parties, they have accommodated both parties, but the Independent-wallah has nothing to be ashamed of in this Report but everything to be proud of. You can make what you like out of that Report and I think you can make much more out of that Report than the man who cannot stand the dazzle and glare of Independence.

You call it special pleading. I have never been guilty of that art. Every word that I say comes out of the deepest recesses of my heart. The heart is responding although the brain is reeling. I ask you to bear in mind what you are doing when you accept the resolution. Do not say that it is a waste paper or a consolation prize to Motilal Nehru lest he be offended with the magnificent ride he had on a chariot drawn by 34 more or less white horses. After that triumphant ride he stands in no need of a consolation prize. Much less do I need a consolation prize.

I want drops of your life-blood to mingle with mine, the drops of Hindu blood to mingle with Muslim blood and Sikh blood, Parsi blood and Christian blood so that a magnificent memorial may rise in Calcutta, if you like, to show what this nation has done in order to earn its liberty, in order to buy its liberty, not with gold but with blood. That is what I want you to read into this resolution. The

resolution calls you to that duty and nothing else. Then there is very little left for me to say.

But I had better explain to you the exigencies of the political situation. Of course it sticks in the throat. It is again an interpolation from that old dame "Inferiority Complex",but sometimes we will have to treat old dames as young maidens. Supposing that a Viceroy or a Secretary of State for India loses his head and says: "What are these insolent men doing, firing these insults against the nation and demanding Dominion Status even at the point of the bayonet?" We have no bayonets. But the points of our pens sometimes feel like bayonets. But how can we avoid it? If yearnings of our hearts, if the miseries or signs of the burning of our hearts, are misread, we cannot help it. But they choose to do so, imprison some of us, or do something worse. Suppose after this resolution and after all we are doing here, we have a demonstration against the Simon Commission whenever it comes officially to Calcutta—the last time I understand it did not come officially and therefore you restrained yourselves and showed how you were capable of behaving yourselves—but when it makes its official entry and you welcome it with black flags, supposing then that some Superintendent of Police in the discharge of his duty as he considers it, uses his rifle, what are we to do? Are we still to say "Yes, we shall accept Dominion Status"? We can say that if we do not want to treat it as an exigency of the political situation and if we do not feel strong enough, we can swallow that injury, and weak we certainly are, and yet we can say:"Yes, we shall accept Dominion Status." But we may get together sufficient courage and have a manifestation of such courage within us that will enable us to say "No more Dominion Status, no more parleying. Now Complete Independence". That is a political exigency that we have provided for.

If the Commission reads these signs aright, it will see the country stands by the Nehru Report. Of course there is no such hope from the Commission to read the signs aright. And I am not such a simpleton to believe it but I am also an irrepressible optimist. If some sudden influx of energy comes to us, the Hindus, and if Mohammedans and Sikhs say after having listened to this mad man and known the fire that was burning in his breast: "Let us shed our mutual distrust and say we don't want communalism at all", we shall trust our Muslim and Sikh friends and if as a result of the trust some of us have to die or to be deprived of our franchise and rights, it does not matter, that will be a step in our march towards our goal; if that kind of courage and conviction comes to you all of a sudden, then I promise that Sir John Simon will say: "That is *my* Report, I understand the situation in Indiaas no other representative of the British Nation does

understand." Today we have not got that atmosphere, we have not got that trust, we have not got that self-confidence, hence you hedge yourselves round with all the badges of inferiority complex. But the key lies in the resolution which I have placed before you.

(Applause)

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 29-12-1928 and *Forward*, 29-12-1928

588 WHAT IS IN A NAME?

December 29, 1928

At the time of writing this (forenoon, 29th December) it is too early to give my impressions of the Congress. The events are moving and changing so fast that the impressions of the morning are nullified by those of the evening. Meanwhile, therefore, it may be well to understand the controversy raging round Dominion Status and Independence. The more I hear the arguments of those who have forced the issue, the more clearly do I see the harm that is being done by it. Up to a certain point it was perhaps health giving and necessary. It was certainly good to appreciate the fact that nothing short of independence could possibly be the goal of the nation and that therefore every advance should be interpreted in terms of independence. It follows therefore that every political change or reform that may impede the nation's march towards independence should be rejected.

But what is the meaning of this independence? For me its meaning is swaraj. Independence is a word employed for European consumption. And those whose eyes are turned outward, whether it be towards West or East, North or South are thinking of anything but India's independence. For finding India's independence we must look to India and her sons and daughters, her needs, and capacity. It is obvious that the contents of her independence must therefore vary with her varying needs and increasing capacity. India's independence therefore need not have the meaning current in the West. Italian independence is different from that of England, Sweden's differs from both.

One thing that we need is undoubtedly freedom from British *control in any shape or form.* But freedom from such control of any other power is equally our need in terms of independence. The Nehru Report points the way to such freedom and it prescribes the remedy that India can assimilate today. It is a worthless document if it means anything less. Its acceptance is wholly compatible with the national goal and I venture to think that the fiercest champion of national

independence can and should safely work for its full fruition. The Report is not an end in itself. It simply gives us the formula according to which we should work. It presumes concentrated ceaseless work by all the different parties before it can bear fruit.

Great confusion has been created by tearing the much abused expression 'Dominion Status' from its context. It is not an elixir of life to be imported from Westminster to put life into us. The expression has been used by the distinguished authors of the Report to show by analogy what in their opinion is needed for India's political growth. The scheme of government adumbrated in the Report, whether it is known by the expression Dominion Status or any other, whilst it may fully answer our needs today, may easily fall short of them tomorrow. But it contains its own corrective. For it is a scheme to be worked out by the nation, not one to be imposed upon or thrown at her by Britain. If it fructifies, it *contains all we need* for future growth; hence I call it the Charter of our Independence.

After all, if the Nehru Report is consigned to oblivion, we shall still need a charter. It may be known as the charter of India's independence and may still conceivably be much less than the Dominion Status of the Nehru Report.

If what we want therefore cannot be sufficiently described by the swadeshi word swaraj, it cannot be described by any other word that can be coined. All that the man in the street should know is that he wants the scheme of government framed by the nation's representatives without the change of a comma and then he can say with the greatest confidence: 'What is in a name?'

That the Nehru scheme requires endorsement by the British Parliament is no defect in it. Since we are connected with Britain, we shall in every case need some sort of endorsement from her Parliament whether the scheme is to be transmutation of the present bondage into an absolutely equal partnership to be destroyed at will or whether it is to end every sort of connection with Britain. I shall always maintain that the transmutation, complete conversion, is any day a higher status than destruction. But of this later. Enough for us to learn by heart for the moment that any scheme to take us towards swaraj or if you will, independence, must be framed by us and must be accepted without a single alteration dictated by the British Parliament.

Young India, 3-1-1929

589. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Saturday, December 29, 1928

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have a few moments to myself today and I give them to this letter. Despite pressure of work and late hours, I have kept good health.

Tell Gangabehn that she should take complete rest and not be in a hurry to resume work. Tell Shankerbhai[1] that he should never spend as much as one hour in the lavatory. In any case he should never strain. He should make changes in his diet and improve his health, or go out to some other place and do so. It will be quite proper for Kamala[2] to make the kind of chapatis her father requires, but it is not proper to cook his meals separately. We have to learn to run a joint kitchen and overcome all the difficulties which arise. We have taken a vow to continue this experiment for at least a year. I believe, therefore, that we can make no changes.

I expect to leave this place on the 2nd or the 3rd. I hope to reach there before the 11th in any case. Mirabehn is coming here tomorrow and from here she will go to Bihar.

About other things, in the next letter or when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 37

590. SPEECH ON RESOLUTION ON CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME, CALCUTTA CONGRESS[3]

December 29, 1928

The President [Pandit Motilal Nehru] then requested Mahatmaji to move his second resolution which runs as follows:[4]

Mahatmaji said that he had no desire of detaining the house for many minutes

[1] An inmate of the Ashram, looking after accounts

[2] Daughter of Shankerbhai

[3] At the Subjects Committee meeting

[4] For the text of the resolution, *vide* "Speech on Resolution on Nehru Report, Calcutta Congress-I, 26-12-1928, and for the final amended version, *vide* "Speech on Constructive Programme, Calcutta Congress", 1-1-1929

in explaining the resolution. It was plain enough. After what he had listened to for the last half an hour he would only say that the resolution could be worked out only by true Congressmen. It was only by them that the revival and organization of non-co-operation was possible. If they wanted the Nehru Report to fructify, the least that they could do was to work out the resolution with the greatest concentration and with equal integrity during the coming months.[1]

Mahatma Gandhi said that he thought that he could take over one or two things from the amendments but when he ran his eye over the amendments suggested, he found nothing which needed to be taken over in the original resolution. The National Volunteers Corps was already in the country. He had proposed an effective use of the National Volunteers. As regards the suggestion about the peasantry and workers, he had been engaged in organizing the peasantry and workers and he did not think there was any person in that assembly there who could claim greater knowledge of the organization of the peasantry than himself. Knowing the matter as well as he did he was not inclined to take over this clause also because the clause in its most effective part was already in the resolution. There was one thing which he would like to clear up and that was with reference to the five per cent. He had never anticipated that the five per cent contribution was to last for ever. What he had anticipated was that this programme would be adhered to for one year and it would prove to be an effective test as to what the nation was capable of doing. If the nation could honestly work out, then the fear that Mrs. Besant had as to non-violent non-co-operation, non-payment of taxes and civil disobedience would be totally dispelled. The probability was that there would be no occasion for any such drastic step or direct action. She will discover that there is no such atmosphere in the country and that there is no untowardness from non-payment of taxes or other forms of civil disobedience. She had no fear of civil disobedience or suspension of taxes in Bardoli, and she thought that the people of Bardoli were justified because she said that the people had a felt grievance and there they could act as one man. But here they did not have a felt grievance or a longing or yearning for swaraj. If they had, they would not find the gross irregularities which had been brought to notice. He was very glad that these irregularities had been reported and hoped the matter would be properly investigated and the complaint effectively dealt with. With regard to the percentage he said it was intended as an acid test of the sincerity of the Congressmen. If they were really sincere about this programme and about getting the Nehru scheme accepted by the British Parliament or on failure of acceptance they were going to work out independence for themselves, and independence could not be gained simply by shouting from the house-tops, then they would not hesitate over this five per cent. He had deliberately excluded anything below Rs. 100, because he knew what difficulties some families had and he had also provided for excluding even this five per cent for the same reason, and left these

[1] After this Dr. Thambe moved an amendment that the term “swadeshi” be substituted for “hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar”. The amendment was, however, lost.

matters to be dealt with by the Working Committee. If Congressmen were prepared to honestly work this programme, this test would show it. But if a proper atmosphere was not created then this would not be forthcoming except from solitary promises. He knew there was the danger of Congressmen leaving in force, of honest Congressmen who would fear that the money would be wasted and not properly applied. He considered all these dangers but unless they incorporated this provision for the purpose of making the Congress effective they would not make much headway. In spite of all these dangers he would take courage in both his hands and say no, as they all knew that he was an irrepressible optimist. He pressed the Resolution for their acceptance. If they liked they might remove that clause.

All the amendments were put to vote and lost and Mahatma Gandhi's resolution put *en bloc* and carried.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 30-12-1928

591. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

CALCUTTA,
Sunday, December 30, 1928

CHI. VASUMATI,

Every day I want to write to you, but how could I possibly do so? You did not write to me about [your] weight. By all means go to Bombay and learn everything. When you go to work in the Udyoga Mandir this time, you must preserve your peace of mind absolutely.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. VASUMATIBEHN
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 501. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

592. LETTER TO M. T. WALAWALKER

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

December 30, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You will have received the acknowledgment of the money order for Lalaji memorial.

As to the solutions you have offered about the monkeys, whilst they are interesting, you will notice that they are not non-violent. What I want to avoid is the slow torture of the monkeys.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. MAHADEV TUKARAM WALAWALKER
VENGURLA, KHADI KARYALAYA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13824

593. LETTER TO SAYYID ABDUL LATIF

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

December 30, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I have received the magazine. I have glanced through its interesting contents. But I am sorry to say that I have not a moment to spare to give you the kind of article that you want and I should like to give. I am however not sorry for the want of time for the simple reason that unity is not to be reached by any amount of writing but it will be reached by a silent transformation of our hearts which would only come when we are truly desirous of achieving unity.

Yours sincerely,

PROF. SAYYID ABDUL LATIF
OSMANIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
HYDERABAD (DECCAN)

From a microfilm: S.N. 13825

594. LETTER TO TARA SHANKER

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

December 30, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Personally I do think that you should remain firm and cut off all contact even if there is the slightest danger of her dying. In seeking to do the right often we have to risk the death of dearest ones. I am quite clear in my mind that all contact must cease.

I return the Hindi letter.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. TARA SHANKER
50 BUTLER HOSTEL
BADSHAHBAGH, LUCKNOW

From a microfilm: S.N. 13826

595. LETTER TO SACHINDRA NATH MAITI

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

December 30, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[1] I would suggest your studying the constitution of the Ashram published in the pages of *Young India* and I would further ask you to live in accordance with its vows at least for one year and then write to me what progress you have made. It will be then time enough to take stock and consider whether you should join the Ashram or not.

Yours sincerely,

SACHINDRA NATH MAITI, ESQ.
MIDNAPORE, BENGAL

From a photostat: S.N. 13827

[1] The correspondent, a young man of 23, was returning from England and wished to join the Ashram.

596. LETTER TO RAJA OF KANIKA

CALCUTTA ,
December 30, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter[1]. I note the contents. The letter shall be treated as strictly private.

Yours sincerely,

RAJASAHEB OF KANIKA
19-A BALLYGUNGE, CIRCULAR ROAD, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13828

597. LETTER TO LADY R. L. RAMANATHAN

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 30, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your touching letter. It revived all the memories of my visit to your college[2]. It gave me joy to note that you are not forgetting *Daridranarayana* [3]. The handsome collection made by you should be sent to Sabarmati which I reach about the 6th of January.

Yours sincerely,

LADY RAMANATHAN
RAMANATHAN COLLEGE
CHUNNAKAM (CEYLON)

From a photostat: S.N. 13823

598. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

December 30, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

I get your letters regularly. Prabhavati will have returned by the time you get this.

It has reassured me on your account to know that you have been serving everyone. Tell Sarojini Devi that I did not write to her because

[1] In reply to Gandhiji's letter of 27th instant; *vide* "Letter to Raja of Kanika", 27-12-1928

[2] On November 29, 1927. On the anniversary of that event the college collected Rs. 1,200 to be sent to Gandhiji.

[3] God in the form of the poor

I had nothing particular to say. And now we shall be meeting in four or five days. I intend to reach there on the 6th. Letters are now being taken away to be posted, and so I shall not write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1774

599. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

December 30, 1928

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I see that I shall not be able to start from here before the 3rd.

After I return there, you must give yourself some rest from office work.

The problem here has become very complicated this time. I simply cannot say what the outcome will be.

It is a question how long the Mandir should go on supervising khadi work done outside. Lakshmidas's view certainly deserves consideration. We bear Prabhudas's expenses as incidental to his living where he does. About Shantilal[1], I have been thinking. I had a talk with Chhaganlal.

I for one feel that if the parents of any inmates of the Mandir come there and cannot take their meals in the joint kitchen, we cannot make separate arrangements for them. Our decision on this point will depend on our intention as to the direction in which we wish to develop the Mandir. If we wish to develop it into an Ashram, we ought to weaken our personal ties. If we wish to develop in the opposite direction and take interest in worldly life, the number of separate kitchens is bound to increase. If I want *shiro*[2] for myself, I must get it cooked in the Mandir's kitchen. If my relations come, the only kitchen I have is the Mandir's kitchen. Our uncles should know that our family has grown in the Mandir. I for one feel that we cannot add to the two exceptions[3] which we have made. Those who cannot fit into this scheme may leave, and we should reconcile ourselves to their doing so.

[1] Shantilal Joshi, helpmate of Prabhudas
[2] A sweet made from wheat flour
[3] Narandas Gandhi and Valji Desai

I, too, had a letter from Devasharmaji[1] about Balbir. Send him away at the first opportunity.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro- 7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 38-9

600 LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

CALCUTTA,
Silence Day, December 31, 1928

DEAR SISTERS,

I expect this to be my last letter to you. According to present indications I should be there on Sunday morning.

Today I have only enough time to warn you that on coming there I shall ask all of you to render an account of your activities. Where is the need now to write anything new ? If you have settled down, if you have been able to bring quiet in the kitchen, and if you are regular in attending prayers, I should think that you have done a great deal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3687

601. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Silence Day [*December 31, 1928*][2]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I need not write much today. I expect to start from here on Thursday and reach Ahmedabad on Sunday by the train which arrives there at six in the morning. In an hour's time, I have to reach the Congress session. How happy would I be if, when I arrive there, I see everyone carefully attending to all the things I have been writing about!

Vallabhbhai and Mahadev are leaving for Bardoli this very day.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 39

[1] A teacher at Gurukul Kangri

[2] From the reference to Gandhiji's intention to leave Calcutta for Ahmedabad which he did on January 3. The silence day immediately preceding was December 31.

602 SPEECH ON RESOLUTION ON NEHRU REPORT, CALCUTTA CONGRESS—III[1]

December 31, 1928

At Monday's sitting of the Congress, Mahatma Gandhi moved the following compromise resolution[2].

Mahatma Gandhi in moving the resolution delivered a short speech in Hindi. As the loudspeakers failed to work, his speech could not be heard and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru repeated his speech sentence by sentence.

Mahatmaji in the course of his speech said that after due consideration and carefully judging the whole situation he was going to move the resolution before the house. The younger group in the house were eager for Complete Independence.[3]

If you all wish India to become free you should stop all this controversy about Dominion Status and Independence. You should remember swaraj is what we have outlined here [in this Report]. I have come all the way from Sabarmati Ashram to support the Nehru Committee's recommendation. And that also because the Report is the tangible fruit of the directive given by the Madras Congress. Today we may accept this as swaraj in a way. I don't know what shape it will take tomorrow. We must always insist on truth. If people give up truth and self-respect or break promises and disregard tradition, they cannot secure freedom for they don't deserve it.

You must honour the compromise I have worked out in the Subjects Committee. If you think I am lowering the ideal of Congress, you may repudiate me and not listen to me. I do not want you to accept the resolution simply because I have moved it. You must accept it only if you are prepared to work the specified programme. If you reject this then you will have to find yourself another President, as your present President is the moving spirit behind this resolution. I do not believe in resorting to dirty manoeuvring to obtain a majority vote. It will only delay swaraj. If you want swaraj you must cleanse your mind of all such ideas by voting for this Resolution.[4]

Replying to the debate, Mahatma Gandhi said that his remarks were principally addressed to young Bengal and if they considered for one moment that a mere Gujarati could not understand young Bengal, then young Bengal would commit a most serious blunder.[5]

[1] The speech was delivered at the open session.

[2] Not reproduced here . *Vide* "Speech on Resolution on Nehru Report, Calcutta Congress-II, 28-12-1928

[3] What follows is from *Aaj*.

[4] What follows is from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*.

[5] Two or three voices cried "No, no".

I will ask you not to interrupt me when I am endeavouring to address a few words to you, as a fellow-worker of yours. If however you want to interrupt me, I shall certainly retire and not address you. If on the other hand you want to listen to me, then listen to me in perfect silence. I want to make it absolutely clear that if you are wise, you will dismiss from your mind the bogey of Independence *v.* Dominion Status. There is no opposition between Dominion Status and Independence. I do not want a Dominion Status that will interfere with my fullest growth, with my independence. These words, I suggest, are misleading. I would therefore suggest a better method. That is independence whereby we can grow to our fullest height. We are the architects of our own destiny and I suggest that the architects of the Nehru Report are your own countrymen appointed by you. There is no hand on the part of the Government in the framing of this document. This document owes its origin to the Madras Congress and it is through the Madras Congress that this Committee was appointed and it is this Report by which I ask you to stand for the time being. The question has been agitating my mind since yesterday afternoon when I heard that there was going to be seriously put forward an amendment to this resolution on behalf of those who, I thought, were a party to the resolution that I moved.

The resolution that I have submitted to this house is the direct result of a compromise. The resolution that I originally framed, you have not seen. And even the one that was printed and moved in the Subjects Committee was also in a way the result of informal compromise or some kind of understanding, whatever language you might wish to use. That resolution was not framed by me only; there were many heads behind that. There was an attempt to placate as many parties as it was possible to placate. That resolution was discussed by various men, men who were supposed to represent different parties. I do not want to suggest that you are bound by that resolution but I do want to say that those who were supposed to be behind that resolution were honour-bound to support it.

If anybody runs away with the idea that I am here appealing to sentiment, he is in the wrong. You can appeal to one's sense of honour and I am proud of having made my appeal to that sense of honour. I suggest that if those who were behind this compromise subsequently discovered that they have committed a blunder and that they must clear their position before the world and say that they are penitent for what they had done previously, I suggest that penitence is made of sterner stuff. It is not made by amendments. There are other drastic steps to be taken. If those who were behind the compromise consider that they have committed no such blunder but have

committed only tactical blunder or a blunder that involves displeasure of some party, then I suggest that it is their bounden duty to swallow that blunder and abide by that compromise. If you have not got that sense of honour and if, giving a word of honour you are not sure that it should be kept at any cost, then I say that you will not be able to make this nation free.

You may take the name of Independence on your lips just as the Muslims utter the name of Allah or a pious Hindu utters the name of Krishna or Rama, but all that muttering will be an utterly empty formula if there is no honour behind it. If you are not prepared to stand by your own words, where will Independence be? Independence is after all a thing made of sterner stuff. It is not made by wriggling of words. I suggest that if you want to vindicate the honour of this nation, because the Viceroy insults us or president of a European Chamber of Commerce insults us, we say, we want our independence because we want to vindicate our honour, then you are dragging independence into the mire. Do not imagine for a moment that I am trying to snatch a vote from you. Believe me there is no such thing at the back of my mind.

I would fain suffer defeat at the hands of young men, but I am jealous of their honour. If you, young men, who are behind this amendment[1], understand the significance of the message I am delivering to you, you may say for the present that you have committed a blunder but that you want to abide by that compromise because our leaders have entered into compromise. If you think it is not a matter of honour, if you think that the independence of the country will be lost if you accept my resolution, I invite you to throw out my resolution by an overwhelming majority. But if you accept my resolution by an overwhelming majority or even by any majority whatsoever, then those who vote for this resolution should understand that it would be a matter of honour for them to work for it because they pledge themselves for it.

But why are you so oppressed? Why are you labouring under that inferiority complex that within a year we shall not be able to convince the British Parliament that we shall not be able to marshal our forces and summon to ourselves the strength that we need? Swaraj is my birthright just as breathing through the lungs is my birthright. It must be as natural to you as your breath. Why are you so afraid.?

I have got full faith. If you will help me and follow the programme honestly and intelligently, I promise that swaraj will come

[1] By Subhas Chandra Bose, repudiating Dominion Status and declaring Complete Independence as the goal of the Indian people

within one year. I want you to die a proper death. I want you to develop full courage and die with calculated courage. If you have got that courage, if you can stand with your breast bare before the bullet, then I promise, you will get all that you possibly desire. Do not be frightened by the shadow. Do not be afraid of the long-drawn-out agony. I admit that it is a longdrawn-out process, but under the present state of the country when we cannot trust our brothers and sisters, our parents, and party leaders, when we cannot trust anybody, when we have no sense of honour, when we cannot allow our words to remain unaltered for 24 hours, do not talk of independence. But if you will develop that calm courage and honesty of purpose and that determination which will refuse to accept 'no' for an answer to your demand, then I promise what the tallest among us can possibly desire.

Throughout these days we have heard a great deal that we are not able to carry on the Congress election campaign in an honest manner. It cut me to the quick when I heard that delegates' tickets passed hands and were sold like bills of exchange and the rates increased as the days went on and rupee ticket sold for Rs. 15. It is discreditable to the Congress and I tell you that you are not going to get Independence by these methods. On the other hand you are forging your own shackles, from which there will be no escape because it is of your own will.

May God direct you in coming to a decision.

I do not want you to decide the question, because I am the mover of the resolution or because Pandit Motilal is at the back of the resolution. It is you who must decide with your calm reasoning but showing honour with it.[1] (Loud applause)

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 1-1-1929 and *Aaj*, 2-1-1929

603. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

[*1928*][2]

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have received your letter. Your earlier letter represented the high tide, the present one represents the low tide. But do not worry. We must live as God wishes. You must sing Narasinh Mehta's morning hymns and understand their meaning. Therein you will find the remedy for your restlessness. Even restlessness is something like a

[1] At this stage amendments were put to vote and they were all lost Gandhiji's resolution was then separately put to vote and adopted.

[2] As noted by the addressee.

ghost. How can the *atman* be restless? But that is not something which can be understood by being explained. It has to be experienced. One day you will certainly experience the peace you are longing for. If you want to go to South Africa I can help you. But will you find peace even there? One's peace does not depend on time and place, which are external things. Very often we have an illusion of peace when we are drunk, but the feeling of peace vanishes when we are sober again. You want that kind of peace which can pass through the severest test. Ordinary things cannot give you that peace. May God grant you patience. Ba is undecided about coming.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Motana Man, p. 45

604. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

Silence day, [*1928*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN JHAVERI,

The letter addressed to the women is enclosed. Where are you yourself?

Are you occupying with credit the position of the women's organization? Have you found the key to life? Have you acquired control over your mind? I have come to the conclusion that your mental agitation has been the cause of your illness. Know it for certain that God is not to be found in temples or in pilgrimages. God resides in your very heart. He is to be found in your duty. Your energy will be well spent if you go deep and purify your thinking. You do have energy.

I notice diplomacy in your letters. Why diplomacy with me?

A daughter can utter any crazy thing before her father or mother. She does not choose her words to express herself. You have deliberated on your words and sentences. Beware. Do not add to my disappoint-ments. The matter about Sharada is still hurting me like a knife. The wound has not healed. I have myself closed this letter.

If you write 'Personal' on the letter, it will come straight to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 3131

[1] From the reference to the matter about Sharada; *vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 8-12-1928 and "Letter to Kusum Desai", 19-12-1928

605. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
[*1928*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Improve your health. If there is anything more to be written about Sharada, do write. Discuss things with her.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapune Patro - 6 : Gangabehnne, p. 17; G. N. 11264

606. THE ASIATIC PASSIVE RESISTANCE STRUGGLE — THE FINAL STAGES[2]

[Before *1929*]

He who played an important part in the Indian Passive Resistance Movement did not live to see the final stages. He has described the struggle in his own graphic style in his monograph[3] on me, Gandhi.

This chapter is intended to take a brief survey of the movement from where Mr. Doke left it. No Englishman had such a keen grasp of the subject as he, by patient study, had acquired. Busy though he was with the work of his own flock, if a man of his breadth of vision and his all-round humanity could be said to have had a special flock, he made this Indian question as much his own as the work of the Pastorate. He collected and tabulated every scrap of paper upon the subject. He wrote much upon it. He saw the authorities and spoke to them with the certainty of the knowledge of an expert. He took charge of the editorial work of the Passive Resistance organ, *Indian Opinion*, during Mr. Gandhi's and Mr. Polak's absence from South Africa[4]. The leading articles he wrote for the journal during the period are literary monuments. His anxiety to keep up the traditions of the

[1] Period inferred; *vide* also the preceding item.

[2] Gandhi wrote this for William E. Cursons, who was preparing a biography of the Reverend Doke at the request of his family. It was published as Chapter XV of the biography. *Joseph Doke : The Missionary-hearted.* The date when Gandhiji wrote this is not available; there was a delay of several years before the publication of the biography in 1929 by the Christian Literature Depot, Johannesburg.

[3] *M. K. Gandhi : An Indian Patriot in South Africa; vide* "Letter to J. J. Doke", 14-10-1908 "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi" and "Letter to Shapurji Saklatvala", 20-5-1927

[4] The Reverend J. J. Doke was editor for a brief period in 1913.

journal was so great that, in matters of policy, he took the advice of and allowed himself to be guided by, those whom he was not bound to consult. He came in contact with the best and the worst of Indians. All his study was not merely to bring to a close a movement, however great it may have been. He had dreams about the future of South Africa, the part that Indians were to play in it, the part that Christianity had to play in the great drama that was being enacted before him. His Indian work was taken up in answer to the question of his soul."What am I to do in South Africa in the midst of many races?"

Mr. Doke had intended, if he had lived, to take part in the constructive programme of the Indian community after the struggle was finished. He had intended, too, to write a volume on the lessons of the struggle. But that was not to be.

The readers of these pages will, however, be glad to know the final results of the historical struggle which attracted world-wide attention. Only a bird's-eye view is possible in a single chapter of a book, when a full description would require several volumes. During the last stages it took a most unexpected and brilliant turn. Every act of repression by the authorities only heartened the resisters. The refusal of the Government to recognize the legal status of Indian miners and to abolish the poll-tax on indentured Indians, which it was claimed on their behalf the Government had promised the late Mr. Gokhale to do, brought thousands to the Passive Resistance fold. Indentured Indians, working in the Natal mines and in the sugar fields, struck work and sought imprisonment. This strike must be distin-guished from ordinary strikes. It was undertaken, not to usurp the functions of the Government or to paralyse the industries concerned. It was declared simply as a protest against the £ 3 tax. It was an assertion on the part of the strikers, men and women, of their self-respect. They were no longer content to pay a tax, which not only told heavily upon their slender purses, but which was a mark of their degradation and a causeof terror to the womenfolk. At one time, nearly 30,000 men were on strike. The Government and the planters tried every means to bend the strikers, but without avail. They had but one purpose in life, these strikers refused to be left alone. They wanted to fill the prisons. After due notice to the Government, nearly 2,000 of them, men, women and children, marched into the Transvaal. They had no legal right to cross the border, their destination was Tolstoy Farm, established by Mr. Kallenbach for Passive Resisters, the distance to be covered was 150 miles. No army ever marched with so little burden. No waggons or mules accompanied the party. Each one carried his own blankets and daily rations, consisting of one pound of bread and one ounce of sugar. This meagre ration was sup-plemented by what Indian mer-

chants gave them on their way. The Government imprisoned the leaders, i.e. those whom they thought were leaders. But they soon found that all were leaders. So when they were nearly within reach of their destination, the whole party was arrested. Thus their object (to get arrested) was accomplished.That extreme reasonableness was mixed with such an unbending spirit that was shown when the Indian strikers voluntarily stayed their activity during the strike of the Government railwaymen, which was certainly not a Passive Resistance Movement.

The Indian strikers at once stood aloof, and their self-restraint was much appreciated throughout the Empire, whilst it had not a little to do with the final settlement for which negotiations were opened.

It will be easily imagined that India would not remain supine when a mighty effort was being made by her sons in this far-off continent. Under the splendid leadership of the late Honourable Mr. Gokhale, meetings of protest were held all over the country, and thousands of pounds were collected to aid the Resisters. Lord Hardinge, the Viceroy, who strongly protested in a public speech at Madras[1] against what was transpiring in South Africa, sent a Commission[2] to investigate the cause of the upheaval. A local Commission was appointed. Though for high political reasons, the Indian community as a whole refused to give evidence before it, the Commissioners completely vindicated the Resisters by declaring in favour of every one of the main contentions of the aggrieved Indians. And so at last legislation was passed, repealing the poll-tax, restoring racial equality in law, and recognizing the status of Indian wives. Thus ended the great struggle in 1914, after having lasted nearly eight years.

Mr. Doke, along with many, considered it to be a religious or ethical struggle. It was not undertaken in order to gain individual rights but to gain national dignity. The methods adopted were not those of brute force or violence, but those of self-sacrifice and suffering. Repeal of obnoxious legislation was an embodiment of the vital principle that Indian sentiment must not be flouted on Indian matters. It was an admission of the right of the Indians to be consulted in everything affecting their status and intimate well-being. And it was for such an achievement that Mr. Doke laboured during his life time.z time. Who knows how important a part he would have played in the more difficult work of reconstruction? Certainly the Indian community misses the guiding hand.

Joseph Doke : The Missionary-hearted, pp. 147-150

[1] Delivered on November 24, 1913; *vide* "Lord Hardinge's Speech", 3-12-1913.

[2] The Indian Enquiry Commission set up on December 11.

607. SPEECH ON CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME, CALCUTTA CONGRESS

January 1, 1929

Mahatmaji first spoke in Hindi explaining the resolution. Speaking in English he said:

I do not want to detain you for long over the resolution which is an integral part of the first resolution[1] which you were good enough to endorse yesterday. It was only for the sake of convenience that the Subjects Committee insisted upon dividing this one resolution into two parts; one in connection with the Nehru Committee Report and the second in connection with the programme of work based upon that Report. Hence it is that the second part of the first resolution I am now putting before you today. But it was after all a happy thing for "all's well that ends well", and that arrangement enables me to give you the welcome information that a complete agreement without any mental reservation has been accomplished. I don't propose to read that resolution to you, because you have had that resolution before you and I am trying to economize my voice, energy and time as much as possible. Therefore, let us consider it an arrangement between yourselves and me that I do not read this resolution.

There are two amendments to the resolution and of these amendments Mr. Satyamurthi has chosen the second one. But now as I have agreed to his suggestions, he has authorized me to withdraw his alternative amendment and the suggestions I have accepted are these. You will notice in his alternative resolution that he refers to the organization of the peasantry and workers. So far as the peasantry is concerned you will find in my resolution there is a reference where the volunteers are called upon to enlist themselves in order to do village reconstruction work, and this village reconstruction work is nothing but the organization of the peasantry and workers upon an economic basis. We want to enter into the hearts of the peasants. We want to identify ourselves completely with the masses. We want to make their woes our own. We want to feel with them in everything in order to better the lot of those on whose toil we the people of the city are really living. We must therefore make common cause with the workers. I do not want it for one moment to be understood that the

[1] *Vide* "Speech on Resolution on Nehru Report", Calcutta Congress-I, 26-12-1928

city workers and labourers are to be neglected; I cannot possibly mean that because I am myself organizing labour, and I have been identifying myself with labour for the last 30 or 35 years of my life. So I have no hesitation in accepting that part. The second suggestion that I have adopted is in connection with the tax; I suggested in my resolution five per cent, on incomes exceeding Rs. 100. Personally, I would like that clause, but many of my friends and many Congressmen have suggested that it would work as a hardship upon people. People cannot really pay so much, they cannot really pay. If they cannot pay, there is a remedy in that clause itself. The suggestion was that they are not yet in the habit of conforming to that exact discipline whereby men or women would automatically recognize it as a compulsory obligation to pay. I have appreciated the force of that argument and therefore I have accepted the suggestion so that that clause will now be remodelled. I am not telling you how it is to be remodelled, because I have not really the text of that clause before me and you do not want me to worry you about it just now. But it will enable you to carry out the meaning of what I am telling you just now. That clause will be so worded as to carry out the formula that was suggested for another thing by Deshbandhu Das that the Congress expects every Congressman to contribute to the Congress coffers month by month in accordance with his ability, in order to advance the cause of the Congress, more especially in order to embark upon a programme that is set forth in the foregoing resolution. That will be the wording instead of the wording in the last clause of the printed paper. I do not want to take up your time any longer but I cannot help giving you a warning note. I want you to take this resolution seriously and I want you to adhere with all seriousness to this resolution. I do not want you to raise your hands as accepting this resolution and then sleep over it for a solid twelve months and expect the A.I.C.C. or the Working Committee or the President to work wonders for you. Neither the President nor the A.I.C.C. have a magic wand. There is no magic wand except your own iron determination and will and that is the magic wand that will alone bring swaraj within your grasp and give the country peace and happiness. Therefore, I would beseech you not to accept the resolution with the two suggestions adopted unless everyone here in his own person means seriously to carry out all the items of the programme which are applicable to them and unless you are determined to take the message of the Congress from door to door ceaselessly for these twelve months.

At the end of this period I hope to see an atmosphere totally different from the atmosphere of distrust and despondency that I can read in the faces of every one of us today.

With these words I leave this resolution in your hands and I thank you for giving me this very patient hearing.[1] (Loud and continued applause)

The resolution ran as follows:

Meanwhile the Congress shall engage in the following activities:

(1) In the Legislatures and outside every attempt will be made to bring about total prohibition of intoxicating drugs and drinks; picketing of liquor and drug shops shall be organized wherever desirable and possible.

(2) Inside and outside the legislatures, methods suited to respective environment shall be immediately adopted to bring about boycott of foreign cloth by advocating and stimulating production and adoption of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar.

(3) Specific grievances, wherever discovered and where people are ready, shall be sought to be redressed by non-violent action as was done recently at Bardoli.

(4) Members of Legislatures returned on the Congress ticket shall devote the bulk of their time to the constructive work settled from time to time by the Congress Committee.

(5) The Congress organization shall be perfected by enlisting members and enforcing stricter discipline.

(6) Measures shall be taken to remove the disabilities of women and they will be invited and encouraged to take their due share in national upbuilding.

(7) Measures shall be taken rid the country of social abuses.

(8) It will be the duty of all Congressmen, being Hindus, to do all they can to remove untouchability and help the so-called untouchables in every possible way in their attempt to remove their disabilities and better their condition.

(9) Volunteers shall be enlisted to take up the work among the city labourers and village reconstruction in addition to what is being done through the spinning-wheel and khaddar.

(10) Such other work as may be deemed advisable in order to advance nation-building in all its department and in order to enable the Congress to secure the co-operation in the national effort of the people engaged in different pursuits.

[1] The resolution was seconded by Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru read out the resolution as corrected by Mahatmaji in consultation with Mr. Satyamurthi and he then explained it in Hindi, after which it was put to vote and carried with only two dissentients.

In order to finance the activities mentioned in the foregoing programme, the Congress expects every Congressman to contribute to the Congress coffers a certain percentage of his or her income according to his or her ability.

Report of the Forty-third Session of the Indian National Congress, 1928

608. SPEECH AT ALL-PARTIES CONVENTION, CALCUTTA[1]

January 1, 1929

Mahatmaji then moved:

> This Convention is of opinion that the resolutions it has already passed on the recommendations of the All-Parties Committee contained in clauses one to six of their Report sufficiently indicate the will of the nation as to the nature and main principles of the constitution acceptable to it and is further of opinion that except on points on which notes of dissent have been recorded at the instance of some of the parties present there is a general agreement on the basis of the solution of communal problem recommended by the said Committee.
>
> This Convention adjourns *sine die* authorizing the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress to convene it when necessary for more detailed examination of the recommendations of the Committee.

In doing so Mahatmaji offered an apology for his presence in the Convention but he came as a legal adviser to the President who had met him and Pandit Motilal and requested them to be present in the Convention and help him with advice. To facilitate work he was going to move the present resolution and hoped there should not be much discussion and no amendment. Continuing, Mahatmaji said:

Whilst we have very nearly exhausted the Nehru Report and accepted it without much alteration, yet much still remains to be done. The situation in the country is such that we shall have to keep both the Nehru Report and the Convention alive.

As regards the Mohammedan question, he said the Convention had not been able to placate all parties. The Sikhs also required to be placated. continuing, Mahatmaji said:

Personally I think we have not done full justice to the Sikhs.

[1] Dr. Ansari presided. Among those present were Dr. Moonje, Dr. Besant, Messrs Satyamurthi, Bhagwandas, Vijayaraghavachariar, Bipin Pal, B. Das, Satyen Mitter, Devratan Sharma, S. A. Brelvi, Nilkanta Das, Manilal Kothari, Hirendranath Dutt, Lalit Das and Shyam Sunder Chakravarti.

Hence it is necessary for all of you to put your heads together and make suggestions and evolve order out of chaos. There is the Utkal question which still requires to be solved and is giving trouble. This question is a nightmare. It crops up in all my speeches. The exhibition given by Utkal delegates the other day was like an animal undergoing vivisection.

The Nehru Report can only be touched here and there and not in its entirety. Only in matters of detail can we make alterations. If anything is wanted to satisfy the Muslims then also we have to touch it but if the Muslims spring some surprise it is not for the Nehru Committee to do so. That is the business of some other organization.

Mahatmaji concluded with the hope that the resolution be carried without any amendment.[1]

Mahatmaji announced that as a result of discussion he had come to some compromise and agreed to make some verbal alterations in the latter part of the resolution.[2]

This Convention adjourns *sine die* to meet when necessary for completing its work.

Forward, 2-1-1929

609. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS [3]

CALCUTTA,
January 2, 1929

The Mahatma had just returned from his morning walk and was surrounded by a score of his followers while we talked. He remarked with a smile in explanation of our audience:

I have no secrets from my friends.

[QUESTION:] What exactly does the Congress stand for—Dominion Status or Independence?

Mr. Gandhi thought for a moment, and then, peering at me keenly through his glasses, replied:

I can realize the Britisher's difficulty in understanding our point of view, but I am glad that he is trying to. My position is very clear. To me Dominion Status means Independence. Others have been led, through suspicion of Britain's good faith, and partly also, I am afraid,

[1] Dr. Annie Besant then moved an amendment.

[2] The first paragraph of the Resolution is not reproduced here.

[3] The interview also appeared in *The Daily Telegraph*, 3-1-1929, as from its special correspondent.

for their own party purposes, to make a distinction between the two. But it has been largely a battle of words. There is no real room for misunderstanding as to what I personally—and the Congress—stand for. We want Home Rule—a Freedom Constitution built up by ourselves—something not imposed from without. The Nehru Constitution is of our own making. If that is accepted it means that we become partners at will and makers of our own destiny.

In that case why did you make what the British people cannot but consider a surrender on your part to those to whom Independence is not the same thing as Dominion Status and frankly implies severance of the British connection ?

Mr. Gandhi pondered the question carefully before he replied.

I have in a sense made a surrender to those who are considered "the extremists", but it has been a surrender on points which do not seem to me to affect the real position. There has been no surrender of the principle for which I have always stood and always will stand. Severance on any account is not my goal. Power for severance when desired is.

You have, nevertheless, added to your demand for Home Rule on the basis of the Nehru Report a time-limit which you must know to be an impossible one. You have, in effect, presented a pistol at the head of the British Parliament. You declare that unless the Nehru Report is adopted by the 31st of December this year something dreadful is going to happen.

Mr. Gandhi shook his head and said quietly:

You are wrong. We are not in a position to point a pistol at the head of the British Parliament—and I cannot agree with you that the time-limit we have laid down is an impossible one. If Britain today were threatened with another war she would face the situation and deal with it at once. But the Indian situation is not considered serious enough to warrant immediate handling. That is where Britain has been making a very big mistake. She does not consider the Indian situation sufficiently important. It is a minor affair in the business of the Empire, a minor affair that can be put off and off, to be attended to some day when there is nothing else to worry about. That is what we resent, and that is what is aggravating this tragic suspicion that is poisoning the whole atmosphere of our political life. Let the leaders of the British people make some definite, serious and sincere move to meet us within the year and then ultimatums and time-limits need not matter.

If the British Parliament has not conceded the Nehru Constitution by the 31st of December what is going to happen?

Mr. Gandhi smiled [and, said:]

I am an incorrigible optimist. Up to midnight on the 31st of

December 1929, I shall be hoping and hoping—and praying —that the definite move we ask for will be made by Britain.

Q. And if your hopes are not realized?

The Mahatma thought a moment before he answered.

In that case on New Year's Day 1930 I shall wake up to find myself an Independencewallah.

But he has hope and faith that things will so shape themselves that his will not be the responsibility for ringing up the curtain upon another Indian tragedy. Summing up, he said:

Get rid of the suspicion of Britain's good faith that is poisoning the political atmosphere of India and the way will be clear for an understanding between the leaders of the British people and the leaders of my own people that will solve all our difficulties.

The Englishman, 3-1-1929

610. SPEECH AT CHITTARANJAN SEVA SADAN, CALCUTTA

January 2, 1929

Mahatma Gandhi in declaring the new block formally open said that two years ago when the people of Bengal invited him to lay the foundation-stone of the new block, he gladly accepted the invitation and this time they also had extended their invitation to him to open the new block of the Seva Sadam which was built on the foundation which he had laid. From that he realized the real love and respect which they had shown to him and he was really fortunate to attend the function. When he comes to this building he recalls in his mind the sacred memory of Deshbandhu Das, the great leader of Bengal, who had dedicated his life for the cause of his country. Whenever he comes to Bengal, he feels the absence of Deshbandhu and thinks within himself: 'What was Deshbandhu's Bengal and what is today's Bengal'! The enthusiasm which he had seen during his lifetime was unique and Bengal would ever remember the great sacrifice which their leader did for their good and for the good of Bengal. Mahatmaji then thanked Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, Sir Nilratan Sarcar and other members of the trust who had worked hard so long for the prosperity of the institution which would be the living memory of Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das, the karmayogi of Bengal.

Proceeding, Mahatmaji said that the members of the trust had appealed for more funds for the maintenance and further development of the institution. He also joined with them in their appeal and asked the people of Bengal to contribute according to their means to the Seva Sadan Fund. In conclusion Mahatmaji hoped that middle and higher class women of Bengal would spare no pains to keep this institution alive as a fitting momorial of Deshbandhu Das.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 3-1-1929

611. SAROJINI DEVI'S LETTER

The following graphic and poetic account of her experiences during her American visit sent by Shrimati Sarojini Devi will be read with interest:[1]

> . . . I am writing tonight from the charming old town of Cincinnati which is called the Gateway of the South, where long ago lived a very noble woman who dedicated her genius to the deliverance of the Negroes from their pitiful bondage. I have just returned from interpreting to a large audience (whose parents and grandparents knew Harriet Beecher Stowe in the days when she was writing the poignant tale of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*) the message of the 'Mystic Spinners' . . . .
>
> And through me the New World sends back a greeting of love for the Mystic Spinner and admiration for the Land whose people are set out on the way of self-deliverance from their sevenfold bondage.

Young India, 3-1-1929

612. 'BROKEN'[2]

A friend sends me a number of *Spiritual Life* which contains a beautiful paragraph under the heading "Broken" which reminds one of so many hymns by Tulsidas, Surdas and the other saints that I am tempted to give the following condensation of the paragraph.

> God uses most for His glory those people and things which are most perfectly broken. The sacrifices He accepts are broken and contrite hearts. It was the thorough breaking-down of Jacob's natural strength at Peniel that got him where God could clothe him with spiritual power. It was by breaking the surface of the rock at Horeb by the stroke of Moses' rod, that it let out the cool waters to thirsty people.
>
> It was when the three hundred elect soldiers under Gideon broke-their pitchers, a type of breaking themselves, that the hidden lights shone forth to the consternation of their adversaries. It was when the poor widow broke the seal of the little pot of oil, and poured it forth, that God multiplied it to pay her debts and supply means of support.
>
> It is when a beautiful grain of corn is broken up in the earth by death, that its inner heart sprouts forth and bears hundreds of other grains. And thus on and on through all history, and all biography, and all vegetation, and all spiritual life, God must have *broken things*.

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.
[2] This appeared under the title "Notes".

Those who are broken in wealth and broken in heart, broken in their ambitions, broken in their beautiful ideals, broken in worldly reputation, broken in their affections, and broken sometimes in health, and those who are despised, and seem utterly helpless and forlorn, the Holy Ghost is seizing upon and using for God's glory. It is "the lame that take the prey", Isaiah tells us. It is the weak that overcome the devil. God is waiting to take hold of our failures and cleanse away the cause and shine through us in victory.

The paragraph shows how religion at its highest is one.

Young India, 3-1-1929

613. LALAJI MEMORIAL[1]

After consultation with several friends interested in the Lalaji Memorial we have decided to devote the collections to the following objects:

1. Four lakhs and twenty five thousand for the maintenance of the Servants of the People Society.
2. Twenty five thousand for the completion of the Lajpat Rai Hall which is already half finished.
3. Fifty thousand for the consolidation of the work done through the Society for the uplift of the suppressed classes.

We propose to utilize the first proceeds for the first object and the rest for the second and the third respectively. But it is open to any donor to earmark his donation and it will be utilized according to his or her wish.

The Society was founded in 1920. The object of the Society is to enlist and train national missionaries for the service of the country whose duty it is to work for its educational, political, social and economic uplift. There are at present sixteen life-members who are pledged to devote their whole time and attention to the fulfilment of the object. There are two Assistant members. There are six Associates. Seven members are engaged exclusively in the suppressed classes' work.

Lajpat Rai Hall was conceived and commenced by Lala Lajpat Rai for the purpose of accommodating the library collected by him and for delivering political and other lectures. It was found difficult, if not impossible, to hire, at reasonable rates, a hall in Lahore for political lectures.

[1] This was an enclosure to the following item. It appeared under the title "Notes".

The work among the suppressed classes is distributed in several areas and touches every department of their lives.

It was a serious question as to who should guide the Society and take, so far as possible, Lalaji's place in this connection. Sjt. Purushottamdas Tandon enjoyed Lalaji's confidence in the fullest measure. He is one of the earliest associates of the Society and was in close touch with its affairs during Lalaji's lifetime. He has consented to take charge of the affairs of the Society as its president. We feel therefore that the public need have no anxiety or fear as to the character of the future work of the Society and we hope that the appeal for subscriptions will receive a quicker and more liberal response than hitherto.

M. A. ANSARI
MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA
GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA

Young India,10-1-1929

614. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 6, 1929

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

Here is a copy of a statement[1] I propose to issue on behalf of the trustees of the Lalaji Memorial Fund. Will you please wire your consent? If I do not hear from you to the contrary, I propose to publish the same.

I hope you are none the worse for the terrific strain of Calcutta .

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure 1.

From a photostat: S.N. 15256-a

615. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 6, 1929

This is to introduce Mr. Jiwanlal Motichand to you. He has been a most constant supporter and friend of all my constructive activities. He has a good aluminium business in Calcutta and elsewhere. He has

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

been to England once. This time he is combining business with recreation which he needs very badly. I know that you will give him all the assistance you can and he may need.

With love,

HENRY S. L. POLAK, ESQ.
42, 47 & 48 DANES INN HOUSE
265 STRAND
LONDON W. C. 2

From a photostat: S. N. 14983

616. LETTER TO G. M.[1]

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 6, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am sorry for your bereavement. You will not meet your child in the flesh. There is therefore no question of recog-nition in the flesh. But this hankering after meeting in the flesh is surely not true love. Love to be true must be transferred to the soul within and, on that spiritual platform, there never has been separation. But that union transcends earthly relations.

Yours sincerely,

G. M.
C/O CONGRESS KHADI BHANDAR
BHADRAK
ORISSA

From a photostat: S.N. 15257

617. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE

Sunday, January 6, 1929

BHAI MAMA,

I have your postcard. I arrived here last night. Bring along Jaggu and his wife. We shall lodge her in the women's quarters. Do you still require help for the house? If so, how much?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3822

[1] Addressee's full name is not available.

618. MESSAGE TO CHRISTIAN INDIANS[1]

[Before *January 7, 1929*]

If Christian Indians will not cease to be Indians because they are Christians, they will identify themselves with all national movements and with the starving millions by listening to the message of the spinning-wheel.

The Hindu, 7-1-1929

619. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

January 7, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

No time to write beyond saying we had a most comfortable journey to Delhi and thence to the Ashram.

Hope you had a good time at Santiniketan.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5329. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9384

620. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Tuesday [*January 8, 1929*][2]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. I see no harm in your prolonging your stay there. It is true that I shall have to leave this place about the 20th. Ba and Keshu stayed in Delhi for two days. Travelling *via* Delhi saved eight rupees for each person and eight hours.

Kashi's Address:

Satyabadi, Sakhi Gopal, *via* Cuttack

The work here is going on very well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

My diet is still the same

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 502. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

[1] This was sent through *The Guardian* of Calcutta.

[2] From the postmark

621. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

Tuesday, January 8,1929

MY DEAR BHRRR[1],

I am warned betimes. But remember, the Gujarat mail does not go to Sabarmati and it is the day of convocation. I therefore propose to send somebody's car to Ahmedabad, where you will be received. I can't give Raihana a drive in the royal cart.

Love.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9565

622. LETTER TO TARABEHN

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 8, 1929

CHI. TARA,

Be satisfied that I dictate this letter rather than delay in writing to you. It is not right. I am sorry that you do not keep good health. Keeping good health is an art, which everyone should learn. Why should you not come to the Ashram? If you come and stay here in peace for a few months perhaps you may learn that art. I am planning to go to Rangoon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8784

623. LETTER TO GANGADHARRAO B. DESHPANDE

January 9, 1929

BHAI GANGADHARRAO,

This telegram was received today. What is it about?

I think you will send me an account of Pundalik's satyagraha.[2]

[1] This was a form of greeting used between Gandhiji and the addressee.

[2] A satyagraha was launched in Miraj State in Maharashtra against the unreasonably enhanced rate of land revenue. Narayan Tamaji Katagade alias "Pundalik" had to assume its leadership when it took a violent turn.

What was the outcome of the satyagraha?

I hope your health is all right.

Kaka is, of course, quite busy.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5225

624. THE CONGRESS

Last year's was a remarkable Congress in more ways than one. lt. was remarkable for the attendance of delegates, visitors and spectators, it was remarkable for the resolutions it passed; it was remarkable for the compromises the leaders made and broke. There was both reality and terrible unreality about the Congress. But behind the unreality it showed the greatest possibilities for the nation. The bubbling enthusiasm of the people who knew nothing of the unreality was an unmistakable proof of what the nation could do if it was properly harnessed and its energies turned into profitable channels.

Pandit Motilal Nehru's address was eminently practical. It was even great for the boldness with which he defended the Report[1] and for presenting the nation with an unexciting but true programme in spite of the clamour for unadulterated excitement. The whole address is a piece of constructive statesmanship. It promises the substance of independence instead of the shadow of which one hears so much nowadays.

If thus Pandit Motilal Nehru's address is boldly constructive, Sjt. Sen Gupta's is usefully destructive and polemical. He defends and accepts the Nehru Report rightly as a step towards the goal of complete independence. His address clears the ground as if by design for the Presidential address. He successfully explodes the doctrine of Britain's trusteeship and the 'blessings' of British rule. He asserts that Britain has never done justice except under pressure of physical force and concludes by insisting on freedom at any cost. To this end he demands social revolution equally with the political. Both the addresses show that there is no political progress without equal social progress, if the former is to come, as it must to be real, from internal effort and not as a gesture from the British 'trustees' in answer to India's 'prayer'.

Hence the 'tame' programme of social reconstruction and effort. Behind the 'tameness' lies the battery for storing the necessary strength for internal and national political effort.

[1] The Nehru Report

OVERHAUL CONGRESS

The first item of preliminary importance therefore is the overhauling of the Congress. It is owing to my hurried draftsmanship that reorganization of the Congress stands fifth in the list in the second resolution[1] moved by me. It should have stood first by right. For without complete overhauling of the Congress, there will be no other work. If the Congress which is the salt loseth its savour, wherewith shall it be salted ? The Congress is the powerhouse from which all the power for all the work is to be derived. If the power-house is rotten, the whole national work must be necessarily so.

The delegates to the Congress were mostly self-appointed. The election procedure laid down by the Congress constitution was discovered to have broken down. This was one of the terrible unrealities about the great annual demonstration. If the fight for swaraj whether defined as independence or dominion status is to be solid and real, the re-formation of the Congress is the first need to which the Working Committee has to devote its attention. Let nothing be hushed. We shall gain nothing by a policy of 'hush hush'. The disease must be made known all over the Congress world before it can be successfully tackled. Every organization to be living must show growth. But the Congress is suffering from internal decay. And even as a patient suffering from tuberculosis often shows ruddiness and plumpness, so is the Congress showing every year the ruddiness and plumpness of a consumptive patient betraying to the seeing eye of the physician the surest signs of approaching decay. As at present constituted, the Congress is unable to put forth real, united and unbreakable resistance. If the Calcutta demonstration were a reality, there was no reason why such a vast mass of people as had gathered there could not wrest power from unwilling hands. But the demonstrators had gone not to demonstrate strength, they had gone as if to a circus as sightseers. And strange as it may appear, the Congress pandal was constructed as an adjunct to and in the midst of an enlarged edition of Filis's circus.

WARNING TO PUNJAB

This must be changed if we are to exhibit reality at the next Congress. The volunteers dressed in European fashion presented, in my opinion, a sorry spectacle at Calcutta and the expense incurred was out of keeping with the pauperism of the nation. They were no representatives of rough and rugged businesslike farmers. The Punjab has to alter this.

[1] *Vide* "Speech on constructive Programme, Calcutta congress",1-1-1929

The Congress must not be used for making money. If there is to be a surplus, it must be a surplus from the humble offerings of poor but real representatives of a poor nation coming to the annual gathering not as idle sightseers but as soldiers eager to take part in the annual stock-taking and ready to give a good account of themselves on the occasion arriving.

If I had my way I should separate the deliberative portion from the demonstrative and spectacular. I should exclude visitors from the deliberative section; or if they must be allowed, I should have an open air enclosure divided into sections strongly but elegantly fenced. Meetings in the enclosure will then have to be held during the early morning hours and in the evenings. This will at once simplify the labours of the reception committee and result in great economy. Artistic decorations are surely possible in an open air enclosure which is any day preferable from the standpoint of hygiene to a closed pandal which suffocates, no matter how well ventilated it may be.

We are a nation passing through the valley of humiliation. So long as we have not secured our freedom we have not the least excuse at the annual stock-taking season for amusements, riotous or subdued. It is a week of serious business, introspection and heart-searching; it is a week for evolving national policies and framing programmes for giving battle to a power perhaps the strongest and the most vicious the world has ever seen. I submit that it is impossible to do clear thinking or to evolve programmes political, social, economic and educational in the midst of distraction, noise, rush and a lavish display of boisterous amusements fit enough for a children's pantomime, entirely out of place as an appendage to a deliberative assembly intent on preparing for a grim life and death struggle. Our annual exhibition ought therefore to be strictly of an educative character and its organization should be entrusted to an expert body like the All-India Spinners' Association. Indeed, it is the only body fit to handle it, so long as the Congress retains khadi as the centre of its policy of boycott of foreign cloth and of economic reform among the millions of India's peasantry.

PREPARE NOW

If the Punjab is in earnest, it will profit by the lessons of Calcutta. It will give up nothing of the glowing enthusiasm of Calcutta but would shed all its unreality which damped one's hope. If the Punjab begins now in a businesslike fashion to work out every item of the Congress programme, it may even hope to celebrate the attainment of a constitution as portrayed in the Nehru Report. If in spite of its best effort, such a consummation has not come about by the end of

the year, it has to show its preparedness for inaugurating a no-tax campaign and such other direct action as may then be devised by the Congress. If the Punjab means all this, it will begin by putting the Congress organization in perfect order without any prompting from above, it will enroll members by the thousand and show an absolutely honest and clean register of membership and an equally clean record of its accounts. It will hasten to remove all internal friction and squabbles. A year is none too much for the preparation suggested in these lines. Will the Punjab rise to the occasion ? If it cannot, the next best thing it can do is in all humility to advise the Working Committee that it cannot shoulder the responsibility hastily undertaken by its leaders.

Young India, 10-1-1929

625. HINDI IN BENGAL

The Hindi Prachar Conference that met in Calcutta during the Congress Week lasted not more than two hours and had only two speeches, one by Sjt. Subhas Chandra Bose who in spite of the busy time he had with his volunteers and the Congress reception work made time for becoming the Chairman of the Reception Committee of this Conference. The other was by me as President. Sjt. Bose's speech was printed. He read the Devanagari script without difficulty. His pronunciation was almost faultless. The address was short and businesslike. He effectively disposed of the calumny that Bengal was indifferent to Hindi by reminding his audience that it was Bhudev Mukerji who strove to popularize Hindi and Devanagari script in Bihar, it was Navinchandra Ray who strove likewise in the Punjab, it was Swami Shri Chintamani Ghosh who was responsible in the United Provinces for the publication of many useful Hindi books, it was Justice Sharadacharan Mitra who was the father of the idea that there should be one script for all India and that it must be Devanagari, it is Amritlal Chakravarti who is issuing a Hindi newspaper, it is Ravindranath Tagore who has published the popular translation of some of Kabir's songs, it is Sjt. Kshitish Mohan Sen of Shantiniketan who has made and is still making researches in the writings of Hindi saints, it is Sjt. Nagendranath Vasu who is issuing his monumental Hindi Encyclopaedia[1] and it is Sjt. Ramanand Chatterjee who is issuing a Hindi monthly called *Vishal Bharat.* He recognized the necessity of Hindi for establishing touch with labour. He ended by promising to be the first to enlist himself for learning Hindi.

[1] *Vide* "Notes" sub-title Khadi Bhandar in Calcutta", 10-1-1929

My speech simply suggested that a beginning should be made by establishing free Hindi classes in Calcutta after the style of Madras and made an appeal for subscriptions on the spot.

A resolution was passed forming a Committee, at least for one year, for the purpose of carrying on Hindi propaganda in Bengal with a view to making it a permanent body. The Committee consists of Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla who has consented to act as Treasurer, Sjt Subhas Chandra Bose, Sjt. Prabhu Dayal, Sjt. Satish Chandra Das Gupta, Sjt Banarasidas Chaturvedi, Editor, *Vishal Bharat*, Sjt. Ranglal Jajodia, Sjt. Baijnath Kedia, Sjt. Mahavirprasad Poddar and Baba Raghavdas, Prachar Mantri, Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. The following have offered their services as part-time honorary Hindi teachers:

Sjt. Satyadev	Sjt. Devadatt
Sjt. Ramshankar	Sjt. Madanlal
Sjt. V. K. Ghosh	Sjt. Rameshchandra
Sjt. Bhajavaram	Sjt. Vikasitji
Sjt. Rajaram Pande	Sjt. Krishna Gopal Tewari

There was a handsome response to the appeal for collections, over Rs. 3,000 having been collected on the spot.

Those who offered their services as teachers were duly warned by me of the responsibility they shouldered. They were to be not merely Hindi teachers but interpreters of Indian culture and Indian purity. Hindi was to be taught not merely as any language but as the national language. As Hindi for Hindus it was a language of religion and morals. Millions could not be expected to learn Sanskrit but they could receive the message of the Vedas through Tulsidas, Surdas, Kabir and a host of other saints who kept the well of religion undefiled. They were moreover to teach Hindi as also Hindustani, not as a rival to Urdu. It was to be a blend of Hindi and Urdu. They had therefore to be repositories of purity of character and strength of purpose. Theirs was a noble mission demanding nobility of conduct.

In spite of a resolution of the Congress and its constitution the Congress proceedings are still often carried on in English for the benefit principally of the delegates from the South and Bengal. If in both the provinces those who propose to do national work make full use of the facilities provided in these provinces, the way will be clear for the forthcoming Congress to conduct its proceedings wholly in Hindi-Hindustani—surely a consummation devoutly to be wished for in view especially of the momentous resolution of the Calcutta Congress. There is no independence for the masses if their represen-tatives cannot conduct their proceedings in the national language. When the true yearning for swaraj comes, there will be no need for English

speech in the national assembly. English will still have its place and a place of importance at that. It will be and must remain the language of international diplomacy and intercourse. But it must not be allowed to usurp the function of the national language.

Young India, 10-1-1929

626. NOTES

KHADI BHANDAR IN CALCUTTA

A khadi bhandar was opened in Calcutta, 251 Harrison Road, by me on new year's day in the presence of Pandit Malaviyaji. The bhandar owes its origin to a conversation I had at Wardha with Sjt. Ghanshyamadas Birla. He and his brothers are noted for their silent munificent charities. Among the many causes helped by Sjt. Ghanshyamdas khadi has been one. I have always felt the need of a depot that would relieve the pressure, in times of need, on production centres which are generally made responsible by the All-India Spinners' Association for the sale of the khadi they manufacture. I suggested to Sjt. Birla that he should not only give money but he should also give the use of his mercantile talents to khadi. I told him that if the merchant princes of India took no personal interest in khadi it could not in the near future be made universal merely through the effort of the clerical class who were largely manning the Association. Sjt. Ghanshyamdas appreciated the argument. Hence the khadi bhandar of Calcutta. It has secured the services of a khadi lover in Sjt. Mahavirprasad Poddar of Gorakhpur. Malaviyaji blessed the effort. The arrangement was to sell khadi immediately after the opening ceremony. Nearly five thousand rupees worth of khadi was sold on the spot.

This bhandar is in no way designed to compete with the Khadi Pratishthan and Abhoy Ashram which have large depots. On the other hand, it is designed to supplement and support them. My own opinion is that in the lines which they manufacture there should be no variation in prices by way of pooling or other adjustment. Such adjustment will take place only regarding khadi received from other provinces. I hope that the public will liberally support this bhandar so as to enable it adequately to perform the function for which it is designed. Needless to say that there is behind this effort no idea whatsoever of making profits.

"HINDI VISHVA KOSH"

Reference has already been made to Sjt. Vasu's Hindi cyclop-

edia in my notice of the Hindi Prachar Conference.[1] I knew of this great work two years ago. I knew too that the author was ailing and bedridden. I was so struck with Sjt. Vasu's labours that I had a mind to see the author personally and know all about his work. I had therefore promised myself this pilgrimage during my visit to Calcutta for the Congress. It was only on my way to Khadi Pratishthan at Sodepur that I was able to carry out my promise. I was amply rewarded. I took the author by surprise for I had made no appointment. I found him seated on his bed in a practically unfurnished and quite unpretentious room. There were no chairs. There was just by his bedside a cupboard full of books and behind a small desk. He offered me a seat on his bed. I sat instead on a stool near it.

He is a martyr to asthma of which he showed ample signs during my brief stay with him. "I feel better when I talk to visitors and forget my disease for the moment. When you leave me, I shall suffer more," said Sjt. Vasu.

This is a summary description he gave me of his enterprise: "I was 19 when I began my Bengali cyclopaedia. I finished the last volume when I was 45. It was a great success. There was a demand for a Hindi edition. The late Justice Sharadacharan Mitra suggested that I should myself publish it. I began my labours when I was 47 and am now 63. It will take three years more to finish this work. If I do not get more subscribers or other help, I stand to lose Rs. 25,000 at the present moment. But I do not mind. I have faith that when I come to the end of my resources, God will send me help. These labours of mine are my *sadhana*[2]. I worship God through them, I live for my work."

There was no despondency about Sjt. Vasu but a robust faith in his mission. I was thankful for this pilgrimage which I should never have missed. As I was talking to him I could not but recall Dr. Murray's[3] labours on his great work. I am not sure who is the greater of the two. I do not know enough of either. But why any comparison between giants? Enough for us to know that nations are made from such giants.

The address of the printing works behind which the author lives is: 9 Vishvakosh Lane, Bagbazar, Calcutta.

Young India, 10-1-1929

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Spiritual effort

[3] Sir James Augustus Henry Murray (1835-1917), British lexicographer, editor of *New English Dictionary*

627. SPEECH DURING YOUTH WEEK, AHMEDABAD[1]

January 10, 1929

As your President has mentioned, I am now so busy with my activities that I can hardly spare even a moment from them. But because of my affection for children and your pressing invitation, I had no alternative but to come here. With regret, I had to make this condition that it would not be possible for me to see all the items on the programme or take part in the children's merriment.

I am watching the work done by the youth associations all over India. I must admit that I cannot say that I like all that is being done. Again, as explained by the President, co-operation between the old and the young is essential. It is pardonable if an old man like me cannot work with you, but I must add, "please do not altogether rule out the old". Bear in mind that you too will grow old and, although we are advanced in age, our minds are as fresh as yours. It is impossible that your soul will always stay in a youthful body. The conduct and efforts of one whose soul is always pure are unique and I wish that everyone living in India has such a soul.

The Government provides for your education from the income received through the excise department. The 25-30-crores that make up the income of this department are extracted from the poor; in other words, the education imparted to you is from the money collected by sucking the blood of the poor.

Condition of youth in India is the same as that of others. They also have the zeal for swaraj. Some seem to dislike this name and have substituted an English name for it—and there is a duel going on between the two names. I wish to protect you from this duel, because perhaps I may have greater enthusiasm and greater zeal for India's independence than you. And why not? You have a whole age before you, while I have passed that age and I am on the brink of death—and therefore if I claim to have a greater desire for the independence of India than you, it cannot be considered wrong.

I wish to give you some advice—and in a field where I have much experience. I merely wish to advise you not to be deceived by names. If I place before you a rose made out of paper and a withered but real rose with only a few petals, you would still like to have the latter though it is shrunken. Similarly if you really wish to test the

[1] The fourth day of the fifth Youth Week at Ahmedabad was observed as Children's Day. Dr. Hariprasad, while reading the report of the activities of the Yuvak Sangh, referred to the victimization and consequent strike of students in the Gujarat College. *Vide* "duty of Resistance", 24-1-1929

pulse of India, do not run after names. Engage yourselves in work. The fragrance of independence lies in work.

You are at present in the midst of a crisis. A struggle should always bring joy. I have not made a study of the entire situation in your college. But from what I have come to know I think that your stand is just. As I am a staunch enemy of the present administration and always hope for its overthrow, I wish that some good people side with you. But even those who are good cannot remain so in the administration under which they work, since injustice lies at the very root of this administration.

I have not met the other party, yet from what I have gathered as a result of my contacts, I feel that your strike is justified. It is not strange that your Principal should find the foundation of the Empire shaken by this insignificant strike. If I were the Principal then I too would have, like him, seen in it the fall of the flag of Empire. I hope that you would justify the fears of the Principal.

When the revolt of 1857 was over, Lord Canning said that they should not be deceived even if a small distinct cloud, not bigger than a thumb, is seen in the skies of India. His warning is justified. I hope that this small cloud of yours is a signal for a bigger one. If you had not taken this step you would not have been blamed, but if you back out now, remember that you will be censured. A brave man fights desperately after entering the battle-field—and would be ready to meet death. Spies alone will go looking behind.

There is no question of death here; at the most you will waste one or two or, perhaps five or seven years. And if this does happen, what are you going to lose? I believe that at the end it will be a gain for you. Do not be disheartened even if you yourselves are totally boycotted. Nothing can be achieved if you do not even sacrifice this much. What even if your number rose from one to ten thousand? What is the value of even those 10,000 pebbles on the other banks of the Sabarmati? It is sufficient if out of the 1,000 even ten turn out to be diamonds. If all of you become pebbles, you will be of no use to anyone. May you achieve victory in your struggle such is my hope and my wish.

Before I conclude I specially wish to warn you that you must never be discourteous. Do not insult the teachers or utter bitter words. Harsh words do no good. They will only create bitterness. And if there is hard work combined with courtesy, you will do credit to yourselves and your name will be cherished in future history. Be courteous at heart as well. Your struggle is a peaceful one, and whatever the provocation, you may not cross the limits of peacefulness.

I hope that Mr. Shirras'[1] fear may prove true. The flag of India, and the reins too, are in your hands. An old man like me has no right to hold those reins. I congratulate you for having stood firm in your strike so far.

For the sake of the poor, recognize the importance of the spread of khadi. This also is the main plank of the programme framed by the Congress. I am not at the root of that resolution. Its origin lies in the President's speech and I was only instrumental in bringing forward the resolution.

[From Gujarati]
Prajabandhu, 13-1-1929

628. MESSAGE TO THE THIRD GATHERING OF GRADUATES

January 12, 1929

The old and the new graduates of the Vidyapith should think and decide what they are going to contribute to the *yajna* of swaraj at this critical juncture.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

Sabarmati, Vol. VII, Number 3

629. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 12, 1929

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

I instructed Subbiah to send you my answer yesterday in reply to your letter. Your programme stands. I see you are compelling me to travel on Sunday night, that is, whilst I am silent. I would of course have preferred all suspension of travel for 24 hours, that is, during my slent hours. But if it cannot be done, I do not mind.

What about that place in Sind at which through my stupidity I did not see the people who had assembled on the platform to see me at midnight whilst we were going back to Hyderabad? If that place has got to be done, that is, if the people want it, I am prepared to redeem the promise even if it means extension of a day unless you will take the day from the programme already sent.

I do not know the whereabouts of Manilal. You will trace him

[1] Findlay Shirras was then the Principal of the Gujarat College.

and see to his going to Sind. Do you make the visit contingent upon his going to Sind, or am I to take the programme as an absolute fixture?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
BOMBAY VIEW, GOWALIA TANK ROAD, BOMBAY

From the original: C.W. 9251. Courtesy: Jairamdas Doulatram

630. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 12, 1929

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

I have your telegram[1]. I had certainly intended to tour in some parts of the U.P. in response to a request made by some workers in Banda and Jhansi. But they withdrew the request, being diffident. The tour, therefore, was cancelled. There is yet another in prospect and that is near Meerut and Delhi. They want me to go there in March. But for March I have so many engagements from which I have got to choose. There is Andhra, there is Karnatak and there is Burma besides Delhi and Meerut; and there is also the Punjab. Lalaji's Society people want me there for their anniversary celebration. I am awaiting Father's decision as to the proposed European visit. If he cancels that visit, then the way will be open for me to satisfy all the demands upon my time. If he wants the European visit to come off, then I may not extend my tour beyond the first week of April. I cannot take the matter any further just now. But I would like you to help me to make my choice. You will consult Father about his wishes and that will enable you to guide me better.

By the time this reaches you, Father will have probably telegraphed to me his opinion. If he has not, please see that he does.

How is Kamala doing now? And how are you yourself faring? You have become Secretary. I want you to throw yourself heart and soul therefore into the programme, and compel obedience to instructions from the Working Committee and try to bring order out of the existing disgraceful disorder.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1929. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library; also S.N. 15276

[1] Dated January 11, 1929 It read: "Papers announce you touring North United Provinces. Hope you will extend tour South also."

631. LETTER TO THE SECRETARY, BEE-KEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 12, 1929

THE SECRETARY
BEE-KEEPERS' ASSOCIATION
SANAWAR (PUNJAB)

DEAR SIR,

We in the Satyagraha Ashram are interesting ourselves in the question of bee-keeping. We have learnt about the Bee-keepers' Association from the publication of the Punjab Agricultural Depart-ment entitled *A Guide to Bee-keeping*. We will be obliged if you would kindly let me know whether the Bee-keepers' Association at Simla mentioned in the book is still in existence and whether someone from the Ashram can go there for receiving practical instructions in bee-keeping.

Thanking you in anticipation,

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 14984

632. MY NOTES

THE NATIONAL FLAG

A lover of the nation puts down his thoughts as follows:[1]

I have also had the painful experience of which this correspondent has written. There was inconsistency even about the national flag that was unfurled at the hands of Pandit Motilal at the Congress session. There was no spinning-wheel on it. So far the Indian National Congress has not passed a resolution to decide upon the dimensions of the national flag, its colour, etc.[2] But in 1920 my proposal was accepted almost unanimously. If those who believe in khadi and in the unity of Hindus, Muslims and others stick to my original proposal correctly and voluntarily, the occasion will readily come for the

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had complained of lack of uniformity in national flags and of the use of mill-cloth and foreign cloth for them.

[2] The A.I.C.C. adopted a resolution in August 1931, determining the specifications of the national flag. It consisted of saffron, white and green horizontal stripes with the spinning-wheel in dark blue in the centre of the white stripe. The resolution also stated that the colours stood for qualities and not communities.

Congress to decide upon a flag. It would certainly be an unbearable and shameful matter if the spinning-wheel is not the focal point in the flag, and if it is made of foreign or Indian mill-made cloth.

FASCINATION FOR ENGLISH

The same correspondent writes:[1]

This is indeed a fact. Not only do pupils and teachers devote a third of their modest talent to English, but many devote all or most of it to English and even after doing all this their greed is not satiated. The efforts to break this spell of English can be directed in two ways: those who love English should stick to it and translate attractively into the national language the literature and the special knowledge found in it and those not knowing English should, despite lack of knowledge of that language, leave the stamp of their own personality on the people and prove that a knowledge of English is not essential for development of character, for intellectual progress, courage or inventiveness.

Let me point out an error in the correspondent's reasoning. He wishes that the propaganda to undermine the status of English should be launched through *Young India*; how can that be? To launch this propaganda through *Young India*, that journal itself should be closed down. The advent of *Young India* has proved to be a sort of headache to me. I believe and a number of my friends believe that the success of *Young India* has, to some extent, added to the fascination for English. Some young men see a consequence in a mere sequence when they infer that I have proved the necessity of a knowledge of English by accepting the editorship of *Young India*. As a matter of fact, my assumption of the editorship can only prove that knowing English and being a practical man, I have made use of that knowledge to suit the circumstances. The conclusion may also be drawn from this that knowledge of English is not to be renounced. But an infatuation for English at the cost of the national language is reprehensible. However, it is difficult for me to explain this distinction so long as I continue to publish *Young India* and, as I believe that the latter too renders some service, it is difficult even to give it up all of a sudden. Hence *Navajivan* alone can take up the task of ending the false status of English and that too not by publishing articles on the need to do so, but by increasingly improving itself, by adding to its usefulness and by proving in practice that nothing more than what is published in it about service to the country could be available in English. I know

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had complained that fascination for English had not lessened and that pupils and teachers of national schools spent too much time on it.

that *Navajivan* falls short from this point of view. The attempt to remedy the shortcoming is going on.

OBSCENITY ON TRAINS

A passenger writes to say:[1]

Those who write obscene words will hardly be reading *Navajivan* and hence there is nothing that I can write here for them. But I believe many cultured people read *Navajivan*. I feel the suggestion made to them is quite practicable. It is not that we come across obscene writing in latrines only. I had seen such writing on the walls of a well-known street in Bhuj during my tour of Kutch. One may perhaps come across this even in other cities. The municipality should efface such writings wherever they are found and should paste prohibitory notices in those places.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-1-1929

633. AHIMSA AMONG THE JAINS

I do not touch upon the matter of the calf [2] in *Navajivan*; none should therefore conclude that I have forgotten about it. Two types of people have criticized my action: one, those who are full of anger against me, two, those who are thoughtful. I know that my action which appears to me to be innocent has shocked the second type of people, and chiefly the Jains among them. I have been scrutinizing Jain literature. I believed there ought to be a great deal of support for my action in the Jain books. An expert professing the Jain religion had sent me his opinion and an article in which I found such support. Hence I carried on correspondence with known Jain friends. As aresult I have received the following article[3]. I publish it for the benefit of those who can think objectively.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-1-1929

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had urged Gandhiji to write in *Navajivan* appealing to educated readers to efface obscene writings inside latrines on trains.

[2] The killing of an ailing calf in the Ashram caused great commotion in certain circles. *Vide* "The Fiery Ordeal", sub-title When Killin May Be Ahimsa

[3] Not translated here

634. AVERSION TO KHADI

A Brahmin from the South writes:[1]

We shall not know how many such wearers of khadi there must be in every nook and corner. It is a matter of sorrow and surprise that those who wear a cap or other garments of khadi are ridiculed by our own people. But those who have accepted the dharma to wear khadi should be able to suffer it. I remember that when I went to England, for fear that I would be ridiculed, I had decided to wear my hair in the English style rather than have it cut in accordance with the native practice. For the same reason, I dispensed with my tuft too. But one to whom his duty has become clear will stick to it, abjuring all fear of ridicule, etc. If khadi is an *Annapurna*[2] to the starving peasants dwelling in the seven lakh villages of India, the thoughtful will stick to it, despite ridicule, contempt or risk of being beaten up. This Brahmin should never permit himself to think that he is low or contemptible because he is a cook. Neither the profession of a cook nor that of cleaning latrines is low. King Nala had cultivated cooking as an art. Every mother cleans latrines. I hope this Brahmin will stick to his khadi cap, and realize that an essential service can never be degrading.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-1-1929

635. A FINE SUGGESTION

Shri Mathuradas Purushottam writes as follows on how to make khadi cheap:[3]

I think this is a good suggestion. If there is true patriotism in the country, if the people have even a little faith in the constructive programme, it should not be difficult to find a lakh of people to undertake the task of sewing. The art of sewing according to a given pattern is both easy and enjoyable. There are sewing machines in a number of houses; if one or two hours of leisure are given to this work for the sake of the country, ready-made garments of khadi will surely sell very cheap and all talk of khadi being expensive will end.

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent, who had studied up to the fifth standard, served as a cook. People ridiculed him for wearing a khadi cap.

[2] Giver of plenty

[3] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had suggested that if khadi was purchased and made into garments and put up for sale without adding stitching charges, etc., it could compete with garments made out of mill-cloth.

People buy khadi in order to make garments out of it. It is likely that many other ideas will strike us as a result of this suggestion. At the moment I place this attractive suggestion before the reader and I solicit the names and addresses of those who know sewing and are willing to sew as a measure of sacrifice. Tailors can make a very great contribution to this work. The Wadhwan tailor, the late Motilal, used to sew for an hour for his livelihood and utilize the rest of his time to serve others and used to teach sewing gladly to those who were desirous of learning. This noble example is there for all tailors and others to emulate.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-1-1929

636. WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS DO?[1]

A sort of awakening and turmoil have spread among students as among others in the whole country. That is an auspicious sign but it can easily turn into its opposite too. If steam is confined within a limited space, one can make a steam-engine, whose enormous power can haul mighty loads. If, however, it is not harnessed, it either goes waste or causes destruction. In like manner, if the steam that is being produced today among the students is not kept under control, it will either go waste or destroy us all; if it is intelligently harnessed, it will generate great power.

The strike of the students of the Gujarat College that is going on at present, is a product of this steam that has been released. From what I have heard, I believe that both the students' strike and their complaint are just. They had participated in the boycott of the Simon Commission in October last and had absented themselves from the College. For doing so, the Principal had conveyed his decision to them that those who wished to appear for the examination would have to pay a fee of Rs. 3. Those who did not appear for the examinations would not be punished. Despite this decision, I hear that the Principal has adopted another policy and is compelling everyone to pay Rs. 3 and sit for the examination. The strike is against this order and, if the facts are as above, injustice has been done to the students.

But the President of the Youth League says that the Principal is angry and he sees a danger to the Empire in this strike. The strike is harmless, it is a sign of youthful vigour. The Principal can avoid the

[1] *Vide* also "Speech During Youth Week, Ahmedabad", 10-1-1929 and "Duty of Resistance", 24-1-1929

danger by regarding it merely as a youthful exercise. But if by regarding the strike as a danger and a great sin, he persists in meting out some punishment, harsh or otherwise, what is not a danger today is likely to become a great danger tomorrow.

Speaking about the revolt of 1857, Lord Canning had observed that in the Indian skies a cloud no bigger than one's thumb could in a trice assume enormous proportions and no one could say when it would do so. Hence wise men should not underestimate an innocent little cloud but regard it as a symptom and administer necessary remedies.

This strike is a cloud small as a thumb; but it can generate power enough to blow up the sky. I certainly desire that such power should be generated. I have neither respect nor love for the modern British system of government. I have described it as the creation of Satan. I desire the destruction of that system once and for all. It is desirable in every way that such destruction is accomplished by the young men and women of India. It is in the hands of the students to acquire this destructive power. If they store up the steam that is being released among them, they could generate that force today.

The first thing is that the students should make a success of the strike begun by them. Had they not started it, no one would have said anything to them. Having once begun it if they lose it, they will certainly deserve blame and will harm both themselves and their country. The worst result of the strike could only be that the Principal will expel the students for a long time or forever or will impose a fine for their re-admission. The students should face both these gladly. A brave man once in the field of battle never turns back. The students cannot now beat a retreat.

Moreover, students should never give up their good manners. They should not utter a single bitter word about the Principal or the professors. Harsh words harm the speaker and not the one addressed. The students have to keep their pledge and do a difficult task. It will surely have an effect. Out of this will be born the power to destroy this political system; it cannot but be so. Our young men and women should remember the example of Chinese students. Of them not one, nor two, but fifty thousand spread themselves into the villages and in a short while prepared both young and old by imparting to them literary and such other needed knowledge. If students desire to make a significant contribution to the *yajna* of swaraj, they must do something like what was done in China.

As I understand matters, students are desirous of sacrificing themselves in a peaceful struggle. Even if I am mistaken about the

facts, the above applies to both kinds of war—with soul-force and brute force. Even if we want to fight with ammunition, we shall need to observe discipline; we shall have to store up the steam; up to a certain extent both have a common path. The Khalifas offered unique sacrifices for Islam, the Crusaders for Christianity and Cromwell and his warriors for political ends. Taking recent examples, Lenin, Sun Yat-sen and others have placed before the world instances of simplicity, endurance of hardship, sacrifice of enjoyments, single-minded devotion and eternal vigilance that would put even yogis to shame. Their followers have placed before us equally illustrious examples of devotion and discipline.

We must perforce make such sacrifices. Our sacrifices are no sacrifices, they are only trifling. Our capacity to observe rules is small, our simplicity is comparatively little, our devotion is almost insignificant, and our determination and concentration show themselves only in the beginning. Hence youths should remember that they have yet to accomplish much. I have not forgotten what they have achieved; they need no praise from me. If one friend praises another, he ceases to be a friend and becomes a professional pane-gyrist and forfeits the title of friend. A friend's job is to point out failings and try to get these remedied.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-1-1929

637. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Sunday [*January 13, 1929*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

What could I write when the programme was not settled? Now it has been settled. I start from here on the 31st and go to Sind, from where I shall return by the 15th. What I shall do after that has not been decided. My advice is that at present you should stay on there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 503. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

[1] From the postmark

638. LETTER TO JAGANNATH

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 13, 1929

MY DEAR JAGANNATH,

I have your letter. I expect that Manilal will be going to Sind. I do not know where he is at the present moment. I leave on the 31st instant for Karachi. It would be better to send someone on behalf of the Society[1] in advance.

As to my visit[2] to the Punjab for the opening ceremony, etc. in April, please ask me later. I am awaiting a communication from Pandit Motilalji before I can decide.

Yours sincerely,

LALA JAGANNATH
CARE PEOPLE
COURT STREET, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 15268

539. LETTER TO KHURSHED NAOROJI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 13, 1929

I have your letter.[3] I ought to have acknowledged it earlier, but I have been overwhelmed with work. Those Indo-Chinese friends will be welcome whenever they come.

I am sending a short message[4] to the friends.

Jamnabehn should come here because I go to Sind from here by the rail route. I leave here on 31st instant. Jamnabehn may come whenever she likes before 31st instant. Of course she is bringing with her a choice assortment of fine khadi. It would certainly be extremely nice if you will join me during my trip to Burma, if it ever comes off.

What happened to the balance of the stuff in Calcutta ?

MISS KHURSHED NAOROJI
F 8 NAPEAN SEA ROAD, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 15264

[1] Servants of the People Society, Lahore

[2] Gandhiji was requested by the Servants of the People Society to preside over the anniversary of the Society which was to be held in April and perform the opening ceremony of the Lajpat Rai Hall.

[3] The addressee had requested Gandhiji on behalf of the Indo-Chinese delegates to give a message to the people of Indo-China (S.N. 15263).

[4] *Vide* the following item.

640. LETTER TO BUI QUANG-CHIEU

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 13, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

Miss Khurshedbai Naoroji has written to me to say that you want a message from me. My message is:

True freedom lies through Truth and Non-violence and nothing else.

Yours sincerely,

BUI QUANG-CHIEU, ESQ.
P 253 SHAHNAGAR STREET
KALIGHAT P.O., CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 15265

641. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 13, 1929

I have your letter. What is one to do with Prakasam or anybody else ? I have certainly not taken charge. I do not see how I can take the sole charge. I have today a letter from the Working Committee, copy of which I enclose. I shall frame some sort of a scheme. Let us simply do whatever we can in spite of adverse circumstances. In my opinion, dictatorship is out of question. When you receive the formal communication to prepare a scheme, I suppose you will prepare something and send it. If they put you in sole charge, you will ask for absolute powers and ask for the Congress Committees being put in proper order.

The health-god dealt with me most handsomely during the Calcutta strain. I am none the worse. In spite of reduced diet, bad hours, want of sleep, I had lost only one lb., and I have regained all the lost weight during the week I have been here. Yes, almonds, bread and vegetables seem to answer the purpose well. The quantity of almonds is for the last two days 6 ounces, bread untoasted 14 *tolas*. I am keeping well.

Encl.

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR
GANDHI ASHRAM, TIRUCHENGODU

From a photostat: S.N. 15273

642. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

January 13, 1929

DEAR SATISBABU,

Can you prepare the tricolour national flag with the charkha in it? The question is how to have the three colours nicely on one piece. If you can prepare it, let me have the price also.

You will keep me informed of how the new Khadi Bhandar[1] is going on.

I wish I could have given more days to you. Hemprabha Devi must not overwork herself. What is the cost there per head of feeding and how is it worked out?

Love.

BAPU

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 1601

643. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

January 13, 1929

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I have your letter. It would have been better if you could have personally come to Allahabad. But now it will do even if a responsible representative of yours comes. A satyagrahi must be absolutely faultless. Then alone can he be invincible. If necessary, we will talk further about this when we meet. I presume that you will definitely come to Wardha if you have not come to the Sabarmati Ashram before that.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* "Notes" sub-title Khadi Bhandar in Calcutta

644. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

Sunday [*January 13, 1929*][1]

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

Your letter. Have patience. Always remember Rama. He will remove all impurities.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original. Courtesy: National Archives of India; also G.N. 198

645. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

January 14, 1929

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I got your wire and your letter too. I am going to Sind at the end of this month in connection with the Lalaji Memorial [Fund]. Did you collect any subscriptions in Calcutta?

Did you write to the South Indian gentleman whose name I had sent for the dairy? If he does not suit I can suggest a few other names.

As regards the Khadi Bhandar do not let its purpose slip off your mind. It ought not to be run merely on a commercial basis. It is to be conducted from an altruistic viewpoint.

My health is good. These days my diet consists of milk from 15 *tolas* almonds, 14 *tolas roti* (soaked), vegetable, raw tomatoes, 4 *tolas* linseed oil and 2 *tolas* of wheat flour gruel in the morning. I have left off fruit. The increase in weight in one week is 1_ lb.

I am maintaining good strength.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6152. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

646. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

Monday [*January 14, 1929*][2]

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have your letter. Let me have the date of departure of your ship for Rangoon. I would certainly like to go by it. Most probably it

[1] From the postmark
[2] *ibid*

will be cheaper to sail from Calcutta. But you can guide me better.

We need not wire for the literature about bee-keeping. There is no urgency about it. The honey you sent is very sweet. Send me a book on chromopathy if you can get one. I hope grandmother is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4711. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

647. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Not revised *Silence Day, January 14, 1929*

CHI. MIRA,

I have all your love letters. I am glad indeed that you liked the poet and his great creation. Your letters soothed me. I have sent them to Mahadev for I know he will like them. I would like you to go there again and, if you will like it, before returning home.

I am satisfied so long as you do not expect long letters from me. But you need not shorten yours to spare me. I like your letters. They give me useful news and they are your temperature chart.

I do not mind your opinion of Krishnadas. I cannot endorse it. But give me the reasons for that terrible judgment. I might be able to correct it or endorse it. If it is the worst, I must know it. But I feel that I shall be able to correct your judgment. No one else has the opinion you have.

Things are going on well here. The kitchen is better ordered. Bread is almost perfect. Chhotelal has returned with more accurate information about bakeries. Surendra will be back in a few days.

I leave here on 31st instant for Sind, returning by 15th February. You shall have the Sind dates in due course.

I have regained my lost weight and added 1_ lb. It was 95_ yesterday after performance at the library. Fruit replaced by tomatoes. No lemon either.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5330. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G. N. 9384

648. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

January 14, 1929

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I get your letters. I missed one mail as I have been very busy.

If it was left to me to give a name to Dhairyabala[1], I would call her Sita. It is a holy name. It is easy for friends there to pronounce and suggest the virtues we wish her to have. I considered some other names too, but could not think of a better one.

What need is there now to write about Sastriji? Keep me informed how the new Agent[2] is doing. Since I do not know him, I have not written a single line about him. The other reports that I have received are not favourable, but we should not form an opinion on the basis of these reports. It is possible that he may show only his better qualities there. You should not, any of you, be prejudiced against him from the beginning.

I am doing fairly well. At present I have given up goat's milk and fruits. Fruits I gave up after coming here. I take tomatoes instead, and almond-milk instead of goat's milk.

I hope you write to Ramdas. It appears he and Nimu are doing well at Bardoli. Devdas, Navin and Rasik are still in Delhi. All three are doing well. Mahadev is in Bardoli.

Kishorelal was here for four days. His health can be said to be fairly good. Ba, too, can be said to be well. We can say that she shows her age now. I have already written to you that she was with me at Calcutta. I returned *via* Delhi. Ba came later, having stayed on in Delhi for two days. Keshu had stayed back with her. Brijkishan has come here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4749

[1] Daughter of the addressees

[2] Sir Kurma Venkata Reddi who took over the charge of the office of Agent in South Africa from V. S. Srinivasa Sastri on January 28, 1929

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

COW-PROTECTION TRUE AND FALSE[1]

The question of cow-protection is extremely complex. The fanatic, the humanitarian and the economist will of course view it differently. . . . But the Hindu ideal of cow-protection has nothing in common with that of the first and transcends that of the other two.... The camel and the horse occupy the same position in the economic life of the people of Arabia that the cow does in ours.... Yet the ideal of camel-protection or horse-protection never arose in Arabia.... Even in the West the cow has more and more come to be regarded as the "mother of prosperity" and dairying has been developed into an elaborate science, but Westerners have not adopted the ideal of cow-protection in the sense in which we have. The cow-protection ideal set up by Hinduism is essentially different from and transcends the dairy ideal of the West. The latter is based on economic values, the former, while duly recognizing the economic aspect of the case, lays stress on the spiritual aspect, viz., the idea of penance and self-sacrifice for the relief of martyred innocence which it embodies....

The story [in Kalidasa's *Raghuvamsa*] runs that King Dilip of the famous Raghu line finding himself in his declining years without issue went to seek the advice of sage Vasishtha his preceptor and was told that the attainment of his desire was prevented by a curse pronounced upon him by Surabhi, the Divine Cow, on account of an unintended insult that he had once offered to her and that the only way to remedy it was to propitiate her by personally serving her and by protecting her against all harm in her roamings in the forest. So dismissing all his servants, the King entered upon his penance . . . "offering her palatable mouthfuls of grass, rubbing her body, keeping off the gnats, following her as her shadow, halting where she halted, sitting down where she lay down, moving forth when she moved." . . . Such was the power of the King's penance and so all-conquering his love that even wild Nature felt its spell. "When he entered the forest as its protector, forest conflagrations would become extinguished even without any shower of rain . . . the stronger animals no longer oppressed the weaker ones."

Thus it went on for "thrice seven" days at the end of which, wishing to test the devotion of her protector, the cow entered a cave in the Himalayas . . . and was suddenly seized upon by a lion unnoticed by the King who was lost in contemplating the beauty and grandeur of the surrounding mountain scenery. Startled

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

from his reverie by the plaintive lowing of the cow, the King, ashamed of his absent-mindedness, fitted an arrow to his bow to shoot at the lion, but to his utter amazement and dismay feel himself hold as if by a spell and all his strength paralysed. . . . The lion . . . told him that all his prowess was vain, since he was not an ordinary lion but Kumbhodara the servant of God Siva and was protected by the blessing of that God hi consequence of which no arms could prevail against him.... "I know I am helpless," replied the King . . . but one thing still remains to me. I offer my body to thee as ransom for the cow and I beseech thee to appease thy hunger on my flesh and let the cow go."

The lion tries to move him from his resolve by a variety of arguments. "If compassion is your motive," he expostulates, "then your decision is wrong, since by your death you will save only one cow, whereas if you live you will as their father ever protect your people against all troubles." . . . The King . . . once more presses his request. "So be it," replies the lion at last and the King laying down his arms throws himself before the wild beast "like a lump of flesh," so that it might make a meal of him.... But ... instead of the dreadful leap of the lion which he was expecting, flowers begin to shower from the heavens and he hears a gentle voice speak, "Rise up, my son." He gets up and finds the cow standing before him like his own mother, with milk overflowing from her udders and "nowhere the lion!" . . .

And since the King has discharged his trust so nobly she grants him his wish. "Do not think I can produce milk alone," she says to him, "if pleased I can grant any wish".

Dilip is here depicted as love incarnate. Faced with the dilemma whether to lay down his life to save the cow or to gain the merit of giving crores of cows in charity he unhesitatingly chooses the former and finds that he has thereby propitiated an angel unawares. His relentless pursuit of truth leads him to the discovery of the true way of cow-protection—the way of ahimsa, of perfect love and therethrough everything else is added unto him....

The cow whose service and protection is enjoined by Hinduism as a sacred duty is not cow, the animal merely, but cow that in our sacred lore appears as the personification of the "agony of the Earth", and that pleads for redress before the Great White Throne whenever the Earth grows weary under its load of iniquity. Its service includes the service of the entire afflicted humanity, of all those "who toil and suffer and are weary and need rest", the service of *Daridranarayana* . . .

Dilip's way [is] the way of perfect love . . . self-suffering and selfpurification. It is this spiritual ideal of cow-protection that is exalted by Hinduism as the highest

dharma and with reference to which the promise is held out:

'न केवलानां पथसां प्रसूतिमवेहि मां कामदुघां प्रसन्नाम् ।'

"Do not think I can produce milk alone, if pleased I can grant any wish."

Young India, 20-9-1928

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM DR. B. C. ROY

SHILLONG,

October 28,1928

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I had written to you some months ago to find out from you your directions regarding the Exhibition to be held in connection with the 43rd session of the congress. I confess I did not get from you any definite instructions for us to follow as your letter was vague and guarded. It is time now (I hope it is not too late) that I received them and shall be grateful if I am told exactly what are the decisions of the Calcutta Committee which embarrass you. I understood from Mr Khandelwal just before I left Calcutta that you had not decided to come to Calcutta during the Congress.

The Calcutta Congress Committee have so far decided (I am speaking from memory)

(i) not to exhibit any textiles made of foreign yarn or anything of this nature manufactured in any foreign country,

(ii) not to allow any advertisements re[garding] the same,

(iii) not to allow the exhibition of any British goods,

(iv) not to allow any advertisements of these goods,

(v) to allow the exhibition of small machinery (non-British) good enough for cottage industries,

(vi) to allow the exhibition of mill-cloth only if the Committee is convinced that the cloth is made of Indian yarn.

While the Committee have come to these conclusions yet I am perfectly cer-

tain that no member of the Committee will insist on the compliance by us of any or all of these conditions if they knew that you had objection to any of these decisions.

We have set apart a large portion of the exhibition grounds for khaddar cloth I am now informed by Pandit Motilalji that the A.I.S.A. have decided to abstain from being represented in the exhibition. This decision is unfortunate. As an humble office-bearer of the Congress I am bound to see that the Association is represented at the exhibition as also to take orders from my Committee. Please do not leave me in this predicament. Kindly revise your decision and come to Calcutta. We shall not accept a 'no' from you. If necessary I will try and close down the exhibition. Please let me know your wishes and I will try and follow them. Only I would request you not to be too unbending.

I am going down to Calcutta in two days and I shall be anxiously awaiting a reply there from you, giving me definite directions. The Seva Sadan is going on well. I do hope you will find time to open the new wards when in Calcutta. We are looking forward to it.

Yours sincerely,

B. C. ROY

From a microfilm: S.N. 14852

APPENDIX III

EXTRACTS FROM SHAUKAT ALI'S LETTER

SULTANI MANSION, DONGRI, BOMBAY

October 23, 1928

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I had received your letter of the September 24th all right. . . . I know from the writings in the Press that your name was being dragged in to raise the people's feeling against me. . . . Our Kohat differences and other things had also been mentioned. So I do not feel surprised that at Simla Mahadev heard something about it. Here is what I had said about you and I assure you that in giving the details of the incident I depend not only on my own good memory and also on Shuaib's, but Dr. Ansari or even Pandit Motilal cannot disprove my facts. . . . I had real quarrel with Panditji at Ambalal Sarabhai's and very nearly came to blows, as my blood boiled when in our face he was heaping abuses on us "No-changers". . . . You have forgiven them, may have even forgotten the wrongs they may have done, but most of us cannot do it. . . . You can retire from active politics, being many-sided, but unfortunately we cannot; and I have got to save my Muslim brethren from going to the English fold which means death to them and a great deal of harm to Islam to the

service of which I have devoted my life. . . . I have always liked Srinivasa Iyengar. He is impulsive and open, may be changeable, but he is sincere and good-tempered. Whether his sponsorship of the Madras Resolution was responsible for Panditji's opposition I cannot say. . . . In May last I came for the first time in touch with the All-Parties Conference at Bombay and, you know, in your presence Motilalji and myself differed so strongly. . . . Over this reservation of Muslim seats question he gave out strong views and we had equally strong views on that subject. You were in agreement with Motilalji and wanted the reservation to go both in the case of majority and minority provinces. . . . The Working Committee of the Congress discussed this question for three days and the majority did not want the Madras Resolution to be reopened. There was great fear of the collapse of the All-Parties Conference and to overcome the deadlock you had suggested the formation of this committee to draft the constitution in the *spirit of the Madras Resolution.* Panditji asked you to give the names of the members also and you suggested four names— Dr. Ansari, Pandit Motilal Nehru, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Mr. Aney. On this Dr. Ansari said that personally he had always been opposed to the reservation of seats but the general Muslim public did not agree with him on this point. He would not be able to find time to work on this committee. . . . Mrs. Naidu and I suggested Shuaib's name in place of Dr. Ansari who could not work on the committee; but you said, "No, not Shuaib", which rather surprised me and I said, "Why not, Sir? There must be someone to represent the Muslim point of view and Shuaib will be the best person." You said in reply that he would not work and give time or some such words; and when we assured you that he would work, you withdrew your objection, and Shuaib's name was added and also, I believe, Subhas Bose's. It is this incident that I have mentioned in the statement which I issued at Delhi on the 4th September on my return from Lucknow Conference. You yourself say in your letter of the 24th referring to this incident, "I do not even remember what I said about him and others." I never said in my statement that you *made every effort to keep Shuaib out.* I only gave the true picture of that scene and said that you objected to Shuaib's name which was proposed but afterwards agreed saying that if Shuaib promises to work I have no further objection. That is all that I have said about you. I did say then and say it now also that the original committee of four as proposed by you—Ansari, Motilal, Jawaharlal and Aney—was composed of men who did not want Muslim reservation of seats, but at the open meeting of the All-Parties Conference, I was surprised that other names were added to the committee, i.e., Sir Ali Imam, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Mr. Jayakar, Mr. Joshi, Sardar Mangal Singh, so that Shuaib's alone, and possibly Subhas Bose were the only members who could put forward the Muslim point of view, the views of the others being against the reservation of seats.

I am afraid you have been out of touch with all that is going on in this connection. You saw my English letter to Dr. Ansari, but you did pot see the reply he issued after reading my statement of the 4th September in *Hamdard* and to which this

letter was a rejoinder. Naturally you would not like two brothers Dr. Ansari and myself fighting over anything. . . . My quarrel really is not with Ansari but with Pandit Motilal, who knowing that I was giving expression to the views of millions of Mussalmans, yet would not listen. . . . It was a big task before us to make them accept Joint Electorates which, I think, in itself was a very great gain. . . .

I am sorry to write this letter to you. . . . Ansari is a gentleman and an honest man and I love him; but he is not strong. . . .

. . . It matters little if any action of mine annoys you today or any action of yours makes me angry. We have fought together side by side and will carry the wounds we earned together to our graves. They are a link between us, but I beg you not to ignore the warning I give you. We cannot allow things to drift because that way lies danger and that terribly ugly thing called civil war which means a brother killing a brother. I must stop it in my own way and I beg you to do the same in your way. . . .

Yours in great sorrow,

SHAUKAT ALI

From a photostat: S.N. 13710

1. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

January 16, 1929

MIRABEHN
CARE KHADI BHANDAR
MUZAFFARPUR

WROTE FULLY YESTERDAY[1]. NOT LEAVING TILL THIRTYFIRST. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5331. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9386

2. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Wednesday [On or before *January 16, 1929*][2]

CHI. NARANDAS,

You seem to have been hurt. I would have been happy to respect your wishes in regard to Chi. Santok[3], but I did not approve of your plan. For the manner of living of the mother and the daughters is so expensive that they would always have been a cause of discontent in the Ashram. Santok never liked the common kitchen, nor the inmates of the Ashram.

About the khadi training section, I have already stated my view that neither suggestions can be supported. I see nothing wrong in the view that the Ashram and not an individual should have the agency. I shall decide finally on the 18th at the latest. I want you to take interest in all activities and participate in them. Trust Chhaganlal. He is a sincere and hard-working man. Do not mind his errors, but consider his motive.

About Sannabhai, I have simply said that Chhaganlal Joshi's decision should be final. For no one of whom the secretary does not approve should remain.

[1] Presumably a slip for "day before yesterday"; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", January 1[4], 1929.

[2] Year inferred from the allusion to the problem of Santok; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", December 19, 1928. As Gandhiji asked Narandas to see him on the 18th, the date of this letter could be fixed on the preceding Wednesday which was 16th January.

[3] Widow of Maganlal Gandhi.

You may write to me anything you wish to. If you can come over for the 18th, do so. If you think that both of you should come, do that. If you do not, I shall reach the decision which seems best to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–9: Shri Narandas Gandhine—Part I, p. [4]7

3. AMERICAN PATRIOTISM

Sjt. C. V. Rangam Chetty writes:

> Rev. . . . is the head of the American Mission Schools at . . . He deputed Mr. . . . , who was an Indian teacher in the Mission School at . . . and who knows mechanism, to go to . . . and bring materials for his motor-car. Mr. . . . purchased German material which is cheaper and better than the American. Rev. . . . refused to touch it and said that he would not like to pay his money so far as possible to any nation except America. Mr. . . then sold the material to a Brahmin gentleman at . . . and purchased American material. Mr. . . . who was indifferent to my repeated requests to wear khaddar has now come forward to confess his folly and has resolved to wear khaddar in future after this incident. I hope our educated and rich countrymen will take a lesson from the American and set an example to others.

I have purposely omitted names and places as they are not germane to my theme. The point is quite clear. Whether the Reverend gentleman referred to did not overstep the limit of patriotism is not the point to be examined. The lesson Sjt. Rangam Chetty wishes to draw from the incident is quite legitimate. We, in our country, are in honour bound to prefer handspun khaddar to foreign cloth, no matter how inconvenient it may be to us. It is flimsy philosophy that teaches us to go to the cheapest market irrespective of what happens therethrough to our next-door neighbours. Free donations of fine wheat from Australia or America will be poison to us, if that meant a workless India with her soil growing weeds instead of golden grain. Similarly a free gift of cloth from Manchester would be too costly a bargain for India to accept. I repeat, therefore, that khaddar is cheap at any price so long as it serves to utilize the idle hours of the nation and there is nothing else immediately in view to occupy them as usefully.

Young India, 17-1-1929

4. THEN AND NOW

Some critics of the constructive resolution[1] passed by the Congress think that it is something new sprung by me upon a Congress that was eager for a vigorous, forward policy. In the first place I claim no originality for my resolution, for, it closely follows the presidential address. In the second, it is identical with the now much lauded programme of 1920-21,[2] with certain desirable addi-tions. In 1921, as now, we had prohibition with picketing, we had kha-ddar and boycott of foreign cloth with the burning demonstrati-ons and we had untouchability campaign and Hindu-Muslim unity. The present programme adds the amelioration of the status ofwomen and removal of kindred social abuses. It also adds village reconstru-ction and organization of city labour—surely, items that must find place in any constructive programme for the attainment of swaraj.

Is there not excitement enough in the programme, if Congressmen are serious about it? Picketing of liquor shops, foreign cloth shops and collection and burning of foreign cloth are exciting enough for any worker and are enough to evoke all the resource fulness that the best workers may be capable of.

What, indeed, we have not in my resolution of the programme of 1920-21 is the boycott of legislatures, law-courts and educational institutions and titles. Nothing would please me better than to find these institutions that sustain the Government abandoned by the nation or at least Congressmen. I know that then we should have swaraj and, what is perhaps more, we should have less corruption in the Congress than we now have. But that time is not yet. Congressmen assist legislatures, law-courts and schools as much as any other, and perhaps during this year when the Congress works for the attainment of a constitution in accordance with the Nehru Report it must function through the legislatures. In any event one year is not too much even for the most impatient independencewallah to organize for the quadruple boycott assuming, of course, that the Nehru Report status is not attained during the twelve months. And if we are serious about

[1] V*ide* "Speech on Constructive Programme, Calcutta Congress", January 1, 1929.

[2] V*ide* Appendix "Congress Resolution on Non-Cooperation", December 30, 1920.

complete severance of British connection, we shall, when the year is over, certainly cease to patronize the very institutions that are the emblems of British power and instruments for holding us under subjection.

And is the present programme quite so tame as it is made to appear? Was the picketing of liquor traps a tame affair? Let Dr. Kanuga and his band of volunteers who were assaulted by angry liquor dealers and their myrmidons answer. Let the hundreds of the prisoners in Assam answer who were mercilessly clapped into the Assam jails because they had the audacity to picket opium dens. Was the burning of foreign cloth a tame affair? Let Sarojini Devi who gave her very beautiful costly foreign scarf and many girls who gave up their rich foreign silks and other fineries they had learnt to treasure answer. There is nothing to prevent Congressmen now from picketing liquor traps or opium dens or from collecting and burning foreign cloth. Apart from the great social and economic value of these two very powerful items they have a political value of the very first order. If we achieve boycott of foreign cloth we remove from Britain's path the greatest incentive to greed, and if we stop the liquor and drug revenue, we force the rulers to reduce the ever-growing military expenditure. These two things so easy to accomp-lish, so well suited to employ the energy of a vast mass of people, I hold, will go a long way towards the fulfilment of the national purpose, if we can but accomplish them.

I claim that the programme is so catholic as to satisfy all tastes and to occupy the whole nation. If we are many workers, we can take up all the items at once, if we are few, we may take up one item at a time.

There is, I admit, one important condition necessary to make the programme palatable, and that is, a living belief in non-violence for the establishment of swaraj or Dominion Status or Independence, whichever the name we may give to our object. It is not difficult to think out a programme that would immediately precipitate violence. That however is beyond my ken or capacity.

Young India, 17-1-1929

5. NOTES

REPORTED THREAT

It is reported that the Government propose to take legal proceedings against those who strive for complete independence carrying severance of British connection with it. It has further been suggested that organizations working for complete independence should be suppressed. I am not aware of any law enabling the Government to punish the active advocacy of independence. I wish the Gov-ernment would take steps against the promoters of independence. It will clear the political atmosphere and show what the Government mean by Dominion Status. If it does not carry with it the power to sever connection with the British, it is a form of bondage be it so mild. An India, impatient of servitude and waiting to come to her own, will never be content with any form of bondage. No national assembly can possibly be permitted to be the custodian of national honour, if it does not strive for the best that the nation is entitled to. Any move on the part of the Government, therefore against the propaganda of independence *cum* severance of British connection will precipitate the issue and undoubtedly give added strength to the severance movement. As I have already remarked, we must have the power to sever the connection even though we may never exercise that power. Whether we should and would exercise that power or not will depend wholly upon how British rulers behave towards us during these critical times. The school of severance must have the fullest liberty to vow and carry on its propaganda unhampered by any Governmental act, direct or indirect, open or secret. The only honourable way to prevent the school from growing is to make the connection worthwhile for us to retain. That can only be whenthe imperialistic spirit, the spirit of exploitation is killed and partnership on absolutely equal terms offered in the place of present bondage.

GUJARAT VIDYAPITH[1]

This National Institution held its seventh convocation on 11th instant. Acharya Ramadeva delivered the convocation speech in the place of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel who could not attend, but who sent his blessings and a spirited message reminding the graduates that their

[1] An article on this subject appeared in *Navajivan*, 20-1-1929.

education had only just begun. Acharya Ramadeva's was an impassioned address to show that the British educational system was devised to manufacture clerks, not statesmen, to make students 'black Englishmen' according to Macaulay, but not better Indians. He had no difficulty in showing that the foreign method, grafted by foreigners on the Indian, had resulted in terrible increase of illiteracy.

The Registrar's report which was a businesslike document showed that the Vidyapith was still doing pruning work and strengthening its foundation. Nevertheless it was able to show a literary output of no mean order in the shape of text books and research work done by the Puratatva Mandir with whose activity were identified scholars like Muni Jinvijayaji and Prof. Dharmananda Kosambi and Pandit Sukhlalji. The Vidyapith hopes inside of three months to furnish the Gujaratis with an authorized spelling dictionary, a want that is being increasingly felt. Great stress is being laid upon manual training which is superstitiously believed to interfere with the development of the intellect.

The occasion was utilized by the graduates to present Acharya Kripalani with the khadi purse which the students had intended to collect and present to their popular Principal when he retired last year. The purse contained over Rs. 6,000. Acharya Kripalani in thanking the students for their purse reiterated his promise to visit Gujarat from time to time and by citing his experience of the solid work being done by the old students among untouchables and Raniparaj showed that the Vidyapith had more than justified its existence. Whilst he was proud of all the menial labour that these workers were doing with zest, he warned them against neglecting brainwork after leaving college. He added that the marvellous work done by the Sardar of Bardoli could not have been done, if he had not combined great brain capacity with rare courage and equally rare powers of endurance.

The 'old boys' had their own function over which Sjt. Kishorelal Mashruwala presided. His thoughtful address reminded the students of their serious responsibility and enjoined upon them the necessity of becoming true soldiers of swaraj.

I must not omit to notice the work being done by the students among the untouchables in the shape of night schools in the villages round Ahmedabad. Through these night schools they are dealing with social evils, the drink curse and giving medical relief. All honour to the boys who are thus patiently building brick by brick the swaraj structure.

Sjt. Jairamdas and other Sind friends pressed me whilst I was in Calcutta to go to Sind for the Lalaji Memorial collection. I could not resist the temptation. Though being pledged to tour for khadi I could not go to many places for this collection, I would not refuse the sporting offer from Sind. The collections for the Lalaji Memorial are creeping in, not pouring as they should have. It would be a shame if the five lacs are not forthcoming within a reasonable time. The donors have no excuse now for delaying, as they know exactly the purpose to which the collections are to be devoted. I am hoping therefore that the response from Sind will be generous enough to serve as guide to the other provinces.

Nor must Sind forget khadi. My visit to Sind has, I know, been long overdue. Khadi lovers have been inviting me ever since my release from Yeravda to visit Sind for khadi propaganda and collections. Let them now prepare their offering for *Daridra narayana*. And I expect the silk-bedecked Sindhi ladies to think of their poor sisters as also to render me an account of their connection with the evil custom of *deti-leti*. Many of them promised to exert themselves to do away with it root and branch. I hope that they will prove as good as their word.

Young India, 17-1-1929

6. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

January 17, 1929

MIRABEHN
CARE KHADI BHANDAR
MUZAFFARPUR

NO ANXIETY. HOT WATER BOTTLE ABDOMEN. MAY TAKE FOUR OUNCES BOILING RICE WATER PREPARED FROM HALF OUNCE UNBOILED RICE DAILY. SUN BATH ADVISABLE. REPORT DAILY PROGRESS. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 5332. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G. N. 9387

7. LETTER T0 ZAFAR-UL-MULK

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 17, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have kept the letter you left in Calcutta all this time. I was sorry indeed that I was silent when you came. I had not thought of the silence when I asked you to come again. I was none the less sorry than you were that we could not talk. Do please write to me whatever you want to say and if you get the time do come and pass a few days when I am at the Ashram. At the present moment I am preparing to go to Sind.

Yours sincerely,

ZAFAR-UL-MULK, ESQ.
LUCKNOW

From a microfilm: S.N. 14986

8. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 17, 1929

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

I have your letter[1]. About the tour in the U.P. I have written to you already.[2] I write this about Kripalani. Jamnalalji tells me that you want Kripalani to take up organization under you, that is to say, to take up the work that Sitla Sahai was doing and add to it as much as he can. Your letter under reply does not quite give me that impression. Kripalani himself, I understand, has written to you already, because on the strength of Jamnalalji's letter, I had begun to talk to him before receipt of your letter and so had Shankerlal. You will now write to me therefore what you exactly intend in this matter.

If I do not tour in the U.P. in the near future and if you can come over to Sabarmati even for a day or two, we can discuss many things. I utterly distrust doctors' reports about Kamala whether they

[1] Dated January 12, 1929 (S.N. 15277)
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", January 12, 1929.

are favourable or unfavourable. I wish you and Father and Kamala will make up your minds for her to take the natural treatment, that means Kuhne's bath and sun baths. Sun baths are now in vogue even amongst the medical profession and very extraordinary results are claimed for them.

You will telegraph if necessary about Kripalani.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1929. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library; also S. N. 15276

9. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 17, 1929

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have both your letters[1]. No apology whatsoever is necessary for taking me to Calcutta. Of course I had never expected to have to take such an active part in the deliberations as circumstances forced me to take. But it was as well. I was quite happy over it and it gave me an insight into the present working of the Congress organization which I certainly did not possess. And after all, we have to battle both within and without.

The big Darbhanga case is a very heavy responsibility and it must take up a great deal of your time which would otherwise have been available for the constructive programme. Nevertheless, I am glad you have this case and if it relieves you of all financial burdens, it will be possible for you then to give much more time to public work and that without a load of anxiety behind you.

Now as to the second letter. If I am to finish the European programme, I may not put off the visit till May and I dare not keep the many friends who have invited me in a state of suspense up to the very time of my sailing. And if I go at all I have to go to Germany, Austria, Russia, possibly Poland, France, England and I would like to add Italy, Turkey and Egypt though I have no invitations as yet from the last three places. There are also pressing invitations from America

[1] Dated January 12,1929 (S.N. 15279) and January 1[4], 1929 (S.N. 15280)

to include America if I go to Europe. All these things I must settle now or not at all. And your letter leads me to think that I must not think of undertaking the European tour this year at all. The next will take care of itself. Subject therefore to your reply, I propose to announce cancellation of the tour and make no promise for next year.

I have been asked to draw up a scheme for boycott of foreign cloth.[1] I hope to do so in a day or two, unless I can be ready to send it even with this letter.

About the Lalaji Memorial Fund I personally do not think it is necessary for you to sign the local appeal. Let the local people make vigorous collections if they will. Purushottamdas Tandon is now taking charge of the affairs of the Society and that ought to inspire confidence.

If I do not go to Europe, I would gladly include the U.P. in my tour programme, when I would like you to join me at least in some places.

It is quite like Jawahar that he should give up smoking, a fine preparation to face Hailey[2]. I do not know that Hailey will lay his hands upon Jawahar quite so easily as you think.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 15281

[1] *Vide* "Scheme for Boycott of Foreign Cloth Through Khadi", 24-1-1929.

[2] Sir Malcolm Hailey, the then Governor of U.P.

10. LETTER TO NIRANJAN SINGH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 17, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Your idea commends itself to me and you are at liberty to translate my other works. I hope that all your translations will be full and not of parts of the books you may translate. I am obliged to write this because some translators have taken such liberty with my writings and that too in a manner so as to give almost different meaning to them.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. NIRANJAN SINGH
PROFESSOR OF CHEMISTRY
KHALSA COLLEGE
AMRITSAR

From a microfilm: S.N. 15289

11. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 17, 1929

DEAR MR. ANSARI,

I have your letter. I hope you have now got rid of your influenza. It was a marvel to me how some of us could get through the terrific strain of the work in Calcutta without coming to grief. I often exclaimed to myself, 'God is great'!

What you tell me about the Muslim Conference[1] in Delhi makes distressful reading. We have to live it down. And if we will but keep our heads cool, retain our patience in spite of irritation and not swerve from what we may consider to be the true path, I know that all will be well in the end.

I was able to see Dr. Zakir[2] when I passed through Delhi. He was with me the whole time. I agree with you that a bulk of the collections

[1] Presumably the Muslim All-Parties Conference held under the presidentship of the Aga Khan, on December 31, 1928 and January 1, 1929

[2] Dr. Zakir Husain (1897-1969), third President of India

of the Ajmal Fund should be transferred to the Jamia so as to relieve Dr. Zakir of anxiety at least to a certain extent. I shall be writing to Jamnalalji or perhaps he will be coming here. I do not leave for Sind before the 31st instant and I have asked Jamnalalji before he goes to Madras to come to Sabarmati even if it is for a day. He may be here any time this week. If he does not come, I shall write to him.

I hope that you are still working over the Hindu-Muslim question.

I note what you say about the Lalaji's Society and I agree with you entirely that, if there are members in it with a communal bias, it should be purged of that then. I shall be writing to the Secretary as also to Purushottamdas Tandon.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 15287

12. LETTER TO JAGANNATH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 17, 1929

DEAR LALA JAGANNATH,

This is what Dr. Ansari writes in his letter[1] to me signifying his assent to the notice about the Memorial which I sent to him[2] and which referred to the allocation of the Fund for the Society. I would like you to put Dr. Ansari at ease altogether on this score. Please show this letter to Purushottamdas Tandon and it will be better perhaps for him to write to Dr. Ansari. If there is any member whom you think Dr. Ansari has in view, he should also write.

The Sind programme, of which I wrote to you the other day, stands and I leave here on the 31st instant.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure: Extract from Dr. Ansari's letter

From a photostat: S.N. 15290

[1] Dated January 10, 1929, which read: "I have heard from some very reliable workers in the Punjab that some of the members in charge of the Servants of the People Society have shown a distinct bias towards communalism. I hope this taint would be soon removed from a body which is primarily intended to serve the people and the country at large."

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. M. A. Ansari", January 6, 1929.

13. LETTER TO MRS. GIDWANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 17, 1929

I have your letter. Why do you write to me in English? Surely you know Hindi well. You know Gujarati also. But if you could not write in Gujarati or in Hindi, you might have written even in Sindhi and I would have got someone to decipher it for me. After all Sindhi is written in the Persian script. However, you will have to render an account of these things when I come to Karachi.

Of course, I should like to be with you whilst I am in Karachi. But I shan't go to Sind as a free agent. I shall be in the custody of the Reception Committee of each place. So you must manage the Reception Committee in Karachi.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. GIDWANI
6 QUEENS ROAD, KARACHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15291

14. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 17, 1929

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

What is the truth about Mukerjee's claim[1] about the tent? I enquired of Rengaswami and he thinks that his claim is well made. If it is so, should not the Reception Committee make amends for its inability to carry out the contract?

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure 1

DR. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY
36 WELLINGTON STREET, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 15292

[1] A. N. Mukerjee, a tent manufacturer, had referred in his letter dated December 1[4], 1928 to an agreement dated July 7, 1926 signed between himself and the General Secretary of the All-India Congress Committee, A. Rengaswami Iyengar (S.N. 13798).

15. LETTER TO THE SECRETARY, ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 17, 1929

THE SECRETARY
A. I. S. A.
AHMEDABAD

DEAR SIR,

With reference to the matters referred to me for opinion regarding the constitution of the A.I.S.A., I am of opinion that no one is entitled to be enlisted as voter for the election of members of the Council who has not been a paid-up member of the 'A' class for full two years at the time of the preparation of the voters' list and, secondly, no one can be nominated as candidate for election who is not at the date of such nomination a fully-paid member of the 'A' class.

Yours faithfully,

From a microfilm: S.N. 15293

16. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 17, 1929

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. I had your telegram also about your daughter. I did not quite understand the significance of one sari. Therefore I sent you nothing. I read the telegram to either Kripalani or Choithram whoever was by me and he also could not understand it and could not believe that you could have done with one sari only. And now I see that you have not. Why was the expense of Rs. 700 incurred? The thing is finished, but I would like to know.

With reference to yourself, you may make your own choice either to remain there whilst I am in Sind or come here as soon as you are free, in which case you will be with me for about a week. This letter will be in your hands before the 20th instant. Supposing that you are relieved on the 20th and you leave immediately, you will be

able to reach Sabarmati on the 21st and from the 21st to the 30th you will be in the Ashram during my presence. 31st does not count because I have to leave Sabarmati on the morning.

Of course, I shall give you a room all to yourself. I quite recognize that you will want a separate room for yourself.

Yours sincerely

BAPU

SJT. N. R. MALKANI
CENTRAL FLOOD RELIEF COMMITTEE, HYDERABAD

From a photostat: G.N. 891

17. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January[*18*,][1] *1929*

CHI. MIRA,

I return the charts prepared by you. They are quite all right I have made two corrections which you will note. And I see no harm in the reference to swaraj. With more figures graphically given, the charts can be made to be more telling. I hope the figures about the daily income for various countries are accurate. In all your chart you will insist upon absolute accuracy and as few words as possible.

I don't think that it is necessary to publish them in English also in Bihar. English may be necessary for some in the South, but never in the North. However, you will decide in consultation with the local people.

I sent you a wire[2] in reply to yours though I had written to you already that I was not leaving till 31st instant and that the detailed programme would be sent to you later.

You should shake off the cold by vigorous walking. And Why need you wait for milk? Prepare hot water and drink it with or without lemon, and you will get temporary warmth. The rest you get by walking even if it be for 15 minutes.

[1] The letter carries the date January 17, 1929. From the last paragraph, however, it is evident that it was concluded the following day.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Mirabehn", January 16, 1929.

This was dictated last night. Now I have your wire about your illness. Never mind. You will soon be well. I have wired full instructions yesterday.[1] You will have two cards weekly about my health and a wire if I am ill.

God be with you.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5333. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G. N. 9388

18. LETTER TO HAROLD F. BING

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 18, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your letter, but I am able to reach it only today. I see that the date you have given me for my message[2] to reach is the 15th instant, and I am dictating this on the 18th. I am therefore writing to express to you my regret that I was unable to send you the message.

Yours sincerely,

HAROLD F. BING ESQ.
ORGANIZING SECRETARY
THE BRITISH FEDERATION OF YOUTH
LONDON W.C. I.

From a photostat: S.N. 14988

19. LETTER TO RICHARD B. GREGG

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 18, 1929

I have been receiving your letters regularly. But I have not hitherto written to you as I was waiting for your reaching New York before I commenced writing. This is to tell you that the preparations are now being made to print your scientific handbook or whatever it should be called. I have not fixed upon the name by which it will be

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Mirabehn", January 17, 1929.

[2] For a special issue of *Youth* devoted to the subject of Indian Youth and Indian problems (S.N. 15085)

called. I am ashamed to confess to you that I have not yet finished reading the book. But the publication has been decided upon and as it has been decided upon, I am trying to finish reading it quickly.

I am now again trying my milkless experiment, confining myself to almond milk, tomatoes, some other vegetable and bread that has become the principal diet. You will therefore send me all the latest information about diet.

Mirabehn is in Bihar organizing self-carding in the Bihar villages.

We have at the Mandir at the present moment many European guests. Two Danish sisters have been here for some days now and three friends came today, two men and one woman. Common kitchen is making steady progress.

Yours sincerely,

RICHARD B. GREGG, ESQ.
40 OLD ORCHARD ROAD
CHESTNUT HILL, MASS, U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N. 15143

20. LETTER TO FRANCISCA AND FREDERIC STANDENATH[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 18, 1929

I have your letters and I know from your letters to others also how you feel the separation from the Ashram. I want you however to compose yourselves and go on steadily with your mission.

I am quite well even after the Calcutta strain and I am now going on with my experiment in milkless diet confining myself to almond milk, tomatoes, another vegetable and bread. Up to now there has been no difficulty.

Mirabehn is doing charkha work in Bihar. The others are getting on well. At present we have many European guests in the Ashram. I must not try to write more. I am afraid that, owing to the

[1] In reply to a number of letters written by Mr. and Mrs. Standenath during their return journey to Europe

new developments at the Congress, I may not be able to visit Europe this year. I shall know more definitely next week.

Yours sincerely,

SAVITRI[1]

FREDERIC STANDENATH

From a photostat: S.N. 151[44]

21. LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 18, 1929

DEAR BROTHER,

I have your note. I await your promised letter. But I still more eagerly await your promised visits.

I have the invitation, but I am afraid I won't be able to attend.

Mahadev is in Bardoli, helping Vallabhbhai about the Inquiry[2].

Yours sincerely

MAULANA SHAUKAT ALI

THE CENTRAL KHILAFAT COMMITTEE

THE SULTAN MANSION, DONGRI, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S. N. 15285

22. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

January 19, 1929

MIRABAI

CARE KHADIBHANDAR

MUZAFFARPUR

YOUR WIRE. SUBJECT RAJENDRABABU'S ADVICE SUGGEST TRANSFER NEAREST WARM PLACE. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 533[4]. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G. N. 9389

[1] Name given to Francisca by Gandhiji; Frederic Standenath was called Satyavan by him.

[2] About the assessment of land revenue in the Bardoli taluk; *vide* "Evil Genius of Government", 22-7-1928.

23. LETTER TO SHANKARAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 19, 1929

MY DEAR SHANKARAN,

I have your letter. I am forwarding it to Mathuradas. I want you to talk to him and you may go as soon as you are disengaged. On no account will you leave abruptly. Mathuradas will give you what you need. You ought not to have kept this thing from me for such a long time. I expect you to return as early as you can. And don't spend more than is absolutely necessary.

Your sincerely,

SJT. SHANKARAN
EVERGREEN, MATHERAN

From a microfilm: S.N. 1[4]985

24. LETTER TO DEWAN OF TRAVANCORE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 19, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

Correspondents from Travancore continue to write to me about the use by the so-called untouchables of roads surrounding the Suchindram temple. I was led to expect when I was in Travancore[1] that the roads would be thrown open to them within a short time. Considerable time has now elapsed and nothing apparently has been done. May I know whether there is any likelihood of these roads being thrown open to the so-called untouchables in the near future?

Yours sincerely,

THE DEWAN OF TRAVANCORE
TRIVANDRUM

From a microfilm: S.N. 15296

[1] In October, 1927

25. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Saturday, January 19, 1929

BHAI MAMA,

I got your letter and that of Maneklal Gandhi. I approve of Jaishukhlal Mehta's name. We can add Lakshmidas's. But it would be good if Jaishukhlal joins. I cannot think of any other name.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3823

26. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 19, 1929

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I enclose Shankaran's letter.[1] It does not appear that he has spoken to you. Can you spare him for a month or two? If you can spare him, and if you need a substitute, would you like someone of your choice to be sent from here, or would anyone I can send do? If Shankaran goes, give him the money he is asking for. I shall ask Revashankarbhai[2] to reimburse the amount by draft.

Chhotalal has given me news about the health of all of you. My visit to Europe is likely to be put off even this year.[3]

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] For Gandhiji's reply to Shankaran, *vide* "Letter to Shankaran", January 19, 1929.

[2] Revashankar Jhaveri

[3] For Gandhiji's decision to postpone the European tour, *vide* "My Apologies", 31-1-1929.

27. "PRAN JAAYI ARU VACHAN NA JAAYI"[1]

Tulsidas has put this vow in Ramachandra's mouth. Indian tradition abounds in examples where one's pledge is held as dear as one's life. I hope the students of Gujarat College will add another example by keeping their pledge. The conditions on which the Principal would permit them to study do not enhance his prestige nor do they ennoble the students if they agree to them. In this there is an attempt to get a confession from the students as if they had committed an error instead of the Principal admitting his own. The students deserve congratulations on not agreeing to such conditions. It was their dharma not to agree to conditions. They will be considered truly educated if they keep their pledge till the end. And they will be regarded as having made a great contribution towards taking the country forward. One need not doubt that such action by the students will have far-reaching consequences. The students' victory does not consist in their returning to the college somehow, but in observing their pledge till their last breath. If they thus learn the first lesson of honouring their pledge, they will in future be able to serve the country well, because they will have greater self-confidence. Moreover, to one who has cultivated self-confidence, everything else in this world becomes easy.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-1-1929

28. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

[*January 20, 1929*][2]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your letter. It is good that you left Wardha. You have not disobeyed. Come here whenever you feel like doing so. Keep yourself in good health and keep your mind free from worry. My programme of leaving for Sind on the 31st stands.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 50[4]. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

[1] "One's life one may give up but not one's pledge."

[2] From the postmark

29. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

January 20, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

No news from you today by wire. These mishaps will happen. I wired[1] you yesterday advising removal to a warmer place. I wired[2] too to Rajendrababu suggesting that, if he thought it necessary, you should return to the Ashram for the time being. I know that you are quite safe. You won't be nervous over the illness. It is a mild attack of dysentery. Milk and fruit juices is the thing. But if the doctor prohibits fruit juices, it does not matter for the time being. You must keep warm and have an abdominal bandage if necessary.

There is no wire today as it is Sunday I suppose. Tomorrow I expect a wire without fail.

Love.

BAPU

[PS]

I am well. No increase in weight. This week, a decrease of 1 lb. But it is nothing.

From the original: C.W. 5335. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9390

30. LETTER TO ANNE MARIE PETERSEN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 20, 1929

MY DEAR MARIA,

I was delighted to receive your letter after such a long absence. It is not at all certain that I have launched on active politics. I do not know what part I have to play during the year. The next month will perhaps decide.

You are needlessly anxious about my dietetic experiment. Believe me that experiment too is under God's guidance as I understand it.

You are quite right about the time-limit. Let us see what is in

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Mirabehn", Januery 19, 1929.

[2] This telegram is not traceable.

store for us at the end of the year.

I am sorry that Esther is not yet quite restored. I knew about the operation for her appendicitis. Menon was expected to do no less than what he has been doing. However, I am glad that he has come up to the expectation.

You have surmised well about the European visit. In 10 days I shall know definitely whether I am to go to Europe or not. But you are quite right. It would be only as a representative of free India that I should go to Europe. But here too God's will be done.

The Danish sisters are here. They have been here for the last 4 or 5 days. They are passing a week here at the Ashram.

Yours sincerely,

MISS MARIE PETERSEN
NATIONAL CHRISTIAN GIRLS SCHOOL
PORTO NOVO (S. INDIA)

From a photostat: S.N, 151[4]1

31. LETTER TO P. C. GHOSH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 20, 1929

DEAR PROFULLABABU,

I have your letter[1]. I am sorry to know that you were ill. I am not yet sure what part I shall have to play during this year in connection with the Congress programme. I am supposed to advise the Working Committee in connection with the foreign cloth boycott and I am preparing a scheme[2]. I am in correspondence with Pandit Motilalji. If I have to do anything, naturally I expect you to play your part in it. I know that you will realize the expectations I have of you.

Yours sincerely,

DR. PROFULLA GHOSH
ABHOY ASHRAM, COMILLA

From a photostat: S.N. 15283

[1] The addressee wanted to know the definite programme of work for 1929 and 1930 (S.N. 15282).

[2] *Vide* "Scheme for Boycott of Foreign Cloth through Khadi", 2[4]-1-1929.

32. LETTER TO DR. SATYAPAL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 20, 1929

DEAR DR. SATYAPAL,

I have your letter. Do tell me all you want to.

I wish that I could tour in the Punjab. But my programme for the year is still very uncertain. I am in correspondence with Pandit Motilalji. I hope I shall be able to decide before the end of this month.

The first thing you should tackle is to put the Congress organization in order.

Yours sincerely,

DR. SATYAPAL
[4]2 NISBET ROAD, LAHORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 15299

33. LETTER TO THE SECRETARY, ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 20, 1929

THE SECRETARY
A. I . S .A. , AHMEDABAD

DEAR SIR,

With reference to your letter No. 1519, dated 18h January, you may have 30th September as the date up to which candidates for election should have paid up their subscriptions. And the candidate for election being a member only of one month's duration, in my opinion, does not matter for the simple reason that one would expect the voters to make the best selection out of candidates nominated.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 15300

34. LETTER TO THE SECRETARY, ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 20, 1929

THE SECRETARY
A. I. S. A., AHMEDABAD

DEAR SIR,

With reference to your letter No. 1517, dated 18th January, enclosing Satisbabu's letter, I like Satisbabu's suggestion. There are, however, practical difficulties in the way of holding an exhibition during the Congress Week. Unless the Congress wants such an exhibition, we may not set up an exhibition in the teeth of Congress opposi--tion. What, however, we can do is to hold an independent all-India exhibitionevery year. And if we can get sufficient workers for the purpose, it can become a striking demonstration. It can draw large crowds and it can be a means of selling off all the surplus stock of khadi without any difficulty. It can become a dignified andeduca-tive effort. Let Satisbabu consider this suggestion. I may however state that, so far as this year's Congress is concerned, I am already in touch with the exhibition. Committee in the Punjab regarding the holding of the exhibition.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 15301

35. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

January 21, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I have your cheering wire today. I hope now progress will be steady. You will not hesitate to return if it becomes necessary. At the same time I do not want you to give in unless the giving in is wisdom.

Mahadev has returned. He will have to go back in a few days. One is thankful for small mercies.

The loss of weight reported yesterday has no significance. Any variation in food tells. But there is no loss of vitality. Weight in this experiment need not be a factor.

Whenever you feel like taking a change in those parts, you could go to Shantiniketan. There are Ambalal's sugar works near Sewan. Rajendrababu knows them. You will be quite welcome there. Anasuyabehn mentioned them on Saturday.

We had five Europeans staying on Saturday. Now we have two Danish ladies. Two more coming on Tuesday. Surendra is off to Dholka.

Did I tell you we had thieves here the other day. They took away pots from my bathroom.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5336. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G. N. 9391

36. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
[*January 22, 1929*][1]

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have your letter. There is no need to order from England the equipment for bee-keeping.

I got the books on chromopathy which you sent. They will serve my purpose. If I decide to go to Rangoon after the 15th February, will any of your ships be available? If I can reach Rangoon from Bombay in six days, it would do for me and I would like the voyage too. I will not take another ship if I can sail by yours. I see that your ships do not sail on fixed dates.

Grandmother must be well now. Tell her that I think of her often.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. [4]792. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

[1] From the postmark

37. LETTER TO V. SURYANARYANAMURTI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 22, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. You may decline to make any statement if you wish to, but you may not tell an untruth.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. V. SURYANARAYANAMURTI
TEACHER, MRS. A. V. COLLEGE, VIZAGAPATAM

From a photostat: S.N. 1[4]880

38. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 22, 1929

I have your letter. You will see from current *Young India* what I have done about the boycott of foreign cloth. You would do some such thing like that. I want you to throw yourself into that work.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
GANDHI ASHRAM, TIRUCHENGODU, S. INDIA

From a photostat: S.N. 1[4]892

[1] The addressee had written: "A certain student in the Medical College poisoned and killed his wife. He is under arrest now. . . . A letter . . . instigating him to murder his wife was brought to me by an aunt of the accused to read it to her. After hearing the contents in it, she destroyed the letter. The police got scent of the letter and examined me in the affair. I told them all that I had read in the letter. Many of the big men now, being interested in the accused, insist upon my not speaking the truth in the court. Kindly . . bless me with your advice in this, my most trying affair . . ." (S.N. 1[4]879).

39. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 22, 1929

DEAR SATISBABU,

I have your letter. The line at the end of your letter is alarming. I wish you, Hemprabhadevi and Tarini would heed Nature's warning. It is false economy to wear yourselves out there. Do go out of Sodepur and give yourselves complete rest. Come here if you can be happy and if the climate will agree or go to Chandranagore. It is a great pity that you cannot exchange with Abhoy Ashram. Why not simply send Tarini there? of course, it is to be done naturally and spontaneously.

I shall await a sample flag from you, as also your opinion about Ram Binod's[1] case. I shall study the figures supplied by you for boarding.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: G.N. 1602

40. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

SABARMATI,
January 22, 1929

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

It is from visitors that I get news about your health. I am writing this with a selfish motive. Bhai Balwantrai Mehta and others also say that the cultivators of Bhavnagar are poorer even than those in British India and in the other States. I have asked him to substantiate this statement. He wants your help for this and I think you can give it. If what he says is true, it should interest you also.

When you reply, please give me news about your health too. When are you likely to come here?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5979

[1] An active political and khaddar worker of Bihar. There were allegations against him about misappropriation of the Congress funds.

41. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 22, 1929

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I have your letter. I received the book you sent. Since I have been constantly travelling, I seem to have sent no acknowledgement. As the book is in the Italian language, I cannot understand it. How can I, therefore, express my views? If you wish, I can send you a letter of acknowledgement in English for him.

Are you keeping well now?

Blessings to both from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6590

42. LETTER TO ANNAYYA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 23, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The letter you mention cannot be managed through the Protector of Immigrants.[1] If you can spend some money on lawyers' fees, I can write to someone in Durban who might be able to do something. But if you have [any] friend or if you know any lawyer in Durban you should write to him directly.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. ANNAYYA
FREE INDIA NO. 39869
OVERSEAS LINE, KIRKEE

From a microfilm: S.N. $1^4$877

[1] The addressee, who owned a piece of land in Natal, had given a General Power of Attorney to Messrs Pather & Co., Durban. asking them to forward to him in India the proceeds, through the Protector of Indian Immigrants. But as they had done nothing in the matter the addressee wrote to Gandhiji seeking his help (S.N. $1^4$876).

43. LETTER TO A. A. PAUL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 23, 1929

MY DEAR RAJAN[1],

I have your letter[2]. I have the book[3] also. I have not yet looked at it.

I must hasten to reply to your letter regarding the proposed visit to Europe. I must confess to you that Dr. Atkinson[4] did not create much impression upon me and, in any case, I do not think that you need go to Europe and the good it may do is problematical. The harm that must result from the misconception that is bound to arise will be a certainty. I am therefore decidedly of opinion that, irresp-ective of the impression left upon mind by Dr. Atkinson's visit, an impression that may be totally unjustified my opinion is that you should not go.

Yours sincerely,

A. A. PAUL, ESQ
'MAITRI', KILPAUK, MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 1[4]8[4]

44. LETTER TO P. A. WADIA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI
January 23, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[5]. Dr. Atkinson did not mention to me that I should join the Committee[6]. It was perhaps because I did not give him much encouragement. For I told him that I did not have much

[1] A. A. Paul, Honorary General Secretary of the Federation of International Fellowships, Madras

[2] Dated January 18, 1929. The addressee informed Gandhiji about his election as a member of the Executive Committee of the Universal Religions Peace Conference and wanted to know his impression of Dr. Atkinson. The letter also said that Prof. P. A. Wadia was elected Vice-President of the conference. *Vide* the following item.

[3] *Attitudes Towards Other Religions* by Rev. Dr. D. J. Fleming

[4] Of the Universal Religions Peace Conference

[5] Dated January 21, 1928 (S.N. 1[4]887)

[6] Central Committee of the Universal Religions Peace Conference for India

faith in conferences, [for] promoting real goodwill and brotherhood, something far more tangible than conferences was necessary. And I must say that, on the whole, Dr. Atkinson did not leave a good impression upon me.

Yours sincerely,

PROFESSOR P. A. WADIA
HORMUZD VILLA, MALABAR HILL, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 14888

45. LETTER TO DR. INDARLAL KAPUR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 23, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You were quite-correct in your surmise that the statements[1] issued by Dr. Ansari, Pandit Malaviyaji and Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla had my approval. I think that subscriptions given for Lalaji Memorial cannot be better used than by being handed over to his Society. Political Sufferers' Fund and the like should stand on their own merits.

Yours sincerely,

DR. INDARLAL KAPUR
WARBURTON, PUNJAB

From a photostat: S.N. 14890

46. LETTER TO DR. PARASHURAM

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 23, 1929

DEAR DR. PARASHURAM,

I am glad you have given me a full letter. I note your restrictions which I shall bear in mind. I shall make careful use of your important letter. It is a terrible business.

Yours sincerely,

DR. PARASHURAM
PUNJAB PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE, LAHORE

From a photostat: S.N. 14894

[1] *Vide* "Appeal for Lajpat Rai Memorial Fund", November 26, 1928 and "Lalaji Memorial", January 10, 1929.

47. LETTER TO GANGADHARRAO B. DESHPANDE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 23, 1929

MY DEAR GANGADHARRAO,

Herewith two letters with copies of my reply. I wish you would not be guided by Rajaji in the matter of this tour, but take the responsibility upon your own shoulders and decide. If I am not taken at express speed, I should be able to go through the programme without the slightest difficulty as I imagine. But I do not know whether I can spare the time. You must therefore definitely say whether you want me and if so, for how long and when. Together with all other circumstances, I shall then be able to decide. I warn you against putting off the Karnatak tour indefinitely.

I still await your letter regarding Pundalik.[1] It is not right to keep me without information about his doings and his victory or otherwise.

How are you keeping in health?

Yours sincerely,

Enclosures 3

From a photostat: S.N. 1[4]895

48. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Saturday, [*March 23, 1929*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have all your letters. I would learn about Andhra Desh on reaching Calcutta. We will reach there tomorrow.

Kusumbehn must have arrived. I am not writing to her separately.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : S. N. 328[4]7

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Gangadharrao Deshpande", January 9, 1929.

[1] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Prabhavati", March 11, 1929, "Letter to Mirabehn", March 23, 1929 and Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", March 2[4], 1929. Gandhiji reached Calcutta on March 2[4], 1929, a Sunday.

49. WHY NOT K. S. ASSOCIATION?

If we have graduates' associations, civil service associations and the like, why not Khadi Service Association or Khadi Sevak Sangha? This service, if it is to succeed, should certainly be the most numerous in the world if not even the most important. It is true that it will never bring the same remuneration as the other services which are only so-called but which are based more or less, perhaps more rather than less, upon exploitation. Khadi Service is a purely philanthropic agency and the servants are merely maintained on the principle that a labourer is worthy of his hire. But in Khadi Service there is a higher satisfaction than that of pecuniary reward. The satisfaction lies in the knowledge that the servant ministers to the needs ofthe neediest, the most helpless and the most numerous class of men in the country.

As this truth is being realized, khadi servants begin also to plan ways and means of consolidating their trust. Hence at the usual weekly meeting of the Khadi Service candidates who are undergoing training at the Udyoga Mandir, late Satyagraha Ashram, the question of forming a Khadi Service Association was seriously discussed and it was resolved to form such an association. To that end I invite all those who have received training at any of the institutions recognized by the All-India Spinners' Association to send to the Secretary, Udyoga Mandir, the following particulars: name in full, present address, age, whether married or single, children if any, where trained for Khadi Service, previous qualifications, present occupation, wages and such other information as may be useful for the proposed Association. An early opportunity will be taken to form a provisional body and frame a provisional constitution. The object of this body should be:

1. to promote contact and co-operation among the men and women belonging to the Service,

2. to encourage them to make researches in khadi work in all its branches,

3. to help the needy members,

4. to attract new members,

5. to hold periodical conferences with a view to compare notes and exchange experiences,

6. to devise methods of making khadi more popular from the Service standpoint.

These are only suggestions thrown out at random. The first step will be to publish a directory of names and addresses of such servants. The number of persons trained at the Ashram to date already comes up to [44]5. There is, no doubt, a large number trained by the other khadi organizations. It will not be therefore an unpretentious directory by any means. In sending names care, I hope, will be taken to send only those who are or were doing khadi work and have received adequate training and who have sought this service as volunteers, i.e., from the strictly philanthropic motive. The desire of the promoters of the idea is to make the proposed association an efficient organization of true servants. Writers will send their suggestions as to the condition of membership, objects, etc.

Young India, 2[4]-1-1929

50. DUTY OF RESISTANCE

The strike of nearly seven hundred students of the Gujarat College which has now gone on for over 20 days is no longer a matter merely of local importance. A labour strike is bad enough, a students' strike is worse whether it is justly declared or unjustly. It is worse because of the consequences it entails in the end and because of the status of the parties. Unlike labourers, students are educated and can have no material interest to serve by means of strikes, and unlike employers, heads of educational institutions have no interest in conflict with that of the students. Students moreover are supposed to be embodiments of discipline. A strike of students therefore produces far-reaching consequences and can only be justified in extraordinary circumstances.

But though occasions for students' strikes in well-ordered schools and colleges must be rare, it is not impossible to conceive such as to warrant strikes on their part. Thus for instance if a principal running counter to public opinion refuses to recognize a day of universal rejoicing as a holiday which both parents and their school or college-going children may desire, students will be justified in declaring a strike for that day. Such occasions will be more frequent in India as the students grow more self-conscious and become more alive to a sense of their responsibility to the nation.

In the case of the Gujarat college I cannot help saying that so far as I have been able to judge, the students have had ample reason

for the strike. It is quite wrong to say, as has been said in some quarters, that the strike has been engineered by a few mischievous students. It is impossible for a handful of mischief-makers to hold together seven hundred boys for over a fortnight. As it is, there are responsible citizens advising and guiding the students. Chief among these is Sjt. Mavlankar, a pleader of experience and known for his wisdom and moderation. He has been in touch with the Principal and is firmly of opinion that the students are absolutely in the right.

The facts can be briefly told. The students absented themselves from college with the rest of the boys all over India on the Simon boycott day. The absence was no doubt unauthorized. The students were technically in the wrong. They should have at least asked for formal permission before they absented themselves, But boys are the same all the world over. One might as well hope to restrain the winds as hope to curb the roused enthusiasm of students. Theirs was at best a youthful indiscretion. This was condoned by the Principal after a great deal of negotiation, the boys being permitted optionally to appear for their terminal examination on a fee of Rs. 3 each, it being understood that the majority would appear and that those who did not would not be in any way punished. The Principal, however, it is alleged, broke his pledge and put up notice making it compulsory for the boys to appear for the terminal examination upon payment of Rs. 3 each. This naturally incensed the boys. They felt: 'if the salt loseth its savour, wherewith shall it be salted?, They therefore struck work. The rest is simple. The strike continues and friends and critics alike certify to the great self-restraint and correct conduct of the boys. In my opinion, students of a college are in duty bound to resist such breach of honour by their Principal as is alleged against the Principal of the Gujarat College. It is impossible to tender to a teacher that unreserved respect to which he is entitled by reason of his honourable calling when he is found to be guilty of breach of honour.

If the students are resolute there can be but one end to the strike, viz., withdrawal of the offending notice and an absolute promise of immunity from any punishment to the students. Indeed the most proper thing would be for the Government to appoint another Principal for the College.

There is in the Government Colleges too much of espionage and persecution of boys holding pronounced political views or taking any part in political gatherings not liked by the Government. It is high

time that this unwarranted interference was stopped. In a country groaning as India is under foreign rule, it is impossible to prevent students from taking part in movements for national freedom. All that can be done is to regulate their enthusiasm so as not to interfere with their studies. They may not become partisans taking sides with warring parties. But they have a right to be left free to hold and actively to advocate what political opinion they choose. The function of educational institutions is to impart education to the boys and girls who choose to join them and therethrough to help to mould their character, never to interfere with their political or other non-moral activities outside the school room.

The question therefore raised by the strike of the Ahmedabad students is of first-rate importance and they deserve the sympathy and support of other scholastic institutions and the public in general. Parents are as much concerned with the strike as school going boys and girls. For the Ahmedabad students have, I understand, acted throughout with the approval of their parents or guardians.

Young India, 24-1-1929

51. NOTES

FOREIGN CLOTH AND KHADI

The Working Committee of the Congress has passed a resolution asking me to frame a scheme for carrying out the Congress programme regarding boycott of foreign cloth through khadi. The scheme[1] as submitted by me to the Secretary is published elsewhere in this issue. I commend it to the careful attention of the reader and invite him to offer suggestions for its improvement. In my opinion boycott of foreign cloth is a comparatively easy thing to accomplish, if Congressmen would concentrate upon the effort with a will. In order to enable them to do so a living faith in khadi is an absolute necessity. If Congressmen still need conversion the scheme cannot be carried out. I warned the Congress delegates as earnestly as I could against passing the resolution if they had no faith in the programme. Notwithstanding the warning they passed the resolution without dissent and without protest. That presupposes faith in khadi. If they have it, the scheme is capable of being worked. Let it be thoroughly

[1] *Vide* the following item.

understood that it is not possible to accomplish the boycott through any other means. Let no one worry about the place of the indigenous mill-cloth in the boycott. This cloth has taken care of itself and will take care of itself. What we need to do is to clothe with khadi those whom we reach. If we speak with two voices, we shall fail in carrying out the boycott. We shall succeed only in inflating the prices of indigenous mill-cloth and in tempting unscrupulous mill-owners to commit frauds upon a gullible public.

Finally I draw the attention of all concerned to my note at the foot of the scheme. No progress in the prosecution of the Congress programme is possible unless the Congress house is put in order and becomes the living structure it was in 1929.

Young India, 2[4]-1-1929

52. SCHEME FOR BOYCOTT OF FOREIGN CLOTH THROUGH KHADI

Congress organizations should call for volunteers to go from door to door in every town and village having a Congress Committee and collect foreign cloth in the possession of the householders and deliver or receive orders for khadi required by such householders.

2. All khadi should bear the stamp of the All-India Spinners' Association and prices should be distinctly marked on them.

3. Voluntary preachers should be called for to popularize the use of khadi and to advocate complete boycott of foreign cloth.

NOTE. Volunteers and preachers should know genuine from spurious khadi.

[4]. Foreign cloth collected should be publicly burnt wherever possible.

5. Foreign cloth dealers should be individually visited with a view to enlisting their help and inducing them to stop further purchase of foreign cloth and to cancel all cancellable orders.

6. Picketing foreign cloth shops may be undertaken wherever possible and where there is no danger of violence being committed by Congress pickets, the latter being reliable and seasoned volunteers.

7. All units should from day to day report to the Central Office details of work done in terms of the foregoing and the latter should circulate to the Press for publication a weekly digest of day-to-day progress.

8. Help and co-operation of all political and other organizations should be solicited in the campaign.

9. Help of patriotic ladies should be enlisted to prosecute the boycott campaign.

10. The All-India Spinners' Association should be asked to furnish the Central Office with a list of places where genuine khadi is available and to open stores where there is a demand for khadi.

11. A small committee called Foreign Cloth Boycott Committee should be formed and entrusted with an initial fund with power to collect more funds. The Committee should be under obligation to publish duly audited statements of income and expenditure every quarter.

12. The Committee proposed in paragraph 11 should publish and distribute broadcast leaflets showing the necessity and possibility of boycott giving full details as to the method of achieving it by individuals.

13. Resolutions should be moved in the provincial legislatures as well as the central calling upon their respective Governments to make all their cloth purchases in khadi irrespective of its so-called costliness. Resolutions should also be moved demanding a prohibitive duty on imports of foreign cloth.

NOTE. The foregoing scheme is based upon the assumption that the Congress Committees all over India will be immediately reorganized and that there will be handsome response to the call for membership and that there will be full co-operation on the part of all Congress Committees in the prosecution of the campaign of boycott of *foreign cloth through khadi*. It is suggested that if these conditions are fulfilled, it is possible to achieve this boycott during the year, at any rate to the extent of making a visible impression upon the imports of foreign cloth.

Young India, 24-1-1929

53. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 24, 1929

MY DEAR SHANTIKUMAR,

I have your letter. I am here till Wednesday. I could therefore see Krishnamurti either on Tuesday or on Wednesday. Thursday morning I leave for Karachi.

Have you any sailing during February from Calcutta or Madras, and if you have, how long does the voyage take from Madras to Rangoon or Calcutta to Rangoon? It may be difficult for me to spare 10 days though I should love it. Please tell me also what ports does your steamer touch[1] between Bombay and Rangoon and how long does it stay at those ports.

You ask me also whether you should enquire about B.I. sailings. Do you mean from Bombay to Rangoon? And if there are sailings from Bombay to Rangoon, is there a regular service and, if there is, what is the duration and what is the fare from Bombay to Rangoon?

Blessings from[2]

BAPU

[PS.]

I am glad to know that Father's operation has been successful.[2]

From the original: C. W. 4793. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

54. LETTER TO G. V. GURJALE [3]

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 24, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I would ask you to correspond with Sjt. C. Rajagopalachariar, (Gandhi Ashram, Tiruchengodu) to whom I have forwarded your letter.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1380

[1] The source has "make".
[2] These lines are in Gujarati.
[3] Later known as Bhikshu Nirmalanand

55. LETTER TO THE SECRETARY, ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 2[4], 1929

THE SECRETARY
A. I. S. A., AHMEDABAD

DEAR SIR,

With reference to your enquiry, it is difficult to say now whether I should be able to give a few days for Utkal tour when I go to Andhra. Where would they want me to go and how much time will they want?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 1329[4]

56. LETTER TO S. K. SARMA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 2[4], 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and your book *Towards Swaraj*. If you are a reader of *Young India*, you must have noticed that *Young India* is not a reviewing paper in any sense of the term, and I have so little time to read the books that friends kindly send me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. K. SARMA
PLEADER, TEPPAKULAM, TRICHINOPOLY

From a microfilm: S.N. 1[4]897

57. LETTER TO KARNAD SADASHIVA RAO

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 24, 1929

MY DEAR SADASHIVA RAO,

Here is the report about the closing of Nileshwar centre. Sjt. Chhotelal himself agrees that it should be closed.

Yours sincerely,

ENCL. 1 IN 5 SHEETS
SJT. KARNAD SADASHIVA RAO
KODAILBAIL, MANGALORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 14898

58. LETTER TO VISHNU CHANDER AGARWAL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 24, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter which I am able to reach only now.

With reference to dramas, it is difficult to give a dogmatic opinion. All I can say is that under proper supervision, it can be made a vehicle for uplifting student life.

With reference to ahimsa, I can only suggest that the very points you have raised have been exhaustively dealt with in the pages of *Young India*.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. VISHNU CHANDER AGARWAL
HEAD MASTER, PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL
P.O. SHAMLI
DISTRICT MUZAFFARNAGAR, U. P.

From a microfilm: S.N. 14899

59. LETTER TO N. V. THADANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 24, 1929

MY DEAR THADANI,

I have your letter[1]. I shall certainly go through the preface as soon as I can and let you have my opinion.

You are quite right in surmising that in Hyderabad I shall have no time left to have a quiet chat with you, though of course I shall have a look at you and it might be possible to steal a few moments.

Yes, I was wondering when you were coming. But now I know the reason and I excuse you. The forgiveness will be doubly earned if your preface promises a discovery after my heart.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. V. THADANI
HIRABAD, HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat: S.N. 14886

60. LETTER TO K. S. KARANTH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 24, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The first case is not a question of *shuddhi* but of reclamation and, if the so-called converts have no sense of Christianity in them, they should be treated as Hindus.

As to your second question: If the girls look grown up, are intelligent enough to understand what they are doing and they cannot be kept long enough without danger of their being given to a life of shame, they should be married.

[1] Dated January 21, 1929; it read: ". . . I spoke to you some years ago at Delhi, after your great fast of twenty-one days [in 1924], about my idea of the *Mahabharata*, and you had said that you would give anything to be sure that it was a philosophical work and not a mere story . . . I am sending you a copy of the Preface, which will indicate the idea of the work; and if you feel interested I should feel happy in sending you a copy of the manuscript . . ." (S.N. 14885).

About the child widow: If a husband can be found who would marry her but who would postpone co-habitation till the girl reaches the proper age, I should see no harm.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. S. KARANTH
VASANTA OFFICE, MANGALORE

From a photostat: S.N. 14896

61. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 24, 1929

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have your telegram. After having written to you, I had almost reconciled myself to abandoning the proposed European tour and, now that you have reconsidered your decision, there is a disinclination on my part to undertake the tour. I feel that if we are to do anything next year,[1] as we ought to, I may not absent myself from India during the year, but should do whatever I can to assist to make the way clear for next year's battle. Having moved the constructive programme resolution[2], I almost feel [it] like running away if there is any work that I can do in the country. If I leave at the end of April, I do not expect to return before the middle of October. If then, that is, if I am to go through the long programme sketched by me in my previous letter[3], more especially if I am to throw in America. The more, therefore, I contemplate the European tour, the more disinclined I feel like facing it this year. Next year, of course, may be out of question. I am, therefore, just now on the horns of a dilemma.

I do not want to tax you any further in the matter and I know that I must now decide for myself. But if anything occurs to you, you will please let me know. I am now conferring with Vallabhbhai, Jamnalalji, Rajagopalachari and others and hope to decide finally in a few days.

[1] The Congress was likely to organize a campaign of non-violent non-co-operation after December 31, 1929. *Vide* pp. 306-10.

[2] *Vide* "Speech on Constructive Programme, Calcutta Congress", January 1, 1929.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Motilal Nehru", January 17, 1929 .

A Danish friend[1], not knowing the inner working of the Congress, grows enthusiastic over our resolutions and says, ''It is no use my going to Europe as a representative from an India in bondage, I should go next year as a representative of an India become free." I wish that we could all share this belief and make an adequate effort to realize it.

Are you doing anything about the Hindu-Muslim question? I am sending Jawahar a copy[2] of my tour programme in Sind for which I leave on the 31st instant.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 1530[4]

62. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 2[4]*, 1929*

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

You will see my letter to Father about the European visit. I would like you to let me have your own opinion on it. It will help me in coming to a decision.

I have your telegram[3] about Kripalani. Jamnalalji and Shankerlal, more especially Jamnalalji, have set their hearts upon Kripalani. They have no faith in Sitla Sahai[4] being able to do much. They think that he has not been able to show himself to advantage during the three years he has been at work in U.P. I am therefore going to confer with Sitla Sahai and see what he has to say. But before I decide anything finally, I would like you to let me have your own view about Sitla Sahai.

Here is a copy of my Sind programme.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

Encl. 1

[1] Anne Marie Petersen; *vide* "Letter to Anne Marie Petersen", January 20, 1929.

[2] *Vide* the following item.

[3] Dated January 21, 1929, which read: "Your letter. Apparently some misappr-ehension. My idea Kripalani undertake thorough investigation, make recommen-dations for reorganization. Meanwhile status quo continuing. But am agreeable to any course you suggest."

[4] Secretary of the U.P. branch of All-India Spinners' Association

[PS.]

After writing this, your letter was received. I have now talked to Sitla Sahai. It is on the whole better for him to resign. As to his future programme I am going to confer with him tonight.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1929. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library; also S.N. 15305

63. LETTER TO DUNCAN GREENLEES

THE ASHRAM SABARMATI,
January 25, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[1] I am not sure where I should be in June; but if you do not mind coming to the Ashram in my absence, you will be welcome and we would try to give you some English classes. You may not know that whilst the climate here is not very trying in June, it is not so cool as Madanapalle. You may not know too that life at the Ashram is very simple I enclose herewith a copy of the rules which all those who live at the Ashram, even for a brief period, are expected to follow during their stay.

Yours sincerely,

DUNCAN GREENLEES, ESQ.
THEOSOPHICAL HIGH SCHOOL
MADANAPALLE, S. INDIA

From a microfilm: S.N. 1[4]993

64. LETTER TO ZAHID ALI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 25, 1929

MY DEAR ZAHID ALI,

I have your letter. Please tell me how many charkhas you have, whether they are in perfect working order, whether they have spindles. And give me also the size of the wheels and the kind of spindle-

[1] Dated January 22, 1929; the addressee had asked Gandhiji whether there was any possibility of his being able to work as an English teacher in Sabarmati after June (S.N. 1[4]992).

holders and a detailed specification. Tell me also the price required and I shall try to do what I can.

Yours sincerely,

ZAHID ALI, ESQ.
THE CHHOTANI SAW MILLS
SEWRI BUNDER, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 1[4]995

65. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 25, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1] which I have kept by me for a long long time.

You certainly did not write your first letter in any wrong spirit.

I have now got a parcel of Quaker books which I suppose I owe to you.

I have not had the proposal referred to by you about the *Young India* literature.

Yours sincerely,

HORACE G. ALEXANDER
BIRMINGHAM, ENGLAND

From a photostat: S.N. 150[44]

[1] This letter, dated August 15, 1928, read: ". . . I hope the length of my first letter was not a burden to you. . . . From your reply I am a little afraid that my letter was written in a wrong spirit. . . Mr. Andrews had been telling us that your publications, issued by Ganesan, have at present no central sale depot in England. . . if you approve, the Friends' 'Book Centre (Friends are Quakers, as I think you know) might become such a depot. . . . I am sure we Quakers have much to learn from you. . . . Our new 'Friends House', including the Book Centre, is only three minutes' walk from the Indian Students' Hostel. . . ."

66. LETTER TO A. W. COHENTMAES

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM SABARMATI,
January 25, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[1] I should not have the slightest hesitation in acknowledging a mistake if I felt I have made one. I cannot recall the whole of the conversation I had with you. But from your description of it, I do gather that I was very brief, which I am inclined to become if I am to cope with all the work before me including the visitors, many of whom seem to think that they can study Indian problems by a flying visit. I remember to have told you that you could not study Indian problems or, for that matter, any problem in such a fashion. I would ask you therefore instead of expecting an acknowledgement of a mistake on my part to extend your pity towards one who does not know from day to day how he can accomodate visitors who come to him even without appointment and put serious questions.

Yours sincerely,

A. W. COHENTMAES
THE HAGUE, 1[4]0 ANTONIE
DAYCKSTRASS, HOLLAND

From a photostat: S.N. 15075

67. LETTER TO MRS. I. J. PITT

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 25, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and the printed leaflet[2] on mercy to animals. Therein you have gone much further than I should care to go.

So far as pariah dogs are concerned, I am quite at one with you. But I do not see I would be right in taming dogs and destroying those

[1] Complaining that in the interview given to him Gandhiji did not receive him well and concluding "I did not meet the Mahatma I expected."

[2] Wherein it was argued that either dogs should be kept and fed properly or the unwanted young ones be destroyed at birth

young ones which I do not want. That would be selfish. My definition of ahimsa admits of no selfishness. A selfish destruction may be dignified on other grounds but not on the ground of ahimsa.

I hope both you and Mr. Pitt are doing well.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. I. J. PITT

PENUKONDA, ANANTAPUR DISTRICT

From a microfilm: S.N. 15078

68. LETTER TO A. A. SHAIKH

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 25, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. We have so many demands for free copies of *Young India* that it is difficult to cope with all the applications. You as an Association should surely be able to subscribe to the paper if you appreciate it and you should know that *Young India* is not run for profits. And if there are and when profits are made, they are all used not for anybody's personal gain but for corporate public work.

Yours sincerely,

A. A. SHAIKH[1], ESQ.
BERLIN CHARLO
MOMMSENSTRASSE [4]1, GERMANY

From a photostat: S.N. 1512[4]

69. LETTER TO KENNETH SAUNDERS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 25, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is a difficult job for me to promise to read any book. But if you care to send me your book[2], I shall only hope to get a few moments to go through it.

[1] Honorary General Secretary, Indian Association of Central Europe

[2] On life in India. The addressee had asked Gandhiji if he would like to write a prefactory statement to it (S.N. 15125).

I am sending by registered book post two volumes of *Young India* and a copy of my autobiography.

Yours sincerely,

KENNETH SAUNDERS, ESQ.
HIGH ASCRIS
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

From a photostat: S.N. 15126

70. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 25, 1929

I have your letters, including the one you gave to the Danish sisters. They were here for over a week. They left only two days ago and they told me they enjoyed their stay at the Ashram. They had their meals at the common board at which over 175 men, women and children sit.

Maria has written me that you are still weak and have not completely recovered after your operation, but that you and Menon are due to return at the end of the year. I shall be glad to see you both and the children face to face.

Nothing is yet decided about my European visit this year. But I am hesitating especially in view of the Congress resolution. Maria says I can best go to Europe as a messenger from a free India. My reason inclines towards that view, but I am waiting on God for light.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. ESTHER MENON
TAARCAK, DENMARK

From a photostat: S.N. 15130

71. LETTER TO W. LUTOSTAWSKI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 25, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. Though I know Mr. Dhangopal Mukerjee's name by correspondence, I have never had the pleasure of meeting him personally whether in India or elsewhere. Nor do I pass my time in contemplation as distinguished from active work. You have rightly guessed that my active work is my contemplation. I thank you for with it. I am not ultra strong nor am I ultra weak.

Do please send your book on Pre-existence and Reincarnation.

Current Thought ceased publication many months ago.

Yours sincerely,

PROF. W. LUTOSTAWSKI
JAGIELLONSKA, 7M. 2
WILNO, POLAND

From a photostat: S.N. 15132

[1] In which, *inter alia*, the addressee had written: "Now I am reading in a French monthly an article by Dhangopal Mukerjee 'A Visit to Gandhi'. . . . He pretends that you have taken a bath with him in the Ganges near Benares and that you said good actions are useless. He pretends you live in contemplation while I know from your own writings you are leading an active life. . ." (S.N. 15131).

72. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 25, 1929

MY DEAR MURIEL,

I have your letters. I see your work is daily prospering. May it be a complete blessing to all who come under its influence.

Nothing is yet decided about my European visit this year. You shall know about the decision in due course.

Yours sincerely,

MISS MURIEL LESTER
BOW, E. 3, LONDON

From a photostat: S.N. 15147

73. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 25, 1929

I have your communications regularly. I am between the devil and the deep sea. Whether to undertake the European tour or not is the question. My own unaided reason tells me: 'Don't go.' I do not know what my heart tells. Miss Petersen writes to me in effect, hearing conflicting news about the intended tour, "What can be the use of your going to Europe as a messenger from India in bondage? You will deliver your message far more truly after India has become free", as she believes, it will be next year, because of the Congress resolution. My fate however will have been decided before this letter is in your hands. I am simply sharing with you the conflicting emotions that are arising in my breast. I incline to Miss Petersen's view.

I am glad you are at least able to see what I had already seen about the Macmillan's business.[1] However you are in America, you will see them face to face and I shall be satisfied with what you arrange and only let the Company, and all who may care to, understand that I have no desire to make any profits even for my public or philanthropic activities. They are all more than financed by God

[1] Regarding publication of *An Autobiography* in America; *vide* "Letter to John Haynes Holmes", December 7, 1928.

through other channels. Only I did not want to become pedantic and tell Mr. Holmes that I do not want to have any dealings with publishers on a financial basis.

C. F. ANDREWS, ESQ.

1172 PARK AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 15148

74. LETTER TO J. D. JENKINS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

January 25, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. I have not seen the full text of Pandit Motilal Nehru's reply in the Assembly and I think that the inquiry should be addressed to the Pandit himself and not to me. But I can give you my own opinion upon the question for whatever it may be worth. In any constitution that I could endorse, I should certainly be against the confiscation of the legitimate rights of any community. I would however put stress upon the word 'legitimate'. There are many privileges enjoyed by those who belong to the ruling race which privileges have not been legitimately earned. If therefore I had my way, I should most decidedly examine every such privilege and those which are discovered not to have been legitimately obtained should be taken away.

Yours sincerely,

J. D. JENKINS, ESQ.

BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 15149

[1] Dated January 21, 1929; it read: ". . . Pandit Nehru was supporting a measure in the Assembly which advocates, in the opinion of many, the unqualified confiscation of British property. . . ."

75. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 25, 1929

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

I have your letter and the programme. I shall hope to carry out the programme. Manilal left this morning.

Kikibehn[1] has written to me asking me to stay with her in Karachi. I should be delighted to do so. But I am telling her that I shall have to go by what the Reception Committee arranges. You will now do whatever is necessary from the tour point of view. Kripalani is insisting that I should stay with Kikibehn and he will be writing to you also. If it is a matter of no consequence where I stay, of course I should love to stay with her. Gangabehn also wrote to me and I referred her to the Reception Committee.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 15311

76. LETTER TO JUGALKISHORE

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 25, 1929

MY DEAR JUGALKISHORE,

I have your letter. I feel guilty about not having said anything yet in *Young India* about the work you are doing. I am now transferring your letter to the *Young India* file and hope to deal with it in the next issue[2].

If on reading your letter carefully I find anything to suggest you may expect another letter from me.

Kripalani is here just now.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. JUGALKISHORE
PRINCIPAL
PREM MAHAVIDYALAYA
BRINDABAN

From a microfilm: S.N. 15313

[1] Sister of J. B. Kripalani
[2] *Vide* "Notes", 31-1-1929, sub-topic "Village Workers' Training Class".

77. LETTER T0 KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 26, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. It is somewhat surprising. I thought you wanted me not before the beginning of April. All my plans are therefore being made so as to come to Andhra in April. March 30th and 31st I am bound to give to Kathiawar. My present plan therefore is to go to Burma about the end of February, return to Kathiawar and then come to Andhra in the beginning of April. I hope to give one month to Andhra. Isn't that enough for you? Isn't that what was agreed upon?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA
GUNTUR

From a photostat: S.N. 15308

78. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 26, 1929

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

I have had a chat with Sitla Sahai, and both of us have come to the conclusion that, all things considered, it is best for him to resign and that he should, for the time being, be in the Ashram with his wife. During that time he will master all the technique of khadi and take part in all such other activities of the Ashram as may be necessary. I want him also during this time of preparation and probation[2] to understand my method of work.

I agree with you that he is a valuable worker and therefore should be as efficient as possible. Immediately after my departure

[1] In which the addressee had pleaded: "Anyhow, please do not postpone your visit to Andhra. Your March is ours already and we want half of your April too" (S.N. 15307).

[2] For the campaign of non-violent non-co-operation envisaged by the Calcutta Congress; *vide* "Speech on Resolution on Nehru Report, Calcutta Congress—III", December 31, 1928.

from Sind, he will come to Allahabad to wind up his home and to prepare the papers for handing over charge and the balance-sheet to date so that whenever Kripalani is ready to go there he can take charge.

I wish you will not listen to doctors when they object to the Indian sun. You have heard of Dr. Muthu. Revashankerbhai's son Dhiru was suffering from tuberculosis of the bone. After having tried sanatorium cure in Solon and all the doctors he could get hold of in Bombay, he sent for Dr. Muthu, paid him a fee of thousand rupees per day. Dr. Muthu had no better advice to offer than to prescribe open air, light food and sun treatment. The affected bone was discharging some time one pound of pus per day. The affected bone had to be exposed to the sun every morning for a few hours and he had to lie in the open air the whole day long. He was not even sent to a sanatorium. He is now completely cured. European sun may be better, but the Indian rival is by no means to be despised. Doctors here suggest the morning sun. They say that ultra-violet rays are best taken between 8 and 10 o'clock and in summer between 7 and 8. But it really depends upon the patient's condition.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1929. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library; also S.N. 15314

79. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 26, 1929

BHAI DEVCHANDBHAI,

Chi. Champa will reach there safely. She gets nervous too soon. Saroj of course did have a cough. These days many in Ahmedabad have it. Saroj's cough got bad in Ahmedabad but you must have seen that she is happy. Nevertheless, I do not mind your having called away Champa and her leaving. Let her return only when she wishes. She need not stay in the Udyoga Mandir against her wishes.

The purpose of this letter, however, is quite different. Write to Sardar Vallabhbhai from time to time. Send him copies of the speeches of the previous presidents. Tell him on what topics you want him

to speak. Everyone should send him an invitation. You had forgotten to observe all this courtesy towards Thakkarbapa.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5694

80. MY NOTES

STUDENTS AND THE STRIKE

As this strike drags on, the students are being tested. The fact that they have so far remained resolute does credit to them and takes the country forward. Now I feel inclined to suggest to them that they should do some work. Why should they not clean the lanes of Ahmedabad ? They should have confidence that ultimately they will attend the same college honourably. The time is now approaching when the Principal himself will have to quit. In order to acquire this much strength, it is necessary for the students to engage themselves in social service. There is a Congress resolution that the boycott of foreign cloth should be effected through khadi. Will they not give up foreign cloth? Will they not collect it from others? Will they not wear khadi? Will they not sell khadi from door to door? Students should give thought to these questions.

SILENCE DURING SPINNING

One who does sacrificial spinning writes to say:[1]

I was unaware that silence could mean what this writer has interpreted it to mean. In recommending silence I implied that no one should gossip with those sitting around. I certainly did not imply that he who maintained silence should not sing a *bhajan* about Rama in his heart. Moreover, he who cannot thus repeat the name of Rama in his heart should certainly do so with his tongue. Since the example of a water-lift has been cited, I consider it necessary to make it clear that the *bhajan* which the farmer sings will have a good effect on a cultured listener, but we cannot assume that the same is always true of the peasant. His lips sing the *bhajan* by force of habit but his mind

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent, mentioning the *bhajans* or devotional songs that a farmer used to sing while lifting water from the well, had asked Gandhiji why he had advised maintenance of silence during spinning and not singing *bhajans* or repeating Ramanama.

may well be wandering elsewhere at that time. Hence we cannot acquit ourselves by singing *bhajans* aloud while spinning. It is only when the tongue is always in tune with the heart that the singing of a *bhajan* may be regarded as worth while. If we do not keep this in mind, we should assume with the poet that "all means become so many obstacles".

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-1-1929

81. HOW TO INCREASE THE SALE OF KHADI

In the *Khadi Patrika* Shri Vithaldas Jerajani has made an important suggestion about increasing the sale of khadi, from which I give the following extracts:[1]

This certainly is one way. I feel like suggesting another which springs from it. Any merchant in a village who wishes to invest even a small sum should buy khadi worth Rs. 10 or more on condition that if he could not sell it within a month he would return it at his own cost to the khadi bhandar. Even those who are not merchants but are desirous of doing this business can do so. In this there is no risk involved for either party and khadi can be propagated easily. A number of good and bad things have thus been propagated in the world. Within no time tea has been made popular all over India by taking it within easy reach of every home. But this is propaganda for a vice. This has resulted in nothing but a loss for the people. In khadi propaganda, the propagandist, the buyer and the thing — all three stand to gain and yet we do not find many persons willing to carry on this propaganda. In these circumstances, if there are a number of people willing to invest a capital of Rs. 10 and forgo interest on it, even then we should feel contented. But I must admit that there is a problem involved in this suggestion. If one man offers a hundred rupees and suggests that khadi worth ten rupees be propagated in ten villages, we can hardly afford to take those hundred rupees and our object too will not be served. My suggestion in effect emphasizes the necessity of having village workers only and the condition is that every one of them should invest a capital of ten rupees. This is because only if such persons are available, can they carry on propaganda for khadi in

[1] These are not translated here. The correspondent had listed various facilities offered to traders by the Khadi Bhandar, Bombay.

villages. That is to say, my suggestion envisages the search not for those who can donate a hundred rupees or more, but for khadi-lovers of one or more villages who will invest ten rupees of their own or those secured from their friends by virtue of their status and keep doing propaganda for khadi with that amount. Let Shri Vithaldas and all other lovers of khadi make this search.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-1-1929

82. LETTER TO PERIN CAPTAIN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 27, 1929

I have your letter. I am sorry about Jamnabehn. Are you sending the parcel directly to Karachi or are you sending it to me? If it reaches me at Karachi the same time that I reach there, it would be of course ideal. I reach there on the 1st February, leaving Ahmedabad on the morning of the 31st instant.

About the message to be sent to Queen Souriya, what can poor Ba really write out. She doesn't follow the controversy. Whatever, therefore, she sends would be not hers but somebody else's. In all such matters, therefore, I should leave her severely alone. Nor am I sure that the step you propose is without question the proper step to take.

If I pass through Bombay on any account, I should love to give you the time you need.

MRS. PERIN CAPTAIN

BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 15000

83. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Sunday [*January 27, 1929*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have been wanting to write this to you, but could find time to do so only today. I had long discussions with Chhaganlal. I see that just now you two will not be able to work in harmony. I, therefore, wish to act upon your first suggestion. That is, you should formally send in your resignation as Director of the Spinners' Association. Chhaganlal himself will attend to the work being done in the Ashram on behalf of the Association, and you should take up spinning, carding, etc., till Chhaganlal entrusts to you some other work. I want you to continue in the Mandir. It is necessary that the suspicion you harbour in your mind should be removed, or that I should believe about Chhaganlal what you do. It is a painful thing to me that he cannot work in harmony with you. You, too, are at fault in this, though unknowingly. Your letters to him are not such as will quench a fire. Apart from the fact that Chhaganlal cannot work in harmony with you, I see nothing but virtues in him, and their number increase, day by day. Write to me and explain where I am making a mistake in this; or tell me when you are here. I shall be here up to 31st.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–9: Shri Narandas Gandhine–Part I, p. 49

84. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[After *January 27, 1929*][2]

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letters. Gurudev's letter is very good and so is the other. Your visit was altogether well timed and well done.

[1] From the reference to the lack of understanding between the addressee and Chhaganlal Joshi; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", on or before January 16, 1929. Gandhiji left on the Sind tour on February 2, 1929. The preceding Sunday was January 27.

[2] From the reference to Narandas in the last paragraph; *vide* the preceding item.

You have dropped weight enormously. But you should have no difficulty in regaining it after full recovery and judicious dieting.

I have gained over _ lb. without any fruit. I must now see what I can do during the Sind tour.

You will go slow in everything you do and keep your extremities and abdominal regions warm. Insist on sitting on a warm surface and therefore never move about without a thick *asan*[1].

Narandas has been withdrawn from the khadi depot. He will now be reserved for women's classes. Though this is an accident, it is a blessing in disguise. Krishnadas Gandhi left yesterday for Kashmir to help Harjivan[2] and to recuperate.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5338. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9393

85. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

January 28, 1929

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

Malkani advises me to abide by your programme and no other. He evidently does not know me still. But I knew you better before I began to know him as well. Hence his mistake is pardoned. Tell him. Ba, Pyarelal and Subbiah accompany me as far as I know at present. Narayandas[3] has a programme for Karachi which needs overhauling. Govindanand[4] wants me to visit Kotri. I am referring him to you. Kikibehn wants me to stay with her in Karachi. You will do what you can.

BAPU

SJT. JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

MARKET ROAD, HYDERABAD, SIND

From the original: C.W. 9252. Courtesy: Jairamdas Doulatram

[1] Mat or carpet to sit on

[2] Harjivan Kotak who had established a branch of A.I.S.A. in Kashmir

[3] Narayandas Bechar, labour leader in Karachi

[4] Congress leader of Karachi

86. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

Silence Day [*January 28, 1929*][1]

CHI. KISHORELAL,

You have fallen ill properly after you went from here. Does this illness not teach you that you must not be rushing about?

Karsandas has written a very long letter[2] which he has asked me to pass on to you read. Read it and think carefully about it and then discuss it with him.

How is Gomati[3]?

The work here is going on well. I have withdrawn Narandas from the khadi work[4]. I think he will stay on here. Mahadev and Narahari[5] have gone to Bardoli. I am going to Sind on the 31st.[6] I am giving my dates overleaf.[7]

Blessings from

BAPU

31st January	7.28 a.m.	leave Ahmedabad
1st February	3.30 p.m.	reach Karachi
2nd February		Karachi
3, 4 & 5 February		Hyderabad
6th February		Shikarpur
7th February		Jacobabad
8th February		Karkana
9th February		Sukkur
10th February		To Naushera and backto Hyderabad
11th February		Hyderabad

[1] The Monday before January 31, 1929, the first date in Gandhiji's itinerary, fell on this date.

[2] For Gandhiji's letter to Karsandas Chitalia, *vide* the following item.

[3] Addressee's wife

[4] On account of a lack of understanding between Narandas Gandhi and Chhaganlal Joshi; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", January 27, 1929.

[5] Narahari D. Parikh

[6] To collect funds for the Lala Lajpat Rai Memorial

[7] Gandhiji, however, left Ahmedabad only on February 2, 1929, owing to the severe cold in Karachi.

12th February	Mirpurkhas
13th February 8.00 p.m.	reach Ahmedabad

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10712. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

87. LETTER TO KARSANDAS CHITALIA[1]

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 28, 1929

BHAISHRI KARSANDAS,

You have been writing regularly. I am not worrying as Kusumbehn writes to you.

I had a long and pleasant conversation with Sulochanabehn. She thinks, and I agree with her, that she is not yet mentally ready to join the Sangh. In order to know where she stand, I feel she needs to join some organization and gain experience as an ordinary worker. She agrees with this and for the present is thinking of doing something of that kind. Her idea of the Sangh was quite different. She thought that a Sangh of the women office-bearers of the existing organizations should be formed and they should meet for an exchange of views. I tried to explain to her that this would serve no useful purpose and I think she was convinced. I have formed a good impression of her.

It is difficult to say anything about. . . .behn. This, however, is certain that . . . behn and Sulochanaben cannot carry on together. Their temperaments are absolutely incompatible. Sulochanabehn will find her own way . . . .It is doubtful if . . .behn to render much service independently. She keeps good enough health . . . .But I cannot Judge how she will fare in future.

The idea of a separate Sangh will have to be dropped for the present. I do not think we have enough means even for constructing a building. Sulochanabehn has decided to do some introspection for the present and estimate her strength . . . .behn is incapable of coming to a decision. I think there has been too much hurry in asking for the security. I also think that you have been a little hasty in your judgment of . . .behn. Think over this carefully, discuss it with Kishorelal and write to me. Let us not do anything which may seem ridiculous. The fruits of patience are sweet. We can take the plunge even if one

[1] Omissions in the letter are as in the source.

women comes forward to dedicate herself. But I see no such woman at present.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/45

88. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

January 28, 1929

MU. BHAI,

I got your letter. I have not received Chhaganlal's. However, I am sending a wire today. There is no cause for worry. It is just like a home there, too. They will leave nothing undone to meet all his needs. Even so, if he does not feel well there, I am sending him a wire asking him to come away.

Krishnadas left for Kashmir yesterday. He is sure to get well there. Chi. Keshu is fine. I am starting on a tour of Sind on the 31st and expect to return on the 13th.

Respectful prostration by

MOHANDAS

MU. BHAI KHUSHAL JIVAN GANDHI
OPPOSITE MIDDLE SCHOOL
NEW SUBURB
RAJKOT

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33102

89. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

January 29, 1929

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I received together all the letters you had sent by three different mails. I have already sent another name for Dhairyabala. Today I am writing this letter in great hurry. Rasik has caught typhoid in Delhi. Kanti has been down with fever for the past three days. Such are the ups and downs over here.

I cannot advise the closing of *Indian Opinion*. A journal that has survived till this day cannot be allowed to close down. I would not mind if both of you had to spend your whole life there. That is how

great tasks are accomplished. That is what single-minded devotion means. Yes, if you can make some other arrangement for running the paper and leave the place, I would not mind. Nor would I see anything wrong if Sushila came over here once and stayed for some time. I would be happy to see you three living happily.

I was sorry to learn about Charlie[1]. That is the way the world goes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4750

90. SPEECH TO GUJARAT COLLEGE STUDENTS, AHMEDABAD

January 30, 1929

I have to add one telegram to the many telegraphic messages that you are receiving from various places. This one has been sent by the women of Bharat Bhushan Malaviyaji's Benares Hindu University. I have forgotten to bring that telegram here but its purpose is to congratulate the women of Gujarat College on their struggle.

You have received messages of gratitude today from all quarters but much remains to be done by you to deserve these congratulations. In a way it is risky to call me to such a meeting. If I have been invited here at the instance of the students, they have run a risk; and if Dr. Hariprasad has himself called me here then he has taken a still greater risk.

I am not in a position to give you encouragement. I believe that the time is now over when encouragement was needed in order to get work out of those who were ready to sacrifice themselves for the *yajna* of swaraj. The time has now come, when each one has to rely on his own strength. The struggle that you are carrying on today with dignity and the movement which is being carried on all over India will be futile if you fall back now, and you will harm the entire community of youth in India.

Do not remain indifferent towards the activities of your opponents; do not disregard them. He who disregards the ability of his enemies or opponents does in fact disregard his own self.

[1] An African employee at the Phoenix Press who had died

Your struggle—your strike—is not against your Principal. It is directed against the system under which the present Government and this college function. It is not that what your Principal has done is something new. Similar restrictions had been imposed in other colleges also, many had to suffer for disregarding them, many had to pay a fine and also to resort to flattery. You have been saved from this unhappy predicament.

You are a part of the nation and so you have felt that if you go to the college in spite of the betrayal, you will not uphold the nation's self-respect. This will certainly bring in welcome results. If an honorable settlement can be arrived at, do strive for it, and if at the same time you act politely there need be no doubt about your success. Your victory lies in your defeat. If you have to stay out of college for a year it does not imply your defeat. It is when through a feeling of helplessness you forget your pledge, pay a fine, resort to flattery and go to the college, that you will have been defeated; I have come to give you this warning.

I can quite realize that you will feel unhappy when you have to lose a year or a term. Those who think that they have lost a year or a term do not realize the value of the strike. You had not calculated all this from the beginning but now you have realized that great results can come out of this small struggle. The longer you stay out (of college), and if you are also polite, the more your strength and that of the entire country will grow. The strength and vigour of the students all over India will increase.

I am not exaggerating when I say that you are inaugurating a new era. But this would be true only if you keep your resolve until the end. Some members of your committee had met me; I had told them to remain free from anxiety. You do not even need messages of encouragement. You have to cultivate your collective strength. It would be better if instead of returning to college you take up some other activity.

Your tactics as outlaws will bring credit to you only when you carry out successfully the task that you have taken upon yourselves and also give every moment of your life to it. Do credit to your activity as outlaws. These many messages of congratulations sent to you, what do they indicate? Those who have sent these messages say that a certain type of strength is now needed in India which they themselves lack, but which can be obtained from you. You can fulfil

this desire of theirs and this strength only when you can maintain the solidarity of your organization.

Previously, I had given you some instructions about this and I remind you of them again. If you are prepared to make a sacrifice for securing swaraj, or for the sake of the country's honour, it is your dharma to give your full support to the completion of the programme of the Congress. It is the easiest, the simplest and the most readily comprehensible. Perhaps it does not interest you and you feel that it is an outdated thing but much can be derived from such activities and they have a great value. If that programme does not appeal to you, draw up another more to your liking.

If you always have a longing to hear speeches, when assembling on the sands of the river, you will be making a big mistake and remember that you will be tired of it in the end. You may like to hear the lectures in the colleges and to get medals and add the B.A. degree to your name, but Acharya Kripalani is not going to give you any such thing here.

I can say with certainty if you wish to bring glory to this effort, take up some constructive work. By doing so, you will set an example to other students. Khadi is the first thing I shall talk about. You can, render much service by wearing and selling it. Until settlement is reached, you can carry on that work and collect foreign cloth from house to house. And if you wish to go a step further, bring it here and make a bonfire of it. The burning of foreign cloth will bring much credit to you. You will see an article about the ruin that we bring upon India by using foreign cloth. There must be at least some of it left with you. When you take up this work, the Government will also be convinced that students have now begun to work.

Among Tolstoy's stories, there is one in which Satan climbs on the top of a house to give a speech and, falling down, becomes unconscious. When he collapses, people say he has toppled down.

Even if you tumble down people will say that you have achieved something. The nation will certainly admit that students have at any rate done something. You can take a vow to clean up the streets of Ahmedabad or do prohibition work. You can undertake many such tasks.

Do bear it in mind that a settlement which is not unconditional is worthless even if it fetches us crores of rupees.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 3-2-1929

91. TELEGRAM TO NARAYANDAS[1]

[On or after *January 30, 1929*]

NARAYANDAS ANANDJI

NANAWARA

KARACHI

YOUR TELEGRAM DISCONCERTING. POSTPONING VISIT. THOUGH PERSONALLY DO NOT MIND COLD CONSULT JAIRAMDAS INFORM WHEN TO START.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 15315

92. TELEGRAM TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

[On or after *January 30, 1929*][2]

JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

MARKET ROAD

HYDERABAD, (SIND)

HAVING RECEIVED PEREMPTORY WIRE FROM NARAYANDAS POSTPONING DEPARTURE PENDING YOUR INSTRUCTIONS. READY START FRIDAY OR SATURDAY IF DESIRED. WIRE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15315

93. A SOUTH AFRICAN TRIBUTE

I have hitherto resisted the publication of the many tributes to the Rt. Hon. Sastri's work in South Africa that I have found in the

[1] In reply to his telegram dated January 30, 1929, which read: "Extremely cold Quetta winds blowing. Feel your travelling Sind inadvisable now. Pray postpone week . . ."

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

cuttings friends in South Africa have sent me. But now that his return to the Motherland is imminent, I cannot resist the temptation to quote in full the following[1] ungrudging tribute from Professor Bell of Cape Town. His official work, great as it has been, has been outweighed by his unofficial contribution. His transparent sincerity and his passionate love of his country made him give unstintingly the whole of his matchless gifts to the service of the cause that took him to South Africa. The result is a changed atmosphere in that subcontinent and a smoother passage for his successor. Let me hope that the great service rendered by the distinguished patriot to the country will be crowned by a rousing reception on his landing not for his sake but for ours.

Young India, 31-1-1929

94. MY APOLOGIES

Circumstances permitting, I had fully intended to undertake my long-talked-of European tour early this year. But after the most careful consideration and consultation with friends I have come to the conclusion that the circumstances compel me to give up the tour for this year at any rate. I dare not think of the next. A dear Danish friend writes to me saying I could usefully go to Europe only as a representative of free India. I feel the truth of the remark. But that is by the way.

Pandit Motilalji, to whom I had mentioned the matter in Calcutta, whilst he at first thought I should not go, has telegraphed withdrawing his objection, pressing me to fulfil the 'elaborate European programme' of which I had given him a rough idea. But now that I have freedom of action from him, my courage fails me. I have no voice from within prompting me to go. On the contrary, having put the constructive resolution before the Congress and having received universal support, I feel that I would be guilty of desertion if I now went away to Europe. It may be that those who voted for the resolution never meant to carry it out. It may be that I shall have to do nothing during the year in respect of the programme. But I feel that it is not for me to reason thus. I must not lose faith in the workers. I must, like the immortal Barkis, be ever 'willing'. The voice within tells me that I must not only hold myself in readiness to do what comes my

[1] Not reproduced here

way, but I must even think out and suggest means of working out what to me is a great programme. Above all I must prepare myself for the next year's struggle, whatever shape it may take.

Though one year's limit was not of my seeking, though I considered it to be too short a notice for the nation and for the British people, I could not make it a point of principle on which to break. No notice is too short for a vindication of one's birthright. When therefore I accepted the change from two years to one, I was quite serious. For me then I have burnt my boats. What was said by way of humour to a newspaper correspondent was also seriously meant by me. If the Nehru Report is not accepted by or on behalf of the British people before the end of the year, after midnight on December 31st next, it will cease to have any meaning for me, I must declare myself an Independencewallah. But if I mean this seriously, I may not leave India for the best part of this year of probation and preparation. On the contrary, I must strain every nerve to carry out the preparatory programme.

The Satyagraha Ashram, now Udyoga Mandir, too, which rightly or wrongly I claim to be my best creation, demands just now my close attention, if it is to serve the purpose for which it has been created. And what message may I deliver to the West whilst it has yet been hardly delivered in India? Barring those who out of their partiality for me would have me in Europe and America at any cost, the peoples of the West would be justified in saying 'Physician, heal thyself'. I frankly confess that when I first tempted myself seriously to entertain a European invitation apart from my keen desire to see M. Romain Rolland face to face, I had no idea of seeking help for India in her fight for freedom, but I had a desire to deliver the message of non-violence. Not that I do not need all the help I can get from outside for my country, but I do not believe in a begging expedition for that purpose. That aid will come when we deserve it and then it will come without the asking. I therefore flattered myself with the belief that if I went to the West I should be able to interpret true non-violence to her by word of mouth. But the more I ponder over the thing, the more unworthy I appear to myself to be. I need greater preparation and greater self-purification to make me a worthy vehicle for the transmission of the unbroken message of what appears to me to be the only way of reaching truth which is God. For the time being therefore the friends in the West would pardon me for my

inability to visit them personally. The wish is there, capacity is wanting. Let them pray with me that I may have the clearest possible light. Meanwhile let these columns be a living bond between them and me.[1]

But with the postponement of my European visit my eyes turn to Gujarat. The workers of Gujarat can, if they will, get a great deal done by Gujarat which has contributed its full share since the era of non-co-operation. I still stand by what I said in 1921. Even if a single taluk of Gujarat becomes totally ready and is prepared to make sacrifices, swaraj can be won through them in a trice. It is to be seen what role Gujarat plays.

Young India, 31-1-1929 and *Navajivan,* 3-2-1929

95. NOT THAT WAY

I publish below a precious letter[2] from a Secretary of a provincial Congress Committee. It shows vividly what happened at the last Congress. Not one province, but many did what has been described in the communication. Surely it must be clear as daylight to everybody that the coming of swaraj will be indefinitely postponed if we poison the very source of our strength. And if in an institution where there is no money and less fame, we engage in a scramble for election and manipulate voting lists, what shall we do when a huge machinery with all its terrible temptations comes into our hands? I know the answer that can be given to this objection. If it satisfied patriots, I should be sorry.

Young India, 31-1-1929

[1] What follows is a translation of the last paragraph of a Gujarati article "European Visit Postponed', appearing in *Navajivan,* 3-2-1929.

[2] Not reproduced here. It described in detail the irregularities in the registration of the delegates to the Calcutta Congress Session.

96. HINDI IN THE SOUTH

Sjt. Jamnalalji's tour in the South on behalf of Hindi should result in a double response in men and women desirous of learning Hindi and in contributions for conducting the Hindi Prachar office. Accounts received from Madras show that Sjt. Jamnalalji's earnestness is producing the desired effect. So long as the leaders in the South refuse to learn Hindi, it must remain almost cut off from the rest of India. Let it be clearly understood that Hindi is not to supplant the indigenous languages but it is to be the medium of inter-provincial intercourse and the official language of all all-India organizations. Needless to say that Hindi includes its Urdu form.

Young India, 31-1-1929

97. NOTES

STUDENTS' STRIKE[1]

The strike of the students of the Gujarat College, Ahmedabad, continues with unabated vigour. The students are showing determination, calmness and solidarity that are worthy of all praise. They are beginning only now to feel their strength. And I venture to think that they will feel it still more if they do constructive work. It is my conviction that our schools and colleges, instead of making us manly, make us obsequious, timid, indecisive and ballastless. Man-lin-ess consists not in bluff, bravado or lordliness. It consists in daring to do the right and facing consequences, whether it is in matters social, political or other. It consists in deeds not in words. The students have now before them probably a long time of waiting. They must not be disheartened if events shape themselves so. It will then be up to the public to intervene. It will be up to the student world all over India to vindicate the right which is entirely on the side of the students. Those who would study the question in all its fulness can secure from Sjt. Mavlankar copies of all the relevant papers. The fight of the Ahmedabad students is a fight not for their own personal rights, it is a fight for the honour of students in general and therefore in a sense for

[1] *Vide* also "Speech to Gujarat College Students, Ahmedabad", January 30, 1929.

national honour. Students who have been fighting so pluckily as these are doing deserve the fullest public support.

And this the students will surely get if they will engage in doing national activity. They will lose nothing by doing national work. They need not confine themselves to the Congress programme, if it does not commend itself to them. The chief thing is to demonstrate their capacity for holding together and doing independent solid work. The charge is often brought against us that we are good only at oratorical displays and fruitless demonstrations, but fail when we are called upon to *do* work that requires cohesion, co-operation, grit and unflinching determination. The students have a splendid opportunity of falsifying the charge. Will they rise to the occasion?

They may not lose faith on any account whatsoever. The College is the Nation's property. If we were not demoralized, a foreign Government should never be able to hold our property or make it practically criminal for students to take part in the nation's battle for freedom, which it should be the duty and privilege of students to lead.

LAPSE OF MEMORY[1]

Govindbabu of Champapurhat, Utkal, tells me that in "The Story of My Experiments with Truth"[2], I have erroneously mentioned two professional spinners of Bombay as having taught spinning to Shrimati Gangabehn, Avantikabai, and Ramibai and that it was he whom I had deputed to teach these sisters. I am thankful for having had the error pointed out to me. Now that I have taxed my memory, I do remember that I asked Govindbabu to teach many in Bombay who wanted to learn spinning. I have no doubt that in the "Story" there are several such omissions. Only the "Story" has been written not to issue certificates to deserving workers but to relate incidents illustrative of the working of the law of Truth. Those innumerable workers who have helped me in my pursuit must find in service its own reward. And Govindbabu has had ample reward in that from an indifferent spinning teacher he has developed into the founder and manager of an Ashram in Utkal which is supported almost wholly from donations given to him by Gujarati patrons. He will be more than compensated

[1] This was published in *Navajivan, 27-1-1929* under the sub-title "An Omission".

[2] *Vide An Autobiography*, Pt. V, Ch. XL.

for his services, if he makes of the Ashram an efficient institution forming a nucleus for village reconstruction. He has set up an ambi-tious programme for himself. Khadi, medical aid, national education, service of 'untouchables' are a big morsel for anybody. But faith can overcome mountains. It is well with Govindbabu if he has faith and if he can show himself deserving of the help he is receiving.

VILLAGE WORKERS' TRAINING CLASS

Acharya Jugal Kishore of Prem Mahavidyalaya, Brindavan, sends me an ambitious and interesting scheme for the training of village workers through that institution.[1] The scheme was inaugurated last December. He now writes:

> The village Workers' Training Class has already begun to function with five students on the roll and two more students agreeing to join itin about a week's time. Besides attending lectures on economics and citizenship which for the time being are given by me, they are attending to spinning and carding under Bharatbhai's instruction. We have been able to make arrangements locally with the Municipal Doctor to give them lectures and exercises on first aid and sanitation, hygiene and physiology. Besides this, they go to villages round about at least once a weak, collecting statistics of the conditions in those villages. We are thinking of starting a small centre in one or two villages when we are able to find a suitable field for it. I am hoping that other students of this institution will also be aroused to take greater interest in village work. We have already a Hindustani Seva Dal here and hope to make it a more active and useful body than it has been so for

The fewness of candidates need not worry the reader. The restrictions put upon admissions naturally keep back many from joining. And it is well that it is so in the beginning. For only those are admitted who among other things pledge themselves to devote at least 10 years of their life to village work after completing the course of two years. Needy candidates receive a stipend of from Rs. 15 to Rs. 20 per month. After completion of the course, they are to receive according to their proved needs from Rs. 30 to Rs. 75 per month. I commend the scheme to the attention of all who are desirous of promoting village reconstruction. They can get a copy of the scheme on application to the Secretary of the Institution. The Acharya invites the co-operation of individuals and kindred bodies,

[1] *Vide* "letter to Jugal Kishore", January 25, 1929.

(a) by awarding stipends,

(b) by arranging to enable the candidates under training to receive the practical training under the organizations for village uplift,

(c) by engaging the services of those who will have completed their course of training here,

(d) by donations and presents of useful books for the use of the students of this class,

(e) by their suggestions and advice, and

(f) by periodical lectures on the subjects of village problems.

I congratulate Acharya Jugal Kishore on his courage in having inaugurated a scheme that can, if well worked, yield mighty results.

Young India, 31-1-1929

98. MESSAGE TO " MAJUR SANDESH " [1]*, AHMEDABAD*

[*January 31, 1929*][2]

The labourers should fully try for their rights, but in that they must observe courtesy and peace. The labourers have a right to go on strike if the arbitrators do not give their award or if the owners do not go to the arbitrators or if the owners do not act according to the decisions of the arbitrators. They must not lose patience under any circumstances after going on strike. They must not intimidate those who do not join the strike. So far as the strike in the Gujarat Ginning Mill is concerned, they have to do as they are directed by Shrimati Anasuyabehn, Mr. Shankerlal Banker and the labour union secretaries.

The Hindu, 1-2-1929

[1] Organ of the Majur Mahajan, Ahmedabad

[2] Released by the Free Press of India from Ahmedabad on this date

99. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

SABARMATI,
January 31, 1929

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I have your letter. I do not mind your not being present at the prayers. But your unhappiness at not being able to come pleases me. Once we realize the significance of prayer, it becomes more essential for us than food and water.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 6064. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

100. LETTER TO GOPALDAS K. DESAI

January 31, 1929

BHAISHRI GOPALDAS[1],

I have your letter. I would have written to you directly if I had received definite information. I had definite information first from Raojibhai[2] and I sent a message to him. Before that somebody—I do not remember who—did tell me that Bhaktibehn[3] was going to Africa. Nor did I know whether both of you were going, or why. What could I therefore write? However, it is very good that you have abandoned the idea. It is best to avail ourselves of whatever help we can get through local influence. If difficulties have to faced in obtaining such help it will be our penance. It purifies our mind and helps us to serve the people in the right manner. When people appreciate out service they readily offer monetary help and then if similar help flows in from other sources it does so on its own. I am not pained at the volunteers having left because they were displeased by your not going out to beg.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/11

[1] Durbar Gopaldas, ex-ruler of Dhasa in Kathiawar; *vide* also "My Notes", 19-2-1922, sub-topic "Satyagraha by Dhasa Durbar".

[2] Raojibhai Patel

[3] Addressee's wife

101. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 31, 1929

CHI. MAHADEV,

Herewith Motilalji's telegram expressing his joy.[1] It shows that the decision not to go [to Europe] was correct. Motilalji's permission to me to go was only to keep my way open. But what is our duty now? There is of course the task of preparing the Ashram. We are daily making progress in our ideas about this, and I see that in order to attain our objection through non-violence we have got to put Ashram forward as a mean. But my purpose in writing this is to suggest to you to consider with Vallabhbhai what Gujarat, and Bardoli, can do.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary, S.N. 32577/4

102. LETTER TO K. T. PAUL

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 1, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[2]. You need not apologize. I know how helpless a busy man often becomes as to his movements.

I am leaving for Sind tomorrow and I shall be back on the 15th February. I shall be at the Ashram at least up to the 23rd or 24th instant.

Yours sincerely,

K. T. PAUL, ESQ.
MAITLAND HOUSE, DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15003

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Motilal Nehru", February 1, 1929.

[2] Dated January 29, 1929. The addressee had expressed his inability to go over to Sabarmati before the end of the month.

103. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 1, 1929

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

You should carefully read the Punjab letter that I have reproduced in *Young India*[1] about what was done in Calcutta. Probably you knew everything of what is stated in the letter. I wish that you will make it your business first to put the Congress Comm-ittees in order and then organize the work in connection with the constructive programme. Unless by some unforeseen circumstances there is an honourable settlement with Great Britain, there will be practically no other party save the party of independence in the country. But the cry will be ineffective if we cannot put up a proper fight. If that fight is to be put up through the Congress, then the Congress must be a living thing. And if it is to be a non-violent fight then the present constructive programme ought to be worked now for all it is worth. Apart from the fact, therefore, that you, as is your wont, having taken up the secretaryship, would work your office whole-heartedly, I would like you on the strength of merits also to give your undivided attention to the Congress programme. I cannot help feeling that we can do much with the boycott of foreign cloth through khadi and, if there are enough workers, also about picketing liquor shops. And if these things are to be done, I think that it is necessary for you to travel in all the provinces and first put the machinery in order.

They stopped me from leaving for Sind yesterday owing to the terrible cold winds that had suddenly overtaken Sind.[2] It was foolish of them to have stopped me, but I was helpless. I am now leaving tomorrow. You will therefore post-date the programme by two days.

Sitla Sahai is leaving tomorrow to prepare balance-sheets, etc. I expect him back by the time I return from Sind

Now that the European visit is dropped, you will be free to take me to the U.P. Andhra and Burma which must precede will prevent

[1] *Vide* "Not That Way", January 31, 1929.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Narayandas", on or after January 30, 1929.

me from going there before the last week of April.

I hope Kamala is better.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
11 CLIVE ROAD, NEW DELHI

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1929. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library; also S.N. 15318

104. LETTER TO K. SANTANAM

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 1, 1929

MY DEAR SANTANAM,

I have your letter. You have to be firm and strong if you want the Punjab to come out well during the Congress. Unless the Congress is put on a proper footing, you should refuse to give any help and even make a public statement. As it is I am sending your letter to Motilalji and asking him to do whatever is possible.[1]

If I were you, I should not bring in Lalaji Memorial in discussing the subject. Let the Memorial stand on its own footing. You should go on with collections irrespective of whether the Congress is to be held in Lahore or not. Those who want to revere Lalaji's memory will pay in any case. What I am anxious about is that the Congress in the Punjab should be a genuine register of representatives.

You will see the letter I have published in *Young India*. Of course, you will easily guess that it is from the Punjab. What a heartbreaking revelation. It is this root evil which I am likely to deal with.

I am leaving for Sind tomorrow and shall return on the 15th instant. The enclosed is my programme.

How is Krishna doing?

Yours sincerely,

PANDIT K. SANTANAM
LAHORE

From a photostat: S.N. 15319

[1] *Vide* the following item.

105. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 1, 1929

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have your telegram. You will have read what I have said in *Young India* about the European visit.[1] I therefore need not enter into the reasoning that decided the matter for me. When I came to the final conclusion, it was like a weight lifted of my back. And your telegram confirms the correctness of my decision.

I sent the Sind programme to Jawahar and he must have shown it to you already. But to make assurance doubly sure I am sending you a copy. There is an alteration of dates somewhat because owing to the terrific [cold] that has overtaken the country they stopped me from leaving tomorrow morning.

I enclose herewith Santanam's letter. It speaks for itself. I wish you would send for the Punjab workers and adjust their differences. If we are to do any work at all the next Congress must be a genuine affair, a true register of elected representatives.

For ready reference I send you a marked copy of *Young India* containing a provincial Congress Committee Secretary's letter revealing true facts. That letter you will easily guess refers to the Punjab. In order to spare the feelings of the Punjab workers I have removed reference to names. That letter shows how practically the whole of the delegation to the Bengal Congress was manipulated. You were present when Pattabhi[2] was relating what was done in Andhra. If all the Congress registers were examined they will reveal a terrible state of things. I wish that Jawahar could travel throughout all the provinces and see that the Congress organizations become living bodies.

Yours sincerely,

PANDIT MOTILALJI
11 CLIVE ROAD, NEW DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15320

[1] *Vide* "My Apologies", January 31, 1929.
[2] Pattabhi Sitaramayya

106. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 2, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I was detained by the Sind people for two days owing to the extraordinary cold. The programme must therefore be post-dated by two days. Rasik[1] is lying dangerously ill at Delhi. Ba and Kanti have gone there. He has been unconscious for five days. God's will be done. I return to the Mandir on 15th instant. We are all traveling third class. The closet is wretched, otherwise it is quite all right. Prof. Kripalani is with me.

Love.

BAPU

SHRIMATI MIRABEHN
KHADI DEPOT, CHHATWAN
POST CHHOTARIPAT, BIHAR

From the original: C.W. 5339. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9394

107. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

February 2, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your wires at Siddhapur. I got one at Marwar junction too. There is very little hope[2]. Ba and Kanti got down to take a train to Delhi. May such occasions make us gentle and more devoted to duty. Swami and Yehabhai met me at Siddhapur station. Ramniklal should go there, tour the area and report about the women there who are so poor that they would be ready to card and spin. The intending donor is a friend of Punjabhai and wants khadi work to be started in Siddhapur itself.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro— 7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 40

[1] Son of Harilal, who had gone to Delhi to help Devdas in khadi work; he died on February 8, 1929.

[2] Of the survival of Rasik

108. STUDENTS OF GUJARAT COLLEGE

As the students—both boys and girls–of Gujarat College gain glory day by day, their responsibility too increases. To the extent their strike drags on and their determination increasingly attracts the entire country's attention, the people's expectations of them rise also. This is exactly like what happened in Bardoli. One can say that at the outset the strike concerned the students alone. Now it concerns the whole of India. Hence they cannot relax now. I hear from all quarters that the majority of students will never break their pledge. Nevertheless, in accordance with the saying, "The wary is always happy", I do not think it is discourteous to sound a note of warning that the students should remain vigilant and should not succumb to any kind of temptation or fear.

It is only if the students jointly undertake some constructive work that this strike will bring about the best result. There are many such tasks. A letter from a citizen of Ahmedabad about the insanitary condition of the city appears in this very issue.[1] This gives an adequate description of the filth there. Along with that letter the writer sent figures of the rate of child mortality which should put us to shame, but I do not publish them because they are well known. The president of the Youth League, Dr. Hariprasad [Desai], has himself given them publicity. The students can easily undertake the job of removing this filth. By showing the people ways of doing away with such dirt they can promote the city's health. There is altruism as well as glory in this work. Some such work will serve as an example to every student in India. They will earn the blessings of the citizens and I believe this is one fine way of bringing the strike to an early end. As long as the students do not engage themselves in some work, the danger of their falling and Mr. Shirras too will attempt to beat them down.

This much is clear that the students cannot spend a long time in merely listening to speeches and lectures. Now every step must be taken on the assumption that the strike will drag on. It is proper and necessary that we should be ready for a settlement. We should not take any drastic step that would preclude a settlement for ever. Likewise we cannot sit idle waiting for a compromise. Assuring themselves that it

[1] *Vide* "My Notes", February 3, 1929

will come off honourably at the proper time, the students should not worry about it and should now throw themselves whole-heartedly into work. If this is done, there is a chance of an early settlement since the student, burying themselves in work will be regarded as a symbol of their strength and when their strength is tried, the attempt to cause disunity among them will stop and attempts will be made only to please them.

The task of removing the dirt of Ahmedabad has been mentioned only by way of example. That work is extremely necessary. Since it is a local job which can be completed in a short time, should attract all the greater interest. As it is a local matter, the citizens have a right to expect that work from the students. It is difficult to get that work done by hired persons. As volunteers can do it regularly, I have drawn attention to it. But it would do if the students find out some other work which they like and approve of. The object that some consecutive work of public service should be done collectively. I have already drawn attention to khadi and other activities envisaged in the Congress programme. All those items of work are to my mind fine and necessary. I hope that the students will not let go a good opportunity which has readily presented itself. It is only when the strength which the students have realized is consolidated, that the country will benefit by it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-2-1929

109. MY NOTES

SUSPICIOUS

A gentleman from Wadhwan writes:[1]

To believe that I will be able to convince the State and the leaders of Wadhwan only shows the writer's naivety. I do not even know if those who have enforced the above regulations will ever read my criticism. But in the hope that this article will reach them, I can certainly say that in this age of purification, the injustice shown in the

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that Wadhwan State had agreed to constitute an elected municipality. But there was a clause in its constitution whereby untouchables would have to elect a representative from the 'touchable' class.

above clause to those whom we regard as untouchables, is improper. The Dheds, Bhangis and Chamars are our brothers and sisters; our own kith and kin. In not acknowledging this fact we do injustice to ourselves. And by regarding them as outcastes we have invited the criticism of the whole world upon ourselves. If there is any national awakening in the public of Wadhwan, the citizens should oppose this clause and if the opposition is not heeded, the people should renounce a municipality which upholds such caste distinctions. Whether or not the citizens practise such a boycott, it is my advice to the untouchable brothers that they should not be guilty of electing a representative from among the 'touchables'.

SLUMS OF AHMEDABAD

A citizen writes[1] about the slums of Ahmedabad to which Dr. Hariprased has given publicity:

Every citizen, man and woman, needs to ponder over this letter. There is nothing new in it. Nor is what is already known put here in a new form; yet this letter draws attention to something we know. As the insanitary conditions in Ahmedabad are such as to arouse shame in the Municipality and the citizens, any amount of attention paid to it cannot be regarded as too much. If we cannot keep clean our own courtyard, how then can we help in keeping the entire country clean? If we leave our courtyard stinking, then there is every chance of a foul stench arising from our swaraj. Therefore, it is the duty of the Municipality and the citizens of Ahmedabad to adopt ways and means of clearing up this filth. It is possible that many who have got used to this filth may like to tolerate it, but to continue such a slumber in this age of purification should be a matter of shame. The fact that there is an economic loss in preserving this filth is something which should be understood by the wealthy citizens of Ahmedabad. Because, diseases spread fast owing to uncleanliness and lead to loss of manpower. When an inanimate engine stops working we start calculating the loss caused by this stoppage. The body is a living engine and when it stops working there is a twofold loss. Idleness following illness is one loss and another is the cost of medical treatment. And the individual's loss

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had described the foul conditions prevailing in Ahmedabad and his own unsuccessful efforts to improve them. He wanted that children in primary schools should be given lessons in cleanliness.

should be regarded in the final calculation as a loss of public wealth. In the above letter a suggestion has been made to educate pupils in schools about hygiene. This is worth welcoming. If all the students of Ahmedabad, who are mature, are invited to work for cleaning up the city's filth, and if after forming them into batches, the teachers set out with brooms and buckets, they can change the appearance of Ahmedabad in no time and the students will readily receive practical and real education.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-2-1929

110. A YOUNG MAN'S DILEMMA[1]

A Patidar young man writes:

> My parents want me to be married this very year and insist on my obeying their wishes in this respect. . . . In my community no one can secure a bride without conforming to the condition of *sata*, i.e., without offering a girl of one's family in exchange. Child-marriage is the rule. In my case too girls of nine or ten years of age are only are available and that too on the condition that we conform to the condition of *sata*. My father says that even this may not be possible afterwards, if we miss the opportunity this year. If I say 'no' my mother weeps and creates no end of trouble in the family. I am a Patidar young man of 22 years of age. My parents will not hear of my marrying a widow or outside my caste. What am I to do in the circumstances?

I know many a young man who is in the same dilemma as this Patidar youth. According to our Shastras, a boy of 16 years and over should be regarded by his parents as a friend whom they should take in their confidence and not as a child whom they can coerce. But some parents in our country seem to think that even their grown-up children are bound to follow every wish of theirs—especially when it relates to such things as marriage—as if they could have no will of their own in the matter. And if this is the attitude with regard to the sons, the plight of the daughters may well be imagined. It seems to me that in all such contingencies it is not only the right but the religious duty of young men and young girls not to be afraid of the parents' wrath. It has been my experience that when a grown-up boy or girl

[1] The original Gujarati article appeared in *Navajivan* 3-2-1929. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

takes up a just and right position and adheres to it with absolute firmness there is the least amount of difficulty created by the parents. When once they realize that the resolution of their children is absolutely unalterable, they get reconciled to it. For behind the parents' insistence there is always the ultimate hope that it would bring their children to their viewpoint. But when this hope is destroyed further insistence becomes meaningless and is therefore given up. My advice to the young man in question, therefore, is to refuse to be party to the double sin of marrying a child girl and of conforming to the evil practice of *sata.* He must not mind how much domestic trouble he has to face as a result of his refusal. He should consider it a virtue to marry outside his sub-caste or to marry a widow, subject to the necessary limitations.

Young India, 11-4-1929

111. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

KARACHI
Sunday, February 3, 1929

CHI. KUSUM,

The women's section should be cleaner. Let all the women divide the work among themselves. A lot of water is thrown in the kitchenyard; this should stop. Now that you have two bathrooms outside, everyone had better go there. The room where Yashodabehn[1] lives, that too should be cleaner. Do something about the water. I am feeling weak these days. I cannot understand why.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1775

[1] Wife of Suraj Bhanji, a khadi worker of Ambala

112. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Sunday [*February 3, 1929*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I hope you got the postcard I wrote to you from Marwar Junction.

From Devdas's wire it seems there is little hope of Rasik surviving. We should, on occasions like this, put into practice the ideals of knowledge which we repeat mechanically every day.

Let Ramniklal go to Siddhapur, tour the surrounding villages and examine the conditions of the women there. He told me that this was two or three days' work. The women should be paid at the normal rate, and they should agree to learn carding. There is one Chhotubhai there who is ready to look after this work. I am not hopeful of anything coming out of this, but it is better that we examine the possibilities.

Take care and see that the arrangement about someone keeping a watch and sleeping in the office is not neglected. The working of the kitchen ought to become smooth. In any case, attend to the problem of vegetables. Take necessary measures about ghee.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna patro–7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 40

113. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Sunday [*February 3, 1929*][2]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

You have to be very firm and brave. Make all efforts to be self-reliant.

Know all the details about Rasik from Chhaganbhai. You shall not fall ill now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi. G.N. 3318

[1] *Vide* "letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", Februaru 2, 1929.

[2] From the reference to Rasik's illness; *vide* the preceding item.

114. SPEECH IN REPLY TO MUNICIPAL ADDRESS, KARACHI

February 3, 1929

Replying to the address[1], Gandhiji, speaking in Hindi, thanked the Municipality for its address full of warm and affectionate appreciation. He also thanked the Parsi ladies who had prepared a beautiful khadi garland and a bouquet that were presented to him. He acknowledged that the Parsis had always been most kind towards him wherever he happened to go and wherever they were to be found. It was therefore no surprise to him to receive those tokens of affection.

Adverting to the municipal administration he said that the fact that Mr. Jamshed Mehta was at its head was the guarantee of the administrative efficiency and purity of the Municipality. He was glad that the franchise qualification was fairly low but he endorsed the hope of the councillors that at no distant time they would have adult suffrage which was becoming daily recognized and that purely monetary test, however low it was, was an indifferent and inadequate makeshift which excluded many worthy citizens from exercising their undoubted right of administering municipal affairs through the elected representatives. He was glad to note that the Municipality was alive to the elementary needs of the citizens.

Referring to the attempts which were being made to ensure pure milk supply in the city he said that he was sure that Karachi had enough talent and money to embark upon a proper dairy system. The supply of pure milk and pure ghee especially for the aged and the infants in the cities of India was a daily felt want and he would be glad if Karachi would give a lead to all municipalities of India. It would be regarded as a matter of shame for any city not to have a proper supply of pure milk and ghee. He wished the Municipality every success.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 5-2-1929

[1] Read out by Jamshed Mehta, President of the Karachi Municipality

115. AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY OR THE STORY OF MY EXPERIMENTS WITH TRUTH[1]

INTRODUCTION

Four or five years ago, at the instance of some of my nearest co-workers, I agreed to write my autobiography. I made the start, but scarcely had I turned over the first sheet when riots broke out in Bombay[2] and the work remained at a standstill. Then followed a series

[1] The chapters, in Gujarati, under the title "Experiments with Truth or an Autobiography", appeared serially in the issues of *Navajivan*, beginning on November 29, 1925 and ending on February 3, 1929. The *Autobiography* as a whole has therefore been placed under this last date. English translations of these chapters appeared simultaneously in the issues of *Young India*, and were reproduced weekly by *Indian Opinion* in South Africa and *Unity* in the U.S.A.

The first edition of *An Autobiography* came out in two volumes. The first containing three parts was issued in 1927 and the second, containing parts IV and V, in 1929. The second edition, in one volume, was issued in 1940. For the translator's and publisher's notes to these editions, *vide* Appendix to *An Autobiography* "A. Translator's Preface to First Edition of the Autobiography (Vol. 1), "B. Translator's Preface to the Second Edition of the Autobiography", "Publisher's Note to Vol. I of the First Edition of the Autobiography"and "Publisher's Note to Vol. II of the First Edition of the Autobiography".

The English translations by Mahadev Desai and, for chapters XXIX-XLIII of Part V, by Pyarelal were revised by Gandhiji for subject-matter and by Mirabehn for language. For the second edition, the translation was further revised by a "revered friend who, among many other things, has the reputation of being an eminent English scholar". Before undertaking the task, he had made it a condition—which Mahadev Desai had accepted—that his name should on no account be given out. This friend was V. S. Srinivasa Sastri who, in a letter to Mahadev Desai, 28-3-1935, wrote: "I am at work on the *Auto*, and making good progress." The text reproduced here is that of the second edition thus revised.

Besides two editions and eight reprints in English, the Navajivan Trust have brought out several editions of the work in Gujarati, Hindi and Marathi. They have also issued abridged editions in Gujarati and Hindi. By the end of 1967 they had issued 4,66,000 copies. Other Indian publishers have brought out abridged or translated editions in Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, English and Sanskrit. Foreign publishers have issued editions in the English, Spanish, Portuguese, French, German, Polish, Russian, Swedish, Arabic, Turkish and Serbocroat languages and in Braille for English. An American firm published *Mahatma Gandhi—His Own Story* edited by C. F. Andrews, which combined portions

[2] On 17-11-1921. *Vide* "A Deep Stain", November 18, 1921 and "Appeal to Bombay Citizens", November 19, 1921.

of events which culminated in my imprisonment at Yeravda[1] Sjt. Jairamdas[2], who was one of my fellow-prisoners there, asked me to put everything else on one side and finish writing the autobiography. I replied that I had already framed a programme of study for myself, and that I could not think of doing anything else until this course was complete. I should[T1] indeed have finished the autobiography had I gone through[T2] my full term of imprisonment at Yeravda[T3], for there was still a year left to complete the task, when I was discharged. Swami Anand[3] has now repeated the proposal, and as I have finished the history of Satyagraha in South Africa, I am tempted to undertake the autobiography for *Navajivan*. The Swami wanted me to write it separately for publication as a book. But I have no spare time. I could ony write a chapter week by week. Something has to be written for *Navajivan* every week. Why should it not be the autobiography ? The Swami agreed to the proposal, and here am I hard at work.

But a God-fearing friend had his doubts, which he shared with me on my day of silence. "What has set you on this adventure ?", he asked. "Writing an autobiography is a practice peculiar to the West. I know of nobody in the East having written one, except amongst those who have come under Western influence. And what will you write ? Supposing you reject tomorrow the things you hold as principles today[T4], or supposing you revise in the future your plans of today, is it not likely that the men who shape their conduct on the authority of your word, spoken or written, may be misled ? Don't you think it would be better[T5] not to write anything like an autobiography, at any rate just yet ?"

This argument had some effect on me. But it is not my purpose to attempt a real autobiography. I simply want to tell the story of my numerous experiments with truth, and as my life consists of nothing but those experiments, it is true that the story will take the shape of an aut-obiography. But I shall not mind, if every page of it speaks only

[1] Gandhiji was arrested in Ahmedabad on the night of March 10, 1922, sentenced to six years' imprisonment on March 18, 1922, brought to Yeravda Prison on March 21, 1922, and released on February 5, 1924

[2] Jairamdas Doulatram (b. 1892), General Secretary, Indian National Congress, 1931-34; later Governor of Bihar, of Assam and Union Minister for Food.

[T] This and other notes regarding translation from the Gujarati original are marked [T1], [T2], etc., and are given in Appendix to *An Autobiography* "Translation Notes for the Autobiography".

[3] Swami Anandanand managed the affairs of the Navajivan Press.

This argument had some effect on me. But it is not my purpose to attempt a real autobiography. I simply want to tell the story of my numerous experiments with truth, and as my life consists of nothing but those experiments, it is true that the story will take the shape of an aut-obiography. But I shall not mind, if every page of it speaks only of my experiments. I believe, or at any rate flatter myself with the belief, that a connected account of all these experiments will not be without benefit to the reader. My experiments in the political field are now known, not only to India, but to a certain extent to the 'civilized' world. For me, they have not much value; and the title of 'Mahatma' that they have won for me has, therefore, even less. Often the title has deeply pained me; and there is not a moment I can recall when it may be said to have tickled me. But I should certainly like to narrate my experiments in the spiritual field which are known only to myself, and from which I have derived such power as I possess for working in the political field. If the experiments are really spiritual, then there can be no room for self-praise. They can only add to my humility. The more I reflect and look back on the past, the more vividly do I feel my limitations.

What I want to achieve—what I have been striving and pining to achieve these thirty years—is self-realization, to see God face to face, to attain *moksha*.[1] I live and move and have my being in pursuit of this goal. All that I do by way of speaking and writing, and all my ventures in the political field, are directed to this same end. But as I have all along believed that what is possible for one is possible for all, my experiments have not been conducted in the closet, but in the open; and I do not think that this fact detracts from their spiritual value. There are some things which are known only to oneself and one's Maker. These are clearly incommunicable[T6]. The experiments I am about to relate are not such. But they are spiritual, or rather moral; for the essence of religion is morality.

Only those matters of religion[T7] that can be comprehended as much by children as by older people, will be included in this story. If I can narrate them in a dispassionate and humble spirit, many other experimenters will find in them provision for their onward march. Far be it from me to claim any degree of perfection for these experiments. I claim for them nothing more than does a scientist who, though he conducts his experiments with the utmost accuracy, forethought and minuteness, never claims any finality about his con-clusions, but keeps an open mind regarding them. I have gone through deep self-introspection, searched myself through and through, and

[1] Literally,'liberation'; freedom from the phenomenal cycle of birth and death.

examined and analysed every psychological situation. Yet I am far from claiming any finality or infallibility about my conclusions. One claim I do indeed make and it is this. For me they appear to be absolutely correct, and seem for the time being to be final. For if they were not, I should base no action on them. But at every step I have carried out the process of acceptance or rejection and acted accordingly. And so long as my acts satisfy my reason and my heart, I must firmly adhere to my original conclusions.

If I had only to discuss academic principles, I should clearly not attempt an autobiography. But my purpose being to give an account of various practical applications of these principles, I have given the chapters I propose to write[T8] the title of *The Story of My Experiments with Truth.* These will of course include experiments with non-violence, celibacy and other principles of conduct believed to be distinct from truth. But for me, truth is the sovereign principle, which includes num-erous other principles. This truth is not only truthfulness in word, but truthfulness in thought also, and not only the relative truth of our conception, but the Absolute Truth, the Eternal Principle, that is God. There are innumerable definitions of God, because His manifestations are innumerable. They overwhelm me with wonder and awe and for a moment stun me. But I worship God as Truth only. I have not yet found Him, but I am seeking after Him. I am prepared to sacrifice the things dearest to me in pursuit of this quest. Even if the sacrifice demanded be my very life, I hope I may be prepared to give it. But as long as I have not realized this Absolute Truth, so long must I hold by the relative truth as I have conceived it. That relative truth must, meanwhile, be my beacon, my shield and buckler. Though this path is strait and narrow and sharp as the razor's edge, for me it has been the quickest and easiest. Even my Himalayan blunders have seemed trifling to me because I have kept strictly to this path. For the path has saved me from coming to grief[T9] , and I have gone forward according to my light. Often in my progress I have had faint glimpses of the Absolute Truth, God, and daily the conviction is growing upon me that He alone is real and all else is unreal. Let those, who wish[T10], realize how the conviction has grown upon me; let them share my experiments and share also my conviction if they can. The further conviction has been growing upon me that whatever is possible for me is possible even for a child, and I have sound reasons for saying so. The instruments for the quest of truth are as simple as they are difficult. They may appear quite impossible to an arrogant person, and quite possible to an innocent child. The seeker after truth should be humble than the dust. The world crushes the dust under its feet, but the seeker after truth should so humble himself that even the dust

could crush him. Only then, and not till then, will he have a glimpse of truth. The dialogue[1] between Vasishtha and Vishwamitra makes this abundantly clear. Christianity and Islam also amply bear it out.

If anything that I write in these pages should strike the reader as being touched with pride, then he must take it that there is something wrong with my quest, and that my glimpses are no more than mirage. Let hundreds like me perish, but let truth prevail. Let us not reduce the standard of truth even by a hair's breadth for judging erring mortals [T11] like myself.

I hope and pray that no one will regard the advice interspersed in the following chapters as authoritative. The experiments narrated should be regarded as illustrations, in the light of which everyone may carry on his own experiments according to his own inclinations and capacity. I trust that to this limited extent the illustrations will be really helpful; because I am not going either to conceal or understate any ugly things that must be told. I hope to acquaint the reader fully with all my faults and errors. My purpose is to describe experiments in the science of satyagraha, not to say how good I am. In judging myself I shall try to be as harsh as truth, as I want others also to be[T12]. Measuring myself by that standard I must exclaim with Surdas :

Where is there a wretch
So wicked and loathsome as I ?
I have forsaken my Maker,
So faithless have I been.

For it is an unbroken torture to me that I am still so far from Him, Who as I fully know, governs every breath of my life, and Whose offspring I am[T13]. I know that it is the evil passions within that keep me so far from Him, and yet I cannot get away from them.

But I must close. I can only take up the actual story in the next chapter.

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI, M. K. GANDHI
November 29, 1925

PART I

CHAPTER I : BIRTH AND PARENTAGE

The Gandhis belong to the Bania caste and seem to have been originally grocers. But for three generations, from my grandfather, they have been Prime Ministers in several Kathiawad States.[2]

[1] Ramayana, "Balakanda"
[2] *Vide* "Open Letter to Kathiawar Princes", August 8, 1921.

Uttamchand Gandhi[1], alias Ota Gandhi, my grandfather, must have been a man of principle. State intrigues compelled him to leave Porbandar, where he was Diwan, and to seek refuge in Junagadh. There he saluted the Nawab with the left hand. Someone, noticing the apparent discourtesy, asked for an explanation, which was given thus : 'The right hand is already pledged to Porbandar.'

Ota Gandhi married a second time, having lost his first wife. He had four sons by his first wife and two by his second wife. I do not think that in my childhood I ever felt or knew that these sons of Ota Gandhi were not all of the same mother. The fifth of these six brothers was Karamchand Gandhi, alias Kaba Gandhi, and the sixth was Tulsidas Gandhi. Both these brothers were Prime Ministers in Porbandar, one after the other. Kaba Gandhi was my father. He was[T1] a member of the Rajasthanik Court. It is now extinct, but in those days it was a very influential body for settling disputes between the chiefs and their fellow-clansmen.[T2] He was for some time Prime Minister in Rajkot and then in Vankaner. He was a pensioner of the Rajkot State when he died.

Kaba Gandhi married four times in succession,[T3] having lost his wife each time by death. He had two daughters by his first and second marriages. His last wife, Putlibai, bore him a daughter and three sons, I being the youngest.

My father was a lover of his clan, truthful, brave and gene- rous, but short-tempered. To a certain extent he might have been given to carnal pleasures. For he married for the fourth time when he was over forty. But he was incorruptible and had earned a name for strict impartiality in his family as well as outside. His loyalty to the State was well known. An Assistant Political Agent spoke insultingly of the Rajkot Thakore Saheb, his chief, and he stood up to the insult. The Agent was angry and asked Kaba Gandhi to apologize. This he refused to do and was therefore kept under detention for a few hours. But when the Agent saw that Kaba Gandhi was adamant, he ordered him to be released.[2]

My father never had any ambition to accumulate riches and left us very little property.

He had no education, save that of experience. At best, he might be said to have read up to the fifth Gujarati standard. Of history and

[1] For the genealogical table, *vide* Appendix to *An Autobiography* "Genealogical Table of Gandhiji".

[2] *Vide*, however,"Injustice to Kathiawaris", June 1, 1924.

geography he was innocent. But his rich experience of practical affairs stood him in good stead in the solution of the most intricate questions and in managing hundreds of men. Of religious training he had very little, but he had had that kind of religious culture which frequent visits to temples and listening to religious discourses make available to many Hindus. In his last days he began reading the *Gita* at the instance of a learned Brahmin friend of the family, and he used to repeat aloud some verses every day at the time of worship.

The outstanding impression my mother has left on my memory is that of saintliness[1]. She was deeply religious. She would not think of taking her meals without her daily prayers[T4]. Going to *Haveli*—the Vaishnava temple—was one of her daily duties. As far as my memory can go back, I do not remember her having ever missed the *Chaturmas*[2]. She would take the hardest vows and keep them without flinching. Illness was no excuse for relaxing them. I can recall her once falling ill when she was observing the *Chandrayana*[3] vow, but the illness was not allowed to interrupt the observance. To keep two or three consecutive fasts was nothing to her. Living on one meal a day during *Chaturmas* was a habit with her. Not content with that, she fasted every alternate day during one *Chaturmas*. During another *Chaturmas* she vowed not to have food without seeing the sun. We children on those days would stand, staring at the sky, waiting to announce the appearance of the sun to our mother. Everyone knows that at the height of the rainy season the sun often does not condescend to show his face. And I remember days when, at his

[1] Mahadev Desai has reported the following conversation with Gandhiji in Yeravda Prison in 1932; "In the morning while examining the proofs of the abridged edition of *An Autobiography*, I asked Bapu; 'You have spoken of your mother's austere vows such as *ekadashi, chaturmas kandrayana*, etc., but you have used the word saintliness. Do you not wish to say penance instead of saintliness here ? Cannot the word austerity be put in ?'

Bapu : No. I have used the word saintliness deliberately. In penance there may be external renunciation, endurance and even hypocrisy. But saintliness is an inner quality. My mother's inner life would reflect itself in her austerity. If you notice any purity in me, that is not my father's but my mother's. My mother died at the age of forty, so I have seen her in the prime of life, but I have never seen in her any frivolity, recourse to beauty aids or interest in the pleasures of life or hypocrisy. The one lasting impression that she left on my mind is that of saintliness." [From Gujarati] *Mahadevbhaini Diary I*, p. 67.

[2] Literally, 'a period of four months'. A vow of fasting and semi-fasting during the four months of the rains.

[3] A sort of fast in which the daily quantity of food is increased or diminished according as the moon waxes or wanes.

sudden appearance, we would rush and announce it to her. She would run out to see with her own eyes, but by that time the fugitive sun would be gone, thus depriving her of her meal. “That does not matter,” she should say cheerfully, “God did not want me to eat today.” And then she would return to her round of duties.

My mother had strong common sense. She was well informed about all matters of State, and ladies of the court thought highly of her intelligence. Often I would accompany her, exercising the privilege of childhood, and I still remember many lively discussions she had with the widowed mother of the Thakore Saheb.

Of these parents I was born at Porbandar, otherwise known as Sudamapuri, on[T5] the 2nd October,1869. I passed my childhood in Porbandar. I recollect having been put to school. It was with some difficulty that I got through the multiplication tables. The fact that I recollect nothing more of those days than having learnt, in company with other boys, to call our teacher all kinds of names, would strongly suggest that my intellect must have been sluggish, and my memory raw[T6].

CHAPTER II : CHILDHOOD

I must have been about seven when my father left Porbandar for Rajkot to become a member of the Rajasthanik Court. There I was put into a primary school, and I can well recollect those days, including the names and other particulars of the teachers who taught me. As at Porbandar, so here, there is hardly anything to note about my studies. I could only have been a mediocre student. From this school I went to the suburban school and thence to the high school, having already reached my twelfth year. I do not remember having ever told a lie during this short period, either to teachers or to my school-mates[T1]. I used to be very shy and avoided all company. My books and my lessons were my sole companions. To be at school at the stroke of the hour and to run back home as soon as the school closed—that was my daily habit. I literally ran back, because I could not bear to talk to anybody. I was even afraid lest anyone should poke fun at me.

There is an incident which occurred at the examination during my first year at the high school and which is worth recording. Mr. Giles, the Educational Inspector, had come on a visit of inspection. He had set us five words to write as a spelling exercise. One of the words was ‘kettle’. I had mis-spelt it. The teacher tried to prompt me with the point of his boot, but I would not be prompted. It was beyond me to see that he wanted me to copy the spelling from my neighbour’s slate, for I had thought that the teacher was there to supervise us against copying. The result was that all the boys, except myself, were found to have spelt every word correctly. Only I had been stupid. The

teacher tried later to bring this stupidity home to me, but without effect. I never could learn the art of 'copying'.

Yet the incident did not in the least diminish my respect for my teacher. I was by nature, blind to the faults of elders. Later I came to know of many other failings of this teacher, but my regard for him remained the same. For I had learnt to carry out the orders of elders, not to scan their actions.

Two other incidents belonging to the same period have always clung to my memory. As a rule I had a distaste for any reading beyond my school books. The daily lessons had to be done, because I disliked being taken to task by my teacher as much as I disliked deceiving him. Therefore I would do the lessons, but often without my mind in them. Thus when even the lessons could not be done properly, there was of course no question of any extra reading. But somehow my eyes fell on a book purchased by my father. It was *Shravana Pitribhakti Nataka* (a play about Shravana's devotion to his parents). I read it with intense interest. There came to our place about the same time itinerant showmen. One of the pictures I was shown was of Shravana carrying, by means of slings fitted for his shoulders, his blind parents on a pilgrimage. The book and the picture left an indelible impression on my mind. Here is an example for you to copy,' I said to myself. The agonized lament of the parents over Shravan's death is still fresh in my memory. The melting tune moved me deeply, and I played it on a concertina which my father had purchased for me.

There was a similar incident connected with another play. Just about this time, I had secured my father's permission to see a play performed by a certain dramatic company. This play—*Harishchandra*[1] —captured my heart. I could never be tired of seeing it. But how often should I be permitted to go ? It haunted me and I must have acted Harishchandra[T2] to myself times without number. 'Why should not all be truthful like Harishchandra?' was the question I asked myself day and night. To follow truth and to go through all the ordeals Harishchandra went through was the one ideal it inspired in me. I literally believed in the story of Harishchandra[T3]. The thought of it all often made me weep. My common sense tells me today that Harishchandra could not have been a historical character. Still both Harishchandra and Shravana are living realities for me, and I am sure I should be moved as before if I were to read those plays again today.

[1] King of Ayodhya who suffered great hardships for the sake of his pledge and, while in the service of a *Chandala*, got ready to kill his wife Taramati in the performance of his duty.

CHAPTER III : CHILD MARRIAGE

Much as I wish that I had not to write this chapter, I know that I shall have to swallow many such bitter draughts in the course of this narrative. And I cannot do otherwise, if I claim to be a worshipper of Truth. It is my painful duty to have to record here my marriage at the age of thirteen. As I see the youngsters of the same age about me who are under my care, and think of my own marriage, I am inclined to pity myself and to congratulate them on having escaped my lot. I can see no moral argument in support of such a preposterously early marriage.

Let the reader make no mistake. I was married, not betrothed. For in Kathiwad there are two distinct rites—betrothal and marriage. Betrothal is a preliminary promise on the part of the parents of the boy and the girl to join them in marriage, and it is not inviolable. The death of the boy entails no widowhood on the girl. It is an agreement purely between the parents, and the children have no concern with it. Often they are not even informed of it. It appears that I was betrothed thrice, though without my knowledge. I was told that two girls chosen for me had died in turn, and therefore I infer that I was betrothed three times. I have a faint recollection, however, that the third betrothal took place in my seventh year. But I do not recollect having been informed about it.[T1] In the present chapter I am talking about my marriage, of which I have the clearest recollection.

It will be remembered that we were three brothers. The first was already married. The elders decided to marry my second brother, who was two or three years my senior, a cousin, possibly a year older, and me, all at the same time. In doing so there was no thought of our welfare, much less our wishes. It was purely a question of their own convenience and economy.

Marriage among Hindus is no simple matter. The parents of the bride and the bridegroom often bring themselves to ruin over it. They waste their substance, they waste their time. Months are taken up over the preparations—in making clothes and ornaments and in preparing budgets for dinners. Each tries to outdo the other in the number and variety of courses to be prepared. Women, whether they have a voice or no, sing themselves hoarse, even get ill, and disturb the peace of their neighbours. These in their turn quietly put up with all the turmoil and bustle, all the dirt and filth, representing the remains of the feasts, because they know that a time will come when they also will be behaving in the same manner.

It would be better, thought my elders, to have all this bother over at one and the same time. Less expense and greater *eclat*. For money

could be freely spent if it had only to be spent once instead of thrice. My father and my uncle were both old, and we were the last children they had to marry. It is likely that they wanted to have the last best time of their lives. In view of all these considerations, a triple wedding was decided upon, and as I have said before, months were taken up in preparation for it.

It was only through these preparations that we got warning of the coming event. I do not think it meant to me anything more than the prospect of good clothes to wear, drum beating, marriage processions, rich dinners and a strange girl to play with. The carnal desire came later.[T2] I propose to draw the curtain over my shame, except for a few details worth recording. To these I shall come later. But even they[T3] have little to do with the central idea I have kept before me in writing this story.

So my brother and I were both taken to Porbandar from Rajkot. There are some amusing details of the preliminaries to the final drama—e.g., smearing our bodies all over with turmeric paste—but I must omit them.

My father was a Diwan, but nevertheless a servant, and all the more so because he was in favour with the Thakore Saheb. The latter would not let him go until the last moment. And when he did so, he ordered for my father special stage-coaches, reducing the journey by two days. But the fates had willed otherwise. Porbandar is 120 miles from Rajkot—a cart journey of five days. My father did the distance in three, but the coach toppled over in the third stage, and he sustained severe injuries. He arrived bandaged all over. Both his and our interest in the coming event was half destroyed, but the ceremony had to be gone through. For how could the marriage dates be changed ? However, I forgot my grief over my father's injuries in the childish amusement of the wedding.

I was devoted to my parents. But no less was I devoted to the passions that flesh is heir to.[T4] I had yet to learn that all happiness and pleasure should be sacrificed in devoted service to my parents. And yet, as though by way of punishment for my desire for pleasures, an incident happened, which has ever since rankled in my mind and which I will relate later. Nishkulanand[1] sings :'Renunciation of objects, without the renunciation of desires, is short-lived, however hard you may try.' Whenever I sing this song or hear it sung, this bitter untoward incident rushes to my memory and fills me with shame.

[1] A Gujarati poet of the Swaminarayan cult

My father put on a brave face in spite of his injuries, and took full part in the wedding. As I think of it, I can even today call before my mind's eye the places where he sat as he went through the different details of the ceremony. Little did I dream then that one day I should severely criticize my father for having married me as a child. Everything on that day seemed to me right and proper and pleasing. There was also my own eagerness to get married. And as everything that my father did then struck me as beyond reproach, the recollection of those things is fresh in my memory. I can picture to myself, even today, how we sat on our wedding dais, how we performed the *Sapta-padi*[1], how we, the newly wedded husband and wife, put the sweet *kansar*[2] into each other's mouth, and how we began to live together, and oh! that first night. Two innocent children all unwittingly hurled themselves into the ocean of life. My brother's wife had thorough- ly coached me about my behaviour on the first night. I do not know who had coached my wife. I have never asked her about it, nor am I inclined to do so now. The reader may be sure that we were too nervous to face each other. We were certainly too shy. How was I to talk to her, and what was I to say ? The coaching could not carry me far. But no coaching is really necessary in such matters. The impressions of the former birth are potent enough to make all coaching superfluous. We gradually began to know each other, and to speak freely together. We were the same age. But I took no time in assuming the authority of a husband.

CHAPTER IV : PLAYING THE HUSBAND

About the time of my marriage, little pamphlets costing a pice, or a pie (I now forget how much), used to be issued, in which conjugal love, thrift, child marriages, and other such subjects were discussed. Whenever I came across any of these, I used to go through them cover to cover, and it was a habit with me to forget what I did not like, and to carry out in practice whatever I liked. Lifelong faithfulness to the wife, inculcated in these booklets as the duty of the husband, remained permanently imprinted on my heart. Furthermore, the passion for truth was innate in me, and to be false to her was therefore out of the question. And then there was very little chance of my being faithless at that tender age.

But the lesson of faithfulness had also an untoward effect. 'If I

[1] A ceremony consisting of seven steps in which a Hindu bride and bridegroom walk together, making at the same time promises of mutual fidelity and devotion, after which the marriage becomes irrevocable. For details, *vide* "With Bare Religious Rites", March 7, 1926.

[2] A wheat preparation which the pair partake of after the ceremony

should be pledged to be faithful to my wife, she also should be pledged to be faithful to me,' I said to myself. The thought made me a jealous husband. Her duty was easily converted into my right to exact faithfulness from her, and if it had to be exacted, I should be watchfully tenacious of the right. I had absolutely no reason to suspect my wife's fidelity, but jealousy does not wait for reasons. I must needs be for ever on the look-out regarding her movements, and therefore she could not go anywhere without my permission. This sowed the seeds of a bitter quarrel between us. The restraint was virtually a sort of imprisonment. And Kasturbai was not the girl to brook any such thing. She made it a point to go out whenever and wherever she liked. More restraint on my part resulted in more liberty being taken by her and in my getting more and more cross. Refusal to speak to one another thus became the order of the day with us, married children. I think it was quite innocent of Kasturbai to have taken those liberties with my restrictions. How could a guileless girl brook any restraint on going to the temple or on going on visits to friends ? If I had the right to impose restrictions on her, had not she also a similar right ? All this is clear to me today. But at that time I had to make good my authority as a husband !

Let not the reader think, however, that ours was a life of unrelieved bitterness. For my severities were all based on love. I wanted to *make* my wife an ideal wife. My ambition was to *make* her live a pure life, learn what I learnt, and identify her life and thought with mine.

I do not know whether Kasturbai had any such ambition. She was illiterate. By nature she was simple, independent, persevering and, with me at least, reticent. She was not impatient of her ignorance and I do not recollect my studies having ever spurred her to go in for a similar adventure. I fancy, therefore, that my ambition was all one-sided. My passion was entirely centred on one woman, and I wanted it to be reciprocated. But even if there were no reciprocity, it could not be all unrelieved misery because there was active love on one side at least.

I must say I was passionately fond of her. Even at school I used to think of her, and the thought of nightfall and our subsequent meeting was ever haunting me. Separation was unbearable. I used to keep her awake till late in the night with my idle talk. If with this devouring passion there had not been in me a burning attachment to duty, I should either have fallen a prey to disease and premature death, or have sunk into a burdensome existence. But the appointed tasks had to be gone through every morning, and lying to anyone was out of the question. It was this last thing[T1] that saved me from many a pitfall.

I have already said that Kasturbai was illiterate. I was very anxious to teach her, but lustful love left me no time. For one thing the teaching had to be done against her will, and that too at night. I dared not meet her in the presence of the elders, much less talk to her. Kathiawad had then, and to a certain extent has even today, its own peculiar, useless and barbarous *purdah*. Circumstances were thus unfavourable. I must therefore confess that most of my efforts to instruct Kasturbai in our youth were unsuccessful. And when I awoke from the sleep of lust, I had already launched forth into public life, which did not leave me much spare time. I failed likewise to instruct her through private tutors. As a result, Kasthurbai can now with difficulty write simple letters and understand simple Gujarati. I am sure that, had my love for her been absolutely untainted with lust, she would be a learned lady today; for I could then have conquered her dislike for studies. I know that nothing is impossible for pure love.

I have mentioned one circumstance that more or less saved me from the disasters of lustful love. There is another worth noting. Numerous examples have convinced me that God ultimately saves him whose motive is pure. Along with the cruel custom of child marriages, Hindu society has another custom which to a certain extent diminishes the evils of the former. Parents do not allow young couples to stay together long. The child-wife spends more than half her time at her father's place. Such was the case with us. That is to say, during the first five years of our married life (from the age of 13 to 18), we could not have lived together longer than an aggregate period of three years. We would hardly have spent six months together, when there would be a call to my wife from her parents. Such calls were very unwelcome in those days, but they saved us both. At the age of eighteen I went to England, and this meant a long and healthy spell of separation. Even after my return from England we hardly stayed together longer than six months. For I had to run up and down between Rajkot and Bombay. Then came the call from South Africa, and that found me already fairly free from the carnal appetite.

CHAPTER V : AT THE HIGH SCHOOL

I have already said that I was learning at the high school when I was married. We three brothers were learning at the same school. The eldest brother was in a much higher class, and the brother who was married at the same time as I was, only one class ahead of me. Marriage resulted in both of us wasting a year. Indeed the result was even worse for my brother, for he gave up studies altogether. Heaven knows how many youths are in the same plight as he. Only in our present Hindu society do studies and marriage go thus hand in hand.

My studies were continued. I was not regarded as a dunce at the high school. I always enjoyed the affection of my teachers. Certificates of progress and character used to be sent to the parents every year. I never had a bad certificate. In fact I even won prizes after I passed out of the second standard. In the fifth and sixth I obtained scholarships of rupees four and ten respectively, an achievement for which I have to thank good luck more than my merit. For the scholarships were not open to all, but reserved for the best boys amongst those coming from the Sorath Division of Kathiawad. And in those days there could not have been many boys from Sorath in a class of forty to fifty.

My own recollection is that I had not any high regard for my ability. I used to be astonished whenever I won prizes and scholarships. But I very jealously guarded my character. The least little blemish drew tears from my eyes. When I merited, or seemed to the teacher to merit, a rebuke, it was unbearable for me. I remember having once received corporal punishment. I did not so much mind the punishment, as the fact that it was considered my desert. I wept piteously. That was when I was in the first or second standard. There was another such incident during the time when I was in the seventh standard. Dorabji Edulji Gimi was the head master then. He was popular among boys, as he was a disciplinarian, a man of method and a good teacher. He had made gymnastics and cricket compulsory for boys of the upper standards. I disliked both. I never took party in any exercise, cricket or football, before they were made compulsory. My shyness was one of the reasons for this aloofness, which I now see was wrong. I then had the false notion that gymnastics had nothing to do with education. Today I know that physical training should have as much place in the curriculum as mental training.

I may mention, however, that I was none the worse for abstaining from exercise. That was because I had read in books about the benefits of long walks in the open air, and having liked the advice, I had[T1] formed a habit of taking walks, which has still remained with me. These walks gave me a fairly hardy constitution.

The[T2] reason of my dislike for gymnastics was my keen desire to serve as nurse to my father. As soon as the school closed, I would hurry home and begin serving him. Compulsory exercise came directly in the way of this service. I requested Mr. Gimi to exempt me from gymnastics so that I might be free to serve my father. But he would not listen to me. Now it so happened that one Saturday, when we had school in the morning, I had to go from home to the school for gymnastics at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. I had no watch, and the clouds deceived me. Before I reached the school the boys had all left.

The next day Mr. Gimi, examining the roll, found me marked absent. Being asked the reason for absence, I told him what had happened. He refused to believe me and ordered me to pay a fine of one or two annas (I cannot now recall how much).

I was convicted of lying ! That deeply pained me. How was I to prove my innocence ? There was no way. I cried in deep anguish. I saw that a man of truth must also be a man of care. This was the first and last instance of my carelessness in school. I have a faint recollection that I finally succeeded in getting the fine remitted. The exemption from exercise was of course obtained, as my father wrote himself to the head master saying that he wanted me at home after school.

But though I was none the worse for having neglected exercise,[T3] I am still paying the penalty of another neglect. I do not know whence I got the notion that good handwriting was not a necessary part of education, but I retained it until I went to England. When later, especially in South Africa, I saw the beautiful handwriting of lawyers and young men born and educated in South Africa, I was ashamed of myself and repented of my neglect. I saw that bad handwriting should be regarded as a sign of an imperfect education. I tried later to improve mine, but it was too late. I could never repair the neglect of my youth. Let every young man and woman be warned by my example, and understand that good handwriting is a necessary part of education.[T4] I am now of opinion that children should first be taught the art of drawing before learning how to write. Let the child learn his letters by observation as he does different objects, such as flowers, birds, etc., and let him learn handwriting only after he has learnt to draw objects. He will then write a beautifully formed hand.

Two more reminiscences of my school days[T5] are worth recording. I had lost one year because of my marriage, and the teacher wanted me to make good the loss by skipping a class—a privilege usually allowed to industrious boys. I therefore had only six months in the third standard and was promoted to the fourth after the examinations which are followed by the summer vacation. English became the medium of instruction in most subjects from the fourth standard. I found myself completely at sea. Geometry was a new subject in which I was not particularly strong, and the English medium made it still more difficult for me. The teacher taught the subject very well, but I could not follow him. Often I would lose heart and think of going back to the third standard, feeling that the packing of two years' studies into a single year was too ambitious. But this would discredit not only me, but also the teacher; because, counting on my industry, he had recommended my promotion. So the fear of the double discredit kept me at my post. When, however, with much effort

I reached the thirteenth proposition of Euclid, the utter simplicity of the subject was suddenly revealed to me. A subject which only required a pure and simple use of one's reasoning powers could not be difficult. Ever since that time geometry has been both easy and interesting for me.

Samskrit, however, proved a harder task. In geometry there was nothing to memorize, whereas in Samskrit, I thought, everything had to be learnt by heart. This subject also was commenced from the fourth standard. As soon as I entered the sixth I became disheartened. The teacher was a hard taskmaster, anxious, as I thought, to force the boys. There was a sort of rivalry going on between the Samskrit and the Persian teachers. The Persian teacher was lenient. The boys used to talk among themselves that Persian was very easy and the Persian teacher very good and considerate to the students. The 'easiness' tempted me and one day I sat in the Persian class. The Samskrit teacher was grieved. He called me to his side and said: 'How can you forget that you are the son of a Vaishnava[1] father ? Won't you learn the language of your own religion ? If you have any difficulty, why not come to me ? I want to teach you students Samskrit to the best of my ability. As you proceed further, you will find in it things of absorbing interest. You should not lose heart. Come and sit again in the Samskrit class.'

This kindness put me to shame. I could not disregard my teacher's affection. Today I cannot but think with gratitude of Krishnashankar Pandya. For if I had not acquired the little Samskrit that I learnt then, I should have found it difficult to take any interest in our sacred books. In fact I deeply regret that I was not able to acquire a more thorough knowledge of the language, because I have since realized that every Hindu boy and girl should possess sound Samskrit learning.

It is now my opinion that in all Indian curricula of higher education there should be a place for Hindi, Samskrit, Persian, Arabic and English, besides of course the vernacular. This big list need not frighten anyone. If our education were more systematic, and the boys free from the burden of having to learn their subjects through a foreign medium, I am sure learning all these languages would not be an irksome task, but a perfect pleasure. A scientific knowledge of one language makes a knowledge of other languages comparatively easy.

In reality, Hindi, Gujarati and Samskrit may be regarded as one language, and Persian and Arabic also as one. Though Persian

[1] Member of the Vaishnava sect; a worshipper of Vishnu

belongs to the Aryan, and Arabic to the Semitic family of languages, there is a close relationship between Persian and Arabic, because both claim their full growth through the rise of Islam. Urdu I have not regarded as a distinct language, because it has adopted the Hindi grammar and its vocabulary is mainly Persian and Arabic, and he who would learn good Urdu must learn Persian and Arabic, as one who would learn good Gujarati, Hindi, Bengali or Marathi must learn Samskrit.

CHAPTER VI : A TRAGEDY

Amongst my few friends at the high school I had, at different times, two who might be called intimate. One of these friendships did not last long, though I never forsook my friend. He forsook me, because I made friends with the other[1]. This latter friendship I regard as a tragedy in my life. It lasted long. I formed it in the spirit of a reformer.

This companion was originally my elder brother's friend. They were classmates. I knew his weaknesses, but I regarded him as a faithful friend. My mother, my eldest brother, and my wife warned me that I was in bad company. I was too proud to heed my wife's warning. But I dared not go against the opinion of my mother and my eldest brother. Nevertheless I pleaded with them saying, 'I know he has the weaknesses you attribute to him, but you do not know his virtues. He cannot lead me astray, as my association with him is meant to reform him. For I am sure that if he reforms his ways, he will be a splendid man. I beg you not to be anxious on my account.'

I do not think this satisfied them, but they accepted my explanation and let me go my way.

I have seen since that I had calculated wrongly[T1]. A reformer can-not afford to have close intimacy with him whom he seeks to reform. True friendship is an identity of souls rarely to be found in this world. Only between like natures can friendship be altogether worthy and endu-ring. Friends react on one another. Hence in friendship there is very little scope for reform. I am of opinion that all exclusive intimacies are to be avoided; for man takes in vice far more readily than virtue. And he who would be friends with God[T2] must remain alone, or make the whole world his friend. I may be wrong, but my effort to cultivate in intimate friendship proved a failure.

A wave of 'reform' was sweeping over Rajkot at the time when I first came across this friend. He informed me that many of our teachers were secretly taking meat and wine. He also named many

[1] Sheikh Mehtab; *vide* "London Diary", November 12, 1888.

well-known people of Rajkot as belonging to the same company. There were also, I was told, some high-school boys among them.

I was surprised and pained. I asked my friend the reason and he explained it thus : 'We are a weak people because we do not eat meat. The English are able to rule over us, because they are meat-eaters. You know how hardy I am, and how great a runner too. It is because I am a meat-eater. Meat-eaters do not have boils or tumours, and even if they sometimes happen to have any, these heal quickly. Our teachers and other distinguished people who eat meat are no fools. They know its virtues. You should do likewise. There is nothing like trying. Try, and see what strength it gives.'

All these pleas on behalf of meat-eating were not advanced at a single sitting. They represent the substance of a long and elaborate argument which my friend was trying to impress upon me from time to time. My elder brother had already fallen. He therefore supported my friend's argument. I certainly looked feeble-bodied by the side of my brother and this friend. They were both hardier, physically stronger, and more daring. This friend's exploits cast a spell over me. He could run long distances and extraordinarily fast. He was an adept in high and long jumping. He could put up with any amount of corporal punishment. He would often display his exploits to me and, as one is always dazzled when he sees in others the qualities that he lacks himself, I was dazzled by this friend's exploits. This was followed by a strong desire to be like him. I could hardly jump or run. Why should not I also be as strong as he ?

Moreover, I was a coward. I used to be haunted by the fear of thieves, ghosts and serpents. I did not dare to stir out of doors at night. Darkness was a terror to me. It was almost impossible for me to sleep in the dark, as I would imagine ghosts coming from one direction, thieves from another and serpents from a third. I could not therefore bear to sleep without a light in the room. How could I disclose my fears to my wife, no child, but already at the threshold of youth, sleeping by my side ? I knew that she had more courage than I, and I felt ashamed of myself. She knew no fear of serpents and ghosts. She could go out anywhere in the dark. My friend knew all these weaknesses of mine. He would tell me that he could hold in his hand live serpents, could defy thieves and did not believe in ghosts. And all this was, of course,[T3] the result of eating meat.

A doggerel of the Gujarati poet Narmad was in vogue amongst us schoolboys, as follows :

> Behold the mighty Englishman
>
> He rules the Indian small,

Because being a meat-eater

He is five cubits tall.[T4]

All this had its due effect on me. I was beaten. It began to grow on me that meat-eating was good, that it would make me strong and daring, and that, if the whole country took to meat-eating, the English could be overcome.

A day was thereupon fixed for beginning the experiment. It had to be conducted in secret.[T5] The Gandhis were Vaishnavas. My parents were particularly staunch Vaishnavas. They would regularly visit the *Haveli*. The family had even its own temples. Jainism was strong in Gujarat, and its influence was felt everywhere and on all occasions. The opposition to and abhorrence of meat-eating that existed in Gujarat among the Jains and Vaishnavas were to be seen nowhere else in India or outside in such strength. These were the traditions in which I was born and bred. And I was extremely devoted to my parents. I knew that the moment they came to know of my having eaten meat, they would be shocked to death. Moreover, my love of truth made me extra cautious.[T6] I cannot say that I did not know then that I should have to deceive my parents if I began eating meat.[T7] But my mind was bent on the 'reform'. It was not a question of pleasing the palate. I did not know that it had a particularly good relish. I wished to be strong and daring and wanted my countrymen also to be such, so that we might defeat the English and make India free. The word 'swaraj' I had not yet heard. But I knew what freedom meant. The frenzy of the 'reform' blinded me. And having ensured secrecy, I persuaded myself that mere hiding the deed from parents was no departure from truth.[T8]

CHAPTER VII : A TRAGEDY (*CONTD.*)

So the day came. It is difficult fully to describe my condition. There were, on the one hand, the zeal for 'reform' and the novelty of making a momentous departure in life. There was, on the other, the shame of hiding like a thief to do this very thing. I cannot say which of the two swayed me more. We went in search of a lonely spot by the river, and there I saw, for the first time in my life—meat. There was baker's bread also. I relished neither. The goat's meat was as tough as leather. I simply could not eat it. I was sick and had to leave off eating.

I had a very bad night afterwards. A horrible nightmare haunted me. Every time I dropped off to sleep it would seem as though a live goat were bleating inside me, and I would jump up full of remorse. But then I would remind myself that meat-eating was a duty and so become more cheerful.

My friend was not a man to give in easily. He now began to cook various delicacies with meat, and dress them neatly. And for dining, no longer was the secluded spot on the river chosen, but a State house, with its dining-hall, and tables and chairs, about which my friend had made arrangements in collusion with the chief cook there.

This bait had its effect. I got over my dislike for bread, forswore my compassion for the goats, and became a relisher of meat-dishes, if not of meat itself. This went on for about a year. But not more than half a dozen meat-feasts were enjoyed in all; because the State house was not available every day, and there was the obvious difficulty about frequently preparing expensive savoury meat-dishes. I had no money to pay for this 'reform'. My friend had therefore always to find the wherewithal. I had no knowledge where he found it.[T1] But find it he did, because he was bent on turning me into a meat-eater[T2]. But even his means must have been limited, and hence these feasts had necessarily to be few and far between.

Whenever I had occasion to indulge in these surreptiitous feasts, dinner at home was out of the question. My mother would naturally ask me to come and take my food and want to know the reason why I did not wish to eat. I would say[T3] to her, 'I have no appetite today; there is something wrong with my digestion.' It was not without compunction that I devised these pretexts. I knew I was lying, and lying to my mother. I also knew that, if my mother and father came to know of my having become a meat-eater, they would be deeply shocked. This knowledge was gnawing at my heart.

Therefore I said to myself : 'Though it is essential to eat meat, and also essential to take up food reform in the country yet deceiving and lying to one's father and mother is worse than not eating meat. In their lifetime, therefore, meat-eating must be out of the question. When they are no more and I have found freedom, I will eat meat openly, but until that moment arrives I will abstain from it.'

This decision I communicated to my friend, and I have never since gone back to meat. My parents never knew that two of their sons had become meat-eaters.

I abjured meat out of the purity of my desire not to lie to my parents, but I did not abjure the company of my friend. My zeal for reforming him had proved disastrous for me, and all the time I was completely unconscious of the fact.

The same company would have led me into faithlessness to my wife. But I was saved by the skin of my teeth.[T4] My friend once took me to a brothel. He sent me in with the necessary instructions. It was all pre-arranged. The bill had already been paid.[T5] I went into the jaws

of sin, but God in His infinite mercy protected me against myself.[T6] I was almost struck blind and dumb in this den of vice. I sat near the woman on her bed, but I was tongue-tied. She naturally lost patience with me, and showed me the door, with abuses and insults. I then felt as though my manhood had been injured, and wished to sink into the ground for shame. But I have ever since given thanks to God for having saved me. I can recall four more similar incidents in my life, and in most of them my good fortune,[T7] rather than any effort on my part, saved me.[1] From a strictly ethical point of view, all these occasions must be regarded as moral lapses; for the carnal desire was there, and it was as good as the act. But from the ordinary point of view, a man who is saved from physically committing sin is regarded as saved. And I was saved only in that sense. There are some actions from which an escape is a godsend both for the man who escapes and for those about him. Man, as soon as he gets back his consciousness of right, is thankful to the Divine mercy for the escape. As we know that a man often succumbs to temptation, however much he may resist it, we also know[T8] that Providence often intercedes and saves him in spite of himself. How all this happens—how far a man is free and how far a creature of circumstances—how far free will comes into play and where fate enters on the scene—all this is a mystery and will remain a mystery.

But to go on with the story. Even this was far from opening my eyes to the viciousness of my friend's company. I therefore had many more bitter draughts in store for me, until my eyes were actually opened by an ocular demonstration of some of his lapses quite unexpected by me. But of them later, as we are proceeding chronologically[T9].

One thing, however, I must mention now, as it pertains to the same period. One of the reasons of my differences with my wife was undoubtedly the company of this friend. I was both a devoted and a jealous husband, and this friend fanned the flame of my suspicions about my wife.[T10] I never could doubt his veracity. And I never have forgiven myself the violence of which I have been guilty in often having pained my wife by acting on his information.[T11] Perhaps only a Hindu wife would tolerate these hardships, and that is why I have regarded woman as an incarnation of tolerance[T12]. A servant wrongly suspected may throw up his job, a son in the same case may leave his father's roof, and a friend may put an end to the friendship. The wife, if she suspects her husband, will keep quiet[T13], but if the husband suspects her, she is ruined. Where is she to go ? A Hindu wife[T14] may not seek divorce in a law-court. Law has no remedy for *her*. And I can

[1] *Vide* "Power of 'Ramanama'", May 17, 1925.

never forget or forgive myself for having driven my wife to that desperation[T15].

The canker of suspicion was rooted out only when I understood ahimsa in all its bearings. I saw then the glory of *brahmacharya*[1] and realized that the wife is not the husband's bondslave, but his companion and his helpmate, and an equal partner in all his joys and sorrows—as free as the husband to choose her own path[T16]. Whenever I think of those dark days of doubts and suspicions, I am filled with loathing of my folly and my lustful cruelty, and I deplore[T17] my blind devotion to my friend.

CHAPTER VIII : STEALING AND ATONEMENT

I have still to relate some of my failings during this meat-eating period and also previous to it, which date from before my marriage or soon after.

A relative and I became fond of smoking. Not that we saw any good in smoking, or were enamoured of the smell of a cigarette. We simply imagined a sort of pleasure in emitting clouds of smoke from our mouths. My uncle had the habit, and when we saw him smoking, we thought we should copy his example. But we had no money. So we began pilfering stumps of cigarettes thrown away by my uncle.

The stumps, however, were not always available, and could not emit much smoke either. So we began to steal coppers from the servant's pocket-money in order to purchase Indian cigarettes. But the question was where to keep them. We could not of course smoke in the presence of elders. We managed somehow for a few weeks on these stolen coppers. In the mean time we heard that the stalks of a certain plant[T1] were porous and could be smoked like cigarettes. We got them and began this kind of smoking.

But we were far from being satisfied with such things as these. Our want of independence began to smart. It was unbearable that we should be unable to do anything without the elder's permission. At last, in sheer disgust, we decided to commit suicide !

But how were we to do it? From where were we to get the poison? We heard that dhatura[2] seeds were an effective poison. Off we went to the jungle in search of these seeds, and got them. Evening was thought to be the auspicious hour. We went to Kedarji Mandir, put ghee in the temple-lamp, had the *darshan* and then looked for a lonely corner. But our courage failed us. Supposing we were not

[1] Literally, 'conduct that leads one to God'; hence self-restraint, parti- cularly in sex

[2] Belladonna

instantly killed ? And what was the good of killing ourselves ? Why not rather put up with the lack of independence? But we swallowed two or three seeds nevertheless. We dared not take more. Both of us fought shy of death, and decided to go to Ramji-Mandir to compose ourselves, and to dismiss the thought of suicide.

I realized that it was not as easy to commit suicide as to contemplate it. And since then, whenever I have heard of someone threatening to commit suicide, it has had little or no effect on me.

The thought of suicide ultimately resulted in both of us bidding good-bye to the habit of smoking stumps of cigarettes and of stealing the servant's coppers for the purpose of smoking.

Ever since I have been grown up, I have never desired to smoke and have always regarded the habit of smoking as barbarous, dirty and harmful. I have never understood why there is such a rage for smoking throughout the world. I cannot bear to travel in a compartment full of people smoking. I become choked.

But much more serious than this theft was the one I was guilty of a little later. I pilfered the coppers when I was twelve or thirteen, possibly less. The other theft was committed when I was fifteen. In this case I stole a bit of gold out of my meat-eating brother's armlet. This brother had run into a debt of about twenty-five rupees.[T2] He had on his arm an armlet of solid gold. It was not difficult to clip a bit out of it.

Well, it was done, and the debt cleared. But this became more than I could bear. I resolved never to steal again. I also made up my mind to confess it to my father. But I did not dare to speak. Not that I was afraid of my father beating me. No. I do not recall his ever having beaten any of us. I was afraid of the pain that I should cause him.[T3] But I felt the risk should be taken; that there could not be a cleansing without a clean confession.

I decided at last to write out the confession, to submit it to my father, and ask his forgiveness. I wrote it on a slip of paper and handed it to him myself. In this note not only did I confess my guilt, but I asked adequate punishment for it, and closed with a request to him not to punish himself for my offence. I also pledged myself never to steal in future.

I was trembling as I handed the confession to my father. He was then suffering from a fistula and was confined to bed. His bed was a plain wooden plank. I handed him the note and sat opposite the plank.[T4]

He read it through, and pearl-drops trickled down his cheeks, wetting the paper. For a moment he closed his eyes in thought and

then tore up the note. He had sat up to read it. He again lay down. I also cried. I could see my father's agony. If I were a painter I could draw a picture of the whole scene today. It is still so vivid in my mind.

Those pearl-drops of love cleansed my heart, and washed my sin away.[T5] Only he who has experienced such love can know what it is. As the hymn says :

> 'Only he
> Who is smitten the arrows of love,
> Knows its power.'

This was, for me, an object-lesson in ahimsa. Then I could read in it nothing more than a father's love, but today I know that it was pure ahimsa. When such ahimsa becomes all-embracing, it transforms every-thing it touches. There is no limit to its power.[T6]

This sort of sublime forgiveness was not natural to my father. I had thought that he would be angry, say hard things, and strike his forehead. But he was so wonderfully peaceful, and I believe this was due to my clean confession. A clean confession, combined with a promise never to commit the sin again, when offered before one who has the right to receive it, is the purest type of repentance. I know that my confession made my father feel absolutely safe about me, and increased his affection for me beyond measure[T7].

CHAPTER IX : MY FATHER'S DEATH AND MY DOUBLE[T1] SHAME

The time of which I am now speaking is my sixteenth year. My father, as we have seen, was bed-ridden, suffering from a fistula. My mother, an old servant of the house, and I were his principal attendants. I had the duties of a nurse, which mainly consisted in dressing the wound, giving my father his medicine, and compounding drugs whenever they had to be made up at home. Every night I massaged his legs and retired only when he asked me to do so or after he had fallen asleep. I loved to do this service[1]. I do not remember ever having neglected it. All[T2] the time at my disposal, after the performance of the daily duties, was divided between school and attending on my father. I would only go out for an evening walk either when he permitted me or when he was feeling well.

This was also the time when my wife was expecting a baby,—a circumstance which, as I can see today, meant a double shame for me. For one thing I did not restrain myself, as I should have done whilst I

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Manilal Gandhi", March 25, 1925 : "My keenest enjoyment was to nurse my father."

was yet a student. And secondly, this carnal lust got the better of what I regarded as my duty to study, and of what was even a greater duty, my devotion to my parents, Shravana having been my ideal since childhood. Every night whilst my hands were busy massaging my father's legs, my mind was hovering about the bed-room—and that too at a time when religion, medical science and common sense alike forbade sexual intercourse. I was always glad to be relieved from my duty, and went straight to the bed-room after doing obeisance to my father.

At the same time my father was getting worse every day. Ayurvedic physicians had tried all their ointments, hakims their plasters, and local quacks their nostrums. An English surgeon had also used his skill. As the last and only resort he had recommended a surgical operation. But the family physician came in the way. He disapproved of an operation being performed at such an advanced age. The physician was competent and well known, and his advice prevailed. The operation was abandoned, and various medicines purchased for the purpose were of no account. I have an impression that, if the physician had allowed the operation, the wound would have been easily healed. The operation also was to have been performed by a surgeon who was then well known in Bombay. But God had willed otherwise.[T3] When death is imminent, who can think of the right remedy? My father returned from Bombay with all the paraphernalia of the operation, which were now useless. He despaired of living any longer. He was getting weaker and weaker, until at last he had to be asked to perform the necessary functions in bed. But up to the last he refused to do anything of the kind, always insisting on going through the strain of leaving his bed. The Vaishnavite rules about external cleanliness are so inexorable.

Such cleanliness is quite essential no doubt, but Western medical science has taught us that all the functions, including a bath, can be done in bed with the strictest regard to cleanliness, and without the slightest discomfort to the patient, the bed always remaining spotlessly clean. I should regard such cleanliness as quite consistent with Vaishnavism. But my father's insistence on leaving the bed only struck me with wonder then, and I had nothing but admiration for it.

The dreadful night came. My uncle was then in Rajkot. I have a faint recollection that he came to Rajkot having had news that my father was getting worse. The brothers were deeply attached to each other. My uncle would sit near my father's bed the whole day, and would insist on sleeping by his bedside after sending us all to sleep. No one had dreamt that this was to be the fateful night. The danger of course was there.

It was 10.30 or 11 p.m. I was giving the massage. My uncle offered to relieve me. I was glad and went straight to the bed-room. My wife, poor thing, was fast asleep. But how could she sleep when I was there? I woke her up. In five or six minutes, however, the servant[T4] knocked at the door. I started with alarm. 'Get up,' he said, 'Father is very ill.' I knew of course that he was very ill, and so I guessed what 'very ill' meant at that moment. I sprang out of bed.

'What is the matter ? Do tell me !'

'Father is no more.'

So all was over ! I had but to wring my hands.[T5] I felt deeply ashamed and miserable. I ran to my father's room. I saw that, if animal passion had not blinded me, I should have been spared the torture of separation from my father during his last moments. I should have been massaging him,[T6] and he would have died in my arms.[T7] But now it was my uncle who had had this privilege.[T8] He was so deeply devoted to his elder brother that he had earned the honour of doing him the last services ! My father had forebodings of the coming event. He had made a sign for pen and paper, and written : 'Prepare for the last rites.' He had then snapped the amulet of his arm and also his gold necklace of *tulasi*[1] beads and flung them aside. A moment after this he was no more.

The shame, to which I have referred in a foregoing chapter, was this shame of my carnal desire even at the critical hour of my father's death, which demanded wakeful service.[T9] It is a a blot I have never been able to efface or forget, and I have always thought that, although my devotion to my parents knew no bounds and I would have given up anything for it, yet it was weighed and found unpardonably wanting becuase my mind was at the same moment in the grip of lust. I have therefore always regarded myself as a lustful, though a faithful, husband. It took me long to get free from the shackles of lust, and I had to pass through many ordeals before I could overcome it.

Before I close this chapter of my double shame, I may mention that the poor mite that was born to my wife scarcely breathed for more than three or four days. Nothing else could be expected. Let all those who are married[T10] be warned by my example.

CHAPTER X : GLIMPSES OF RELIGION

From my sixth or seventh year up to my sixteenth I was at school, being taught all sorts of things except religion. I may say that I failed to get from the teachers what they could have given me

[1] An aromatic plant the leaves of which are offered in worship. Prayer beads are made out of its stalk.

without any effort on their part. And yet I kept on picking up things here and there from my surroundings. The term 'realigion' I am using in its broadest sense, meaning thereby self-relization or knowledge of self.

Being born in the Vaishnava faith, I had often to go to the *Haveli*. But it never appealed to me. I did not like its glitter and pomp. Also I heard rumours of immorality being practised there, and lost all interest in it. Hence I could gain nothing from the *Haveli*.

But what I failed to get there I obtained from my nurse, an old servant of the family, whose affection for me I still recall. I have said before that there was in me a fear of ghosts and spirits. Rambha, for that was her name, suggested, as a remedy for this fear, the repetition of Ramanama[1]. I had more faith in her than in her remedy, and so at a tender age I began repeating Ramanama to cure my fear of ghosts and spirits. This was of course short-lived, but the good seed sown in childhood was not sown in vain. I think it is due to the seed sown by that good woman Rambha that today Ramanama is an infallible remedy[T1] for me.[2]

Just about this time, a cousin of mine who was a devotee of the *Ramayana* arranged for my second brother and me to learn *Rama Raksha*[3]. We got it by heart, and made it a rule to recite it every morning after the bath. The practice was kept up as long as we were in Porbandar. As soon as we reached[T2] Rajkot, it was forgotten. For I had not much belief in it. I recited it partly because of my[T3] pride in being able to recite *Rama Raksha* with correct pronunciation.

What, however, left a deep impression on me was the reading of the *Ramayana* before my father. During part of his illness my father was in Porbandar. There every evening he used to listen to the *Ramayana*.[T4] The reader was a great devotee of Rama— Ladha Maharaj of Bileshwar. It was said of him that he cured himself of his leprosy[T5] not by any medicine, but by applying to the affected parts *bilva* leaves which had been cast away after being offered to the image of Mahadeva[4] in Bileshwar temple, and by the regular repetition of Ramanama. His faith, it was said, had made him whole.[5] [T6] This may or may not be true. We at any rate believed the story. And it is a fact that when Ladha Maharaj began his reading of the *Ramayana* his body

[1] Name of Rama, name of God

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Suppressed Classes Conference, Ahmedabad", April 13, 1921.

[3] A hymn invoking Rama's protection

[4] Lord Siva, God of destruction in the Hindu Trinity

[5] *St. Matthew*, ix. 22 and *St. Mark* and *St. Luke*

was entirely free from leprosy[T7]. He had a melodious voice. He would sing the *dohas* (couplets) and *chopais* (quatrains), and explain them, losing himself in the discourse and carrying his listeners along with him. I must have been thirteen at that time, but I quite remember being enraptured by his reading. That laid the foundation of my deep devotion to the *Ramayana*. Today I regard the *Ramayana* of Tulasidas as the greatest book in all devotional literature.

A few months after this we came to Rajkot. There was no *Ramayana* reading there. The *Bhagavata*, however, used to be read on every *Ekadashi*[1] day. Sometimes I attended the reading, but the reciter was uninspiring. Today I see that the *Bhagavata* is a book which can[T8] evoke religious fervour. I have read it in Gujarati with intense interest. But when I heard portions of the original read by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya during my twenty-one days' fast[2], I wished I had heard it in my childhood from such a devotee as he is, so that I could have formed a liking for it at an early age. Impressions[T9] formed at that age strike roots deep down into one's nature, and it is my perpetual regret that I was not fortunate enough to hear more good books of this kind read during that period.

In Rajkot, however, I got an early grounding in toleration for all branches of Hinduism and sister religions. For my father and mother would visit the *Haveli* as also Shiva's and Rama's temples, and would take or send us youngsters there. Jain monks also would pay frequent visits to my father, and would even go out of their way to accept food from us—non-Jains.[T10] They would have talks with my father on subjects religious and mundane.

He had, besides, Mussalman and Parsi friends, who would talk to him about their own faiths, and he would listen to them always with respect, and often with interest. Being his nurse, I often had a chance to be present at these talks. These many things combined to inculcate in me a toleration for all faiths.

Only Christianity was at the time an exception. I developed a sort of dislike for it. And for a reason.[T11] In those days Christian missionaries[T12] used to stand in a corner near the high school and hold forth, pouring abuse on Hindus and their gods. I could not endure this. I must have stood there to hear them[T13] once only, but that was enough to dissuade me from repeating the experiment. About the same time, I heard of a well-known Hindu having been converted to

[1] Eleventh day of the bright and the dark half of a lunar month.

[2] From September 17, to October 8, 1924, to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity; *vide* "Letter to Mahomed Ali" & "Silence Day Note", September 17, 1924, and "Statement before Breaking Silence", October 8, 1924.

Christianity. It was the talk of the town that, when he was baptized, he had to eat beef and drink liquor, that he also had to change his clothes, and that thenceforth he began to go about in European costume including a hat. These things got on my nerves. Surely, thought I, a religion that compelled one to eat beef, drink liquor, and change one's own clothes did not deserve the name. I also heard that the new convert had already begun abusing the religion of his ancestors, their customs and their country. All these things created in me a dislike for Christianity.

But the fact that I had learnt to be tolerant to other religions did not mean that I had any living faith in God. I happened, about this time, to come across *Manusmriti*[1] which was amongst my father's collection. The story of the creation and similar things in it did not impress me very much, but on the contrary made me incline somewhat towards atheism.

There was a cousin of mine, still alive, for whose intellect I had great regard. To him I turned with my doubts. But he could not resolve them. He sent me away with this answer : 'When you grow up, you will be able to solve these doubts yourself. These questions ought not to be raised at your age.' I was silenced, but was not comforted. Chapters about diet and the like in *Manusmriti* seemed to me to run contrary to daily practice. To my doubts as to this also, I got the same answer. 'With intellect more developed and with more reading I shall understand it better,' I said to myself.

Manusmrit*i* at any rate did not then teach me ahimsa. I have told the story of my meat-eating. *Manusmriti* seemed to support it. I also felt that it was quite moral to kill serpents, bugs and the like. I remember to have killed at that age bugs and such other insects, regarding it as a duty.

But one thing took keep root in me—the conviction that morality is the basis of things, and that truth is the substance of all morality. Truth became my sole objective. It began to grow in magnitude every day, and my definition of it also has been ever widening.

A Gujarati didactic stanza likewise gripped my mind and heart. Its precept—return good for evil—became my guiding principle. It became such a passion with me that I began numerous experiments in it. Here are those (for me)[T14] wonderful lines :

For a bowl of water give a goodly meal;

For a kindly greeting bow thou down with zeal;

[1] Laws of Manu, Hindu law-giver. They have the sanction of religion.

For a simple penny pay thou back with gold;

If thy life be rescued, life do not withhold.

Thus the words and actions of the wise regard;

Every little service tenfold they reward.

But the truly noble know all men as one,

And return with gladness good for evil done.[1]

CHAPTER XI : PREPARATION FOR ENGLAND

I passed the matriculation examination in 1887. It then used to be held at two centres, Ahmedabad and Bombay. The general poverty of the country naturally led Kathiawad students to prefer the nearer and the cheaper centre. The poverty of my family likewise dictated to me the same choice. This was my first journey from Rajkot to Ahmedabad and that too without a companion.

My elders wanted me to pursue my studies at college after the matriculation. There was a college in Bhavnagar as well as in Bombay, and as the former was cheaper, I decided to go there and join the Samaldas College. I went, but found myself entirely at sea. Everything was difficult. I could not follow, let alone taking interest in, the professors' lectures. It was no fault of theirs. The professors in that College were regarded as first-rate. But I was so raw. At the end of the first term, I returned home.

We had in Mavji Dave[2], who was a shrewd and learned Brahmin, an old friend and adviser of the family. He had kept up his connection with the family even after my father's death. He happened to visit us during my vacation. In conversation with my mother and elder brother, he inquired about my studies.

Learning that I was at Samaldas College, he said: 'The times are changed. And none of you can expect to succeed to your father's gadi[3] without having had a proper education. Now as this boy is still pursuing his studies, you should all look to him to keep the gadi. It will take him four or five years to get his B.A. degree, which will at best qualify him for a sixty rupees' post, not for a Diwanship. If like my son he went in for law[T1], it would take him still longer, by which time there would be a host of lawyers, aspiring for a Diwan's post. I would far rather that you sent him to England. My son Kevalram says

[1] By Shamal Bhatt

[2] Alias Mavji Joshi, a leading lawyer of Kathiawar; for another account of the decision on going to England and of the voyage to England, *vide* "London Diary", November 12, 1888.

[3] Throne, seat

it is very easy to become a barrister. In three years' time he will return. Also expenses will not exceed four to five thousand rupees. Think of that barrister who has just come back from England. How stylishly he lives! He could get the Diwanship for the asking. I would strongly advise you to send Mohandas to England this very year. Kevalram has numerous friends in England. He will give notes of introduction to them, and Mohandas will have an easy time of it there.'

Joshiji—that is how we used to call old Mavji Dave—turned to me with complete assurance, and asked: 'Would you not rather go to England than study here?' Nothing could have been more welcome to me. I was fighting shy of my difficult studies. So I jumped at the proposal and said that the sooner I was sent the better. It was no easy business to pass examinations quickly. Could I not be sent to qualify for the medical profession?

My brother interrupted me: 'Father never liked it. He had you in mind when he said that we Vaishnavas should have nothing to do with dissection of dead bodies. Father intended you for the bar.'

Joshiji chimed in: 'I am not opposed to the medical profession as was Gandhiji. Our Shastras are not against it. But a medical degree will not make a Diwan of you, and I want you to be Diwan, or if possible something better. Only in that way could you take under your protecting care your large family. The times are fast changing and getting harder every day. It is the wisest thing therefore to become a barrister.' Turning to my mother he said: 'Now, I must leave. Pray ponder over what I have said. When I come here next I shall expect to hear of preparations for England. Be sure to let me know if I can assist in any way.'

Joshiji went away, and I began building castles in the air.

My elder brother was greatly exercised in his mind. How was he to find the wherewithal to send me? And was it proper to trust a young man like me to go abroad alone?

My mother was sorely perplexed. She did not like the idea of parting with me. This is how she tried to put me off: 'Uncle,' she said, is now the eldest member of the family. He should first be consulted. If he consents we will consider the matter.'

My brother had another idea. He said to me: 'We have a certain claim on the Porbandar State. Mr. Lely is the Administrator. He thinks highly of our family and uncle is in his good books. It is just possible that he might recommend you for some State help for your education in England.'

I liked all this and got ready to start off for Porbandar. There

was no railway in those days. It was a five days' bullock-cart journey. I have already said that I was a coward. But at that moment my cowardice vanished before the desire to go to England, which com-pletely possessed me. I hired a bullock-cart as far as Dhoraji, and from Dhoraji I took a camel in order to get to Porbandar a day quicker. This was my first camel-ride.

I arrived at last, did obeisance to my uncle, and told him everything. He thought it over and said: 'I am not sure whether it is possible for one to stay in England without prejudice to one's own religion. From all I have heard, I have my doubts. When I meet these big barristers, I see no difference between their life and that of Europeans. They know no scruples regarding food. Cigars are never out of their mouths. They dress as shamelessly as Englishmen. All that would not be in keeping with our family tradition. I am shortly going on a pilgrimage and have not many years to live. At the threshold of death, how dare I give you permission to go to England, to cross the seas? But I will not stand in your way. It is your mother's permission which really matters. If she permits you, then godspeed! Tell her I will not interfere. You will go with my blessings.'

'I could expect nothing more from you,' said I. 'I shall now try to win mother over. But would you not recommend me to Mr. Lely?'

'How can I do that ?' said he. 'But he is a good man. You ask for an appointment telling him how you are connected. He will certainly give you one and may even help you.'

I cannot say why my uncle did not give me a note of recommendation. I have a faint idea that he hesitated to co-operate directly in my going to England, which was in his opinion an irreligious act.

I wrote to Mr. Lely, who asked me to see him at his residence. He saw me as he was ascending the staircase; and saying curtly, 'Pass your B.A. first and then see me. No help can be given you now', he hurried upstairs. I had made elaborate preparations to meet him. I had carefully learnt up a few sentences and had bowed low and saluted him with both hands. But all to no purpose!

I thought of my wife's ornaments. I thought of my elder brother, in whom I had the utmost faith. He was generous to a fault, and he loved me as his son.

I returned to Rajkot from Porbandar and reported all that had happened. I consulted Joshiji, who of course advised even incurring a debt if necessary. I suggested the disposal of my wife's ornaments, which could fetch about two to three thousand rupees. My brother promised to find the money somehow.

My mother, however, was still unwilling. She had begun making

minute inquiries. Someone had told her that young men got lost in England. Someone else had said that they took to meat; and yet another that they could not live there without liquor. 'How about all this?' she asked me. I said: 'Will you not trust me? I shall not lie to you. I swear that I shall not touch any of those things. If there were any such danger, would Joshiji let me go?'

'I can trust you,' she said. 'But how can I trust you in a distant land? I am dazed and know not what to do. I will ask Becharji Swami.'

Becharji Swami was originally a Modh Bania, but had now become a Jain monk. He too was a family adviser like Joshiji. He came to my help, and said: 'I shall get the boy solemnly to take the three vows, and then he can be allowed to go.' He administered the oath and I vowed not to touch wine, woman and meat. This done, my mother gave her permission.

The high school had a send-off in my honour. It was an uncommon thing for a young man of Rajkot to go to England. I had written out a few words of thanks. But I could scarcely stammer them out. I remember how my head reeled and how my whole frame shook as I stood up to read them.[1]

With the blessings of my elders, I started for Bombay. This was my first journey from Rajkot to Bombay. My brother accompanied me. But there is many a slip,' twixt the cup and the lip. There were difficulties to be faced[T2] in Bombay.

CHAPTER XII : OUTCASTE

With my mother's permission and blessings, I set off exultantly for Bombay, leaving my wife with a baby of a few months. But on arrival there friends told my brother that the Indian Ocean was rough in June and July, and as this was my first voyage, I should not be allowed to sail until November. Someone also reported that a steamer had just been sunk in a gale. This made my brother uneasy, and he refused to take the risk of allowing me to sail immediately. Leaving me with a friend in Bombay, he returned to Rajkot to resume his duty. He put the money for my travelling expenses in the keeping of a brother-in-law, and left word with some friends to give me whatever help I might need.

Time hung heavily on my hands in Bombay. I dreamt continually of going[T1] to England.

Meanwhile my caste people were agitated over my going

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Alfred High School", July 4, 1888.

abroad. No Modh Bania had been to England up to now, and if I dared to do so, I ought to be brought to book! A general meeting of the caste was called and I was summoned to appear before it. I went. How I suddenly managed to muster up courage I do not know. Nothing daunted, and without the slightest hesitation, I came before the meeting. The Sheth—the headman of the community—who was distantly related to me and had been on very good terms with my father, thus accosted me:

'In the opinion of the caste, your proposal to go to England is not proper. Our religion forbids voyage abroad. We have also heard that it is not possible to live there without compromising our religion. One is obliged to eat and drink with Europeans!'

To which I replied: 'I do not think it is at all against our religion to go to England. I intend going there[T2] for further studies. And I have already solemnly promised to my mother to abstain from three things you fear most. I am sure the vow will keep me safe.'

'But we tell you,' rejoined the Sheth, 'that it is *not* possible to keep our religion there. You know my relations with your father and you ought to listen to my advice.'

'I know those relations,' said I. 'And you are as an elder to me. But I am helpless in this matter. I cannot alter my resolve to go to England. My father's friend and adviser, who is a learned Brahmin, sees no objection to my going to England, and my mother and brother have also given me their permission.'

'But will you disregard the orders of the caste?'

'I am really helpless. I think the caste should not interfere in the matter.'

This incensed the Sheth. He swore at me. I sat unmoved. So the Sheth pronounced his order: 'This boy shall be treated as an outcaste from today. Whoever helps him or goes to see him off at the dock shall be punishable with a fine of one rupee four annas.'

The order had no effect on me, and I took my leave of the Sheth. But I wondered how my brother would take it. Fortunately he remained firm and wrote to assure me that I had his permission to go, the Sheth's order notwithstanding.

The incident, however, made me more anxious than ever to sail. What would happen if they succeeded in bringing pressure to bear on my brother? Supposing something unforeseen happened? As I was thus worrying over my predicament, I heard that a Junagadh vakil was going to England, for being called to the bar, by a boat sailing on the 4th of September. I met the friends to whose care my brother had commended me. They also agreed that I should not let go the opp-

ortunity of going in such company. There was no time to be lost. I wired to my brother for permission, which he granted. I asked my brother-in-law to give me the money. But he referred to the order of the Sheth and said that he could not afford to lose caste. I then sought a friend of the family and requested him to accommodate me to the extent of my passage and sundries, and to recover the loan from my brother. The friend was not only good enough to accede to my request, but he cheered me up as well. I was so thankful. With part of the money I at once purchased the passage. Then I had to equip myself for the voyage. There was another friend who had experience in the matter. He got clothes and other things ready. Some of the clothes I liked and some I did not like at all. The necktie, which I delighted in wearing later, I then abhorred. The short jacket I looked upon as immodest. But this dislike was nothing before the desire to go to England, which was uppermost in me. Of provisions also I had enough and to spare for the voyage. A berth was reserved for me by my friends in the same cabin as that of Sjt. Tryambakrai Mazmudar, the Junagadh vakil. They also commended me to him. He was an experienced man of mature age and knew the world. I was yet a stripling of eighteen without any experience of the world. Sjt. Mazmudar told my friends not to worry about me.

I sailed at last from Bombay on the 4th of September.[1]

CHAPTER XIII : IN LONDON AT LAST

I did not feel at all sea-sick. But as the days passed, I became fidgety. I felt shy even in speaking to the steward. I was quite unaccustomed to talking English, and except for Sjt. Mazmudar all the other passengers in the second saloon[T1] were English. I could not speak to them. For I could rarely follow their remarks when they came up to speak to me, and even when I understood I could not reply. I had to frame every sentence in my mind, before I could bring it out. I was innocent of the use of knives and forks and had not the boldness to inquire what dishes on the menu were free of meat. I therefore never took meals at table but always had them in my cabin, and they consisted principally of sweets and fruits which I had brought with me. Sjt. Mazmudar had no difficulty, and he mixed with everybody. He would move about freely on deck, while I hid myself in the cabin the whole day, only venturing up on deck when there were but few people. Sjt. Mazmudar kept pleading with me to associate with the passengers and to talk with them freely. He told me that lawyers should have a long tongue, and related to me his legal

[1] In 1888

experiences. He advised me to take every possible opportunity of talking English, and not to mind making mistakes which were obviously unavoidable with a foreign tongue. But nothing could make me conquer my shyness.

An English passenger, taking kindly to me, drew me into conversation. He was older than I.[T2] He asked me what I ate, what I was, where I was going, why I was shy, and so on. He also advised me to come to table. He laughed at my insistence on abjuring meat, and said in a friendly way when we were in the Red Sea: 'It is all very well so far but you will have to revise your decision in the Bay of Biscay. And it is so cold in England that one cannot possibly live there without meat.'

'But I have heard that people *can* live there without eating meat,' I said.

'Rest assured it is a fib,' said he. 'No one, to my knowledge, lives there without being a meat-eater. Don't you see that I am not asking you to take liquor, though I do so? But I do think you should eat meat, for you cannot live without it.'

'I thank you for your kind advice, but I have solemnly promised to my mother not to touch meat, and therefore I cannot think of taking it. If it be found impossible to get on without it, I will far rather go back to India than eat meat in order to remain there.'

We entered the Bay of Biscay, but I did not begin to feel the need either of meat or liquor. I had been advised to collect certificates of my having abstained from meat, and I asked the English friend to give me one. He gladly gave it and I treasured it for some time. But when I saw later that one could get such a certificate in spite of being a meat-eater, it lost all its charm for me. If my word was not to be trusted, where was the use of possessing a certificate in the matter ?

However, we reached Southampton,[T3] as far as I remember, on a Saturday. On the boat I had worn a black suit, the white flannel one, which my friends had got me, having been kept especially for wearing when I landed. I had thought that white clothes would suit me better when I stepped ashore, and therefore I did so in white flannels. Those were the last days of September, and I found I was the only person wearing such clothes. I left in charge of an agent of Grindlay and Co. all my kit, including the keys, seeing that many others had done the same and I must follow suit.

I had four notes of introduction : to Dr. P. J. Mehta, to Sjt. Dalpatram Shukla, to Prince Ranjitsinhji and to Dadabhai Naoroji. Someone on board had advised us to put up at the Victoria Hotel in London. Sjt. Mazmudar and I accordingly went there. The shame of

being the only person in white clothes was already too much for me. And when at the Hotel I was told that I should not get my things from Grindlay's the next day, it being a Sunday, I was exasperated.

Dr. Mehta, to whom I had wired from Southampton,[T4] called at about eight o'clock the same evening. He gave me a hearty greeting. He smiled at my being in flannels. As we were talking, I casually picked up his top-hat, and trying to see how smooth it was, passed my hand over it the wrong way and disturbed the fur. Dr. Mehta looked somewhat angrily[T5] at what I was doing and stopped me. But the mischief had been done. The incident was a warning for the future. This was my first lesson in European etiquette, into the details of which Dr. Mehta humorously initiated me. 'Do not touch other people's things,' he said. 'Do not ask questions as we usually do in India on first acquaintance; do not talk loudly; never address people as 'sir' whilst speaking to them as we do in India, only servants and subordinates address their masters that way.' And so on and so forth. He also told me that it was very expensive to live in a hotel and recommended that I should live with a private family. We deferred consideration of the matter until Monday.[T6]

Sjt. Mazmudar and I found the hotel to be a trying affair. It was also very expensive. There was, however, a Sindhi fellow- passenger from Malta who had become friends with Sjt. Mazmudar, and as he was not a stranger to London, he offered to find rooms for us. We agreed, and on Monday, as soon as we got our baggage, we paid up our bills and went to the rooms rented for us by the Sindhi friend. I remember my hotel bill came to £3, an amount which shocked me. And I had practically starved in spite of this heavy bill ! For I could relish nothing. When I did not like one thing, I asked for another, but had to pay for both just the same. The fact is that all this while I had depended on the provisions which I had brought with me from Bombay.

I was very uneasy even in the new rooms. I would continually think of my home and country. My mother's love always haunted me. At night the tears would stream down my cheeks and home memories of all sorts made sleep out of the question. It was impossible to share my misery with anyone. And even if I could have done so, where was the use ? I knew of nothing that would soothe me. Everything was strange—the people, their ways, and even their dwellings. I was a complete novice in the matters of English etiquette and continually had to be on my guard. There was the additional inconvenience of the vegetarian vow. Even the dishes that I could eat were tasteless and insipid. I thus found myself between Scylla and Charybdis. England I could not bear, but to return to India was not to

be thought of. Now that I had come, I must finish the three years, said the inner voice.[T7]

CHAPTER XIV : MY CHOICE

Dr. Mehta went on Monday to the Victoria Hotel expecting to find me there. He discovered that we had left,[T1] got our new address, and met me at our rooms. Through sheer folly I had managed to get ringworm on the boat. For washing and bathing we used to have sea-water, in which soap is not soluble. I, however, used soap, taking its use to be a sign of civilization, with the result that instead of cleaning the skin it made it greasy. This gave me ringworm. I showed it to Dr. Mehta, who told me to apply acetic acid. I remember how the burning acid made me cry. Dr. Mehta inspected my room and its appointments and shook his head in disapproval. 'This place won't do,' he said. 'We come to England not so much for the purpose of studies as for gaining experience of English life and customs. And for this you need to live with a family. But before you do so, I think you had better serve a period of apprenticeship with—. I will take you there.'

I gratefully accepted the suggestion and removed to the friend's rooms. He was all kindness and attention. He treated me as his own brother, initiated me into English ways and manners, and accustomed me to talking the language. My food, however, became a serious question. I could not relish boiled vegetables cooked without salt or condiments. The landlady was at a loss to know what to prepare for me. We had oatmeal porridge for breakfast, which was fairly filling, but I always starved at lunch and dinner. The friend continually reasoned with me to eat meat, but I always pleaded my vow and then remained silent.[T2] Both for luncheon and dinner we had spinach and bread and jam too. I was a good eater and had a capacious stomach; but I was ashamed to ask for more than two or three slices of bread, as it did not seem correct to do so. Added to this, there was no milk either for lunch or dinner. The friend once got disgusted with this state of things, and said: 'Had you been my own brother, I would have sent you packing. What is the value of a vow made before an illiterate mother, and in ignorance of conditions here ? It is no vow at all. It would not be regarded as a vow in law. It is pure superstition to stick to such a promise. And I tell you this persistence will not help you to gain anything here. You confess to having eaten and relished meat. You took it where it was absolutely unnecessary, and will not where it is quite essential. What a pity!'

But I was adamant.

Day in and day out the friend would argue, but I had an eternal negative to face him with. The more he argued, the more uncompro-

mising I became. Daily I would pray for God's protection and get it. Not that I had any idea of God. It was faith that was at work—faith of which the seed had been sown by the good nurse Rambha.

One day the friend began to read to me Bentham's *Theory of Utility*. I was at my wit's end. The language was too difficult for me to understand. He began to expound it. I said: 'Pray ex- cuse me. These abstruse things are beyond me. I admit it is necessary to eat meat. But I cannot break my vow. I cannot argue about it. I am sure I cannot meet you in argument. But please give me up as foolish or obstinate. I appreciate your love for me and I know you to be my well-wisher. I also know that you are telling me again and again about this because you feel for me. But I am helpless. A vow is a vow. It cannot be broken.'

The friend looked at me in surprise. He closed the book and said: 'All right. I will not argue any more.' I was glad. He never discussed the subject again. But he did not cease to worry about me. He smoked and drank, but he never asked me to do so. In fact he asked me to remain away from both. His one anxiety was lest I should become very weak without meat, and thus be unable to feel at home in England.

That is how I served my apprenticeship for a month. The friend's house was in Richmond, and it was not possible to go to London more than once or twice a week. Dr. Mehta and Sjt. Dalpatram Shukla therefore decided that I should be put with some family. Sjt. Shukla hit upon an Anglo-Indian's house in West Kensington and placed me there. The landlady was a widow. I told her about my vow. The old lady promised to look after me properly, and I took up my residence in her house. Here too I practically had to starve. I had sent for sweets and other eatables from home, but nothing had yet come. Everything was insipid. Every day the old lady asked me whether I liked the food, but what could she do? I was still as shy as ever and dared not ask for more than was put before me. She had two daughters. They insisted on serving me with an extra slice or two of bread. But little did they know that nothing less than a loaf would have filled me.

But I had found my feet[T3] now. I had not yet started upon my regular studies. I had just begun reading newspapers, thanks to Sjt. Shukla. In India I had never read a newspaper. But here I succeeded in cultivating a liking for them by regular reading. I always glanced over *The Daily News*, *The Daily Telegraph*, and *The Pall Mall Gazette*. This took me hardly an hour. I therefore began to wander about. I launched out in search of a vegetarian restaurant. The landlady had

told me that there were such places in the city. I would trot ten or twelve miles each day, go into a cheap restaurant and eat my fill of bread, but would never be satisfied. During these wanderings I once hit on a vegetarian restaurant in Farringdon Street. The sight of it filled me with the same joy that a child feels on getting a thing after its own heart. Before I entered I noticed books for sale exhibited under a glass window near the door. I saw among them Salt's *Plea for Vegetarianism*. This I purchased for a shilling and went straight to the dining-room. This was my first hearty meal since my arrival in England. God had come to my aid.

I read Salt's book from cover[T4] to cover and was very much impressed by it. From the date of reading this book, I may claim to have become a vegetarian by choice. I blessed the day on which I had taken the vow before my mother. I had all along[T5] abstained from meat in the interests of truth and[T6] of the vow I had taken, but had wished at the same time that every Indian should be a meat-eater, and had looked forward to being one myself freely and openly some day, and to enlisting others in the cause. The choice was now made in favour of vegetarianism, the spread of which henceforward became by mission.

CHAPTER XV : PLAYING THE ENGLISH GENTLEMAN[T1]

My faith in vegetarianism grew on me from day to day. Salt's book whetted my appetite for dietetic studies. I went in for all books available on vegetarianism and read them. One of these, Howard Williams's *The Ethics of Diet*, was a 'biographical history of the literature of humane dietetics from the earliest period to the present day'. It tried to make out, that all philosophers and prophets from Pythagoras and Jesus down to those of the present age were vegetarians. Dr. Anna Kingsford's *The Perfect Way in Diet* was also an attractive book. Dr. Allinson's writings on health and hygiene were likewise very helpful. He advocated a curative system based on regulation of the dietary of patients. Himself a vegetarian, he prescribed for his patients also a strictly vegetarian diet. The result of reading all this literature was that dietetic experiments came to take an important place in my life. Health was the principal consideration of these experiments to begin with. But later on religion became the supreme motive.[T2]

Meanwhile my friend had not ceased to worry about me. His love for me led him to think that, if I persisted in my objections to meat-eating, I should not only develop a weak constitution, but should remain a duffer, because I should never feel at home in English society. When he came to know that I had begun to interest myself in

books on vegetarianism, he was afraid lest these studies should muddle my head; that I should fritter my life away in experiments, forgetting my own work, and become a crank. He therefore made one last effort to reform me. He one day invited me to go to the theatre. Before the play we were to dine together at the Holborn Restaurant, to me a palatial place and the first big restaurant I had been to since leaving the Victoria Hotel. The stay at that hotel had scarcely been a helpful experience, for I had not lived there with my wits about me. The friend had planned to take me to this restaurant evidently imagining that modesty would forbid any questions.[T3] And it was a very big company of diners in the midst of which my friend and I sat sharing a table between us. The first course was soup. I wondered what it might be made of, but durst not ask the friend about it. I therefore summoned the waiter. My friend saw the movement and sternly asked across the table what was the matter. With considerable hesitation I told him that I wanted to inquire if the soup was a vegetable soup. 'You are too clumsy for decent society,' he passionately exclaimed. 'If you cannot behave yourself, you had better go. Feed in some other[T4] restaurant and await me outside.' This delighted me. Out I went. There was a vegetarian restaurant close by, but it was closed.[T5] So I went without food that night. I accompanied my friend to the theatre, but he never said a word about the scene I had created. On my part of course there was nothing to say.

That was the last friendly tussle we had. It did not affect our relations in the least. I could see and appreciate the love by which all my friend's efforts were actuated, and my respect for him was all the greater on account of our differences in thought and action.

But I decided that I should put him at ease, that I should assure him that I would be clumsy no more, but try to become polished and make up for my vegetarianism by cultivating other accomplishments which fitted one for polite society. And for this purpose I undertook the all too impossible task of becoming an English gentleman.[T6]

The clothes[T7] after the Bombay cut that I was wearing were, I thought, unsuitable for English society, and I got new ones at the Army and Navy Stores. I also went in for a chimney-pot hat costing nineteen shillings—an excessive price in those days. Not content with this, I wasted ten pounds on an evening suit made in Bond Street, the centre of fashionable life in London[T8]; and got my good and noble-hearted brother to send me a double watch-chain of gold. It was not correct to wear a ready-made tie and I learnt the art of tying one for myself. While in India, the mirror had been a luxury permitted on the days when the family barber gave me a shave. Here I wasted ten minutes every day before a huge mirror, watching myself arranging

my tie and parting my hair in the correct fashion. My hair was by no means soft, and every day it meant a regular struggle with the brush[T9] to keep it in position. Each time the hat was put on and off, the hand would automatically move towards the head to adjust the hair, not to mention the other civilized habit of the hand every now and then operating for the same purpose when sitting in polished society.

As if all this were not enough to make me look the thing, I directed my attention to other details that were supposed to go towards the making of an English gentleman.[T10] I was told it was necessary for me to take lessons in dancing, French and elocution.[T11] French was not only the language of neighbouring France, but it was the lingua franca of the Continent over which I had a desire to travel.[T1] I decided to take dancing lessons at a class and paid down £3 as fees for a term. I must have taken about six lessons in three weeks. But it was beyond me to achieve anything like rhythmic motion. I could not follow the piano and hence found it impossible to keep time.[T13] What then was I do? The recluse in the fable kept a cat to keep off the rats, and then a cow to feed the cat with milk, and a man to keep the cow and so on. My ambitions also grew like the family of the recluse. I thought I should learn to play the violin in order to cultivate an ear for Western music. So I invested £3 in a violin[14] and something more in fees. I sought a third teacher to give me lessons in elocution and paid him a preliminary fee of a guinea. He recommended Bell's *Standard Elocutionist* as the text-book, which I purchased. And I began with a speech of Pitt's.

But Mr. Bell rang the bell of alarm in my ear and I awoke.

I had not to spend a lifetime in England, I said to myself. What then was the use of learning elocution? And how could dancing make a gentleman of me? The violin I could learn even in India. I was a student and ought to go on with my studies. I should qualify myself to join the Inns of Court. If my character made a gentleman of me, so much the better. Otherwise I should forgo the ambition.

These and similar thoughts possessed me, and I expressed them in a letter which I addressed to the elocution teacher, requesting him to excuse me from further lessons. I had taken only two or three. I wrote a similar letter to the dancing teacher, and went personally to the violin teacher with a request to dispose of the violin for any price it might fetch. She was rather friendly to me,[T15] so I told her how I had discovered that I was pursuing a false idea. She encouraged me in the determination to make a complete change.

This infatuation must have lasted about three months. The punctiliousness in dress persisted for years. But henceforward I

became a student.

CHAPTER XVI : CHANGES

Let no one imagine that my experiments in dancing and the like marked a stage of indulgence in my life. The reader will have noticed that even then I had my wits about me. That period of infatuation was not unrelieved by a certain amount of self-intro-spection on my part. I kept account of every farthing I spent, and my expenses were carefully calculated.[T1] Every little item, such as omnibus fares or postage or a couple of coppers spent on newspapers,[T2] would be entered, and the balance struck every evening before going to bed. That habit has stayed with me ever since, and I know that as a result, though I have had to handle public funds amounting to lakhs, I have succeeded in exercising strict economy in their disbursement and, instead of outstanding debts, have had invariably a surplus balance in respect of all the movements I have led. Let every youth take a leaf out of my book and make it a point to account for everything that comes into and goes out of his pocket,[T3] and like me[T4] he is sure to be a gainer in the end.[1]

As I kept strict watch over my way of living, I could see that it was necessary to economize.[T5] I therefore decided to reduce my expenses by half. My accounts showed numerous items spent on fares. Again my living with a family meant the payment of a regular weekly bill. It also included the courtesy of occasionally taking members of the family out to dinner, and likewise attending parties with them. All this involved heavy items for conveyances, especially as, if the friend was a lady, custom required that the man should pay all the expenses. Also dining out meant extra cost, as no deduction could be made from the regular weekly bill for meals not taken. It seemed to me that all these items could be saved, as likewise the drain on my purse caused through a false sense of propriety.

So I decided to take rooms on my own account, instead of living any longer in a family, and also to remove from place to place[t6] according to the work I had to do, thus gaining experience at the same time. The rooms were so selected as to enable me to reach the place of business on foot in half an hour, and so save fares. Before this I had always some kind of conveyance[T7] whenever I went anywhere and had to find extra time for walks. The new arrangement combined walks and economy, as it meant a saving of fares and gave me walks of eight or ten miles a day. It was mainly this habit of long walks that kept me practically free from illness throughout my stay in England and gave

[1] *Vide* "Satyagraha in South Africa — Chapter XIV : Deputation to England".

me a fairly strong body.

Thus I rented a suite of rooms; one for a sitting-room and another for a bedroom. This was the second stage. The third was yet to come.

These changes saved me half the expense. But how was I to utilize the time? I knew that Bar examinations did not require much study, and I therefore did not feel pressed for time. My weak English was a perpetual worry to me. Mr. (afterwards Sir Frederic) Lely's words, 'Graduate first and then come to me,' still rang in my ears. I should, I thought, not only be called to the Bar, but have some literary degree as well. I inquired about the Oxford and Cambridge University courses, consulted a few friends, and found that, if I elected to go to either of these places, that would mean greater expense and a much longer stay in England than I was prepared for. A friend suggested that, if I really wanted to have the satisfaction of taking a difficult examination, I should pass the London Matriculation. It meant a good deal of labour and much addition to my stock of general knowledge, without any extra expense worth the name. I welcomed the suggestion. But the syllabus frightened me. Latin and a modern language were compulsory ! How was I to manage Latin ? But the friend entered a strong plea for it: 'Latin is very valuable to lawyers. Knowledge of Latin is very useful in understanding law-books. And one paper in[T8] Roman Law is entirely in Latin. Besides, a knowledge of Latin means greater command over the English language.' It went home and I decided to learn Latin, no matter how difficult it might be. French I had already begun, so I thought that should be the modern language. I joined a private Matriculation class. Examinations were held every six months and I had only five months at my disopsal. It was an almost impossible task for me. But the aspirant after being an English gentleman chose to convert himself[T9] into a serious student. I framed my own time-table to the minute; but neither my intelligence nor memory promised to enable me to tackle Latin and French besides other subjects within the given period. The result was that I was ploughed in Latin. I was sorry[T10] but did not lose heart. I had acquired a taste for Latin, also I thought my French would be all the better for another trial and I would select a new subject in the science group. Chemistry which was my subject in science had no attraction for want of experiments, whereas[T11] it ought to have been a deeply interesting study. It was one of the compulsory subjects in India and so I had selected it for the London Matriculation. This time, however, I chose Heat and Light instead of Chemistry. It was said to be easy and I found it to be so.

With my preparation for another trial, I made an effort to

simplify my life still further. I felt that my way of living did not yet befit the modest means of my family. The thought of my struggling brother, who nobly responded to my regular calls for monetary help, deeply pained me. I saw that most of those who were spending from eight to fifteen pounds monthly had the advantage of scholarships. I had before me examples of much simpler living. I came across a fair number of poor students living more humbly than I. One of them was staying in the slums in a room at two shillings a week and living on twopence worth of cocoa and bread per meal from Lockhart's cheap Cocoa Rooms. It was far from[T12] me to think of emulating him, but I felt I could surely have one room instead of two and cook some of my meals at home. That would be a saving of[T14] four to five pounds each[T15] month. I also came across books on simple living. I gave up the suite of rooms and rented one instead, invested in a stove, and began cooking my breakfast at home. The process scarcely took me more than twenty minutes, for there was only oatmeal porridge to cook and water to boil for cocoa. I had lunch out and for dinner bread and cocoa at home. Thus I managed to live on a shilling and three pence a day. This was also a period of intensive study. Plain living saved me plenty of time and I passed my examination.

Let not the reader think that this living made my life by any means a dreary affair. On the contrary the change harmonized my inward and outward life. It was also more in keeping with the means of my family. My life was certainly more truthful[T16] and my soul knew no bounds of joy.

CHAPTER XVII : EXPERIMENTS IN DIETETICS

As I searched myself deeper, the necessity for changes both internal and external began to grow on me. As soon as, or even before, I made alterations in my expenses and my way of living, I began to make changes in my diet. I saw that the writers on vegetarianism had examined the question very minutely, attacking it in its religious, scientific, practical and medical aspects. Ethically they had arrived at the conclusion that man's supremacy over the lower animals[T1] meant not that the former should prey upon the latter, but that the higher should protect the lower, and that there should be mutual aid between the two as between man and man. They had also brought out the truth that man eats not for enjoyment but to live. And some of them accordingly suggested and effected in their lives abstention not only from fleshmeat but from eggs and milk[T2]. Scientifically some had concluded that man's physical structure showed that he was not meant to be a cooking but a frugivorous animal, that he could take only his mother's milk and, as soon as he

had teeth, should begin to take solid foods. Medically they had suggested the rejection of all spices and condiments. According to the practical and economic argument they had demonstrated that a vegetarian diet was the least expensive. All these considerations had their effect on me, and I came across vegetarians of all these types in vegetarian restaurants. There was a Vegetarian Society in England with a weekly journal[1] of its own. I subscribed to the weekly, joined the Society and very shortly found myself on the Executive Committee. Here I came in contact with those who were regarded as pillars of vegetarianism, and began my own experiments in dietetics.

I stopped taking the sweets and condiments I had got from home. The mind having taken a different turn, the fondness for condiments wore away, and I now relished the boiled spinach, which in Richmond tasted insipid, cooked without condiments. Many such experiments taught me that the real seat of taste was not the tongue but the mind.

The economic consideration was of course constantly before me. There was in those days a body of opinion which regarded tea and coffee as harmful and favoured cocoa. And as I was convinced that one should eat only articles that sustained the body, I gave up tea and coffee as a rule, and substituted cocoa.

There were two divisions in the restaurants I used to visit. One division, which was patronized by fairly well-to-do people, provided any number of courses from which one chose and paid for *a la carte*, each dinner thus costing from one to two shillings. The other division provided six-penny dinners of three courses with a slice of bread. In my days of strict frugality I usually dined in the second division.

There were many minor experiments going on along with the main one; as for example, giving up starchy foods at one time; living on bread and fruit alone at another, and once living on cheese, milk and eggs. This last experiment is worth noting. It lasted not even a fortnight.[2] The reformer who advocated starchless food had spoken highly of eggs and held that eggs were not meat. It was apparent that there was no injury done to living creatures in taking eggs. I was taken in by this plea and took eggs in spite of my vow. But the lapse was momentary. I had no business to put a new interpretation on the vow.[T3] The interpretation of my mother who administered the vow was

[1] *The Vegetarian*; commenced publication in 1888 as an independent journal and became the London Vegetarian Society's official organ

[2] However, in a paper read in London on 2-5-1891, Gandhiji stated : "I am sorry to say that I have been taking eggs for about a month and half'. *Vide* "The Foods of India", June 1, 189

therefor me. I knew that her definition of meat included eggs. And as soon as I saw the true import of the vow I gave up eggs and the experiment alike.

There is a nice point underlying the argument, and worth noting. I came across three definitions of meat in England. According to the first, meat denoted only the flesh of birds and beasts. Vegetarians who accepted that definition abjured the flesh of birds and beasts, but ate fish, not to mention eggs. According to the second definition, meat meant flesh of all living creatures. So fish was here out of the question, but eggs were allowed. The third definition included under meat the flesh of all living beings, as well as all their products, thus covering eggs and milk alike. If I accepted the first definition, I could take not only eggs, but fish also. But I was convinced that my mother's definition was the definition binding on me. If, therefore, I would observe the vow I had taken, I must abjure eggs. I therefore did so. This was a hardship inasmuch as inquiry showed that even in vegetarian restaurants many courses used to contain eggs. This meant that unless[T4] I knew what was what, I had to go through the awkward process of ascertaining whether a particular course contained eggs or no, for many puddings and cakes were not free from them. But though the revelation of my duty caused this difficulty, it simplified my food. The simplification in its turn brought me annoyance in that I had to give up several dishes I had come to relish. These difficulties were only passing, for the strict observance of the vow produced an inward relish disinctly more healthy, delticate and permanent[T5].

The real ordeal, however, was still to come, and that was in respect of the other vow. But who dare harm whom God protects ?

A few observations about the interpretation of vows or pledges may not be out of place here.[T6] Interpretation of pledges[T7] has been a fruitful source of strife all the world over. No matter how explicit the pledge[T8], people[T9] will turn and twist the text to suit their own purposes. They are to be met with among all classes of society, from the rich down to the poor, from the prince down to the peasant. Selfishness turns them blind, and by a use of the ambiguous middle they deceive themselves and seek to deceive the world and God.[T10] One golden rule is to accept the interpretation honestly put on the pledge by the party administering it.[T11] Another is to accept the interpretation of the weaker party, where there are two interpretations possible. Rejection of these two rules gives rise to strife and iniq-uity[T12], which are[T13] rooted in untruthfulness. He who seeks truth alone easily follows the golden rule. He need not seek learned advice for interpretation.[T14] My mother's interpretation of meat was, according to the golden

rule,[T16] the only true one for me, and not the one my wider experience or my pride of better knowledge might have taught me.

My experiments in England were conducted from the point of view of economy and hygiene. The religious aspect of the question was not considered until I went to South Africa where I undertook strenuous experiments which will be narrated later. The seed, however, for all of them was sown in England.

A convert's enthusiasm for[T17] his new religion is greater than that of a person who is born in it. Vegetarianism was then a new cult in England, and likewise for me, because, as we have seen, I had gone there a convinced meat-eater, and was intellectually converted to vegetarianism later.[T18] Full of the neophyte's zeal for vegetarianism. I decided to start a vegetarian club in my locality, Bayswater. I invited Sir Edwin Arnold, who lived there, to be Vice-President. Dr. Oldfield who was Editor of *The Vegetarian* became President. I myself became the Secretary. The club went well for a while, but came to an end in the course of a few months. For I left the locality, according to my custom of moving from place to place periodically. But this brief and modest experience gave me some little training in organizing and conducting institutions.

CHAPTER XVIII : SHYNESS MY SHIELD

I was elected to the Executive Committee of the Vegetarian Society, and made it a point to attend every one of its meetings, but I always felt tongue-tied. Dr. Oldfield once said to me, 'You talk to me quite all right, but why is it that you never open your lips at a committee meeting ? You are a drone.' I appreciated the banter. The bees are ever busy, the drone is a thorough idler. And it was not a little curious that whilst others expressed their opinions at these meetings, I sat quite silent. Not that I never felt tempted to speak. But I was at a loss to know how to express myself. All the rest of the members appeared to me to be better informed than I. Then it often happened that just when I had mustered up courage to speak, a fresh subject would be started. This went on for a long time.

Meantime a serious question came up for discussion. I thought it wrong to be absent,[T1] and felt it cowardice to register a silent vote. The discussion arose somewhat in this wise. The President of the Society was Mr. Hills, proprietor of the Thames Iron Works. He was a puritan. It may be said that the existence of the Society depended practically on his financial assistance. Many members of the

Committee were more or less his proteges. Dr. Allinson of vegetarian fame[T2] was also a member of the Committee. He was an advocate of the then new birthcontrol movement, and preached its methods among the working classes. Mr. Hills regarded these methods as cutting at the root of morals. He thought that the Vegetarian Society had for its object not only dietetic but also moral reform, and that a man of Dr. Allinson's anti-puritanic[T3] views should not be allowed to remain in the Society. A motion was therefore brought for his removal. The question deeply interested me. I considered Dr. Allinson's views regarding artificial methods of birth control as dangerous, and I believed that Mr. Hills was entitled, as a puritan, to oppose him.[T4] I had also a high regard for Mr. Hills and his generosity. But I thought it was quite improper[T5] to exclude a man from a vegetarian society[T6] simply because he refused to regard puritan morals as one of the objects of the Society.[T7] Mr. Hills view regarding the exclusion of anti-puritans from the Society was personal to himself, and it had nothing to do with the declared object of the Society, which[T8] was simply the promotion of vegetarianism and not of any system of morality. I therefore held that any vegetarian could be a member of the Society irrespective of his views on other morals.[T9]

There were in the Committee others also who shared my view, but I felt myself personally called upon to express my own. How to do it was the question. I had not the courage to speak and I therefore decided to set down[T10] my thoughts in writing[T11]. I went to the meeting with the document in my pocket. So far as I recollect, I did not find myself equal even to reading it, and the President had it read by someone else. Dr. Allinson lost the day. Thus in the very first battle of the kind I found myself siding with the losing party. But I had comfort in the thought that the cause was right. I have a faint recollection that, after this incident, I resigned from the Committee This shyness I retained throughout my stay in England. Even when I paid a social call the presence of half a dozen or more people would strike me dumb.

I once went to Ventnor with Sjt. Mazmudar. We stayed there with a vegetarian family. Mr. Howard, the author of *The Ethics of Diet*, was also staying at the same watering-place. We met him, and he invited us to speak at a meeting for the promotion of vegetarianism. I had ascertained that it was not considered incorrect to read one's speech. I knew that many did so to express themselves coherently and briefly. To speak extempore would have been out of the question for me. I had therefore written down my speech. I stood up to read it, but could

not. My vision became blurred and I trembled, though the speech hardly covered a sheet of foolscap. Sjt. Mazmudar had to read it for me. His own speech was of course excellent and was received with applause. I was ashamed of myself and sad at heart for my incapacity.

My last effort to make a public speech in England was on the eve of my departure for home. But this time too I only succeeded in making myself ridiculous.[T12] I invited my vegetarian friends to dinner in the Holborn Restaurant referred to in these chapters. 'A vegetarian dinner could be had,' I said to myself, 'in vegetarian restaurants as a matter of course. But why should it not be possible in a non-vegetarian restaurant too?' And I arranged with the manager of the Holborn Restaurant to provide a strictly vegetarian meal. The vegetarians hailed the new experiment with delight[T13]. All dinners are meant for enjoyment, but the West has developed the thing into an art. They are celebrated with great *eclat*, music and speeches. And the little dinner party that I gave was also not un-accompanied by some such display. Speeches, therefore, there had to be. When my turn for speaking came, I stood up to make a speech. I had with great care thought out one which would consist of a very few sentences. But I could not proceed beyond the first sentence. I had read of Addison that he began his maiden speech in the House of Commons, repeating 'I conceive' three times, and when he could proceed no further, a wag stood up and said, 'The gentleman conceived thrice but brought forth nothing.' I had thought of making a humorous speech taking this anecdote as the text. I therefore began with it and stuck there. My memory entirely failed me and in attempting a humorous[T14] speech I made myself ridiculous. 'I thank you, gentlemen, for having kindly responded to my invitation,' I said abruptly, and sat down.[1]

It was only in South Africa that I got over this shyness, though I never completely overcame it.[T15] It was impossible for me to speak *impromptu*.[T16] I hesitated[T17] whenever I had to face strange audiences and avoided making a speech whenever I could. Even today I do not think I could or would even be inclined to keep a meeting of friends engaged in idle talk.

I must say that, beyond occasionally exposing me to laughter, my constitutional shyness has been no disadvantage whatever. In fact I can see that, on the contrary, it has been all to my advantage. My hesitancy in speech, which was once an annoyance, is now a pleasure. Its greatest benefit has been that it has taught me the economy of words. I have naturally formed the habit of restraining my thoughts.

[1] For a report of this 'nervous' speech, *vide* Speech at Farewell Dinner", June 11, 1891.

And I can now give myself the certificate that a thoughtless[T18] word hardly ever escapes my tongue or pen. I do not recollect ever having had to regret anything in my speech or writing. I have thus been spared many a mishap and waste of time. Experience has taught me that silence is part of the spiritual discipline of a votary of truth. Proneness to exaggerate, to suppress or modify the truth, wittingly or unwittingly, is a natural weakness of man, and silence is necessary in order to surmount it.[T19] A man of few words will rarely be thoughtless in his speech; he will measure every word. We find so many people impatient to talk. There is no chairman of a meeting who is not pestered with notes for permission to speak. And whenever the permission is given the speaker generally exceeds the time-limit, asks for more time, and keeps on talking without permission. All this talking can hardly be said to be of any benefit to the world. It is so much waste of time. My shyness has been in reality my shield and buckler. It has allowed me to grow[T20]. It has helped me in my discernment of[T21] truth.

CHAPTER XIX : THE CANKER OF UNTRUTH

There were comparatively few Indian students in England forty years ago. It was a practice with them to affect the bachelor even though they might be married. School or college students in England are all bachelors, studies being regarded as incompatible with married life. We had that tradition in the good old days, a student then being invariably known as a *brahmchari*[1]. But in these days we have child-marriages, a thing practically unknown in England. Indian youths in England, therefore, felt ashamed to confess that they were married. There was also another reason for dissembling, namely that in the event of the fact being known it would be impossible for the young man to go about or flirt with the young girls of the family in which they lived. The flirting was more or less innocent. Parents even encouraged it[T1]; and that sort of association between young men and young women may even be[T2] a necessity there, in view of the fact that every young man has to choose his mate. If, however, Indian youths on arrival in England indulge in these relations, quite natural to English youths, the result is likely to be disastrous, as has often been found. I saw that our youths had succumbed to the temptation and chosen a life of untruth for the sake of companionships which, however innocent in the case of English youths, were for them undesirable. I too caught the contagion. I did not hesitate to pass myself of as a bachelor though I was married and[T3] the father of a

[1] One who observes *brahmacharya*, i.e., complete self-restraint

son. But I was none the happier for being a dissembler. Only[T4] my reserve[T5] and my reticence saved me from going into deeper waters. If I did not talk, no girl would think it worth her while to enter into conversation with me or to go out with me.

My cowardice was on a par with my reserve[T6]. It was customary in families like the one in which I was staying at Ventnor for the daughter of the landlady to take out guests for a walk[T7]. My[T8] landlady's daughter took me one day to the lovely hills round Ventnor. I was no slow walker, but my companion walked even faster, dragging me after her and chattering away all the while. I responded to her chatter sometimes with a whispered 'yes' or 'no', or at the most 'yes, how beautiful !' She was flying like a bird whilst I was wondering when I should get back home.[T9] We thus reached the top of a hill. How to get down again was the question. In spite of her high-heeled boots this sprightly young lady of twenty-five darted down the hill like an arrow. I was shamefacedly struggling to get down[T10]. She stood at the foot smiling and cheering me and offering to come and drag me. How could I be so chicken-hearted ? With the greatest difficulty, and crawling at intervals, I somehow managed to scramble to the bottom. She loudly laughed 'bravo' and shamed me all the more, as well she might.

But I could not escape scatheless everywhere. For God wanted to rid me of the canker of untruth. I once went to Brighton, another watering-place like Ventnor. This was before the Ventnor visit. I met there at a hotel an old widow of moderate means. This was my first year in England. The courses on the *menu* were all described in French, which I did not understand. I sat at the same table as the old lady. She saw that I was a stranger and puzzled, and immediately came to my aid. 'You seem to be a stranger,' she said, 'and look perplexed. Why have you not ordered anything ?' I was spelling through the *menu* and preparing to ascertain the ingredients of the courses from the waiter, when the good lady thus intervened. I thanked her, and explaining my difficulty told her that I was at a loss to know which of the courses were vegetarian as I did not understand French.

'Let me help you,' she said, "I shall explain the card to you and show you what you may eat.' I gratefully availed of her help. This was the beginning of an acquaintance that ripened into friendship and was kept up all through my stay in England and long after. She gave me her London address and invited me to dine at her house every Sunday. On special occasions also she would invite me, help me to conquer my bashfulness and introduce me to young ladies and draw me into conversation with them. Particularly marked out for these conversations was a young lady who stayed with her, and often we would be left entirely alone together.

I found all this very trying at first. I could not start a conversation nor could I indulge in any jokes. But she put me in the way. I began to learn; and in course of time looked forward to every Sunday and came to like the conversations with the young friend.

The old lady went on spreading her net wider every day. She felt interested in our meetings. Possibly she has her own plans about us.[T11]

I was in a quandary. 'How I wished I had told the good lady that I was married !' I said to myself. 'She would then have not thought of an engagement between us. It is, however, never too late to mend. If I declare the truth, I might yet be saved more misery.' With these thoughts in my mind, I wrote a letter to her somewhat to this effect :

'Ever since we met at Brighton you have been kind to me. You have taken care of me even as a mother of her son. You also think that I should get married and with that view you have been introducing me to young ladies. Rather than allow matters to go further, I must confess to you that I have been unworthy of your affection. I should have told you when I begen by visits to you that I was married. I knew that Indian students in England dissembled the fact of their marriage and I followed suit. I now see that I should not have done so. I must also add that I was married while yet a boy, and am the father of a son. I am pained that I should have kept this knowledge from you so long. But I am glad God has now given me the courage to speak out the truth. Will you forgive me ? I assure you I have taken no improper liberties with the young lady you were good enough to introduce to me. I knew my limits. You, not knowing that I was married, naturally desired that we should be engaged. In order that things should not go beyond the present stage, I must tell you the truth.[T12]

'If on receipt of this, you feel that I have been unworthy of your hospitality, I assure you I shall not take it amiss. You have laid me under an everlasting debt of gratitude by your kindness and solicitude. If, after this, you do not reject me but continue to regard me as worthy of your hospitality, which I will spare no pains to deserve, I shall naturally be happy and count it a further token of your kindness.'

Let the reader know that I could not have written such a letter in a moment. I must have drafted and redrafted it many times over. But it lifted a burden that was weighing me down. Almost by return post came her reply somewhat as follows :

'I have your frank letter. We were both very glad and had a hearty laugh over it. The untruth you say you have been guilty of is

pardonable. But it is well that you have acquainted us with the real state of things. My inviation still stands and we shall certainly expect you next Sunday and look forward to hearing all about your child-marriage and to the pleasure of laughing at your expense. Need I assure you that our friendship is not in the least affected by this incident ?'

I thus purged myself of the canker of untruth, and I never thenceforward hesitated to talk of my married state wherever necessary.

CHAPTER XX : ACQUAINTANCE WITH RELIGIONS

Towards the end of my second year[T1] in England I came across two Theosophists, brothers, and both unmarried. They talked to me about the *Gita*. They were reading Sir Edwin Arnold's translation—*The Song Celestial*—and they invited me to read the original with them. I felt ashamed, as I had read the divine poem neither in Samskrit nor in Gujarati. I was constrained to tell them that I had not read the *Gita*, but that I would gladly read it with them, and that though my knowledge of Samskrit was meagre, still I hoped to be able to understand the original to the extent of telling where the translation failed to bring out the meaning. I began reading the *Gita* with them. The verses in[T2] the second chapter

> If one
> Ponders on objects of the sense, there springs
> Attraction; from attraction grows desire,
> Desire flames to fierce passion, passion breeds
> Recklessness; then the memory—all betrayed—
> Lets noble purpose go, and saps the mind,
> Till purpose, mind, and man are all undone.

made a deep impression on my mind, and they still ring in my ears. The book struck me as one of priceless worth. The impression has ever since been growing on me with the result that I regard it today as the book *par excellence* for the knowledge of Truth. It has afforded me invaluable help in my moments of gloom. I have read almost all the English translations of it, and I regard Sir Edwin Arnold's as the best. He has been faithful to the text[T3], and yet it does not read like a translation. Though I read the *Gita* with these friends, I cannot pretend to have studied it then. It was only after some years that it became a book of daily reading.

The brothers also recommended *The Light of Asia* by Sir Edwin Arnold, whom I knew till then as the author only of *The Song*

Celestial, and I read it with even greater interest than I did the *Bhagavad Gita*. Once I had begun it I could not leave off. They also took me on one occasion to the Blavatsky Lodge and introduced me to[T4] Madame Blavatsky and Mrs. Besant. The latter had just then joined the Theosophical Society, and I was following with great interest the controversy about her conversion. The friends advised me to join the Society, but I politely declined saying, With, my meagre knowledge of my own[T5] religion I do 63 not want to belong to any religious body[T6].' I recall having read, at the brothers' instance, Mad-ame Blavatsky's *Key to Theosophy*. This book stimulated in me the desire to read books on Hinduism, and disabused me of the notion fostered by the missionaries that Hinduism was rife with superstition.

About the same time I met a good Christian from Manchester in a vegetarian boarding house. He talked to me about Christianity. I narrated to him my Rajkot recollections. He was pained to hear them. He said, 'I am a vegetarian. I do not drink. Many Charistians are meat-eaters and drink, no doubt; but neither meat-eating nor drinking is enjoined by Scripture[T7]. Do please read the Bible.' I accepted his advice, and he got me a copy. I have a faint recollection that he himself used to sell copies of the Bible, and I purchased from him an edition containing maps, concordance, and other aids. I began reading it, but I could not possibly read through the Old Testament. I read the book of Genesis, and the chapters that followed invariably sent me to sleep. But just for the sake of being able to say that I had read it, I plodded through the other books with much difficulty and without the least interest or understanding. I disliked reading the book of Numbers.

But the New Testament produced a different impression, especially the Sermon on the Mount which went straight to my heart. I compared[T8] it with the *Gita*. The verses, 'But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil : but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man take away thy coat let him have thy cloak too,' delighted me beyond measure and put me in mind of Shamal Bhatt's 'For a bowl of water, give a goodly meal' etc. My young mind tried to unify the teaching of the *Gita, The Light of Asia* and the Sermon on the Mount. That renunciation was the highest form of religion[T9] appealed to me greatly.

This reading whetted my appetite for studying the lives of other religious teachers. A friend recommended Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero-warship*. I read the chapter on the Hero as a prophet and learnt of the Prophet's greatness and bravery and austere living.

Beyond this acquaintance with religion I could not go at the

moment, as reading for the examination left me scarcely any time for outside subjects. But I took mental note of the fact that I should read more religious books and acquaint myself with all the principal religions.

And how could I help knowing something of atheism too ? Every Indian knew Bradlaugh's name and his so-called atheism. I read some book about it, the name of which I forget. It had no effect on me, for I had already crossed the Sahara of atheism. Mrs. Besant who was then very much in the limelight, had turned to theism from atheism, and that fact also strengthened my aversion to atheism. I had read her book[T10] *How I Became a Theosophist.*

It was about this time that Bradlaugh died. He was buried in the Woking Cemetery. I attended the funeral, as I believe every Indian residing in London did. A few clergymen also were present to do him the last honours. On our way back from the funeral we had to wait at the station for our train. A champion atheist from the crowd heckled one of these clergymen.'Well, Sir, you believe in the existence of God?'

'I do,' said the good man in a low tone.

'You also agree that the circumference of the Earth is 28,000 miles, don't you ?' said the atheist with a smile of self-assurance.

'Indeed.'

'Pray tell me then the size of your God and where he may be ?'

'Well, if we but knew, He resides in the hearts of us both.'

'Now, now, don't take me to be a child,' said the champion with a triumphant look at us.

The clergyman assumed a humble silence.

This talk still further increased my prejudice against atheism.

CHAPTER XXI : निर्बल के बल राम[1]

Though I had acquired a nodding acquaintance with Hinduism[T1] and other[T2] religions of the world, I should have known that it would not be enough to save me in my trials.[T3] Of the thing that sustains him through trials man has no inkling, much less knowledge, at the time. If an unbeliever, he will attribute his safety to chance. If a believer, he will say God saved him. He will conclude as well he may, that his religious study or spiritual discipline was at the back of the state of grace within him. But in the hour of his deliverance he does not know whether his spiritual discipline or something else saves him.

[1] '*Nirbalke Bal Ram*'—refrain of Surdas's famous hymn, 'Rama the help of the helpless, the strength of the weak'

Who that has prided himself on his spiritual strength has not seen it humbled to the dust? A knowledge of religion[T4], as distinguished from experience, seems but chaff in such moments of trial.

It was in England that I first discovered the futility of mere religious knowledge. How I was saved on previous occasions is more than I can say, for I was very young then[1] ; but not I was twenty and had gained some experience as husband and father.

During the last year, as far as I can remember, of my stay in England, that is in 1890,[2] there was a Vegetarian Conference at Portsmouth to which an Indian friend and I were invited. Portsmouth is a sea-port with a large naval population. It has many houses with women of ill fame, women not actually prostitutes, but at the same time, not very scrupulous about their morals. We were put up in one of these houses. Needless to say, the Reception Committee did not know anything about it. It would have been difficult in a town like Portsmouth to find out which were good lodgings and which were bad for occasional travellers like us.

We returned from the Conference in the evening. After dinner we sat down to play a rubber of bridge, in which our landlady joined, as is customary in England even in respectable households. Every player indulges in innocent jokes as a matter of course, but here my companion and our hostess began to make indecent ones as well. I did not know that my friend was an adept in the art. It captured me and I also joined in. Just when I was about to go beyond the limit, leaving the cards and the game to themselves, God through the good companion uttered the blessed warning : 'Whence this devil in you, my boy ? Be off, quick !'

I was ashamed. I took the warning and expressed within myself gratefulness to my friend. Remembering the vow I had taken before my mother, I fled from the scene. To my room I went quaking, trembling, and with beating heart, like a quarry escaped from its pursuer.

I recall this as the first occasion on which a woman, other than my wife, moved me to lust. I passed that night sleeplessly, all kinds of thoughts assailing me. Should I leave this house ? Should I run away from the place ? Where was I ? What would happen to me if I had not my wits about me ? I decided to act thenceforth with great caution; not to leave the house, but somehow leave Portsmouth[T5]. The Conference was not to go on for more than two days, and I remember I left Portsmouth the next evening, my companion staying there some

[1] *Vide* also "Power of 'Ramanama'", May 17, 1925.

[2] This should be 1891, *vide* "The Foods of India", June 1, 1891.

time longer.

I did not then know the essence of religion or of God, and how He works in us. Only vaguely I understood that God had saved me on that occasion. On all occasions of trial He has saved me.[T6] I know that the phrase 'God saved me' has a deeper meaning for me today, and still I feel that I have not yet grasped its entire meaning. Only richer experience can help me to a fuller understanding. But in all[T7] my tria ls—of a spiritual nature, as a lawyer, in conducting institutions, and in politics—I can say that God saved me. When every hope is gone, 'when helpers fail and comforts flee,' I find that help arrives somehow, from I know not where. Supplication, worship, prayer are no superstition; they are acts more real than the acts of eating, drinking, sitting or walking. It is no exaggeration to say that they along are real, all else is unreal.

Such worship or prayer is no flight of eloquence; it is no lip-homage. It springs from the heart. If, therefore, we achieve that purity of the heart when it is 'emptied of all but love', if we keep all the chords in proper tune, they 'trembling pass in music out of sight'. Prayer needs no speech. It is in itself independent of any sensuous effort.[T8] I have not the slightest doubt that[T9] prayer is an unfailing means of cleansing the heart of passions. But it must be combined with the utmost humility.[T10]

CHAPTER XXII : NARAYAN HEMCHANDRA

Just about this time[T1] Narayan Hemchandra came to England. I had heard of him as a writer.[1] We met at the house of Miss Manning[2] of the National Indian Association. Miss Manning knew that I could not make myself sociable. When I went to her place I used to sit tongue-tied, never speaking except when spoken to. She introduced me to Narayan Hemchandra. He did not know English. His dress was queer—a clumsy pair of trousers, a wrinkled, dirty, brown coat after the Parsi fashion, no necktie or collar, and a tasselled woollen cap. He grew a long beard.

He was lightly built and short of stature. His round face was scarred with small-pox, and had a nose which was neither pointed nor blunt. With his hand he was constantly turning over his beard.

Such a queer-looking and queerly dressed person was bound to be singled out in fashionable society.

[1] Gandhiji mentions him as the author of a biography of the Prophet Mohammed; *vide* "letter to Jamnadas Gandhi", August 28, 1911.

[2] Died in 1905; for an obituary by Gandhiji, *vide* "The Late Miss Manning", September 16, 1905.

‘I have heard a good deal about you,’ I said to him. ‘I have also read some of your writings. I should be very pleased if you were kind enough to come to my place.’

Narayan Hemchandra had a rather hoarse voice. With a smile on his face he replied :

‘Yes, where do you stay ?’

‘In Store Street.’

Then we are neighbours. I want to learn English. Will you teach me ?’

‘I shall be happy to teach you anything I can, and will try my best. If you like, I will go to your place.’

‘Oh, no. I shall come to you. I shall also bring with me a Translation Exercise Book.’ So we made an appointment. Soon we were close friends.

Narayan Hemchandra was innocent of grammar. ‘Horse’ was a verb with him and ‘run’ a noun. I remember many such funny instances. But he was not to be baffled by his ignorance. My little knowledge of grammar could make no impression on him. Certainly he never regarded his ignorance of grammar as a matter for shame.

With perfect nonchalance he said :[T2] ‘I have never been to school like you. I have never felt the need of grammar in expressing my thoughts. Well, do you know Bengali ? I know it. I have travelled in Bengal. It is I who have given Maharshi Devendranath Tagore’s works to the Gujarati-speaking world. And I wish to translate into Gujarati the treasures of man other languages. And you know I am never literal in my translations. I always content myself with bringing out the spirit. Others, with their better knowledge, may be able to do more in future.[T3] But I am quite satisfied with what I have achieved without the help of grammar.[T4] I know Marathi, Hindi, Bengali,[T5] and now I have begun to know English. What I want is a copious vocabulary. And do you think my ambition ends here ? No fear. I want to go to France and learn French. I am told that language has an extensive literature. I shall go to Germany also, if possible, and there learn German.’ And thus he would talk on unceasingly. He had a boundless ambition for learning languages and for foreign travel.

‘Then you will go to America also ?’

‘Certainly. How can I return to India without having seen the New World ?’

‘But where will you find the money ?’

‘What do I need money for ? I am not a fashionable fellow like you. The minimum amount of food and the minimum amount of

clothing suffice for me. And for this what little I get out of my books and from my friends is enough. I always travel third class. While going to America also I shall travel on deck.'

Narayan Hemchandra's simplicity was all his own, and his frankness was on a par with it. Of pride he had not the slightest trace, excepting, of course, a rather undue regard for his own capacity as a writer.

We met daily. There was a considerable amount of similarity between our thoughts and actions. Both of us were vegetarians. We would often have our lunch together. This was the time when I lived on 17s. a week and cooked for myself. Sometimes I would go to his room, and sometimes he would come to mine. I cooked in the English style. Nothing but Indian style would satisfy him. He could not do without dal. I would make soup of carrots, etc., and he would pity me for my taste. Once he somehow hunted out *mung*[1], cooked it and brought it to my place. I ate it with delight. This led on to a regular system of exchange between us. I would take my delicacies to him and he would bring his to me.

Cardinal Manning's name was then on every lip. The dock labourers' strike had come to an early termination owing to the efforts of John Burns and Cardinal Manning. I told Narayan Hemchandra of Disraeli's tribute to the Cardinal's simplicity. 'Then I must see the sage,' said he.

'He is a big man. How do you expect to meet him ?'

'Why ? I know how. I must get you to write to him in my name. Tell him I am an author and that I want to congratulate him personally on his humanitarian work, and also say that I shall have to take you as interpreter as I do not know English.'

I wrote a letter to that effect. In two or three days came Cardinal Manning's card in reply giving us an appointment. So we both called on the Cardinal. I put on the usual visiting suit. Narayan Hemchandra was the same as ever, in the same coat and the same trousers. I tried to make fun of this, but he laughed me out and said :

'You civilized fellows are all cowards. Great men never look at a person's exterior. They think of his heart.'

We entered the Cardinal's mansion.[T6] As soon as we were seated, a thin, tall, old gentleman made his appearance, and shook hands with us. Narayan Hemchandra thus gave his greetings :[T7]

'I do not want to take up your time. I had heard a lot about you and I felt I should come and thank you for the good work you have

[1] An Indian pulse

done for the strikers. It has been my custom to visit the sages of the world and that is why I have put you to this trouble.'

This was of course my translation of what he spoke in Gujarati.[T8]

'I am glad you have come. I hope your stay in London will agree with you and that you will get in touch with people here. God bless you.'

With these words the Cardinal stood up and said good-bye.

Once Narayan Hemchandra came to my place in a shirt and dhoti. The good landlady opened the door, came running to me in a fright—this was a new landlady who did not know Narayan Hemchandra[T9]—and said : 'A sort of a madcap wants to see you.' I went to the door and to my surprise found Narayan Hemchandra. I was shocked. His face, however, showed nothing but his usual smile.

'But did not the children in the street rag you ?'

'Well, they ran after me, but I did not mind them and they were quiet.'

Narayan Hemchandra went to Paris after a few months' stay in London. He began studying French and also translating French books. I knew enough French to revise his translation, so he gave it to me to read. It was not a translation, it was the substance.

Finally he carried out his determination to visit America. It was with great difficulty that he succeeded in securing a deck ticket. While in the United States he was prosecuted[T10] for 'being indecently dressed', as he once went out in a shirt and dhoti. I have a recollection that he was discharged.

CHAPTER XXIII : THE GREAT EXHIBITION

There was a great Exhibition at Paris in 1890. I had[T1] read about its elaborate preparations, and I also had a keen desire to see Paris. So I thought I had better combine two things in one and go there at this juncture. A particular attraction of the Exhi- bition was the Eiffel Tower, constructed entirely of iron, and nearly 1,000 feet high. There were of course many other things of inte- rest, but the Tower was the chief one, inasmuch as it had been supposed till then that a structure of that height could not safely stand.

I had heard of[T2] a vegetarian restaurant in Paris. I engaged a room there and stayed seven days. I managed everything very economically, both the journey to Paris and the sightseeing there. This I did mostly on foot and with the help of a map of Paris, as also a map of and guide to the Exhibition. These were enough to direct one to the main streets and chief places off interest.

I remember nothing of the Exhibition excepting its magnitude and variety. I have fair recollection of the Eiffel Tower as I ascended it twice or thrice. there was a restaurant on the first platform, and just for the satisfaction of being able to say that I had had my lunch at a great height, I threw away seven shillings on it.

The ancient churches of Paris are still in my memory. Their grandeur and their peacefulness are unforgettable. The wonderful constru-ction of Notre Dame and the elaborate decoration of the interior with its beautiful sculptures cannot be forgotten. I felt then that those who expended millions on such divine cathedrals could not but have the love of God in their hearts.

I had read a lot about the fashions and frivolity of Paris. These were in evidence in every street, but the churches stood noticeably apart from these scenes. A man would forget the outside noise and bustle as soon as he entered one of these churches. His manner would change, he would behave with dignity and reverence[T3] as he passed[T4] someone kneeling before the image of the Virgin. The feeling I had then has since been growing on me, that all this kneeling and prayer could not be mere superstition; the devout souls kneeling before the Virgin could not be worshipping mere marble. They were fired with genuine devotion and they worshipped not stone, but the divinity[T5] of which it was symbolic. I have an impression that I felt then that by this worship they were not detracting from, but increasing, the glory of God.

I must say a word about the Eiffel Tower. I do not know what purpose it serves today.[T6] But I then heard it greatly disparaged as well as praised. I remember that Tolstoy was the chief among those who disparaged it. He said that the Eiffel Tower was a monument of man's folly, not of his wisdom. Tobacco, he argued, was the worst of all into-xicants, inasmuch as a man addicted to it was tempted to commit crimes which a drunkard never dared to do; liquor made a man mad, but tobacco clouded his intellect and made him build castles in the air.[T7] The Eiffel Tower was one of the creations of a man under such influence.

There is[T8] no art about the Eiffel Tower. In no way can it be said to have contributed to the real beauty of the Exhibition. Men flocked to see it and ascended it as it was a novelty and of unique dimensions. It was the toy of the Exhibition. So long as we are children we are attracted by toys, and the Tower was a good demonstration of the fact that we are all children attracted by trinkets. That may be claimed to be the purpose served by the Eiffel Tower.

CHAPTER XXIV : ‘CALLED’—BUT THEN ?

I have deferred saying anything up to now about the purpose for which I went to England, viz., being called to the bar. It is time to advert to it briefly.

There were two conditions which had to be fulfilled before a student was formally called to the bar : ‘keeping terms’, twelve terms equivalent to about three years; and passing examinations. ‘Keeping terms’ meant eating one’s terms, i.e., attending at least six out of about twenty-four dinners in a term. Eating did not mean actually partaking of the dinner, it meant reporting oneself at the fixed hours and remaining present throughout the dinner. Usually of course everyone ate and drank the good commons and choice wines provided. A dinner cost from two and six to three and six, that is from two to three rupees. This was considered moderate, inasmuch as one had to pay that same amount for wines alone if one dined at a hotel. To us in India it is a matter for surprise, if we are not ‘civilized’,[T1] that the cost of drink should exceed the cost of food. The first revelation gave me a great shock, and I wondered how people had the heart to throw away so much money on drink. Later Icame to understand. I often nothing at these dinners, for the things that I might eat were only bread, boiled potato and cabbage. In the beginning I did not eat these, as I did not like them; and later, when I began to relish them, I also gained the courage to ask for other dishes.

The dinner provided for the benchers used to be better than that for the students. A Parsi student, who was also a vegetarian, and I applied, in the interests of vegetarianism, for the vegetarian courses which were served to the benchers. The application was granted, and we began to get fruits and other vegetables from the benchers’ table.

Two bottles of wine were allowed to each group of four, and as I did not touch them, I was ever in demand to form a quartet, so that three might empty two bottles. And there was a ‘grand night‘ in each term when extra wines, like champagne, in addition to port and sheery, were served.[T2] I was therefore specially requested to attend and was in great demand on that ‘grand night’.

I could not see then, nor have I seen since, how these dinners qualified the students better for the bar. There was once a time when only a few students used to attend these dinners and thus there were opportunities for talks between them and the benchers, and speeches were also made. These occasions helped to give them knowledge of the world with a sort of polish and refinement, and also improved their power of speaking. No such thing was possible in my time, as the benchers had a table all to themselves.[T3] The institution had gradually

lost all its meaning, but conservative[T4] England retained it nevertheless.

The curriculum of study was easy, barristers being humorously known as 'dinner barristers'. Everyone knew that the examinations had practically no value. In my time there were two, one in Roman Law and the other in Common Law. There were regular text-books prescribed for these examinations which could be taken in compartments, but scarcely anyone read them. I have known many to pass the Roman Law examination by scrambling through[T5] notes on Roman Law in a couple of weeks, and the Common Law examination by reading notes on the subject in two or three months. Question papers were easy and examiners were generous. The percentage of passes in the Roman Law examination used to be 95 to 99 and of those in the final examination 75 or even more. There was thus little fear of being plucked, and examinations were held not once but four times in the year. They[T6] could not be felt as a difficulty.

But I succeeded in turning them into one. I felt that I should read all the text-books. It was a fraud, I thought, not to read these books. I invested much money in them. I decided to read Roman Law in Latin. The Latin which I had acquired in the London Matriculation stood me in good stead. And all this reading was not without its value later on in South Africa, where Roman Dutch is the common law. The reading of Justinian, therefore, helped me a great deal in understanding the South African law.

It took me nine months of fairly hard labour to read through the Common Law of England. For Broom's *Common Law*, a big but interesting volume, took up a good deal of time. Snell's *Equity* was full of interest, but a bit hard to understand. White and Tudor's *Leading Cases*, from which certain cases were prescribed, was full of interest and instruction. I read also with interest Williams' and Edwards' *Real Property*, and Goodeve's *Personal Property*. Williams' book read like a novel. The one[T7] book I remember to have read on my return to India, with the same unflagging interest, was Mayne's *Hindu Law*. But it is out of place to talk here of Indian law-books.

I passed my examinations, was called to the bar on the 10th of June 1891, and enrolled in the High Court on the 11th.[T8] On the 12th I sailed for home.

But notwithstanding my study there was no end to my helplessness and fear. I did not feel myself qualified to practise law.[T9]

But a separate chapter is needed to describe this helplessness[T10] of mine.

It was easy to be called, but it was difficult to practise at the bar. I had read the laws, but not learnt how to practise law. I had read with interest 'Legal Maxims',[T1] but did not know how to apply them in my profession. '*Sic utere tuo ut alienum non laedas*'[1] (Use your property in such a way as not to damage that of others) was one of them,[T2] but I was at a loss to know how one could employ this maxim for the benefit of one's client. I had read all the leading cases on this maxim, but they gave me no confidence in the application of it in the practice of law.

Besides, I had learnt nothing at all of Indian law. I had not the slightest idea of Hindu and Mahomedan Law. I had not even learnt how to draft a plaint, and felt completely at sea. I had heard of Sir Pherozeshah Mehta as one who roared like a lion in law-courts. How, I wondered, could he have learnt the art in England ? It was out of the question for me ever to acquire his legal acumen, but I had serious misgivings as to whether I should be able even to earn a living by the profession.

I was torn with these doubts and anxieties whilst I was studying law. I confided my difficulties to some of my friends. One of them suggested that I should seek Dadabhai Naoroji's advice. I have already said that, when I went to England, I possessed a note of introduction to Dadabhai. I availed myself of it very late. I thought I had no right to trouble such a great man for an interview. Whenever an address by him was announced, I would attend it, listen to him from a corner of the hall and go away after having feasted my eyes and ears. In order to come in close touch with the students he had founded an association. I used to attend its meetings, and rejoiced at Dadabhai's solicitude for the students, and the latter's respect for him. In course of time I mustered up courage to present to him the note of introduction. He said[T3] : 'You can come and have my advice whenever you like.' But I never availed myself of his offer. I thought it wrong[T4] to trouble him without the most pressing necessity. Therefore I dared not venture to accept my friend's advice to submit my difficulties to Dadabhai at that time. I forget now whether it was the same friend or someone else who recommended me to meet Mr. Frederick Pincott. He was a Conservative, but his affection for Indian students was pure and unselfish. Many students sought his advice and I also applied to him for an appointment, which he granted. I can

[1] Gandhiji often cites this maxim; *vide*, e.g., "Speech on Swadeshi at Missionary Conference, Madras", February 14, 1916.

never forget that interview. He greeted me as a friend. He laughed away my pessimism. 'Do you think,' he said, 'that everyone must be a Pherozeshah Mehta ? Pherozeshahs and Badruddins are rare. Rest assured it takes no unusual skill to be an ordinary lawyer. Common honesty and industry are enough to enable him to make a living. All cases are not complicated. Well, let me know the extent of your general reading.'

When I acquainted him with my little stock of reading, he was, as I could see, rather disappointed. But it was only for a moment. Soon his face beamed with a pleasing smile and he said, 'I understand your trouble. Your general reading is meagre. You have no knowledge of the world, a *sine qua non* for a *vakil*. You have not even read the history of India. A *vakil* should know human nature. He should be able to read a man's character from his face. And every Indian ought to know Indian history. This has no connection with the practice of law, but you ought to have that knowledge I see that you have not even read Kaye and Malleson's history of the Mutiny of 1857. Get hold of that at once and also read two more books to understand human nature.' These were Lavator's and Shemmelpennick's books on physiognomy.

I was extremely grateful to this venerable friend. In his presence I found all my fear gone, but as soon as I left him I began to worry again. 'To know a man from his face' was the question that haunted me, as I thought of the two books on my way home. The next day I purchased Lavator's book. Shemmelpennick's was not available at the shop. I read Lavator's book and found it more difficult than Snell's *Equity*, and scarcely interesting. I studied Shakespeare's physiognomy, but did not acquire the knack of finding out the Shakespeares walking up and down the streets of London.

Lavator's book did not add to my knowledge. Mr. Pincott's advice did me very little direct service, but his kindness stood me in good stead. His smiling open face stayed in my memory, and I trusted his advice that Pherozeshah Mehta's acumen, memory and ability were not essential to the making of a successful lawyer; honesty and industry were enough. And as I had a fair share of these last I felt somewhat reassured.

I could not read Kaye and Malleson's volumes in England, but I did so in South Africa as I had made a point of reading them at the first opportunity.

Thus with just a little leaven of hope mixed with my despair, I landed at Bombay from s.s. *Assam*. The sea was rough in the harbour, and I had to reach the quay in a launch.

PART II

CHAPTER I : RAYCHANDBHAI

I said in the last chapter that the sea was rough in Bombay harbour, not an unusual thing in the Arabian Sea in June and July. It had been choppy all the way from Aden. Almost every passenger was sick; I alone was in perfect form, staying on deck to see the stormy surge, and enjoying the splash of the waves. At breakfast there would be just one or two people besides myself, eating their oatmeal porridge from plates carefully held in their laps, lest the porridge itself find its place there.

The outer storm was to me a symbol of the inner. But even as the former left me unperturbed, I think I can say the same thing about the latter. There was the trouble with the caste that was to confront me. I have already adverted to my helplessness in starting on my profession. And then, as I was a reformer, I was taxing myself as to how best to begin certain reforms. But there was even more in store for me than I knew.

My elder brother had come to meet me at the dock. He had already made the acquaintance of Dr. Mehta and his elder brother, and as Dr. Mehta insisted on putting me up at his house, we went there. Thus the acquaintance begun in England continued in India and ripened into a permanent friendship between the two families.

I was pining to see my mother. I did not know that she was no more in the flesh to receive me back into her bosom.[T1] The sad news was now given me, and I underwent the usual ablution. My brother had kept me ignorant of her death, which took place whilst I was still in England. He wanted to spare me the blow in a foreign land. The news, however, was none the less a severe shock to me. But I must not dwell upon it.[T2] My grief was even greater than over my father's death. Most of my cherished hopes were shattered. But I remember that I did not give myself up to any wild expression of grief. I could even check the tears, and took to life just as though nothing had happened.

Dr. Mehta introduced me to several friends, one of them being his brother Shri Revashankar Jagjivan, with whom there grew up a lifelong friendship. But the introduction that I need particularly take note of was the one to the poet Raychand or Rajchandra[1], the son-in-law of an elder brother of Dr. Mehta, and partner[T3] of the firm of

[1] Died in 1901; *vide* "Letter to Revashankar Zaveri", May 21, 1901; also "Preface to 'Shrimad Rajchandra'", November 5, 1926 & Appendix "Gandhiji's Questions to Rajchandra and His Replies", before December 12, 1926.

jewellers conducted in the name of Revashankar Jagjivan. He was not above twenty-five then, but my first meeting with him convinced me that he was a man of great character and learning. He was also known as *shatavadhani* (one having the faculty of remembering or attending to a hundred things simultaneously), and Dr. Mehta recommended me to see some of his memory feats. I exhausted my vocabulary of all the European tongues I knew, and asked the poet to repeat the words. He did so in the precise order in which I had given them. I envied his gift without, however, coming under its spell. The thing that did cast its spell over me I came to know afterwards. This was his wide knowledge of the scriptures, his spotless character, and his burning passion for self-realization. I saw later that this last was the only thing for which he lived. the following lines of Muktanand were always on his lips and engraved on the tablets of his heart :

> 'I shall think myself blessed only when I see Him
> In every one of my daily acts;
> Verily he is the thread,
> Which supports Muktanand's life.'

Raychandbhai's commercial transactions covered hundreds of thousands. He was a connoisseur of pearls and diamonds. No knotty business problem was too difficult for him. But all these things were not the centre round which his life revolved. That centre was the passion to see God face to face. Amongst the things on his business table there were invariably to be found some religious book and his diary. The moment he finished his business he opened the religious book or the diary. Much of his published writings is a reproduction from this diary. The man who, immediately on finishing his talk about weighty business transactions, began to write about the hidden things of the spirit could evidently not be a businessman at all, but a real seeker after Truth. And I saw him thus absorbed in godly pursuits in the midst of business, not once or twice, but very often. I never saw him lose his state of equipoise. There was no business or other selfish tie that bound him to me, and yet I enjoyed the closest association with him. I was but a briefless barrister then, and yet whenever I saw him he would engage me in conversation of a seriously religious nature. Though I was then groping and could not be said to have any serious interest in religious discussion, still I found his talk of absorbing interest. I have since met many a religious leader or teacher. I have tried to meet the heads of various faiths, and I must say that no one else has ever made on me the impression that Raychandbhai did. His words went straight home to me. His intellect compelled as great a regard from me as his moral earnestness, and

deep down in me was the conviction that he would never willingly lead me astray and would always confide to me his innermost thoughts. In my moments of spiritual crisis, therefore, he was my refuge.

And yet in spite of this regard for him I could not enthrone him in my heart as my Guru. The throne has remained vacant and my search still continues.

I believe in the Hindu theory of Guru and his importance in spiritual realization. I think there is a great deal of truth in the doctrine that true knowledge is impossible without a Guru. An imperfect teacher may be tolerable in mundane matters, but not in spiritual matters. Only a perfect *jnani*[1] deserves to be enthroned as Guru.[T4] There must, therefore, be ceaseless striving after perfection. For one gets the Guru that one deserves. Infinite striving after perfection is one's right. It is its own reward. The rest is in the hands of God.[T5]

Thus, though I could not place Raychandbhai on the throne of my heart as Guru, we shall see how he was, on many occasions, my guide and helper[T6]. Three moderns have left a deep impress on life, and captivated me : Raychandbhai by his living contact; Tolstoy by his book. *The Kingdom of God Is within you*; and Ruskin by his *Unto This Last.* But of these more in their proper place.

CHAPTER II : HOW I BEGAN LIFE

My elder brother had built high hopes on me. The desire for wealth and name and fame[T1] was great in him. He had a big heart, generous to a fault. this, combined with his simple nature, had attracted to him many friends, and through them he expected to get me briefs. He had also assumed that I should have a swinging practice and had, in that expectation, allowed the household expenses to become top-heavy. He had also left no stone unturned in preparing the field for my practice.

The storm in my caste over my foreign voyage was still brewing. It had divided the caste into two camps, one of which immediately readmitted me, while the other was bent on keeping me out. To please the former my brother took me to Nasik before going to Rajkot, gave me a bath in the sacred river and, on reaching Rajkot, gave a caste dinner. I did not like all this. Buy my brother's love for me was boundless, and[T2] my devotion to him was in proportion to it, and so I mechanically acted as he wished, taking his will to be law. The trouble about readmission to the caste was thus practically over.

I never tried to seek admission to the section that had refused it.

[1] Seer, knower

Nor did I feel even mental resentment against any of the headmen of that section. Some of these regarded me with dislike, but I scrupulously avoided hurting their feelings.[T3] I fully respected the caste regulations about excommunication. According to these, none of my relations, including my father-in-law and mother-in-law, and even my sister and brother-in-law, could entertain me; and I would not so much as drink water at their houses. They were prepared secretly to evade the prohibition, but it went against the grain with me to do a thing in secret that I would not do in public.

The result of my scrupulous conduct was that I never had occasion to be troubled by the caste; nay, I have experienced nothing but affection and generosity from the general body of the section that still regards me as[T4] excommunicated. They have even helped me in my work, without ever expecting me to do anything for the caste. It is my conviction that all these good things are[T5] due to my non-resistance. Had I agitated for being admitted to the caste, had I attempted to divide it into more camps, had I provoked the caste-men, they would surely have retaliated, and instead of steering clear of the storm, I should, on arrival from England, have found myself in a whirlpool of agitation, and perhaps a party to dissimulation.

My relations with my wife were still not as I desired. Even my stay in England had not cured me of jealousy. I continued my squeamishness and suspiciousness in respect of every little thing, and hence all my cherished desires remained unfulfilled. I had decided that my wife should learn reading and writing and that I should help her in her studies, but my lust came in the way and she had to suffer for[T6] my own shortcoming. Once I went the length of sending her away to her father's house, and consented to receive her back only after I had made her thoroughly miserable. I saw later that all this was pure folly on my part.

I had planned reform in the education of children. My bro- ther had children, and my own child which I had left at home when I went to England was now a boy of nearly four. It was my desire to teach these little ones physical exercise and make them hardy, and also to give them the benefit of my personal guidance. In this I had my brother's support and I succeeded in my efforts more or less. I very much liked the company of children, and the habit of playing and joking with them has stayed with me till today. I have ever since thought that I should make a good teacher of children.

The necessity for food 'reform' was obvious. Tea and coffee had already found their place in the house. My brother had thought it fit to keep some sort of English atmosphere ready for me on my

return, and to that end, crockery[T7] and such other things, which used to be kept in the house only for special occasions,[T8] were now in general use. My 'reforms' put the finishing touch. I introduced oat-meal porridge, and cocoa was to replace tea and coffee. But in truth it became an addition to tea and coffee. Boots and shoes[T9] were already there. I completed the Europeanization by adding the European dress.[T10]

Expenses thus went up. New things were added every day. We had succeeded in tying a white elephant at our door. But how was the wherewithal to be found ? To start practice in Rajkot would have meant sure ridicule. I had hardly the knowledge of a qualified *vakil*[T11] and yet I expected to be paid ten times his fee ! No client would be fool enough to engage me. And even if such a one was to be found, should I add arrogance and fraud to my ignorance, and increase the burden of debt I owed to the world ?

Friends advised me to go to Bombay for some time in order to gain experience of the High Court, to study Indian law and to try and get what briefs I could. I took up the suggestion and went.

In Bombay I started a household with a cook as incompetent as myself. He was a Brahmin. I did not treat him as a servant but as a member of the household.[T12] He would pour water over himself but never wash. His dhoti was dirty, as also his sacred thread, and he was completely innocent of the scriptures. But how was I to get a better cook

'Well, Ravishankar,' (for that was his name), I would ask him, 'you may not know cooking, but surely you must know your *sandhya* (daily worship), etc.'

'*Sandhya*, sir ! The plough is our *sandhya* and the spade our daily ritual. Theat is the type of Brahmin I am. I must live on your mercy. Otherwise agriculture is of course there for me.'

So I had to be Ravishankar's teacher. Time I had enough. I began to do half the cooking myself and introduced the English experiments in vegetarian cookery. I invested in a stove, and with Ravishankar began to run the kitchen.[T13] I had no scruples about inter-dining, Ravishankar too came to have none, and so we went on merrily together. There was only one obstacle. Ravishankar had sworn to remain dirty and to keep the food unclean !

But it was impossible for me to get along in Bombay for more than four or five months, there being no income to square with the ever-increasing expenditure.

This was how I began life. I found the barrister's profession a bad job—much show and little knowledge. I felt a crushing sense of

my responsibility.

CHAPTER III : THE FIRST CASE

Whilst in Bombay, I began, on the one hand, my study of Indian law and, on the other, my experiments in dietetics in which Virchand Gandhi, a friend, joined me. My brother, for his part, was trying his best to get me briefs.

The study of Indian law was a tedious business. The Civil Procedure Code I could in no way get on with. Not so, however, with the Evidence Act. Virchand Gandhi was reading for the Solicitor's Examination and would tell me all sorts of stories about barristers and *vakils*. 'Sir Pherozeshah's ability,' he would say, 'lies in his profound knowledge of law. He has the Evidence Act by heart and knows all the cases on the thirty-second section. Badruddin Tyabji's wonderful power of argument inspires the judges with awe.'

The stories of stalwarts such as these would unnerve me.

'It is not unusual,' he would add, 'for a barrister to vegetate for five or seven years. That's why I have signed the articles for solicitorship. You should count yourself lucky if you can paddle your own canoe in three years' time.'

Expenses were mounting up every month. To have a barrister's board outside the house, whilst still preparing for the barrister's profession inside, was a thing to which I could not reconcile myself. Hence I could not give undivided attention to my studies. I[T1] developed some liking for the Evidence Act[T2] and read Mayne's *Hindu Law* with deep interest, but I had not the courage to conduct a case. I was helpless beyond words, even as the bride come fresh to her father-in-law's house !

About this time, I took up[T3] the case of one Mamibai. It was a 'small cause'. 'You will have to pay some commission to the tout,' I was told. I emphatically declined.

'But even that great criminal lawyer Mr. So-and-So, who makes three to four thousand a month, pays commission !'

'I do not need to emulate him,' I rejoined. 'I should be content with Rs. 300 a month. Father did not get more.'

'But those days are gone. Expenses in Bombay have gone up frightfully. You must be business-like.'

I was adamant. I gave no commission, but got Mamibai's case all the same. It was an easy case. I charged Rs. 30 for my fees. The case was not likely to last longer than a day.

This was my *debut* in the Small Causes Court. I appeared for the defendant and had thus to cross-examine the plaintiff's witnesses. I

stood up, but my heart sank into my boots. My head was reeling and I felt as though the whole court was doing likewise. I could think of no question to ask. The judge must have laughed, and the *vakils* no doubt enjoyed the spectacle. But I was past seeing anything. I sat down and told the agent that I could not conduct the case, that he had better engage Patel and have the fee back from me. Mr. Patel was duly engaged for Rs. 51. To him, of course, the case was child's play.

I hastened from the Court[T4], not knowing whether my client won or lost her case, but I was ashamed of myself, and decided not to take up any more cases until I had courage enough to conduct them. Indeed I did not go to Court again until I went to South Africa. There was no virtue in my decision. I had simply made a virtue of necessity. There would be no one so foolish as to entrust his case to me, only to lose it !

But there *was* another case in store for me at Bombay. It was a memorial to be drafted. A poor Mussalman's land was confiscated in Porbandar. He approached me as the worthy[T5] son of a worthy father. His case appeared to be weak, but I consented to draft a memorial for him, the cost of printing to be borne by him. I drafted it and read it out to friends. They approved of it, and that to some extent made me feel confident that I was qualified enough to draft a memorial, as indeed I really was.

[T6]My business could flourish if I drafted memorials without any fees. But that would bring no grist to the mill. So I thought I might take up a teacher's job. My knowledge of English was good enough, and I should have loved to teach English to Matriculation boys in some school. In this way I could have met part at least of the expenses. I came across an advertisement in the papers : 'Wanted, an English teacher to teach one hour daily. Salary Rs. 75.' The advertisement was from a famous high school. I applied for the post and was called for an interview. I went there in high spirits, but when the principal found that I was not a graduate, he regretfully refused me.

'But I have passed the London Matriculation with Latin as my second language.'

'True, but we want a graduate.'

There was no help for it. I wrung my hands in despair. My brother also felt much worried. We both came to the conclusion that it was no use spending more time in Bombay. I should settle in Rajkot where my brother, himself a petty pleader, could give me some work in the shape of drafting applications and memorials. And then as there was already a household at Rajkot, the breaking up of the one at Bombay meant a considerable saving. I liked the suggestion. My little esta-

blishment was thus closed after a stay of six months in Bombay.

I used to attend High Court daily whilst in Bombay,but I cannot say that I learnt anything there. I had not sufficient knowledge to learn much. Often I could not follow the cases and dozed off. There were others also who kept me company in this, and thus lightened my load of shame. After a time, I even lost the sense of shame, as I learnt to think that it was fashionable to doze in the High Court.

If the present generation has also its briefless barristers like me in Bombay, I would commend them a little practical precept about living. Although I lived in Girgaum I hardly ever took a carriage or a tramcar. I had made it a rule to walk to the High Court. It took me quite forty-five minutes, and of course I invariably returned home on foot. I had inured myself to the heat of the sun. This walk to and from the Court saved a fair amount of money, and when many of my friends in Bombay used to fall ill, I do not remember having once had an illness. Even when I began to earn money, I kept up the practice of walking to and from the office, and I am still reaping the benefits of that practice.

CHAPTER IV : THE FIRST SHOCK

Disappointed, I left Bombay and went to Rajkot where I set up my own office. Here I got along moderately well. Drafting applications and memorials brought me in, on an average, Rs. 300 a month. For this work I had to thank influence rather than my own ability, for my brother's partner had a settled practice. All applications, etc., which were really or to his mind of an important character, he sent to big barristers. To my lot fell the applications to be drafted on behalf of his poor clients.

I must confess that here I had to compromise the principle of giving no commission, which in Bombay I had so scrupulously observed. I was told that conditions in the two cases were different; that whilst in Bombay commissions had to be paid to touts, here they had to be paid *vakils* who briefed you; and that here as in Bombay all barristers, without exception, paid a percentage of their fees as commission. The argument of my brother was, for me, unanswerable. 'You see', said he, 'that I am in partnership with another *vakil*. I shall always be inclined to make over to you all our cases with which you can possibly deal, and if you refuse to pay a commission to my partner, you are sure to embarrass me. As you and I have a joint establishment, your fee comes to our common purse, and I auto- matically get a share. But what about my partner ? Supposing he gave the same case to some other barrister, he would certainly get his commission from him,' I was taken in by this plea, and felt that, if I was to practise as a

barrister, I could not press my principle regarding commission in such cases. That is how I argued with myself, or to put it bluntly, how I deceived myself. Let me add, however, that I do not remember even to have given a commission in respect of any other case.

Though I thus began to make both ends meet, I got the first shock of my life about this time. I had heard what a British officer was like, but up to now had never been face to face with one.

My brother had been secretary and adviser to the late Ranasaheb of Porbandar before he was installed on his gadi, and hanging over his head at this time was the charge of having given wrong advice when in that office. The matter had gone to the Political Agent who was prejudiced against my brother. Now I had known this officer when in England, and he may be said to have been fairly friendly to me. My brother thought that I should avail myself of the friendship and, putting in a good word on his behalf, try to disabuse the Political Agent of his prejudice. I did not at all like this idea. I should not, I thought, try to take advantage of a trifling acquaintance in England. If my brother was really at fault, what use was my recommendation ? If he was innocent, he should submit a petition in the proper course and, confident of his innocence, face[t1] the result. My brother did not relish this advice. 'You do not know Kathiawad,' he said, 'and you have yet to know the world. Only influence counts here. It is not proper for you, a brother, to shirk your duty, when you can clearly put in a good word about me to an officer you know.

I could not refuse him, so I went to the officer much against my will. I knew I had no right to approach him and was fully conscious that I was compromising self-respect. But I sought an appointment and got it. I reminded him of the old acquaintance, but I immediately saw that Kathiawad was different from England; that an officer on leave was not the same as an officer on duty. The Political Agent owned the acquaintance, but the reminder seemed to stiffen him. 'Surely you have not come here to abuse that acquaintance, have you ?' appeared to be the meaning of that stiffness, and seemed to be written on his brow. Nevertheless I opened my case. The sahib was impatient. 'Your brother is an intriguer. I want to hear nothing more from you. I have no time. If your brother has anything to say, let him apply through the proper channel.' The answer was enough, was perhaps deserved[T2] But selfishness is blind. I went on with my story. The sahib got up and said: 'You must go now.'

'But please hear me out', said I. That made him more angry. He called his peon and ordered him to show me the door. I was still hesitating[T3] when the peon came in, placed his hands on my shoulders

and put me out of the room.

The sahib went away as also the peon, and I departed fretting and fuming. I at once wrote out and sent over a note to this effect : 'You have insulted me. You have assaulted me through your peon. If you make no amends, I shall have to proceed against you.'

Quick came the answer through his *sowar*[1] :

'You were rude to me. I asked you to go and you would not. I had no option but to order my peon to show you the door. Even after he asked you to leave the office, you did not do so. He therefore had to use just enough force to send you out. You are at liberty to proceed as you wish.'

With this answer in my pocket, I came home crestfallen, and told my brother all that had happened. He was grieved, but was at a loss as to how to console me. He spoke to his *vakil* friends. For I did not know how to proceed against the sahib. Sir Pherozeshah Mehta happened to be in Rajkot at this time, having come down from Bombay for some case. But how could a junior barrister like me dare to see him ? So I sent him the papers of my case, through the *vakil* who had engaged him, and begged for his advice. 'Tell Gandhi,' he said, 'such things are the common experience of many *vakils* and barrister. He is still fresh from England, and hot-blooded. He does not know British officers. If he would earn something and have an easy time here, let him tear up the note and pocket the insult. He will gain nothing by proceeding against the sahib, and on the contrary will very likely ruin himself. Tell him he has yet to know life.'[2]

The advice was as bitter as poison to me, but I had to swallow it. I pocketed the insult, but also profited by it.[T4] Never again shall I place myself in such a false position, never again shall I try to exploit friendship in this way,' said I to myself, and since then I have never been guilty of a breach of that detemination. This shock changed the course of my life.

CHAPTER V : PREPARING FOR SOUTH AFRICA

I was no doubt at fault in having gone to that officer. But his impatience and overbearing anger were out of all proportion to my mistake. It did not warrant expulsion. I can scarcely have taken up more than five minutes of his time. But he simply could not endure my talking. He could have politely asked me to go, but power had intoxicated him to an inordinate extent. Later I came to know that

[1] Messenger on horseback

[2] This incident is mentioned in a speech in 1921; *vide* "Speech on Non-Cooperation, Bombay", June 18, 1921.

patience was not one of the virtues of this officer. It was usual for him to insult his visitors. The slightest unpleasantness was sure to put the sahib out.

Now most of my work would naturally be in his court. It was beyond me to conciliate him. I had no desire to curry favour with him. Indeed, having once threatened to proceed against him, I did not like to remain silent.

Meanwhile I began to learn something of the petty politics of the country. Kathiawad, being a conglomeration of small States, naturally had its rich crop of politicals. Petty intrigues between States, and intrigues of officers for power were the order of the day. Princes were always at the mercy of others and ready to lend their ears to sycophants. Even the sahib's peon had to be cajoled, and the sahib's shirastedar[1] was more than his master, as he was his eyes, his ears and his interpreter. The *shirastedar's* will was law, and his income was always reputed to be more than the sahib's. This may have been an exaggeration, but he certainly lived beyond his salary.

This atmosphere appeared to me to be poisonous, and how to remain unscathed was a perpetual problem for me.

I was thoroughly depressed and my brother clearly saw it. We both felt that, if I could secure some job, I should be free from this atmosphere of intrigue. But without intrigue a ministership or judgeship was out of the question. And the quarrel with the sahib stood in the way of practice.

Porbandar was then under administration, and I had some work there in the shape of securing more[T1] powers for the Prince. Also I had to see the Administrator in respect of the heavy *vighoti* (land rent) exacted from the Mers. This officer, though an Indian, was, I found, one better than the sahib in arrogance. He was able, but the ryots appeared to me to be none the better off for his ability. I succeeded in securing a few more[T2] powers for the Rana, but hardly any relief for the Mers. It struck me that their cause was not even carefully gone into.

So even in this mission I was comparatively disappointed. I thought justice was not done to my clients, but I had not the means to secure it. At the most I could have appealed to the Political Agent or to the Governor who whould have dismissed the appeal saying, 'We decline to interfere.' If there had been any rule or regulation governing such decisions, it would have been something, but here the sahib's will was law.

[1] Head clerk

I was exasperated.

In the meantime a Meman firm from Porbandar wrote to my brother making the following offer : 'We have business in South Africa. Ours is a big firm, and we have a big case there in the Court, our claim being £40,000. It has been going on for a long time. We have engaged the services of the best *vakils* and barristers. If you sent your brother there, he would be useful to us and also to himself. He would be able to instruct our counsel better than ourselves. And he would have the advantage of seeing a new part of the world, and of making new acquaintances.

My brother discussed the proposition with me. I could not clearly make out whether I had simply to instruct the counsel or to appear in court. But I was tempted.

My brother introduced me to the late Sheth Abdul Karim Jhaveri, a partner of Dada Abdulla & Co., the firm in question. 'It won't be a difficult job,' the Sheth assured me. 'We have big Europeans as our friends, whose acquaintance you will make. you can be useful to us in our shop. Much of our correspondence is in English and you can help us with that too. You will, of course, be our guest and hence will have no expense whatever.'

'How long do you require my services ?' I asked. 'And what will be the payment ?'

Not more than a year. 'We will pay you a first class return fare and a sum of £105, all found.'

This was hardly going there as a barrister. It was going as a servant of the firm. But I wanted somehow to leave India. There was also the tempting opportunity of seeing a new country and of having new experience. Also I could send £105 to my brother and help in the expenses of the household. I closed with the offer without any higgling and got ready to go to South Africa.

CHAPTER VI : ARRIVAL IN NATAL

When starting for South Africa I did not feel the wrench of separation which I had experienced when leaving for England. My mother was now no more. I had gained some knowledge of the world and of travel abroad, and going from Rajkot to Bombay was no unusual affair.

This time I only felt the pang of parting with my wife. Another baby had been born to us since my return from England. Our love could not yet be called free from lust, but it was getting gradually purer. Since my return from Europe, we had lived very little together; and as I had now become her teacher, however indifferent, and helped

her to make certain reforms, we both felt the necessity of being more together, if only to continue the reforms. But the attraction of South Africa rendered the separation bearable. 'We are bound to meet again in a year,' I said to her, by way of consolation, and left Rajkot for Bombay.

Here I was to get my passage through the agent of Dada Abdulla and Company. But no berth was available on the boat, and if I did not sail then, I should be stranded in Bombay.[T1] 'We have tried our best,' said the agent, 'to secure a first-class passage, but in vain—unless you are prepared to go on deck. Your meals can be arranged for in the salloon.' Those were the days of my first-class travelling, and how could a barrister travel as a deck passenger ? So I refused the offer. I suspected the agent's veracity, for I could not believe that a first-class passage was not available. With the agent's consent I set about securing it myself. I went on board the boat and met the chief officer. He said to me quite frankly, 'We do not usually have such a rush. But as the Goveror-General of Mozambique is going by this boat, all the berths are engaged.'

'Could you not possibly squeeze me in ?' I asked.

He surveyed me from top to toe and smiled. 'There is just one way,' he said. 'There is an extra berth in my cabin, which is usually not available for passengers. But I am prepared to give it to you.' I[T2] thanked him and got the agent to purchase the passage. In April 1893 I set forth full of zest to try my luck in South Africa.

The first port of call was Lamu, which we reached in about thirteen days. The Captain and I had become great friends by this time. He was fond of playing chess, but as he was quite a novice, he wanted one still more of a beginner for his partner, and so he invited me. I had heard a lot about the game but had never tried my hand at it. Players used to say that this was a game in which there was plenty of scope for the exercise of one's intelligence. The Captain offered to give me lessons, and he found me a good pupil as I had unlimited patience. Every time I was the loser, and that made him all the more eager to teach me. I liked the game, but never carried my liking beyond the boat or my knowledge beyond the boat or my knowledge beyond the moves of the pieces.

At Lamu the ship remained at anchor for some three to four hours, and I landed to see the port. The Captain had also gone ashore, but he had warned me that the harbour was treacherous and that I should return in good time.

It was a very small place. I went to the Post Office and was delighted to see the Indian clerks there, and had a talk with them. I

also saw the Africans and tried to acquaint myself with their ways of life which interested me very much. This took up some time.

There were some deck passengers with whom I had made acquaintance, and who had landed with a view to cooking their food on shore and having a quiet meal. I now found them preparing to return to the steamer, so[T3] we all got into the same boat. The tide was high in the harbour and our boat more than its proper load. The current was so strong that it was impossible to hold the boat to the ladder of the steamer. It would just touch the ladder and be drawn away again by the current. The first whistle to start had already gone. I was worried. The Captain was witnessing our plight from the bridge. He ordered the steamer to wait an extra five minutes. There was another boat near the ship which a friend hired for me for ten rupees. This boat picked me up from the overloaded one. The ladder had already been raised. I had therefore to be drawn up by means of a rope and the steamer started immediately. The other passengers were left behind. I now appreciated the Captain's warning.

After Lamu the next port was Mombasa and then Zanzibar. The halt here was a long one—eight or ten days—and we then changed to another boat.

The Captain liked me much but the liking took an undesirable turn. He invited an English friend and me to accompany him on an outing, and we all went ashore in his boat. I had not the least notion of what the outing meant. And little did the Captain know what an ignoramus I was in such matters. We were taken to some Negro women's quarters by a tout. We were each shown into a room. I simply stood there dumb with shame. Heaven only knows what the poor woman must have thought of me. When the Captain called me I came out just as I had gone in. He saw my innocence. At first I felt very much ashamed, but as I could not think of the thing except with horror, the sense of shame wore away, and I thanked God that the sight of the woman had not moved me in the least. I was disgusted at my weakness and pitied myself for not having had the courage to refuse to go into the room.[1]

This in my life was the third trial of its kind. Many a youth, innocent at first must have been drawn into sin by a false sense of shame. I could claim no credit for having come out unscathed. I could have credit if I had refused to enter that room. I must entirely thank the All-merciful for having saved me. The incident increased my faith in God and taught me, to a certain extent, to cast off false shame.

[1] *Vide* also "Power of 'Ramanama'", May 17, 1925.

As we had to remain in this port for a week, I took rooms in the town and saw a good deal by wandering about the neighbourhood. Only Malabar can give any idea of the luxuriant vegetation of Zanzibar. I was amazed at the gigantic trees and the size of the fruits.

The next call was at Mozambique and thence we reached Natal towards the close of May.

CHAPTER VII : SOME EXPERIENCES

The port of Natal is Durban, also known as Port Natal. Abdulla Sheth was there to receive me. As the ship arrived at the quay and I watched the people coming on board to meet their friends, I observed that the Indians were not held in much respect. I could not fail to notice a sort of snobbishness about the manner in which those who knew Abdulla Sheth behaved to-wards him, and it stung me. Abdulla Sheth had got used to it. Those who looked at me did so with a certain amount of curiosity. My dress marked me out from other Indians. I had a frock-coat and a turban, an imitation of the Bengal pugree.

I was taken to the firm's quarters and shown into the room set apart for me, next to Abdulla Sheth's. He did not understand me. I could not understand him. He read the papers his brother had sent through me, and felt more puzzled[T1]. He thought his brother had sent him a white elephant. My style of dress and living struck him as being expensive like that of the Europeans.[T2] There was no particular work then which could be given me. Their case was going on in the Transvaal. There was no meaning in sending me there immediately. And how far could he trust my ability and honesty ? He would not be in Pretoria to watch me. The defendants were in Pretoria, and for aught he knew they might bring undue influence to bear on me. And if work in connection with the case in question was not to be entrusted to me, what work could I be given to do, as all other work could be done much better by his clerks ? The clerks could be brought to book, if they did wrong. Could I be, if I also happened to err ?[T3] So if no work in connection with the case could be given me, I should have to be kept for nothing.

Abdulla Sheth was practically unlettered, but he had a rich fund of experience. He had an acut intellect and was conscious of it. By practice he had picked up just sufficient English for conversational purposes, but that served him for carrying on all his business, whether it was dealing with Bank Managers and European merchants or explaining his case to his counsel. The Indians held him in very high esteem. His firm was then the biggest, or at any rate one of the biggest, of the Indian firms. With all these advantages he had one disadvantage[T4]—he was by nature suspicious.

He was proud of Islam and loved to discourse on Islamic philosophy. Though he did not know Arabic, his acquaintance with the Holy Koran and Islamic literature in general was fairly good. Illustrations he had in plenty, always ready at hand. Contact with him gave me a fair amount of practical knowledge of Islam. When we came closer to each other, we had long discussions on religious topics.

On the second or third day of my arrival, he took me to see the Durban court. There he introduced me to several people and seated me next to his attorney. The Magistrate kept staring at me and finally asked me to take off my turban. This I refused to do and left the court.

So here too there was fighting in store for me.

Abdulla Sheth explained to me why some Indians were required to take off their turbans. Those wearing the Mussalman costume might, he said, keep their turbans on, but the other Indians on entering a court had to take theirs off as a rule.

I must enter into some details to make this nice distinction intelligible. In the course of these two or three days I could see that the Indians were divided into different groups. One was that of Mussalman merchants, who would call themselves 'Arabs'. Another was that of Hindu, and yet another of Parsi, clerks. The Hindu clerks were neither here nor there, unless they cast in their lot with the 'Arabs'. The Parsi clerks would call themselves Persians. These three classes had some social relations with one another. But by far the largest class was that composed of Tamil, Telugu and North Indian indentured and freed labourers. The indentured labourers were those who went to Natal on an agreement to serve for five years, and came to be known there as *girmitiyas* from *girmit*, which was the corrupt form of the English word 'agreement'. The other three classes had none but business relations with this class. Englishmen called them 'coolies' and as the majority of Indians belonged to the labouring class, all Indians were called 'coolies', or '*samis*'. '*Sami*' is a Tamil suffix occurring after many Tamil names, and it is nothing else than the Samskrit *swami*, meaning a master. Whenever therefore, an Indian resented being addressed as a '*sami*' and had enough wit[T5] in him, he would try to return the compliment in this wise : 'You may call me *sami*, but you forget that *sami* means a master. I am not your master !' Some Englishmen would wince at this, while others would get angry, swear at the Indian and, if there was a chance, would even belabour him; for '*sami*' to him was nothing better than a term of contempt. To interpret it to mean a master amounted to an insult !

I was hence known as a 'coolie barrister'. The merchants were

known as ‘coolie merchants’. The original meaning of the word ‘coolie’ was thus forgotten, and it became a common appellation for all Indians.[T6] The Mussalman merchant would resent this and say : ‘I am not a coolie, I am an Arab,’ or ‘I am a merchant,’ and the Englishman, if courteous, would apologize to him.

The question of wearing the turban had a great importance in this state of things. Being obliged to take off one’s Indian turban would be pocketing an insult. So I thought I had better bid good-bye to the Indian turban and begin wearing an English hat, which would save me from the insult and the unpleasant controversy.

But Abdulla Sheth disapproved of the idea. He said, ‘If you do anything of the kind, it will have a very bad effect. You will compromise those insisting on wearing Indian turbans. And an Indian turban sits well on your head. If you wear an English hat, you will pass for a waiter.’

There was practical wisdom, patriotism and a little bit of narrowness in this advice. The wisdom was apparent, and he would not have insisted on the Indian turban except out of patriotism; the slighting reference to the waiter betrayed a kind of narrowness. Amongst the identured Indians there were three classes—Hindus, Mussalmans and Christians. The last were the children of indentured Indians who became converts to Christianity. Even in 1893 their number was large. They wore the English costume, and the majority of them earned their living by service as waiters in hotels. Abdulla Sheth’s criticism of the English hat was with reference to this class. It was considered degrading to serve as a waiter in a hotel. The belief persists even today among many.

On the whole I liked Abdulla Sheth’s advice. I wrote to the Press about the incident and defended the wearing of my turban in the court. The question was very much discussed in the papers, which described me as an ‘unwelcome visitor’. Thus the incident gave me an unexpected advertisement in South Africa within a few days of my arrival there. Some supported me while others severely criticized my temerity.

My turban stayed with me practically until the end of my stay in South Africa. When and why I left off wearing any head-dress at all in South Africa, we shall see later.[T7]

CHAPTER VIII : ON THE WAY TO PRETORIA

I soon came in contact with the Christian Indians living in Durban. The Court Interpreter, Mr. Paul, was a Roman Catholic. I made his acquaintance, as also that of the late Mr. Subhan Godfrey, then a teacher under the Protestant Mission, and father of Mr. James

Godfrey, who, as a member of the South African Deputation, visited India in 1924. I likewise met the late Parsi Rustomji and the late Adamji Miyakhan about the same time. All these friends, who up to then had never met one another except on business, came ultimately into close contact, as we shall see later.

Whilst I was thus widening the circle of my acquaintance, the firm received a letter from their lawyer saying that preparations should be made for the case, and that Abdulla Sheth should go to Pretoria himself or send a representative.

Abdulla Sheth gave me this letter to read, and asked me if I would go to Pretoria. 'I can only say after I have understood the case from you,' said I. 'At present I am at a loss to know what I have to do there.' He thereupon asked his clerks to explain the case to me.

As I began to study the case, I felt as though I ought to begin from A B C of the subject.[T1] During the few days I had at Zanzibar, I had been to the court to see the work there. A Parsi lawyer was examining a witness and asking him questions regarding credit and debit entries in account books. It was all Greek to me. Book-keeping I had learnt neither at school nor during my stay in England. And the case for which I had come to South Africa was mainly about accounts. Only one who knew accounts could understand and explain it. The clerk went on talking about this debited and that credited, and I felt more and more confused. I did not know what a P. Note meant. I failed to find the word in the dictionary. I revealed my ignorance to the clerk, and learnt from him that a P. Note meant a promissory note. I purchased a book on book-keeping and studied it. That gave me some confidence. I understood the case. I saw that Abdulla Sheth, who did not know how to keep accounts, had so much practical knowledge that he could quickly solve intricacies of book-keeping. I told him that I was prepared to go to Pretoria.

'Where will you put up ?' asked the Sheth.

'Wherever you want me to,' said I.

'Then I shall write to our lawyer. He will arrange for your lodgings. I shall also write to my Meman friends there, but I would not advise you to stay with them. The other party has great influence in Pretoria. Should anyone of them manage to read our private correspondence, it might do us much harm. The more you avoid familiarity with them, the better for us.'

'I shall stay where your lawyer puts me up, or I shall find out independent lodgings. Pray don't worry. Not a soul shall know anything that is confidential between us. But I do intend cultivating the acquaintance of the other party[T2]. I should like to be friends with

them.[T3] I would try, if possible, to settle the case out of court. After all Tyeb Sheth is a relative of yours.'

Sheth Tyeb Haji Khan Muhammad was a near relative of Abdulla Sheth.

The mention of a probable settlement somewhat startled the Sheth, I could see. But I had already been six or seven days in Durban, and we now knew and understood each other. I was no longer a 'white elephant'. So he said :

'Y…es, I see. There would be nothing better than a settlement out of court. But we are all relatives and know one another very well indeed. Tyeb Sheth is not a man to consent to a settlement easily. With the slightest unwariness on our part, he would screw all sorts of things out of us, and do us down in the end. So please think twice before you do anything.'

'Don't be anxious about that,' said I. 'I need not talk to Tyeb Sheth, or for that matter to anyone else, about the case. I would only suggest to him to come to an understanding, and so save a lot of unnecessary litigation.'

On the seventh or eighth day after my arrival, I left Durban. A first-class seat was booked for me. It was usual there to pay five shillings extra, if one needed a bedding. Abdulla Sheth insisted that I should book one bedding but, out of obstinacy and pride and with a view to saving five shillings, I declined. Abdulla Sheth warned me. 'Look, now,' said he, 'this is a different country from India. Thank God, we have enough and to spare. Please do not stint yourself in anything that you may need.'

I thanked him and asked him not to be anxious.

The train reached Maritzburg, the capital of Natal, at about 9 p.m. Beddings used to be provided at this station. A railway servant came and asked me if I wanted one. 'No,' said I, 'I have one with me.' He went away. But a passenger came next, and looked me up and down. He saw that I was a 'coloured' man. This disturbed him. Out he went and came in again with one or two officials. They all kept quiet, when another official came to me and said, 'Come along, you must go to the van compartment.'

'But I have a first-class ticket,' said I.

'That doesn't matter,' rejoined the other. 'I tell you, you must go to the van compartment.'

'I tell you, I was permitted to travel[T4] in this compartment at Durban, and I insist on going on in it.'

'No, you won't,' said the official. 'You must leave this compa-

rtment, or else I shall have to call a police constable to push you out.'

'Yes, you may. I refuse to get out voluntarily.'

The constable came. He took me by the hand and pushed me out. My luggage was also taken out. I refused to go to the other compartment and the train steamed away. I went and sat in the waiting room, keeping my hand-bag with me, and leaving the other luggage where it was. The railway authorities had taken[T5] charge of it.

It was winter, and winter in the higher regions of South Africa is severely cold. Maritzburg being at a high altitude, the cold was extremely bitter. My over-coat was in my luggage, but I did not dare to ask for it lest I should be insulted again, so I sat and shivered. There was no light in the room. A passenger came in at about midnight and possibly wanted to talk to me. But I was in no mood to talk.

I began to think of my duty. Should I fight for my rights or go back to India, or should I go on to Pretoria without minding the insults, and return to India after finishing the case ? It would be cowardice to run back to India without fulfilling my obligation. The hardship to which I was subjected was superficial—only a symptom of the deep disease of colour prejudice. I should try, if possible, to root out the disease and suffer hardships in the process. Redress for wrongs I should seek only to the extent that would be necessary for the removal of the colour prejudice.

So I decided to take the next available train to Pretoria[T6].

The following morning I sent a long telegram to the General Manager of the Railway and also informed Abdulla Sheth, who immediately met the General Manager. The Manager justified the conduct of the railway authorities, but informed him that he had already instructed the Station Master to see that I reached my destination safely. Abdulla Sheth wired to the Indian merchants in Maritzburg and to friends in other places to meet me and look after me. The merchants came to see me at the station and tried to comfort me by narrating their own hardships and explaining that what had happened to me was nothing unusual. They also said that Indians travelling first or second class had to expect trouble from railway officials and white passengers. The day was thus spent in listening to these tales of woe. The evening train arrived. There was a reserved berth for me. I now purchased at Maritzburg the bedding ticket I had refused to book at Durban.

The train took me to Charlestown.

CHAPTER IX : MORE HARDSHIPS

The train reached Charlestown in the morning. There was no

railway, in those days, between Charlestown and Johannesburg, but only a stage-coach, which halted at Standerton for the night *en route*. I possessed a ticket for the coach, which was not cancelled by the break of the journey at Maritzburg for a day; besides, Abdulla Sheth had sent a wire to the coach agent at Charlestown.

But the agent only needed a pretext for putting me off, and so, when he discovered me to be a stranger, he said, 'Your ticket is cancelled.' I gave him the proper reply. The reason at the back of his mind was not want of accommodation, but quite another. Passengers had to be accommodated inside the coach, but as I was regarded as a 'coolie' and looked a stranger, it would be proper, thought the 'leader', as the white man in charge of the coach was called, not to seat me with the white passengers. There were seats on either side of the coachbox. The leader sat on one of these as a rule. Today he sat inside and gave me his seat. I knew it was sheer injustice and an insult, but I thought it better to pocket it. I could not have forced myself inside, and if I had raised a protest, the coach would have gone off without me. This would have meant the loss of another day, and Heaven only knows what would have happened the next day. So, much as I fretted within myself, I prudently sat next the coachman.

At about three o'clock the coach reached Pardekoph. Now the leader desired to sit where I was seated, as he wanted to smoke and possibly to have some fresh air. So he took a piece of dirty sack-cloth from the driver, spread it on the footboard and, addressing me said, '*Sami*, you sit on this, I want to sit near the driver.' The insult was more than I could bear. In fear and trembling I said to him, 'It was you who seated me here, though I should have been accommodated inside. I put up with the insult. Now that you want to sit outside and smoke, you would have me sit at your feet. I will not do so, but I am prepared to sit inside.'

As I was struggling through these sentences, the man came down upon me and began heavily to box my ears. He seized me by the arm and tried to drag me down. I clung to the brass rails of the coachbox and was determined to keep my hold even at the risk of breaking my wristbones. The passengers were witnessing the scene—the man swearing at me, dragging and belabouring me, and I remaining still. He was strong and I was weak. Some of the passengers were moved to pity and exclaimed : 'Man, let him alone. Don't beat him. He is not to blame. He is right. If he can't stay there, let him come and sit with us.' 'No fear,' cried the man, but he seemed somewhat crestfallen and stopped beating me. He let go my arm, swore at me a little more, and asking the Hottentot servant who was sitting on the other side of the coachbox to sit on the footboard, took the seat so vacated.

The passengers took their seats and, the whistle given, the coach rattled away. My heart was beating fast within my breast, and I was wondering whether I should ever reach my destination alive. The man cast an angry look at me now and then and, pointing his finger at me, growled : 'Take care, let me once get to Standerton and I shall show you what I do.' I sat speechless and prayed to God to help me.

After dark we reached Standerton and I heaved a sigh of relief on seeing some Indian faces. As soon as I got down, these friends said : 'We are here to receive you and take you to Isa Sheth's shop. We have had a telegram from Dada Abdulla.' I was very glad, and we went to Sheth Isa Haji Sumar's shop. The Sheth and his clerks gathered round me. I told them all that I had gone through. They were very sorry to hear it and comforted me by relating to me their own bitter experiences.

I wanted to inform the agent of the Coach Company of the whole affair. So I wrote him a letter, narrating everything that had happened, and drawing his attention to the threat his man had held out. I also asked for an assurance that he would accommodate me with the other passengers inside the coach when we started the next morning. To which the agent replied to this effect : 'From Standerton we have a bigger coach with different men in charge. The man complained of will not be there tomorrow, and you will have a seat with the other passengers.' This somewhat relieved me. I had, of course, no intention of proceeding against the man who had assaulted me, and so the chapter of the assault closed there.

In the morning Isa Sheth's man[T1] took me to the coach, I got a good seat and reached Johannesburg quite safely that night.

Standerton is a small village and Johannesburg a big city. Abdulla Sheth had wired to Johannesburg also, and given me the name and address of Muhammad Kasam Kamruddin's firm there. Their man had come to receive me at the stage, but neither did I see him nor did he recognize me. So I decided to go to a hotel. I knew the names of several. Taking a cab I asked to be driven to the Grand National Hotel. I saw the Manager and asked for a room. He eyed me for a moment, and politely saying, 'I am very sorry, we are full up', bade me good-bye. So I asked the cabman to drive to Muhammad Kasam Kamruddin's shop. Here I found Abdul Gani Sheth expecting me, and he gave me a cordial greeting. He had a hearty laugh over the story of my experience at the hotel. 'How ever did you expect to be admitted to a hotel ?' he said.

'Why not ?' I asked.

'You will come to know after you have stayed here a few days,'

said he. ‘Only *we* can live in a land like this, because, for making money, we do not mind pocketing insults, and here we are.’ With this he narrated to me the story of the hardships of Indians in South Africa.[T2]

Of Sheth Abdul Gani we shall know more as we proceed.

He said : ‘This country is not for men like you. Look now, you have to go to Pretoria tomorrow. You will *have* to travel third class. Conditions in the Transvaal are worse than in Natal. First and second-class tickets are never issued to Indians.’

‘You cannot have made persistent effort in this direction.’

‘We have sent representations, but I confess our own men too do not want as a rule to travel first or second.’

I sent for the railway regulations and read them. There was a loophole. The language of the old Transvaal enactments was not very exact or precise; that of the railway regulations was even less so.

I said to the Sheth : ‘I wish to go first class, and if I cannot, I shall prefer to take a cab to Pretoria, a matter of only thirty-seven miles.’

Sheth Abdul Gani drew my attention to the extra time and money this would mean, but agreed to my proposal to travel first, and accordingly we sent a note to the Station Master. I mentioned in my note that I was a barrister and that I always travelled first. I also stated in the letter that I needed to reach Pretoria as early as possible, that as there was no time to await his reply I would receive it in person at the station, and that I should expect to get a first-class ticket. There was of course a purpose behind asking for the reply in person. I thought that if the Station Master gave a written reply, he would certainly say ‘no’, especially because he would have his own notion of a ‘coolie’ barrister. I would therefore appear before him in faultless English dress, talk to him and possibly persuade him to issue a first-class ticket. So I went to the station in a frock-coat and necktie, placed a sovereign for my fare on the counter and asked for a first-class ticket.

‘You sent me that note ?’ he asked.

‘That is so. I shall be much obliged if you will give me a ticket. I must reach Pretoria today.’

He smiled and, moved to pity, said: ‘I am not a Transvaaler. I am a Hollander. I appreciate your feelings, and you have my sympathy. I do want to give you a ticket—on one condition, however, that, if the guard should ask you to shift to the third class, you will not involve me in the affair, by which I mean that you should not proceed

against the Railway Company. I wish you a safe journey. I can see you are a gentleman.'

With these words he booked the ticket. I thanked him and gave him the necessary assurance.

Sheth Abdul Gani had come to see me off at the station. The incident gave him an agreeable surprise, but he warned me saying : 'I shall be thankful if you reach Pretoria all right. I am afraid the guard will not leave you in peace in the first-class and even if he does, the passengers will not.'

I took my seat in a first-class compartment and the train started. At Germiston the guard came to examine the tickets. He was angry to find me there, and signalled to me with his finger to go to the third class. I showed him my first-class ticket. 'The doesn't matter,' said he, 'remove to the third class.'

There was only one English passenger in the compartment. He took the guard to task. 'What do you mean by troubling the gentleman ?' he said. 'Don't you see he has a first-class ticket ? I do not mind in the least his travelling with me.' Addressing me, he said, 'You should make yourself comfortable where you are.'

The guard muttered : 'If you want to travel with a coolie, what do I care ?' and went away.

At about eight o'clock in the evening the train reached Pretoria.

CHAPTER X : FIRST DAY IN PRETORIA

I had expected someone on behalf of Dada Abdulla's attorney to meet me at Pretoria station. I knew that no Indian would be there to receive me, since I had particularly promised not to put up at an Indian house. But the attorney had sent no one. I understood later that, as I had arrived on a Sunday, he could not have sent anyone without inconvenience. I was perplexed, and wondered where to go, as I feared that no hotel would accept me.

Pretoria station in 1893 was quite different from what it was in 1914. The lights were burning dimly. The travellers were few. I let all the other passengers go and thought that, as soon as the ticket collector was fairly free, I would hand him my ticket and ask him if he could direct me to some small hotel or any other such place where I might go; otherwise I would spend the night at the station. I must confess I shrank from asking him even this, for I was afraid of being insulted.

The station became clear of all passengers. I gave my ticket to the ticket collector and began my inquiries. He replied to me courteously, but I saw that he could not be of any considerable help.

But an American Negro who was standing near by broke into the conversation.

'I see,' said he, 'that you are an utter stranger here, without any friends. If you will come with me, I will take you to a small hotel, of which the proprietor is an American who is very well known to me. I think he will acept you.'

I had my own doubts about the offer, but I thanked him and accepted his suggestion. He took me to Johnston's Family Hotel. He drew Mr. Johnston aside to speak to him, and the latter agreed to accommodate me for the night, on condition that I should have my dinner served in my room.

'I assure you,' said he, 'that I have no colour prejudice. But I have only European custom, and, if I allowed you to eat in the dining-room, my guests might be offended and even go away.'

'Thank you,' said I, 'even for accommodating me for the night. I am now more or less acquainted with the conditions here, and I understand your difficulty. I do not mind your serving the dinner in my room. I hope to be able to make some other arrangement tomorrow.'

I was shown into a room, where I now sat waiting for the dinner and musing, as I was quite alone. There were not many guests in the hotel, and I had expected the waiter to come very shortly with the dinner. Instead Mr. Johnston appeared. He said : 'I was ashamed of having asked you to have your dinner here. So I spoke to the other guests about you, and asked them if they would mind your having your dinner in the dining-room. They said they had no objection, and that they did not mind your staying here as long as you liked. Please, therefore, come to the dining-room, if you will, and stay here as long as you wish.'

I thanked him again, went to the dining-room and had a hearty dinner.

Next morning I called on the attorney, Mr. A. W. Baker. Abdulla Sheth had given me some description of him; so his cordial reception did not surprise me. He received me very warmly and made kind inquiries. I explained all about myself. Thereupon he said : 'We have no work for you here as barrister, for we have engaged the best counsel. The case is a prolonged and complicated one, so I shall take your assistance only to the extent of getting necessary information. And of course you will make communication with my client easy for me, as I shall now ask for all the information I want from him through you. That is certainly an advantage. I have not yet found rooms for you. I thought I had better do so after having seen you. There is a

fearful amount of colour prejudice here, and therefore it is not easy to find lodgings for such as you. But I know a poor woman. She is the wife of a baker. I think she will take you and thus add to her income at the same time. Come, let us go to her place.'

So he took me to her house. He spoke with her privately about me, and she agreed to accept me as a boarder at 35 shillings a week.

Mr. Baker, besides being an attorney, was a staunch lay preacher. He is still alive and now engaged purely in missionary work, having given up the legal profession. He is quite well-to-do. He still corresponds with me. In his letters he always dwells on the same theme. He upholds the excellence of Christianity from various points of view, and contends that it is impossible to find eternal peace, unless one accepts Jesus as the only son of God and the Saviour of mankind.

During the very first interview Mr. Baker ascertained my religious views. I said to him : 'I am a Hindu by birth. And yet I do not know much of Hinduism, and I know less of other religions. In fact I do not know where I am, and what is and what should be my belief. I intend to make a careful study of my own religion and, as far as I can, of other religions as well.'

Mr. Baker was glad to hear all this, and said : 'I am one of the Directors of the South Africa General Mission. I have built a church at my own expense, and deliver sermons in it regularly. I am free from colour prejudice. I have some co-workers, and we meet at one o'clock every day for a few minutes and pray for peace and light. I shall be glad if you will join us there. I shall introduce you to my co-workers who will be happy to meet you, and I dare say you will also like their company. I shall give you, besides, some religious books to read, though of course the book of books is the Holy Bible, which I would specially recommend to you.'

I thanked Mr. Baker and agreed to attend the one o'clock prayers as regularly as possible.

'So I shall expect you here tomorrow at one o'clock, and we shall go together to pray,' added Mr. Baker, and we said good-buy.

I had little time for reflection just yet.

I went to Mr. Johnston, paid the bill and removed to the new lodgings, where I had my lunch. The landlady was a good woman. She had cooked a vegetarian meal for me. It was not long before I made myself quite at home with the family.

I next went to see the friend to whom Dada Abdulla had given me a note. From him I learnt more about the hardships of Indians in South Africa. He insisted that I should stay with him. I thanked him, and told him I had already made arrangements. He urged me not to

hesitate to ask for anything I needed.

It was now dark. I returned home, had my dinner, went to my room and lay there absorbed in deep thought. There was not any immediate work for me. I informed Abdulla Sheth of it. What, I thought, can be the meaning of Mr. Baker's interest in me ? What shall I gain from his religious co-workers? How far should I undertake the study of Christianity? How was I to obtain literature about Hinduism? And how was I to understand Christianity in its proper perspective without thoroughly knowing my own religion? I could come to only one conclusion : I should make a dispassionate study of all that came to me, and deal with Mr. Baker's group as God might guide me; I should not think of embracing another religion before I had fully understood my own.

Thus musing I fell asleep.

CHAPTER XI : CHRISTIAN CONTACTS

The next day at one o'clock I went to Mr. Baker's prayer-meeting. There I was introduced to Miss Harris, Miss Gabb, Mr. Coates and others. Everyone kneeled down to pray, and I followed suit. The prayers were supplications to God for various things, according to each person's desire. Thus the usual forms were for the day to be passed peacefully, or for God to open the doors of the heart.

A prayer was now added for my welfare : 'Lord, show the path to the new brother who has come amongst us. Give him, Lord, the peace that Thou hast given us. May the Lord Jesus who has saved us save him too. We ask all this in the name of Jesus.' There was no singing of hymns or other music at these meetings. After the supplication for something special every day, we dispersed, each going to his lunch, that being the hour for it. The prayer did not take more than five minutes.

The Misses Harris and Gabb were both elderly maiden ladies. Mr. Coates was a Quaker. The two ladies lived together, and they gave me a standing invitation to four o'clock tea at their house every Sunday.

When we met on Sundays, I used to give Mr. Coates my religious diary for the week, and discuss with him the books I had read and the impression they had left on me. The ladies used to narrate their sweet experiences and talk about the peace they had found.

Mr. Coates was a frank-hearted staunch young man[T1 T2]. We went out for walks together, and he also took me to other Christian friends.

As we came closer to each other, he began to give me books of his own choice, until my shelf was filled with them. He loaded me with books, as it were. In pure faith I consented to read all those books, and as I went on reading them we discussed them.

I read a number of such books in 1893. I do not remember the names of them all, but they included the *Commentary* of Dr. Parker of the City Temple, Pearson's *Many Infallible Proofs* and Butler's *Analogy*. Parts of these were unintelligible to me. I liked some things in them, while I did not like others.[T3] *Many Infallible Proofs* were proofs in support of the religion of the Bible, as the author understood it. The book had no effect on me. Parker's *Commentary* was morally stimulating, but it could not be of any help to one who had no faith in the prevalent Christian beliefs. Butler's *Analogy* struck me to be a very profound and difficult book, which should be read four or five times to be understood properly. It seemed to me to be written with a view to converting atheists to theism. The arguments advanced in it regarding the existence of God were unnecessary for me, as I had then passed the stage of unbelief but the arguments in proof of Jesus being the only incarnation of God and the Mediator between God and man left me unmoved. But Mr. Coates was not the man easily to accept defeat. He had great affection for me. He saw, round my neck, the Vaishnava necklace of Tulasi-beads. He thought it to be superstition and was pained by it. 'This superstition does not become you. Come, let me break the necklace.'

'No, you will not. It is a sacred gift from my mother.'

'But do you believe in it?' 'I do not know its myterious significance. I do not think I should come to harm if I did not wear it. But I cannot, without sufficient reason, give up a necklace that she put round my neck out of love and in the conviction that it would be conducive to my welfare. When, with the passage of time, it wears away and breaks on its own accord, I shall have no desire to get a new one. But this necklace cannot be broken.'

Mr. Coates could not appreciate my argument, as he had no regard for my religion. He was looking forward to delivering me from the abyss of ignorance. He wanted to convince me that, no matter whether there was some truth in other religions, salvation was impossible for me unless I accepted Christianity which represented the truth, and that my sins would not be washed away except by the intercession of Jesus, and that all good works were useless.

Just as he introduced me to several books, he introduced me to several friends whom he regarded as staunch Christians. One of these introductions was to a family which belonged to the Plymouth Brethren, a Christian sect.

Many of the contacts for which Mr. Coates was responsible were good. Most struck me as being God-fearing. But during my contact with this family, one of the Plymouth Brethren confronted me with an argument for which I was not prepared :

'You cannot understand the beauty of our religion. From what you say it appears that you must be brooding over your transgressions every moment of your life, always mending them and atoning for them. How can this ceaseless cycle of action bring you redemption ? You can never have peace. You admit that we are all sinners. Now look at the perfection of our belief. Our attempts at improvement and atonement are futile. And yet redemption we must have. How can we bear the burden of sin ? We can but throw it on Jesus. He is the only sinless Son of God. It is His word that those who believe in Him shall have everlasting life.[T4] Therein lies God's infinite mercy. And as we believe in the atonement of Jesus, our own sins do not bind us. Sin we must.[T5] It is impossible to live in this world sinless. And therefore Jesus suffered and atoned for all the sins of mankind. Only he who accepts His great redemption[T6] can have eternal peace. Think what a life of restlessness is yours, and what a promise of peace we have.'

The argument utterly failed to convince me. I humbly replied :

'If this be the Christianity acknowledged by all Christians, I cannot accept it. I do not seek redemption[T7] from the consequences of my sin. I seek to be redeemed[T8] from sin itself, or rather from the very thought of sin. Until I have attained that end, I shall be content to be restless.'

To which the Plymouth Brother rejoined : 'I assure you, your attempt is fruitless. Think again over what I have said.'

And the Brother proved as good as his word He knowingly committed transgressions, and showed me that he was undisturbed by the thought of them.

But I already knew before meeting with these friends that all Christians did not believe in such a theory of atonement. Mr. Coates himself walked in the fear of God. His heart was pure, and he believed in the possibility of self-purification. The two ladies also shared this belief. Some of the books that came into my hands were full of devotion. So, although Mr. Coates was very much disturbed by this latest experience of mine, I was able to reassure him and tell him that

the distorted belief of a Plymouth Brother could not prejudice me against Christianity.

My difficulties lay elsewhere. They were with regard to the Bible and its accepted interpretation.

CHAPTER XII : SEEKING TOUCH WITH INDIANS

Before writing further about Christian contacts, I must record other experiences of the same period.

Sheth Tyeb Haji Khan Muhammad had in Pretoria the same position as was enjoyed by Dada Abdulla in Natal. There was no public movement that could be conducted without him. I made his acquaintance the very first week and told him of my intention to get in touch with every Indian in Pretoria. I expressed a desire to study the conditions of Indians there, and asked for his help in my work, which he gladly agreed to give.

My first step was to call a meeting of all the Indians in Pretoria and to present to them a picture of their condition in the Transvaal. The meeting was held at the house of Sheth Haji Muhammad Haji Joosab, to whom I had a letter of introduction. It was principally attended by Meman merchants, though there was a sprinkling of Hindus as well. The Hindu population in Pretoria was, as a matter of fact, very small.

My speech at this meeting may be said to have been the first public speech in my life. I went fairly prepared with my subject, which was about observing truthfulness in business. I had always heard the merchants say that truth was not possible in business. I did not think so then, nor do I now. Even today there are merchant friends who contend that truth is inconsistent with business. Business they say, is a very practical affair, and truth a matter of religion; and they argue that practical affairs are one thing, while religion is quite another. Pure truth, they hold, is out of the question in business; one can speak it only so far as is suitable. I strongly contested the position in my speech and awakened the merchants to a sense of their duty, which was twofold. Their responsibility to be truthful was all the greater in a foreign land, because the conduct of a few Indians was the measure of that of the millions of their fellowcountrymen.

I had found our people's habits to be insanitary, as compared with those of the Englishmen around them, and drew their attention to it. I laid stress on the necessity of forgetting all distinctions such as Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians, Gujaratis, Madrasis, Punjabis, Sindhis, Kachchhis, Surtis and so on.

I suggested, in conclusion, the formation of an association to make representations to the authorities concerned in respect of the hardships of the Indian settlers, and offered to place at its disposal as much of my time and service as was possible.

I saw that I made a considerable impression on the meeting.

My speech was followed by discussion. Some offered to supply me with facts. I felt encouraged. I saw that very few amongst my audience knew English. As I felt that knowledge of English would be useful in that country, I adviced those who had leisure to learn English. I told them that it was possible to learn language even at an advanced age, and cited cases of people who had done so. I undertook, besides, to teach a class, if one was started or personally to instruct individuals desiring to learn the language.

The class was not started, but three young men expressed their readiness to learn at their convenience, and on condition that I went to their places to teach them. Of these, two were Mussalmans— one of them a barber and the other a clerk—and the third was a Hindu, a petty shopkeeper. I agreed to suit them all. I had no mis- givings regarding my capacity to teach. My pupils might become tired, but not I. Sometimes it happened that I would go to their places only to find them engaged in their business. But I did not lose patience. None of the three desired a deep study of English, but two may be said to have made fairly good progress in about eight months. Two learnt enough to keep accounts and write ordinary business letters. The barber's ambition was confined to acquiring just enough English for dealing with his customers. As a result of their studies, two of the pupils were equipped for making a fair income.

I was satisfied with the result of the meeting. It was decided to hold such meetings, as far as I remember, once as week or, may be, once a month. These were held more or less regularly, and on these occasions there was a free exchange of ideas. The result was that there was now in Pretoria no Indian I did not know, or whose condition I was not acquainted with. This prompted me in turn to make the acquaintance of the British Agent in Pretoria, Mr. Jacobus de Wet. He had sympathy for the Indians, but he had very little influence. However, he agreed to help us as best he could, and invited me to meet him whenever I wished.

I now communicated with the railway authorities and told them that, even under their own regulations, the disabilities about travelling under which the Indians laboured could not be justified. I got a letter in reply to the effect that first and second class tickets would be issued to Indians who were properly dressed. This was far from giving

adequate relief, as it rested with the Station Master to decide who was 'properly dressed'.

The British Agent showed me some papers dealing with Indian affairs. Tyeb Sheth had also given me similar papers. I learnt from them how cruelly the Indians were hounded out from the Orange Free State.

In short, my stay in Pretoria enabled me to make a deep study of the social, economical and political condition of the Indians in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. I had no idea that this study was to be of invaluable service to me in the future. For I had thought of returning home by the end of the year, or even earlier, if the case was finished before the year was out.

But God disposed otherwise.

CHAPTER XIII : WHAT IT IS TO BE A 'COOLIE'

It would be out of place here to describe fully the condition of Indians in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. I would suggest that those who wish to have a full idea of it may turn to my *History of Satyagraha in South Africa*. It is, however, necessary to give here a brief outline.

In the Orange Free State the Indians were deprived of all their rights by a special law enacted inn 1888 or even earlier. If they chose to stay there, they could do so only to serve as waiters in hotels or to pursue some other such menial calling. The traders were driven away with a nominal compensation. They made representations and petitions, but in vain.

A very stringent enactment was passed in the Transvaal in 1885. It was slightly amended in 1886, and it was provided under the amended law that all Indians should pay a poll-tax of £3 as fee for entry into the Transvaal. They might not own land except in locations set apart for them, and in practice even that was not to be ownership. They had no franchise. All this was under the special law for Asiatics, to whom the laws for the coloured people were also applied. Under these latter, Indians might not walk on public footpaths, and might not move out of doors after 9 p.m. without a permit. The enforcement of this last regulation was elastic so far as the Indians were concerned. Those who passed as 'Arabs' were, as a matter of favour, exempted from it. The exemption thus naturally depended on the sweet will of the police.

I had to experience the effect of both these regulations. I often went out at night for a walk with Mr. Coates, and we rarely got back home much before ten o'clock. What if the police arrested me ? Mr.

Coates was more concerned about this than I. He had to issue passes to his Negro servants. But how could he give one to me ? Only a master might issue a permit to a servant. If I had wanted one, and even if Mr. Coates had been ready to give it, he could not have done so, for it would have been fraud.

So Mr. Coates or some friend of his took me to the State Attorney, Dr. Krause. We turned out to be barristers of the same Inn. The fact that I needed a pass to enable me to be out of doors after 9 p.m. was too much for him. He expressed sympathy for me. Instead of ordering for me a pass, he gave me a letter authorizing me to be out of doors at all hours without police interference. I always kept this letter on me whenever I went out. The fact that I never had to make use of it was a mere accident.

Dr. Krause invited me to his place, and we may be said to have become friends. I occasionally called on him, and it was through him that I was introduced to his more famous brother, who was Public Prosecutor in Johannesburg. During the Boer War he was court-martialled for conspiring to murder an English officer, and was sentenced to imprisonment for seven years. He was also disbarred by the Benchers. On the termination of hostilities he was released and, being honourably readmitted to the Transvaal bar, resumed practice.

These connections were useful to me later on in my public life, and simplified much of my work.

The consequences of the regulation regarding the use of footpaths were rather serious for me. I always went out for a walk through President Street to an open plain. President Kruger's house was in this street—a very modest, unostentatious building, without a garden, and not distinguishable from other houses in its neighbourhood. The houses of many of the millionaires in Pretoria were far more pretentious, and were surrounded by gardens. Indeed President Kruger's simplicity was proverbial. Only the presence of a police patrol before the house indicated that it belonged to some official. I nearly always went along the footpath past this patrol without the slightest hitch or hindrance.

Now the man on duty used to be changed from time to time. Once one of these men, without giving me the slightest warning, without even asking me to leave the footpath, pushed and kicked me into the street. I was dismayed. Before I could question him as to his behaviour, Mr. Coates, who happened to be passing the spot on horse back, hailed me and said :

‘Gandhi, I have seen everything. I shall gladly be your witness in court if you proceed against the man. I am very sorry you have been so rudely assaulted.’

‘You need not be sorry,’ I said. ‘What does the poor man know ? All coloured people are the same to him. He no doubt treats Negroes just as he has treated me. I have made it a rule not to go to court in respect of any personal grievance. So I do not intend to proceed against him.’

‘That is just like you,’ said Mr. Coates, ‘but do think it over again. We must teach such men a lesson.’ He then spoke to the policeman and reprimanded him. I could not follow their talk, as it was in Dutch, the policeman being a Boer. But he apologized to me, for which there was no need. I had already forgiven him.

But I never again went through this street. There would be other men coming in this man’s place and, ignorant of the incident, they would behave likewise. Why should I unnecessarily court another kick ? I therefore selected a different walk.

The incident deepened my feeling for the Indian settlers. I discussed with them the advisability of making a test case, if it were found necessary to do so, after having seen the British Agent in the matter of these regulations.

I thus made an intimate study of the hard condition of the Indian settlers, not only by reading and hearing about it, but by personal experience. I saw that South Africa was no country for a self-respecting Indian, and my mind became more and more occupied with the question as to how this state of things might be improved.

But my principal duty for the moment was to attend to the case of Dada Abdulla.

CHAPTER XIV : PREPARATION FOR THE CASE

The year’s stay in Pretoria was a most valuable experience in my life. Here it was that I had opportunities of learning public work and acquired some measure of my capacity for it. Here it was that the religious spirit within me became a living force, and here too I acquired a true knowledge of legal practice. Here I learnt the things that a junior barrister learns in a senior barrister’s chamber, and here I also gained confidence that I should not after all fail as a lawyer. It was likewise here that I learnt the secret of success as a lawyer.

Dada Abdulla’s was no small case. The suit was for £40,000. Arising out of business transactions, it was full of intricacies of accounts. Part of the claim was based on promissory notes, and part on the specific performance of promise to deliver promissory notes.

The defence was that the promissory notes were fraudulently taken and lacked sufficient consideration. There were numerous points of fact and law[T1] in this intricate case.

Both parties had engaged the best attorneys and counsel. I thus had a fine opportunity of studying their work. The preparation of the plaintiff's case for the attorney and the sifting of facts in support of his case had been entrusted to me. It was an education to see how much the attorney accepted, and how much he rejected from my preparation, as also to see have much use the counsel made of the brief prepared by the attorney. I saw that this preparation for the case would give me a fair measure of my powers of comprehension and my capacity for marshalling evidence.

I took the keenest interest in the case. Indeed I threw myself into it. I read all the papers pertaining to the transactions. My client was a man of great ability and reposed absolute confidence in me, and this rendered my work easy. I made a fair study of book-keeping. My capacity for translation was improved by having to translate the correspondence, which was for the most part in Gujarati.

[T2]Although, as I have said before, I took a keen interest in religious communion[T3] and in public work and always gave some of my time to them, they were not then my primary interest. The preparation of the case was my primary interest. Reading of law and looking up law cases, when necessary, had always a prior claim on my time. As a result, I acquired such a grasp of the facts of the case as perhaps was not possessed even by the parties themselves, inasmuch as I had with me the papers of both the parties.

I recalled the late Mr. Pincott's advice—facts are three-fourths of the law. At a later date it was amply borne out by that famous barrister of South Africa, the late Mr. Leonard. In a certain case in my charge I saw that, though justice was on the side of my client, the law seemed to be against him. In despair I approached Mr. Leonard for help. He also felt that the facts of the case were very strong. He exclaimed, 'Gandhi, I have learnt one thing, and it is this, that if we take care of the facts of a case, the law will take care of itself. Let us dive deeper into the facts of this case.' With these words he asked me to study the case further and then see him again. On a re-examination of the facts I saw them in an entirely new light, and I also hit upon an old South African case bearing on the point. I was delighted and went to Mr. Leonard and told him everything. 'Right,' he said, 'we shall win the case. Only we must bear in mind which of the judges takes it.'

When I was making preparation for Dada Abdulla's case, I had not fully realized this paramount importance of facts. Facts mean

truth, and once we adhere to truth, the law comes to our aid naturally. I saw that the facts of Dada Abdulla's case made it very strong indeed, and that the law was bound to be on his side. But I also saw that the litigation, if it were parsisted in, would ruin the plaintiff and the defendant, who were relatives and both belonged to the same city. No one knew how long the case might go on. Should it be allowed to continue to be fought out in court, it might go on indefinitely and to no advantage of either party.[T4] Both, therefore, desired an immediate termination of the case, if possible.

I approached Tyeb Sheth and requested and advised him to go to arbitration. I recommended him to see his counsel. I suggested to him that if an arbitrator commanding the confidence of both par-ties could be appointed, the case would be quickly finished. The lawy-ers' fees were so rapidly mounting up that they were enough to devo-ur all the resources of the clients, big merchants as they were. The case occupied so much of their attention that they had no time left for any other work. In the mean-time mutual ill-will was steadily increasing. I became disgusted with the profession. As lawyers the counsel on both sides were bound to rake up points of law in support of their own clients. I also saw for the first time that the winning party never recovers all the costs incurred. Under the Court Fees Regulation there was a fixed scale of costs to be allowed as between party and party, the actual costs as between attorney and client being very much higher. This was more than I could bear. I felt that my duty was to befriend both parties and bring them together. I strained every nerve to bring about a compromise. At last Tyeb Sheth agreed. An arbitrator was appointed, the case was argued before him, and Dada Abdulla won.

But that did not satisfy me. If my client were to seek immediate execution of the award, it would be impossible for Tyeb Sheth to meet the whole of the awarded amount, and there was an unwritten law among the Porbandar Memans living in South Africa that death should be preferred to bankruptcy. It was impossible for Tyeb Sheth to pay down the whole sum of about £ 37,000 and costs. He meant to pay not a pie less than the amount, and he did not want to be declared bankrupt. There was only one way, Dada Abdulla should allow him to pay in moderate instalments.[T5] He was equal to the occasion, and granted Tyeb Sheth instalments spread over a very long period. It was more difficult for me to secure this concession of payment by instalments than to get the parties to agree to arbitration. But both were happy over the result, and both rose in the public estimation. My joy was boundless. I had learnt the true practice of law. I had learnt to find out the better side of human nature and to enter men's hearts. I realized that the true function of a lawyer was to unite parties riven

asunder. The lesson was so indelibly burnt into me that a large part of my time during the twenty years of my practice as a lawyer was occupied in bringing about private compromises of hundreds of cases. I lost nothing thereby—not even money, certainly not my soul.

CHAPTER XV : RELIGIOUS FERMENT

It is now time to turn again to my experiences with Christian friends.

Mr. Baker was getting anxious about my future. He took me to the Wellington Convention. The Protestant Christians organize such gatherings every few years for religious enlightenment or, in other words, self-purification. One may call this religion restoration or revival. The Wellington Convention was of this type. The chairman was the famous divine of the place, the Rev. Andrew Murray. Mr. Baker had hoped that the atmosphere of religious exaltation at the Convention, and the enthusiasm and earnestness of the people attending it, would inevitably lead me to embrace Christianity.

But his final hope was the efficacy of prayer. He had an abiding faith in prayer. It was his firm conviction that God could not but listen to prayer fervently offered. He would cite the instances of men like George Muller of Bristol, who depended entirely on prayer even for his temporal needs. I listened to his discourse on the efficacy of prayer with unbiased attention, and assured him that nothing could prevent me from embracing Christianity, should I feel the call. I had no hesitation in giving him this assurance, as[T1] I had long since taught myself to follow the inner voice. I delighted in submitting to it. To act against it would be difficult and painful to me.

So we went to Wellington. Mr. Baker was hard put to it in having 'a coloured man' like me for his companion. He had to suffer inconveniences on many occasions entirely on account of me. We had to break the journey on the way, as one of the days happened to be a Sunday, and Mr. Baker and his party would not travel on the sabbath. Though the mannager of the station hotel agreed to take me in after much altercation, he absolutely refused to admit me to the dining-room. Mr. Baker was not the man to give way easily. He stood by the rights of the guests of a hotel. But I could see his difficulty. At Wellington also I stayed with Mr. Baker. In spite of his best efforts to conceal the little inconveniences that he was put to, I could see them all.

This Convention was an assemblage of devout Christians. I was delighted at their faith. I met the Rev. Murray. I saw that many were praying for me. I liked some of their hymns, they were very sweet.

The Convention lasted for three days. I could understand and appreciate the devoutness of those who attended it. But I saw no reason for changing my belief—my religion. It was impossible for me to believe that I could go to heaven or attain salvation only by becoming[T2] a Christian. When I frankly said so to some of the good Christian friends, they were shocked. But there was no help for it.

My difficulties lay deeper. It was more than I could believe that Jesus was the only incarnate son of God, and that only he who believed in him would have everlasting life. If God could have sons, all of us were His sons. If Jesus was like God, or God Himself, then all men were like God and could be God Himself[T3]. My reason was not ready to believe literally that Jesus by his death and by his blood redeemed the sins of the world. Metaphorically there might be some truth in it. Again, according to Christianity[T4] only human beings had souls, and not other living beings, for whom death meant complete extinction; while I held a contrary belief. I could accept Jesus as a martyr, an embodiment of sacrifice[T5], and a divine teacher, but not as the most perfect man ever born[T6]. His death on the Cross was a great example to the world, but that there was anything like a mysterious or miraculous virtue in it my heart could not accept. The pious lives of Christians did not give me anything that the lives of men of other faiths had failed to give. I had seen in other lives just the same reformation that I had heard of among Christians. Philosophically there was nothing extraordinary in Christian principles. From the point of view of sacrifice[T7], it seemed to me that the Hindus greatly surpassed the Christians. It was impossible for me to regard Christianity as a perfect religion or the greatest of all religions.

I shared this mental churning with my Christian friends when ever there was an opportunity, but their answers could not satisfy me.

Thus if I could not accept Christianity either as a perfect, or the greatest religion, neither was I then convinced of Hinduism being such. Hindu defects were pressingly visible to me. If untouchability could be a part of Hinduism, it could but be a rotten part or an excrescence. I could not understand the *raison d'etre* of a multitude of sects and castes. What was the meaning of saying that the Vedas were the inspired Word of God ? If they were inspired, why not also the Bible and the Koran ?

As Christian friends were endeavouring to convert me, even so were Mussalman friends. Abdulla Sheth had kept on inducing me to study Islam, and of course he had always something to say regarding its beauty.

I expressed my difficulties in a letter to Raychandbhai.[1] I also corresponded with other religious authorities in India and received answers from them. Raychandbhai's letter somewhat pacified me. He asked me to be patient and to study Hinduism more deeply. One of his sentences was to this effect: 'On a dispassionate view of the question I am convinced that no other religion has the subtle and profound thought of Hinduism, its vision of the soul, or its charity.'

I purchased Sales's translation of the Koran and began reading it. I also obtained other books on Islam. I communicated with Christian friends in England. One of them introduced me to Edward Maitland[2] with whom I opened correspondence. He sent me *The Perfect Way*, a book he had written in collaboration with Anna Kingsford. The book was a repudiation of the current Christian belief. He also sent me another book, *The New Interpretation of the Bible*. I liked both. They seemed to support Hinduism. Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God Is within You* overwhelmed me. It left an abiding impression on me. Before the independent thinking, profound morality, and the truthfulness of this book, all the books given me by Mr. Coates seemed to pale into insignificance.

My studies thus carried me in a direction unthought of by the Christian friends. My correspondence with Edward Maitland was fairly prolonged, and that with Raychandbhai continued until his death. I read some of the books he sent me. These included *Panch-ikaran, Maniratnamala, Mumukshu Prakaran* of *Yogavasishtha*, Haribhadra Suri's *Shaddarshana Samuchchaya* and others.

Though I took a path my Christian friends had not intended for me, I have remained for ever indebted to them for the religious quest that they awakened in me. I shall always cherish the memory of their contact. The years that followed had more, not less, of such sweet and sacred contacts in store for me.

CHAPTER XVI : MAN PROPOSES, GOD DISPOSES[T1]

The case having been concluded, I had no reason for staying in Pretoria. So I went back to Durban and began to make preparations for my return home. But Abdulla Sheth was not the man to let me sail

[1] For the text of questions raised by Gandhiji, *vide* "Questions on Religion", before June 1894; for Raychandbhai's replies, *vide* "Gandhiji's Questions to Rajchandra and His Replies", before December 26, 1926.

without a send-off. He gave a farewell party in my honour at Sydenham.

It was proposed to spend the whole day there. Whilst I was turning over the sheets of some of the newspapers I found there, I chanced to see a paragraph in a corner of one of them under the caption 'Indian Franchise'. It was with reference to the Bill then before the House of Legislature, which sought to deprive the Indians of their right to elect members of the Natal Legislative Assembly. I was ignorant of the Bill, and so were the rest of the guests who had assembled there.

I enquired of Abdulla Sheth about it. He said : 'What can we understand in these matters ? We can only understand things that affect our trade. As you know all our trade in the Orange Free State has been swept away. We agitated about it, but in vain. We are after all lame men, being unlettered. We generally take in newspapers simply to ascertain the daily market rates, etc. What can we know of legislation ? Our eyes and ears are the European attorneys here.'

'But', said I, 'there are so many young Indians born and educated here. Do not they help you ?'

'They !' exclaimed Abdulla Sheth in despair.[T2] 'They never care to come to us, and to tell you the truth, we care less to recognize them. Being Christians, they are under the thumb of the white clergymen, who in their turn are subject to the Government.'

This opened my eyes. I felt that this class should be claimed as our own. Was this the meaning of Christianity ? Did they cease to be Indians because they had become Christians ?

But I was on the point of returning home and hesitated to express what was passing through my mind in this matter. I simply said to Abdulla Sheth : 'This Bill, if it passes into law, will make our[T3] lot extremely difficult. It is the first nail into our coffin. It strikes at the root of our self-respect.'

'It may,' echoed Sheth Abdulla. 'I will tell you the genesis of the franchise question[T4]. We know nothing about it. But Mr. Escombe, one of our best attorneys, whom you know, put the idea into our heads. It happened thus. He is a great fighter, and there being no love lost between him and the Wharf Engineer, he feared that the Engineer might deprive him of his votes and defeat him at the election. So he acquainted us with our position, and at his instance we all registered ourselves as voters, and voted for him. You will now see how the franchise has not for us the value that you attach to it. But we understand what you say. Well, then, what is your advice ?'

The other guests were listening to this conversation with attention. One of them said : 'Shall I tell you what should be done ? You cancel your passage by this boat, stay here a month longer, and we will fight as you direct us.'

All the others chimed in : 'Indeed, indeed. Abdulla Sheth, you must detain Gandhibhai.'

The Sheth was a shrewd man. He said : 'I may not detain him now. Or rather, you have as much right as I to do so. But you are quite right. Let us *all* persuade him to stay on. But you should remember that he is a barrister. What about his fees ?'

The mention of fees pained me, and I broke in : 'Abdulla Sheth, fees are out of the question. There can be no fees for public work. I can stay, if at all, as a servant. And as you know, I am not acquainted with all these friends. But if you believe that they will co-operate, I am prepared to stay a month longer. There is one thing, however. Though you need not pay me anything, work of the nature we contemplate cannot be done without some funds to start with. Thus we may have to send telegrams, we may have to print some literature, some touring may have to be done, the local attorneys may have to be consulted, and as I am ignorant of your laws, I may need some law-books for reference. All this cannot be done without money. And it is clear that one man is not enough for this work. Many must come forward to help him.'

And a chorus of voices was heard: 'Allah is great and merciful. Money will come in. Men there are, as many as you need. You please consent to stay, and all will be well.'

The farewell party was thus turned into a working committee. I suggested finishing dinner, etc., quickly and getting back home. I worked out in my own mind an outline of the campaign. I ascertained the names of those who were on the list of voters, and made up my mind to stay on for a month.

Thus God laid the foundations of my life[T5] in South Africa and sowed the seed of the fight for national self-respect.

CHAPTER XVII : SETTLED IN NATAL

Sheth Haji Muhammad Haji Dada was regarded as the foremost leader of the Indian community in Natal in 1893. Financially Sheth Abdulla Haji Adam was the chief among them, but he and others always gave the first place to Sheth Haji Muhammad in public affairs. A meeting was, therefore, held under his presidentship at the house of Abdulla Sheth, at which it was resolved to offer opposition to the Franchise Bill.

Volunteers were enrolled. Natal-born Indians, that is, mostly Christian Indian youths, had been invited to attend this meeting. Mr. Paul, the Durban Court Interpreter, and Mr. Subhan Godfrey, Head Master of a mission school, were present, and it was they who were responsible for bringing together at the meeting a good number of Christian youths. All these enrolled themselves as volunteers.

Many of the local merchants were of course enrolled, note worthy among them being Sheths Dawud Muhammad, Muhammad Kasam Kamruddin, Adamji Miyakhan, A. Kolandavellu Pillai, C. Lachhiram, Rangasami Padiachi, and Amad Jiva. Parsi Rustomji was of course there. From among the clerks were Messrs Manekji, Joshi, Narsinhram and others, employees of Dada Abdulla and Co. and other big firms. They were all agreeably surprised to find themselves taking a share in public work. To be invited thus to take part was a new experience in their lives. In face of the calamity that had overtaken the community, all distinctions such as high and low, small and great, master and servant, Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians, Gujaratis, Madrasis, Sindhis, etc., were forgotten. All were alike the children and servants of the motherland.

The Bill had already passed, or was about to pass, its second reading. In the speeches on the occasion the fact that Indians had expressed no opposition to the stringent Bill was urged as proof of their[T1] unfitness for the franchise.

I explained the situation to the meeting. The first thing we did was to despatch a telegram to the Speaker of the Assembly requesting him to postpone further discussion of the Bill. A similar telegram was sent to the Premier, Sir John Robinson, and another to Mr. Escombe, as a friend of Dada Abdulla's. The Speaker promptly replied that discussion of the Bill would be postponed for two days. This gladdened our hearts.

The petition[1] to be presented to the Legislative Assembly was drawn up. Three copies had to be prepared[T2] and one extra was needed for the Press. It was also proposed to obtain as many signatures to it as possible, and all this work had to be done in the course of a night. The volunteers with a knowledge of English and several others sat up the whole night. Mr. Arthur, an old man, who was known for his calligraphy, wrote the principal copy. The rest were written by others to someone's dictation. Five copies were thus got ready simultaneously. Merchant volunteers went out in their own carriages, or carriages whose hire they had paid, to obtain signatures

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Natal Legislative Assembly", June 28, 1894.

to the petition. This was accomplished in quick time and the petition was despatched. The newspapers published it with favourable comments. It likewise created an impression on the Assembly. It was discussed[T3] in the House. Partisans of the Bill offered a defence, an admittedly lame one, in reply to the arguments advanced in the petition. The Bill, however, was passed.

We all knew that this was a foregone conclusion, but the agitation had infused new life into the community and had brought home to them the conviction that the community was one and indivisible, and that it was as much their duty to fight for its political rights as for its trading rights.

Lord Ripon was at this time Secretary of State for the Colonies. It was decided to submit to him a monster petition. This was no small task and could not be done in a day. Vlunteers were enlisted, and all did their due share of the work.

I took considerable pains over drawing up this petition[1] . I read all the literature available on the subject. My argument centred round a principle and an expedience. I argued that we had a right to the franchise in Natal, as we had a kind of franchise in India. I urged that it was expedient to retain it, as the Indian population capable of using the franchise was very small.

Ten thousand signatures were obtained in the course of a fortnight. To secure this number of signatures from the whole of the province was no light task, especially when we consider that the men were perfect strangers to the work. Specially competent volunteers had to be selected for the work, as it had been decided not to take a single signature without the signatory fully understanding the petition. The villages were scattered at long distances. The work could be done promptly only if a number of workers put their whole heart into it. And this they did. All carried out their allotted task with enthusiasm. But as I am writing these lines, the figures of Sheth Dawud Muhammad, Rustomji, Adamji Miyakhan, and Amad Jiva rise clearly before my mind. They brought in the largest number of signatures. Dawud Sheth kept going about in his carriage the whole day. And it was all a labour of love, not one of them asking for even his out-of-pocket expenses. Dada Abdulla's house became at once a caravanserai and a public office. A number of educated friends who helped me and many others had their food there. Thus every helper was put to considerable expense.

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Lord Ripon", before May 5, 1895.

The petition was at last submitted. A thousand copies had been printed for circulation and distribution. It acquainted the Indian public for the first time with conditions in Natal. I sent copies to all the newspapers and publicists[T4] I knew.

The Times of India, in a leading article on the petition, stongly supported the Indian demands. Copies were sent to journals and publicists in England representing different parties.[T5] The London *Times* supported our claims, and we began to entertain hopes of the Bill being vetoed.

It was now impossible for me to leave Natal. The Indian friends surrounded me on all sides and importuned me to remain there permanently. I expressed my difficulties. I had made up my mind not to stay at public expense. I felt it necessary to set up an independent household. I thought[T6] that the house should be good and situated in a good locality. I also had the idea that I could not add to the credit of the community, unless I lived in a style usual for barristers. And it seemed to me to be impossible to run such a household with anything less than £300 a year. I therefore decided that I could stay only if the members of the community guaranteed legal work to the extent of that minimum, and I communicated my decision to them.

'But', said they, 'we should like you to draw[T7] that amount for public work, and we can easily collect it. Of course this is apart from the fees you must charge for private legal work.'

'No, I could not thus charge you for public work,' said I.[T8] 'The work would not involve the exercise on my part of much skill as barrister. My work would be mainly to make you all work. And how could I charge you for that? And then I should have to appeal to you frequently for funds for the work, and if I were to draw my maintenance from you, I should find myself at a disadvantage in making an appeal for large amounts, and we should ultimately find ourselves at a standstill. Besides I want the community to find more than £300 annually for public work.'

'But we have now known you for some time, and are sure you would not draw anything you do not need. And if we wanted you to stay here, should we not find your expenses ?'

'It is your love and present enthusiasm that make you talk like this. How can we be sure that this love and enthusisam will endure for ever ? And as your friend and servant,[T9] I should occasionally have to say hard things to you. Heaven only knows whether I should then retain your affection. But the fact is that I must not accept any salary for public work. It is enough for me that you should all agree to

entrust me with your legal work. Even that may be hard for you. For one thing I am not a white barrister. How can I be sure that the court will respond to me ? Nor can I be sure how I shall fare as a lawyer. So even in giving me retainers you may be running some risk. I should regard even the fact of your giving them to me as the reward of my public work.'

The upshot of this discussion was that about twenty merchants gave me retainers for one year for their legal work. Besides this, Dada Abdulla purchased me the necessary furniture in lieu of a purse he had intended to give me on my departure.

Thus I settled in Natal.

CHAPTER XVIII : COLOUR BAR[T1]

The symbol of a court of justice is a pair of scales held evenly by an impartial and blind but sagacious woman. Fate has purposely made her blind, in order that she may not judge a person from his exterior but from his intrinsic worth. But the Law Society of Natal set out to persuade the Supreme Court to act in contravention of this principle and to belie its symbol.[T2]

I applied for admission as an advocate of the Supreme Court. I held a certificate of admission from the Bombay High Court. The English certificate I had to deposit with the Bombay High Court when I was enrolled there. It was necessary to attach two certificates of character to the application for admission, and thinking that these would carry more weight if given by Europeans, I secured them from two well-known European merchants whom I knew through Sheth Abdulla. The application had to be presented through a member of the bar, and as a rule the Attorney General presented such applications without fees. Mr. Escombe, who, as we have seen, was legal adviser to Messrs Dada Abdulla & Co., was the Attorney General. I called on him, and he willingly consented to present my application.

The Law Society now sprang a surprise on me by serving me with a notice opposing my application for admission. One of their objections was that the original English certificate was not attached to my application. But the main objection was that, when the regulations regarding admission of advocates were made, the possibility of a coloured man applying could not have been contemplated. Natal owed its growth to European enterprise, and therefore in the bar. If coloured people were admitted, they might gradually outnumber the Europeans, and the bulwark of their protection would break down.

The Law Society had engaged a distinguished lawyer to support their opposition. As he too was connected with Dada Abdulla & Co.,

he sent me word through Sheth abdulla to go and see him. He talked with me quite frankly, and inquired about my antecedents, which I gave. Then he said :

'I have nothing to say against you. I was only afraid lest you should be some Colonial-born adventurer. And the fact that your application was unaccompanied by the original certificate supported my suspicion. There have been men who have made use of diplomas which did not belong to them. The certificate of character from European traders you have submitted have no value for me. What do they know about you ? What can be the extent of their acquaintance with you ?'

'But', said I, 'everyone here is a stranger to me. Even Sheth Abdulla first came to know me here.

'But then you say he belongs to the same place as you ? If your father was Prime Minister there, Sheth Abdulla is bound to know your family. If you were to produce his affidavit, I should have absolutely no objection. I would then gladly communicate to the Law Society my inability to oppose your application.'

This talk enraged me, but I restrained my feelings. 'If I had attached Dada Abdulla's certificate,' said I to myself, 'it would have been rejected and they would have asked for Europeans' certificates. And what has my admission as advocate to do with my birth and my antecedents ? How could my birth, whether humble or objectionable, be used against me ?' But I contained myself and quietly replied :

'Though I do not admit that the Law Society has any authority to require all these details, I am quite prepared to present the affidavit you desire.'

Sheth Abdulla's affidavit was prepared and duly submitted to the counsel for the Law Society. He said he was satisfied. But not so the Law Society. It opposed my application before the Supreme Court, which ruled out the opposition without even calling upon Mr. Escombe to reply. The Chief Justice said in effect :

'The objection that the applicant has not attached the original certificate has no substance. If he has made a false affidavit, he can be prosecuted, and his name can then be struck off the roll, if he is proved guilty. The law[T3] makes no distinction between white and coloured people. The Court has therefore no authority to prevent Mr. Gandhi from being enrolled as an advocate. We admit his application. Mr. Gandhi, you can now take the oath.'

I stood up and took the oath before the Registrar. As soon as I was sworn in, the Chief Justice, addressing me, said :

‘You must now take off your turban, Mr. Gandhi. You must submit to the rules of the Court with regard to the dress to be worn by practising barristers.’

I saw my limitations. The turban that I had insisted on wearing in the district Magistrate Court I took off in obedience to the order of the Supreme Court. Not that, if I had resisted the order, the resistance could not have been justified. But I wanted to reserve my strength for fighting bigger battles. I should not exhaust my skill as a fighter in insisting on retaining my turban. It was worthy of a better cause.

Sheth Abdulla and other friends did not like my submission (or was it weakness ?). They felt that I should have stood by my right to wear the turban while practising in the Court. I tried to reason with them. I tried to press home to them the truth of the maxim, ‘When at Rome do as the Romans do.’ ‘It would be right,’ I said, ‘to refuse to obey, if in India an English officer or judge ordered you to take off your turban; but as an officer of the Court, it would have ill become me to disregard a custom of the Court in the province of Natal.’

I pacified the friends somewhat with these and similar arguments, but I do not think I convinced them completely; in this instance, of the applicability of the principle of looking at a thing from a different standpoint in different circumstances. But all my life through, the very insistence on truth has taught me to appreciate the beauty of compromise.[T4] I saw[T5] in later life that this spirit was an essential part of satyagraha. It has often meant endangering my life and incurring the displeasure of friends. But truth is hard as adamant and tender as a blossom.

The opposition of the Law Society gave me another advertisement in South Africa. Most of the newspapers condemned the opposition and accused the Law Society of jealousy. The advertisement, to some extent, simplified my work.

CHAPTER XIX : NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

Practice as a lawyer was and remained for me a subordinate occupation. It was necessary that I should concentrate on public work to justify my stay in Natal. The despatch of the petition regarding the disfranchising bill was not sufficient in itself. Sustained agitation was essential for making an impression on the Secretary of State for the Colonies. For this purpose it was thought necessary to bring into being a permanent organization. So I consulted Sheth Abdulla and other friends, and we all decided to have a public organization of a permanent character.

To find out a name to be given to the new organization perplexed me sorely. It was not to identify itself with any particular party. The name 'Congress', I knew, was in bad odour with the Conservatives in England, and yet the Congress was the very life of India. I wanted to popularize it in Natal. It savoured of cowardice to hesitate to adopt the name. Therefore, with full explanation of my reasons, I recommended that the organization should be called the Natal Indian Congress, and on the 22nd May the Natal Indian Congress came into being.[1]

Dada Abdulla's spacious room was packed to the full on that day. The Congress received the enthusiastic approval of all present. Its constitution[2] was simple, the subscription was heavy. Only he who paid five shillings monthly could be a member. The well-to-do classes were persuaded to subscribe as much as they could. Abdualla Sheth headed the list with £2 per month. Two other friends also put down the same. I thought I should not stint my subscription, and put down a pound per month. This was for me no small amount. But I thought that it would not be beyond my means, if at all I was to pay my way. And God helped me. We thus got a considerable number of members who subscribed £1 per month. The number of those who put down 10s. was even larger. Besides this, there were donations which were gratefully accepted.

Experience showed that no one paid his subscription for the mere asking. It was impossible to call frequently on members outside Durban. The enthusiasm of one moment seemed to wear away the next. Even the members in Durban had to be considerably dunned before they would pay in their subscriptions.

The task of collecting subcriptions lay with me, I being the secretary. And we came to a stage when I had to keep my clerk engaged all day long in the work of collection. The man got tired of the job, and I felt that, if the situation was to be improved, the subscriptions should be made payable annually and not monthly, and that too strictly in advance. So I called a meeting of the Congress. Everyone welcomed the proposal for making the subscription annual instead of monthly and for fixing the minimum at £3. Thus the work of collection was considerably facilitated.

I had learnt at the outset not to carry on public work with borrowed money. One could rely on people's promises in most matters except in repsect of money. I had never found people quick

[1] It was formally established on 22-8-1894; *vide* "Constitution of the Natal Indian Congress", August 22, 1894.

[2] *Ibid*.

to pay the amounts they had undertaken to subscribe, and the Natal Indians were no exception to the rule. As, therefore, no work was done unless there were funds on hand, the Natal Indian Congress has never been in debt.

My co-workers evinced extraordinary enthusiasm in canvassing members. It was work which interested them and was at the same time an invaluable experience. Large numbers of people gladly came forwad with cash subscriptions. Work in the distant Villages of the interior was rather difficult. People did not know the nature of public work. And yet we had invitations to visit far-away places, leading merchants of every place extending their hospitality.

On one occasion during this tour the situation was rather difficult. We expected our host to contribute £6, but he refused to give anything more than £3. If we had accepted that amount from him, others would have follwed suit, and our collections would have been spoiled. It was a late hour of the night, and we were all hungry. But how could we dine without having first obtained the amount we were bent on getting ? All persuasion was useless. The host seemed to be adamant. Other merchants in the town reasoned with him, and we all sat up throughout the night, he as well as we determined not to budge one inch. Most of my co-workers were burning with rage, but they contained themselves. At last, when day was already breaking, the host yielded, paid down £6 and feasted us. This happened at Tonggat, but the repercussion of the incident was felt as far as Stanger on the North Coast and Charlestown in the interior. It also hastened our work of collection.

But collecting funds was not the only thing to do. In fact I had long learnt the principle of never having more money at one's disposal than necessary.

Meetings used to be held once a month or even once a week if required. Minutes of the proceedings of the preceding meeting would be read, and all sorts of questions would be discussed. People had no experience of taking part in public discussions or of speaking briefly and to the point. Everyone hesitated to stand up to speak. I explained to them the rules of procedure at meetings, and they respected them. They realized that it was an education for them, and many who had never been accustomed to speaking before an audience soon acquired the habit of thinking and speaking publicly about matters of public interest.

Knowing that in public work minor expenses at times absorb large amounts, I had decided not to have even the receipt books printed in the beginning. I had a cyclostyle machine in my office, on

which I took copies of receipts and reports. Such things I began to get printed only when the Congress coffers were full, and when the number of members and work had increased. Such economy is essential for every organization, and yet I know that it is not always exercised. That is why I have thought it proper to enter into these little details of the beginnings of a small but growing organization.

Poeple never cared to have receipts for the amounts they paid, but we always insisted on the receipts being given. Every pie was thus clearly accounted for, and I dare say the account books for the year 1894 can be found intact even today in the records of Natal Indian Congress. Carefully kept accounts are a *sine qua non* for any organization. Without them it falls into disrepute. Without properly kept accounts it is impossible to maintain truth in its pristine purity.

Another feature of the Congress was service of Colonial-born educated Indians. The Colonial-born Indian Educational Association was founded under the auspices of the Congress. The members consisted mostly of these educated youths. They had to pay a nominal subscription. The association served to ventilate their needs and grievances, to stimulate thought amongst them, to bring them into touch with Indian merchants and also to afford them scope for service of the community. It was a sort of debating society. The members met regularly and spoke or read papers on different subjects. A small library was also opened in connection with the Association.

The third feature of the Congress was propaganda. This consisted in acquainting the English in South Africa and England and people in India with the real state of things in Natal. With that end in view I wrote two pamphlets. The first was *An Apeal to Every Briton in South Africa*. It contained a statement, supported by evidence, of the general condition of Natal Indians. The other was entitled *The Indian Franchise—An Appeal*. It contained a brief history of the Indian franchise in Natal with facts and figures. I had devoted considerable labour and study to the preparation of these pamphlets, and the result was quite commensurate with the trouble taken. They were widely circulated.[1]

All this activity resulted in winning the Indians numerous friends in Sourth Africa and in obtaining the active sympathy of all parties in India. It also opened out and placed before the South African Indians a definite line of action.

[1] *Vide* "Open Letter", before December 19, 1894 & "The Indian Franchise", December 16, 1895.

The heart's earnest and pure desire is always fulfilled. In my own experience I have often seen this rule verified. Service of the poor has been my heart's desire, and it has always thrown me amongst the poor and enabled me to identify myself with them.

Although the members of the Natal Indian Congress included the Colonial-born Indians and the clerical class, the unskilled wage-earners, the indentured labourers were still outside its pale. The Congress was not yet theirs. They could not afford to belong to it by paying the subscription and becoming its members. The Congress could win their attachment only by serving them. An opportunity offered itself when neither the Congress nor I was really ready for it. I had put in scarcely three or four months's practice, and the Congress also was still in its infancy, when a Tamil man in tattered clothes, head-gear in hand, two front teeth broken and his mouth bleeding, stood before me trembling and weeping. He had been heavily belaboured by his master. I learnt all about him from my clerk, who was a Tamilian[T1]. Balasundaram, as that was the visitor's name, was serving his indenture under a well-known European resident of Durban. The master, getting angry with him, had lost self-control, and had beaten Balasundaram severely, breaking two of his teeth.

I sent him to a doctor. In those days only white doctors were available. I wanted a certificate from the doctor about the nature of the injury Balasundaram had sustained. I secured the certificate, and straightway took the injured man to the magistrate, to whom I submitted his affidavit. The magistrate was indignant when he read it, and issued a summons against the employer.

It was far from my desire to get the employer punished. I simply wanted Balasundaram to be released from him. I read the law about indentured labour. If an ordinary servant left service without giving notice, he was liable to be sued by his master in a civil court. With the indentured labourer the case was entirely different. He was liable, in similar circumstances, to be proceeded against in a criminal court and to be imprisoned on conviction. That is why Sir William Hunter called the indenture system almost as bad as slavery. Like the slave the indentured labourer was the property of his master.

There were only two ways of relasing Balasundaram: either by getting the Protector of Indentured Labourers to cancel his indenture or transfer him to someone else, or by getting Bala- sundaram's employer to release him. I called on the latter and said to him : 'I do

not want to proceed against you and get you punished. I think you realize that you have severly beaten the man. I shall be satisfied if you will transfer the indenture to someone else.' To this he readily agreed. I next saw the Protector. He also agreed, on condition that I found a new employer.

So I went off in search of an employer. He had to be a European, as no Indians could employ indentured labour. At that time I knew very few Europeans. I met one of them.[1] He very kindly agreed to take on Balasundaram. I gratefully acknowledged his kindness. The magistrate convicted Balasundaram's employer, and recorded that he had undertaken to transfer the indenture to someone else.

Balasundaram's case reached the ears of every indentured labourer, and I came to be regarded as their friend. I hailed this connection with delight. A regular stream of indentured labourers began to pour into my office, and I got the best opportunity of learning their joys and sorrows.

The echoes of Balansundaram's case were heard in far off Madras. Labourers from different parts of the province, who went to Natal on indenture, came to know of this case through their indentured brethren.

There was nothing extraordinary in the case itself, but the fact that there was someone in Natal to espouse their casue and publicly work for them gave the indentured labourers a joyful surprise and inspired them with hope.

I have said that Balasundaram entered my office, head-gear in hand. There was a peculiar pathos about the circumstance which also showed our humiliation. I have already narrated the incident when I was asked to take off my turban. A practice had been forced upon every indentured labourer and every Indian stranger to take off his head-gear when visiting a Euopean, whether the head-gear were a cap, a turban or a scarf wrapped round the head. A salute even with both hands was not sufficient. Balasundaram thought that he should follow the practice even with me. This was the first case in my experience. I felt humiliated and asked him to tie up his scarf. He did so, not without a certain hesitation, but I could perceive the pleasure on his face.

It has always been a mystery to me how men can feel themselves honoured by the humiliation of their fellow-beings.

[1] Mr. Askew; *vide* "Report of the Natal Indian Congress", August 1895.

CHAPTER XXI : THE £3 TAX

Balasundaram's case brought me into touch with the indentured Indians. What impelled me, however, to make a deep study of their condition was the campaign for bringing them under special heavy taxation.

In the same year, 1894, the Natal Government sought[T1] to impose an annual tax of £25[T2] on the indentured Indians. The proposal[T3] astonished me. I put the matter before the Congress for discussion, and it was immediately resolved to organize the necessary opposition.

At the outset I must explain briefly the genesis of the tax.

About the year 1860 the Europeans in Natal, finding that there was considerable scope for sugarcane cultivation, felt themselves in need of labour. Without outside labour the cultivation of cane and the manufacture of sugar were impossible, as the Natal Zulus were not suited to this form of work. The Natal Government therefore corresponded with the Indian Government, and secured their permission to recruit Indian labour. These recruits were to sign an indenture to work in Natal for five years, and at the end of the term they were to be at liberty to settle there and to have full rights of ownership of land. Those were the inducements held out to them, for the whites then had looked forward to improving their agriculture by the industry of the Indian labourers after the term of their indentures had expired.

But the Indians gave more than had been expected of them. They grew large quantities of vegatables. They introduced a number of Indian varieties and made it possible to grow the local varieties cheaper. They also introduced the mango. Nor did their enterprise stop at agriculture. They entered trade. They purchased land for building, and many raised themselves from the status of labourers to that of owners of land and houses. Merchants from India followed them and settled there for trade. The late Sheth Abubakar Amod was first among them. He soon built up an extensive business.

The white traders were alarmed. When they first welcomed the Indian labourers, they had not reckoned with their business skill. They might be tolerated as independent agriculturists, but their competition in trade could not be brooked.

This sowed the seed of the antagonism to Indians. Many other factors contributed to its growth. Our different ways of living, our simplicity, our contentment with small gains, our indifference to the

laws of hygiene and sanitation, our slowness in keeping our surroundings clean and tidy, and our stinginess in keeping our houses in good repair—all these, combined with the difference in religion, contributed to fan the flame of antagonism. Through legislation this antagonism found its expression in the disfranchising bill and the bill to impose a tax on the indentured Indians. Independent of legislation a number of pinpricks had already been started.

The first suggestion was that the India labourers should be forcibly repatriated, so that the term of their indentures might expire in India. The Government of India was not likely to accept the suggestion. Another proposal was therefore made to the effect that

1. the indentured labourer should return to India on the expiry of his indenture; or that

2. he should sign a fresh indenture every two years, an increment being given at each renewal; and that

3. in the case of his refusal to return to India or renew the indenture he should pay an annual tax of £25.

A deputation composed of Sir Henry Binns and Mr. Mason was sent to India to get the proposal approved by the Government there. The Viceroy at that time was Lord Elgin. He disapproved of the £25 tax, but agreed to a poll tax of £3. I thought then, as I do even now, that this was a serious blunder on the part of the Viceroy. In giving his approval he had in no way thought of the interests of India. It was no part of his duty thus to accommodate the Natal Europeans. In the course of three of four years an indentured labourer with his wife and each male child over 16 and female child over 13 came under the impost. To levy a yearly tax of £12 from a family of four—husband, wife and two children—when the average income of the husband was never more than 14s. a month, was atrocious and unknown anywhere else in the world.

We organized a fierce campaign against this tax.[1] If the Natal Indian Congress had remained silent on the subject, the Viceroy might have approved of even the £25 tax. The reduction from £25 to £3 was probably due solely to the Congress agitation. But I may be mistaken in thinking so. It may be possible that the Indian Government had disapproved of the £25 tax from the beginning and reduced it to £3[T4], irrespective of the opposition from the Congress. In any case it was a breach of trust on the part of the Indian Government.[T5] As trustee of

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to J. Chamberlain" and "Memorial to Lord Elgin", August 11, 1895.

the welfare of India the Viceroy ought never to have approved of this inhuman tax.

The Congress could not regard it as any great achievement to have succeeded in getting the tax reduced from £25 to £3[T6]. The regret was still there that it had not completely safeguarded the interest of the indentured Indians. It ever remained its determination to get the tax remitted, but it was twenty years before the detemination was realized. And when it was realized, it came as a result of the labours of not only the Natal Indians but of all the Indians in South Africa. The breach of faith with the late Mr. Gokhale became the occasion of the final campaign, in which the indentured Indians took their full share, some of them losing their lives as a result of the firing that was resorted to, and over ten thousand suffering imprisonment.

But truth triumphed in the end. The sufferings of the Indians were the expression of that truth. Yet it would not have triumphed except for unflinching faith, great patience and incessant effort. Had the community given up the struggle, had the Congress abandoned the campaign and submitted to the tax as inevitable, the hated[T7] impost would have continued to be levied from the indentured Indians until this day, to the eternal shame of the Indians in South Africa and of the whole of India.

CHAPTER XXII : COMPARATIVE STUDY OF RELIGIONS

If I found myself entirely absorbed in the service of the community, the reason behind it was my desire for self-realization. I had made the religion of service my own, as I felt that God could be realized only through service. And service for me was the service of India, because it came to me without my seeking, because I had an aptitude for it. I had gone to South Africa for travel, for finding an escape from Kathiawad intrigues and for gaining my own livelihood. But as I have said, I found myself in search of God and striving for self-realization.

Christian friends had whetted my appetite for knowledge[T1], which had become almost insatiable, and they would not leave me in peace, even if I desired to be indifferent. In Durban Mr. Spencer Walton, the head of the South Africa General Mission, found me out. I became almost a member of his family. At the back of this acquaintance was of course my contact with christians in Pretoria. Mr. Walton had a manner all his own. I do not recollect his ever having invited me to embrace Christianity. But he placed his life as an open book before me, and let me watch all his movements. Mrs. Walton was a very gentle and talented woman. I liked the attitude of this couple.

We knew the fundamental differences between us. Any amount of discussion could not efface them. Yet even differences prove helpful, where there are tolerance, charity and truth. I liked Mr. and Mrs. Walton's humility, perseverance and devotion to work, and we met very frequently.

This freindship kept alive my interest in religion. It was impossible now to get the leisure that I used to have in Pretoria for my religious studies. But what little time I could spare I turned to good account. My relgious correspondence continued. Raychandbhai was guiding me. Some friend sent me Narmadashanker's book *Dharma Vichar*. Its preface proved very helpful. I had heard about the Bohemian way in which the poet had lived, and a description in the preface of the revolution effected in his life by his religious studies[T2] captivated me. I came to like the book, and read it from cover to cover with attention. I read with interest Max Muller's book, *India—What Can It Teach Us ?* and the translation of the Upanishads published by the Theosophical Society. All this enhanced my regard for Hinduism, and its beauties began to grow upon me. It did not, however, prejudice me against other religions. I read Washington Irving's *Life of Mahomet and His Successors* and Carlyle's panegyric on the Prophet. These books raised Muhammad in my estimation I also read a book called *The Sayings of Zarathustra*.

Thus I gained more knowledge of the different religions. The study stimulated my self-introspection and fostered in me the habit of putting into practice whatever appealed to me in my studies. Thus I began some of the Yogic practices[T3], as well as I could understand them from a reading of the Hindu books. But I could not get on very far, and decided to follow them with the help of some expert when I returned to India. The desire has never been fulfilled.

I made too an intensive study of Tolstoy's books. *The Gospels in Brief*, *What to Do ?* and other books made a deep impression on me. I began to realize more and more the infinite possibilities of universal love.

About the same time I came in contact with another Christian family. At their suggestion I attended the Wesleyan church every Sunday. For these days I also had their standing invi- tation to dinner. The church did not make a favourable impression on me. The sermons seemed to be uninspiring. The congregation did not strike me as being particularly religious[T4]. They were not an assembly of devout souls; they appeared rather to be worldly- minded people, going to church for recreation and in conformity to custom. Here, at times, I would involuntarily doze. I was ashamed, but some of my

neighbours, who were in no better case, lightended the shame. I could not go on long like this, and soon gave up attending the service.

My connection with the family I used to visit every Sunday was abruptly broken. In fact it may be said that I was warned to visit it no more. It happened thus. My hostess was a good and simple woman, but somewhat narrow-minded. We always discussed religious subjects. I was then re-reading Arnold's *Light of Asia.* Once we began to compare the life of Jesus with that of Buddha. 'Look at Gautama's compassion !' said I. 'It was not confined to mankind, it was extended to all living beings. Does not one's heart overflow with love to think of the lamb joyously perched on his shoulders ? One fails to notice this love for all living beings in the life[T5] of Jesus.' The comparison pained the good lady. I could understand her feelings. I cut the matter short, and we went to the dining-room. Her son, a cherub aged scarcely five, was also with us. I am happiest when in the midst of children, and this youngster and I had long been friends. I spoke derisively[T6] of the piece of meat on his plate and in high praise of the apple on mine. The innocent boy was carried away and joined in my praise of the fruit.

But the mother ? She was dismayed.[T7]

I was warned[T8]. I checked myself and changed the subject. The following week I visited the family as usual,[T9] but not without trepidation. I did not see that I should stop going there, I did not think it proper either. But the good lady made my way easy.

'Mr. Gandhi,' she said, 'please don't take it ill if I feel obliged to tell you that my boy is none the better for your company.[T10] Everyday he hesitates to eat meat and asks for fruit, reminding me of your argument. This is too much.[T11] If he gives up meat, he is bound to get weak, if not ill, how could I bear it ? Your discussions should henceforth be only with[T12] us elders. They are sure to react badly on children.'[1]

'Mrs.—,' I replied, 'I am sorry. I can understand your feelings as a parent[T13], for I too have children. We can very easily end this unpleasant state of things. What I eat and omit to eat is bound to have a greater effect on the child than what I say. The best way, therefore, is for me to stop these visits. That certainly need not affect our friendhsip.'

'I thank you,' she said with evident relief.

[1] *Vide* "Vegetarianism and Children", May 5, 1894.

CHAPTER XXIII : AS A HOUSEHOLDER

To set up a household was no new experience for me.[T1] But the establishment in Natal was different from the ones that I had had in Bombay and London. This time part of the expense was solely for the sake of prestige. I thought it necessary to have a household in keeping with my position as an Indian barrister in Natal and as a representative. So I had a nice little house in a prominent locality. It was also suitably furnished. Food was simple but as I used to invite English friends and Indian co-workers, the housekeeping bills were always fairly high.

A good servant is essential in every household. But I have never known how to keep anyone as a servant.[T2]

I had a friend[1] as companion and help, and a cook who had become a member of the family. I also had office clerks boarding and lodging with me. I think I had a fair amount of success in this experiment, but it was not without its modicum of the bitter experience of life.

The companion was very clever and, I thought, faithful to me. But in this I was decieved. He became jealous of an office clerk who was staying with me, and wove such a tangled web that I suspected the clerk. This clerical friend had a temper of his own. Immediately he saw that he had been the object of my suspicion,[T3] he left both the house and the office. I was pained. I felt that perhaps I had been unjust to him, and my conscience always stung me.

In the meanwhile, the cook needed a few days' leave, or for some other cause was away[T4]. It was necessary to procure another during his absence. Of this new man I learnt later that he was a perfect scamp. But for me he proved a godsend. Within two or three days of his arrival, he discovered certain irregularities that were going on under my roof without my knowledge, and he made up his mind to warn me. I had the reputation of being a credulous but straight man. The discovery was to him, therefore, all the more shocking. Every day at one o'clock I used to go home from office for lunch. At about twelve o'clock one day the cook came panting to the office, and said, 'Please come home at once. There is a surprise for you.'

'Now, what is this ?' I asked. 'You must tell me what it is. How can I leave the office at this hour to go and see it ?

[1] Sheikh Mehtab. *Vide* Pyarelal's *Mahatma Gandhi—The Early Phase*, Volume I, p. 492.

‘You will regret it, if you don’t come. That is all I can say.’

I felt an appeal in his persistence. I went home accompanied by a clerk and the cook who walked ahead of us. He took me straight to the upper floor, pointed at my companion’s room, and said, ‘Open this door and see for yourself.’

I saw it all. I knocked at the door. No reply ! I knocked heavily so as to make the very walls shake. The door was opened. I saw a prostitute inside. I asked her to leave the house, never to return.[T5]

To the companion I said, ‘From this moment I cease to have anything to do with you. I have been thoroughly deceived and have made a fool of myself. That is how you have requited my trust in you?’[T6]

Instead of coming to his senses, he threatened to expose me.

‘I have nothing to conceal,’ said I. ‘Expose whatever I may have done. But you must leave me this moment.’

This made him worse. There was no help for it. So I said to the clerk standing downstairs: ‘Please go and inform the Police Superintendent, with my compliments, that a person living with me has misbehaved himself[T7]. I do not want to keep him in my house, but he refuses to leave. I shall be much obliged if police help can be sent me.’

This showed him that I was in earnest. His guilt unnerved him. He apologized to me, entreated me not to inform[T8] the police, and agreed to leave the house immediately, which he did.

The incident came as a timely warning in my life[T9]. Only now could I see clearly how thoroughly I had been beguiled by this evil genius.[T10] In harbouring him I had chosen a bad means for a good end. I had expected to ‘gather figs of thistles’. I had known that the companion was a bad character, and yet I believed in his faithfulness to me. In the attempt to reform him I was near ruining myself. I had disregarded the warnings of kind friends. Infatuation had completely blinded me.

But for the new cook I should never have discovered the truth and, being under the influence of the companion, I should probably have been unable to lead the life of detachment that I then began.[T11] I should always have been wasting time on him. He had the power to keep me in the dark and to mislead me.

But God came to the rescue as before.[T12] My intentions were pure, and so I was saved in spite of my mistakes, and this early experience thoroughly forewarned me for the future.

The cook had been almost a messenger sent from Heaven. He

did not know cooking, and as a cook he could not have remained at my place. But no one else could have opened my eyes. This was not the first time, as I subsequently learnt, that the woman had been brought into my house. She had come often before, but no one had the courage of this cook. For everyone knew how blindly I trusted the companion. The cook had, as it were, been sent to me just to do this service, for he begged leave of me that very moment.[T13]

'I cannot stay in your house,' he said. 'You are so easily misled. This is no place for me.'

I let him go.

I now discovered that the man who had poisoned my ears against the clerk was no other than this companion. I tried very hard to make amends to the clerk for the injustice I had done him. It has, however, been my eternal regret that I could never satisfy him fully. Howsoever you may repair it, a rift is a rift.

CHAPTER XXIV : HOMEWARD

By now I had been three years in South Africa. I had got to know the people and they had got to know me. In 1896 I asked permission to go home for six months, for I saw that I was in for a long stay there. I had established fairly good practice, and could see that people felt the need of my presence.[T1] So I made up my mind to go home, fetch my wife and children, and then return and settle out there. I also saw that, if I went home, I might be able to do there some public work by educating public opinion and creating more interest in the Indians of South Africa. The £3 tax was an open sore. There could be no peace until it was abolished.

But who was to take charge of the Congress work and Education Society in my absence ? I could think of two men—Adamji Miyakhan and Parsi Rustomji. There were many workers now available from the commercial class. But the foremost among those who could fulfil the duties of the secretary by regular work, and who also commanded the regard of the Indian community, were these two. The secretary certainly needed a working knowledge of English. I recommended the late Adamji Miyakhan's name to the Congress, and it approved of his appointment as secretary. Experience showed that the choice was a very happy one. Adamji Miyakhan satisfied all with his perseverance, liberality, amiability and courtesy, and proved to everyone that the secretary's work did not require a man with a barrister's degree or high English education.

About the middle of 1896 I sailed for home in the s.s. *Pongola* which was bound for Calcutta.

There were very few[T2] passengers on board. Among them were

two English officers, with whom I came in close contact. With one of them I used to play chess for an hour daily. The ship's doctor gave me a *Tamil Self-teacher* which I began to study. My experience in Natal had shown me that I should acquire a knowledge of Urdu to get into closer contact with the Mussalmans, and of Tamil to get into closer touch with the Madras Indians.

At the request of the English friend, who read Urdu with me,[T3] I found out a good Urdu munshi from amongst the deck passengers, and we made excellent progress in our studies. The officer had a better memory than I. He would never forget a word after once he had seen it; I often found it difficult to decipher Urdu letters. I brought more perseverance to bear, but could never overtake the officer.

With Tamil I made fair progress. There was no help available, but the *Tamil Self-teacher* was a well-written book, and I did not feel in need of much outside help.

I had hoped to continue these studies even after reaching India, but it was impossible. Most of my reading[T4] since 1893 has been done in jail. I did make some progress in Tamil and Urdu, in jails—Tamil in South African jails, and Urdu in Yeravda Jail. But I never learnt to speak Tamil, and the little I could do by way of reading is now rusting away for want of practice.

I still feel what a handicap this ignorance of Tamil or Telugu[T5] has been. The affection that the Dravidians[T6] in Sourth Africa showered on me has remained a cherished memory. Whenever I see a Tamil or Telugu friend, I cannot but recall the faith, perseverance and selfless sacrifice of many of his compatriots in South Africa. And they were mostly illiterate, the men no less than the women. The fight in South Africa was for such, and it was fought by illiterate soldiers; it was for the poor, and the poor took their full share in it. Ignorance of their language, however, was never a handicap to me in stealing the hearts of these simple and good countrymen. They spoke broken Hindustani or broken English, and we found no difficulty in getting on with our work. But I wanted to requite their affection by learning Tamil and Telugu. In Tamil, as I have said, I made some little progress, but in Telugu. which I tried to learn in India, I did not get beyond the alphabet. I fear now I can never learn these languages, and am therefore hoping that the Dravidians will learn Hindustani. The non-English-speaking among them[T7] in South Africa do speak Hindi or Hindustani, however indifferently. It is only the English-speaking ones who will not learn it, as though a knowledge of English were an

obstacle to learning our own languages.

But I have digressed. Let me finish the narrative of my voyage. I have to introduce to my readers the Captain of the s.s. *Pongola*. We had become friends. The good Captain was a Plymouth Brother. Our talks were more about spiritual subjects than nautical. He drew a line between morality and faith. The teaching of the Bible was to him child's play. Its beauty lay in its simplicity. Let all, men, women and children, he would say, have faith in Jesus and his sacrifice, and their sins were sure to be redeemed. This friend revived my memory of the Plymouth Brother of Pretoria. The religion that imposed any moral restrictions was to him no good. My vegetarian food had been the occasion of the whole of this discussion.[T8] Why should I not eat meat, or for that matter beef ? Had not God created all the lower animals for the enjoyment of mankind as, for instance, he had created the vegetable kingdom ? These questions inevitably drew us into religious discussion.

We could not convince each other. I was confirmed in my opinion that religion and morality were synonymous. The Captain had no doubt about the correctness of his opposite conviction.

At the end of twenty-four days the pleasant voyage came to a close, and admiring the beauty of the Hooghly, I landed at Calcutta. The same day I took the train for Bombay.

CHAPTER XXV : IN INDIA

On my way to Bombay the train stopped at Allahabad for forty-five minutes. I decided to utilize the interval for a drive[T1] through the town. I also had to purchase some medicine at a chemist's shop. The chemist was half asleep, and took an unconscionable time in dispensing the medicine, with the result that when I reached the station, the train had just started. The Station Master had kindly detained the train one minute for my sake, but not seeing me coming, and carefully ordered my luggage to be taken out of the train.

I took a room at Kellner's, and decided to start work there and then. I had heard a good deal about *The Pioneer* published from Allahabad, and I had understood it to be an opponent of Indian aspirations. I have an impression that Mr. Chesney Jr. was the editor at that time. I wanted to secure the help of every party, so I wrote a note to Mr. Chesney, telling him how I had missed the train, and asking for an appointment so as to enable me to leave the next day. He immediately gave me one, at which I was very happy especially when I found that he gave me a patient hearing. He promised to notice in his paper anything that I might write, but added that he could not promise to endorse all the Indian demands, inasmuch as he was bound to

understand and give due weight to the viewpoint of the Colonials as well.

'It is enough', I said, 'that you should study the question and discuss it in your paper. I ask and desire nothing but the barest justice that is due to us.'

The rest of the day was spent in having a look round admiring the magnificent confluence of the three rivers[1], the *Triveni*, and planning the work before me.

This unexpected interview with the editor of *The Pioneer* laid the foundation of the series of incidents which ultimately led to my being lynched in Natal.

I went straight to Rajkot without halting at Bombay and began to make preparations for writing a pamphlet on the situation in South Africa[T2]. The writing and publication of the pamphlet took about a month[2]. It had a green cover and came to be known afterwards as the Green Pamphlet. In it I drew a purposely subdued picuture of the condition of Indians in South Africa. The language I used was more moderate than that of the two pamphlets[T3] which I have referred to before, as I knew that things heard of from a distance appear bigger than they are.

Ten thousand copies were printed and sent to all the papers and leaders of every party in India. *The Pioneer* was the first to notice it editorially. A summary of the article was cabled by Reuter to England, and a summary of that summary was cabled to Natal by Reuter's London office. This cable was not longer than three lines in print. It was a miniature, but exaggerated,[T4] edition of the picture I had drawn of the treatment accorded to the Indians in Natal, and it was not in my words. We shall see later on the effect this had in Natal. In the meanwhile every paper of note commented at length on the question.

To get these pamphlets ready for posting was no small matter. It would have been expensive too, if I had employed paid help for preparing wrappers, etc. But I hit upon a much simpler plan. I gathered together all the children in my locality and asked them to volunteer two or three hours' labour of a morning, when they had no school.[T5] This they willingly agreed to do. I promised to bless them and give them, as a reward, used postage stamps which I had collected.

[1] Ganga, Yamuna and the invisible Saraswati

[2] The drafting of the pamphlet was completed at Rajkot on August 14, 1896; *vide* "The Credentials", 26-5-1896, "The Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa : An Appeal to the Indian Public", 14-8-1896 and "Notes on the Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa", 22-9-1896.

They got through the work in no time. That was my first experiment of having little children as volunteers. Two of those little friends are my co-workers today.

Plague broke out [T6] in Bombay about this time, and there was panic all around. There was fear of an outbreak in Rajkot. As I felt that I could be of some help in the sanitation department, I offered my services to the State. They were accepted, and I was put on the committee which was appointed to look into the question. I laid especial emphasis on the cleanliness of latrines, and the committee decided to inspect these in every street. The poor people had no objection to their latrines being inspected, and what is more, they carried out the improvements suggested to them. But when we went to inspect the houses of the upper ten,[T7] some of them even refused us admission,[T8] not to talk of listening to our suggestions. It was our visit in my life to such a locality. The men and women there were surprised to see common experience that the latrines of the rich were more unclean. They were dark and stinking and reeking with filth and worms.[T9] The improvements we suggested were quite simple, e.g., to have buckets for excrement instead of allowing it to drop on the ground; to see that urine also was collected in buckets, instead of allowing it to soak into the ground, and to demolish the partitions between the outer walls and the latrines, so as to give the latrines more light and air and enable the scavenger to clean them properly. The upper classes raised numerous objections to this last improvement, and in most cases it was not carried out.

The committee had to inspect the untouchables' quarters also. Only one member of the committee was ready to accompany me there. To the rest it was something preposterous to visit those quarters, still more so to inspect their latrines. But for me those quarters were an agreeable surprise. That was the first us. I asked them to let us inspect their latrines.

'Latrines for us !' they exclaimed in astonishment. 'We go and perform our functions out in the open. Latrines are for you big people.'

'Well, then, you won't mind if we inspect your houses ?' I asked.

'You are perfectly welcome, sir. You may see every nook and corner of our houses. Ours are no houses, they are holes.'

I went in and was delighted to see that the insides were as clean as the outsides. The entrances were well swept, the floors were beautifully smeared with cow-dung, and the few pots and pans were clean and shining. There was no fear of an outbreak in those

quarters.[T10]

In the upper class quarters[T11] we came across a latrine which I cannot help describing in some detail. Every room had its gutter, which was used both for water and urine, which meant that the whole house would stink. But one of the houses had a storeyed bed-room with a gutter which was being used both as a urinal and a latrine. The gutter had a pipe descending to the ground floor. It was not possible to stand the foul smell in this room. How the occupants could sleep there I leave the readers to imagine.

The committee also visited the Vaishnava *Haveli*. The priest in charge of the *Haveli* was very friendly with my family. So he agreed to let us inspect everything and suggest whatever improvements we liked.[T12] There was a part of the *Haveli* premises that he himself had never seen. It was the place where refuse and leaves used as dinner-plates used to be thrown over the wall. It was the haunt of crows and kites. The latrines were of course dirty. I was not long enough in Rajkot to see how many of our suggestions the priest carried out.

It pained me to see so much uncleanliness about a place of worship. One would expect a careful observance of the rules of sanitation and hygiene in a place which is regarded as holy. The authors of the *smritis*, as I knew even then, have laid the greatest emphasis on cleanliness both inward and outward.

CHAPTER XXVI : TWO PASSIONS[T1]

Hardly ever have I known anybody to cherish such loyalty as I did to the British Constitution[T2]. I can see now that my love of truth was at the root of this loyalty. It has never been possible for me to simulate loyalty or, for that matter, any other virtue. The National Anthem[T3] used to be sung at every meeting that I attended in Natal. I then felt that I must also join in the singing. Not that I was unaware of the defects in British rule, but I thought that it was on the whole acceptable. In those days I believed that British rule[T4] was on the whole beneficial to the ruled.

The colour prejudice that I saw in South Africa was, I thought, quite contrary to British traditions, and I believed that it was only temporary and local. I therefore vied with Englishmen in loyalty to the throne. With careful perseverance I learnt the tune of the National Anthem[T5] and joined in the singing whenever it was sung.[T6] Whenever there was an occasion for the expression of loyalty without fuss or ostentation, I readily took part in it.

Never in my life did I exploit this loyalty, never did I seek to gain a selfish end by its means. It was for me more in the nature of an

obligation, and I rendered it without expecting a reward.

Preparations were going on for the celebration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee when I reached India. I was invited to join the committee appointed for the purpose in Rajkot. I accepted the offer, but had a suspicion that the celebrations would be largely a matter of show. I discovered much humbug about them and was considerably pained. I began to ask myself whether I should remain on the committee or not, but ultimately decided to rest content with doing my part of the business.

One of the proposals was to plant trees. I saw that many did it merely for show and for pleasing the officials. I tried to plead with them that tree-planting was not compulsory, but merely a suggestion. It should be done seriously or not at all. I have an impression that they laughed at my ideas. I remember that I was in earnest when I planted the tree allotted to me and that I carefully watered and tended it.[T7]

I likewise taught the National Anthem[T8] to the children of my family. I recollect having taught it to students of the local Training College, but I forget whether it was on the occasion of the Jubilee or of King Edward VII's coronation as Emperor of India.[T9] Later on the text[T10] began to jar on me. As my conception of ahimsa went on maturing, I became more vigilant about my thought and speech. The lines in the Anthem :

> Scatter her enemies,
> And make them fall;
> Confound their politics,
> Frustrate their knavish tricks.

particularly jarred upon my sentiment of ahimsa.[T11] I shared my feelings with Dr. Booth[1] who agreed that he will become a believer in ahimsa to sing those lines. How could we assume that the so-called 'enemies' were 'knavish'? And because they were enemies, were they bound to be in the wrong? From God we could only ask for justice. Dr. Booth entirely endorsed my sentiments, and composed a new anthem for his congregation. But of Dr. Booth more later.

Like loyalty an aptitude for nursing was also deeply rooted in my nature. I was fond of nursing people, whether friends[T12] or strangers.

Whilst busy in Rajkot with the pamphlet on South Africa, I had an occasion to pay a flying visit to Bombay. It was my intention to educate public opinion[T13] in cities on this question by organizing

[1] Minister of St. Aidan's Church, Durban

meetings, and Bombay was the first city I chose. First of all I met Justice Ranade[1] , who listened to me with attention, and advised me to meet Sir Pherozeshah Mehta. Justice Badruddin Tyabji, who I met next, also gave the same advice. 'Justice Ranade and I can guide you but little,' he said. 'You know our position. We cannot take an active part in public affairs, but our sympathies are with you. The man who can effectively guide you is Sir Pherozeshah Mehta.'

I certainly wanted to see Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, but the fact that these senior men advised me to act according to his advice gave me a better idea of the immense influence that Sir Phirozeshah had on the public. In due course I met him. I was prepared to be awed by his presence. I had heard of the popular titles that he had earned, and knew that I was to see the 'Lion of Bombay', the 'Uncrowned King of the Presidency'. But the king did not overpower me. He met me, as a loving father would meet his grown-up son. Our meeting took place at his chamber. He was surrounded by a circle of friends and followers. Amongst them were Mr. D. E. Wacha and Mr. Cama, to whom I was introduced. I had already heard of Mr. Wacha. He was regarded as the right-hand man of Sir Pherozeshah, and Sjt. Virchand Gandhi had described him to me as a great statistician. Mr. Wacha said, 'Gandhi, we must meet again.'

These introductions could scarcely have taken two minutes. Sir Pherozeshah carefully listened to me. I told him that I had seen Justices Ranade and Tyabji. 'Gandhi,' said he, 'I see that I must help you. I must call a public meeting here.' With this he truned to Mr. Munshi, the secretary, and told him to fix up the date of the meeting. The date was settled, and he bade me good-bye, asking me to see him again on the day previous to the meeting. The interview removed my fears, and I went home delighted.

During this stay in Bombay I called on my brother-in-law, who was staying there and lying ill. He was not a man of means, and my sister (his wife) was not equal to nursing him. The illness was serious, and I offered to take him to Rajkot. He agreed[T14], and so I returned home with my sister and her husband. The illness was much more prolonged than I had expected. I put my brother-in-law in my room and remained with him night and day. I was obliged to keep awake part of the night and had to get through some of my South African work whilst I was nursing him. Ultimately, however, the patient died, but it was a great consolation to me that I had had an opportunity to nurse him during his last days.

[1] Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842-1901); social reformer and author; Judge of the Bombay High Court; one of the founders of the Indian National Congress

My aptitude[T15] for nursing gradually developed into a passion, so much so that it often led me to neglect my work, and on occasions I engaged not only my wife but the whole household in such service.

Such service can have no meaning unless one takes pleasure in it.[T16] When it is done for show or for fear of public opinion, it stunts the man and crushes his spirit. Service which is rendered without joy helps neither the servant nor the served. But all other pleasures and possessions pale into nothingness before service which is rendered in a spirit of joy.

CHAPTER XXVII : THE BOMBAY MEETING

On the very day after my brother-in-law's death I had to go to Bombay for the public meeting. There had hardly been time for me to think out my speech. I was feeling exhausted after days and nights of anxious vigil, and my voice had become husky. However, I went to Bombay trusting entirely to God. I had never dreamt of writing out my speech.

In accordance with Sir Pherozeshah's instructions I reported myself at his office at 5 p.m. on the eve of the meeting.

'Is your speech ready, Gandhi ?' he asked.

'No sir,' said I, trembling with fear, 'I think of speaking extempore.'

'That will not do in Bombay. Reporting here is bad, and if we would benefit by this meeting, you should write out your speech, and it should be printed before daybreak tomorrow. I hope you can manage this ?'

I felt rather nervous, but I said I would try.

'Then, tell me, what time Mr. Munshi should come to you for the manuscript ?'

'Eleven o'clock tonight,' said I.[T1]

On going to the meeting the next day, I saw that wisdom of Sir Pherozeshah's advice. The meeting was held in the hall of Sir Cowasji Jehangir Institute. I had heard that when Sir Pherozeshah Mehta addressed meetings the hall was always packed, chiefly by the students intent on hearing him, leaving not an inch of room. This was the first meeting of the kind in my experience. I saw that my voice could reach only a few. I was trembling as I began to read my speech.[1] Sir Pherozeshah cheered me up continually by asking me to speak louder and still louder. I have a feeling that, far from encouraging me, it

[1] The written address is not available; for newspaper reports, *vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Bombay", September 26, 1896.

made my voice sink lower and lower.

My old friend Sjt. Keshavrao Deshpande came to my rescue. I handed my speech to him. His was just the proper voice. But the audience refused to listen. The hall rang with the cries of 'Wacha', 'Wacha'. So Mr. Wacha stood up and read the speech, with wonderful results. The audience became perfectly quiet, and listened to the speech to the end, punctuating it with applause and cries of 'shame' where necessary. This gladdened my heart.

Sir Pherozeshah liked the speech. I was supremely happy.

The meeting won me the active sympathy of Sjt. Deshpande and a Parsi friend, whose name I hesitate to mention, as he is a high-placed Government official today. Both expressed their resolve to accompany me to South Africa.[T2] Mr. C. M. Cursetji, who was then Small Causes Court Judge, however, moved the Parsi friend from his resolve as he had plotted his marriage[T3]. He had to choose between marriage and going to South Africa, and he chose the former. But Parsi Rustomji made amends for the broken resolve, and a number of Parsi sisters are now making amends for the lady who helped in the breach by dedicating themselves to khadi work. I have therefore gladly forgiven that couple. Sjt. Deshpande had no temptations of marriage, but he too could not come. Today he is himself doing enough reparation for the broken pledge. On my way back to Sourth Africa I met one of the Tyabjis at Zanzibar. He also promised to come and help me, but never came. Mr. Abbas Tyabji is atoning for that offence. Thus none of my three attempts to induce barristers to go to South Africa bore any fruit.

In this connection I remember Mr. Pestonji Padshah. I had been on friendly terms with him ever since my stay in England. I first met him in a vegetarian restaurant in London. I knew of his brother Mr. Barjorji Padshah by his reputation as a 'crank'. I had never met him, but friends said that he was eccentric. Out of pity for the horses, he would not ride in tram-cars, he refused to take degrees in spite of a prodigious memory, he had develo -ped an independent spirit[T4], and he was a vegetarian, thougha Parsi. Pestonji had not quite this reputation, but he was famous for his erudition even in London. The common factor between us, however, was vegetarianism, and not scholarship in which it was beyond my power to approach him.

I found him out again in Bombay. He was Prothonotary in the High Court. When I met him he was engaged on his contribution to a Higher Gujarati Dictionary. There was not a friend I had not approached for help in my Sourth African work. Pestonji Padshah, however, not only refused to aid me, but even advised me not to return

to South Africa.

'It is impossible to help you,' he said. 'But I tell you I do not like even *your* going to South Africa. Is there lack of work in our own country ? Look, now, there is not a little to do for our language. I have to find out scientific words. But this is only one branch of the work. Think of the poverty of the land. Our people in Sourth Africa are no doubt in difficulty, but I do not want a man like you to be sacrificed for that work. Let us win self-government here, and we shall automatically help our countrymen there. I know I cannot prevail upon you, but I will not encourage anyone of your type to throw in his lot with you.'

I did not like this advice, but it increased my regard for Mr. Pestonji Padshah. I was struck with his love for the country and for the mother tongue. The incident brought us closer to each other. I could understand his point of view. But far from giving up my work in South Africa, I became firmer in my resolve.[T5] A patriot cannot afford to ignore any branch of service to the motherland. And for me the text of the *Gita* was clear and emphatic :

> Finally, this is better, that one do
>
> His own task as he may, even though he fail,
>
> Than take tasks not his own, though they seem good.
>
> To die performing duty is no ill;
>
> But who seeks other roads shall wander still.[1]

CHAPTER XXVIII : POONA AND MADRAS[T1]

Sir Pherozeshah had made my way easy. So from Bombay I went to Poona.[2] Here there were two parties. I wanted the help of people of every shade of opinion. First I met Lokamanya Tilak. He said :

'You are quite right in seeking the help of all parties. There can be no difference of opinion on the South African question. But you must have a non-party man for your President. Meet Professor Bhandarkar. He has been taking no part of late in any public movement. But this question might possibly draw him out. See him and let me know what he says. I want to help you to the fullest extent.[T2] Of course you will meet me whenever you like. I am at your disposal.'

[1] III. 35

[2] For other versions of this visit to Poona, *vide* "A Confession of Faith", July 13, 1921 and "Satyagraha in South Africa — Chapter VII : A Review of the Early Struggle (continued)".

This was my first meeting with the Lokamanya. It revealed to me the secret of his unique popularity.

Next I met Gokhale. I found him on the Fergusson College grounds. He gave me an affectionate welcome, and his manner immediately won my heart. With him too this was my first meeting, and yet it seemed as though we were renewing an old friendship. Sir Pherozeshah had seemed to me like the Himalaya, the Lokamanya like the ocean. But Gokhale was the Ganges. One could have a refreshing bath in the holy river. The Himalaya was unscalable, and one could not easily launch forth on the sea,[T3] but the Ganges invited one to its bosom. It was a joy to be on it with a boat and an oar. Gokhale closely examined me, as a schoolmaster would examine a candidate seeking admission to a school. He told me whom to approach and how to approach them. He asked to have a look at my speech. He showed me over the college, assured me that he was always at my disposal, asked me to let him know the result of the interview with Dr. Bhandarkar, and sent me away exultantly happy[T4]. In the sphere of politics the place that Gokhale occupied in my heart during his lifetime and occupies even now was and is absolutely unique.

Dr. Bhandarkar received me with the warmth of a father. It was noon when I called on him. The very fact that I was busy seeing people at that hour appealed greatly to this indefatigable savant, and my insistence of a non-party man for the president of the meeting had his ready approval, which was expressed in the spontaneous exclamation, 'That's it', 'That's it.'

After he had heard me out he said : 'Anyone will tell you that I do not take part in politics. But I cannot refuse you. Your case is so strong and your industry is so admirable that I cannot decline to take part in your meeting. You did well in consulting Tilak and Gokhale. Please tell them that[T5] I shall be glad to preside over the meeting to be held under the joint auspices of the two Sabhas. You need not have the time of the meeting from me. Any time that suits them will suit me.' With this he bade me good-bye with congratulations and blessings.

Without any ado this erudite and selfless band of workers in Poona held a meeting in an unostentatious little place, and sent me away rejoicing and more confident of my mission.

I next proceeded to Madras. It was wild with enthusiasm. The Balasundaram incident made a profound impression on the meeting. My speech[1] was printed and was, for me, fairly long. But the audience

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Meeting, Madras", October 26, 1896.

listened to every word with attention. At the close of the meeting there was a regular run on the 'Green Pamphlet'. I brought out a second and revised edition of 10,000 copies[T6]. They sold like hot cakes, but I saw that it was not necessary to print such a larger number. In my enthusiasm I had overcalculated the demand. It was the Englis speaking public to which my speech had been addressed, and in Madras that class alone could not take the whole ten thousand.

The greatest help here came to me from the late Sjt. G. Parameshvaran Pillay, the editor of *The Madras Standard*. He had made a careful study of the question, and he often invited me to his office and gave me guidance. Sjt. G. Subramaniam of *The Hindu*[T7] and Dr. Subramaniam also were very sympathetic. But Sjt. G. Parameshvaran Pillay placed the columns of *The Madras Standard* entirely at my disposal, and I freely availed myself of the offer. The meeting in Pachaiappa Hall, so far as I can recollect, was with Dr. Subramaniam in the chair.

The affection showered on me by most of the friends I met and their enthusiasm for the cause were so great that, in spite of my having to communicate with them in English, I felt myself entirely at home. What barrier is there that love cannot break ?

CHAPTER XXIX : 'RETURN SOON'

From Madras I proceeded to Calcutta where I found myself hemmed in by difficulties. I knew no one there. So I took a room in the Great Eastern Hotel. Here I became acquainted with Mr. Ellerthorpe, a representative of *The Daily Telegraph*. He invited me to the Bengal Club, where he was staying. He did not then realize that an Indian could not be taken to the drawing-room of the club. Having discovered the restriction, he took me to his room. He expressed his sorrow regarding this prejudice of the local Englishmen and apologized to me for not having been able to take me to the drawing-room.

I had of course to see Surendranath Banerji, the 'Idol of Bengal'. When I met him, he was surrounded by a number of friends. He said :

'I am afraid people will not take interest in your work. As you know, our difficulties here are by no means few. But you must try as best you can. You will have to enlist the sympathy of Maharajas. Mind, you meet the representatives of the British Indian Association. You should meet Raja Sir Pyarimohan Mukarji and Maharaja Tagore. Both are liberal-minded and take a fair share in public work.'

I met these gentlemen, but without success. Both gave me a cold reception and[T1] said it was no easy thing to call a public meeting in

Calcutta, and if anything could be done, it would practically all depend on Surendranath Banerji.

I saw that my task was becoming more and more difficult. I called at the office of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. The gentleman whom I met there took me to be a wandering Jew. *The Bangabasi* went even one better. The editor kept me waiting for an hour. He had evidently many interviewers, but he would not so much as look at me, even when he had disposed of the rest.[T2] On my venturing to broach my subject after the long wait, he said : 'Don't you see our hands are full ? There is no end to the number of visitors like you. You had better go. I am not disposed to listen to you.' For a moment I felt offended, but I quickly understood the editor's position. I had heard of the fame of *The Bangabasi*. I could see that there was a regular stream of visitors there. And they were all people acquainted with him. His paper had no lack of topics to discuss, and South Africa was hardly known at that time.

However serious a grievance may be in the eyes of the man who suffers from it, he will be but one of the numerous people invading the editor's office, each with a grievance of his own. How is the editor to meet them all ? Moreover, the aggrieved party imagines that the editor is a power in the land. Only he knows that his power can hardly travel beyond the threshold of his office. But I was not discouraged. I kept on seeing editors of other papers. As usual I met the Anglo-Indian editors also. *The Statesman* and *The Englishman* realized[T3] the importance of the question. I gave them long interviews, and they published them in full.[1]

Mr. Saunders, editor of *The Englishan,* claimed me as his own. He placed his office and paper at my disposal. He even allowed me the liberty of making whatever changes I liked in the leading article he had written on the situation, the proof of which he sent me in advance.[T4] It is no exaggeration to say that a friendship grew up between us. He promised to render me all the help he could,[T5] carried out the promise to the letter, and kept on his correspondence with me until the time when he was seriously ill.

Throughout my life I have had the privilege of many such friendships, which have sprung up quite unexpectedly. What Mr. Saunders liked in me was my freedom from exaggeration and my devotion to truth. He subjected me to a searching cross-examination before he began to sympathize with my cause,[T6] and he saw that I had spared neither will nor pains to place before him an impartial

[1] *Vide* "Interview to *The Statesman*", November 10, 1896 & "Interview to *The Englishman*", on or before November 13, 1896.

statement of the case even of the white man in Sourth Africa and also to appreciate it.

My experience has shown me that we win justice quickest by rendering justice to the other party.

The unexpected help of Mr. Saunders had begun to encourage me to think that I might succeed after all in holding a public meeting in Calcutta, when I received the following cable from Durban : 'Parliament opens January. Return soon.'

So I addressed a letter to the Press, in which I explained why I had to leave Calcutta so abruptly, and set off for Bombay. Before starting I wired to the Bombay agent of Dada Abdulla & Co. to arrange for my passage by the first possible boat to South Africa. Dada Abdulla had just then purchased the steamship *Courland* and insisted on my travelling on that boat, offering to take me and my family free of charge. I gratefully accepted the offer, and in the beginning of December[1] set sail a second time for South Africa, now with my wife and two sons[2] and the only son[3] of my widowed sister[4].

Another steamship *Naderi* also sailed for Durban at the same time. The agents of the Company were Dada Abdulla & Co. The total number of passengers these boats carried must have been about eight hundred,[T7] half of whom were bound for the Transvaal.

PART III

CHAPTER I : RUMBLINGS OF THE STORM

This was my first voyage with my wife and children. I have often observed in the course of this narrative[T1] that, on account of child marriages amongst middle-class Hindus, the husband will be literate whilst the wife remains practically unlettered. A wide gulf thus separates them, and the husband has to become his wife's teacher. So I had to think out the details of the dress to be adopted by my wife and children, the food they were to eat, and the manners which would be suited to their new surroundings. Some of the recollections of those days are amusing to look back upon.

A Hindu wife regards implicit obedience to her husband as the highest religion. A Hindu husband regards himself as lord and master of his wife who must ever dance attendance upon him.[T2]

[1] The s.s. *Naderi* left Bombay on November 28, 1896 and the s.s. *Courland* on November 30, 1896.

[2] Harilal and Manilal

[3] Gokuldas

[4] Raliathehn

I believed, at the time of which I am writing, that in order to look civilized, our dress and manners had as far as possible to approximate to the European standard. Becuase, I thought, only thus could we have some influence, and without influence it would not be possible to serve the community.

I therefore determined the style of dress for my wife and children. How could I like them to be known as Kathiawad Banias ? The Parsis used then to be regarded as the most civilized people amongst Indians, and so, when the complete European style seemed to be unsuited, we adopted the Parsi style. Accordingly my wife wore the Parsi sari, and the boys the Parsi coat and trousers. Of course no one could be without shoes and stockings. It was long before my wife and children could get used to them. The shoes cramped their feet and the stockings stank with perspiration. The toes often got sore. I always had my answers ready to all these objections. But I have an impression that[T3] it was not so much the answers as the force of authority that carried conviction. They agreed to the changes in dress as there was no alternative. In the same spirit and with even more reluctance they adopted the use of knives and forks. When my infatuation for these signs of civilization[T4] wore away, they gave up[T5] the knives and forks. After having become long accustomed to the new style, it was perhaps no less irksome for them to return to the original mode. But I can see today that we feel all the freer and lighter for having cast off the tinsel of 'civilization'.

On board the same steamer with us were some relatives and acquaintances. These and other deck passengers I frequently met, because, the boat belonging to my client friends, I was free to move about anywhere and everywhere I liked.

Since the steamer was making straight for Natal, without calling at intermediate ports, our voyage was of only eighteen days. But as though to warn us of the coming real storm on land, a terrible gale overtook us, whilst we were only four days from Natal. December is a summer month of monsoon in the Southern hemisphere, and gales, great and small, are therefore quite common in the Southern sea at that season. The gale in which we were caught was so violent and prolonged that the passengers became alarmed. It was a solemn scene. All became one in face of the common danger. They forgot their differences and began to think of the one and only God[T6]— Mussalmans, Hindus, Christians and all. Some took various vows. The captain also joined the passengers in their prayers. He assured them that, though the storm was not without danger, he had had experience of many worse ones, and explained to them that a well-built ship could stand almost any weather. But they were inconsolable. Every

minute were heard sounds and crashes which foreboded breaches and leaks. The ship rocked and rolled to such an extent that it seemed as though she would capsize at any moment. It was out of the question for anyone to remain on deck. 'His will be done' was the only cry on every lip. So far as I can recollect, we must have been in this plight for about twenty-four hours. At last the sky cleared, the sun made his appearance, and the captain said that the storm had blown over. People's faces beamed with gladness, and with the disappearance of danger disappeared also the name of God from their lips. Eating and drinking, singing and merry-making again became the order of the day. The fear of death was gone, and the momentary mood of earnest prayer gave place to *maya*.[1] There were of course the usual *namaz*[2] and the prayers[T7], yet they had none of the solemnity of that dread hour.

But the storm had made me one with the passengers. I had little fear of the storm,[T8] for I had had experience of similar ones. I am a good sailor and do not get sea-sick. So I could fearlessly move amongst the passengers, bringing them comfort and good cheer, and conveying to them hourly reports of the captain. The friendship I thus formed stood me, as we shall see, in very good stead.

The ship cast anchor in the port of Durban on the 18th or 19th of December. The *Naderi* also reached the same day.

But the real storm was still to come.

CHAPTER II : THE STORM

We have seen that the two ships cast anchor in the port of Durban on or about the 18th of December. No passengers are allowed to land at any of the South African ports before being subjected to a thorough medical examination. If the ship has any passenger suffering from a contagious disease, she has to undergo a period of quarantine. As there had been plague in Bombay when we set sail, we feared that we might have to go through a brief quarantine. Before the examination every ship has to fly a yellow flag, which is lowered only when the doctor has certified her to be healthy. Relatives and friends of passengers are allowed to come on board only after the yellow flag has been lowered.

Accordingly our ship was flying the yellow flag, when the doctor came and examined us. He ordered a five days' quarantine because, in his opinion, plague germs took twenty-three days at the most to develop. Our ship was therefore ordered to be put in quarantine until the twenty-third day of our sailing from Bombay. But

[1] Illusion; ignorance of one's real self

this quarantine order had more than health reasons behind it.

The white residents of Durban had been agitating for our repatriation, and the agitation was one of the reasons for the order. Dada Abdulla and Co.[T1] kept us regularly informed about the daily happenings in the town. The whites were holding monster meetings every day. They were addressing all kinds of threats and at times offering even inducements to Dada Abdulla and Co. They were ready to indemnify the Company if both the ships should be sent back. But Dada Abdulla and Co. were not the people to be afraid of threats. Sheth Abdul Karim Haji Adam was then the managing partner of the firm. He was determined to moor the ships at the wharf and disembark the passengers at any cost. He was daily sending me detailed letters. Fortunately the late Sjt. Mansukhlal Naazar was then in Durban having gone there to meet me. He was capable and fearless and guided the Indian community. Their advocate Mr. Laughton was an equally fearless man. He condemned the conduct of the white residents and advised the community, not merely as their paid advocate, but also as their true friend.

Thus Durban had become the scene of an unequal duel.[T2] On one side there was a handful of poor Indians and a few of their English friends, and on the other were ranged the white men, strong in arms, in numbers, in education and in wealth. They had also the backing of the State, for the Natal Government openly helped them. Mr. Harry Escombe, who was the most influential of the members of the Cabinet, openly took part in their meetings.

The real object of the quarantine was thus to coerce the passengers into returning to India by somehow intimidating them or the Agent Company.[T3] For now threats began to be addressed to us also : 'If you do not go back, you will surely be pushed into the sea. But if you consent to return, you may even get your passage money back.' I constantly moved amongst my fellow-passengers cheering them up. I also sent messages of comfort to the passengers of the s.s. *Naderi*. All of them kept calm and courageous.

We arranged all sorts of games on the ship for the entertainment of the passengers. On Christmas Day the captain invited the saloon passengers to dinner. The principal among these were my family and I. In the speeches after dinner[T4] I spoke on Western civilization. I knew that this was not an occasion for a serious speech. But mine could not be otherwise. I took part in the merriment, but my heart was in the combat that was going on in Durban. For I was the real target. There were two charges against me :

1. that whilst in India I had indulged in unmerited

condemnation of the Natal whites;

2. that with a view to swamping Natal with Indians I had specially brought the two shiploads of passengers to settle there.

I was conscious of my responsibility. I knew that Dada Abdulla and Co. had incurred grave risks on my account, the lives of the passengers were in danger, and by bringing my family with me I had put them likewise in jeopardy.

But I was absolutely innocent. I had induced no one to go to Natal. I did not[T5] know the passengers when they embarked. And with the exception of a couple of relatives, I did not know the name and address of even one of the hundreds of passengers on board. Neither had I said, whilst in India, a word about the whites in Natal that I had not already said in Natal itself. And I had ample evidence in support of all that I had said.

I therefore deplored the civilization of which the Natal whites were the fruit, and which they represented and championed. This civilization had all along been on my mind, and I tharefore offered my views concerning it in my speech before that little meeting. The captain and other friends gave me a patient hearing, and received my speech in the spirit in which it was made. I do not know that it in any way affected the course of their lives, but afterwards I had long talks with the captain and other officers regarding the civilization of the West. I had in my speech described Western civilzation as being, unlike the Eastern, predominantly based on force. The questioners pinned me to my faith, and one of them—the captain so far as I recollect—said to me :

'Supposing the whites carry out their threats, how will you stand by your principle of non-violence ?' To which I replied : 'I hope God will give me the courage and the sense to forgive them and to refrain from bringing them to law. I have no anger against them. I am only sorry for their ignorance and their narrowness. I know that they sincerely believe that what they are[T6] doing today is right and proper. I have no reason therefore to be angry with them.'

The questioner smiled, possibly distrustfully.

Thus the days dragged on their weary length. When the quarantine would terminate was still uncertain. The Quarantine Officer said that the matter had passed out of his hands and that, as soon as he had orders from the Government, he would permit us to land.

At last ultimatums were served on the passengers and me. We were asked to submit, if we would escape with our lives. In our reply the passengers and I both maintained our right to land at Port Natal, and intimated our determination to enter Natal[T7] at any risk.

At the end of twenty three days[T8] the ships were permitted to enter the harbour, and orders permitting the passengers to land were passed.

CHAPTER III : THE TEST[1]

So the ships were brought into the dock and the passengers began to go ashore. But Mr. Escombe had sent word to the captain that, as the whites were highly enraged against me and my life was in danger, my family and I should be advised to land at dusk, when the Port Superintendent Mr. Tatum would escort us home. The captain communicated the message to me, and I agreed to act accordingly. But scarcely half an hour after this, Mr. Laughton came to the captain. He said : 'I would like to take Mr. Gandhi with me[T1], should he have no objection. As the legal adviser of the Agent Company I tell you that you are not bound to carry out the message you have received from Mr. Escombe.' After this he came to me and said somewhat to this effect : 'If you are not afraid[T2], I suggest that Mrs. Gandhi and the children should drive to Mr. Rustomji's house, whilst you and I follow them on foot.[T3] I do not at all like the idea of your entering the city like a thief in the night.[2] I do not think there is any fear of anyone hurting you. Everything is quiet now. The whites have all dispersed. But in any case I am convinced that you ought not to enter the city stealthily.' I readily agreed. My wife and children drove safely to Mr. Rustomji's place. With the captain's permission I went ashore with Mr. Laughton. Mr. Rustomji's house was about two miles from the dock.

As soon as we landed, some youngsters recognized me and shouted 'Gandhi, Gandhi'. About half a dozen men rushed to the spot and joined in the shouting. Mr. Laughton feared that the crowd might swell and hailed a rickshaw. I had never liked the idea of being in a rickshaw. This was to be my first experience. But the youngsters would not let me get into it. They frightened the rickshaw boy out of his life, and he took to his heels. As we went ahead, the crowd continued to swell, until it became impossible to proceed further. They first caught hold of Mr. Laughton and separated us. Then they pelted me with stones, brickbats and rotten eggs. Someone snatched away my turban, whilst others began to batter and kick me. I fainted and caught hold of the front railings of a house and stood there to get

[1] *Vide* "Satyagraha in South Africa — Chapter VII : A Review of the Early Struggle (continued)" and "Letter to Attorney-Geberal", January 20, 1897.

[2] Gandhiji wrote to the Colonial Secretary denying the allegation that he had described this advice as 'bad'; *vide* "Letter to Natal Colonial Secretary", March 26, 1897.

my breath. But it was impossible. They came upon me boxing and battering. The wife of the Police Superintendent, who knew me, happened to be passing by. The brave lady came up, opened her parasol though there was no sun then, and stood between the crowd and me.[T4] This checked the fury of the mob, as it was difficult for them to deliver blows on me without harming Mrs. Alexander.

Meanwhile an Indian youth who witnessed the incident had run to the police station. The Police Superintendent Mr. Alexander[1] sent a posse of men to ring me round and escort me safely to my destination. They arrived in time. The police station lay on our way. As we reached there, the Superintendent asked me to take refuge in the station, but I gratefully[T5] declined the offer. 'They are sure to quiet down when they realize their mistake,' I said. 'I have trust in their sense of fairness.' Escorted by the police, I arrived without fur-ther harm at Mr. Rustomji's place. I had bruises all over, but no abrasions except in one place. Dr. Dadi Barjor, the ship's doctor, who was on the spot, rendered the best possible help.

There was quiet inside, but outside the whites surrounded the house. Night was coming on, and the yelling crowd was shouting, 'We must have Gandhi.' The quicksighted Police Superintendent was already there trying to keep the crowds under control, not by threats, but by humouring them. But he was not entirely free from anxiety. He sent me a message to this effect : 'If you would save your friend's house and property and also your family, you should escape from the house in disguise, as I suggest.'

Thus on one and the same day I was faced with two contradictory positions. When danger to life had been no more than imaginary, Mr. Laughton advised me to launch forth openly. I accepted the advice. When the danger was quite real, another friend gave me the contrary advice, and I accepted that too. Who can say whether I did so because I saw that my life was in jeopardy, or because I did not want to put my friend's life and property or the lives of my wife and children in danger[T6] ? Who can say for certain that I was right both when I faced the crowd in the first instance bravely, as it was said, and when I escaped from it in disguise ?[T7]

It is idle to adjudicate upon the right and wrong of incidents that have already happened. It is useful to understand them and, if

[1] He relinquished his post in 1907. For the Durban Indian community's letters of thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Alexander, *vide* Letter to R. C. Alexander" and "Letter to Mrs. Alexander", March 24, 1897; for the proposal to present Mr. Alexander with an address, *vide* "Superintendent Alexander", January 5, 1907 & "Ex-Superintendent Alexander", April 13, 1907.

possible, to learn a lesson from them for the future. It is difficult to say for certain how a particular man would act in a particular set of circumstances. We can also see that judging a man from his outward act is no more than a doubtful inference, inasmuch as it is not based on sufficient data.

Be that as it may, the preparations for escape made me forget my injuries. As suggested by the Superintendent,[T8] I put on an Indian constable's uniform and wore on my head a Madrasi scarf, wrapped round a plate to serve as a helmet. Two detectives accompanied me, one of them disguised as an Indian merchant and with his face painted to resemble that of an Indian. I forgot the disguise of the other. We reached a neighburing shop by a by-lane and, making our way through the gunny bags piled in the godown, escaped by the gate of the shop and threaded our way through the crowd to a carriage that had been kept for me at the end of the street. In this we drove off to the same police station where Mr. Alexander had offered me refuge a short time before, and I thanked him and the detective officers.

Whilst I had been thus effecting my escape, Mr. Alexander had kept the crowd amused by singing the tune :

> 'Hang old Gandhi
>
> On the sour apple tree.'

When he was informed of my safe arrival at the police station, he thus broke the news to the crowd. 'Well your victim has made good his escape through a neighbouring shop. You had better go home now.'[T9] Some of them were angry, others laughed, some refused to believe the story.

'Well then,' said the Superintendent, 'if you do not believe me, you may appoint one or two representatives, whom I am ready to take inside the house. If they succeed in finding out Gandhi, I will gladly deliver him to you. But if they fail, you must disperse. I am sure that you have no intention of destroying Mr. Rustomji's house or of harming Mr. Gandhi's wife and children.'

The crowd sent their representatives to search the house. They soon returned with disappointing news, and the crowd broke up at last, most of them admiring the Superintendent's tactful handling of the situation, and a few fretting and fuming.

The late Mr. Chamberlain, who was then Secretary of State for the Colonies,[T10] cabled asking the Natal Government to prosecute my assailants. Mr. Escombe sent for me, expressed his regret for the injuries I had sustained, and said : 'Believe me, I cannot feel happy over the least little injury done to your person. You had a right to accept Mr. Laughton's advice and to face the worst, but I am sure that,

if you had considered my suggestion favourably, these sad occurrences would not have happened. If you can identify the assailants, I am prepared to arrest and prosecute them. Mr. Chamberlain also desires me to do so.'

To which I gave the following reply :

'I do not want to prosecute anyone. It is possible that I may be able to identify one or two of them, but what is the use of [T11] getting them punished? Besides, I do not hold the assailants to blame. They were given to understand that I had made exaggerated statements in India about the whites in Natal and calumniated them. If they believed these reports, it is no wonder that they were enraged. The leaders, and, if you will permit me to say so, you are to blame. You could have guided the people properly, but you also believed Reuter and assumed that I must have indulged in exaggeration. I do not want to bring anyone to book. I am sure that, when the truth becomes known, they will be sorry for their conduct.'

'Would you mind giving me this in writing ?' said Mr. Escombe. 'Because I shall have to cable to Mr. Chamberlain to that effect. I do not want you to make any statement in haste. You may, if you like, consult Mr. Laughton and your other friends, before you come to a final decision. I may confess, however, that, if you waive the right of bringing your assailants to book, you will considerably help me in restoring quiet, besides enhancing your own reputation.'

'Thank you,' said I. 'I need not consult anyone. I had made my decision in the matter before I came to you. It is my conviction that I should not prosecute the assailants, and I am prepared this moment to reduce my decision to writing.'[T12]

With this I gave him the necessary statement.

CHAPTER IV : THE CALM AFTER THE STORM

I had not yet left the police station, when, after two days, I was taken to see Mr. Escombe. Two constables were sent to protect me, though no such precaution was then needed.

On the day of landing, as soon as the yellow flag was lowered, a representative of *The Natal Advertiser* had come to interview me.[1] He had asked me a number of questions, and in reply I had been able to refute every one of the charges that had been levelled against me. Thanks to Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, I had delivered only written speeches in India, and I had copies of them all, as well as of my other

[1] For a report of the interview, *vide* "Interview to *The Natal Advertiser*", january 13, 1897.

writings. I had given the interviewer all this literature and showed him that in India I had said nothing which I had not already said in South Africa in stronger language. I had also shown him that I had no hand in bringing the passengers of the *Courland* and *Naderi* to South Africa. Many of them were old residents, and most of them, far from wanting to stay in Natal, meant to go to the Transvaal. In those days the Transvaal offered better prospects than Natal to those coming in search of wealth, and most Indians, therefore, preferred to go there.

This interview and my refusal to prosecute the assailants produced such a profound impression that the Europeans of Durban were ashamed of their conduct. The Press declared me to be innocent and condemned the mob. Thus the lynching ultimately proved to be a blessing for me, that is, for the cause. It enhanced the prestige of the Indian community in South Africa and made my work easier.

In three or four days I went to my house,[1] and it was not long before I settled down again. The incident added also to my professional practice.

But if it enhanced the prestige of the community, it also fanned the flame of prejudice against it. As soon as it was proved that the Indian could put up a manly fight, he came to be regarded as a danger. Two bills were introduced in the Natal Legislative Assembly, one of them calculated to affect the Indian trader adversely, and the other to impose a stringent restriction on Indian immigration. Fortunately the fight for the franchise had resulted in a decision to the effect that no enactment might be passed against the Indians as such, that is to say, that the law should make no distinctions of colour or race. The language of the bills above mentioned made them applicable to all, but their object undoubtedly was to impose further restrictions on the Indian residents of Natal.

The bills considerably increased my public work and made the community more alive than ever to their sense of duty. They were translated into Indian languages and fully explained, so as to bring home to the community their subtle implications. We appealed to the Colonial Secretary, but he refused to interfere and the bills became law.

Public work now began to absorb most of my time. Sjt. Mansukhlal Naazar, who, as I have said, was already in Durban, came to stay with me, and as he gave his time to public work,[T1] he lightened my

[1] According to contemporary Press reports, however, Gandhiji had quietly been removed to his residence at 'Beach Grove' after a day's stay at the Central Police Station, where Mr. Alexander had provided him asylum in the officers' quarters upstairs.

burden to some extent.

Sheth Adamji Miyakhan had, in my absence, discharged his duty with great credit. He had increased the membership and added about £1,000 to the coffers of the Natal Indian Congress. The awakening caused by the bills and the demonstration against the passengers I turned to good account by making an appeal for membership and funds, which now amounted to £5,000. My desire was to secure for the Congress a permanent fund, so that it might procure property of its own and then carry on its work out of the rent of the property.[T2] This was my first experience of managing a public institution. I placed my proposal before my co-workers, and they welcomed it. The property that was purchased was leased out, and the rent was enough to meet the current expenses of the Congress. The property was vested in a strong body of trustees and is still there today, but it has become the source of much internecine quarrelling with the result that the rent of the property now accumulates in the court.

This sad situation developed after my departure from South Africa, but my idea of having permanent funds for public institutions underwent a change long before this difference arose.[T3] And now after considerable experience with the many public institutions which I have managed, it has become my firm conviction that it is not good to run public institutions on permanent funds.[T4] A permanent fund carries in itself the seed of the moral fall of the institution. A public institution means an institution conducted with the approval, and from the funds, of the public. When such an institution ceases to have public support, it forfeits its right to exist. Institutions maintained on permanent funds are often found to ignore public opinion, and are frequently responsible for acts contrary to it. In our country we experience this at every step. Some of the so-called religious trusts have ceased to render any accounts. The trustees have become the owners and are responsible to none. I have no doubt that the ideal is for public institutions to live, like nature, from day to day. The institution that fails to win public support has no right to exist as such. The subscriptions that an institution annually receives are a test of its popularity and the honesty of its management; and I am of opinion that every instit- ution should submit to that test. But let no one misunderstand me. My remarks do not apply to the bodies which cannot, by their very nature, be conducted without permanent buildings. What I mean to say is that the current expenditure shoud be found from subscriptions voluntarily received from year to year.

These views were confirmed during the days of the satyagraha in South Africa. That magnificent campaign extending over six years

was carried on without permanent funds, though lakhs of rupees were necessary for it. I can recollect times when I did not know what would happen the next day if no subscriptions came in. But I shall not anticipate future events. The reader will find the opinion expressed above amply borne out in the coming narrative.

CHAPTER V : EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

When I landed at Durban in January 1897, I had three children with me, my sister's son ten years old, and my own sons nine and five years of age. Where was I to educate them ?

I could have sent them to the schools for European children, but only as a matter of favour and exception. No other Indian children were allowed to attend them. For these there were schools established by Christian missions, but I was not prepared to send my children there, as I did not like the education imparted in those schools.[T1] For one thing, the medium of instruction would be only English, or perhaps incorrect Tamil or Hindi; this too could only have been arranged with difficulty. I could not possibly put up with this and other disadvantages. In the meantime I was making my own attempt to teach them. But that was at best irregular, and I could not get hold of a suitable Gujarati teacher.

I was at my wit's end. I advertised for an English teacher who should teach the children under my direction. Some regular instruction was to be given them by this teacher, and for the rest they[T2] should be satisfied with what little I could give them irregularly. So I engaged an English governess on £7 a month. This went on for some time, but not to my satisfaction. The boys acquired some knowledge of Gujarati through my conversation and intercourse with them, which was strictly in the mother-tongue. I was loath to send them back to India, for I believed even then that young children should not be separated from their parents. The education that children naturally imbibe in a well-ordered household is impossible to obtain in hostels. I therefore kept my children with me[T3]. I did send my nephew and elder son to be educated at residential schools in India for a few months, but I soon had to recall them. Later, the eldest son, long after he had come of age, broke away from me.[T4] and went to India to join a High School in Ahmedabad.[1] I have an impression that the nephew was satisfied with what I could give him. Unfortunately he died in the prime of youth after a brief illness. The other three of my sons have never been at a public school, though they did get some regular

[1] Harilal Gandhi left his father's home in the Transvaal and sailed for India in 1911; *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", May 18, 1911.

schooling in an improvised school which I started for the children of satyagrahi parents in South Africa.

These experiments were all inadequate. I could not devote to the children all the time I had wanted to give them. My inability to give them enough attention and other unavoidable causes prevented me from providing them with the literary education I had desired, and all my sons have had complaints to make against me in this matter. Whenever they come across an M.A. or a B.A., or even a matriculate, they seem to feel the handicap of a want of school education.

Nevertheless I am of opinion that, if I had insisted on their being educated somehow at public schools, they would have been deprived of the training that can be had only at the school of experience or from constant contact with the parents[T5]. I should never have been free, as I am today, from anxiety on their score, and the artificial education that they could have had in England or South Africa, torn from me, would never have taught them the simplicity and the spirit of service that they show in their lives today, while their artificial ways of living might have been a serious handicap in my public work. Therefore, though I have not been able to give them a literary education either to their or to my satisfaction, I am not quite sure, as I look back on my past years, that I have not done my duty to them to the best of my capacity. Nor do I regret not having sent them to public schools. I have always felt that the undesirable traits[T6] I see today in my eldest son are an echo of my own undisciplined and unformulated early life. I regard that time as a period of half-baked knowledge[T7] and indulgence. It coincided with the most impressionable years of my eldest son, and naturally he has refused to regard it as my time of indulgence and inexperience[T8]. He has on the contrary believed that that was the brightest period of my life, and the changes, effected later, have been due to delusion miscalled enlightenment. And well he might. Why should he not think that my earlier years represented a period of awakening, and the later years of radical change, years of delusion and egotism ? Often have I been confronted with various posers from friends : What harm had there been, if I had given my boys an academical education ?[T9] What right had I thus to clip their wings ? Why should I have come in the way of their taking degrees and choosing their own careers ?

I do not think that there is much point in these questions. I have come in contact with numerous students. I have tried myself or through others to impose my educational 'fads'[T10] on other children too and have seen the results thereof. There are within my knowledge a number of young men today contemporaneous with my sons. I do

not think that man to man they are any better than my sons, or that my sons have much to learn from them.

But the ultimate result of my experiments is in the womb of the future. My object in discussing this subject here is that a student of the history of civilization may have some measure of the difference between disciplined[T11] home education and school education, and also of the effect produced on children through changes introduced by parents in their lives. The purpose of this chapter is also to show the lengths to which a votary of truth is driven by his experiments with truth, as also to show the votary of liberty how many are the sacrifices demanded by that stern goddess. Had I been without a sense of self-respect and satisfied myself with having for my children the education that other children could not get.,[T12] I should have deprived them of the object-lesson in liberty and self respect that I gave them at the cost of the literary training. And where a choice has to be made between liberty and learning, who will not say that the former has to be preferred a thousand times to the latter ?

The youths whom I called out in 1920 from those citadels of slavery—their schools and colleges—and whom I advised that it was far better to remain unlettered and break stones for the sake of liberty than to go in for a literary education in the chains of slaves will probably be able now to trace my advice to its source.

CHAPTER VI : SPIRIT OF SERVICE

My profession progressed satisfactorily, but that was far from satisfying me. The question of further simplifying my life and of doing some concrete act of service[T1] to my fellowmen had been constantly agitating me, when a leper came to my door. I had not the heart to dismiss him with a meal. So I offered him shelter, dressed his wounds, and began to look after him. But I could not go on like that indefinitely. I could not afford, I lacked the will[T2] to keep him always with me. So I sent him to the Government Hospital for indentured labourers.

But I was still ill at ease. I longed for some humanitarian work of a permanent nature. Dr. Booth was the head of the St. Aidan's Mission. He was a kind-hearted man and treated his patients free. Thanks to Parsi Rustomji's charities, it was possible to open a small charitable hospital under Dr. Booth's charge. I felt strongly inclined to serve as a nurse in this hospital. The work of dispensing medicines took from one to two hours daily, and[T3] I made up my mind to find that time from my office-work, so as to be able to fill the place of a compounder in the dispensary attached to the hospital. Most of my professional work was chamber work, conveyancing and arbitration. I

of course used to have a few cases in the magistrate's court, but most of them were of a non-controversial character, and Mr. Khan, who had followed me to South Africa and was then living with me, undertook to take them if I was absent. So I found time to serve in the small hospital. This meant two hours every morning, including the time taken in going to and from the hospital. This work brought me some peace. It consisted in ascertaining the patient's complaints, laying the facts before the doctor and dispensing the prescriptions. It brought me in close touch with suffering Indians, most of them indentured Tamil, Telugu or North India men.

The experience stood me in good stead, when during the Boer War I offered my services for nursing the sick and wounded soldiers.

The question of the rearing of children had been ever before me. I had two sons born in South Africa, and my service in the hospital was useful in solving the question of their upbringing. My independent spirit was[T4] a constant source of trial. My wife and I had decided to have the best medical aid at the time of her delivery, but if the doctor and the nurse were to leave us in the lurch at the right moment, what was I to do ? Then the nurse had to be an Indian. And the difficulty of getting a trained Indian nurse in South Africa can be easily imagined from the similar difficulty in India. So I studied the things necessary for safe labour. I read Dr. Tribhuvandas' book, *Mane Shikhaman*—Advice to a Mother—and I nursed both my[T5] children according to the instructions given in the book, tempered here and there by such experience as I had gained elsewhere. The services of a nurse were utilized—not for more than two months each time—chiefly for helping my wife, and not for taking care of the babies, which I did myself.

The birth of the last child put me to the severest test. The travail came on suddenly. The doctor was not immediately available, and some time was lost in fetching the midwife. Even if she had been on the spot, she could not have helped delivery. I had to see through the safe delivery of the baby. My careful study of the subject in Dr. Tribhuvandas' work was of inestimable help. I was not nervous.

I am convinced that for the proper upbringing of children[T6] the parents ought to have a general knowledge of the care and nursing of babies. At every step I have seen the advantages of my careful study of the subject. My children would not have enjoyed the general health that they do today, had I not studied the subject and turned my knowledge to account. We labour under a sort of superstition that the child has nothing to learn during the first five years of its life. On the contrary the fact is that the child never learns in after life what it does

in its first five years.[T7] The education of the child begins with conception. The physical and mental states of the parents at the moment of conception are re- produced in[T8] the baby. Then during the period of pregnancy it continues to be affected by the mother's moods, desires and temperament, as also[T9] by her ways of life. After birth the child imitates the parents, and[T10] for a considerable number of years entirely depends on them for its growth.

The couple who realize these things will never have sexual union for the fulfilment of their lust, but only when they desire issue. I think it is the height of ignorance to believe that the sexual act is an independent function necessary like sleeping or eating.[T11] The world depends for its existence on the act of generation, and as the world is the play-ground of God and a reflection of His glory, the act of generation should be controlled for the ordered growth of the world. He who realizes this will control his lust at any cost, equip himself with the knowledge necessary for the physical, mental and spiritual well-being of his progeny, and give the benefit of that knowledge to posterity.

CHAPTER VII : BRAHMACHARYA—I

We now reach the stage in this story when I began seriously to think of taking the *brahmacharya* vow.[T1] I had been wedded to a monogamous ideal ever since my marriage, faithfulness to my wife being part of the love of truth. But it was in South Africa that I came to realize the importance of observing *brahmacharya* even with respect to my wife. I cannot definitely say what circumstance or what book it was, that set my thoughts in that direction, but I have a recollection that the predominant factor was the influence of Raychandbhai, of whom I have already written. I can still recall a conversation that I had with him. On one occasion I spoke to him in high praise of Mrs. Gladstone's devotion to her husband. I had read somewhere that Mrs. Gladstone insisted on preparing tea for Mr. Gladstone even in the House of Commons, and that this had become a rule in the life of this illustrious[T2] couple, whose actions were governed by regularity. I spoke of this[T3] to the poet, and incidentally eulogized conjugal love. 'Which of the two do you prize more,' asked Raychandbhai, 'the love of Mrs. Gladstone for her husband as his wife, or her devoted service irrespective of her relation to Mr. Gladstone ? Supposing she had been his sister, or his devoted servant, and ministered to him with the same attention, what would you have said ? Do we not have instances of such devoted sisters or servants ? Supposing you had found the same loving devotion in a male servant, would you have been pleased in the same way as in Mrs. Gladstone's

case ? Just examine the view-point suggested by me.'

Raychandbhai was himself married. I have an impression that at the moment his words sounded harsh, but they gripped me irresistibly. The devotion of a[T4] servant was, I felt, a thousand times more praiseworthy than that of a wife to her husband. There was nothing surprising in the wife's devotion to her husband, as there was an indissoluble bond between them. The devotion was perfectly natural. But it required a special effort to cultivate equal devotion between master and servant. The poet's point of view began gradually to grow upon me.

What then, I asked myself, should be my relation with my wife ? Did my faithfulness consist in making my wife the instrument of my lust ? So long as I was the slave of lust, my faithfulness was worth nothing. To be fair to my wife, I must say that she was never the temptress. It was therefore the easiest thing for me to take the vow of *brahmacharya*, if only I willed it. It was my weak will or lustful attachment that was the obstacle.

Even after my conscience had been roused in the matter, I failed twice. I failed because the motive that actuated the effort was none the highest. My main object was to escape having more children. Whilst in England I had read something about contraceptives. I have already referred to Dr. Allinson's birth-control propaganda in the chapter on Vege-tarianism. If it had some temporary effect on me, Mr. Hill's opposition to those methods and his advocacy of internal efforts as opposed to outward means, in a word, of self-control, had a far greater effect, which in due time came to be abiding. Seeing therefore, that I did not desire more children I began to strive after self-control. There was endless difficulty in the task. We began to sleep in separate beds. I decided to retire to bed only after the day's work had left me completely exhausted. All these efforts did not seem to bear much fruit, but when I look back upon the past, I feel that the final resolution was the cumulative effect of those unsuccessful strivings.

The final resolution could only be made as late as 1906. Satyagraha had not then been started. I had not the least notion of its coming. I was practising in Johannesburg at the time of the Zulu 'Rebellion' in Natal, which came soon after the Boer War. I felt that I must offer my services to the Natal Government on that occasion[T5]. The offer was accepted, as we shall see in another chapter. But the work set me furiously thinking in the direction of self-control and according to my wont I discussed my thoughts with my co-workers. It became my conviction that procreation and the consequent care of children were inconsistent with public service. I had to break up my

household at Johannesburg to be able to serve during the 'Rebellion'. Within one month of offering my services, I had to give up the house I had so carefully furnished. I took my wife and children to Phoenix and led the Indian ambulance corps attached to the Natal forces. During the difficut marches that had then to be performed, the idea flashed upon me that if I wanted to devote myself to the service of the community in this manner, I must relinquish the desire for children and wealth and live the life of a *vanaprastha*—of one retired from household cares.

The 'Rebellion' did not occupy me for more than six weeks, but this brief period proved to be a very important epoch in my life. The importance of vows grew upon me more clearly than ever before. I realized that a vow, far from closing the door to real freedom, opened it. Up to this time I had not met with success because the will had been lacking, because I had had no faith in myself, no faith in the grace of God, and therefore, my mind had been tossed on the boisterous sea of doubt[T6]. I realized that in refusing to take a vow man was drawn into temptation, and that to be bound by a vow was like a passage from libertinism to a real monogamous marriage. 'I believe in effort, I do not want to bind myself with vows,' is the mentality of weakness and betrays a subtle desire for the thing to be avoided. Or where can be the difficulty in making a final decision ? I vow to flee from the serpent which I know will bite me, I do not simply make an effort to flee from him. I know that mere effort may mean certain death. Mere effort means ignorance of the certain fact that the serpent is bound to kill me. The fact, therefore, that I could rest content with an effort only, means that I have not yet clearly realized the necessity of definite action. 'But supposing my views are changed in the future, how can I bind myself by a vow ' Such a doubt often deters us. But that doubt also betrays a lack of clear perception that a particular thing must be renounced. That is why Nishkulanand has sung :

> Renunciation without aversion is not lasting.

Where therefore the desire is gone, a vow of renunciation is the natural and inevitable fruit.

CHAPTER VIII : BRAHMACHARYA—II

After full discussion and mature deliberation I took the vow in 1906. I had not shared my thoughts with my wife until then, but only consulted her at the time of taking the vow. She had no objection. But I had great difficulty in making the final resolve. I had not the necessary strength. How was I to control my passions? The elimination of carnal relationship with one's wife seemed then a strange thing. But I launched forth[T1] with faith in the sustaining power

of God.

As I look back upon the twenty years of the vow, I am filled with pleasure and wonderment. The more or less successful practice of self-control had been going on since 1901. But the freedom and joy that came to me after taking the vow had never been experienced before 1906. Before the vow I had been open to being overcome by temptation at any moment. Now the vow was a sure shield against temptation. The great potentiality of *brahmacharya* daily became more and more patent to me. The vow was taken when I was in Phoenix. As son as I was free from ambulance work, I went to Phoenix, whence I had to return to Johannesburg. In about a month of my returning there, the foundation of satyagraha was laid. As though unknown to me, the *brahmacharya* vow had been preparing me for it. Satyagraha had not been a preconceived plan. It came on spontaneously, without my having willed it. But I could see that all my previous steps had led up to that goal.[T2] I had cut down my heavy household expenses at Johannesburg and gone to Phoenix to take, as it were, the *brahmacharya* vow.

The knowledge that a perfect observance of *brahmacharya* means realization of Brahman, I did not owe to a study of the Shastras. It slowly grew upon me with experience. The shastric texts on the subject I read only later in life. Every day of the vow has taken me nearer the knowledge that in *brahmacharya* lies the protection of the body, the mind and the soul. For *brahmacharya* was now no process of hard penance, it was a matter of consolation and joy.[T3] Every day[T4] revealed a fresh beauty in it.

But if it was a matter of ever-increasing joy, let no one believe that it was an easy thing for me. Even when I am past fifty six years, I realize how hard a thing it is. Every day I realize more and more that it is like walking on the sword's edge, and I see every moment the necessity for eternal vigilance.

Control of the palate is the first essential in the observance of the vow. I found that complete control of the palate made the observance very easy, and so I now pursued my dietetic experiments not merely from the vegetarian's but also from the *brahmachari*'s point of view. As the result of these experiments I saw that the *brahmachari*'s food should be limited, simple, spiceless, and, if possible, uncooked.

Six years of experiment have showed me that the *brahmachari*'s ideal food is fresh fruit and nuts. The immunity from passion that I enjoyed when I lived on this food was unknown to me after I changed that diet. *Brahmacharya* needed no effort on my part in South Africa[T5] when I lived on fruits and nuts alone. It has been a matter of

very great effort ever since I began to take milk. How I had to go back to milk from a fruit diet will be considered in its proper place. It is enough to observe here that I have not the least doubt that milk diet makes the *brahmacharya* vow difficult to observe. Let no one deduce from this that all *brahmacharis* must give up milk. The effect on *brahmacharya* of different kinds of food can be determined only after numerous experiments. I have yet to find a fruit-substitute for milk which is an equally good muscle-builder and easily digestible. The doctors, *vaidyas* and *hakims* have alike failed to enlighten me. Therefore, though I know milk to be partly a stimulant, I cannot, for the time being, advise anyone to give it up.

As an external aid to *brahmacharya*, fasting is as necessary as selection and restriction in diet. So overpowering are the senses that they can be kept under control only when they are completely hedged in on all sides, from above and from beneath. It is common knowledge that they are powerless without food, and so fasting[T6] undertaken with a view to control of the senses is, I have no doubt, very helpful. With some, fasting is of no avail, because assuming that mechanical fasting alone will make them immune, they keep their bodies without food, but feast their minds upon all sorts of delicacies, thinking all the while what they will eat and what they will drink after the fast terminates. Such fasting[T7] helps them in controlling neither palate nor lust. Fasting is useful, when mind co-operates with starving body, that is to say, when it cultivates[T8] a distaste for the objects that are denied to the body. Mind is at the root of all sensuality. Fasting, therefore,[T9] has a limited use, for a fasting man may continue to be swayed by passion. But it may be said that[T10] extinction of the sexual passion is as a rule impossible without fasting, which may be said to be indispensable for the observance of *brahmacharya*. Many aspirants after *brahmacharya* fail, because in the use of their other senses they want to carry on like those who are not *brahmacharis*. Their effort is, therefore identical with the effort to experience the bracing cold of winter in the scorching summer months. There should be a clear line between the life of a *brahmachari* and of one who is not. The resemblance that there is between the two is only apparent. The distinction ought to be clear as daylight. Both use their eyesight, but whereas the *brahmachari* uses it to see the glories of God, the other uses it to see the frivolity around him. Both use their ears, but whereas the one hears nothing but praises of God, the other feasts his ears upon ribaldry. Both often keep late hours, but whereas the one devotes them to prayer,[T11] the other fritters them away in wild and wasteful mirth. Both feed the inner man, but the one only to keep the temple of God in good repair,[T12] while the other gorges himself and

makes the sacred vessel a stinking gutter. Thus both live as the poles apart, and the distance between them will grow and not diminish with the passage of time.

Bahmacharya means control of[T13] the senses in thought, word and deed. Every day I have been realizing more and more the necessity for restraints of the kind I have detailed above. There is no limit to the possibilities of renunciation even as there is none to those of *brahmacharya*. Such *brahmacharya* is impossible of attainment by limited effort. For many[T14] it must remain only as an ideal. An aspirant after *brahmacharya* will always be conscious of his short-comings, will seek out the passions lingering in the inner- most recesses of his heart and will incessantly strive to get rid of them. So long as thought is not under complete control of the will, *brahma-charya* in its fulness is absent. Involuntary thought is an affection of the mind, and curbing of thought, therefore, means curbing of the mind which is even more difficult to curb than the wind. Neverthe-less the existence of God within makes even control of the mind possible.[T15] Let no one think that it is impossible because it is difficult. It is the highest goal, and it is no wonder that the highest effort should be necessary to attain it.

But it was after coming to India that I realized that such *brahmacharya* was impossible to attain by mere human effort. Until then I had been labouring under the delusion that fruit diet alone would enable me to eradicate all passions, and I had flattered myself with the belief[T16] that I had nothing more to do.

But I must not anticipate the chapter of my struggle. Meanwhile let me make it clear that those who desire to observe *brahma-charya*[T17] with a view to realizing God need not despair, provided their faith in God is equal to their confidence in their own effort.

विषया विनिवर्तन्ते निराहारस्य देहिनः ।
रसवर्जं रसोऽप्यस्य परं दृष्ट्वा निवर्तते ॥

'The sense-objects turn away from an abstemious soul, leaving the relish behind. The relish also disappears with the realization of the Highest.'[1] Therefore His name and His grace are the last resources of the aspirant after *moksha*. This truth came to me only after my return to India.

CHAPTER IX : SIMPLE LIFE

I had started on a life of ease and comfort, but the experiment was short-lived. Although I had furnished the house with care, yet it

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 59

that life, than I began to cut down expenses. The washerman's bill was heavy, and as he was besides by no means noted for his punctuality, even two or three dozen shirts and collars proved insufficient for me. Collars had to be changed daily and shirts, if not daily, at least every alternate day. This meant a double expense, which appeared to me unnecessary. So I equipped myself with a washing outfit to save it. I bought a book on washing, studied the art and taught it also to my wife. This no doubt added to my work, but its novelty made it a pleasure.

I shall never forget the first collar that I washed myself. I had used more starch than necessary, the iron had not been made hot enough, and for fear of burning the collar I had not pressed it sufficiently. The result was that, though the collar was fairly stiff, the superfluous starch continually dropped off it. I went to court with the collar on, thus inviting the ridicule of brother barristers, but even in those days I could be impervious to ridicule.

'Well,' said I, 'this is my first experiment at washing my own collars and hence the loose starch. But it does not trouble me, and then there is the advantage of providing you with so much fun.'

'But surely there is no lack of laundries here ?' asked a friend.

'The laundry bill is very heavy,' said I. 'The charge for washing a collar is almost as much as its price, and even then there is the eternal dependence on the washerman. I prefer by far to wash my things myself.'

But I could not make my friends appreciate the beauty of self-help. In course of time I became an expert washerman so far as my own work went, and my washing was by no means inferior to laundry washing. My collars were no less stiff or shiny than others.

When Gokhale came to South Africa,[T1] he had with him a scarf which was a gift from Mahadeo Govind Ranade. He treasured the mem-ento with the utmost care and used it only on special occasions. One such occasion was the banquet given in his honour by the Johannesburg Indians.[T2] The scarf was creased and needed ironing. It was not possible to send it to the laundry and get it back in time. I offered to try my art.

'I can trust to your capacity as a lawyer, but not as a washerman,'[T3] said Gokhale. 'What if you should soil it ? Do you know what it means to me ?'

With this he narrated, with much joy, the story of the gift. I still insisted, guaranteed good work, got his permission to iron it, and won his certificate. After that I did not mind if the rest of the world refused

me its certificate.

In the same way, as I freed myself slavery to the washerman, I threw[T4] off dependence on the barber. All people who go to England learn there at least the art of shaving, but none, to my knowledge, learn to cut their own hair. I had to learn that too.[T5] I once went to an English hair-cutter in Pretoria. He contemptuously refused to cut my hair. I certainly felt hurt, but immediately[T6] purchased a pair of clippers and cut my hair before the mirror. I succeeded more or less in cutting the front hair, but I spoiled the back.[T7] The friends in the court shook with laughter.

'What's wrong with your hair, Gandhi? Rats have been at it?'

'No. The white barber would not condescend to touch my black hair,' said , 'so I preferred to cut it myself, no matter how badly.'

The reply did not surprise the friends.

The barber was not at fault in having refused to cut my hair. There was every chance of his losing his custom, if he should serve black men. We do not allow our barbers to serve our untouchable brethren. I got the reward of this in South Africa, not once, but many times, and the conviction that it was the punishment for our own sins saved me from becoming angry.

The extreme forms in which my passion for self-help and simplicity ultimately expressed itself will be described in their proper place. The seed had been long sown. It only needed watering to take root, to flower and to fructify, and the watering came in due course.

CHAPTER X : THE BOER WAR

I must[T1] skip many other experiences of the period between 1897 and 1899 and come straight to the Boer War.

When the war was declared, my personal sympathies were all with the Boers, but I believed then that I had yet no right, in such cases, to enforce[T2] my individual convictions. I have minutely dealt with the inner struggle regarding this in my history of the Satyagraha in South Africa,[1] and I must not repeat the argument here. I invite the curious to turn to those pages. Suffice it to say that my loyalty to the British rule drove me to participation with the British in that war. I felt that, if I demanded rights as a British citizen, it was also my duty, as such, to participate in the defence of the British Empire. I held then that India could achieve her complete emancipation only[T3] within and through[T4] the British Empire. So I collected together as many comrades as possible, and with very great difficulty got their services accepted as an ambulance corps.

[1] *Vide* "Satyagraha in South Africa — Chapter IX : The Boer War.

The average Englishman believed that the Indian was a coward, incapable of taking risks or looking beyond his immediate self-interest. Many English friends, therefore, threw cold water on my plan. But Dr. Booth supported it whole-heartedly. He trained us in ambulance work. We secured medical certificates of fitness for service. Mr. Laughton and the late Mr. Escombe enthusiastically[T5] supported the plan, and we applied at last for service at the front.[1] The Government tankfully acknowledged our application, but said that our services were not then needed.

I would not rest satisfied, however, with this refusal. Through the introduction of Dr. Booth,[T6] I called on the Bishop of Natal. There were many Christian Indians in our corps. The Bishop was delighted with my proposal and promised to help us in getting our services accepted.

Time too was working with us. The Boer had shown more pluck, determination and bravery than had been expected; and our services were ultimately needed.

Our corps was1,100 strong, with nearly 40 leaders. About three hundred were free Indians and the rest indentured. Dr. Booth was also with us. The corps acquitted itself well. Though our work was to be outside the firing line, and though we had the protection of the Red Cross, we were asked[T7] at a critical moment to serve within the firing line. The reservation had not been of our seeking. The authorities did not want us to be within the range of fire. The situation, however, was changed after the repulse at Spion Kop, and General Buller sent the message that, though we were not bound to take the risk, Government would be thankful if we would do so and fetch the wounded from the field. We had no hesitation[T8] and so the action at Spion Kop found us working within the firing line. During these days we had to march from twenty to twenty-five miles a day,[T9] bearing the wounded on stretchers. Amongst the wounded we had the honour of carrying soldiers like General Woodgate.

The corps was disbanded after six weeks' service. After the reverses at Spion Kop and Vaalkranz, the British Commanderin-in-Chief abandoned the attempt to relieve Ladysmith and other places by summary procedure, and decided to proceed slowly, awaiting reinforcements from England and India.

Our humble work was at the moment much applauded, and the Indians' prestige was enhanced. The newspapers published laudatory rhymes with the refrain, 'We are sons of Empire after all.'

[1] *Vide* "Relief to Indian Refugees", October 14, 1899.

General Buller mentioned with appreciation the work of the corps in his despatch, and the leaders were awarded the War Medal.

The Indian community became better organized. I got into closer touch with the indentured Indians. There came a greate awakening amongst them, and the feeling that Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians, Tamilians, Gujaratis and Sindhis were all Indians and children of the same motherland took deep root amongst them. Everyone believed that the Indians' grievances were now sure to be redressed. At the moment the white man's attitude seemed to be distinctly changed. The relations formed with the whites during the war were of the sweetest. We had come in contact with thousands of tommies. They were friendly with us and thankful for being there to serve them.

I cannot forbear from recording a sweet reminiscence of how human nature shows itself at its best in moments of trial. We were marching towards Chievely Camp were Lieutenant Roberts, the son of Lord Roberts, had received a mortal wound. Our corps had the honour of carrying the body from the field. It was a sultry day—the day of our march. Everyone was thirsting for water. There was a tiny brook on the way where we could slake our thirst. But who was to drink first? We had proposed to come in after the tommies had finished. But they would not begin first and urged us to do so, and for a while a pleasant competition went on for giving precedence to one another.

CHAPTER XI : SANITARY REFORM AND FAMINE RELIEF

It has always been impossible forme to reconcile myself to any one member of the body politic remaining out of use. I have always been loath to hide or connive at the weak points of the community or to press for its rights without having purged it of its blemished. Therefore, ever since my settlement in Natal, I had been endeavouring to clear the community of a charge that had been levelled against it, not without a certain amount of truth. The charge had often been made that the Indian was slovenly in his habits and did not keep his house and surroundings clean. The principal men of the community had, therefore, already begun to put their houses in order, but house-to-house inspection was undertaken only when plague was reported to be imminent in Durban. This was done after consulting, and gaining the approval of, the city fathers [T1], who had desired our co-operation. Our co-operation made work easier for them and at the same time lessened our hardships, For whenever there is an outbreak of epidemics, the executive, as a general rule, get impatient, take excessive measures and behave to such as may have incurred their displeasure with a heavy hand. The community saved itself from this oppression

by voluntarily taking sanitary measures.

But I had some bitter experiences. I saw that I could not so easily count on the help of the community in getting in to do its own duty, as I could in claiming for it rights[T2]. At some places I met with insults, at others with polite indifferences. It was too much for people to bestir themselves to keep their surroundings clean. To expect them to find money for the work was out of the question. These experiences taught me, better than ever before, that without infinite patience it was impossible to get the people to do any work. It is the reformer who is anxious for the reform, and not society, from which he should expect nothing better than opposition, abhorrence and even mortal persecution [T3]. Why may not society regard as retrogression what the reformer holds dear as life itself ?[T4]

Nevertheless the result of this agitation was that the Indian community learnt to recognize more or less the necessity for keeping their houses and environments clean. I gained the esteem of the authorities. They saw that, though I had made it my business to ventilate grievances and press for rights, I was no less keen and insistent upon self-purification.

There was one thing, however, which still remained to be done, namely, the awakening in the Indian settler of a sense of duty to the motherland. India was poor, the Indian settler went to South Africa in search of wealth, and he was bound to contribute part of his earnings for the benefit of his countrymen in the hour of their adversity. This the settler did during the terrible famines in 1897 and 1899.[1] They contributed handsomely for famine relief, and more so in 1899 than in 1897. We had appealed to Englishmen also for funds, and they had responded well. Even the indentured Indians gave their share to the contribution, and the system inaugurated at the time of these famines has been continued ever since, and we know that Indians in South Africa never fail to send handsome contributions to India in times of national calamity.

Thus service of the Indians in South Africa ever revealed to me new implications of truth at every stage.[T5] Truth is like a vast tree, which yields more and more fruit, the more you nurture it.[T6] The deeper the search in the mine of truth the richer the discovery of the gems buried there, in the shape of openings for an ever greater variety of service.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to *The Natal Mercury*", February 2, 1897, "Appeal for Funds", February 3, 1897, "Letter to J. B. Robinson", February 4, 1897, "To the Cergymen of Durban", February 6, 1897 and "The Famine Fund", February 16, 1901.

On my relief from war-duty I felt that my work was no longer in South Africa but in India. Not that there was nothing to be done in South Africa, but I was afraid that my main business might become merely money-making.

Friends at home were also pressing meto return, and I felt that I should be of more service in India. And for the work in South Africa, there were, of course, Messrs Khan and Mansukhlal Naazar. So I requested my co-workers to relieve me. After very great difficulty my request was conditionally accepted, the conditon being that I should be ready to go back to South Arica if, within a year, the community should need me. I thought it was a difficult conditon but the love that bound me to the community made me accept it.

The Lord has bound me

With the cotton-thread of love,

I am His bondslave,

sang Mirabai. And for me, too, the cotton-thread of love that bound me to the community was too strong to break. The voice of the people is the voice of God, and here the voice of friends was too real to be rejected. I accepted the condition and got their permission to go.

At this time I was intimately connected only with Natal. The Natal Indians bathed me with the nectar of love. Farewell meetings[1] were arranged at every place, and costly gifts were presented to me.

Gifts had been bestowed on me before when I returned to India in 1896[2], but this time the ferewell was overwhelming. T The gifts of course included things in gold and silver, but there were articles of costly diamond as well.

What right had I to accept all these gifts ? Accepting them, how could I persuade myself that I was serving the community without remuneration? All the gifts, excepting a few from my clients, were purely for my service to the community, and I could make no difference between my clients and co-workers; for the clients also helped me in my public work.

One of the gifts was a gold necklace worth fifty guineas, meant for my wife. But even that gift was given because of my public work, and so it could not be separated from the rest.

The evening I was presented with the bulk of these things I had a sleepless night.T2 I walked up and down my room deeply agi- tated,

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Farewell Meeting", October 15, 1901.

[2] Some English editions had '1899', evidently a slip.

but could find no solution. It was dificult for me to forgo gifts worth hundreds, it was more difficult to keep them.

And even if I could keep [T3] them, what about my children ? What about my wife ? They were being trained to a life of service and to an understanding that service was its own reward.

I had no costly ornaments in the house. We had been fast simplifying our life. How then could we afford to have gold watches ? How could we afford to wear gold chains and diamond rings ? Even then I was exhorting people to conquer the infatuation for jewellery. What was I now to do with the jewellery that had come upon me ?

I decided that I could not keep these things. I drafted a letter,[1] creating a trust of them favour of the community and appointing Parsi Rustomji and others trustees. In the morning I held a consultation with my wife and children and finally got rid of the heavy incubus.

I knew that I should have some difficulty in persuading my wife, and I was sure that I should have none so far as the children were concerned. So I decided to constitute them my attorneys.

The children readily agreed to my proposal. 'We do not need these costly presents, we must return them to the community, and should we ever need them, we could easily purchase them,' they said.

I was delighted. 'Then you will plead with Mother, won't you ?' I asked them.

'Certainly,' said they. 'That is our business. She does not need to wear the ornaments. She would want to keep them for us, and if we don't want them, why should she not agree to part with them ?'

But it was easier said than done.

'You may not need them,' said my wife. 'Your children may not need them. Cajoled they will dance to your tune. I can understand your not permitting me to wear them. But what about my daughters-in-law ? They will be sure to need them. And who knows what will happen tomorrow ? I would be the last person to part with gifts so lovingly given.'

And thus the torrent of argument went on, reinforced, in the end, by tears. But the children were adamant. And I was unmoved.

I mildly put in: The children have yet to get married. We do not want to see them married young. When they are grown up, they can take care of themselves. And surely we shall not have, for our sons, brides who are fond of ornaments. And if after all, we need to provide them with ornaments, I am there. You will ask me then.'

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Parsee Rustomjee", October 18, 1901.

‘Ask you? I know you by this time. You deprived me of my ornaments, you would not leave me in peace with them. Fancy you offering to get ornaments for the daughters-in-law ! You who are trying to make sadhus of my boys from today! No, the ornaments will not be returned. And pray what right have you to my necklace?’

‘But,’ I rejoined, ‘is the necklace given you for your service or for my service?’

‘I agree. But service rendered by you is as good as rendered by me. I have toiled and moiled for you day and night. Is that no service? You forced all and sundry on me, making me weep bitter tears, and I slaved for them!’

These were pointed thrusts, and some of them went home. But I was determined to return the ornaments. I somehow succeeded in extorting a consent from her. The gifts received in 1896 and 1901 were all returned. A trust-deed was prepared, and they were deposited with a bank, to be used for the service of the community, according to my wishes or to those of the trustees.

Often, when I was in need of funds for public purposes, and felt that I must draw upon the trust, I have been able to raise the requisite amount, leaving the trust money intact. The fund is still there, being operated upon in times of need, and it has regularly accumulated.

I have never since regretted the step, and as the years have gone by, my wife has also seen its wisdom. It has saved us from many temptations.

I am definitely of opinion that a public worker should accept no costly[T4] gifts.

CHAPTER XIII : IN INDIA AGAIN

So I sailed for home. Mauritius was one of the ports of call, and as the boat made a long halt there, I went ashore and acquainted myself fairly well with the local conditions.[1] For one night I was the guest of Sir Charles Bruce, the Governor of the Colony.

After reaching India I spent some time in going about the country. It was the year 1901 when the Congress met at Calcutta under the presidentship of Mr. (later Sir) Dinshaw Wacha. And I of course attended it. It was my first experience of the Congress.

From Bombay I travelled in the same train as Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, as I had to speak to him about conditions in South Africa. I knew the kingly style in which he lived. He had engaged a special

[1] For a report of his speech at reception by the Indian community of Mauritius, *vide* “Speech in Mauritius”, November 13, 1901.

saloon for himself, and I had orders to take my opportunity of speaking to him by travelling in his saloon for one stage. I, therefore, went to the saloon and reported myself at the appointed station. With him were Mr. Wacha, and Mr. (now Sir) Chimanlal Setalvad. They were discussing politics. As soon as Sir Pherozeshah saw me, he said, 'Gandhi, it seems nothing can be done for you. Of course we will pass the resolution you want. But what rights have we in our own country ? I believe that, so long as we have no power in our own land, you cannot fare better in the Colonies.'

I was taken aback. Mr. setalvad seemed to concur in the view; Mr. Wacha cast a pathetic [T1] look at me.

I tried to plead with Sir Pherozeshah, but it was out of the question for one like me to prevail upon the uncrowned king of Bombay. I contented myself with the fact that I should be allowed to move my resolution.

'You will of course show me the resolution,' said Mr. Wacha, to cheer me up. I thanked him and left them at the next stop.[T2]

So we reached Calcutta. The President was taken to his camp with great *eclat* by the Reception Committee. I asked a volunteer where I was to go. He took me to the Ripon College, where a number of delegates were being put up. Fortune favoured me. Lokamanya was put in the same block as I. I have a recollection that he came a day later.

And as was natural, Lokamanya would never be without his durbar. Were I a painter, I could paint him as I saw him seated on his bed—so vivid is the whole scene in my memory. Of the numberless people that called on him, I can recollect today only one, namely the late Babu Motilal Ghose, editor of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. Their loud laughter and their talks about the wrongdoings of the ruling race cannot be forgotten.

But I propose to examine in some detail the appointments in this camp. The volunteers were clashing against one another. You asked one of them to do something. He delegated it to another, and he in his turn to a third, and so on; and as for the delegates, they were neither here nor there.

I made friends with a few volunteers. I told them some things about South Africa, and they felt somewhat ashamed. I tried to bring home to them the secret of service. They seemed to understand, but service is no mushroom growth. It presupposes the will first, and then experience. There was no lack of will on the part of those good, simple-hearted young men, but their experience [T3] was nil. The Congress would meet three days every year and then go to sleep. What

training could one have out of a three days' show once a year ? And the delegates were of a piece with the volunteers. They had no better or longer training. They would do nothing themselves. 'Volunteer, do this,' 'Volunteer, do that,' were their constant orders.

Even here I was face to face with untouchability in a fair measure.[T4] The Tamilian kitchen was far away from the rest. To the Tamil delegates even the sight of others, whilst they were dining, meant pollution. So a special kitchen had to be made for them in the College compound, walled in by wicker-work. It was full of smoke which choked you. It was a kitchen, dining-room, washroom, all in one—a close safe with no outlet. To me this looked like a travesty of *Varnadharma*[1] . If, I said to myself, there was such untouchability between the delegates of the Congress, one could well imagine the extent to which it existed amongst their constituents. I heaved a sigh at the thought.

There was no limit to insanitation. Pools of water were every where. There were only a few latrines, and the recollection of their stink still oppresses me. I pointed it out to the volunteers. They said point-blank: 'That is not our work, it is the scavenger's work.' I asked for a broom. The man stared at me in wonder. I procured one and cleaned the latrine. But that was for myself. The rush was so great, and the latrines were so few, that they needed frequent cleaning, but that was more than I could do. So I had to content myself with simply ministering to myself. And the others did not seem to mind the stench and the dirt.

But that was not all. Some of the delegates did not scruple to use the verandahs outside their rooms for calls of nature at night. In the morning I pointed out the spots to the volunteers. No one was ready to undertake the cleaning, and I found no one to share the honour with me of doing it. Conditions have since consi- derably improved, but even today thoughtless delegates are not wanting who disfigure the Congress camp by committing nuisance wherever they choose, and all the volunteers are not always ready to clean up after them.

I saw that, if the Congress session were to be prolonged, conditions would be quite favourable for the outbreak of an epidemic.

CHAPTER XIV : CLERK AND BEARER

There were yet two days for the Congress session to begin. I had made up my mind to offer my services to the Congress office in order to gain some experience. So as soon as I had finished the daily ablutions on arrival at Calcutta, I proceeded to the Congress office.

[1] Duties of the four fundamental divisions of Hindu society

Babu Bhupendranath Basu and Sjt. Ghosal were the secretaries. I went to Bhupenbabu and offered my services. He looked at me, and said: 'I have no work, but possibly Ghosalbabu might have something to give you. Please go to him.'

So I went to him. He scanned me and said with a smile: 'I can give you only clerical work. Will you do it ?'

'Gertainly,' said I. 'I am here to do anything that is not beyond my capacity.'

'That is the right spirit, young man,' he said. Addressing the volunteers who surrounded him, he added, 'Do you hear what this young man says ?'

Then turning to me he proceeded: 'Well then, here is a heap of letters for disposal. Take that chair and begin. As you see, hundreds of people come to see me. What am I to do? Am I to meet them, or am I to answer these busybodies inundating me with letters ? I have no clerks to whom I can entrust this work. Most of these letters have nothing in them, but you will please look them through. Acknowledge those that are worth it, and refer to me those that need a considered reply.'

I was delighted at the confidence reposed in me.

Sjt. Ghosal didnot know me when he gave me the work. Only later did he enquire about my credentials.

I found my work very easy—the disposal of that heap of correspon-dence. I had done with it in no time, and Sjt. Ghosal was very glad. He was talkative. He would talk away for hours together. When he learnt something from me about my history, he felt rather sorry to have given me clerical work. But I reassured him: 'Please don't worry. What am I before you? You have grown gray in the service of the Congress, and are as an elder to me. I am but an inexperienced youth. You have put me under a debt of obligation by entrusting me with this work. For I want to do Congress work, and you have given me the rare opportunity of understanding the details.'

'To tell you the truth,' said Sjt. Ghosal, 'that is the proper spirit. But young men of today do not realize it. Of course I have known the Congress since its birth. In fact I may claim a certain share with Mr. Hume in bringing the Congress into being.'

And thus we became good friends. He insisted on my having lunch with him.

Sjt. Ghosal used [T1] to get his shirt buttoned by his bearer. I volunteered to do the bearer's duty, and I loved to do it, as my regard for elders was always great. When he came to know this, he did not

mind my doing little acts of personal service for him. In fact he was delighted. Asking me to button his shirt, he would say,[T2] 'You see, now, the Congress secretary has no time even to button his shirt. He has always some work to do.' Sjt. Ghosal's naivete amused me, but did not create any dislike in me for service of that nature. The benefit I received from his service is incalculable.

In a few days I came to know the working of the Congress. I met most of the leaders. I observed the movements of stalwarts like Gokhale and Surendranath. I also noticed the huge waste of time there. I observed too, with sorrow even then, the prominent place that the English language occupied in our affairs. There was little regard for economy of energy. [T3] More than one did the work of one, and many an important thing was no one's business at all.

Critical as my mind was in observing these things, there was enough charity in me, and so I always thought that it might, after all, be impossible to do better in the circumstances, and that saved me from undervaluing any work.[T4]

CHAPTER XV : IN THE CONGRESS

In the Congress at last. The immense pavilion and the volunteers in stately array, as also the elders seated on the dais, overwhelmed [T1] me. I wondered[T2] where I should be in that vast assemblage.

The presidential address was a book by itself. To read it from cover to cover was out of the question. Only a few passages were therefore read.

After this came the election of the Subjects Committee. Gokhale took me to the Committee meetings.

Sir Pherozeshah had of course agreed to admit my resolution, but I was wondering who would put it before the Subjects Committee, and when. For there were lengthy speeches to every resolution, all in English to boot, and every resolution had some wellknown leader to back it. Mine was but a feeble pipe amongst those veteran drums, and as the night was closing in, my heart beat fast. The resolutions coming at the fag-end were, so far as I can recollect, rushed through at lightning speed. [T3] Everyone was hurrying to go. It was 11 o'clock. I had not the courage to speak. I had already met Gokhale, who had looked at my resolution. So I drew near his chair and whispered to him: 'Please do something for me.' He said: 'Your resolution is not out of my mind. You see the way they are rushing through the resolutions. But I will not allow yours to be passed over.'

'So we have done?' said Sir Pherozeshah Mehta.

'No, no, there is still the resolution on South Africa. Mr. Gandhi

has been waiting long,' cried out Gokhale.

'Have you seen the resolution?' asked Sir Pherozeshah.

'Of course.'

'Do you like it?'

'It is quite good.'

'Well then, let us have it, Gandhi.'

I read it trembling.

Gokhale supported it.

'Unanimously passed,' cried out everyone.

'You will have five minutes to speak to it Gandhi,' said Mr. Wacha.

The procedure was far from pleasing to me. No one had troubled to understand the resolution, everyone was in a hurry to go and, because Gokhale had seen the resolution, it was not thought necessary for the rest to see it or understand it!

The morning found me worrying about my speech. What was I to say in five minutes ? I had prepared myself fairly well but the words would not come to me. I had decided not to read my speech but to speak extempore. But the facility for speaking that I had acquired in South Africa seemed to have left me for the moment.

As soon as it was time for my resolution, Mr. Wacha called out my name. I stood up. My head was reeling. I read the resolution some-how. someone had printed and distributed amongst the delegates copies of a poem he had written in praise of foreign emigration. I read the poem and referred to the grievances of the settlers in South Africa. Just at this moment Mr. Wacha rang the bell. I was sure I had not yet spoken for five minutes. I did not know that the bell was rung in order to warn me to finish in two minutes more. I had heard others speak for half an hour or three quarters of an hour, and yet no bell was rung for them. I felt hurt and sat down as soon as the bell was rung.[1] But my childlike intellect thought then that the poem contained an answer to Sir Pherozeshah. There was no question about the passing of the resolution. In those days there was hardly any diference between visitors and delegates. Everyone raised his hand and all resolutions passed unanimously. My resolution also fared in this wise and so lost all its importance for me. And yet the very fact that it was passed by the Congress was enough to delight my heart. The knowledge that the *imprimatur* of the Congress meant that of the

[1] For the text of the resolution and Gandhiji's speech, *vide* "Speech at Calcutta Congress", December 27, 1901.

whole country was enough to delight anyone.

CHAPTER XVI : LORD CURZON'S DURBAR

The Congress was over, but as I had to meet the Chamber of Commerce and various people in connection with work in South Africa, I stayed in Calcutta for a month. Rather than stay this time in a hotel, I arranged to get the required introduction for a room in the India Club. Among its members were some prominent Indians, and I looked forward to getting into touch with them and interesting them in the work in South Africa. Gokhale frequently went to this Club to play billiards, and when he knew that I was to stay in Calcutta for some time, he invited me to stay with him. I thankfully accepted the invitation, but did not think it proper to go there by myself. He waited for a day or two and then took me personally. He discovered my reserve and said : 'Gandhi, you have to stay in the country, and this sort of reserve will not do. You must get into touch with as many people as possible. I want you to do Congress work.'

I shall record here an incident in the India Club, before I proceed to talk of my stay with Gokhale.

Lord Curzon held his durbar about this time. Some Rajas and Maharajas who had been invited to the durbar were members of the Club. [T1] In the Club I always found them wearing fine Bengali dhotis and shirts and scarves. On the durbar day they put on trousers[T2] befitting *khansamas*[1] and shining boots. I was pained and inquired of one of them the reason for the change.

'We alone know our unfortunate condition. We alone know the insults we have to put up with, in order that we may possess our wealth and titles,' he replied.

'But what about these *khansama* turbans and these shining boots?' I asked.

'Do you see any difference between *khansamas* and us?' he replied, and added, 'they are our *khansamas*, we are Lord Curzon's *khansamas*. If I were to absent myself from the levee, I should have to suffer the consequences. If I were to attend it in my usual dress, it should be an offence. And do you think I am going to get any opportunity there of talking to Lord Curzon? Not a bit of it!'

I was moved to pity for this plain-spoken friend.

This reminds me of another durbar.

At the time when Lord Hardinge laid the foundation-stone of Hindu University, there was a durbar. There were Rajas and Maharajas

[1] Waiters

of course, but Pandit Malaviyaji specially invited me also to attend it, and I did so.

I was distressed to see Maharajas bedecked like women—silk pyjamas and silk *achkans*, pearl necklaces round their necks, bracelets on their wrists, pearl and diamond tassels on their turbans and, besides all this, swords with golden hilts hanging from their waist-bands.

I discovered [T3] that these were insignia not of their royalty, but of their slavery. I had thought that they must be wearing these badges of impotence of thier own free will, but I was told that it was obligatory for these Rajas to wear all their costly jewels at such functions. I also gathered that some of them had a positive dislike for wearing these jewels, and that they never wore them except on occasions like the durbar.

I do not know how far my information was correct. But whether they wear them on other occasions or not, it is distressing enough to have to attend viceregal durbars[T4] in jewels that only some women wear.

How heavy is the toll of sins and wrongs that wealth, power and prestige exact from man !

CHAPTER XVII : A MONTH WITH GOKHALE—I

From the very first day of my stay with him Gokhale made me feel completely at home. He treated me as though I were his younger brother, he acquainted himself with all my requirements and arranged to see that I got all I needed. Fortunately my wants were few, and as I had cultivated the habit of self-help, I needed very little personal attendance. He was deeply impressed with my habit of fending for myself, my personal cleanliness, perseverance and regularity, and would often overwhelm me with praise.

He seemed to keep nothing private from me. He would introduce me to all the important people that called on him. Of these the one who stands foremost in my memory is Dr. (now Sir) P. C. Ray. He lived practically next door and was a very frequent visitor.

This is how he introduced Dr. Ray : ‘This is Prof. Ray who, having a monthly salary of Rs. 800, keeps just Rs. 40 for himself and devotes the balance to public purposes. He is not, and does not want to get married.’

I see little difference between Dr. Ray as he is today and as he used to be then. His dress used to be nearly as simple as it is, with this difference of course that whereas it is khadi now, it used to be [T1] Indian mill-cloth in those days. I felt I could never hear too much of the talks between Gokhale and Dr. Ray, as they all pertained to public good or

were of educative value. At times they were painful too, containing, as they did, strictures on public men. As a result, some of those whom I had regarded as stalwart fighters began to look quite puny.

To see Gokhale at work was as much a joy as an education. He never wasted a minute. His private relations and friendships were all for public good. All his talks had reference only to the good of the country and were absolutely free from any trace of untruth or insincerity. India's poverty and subjection were matters of constant and intense concern to him. Various people sought to interest him in different things. But he gave every one of them the same reply : 'You do the thing yourself. Let me do my own work. What I want is freedom for my country. After that is won, we can think of other things. Today that one thing is enough to engage all my time and energy.'

His reverence for Ranade could be seen every moment. Ranade's authority was final in every matter, and he would cite it at every step. The anniversary of Ranade's death (or birth, Iforget which) occurred during my stay with Gokhale, who observed it regularly. There were with him then, besides myself, his friends Prof. Kathavate and a Sub-Judge. He invited us to take part in the celebrations and in his speech[T2] he gave us his reminiscences of Ranade. He compared incidentally Ranade, Telang[1] and Mandlik[2] . He eulogized Telang's charming style and Mandlik's greatness as a reformer. Citing an instance of Mandlik's solicitude for his clients, he told us an anecdote as to how once, having missed his usual train, he engaged a special train so as to be able to attend the court in the interest of his client. But Ranade, he said, towered above them all, as a versatile genius. He was not only a great judge, he was an equally great historian, an economist and a reformer. Although he was a judge, he fearlessly attended the Congress, and everyone had such confidence in his sagacity that they unquestioningly accepted his decisions. Gokhale's joy knew no bounds, as he described these qualities of head and heart which were all combined in his master.

Gokhale used to have a horse-carriage in those days. I did not know the circumstances that had made a horse-carriage a necessity for him, and so I remonstrated with him: 'Can't you make use of the tram- car in going about form place to place? Is it derogatory to a

[1] Justice Telang of the Bombay High Court, one of the founders of the Indian National Congress

[2] R. N. Mandlik, a member of the Executive Committee, Satyagraha Sabha, Bombay

leader's dignity?'

Slightly pained, he said, 'So you also have failed to understand me! I do not use my Council allowances for my own personal comforts. I envy your liberty to go about in tram-cars, but I am sorry I cannot do likewise. When you are the victim of as wide a publicity as I am, it will be difficult, if not impossible, for you to go about in a tramcar. There is no reason to suppose that everything that the leaders do is with a view to personal comfort. I love your simple habits. I live as simply as I can, but some expense is almost inevitable for a man like myself.'

He thus satisfactorily disposed of one of my complaints,[1] but there was another which he could not dispose of to my satisfaction.

'But you do not even go out for walks,' said I. 'Is it surprising that you should be always ailing? Should public work leave no time for physical exercise?'

'When do you ever find me free to go out for a walk?' he replied.

I had such a great regard for Gokhale that I never strove with him. Though this reply was far from satisfying me, I remained silent. I believed then and I belive even now, that, no matter what amount of work one has, one should always find some time for exercise, just as one does for one's meals. It is my humble opinion that, far from taking away from one's capacity for work, it adds to it.

CHAPTER XVIII : A MONTH WITH GOKHALE—II

Whilst living under Gokhale's roof I was far from being a stay-at-home.

I had told my Christian friends in South Africa that in India I would meet the Christian Indians and acquaint myself with their condition. I had heard of Babu Kalicharan Banerji and held hin in high regard. He took a prominent part in the Congress, and I had none of the misgivings about him that I had about the average Christian Indian, who stood aloof from the Congress and isolated himself from Hindus and Mussalmans. I told Gokhale that I was thinking of meeting him. He said: 'What is the good of your seeing him? He is a very good man, but I am afraid he will not satisfy you. I know him very well. However, you can certainly meet him if you like.'

I sought an appointment, which he readily gave me. When I went, I found that his wife was on her death-bed. His house was

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", january 30, 1902.

simple. In the Congress I had seen him in a coat and trousers, but I was glad to find [T1] him now wearing a Bengal dhoti and shirt. I liked his simple mode of dress, though I myself then wore a Parsi coat and trousers. Without much ado I presented my difficulties to him. He asked: 'Do you believe in the doctrine of original sin?'

'I do,' said I.

'Well then, Hinduism offers no absolution therefrom, Christianity does,' and added: 'The wages of sin is death, and the Bible says that the only way of deliverance is surrender unto Jesus.'

I put forward *Bhakti-marga* (the path of devotion) of the *Bhagavad Gita*, but to no avail. I thanked him for his goodness. He failed to satisfy me, but I benefited by the interview.

During these days I walked up and down the streets of Calcutta. I went to most places on foot. I met Justice Mitter and Sir Gurudas Banerji, whose I wanted in my work in South Africa. And about this time I met Raja Sir Pyarimohan Mukarji.

Kalicharan Benerji had spoken to me about the Kali temple, which I was eager to see, especially as I had read about it in the books. So I went there one day. Justice Mitter's house was in the some locality, and I therefore went to the temple on the same day that I visited him. On the way I saw a stream of sheep going to be sacrificed to Kali. Rows of beggars lined the lane leading to the temple. There were religious mendicants too, and even in those days I was sternly opposed to giving alms to sturdy beggars. A crowd of them pursued me. One of such men was found seated on a verandah. He stopped me, and accosted me: 'Whither are you going, my boy?' I replied to him.

He asked my companion and me to sit down, which we did.

I asked him: 'Do you regard this sacrifics as religion ?'

'Who would regard killing of animals as religion ?'

'Then, why don't you preach against it ?'

'That's not my business. Our business is to worship God.'

'But could you not find any other place in which to worship God ?'

'All places are equally good for us. The people are like a flock of sheep, following where leaders lead them. It is no business of us sadhus.'

We did not prolong the discussion but passed on to the temple. We were greeted by rivers[T2] of blood. I could not bear to stand there. I was exasperated [T3] and restless. I have never forgotten that sight.

That very evening I had an invitation to dinner at a party of

Bengali friends. There I spoke to a friend about this cruel form of worship. He said: 'The sheep[T4] don't feel anything. The noise and the drum-beating there deaden all sensation of pain.'

I could not swallow this. I told him that, if the sheep had speech, they would tell a different tale. I felt that the cruel custom ought to be stopped. I thought of the story of Buddha, but I also saw that the task was beyond my capacity.

I hold today the same opinion as I held then. To my mind the life of a lamb is no less precious than that of a human being. I should be un-willing to take the life of a lamb for the sake of the human body. I hold that, the more helpless a creature, the more entitled it is to protection by man from the cruelty of man. But he who has not qualified himself for such service is unable to afford to it any protection. I must go through[T5] more self-purification and sacrifice, before I can hope to save these lambs from this unholy sacrifice. Today I think I must die pining for this self-purification and sacrifice. It is my constant prayer that there may be born on earth some great spirit, man or woman, fired with divine pity, who will deliver us from this heinous sin, save the lives of the innocent creatures, and purify the temple. How is it that Bengal with all its knowledge, intelligence, sacrifice, and emotion[T6] tolerates this slaughter ?

CHAPTER XIX : A MONTH WITH GOKHALE—III

The terrible sacrifice offered to Kali in the name of religion enhanced my desire to know Bengali life. I had read and heard a good deal about the Brahmo Samaj[1]. I knew something about the life of Pratap Chandra Mazmudar[2] . I had attended some of the meetings addressed by him. I secured his *Life of Keshav Chandra Sen*[3], read it with great interest, and understood the distinction between Sadharan Brahmo Samaji and Adi Brahmo Samji. I met Pandit Shivanath Shastri and in company with Prof. Kathavate went to see Maharshi Devendranath Tagore, but as no interviews with him were allowedthen, we could not see him. We were, however, invited to a celebration of the Brahmo Samaj held at his place, and there we had the privilege of listening to fine Bengali music. Ever since I have been a lover of Bengali music.

Having seen enough of the Brahmo Samaj, [T1] it was impossible to

[1] Founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy in 1828
[2] Brahmo Samaj leaders
[3] *ibid*

be satisfied without seeing Swami Vivekanand[1]. So with great enthusiasm I went to Belur Math, mostly, or maybe all the way, on foot. I loved the sequestered site of the Math. I was disappointed and sorry to be told that the Swami was at his Calcutta house, lying ill, and could not be seen.

I then ascertained the place of residence of Sister Nivedita[2], and met her in a Chowringhee mansion. I was taken aback by the splendour that surrounded her, and even in our conversation, there was not much meeting ground. I spoke to Gokhale about this, and he said he did not wonder that there could be no point of contact between me and a volatile[3] person like her.

I met her again at Mr. Pestonji Padshah's[4] place. I happened to come in just as she was talking to his old mother, and so Ibecame an interpreter between the two. In spite of my failure to find any agreement with her, I could not but notice and admire her over flowing love for Hindusim. I came to know[T2] of her books later.

I used to divide my day between seeing the leading people in Calcutta regarding the work in South Africa, and visiting and studying the religious and public institutions of the city. I once addressed a meeting, presided over by Dr. Mullick, on the work of the Indian Ambulance Corps in the Boer War. My acquaintance with *The Englishman* stood me in good stead on this occasion too. Mr. Saunders was ill then but rendered me as much help as in 1896. Gokhale liked this speech of mine, and he was very glad to hear Dr. Ray praising it.

Thus my stay under the roof of Gokhale made my work in Calcutta very easy, brought me into touch with the foremost Bengali Families, and was the beginning of my intimate contact with Bengal.

I must needs skip over many a reminiscence of this memorable

[1] 1863-1902; disciple of Swami Ramakrishna and eminent exponent of Vedantic philosophy

[2] Margaret Noble (1867-1911); an Irish disciple of Swami Vivekananda

[3] At the time when Gandhiji saw her, Sister Nivedita was the guest of two ladies at the American consulate. She was not therefore responsible for 'the splendour that surrounded her'. What word Gokhale used for 'volatile', Gandhiji could not recall. The word used in the original Gujarati writing is *tej*, which would in this context mean "of overbearing temper", Both Gandhiji and Mahadev Desai had doubts about its translation. The choice lay between 'volatile', 'violent' and 'fanatical'. Mahadev had chosen 'volatile' and Gandhiji approved it without the dictionary meaning in view. When *Modern Review* pointed out the errors, Gandhiji corrected them in a note; *vide* "Notes", July 1, 1927.

[4] *Vide* Chapter XXVII.

month. Let me simply mention my flying visi T3 to Burma, and the *foongis*[1] there. I was pained by their lethargy. I saw the golden pagoda. I did not like the innumerable little candles burning in the temple, and the rats running about the sanctum brought to my mind thoughts of Swami Dayanand's at Morvi.[2] The freedom and energy of the Burmese women charmed just as the indolence of the men pained me. I also saw, during my brief sojourn, that just as Bombay was not India, Rangoon was not Burma, and that just as we in India have become commission agents of English merchants, even so in Burma have we combined with the English merchants in making the Burmese people our commission agents.

On my return from Burma I took leave of Gokhale. The separation was a wrench, but my work in Bengal, or rather Calcutta, was finished, and I had no occasion to stay any longer.

Before settling down I had thought of making a T3 tour through India travelling third class, and of acquainting myself with the hardships of third-class passengers. I spoke to Gokhale about this. To begin with he ridiculed the idea, but when I explained to him what I hoped to see, he cheerfully approved. I planned to go first to Benares to pay my respects to Mrs. Besant, who was then ill.

It was necessary to equip myself anew for the third-class tour. Gokhale himself gave me a metal tiffin-box and got it filled with sweetballs and *puris*. I purchased a canvas bag worth twelve annas and a long coat made of Chhaya[3] wool. The bag was to contain this coat, a dhoti, a towel and a shirt. I had a blanket as well to cover myself with and a water jug. Thus equipped I set forth on my travels. Gokhale and Dr. Ray came to the station to see me off. I had asked them both not to trouble to come, but they insisted. 'I should not have come if you had gone first class, but now I had to,' said Gokhale.

No one stopped Gokhale from going on to the platform. He was in his silk turban, jacket and dhoti. Dr. Ray was in his Bengali dress. He was stopped by the ticket collector, but on Gokhale's telling him that he was his friend, he was admitted.

Thus with their good wishes I started on my journey.

CHAPTER XX : IN BENARES

The journey was from Calcutta to Rajkot, and I planned to halt

[1] Monks

[2] At the age of 14, he went through a crisis when he kept vigil in a Siva temple on the Shivaratri night. There, the young lad was shocked to find mice frolicking over the image of the deity.

[3] A place in Porbandar State noted locally for its coarse woollen fabrics

at Benares, Agra, Jaipur and Palanpur *en route*. I had not the time to see any more places than these. In each city I stayed one day and put up in dharmsalas or with *pandas*[1] like the ordinary pilgrims, excepting at Palanpur. So far as I can remember, I did not spend more than Rs. 31 (including the train fare) on this journey.

In travelling third class I mostly preferred the ordinary to the mail trains, as I knew that the latter were more crowded and the fares in them higher.

The third-class compartments are practically as dirty, and the closet arrangements as bad, today as they were then.[T1] There may be a little improvement now, but the difference between the facilities provided for the first and the third classes is[T2] out of all proportion to the difference between the fares for the two classes. Third-class passengers are treated like sheep and their comforts are sheep's comforts. In Europe I travelled third—and only once first just to see what it was like—but there I noticed no such difference between the first and the third classes. In South Africa third-class passengers are mostly Negores, yet the third-class comforts are better there than here. In parts of South Africa third-class compartments are provided with sleeping accommodation and cushioned seats. The accommodation is also regulated, so as to prevent overcrowding, whereas here I have found the regulation limit usually exceeded.[T3]

The indifference of the railway authorities to the comforts of the third-class passengers, combined with the dirty and inconsiderate habits of the passengers themselves, makes third-class travelling a trial for a passenger of cleanly ways. These unpleasant habits commonly include throwing of rubbish on the floor of the compartment, smoking at all hours and in all places, betel and tobacco chewing converting of the whole carriage into a spittoon,[T4] shouting and yelling, and using foul language, regardless of the convenience or comfort of fellow-passengers. I have noticed little difference between my experience of the third-class travelling in 1902 and that of my unbroken third-class tours from 1915 to 1919.

I can think of only one remedy for this awful state of things—that educated men should make a point of travelling third class and reforming the habits of the people, as also of never letting the railway authorities rest in peace, sending in complaints whereever necessary, never resorting to bribes or any unlawful means for obtaining their own comforts, and never putting up with infringements of rules on the part of anyone concerned. This, I am sure, would bring about consi-

[1] Priests

derable improvement.

My serious illness in 1918-19 has unfortunately compelled me practically to give up third-class travelling, and it has been a matter of constant pain and shame to me, especially because the disability came at a time when the agitation for the removal of the hardships of third-class passengers was making fair headway. The hardships of poor railway and steamship passengers, accentuated by their bad habits, the undue facilities allowed by Government to foreign trade, and such other things, make an important group of subjects, worthy to be taken up by one or two enterprising and persevering workers who could devote their full time to it.

But I shall leave the third-class passengers at that, and come to my experience in Benares. I arrived there in the morning. I had decided to put up with a *panda*. Numerous Brahmins surrounded me as soon as I got out of the train, and I selected one who struck me to be comparatively cleaner and better than the rest. It proved to be a good choice. There was a cow in the courtyard of his house and an upper storey where I was given a lodging. I did not want to have any food without ablution in the Ganges in the proper orthodox manner. The *panda* made preparations for it. I had told him beforehand that on no account could I give him more than a rupee and four annas as *dakshina*[1] , and that he should therefore keep this in mind while making the preparations.

The *panda* readily assented. 'Be the pilgrim rich or poor,' said he, 'the service is the same in every case. But the amount of *dakshina* we receive depends upon the will and the ability of the pilgrim. I did not find that the *panda* at all abridged the usual formalities in my case. The *puja*[2] was over at 12 o'clock, and I went to the Kashi Vishvanath temple for *darshan*[3] . I was deeply pained by what I saw there. When practising as a barrister in Bombay in 1891, I had occasion to attend a lecture on 'Pilgrimage to Kashi' in the Prarthana Samaj hall. I was therefore prepared for some measure of disappointment. But the actual disappointment was greater than I had bargained for.

The approach was through a narrow and slippery lane. Quiet there was none. The swarming flies and the noise made by the shopkeepers and pilgrims were perfectly insufferable.

Where one expected an atmosphere of meditation and communion, it was conspicuous by its absence. One had to seek that

[1] Gift
[2] Worship
[3] Sight of person or object considered holy

atmosphere in oneself. I did observe devout sisters, who were absorbed in meditation, entirely unconscious of the environment. But for this the authorities of the temple could scarcely claim any credit. The authorities should be res-ponsible for creating and maintaining about the temple a pure, sweet and serene atmosphere, physical as well as moral. Instead of this I found a bazar where cunning shopkeepers were selling sweets and toys of the latest fashion.

When I reached the temple. I was greeted at the entrance by a stinking mass of rotten flowers. The floor was paved with fine marble, which was however broken by some devotee innocent of aesthetic taste who had set it with rupees serving as an excellent receptacle for dirt.

I went near the *Jnana-vapi* (well of knowledge). I searched here for God but failed to find Him. I was not therefore in particularly good mood. The surroundings of the *Jnana-vapi* too I found to be dirty. I had no mind to give any *dakshina*. So I offered a pie. The *panda* in charge got angry and threw away the pie. He swore at me and said: 'This insult will take you straight to hell.'

This did not perturb me. 'Maharaj,' said I, 'whatever fate has in store for me, it does not behove one of your class to indulge in such[T5] language. You may take this pie if you like, or you will lose that too.'

'Go away,' he replied, 'I don't care for your pie.' And then followed a further volley of abuse.

I took up the pie and went my way, flattering myself that the Brahmin had lost a pie and I had saved one. But the Maharaj was hardly the man to let the pie go. He called me back and said, 'All right, leave the pie here, I would rather not be as you are. If I refuse your pie, it will be bad for you.'

I silently gave him the pie and, with a sigh, went away.

Since then I have twice been to Kashi Vishvanath, but that has been after I had already been afflicted with the title of Mahatma and experiences such as I have detailed above had become impossible. People eager to have my *darshan* would not permit me to have a *darshan* of the temple. The woes of mahatmas are known to mahat-mas alone.[T6] Otherwise the dirt and the noise were the same before.

If anyone dubts the infinite mercy of God, let him have a look at these sacred palces. How much hypocrisy and irreligion does the Prince of Yogis suffer to be perpetrated in His holy name? He proclaimed long ago :

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तचैव भजाम्यहम् ।[1]

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, IV. 11

‘Whatever a man sows, that shall he reap.’ The law of karma is inexorable and impossible of evasion. There is thus hardly any need for God to interfere. He laid down the law and, as it were, retired.

After this visit to the temple, I waited upon Mrs. Besant. I knew that she had just recovered from an illness. I sent in my name. She came at once. As I wished only to pay my respects to her, I said, ‘I am aware that you are in delicate health. I only wanted to pay my respects. I am thankful that you have been good enough to receive me in spite of your indifferent health. I will not detain you any longer.’

So saying, I took leave of her.

CHAPTER XXI : SETTLED IN BOMBAY [T1]

Gokhale was very anxious that I should settle down in Bombay, practise at the bar and help him in public work. Public work in those days meant Congress work, and the chief work of the institution which he had assisted to found[T2] was carrying on the Congress administration.

I liked Gokhale’s advice, [T3] but I was not overconfident of success as a barrister. The unpleasant memories of past failure were yet with me, and I still hated as poison the use of flattery for getting briefs.

I therefore decided to start work first at Rajkot. Kevalram Mavji Dave, my old well-wisher, who had induced me to go to England, was there, and he started me straightaway with three briefs. Two of them were appeals before the Judicial Assistant to the Political Agent in Kathiawad and one was an original case in Jamnagar. This last was rather important. On my saying that I could not trust myself to do it justice, Kevalram Dave exclaimed: ‘Winning or losing is no concern of yours. You will simply try your best, and I am of course there to assist you.’

The counsel on the other side was the late Sjt. Samarth. I was fairly well prepared. Not that I knew much of Indian law, but Kevalram Dave had instructed me very thoroughly. I had heard friends say, before I went out to South Africa, that Sir Pherozeshah Mehta had the law of evidence at his finger-tips and that was the secret of his success. I had borne this in mind, and during the voyage had carefully studied the Indian Evidence Act with commentaries thereon. There was of course also the advantage of my legal experience in South Africa.

I won the case and gained some confidence. I had no fear about the appeals, which were succeesful. All this inspired a hope in me that after all I might not fail even in Bombay.

But before I set forth the circumstances in which I decided to go to Bombay, I shall narrate my experience of the inconsiderateness and ignorance of English officials. The Judicial Assistant's court was peripatetic. He was constantly touring, and *vakils* and their clients had to follow him wherever he moved his camp. The *vakils* would charge more whenever they had to go out of headquarters, and so the clients had naturally to incur double the expenses. The inconvenience was no concern of the judge.

The appeal of which I am talking was to be heard at Veraval where plague was raging. I have a recollection that there were as many as fifty cases daily in the place with a population of 5,500. It was practically deserted, and I put up in a deserted dharmsala at some distance from the town. But where the clients to stay? If they were poor, they had simply to trust themselves to God's mercy.

A friend who also had cases before the court had wired[T4] that I should put in an application for the camp to be moved to some other station because of the plague at Veraval. On my submitting the application, the sahib asked me: 'Are you afraid?'

I answered: 'It is not a question of my being afraid, I think I can shift for myself, but what about the clients?'

'The plague has come to stay in India,' replied the sahib. 'Why fear it ? The climate of Veraval is lovely. (The sahib lived far away from the town in a palatial tent pitched on the seashore.) Surely people must learn to live in the open.'

It was no use arguing against this philosophy. The sahib told his *shirastedar*: 'Make a note of what Mr. Gandhi says, and let me know if it is very inconvenient for the *vakils* or the clients.'

The sahib of course had honestly done what he thought was the right thing. But how could the man have an idea of the hardships of poor India? How was he to understand the needs, habits, idiosyncrasies and customs of the people? How was one accustomed to measure things in gold sovereigns, all at once to make calculations in tiny bits of copper ? As the elephant is powerless to think in the terms of the ant, in spite of the best intentions in the world, even so is the Englishman powerless to think in the terms of, or legislate for, the Indian.

But to resume the thread of the story. In spite of my successes, I had been thinking of staying on in Rajkot for some time longer when one day Kevalram Dave came to me and said: 'Gandhi, we will not suffer you to vegetate here. You must settle in Bombay.'

'But who will find work for me there ?' I asked. 'Will you find the expenses ?'

‘Yes, yes, I will,’ said he. ‘We shall bring you down here sometimes as a big barrister from Bombay and drafting work we shall send you there. It lies with us *vakils* to make or mar a barrister. You have proved your worth in Jamnagar and Veraval, and I have therefore not the least anxiety about you. You are destined to do public work, and we will not allow you to be buried in Kathiawad. So tell me, then, when you will go to Bombay.’

‘I am expecting a remittance from Natal. As soon as I get it I will go,’ I replied.

The money came in about two weeks, and I went to Bombay. I took chambers in Payne, Gilbert and Sayani’s offices, and it looked as though I had settled down.

CHAPTER XXII : FAITH ON ITS TRIAL

Though I had hired chambers in the Fort and a house in Girgaum, God would not let me settle down. Scarcely had I moved into my new house when my second son Manilal, who had already been through an acute attack of smallpox some years back, had a severe attack of typhoid, combined with pneumonia and signs of delirium at night.

The doctor was called in. He said medicine would have little effect, but eggs and chicken broth might be given with profit.

Manilal was only ten years old. To consult his wishes was out of the question. Being his guardian I had to decide. The doctor was a very good Parsi. I told him that we were all vegetarians and that I could not possibly give either of the two things to my son. Would he therefore recommed something else ?

‘Your son’s life is in danger,’ said the good doctor. ‘We could give him milk diluted with water, but that will not give him enough nourishment. As you know, I am called in by many Hindu families, and they do not object to anything I precribe. I think you will be well advised not to be so hard on your son.’

‘What you say is quite right,’ said I. ‘As a doctor you could not do otherwise. But my responsibility is very great. If the boy had been grown up, I should certainly have tried to ascertain his wishes and respected them. But here I have to think and decide for him. To my mind it is only on such occasions that a man’s faith is truly tested. Rightly or wrongly it is part of my religious conviction that man may not eat meat, eggs, and the like. There sould be a limit even to the means of keeping ourselves alive. Even for life itself we may not do certain things. Reli-gion, as I understand it, does not permit me to use meat or eggs for me or mine even on occassions like this, and I must

therefore take the risk that you say is likely. But I beg of you one thing. As I cannot avail myself of your treatement, I Propose to try some hydropathic remedies which I happen to know. But I shall not know how to examine the boy's pulse, chest, lungs etc. If you will kindly look in from time to time examine and keep me informed of his condition, I shall be grateful to you.

The good doctor appreciated my difficulty and agreed to my request. Though Manilal could not have made his choice, I told him what had passed between the doctor and myself and asked him his opinion.

'Do try your hydropathic treatment,' he said. 'I will not have eggs or chicken broth.'

This made me glad, though I realized that, if I had given him either of these, he would have taken it.

I knew Kuhne's treatment and had tried it too. I knew as well that fasting also could be tried with profit. So I began to give Manilal hip-baths according to Kuhne, never keeping him in the tub for more than three minutes, and kept him on orange juice mixed with water for three days.

But the temperature persisted, going up to 104∞. At night he would be delirous. I began to get anxious. What would people say of me ? [T1] What would my elder brother think of me ? Could we not call in another doctor ? Why not have an Ayurvedic physician ? What right had the parents to inflict their fads on their children ?

I was haunted by toughts like these. Then a contrary current would start. God would surely be pleased to see that I was giving[T2] the same treatement to my son as I would give myself. I had faith in hydropathy, and little faith in allopathy. The doctors could not guarantee recovery. At best they could experiment. The thread of life was in the hands of God. Why not trust it to Him and in His name go on with what I thought was the right reatment ?

My mind was torn between these conflicting thougts. It was night. I was in Manilal's bed lying by his side. I decided to give him a wet sheet pack. I got up, wetted a sheet, [T3] wrung the water out of it and wrapped it about Manilal, keeping only his head out and then covered him with two blankets. To the head I applied a wet towel. The whole body was burning like hot iron, and quite parched. There was absolutely no perspiration.

I was sorely tired. I left Manilal in the charge of his mother, and went out for a walk on Chaupati to refresh myself. It was about ten o'clock. Very few pedestrians were out. Plunged in deep thoughts, I scarcely looked at them. 'My honour is in Thy keeping, oh Lord, in

this hour or trial,' I repeated to myself. Ramanama was on my lips. After a short time I returned, my heart beating within my breast.

No sooner had I entered the room than Manilal said, 'You have returned, Bapu ?'

'Yes, darling.'

'Do please pull me out. I am burning.'

'Are you perspiring, my boy ?'

'I am simply soaked. Do please take me out.'

I felt his forehead. It was covered with beads of perspiration. The temperature was going down. I thanked God.

'Manilal, your fever is sure to go now. A little more perspiration and then I will take you out.'

'Pray, no. Do deliver me from this furnace. Warp me some other time if you like.'

I just[T4] managed to keep him under the pack for a few minutes more by diverting him. The perspiration streamed down his forehead. I undid the pack and dried his body. Father and son fell asleep in the same bed.

And each slept like a log. Next morning Manilal had much less fever. He went on thus for forty days on diluted milk and fruit juice. I had no fear now. It was an obstinate type of fever, but it had been got under control.

Today each slept like a log. Next morning Manilal had much less fever. He went on thus for forty days on diluted milk and fruit juices. I had no fear now. It was an obstinate type of fever, but it had been got under control.

Today Manilal is the healthiest of my boys. Who can say whether his recovery was due to God's grace, or to hydropathy, or to careful dietary and nursing ? Let everyone decide according to his own faith. For my part I was sure that God had saved my honour, and that belief remains unaltered to this day.

CHAPTER XXIII : TO SOUTH AFRICA AGAIN

Manilal was restored to health, but I saw that the Girgaum house was not habitable. It was damp and ill-lighted. So in consultation with Shri Revashankar Jagjivan I decided to hire some well-ventilated bungalow in a suburb of Bombay. I wandered about in Bandra and Santa Cruz. The slaughter-house in Bandra prevented our choice falling there. Ghatkopar and places near it were too far from the sea. At last we hit upon a fine bungalow in Santa Cruz, which we hired as being the best from the point of view of sanitation.

I took a first-class season ticket from Santa Cruz to Chruchgate, and remember having frequently felt a certain pride in being the only first-class passenger in my compartment. Often I walked to Bandra in order to take the fast train from there direct to Churchgate.

I prospered in my profession better than I had expected. My South African clients often entrusted me with some work, and it was [T1] enough to enable me to pay my way.

I had not yet succeeded in securing any work in the High Court, but I attended the 'moot' that used to be held in those days, though I never ventured to take part in it. I recall Jamiatram Nanabhai taking a prominent part. Like other fresh barristers I made a point of attending the hearing of cases in the High Court, more, I am afraid, for enjoying the soporific breeze coming straight from the sea than for adding to my knowledge. I observed that I was not the only one to enjoy this plesure. It seemed to be the fashion and therefore nothing to be ashamed of.

However I began to make use of the High Court library and make fresh acquaintances and felt that before long I should secure work in the High Court.

Thus whilst on the one hand I began to feel somewhat at ease about my profession, on the other hand Gokhale, whose eyes were always on me, had been busy making his own plans on my behalf. He peeped in at my chambers twice or thrice every week, often in company with friends whom he wanted me to know, and he kept me acquainted with his mode of work.

But it may be said that God has never allowed any of my own plans to stand. He has disposed them in His own way.

Just when I seemed to be settling down as I had intended, I received an unexpected cable from South Africa: 'Chamberlain expected here. Please return immediately.' I remembered my promise and cabled to say that I should be ready to start the moment they put me in funds. They promptly responded, I gave up the chambers and started for South Africa.[1]

I had an idea that the work there would keep me engaged for at least a year, so I kept the bungalow and left[T2] my wife and children there.

I believed then that enterprising youths who could not find an opening in the country should emigrate to other lands. I therefore took with me four or five such youths, one of whom was Maganlal

[1] This was about November 20, 1902 *vide* "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", November 14, 1902.

Gandhi.

The Gandhis were and are a big family. I wanted to find out all those who wished to leave the trodden path and venture abroad. [T3] My father used to accommodate a number of them in some State service. I wanted them to be free from this spell. I neither could nor would secure other service for them; I wanted them to be self-reliant.

But as my ideals advanced[T4], I tried to persuade these youths also to conform their ideals to mine, and I had the greatest success in guiding Maganlal Gandhi. But about this later.

The separation from wife and children, the breaking up of a settled establishment,[T5] and the going from the certain to the uncertain—all this was for a moment painful, but I had inured myself to an uncertain life. I think it is wrong to expect certainties in this world, where all else but God that is Truth is an uncertainty. All that appears and happens about and around us is uncertain, transient. But there is a Supreme Being hidden therein as a certainty, and one would be blessed if one could catch a glimpse of that Certainty and hitch one's waggon to it. The quest for that Truth is the *summun bonum* of life.

I reached Durban not a day too soon. There was work waiting for me. The date for the deputation to wait on Mr. Chamberlain had been fixed. I had to draft the memorial to be submitted to him and accompany the deputation.[1]

PART IV

CHAPTER I : 'LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST' ?

Mr. Chamberlain had come to get a gift of 35 million pounds from South Africa, and to win the hearts of Englishmen and [T1] Boers . So he gave a cold shoulder to the Indian deputation.

'You know,' he said, 'that the Imperial Government has little control over self-governing Colonies. Your grievances seem to be genuine. I shall do what I can, but you must try your best to placate the Europeans, if you wish to live in their midst.'

The reply cast a chill over the members of the deputation. I was also disappointed. It was an eye-opener for us all, and I saw that we should start with our work *de novo*. I explained the situation to my colleagues.

As a matter of fact there was nothing wrong about Mr. Chamberlain's reply. It was well that he did not mince matters. He had brought home to us in a rather gentle way the rule of might being right or the law of the sword.

[1] *Vide* "Petition to Chamberlain", December 27, 1902.

But sword we had none. We scarcely had the nerve and the muscle even to receive sword-cuts.

Mr. Chamberlin had given only a short time to the subcontinent.[T2] If Srinagar to Cape Comorin is 1,900 miles, Durban to Cape Town is not less than 1,100 miles, and Mr. Chamberlain had to cover the long distance at hurricane speed.

From Natal he hastened to the Transvaal. I had to prepare the case for the Indians there as well and submit it to him. But how was I to get Pretoria ? Our people there were not in a position to procure the necessary legal facilities for my getting to them in time. The war had reduced the Transvaal to a howling wildernes. There were neither provisions nor clothing available. Empty or closed shops were there, waiting to be replenished or opened, but that was a matter of time. Even refugees could not be allowed to return until the shops were ready with provisions. Every Transvaaler had therefore to obtain a permit. The European had no difficulty in getting one, but the Indian found it very hard.

During the war many officers and soldiers had come to South Africa from India and Ceylon, and it was considered to be the duty of the British authorities to provide for such of them as decided to settle there. They had in any event to appoint new officers, and these experienced men came in quite handy. The quick ingenuity of some of them created a new department. It showed their resourcefulness. There was a special department for the Negroes. Why then should there not be one for the Asiatics? The argument seemed to be quite plausible. When I reached the Transvaal, this new department had already been opened and was gradually spreading its tentacles. The officers who issued permits to the returning refugees might issue them to all, but how could they do so in respect of the Asiatics without the intervention of the department ? And if permits were to be issued on the recommendation of the new department, some of the responsibility and burden of the permit officers could thus be lessened. This was how they had argued. The fact, however, was that the new department wanted some apology for work, and the men wanted money. If there had been no work, the department would have been found unnecessary and would have been discontinued. So they found this work for themselves.

The Indians had to apply to this department. A reply would be vouchsafed many days after. And as there were large numbers wishing to return to the Transvaal, there grew up an army of intermediaries or touts who, with the officers, looted the poor Indians to the tune of thousands. I was told that no permit could be had without influence

and that in some cases one had to pay up to hundred pounds in spite of the influence which one might bring to bear. Thus there seemed to be no way open to me. I went to my old friend, the Police Superintendent of Durban, and said to him : 'Please introduce me to the Permit Officer and help me to obtain a permit. You know that I have been a resident of the Transvaal.' He immediately put on his hat, came out and secured me a permit. There was hardly an hour left before my train was to start. I had kept my luggage ready. I thanked Superintendent Alexander and started for Pretoria.

I now had a fair idea of the difficulties ahead. On reaching Pretoria I drafted the memorial.[1] In Durban I do not recollect the Indians having been asked to submit in advance the names of their representatives, but here there was the new department and it asked to do so. The Pretoria Indians had already come to know that the officers wanted to exclude me.[2]

But another chapter is necessary for this painful though amusing incident.

CHAPTER II : AUTOCRATS FROM ASIA

The officers at the head of the new department were at a loss to know how I had entered the Transvaal. They inquired of the Indians who used to go to them, but these could say nothing definite. The officers only ventured a guess that I might have succeeded in entering without a permit on the strength of my old connections. If that was the case, I was liable to be arrested !

It is a general practice, on the termination of a big war, to invest the Government of the day with special powers. [T1] This was the case in South Africa. The Government had passed a Peace Preservation Ordinance,[T2] which provided that anyone entering the Transvaal without a permit should be liable to arrest and imprisonment. The question of arresting me under this provision was mooted, but no one could summon up courage enough to ask me to produce my permit.

The officers had of course sent telegrams to Durban, and when they found that I had entered with a permit, they were disappointed. But they were not the men to be defeated by such disappointment. Though I had succeeded in entering the Transvaal, they could still successfully prevent me from waiting on Mr. Chamberlain.

So the community was asked to submit the names of the representatives who were to form the Deputation. Colour prejudice

[1] *Vide* "Address to Chamberlain", January 7, 1903.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to the Transvaal Governor", January 6, 1903.

was of course in evidence everywhere in South Africa, but I was not prepared to find here the dirty and underhand dealing among officials that I was familiar with in India. In South Africa the public departments were maintained for the good of the people and were responsible to public opinion. Hence officials in charge had a certain courtesy of manner and humility about them, and coloured people also got the benefit of it more or less. With the coming of the officers from Asia, came also its autocracy, and the habits that the autocrats had imbibed there. In South Africa there was a kind of responsible government or democracy, whereas the commodity imported from Asia was autocracy pure and simple; for the Asiatics had no responsible government, there being a foreign power governing them. In South Africa the Europeans were settled emigrants. They had become South African citizens and had control over the departmental officers. But the autocrats from Asia now appered on the scene, and the Indians in consequence found themselves between the devil and the deep sea.

I had a fair taste of this autocracy. I was first summoned to see the chief of the department, an officer from Ceylon. Lest I should appear to exaggerate when I say that I was 'summoned' to see the chief, I shall make myself clear. No written order was sent to me. Indian leaders often had to visit the Asiatic officers. Among these was the late Sheth Tyeb Haji Khan Muhammad. The chief of the office asked him who I was and why I had come there.

'He is our adviser,' said Tyeb Sheth, 'and he has come here at our request.'

'Then what are we here for? Have we not been appointed to protect you? What can Gandhi know of the conditions here?' asked the autocrat.

Tyeb Sheth answered the charged as best he could : 'Of course you are there. But Gandhi is our man. He knows our language and understands us. You are after all officials.'

The Sahib ordered Tyeb Sheth to fetch me before him. I went to the Sahib in company with Tyeb Sheth and others. No seats were offered, we were all kept standing.

'What brings you here?' said the Sahib addressing me.

'I have come here at the request of my fellow-countrymen to help them with my advice,' I replied.

'But don't you know that you have no right to come here? The permit you hold was given you by mistake. You cannot be regarded as a domiciled Indian. You must go back. You shall not wait on Mr. Chamberlain. It is for the protection of the Indians here that the

Asiatic Department has heen especially created. Well, you my go.' With this he bade me good-bye, giving me no opportunity for a reply.

But he detained my companions. He gave them a sound scolding and advised them to send me away.

They returned chagrined. We were now confronted with an unexpected situation.

CHAPTER III : POCKETED THE INSULT

I smarted under the insult, but as I had pocketed many such in the past, I had become inured to them. I therefore decided to forget this latest one and take what course a dispassionate view of the case might suggest.

We had a letter from the Chief of the Asiatic Department to the effect that, as I had seen Mr. Chamberlain in Durban, it had been found ncessary to omit my name from the Deputation which was to wait on him.

The letter was more than my co-workers could bear. They proposed to drop the idea of the Deputation altogether. I pointed out to them the awkward situation of the community.

'If you do not represent your case before Mr. Chamberlain,' said I, 'it will be presumed that you have no case at all. After all, the represen-tation has to be made in writing, and we have got it ready. It does not matter in the least whether I read it or someone else reads it. Mr. Chamberlain is not going to argue the matter with us. I am afraid, we must swallow the insult.'

I had scarcely finished speaking when Tyeb Sheth cried out, 'Does not an insult to you amount to an insult to the community? How can we forget that you are our representative?'

'Too true,' said I. 'But even the community will have to pocket insults like these. Have we any alternative?'

'Come what may, why should we swallow a fresh insult? Nothing worse can possibly happen to us. Have we many rights to lose?' asked Tyeb Sheth.

It was a spirited[T1] reply, but of what avail was it? I was fully cons-cious of the limitations of the community. I pacified my friends and advi-sed them to have, in my place,[T2] Mr. George Godfrey, an Indian barrister.

So Mr. Godfrey led the Dedputation. Mr. Chamberlain referred in his reply to my exclusion. 'Rather than hear the same representative over and over again, is it not better to have someone

new?' he said, and tried to heal the wound.

But all this, far from ending the matter, only added to the work of the community and also to mine. We had to start afresh.

'It is at your instance that the community helped in the war, and you see the result now,' were the words with which some people taunted me. But the taunt had no effect. 'I do not regret my advice,' said I. 'I maintain that we did well in taking part in the war. In doing so we simply did our duty. We may not look forward to any reward for our labours, but it is my firm conviction that all good action is bound to bear fruit in the end. Let us forget the pat and think of the task before us.' With which the rest agreed.

I added : 'To tell you the truth, the work for which you had called me is practically finished. But I believe I ought not to leave the Transvaal, so far as it is possible, even if you permit me to return home. Instead of carrying on my work from Natal, as before, I must now do so from here. I must no longer think of returning to India within a year, but must get enrolled in the Transvaal Supreme Court. I have confidence enough to deal with this new department. If we do not do this, the community will be hounded out of the country, besides being thoroughly robbed. Every day it will have fresh insults heaped upon it. The facts that Mr. Chamberlain refused to see me and that the official insulted me, are nothing before the humiliation of the whole community. It will become impossible to put up with the veritable dog's life that we shall be expected to lead.'

So I set the ball rolling, discussed things with Indians in Pretoria and Johannesburg, and ultimately decided to set up office in Johannesburg.

It was indeed doubtful whether I would be enrolled in the Transvaal Supreme Court. But the Law Society did not oppose my application, and the Court allowed it. It was difficult for an Indian to secure rooms for office in a suitable locality. But I had come in fairly close contact with Mr. Ritch, who was then one of the merchants there. Through the good offices of a house agent known to him, I succeeded securing suitable rooms for my office in the legal quarters of the city[T3], and I started on my professional work.

CHAPTER IV : QUICKENED SPIRIT OF SACRIFICE

Before I narrate the struggle for the Indian settlers' rights in the Transvaal and their dealings with the Asiatic Department, I must turn to some other aspects of my life.

Up to now there had been in me a mixed desire. The spirit of self-sacrifice was tempered by the desire to lay by something for the

future.

About the time I took up chambers in Bombay, an American insurance agent had come there—a man with a pleasing countenance and a sweet tongue. As though we were old friends he discussed my future welfare. 'All men of your status in America have their lives insured. Should you not also insure yourself against the future? Life is uncertain. We in America regard it as a religious obligation to get insured. Can I not tempt you to take out a small policy?'

Up to this time I had given the cold shoulder to all the agents I had met in South Africa and India, for I had thought that life assurance implied fear and want of faith in God. But now I succumbed to the temptation of the American agent. As he proceeded with his argument, I had before my mind's eye a picture of my wife and children. 'Man, you have sold almost all the ornaments of your wife,' I said to myself. 'If something were to happen to you, the burden of supporting her and the children would fall on your poor brother, who has so nobly filled the place of father. How would that become you?' With these and similar argument I persuaded myself to take out a policy for Rs. 10,000.

But when my mode of life changed in South Africa, my outlook changed too. All the steps I took at this time of trial were taken in the name of God and for His service. I did not know how long I should have to stay in South Africa. I had a fear that I might never be able to get back to India; so I decided to keep my wife and children with me and earn enough to support them. This plan made me deplore the life policy and feel ashamed of having been caught in the net of insurance agent. If, I said to myself, my brother is really in the position of my father, surely he would not consider it too much of a burden to support my widow, if it came to that. And what reason had I to assume that death would claim me earlier than the others? After all the real protector was neither I nor my brother, but the Almighty. In getting my life insured I had robbed my wife and children of their self-reliance. Why should they not be expected to take care of themselves? What happened to the families of the numberless poor in the world? Why should I not count myself as one of them?

A multitude of such thoughts passes through my mind, but I did not immediately act upon them. I recollect having paid at least one insurance premium in South Africa.

Outward circumstances too supported this train of thought. During my first sojourn in South Africa it was Christian influence that had kept alive in me the religious sense. Now it was theosophical influence that added strength to it. Mr. Ritch was a theosophist and

put me in touch with the Society at Johannesburg. I never became a member, as I had my differences, but I came in close contact with almost every theosophist. I had religious discussions with them every day. There used to be readings from theosophical books and sometimes I had occasion to address their meetings. The chief thing about theosophy is to cultivate and promote the idea of brotherood. We had considerable discussion over this, and I criticized the members where their conduct did not appear to me to square with their ideal. The criticism was not without its wholesome effect on me. It led to introspection.

CHAPTER V : RESULT OF INTROSPECTION

When, in 1893, I came in close contact with Christian friends, I was a mere novice. They tried hard to bring home to me, and make me accept, the message of Jesus, and I was a humble and respectful listener with an open mind. At that time I naturally studied Hinduism to the best of my ability and endeavoured to understand other religions.

In 1903 the position was somewhat changed. Theosophist friends certainly intended to draw me into their society, but that was with a view to getting something from me as a Hindu. Theosophical literature is replete with Hindu influence, and so these friends expected that I should be helpful to them. I explained that my Samskrit study was not much to speak of, that I had not read the Hindu scriptures in the original, and that even my acquaintance with the translations was of the slightest. But being believers in samskara (tendencies caused by previous births) and punarjanma (rebirth), they assumed that I should be able to render at least some help. And so I felt like a Triton among the minnows. I started reading Swami Vivekananda's Rajayoga with some of these friends and M. N. Dvivedi's Rajayoga with others. I had to read Patanjali's Yoga Sutras with one friend and the Bhagavad Gita with quite a number. We formed a sort of Seekers' Club where we had regular readings. I already had faith in the Gita, which had a fascination for me. Now I realized the necessity of diving deeper into it. I had one or two translations, by means of which I tried to understand the original Samskrit. I decided also to get by heart one or two verses every day. For this purpose I employed the time of my morning ablutions. The operation took me thirty-five minutes, fifteen minutes for the tooth brush and twenty for the bath. The first I used to do standing in western fashion. So on the wall opposite I stuck slipe of paper on which were written the Gita verses and referred to them now and then to help my memory. This time was found sufficient for memorizing the daily portion and recalling the

verses already learnt. I remember having thus committed to memory thirteen chapters. But the memorizing of the Gita had to give way to other work and the creation and nurture of satyagraha, which absorbed all my thinking time, as the latter may be said to be doing even now.

What effect this reading of the Gita had on my friends only they can say, but to me the Gita became an infallible guide of conduct. It became my dictionary of daily reference.[T1] Just as I turned to the English dictionary for the meanings of English words that I did not understand, I turned to this dictionary of conduct for a ready solution of all my troubles and trials. Words like aparigraha (non-possession) and samabhava (equability) gripped me. How to cultivate and preserve that eqability was the question. How was one to treat alike insulting, insolent and corrupt officials, co-workers of yesterday raising meaningless opposition, and men who had always been good to one? How was one to divest oneself of all possessions? Was not the body itself possession enough? Were not wife and children possessions? Was I to destroy all the cupboards of books I had? Was I to give up all I had and follow Him? Straight came the answer : I could not follow Him unless I gave up all I had. My study of English law came to my help. Snell's discussion of the maxims of Equity came to my memory. I understood more clearly in the light of the Gita teaching the implication of the word 'trustee'. My regard for jurisprudence increased, I discovered in it religion. I understood the Gita teaching of non-possession to mean that those who desired salvation should act like the trustee who, though having control over great possessions, regards not an iota of them as his own. It became clear to me as daylight that non-possession and equability presuposed a change of heart, a change of attitude. I then wrote to Revashankerbhai to allow the insurance policy to lapse and get whatever could be recovered or else to regard the premiums already paid as lost, for I had become convinced that God, who created my wife and children as well as myself, would take care of them. To my brother, who had been as father to me, I wrote explaining that I had given him all that I had saved up to that moment, but that henceforth he should expect nothing from me, for future savings, if any, would be utilized for the benefit of the community.[1]

I could not easily make my brother understand this. In stern language he explained to me my duty towards him. I should not, he said, aspire to be wiser than our father. I must support the family as he did. I pointed out to him that I was doing exactly what our father had

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lakshmidas Gandhi", about April 20, 1907.

done. The meaning of 'family' had but to be slightly widened and the wisdom of my step would become clear.

My brother gave me up and practically stoped all communication. I was deeply distressed, but it would have been a greater distress to give up what I considered to be my duty, and I pref- erred the lesser. But that did not affect my devotion to him, which remained as pure and great as ever. His great love for me was at the root of his misery. He did not so much want my money as that I should be well-behaved towards the family. Near the end of his life, however, he appreciated my view-point. When almost on his death-bed, he realized that my step had been right and wrote me a most pathetic letter. He apologized to me, if indeed a father may apologize to his son. He commended his sons to my care, to be brought up as I thought fit, and expressed his impatience to meet me. He cabled that he would like to come to South Africa and I cabled in reply that he could. But that was not to be. Nor could his desire as regards his sons be fulfilled. He died before he could start for South Africa. His sons had been brought up in the old atmosphere and could not change their course of life. I could not draw them to me. It was not their fault. 'Who can say thus far, no further, to the tide of his own nature?' Who can erase the impressions with which he is born? It is idle to expect one's children and wards necessarily to follow the same course of evolution as oneself.

This instance to some extent serves to show what a terrible responsibility it is to be a parent.

CHAPTER VI : A SACRIFICE TO VEGETARIANISM

As the ideals of sacrifice and simplicity were becoming more and more realized, and the religious consciousness was becoming more and more quickened in my daily life, the passion for vegetarianism as a mission went on increasing. I have known only one way of carrying on missionary work, viz., by personal example and discussion with searchers for knowledge.

There was in Johannesburg a vegetarian restaurant conducted by a German who believed in Kuhne's hydropathic treatment. I visited the restaurant myself and helped it by taking English friends there. But I saw that it could not last as it was always in financial difficulties. I assisted it as much as I thought it deserved, and spent some money on it, but it had ultimately to be closed down.

Most theosophists are vegetarians more or less, and an enterprising lady[1] belonging to that society now came upon the scene with

[1] Miss Bissicks; *vide* "Letter to Miss Bissicks", August 5, 1905.

a vegetarian restaurant on a grand scale. She was fond of art, extravagant and ignorant of accounts. Her circle of friends was fairly large. She had started in a small way, but later decided to extend the venture by taking large rooms, and asked me for help. I knew nothing of her finances when she thus approached me, but I took it that her estimate must be fairly accurate. And I was in a position to accommodate her. My clients used to keep large sums as deposits with me. Having received the consent of one of these clients, I lent about a thousand pounds from the amount to his credit. This client was most large-hearted and trusting. He had originally come to South Africa as an indentured labourer. He said : 'Give away the money, if you like. I know nothing in these matters. I only know you.' His name was Badri. He afterwards took a prominent part in satyagraha, and suffered imprisonmentas well. So I advanced the loan assuming that this consent was enough.

In two or three months' time I came to know that the amount would not be recovered. I could ill afford to sustain such a loss. There were many other purposes to which I could have applied this amount. The loan was never repaid. But how could trusting Badri be allowed to suffer? He had known me only. I made good the loss.

A client friend to whom I spoke about this transaction sweetly chid me for my folly.

'Bhai,'—I had fortunately not yet become 'Mahatma', nor even 'Bapu' (father),[T1] friends used to call me by the loving name of 'Bhai' (brother)—said he, 'this was not for you to do. We depend upon you in so many things. You are not going to get back this amount. I know you will never allow Badri to come to grief, for you will pay him out of your pocket, but if you go on helping your reform schemes by operating on your clients' money, the poor fellows will be ruined, and you will soon become a beggar. But you are our trustee and must know that, if you become a beggar, all our public work will come to a stop.'[T2]

The friend, I am thankful to say, is still alive. I have not yet come across a purer man than he, in South Africa or anywhere else. I have known him to apologize to people and to cleanse himself, when, having happened to suspect them, he had found his suspicion to be unfounded.

I saw that he had rightly warned me. For though I made good Badri's loss, I should not have been able to meet any similar loss and should have been driven to incur debt—a thing I have never done in my life and always abhorred. I realized that even a man's reforming zeal ought not to make him exceed his limits. I also saw that in thus

lending trust-money I had disobeyed the cardinal teaching of the Gita, viz., the duty of a man of equipoise to act without desire for the fruit. The error became for me a beaconlight of warning.

The sacrifice offered on the altar of vegetarianism was neither intentional nor expected. It was a virtue of necessity.

CHAPTER VII : EXPERIMENTS IN EARTH AND WATER TREATMENT

With the growing simplicity of my life, my dislike for medicines steadily increased. While practising in Durban, I suffered for some time from debility and rheumatic inflammation. Dr. P. J. Mehta, who had come to see me[T1], gave me treatment, and I got well. After that, up to the time when I returned to India, I do not remember having suffered from an ailment to speak of.

But I used to be troubled with constipation and frequent headaches, while at Johannesburg. I kept myself fit with occasional laxatives and a well-regulated diet. But I could hardly call myself healthy, and always wondered when I should get free from the incubus of these laxative medicines.

About this time I read of the formation of a 'No Breakfast Association' in Manchester. The argument of the promoters was that Englishmen ate too often and too much, that their doctors' bills were heavy because they ate until midnight, and that they should at least give up breakfast, if they wanted to improve this state of affairs. Though all these things could not be said of me, I felt that the argument did partly apply in my case. I used to have three square meals daily in addition to afternoon tea. I was never a spare eater and enjoyed as many delicacies as could be had with a vegetarian and spiceless diet. I scarcely ever got up before six or seven. I therefore argued that, if I also dropped the morning breakfast, I might become free from headaches. So I tried the experiment. For a few days it was rather hard, but the headache entirely disappeared. This led me to conclude that I was eating more than I needed.

But the change was far from relieving me of constipation. I tried Kuhne's hip-baths, which gave some relief but did not com- pletly cure me. In the meantime the German who had a vege- tarian restaurant, or some other friend, I forget who, placed in my hands Just's Return to Nature. In this book I read about earth treat- ment. The author also advocated fresh fruit and nuts as the natural diet of man. I did not at once take to the exclusive fruit diet, but immediately began experiments in earth treatment, and with wonderful results. The treatment consisted in applying to the abdomen a bandage of clean earth moistened with cold water and spread like a poultice on fine[T2] linen. This I applied at bed-time, removing it during the night or in

the morning, whenever I happened to wake up. It proved a radical cure. Since then I have tried the treatment on myself and my friends and never had reason to regret it. In India I have not been able to try this treatment with equal confidence. For one thing, I have never had time to settle down in one place to conduct the experiments. But my faith in the earth and water treatment remains practically the same as before. Even today I give myself the earth treatment to a certain extent and recommend it to my co-workers, whenever occasion arises.

Though I have had two serious illnesses in my life, I believe that man has little need to drug himself. 999 cases out of a thousand can be brought round by means of a well-regulated diet, water and earth treatment and similar household remedies. He who runs to the doctor, vaidya or hakim for every little ailment, and swallows all kinds of vegetable and mineral drugs, not only curtails his life, but, by becoming the slave of his body instead of remaining its master, loses self-control, and ceases to be a man.

Let no one discount these observations because they are being written in a sick-bed[1]. I know the reasons for my illnesses. I am fully conscious that I alone am responsible for them, and it is because of that consciousness that I have not lost patience. In fact I have thanked God for them as lessons and successfully resisted the temptation of taking numerous drugs. I know my obstinacy often tries my doctors, but they kindly bear with me and do not give me up.

However, I must not digrees. Before proceeding futrther, I should give the reader a word of warning. Those who purchase Just's book on the strength of this chapter should not take everything in it to be gospel truth. A writer almost always presents one aspect of a case, whereas every case can be seen from no less than seven points of view, all of which are probably correct by themselves, but not correct at the same time and in the same circumstances. And then many books are written with a view to gaining customers and earning name and fame. Let those, therefore, who read such books as these do so with discernment, and take advice of some experienced man before trying any of the experiments set forth, or let them read the books with patience and digest them thoroughly before acting upon them.

CHAPTER VIII : A WARNING

I am afraid I must continue the digression until the next chaper. Along with my experiments in earth treatment, those in dietetics were also being carried on, and it may not be out of place here to make a

[1] This chapter appeared in *Navajivan*, 26-6-1927, when Gandhiji was suffering from high blood-pressure.

few observations as regards the latter, though I shall have occasion to refer to them again later.

I may not, now or hereafter, enter into a detailed account of the experiments in dietetics,[T1] for I did so in a series of Gujarati articles which appeared years ago in Indian Opinion, and which were afterwards published in the form of a book popularly known in English as A Guide to Health[1]. Among my little books this has been the most widely read alike in the East and in the West, a thing that I have not yet been able to understand. I was written for the benefit of the readers of Indian Opinion. But I know that the booklet has profoundly influenced the lives of many, both in the East and in the West, who have never seen Indian Opinion.[T2] For they have been corresponding with me on the subject. It has therefore appeared necessary to say something here about the booklet, for though I see no reason to alter the views set forth in it, yet I have made certain radical changes in my actual practice, of which all readers of the book do not know, and of which, I think, they should be informed.

The booklet was written, like all my other writings, with a spiritual end, which has always inspired every one of my actions, and therefore it is a matter for deep distress[T3] to me that I am unable today to practise some of the theories propounded in the book.

It is my firm conviction that man need take no milk at all, beyond the mother's milk that he takes as a baby. His diet should consist of nothing but sunbaked fruits and nuts. He can secure enough nourishment both for the tissues and the nerves from fruits like grapes and nuts like almonds. Restraint of the sexual and other passions becomes easy for a man who lives on such food. My co-workers and I have seen by experience that there is much truth in the Indian proverb that as a man eats, so shall he become. These views have been set out elaborately in the book.

But unfortunately in India I have found myself obliged to deny some of my theories in practice. Whilst I was engaged on the recruiting campaign in Kheda, an error in diet laid me low, and I was at death's door.[2] I tried in vain to rebuild a shattered constitution without milk. I sought the help of the doctors, vaidyas and scientists whom I knew, to recommend a substitute for milk. Some suggested mung water, some mowhra oil, some almond-milk. I wore out my

[1] *Vide* " General Knowledge about Health', a series of thirty-four articles between January 4, 1913 and August 16, 1913. For information about different editions of the book, *vide* "General Knowlwdge about Health [—XIV]", April 5, 1913.

[2] This was in August 1918; *vide* "Letter to Fulchand Shah", August 12, 1918.

body in experimenting on these, but nothing could help me to leave the sick-bed. The vaidyas read verses to me from Charaka to show that religious scruples about diet have no place in therapeutics. So they could not be expected to help me to continue to life without milk. And how could those who recommended beef-tea and brandy without hesitation help me to persvere with a milkless diet?

I might not take cow's or buffalo's milk, as I was bound by a vow. The vow of course meant the giving up of all milks, but as I had mother cow's and mother buffalo's only in mind when I took the vow, and was I wanted to live, I somehow beguiled myself into emphasizing the letter of the vow and decided to take goat's milk. I was fully conscious, when I started taking mother goat's milk, that the spirit of my vow was destroyed. [1]

But the idea of leading a campaign against the Rowlatt Act had possessed me. And with it grew the desire to live. Consequently one of the greatest experiments in my life came to a stop.

I know it is argued that the soul has nothing to do with what one eats or drinks, as the soul neither eats nor drinks; that it is not what you put inside from without, but what you express outwardly from within, that matters. There is, no doubt, some force in this. But rather than examine this reasoning. I shall content myself with merely declaring my firm conviction that, for the seeker who would live in fear of God and who would see Him face to face, restraint in diet both as to quantity and quality is as essential as restraint in thought and speech.[T4]

In a matter, however, where my theory has failed me, I should not only give the information, but issue a grave warning against adopting it.[T5] I would therefore urge those who, on the strength of the theory propounded by me, may have given up milk, not to persist in the experiment, unless they find it beneficial in every way, or unless they are advised by experienced physicians. Up to now my experience here has shown me that for those with a weak digestion and for those who are confined to bed there is no light and nourishing diet equal to that of milk.

I should be greatly obliged if anyone[T6] with experience in this line, who happens to read this chapter, would tell me, if he has known from experience, and not from reading, of a vegetable substitute for milk, which is equally nourishing and digestible.

[1] For Kasturba's part in bringing about this compromise, *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", January 10, 1919.

To turn now to the Asiatic Department.

Johannesburg was the stronghold of the Asiatic officers. I had been observing that, far from proteching the Indians, Chinese and others, these officers were grinding them down. Every day I had complaints like this : 'The rightful ones are not admitted, whilst those who have no right are smuggled in on payment of £100. If you will not remedy this state of things, who will?' I shared the feeling. If I did not succeed in stamping out this evil, I should be living in the Transvaal in vain.

So I began to collect evidence, and as soon as I had gathered a fair amount, I approached the Police Commissioner. He appeared to be a[T1] just man. Far from giving me the cold shoulder, he listened to me patiently and asked me to show him all the evidence in my possession. He examined the witnesses himself and was satisfied, but he knew as well as I that it was difficult in South Africa to get a white jury to convict a white offender against coloured men. 'But,' said he, 'let us try at any rate. It is not proper either, to let such criminals go scot-free for fear of the jury acquiting them. I must get them arrested. I assure you I shall leave no stone unturned.'

I did not need the assurance. I suspected quite a number of officers, but as I had no unchallengeable evidence against them all, warrants of arrest were issued against the two about whose guilt I had not the slightest doubt.

My movements could never be kept secret. Many knew that I was going to the Police Commissioner practically daily. The two officers against whom warrants had been issued had spies more or less efficient. They used to patrol my office and report my movements to the officers. I must admit, however, that these officers were so bad that they could not have had many spies. Had the Indians and the Chinese not helped me, they would never have been arrested.

One of these absconded. The Police Commissioner obtained an extradition warrant against him and got him arrested and brought to the Transvaal. They were tried, and although there was strong evidence against them, and in spite of the fact that the jury had evidence of one of them having absconded, both were declared to be not guilty and acquitted.

I was sorely disappointed. The Police Commissioner also was very sorry. I got disgusted with the legal profession. The very intellect became an abomination to me inasmuch as it could be prostituted for

screening crime.

However, the guilt of both these officers was so patent that in spite of their acquittal the Government could not harbour them. Both were cashiered, and the Asiatic Department became comparatively clean, and the Indian community was somewhat reassured.

The event enhanced my prestige and brought me more business. The bulk, though not all, of the hundreds of pounds that the community was monthly squandering in peculation, was saved. All could not be saved, for the deshonest still plied their trade. But it was now possible for the honest man to preserve his honesty.

I must say that, though these officers were so bad, I had nothing against them personally. They were of this themselves, and when in their straits they approached me, I helped them too. They had a chance of getting employed by the Johannesburg Municipality in case I did not oppose the proposal. A friend of theirs saw me in this connection and I agreed not to thwart them[T2], and they succeeded.

This attitude of mine put the officials with whom I came in contact perfectly at ease, and though I had often to fight with their department and use strong language, they remained quite friendly with me. I was not then quite conscious that such behaviour was part of my nature. I learnt later that it was an essential part of satyagraha, and an attribute of ahimsa.

Man and his deed are two distinct things. Whereas a good deed should call forth approbation and a wicked deed disapprobation, the doer of the deed, whether good or wicked, always deserves respect of pity as the case may be. “Hate the sin and not the sinner’ is a precept which, though easy enough to understand, is rarely practised, and that is why the poison of hatred spreads in the world.

This ahimsa is the basis of the search for truth. I am rea- lizing every day that the search is vain unless it is founded on ahimsa as the basis. It is quite proper to resist and attack a system, but to resist and attack its author is tantamount to resisting and attacking oneself. For we are all tarred with the same brush, and are children of one and the same Creater, and as such the divine powers within us are infinite. To slight a single human being is to slight those divine powers, and thus to harm not only that being but with him the whole world.

CHAPTER X : A SACRED RECOLLECTION AND PENANCE[T1]

A variety of incidents in my life have conspired to bring me in close contact with people of many creeds and many cummunities, and my experience with all of them warrants the statement that I have known no distinction between relatives and strangers, countrymen and

foreigners, white and coloured, Hindus and Indians of other faiths, whether Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians or Jews. I may say that my heart has been incapable of making any such distinctions. I cannot claim this as a special virtue, as it is in my very nature, rather than a result of any effort on my part, whereas in the case of ahimsa (non-violence), brahmacharya (celibacy), aparigraha (non-possession) and other cardinal virtues, I am fully conscious of a continuous striving for their cultivation.

When I was practising in Durban, my office clerks often stayed with me, and there were among them Hindus and Christians, or to describe them by their provinces, Gujaratis and Tamilians. I do not recollect having ever regarded them as anything but my kith and kin. I treated them as members of my family, and had unpleasantness with my wife if ever she stood in the way of my treating them as such. One of the clerks was a Christian, born of Panchama parents.

The house was built after the Western model and the rooms rightly had no outlets for dirty water. Each room had therefore chamber-pots. Rather than have these cleaned by a servant or a sweeper, my wife or I attended to them. The clerks who made themselves completely at home would naturally clean their own pots, but the Christian[T2] clerk was a newcomer, and it was our duty to attend to his bedroom. My wife managed the pots of the others, but to clean those used by one who had been a Panchama[T3] seemed to her to be the limit, and we fell out. She could not bear the pots being cleaned by me, neither did she like doing it herself. Even today I can recall the picture of her chiding me, her eyes red with anger, and pearl drops streaming down her cheeks, as she descended the ladder, pot in hand. But I was a cruelly kind[T4] husband. I[T5] regarded myself as her teacher, and so harassed her out of my blind love for her.

I was far from being satisfied by her merely carrying the pot. I would have her do it cheerfully. So I said, raising my voice : ‘I will not stand this nonsense in my house.’

The words pierced her like an arrow.

She shouted back : ‘Keep your house to yourself and let me go.’ I forgot myself, and the spring of compassion dried up in me[T6]. I caught her by the hand, dragged the helpless woman to the gate, which was just opposite the ladder, and proceeded to open it with the intention of pushing her out.[T7] The tears were running down her cheeks in torrents, and she cried : ‘Have you no sense of shame? must you so far forget yourself?[T8] Where am I to go? I have no parents or relatives here to harbour me. Being your wife, you think I must put up with your cuffs and kicks? For heaven’s sake behave yourself, and

shut the gate. Let us not be found making scenes like this !'[T9]

I put on a brave face, but was really ashamed and shut the gate. If my wife could not leave me, neither could I leave her. We have had numerous bickerings, but the end has always been peace between us. The wife, with her matchless powers of endurance, has always been the victor.

Today I am in a position to narrate the incident with some detachment, as it belongs to a period out of which I have fortunately emerged. I am no longer a blind, infatuated husband, I am no more my wife's teacher. Kasturba can, if she will, be as unpleasant to me today, as I used to be to her before.[T10] We are tried friends, the one no longer regarding the other as the object of lust. She has been a faithful nurse throughout my illnesses, serving without any thought of reward.

The incident in question occurred in 1898, when I had no conception of brahmacharya.[T11] It was a time when I thought that the wife was the object of her husband's lust, born to do her husband's behest, rather than a helpmate, a comrade and a partner in the husband's joys and sorrows.

It was in the year 1900 that these ideas[T12] underwent a radical transformation, and in 1906 they took concrete shape. But of this I propose to speak in its proper place. Suffice it to say that with the gradual disappearnace in me of the carnal appetite, my domestic life became and is becoming more and more peaceful, sweet and happy.

Let no one conclude from this narrative of a sacred recollection that we are by any means an ideal couple,[T13] or that there is a complete identity of ideals between us. Kasturba herself does not perhaps know whether she has any ideals independently of me. It is likely that many of my doings have not her approval even today. We never discuss them, I see no good in discussing them. For she was educated neither by her parents nor by me at the time when I ought to have done it. But she is blessed with one great quality to a very considerable degree, a quality which most Hindu wives possess in some measure. And it is this : Willingly or unwillingly, consciously or unconsciouly, she has considered herself blessed in following in my footsteps, and has never stood in the way of my endeavour to lead a life of restraint. Though, therefore, there is a wide difference between us intellectually, I have always had the feeling that ours is a life of contentment, happiness and progress.[T14]

CHAPTER XI : INTIMATE EUROPEAN CONTACTS

This chapter has brought me to a stage where it becomes

necessary for me to explain to the reader how this story is written from week to week.

When I began writing it, I had no definite plan before me. I have no diary or documents on which to base the story of my experiments. I write just as the Spirit moves me at the time of writing. I do not claim to know definitely that all conscious thought and action on my part is directed by the Spirit. But on an examination of the greatest steps that I have taken in my life, as also of those that may be regarded as the least, I think it will not be improper to say that all of them were directed by the Spirit.[T1]

I have not seen Him, neither have I known Him. I have made the world's faith in God my own, and as my faith is ineffaceable, I regard that faith as amounting to experience. However, as it may be said that to describe faith as experience is to tamper with truth, it may perhaps be more correct to say that I have no word for characterizing my belief in God.

It is perhaps now somewhat easy to understand why[T2] I believe that I am writing this story as the Spirit[T3] prompts me. When I began the last chapter I gave it the heading I have given to this, but as I was writing it, I realized that before I narrated my experiences with Europeans, I must write something by way of a preface.[T4] This I did and altered the heading.

Now again, as I start on this chapter, I find myself confronted with a fresh problem. What things to mention and what to omit regarding the English friends of whom I am about to write is a serious problem. If things that are relevant are omitted, truth will be dimmed. And it is difficult to decide straightaway what is relevant, when I am not even sure about the relevancy of writing this story.

I understand more clearly today what I read long ago about the inadequacy[T5] of all autobiography as history. I know that I do not set down in this story all that I remember. Who can say how much I must give and how much omit in the interest of truth? And what would be the value in a court of law of the inadequate ex parte evidence being tendered by me of certain events in my life[T6]? If some busybody were to cross-examine me on the chapters already written, he could probably shed much more light on them, and if it were a hostile critics's cross-examination, he might even flatter himself for having shown up 'the hollowness of many of my pretensions'.

I, therefore, wonder for a moment whether it might not be proper to stop writing these chapters. But so long as there is no prohibition from the voice within, I must continue the writing. I must follow the sage maxim that nothing once begun should be abandoned

unless it is proved to be morally wrong.

I am not writing the autobiography to please critics. Writing it is itself one of the experiments with truth. One of its objects is certianly to provide some comfort and food for reflection for my co-workers. Indeed I started writing it in compliance with their wishes. It might not have been written, if Jairamdas and Swami Anand had not persisted in their suggestion. If, therefore, I am wrong in writing the auto-biography, they must share the blame.

But to take up the subject indicated in the heading. Just as I had Indians living with me as members of my family, so had I[T7] English friends living with me in Durban. Not that all who lived with me liked it. But I persisted in having them. Nor was I wise in every case. I had some bitter experiences, but these included both Indians and Europeans. And I do not regret the experiences. In spite of them, and in spite of the inconvenience and worry that I have often caused to friends, I have not altered my conduct and friends have kindly borne with me. Whenever my contacts with strangers have been painful to friends, I have not hesitated to blame them. I hold that believers who have to see the same God in others that they see in themselves, must be able to live amongst all with sufficient detachment. And the ability to live thus can be cultivated, not by fighting shy of unsought opportunities for such contacts, but by hailing them in a spirit of service and withal keeping oneself unaffected by them.

Though, therefore, my house was full when the Boer War broke out, I received two Englishmen who had come from Johannesh-burg. Both were theosophists, one of them being Mr. Kitchin, of whom we shall have occasion to know more later. These friends[T8] often cost my wife bitter tears. Unfortunately she has had many such trials on my account. This was the first time that I had English friends to live with me as intimately as members of my family. I had stayed in English houses during my days in England, but there I conformed to their ways of living, and it was more or less like living in a boarding house. Here it was quite the contrary. The English friends became members of the family. They adopted the Indian style in many matters. Though the appointments in the house were in the Western fashion, the internal life was mostly Indian. I do remember having had some difficulty in keeping them as members of the family, but I can certainly say that they had no difficulty in making themselves perfectly at home under my roof. In Johannesburg these contacts developed further than in Durban.

CHAPTER XII : EUROPEAN CONTACTS (CONTD.)

In Johannesburg I had at one time as many as four Indian

clerks, who were perhaps more like my sons than clerks. But even these were not enough for my work. It was impossible to do without typewriting, which, among us, if at all, only I knew. I taught it to two of the clerks, but they never came up to the mark because of their poor English. And then one of these I wanted to train as an accountant. I could not get out anyone from Natal, for nobody could enter the Transvaal without a permit, and for my own personal convenience I was not prepared to ask a favour of the Permit Officer.

I was at my wit's end. Arrears were fast mounting up, so much so that it seemed impossible for me, however much I might try, to cope with professional and public work. I was quite willing to engage a European clerk, but I was not sure to get a white man or woman to serve a coloured man like myself. However I decided to try. I approached a typewriter's agent whom I knew, and asked him to get me a stenographer[T1]. There were girls available[T2], and he promised to try to secure the sevices of one. He came across a Scotch girl called Miss Dick, who had just come fresh from Scotland. She had no objection to earning an honest livelihood, wherever available, and she was in need. So the agent sent her on to me. She immediately prepossessed me.

'Don't you mind serving under an Indian?' I asked her.

'Not at all,' was her firm reply.

'What salary do you expect '

'Would £17/10 be too much?'

'Not too much if you will give me the work I want from you. When can you join?'

'This moment, if you wish.'

I was very pleased and straightaway started dictating letters to her.

Before very long she became more a daughter or a sister to me than a mere stenotypist. I had scarcely any reason[T3] to find fault with her work. She was often entrusted[T4] with the management of funds amounting to thousands of pounds, and she was in charge of account books. She won my complete confidence, but what was perhaps more, she confided to me her innermost thoughts and feelings. She sought my advice in the final choice of her husband, and I had the privilege to give her away in marriage. As soon as Miss Dick became Mrs. Macdonald, she had to leave me, but even after her marriage she did not fail to respond, whenever under pressure I made a call upon her.

But a permanent stenotypist was now needed in her place, and I

was fortunate in getting another girl. She was Miss Schlesin, introduced to me by Mr. Kallenbach, whom the reader will know in due course. She is at present a teacher in one of the High Schools in the Transvaal.[1] She was about seventeen when she came to me. Some of her idiosyncrasies were at times too much for Mr. Kallenbach and me. She had come less to work as a stenotypist than to gain experience. Colour prejudice was foreign to her temperament. She seemed to mind neither age nor experience.[T5] She would not hesitate even to the point of insulting a man and telling him to his face what she thought of him.[2] Her impetuosity often landed me in difficulties, but her open and guileless temperament removed them as soon as they were created. I have often signed without revision letters typed by her, as I considered her English to be better than mine, and had the fullest confidence in her loyalty.

Her sacrifice was great. For a cosniderable period she did not draw more than £6, and refused ever to receive more than £10 a month. When I urged her to take more, she would give me a scolding and say, "I am not here to draw a salary from you. I am here becasue I like to work with you and I like your ideals.'

She had once an occasion to take £40 from me, but she insisted on having it as a loan, and repaid the full amount last year.[3] Her courage was equal to her sacrifice. She is one of the few women I have been privileged to come across, with a character as clear as crystal and courage that would shame a warrior. She is a grown-up woman now. I do not know her mind quite as well as when she was with me, but my contact with this young lady will ever be for me a sacred recollection. I would therefore be false to truth if I kept back what I know about her.

[1] In *Young India*, 11-8-1927, this sentence read : "She is at present at the head of a girls' school in the Transvaal", The correction was made at the instance of Miss Schlesin, (S.N. 15039, 15040 and 15041); *vide* "A Correction", June 28, 1928.

[2] In her letters, Miss Schlesin spoke of Gandhiji's "wretched autobiography", his "breaches of confidence", "unholy misrepresentations", "caddishness", etc. In his letter of July 15, 1928, to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi, Gandhiji remarked : "I follow what you say about Miss Schlesin. But then, isn't she half crazy ? She has written a sort of wild letter even to me." *Vide* "Letter to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi", July 15, 1928.

[3] Miss Schlesin, in her letters, stated that she had demanded, as a matter of right, and obtained a loan of £150; and that she had repaid £110 to Gandhiji and the balance of £40 to Rustomjee, apparently after an interval of over ten years.

She knew neither night nor day in toiling for the cause. She ventured out on errands in the darkness of the night all by herself, and angrily scouted any suggestion of an escort. Thousands of stalwart Indians looked up to her for guidance. When during the satyagraha days almost every one of the leaders was in jail,[T6] she led the movement single-handed. She had the management of thousands, a tremendous amount of correspondence and *Indian Opinion* in her hands, but she never wearied.

I could go on without end writing thus about Miss Schlesin, but I shall conclude this chapter with citing Gokhale's estimate of her. Gokhale knew every one of my co-workers. He was pleased with many of them, and would often give his opinion of them. He gave the first place to Miss Schlesin amongst all the Indian and European co-workers. 'I have rarely met with the sacrifice, the purity and the fearlessness[T7] I have seen in Miss Schlesin,' said he. 'Amongst you co-workers, she takes the first place in my estimation.,

CHAPTER XIII

"INDIAN OPINION"

Before I proceed with the other intimate European contacts, I must note two or three items of importance. One of the con- tracts, however, should be mentioned at once. The appointment of Miss Dick was not enough for my purpose. I needed more assistance. I have in the earlier chapters referred to Mr. Ritch. I knew him well. He was manager in a commercial firm. He approved my suggestion of leaving the firm and getting articled under me, and he considerably lightened my burden.

About this time[1] Sjt. Madanjit approached me with a proposal to start *Indian Opinion* and sought my advice.[T1] He had already been conducting a press, and I approved of his proposal. The journal was launched in 1904 and Sjt. Mansukhlal Naazar became the first editor. But I had to bear the brunt of the work, having for most of the time to be practically in charge of the journal.[T2] Not that Sjt. Mansukhlal could not carry it on. He had been doing a fair amount of journalism whilst in India, but he would never venture to write on intricate South African problems so long as I was there. He had the greatest confidence in my discernment, and therefore threw on me the

[1] The first issue of *Indian Opinion* was published on June 4, 1903 by Madanjit Vyavaharik, a co-worker of Gandhiji; Gandhiji took over the management of the weekly in October 1904, *vide* "Tribute to Madanjit", October 15, 1904; the press was shifted to Phoenix in December 1904; for Gandhiji's statement of the financial position of *Indian Opinion, vide* " '*Indian Opinion*' ", April 23, 1906.

responsibility of attending to the editorial columns. The journal has been until this day a weekly. In the beginning, it used to be issued in Gujarati, Hindi, Tamil and English. I saw, however, that the Tamil and Hindi sections were a make-believe. They did not serve the purpose for which they were intended, so I discontinued them as I even felt that there would be a certain amount of deception involved in their continuance.[T3]

I had no notion that I should have to invest any money in this journal, but I soon discovered that it could not go on without my financial help. The Indians and the Europeans both knew that, though I was not avowedly the editor of *Indian Opinion*, I was virtually responsible for its conduct. It would not have mattered if the journal had never been started, but to stop it after it had once been launched would have been both a loss and a disgrace. So I kept on pouring out my money, until ultimately I was practically sinking all my savings in it. I remember a time when I had to remit £75 each month.

But after all these years I feel that the journal has served the community well. It was never intended to be a commercial con- cern. So long as it was under my control, the changes in the jour- nal were indicative of changes in my life. *Indian Opinion* in those days, like *Young India* and *Navajivan* today, was a mirror of part of my life. Week after week I poured out my soul in its columns, and expounded the principles and practice of satyagraha as I under- stood it. During ten years, that is, unitl 1914, excepting the intervals of my enforced rest in prison, there was hardly an issue of *Indian Opinion* without an article from me. I cannot recall a word in those articles set down without thought or deliberation or a word of conscious exaggeration, or anything merely to please. Indeed the journal became for me a training in self-restraint, and for friends a medium through which to keep in touch with my thoughts. The critic found very little to which he could object. In fact the tone of *Indian Opinion* compelled the critic to put a curb on his own pen. Satyagraha would probably have been impossible without *Indian Opinion*. The readers looked forward to it for a trustworthy account of the satyagraha campaign as also of the real condition of Indians in South Africa. For me it became a means for the study of human nature in all its casts and shades[T4], as I always aimed at establishing an intimate and clean bond between the editor and the readers, I was inundated with letters containing the outpourings of my correspondents' hearts. They were friendly, critical or bitter, according to the temper of the writer. It was a fine education for me to study, digest and answer all this correspondence. It was as though the community thought audibly through this corr- espondence with me. It made me thoroughly understand the resp-

onsibility of a journalist, and the hold I secured in this way over the community made the future campaign workable, dignified and irresistible.

In the very first month of *Indian Opinion*, I realized that the sole aim of journalism should be service. The newspaper Press is a great power, but just as an unchained torrent of water submerges whole countrysides and devastates crops, even so an uncontrolled pen serves but to destory. If the control is from without, it proves more poisonous than want of control. It can be profitable only when exercised from within. If this line of reasoning is correct, how many of the journals in the world would stand the test? But who would stop those that are useless? And who should be the judge? The useful and the useless must, like good and evil generally, go on together, and man must make his choice.

CHAPTER XIV : COOLIE LOCATIONS OR GHETTOES ?

Some of the classes which render us the greatest social ser- vice, but which we Hindus have chosen to regard as 'untouchables', are relegated to remote quarters of a town or a village, called in Gujarati *dhedvado*, and the name has acquired a bad odour. Even so in Christian Europe the Jews were once 'untouchables', and the quarters that were assigned to them had the offensive name of 'ghettoes'. In a similar way today we have become the untouchables of South Africa. It remains to be seen how far the sacrifice of Andrews and the magic wand of Shastri succeed in rehabilitating us.[1]

The ancient Jews[T1] regarded themselves as the chosen people of God to the exclusion of all others, with the result that their desc- endants were visited with a strange and even unjust retribu- tion. Almost in a similar way the Hindus have considered them- selves *Aryas* or civilized, and a section of their own kith and kin as *Anaryas* or untouchables, with the result[T2] that a strange, if unjust, nemesis is being visited not only upon the Hindus in South Africa[T3], but the Mussalmans and Parsis as well, inasmuch as they belong to the same country and have the same colour as their Hindu brethren.

The reader will have now realized to some extent the meaning of the word 'locations' with which I have headed this chapter. In South Africa we have acquired the odious name of 'coolies'. The word 'coolie' in India means only a porter or hired workman, but in South Africa it has contemptuous connotation. It means what a pariah or an untouchable means to us, and the quarters assigned to the 'coolie' are

[1] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri was appointed Agent-General of the Government of India in South Africa in May 1927.

known as ‘coolie locations’. Johannesburg had one such location, but unlike other places with locations where the Indians had tenancy rights, in the Johannesburg location the Indians had acquired their plots on a lease of 99 years. People were densely packed in the location, the area of which never increased with the increase in population. Beyond arranging to clean the latrines in the location in a haphazard way, the Municipality did nothing to provide any sanitary facilities, much less good roads or lights. It was hardly likely that it would safeguard its sanitation, when it was indifferent to the welfare of the residents. These were too ignorant of the rules of municipal sanitation and hygiene to do without the help or supervision of the Municipality. If those who went there had all been Robinson Crusoes, theirs would have been a different story. But we do not know of a single emigrant colony of Robinson Crusoes in the world.[T4] Usually people migrate abroad in search of wealth and trade, but the bulk of the Indians who went to South Africa were ignorant, pauper agriculturists, who needed all the care and protection that could be given them. The traders and educated Indians who followed them were very few.

The criminal negligence of the Municipality and the ignorance of the Indian settlers thus conspired to render the location thoroughly insanitary. The Municipality, far from doing anything to improve the condition of the location, used the insanitation caused by their own neglect as a pretext for destroying the location, and for that purpose obtained from the local legislature authority to dispossess the settlers. This was the condition of things when I settled in Johannessburg.

The settlers, having proprietary rights in their land, were naturally entitled to compensation. A special tribunal was appointed to try the land acquisition cases. If the tenant was not prepared to accept the offer of the Municipality, he had a right to appeal to the tribunal, and if the latter’s award exceeded the Municipality’s offer, the Municipality had to bear the costs.

Most of the tenants engaged me as their legal adviser. I had no desire to make money out of these cases, so I told the tenants that I should be satisfied with whatever costs the tribunal awarded, in case they won, and a fee of £10 on every lease, irrespective of the result of the case. I also told them that I proposed to set apart half of the money paid by them for the builing of a hospital or similar institution for the poor. This naturally pleased them all.

Out of about 70 cases only one was lost. So the fees amounted to a fairly big figure. But *Indian Opinion* was there with its persistent

claim and devoured, so far as I can recollect, a sum of £1,600. I had worked hard for these cases. The clients always surrounded me. Most of them were originally indentured labourers from Bihar and its neighbourhood and from South India. For the redress of their peculiar grievances they had formed an association of their own, separate from that of the free Indian merchants and traders. Some of them were open-hearted, liberal men and had high character. Their leaders were Sjt. Jairamsing, the president, and Sjt. Badri, who was as good as the president. Both of them are now no more. They were exceedingly helpful to me. Sjt. Badri came in very close contact with me and took a prominent part in satyagraha. Through these and other friends I came in intimate contact with numerous Indian settlers from North and South India. I became more their brother than a mere legal adviser, and shared in all their private and public sorrows and hardships.

It may be of some interest to know how the Indians used to name me.[T5] Abdulla Sheth refused to address me as Gandhi. None, fortunately, ever insulted me by calling or regarding me as 'saheb'. Abdulla Sheth hit upon a fine appellation—'bhai', i.e., brother. Others followed him and continued to address me as 'bhai' until the moment I left South Africa. There was a sweet flavour about the name[T6] when it was used by the ex-indentured Indians.

CHAPTER XV : THE BLACK PLAGUE—I

The Indians were not removed from the location as soon as the Municipality secured its ownership. It was necessary to find the residents suitable new quarters before dislodging them, but as the Municipality could not easily do this, the Indians were suffered to stay in the same 'dirty' location,[T1] with this difference that their condition became worse than before. Having ceased to be proprietors they became tenants of the[T2] Municipality, with the result that their surroundings became more insanitary than ever. When they were proprietors, they had to maintain some sort of cleanliness, if only for fear of the law. The Municipality had[T3] no such fear! The number of tenants increased, and with them the squalor and the disorder.

While the Indians were fretting over this state of things, there was a sudden outbreak of the black plague, also called pneumonic plague, more terrible and fatal than the bubonic.

Fortunately it was not the location but one of the gold mines in the vicinity of Johannesburg that was responsible for the outbreak. The workers in this mine were for the most part Negroes, for whose cleanliness their white employers were solely responsible. There were a few Indians also working in connection with the mine, twenty-three

of whom suddenly caught the infection, and returned one evening to their quarters in the location with an acute attack of the plague. Sjt. Madanjit, who was then canvassing subscribers for *Indian Opinion* and realizing subscriptions, happened to be in the location at this moment. He was a remarkably fearless man. His heart wept to see these victims of the scourge, and he sent a pencil-note to me to the following effect : 'There has been a sudden outbreak of the black plague. You must come immediately and take prompt measures, otherwise we must be prepared for dire consequences. Please come immediately.'

Sjt. Madanjit bravely broke open the lock of a vacant house, and put all the patients there. I cycled to the location, and wrote to the Town Clerk to inform him of the circumstances in which we had taken possession of the house.

Dr. William Godfrey, who was practising in Johannesburg, ran to the rescue as soon as he got the news, and became both nurse and doctor to the patients. But twenty-three patients were more than three of us could cope with.

It is my faith, based on experience, that if one's heart is pure, calamity brings in its train men and measures to fight it. I had at that time four Indians in my office—Sjts. Kalyandas, Maneklal, Gunvantrai Desai and another[T4] whose name I cannot recollect. Kalyandas had been entrusted to me by his father. In South Africa I have rarely come across anyone more obliging and willing to render implicit obedience than Kalyandas. Fortunately he was unmarried then, and I did not hestitate to impose on him duties involving risks, however great. Maneklal I had secured in Johannesburg. He too, so far as I can remember, was unmarried. So I decided to sacrifice all four—call them clerks, co-workers or sons. There was no need at all to consult Kalyandas. The others expressed their readiness as soon as they were asked. 'Where you are, we will also be,' was their short and sweet reply.

Mr. Ritch had a large family. He was ready to take the plunge, but I prevented him. I had not the heart to expose him to the risk. So he attended to the work outside the danger zone.[1]

It was a terrible night—that night of vigil and nursing. I had nursed a number of patients before, but never any attacked by the black plague. Dr. Godfrey's pluck proved infectious. There was not much nursing required. To give them their doses of medicine, to attend to their wants, to keep them and their beds clean and tidy, and to cheer them up was all that we had to do.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Farewell to L. W. Ritch", March 9, 1905.

The indefatigable zeal fearlessness with which the[T5] youths worked rejoiced me beyond measure. One could understand the bravery of Dr. Godfrey and of an experienced man like Sjt. Madanjit. But the spirit of these callow youths !

[T6]So far as I can recollect, we pulled all the patients through that night.

But the whole incident, apart from its pathos, is of such absorbing interest, and for me[T7], of such religious value, that I must devote to it at least two more chapters.

CHAPTER XVI : THE BLACK PLAGUE—II

The Town Clerk expressed his gratitude to me for having taken charge of the vacant house and the patients. He frankly confessed that the Town Council had no immediate means to cope with such an emergency, but promised that they would render all the help in their power. Once awakened to a sense of their duty, the Municipality made no delay in taking prompt measures.

The next day they placed a vacant godown at my disposal, and suggested that the patients be removed there, but the Municipality did not undertake to clean the premises. The building was unkempt and unclean. We cleaned it up ourselves, raised a few beds and other necessaries through the offices of charitable Indians, and improvised a temporary hospital. The Minicipality lent the services of a nurse, who came with brandy and other hospital equipment. Dr. Godfrey still remained in charge.

The nurse was a kindly lady and would fain have attended to the patients, but we rarely allowed her to touch them, lest she should catch the contagion.

We had instructions to give the patients frequent doses of brandy. The nurse even asked us to take it for precaution, just as she was doing herself. But none of us would touch it. I had no faith in its beneficial effect even for the patients. With the permission of Dr. Godfrey, I put three patients, who were prepared to do without brandy, under the earth treatment, applying wet earth bandages to their heads and chests. Two of these were saved. The other twenty died in the godown.

Meanwhile the Municipality was busy taking other measures. There was a lazaretto for contagious diseases about seven miles from Johannesburg. The two surviving[T1] patients were removed to tents near the lazaretto, and arrangements were made for sending any fresh cases there. We were thus relieved of our work.

In the course of a few days we learnt that the good nurse had

had an attack and immediately succumbed. It is impossible to say how the two patients were saved and how we remained immune, but the experience enhanced my faith in earth treatment, as also my scepticism of the efficacy of brandy, even as a medicine. I know that neither this faith nor this scepticism is based upon any solid grounds, but I still retain the impression which then received, and have therefore thought it necessary to mention it here.

On the outbreak of the plague, I had addressed a strong letter[1] to the Press, holding the Municipality guilty of negligence after the location came into its possession and responsible for the outbreak of the plague itself. This letter secured me Mr. Henry Polak, and was partly responsible for the freindship of the late Rev. Joseph Doke.

I have said in an earlier chapter that I used to have my meals at a vegetarian restaurant. Here I met Mr. Albert West. We used to meet in this restaurant every evening and go out walking after dinner. Mr. West was a partner in a small printing concern. He read my letter in the Press about the outbreak of the plague and, not finding me in the restaurant, felt uneasy.

My co-workers and I had reduced our diet since the outbreak, as I had long made it a rule to go on a light diet during epidemics. In these days I had therefore given up my evening dinner. Lunch also I would finish before the other guests arrived. I knew the proprietor of the restaurant very well, and I had informed him that, as I was engaged in nursing the plague patients, I wanted to avoid the contact of friends[T2] as much as possible.

Not finding me in the restaurant for a day or two, Mr. West knocked at my door early one morning just as I was getting ready to go out for a walk. As I opened the door Mr. West said : 'I did not find you in the restaurant and was really afraid lest something should have happened to you. So I decided to come and see you in the morning in order to make sure of finding you at home. Well, here I am at your disposal. I am ready to help in nursing the patients. You know that I have no one depending on me.'

I expressed my gratitude, and without taking even a second to think, replied : 'I will not have you as a nurse. If there are no more cases we shall be free in a day or two. There is one thing however.'

'Yes, what is it?'

'Could you take charge of the *Indian Opinion* press at Durban? Mr. Madanjit is likely to be engaged here and someone is needed at Durban. If you could go, I should feel quite relieved on that score.'

[1] *Vide* "Letter to the Johannesburg Press", April 5, 1904.

‘You know that I have a press. Most probably I shall be able to go, but may I give my final reply in the evening? We shall talk it over during our evening walk[T3].’

I was delighted. We had the talk. He agreed to go. Salary was no consideration to him, as money was not his motive. But a salary of £10 per month and a part of the profits, if any, was fixed up. The very next day Mr. West left for Durban by the evening mail, entrusting me with the recovery of his dues. From that day until the time I left the shores of South Africa, he remained a partner of my joys and sorrows.

Mr. West belonged to a peasant family in Louth (Lincolnshire). He had had an ordinary school education, but had learnt a good deal in the school of experience and by dint of self-help. I have always known him to be a pure, sober, godfearing, humane Englishman.

We shall know more of him and his family in the chapters to follow.

CHAPTER XVII : LOCATION IN FLAMES

Though my co-workers and I were relieved of the charge of the patients, there remained many things arising out of the black plague still to be dealt with.

I have referred to the negligence of Municipality regarding the location. But it was wide awake so far as the health of its white citizens was concerned. It had spent large amounts for the preservation of their health and now it poured forth money like water in order to stamp out the plague. In spite of the many sins of omission and commission against the Indians that I had laid at the door of the Municipality, I could not help commending its solicitude for the white citizens, and I rendered it as much help as I could in its laudable efforts. I have an impression that, if I had withheld my co-operation, the task would have been more difficult for the Municipality, and that it would not have hesitated to use armed force and do its worst.[T1]

But all that was averted. The Municipal authorities were pleased at the Indian’s behaviour, and much of the future work regarding plague measures was simplified. I used all the influence I could command with the Indians to make them submit to the requirements of the Municipality. It was far from easy for the Indians to go all that length, but I do not remember anyone having resisted my advice.

The location was put under a strong guard, passage in and out being made impossible without permission. My co-workers and I had free permits of entry and exit. The decision was to make the whole location population vacate, and live under canvas for three weeks in an

open plain about thirteen miles from Johan-nesburg, and then to set fire to the location. To settle down under canvas with provisions and other necessaries was bound to take some time, and a guard became necessary during the interval.

The people were in a terrible fright, but my constant presence was a consolation to them. Many of the poor people used to hoard their scanty savings underground. This had to be unearthed. They had no bank, they knew none. I became their banker. Streams of money poured into my office. I could not possibly charge my fees for my labours in such a crisis. I coped with the work somehow. I knew my bank manager very well. I told him that I should have to deposit these moneys with him. The banks were by no means anxious to accept large amounts of copper and silver. There was also the fear of bank clerks refusing to touch money coming from a plague-affected area. But the manager accommodated me in every way. It was decided to disinfect all the money before sending it to the bank. So far as I can remember, nearly sixty thousand pounds were thus deposited. I advised such of the people as had enough money to place it as fixed deposit, and they accepted the advice. The result was some of them became accustomed to invest their money in banks.

The location residents were removed by special train to Klipspruit Farm near Johannesburg, where they were supplied with provisions by the Municipality at public expense. This city under canvas looked like a military camp. The poeple who were unaccustomed to this camp life were distressed and astonished over the arrangements, but they did not have to put up with any particular inconvenience. I used to cycle out to them daily. Within twenty-four hours of their stay they forgot all their misery and began to live merrily. Whenever I went there I found them enjoying themselves with song and mirth[T2]. Three weeks' stay in the open air evidently improved their health.

So far as I recollect, the location was put to the flames on the very next day after its evacuation. The Municipality showed not the slightest inclination to save anything from the conflagration. About this very time, and for the same reason, the Municipality burnt down all its timber in the market, and sustained a loss of some ten thousand pounds. The reason for this drastic step was the discovery of some dead rats in the market.

The Municipality had to incur heavy expenditure, but it successfully arrested the further progress of the plague, and the city once more breathed freely.

The black plague enhanced my influence with the poor Indians, and increased my business and my responsibility. Some of the new contacts with Europeans became so close that they added considerably to my moral obligations.

I made the acquaintance of Mr. Polak in the vegetarian restaurant, just as I had made that of Mr. West. One evening a young man dining at a table a little way off sent me his card expressing a desire to see me. I invited him to come to my table, which he did.

'I am sub-editor of *The Critic*', he said. 'When I read your letter to the Press about the plague, I felt a strong desire to see you. I am glad to have this opportunity.'

Mr. Polak's candour drew me to him. The same evening we got to know each other. We seemed to hold closely similar views on the essential things of life. He liked simple life. He had a wonderful faculty of translating into practice anything that appealed to his intellect. Some of the changes that he had made in his life were as prompt as they were radical.

Indian Opinion was getting more and more expensive every day. The very first report from Mr. West was alarming. He wrote : 'I do not expect the concern to yield the profit that you had thought probable. I am afraid there my be even a loss. The books are not in order. There are heavy arrears to be recovered, but one cannot make head or tail of them. Considerable overhauling will have to be done. But all this need not alarm you. I shall try to put things right as best I can. I remain on, whether there is profit or not.'

Mr. West might have left when he discovered that there was no profit, and I could not have blamed him. In fact, he had a right to arraign me for having described the concern as profitable without proper proof. But he never so much as uttered one word of complaint. I have, however, an impression that this discovery led[T1] Mr. West to regard me as credulous. I had simply accepted Sjt. Madanjit's estimate without caring to examine it, and told Mr. West to expect a profit.

I now realize that a public worker should not make state- ments of which he has not made sure. Above all, a votary of truth must exercise the greatest caution. To allow a man to believe a thing which one has not fully verified is to compromise truth. I am pained to have to confess that, in spite of this know- ledge, I have not quite conquered my credulous habit, for which my ambition to do more work than I can manage is responsible. This ambition has often been a

source of worry more to my co-workers than to myself.

On receipt of Mr. West's letter I left for Natal. I had taken Mr. Polak into my fullest confidence. He came to see me off at the station, and left with me a book to read during the journey, which he said I was sure to like. It was Ruskin's *Unto This Last.*

The book was impossible to lay aside, once I had begun it. It gripped me. Johannesburg to Durban was a twenty-four hours' journey. The train reached there in the evening. I could not get any sleep that night. I determined to change my life in accordance with the ideals of the book.

This was the first book of Ruskin I had ever read. During days of my education I had read practically nothing outside text-books, and after I launched into active life I had very little time for reading. I cannot therefore claim much book knowledge. However, I believe I have not lost much because of this enforced restraint. On the contrary, the limited reading may be said to have enabled me thoroughly to digest what I did read. Of these books, the one that brought about an instantaneous and practical transformation in my life was *Unto This Last.* I translated it later into Gujarati, entitling it *Sarvodaya*[1] (the welfare of all).

I believe that I discovered some of my deepest convictions reflected in this great book of Ruskin, and that is why it so captured me and made me transform my life. A poet is one who can call forth the good latent in the human breast. Poets do not influence all alike, for everyone is not evolved in an equal measure.

The teachings of *Unto This Last* I understood to be :

1. That the good of the individual is contained the good of all.

2. That a lawyer's work has the same value as the barber's inasmuch as all have the same right of earning their livelihood from their work.

3. That a life of labour, i.e., the life of the tiller of the soil and the handicraftsman[T2] is the life worth living.

The first of these I knew. The second I had dimly realized. The third had never occurred to me. *Unto This Last* made it as clear as daylight for me that the second and the third were contained in the first. I arose with the dawn, ready to reduce these principles to practice.

CHAPTER XIX : THE PHOENIX SETTLEMENT

I talked over the whole thing[T1] with Mr. West, described to him

[1] It was published in *Indian Opinion* in instalments during May-July, 1908

the effect *Unto This Last* had produced on my mind, and proposed that *Indian Opinion* should be removed to a farm, on which everyone should labour, drawing the same living wage, and attending to the press work in spare time. Mr. West approved of the proposal, and £3 was laid down as the monthly allowance per head, irrespective of colour or nationality.

But it was a question whether all the ten or more workers in the press would agree to go and settle on an out-of-the-way farm, and be satisfied with bare maintenance. We therefore proposed that those who could not fit in with the scheme should continue to draw their salaries and gradually try to reach the ideal of becoming members of the Settlement.

I talked to the workers in the terms of this proposal. It did not appeal to Sjt. Madanjit, who considered my proposal to be foolish and held that it would ruin a venture on which he had staked his all; that the workers would bolt, *Indian Opinion* would come to a stop, and the press would have to be closed down.

Among the men working in the press was Chhaganlal Gandhi[1], one of my cousins.[T2] I had put the proposal to him at the same time as to West. He had a wife and children, but he had from childhood chosen to be trained and to work under me. He had full faith in me. So without any argument he agreed to the scheme and has been with me ever since. The machinist Govindaswami also fell in with the proposal. The rest did not join the scheme, but agreed to go wherever I removed the press.

I do not think I took more than two day to fix up these matters with the men. Thereafter I at once advertised for a piece of land situated near a railway station in vicinity of Durban. An offer came in respect of Phoenix. Mr. West and I went to inpect the estate. Within a week we purchased twenty acres of land. It had a nice little spring and a few orange and mango trees. Adjoining it was a piece of 80 acres which had many more fruit trees and a dilapidated cottage.[T3] We purchased this too, the total cost being a thousand pounds.

The late Mr. Rustomji always supported me in such enterprises. He liked the project. He placed at my disposal second- hand corr-ugated iorn sheets of a big godown and other building material, with which we started work. Some Indian carpenters and masons, who had worked with me in the Boer War, helped me in ere-cting a shed for the press. This structure, which was 75 feet long and 50 feet broad, was ready in less than a month. Mr. West and others, at great personal risk,

[1] Chhaganlal is the son of Gandhiji's cousin.

stayed with the carpenters and masons. The place, un-inhabited and thickly overgrown with grass, was infested with snakes and obviously dangerous to live in. At first all lived under canvas. We carted most of our things to Phoenix in about a week.[T4] It was fourteen[T5] miles from Durban, and two and a half miles from Phoenix station.[1]

Only one issue of *Indian Opinion* had to be printed outside, in the Mercury Press.

I now endeavoured to draw to Phoenix those relations and friends who had come with me from India to try their fortune, and who were engaged in business of various kinds. They had come in search of wealth, and it was therefore difficult to persuade them; but some agreed. Of these I can single out here only Maganlal Gandhi's name. The others went back to business. Maganlal Gandhi left his business for good to cast in his lot with me, and by ability, sacrifice and[T6] devotion stands foremost among my original co-workers in my ethical experiments. As a self-taught handicraftsman his place among them is unique.

Thus the Phoenix Settlement was started in 1904,[2] and there,in spite of numerous odds, *Indian Opinion* continues to be published.[3]

But the initial difficulties, the changes made,[T7] the hopes and the disappointments demand a separate chapter.

CHAPTER XX : THE FIRST NIGHT

It was no easy thing to issue the first number of *Indian Opinion* from Phoenix. Had I not taken two precautions, the first issue would have had to be dropped or delayed. The idea of having an engine to work the press had not appealed to me. I had thought that hand-power would be more in keeping with an atmosphere where agricultural work was also to be done by hand. But as the idea had not appeared feasible, we had installed an oil-engine. I had, however, suggested to West to have something handy to fall back upon in case the engine failed. He had therefore arranged a wheel which could be worked by hand. The size of the paper, that of a daily, was considered unsuitable for an out-of-the-way place like Phoenix[T1]. It was reduced to foolscap size,[T2] so that, in case of emergency, copies might be struck off with the help of treadle. In the initial stages, we all had to keep late hours before the day of publication. Everyone, young and old, had to help

[1] For the announcement of the scheme, *vide* "Ourselves", December 24, 1904.

[2] For the aims of the Phoenix Settlement, *vide* "The Phoenix Trust Deed", September 14, 1912.

[3] It stopped publication in 1961.

in folding the sheets. We usually finished our work between ten o'clock and mid-night. But the first night was unforgettable. The pages were locked, but the engine refused to work. We had got out an engineer from Durban to put up the engine and set it going. He and West tried their hardest, but in vain. Everyone was anxious. West, in despair, at last came to me, with tears in his eyes, and said, 'The engine will not work, I am afraid we cannot issue the paper in time.'

'If that is the case, we cannot help it. No use shedding tears. Let us do whatever else is humanly possible. What about the handwheel?' I said, comforting him.

'Where have we the men to work?'he replied. 'We are not enough to cope with the job. It requires relays of four men each, and our own men are all tired.'[T3]

Building work had not yet been finished, so the carpenters were still with us. They were sleeping on the press floor. I said pointing to them, 'But can't we make use of these carpenters? And we may have a whole night of work. I think this device is still open to us.'

'I dare not wake up the carpenters. And our men are really too tired,' said West.

'Well, that's for me to negotiate,' said I.

'Then it is possible that we may get through the work,' West replied.

I woke up the carpenters and requested their co-operation. They needed no pressure. They said, 'If we cannot be called upon in an emergency, what use are we? You rest yourselves and we will work the wheel. For us it is easy work.' Our own men were of course ready.

West was greatly delighted and started singing a hymn as we get to work. I partnered the carpenters, all the rest joined turn by turn, and thus we went on until 7 a.m. There was still a good deal to do. I therefore suggested to West that the engineer might now be asked to get up and try again to start the engine, so that if we succeeded we might finish in time.

West woke him up and he immediately went into the engine room. And lo and behold! The engine worked almost as soon as he touched it. The whole press rang with peals of joy.'How can this be? How is it that all our labours last night were of no avail, and this morning it has been set going as though there were nothing wrong with it?' I enquired.

'It is difficult to say,' said West or the engineer, I forget which. Machines also sometimes seem to behave as though they required rest like us.'

For me the failure of the engine had come as a test for us all, and its working in the nick of time as the fruit of our honest and earnest labours.

The copies were despatched in time, and everyone was happy.

This initial insistence ensured the regularity of the paper, and created an atmosphere of self-reliance in Phoenix. There came a time when we deliberately gave up the use of the engine and worked with hand-power only. Those were, to my mind, the days of the highest moral uplift for Phoenix.

CHAPTER XXI : POLAK TAKES THE PLUNGE

It has always been my regret that, although I started the Settlement at Phoenix, I could stay there only for brief periods. My original idea had been gradually to retire from practice, go and live at the Settlement, earn my livelihood by manual work there, and find the joy of service in the fulfilment of Phoenix. But it was not to be. I have found by experience that man makes his plans to be often upset by God, but at the same time where the ultimate goal is the search of truth, no matter how a man's plans are frustrated, the issue is never injurious and often better than anticipated. The unexpected turn that Phoenix took and the unexpected happenings were certainly not injurious, though it is difficult to say that they were better than our original expectations.

In order to enable every one of us to make a living by manual labour, we parcelled out the land round the press in pieces of three acres each. One of these fell to my lot. On all these plots we, much against our wish, built houses with corrugated iron. Our desire had been to have mud huts thatched with straw or small brick houses such as would become ordinary peasants but it could not be. They would have been more expensive and would have meant more time, and everyone was eager to settle down as soon as possible.

The editor was still Mansukhlal Naazar. He had not accepted the new scheme and was directing the paper from Durban where there was a branch office for *Indian Opinion*. Though we had paid compositors, the idea was for every member of the Settlement to learn type-setting, the easiest, if the most tedious, of the processes in a printing-press. Those, therefore, who did not already know the work learnt it. I remained a dunce to the last. Maganlal Gandhi surpassed us all.[T1] Though he had never before worked in a press, he became an expert compositor and not only achieved great speed but, to my agreeable surprise, quickly mastered all the other branches of press work. I have always thought that he was not conscious of his own capacity.

We had hardly settled down, the buildings were hardly ready, when I had to leave the newly constructed nest[T2] and go to Johannesburg. I was not in a position to allow the work there to remain without attention for any length of time.

On return to Johannesburg, I informed Polak of the important changes I had made. His joy knew no bounds when he learnt that the loan of his book had been so fruitful. 'Is it not possible,' he asked[T3], 'for me to take part in the new venture?' 'Certainly,' said I, 'You may if you like join the Settlement.' 'I am quite ready,' he replied 'if you will admit me.'

His determination captured me. He gave a month's notice to his chief to be relieved from *The Critic*, and reached Phoenix in due course. By his sociability he won the hearts of all and soon became a member of the family. Simplicity was so much a part of his nature that, far from feeling the life at Phoenix in any way strange or hard, he took to it like a duck takes to water. But I could not keep him there long. Mr. Ritch had decided to finish his legal studies in England, and it was impossible for me to bear the burden of the office single-handed, so I suggested to Polak that he should join the office and qualify as an attorney. I had thought that ultimately both of us would retire and settle at Phoenix, but that never came to pass. Polak's was such a trustful nature that, when he reposed his confidence in a friend, he would try to agree with him instead of arguing with him. He wrote to me from Phoenix that though he loved the life there, was perfectly happy, and had hopes of developing the Settlement, still he was ready to leave and join the office to qualify as an attorney, if I thought that thereby we should more quickly realize our ideals. I heartily welcomed the letter. Polak left Phoenix, came to Johannesburg and signed his articles with me.

About the same time a Scotch theosophist, whom I had been coaching for a local legal examination, also joined as an articled clerk, on my inviting him to follow Polak's example. His name was Mr. MacIntyre. Thus, with the laudable object of quickly realizing the ideals at Phoenix, I seemed to be going deeper and deeper into a contrary current, and had God not willed otherwise, I should have found myself entrapped in this net spread in the name of simple life.

It will be after a few more chapters that I shall describe how I and my ideals were saved in a way no one had imagined or expected.

I had now given up all hope of returning to India[T1] in the near future. I had promised my wife that I would return home within a year. The year was gone without any prospect of my return, so I decided to send for her and the children.

On the boat bringing them to South Africa, Ramdas, my third son, broke his arm while playing with the ship's captain. The captain looked after him well and had him attended to by the ship's doctor. Ramdas landed with his hand in a sling. The doctor had advised that, as soon as we reached home,[T2] the wound should be dressed by a qualified doctor. But this was the time when I was full of faith in my experiments in earth treatment. I had even succeeded in persuading some of my clients who had faith in my quackery to try the earth and water treatment.

What then was I to do[T3] for Ramdas ? He was just eight years old. I asked him if he would mind my dressing his wound. With a smile he said he did not mind at all. It was not possible for him at that age to decide what was the best thing for him, but he knew very well the distinction between quackery and proper medical treatment. And he knew my habit of home treatment and had faith enough to trust himself to me. In fear and trembling I undid the bandage, washed the wound, applied a clean earth poultice and tied the arm up again. This sort of dressing went on daily for about a month until the wound was completely healed. There was no hitch, and the wound took no more time to heal than the ship's doctor had said it would under the usual treatment.

This and other experiments enhanced my faith in such household remedies, and I now proceeded with them with more self-confidence. I widened the sphere of their application, trying the earth and water and fasting treatment in cases of wounds, fevers, dyspepsia, jaundice and other complaints, with success on most occasions. But nowadays I have not the confidence I had in South Africa and experience has even shown that these experiments involve obvious risks.

The reference here, therefore, to these experiments is not meant to demonstrate their success. I cannot claim complete success for any experiment. Even medical men can make no such claim for their experiments. My object is only to show that he who would go in for novel experiments must begin with himself. That leads to a quicker discovery of truth, and God always protects the honest experimenter.

The risks involved in experiments in cultivating intimate contacts with Europeans were as grave as those in the nature-cure exp-

eriments. Only those risks were of a different kind. But in cultivating those contacts I never so much as thought of the risks.

I invited Polak to come and stay with me, and we began to live like blood-brothers. The lady who was soon to be Mrs. Polak and he had been engaged for some years, but the marriage had been postponed for a propitious time. I have an impression that Polak wanted to put some money by before he settled down to a married life. He knew Ruskin much better than I, but his Western surroundings were a bar against his translating Ruskin's teacher immediately into practice. But I pleaded with him : 'When there is a heart union, as in your case, it is hardly right to postpone marriage merely for financial considerations. If proverty is a bar, poor men can never marry. And then you are now staying with me. There is no question of household expenses. I think you should get married as soon as possible.' As I have said in a previous chapter, I had never to argue a thing twice with Polak. He appreciated the force of my argument, and immediately opened correspondence on the subject with[T4] Mrs. Polak, who was then in England. She gladly accepted the proposal and in a few months reached Johannesburg. Any expense over the wedding was out of the question, not even a special dress was thought necessary. They needed no religious rites to seal the bond. Mrs. Polak was a Christian by birth and Polak a Jew. Their common relligion was the religion of ethics.

I may mention in passing an amusing incident in connection with this wedding. The Registrar of European marriages in the Transvaal could not register marriages between black or coloured people. In the wedding in question, I acted as the best man. Not that we could not have got a European friend for the purpose, but Polak would not brook the suggestion. So we three went to the Registrar of marriages. How could he be sure that the parties to a marriage in which I acted as the best man would be whites ? He proposed to postpone registration pending inquiries. The next day was a Sunday[T5]. The day following was New Year's Day, a public holiday.[T6] To postpone to date of a solemnly arranged wedding on such a flimsy pretext was more than one could put up with. I knew the Chief Magistrate, who was head of the Registration Department. So I appeared before him with the couple. He laughed and gave me a note to the Registrar and the marriage was duly registered.

Up to now the Europeans living with us had been more or less known to me before. But now an English lady who was an utter stranger to us entered the family. I do not remember our ever having had a difference with the newly-married couple, but even if Mrs.

Polak and my wife had some unpleasant experiences, they would have been no more than what happen in the best-regulated homogeneous families. And let it be remembered that mine would be considered an essentially heterogeneous family, where people of all kinds and temperaments were freely admitted. When we come to think of it, the distinction between heterogeneous and homogeneous is discovered to be merely imaginary. We are all one family.

I had better celebrate West's wedding also in this chapter. At this stage of my life, my ideas about *brahmacharya* had not fully matured, and so I was interesting myself in getting[T7] all my bachelor friends married. When, in due course, West made a pilgrimage to Louth to see his parents I advised him to return married if possible. Phoenix was the common home, and as we were all supposed to have become farmers, we were not afraid of marriage and its usual conse-quences. West returned with Mrs. West, a beautiful young lady from Leicester. She came of a family of shoemakers working in a Leicester factory. Mrs. West had herself some experience of work in this factory. I have called her beautiful, because it was her moral beauty that at once attracted me. True beauty after all consists in purity of heart. With Mr. West had come his mother-in-law too. The old lady is still alive. She put us all to shame by her industry and her buoyant, cheerful nature.

In the same way as I persuaded these European friends to marry, I encouraged the Indian friends to send for their families from home. Phoenix thus developed into a little village, half a dozen families having come and settled and begun to increase there.

CHAPTER XXIII : A PEEP INTO THE HOUSEHOLD[T1]

It has already been seen that, though household expenses were heavy, the tendency towards simplicity began in Durban. But the Johannesburg house came in for much severer overhauling in the light of Ruskin's teaching.

I introduced as much simplicity as was possible in a barrister's house. It was impossible to do without a certain amount of furniture. The change was more internal than external. The liking for doing personally all the physical labour increased. I therefore began to bring my children also under that discipline.

Instead of buying baker's bread, we began to prepare unleavened wholemeal bread at home according to Kuhne's recipe. Common mill flour was no good for this, and the use of handground flour, it was thought, would ensure more simplicity, health and economy. So I purchased a hand-mill for £7. The iron wheel was too heavy to be tackled by one man, but easy for two. Polak and I and the children usually worked it. My wife also occasionally lent a hand,

though the grinding hour was her usual time for commencing kitchen work. Mrs. Polak now joined us on her arrival. The grinding proved a very beneficial exercise for the children. Neither this nor any other work was ever imposed on them, but it was a pastime to them to come lend a hand, and they were at liberty to break off whenever tired. But the children, including those whom I shall have occasion to introduce later, as a rule never failed me. Not that I had no laggards at all, but most did their work cheerfully enough. I can recall few youngsters in those days fighting shy of work or pleading fatigue.

We had engaged a servant to look after the house. He lived with us as a member of the family, and the children used to help him in his work. The municipal sweeper removed the night-soil, but we personally atten-ded to the cleaning of the closet instead of asking or expecting the servant to do it. This proved a good training for the children. The result was that none of my sons developed any aversion for scavenger's work, and they naturally got a good grounding in general sanitation. There was hardly any illness in the home at Johannesburg, but whenever there was any, the nursing was willingly done by the children. I will not say that I was in-different to their literary education, but I certainly did not hesitate to sacri-fice it. My sons have therefore some reason for a grievance against me[T2]. Indeed they have occasionally given expression to it, and I must plead guilty to a certain extent. The desire to give them a literary education was there. I even endeavoured to give it to them myself, but every now and then there was some hitch or other. As I had made no other arrange-ment for their private tuition, I used to get them to walk with me daily to the office and back home—a distance of about 5 miles in all. This gave them and me a fair amount of exercise. I tried to instruct them by conversation during these walks, if there was no one else claiming my attention.[T3] All my children, excepting the eldest, Harilal, who had stayed away in India, were brought up in Johannesburg in this manner. Had I been able to devote at least an hour to their literary education with strict regularity, I should have given them, in my opinion, an ideal education. But it has been their, as also my, regret that I failed to ensure them enough literary training. The eldest son has often given vent to his distress privately before me and publicly in the Press; the other sons have generously forgiven the failure as unavoidable. I am not heart-broken over it and the regret, if any, is that I did not prove an ideal father. But I hold that I sacrificed their literary training to what I genuinely, though maybe wrongly, believed to be service to the community. I am quite clear that I have not been negligent in doing whatever was needful for building up their character. I believe it is the bounden duty of every parent to provide

for this properly. Whenever, in spite of my endeavour, my sons have been found wanting, it is my certain conviction that they have reflected, not want of care on my part,[T4] but the defects of both their parents.

Children inherit the qualities of the parents, no less than their physical features. Environment does play an important part, but the original capital on which a child starts in life is inherited from its ancestors. I have also seen children successfully surmounting the effects of an evil inheritance. That is due to purity being an inherent attribute of the soul.

Polak and I had often very heated discussions about the desirability or otherwise of giving the children an English education. It has always been my conviction that Indian parents who train their children to think and talk in English from their infancy betray their children and their country. They deprive them of the spiritual and social heritage of the nation, and render them to that extent unfit or the service of the country[T5]. Having these convictions, I made a point of always talking to my children in Gujarati. Polak never liked this. He thought I was spoiling their future. He contended, with all the vigour and love at his command, that, if children were to learn a universal language like English from their infancy, they would easily gain considerable advantage over others in the race of life. He failed to convince me. I do not now remember whether I convinced him of the correctness of my attitude, or whether he gave me up as too obstinate. This happened about twenty years ago, and my convictions have only deepened with experience. Though my sons have suffered for want of full literary education, the knowledge of the mother-tongue that they naturally acquired has been all to their and the country's good, inasmuch as they do not appear the foreigners they would otherwise have appeared. They naturally became bilingual, speaking and writing English with fair ease, because of daily contact with a large circle of English friends, and because of thier stay in a country where English was the chief language spoken.

CHAPTER XXIV : THE ZULU 'REBELLION'

Even after I thought I had settled down in Johannesburg, there was to be no settled life for me.[T1] Just when I felt that I should be breathing in peace, an unexpected event happened. The papers brought the news of the outbreak of the Zulu 'rebellion' in Natal. I bore no grudge against the Zulus, they had harmed no Indian. I had doubts about the 'rebellion'[T2] itself. But I then believed that the British Empire existed for the welfare of the world.[T3] A genuine sense

of loyalty prevented me from even wishing ill to the Empire.[1] The rightness or otherwise of the 'rebellion' [T4] was therefore not likely to affect my decision. Natal had a volunteer Defence Force, and it was open to it to recruit more men[T5]. I read that this force had already been mobilized to quell the 'rebellion'.

I considered myself a citizen of Natal, being intimately connected with it. So I wrote to the Governor, expressing my readiness, if necessary, to form an Indian Ambulance Corps. He replied immediately accepting the offer.[2]

I had not expected such prompt acceptance. Fortunately I had made all the necessary arrangements even before writing the letter. If my offer was accepted, I had decided to break up the Johannesburg home. Polak was to have a smaller house, and my wife was to go and settle at Phoenix. I had her full consent to this decision. I do not remember her having ever stood in my way in matters like this. As soon, therefore, as I got the reply from the Governor, I gave the landlord the usual month's notice of vacating the house, sent some of the things to Phoenix and left some with Polak.

I went to Durban and appealed for men. A big contingent was not necessary. We were a party of twenty-four, of whom, be- sides me, four were Gujaratis. The rest were ex-indentured men from South India, excepting one who was a free Pathan.

In order to give me a status and to facilitate work, as also in accordance with the existing convention, the Chief Medical Officer appointed me to the temporary rank of Sergeant Major and three men selected by me to the rank of sergeants and one to that of corporal. We also received our uniforms from the Government. Our Corps was on active service for nearly six weeks. On reaching the scene of the 'rebellion', I saw that there was nothing there to justify the name of 'rebellion'. There was no resistance that one could see. The reason why the disturbance had been magnified into a rebellion was that a Zulu chief had advised non-payment of a new tax imposed on his people, and had assagaied[3] a sergeant who had gone to collect the tax. At any rate my heart was with the Zulus, and I was delighted, on reaching headquarters, to hear that our main work was to be the nursing of the wounded Zulus. The Medical Officer in charge welcomed us. He said the white people were not willing nurses for the wounded Zulus, that their wounds were festering, and he was at his wit's end. He hailed our arrival as a godsend for those innocent

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Congress Meeting", April 24, 1906.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Colonial Secretary", April 25 & June 2, 1906.

[3] Attacked with assagai, a missile used by tribesmen

people, and he equipped us with bandages, disinfectants, etc., and took us to the improvised hospital. The Zulus were delighted to see us. The white soldiers used to peep through the railings that separated us from them and tried to dissuade us from attending to the wounds. And as we would not heed them, they became enraged and poured unspeakable abuse on the Zulus.

Gradually I came into closer touch with these soldiers, and they ceased to interfere. Among the commanding officers were Col. Sparks and Col. Wylie, who had bitterly opposed me in 1896. They were surprised at my attitude and specially called and thanked me. They introduced me to General Mackenzie. Let not the reader think that these were professional soldiers. Col. Wylie was a well-known Durban lawyer. Col. Sparks was well known as the owner of a butcher's shop in Durban. General Mackenzie was a noted Natal farmer. All these gentlemen were volunteers, and as such had received military training and experience.

The wounded in our charge were not wounded in battle. A section of them had been taken prisoners as suspects. The General had sentenced them to be flogged. The flogging had caused severe sores. These, being unattended to, were festering. The others were Zulu friendlies. Although these had badges given them to distinguish them from the 'enemy', they had been shot at by the soldiers by mistake.

Besides this work, I had to compound and dispense prescriptions for the white soldiers. This was easy enough for me as I had received a year's training in Dr. Booth's little hospital. This work brought me in close contact with many Europeans.

We were attached to swift-moving column. It had orders to march wherever danger was reported. It was for the most part mounted infantry. As soon as our camp was moved, we had to follow on foot with our stretchers on our shoulders. Twice or thrice we had to march forty miles a day. But wherever we went, I am thankful that we had God's good work to do, having to carry to the camp on our stretchers those Zulu friendlies who had been inadvertently wounded, and to attend upon them as nurses.[1]

CHAPTER XXV : HEART SEARCHINGS

The Zulu 'rebellion' was full of new experiences and gave me much food for thought. The Boer War had not brought home to me the horrors of war with anything like the vividness that the 'rebellion' did. This was no war but a man-hunt, not only in my opinion, but also

[1] For the reports in *Indian Opinion* from Gandhiji as a special correspondent on the front, *vide* "Indian Stretcher-Bearer Corps", before July 19, 1906.

in that of many Englishmen with whom I had occasion to talk. To hear every morning reports of the soldiers' rifles exploding like crackers in innocent hamlets, and to live in the midst of them was a trial. But I swallowed the bitter draught, especially as the work of my Corps consisted only in nursing the wounded Zulus. I could see that but for us the Zulus would have been uncared for. This work, therefore, eased my conscience.

But there was much else to set one thinking.[T1] It was a sparsely populated part of the country. Few and far between in hills and dales were the scattered Kraals of the simple and so-called 'uncivilized' Zulus. Marching, with or without the wounded, through[T2] these solemn solitudes, I often fell into deep thought.

I pondered over *brahmacharya* and its implications, and my convictions took deep root. I discussed it with my co-workers. I had not realized then how indispensable it was for self-realization, but clearly saw that one aspiring to serve humanity with his whole soul could not do without it. It was borne in upon me that I should have more and more occasions for service of the kind I was rendering, and that I should find myself unequal to my task if I were engaged in the pleasures of family life and in the propagation and rearing of children.

In a word, I could not live both after the flesh and the spirit.[T3] On the present occasion, for instance, I should not have been able to throw myself into the fray[T4], had my wife been expecting a baby.[T5] Without the observance of *brahmacharya* service of the family would be inconsistent with service of the community. With *brahmacharya* they would be perfectly consistent.

So thinking, I became somewhat impatient to take a final vow. The prospect of the vow brought a certain kind of exultation. Imagination also found free play and opened out limitless vistas of service.

Whilst I was thus in the midst of strenuous physical and mental work, a report came to the effect that the work of suppressing the 'rebellion' was nearly over, and that we should soon be discharged. A day or two after this our discharge came and in a few days we got back to our homes.

After a short while I got a letter from the Governor specially thanking the Ambulance Corps for its services.

On my arrival at Phoenix I eagerly broached the subject of *brahmacharya* with Chhaganlal, Maganlal, West and others. They liked the idea and accepted the necessity of taking the vow, but they also represented the difficulties of the task. Some of them set themselves bravely to observe it, and some, I know, succeeded also.

I too took the plunge—the vow to observe *brahamcharya* for life. I must confess that I had not then fully realized the magnitude and immensity of the task I undertook. The difficulties are even today staring me in the face. The importance of the vow is being more and more borne in upon me. Life without *brahmacharya* appears to me to be insipid and animal-like. The brute by nature knows no self-restraint. Man is man because he is capable of, and only in so far as he exercises, self-restraint. What formerly appeared to me to be extravagant praise of *brahmacharya* in our religious books seems now, with increasing clearness every day, to be absolutely proper and founded on experience.

I saw that *brahmacharya*, which is so full of wonderful potency, is by no means an easy affair, and certainly not a mere matter of the body. It begins with bodily restraint, but does not end there. The perfection of it precludes even an impure thought. A true *brahmachari* will not even dream of satisfying the fleshly appetite, and until he is in that condition, he has a great deal of ground to cover.

For me the observance of even bodily *brahmacharya* has been full of difficulties. Today I may say that I feel myself fairly[T6] safe, but I have yet to achieve complete mastery over thought, which is so essential. Not that the will or effort is lacking, but it is yet a problem to me wherefrom undesirable thoughts spring their insidious invasions. I have no doubt that there is a key to lock out undesirable thoughts, but[T7] everyone has to find it out for himself. Saints and seers have left their experiences for us, but they have given us no infallible and universal prescription. For perfection or freedom from error comes only from grace, and so seekers after God have left us *mantras*, such as Ramanama, hallowed by their own austerities and charged with their purity. Without an unreserved surrender to His grace, complete mastery over thought is impossible. This is the teaching of evey great book of religion, and I am realizing the truth of it every moment of my striving after that perfect *brahmacharya*.

But part of the history of that striving and struggle will be told in chapters to follow. I shall conclude this chapter with an indication of how I set about the task. In the first flush of enthusiasm, I found the observance quite easy.[T8] The very first change I made in my mode of life was to stop sharing the same bed with my wife or seeking privacy with her.

Thus *brahmacharya*, which I had been observing willy-nilly since 1900, was sealed with a vow in the middle of 1906.

Events were so shaping themselves in Johannesburg as to make this self-purification on my part a preliminary as it were to satyagraha. I can now see that all the principal events of my life, culminating in the vow of *brahmacharya*, were secretly preparing me for it. The principle called satyagraha came into being before that name was invented.[T1] Indeed when it was born, I myself could not say what it was. In Gujarati also we used the English phrase 'passive resistance' to describe it. When in a meeting of Europeans I found that the term 'passive resistance' was too narrowly construed, that it was supposed to be a weapon of the weak, that it could be characterized by hatred, and that it could finally manifest itself as violence, I had to demur to all these statements[1] and explain the real nature of Indian move- ment. It was clear that a new word must be coined by the Indians to designate their struggle.

But I could not for the life of me find out a new name, and therefore offered a nominal prize through *Indian Opinion* to the reader who made the best suggestion on the subject. As a result Maganlal Gandhi coined the word 'Sadagraha' (*sat*—truth, *agraha*—firmness) and won the prize.[2] But in order to make it clearer I changed the word to 'Satyagraha' which has since become current in Gujarati as a designation for the struggle.

The history of this struggle is for all practical purposes a history of the remainder of my life in South Africa and especially of my experiments with truth in that sub-continent. I wrote the major portion of this history in Yeravda jail and finished it after I was released. It was published in *Navajivan* and subsequently issued in book form[T2]. Sjt. Valji Govindji Desai has been translating it into English for *Current Thought*, but I am now arranging to have the English translation[3] published in book form at an early date, so that those who will may be able to familiarize themselves with my most important experiments in South Africa. I would recommend a perusal of my history of satyagraha in South Africa to such[T3] readers as have not seen it already. I will not repeat what I have put down there, but in the next few chapters will deal only with a few personal incidents of my life in South Africa which have not been covered by that history. And when

[1] At a meeting of the European sympathizers in Germiston; *vide* "Speech at Germiston", June 7, 1909.

[2] For the offer of prize, *vide* "Some English Terms", December 28, 1907 and for the announcement of the result, *vide* "Johannesburg Letter", before January 10, 1908.

[3] *Satyagraha in South Africa*.

I have done with these, I well at once proceed to give the reader some idea of my experiments in India. Therefore, anyone who wishes to consider these experiments in their strict chronological order will now do well to keep the history of satyagraha in South Africa before him.

CHAPTER XXVII : MORE EXPERIMENTS IN DIETETICS

I was anxious to observe *brahmacharya* in thought, word and deed, and equally anxious to devote the maximum of time to the satyagraha struggle and fit myself for it by cultivating[T1] purity. I was therefore led to make further changes and to impose greater restraints upon myself in the matter of food. The motive for the previous changes had been largely hygienic, but the new experiments were made from a religious standpoint.

Fasting and restriction in diet now played a more important part in my life. Passion in man is generally co-existent with a hankering after the pleasures of the palate. And so it was with me. I have encountered many difficulties in trying to control passion as well as taste, and I cannot claim even now to have brought them under complete subjection. I have considered myself to be a heavy eater. What friends have thought to be my restraint has never appeared to me in that light. If I had failed to develop restraint to the extent that I have, I should have descended lower than the beasts and met my doom long ago. However, as I had adequately realized my shortcomings, I made great efforts to get rid of them, and thanks to this endeavour I have all these years pulled on with my body and put in with it my share of work.

Being conscious of my weakness and unexpectedly coming in contact with congenial company, I began to take an exclusive fruit diet or to fast on the *Ekadashi* day, and also to observe *Janmashtami* and similar holidays.

I began with a fruit diet, but from the standpoint of restraint I did not find much to choose between a fruit diet and a diet of food grains. I observed that the same indulgence of taste was possible with the former as with the latter, and even more, when one got accustomed to it. I therefore came to attach greater importance to fasting or having only one meal a day on holidays. And if there was some occasion for penance or the like, I gladly utilized it too for the purpose of fasting.

But I also saw that, the body now being drained more effectively, the food yielded greater relish and the appetite grew keener. It dawned upon me that fasting could be made as powerful a weapon of indulgence as of restraint. Many similar later experiences of mine as well as of others can be adduced as evidence of this

startling fact. I wanted to improve and train my body, but as my chief object now was to achieve restraint and a conquest of the palate, I selected first one food and then another, and at the same time restricted the amount. But the relish was after me, as it were. As I gave up one thing and took up another, this latter afforded me a fresher and greater relish than its predecessor.

In making these experiments I had several companions, the chief of whom was Hermann Kallenbach.[1] I have already written about this friend in the history of satyagraha in South Arfica, and will not go over the same ground here. Mr. Kallenbach was always with me whether in fasting or in dietetic changes. I lived with him at his own place when the satyagraha struggle was at its height. We discussed our changes in food and derived more pleasure from the new diet than from the old. Talk of this nature sounded quite pleasant in those days, and did not strike me as at all improper. Experience has taught me, however, that it was wrong to have dwelt upon the relish of food. One should eat not in order to please the palate, but just to keep the body going. When each organ of sense subserves the body and through the body the soul, its special relish disappears, and then alone does it begin to function in the way nature intended it to do.

Any number of experiments is too small and no sacrifice is too great for attaining this symphony with nature. But unfortunately the current is nowadays flowing strongly in the opposite direction. We are not ashamed to[T2] sacrifice a multitude of other lives in decorating the perishable body and trying to prolong its existence for a few fleeting moments[T3] with the result that we kill ourselves, both body and soul. In trying to cure one old disease, we give rise to a hundred new ones; in trying to enjoy the pleasures of sense, we lose in the end even our capacity for enjoyment. All this is passing before our very eyes, but there are none so blind as those who will not see.

Having thus set forth their object and the train of ideas which led up to them, I now propose to describe the dietetic experiments at some length.[T4]

CHAPTER XXVIII : KASTURBAI'S COURAGE

Thrice in her life my wife narrowly escaped death through serious illness.[2] The cures were due to household remedies. At the time of her first attack satyagraha was going on or was about to

[1] *Vide* "Satyagraha in South Africa — Chapter XXIII : Europeon Support".

[2] During one such illness Gandhiji was in prison. For his touching letter to her then, *vide* "Letter to Kasturba Gandhi", November 9, 1908.

commence[T1]. She had frequent haemorrhage. A medical friend advised a surgical operation, to which she agreed after some hesitation. She was extremely emaciated, and the doctor had to perform[T2] the operation without chloroform. It was successful, but she had to suffer much pain. She, however, went through it with wonderful bravery. The doctor and his wife who nursed her were all attention. This was in Durban.[T3] The doctor gave me leave to go to Johannesburg, and told me not to have any anxiety about the patient.

In a few days, however, I received a letter to the effect that Kasturbai was worse, too weak to sit up in bed, and had once become unconscious. The doctor knew that he might not, without my consent, give her wines or meat. So he telephoned to me at Johannesburg for permission to give her beef tea. I replied saying I could not grant the permission, but that, if she was in a condition to express her wish in the matter she might be consulted, and she was free to do as she liked. 'But,' said the doctor, 'I refuse to consult the patient's wishes in the matter. You must come yourself. If you do not leave me free to prescribe whatever diet I like, I will not hold myself responsible for your wife's life.'

I took the train for Durban the same day, and met the doctor who quietly broke this news to me : 'I had already given Mrs. Gandhi beef tea when I telephoned to you.'

'Now, doctor, I call this a fraud,' said I.

'No question of fraud in prescribing medicine or diet for a patient. In fact we doctors consider it a virtue to deceive patients or their relatives, if thereby we can save our patients,' said the doctor with determination.

I was deeply pained, but kept cool. The doctor was a good man and a personal friend. He and his wife had laid me under a debt of gratitude, but I was not prepared to put up with his medical morals.[T4]

'Doctor, tell me what you propose to do now. I would never allow my wife to be given meat or beef, even if the denial meant her death, unless of course she desired to take it.'

'You are welcome to your philosophy. I tell you that, so long as you keep your wife under my treatment, I must have the option to give[T5] her anything I wish. If you don't like this, I must regretfully[T6] ask you to remove her. I can't see her die under my roof.'

'Do you mean to say that I must remove her at once ?'

'Whenever did I ask you to remove her ? I only want to be left entirely free. If you do so, my wife and I will do all that is possible for her, and you may go back without the least anxiety on her score. But

if you will not understand this simple thing, you will compel me to ask you to remove your wife from my place.'

I think one of my sons was with me.[1] [T7] He entirely agreed with me, and said his mother should not be given beef tea. I next spoke to Kasturbai herself. She was really too weak to be consulted in this matter. But I thought it my painful duty to do so. I told her what had passed between the doctor and myself. She gave a resolute reply : 'I will not take beef tea. It is a rare thing in this world to be born as a human being, and I would far rather die in your arms[T8] than pollute my body with such abominations.'[T9]

I pleaded with her. I told her that she was not bound to follow me. I cited to her the instances of Hindu friends and acquanitances who had no scruples about taking meat or wine as medicine. But she was adamant. 'No,' said she, 'pray remove me at once.'

I was delighted. Not without some agitation I decided to take her away. I informed the doctor of her resolve. He exclaimed in a rage : 'What a callous man you are! You should have been ashamed to broach the matter to her in her present condition. I tell you your wife is not in a fit state to be removed. She cannot stand the least little hustling. I shouldn't be surprised if she were to die on the way. But if you must persist, you are free to do so. If you will not give her beef tea, I will not take the risk of keeping her under my roof even for a single day.'

So we decided to leave the place at once.[T10] It was drizzling and the station was some distance. We had to take the train from Durban for Phoenix, whence our Settlement was reached by a road of two miles and a half. I was undoubtedly taking a very great risk, but I trusted in God, and proceeded with my task. I sent a messenger to Phoenix in advance, with a message to West to receive us at the station with a hammock, a bottle of hot milk and one of hot water, and six men to carry Kasturbai in the hammock. I got a rickshaw to enable me to take her by the next available train, put her into it in that dangerous condition, and marched away.

Kasturbai needed no cheering up. On the contrary she comforted me, saying : 'Nothing will happen to me. Don't worry.'

She was mere skin and bone, having had no nourishment for days. The station platform was very large, and as the rickshaw could not be taken inside, one had to walk some distance before one could reach the train. So I carried her in my arms and put her into the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Manilal Gandhi", September 17, 1909.

compartment. From Phoenix we carried her in the hammock, and there she slowly picked up strength under hydropathic treatment.

In two or three days of our arrival at Phoenix a Swami came to our place. He had heard of the resolute way in which we had rejected the doctor's advice,[T11] and he had, out of sympathy, come to plead with us. My second and third sons Manilal and Ramdas were, so far as I can recollect, present when the Swami came. He held forth on the religious harmlessness of taking meat, citing authorities from Manu. I did not like his carrying on this disputation in the presence of my wife, but I suffered him to do so out of courtesy. I knew the verses from the *Manusmriti*, I did not need them for my conviction. I knew also that there was a school which regarded these verses as interpolations : but even if they were not, I held my views on vegetarianism independently of religious texts, and Kasturbai's faith was unshakable. To her the scriptural texts were a sealed book, but the traditional religion of her forefathers was enough for her. The children swore by their father's creed and so they made light of the Swami's discourse. But Kasturbai put an end to the dialogue at once.[T12] 'Swamiji', she said, 'whatever you may say, I do not want to recover by means of beef tea. Pray don't worry me any more. You may discuss the thing with my husband and children[T13] if you like. But my mind is made up.

CHAPTER XXIX : DOMESTIC SATYAGRAHA

My first experience of jail life was in 1908. I saw that some of the regulations that the prisoners had to observe were such as should be voluntarily observed by a *brahmachari*, that is, one desiring to practise self-restraint.[T1] Such, for instance, was the regulation requiring the last meal to be finished before sunset[T2]. Neither the Indian nor the African prisoners were allowed tea or coffee. They could add salt to the cooked food if they wished, but they might not have anything for the mere satisfaction of the palate. When I asked the jail medical officer to give us curry powder, and to let us add salt to the food whilst it was cooking, he said : 'You are not here for satisfying your palate. From the point of view of health, curry powder is not necessary, and it makes no difference whether you add salt during or after cooking.'

Ultimately these restrictions were modified, though not with- out much difficulty, but both were wholesome rules of self-restraint. Inhibitions imposed from without rarely succeed, but when they are self-imposed, they have a decidedly salutary effect. So, imme- diately after release from jail, I imposed on myself the two rules. As far as was

then possible, I stopped taking tea, and finished my last meal before sunset. Both these now require no effort in the observance.

There came, however, an occasion which compelled me to give up salt altogether, and this restriction I continued for an unbroken period of ten years. I had read in some books on vegetarianism that salt was not a necessary article of diet for man, that on the contrary saltless diet was better for the health. I had deduced that a *brahmachari* benefited by a saltless diet. I had[T3] read and realized[T4] that the weak-bodied should avoid pulses[T5]. I was very fond of them.[T6]

Now it happened that Kasturbai, who had a brief respite after her operation, had again begun getting haemorrhage, and the malady seemed to be obstinate. Hydropathic treatment by itself did not answer. She had not much faith in my remedies, though she did not resist them.[T7] She certainly did not ask for outside help. So when all my[T8] remedies had failed, I entreated her to give up salt and pulses. She would not agree, however much I pleaded with her, supporting myself with authorities. At last she challenged me, saying that even I could not give up these articles if I was advised to do so. I was pained and equally delighted—delighted in that I got an opportunity to shower my love on her. I said to her : 'You are mistaken. If I was ailing and the doctor advised me to give up these or any other articles, I should unhestitatingly do so. But there! Without any medical advice, I give up salt and pulses for one year, whether you do so or not.'

She was rudely shocked and exclaimed in deep sorrow:[T9] 'Pray forgive me. Knowing you, I should not have provoked you. I promise to abstain from these things, but for heaven's sake take back your vow. This is too hard on me.'

'It is very good for you to forgo these articles. I have not the slightest doubt that you will be all the better without them. As for me, I cannot retract a vow seriously taken. And it is sure to benefit me, for all restraint, whatever prompts it, is wholesome for men. You will therefore leave me alone. It will be a test for me, and a moral support to you in carrying out your resolve.'

So she gave me up. 'You are too obstinate. You will listen to none,' she said, and sought relief in tears.

I would like to count this incident as an instance of satyagraha and it is one of the sweetest recollections of my life.

After that Kasturbai began to pick up quickly—whether as a result of the saltless and pulseless diet or of the other consequent changes in her food, whether as a result of my strict vigilance in exacting observance of the other rules of life, or as an effect of the mental exhilaration produced by the incident, and if so to what extent,

I cannot say. But she rallied quickly, haemorrhage completely stopped, and I added somewhat to my reputation as a quack.[1]

As for me, I was all the better for the new denials. I never craved for the things I had left, the year sped away, and I found the senses to be more subdued than ever. The experiment stimulated the inclination for self-restraint, and I continued the abstention from the articles until long after I returned to India. Only once I happened to take both the articles whilst I was in London in 1914. But of that occasion, and as to how I resumed both[T10], I shall speak in a later chapter.

I have tried the experiment of a saltless and pulseless diet on many of my co-workers, and with good results in South Africa. Medically there may be two opinions as to the value of this diet, but morally I have no doubt that all self-denial is good for the soul.[T11] The diet of a man of self-restraint must be different from that of a man of pleasure, just as their ways of life must be different. Aspirants after *brahmacharya* often defeat their own end by adopting courses suited to a life of pleasure.

CHAPTER XXX : TOWARDS SELF-RESTRAINT

I have described in the last chapter how Kasturbai's illness was instrumental in bringing about some changes in my diet. At a later stage more changes were introduced for the sake of supporting *brahmacharya*.

The first of these was the giving up of milk. It was from Raychandbhai that I first learnt that milk stimulated animal passion. Books on vegetarianism strengthened the idea, but so long as I had not taken the *brahmacharya* vow I could not make up my mind to forgo milk. I had long realized that milk was not necessary for supporting the body, but it was not easy to give it up. While the necessity for avoiding milk in the interest of self-restraint was growing upon me, I happended to come across some literature from Calcutta, describing the tortures to which cows and buffaloes were subjected by their keepers. This had a wonderful effect on me. I discussed it with Mr. Kallenbach.

Though I have introduced Mr. Kallenbach to the readers of the history of satyagraha in South Africa, and referred to him in a previous chapter, I think it necessary to say something more about him here. We met quite by accident. He was a friend of Mr. Khan's, and as the latter had discovered deep down in him a vein of otherworldliness he introduced him to me.

[1] For Gandhiji's views on saltless diet, *vide* "Letter to Harilal Gandhi", July 25, 1911 & "General Knowledge about Health [—XIII]", March 29, 19[13].

When I came to know him I was startled at his love of luxury and extravagance. But in our very first meeting, he asked searching questions concerning matters of religion. We incidentally talked of Gautama Buddha's renunciation. Our acquaintance soon ripened into very close friendship, so much so that we thought alike, and he was convinced that he must carry out in his life the changes I was making in mine.

At that time he was single, and was expending Rs. 1,200 monthly on himself, over and above house rent. Now he reduced himself to such simplicity that his expenses came to Rs. 120 per month. After the breaking up of my household and my first release from jail, we began to live together. It was a fairly hard life that we led.

It was during this time that we had the discussion about milk. Mr. Kallenbach said, 'We constantly talk about the harmful effects of milk. Why then do not we give it up? It is certainly not necessary.' I was agreeably surprised at the suggestion, which I warmly welcomed, and both of us pledged ourselves to abjure milk there and then. This was at Tolstoy Farm[1] in the year 1912.

But this denial was not enought to satisfy me. Soon after this I decided to live on a pure fruit diet, and that too composed of the cheapest fruit possible. Our ambition was to live the life of the poorest people.

The fruit diet turned out to be very convenient also. Cooking was practically done away with. Raw groundnuts, bananas, dates, lemons, and olive oil composed our usual diet.

I must here utter a warning for the aspirants of *brahmacharya*. Though I have made out an intimate connection between diet and *brahmacharya*, it is certain that mind is the principal thing. A mind consciouly unclean cannot be cleansed by fasting. Modification in diet have no effect on it. The concupiscence of the mind cannot be rooted out except by intense self-examination, surrender to[T1] God and, lastly, grace. But there is an intimate connection between the mind and the body, and the carnal mind always lusts for delicacies and luxuries.[T2] To obviate this tendency dietetic restrictions and fasting would appear to be necessary. The carnal mind, instead of controlling the senses, becomes their slave, and therefore the body always needs clean non-stimulating foods and periodical fasting.

[1] About 1,100 acres near Johannesburg bought by Mr. Kallenbach and given for the settlement of satyagrahis on 30-5-1910

Those who make light of dietetic restrictions and fasting are as much in error as those who stake their all on them. My experience teaches me that, for those whose minds are working towards self-restraint, dietetic restrictions and fasting are very helpful. In fact without their help concupiscence cannot be completely rooted out of the mind.

CHAPTER XXXI : FASTING

Just about the time when I gave up milk and cereals, and started on the experiment of a fruit diet, I commenced fasting as a means of self-restraint. In this Mr. Kallenbach also[T1] joined me. I had been used to fasting now and again, but for purely health reasons. That fasting was necessary for self-restraint I learnt from a friend.

Having been born in a Vaishnava family and of a mother who was given to keeping all sorts of hard vows, I had observed, while in India, the *Ekadashi* and other fasts, but in doing so I had merely copied my mother and sought to please my parents.

At that time I did not understand, nor did I believe in, the efficacy[T2] of fasting. But seeing that the friend I have mentioned was observing it with benefit, and with the hope of supporting the *brahmacharya* vow, I followed his example and began keeping the *Ekadashi* fast. As a rule Hindus allow themselves milk and fruit on a fasting day, but such fast I had been keeping daily. So now I began complete fasting, allowing myself only water.

When I started on this experiment, the Hindu month of *shravan* and the Islamic month of *Ramzan* happened to coincide. The Gandhis used to observe not only the Vaishnava but also the Shaivite vows, and visited the Shaivite as also the Vaishnava temples. Some of the members of the family used to observe pradosha[1] in the whole of the month of *Shravan*. I decided to do likewise.

These important experiments were undertaken while we were at Tolstoy Farm, where Mr. Kallenbach and I were staying with a few satyagrahi families, including young people and children. For these last we had a school. Among them were four or five Mussalmans. I always helped and encouraged them in keeping all their religious observances. I took care to see that they offered their daily *namaz*. There were Christian and Parsi youngsters[T3] too, whom I considered it my duty to encourage to follow their respective religious observances.

During this month, therefore, I persuaded the Mussalman youngsters to observe the *Ramzan* fast. I had of course decided to observe *pradosha* myself, but I now asked the Hindu, Parsi and

[1] Fasting until evening

Christian youngsters to join me[T4]. I explained to them that it was always a good thing to join with others in any matter of self-denial. Many of the Farm inmates welcomed my proposal. The Hindu and the Parsi youngsters did not copy the Mussalman ones in every detail; it was not necessary. The Mussalman youngsters had to wait for their breakfast until sunset, whereas the others did not do so, and were thus able to prepare delicacies for the Mussalman friends and serve them. Nor had the Hindu and other youngsters to keep the Mussalmans company when they had their last meal before sunrise next morning, and of course all except the Mussalmans allowed themselves water[T5].

The result of these experiments was that all were convinced of the value of fasting, and a splendid *esprit corps* grew up among them.

We were all vegetarians on Tolstoy Farm, thanks, I must gratefully confess, to the readiness of all to respect my feelings. The Mussalman youngsters must have missed their meat during *Ramzan*, but none of them ever let me know that they did so. They delighted in and relished the vegetarian diet, and the Hindu youngsters often prepared vegetarian delicacies for them, in keeping with the simplicity of the Farm.

I have purposely digressed in the midst of this chapter on fasting, as I could not have given these pleasant reminiscences anywhere else, and I have indirectly described a characteristic of mine, namely that I have always loved to have my co-workers with me in anything that has appealed to me as being good. They were quite new to fasting, but thanks to the *pradosha* and *Ramzan* fasts, it was easy for me to interest them in fasting as a means of self-restraint[T6].

Thus an atmosphere of self-restriant naturally sprang up on the Farm. All the Farm inmates now began to join us in keeping partial and complete fasts[T7], which, I am sure, was entirely to the good. I cannot definitely say how far this self-denial touched their hearts and helped them in their striving to conquer the flesh. For my part, however, I am convinced that I greatly benefited by it both physically and morally. But I know that it does not necessarily follow that fasting and similar disciplines would have the same effect for all.

Fasting can help to curb animal passion, only if it is undertaken with a view to self-restraint. Some of my friends have actually found their animal passion and palate stimulated as an after-effect of fasts. That is to say, fasting is futile unless it is accompanied by an incessant longing for self-restraint. The famous verse from the second chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita* is worth noting in this connection :

> For a man who is fasting his senses Outwardly, the sense-objects disappear,
>
> Leaving the yearning behind; but when He has seen the Highest, Even the

yearning disappears.[1]

Fasting and similar discipline is, therefore, one of the means to the end of self-restraint but it is not all, and if physical fasting is not accompanied by mental fasting, it is bound to end in hypocrisy and disaster.

CHAPTER XXXII : AS SCHOOLMASTER

The reader will, I hope, bear in mind the fact that I am, in these chapters, describing things not mentioned, or only cursorily mentioned in the history of satyagraha in South Africa. If he does so, he will easily see the connection between the recent chapters.

As the Farm grew,[T1] it was found necessary to make some provision for the education of its boys and girls. There were, among these, Hindu, Mussalman, Parsi and Christian boys and some Hindu girls. I was not possible, and I did not think it necessary, to engage special teachers for them. It was not possible, for qualified Indian teachers were scarce, and even when available, none would be ready to go to a place 21 miles distant from Johannesburg on a small salary. Also we were certainly not overflowing with money. And I did not think it necessary to import teachers from outside the Farm. I did not believe in the existing system of education, and I had a mind to find out by experience and experiment the true system. Only this much I knew—that, under ideal conditions, true education could be imparted only by the parents, and that then there should be the minimum of outside help, that Tolstoy Farm was a family, in which I occupied the place of the father, and that I should so far as possible shoulder the responsibility for the training of the young.

The conception no doubt was not without its flaws. All the young people had not been with me since their childhood, they had been brought up in different conditions and environments, and they did not not belong to the same religion. How could I do full justice to the young people, thus circumstanced, even if I assumed the place of paterfamilias ?

But I had always given the first place to the culture of the heart or the building of character, and as I felt confident that moral training could be given to all alike, no matter how different their ages and their upbringing, I decided to live amongst them all the twnety-four hours of the day as their father. I regarded character buildings as the proper fundation for their education and, if the foundation was firmly laid, I was sure that[T2] the children could learn all the other things themselves or with the assistance of friends.

[1] II. 59

But as I fully appreciated the necessity of a[T3] literary training in addition, I started some classes with the help of Mr. Kallenbach and Sjt. Pragji Desai. Nor did I under-rate the building up of the body. This they got in the course of their daily routine. For there were no servants on the Farm, and all the work, from cooking down to scavenging, was done by the inmates. There were many fruit trees to be looked after, and enough gardening to be done as well. Mr. Kallencbach was fond of gardening and had gained some experince of this work in one of the governmental model gardens.

It was obligatory on all, young and old, who were not engaged in the kitchen, to give some time to gardening. The children had the lion's share of this work, which included digging pits, felling timber and lifting loads. This gave them ample exercise. They took delight in the work, and so they did not generally need any other exercise or games. Of course some of them, and sometimes all of them, malingered and shirked. Sometimes I connived at their pranks, but often I was strict with them. I dare say they did not like the strictness, but I do not recollect their having resisted it. Whenever I was strict, I would, by argument, convince them that it was not right to play with one's work.[T4] The conviction would, however, be short-lived, the next moment they would again leave their work and go to play. All the same we got along, and at any rate they built up fine physiques. There was scarcely any illness on the Farm, though it must be said that good air and water and regular hours of food were not a little responsible for this.

A word about vocational training. It was my intention to teach every one of the youngsters some useful manual vocation. For this purpose Mr. Kallenbach went to a Trappist monastery and returned having learnt shoe-making. I learnt it from him and taught the art to such as were ready to take it up. Mr. Kallenbach had some experience of carpentry, and there was another inmate who knew it; so we had a small class in carpentry. Cooking almost all the youngsters knew.

All this was new to them. They had never even dreamt that they would have to learn these things some day. For generally the only training that Indian children received in South Africa was in the three R's.

On Tolstoy Farm we made it a rule that the youngsters should not be asked to do what[T5] the teachers did not do, and therefore, when they were asked to do any work, there was always a teacher co-operating and actually working with them. Hence whatever the youngsters learnt, they learnt cheerfully.

Literary training and character building must be dealt with in the following chapters.

CHAPTER XXXIII : LITERARY TRANINING

It was seen in the last chapter how we provided for the physical training on Tolstoy Farm, and incidentally for the vocational. Though this was hardly done in a way to satisfy me, it may be claimed to have been more or less successful.

Literary training, however, was a more difficult matter. I had neither the resources nor the literary equipment necessary; and I had not the time I would have wished to devote to the subject. The physical work that I was doing used to leave me thoroughly exhausted at the end of the day, and I used to have the classes just when I was most in need of some rest. Instead, therefore, of my being fresh for the class, I could with the greatest difficulty keep myself awake. The mornings had to be devoted to work on the farm and domestic duties, so the school hours had to be kept after the midday meal. There was no other time suitable for the school.

We gave three periodsT1 at the most to literary training. Hindi, Tamil, Gujarati and Urdu were all taught, and tuition was given through the vernaculars of the boysT2. English was taught as well. It was also necessary to acquaint the Gujarati Hindu children with a little SamskritT3, and to teach all the children elementary history, geography and arithmetic.T4

I had undertaken to teach Tamil and Urdu. The little Tamil I knew was acquired during voyages and in jail. I had not got beyond Pope's[1] excellent Tamil handbook. My knowledge of the Urdu script was all that I had aqcuired on a single voyage, and my knowledge of the language was confined to the familiar Persian and Arabic words that I had learnt from contact with Mussalman friends. Of Samskrit I new no more than I had learnt at the high school, even my Gujarati was no better than that which one acquires at the school.

Such was the capital with which I had to carry on. In poverty of literary equipment my colleagues went one better than I. But my love for the languages of my country, my confidence in my capacity as a teacher as also the ignorance of my pupils, and more than that, their generosity, stood me in good stead.

The Tamil boys were all born in South Africa, and therefore knew very little Tamil, and did not know the script at all. So I had to teach them the script and the rudiments of grammar. That was easy

[1] G.U. Pope; *vide* "The Late Dr. Pope", March 14, 1908.

enough. My pupils knew that they could any day beat me in Tamil conversation, and when Tamilians, not knowing English, came to see me, they became my interpreters. I got along merrily, because I never attempted to disguise my ignorance from my pupils. In all respect I showed myself to them exactly as I really was. Therefore in spite of my colossal ignorance of the language I never lost their love and respect. It was comparatively easier to teach the Mussalman boys Urdu. They knew the script. I had simply to stimulate in them an interest in reading and to improve their handwriting.

These youngsters were for the most part unlettered and unschooled. But I found in the course of the work that I had very little to teach them, beyond weaning them from their laziness,T5 and supervising their studies. As I was content with this, I could pull on with boys of different ages and learning different subject in one and the same class-room.

Of text books, about which we hear so much, I never felt the want. I do not even remember having made much use of the books that were available. I did not find it at all necessary to load the boys with quantities of books. I have always felt that the true textbook for the pupil is his teacher. I remember very little that my teachers taught me from books, but I have even now a clear recollection of the things they taught me independently of books.

Children take in much more and with less labour through their ears than through their eyes. I do not remember having read any book from cover to cover with my boys. But I gave them, in my own language, all that I had digested from my reading of various books, and I dare say they are still carrying a recollection of it in their minds. It was laborious for them to remember what they learnt from books, but I imparted to them by word of mouth, they could repeatT6 with the greatest ease. Reading was a task for them, but listening to me was a pleasure, when I did not bore them by failure to make my subject interesting.T7 And from the questions that my talks prompted them to put, I had measure of their power of understanding.

CHAPTER XXXIV : TRAINING OF THE SPIRIT

The spiritual training of the boys was a much more difficult matter than their physical and mental training. I relied little on religious books for the training of the spirit. Of course I believed that every student should be acquainted with the elements of his own religion and have a general knowledge of his own scriptures, and therefore I provided for such knowledge as best I could. But that, to my mind, was part of the intellectual training. Long before I undertook the education of the youngters of the Tolstoy Farm I had

realized that the training of the spirit was a thing by itself. To develop the spirit is to build character and to enable one to work towards a knowledge of God and self-realization. And I held that this was an essential part of the training of the young,T1 and that all training without culture of the spirit was of no use, and might be even harmful.

I am familiar with the superstition that self-realization is possible only in the fourth stage of life, i.e., sanyasa (renunciation). But it is a matter of common knowledge that those who defer preparation for this invaluable experience until the last stage of life attain not self-realization but old age amounting to a second and pitiable childhood, living as a burden on this earth. I have a full recollection that I held these views even whilst I was teaching, i.e., in 1911-12, though I might not then have expressed them in identical language.

How then was this spiritual training to be given? I made the children memorize and recite hymns, and read to them from books on moral training. But that was far from satisfying me. As I came into closer contact with them I saw that it was not through books that one could impart training of the spirit. Just as physical training was to be imparted through physical exercise, and intellectual through intellectual exercise, even so the training of the spirit was possible only through the exercise of the spirit. And the exercise of the spirit entriely depended on the life and character of the teacher. The teacher had always to be mindful of his p's and q's, whether he was in the midst of his boys or not.

It is possible for a teacher situated miles away to affect the spirit of the pupils by his way of living. It would be idle for me, if I were a liar, to teach boys to tell the truth. A cowardly teacher would never succeed in making his boys valiant, and a stranger to self-restraint could never teach his pupils the value of self-restraint. I saw, therefore, that I must be an eternal object-lesson to the boys and girls living with me. They thus became my teachers, and I learnt I must be good and live straight, if only for their sakes. I may say that the increasing discipline and restraint I imposed on myself at Tolstoy Farm was mostly due to those wards of mine.

One of them was wild, unruly, given to lying, and quarrelsome. On one occasion he broke out most violently. I was exasperatedT2. I never punished my boys, but this time I was very angry. I tried to reason with him. But he was adamant and even tried to over-reach me. At last I picked up a ruler lying at hand and delivered a blow on his arm. I trembled as I struck him. I dare say he noticed it. This was an entirely novel experience for them all. The boy cried out and begged to be forgiven. He cried not because the beating was painful to him;

he could, if he had been so minded, have paid me back in the same coin, being a stoutly-built youth of seventeen; but he realized my pain in being driven to this violent resource. Never again after this incident did he disobey me. But I still repent that violence. I am afriad I exhibited before him that day not the spirit, but the brute, in me.

I have always been opposed to corporal punishment. I remember only one occasion on which I physically punished one of my sons. I have therefore never until this day been able to decide whether I was right or wrong in using the ruler. Probably it was improper, for it was prompted by anger and a desire to punish. Had it been an expression only of my distress, I should have considered it justified. But the motive in this case was mixed.

This incident set me thinking and taught me a better method of correcting students. I do not know whether that method would have availed on the occasion in question. The youngster soon forgot the incident, and I do not think he ever showed great improvement. But the incident made me understand better the duty of a teacher towards his pupils.

Cases of[T3] misconduct on the part of the boys often occurred after this, but I never resorted to corporal punishment. Thus in my endeavour to impart spiritual training to the boys and girls under me, I came to understand better and better the power of the spirit.

CHAPTER XXXV : TARES AMONG THE WHEAT

It was at Tolstoy Farm that Mr. Kallenbach drew my attention to a problem that had never before struck me. As I have already said, some of the boys at the Farm were bad and unruly. There were loafers, too amongst them. With these my three boys came in daily contact, as also did other children of the same type as my own sons. This troubled Mr. Kallenbach, but his attention was centred on the impropriety of keeping *my* boys with these unruly youngsters.

One day he spoke out: ‘Your way of mixing your own boys with the bad ones does not appeal to me. It can have only one result. They will become demoralized through this bad company.’

I do not remember whether the question puzzled me at the moment, but I recollect what I said to him :

‘How can I distinguish between my boys and the loafers? I am equally responsible for both. The youngsters have come because I invited them. If I were to dismiss them with some money, they would immediately run off to Johannesburg and fall back into their old ways. To tell you the truth, it is quite likely that they and their guardians believe that, by having come here, they have laid me under

an obligation. That they have to put up with a good deal of inconvenience here, you and I know very well. But my duty is clear. I must have them here, and therefore my boys also must live with them. And surely, you do not want me to teach my boys to feel from today that they are superior to other boys. To put that sense of superiority into their heads would be to lead them stray. This association with other boys will be a good discipline for them. They will, of their own accord, learn to discriminate between good and evil. Why should we not believe that, if there is really anything good in them, it is bound to react on their companions? However that may be, I cannot help keeping them here, and if that means some risk, we must run it.'

Mr. Kallenbach shook his head.

The result, I think, cannot be said to have been bad. I do not consider my sons were any the worse for the experiment. On the contrary I can see that they gained something. If there was the slightest trace of superiority in them, it was destroyed and they learnt to mix with all kinds of children. They were tested and disciplined.

This and similar experiments have shown me that, if good children are taught together with bad ones and thrown into their company, they will lose nothing, provided the experiment is conducted under the watchful case of their parents and guardians.

Children wrapped up in cottonwool are not always proof against all temptation or contamination. It is true, however, that when boys and girls of all kinds of upbringing are kept and taught together, the parents and the teachers are put to the severest test. They have constantly to be on the alert.

CHAPTER XXXVI : FASTING AS PENANCE

Day by day it became increasingly clear to me how very difficult it was to bring up and educate boys and girls in the right way. If I was to be their real teacher and guardian, I must touch their hearts. I must share their joys and sorrows, I must help them to solve the problems that faced them, and I must take along the right channel the surging aspirations of their youth.

On the release of some of the satyagrahis from jail, Tolstoy Farm was almost denuded of its inmates. The few that remained mostly belonged to Phoenix. So I removed them there. Here I had to pass through a fiery ordeal.

In those days I had to move between Johannesburg and Phoenix. Once when I was in Johannesburg I received tidings of the moral fall of two of the inmates of the Ashram. News of an apparent failure or reverse in the satyagraha struggle would not have shocked

me, but this news came upon me like a thunderbolt.T1 The same day I took the train for Phoenix. Mr. Kallenbach insisted on accompanying me. He had noticed the state I was in. He would not brook the thought of my going alone, for he happened to be the bearer of the tidings which had so upset me.[1]

During the journey my duty seemed clear to me.T2 I felt that the guardian or teacher was responsible, to some extent at least, for the lapse of his ward or pupil. So my responsibility regarding the incident in question became clear to me as daylight. My wife had already warned me in the matter, but being of a trusting nature,I had ignored her caution. I felt that the only way the guiltyparties could be made to realize my distress and the depth of their own fall would be for me to do some penance. So I imposed upon myself a fast for seven days and a vow to have only one meal a day for a period of four months and a half. Mr. Kallenbach tried to dissuade me, but in vain. He fullyT3 conceded the propriety of the penance, and insisted on joining me. I could not resist his transparent affection.

I felt greatly relieved, for the decision meant a heavy load off my mind. The anger against the guilty parties subsided and gave place to the purest pity for them. Thus considerably eased, I reached Phoenix. I made further investigation and acquainted myself with some more details I needed to know.

My penance pained everybody, but it cleared the atmos- phere. Everyone came to realize what a terrible thing it was to be sinful, and the bond that bound me to the boys and girls became stronger and truer.

A circumstance arising out of this incident compelled me, a little while after, to go into a fast for fourteen days, the results of whichT4 exceeded even my expectations.

It is not my purpose to make out from these incidents that it is the duty of a teacher to resort to fasting whenever there is a delinquency on the part of his pupils. I hold, however, that some occa- sions do call for this drastic remedy. But it presupposes clearness of vision and spiritual fitness. Where there is no true love between the teacher and the pupil, where the pupil's delinquency has not touched the very being of the teacher and where the pupil has no respect for the teacher, fasting is out of place and may even be harmful. Though there is thus room for doubting the propriety of fasts in such cases,

[1] *Vide* "Fragment of Letter", April 22, 1914.

there is no question about the teacher's responsibility for the errors of his pupil.[T5]

The first penance did not prove difficult for any of us. I had to suspend or stop none of my normal activities. It may be recalled that during the whole of this period of penance I was a strict fruita- rian. The latter part of the second fast went fairly hard with me. I had not then completely understood the wonderful efficacy of Ramanama, and my capacity for suffering was to that extent less. Besides, I did not know the technique of fasting, especially the necessity of drinking plenty of water, however nauseating or distasteful it might be. Then the fact that the first had been an easy affair had made me rather careless as to the second. Thus during the first I took Kuhne baths every day, but during the second I gave them up after two or three days, and drank very little water, as it was distasteful and produced nausea. The throat became parched and weak and during the last days I could speak only in a very low voice. In spite of this, however, my work was carried on through dictation where writing was necessary. I regularly listened to readings from the *Ramayana* and other sacred books. I had also sufficient strength to discuss and advise in all urgent matters.

CHAPTER XXXVII : TO MEET GOKHALE

I must skip many of the recollections of South Africa.

At the conclusion of the satyagraha struggle in 1914, I received Gokhale's instructions to return home *via* London. So in July Kasturbai, Kallenbach and I sailed for England.

During satyagraha I had begun travelling third class. I therefore took third class passages for this voyage. But there was a good deal of difference between third-class accommodation on the boat on this route and that provided on Indian coastal boats or railway trains. There is hardly sufficient sitting, much less sleeping, accommodation in the Indian service, and little cleanliness. During the voyage to London, on the other hand, there was enough room and cleanliness, and the steamship company had provided special facilities for us. The company had provided reserved closet accommodation for us, and as we were fruitarians, the steward had orders to supply us with fruits and nuts. As a rule third-class passengers get little fruit or nuts. These facilities made our eighteen days on the boat quite comfortable.

Some of the incidents during the voyage are well worth recording. Mr. Kallenbach was very fond of binoculars, and had one or two costly pairs. We had daily discussions over one of these. I tried to impress on him that this possession was not in keeping with the ideal of simplicity that we aspired to reach. Our discussions came to a

headT1 one day, as we were standing near the porthole of our cabin.

'Rather than allow these to be a bone of contention between us, why not throw them into the sea and be done with them ?' said I.

'Certainly throw the wretched things away,' said Mr. Kallenbach.

'I mean it,' said I.

'So do I,' quickly came the reply.

And forthwith I flung them into the sea. They were worth some £7, but their value lay less in their price than in Mr. Kallenbach's infatuation for them. However, having got rid of them, he never regretted it.

This is but one out of the manyT2 incidents that happened between Mr. Kallenbach and me.

Every day we had to learn something new in this way, for both of us were trying to tread the path of truth. In the march towards truth, anger, selfishness, hatred, etc., naturally give way, for otherwise truth would be impossible to attain. A man who is swayed by passions may have good enough intentions, may be truthful in word, but he will never find the truth. A successful search for truth means complete deliverance from the dual throng such as of love and hate, happiness and misery.

Not much time had elapsed since my fast when we started on our voyage. I had not regained my normal strength. I used to stroll on deck to get a little exercise, so as to revive my appetite and digest what I ate. But even this exercise was beyond me, causing pain in the calves, so much so that on reaching London I found that I was worseT3 rather than better. There I came to know Dr. Jivraj Mehta. I gave him the history of my fast and subsequent pain, and he said, 'If you do not take complete rest for a few days, there is a fear of your legs going out of use.'

It was then that I learned that a man emerging from a long fast should not be in a hurry to regain lost strength, and should also put a curb on his appetite. More caution and perhaps more restraint are necessary in breaking a fast than in keeping it.

In Madeira we heard that the great War might break out at any moment. As we entered the English Channel, we received the news of its actual outbreak. We were stopped for some time. It was difficult business to tow the boat through the submarine mines which had been laid throughout the Channel, and it took about two days to reach Southampton.

War was declared on the 4th of August. We reached London on the 6th.

On arrival in England I learned that Gokhale had been stranded in Paris where he had gone for reason of health, and as communication between Paris and London had been cut off, there was no knowing when he would return. I did not want to go home without having seen him, but no one could say definitely when he would arrive.

What then was I to do in the meanwhile ? What was my duty as regards the War ? Sorabji Adajania, my comrade in jail and a satyagrahi, was then reading for the bar in London. As one of the best satyagrahisT1 he had been sent to England to qualify himself as a barrister, so that he might take my place on return to South Africa. Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta was paying his expenses. With him, and through him, I had conferences with Dr. Jivraj Mehta and others who were prosecuting their studies in England. In consultation with them, a meeting of the Indian residents in Great Britian and Ireland was called. I placed my views before them.

I felt that Indians residing in England ought to do their bit in the War. English students had volunteered to serve in the army, and Indians might do no less. A number of objections were taken to this line of argument. There was, it was contended, a world of difference between the Indians and the English. We were slaves and they were masters. How could a slave co-operate with the master in the hour of the latter's need ? Was it not the duty of the slave, seeking to be free, to make the master's need his opprtunity? This argument failed to appeal to me then. I knew the difference of status between an Indian and an Englishman, but I did not believe that we had been quite reduced to slavery. I felt then that it was more the fault of individual British officials than of the British system, and that we could convert them by love. If we would improve our status through the help and co-operation of the British, it was our duty to win their help by standing by them in their hour of need. Though the system was faulty, it did not seem to me to be intolerable, as it does today. But if, having lost my faith in the system, I refuse to co-operate withT2 the British Government today, how could those friends then do so, having lost their faith not only in the system but in the officials as well ?

The opposing friends felt that that was the hour for making a bold declaration of Indian demands and for improving the status of Indians.

I thought that England's need should not be turned into our opportunity, and that it was more becoming and far-sighted not to

press our demands while the War lasted. I therefore adhered to my advice and invited those who would to enlist as volunteers.[1] There was a good response, practically all the provinces and all the religions being represented among the volunteers.

I wrote a letter to Lord Crewe, acquainting him with these facts, and expressing our readiness to be trained for ambulance work, if that should be considered a condition precedent to the acceptance of our offer.[2]

Lord Crewe accepted the offer after some hesitation,T3 and thanked us for having tendered our services to the Empire at that critical hour.

The volunteers began their preliminary training in first aid to the wounded under the well-known Dr. Cantlie[3]. It was a short course of six weeks, but it covered the whole course of first-aid.

We were a class of about 80. In six weeks we were examined, and all except one passed. For these the Government now provided military drill and other training. Colonel Baker was placed in charge of this work.T4

London in these days was a sight worth seeing. There was no panic, but all were busy helping to the best of their ability. Able-bodied adults began training as combatants, but what were the old, the infirm and the women to do? There was enough work for them, if they wanted. So they employed themselves in cutting and making clothes and dressings for the wounded.

The Lyceum, a ladies' club, undertook to make as many clothes for the soldiers as they could. Shrimati Sarojini Naidu was a member of this club, and threw herself whole-heartedly into the work. This was my first acquaintance with her. She placed before me a heap of clothes which had been cut to pattern, and asked me to get them allT5 sewn up and return them to her. I welcomed her demand and with the assistance of friends got as many clothes made as I could manage druing my training for first-aid.

CHAPTER XXXIX : A SPIRITUAL DILEMMA

As soon as the news reached South Africa that I along with other Indians had offered my services in the War, I received two cables. One of these was from Mr. Polak who questioned the consistency of my

[1] *Vide* "A Confidential Letter", August 13, 1914.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Under Secretary for India", August 14, 1914.

[3] An authority on Red Cross work

action with my profession of ahimsa[1]

I had to a certain extent anticipated this objection, for I had discussed the question in my *Hindu Swaraj* or *Indian Home Rule*[2], and used to discuss it day in and day out with friends in South Africa. All of us recognized the immorality of war. If I was not prepar- ed to prosecute my assailant, much less should I be willing toT1 participate in a war, especially when I knew nothing of the justice or otherwise of the cause of the combatants. Friends of course knew that I had previously served in the Boer War, but they assumed that my views had since undergone a change.

As a matter of fact the very same line of argument that persuaded me to take part in the Boer War had weighed with me on this occasion. It was quite clear to me that participation in war could never be consistent with ahimsa. But it is not always given to one to be equally clear about one's duty. A votary of truth is often obliged to grope in the dark.

Ahimsa is a comprehensive principle. We are helpless mortals caught in the conflagration of *himsa*. The saying that life lives on life has a deep meaning in it. Man cannot for a moment live without consciously or unconsciously committing outward *himsa*. The very fact of his living—eating, drinking and moving about–necessarily involves some *himsa*, destruction of life, be it ever so minute. A votary of ahimsa therefore remains true to his faith if the spring of all his actions is compassion, if he shuns to the best of his ability the destruction of the tiniest creature, tries to save it, and thus incessantly strives to be free from the deadly coil of *himsa.* He will be constantly growing in self-restraint and compassion, but he can never become entirely free from outward *himsa*T2.

Then again, because underlying ahimsa is the unity of all life, the error of one cannot but affect all, and hence man cannot be wholly free from *himsa*. So long as he continues to be a social being, he cannot but participate in the *himsa* that the very existence of society involvesT3. When two nations are fighting, the duty of a votary of ahimsa is to stop the war. He who is not equal to that duty, he who has no power of resisting war, he who is not qualified to resist war, may take part in war, and yet whole-heartedly try to free himself, his nation and the world from war.

I had hope to improve my status and that of my peopleT4 through the the British Empire. Whilst in England I was enjoying the

[1] In his letters from London to Maganlal Gandhi and Pragji Desai, Gandhiji explained his attitude to the war; *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", September 18, 1914 & "Letter to Pragji Desai", November 15, 1914.

[2] *Vide* "Hind Swaraj".

protection of the British Fleet, and taking shelter as I did under its armed might, I was directly participating in its potential violence. Therefore, if I desired to retain my connection with the Empire and to live under its banner, one of three courses was open to me : I could declare open resistance to the War and, in accordance with the law of satyagraha, boycott the Empire until it changed its military policy; or I could seek imprisonment by civil disobedience of such of its laws as were fit to be disobeyed; or I could participate in the War on the side of the Empire and thereby acquire the capacity and fitness for resisting the violence of war. I lacked this capacity and fitness, so I thought there was nothing for it but to serve in the War.

I make no distinction, from the point of view of ahimsa, between combatants and non-combatants. He who volunteers to serve a band of dacoits, by working as their carrier, or their watchman while they are about their business, or their nurse when they are wounded, is as much guilty of dacoity as the dacoits themselves. In the same way those who confine themselves to attending to the wounded in battle cannot be absolved from the guilt of war.

I had argued the whole thing out to myself in this manner, before I received Polak's cable, and soon after its receipt, I discussed these views with several friends and concluded that it was my duty to offer to serve in the War. Even today I see no flaw in that line of argument, nor am I sorry for my action, holding, as I then did, views favourable to the British connection.

I know that even then I could not carry conviction with all my friends about the correctness of my position. The question is subtle. It admits of differences of opinion, and therefore I have submitted my argument as clearly as possible to those who believe in ahimsa and who are making serious efforts to practise it in every walk of life. A devotee of Truth may not do anything in deference to convention. He must always hold himself open to correction, and whenever he discovers himself to be wrong he must confess it at all costs and atone for it.

CHAPTER XL : MINIATURE SATYAGRAHA

Though I thus took part in the War as a matter of duty, it chanced that I was not only unable directly to participate in it, but actually compelled to offer what may be called miniatureT1 satyagraha even at that critical juncture.

I have already said that an officer[1] was appointed in charge of our training, as soon as our names were approved and enlisted. We

[1] Col. R. J. Baker

were all under the impression that this Commanding Officer was to be our chief only so far as technical matters were concerned, and that in all other matters I was the head of our Corps, which was directly responsible to me in matters of internal discipline; that is to say, the Commanding Officer had to deal with the Corps through me. But from the first the Officer left us under no such delusion.

Mr. Sorabji Adajania was a shrewd man. He warned me. 'Beware of this man,' he said, 'He seems inclined to lord it over us. We will have one of his orders. We are prepared to look upon him as our instructor. But the youngsters he has appointed to instruct us also feel as though they had come as our masters.'

These youngsters were Oxford students who had come to instruct us and whom the Commanding Officer had appointed to be our section leaders.

I also had not failed to notice the high-handedness of the Commanding Officer, but I asked Sorabji not to be anxious and tried to pacify him. But he was not the man to be easily convinced.

'You are too trusting. These people will deceive you with wretchedT2 words, and when at last you see through them, you will ask us to resort to satyagraha, and so come to grief, and bring us all to grief along with youT3,' said he with a smile.

'What else but grief can you hope to come to after having cast in your lot with me?' said I. 'A satyagrahi is born to be deceived. Let the Commanding Officer deceive us. Have I not told you times without number that ultimately a deceiver only deceives himself ?'

Sorabji gave a loud laugh. 'Well, then,' said he, 'continue to be deceived. You wil some day meet your death in satyagraha and drag poor mortals like me behind you.'

These words put me in mind of what the late Miss Emily Hobhouse wrote to me with regard to non-co-operation : 'I should not be surprised if one of these days you have to go to the gallows for the sake of truth. May God show you the right path and protect you.'

The talk with Sorabji took place just after the appointment of the Commanding Officer. In a very few days our relations with him reached the breaking point. I had hardly regained my strength after the fourteen days' fast, when I began to take part in the drill, often walking to the appointed place about two miles from home. This gave me pleurisy and laid me low. In this condition I had to go week-end camping. Whilst the others stayed there, I returned home. It was here that an occasion arose for satyagraha.

The Commanding Officer began to exercise his authority somewhat freely. He gave us clearly to understand that he was our head in

all matters, military and non-military, giving us at the same time a taste of his authority. Sorabji hurried to me. He was not at all prepared to put up with this high-handedness. He said ; 'We must have all order through you. We are still in the training camp and all sorts of absurd orders are being issued. Invidious distinctions are made between ourselves and those youths who have been appointed to instruct us. We must have it out with the Commanding Officer, otherwise we shall not be able to go on any longer. The Indian students and others who have joined our Corps are not going to abide by any absurd orders. In a cause which has been taken up for the sake of self-respect, it is unthinkable to put up with loss of it.'

I approached the Commanding Officer and drew his attention to the complaints I had received. He wrote asking me to set out the complaints in writing, at the same time asking me 'to impress upon those who complain that the proper direction in which to make complaints is to me through their section commanders, now appointed, who will inform me through the instructors.'

To this I replied saying that I claimed no authority, that in the military sense I was no more than any other private, but that I had believed that as Chairman of the Volunteer Corps, I should be allowed unofficially to act as their representative. I also set out the grievances and requests that had been brought to my notice, namely, that grievous dissatisfaction had been caused by the appointment of section leaders without reference to the feeling of the members of the corps; that they be recalled, and the Corps be invited to elect section leaders, subject to the Commander's approval.

This did not appeal to the Commanding Officer, who said it was repugnant to all military discipline that the section leaders should be elected by the Corps, and that the recall of appointments already made would be subversive of all discipline.

So we held a meeting and decided upon withdrawalT4. I brought home to the members the serious consequences of satyagraha. But a very large majority voted for the resolution, which was to the effect that, unless the appointments of Corporals already made were recalled and the members of the Corps given an opportunity of electing their own Corporals, the members would be obliged to abstain from further drilling and week-end camping.

I then addressed a letter to the Commanding Officer telling him what a severe disappointment his letter rejecting my suggestion had been. I assured him that I was not fond of any exercise of authority and that I was most anxious to serveT5. I also drew his attention to a precedent. I pointed out that, although I occupied no offical rank in

the South African Indian Ambulance Corps at the time of the Boer War, there was never a hitch between Colonel Gallwey and the Corps, and the Colonel never took a step without reference to me with a view to ascertain the wishes of the Corps. I also enclosed a copy of the resolution we had passed the previous evening.

This had no good[T6] effect on the officer, who felt that the meeting and the resolution were a grave breach of discipline.

Hereupon I addressed a letter to the Secretary of State for India, acquainting him with all the facts and enclosing a copy of the resolution. He replied explaining that conditions in South Africa were different, and drawing my attention to the fact that under the rules the section commanders were appointed by the Commanding Officer, but assuring me that in future, when appointing section commanders, the Commanding Officer would consider my recommendations.

A good deal of correspondence[1] passed between us after this, but I do not want to prolong the bitter tale. Suffice it to say that my experience was of a piece with the experiences we daily have in India. What with threats and what with adroitness the Commanding Officer succeeded in creating a division in our Corps. Some of those who had voted for the resolution yielded to the Commander's threats or persuasions and went back on their promise.

About this time an unexpectedly large contingent of wounded soldiers arrived at the Netley Hospital, and the services of our Corps were requisitioned. Those whom the Commanding Officer could persuade went to Netley. The others refused to go.[T7] I was on my back, but was in communication with the members of the Corps.[T8] Mr. Roberts, the Under-Secretary of State, honoured me with many calls during those days. He insisted on my persuading the others to serve. He suggested that they should form a separate Corps and that at the Netley Hospital they could be responsible only to the Commanding Officer there, so that there would be no question of loss of self-respect, Government would be be placated, and at the same time helpful service would be rendered to the large number of wounded received at the hospital. This suggestion appealed both to my companions and to me, with the result that those who had stayed away also went to Netley.

Only I remained away, lying on my back and making the best of a bad job.[T9]

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Col. R. J. Baker", October 13 & 14, 1914.

I have already referred to the attack of pleurisy I had in England. Gokhale returned to London soon after. Kallenbach and I used regularly to go to him. Our talks were mostly about the War, and as Kallenbach had the geography of Germany at his fingertips, and had travelled much in Europe, he used to show him on the map the various places in connection with the War.

When I got pleurisy this also became a topic of daily discussion. My dietetic experiments were going on even then. My diet consisted, among other things, of groundnuts, ripe and unripe bananas, lemon, olive oil, tomatoes and grapes. I completely eschewed milk, cereals, pulses and other things.

Dr. Jivraj Mehta treated me. He pressed me hard to resume milk and cereals, but I was obdurate. The matter reached Gokhale's ears.T1 He had not much regard for my reasoning in favour of a fruitarian diet, and he wanted me to take whatever the doctor prescribed for my health.

It was no easy thing for me not to yield to Gokhale's pressure. When he would not take a refusal, I begged him to give me twenty-four hours for thinking over the question. As Kallenbach and I returned home that evening, we discussed where my duty lay. He had been with me in my experiment. He liked it, but I saw that he was agreeable to my giving it up if my health demanded it. So I had to decide for myself according to the dictates of the inner voice.

I spent the whole night thinking over the matter. To give up the experiment would mean renouncing all my ideas in that direction, and yet I found no flaw in them. The question was how far I should yield to Gokhale's loving pressure, and how far I might modify my experiment in the so-calledT2 interests of health. I finally decided to adhere to the experiment in so far as the motive behind was chiefly religious, and to yield to the doctor's advice where the motive was mixed. Religious considerations had been predominant in the giving up of milk. I had before me a picture of the wicked processes the *govals* in Calcutta adopted to extract the last drop of milk from their cows and buffaloes. I also had the feeling that, just as meat was not man's food, even so animal's milk could not be man's food. So I got up in the morning with the determination to adhere to my resolve to abstain from milk. This greatly relieved me. I dreaded to approach Gokhale, but I trusted him to respect my decision.

In the evening Kallenbach and I called on Gokhale at the National Liberal Club. The first question he asked me was : 'Well,

have you decided to accept the doctor's advice ?'

I gently but firmlyT3 replied : 'I am willing to yield on all points except one about which I beg you not to press me. I will not take milk, milk-products or meat. If not to take these things should mean my death, I feel I had better face it.'

'It this your final decision ?' asked Gokhale.

'I am afraid I cannot decide otherwise,' said I. 'I know that my decision will pain you, but I beg your forgiveness.'

With a certain amount of pain but with deep affection, Gokhale said : 'I do not approve of your decision, I do not see any religion in it. But I won't press you any more.' With these words he turned to Dr. Jivraj Mehta and said : 'Please don't worry him any more. Prescribe anything you like within the limit he has set for himself.'

The doctor expressed dissent, but was helpless. He advised me to take *mung* soup, with a dash of asafoetida in it. To this I agreed. I took it for a day or two, but it increased my pain. As I did not find it suitable, I went back to fruits and nuts. The doctor of course went on with his external treatment. The latter somewhat relieved my pain, but my restrictions were to him a sore handicap.

Meanwhile Gokhale left for home, as he could not stand the October fogsT4 of London.

CHAPTER XLII : TREATMENT OF PLEURISY

The persistence of the pleurisy caused some anxiety, but I knew that the cure lay not in taking medicine internally but in dietetic changes assisted by external remedies.

I called in Dr. Allinson of vegetarian fame, who treated diseases by dietetic modifications and whom I had met in 1890. He thoroughly overhauled me. I explained to him how I had pledged myself not to take milk. He cheered me up and said : 'You need not take milk. In fact I want you to do without any fat for some days.' He then advised me to live on plain brown bread, raw vegetables such as beet, radish, onion and other tubers and greens, and also fresh fruit, mainly oranges. The vegetables were not to be cooked but merely grated fineT1, if I could not masticate them.

I adopted this for about three days, but raw vegetables did not quite suit me. My body was not in a condition to enable me to do full justice to the experimentT2. I was nervous about taking raw vegetables.

Dr. Allinson also advised me to keep all the windows of my room open for the whole twenty-four hours, bathe in tepid water, have an oil massage on the affected parts and a walk in the open for fifteen to thirty minutes. I liked all these suggestions.

My room had French windows which, if kept wide open, would let in the rain. The fanlight could not be opened. I therefore got the glass broken, so as to let in fresh air, and I partially opened the windows in a manner not to let in rain.

All these measures somewhat improved my health, but did not completely cure me.

Lady Cecilia Roberts occasionally called on me. We became[T3] friends. She wanted very much to persuade me to take milk. But as I was unyielding, she hunted about for a substitute for milk. Some friend suggested to her malted milk, assuring her quite unknowingly that it was absolutely free from milk, and that it was a chemical preparation with all the properties of milk. Lady Cecilia, I knew, had a great regard for my religious scruples, and so I implicity trusted her. I dissolved the powder in water and took it only to find that it tasted just like milk. I read the label on the bottle, to find, only too late, that it was a preparation of milk. So I gave it up[T4].

I informed Lady Cecilia about the discovery, asking her not to worry over it. She came post-haste to me to say how sorry she was. Her friend had not read the label at all. I begged her not to be anxious and expressed my regret that I could not avail myself of the thing she had procured with so much trouble. I also assured her that I did not at all feel upset or guilty over having taken milk under a misapprehension.

I must skip over many other sweet reminiscences of my contact with Lady Cecilia. I could think of many friends who have been a source of great comfort to me in the midst of trials and disappointments. One who has faith reads in them the merciful providence of God, who thus sweetens sorrow itself.

Dr. Allinson, when he next called, relaxed his restrictions and permitted me to have groundnut butter or olive oil for the sake of fat, and to take the vegetables cooked, if I chose, with rice. These changes were quite welcome, but they were far from giving me a complete cure. Very careful nursing was still necessary, and I was obliged to keep mostly in bed.

Dr. Mehta occasionally looked in to examine me and held out a standing offer to cure me if only I would listen to his advice.

Whilst things were going on in this way, Mr. Roberts one day came to see me and urged me very strongly to go home. ‘You cannot possibly go to Netley in this condition. There is still severer cold ahead of us. I would strongly advise you to get back to India, for it is only there that you can be completely cured. If, after your recovery, you should find the War still going on, you will have many

opportunities there of rendering help. As it is, I do not regard what you have already done as by any means a mean contribution.'

I accepted his advice ad began to make preparations for returning to India.

CHAPTER XLIII : HOMEWARD

Mr. Kallenbach had accompanied me to England with a view to going to India. We were staying together and of course wanted to sail by the same boatT1. Germans, however, were under such strict surveillance that we had our doubts about Mr. Kallenbach getting a passport. I did my best to get it, and Mr. Roberts, who was in favour of his getting his passport, sent a cable to the Viceroy in this behalf. But straight came Lord Hardinge's reply : 'Regret Government of India not prepared to take any such risk.' All of us understood the force of the reply.

It was a great wrench for me to part from Mr. Kallenbach, but I could see that his pang was greater. Could he have come to India, he would have been leading today the simple happy life of a farmer and weaver. Now he is in South Africa, leading his old life and doing brisk business as an architect.

We wantedT2 a third-class passage, but as there was none available on P. and O. boats, we had to go second.

We took with us the dried fruit we had carried from South Africa, as most of it would not be procurable on the boat, where fresh fruit was easily available.

Dr. Jivraj Mehta had bandaged my ribs with 'Mede's Plaster' and had asked me not to remove it till we reached the Red SeaT3. For two days I put up with the discomfort, but finally it became too much for me. It was with considerable difficulty that I managed to undo the plaster and regain the liberty of having a proper wash and bath.

My diet consisted mostly of nuts and fruits. I found that I was improving every day and felt very much better by the time we entered the Suez Canal. I was weak, but felt entirely out of danger, and I gradually went on increasing my exercise. The improvement I attributed largely to the pure air of the temperate zone.

Whether it was due to past experience or to any other reason, I do not know, but the kind of distance I notice between the English and Indian passengers on the boat was something I had not observed even on my voyage from South Africa.T4 I did talk to a few Englishmen, but the talk was mostly formal. There were hardly any cordial conversations such as had certainly taken place on the South African boatsT5. The reason for this was, I think, to be found in the

conscious or unconscious feeling at the back of the Englishman's mind that he belonged to the ruling race, and the feeling at the back of the Indian's mind that he belonged to the subject race.

I was eager to reach home and get free from this atmosphere.

On arriving at Aden we already began to feel somewhat at home. We knew the Adenwallas very well, having met Mr. Kekobad Kavasji Dinshaw in Durban and come in close contact with him and his wife.

A few days more and we reached Bombay. It was such a joy to get back to the homeland after an exile of ten years.T6

Gokhale had inspired a reception for me in Bombay,[1] where he had come in spite of his delicate health. I had approached India in the ardent hope of merging myself in him, and thereby feeling free. But fate had willed it otherwise.

CHAPTER XLIV : SOME REMINISCENCES OF THE BAR

Before coming to a narrative of the course my life took in India, it seemsT1 necessary to recall a few of the South African experiences which I have deliberately left out.

Some lawyer friends have asked me to give my reminiscences of the bar. The number of these is so large that, if I were to describe them all, they would occupy a volume by themselves and take me out of my scope. But it may not perhaps be improper to recall some of those which bear upon the practice of truth.

So far as I can recollect, I have already said that I never resorted to untruth in my profession, and that a large part of my legal practice was in the interest of public work, for which I charged nothing beyond out-of-pocket expenses, and these too I sometimes met myself. I had thought that in saying this I had said all that was necessary as regards my legal practice. But friends want me to do more. They seem to think that, if I described how-
ever slightly some of the occasions when I refused to swerve from the truth, the legal profession might profit by it.

As a studentT2 I had heard that the lawyer's profession was a liar's profession. But this did not influence me, as I had no intention of earning either position or money by lying.

My principle was put to the test many a time in South Africa. Often I knew that my opponents had tutored their witnesses, and if I only encouraged my client or his witnesses to lie, we could win the case. But I always resisted the temptation. I remember only one

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Public Reception, Bombay", January 11, 1915

occasion when, after having won a case, I suspected that my client had deceived me. In my heart of hearts I always wished that I should win only if my client's case was right. In fixing my fees I do not recall ever having made them conditional on my winning the case. Whether my client won or lost, I expected nothing more nor less than my fees.T3 I warned every new client at the outset that he should not expect me to take up a false case or to coach the witnesses, with the result that I built up suchT4 a reputation that no false cases used to come to me. Indeed some of my clients would keep their clean cases for me, and take the doubtful ones elsewhere.

There was one case which proved a severe trial. It was brought to me by one of my best clients. It was a case of highly complicated accounts and had been a prolonged one. It had been heard in parts before several courts. Ultimately the book-keeping portion of it was entrusted by the court to the arbitration of some qualified accountants.T5 The award was entirely in favour of my client, but the arbitrators had inadvertently committed an error in calculation which, however small, was serious, inasmuch as an entry which ought to have been on the debit side was made on the credit side. The opponents had opposed the award on other grounds.[T6] I was junior counsel for my client. When the senior counsel became aware of the error, he was of opinion that our client was not bound to admit it. He was clearly of opinion that no counsel was bound to admit anything that went against his client's interest. I said we ought to admit the error.

But the senior counsel contended : 'In that case there is every likelihood of the court cancelling the whole award, and no sane counsel would imperil his client's case to that extent. At any rate I would be the last man to take any such risk. If the case were to be sent up for a fresh hearing, one could never tell what expenses our client might have to incur, and what the ultimate result might be !'

The client was present when this conversation took place.

I said : 'I feel that both our client and we ought to run the risk. Where is the certainty of the court[T7] upholding a wrong award simply because we do not admit the error ? And supposing the admission[T8] were to bring the client to grief, what harm is there ?'

'But why should we make the admission at all ?' said the senior counsel.

'Where is the surety of the court not detecting the error or our opponent not discovering it ?' said I.

'Well then, will you argue the case ? I am not prepared to argue

it on your terms,' replied the senior counsel with decision.

I humbly answered : 'If you will not argue, then I am prepared to do so, if our client so desires. I shall have nothing to do with the case if the error is not admitted.'

With this I looked at my client. He was a little embarrassed. I had been in the case from the very first. The client fully trusted me, and knew me through and through. He said : 'Well, then, you will argue the case and admit the error. Let us lose, if that is to be our lot. God defends the right.'

I was delighted. I had expected nothing less from him. The senior counsel again warned me, pitied me for my obduracy, but congratulated me all the same.

What happened in the court we shall see in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XLV : SHARP PRACTICE ?

I had no doubt about the soundness of my advice, but I doubted very much my fitness for doing full justice to the case. I felt it would be a most hazardous undertaking to argue such a difficult case before the Supreme Court, and I appeared before the Bench in fear and trembling.

As soon as I referred to the error in the accounts, one of the judges said :

'Is not this sharp practice, Mr. Gandhi ?'

I boiled within to hear this charge. It was intolerable to be accused of sharp practice when there was not the slightest warrant for it.

'With a judge prejudiced from the start like this, there is little chance of success in this difficult case,' I said to myself. But I composed my thoughts and answered :

'I am surprised that Your Lordship should suspect sharp practice without hearing me out.'

'No question of a charge,' said the judge. 'It is a mere suggestion.'

'The suggestion here seems to me to amount to a charge. I would ask Your Lordship to hear me out and then arraign me if there is any occasion for it.'

'I am sorry to have interrupted you,' replied the judge. 'Prey do go on with your explanation of the discrepancy.'

I had enough material in support of my explanation. Thanks to the judge having raised this question, I was able to rivet the Court's attention on my argument from the very start. I felt much encouraged

and took the opportunity of entering into a detailed explanation. The Court gave me a patient hearing, and I was able to convince the judges that the discrepancy was due entirely to inadvertence. They therefore did not feel disposed to cancel the whole award, which had involved considerable labour.

The opposing counsel seemed to feel secure in the belief that not much argument would be needed after the error had been admitted. But the judges continued to interrupt him, as they were convinced that the error was a slipT1 which could be easily rectified. The counsel laboured hard to attack the award, but the judge who had originally started with the suspicion had now come round definitely to my side.

'Supposing Mr. Gandhi had not admitted the error, what would you have done ?' he asked.

'It was impossible for us to secure the services of a more competent and honest expert accountant than the one appointed by us.'

'The Court must presume that you know your case best. If you cannot point out anything beyond the slip which any expert accountant is liable to commit, the Court will be loath to compel the parties to go in for fresh litigation and fresh expenses because of a patent mistake. We may not order a fresh hearing when such an error can be easily corrected,' continued the judge.

And so the counsel's objection was overruled. The Court either confirmed the award, with the error rectified, or ordered the arbitrator to rectify the error, I forget which.

I was delighted.T2 So were client and senior counsel; and I was confirmed in my conviction that it was not impossible to practise law without compromising truth.

Let the reader, however, remember that even truthfulness in the practice of the profession cannot cure it of the fundamental defect that vitiates it.

CHAPTER XLVI : CLIENTS TURNED CO-WORKERS

The distinction between the legal practice in Natal and that in the Transvaal was that in Natal there was a joint bar; a barrister, whilst he was admitted to the rank of advocate, could also practise as an attorney; whereas in the Transvaal, as in Bombay, the spheres of attorneys and advocates were distinct.T1 A barrister had the right of election whether he would practise as an advocate or as an attorney. So whilst in Natal I was admitted as an advocate, in the Transvaal I sought admission as an attorney. For as an advocate I could not have

come in direct contact with the Indians and the white attorneys in South Africa would not have briefed me.

But even in the Transvaal it was open to attorneys to appear before magistrates. On one occasion, whilst I was conducting a case before a magistrate in Johannesburg, I discovered that my client had deceived me.T2 I saw him completely break down in the witness box. So without any argument I asked the magistrate to dismiss the case. The opposing counsel was astonished, and the magistrate was pleased. I rebuked my client for bringing a false case to me. He knew that I never accepted false cases, and when I brought the thing home to him, he admitted his mistake, and I have an impression that he was not angry with me for having asked the magistrate to decide against him. At any rate my conduct in this case did not affect my practice for the worse, indeed it made my work easier. I also saw that my devotion to truth enhanced my reputation amongst the members of the profession, and in spite of the handicap of colour I was able in some cases to win even their affection.

During my professional work it was also my habit never to conceal my ignorance from my clients or my colleagues. Wherever I felt myself at sea, I would advise my client to consult some other counsel, or if he preferred to stick to me, I would ask him to let me seek the assistance of senior counsel. This frankness earned me the unbounded affection and trust of my clients. They were always willing to pay the fee whenever consultation with senior counsel was necessary. This affection and trust served me in good stead in my public work.

I have indicated in the foregoing chapters that myT3 object in practising in South Africa was service of the community. Even for this purpose, winning the confidence of the people was an indis-pensable condition. The large-hearted Indians magnified into service professional work done for money, and when I advised them to suffer the hardships of imprisonment for the sake of their rights, many of them cheerfully accepted the advice, not so much because they had reasoned out the correctness of the course, as because of their confidence in, and affection for, me.

As I write this, many a sweet reminiscence comes to my mind. Hundreds of clients became friends and real co-workers in public service, and their association sweetened a life that was otherwise full of difficulties and dangers.

CHAPTER XLVII : HOW A CLIENT WAS SAVEDT1

The reader, by now, will be quite familiar with Parsi Rustomji's name.[1] He was one who became at once my client and coworker, or perhaps it would be truer to say that he first became co-worker and then client. I won his confidence to such an extent that he sought and followed my advice also in private domestic matters. Even when he was ill, he would seek my aid, and though there was much difference between our ways of living, he did not hesitate to accept my quack treatment.

This friend once got into a very bad scrape. Though he kept me informed of most of his affairs,T2 he had studiously kept back one thing. He was a large importer of goods from Bombay and Calcutta, and not infrequently he resorted to smuggling. But as he was on the best terms with customs officials, no one was inclined to suspect him. In charging duty, they used to take his invoices on trust. Some might even have connived at the smuggling.

But to use the telling simile of the Gujarati poet Akho, theft like quicksilver won't be suppressed, and Parsi Rustomji's proved no exception. The good friend ran post-haste to me, the tears rolling down his cheeks as he said : 'Bhai, I have deceived you. My guilt has been discovered today. I have smuggled and I am doomed. I must go to jail and be ruined. You alone may be able to save me from this predicament. I have kept back nothing else from you, but I thought I ought not to bother you with such tricks of the trade, and so I never told you about this smuggling. But now, how much I repent it !'

I calmed him and said : 'To save or not to save you is in His hands. As to me you know my way. I can but try to save you by means of confession.'

The good Parsi felt deeply mortified.

'But is not my confession before you enough ?' he asked.

'You have wronged not me but Government. How will the confession made before me avail you ?' I replied gently.

'Of course I will do just as you advise, but will you not consult with my old counsel Mr.— ? He is a friend too,' said Parsi Rustomji.

Inquiry revealed that the smuggling had been going on for a long time, but the actual offence detected involved a trifling sum. We

[1] Gandhiji mentions Rustomji's name so that it "should be remembered as long as the autobiography is recognized as an important work". *Vide* "Letter to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi", July 15, 1928.

went to his counsel. He perused the papers, and said : ‘The case will be tried by a jury, and a Natal jury will be the last to acquit an Indian. But I will not give up hope.’

I did not know this counsel intimately. Parsi Rustomji intercepted : ‘I thank you, but I should like to be guided by Mr. Gandhi’s advice in this case. He knows me intimately. Of course you will advise him whenever necessary.’

Having thus shelved the counsel’s question, we went to Parsi Rustomji’s shop.

And now explaining my view I said to him : ‘I don’t think this case should be taken to court at all. It rests with the Customs Officer to prosecute you or to let you go, and he in turn will have to be guided by the Attorney General. I am prepared to meet both.T3 I propose that you should offer to pay the penalty they fix, and the odds are that they will be agreeable. But if they are not, you must be prepared to go to jail. I am of opinion that the shame lies not so much in going to jail as in committing the offence. The deed of shame has already been done. Imprisionment you should regard as a penance. The real penance lies in resolving never to smuggle again.’

I cannot say that Parsi Rustomji took all this quite well. He was a brave man, but his courage failed him for the moment. His name and fame were at stake, and where would he be if the edifice he had reared with such care and labour should go to pieces ?

‘Well, I have told you,’ he said, ‘that I am entirely in your hands. You may do just as you like.’

I brought to bear on this case all my powers of persuasion. I met the Customs Officer and fearlessly apprised him of the whole affair. I also promised to place all the books at his disposal and told him how penitent Parsi Rustomji was feeling.

The Customs Officer said : ‘I like the old Parsi. I am sorry he has made a fool of himself. You know where my duty lies. I must be guided by the Attorney General and so I would advise you to use all your persuasion with him.’

‘I shall be thankfulT4,‘ said I, ‘if you do not insist on dragging him into court.’

Having got him to promise this, I entered into correspondence with the Attorney General and also met him. I am glad to say that he appreciated my complete franknessT5 and was convinced that I had kept back nothing.

I now forget whether it was in connection with this or with some other case that my persistence and frankness extorted from him the

remark:T6 'I see you will never take a no for an answer.'

The case against Parsi Rustomji was compromised. He was to pay a penalty equal to twice the amount he had confessed to having smuggled. Rustomji reduced to writing the facts of the whole case, got the paper framed and hung it up in his office to serve as a perpetual reminder to his heirs and fellow-merchants.

These friends of Rustomji warned me not to be taken in by this transitory contrition.T7 When I told Rustomji about this warning he said: 'What would be my fate if I deceived you?'

PART V

CHAPTER I : THE FIRST EXPERIENCE

Before I reached home, the party which had started from phoenix had already arrived. According to our original plan I was to have preceded them, but my preoccupation in England with the War had upset all our calculations, and when I saw that I had to be detained in England indefinitely, I was faced with the question of finding a place for accommodating the Phoenix party. I wanted them all to stay together in India, if possible, and to live the life they had led at Phoenix. I did not knowT1 of any Ashram to which I could recommend them to go, and therefore cabledT2 to them to meet Mr. Andrews and do as he advised.

So they were first put in the Gurukul, Kangri, where the late Swami Shraddhanandji treated them as his own children. After this they were put in the Shantiniketan Ashram, where the Poet and his people showered similar love upon them. The experiences they gathered at both these places too stood them and me in good stead.

The Poet, Shraddhanandji and Principal Sushil Rudra, as I used to say to Andrews, composed his trinity. When in South Africa he was never tired of speaking of them, and of my many sweet memories of South Africa, Mr. Andews's talks, day in and day out, of this great trinity, are amongst the sweetest and most vivid. Mr. Andrews naturally put the Phoenix partyT3 in touch also with Sushil Rudra. Principal Rudra had no Ashram, but he had a home which he placed completely at the disposal of the Phoenix family. Within a day of their arrival, his people made them feel so thoroughly at home that they did not seem to miss Phoenix at all.

It was only when I landed in Bombay that I learnt that the Phoenix party was at Shantiniketan. I was therefore impatient to meet them as soon as I could after my meeting with Gokhale.

The receptions in Bombay gave me an occasion for offering what might be called a little satyagraha.

At the party given in my honour at Mr. Jehangir Petit's place, I did not dare to speak in Gujarati. In those palatial surroundings of dazzling splendour I, who had lived my best life among indentured labourers, felt myself a complete rustic. With my Kathiawadi cloak, turban and dhoti, I looked somewhat more civilized than I do today, but the pomp and splendour of Mr. Petit's mansion made me feel absolutely out of my element. However, I acquitted myself tolerably well, having taken shelter under Sir Pherozeshah's protecting wing.

Then there was the Gujarati function. The Gujaratis would not let me go without a reception, which was organized by the late Uttamlal Trivedi.T4 I had acquainted myself with the programme befor-ehand. Mr. Jinnah was present, being a Gujarati, I forget whether as president or as the principal speaker.[1] He made a short and sweet little speech in English. As far as I remember most of the other speeches were also in English. When my turn came, I expressed my thanks in Gujarati explainingT5 my partiality for Gujarati and Hindustani, and entering my humble protest against the use of English in a Gujarati gathering. This I did, not without some hesitation, for I was afraid lest it should be considered discourteous for an inexper-ienced man, returned home after a long exile, to enter his protest against established practices. But no one seemed to misunderstand my insistence on replying in Gujarati. In fact I was glad to note that everyone seemed reconciled to my protest.

The meeting thus emboldened me to think that I should not find it difficult to place myT6 new-fangled notions before my countrymen.?v

After a brief stay in Bombay, full of these preliminary experiences, I went to Poona whither Gokhale had summoned me.

CHAPTER II : WITH GOKHALE IN POONA

The moment I reached Bombay Gokhale sent me word that the Governor was desirous of seeing me, and that it might be proper for me to respond before I left for Poona. Accordingly I called on His Excellency. After the usual inquiries, he said :

'I ask one thing of you.T1 I would like you to come and see me whenever you propose to take any steps concerning Government.'

[1] M. A. Jinnah, who was then Chairman of the Gurjar Sabha, Bombay, presided on the occasion; *vide* "Speech at Gurjar Sabha Reception, Bombay", January 14, 1915.

I replied:

'I can very easily give the promise, inasmuch as it is my rule, as a satyagrahi, to understand the viewpoint of the party I propose to deal with, and to try to agree with him as far as may be possible. I strictly observed the rule in South Africa and I mean to do the same here.'

Lord Willingdon thanked me and said :

'You may come to me whenever you like, and you will see that my Government do not wilfully do anything wrong.'

To which I replied. 'It is that faith which sustains me.'

After this I went to Poona. It is impossible for me to set down all the reminiscences of this precious[T2] time. Gokhale and the members of the Servants of India Society overwhelmed me with affection. So far as I recollect, Gokhale had summoned all of them to meet me. I had a frank talk with them all on every sort of subject.

Gokhale was very keen that I should join the Society and so was I.[1] But the members felt that, as there was a great difference between my ideals and methods of work and theirs, it might not be proper for me to join the Society. Gokhale believed that, in spite of my insistence on my own principles, I was equally ready and able to tolerate theirs.[T3]

'But,' he said 'the members of the Society have not yet understood your readiness for compromise. They are tenacious of their principles, and quite independent. I am hoping that they will accept you, but if they don't you will not for a moment think that they are lacking in respect or love for you. They are hesitating to take any risk lest their high regard for you should be jeopardized. But whether you are formally admitted as a member or not, I am going to look upon you as one.'

I informed Gokhale of my intentions. Whether I was admitted as a member or not, I wanted to have an Ashram where I could settle down with my Phoenix family, preferably somewhere in Gujarat as, being a Gujarati, I thought I was best fitted to serve the country through serving Gujarat. Gokhale liked the idea. He said: 'You should certainly do so. Whatever may be the result of your talks with the members, you must look to me for the expenses of the Ashram, which I will regard as my own.'

My heart overflowed with joy. It was a pleasure to feel free from the responsibility of raising funds, and to realize that I should not be obliged to set about the work all on my own, but that I should be able to count on a sure guide whenever I was in difficulty. This took a great load off my mind.

[1] *Vide* "Replies to Questions a Poona Meetings", February 11/12, 1915.

So the late Dr. Dev was summoned and told to open an account for me in the Society's books and to give me whatever I might require for the Ashram and for public expenses.

I now prepared to go to Shantiniketan. On the eve of my departure Gokhale arranged a party of selected friends, taking good care to order refreshments of my liking, i.e., fruits and nuts. The party was held just a few paces from his room, and yet he was hardly in a condition to walk across and attend it. But his affection for me got the better of him and he insisted on coming. He came, but fainted[1] and had to be carried away. Such fainting was not a new thing with him and so when he came to, he sent word that we must go on with the party.

This party was of course no more than a conversazione in the open space opposite the Society's guesthouse, during which friends had heart-to-heart chats over light refreshments of groundnuts, dates and fresh fruits of the season.

But the fainting fit was to be no common event in my life.

CHAPTER III : WAS IT A THREAT ?

From Poona[T1] I went to Rajkot and Porbandar, where I had to meet my brother's widow and other relatives.

During the satyagraha in South Africa I had altered my style of dress so as to make it more in keeping with that of the indentured labourers, and in England also I had adhered to the same style for indoor use.[T2] For landing in Bombay I had a Kathiawadi suit of clothes consisting of a shirt, a dhoti, a cloak and a white scarf; all made of Indian mill-cloth. But as I was to travel third from Bombay, I regarded the scarf and the cloak as too much of an encumbrance, so I shed them, and invested in an eight-to-ten-annas Kashmiri cap. One dressed in that fashion was sure to pass muster as a poor man.

On account of the plague prevailing at that time third-class passengers were being medically inspected at Viramgam or Wadhwan—I forget which. I had slight fever. The inspector on finding that I had a temperature asked me to report myself to the Medical Officer at Rajkot and noted down my name.

Someone had perhaps sent the information that I was passing through Wadhwan, for the tailor Motilal, a noted public worker of the place, met me at the station. He told me about the Viramgam customs, and the hardships railway passengers had to suffer on account of it. I had little inclination to talk because of my fever, and tried to finish

[1] The incident is mentioned under the February 13 entry in "Diary for 1915"

with a brief reply which took the form of a question :

'Are you prepared to go to jail?'

I had taken Motilal to be one of those impetuous youths who do not think before speaking. But not so Motilal. He replied with firm deliberation :

'We will certainly go to jail, provided you lead us. As Kathiawadis, we have the first right on you. Of course we do not mean to detain you now, but you must promise to halt here on your return. You will be delighted to see the work and the spirit of our youths, and you may trust us to respond as soon as you summon us.'

Motilal captivated me. His comrade eulogizing him, said:

'Our friend is but a tailor. But he is such a master of his profession that he easily earns Rs. 15 a month—which is just what he needs—working an hour a day, and gives the rest of his time to public work. He leads us all, putting our education to shame.'

Later I came in close contact with Motilal, and I saw that there was no exaggeration in the eulogy. He made a point of spending some days in the then newly started Ashram every month to teach the children tailoring and to do some of the tailoring of the Ashram himself. He would talk to me every day of Viramgam, and the hardships of the passengers, which had become absolutely unbearable for him. He was cut off in the prime of youth by a sudden illness, and public life at Wadhwan suffered without him.

On reaching Rajkot, I reported myself to the Medical Officer the next morning. I was not unknown there. The doctor felt ashamed and was angry with the inspector. This was unnecessary, for the inspector had only done his duty. He did not know me, and even if he had known me, he should not have done otherwise. The Medical Officer would not let me go to him again[T3] and insisted on sending an inspector to me instead.

Inspection of third-class passengers for sanitary reasons is essential on such occasions. If big men choose to travel third, whatever their position in life, they must voluntarily submit themselves to all the regulations that the poor are subject to, and the officials ought to be impartial. My experience is that the officials, instead of looking upon third-class passengers as fellowmen, regard them as so many sheep. They talk to them contemptuously, and brook no reply or argument. The third-class passenger has to obey the official as though he were his servant, and the latter may with impunity belabour and blackmail him, and book him his ticket only after putting him to the greatest possible incon- venience, including often missing the train. All this I have seen with my own eyes. No reform is possible unless some of the

educated and the rich voluntarily accept the status of the poor, travel third, refuse to enjoy the amenities denied to the poor and, instead of taking avoidable hardships, discourtesies and injustice[T4] as a matter of course, fight for their removal.

Wherever I went in Kathiawad I heard complaints about the Viramgam customs hardships. I therefore decided immediately to make use of Lord Willingdon's offer. I collected and read all the literature available on the subject, convinced myself that the complaints were well-founded, and opened correspondence with the Bombay Government. I called on the Private Secretary to Lord Willingdon and waited on His Excellency also. The latter expressed his sympathy but shifted the blame on Delhi. 'If it had been in our hands, we should have removed the cordon long ago. You should approach the Government of India,' said the Secretary.

I communicated with the Government of India, but got no reply beyond an acknowledgement. It was only when I had an occasion to meet Lord Chelmsford latter[T5] that redress could be had. When I placed the facts before him, he expressed his astonishment. He had known nothing of the matter. He gave me a patient hearing, telephoned that very moment for papers about Viramgam and promised to remove the cordon if the authorities had no explanation of defence to offer. Within a few days of this interview I read in the papers that the Viramgam customs cordon had been removed.[1]

I regarded this event[T6] as the advent of satyagraha in India. For during my interview with the Bombay Government the Secretary had expressed his disapproval of a reference to satyagraha in a speech which I had delivered in Bagasra (in Kathiawad).[2]

'Is not this a threat?' he had asked. 'And do you think a powerful Government will yield to threats?'

'This was no threat,' I had replied. 'It was educating the people. It is my duty to place before the people all the legiti- mate remedies for grievances. A nation that wants to come into its own ought to know all the ways and means to freedom.[T7] Usually they include violence as the last remedy. Satyagraha, on the other hand, is an absolutely non-violent weapon. I regard it as my duty to explain its practice and its limitations. I have no doubt that the British

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Gujarat Political Conference—II", November 4, 1917 & "Resolutions at Gujarat Political Conference—II", November 5, 1917.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Bagasra on Viramgam Customs Cordon", December 12, 1915 for report of the speech from the Bombay Secret Abstracts, which however contains no reference to satyagraha; also "Speech on Viramgam Customs Cordon", October 23, 1916.

Government is a powerful Government but, I have no doubt also that satyagraha is a sovereign remedy.'

The clever Secretary sceptically nodded his head and said: 'We shall see.'

CHAPTER IV : SHANTINIKETAN

From Rajkot I proceeded to Shantiniketan. The teachers and students overwhelmed me with affection. The reception[1] was a beautiful combination of simplicity, art and love. It was here I met Kakasaheb Kalelkar for the first time.

I did not know then why Kalelkar was called 'Kakasaheb'. But I learnt later on that Sjt. Keshavrao Deshpande, who was a contemporary and a close friend of mine in England, and who had conducted a school in the Baroda State called 'Ganganath Vidyalaya', had given the teachers family names with a view to investing the Vidyalaya with a family atmosphere. Sjt. Kalelkar who was a teacher there came to be called 'Kaka' (literally, paternal uncle). Phadke was called 'Mamma' (literally, maternal uncle), and Harihar Sharma received the name 'Anna' (literally, brother). Others also got similar names. Anandanand (Swami) as Kaka's friend and Patwardhan (Appa) as Mama's friend later joined the family, and all in course of time became my co-workers one after another. Sjt. Deshpande himself used to be called 'Saheb'. When the Vidyalaya had to be dissolved, the family also broke up, but they never gave up their spiritual relationship or their assumed names.

Kakasaheb went out to gain experience of different institutions, and at the time I went to Shantiniketan, he happened to be there. Chintaman Shastri, belonging to the same fraternity, was there also. Both helped in teaching Samskrit.

The Phoenix family had been assigned separate quarters at Shantiniketan. Maganlal Gandhi was at their head, and he had made it his business to see that all the rules of the Phoenix Ashram should be scrupulously observed. I saw that, by dint of his love, knowledge and perseverance, he had made his fragrance felt in the whole of Shantiniketan.

Andrews was there, and also Pearson. Amongst the Bengali teachers with whom we came in fairly close contact were Jagadanandbabu, Nepalbabu, Santoshbabu, Kshitimohanbabu, Nagenbabu, Sharadbabu and Kalibabu.

As in my wont, I quickly mixed with the teachers and students,

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Santiniketan Reception", February 17, 1915.

and engaged them in a discussion on self-help. I put it to the teachers that, if they and the boys dispensed with the services of paid cooks and cooked their food themselves, it would enable the teachers to control the kitchen from the point of view of the boys' physical and moral health, and it would afford to the students an object-lession in self-help. One or two of them were inclined to shake their heads. Some of them strongly approved of the proposal. The boys welcomed it, if only because of their instinctive taste for novelty. So we launched the experiment. When I invited the Poet to express his opinion, he said that he did not mind it provided the teachers were favourable. To the boys he said, 'The experiment contains the key to swaraj.'

Pearson began to wear away his body in making the experiment a success. He threw himself into it with zest. A batch was formed to cut vegetables, another to clean the grain, and so on. Nagenbabu and others undertook to see to the sanitary cleaning of the kitchen and its surroundings. It was a delight to me to see them working spade in hand. But it was too much to expect the hundred and twenty-five boys with their teachers to take to this work of physical labour like ducks to water. There used to be daily discussions. Some began early to show fatigue. But Pearson was not the man to be tired. One would always find him with his smiling face doing something or other in or about the kitchen. He had taken upon himself the cleaning of the bigger utensils. A party of students played on their sitar before this cleaning party in order to beguile the tedium of the operation. All alike took the thing up with zest and Shantiniketan became a busy hive.

Changes like these when once begun always develop. Not only was the Phoenix party's kitchen self-conducted, but the food cooked in it was of the simplest. Condiments were eschewed. Rice, dal, vegetables and even wheat flour were all cooked at one and the same time in a steam cooker. And Shantiniketan boys started a similar kitchen with a view to introducing reform in the Bengali kitchen. One or two teachers and some students ran this kitchen.

The experiment was, however, dropped after some time. I am of opinion that the famous[T1] institution lost nothing by having conducted the experiment for a brief interval, and some of the experiences gained could not but be of help to the teachers.

I had intended to stay at Shantiniketan for some time, but fate willed otherwise. I had hardly been there a week when I received from Poona a telegram announcing Gokhale's death. Shantiniketan was immersed in grief. All the members came over to me to express their condolences. A special meeting was called in the Ashram temple[T2] to

mourn the national loss.[1] It was a solemn function. The same day I left for Poona with my wife and Maganlal. All the rest stayed at Shantiniketan.

Andrews accompanied me up to Burdwan. 'Do you think,' he asked me, 'that a time will come for satyagraha in India ? And if so, have you any idea when it will come ?'

'It is difficult to say,' said I. 'For one year I am to do nothing. For Gokhale took from me a promise that I should travel in India[T3] for gaining experience, and[T4] express no opinion on public questions until I have finished the period of probation.[T5] Even after the year is over, I will be in no hurry to speak and pronounce opinions. And so I do not suppose there will be any occasion for satyagraha for five years or so.'

I may note in this connection that Gokhale used to laugh at some of my ideas in *Hind Swaraj* or *Indian Home Rule* and say : 'Aftrer you have stayed a year in India, your views will correct themselves.'

CHAPTER V : WOES OF THIRD-CLASS PASSENGERS

At Burdwan we came face to face with the hardships that a third-class passenger has to go through even in securing his ticket. 'Third-class tickets are not booked so early,' we were told. I went to the Station Master, though that too was a difficult business. Someone kindly directed me to where he was, and I represented to him our difficulty. He also made the same reply. As soon as the booking window opened, I went to purchase the tickets. But it was no easy thing to get them. Might was right, and passengers, who were forward and indifferent to others, coming one after another, continued to push me out. I was therefore about the last of the first crowd to get a ticket.[T1]

The train arrived, and getting into it was another trial.[T2] There was a free exchange of abuse and pushes between passengers al- ready in the train and those trying to get in.[T3] We ran up and down the platform, but were everywhere met with the same reply : 'No room here.' I went to the guard. He said, 'You must try to get in where you can or take the next train.'

'But I have urgent business,' I respectfully replied. He had no time to listen to me. I was disconcerted. I told Maganlal to get in wherever possible, and I got into an inter-class compartment with my wife. The guard saw us getting in. At Asansol station he came to charge us excess fares. I said to him :

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Santiniketan on Gokhale's Death", February 20, 1915.

‘It was your duty to find us room. We could not get any, and so we are sitting here. If you can acommodate us in a third class compartment, we shall be only too gald to go there.’

‘You may not argue with me,’ said the guard. ‘I cannot accommodate you. You must pay the excess fare, or get out.’

I wanted to reach Poona somehow. I was not therefore prepared to fight the guard, so I paid the excess fare he demanded, i.e., up to Poona. But I resented the injustice.

In the morning we reached Mogalsarai. Maganlal had managed to get a seat in the third class, to which I now shifted. I acquainted the ticket examiner with all the facts, and asked him to give me a certificate to the effect that I had shifted to a thirdclass compartment at Mogalsarai. This he declined to do. I applied[1] to the railway authoritities for redress and got a reply to this effect : ‘It is not our practice to refund excess fares without the production of a certificate, but we make an exception in your case. It is not possible, however, to refund the excess fare from Burdwan to Mogalsarai.’

Since this I have had experiences of third-class travelling which, if I wrote them all down, would easily fill a volume. But I can only touch on them casually in these chapters. It has been and always will be my profound regret that physical incapacity should have compelled me to give up third-class travelling.

The woes of third-class passengers are undoubtedly due to the high-handedness of railway authorities. But the rudeness, dirty habits, selfishness and ignorance of the passengers[T4] themselves are no less to blame. The pity is that they often do not realize that they are behaving ill, dirtily or selfishly. They believe that everything they do is in the natural way. All this may be traced to the indifference towards them of us ‘educated’ people.

We reached Kalyan dead tired. Maganlal and I got some water from the station water-pipe and had our bath. As I was proceeding to arrange for my wife’s bath, Sjt. Kaul of the Servants of India Society recognizing us came up. He too was going to Poona. He offered to take my wife to the second-class bath-room. I hesitated to accept the courteous offer. I knew that my wife had no right to avail herself of the second-class bath-room, but I ultimately connived at the impropriety. This, I know, does not become a votary of truth. Not that my wife was eager to use the bath-room, but a husband’s partiality for his wife got the better of his partiality for truth. The face of truth is

[1] *Vide* “Letter to Chief Traffic Manager, E. I. Railway”, February 23, 1915.

hidden behind the golden veil of *maya*, says the Upanishad.[1]

CHAPTER VI : WOOING[T1]

On arrival in Poona, we found ourselves, after the performance of the *shraddha* ceremonies, discussing the future of the Society,[2] and the question as to whether I should join it or not. This question of membership proved a very delicate matter for me to handle. Whilst Gokhale was there I did not have to seek admission as a member. I had simply to obey this wish, a position I loved to be in. Launching on the stormy sea of Indian public life, I was in need of a sure pilot. I had had one in Gokhale and had felt secure in his keeping. Now that he was gone, I was thrown on my own resources, and I felt that it was my duty to seek admission. That, I thought, would please Gokhale's spirit. So, without hesitation and with firmness, I began the wooing.

Most of the members of the Society were in Poona at this juncture. I set about pleading with them and tried to dispel their fears about me. But I saw that they were divided. One section favoured my admission, the other was strongly against it. I knew that neither yielded to the other in its affection for me, but possibly their loyalty to the Society was greater, at any rate not less than their love for me. All our discussions were therefore free from bitterness, and strictly confined to matters of principle. The section that was opposed to me held that they and I were as the poles asunder in various vital matters, and they felt[T2] my membership was likely to imperil the very objects for which the Society was founded[T3]. This naturally was more than they could bear.

We dispersed after prolonged discussions, the final decision being postponed to a later date.[T4]

I was considerably agitated as I returned home. Was it right for me to be admitted by a majority vote ? Would it be consonant with my loyalty to Gokhale ?[T5] I saw clearly that, when there was such a sharp division amongst the members of the Society over admitting me, by far the best course for me was to withdraw my application for admission and save those opposed to me from a delicate situation. Therein I thought lay my loyalty to the Society and Gokhale. The decision came to me in a flash, and immediately I wrote to Mr. Shastri asking him not to have the adjuorned meeting at all.[3] Those who had opposed my application fully appreciated the decision. It saved them

[1] *Isopanishad*, 15. It says : "The jar of Truth is covered with a golden lid. Lift it, Oh Lord, Sustainer of the world, so that I, a seeker of Truth, may have a glimpse."

[2] *Vide* "Diary for 1915".

[3] *Vide* "Letter to V. S. Srinivas Sastri", January 13, 1916.

from an awkward position and bound us in closer bonds of friendship. The withdrawal of my application made me truly a member of the Society.

Experience now tells me that it was well that I did not formally become a member, and that the opposition of those who had been against me was justified. Experience has shown too that our views on matters of principle were widely divergent. But the recognition of the differences has meant no estrangement or bitterness between us. We have remained as brothers, and the Society's Poona home has always been for me a place of pligrimage.

It is ture that I did not officially become a member of the Society, but I have ever been a member in spirit. Spiritual relationship is far more precious than physical. Physical relationship divorced from spiritual is body without soul.

CHAPTER VII : KUMBHA MELA

I next went to Rangoon to meet Dr. Mehta, and on my way I halted at Calcutta. I was the guest of the late Babu Bhupendranath Basu. Bengali hospitality reached its climax here. In those days I was a strict fruitarian, so all the fruits and nuts available in Calcutta were ordered for me. The ladies of the house kept awake all night skinning various nuts. Every possible care was taken in dressing fresh fruit in the Indian style. Numerous delicacies were prepared for my companions, amongst whom was my son Ramdas. Much as I could appreciate this affectionate hospitality, I could not bear the thought of a whole household being occupied in entertaining two or three guests. But as yet I saw no escape from such embarrassing attentions.

On the boat going to Rangoon I was a deck passenger. If excess of attention embarrassed us in Sjt. Basu's house, grossest inattention, even to the elementary comforts of deck passengers was our lot on the boat. What was an apology for a bath-room was unbearably dirty, the latrines were stinking sinks. To use the latrine one had to wade through urine and excreta or jump over them.

This was more than flesh and blood could bear. I approached the Chief Officer without avail. If anything was lacking to complete the picture of stink and filth, the passengers furnished it by their thoughtless habits. They spat where they sat, dirtied the surroundings with the leavings of their food, tobacco and betel leaves. There was no end to the noise, and everyone tried to monopolize as much room as possible.[T1] Their luggage took up more room than they. We had thus two days of the severest trial.

On reaching Rangoon I wrote to the Agent of the Steamship

Company,[1] acquainting him with all the facts. Thanks to this letter and to Dr. Mehta's efforts in the matter, the return journey though on deck was less unbearable.

In Rangoon my fruitarian diet was again a source of additional trouble to the host. But since Dr. Mehta's home was as good as my own, I could control somewhat the lavishness of the menu. However, as I had not set any limit to the number of articles I might eat, the palate and the eyes refused to put an effective check on the supply of varieties ordered. There were no regular hours for meals. Personally I preferred having the last meal before nightfall. Nevertheless as a rule it could not be had before eight or nine.

This year—1915—was the year of the Kumbha fair, which is held at Hardvar once every 12 years. I was by no means eager to attend the fair, but I was anxious to meet Mahatma Munshiramji who was in his Gurukul. Gokhale's Society had sent a big volunteer corps for service at the Kumbha. Pandit Hridayanath Kunzru was at the head, and the late Dr. Dev was the medical officer. I was invited to send the Phoenix party to assist them, and so Maganlal Gandhi had already preceded me. On my return from Rangoon, I joined the band.

The journey from Calcutta to Hardvar was particularly trying. Sometimes the compartments had no lights. From Saha- ranpur we were huddled into carriages for goods or cattle. These had no roofs, and what with the blazing midday sun overhead and the scorching iron floor beneath, we were all but roasted. The pangs of thirst, caused by even such a journey as this, could not persuade orthodox Hindus to take water, if it was 'Mussalmani'. They waited until they could get the 'Hindu' water. These very Hindus, let it be noted, do not so much as hesitate or inquire when during illness the doctor administers them wine or prescribes beef tea or a Mussalman or Christian compounder gives them water.

Our stay in Shantiniketan had taught us that the scavenger's work would be our special function in India. Now for the volunteers in Hardvar tents had been pitched in a dharmsala, and Dr. Dev had dug some pits to be used as latrines. He had had to depend on paid scavengers for looking after these. Here was work for the Phoenix party. We offered to cover up the excreta with earth and to see to their disposal, and Dr. Dev gladly accepted our offer. The offer was naturally made by me, but it was Maganlal Gandhi who had to execute it. My business was mostly to keep sitting in the tent giving *darshan* and holding religious and other discussions with numerous pilgrims who called on me.[T2] This left me not a minute which I could call my

[1] *Vide* "Leter to Agents of B. I. S. N. Company", March 19, 1915.

own. I was followed even to the bathing ghat by these *darshan*-seekers, nor did they leave me alone whilst I was having my meals.[T3] Thus it was in Hardvar that I realized what a deep impression my humble services in South Africa had made throughout the whole of India.

But this was no enviable position to be in. I felt as though I was between the devil and the deep sea[T4]. Where no one recognized me, I had to put up with the hardships that fall to the lot of the millions in this land, e.g., in railway travelling. Where I was surrounded by people who had heard of me I was the victim of their craze for *darshan*. Which of the two conditions was more pitiable, I have often been at a loss to determine. This at least I know that the *darshan-walas*' blind love has often made me angry, and more often sore at heart. Whereas travelling, though often trying, has been uplifting and has hardly ever roused me to anger.

I was in those days strong enough to roam about a lot, and was fortunately not so known as not to be able to go in the streets without creating much fuss. During these roamings I came to observe more of the pilgrims' absent-mindedness, hypocrisy and slovenliness, than of their piety. The swarm of sadhus, who had descended there, seemed to have been born but to enjoy the good things of life. Here I saw a cow with five feet ! I was astonished, but knowing men soon disillusioned me. The poor five-footed cow was a sacrifice to the greed of the wicked. I learnt that the fifth foot was nothing else but a foot cut off from a live calf and grafted upon the shoulder of the cow ! The result of this double cruelty was exploited to fleece the ignorant of their money. There was no Hindu but would be attracted by a five-footed cow, and no Hindu but would lavish his charity on such a miraculous cow.

The day of the fair was now upon us. It proved a red-letter day for me.[T5] I had not gone to Hardvar with the sentiments of a pilgrim. I have never thought of frequenting places of pilgrimage in search of piety. But the seventeen lakhs of men that were reported to be there could not all be hypocrites or mere sight-seers. I had no doubt that countless people amongst them had gone there to earn merit and for selfpurification. It is difficult, if not imossible, to say to what extent this kind of faith uplifts the soul.

I therefore passed the whole night immersed in deep thought. There were those pious souls in the midst of the hypocrisy that surrounded them. They would be free of guilt before their Maker. If the visit to Hardvar was in itself a sin, I must publicly protest against it, and leave Hardvar on the day of Kumbha. If the pilgrimage to

Hardvar and to the Kumbha fair was not sinful, I must impose some act of self-denial on myself in atonement for the iniquity prevailing there and purify myself.T6 This was quite natural for me. My life is based on disciplinary resolutions. I thought of the unnecessary trouble I had caused to my hosts at Calcutta and Rangoon, who had so lavishly entertained me.T7 I therefore decided to limit the articles of my daily diet and to have my final meal before sunset. I was convinced that, if I did not impose these restrictions on myself, I should put my future hosts to considerable inconvenience and should engage them in serving me rather than engage myself in service. So I pledged myself never whilst in IndiaT8 to take more than five articles in twenty-four hours, and never to eat after dark. I gave the fullest thought to the difficulties I might have to face. But I wanted to leave no loophole. I rehearsed to myself what would happen during an illness, if I counted medicine among the five articles, and made no exception in favour of special articles of diet. I finally decided that there should be no exception on any account whatsoever.

I have been under these vows for now thirteen years. They have subjected me to a severe test, but I am able to testify thatT9 they have also served as my shield. I am of opinion that they have added a few years to my life and saved me from many an illness.

CHAPTER VIII : LAKSHMAN JHULA

It was a positive relief to reach the Gurukul and meet Mahatma Munshiramji with his giant frame. I at once felt the wonderful contrast between the peace of the Gurukul and the din and noise of Hardvar.

The Mahatma overwhelmed me with affection. The *brahmacharis* were all attention. It was here that I was first introduced to Acharya Ramadevji, and I could immediately see what a force and a power he must be. WeT1 had different viewpoints in several matters, nevertheless our acquaintance soon ripened into friendship.

I had long discussions with Acharya Ramadevji and other professors about the necessity of introducing industrial training into the Gurukul. When the time came for going away it was a wrench to leave the place.

I had heard much in praise of the Lakshman Jhula (a hanging bridge over the Ganges) some distance from HrishikeshT2, and many friends pressed me not to leave Hardvar without having gone as for as the bridgeT3. I wanted to do this pilgrimage on foot and so I did it in two stagesT4.

Many sanyasis called on me at Hrishikesh. One[1] of them was

[1] Mangalnathji; *vide* the entry under April 7, "Diary for 1915".

particularly attracted towards me. The Phoenix party was there and their presence drew from the swami many questions.

We had discussions about religion and he realized that I felt deeply about matters of religion.T5 He saw me bare-headed and shirtless as I had returned from my bath in the Ganges. He was pained to miss the *shikha* (tuft of hair) on my head and the sacred thread about my neck and said :

'It pains me to see you, a believing Hindu, going without a sacred thread and the *shikha*. These are the two external symbols of Hinduism and every Hindu ought to wear them.'

Now there is a history as to how I came to dispense with both.T6 When I was an urchin of ten, I envied the Brahmin ladsT7 sporting bunches of keys tied to their sacred threads, and I wished I could do likewise. The practice of wearing the sacred thread was not then common among the Vaishya families in Kathiawad. But a movement had just been started for making it obligatory for the first three varnas. As a result several members of the Gandhi clan adopted the sacred thread. The Brahmin who was teaching two or three of us boys *Ram Raksha* invested us with the thread, and although I had no occasion to possess a bunch of keys, I got one and began to sport it. Later, when the thread gave way, I do not remember whether I missed it very much. But I know that I did not go in for a fresh one.

As I grew up several well-meaning attempts were made both in India and South africa to re-invest me with the sacred thread, but with little success. If the shudras may not wear it, I argued, what right have the other varnas to do so ? And I saw no adequate reason for adopting what was to me an unnecessary custom.T8 I has no objection to the thread as such, but the reasons for wearing it were lacking.

As a Vaishnava I had naturally worn round my neck the *kanthi*, and the *shikha* was considered obligatory by elders. On the eve of my going to England, however, I got rid of the *shikha*, lest when I was bare-headed it should expose me to ridicule and make me look, as I then thought, a barbarian in the eyes of the Englishmen. In fact this cowardly feeling carried me so far thatT9 in South Africa I got my cousin Chhaganlal Gandhi who was religiously wearing the *shikha*, to do away with it. I feared that it might come in the way of his public work and so, even at the risk of paining him, I made him get rid of it.T10

I therefore made a clean breast of the whole matter to the Swami and said :

'I will not wear the sacred thread, for I see no necessity for it, when countless Hindus can go without it and yet remain Hindus.

Moreover, the sacred thread should be a symbol of spiritual regeneration, presupposing a deliberate attempt on the part of the wearer at a higher and purer life. I doubt whether in the present state of Hinduism and of India, Hindus can vindicate the right to wear a symbol charged with such a meaning.T11 That right can come only after Hinduism has purged itself of untouchability, has removed all distinctions of superiority and inferiority, and shed as host of other evils and shames that have become rampant in it.T12 My mind therefore rebels against the idea of wearing the sacred thread. But I am sure your suggestion about the *shikha* is worth considering. I once used to have it, and I discarded it from a false sense of shameT13. And so I feel that I should start growing it again. I shall discuss the matter with my comrades.'

The Swami did not appreciate my position with regard to the sacred thread. The very reasons that seemed to me to point to not wearing it appeared to him to favour its wearing. Even today my position remains about the same as it was at Hrishikesh. So long as there are different religions, every one of them may need some outward distinctive symbol. But when the symbol is made into a fetish and an instrument of proving the superiority of one's religion over others', it is fit only to be discarded. The sacred thread does not appear to me today to be a means of uplifing Hinduism. I am therefore indifferent to it.

As for the *shikha*, cowardice having been the reason for discarding it, after consultation with friends I decided to re-grow it.

But to return to Lakshman Jhula. I was charmed with the natural scenery about Hrishikesh and the Lakshman Jhula, and bowed my head in reverence to our ancestors for their sense of the beautiful in Nature, and for their foresight in investing beautiful manifestations of Nature with a religious significance.

But the way in which men were using these beauty spots was far from giving me peace. As at Hardvar, so at Hrishikesh, people dirtied the roads and the fair banks of the Ganges. They did not even hesitate to desecrate the sacred water of the Ganges. It filled me with agony to see people performing natural functions on the thoroughfares and river banks, when they could easily have gone a little farther away from public haunts.

Lakshman Jhula was, I saw, nothing but an iron suspension bridge over the Ganges.T4 I was told that originally there had been a fine rope-bridge. But a philanthropic Marwadi got it into his head to destroy the rope-bridge and erect an iron one at a heavy cost and then entrusted the keys to the Government! I am at a loss to say anything

about the rope-bridge as I have never seen it, but the iron bridge is entirely out of place in such surroundings and mars their beauty. The making over of the keys of this pilgrims' bridge to Government was too much even for my loyalty of those days.

The svargashram which one reaches after crossing the bridge was a wretched place, being nothing but a number of shabbylooking sheds of galvanized iron sheets. These, I was told, were made for *sadhakas* (aspirants). There were hardly any living there at the moment. Those who were in the main building gave one an unfavourable impression.T15

But the Hardvar experiences proved for me to be of inestimable value. They helped me in no small way to decide where I was to live and what I was to do.

CHAPTER IX : FOUNDING OF THE ASHRAM

The pilgrimage to the Kumbha fair was my second visit to Hardvar.

The Satyagraha Ashram was founded on the 25th of May, 1915. Shraddhanandji wanted me to settle in Hardvar. Some of my Calcutta friends recommended Vaidyanathadham. Others strongly urged me to choose Rajkot. But when I happened to pass through Ahmedabad, many friends pressed me to settle down there, and they volunteered to find the expenses of the Ashram, as well as a house for us to live in.

I had a predilection for Ahmedabad. Being a Gujarati I thought I should be able to render the greatest service to the country through the Gujarati language. And then, as Ahmedabad was an ancient centre of handloom weaving, it was likely to be the most favourable field for the revival of the cottage industry of hand-spinning. There was also the hope that, the city being the capital of Gujarat, monetary help from its wealthy citizens would be more available here than elsewhere.

The question of untouchability was naturally among the subjects discussed with the Ahmedabad friends. I made it clear to them that I should take the first opportunity of admitting an untouchable candidate to the Ashram if he was otherwise worthy.

'Where is the untouchable who will satisfy your condition ?' said a Vaishnava friend self-complacently.

I finally decided to found the Ashram at Ahmedabad.

So far as accommodation was concerned, Sjt. Jivanlal Desai, a barrister in Ahmedabad, was the principal man to help me. He offered to let, and we decided to hire, his Kochrab bungalow.T1

The first thing we had to settle was the name of the Ashram. I consulted friends. Amonst the names suggested were 'Sevashram'

(the abode of service). 'Tapovan' (the abode of austerities), etc. I liked the name 'Sevashram' but for the absence of emphasis on the method of service. 'Tapovan' seemed to be a pretentious title, because though *tapas* was dear to us we could not presume to be *tapasvins* (men of austerity). Our creed was devotion to truth, and our business was the search for and insistence on truth. I wanted to acquaint India with the method I had tried in south Africa, and I desired to test in India the extent to which its application might be possible. So my companions and I selected the name 'Satyagraha Ashram', as conveying both our goal and our method of service.

For the conduct of the Ashram a code of rules and observances was necessary. A draft[1] was therefore prepared, and friends were invited to express their opinions on it. Amongst the many opinions that were received, that of Sir Gurudas Benerji is still in my memory. He liked the rules, but suggested that humility should be added as one of the observances, as he believed that the younger generation sadly lacked humility. Though I noticed this fault, I feared humility would cease to be humility the moment it became a matter of vow. The true connotation of humility is self-effacement. Self-effacement is *moksha* (salvation), and whilst it cannot, by itself, be an observance, there may be other observances necessary for its attainment. If the acts of an aspirant after *moksha* or a servant have no humility or selflessness about them, there is no longing for *moksha* or service. Service without humility is selfishness and egotism.

There were at this time about thirteen Tamilians in our party. Five Tamil youngsters had accompanied me from South Africa, and the rest came from different parts of the country. We were in all about twenty-five men and women.

This is how the Ashram was started. All had their meals in a common kitchen and strove to live as one family.

CHAPTER X : ON THE ANVIL

The Ashram had been in existence only a few months when we were put to a test such as I had scarcely expected. I received a letter from Amritlal Thakkar to this effect : 'A humble and honest untouchable family is desirous of joining your Ashram. Will you accept them ?'

I was perturbed. I had never expected that an untouchable family with an introduction from no less a man than Thakkar Bapa would so soon be seeking admission to the Ashram. I shared the letter

[1] *Vide* "Draft Constitution for thr Ashram", before May 20, 1915 and "Satyagraha Ashram", June 14, 1928.

with my companions. They welcomed it.

I wrote to Amritlal Thakkar expressing our willingness to accept the family, provided all the members were ready to abide by the rules of the Ashram.

The family consisted of Dudabhai, his wife Danibehn and their daughter Lakshmi[1] , then a mere toddling babe. Dudabhai had been a teacher in Bombay. They all agreed to abide by the rules and were accepted.

But their admission created a flutter amongst the friends who had been helping the Ashram. The very first difficulty was found with regard to the use of the well, which was partly controlled by the owner of the bungalow. The man in charge of the water- lift objected that drops of water from our bucket would pollute him. So he took to swearing at us and molesting Dudabhai. I told everyone to put up with the abuse and continue drawing water at any cost. When he saw that we did not return his abuse, the man became ashamed and ceased to bother us.

All monetary help, however, was stopped. The friend who had asked that question about an untouchable being able to follow the rules of the Ashram had never expected that any such would be forthcoming.

With the stopping of monetary help came rumours of proposed social boycott. We were prepared for all this. I had told my companions that, if we were boycotted and denied the usual facilities, we would not leave Ahmedabad. We would rather go and stay in the untouchables' quarter and live on[T1] whatever we could get by manual labour.

Matters came to such a pass that Maganlal Gandhi one day gave me this notice : 'We are out of funds and there is nothing for the next month.'

I quietly replied : 'Then we shall go to the untouchables' quarter.'

This was not the first time I had been faced with such a trial. On all such occasions God has sent help at the last moment. One morning, shortly after Maganlal had given me warning of our monetary plight, one of the children came and said that a Sheth[2] who was waiting in a car outside wanted to see me. I went out to him. 'I want to give the Ashram some help. Will you accept it ?' he asked.

'Most certainly,' said I. 'And I confess I am at the present

[1] *Vide* "Speech at 'Antyaj' Conference, Nagpur", December 25, 1920.

[2] Ambalal Sarabhai, who had insisted on remaining anonymous

moment at the end of my resources.'

'I shall come tomorrow at this time, he said.'Will you be here ?'

'Yes,' said I, and he left.

Next day, exactly at the appointed hour, the car drew up near our quarters, and the horn was blown. The children came with the news. The Sheth did not come in. I went out to see him. He placed in my hands currency notes of the value of Rs. 13,000, and drove away.

I had never expected this help, and what a novel way of rendering it! The gentleman had never before visited the Ashram. So far as I can remember, I had met him only once. No visit, no enquiries, simply rendering help and going away ! This was a unique experience for me. The help deferred the exodus to the untouchables' quarter. We now felt quite safe for a year.

Just as there was a storm outside, so was there a storm in the Ashram itself. Though in South Africa untouchable friends used to come to my place and live and feed with me, my wife and other women did not seem quite to relish the admission into the Ashram of the untouchable friends. My eyes and ears easily detected their indifference, if not their dislike, towards Danibehn. The monetary difficulty had caused me no anxiety, but this internal storm was more than I could bear.[1] Danibehn was an ordinary woman. Dudabhai was a man with slight education but of good understanding. I liked his patience. Sometimes he did flare up, but on the whole I was well impressed with his forbearance. I pleaded with him to swallow minor insults. He not only agreed, but prevailed upon his wife to do likewise.

The admission of this family proved a valuable lesson to the Ashram. In the very beginning we proclaimed to the world that the Ashram would not countenance untouchability. Those who wanted to help the Ashram were thus put on their guard, and the work of the Ashram in this direction was considerably simplified. The fact that it is mostly the real orthodox Hindus who have met the daily growing expenses of the Ashram is perhaps a clear indication that untou-chability is shaken to its foundation. There are indeed many other proofs of this, but the fact that good Hindus do not scruple to help an Ashram where we go to the length of dining with the untouchables is no small proof.

I am sorry that I should have to skip over quite a number of things pertaining to this subject, how we tackled delicate questions arising out of the main question, how we had to overcome[T2] some unexpected difficulties, and various other matters which are quite

[1] *Vide* "Letter to V. S. Srinivas Sastri", September 23, 1915.

relevant to a description of experiments with Truth. The chapters that follow will also suffer from the same drawback. I shall have to omit important details, because most of the characters in the drama are still alive, and it is not proper without permission to use their names in connection with events with which they are concerned. It is hardly practicable to obtain their consent or to get them every now and then to revise the chapters concerning themselves. Besides, such procedure is outside the limit of this autobiography. I therefore fear that the rest of the story, valuable as it is in my opinion to seekers after Truth, will be told with inevitable omissions. Nevertheless, it is my desire and hope, God willing, to bring this narrative down to the days of Non-co-operation.

CHAPTER XI : ABOLITION OF INDENTURED EMIGRATIONT1

We shall, for a moment, take leave of the Ashram, which in the very beginning had to weather internal and external storms, and briefly advert to a matter that engaged my attention.T2

Indentured labourers were those who had emigrated from India to labour under an indenture for five years or less. Under the Smuts-Gandhi Settlement of 1914,T3 the £3 tax in respect of the indentured emigrants to Natal had been abolished, but the general emigration from India still needed treatment.T4

In March 1916 Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji moved a resolution in the Imperial Legislative Council for the abolition of the indenture system. In accepting the motion Lord Harding announced that he had 'obtained from His Majesty's Government the promise of the abolition in due course' of the system. I felt, however, that India could not be satisfied with so very vague an assurance, but ought to agitate for immediate abolition.T5 India had tolerated the system through her sheer negligence, and I believed the time had come when people could successfully agitate for this redress. I met some of the leaders, wrote in the Press[1] and saw that public opinion was solidly in favour of immediate abolition. Might this be a fit subject for satyagraha ? I had no doubt that it was, but I did not know the *modus operandi*.

In the meantime the Viceroy had made no secret ofT6 the meaning of 'the eventual abolition,' which, as he said, was abolition 'within such reasonable time as will allow of alternative arrangements being introduced.'

So in February 1917, Pandit Malaviyaji asked for leave to introduce a bill for the immediate abolition of the system. Lord

[1] *Vide* "Indentured Labour", February 25, 1916.

Chelmsford refused permission. It was time for me to tour the country for an all-India agitation.

Before I started the agitation I thought it proper to wait upon the Viceroy. So I applied for an interview. He immediately granted it. Mr. Maffey, now Sir John Maffey, was his private secretary. I came in close contact with him. I had a satisfactory talk with Lord Chelmsford who, without being definite, promised to be helpful.

I began my tour from Bombay. Mr. Jehangir Petit undertook to convene the meeting under the auspices of the Imperial Citizenship Association. The Executive Committee of the Association met irst for fra-ming the resolutions to be moved at the meeting. Dr. Stanley Reed, Sjt. (now Sir) Lallubhai Samaldas, Sjt. Natarajan and Mr. Petit were present at the Committee meeting. The discussion centred round the fixing of the period within which the Government was to be asked to abolish the system. There were three proposals, viz., for abolition 'as soon as possible', abolition 'by the 31st July'[1], and 'immediate abolition'. I was for a definite date as we could then decide what to do if the Government failed to aceede to our request within the time limit. Sjt. Lallubhai was for 'immediate' abolition. He said 'immediate' indicated a shorter period than the 31st July. I explained that the people would not understand the word 'immediate'. If we wanted to get them to do something, they must have a more definite word. Everyone would interpret 'immediate' in his own way—Government one way, the people another way. There was no question of misunderstanding 'the 31st of July', and if nothing was done by that date, we could proceed further. Dr. Reed saw the force of the argument, and ultimately Sjt. Lallubhai also agreed. We adopted the 31st July as the latest date by which the abolition should be announced, a resolution to that effect was passed at the public meeting, and meetings throughout India resolved accordingly.

Mrs. Jaiji Petit put all her energies into the organization of a ladies' deputation to the Viceroy. Amongst the ladies from Bombay who formed the deputation, I remember the names of Lady Tata and the late Dilshad Begum. The deputation had a great effect. The Viceroy gave an encouraging reply.

I visited Karachi, Calcutta and various other places. There were fine meetings everywhere, and there was unbounded enthusiasm. I had not expected anything like it when the agitation was launched.

In those days I used to travel alone, and had therefore wonderful experiences. The C.I.D. men were always after me.T7 But as I had

[1] Apparently a slip for May 31; *vide* "Speech at Anti-Indenture Meeting, Bombay", February 9, 1917.

nothing to conceal, they did not molest me, nor did I cause them any trouble. Fortunately I had not then received the stamp of Mahatmaship, though the shout of that name was quite common where people knew me.

On one occasion the detectives disturbed me at several stations, asked for my ticket and took down the number. I, of course, readily replied to all the questions they asked. My fellow-passengers had taken me to be[T8] a 'sadhu' or a 'fakir'. When they saw that I was being molested at every station, they were exas- perated and swore at the detectives. 'Why are you worrying the poor sadhu for nothing ?' they protested. 'Don't you show these scoundrels your ticket,' they said addressing me.

I said to them gently : 'It is no trouble to show them my ticket. They are doing their duty[T9]'. The passengers were not satisfied, they evinced more and more sympathy, and strongly objected to this sort of ill-treatment of innocent men.

But the detectives were nothing. The real hardship was the third-class travelling. My bitterest experience was from Lahore to Delhi. I was going to Calcutta from Karachi *via* Lahore where I had to change trains. It was impossible to find a place in the train. It was full and those who could get in did so by sheer force, often sneaking through windows if the doors were locked. I had to reach Calcutta on the date fixed for the meeting, and if I missed this train I could not arrive in time. I had almost given up hope of getting in. No one was willing to accept me, when a porter discovering my plight came to me and said, 'Give me twelve annas and I'll get you a seat.' 'Yes,' said I, 'You shall have twelve annas if you do procure me a seat.' The young man went from carriage to carriage entreating passengers but no one heeded him. As the train was about to start, some passengers said, 'There is no room here, but you can shove him in here if you like. He will have to stand.' 'Well ?' asked the young porter. I readily agreed, and he shoved me in bodily through the window. Thus I got in and the porter earned his twelve annas.

The night was a trial. The other passengers were sitting somehow. I stood two hours, holding the chain of the upper bunk. Meanwhile some of the passengers kept worrying me incessantly. 'Why will you not sit down ?' they asked. I tried to reason with them saying there was no room but they could not tolerate my standing, though they were lying full length on the upper bunks. They did not tire of worrying me neither did I tire of gently replying to them. This at last mollified them. Some of them asked me my name and, when I gave it they felt ashamed. They apologized and made room for me.

Patience was thus rewarded.[T10] I was dead tired, and my head was reeling. God sent help just when it was most needed.

In that way I somehow reached Delhi and thence[T11] Calcutta. The Maharaja of Cassimbazaar, the president of the Calcutta meeting, was my host. Just as in Karachi, here also there was unbounded enthusiasm. The meeting was attended by several Englishmen.

Before the 31st July[1] the Government announced that indentured emigration from India was stopped.

It was in 1894 that I drafted the first petition protesting against the system, and I had then hoped that this 'semi-salvery', as Sir W. W. Hunter used to call the system, would some day be brought to an end.

There were many who aided in the agitation which was started in 1894, but I cannot help saying that potential satyagraha hastened the end.[T12]

For further details of that agitation and of those who took part in it, I refer the reader to my *Satyagraha in South Africa*.

CHAPTER XII : THE STAIN OF INDIGO

Champaran is the land of King Janaka. Just as it abounds in mango groves, so used it to be full of indigo plantations until the year 1917. The Champaran tenant was bound by law to plant three out of every twenty parts of his land with indigo for his landlord. This system was known as the *tinkathia* system, as three *kathas* out of twenty (which make one acre) had to be planted with indigo.

I must confess that I did not then know even the name, much less the geographical position, of Champaran, and I had hardly any notion of indigo plantations. I had seen packets of indigo, but little dreamed that it was grown and manufactured in Champaran at great hardship to thousands of agriculturists.

Rajkumar Shukla was one of the agriculturists who had been under this harrow, and he was filled with a passion to wash away the stain of indigo for the thousands who were suffering as he had suffered.

This man caught hold of me at Lucknow, where I had gone for the Congress of 1916. 'Vakil Babu will tell you everything about our distress,' he said, and urged me to go to Champaran. 'Vakil Babu' was none other than Babu Brajkishore Prasad, who became my esteemed co-worker in Champaran, and who is the soul of public work in Bihar. Rajkumar Shukla brought him to my tent. He was dressed in a black alpaca *achkan* and trousers. Brajkishore Babu failed then to

[1] The decision was gazetted on 12-3-1917

make an impression on me. I took it that he must be some *vakil* exloiting the simple agriculturists. Having heard from him something of Champaran, I replied as was my wont : 'I can give no opinion without seeing the conditions with my own eyes. You will please move the resolution in the Congress, but leave me free for the present.' Rajkumar Shukla of course wanted some help from the Congress. Babu Brajkishore Prasad moved the resolution, expressing sympathy for the people of Champaran, and it was unanimously passed.

Rajkumar Shukla was glad, but far from satisfied. He wanted me personally to visit Champaran and witness the miseries of the ryots there. I told him that I would include Champaran in the tour which I had contemplated and give it a day or two. 'One day will be enough,' said he, 'and you will see things with your own eyes.'

From Lucknow I went to Cawnpore. Rajkumar Shukla followed me there. 'Champaran is very near here. Please give a day,' he insisted. 'Pray excuse me this time. But I promise that I will come,' said I, further committing myself.

I returned to the Ashram. The ubiquitous Rajkumar was there too. 'Pray fix the day now', he said. 'Well' said I, 'I have to be in Calcutta on such and such a date, come and meet me then, and take me from there.' I did not know where I was to go, what to do, what things to see.

Before I reached Bhupen Babu's place in Calcutta, Rajkumar Shukla had gone and established himself there. Thus this ignorant, unsophisticated but resolute agriculturist captured me.

So early in 1917, we left Calcutta for Champaran, looking just like fellow-rustics. I did not even know the train. He took me to it, and we travelled together, reaching Patna in the morning.

This was my first visit to Patna. I had no friend or acquaintance with whom I could think of putting up. I had an idea that Rajkumar Shukla, simple agriculturist as he was, must have some influence in Patna. I had come to know him a little more on the journey, and on reaching Patna I had no illusions left concerning him. He was perfectly innocent of everything. The *vakils* that he had taken to be his friends were really nothing of the sort. Poor Rajkumar was more or less as a menial to them. Between such agriculturist clients and their *vakils* there is a gulf as wide as the Ganges in flood.

Rajkumar Shukla took me to Rajendra Babu's place in Patna. Rajendra Babu had gone to Puri or some other place, I now forget which. There were one or two servants at the bungalow who paid us no attention.[T1] I had with me something to eat. I wanted dates which my

companion procured for me from the bazaar.[1]

There was strict untouchability in Bihar. I might not draw water at the well whilst the servants were using it, lest drops of water from my bucket might pollute them, the servants not knowing to what caste I belonged. Rajkumar directed me to the indoor latrine, the servant promptly directed me to the outdoor one. All this was far from surprising or irritating to me, for I was inured to such things. The servants were doing the duty, which they thought Rajendra Babu would wish them to do.

These entertaining experience enhanced my regard for Rajkumar Shukla, if they also enabled me to know him better. I saw now that Rajkumar Shukla could not guide me, and that I must take the reins in my own hands.T2

CHAPTER XIII : THE GENTLE BIHARI

I knew Maulana Mazharul Haq in London when he was studying for the bar, and when I met him at the Bombay Congress in 1915—the year in which he was President of the Muslim League—he had renewed the acquaintance, and extended me an invitation to stay with him whenever I happened to go to Patna. I bethought myself of this invitation and sent him a note indicating the purpose of my visit. He immediately came in his car, and pressed me to accept his hospitality. I thanked him and requested him to guide me to my destination by the first available train, the railway guide being useless to an uttar stranger like me. He had a talk with Rajkumar Shukla and suggested that I should first go to Muzaffarpur. There was a train for that place the same evening, and he sent me off by it.

Principal Kripalani was then in Muzaffarpur. I had known of him ever since my visit to Hyderabad. Dr. Choithram had told me of his great sacrifice, of his simple life, and of the Ashram that Dr. Choithram was running out of funds provided by Prof. Kripalani. He used to be a professor in the Government College, Muzaffarpur, and had just resigned the post when I went there. I had sent a telegram informing him of my arrival, and he met me at the station with a crowd of students, though the train reached there at midnight. He had no rooms of his own, and was staying with Professor Malkani who therefore virtually became my host. It was an extraordinary thing in those days for a Government professor to harbour a man like me.

Professor Kripalani spoke to me about the desperate condition of Bihar, particularly of the Tirhut division and gave me an idea of the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 10-4-1917, where "the master of the house" is not named.

difficulty of my task. He had established very close con- tact with the Biharis, and had already spoken to them about the mission that took me to Bihar.

In the morning a small group of *vakils* called on me. I still remember Ramnavmi Prasad among them, as his earnestness specially appealed to me.

'It is not possible,' he said, 'for you to do the kind of work you have come for, if you stay here (meaning Prof. Malkani's quarters). You must come and stay with one of us. Gaya Babu is a well-known *vakil* here. I have come on his behalf to invite you to stay with him. I confess we are all afraid of Government, but we shall render what help we can. Most of the things Rajkumar Shukla has told you are true. It is a pity our leaders are not here today. I have, however, wired to them both, Babu Brajkishore Prasad and Babu Rajendra Prasad. I expect them to arrive shortly, and they are sure to be able to give you all the information you want and to help you considerably. Pray come over to Gaya Babu's place.'

This was a request that I could not resist, though I hesitated for fear of embarrassing Gaya Babu. But he put me at ease, and so I went over to stary with him. He and his people showered all their affection on me.

Brajkishorebabu now arrived from Darbhanga and Rajendra Babu from Puri. Brajkishorebabu was not the Babu Brajkishore Prasad I had met in Lucknow. He impressed me this time with his humility, simplicity, goodness and extraordinary faith, so characteristic of the Biharis, and my heart was joyous over it. The Bihar *vakils*' regard for him was an agreeable surprise to me.

Soon I felt myself becoming bound to this circle of friends in lifelong friendship. Brajkishorebabu acquainted me with the facts of the case. He used to be in the habit of taking up the cases of the poor tenants. There were two such cases pending when I went there. When he won any such case,T1 he consoled himself that he was doing something for these poor people.T2 Not that he did not charge fees from these simple peasants.T3 Lawyers labour under the belief that, if they do not charge fees, they will have no wherewithal to run their households, and will not be able to render effective help to the poor people. The figures of the fees they charged and theT4 standard of a barrister's fees in Bengal and Bihar staggered me.

'We gave Rs. 10,000 to so and so for his opinion,' I was told. Nothing less than four figures in any case.

The friends listened to my kindly reproach and did not mis-understand me.

‘Having studied these cases,’ said I, ‘I have come to the conclusion that we should stop going to law-courts. Taking such cases to the courts does little good. Where the ryots are so crushed and fear-stricken, law-courts are useless. The real relief for them is to be free from fear. We cannot sit still until we have driven *tinkathia* out of Bihar. I had thought that I should be able to leave here in two days, but I now realize that the work might take even two years. I am prepared to give that time, if necessary. I am now feeling my ground, but I want your help.’

I found Brajkishore Babu exceptionally cool-headed. ‘We shall render all the help we can,’ he said quietly, ‘but pray tell us what kind of help you will need.’

And thus we sat talking until midnight.

‘I shall have little use for your legal knowledge[T5],’ I said to them. ‘I want clerical assistance and help in interpretation. It may[T6] be necessary to face imprisonment, but much as I would love you to run that risk, you would go only so far as you feel yourselves capable of going. Even turning yourselves into clerks and giving up your profession for an indefinite period is no small thing. I find it difficult to understand the local dialect of Hindi, and I shall not be able to read papers written in Kaithi or Urdu. I shall want you to translate them for me. We cannot afford to pay for this work. I should all be done for love and out of a spirit of service.’

Brajkishorebabu understood this immediately, and he now cross-examined me and his companions by turns. He tried to ascertain the implications of all that I had said—how long thier service would be requi-red, how many of them would be needed, whether they might serve by turns and so on. Then he asked the *vakils* the capacity of their sacrifice.

Ultimately they gave me this assurance. ‘Such and such a number of us will do whatever you may ask. Some of us will be with you for so much time as you may require. The idea of accommodating oneself to imprisonment is a novel thing for us. We will try to assimilate it.’

CHAPTER XIV : FACE TO FACE WITH AHIMSA[t1]

My object was to inquire into the condition of the Champaran agriculturists and understand their grievances against the indigo planters. For this purpose it was necessary that I should meet thousands of the ryots. But I deemed it essential, before starting on my inquiry, to know the planters’ side of the case and see the Commissioner of the Division. I sought and was granted appointments

with both.

The Secretary of the Planters' Association told me plainly that I was an outsider and that I had no business to come between the planters and their tenants, but if I had any representation to make, I might submit it in writing. I politely told him that I did not regard myself as an outsider, and that I had every right to inquire into the condition of the tenants if they desired me to do so.

The Commissioner, on whom I called, proceeded to bully me, and advised me forthwith to leave Tirhut.

I acquainted my co-workers with all this, and told them that there was a likelihood of Government stopping me from proceeding further, and that I might have to go to jail earlier than I had expected, and that, if I was to be arrested, it would be best that the arrest should take place in Motihari or if possible in Bettiah. It was advisable, therefore, that I should go to those places as early as possible.

Champaran is a district of the Tirhut division and Motihari is its headquarters. Rajkumar Shukla's place was in the vicinity of Bettiah, and the tenants belonging to the *kothis* in its neighbourhood were the poorest in the district. Rajkumar Shukla wanted me to see them and I was equally anxious to do so.

So I started with my co-workers for Motihari the same day. Babu Gorakh Prasad harboured us in his home, which became a caravanserai. It could hardly contain us all. The very same day we heard that about five miles from Motihari a tenant had been ill-treated. It was decided that, in company with Babu Dharanidhar Prasad, I should go and see him the next morning, and we accordingly set off for the place on elephant's back. An elephant, by the way, is about as common in Champaran as a bullock-cart in Gujarat. We had scarcely gone half way when a messenger from the Police Superintendent overtook us and said that the latter had sent his compliments. I saw what he meant. Having left Dharanidhar Babu to proceed to the original destination, I got into the hired carriage which the messenger had brought. He then served on me a notice to leave Champaran, and drove me to my place. On his asking me to acknowledge the service of the notice, I wrote to the effect that I did not propose to comply with it and leave Champaran till my inquiry was finished. Thereupon I received a summons to take my trial the next day for disobeying the order to leave Champaran.[1]

I kept awake that whole night writing letters and giving necessary instructions to Babu Brajkishore Prasad.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to District Magistrate, Champaran", April 16 & 17, 1917.

The news of the notice and the summons spread like wildfire, and I was told that Motihari that day witnessed unprecedented scenes. Gorakhbabu's house and the court house overflowed with men. Fortunately I had finished all my work during the night and so was able to cope with the crowds. My companions proved the greatest help. They occupied themselves with regulation the crowds, for the latter followed me wherever I went[T2].

A sort of friendliness sprang up between the officials—Collector, Magisrate, Police Superintendent—and myself. I might have legally resisted the notices served on me. Instead I accepted them all, and my conduct towards the officials was correct. They thus saw that I did not want to offend them personally, but that I wanted to offer civil resistance to their orders. In this way they were put at ease, and instead of harassing me they gladly availed themselves of my and my co-worker's co-operation in regulating the crowds. But it was an ocular demonstration to them of the fact that their authority was shaken[T3]. The people had for the moment lost all fear of punishment and yielded obedience to the power of love which their new friend exercised. It should be remembered that no one knew me in Champaran. The peasants were all ignorant. Champaran, being far up north of the Ganges, and right at the foot of the Himalayas in close proximity to Nepal, was cut off from the rest of India. The Congress was practically unknown in those parts. Even those who had heard the name of the Congress shrank from joining it or even mentioning it. And now the Congress and its members had entered this land, though not in the name of the Congress, yet in a far more real sense.

In consultation with my co-workers I had decided that nothing should be done in the name of the Congress. What we wanted was work and not name, substance and not shadow. For the name of the Congress was the *bete noire* of the Government and their controllers—the planters. To them the Congress was a byword for lawyers' wrangles, evasion of law through legal loopholes, a byword for bomb and anarchical crime and for diplomacy and hypocrisy. We had to disillusion them both. Therefore we had decided not to mention the name of the Congress and not to aqcuaint the peasants with the organization called the Congress. It was enough, we thought, if they understood and followed the spirit of the Congress instead of its letter.

No emissaries had therefore been sent there, openly or secretly, on behalf of the Congress to prepare the ground for our arrival. Rajkumar Shukla was incapable of reaching the thousands of peasants. No political work had yet been done amongst them. The world outside Champaran was not known to them. And yet they received me as though we had been age-long friends. It is[T4] no exag-

geration, but the literal truth, to say that in this meeting with the peasants I was face to face with God, Ahimsa and Truth.

When I come to examine my title to this realization, I find nothing but my love for the people. And this in turn is nothing but an expression of my unshakable faith in ahimsa.

That day in Champaran was an unforgettable event in my life and a red-letter day for the peasants and for me.

According to the law, I was to be on my trial, but truly speaking Government was to be on its trial. The Commissioner only succeeded in trapping Government in the net which he had spread for me.

CHAPTER XV : CASE WITHDRAWN

The trial began. The Government pleader, the Magistrate and other officials were on tenterhooks. They were at a loss to know what to do. The Government pleader was pressing the Magistrate to postpone the case. But I interfered and requested the Magistrate not to postpone the case, as I wanted to plead guilty to having disobeyed the order to leave Champaran and read a brief statement[1] as follows :

> With the permission of the Court I would like to make a brief statement showing why I have taken the very serious step of seemingly disobeying the order passed under Section 144 of Cr. P. C. In my humble opinion it is a question of difference of opinion between the Local Administration and myself. I have entered the country with motives of rendering humanitarian and national service. I have done so in response to a pressing invitation to come and help the ryots, who urge they are not being fairly treated by the indigo planters. I could not render any help without studying the problem. I have, therefore, come to study it with the assistance, if possible, of the Administration and the planters. I have no other motive, and I cannot believe that my coming can in any way disturb public peace and cause loss of life. I claim to have considerable experience in such matters. The Administration, however, have thought differently. I fully appreciate their difficulty, and I admit too that they can only proceed upon information they received. As a lawabiding citizen my first instinct would be, as it was, to obey the order served upon me. But I could not do so without doing violence to my sense of duty to those for whom I have come. I feel that I could just now serve them only by remaining in their midst. I could not, therefore, voluntarily retire. Amid this conflict of duties I could only throw the responsiblity of removing me from them on the Administration. I am fully conscious of the fact that a person, holding in the public life of India, a position such as I do, has to be most careful in setting an example. It is my firm belief that in the complex consitution under which we are living, the only safe and honourable course for a self-respecting man is, in the circumstances such as face me, to do what I have decided to do, that is, to submit without protest to the

[1] *Vide* "Statement before the Court", April 18, 1917; the text here has been slightly touched up.

penalty of disobedience.

> I venture to make this statement not in any way in extenuation of the penalty to be awarded against me, but to show that I have disregarded the order served upon me not for want of respect for lawful authority, but in obedience to the higher law of our being, the voice of conscience.

There was now no occasion to postpone the hearing, but as both the Magistrate and the Government pleader had been taken by surprise, Magistrate postponed judgement. Meanwhile I had wired full details to the Viceroy,[1] to Patan friends, as also to Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and others.

Before I could appear before the Court to receive the sentence, the Magistrate sent a written message that the Lieutenant Governor had ordered the case against me to be withdrawn, and the Collector wrote to me saying that I was at liberty to conduct the proposed inquiry, and that I might count on whatever help I needed from the officials. None of us was prepared for this prompt and happy issue.

I called on the Collector Mr. Heycock. He seemed to be a good man, anxious to do justice. He told me that I might ask for whatever papers I desired to see, and that I was at liberty to see him whenever I liked.

The country thus had its first direct object-lesson in[T1] Civil Disobedience. The affair was freely discussed both locally and in the Press, and[T2] my inquiry got unexpected publicity.

It was necessary for my inquiry that the Government should remain neutral. But the inquiry did not need support from Press reporters or leading articles in the Press. Indeed the situation in Champaran was so delicate and difficult that over-energetic criti- cism or highly coloured reports might easily damage the cause which I was seeking to espouse. So I wrote to the editors of the principal papers requesting them not to trouble to send any reporters, as I should send them whatever might be necessary for publication and keep them informed.[2]

I knew that the Government attitude countenancing my presence had displeased the Champaran planters[T3] and I knew that even the officials, though they could say nothing openly, could hardly have liked it. Incorrect or misleading reports, therefore, were likely to incense them all the more, and their ire, instead of descending on me, would be sure to descend on the poor fear-stricken ryots and seriously hinder my search for the truth about the case.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Viceroy", April 16, 1917.

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", April 21, 1917.

In spite of these precautions the planters engineered against me a poisonous agitation. All sorts of falsehoods appeared in the Press about my co-workers and myself. But my extreme cautiousness and my insistence on truth, even to the minutest detail, truned the edge of their sword.T4

The planters left no stone unturned in maligning Brajkishorebabu, but the more they maligned him, the more he rose in the estimation of the people.

In such delicate situations as this I did not think it proper toT5 invite any leaders from other provinces. Pandit Malaviyaji had sent me an assurance that, whenever I wanted him, I had only to send him word, but I did not trouble him. I thus prevented the stuggle from assuming a political aspect. But I sent to the leaders and the principal papers occasional reports, not for publication, but merely for their information. I had seenT6 that, even where the end might be political, but where the cause was non-political, one damaged it by giving it a political aspect and helped it by keeping it within its non-political limit. The Champaran struggle was a proof of the fact that disinterested service of the people in any sphere ultimately helps the country politically

CHAPTER XVI : METHODS OF WORK

To give a full account of the Champaran inquiry would be to narrate the history, for the period,T1 of the Champaran ryot, which is out of the question in these chapters. The Champaran inquiry was a bold experiment with Truth and Ahimsa, and I am giving week by week only what occurs to me as worth giving from that point of view. For more details the reader must turn to Sjt. Rajendra Prasad's history of the Champaran Satyagraha in Hindi, of which, I am told, an English edition[1] is now in the press.T2

But to return to the subject matter of this chapter. The inquiry could not be conducted in Gorakhbabu's house, without practically asking poor Gorakhbabu to vacate it. And the people of Motihari had not yet shed their fear to the extent of renting a house to us. However, Brajkishorebabu tactfully secured one with considerable open space about it, and we now removed there.

It was not quite possible to carry on the work without money. It had not been the practice hitherto to appeal to the public for money for work of this kind. Brajkishorebabu and his friends were mainly *vakils* who either contributed funds themselves, or found it from friends whenever there was an occasion. How could they ask the

[1] *Satyagraha in Champaran*, published by the Navajivan Publishing House

people to pay when they and their kind could well afford to do so ? That seemed to be the argument. I had made up my mind not to accept anything from the Champaran ryots. It would be bound to be misinterpreted. I was equally determined not to appeal to the country at large for funds to conduct this inquiry. For that was likely to give it an all-India and political aspect. Friends from Bombay offered[T3] Rs. 15,000, but I declined the offer with thanks. I decided to get as much as was possible, with Brajkishorebabu's help, from well-to-do Biharis living outside Champaran and, if more was needed, to approach my friend Dr. P. J. Mehta of Rangoon. Dr. Mehta readily agreed to send me whatever might be needed. We were thus free from all anxiety on this score. We were not likely to require large funds, as we were bent on exercising the greatest economy in consonance with the poverty of Champaran. Indeed it was found in the end that we did not need any large amount. I have an impression that we expended in all not more than three thousand rupees, and, as far as I remember, we saved a few hundred[T4] rupees from what we had collected.

The curious ways of living of my companions in the early days were a constant theme of raillery at their expense. Each of the *vakils* had a servant and a cook, and therefore a separate kitchen, and they often had their dinner as late as midnight. Though they paid their own expenses, their irregularity worried me but as we had become close friends there was no possiblity of a misunder- standing between us, and they received my ridicule in good part. Ultimately it was agreed that the servants should be dispensed with, that all the kitchens should be amalgamated and that regular hours should be observed. As all were not vegetarians, and as two kitchens would have been expensive, a common vegetarian kitchen was decided upon. It was also felt necessary to insist on simple meals.

These arrangements considerably reduced the expenses and saved us a lot of time and energy, and both these were badly needed. Crowds of peasants came to make their statements, and they were followed by an army of companions who filled the compound and garden to overflowing. The efforts of my companions to save me from *darshan*-seekers were often of no avail, and I had to be exhibited for *darshan* at particular hours. At least five to seven volun- teers were required to take down statements, and even then some people had to go away in the evening without being able to make their statements. All these statements were not essential, many of them being repetitions, but the poeple could not be satisfied otherwise, and I appreciated their feeling in the matter.[T5]

Those who took down the statements had to observe certain rules. Each peasant had to be closely cross-examined, and whoever

failed to satisfy the test was rejected.[T6] This entailed a lot of extra time but most of the statements were thus rendered incontrovertible.

An officer from the C.I.D. would always be present when these statements were recorded. We might have prevented him but we had decided from the very beginning not only not to mind the presence of C.I.D. officers, but to treat them with courtesy and to give them all the information that it was possible to give them.[T7] This was far from doing us any harm. On the contrary the very fact that the statements were taken down in the presence of the C.I.D. officers made the peasants more fearless. Whilst on the one hand excessive fear of the C.I.D. was driven out of the peasants's minds, on the other, their presence exercised a natural restraint on exaggeration. It was the business of C.I.D. friends to entrap people and so the peasants had necessarily to be cautious.

As I did not want to irritate the planters, but to win them over by gentleness, I made a point of writing to and meeting such of them against whom allegations of a serious nature were made. I met the Planters' Association as well, placed the ryots' grievances before them and acquainted myself with their point of view. Some of the planters hated me. Some were indifferent and a few treated me with courtesy.

CHAPTER XVII : COMPANIONS

Brajkishorebabu and Rajendrababu were a matchless pair. Their devotion made it impossible for me to take a single step without their help. Their disciples, or their companions—Shambhubabu, Anugrahababu, Dharanibabu, Ramnavmibabu and other *vakils*—were always with us. Vindhyababu and Janakdharibabu also came and helped us now and then. All these were Biharis. Their principal work was to take down the ryot's statements.

Professor Kripalani could not but cast in his lot with us. Though a Sindhi he was more Bihari than a born Bihari. I have seen only a few workers capable of merging themselves in the province of their adoption. Kripalani is one of those few. He made it impossible for anyone to feel that he belonged to a different province. He was my gatekeeper in chief. For the time being he made it the end and aim of his life to save me from *darshan*-seekers. He warded off people, calling to his aid now his unfailing humour, now his non-violent threats. At nightfall he would take up his occupation of a teacher and regale his companions with his historical studies and observations, and quicken any timid visitor into bravery.

Maulana Mazharul Haq had registered his name on the standing list of helpers whom I might count upon whenever necessary, and he made a point of looking in once or twice a month. The pomp and

splendour in which he then lived was in sharp contrast to his simple life of today. The way in which he associated with us made us feel that he was one of us, though his fashionable habit gave a stranger a diferent impression.

As I gained more experience of Bihar, I became convinced that work of a permanent nature was impossible without proper village education. The ryots' ignorance was pathetic. They either allowed their children to roam about, or made them toil on indigo plantations from morning to night for a couple of coppers a day. In those days a male labourer's wage did not exceed ten pice, a female's did not exceed six, and a child's three. He who succeeded in earning four annas a day was considered most fortunate.

In consultation with my companions I decided to open primary schools in six villages. One of our conditions with the villagers was that they should provide the teachers with board and lodging while we would see to the other expenses. The village folk had hardly any cash in their hands, but they could well afford to provide foodstuffs. Indeed they had already expressed their readiness to contrbiute grain and other raw materials.

From where to get the teachers was a great problem. It was difficult to find local teachers who would work for a bare allowance or without remuneration. My idea was never to entrust children to commonplace teachers. Their literary qualification was not so essential as their moral fibre.

So I issued a public appeal for voluntary teachers. It received ready response. Sjt. Gangadharrao Deshpande sent Babsaheb Soman and Pundalik, Shrimati Avantikabai Gokhale came from Bombay and Mrs. Anandibai Vaishampayan from Poona.[T1] I sent to the Ashram for Chhotalal, Surendranath and my son Devdas. About this time Mahadev Desai and Narahari Parikh with their wives cast in their lot with me. Kasturbai was also summoned for the work. This was a fairly strong contingent. Shrimati Avantikabai and Shrimati Anandibai were educated enough, but Shrimati Durga Desai and Shrimati Manibehn Parikh had nothing more than a bare knowledge of Gujarati, and Kasturbai not even that. How were these ladies to instruct the children in Hindi ?

I explained to them that they were expected to teach the children not grammar and the three R's so much as cleanliness and good manners. I further explained that even as regards letters there was not so great a difference between Gujarati, Hindi and Marathi as they imagined, and in the primary classes, at any rate, the teaching of the rudiments of the alphabet and numerals was not a difficult matter.

The result was that the classes taken by these ladies were found to be most successful. The experience inspired them with confidence and interest in their work. Avantikabai's became a model shcool. She threw herself heart and soul into her work. She brought her exceptional gifts to bear on it. Through these ladies we could, to some extent, reach[T2] the village women.

But I did not want to stop at providing for primary education. The villages were insanitary, the lanes full of filth, the well surrounded by mud and stink and the courtyards unbearably untidy. The elder people badly needed education in cleanliness. They were all suffering from various skin diseases. So it was decided to do as much sanitary work as possbile and to penetrate every department of their lives.

Doctors were needed for this work. I requested the Servants of India Society to lend us the services of the late Dr. Dev.[1] We had been great friends, and he readily offered his services for six months. The teachers—men and women—had all to work under him.

All of them had express instructions not to concern themselves with grievances against planters or with politics. People who had any complaints to make were to be referred to me. No one was to venture out of his beat. The friends carried out these instructions with wonderful fidelity. I do not remember a single occasion of indiscipline.

CHAPTER XVIII : PENETRATING THE VILLAGES

As far as was possible we placed each school in charge of one man and one woman. These volunteers had to look after medical relief and sanitation. The womenfolk had to be approached through women.

Medical relief was a very simple affair. Castor oil, quinine and sulphur ointment were the only durgs provided to the volunteers. If the patient showed a furred tongue or complained of constipation, castor oil as administered, in case of fever quinine was given after an opening dose of castor oil, and the sulphur ointment was applied in case of boils and itch after thoroughly washing the affected parts. No patient was permitted to take home any medicine. Wherever there was some complication Dr. Dev was consulted.[T1] Dr. Dev used to visit each centre on certain fixed days in the week.

Quite a number of people availed themselves of this simple relief. This plan of work will not seem strange[T2] when it is remembered that the prevailing ailments were few and amenable to simple treatment, by no means requiring expert help. As for the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", June 30, 1917.

people the arrangement answered excellently.

Sanitation was a difficult affiar. The people were not prepared to do anything themselves. Even the field labourers were not ready to do their own scavenging. But Dr. Dev was not a man easily to lose heart. He and the volunteers concentrated their energies on making a village ideally clean. They swept the roads and the courtyards, cleaned out the wells, filled up the pools nearby, and lovingly persuaded the villagers to raise volunteers from amongst themselves. In some villages they shamed people into taking up the work, and in others the people were so enthusiastic that they even prepared roads to enable my car to go from place to place. These sweet experiences were not unmixed with bitter ones of people's apathy. I remember some villagers frankly expressing their dislike for this work.T3

It may not be out of place here to narrate an experience that I have described before now at many meetings.T4 Bhitiharva was a small village in which was one of our schools.T5 I happened to visit a smaller village in its vicinity and found some of the women dressed very dirtily. So I told my wife to ask them why they did not wash their clothes. She spoke to them. One of the women took her into her hut and said: 'Look now, there is no box or cupboard here containing other clothes. The sari I am wearing is the only one I have. How am I to wash it ? Tell Mahatmaji to get me another sari, and I shall then promise to bathe and put on clean clothes every day.'

This cottage was not an exception, but a type to be found in many Indian villages. In countless cottages in India people live without any furniture, and without a change of clothes, merely with a rag to cover their shame.

One more experience I will note. In Champaran there is no lack of bamboo and grass. The school hut they had put up at Bhitiharva was made of these materials. Someone—possible some of the neighbouring planters' men—set fire to it one night. It was not thought advisable to build another hut of bamboo and grass. The school was in charge of Sjt. Soman and Kasturbai. Sjt. Soman decided to build a pukka house, and thanks to his infectious labour, many co-operated with him, and a brick-house was soon made ready. There was no fear now of this building being burnt down.

Thus the volunteers with their schools, sanitation work and medical relief gained the confidence and respect of the village folk, and were able to bring good influence to bear upon them.

But I must confess with regret that my hope of putting this constructive work on a permanent footing was not fulfilled. The volunteers had come for temporary periods, I could not secure any more from

outside, and permanent honorary workers from Bihar were not available. As soon as my work in Champaran was finished, work outside, which had been preparing in the meantime, drew me away. The few month's work in Champaran, however, took such deep root that its influence in one form or another is to be observed there even today.

CHAPTER XIX : WHEN A GOVERNOR IS GOOD T1

Whilst on the one hand social service work of the kind I have described in the foregoing chapters was being carried out, on the other the work of recording statements of the ryots' grievances was progressing apace. Thousands of such statements were taken, and they could not but have their effect. The ever-growing number of ryots coming to make their statements increased the planters' wrath, and they moved heaven and earth to counteract T2 my inquiry.

One day I received a letter from the Bihar Government to the following effect : 'Your inquiry has been sufficiently prolonged; should you not now bring it to an end and leave Bihar ?' The letter was couched in polite language, but its meaning as obvious.

I wrote in reply that the inquiry was bound to be prolonged, and unless and until it resulted in bringing relief to the people, I had no inten-tion of leaving Bihar. I pointed out that it was open to Government to terminate my inquiry by accepting the ryots' grievances as genuine and redressing them, or by recognizing that the ryots had made out a *prima facie* case for an official inquiry which should be immediately instituted.

Sir Edward Gait, the Lieutenant Governor, asked me to see him,[1] expressed his willingness to appoint an inquiry and invited me to be a member of the Committee. I ascertained the names of the other members, and after consultation with my co-workers agreed to serve on the Committee, on condition that I should be free to confer with my co-workers during the progress of the inquiry, that Government should recognize that, by being a member of the Committee, I did not cease to be the ryots' advocate, and that in case the result of the inquiry failed to give me satisfaction, I should be free to guide and advise the ryots as to what line of action they should take.

Sir Edward Gait accepted the condition as just and proper and announced the inquiry. The late Sir Frank Sly was appointed Chairman of the Committee.

The Committee found in favour of the ryots, and recommended that the planters should refund a portion of the exactions made by them which the Committee had found to be unlawful, and that the

[1] *Vide* "Interview with Lt. Governor of Bihar", June 5, 1917.

tinkathia system should be abolished by law.[1]

Sir Edward Gait had a large share in getting the Committee to make a unanimous report and in getting and Agrarian Bill passed in accordance with the Committee's recommendations. Had he not adopted a firm attitude, and had he not brought all his tact to bear on the subject, the report would not have been unanimous, and the Agrarian Act would not have been passed. The planters wielded extraordinary power. They[T3] offered strenuous opposition to the Bill in spite of the report, but Sir Edward Gait remained firm up to the last and fully carried out the recommendations of the Committee.

The *tinkathia* system, which had been in existence for about a century, was thus abolished, and with it the planters' raj came to an end. The ryots, who had all along remained crushed, now somewhat came to their own, and the superstition that the stain of indigo could never be washed out was exploded.

It was my desire to continue the constructive work for some years, to establish more schools and to penetrate the villages more effectively. The ground had been prepared, but it did not please God, as often before, to allow my plans to be fulfilled. Fate decided otherwise and drove me to take up work elsewhere.

CHAPTER XX : IN TOUCH WITH LABOUR

Whilst I was yet winding up my work on the Committee, I received a letter from Sjts. Mohanlal Pandya and Shankarlal Parikh telling me of the failure of crops in the Kheda district, and asking me to guide the peasants, who were unable to pay the assessment. I had not the inclination, the ability of the courage to advise without an inquiry on the spot.

At the same time there came a letter from Shrimati Anasuyabai about the condition of labour in Ahmedabad. Wages were low, the labourers had long been agitating for an increment, and I had a desire to guide them if I could. But I had not the confidence[T1] to direct even this comparatively small affair from that long distance. So I seized the first opportunity to go to Ahmedabad. I had hoped that I should be able to finish both these matters quickly and get back to Champaran to supervise the constructive work that had been inaugurated there.

But things did not move as swiftly as I had wished, and I was unable to return to Champaran[T2], with the result that the schools closed down one by one. My co-workers and I had built many castles in the air, but they all vanished for the time being.

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Report of Champaran Agrarian Enquiry Committee", October 3, 1917 & "The Champaran Agrarian Bill, 1917", after October 6, 1917.

One of these was cow-protection work in Champaran, bsides rural sanitation and education. I had seen, in the course of my travels, that cow-protection and Hindi propaganda had become the exclusive concern of the Marwadis. A Marwadi friend had sheltered me in his dharmsala whilst at Bettiah. Other Marwadis of the place had interested me in their goshala (dairy). My ideas about cow-protection had been definitely formed then, and my conception of the work, was the same as it is today. Cow-protection, in my opinion, included cattle-breeding, improvement of the stock, humane treatment of bullocks, formation of model dairies, etc. The Marwadi friends had promised full co-operation in this work, but as I could not fix myself up in Champaran, the scheme could not be carried out.

The goshala in Bettiah is still there, but it has not become a model dairy, the Champaran bullock is still made to work beyond his capacity, and the so-called Hindu still cruelly belabours the poor animal and disgraces his religion.

That this work should have remained unrealized has been, to me, a continual regret, and whenever I go to Champaran and hear the gentle reproaches of the Marwadi and Bihari friends, I recall with a heavy sigh all those plans which I had to drop so abruptly.

The educational work in one way or another is going on in many places. But the cow-protection work had not taken firm root, and has not, therefore, progressed in the direction intended.

Whilst the Kheda peasants' question was still being discussed, I had already taken up the question of the mill-hands in Ahmedabad.

I was in a most delicated situation. The mill-hands' case was strong.[T3] Shrimati Anasuyabai had to battle against her own brother, Sjt. Ambalal Sarabhai, who led the fray on behalf of the mill-owners.[T4] My relations with them were friendly, and that made fighting with them the more difficult. I held consultations with them, and requested them to refer the dispute to arbitration, but they refused to recognize the principle of arbitration.[T5]

I had therefore to advise the labourers to go on strike. Before I did so, I came in very close contact with them and their leaders, and explained to them the conditons of a successful strike :

1. never to resort to violence,
2. never to molest blacklegs,
3. never to depend upon alms, and
4. to remain firm, no matter how long the stike continued, and to earn bread, during the strike,[T6] by any other honest labour.

The leaders of the strike understood and accepted the

conditions, and the labourers pledged themselves at a general meeting not to resume work until either terms were accepted or the mill-owners agreed to refer the dispute to arbitration.

It was during this strike that I came to know intimately Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel and Shankarlal Banker. Shrimati Anasuyabai I knew well before this.

We had daily meetings of the strikers under the shade of a tree on the bank of the Sabarmati. They attended the meeting in their thousandsT7 and I reminded them in my speeches of their pledge and of the duty to maintain peace and self-respect. They daily paraded the streets of the city in peaceful procession,T8 carrying their banner bearing the inscription *'Ek Tek'* (keep the pledge).

The strike went on for twenty-one days. During the continuance of the strike I consulted the mill-owners from time to time and entereated them to do justice to the labourers. 'We have our pledge too,' they used to say. 'Our relations with the labourers are those of parents and children……How can we brook the interference of a third party ? Where is the room for arbitration ?'

CHAPTER XXI : A PEEP INTO THE ASHRAM

Before I proceed to describe the progress of the labour dispute it is essential to have a peep into the Ashram. All the while I was in Champaran the Ashram was never out of my mind, and occasionally I paid it flying visits.

At that time the Ashram was in Kochrab, a small village near Ahmedabad. Plague broke out in this village, and I saw evident danger to the safety of the Ashram children. It was impossible to keep ourselves immune from the effects of the surrounding insanitation, however scrupulously we might observe the rules of cleanliness within the Ashram walls. We were not then equal either to getting the Kochrab people to observe these rules nor to serving the village otherwise.

Our ideal was to have the Ashram at a safe distance both from town and village, and yet at a manageable distance from either. And we were determined, some day, to settle on ground of our own.T1

The plauge, I felt, was sufficient notice to quit Kochrab. Sjt. Punjabhai Hirachand, a merchant in Ahmedabad,T2 had come in close contact with the Ashram, and used to serve us in a number of matters in a pure and selfless spirit. He had a wide expreience of things in Ahmedabad, and he volunteered to procure us suitable landT3. I went about with him north south of Kochrab in search of land, and then suggested to him to find out a piece of land three or four miles to the

north. He hit upon the present site. Its vicinity to the Sabaramati Central Jail was for me a special attraction. As jail-going was understood to be the normal lot of satyagrahis, I liked this position. And I knew that the sites selected for jails have generally clean surroundings.

In about eight days the sale was executed. There was no building on the land and no tree. But its situation on the bank of the river and its solitude were great advantages.

We decided to start by living under canvas, and having a tin shed for a kitchen, till permanent houses were built.

The Ashram had been slowly growing. We were now over forty souls, men, women and children, having our meals at a common kitchen. The whole conception about the removal was mine, the execution was as usual left to Maganlal.

Our difficulties, before we had permanent living accommodation, were great. The rains were impending, and provisions had to be got from the city four miles away. The ground, which had been a waste, was infested with snakes, and it was no small risk to live with little children under such conditions. The general rule was not to kill the snakes, though I confess none of us had shed the fear of these reptiles, nor have we even now.

The rule of not killing venomous reptiles has been practised for the most part at Phoenix, Tolstoy Farm and Sabarmati. At each of these places we had to settle on waste lands[T4]. We have had, however, no loss of life occasioned by snakebite. I see, with the eye of faith, in this circumstance the hand of the God of Mercy. Let no one cavil at this, saying that God can never be partial, and that He has no time to meddle with the humdrum affairs of men. I have no other language to express the fact of the matter, to describe this uniform experience of mine[T5]. Human language can but imperfectly describe God's ways. I am sensible of the fact that they are indescribable and inscrutable. But if mortal man will dare to describe them, he has no better medium than his own inarticulate speech[T6]. Even if it be a superstition to believe that complete immunity from harm for twenty-five years in spite of a fairly regular practice of non-killing is not a fortuitous accident but a grace of God, I should still hug that superstition.

During the strike of the mill-hands in Ahmedabad the foundation of the Ashram weaving-shed was being laid. For the principal activity of the Ashram was then weaving. Spinning had not so far been possible for us.

For the first two weeks the mill-hands exhibited great courage and self-restraint and daily held monster meetings. On these occasions I used to remind them of their pledge, and they would shout back to me the assurance that they would rather die than break their word.

But at last they began to show signs of flagging. Just as physical weakness in men manifests itself in irascibility, their attitude towards the blacklegs became more and more menacing as the strike seemed to weaken, and I began to fear an outbreak of rowdyism on their part. The attendance at their daily meetings also began to dwindle by degrees, and despondency and despair were writ large on the faces of those who did attend. Finally the information was brought to me that the strikers had begun to totter. I felt deeply troubled and set to thinking furiously as to what my duty was in the circumstances. I had had experience of a gigantic strike in South Africa, but the situation that confronted me here was different. The mill-hands had taken the pledge at my suggestion. They had repeated it before me day after day, and the very idea that they might now go back upon it was to me inconceivable. Was it pride or was it my love for the labourers and my passionate regard for truth that was at the back of this feeling—who can say ?

One morning—it was at a mill-hands' meeting—while I was still groping and unable to see my way clearly, the light came to me. Unbidden and all by themselves the words came to my lips: 'Unless the strikers rally', I declared to the meeting, 'and continue the strike till a settlement is reached or till they leave the mills altogether,T1 I will not touch any food.'[1]

The labourersT2 were thunderstruck. Tears began to course down Anasuyabehn's cheeks. The labourers broke out, 'Not you but we shall fast. It would be monstrous if you were to fast. Please forgive us for our lapse, we will now remain faithful to our pledge to the end.'

'There is no need for you to fast,' I replied. 'It would be enough if you could remain true to your pledge. As you know we are without funds, and we do not want to continue our strike by living on public charity. You should therefore try to eke out a bare existence by some kind of labour, so that you may be able to remain unconcerned, no matter how long the strike may continue. As for my fast, it will be broken only after the strike is settled.'

[1] For speeches during the fast, *vide* "Speech to Ahmedabad Mill-Hands", March 15, 1918 & "Prayer Discourse in Ashram", March 17, 1918.

In the meantime Vallabhbhai was trying to find some employment for the strikers under the Municipality, but there was not much hope of success there. Maganlal Gandhi suggested that, as we needed sand for filling the foundation of our weaving school in the Ashram, a number of them might be employed for that purpose. The labourers welcomed the proposal. Anasuyabehn led the way with a basket on her head and soon an endless stream of labourers carrying baskets of sand on their heads could be seen issuing out of the hollow of river-bed. It was a sight worth seeing. The labourers felt themselves infused with a new strength, and it became difficult to cope with the task of paying out wages to them.

My fast was not free from a grave defect. For as I have already mentioned in a previous chapter, I enjoyed very close and cordial relations with the mill-owners, and my fast could not but affect their decision. As a satyagrahi I knew that I might not fast against them, but ought to leave them free to be influenced by the mill-hands' strike alone. My fast was undertaken not on account of lapse of the mill-owners, but on account of that of the labourers in which, as their representative, I felt I had a share. With the mill-owners, I could only plead; to fast against them would amount to coercion. Yet in spite of my knowledge that my fast was bound to put pressure upon them, as in fact it did, I felt I could not help it. The duty to undertake it[T3] seemed to me to be clear.

I tried to set the mill-owners at ease. 'There is not the slightest necessity for you to withdraw from your position,' I said to them. But they received my words coldly and even flung keen, delicate bits of sarcasm at me, as indeed they had a perfect right to do.

The principal man at the back of the mill-owners' unbending attitude towards the strike was Sheth Ambalal. His resolute will and transparent sincerity were wonderful and captured my heart. It was a pleasure to be pitched against him. The strain produced by my fast upon the opposition, of which he was the head, cut me, therefore, to the quick. And then, Sarladevi, his wife, was attached to me with the affection of a blood-sister, and I could not bear to see her anguish on account of my action.

Anasuyabehn and a number of other friends and labourers shared the fast with me on the first day. But after some difficulty I was able to dissuade them from continuing it further.

The net result of it was that an atmosphere of goodwill was created all round. The hearts of the mill-owners were touched, and they set about discovering some means for a settlement. Anasuya-behn's house became the venue of their discussions. Sjt. Anand-

shankar Dhruva intervened and was in the end appointed arbi- trator, and the strike was called off after I had fasted only for three days. The mill-owners commemorated the event by distri- buting sweets among the labourers, and thus a settlement was reached after 21 days' strike.

At the meeting[1] held to celebrate the settlement, both the mill-owners and the Commissioner[T4] were present. The advice which the latter gave to the mill-hands on this occasion was: 'You should always act as Mr. Gandhi advises you.' Almost immediately after these events I had to engage in a tussle with this very gentleman. But circumstances were changed, and he had changed with the circumstances. He then set about warning the Patidars of Kheda against following my advice !

I must not close this chapter without noting here an incident, as amusing as it was pathetic. It happened in connection with the distribution of sweets.[T5] The mill-owners had ordered a very large quantity, and it was a problem how to distribute it among the thousands of labourers. It was decided that it would be the fittest thing to distribute it in the open, beneath the very tree under which the pledge had been taken, especially as it would have been extremely inconvenient to assemble them all together in any other place.

I[T6] had taken it for granted that the men who had observed strict discipline for full 21 days would without any difficulty be able to remain standing in an orderly manner while the sweets were being distributed, and not make an impatient scramble for them. But when it came to the test, all the methods that were tried for making the distribution failed. Again and again their ranks would break into confusion after distribution had proceeded for a couple of minutes. The leaders of the mill-hands tried their best to restore order, but in vain. The confusion, the crush and the scramble at last became so great that quite an amount of the sweets was spoiled by being trampled under foot, and the attempt to distribute them in the open had finally to be given up. With difficulty we succeeded in taking away the remaining sweets to Sheth Ambalal's bungalow in Mirzapur. Sweets were distributed comfortably the next day within the compound of that bungalow.

The comic side of this incident is obvious, but the pathetic side bears mention. Subsequent inquiry revealed the fact that the beggar population of Ahmedabad, having got scent of the fact that sweets were to be distributed under the *Ek-Tek* tree, had gone there in large numbers, and it was their hungry scramble for the sweets that had created all the confusion and disorder.

[1] *Vide* "Speech to Ahmedabad Mill-Hands", March 18, 1918.

The grinding poverty and starvation with which our country is afflicted is such that it drives more and more men every year into the ranks of the beggars, whose desperate struggle for bread renders them insensible to all feelings of decency and self-respect. And our philanthropists, instead of providing work for them and insisting on their working for bread, give them alms.

CHAPTER XXIII : THE KHEDA SATYAGRAHA

No breathing time was, however, in store for me. Hardly was the Ahmedabad mill-hands' strike over, when I had to plunge into the Kheda Satyagraha struggle.

A condition approaching famine had arisen in the Kheda district owing to a widespread failure of crops, and the Patidars of Kheda were considering the question of getting the revenue assessment for the year suspended.

Sjt. Amritlal Thakkar had already inquired into and reported on the situation and personally discussed the question with the Commissioner, before I gave definite advice to the cultivators.[T1] Sjts. Mohanlal Pandya and Shankarlal Parikh had also thrown themselves into the fight, and had set up an agitation in the Bombay Legislative Council through Sjt. Vithalbhai Patel and the late Sir Gokuldas Kahandas Parekh. More than one deputation had waited upon the Governor in that connection.

I was at this time President of the Gujarat Sabha. The Sabha sent petitions and telegrams to the Government and even patiently swallowed the insults and threats of the Commissioner. The conduct of the officials on this occasion was so ridiculous and undignified as to be almost incredible now.

The cultivators'demand was as clear as daylight, and so moderate as to make out a strong case for its acceptance. Under the Land Revenue Rules, if the crop was four annas or under, the cultivators could claim full suspension of the revenue assessment for the year. According to the official figures the crop was said to be over four annas. The contention of the cultivators, on the other hand, was that it was less than four annas. But the Government was in no mood to listen, and regarded the popular demand for arbitration as *lese majeste*. At last all petitioning and prayer having failed, after taking counsel with co-workers, I advised the Patidars to resort to satyagraha.

Besides the volunteers[T2] of Kheda, my principal comrades in this struggle were Sjts. Vallabhbhai Patel, Shankarlal Banker, Shrimati Anasuyabehn, Sjts. Indulal Yagnik, Mahadev Desai and others. Sjt. Vallabhbhai, in joining the struggle, had to suspend a splendid and growing practice at the bar, which or all practical purposes he was

never able to resume.

We fixed up our headquarters at the Nadiad Anathashram,T3 no other place being available which would have been large enough to accommodate all of us.

The following pledge was signed by the satyagrahis :

'Knowing that the crops of our villages are less than four annas, we requested the Government to suspend the collection of revenue assessment till the ensuing year, but the Government has not acceded to our prayer. Therefore, we, the undersigned, hereby solemnly declare that we shall not, of our own accord, pay to the Government the full or the remaining revenue for the year. We shall let the Government take whatever legal steps it may think fit and gladly suffer the consequences of our non-payment. We shall rather let our lands be forfeited than that by voluntary payment we should allow our case to be considered false or should compromise our self-respect. Should the Government, however, agree to suspend collection of the second instalment of the assessment throughout the district, such amongst us as are in a position to pay will pay up the whole or the balance of the revenue that may be due. The reason why thoseT4 who are able to pay still withhold payment is that, if they pay up, the poorer ryots may in a panic sell their chattels or incur debts to pay their dues, and thereby bring suffering upon themselves. In these circumstances we feel that, for the sake of the poor, it is the duty even of those who can afford to pay to withhold payment of thier assessment.'

I cannot devote many chapters to this struggle.[1] So a number of sweet recollections in this connection will have to be crowded out. Those who want to make a fuller and deeper study of this important fight would do well to read the full and authentic history of the Kheda Satyagraha by Sjt. Shankarlal Parikh of Kathlal, Kheda.

CHAPTER XXIV : 'THE ONION THIEF'

Champaran being in a far away corner of India, and the Press having been kept out of the campaign, it did not attract visitors from outside. Not so with the Kheda campaign, of which the happenings were reported in the Press from day to day.

The Gujaratis were deeply interested in the fight, which was to them a novel experiment. They were ready to pour forth their riches for the success of the cause. It was not easy for them to see that satyagraha could not be conducted simply by means of money. Money is the thing that it least needs. In spite of my remonstrance, the Bombay

[1] For its various stages, *vide* items between February 16 and June 9, 1918; for the pledge,*vide* "The Pledge", March 22, 1918.

merchants sent us more money than necessary, so that we had some balance left at the end of the campaign.

At the same time the satyagrahi volunteers had to learn the new lesson of simplicity. I cannot say that they imbibed it fully, but they considerably changed their ways of life.

For the Patidar farmers, too,[T1] the fight was quite a new thing. We had, therefore, to go about from village to village explaining the principles of satyagraha.

The main thing was to rid the agriculturists of their fear by making them realize that the officials were not the masters but the servants of the people, inasmuch as they received their salaries from the taxpayer. And then it seemed well nigh impossible to make them realize the duty of combining civility with fearlessness. Once they had shed the fear of the officials, how could they be stopped from returning their insults? And yet if they resorted to incivility it would spoil their satyagraha, like a drop of arsenic in milk. I realized later that they had less fully learnt the lesson of civility than I had expected. Experience has taught me that civility is the most difficult part of satyagraha. Civility does not here mean the mere outward gentleness of speech cultivated for the occasion, but an inborn gentleness and desire to do the opponent good. These should show themselves in every act of a satyagrahi.

In the initial stages, though the people exhibited much courage, the Government did not seem inclined to take strong action. But as the people's firmness showed no signs of wavering, the Government began coercion. The attachment officers sold people's cattle and seized whatever movables they could lay hands on. Penalty notices were served, and in some cases standing crops were attached. This unnerved the peasants, some of whom paid up their dues, while others desired to place safe movables in the way of the officials so that they might attach them to realize the dues. On the other hand some were prepared to fight to the bitter end.

While these things were going on, one of Sjt. Shankarlal Parikh's tenants paid up the assessment in respect of his land. This created a sensation. Sjt. Shankarlal Parikh immediately made amends for his tenant's mistake by giving away for charitable purposes the land for which the assessment had been paid. He thus saved his honour and set a good example to others.

With a view to steeling the hearts of those who were frightened, I advised the people, under the leadership of Sjt. Mohanlal Pandya, to remove the crop of onion, from a field which had been in my opinion

wrongly attached. I did not regard this as civil disobedience, but even if it was, I suggested that this attachment of standing crops[T2], though it might be in accordance with law, was morally wrong, and was nothing short of looting, and that therefore it was the people's duty to remove the onion in spite of the order of attachment. This was a good opportunity for the people to learn a lesson in courting fines or imprisonment, which was the necessary consequence of such disobedience[T3]. For Sjt. Mohanlal Pandya it was a thing after his heart. He did not like the campaign to end without someone undergoing suffering in the shape of imprisonment for something done consistenly with the principles of satyagraha. So he volunteered to remove the onion crop from the field, and in this seven or eight friends joined him.

It was impossible for the Government to leave them free. The arrest of Sjt. Mohanlal and his companions added to the people's enthusiasm. When the fear of jail disappears, repression puts heart into the people. Crowds of them besieged the court-house on the day of the hearing. Pandya and his companions were convicted and sentenced to a brief term of imprisonment. I was[T4] of opinion that the conviction was wrong, because the act of removing the onion crop could not come under the definition of 'theft' in the Penal Code. But no appeal was filed as the policy was to avoid the law-courts.

A procession escorted the 'convicts' to jail, and on that day Sjt. Mohanlal Pandya earned from the people the honoured title of '*dungli chor*' (onion thief) which he enjoys to this day.

The conclusion of the Kheda Satyagraha I will leave to the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXV : END OF KHEDA SATYAGRAHA

The campaign came to an unexpected end. It was clear that the people were exhausted, and I hesitated to let the unbending be driven to utter ruin. I was casting about for some graceful way of terminating the struggle which would be acceptable to a satyagrahi. Such a one appeared quite unexpectedly. The Mamlatdar of the Nadiad Taluk sent me word that, if well-to-do Patidars paid up, the poorer ones would be granted suspension. I asked for a written undertaking to that effect, which was given. But as a Mamlatdar could be responsible only for his Taluk, I inquired of the Collector, who alone could give an undertaking in respect of the whole district, whether the Mamlatdar's undertaking was true for the whole district.[T1] He replied that order declaring suspension in terms of the Maml-atdar's letter had been already issued. I was not aware of it, but if it was a fact, the people's pledge had been fulfilled. The pledge, it will be remembered, had the same thing for its ojbect, and so we expressed ourselves satisfied with

the orders.

However, the end was far from making me[T2] feel happy, inasmuch as it lacked the grace with which the termination of every satyagraha campaign ought to be accompanied. The Collector carried on as though he had done nothing by way of a settlement. The poor were to be granted suspension, but hardly any got the benefit of it. It was the people's right to determine who was poor, but they could not exercise it. I was sad that they had not the strength to exercise the right. Although, therefore, the termination was celebrated as a truimph of satyagraha, I could not enthuse over it, as it lacked the essentials of a complete triumph.

The end of a satyagrapha campaign can be described as worthy, only when it leaves the satyagrahis stronger and more spirited than they are in the beginning.[T3]

The campaign was not, however, without its indirect results which we can see[T4] today and the benefit of which we are reaping. The Kheda Satyagraha marks the beginning of an awakening among the peasants of Gujarat, the beginning of their true political education.

Dr. Besant's brilliant Home Rule agitation had certainly touched the peasants, but it was the Kheda campaign that compelled the educated public workers to establish contact with the actual life of the peasants. They learnt to identify themselves with the latter. They found their proper sphere of work, their capacity for sacrifice increased. That Vallabhbhai found himself during this campaign was by itself no small achievement. We could realize its measure during the flood relief operations last year and the Bardoli Satyagraha this year. Public life in Gujarat became instinct with a new energy and a new vigour. The Patidar peasant came to an unforgettable consciousness of his strength. The lesson was indelibly imprinted on the public mind that the salvation of the people depends upon themselves, upon their capacity or suffering and sacrifice. Through the Kheda campaign satyagraha took firm root in the soil of Gujarat.

Although, therefore, I found nothing to enthuse over in the termination of the satyagraha, the Kheda peasants were jubilant, because they knew that what they had achieved was commensurate with their effort, and they had found the true and infalliable method for a redress of their grievances[T5]. This knowledge was enough justification for their jubilation.

Nevertheless the Kheda peasants had not fully understood the inner meaning of satyagraha, and they saw it to their cost, as we shall see in the chapters to follow.

CHAPTER XXVI : PASSION FOR UNITY

The Kheda campaign was launched while the deadly war in Europe was still going on. Now a crisis had arrived,T1 and the Viceroy had invited various leaders to a war conference in Delhi. I had also been urged to attend the conference. I have already referred to the cordial relations between Lord Chelmsford, the Viceroy, and myself.

In response to the invitation I went to Delhi. I had, however, objections to taking part in the conference, the principal one being the exclusion from it of leaders like the Ali BrothersT2.[1] They were then in jail. I had met them only once or twice, though I had heard much about them. Everyone had spoken highly of their services and their courage. I had not then come in close touch with Hakim Saheb, but T3Principal Rudra and Dinabandhu Andrews had told me a deal in his praise. I had met Mr. Shuaib Qureshi and Mr. Khwaja at the Muslim League in Calcutta. I had also come in contact with Drs. Ansari and Abdur Rehman. I was seeking the friendship of good Mussalmans, and was eager to understand the Mussalman mind through contact with their purest and most patriotic representatives. I therefore never needed any pressure to go with them, wherever they took me, in order to get into intimate touch with them.

I had realized early enough in South Africa that there was no genuine friendship between the Hindus and the Mussalmans. I never missed a single opportunity to remove obstacles in the way of unity. It was not in my nature to placate anyone by adulation, or at the cost of self-respect. But my South African experiences had convinced me that it would be on the questions of Hindu-Muslim unity that my ahimsa would be put to its severest test, and that the question presented the widest field for my experiments in ahimsa. The conviction is still there. Every moment of my life I realize that God is putting me on my trial.T4

Having such strong convictions on the question when I returned from South Africa, I prized the contact with the Brothers.T5 But before closer touch could be established they were isolated.T6 Maulana Mahomed Ali used to write long letters to me from Betul and Chhindwada whenever his jailers allowed him to do so. I applied for permission to visit the Brothers, but to no purpose.

It was after the imprisonment of the Ali Brothers that I was invited by Muslim friends to attend the session of the Muslim League at Calcutta. Being requested to speak, I addressed them on the duty of

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Claude Hill", April 26, 1918.

the Muslims to secure the Brothers' release. A little while after this I was taken by these friends to the Muslim College at Aligarh. There I invited the young men to be fakirs for the service of the motherland.[1]

Next I opened correspondence with the Government for the release of the Brothers. In that connection I studied the Brothers' views and activities about the Khilafat. I had discussions with Mussalman friends. I felt that, if I would become a true friend of the Muslims, I must render all possible help in securing the release of the Brothers, and a just settlement of the Khilafat question.T7 It was not for me to enter into the absolute merits of the question, provided there was nothing immoral in their demands. In matters of religion beliefs differ, and each one's is supreme for himself. If all had the same belief about all matters of religion, there would be only one religion in the world. As time progressed I found that the Muslim demand about the Khilafat was not only not against any ethical principle, but that the British Prime MinisterT8 had admitted the justice of the Muslim demand. I felt, therefore, bound to render what help I could in securing a due fulfilment of the Prime Minister's pledge. The pledge had been given in such clear terms that the examination of the Muslim demand on the meritsT9 was needed only to satisfy my own conscience.

Friends and critics haveT10 criticized my attitude regarding the Khilafat question. In spite of the criticismT11 I feel that I have no reason to revise it or to regret my co-operation with the Muslims. I should adopt the same attitude, should a similar occasion arise.

When, therefore, I went to Delhi, I had fully intended to submit the Muslim case to the Viceroy. The Khilafat question had not then assumed the shape it did subsequently.

But on my reaching Delhi another difficulty in the way of my attending the conference arose. Dinabandhu Andrews raised a question about the morality of my participation in the war conference. He told me of theT12 controversy in the British Press regarding secret treaties between England and Italy. How could I participate in the conference, if England had entered into secret treaties with another European power ?—asked Mr. Andrews. I knew nothing of the treaties. Dinabandhu Andrews's word was enough for me. I therefore addressed a letter to Lord Chelmsford explaining my hesit-ation to take part in the conference. He invited me to discuss the question with him. I had a prolonged discussion with him and his Private Secretary

[1] Gandhiji visited Aligarh before the Muslim League session in Calcutta; *vide* "Speech at Aligarh", November 28, 1917 & "Speech at Aii-India Muslim League", December 31, 1917.

Mr. Maffey. As a result I agreed to take part in the conference. This was in effect the Viceroy's argument : 'Surely you do not believe that the Viceroy knows everything done by the British Cabinet. I do not claim, no one claims, that the British Government is infallible. But if you agree that the Empire has been, on the whole, a power for good, if you believe that India has, on the whole, benefited by the British connection, would you not admit that it is the duty of every Indian citizen to help the Empire in the hour of its need ? I can assure you that I know nothing beyond what the papers say, and you know the canards that these papers frequently start. Can you, acting on a mere newspaper report, refuse help to the Empire at such a critical juncture ? You may raise whatever moral issues you like and challenge us as much as you please after the conclusion of the war, not today.'

The argument was not new. It appealed to me as new because of the manner in which, and the hour at which, it was presented, and I agreed to attend the conference. As regards the Muslim demands I was to address a letter to the Viceroy.

CHAPTER XXVII : RECRUITING CAMPAIGN

So I attended the conference. The Viceroy was very keen on my supporting the resolution about recruiting. I asked for permi- ssion to speak in Hindi-Hindustani. The Viceroy acceded to my request, but suggested that I should speak also in English. I had no speech to make. I spoke but one sentence to this effect : 'With a full sense of my responsibility I beg to support the reso- lution.'[1]

Many congratulated me on my having spoken in Hindustani. That was, they said, the first instance within living memory of anyone having spoken in Hindustani at such a meeting. The congratulations and the discovery that I was the first to speak in Hindustani at a Viceregal meeting hurt my national pride. I felt like shrinking into myself. What a tragedy that the language of the country should be taboo in meetings held in the country, for work relating to the country, and that a speech there in Hindustani by a stray individual like myself should be a matter for congratulation ? Incidents like these are reminders of the low state to which we have been reduced.

The one sentence that I uttered at the conference had for me considerable significance. It was impossible for me to forget either the conference or the resolution I supported. There was one underta-king that I had to fulfil while yet in Delhi. I had to write a letter to the Viceroy. This was no easy thing for me. I felt it my duty both in the interests of the Government and of the people to explain therein how

[1] For the speech, *vide* "Speech at War Conference", April 28, 1918.

and why I attended the conference, and to state clearly what the people expected from Government.

In the letter[1] I expressed my regret for the exclusion from the conference of leaders like Lokamanya Tilak and the Ali Brothers, and stated the people's minimum political demand as also the demands of the Muslims on account of the situation created by the War. I asked for premission to publish the letter, and the Viceroy gladly gave it.

The letter had to be sent to Simla, where the Viceroy has gone immediately after the conference. The letter had for me considerable importance, and sending it by post would have meant delay. I wanted to save time, and yet I was not inclined to send it by any messenger I came across. I wanted some pure man to carry it and hand it perosnally at the Viceregal Lodge. Dinabandhu Andrews and Principal Rudra suggeted the name of the good Rev. Ireland of the Cambridge Mission. He agreed to carry the letter if he might read it and if it appealed to him as good. I had no objection as the letter was by no means private. He read it, liked it and expressed his willingness to carry out the mission. I offered him the second-class fare, but he declined it saying he was accustomed to travelling intermediate. This he did though it was a night journey. His simplicity and his straight and plain-spoken manner captivated me. The letter thus delivered at the hands of a pure-minded man had, as I thought, the desired[T1] result. It eased my mind[T2] and cleared my way.

The other part of my obligation consisted in raising recruits. Where could I make a beginning except in Kheda ? And whom could I invite to be the first recruits except my own co-workers ? So as soon as I reached Nadiad, I had a conference with Vallabhbhai and other friends. Some of them could not easily take to the proposal. Those who liked the proposal had misgivings about its success. There was no love lost between the Government and the classes to which I wanted to make my appeal. The bitter experience they had of the Government officials was still fresh in their memory.

And yet they were in favour of starting work. As soon as I set about my task, my eyes were opened. My optimism received a rude shock.[T3] Whereas during the revenue campaign the people readily offered their carts free of charge, and two[T4] volunteers came forth when one was needed, it was difficult now to get a cart even on hire, to say nothing of volunteers. But we would not be dismayed. We decided to dispense with the use of carts and to do our journeys on foot. At this rate we had to trudge about 20 miles a day. If carts were not

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", April 29, 1918.

forthcoming, it was idle to expect people to feed us. It was hardly proper to ask for food. So it was decided that every volunteer must carry his food in his satchel. No bedding or sheet was necessary as it was summer.

We had meetings wherever we went. People did attend, but hardly one or two would offer themselves as recruits. 'You are votary of ahimsa, how can you ask us to take up arms ?' 'What good has Government done for India to deserve our co-operation ?' These and similar questions used to be put to us.

However, our steady work began to tell. Quite a number of names were registered, and we hoped that we should be able to have a regular supply as soon as the first batch was sent. I had already begun to confer with the Commissioner as to where the recruits were to be accommodated.

The Commsioners in every division were holding conferences on the Delhi model. One such was held in Gujarat. My co-workers and I were invited to it. We attended, but I felt there was even less place for me here than at Delhi. In this atmosphere of servile submission I felt ill at ease. I spoke somewhat at length. I could say T5 nothing to please the officials, and had certainly one or two hard things to say.

I used to issue leaflets asking people to enlist as recruits.[1] One of the arguments I had was distasteful to the Commissioner : 'Among the many misdeeds of the British rule in India, history will look upon the Act depriving a whole nation of arms as the blackest. If we want the Arms Act to be repealed, if we want to learn the use of arms, here is a golden opportunity. If the middle classes render voluntary help to Government in the hour of its trial, distrust will disappear, and the ban on possessing arms will be withdrawn.' The Commissioner referred to this and said that he appreciated my presence in the conference in spite of the differences between us. And I had to justify my standpoint as courteously as I could :

Here is the letter to the Viceroy referred to above :

> 'As you are aware, after careful consideration, I felt constrained to convey to Your Excellency that I could not attend the Conference for reasons stated in the letter of the 26th instant (April), but after the interview you were good enough to grant me, I persuaded myself to join it, if for no other cause, then certainly out of my great regard for yourself. One of my reasons for abstention and perhaps the strongest was that Lokamanya Tilak, Mrs. Besant and the Ali Brothers, whom I regard as among the most powerful leaders of

[1] *Vide* "Appeal for Enlistment", June 22, 1918.

public opinion, were not invited to the Conference. I still feel that it was a grave blunder not to have asked them, and I respectfully suggest that that blunder might be possibly repaired if these leaders were invited to assist the Government by giving it the benefit of their advice at the Provincial Conference, which I understand are to follow. I venture to submit that no Government can afford to disregard the leaders, who represent the large masses of the people as these do, even though they may hold views fundamentally different. At the same time it gives me pleasure to be able to say that the views of all parties were permitted to be freely expressed at the Committees of the Conference. For my part, I purposely refrained from stating my views at the Committee at which I had the honour of serving or at the Conference itself. I felt that I could best serve the objects of the Conference by simply tendering my support to the resolutions submitted to it, and this I have done without any reservation. I hope to translate the spoken word into action as early as the Government can see its way to accept my offer, which I am submitting simultaneously herewith in a separate letter.

I recognize that in the hour of its danger we must give, as we have decided to give, ungrudging and unequivocal support to the Empire of which we aspire in the near future to be partners in the same sense as the Dominions overseas. But it is the simple truth that our response is due to the expectation that our goal will be reached all the more speedily. On that account, even as performance of duty automatically confers a corresponding right, people are entitled to believe that the imminent reforms alluded to in your speech will embody the main general principles of the Congress-League Scheme, and I am sure that it is this faith which has enabled many members of the Conference to tender to the Government their full- hearted co-operation.

If I could make my countrymen retrace their steps, I would make them withdraw all the Congress resolutions, and not whisper "Home Rule" or "Responsible Government" during the pendency of the War. I would make India offer all her able-bodied sons as a sacrifice to the Empire at its critical moment, and I know that India, by this very act, would become the most favoured partner in the Empire, and racial distinctions would become a thing of the past. But practically the whole of educated India has decided to take a less effective course, and it is no longer possible to say that educated India does not exercise any influence on the masses. I have been coming into most intimate touch with the ryots ever since my return from South Africa to India, and I wish to assure you that the desire for Home Rule has widely penetrated them. I was present at the sessions of the last Congress, and I was a party to the resolution that full Responsible Government should be granted to British India within a period to be fixed definitely by a Parliamentary Statute. I admit that it is a bold step to take, but I feel sure that nothing less than a definite vision of Home Rule to be realized in the shortest possible time will satisfy

the Indian people. I know that there are many in India who consider no sacrifice as too great in order to achieve the end, and they are wakeful enough to realize that they must be equally prepared to sacrifice themselves for the Empire in which they hope and desire to reach their final status. It follows then that we can but accelerate our journey to the goal by silently and simply devoting ourselves heart and soul to the work of delivering the Empire from the threatening danger. It will be national suicide not to recognize this elementary truth. We must perceive that, if we serve to save the Empire, we have in that very act secured Home Rule.

Whilst, therefore, it is clear to me that we should give to the Empire every available man for its defence, I fear that I cannot say the same thing about financial assistance. My intimate intercouse with the ryots convinces me that India has already donated to the Imperial Ex-chequer beyond her capacity. I know that in making this statement I am voicing the opinion of the majority of my countrymen.

The Conference means for me, and I believe for many of us, a definite step in the consecration of our lives to the common cause, but ours is a peculiar position. We are today outside the partnership. Ours is consecration based on hope of better future. I should be untrue to you and to my country if I did not clearly and unequivocally tell you what that hope is. I do not bargain for its fulfilment, but you should know that disappointment of hope means disillusion.

There is one thing I may not omit. You have appealed to us to sinkdomestic differences. If the appeal involves the toleration of tyranny and wrongdoing on the part of officials, I am powerless to respond. I shall resist organized tyranny to the uttermost. The appeal must be to the officials that they do not ill-treat a single soul, and that they consult and respect popular opinion as never before. In Champaran by resisting an age-long tyranny I have shown the ultimate sovereignty of British justice. In Kheda a population that was cursing the Government now feels that it, and not the Government, is the power when it is prepared to suffer for the truth it represents. It is, therefore, losing its bitterness and is saying to itself that the Government must be a Government for people, for it tolerates orderly and respectful disobedience where injustice is felt. Thus Champaran and Kheda affairs are my direct, definite and special contributon to the War. Ask me to suspend my activities in that direction and you ask me to suspend my life. If I could popularize the use of soul-force, which is but another name for love-force, in place of brute force, I know that I could present you with an India that could defy the whole world to do its worst. In season and out of season, therefore, I shall discipline myself to express in my life this eternal law of suffering, and present it for acceptance to those who care, and if I take part in any other activity, the motive is to show the matchless superiority of that law.

Lastly, I would like you to ask His Majesty's Ministers to give defi- nite assurance about Mohammedan States. I am sure you know that every Mohamm-

edan is deeply interested in them. As a Hindu, I cannot be indifferent to their cause. Their sorrows must be our sorrows. In the most scrupulous regard for the rights of those States and for the Muslim sentiment as to their places of worship, and your just and timely treatment of India's claim to Home Rule lies the safety of the Empire. I write this, because I love the English nation, and I wish to evoke in every Indian the loyalty of Englishmen.'

CHAPTER XXVIII : NEAR DEATH'S DOOR

I very nearly ruined my constitution during the recruiting campaign. In those days my food principally consisted of groundnut butter and lemons.T1 I knew that it was possible to eat too much butter and injure one's health, and yet I allowed myself to do so. This gave me a slight attack of dysentery. I did not take serious notice of this, and went that evening to the Ashram, as was my wont every now and then. I scarcely took any medicine in those days. I thought I should get well if I skipped a meal, and indeed I felt fairly free from trouble as I omitted the morning meal next day. I knew, however, that to be entirely free I must prolong my fast and, if I ate anything at all, I should have nothing but fruit juices.

There was some festival that day, and although T2 I had told Kasturbai that I should have nothing for my midday meal, she tempeted me and I succumbed. As I was under a vow of taking no milk or milk products, shet3 had specially prepared for me a sweet wheaten porridge with oil added to it instead of ghee. She had reserved too a bowlful of *mung* for me. I was fond of these things, and I readily took them, hoping that without coming to grief I should eat just enough to please Kasturbai and to satisfy my palate. But the devil had been only waiting for an opportunity. Instead of eating very little I had my fill of the meal. This was sufficient invitation to the angel of death. Within an hour the dysentery appeared in acute form.

The same evening I had to go back to Nadiad. I walked with very great difficulty to the Sabarmati station, a distance of only T4 ten furlongs. Sjt. Vallabhbhai, who joined me at Ahmedabad, saw that I was unwell, but I did not allow him to guess how unbearable the pain was.

We reached Nadiad at about ten o'clock.T5 The Hindu Anathashram where we had our headquarters was only half a mile T6 from the station; but it was as good as ten for me. I somehow managed to reach the quarters, but the griping pain was steadily increasing.T7 Instead of using the usual latrine which was a long way off, I asked for a commode to be placed in the adjoining room. I was ashamed to have to ask for this, but there was no escape. Sjt. Fulchand immediately procured a commode. All the friends surrounded me deeply

concerned. They were all love and attention, but they could not relieve my pain. And my obstinacy added to their helplessness. I refused all medical aid. I would take no medicine, but preferred to suffer the penalty for my folly. So they looked on in helpless dismay. I must have had thirty to forty motions in twenty-four hours. I fasted, not taking even fruit juices in the beginning. The appetite had all gone. I had thought all along that I had an iron frame, but I found that my body had now become a lump of clay. It had lost a power of resistance. Dr. Kanuga came and pleaded with me to take medicine. I declined. He offered to give me an injection. I declined that too. My ignorance about injections was in those days quite ridiculous. I believed that an injection must be some kind of serum. Later I discovered that the injection that the doctor suggested was a vegetable substance, but the discovery was too late to be of use. The motions still continued, leaving me completely exhausted. The exhaustion brought on a delirious fever. The friends got more nervous, and called in more doctors. But what could they do with a patient who would not listen to them ?

Sheth Ambalal with his good wife came down to Nadiad, conferred with my co-workers and removed me with the greatest care to his Mirzapur bungalow in Ahmedabad. It was impossible for anyone to receive more loving and selfess service than I had the privilege of having during this illness. But a sort of low fever persisted, wearing away my body from day to day. I felt that the illness was bound to be prolonged and posssibly fatal. Surounded as I was with all the love and attention that could be showered on me under Sheth Ambalal's roof, I began to get restless and urged him to remove me to the Ashram. He had to yield to my importunity.

Whilst I was thus tossing on the bed of pain in the Ashram, Sjt. Vallabhbhai brought the news that Germany had been completely defeated, and that the Commissioner had sent word that recruiting was no longer necessary. The news that I had no longer to worry myself about recruiting came as a very great relief.

I had now been trying hydropathy which gave some relief, but it was a hard job to build up the body. The many medical advisers overwhelmed me with advice, but I could not persuade myself to take anything. Two or three suggested meat broth as a way out of the milk vow, and cited authorities from Ayurveda in support of their advice. One of them strongly recommended eggs. But for all of them I had but one answer—no.

For me the question of diet was not to be determined on the authority of the Shastras. It was one interwoven with my course of life

which is guided by principles no longer depending upon outside authority. I had no desire to live at the cost of them. How could I relinquish a principle in respect of myself, when I had enforced it relentlessly in respect of my wife, children and friends ?

This protracted and first long illness in my life thus afforded me a unique opportunity to examine my principles and to test them. One night I gave myself up to despair. I felt that I was at death's door. I sent word to Anasuyabehn. She ran down to the Ashram. Vallabhbhai came up with Dr. Kanuga, who felt my pulse and said : 'Your pulse is quite good. I see absolutely no danger. This is a nervous breakdown due to extreme weakness.' But I was far from being reassured. I passed the night without sleep.

The morning broke without death coming. But I could not get rid of the feeling that the end was near, and so I began to devote all my waking hours to listening to the *Gita* being read to me by the inmates of the Ashram.T8 I was incapable of reading. I was hardly inclined to talk. The slightest talk meant a strain on the brain. All interest in living had ceased, as I have never liked to live for the sake of living. It was such an agony to live on in that helpless state, doing nothing, receiving the service of friends and co-workers, and watching the body slowly wearing away.

Whilst I lay thus ever expectant of death, Dr. Talvalkar came one day with a strange creature. He hailed from Maharashtra. He was not known to fame, but the moment I saw him I found that he was a crank like myself. He had come to try his treatment on me. He had almost finished his course of studies in the Grant Medical College without taking the degree. Later I came to know that he was a member of the Brahmo Samaj. Sjt. Kelkar, for that is his name, is a man of an independent and obstinate temperament. He swears by the ice treatment, which he wanted to try on me. We gave him the name of 'Ice Doctor'.[1] He is quite confident that he has discovered certain things which have escaped qualified doctors. It is a pity both for him and me that he has not been able to infect me with his faith in his system. I believe in his system up to a certain point, but I am afraid he has been hasty in arriving at certain conclusions.

But whatever may be the merits of his discoveries, I allowed him to experiment on my body. I did not mind external treatment. The treatment consisted in the application of ice all over the body. Whilst I am unable to endorse his claim about the effect his treatment had on me, it certainly infused in me a new hope and a new energy, and the mind naturally reacted on the body. I began to have appetite, and to

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Devdas Gandhi", February 23, 1919.

have a gentle walk for five to ten minutes. He now suggested a reform in my diet. Said he : 'I assure you that you will have more energy and regain your strength quicker if you take raw eggs. Eggs are as harmless as milk. They certainly cannot come under the category of meat.

And do you know that all eggs are not fertilized ? There are sterilized[T9] eggs in the market.' I was not, however, prepared to take even the sterilized[T10] eggs. But the improvement was enough to give me interest in public activities.[T11]

CHAPTER XXIX : THE ROWLATT BILLS AND MY DILEMMA

Friends and doctors assured me that I should recuperate quicker by a change to Matheran, so I went there. But the water at Matheran being very hard, it made my stay there extremely difficult. As a result of the attack of the dysentery that I had, my anal tract had become extremely tender, and owing to fissures, I felt an excruciating pain at the time of evacuation, so that the very idea of eating filled me with dread. Before the week was over I had to flee from Matheran. Shankerlal Banker now constituted himself the guardian of my health, and pressed me to consult Dr. Dalal. Dr. Dalal was called accordingly. His capacity for taking instantaneous decisions captured me.

He said : ' I cannot rebuild your body unless you take milk. If in addition you would take iron and arsenic injections. I would guarantee fully to renovate your constitution.'

'You can give me the injections,' I replied, 'but milk is a different question; I have a vow against it.'

'What exactly is the nature of your vow ?' the doctor inquired.

I told him the whole history and the reasons behind my vow, how, since I had come to know that the cow and the buffalo were subjected to the process of *phooka*, I had conceived a strong disgust for milk. Moreover, I had always held that milk is not the natural diet of man. I had therefore abjured its use altogether. Kasturbai was standing near my bed listening all the time to this conversation.

'But surely you cannot have any objection to goat's milk then,' she interposed.

The doctor too took up the strain. 'If you will take goat's milk, it will be enough for me,' he said.

I succumbed. My intense eagerness to take up satyagraha fight had created in me a strong desire to live, and so I contented myself with adhering to the letter of my vow only, and sacrificed its spirit. For al-though I had only the milk of the cow and the she-buffalo in mind when I took the vow, by natural implication it covered the milk of all animals. Nor could it be right for me to use milk at all, so long as I

held that milk is not the natural diet of man. Yet knowing all this I agreed to take goat's milk. The will to live proved stronger than the devotion to truth, and for once the votary of truth compromised his sacred ideal by his eager- ness to take up the stayagraha fight. The memory of this action even now rankles in my breast and fills me with remorse, and I am cons- tantly thinking how to give up goat's milk. But I cannot yet free myself from that subtlest of temptations, the desire to serve, which still holds me.

My experiments in dietetics are dear to me as a part of my researches in ahimsa. They give me recreation and joy. But my use of goat's milk today troubles me not from the view-point of dietetic ahimsa so much as from that of truth, being no less than in breach of pledge. It seems to me that I understand the ideal of truth better than that of ahimsa, and my experience tells me that, if I let go my hold of truth, I shall never be able to solve the riddle of ahimsa. The ideal of truth requires that vows taken should be fulfilled in the spirit as well in the letter. In the present case I killed the spirit—the soul of my vow—by adhering to its outer form only, and that is what galls me. But in spite of this clear knowledge I cannot see my way straight before me. In other words, perhaps, I have not the courage to follow the straight course. Both at bottom mean one and the same thing, for doubt is invariably the result of want or weakness of faith. 'Lord, give me faith' is, therefore, my prayer day and night.

Soon after I began taking goat's milk. Dr. Dalal performed on me a successful operation for fissures. As I recuperated, my desire to live revived, especially God had kept work in store for me.T1

I had hardly begun to feel my way towards rcovery, when I happened casually to read in the papers the Rowlatt Committee's report[1] which had just been published. Its recommendations startled me. Shankarlal Banker and Umar Sobani approached me with the suggestion that I should take some promptT2 action in the matter. In about a month I went to Ahmedabad. I mentioned my apprehensions to Vallabhabhai, who used to come to see me almost daily. 'Something must be done,' said I to him. 'But what can we do in the circum-stances ?' he asked in reply. I answered, 'If even a handful of men can be found to sign the pledge of resistance, and the proposed measure is passed into law in defiance of it,T3 we ought to offer satyagraha at once. If I was not laid up like this, I should give battle against it all alone, and expect others to follow suit. But in my present helpless condition I feel myself to be altogether unequal to the task.'

As a result of this talk, it was decided to call a small meeting of

[1] For a summary, *vide* "Summary of Rowlatt Bills", before February 26, 1919.

such persons as were in touch with me. The recommendation of the Rowlatt Committee seemed to me to be altogether unwarranted by the evidence published in its report, and were, I felt, such that no self-respecting people could submit to them.

The proposed conference was at last held at the Ashram. Hardly a score of persons had been invited to it. So far as I remember, among those who attended were, besides Vallabhabhai, Shrimati Sarojini Naidu, Mr. Horniman, the late Mr. Umar Sobani, Sjt. Shankarlal Banker and Shrimati Anasuyabehn. The stayagraha pledge[1] was drafted at this meeting, and as far as I recollect, was signed by all present. I was not editing any journal at that time, but I used occasi-onally to ventilate my views through the daily Press. I followed the practice on this occasion. Shankarlal Banker took up the agitation in right earnest, and for the first time I got an idea of his wonderful capacity for organization and sustained work.

As all hope of any of the existing institutions adopting a novel weapon like satyagraha seemed to me to be in vain, a separate body called the Satyagraha Sabha[2] was established at my instance. Its principal members were drawn from Bombay where, therefore, its headquarters were fixed. The intending covenanters began to sign the satyagraha pledge in large numbers, bulletins were issued, and popular meetings began to be held everywhere recalling all the familiar features of the Kheda campaign.

I became the president of the Satyagraha Sabha. I soon found that there was not likely to be much chance of agreement between myself and the intelligentsia composing this Sabha. My insistence on the use of Gujarati in the Sabha, as also some of my other methods of work that would appear to be peculiar, caused them no small worry and embarrassment. I must say to their credit, however, that most of them generously put up with my idiosyncrasies.

But from the very beginning it seemed clear to me that the Sabha was not likely to live long. I could see that already my emphasis on truth and ahimsa had begun to be disliked by some of its members. Nevertheless in its early stages our new activity went on at full blast, and the movement gathered head rapidly.

CHAPTER XXX : THAT WONDERFUL SPECTACLE !

Thus, while on the one hand the agitation against the Rowlatt Committee's report gathered volume and intensity, on the other the Government grew more and more determined to give effect to its

[1] *Vide* "The Satyagraha Pledge", February 24, 1919.
[2] *Vide* "Satyagraha Sabha Rules", March 12, 1919.

recommendations, and the Rowlatt Bill was published. I have attended the proceedings of India's legislative chamber only once in my life, and that was on the occasion of the debate on this Bill. Shastriji delivered an impassioned speech, in which he uttered a solemn note of warning to the Government. The Viceroy seemed to be listening spell-bound, his eyes rivetted on Shastriji as the latter poured forth the hot stream of his eloquence. For the moment it seemed to me as if the Victory could not but be deeply moved by it, it was so true and so full of feeling.

But you can wake a man only if he is really asleep; no effort that you may make will produce any effect upon him if he is merely pretending sleep. That was precisely the Government's position. It was anxious only to go through the farce of legal formality. Its decision had already been made. Shastriji's solemn warning was, therefore, entirely lost upon the Government.

In these circumstances mine could only be a cry in the wilderness. I earnestly pleaded with the Viceroy, I addressed him private letters as also public letters, in the course of which I clearly told him that the Government's action left me no other course except to resort to satyagraha. But it was all in vain.[1]

The Bill had not yet been gazetted as an Act. I was in a very weak condition, but when I received an invitation from Madras I decided to take the risk of the long journey. I could not at that time sufficiently raise my voice at meetings. The incapacity to address meetings standing still abides. My entire frame would shake, and heavy throbbing would start on an attempt to speak standing for any length of time.[2]

I have ever felt at home in the South. Thanks to my South African work I feltT1 I had some sort of special right over the Tamils and Telugus, and the good people of the South have never belied my belief. The invit-ation had come over the signature of the late Sjt. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar. But the man behind the invitation, as I subsequently learnt on my way to Madras, was Rajagopalachari. This might be said to be my first acquaintance with him; at any rate this was the first time that we came to know each other personally.

Rajagopalachari had then only recently left Salem to settle down for legal practice in Madras at the pressing invitation of friends like the late Sjt. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, and that with a view to taking a

[1] *Vide* "Letter to J. L. Maffey", March 11, April 14, 15, May 5, 11 & 16, 1919.

[2] Gandhiji's speeches in Madras were read out by Mahadev Desai; *vide* Speech on Satyagraha, Madras", March 18 & 20, 1919.

more active part in public life. It was with him that we had put up in Madras. This discovery I made only after we had stayed with him for a couple of days. For since the bungalow that we were staying in belonged to Sjt. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, I was under the impression that we were his guests. Mahadev Desai, however, corrected me. He very soon formed a close acquaintance with Rajagopalachari, who, from his innate shyness, kept himself constantly in the background. But Mahadev put me on my guard. 'You should cultivate this man,' he said to me one day.

And so I did. We daily discussed together plans of the fight, but beyond the holding of public meetings I could not then think of any other programme. I felt myself at a loss to discover how to offer civil disobedience against the Rowlatt Bill if it was finally passed into law. One could disobey it only if the Government gave one the opportunity fot it. Failing that, could we civilly disobey other laws ? And if so, where was the line to be drawn ? These and a host of similar questions formed theme of these discussions of ours.

Sjt. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar called together a small conference of leaders to thrash out the matter. Among those who took a conspicuous part in it was Sjt. Vijayaraghavachari. He suggested that I should draw up a comprehensive manual of the science of satyagraha, embodying even minute details. I felt the task to be beyond my capacity, and I confessed as much to him.

While these cogitations were still going on, news was received that the Rowlatt Bill had been published as an Act. That night I fell asleep while thinking over the question. Towards the small hours of the morning I woke up somewhat earlier than usual. I was still in that twilight condition between sleep and consciousness when suddenly the idea broke upon me—it was as if in a dream. Early in the morning I related the whole story to Rajagopalachari.

'The idea came to me last night in a dream that we should call upon the country to observe a general hartal[T2]. Satyagraha is a process of self-purification, and ours is a sacred fight, and it seems to me to be in the fitness of things that it should be commenced with an act of self-purification. Let all the people of India, there- fore, suspend their business on that day and observe the day as one of fasting and prayer. The Mussalmans may not fast for more than one day; so the duration of the fast should be 24 hours. It is very difficult to say whether all the provinces would respond to this appeal of ours or not, but I feel fairly sure of Bombay, Madras, Bihar and Sind. I think we should have every reason to feel satisfied even if all these places observe the hartal fittingly.'

Rajagopalachari was at once taken up with my suggestion. Other friends too welcomed it when it was communicated to them later. I drafted a brief appeal.[1] The date of the hartal was first fixed on the 30th March 1919, but was subsequently changed to 6th April. The people thus had only a short notice of the hartal. As the work had to be started at once, it was hardly possible to give longer notice.

But who knows how it all came about ? The whole of India from one end to the other, towns as well as villages, observed a complete hartal on that day. It was a most wonderful spectacle.

CHAPTER XXXI : THAT MEMORABLE WEEK !—I

After a short tour in South India I reached Bombay, I think on the 4th April, having received a wire from Sjt. Shankarlal Banker asking me to be present for the 6th of April celebrations.

But in the meanwhile Delhi had already observed the hartal on the 30th March. The word of the late Swami Shraddhanandji and Hakim Ajmal Khan Saheb was law there. The wire about the postponement of the hartal till the 6th of April had reached there too late. Delhi had never witnessed a hartal like that before. Hindus and Mussalmans seemed united like one man. Swami Shraddhanandji was invited to deliver a speech in the Jumma Masjid which he did. All this was more than the authorities could bear. The police checked the hartal procession as it was proceeding towards the railway station and opened fire, causing a number of casualties, and the reign of repression commenced in Delhi. Shraddhanandji urgently summoned me to Delhi. I wired back, saying I would start for Delhi immediately after the 6th of April celebrations were over in Bombay.[2]

The story of happenings in Delhi was repeated with variations in Lahore and Amritsar. From Amritsar Drs. Satyapal and Kitchlew had sent me a pressing invitation to go there. I was altogether unacquainted with them at that time, but I communicated to them my intention to visit Amritsar after Delhi.

On the morning of the 6th citizens of Bombay flocked in their thous-ands to the Chaupati for a bath in the sea, after which they moved on in a procession to Thakurdvar[3]. The procession included a fair sprinkling of women and children, while the Mussalmans joined it in large numbers. From Madhav Baug some of us who were in the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Press on Satyagraha Movement", March 23, 1919.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Swami Shraddhanand", April 3, 5 & 6, 1919.

[3] According to a footnote in the source, this should be Madhav Baug. *Vide* also "Speech on Hindu-Mulim Friendship, Bombay", April 6, 1919, where "Madhav Baug" is specifically mentioned.

procession were taken by the Mussalman friends to a mosque near by, where Mrs. Naidu and myself were persuaded to deliver speeches. Sjt. Vithaldas Jerajani proposed that we should then and there administer the Swadeshi and Hindu-Muslim unity pledges to the people, but I resisted the proposal on the ground that pledges should not be administered or taken in precipitate hurry, and that we should be satisfied with what was already being done by the people. A pledge once taken, I argued, must not be broken afterwards; therefore it was necessary that the implications of the Swadeshi pledge should be clearly understood, and the grave responsibility entailed by the pledge regarding Hindu-Muslim unity fully realized by all concerned. In the end I suggested that those who wanted to take the pledges should again assemble[T1] on the following morning for the purpose.

Needless to say[T2] the hartal in Bombay was a complete success. Full preparation had been made for starting civil disobedience. Two or three things had been discussed in this connection. It was decided that civil disobedience might be offered in respect of such laws only as[T3] easily lent themselves to being disobeyed by the masses. The salt tax was extremely unpopular and a powerful movement had been for some time past going on to secure its repeal. I therefore suggested that the people might prepare salt from sea-water in their own houses in disregard of the salt laws. My other suggestion was about the sale of proscribed literature. Two of my books, viz, *Hind Swaraj* and *Sarvodaya* (Gujarati adaptation of Ruskin's *Unto This Last*), which had been already proscribed, came handy for this purpose.[T4] To print and sell them openly seemed to be the easiest way of offering civil disobedience. A sufficient number of copies of the books was therefore printed, and it was arranged to sell them at the end of the monster meeting that was to be held that evening after the breaking of the fast.

On the evening of the 6th an army of volunteers issued forth accordingly with this prohibited literature to sell it among the people. Both Shrimati Sarojini Devi and I went out in cars. All the copies where soon sold out. The proceeds of the sale were to be utilized for furthering the civil disobedience campaign. Both these books were priced at four annas per copy, but I hardly remember anybody having purchased them from me[T5] at their face value merely. Quite a large number of people simply poured out all the cash that was in their pockets to purchase their copy. Five and ten rupee notes just flew out to cover the price of a single copy, while in one case I remember having sold a copy for fifty rupees ! It was duly explained to the people that they were liable to be arrested and imprisoned for purchasing the proscribed literature. But for the moment they had

shed all fear of jail-going.

It was subsequently learnt[T6] that the Government had conveniently taken the view that the books that had been proscribed by it had not in fact been sold, and that what we had sold was not held as coming under the definition of proscribed literature. The reprint was held by the Government to be a new edition of the books that had been proscribed, and to sell them did not constitute an offence under the law. This news caused general disappointment.

The next morning another meeting was held for the administration of the pledges with regard to swadeshi and Hindu-Muslim unity. Vithaldas Jerajani for the first time realized that all is not gold that glitters. Only a handful of persons came. I distinctly remember some of the sisters who were present on that occasion. The men who attended were also very few. I had already drafted the pledge and brought it with me. I thoroughly explained its meaning to those present before I administered it to them. The paucity of the attendance neither pained nor surprised me, for I have noticed this characteristic difference in the popular attitude—partiality for exciting work, dislike for quiet constructive effort. The difference has persisted to this day.

But I shall have to devote to this subject a chapter by itself. To return to the story. On the night of the 7th I started for Delhi and Amr-itsar. On reaching Mathura on the 8th I first heard rumours about my probable arrest. At the next stoppage after Mathura, Acharya Gidwani came to meet me, and gave me difinite news that I was to be arrested, and offered his services to me if I should need them. I thanked him for the offer, assuring him that I would not fail to avail myself of it, if and when I felt it necessary.

Before the train had reached Palwal railway station, I was served with a written order[1] to the effect that I was prohibited from entering the boundary of the Punjab, as my presence there was likely to result in a distrubance of the peace. I was asked by the police to get down from the train. I refused to do so saying, 'I want to go to Punjab in response to a pressing invitation, not to foment unrest, but to allay it, I am therefore sorry that it is not possible for me to comply with this order.'

At last the train reached Palwal. Mahadev was with me. I asked him to proceed to Delhi to convey to Swami Shraddhanandji the news about what had happened and to ask the people to remain calm. He was to explain why[T7] I had decided to disobey the order served upon

[1] *Vide* "Message to Countrymen", April 9, 1919.

me and suffer the penalty for disobeying it, and also why[T8] it would spell victory for our side if we could maintain perfect peace in spite of any punishment that might be inflicted upon me.

At Palwal railway station I was taken out of the train and put under police custody. A train from Delhi came in a short time. I was made to enter a third-class carriage, the police party accompanying. On reaching Mathura, I was taken to the police barracks, but no police official could tell me as to what they proposed to do with me or where I was to be taken next. Early at 4 o'clock the next morning I was waked up and put in a goods train that was going towards Bomaby. At noon I was again made to get down at Sawai Madhopur. Mr. Bowring, Inspector of Police, who arrived by the mail train from Lahore, now took charge of me. I was put in a first-class compartment with him. And from an ordinary prisoner I became a 'gentleman' prisoner. The officer commenced a long panegyric of Sir Michael O'Dwyer. Sir Michael had nothing against me personally, he went on, only he apprehended a distrubance of the peace if I entered the Punjab and so on. In the end he requested me to return to Bombay of my own accord and agree not to cross the frontier of the Punjab. I replied that I could not possibly complay with the order, and that I was not prepared of my own accord to go back. Whereupon the officer, seeing no other course, told me that he would have to enforce the law against me. 'But what do you want to do with me ?' I asked him. He replied that he himself did not know, but was awaiting further orders. 'For the present,' he said, 'I am taking you to Bombay.'[1]

We reached Surat. Here I was made over to the charge of another police officer. 'You are now free,' the officer told me when we had reached Bombay. 'It would however be better,' he added, 'If you get down near the Marine Lines where I shall get the train stopped for you. At Colaba there is likely to be a big crowd.' I told him that I would be glad to follow his wish. He was pleased and thanked me for it. Accordingly I alighted at the Marine Lines. The carriage of a friend just happened to be passing by. It took me and left me at Revashankar Jhaveri's place. The friend told me that the news of my arrest had incensed the people and roused them to a pitch of mad frenzy. 'An outbreak is apprehended every minute near Pydhuni, the Magistrate and the police have already arrived there,' he added.

Scarcely had I reached my destination, when Umar Sobani and Anasuyabehn arrived and asked me to motor to Pydhuni at once. 'The people have become impatient, and are very much excited,' they asid, we cannot pacify them. Your presence alone can do it.'

[1] For details of the arrest, *vide* "Letter to Sir Stanley Reed", April 15, 1919.

I got into the car. Near Pydhuni I saw that a huge crowd had gathered. On seeing me the people went mad with joy. A procession was immediately formed, and the sky was rent with the shouts of *Vande mataram* and *Allaho Akbar*. At Pydhuni we sighted a body of mounted police. Brickbats were raining down from above. I besought the crowd to be calm, but it seemed as if we should not be able to escape the shower of brickbats. As the procession issued out of Abdur Rahman Street and was about to proceed towards the Crawford Market, it suddenly found itself confronted by a body of the mounted police, who had arrived there to prevent it from proceeding further in the direction of the Fort. The crowd was densely packed. It had almost broken through the police cordon. There was hardly any chance of my voice being heard in that vast concourse. Just then the officer in charge of the mounted police gave the order to disperse the crowd, and at once the mounted party charged upon the crowd brandishing their lances as they went. For a moment I felt that I would be hurt.[T9] But my apprehension was groundless, the lances just grazed the car as the lancers swiftly passed by. The ranks of the people were soon broken, and they were thrown into utter confusion, which was soon converted into a rout. Some got trampled under foot, others were badly mauled and crushed. In that seething mass of humanity there was hardly any room for the horses to pass, nor was there an exit by which the people could disperse. So the lancers blindly cut their way through the crowd. I hardly imagine they could see what they were doing. The whole thing presented a most dreadful spectacle. The horsemen and the people were mixed together in mad confusion.

Thus the crowd was dispersed and its progress checked. Our motor was allowed to proceed. I had it stopped before the Commissioner's office, and got down to complain to him about the conduct of the police.

CHAPTER XXXII : THAT MEMORABLE WEEK !—II

So I went to the Commissioner Mr. Griffith's office. All about the staircase leading to the office I saw soldiers armed from top to toe, as though for military action. The verandah was all astir. When I was admitted to the office, I saw Mr. Bowring sitting with Mr. Griffith.

I described to the Commissioner the scenes I had witnessed. He replied briefly : 'I did not want the procession to proceed to the Fort, as a disturbance was inevitable there. And as I saw that the people would not listen to persuation, I could not help ordering the mounted police to charge through the crowd.'

'But,' said I, 'You knew what the consequences must be. The

horses were bound to trample on the people. I think it was quite unnecessary to send that contingent of mounted men.'

'You cannot judge that,' said Mr. Griffith. 'We police officers know better than you the effect of your teaching on the people. If we did not start with drastic measures, the situation would pass out of our hands. I tell you that the people are sure to go out of your control. Disobedience of law will quickly appeal to them; it is beyond them to understand the duty of keeping peaceful. I have no doubt about your intentions, but the people will not understand them. They will follow their natural instinct.'

'It is there that I join issue with you,' I replied. 'The people are not by nature violent but peaceful.'

And thus we argued at length. Ultimately Mr. Griffith said, 'But suppose you were convinced that your teaching had been lost on the people, what would you do?'

'I should suspend civil disobedience if I were so convinced.'

'What do you mean ? You told Mr. Bowring that you would proceed to the Punjab the moment you were released.'

'Yes, I wanted to do so by the next available train. But it is out of the question today.'

'If you will be patient, the conviction is sure to grow on you. Do you know what is happening in Ahmedabad? And what has happened in Amritsar? People have everywhere gone nearly mad. I am not yet in possession of all the facts. The telegraph wires have been cut in some places. I put it to you that the responsibility for all these disturbances lies on you.'

'I assure you I should readily take it upon myself wherever I discovered it. But I should be deeply pained and surprised, if I found that there were disturbances in Ahmedabad. I cannot answer for Amritsar. I have never been there, no one knows me there. But even about the Punjab I am certain of this much that, had not the Punjab Government prevented my entry into the Punjab, I should have been considerably helpful in keeping the peace there. By preventing me they gave the people unnecessary provocation.'

And so we argued on and on. It was impossible for us to agree. I told him that I intended to address a meeting on Chaupati and to ask the people to keep the peace, and took leave of him. The meeting was held on the Chaupati sands. I spoke at length on the duty of non-violence and on the limitations of satyagraha, and said : 'Satyagraha is essentially a weapon of the truthful. A satyagrahi is pledged to non-violence, and, unless people observe it in thought, word and deed,[T1] I

cannot offer mass satyagraha.'[1]

Anasuyabehn, too, had received news of disturbances in Ahmedabad. Someone had spread a rumour that she also had been arrested. The mill-hands had gone mad over her rumoured arrest, struck work and committed acts of violence, and a sergeant had been done to death.

I proceeded to Ahmedabad. I learnt that an attempt had been made to pull up the rails near the Nadiad railway station, that a Government officer had been murdered in Viramgam, and that Ahmedabad was under martial law. The people were terrorstricken. They had indulged in acts of violence and were being made to pay for them with interest.

A police officer was waiting at the station to escort me to Mr. Pratt, the Commissioner. I found him in a state of rage. I spoke to him gently, and expressed my regret for the disturbances[T2]—I suggested that martial law was unnecessary, and declared my readiness to co-operate in all efforts to restore peace. I asked for permission to hold a public meeting on the grounds of the Sabarmati Ashram. The proposal appealed to him, and the meeting was held, I think, on Sunday, the 13th of April, and martial law was withdrawn the same day or the day after. Addressing the meeting, I tried to bring home to the people the sense of their wrong, declared a penitential fast of three days for myself, appealed to the people to go on a similar fast for a day, and suggested to those who had been guilty of acts of violence to confess their guilt.[2]

I saw my duty as clear as daylight. It was unbearable for me to find that the labourers, amongst whom I had spent a good deal of my time, whom I had served, and from whom I had expected better things, had taken part in the riots, and I felt I was a sharer in their guilt.

Just as I suggested to the people to confess their guilt, I suggested to the Government to condone the crimes. Neither accepted my suggestion.

The late Sir Ramanbhai and other citizens of Ahmedabad came to me with an appeal to suspend satyagraha. The appeal was needless, for I had already made up my mind to suspend satyagraha so long as people had not learnt the lesson of peace. The friends went away happy.

There were, however, others who were unhappy over the

[1] *Vide* "Satyagraha Leaflet : No. 3", April 11, 1919.

[2] The meeting was held on Monday, April 14, 1919; *vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting, Ahmedabad".

decision. They felt that, if I expected peace everywhere and regarded it as a condition precedent to launching satyagraha, mass satyagraha would be an impossibilty. I was sorry to disagree[T3] with them. If those amongst whom I worked, and whom I expected to be prepared for non-violence and self-suffering,[T4] could not be non-violent, satyagraha was certainly impossible. I was firmly of opinion that those who wanted to lead the people to satyagraha ought to be able to keep the people within the limited non-violence expected of them. I hold the same opinion even today.

CHAPTER XXXIII : 'A HIMALAYAN MISCALCULATION'

Almost immeditely after the Ahmedabad meeting I went to Nadiad. It was here that I first used the expression 'Himalayan miscalculation' which obtained such a wide currency afterwards. Even at Ahmeda-bad I had begun to have a dim perception of my mistake. But when I reached Nadiad and saw the actual state of things there and heard reports about a large number of people from Kheda district having been arrested, it suddenly dawned upon me that I had committed a grave error in calling upon the people in the Kheda district and elsewhere to launch upon civil disobedience prematurely, as it now seemed to me.[T1] I was addressing a public meeting.[T2] My confession brought down upon me no small amount of ridicule. But I have never regretted having made that confession. For I have always held that it is only when one sees one's own mistakes with a convex lens, and does just the reverse in the case of others, that one is able to arrive at a just relative estimate of the two. I further believe that a scrupulous and conscientious observance of this rule is necessary for one who wants to be a satyagrahi.

Let us now see what that Himalayan miscalculation was. Before one can be fit for the practice of civil disobedience one must have rendered a willing and respectful obedience to the State laws. For the most part we obey such laws out of fear of the penalty for their breach, and this holds good particularly in respect of such laws as do not involve a moral principle. For instance, an honest, respectable man will not suddenly take to stealing, whether there is a law against stealing or not, but this very man will not feel any remorse for failure to observe the rule about carrying head-lights on bicycles after dark. Indeed it is doubtful whether he would even accept advice kindly about being more careful in this respect. But he would observe any obligatory rule of this kind, if only to escape the inconvenience of facing a prosecution for a breach of the rule. Such compliance is not, however, the willing and spontaneous obedience that is required of a satyagrahi. A satyagrahi obeys the laws of society intelligently and of

his own free will, because he considers it to be his sacred duty to do so. It is only when a person has thus obeyed the laws of society scrupulously that he is in a position to judge as to which particular rules are good and just and which unjust and iniquitous. Only then does the right accrue to him of the civil disobedience of certain laws in well-defined circumstances. My error lay in my faliure to observe this necessary limitation.T3 I had called on the people to launch upon civil disobedience before they had thus qualified themselves for it, and this mistake seemed to me of Himalayan magnitude. As soon as I entered the Kheda district, all the old recollections of the Kheda Satyagraha struggle came back to me, and I wondered how I could have failed to perceive what was so obvious. I realized that before a people could be fit for offering civil disobedience, they should thoroughly understand its deeper implications.T4 That being so, before restartingT5 civil disobedience on a mass scale, it would be necessary to create a band of well-tried,T6 pure-hearted volunteers who thoroughly understood the strict conditions of satyagraha. They could explain these to the people, and by sleepless vigilance keep them on the right path.

With these thoughts filling my mind I reached Bombay, raised a corps of satyagrahi volunteers through the Satyagraha Sabha there, and with their help commenced the work of educating the people with regard to the meaning and inner significance of satyagraha. This was princi-pally done by issuing leaflets of an educative character bearing on the subject.[1]

But whilst this work was going on, I could see that it was a difficult task to interest the people in the peaceful side of satyagraha. The volunteers too failed to enlist themselves in large numbers. Nor did all those who actually enlisted take anything like a regular systematic training, and as the days passed by, the number of fresh recruits began gradually to dwindle instead of to grow.T7 I realized that the progress of the training in civil disobedience was not going to be as rapid as I had at first expected.

CHAPTER XXXIV : 'NAVAJIVAN' AND 'YOUNG INDIA'

Thus, whilst this movement for the preservation of non-violence was making steady though slow progress on the one hand, Government's policy of lawless repression was in full career on the other, and was manifesting itself in the Punjab in all its nakedness. Leaders were put under arrest, martial law, which in other words meant

[1] Two leaflets were issued under the title "Satyagrahi" and twenty-one under "Satyagraha Leaflet"

no law, was proclaimed, special tribunals were set up. These tribunals were not courts of justice but instruments for carrying out the arbitrary will of an autocrat. Sentences were passed unwarranted by evidence and in flagrant violation of justice. In Amritsar innocent men and women were made to crawl like worms on their bellies. Before this outrage the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy paled into insignificance in my eyes, though it was this massacre principally that attracted the attention of the people of India and of the world.

I was pressed to proceed to the Punjab immediately in disregard of consequences. I wrote and also telegraphed to the Viceroy asking for permission to go there, but in vain. If I proceeded without the necessary permission, I should not be allowed to cross the boundary of the Punjab, but left to find what satisfaction I could from civil disobedience. I was thus confronted by a serious dilemma. As things stood, to break the order against my entry into the Punjab could, it seemed to me, hardly be classed as civil disobedience, for I did not see around me the kind of peaceful atmosphere that I wanted, and the unbr-idled repression in the Punjab had further served to aggravate and deepen the feelings of resentment. For, me, therefore, to offer civil disobedience at such a time, even if it were possible, would have been like fanning the flame. I therefore decided not to proceed to the Punjab in spite of the suggestion of friends. It was bitter pill for me to swallow. Tales of rank injustice and oppression came pouring in daily from the Punjab, but all I could do was to sit helplessly by and gnash my teeth.

Just then Mr. Horniman, in whose hands *The Bombay Chronicle* had become a formidable force, was suddenly spirited away by the authorities. This act of the Government seemed to me to be surrounded by a foulness which still stinks in my nostrils.[1] I know that Mr. Horniman never desired lawlessness. He had not liked my breaking the prohibitory order of the Punjab Government without the permission of the Satyagraha Committee, and had fully endorsed the decision to suspend civil disobedience. I had even received from him a letter advising suspension before I had announced my decision to that effect. Only owing to the distance between Bombay and Ahmedabad I got the letter after the announcement. His sudden deportation therefore caused me as much pain as surprise.

As a result of these developments I was asked by the directors of *The Bombay Chronicle* to take up the responsibility of conducting that paper. Mr. Brelvi was already there on the staff, so not much

[1] For Gandhiji's immediate reaction to Horniman's deportation, *vide* "Sayagraha Leaflet : No. 10", April 30, 1919.

remained to be done by me, but as usual with my nature, the responsibility would have become[T1] an additional tax.

But the Government came as it were to my rescue, for by its order the publication of *The Chronicle* had to be suspended.

The friends who were directing the management of *The Chronicle*, viz., Messrs Umar Sobani and Shankarlal Banker, were at this time also controlling *Young India*. They suggested that, in view of the suppression of *The Chronicle*, I should now take up the editor- ship of *Young India*, and that, in order to fill the gap left by the former, *Young India* should be converted from a weekly into a bi- weekly organ.[1] This was what I felt also. I was anxious to expound the inner meaning of satygraha to the public, and also hoped that through this effort I should at least be able to do justice to the Punjab situation. For, behind all I wrote, there was potential satyagraha,[T2] and the Government knew as much. I therefore readily accepted the suggestion made by these friends.

But how could the general public be trained in satyagraha through the medium of English ? My principal field of work lay in Gujarat. Sjt. Indulal Yajnik was at that time associated with the group of Messrs Sobani and Banker. He was conducting the Gujarati monthly *Navajivan* which had the financial backing of these friends. They placed the monthly at my disposal, and further Sjt. Indulal offered to work on it. This monthly was converted into a weekly.[2]

In the meantime *The Chronicle* was resuscitated. *Young India* was therefore restored to its original weekly form. To have published the two weeklies from two different places would have been very inconvenient to me and involved more expenditure. As *Navajivan* was already being published from Ahmedabad *Young India* was also removed there at my suggestion.

There were other reasons besides for this change.[T3] I had already learnt from my experience of *Indian Opinion* that such journals needed a press of their own. Moreover the press laws in force in India at that time were such that, if I wanted to express my views untrammelled, the existing printing presses, which were naturally run for business, would have hesitated to publish them. The need for setting up a press of our own, therefore, became all the more imperative, and since this could be conveniently done only at Ahmedabad, *Young India* too had to be taken there.

[1] Gandhiji announced his taking over supervision of *Young India* in his article on "Babu Kalinath Roy", dated June 11, 1919.

[2] The take-over of *Navajivan* was announced in July 1919; *vide* " 'Navjivan' Weekly".

Through these journals I now commenced to the best of my ability the work of educating the reading public in satyagraha. Both of them[T4] had reached a very wide circulation, which at one time rose to the neighbourhood of forty thousand each. But while the circulation of *Navajivan* went up at a bound, that of *Young India* increased only by slow degrees. After my incarceration the circulation of both these journals fell to a low ebb, and today stands below eight thousand.

From the very start I set my face against taking advertisements in these journals. I do not think that they have lost anything thereby. On the contrary, it is my belief that it has in no small measure helped them to maintain their independence.

Incidentally these journals helped me also to some extent to remain at peace with myself for, whilst immediate resort to civil disobedience was out of the question, they enabled me freely to ventilate my views and to put heart into the people.[T5] Thus I feel that both the journals rendered good service to the people in this hour of trial, and did their humble bit towards lightening the tyranny of the martial law.

CHAPTER XXXV : IN THE PUNJAB

Sir Michael O'Dwyer held me responsible for all that had happened in the Punjab, and some irate young Punjabis held me responsible[T1] for the martial law. They asserted that, if only I had not suspended civil disobedience, there would have been no Jallianwala Bagh massacre[T2]. Some of them even went the length of threatening me with assassination if I went to the Punjab.

But I felt that my position was so correct and above question that no intelligent person could misunderstand it.

I was impatient to go to the Punjab. I had never been there before, and that made me all the more anxious to see things for myself. Dr. Satyapal, Dr. Kitchlew and Pandit Rambhaj Dutt Chowdhari, who had invited me to the Punjab,[T3] were at this time in jail. But I felt sure that the Government could not dare to keep them and the other prisoners[T4] in prison for long. A large number of Punjabis used to come and see me whenever I was in Bombay. I ministered to them a word of cheer on these occasions, and that would comfort them. My self-confidence of that time was infectious.[T5]

But my going to the Punjab had to be postponed again and again. The Viceroy would say, 'not yet', every time I asked for permission to go there, and so the thing dragged on.

In the meantime the Hunter Committee was announced to hold

an inquiry in connection with the Punjab Government's doings under the martial law. Mr. C. F. Andrews had now reached the Punjab. His letters gave a heart-rending description of the state of things there, and I formed the impression that the martial law atrocities were in fact even worse than the Press reports had showed. He pressed me urgently to come and join him. At the same time Malaviyaji sent telegrams asking me to proceed to the Punjab at once. I once more telegraphed to the Viceroy asking whether I could now go the Punjab. He wired back in reply that I could go there after a certain date. I cannot exactly recollect now, but I think it was 17th[1] of October.

The scene that I witnessed on my arrival at Lahore can never be effaced from my memory. The railway station was from end to end one seething mass of humanity. The entire populace had turned out of doors in eager expectation, as if to meet a dear relation after a long separation, and was delirious with joy. I was put up at the late Pandit Rambhaj Dutt's bungalow, and the burden of entertaining me fell on the shoulders of Shrimati Sarala Devi[T6]. A burden it truly was, for even then, as now, the place where I was accommodated became a veritable caravanserai.

Owing to the principal Punjab leaders being in jail, their place, I found, had been properly[T7] taken up by Pandit Malaviyaji, Pandit Motilalji and the late Swami Shraddhanandji. Malaviyaji and Shraddhanandji I had known intimately before, but this was the first occasion on which I came in close personal contact with Motilalji. All these leaders, as also such local leaders as had escaped the privilege of going to jail, at once made me feel perfectly at home amongst them, so that I never felt like a stranger in their midst.

How we unanimously decided not to lead evidence before the Hunter Committee is now a matter of history.[T8] The reasons for that decision were published at that time, and need not be recapitulated here. Suffice it to say that, looking back upon these events from this distance of time, I still feel that our decision to boycott the Committee was absolutely correct and proper.[2]

As a logical consequence of the boycott of the Hunter Committtee, it was decided to appoint a non-official Inquiry Committee, to hold almost a parallel inquiry on behalf of the Congress. Pandit Motilal Nehru, the late Deshbandhu C. R. Das, Sjt. Abbas Tyabji, Sjt. M. R. Jayakar and myself were appointed to this Committee, virtually by Pandit Malaviyaji. We distributed ourselves over various places for

[1] It was 15th; *vide* "Telegrm to P. S. to Viceroy", October 2, 1919.

[2] For the Congress Committee's statement, *vide* "Statement on the Punjab by Congress Enquiry Committee", November 17, 1919.

purposes of inquiry. The responsibility for organizing the work of the Committee devolved on me, and as the privilege of conducting the inquiry in the largest number of places fell to my lot, I got a rare opportunity of observing at close quarters the people of the Punjab and the Punjab villages.

In the course of my inquiry I made acquaintance with the women of the Punjab also. It was as if we had known one another for ages. Wherever I went they came flocking, and laid before me their heaps of yarn. My work in connection with the inquiry brought home to me the fact that the Punjab could become a great field for khadi work.

As I proceeded further and further with my inquiry into the atrocities that had been committed on the people, I came across tales of Government's tyranny and the arbitrary despotism of its officers such as I was hardly prepared for, and they filled me with deep pain. What surprised me then, and what still continues to fill me with surprise, was the fact that a province that had furnished the largest number of soldiers to the British Government during the War, should have taken all these brutal excesses lying down.

The task of drafting the report[1] of this Committee was also entrusted to me. I would recommend a perusal of this report to anyone who wants to have an idea of the kind of atrocities that were perpetrated on the Punjab people. All that I wish to say here about it is that there is not a single conscious exaggeration in it anywhere, and every statement made in it is substantiated by evidence. Moreover, the evidence published was only a fraction of what was in the Committee's possession. Not a single statement, regarding the validity of which there was the slightest room for doubt, was permitted to appear in the report. This report, prepared as it was solely with a view to bringing out the truth and nothing but the truth, will enable the reader to see to what lengths the British Government is capable of going, and what inhumanities and barbarities it is capable of perpetrating in order to maintain its power. So far as I am aware, not a single statement made in this report has ever been disproved.

CHAPTER XXXVI : THE KHILAFAT AGAINST COW-PROTECTION ?

We must now leave for the time being these dark happenings in the Punjab.

The Congress inquiry into Dyerism in the Punjab had just commenced, when I received a letter of invitation to be present at a joint conference of Hindus and Mussalmans that was to meet at Delhi

[1] *Vide* "Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders", after March 24, 1920.

to deliberate on the Khilafat question.[T1] Among the signatories to it were the late Hakim Ajmal Khan Saheb and Mr. Asaf Ali. The late Swami Shraddhanandji, it was stated, would be attending and, if I remember aright, he was to be the vice-president of the conference, which, so far as I can recollect, was to be held in the November of that year. The confe-rence was to deliberate on the situation arising out of the Khilafat betra-yal, and on the question as to whether the Hindus and Mussalmans should take any part in the peace celebrations. The letter of invitation went on to say, among other things, that not only the Khilafat question but the question of cow-protection as well would be discussed at the conference, and it would, therefore, afford a golden opportunity for a settlement of the cow question. I did not like this reference to the cow question. In my letter in reply to the invitation, therefore, whilst promising to do my best to attend, I suggested that the two questions should not be mixed up together or considered in the spirit of a bargain, but should be decided on their own merits and treated separately.

With these thoughts filling my mind,[T2] I went to the conference. It was a very well attended gathering, though it did not present the spectacle of later gatherings that were attended by tens of thousands. I discussed the question referred to above with the late Swami Shraddhanandji, who was present at the conference. He appreciated my argument and left it to me to place it before the conference. I likewise discussed it with the late Hakim Saheb. Before the conference I contended that, if the Khilafat question had a just and legitimate basis, as I believe it had, and if the Government had really committed a gross injustice, the Hindus were bound to stand by the Mussalmans in their demand for the redress of the Khilafat wrong. It would ill become them to bring in the cow question in this connection, or to use the occasion to make terms with the Mussalmans, just as it would ill become the Mussalmans to offer to stop cow-slaughter as a price for the Hindus' support on the Khilafat question. But it would be another matter and quite graceful, and reflect great credit on them, if the Mussalmans of their own free will stopped cow-slaughter out of regard for the religious sentiments of the Hindus, and from a sense of duty towards them as neighbours and children of the same soil. To take up such an independent attitude was, I contended, their duty, and would enhance the dignity of their conduct. But if the Mussalmans considered it as their neighbourly duty to stop cow-slaughter, they should do so regardless of whether the Hindus helped them in the Khilafat or not. 'That being so,' I argued, 'the two questions should be discussed independently of each other, and the deliberations of the

conference should be confined to the question of the Khilafat only.' My argument appealed to those present and, as a result, the question of cow-protection was not discussed at this conference.[1]

But in spite of my warning Maulana Abdul Bari Saheb said : 'No matter whether the Hindus help us or not, the Mussalmans ought, as the countrymen of the Hindus, out of regard for the latter's susceptibilities, to give up cow-slaughter.' And at one time it almost looked as if they would really put an end to it.

There was a suggestion from some quarters that the Punjab question should be tacked on to that of the Khilafat wrong. I opposed the proposal. The Punjab question, I said, was a local affair and could not therefore weigh with us in our decision to participate or not in the peace celebrations[T3]. If we mixed up the local question with the Khilafat question, which arose directly out of the peace terms,[T4] we should be guilty of a serious indiscretion. My argument easily carried conviction.

Maulana Hasrat Mohani was present in this meeting. I had known him even before, but it was only here that I discovered what a fighter he was. We differed from each other almost from the very beginning, and in several matters the differences have persisted.

Among the numerous resolutions that were passed at this conference, one called upon both Hindus and Mussalmans to take the swadeshi vow, and as a natural corollary to it, to boycott foreign goods[T5]. Khadi had not as yet found its proper place.[T6] This was not a resolution that Hasrat Saheb would accept. His object was to wreak vengeance on the British Empire, in case justice was denied in the matter of the Khilafat. Accordingly, he brought in a counter proposal for the boycott purely of British goods so far as practicable. I opposed it on the score of principle, as also of practicability, adducing for it those arguments that have now become pretty familiar. I also put before the conference my viewpoint of non-violence. I noticed that my arguments made a deep impression on the audience. Before me, Hasrat Mohani's speech had been received with such loud acclamations that I was afraid that mine only be a cry in the wilderness. I had made bold to speak only because I felt that it would be a dereliction of duty not to lay my views before the conference. But, to my agreeable surprise, my speech was followed with the closest attention by those present, and evoked a full measure of support among those on the platform, and speaker after speaker rose to deliver speeches in support of my views. The leaders were able to see that not

[1] For Gandhiji's speech on the occasion, *vide* "Punjab Letter", about December 1, 1919.

only would the boycott of British goods fail of its purpose, but would, if adopted, make of them a laughing stock. There was hardly a man present in that assembly but had some article of British manufacture on his person. Many of the audience therefore realized that nothing but harm could result from adopting a resolution that even those who voted for it were unable to carry out.

Mere boycott of foreign cloth cannot satisfy us, for who knows how long it will be, before we shall be able to manufacture swadeshi cloth in sufficient quantity for our needs, and before we can bring about an effective boycott of foreign cloth ? We want something that will produce an immediate effect on the British. Let your boycott of foreign cloth stand, we do not mind it, but give us something quicker, and speedier in addition'—so spoke in effect Maulana Hasrat Mohani. Even as I was listening to him, I felt that something new, over and above boycott of foreign cloth, would be necessary. An immediate boycott of foreign cloth seemed to me also to be a clear impossibility, at that time. I did not then know that we could, if we liked, produce enough khadi for all our clothing requirements; this was only a later discovery. On the other hand, I knew even then that, if we depended on the mills alone for effecting the boycott of foreign cloth, we should be betrayed. I was still in the middle of this dilemma when the Maulana concluded his speech.

I was handicapped for want of suitable Hindi or Urdu words. This was my first occasion for delivering an argumentative speech before an audience especially composed of Mussalmans of the North.[T7] I had spoken in Urdu[T8] at the Muslim League at Calcutta, but it was only for a few minutes, and the speech was intended only to be feeling appeal to the audience. Here, on the contrary, I was faced with a critical, if not hostile, audience, to whom I had to explain and bring home my view-point. But I had cast aside all shyness. I was not there to deliver an address in the faultless, polished Urdu of the Delhi Muslims, but to place before the gathering my views in such broken Hindi as I could command. And in this I was successful. This meeting afforded me a direct proof of the fact that Hindi-Urdu alone could become the lingua franca of India. Had I spoken in English, I could not have produced the impression that I did on the audience, and the Maulana might not have felt called upon to deliver his challenge. Nor, if he had delivered it, could I have taken it up effectively.

I could not hit upon a suitable Hindi or Urdu word for the new idea, and that put me out somewhat. At last I described it by the word 'non-co-operation', an expression that I used for the first time at this meeting. As the Maulana was delivering his speech, it seemed to me that it was vain for him to talk about effective resistance to a Gove-

rnment with which he was co-operating in more than one thing. If resort to arms was impossible or undesirable, the only true resistance to the Government, it therefore seemed to me, was to cease to co-operate with it. Thus I arrived at the word non-co-operation. I had not then a clear idea of all its manifold implications. I therefore did not enter into details. I simply said :

'The Mussalmans have adopted a very[T9] important resolution. If the peace terms are unfavourable to them—which may God forbid—they will stop all co-operation with Government. It is an inalienable right of the people thus to withhold co-operation. We are not bound to retain Government titles and honours, or to continue in Government service. If Government should betray us in a great cause like the Khilafat, we could not do otherwise than non-co-operate. We are therefore entitled to non-co-operate with Government in case of a betrayal.'

But months elapsed before the word non-co-operation became current coin. For the time being it was lost in the proceedings of the conference. Indeed when I supported the co-operation resolution at the Congress which met at Amritsar a month later, I did so in the hope that the betrayal would never come.[T10]

CHAPTER XXXVII : THE AMRITSAR CONGRESS

The Punjab Government could not keep in confinement the hundreds of Punjabis who, under the martial law regime, had been clapped into jail on the strength of the most meagre evidence by tribunals that were courts only in name. There was such an outcry all round against this flagrant piece of injustice that their further incarceration became impossible. Most of the prisoners were released before the Congress opened. Lala Harkishanlal and the other leaders were all released, while the session of the Congress was still in progress.[T1] The Ali Brothers too arrived there straight from Jail. The people's joy knew no bounds. Pandit Motilal Nehru, who, at the sacrifice of his splendid practice, had made the Punjab his headquarters and had done great service, was the President of the Congress; the late Swami Shraddhanandji was the Chairman of the Reception Committee.

Up to this time my share in the annual proceedings of the Congress was confined only to the constructive advocacy of Hindi by making my[T2] speech in the national language, and to presenting in that speech the case of the Indians overseas. Nor did I expect to be called upon to do anything more this year. But, as had happened on many a previous occasion, responsible work came to me all of a sudden.

The King'sT3 announcement on the new reforms[1] had just been issued. It was not wholly satisfactory even to me, and was unsatisfactory to everyone else. But I felt at that time that the reforms though defective, could still be accepted. I felt in the King'sT4 announcement and its language the hand of Lord Sinha[2], and it lent a ray of hope. But experienced stalwarts like the late Lokamanya and Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das shook their heads. Pandit Malaviyaji was neutral.

Pandit Malaviyaji had harboured me in his own room. I had a glimpse of the simplicity of his life on the occasion of the foundation ceremony of the Hindu University,[3] but on this occasion, being in the same room with him, I was able to observe his daily routine in the closest detail, and what I saw filled me with joyful surprise. His room presented the appearance of a free inn for all the poor. You could hardly cross from one end to the other. It was so crowded. It was accessible at all hours to chance visitors who had the licence to take as much of his time as they liked. In a corner of this crib lay my charpoy in all its dignity.

But I may not occupy this chapter with a description of Malaviyaji's mode of living, and must return to my subject. I was thus enabled to hold daily discussions with Malaviyaji, who used lovingly to explain to me, like an elder brother, the various viewpoints of the different parties. I saw that my participation in the deliberations on the resolution on the reforms was inevitableT5. HavingT6 had my share of responsibility in the drawing-up of the Congress report on the Punjab wrongs, I felt that all that still remained to be done in that connection must claim my attentionT7. There had to be dealings with Government in that matter. Then similarly there was the Khilafat question. I further believed at that time that Mr. Montagu would not betray or allow India's cause to be betrayed. The release of the Ali Brothers and other prisoners too seemed to me to be an auspicious sign. In the circumstances I felt that a resolution not rejecting but accepting the reforms was the correct thing. Deshbandhu Chittaranjan

[1] Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms

[2] Then Under-Secretary of State for India

[3] In a letter to Sri Prakasa, dated 2-10-1928, Gandhiji wrote : "With reference to the Benares incident, I have purposely omitted it as many other chapters of my life. Indeed as I proceed with the chapters, my embarrassment increases, because the chief actors are still alive and they are much before the public…Of course I myself regard that event in Benares as one of the proud events of my life." For Gandhiji's speech at Benares Hindu University, *vide* "Speech at Benaras Hindu University", February 6, 1916.

Das, on the other hand, held firmly to the view that the reforms ought to be rejected as wholly inadequate and unsatisfactory. The late Lokamanya was more or less neutral, but had decided to throw in his weight on the side of any resolution that the Deshbandhu might approve.

The idea of having to differ from such seasoned, well-tried and universally revered leaders was unbearable to me. But on the other hand the voice of conscience was clear. I tried to run away from the Congress and suggested to Pandit Malaviyaji and Motilalji that it would be in the general interest if I absented[T8] myself from the Congress for rest of session. It would save me from having to make an exhibition of my difference with such esteemed leaders.

But my suggestion found no favour with these two seniors. The news of my proposal was somehow whispered to Lala Harkishanlal. 'This will never do. It will very much hurt the feelings of the Punjabis, he said. I discussed the matter with Lokamanya, Deshbandhu and Mr. Jinnah, but no way out could be found. Finally I laid bare my distress to Malaviyaji. 'I see no prospect of a compromise,' I told him, 'and if I am to move my resolution, a division will have to be called and votes taken. But I do not find here any arrangements for it. The practice in the open session of the Congress so far has been to take votes by a show of hands with the result that all distinction between visitors and delegates is lost, while, as for taking a count of votes in such vast assemblies, we have no means at all. So it comes to this that, even if I want to call a division there will be no facility for it, nor meaning in it.' But Lala Harkishanlal came to the rescue and undertook to make the necessary arrangements. 'We will not,' he said, 'permit visitors in the Congress *pandal* on the day on which voting is to take place. And as for taking the count, well, I shall see to that. But you must not absent yourself from the Congress.' I capitulated; I framed my resolution, and in heart trembling undertook to move it. Pandit Ma-laviyaji and Mr. Jinnah were to support it. I could notice that, although our difference of opinion was free from any trace of bittern-ess, and although our speeches too contained nothing but cold reasoning, the people[T9] could not stand the very fact of a difference[T10]; it pained them. They wanted unanimity.

Even while speeches were being delivered, efforts to settle the difference were being made on the platform, and notes were being freely exchanged among the leaders for that purpose. Malaviyaji was leaving no stone unturned to bridge the gulf. Just then Jairamdas handed over his amendment to me and pleaded in his own sweet manner to save the delegates from the dilemma of a division. His amendment appealed to me. Malaviyaji's eye was already scanning

every quarter for a ray of hope. I told him that Jairamdas's amendment seemed to me to be likely to be acceptable to both the parties. The Lokamanya, to whom it was next shown, said, 'If C. R. Das approves, I will have no objection.' Deshbandhu at last thawed, and cast a look towards Sjt. Bepin Chandra Pal for endorsement. Malaviyaji was filled with hope. He snatched away the slip of paper containing the amendment, and before Deshbandhu had even pron-ounced a definite 'Yes' shouted out, 'Brother delegates, you will be glad to learn that a compromise has been reached.' What followed beggars description. The *pandal* was rent with the clapping of hands, and the erstwhile gloomy faces of the audience lit up with joy.

It is hardly necessary to deal with the text of the amendment.[1] My object here is only to describe how this resolution was undertaken as part of my experiments with which these chapters deal.

The compromise further increased my responsibility.

CHAPTER XXXVIII : CONGRESS INITIATION

I must regard my participation in Congress proceedings at Amritsar as my real entrance into the Congress politics.T1 My attendance at the previous Congresses was nothing more perhaps than an annual renewal of allegiance to the Congress. I never felt on these occasions that I had any other work cut out for me except that of a mere private, nor did I desire more.

My experience of Amritsar had shown that there were one or two things for which perhaps I had some aptitude and which could be useful to the Congress. I could already see that the late Lokamanya, the Deshbandhu, Pandit Motilalji and other leaders were pleased with my work in connection with the Punjab inquiry. They used to invite me to their informal gatherings where, as I found, resolutions for the Subjects Committee were conceived.T2 At these gatherings only those persons were invited who enjoyed the special confidence of the leaders and whose services were needed by them. Interlopers also sometimes found their way to these meetings.

There were, for the coming year, two things which inter- ested me, as I had some aptitude for them. One of these was the memorial of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. The Congress had passed a resolution for it amid great enthusiasm. A fund of about five lakhs had to be collected for it. I was appointed one of the trustees. Pandit Mala-viyaji enjoyedT3 the reputation of being the prince among

[1] For Gandhiji's speech at Amritsar Congress and texts of resolution and amendments, *vide* "Speech at Reforms Resolution at Amritsar Congress", January 1, 1920.

beggars for the public cause. But I knew that I was not far behind him in that respect. It was whilst I was in South Africa that I discovered my capacity in this direction. I had not the unrivalled magic of Malaviyaji for commanding princely donations from the potentates of India.T4 But I knew that there was no question of approaching the Rajas and Maharajas for donations for the Jallianwala Bagh memorial. The main responsibility for the collection thus fell, as I had expected, on my shoulders. The generous citizens of Bombay subscribed most liberally, and the memorial trust has at present a handsome credit balance in the bank. But the problem that faces the country today is what kind of memorial to erect on the ground, to sanctify which, Hindus, Mussalmans and Sikhs mingled their blood. The threeT5 communities, instead of being bound in a bond of amity and love, are, to all appearance, at war with one another, and the nation is at a loss as to how to utilize the memorial fund.T6

My other aptitude which the Congress could utilize was as a draftsman. The Congress leaders had found that I had a faculty for condensedT7 expression, which I had acquired by long practice. The then existing constitution of the Congress was Gokhale's legacy. He had framed a few rules which served as a basis for running the Congress machinery. The interesting history of the framing of these rules I had learnt from Gokhale's own lips. But everybody had now come to feel that these rules were no longer adequate for the ever-increasing business of the Congress. The question had been coming up year after year. The Congress at that time had practically no machinery functioning during the interval between session and session, or for dealing with fresh contin-gencies that might arise in the course of the year. The existing rules pro-vided for three secretaries, but as a matter of fact only one of them was a functioning secretary, and even he was not a whole-timer. How was he, single-handed, to run the Congress office, to think of the future, or to dis-charge during the current year the obligations contracted by the Congress in the past? During that year, therefore, everybody felt that this question would assume all the more importance. The Congress was too unwieldy a bodyT8 for the discussion of public affairs. There was no limit set to the number of delegates in the Congress or to the number of delegates that each province could return.T9 Some improvement upon the existing chaotic conditionT10 was thus felt by everybody to be an imperative necessity. I undertook the responsibility of framing a constitution on one condition. I saw that there were two leaders, viz., the Lokamanya and the DeshbandhuT11 who had the greatest hold on the public. I requested that they, as the representatives of the peopleT12, should be associated with me on the Committee for framing the const-

tution. But since it was obvious that they would not have the time personally to participate in the constitution-making work, I sugg-ested that two persons enjoying their confidence should be appo-inted along with me on the Constitution Committee, and that the number of its personnel should be limited to three. This suggestion was accepted by the late Lokamanya and the late Deshbandhu, who suggested the names of Sjts. Kelkar and I. B. Sen respectively as their proxies. The Constitution Committee could not even once come together, but we were able to consult with each other by correspon-dence, and in the end presented a unanimous report[1]. I regard this constitution with a certain measure of pride. I hold that, if we could fully work out this constitution, the mere fact of working it out would bring us swaraj. With the assumption of this responsibility I may be said to have made my real entrance into the Congress politics.

CHAPTER XXXIX : THE BIRTH OF KHADI

I do not remember to have seen handloom or a spinning-wheel when in 1908[2] I described it in *Hind Swaraj* as the panacea for the growing pauperism of India. In that book I took it as understood that anything that helped India to get rid of the grinding poverty of her masses would in the same process also establish swaraj. Even in 1915, when I returned to India from South Africa, I had not actually seen a spinning-wheel. When the Satyagraha Ashram was founded at Sabarmati, we introduced a few handlooms there. But no sooner had we done this than we found ourselves up against a difficulty.[T1] All of us belonged either to the liberal professions or to business; not one of us was an artisan. We needed a weaving expert to teach us to weave before we could work the looms. One was at last procured from Palanpur,[T2] but he did not communicate to us the whole of his art. But Maganlal Gandhi was not to be easily baffled. Possessed of a natural talent for mechanics, he was able fully to master the art before long, andone after another several new weavers were trained up in the Ashram.

The object that we set before ourselves was to be able to clothe ourselves entirely in cloth manufactured by our own hands. We therefore forthwith discarded the use of mill-woven cloth, and all the members of the Ashram resolved to wear hand-woven cloth made from Indian[T3] yarn only. The adoption of this practice brought us a

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chairman, A.I.C.C.", September 25, 1920 & "The Congress Constitution", November 3, 1920. For the Constitution as adopted at Nagpur Session, *vide* "Congress Constitution adopted at Nagpur Session", December 1920

[2] Slip for 1909

world of experience. It enabled us to know, from direct contact, the conditions of life among the weavers, the extent of their production, the handicaps in the way of their obtaining their yarn supply, the way in which they were being made victims of fraud, and, lastly, their ever-growing indebtedness. We were not in a position immediately to manufacture all the cloth for our needs. The alternative therefore was to get our cloth supply from handloom weavers. But ready-made cloth from Indian mill-yarn was not easily obtainable either from the cloth-dealers or from the weavers themselves. All the fine cloth woven by the weavers was from foreign yarn, since Indian mills did not spin fine counts. Even today the outturn of higher counts by Indian mills is very limited, whilst highest counts they cannot spin at all. It was after the greatest effort that we were at last able to find some weavers who condescended to weave swadeshi yarn for us, and only on condition that the Ashram would take up all the cloth that they might produce. By thus adopting cloth woven from mill-yarn as our wear, and propagating it among our friends, we made ourselves voluntary agents of the Indian spinning mills. This in its turn brought us into contact with the mills, and enabled us to know something about their management and their handicaps. We saw that the aim of the mills was more and more to weave the yarn spun by them; their co-operation with the handloom weaver was not willing, but unavoidable and temporary. We became impatient to be able to spin our own yarn. It was clear that, until we could do this ourselves, dependence on the mills would remain. We did not feel that we could render any service to the country by continuing as agents of Indian spinning mills.

No end of difficulties again faced us.[T4] We could get neither spinning-wheel nor a spinner to teach us how to spin. We were employing some wheels for filling pearns and bobbins for weaving in the Ashram. But we had no idea that these could be used as spinning-wheels. Once Kalidas Jhaveri discovered a woman who, he said, would demonstrate to us how spinning was done. We sent to her a member of the Ashram who was known for his great versatility in learning new things. But even he returned without wresting the secret of the art.

So the time passed on, and my impatience grew with the time. I plied every chance visitor to the Ashram who was likely to possess some information about handspinning with questions about the art. But the art being confined to women and having been all but exterminated,[T5] if there was some stray spinner still surviving in some obscure corner, only a member of that sex was likely to find out her whereabouts.

In the year 1917 I was taken by my Gujarati friends to preside at the Broach Educational Conference. It was here that I discovered

that remarkable lady Gangabehn Majmudar. She was a widow, but her enterprising spirit knew no bounds. Her education, in the accepted sense of the term, was not much. But in courage and common sense she easily surpassed the general run of our educated women. She had already got rid of the curse of untouchability, and fearlessly moved among and served the suppressed classes. She had means of her own, and her needs were few. She had a well seasoned constitution, and went about everywhere without an escort. She felt quite at home on horseback. I came to know her more intimately at the Godhra Conference. To her I poured out my grief about the charkha, and she lightened my burden by a promise to prosecute an earnest and incessant search for the spinning-wheel.

CHAPTER XL : FOUND AT LAST !

At last, after no end of wandering in Gujarat, Gangabehn found the spinning-wheel in Vijapur in the Baroda State. Quite a number of people there had spinning-wheels in their homes, but had long since consigned them to the lofts as useless lumber. They expressed to Gangabehn their readiness to resume spinning, if someone promised to provide them with a regular supply of slivers, and to buy the yarn spun by them. Gangabehn communicated the joyful news to me. The providing of slivers was found to be difficult task. On my mentioning the thing to the late Umar Sobani, he solved the difficulty by immediately undertaking to send a sufficient supply of slivers from his mill. I sent to Gangabehn the slivers received from Umar Sobani, and soon yarn began to pour in at such a rate that it became quite a problem how to cope with it.

Mr. Umar Sobani's generosity was great, but still one could not go on taking advantage of it for ever. I felt ill at ease, conti- nuously receiving slivers from him.[T1] Moreover, it seemed to me to be fundamentally wrong to use mill-slivers. If one could use mill-slivers, why not use mill-yarn as well ? Surely no mills supplied slivers to the ancients ? How did they make their slivers then ? With these thoughts in my mind[T2] I suggested to Gangabehn to find carders who could supply slivers. She confidently undertook the task. She engaged a carder who was prepared to card cotton. He demanded thirty-five rupees, if not much more, per-month. I considered no price too high at the time.[T3] She trained a few youngsters to make slivers out of the carded cotton. I begged for cotton in Bombay.[T4] Sjt. Yashvantprasad Desai at once responded. Gangabehn's enterprise thus prospered beyond expecta-tions.[T5] She found out[T6] weavers to weave the yarn that was spun in Vijapur, and soon Vijapur khadi gained a name for itself.

While these developments were taking place in Vijapur, the spinning-wheel gained a rapid footing in the Ashram. Maganlal Gandhi, by bringing to bear all his splendid mechanical talent on the wheel, made many improvements in it, and wheels and their[T7] accessories began to be manufactured at the Ashram. The first piece of khadi manufactured in the Ashram cost 17 annas per yard. I did not hesitate to commend this very coarse khadi at that rate to friends, who willingly paid the price.

I was laid up in bed at Bombay. But I was fit enough to make searches for the wheel there. At last I chanced upon two spinners. They charged one rupee for a seer of yarn; i.e., 28 *tolas* or nearly three quarters of a pound.[T8] I was then ignorant of the economics of khadi. I considered no price too high for securing hand-spun yarn. On comparing the rates paid by me with those paid in Vijapur[T9] I found that I was being cheated. The spinners refused to agree to any reduction in their rates. So I had to dispense with their services. But they served their purpose. They taught spinning to Shrimatis Avantikabai, Ramibai Kamdar, the widowed mother of Sjt. Shankarlal Banker and Shrimati Vasumatibehn.[1] The wheel began merrily to hum in my room, and I may say without exaggeration that its hum had no small share in restoring me to health. I am prepared to admit that its effect was more psychological than physical. But then it only shows how powerfully the physical in man reacts to the psychological. I too set my hand to the wheel, but did not do much with it at the time.

In Bombay, again, the same old problem of obtaining a supply of hand-made slivers presented itself. A carder twanging his bow used to pass daily by Sjt. Revashankar's residence. I sent for him and learnt that he carded cotton for stuffing mattresses. He agreed to card cotton for slivers, but demanded a stiff price for it, which, however, I paid. The yarn thus prepared I disposed of to some Vaishnava friends for making from it the garlands for the *pavitra Ekadashi*. Sjt. Shivji started a spinning class in Bombay. All these experiments involved considerable expenditure. But it was willingly defrayed by patriotic friends, lovers of the motherland, who had faith in khadi. The money thus spent, in my humble opinion, was not wasted. It brought us a rich store of experience, and revealed to us the possibilities of the spinning-wheel.[T10]

I now grew impatient for the exclusive adoption of khadi for my dress. My dhoti was still of Indian mill-cloth. The coarse khadi manufactured in the Ashram and at Vijapur was only 30 inches in

[1] It was, in fact, Govindbabu of Orissa who taught spinning to these sisters; *vide* "Notes", January 31, 1929.

width. I gave notice to Gangabehn that, unless she provided me with a khadi dhoti of 45 inches width within a month, I would do with coarse, short khadi dhoti. The ultimatum came upon her as a shock. But she proved equal to the demand made upon her. Well within the month she sent me a pair of khadi dhotis of 45T11 inches width, and thus relieved me from what would then have been a difficult situation for me.T12

At about the same time Sjt. Lakshmidas brought Sjt. Ramji, the weaver, with his wife Gangabehn, from Lathi to the Ashram and got khadi dhotisT13 woven at the Ashram. The part played by this couple in the spread of khadi was by no means insignificant. They initiated a host of persons in Gujarat and also outside into the art of weaving hand-spun yarn. To see Gangabehn at her loom is a stirring sight.T14 When this unlettered but self-possessedT15 sister plies at her loom, she becomes so lost in it that it is difficult to distract her attention, and much more difficult to draw her eyes off her beloved loom.

CHAPTER XLI : AN INSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE

From its very inception the khadi movement, swadeshi movement as it was then called, evoked much criticism from the mill-owners. The late Umar Sobani, a capable mill-owner himself, not only gave me the benefit of his own knowledge and experience, but kept me in touch with the opinion of the other mill-owners as well. The argument advanced by one of these deeply impressed him. He pressed me to meet him. IT1 agreed. Mr. Sobani arranged the interview. The mill-owner opened the conversation.

'You know that there has been swadeshi agitation before now ?'

'Yes, I do,' I replied.

'You are also aware that in the days of theT2 Partition[1] we, the mill-owners, fully exploited the swadeshi movememt. When it was at its height, we raised the prices of cloth, and did even worse things.'

'Yes, I have heard something about it, and it has grieved me.'

'I can understand your grief, but I can see no ground for it. We are not conducting our business out of philanthropy. We do it for profit, we have got to satisfy the shareholders. The price of an article is governed by the demand for it. Who can check the law of demand and supply ? The Bengalis should have known that their agitation was bound to send up the price of swadeshi cloth by stimulating the demand for it.'

I interrupted : 'The Bengalis like me were trustful in their nature. They believed, in the fulness of their faith, that the mill-owners

[1] Partition of Bengal, which was annulled in December 1911

would not be so utterly selfish and unpatriotic as to betray their country in the hour of its need, and even to go the length, as they did, of fraudulently passing off foreign cloth as swadeshi.'

'I knew your believing nature,' he rejoined; 'that is why I put you to the trouble of coming to me, so that I might warn you against falling into the same error as these simple-hearted Bengalis.'

With these words the mill-owner beckoned to his clerk who was standing by to produce samples of the stuff that was being manufactured in his mill.T3 Pointing to it he said : 'Look at this stuff. This is the latest variety turned out by our mill. It is meeting with a widespread demand. We manufacture it from the waste. Naturally, therefore, it is cheap. We send it as far North as the valleys of the Himalayas. We have agencies all over the country, even in places where your voice or your agents can never reach. You can thus see that we do not stand in need of more agents.T4 Besides, you ought to know that India's production of cloth falls far short of its requirements. The question of swadeshi, therefore, largely resolves itself into one of production. The moment we can increase our production sufficiently, and improve its quality to the necessary extent, the import of foreign cloth will automatically cease. My advice to you, therefore, is not to carry on your agitation on its present lines, but to turn your attention to the erection of fresh mills. What we need is not propaganda to inflate demand for our goods, but greater production.'

'Then, surely, you will bless my effort, if I am already engaged in that very thing,' I asked.

'How can that be ?' he exclaimed, a bit puzzled, 'but may be, you are thinking of promoting the establishment of new mills, in which case you certainly deserve to be congratulated.'

'I am not doing exactly that,' I explained, 'but I am engaged in the revival of the spinning-wheel.'

'What is that ?' he asked, feeling still more at sea.T5 I told him all about the spinning-wheel, and the story of my long quest after it, and added, 'I am entirely of your opinion, it is no use my becoming virtually an agent for the mills. That would do more harm than good to the country. Our mills will not be in want of custom for a long time to come.T6 My work should be, and therefore is, to organize the production of hand-spun cloth, and to find means for the disposal of the khadi thus produced. I am, therefore, concentrating my attention on the production of khadi. I swear by this form of swadeshi, because through it I can provide work to the semi-starved, semi-employed women of India. My idea is to get these women to spin yarn, and to clothe the people of India with khadi woven out of it. I do not know

how far this movement is going to succeed; at present it is only in the incipient stage. But I have full faith in it. At any rate it can do no harm. On the contrary to the extent that it can add to the cloth production of the country be it ever so small, it will represent so much solid gain. You will thus perceive that my movement is free from the evils mentioned by you.'

He replied, 'If you have additional production in view in[T7] organizing your movement, I have nothing to say against it. Whether the spinning-wheel can make headway in this age of power machinery[T8] is another question. But I for one wish you every success.'

CHAPTER XLII : ITS RISING TIDE[T1]

I must not devote any more chapters here to a description of the further progress of khadi. It would be outside the scope of these chapters to give a history of my various activities after they came before the public eye, and I must not attempt it, if only because to do so would require a treatise on the subject. My object in writing these chapters is simply to describe how certain things, as it were spontaneously, presented themselves to me in the course of my experiments with truth.

To resume, then, the story of the non-co-operation movement. Whilst the powerful Khilafat agitation set up by the Ali Brothers was in full progress, I had long discussions on the subject with the late Maulana Abdul Bari and the other *ulemas*, especially, with regard to the extent to which a Mussalman could observe the rule of non-violence. In the end they all agreed that Islam did not forbid its followers from following non-violence as a policy[T2], and further, that, while they were pledged to that policy, they were bound faithfully to carry it out. At last the non-co-operation resolution was moved in the Khilafat conference, and carried after prolonged deliberations. I have a vivid recollection how once at Allahabad a committtee sat all night deliberating upon the subject. In the beginning the late Hakim Saheb was sceptical as to the practicability of non-violent non-co-operation. But after his scepticism was overcome he threw himself into it heart and soul, and his help proved invaluable to the movement.

Next, the non-co-operation resolution was moved by me at the Gujarat Political Conference that was held shortly afterwards. The preliminary contention raised by the opposition was that it was not competent to a provincial conference to adopt a resolution in advance of the Congress. As against this, I suggested that the restriction could apply only to a backward movement; but as for going forward, the subordinate organizations were not only fully competent, but were in duty bound to do so, if they had in them the necessary grit and

confidence. No permision, I argued, was needed to try to enhance the prestige of the parent institution, provided one did it at one's own risk.[T3] The proposition was then discussed on its merits, the debate being marked by its keenness no less than the atmosphere of 'sweet reasonableness' in which it was conducted. On the ballot being taken the resolution was declared carried by an overwhelming majority. The successful passage of the resolution was due not a little to the personality of Sjt. Vallabhbhai and Abbas Tyabji. The latter was the president, and his leanings were all in favour of the non-co-operation resolution.

The All-India Congress Committee resolved to hold a special session of the Congress in September 1920 at Calcutta to deliberate on this question. Preparations were made for it on a large scale. Lala Lajpat Rai was elected President. Congress and Khilafat specials were run to Calcutta from Bombay. At Calcutta there was a mammoth gathering of delegates and visitors.

At the request of Maulana Shaukat Ali I prepared a draft of the non-co-operation resolution in the train. Up to this time I had more or less avoided the use of the word non-violent in my drafts. I invariably made use of this word in my speeches. My vocabulary on the subject was still in process of formation.[T4] I found that I could not bring home my meaning to purely Muslim audiences with the help of the Sanskrit equivalent for non-violent. I therefore asked Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to give me some other equivalent for it. He suggested the word *ba-aman*; similarly for non-co-operation he suggested the phrase *tark-i-mavalat*.

Thus, while I was still busy devising suitable Hindi, Gujarati and Urdu phraseology for non-co-operation, I was called upon to frame the non-co-operation resolution for that eventful Congress. In the original draft the word 'non-violent' had been left out by me. I had handed over the draft to Maulana Shaukat Ali who was travelling in the same compartment, without noticing the omission. During the night I discovered the error. In the morning I sent Mahadev with the message that the omission should be made good before the draft was sent to the Press. But I have an impression that the draft was printed before the insertion could be made. The Subjects Committee was to have met the same evening. I had therefore to make the necessary correction in the printed copies of the draft. I afterwards saw that there would have been great difficulty, had I not been ready with my draft.

None the less my plight was pitiable indeed. I was absolutely at sea as to who would support the resolution and who would oppose it. Nor had I any idea as to the attitude that Lalaji would adopt. I only

saw an imposing phalanx of veteran warriors assembled for the fray at Calcutta,[T5] Dr. Besant, Pandit Malaviyaji, Sjt. Vijayaraghavachari, Pandit Motilalji and the Deshbandhu being some of them.

In my resolution non-operation was postulated only with a view to obtaining redress of the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs. That, however, did not appeal to Sjt. Vijayaraghavachari. 'If non- co-operation was to be declared, why should it be with reference to particular wrongs? The absence of swaraj was the biggest wrong that the country was labouring under; it should be against that that non-co-operation should be directed,' he argued. Pandit Motilalji also wanted the demand for swaraj to be included in the resolution. I readily accepted the suggestion and incorporated the demand for swaraj in my resolution, which was passed after an exhaustive, serious and somewhat stormy discussion.

Motilalji was the first to join the movement. I still remember the sweet discussion that I had with him on the resolution. He suggested some changes in its phraseology which I adopted. He undertook to win the Deshbandhu for the movement. The Deshbandhu's heart was inclined towards it, but he felt sceptical as to the capacity of the people to carry out the programme. It was only at the Nagpur Congress that he and Lalaji accepted it whole-heartedly.

I felt the loss of the late Lokamanya very deeply at the special session. It has been my firm faith to this day that, had the Lokamanya been then alive, he would have given his benedictions to me on that occasion. But even if it had been otherwise, and he had opposed the movement, I should still have esteemed his opposition as a privilege and an education for myself. We had our differences of opinion always, but they never led to bitterness. He always allowed me to believe that the ties between us were of the closest. Even as I write these lines, the circumstances of his death stand forth vividly before my mind's eye. It was about the hour of midnight, when Patwardhan, who was then working with me, conveyed over the telephone the news of his death. I was at that time surrounded by my companions. Spontaneously the exclamation escaped my lips, 'My strongest bulwark is gone.' The non-co-operation movement was then in full swing, and I was eagerly looking forward to encouragement and inspiration from him. What his attitude would have been with regard to the final phase of non-co-operation will always be a matter of speculation, and an idle one at that. But this much is certain—that the deep void left by his death weighed heavily upon everybody present at Calcutta. Everyone felt the absence of his counsels in that hour of

crisis in the nation's history.

CHAPTER XLIII : AT NAGPUR

The resolutions adopted at the Calcutta special session of the Congress were to be confirmed at its annual session at Nagpur. Here again, as at Calcutta there was a great rush of visitors and delegates. The number of delegates in the Congress had not been limited yet. As a result, so far as I can remember, the figure on this occasion reached about fourteen thousand. Lalaji pressed for a slight amendment to the clause about the boycott of schools, which I accepted. Similarly some amendments were made at the instance of the Deshbandhu, after which the non-co-operation resolution[T1] was passed unanimously.[1]

The resolution regarding the revision of the Congress constitution too was to be taken up at this session of the Congress. The sub-committee's draft was presented at the Calcutta special session. The matter had therefore been thoroughly ventilated and thrashed out. At the Nagpur session, where it came up for final disposal,[T2] Sjt. C. Vijayaraghavachari was the President. The Subjects Committee passed the draft with only one important change. In my draft the number of delegates had been fixed, I think, at 1,500; the Subjects Committee substituted in its place the figure 6,000. In my opinion this increase was the result of hasty judgment, and experience of all these years has only confirmed me in my view. I hold it to be an utter delusion to believe that a large number of delegates is in any way a help to the better conduct of the business, or that it safeguards the principle of democracy. Fifteen hundred delegates, jealous of the interest of the people, broad-minded and truthful, would any day be a better safeguard for democracy than six thousand irresponsible men chosen anyhow. To safeguard democracy the people must have a keen sense of independence, self-respect and their oneness, and should insist upon choosing as their representatives only such persons as are good and true. But obsessed with the idea of numbers as the Subjects Committee was, it would have liked to go even beyond the figure of six thousand. The limit of six thousand was therefore in the nature of a compromise.

The question of the goal of the congress formed a subject for keen discussion. In the constitution that I had presented, the goal of the Congress was the attainment of swaraj within the British Empire if pos-sible and without if necessary. A party in the Congress wanted to limit the goal to swaraj within the British Empire only. Its viewpoint

[1] For the draft resolution, *vide* "Draft Resolution on Non-Cooperation", before December 30, 1920; and for the resolution as passed, *vide* "Congress Resolution on Non-Cooperation", December 30, 1920.

was put forth by Pandit Malaviyaji and Mr. Jinnah. But they were not able to get many votes. Again the draft constitution provided that the means for the attainment were to be peaceful and legitimate. This condition too came in for opposition, it being contended that there should be no restriction upon the means to be adopted. But the Congress adopted the original draft after an instructive and frank discussion. I am of opinion that, if this constitution had been worked out by the people honestly, intelligently and zealously, it would have become a potent instrument of mass education, and the very process of working it out would have brought us swaraj. But a discussion of the theme would be irrelevant here.

Resolutions about Hindu-Muslim unity, the removal of untouchability and khadi too were passed in this Congress, and since then the Hindu members of the Congress have taken upon themselves the responsilibity of ridding Hinduism of the curse of untouchability, and the Congress has established a living bond of relationship with'skeletons' of India through khadi. The adoption of non-co-operation for the sake of the Khilafat was itself a great practical attempt made by the Congress to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity.

FAREWELL

The time has now come to bring these chapters to a close.[1]

My life from this point onward has been so public that there is hardly anything about it that people do not know. Moreover, since 1921 I have worked in such close association with the Congress leaders that I can hardly describe[T1] any episode in my life since then without referring to my relations with them.[T2] For though Shraddhanandji, the Deshbandhu, Hakim Saheb and Lalaji are no more with us today, we have the good luck to have a host of other veteran Congress leaders still living and working in our midst. The history of the Congress, since the great changes in it that I have described above, is still in the making. And my principal experiments during the past seven years[T3] have all been made through the Congress. A reference to my relations with the leaders would therefore be unavoidable, if I

[1] In a letter to C. F. Andrews, 29-11-1928, Gandhiji said : "I have no notion when the whole thing will be finished, even though I am omitting many important events and trying to hurry on to the Non-co-operation days. I want to break off after the special session at Calcutta, because the events are too fresh and there are so many contemporaries I must describe if I am to write further. I feel too that it would be advisable for me to stop at that stage for thenceforward my life has been too public. Therefore there is no need for further elucidation. And then of course there is *Young India*, a clear mirror through which anybody who cares can look at me." *Vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", November 29, 1928.

set about describing my experiments further. And this I may not do, at any rate for the present, if only from a sense of propriety. Lastly, my conclusions from my current experiments can hardly as yet be regarded as decisive. It therefore seems to me to be my plain[T4] duty to close this narrative here. In fact, my pen instinctively refuses to proceed further.

It is not without a wrench that I have to take leave of the reader. I set a high value on my experiments. I do not know whether I have been able to do justice to them. I can only say that I have spared no pains to give a faithful narrative. To describe truth, as it has appeared to me, and in the exact manner in which I have arrived at it, has been my ceaseless effort. The exercise has given me ineffable mental peace, because, it has been my fond hope that it might bring faith in Truth and Ahimsa to waverers.[T5]

My uniform experience has convinced me that there is no other God than Truth. And if every page of these chapters does not proclaim to the reader that the only means for the realization of Truth is Ahimsa, I shall deem all my labour in writing these chapters to have been in vain. And, even though my efforts in this behalf may prove fruitless, let the readers know that the vehicle, not the great principle, is at fault.[T6] After all, however sincere my strivings after Ahimsa may have been, they have still been imperfect and inadequate. The little fleeting glimpses, therefore, that I have been able to have of Truth can hardly convey an idea of the indescribable lustre of Truth, a million times more intense than that of the sun we daily see with our eyes. In fact what I have caught is only the faintest glimmer of that mighty effulgence. But this much I can say with assurance, as a result of all my experiments, that a perfect vision of Truth can only follow a complete realization of Ahimsa.

To see the universal and all-pervading Spirit of Truth face to face one must be able to love the meanest of creation as oneself. And a man who aspires after that cannot afford to keep out of any field of life. That is why my devotion to Truth has drawn me into the field of politics; and I can say without the slightest hesitation, and yet in all humility, that those who say that religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means.

Identification with everything that lives is impossible without self-purification; without self-purification the observance of the law of Ahimsa must remain an empty dream. God can never be realized by one who is not pure of heart. Self-purification therefore must mean purification in all the walks of life.[T7] And purification being highly

infectious, purification of oneself necessarily leads to the purification of one's surroundings.[T8]

But[T9] the path of self-purification is hard and steep. To attain to perfect purity one has to become absolutely passion-free in thought, speech and action; to rise above the opposing currents of love and hatred, attachment and repulsion. I know that I have not in me as yet that triple purity, in spite of constant ceaseless striving for it. That is why the world's praise fails to move me, indeed it very often stings me. To conquer the subtle passions seems to me to be harder far than the physical conquest of the world by the force of arms. Ever since[T10] my return to India I have had experiences of the dormant passions lying hidden within me. The knowledge of them has made me feel humiliated though not defeated. The experiences and experiments have sustained me and given me great joy.[T11] But I know that I have still before me a difficult path to traverse. I must reduce myself to zero. So long as a man does not of his own free will put himself last among his fellow creatures, there is no salvation for him. Ahimsa is the farthest limit of humility.[T12]

In bidding farewell to the reader, for the time being at any rate, I ask him to join with me in prayer to the God of Truth that He may grant me the boon of Ahimsa in mind, word and deed.[T13]

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

A. TRANSLATORS PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION OF THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY (VOL. I)

It was by a fortunate accident that the privilege of translating into English, for *Young India*, *The Story of My Experiments with Truth* or Gandhiji's Autobiography as it was being published in *Navajivan* from week to week, fell to me. No one, perhaps, is more conscious of the blemishes in the translation than myself. But it might be some comfort to the reader to know that the volume, in the form in which it now appears, has had, so far as the meaning of the author is concerned, the benefit of his own careful revision, and so far as the language is concerned, the advantage of equally careful revision by Shrimati Mirabehn (Miss Madeleine Slade), who cast in her lot with us at the Ashram a year and a half ago.

Satyagraha Ashram MAHADEV DESAI
1st August, 1927

B. TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION OF THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The first edition of Gandhiji's Autobiography was published in two volumes, Vol. I in 1927 and Vol. II in 1929. The original in Gujarati which was priced at Re. 1 has run through five editions, nearly 50,000 copies having been sold. The price of the English translation (only issued in library edition) was prohibitive for the Indian reader, and a cheap edition has long been needed. It is now being issued in one volume. The translation, as it appeared serially in *Young India*, had, it may be noted, the benefit of Gandhiji's revision. It has now undergone careful revision, and from the point of view of language, it has had the benefit of careful revision by a revered friend, who, among many other things, has the reputation of being an eminent English scholar. Before undertaking the task, he made it a condition that his name should on no account be given out. I accept the condition. It is needless to say it heightens my sense of gratitude to him. Chapters XXIX-XLIII of Part V were translated by my friend and colleague Pyarelal during my absence in Bardoli at the time of the Bardoli Agrarian Inquiry by the Broomfield Committee in 1928-29.

1940 MAHADEV DESAI

C. PUBLISHER'S NOTE TO VOL. I OF THE FIRST EDITION OF THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY

In placing this first volume of Gandhiji's Autobiography in the hands of the public, the publisher's acknowledgements are due to Sjt. Jerajani of the Khadi Bhandar, and Sjt. Shantikumar Narottam Morarji, Bombay, who took great pains in supplying and getting the khadi dyed for use as binding cloth for this volume, to Sjt. Mahulikar, artist, Ahmedabad, for lending us his copyright photograph of Gandhiji for use in this volume, and to Sjt. Mangeshrao Kulkarni, proprietor, Karnatak Press, Bombay, who placed practically the whole resources of his printing house at our disposal.

D. PUBLISHER'S NOTE TO VOL. II OF THE FIRST EDITION OF THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The publisher's acknowledgements are due to Sjt. Mangeshrao Kulkarni, proprietor, Karnatak Press, Thakurdvar, Bombay, whose help in the production of this volume was as valuable as in the case of the first volume.

APPENDIX II

TRANSLATION NOTES FOR THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY

(*The notes in this Appendix correspond to the superior T marks serially numbered under each chapter and indicate significant variations between the Gujarati original and the English translation reproduced in the text.*)

INTRODUCTION (pp. 1-5)

T1 The Gujarati original has "could".

T2 Guj. has "had I the good fortune to complete".

T3 For the rest of the sentence Guj. has : "But it would be still one year before I could take up the task. I could in no circumstances even start writing the autobiography before then. The work, therefore, remained unattempted."

T4 In Guj., the following clause reads : "or supposing that in pursuance of these principles you revise in the future your plans of today".

T5 Guj. adds "to be cautious and".

T6 Guj. has "beyond my capacity to communicate ?". The rest of the paragraph reads : "In my experiments, spiritual means moral; dharma means morality practised for the sake of the *atman*."

T7 Guj. does not have "of religion".

T8 Guj. has "the first". (The word "first" has been omitted in the English translation because the titles have been reversed; for the sequence of titles in Gujarati, *vide* p. 1, footnote 1, lines 1 and 2.)

T9 Guj. adds “in spite of my mistakes”.

T10 For “Let those, who wish,” Guj. has “Let the readers of *Navajivan*, etc., who constitute my world”.

T11 Guj. has *alpatma*, which literally means “a little soul”, as opposed to mahatma, “a great soul”.

T12 Guj. adds “in judging themselves”.

T13 Guj. has “whom I look upon as the Provider of my daily bread”.

PART I

CHAPTER I (pp. 7-9)

T1 Guj. has “After resigning as Prime Minister of Porbandar, he became”.

T2 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T3 Guj. does not have the rest of the sentence.

T4 Guj. has “worship”.

T5 Guj. has the regional date, “*Bhadarva Vad* 12, in the *Samvat* 1925”.

T6 Guj. adds: “like the half-baked *papad* in the rhyme that we boys used to sing aloud. I must not omit these lines. ‘One is one, bake the *papad*, the *papad* is raw,. . . is my . . . !’ The first blank is for the omission of the teacher’s name whom I do not want to immortalize. The second blank need not be filled in with the word of abuse which I have left out.”

CHAPTER II (pp. 9-11)

T1 Guj. has : “I do not remember having ever told a lie, during this short period, to my teachers or to have made any friends.”

T2 Guj. has “I must have enacted the play in my mind”.

T3 Guj. has “Harishchandra’s ordeals”.

CHAPTER III (pp. 11-4)

T1 Guj. adds : “Marriage, on the other hand, involves a religious rite and requires the physical presence of the bride and the bridegroom.”

T2 Guj. adds : “I can describe how it came, but let not the reader be curious about that.”

T3 Guj. has “the other details of the story”.

T4 Guj. adds : “‘Passions’ here does not mean only sexual desire but includes all cravings of the senses.”

CHAPTER IV (pp. 14-6)

T1 For “this last thing”, Guj. has “these ideas”.

CHAPTER V (pp. 16-20)

T1 Guj. adds “while still in the upper standards of the high school”.

T2 Guj. has “Another”.

T3 Guj. has “preferred walking to gymnastics”.

T4 Guj. adds. “Skill in drawing is necessary for mastering good handwriting.”

T5 Guj. adds “concerning the progress of my studies”.

CHAPTER VI (pp. 20-2)

T1 Guj. adds : “One should not venture into deep waters even for the sake of reforming another.”

T2 Guj. adds “or with the *atman*”.

T3 Guj. has “he convinced me”.

T4 Guj. adds “and is a match for 500 Indians”.

T5 Guj. has : “All readers will not be able to grasp the full significance of this decision—this venture.”

T6 After “Moreover,” the rest of the sentence in Guj. reads : “by conscious intention or otherwise I was a servant of truth”.

T7 Guj. adds : “In these circumstances, my decision to start meat-eating was a very serious and terrible step.”

T8 Guj. does not have this sentence.

CHAPTER VII (pp. 23-5)

T1 Guj. has : “I have to this day no knowledge where he found it.”

T2 Guj. adds “—polluting me”.

T3 Guj. has “I had to say”.

T4 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T5 Guj. adds : “I had only to amuse myself.”

T6 Guj. has: “I let myself be imprisoned in the room, but, he whom God wishes to protect can remain pure in spite of himself.”

T7 For “my good fortune”, Guj. has “circumstances”.

T8 In Guj., the rest of the sentence reads : “from experience that various circumstances often intercede and save him.”

T9 Guj. adds “as far as possible”.

T10 For “fanned the flame of my suspicions about my wife”, Guj. has “increased my jealousy”.

T11 For “pained my wife by acting on his information”, Guj. has “harassed my wife by believing his suggestions”.

T12 Guj. adds “and patient endurance”.

T13 Guj. adds “and suffer in silence”.

T14 Guj. has “A high-caste Hindu woman”.

T15 For “driven my wife to that desperation”, Guj. has “dealt such justice to my wife”.

T16 Guj. adds “good or bad”.

T17 Guj. has “pity myself for”.

CHAPTER VIII (pp. 26-8)

T1 Guj. adds “(I forget its name)”.

T2 Guj. adds : “Both of us were thinking how to pay it off.”

T3 For “afraid of the pain that I should cause him”, Guj. has “afraid lest he should be pained and strike his forehead in his anguish”.

T4 Guj. does not have the first part of the sentence and has “sat opposite the plank” as part of the first sentence of the para.

T5 Guj. has : “Those pearl-drops, like shafts of love, pierced my heart and I was purified.”

T6 Guj. has : “It is impossible to measure its power.”

T7 For “and increased his affection for me beyond measure”, Guj. has “and increased his deep affection for me”.

CHAPTER IX (pp. 28-30)

T1 Guj. does not have this word.

T2 Guj. has “I was in the high school at this time, and all”.

T3 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T4 Guj. adds “whom I have mentioned earlier”.

T5 For the preceding two sentences, Guj. has : “I was filled with remorse. But what was the good of it now ?”

T6 For “him, Guj. has “his legs”.

T7 Guj. does not have “and he would have died in my arms”.

T8 Guj. has : “But instead I had to hear from my uncle that father had left us.”

T9 For “even at the critical hour of my father’s death, which demanded wakeful service”, Guj. has “troubling me even when I was engaged in service”.

T10 For “those who are married”, Guj. has “parents or child couples”.

CHAPTER X (pp. 31-4)

T1 Guj. has “unfailing *shakti*”.

T2 For “As soon as we reached,” Guj. has “In the atmosphere of”.

T3 Guj. adds “respect for that cousin and partly through”.

T4 Guj. adds “in the temple dedicated to Rama”.

T5 In Guj., the word would also mean “leucoderma”.

T6 Guj. has : “In the end the disease disappeared completely.”

T7 Guj. has “any disease”.

T8 Guj. adds “be so read as to”.

T9 In Guj., the following clause precedes the word : “I again and again see from experience that”.

T10 For “would even go out of their way to accept food from us—non-Jains”, Guj. has “he would even invite them to receive an offering of food from us”.

T11 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T12 For “Christian missionaries”, Guj. has “a Christian missionary”.

T13 Guj. has “him”.

T14 Guj. does not have the bracketed words.

CHAPTER XI (pp. 34-7)

T1 Guj. adds “after that”.

T2 Guj. adds “before embarking”.

CHAPTER XII (pp. 38-40)

T1 Guj. does not have this and the following word.

T2 Guj. adds “only”.

CHAPTER XIII (pp. 40-2)

T1 Guj. does not have “in the second saloon”.

T2 Guj. has : “He was an elderly man.”

T3 Guj. has “We completed the voyage somehow and reached Southampton”.

T4 Guj. does not have “to whom I had wired from Southampton”.

T5 Guj. does not have “somewhat angrily”.

T6 Guj. adds : “After giving some letters of introduction, Dr. Mehta left.”

T7 For “I must finish the three years, said the inner voice”, Guj. has “I was resolved to finish the three years”.

CHAPTER XIV (pp. 42-5)

T1 Guj. does not have “discovered that we had left”.

T2 Guj. adds : “I could not answer his arguments.”

T3 Guj. has “wings”.

T4 Guj. does not have “from cover to cover”.

T5 For “all along”, Guj. has “previously”.

T6 Guj. adds “later for the sake”.

CHAPTER XV (pp. 45-8)

T1 In Guj., the title literally means “civilized airs”.

T2 Guj. has : “But later on the religious motive became supreme.”

T3 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T4 Guj. has “small”.

T5 Guj. adds : “I didn’t know what to do.”

T6 Guj. has : “And for this purpose I took the impossible and superficial course of learning ‘civilized’ habits.”

T7 Guj. has “The European style clothes”.

T8 Guj. has “where fashionable people used to get their clothes stitched”.

T9 Guj. adds : “(Is it not but another name for a broom-stick ?)”

T10 For “an English gentleman”, Guj. has “a gentleman”.

T11 Guj. has : “He should know how to dance, and should also have a fairly good knowledge of French.”

T12 Guj. adds : “A gentleman, moreover, should know the art of public speaking.”

T13 Guj. adds : “One, two, three—would go on, but the intervals of time were indicated by the piano and I could not follow them.”

T14 Guj. has “I sacrificed £3 for buying a violin”.

T15 Guj. has “She had become rather friendly with me”

.CHAPTER XVI (pp. 48-50)

T1 Guj. adds : “I had decided not to spend more than £15 a month.”

T2 Guj. does not have “or a couple of coppers spent on newspapers”.

T3 For “to account for everything that comes into and goes out of his pocket”, Guj. has “to keep an account of whatever money he gets, no matter how little”.

T4 Guj. adds “and the public”.

T5 For “that it was necessary to economize”, Guj. has “within what limits I should spend”.

T6 For “place to place”, Guj. has “suburb to suburb”.

T7 Guj. has “Before this I had always to spend money on conveyance”.

T8 Guj. has “And one question in the paper on”.

T9 For “chose to convert himself”, Guj has “was converted”.

T10 Guj. has “disappointed”.

T11 Guj. has “though I see now that”.

T12 For “far from”, Guj. has “beyond”.

T14 Guj. has “In this way I would be able to live within”.

T15 Guj. has “a”.

T16 Guj. has “My life became more meaningful”.

CHAPTER XVII (pp. 50-3)

T1 Guj. adds “and birds”.

T2 Guj. adds “too”.

T3 For the ensuing two sentences, Guj. has : “One must accept the interpretation of the person who administers the vow. I know that my mother who administered the vow against meat could not have even thought about eggs.”

T4 Guj. has “till”.

T5 Guj. adds “than the other momentary pleasure”.

T6 Guj. adds : “My pledge was a kind of contract made by me with my mother.”

T7 Guj. has “contracts”.

T8 Guj. has“contract”.

T9 Guj. has “masters of language”.

T10 For the preceding two sentences, Guj. has : “selfishness makes everyone blind. From the prince down to the pauper, everybody interprets a contract to suit himself and deceives himself, the world and God. This practice of parties to a contract putting convenient interpretations on words or sentences is known in logic as the fallacy of the ambiguous middle.”

T11 Guj. adds “the meaning that one had in one’s mind being irrelevant or only partially relevant”.

T12 Guj. has a full stop here.

T13 For “which are”, Guj. has “Injustice is”.

T14 Guj. has : “He need not turn to scriptures for that.”

T16 Guj. does not have “according to the golden rule”.

T17 Guj. adds “for the propagation of”.

T18 Guj. adds : “I was thus like a convert to a new religion.”

CHAPTER XVIII (pp. 54-6)

T1 Guj. has “I thought I would be acquiescing in injustice by refraining from taking part in it”.

T2 Guj. does not have “of vegetarian fame”.

T3 Guj. has “anti-social”.

T4 For “Mr. Hills was entitled, as a puritan, to oppose him”, Guj. has “Mr. Hills’s opposition to them was based on pure moral principles”.

T5 Guj. has “pure injustice”.

T6 For “vegetarian society”, Guj. has “a society dedicated to the promotion of vegetarianism”.

T7 Guj. has “simply because he did not believe in pure moral principles”.

T8 Guj. has : “It appeared to me that Mr. Hills’s views regarding sexual practices of members of the Vegetarian Society were his personal views and had nothing to do with its principles. The object of the society”.

T9 For “views on other morals”, Guj. has “disrespect for any number of other moral principles”.

T10 For “set down”, Guj. has “give”.

T11 Guj. adds “to the President”.

T12 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T13 Guj. adds “but I only succeeded in making myself ridiculous”.

T14 Guj. adds “and significant”.

T15 For “I never completely overcame it”, Guj. has “I cannot say even now that I have completely overcome it”.

T16 Guj. adds : “I hesitated when speaking.”

T17 Guj. has “felt embarrassed”.

T18 Guj. adds “or unweighed”.

T19 For “silence is necessary in order to surmount it’, Guj. has “economy of speech is necessary even for escaping such dangers”.

T20 Guj. has “mature”.

T21 For “discernment of”, Guj. has “faithful adherence to”.

CHAPTER XIX (pp. 57-9)

T1 Guj. has “such friendships”.

T2 For “may even be”, Guj. has “is even considered”.

T3 For “was married and”, Guj has “had been married for four or five years and was”.

T4 Guj. does not have this word.

T5 & T6 Guj. has “shyness”.

T7 Guj. adds “at least as a matter of courtesy”.

T8 Guj. has “By way of such courtesy my”.

T9 Guj. adds : “But I did not have the courage to suggest that we should return.”

T10 For “struggling to get down”, Guj has “still thinking how to get down”.

T11 Guj. has : “I am sure she must have had nothing but the good of us both in her mind.”

T12 For the preceding two sentences, Guj. has : “But you would naturally wish to see me engaged with somebody. Even in order that the idea may not grow in your mind, I must tell you the truth.”

CHAPTER XX (pp. 60-2)

T1 Guj. has “After I had been a year or so”.

T2 Guj. has “towards the end of”.

T3 Guj. has “spirit of the original”.

T4 For “introduced me too”, Guj. has “took me into the presence of”.

T5 For “of my own”, Guj. has “about”.

T6 For “belong to any religious body”, Guj. has “join any sect”.

T7 Guj. has “Christianity”.

T8 Guj. has “My intellect compared”.

T9 Guj. has “That religion consists in renunciation”.

T10 Guj. has “pamphlet”.

CHAPTER XXI (pp. 62-4)

T1 Guj. has “the principles of religion”.

T2 Guj. has “the”.

T3 For “I should have known that it would not be enough to save me in my trials”, Guj. has “such knowledge is not enough to save one in one’s trials”.

T4 Guj. has “scriptures”.

T5 Guj. adds “soon”.

T6 Guj. has : “But I have had that experience in many different spheres of life.”

T7 Guj. has “many of”.

T8 Guj. has : “It is by its very nature a mysterious thing.”

T9 Guj. adds “heart-felt”.

T10 Guj. has : “But to deserve such grace one must have perfect humility.”

CHAPTER XXII (pp. 64-7)

T1 Guj. adds “the late”.

T2 Guj. does not have this clause.

T3 Guj. has : “Let others give more after me.”

T4 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T5 Guj. adds “without having studied their grammar”.

T6 Guj. adds : “The house was indeed a mansion.”

T7 Guj. has : “He welcomed Narayan Hemchandra.”

T8 Guj. has : “Narayan Hemchandra ordered me to translate these sentences into English.”

T9 Guj. has “the reader will remember that I used to keep changing my lodgings”.

T10 Guj. has “arrested”.

CHAPTER XXIII (pp. 67-9)

T1 Guj. has “used to”.

T2 Guj. has “I have read about”.

T3 In Guj., the sentence ends here.

T4 Guj. has “There was no noise and there was always”.

T5 Guj. has “*shakti*”.

T6 Guj. adds : “After visiting an exhibition one also reads accounts of it.” After this Guj. does not have “But”.

T7 Guj. adds “Tolstoy had declared that”.

T8 Guj. adds “certainly”.

CHAPTER XXIV (pp. 69-71)

T1 Guj. has “if we have not become ‘civilized’ ”.

T2 Guj. adds : “The taste of champagne is believed to be in a class by itself.”

T3 For “had a table all to themselves”, Guj. has “sat at a distance like ‘untouchables’”.

T4 Guj. adds “slow-changing”.

T5 Guj. adds “brief ”.

T6 Guj. has “Examinations with such facilities”.

T7 Guj. adds “law”.

T8 Guj. adds “by paying two and a half shillings”.

T9 For this paragraph, Guj. has : “I had studied laws, but I felt that I had learnt nothing which would help me to practise as a lawyer.”

T10 Guj. has “agony”.

CHAPTER XXV (pp. 71-3)

T1 For “Legal Maxims”, Guj. has “many moral maxims in law”.

T2 For “was one of them”, Guj has “is a moral injunction”.

T3 Guj. has “had said”.

T4 Guj. has “sinful”.

PART II

CHAPTER I (pp. 74-6)

T1 Guj. does not have “to receive me back into her bosom”.

T2 For the preceding two sentences, Guj. has : “I wish to draw a veil over my grief.”

T3 Guj. adds “and manager”.

T4 For the following sentence, Guj. has “for success lies in finding the Guru”.

T5 For the preceding three sentences, Guj. has : “The theory implies that it is the right of every seeker to strive ceaselessly to make himself deserving of a Guru. The reward of such effort is in the hands of God.”

T6 In Guj., the following sentence begins with “It will suffice here to state that”.

CHAPTER II (pp. 76-9)

T1 Guj. has “position”.

T2 Guj. adds “I knew with certainty that”.

T3 Guj. has “behaved respectfully towards them”.

T4 Guj. adds “officially”.

T5 For “all these good things are”, Guj. has “this sweet fruit is”.

T6 For “she had to suffer for”, Guj. has “I vented on her the anger caused by”.

T7 Guj. adds “tea”.

T8 Guj. adds “or for use as medicine”.

T9 Guj. has “socks”.

T10 Guj. has : “I sanctified the home by introducing coat and trousers.”

T11 For “a qualified *vakil*”, Guj. has *“vakils* trained in Rajkot”.

T12 Guj. does not have “but as a member of the household”.

T13 Guj. does not have “and with Ravishankar began to run the kitchen”.

CHAPTER III (pp. 79-81)

T1 Guj. adds “said above that I”.

T2 In Guj., the sentence ends here. For the following “and read”, the Guj. has “I read”.

T3 For “I took up”, Guj. has “as fate would have it I chanced to get”.

T4 In Guj., the sentence ends here. Thereafter, for “not knowing” Guj. has “I do not remember”.

T5 Guj. has “Barrister”.

T6 In Guj., the para begins : “But my worry went on increasing.” (The Guj. has *udyoga*, which means, work or industry, but this seems to be a misprint for *udvega*, meaning worry).

CHAPTER IV (pp. 81-4)

T1 Guj. has “remain unconcerned about”.

T2 For “was perhaps deserved”, Guj. has “it was correct”.

T3 Guj. has “taking on”.

T4 Guj. has “I could not forget the insult. However, I profited by it.”

CHAPTER V (pp. 84-6)

T1 For “some work there in the shape of securing more”, Guj. has “to try and secure some”.

T2 Guj. does not have this word.

CHAPTER VI (pp. 86-8)

T1 Guj. adds “for a month”.

T2 Guj. adds “felt happy and”.

T3 Guj does not have the preceding clause.

CHAPTER VII (pp. 88-91)

T1 Guj. has “disturbed”.

T2 Guj. does not have “like that of the Europeans”.

T3 Guj. adds : “There was no other work besides that connected with the case and the work of the clerks.”

T4 Guj. does not have this clause.

T5 Guj. has “courage”.

T6 Guj. does not have “and it became a common appellation for all Indians”.

T7 Guj. has : “When and why I felt it off, we shall see towards the end.”

CHAPTER VIII (pp. 91-4)

T1 Guj. has “I saw that I would have to begin from the A B C of the subject”.

T2 For “the other party”, Guj. has “all the people”.

T3 Guj. has : “I should like to win the friendship of the other party.”

T4 For “permitted to travel”, Guj. has “given a seat”.

T5 For “had taken”, Guj. has “took”.

T6 For “to Pretoria”, Guj. has “and proceed farther at any cost”.

CHAPTER IX (pp. 95-8)

T1 Guj. has “men”.

T2 Guj. has “the Transvaal”.

CHAPTER XI (pp. 101-4)

T1 Guj. has “Quaker”.

T2 Guj. adds : “We became close friends.”

T3 Guj. adds : “I would tell Mr. Coates all about that.”

T4 Guj has : “It is His word that He washes away the sins of those who believe in Him.”

T5 Guj. has : “Sin is inescapable”.

T6 Guj. has “supreme sacrifice”.

T7 Guj. has “freedom”.

T8 Guj. has “I seek freedom”.

CHAPTER XIV (pp. 109-11)

T1 Guj. adds “and of book-keeping”.

T2 In Guj., this para begins with : “I worked very hard.”

T3 Guj. has “discussions”.

T4 Guj. has : “Should it be allowed to continue to be fought out in court, it could be prolonged as long as one wished and that would be to the advantage of neither party.”

T5 For “to pay in moderate instalments”, Guj. has “sufficient time”.

CHAPTER XV (pp. 111-4)

T1 Guj. does not have the preceding clause.

T2 Guj. has “acquiring for myself the label of”.

T3 For “could be God Himself ”, Guj. has “could become God”.

T4 Guj. has “Christian belief”.

T5 Guj. has “renunciation; a great soul”.

T6 For “the most perfect man ever born”, Guj. has “*advitiya*, one without a second”.

T7 Guj. has “renunciation”.

CHAPTER XVI (pp. 114-6)

T1 Guj. has “Who can foresee tomorrow ?”, and it is followed by a couplet which says :

> “We cannot be sure even of
> the next moment in this world,
> Know this, mind. Who can then
> foresee tomorrow ?”

T2 Guj. adds : “What help can they give ? What can they understand about these problems ?

T3 Guj. has “your”.

T4 Guj. has English word “franchise” spelt as “farenchise”, and adds in brackets : “(A good many English words had thus been corrupted and become current among Indians. If anybody used the word ‘*matadhikar*’ nobody would understand it.)”

T5 Guj. has “settling down”.

CHAPTER XVII (pp. 116-20)

T1 Guj. adds “indifference and”.

T2 Guj. has “sent”.

T3 Guj. adds “at length”.

T4 Guj. has “public leaders”.

T5 Guj. has : “Copies were also sent to leaders of all parties in England.”

T6 Guj. adds “then”.

T7 For “we should like you to draw”, Guj. has “we can afford to let you have”.

T8 Guj. adds : “I would not put such a high price on my public service.”

T9 Guj. does not have these words.

CHAPTER XVIII (pp. 120-2)

T1 Guj. has “Black Collar”.

T2 Guj. adds : “But the court proved itself worthy of its symbol on this occasion.”

T3 For “The law makes”, Guj. has “Rules of the court make”.

T4 Guj. has : “But all my life through, resistance has always been accompanied by yielding.”

T5 Guj. adds “again and again.”

CHAPTER XX (pp. 126-7)

T1 Guj. has : “I learnt all about him through my clerk who knew Tamil.”

CHAPTER XXI (pp. 128-30)

T1 Guj. has “prepared a bill”.

T2 Guj. adds “that is of Rs. 375”.

T3 Guj. has “bill”.

T4 For “reduced it to £3”, Guj. has “would have accepted only £3”.

T5 Guj. has : “In any case it was injurious to the interests of India.”

T6 Guj. adds “(from Rs. 375 to Rs. 45)”.

T7 Guj. does not have this word.

CHAPTER XXII (pp. 130-2)

T1 Guj. has “my *jijnasa*, thirst for spiritual knowledge”.

T2 Guj. does not have “effected” and “by his religious studies”.

T3 Guj. has “exercises in *pranayama* [breath control] recomended by Hindu religion”.

T4 Guj. has “filled with the spirit of devotion”.

T5 Guj. has “story”.

T6 Guj. has “I made fun”.

T7 Guj. has : “The poor lady was pained.”

T8 Guj. has : “I understood.”

T9 Guj. adds “resolved to be careful”.

T10 For “my boy is none the better for your company”, Guj. has “your company is beginning to have a bad effect on my boy”.

T11 Guj. has : “I cannot afford this.”

T12 Guj. has “Your discussions are all right among”.

T13 Guj has “mother”.

CHAPTER XXIII (pp. 133-5)

T1 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T2 Guj. has : “The servant was always a problem for me, for I did not know how to treat anyone as a servant.

T3 Guj. does not have this clause.

T4 In Guj., the succeeding sentence reads : “As I had kept him to look after the needs of the friends it was necessary to procure another during his absence.”

T5 Guj. has : “I told her : ‘Please sister, leave this house at once and never step into it again.”’

T6 Guj. has : “My trust did not deserve this return.”

T7 Guj. has “deceived me”.

T8 Guj. has “send for”.

T9 Guj. has : “The incident purged my life of much impurity.”

T10 Guj. has : “Only now could I see clearly how this companion was a cause of *moha* in me and was an evil influence.”

T11 Guj. has : “If the accident described above had not opened my eyes and I had not discovered the truth, I should probably never have been able to dedicate myself to service as I have done. My dedication would always have remained incomplete because the companion would have obstructed my progress.”

T12 Guj. has : “But who can harm a person whom Rama protects ?”

T13 Guj. has : “After doing this service, the cook begged leave of me that very moment.”

CHAPTER XXIV (pp. 135-7)

T1 Guj. adds: “in public work. I also feel it.”

T2 For “very few”, Guj. has “many”, but the *Navajivan* instalment which appeared on 24-10-1926 has “few”.

T3 Guj. does not have “who read Urdu with me”.

T4 Guj. adds “and study”.

T5 Guj. does not have “Tamil or Telugu”.

T6 Guj. has “Madrasi Indians”.

T7 Guj. has “Madrasis among the Dravidians”.

T8 Guj. has : “My vegetarian food had been the cause of this friendship and this religious discussion.”

CHAPTER XXV (pp. 137-40)

T1 Guj. has “sauntering”.

T2 Guj. does not have “on the situation in South Africa”.

T3 Guj. adds “written in Natal”.

T4 Guj. does not have “but exaggerated”.

T5 Guj. does not have “when they had no school”.

T6 Guj. adds “for the first time”.

T7 For “upper ten”, Guj. has “officials and politicians”.

T8 Guj. has “permission to have a look at their latrines”.

T9 Guj. adds. “It was like going into a living hell daily.”

T10 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T11 Guj. does not have “in the upper class quarters”.

T12 For “suggest whatever improvements we liked”, Guj. has “to carry out whatever improvements he could”.

CHAPTER XXVI (pp. 140-3)

T1 Guj. has “Loyalty and Nursing”.

T2 Guj. does not have the words “to the British Constitution”.

T3 Guj. has “God Save the King”.

T4 Guj. adds “and administration”.

T5 Guj. has “British National Anthem, ‘God Save the King’ ”.

T6 For “whenever it was sung”, Guj. has “when it was sung at meetings”.

T7 For “I carefully watered and tended it”, Guj. has “it grew up”.

T8 Guj. has “God Save the King”.

T9 Guj. does not have “as Emperor of India”.

T10 Guj. has “singing of the Anthem”.

T11 For “my sentiments of ahimsa”, Guj. has “me”.

T12 Guj. has “relatives”.

T13 Guj. adds “specially”.

T14 For “He agreed”, Guj. has “They were pleased”.

T15 Guj. has “hobby”.

T16 Guj. has : “I have described my inclination for service as hobby because I have realized that such virtues endure only if they become a source of joy.”

CHAPTER XXVII (pp. 143-5)

T1 Guj. adds a separate paragraph as follows : “Sir Pherozeshah instructed Mr. Munshi to collect the speech from me at that hour and get it printed during the night, and bade me good-bye.”

T2 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T3 In Guj., the sentence ends at “resolve”, and thereafter it reads : “The reason for his swerving from his resolve was a Parsi sister.”

T4 Guj. has “he had developed such an independent spirit that he would yield to nobody through fear”.

T5 For “I became firmer in my resolve”, Guj. has “I felt that even from his point of view I should cling to it”.

CHAPTER XXVIII (pp. 145-7)

T1 Guj. has “In Poona”.

T2 Guj. adds : “You will, of course, meet Prof. Gokhale.”

T3 Guj. has “and there was risk of being drowned in the sea.”

T4 Guj. does not have “exultantly happy”.

T5 Guj. adds “if invited”.

T6 Guj. adds “in Madras”.

T7 Guj. has “I had met Sjt. G. Subramaniam of *The Hindu* too, and he”.

CHAPTER XXIX (pp. 147-9)

T1 Guj. does not have “gave me a cold reception and”.

T2 Guj. has “as they left one after another”.

T3 Guj. has “were aware of”.

T4 Guj. does not have “the proof of which he sent me in advance”.

T5 In Guj., the sentence ends here and is followed by : “He asked me to write to him even after I had returned to South Africa and promised to do his best. He”.

T6 Guj. does not have “before he began to sympathize with my cause”.

T7 Guj. adds “more than”.

PART III

CHAPTER I (pp. 150-2)

T1 Guj. does not have “in the course of this narrative”.

T2 For “attendance upon him”, Guj. has “to his tune”.

T3 Guj. does not have this clause.

T4 Guj. does not have “for these signs of civilization”.

T5 Guj. adds “stockings and”.

T6 For “to think of the one and only God’, Guj. has “sincerely to think of God”.

T7 Guj. has “*bhajans*”.

T8 Guj. has “I can say that I had little fear of the storm or at any rate less than anybody else”.

CHAPTER II (pp. 152-4)

T1 In this paragraph in Guj., Gandhiji speaks of “Dada Abdulla” and not of “and Co.”.

T2 For “an unequal”, Guj. has “a”.

T3 Guj. adds : “Threats had already been held out to the Agent.”

T4 Guj. has : “A dinner is always followed by speeches.”

T5 Guj. adds “even”.

T6 Guj. adds “saying and”.

T7 For “enter Natal”, Guj. has “cling to our rights”.

T8 Guj. adds “that is, on January 13, 1897”.

CHAPTER III (pp. 154-8)

T1 Guj. adds “on my own responsibility”.

T2 Guj. adds “for your life”.

T3 Guj. adds “on the main road”.

T4 Guj. has : “The moment she saw me, she came up and opened her parasol though there was no sun then.”

T5 Guj. does not have this word.

T6 Guj. adds “or for all the three reasons ?”

T7 Guj. has : “Who can say for certain that I was right both when I landed from the steamer bravely and when subsequently, faced with real danger, I escaped in disguise ?”

T8 Guj. does not have this clause.

T9 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T10 Guj. does not have this clause.

T11 For “is the use of”, Guj. has “would I gain by”.

T12 In Guj., this paragraph reads : “My views on this subject are fixed. I have decided not to prosecute anybody, and I wish to give that in writing to you right now.”

CHAPTER IV (pp. 158-61)

T1 For “as he gave his time to public work”, Guj. has “as he now gave more of his time to public work”.

T2 Guj. has : “I thought that if the Congress had a permanent fund, so that it might procure property of its own and then carry on its work out of the rent of the property, it would not have to worry about its future.”

T3 For “long before this difference arose”, Guj. has “even while I was in South Africa”.

T4 Guj. has : “And now after considerable experience of being responsible for the establishment and management of many public institutions which I have managed, it has become my firm conviction that no public institution should try to maintain itself on permanent funds.”

CHAPTER V (pp. 161-3)

T1 Guj. adds : “Education through Gujarati was not possible there.”

T2 Guj. has “I”.

T3 Guj. adds “most of the time”.

T4 For “broke away from me”, Guj. has “left South Africa on his own”.

T5 Guj. adds “and would not have learnt the lessons of self-reliance that they did”.

T6 Guj. has “On the contrary I have always felt that the painful result”.

T7 For “half-baked knowledge”, Guj. has “ignorance”.

T8 For “indulgence and inexperience”, Guj. has “ignorance”, and the following three sentences read : “He has on the contrary believed that that was the period when I was wise, and that the changes which took place later were undersirable and born of delusion. And well he might. Why should he not think that at that time I trod the royal road followed by the whole world and was, therefore, safe, whereas the changes effected later were signs of refined egotism and ignorance in me ?”

T9 Guj. has “if my sons had become barristers or got degrees ?”

T10 Guj. has “I have also made myself,or helped other people to make other experiments”.

T11 Guj. does not have this word.

T12 Guj has "Had I been without a sense of self-respect and not cherished the idea that I should not desire for my children what other Indian children could not get".

CHAPTER VI (pp. 163-5)

T1 Guj. has "bodily service".

T2 Guj. has "courage".

T3 Guj. adds "a paid compounder or voluntary worker was required".

T4 Guj. adds "and even now is".

T5 Guj. adds "younger".

T6 Guj. adds "both".

T7 Guj. adds "I can say from experience that".

T8 For "are reproduced in", Guj. has "have an effect on".

T9 Guj. adds "her diet and".

T10 Guj. adds "being helpless".

T11 Guj. has : "I think it is the height of ignorance to believe that sexual gratification is its own end."

CHAPTER VII (pp. 165-8)

T1 Guj. has : "It is time now to turn to the subject of *brahmacharya*."

T2 Guj. does not have this word.

T3 Guj. has "read this out".

T4 Guj. adds "male".

T5 Guj. adds "also".

T6 Guj. adds "and enslaved by all manner of passions".

CHAPTER VIII (pp. 168-71)

T1 Guj. has "But I could clearly see it as my duty, my motives were pure and I launched forth".

T2 For "had led to that goal", Guj. has "had been a preparation for it".

T3 Guj. has : "For *brahmacharya* was now to be no process of hard penance, but had to be made a source of joy."

T4 Guj. adds "therefore".

T5 Guj. does not have "in South Africa".

T6 Guj. adds "voluntarily".

T7 Gaj. has "And then they complain that fasting".

T8 Guj. has "is filled with".

T9 Guj. adds "though of much help".

T10 Guj. adds "complete".

T11 Guj. has "to pray to the Rama enthroned in the temple of his heart".

T12 Guj. has "Both eat but the one only to give the temple of God its hire".

T13 Guj. adds “all”.

T14 Guj. has “the millions”.

T15 Guj. has : “Nevertheless, if the *atman* exists, control of the mind also is possible.”

T16 Guj. has “and I had believed in my pride”.

T17 Guj. has “such *brahmacharya* as I have described”.

CHAPTER IX (pp. 171-3)

T1 Guj. does not have this clause.

T2 Guj. adds : “It was to be his most important speech in South Africa. He, therefore, wished to wear the scarf.”

T3 Guj. has “I would not let you try your skill as washerman on this scarf ”.

T4 Guj. has “I got an opportunity to throw”.

T5 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T6 Guj. adds “went to a shop and”.

T7 For “spoiled the back”, Guj. has “found it extremely difficult to cut the hair on the back and in spite of my effort did not succeed in cutting it evenly”.

CHAPTER X (pp. 173-5)

T1 Guj. has “shall”.

T2 Guj. has “act according to”.

T3 Guj. does not have this word.

T4 Guj. does not have “and through”.

T5 Guj. has “also”.

T6 Guj. has “With the help of Dr. Booth and accompanied by him”.

T7 Guj. has “also got an opportunity”.

T8 For “had no hesitation”, Guj. has “were only too eager to do this”.

T9 Guj. adds “and on one occasion we had to do that”.

CHAPTER XI (pp. 175-6)

T1 Guj. has “municipal officials”.

T2 Guj. adds “from the local Government”.

T3 For “mortal persecution”, Guj. has : “a threat to his life”.

T4 For “what the reformer holds dear as life itself ”, Guj. has “or at any rate remain indifferent to what he believes to be reform ?”

T5 Guj. has : “Thus service of the Indians in South Africa taught me a number of lessons one after another.”

T6 Guj. adds : “There is no limit to this.”

CHAPTER XII (pp. 176-9)

T1 For “farewell was overwhelming”, Guj. has “gifts and the scenes at the farewell meetings oppressed me”.

T2 Guj. adds “like a man beside his wits”.

T3 Guj. has “remain unaffected by”.

T4 Guj. has “personal”.

CHAPTER XIII (pp. 179-82)

T1 Guj. has “pitying”.

T2 For “left them at the next stop”, Guj. has “the moment the train stopped at the next station I hurried out and ran back to my compartment”.

T3 Guj. adds “and training”.

T4 Guj. has : “Even here I had fairly good experience of what Akha Bhagat has described as ‘a superfluous limb’. A good many people believed in untouchability.”

CHAPTER XIV (pp. 182-3)

T1 Guj. adds “even”.

T2 Guj. adds “evidently pleased”.

T3 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T4 Guj. has “and did not feel prejudiced against anyone”.

CHAPTER XV (pp. 183-5)

T1 Guj. has “unnerved”.

T2 Guj. has “was oppressed by the thought”.

T3 For “lightning speed”, Guj. has “at the speed of today’s aeroplane”.

CHAPTER XVI (pp. 185-6)

T1 In Guj., Gandhiji speaks of a “Raja or Maharaja”.

T2 Guj. adds “a long shirt, a turban”.

T3 Guj. has “was told by someone”.

T4 Guj. adds “or any other function”.

CHAPTER XVII (pp. 186-9)

T1 Guj. has “it was probably”.

T2 For “in his speech”, Guj. has “on that occasion”.

CHAPTER XVIII (pp. 189-91)

T1 For “I was glad to find”, Guj. has “I found”.

T2 Guj. has “a river”.

T3 Guj. has : “I felt very much oppressed”.

T4 Guj. has “We believe that the sheep”.

T5 Guj. adds “a great deal”.

T6 Guj. has “idealism”.

CHAPTER XIX (pp. 191-3)

T1 Guj. has "Having seen as much of the Brahmo Samaj as I could".

T2 For "I came to know of", Guj. has "I read".

T3 Guj. adds "short".

CHAPTER XX (pp. 193-7)

T1 Guj. has : "The third-class compartments were practically as dirty, and the closet arrangements as bad, then as they are today."

T2 Guj. has "seemed to be".

T3 Guj. has "whereas I have never found the regulation limit observed."

T4 Guj. adds "throwing left-overs on the floor".

T5 Guj. adds "foul".

T6 Guj. has : "The woes of mahatmas are known only to mahatmas like myself"

CHAPTER XXI (pp. 197-9)

T1 Guj. has a question-mark after the title.

T2 For "assisted to found", Guj. has "created".

T3 Guj. has "I also wished to do that".

T4 Guj. has "Some *vakil* friends had wired to me".

CHAPTER XXII (pp. 199-201)

T1 Guj. adds "if the boy died".

T2 Guj. has "It would be enough for God if I gave".

T3 Guj. adds "in cold water".

T4 Guj. has "had been reassured and so".

CHAPTER XXIII (201-3)

T1 Guj. has "seemed".

T2 Guj. has "thought it best to leave".

T3 Guj. has : "I wanted that those members who wished to become independent should be encouraged to do so."

T4 Guj. adds "(so I presume)".

T5 For "settled establishment", Guj. has "carefully built nest".

PART IV

CHAPTER I (pp. 204-5)

T1 Guj. adds "if possible".

T2 Guj. adds : "South Africa is not a small province. It is a country, a continent. Africa consists of a number of sub-continents."

CHAPTER II (pp. 206-7)

T1 Guj. adds “for a temporary period”.

T2 Guj. adds “one clause of 01”.

CHAPTER III (pp. 207-9)

T1 Guj. has “I liked this spirited”.

T2 Guj. adds “the late”.

T3 For “in the legal quarters of the city”, Guj. has “in a good locality”.

CHAPTER V (pp. 211-3)

T1 Guj. has : “It became a spiritual dictionary for me.”

CHAPTER VI (213-5)

T1 Guj. adds “clients and”.

T2 Guj. has “and in consequence your public work will suffer.”

CHAPTER VII (pp. 215-6)

T1 For “see me”, Guj. has “take me back”.

T2 Guj. adds “wet”.

CHAPTER VIII (pp. 217-9)

T1 Guj. adds “and my views on that subject”.

T2 Guj. does not have “who have never seen *Indian Opinion*”.

T3 Guj. adds “and shame”.

T4 Guj. has “discrimination in diet both as to what he will accept and what reject is as essential as discrimination in thought and speech”.

T5 Guj. has : “In a matter, however, where my theory has failed me, I should not only not advise them to follow it but actually dissuade them from doing so.”

T6 Guj. has “any *vaidya*, doctor or *hakim* or anybody else”.

CHAPTER IX (pp. 219-21)

T1 Guj. adds “kind and”.

T2 For “not to thwart them”, Guj. has “to help them”.

CHAPTER X (pp. 221-3)

T1 Guj. has “Atonement”.

T2 Guj. has “*Panchama*”.

T3 Guj. has “but to clean this one”.

T4 Guj. has : “But I was a cruel as well as loving husband.”

T5 Guj. adds “also”.

T6 Guj. has : “I had forgotten God, and the spring of compassion had dried up in me.”

T7 Guj. does not have “with the intention of pushing her out”.

T8 For this and the previous sentence, Guj. has : “You have no sense of shame, but I have. Have some sense of decency.”

T9 Guj. has : “If anybody sees us, both of us will be disgraced.”

T10 Guj. has : “Kasturba can, if she wills, take me to task for anything.”

T11 Guj. has “the practice of *brahmacharya*”.

T12 Guj. has “From 1900 onwards these ideas”.

T13 Guj. adds “or that there is no blemish in my wife”.

T14 Guj. has “spiritual progress”.

CHAPTER XI (pp. 223-5)

T1 For the preceding three sentences, Guj. has : “I may say that I write just as the *antaryami* [the Dweller within] moves me at the time of writing. I do not claim to know definitely that all movements of my mind are directed by the *antaryami*. But on an examination of all the steps I have taken in my life—those that have been regarded as the greatest and those that can be described as the least—I have not thought it wrong to say that all of them were directed by the *antaryami*.”

T2 Guj. does not have this clause.

T3 Guj. has “that invisible *antaryami*”.

T4 For “write something by way of a preface”, Guj. has “narrate that sacred recollection”.

T5 Guj. adds “and difficulty”.

T6 Guj. does not have “being tendered by me of certain events in my life”.

T7 Guj. has “so I started having”.

T8 Guj. has “friends’ stay”.

CHAPTER XII (pp. 225-7)

T1 Guj. adds “who would not object to serve under a coloured man”.

T2 Guj. has “In South Africa stenographers and typists are mostly women”.

T3 Guj. adds “to speak roughly to her or”.

T4 For “often entrusted”, Guj. has “at one time even entrusted”.

T5 Guj. has : “She feared nobody.”

T6 Guj. adds “and hardly any responsible person was left outside”.

T7 Guj. adds “and the skill”.

CHAPTER XIII (pp. 227-9)

T1 Guj. adds “and help”.

T2 Guj. adds : “It has always been my lot to run papers from a distance.”

T3 Guj. adds : “This gave me some relief.”

T4 In Guj., there is a full stop after ‘shades’ and the subsequent clause goes with the next sentence.

CHAPTER XIV (pp. 229-32)

T1 Guj. adds “like the Hindus”.

T2 Guj. adds “I believe”.

T3 Guj. adds “and other Colonies”.

T4 The preceding three sentences in Guj. read : “These were not well educated Indians who knew the rules of municipal sanitation and hygiene and, therefore, could do without the help or supervision of the municipality. If those who went there had all been men who could transform a desert into a garden or convert dust into wealth, theirs would have been a different story. But we do not know anywhere large numbers of people of this type going to foreign lands.”

T5 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T6 Guj. adds “especially”.

CHAPTER XV (pp. 232-3)

T1 Guj. does not have the rest of this sentence.

T2 Guj. has “a big”.

T3 Guj. has “inspired”.

T4 For “Gunvantrai Desai and another”, Guj. has “and two other Indians”.

T5 Guj. adds “four”.

T6 Guj. adds : “The night passed somehow.”

T7 For “for me”, Guj. has “according to me”1

CHAPTER XVI (pp. 234-6)

T1 For “two surviving”, Guj. has “three”.

T2 For “contact of friends”, Guj. has “contact with others”

T3 Guj. adds “if you can come out”.

CHAPTER XVII (pp. 236-7)

T1 For “and do its worst”, Guj. has “to enforce its will”.

T2 For “song and mirth”, Guj. has “*bhajans* and games”.

CHAPTER XVIII (pp. 238-9)

T1 Guj. has “must have led”.

T2 Guj. does not have “and the handicraftsman”.

CHAPTER XIX (pp. 240-1)

T1 Guj. has “In the morning, I first talked over the thing”.

T2 For “one of my cousins”, Guj. has “a nephew of mine.”

T3 Guj. adds “After a few days”.

T4 Guj. prefixes “When the main building was ready” to this sentence.

T5 Guj. has “thirteen”.

T6 Guj. adds “perfect”.

T7 Guj. does not have “the changes made”.

CHAPTER XX (pp. 241-3)

T1 Guj. adds “as it would not be possible to repair the big machine if it failed”.

T2 Guj. has “The size, therefore, was changed to that of an ordinary weekly”.

T3 Guj. has “and we are all tired”.

CHAPTER XXI (pp. 243-5)

T1 Guj. adds : “I have always believed that he himself probably did not know his latent ability.”

T2 For “constructed nest”, Guj. has “established family”.

T3 Guj. adds “eagerly”.

CHAPTER XXII (pp. 245-7)

T1 Guj. adds “and settling there”.

T2 Guj. does not have “as soon as we reached home”.

T3 Guj. has “What else could I do”.

T4 Guj. adds “the future”.

T5 Guj. has “Christmas Day”.

T6 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T7 Guj. has “and so I made it my business to get”.

CHAPTER XXIII (pp. 247-50)

T1 In Guj., the title reads : “Changes in the Home and Children’s Education”.

T2 Guj. adds “because of their deficiency in this regard”.

T3 Guj. adds : “In the office they would talk with clients and clerks, read whatever was put into their hands, run errands or do shopping fo the home.”

T4 Guj. does not have “not want of care on my part”.

T5 Guj. adds “and the world”.

CHAPTER XXIV (pp. 250-2)

T1 Guj. has : “It has been my lot never to settle down to a steady life after setting up a home.”

T2 Guj. has “correctness of the term ‘rebellion’ ”.

T3 Guj. has : “But I then believed that the British Empire was beneficial to the world.”

T4 Guj. has “The ethical propriety or otherwise of the use of force”.

T5 Guj. adds “in an emergency”.

CHAPTER XXV (pp. 252-4)

T1 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T2 Guj. adds “miles and miles of”.

T3 Guj. has : “In a word, I could not ride two horses simultaneously.”

T4 For “the fray”, Guj. has “this service”.

T5 In Guj., the succeeding two sentences read : “The enlargement of the family which results from not observing *brahmacharya* would be an obstacle to one’s work for the uplift of society. If one observes *brahmacharya* even in the married state, service of the family would not stand in the way of public service.”

T6 Guj. does not have “fairly”.

T7 Guj. adds “for the present I have come to the conclusion that”.

T8 In Guj., the two preceding sentences read : “In concluding this chapter I will only say that in the first flush of enthusiasm I found the observance quite easy.”

T1Guj. has : “Before the name satyagraha was invented, the thing had come into being.”

T2 Guj. adds “with the title ‘History of Satyagraha in South Africa’ ”.

T3 Guj. has “Gujarati”.

CHAPTER XXVII (pp. 255-7)

T1 Guj. adds “the utmost possible”.

T2 Guj. does not have “are not ashamed to”.

T3 Guj. does not have “for a few fleeting moments”.

T4 Guj. has : “It was thus necessary to set forth their object and the train of ideas which led up to them, in order that the dietetic experiments which I propose to describe at some length may be properly understood.”

CHAPTER XXVIII (pp. 257-60)

T1 Guj. does not have “or was about to commence”.

T2 For “had to perform”, the Guj. has “performed”.

T3 In Guj., the succeeding sentence begins with “After two or three days”.

T4 For “his medical morals”, Guj. has “the way he had acted”.

T5 For “I must have the option to give”, Guj. has “I will give”.

T6 Guj. does not have this word.

T7 Guj. adds : “I consulted him.”

T8 Guj. has “lap”.

T9 Guj. does not have “with such abominations”.

T10 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T11 Guj. has “He had heard of our obstinacy”.

T12 Guj. has : “Ultimately Kasturbai put an end to the dialogue thus.”

T13 For “my husband and children”, Guj. has “the father of my children”.

CHAPTER XXIX (pp. 260-2)

T1 Guj. gives the following foot-note here :

“ ‘My Jail Experiences’ have been published in book-form. They were orginally written in Gujarati and have been translated and published in English. So far as I know, both are available—M.K.G.”

T2 Guj. adds “by five o’clock”.

T3 Guj. adds “also”.

T4 Guj. adds “from experience”.

T5 Guj. adds “but I had not been able to give them up immediately”.

T6 For “them”, Guj. has “both these things”.

T7 For “did not resist them”, Guj. has “had no aversion to them either”.

T8 Guj. adds “other”.

T9 Guj. has “She was filled with remorse and exclaimed”.

T10 Guj. adds “after my return to India”.

T11 Guj. has “but I have no doubt that the exclusion of these two things is beneficial for self-control”.

CHAPTER XXX (pp. 262-4)

T1 Guj. has “meditation on”.

T2 Guj. adds : “These in turn affect the mind.”

CHAPTER XXXI (pp. 264-6)

T1 Guj. has “In this also Mr. Kallenbach”.

T2 Guj. has “beneficial effects”.

T3 Guj. has “Christians and Parsis”.

T4 Guj. has “the Mussalman youngsters”.

T5 Guj. adds “during the day”.

T6 Guj. does not have “as a means of self-restraint”.

T7 Guj. adds “on other occasions”.

CHAPTER XXXII (pp. 266-8)

T1 Guj. does not have "As the Farm grew".

T2 Guj. adds "when they got the opportunity".

T3 Guj. has "some measure of ".

T4 For "with one's work", Guj. has "while doing one's work".

T5 Guj. adds "we".

CHAPTER XXXIII (pp. 268-70)

T1 Guj. has "hours".

T2 Guj. adds "as a matter of principle".

T3 Guj. adds "to acquaint all with a little Hindi".

T4 In Guj., as it appeared in *Navajivan* on 1-1-1928, the sentence reads : "Besides, it was necessary to acquaint them a little with Gujarati, Hindi and Sanskrit and to teach them history, geography and arithmetic."

T5 Guj. adds "making them read by themselves".

T6 Guj. adds "immediately".

T7 Guj. has "when I myself, through fatigue or some other reason, was not dull or uninteresting".

CHAPTER XXXIV (pp. 270-2)

T1 Guj. has "And I held that children needed a great deal of help in acquiring this knowledge".

T2 Guj. has "alarmed".

T3 Guj. adds "similar".

CHAPTER XXXVI (pp. 273-5)

T1 For this and the preceding sentences, Guj. has : "After putting the remaining inmates of the Tolstoy Farm at Phoenix, I went to Johannesburg. After I had been there a few days, I received tidings of the terrible moral fall of two of the inmates of the Ashram. News of an apparent failure or reverse in the great satyagraha struggle never shocked me but this news came upon me like a thunderbolt. I was deeply pained."

T2 Guj. has : "During the journey my duty became clear to me or rather seemed to have become clear to me."

T3 Guj. has "finally".

T4 Guj. adds "I believe".

T5 Guj. has "I have no doubt at all about the teacher being largely responsible for the errors of his pupil".

CHAPTER XXXVII (pp. 275-6)

T1 For "came to a head", Guj. has "led to a heated argument".

T2 Guj. adds "similar".

T3 For "on reaching London I found that I was worse", Guj. has "after

reaching London I got worse".

CHAPTER XXXVIII (pp. 276-8)

T1 Guj. has "As the best satyagrahi".

T2 Guj. has "I would refuse to help".

T3 Guj. has "discussion".

T4 Guj. adds "and was appointed captain of our batch".

T5 For "them all", Guj. has "as many of them as possible".

CHAPTER XXXIX (pp. 278-80)

T1 For "much less should I be willing to", Guj. has "how could I".

T2 Guj. adds "while he lives in the body".

T3 For "that the very existence of society involves", Guj. has "committed by society".

T4 For "and that of my people", Guj. has "that is, of my people".

CHAPTER XL (pp. 280-3)

T1 Guj. does not have "what may be called miniature".

T2 Guj. has "honeyed".

T3 Guj. has "and so bring us all to grief".

T4 Guj. does not have "and decided upon withdrawal".

T5 Guj. adds "and make a success of the job".

T6 Guj. does not have this word.

T7 Guj. adds : "The India Office was displeased by this."

T8 In Guj., the following two sentences read : "I had come to know Mr. Roberts very well. He called on me and urged me to persuade the others to serve."

T9 For "making the best of a bad job", Guj. has "feeling miserable at my helpless condition".

CHAPTER XLI (pp. 284-5)

T1 Guj. has : "The complaint was taken to Gokhale."

T2 Guj. does not have this word.

T3 Guj. does not have "but firmly".

T4 Guj. has "October-November fogs".

CHAPTER XLII (pp. 285-7)

T1 Guj. adds "or crushed", but does not have the succeeding clause.

T2 Guj. adds "nor had I the necessary faith", but does not have the succeeding sentence.

T3 Guj. has "were".

T4 Guj. adds "after having tasted it only once".

CHAPTER XLIII (pp. 287-8)

T1 Guj. does not have “and of course wanted to sail by the same boat”.

T2 Guj. has “tried to get”.

T3 Guj. does not have “till we reached the Red Sea”.

T4 Guj. adds : “There was some distance during that voyage too, but I found the distance during this voyage something altogether different.”

T5 Guj. adds “and in South Africa”.

T6 Guj. has : “I had wished to return to the homeland in 1905, and it was such a joy to get back to it after a delay of ten years.”

CHAPTER XLIV (pp. 288-90)

T1 Guj. has “has become”.

T2 Guj. has “Even as a student”.

T3 For “my fees”, Guj. has “what I had earned by my work”.

T4 For “I built up such”, Guj. has “I had acquired”.

T5 Guj. has “some qualified accountant appointed by it”.

T6 Guj. has : “The opponents had appealed for the award to be set aside.”

T7 Guj. adds “if it discovers the error”.

T8 Guj. has “attempt to rectify the error”.

CHAPTER XLV (pp. 290-1)

T1 Guj. has “But the judges were not inclined to set aside the award of the arbitrators on account of such an evident slip”.

T2 Guj. adds “beyond measure”.

CHAPTER XLVI (pp. 292-3)

T1 Guj. adds : “The advocates could deal with clients only through their attorneys.”

T2 Guj. adds “and that his case was false”.

T3 Guj. adds “only”.

CHAPTER XLVII (pp. 293-5)

T1 Guj. adds “From imprisonment”.

T2 For “most of his affairs”, Guj. has “even most of his business affairs”.

T3 Guj. adds : “But I shall have to admit even the smuggling about which they are ignorant,”

T4 Guj. has “satisfied”.

T5 For “complete frankness”, Guj. has “truthfulness”.

T6 For “my persistence and frankness extorted from him the remark”, Guj. has “he gave me a testimonial”.

T7 Guj. adds : “I do not know how far they were right.”

PART V

CHAPTER I (pp. 296-7)

T1 Guj. adds “the head”.

T2 Guj. has “wrote”.

T3 For “the Phoenix party ”, Guj. has “my children”.

T4 Guj. has : “The reception was organized by the late Uttamlal Trivedi.”

T5 Guj. adds “in a very few words”.

T6 Guj. adds “other”.

CHAPTER II (pp. 297-9)

T1 Guj. has : “I want one promise from you.”

T2 Guj. does not have this word.

T3 For “theirs”, Guj. has “those of others and work in harmony with them”.

CHAPTER III (pp. 299-302)

T1 Guj. has “Bombay”.

T2 Guj. adds : “I had intended to wear, on returning to India, a Kathiawari dress and had kept it with me in South Africa.”

T3 In Guj., the sentence begins with “Since I was a public figure”.

T4 Guj. adds “and foul language”.

T5 Guj. adds “that is, after two years’ correspondence”.

T6 Guj. has “victory”.

T7 Guj. has : “A nation that wants to come into its own ought to possess the ultimate means of self-defence.”

CHAPTER IV (pp. 302-4)

T1 Guj. has “world-famous”.

T2 Guj. does not have “to mourn the national loss”.

T3 Guj. adds “for one year”.

T4 Guj. adds “to form or”.

T5 Guj. adds : “I intend to keep this promise literally.”

CHAPTER V (pp. 304-6)

T1 Guj. has : “But at last I got the ticket.”

T2 Guj. has “and here also the strong ones forced themselves in.”

T3 Guj. adds : “I could not join the fray.”

T4 Guj. has “some of the passengers”.

CHAPTER VI (pp. 306-7)

T1 Guj. has “My Efforts”.

T2 For “they felt”, Guj. has “they even felt that”.

T3 Guj. adds “by Gokhale”.

T4 For “a later date”, Guj. has “another meeting”.

T5 Guj. adds : “If a majority of the members voted against me, would I not be instrumental in putting the Society in an embarrassing position ?”

CHAPTER VII (pp. 307-10)

T1 Guj. adds “paying no attention to other people’s needs”.

T2 Guj. adds : “Giving *darshan* was an ordeal.”

T3 Guj. adds : “I did not get a moment’s privacy during all the time that I spent in the tent.”

T4 For “between the devil and the deep sea”, Guj. has “squeezed between the stones of the quern”.

T5 Guj. has : “It was a blessed day for me.”

T6 For this and the two succeeding sentences, Guj. has : “If the pilgrimage to Hardvar and to the Kumbha fair was not sinful, I must take some strict vow in atonement for the sin prevailing there and purify myself. My life is based on vows, and I, therefore, decided to take some really difficult vow.”

T7 Guj. does not have “who had so lavishly entertained me”.

T8 Guj. does not have “whilst in India”.

T9 Guj. does not have “I am able to testify that”.

CHAPTER VIII (pp. 310-3)

T1 Guj. adds “saw that we”.

T2 Guj. does not have “some distance from Hrishikesh”

T3 For “the bridge”, Guj. has “Hrishikesh”.

T4 Guj. adds “first up to Hrishikesh and thence up to Lakshman Jhula”.

T5 For “I felt deeply about matters of religion”, Guj. has “had a strong religious inclination”.

T6 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T7 Guj. has “Brahmins in Porbandar”.

T8 For “what was to me an unnecessary custom”, Guj. has “an external practice which was not customary in our family”.

T9 Guj. does not have this clause.

T10 Guj. adds : “I thus used to feel ashamed of the *shikha*.”

T11 Guj. has : “I doubt whether in the present state of Hinduism and of India, Hindus have a right to wear the sacred thread.”

T12 Guj. has “and shed a host of other age-old evils and get rid of the irreligion and frauds that have become rampant in it”.

T13 Guj. adds “and fear”.

T14 Guj. has : “On reaching Lakshman Jhula, I saw the iron suspension bridge over the Ganges.”

T15 Guj. has: “Nor did those who were in the main building produce a favourable impression on me.”

CHAPTER IX (pp. 313-5)

T1 In Guj., this paragraph reads : “So far as the accommodation was concerned, it was decided to hire the Kocharab bungalow of Sjt. Jiwanlal Desai, a barrister of Ahmedabad, who was the principal man in presuading me to settle in Ahmedabad.”

CHAPTER X (pp. 315-7)

T1 Guj. adds “whatever help we got or”.

T2 For “had to overcome”, Guj. has “cheerfully faced”.

CHAPTER XI (pp. 318-21)

T1 For “Abolition”, Guj. has “System”.

T2 For “a matter that engaged my attention”, Guj. has “the system of indentured emigration”.

T3 Guj. has “In 1914”.

T4 Guj. has : “But the system of indentured emigration from India had not yet been abolished.”

T5 Guj. has : “I felt, however, that a decision for immediate abolition of the system should be taken.”

T6 For “made no secret of ”, Guj. has “taken an opportunity to explain”.

T7 Guj. adds : “I could have no objection to their following me.”

T8 Guj. adds “an ordinary”.

T9 Guj. adds “and I don’t mind it”.

T10 Guj. has : “I remembered the saying, ‘Sweet are the fruits of patience’.”

T11 Guj. does not have “Delhi and thence”.

T12 For “potential satyagraha hastened the end”, Guj. has “pure satyagraha was the chief cause”.

CHAPTER XII (pp. 321-3)

T1 Guj. does not have “who paid us no attention”.

T2 Guj. has : “From Patna, I took the reins in my own hands.”

CHAPTER XIII (pp. 323-5)

T1 Guj. has “By taking such cases to court”.

T2 Guj. adds : “Sometimes he even failed in winning them.”

T3 Guj. adds : “Though they were self-sacrificing men, Brijkishorebabu and Rajendrababu felt no hesitation in charging fees.”

T4 Guj. adds “unbelievable”.

T5 Guj. has “ability”.

T6 Guj. adds “even”.

CHAPTER XIV (pp. 325-8)

T1 Guj. has “with the Goddess of Ahimsa”.

T2 Guj. adds “in the court”.

T3 Guj. has “now at an end”.

T4 Guj. adds “therefore”.

CHAPTER XV (pp. 328-30)

T1 Guj. adds “satyagraha or”.

T2 Guj. adds “Champaran and”.

T3 Guj. has “I knew that the Champaran planters had been displeased”

T4 Guj. has “blunted the points of their arrows”.

T5 For “think it proper to”, Guj. has “encourage any reporters to come or”.

T6 Guj. adds “from long experience”.

CHAPTER XVI (pp. 330-2)

T1 Guj. does not have “for the period”.

T2 For “of which, I am told, an English edition is now in the press”, Guj. has “and the translation brought out by the Yugadharma Press”.

T3 Guj. has “wired offering”.

T4 For “a few hundred”, Guj. has “500 to 1,000”.

T5 For “I appreciated their feeling in the matter”, Guj. has “they helped me to know their feelings”.

T6 Guj. adds : “Any statement that seemed *prima facie* to be improbable was also to be rejected.”

T7 Guj. adds : “All statements were recorded in their presence and hearing.”

CHAPTER XVII (pp. 333-5)

T1 Guj. has “Mrs. Anandibai from the South”. In Gujarat, Maharashtrians are often called ‘Southerners’.

T2 For “to some extent, reach”, Guj. has “also reach”.

CHAPTER XVIII (pp. 335-6)

T1 For “Dr. Dev was consulted”, Guj. has “the case was reserved for Dr. Deva”.

T2 Guj. has “amusing”.

T3 For “dislike for this work”, Guj. has “annoyance at suggestions for improvements”.

T4 Guj. adds “of women”.

T5 Guj. does not have “in which was one of our schools”.

CHAPTER XIX (pp. 336-8)

T1 Guj. has “The Brighter Side”.

T2 Guj. has “stop”.

T3 Guj. has “some of them”.

CHAPTER XX (pp. 338-40)

T1 Guj. has “capacity”.

T2 Guj. adds “for some time”.

T3 Guj. has : “To me the mill-hands’ case appeared strong.”

T4 Guj. has “who played the chief part in this great fight between the workers and mill-owners”.

T5 For “principle of arbitration”, Guj. has “propriety of intervention by arbitrators between them and workers”.

T6 For “during the strike”, Guj. has “if their resources were exhausted”.

T7 Guj. has “hundreds”.

T8 For “in peaceful procession”, Guj. has “and came to the meeting in procession”.

CHAPTER XXI (pp. 340-1)

T1 Guj. has : “The Ashram had, some day, to settle on ground of its own if it was to justify its description as an Ashram.”

T2 Guj. does not have “a merchant in Ahmedabad”.

T3 Guj. adds “as soon as possible”.

T4 Guj. adds “and all of them were fairly well infested by snakes”.

T5 For the sentence that follows, Guj. has “Though I am using human language to describe God’s ways,”.

T6 Guj. has “than his own childlike prattle”.

CHAPTER XXII (pp. 341-5)

T1 Guj. does not have “or till they leave the mills altogether”.

T2 Guj. adds “who were present”.

T3 Guj. has “such a tainted fast”.

T4 Guj. adds “of the Northern Division”.

T5 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T6 Guj. adds “in my simplicity”.

CHAPTER XXIII (pp. 345-6)

T1 Guj. has “and I personally discussed the question with the Commissioner, before giving advice to the cultivators”.

T2 Guj. has “public workers”.

T3 In place of the rest of the sentence, Guj. has : “Let nobody think that there was any special merit in this. No other place large enough to accommodate all of us was available.”

T4 Guj. adds “of us”.

CHAPTER XXIV (pp. 346-8)

T1 For the following “the”, Guj. has “this kind of ”.

T2 Guj. adds “for a small amount of revenue”.

T3 Guj. has : “I had made it clear to the people that this involved the risk of fines and imprisonment.”

T4 Guj. has “am”.

CHAPTER XXV (pp. 348-50)

T1 Guj. does not have “whether the Mamlatdar’s undertaking was true for the whole district”.

T2 Guj. has “any of us”.

T3 Guj. adds : “This I did not notice.”

T4 Guj. adds “even”.

T5 Guj. adds “against the Government”.

CHAPTER XXVI (pp. 350-2)

T1 Guj. does not have this clause.

T2 Guj. adds “Lokamanya and others”.

T3 Guj. adds “the late”.

T4 Guj. adds : “My experiement goes on.”

T5 Guj. adds : “Our friendship grew.”

T6 For “they were isolated”, Guj. has “the Government buried them alive”.

T7 Guj. adds : “For me the problem was simple.”

T8 Guj. adds “Lloyd George”.

T9 Guj. adds “from a limited point of view”.

T10 Guj. adds “severely”.

T11 Guj. has “I have reflected over it all and yet”.

T12 Guj. adds “then current”.

CHAPTER XXVII (pp. 352-7)

T1 Guj. has “a good”.

T2 Guj. does not have “eased my mind”.

T3 Guj. has : “My optimism was also shaken a little.”

T4 Guj. has “three or four”.

T5 For “could say”, Guj. has “said”.

CHAPTER XXVIII (pp. 357-61)

T1 For “groundnut butter and lemons”, Guj. has “roasted and pounded groundnut mixed with jaggery, fruits like plantain and the juice of two or three lemons”.

T2 Guj. adds “I think”.

T3 Guj. adds “told me she”.

T4 Guj. does not have “only”.

T5 Guj. does not have “at about ten o’clock”.

T6 For “only half a mile”, Guj. has “less than half a mile”.

T7 Guj. adds : “I had to go to the lavatory every fifteen minutes. At last I gave up the struggle. I told friends about the unbearable pain I was suffering, and took to a bed.”

T8 Guj. adds : “I had no strength for any work.”

T9 & T10 Guj. has “unfertilized”.

T11 For “interest in public activities”, Guj. has “some interest in the activities around me”.

CHAPTER XXIX (pp. 361-3)

T1 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T2 Guj. has “positive”.

T3 Guj. does not have “in defiance of it”.

CHAPTER XXX (pp. 364-6)

T1 For “I felt”, Guj. has “I have felt”.

T2 Guj. adds “as an answer to this Act”.

CHAPTER XXXI (pp. 366-71)

T1 Guj. adds “at Chaupati”.

T2 Guj. does not have “needless to say”.

T3 For “such laws only as”, Guj. has “only one law from among those which”.

T4 Guj. has : “Two of these books were mine, viz., *Hind Swaraj* and *Sarvodaya*.”

T5 Guj. adds “or Sarojini Devi”.

T6 Guj. adds “on the 7th”.

T7 Guj. has “tell them that”.

T8 Guj. has “explain to them how”.

T9 Guj. has : “For a moment I feared that one of the lances might kill us too.”

CHAPTER XXXII (pp. 371-3)

T1 Guj. has “unless people remain peaceful”.

T2 Guj. has “murders”.

T3 Guj. has “I expressed my disagreement”.

T4 Guj. has “and through whom I hoped to carry on satyagraha”.

CHAPTER XXXIII (pp. 373-5)

T1 Guj. has "it suddenly dawned upon me, in the course of my speech to the meeting about the recent occurrences, that I had been guilty of haste in calling upon the people in Kheda district and elsewhere to launch upon civil disobedience and the error seemed to be Himalayan".

T2 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T3 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T4 Guj. adds : "How can those who daily commit breaches of law in their thoughts or frequently break laws on the sly, appreciate the implications of civil disobedience? How can they keep within its limits? It is easy to see that the millions cannot reach this ideal."

T5 Guj. has "starting".

T6 Guj. does not have "well-tried".

T7 For "the number of fresh recruits began gradually to dwindle instead of to grow", Guj. has "even those who had enlisted began to fall away instead of becoming firmer".

CHAPTER XXXIV (pp. 375-8)

T1 For "would have become", Guj. has "became".

T2 For "potential", Guj. has "the power of".

T3 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T4 Guj. adds "from just a few copies".

T5 For "the people", Guj. has "those who looked up to me for advice and guidance".

CHAPTER XXXV (pp. 378-80)

T1 Guj. adds "even".

T2 Guj. adds "and no martial law".

T3 Guj. does not have "who had invited me to the Punjab".

T4 Guj. does not have "and the other prisoners".

T5 Guj. literally means "great".

T6 Guj. adds "whom I had known previously".

T7 Guj. does not have "properly".

T8 Guj. has : "We unanimously decided not to lead evidence before the Hunter Committee."

CHAPTER XXXVI (pp. 380-4)

T1 Guj. has "when I received a public invitation".

T2 Guj. does not have "with these thoughts filling my mind".

T3 Guj. adds "which concerned the whole Empire".

T4 Guj. does not have this clause.

T5 Guj. has “cloth”.

T6 For “found its proper place”, Guj. has “been reborn”.

T7 Guj. does not have “of the North”.

T8 Guj. does not have “in Urdu”.

T9 For “a very”, Guj. has “another”.

T10 For “the betrayal would never come”, Guj. has “there would be no necessity for Hindus and Muslims to adopt non-co-operation”.

CHAPTER XXXVII (pp. 384-7)

T1 In Guj., the clause “while the session of the Congress was still in progress” goes with the following sentence.

T2 Guj. adds “brief”.

T3 & T4 Guj. has “King-Emperor’s”.

T5 Guj. has : “I saw that it was my duty to participate in the deliberations on the resolution on the reforms.”

T6 Guj. has “I”.

T7 Guj. does not have “I felt that all that still remained to be done in that connection must claim my attention”.

T8 Guj. has “was permitted to absent”.

T9 Guj. has “delegates”.

T10 Guj. adds “among the leaders”.

CHAPTER XXXVIII (pp. 387-9)

T1 Guj. has : “I do not regard my being drawn into participation in the Congress proceedings at Amritsar as entry into Congress politics.”

T2 Guj. has “the real work of the Subjects Committee was done”.

T3 Guj. add “and still enjoys”.

T4 Guj. adds “nor do I have it now”.

T5 Guj. adds “or say two”.

T6 Guj. does not have “and the nation is at a loss as to how to utilize the memorial fund”.

T7 Guj. adds “and inoffensive”.

T8 Guj. has : “The Congress sessions were too unwieldy.”

T9 Guj. adds : “And anybody could attend as a delegate.”

T10 Guj. does not have “upon the existing chaotic condition”.

T11 Guj. does not mention the names.

T12 For “they, as the representatives of the people”, Guj. has “their representatives”.

CHAPTER XXXIX (pp. 389-91)

T1 Guj. adds : “None of us knew the working of a loom and so procuring one was not enough”.

T2 Guj. has “A loom was received from Kathiawar and one from Palanpur, and an expert also arrived”.

T3 Guj. adds “mill”.

T4 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T5 Guj. does not have “and having been all but exterminated”.

CHAPTER XL (pp. 391-3)

T1 Guj. has : “I felt embarrassed in offering to pay for the slivers.”

T2 Guj. does not have this phrase.

T3 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T4 Guj. does not have “in Bombay”.

T5 Guj. has : “Gangabehn lost no time in extending the scope of her work.”

T6 For “found out”, Guj. has “brought”.

T7 For “their accessories”, Guj. has “spindles”.

T8 Guj. does not have “i.e., 28 *tolas* or nearly three quarters of a pound”.

T9 For “in Vijapur”, Guj. has “by Gangabehn”.

T10 For “the possibilities of the spinning-wheel”, Guj. has “our limits”.

T11 Guj. has “50”.

T12 Guj. has “and thus fully met my need”.

T13 For “khadi dhotis”, Guj. has “through them khadi of larger width”.

T14 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T15 Guj. has “cultured”.

CHAPTER XLI (pp. 393-5)

T1 Guj. adds “gladly”.

T2 Guj. has “Bengal”.

T3 For “the stuff that was being manufactured in his mill”, Guj. has “blankets manufactured from waste yarn”.

T4 For “more agents”, Guj. has “agents like you”.

T5 Guj. does not have “feeling still more at sea”.

T6 Guj. has : “Our mills are not in want of custom.”

T7 Guj. has “If these are the lines along which you are”.

T8 Guj. does not have “of power machinery”.

CHAPTER XLII (pp. 395-8)

T1 Guj. has “Rising Tide of Non-co-operation”.

T2 Guj. adds “up to a certain point”.

T3 Guj. has : “That would enhance the prestige of the parent organization.”

T4 Guj. does not have this sentence.

T5 Guj. has “Seasoned fighters had assembled for the session in Calcutta”.

CHAPTER XLIII (pp. 398-400)

T1 For “the non-co-operation resolution”, Guj. has “the resolution non-violent non-co-operation”.

T2 Guj. does not have this clause.

FAREWELL (400-2)

T1 Guj. adds “correctly”.

T2 Guj. adds : “These relations belong to the recent past.”

T3 Guj. does not have “during the past seven years”.

T4 Guj. does not have “plain”.

T5 Guj. has “readers”.

T6 For “let the readers know that the vehicle, not the great principle, is at fault”, Guj. has “the statement remains true”.

T7 Guj. adds : “Such purification is possible.”

T8 Guj. adds : “And the God of Truth has endowed everyone with the capacity to strive for his own purification.”

T9 Guj. adds “I experience every moment of my life that”.

T10 For “Ever since”, Guj. has “Even after”.

T11 Guj. has : “The experiments in truth have given me and still give me great joy.”

T12 Guj. adds : “And it is a fact of experience that without such humility *mukti* is ever impossible.”

T13 Guj. has : “Praying for such humility and begging the world to join me in my prayer, I close these chapters, for the present at any rate.”

Wide Table

1. LETTER TO CHILDREN OF BAL MANDIR

KARACHI,
February 4, 1929

CHILDREN OF BAL MANDIR,

The children of the Bal Mandir[1] are too mischievous. What kind of mischief was this that led to Hari breaking his arm? Shouldn't there be some limit to playing pranks? Let each child give his or her reply.

QUESTION TWO: Does any child still eat spices? Will those who eat them stop doing so? Those of you who have given up spices, do you feel tempted to eat them? If so, why do you feel that way?

QUESTION THREE: Does any of you now make noise in the class or the kitchen? Remember that all of you have promised me that you will make no noise.

In Karachi it is not so cold as they tried to frighten me by saying it would be. I am writing this letter at 4 o'clock. The post is cleared early. Reading by mistake four instead of three, I got up at three. I didn't then feel inclined to sleep for one hour. As a result, I had one hour more for writing letters to the Udyoga Mandir[2]. How nice !

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9222

[1] An infant school in the Sabarmati Ashram

[2] Since the new constitution published on June 14, 1928 the Ashram was renamed Udyoga Mandir.

2. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

KARACHI,
February 4, 1929

SISTERS,

I hope your classes are working regularly. I believe that no better arrangements could have been made than what has come about without any special planning. Take full advantage of these arrangements.

Rasik's condition can be described as really very serious. I do not know whether he will be alive when this letter reaches you. But we try to learn every day that birth and death are two facets of the same thing. He who is born dies, and he who dies is born again. Some do escape this cycle, but neither they nor the others need rejoice at birth or grieve over death. I realize this and, therefore, remain unconcerned. Rasik has recently become a votary of the *Ramayana*, and we feel, therefore, that he enjoys complete peace inwardly.

I should like you women to make the kitchen and the infant school a shining success. Do not tempt the children to eat spiced food. You will see in future that such restraint has benefited them. You must have discovered by now that abstaining from spices ordinarily does the body no harm. It is a different matter, of course, if some persons who have become addicted to spiced food cannot change their habit. Think over this matter. It is entirely in your hands to stop the children from making noise. You should try and lighten Gangabehn's burden. You may get from her other services too. You should fix her hours of work and, during certain hours, should not permit her to enter the kitchen at all.

You should give up the idea of getting ghee from anywhere except Chharodi. If you can get no ghee from there, you should learn to do without it. It has practically been proved now that linseed oil does no harm whatever. So long as we get milk and curds, it does not matter too much if we do not get ghee.

Do set a limit to the quantity of vegetables cooked. Make it a rule that not more than ten *tolas* of cleaned vegetables are cooked for each person.

These changes require your mental co-operation. That is, you should accept them with your heart and mind.

You have got to train yourselves for work in the Bal Mandir. Now that a teacher has been appointed specially for this—and he is an able person—you can get all the training you need.

I shall reach there on the 16th evening instead of the 15th. Since I arrived here a day late, one day will be wasted.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—1: Ashramni Behnone

3. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

February 4, 1929

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

You ought to see to it that your physique improves. And it would be a great thing if you could do this while you live in the Ashram. However, I do not insist on that. If you are not confident that you can build your body in the Ashram you may go to Hajira. It is the best place we can think of. For my part, I am certain that you will do well to take water treated with the sun's rays admitted through glass bottles of different colours. I have again gone through the chapter on the subject. Fill with water a bottle of orange yellow colour, keep it in sunlight and use the water for drinking. Note the effect. The gruel made from wheat bran taken in the morning is also likely to help. Consult Chhotelalji about how to prepare it. He himself will prepare the bran for your use. Personally I would like to keep you with me for some time during my tour and help you to make your body strong. Your idea about Wardha is of course right. Till I return, adopt the remedies which I have suggested and make up your mind about what you will do afterwards.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati: C.W. 895. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

4. LETTERS TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Silence Day, February 4, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I hope you got the two letters I wrote to you during the journey. A postcard, too, is a letter.

The portions concerning women in the accompanying letters — to Kishorelal and to the [Ashram] women—are of general inte- rest; therefore show them to all. You should read all letters en- closed in an envelope addressed to you. When any such letter is not meant to be read by you, I shall write the word "personal"on it. You should spare sufficient time from your daily work for general supervision over everything. Think in advance of the time which each matter is likely to require, and try your best to finish it within that time. Keep a note of things to be attended to later and make it a habit to consult this note every day. Such a practice lightens the burden on one's memory. No one can carry in his memory all matters to be attended to.

I shall return there a day later. The programme here got upset and, owing to Monday being a silence day, alternative arrangements could not be made except by extending the programme by a day.

Make your body strong as a rock; this is possible. You should take more milk and ghee. If oil agrees with you, I am not particular about ghee. If your stomach can digest almonds, I think you will need no ghee at all. But you may make that experiment after I return there.

You yourself should take charge of Vimu[1] and Dhiru[2], or Rama[3] should learn how to bring them up. They are fine children, and only require proper attention.

I am writing all the letters for today in the early morning. The post is cleared early and, since I chanced to get up at three, I sat down

[1] Addressee's daughter and son
[2] *ibid*
[3] Addressee's wife

to write letters. Compared to the temperature there, it is less cold here. People say that the weather has changed since yesterday.

I experienced no difficulty in travelling third class. For half of the way there were very few passengers in the train. Everyone had enough space to sleep during the night. The only difficulty was about the lavatory. We, therefore, bought a second-class ticket for the professor from Abu to Hyderabad, and he and Subbiah[1] went and sat in that compartment by turns. This enabled the latter to do his typing work and the articles for *Young India* to be typed and dispatched. We saved nearly fifty rupees by travelling in this fashion, apart from the greater peace which I enjoyed. I could see that people liked my having resumed third class travelling.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a phootstat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5383

5. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Silence Day, February 4, 1929

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Remember well the two things I mentioned to you in connection with Kaku's clothes.

Give up your desire to work as hard as you possibly can. You ought to spend at least four hours a day outside the kitchen. To guide the other women assisting you, maintain an inventory of all the things. If even after that something should get lost or spoilt you need not worry. Think what you would do if you were to fall ill for four hours every day. Our aim, after all, is to see that the organization runs.

Running an organization means that the work is carried on not by one individual but by even new persons trained for the purpose. This should be so for all our departments without exception. No work should depend on any one person doing it. This means that we who are working at present must train others for our jobs.

Don't think that it is Kusum alone who should have fixed hours of work. Having fixed hours of work is part of running an

[1] Gandhiji's secretary

organization. No organization can run without rules. An accident does not occur every day. What occurs everyday is not an accident. If bread gets spoiled everyday, we may do without it. We should think out beforehand what we should do when accidents like bread being spoiled occur. Even for that, you ought to enjoy some rest and peace.

I see that this kitchen has become a hard school in which you learn something every day. You are being daily trained through new experience.

Take care of your health. For the present, your food should be milk and fruit. Take in small quantities at a time as much milk as you need in the day. One is likely to feel tempted to eat fruit, in unrestricted quantity. You should, therefore, find the right quantity for yourself. Avoid altogether coffee and sugar or sugar-candy.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 21

6. A LETTER

KARACHI,
February 4, 1929

CHI. . . .[1],

I received your letter. You will have got more information about Rasik from Ramdas's letter of yesterday. I am beginning to feel that he is as good as gone. I am carefully searching my heart. I travel, I eat, and all this only seems right. It seems a religious duty. What would I do by going to Delhi? Rasik is being looked after. Having learnt the *Gita* by heart, how can one rejoice over birth and grieve over death? Such illnesses are a test whether our study of the *Gita* is bearing fruit.

Young India[2] this time is worth reading. I can always make it . . . While travelling I wrote everything in the third-class compartment. Giving up travelling second class and giving up milk seem to have benefited me at least for now and I therefore feel delighted like a

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] *Vide* "Third-Class Travelling", February 14, 1929.

child. I like it. I now feel embarrassed and ashamed to travel second class. Praise be to mother almond. I may perhaps start saying the same about linseed oil also. Please do not make light of these experiments of mind. They are as dear to me as the struggle for swaraj. I find in them the same peace as I do in the latter. They do not involve any risk and may do some good.

In the event of my going to Europe, Jamnalalji had persuaded Rajaji [to accompany me]. Both of them were of the opinion that I should go. I think my decision is correct. It would have been improper to have gone.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/47

7. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

February 4, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I have been awake quite by accident since 3 a.m. It is now nearing 5 a.m. and I have nearly finished the U.M.[1] post.

I travelled 3rd class again without any mishap and without any discomfort worth the name. And it added to my mental peace. I am never at peace with myself travelling 2nd class.

There is no more news to give you about Rasik[2]. There was no wire awaiting me at Karachi and today I shall get nothing before this is posted. The post closes at 9 a.m.

Did I tell you that last week it was so cold at the U.M. that the water in the buckets and the little reservoir had frozen. The thermometer registered 28 degrees—an unheard of temperature for Sabaramati. We had a most magnificent crop of vegetables, cotton, etc. Poor Somabhai had given his whole soul to the thing. Well, practically all was destroyed by the terrible frost, even the beautiful papaiya orchard gone. The whole fields looked like weeping. It was an unbearable sight. And yet behind this tragedy Nature has a kindly purpose which we cannot perceive, but believe in full faith—yes, faith is evidence of things unseen and unseeable.

[1] Udyoga Mandir

[2] Harilal Gandhi's son who died of typhoid fever on February 8, 1929

I hope you have now completely regained your normal health. You will—won't you—recognize the limitations of your body and insist on having the things it may need for its upkeep even as a trustee would be bound to secure the well-being of his ward. Be sure that you do not pamper the body, that you are treating [it] as a trust from God to be used for your unfoldment and you will be justified, nay bound, to supply its primary wants.

It is not enough merely to postdate the programme by two days. It has been rearranged but it would be wise to treat Hyderabad Sind as headquarters. I have not spent money on wiring as, whenever you post your letters, I am bound to get them.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Of course you have read my articles[1] about the European visit. Do you not agree? You will write to Rolland.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5340. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9395

8. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KARACHI [2]

Februray 4, 1929

Mahatmaji in accepting the purse thanked the citizens of Karachi for having contributed so liberally but he said that taking into consideration Lalaji's services to the country and for that matter to the whole world the amount could not be very large. Lalaji's services could not be adequately measured in terms of money. But money was needed to continue and expand the work started by him. Mahatmaji hoped Sind would give him a very big amount for this Fund.

[1] *Vide* "My Apologies", January 31, 1929.

[2] The meeting was held in Rambagh grounds presided over by Narayan Das Anandji, M.L.C. A purse for Lajpat Rai Memorial Fund was presented to Gandhiji.

Lalaji's work was not confined to any particular community or province. So was his Society's[1]work. Members are from different provinces and its work is being carried on in different provinces. So it should not be thought that Sind could not profit by the Society's work. Lalaji loved the whole world, but he had realized that one who did not serve his country could not serve the world. He was a true patriot. He lived for his country and died in its service. The money that they were offering to his memory would be spent in furthering the work that he had started.

Coming to the second part of his speech Mahatmaji said Lalaji wanted the same thing as Lokamanya Tilak, Swami Shraddhanand, Hakim Ajmal Khan and Deshbandhu Das had wanted. It was freedom of India.

If we could cultivate the same spirit of sacrifice and win swaraj that Lalaji had aspired to win in his lifetime, we would be building a true memorial to him.

If good work was put in during the course of this year swaraj may come next year and if it did not, non-violent non-co-operation and non-payment of taxes will be launched upon. This could be done only if preparatory constructive work was done during this year.

Speaking on important items in the constructive programme he spoke of khaddar as being the only effective way of boycotting foreign cloth. He also emphasized the importance of discarding liquor.

Further, he said he would still repeat what he said in 1921 that swaraj could not be achieved until there was unity between all communities. A particular community could no doubt carry on the struggle of non-violent non-co-operation. He in his person was non-co-operating with the Government but that did not bring swaraj for the country. Next year some section of people or some province or some taluk might launch upon the campaign of non-violent non-co-operation but the Congress wanted the whole country to prepare for this struggle. Again Swami Shraddhanand and Lalaji had told us of our duty to the depressed classes. He (Mahatmaji) claimed to be a Sanatanist Hindu though he feared his claim was disputed. But even Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya who was universally recognized as a true Sanatanist was taking untouchable brethren to the banks of the holy Ganges and giving them holy *mantra* and good advice and making them one with the Hindus.

The Tribune 7-2-1929

[1] Servants of the People Society

9. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU

[*February 4/5, 1929*][1]

YOUR WIRE. SIND TOUR ENDS FIFTEENTH. CAN'T DETAIN COMMITTEE SO LONG. SUGGEST YOUR SENDING REPRESENTATIVE OR REPRESENTATIVES SABARAMATI AFTER SIXTEENTH. KARACHI TILL WEDNESDAY.[2]

GANDHI

From a photostat: S. N. 15327

10. SPEECH AT BHARAT SARASVATI MANDIR, KARACHI [3]

February 5, 1929

Gandhiji made a brief but powerful speech in vindication of the existence of national educational institutions. The national institutions were a most important fruit of Non-co-operation. That their number had gone down was unfortunate; it betrayed the apathy of the parents. Those that had servived the depressing political atmosphere were like oases in a desert and Gandhiji was sure, would be found at the most critical moment to answer the national call when the balconies of palace-like schools and colleges would be used as soldiers' barracks from which they would be shooting down innocent fighters for freedom. The Sardar of Bardoli was able to work wonders because of the volunteers that were supplied either directly by the national institutions of Gujarat or that were otherwise a product of the atmosphere of service that these national institutions spread round them as a flower garden spreads its fragrance in its vicinity. During the distress that overtook

[1] This was sent in reply to Motilal Nehru's telegram, dated February 4, reading: "Working Committee considers consultation with you necessary regarding boycott foreign cloth programme. Could you visit Delhi or Lahore for day on way back Sind or any other date for meeting committee? Wire."

[2] To this Motilal Nehru replied on February 5: "Your consultation with full Committee greatly preferable. Many members Committee staying on Delhi. Anyhow others can come back. Your presence would also help solution Punjab difficulty."

[3] Extracted from Pyarelal's account of Gandhiji's tour in Sind

Gujarat after the Phenomenal floods of 1927, it was the same atmosphere created by the existence of national institutions that gave Vallabhbhai his army of staunch and hard-working volunteers through whom he was able to overtake distress when the Government machinery had become impotent to render aid to the people.

Young India, 14-2-1929

11. SPEECH AT UNTOUCHABLES' MEETING, KARACHI [1]

February 5, 1929

In reply to their address, asking him to secure further assistance, Gandhiji told them that they should first deserve what they had already received and they would get, without asking, more even than their needs. To this end he exhorted them to give up drink, gambling, carrion-eating and to observe the rules of sanitation and hygiene. If they succeeded in achieving that reform they would make themselves irresistible. He told them never to be ashamed of their occupation which he considered to be noble, sacred and necessary for the very existence of mankind. The sweepers gave a purse for the Lalaji Memorial.

Young India, 14-2-1929

12. SPEECH AT DEPRESSED CLASSES' MEETING, KARACHI [2]

February 5, 1929

Gandhiji told them that it was good that they claimed Rajput descent[3] but they should make good the claim by exhibiting in their own persons the qualities that the Shastras attributed to the Rajputs. They should show chivalry towards women, and be embodiments of fearlessness. They should be able to protect the weak and the helpless and they should never beg as they had begged Gandhiji for help.

Young India, 14-2-1929

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's account of Gandhiji's tour in Sind

[2] *ibid*

[3] The members of the "Depressed" classes had described themselves as Mayavanshi Rajputs.

13. SPEECH AT SIKHS' MEETING, KARACHI [1]

February 5, 1929

Gandhiji told them that neither the Mussalmans nor the Hindus had the slightest intention of establishing their own exclusive rule. They must not take the speeches of a few individuals as representative of either Hindu opinion or of Mussalman opinion and above all they should not forget that even if any one community entertained any such sinister desire it was doomed to disappointment. If there was to be rule of any one class over another the English were there resourceful and powerful enough to insure their own rule. All that was possible in the prevailing circumstances was either the overthrow of the present rule and establishment of swaraj by the joint effort of all the classes that formed the Indian nation or the perpetuation of the present slavery. He denied that the Congress or the Nehru Report had disregarded the Sikh claim. He reminded them that Sikh representatives were party to the recommendations of the Nehru Report and that in any case the All-Parties Conference had been postponed instead of being wound up for the purpose among others of considering the question of Sikh representation. In connection with the complaint about Dominion Status Gandhiji reiterated his well-known opinion and adjured the Sikhs to be patient and not to lose faith in the Congress and therefore themselves. For, he told them, the Congress could only be what all combined would make it. It had no separate existence apart from the nation's will.

Young India, 14-2-1929

14. SPEECH AT D. J. S. COLLEGE HALL, KARACHI

February 5, 1929

SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

I thank you for your giving me the address[2] and the purse, which you have collected for the Lalaji Memorial Fund. Whatever you have given me will go to the Fund and nothing shall be left with me. You have said in your address many things in praise

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's account of Gandhiji's tour in Sind

[2] Presented jointly by the students of the Law College, the Engineering College and the Arts College

of me. There is, however, an English proverb which I want to remind you of. It says, “Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.” If I praise anybody, I must act according to what he says. But I see that you have gone precisely the other way about. You have, as it were, praised me to the skies, but have done nothing according to my wishes. I am not profited by this, nor are you. What have you done? You have presented me with an address written in English. You have appreciatively mentioned in it all my activities, but it is now clear that you have failed to understand me. I wish that all the students, inclined to serve India, must work in *some way*. They must try to speak in their own language. Perhaps, you thought that if you gave me an address in Sindhi, I would not be able to understand it. But then you could have supplied me with a Hindi translation of it and I would have appreciated your patriotic sentiment and felt thankful to you for it. I would have then said, ‘Well, whatever else the Sindhis may or may not have done, at least they have followed one of my precepts, by giving me an address in Sindhi.’ Not that I want to do away with English altogether. English will, no doubt, have its place in India under swaraj as a medium for international commerce, but that does not mean that it should be allowed to usurp the place of your mother tongue. Even when foreigners come to see me, they at least try to speak as many Hindi or other non-English words as they might be knowing in my presence and end their conversation with a *Vandemataram* or a Salaam. An English Lady came to me yesterday with her daughters. I wanted to speak to her daughters in English, but they preferred to talk to me in Urdu. But what have you done? You have as it were said to me: ‘Yes, we know what you like, but we shall give you that which you do not like.’ It is just like the story of the fox and the stork, you know how the one called the other to a dinner and then kept him hungry. Similarly, you have called me here. You have called me the greatest man of the world, but you have forgotten the first essential of courtesy, viz., to address me in the mother tongue. Or was it that you wanted only to pull my leg raising me to the frozen Himalayan heights of mahatmaship and absolving yourselves from the duty of following me in practice? Do not think, because I am smiling, that I am happy at heart. Really speaking I am weeping in my heart. My heart is bleeding to see you dressed in foreign [cloth]. This is very strange to me. The Nehru Report has recom-mended that Hindustani should be the lingua franca and official language of India under swaraj. But, perhaps, you will turn round and

say, ‘Oh, these are old ideas, suiting old fossils; we are not going to follow them. We are Independencewalas.’ But then I would remind you of the example of Gen. Botha who at the time of the South African negotia-tions after the Boer War, refused to speak in English even before the King, but preferred to use Dutch only, taking the help of an interpreter. That was the only thing that the representative of a freedom-loving people could do. How dare you refuse to put on homespun khadi prepared by the pure hands of your poor sisters? You have garlanded me with a khaddar garland, how dare you then yourselves put on collars of foreign textures ! If you must need put on collars, why can’t you put on the khaddar collars prepared by Vithaldas Jerajani? These foreign fripperies are not decorations, they are your fetters since they result in an annual drain of 69 crores of rupees to India every year and help to keep her in bondage. That is why I am crying from the housetops: Boys and girls, look to the money that you are wasting over fripperies, remember your fellow-beings who are starving and dying. You will have one day to answer before God’s judgment seat the dread question, ‘What hast thou done with thy brother?’ The condition of our masses is steadily becoming worse. Even our commerce has been [turned] into an instrument of our exploitation. Generally with the advance of commerce, there is a corresponding advance in prosperity. But in India the position is just the reverse. Instead of adding to national prosperity our foreign trade is only serving to take the bread out of the mouths of millions of our artisans. No doubt, your Karachi, the Key to India, is flourishing like Bombay, Madras and Calcutta. Land is becoming scarce and its value is increasing day by day. From this it might be inferred that India is getting richer. But this is a false inference. Sjt. Rajagopalachari has prepared a beautiful chart illustrating this paradox. In that chart it is shown how when you buy khaddar every pie that you pay goes into the pockets of the toiling poor of India while in the use of foreign cloth 95% of what you pay is taken out of the country and only about 5% is left in the pockets of our countrymen. Our commercial classes have been reduced to the position of mere commercial agents for Lancashire and it is out of the 5% which they get as their share of the exploitation that the seeming magnificence of our big ports like Karachi, Bombay and others is built. It was Lord Salisbury who had observed on a historical occasion that since India had to be bled the lancet must be applied to the congested part. If revenue had to be derived by the process of bleeding in Lord Salisbury’s time, how

much more so it must be now when India has become poorer as a result of all these years of exploitation? Then have you ever considered at what cost to the country you are receiving your education? As students of economics you ought to know that the fees that you pay hardly cover a fraction of the amount that is spent on education out of the public exchequer. Have you ever thought as to where the rest of the money comes from? It comes from the pockets of the poor, the walking skeletons of Orissa. They do not know what college education means; their eyes lack lustre; their bodies are emaciated; when a rich Gujarati bania or a rich Marwari happens to go there he flings at them half-cooked rice, and thus they manage to eke out their existence. What have you done for them? Nor should you forget that your education is financed out of the notorious "excise revenue" which spells the moral ruin of so many of your countrymen. If Lalaji's spirit is moving in this hall, it will surely say: "Well, Sind has given so much money towards my memorial, but is swaraj going to be won like this, when so many people are starving?" You have contributed so much money but the spirit of Lalaji is not satisfied, nor am I. I am weeping in my heart, although I am trying to keep my face cheerful and to make you laugh. Oh, how can you win swaraj in this way? They alone can win swaraj who are ready to be pierced by the bayonet, who pray to be imprisoned in jails, to be tortured for the nation's sake; when they are brought to the block, refuse to get their eyes bandaged, saying: "Why bind our eyes? We are not afraid of the sharp edge of your axe; do your work, we do not fear, for we know that out of the blood of patriots shall grow the full-bloomed flower of liberty." You seem to be very enthusiastic. Outside this hall are standing many who, if they were permitted, would break the glasses and force their way in. But let me remind you that you have been weighed and found wanting in my test. There is another thing which I want to tell you. During the flood days in 1927 Prof. Narayandas Malkani had written to me about the trouble here. He thought it necessary to import some Gujarati volunteers here. Is it not a shame that you should require Gujarati *swayamsevaks* to come here and serve you? At the most you might accept financial help from outside, but is it not a humiliation that you must ask Gujarat to help you with men also? In spite of all your professors' teaching, in spite of all your knowledge, you are not ready to help yourselves? Then there is a third thing even more important. I am told that as soon as marriage is proposed to a Sindhi young man he wants to be sent to

England at the expense of his prospective father-in-law and that even after marriage misses no opportu-nity of exacting money from the bride's father. You think yourselves very clever. You get a good lot of money and try to become barristers or I.C.S. Now what is the meaning of all this? You thereby tyrannize over your own women, over your wives. Wife in our language has been described as *ardhangini* or the better half of man. But you have reduced her to the position of mere chattel to be bought and sold. There is a word in Hindi—*ardhangavayu*. Can anybody tell me a proper English word for *ardhangavayu*?

A VOICE FROM THE GALLERY: Paralysis.

Yes, paralysis is the exact word for it. This shows that you know Hindi very well and a vote of censure should be passed for Mr. Lulla's having presented to me the address in English. Well, I was going to say that it is the suppression of the better half of society by you menfolk that is responsible for the state of paralysis in which we find our society today. You read your Milton, your Browning,and your Whittier, all right. Is this what you have learnt from them to reduce your wives who should be the queens of your hearts and your homes into *londis*[1]. Shame, shame on you ! Tell me that you will starve but you will never make your women your slaves. Promise me that *deti-leti*[2] shall be wiped off. Swear that you will cherish the freedom of your women, as much as your own, that you will die to restore to them their full status and dignity. Otherwise, remember the whole world will shower its contempt on you. The other day Prof. Narayandas Malkani wired to me that he got his daughter married with only a sari for dowry. He wanted me to send my blessings to the couple. But I hesitated as a Sindhi friend to whom I mentioned the thing told me that it was impossible for a man to get his daughter married in Sind with that much dowry. That shows what sort of reputation you have established for yourselves. Promise me that you will die rather than be party to the humiliation of your women- folk by allowing the custom of *deti-leti* to prevail. Then I will understand that you are ready for the freedom of your country. If I had a girl under my charge, I would rather keep her a maiden all her life than give her in marriage to one who demanded even a pie as a condition for marrying her. Remember

[1] Slave girls or maid servants

[2] Dowry system

these four things then use your mother tongue, wear only home spun cloth, free your women folk from social disabilities, and do something to help poor. Finally, let me warn you that if you do not act up to my advice after all your profes-sions of regard for me, you will be called *bhats* or bards ! You must give addresses even to the foreigners in your own language. You may have interpreters to translate them for the addressees. Keep in mind the instance of General Botha who knew English and yet when he met Edward the King, he talked to him in Dutch taking the help of an interpreter. Even if you have to present an address to the Governor you must do so in your mother tongue. You must restrict the use of English to such occasions only when it is absolutely essential, then alone will you be able to do justice to English even. Try to do away with foreign style of dress which is unsuited to Indian conditions. Do you want to be slaves or free men? There is no shame in putting on thick clothes when they are prepared by your own sisters. If my mother prepares thick loaves, do you mean to say that I must throw them away, and go to a hotel for nicer ones? No. You know the story of Hazarat Umar—the great caliph; how when his soilders took to using finely ground flour and thin clothes he asked them to take themselves away from him as they were no true followers of the Prophet who always ate bread made out of coarse flour and wore coarse homespun. I wish you could take a leaf out of that great godfearing caliph's life. Now let me see how many are prepared to make the sacrifices that I have mentioned? Are you ready?

All boys shouted 'Yes' thrice.[1]

From a copy: S.N. 16105

[1] Later Gandhiji opened the New Library of Karachi Sweepers' Union. In an address the sweepers stated that they had decided to reform their lives and that they would not touch drink. Gandhiji replied that they should not be ashamed of their profession and should cultivate their minds by reading newspapers and books.

15. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

KARACHI,
Wednesday, February 6, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have really no time to write. I know how much you are working. After the work in Sind is over, I may have to go to Delhi. I know that some things go on more smoothly in my absence, for the excitement and agitation caused by my presence subside then.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5384

16. SPEECH AT PARSI MEETING, KARACHI [1]

February 6, 1929

Gandhiji as usual let himself go in his parise of his Parsi friends and said that it did not surprise him that the Parsis of Karachi had contributed altogether to the Lalaji Memorial Fund a handsome purse of Rs. 7,000, but he reminded them that Parsi munificence, greatest though it was in the world, should not satisfy them. They should give something not merely of their wealth but of themselves for the service of humanity and this they could do easily by adopting khadi and thus forging an unbreakable link between themselves and *Daridranarayana*, represented by the semi-starved millions of India. He appealed to them also to emulate the hard work and simplicity of the great Parsi philanthropists of the previous generation and wean the community from the drink evil.

Young India, 14-2-1929

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's account of Gandhiji's tour in Sind

17. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, KARACHI [1]

February 6, 1929

Here Gandhiji delivered a remarkable reply, urging the Indian students to learn two Indian languages just as Europeans in England learnt Greek and Latin. He then deprecated the use of the word "Mahatma", while anyone was alive. "Mahatma" was an appreciative term that ought to be used after death.

Finally, he touched upon the question of headgear and demonstrated the unhygienic nature of the usual headgear worn by Indians. Talking of the cap of a young boy near him and pointing towards it, he drew attention to the dust, grease, hair oil and dried perspiration on the cap, which was un- washable. Yet, he said, men wore such filthy things year in and year out and refused to discard them because they were rather costly. The scientists had proved that all dark colours, particularly black, attracted and held heat. Most of the caps worn in India were of black or some other dark colour. Mr. Gandhi then offered to exchange his khaddar-made Gandhi cap free with anyone who would consent to his foreign cap being burned on the spot. Several hundred students did so and Dr. Tarachand Lalvani, Secretary of the Karachi Congress Committee, collected all the foreign caps and made a bonfire of them before a bewildered crowd.[2]

The Leader, 10-2-1929

18. ON DEATH

Death continues to haunt man as the terror of terrors. Whilst we have much in our literature that teaches us to be indifferent to death, there is also much that inculcates in us a paralysing fear of death. In these times when we wish to contemplate death in the cause of the country as a matter of joy and honour, the following extract[3] sent by a friend from Lecky's *History of European Morals* will be of interest.

> There was much difference of opinion and of certitude in the judgments of the ancient philosophers (the Stoics) concerning the future destinies of the

[1] A public reception for Gandhiji was organized by the Karachi Vidyarthi Samagam.

[2] Later, purses were presented to Gandhiji by students and women of Karachi. Gandhiji left for Jacobabad at 7 p.m.

[3] Only the first paragraph is reproduced here.

Soul, but they were unanimous in regarding death simply as a natural rest, and in attributing the terrors that were connected with it to a diseased imagination. Death, they said, is the only evil that does not afflict us when present. While we are, death is not; when death has come, we are not. It is a false belief that it only follows, it also precedes life. It is to be as we were before we were born. The candle which has been extinguished is in the same condition as before it was lit, and the dead man as the man unborn. Death is the end of all sorrow. It either secures happiness or ends suffering. It frees the slave from his cruel master, opens the prison door, calms the qualms of pain, closes the struggles of poverty. It is the last and best boon of nature, for it frees man from all his cares. It is at worst but the close of a banquet we have enjoyed. Whether it be desired or whether it be shunned, it is no curse and no evil, but simply the resolution of our being into its primitive elements, the law of our nature to which it is our duty cheerfully to conform.

Young India, 7-2-1929

19. THE INHUMAN SYSTEM

The Imperial Indian Citizenship Association, Bombay circulated during the Christmas week the following note[1] to the Press :

> It will be remember that in the month of September last, Reuter reported the death of 37 repatriated Indians on board the s.s. *Sutlej* returning to India from British Guiana. . . The investigations were conducted by Major W. O. Walker, I.M.S., Protector of Emigrants, Calcutta and Mr. E. H. Blandy, I.C.S., Collector of the 24 Parganas. The report of this official enquiry says that there were 745 passengers on the s.s. *Sutlej* out of which 37 died. Of these deaths, thirty were due to respiratory diseases and seven to other causes such as heart diseases, nephritis, enteritis, senility and malaria. The report further observes that the deaths were practically confined to old people, who were not strong and who, but for their great anxiety to return to their homeland, would probably have been advised not to undertake so long a voyage. It also shows that the incident was no exception to previous years; as since 1923, deaths among the repatriated Indians on these boats have regularly occurred. . . .

As it was received at a time when I was hardly able to rest my head on a pillow, the note was placed by my assistant in the *Young India* file. It is only during my journey to Sind that I am able to reach this important note.

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

The system of Government which holds us in bondage is so wicked that it successfully denies justice by making a pretence of rendering justice. An inordinate mortality occurs on an immigrant ship. Lest it might attract public opinion, a guilty conscience appoints a public inquiry so called but in reality a white washing inquiry which finds that such deaths have always occurred on such ships, as if a wrong becomes right by prescription. The Committee consists of a person called the 'Protector' of Immigrants and a Collector both of whom by the very nature of their occupation are inured to such occurrences. I know these boats and I know how the 'exiles' are 'packed like sardines' (not an expression of my coining but that of those concer ned with emigration) in ill-ventilated and worse-lighted holes. Add to this the habit of our people to shun air and light when there is the least cold. These habits do not affect them much when perforce they have to be outdoor for the better part of the day. They do affect them mortally as on the s.s. *Sutlej* when they have to be in a dungeon-like closed deck practically during the whole of the voyage.

In my opinion the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association should not allow the matter to rest at the so-called inquiry but having drawn public attention to the terrible mortality should demand an impartial public inquiry which should include an examination by experts of the build of the boats designed for emigration purposes. It will be found then that more than one department was concerned in the tragedy which as is admitted is of periodical occurrence. It will be found too that the greed of the owners of these ships is no less responsible for this mortality than the callous indifference of masters and officers of these ships who regard the emigrants not as fellowmen to be gently treated but as beasts needing no attention. As a matter of fact even beasts are better kept for the simple reason that their owners will exact damages if they are not properly tended.

Young India, 7-2-1929

20. 'MY ATTITUDE TOWARDS WAR'

My article under the above heading published in *Young India*, 13th September, 1928 has given rise to much correspondence with me and in the European Press that is interested in war against war. In the personal correspondence there is a letter from Tolstoy's friend and follower V. Tcherkoff which, coming as it does from one who

commands great respect among lovers of peace, the reader will like me to share with him. Here is the letter :[1]

> Your Russian friends send you their warmest greetings and best wishes for the further success of your devoted service for God and men. With the liveliest interest do we follow your life, the work of your mind and your activity and we rejoice at each one of your successes. We realize that all that you attain in your own country is at the same time also our attainment, for although under different circumstances, we are serving the one and the same cause. We feel a great gratitude to you for all that you have given and are giving us by your person, the example of your life and your fruitful social work. We feel the deepest and most joyous spiritual union with you. . . .
>
> Your article "My Attitude towards War", printed in *Young India* of the 13th September of this year, has grieved many of your admirers and friends. And I have felt the need of expressing that which I feel and think on this subject. . . .
>
> You justify your past participation in three wars waged by the British Government. Alluding to the same subject some years ago you in an article expressed yourself, if I remember right, in another spirit. Then you did not justify yourself, but recognized your former inconsistency. And I remember that this readiness of yours to recognize your past mistake greatly touched and consoled me and your other friends here. Whereas now, on the contrary, you justify yourself, referring to the usual arguments put forward in defence of war. . . .
>
> Neither may one solve this question according to whether one sympathizes or not with a given government. And yet you do so when you say: "If there was a national government I can conceive occasions when it would be my duty to vote for the military training of those who wish to take it." In this way you justify others who also vote for the preparation for war because they sympathize with another Government. And what a snare is placed in people's way by a man who denies war to such an extent that he refuses to serve in the army and who at the same time votes for military training?
>
> Further you say that "all its (the Government's) members do not believe in non-violence" and that "it is not possible to make a person or a society non-violent by compulsion." But by abstaining from voting for military training I compel no one to do anything, just as by refraining from voting for training pickpockets I do no violence to pickpockets.

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

You refer to the example of a harvest eaten by monkeys. But by transferring the case from men to monkeys you obscure it. If your harvest were attacked by men not beasts, would you not deem it your duty to sacrifice the harvest rather than destroy the men ?

You say that it would be madness for you to sever your connection with the society to which you belong and that as long as you lived under a system of government based on force and voluntarily partook of the many facilities and privileges it created for you you were bound to help it to the extent of your ability when it was engaged in war.

Firstly, by abstaining from approving those evil deeds which men are engaged in around me I not only do not "sever my connection with the society to which I belong," but, exactly the opposite. I utilize this connection for the best possible way of serving this society.

Secondly, if living as I live, I am obliged to assist the State in waging war, then I ought at all costs to cease to live as I live, even if I had in doing so to sacrifice my life, and in no wise to help people in the slaughter of their brothers. Besides it is quite possible to make use of certain facilities afforded by the State, which could be obtained without violence, and at the same time to abstain from supporting the evil deeds of the State.

Perhaps the misunderstanding partly arises from your not having sufficiently rigidly drawn the line between *violence* and *killing*. There are cases when it is indeed difficult, without careful consideration, to make clear whether definite violence is being committed. But in the question of war there is no room for doubt as to its being founded on the killing of man. In this we probably agree. . . .

I need hardly assure M. Tcherkoff that not only do I not resent his letter but I welcome it for its warmth of affection and for its transparent sincerity.

I do not propose to enter into a detailed replay to the points raised in the letter. For me the matter does not admit of reasoning beyond a point. It is one of deep conviction that war is an unmixed evil. I would not yield to anyone in my detestation of war. But conviction is one thing, correct practice is another. The very thing that one war-resister may do in the interest of his mission may repel another war-resister who may do the exact opposite and yet both may hold the same view about war. This contradiction arises because of the bewildering complexity of human nature. I can only therefore plead for mutual toleration even among professors of the same creed.

Now for some points in the letter. I do not recall the writing or speech in which I expressed repentance for my participation in Britain's wars. What I am likely to have said is that I was sorry that I aided Britain though her policy was afterwards discovered by me to have been one fraught with harm to India and danger to humanity. If I had felt remorse for having taken part in the three wars as wars, I should have remembered it and repeated it unless I had changed my opinion about my participation.

Whatever I have done was not done from expedience as we understand the term. I claim to have done every act described by me for the purpose of advancing the cause of peace. That does not mean that those acts really advanced the cause of peace. I am merely stating the fact that my motive was peace.

What is possible however is that I was then weak and am still too weak to perceive my error even as a blind man is unable to see what his neighbours are able to see. I observe daily how capable we are of utmost self-deception. For the time being how- ever I am not aware of any self-deception. What Ifeel is that I am looking at peace through a medium to which my European friends are strangers. I belong to a country which is compulsorily disarmed and has been held under subjection for centuries. My way of looking at peace may be necessarily different from theirs.

Let me take an illustration. Supposing that both cats and mice sincerely desire peace. Now cats will have to adjure war against mice. But how will mice promote peace? What will they abjure? Is their vote even necessary? Suppose further that some cats do not observe the pact arrived at by the assembly of cats and continue preying upon mice, what will mice do? There may be some wise heads among them and they may say, 'We will offer ourselves a willing sacrifice till the cats are oversatisfied and find no fun in preying.'These will do well to propagate their cult. But what should be their attitude, peace-lovers though they are, towards the mice who would instead of runnig away from their oppressors decided to arm themselves and give battle to the enemy? The effort may be vain but the wise mice whom I have imagined will, I apprehend, be bound to assist the mice in their desire to become bold and strong even whilst maintaining their attitude of peace. They will do so not out of policy but from the highest of motives. That is exactly my attitude. Non-violence is not an easy thing to understand, still less to practise, weak as we are. We must all act

prayerfully and humbly and continually asking God to open the eyes of our understanding, being ever ready to act according to the light as we daily receive it. My task as a lover and promoter of peace therefore today consists in unflinching devotion to non-violence in the prosecution of the campaign for regaining our liberty. And if India succeeds in so regaining it it will be the greatest contribution to the world's peace. European war-resisters therefore may well formulate public opinion in Europe that will compel Britain to retrace her steps and stop the continuing spoliation of India.

Young India, 7-2-1929

21. ANOTHER TRIBUTE

Last week I reproduced Prof. Bell's tribute to the Rt. Hon'ble Srinivasa Sastri.[1] Now that our great and good countryman's return is imminent, I must share with the readers a semi-public letter[2] addressed to him. Though the letter is full of praise, there is not a word that is not deserved. It is evidence of the way in which Sjt. Sastri has stolen into the hearts of many South Africans. This work of silent conversion will be a far greater help to our people in South Africa than any amount of official concessions. The conversion makes even these possible.

Young India, 7-2-1929

22. THE TERROR OF THE PENAL CODE

A lawyer friend writes :

> I read *Young India* of 3-1-1929, p. 8. You write, 'My advice to this young man is that if he has the courage he should repudiate the marriage. . . . If they do not, it will be the clear duty of the boy and the girl respectfully to disregard parental authority and follow the light of reason and conscience.'[3]
>
> The ties of Hindu marriage once performed are indissoluble. The boy may forsake his wife and marry another when he chooses later in life when he grows up. The girl can never remarry, the marriage once performed being indissoluble among the higher classes. If she does, she commits the offence

[1] *Vide* "A South African Tribute", January 31, 1929.
[2] Not reproduced here
[3] *Vide* "Notes", January 3, 1929.

of "bigamy". So please enlighten us as to what is the fate of the girl who is once married and who cannot remarry if the boy is allowed to repudiate the so-called marriage as you suggest. Gour's Penal Code, p. 2019: 'And since Hindu men are permitted polygamy while women are strictly confined to monogamy it follows that while women may be exposed to the risk of this offence, men are by their personal law exempt from its provisions.' Please now correct your advice in accordance with the Penal Code that now guides the couple you advise.

I do not need to correct my advice. The only code that guides a reformer is his own conscience in the last resort. The marriage I had in mind was in reality no marriage at all. But should it be held otherwise in a court of law, the law would be corrected through the righteous suffering of a few if public opinion had not already secured either correction or disuse. If Hindu society were to wait for statutory help in order to rid itself of innumerable abuses, it would have to wait for aeons. The history of reforms shows that legal recognition has come after the fact, not before. We know too from experience that where law is imposed upon an unwilling people, it has failed in its purpose. Where the so-called husband who has never even seen the so-called child-wife releases her from a supposed obligation, the sword of the Penal Code need not be hung over the devoted head of the poor girl, who probably does not even know that she was ever married.

Moreover let people like the lawyer correspondent read the signs of the times. Society bids fair to be disrupted if much-needed and overdue reform had to be indefinitely delayed by legal pedantries and subtleties.

Young India, 7-2-1929

23. THAT GRAZ EPISODE

The Secretary for Women's International League for Peace and Freedom writes to Mademoiselle Rolland as follows :

> Number 35 of *Young India* has a leading article by Gandhi, "Europe-goers, Beware"[1], in which he speaks of the Graz meeting and makes a very unfair reference to our League due no doubt to Professor Standenath's hostility. I think you knew enough particulars about that meeting to correct this unfortunate impression. I wonder whether it would be possible for M. Romain Rolland to write to Gandhi and correct this information which has been given from a source so unfriendly to our League.
>
> I think there is no question that our League was not in any degree to blame for the occurrence in Graz. The militaristic element in Austria, which is causing such grave apprehensions, especially in regard to the demonstrations last Sunday, came out in force at that Graz meeting specially in order to injure General Schonaich. This was not foreseen by any of the participants at the meeting who themselves ran very great risks of personal injury, as indeed many of us did who held pacifist meetings during the War. But it is certainly very regrettable that Gandhi should be preaching against our movement which stands for all the things which he advocates.
>
> I think perhaps in this affair you and your brother would be able to set things right better than anyone else could.

Miss Rolland has sent this letter to me. I gladly give it publicity. The letter refers to the meeting at which Babu Rajendra Prasad was assaulted last year. Though at the time of writing this (in the train taking me to Karachi) I have not the number of *Young India* before me, I feel sure that the article referred to contains no attack or reflection upon the League. I have had a chat with Rajendra Babu and he too is decidedly of opinion that the League could have and had nothing to do with the attack. I hope therefore that those who think that my article implied and made any reflection on the W.I.L.P.F. would dismiss the idea from their minds. I am sorry for the pain caused to the members of the League.

Young India, 7-2-1929

[1] *Vide* "Europe-Goers Beware", August 30, 1928.

24. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

JACOBABAD,
February 7, 1929

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
11 CLIVE ROAD, NEW DELHI

YOUR WIRE. CAN ATTEND WORKING COMMITTEE SEVENTEENTH. WIRE SHIKARPUR.

GANDHI

Gandhi-Nehru papers, 1929. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

25. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

JACOBABAD,
February 7, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I have got all your letters. And they are all good. Your last letter dated 2nd instant gives me an account of your doings up to date. It is a splendid arrangement. Only you must not break under the strain. Do not overdo it. If you can stand all the rigid programme commencing from 3.45 a.m., nothing can be better. But if you find it too taxing, do not please hesitate and revise it and make it easier.

I did not suggest that all your judgment about K. was based on inferences. I know about the lying. That became a closed book when he made the confession though it was not adequate. What I meant was that your judgment in Calcutta and after confirming your original judgment was based on inferences. But I shall not strive with you in this matter. Only let not your mind become prejudiced against him. For me, my after-experience confirms me in my opinion that he is a clean man and a good man. He has some ways that are not attractive but who is there on earth with[out] a blemish? Let us, however, agree to differ on this matter. You should pray that my judgment may prove right not because it is mine but because it is in favour of a fellow being.

Rasik seems to be sinking. He is still lingering unconscious and helpless. It is terrible. Devdas is the hero in the tragedy. He is nursing him and managing those that have gone to Delhi merely to watch. For now Rasik's aunt has gone there. She dotes on Harilal's children.

I am keeping well and bearing the strain without difficulty. Of course non-milk diet continues. I take oranges in the journeyings, but otherwise the food is as at Sabarmati. The cold is bearable.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5341. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9396

26. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, JACOBABAD [1]

February 7, 1929

Gandhiji in his speech while thanking the respective committees and organizations for partiotic sentiments in presenting their respective purses for the Lalaji Memorial warned them against the dangers of developing a separatist tendency.[2] Why could they not, he asked them, present him a single consoli- dated purse on behalf of all of them? Was he to infer that they could not find any single person whom they could accept as their common representative? Again, it had been suggested to him that response to appeal for the Lalaji Memorial Fund would have been more liberal if the people had the assurance that at least a substantial part of Sind's money would be earmarked for use in Sind itself. The suggestion to him betrayed a narrow outlook. He wanted them to feel that in the Service of India consisted the service of Sind also. And since every pie of the Fund was to be utilized for the service of India, Sind would be a participator in the benefit of the Fund not only to the extent of its contribution but to the entire extent of the Fund. Lalaji's Servants of the People Society was at the beck and call of any part of India where its services were most needed. It was trying to enlist members from all parts of India; if

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". Purses and addresses on behalf of seven different organizations were presented to Gandhiji.

[2] Fearing that sanatani Hindus might object to untouchables attending the same meeting the organizers had arranged separate meetings for them. On learning this Gandhiji said: "You may keep your purses and all your addresses. I am going to have the meeting with untouchables only. Let all others who want come and present their addresses then."

no name from Sind was on its roll yet, the fault was not of the Society but of Sind. Finally, since a part of the Lalaji Fund was earmarked for untouchability work, if they prepared a suitable scheme for work among the untouchables of Sind, they could apply to the trustees of the Fund for financial aid, and their claim would be favourably considered. He then went on to make an impassioned appeal to the workers to purge their hearts of all base feelings of personal rancour, suspicion and distrust that were poisioning the political atmosphere of Sind and paralysing all useful activity. It had pained him very much to find that aspersions were cast even on a person like Jairamdas whom he regarded as a cent per cent good servant of India. Instead of indulging in recriminations, they should prepare for the fiery ordeal that awaited them by going through the process of self-purification and purifying the Congress organization during the present year of probation and grace.

Young India, 21-2-1929

27. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

SHIKARPUR,
February 8, 1929

DEAR MOTILALJI,

There has not been a moment to spare for writing work beyond what I have been able to snatch for *Y.I.* I have your wire today. I hope to reach Delhi on 17th instant *via* Marwar junction. The train reaches Delhi about 9.30 a.m. Rasik, my grandson, is lying on his deathbed in Delhi. He went there to teach carding to the Jamia boys. If he is still alive I shall drive straight to the Jamia and then attend the W.C. meeting. I do not know where I should stay this time. Usually I at Dr. Ansari's. May I look to you to decide and fix up wherever it is the most convenient. You will not detain me there longer than two days, I hope. 18th is a Monday. I would like to leave Delhi on 18th night.

I am under promise to finish Burma and Andhra before the end of April. I do not know how I shall cope with the two provinces now.

There has been a very good response to the Lalaji Memorial appeal in Sind.

Hope Kamala is better.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I reach Hyderabad on 13th and leave it 15th morning.

From the original: Motilal Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

28. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

SHIKARPUR,
February 8, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter. I understand the matter about Shivabhai. I am dictating this letter while eating. It is time for a meeting. I had certainly intended to return there on the 16th but this time everything goes wrong. There is an urgent message from Motilalji and so I shall have to go to Delhi. I must reach there on the 17th. The 18th is Monday. I shall, therefore, return there earliest on the 19th. I did not go to Delhi for the sake of Rasik. I shall be going now for the Working Committee, and shall see Rasik if he is alive then. There is so much disturbance during the journey that I can barely manage to finish the work for *Young India*, and that too after quarrelling with people. I have to disappoint many. You are one of them, for it was my intention to write to you every day but cannot manage to do that.[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5385

[1] The letter was signed by Girdhari, nephew of J. B. Kripalani, on behalf of Gandhiji.

29. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, SHIKARPUR [1]

February 8, 1929

Gandhiji spoke to them on the duty of wearing khadi. But the boys were in a rather impish mood. When Gandhiji asked them whether they would still wear foreign clothes after what he had told them about khadi there was a mischievous chorus of 'All' 'All'. Gandhiji next asked them whether there were any among them who occasionally indulged in lying. Some students boldly confessed their failing by raising their hands but the general spirit of exhilaration soon got the better of their earnestness. Gandhiji then too asked them whether there were any among them who would persist in the habit of lying. But this time not a single hand was raised and the erstwhile frivolous faces of the children at once became serious and drawn up in a grim resolve. Gandhiji was deeply touched. He spoke to them about the necessity of personal purity and of the greatness of truth.

Put all your knowledge, learning and scholarship in one scale and truth and purity in the other and the latter will by far outweight the other. The miasma of moral impurity has today spread among our school-going children and like a hidden epidemic is working havoc among them. I therefore appeal to you, boys and girls, to keep your minds and bodies pure. All your scholarship, all your study of the scriptures will be in vain if you fail to translate their teachings into your daily life. I know that some of the teachers too do not lead pure and clean lives. To them I say that even if they impart all the knowledge in the world to their students but inculcate not truth and purity among them, they will have betrayed them and instead of raising them set them on the downward road to perdition. Knowledge without character is a power for evil only, as seen in the instances of so many talented thieves and 'gentlemen rascals' in the world. Finally let me tell you, teachers and students, that even if you did not contribute a single pie to the Lalaji Memorial Fund but made yourselves immaculately pure in thought, word and deed you would have rendered the greatest service to Lalaji's spirit and to the country.

Young India, 21-2-1929

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

30. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, SHIKARPUR [1]

February 8, 1929

At the public meeting in the evening Gandhiji made this incident[2] the text of his appeal to the merchant princes of Shikarpur to use their splendid business talents and energy to become the trustees of *Daridranarayana* instead of being his spoliators—as they at present were, taking out one hundred rupees out of the pockets of the poor of which they got only five rupees as commission, and the balance of Rs. 95 they exported to their foreign principals. He further exhorted them to rid themselves of the evil custom of *deti-leti*, child-marriages, marriage of young girls with old men and breaking off out of sordid considerations betrothals solemnly made. At the end of the meeting there were questions which drew important observations on the canons of scriptural interpretation. He warned them against accepting everything that was written in Sanskrit verse as Shastra. Even the Shastras had to stand the test of reason and moral sense. The first qualification for the interpretation of the Shastras was that one should have purified oneself by a rigorous preparatory course of the observance of *yamas* and *niyamas*.

Young India, 21-2-1929

31. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

February 9, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

Have just had a wire saying Rasik passed away yesterday. God's will is our law. My day's work goes on uninterrupted. Whatever I feel is felt from selfishness. I had built so much on Rasik doing much in the present body. But that was not to be. Rasik's soul has gone to a higher state. Such was his transformation during the past two months.

I reach Hyderabad on Wednesday. I leave it on Friday morning, pass the day at Mirpurkhas, and entrain in the evening for Delhi, not for Sabaramati. Motilalji wants me there for a day or two. I hope to

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

[2] At a women's meeting held earlier in the afternoon, a detailed report of which is not available, a few cowries were received among the collections made.

reach the Mandir on Tuesday night. But I do not know. Better send anything you want to, between Sunday and Tuesday, do Pandit Motilal Nehru, Clive Street, New Delhi.

No time to give you more just now. Your letters continue to be good and informing. I am purposely refraining from sending you a wire about Rasik. Let us work.

Love

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5342. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9397

32. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

February 9, 1929

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have just now got your two telegrams here at Larkana. I also got Dr. Ansari's telegram. The telegram arrived while food was being brought in for me. I took my meal as usual and kept on working as I ate. Now I sit down to write this. My programme here will remain as already fixed. This is what I feel now. Rasik's death certainly pains me, but that is only because of selfishness. I love the boy. I had placed high hopes on him. God will in some mysterious way fulfil through him the hopes we had of him. But how are we, human beings, to remain steadfast in such faith? Our pain at his departure is the result of our selfishness. As for Rasik he has been freed from the pains to which the body is subject. I have no doubt that he is in a better state in the other world, for he was a devotee of Rama.

You will feel the greatest pain of all, though you may not show it. What you did is beyond praise. You will have the reward of your services to him. Your fortitude will lead to your progress. Rasik died through no fault of yours. He went to Delhi to collect the debt owing to him, and departed when it had been paid. You did your duty well. God will certainly bless you.

Let me tell you what I feel inwardly. It is of course God's will that prevails,and human intelligence follows the law of karma. Man is however entitled to use his reason. Accordingly, it appears to me that the best remedies are the remedies I or we employ and are based on nature-cure methods. It seems to me that both Maganlal and Rasik could perhaps have been saved if simple remedies had been applied.

One may put the same idea in another way. If Rasik had been destined to live, he would have been put in such circumstances that only nature-cure methods would have been used in his treatment. This thought, however, is no consolation, nor do we seek any. By saying all this, I do not express regret at having sent him to Delhi or at his being put under a doctor's treatment. You did what was pr for him in respect of Maganlal. We should never grieve over anyone's death. Dharma lies in doing one's duty, not in making no mistake at all. But after all, mine is only a conjecture. What was best Rama alone knows.

Incidentally, I have to go to Delhi on February 17, and that is exactly as I would have it. I shall be able to see you. Detain Ba. But let her go if she wished to. I know you must be comforting Kanti. I shall expect a full account from you then. I still have enough attachment to be eager to know from you about the last days of Rasik's life. Do not disappoint me in that.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2122

33. LETTER TO BALI VORA

Saturday [*February 9, 1929*][1]

CHI. BALI,

It is good you went there. To you, Rasik was as dear as life. I can understand that, among us all, you will suffer the most. But I know that you are wise. Keep up courage. Console yourself with the thought that nothing was wanting in the care of Rasik. I do not write separately to Kumi. We shall meet at Delhi on the 17th, if you have not already left.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2155

[1] From the reference to Rasik's death

34. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

Saturday [*February 9, 1929*][1]

BA,

You have acquired true knowledge. You showed great patience when you went to Delhi. I, therefore, hope that you are not grieving excessively. These children were brought up by you and, therefore, you are bound to suffer. But all of us will follow Rasik one day. Why should we, then, grieve when someone goes before the others? If you happen to stay on at Delhi, we shall meet on Sunday, the 17th.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 2156

35. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

LARKANA,
Saturday [*February 9, 1929*][2]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have no letter from you today. Rasik has passed away. As I came out after finishing my bath and was preparing to sit down for my meal, I got a telegram from Devdas. I read the telegram and sat down for the meal. Work is going on as usual. I feel grief at Rasik's passing away, but see plainly that it is the result of selfishness. I had entertained hopes of getting much work done through his body and certainly, therefore, I am suffering today as we suffer for selfish reasons when a machine breaks down. If we think of the one within who was driving the machine, we should, on the contrary, be happy, for the cage had become old, was decaying and the swan flew away. There is no cause in this for mourning. I know this and that is why, suppressing my selfish grief, I go on with my work. When one machine breaks down, the rest of us should improve our own machines, make them work more and thus make up for the loss of the one that has broken down.

[1] From the reference to Rasik's death, which occurred on February 8

[2] Gandhiji was at Larkana on February 9.

I shall reach Hyderabad on Wednesday evening. I shall leave the place on Friday morning to go to Mirpurkhas. From there I shall take a train to Delhi.

Let me say one thing. After the death of Maganlal and Rasik, I put increasingly greater value on Ashram work, that is, on ordinary activities. I feel that, if we had served the bodies of these two, they would not have perished. This does not imply any want in the service rendered to them at Patna or Delhi, but has reference to the scientific method of service in the Ashram. Their destiny, however, took them to distant places and they received royal service at those places.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5483

36. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

February 9, 1929

CHI. KUSUM,

I have your letter. I am not at all in a position to write a letter every day. I can understand somewhat why you feel uneasy and sad. You should, however, remove the cause. We may not always be able to remove the external causes but we can control them. Our duty lies in enduring them.

After writing thus far I went for my bath. Coming out of the bath I saw the wires about the passing away of Rasik[1]. Nevertheless I took my meal. Then I sat down to work. After finishing with the Delhi letters I have taken up this unfinished letter. It seems as if an age had passed in an hour. You may have now understood my meaning without any need for further explanation. The remedy for all suffering lies in enduring it. Then why should we pay any attention to what somebody says or does or how he or she behaves? We should go on with our own work quietly and cheerfully. You have the strength for this. If you do not have it, then strive hard to cultivate it.

Do your work but guard your health. Go deeply into the problem of the Bal Mandir and do whatever is needed. Are you not

[1] Who died of typhoid fever on February 8, 1929 at Delhi; *vide* also "Letter to Devdas Gandhi", February 9, 1929.

now in charge of it? Accept a responsibility which comes to you unsought and do the job well.

Look for the virtues of other people and think of them. When you discover faults, you should remind yourself that there is nothing perfect or flawless in this world. Recite the couplet *jadachetana gunadoshamaya*[1] and ponder it.

No more today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 1776

37. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

LARKANA,

February 9/10, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have already mailed you today's post. But I had kept aside some letters of Mirabai for being sent to you, and I enclose them with this. These letters are evidence of her clean mind, her love and her devotion to duty. Her remarks about Hinduism are worth pondering over. Convey a summary of these letters to the inmates of the Mandir, and particularly to the women. After you have read them, send them to Mahadev.

I wrote the above lines yesterday evening. I am now writing this after the morning prayers on the 10th while waiting to leave for the station. We wish to reach Sukkur at 8·30 a. m. I shall spend the silence day also there. The whole of Tuesday will be spent in visiting people. We shall reach Hyderabad on Wednesday evening. On Friday morning we shall leave Hyderabad for Mirpurkhas. I should, therefore, get the Friday post at the latter place. The mail from Ahmedabad arrives there at 9 in the morning. On Sunday morning we shall be in Delhi. Address the post there c/o Pandit Motilal Nehru, Clive Street, New Delhi. If I can remember it I shall write to you the number. I hope to return there on Tuesday, the 19th, but I cannot be sure. Does it happen that we feel inclined to run to a doctort he

[1] By Tulsidas; it means: "The Creator has made the world full of things animate and inanimate, of good qualities and bad. "

moment we get toothache or similar pain? Our standard is avillage far away from a railway station. We may not receive what people in such a village do not get. In ninety-nine per cent cases the pain we suffer is due to our own fault, and in 95 per cent cases again it is such as we can bear. In most cases mere fasting diminishes the pain. In every matter we should cultivate the capacity to endure. We ought not to bear, in any circumstances, what we can avoid by some means which lies within us and what it would be wrong on our part not to get rid of. For instance, uncleanliness, external or internal. Explain this to everyone. I have not written this by way of criticism of those who have gone to Broach; these reflections were provoked by the news of their having gone there and as part of the train of reflections following Rasik's death. We live near doctors and have learnt to take their help. Since they offer it, we shall certainly avail ourselves of it. What I have said is only by way of caution so that we may keep within limits.

Are things smooth now between Narandas and you? Do not rest content with cultivating indifference to each other. You should shower love on Narandas and convince him that his suspicion is groundless, that you want his presence. Use his services whenever you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I got your long letter after arriving here. If it is necessary to reply to it, I can do so only tomorrow.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5487

38. THIRD-CLASS TRAVELLING[1]

Now that I have resumed third-class travelling after many years,myeyes are opened to the fact that the condition is about the samethat ruled five years ago. Third-class carriages and especially latrines are just as dirty and unkempt as they ever were. Nor have the third- class passengers learnt better manners. They are as indifferent as before about their own comforts and those of others. They would squat in the passage and in the corridor and remain there not minding passengers fromthe other pats of the compartment treading on their

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan,* 10-2-1929.

clothes, and even themselves, in their passage to and fro. They will not take the troubleof getting up for the time being to give them passage. They are utterly oblivious of the simple rules of sanitation. Let us not mistake this kind of indifference for virtue or regard it as a sign of India's proverbial patience and forbearance. Indifference to physical comforts is good when it comes from enlightenment; but it is criminal when it is the result of slothfulness or ingnorance or both. Indifference to sanitation is ever a crime. Such indifference as one notices during railway travelling is surely due to slothfulness, ignorance of the elementary laws of sanitation and want of consideration for others' feelings. Here then is work for the Railway Passengers' Association. It is no doubt absolutely necessary to complain against the indifference on the part of authorities to the well-being of third-class railway passengers. But I am afraid that no amount of complaints and protest will wake them to a sense of duty unless the third-class passengers themselves demand redress and show energetic impatience of neglect on the part of the authorities. Nearly three-fourths of the discomfort of third-class travelling can be avoided without much extra expense. Proper cleaning of the compartments and latrines and ensuring obedience to the bye-laws framed for the comfort of passengers will remove the most glaring difficulties of third-class travelling which should be as free from risk as first-class and second-class travelling is or is supposed to be. If third-class passengers are duly instructed about the need of insistence upon elementary comfort and to complain about it every time that avoidable inconvenience is felt, the disgraceful condition under which third-class travelling has to be undertaken can be remedied. This instruction is, I know, much more difficult to impart than the simple task of swearing at the authorities and sending a basketful of complaints. But it is just this more difficult task which it is the duty of the Railway Passengers' Association to take up. It should have courteous, well-versed, patient and cultured agents travelling third class, reading notices to the third-class passengers, telling them of the insanitation and the discomfort they should feel and strive to remove,insisting, wherever possible, upon immediate redress. These missionaries, if one may use that term for the class of persons I have in mind, should become a binding link between the railway officials and the passengers; they may not treat the former as the natural enemy of the latter but regard them as trustees for their welfare. Much improvement can be effected by tactfulness on the part of these

missionaries.

Then, there is the larger question of improvement in accommodation by the construction of more and better carriages. This no doubt involves considerable expense. But as it is the third-class railway traffic which is the most paying part of railway administration, it is due to that vast travelling public that at least a minimum of comfort is ensured for them.

To mention one glaring instance, the latrines on the other systems that I know are somewhat tolerable; but the latrines in the Jodhpur State Railway are, in my opinion, absolutely intolerable, insanitary and unfit for human use. They are little black holes without ventilation, without light, without latches to close the doors from inside. A bulky man like say Maulana Shaukat Ali would not perhaps be able to enter the latrines or having entered would certainly not be able to use it. Lean man like me cannot use them without the clothes touching the walls. The whole construction was evidently conceived without reference to the primary human want. It is up to the railway management to alter this disgraceful state of things without a moment's delay. The State railways should really be a model to the British system; whereas the actual state of things is the other way. The construction of the State railways that I know is any day inferior to the construction of the carriages in British India.

Young India, 14-2-1929

39. MY NOTES

SAROJINI DEVI'S SERVICES

I have been receiving letters from friends in America to the effect that Sarojini Devi has been doing there work of great importance and that she has been using all her God-given gifts in her country's service. There is no doubt at all that she has won the heartsof the American people. A sister from Canada has sent me a long letter[1] about her experiences from which I take the following

[1] Miss Helen Reed's letter which also appeared in *Young India*, 7-2-1929, along with Gandhiji's comments is not reproduced here. She had described the great impact Sarojini Naidu's personality and speeches had made on the Canadians. With her knowledge, poetic fervour, humour and command over English, she awakened the sense of justice in her listeners and melted their hearts. Great popularity did not turn her head.

excerpts: I do not think this correspondent is guilty of any exaggeration in her description of Sarojini Devi's powers. She has a great capacity to grasp a given situation in an instant. She understands herlimitations. She never goes into little details which economists and political leaders concern themselves with. She never pretends to possess knowledge of this kind. She employs her fund of common sense so skilfully that the opponent is never able to put her in an awkward situation. And he has a feeling of satisfaction that whatever he has learnt from her is somehow complete.

ON BEHALF OF CARDERS

A lover of the spinning-wheel who regards himself as a judge of carding writes :[1]

I am not very well versed in the *kakar*[2] science, but, as the writer of the letter appears to have that knowledge in ample measure, I publish his suggestions. Other carders may, if they can, compare their own experience with this and furnish me with any additional information that they may have.

The above letter indicates that there is such a lot to learn about even these simple implements. While I was at Yeravda I was unmindful of the *kakar* and my soul. [3] Now I can card better and so know their value. But I am unable to judge the merits or demerits of a *kakar*. From the letter referred to above, I see that in choosing one we have to go right into its very origin.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-2-1929

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had sent Gandhiji some hints about *kakar* in a carding-bow, saying that it was best to use *kakar* made from a goat's hide instead of one from the hide of a calf.

[2] A leather strap fastened below the gut in a carding-bow

[3] Probably Gandhiji meant that he had been, without knowing it, using a carding-bow with a *kakar* made from the hide of a calf.

40. A DEMONIACAL SYSTEM

There is a steamer called the *Sutlej*. Some months ago that vessel called at the Calcutta port bringing as passengers some Indian labourers returning from British Guiana. There are a number of steamers in which steamship companies carry passengers to distant Colonies and back. The *Sutlej* is one of them. Of the passengers it had on board 37 died during the voyage. This is a shocking figure. As soon as the fact became known the Imperial Citizenship Association sent a telegram to the Government suggesting that an inquiry be held into the matter. The Government, it appears, already had an explanation. Two officials had been appointed to investigate the matter. They had reported that such deaths were a common occurrence on such steamers; that those among the passengers of the *Sutlej* who had died were old people, who, as a matter of fact, ought not to have left British Guiana, as they were not fit enough to undertake a sea voyage. Having obtained such a report the Government has exonerated itself.

Let us try to see who the investigation officials were. One held the post of the Protector of Emigrants, the other wasa Collector from that area. The point to note in these appointments is that neither officials can be regarded as neutral or impartial because the task of both is to inspect steamers of the kind in question. They are supposed to be responsible for the health, etc. , of the passengers. Hence it is in thier interest to show at the end of an inquiry that there has been no oppression, injustice or irregularity. In fact as they were the interested parties they ought to have been made to stand in the dock. Whether or not they had properly discharged their duty was the subject-matter of the inquiry. That means in plain language that the accused were made their own judges. Could there be anything wanting in the verdict they would give?

I call this sytem a demoniacal system. To pretend to render justice instead of doing so, to fuss outward formalities in order to throw dust into people's eyes, to build dykes beforehand, never to accept any mistakes as far as possible, to cover up the guilt of the guilty officials—these are marks of a demoniacal system. We observe these marks every day in the British administration.

Let us now examine the *Sutlej* affair a little more fully. If the number of deaths that occurred on the *Sutlej* occur on every voyage, surely this cannot be used to cover up these deaths. It only shows the cruelty and callousness of the officials. If deaths on this scale had occurredonly on this occasion it might perhaps be treated as anaccident. But if they occur regularly they are unpardonable and indefensible. Instead, the officials gave a contrary verdict as if sins or crimes ceased to be so if they took place everyday. The questions which arise from the *Sutlej* incident are: How is the *Sutlej* built? Does she have enough accommodation for the passengers? Is there provision for enough light and air? Is there protection from cold, heat, rain, etc.? Also, did the passengers have enough clothing? In considering these questions the inquiry should further cover the owner of the steamer, the mates and other officers, the British Guianese officials and Indian officials connected with this department. Who will conduct such an impartial inquiry and in whose interests? Who will care for poor indentured labourers? Who bothers whether they live or die, whether they eat or do not. The Association has done the right thing in drawing attention tothe tragic incident of the *Sutlej*. I hope the Association will not rest satisfied that the Government has exonerated itself. This shocking occurrence calls for an impartial public inquiry. It need hardly be stressed that persons other than officials should be appointed to conduct it.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 10-2-1929

41. OVERFLOWING LOVE

Shri Lakshmidas writes as follows about the article entitled "Khadi in Hyderabad" published in *Navajivan*:[1]

I publish this letter, not for its intrinsic merit, but for the brimming love for khadi it evinces. I do not suggest that it has nosubstance. That it does have, but as compared to the love, it seems slight. While I write this, a verse of Narsinh Mehta comes to mind. He sang:

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had supported a suggestion that one must begin spinning by learning to card. He also said that every agriculturist should utilize his leisure for khadi work.

Compared to drinking the nectar of Thy love,
O Wearer of peacock's feather,
Meta physical wrangling seems trivial.

My faith in khadi is fortified because there are in India votaries of khadi like Lakshmidas. Many principles deserve to be supported in the world, commentaries have been written on them, and yet they do not catch on, because they have no votaries. History shows that those principles which had votaries attained permanence. Now a few words about the subject. There is no doubt about what Shri Lakshmidas writes. Khadi will become cheaper than all other cloth when Indian agricul- turists manage to perform all the operations up to weaving in their own families. Had we forgotten the art of making *rotlis* at home and begun to live on factory-made biscuits, we would have got the flour ground in one place and, perhaps, got it kneaded in yet another place and would have rolled the *rotlis* at first in our homes; so too it is in regard to spinning. In Europe today wheat is grown in one place, ground and sifted in another, kneaded and made into small lumps in a third and made into bread in a fourth. One may say that in European cities bread has almost ceased to be made in homes. The practice of cooking at home has ceased in many parts of America and people take their meals in restaurants only. They do so not as an expedience but because they consider the practice good.

Hence though in principle I wholly agree with Shri Lakshmidas, I nevertheless feel that during the transitional period those who know spinning should be supplied slivers for some time and ultimately they should be made to do the carding for themselves. In order not to be deceived by such hope and to be on our guard, I believe there is need for men of one-sided views like Shri Lakshmidas. I have no doubt that spinning without carding is like building without a foundation. Hence we need carders who will do carding not as an occupation but as a sacrifice. I have already written on this subject. [1] The fact is that the progress of khadi depends on the increase in the number of those who engage themselves for the good of others in the processes beginning with sowing of cotton and ending with weaving, because it is only they who, by going to the villages, can make the farmers conscious of their duty.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 10-2-1929

[1] *Vide* "Good Carding", December 9, 1928.

42. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

February 11, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

You have been slack in writing this time. Why should then I write to you?

You would have already known about the death of Rasik[1]. I have been constantly comparing the circumstances of his death to the calf's. We were happy in the death of the calf. We rejoiced in having poisoned him. Rasik passed away on his own. Why should we then be unhappy? If we are, it is because of our selfishness. Moreover, for the last two months, he had immersed himself in prayers and so he has risen high. The saying in the villages that the candles return to their original form of wax after they are burnt up, is beautiful and is worth pondering over. You must have seen that in *Young India* and *Navajivan*. [2]

I have given you full freedom as far as your coming to stay here is concerned. So, do whatever you feel is proper.

I feel the same about Prabhudas as you do. I assume from his letter that he is obliged to go and stay with Kaka whenever the latter is in difficulty. Kaka no doubt needs help and he is also fond of Pra[bhudas]. Pra[bhudas] had been writing to him that his health had improved and he was fit enough to live in any condition. So Kaka wrote to him to which he replied that he was not in any way bound to go to Tadikhet and could go wherever Kaka wanted him to go. Under the circumstances, I also agree with P[rabhudas]. I want to write to him that after taking into consideration everything, he should do what his duty is. Let things take their own course.

Shantilal has not yet calmed down. He writes long letters to Prabhudas. I have written to him a short but stern letter.

If Sakhi Gopal's lands are owned by trustees of the temple, then does it also mean that the houses built on them also belong to

[1] Son of Harilal Gandhi; he passed away at Delhi on February 8, 1929 after prolonged illness.

[2] The reference, presumably, is to the article referred to in the item *vide* "Letter to Vasumati Pandit", February 11, 1929. The article, however, could not be traced.

them? If that is so, who will pay for the repair of the houses? Do find out more about this and write to me.

It seems that Kashi's health would not be fully restored. I do feel like recommending fasting as a treatment. It is possible she may not benefit by it but what harm could it do? Fasting certainly cannot have any adverse effect. See the details of a recent case which has been published in *Young India*.

I write this letter from Sakkar. My Sind tour will come to an end on the 15th. I was expected to reach N. W. F. P. on the 16th. Now Motilalji has called me to Delhi. So I will have to go there for two days. Immediately after that, I intend to leave for Andhra Desh. The temple [authorities] have been sounded, and if they give me permission, I will go there. I do have to reach Morbi on March 30.

My health has been all right during my travels. Even now, I live on mother almond and have given rest to mother goat.

Perhaps you know that Krishnadas has stayed on in Delhi because of the cold. Let me see when he moves further. From his letters, I learn that the Delhi weather suits him. I hope you know about the changes in the Mandir.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Look after Govindbabu's Ashram and his work. Observe carefully who the workers are, how they function, how they maintain the accounts, etc. I have recommended that he should form a trust for the Ashram and have suggested your name and that of Jivrambhai for that. I have been given the impression that the report published by him is full of exaggeration. I have even told him that. He wants you to stay there permanently. However, that is a different thing. But do stay there for a few days so that you may observe the work properly.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 3286

43. FEAR OF THE PENAL CODE

While advising a young man several weeks ago,I had suggested that he should repudiate his child-marriage and, if his doing so pained his parents, he should put up with it. A lawyer friend writes on this subject thus :[1]

I see no reason to withdraw my advice. The law is no guide to a reformer; in the final analysis it is only his inner voice that shows the way. He who fears the law can bring about no reforms. With regard to all the great reforms in the world it can be said that they came about because the reformers never bothered about the law.

In the present case the marriage whose repudiation I advised cannot, truly speaking, be regarded as a marriage at all. Where a girl is so young that she does not even understand what marriage is, marriage has no meaning. A marriage implies a certain kind of relationship entered into withunderstanding between a man and a woman, and a certain kind of contract. And about a contract the law says that both parties must understand it.

A contract effected without either party understanding it or one concluded by force can never be binding. Hence, I feel that the advice I gave is practical. And so long as we do not have youths brave enough to act in accordance with such advice, it will not be possible to protect poor, innocent girls. If we have to wait for the law to be amended, aeons will pass. I do not mean to say that there should be no agitation to amend bad laws or that laws should not be amended. The remedy suggested by me is a potent weapon for having the law scrapped. A law, truly speaking, should follow public opinion. It is only in an autocratic regime, in a regime indifferent to public opinion, that laws opposed to public opinion are made. Consequently, the people always look for loopholes to circumvent those laws, and indeed do so successfully and, finally, the respect based on understanding that one should have for the laws disappears.

I think the remedy that I have suggested is the first step towards abolishing child-marriage and similar other wicked practices. In this way the people's attention is at once drawn to the evil customs. They begin to think and participate in abolishing laws which support evil

[1] For text of the letter, *vide* "A Terror of the Penal Code", February 7, 1929.

practices. Hence, my advice to every enthusiastic reformer is that heshould not bother too much about the intricacies of the law; he should rather, where he sees his duty clearly, act unhesitatingly and be prepared to face the punishment provided by the law.

The Penal Code may well be necessary for a criminal and may be so for all time. But for an innocent reformer, the Penal Code is meaningless and ineffective. Punishment has two objects: to deter a criminal from committing crime and to protect society. Neither of these things affects a reformer, because he does not have to be deterred from committing any crime and his reform too cannot be halted. Punishment actually accelerates reforms. In this poor country the innocent harbours more fear of the Penal Code than criminals do. A real criminal cares a twopence for that law, while the poor weakling, who has committed no offence and who is not guilty at heart, being a victim of circumstances trembles from fear before the Penal Code. This sort of fear has lessened since satyagraha appeared; but the lawyer friend's letter shows that it still persists. Let all reformers save themselves from such fear.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-2-1929

44. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

February 10, 1929

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

Your letters reached me only today during my tour of Sind.

It will grieve you both to learn that after an illness of 15 to 20 days, Rasik passed away on the 8th at Delhi. Dr. Ansari spared no pains in looking after him. Ba, Kanti, Harilal and Bali had by that time run up to Delhi. Devdas, Krishnadas and Navin were also there. For the last two months, Rasik had become a devotee of God and took great interest in the *Ramayana*. There is no reason at all for sorrow in this matter, as all of us have to go the same way sooner or later. Our sorrow results from selfishness. I did not let it interfere with any of my work.

For Dhairyabala I send you another name, Sita, which is sweet, easy for all to pronounce and a sacred name. You have now no cause for complaint. I have today a letter from Nanabhai also.

Sushila's present weight, 90 lb. , is good enough. She can easily reach to 105 lb. She can do that with some exercise and enough food.

Vasumatibehn's weight, which had gone down to 74, is now a little over 105. She was frightened by some people who told her that she had tuberculosis, but she now weighs more than she did at any time in the past. The cause of her losing weight was mainly mental.

After my tour of Sind I shall return to the Ashram *via* Delhi. Another tour programme will be decided there.

I have explained the reason why I did not write about the new Agent. Describe to me what kind of a person he is.

I keep pretty good health.

A grant can certainly be made for Mr. Doke's biography from the Rustomji Trust. If necessary, you may use this letter for the purpose. If required, however, I shall write separately.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4752

45. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

SUKKUR,
February 10, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I expect that you will get this letter along with the big envelope. I intend to send it with a special messenger who is going to Hyderabad.

Venkatappayya of Andhra Pradesh is getting impatient and so I am thinking of proceeding to Bezwada directly from Delhi. It seems you are managing things fairly well there. When I arrive there, something or the other is bound to happen. Instead of that, it is better that you should have peace for about two months. Even if I come, I shall not be able to spend more than five days. Why should I take a circuitous route just for so many days? I think I should go directly *via* Manmad or Bombay. If, however, you wish my presence in the Mandir even for five days, wire or write to me. I expect that you will get this letter on Wednesday morning. I shall reach Hyderabad [Sind] on the evening of that day. You can wire to me there up to Thursday. A letter will reach me only at Delhi, and so may be too late. Discuss the matter with all others and let me know.

The incident concerning Abbas and Rajaram was painful, but I am happy that it is over.

Do not get frightened and give way to despair. When you have done your duty, let the Mandir go up in flames if it will. What more can a person do than give of his best? One cannot control the outcome. If, despite this, anyone makes himself unhappy or worries unnecessarily, one can only say that he is a fool. Do not work beyond your strength and do not do anything in a hurry. Do everything at its proper time and, if you cannot do something, be humble and admit your inability. Everything will become easy then.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5386

46. LETTER TO NANABHAI MASHRUWALA

[*February 10, 1929*][1]

BHAI SHRI NANABHAI,

I have your letter. As for the summons, I shall wait for more information. I have sent an alternative name to Sushila.[2] I have selected Sita. Her friends will like it and, in any case, it is a sacred name. Sushila complains that there has been no letter from Tara. At presentI am in Sind. I shall be reaching Delhi on the 17th. I may be there for two days. After that I may proceed direct to Bezwada.

You have probably learnt that Harilal's son, Rasik, passed away on the 8th at Delhi. I have thought much on the subject of death and, therefore, I do not grieve over it. There is some suffering, of course, because of selfishness, but that is only momentary.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4751

[1] From the postmark

[2] The addressee had earlier suggested the name 'Dhairyabala' for Sushila Gandhi's new-born daughter.

47. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, SUKKUR[1]

February 10, 1929

You have presented me an address whose contents you do not know. [2] You have praised khadi in your address but have comehere dressed in foreign cloth. You have asked me questionswhich appear to be a mere pose. You wasted your good time which you could have much better utilized by sweeping clean the streets or doing some other piece of honest labour and giventhe earnings to the Lalaji memorial Fund. Knowledge can be im-parted to the *jijnasu*[5] only. But seeing that you never knew thecontents of the address, you could have no desire to know the answers. I must therefore decline to take them seriously. If the framer wishes to have the answers, he must seek another opportunity.

Young India, 21-2-1929

48. SPEECH AT MUNICIPAL MEETING, SUKKUR[4]

February 10, 1929

Gandhiji's reply was a dissertation on the functions and limitations of our existing municipalities. Whilst he agreed with what they had observed in thier address that they could win swaraj through the municipalities, he cautioned them that the statement held good in respect of free and independent municipalities only, not municipalities that were dominated by the Government, as was largely the case in India at present. But though the existing municipalities might not by themselves enable them to wrest swaraj from the Government, efficient working would certainly be a great step towards swaraj. The first condition of municipal efficiency was that those who entered municipalities should be actuated by a spirit of service, not by considerations of personal gain. Secondly, it was necessary that the municipal commissioners should qualify themselves for their work by themselves becoming

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

[2] The address presented on behalf of the students included some "ethical questions which did not seem to be in keeping with the atmosphere. " On cross-examination the students admitted that they had not been consulted before or after the address was drafted.

[3] Seeker after knowledge

[4] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

sweepers first and by learning to distinguish pure milk and ghee from impure. It would be their duty to see that there was not a dirty street or an unswept lane within municipal limits.

Young India, 21-2-1929

49. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, SUKKUR

February 10, 1929

If you want to establish swaraj in India, which for you and me can only mean *Ramarajya*, you must become pure in mind and body like Sita, for then alone you will become the mothers of heroes. And as a first step towards attaining bodily purity you must wear pure, homespun khadi just as Sita did in days of old. And lastly you must emancipate yourselves and your daughters from the thraldom of the various social abuses and tyrannies that are prevalent in your midst at present.

Young India, 21-2-1929

50. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

[On or after *February 10, 1929*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letters on reaching Sukkur. I am writing to father. Do as he says. Await his reply.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi; G. N. 3313

[1] Gandhiji reached Sukkur on February 10, 1929.

51. LETTER TO AGNES

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
February 11, 1929

MY DEAR AGNES,

I was filled with delight to hear from you after so many years. Of course I knew all about your movements from Henry[2] when he was here. But it is a different thing to hear of you and to hear from you. I am glad too that you are getting on so well. Do please remember me to uncle and aunt when you write to them. I often think of them and their many kindnesses.

You might have seen from the papers and from *Young India*, if you are getting that paper, that I have again been obliged to cancel my proposed European tour. Now I don't know when I shall be able to manage it. I was sorry to have to cancel it, but it was absolutely necessary.

Yours sincerely,

AGNES
BULSTRODE HOUSE
BULSTRODE STREET
LONDON W-1

From a photostat: S. N. 15138

52. LETTER TO OAMER AHMED

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 11, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I cannot agree with you that the Nehru Report has disregarded Mussalman interest. You may not agree with its treatment of that interest. But I am convinced that there has been no desire on the part of the framers of that Report

[1] Here and in the subsequent letters of this period the permanent address was given for purposes of correspondence.

[2] H. S. L. Polak

to belittle or ignore the Mussalman claim. In any case there is no question of solving the problem of swaraj without the co-operation of all classes concerned. For my part I can only say that I am as fervent as ever about the Hindu-Muslim unity.

Yours sincerely,

OAMER AHMED, ESQ.
KHILAFAT HOUSE
BOMBAY-10

From a photostat: S. N. 15324

53. LETTER TO H. T. HOLLAND

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 11, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

It is only now I am able to acknowledge your note. I had not one minute to spare in Shikarpur. I had to disappoint many who had more or less expected I would visit their institutions. In the circumstances I was unable to make time for your institution. You will please therefore forgive me.

Yours sincerely,

REV. H. T. HOLLAND
SETH HIRANAND CHARITABLE HOSPITAL
SHIKARPUR

From a photostat: S. N. 15006

54. LETTER TO RAMA RAO

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 11, 1929

DEA RFRIEND,

Here are my answers to your questions :[1]

Liberation as I understand it is complete freedom from the bondage of the flesh, that is, from birth and death.

(1) Yes.

(2) Life is that which is permanent, that is, ever was, ever is and ever will be and it is superior to all that we can see or sense with our organs.

(3) Doubt is the mother of understanding.

(4) Truth and Life in its essence are one and the same. I should give the same definition for Truth as I have given for life.

(5) I entirely agree with Mr. Krishnamurti. What he has said is a paraphrase of the aphorism[2].

I have purposely made my answers cryptic. It is difficult to enter into a detailed examination of your questions. That is possible only in the course of a discussion. But my answers will perhaps give you an idea how I feel about the paramount questions that agitate all

[1] The addressee had asked :

Could you explain your idea of liberation or perfection ?

(1) Do you consider it possible for any man to attain liberation at any stage of evolution ?

(2) Mr. Krishnamurti explains life as "thought feeling". Could you kindly give us an idea of your conception of life ?

(3) The place and position of doubt in the understanding of things :

(4) Are Truth and life one and the same? You have written the book *My Experiments with Truth*. What do you mean by truth ?

(5) Mr. Krishnamurti maintains that "individual problem is world problem". How far do you agree with his view?

[2] "As with microcosm, so with macrocosm. "

thoughtful men.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RAMARAO
C/O SJT. JAMSHEDN. R. MEHTA
BONUSROAD
KARACHI

From a photostat: S. N. 15008

55. LETTER TO KAMALA SATTHIANADHAN[1]

February 11, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

Here is my message—as with men, so with women: Salvation lies in their own hands. They must resist with all their power every evil custom that keeps them under its heels.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Sarojini Naidu, p. 199

56. LETTER TO RUTH F. WOODSWALL

SATYAGRAHAASHRAM,SABARMATI,
February 11, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It was delivered during my Sind tour, hence the delay. I am to be in Delhi on the 17th and I shall be there on the 18th also, but 18th is my day of silence. As I am going to Delhi on special work I shall have no time left. I expect to reach Sabarmati about the 20th instant and remain there only for a few days. You will be welcome during those days. I am likely to be there at least till the 25th instant.

Yours sincerely,

RUTH F. WOODSWALL
C/O Y. W. C. A.
NEW DELHI

From a photostat: S. N. 15005

[1] Editor of *Indian Ladies Magazine*

57. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

February 11, 1929

SISTERS,

I have your letter.

I am ever content with whatever you can do sincerely. My happiness lies in your peace and contentment.

Deep in my heart there is no sorrow over the death of Rasik. I have enough attachment to make me suffer for selfish reasons. All of us will go one day where Rasik has gone. The difference is only about the time of going. Then why feel grief or fear death? After death, there is either another birth or *moksha*. We do love life. If we long and strive for it we may even attain *moksha*. There is no third state. If we do not ceaselessly strive for *moksha,* then another birth is inevitable. And since we love life, we have no cause to feel sorrow. Grief is the result of our ignorance. Knowing this, I did not stop my work even for a moment.

This time my tour seems to have begun at such an inauspicious hour that the date of my return is being postponed again and again. You will know about this from the letter to Chhaganlal.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—1 : *Ashramni Behnone*

58. LETTER TO CHILDREN OF BALMANDIR

SUKKUR,
February 11, 1929

BIRDS OF THE BAL MANDIR,

I got your answers.

Indu, Vasant and Madhuri state that they will not give upspices as they like them. What is this ! Our practice is to eat, speak or do, not what we like, but what is good. Some of you might like chillies, but should you eat them? Suppose you havefever and at that time you feel tempted to eat *rotli*; should youeat it then? Eat only what, and as much as, is good for thebody. If as children we learn to control the mind, we shall go far. Nani says she desires to wear bangles of yarn. There is no harm in wearing yarn bangles, but it is best to wear no bangles at all. Therefore, even though one may feel tempted to wear yarn bangles, one should suppress the desire. Such bangles are bound to get dirty and will have to be washed. Wouldn't it be better, then, not to wear them?

I had hoped that I would be there in person to hear your answers to this letter. But that may not be; in that case you should keep your promises and preserve silence in the class-room, the kitchen and at the prayer-meeting.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9221

59. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

SUKKUR,
February 11, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

If the peace in the kitchen becomes a permanent feature, it will probably be kept even after I return there. A string, they say, can make a dent in granite. Is there anything we cannot do through practice?

You have solved the problem of ghee quite well. Our experiment will proceed satisfactorily now. Weigh its results and examine its

merits and demerits. Also consider its effect on the purses, the bodies and minds of those who eat it.

The knives made by Ishvarlal will give excellent service if whetted from time to time. Get all of them cleaned after use.

Shankarlal knows the matter about Badrul. Do not accede to his request immediately. He has not given a proper account of Rs. 30,000. If the skin of your soles still cracks owing to cold, the remedy is to wash them at night in hot water mixed with soda-bi-carb, to fill be the cracks with ghee and bandage the feet. One who keeps watch at night may do this during the day. There were cracks in the skin of my toes and under them. I applied this remedy and the cracks healed up in two days. I had not stopped any work. I had even continued the walks.

It is necessary that you should not arrange the cleaning of lavatories and night-watch for yourself on the same day. Divide your work among the days of the week and lighten it in that manner.

If Saraladevi feels that the *mava*[1] which you send to her is too much, send less. About the price, too, inquire the market rate and charge her a little less than that. Keep all our dealings with others above board. We need not force on her or anybody else anything which they do not want. We can easily find other customers for *mava*. Has the quantity of milk increased?

Employ for making bread only those who can do the work. You have not explained why Dhiru had to be relieved. Ramniklal should learn to make bread.

If anyone who cannot say that he span one lea during the day has good reason for his not being able to do so, there is nothing to be said in the matter.

You need not feel the slightest hesitation in writing to me about Ashram matters, small or big. Just as one must take interest in news of births and deaths, so also must one in other matters of joy or sorrow. One must cultivate the strength, or the art, whatever you call it, of listening with interest to such matters too, without getting upset. Who knows if what we feel to be a cause of happiness or unhappiness is

[1] Milk dehydrated

really that? Bhang is pleasant to drink, but we know the effect it produces. We do not know the results of other things which seem pleasant, and so are often deceived.

Let me know about the condition of Totaram's eyes. What was the matter with them?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5388

60. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Silence Day, February 11, 1929

CHI. GANGABEHN,

What is this that I hear? Why should you feel offended because[1] read my letter to you with Chhaganlal's permission? I have always thought that you and I have nothing private orconfidential. Why shouldyouthentakeoffenceif someonehappens to read my harmless letter? But now I shall be careful. I will send this letter to you separately. Of course, Chhaganlal has been told that neither he nor anybody else should read a letter marked 'personal'. All the same, till you reassure me I shall continue to send you letters separately.

I suppose you are now quite all right. I did expect a letter from you today. But, you seem to sulk and would not write. Get rid of the sullenness. Remember the very first verse we recite every day: "When a man puts away all the cravings . . . "[2] Further on we recite: "Craving begets wrath. "[3]

If . . . [4] does anything wrong, you have every right to twist her ear, but you have no right to be angry. Take heed.

To save postage I put half the number of letters in the envelope for you and the other half in that for Chhaganlal.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 22

[1] The name is omitted in the source.
[2] *Bhagavad Gita,* II. 55
[3] *Ibid*
[4] The name is omitted in the source.

61. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[*February 11, 1929*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

While I was busy looking into the old letters, some more have arrived from Rohri. Rohri means Sabarmati and Sukkur means Ahmedabad; here, however, the distance between the two places is less.

I am surprised to know about Gangabehn being angry. I have today written separately to her. Such things are bound to happen from time to time.

I wrote to you about *mava* in this morning's letter, and nowI read in your letter that neither of them wants it. Anasuyabehnknows a shop where good *mava* is sold. You can arrange with itsowner. If you fail in that, let me know. He will surely buy if you offer it at one anna less than the market rate. There will beno problem if they buy the milk at Ambalal's place. Nevertheless, it is necessary to become familiar with the *mava* shop.

Yes, that is what Chhotelal is. If you cannot keep him, I shall not say that you have failed. Those who can retain him would be occupying a high place even in the "Honours" list.

I have just got up after the midday nap. I dreamt about you in sleep. You were singing with me. I remarked that you knew singing quite well. You replied that you certainly did and that it was onlyin Ahmedabad that people took no notice of you. Before you joined the Ashram, you said, you had been thrice elected president of conferences of poets, and that you had had an invitation from as far as Srinagar. You added that after you had joined the Ashram your pride had been humbled and you had ceased to be regarded as a poet. We laughed at this; the dream ended there and I awoke.

I for one am sure that we shall not find it convenient to employ labourers in the Ashram. This practice which we cannot bring ourselves to end voluntarily now, we shall be eager to end after bitter experience. Therefore, think again. But do not end it reluctantly so long as you do not feel that we are strong enough to do so. It would be

[1] From the reference to the sale of *mava*, it is evident that the letter was written later on this date; *vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 11-2-1929

all right for the present if you put some restrictions. I suggest two: (1) that the labourers should wear khadi, and (2) that we should not exceed the present or any other fixed number.

I remember Abdullabhai. He must have left by now.

There was a telegram from Motilalji asking me to stay on [in Delhi] till Tuesday—and to put up at Vithalbai's. Make a change, therefore, in the address and add one day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5563

62. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

SUKKUR,
Silence Day, February 11, 1929

CHI. VASUMATI,

Your letter written from Valiped reached me only yesterday. I, therefore, address this letter to you at the Udyoga Mandir.

It is good that you mention the death of Dada's son as an ordinarypieceofnews. Thatisasignofone'shavinggiven up the fear of death. I have had recent experience of this in Rasik's death. The pain felt by us on account of death is only due to our selfishness. As for Rasik, he is now happy in every way. His body had become incapable of work. It was decaying inside; how would it have served him to keep it? A little before his death, I wrote in *Navajivan* something about death, which you should read and ponder over. And if we have learnt to be unconcerned at the death of our loved ones, we should be even more so at the thought of our own death and remain ever ready to meet that great friend.

You have now in your own hand the key to your health. Whatever the circumstances, never lose your peace of mind. Bear with what cannot be changed, and change what you can. Non-co-operate with anything which is immoral and which therefore should not be tolerated. Apart from these three conditions, there is no fourth.

I may not be able to return to the Mandir immediately, as you may have seen from my yesterday's letter to Chhaganlal.

I have been doing quite well without goat's milk, and may have no difficulty at all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 429. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

63. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, ROHRI[1]

February 11, 1929

Gandhiji made a powerful appeal to the audience, among other things, to cast out the demon of drink from their midst. If they did that it would not only clip the wings of the Government by depriving it of 25 crores of revenue every year, which would fructify in the pockets of the poor, but also would to certainextent purify the connection between the Government and the people. He asserted that the boycott of liquor and of foreign cloth were the purest expression of ahimsa. In this there was no ill will against anybody.

Young India, 21-2-1929

64. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

February, 13, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I could not write to you on Monday but I have been writing fairly frequently. So you won't notice the absence of Monday letter. And in the midst of daily travelling neither you nor I know when you may expect my letter.

The last from Motilalji tells me I must be in Delhi till Tuesday. Where I shall go on Tuesday I do not know. I am inclined to go straightway to Andhra from Delhi without going to Sabarmati or Bombay. But you shall know as soon as I have settled. My address in Delhi will be care Hon'ble V. J. Patel, Speaker, Delhi.

What a slaughter in Bombay ! It makes me sad but perhaps this was inevitable.

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

Devdas has sent me a poetic letter describing Rasik's last days. If all he says is true the Ashram has justified its existence. He is described as having become a godly boy full of tenderness. Ba, Harilal and Kanti are still in Delhi awaiting me. No more today.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 5343. Courtesy: Mirabehn

65. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, PADIDAN[1]

February 13, 1929

Our Shastras say that God is incarnate in the person of a pure woman—a sati. You should legitimately occupy the position of queens in your homes. But that will only be when you have rescued you men-folk from the drink habit.

The curse of drink had resulted in the total destruction of the great Yadava dynasty to which Lord Krishna himself belonged. And history recorded the fact that the drink habit had a share in bringing about the downfall of the Roman Empire. In shor wherever it succeeded in obtaining a footingit brought misery and degradation in its train. But the women had at their disposal the great and powerful weapon of satyagraha. If Kaikeyi could obtainall that she wanted from Dasharatha by dint of *duragraha* what could they not achievewith the help of satyagraha? Their cause was just and they had an unlimited capacity for self-sacrifice and self-suffering. Victory would assuredly be theirs if they tried and persevered to the end.

Young India, 28-2-1929

66. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, HYDERABAD (SIND)[2]

February 13, 1929

Gandhiji in his speech while noting with satisfaction the fact mentioned in it, viz., that the Municipality had made primary education free within its limits, reminded them that it could not be regarded as having done its duty by the public fully till it had stamped out the drink evil from Hyderabad and solved the question of a cheap and pure milk supply for the people making milk as commonly and easily obtainable as a postage stamp. Lastly he regretted to miss all reference to khadi in the

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"
[2] *ibid*

Municipal address. He had found evidence enough of poverty in Sind. The Hyderabad Municipality could by introducing spinning in its schools produce cheap khadi worth thousands of rupees with an inconsiderable expenditure of capital and time and thus help to establish a living bond of fellowship between the cities and villages of Sind.

Young India, 28-2-1929

67. NOTES

SWORD *V*: SPIRIT

A friend sends the following interesting extract from an old number of *My Magazine* :[1]

> Nepoleon knew that it was folly to rely on force. "There are only two powers in the world," he said, not after he had been defeated and exiled, but while he appeared to be at the height of his success. "Those powers are the spirit and the sword. In the long run *the sword will always be conquered by the spirit*."
>
> But why, we may ask, did Nepoleon, if he saw so plainly the uselessness of war, continue to make war? Why did he use the sword untilit was wrenched out of his hand at Waterloo? Partly because Nepoleon,like the rest of us, could not always practise what he preached, but partly because other kings and emperors would not let him alone. They were not as wise as he. When he pleaded for peace they would not believe he wassincere. To the Emperor of Austria after a fierce battle he addressed this personal appeal :
>
> "Amid grief and surrounded by 15,000 corpses, I implore Your Majesty, Ifeel bound to give you an urgent warning. You are far from the scene, your heart cannot be so deeply moved as mine is on the spot . . . . "

Would that India which through her Congress has subscribed to the policy of non-violence will adhere to it and demonstrate to a world groaning under the curse of the sword that the spirit does triumph over the sword in national affairs as it has ever been shown to have triumphed in individual affairs.

PROHIBITION IN AMERICA

One reads conflicting reports in newspapers about the great experiment in prohibition that America is making. I question about it the many American tourists who visit me and the majority have assured me that the experiment is working well. Among these visitors recently there was an American authoress Madame Sara M. Algeo.

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

She claimed to have worked in the cause of prohibition and was an ardent reformer. I therefore asked her to put down in writing as briefly as she could her impressions of the experiment which she very kindly did. Here are relevant parts of her enthusiastic letter :[1]

> In my interview this afternoon you asked me to write you about our recent great victory for prohibition in the United States. It is with real pleasure I do this, for there are so many wild stories afloat about its being a failure that I welcome the chance to put before you the facts. You have been a prohibitionist for many years like me. We have seen our highest hopes smashed many times and have wondered if our dreams would ever come true.
>
> Mine were more than realized in the last election in America. As you know we have two dominant parties—the Republican and the Democratic party. Every four years sees them drawn up in battle regal over certain issues. InNovember all other issues paled beside the great one of prohibition which hasbeen in force since 1919 and which had reached a crisis; so many of the richer classes seemed to want their liquor back.
>
> Governor Alfred Smith of New York State who represented the 'wets' staked his hopes of election on the vote of the 'wets' and came out boldlyand noisily as in favour of repeal of prohibition laws. Mr. Herbert Hoover on the contrary and his running mate Senator Curtis were equally strong in favour of the continuance of prohibition. . . . As you know the victory for prohibition and Mr. Hoover was overwhelming not only for the Presidency and Vice-Presidency, but for the Senate and Congress as well—8 wet senators going down to defeat and 14 wet Congressmen doing likewise.
>
> *The Women Did It*. It was the quiet little homebody of the South who contrary to all political expectations deserted her party, the Democratic, that ofMr. Smith, and voted for Mr. Hoover. Not only did they vote for Mr. Hoover but they formed clubs and shamed many of their menfolk into supporting him. It was indeed a victory for prohibition, a victory for woman suffrage, but especially a great triumph of good over evil.

WHAT IS COMMON ?

"What is common to us except Pax Britannica?" is the question that has been often put to me. The last time it was put to me was by the editor of the *Daily Gazette* of Karachi. I was sorry I had not the time to answer the question in full detail though my answer was comprehensive enough. I suggested that birth, manners, distress and bondage were more common than Pax Britannica. But what is this Pax

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

Britannica? Does it not mean that it more often keeps us from fighting against one another than protects us from foreign invasions? And do we not see that even that condition is more often observed in the breach than in the performance? Pax Britannica is unable to prevent Hindu-Muslim feuds. What it successfully does is to ensure the protection by means of extraordinary military and other dispositions of the few Europeans who are exploiting the country. Pax Britannica, therefore, so far as it is common to the whole of the country, is not a blessing calculated to advance the nation either economically or politically. It has emasculated the people and reduced them to a state of helplessness. My suggestion, therefore, is that common birth, common distress, common manners and common bondage are each in itself and all collectively a real cohesive force, not Pax Britannica. Consciousness of distress and consciousness of bondage are unifying the people in a manner in which they have never before been unified. And when these become a thing of the past as they are bound to, common birth will prove a force that will make the nation irresistible.

EVIDENCE BEFORE THE SIMON COMMISSION

Among the questions put by the Editor besides the one on Pax Britannica was also one referring to the value of the evidence tendered to the Simon Commission. My emphatic opinion is that that evidence has little national value. The evidence is mostly from official sources and sources that have always been at the disposal of officials and it was surely a waste of money and effort to bring all the way from London a Parliamentary Commission for the purpose of collecting evidence which could easily have been sent from Delhi to Downing Street at a cost of a few hundred rupees. A Government that is irresponsive to public opinion may do any thing it likes over the heads of the people, but it will solve no problems. It will make confusion worse confounded. Persistence in keeping the Commission in India in defiance of strong public opinion is proof positive of the desire and capacity of this Government to ignore the political opinion of India, no matter how strong, consolidated and unanimous it may be.

FOR CONSCIENCE' SAKE

Pax International is a monthly journal issued at Geneva, 12 Rue du Vieux-College, on behalf of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. I have before me a copy of the November number of this monthly which has the following paragraph :

In Yugoslavia 72 members of the religious body of Nazarenes have been condemned by the military court of the Save District to 10 years' imprisonment for refusing to take up arms. All of the condemned have already served 5 years' imprisonment for the same offence. All friends of peace in the whole world should protest against these inhuman sentences and demand the revision of the sentence.

It is a remarkable awakening in the Western world, this peace movement. That 10 years' servitude for the mere refusal to take up arms is possible under asystem in respect of 70 honourable men who follow the law of love rather than the law of hate which the system promulgates is proof of its barbarity. Whether the world conscience disapproves of these savage sentences or not and whether such disapproval produces an effect on theYugoslavian Government or not, it is certain that the system must be at its last gasp that needs for its sustenance the infliction of barbarous sentences on innocent and honourable citizens. I tender my respectful congratulations to the brave Nazarenes whom, let me hope, the conscience of Yugoslavia itself will not allow to lie buried in its jails for 10 long years.

'WITHOUT NATIONALITY'

Pax International has another paragraph of equal tragic importance under the heading "People without Nationality". It says :

As a result of the post-war upheavals especially in Hungary, Rumania, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Austria, thousands of people have found themselves without a home, without a nationality and without a passport.

Think of the condition of a man and his family conducted to the frontier by *gendarmes* and expelled from the country. From then on the life of thatfamily has been one of hunted animals going from country to country, unable to remain anywhere permanently because they lack the requisite papers. They are *heimatlos*, and without nationality.

This situation has been solved for the Russians and Armenians without nationality by means of the "Nansen Passport" which is at present accepted inabout 32 countries of the world as a legal paper.

But until now nothing has been done for all the other homeless people. And in order to help them find some way out of their difficulty a committee has been formed in Geneva called the "World Committee for the Homeless," whose object is to draw up statistics so that the material may be given to the Press, public opinion educated in the matter, and an international

conference calledunder the auspices of the League of Nations, and measures taken, so that these homeless people may have some standing.

The director of the Committee is Walter H. Furgler, and the office is at 3Rue General-Dufourr.

The whole of the European system is based on mutual distrust and fear. Well did Wallace the contemporary of Darwin say that the amazing material progress of the West had made little or no difference in the moral condition of the peoples of the West. Even liberty in many cases is a misnomer. But it is a happy sign of the times that a large number of the Westerns have become awakened to a sense of this very grave limitation of their civilization and are making a serious effort to overcome it. Meanwhile we would do well not to be carried away by the glamour of the material splendour that comes to us from over the Indian Ocean. All is not gold that glitters.

'HALF-STARVED AND UNDERFED'

There is evidently a direct connection in India between the poverty of the people and that of their cattle. Orissa is an epitome of human poverty. Rai Saheb P. N. Das, Assistant Director in charge Orissa Range, Civil Veterinary Department, is thus reported to have spoken at a meeting of the Cuttack Gorakshani Sabha at which he was presiding the other day. [1]

The condition of cattle of Orissa is most deplorable. . . . Supply of milkto the people is hoplessly how. There are many people in the villages who have never tasted milk in their life and there are many villages where a *chhatank* of milk is not available.

Regarding goshalas :

He suggested that in future there should be two sections in such institutions, i. e. , one for the purpose of giving shelter to the maimed, old and useless animals and the other for the improvement of breeds by adopting up-to-date methods of breeding and rearing.

Enough evidence has been produced in these pages in support of the Rai Saheb's suggestion. Would that the trustees of the numerous goshalas of the country would take to heart the advice given by the speaker.

Young India, 14-2-1929

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

68. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 14, 1929

DEARDR. GOPICHAND,

I had your two letters. You will not consider me guilty of discourtesy because I have not answered them hitherto. The fact is I am terribly in arrears with my correspondence. It was only day before yesterday that I was able to get Jagannath to give me the purport of the Urdu cutting you have sent me. I understand the position more clearly now than before. I am in correspondence with Motilalji and I shall presently put myself in touch with Dr. Satyapal too.

Yours sincerely,

DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA
WACHHOWALLI
LAHORE

From a photostat: S. N. 15335

69. LETTER TO D. [1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 14, 1929

DEARFRIEND,

I have your letter redirected to me in my Sind tour. I would like to help you. But beforeI could do that I would like to know a little more about you. What you tell me about Malaviyaji is flatly contrary to my experience of him. Yours is a case that would make a forcible appeal to him, and I know him to be capable of going out of his way to take up cases like yours. There must be, therefore, so I presume, something wrong with you apart from your deformity which need in no way interfere with your capacity for teaching. I would like you therefore to give me such satisfaction as you can on this point.

Meanwhile as I am reaching Delhi next Sunday, I shall be meeting Malaviyaji and I shall discuss your question with him personally.

[1] The full name is not reproduced here.

Assuming that Malaviya ji can not accommodate you, I would like to know whether you would be prepared to take up teaching post anywhere else, say in Ahmedabad or any other place where I might be able to find a location for you. Please tell me also in detail what things you can teach and what your own choice would be if you had a blank card.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S. N. 13314

70. LETTER TO GANGADHAR RAO DESHPANDE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 14, 1929

MYDEAR GANGADHAR RAO,

I sent you a telegram on receipt of your letter. I now findit is impossible for me to tour in Karnatak during February. Itwon't be possible perhaps before June. I must finish Burma andAndhra first though dates are not yet fixed. But when I do tourin Karnatak it won't be possible for me to divide the collectionsbetween Congress Committees and the A. I. S. A. The tour would be wholly in the interests of khadi and in continuation of the previous interrupted tour. I am firmly of opinionthat Congress Committees to be worthy of the name should be able to command men and money without the assistance of all-India men.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GANGADHARRAO DESHPANDE
P. O. HUDLI
BELGAUM

From a photostat: S. N. 15337

71.LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 14, 1929

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have your wire. I know now where I am to be housed in Delhi. I shall remain there till Tuesday, but you will please make the way clear for me to leave Delhi on Tuesday night.

You must have heard from some source that Rasik died on the 8th instant. Probably therefore I shan't need to go to the Jamia before going to Vithalbhai's place. But Devdas might want me for the sake of Mrs. Gandhi to go to the Jamia first.If so, I shall abide by his wish though I feel I am sure that she will not want me now to go to the Jamia merely for sentiment's sake.

Yours sincerely,

PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU
11 CLIVE ROAD
NEW DELHI

From a photostat : S.N. 15336

72. LETTER TO KARNAD SADASHIVA RAO

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 14, 1929

MY DEAR SADASHIVA RAO,

I have your letter. You don't know evidently all about Chhotalal. Chhotalal has proved a broken reed. He has been found to have misbehaved himself. He has made the confession himself and in his letters that I have seen he has clearly stated that he must not stay in Nileshwar. That he says that Nileshwar is a good khadi centre I can well understand and believe. And if he could have restrained his carnal aptitude, he would certainly have done good work. But when Chhotalal is removed who can take charge of the work and build up what is broken to pieces? I am surprised that Chhotalal has not told you all about himself. You are at liberty to show this letter to him. He is supposed not to hide his sin, if he has done elementary penance as he claims to have done.

With reference to the tour, it cannot come off this month. I have to go to Delhi in obedience to Motilalji's call. It won't be possible now before June. And June perhaps would not be proper month for you. And when I tour in Karnatak, I could do so only to resume it at the point where it was suspended and in the interest of khadi. I must not be expected to collect funds for the local Congress Committees. To be worth anything they must be able to command the confidence of the public independently of the services off all-India men.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KARNAD SADASHIVA RAO
KODIALBAIL
MANGALORE

From a microfilm : S. N. 15010

73. LETTER TO DR. PARASHURAM SHARMA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 14, 1929

MY DEAR PARASHURAM,

I have your letter.[1] It is a strange letter for you. I thought that you had unreservedly permitted me to make what use I liked of your letter so long as I did not use the names you had given. You had even permitted me if I chose to use your name. And can whatever Santanam or others might have done or might not have done be any excuse for the things that were done in Calcutta and that you have so graphically described? I should certainly like to know what crooked things Pandit Santanam and others have in their mind. Of course I know Dr.Satyapal's energy, his capacity for work and his fearlessness; but for me they do not carry much weight if there is any crookedness with these splendid qualities. Believe me that you and I would render a real service to Dr. Satyapal by telling him plainly where he errs. Friendship either in private life or public is of little value if it hesitates to find fault with friends when they err. It is the special privilege of friendship to do so without being misunderstood and without hurting.

[1] *Vide* "Not That Way", January 31, 1929.

You are at liberty to share this letter with Dr. Satyapal. How I would love to have a full conversation with him and a joint conference with him and the others with whom he finds it so difficult to get on.

Yours sincerely,

DR. PARASHURAM
PUNJAB P. C. C.
BRADLAUGH HALL
LAHORE

From a micorfilm : S.N. 15295

74. SPEECH AT P. C. C. MEETING, HYDERABAD[1]

February 14, 1929

In a brief speech Gandhiji explained the inwardness of the function that was going to be performed. A flag was after all a mere piece of cloth. And even a child could hoist it. Wherein then consisted the merit of hoisting, he asked. It consisted in its being the symbol of a nation's honour and the determination to stand by it though one were all alone. The Englishmen had shed their blood freely to upold the honour of the Union Jack and that was what gave it its prestige. Again it was to the potential sacrifice which a standard-bearer represented that the importance of the office of *Alam bardar* in Islamic history was due. The vindication of the honour of the flag has often called for a reckless sacrifice as was typified in the case of the Moroccan soldiers who throwing away their arms rushed at the French gunners in the face of a withering fire with shouts of Allah. The latter were so overcome by the reckless bravery shown by the Moroccans that they threw up their caps in admiration and fraternized with them. That was an example for Congressmen to emulate. Their unfurling of the Congress flag would be nothing more than a childish mock-heroic if it did not carry with it a determination to keep it flying all alone even if everybody else deserted it. Similarly their unveiling of the portrait of Lalaji would be reduced to a mere act of idol worship unless it represented their grim resolve to lay down their lives to fulfil the mission for which Lalaji had lived and died, the emancipation of India from bondage. The sight of his portrait should evoke a reverence in them for the ideals for which Lalaji stood and render impossible any act unworthy of his memory. The installation of Lalaji's portrait in their building should thus not mean idol worship but what in Hindu ceremonial was known as *prana-pratishtha*[2].

Young India, 28-2-1929

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The meeting was held at the office of the Provincial Congress Committee, where Gandhiji had unfurled the Congress flag and unveiled Lajpat Rai's portrait.

[2] Induction of the spirit

75. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, HYDERABAD[1]

February 14, 1929

To own up one's defects is the first step towards reform. I will not therefore speak to you about the failings referred to in your address as I take it that having confessed them you will spare no effort to eradicate them. But I will speak to you on one or two other moot questions.

He then proceeded to exhort them to stamp out the liquor habit from their midst. They might think that moderate drinking might be allowed since it seemed to do them no harm. But, as the *Gita* said, one had to shape one's conduct not merely according to one's own requirements but also with an eye to the effect that it would have on others. And if they saw the terrible havoc that this fell habit was causing among the working classes of India they would take a solemn vow not to touch liquor. He next warned them against the baneful poisonous literature from the West that was inundating the country and sought under the respectable and attractive garb of science to seduce them from the path of purity and self-restraint. Manifestos justifying self-indulgence were sometimes issued over the signatures of bishops, doctors and other men of weight and influence, but they should never allow themselves to be drawn away from the strait and narrow path of virtue. The path of self-indulgence and moral indiscipline was the surest way to perdition. He appealed to them to cultivate a snow-white purity of mind and body and prayed to God that He might give them the wisdom and strength for it.

Young India, 28-2-1929

76. SPEECH AT SWEEPERS' MEETING, HYDERABAD

February 14, 1929

Gandhiji in addressing the sweepers who mostly hailed from Gujarat and Rajputana identified himself with them and their occupation which he asked them to feel proud of instead of looking down upon it. He noted with satisfaction the progress that was being made in the removal of the curse of untouchability. There was a time when it would have been unthinkable to hold a sweepers' function in a high class *mandir* or to admit them to a select temple like the Lakshminarayan temple of Jamnalalji at Wardha.

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The meeting was held in the Sindhi National College. The students presented an address in Sindhi which was "a bold confession of their weaknesses and shortcomings".

But whilst the progress so far made in this behalf was a matter of all-round congratulation it was up to the depressed classes themselves to smooth the way for the reform by ridding themselves of such habits as drinking, carrion-eating, gambling, etc., and by a rigorous observance of the principles of hygiene and sanitation. It might not be given to everybody to study Sanskrit and Sanskrit scriptures or to go into the subtleties of dharma, but surely it was the right and duty of everybody to be perfect in the practice of cardinal virtues.[1]

Young India, 28-2-1929

77. SPEECH AT KOTRI CONGRESS COMMITTEE MEETING[2]

February 14, 1929

Gandhiji in his reply thanked the Chairman for his frankness.[3] For if there was anything that was criminal on the part of Congressmen at the present juncture when things were all in the crucible it was to sleep over the Congress programme in a state of half-hearted indecision. They must either loyally work it out or, if they thought it to be unworkable or otherwise harmful, report to the Working Committee accordingly. It was however neither right nor proper to ask him to move for the rescission of the khadi clause. It was not as a result of pressure on his part that the khadi clause was retained in the Congress constitution. At Gauhati the attempt to remove it had failed. He did not even remain there to oppose it. He confessed he was glad to hear that it was thrown out. At Madras the attempt could not even be made as elections were won on khadi. No one so far as he was aware even thought of the khadi clause. The khadi clause had thus remained unchanged in the midst of other changes of Congress policy because of the silent and unexpressed pressure of mass opinion. Holding the opinion as he did that there was no escape from khadi if swaraj was to be won by non-violent and truthful means, he could only advise them rigorously to enforce the condition about the habitual wearing of khadi, even if it resulted in only one member being left on the Congress rolls. It was better that one man should loyally keep the flag of the Congress flying than that a hundred lukewarm members tear it to pieces. The history of great deeds was the history of men who had the courage to stand

[1] Later Gandhiji addressed members of the Jhatia and the Kalal communities and exhorted them to do away with the invidious distinction of high and low that was poisoning their atmosphere and to regard all sections of their community as children of the same Father.

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

[3] The Chairman had said that if strict compliance with habitual wearing of khadi for Congress membership was insisted on, most Congress Committees would become defunct and Kotri Congress Committee would have hardly two members left on its rolls.

alone against the world. Krishna was alone sufficient to inspire the wavering hosts by his presence, he never relied on the strength of numbers. The Prophet touched the high watermark of his greatness not when he was acclaimed by Arabia as the all-conquering hero but when he was glad to stand by God in a minority of one. Pratap, deserted by all, carried on alone a desperate and losing fight to his dying day but refused to lower the flag for a single second, even so did Shivaji, and the world remembered their names with pride. Speaking for himself he could only pray that God would give him the strength to testify his faith in khadi even though everybody else were to desert it. He considered his work in connection with khadi to be the most universal, the most fruitful and the most permanent part of his activities. It was the one thing by which he would be remembered when everything else about him was forgotten. For instance he could not expect even his message of ahimsa to be accepted as a creed by non-Hindus. But his message of the wheel was meant for all—for young and old, Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians and Sikhs alike. The message of the spinning-wheel was inwoven in the very texture of our language. The name for God was सूत्रधार[1], the universe was interpenetrated by the Supreme Being like beads in a necklace by a cotton thread, सूत्रे मणिमणा इव Even so cotton thread was the one thing that could hold together millions of the masses of India and create an indissoluble bond between them and the Congress. People were free to hold a different view as to the utility of khadi or as to what the most fruitful activity of his was but then they ought to leave him severely alone; they could not separate him from his message of khadi.

Gandhiji commenting on it[2] said that one could accpet the will for the deed only when the deed represented the maximum sacrifice that one was capable of. The 62 students of Kandiara who had presented Rs. 65 could make that plea, but in their case they had paid nothing in proportion to their capacity to pay. He therefore refused to accept their plea and hoped that they would still retrieve their position by increasing their subscription.[3]

Young India, 28-2-1929

[1] One who holds the thread

[2] The Congress Secretary while presenting a purse of Rs. 200 had expressed the hope that Gandhiji would not see the sum but the spirit behind it and accept the will for the deed.

[3] The amount was then raised to Rs. 500.

78. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

February 15, 1929

Ever be dutiful, courteous in behaviour and firm in action.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

79. STATEMENT ON SIND CONGRESS AFFAIRS[1]

[On or after *February 15, 1929*][2]

At an informal meeting of the Sind Provincial Congress members which was held at Mirpurkhas on 15th instant to consider various domestic questions, I was invited to be present. This meeting was originally convened by Manilal Kothari in connection with certain disputes that were referred to him by the two wings of the P.C.C. for disposal and for the election of the Executive. But, in view of the tension between the parties, I have advised them to elect Swami Govindanand as President by consent. He has named the following as members of the Provincial Executive and the following as members of the A.I.C.C.[3]

I am aware that opinion is sharply divided over the nomination of the President as well as the members of the Executive. But I am sure that the interests of Sind will be best served by giving the above arrangement an honest trial, those aggrieved remaining passive and never obstructing the working of the provincial body. I have advised and all the parties concerned have agreed that there should be no personal references or comments in the Sind Press controlled of influenced by the respective parties in respect of their opponents, that each party should be allowed to do its work without interference directly or indirectly by the other. As many members were absent and as Swami Govindanand suggested that the meeting should be informal, the elections were not held.

From a photostat: S.N. 5341

[1] *Vide* the following item and also "Sind Impressions", February 21, 1929, sub-topic "Congress Squabbles".

[2] Gandhiji was at Mirpurkhas on February 15, 1929.

[3] The names are not found in the source.

80. LETTER TO SWAMI GOVINDANAND

MARWAR JUNCTION,
February 16, 1929

DEAR SWAMI,

I was sorry I was not able to have more time with you alone than I was able to have. I would now share with you my innermost thoughts through the more imperfect medium of correspondence.

I look to you to discharge your responsibility and shed sweetness around and about you, as you have promised. You have to stoop to conquer. You should become a real sannyasi with out anger, without malice, without desire for self. I was not unobservant of the fact that you had no power behind you outside the ranks of your own immediate and very limited following. You are evidently unable to command money when you need it for public work. All this must be altered. You have sacrifice behind you. You have courage. What is it that keeps you from possessing greater influence over the people for their own good?

Why do you want office when the office does not want you? The narrow majority by which you may be able to retain office can bring no real satisfaction, can give you no real opportunity for service. If you will interpret office in terms of service, why will you not refuse to hold it unless your opponents too insist upon your holding it?

I have given effect as much as possible to your wishes in so far as I have been able to interpret them. But I would like you after the election is over or even before, if you have the humility, to confer with Jairamdas and others and think of another president whom you will unanimously elect. Anyway I look to you to run the Congress machinery in Sind smoothly and honestly. *Verb. sap*. You will not I hope misunderstand or misinterpret this letter.[1]

Yours sincerely,

[PS.]

I am in Delhi between Sunday and Tuesday care Speaker Patel. Then Sabarmati for a Week.

From a photostat: S.N. 15339

[1]*Vide* also "Sind Impressions", February 21, 1929.

81. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

February 16, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I had got your letter at Mirpurkhas. Raojibhai may go through an operation in his nostril, if he wants to. I have no news this time, too, about the condition of Totaram's eyes. The incident concerning . . . bhai[1] was painful from beginning to end. Perhaps he will not return at all.

Malkani will arrive there on Tuesday. He will write to you. The final decision about him is altogether different. He is to be paid Rs. 150 per month from the Birla fund. He will work in Sind. He is going there in order to learn the constructive science of khadi.

I shall arrive there on Wednesday evening. I have decided to postpone the Andhra tour and to proceed, instead, to Rangoon. I shall leave on a date so that I can reach Rangoon on March 8. I shall, therefore, get about ten days in Ahmedabad. I shall leave Rangoon on or before the 21st and return to the Ashram some time about the 28th. From the Ashram, I shall go to Kathiawar and spend 30th, 31st and April 1 there. Immediately after that, I shall leave for Andhra Pradesh and spend one month there. Thereafter, where the fates take me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Pay Jaisukhlal from the [Udyoga] Mandir funds and draw the money for the purpose from any accounts that it may be necessary to do. He and we should take it that he belongs to the Mandir.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5389

[1] The name is omitted here.

82. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

LARKANA,
Saturday, February 16, 1929

CHI. KUSUM,

I have your letter. My programme has changed again. The visit to Andhra Desh has been put off[1] and I shall again be staying in the Ashram for some days. You will know more from my letter to Chhaganlal Joshi.[2]

Your contentment is in your own hands. You are striving for it and I am therefore confident that everything will turn out well. You will have read my letter to Sulochana. I want you to show the qualities that your names stands for. A flower spreads it fragrance without any conscious effort. It is in its nature to spread fragrance. Let it be so in your case. It should be so for everyone but it is not. For we are human only in form, in our nature we are like beasts. We have to make heroic efforts to get out of our animal nature.

You are guiding Manu[3] very well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1777

83. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

Saturday [*February 16,1929*][4]

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have to reach Rangoon on March 8, but I do not wish to leave the Ashram before March 2. Which route should I take? Going *via* Calcutta takes the least time, doesn't it? I think of travelling as a deck passenger. Have you any suggestion to make in this regard? I am

[1] *Vide* "Forthcoming Andhra Tour", March 7, 1929.
[2] Dated February 16, 1929.
[3] Harilal Gandhi's daughter
[4] From the postmark.

writing this on my way to Delhi. I shall be in Delhi from the 17th to the 19th. My address there will be c/o Speaker Patel. I expect your mother is quite well by now. What happened in Bombay? Let me know if you have discovered the real cause.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 4712. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

84. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Saturday [*February 16,1929*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letters. I have written to Father and expect to receive his reply at Delhi. Whatever happens you are not to worry. The rest when we meet, since I hope to reach the Ashram on Wednesday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3314

85. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

[After *February 16, 1929*][2]

CHI. PRABHA,

I still hope to reach there on Wednesday. But in case the work is not finished in time for that, on Thursday morning at the latest. Your patience is bound to be rewarded.

Blessings to Gomati and Rajkishori.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3306

[1] Following the Sind tour, Gandhiji, after a halt at Delhi, reached the Ashram on Wednesday, February 20, 1929.

[2] From the contents this letter appears to have been written after the one to the addressee dated February 16, 1929

86. PROHIBITION IN SURAT DISTRICT

Regarding the prohibition work that is going on in Surat district as a minor consequence of Bardoli Satyagraha, Smt. Mithubehn Petit writes:[1]

When Mithubehn backs up a movement, there is little fear of its fizzling out. Hence one can hope that if the movement continues at the present rate, no trace of liquor will be left in Surat district in a very short time. If this result does follow it may well be looked upon as a minor consequence of Bardoli, but very often minor consequences turn out to be more important than the main consequence.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-2-1929

87. FEAR OF OSTRACISM

Having read my article on child-marriages, marriages of the old and ill-matched marriages, a gentleman belonging to the Dasha Shrimali caste of Godhra has written a long letter, the substance[2] of which is as follows:

If I had the power to remedy this situation, I would certainly use it. But my capacity is limited. To stop such marriages, agitations should be organized by all castes in all the villages; these should be conducted by respectable people or by those who have the capacity to win respect. I however feel that local agitations need not necessarily be confined only to particular castes. But it is the duty and the right of respectable men even of other castes to prevent such cruel marriages. The belief that one caste has no right to interfere in the matters of another may be regarded as outmoded. It is the duty of men who love justice and carry influence to prevent injustice wherever it occurs.

People need to give up the fear of ostracism. In many cases ostracism is to be welcomed. The Mahajan of a caste loses its stature

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had reported that prohibition was making progress.

[2] Not translated here. The correspondent had said that in his community many such marriages continued to take place.

by doing injustice. To continue to belong to such a caste is like living under an immoral regime. One should get out of such a caste beforethe caste boycotts one. Moreover, the elimination of sub-castes is desirable in all circumstances. And if a large number of people get out of a caste, then that caste will automatically cease to exist. People can be happy even where there are no caste barriers, and there is no reason why this should not happen so in Hinduism.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-2-1929

88. TRIUMPH OF JUSTICE

The students and staff of Gujarat College deserve to be congratulated upon the victory scored by the former.[1] The Director of Education also deserves congratulations for fearlessly administering justice. Mr. Shirras[2] has done nothing to deserve congratulations. He can earn congratulations now only if he voluntarily submits his resignation. The teacher who has lost the affection of the pupils, one who does not keep his word, does not deserve to remain a teacher.

The main features that were to be found in the Bardoli Satyagraha were present here. In Bardoli the demand was for justice. Leaders of the agitation were competent men. People obeyed rules and were determined. The peasantry of Bardoli was able, through peaceful conduct, to win over public opinion, hence the Government finally had to bow.

All these things were true in the case of the students. Here too, the leaders were competent, the students has faith in them. The students were firm and their demand was just. The students obeyed rules and, by their peaceful behaviour, were able to win over public opinion.

I hope that the students in the pride of their victory will not

[1] The students of Gujarat College had been on a prolonged strike in protest against punishment meted out to them for staying away from their classes on Simon Commission Boycott Day. For details, *vide* "Duty of Resistance", January 24, 1929 and "Notes", January 31, 1929.

[2] Principal of Gujarat College.

insult the Principal or their professors. Anyone who wages a non-violent war does not become proud of his victory and does not overstep the limits. But, just as it is necessary for students to be polite and keep within their limits, it is necessary for them to recognize their own strength. In spite of studying in Government colleges, they should maintain their freedom and never let their self-respect be undermined.To do this, they should learn to become indifferent towards 'degrees'. There is no virtue in a 'degree'. But there is virtue in the acquisition of knowledge. And that is worth while only so long as one's self-respect is preserved. In this manner if they study with an attitude of detachment, they will increasingly add to their own strength. They have proved by their prowess that no one can stop them from participating in national work. We hope that, by accumulating such strength, they would contribute their share to the swaraj *yajna*.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-2-1929

89. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

February 18, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I have all your letters. I am writing this in New Delhi. I leave tomorrow for the Mandir and leave the Mandir probably on 1st March for Rangoon returning to Sabarmati about 27th March. Burma address: 8 Pagoda Road, Rangoon, care of Dr. Mehta.

Your letters are all most consoling. Your work is evidently prospering. When you think that you can speak with some degree of certainty, I would like to publish an account in *Young India*. But I am in no hurry. You will report to me your progress about soft spindles. I discussed the thing with Keshu and he was unconvinced. It would be a good thing if all the inmates learn the habit of keeping Ashram hours.

Dr. Ansari is amazed at the success that has hitherto attended my diet experiment. He is indifferent about the weight, if I do not decrease.

Devdas has borne the grief[1] wonderfully. Ba and Kanti are still here. Probably they accompany me tomorrow.

Love.

BAPU

PS.

Yes, you have to hurry up with corrections of the autobiography. Andrews is now in New York and so is Gregg.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 5344. Courtesy : Mirabehn; also G.N. 9399 and 9400

90. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

February 18, 1929

CHI. KUSUM,

I have your letter. When I am there you may read all my incoming and outgoing letters; but it is a little ticklish doing so when I am away. I do not, however, mean to rebuke you. I have merely indicated what propriety requires when you and Gangabehn[2] are not on good terms. I wish that you should not do anything that would lead to a misunderstanding. A delicate sense of ahimsa and a charitable disposition are needed to know what actions may have such a result. Unfortunately Gangabehn is easily hurt by you and you by her. Do not take this as a rebuke but only as an experienced man's advice. I know that you are progressing to the best of your ability. That makes me happy. But I wish to see the speed of the progress increased.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1778

[1] Over the death of Rasik; *vide* "A Boy of much Promise", February 21, 1929.

[2] Gangabehn Vaidya

91. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Silence Day [*February 18, 1929*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letters. Yesterday there was a telegram saying you need not go back home. So you can stay on with a light heart. There is nothing more to write since we shall be meeting on Wednesday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 3333

92. SIND IMPRESSIONS

As it is, everything in India attracts me. It has everything that a human being with the highest possible aspirations can want. But when I first visited Sind in 1916, it attracted me in a special way and a bond was established between the Sindhis and me that has proved capable of bearing severe strains. I have been able to deliver to the Sindhis bitter truths without being misunderstood. I did not mince matters anywhere during the last extensive but hurried tour in Sind. The audiences took my remarks in good part and where it was possible, they gave immediate effect to my advice. The warning to the Karachi students against presenting addresses in English and filling them with empty (empty because of lack of action behind it) praise had instantaneous effect. The numerous other addresses that followed were much more subdued and were read in easy, simple and graceful Sindhi or in equally easy and graceful Hindi instead of being in high-flown and bombastic English which 90 per cent of the audience could never follow. Perfection was almost reached at the students' meeting in Hyderabad. The address was first composed in Sindhi and a good translation in Hindi was supplied to me. I must deal with this separately next week.[2] The only defect was that although it purported to come from the students they knew nothing of the contents. There is too

[1] From the reference to the anticipated meeting on Wednesday; Monday was February 18.

[2] *Vide* "Be True", March 14, 1929.

much of laxity observable among us about such simple matters. Surely addresses presented on behalf of institutions must be duly approved by them before they are presented.

LALAJI MEMORIAL

The response to the Lalaji Memorial appeal was up to my expectations and even beyond those of the ever sanguine and ever successful national beggar Manilal Kothari. It amounts to over Rs. 70,000, much more than Sind's quota calculated according to any of the methods mentioned by me in these pages. If the other provinces do half as well as Sind, the amount mentioned in the Memorial appeal will be more than covered. And this can be easily done, if those who cherish Lalaji's memory will bestir themselves to make the collections. Our people have not yet acquired the habit of doing their duty without persistent reminders even as we need the loud call of the temple bell to remind us that there is God watching over us and summoning us to prayer.

KHADI

As in Travancore so in Sind there is unlimited scope for khadi propaganda for the simple reason that the women of Sind, young and old, do not go in for coloured saris with picturesque borders. They wear white scarfs without borders. If men of Sind will but do a little national propaganda among the womenfolk, they should have no difficulty in inducing them to take to khadi. But the painful fact is that with a few honourable exceptions they are not interested in khadi. They will not part with their foreign clothing. The terrible poverty of the people which they do not see fails to move them. Hence Sind is perhaps one of the most backward provinces in point of khadi.

Of production there is next to nothing. Acharya Kripalani who now better deserves the title of khadi hawker than of Acharya is emphatically of opinion that there is great scope for khadi production in Sind as he thinks that in spite of the prosperous appearance of the Amils and the Bhaibandhs there is much poverty in Sind. He quotes in proof of his statement that the pie is still current coin in Sind. I can bear testimony to the fact that apart from Orissa, I have never found so many pies in my collections as in Sind. In one collection of about ten rupees from among over a hundred men, forty pies were counted. This phenomenon cannot be explained away by saying that the people were stingy or unwilling to give. Stinginess I have never experienced in

Sind. A people who gave over Rs. 70,000 in twelve days could not be considered unwilling. And the fact that they had pies to give shows that a pie can fetch something in the Sind villages not even far away from the railway. In one place I found even cowries among the collections. Upon inquiry I found that a pice was equal to five cowries. At the same time, I am free to confess that this khadi hawker's evidence must be taken with a certain amount of reserve because of the fact that for years together he has lived in self-imposed exile. But this is certain that no serious, sustained, methodical effort backed by expert knowledge has been made to test the capacity of Sind for khadi production. Add to this the fact that Sind is a cotton-producing tract and has compulsory primary education as in Hyderabad. If there was khadi atmosphere, sacrificial khadi could always be produced through the numerous schools of Sind. A methodical daily manufacture of yarn under proper inspection in the schools if not even in the colleges should yield good and durable cheap khadi in large quantities. But want of faith is the father of an innumerable brood of doubts.

CONGRESS POSITION

The courageous chairman of the Kotri Congress Committee told me at its public meeting that he had only twenty members on the Congress register and that if the Khadi franchise was to be faithfully and honestly worked, there would be probably only two members on the Congress register. My answer was simple. The chairman was bound to work the franchise honestly and report the result to the Working Committee and, if he had faith in khadi, he should not hesitate to stand alone.

The position of the Congress is no better in the other parts of Sind. Everywhere the Congress is functioning only in name. To paraphrase immortal Tulsidas, the name is greater than its bearer. The Congress instead of permeating every walk of life and every section of society is known only in time of some political excitement. As a whole it can show no steady progress, no constructive activity in this province of sandy desert. Probably the condition is no better in the other provinces. In my opinion therefore the greatest problem before the Congress politician is to restore the Congress to the position of dominance it had attained in 1921. I have no hesitation in saying that if it cannot do so without sacrificing the khadi franchise, the latter should be unhesitatingly sacrificed. Camouflage, dishonesty and inanity should be removed at any cost. My own opinion is that the

organizers and leaders have themselves not much faith in khadi. But my opinion has no value in face of the fact, if it is the fact, that thekhadi franchise has not worked. However whilst I am giving my opinion in this matter, I may as well give my further opinion that even if the khadi franchise is removed we are not going to have people clamouring to find their names on the Congress roll.

CONGRESS SQUABBLES

For the cause of the decline lies so far as Sind is concerned in Congress squabbles. I had little expected to be called upon to help to remove them. As it so happened Sjt. Manilal Kothari was deputed by the Working Committee to supervise elections, etc. He timed this work with that of helping the Memorial collections. I was therefore naturally drawn into the net. At every place visited an hour was set apart for a quiet chat with workers. The burden of their talk almost everywhere was, 'Our work suffers owing to our squabbles; do please settle these before you leave Sind.' The quarrel was over what appeared to me a trifle, division of power. And yet the painful fact is that there is no power to divide, there is no purse, no patronage to share. In all perhaps there are hardly 400 members on the Sind Congress register. There are 45 members of the Provincial Committee. Its Working Committee has 15, far too many in my opinion. If the central body manages with 15 the provincial body should manage with 5. But we have not yet become business-like enough to save all available energy, money and time.

There are two Congress parties in Sind. These function largely for the purpose of owning the executive. Every one of the workers told me that the provincial organization, once homogeneous, was split when the unfortunate Council-entry became a live issue. The question of the separation of Sind later intensified the division. Swami Govindanand represents one party and Jairamdas the other. Swami Govindanand has been chairman for the past 3 years, or more (I forget the number of years). Jairamdas's party has averred many irregularities. Into these I did not go. But at Mirpurkhas where I had a final chat with the workers representing both the groups, I tried to bring the two together. And after surveying the situation, I suggested a compromise which, I confess, was a patchwork, a trial solution. I could observe that the Govindanand group was keen on the Swami remaining President. The Swami himself seemed to me to be insistent

on retaining the reins of government in his hands. So far as I could see, Jairamdas had no such desire, though he and his party were desirous of having another who they thought was neutral. I saw that this could not be brought about without forcing a conteste delection. A chairman to command respect should, in my opinion, be elected by unanimity or at any rate by an overwhelming majority. The parties appeared to me to be evenly balanced. I was not prepared therefore to advise an election by the party vote. And if Jairamdas and his principal supporters were not eager or even willing to hold the reins, I thought that they should give proof of their unwillingness by letting the Swami's election go uncontested. The election of the executive was then simple. I suggested the central body's convention for adoption, viz., election of those nominated by the chair. Every president should be able and be allowed to choose his own executive. I therefore put the pen in the Swami's hand. He selected five from the Jairamdas group, thus having ten of his own group over five of the rival. I suggested too that he should select the names for the A.I.C.C., thus avoiding all contest over election of office-bearers. I hope that these elections will be held without delay and without friction.

I know that the arrangement has not pleased the Jairamdas group. They would have preferred to act on my original advice to them, viz., to retire altogether from the provincial body and work in those districts where they had a clear, undisputed majority. I asked the Swami which he would prefer, and he said he would like the Jairamdas group to be represented on his executive. I therefore pressed the advice upon the Jairamdas group that it would be greater self-effacement on their part to let their names appear on the executive and to become passive co-operators and let the Swami work out the Congress programme during this year of trial for the nation. I have advised them not to appear at the executive meetings except when the Swami requires their presence and to resign if they find that things are being done or policies followed to which they would not conscientiously lend their names.

Now a word to Swami Govindanand. His sacrifice is unquestioned. His courage is beyond doubt. But I think that he will increase his power for service, if he steps out of office and insists on someone else occupying the chair.

There was much talk though confined to a few to the effect that the money for the Lalaji Memorial should not all be sent out of Sind. I explained that the signatories to the appeal had already defined the purpose to which the funds would be devoted and that I had no power to alter the purpose. But I pointed out that much of the money could be used for Sind if some eligible Sindhis offered to joinLalaji's Society which was an all-India organization or if they could submit a good scheme for suppressed classes work. I have assured them that neither the trustees nor Lalaji's Society would neglect the claims of Sind that had given the magnificent response it had to the Lalaji Memorial. Indeed I may inform the Sind public that negotiations are already on foot to bring some Sind workers within the fold of Lalaji's Society. But whilst this discussion was going on Swami Govindanand brought forward the suggestion that there should be a provincial organization, analogous to Lalaji's Society. The idea appealed to me forcibly. There is nothing to prevent anybody having a following from founding such a society. The question of maintenance need cause no worry. A labourer is worthy of his hire. A volunteer working in any national organization works or ought to work always for less than his market price. He need therefore never excite jealousy or suffer privation so long as he gives a good account of himself to the nation. But as Dr. Choithram is the oldest national worker I have known in Sind and as he has dispossessed himself of everything he ever had, I approached him about the Swami's suggestion and he told me they had already some such thing. I have therefore asked him and Jairamdas to draw up a proper scheme, publish it and invite candidates. Though they have resources and influence, and have always had response to their appeals for funds, they are not without misgivings as to the support they might expect for the project. I have urged them as I urge everybody to dismiss such vain fears and to have confidence in themselves and the cause they espouse. I have never known a good cause backed by good men ever to have died for want of funds. Only we often mistake a bad cause for good and bad men for good and then complain that the cause fails for want of funds.

Young India, 21-2-1929

93. A BOY OF MUCH PROMISE

I tender my humble thanks to those who have sent me telegrams and letters of condolence on hearing the news of the death of a grandson of mine. Rasik was only seventeen years old and was from his infancy being trained to become a national servant. He was clever, pushful and ambitious. He was an expert carder and had gone to Delhi to help my son Devdas who is teaching spinning and Hindi at the Jamia Millia. Hehad grown considerably in wisdom during the past few months. Only a few days before he lay on his death-bed he wrote to me to show how devoted he had become to the *Ramayana* and the *Gita*. He had developed a fine sense of responsibility. With the views I hold on death Rasik's death has caused me no grief, or such grief as I have felt is purely based on selfish considerations. I had built high hopes on getting much national service from Rasik with his body which is now no more. But for him, he has gone because he had outgrown the use of his existing body. And he has gone the blessed way which every one of us must tread. His death therefore only brings me closer to God, makes me realize my responsibility more fully than before. The thought that he died at his post fills me with joy. His death has enabled me to come closer to the Mussalman world. Rasik's Mussalman comrades, I hear from Devdas, were ever kind to him. Dr. Ansari gave him the attention not merely of a first-class physician but bestowed upon him a father's loving care. The principal and staff of the Jamia were never failing in their attention. My respectful thanks are due to them all, to Dr. Sharma of the Tibbia College, to the devoted nurses under whose charge the patient had been placed and to the numerous Hindu friends who helped Devdas in the task of nursing Rasik. But for the loving and unsolicited aid given by his Hindu and Mussalman friends Devdas might easily have been broken by the strain of nursing his patient and ward whom he loved so dearly during the prolonged unconsciousness that had overtaken Rasik. His was a death not to mourn but to envy.

Young India, 21-2-1929

94. CHARKHA SONG

Rev. Donald Miller of Purulia Leper Asylum sends me a cutting from the *Watch Tower* containing Rev. F. W. Ross's description of a Bengali woman leper, an inmate of the Raniganj Leper Asylum. I take the following abstract[1] from Mr. Ross's interesting account including

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

Saro's charkha song:

> Saro is one of our 'characters', a person really worth knowing. When any distinguished visitor comes to our Leper Home the occasion is not complete unless Saro bestows a blessing. . . . "May you be happy, may you increase in wealth and children, may you live as many years as you havehairs on your head, and may your body be as strong as iron." This formula she never varies, so it is perhaps fortunate that no entirely bald person has yet presented himself to be blessed. . . . It was when weaving was being introduced that Saro really blossomed forth. . . . "Did she know how to use a charkha?" . . . Then to our amusement as well as amazement she broke forth into an old song of her youth. . . .
>
> Charkha is my husband, son and grandson;
> By the favour of charkha we can now keep elephants:
> Hum-m-m, hum-m-m goes the charkha.

Similarity between this folk song and the similar songs I have from Gujarat and other parts of India is striking and remarkable.

Young India, 21-2-1929

95. MY IMPENDING VISIT TO BURMA

It was in 1915 that I last visited Burma, that is, Rangoon only. Since then though I have had many a call I have not had the time to visit that great province. I am now looking forward to visiting it early next month. I am going there principally in the interest of khadi and the Gujarat Vidyapith which has always had munificent support from the Gujarati colony in Burma. I hope also to receive donations for the Lajpat Rai Memorial. And the forthcoming visit gives me added joy in that it will enable me to meet my life-long friend and companion Dr. P.J. Mehta. I hope too to renew the acquaintance of Burmese friends from whom I have already received invitations. But let all the friends know that I have limited time at my disposal. I must return to Gujarat during the last week of March to enable me to attend the Kathiawar Political Conference which meets at Morbi at the end of March under the presidentship of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Moreover let the friends know that I do not possess now a body that used at one time to stand an infinite amount of wear and tear. Add to this the fact that I must attend to the editing of two weeklies and the daily correspondence. The Reception Committee will therefore kindly give me an unbroken period of six hours to attend to the ablutions, food, rest and the

editorial and the other writing work. And as I must rise at 4 a.m., the Reception Committee will kindly see to it that no appointments are made after 8 p.m. so as to enable me to retire to bed by 9 p.m.

Young India, 21-2-1929

96. WILL THIS POOR COW BE SAVED?

Shri Kashinath Trivedi lives in the Ashram and helps in running the *Hindi Navajivan*. He has in Ujjain a sister aged thirteen years. He does not want that she should be married off at such a young age. But Shri Kashinath says that his father has arranged her marriage with a widower of thirty, who lost his wife in January last. He is a doctor employed in a State in Central India. Kashinathji's father is very orthodox in following social tradition and having failed to find a suitable groom for his daughter he has been obliged to agree to having the poor girl married to a widower. The ceremony is fixed for March 11, 1929. Kashinathji has opposed this alliance in the clearest terms and has written to his father saying that his conscience prevents him from attending the wedding to obedience to his father's wishes. But I have told Kashinathji that mere writing will not do; so he wants to go in person and try to have this sinful affair stopped. It is my prayer to the girl's father that he turn away from his intention. But if he does not do so, if he obdurately sticks to it, I hope all the responsible, thinking men of Central India will help Shri Kashinath in his sacred undertaking and stop the marriage.

One word to the widower doctor who has ventured upon this misadventure. I hope the doctor will realize his duty and purge his mind of the evil thought of marrying this girl, innocent as the cow. It will not be amiss here to remind the doctor that decency and duty demand that he should restrain his animal passions for at any rate one year after the death of his wife.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 21-2-1929

97. LETTER TO D.

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM SABARMATI,
February 21, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your two letters. Before I received your letter in Delhi, I had already had a talk with Pandit Malaviyaji. I gave him the contents of my letter and he told me that I was quite right in telling you that he, Malaviyaji, could never keep you out because of your bodily infirmity. In any case, he gave you a very good certificate and he said that if I could take you up, he would be delighted as he might find it difficult to accommodate you at once. He recognized that you deserved immediate help. Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla happened to be present at the time of the conversation. He felt interested in it and in you and straightway offered to take you up in his college or high school, I forget which, at Pilani. He needs a good professor there. And there should be no difficulty in your getting there the salary you want. If you will accept that post, please write to Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla, and go there by appointment. His address is: Birla Brothers, Subzimandi, Delhi.

Please keep me informed as to what you are doing. I am forwarding to Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla a copy of this letter as also your second letter. I leave Sabarmati for Burma on the 1st of March, before which I should like to see you fixed up.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13298

98. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 21, 1929

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letters. The report about your health and Hemprabha Devi's is bad. I do not like the idea of always harbouring the thought of never taking without giving. Once the attitude of selfishness is destroyed there is never any taking without giving but it

is all an unconscious performance. If I always have to prove to myself that as against one *tola* of rice taken by me from you I have given you 2 *tolas* of dal, I am giving nothing and I am merely taking from you. Because the consciousness that I have given you more than you have given me destroys the value of my gift. Why should it not be a privilege to Hemprabha Devi to be at the Abhoy Ashram and apparently be receiving all service without giving anything in return? Is that how you act towards each other in every little thing weighing exactly to find out whether the balance is preserved? And if you are not, why calculate when it is not husband and wife, but two different organizations in which there is even a little coolness? I wonder if I have made my meaning clear. Of course this argument is based on the assumption that the Abhoy Ashram is ready and willing to harbour Hemprabha Devi.

I am glad about your dietetic experiments. The changes made are good. And now that you are on the track, you are better able to find out than I can the exact qualities of different oils. So far, in my estimation, linseed oil holds the field. But what it is that makes it free from irritation I do not know. And then, if your oil experiment is to be scientific, you must press your own oil, for you never get pure oils in the bazaar. And some how or other oils don't keep nice for a long time.

You must carefully study the contribution in *Young India* on "Fasting Cure".[1] The writer is a learned man and seems to be a very methodical man. More even than change of climate, I regard fasting as a good cure for Hemprabha Devi and Tarini at any rate. I am not quite sure about you. But it should be judiciously taken. That can be taken only when the superstition that something must be taken inside to keep up the strength is given up. And I would add to the fasting sun-baths, which have got to be taken absolutely naked. Therefore there must be an enclosure. And whilst the fasting cure is taken, bowels must be regulated by the enema. It is remarkable how hard faeces are sometimes received in the discharge of enema water even after three weeks' fasting, as happened in my own case.

[1] For Gandhiji's comments on this, *vide* "A Marvellous fasting Cure", February 28, 1929.

I do not know what lead I can give you about khadi beyond what I have written in *Young India*. The scheme[1] I drew up has been accepted. I would simply suggest workers, wherever they are found, carrying out the scheme, or as much of it as is possible, in their own persons.

Purging the Congress is not an easy process, but let us hope that it will come. It will have to come if—the foregoing was dictated in Delhi on Tuesday[2]. But every one of us was so busy that even the unfinished letter could not be typed or fairly written in order that it could go to you. I was interrupted when I was dictating the letter because the members of the Working Committee came in. Now to resume the connection—we are to get swaraj through Truth and Ahimsa. With out self-purification, we shall never secure purification of the Government. I can only therefore tell that in my own way, and in the manner I know, I am trying to perform that double purification of my own and that of the Congress. And you may almost take it that the two will go side by side. Imperfections of the Congress are a resultant of the imperfections of each one of us, and as I am the primary mover in this matter, my limitations must count the most against the progress of the Congress in the direction of purification. My only satisfaction is that I am not conscious of leaving a single stone unturned in order to remove my limitations.

I have your telegram regarding the instructions about enforcing the khadi rule. No instructions need be issued just now. I hope to write about this thing in *Young India*. For the present then you must look to the pages of *Young India* about all these matters. Many things might be done through suggestions in *Young India* rather than through the resolution of the working Committee.

This is my programme. I leave here on the 1st of March, on the 2nd for certain. I then reach Calcutta either on the 3rd or 4th morning. There might be some alternation about the timings according to the train that I take. My inclination is to come *via* Delhi, by doing which I save Rs. 8 per passenger and save a little time also. I shall look up the time-table. I leave Calcutta on the morning of Tuesday the 5th March for Rangoon. I return from Rangoon during the last week of March, so timing myself as to reach Sabarmati at the latest on the 27th March.

[1] *Vide* "Scheme for Boycott of Foreign Cloth through Khadi", January 24, 1929.

[2] February 19, 1929.

The award about Ram Binod is causing me the greatest anxiety. Rajendra Babu is deeply hurt.[1] And he and his co-workers consider it as a reflection upon themselves. He has tendered for himself and his companions resignation. I have pooh-poohed the idea, consoled Rajendra Babu and told him that after all I was to be the final authority in this matter and that therefore I should gladly go through every particle of evidence and consider your award in the light of the evidence and then deliver my own. I shall let you know the further developments. You need not worry about this at this stage. I shall seek your assistance when I need it. I hope to be able to tide over the difficulty. But it means an extra load of work at the time when I am heavily laden. But that is inevitable.

Another thing I wanted to write to you about before I went to Sind and forgot. That was in connection with the letter from Niranjan Babu regarding the security resolution of the A.I.S.A. Council. The resolution is not as inelastic as Niranjan Babu imagines. It is sufficiently elastic and subject to that elasticity, I think it is necessary. As our organization grows, security will have to be demanded. And no one may refuse to give security on the score of his being a patriot or a national servant. Security will be and should be waived in the case of those who are beyond suspicion and are of proved integrity but cannot find security. Do you not agree with this proposition?

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1603

[1] Ram Binod Sinha, a khadi worker of Bihar, was given a loan of Rs. 25,000 for furtherance of his projects. Later he was charged with considering the institution he had built up with public funds as his own proprietary concern. Satis Chandra Das Gupta, who was deputed by Gandhiji to investigate, declared that the affairs of the Bihar branch of the Charkha Sangh were mismanaged. Dr. Rajendra Prasad who was in charge of it protested against this and requested Gandhiji to look into the accounts himself. After some time Gandhiji placed the matter in the hands of Narandas Gandhi who approved the accounts submitted by the Bihar Charkha Sangh.

99. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 21, 1929

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

This letter you had least expected from me, but there it is. I have taken charge of the Committee for Boycott of Foreign Cloth. I must have a whole-time secretary if that thing is to work. And I can think of nobody so suitable like you. Unless therefore you think that the country's interest demands your presence in the Council, I would like you to resign at once and do the secretarial work. You may ask to be relieved at the end of this year. Though of course I would like you to remain on so long as I require you. Nine months' absence from the Council ought not to matter much and may possibly be good for you even from Council standpoint. I do not want to or need to argue with you. Nor have [I] the leisure for it. Read all the pressure into this letter that you can, but after having done so, let you[rs] be the unfettered decision. I shall accept it without complaint even though it may be adverse. If you are at all inclined to entertain my proposal favourably, please come to Sabarmati, if possible, in reply to this letter. I must leave for Burma on the 1st March—at the latest 2nd—and I shan't be passing through Bombay.

Malkani joined me yesterday at Marwar Junction.

I expect a wire from you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 15349

100. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 23, 1929

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I have your letter. On March 9, I shall be in Burma, April 5 seems feasible. When, at the earliest, do you have to be informed of the decision? On March 1, I shall leave Ahmedabad for Delhi *en route* to Calcutta and leave for Burma from there.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

SHRI BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA
275 HORNBY ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6591

101. LETTER TO BECHAR PARMAR

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 23, 1929

BHAISHRI BECHAR,

I have your letter. As for the *Antyaja* teacher you mention, if he puts off marriage and is a man of character, he can be taken in the Vidyapith and a scholarship too may be given to him. If he is agreeable, an application stating all the facts may be forwarded to Kakasaheb along with your covering letter.

VANDEMATARAM FROM

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5577

102. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 23, 1929

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

I got your letter. Do not eat bananas. There is no harm in eating a few apples after boiling them without peeling and then removing the skin, seeds, etc. Pineapple may also be eaten, if it is sweet. The number of fasts should be limited by your capacity to go without food. I do not understand why you cannot have a sun-bath in Calcutta. Even when a sun-bath is not possible you can, and should, take Kuhne bath in the tub. I do believe that it would be better if you can continue to wear a *kachchha*.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6762

103. OUR HELPLESSNESS[1]

Sjt. Jethalal Govindji writes from Bijolia (Rajputana):

> It may not be possible for me to leave this place for another six months. Even so about 6,000 people at the least are today spinning their own yarn. Most of them weave their own cloth. But the question of dyeing is a great stumbling-block. Red, yellow and pink colours are a great necessity. Today we have to depend on foreign dyes. If this dependence continues, the exploiting spirit of the middlemen is likely to betray us and drive people to the bazaar to purchase their coloured cloth. To consolidate the khadi work already done, it will be necessary to teach people the use of indigenous dyes. Some way out of the difficulty must be found and suggestions in this behalf may be invited from the readers of *Young India* and *Navajivan*. Unless this is done there can be no ending of our present helpless state.

I see no reason why it should not be possible to place home-made dyes within the easy reach of all and I hope that those who know this art will co-operate towards this end. But I cannot help uttering a warning to khadi lovers like Sjt. Jethalal. He has set before him an

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 24-2-1929. The translation is by Pyarelal.

ambitious ideal that did not obtain in our country probably at any time even in the past. The cultivator had always to depend for certain necessaries of life on the middleman and it seems to me that this is just as it should be. Interdependence is and ought to be as much the ideal of man as self-sufficiency. Man is a social being. Without inter-relation with society he cannot realize his oneness with the universe or suppress his egotism. His social interdependence enables him to test his faith and to prove himself on the touchstone of reality. If man were so placed or could so place himself as to be absolutely above all dependence on his fellow-beings he would become so proud and arrogant as to be a veritable burden and nuisance to the world. Dependence on society teaches him the lesson of humility. That a man ought to be able to satisfy most of his essential needs himself is obvious; but it is no less obvious to me that when self-sufficiency is carried to the length of isolating one-self from society it almost amounts to sin. A man cannot become self-sufficient even in respectof all the various operations from the growing of cotton to the spinning of the yarn. He has at some stage or other to take the aid of the members of his family. And if one may take help from one's own family why not from one's neighbours? Or otherwise what is the significance of the great saying, 'The world is my family'?

Deep at the root of Sjt. Jethalal's distress I find a lurking distrust of the dye-sellers. Why should it be taken for granted that the middlemen are bound to betray us? The khadi movement stands for an all-round purification. It requires us to establish contact with every sphere of social life and to exercise a purifying influence. We do not want to take away from the middleman his occupation, but only to give a new orientation to it and to change his mental outlook. We must have an abiding faith in the middleman, and in their developing one day a high sense of business morality and a burning patriotism. Even today instances of such ideal businessmen are not lacking. Fanatical excess is a thing always to be shunned. The 'middle path' is the royal road. Self-dependence is a necessary ideal so long as and to the extent that it is an aid to one's self-respect and spiritual discipline. It becomes an obsession and a hindrance when it is pushed beyond that limit. On the other hand interdependence when it is not inconsistent with one's self-respect is necessary to bring home to man the lesson of humility and the omnipotence of God. One must strike a golden mean between these two extremes. A fanaticism that refuses to discriminate is the negation of all ideal.

Young India, 21-3-1929

104. WHAT DID I DO IN DELHI?

From Sind I went to Delhi. I stayed there for three days. I met His Excellency the Viceroy also. Naturally therefore people are anxious to know what happened there. However, if people were truly self-reliant, they would have no such curiosity. What if I met the Viceroy? But as a nation, we have been unable to cultivate such indifference. We are still awed by the grandeur of British rule. As long as this is so, we shall continue to be inquisitive about the Viceroy's activities, his utterances, and what persons who have met him have seen and heard. So I should satisfy this curiosity in some measure.

When I went to Delhi, I did not have the slightest inkling of Vithalbhai's scheme. Motilalji invited me to Delhi in connection with the boycott of foreign cloth and the meeting of the Congress Working Committee was postponed. Putting up with the inconvenience, I wired to Motilalji that I would be in Delhi from the 17th to the 19th. On reaching Delhi I came to know of Vithalbhai's scheme.

Since entering the Legislative Assembly Shri Vithalbhai has rendered the most efficient service to the nation that any Indian is capable of rendering. By his bold conduct he has brought credit to his office and to his country. He does not let go a single opportunity to display his independence, his fearlessness and his patriotism and in spite of this he maintains the impartiality and self-restraint befitting his position. He believes that even if he could do nothing else it would be enough if he could bring together the leaders holding different views and it would be even better if he could bring them in touch with the Viceroy. So he took advantage of my visit to Delhi and invited His Excellency the Viceroy and some leaders to tea. As his guest, my presence there was natural. The Brahmin's duty is to perform the marriage ceremony, not to run the household. Similarly, Vithalbhai brought together leaders holding divergent views, but except for drinking tea and indulging in casual chit-chat what can such a gathering do? Vithalbhai had desired a great deal. He made attempts to broach the subject through jokes and broad hints. But these attempts have their limits. So One may say that we did not discuss the subject which I believe he wanted us to discuss. In other words, the tea-party brought incompatibles together or, to use an English expression, the ice was broken; in the language of the Rajputs, they drank

casumbo[1]. Or to use plain speech, they got rid of mutual fear. The reader must realize that nothing more happened. If he is sensible, he will know that anyone who says something else has happened is naive. In fact it could not have been otherwise. Our salvation lies in our own hands. A fruitful meeting can only take place when we have gathered strength and become conscious of it. Today we lack self-confidence. We have achieved nothing. And so long as we do not accomplish something which would give us self-confidence, all the meetings we may arrange will not bring about the desired result. We must not hope for it. So my summing up of the Delhi meeting is that people should forget it and get on to doing some work or other for swaraj. Considering the matter thus, I wish the readers would ask not what happenedat the party but rather what happened in the Working Committee. They should not rest content with the report appearing in newspapers. Hence I shall come to the point. The main discussion in the Working Committee was about the boycott of foreign cloth. It was in that connection that I was invited to Delhi. I placed before the Committee my experience of Kotri which I have related in an article on Sind.[2] I suggested that, if the members of the Working Committee agreed, the clause about khadi should be deleted and that we should take the risk of doing so before the Congress session. No one was prepared to take that risk. All felt that the question of doing away with khadi could never be raised when there was a talk of boycotting foreign cloth. Everyone also felt that the boycott of foreign cloth was the best weapon we had at present. The scheme which I have already published was endorsed unanimously. A special committee was appointed for the purpose. And it was authorized to nominate the rest of the members. I was appointed Chairman of the committee and I accepted it with humility.[3] But I must confess that I do not have the strength or the self-confidence to bring credit to that office. That I lack self-confidence does not mean that I have softened on boycott. But I have no idea what support we can get from people in this respect. All the same I prayerfully agreed to shoulder the responsibility of the office which I could not have very well refused. I hope that the Gujaratis will lighten my burden by sharing this responsibility with me and in this everyone—men and women, young and old—will be able

[1] An opium preparation drunk at social or formal get-together

[2] *Vide* "Sind Impressions", February 21, 1929.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Jairamdas Doulatram", February 21, 1929.

to take part. Those who possess articles of foreign cloth should voluntarily discard them and if they wish to go a step further, they should send these to me or to the Provincial Congress Committee. If the sender does not give any instructions, the clothes will be burnt. Those who do not send the clothes should themselves burn them. They should give up the use of such clothes for good and use khaddar instead. If the people whole-heartedly accept this boycott there will certainly by some scarcity of cloth, but to avoid this we must be economical in our use of cloth and use only the minimum amount of khadi that we need. If people do so, there will be sufficient khadi to meet everyone's requirements and we can prove the efficacy or boycott of foreign cloth without any difficulty. People shouldbegin with themselves, and then approach their neighbours, friends and relatives who use foreign cloth. If people take upon themselves the responsibility, the task of boycotting foreign cloth will be relatively easy. So much for the boycott of foreign cloth. Another important resolution was one sponsored by Bharat Bhusan Malaviyaji. It was to the effect that processions should be taken out everywhere on the 10th of March and resolutions should be passed about the Nehru Report. The idea behind the resolution is that unless the Nehru Report is accepted, people will not be satisfied. The 10th of March is a Sunday. On the following Sunday people should propagate khadi by selling it from door to door and holding exhibitions. The Sunday after that should be spent mainly in prohibition work. And the Sunday following, in lathi display and other such ancient sports. In this way these three types of constructive work should be undertaken on three consecutive Sundays. The resolution of 10th March is not to be repeated every month. No one should interpret this resolution to mean that since all Sundays of a month are devoted to khadi, prohibition and sports, nothing has to be done on week days. As I have said above, the day-to-day programme of khadi has been framed by the Working Committee. For the remaining two activities and for the ones designed to develop strength in people, different organizations should frame their own programmes. The object of Malaviyaji's resolution is to extract from people work connected with these three things on three different Sundays of every month.

Other resolutions were also passed in the Working Committee. But I cannot cite them in answer to the question posed in the title. But the work in Delhi does not end with the two important resolutions already mentioned. I do not attach less important to the discussions I

had with Mr. Jinnah and others on the Hindu-Muslim question. I cannot of course point to any immediate result of these discussions. However, it is my firm belief that such efforts can never be in vain. This was the reason behind Motilalji's calling me to Delhi. It is necessary to inform the readers that these efforts were limited in scope. They were within the framework of the Nehru Report. We discussed fully how to meet with the complaints of Muslims with regard to the Nehru Report. We came to the conclusions that although changes may be made in it, with the approval of the people when the time comes, for the present and for this year this Report should, from the people's point of view, be considered a final and definite demand and wherever it is accepted it should be done unconditionally. Then alone can the consolidationof the people's strength be achieved through the Report. It can never be achieved through something regarding which no determined public opinion has been created. The rule applies to all types of struggles. But it is indispensable for satyagraha, that is, non-co-operation. Satyagraha strengthens and is possible only over an issue on which a definite opinion has been formed. How can we insist on truth regarding something which can be varied at will? For anything which is variable a potent weapon like satyagraha which is constant for all time cannot be used. That is its beauty and also its limitation.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-2-1929

105. SUNSET AT MORNING

There have been letters and telegrams of condolence on the death of my grandson Rasik. Instead of replying individually I have thought it proper to express my gratitude to all of them through *Young India* and *Navajivan*. Those who have sent messages will forgive me for not being able to reply to them individually.

It was not my intention to notice this death, but as the news appeared in the newspapers and people have written to me, it seems proper for me to take some note of it.

As for me, the death of friends and relatives does not hurt as much as it used to. All religious forbid fear of death or grief over death. Yet we are afraid of death and grieve over the death of a dear one. And if someone dies in the prime of youth, there is greater grief. Truly speaking, death is God's eternal blessing. The body which is

used up falls and the bird within flies away. So long as the bird does not die, the question of grief does not arise.

When despite this there is grief on the death of a relative, it only shows our selfishness and delusion. For the past many years, I have been trying to rid myself of this delusion. Hence the shock on hearing news of Rasik's death was not severe. What shock there was, was due to selfishness.

Rasik was seventeen years of age. He had been under my care from childhood and, like other boys, he was being given training in national service. He was an active, clever and bright boy. He was sturdy and brave. He was always first in taking up work that called for courage. During the past one year his boisterousness was turning into strength. He was a student of the *Gita*. He was an expert carder and spinner. Once or twice he took to spinning continuously for twenty-four hours—and did it successfully.

My youngest son Devdas is working at the Jamia Millia in Delhi. He teaches spinning and Hindi to the students there. About four months back, he had asked for the services of Rasik and another grandson of mine, Navin, to teach carpentry and weaving. Both Rasik and Navin had gone to Delhi and were doing good work there. Earlier, because of his keen desire to serve, Rasik had gone to Bardoli. He became popular wherever he went. The selfish thought that providence took away such a promising worker made me grieve; but then I thought that Providence is always just and is therefore kind and it would get work out of Rasik. By this faith I have been consoled.

After going to Delhi, Rasik turned a devotee. When I was on my way back *via* Delhi after the Congress session, Rasik had told me that he had entered his seventeenth year. At that time, like many other boys, he took certain vows: first to eat only three things at a meal; secondly, to have only three meals a day, and thirdly, to complete within two years the study of the *Ramayana* with commentary. Knowing his restless temperament, I had warned him. But he told me that he found nothing difficult in this and that he liked to read the *Ramayana*. I was pleased.

With reference to these vows, Rasik wrote to me the following letter[1], on the 18th of January. On the 8th of February he passed away. Very few get the care that Rasik received. He was a dear nephew and student of Devdas and had received his matchless service. Dr. Ansari was not merely his physician; he was like a father to him. Dr. Sharma was always at his beck and call. Two nurses were appointed by

[1] Not translated here.

the doctors to nurse him. Muslim friends from the Jamia left nothing to be desired so far as nursing him was concerned. The Hindus who learnt of his illness were at his service, day and night. I am indebted to all of them. Rasik had realized at such an early age the value of service and duty and engrossed himself in it; taken difficult vows, regarded them as easy to fulfil and read the *Gita* with enthusiasm having vowed tofinish study of the *Ramayana* in two years' time. He met deathwhile cherishing such noble sentiments and receiving unsurpassed care. Everyone will envy such a death. And if a grandfather like me feels grieved at this, it is purely selfishness and infatuation.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-2-1929

106. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 24, 1929

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

I have your letter as also your telegram. Nothing concrete could possibly result from the tea-party. But you will see my account[1] of it in *Navajivan* issued today. Get somebody to read it to you.

Of course the auditor and inspector will have to go to Sind also.

I did discuss the Sind affairs with Motilalji. He was glad that I had gone into the thing and agreed that wherever there was irregularity, it should be put down. My note in *Young India* has, I hope, cleared the matter.[2]

With reference to your telegram, I am glad you are coming. I am leaving on the 1st March for Burma *via* Delhi. You should therefore try to come on before the 28th. More when we meet.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 15353

[1] *Vide* "What did I do in Delhi", February 24, 1929.
[2] *Vide* "Sind Impressions", February 21, 1929.

107. LETTER TO GIRDHARILAL

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 24, 1929

DEAR LALA GIRDHARILAL,

I have your two letters. It is difficult to say beforehand that whenever I go to Delhi I shall stay with you. Whenever I go there, it is a special purpose that takes me. And my residence is determined by the purpose, as it was during my last visit to Delhi.

The Punjab is included in my programme. And I hope to be there in June. But this should be fixed up with Jawaharlal.

I must not discuss your long letters about what I have written. You will discuss them personally when we meet.

I understand what you say about the Exhibition. I have no doubt that the provincial committee is quite competent to make all necessary arrangements about it. But I have no doubt also that the provincial Congress Committee will make a thorough mess of it so far as khadi is concerned and so far also as the swadeshi part of it is concerned. But I have said my say.

Your suggestion about the other conferences not being held at the time of the Congress is worthy of consideration. There is much to be said in its favour. I have already written at length in reply to Dr. Satyapal's letter.

Your remarks about Mahantism, Political mutts, and Udyoga Mandir are interesting. We must agree to differ on this point. You have evidently not cared to remember that Udyoga Mandir is an humbler name adopted because of our weaknesses and when we feel that we have somewhat surmounted our weaknesses, we propose to revert to the original name.[1]

[1] In this letter dated February 18, 1929, the addressee had written: "I am dead against personal deification and canonizing of institutions. Personal regard, respect and affection are things apart. We have had too much of 'mahantism' in this country. It is time that we protest against the revival of this policy. Religious 'mutts' abounding all over the country are bad enough. We cannot afford to add to them by creating political mutts now. Anything that savours of this unreal attitude of sacredness or sanctimoniousness will find young men revolting. For this reason I am sorry for the change of the name of 'Satyagraha Ashram' to 'Udyoga Mandir'."

Equally interesting is your homily about younger men.

Yours sincerely,

LALA GIRDHARILAL
DIWAN BHAWAN
DELHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 15346

108. LETTER TO JASWANTRAI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 24, 1929

DEAR LALA JASWANTRAI,

I have your letter of the 13th instant. Acharya Gidwani saw me during my visit to Mirpurkhas and talked to me about the *Antyaja* boys and khadi and told me that I was to expect a letter from you. The letter I got only on my return to Sabarmati from Delhi. I hardly think that I need interfere with you and Acharya Gidwani. I am sure you will do just what is right. I would have shown your letter to Sjt. Manilal Kothari if he had been here. As it is, he is in attendance upon his father who is ailing in Wadhwan.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. LALA JASWANTRAI
JASWANTRAI & SONS
COMMISSION AGENTS
KARACHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 13367

109. LETTER TO KANTHIMATHI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 24, 1929

MY DEAR KANTI,

I have your letter. If your mother-in-law is so unreasonable, I suppose it is better that you let her buy two Bangalore saries. You will wear them only when you find it absolutely necessary for the sake of your mother-in-law. I am sure that if you persist, you will infect your surroundings with your faith in khadi.

Yours sincerely,

SMT. KANTHIMATHI
C/O DR. C. B. RAMA RAO
KANTHI NIVAS
BASAVANGUDI
BANGALORE CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 15012

110. KHADI AND SWARAJ[1]

[*February 24, 1929*][2]

Because mills must depend for their existence on the goodwill of the Government whom people resist and are therefore bound to fail the nation at the most critical moment and

Because mills are always dependent upon foreign machinery and largely foreign skill.

From the original: C.W. 5345. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] The two paragraphs were added to answers drafted by Mirabehn to the question: "why can khadi help us to win swaraj better than Indian millcloth?" For Mirabehn's draft, *vide* Appendix "Khadi and Swaraj", before May 23, 1929.

[2] *Vide* the following item.

111. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 24, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I have now carefully looked at your notes on khadi, and your chart. The chart is quite good. The khadi notes are also good. You will touch up the spelling and wherever there is the slightest doubt, look up the dictionary. There must be no room to correct your spelling and in anything you get printed, there must be no error.

I have added two paragraphs[1] to your note on mills. The rest is all right. I am not quite clear that the notes may not bear your signature. You will therefore discuss with Rajendra Babu or use your own judgment. They must be authorized notes; therefore, if they do not bear your signature, they must be from the Bihar branch of the All-India Spinners' Association.

Love.

BAPU

SHRIMATI MIRABAI

From the original: C.W. 5345. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9401.

112. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 24, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your telegram, which relieved me. You quite realize why I had to decide upon going to Burma. I am now making every preparation to fulfill the obligation about Andhra in April. If I had not the Kathiawar Political Conference demanding my presence, I should have come directly to Andhra from Burma. As it is I shall leave Gujarat for Andhra Desh during the first week of April. Please draw up a provisional programme and let me have it. I am wanted to be present at the All-India Congress Committee meeting in Allahabad on the 14th of May. You will therefore disengage me from Andhra so as

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

to enable me to reach Allahabad on the 14th of May.

Here is a typical letter from Nellore. I enclose also a copy of my reply.[1]

I am at the Ashram up to the 28th instant. I leave on the 1st March for Delhi, reaching there on the 2nd. I have to stop there before I can get the connecting train for Calcutta. The Delhi address is: Care Lakshmi Narayan Gadodia, Gadodia Stores, Chandni Chowk, Delhi. I reach Calcutta on the night of the 3rd March. I am in Calcutta on the 4th which is Monday. My address at Calcutta will be: C/o Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta, Khadi Pratishthan, Sodepur (E. B. Rly.). On the morning of the 5th March I leave for Rangoon. My address at Rangoon is: C/o Dr. P. J. Mehta, 14 Moghul Street, Rangoon. I am giving you these particulars so that you can establish communication with me at these different places if necessary.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA
GUNTUR

From a photostat: S.N. 15352

113. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
[*February 24, 1929*][2]

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

There is one Mahant Gopalnath Bholanath in Junagadh. He is an *Antyaja*. His address is: Ravra Mandap's Premises, Inside Vagheshwari Gate. It is a place sacred to the *Antyajas*. At the place there is a well whose construction has been left unfinished. It has been so because, as he says, there is no money to complete it, and nobody to do the work. If you know anyone at Junagadh through whom we can get the well completed, I can make arrangements for the money required. If you can help in this, please write to me immediately. Let me also know your estimate of the expenditure.

[1] This is not available.
[2] From the postmark of clearance.

Champa must be doing well. I am leaving for Burma on 1st and hope to reach in time for the Conference[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5688

114. TELEGRAM TO F.W. WILSON[2]

[On or after *February 24, 1929*][3]

WHILST I REJOICE WITH ENGLISHMEN OVER KING'S RECOVERY I MAY NOT ASSOCIATE MYSELF WITH MOVEMENT THAT HAS NECESSARILY POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND THAT WOULD IMPLICITLY COMMIT ME TO A SYSTEM FOR WHICH KING STANDS AND WHICH MY LIFE IS PLEDGED TO DESTROY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15351

115. LETTER TO GANGADEVI SANADHYA

Silence Day [Before *February 25, 1929*][4]

DEAR SISTER,

Bhai Chhaganlal writes that you have again had a relapse. As you are resolved not to go out of the Ashram for treatment all I can say is may God give you peace. Sickness and death are ever with the body. Since we revere the *Gita* why should we grieve over illness or death? Of course, we should not deliberately fall ill.

[1] Kathiawar Political Conference.

[2] F. W. Wilson, editor of *Pioneer*, Allahabad, had in a telegram suggested starting a thanksgiving fund, on the recovery of King Emperor, which would be utilized for the "poor and needy throughout India" and sought Gandhiji's permission to publish his name in the list of subscribers.

[3] The telegram under reply was received at Sabarmati Ashram on February 24, 1929.

[4] From the reference to the addressee's health and from Gandhiji's addressing her as "Dear Sister" this letter seems to have been written before the letter to her dated February 25, 1929.

Should you feel like going out of the Ashram for a change of air there would be no shame or sin in doing so. "May Tulsidas by whatever means find refuge at the feet of the Lord."[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2547

116. LETTER TO JASWANTRAI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 25, 1929

DEAR LALA JASWANTRAIJI,

I am sending by separate registered post receipts for the individual members who paid for the Lalaji Memorial Fund at Karachi. The total amount for which receipts have been sent comes to Rs. 40,935-15-0. This is according to the list you sent to us and to the Treasurer at Calcutta. In sending the receipts the treasurer has asked us to request you to remit the balance amount of Rs. 935-15-0 at an early date.

What have you done with ornaments? If you have disposed of them, please let us know the amount realized thereby.

We are leaving Ahmedabad on the 1st March for Rangoon *via* Delhi and Calcutta. Our address at Delhi is: C/o Lakshmi Narayan Gadodia, Gadodia Stores, Chandni Chowk, Delhi, where we stay on the2nd March. And our Calcutta address is: C/o Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta, Khadi Pratishthan, Sodepur (E. B. Rly.), where we reach on the 3rd night and stay till 5th morning. We take steamer on the 5th morning for Rangoon which place we reach on the 8th March. Our address at Rangoon is: C/o Dr. P. J. Mehta, 14 Moghul Street, Rangoon.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. (Receipts sent by separate registered packet)

From a microfilm: S.N. 13368

[1] From a verse from Tulsidas's *Vinaya Patrika*

117. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Monday [*February 25, 1929*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

I daily receive your instructive letters. Your work bears the promise of a big future. It is good that you are working along the line of least resistance. The introduction of Yogendrababu's wife makes your miniature ashram a good model to work upon.

I leave here on 1st March and go through Delhi. Probably Patna is on the way. The Delhi route is the quickest and the cheapest. I reach Calcutta Sunday night, 3rd March. 4th March is the silence day. I leave Calcutta Tuesday morning, 5th March.

Balkrishna came here yesterday. He will attend to the weaving department. Fresh effort is being made to put the *Gita* reading on a firm footing.

Chhotelal is still an uncertain factor but he is slaving away as usual. Mahadev will accompany me.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5347. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9403

118. LETTER TO KASHI AND CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Silence Day, Monday Evening [*February 25, 1929*][2]

CHI. KASHI,

Do I ever write to you ? But this letter I am writing to you instead of Chhaganlal. You have done well in deciding to live with Nirmala. Instead of actively taking up any work, you should only supervise what others do. Look after Lakshmi. Do not indulge the children overmuch. Your staying there has relieved me of my worry.

[1] The letter appears to have been written on the Monday preceding March 1, 1929, that is, February 25.

[2] Gandhiji left Ahmedabad on March 1, 1929 and was in Delhi on March 2, a Saturday. He left for Calcutta on March 3. The Monday, prior to his leaving for Ahmedabad, fell on February 25.

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Give Budhabhai whatever articles of food he needs. Induce him to drink as much milk as he can digest. Less of foods heavy to digest. Less of pulses and rice as well. A diet of wheat, milk and a little quantity of vegetable should be sufficient to build up his health.

Chi. Jamnadas wishes to come along with me. He is making a mistake in that. It seems to me that I will not at all need him. I will have with me one shorthand writer also. Bamanji has sent him to me.

There is opposition to the idea that the sums provided by Dr. Mehta[1] should be used only for the purposes of the Ashram but we will think about it when we have more time.

1 see no harm in spending Rustomjee Sheth's[2] money here. I will have to go to Delhi and will stay there for two days, Friday and Saturday. My plan is to return to Bardoli, but I may have to go to Calcutta.

You must have sent replies to the questions which Rustomjee Sheth put to you.

Is the pressure of work there as heavy as before?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 33097

[1] Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta

[2] Gandhiji's co-worker in South Africa

119. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

Silence Day [*February 25, 1929*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

You have become somewhat slack these days. I was glad to know that you have made it up with Gangabehn. If the three[2] of you become one at heart, then others may join you and the women's wing which seems to be cracking up may become whole again.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1779

120. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Silence Day [*February 25, 1928*][3]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I am so much burdened with work that even some urgent letters remain unwritten. What then to say of writing to you?

It was for your convenience that I had written about reimbursing the money you had given to Shankaran. For the rest you know that I have not felt, and I would not feel ashamed to rob you. I gave the instructions I did because I am not aware of your present circumstances. I do not feel any hesitation in incurring such expenditure on your behalf.

Shankaran had written to me also. He is sensible and he will have undertaken the fast only after due consideration.

Let Shankaran come there if you need help. I shall pay his monthly allowance of Rs. 12/- from here. He is a man who can be easily accepted. It is another matter if I keep him for work in his own home-town. But it is not acceptable to me that you should spoil your

[1] In *Bapuna Patro—3: Kusumbehn Desaine,* this letter is placed between the letters dated February 18 and March 4, 1929. Monday, the silence day, between these two dates fell on February 25.

[2] Gangabehn Vaidya, Vasumati Pandit and the addressee

[3] The addressee received the letter on February 26, 1929. The Monday preceding fell on this date.

health by straining yourself. Rather than that you should have Shankaran. I shall certainly arrange to send somebody else if he cannot come. Let me know frankly. I should of course be happy if you could and would do without any help.

I keep myself informed about the Ali Brothers. I do not read anything. But friends keep me fully informed. I am also corresponding with them. We have only one criterion for judging people; so how can their behaviour affect us? However, I shall read what you send.

As for Rasik, I have written about him in *Navajivan*[1] and *Young India*[2].

Mahadev is still in Bardoli. He will accompany me to Burma. I shall leave here on the morning of Friday the 1st. I shall go *via* Delhi. Devdas is there. He has detained Pyarelal. You must be observing Pyarelal's work.

Ba had been very patient. She will not be accompanying me this time.

I shall return from Burma to be here on the 27th or 28th. Then I shall be in Kathiawar for three days and immediately after that I shall be in Andhra Desh. It is to be seen how long the body can take the strain.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall not write a separate letter to Shankaran now. In your letter to him you may give him a hint of what I have said. Taramati[3] must be enjoying herself. How shall I recognize Dilip[4] now?

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* "Sunset at Morning", February 24, 1929 and "A Boy of much Promise", February 21, 1929.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Addressee's wife

[4] Addresse's son

121. LETTER TO GANGADEVI SANADHYA

Silence Day [*February 25, 1929*][1]

CHI. GANGADEVI,

I was very glad to have your letter. Take a sun-bath early in the morning and only as long as you can stand it. No giddiness should occur. Rash on the body is a good sign. I cannot understand the cause of the pain in the bones. If you find it tiring to sit up for a whole hour, sit up for half an hour. Certainly you should feel thirsty. Drink plenty of boiled water. It will be good to add four or five grains of soda bicarb. We shall see later about your taking sunlight passing through glass. Keep me informed about your condition. You have written nothing about Totaramji's eye. Why?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2542

122. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 26, 1929

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letters. I want to send you a longish thing, but I must not now. I have wired to you about Sitla Sahai.[2] I have wired[3] to you today that I shall be passing through Allahabad and that I shall be in Delhi for seven hours. I wish that we could see each other either in Delhi or in Allahabad and you may even travel some distance with me if it is possible.

I am trying to procure the services of Jairamdas as Secretary for the boycott committee.[4] He is coming here tomorrow. If he consents,

[1] From Gandhiji's recommending of sun-baths to the addressee this letter seems to have been written on the silence day preceding the letter dated March 4, 1929 to Chhaganlal Joshi.

[2] The telegram is not available. Jawaharlal Nehru in his letter dated February 20 had asked whether Gandhiji would like Sitla Sahai to go to the Ashram immediately or to spend the next month or six weeks in U.P. making arrangements for Gandhiji's tour and then go to the Ashram.

[3] The telegram is not available.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Jairamdas Doulatram", February 21, 1929.

of course, he has to leave the Council at least for this year. We shall talk about the future programme of the boycott committee. About the use of the purses to be presented to me, what you have said is quite correct. It will be predominantly used for khadi work. The tour was to be undertaken for khadi, but naturally I will now talk about the constructive programme. But if the people give the money unconditionally as they should, and if you think that some other use might be made of a part of the purses, we shall discuss about it. But you may put down this also as an item for discussion when we meet, lest I forget when we meet.

I would like you not to arrange a hurricane tour but give more time to a few centres where people from surrounding places may gather, and not many functions at one village. If you have not read my note[1] about this in *Young India* please do read it now.

Yours sincerely,

A. SUBBIAH

for BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1929. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library; also S.N. 15354

123. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 26, 1929

I have your telegram. I am publishing it with a note.[2] But I repeat my complaint. Whatever the cause, you fail to back your appeal with facts and figures from week to week. You may not plead want of time or if you want to plead want of time, then don't expect any response. You may not have the cake and eat it. I myself after the publication of the appeal was utterly in the dark as to what was happening. Surely Santanam or whoever is in charge can say from week to week how much relief has been given, what kind of relief has been given and to whom it has been given. You are talking about volunteers going to the villages taking notes. Some telling experience might be given. The condition of the homes of these people might be given. A hundred things suggest themselves to me. How do you expect

[1] *Vide* "My Impending visit to Burma", February 21, 1929.
[2] *Vide* "Need for Immediate Relief", February 28, 1929.

people to respond when very telling figures [are not] thrust upon their attention from week to week, indeed from day to day? You can say if you send such reports they won't be published.

You will see from my notes that I have justified your telegram somehow or other. My complaint against you is that the telegram was not absolutely inevitable. The facts related in the telegram do not suddenly come under your notice. You can send telegrams about landslips, overflowing flood to a terrible extent, but you cannot telegraph about the daily happenings in a famine area, unless you send news to a distant newspaper from day to day. Do please wake up. I will find the Rs. 5,000/- somehow or other. But what is the use? That won't be in answer to your appeal, that would be merely from friend to friend and that is not how you want this relief, if I understand it rightly. And if you wanted it that way, you could simply have telegraphed: you must send me Rs. 5,000/- for my starving people. *Verb. sap*.

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR
GANDHI ASHRAM
TIRUCHENGODU

From a photostat: S.N. 15355

124. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Tuesday Evening [*February 26, 1929*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I see from Nirmala's letter to Ba which I read today that Ba should not accompany me[2]. Deep down in her heart, Nirmala is restless. Most probably Ba will arrive by tomorrow night's train and reach Ahmedabad the next morning.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33097

[1] In the source, the letter is placed alongside the preceding item which bears the date 25.2.1929. From the contents too, it appears that this was written on the following day as the datelines on the two letters suggest. Also the letter does not bear a separate S.N. No. and is hence given the same S.N. No. as that of the preceding item.

[2] Presumably to Rangoon for which Gandhiji sailed from Calcutta on March 5,1929

125. LETTER TO D. G. AMBEKAR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 27, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I had your previous letter also. But owing to tour in Sind and intense pressure, the letter remained unanswered.

I am not inclined to believe that Sjt. Avari is denied the use of khadi because he wants to wear khadi. If you have any written documents about it, I should like to have them and if I know the facts, I might be able to guide you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. D. G. AMBEKAR
SECRETARY
NAGPUR TOWN CONGRESS, ARMS ACT SATYAGRAHA COMMITTEE
NEAR DAJI SCHOOL
CIRCLE NO. 8, NAGPUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 15014

126. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 27, 1929

SJT. GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
TREASURER, LALAJI MEMORIAL FUND
8 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLACE
CALCUTTA

DEAR SIR,

Attached please find the supplementary list[1] of donations for Lalaji Fund from Karachi. The total amounts to Rs. 45,000/- out of which Rs. 43,223/- have been so far realized in cash.

Rs. 40,000/- have already been sent to you. I now enclose a cheque for Rs. 3,223/- for the cash balance. As soon as I receive the balance from the Treasurer at Karachi I shall remit you the same.

[1] This is not reproduced here.

Kindly arrange to issue receipts for the individual members and also a cutcha receipt for me for my office file.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1 cheque (No. A/cc. 11109 on Imperial Bank of India)

From a microfilm: S.N. 13369

127. LETTER TO ROMAIN ROLLAND

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 27, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

This letter introduces you to a young friend B. B. Desai from whom when I was convalescent I received kind treatment in his bungalow at a seaside place. Young Desai is an earnest student of French. He has been professor of French in a Bombay College. He wants however to increase his knowledge of French and therefore wishes to place himself under the influence of French savants. If you could give him any help in this direction I shall appreciate it.

Yours sincerely,

M. ROMAIN ROLLAND
VILLA OLGA
VILLENEUVE
SWITZERLAND

From a photostat: S.N. 15015

128. LETTER TO CHAMAN

SABARMATI,
February 27,1929

BHAISHRI CHAMAN,

I have your letter. I feel that you have seen many things with a prejudiced eye. If all that you write is correct, I see no reason for your faith in me. Just as we know the tree from the seed and the fruit, you should know me through my work.

If Chhaganlal, Panditji[1] and the others are bad and useless, how

[1] N. M. Khare

can I who am responsible for bringing them, be good? Maybe I have made a mistake. But after having been warned by someone like you, should I not be able to see the mistake? If I am unable to do so you should say the same thing about me which you say about my co-workers. Similarly, if there is nothing in the spinning-wheel, can there be anything in me? But I am sure that your opinions about the Ashram, about my co-workers and about the spinning-wheel will change in the end. It is wrong of us to believe that those who do not do what we want are bad.

Remember the couplet: "All things, animate and inanimate, have both virtues and defects." I hope you are well. Restrain your anger.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 15372

129. A MARVELLOUS FASTING CURE

As I had and still have no desire to turn *Young India* into a herald of health, not because it would be wrong to do so, but because I have neither the time nor the qualifications for the task and because I undertook the charge of *Young India* in the interest of the movement for India's freedom, I have hesitated, for the four weeks that the report[1] referred to by K. G. D. has been on my file, to give it publicity. I have twice read the report and it reads so true and is so well written that I can no longer resist K.G.D.'s appeal. As the reader is aware I believe in fasting both for its spiritual and its medicinal value. I daily advise it at the Udyoga Mandir and almost invariably with beneficial results. I know that if the medical profession courageously popularized fasting among their patients, there would be infinitely less suffering than there is now and that many would be saved who now die through the drug and the feeding treatment. I therefore gladly find room for K.G.D.'s accurately-drawn report of his wife's case. I must however warn others interested in fasting and kindred experiments against hoping that their reports too would find room in *Young India* if they sent them. They are at liberty however to send authentic reports for my private information and guidance.

Young India, 28-2-1929

[1] This is not reproduced here.

130. THE DELHI VISIT

I have dealt with the Speaker's party elsewhere[1] but I would like to enlist the reader's serious attention for the business that took me to Delhi. The Working Committee needed my presence for understanding my scheme of boycott of foreign cloth before passing it. The Committee was in earnest about it. I had therefore to interrupt my programme after Sind and go to Delhi at Pandit Motilalji's call. The Working Committee discussed it at great length and finally accepted the scheme without any material alteration. A special committee has been formed to give effect to the scheme. Not without much hesitation have I shouldered the burden of beingits chairman. My hesitation was due to the feeling that those who could, if they meant, bring about the boycott would not respond and that probably they did not believe in khadi. But I saw too that I had no business to refuse to shoulder the responsibility, merely because of a feeling which after all might have no foundation in fact. Mine was but to try.

The scheme is now before the country. The Committee will try to bring it home to everyone it can reach. But meanwhile it is so incredibly simple that everyone can enforce it in his or her own person. Let everyone who has any foreign cloth in his or her possession discard it and replace it by *genuine* khadi. Too much stress cannot be put upon the adjective genuine. The scheme therefore provides that no khadi should be considered genuine unless it is certified by the All-India Spinners' Association. This is easily done by merely buying from depots certified by the All-India Spinners' Association or from trustworthy persons. Let no one belittle his or her own individual effort. Complete boycott means an aggregate of individual effort. Every yard of foreign cloth given up brings the boycott nearer, every yard of khadi bought relieves some distress. Even as constant dropping wears away stones so will constant and continuing boycott of foreign cloth stop the greatest drain from India and bring about all the inevitable implications of such boycott. It is therefore sinful to sit still and do nothing on the plea of futility of individual action and wait for a call from a committee or for action on a national scale. It is the individual effort that will have precipitated the

[1] *Vide* "Notes", February 28, 1929.

national response whenever it comes.

Pandit Malaviyaji's resolution too deserves the earnest attention of every national organization and national worker. It seeks to rivet the nation's attention on the Nehru Report on the 10th March which is a Sunday. During this year of grace that Report is the national war-cry. The swaraj of our coining is to be found in the Nehru Report. Self-respect demands that we should work for the attainment of swaraj as defined in it. We shall find ourselves unready on the 1st January 1930, if we have not ceaselessly worked for the acceptance of the Nehru Report till the midnight of December 31st next. But it may be asked what is the use of harping on the Nehru Report when many Mussalmans and many Sikhs are intensely dissatisfied with it? My answer is: no document has received so much support as this and no other is likely to receive greater support. And when I say that we should concentrate upon securing approval of the Report, I do not exclude the possibility of alterations in it. What I however exclude is the possibility of alterations in it at the point of the bayonet. Alterations will be and must be made wherever justice demands it. It was for that reason that the Convention instead of being wound up was adjourned *sine die*. And these alterations should be made not now but when the Report has gained weight enough to compel acceptance, and when it has arrived at that stage it may not be delivered for acceptance without such alterations as may be absolutely necessary and as may be agreed upon by mutual consent. Subject to this reservation, I submit that the Nehru Report should be presented at all public meetings for unconditional acceptance without mental reservations. After all that Report is the result of much labour and in the nature of an award delivered by arbitrators. No party may lightly repudiate it. I therefore whole-heartedly support the proposal that the Nehru Scheme be the subject or resolutions all over the country on the 10th proximo.

The other parts of Malaviyaji's resolution follow as a matter of course. The other parts expect the nation to concentrate on particular Sundays during every month on particular items of constructive programme. It does not mean that on week days we should go to sleep; but it means that on the Sundays in question we should concentrate more fully than on week days on the matters for which those Sundays may be specifically reserved. The Congress has

seriously devised the constructive programme as a sanction behind the Nehru Report. It behoves us therefore to give full effect to the Congress programme which Malaviyaji's resolution seeks to do in part.

Young India, 28-2-1929

131. TO THE BURMA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

The Congress Working Committee has asked me in terms of its resolution to have the finances of the Burma Congress Committee audited and to do the inspection myself. I invite the Committee therefore to keep its accounts ready and have them audited by an auditor of standing and to have its register and everything else in order at the time of my arrival in Burma, so that I might carry on my work without any loss of time. What would be required is a register containing the names of original members with their addresses, occupations and the amounts received fromthem, a digest of work done by the Committee, first in respect of Congress resolutions, secondly of the work done for the Congress, a register of volunteers, the amount of donations received in the Committee's office, description of the office staff, dispatch book and a note upon the working of the khadi rule in the Congress constitution.

Young India, 28-2-1929

132. NOTES

THE SPEAKER'S PARTY

No one has asked me what was done by the Working Committee or what happened during the talks with Mr. Jinnah and other Mussalman friends. Everyone is eager to know what happened at the tea-party given by that marvel of a speaker—Sjt. Vithalbhai Patel. This eagerness to know what happened there at the tea-party because H.E. the Viceroy was there shows that we still expect more from Englishmen than from ourselves. The change from 1920 to now is no doubt great in spite of the so-called set-back since 1922 but it is not yet great enough to inspire us with self-confidence. The want of it is the greatest stumbling-block in our progress towards our goal.

The party was the Speaker's creation. Though he never hides his colours he does not overstep the constitutional limits of his office and

within those limits he never misses a single opportunity of serving the cause to which he is wedded—attainment of swaraj. He therefore brought about this party to break the ice as it were. But there cannot be much breaking of ice at a private, informal tea-party. And in my opinion, it cannot lead to any real advance or action unless both are ready. We know that we are not yet ready. England will never make any advance so as to satisfy India's aspiration till she is forced to it. British rule is no philanthropic job, it is a terribly earnest business proposition worked out from day to day with deadly precision. The coating of benevolence that is periodically given to it merely prolongs the agony. Such occasional parties are therefore good only to the extent of showing that the bringing together of parties will be easy enough when both are ready for business. Meanwhile let the reader rest satisfied with the assurance that no political significance attaches to the event. The party was one of Speaker Patel's many creditable freaks.

A YOUNG OCTOGENARIAN'S OFFER[1]

Babu Hardayal Nag is a leader in Bengal. He is an octogenarian but like Dr. Besant has the energy and enthusiasm of youth. He now and then favours me with the enthusiastic optimistic letters. Here is his latest:

> I have just passed through a serious attack of hiccup. It appears God has spared my life this time to enable me to take part in the war of India's independence which I am sure will commence from the mid-night of 31st December of this year of grace. God has bestowed upon you the leadership of that war. And I understand you are making preparations for India's fight for freedom. I know my life is not worth much. I also know that I must pay my quota of the price for India's independence. In the Russo-Japanese war, a Japanese commander had to cross an unbridged ditch. He asked his soldiers to throw themselves into it and to make a bridge of human bodies so that his troops might pass over it. I know in the coming struggle you will also have to cross certain unbridged ditches. Please enlist my name as one of those who will voluntarily fill up those ditches with their bodies to enable your troops to cross them, if for no other purpose.

I have no notion that after the midnight of 31st December next the war of India's independence will commence and that I shall have to take up the leadership of the war. Nor have I made up my mind like

[1] A similar not appeared in *Navajivan*, 24-2-1929.

Babu Hardayal Nag that the national demand will not have been granted before 1st January next dawns upon us.[1] Just as I believe in living till death embraces me holding myself in readiness for that warm embrace, so do I believe in the vindication of my just demand holding myself in readiness for a fight on the rejection of the demand by the appointed time. Many things are impossible forman, nothing is impossible for God. We witness the unexpected happening. I refuse to think that in our case alone, the unexpected will never happen. On the contrary, I cherish the belief that swaraj will come to us in a manner least expected by us. Ours is but to do what we think is the right thing for its advent. All the same I welcome the letter for its enthusiasm and commend it to the youth of the country. I invite them to prepare even as this Bengali octogenarian is preparing. And he who would prepare must fulfill the conditions laid down in the constructive resolution which isdesigned to prepare the nation for the next year's battle. The question of leadership will settle itself when the proper time comes. It is the cause and not the leader that matters.[2]

DINABANDHU IN AMERICA

The following two cables were received from America regarding Dinabandhu Andrews's visit to America. The first from Boston dated 18th instant runs as nearly as I can make it out:

> On occasion of Andrews's visit Boston had luncheon in his honour where representatives from many influential organizations were present. Resolution was unanimously passed of goodwill and fellowship to people of India. American Board Women's prayer group, students Y.M.C.A., Boston Federation Churches, Massachusetts Federation Churches, Fellowship Youth represented. —R. A. Hume.

The second from Tuskegee dated 24th instant runs:

> Gracious fellowship with Andrews. His words and presence a benediction. India, Africa and America joined hands last night. Love and greetings from Tuskegee.—Moton, Principal

Andrews had expected when he decided to go to Europe to give himself a little rest. But he had practically none. India's cause

[1] The note in *Navajivan* here adds: "Babu Hardayal Nag is an optimist. But my optimism surpasses that of his."

[2] The note in *Navajivan* here adds: "The cause is the swaraj, we are living for it and we are preparing to die for it."

demanded his unwearied labours in England, and now in response to a pressing call from the New World he has gone there. In his letters he tells me he will have to go to British Guiana and he thinks that he must go also to South Africa. Marvellous as the Rt. Hon'ble Sastri's work has been in that subcontinent Dinabandhu is of opinion that in view of impending general elections in South Africa it is necessary for him to go there as the self-chosen ambassador of peace.

Young India, 28-2-1929

133. NEED FOR IMMEDIATE RELIEF

Chakravarti Rajagopalachari is a busy man. He is now touring all through the South with Sheth Jamnalalji in the interest of Hindi propaganda. That accounts for his sending me the following telegram instead of sending a letter which might easily have been sent but for his touring. Here is the telegram:[1]

> In response to appeals in *Young India* in October and December last the Pudupalayam Gandhi Ashram has so far received over Rs. 769. Of this Rs. 225 were received by us direct and Rs. 544 through the Sabarmati Ashram. . . . We have restricted our relief work to *Adi-Dravidas* of five villages within a mile of the Ashram. . . . A card is given to each family entitling them to buy at concession prices from the Ashram every Saturday not more than five measures of *jovari* per adult and half this quantity for children below twelve. . . . So far 108 families with 344 adults and 179 children have been registered and are receiving relief as above from 2nd February, 1929. . . . Even then the cost of relief will be Rs. 1,312 of which we have received only Rs. 769. But there are other villages near the Ashram whose *Adi-Dravida* population is in a pitiable condition and is clamouring for relief. . . . Large numbers are emigrating. But very poor and old persons, especially women and children, have not even this escape out of an intolerable situation. . . . We would very much like to give them food free. But our funds are limited. . . . We need at least Rs. 5,000 more to do work fairly satisfactorily. The call is very urgent.

This telegram hardly needs any supplementing. A Latin proverb says: *bis dat qui cito dat*. He gives twice who gives soon. This is a case in point. Donors have been sending money in driblets for which he and I are duly thankful. But meanwhile the famine-stricken people are starving. Instead of reporting that they are starving Rajagopalachari

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

might have any day to report that people are dying for want of food. Relief then might be too late. Let the donors who want to give, give now. Rs. 5,000 is not much to give. The telegram contains enough details to prove the necessity for relief.

Young India, 28-2-1929

134. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SABARMATI,
February 28, 1929

KHADISTHAN
CALCUTTA

YOU MAY SETTLE ANYTHING YOU LIKE WITH CONSENT RAMJIBHAI.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 8714

135. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

February 28, 1929

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I reach Calcutta *via* Delhi by the Delhi-Calcutta Express on Sunday 3rd March about 8 p.m. I do not know the exact time of arrival. I do not know where you would want me to pass the silence day. I have in mind Jivanlal's bungalow. It is no use my coming to Sodepur. The steamer leaves early morning on Tuesday, 5th March. This however would mean my missing Hemprabha Devi. But it seems to be inevitable. I shall have with me much writing work.

Hope Hemprabha Devi is now out of the wood. She must not strain herself. Did I suggest sun-baths for her? I am daily having experiences of the treatment.

Love.

Yours,
BAPU

[PS.]

Of course you will guard against the new Sangh coming in conflict with the Congress. If it does, you will dissuade the Sangh from the Congress and still carry on work later.

I have just heard from Rajendra Babu. I have wired saying I shall gladly hear them all on Monday night after the silence is broken. Have you any papers [with you?][1]

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 8713

136. LETTER TO PONAKA KANAKAMMA[2]

February 28, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am averse to any earmarking. The best thing is to leave the matter to my judgment and discuss the institution with me.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a blockprint of the original: C.W. 9237

137. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

February 28, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your clearly written letter. I remember you well. You are free to come whenever you like. There is no difficulty about your earning your way here.

I leave tomorrow morning and return end of March only to leave again for Andhra Desha. I do not know when I shall be able to stay at the Ashram for any length of time.

Yours,

SHRIMATI PREMABAI KANTAK
P. L. LADIES' HOSTEL
WACHHA GANDHI ROAD
GAMDEVI
BOMBAY

From a photostat: G.N. 10212

[1] The words are illegible in the source.
[2] Founder of the Kasturba Vidyalaya, Nellore

138. INSTRUCTION ON LETTER[1]

February 28, 1929

Reply to these two letters. Use the money as you think proper, after reading the Marathi letter.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 15374

139. LETTER TO BECHAR PARMAR

February 28, 1929

BHAISHRI BECHAR,

I have your sincere letter. I will not argue with you now. You may certainly resume your barber's occupation and leave the school if you wish to. Do what will give peace to your soul.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5578

140. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE

February 28, 1929

BHAI MAMA,

I have your letter. Here is the hangman come to put the noose round your neck. Wear it if you have the courage. You have not proved a failure at the Antyaja Ashram. You will not fail even as Secretary. Restrict your work to constructive activities. Don't do even this work if it is likely to interfere with your work for the *Antyajas*. Write about Jagu.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3824

[1] The letter, dated February 25,1929, was from Shankarrao Deo and concerned a sum of Rs. 51 sent by a donor.

141. SPEECH AT UNVEILING OF TILAK STATUE, AHMEDABAD

February 28, 1929

It is clear beyond doubt that after Vallabhbhai's entering the Municipality, it too has become courageous, and I compliment it for the courage it has shown in installing the statue of the Lokamanya. There was a time, only a few years ago, when such acts were considered impertinent, because, formerly, if any library displayed a photograph of the Lokamanya, the Government either compelled the library to remove it or stopped any assistance given to it. But now times have changed, which is a matter for rejoicing.

The late Lokamanya Tilak had sacrificed all his energies for the cause of Swaraj. Only one who is ready to lay down his life for swaraj and is capable of winning swaraj for us within a short time can perform the ceremony of unveiling Tilak's statue. Today you have all joined me in performing this ceremony; so, it is your duty too to prepare yourselves to win that swaraj for which the Lokamanya sacrificed his life. That being the directive of the Congress also, it is the duty of everyone to prepare himself for it.

Though, at the moment, the political sky of India is clear, one cannot predict when clouds will gather. The Municipality should display, even in difficult times, the same courage that it has shown today in having this statue unveiled and in hoisting the national flag. Formerly the very mention of the word 'swaraj' was considered an act of high treason. The *mantra* of Swadeshi and swaraj which the Lokamanya breathed into our ears even during such difficult times should find a place first in our minds and then in our hearts. We should be ready to lay down our lives for it.

The other great quality of the Lokamanya was his simplicity. Although he could collect funds running into lakhs yet he was extremely economical and simple in matters of food and clothing. Our country is very poor compared to rich countries such as England and America. Here the average daily income of a person is just seven pice. If we exclude from consideration millionaires like Seth Lalbhai and Seth Ambalal, we shall immediately get an idea of the wretched

condition of ordinary people. Hence, everyone should be simple and economical in food, clothing, and so on, and should encourage swadeshi.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 3-3-1929

142. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, AHMEDABAD[1]

February 28, 1929

My relations with Sastriji are such that it is unnecessary for me to describe them. Even if our political thinking is poles apart a bond firmer than the one that unites our hearts will not be found between any other two persons. In spite of differences between us in many matters, this bond endures. I do not know who between the two of us is the more generous. He has even said of me that I cannot tolerate others' ideas. Yet friendship, or opposition, between us has remained sweet. Such is our relationship. This is not the proper time for us to assess the services that Sastriji has rendered to India in South Africa. A man standing at the foot of the mountain cannot admire its beauty. But standing at a distance he recognizes it. Similarly, as you go farther and farther away from the twenty months of Sastriji's career there, you will be able to assess the value of his achievements. He has freely spent all his wealth after going to South Africa. His ambition was to think out ways in which he could add to the glory of India in South Africa. As he had his critics too in South Africa, I have received accounts from both sides. But it is by no means certain that the work of one who has no critics is always valuable. By his stay in South Africa, Sastriji has served Indians residing in all the Colonies. Sastriji has impressed them with his determination and purity. His presence there as a representative of the people has certainly brought swaraj also a step nearer. Now we have to learn from his experiences and I hope that he will live long to serve India.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 3-3-1929

[1] The meeting was called to hear V. S. Srinivasa Sastri report on his work in South Africa where he had gone as the Agent of the Government of India. Gandhiji presided at the meeting.

143. SPEECH AT FLAG-HOISTING CEREMONY, AHMEDABAD

February 28, 1929

I had thought that I would only have to unfurl the flag in the presence of a few councillors, but here, too, as the President has said in his speech, I would have to say a few words. I am grateful to you for the opportunity that you have given me to hoist the national flag and I once again congratulate the Municipality on adopting the national flag as its own. I do not think that many of you know what the national flag signifies. Since I gave my interpretation[1] of it the country has largely accepted it. There are no doubt a few differences of opinion, but by and large, so far as I have been able to see, India has accepted it.

The flag has three colours—orange, green and white. The orange is for Hindus, green for Muslims and white for other communities. There is a great thought behind it. It is a confluence of three currents, and the three colours express the hope that all communities would live in harmony, and bestow this blessing upon all; the spinning-wheel in the centre suggests that we all have to seek its assistance. This national flag certainly contains the outward symbols, but though the spinning-wheel is there and the different colours are there, if we do not have within us the spirit that underlies it, then, as I said before in the park, it is nothing but a rag.

Today, in India, some people hold that Hindus and Muslims will never get on well together, that these incompatibles can never be on good terms now or in the future, that independence here could either be for the Hindus or for the Muslims. Others who do not belong to these two communities feel that we shall not be able to escape the rule of Japan or Germany. If this line of thinking still persists, it is meaningless to hoist this national flag. You who are present here to witness the unfurling of this flag should take a vow that the Hindus, Muslims and Christians or any other community which regards India as its home, will co-operate with one another for securing swaraj for India. What the President has said is true, namely, that we wish to be free.

[1] *Vide* "The National Flag", April 13, 1921.

The swaraj that we aspire for is to be secured with the strength of these three colours. If we have the conviction that swaraj cannot be won by any other means, then the hoisting of this flag is worth while. The resolve which is signified by the spinning-wheel should be shared by all—the President and all others. Different circumstances may confront you tomorrow and you may be asked to take down this flag. In many a municipality in India this flag has been hoisted and also taken down. I, therefore, warn you that you are never to take down this flag once it has been hoisted and for that not only you, the members of the Municipality, but every citizen who is a voter has to struggle till the very end. We have added to our strength by performing this task and I pray to God that this flag may be an inspiration to us all.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 3-3-1929

144. TELEGRAM TO DR. P. J. MEHTA

[*February, 1929*][1]

CRUEL FORCE MANILAL PRESENT STATE HEALTH, DO WHAT IS POSSIBLE WITHOUT HIM.[2]

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15139-a

[1] The date of this telegram is not ascertainable. It was written at the end of C.F. Andrews's letter dated January 15, 1929 written on board s.s.. *Majestic*. The letter must have been received by Gandhiji some time in February.

[2] The source bears the following instructions from Gandhiji: "Post copy of this and Dr. Mehta's wire to Manilal K. Ashram address" from which it is evident that the telegram was sent by Gandhiji while he was away from the Ashram.

145. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

ASHRAM,
Sunday [About *February, 1929*][1]

BHAI SHANKERLAL,

Anasuyabehn says you have again fallen ill. You just cannot go on falling ill like this. The handful of people who understand this struggle have now greater responsibility. Their work has also increased. Such people cannot afford to fall ill.

If you live in a separate room at the Ashram, you will soon be well. In my opinion you should go to Abu and such places afterwards. You will have more rest if you live in a room at the Ashram attended by someone. I see no harm in your engaging someone in your present condition. I would like you not to worry at all. It may be necessary to make a fresh declaration for the *Navajivan* and *Young India*.[2] This is because we are changing the premises. You and Indulal[3] may be required.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Has the money been sent to Badrul?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 32693

146. LETTER TO JAGANNATH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
[Before *March 1, 1929*][4]

DEAR JAGANNATHJI,

I have your letters from Shikarpur and Sukkur. With the former I received a *hundi* for Rs. 1,700/- which I have duly forwarded to the treasurer at Calcutta.

[1] From the reference to the money to be paid to Badrul; *vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", February 11, 1929.

[2] For the declaration dated November 26, 1929, *vide* "Declaration of Trust", December 1, 1929.

[3] Indulal Yagnik

[4] From the contents it is evident that the letter was written before March 1, 1929 when Gandhiji left for Burma.

According to your letter which you wrote on the 17th instant from Hyderabad, I ought to have received a cheque for Rs. 2,677-2-6 (which you say you have posted to Delhi on the 15th). I have up till now, after I left you, received only one draft on the Punjab National Bank for Rs. 2,009-4-0 which I received at Delhi and another *hundi* for Rs. 1,700 which I got at Ahmedabad. I should therefore be much obliged if you would kindly enlighten me as to whether you sent three instalments and if so to make immediate enquiry about the cheque for Rs. 2,677-2-6 which you say that you have posted to Delhi on the 15th instant.

We are leaving Ahmedabad for Rangoon *via* Delhi and Calcutta on the 1st March. We reach Delhi on the 2nd morning and take Delhi-Agra-Calcutta Express which takes us to Calcutta on the 3rd evening. We take steamer on the 5th morning and reach Rangoon on the 8th. Our address at Delhi is: C/o Lakshmi Narayan Gadodia, Gadodia Stores, Chandni Chowk, Delhi.

Our Calcutta address is: C/o Satis Chandra Das Gupta, Khadi Pratishthan, Sodepur (E. B. Rly.) And our Rangoon address is: C/o Dr. P. J. Mehta, 14 Moghul Street, Rangoon.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13320

147. INTERVIEW TO DR. JOHN MOTT[1]

[Before *March 1, 1929*][2]

[DR. MOTT:] What do you consider to be the most valuable contribution that India can make to the progress of the world?

[GANDHIJI:] Non-violence, which the country is exhibiting at the present day on a scale unprecedented in history. But for it, there might have been a blaze, for provocation of the gravest kind has not been wanting on the side of the Government. There is no doubt a school in the country that believes in violence, but it is a mere excrescence on the surface and its ideals are not likely to find a congenial soil in the country.

[1] Based on the report by Pyarelal

[2] The date of the interview, which appears to have taken place at the Ashram on a Monday, is not ascertainable.

What causes you solicitude for the future of the country?

Our apathy and hardness of heart, if I may use that Biblical phrase, as typified in the attitude towards the masses and their poverty. Our youth are full of noble feelings and impulses but these have not yet taken any definite practical shape. If our youth had a living and active faith in truth and non-violence, for instance, we should have made much greater headway by now. All our young men, however, are not apathetic. In fact without the closest co-operation of some of our educated young men and women, I should not have been able to establish contact with the masses and to serve them on a nationwide scale; and I am sustained by the hope that they will act as the leaven, and in time transform the entire mass.

From this they passed on to the distinctive contributions of Hinduism, Islam and Christianity to the upbuilding of the Indian nation.

The most distinctive and the largest contribution of Hinduism to India's culture is the doctrine of ahimsa. It has given a definite bias to the history of the country for the last three thousand years and over and it has not ceased to be a living force in the lives of India's millions even today. It is a growing doctrine, its message is still being delivered. Its teaching has so far permeated our people that an armed revolution has almost become an impossibility in India, not because, as some would have it, we as a race are physically weak, for it does not require much physical strength so much as a devilish will to press a trigger to shoot a person, but because the tradition of ahimsa has struck deep roots among the people.

Islam's distinctive contribution to India's national culture is its unadulterated belief in the oneness of God and a practical application of the truth of the brotherhood of man for those who are nominally within its fold. I call these two distinctive contributions. For in Hinduism the spirit of brotherhood has become too much philosophized. Similarly though philosophical Hinduism has no other god but God, it cannot be denied that practical Hinduism is not so emphatically uncompromising as Islam.

What then is the contribution of Christianity to the national life of India? I mean the influence of Christ as a part from Christianity, for I am afraid there is a wide gulf separating the two at present.

Aye,there's the rub. It is not possible to consider the teaching of a religious teacher apart from the lives of his followers. Unfortunately,

Christianity in India has been inextricably mixed up for the last one hundred and fifty years with the British rule. It appears to us as synonymous with materialistic civilization and imperialistic exploitation by the stronger white races of the weaker races of the world. Its contribution to India has been therefore largely of a negative character.

It has done some good in spite of its professors. It has shocked us into setting our won house in order. Christian missionary literature has drawn pointed attention to some of our abuses and set us a thinking.

What has interested me most is your work in connection with the removal of untouchability. Will you please tell me what is the most hopeful sign indicating that this institution is as you say on its last legs?

It is the reaction that is taking place in orthodox Hinduism and the swiftness with which it has come about. As a most illustrious example I will mention Pandit Malaviyaji. Ten years back he was as punctilious in the observance of the rules with regard to untouchability as perhaps the most orthodox Hindu of that day. Today he takes pride in administering the *mantra* of purification to the untouchables by the bank of the Ganges, sometimes even incurring the wrath of unreasoning orthodoxy. He was all but assaulted by the diehard section in Calcutta in December last for doing this very thing. In Wardha a wealthy merchant Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj recently threw open his magnificent temple to the untouchables and that without arousing any serious opposition. The most remarkable thing about it is that from the record kept in the temple of the daily visitors it was found that the attendance had gone up instead of declining since the admission of the untouchables to it. I may sum up the outlook by saying that I expect the tide against untouchability to rise still more swiftly in the near future, astonishingly swift as it has already been.

Where do you find your friends? Do your get the backing of the Mussalmans and the Christians in this work?

The Mussalmans and the Christians can from the very nature of the case render little help in this matter. The removal of untouchability is purely a question of the purification of Hinduism. This can only be effected from within.

But my impression was that Christians would be a great help to you in this connection. The Rev. Whitehead, Bishop of the Church of England Mission, made

some striking statements about the effect of Christian mass movement in ameliorating the condition of the untouchables in the Madras Presidency.

I distrust mass movements of this nature. They have as their object not the upliftment of the untouchables but their ultimate conversion. This motive of mass proselytization lurking at the back in my opinion vitiates missionary effort.

There are conflicting opinions on this point . There are some who seriously believe that the untouchables would be better off if they turned Christians from conviction, and that it would transform their lives for the better.

I am sorry I have been unable to discover any tangible evidence to confirm this view. I was once taken to a Christian village. Instead of meeting among the converts with that frankness which one associates with a spiritual transformation, I found an air of evasiveness about them. They were afraid to talk. This struck me as a change not for the better but for the worse.

Do you then disbelieve in all conversion?

I disbelieve in the conversion of one person by another. My effort should never be to undermine another's faith but to make him a better follower of his own faith. This implies belief in the truth of all religions and therefore respect for them. It again implies true humility, a recognition of the fact that the divine light having been vouchsafed to all religions through an imperfect medium of flesh, they must share in more or less degree the imperfection of the vehicle.

Is it not our duty to help our fellow-beings to the maximum of truth that we may possess, to share with them our deepest spiritual experiences?

I am sorry I must again differ from you, for the simple reason that the deepest spiritual truths are always unutterable. That light to which you refer transcends speech. It can be felt only through the inner experience. And then the highest truth needs no communicating, for it is by its very nature self-propelling. It radiates its influence silently as the rose its fragrance without the intervention of medium.

But even God sometimes speaks through His prophets.

Yes, but the prophets speak not through the tongue but through their lives. I have however known that in this matter I am up against a solid wall of Christian opinion.

Oh, no, even among Christians there is a school of thought-and it is growing—which holds that the authoritarian method should not be employed but that

each individual should be left to discover the deepest truths of life for himself. The argument advanced is that the process of spiritual discovery is bound to vary in the case of different individuals according to their varying needs and temperaments. In other words they feel that propaganda in the accepted sense of the term is not the most effective method.

I am glad to hear you say this. That is what Hinduism certainly inculcates.

What counsel do you give to the young men who are fighting a losing battle with their lower selves and come to you for advice?

Simply prayer. One must humble oneself utterly and look beyond oneself for strength.

But what if the young men complain that their prayer is not heard, that they feel like speaking to brass heavens as it were?

To want an answer to one's prayer is to tempt God. If prayer fails to bring relief it is only lip prayer. If prayer does not help nothing else will. One must go on ceaselessly. This then is my message to the youth. In spite of themselves the youth must believe in the all-conquering power of love and truth.

The difficulty with our youth is that the study of science and modern philosophy has demolished their faith and so they are burnt up by the fire of disbelief.

That is due to the fact that with them faith is an effort of the intellect, not an experience of the soul. Intellect takes us along in the battle of life to a certain limit but at the crucial moment it fails us. Faith transcends reason. It is when the horizon is the darkest and human reason is beaten down to the ground that faith shines brightest and comes to our rescue. It is such faith that our youth require and this comes when one has shed all pride of intellect and surrendered oneself entirely to His will.

Young India, 21-3-1929

148. INTERVIEWS TO FOREIGN VISITORS[1]

[Before *March 1, 1929*][2]

The first was with a British labour Imperialist. This fair visitor began apologetically, "Of course you would like us to clear out of the country altogether."

GANDHIJI: No, on the contrary I should like to keep the English here, but on our terms—not as lords and masters but as true servants of the people. In a free India the English shall have to be content with an equal status with the sons of the soil which means that they must renounce the special privileges which they at present enjoy as members of the ruling race.

"But they may not like to remain here on those terms," continued the fair visitor, "and yet don't you think that there is much that England can teach India-certain things for which she has a special gift?" Gandhiji asked her to explain further. She mentioned England's political sense, her gift for evolving and managing democratic institutions, which she could impart to India.

I question this claim to exclusive political sense that the English arrogate to themselves. It is one of the greatest superstitions of the age and the surprise to me is that even the most level-headed among the English sometimes succumb to it. There is much in British political institutions that I admire. But I am no fetish worshipper. I do not believe that they are the paragon of perfection or that they must be adopted by India at any price. The English have not been able to make a perfect success of them even in their own country, much less to demonstrate that they are the best model for the whole world to adopt. There are Englishmen who admit that the mother of Parliaments has not fulfilled all the expectations that were entertained of her.

"The air of superiority apart," interposed the questioner, "Which I believe is merely on the surface, could not the English help India in certain things in which India is deficient?"

I do not deny that England can help India in a variety of ways. I only question her claim of trusteeship. What is excellent in British political institutions is there for the whole world to see and copy. The British need not come all the way to India as rulers to teach us political wisdom. Whatever is worth adopting for India must come to

[1] Based on the report by Pyarelal

[2] The dates on which these interviews took place are not ascertainable.

her through the process of assimilation, not forcible superimposition. For instance the Chinese possess the cunning of the hand in painting which is all their own. It is there for the whole world to admire and imitate. You would not expect the Chinese to come and take possession of England to teach to her the Chinese fine arts, would you?

"No!" exclaimed the English friend, realizing the false position into which she had unconsciously betrayed herself.

The conversation next turned on how the mutual relations between England and India should be adjusted.

They should be adjusted on the principle that each nation should refrain from a policy that might be in conflict with the interests of the other.

The second was with a fair American.... "Is the plight of the untouchable as hard as that of the Negro in America?" she asked.

There can be no true comparison between the two. They are dissimilar. Depressed and oppressed as the untouchable is in his own land, there is no legal discrimination in force against him as it is in the case of the Negro in America. Then, though our orthodoxy sometimes betrays a hardness of heart that cannot but cause deep anguish to a humanitarian, the superstitious prejudice against the untouchable never breaks out into such savage fury as it does sometimes in America against the Negro. The lynching of the Negro is not an uncommon occurrence in America. But in India such things are impossible because of our tradition of non-violence. Not only that, the humanitarian sentiment in India has so far prevailed against caste prejudice as to result even in the canonization of individual untouchables. We have several untouchable saints. I wonder whether you have any Negro saints among you. The prejudice against untouchability is fast wearing out. I wish somebody could assure me that the tide of colour prejudice had spent itself in America.

The third was with a highly educated Negro from South Africa. . . . He was very much pained at the apathy of educated Negroes towards their own race. "They become altogether like aliens, they are lost to the race," he bitterly complained. . . ."We are crushed, trampled upon and oppressed. We do not know which way to turn. The bulk of us are ignorant. The daughter of ignorance is poverty. The two processes go hand in hand and move in a vicious circle. Then there is the outside force, pitiless and unrelenting like a blind force of Nature without any possibility of reprieve or appeal. We feel stricken and overwhelmed. Instinctively we turn to India for a message of

hope and deliverance, for we believe that India has a mission to fulfil with regard to all the oppressed races of the world." Gandhiji was deeply touched.

I had occasion to discuss this subject with the natives while I was in South Africa. I told them that they had got to help themselves and always to work in the hope that help would come to them from somewhere when the hour for it arrived. In the meantime they had to prepare themselves for it by a process of self purification.

I see your point, but what we want to understand from you is how to relate this inner process with the actual problems of the day that confront us—how to set this process of self-purification in motion.

The first step is to turn the searchlight inward, to proclaim your failings to yourself and the world. There is nothing so debasing and demoralizing as to conceal your weakness and to profess to have strength which you do not possess. The second thing would be to set about boldly and fearlessly to purify public life. Unfortunately a belief has today sprung up that one's private character has nothingto do with one's public activity. This superstition must go. Our public workers must set about the task of reforming society by reforming themselves first. This spiritual weapon of self-purification, intangible as it seems, is the most potent means for revolutionizing one's environment and for loosening external shackles. It works subtly and invisibly; it is an intensive process and though it might often seem a weary and long-drawn-out process, it is the straightest way to liberation, the surest and the quickest, and no effort can be too great for it. What it requires is faith—an unshakable, mountain-like faith that flinches from nothing.

Gandhiji thought that he had said enough and that the conversation was finished, but the African friend sprang a big surprise upon him by telling him how much interested he had been in India's effort to revive the cottage industries of spinning and weaving. He was, he said, anxious to introduce it among his own people who were victims of the economic and moral consequences of unemployment and idleness. What appealed to him most about spinning was its possibilities for awakening and fostering a sense of solidarity and oneness among his people. "We have some villages that grow their own food. We have experimentally begun to grow cotton also. We now want to teach our people to manufacture their own cloth and thus to make our villages practically self-contained. It will give us a new social vision, and a new mass consciousness." He was sure that spinning could become a most

potent means for mobilizing race consciousness against imperialistic exploitation. He inquired whether Gandhiji could send a teacher to South Africa. Gandhiji said his son Manilal could teach spinning.

But I make a better and sporting offer. I would undertake to take six young men here free of charge and give them a full course of training here. Only they will have to accommodate themselves to the discipline and simplicity of life that prevails here.

The African friend was pleased with the offer and said," Certainly, my people should lead a simple life. I shall certainly try to avail myself of your generous offer. I hope to write to you from South Africa."[1]

Young India, 28-3-1929

149. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

DELHI,
March 2, 1929

KHADISTHAN
CALCUTTA
YOUR WIRE. WILL ATTEND WITH PLEASURE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N.8715

150. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

DELHI,
March 2, 1929

I hope to leave Bombay on the 5th or 6th of April and you will please disengage me so as to be able to reach Allahabad on the 14th May for the All-India Congress Committee meeting. I wish I could have given you more time, but if I am to do all the work in front of me for the year, what I have given you is really more than enough. Please draw up a tentative programme and let me have it at Rangoon, 8 Pagoda Street. Do not draw up a whirlwind programme. Let it be a business programme, avoid separate functions. Let all addresses be presented at one place, i.e., at a public meeting. They should not be

[1] The two paragraphs which follow are not reproduced here. Under the caption "Blessed are the Peacemakers" they described the interview with an Australian.

read, but copies should be furnished in advance. The originals should be in Telugu and should be duly passed by the organizations that may wish to present them. Copies of translations in Hindi should be supplied to me. It is unnecessary to print them. Save every pie that you can and save also my energy. Let me have plenty of time for my correspondence and editorial work and rest.

I am sending you an advance copy of the note[1] that I have written for *Young India* that really gives you much information.

My food does not now include goat's milk. It consists of almonds, turned into paste, some fresh vegetable and lemons. No other food is required.

Please instruct me where I should go first from Bombay.

Let me repeat what my hours are:

4 to 7.30 a.m. : No work to be taken from me.

7.30 to 10 a.m. :You may have a programme.

10 a.m. to 5 p.m. :No programme.

5 p.m. to 8 p.m. : You may have a programme.

My eating hours are 10.30 a.m. and 4.30 p.m. The usual hour is 5.30 p.m. In order to have time from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. uninterruptedly for my work and for my rest and for my meals, I am altering the evening meal hour. No other time is suitable because I don't eat after sunset.

The Hindu, 7-3-1929

151. HOW TO CONQUER DESIRE

A reader who is trying to conquer passion writes:[2]

There are many people in the position of this reader. It is difficult to conquer passion, but it is not impossible. It is God's word that he who conquers passion conquers the world and attains *moksha*. So, we know that to gain a victory over passion is the hardest job. Those who would conquer sexual urge do not admit that a great deal of patience is needed to achieve results. We know how much perseverance, patience and concentration are needed to acquire a knowledge of the alphabet. From this if we apply the rule of three we

[1] *Vide* "Forthcoming Andhra Tour", March 7, 1929.

[2] The letter is not translated here.

shall see that, in order to conquer sexual desire, we need myriad times the patience, etc., needed for acquiring a knowledge of the alphabet.

So much for the patience. But we are equally indifferent with regard to the remedy for conquering passion. We scour the whole world in order to cure an ordinary disease, visit every doctor, do not leave out even talismans. But we do not employ all the remedies to cure a great disease like sexual desire. We tire after trying out a few; on the contrary we even demand of God or the one who suggests a remedy that, though we shall certainly not be able to give up a particular thing, we should be cured of our lust. The reason is that we are not really in earnest about getting this disease of sexual desire cured. We are not willing to sacrifice our all for it. This weakness is the biggest hurdle in our way to victory. It is indeed true that such urges are controlled in one who fasts, but the desire does not depart without a vision of the Self. This verse[1] however does not mean that fasting is of no use in conquering desire.

It means that we should not tire of fasting, and the vision of the Self is possible with such determination and effort, so that longing will also cease. Such fasting cannot be undertaken at the instance of another person, nor out of hypocrisy. It should have the co-operation of mind, speech and body. We can surely win the divine grace and when that is gained there is bound to be an end to desire.

But prior to fasting, there are many easy steps to be taken. By taking them, even though the desire may not be calmed, it will certainly become weakened. We should avoid all occasions for indulgence. We should cultivate a distaste towards it, for a sacrifice without distaste will merely be external sacrifice and will not endure. It is not necessary to say what constitutes indulgence. We should give up everything that gives rise to desire.

The question of diet also deserves consideration in this connection. That is a virgin field. I believe that he who wishes to subdue passion should make a minimum use of ghee and milk. If he can live on uncooked food, he should not take cooked food or should take only a little of it. Many fruits and a number of greens can be eaten uncooked, and he should do so. The proportion of raw greens should be very small. Sufficient nourishment can be had from two or three *tolas* of raw greens. Sweets, condiments, etc., should be totally

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 59.

avoided. While I suggest this I know that *brahmacharya* cannot be fully safeguarded by means of diet alone. But one cannot hope to observe *brahmacharya* while one resorts to a diet that stimulates the sexual urge.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-3-1929

152. BOYCOTT

In connection with the movement for boycott of foreign cloth, one good sign is that Shri Jairamdas has agreed to resign his seat in the Bombay Legislative Council and has accepted the secretaryship of the Boycott Committee. This is an occasion for the reader to rejoice. The Boycott Committee saw in Delhi itself the need for a secretary who would think of this work all the twenty-four hours and devote himself to it. I at once thought of Bhai Jairamdas. In my opinion, he is well qualified for such work. I wrote him just a short letter[1] suggesting that it would be a good thing if he resigned from the Legislative Council for this great work. He sent me a telegram in reply informing me that he would come and see me. Before leaving Bombay and coming to see me he had made up his mind to resign. After some discussions with me he has returned to Bombay in order to make preparations and will have resigned from the Council by the 17th of March. So his work as secretary can be said to have begun since last Wednesday. I had not expected less then this from Bhai Jairamdas.

The boycott movement can achieve success this very year if we all realize our duty from the sacrifice that Jairamdas has so promptly made. It is my firm belief that the boycott of foreign cloth is the one task which the nation as a whole can easily accomplish and which will be highly effective. Everything else is simply futile. To those who shake their heads I would only say: It is meaningless to shake one's head over a task which can be undertaken and accomplished.

This boycott will be a thousand times more effective than that of the Simon Commission. The latter was necessary; there was some awakening through it; but it did nothing to eradicate the poverty of the people. The cure for that widespread malady is nothing but the boycott of foreign cloth.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jairamdas Doulatram", February 21, 1929.

It is not necessary to tell readers of *Navajivan* that this boycott cannot be achieved without khadi.

To those who are engaged in the production of khadi I suggest that the essence of boycott lies in production of khadi. They should get busy in producing as much khadi and of as good quality as possible, without bothering about its sale. For be it today or tomorrow, it is certain that there is going to be an upsurge among the people when all will ask for khadi. If the producers are unable to meet the demand, they are going to suffer disgrace. They should not let this happen.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-3-1929

153. WHAT DOES 'CONSTANT WEARER' MEAN?

Everywhere there is a desire, more or less, to put into practice the Congress resolution on the constructive programme. That there is more of it in Gujarat is not surprising. This being the case, it is understandable that the workers seek clarification of the clause regarding the wearing of khadi.

According to the constitution of the Congress, one has a right to become its member even if one does not wear khadi, and one cannot be prevented from becoming a member. But a member thus enrolled cannot take part in the working of the Congress, its committee or subcommittees, nor can he speak, vote at or contest the elections of any of its committees, if he is not 'a constant wearer of khadi'. Therefore, as a result of the khadi clause, one who is not a constant wearer cannot enjoy any of the rights of the Congress and is debarred from rendering certain kinds of service; for instance, he cannot become a volunteer. In fact all privileges enjoyed by Congressmen should be and must be in the form of service to be rendered by them.

Since I deduce this meaning, it is necessary to explain the meaning of the phrase 'constant wearer of khadi'. If we literally translate the equivalent English word, it means one who habitually wears khadi. But anyone who is a habitual wearer is a constant wearer. If the clothes of a constant wearer are stolen and he is unable to obtain khadi immediately, he will wear whatever clothes he can get for the time being, and will obtain khadi at the first opportunity. Despite this he will still be regarded as a constant wearer. Hence a person who

wears khadi only while attending to the work of the Congress, but on other occasions wears foreign or mill-made clothes is not a constant wearer. Similarly, one who wears foreign cloth inside and puts on khadi on top is not a constant wearer. Likewise, a man who wears a dhoti of mill-cloth and a cap and shirt of khadi is also not a constant wearer.

In this way, the meaning of 'constant wearer' in my view is quite clear. How, then, should workers enrol members? My advice to them is that if a non-wearer has faith in khadi and is prepared to wear it; he accepts the Congress ideals and contributes 4 annas or yarn spun by himself—they should explain the khadi clause to him and enrol him as a member of the Congress. If a large number of such members are enrolled, they will have little to do in the way of exercising their right except participating in the elections of the subcommittees. If they are not constant wearers, they should forgo this right, help the Congress in a variety of other ways and should, at the very first opportunity, begin to dress in khadi from head to foot.

It is the duty of the workers not to forget about the members after enrolling them, but to keep a constant watch over them and to persuade them to wear khadi. The workers should go out with them to sell khadi from door to door and should familiarize themselves with the latter's problems and resolve them.

The greatest difficulty in Gujarat is that of dhotis for men and saris for women. Gujarat seems unwilling to spin fine yarn and it finds khadi dhotis expensive. It is possible to produce dhotis in Gujarat if we have the will. We do produce good cotton. In Gujarat, there is a great awakening and there are volunteers also, as well as National Schools. I have found from experience that those who card well can also spin well. For drawing out fine and strong yarn we should have slivers made of well-carded cotton. Carding has made the maximum progress in Gujarat. Plenty of carding-bows can be produced here, and there are also people eager to learn the work. But the will is lacking. If Gujarat so desires, it can produce fine yarn quite soon. But if it is too lazy to do so, and also unwilling to pay for fine dhotis, the men and women here should wear half-length dhotis of coarse khadi.

But all this is meant for wise, sensible people and for khadi-lovers. Where there is a will there is a way. But where there is no will, in spite of the way, we remain stone-blind. One who cannot dance will find the ground uneven.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-3-1929

154. A BEAUTIFUL SATYAGRAHA

Something appeared in the newspapers about the satyagraha that was offered in Miraj a few months ago. But what appears in newspapers is incomplete and sometimes even incorrect, so I did not pay any attention to it. But in this context, I came across the name of Pundalik. I know him very well, since he has stayed in the Ashram, and is a follower of Gangadharrao Deshpande. So I sent for all the information from him. What he says deserves to be considered. I therefore give the main portion of the letter below. The original letter is in Hindi.[1]

We can well regard this small satyagraha as having been beautifully concluded. There are here three points worth noting. The first is that the duty of the leader was only to maintain peace, because that is the foundation of satyagraha. Secondly, the leaders did not provoke the people to fight to satisfy their own vanity, and allowed the *panch* appointed by the people to go to negotiate a settlement. This means that the satyagraha leaders should be without pride. Thirdly, there is no need whatsoever for the satyagraha leader to be a scholar, a lawyer or a barrister. He should possess the qualities of truthfulness, placidity, steadfastness, courage, simplicity, etc. The real leader of this satyagraha was Pundalik. He cannot be regarded as an intellectual. His knowledge of English is almost nil but he displayed all the requisite qualities which I have listed above.

But this work cannot be said to have been finished yet. The remaining work is as important as the work already done. The awakening of the people should be utilized to make them realize their own condition, their own strength and their own limitations. Only then can we preserve the gains achieved which would then spread in the surroundings like the fragrance of flowers.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-3-1929

[1] The letter is not retranslated here. The correspondent had described how he had successfully led a satyagraha movement in Miraj taluk against an unjust increase in land revenue.

155. AN IDEAL STUDENTS' HOSTEL[1]

Since a conference about Hostels is to be held this month in this city, I was asked to express my views as to what would be an ideal hostel. I have been running students' hostels since 1904 according to my lights. I am therefore inclined to claim that I have some knowledge and experience of how hostels should be run and managed. Here, we would do well to take a wider sense of the term 'hostel'. Every person who is learning anything is a student; and the place where more than one such student lives I consider a students' hostel.

The first and the most important condition for the success of such hostels is that the superintendents must be men of good character.

A hostel should never be allowed to degenerate into a mere boarding-house, that is, a place where students live together for the sake of obtaining their meals.

Students should cultivate a family feeling towards one another, and the superintendent should take the place of a father. He should take an interest in them, take part in their social life, and also have his meals with them.

An ideal hostel would be almost more important to the student than school. In fact, the hostel is the real school. In schools or colleges the students get only verbal knowledge, while in the hostels they get all kinds of knowledge. An ideal hostel should not be a separate institution from the school; hence, both should be under the same management, and teachers and students should live together. Thus, we should make the hostels like home, and create in them ideal conditions for growth and development such as do not obtain even in real homes. Therefore, the thing to do would be to turn the hostels into gurukuls.

There are many defects in our hostels. The reason lies in the fact that students lack a sense of belonging to a family group, and those who run them do not enter fully into the life of the students.

Then, these hostels should be outside the city limits, and all the reforms which are considered necessary for the villages or cities should be carried out in them, that is, there must be the necessary arrangements for hygienic and sanitary living and the rules of such

[1] The translation used here is from *True Education*, pp. 133-5.

living should be strictly followed. An ideal hostel cannot be set up in a rented building. There should be good bath-rooms and latrines. The building should be well-ventilated and have a garden attached to it.

An ideal hostel should be swadeshi in all respects—in the way the building is constructed, furnished and decorated. There should too be a reflection of village arts and crafts and way of life. The building itself should be in keeping with our needs and our means, considering the poverty of India. Thus, hostels, as built in prosperous and affluent Western countries, cannot serve as models for ours. Climatic conditions abroad and here differ. Hence, the type of building put up must be in accordance with prevailing conditions.

There must be nothing in the ideal hostel which might encourage indolence and softness, or lead to waywardness. Therefore, the food served there should be simple—as becomes the life of seekers of knowledge. There should be regular prayers, and rules governing work, rest and sleep.

An ideal hostel will be a *brahmacharya* ashram, i.e., a colony of students living the life of *brahmacharis*. The word 'student' is of recent origin—a modern word. The old word for a student—*brahmachari*—is richer in meaning and connotes the ideal of student life more truly. *Brahmacharya* or spiritual discipline—control of the senses, purity of body and mind, and devotion to studies with a view to attaining the Ultimate Reality—is absolutely necessary during the period of study. In the rather topsyturvy conditions obtaining today, I would like married students also, if admitted into the hostel, to observe *brahmacharya* until the completion of their studies. This means, among other things, that during this period they should live away from their wives.

The reader should remember that I have described what would be an ideal hostel. It is understandable that all hostels may not be able to realize this goal. But, if the ideal described above is accepted as the standard, every hostel should strive to reach it, and assess its achievement by comparison with the ideal.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-3-1929

156. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised March 4, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

This sheet tells you where I am writing from.

Tomorrow takes me away from you for a fair distance. My third-class travelling is becoming a fraud in a way. From Delhi I had a whole compartment given to me and the party. There was thus greater freedom than in the 2nd class and I had the satisfaction of having the whole company with me. The separation pained me. The being together gives me joy.

The Mandir is making visible progress, so I fancy. The joint kitchen is becoming more and more popular, and I do not think, at the end of the year, anybody would want to break it up. But let us see.

Do not be anxious about me. There are three services from Rangoon per week. I hope to write to you therefore three times a week. The sailings from Calcutta to Rangoon are Sundays, Tuesdays and Fridays. So you too need not write more than three times per week. The steamer always leaves in the morning.

You will not forget to give me a summary of your work after some time now. I want your informed opinion on the soft spindles and a description of your improvements on the bow, also your digest of comparison between the results of well carded slivers and what they used to have before. I hope you are keeping a diary of these bare experiences. I want you to treat your experiment scientifically.

I want you also to tell me from time to time all about the morning and the evening prayers and what you sing there. And give me also your final changes about food. I am attaching more and more importance to your experiment, for I know you are accurate about these things, and will not easily deceive yourself.

I have a curious party with me this time. It includes a mad girl graduate. She is the daughter of a well-known Tamil leader—Rajaji's friend. Last time I was in Delhi, she and her cousin came in to see me. I suggested their coming to the Ashram for a change. The father jumped at the idea. And there they are. In order to be able to look after her more easily, I have cropped her hair. Now she and the cousin are going with me to Burma. She will listen, if at all, to me and no one

else. It is a serious responsibility. But it is God's, not mine. Then thereis Champa with her two babies—Dr. Mehta's daughter-in-law whom you know. Dr. M. wanted me to take her with me. I expect she will be left in Rangoon. The rest are Pyarelal, Girdhari, Subbiah, Mahadev and Purushottam. Mahadev arrives this morning. As Purushottam was still somewhat constipated, I suggested his joining me. He being with me, I am able to avoid the lights for the prayers. He recites the *Gita* without any assistance.

I am more and more reverting to uncooked food. During the journey I had raw vegetable, chopped up with bread. So bread was the only cooked preparation. Fruit is now becoming a superfluity. Raw green vegetable is proving a perfect and cheap substitute. Cabbage, cauliflower or any *bhaji* serves the purpose. And one needs such a small quantity when you eat the vegetable in a raw state.

Love,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5348. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9404

157. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Silence Day [*March 4, 1929*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

We arrived in Calcutta yesterday evening after a very quiet journey. They had given us a whole carriage. The mad Rukmini is also with us. Her father has given up all hope about her. I do not have the courage to abandon her. Mahadev has not arrived yet. It is just seven in the morning.

Send Rs.500 from the Birla fund to Jawaharlal Nehru for famine relief in U.P. The money will be spent in Allahabad through Kripalaniji.

I see that people already feel the shortage of khadi. We are only a drop in the ocean but we should produce as much khadi as we can. If they can manufacture more in Chalala, let them do so. The stocks which you will send will be bought up in no time.

Take firm measures in every department of the Ashram and clear up things. It is necessary that we should not remain in a state of

[1] Gandhiji arrived in Calcutta *en route* to Burma on March 3.

constant fear. A firm decision in every matter will save us from many difficulties.

Take care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Get Padmavati's eyes examined in Dr. Harilal's[1] dispensary, get the prescription for her glasses and send it to Sitla Sahay. He will buy the glasses and send them to her.

Totaram's eyes must be all right by now. I hope you have made the necessary arrangements to enable Gangadevi to take sun-bath.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N.5390

158. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

CALCUTTA,
March 4, 1929

CHI. KUSUM,

I am expecting a letter from you today. But I must write this immediately.

Travelling third class has become an easy thing for me. The whole compartment was placed at my disposal from Delhi.

Meet your relations to your heart's content, look after your health and return soon. But take as much time as you need.

Keep writing to the women at the Ashram.

I have a fear that I have not yet been able fully to explain to you that only a person who willingly accepts bonds becomes free from bondage. But this needs to be understood at once. A ship without a rudder is not free, it is tossed from this side to that and in the end founders and is wrecked. It is at the mercy of the waves. On the other hand, the man who marks his limits from the beginning can struggle against the stormy sea of life and keep his calm. Ponder over this carefully and then do what you think proper. I have not come across anyone in this world freer than myself. But I have achieved my freedom by binding myself, that is, by taking certain vows and

[1] Dr. Harilal Desai.

observing them. I see that in this world we have got to bind ourselves to many people. This is necessary for a being living in society. One can live in society only if one so binds oneself. But enough of this sermonizing. Perhaps you understand this as much as I do. But I wrote all this thinking that you do not.

The mad Rukmani is with me.[1] Her father has washed his hands of her. When I met him he said: "If at all my daughter is going to recover and live, it will be through you. I have given up all other hopes. Please, therefore, keep her with you if you can." What else could I do after that?

Write truly reassuring letters to Prabhavati. Do not forget Ba, Gangabehn and Vasumati.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1780

159. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

CALCUTTA,
March 4, 1929

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Your nervousness caused me pain. You have to get rid of it. I can get solid work out of you only when I can make you live anywhere by yourself.

I hope you are continuing the study of the *Gita*. Don't let anything tell on your health. Do take ghee if you feel the need.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Rajendra Babu is here.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3336

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", March 4, 1929.

160. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CALCUTTA[1]

March 4, 1929

As the Congress has directed we must boycott foreign cloth, not only British cloth but all foreign cloth. It will not do to boycott British cloth alone, for it will find its way into the country along with other foreign cloth. Bengali friends know this from their experience during the swadeshi movement.

India is an extremely poor country. I wish to draw strength from having the poor of India with me. That is why I place so much emphasis on the propagation of khadi. The author of the *Mahabharata* has dwelt at length on the glory of serving the poor. Buddha has also spoken of this. The people of India sorely need food and clothing. Tormented by the pangs of hunger our countrymen have been known to abandon their children. There is no remedy for their suffering other than propagation of khadi. I have reached this conclusion after having travelled all over India. I shall bow to the man who can show an alternative way of removing the distress of the poor millions of India. I shall accept him as my guru. The only way is the boycott of foreign cloth. I have the fullest faith in this measure.

I hope you will take off such foreign cloth as you may be wearing and burn it here and now and collect all foreign cloth in your homes and bring it to the spot indicated by the Congress and burn it. And now please take off all your foreign cloth.[2]

(As my speech at the foreign-cloth-burning-demonstration campaign at Calcutta on the 4th instant and the statement made to the Press have a significance beyond the Indian border and as they define the scope of the boycott campaign as also of civil disobedience, I transcribe them below from the daily Press.

M. K. G)

FRIENDS,

I do not propose to translate what I have been saying in Hindustani. It is sufficient for me to say that the boycott of foreign

[1] The meeting was held in the Shraddhanand Park.

[2] The three paragraphs above are a translation of Gandhiji's speech in Hindi as reported in *Aaj*. What follows is the report of his speech in English taken from *Young India*.

cloth, not merely boycott of British cloth, is in my opinion indispensable if we are to attain swaraj in terms of the hungry millions.

The Congress accepted this proposition last year. The Working Committee by accepting the scheme drawn up by me at its instance has also set its seal of approval upon the proposition that I have laid down before you. The Working Committee has invited me to shoulder the burden of guiding its deliberations. I have faith in you, my countrymen, I have faith in God. I have faith in the absolute righteousness of this cause and so in fear and trembling and full hope I have shouldered the burden and now ask you to share that burden with me. This meeting is not of my seeking,you have chosen to call this meeting, you have come here well knowing what is to happen here. I hope that this is a sign of your determination to lighten the burden that I have shouldered. I do not want to argue out the pros and cons of the boycott of foreign cloth through khadi. Remember that is the proposition enunciated in the scheme. Before the Working Committee would accept this scheme it wanted to subject me to a fire of cross-examination. The proceedings lasted for four hours and the Working Committee was fully satisfied that this was the only thing we could possibly do if we were to go through this programme during this year and if need be wake up on the first of January next with the whole country as Independencewallahs. If we are to achieve our purpose this is the only effective programme. I want you therefore to be true to this programme and to yourselves. No longer deceive yourselves and the country by crowding at meetings of this character, by giving applause and then going away forgetting everything about what might happen at such meetings. I want you to translate every word that you say into effective action. I want you to pledge yourselves not before me but before your God that henceforth you are not going to use any foreign cloth, that you are going to give up foreign clothes in your possession, that you will burn them even as you burn rags in your possession which may require to be disinfected,even as a drunkard suddenly become teetotaller empties his cupboard and destroys every bottle of brandy and whisky in his possession, no matter what it might have cost him. You will count no cost too great against the cause,the liberty and honour of your country.

But there is a fly in the ointment. I have seen a notice served upon the Secretary of the Provincial Congress Committee which proceeds somewhat on these lines: That at this meeting no burning of clothes should take place because it is an offence under the Police Act or Police Regulations, whatever that may be called. The clause runs after this fashion that no burning of straw or such other things can take place in or near any public street or thoroughfare. Well, I have been taxing my mind as to whether to call this Park a thoroughfare or not. Two lawyers put their heads together—I do not count myself as a lawyer, I am disbarred—they put their heads together and advised me that by no stretch of meaning could this Park be called a thoroughfare. They drew my attention to another section in the Act where a public street, a public thoroughfare and a place of public resort were also mentioned. In this section the place of public resort is specifically omitted. I can well understand this Park being a place of public resort.

In this circumstance what am I to do? I accept this notice as one served upon my humble self. I do not want to avoid the consequences of this law. But today I do not appear before you as a civil breaker of law, I do not appear before you as a civil resister, I do not want you to commit at this moment a breach of any Regulation. I am quite capable of breaking all the Regulations that may hurt my moral sense but that time is not yet for me—that time may come tomorrow, but it is not tonight. But I have got to discharge a public duty in front of you and in interpreting this law as I do or as I am advised to interpret it I venture to submit that this notice has no effect upon me, assuming the argument that the service of that notice upon the Secretary is equal to service upon me. If I am taken before a court of law, I make this definite promise that I shall not raise this issue that the notice was not served upon me. I claim this is not a public thoroughfare, I claim also that I am not doing anything that is dangerous. It is well known that it is the settled policy of the Congress or rather of the Working Committee. The Working Committee has got a duty to discharge. I am a member of that Committee, I am the Chairman of the Boycott Committee and I feel that I shall be running away from my duty if I shirk this issue and avoid a prosecution against me.

If I am allowed to go away, I shall be going away tomorrow and I shall return on the 25th or the 26th of this month to undergo and stand a prosecution against myself for having

undertaken to burn foreign cloth in a public park which I claim is not a public thoroughfare. That is the important statement I wanted to make before you. You are not burning, the act of burning is by me and it will be on my sole responsibility. You are not hurt by being witnesses—I wish you were hurt. But today the campaign is not of civil resistance but one of conducting a boycott, a fierce boycott of foreign clothes, remaining as long as it is possible within the four corners of the law. I do not want you today to be guilty, consciously or unconsciously, of a breach of laws of this kind whatever some of those laws may be. You will get the opportunity if you care to obey the directions of the Working Committee when the proper time comes to break certain laws or all non-moral laws of the country. But as I have said before, the time is not yet and I do not want to precipitate that time and I do not want also to anticipate that time. And if the Government will play the game, if the police will play the game, I promise we shall settle our business with Government without having to resort to civil disobedience, without the public having even to resort to no-tax campaign which is a part of civil disobedience. Believe me I shall strain every nerve to avoid that issue. Speaking with a full sense of responsibility over my shoulders, I know the tremendous consequences of civil disobedience and of no-tax campaign in a vast country like this—a country which has undisciplined masses—but a man who is mad as I am now after freedom, a man who is hungry after freedom—and a real hunger for freedom is infinitely more painful than hunger for mere bread—has got to take tremendous risks, to stake everything that he has in order to gain that precious freedom, and it is because I am hungry for that freedom—although I am on the threshold of death, I want to see swaraj whilst I have still breath in me—that I want to take all those risks. But at the same time I want to take every precaution and therefore I shall plead with the Government and the powers that be, I shall ask them to come to their senses.

But if you alone will help me we shall be able to avoid all these risks and still find the dawn of freedom breaking upon us before the 31st of December next.

If you will [be truthful, if you will][1] carry out honestly, faithfully and completely the programme that will be set before you

[1] Portions in square brackets are taken from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 5-3-1929 and *The Hindustan Times*, 7-3-1929.

from time to time I promise no heroic measures will be necessary to be taken by you. Is boycott of foreign cloth such a heroic measure? Is the putting of the Congress house in order such a heroic measure? Is the registering of thousands upon thousands of members for the Congress or the habitual wearing[of] khadi [on the part of the rich and the poor] a heroic act? If you think these are heroic acts I can honestly tell you that you do not know what heroic acts are; heroic acts are made of sterner stuff. Do not run away with the idea that the programme before you is heroic stuff. These easy things have been placed before you for the simple reason that you are millions against one hundred thousand men.

If we were not under the spell of hypnotism or if we were not being acted upon by that great force [of] inertia, or want of self-confidence, we would find it the most natural thing to breathe the air of freedom which is ours to breathe. If we were not under this hypnotic spell we would not have to go through even these easy stages. [Try and do these things during this year and then come to me and ask me, "Where is swaraj?" You will not need coming to me. You will find it within your grasp. The millions of the masses will smile upon you. They will bless you for making a common cause with them by understanding their real grievances. Therefore I ask you to do this.

I have faith in you. This notice from the Commissioner of Police has enabled me to make my appeal to the authorities. I am here to take the risk. I propose to burn the clothes that have been handed to me and I want you before I perform the sacred ceremony to throw all your clothes at me on the platform. Do not make any noise.]

No violence [or force] must be used so long as you want to have me as a participator in this ceremony. I swear by non-violence—that is my creed. I can see no other way open to me to regain my freedom. [So long as you choose to have me in this campaign, in spite of my creed, so long do I plead with you to observe the law of non-violence, you will find that you have done well.]

The responsibility for this act of burning is entirely on my shoulders—please remember too that we want the boycott of foreign clothes and not merely of British clothes. Let that confusion be dispelled from your minds. Take it from me that the men who have been a party to this scheme are not thoughtless men. They went into the question of foreign clothes *versus* British clothes and they came to

the conclusion that the proper thing was boycott of foreign clothes. I do not want to go into the question of the Indian mills; they will take care of themselves if you will take care of khadi. [Otherwise the mills will be a halter round your neck.][1]

Aaj, 8-3-1929, and *Young India*, 14-3-1929

161. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

[*March 5, 1929*][2]

I was pained and amazed at the uncalled-for and wholly unnecessary police interference, especially after the speech that I delivered in connection with the burning of the foreign clothes. Out of consideration for the Commissioner of Police I went out of my way and delivered my speech in English so far as it referred to the burning incident.

I had full hope that, after the clear statement I made that we were not out for breaking any laws by way of civil disobedience but that we did not accept the interpretation put upon the clause in question of the Police Act, there would be no attempt in interfering with the burning. I have a little experience of the Police Acts in many other parts of the world. Unless there is imminent and grave danger, the police never interfere with acts of the public even though these may amount to a breach of laws and regulations. They summon them before a court of law and it is the most natural thing for a police that are humble enough to recognize their limitations to seek redress through courts of law instead of taking the law into their own hands. They know that tonight there was no danger imminent, there was not certainly serious danger, the crowd was quite peaceful and responsible men were in charge of the whole demonstration. They knew that the demonstration was a part of a big public campaign and on the top of that they had the clearest possible pronouncement from me. The act of burning too had actually taken place and I was confident that the police were there merely to watch when all of a sudden I saw them with their big sticks shoving out the crowd that surrounded the fire and then with their sticks putting the fire out.

[1] The speech was followed by a bonfire of foreign clothes. Shortly afterwards the police entered the scene and put out the fire. *Vide* also the following item.

[2] The statement was issued at 2.30 a.m.

What followed I need not describe. I was not able to watch all the things that were going on around me, surrounded as I was by friends, but I saw that there came a stage when the police used their sticks against the crowd. I have since understood from Sir Charles Tegart that some constables were hurt with brickbats more or less seriously. I am sorry to hear this. I hear from my friends that members of the public also have been more or less seriously hurt.

By a little tact, by a little forbearance, by following the tradition of civilized police all the world over, the whole of the scene could have been avoided. I could have understood the police interfering with the burning of foreign cloth if there was a proper prosecution, a proper interpretation of the Act, and if in defiance of such interpretation by a court of law we had in pursuance of a plan of civil disobedience or otherwise persisted in the burning ceremony.

I am glad that though the police have, in the high-handed manner I have described, interfered with public demonstration, they are prosecuting[1] me and those who took part in setting fire. I recognize the courtesy of the Commissioner of Police in not insisting upon the trial tomorrow and in stopping it till my return from Burma. It was but right that he should expect me to give him an undertaking that till this case is decided there would be no burning of foreign cloth in Calcutta public squares. After consultation with the local Congress friends I have already given that undertaking and I hope that the public will scrupulously respect it.

Let me, however, make it perfectly clear that this does not mean a stoppage of boycott demonstration, of collection of foreign cloth or even of burning it. The undertaking means that pending the authoritative interpretation of this particular section of the Police Act there shall be no burning in Calcutta public squares and naturally in the public streets of Calcutta. But whenever it is considered necessary and whenever the Congress authorities so decide they will not hesitate

[1] At about 11.15 p.m. on March 4, Gandhiji was intimated by the Assistant Commissioner of Police that he was required to appear before the Court of the Chief Presidency Magistrate at 10 a.m. on March 5 and was asked to sign a recognizance bond. Gandhiji said he "could not sign such a bond for promising to appear in court on Tuesday as it had been previously arranged that he would leave for Burma on that day . . . he could not disappoint thousands who expected him in Burma. The Police might take the responsibility of preventing him from going there. If the Police liked they could arrest him." Later in the early hours of March 5, Gandhiji signed a personal recognizance bond of Rs. 50.

to burn collected foreign cloth in private places or in places that manifestly do not come under the section in question even in accordance with the

interpretation sought to be placed upon it by the Police.

I shall be very much surprised indeed if after the unwarranted and premature interference by the Police with the demonstration at Shraddhanand Park the whole of the people do not discard foreign cloth and complete the boycott. The most effective answer to this interference would be for the people in mofussil and the people of other provinces to collect all the foreign clothes available and consign them to the flames. I have given many an anxious hour to this question of burning foreign cloth. I know some friends differ from me but if it is a fact that foreign cloth means the largest drain on the country's resources and the enforced pauperization of the starving millions, then this foreign cloth, charged as it is with such poisonous germs, deserves only to be destroyed.

Forward, 5-3-1929, and *Young India*, 14-3-1929

162. THE ETHICS OF BURNING

[*March 5, 1929*][1]

It will be as late as March 17 before this article is in the reader's hand. I write this on the steamer on my way from Calcutta to Rangoon, so that the spectacle of what took place on March 4 in Shraddhanand Park is still fresh in my mind. I hope that the lathis of hundreds of thousands of policemen will not be able to extinguish the fire that was kindled in that park on that day.

For dharma will not be extinguished by anyone trying to do so. Once it manifests itself in a man's heart, it does not perish even when his body perishes. The fire of dharma lit by the world's men of destiny, prophets, and Hindu and Muslim saints has continued to burn even after their bodies have perished.

But some may ask: Can burning of clothes be dharma? It is my humble opinion that the dharma of burning clothes can be proved. We burn or bury a body from which life has departed. We burn the things which have been contaminated. He who discards liquor will throw it away. However costly the liquor, when one has given up

[1] Gandhiji left Calcutta for Rangoon on the morning of March 5.

drinking, one will not commit the sin of selling it to another. If costly things are contaminated by the plague, they are burnt. It has been regarded as a dharma to do so. The Johannesburg Municipality did not feel hurt in burning down the expensive building of the market and the provisions contained in it when the plague broke out in Johannesburg. It considered it a duty to do so. There may well be a difference of opinion on the necessity of consigning these things to the flames. But even those opposed to it will concede that burning may become a dharma for those who believe that it is necessary to do so. Likewise, it is my humble view that it is the dharma of every Indian to burn foreign cloth. After the insolent and cruel performance of the Calcutta police, that dharma has acquired a new urgency. Those who before that event had doubts about the need to burn foreign cloth should have none after it.

No one will doubt that it is our dharma to boycott foreign cloth which has impoverished out country and through which over 60 crores of rupees are drained out of India every year. If this is conceded, what are we to do with the boycotted cloth if not burn it? Some say that it should be given away to the poor. Those who make this suggestion do not see that thereby they insult both themselves and the poor. They insult the poor when they consider them inferior to themselves, and insulting the poor they insult themselves. Do not the poor have self-respect? Do they not want swaraj? Why should we give to the poor a thing which we regard as infected? We do have the mean habit of offering to the poor left-overs from our plates. Shall we add to that meanness by giving them the clothes which we ourselves have discarded?

Let us consider what sort of clothes they are. The clothes I have burnt till today comprised handkerchiefs, clean or unclean black caps, neckties, collars, socks, thin long shirts, blouses, fine saris, etc. What clothes out of these could one give to the poor? And how strange would it be to create in the poor a fondness for them ? If we do so, how shall we seek to boycott foreign cloth?

And, finally, no one can doubt the necessity of the bonfire after that scene at Shraddhanand Park. I had told the police that there was no intention of breaking the law for the purpose of burning foreign cloth. Only after the lawyers had given their opinion that the police had not correctly interpreted the section of law on the basis of which the order prohibiting the burning was issued, was it decided to burn

clothes in that park. Despite this when the police attempted fruitlessly to put out the fire merely to annoy the people, the latter were certainly agitated and then started burning at many spots in the park. And that led to some exchange of blows between the police and the people. I believe it will be a gross insult to India if, even after such insolence, foreign cloth is not burnt in every home in every village. After this action of the police, people should have confidence in place of whatever doubt they may have had about the success of the boycott.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-3-1929

163. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Tuesday [*March 5, 1929*]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter. How could I expect to take rest in Calcutta? Last night I could go to bed only at about two. I am writing this letter on the ship on the 5th . The events in Calcutta have been fully reported by Mahadev in *Navajivan*.

You did well in speaking firmly to Yashodabehn. In a matter in which we have no doubt that we are following dharma, it is not wrong to be hard; on the contrary we ought to be so. I had only been joking about her hair. I had told them all that, if Rukmini felt afraid, others should be ready to part with their hair. Such things are bound to take a secretary's time. You should not believe that it is wasted.

Do not mind if the arrangement for the technical school[1] is for a year. The reason behind this is not distrust, it is Jamnalalji's cautious nature. Even if the reason is distrust, you need not worry about the matter.

Apart from suspiciousness and a tendency to be hasty, I have seen no other defects in you. These two defects will disappear in the course of time, for from the very first day that I came to know you I have observed you to be hard-working and straightforward. I have no doubt that you will succeed.

It is fixed that we shall return to Calcutta on the 24th . The case in on the 26th. I wish to take the train to Ahmedabad on the same day.

[1] Khadi Technical School

Whether I shall succeed or not is a different matter. "I do not know, O Lord of Janaki, what will happen tomorrow morning." Who had anticipated what happened in Calcutta?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You will see from what I have stated above that I shall barely reach the Ashram on the evening of the 28th or the morning of the 29th. I shall have to leave for Kathiawar the same evening.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5564

164. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

Tuesday [*March 5, 1929*][1]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter and the translation. I do not mind your having written a long letter. I am going to entrust to Kaka the job of revising your translation. I had wanted to compare your virgin pure style of language with our style, particularly with my adulterated style. That has been done. You have not been able to achieve as natural a style of language as I had expected you would. Maybe your being over-careful has made the languageartificial or perhaps it only seems so to me. I am now thinking of entrusting to you a job of quite a contrary nature. The purpose is to see how much you can improve my translation from the point of view of language:

1. The *Gita* does not follow the present style of writing. We find in it one and the same thing elaborated in all the chapters in different ways. Out of all that, we may accept what appeals to our heart. This much, at least, is clear that the first thing is to attain a state of actionlessness, and then faith in knowledge. The state of actionlessness bears fruit in the heart opening to knowledge. But even when we have attained both, if there is any trace in us of 'I-consciousness', that state

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's mentioning the sea journey (last sentence); Gandhiji left Calcutta for Rangoon by sea on March 5, 1929, aboard the steamship, *Akonda*. Also, March 5 was a Tuesday.

would not be of complete self-surrender to God. A *rasik*[1] may work without attachments but even a particle of knowledge may not touch his heart. One may have both knowledge and non-attachment in action, but if one does not at all have faith in something Divine, the sense of 'I' will certainly not disappear. Have you not observed anyone with such a condition of mind?

2. This question of the sense of 'I' is quite relevant here. Ultimately, everything has to be given up. How, then, can we avoid bringing it in? It is our intellect which makes the distinction between a last and a first step. That is the cause of lack of utmost purity in us, and that is the reason why we are unable to reduce ourselves to a zero. Such a state cannot be cultivated by an intellectual effort. This applies to you. But you should not make yourself unhappy by so applying it to yourself. "Learn it by worshiping the feet of the teacher and questioning him again and again and by service.[2] Anyone who wearies of again and again asking till he has thoroughly understood, will be so much the loser.

3. 'Will be lost' means 'will lose both the worlds'[3].

4 But being unable to describe God's ways, man resorted to words like 'delusion' and '*maya*'[4], etc., and that seems right. He who acts under a delusion, does not believe that he is deluded. If Arjuna had acted in conformity with his nature, he could not have been described as acting under delusion, but if he had acted contrary to his nature, he could have been so described. Mirabai let herself be ruled by God and therefore sang 'I let myself be pulled as He wills'. Arjuna resisted [Shri Krishna] for a while and therefore believed that he was being misled. What else could [Shri Krishna] do but threaten him [that he would be lost]?

5. I see nothing wrong in the meanings you have given to the terms *abhakta*[5] and *bhakta*[6]. Those meanings would not have occurred to me.

I like what you have written regarding prayer because I seefrom it that you do not wish to deceive either me or yourself. I also see that you have still not understood the meaning of prayer. But it is in no

[1] A person with attachments
[2] The reference is to the *Bhagavad Gita*, Chapter IV, verse 34.
[3] The practical as well as the spiritual
[4] Illusion
[5] One who has no devotion to God and one who has, respectively
[6] *ibid*

way your fault. Even we elders have barely begun to understand it, that is, if we have understood it at all. Though seniormost among the elders, I certainly do not understand its full meaning. What I have is the greatest faith in it, and hence I cannot have the least doubt about its usefulness. Without mentioning your name, merely on the basis of your question, I explained the meaning of prayer during the two days I spent in the Ashram. Prayer saves you from impure thoughts; that is no small benefit of prayer. But that is only the first step. It is not that while praying one has to remain absorbed only in the meaning of the prayer for, when one is really absorbed in the prayer, one is not conscious of its meaning. In a state of purest prayerfulness, we are in a state which is beyond meaning. In that state, we are aware only of God. Language becomes an obstacle at such a time. I am unable to describe this state of mind. The purpose of prayer is to be single-minded in devotion. The purpose of collective prayer is to be single-minded in devotion collectively and the individual has to lose himself in the group. The individual loses himself or herself in the group and the group loses itself in God. What is the meaning of reciting of *Aum* or *Ramanama*? The *shlokas* and other verses we recite at prayer time have the same meaning as *Aum* and *Ramanama*. I have not the shadow of a doubt that those who recite the prayer in this spirit, will attain the supreme state of peace. He who lives in the social group, must have no aversion to social work, that is, collective prayer. He who loses himself in God, sees the whole world as God. It may be said that collective prayer is the first step in social work for attaining such a state of mind. From the Negroes to the Christians of Europe, from the Muslims of Arabia to the Hindus of Bharatvarsha, none of them has been able to do without prayer. If the churches, the mosques and the temples were to be demolished, the society, too, would go down with them. Divine music is going on all the time where God is and we can only imagine what it is like. Collective prayer is a rationally inexplicable attempt to join in that music, and he who joins in that music is for ever in a state of bliss. I take it that you will be able to deduce the rest from this. If you cannot do so and doubts remain, go on asking me again and again.

I understand what you say about your health. If it is completely restored, we will have all that we can wish for.

You are doing a good job in trying to make a spinning-wheel. I do imagine some difficulties, but since you are having direct

experience of the thing, I am not placing my difficulties before you. All I wish is that you may succeed in your attempt. But see that you do not sacrifice your health in the attempt to succeed. You have not gone there for that experiment. Experiments should be only a recreation for you.

I think I have now given you enough. This time Jamnadas also is with me and the sea gives us much peace and rest.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Your comment on the student's difficulty is reasonable. But I do not know how far you have correctly reproduced the substance of his letter. But whatever new things one may have to say at this time of transition are bound to seem harsh. My duty is to repeat the same thing to make it easier for you to understand. If you tell me what you found harsh in it, I will try to explain it further.

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 33000

165. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN PATHAK.

March 6, 1929

BHAI RAMNARAYAN,

I am able to reply to your letter only today while on my way to Rangoon. To raise contributions from cultivators is an art by itself. So far we have had only a few volunteers trained in that art. Moreover, before we ask for contributions from the cultivators, we must raise contributions for them. The merchant class, at any rate, must pay. This argument holds good in the case of the Ashram too. For the present, cultivate contacts with merchants and traders and get what you can by appealing to their hearts. This includes the whole middle class.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

BHAI RAMNARAYAN
ASHRAM, CHHAYA
via PORBANDAR (KATHIAWAR)

From Gujarati: C.W. 2785. Courtesy: Ramnarayan Pathak

166. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

March 6, 1929

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have made use of your letter in a *Navajivan* article, but I did intend to write to you. That I am able to do only now on my way to Rangoon.

It is three months since I had your letter. During this time you must have been tested still more severely in the observance of your vow. Let me hear in detail about it. Every moment I realize the need for ceaseless vigilance in observing this vow. The slightest slackness in observing other restraints affects adversely the observance of *brahmacharya*. The other sense organs function as if they were the slaves of this one organ. Hence, it is our duty to free them from this slavery. When we succeed in that, sex loses the support of other senses and submits to discipline.

You must get your eyes treated for trachoma. If the disease is cured, that will help your eyesight too.

Keep me informed about the progress of khadi work there. I think we can gain a lot by following your suggestion about the tailor. But the implementation depends on you. Someone must sacrifice himself to infuse life into all others. I did get some letters, but I don't know how I can use them.

I shall return to the Ashram by the end of this month. Thereafter the Andhra tour will start.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3729

167. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

March 6, 1929

BHAISHRI JETHALAL,

Your letter about the khadi scheme is lying before me. I am thinking about it on board the steamer. I see that one who draws up a good scheme should himself be ready to implement it. Where have we

the workers? Why don't you Yourself write the pamphlet, and yourself implement the scheme? I will of course think over it. But meanwhile you also should consider it.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9844. Courtesy: Narayan Jethalal Sampat

168. FORTHCOMING ANDHRA TOUR

Friends in Andhra Desha will forgive me for repeated disappointments caused by circumstances beyond my control. I would gladly have toured earlier if I could have. Now I hope to reach Andhra early next month. Appointments already undertaken finish on 1st April in Kathiawar. I would like a day or two at the Udyoga Mandir and immediately start for Andhra. That would mean leaving Bombay for Andhra about the 5th or 6th of April. On 14th May is the All-India Congress Committee meeting at Allahabad which I must attend. I shall therefore have a trifle over a month in Andhra. I wish I had more time at my disposal but I am helpless. But by good organization much work can be done during the month.

My tour is to be undertaken wholly in the interest of khadi but I shall welcome and want contributions for the Lalaji Memorial. Besides the begging however I expect to do active propaganda in connection with the constructive [programme] resolution of the Congress, more especially about the boycott scheme framed by the Working Committee. I should be painfully surprised if Andhra Desha does not make a most encouraging contribution to the boycott campaign. They have no excuse about fine khadi. They have infinite capacity for producing khadi whether coarse or fine. They grow plenty of cotton. They have able workers and they yield to no province in patriotic fervour. Only they have too many leaders and very few followers. Their versatility has given rise to petty jealousies and bickerings. Is it too much to hope that by the time I reach Andhra Desha they will have made an effort not beyond their capacity to close up their ranks and humbly become followers instead of all claiming to lead?

As for Burma, I have instructions from the Working Committee to inspect the work of the Andhra and Utkal Provincial Congress Committees and to have their accounts audited. I hope that the

Presidents, Secretaries and members of both the committees will bear in mind what I have said about Burma and keep everything ready when I reach Andhra Desha. The Utkal Secretary will kindly see me with the papers at any of the places in Andhra Desha that may be most convenient for him.

A word about the purse or purses to be presented. I am already having proposals that earmarked purses should be presented to me. I must warn the workers against the practice. They must not exploit my name for local work. Local work should really stand on its own merit. The character, good faith and ability of local workers should command such financial support as may be needed for local enterprise. This I can say. The major part of my khadi collections I devote to the province, if it is a khadi production centre. Where, as in Ceylon or Burma, there is no khadi locally produced, the whole of the collections must be used outside those provinces. So far as Andhra Desha is concerned, when the tour was originally conceived the idea was to raise money chiefly for khadi production in Andhra. And that decision still abides. No doubt a certain portion will be used for the upkeep of the Central Office. Workers will please refrain from presenting earmarked purses except with my previous consent. All such proposals must come through and be recommended by Deshabhakta Venkatappayya who is in charge of the tour programme.

Lastly, the enthusiasts will have pity on me. They will share with me, if they will not exclusively bear, the burden of keeping my body in good condition. I am often told that I am no longer responsible for it and that it is a national trust. I am not quite convinced that it is. But it is open to the Andhra nationalists to bring home the conviction to me. Let me suggest a few don’ts to them:

Don’t give the body more than six hours’ work.

Don’t make noises at meetings or anywhere else.

Don’t have processions.

Don’t go in for spectacular things.

Don’t have too many enagagements per day.

Don’t take the body to places where there is no money or no business in terms of the objects of the tour.

Don’t take it anywhere to satisfy anybody’s whim or pride.

Don’t take it to many places.

Don’t make the mistake of thinking it is a mere lump of earth; it is no doubt a lump of earth but it contains a very sensitive tiny creature that notices everything done to the earthy case.

Young India, 7-3-1929

169. LALAJI MEMORIAL

Apart from Sind the other provinces have shown poor results in the matter of collections for the Memorial. Even the Punjab still falls short of expectations. It is to be hoped that the Punjab does not need stimulation from outside. The Punjab should not only fulfil all the expectations but should even influence the other provinces by its promptness in responding to the Memorial appeal. Tardy response will lose half the grace that promptness always lends to such things.

Young India, 7-3-1929

170. THE GIVER OF PLENTY

I reproduce from Sjt. Talmaki's paper interesting extracts[1] on 'dairying'. The extracts confirm what has been said before in these pages regarding the only method of saving the cow. The Rao Bahadur examines dairying as a secondary occupation. That no doubt is one very important use of dairying. But the greater object of saving the cow includes the lesser one of finding a secondary occupation as also many others which would occur to the reader. The remedy being known for the main disease the next thing is to find out the way of applying the remedy. And it will at once strike any intelligent person that the way is adult education answering the deficiencies which everyone acknowledges and which everyone would gladly remove at the earliest possible moment. This education can only take the shape of giving practical demonstrations by conducting model dairies, model tanneries and model breeding farms. As I have shown in these pages the three things can be economically combined and run together.

Young India, 7-3-1929

[1] Not reproduced here

171. A CORRECTION

In the Sind letter P.[1] has inadvertently reported that the national flag was hoisted at the office of the Provincial Congress Committee in Hyderabad and that the Provincial Congress Committee had its own building. The fact however is that the ceremony was performed at the office of the District Congress Committee and that it was the District Congress Committee that had its own building. The headquarters of the Sind Provincial Congress Committee are at Karachi.

Young India, 7-3-1929

172. 'IN POSSESSION'

Mr. Pennington is a nonagenarian. However much one may differ from him, there is no denying his sincerity. He is my unfailing correspondent and is never tired of issuing his periodic warnings to me. Here is his latest:

> I have just been reading your essay on "Congress Initiation" (on p. 5 of the 3rd Jan.)[2] and am more puzzled than ever at your confidence about swaraj—at the end of this year(?). However it happened, *Great Britain is in possession of India*—some, including my old assistant, the late Sir John Rees, M.P., think, by right of conquest (which is her title to the Punjab), but most of us, I hope, as trustees for the whole population, especially the lower orders; and as trustees we have *no right to give up our trust* except to somebody considered capable of carrying on the work we have only just begun. Is your National Congress such a body even with you as (shall we say?) President of the Republic? I quite think you are the most likely person for that office, but would you be prepared to undertake the job with or without a British army? If you failed to keep the peace, what then?
>
> Excuse a very brief note: I am now in my 90th year and have no business to be thinking of sublunary things; but I have been more interested in India than even England since 1861. Again wishing you a safe deliverance

[1] Pyarelal
[2] *An Autobiography*, Pt. V, Ch. XXXVIII.

from all India's troubles and trusting you won't make confusion worse confounded.

How is one to persuade men like Mr. Pennington that we repudiate the doctrine of trust and that if a plebiscite was taken even those whom he is pleased to call "the lower orders" would do likewise? I happen to know them, if anyone in India does. I make bold to say that with the exception of those who have come under the degrading influence of the brandy bottle the vast majority do not want the protection of self-appointed trustees. Whether it be called trust or conquest, it has been imposed upon the people and is sustained by forcible measures. It is therefore the same thing to us whether Englishmen claim to be in possession by right of conquest or as trustees. It is the thing itself that matters, not its description. Why then should Mr. Pennington be "more puzzled than ever" over my confidence about swaraj at the end of the year? The puzzle is that 300 million people stand dispossessed of their own property and lack confidence about their ability to recover it from plunderers whether they be called conquerors or trustees. If I could but infect the Congressmen with my confidence in our ability to win back our freedom and, what is more, in the correctness of the means suggested for winning it, ten months that remain out of the twelve should prove more than enough for the task. Let me therefore suggest to Mr. Pennington that it is neither armed force nor benevolence that gives Great Britain the possession and the power over India but it is the want of faith of India's children that is responsible for the tragedy. When that faith comes, it will work miracles. And when it has come to us the whole world including even Englishmen like Mr. Pennington will acknowledge our capacity for owning ourown property. Nonagenarian though he is, Mr. Pennington must not lose faith in his capacity to live to see that happy day. For I have no doubt that when that day comes, he will feel happy in spite of his reluctance for Englishmen to part with their "trust" as Mr. Pennington is pleased to call the spoliation.

Young India, 7-3-1929

173. HINDI IN EXTREME SOUTH

A little over a hundred miles from Trivandrum, the capital of Travancore, lies the Cape Comorin, where the Indian Ocean meets the Bay of Bengal and where these mingled waters bathe the feet of Mother India. From Trivandrum Sjt. K.G. Shesha Aiyer, President of the Kerala Provincial Hindi Prachar Conference, writes to say that this Conference was held at Ernakulam (Cochin) on 10th February last where the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

> This conference expresses its deep sense of gratitude to Gandhiji and Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj for their untiring efforts in pushing on the Hindi movement in South India and trying to make Hindi the national language of India and urges on all patriotic sons and daughters of India to help the movement by studying the language themselves and also by contributing to the central fund.

The resolution was moved by Sjt. A. Shankara Puduval, B.A., B.L., seconded by Sjt. K. Karunakar Nair and supported by Sjt. H. D. Kamath.

Now I have not published this resolution to advertise either myself or Sheth Jamnalalji or the parties to the resolution. Everybody knows my keenness about Hindi *prachar* in the South. Sheth Jamnalalji was a confirmed lover of Hindi before I returned to India in 1915. His tour in the South has given a fresh impetus to Hindi propaganda there. The parties to the resolution have had their reward by appearing before audiences that knew them. My object then in publishing the resolution and the names is publicly to express the hope that the gentlemen concerned are in their own persons fulfilling the two objects of the resolution, viz., that they are learning Hindi themselves and also contributing to the central fund. I am using this incident merely to drive home a patent fact. So far as these gentlemen are concerned it is likely that they are Hindi scholars and that they are regular subscribers to the central fund. But it is not to be denied that we have not yet shed the evil habit of moving and supporting resolutions we never intend to carry out ourselves. It would conduce to national progress and save a great deal of time and trouble if we cultivated the habit of never supporting resolutions either by speaking or voting for them if we had not either the intention or the ability to

carry them out. I know that wherever Sheth Jamnalalji and Sjt.

Rajagopalachari have gone, the meetings have passed resolutions like the foregoing. If all these good people were to carry out the resolutions, the Hindi propaganda should make rapid progress and be never in want of funds.

Young India, 7-3-1929

174. THE NATIONAL FLAG

The ceremony of hoisting the national flag over the Town Hall of the Ahmedabad Municipality brings to mind two letters lying in my file from Gujarati correspondents on the subject. Before coming to the two letters let me repeat my congratulations which I tendered at the time of performing the hoisting ceremony to the Municipality of Ahmedabad on its courage and patriotism in having the national flag for its Town Hall.[1] Such a thing would have been impossible only a few years ago. Sardar Vallabhbhai's brave work in the Municipality has made the hoisting of the national flag quite possible and even natural as was the erection of a bronze statue of Lokamanya Tilak in its only public garden. I can only hope that the Municipal councillors and the citizens of Ahmedabad will never lower the flag and will live up to its dignity, and having erected Lokamanya's statue in its garden will not rest content till the *mantra* of swaraj bequeathed to us by Lokamanya has become a living reality.

But one of the correspondents referred to by me who is an ardent nationalist says that Congress workers and Congress committees nowadays take all sorts of liberty with the national flag. He complains that some do not retain the three colours, others omit the wheel and yet others even use foreign cloth instead of hand-spun and hand-woven khadi. He rightly observes that this treatment of the flag, unconscious though it may be, diminishes its prestige. The other correspondent insists on precision. He says the order of the three colours should be rigidly observed and so the position in the flag of the wheel. I should add that the coloured strips should be parallel and never horizontal. The proportion between the length and width should also be fixed. The length should be twice the width of the flag. The white colour should be on top to be followed by the green and the red should be the last representing as it does the colour of the majority of

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Flag-Hoisting Ceremony, Ahmedabad", February 28, 1929.

the inhabitants of India. The minorities other than Hindu and Muslim represented by the white colour being the joint primary care of the latter have their colour on top. The same reasoning puts the Muslim minority the second in order. The wheel should be in the middle of the oblong so as to cover all the colours.

There was an informal discussion over the flag at the last meeting of the Working Committee. I had drawn attention to the irregularity observed about the flag and pointed out too that there was no formal resolution taken by the Working Committee or the All-India Congress Committee about the quality of the national flag. It was however the opinion of the members that the convention about the three colours, the wheel and khadi was so well established that it had attained the force of a rule and that anybody using the flag in any other manner clearly committed a breach.

That being so, I have suggested that the Congress should have these flags of various sizes made and stocked for supply all over India. Then the quality and cheapness will be assured. The cheapest and the most expeditious method is for the All-India Spinners' Association to have these flags prepared and kept for sale on behalf of the Congress at the different stores. As it would be impossible for any individual committee to compete with the All-India Spinners' Association in point of cheapness the flags should find a ready sale all over India, assuming of course that the national revival has set in and that the convention as to the quality is faithfully observed by all Congressmen and Congress organizations.

Young India, 7-3-1929

175. FOREIGN-CLOTH BOYCOTT

It is a matter of great pleasure to me as I hope it is to every nationalist that Sjt. Jairamdas has been able promptly to respond to my call on behalf of the Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee to take up its Secretaryship and as a necessary corollary to give up his seat in the Bombay Legislative Council. Jairamdas is not a man to take up a cause he does not believe in. His coming therefore as a whole-time worker is in my opinion a great gain to the movement. If the public will similarly respond to the call that will be made upon them from time to time by the Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee, the country

should be able to show a definite advance inside of a few months. Given popular determination boycott is a matter of careful organization.

Two things will have to go together, sale and production of khadi. The moment there is a real intention on the part of the public for boycott of foreign cloth, there will be a great rush for khadi. If production does not anticipate the demand for khadi, there is danger of a severe disappointment and a consequent loss of faith in the possibility of boycott for mere want of khadi. It is therefore necessary for the public not to purchase more khadi than they need. They should try to cut down their rations as far as possible.

I am studiously silent about the indigenous mills. It is my firm belief that mills, by reason of the limitations under which they must work, will fail us in the end if we rely upon them. Then they, being concerns predominantly for making profits irrespective of national considerations, will not scruple to exploit the public and even to sell foreign cloth as swadeshi. I have already exposed in these pages the fraudulent sale of mill-cloth under the name of khadi.[1] Lastly all mills are not swadeshi because they have their habitation in India as the existing Government is not swadeshi for the mere fact of its habitation being in India. Some of them are foreign in every sense of the term. They are administered by foreigners on behalf exclusively of foreign shareholders with foreign capital. They are here merely to exploit the resources of the country. The only thing they reluctantly contribute is to employ the cheap labour of the country and make a gullible public believe that these are swadeshi concerns.

But this does not mean that the mills will play no part in the boycott compaign. They will, but it will be involuntary and fortuitous. Congressmen will not be able at once to reach every village of India. We will reach the towns and the villages surrounding them. The mills reach every village of India. The atmosphere created in the country will throw the villagers into the arms of the mill-owners' agents and they will buy whatever is given to them by the mills under the name of swadeshi. Congressmen will have to be on the watch regarding their operations. There are some patriotic mills which will refuse to betray the country if they cannot by reason of their limitations give active support. My conviction is that a time must come and that within a few

[1]*Vide* "A Mill-Owner on Boycott", pril 5, 1928 and "More of Mill-Owners' Greed", May 10, 1928.

months when the mills will have to make their choice and accept the terms that were offered to them last year. But it will wholly depend upon the determination of the people to boycott foreign cloth at any cost and replace it by genuine khadi. Khadi has no limits. For we have millions of human spindles and lakhs of human looms. The one thing needful is the will to do it.

Young India, 7-3-1929

176. THE "SUTLEJ" TRAGEDY

Dr. Menon writes as follows from Calcutta regarding my article on the *Sutlej* tragedy:[1]

This forceful letter in my opinion makes things look uglier than I thought they were. But I cannot acquit the master and officers as easily as Dr. Menon does. Every Master of a ship is surely responsible for the welfare of the passengers under his charge. I have known humane masters make the lives of passengers happy in difficult circumstances and I have known callous masters make the lives of their charges needlessly unhappy. Indifferent officers often make the lot of passengers unbearable. But it was not my purpose to distribute the blame. It was enough for me to show that the matter could not be regarded as closed because the Government had held what could not be called an impartial inquiry.

Young India, 7-3-1929

177. CHARKHA AS SECONDARY OCCUPATION

I have before me a copy of the paper on secondary occupations read by Rao Bahadur S.S. Talmaki, Hon. Secretary, Provincial Co-operative Institute, Bombay. It is an exhaustive paper containing an examination of most occupations that have from time to time been suggested as capable of being introduced as secondary occupations for the villagers. He rejects some and accepts some as possible. Among the possible and promising secondary occupations, he

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent, referring to "The Inhuman System", 7-2-1929, had written that the Surgeon-Superintendent and not the Ship's Master was directly and exclusively responsible for the management of the emigrants; that the ships were unsuitable and the Government was to blame for the inhuman system.

mentions hand-spinning and devotes to it paragraphs which are worthy of careful study by sceptics. I reproduce them below:[1]

The Rao Bahadur is probably aware that the All-India Spinners' Association is concentrating its attention on organizing hand-spinning in the villages on the self-sufficient basis suggested by him. I commend to his attention the example of Bijolia and Bardoli. At the same time the towns may not be neglected. So much is town life now dominating the villages that unless the towns set fashion in khadi, it becomes most difficult to persuade the villagers to spin even in their won interest and just enough for their own use. Nor is the question of cost quite so simple as the Rao Bahadur imagines. The cotton speculator and the foreign buyer have so disturbed cotton prices and cotton growing that the village often finds it apparently cheaper to buy cloth than to pay for cotton and for weaving. Strange as it may appear, it sometimes happens that the cost of a yard of foreign cloth equals the cost of weaving and not unoften even the cost of cotton required for an equal length of handwoven cloth. I may not go into these intricacies. As a practical spinner I point out the difficulty of the task when there is no State aid and even subtle and subterranean opposition and always indifference to it. Hence the necessity in the initial stage for subsidy and town patronage. Moreover in these days of democracy, the villagers will not understand the philosophy and the truth of khadi if a distinction is drawn between towns and villages. Lastly, since pioneers must be found from the towns, a khadi atmosphere in them is an absolute necessity for nationalizing the reform whose need the Rao Bahadur has so convincingly demonstrated.

Young India, 7-3-1929

[1] The extracts are not reproduced here.

178. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 7, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter as also Dr. Vaughan's book. I have gone through the booklet. There is no comparison between Miss Mayo's production and Dr. Vaughan's essay. It is a very serious contribution to a thorny subject. I propose to make use of it in the pages of *Young India*.

I do not know whether I have already written to you telling you that the Quaker books you referred to were duly received by me some months after receipt of your letter. I was grateful for the gift.

You have now learnt why I had to give up the idea of going to Europe.

I have not seen the reference about my wife.[1] But I can tell you that the relations between us are of the happiest kind. It is quite true if the writings gave you the impression that I do not carry my wife with me through her intellect. Her loyalty is amazing and she has followed me through all the transformations that my life has undergone. My own conviction is that most probably the reverence felt by the Indian men towards India's women is quite equal to that felt in the West;but it is of a different type.[2] The Western form of reverence yielding the first place to women and many such other things, seems to me to be highly artificial and sometimes even hypocritical. All the same, there is much to criticize in our treatment of women. Some laws are bad, some husbands are monsters, some parents are heartless towards their daughters. In these matters toleration is, in my opinion, the key to a mutual understanding. Every social institution, however admirable it may be, has its own shortcomings. I know you are too generous to

[1] In his letter dated February 5, the addressee had written that from some books he had read he got the impression that Gandhiji and Kasturba were "not always of one mind".

[2] The correspondent had, among other things, written: ". . . the biggest stumbling-block to appreciation of the East comes from the belief that Eastern peoples have not learnt the same reverence for women as we have now begun to learn in the West" (S.N. 15329).

take this paragraph for special pleading in our treatment of women where it falls short of the standard that justice demands. I have simply told you as I have felt.

Yours sincerely,

M.K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1406

179. LETTER TO T. NAGESH RAO

S.S. "ARONDA",
March 7, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Heart-felt prayer comes as a result of persistent effort without weariness.

Yours sincerely,

M.K.GANDHI

SJT. T. NAGESH RAO
TEACHER, BOARD HIGH SCHOOL, PUTTUR
S. CANARA (S.INDIA)

From a photostat: G.N. 9240

180. LETTER TO FRANCISCA STANDENATH

S.S. "ARONDA",
March 7, 1929

CHI. SAVITRI[1],

I have both your entertaining letters. You must not mind all the hostile remarks that critics may make about me, about the Ashram. You must treat them as a test for your spirit of forbearance and charity.

I read all about the severity of the winter there and I knew that you would be suffering greatly. At Sabarmati also we had cold such as living people had not experienced. The water in the buckets, etc., in the Ashram and the reservoir had frozen. But this cold did not last beyond the week. Children enjoyed it.

[1] The addressee and her husband Prof. Frederic Standenath had visited the Ashram in 1928, when Gandhiji named them Savitri and Satyavan.

I do not like at all the attitude of Satyavan's professor. But I suppose it has got to be put up with. I wish that you will both find a way out of that false position. It is injurious to the dignity of man that he should have to pocket his opinion for the sake of retaining a job that brings him his livelihood. There is no hurry. You must think out a remedy.

You remember Rasik? He is no more with us in the body. Ere this reaches you will have read all about him in the pages of *Young India*. Ba was very brave over his death. She no doubt felt the grief very keenly, but she bore it most courageously.

I am now at sea going to Burma. It is a three days' voyage. I have taken this time a deck passage for myself and it has made me happy though I do not have to undergo the discomfort of the deck passage because the Company's officers have placed every facility at my disposal.

I was glad to receive the photographs. Though I do not take any ghee and generally even fruit, I do not feel any the worse for it. I think that raw vegetable makes up for both. It is a great discovery at least for me.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

MRS. FRANCISCA STANDENATH
GRAZ

From a microfilm: MMU/XXII/67

181. A LETTER[1]

S.S. "ARONDA",
March 7, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The best way to answer your questions is: take as few things as possible and in as small quantities as is consistent with good health. And in making your selection, take those things which are natural for man and take them all as far as possible in the raw state.

[1] The addressee is not known.

You are wrongly informed that I took brandy at Poona. I have never taken it in my life.

The state of liberated man is one of perfect bliss which cannot be described.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: MMU/XXII/65

182. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

ON THE SHIP TO RANGOON,
March 7, 1929

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have still to hear about Ram Binod's case. Write to me and give me in detail the results of your inquiry in the matter. It will be enough if you address the letter to me at Calcutta. I shall reach Jivanlal's place at Calcutta, Pretoria Street, on the 24th. Post the letter, therefore, so that it may reach the place on the 23rd. Also tell me in the letter what the matter was which called for your inquiry.

Purushottam is quite happy. It is he who reads from the *Gita* to me every day. The sea is very calm, so that I shall enjoy what peace the two or three days of the journey can give me.

There was a suggestion that I should ask you to come to Calcutta, but I don't feel like drawing you away from the Ashram women just now. How can I do that when, after much difficulty, the affairs of their section are at long last running smoothly?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine - Part I, p.50

183. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Friday [*March 8, 1929*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

You must be well by now. I want to be free of anxiety on your account. That can be only when you become brave and self-reliant.

I have reached Rangoon today and am disposing of the mail.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 3335

184. INTERVIEW TO FREE PRESS OF INDIA

RANGOON,
March 8, 1929

As usual Earl Wintert on has lived up to his reputation of being ignorant of the situation and facts. He ought to know for instance that everyone here has said that I was arrested though the arrest was a gentlemanly affair. It is no doubt true that it was an arrest under law or else why should there be a personal bond given for my appearance on the 26th instant? Still grosser ignorance is betrayed by Earl Winterton's statement that the Government of Bengal had intimated that lighting of bonfire to burn foreign clothes was illegal. The Government of Bengal has intimated no such thing. It was intimated through the Commissioner of Police that burning of straw and the like is prohibited without previous sanction in or near a public street or thoroughfare and this has reference only to cities. The Earl should know that burning in private premises is still going on and will continue if people have grit truly. It is untrue to say that my persistence led to a *melee.* In spite of my questioning the legality of the notice and instead of therefore testing this legality in a court of law, the police proceeded in their outrageous conduct in seeking to put out the fire even though there was no imminent danger to person or property. Information in my possession goes to show that the figures of injuries to the police are altogether exaggerated and there is wilful suppression of the fact that many members of the public were

[1] Gandhiji arrived in Rangoon on March 8, 1929.

injured by unnecessary lathi display of the police. The last misstatement made by the noble Earl is that I had agreed to a condition that there would be no similar bonfire in Calcutta. The truth is that I have agreed that there should be no similar bonfire in Calcutta in public squares and therefore also in public streets. Bonfires continue in private places. Whether the high-handed action of the police authorities has created a new political situation or not, it is too early to say.[1]

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 9-3-1929

185. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, RANGOON[2]

March 8, 1929

As I observe that a majority of this vast audience is Hindustani-speaking, I thought it would be but meet for me to begin my thanksgiving in Hindustani. I am deeply grateful too for the great honour you have conferred upon me by presenting me with this address. I tender my congratulations to you upon the great progress which you are able to record during the 15 or 16 years when I was last in your midst. Whenever I have come to Burma, I have looked forward to the visit. I am in love with the men and women of Burma. You in your address have well said that the people of Burma are generous and liberal-hearted. I know they are generous to a fault. I know also, I recognized it in 1901 when I came here for the first time to see my life-long friend and companion Dr. Mehta, that I did not take much time before I fell in love with the men and women of Burma.

I recognize in your women the freest women in the world. I recognize the openness in men and women of Burma which captivated me. It is therefore a matter of great pleasure to me to come to you for the third time and last time. Although I pay this time largely a business visit in the capacity of a Bania that I am, it gives me unadulterated pleasure that I shall be able to renew, under better auspices, the acquaintance with the Burmese friends. Buddhists in Ceylon as if by instinct claimed me as their own and in spite of my protestations that I was a Hindu of Hindus they claimed me and I felt it an honour that they claimed me as one of their own, as a Buddhist

[1] *Vide* also "Conceit and Ignorance", March 21, 1929.

[2] Held at Fytche Square. About 50,000 people attended. The Rangoon Corporation presented Gandhiji an address. Some verbal corrections in the text have been made on the basis of a report in *Young India*, 28-3-1929.

of Buddhists. Undoubtedly if Buddhists of Ceylon, Burma, China and Japan would claim me as their own, I should accept that honour readily because I know that Buddhism is to Huduism what Protestantism is to Roman Catholicism, only in a much stronger light, in a much greater degree.

You, Sir, in your address have prided yourself and very properly upon the rapid progress, I was going to say almost phenomenal progress, that the Municipality of this fair city of Rangoon has made during the past 15 years. I know that although I went about the streets of Rangoon with my friend Dr. Mehta, I should, if I attempted to repeat the performance, lose myself in all the vast streets of Rangoon. Such is the progress which I can see even during the hour when I was driving through your magnificient roads. I only hope that this great progress of your metropolis is a true reflection of the progress of the Burmese farmers, and the Burmese peasantry in the interior. It is sad for me to have to confess to you that the vast progress which to an onlooker the great cities of India seem to have made is not by any means a true indication, indeed not any indication of the progress of the peasantry of India, but I do not propose to take you along the weary path that I have trodden during the past forty years of strenuous public life of a varied character in different parts of the globe.

I consider myself a lover of the municipal life. I think it is a rare privilege for a person to find himself in the position of a municipal councillor. But let me note down for you, as a man of some experience in public life, one indispensable condition to that privilege is that the municipal councillors dare not approach their office from interested or selfish motives. They must approach their sacred task in a spirit of service. They should pride themselves, as I reminded members of the municipality of Karachi, upon calling themselves scavengers. There is a phrase for the municipal corporation in my mother tongue. We call it *kachrapatti* which means literally a scavenging cart. A municipality is nothing if it is not a premier scavenging department embracing all spheres of public and social life of a city, and if it is not saturated with the spirit of scavenging, scavenging not merely by way of looking after the physical sanitation of a city, but also of the internal sanitation of its citizens.

I have pointed out in my wanderings throughout India in reply to numerous corporation addresses that no corporation deserves that name unless it provides for primary education of all its children,

irrespective of caste, creed or colour, irrespective of status; secondly, it provides cheap and pure milk for every citizen of the place even as you provide postage stamps to everybody who may require them. It must not be beyond the ability of a cosmopolitan city like Rangoon to meet these primary wants of its citizens, on which must largely depend the health of the aged and children, if not of all the citizens. May it fall to your lot to claim the honour of having been the first city in India , or if you like in the East, that provided cheap, pure and unadulterated milk for its citizens.

I have thanked you and I thank you once more for the great honour that you have conferred upon me by presenting me with this address, and I thank this vast audience upon having come here as witnesses to the conferment of this great honour upon me. I hope that I shall do nothing in my life in order to make you regret that you have chosen to honour an humble individual like myself.

The Hindustan Times, 11-3-1929

186. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, RANGOON[1]

March 8, 1929

FRIENDS,

It has given me special joy that on the very first arrival in Burma I find myself in close touch with Burmese friends, men and women, and Burmese thoughts and aspirations.

I thank you for the paper that you have just read to me for my edification. But you will not expect me to express any opinion upon the many points that you have raised in your paper. It would be pure presumption on my part if I attempted to give my own opinion upon what we have just heard from you. But let me just own to you that [if] it is true that Indians living in your midst have not interested themselves in your political aspirations and in your troubles and sorrows, I should be very sorry to make that discovery. I do not need to study the real situation in order to express what is after all a truism, that those who live and make their livelihood and more in you midst, should identify themselves with your aspirations and be partners in your joys and sorrows.

[1] An address on behalf of the General Council of the All-Burmese Association was presented to Gandhiji.

You inform me that you are holding a big conference on the 23rd or the 22nd instant and that at that conference you propose to pass a resolution for boycott of British goods. I must in all humility warn you against taking any such step. If you will look around yourselves, you will find as practical men and women that if for nothing else, that resolution is useless for this reason that it cannot be reduced to practice by any single one of you. I claim to be an expert in this matter and so I would advise you strongly to do what is your duty—not to proclaim a boycott of British goods, but all foreign cloth which necessarily includes British cloth.

This limitation is based on practical wisdom which I claim for myself, and secondly, on the creed of non-violence which also I claim to have studied with great reverence and equally great patience and perseverance. The man who is saturated with the spirit of non-violence has never any quarrel with a single individual. His opposition is directed to a system, to the evil that is in man but not against the man himself.

Your quarrel, therefore, is not with the British people, but with the Imperialistic spirit of exploitation of the weak races of the earth. If you will work along these lines—I must not attempt to work out the whole of this proposition, but I must suggest the deduction from premises if you will work it out—the deduction is that this non-violent reasoning puts an automatic restraint on your boycott activity. And the limit is foreign cloth.

Now the mere boycott of foreign cloth does not take you a yard further in your progress towards the amelioration of the peasantry of Burma. I tendered at this evening's meeting, in reply to the Corporation address, my congratulations to the Burmese friends upon their generosity and open-mindedness. But I am sorry that I cannot tender the same congratulations to you upon the industry of the men of Burma. You are satisfied if you scratch the earth a little bit and grow an abundant crop of rice. We also do likewise in several parts of India. But that does not take you through the whole year and no peasantry in the world has yet been found to keep its head above water by working only for a limited period of the year. Well, then, if you import foreign cloth you deny yourselves the privilege and duty of working with your hands and preparing your own cloth. This is like cutting off both your hands.

You have talked, I am afraid, light-heartedly of the spinning-wheel and khadi. Believe me you will fail to introduce the spinning-wheel or rather to reintroduce the spinning-wheel if you will not appreciate this fundamental distinction between the boycott of foreign cloth on the one hand and of British cloth alone on the other.

I will, therefore, ask wiser heads among you to study a little more deeply the immense bearing of the spinning-wheel upon your life as upon that of the starving millions of India.

Young India, 4-4-1929

187. LETTER TO RICHARD B. GREGG

Unrevised

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
March 9, 1929

MY DEAR GOVIND,

I have been having your letters most regularly and they enable me to understand things better than I should otherwise do. It is such a nice thing that for other and sound reasons I cancelled my intended tour in Europe and America. I do not know that I could have done better even in Europe though the latest from Andrews says that America would have been a misfire and it would have been well if I had gone to Europe. However, I know that it was the wisest thing for me to have cancelled the Western visit. So many things, I fancy, need my presence here. It would be very good if you can find time to abbreviate Krishna Das's book and get MacMillan & Co. to publish your abbreviation.

I am just now in Burma, the place that has a great fascination for me. Its people are so simple, so generous, and yet so basely exploited. It is a great pity they do not effectively resent their exploitation.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 4661

[1] Permanent address

188. LETTER TO EDMUND PRIVAT

CAMP, RANGOON,
March 9, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I was indeed looking forward to my tour in Europe this year but owing to the exigencies of the situation in India, I am obliged to cancel the tour. It is difficult now for me to say when, if at all, I shall be able to visit Europe.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

M. EDMUND PRIVAT
SWITZERLAND

From a photostat: G.N. 8790

189. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, RANGOON

March 9, 1929

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I propose to speak to a certain length in Hindustani and as your address is worded in English, I propose to make a brief reply first in English and then say my say in Hindustani.[1] I thank you for this warmth of reception and the kindly sentiments expressed in your address. I am not able just now to appropriate, much less to assimilate, all the compliments that you have paid me. But I could certainly claim two things of which you have made kind mention. The first thing is that my mission is not merely brotherhood of Indian humanity. My mission is not merely freedom of India, though today it undoubtedly engrosses practically the whole of my life and the whole of my time. But through realization of freedom of India I hope to realize and carry on the mission of brotherhood of man. My patriotism is not an exclusive thing. It is all-embracing and I should reject that patriotism which sought to mount upon the distress or the exploitation of other nationalities. The conception of my patriotism is nothing if it is not always in every case, without exception, consistent with the broadest

[1] This sentence is extracted from a report in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 10-3-1929.

good of humanity at large. Not only that but my religion and my patriotism derived from my religion embrace all life. I want to realize brotherhood or identity not merely with the beings called human, but I want to realize identity with all life, even with such beings as crawl on earth. I want, if I don't give you a shock, to realize identity with even the crawling things upon earth, because we claim common descent from the same God, and that being so, all life in whatever form it appears must be essentially one. I can therefore safely claim all the credit that you may choose to give me in describing my mission of brotherhood of man. As a necessary corollary you may naturally mention, as you have kindly mentioned, untouchability. I have said times without number that untouchability is a serious blot on Hinduism and, I think, in the long run, in the race for life in which all the religions of the world are today engaged, either Hinduism has got to perish or untouchability has to be rooted outcompletely, so that the fundamental principle of Advaita Hinduism may be realized in practical life. Beyond these two things among those that you have mentioned in your address I am unable today to appropriate or assimilate anything. It will be time enough to pronounce a verdict upon my work after my eyes are closed and this tabernacle is consigned to the flames.

You have very kindly asked me to give the indigenous population of Burma some advice. I must own to you that I regard myself as altogether unfit for giving you any advice. My study of your great traditions is merely superficial. My study of your present-day problems is still more superficial, although I yield to none in my love and admiration for you to which I gave expression yesterday at two meetings. I wish I had all the facts before me. I wish that all the different parties in Burma could meet me and I could gain access to your hearts. My heart is there open to receive you, but it is for you to call and certainly that call will not be in vain. And if I find I have enough material before me to give you even provisional limited advice I should be at your disposal.[1]

Young India, 4-4-1929

[1] Gandhiji then spoke in Hindi. Appealing for more funds he pointed out that the bulk of the collection would go to the Khadi Fund and benefit the starving millions of India.

190. ADVICE TO ME

After reading the article "Fear of the Penal Code", a gentleman writes to say:[1]

Many young widows not only stay with me, but live here as if they were my daughters. But neither I nor anyone else is capable of giving them away in marriage. I find that present-day reading has become so superficial that no one is prepared to ponder on what they have read. My articles on widow-remarriage are full of qualifications. Their purpose is to show that it is a good deed to marry off a widowwho is a child, who was married without her consent and who will be happy if someone gives her away in marriage. It can never be my intention to marry off a sensible widow by force of inducement. There is an atmosphere of *brahmacharya* around the widows who live here. They are wise. They know that they have the liberty to remarry. They can freely express their wishes to me. I cannot do more than this. I would not go beyond this and I wish that no one would.

I am continuing efforts to see that the child-widows who want to, get married. But not many such are to be found. Their parents would not let them get away from them. They would neither give them away in marriage nor allow them to marry on their own. In such matters parental restraint is detrimental and promotes *adharma* in the name of dharma. They are not aware that, because they are shackled by tradition, they are crushed, the girls in their care are also being subjected to the same treatment. I entertain the hope that those young unmarried women and child-widows who are staying with me would by the strength of their *tapascharya* break the restrictions imposed upon child-widows. They will not be setting a noble example by getting married, but by willingly observing *brahmacharya* they can acquire the strength to break the restrictions imposed upon girls.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-3-1929

[1] The letter is not translated here. The writer had asked Gandhiji to set an example to society by arranging marriages of the young widows among his associates.

191. SPEECH AT GUJARATIS' MEETING, RANGOON

March 10, 1929

Whichever part of India we may visit, we find Gujaratis and Marwaris there. Only these two communities are in a position to carry on trade in khadi. What a shame, therefore, that the Khadi Bhandar here in Rangoon has to be carried on with such great difficulty! I find it intolerable that not a single Gujarati here wears khadi. Most of you are independent men; those who are traders have no excuse whatever for not wearing khadi. If those who work in English establishments are likely to lose their jobs because of khadi, it is better that they give up service. After so many years' training, I expect every Gujarati to show enough courage to give up his job on that account. How many of you read *Navajivan*?[1] I am surprised to know that there are still Gujaratis who do not read *Navajivan*. I do not want to ask how many purchase that paper because I do not care whether you buy it ornot. By God's grace we never had to run it at a loss, though it does not sell now as much as it used to at one time. I have no doubt that Gujaratis will continue to run *Navajivan*. Since most of you read *Navajivan*, I shall not say much about khadi.

But I spoke to you once about your school and I wish to do so again. You must add lustre to your school; you must adorn it. There is no such thing as pure altruism. There is self-interest in all altruism, but that self-interest which includes the interest of others is called altruism. What I am saying about khadi is a matter of such altruism. But this school is a matter that concerns your self-interest. Your trade and your dealings need a certain amount of knowledge and your school should be fully equipped to provide it. Today we are sitting in a rented hall. You should own a hall bigger than this. I know many shortcomings of the English, but they have also many good qualities worthy of emulation. They too came as traders and have remained traders, but what fine arrangements they have made for their children! They have set up big schools in places like Darjeeling and Simla. They spend enormous sums on the education of their children. You too should establish a school for your children where they will get

[1] At this most of the audience raised their hands.

good air and incidentally get an object-lesson in cleanliness. Build your school in a place which will ensure this.

Those who stay outside Gujarat have twofold responsibility. There are a number of Kathiawaris here. There certainly is truth in Navalram's utterance: "People sweeter than honey have I seen here." We should leave our province only after having rid ourselves of bad habits like scheming, flattery, etc., which find an echo in this statement. In Gujarat we live in our own society and so many of our faults remain hidden, the society being large. Here, in a small society, our shortcomings will be immediately discovered. Foreigners have a way of judging a whole community from a single man in a foreign land. But just as a man like Andrews comes to India and makes us forget blemishes of other Englishmen, so you too should learn to overcome your shortcomings and to give a good account of yourselves. You represent not only Gujarat but the whole of India. Burma was not a part of India at all. This is not what we call Bharatvarsha. Since you have come here as foreigners, you should become one with the people here as sugar dissolves in milk. Your lives should be noble and no action of yours should offend anyone.

Do you believe that money cannot be earned by honest means? It is wrong to suppose that trade cannot be carried on ethically. I have a number of examples. Take the case ofJamnalalji himself. When he came in contact with me 12 years ago, he used to keep at a distance from me and observe me. He is a remarkable man, a man who closely observes the efforts of others and acts after great deliberation. I am a witness to the very honest way in which he has been carrying on his trade. Another hallowed name is that of Omar Haji Amod Zaveri. One cannot say that he always made money, but even today he is worth lakhs and I am not aware that he has ever earned money dishonestly. Hence I know that one can become a millionaire, if not a multi-millionaire, the moral way.

Many have doubts about my conduct in respect of the Hindu-Muslim question. Many people hold that I have committed a grave blunder in joining hands with the Ali Brothers and in giving them importance. But even today I do not regret having established relations with them. I do not bargain for anything in return when I make friendships. Friendship is not a bargain, it is a one-sided affair. A man who demands a return cannot be said to be establishing a friendship. A man who wishes to follow ahimsa day and night can

never act otherwise, can never establish a friendship in any other way. Even today if a crisis like that of the Khilafat were to arise, I would stake my life over it, even today I would offer the same assistance to Muslims in their difficulty. You may say that there is a great awakening among the Muslims as a result of my activity, but is the awakening among the Hindus less? I am certainly not so vain as to believe that I have brought it about, I was only an instrument, but I do not feel the slightest remorse for my conduct. I learned to have friendship for the Muslims long long ago. Even in South Africa I had Muslim friends and, though there had been occasions when I received abuse, I maintain today that I have served the world through such friendship. I do not believe I have done anything wrong in asking your service or money for the Muslims. Your dharma will endure if you practise it; the same is true of self-respect and freedom. There is cowardice in saying that we have suffered because of our dealings with anybody. There is no loss to us if we are cheated by anyone, but the day we cheat others, we should take it that we have suffered loss. Hence we should pray that, rather than that we cheat the world, the world should cheat us and, if we want to be cheated by the world, we should cultivate faith in it. Do you know how to put this into practice? In my dealings with others I should not exercise greater circumspection than I would in the case of my son. Just as I would take a receipt for money I give to my son, I would do the same inregard to others. .Having lent him some money, I shall not fear that I shall suffer loss.

This said, I ask you hesitatingly whether you will be able to donate anything for the Jamia Millia. Give if you can. I have come here only for khadi work, hence I shall say only one thing. A man who does too many things may trip; God alone has the power to do many things. He stays apart despite doing many things. Hence, if you have not caught the contagion of hatred of Muslims and if you have faith—not because I ask you, but if you have independent faith — do give.

I am surprised at receiving a note asking what was done about the Tilak Swaraj Fund. I say that there has not been a single fund involving a crore of rupees which was utilized as well as the Tilak Swaraj Fund has been. How much do you have to write off as loss every year in your business? It must be at least five per cent. In this

deal of a crore, there was no loss of even five per cent. And what little loss there was, was certainly not due to anyone having misappropriated any money.

Its accounts are not secret. They are available in the office of Revashanker Jagjivan. I want to tell you, if you do not know it, that it was not I that received that one crore of rupees. Many Marwaris had kept their contributions in reserve and therefore established trusts. Ramnarayan Sheth's trust money in still there intact. Barrister Jayakar and Umar Sobhani paid Rs. 25,000 each and this amount was- utilized for *The Independent*. I had misread the telegram sent by the Deshbandhu about his having received Rs. 15 lakhs. Out of it, he had not received in cash even Rs. 5 lakhs. The money collected in the Punjab Lalaji kept in that province only. Of course, there is a general account. The Gujaratis had made a big contribution. I had appointed trustees in Bombay for the Bombay collection. That money is even today in charge of the trustees. The Congress House in Bombay has been built with the money from those very funds. Today the Congress office runs because of that money and there is an open account of every pice that has been spent. I, however, cannot say whether all the money has been well spent or not. People of the different provinces spent the money as they thought fit, but while doing so no one has misappropriated anything or given anything to their relatives, and a correct account of expenditure is available even today.

But now I am engaged in an even greater enterprise. Remember that there will be such a boom in the trade in khadi that people will throw away the foreign clothes on their bodies as they would shake off ants. You can see the accounts of the Charkha Sangh whenever you like. Jamnalalji and Shankerlal Banker are in charge of organizing it and they are so careful that, if I wanted to use or give away money somewhere, they would check me. It is not that we did not come across cunning banias who misappropriated funds. There may be one cheat in a thousand in our administrative group. But khadi work is known all over the world. You will know how much hard labour has been put in regard to khadi if you have been reading the Bardoli articles. Vallabhbhai would not have been able to launch the Bardoli Satyagraha without the potency of khadi. But today I want to make khadi universal and to carry its message to every home.

I desire that you should take interest even in the activity concerning service of the cow. We are today in a position to produce *shuddha*[1] footwear, which I would not hesitate to put on even while visiting a temple. Do take interest in that activity and promote true cow-protection. I have said a good deal and can say a good deal more; but remember I have said what I did in order to move you to donate money.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-3-1929

192. SPEECH TO ARYA SAMAJISTS, RANGOON[2]

March 10, 1929

I go about calling myself a Sanatani Hindu. That nevertheless you regard me as an Arya Samajist only shows your generosity. Your love fills me with joy. I have great regard for the Arya Samaj. What is controversial in the Arya Samaj will be forgotten in the course of time, but its services and those of Rishi Dayanand to Hindu society will be ever remembered. The Rishi proclaimed to Hindu society the *mantra* of *brahmacharya*, insisted on spread of Hindu culture and underlined the importance of the study of the Vedas. This service of the Rishi cannot be forgotten. To be sure I don't think much of his talk about Hinduism and the Arya Samaj being separate entities. In my opinion the Arya Samaj is a branch of Hinduism and every Arya Samajist is a Hindu. I will only say to the Arya Samajists: cultivate all the virtuesthat you claim for yourselves; practise them in your lives wherever you happen to be.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 4-4-1929

[1] Literally, 'pure'; here, made of the hide of dead animals

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour in Burma

193. SPEECH TO INDIAN GATE-KEEPERS[1]*, RANGOON*

March 10, 1929

If you think there is anything mean or bad about your occupation you are mistaken. When calamity threatens your employer you are called upon to protect not only his property but his family and his honour. It is no small responsibility. Lakshman, after all, only served as a gate-keeper to Rama. You will recall that as a consequence of what occurred while he was thus employed, Lakshman had to stake his life in battle. How sacred Lakshman considered the office of a gate-keeper and how he brought honour to it! If you think the status of a gate-keeper is low I may tell you that the British Government likes to be considered the gate-keeper of India, guarding India's gates and yet it has today become the master of India. So acquire the qualities that are required of a gate-keeper. So fortify your character that you can withstand the strongest temptation. Develop such courage that when occasion arises you can sacrifice your life for your employer.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 4-4-1929

194. SPEECH AT INDIANS' MEETING, RANGOON

March 10, 1929

There has been a complaint against you to which I want to draw your attention. It is that the Indians do not share the Burmans' lot, but they cause them harm. I hope that there is exaggeration in this complaint but I am afraid that there is some grain of truth in it. For I noted such a habit in the Indians in Ceylon and also those in South Africa. Therefore I am not very much surprised to hear of it here. I must ask you to havedue regard for the people of the country which enables you to earn your bread and more than that—to a mass wealth. I appeal to you not to forget your brethren of Burma. There is an additional reason for the Hindus to do so: they are Indians and follow Buddhism, which is an offshoot of Hinduism. So you should feel

[1] These men, mostly form Gorakhpur, presented to Gandhiji a purse of Rs. 1,811. The report is extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour in Burma.

sorry when they are unhappy and rejoice in their welfare. Your conduct should be such that you would not have to feel sorry for it before God. It should be such that the Burmese would not mind if you stayed on in Burma. That many people have come here from India would be a good thing if you mingle freely with the Burmese. Try to understand their viewpoint and help them where you should. From my forty years' experience, I tell you that nothing will be lost if we deal with the world in this way.

Do not tell me that I have become a saint and you cannot do what I can. I do not claim to be a saint. I too have to feed myself, I have my wife, children and relatives. It is not that I talk of high wisdom, having come to the brink of death. I am talking of the experiences I had, when I was a young man. There are many who live by honest labour, doing daily work, with God as their witness. So do not disregard what I say.

My dress is not that of a fakir, but that of a Dhed, a Bhangi or a coolie. But those Dheds and coolies are not fakirs. They too earn their bread by the sweat of their brow. He who engages in trade with honesty earns his livelihood and also earns peace in the next world.

I have come here as a mendicant. I want to do business on behalf of sixty million Indians by robbing the Indian brethren here and I also want to prepare your children for independence. Further, I have come here to beg money for those who do not get even a crust of bread. I am glad that I have not spent this day in extracting money but have utilized it in getting acquainted with you, residents of Burma. Know me as I am and then give me something if you like to.[1]

Remember that I expect not only the Gujaratis but the Bengalis, Punjabis, and Tamilians to give me as much as they can, though I will certainly dig my hands deeper into the Gujaratis' pockets than into those of others. The Chettis who deal in crores and have lacs of rupees worth of property may not disregard my claim. Let them not forget that I also belong to their class, I am a Gujarati Chetti. I ask you toremember that it is after 14 years that I am paying this visit to Burma. You do not mind even a famine coming once in fourteen years and try to face it as bravely as you can. I hope then that you will

[1] The following paragraph is taken from an account of Gandhiji's tour in Burma by Mahadev Desai and Pyarelal published in *Young India*, 28-3-1929.

satisfy the hunger, to the best of your ability, of this representative of *Daridranarayana*, coming to you once in fourteen years who may never again be in your midst. But pray don't forget that *Daridranarayana's* appetite is insatiable.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

195. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, RANGOON[1]

March 10, 1929

FELLOW STUDENTS AND FRIENDS,

I tender my hearty thanks for your address as also for what I hope is a generous purse for *Daridranarayana*. Those of you who are Indians are not unaware of the meaning of *Daridranarayana* but the Burmese students may not perhaps know its significance. *Daridranarayana* is one of the millions of names by which humanity knows God who is unnamable and unfathomable by human understanding, and it means God of the poor, God appearing in the hearts of the poor. It was the name used in one of his intuitive and sacred moments by the late Deshbandhu Das. It is not a name adopted by me out of my own experience, but it is a heritage from Deshbandhu. He used the word in connection with the mission to which among several others my life is dedicated, I mean the gospel of the charkha or the spinning-wheel. I know there are still many who laugh at this little wheel and regard this particular activity of mine as an aberration. In spite of the criticism and ridicule which is levelled at it I adhere to the gospel of the spinning-wheel as one of my most substantial activities, and I feel certain—as I am certain that I am addressing you at the present moment—that a time is coming when all the scoffing will cease and the scoffers will kneel and pray with me that the spinning-wheel may find an abiding place in the desolate homes of the underfed, starving millions of India. I have not hesitated to bring that message to the Indians who have found their home here. I have no right to approach the Burmans with an appeal for funds for khadi, but I think I have a rightto approach the Indians who find their

[1] The meeting was held in the Jubilee Hall. A purse of Rs. 1,000 was presented to Gandhiji.

livelihood and more in this land of yours, and to ask them to part with their substance for feeding *Daridranarayana*.

A friend told me, I do not know with how much authority, that there was a talk amongst the students that it was not proper for me to make collections for khadi in Burma, and that I must devote something for some work to be done in Burma for the Burmans. If there is any Burman here with that conviction, he will, I hope, go away at the end of the meeting convinced that it will not be right on my part to use any part of the moneys here to purposes in Burma. It should hurt your dignity, it should hurt your self-respect to bring a man all the way from Sabarmati to raise funds for local enterprise. You should be able to find the wherewithal for those purposes and leave me free to do whatever I can for my mission on behalf of the starving millions of India.

You have claimed for me an honour in connection with the student world which I dare not appropriate. But I am endeavouring to claim another honour and that is to become a servant of the student world—not only of India, not only of Burma, but, if it is not too high a claim, the student world throughout the universe. I am in touch with some students in the remotest corners of the earth, and if God gives me a few more years I might be able to make good that claim. I know that I have established a vital connection with thousands and thousands of students in India. I was wondering whether the majority of students here would be Indians or Burmese—I should have been glad to know the percentage of Indians, I should have loved to know something of the life of the students here. But it does not matter whether you are Burmese or Indians, you have used the proper word for the mass of students all over the world—the students' republic. You have claimed for yourself irresponsibility. May it be yours, if it be within limits. The moment the limits are crossed you will cease to be students. A student does not cease to be a student the moment he leaves his scholastic career. At any rate, looking back to 40 years I find that when I left my studies I was entering the threshold of the student's career. And as one who has had some experience of life, take it from me that mere book reading will be of little help to you in after life. I know from correspondence with the students all over India what wrecks they have become by having stuffed their brains with information derived from a cartload of books. Some have become unhinged, others have become lunatics, some have been leading a life

of helpless impurity. My heart goes out to them when they say that try as much as they might, they are what they are, because they cannot overpower the devil. 'Tell us,' they plaintively ask, 'how to get rid of the devil, now to get rid of the impurity that has seized us.' When I ask them to take Ramanama and kneel before God and seek His help, they come to me and say, 'We do not know where God is. We do not know what it is to pray. That is the state to which they have been reduced. I have therefore been asking the students to be on their guard, not to read all the literature that is within their reach, and I ask their teachers to cultivate their hearts and establish with the students a heart-contact. I have felt that the teachers' work lies more outside than inside the lecture-room. In this work-a-day life where teachers and professors work for the wages they get they have no time to give to the students outside the class-room, and that is the greatest stumbling-block in the development of the life and character of students today. But unless the teachers are prepared to give all their time outside the class-room to their students, not much can be done. Let them fashion their hearts rather than their brains. Let them help them to erase every word out of their dictionary which means disappointment and despair. I am trying to put before you all that is welling up in my breast. Pray don't interrupt it with your applause. It will stand between yourselves and your hearts. Never own a defeat in a sacred cause and make up your minds henceforth that you *will* be pure and that you *will* find a response from God. But God never answers the prayers of the arrogant, nor the prayers of those who bargain with Him. Have you heard the story of *Gajendra Moksha*? I ask the Burmese students here who do not know one of the greatest of all poems, one of the divinest things of the world, to learn it from their Indian friends. A Tamil saying has always remained in my memory and it means, God is the help of the helpless. If you would ask Him to help you, you would go to Him in all your nakedness, approach Him without reservations, also without fear or doubts as to how He can help a fallen being like you. He who has helped millions who have approached Him, is He going to desert You? He makes no exceptions whatsoever and you will find that every one of your prayers will be answered. The prayer of even the most impure will be answered. I am telling this out of my personal experience, I have gone through the purgatory. Seek first the Kingdom of Heaven and everything will be added unto you. Do not go to your books or to your teachers with impure hearts. Go with the purest hearts and you will get from them what you want. If you want

to become patriots, real patriots and protectors of the weak, espousers of the cause of the poor and the oppressed to whom the education you get is not available, if you want to become guardians of the purity of every girl and woman in Burma, purify your hearts first. If you approach your mission in life in that spirit all will be well.

Young India, 4-4-1929

196. SPEECH AT SHAWE DAGON PAGODA, RANGOON

March 10, 1929

I had an exhausting day. Therefore I have been obliged not to make any lengthy speech. You will understand me when I tell you that I have not much energy left in me to give you a long speech in a loud voice.[1]

To see on this elevated and sacred site so many Phoongys and such a vast audience is no doubt an inspiring sight, and if I had enough energy left in me at the end of the day, under that inspiration I might have delivered a pretty long speech. But this I would say to the Phoongy friends that in common with the rest of the priesthood of the world you are being weighed in the balance. I was glad to find you telling me that the Phoongys were leading the political movement in Burma, but you have a very serious responsibility upon your shoulders when you undertake to lead the political battle. History shows that the priesthood has not always interfered with political matters to the benefit of mankind. Very often unworthy ambition has moved the priesthood of the world as it has moved unscrupulous men to take part in politics, and if now you Phoongys aspire to lead the political movement of this one of the fairest lands on the face of the earth, you are shouldering a tremendous responsibility. I would ask you not only to be pure beyond suspicion, but I would ask you to combine with stainless purity great wisdom and great ability. This very essential condition being granted, you will find that the whole of Burma will be at your beck and call and will respond to your lead. May the spirit of the great Lord Buddha under whose shadow we are now seated guide everyone connected with the movement.

[1] This paragraph is taken from a report in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 12-3-1929. What follows is taken from the account by Mahadev Desai and Pyarelal of Gandhiji's tour in Burma.

I thank you for gracing this occasion by your presence and I thank you for the warmth with which you have received me ever since I landed on your hospitable shore. I wish everything that is good to the simple-hearted people of Burma.[1]

Young India, 28-3-1929

197. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[2]

RANGOON,
March 10, 1929

Q. What is the present political condition In India?

A. In the melting pot.

Q. What form of Government do you expect to get immediately for India?

A. The form of Government described in the Nehru Report.

Q. Do you think you can get Dominion Status?

A. Most decidedly.

Q. Should dominion form of Government be accepted as most suitable for the present or should it be the goal of Indian aspirations?

A. In my opinion Dominion Status can become the final form of Government for India if it is obtained in the way and in the form that I have postulated. If it means a partnership at will on a basis of equality with full freedom for either party to secede whenever it should wish I for one should be content with it.

Q. Do you consider that India should be in the British Empire?

A. Not in the British Empire as it is today but in it as I conceive it.

Q. Do you intend to take part in the discussions in England or in India if you are invited by the British Parliament regarding Indian Reforms?

A. Yes. If the invitation is *bona fide* and sincere.

[1] This paragraph is taken from the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* report.

[2] A deputation of Saydos, heads of the Buddhist religious orders in Burma, presented Gandhiji a long interrogatory. The replies given here are collated with a report in *The Tribune* and the account by Mahadev Desai and Pyarelal of Gandhiji's tour In Burma.

Q. Do you think that it is in the interests of Burma that it should be part of India for ever?[1]

A. It is a difficult question for me to answer. All I can say is that it will be worth the while of Burma to remain part of India if it means a partnership at will on a basis of equality with full freedom for either party to secede whenever it should wish. The main thing is that Burma should have an absolute right to shape her destiny as she likes.

Q. Do you consider that the line adopted by Swarajists in India helps the cause of the country for getting the form of Government they aspire to have?

A. No, I do not.

Q. Will Indians in Burma join hands with the Burmans in the boycotting of foreign goods and in helping the local industry?

A. Not in the boycott of foreign goods but in the boycott of foreign cloth. Boycott of all foreign goods is a wild goose chase. But the boycott of all foreign cloth is within the range of present possibility and it will do you good to accomplish it. In this work India will join hands with you. And India would be an unworthy neighbour and nothing good if she does not help your local industries.

Q. What protection should be given to minorities in Burma?

A. The same protection should be given to India minorities in Burma as it is to be given to minorities in India, nothing more. If we cannot stay here on our merits, we should retire.

Q. What advice can you give to us and Indians to secure the willing co-operation of both communities, rich and poor alike, in Burma to get the form of Government we aspire for?

A. We should approach each other not in a spirit of suspicion and distrust but that of amity and goodwill. A whole community should not be damned because there are a few scoundrels in it. Each community should live in a neighbourly co-operation with the other; and not seek to dominate over the other. It is clear, therefore, that if any party relies on the strength of the British bayonet for the protection of its supposed interests, there can be no real co-operation between it and other communities. Our culture is substantially the same as yours; although in externals we may differ. I wish we couldtake a leaf out of the history of China in this respect where the

[1] This question and its answer are taken from *Young India*.

Confucians, Buddhists, Christians and Mohammedans mingle together and regard themselves as Chinese rather than the followers of this or that religion. Take Burma, Ceylon, Siam, Malaya, Japan and India—there is something fundamentally common between them all, which should make it possible for them to co-operate with each other in combating the common danger of Western exploitation.

Q. What line of action do you consider we should adopt in view of our present political condition in Burma?

A. The conditions in India and Burma, so far as I can see, are much the same. I have there[fore] the same remedy to recommend to both, i.e., non-violent non-co-operation. But I am no judge of the local situation. You should study the movement carefully and evolve a policy of national action in accordance with your peculiar environment and social conditions. I do not want a mere mechanical imitation on your part. There must be a conviction behind it, a determination to put it into practice. My opinion I consider to be worth nothing of only because I cannot remain here to enforce it. You say you have no powerful organization in your country that can mobilize you to common action like the National Congress in India. The best thing for you, therefore, is to have a body answering to the Congress in India, a body of pure and selfless workers who would depend not on the strength of numbers but on the strength of quality.

Q. Are Indian leaders willing to discuss things with Burmans regarding the allocation of subjects?

A. I see no reason why they should not.[1]

The Saydos complained to Gandhiji that they had no central body in Burma that could effectively mobilize their nation to action. Gandhiji told them that the remedy lay in their own hands, if they could only play their part.

In this land of monks and monasteries, where women enjoy such freedom and equality of status with men, where the people are so simple-minded, with such an amazing faith, you should be able to work wonders if you Phoongys would only shake off lethargy and inertia. Yours should not be merely passive spirituality that spends itself out in idle meditation, but it should be an active thing which will carry the war into the enemy's camp and set the spirit of Burma ablaze from one corner of the land to the other. It should burn out allthe sloth in you and the impurity from your surroundings. You will

[1] What follows has been taken from *Young India*.

not today hurt a fly, such is your peaceful nature, but that is not enough; no Phoongy who does not feel hurt when a fly is hurt and go out of his way to save it has a right to wear the Phoongy's dress. You have renounced the world and taken to a life of religion. A person in your position would fear neither kings nor emperors nor even the public. For what matters it to him whether he gets even food and raiment or not? Walking always in the light of God, steadfast in his devotion to truth, he should stand [up] four square to all injustice, impurity and wrong wherever it may be found. Such is the internal strength I want you to cultivate.

Young India, 28-3-1929, and *The Tribune*, 9-4-1929

198. SPEECH TO LABOURERS, RANGOON[1]

March 10, 1929

Perhaps you do not know that at the time of the Tilak Swaraj Fund collection I was offered fifty thousand rupees as subscription to the Fund if only I would visit a professional performance for ten minutes. But I declined. It is not that I disdain to mix with and move among the professional actors' world, for there is no class of humanity with which I do not claim kinship; but a person in my position has necessarily to guide his conduct not merely with reference to himself but also to the effect that his example might have on others. Whatever may be the pros and cons of going to the public theatre, it is a patent fact that it has undermined the morals and ruined the character of many a youth in this country. You grown-up people, may regard yourselves as immune from the insidious effects of the theatre on yourselves, but you ought to have regard for your little children whose innocence you expose to an unconscionable strain by taking them to questionable performances. Look around you. We are situated in the midst of a raging fire. The cinema, the stage, the race-course, the drink-booth and the opium-den—all these enemies ofsociety that have sprung up under the fostering influence of the present system threaten us on all sides. Is it any wonder, then,

[1] A theatrical performance had been organized on behalf of the labourers, who had promised to pay the proceeds to Gandhiji. He was under the impression that he was going to a labour demonstration and was amazed to find himself in a theatre. The speech is extracted from the account by Mahadev Desai and Pyarelal of Gandhiji's tour in Burma.

that I have not hesitated to call the present system Satanic? My advice to you therefore is, beware of pitfalls.

And you members of the histrionic profession, you may if you like continue to follow your avocation, but preserve your purity. I know the terrible temptations to which you are exposed and if you cannot follow your profession without losing your purity, for heaven's sake throw it up without a moment's consideration. God will take care of you. A labourer is always worthy of his hire.

Young India, 28-3-1929

199. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

RANGOON,
March 11, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I have your four letters, three today. There are only three sailings to and fro. But you need not worry about them. I do not go away from Rangoon for many days at a time. I leave Burma 21st instant to stand trial.[1] I expect to reach Calcutta 24th and hope to leave it 26th.

Such fear as you had this time is perhaps inevitable. Take every precaution you can and have no nervousness if it comes in spite. Starvation is undoubtedly the best and the speediest cure. Do not mind the weakness. And do not take up more burden than you can easily shoulder. "Hasten slowly."

I have a letter from Privat.[2] Everything that is happening here shows the wisdom of my not having gone to Europe this year. The call will be clear and the way will be open, when the real time has come.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Did I tell you Zakir Husain is with me? The more I see him the more I like him. All's well.

From the original: C.W. 5349. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9405

[1] It was to be held in the court of the Presidency Magistrate, Calcutta, on March 26,1929.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Edmund Privat", March 9, 1929.

200. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

RANGOON,
Silence Day [*March 11,1929*][1]

SISTERS,

Today I have just enough time to drop a line to you to show that I remember you .

I may get your letter, if at all, by the next mail. Letters take a full seven days to reach me here.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-1: Ashramni Behnone, p. 50

201. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Silence Day, March 11, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got three mails together today.

We are leaving for Moulmein tonight and shall be returning from there on Wednesday. There will be one more mail by then. The next mail will arrive here on Tuesday. I return to you the cloth-lined envelopes, so that you can use them. I shall use one such envelope for today's post.

The collection is going on quite well here.

As you cultivate more and more patience your difficulties will disappear. It is certainly necessary to use the buildings which remain unoccupied.

You will have to be firm in dealing with Durga and Maitri. Love and firmness are not opposed to each other. In a difficult hour, only love can remain firm, for it fears nothing. When an expert surgeon uses his knife, a bystander will faint; but should the surgeon make a mistake in using the knife, the patient will lose his life.

Take Chhaganlal Gandhi's help whenever you need. He is a man who always works to the best of his ability. Only, one should know how to preserve good relations with him. One should know that

[1] The source has "March 4, 1929" which is evidently a slip.

he is old and respect his old age. He cannot help much now when he cannot work in peace or when he must do things in a hurry. But he can do much, working slowly and in a congenial atmosphere.

All of you should think about the problem of Parnerkar's mother.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall be accompanied by Ratilal and Champa, and they will require the first floor of the bungalow. They will engage their own servants and, therefore, we shall not have to do much for them.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5391

202. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

RANGOON,
March 11, 1929

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

As there is a case pending against me in a Calcutta court, a definite date can be given only after the hearing of the case. You should not, therefore, expect from me much advance notice. Wire to me at Calcutta on the 25th. If you are keen that this ceremony should be performed only by me, I request you not to be in a hurry for the present. Wait till I have more time.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAI BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA
275 HORNBY ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6592

203. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

RANGOON,
Silence Day [*March 11,1929*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Why the listlessness? Why the crying? Why the sorrow? No one can stay on with us for ever. Let us love all and feel the love of all. While following the path of service how can we have time to think of anything else?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not asked Father about Andhra. I shall do so now.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3332

204. LETTER TO C.F. ANDREWS

MOULMEIN (BURMA),
March 12, 1929

I have your letter. Yes. It is quite a good idea your staying out the summer in England watching events and holding yourself in readiness for anything that may crop up.[2]

About the stirring things happening here you have the pages of *Young India* which I hope you are getting regularly.

If I collapse as I did in Kolhapur be it so. I am trying to conserve myself as much as possible, but I feel that I may not shirk the work that has come upon me.

I am dictating this under great pressure from Moulmein.

C.F. ANDREWS, ESQ.
C/O MRS. ELMHURST
1172 PARK AVENUE
NEW YORK CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 13372

[1] From Gandhiji's presence in Rangoon.

[2] In his letter dated February 4, Andrews had asked: "Is it better for me this summer to remain in England on my return? I am trying hard to make my countrymen realize the immediate necessity of granting Dominion Status to India. . . ."

205. LETTER TO PROFULLA CHANDRA GHOSH

MOULMEIN,
March 12, 1929

DEAR PROFULLA BABU,

I have your letter. I telegraphed[1] as soon as I got your telegram and I hope that Dr. Ansari will perform the ceremony.

I shall be returning to Calcutta on the 24th instant and shall be there till the 26th instant. You don't want any special instructions now about the boycott of foreign cloth. The thing is plain sailing. But perhaps we shall meet during my stay in Calcutta.

Yours sincerely,

DR. PROFULLA CHANDRA GHOSH
ABHOY ASHRAM
COMILLA

From a photostat: S.N. 13376

206. LETTER TO T. N. KALIDASS

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 12, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I shall not be able to go through the papers you have sent me for the time being at least. You will have to be satisfied with whatever I am able to write in *Young India* out of my experience. I might endeavour to draft model instructions and publish them in *Young India*.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. N. KALIDAS
HIGH COURT VAKIL
THE RAILWAY PASSENGERS ASSOCIATION
TANJORE
S. INDIA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13375

[1] The telegram is not available.

207. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

MOULMEIN,
March 12, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

This I am dictating just for the sake of writing to you from Moulmein. Moulmein is beautifully situated. The house overlooks the Bay. It is a little place containing a population of 60 thousand. It is therefore very peaceful. The real heat has not yet commenced. Today here it is exceptionally cool because it is rainy.

I hope you have now shed all the weakness left by the fever.

BAPU

SHRIMATI MIRABAI
CHHATWAN CHHOTTAIPATTI
DT. DARBHANGA, BIHAR

From the original: C.W. 5350. Courtesy: Mirabehn: also G.N. 9406

208. LETTER TO RAMADEV

MOULMEIN,
March 12, 1929

DEAR RAMADEVJI,

As you have well said there is no hope of my attending the Gurukul anniversary this year. My message to the *snatakas* is:

"You will be judged not by your English learning nor either by your Sanskrit, but you will be judged by your character shown in a thousand ways in the daily activities of life. You will be judged by your showing that complete *brahmacharya* in thought, word and deed is a present-day possibility."

By the way, you have not yet sent me a copy of your address to the Gujarat Vidyapith students. I want you to help in every way you can the foreign-cloth boycott.

Yours sincerely,

ACHARYA RAMADEV
GURUKUL KANGRI, DT. BIJNOR

From a photostat: S.N. 13377

209. LETTER TO NALINI MOHAN RAYCHOWDHURY

CAMP, MOULMEIN,
March 12, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your telegram. I am sorry that a previous public appointment for the same date on which the Provincial Conference takes place at Rangpur prevents me from responding to your kind invitation. I however wish it every success and hope that the Conference will take up Winterton's challenge[1] and strain every nerve to complete boycott of foreign cloth during the year. Complete success in that one single item will give us a consciousness of our strength which I am sure nothing else can.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. NALINI MOHAN RAYCHOWDHURY
CHAIRMAN
BENGAL PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE
RANGPUR (BENGAL)

From a photostat: S.N. 13371

210. LETTER TO MRS. R. SARDARKHAN

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 12,1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You command sympathy as only recently I lost a grandson[2] of mine who was also a pet of the family. But the lesson I learnt from his death was to practise resignation to the will of God. After all death and birth are not death and birth, but it is the face of the same coin. If it is so, why grieve?

Yours sincerely,

MRS. R. SARDARKHAN
E.C.H.S.
LUDHIANA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13374

[1] *Vide* "Conceit and Ignorance", March 21, 1929.
[2] Rasik Gandhi; *vide* "A Boy of much Promise", February 21, 1929

211. SPEECH AT GUJARATIS' MEETING, MOULMEIN

March 12, 1929

You are busy, but I am busier still; so you should understand how every minute of mine is precious. I was shocked to hear that you had collected only Rs. 5,000. Do you know why I roam about so much? I feel much exhausted and during this year the exhaustion has reached the limit. I wish to take some rest, but how can I do so when I don't allow others to take any? And how can I allow any rest to people? When our house is on fire, how can we afford to be lying in bed? If there is a fire, even a sick person lying in bed would get up and try to extinguish it. Today the whole country is on fire and the soul of India is being destroyed. But those who are asleep are not even aware of the fire. Once a cousin of mine was sleeping in a house which caught fire. He was not aware of it and took to his heels only when he was awakened. If we remain asleep, the fire will consume us too. I have come here to awaken those who are asleep. To the Burmese I may give something, if I can. But from you I have come to take. You will be unhappy, and you ought to be, to know that most of the khadi work today is in the hands of Marwaris. I want the Gujaratis to take up that burden. We in Gujarat have a unique Vidyapith. I am not exaggerating if I say that it is a centre of Gujarat's public life and social work. Have you heard of Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta who has donated Rs. 10,000 for the school here? It was his ambition at one time to devote one half of his time in Gujarat and the other half in Burma. After making money in Burma, he wanted to set up a Bank in Gujarat from which I could keep on drawing as much money as I needed for national work. In short, we had arrived at an agreement that he should make money to his heart's content and I should take money to my heart's content and work away to my heart's content. Once Gokhaleji had also given me a similar assurance. But he is now no more, and Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta has become an invalid. So who is going to support me? I want the Gujaratis to bear that burden. I do not ask for crores from you. I have never asked for more than what I need. I cabled Gokhale from South Africa: "Do not send me more money." But he went on sending it. The result was that I saved and brought back Rs. 2½ lakhs and donated it to the Imperial Citizenship Association, and the amount is now being spent for Indians living in foreign Colonies. But my method of work is different. I do not carry

on my work with interest on capital, but with the courage of the people. I place my budget before the people every year and tell them that, if they like my work, they should find the money for it. How much money could my firm of *Daridranarayana* need? If you can find out how slowly a fire is extinguished, you could know how much money will satisfy my hunger. In spite of all this, I tell you that, if someone gives me sixty crore rupees, I would be unable to utilize that sum because I do not have so many workers. God has created a protective fence by having man's power circumscribed. I therefore ask for only as much today as I can handle.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-3-1929

212. SPEECH AT MOULMEIN[1]

March 12, 1929

Those who believe in the teaching of the Buddha as you do cannot afford to pass a single moment in idleness. The great Nature has intended us to earn our bread in the sweat of our brow. Everyone therefore who idles away a single minute becomes to that extent a burden upon his neighbours, and to do so is to commit a breach of the very first lesson of ahimsa. Ahimsa is nothing if not a well-balanced exquisite consideration for one's neighbour, and an idle man is wanting in that elementary consideration...The remedy that I can commend to you for the deplorable state of things is the same as I have recommended to my countrymen in India. You have got enough weavers in this beautiful land. But they instead of working for the good of the nation are slaving away for a foreign capitalist because it is to foreign yarn that they are applying their skill and workmanship. If therefore you will avoid helplessness, if you will become self-contained and happy and not become semi-starved as we in India are, you will take my word and revert to the spinning-wheel while there is still time.

Young India, 11-4-1929

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour in Burma

213. LETTER TO D.[1]

MOULMEIN,
March 13, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You are unnecessarily nervous. I spoke to Sjt. Birla when on my way to Calcutta I passed through Delhi on the 2nd instant. It was lapse of memory on his part to tell you that I had suggested Rs. 120-150. I had given him the very figure that you had mentioned to me, i.e., Rs. 175. But now you say you require Rs. 200. Whether Rs. 200 is the minimum or not, you would require Rs. 175 at least. I would ask you to be patient and hopeful. Sjt. Birla is anxious to accommodate you.

You have specialized in theoretical philosophy, you must specialize now in applied philosophy. Philosophy to be worth anything has got to be applied in one's own life. A philosopher must be brave and absolutely to the point, whereas your letters are unusually long. Do not shower compliments on me or Sjt. Birla. If he accommodates you or if I do anything for you, it is from a sense of duty. And duty carries no merit with it. I want you to feel certain that work will be found for you giving you not less than Rs. 175 and not more than Rs. 200. If there is a hitch, you will please write to me.

I leave here on the 21st instant and reach Calcutta on the 26th and Delhi in the afternoon of the 27th instant.

I hope you will not mind this letter. Good as you are, I want you to be better and I want you to be also a practiser of the philosophy you teach.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. D.
CAWNPORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 15379

[1] A draft of this letter dated March 12 is also available (S.N. 13378). It appears the letter was finalized and sent the following day with certain verbal variations.

214. LETTER TO SIR CHARLES TEGART

MOULMEIN,
March 13, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I hope to attend Court on the appointed date. But I think it is due to you to tell you that I have a long-standing appointment for 30th March in Kathiawar. A Conference there depends on my presence. If therefore I am allowed to be free I shall have to leave Calcutta on the 26th instant by the Delhi Express. I hope therefore that you would please see to the case being finished before the time of departure from Howrah.

Yours sincerely,

SIR CHARLES TEGART
COMMISSIONER OF POLICE
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13381

215. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

MOULMEIN,
March 13, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Today also the mail is about to leave, and so I write only this. Everything is going on all right. I think of all of you. Everyone must have recovered. It would be good if all of you sat in the sun every morning with your bodies exposed. If anyone falls ill, he should immediately stop eating, take only water and have motions with the help of an enema. There seems to be no need for any other treatment.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5393

216. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MOULMEIN

March 13, 1929

After expressing pleasure in having Burmese majority among the audience, Mahatma Gandhi spoke about the drinking habit.

I was intensely pained to learn yesterday that the drink evil was on the increase and I was intensely pained to learn that the drink revenue amounted to one-third of the land revenue. It is a terrific thing to contemplate for any country in the world, but it is nothing less than suicidal in a country like Burma where climatic conditions are totally opposed to the drink habit. I know what the habit is doing in India. A serious responsibility rests on the shoulders of people living in towns. I would like the leaders of public opinion in Burma to consider this thing seriously and make every endeavour to root this thing out. Whatever may be true of countries with cold climates I am sure that in a climate like ours there is no need for drink whatsoever. Nothing but ruin stares a nation in the face that is a prey to the drink habit. History records that empires have been destroyed through the habit. We have it in India that the great community to which Shri Krishna belonged was ruined by that habit. This monstrous evil was undoubtedly one of the contributory factors in the fall of Rome. If therefore you will live decently you will shun this evil whilst there is yet time.[1]

Addressing the Burmese ladies, Mahatma Gandhi drew their attention to two things: their taste in foreign fineries and smoking habit. He fell in love with the men and women of Burma soon after his arrival and his love would have been heightened, if ladies had not gone so much for foreign silk. He hoped that Burmese ladies would take a lead in the matter.

You are enjoying a freedom which no other women on earth are enjoying at the present moment. You are noted for your industry and your skill. You have great organizing capacity and if you will but revise your taste for foreign fineries and take to heart the message of simplicity that I have given you, you will revolutionize your life. . . .[2]

I have really less courage to speak about the terrible curse of

[1] This paragraph is extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour in Burma.

[2] This and the following paragraph are from *Young India*.

smoking. But I understand that throughout Burma I shall not find a single man or woman free from this habit. We who come from India are painfully surprised to see the beautiful Burmese women disfigure their mouths by cheroots and cigars. But I know that it is a most difficult thing to speak about an evil which is enveloping the whole world. If you have heard the name of Tolstoy I quote his authority to show that Tolstoy being an inveterate smoker himself was speaking from experience when he said that tobacco dulled the intellect of man, let alone other senses. Indeed he cites examples to show that most deliberate crimes have been committed under the influence of smoke, and in one of his beautiful stories he pictures the villain of the piece as committing murder not after drink but after having had a smoke. Although it is perfectly true that the smoke habit is on the increase and it has amongst its supporters many of the brilliant men of the world, there is a spirit of resistance against it and the opponents are some of the best men in the West and great moralists.

Gandhiji advised Indians to lead such life as people would think well of them. He added that he came to collect money for khaddar and appealed to help him with money and take to khaddar. Mahatma Gandhi told the Burmese audience that he came with a selfish mercenary motive having no right to ask them or expect anything from them.

The Hindustan Times, 16-3-1929, and *Young India*, 11-4-1929

217. BE TRUE

I promised to give a free rendering of a remarkable address in Sindhi presented to me by the students of Hyderabad.[1] Much other work crowded it out. I now give it below:

> We welcome you heartily on behalf of the Hyderabad students. We are aware that we are not entitled to have you in our midst as we have not carried out your precepts; but we hope that our hearts would respond after having heard your spoken word. We will not deceive you. We therefore propose to open out our hearts to you.
>
> Our town is a centre of education. Compared with the other towns, we have a larger proportion of those who have passed the Indian Civil Service examination. We have one college here, three high schools for boys, two for girls and numerous other

[1] *Vide* "Sind Impressions", February 21, 1929.

English and Sindhi schools. In the English schools alone there are 4,000 students. But out of these, unfortunately there are not more than 22 or 25 students wearing pure khadi and there cannot be more than 3 or 4 per cent wearing indigenous mill-cloth. The others wear indifferently swadeshi and *videshi*. The vast majority only wear *videshi*. You know well enough that our living is extravagant. We incline towards the English language and Western civilization rather than towards our mother tongue and our own culture. We cannot show much of service or simplicity, aware as we are of the poverty of our country. We know that it is good for the country that we should use khadi and swadeshi articles; but we regret that we were unmoved even when the heart-rending cry of the flood-stricken fell on our ears. And this indifference is the cause of the absence of our response to the general distress surrounding us. Our association has been doing some work during the last four years. But there is not much in it of which we can make any boast.

We are ashamed to have to refer to the evil custom of *deti-leti*. In spite of having received higher education we do not hesitate to squeeze thousands of rupees from the wife's relations. Some of us regard it as our birthright to obtain money through our wives. Many have no sense of self-respect. In spite of the higher education amongst girls, hardly half-a-dozen have been courageous enough to resent it as insult to have to buy their husbands. Recently there has been a boycott resolution against those who countenance *deti-leti*. But people have not yet freed themselves from the evil.

But we do not want to give you only the dark side of the picture. There is a bright side also. You may feel sure that our capacity for good is limitless. We can become torchbearers throughout Sind; for we are the inheritors of traditions left in this very town by Sadhu Hiranand, Diwan Navalrai, Bhai Balachandra, Diwan Dayaram and other such heroes. Even at the present moment we have in our town men who are noted for their organizing capacity and discipline. We have in our midst men who have shown capacity for leadership in the political, the social, the educational and the literary field. They have taken a leading part in all patriotic endeavours. Merchants of Hyderabad are to be found carrying on their enterprise in all parts of the globe. We wish to make no parade of these things, but we want to

show that we are not devoid of capacity for work or service. If our energies can be once organized, it is possible to show good progress. We want to feel that we have not forfeited the right to your affection because we have not acted up to your precepts, because we know that it would be only through your affection that our hearts will expand.

I have given a free rendering of this address first because I want to keep the students to their promise and secondly because it may serve as an example to other students. Let me remind the students of Hyderabad that although they did not know the contents of the address before it was read to me, in answer to the question deliberately put by me, they with one voice endorsed the sentiments expressed in the address and promised that they would make every endeavour to make up for past indifference and neglect. I therefore expect them to boycott completely foreign cloth and take to khadi. I expect them to boycott *deti-leti* once for all.

For the other students let this address be a model. Addresses containing mere praise of leaders are really useless. Those who need such praise should not have any address presented to them. If addresses are presented to those whom students really love and honour they should contain references that might be of some service to them. I do not wish to suggest that every address should be like this one. But I do suggest that every address should have a local touch, a local significance and should refer to some matter of importance. Real affection is not shown through praise but through service. Self-purification is a preliminary process, an indispensable condition of real service. I have therefore welcomed this address as a token of sincere desire on the part of the students of Hyderabad to go through this preliminary process of self-purification, a consummation much to be desired during this year of grace and preparation.

Young India, 14-3-1929

218. NOTES

THE OLD ENEMY

A friend from Akola sends the two following apparently dissimilar questions:

1. How can a man overcome his passion?

2. If A is in the habit of wearing khadi and he requests B to do the same and B regrets his inability to comply with A's wishes, what is to be done in that case? How can a husband induce his wife, if she refuses, to wear khadi?

As to the first, a man has first to give up everything that tends to excite or stimulate his passion and then to wait upon God for help.

As to the second, it is clear that there should be no compulsion about others adopting one's views or habits. My own experience is that example in such matters is an unfailing preceptor and whether for the khadi or for any other reform, we have to wait patiently for our neighbours to adopt it and remain staunch in our own adherence. What I have said about A and B applies equally to the case of husband and wife.

POOR BOYS' FUND

The head master of the New English School, Achra, writes as follows:[1]

I am sorry that owing to my travels at the time the letter was received, it remained buried amongst my papers for nearly two months. The amount has been already acknowledged but the letter has a value of its own apart from the collection. For the teachers and the boys have responded not only to the letter of the appeal but also to its spirit in that they have determined to give up foreign goods and even tea. I suggest to the teachers that the vow to give up foreign goods will not be kept up either by the teachers or by the boys. It is too sweeping to be fulfilled. For instance, neither the teachers nor the boys will give up, foreign books, nor foreign pins, nor foreign watches, nor foreign needles. I suggest to them a revision of their vows. It will be better if they will name the foreign articles which they will refrain from using.

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The students and teachers had sent a collection of Rs. 101 for Lajpat Rai Memorial Fund. The head master had requested Gandhiji to reduce the price of khadi, for poor student at any rate.

As to khadi, I have pointed out often enough that it is cheap at any price, so long as it is sold at the cost price plus a small addition for the upkeep of the stock where it is sold. Let it be borne in mind that during the seven years of its career khadi has cheapened itself by 50 per cent. If there was more patronage it would be cheaper still. And why will not poor boys be taught to help themselves rather than that they should be taught to expect khadi at cheaper than cost price and thus to expect people poorer than themselves to give a gratuity? Boys and girls should be taught to spin their own yarn during their idle hours. I have suggested at least half an hour per day. They can then even weave that yarn, or if that becomes difficult as it may well become so, send the yarn to an agent of the All-India Spinners' Association and get khadi of the same weight and containing yarn of the same count merely for the cost of weaving.

IN ITS GRIP

An Agra friend asks:

> Have you insured your life? Is there anything objectionable in this Western institution? Some insurance companies invest the whole or major portion of their receipts in Government securities. Do not these companies help, with the public money, a Government which you brand as Satanic? Do they not make our lives dependent upon it and so create a tendency in us to foster its permanence to some extent? If so, should patriotic persons be the agents of such companies or insure their life with them?

If this friend is a regular reader of *Young India* he should know that I did insure my life in 1901 and a short time after I gave up the policy because I felt that I was distrusting God and making my relatives in whose behalf the policy was taken dependent upon me or the money I might leave them rather than upon God and themselves.[1] The opinion arrived at when I gave up the policy has been confirmed by subsequent experience. The correspondent's fear about the Government's hold is more than justified. Every penny we invest in Government securities undoubtedly adds to its strength. The Government gets our money at the cheapest rate of interest and holds it undoubtedly and manifestly to use it against us whenever its own existence is threatened by us. No Government can or will do otherwise. When we have our own national Government, it will follow the same method; only, then we would expect and wish it to do so. In

[1] *An Autobiography*, Pt. IV, Ch. IV.

the case of the existing Government, we run helplessly into its arms. We do not know how dependent we become on it. We have become dependent for light, water, food and air itself so far as big cities are concerned. It was not without thinking of every one of these things that non-co-operation was conceived. If Government feels itself safe that is because it knows that when the national struggle is on, it will have on its side all the monied and otherwise vested interests. We are co-operating in a thousand ways with the Government. Of this a few important items of co-operation were singled out for non-co-operation and I know that if we are to win our freedom through non-violent means, we shall have to revert without much variation to those items.

FUNCTION OF KHADI

The same friend asks:

> Do you want to perpetuate the use of khadi or do you recommend it only for temporary use for acquiring political freedom? In the former case, does not khadi offend against aesthetics and do you expect common people to stifle the natural grievance of the sense?

I do indeed seek to perpetuate khadi because it is the only means of saving the peasantry from extinction. I claim for it the ability to gain political freedom because it has the ability to give the peasantry its economic freedom, what is more, to enable the peasantry to keep the wolf from the door. The correspondent is obviously ignorant of the past history of his own country and the present evolution of khadi. When the other parts of the globe did not know the use of cotton, India set the aesthetic standard and supplied the rich nations of the West with the finest fabrics in a variety of colours. And the present evolution of khadi shows that slowly but surely it is day by day reaching the aesthetically inclined people. After all, true art can only be expressed not through inanimate power-driven machinery designed for mass production but only through the delicate living touch of the hands of men and women. I commend the correspondent to Acharya Kripalani's pupils and associates who are making extensive experiments in beautifying khadi.

This correspondent has also raised the question of the so-called dearness of khadi. I have not dealt with it because it has already been dealt with elsewhere in this issue of *Young India* .

Young India, 14-3-1929

219. SPEECH AT RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, RANGOON[1]

March 14, 1929

MY SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

I thank the Ramakrishna Mission for the address they have so kindly presented to me. I am confident you are very pleased to see Maulana Mahomed Ali with me here. People ask me often: "Where are your Ali Brothers?" Then I reply to them according to what I feel. Today as the Maulana Saheb is near me, I am saved from a similar enquiry. I want to tell you the will of Khuda (God) will prevail and I will get him always with me. I do not want to tell you more.

Now I want to tell you something about Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and his mission. He has left for us a great work. I have faith in his mission and I would ask you to follow him. Wherever I go the followers of Ramakrishna invite me and I know their blessings are on my work. Ramakrishna Sevashrams (people's service centres) and Hospitals are spread throughout India. There is no such place where their work is not being carried on a small or large scale. Hospitals are opened and the poor are given medicine and treatment.

I do not like to say much because I have hardly any time at my disposal. When I remember Ramakrishna's name I cannot forget Vivekananda. Sevashrams have been largely spread by Vivekananda's activity and it was he who made his Master known throughout the world.

I pray to God to increase such Sevashrams. I hope such people will join them who are pure and who have love for India. Let them do the work inspired with the love of India.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-4-1929

[1] The function was organized as part of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa birthday celebrations.

220. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, RANGOON[1]

March 14, 1929

MADAM AND FRIENDS,

I feel not a little embarrassed in having to address this meeting especially as I do not possess any knowledge about your activities nor was I prepared to face this audience. I thought that I would have to meet all sorts of people who would come, some out of curiosity and others in order to know my views about temperance. But I see that I am in front of an audience, if I may so name it, of specialists. For I hope that you are all specialists in this work. You, madam, have suggested that if an educative campaign is carried on amongst the people, and as a consequence of that propaganda people who are in the habit of drinking cease to visit liquor shops, there would be no liquor shops in existence. I want to put before you my own experienence without combating the view that has been suggested from the chair.

My work in connection with temperance began as early as 1893 when I went to South Africa. When I saw my own people, my own countrymen drinking and even women drinking who would never think of drinking in India and as a result leading a life of the gutter, I saw that the task was an uphill one. These men and women were not prepared to listen to any lectures on temperance, much less to any personal advice. I saw too that some of them were perfectly helpless or they thought that they were helpless. I adopted many measures, all such measures as were within the competence of a man who is without any authority. But I cannot claim any degree of visible success for those efforts. There was a kind of a "Liquor Commission" appointed by the Union Government after South Africa became a Union. I gave evidence or rather wrote a note for that Commission, but I am again sorry to have to inform you that nothing came out of it. The position in South Africa was and still remains somewhat curious and anomalous. There are three different degrees of restriction on the possession and drinking of liquor. The Bantus and the Zulus are prohibited from carrying bottles with them or from being served in canteens, and yet they do drink. Indians may notpossess bottles, but they may drink as much as they like in the canteens, with the result especially to the women that I have described to you. The white man is of course free. There is no legislation in connection with him, but you may guess what I would like to say. It is that the source of all this

[1] The meeting was held under the auspices of the Burma Women's Christian Temperance Union.

evil comes from this freedom of the white men in South Africa. Some of them have amassed a fortune by exploiting the drink habit of the Bantus and the Indians.

Then I came to India, and I found the position very different from the position in South Africa in one respect, but the problem essentially the same. There was as you are aware a hurricane temperance campaign in 1920-21. And you will not mind my saying to you that if we had then received whole-hearted support from all the temperance organizations throughout the length and breadth of India, we would have achieved complete success. If you are careful students of the temperance movement in India you would gain the knowledge from the Government reports that we were within an ace of complete success, at least in some provinces. Many of the liquor dens were practically closed. Hundreds of opium dens in Assam were deserted. And then followed the tragedy. It consisted in Government repression. It was a shameful and sorry affair. I admit that the movement had a political colour. It was bound to have that political colour. But the political motive should not have deterred temperance organizations from helping a movement that was essentially moral. You will pardon me for taking you through this history which, if it is tragic, is also deeply interesting. The repression came about in this fashion. The Government revenue dwindled down at once in Bihar, in Assam, in the Central Provinces. There was an onrush of feeling, a desire, a yearning for self-purification. That yearning came, I do not know how—we do not always know the mysterious ways in which God works. But there is the fact that the political movement became also a movement of self-purification, and in that onrush thousands of workers became volunteers to picket liquor shops and opium dens and the people also began to believe that it was their duty to desert the drinking-booths. The Government started repression and thousands of volunteers were thrown into jail for the offence of picketing drink and drug shops with the result that today all those canteens that were deserted and opium dens that were almost closed are, I am afraid, doing probably the same volume of business as they were doing prior to 1920-21.

The moral that I would like to draw from this story is that in this connection in India and Burma—treating Burma as a separate entity for our argument—legislation has really to go hand in hand with educative propaganda if not to precede it. I have not been able to study as carefully as I would like to have done the drink habit of the Burman. I assure you that ever since I have come into touch with

Burmese opinion I am trying to learn from Burmese friends about this drink habit of the Burman, but I can speak about it only from second-hand evidence as against India about which I can speak from first-hand knowledge. And I am here before you to give my own evidence that drinking is not a habit with the aristocracy, certainly not with the middle-class man; it is a habit confined to the labourers and especially to the factory hands. And this is an interesting piece of evidence that I am placing before you. Why do factory hands drink when they did not drink before they came to work in the factories, even as those men and women who went to work in South Africa were not drinking before they migrated there? The answer is that the conditions there are such and the temptations that are placed in their way are such that they become addicted to the habit of drink. But even these men who have become addicted to the habit of drink do not justify it. They have a sense of shame about it. If you speak to them about it, they will tell you they are helpless, they are labourers; they will tell you all sorts of falsehoods and try to deceive you, but they are ashamed of this habit. In Europe it will be ungentlemanly on my part if I do not stand a drink when you come to see me. When I was a student in England, I found myself in a most embarrassing position because I would not stand a drink to friends. But that is not the case in India, and therefore I suggest that it would be a wrong thing for you to say that education has to precede legislation. Education will never be able to cope with the evil. There is no prohibition because drink brings a large revenue. Even Indian ministers say, 'We cannot forgo this revenue, but you must go on educating.'

About this revenue also there is a tragedy. The ministers—it applies to Burma equally with India—should never have been placed in that embarrassing position. Excise as you know is a transferred subject. It should never have been so made. Excise revenue should have remained as part of the central revenue, so that it should be open to the Government at any moment to forgo this revenue and declare complete prohibition. In a mighty country like America where drink was so common they have been able to declare prohibition; how much more easy should it be in India or Burma where liquor is not the fashion,where the vast majority of the people do not want liquor, where if you take a referendum you will get millions of signatures in favour of any representation for the introduction of prohibition legislation? The excise revenue is 25 crores. It is not a revenue on which any government should take pride in conducting its

administration. It is a revenue which must be sacrificed and whilst it lasts, it should be held as sacrosanct and be wholly dedicated to the purpose of eradicating the drink evil. But today it is being utilized for educating our children with the result that a tremendous barrier has been put against this necessary temperance legislation. People are made to think that they will not be able to educate their children if this revenue stops. If things go on unchecked like this a whole nation might have to perish. If the evil spreads, it may be too late to undertake legislation. In America it has been possible to educate public opinion in favour of prohibition because there is universal education there, but it may not be possible to mobilize public opinion like that in a country like India where there is illiteracy on such a vast scale and its handmaid superstition. I would therefore appeal to you, especially the women, who are concerned with temperance work to take courage in both your hands. I do not ask you to take as gospel truth what I have told you. Test the truth for yourselves and if you find that what I have told you is more than confirmed by your investigations, then I suggest that you will make it your sacred duty to carry on a whirlwind campaign for total prohibition. The task is difficult only because the rights that have been created through the drink evil belong to the ruling race.

If you discuss this problem with the administrators, they will tell you all sorts of stories and put all manner of difficulties in the way of carrying this legislation through. Do not believe these difficulties at all. There is no difficulty at all beyond the difficulty of making up the deficit of revenue. If you and I have made up our minds that this evil has got to be eradicated and if it can be eradicated only by prohibition legislation, then it is for the Government to find a way out of the deficit difficulty. It is not open to it to ask you to suggest ways and means for making up that deficit. That would be like the conduct of the man who comes to you with unclean hands and asks you to help him to clean them. However there is the question of picketing. When the psychological moment comes—and I am praying for that moment-when every liquor shop and opium den is picketed I will expect you to lend a helping hand and not to say, 'How can we help him? He is an agitator.' Even now an intensive agitation for temperance is being carriedon in the Surat district, and that has been possible because there is a band of workers including women belonging to cultured families, self-sacrificing and brave. When we have got a compact body of reliable and unimpeachable workers we

shall carry on this campaign over the whole country. And when that time comes you will find the whole of India dotted with pickets and I hope that that influence will percolate through the Bay of Bengal to Burma. Burmese ladies and gentlemen too may then, if they so choose, carry on picketing and thus save a noble race from extinction which so far as I can see stares them in the face—as much as it does India—if they are not weaned from this curse in time.

Young India, 18-4-1929

221. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

March 15,1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

We arrived in Rangoon from Moulmein this morning. I got the letters posted by you. It is surprising that you had not got till Thursday the letters posted at Calcutta on the silence day. Subbiah is very careful in this matter.

Yesterday I had time to write only a postcard to you. The post will leave on Saturday. It is Thursday today.

I had to stop with the last sentence. I am now writing this on Friday morning in Paungde. I experience no difficulty, and those who accompany me also find the journey quite comfortable.

I have sent a wire to you about Chalala. Both of us[1] believe that there is no harm in buying that land so long as we can sell it whenever we wish to. But only you can judge there what is best.

I shall look into the balance-sheet. It is not likely, however, that either of us will be able to examine it in detail. I do hope to return there on the 29th.

It is advisable that you should produce khadi in Bahial and wherever else you can. Mahavirprasad has told me that they will buy all the khadi which we can send to Calcutta. There will be, therefore, no problem of exporting it. Give as much help from the Ashram as you can.

[1] Gandhiji and Jamnalal Bajaj

I have accepted the offer of a donation of Rs. 10,000 as help in manufacturing khadi in the area around Kathar. More about this when we meet.

Your decision to spin for four hours on every Friday is a good one. I am very happy that you intend to learn carding.

I like the suggestion of doing away with the distinction between six and seven. It is desirable that, in managing our affairs, our methods should, as far as possible, be smooth and uniform. I like the resolution about supplying milk to the Vidyapith. Our aim now should be to see that it gets the milk every day in time.

Radha-Rukhi must have recovered now. You did not write and tell me what arrangement you made about the Bal Mandir during Radha's illness. There should be provision for an alternative arrangement whenever someone falls ill.

After this, there will be only one more post from Burma—that is, on Tuesday. On Thursday, we start from here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5393

222. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

March 15, 1929

CHI. GANGABEHN,

You must have recovered by now. This year, I hope to exact much work from you and from others who volunteer. I think it very necessary that the Ashram should be free from all worries and that I, too, should be free from anxiety about the Ashram. Never give up your rest hours during the day. Bear with all criticism. Attend the prayer-meetings regularly. Save time for spinning.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 23

223. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

March 15, 1929

CHI. BRIJKRISHANA,

I have your letter. I would like to stay with you. But you are only a guest in the house. It is not right for me to put up at a place where the elders have no faith in my work and ideals. It is also not right for you to urge me. Consideration of the financial state of your family further deters me from staying with you. I have, as a matter of fact, taken enough service from you, and used your money too. You must resist the temptation to give more.

I hope you are keeping well.

Having said all this I shall do as you wish. Consult Devdas.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2362

224. SPEECH AT PAUNGDE

March 15, 1929

Mr. Gandhi replying jointly thanked for the addresses especially the women's address and he was particularly happy that the lady who read the address had been jailed in a national cause. He greatly regretted that none amongst Indians had mastered the Burmese language.

I hope Indians will take the hint from this occasion and learn Burmese as a second language. The least that the Indians owe to the Burmese is that they should try to come close to them by learning their language and I would suggest to the Indians to teach their children Burmese, even if they find it too late for themselves now to do so.[1]

Addressing Burmese men and women, Mr. Gandhi said the more he saw them, the more he felt attracted to them. He exhorted them to discard all foreign fineries, and remarked what contrast foreign umbrellas presented against the picturesque Burmese

[1] This paragraph is taken from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour in Burma published in *Young India*, 11-4-1929.

umbrellas. Foreign silks took away both their money and art. He then asked them toavoid drink and cigars of which drink was far more serious evil, and asked them to shun it as poisonous snakes.

He added the duty of Indians here was to interest themselves in the Burmese welfare, and associate with them in all the beneficial activities.

Speaking in Hindi, Mr. Gandhi urged the Indians to be friends of the Burmese and lead life so that Burmese may think well of them and appealed for further money for his khadi work.

The Hindustan Times, 18-3-1929

225. SPEECH AT PROME

March 15, 1929

Mr. Gandhi replying jointly to all the three addresses expressed great joy that he was able to see during his visit to the interior of Burma so many Burmese friends, both men and women. He said the object of his visit was a mercenary and selfish one which was to collect money. As for their request to advise them for their guidance in the struggle for emancipation, Mr. Gandhi considered himself unfit for the task but, as a general rule which could be universally applicable which he had learnt from his forty years of personal political life, he could say that such emancipation needed first self-purification.[1]

I have on other and no better guidance to offer you than to commend to your attention the general principle of non-violence, in other words self-purification. How and in what manner it can be applied will naturally depend upon evils that exist in your midst. But let me single out at least one thing. It seems to me that the conditions of your agriculture are almost the same as those in India. As I was driving to Prome, I Passed through a village which was predominantly a weaver's village. But all the looms there are working with foreign yarn and therefore have no living contact whatsoever with the peasantry. Weavers weave not with any instinct of patriotism but because it brings them as. 8 to Re. 1 per day as the case may be. I have become aware that there was a time when all these beautiful *loongis* were made out of hand-spun yarn. The spinning-wheel which you manufacture in the place is, from an artistic standpoint, superior to any Indian spinning-wheel. On the whole it is cheaper than Indian wheels and probably lighter to work with. God has blessed this land

[1] The paragraph which follows is taken from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour in Burma.

with an abundance of bamboo, and all you have to do is to carry the message of the wheel to the peasantry and revive this beautiful art of hand-spinning and I would ask the municipalities of Burma to make a commencement in municipal schools and carry the message through them to the villagers. Weavers will then be working on behalf of the poor villagers. Whereas if the weavers remain dependent on foreign yarn not only will they remain isolated from village life, but it will be a question of time when they will be extinct as weavers. For it is the tendency of the weaving mills to consume all the yarn that the spinning mills produce. If therefore you will establish a living connection with the villages—of weavers with villagers and of townspeople with villagers—you can do so only through the spinning-wheel.

He hoped that if at any time self-purification movement was started in Burma, phoongys will take the lead. Phoongys were and should be the repository of Burmese culture and trustees of the normal welfare of the people. Their responsibility, he said, therefore, was very great.

Referring to the drink evil, Mahatma Gandhi said that without non-co-operation, the evil could never be got rid of. He suggested non-violent non-co-operation with liquor-sellers and producers of drink. But he warned his audience that emancipation wrought with violence meant the transfer of power from one to another. Non-violent non-co-operation was the only advice he could give.

Speaking to the Hindus, Mr. Gandhi complimented them for the remarks they had made in their address that in Prome existed a great friendship among all classes and communities. He exhorted Indians to wear khadi. He said he was told that only five thousand rupees were collected. They should collect more for which he made an earnest appeal.[1]

The Hindustan Times, 18-3-1929, and *Young India*, 11-4-1929

[1] Immediately after the speech Gandhiji addressed a women's meeting.

226. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*March 16, 1929*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

After this there is only one more mail to send you from Burma. The mail after takes me back to Calcutta. You are doing well in taking a little quinine daily. Use yourself to an occasional fast or semi-fast even when you are feeling well. Omit ghee at times, milk other times. Sometimes take only juicy fruits. Thus you are likely to avoid fevers.

I hope to collect here about one lac of rupees. It won't be a bad sum for Burma to pay during these times of trade depression.

I have often wished you were present during such tours as this. But I know also that what you are doing is far more important. If God grants you health you will travel to these places yourself and you will then do it after better equipment. The training and the experience you are gaining will prove invaluable when I am gone.

I have passed on your remarks about soft spindles to Lakshmidas. Your argument does appeal to me. But I constantly ask myself, why then did Maganlal who had started with soft spindles resort to the hard ones? Why has not Lakshmidas noted what you have? But, of course, these are no reasons for discounting your discovery. They are reasons for the necessity of utmost caution.

I note too your remarks about keeping women in the Ashram. You will in all these matters go as slowly as you like and never attempt anything about which you have yourself no confidence or have even a doubt. 'Slow but sure wins the race.'

Andrews is still in America. Gregg tells me he is doing well. You will see a paragraph in *Y. I.* from Zimand's letter.[2] A.[3] is to abbreviate the *Autobiography* for the Macmillan Company.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5351. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9407

[1] In his letter to the addressee of March 18, 1929, Gandhiji mentions having sent a letter on Saturday. Presumably this is that letter.

[2] *Vide* "Notes", 21-3-1929.

[3] C. F. Andrews

227. FAREWELL MESSAGE, MARTABAN[1]

[On or before *March 17, 1929*][2]

Money gifts are hardly ever a sure indication of love. In fact in our epics we have the story often told of God refusing the richest presents from those having great possessions, and preferring to eat the coarse morsel lovingly given by a devotee. But it is my great misfortune that I have to measure your love by the money gifts you give for *Daridranaryana.* It is hardly fair to you, I know, but no matter in whatever balance you were weighed, you have simply refused to be found wanting. The excess of your love can only teach me to be more humble and more worthy of it .

Young India, 18-4-1929

228. "STOMACH MAKES US SLAVES"

A Patidar writes:[3]

The object of writing this letter is to create in the reader compassion for cows, buffaloes, etc. It is a noble objective. But the letter has had quite a different effect on me. Such cruel slaughter of cows and buffaloes has now been going on for a long time. The Hindus and Muslims of Bombay are a witness to it. Not only that, they have been participants in this great violence. Here it is not a question of religion in a narrow sense; there is here decline of dharma in a wider sense. History provides many examples of even meat-eaters showing compassion. but meat-eaters should show, towards the animals whose meat they eat, such compassion as they can. Slaughter-houses in the West are exemplary from this point of view. There new ways are constantly devised and adopted so that cattle are killed instantaneously and suffer the minimum pain. Total abstention from meat is of course the best compassion, butthose who cannot practise it should at least lessen the pain inflicted on animals. This we do not see in the slaughter-houses in India.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour in Burma

[2] Gandhiji gave the message while setting out for Mandalay by train. He was in Mandalay on march 18, which was a Silence day.

[3] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had said he was getting training under the Bombay Municipality as a Sanitary Inspector and was shocked to find that large numbers of cows, oxen, pigs, goats and sheep were killed in the various slaugter-houses of the town.

But it is the students of whom the above letter makes me think. They pay the heavy fee of Rs. 200 for six months, not so that they may serve but with an economic end in view: that they may secure good jobs. Can one not make a living without practising such occupations? So long as educated people seek to earn their living through such occupations the slaughter-houses can neither be improved nor closed down. A man should decide even the question of the means of earning his livelihood from the moral point of view. At least educated people like the writer of this letter should stay away from the immoral temptation of making money by hook or by crook. The writer in question is well educated and cultured and has intelligence enough to choose his profession with due regard to ethical considerations. It is to be hoped that he and other young men like him will use their intelligence.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 17-3-1929

229. A CARDER'S EXPERIENCE

An experienced carder writes:[1]

Everyone who carries out experiments, spins well and also minimizes wastage, will have added that much to yarn production in India .

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 17-3-1929

230. "MY HEART ACHES"[2]

One can say now that Gujarat has become familiar with the name of the Tamil poet, Bharati. English translations of a number of his poems by Shri Chakravarti Rajagopalachari have already appeared in *Young India*. Shri Jugatram Dave has translated one of them for *Madhapudo*,the organ of the children of the Udyoga Mandir. I give it[3] below as it is interesting and instructive. Shri Jugatram Dave has become the poet and servant of villagers. He has dedicated himself to

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had referred to the article "Good Carding", in *Navajivan*, 9-12-1928, and described his own experience in spinning with cotton which had not been dried.

[2] The title is from the Gujarati version of a poem by Bharati.

[3] Not retranslated here

the Raniparaj community. I believe we can learn a lot from his songs. Then who bothers to find out if they contain poetry or not? Or why should we not call that writing poetry which has power to take the people forward? How can that be poetry which lacks the power to kindle life?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-3-1929

231. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

MANDALAY,
Silence Day, March 18, 1929

SISTERS,

Mandalay is the town where the Lokamanya wrote his commentary on the *Gita* and where Lalaji and Subhas Bose were kept prisoners. We are in that town today. I have not been able to go out to see these places, but I have sent the others. The lady of the house in which we are staying is a saintly person. She has immense wealth and her husband and children are alive, but she does not wear the smallest article of jewellery on her person. Neither does she encourage her daughters to wear any jewellery. She has one daughter of thirteen years of age, whom she is encouraging not to think of marriage till she is twenty. She persuaded this daughter to give away to me whatever ornaments she had with her. She observes the other rules of the Ashram too, and regularly reads *Navajivan*. And it cannot be said that she is highly educated.

All your activities must be going on very well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-1: Ashramni Behnone, p. 59

232. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

MANDALAY,
Silence Day [*March 18, 1929*]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Your post must be lying in Rangoon today. We shall reach there on Wednesday. This letter will go by Tuesday's mail. The next ship is on Thursday, and we shall leave by that.

You will find enclosed with this a letter from Rupanarayanbabu and model sub-rules. I have read them. Write to him and tell him that at present I can think of no suggestion for their revision. Send the papers to him wherever he is.

There is nothing else to write about today.

We have been put up almost in the shadow of the jail in which the Lokamanya wrote the *Gita-Rahasya*.

I trust all are keeping good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5395

233. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

MANDALAY,
Silence Day [*March 18, 1929*][1]

CHI. KUSUM,

I have your letter written from Kapadwanj. You will have already got the news about the 26th before this letter reaches you.[2] I expect to reach the Ashram on the 28th night. today we are in Mandalay.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1781

[1] From the postmark. Gandhiji was in Mandalay on this date.

[2] Gandhiji was to stand trial in the court of the Presidency Magistrate, Calcutta on March 26, 1929; for details, *vide* "Statement in the Court", 26-3-1929 and "That Test Case", 4-4-1929.

234. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised MANDALAY,
Monday, March 18, 1929

Today is the silence day and I am writing under the shadow of the fort where one of India's greatest of sons, Tilak, was buried alive. Lalaji too was buried in the Mandalay Fort for years. Though then I am writing this on the silence day, I was unable to catch the post. I was too sleepy towards post time. But I gave you a letter[1] by the mail that left on Saturday. This letter will leave by the same mail that will take me to Calcutta.

Today is the day for receiving the Indian post in Rangoon. If there is any from you, I should get it at Rangoon on Wednesday when I reach there.

This interesting tour is drawing to a close. I shall feel the parting with Dr. Mehta. I see that I can comfort him if I am there. But this is a private privilege I may not enjoy.

I have kept well during the tour, though it has needed adjusting. The digestive apparatus does not respond as during bracing cold weather. The climate here is naturally damp.

You know now the rest of the programme. I shall think of sending you a wire on 26th. I shall make a desperate effort to leave by the Express which leaves Howrah at 2 p.m.

I did good carding today for the first time during the tour. I shall love to do it daily.

I wonder if you are receiving any letters from the Udyoga Mandir. You should keep yourself in touch with some men and some women.

No more now as I must be off to a meeting.

Love.

Yours,

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5352. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9408

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 16-3-1929.

235. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MANDALAY[1]

March 18, 1929

You have rightly reminded me that it was here in Mandalay that the great son of India, Lokamanya Tilak, was buried alive. It was he who gave India the *mantra* of swaraj and in burying him alive the British Government had buried India alive. The Lion of the Punjab also was similarly incarcerated here, and lest we should forget those things, Government recently buried alive Sjt. Bose and numerous other sons of Bengal. Mandalay is thus a place of pilgrimage for us Indians, and it is a remarkable coincidence that we are all sitting here today in the shadow of the walls of the fort and the prison sanctified by those sons of India. In India it is a common saying that the way to swaraj is through Mandalay and the British Government has taught you too that great lesson by incarcerating India's great sons here. The way to swaraj is the way of suffering. Indeed no country has come to its own without suffering and let Mandalay be an eternal reminder both to you and to us of that great truth.

You who do well to own the Buddha as your teacher will do well to explore the limitless possibilities of non-violence. There are things in your practice which I have not been able to reconcile with the teachings of the Buddha but I do not propose to abuse your great hospitality by being critical at this moment.

You have, as I conceive it, one of the greatest truths that the world can ever have uttered by one of the greatest teachers of mankind, viz., ahimsa. If there had been a perfectly silent and a quiet atmosphere I would gladly have spoken to you upon that quiet doctrine. As it is I can only ask you to study the doctrine and reduce it to practice in every act of your lives. It is infinitely greater than the gems and the diamonds people prize so much. It can become, if you will make wise use of it, your own saving and the saving of mankind.

Young India, 18-4-1929

[1] From Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour in Burma

236. SPEECH TO GUJARATIS, MANDALAY

March 18, 1929

It is of course true.[1] In the path of non-violence, one person's *tapascharya* is enough since it covers all others. Not that it covers the cunning or hypocrisy of anybody, but the very atmosphere around one undergoes a transformation. My non-violence stands in the midst of the surrounding violence like a castor-oil plant in a desert country. Else why should I have to goad you? Do the women need any coaxing? Had my non-violence been complete, my mere presence here would have made ornaments drop here like dirt from the human body. When my purity has become perfect, even before I write a word it will have been acted on.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-4-1929

237. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, TOUNGOO[2]

March 19, 1929

With this meeting ends what has been to me a most interesting and instructive tour in the interior of Burma. Delightful as my experiences of the people of Burma were when my visit some years ago was only confined to Rangoon and for a day only to Moulmein, that delight has been heightened by my experience during this tour even as far as Mandalay. It has been a great joy to me to see at all these meetings so many yellow-robed Phoongys and so many Burman sisters and brothers. As this will be for many years to come, if not for ever, my last address to an audience such as this, I propose to submit a few remarks on what is to you and me dearest to our hearts. It cannot be without purpose and meaning that all your addresses, no matter where presented, have approved of and blessed my message of non-violence and of the spinning-wheel. I would therefore say a few words to you in explanation of what I understand by the message of ahimsa. To me it is one of the most active forces in the world. It is like the sun

[1] A woman reader of *Navajivan* had blessed Gandhiji: "Let a single sentence of yours in *Navajivan* be sufficient to awaken the nation!"

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour in Burma

that rises upon us unfailingly from day to day. Only if we would but understand it, it is infinitely greater than a million suns put together. It radiates life and light and peace and happiness. Why do we not see that light, that life, that peace and that happiness in a land that professes the law of ahimsa? As I said in Mandalay only yesterday, it has appeared to me that the message of the Buddha, the Enlightened One, has only touched but the surface of the heart of Burma. I would like to apply one or two tests. Now I hold that where the law of ahimsa reigns supreme, there should be no jealousy, no unworthy ambition, no crime. I read your criminal statistics and I find that you are not behindhand in the race for crime. Murder on the slightest pretext seems to me to be fairly common in Burma. I will therefore appeal to the friends on my lift (the Phoongys) who are supposed to be the repositories of the faith you have inherited from the Buddha. Having travelled in Ceylon and now fairly long enough in Burma, I feel that we in India have perhaps more fully, though by no means as fully as possible, interpreted the message of the Buddha than you have done. We have it in our Shastras that whenever things go wrong, good people and sages go in for *tapasya* otherwise known as austerities. Gautama himself, when he saw oppression, injustice and death around him, and when he saw darkness in front of him, at the back of him and on each side of him, went out in the wilderness and remained there fasting and praying in search of light. And if such penance was necessary for him who was infinitely greater than all of us put together, how much more necessary is it for us, no matter whether we are dressed in yellow or not? My friends, if you will become torch-bearers lighting the path of a weary world towards the goal of ahimsa, there is no other way out of it, save that of self-purification and penance. So many priests are sitting here today. If some of them will take upon themselves the work of interpreting the message of the Buddha, they will revolutionize life. You will not be guided by rigid traditions, but will search your hearts and your scriptures and tear the hidden meaning lying behind the written word and vivify your surroundings. You will then find upon searching your hearts that it is not enough not to take animal life, but you must see to it that it is not taken for the pleasures of the palate. You will then at once realize that it is inconsistent with the doctrine of love for all that lives to turn our mouths into chimneys. I understand that drink is on the increase in a people so simple-hearted as the Burmese and in a climate which does not necessitate the drinking of the fiery liquid.

You will immediately see on further research that there is no room for one who loves everything that lives to have fear lurking in his breast. You will yourself cease to fear authority and you will teach all around you to cease to fear anybody. I hope that these few words that I have spoken to you in all humility and from the bottom of my heart will be received by you in the same spirit in which they have been spoken. Since you have at all your meetings credited me with a spirit of non-violence and truth, I have endeavoured to interpret in the best way I could the message of non-violence and truth as I have understood it for an unbroken period of 40 years. May the words I have spoken find a lodgment in your hearts and may they bear abundant fruit, and if they do, there should be no difficulty in all factions and parties combining together for a common cause. I thank you for having listened to me with such patience and in perfect silence.

Young India, 18-4-1929

238. SPEECH AT LABOURERS' MEETING, RANGOON

March 20, 1929

SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

I have no strength now to stand. For this reason I cannot give you much time. When I sit down please do not forget to remain peaceful. I have no time. At 8 o'clock I must do some other work and it is now about a quarter to eight. I want you to do good and shun the evil. Do not drink and gamble. Do not be moral wrecks and then only you can keep your home sweet and peaceful. I know the Tamil people. I know your virtue and your folly in South Africa. Many of your people were associated with me. I want you to give up all the evil habits. I pray you do this for your children's sake who must be good and honest to brother labourers. What I wish to say is I am myself a labourer. I am a sweeper and a cobbler. I have learnt the work of a cobbler and my son is doing the same. Between you and me this is the only difference that you are forced labourers and I am a voluntary labourer.

Besides doing your duties towards your home you have another duty. There are some who are poorer than you are. You must serve those poor. The Chittagong labourers voluntarily came to me and handed me a purse within five minutes. would you make a little

sacrifice of your money? Do not your hearts weep for those who are in greater distress? There are many of them who are spinning and weaving khadi for you and you should wear it. May God bless you.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 22-3-1929

239. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, RANGOON[1]

March 20, 1929

To the Muslim students in a crowded in hall last evening Mahatmaji replying in Urdu said that he was very glad to receive an invitation from this Association. Whenever it was possible he always accepted invitations from Muslim bodies and that was why he paid a visit to the Islamia National School and the Zanniatul Islam Girls's School. Unfortunately the political atmosphere in India had become surcharged with distrust and suspicion which had taken the place of mutual trust and confidence in the hearts of both Hindus and Muslims. He therefore welcomed that opportunity to reiterate his creed before them. He said that times without number and he would ask them to understand that his faith was, if possible, firmer today than ever before. There could be no real swaraj for India without the willing co-operation and heart unity of the Hindus and the Muslims and that such unity and co-operation were bound to come sooner or later. They had rightly referred in the address to the Jamia Millia which was very near and dear to his heart. Whatever was possible for him to do for that college he had done and would do in future and he trusted that God would continue to keep that desire in his mind till the end of his life. The other day he spoke at length at the Jubilee Hall about the student movement and purity and he felt it was unnecessary for him to repeat the same here and he asked them to take to their heart and put into practice what he said on that occasion and not merely keep it in their intellects. When he went to Aligarh College in 1915 he had spoken to his Muslim friends there and hoped from that College would emerge men who would be prepared to turn fakirs for the political uplift of India and Islam. Lastly he considered that any service rendered to the country was service rendered to religion.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 22-3-1929

[1] An address on behalf of the Muslim Students' Association was presented to Gandhiji.

240. "THE HAND OF MAN"

The author of the following article, which he heads "The Hand of Man", writes:[1]

I do not desire to add by way of preface anything more to the letter beyond expressing the hope that the reader will take to heart the testimony against machinery worship of one who is of the West and who has therefore tasted both the sweets and the bitters of the machinery age. Let him not run away with the idea that either the writer or I abuse all machinery because it is machinery. What is resisted is the usurpation by machinery of the function of man and his consequent slavery to it.

Young India, 21-3-1929

241. CONCEIT AND IGNORANCE

Conceit and ignorance often go together. They do in Earl Winterton. The latest instance is to be found in his answers to the House of Commons in reply to questions on the burning of foreign cloth in Calcutta[2] made world famous by the wanton interference of the Calcutta police. I give below the answers of the noble Earl and the correct version against each answer:

EARL WINTERTON'S ANSWERS	CORRECT VERSION
Mr. Gandhi was not arrested.	I was arrested and released on signing a Personal recognizance bond.
The Government of Bengal had intimated that the lighting of bonfire to burn foreign cloth was illegal.	The Government of Bengal never intimated that the burning of foreign cloth was illegal. The Commissioner of Police at Calcutta notified that the burning of foreign cloth in or near thoroughfares or public streets in Calcutta was illegal in terms of the Police act.

[1] The article and the letter are not reproduced here. In his article the writer, an American painter, had tried to show that Gandhiji's was a *human* ideal as opposed to "the inhuman mechanistic ideal sweeping over the world".

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Calcutta", 4-3-1929.

His (Mr. Gandhi's) persistence led to a *melee*.	My persistence did not lead to a *melee*. The wanton stupidity of the police was responsible for what happened in spite of my clearesat possible statement made in their hearing that there was no intention to defy the law and that they could prosecute me if they chose and test the legality of my action in burning foreign cloth. The police brutally dispersed the crowd near the place of fire and sought to extinguish it after it had done its work.
The prosecution should be postponed till Mr. Gandhi had returned from Burma on condition that there would be no similar bonfire in Calcutta in the mean time.	The condition agreed to by me was that there would be no similar bonfire in the public squares of Calcutta. The bonfires continue on private premises in Calcutta.

The corrections can all be verfied from the public Press. The mis-statements made by the noble Earl are, it may be observed, important and made the police appear innocent of any guilt or error.

The noble Earl crowned his answers by the following pronouncement:

> There is no new political situation and the House may rest assured that the Government of Bengal will enforce ordinary law against those attempting to break it whether political leaders or their dupes.

He may out of his conceit which hides the truth from him declare that there is "no new political situation". He who runs may see that a new political situation has undoubtedly arisen in India by reason of the high-handed action of the police. It will depend upon the public workers to demonstrate the strength of the new situation. This much is certain that the bonfire lighted in Shraddhanand Park will not be quenched by any amount of lathi display by the police force and any other exhibition of the "strong arm"of the Government. Only a complete boycott of foreign cloth can quench that fire.

The noble Earl's assurance to the House about the enforcement of the ordinary law whether against "political leaders or their dupes"was a gratuitous insult offered to the leaders and the people.

To this we are used. The only answer that self-respecting persons can offer to such insult is to accelerate the rate of their progress towards their goal. It is however necessary here to show that the Government of Bengal is not enforcing the mere ordinary law. It is enforcing lynch law. Ordinary law would have meant a mere prosecution for the breach of a police regulation. Only under extraordinary circumstances are the police allowed to take the law into their own hands. But of this more hereafter. I am writing this in Burma and in ignorance of the latest events. When may the police take the law into their own hands is a question which needs careful examination so long as one works within the law.[1]

Young India, 21-3-1929

242. WOMEN AND WAR

An effective movement against war is making steady headway in the West and the women of the West are playing a most important, if not the leading, part in the movement. Women's International League for Peace and Freedom issued at its Conference at Frankfurt-on-Main held on January 4th the following telling appeal:[2]

We are too poor to give any material support. Moreover we are not a nation to take part in any war. Till we come to our own, we shall have to be victims of the war that may come upon the world, but it is possible to render more than moral and material support to the movement, that is, by regaining our freedom not by warlike means but by non-violent means. I suggest to the friends of peace for the world that the Congress in 1920 took a tremendous step towards peace when it declared that it would attain her own, namely, swaraj by non-violent and truthful means. And I am positive that if we unflinchingly adhere to these means in the prosecution of our goal, we shall have made the largest contribution to the world peace.

Young India, 21-3-1929

[1] At the end the article contained the following note: "This article was forwarded from Burma and received here before the noble Lord corrected himself. —Asstt. Ed. *Y.I.*."

[2] The appeal, not reproduce here, sought moral support and material help for the campaign for disarmament.

243. NOTES

A VISIT TO MISS MAYO

Dinabandhu Andrews writes as follows about his visit to Miss Mayo:[1]

> I felt it necessary, since I had imputed political motives to Miss Mayo in my first article on *Mother India*, to see her personally; and an opportunity occurred.
>
> After a very long conversation with her, during which she herself did most of the talking, it seemed clear to me that she had gone out independently without a conscious political motive….
>
> But we cannot expect a personality such as that of Miss Mayo ever to understand. Therefore, when she writes about India, it is bound to be a misinterpretation.
>
> This thought grew upon me, hour after hour, as I listened to Miss Mayo and spoke to her in reply. I am sorry that I uncharitably imputed political motives to her, which I now withdraw; but at the same time I experienced, while talking with her, a sense of the great and vast dividing rift, which is extending between those who are absorbed in the superficial aspects of Western life and ourselves. . . .

Dinabandhu has given me the option of publishing this note and whilst in fairness to Miss Mayo, I have thought it necessary to publish it, it is due to the public for me to say that in spite of Dinabandhu Andrews's retraction, I am not shaken in my opinion that the book bears in it patent evidence of a political bias. It contains falsehoods which the authoress must have known to be such. She has since written things which too are probably[2] false. In the face of such patent facts, evidence to the contrary must be held to be irrelevant.

SAROJINI DEVI AND DINABANDHU

Mr. Savel Zimand the author of *Living India* says of these two ambassadors[3] in the course of a letter:[4]

> Her extraordinary charm has won for her the reception which a person of her greatness would inevitably receive. From the talks I have had with those who were fortunate enough to meet her and those who have heard her

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.
[2] Perhaps a slip for "palpably"
[3] Sarojini Naidu and C. F. Andrews
[4] Only extracts are reproduced here.

inspiring words, I can say that she has made a deep impression wherever she has gone.

Now as to Mr. Andrews. I have been present at three luncheons where he was a guest. At two of them he told the story of the Vykom struggle and I have not seen in years an audience so touched by a speaker. He described this moral battle with great sympathy, and it came from the heart. At one of the meetings a lawyer came to me and said: "I certainly am not easily moved to tears by a speaker. But cynic as I am supposed to be, tears came to my eyes as Mr. Andrews talked. . . ."

Young India, 21-3-1929

244. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

ON BOARD THE SHIP,
March 22, 1929

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have not been able to write to you for some time. After spending two weeks in Burma we are again on board the ship. It was impossible, while in Burma, to keep in mind the mail days. Today also, I am writing this letter without any idea as to when the ship is leaving.

As for Rasik, you must have seen what I have written in *Navajivan* and *Young India*. To my mind, he is not at all dead.

We have been able to collect more than Rs. 1,50,000 in Burma. Dr Mehta was also in Rangoon. With me are Mahadev, Pyarelal, Subbiah, Girdhari and Purushottam. There is a case against me in a Calcutta court. You will of course learn the outcome before this letter reaches you.[1]

Devdas is still at Delhi. Keshu is working in Seth Birla's factory there. Navin is with Devdas.

Let me know your experience of the new Agent.

Nimu is with Ramdas. She is with child.

Mani, Kashi's sister and wife of Maneklal, has expired.

I am in pretty good health. I have not yet been obliged to resume milk.

These days I always travel third class. For this voyage I am booked as a deck passenger. Deck journey is generally uncom-

[1] *Vide* "That Test Case", 4-4-1929.

fortable, but the passengers are accommodating and the officers fairly good. So things are tolerable.

Ba preferred to remain behind at the Ashram. Rami has been called there.

The Udyoga Mandir, one may say, is functioning quite well.

How is Sushila progressing in her studies?

I shall be able to see Shanti at Morvi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4754

245. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

March 22, 1929

CHI. VASUMATI,

I write this letter on board the ship. I got your letter. I only suggested the ideal. From that you may do what Nature lets you do. You already have my permission to move to a separate room. I am surprised about Yashodadevi. I will certainly discuss the matter with her when I return there. It is no doubt intolerable that they should talk among themselves at night. Discover a remedy. I am writing about it. Take Chhaganlal Joshi's help. More when we meet. I hope Sulochanabehn is doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:C.W. 506. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

246. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

ON THE SHIP,
March 23, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got four of your letters together. I am replying to them on the ship. The deck is just above the steering chain; it, therefore, shakes and I cannot write comfortably. It is only this time that I am having real experience of deck journey, but I cannot spare the time to give a description of it.

I don't mind your having set up a Khadi managing body. You are vigilant and have faith in Khadi; I have, therefore, no fear. Carry on as you think best. You are likely to make mistakes, but I will not blame you for them even in my thoughts. Didn't Maganlal make mistakes? Lakshmidas, too, has made some. Man is said to be an image of error. If you have sincerity of purpose, complete vigilance, unsparing work and ceaseless effort to make yourself efficient, then any mistake which you make despite them is pardonable and must be tolerated.

You should certainly publish lists of the articles we make, it is our duty to do so.

Sulochanabehn has produced a very good impression on me. We should know how to make her feel at home in the Ashram. I approve of the idea of Vasumati and Sulochanabehn living in the same room. Give them what you can and accept what services they give. Meet their wishes as far as you can.

Your idea of starting a carding class for a short duration is good. You may write whatever you wish to about the matter in *Navajivan*. Do not, for the present, invite trainees from other provinces. However, if any qualified candidate wishes to join the class, do not refuse him admission. Take care and see that what appears in the Gujarati *Navajivan* about this mater is not reproduced in *Hindi Navajivan*. I don't write anything on the subject from here. You should write a note there and print it under your signature.

You did right in sending Romain Rolland's letter to Mirabehn.

Have a talk with Shankerlal about keeping the Maganlal memorial in the Ashram. Personally I like the suggestion. Perhaps some will feel that our rules stand in the way of this. Will Dr. Mehta's bungalow suit for the purpose? Discuss this matter with me when I come.

I sent the draft constitution of the Cow-Service Society long ago.

You have my suggestions about how to run the Bal Mandir. You need not now consult me before making any changes or additions. It would have been a different matter if I had been there. In my absence, however, you can make any changes which are consistent with the principle.

Gangabehn's work is beyond comparison. Her sincerity and her industry should be our envy. She has practically dedicated her life to the Ashram. We should know how to bear with her temperament.

Caution Mama whenever necessary. If even then he commits any mistake, the responsibility will be his. Place before him clearly every doubt you have.

I feel worried about Totaramji's eyes. Perhaps his diet requires some change. He should live on milk, raisins and lime, or should fast and drink plenty of water. Even the eyes are intimately connected with the stomach. Which organ is not?

I cannot reconcile myself to the frequent journeys to Broach. It may be necessary to be a little strict in this matter. I know that it is difficult, especially for you, to be strict. You may, therefore, leave the problem to me, if you so wish.

I know Lakshmidas's views. I do not wish just now to prevail upon him to change them. After knowing his views on all subjects, we may, if necessary, follow a different course. That will not hurt him. He has had wide experience and suffered many times through his errors. He is a votary of Khadi and an efficient worker. We should, knowing this, attach the utmost importance to his views but follow a different course when that seems necessary to us. It would be wrong not to do so. So long as we are doubtful about the correctness of our views, we should, rather than act upon them, respect Lakshmidas's experience. I return his letters.

I still hope to be able to return to the Ashram on the 28th evening. Padma[1] has decided to leave Delhi.

I have sold for a hundred rupees my spinning-wheel, the one I carried with me when travelling. So have another made for me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5394; also *Bapuna Patro–7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*, pp. 61-4

[1] Not clear in the photostat source. The printed source has "Kaka".

247. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

March 23, 1929

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

Today I have been looking through all the old letters. I have found one of yours too. The only way to attain mental peace is to repeat Ramanama.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 190

248. LETTER TO PANNALAL JAIN

March 23, 1929

BHAI PANNALALJI,

Your November letter reached me only today. It is impossible to increase the size of *Navajivan* at present.

Many things were deliberately left out and some could not be included in the *Autobiography*. Only those things have been mentioned which were relevant to the experiments with Truth.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI PANNALAL JAIN
KALYANMAL MILLS
INDORE

[From Hindi]

Madhya Pradesh aur Gandhiji, p. 151

249. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

ON BOARD, S.S. "ARONDA",

Unrevised *March 23, 1929*

CHI. MIRA,

We are nearing Calcutta. I am writing this after the evening meal of 23rd. I have had real deck experience only this time. Last time they had isolated me and insisted upon my using 2nd-class bathroom. I am

going to describe the experience in *Young India*.[1]

Dr. Mehta's son Ratilal and Champa are with me. They are 2nd-class passengers. The mad girl of whom I think I wrote to you is still with me. She has defeated me. She has become intractable. I am therefore sending her back to her father. She is a wreck at present and poor Subbiah is bearing the brunt of nursing.

Milkless diet is still serving me.

You remember the dates.

Leaving Calcutta	26th
Reaching Delhi	27th
Reaching Sabarmati	28th night
Leaving Sabarmati	29th night
Reaching Morvi	30th
Leaving Morvi	1st April
Reaching Sabarmati	2nd April
Leaving Sabarmati	4th April
Reaching Bombay	5th April
Leaving Bombay	5th night
Reaching Bezwada	7th

This is subject to what happens in Calcutta.[2] The address in Bezwada should be simply my name. The programme after Bezwada will be sent later.

The collections in Burma have been good, over $1^1/_2$ lacs.

I expect many letters from you tomorrow. I hope to see Rajendra Babu tomorrow.

Surendra is making headway with his tannery. He is steadily gaining experience. Balkrishna's presence at the Udyoga Mandir has been a great relief to Joshi. Did I tell you that Chhaganlal Gandhi and his wife had returned to the Mandir? Chhaganlal lost his sister-in-law the other day.

A cultured and experienced lady[3] has just now gone to the Mandir. She has gone there only for a short experience. There is a continuous ferment going on at the Mandir. It is a good sign. Chhaganlal Joshi is making a tremendous effort to deserve the post to

[1] *Vide* "Deck Passengers", 11-4-1929.

[2] At the trial on March 26

[3] Sulochanabehn

which he has been called. The others too are trying their best. Kusum went to her mother the same day I left the Mandir for Burma. She is likely to have returned now. Vasumati is at the Mandir. Did I tell you I brought Keshu to Delhi and left him with Mr. Birla for gaining experience in his engineering workshop?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5353. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9409

250. PURDAH AND SUNLIGHT

Dr. Kathleen Olga Baden was for a number of years the chief medical officer in a women's hospital in Kashmir. In addition, she has had a good deal of medical experience also. Kashmir has a cold climate and is considered good for health, but it has been her experience that it has proved inimical to the health of middle-class women. Those women who wear the *burqa* hardly ever stir out of their houses. As a result, their bones get softened. The pelvis particularly becomes so much softened and deformed that they suffer great pain at child-birth. Some of them become too weak to walk and even become bow-legged. This lady has written a little booklet on her experiences.

She has expressed the opinion in this booklet that the sole reason, or the chief reason at any rate, why so many women in Kashmir are reduced to such a state is that they are kept away from sunlight. They remain confined within their homes where they do not even get daylight, how then could they get any sun? Adducing a number of examples and arguments, she proves that those who stay away from sunlight become weak in constitution, their bones get softened, their growth is arrested and they become pale and lackluster. On the other hand, those who enjoy open air and light and get the sun's rays direct on their skin develop a strong constitution. They grow to be tall and free from anaemia and diseases like tuberculosis. She proves in the course of her article that even a thing like cut glass intervening between a man's skin and the sun's rays prevents his receiving the essential health-giving elements from the sun. Hence she suggests that every man and woman, and especially those women who wish to have children, should take a sun-bath with their bodies bared, during the first quarter of the day. This sun-bath is not to be taken

under a very hot sun and it is to be taken in such a way that one does not feel cold while exposing one's body to the sun but enjoys the sun's warmth.

This lady writes that the chief cause of a number of complications arising at the time of child-birth among Indian women is lack of sunlight. The houses in India in which women remain confined have neither gardens nor open grounds where the women can walk about bare-bodied. It is her view that disappearance of the evil custom of the *purdah* will take time, hence, in the mean while, a condition must be created in which women who observe *purdah* getfacilities for sun-bath and physical exercise. Therefore she says there should be facilities in hospitals whereby, unobserved by men, women are able to receive the sun's rays and walk about bare-bodied. Likewise, she recommends that there should be schools for girls also. These should be located in open country so that no one may be able to observe the girls from terraces, or while passing along the road. This sister observes that only harm and no good will result from the practice of making a house dark during summer.

From this little booklet what we can learn about women is first, that we should strive as hard as possible to put an end to the evil custom of the *purdah*. Secondly, that no one—man or woman—should fear the sun, but should take a sun-bath bare-bodied for as long as possible. After taking a bath in the morning, one should salute the sun a hundred times or more and repeat the *Gayatri mantra*. It is being realized more and more that, while there is certainly spiritual significance and value in this, there is also an equally great worldly meaning and benefit.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-3-1929

251. WHAT SHOULD THE ANTYAJAS DO?

A worker among *Antyajas* writes as follows:[1]

I have not relaxed. I belive I have not failed to pursue the course which I think will remove untouchability. I see untouchability disappearing with the speed of a horse; I desire day and night that it should take on the speed of wind. And I have faith that some day it will. But, meanwhile, we must be patient. One can understand what the *Antyaja* brother in the letter above is quoted as saying, but he should be patient. The reformer is always in a minority in this world. If he secured companions easily, the reform would not be worth much. Untouchability is a very ancient evil. Then it has been given a religious garb. One aspiring to destroy it should not at all expect to get ready support. Whatever work has been accomplished so far and whatever co-operation has been obtained is, indeed, due to God's grace. The *Antyaja* youth in question should also remember that whatever purity he has attained is not for the sake of anyone else but for himself. Hence, he must derive mental peace from that purity itself. He who expects others to appreciate the worth of his own purity has not truly become pure. Purity is always self-reliant. Moreover, he should not, out of despair, abandon his brother-*Antyajas*. Those who have been suppressed for ages will take time to come into their own, to be awakened. It is necessary to cultivate patience and love towards them. The entire *Antyaja* society is likely to receive the education and the opportunities which this *Antyaja* brother has received. It is necessary, therefore, to understand his sadness. He has quoted a proverb about the stone.[2] I shall remind him of another: "A rope can cut hard granite." And this line contains greater truth than the former. When the waters from the Himalayas come rushing down on the rocks, they are not left just dry, they get worn into powder .The water of love will melt even a heart of stone.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-3-1929

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had said that in spite of all the work that had been done for the eradiction of untouchability, the untouchables were still looked down upon and insulted. He had also described his meeting with an educated Harijan youth who had said that he did not like to live with other members of his community because they refused to reform their habits and ways of living despite all his attempts to educate them and complained that even Gandhiji had relaxed in his efforts.

[2] "Water overflows a stone and leaves it dry."

252. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[*March 24, 1929*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

The letters written on the ship were posted yesterday and you must have received them. On reaching Calcutta I saw your letters.

You did right in running down to Vadaj to put out the fire there. We may not take out an insurance, but should certainly possess fire-fighting equipment and practise with it once every month. This will stand us in good stead. We should also so arrange things in the house that the danger of fire is minimized. We should make children conscious of their responsibility in this matter. The rule is this: to the extent that we protect ourselves with external means, to that extent our soul is injured and loses its strength.

Everyone should make it a rule that they do not bring buffalo's ghee into the kitchen.

I shall talk to you about the yarn spun by the members of the Khadi Pratishthan. There is little possiblity of anyone from Bengal coming there to learn the work.

If you ask me about suspiciousness[2] when I am free, I shall explain at some length.

You can send to Calcutta the khadi which is lying in Bombay and elsewhere. It should not be moth-eaten or too old. The store here is short of khadi stocks just now. After the bonfire of clothes, the demand for khadi has gone up very much.

Hasn't Bichaldas, who came from Rohri, brought any letters? Give him enough tailoring work and teach him to do it well. See whether he obeys all rules. Introduce him to Malkani. About the land in Chalala, ask me [when we meet].

When a death occurs in the Ashram, the common kitchen should not stop, but it might be desirable that no cooking is done. We always have a stock of ready food which we can supply to those who wish to eat. If necessary, discuss this matter further with others. I would see nothing wrong even if cooking is done. A death is not an occasion for mourning. No work or activity should be stopped as a mark of

[1] The letter seems to have been written on the day on which Gandhiji returned to Calcutta. He returned on this date.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 5-3-1929.

mourning, but some of the inmates who attend to cremation, etc., may not be able to eat. There will also be some who, though not wishing to observe mourning, will obey the custom in accordance with the nature of their relationship with the dead person. It is with these considerations in mind that I have suggested that cooking be stopped. If death occurs while cooking is in progress it need not be stopped. We do not observe the practice of *sootak*[1] in the Ashram.

Send to Rajaji the money received for the South Relief Fund.

I regard the use of the hide of slaughtered goats unavoidable. It is desirable to restrict such use to the minimum. It would also be right that we manage with cow's hide as far as possible. The restriction accepted by us on the basis of dharma stops as present with cows and buffaloes.

I enclose with this a letter from Mirabehn. That part of it which is about Yogendra should be read with attention. She has already written to you about the matter. If, however, you know more about him, it will help you when he comes there. Rajendrababu is here. He has suggested that the couple be sent there. We ought to take them in and train them. They find Mirabehn's work wonderful. Rajendrababu had gone there to see it and was very pleased.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5498

253. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

March 25, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I posted a letter[2] yesterday written on the boat. On reaching here I found three letters from you. There should have been one today but nothing up to 4 p.m. It looks as if there would be no difficulty about my leaving tomorrow.

Rajenbabu is here. He has told me all about your activity. You leave little for anybody else to tell me of your doings.

[1] Treating as polluted the food and water in the homes of the relatives of the deceased

[2] Presumably this was the one dated March 23; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 23-3-1929.

The heat here during the day is fairly strong. The morning was quite cool and there was a breeze throughout the night.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5354. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9410

254. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

CALCUTTA,
Silence day, March 25, 1929

SISTERS,

I write this just to show that I remember you for I hope to reach there practically at the same time as this letter.

Nowhere do I see such real education—that based on experience—being given to people as you women receive in the Udyoga Mandir. But we have stilll much more to do. We should reach a stage when we can admit any woman without fear.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro - 1: Ashramni Behnone, p. 59

255. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

Silence Day [*March 25, 1929*][1]

CHI. KUSUM,

I have your letter sent to the Calcutta address. Prabhavati keeps writing to me to call you back early. This I am conveying to you. But take your own time.

Be content with whatever news about us you get from Subbiah and Pyarelal.

I still hope to reach the Ashram on the 28th evening. I am well. The load of work is as heavy as ever.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1782

[1] In *Bapuna Patro—3: Kusumbehn Desaine,* this letter is placed between the letters dated March 18 and April 5, 1929. The Monday between these dates fell on March 25.

256. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Silence Day [*March 25, 1929*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. Vasumatibehn writes that you are suffering from headaches. Father's letter has arrived. I am enclosing it. The rest on meeting.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Rajendrababu is here.

[PPS.]

Tell Vasumatibehn and Kusumbehn that I am not writing to them today.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3322

257. STATEMENT IN THE COURT[2]

CALCUTTA,
March 26, 1929

Occupying the position I do in public life I owe an explanation to the Court and the public of my conduct which is the subject-matter of this prosecution. I am Chairman of the Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee appointed by the Working Committee of the National Congress. The scheme of boycott sanctioned by the Working Committee includes burning of foreign cloth wherever it is possible. Therefore I naturally advised collection and burning of foreign cloth at the meeting that was held at Shraddhanand Park. The notice from the Commissioner of Police came upon me and my colleagues as a disturbing factor. We saw at once that it was not meant *for protection of property from danger of fire* but it was meant to prevent the demonstration. It was *open to us to conduct the burning demonstration* at a private place. But two lawyers came to the conclusion that the interpretation sought to be put upon Section 66 of the Police Act was at least open to question, if not altogether wrong.

[1] This letter appears to have been written from Calcutta after Gandhiji's return from Burma. The presence of Rajendrababu is mentioned in the letter of this date to Mirabehn.

[2] Of the Chief Presidency Magistrate, Calcutta

We therefore decided to conduct the full demonstration at the Park as advertised and have the police interpretation tested in a Court of Law.

This boycott is not part of civil disobedience. There was no intention to defy the police notice for the sake of defiance and courting imprisonment.

I made this absolutely clear in English within the hearing of the police at the meeting before I started the burning. I believe that the Deputy Commissioner of Police was present whilst I was speaking. I was therefore surprised and deeply pained to see the police, after the burning was well nigh over, swoop down upon the crowd surrounding the fire, charge it with their big lathis, disperse it and put out the dying embers. The rest of the painful scene I may not describe here though I should gladly answer questions on it if the Court so desires.

I venture to submit that by taking the law into their own hands, especially in spite of my very clear statement above referred to, the Police put themselves in the wrong and should change places with me. They should be the accused and my colleagues and I should be the complainants. I have before now in other parts of the world been obliged to differ from police interpretations of laws and act contrary to their notices. But they have recognized the civilized practice of testing the points involved in law-courts without in the first instance prejudging the issue and thus running the risk of themselves breaking the law and, what is more, of inviting a disturbance of public peace.

I affirm that the crowd was absolutely peaceful and extremely well-behaved. There was no danger to the neighbouring property from the little fire that was lighted. The site chosen for burning was well protected and isolated. It was therefore the duty of the police to refrain from interfering with the peaceful and orderly demonstration. Their interference in my opinion was rudely premature, extremely high-handed and uncalled for. In putting out the fire they usurped the fuction of the Court and anticipated its judgment. If you believe the statement of facts I have made I ask Your Worship to discharge me and my colleagues and take such notice of the conduct of the police as may be open to you. And this discharge I ask irrespective of the interpretation the Court may put upon the Section under which I am charged.

One word as to the interpretation of the Section. Sjt. Sen Gupta was one of the lawyer friends referred to in my speech at the Shraddhanand Park. After having had another argument with him I

am clear in my mind that Shraddhanand Park is neither a street nor a thoroughfare within the meaning of the Section. Since it is not the intention, so far as possible, of the Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee to offer civil disobedience in connection with the campaign, an authoritative interpreation of the Section is necessaray. But I may not argue the legal point.

As to the three of my colleagues who are charged with the primary offence, I should like to state that the burning was actually started by me. If therefore any offence has been committed by any of us, the primary offence has been committed by me and the rest three are but the secondary offenders.[1]

Forward, 27-3-1929

258. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

CALCUTTA,
March 26, 1929

MIRABEHN
KHADI BHANDAR
MADHUBANI

JUDGMENT RESERVED LEAVING TODAY DELHI EXPRESS.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5355. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9411

[1] The judgment was reserved for the next day. For Gandhiji's comment on the Court's verdict, *vide* "That Test Case", 4-4-1929.

259. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[On or after *March 26, 1929*][1]

BHAI CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I am signing the letter for Sharadabehn and returning it. We have now got to think about her. I would not be able to send the letters today. I have not been able to go through all the letters.

As for Chalala,[2] Narandas's opinion is necessary.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5482

260. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Tuesday [On or after *March 26, 1929*][3]

BHAI CHHAGANLAL,

I have not the time to write much today. I have been greatly distressed on reading about. . .'s case. All my pain is only on the surface, and so this is not interfering with my work. But it churns me within. I have written him a letter which he may show you.

More later.

You should not lose heart. Bring credit to the office[4] you have accepted. May God help you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5562

[1] As placed in *Bapuna Patro—7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*

[2] *Vide* Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", March 4, 15 and 24, 1929.

[3] In *Bapuna Patro—7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine,* this letter is placed between the letters dated March 23 and April 5, 1929. The Tuesday after March 23 fell on March 26.

[4] Of Secretary of the Udyog Mandir

261. REPORT ON BURMA P. C. C. AFFAIRS

Confidential [Before *March 27, 1929*][1]

In virtue of the instructions given to me by the Working Committee, I inspected the affairs of the Burma P.C.C.

The Committee exists only in name. Sjt.V. Madanjit is the moving spirit. He is the committee and everything. There is no executive worth the name. Hardly any meetings are held. There is no volunteer organization attached to the B.P.C.C. Lawyers are, I was told, afraid to join the Congress. There is no contact with the villages. Members are enrolled once every year without reference to the registered ones. Sjt. V. Madanjit goes out and collects names and four annas. The receipts barely cover his travelling expenses. Sjt. Madanjit is an honorary worker and capable of great sacrifice. He has influence too among the people, but it is of a negative character. He cannot take any constructive work from the people. I could not get hold of any written constitution. The Committee has practically no office unless the Khadi Bhandar address may be called an office. It has no staff. The nominal membership roll is about 800 of whom not more than 10 are Burmese. The majority are Rangoon Indians. There is a district committee in Akyab, but that too only in name. In 1921 there were 5,600 members and 14 taluk committees.

The finances of the Committee, such as they are, are kept in a most business-like manner by able Gujarati merchant. I attach here to a copy of the audited account. I saw the books. They were in a good and clean condition.

There is a khadi bhandar run under the auspices of the A.I.S.A. It is run without any loss. This bhandar may be claimed to be the only substantial and constructive activity carried on in the name of Congress, not that even in this store many people are taking a lively interest. It is going on because there is business ability behind it. There is a fair proportion of habitual khadi wearers in Rangoon and elsewhere among the Indian community.

The cry for separation of Burma has created a gulf between the Burmese and the Indians. There is an anti-separatist Burmese party too. I have advised our people not to take sides and to let the Burmans

[1] This was received at the A.I.C.C. on March 27, 1929.

decide the question for themselves. It is strange but true that an Indian party has claimed communal representation. There is, too, in the growing national consciousness, resentment against Indians carrying on intercourse with Burmese women without any formal marriage.

M. K. GANDHI

Encl. 1

A.I.C.C. File No. 151, 1929. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

262. FALLACY OF FAVOURABLE BALANCES

A Hungarian professor asked me the other day to reconcile my statement about the growing poverty of India with her recurring favourable balance of trade. The professor had not gone beyond the cities on India and his knowledge was naturally based upon the usual statistics. The information derived from the statistics was enforced by the apparently prosperous appearance of the cities he had seen.

The honest doubt entertained by the learned professor is not improbably shared by many who study the orthodox economics in the orthodox manner. It may be therefore worth while reproducing the gist of my reply for what it may be worth. Suppose, I argued, that a country was owned by a certain number of slaveholders who compelled their slaves to grow foodgrains and other articles of value to the world, who paid them hardly enough to keep the wolf from the door, and themselves made enormous profits out of the grain thus grown and exported; suppose further that the total of these exports of grain, etc., was greater than the total imports of this country, the favourable trade balance would be no test of the prosperity of its people in general. It could exist side by side with the growing poverty and degradation of the slaves. I suggested to the professor that the position of India was not far removed from the slave-ridden country imagined. I therefore argued that in order accurately to understand the hidden meaning of the recurring favourable balances it was necessary to study the conditions of certain typical villages in India and to see also the villagers face to face. Of what use I told him could an all-India favourable balance be to the villagers, if they did not reap

the fruits thereof and if the villages betrayed, as I held they did, a process of continuing exhaustion?

The late Dadabhai Naoroji showed by telling figures how the wealth of India was drained away from year to year owing to the foreign rulers living their more than princely lives practically outside India even whilst they were nominally and physically living in India. The favourable balance of India represents the continual bleeding process to which she is subjected in order to sustain a rule which is based not upon the goodwill of the people but upon a show of force which is kept up at an extraordinary expense of which a large part goes out of India.

It has been truly said by economists themselves that statistics can be made to prove two contradictory propositions. It is therefore necessary for a prudent man who is not concerned with merely proving a preconceived proposition but who is concerned solely with finding the truth to probe beneath statistics and test independently every proposition deduced from them. It is no doubt good to know the average depth of a river, but a non-swimmer who on learning that its average depth is below his height attempts to ford it is likely to find a watery grave. Even so will a man lose reputation for sanity who relies upon the mirage of statistics dressed up for him. Just as a man who would ford a river must know its highest and its lowest depth, even so should a man desirous to make a valid use of statistical abstracts have access to the underlying figures and know how to handle them. But the average man has neither the time nor the ability to study bewildering figures. For him the real test is the experience of the village life, if he would know the condition of real India. Such experience cannot be belied by any statistical jugglery.

Eye-witnesses including English administrators whose interest it would be to find the contrary have testified that India has been growing poorer under the British regime. Go to the villages and you will find misery and despair written in the faces of the inhabitants. Both they and their cattle are underfed; mortality is on the increase, they have no resisting power when disease overtakes them. It is well known that malaria is not a disease to dread if one has quinine and a good supply of pure milk. Yet malaria carries away thousands of villagers year by year. They may have quinine thrown at them but they cannot get milk for the convalescent period. Their indebtedness

is increasing. It is a blasphemy to impute it to marriage expenses and the like. These are no new charage on their dwindling purse. The story of hoarded wealth and conversion of silver coin into ornaments is a fable. Millions have and had not silver or gold ornaments. They wear hideous wooden, even stone bangles and rings which interfere with their free movement and undermine their health. Their illiteracy is if anything on the increase. These are no signs of growing prosperity.

Now let us glance at the nature of exports and imports. The exports in 1927-28 were Rs. 309 croces, the imports over Rs. 231 crores. The exports were principally raw products, e.g., cotton, foodgrains, oil-seeds, hides and skins, metals and ores. These could have remained in India ifwe had skill and capital enough to put into them or if we had a government that would regard it as its bounden duty to give us the necessary skill and to find the necessary capital. The story of India'sexports is a story of our impotence and the criminal indifference of the Government to the well-being of the people.

The imports include cotton manufactures Rs. 65 crores, artificial silk Rs. 4 crores, sugar Rs. 18 crores, metals and their manufactures Rs. 23 crores, motor vehicles Rs. 5 crores, liquors Rs. 3 crores, cigarettes nearly 2 crores. These imports too tell the same tale of our impotence where it is not worse. The imports of a country in a healthy state of progress should be such as the country may need for its growth. The imports I have mentioned are not needed for our growth. Liquor and cigarettes promote our degradation. Cotton manufactures, the largest item among imports, discover our shame and wretchedness. They remind us of what the villages must have been when they were manufacturing all that cloth in their own homes with their own hands. What is there in the place of hand-spinning to supply the villagers with work during their idle hours? What can replace the drain of the millions they spend on flimsy foreign calico? Such a people must necessarily grow, as they are growing, poorer and duller.

Young India, 28-3-1929

263. KHADI IN THE LEGISLATURES

Sjt. C. Rajagopalachari is applying his legal ingenuity to devising means of giving effect to that clause in the foreign-cloth boycott scheme which requires of the legislatures to protect or popularize khadi through them. He has therefore sent in to the President of the Congress the following draft bill for his consideration:

> Whereas the name 'khaddar' and 'khadi' have come to mean cotton cloth which is spun and woven by hand in India;
>
> And Whereas it is desirable to protect the said names; It is hereby enacted as follows:
>
> 1. This Act may be called the Indian Khaddar (Name Protection) Act 1929.
>
> 2. In this Act, 'khaddar' and 'khadi' mean cotton cloth which is spun and woven by hand in India.
>
> 3. The names 'khaddar' and khadi' whether in English or in any Indian vernacular language as exclusively signifying cotton cloth spun and woven in India by hand shall be deemed to be trade descriptions within the meaning of the Merchandise Marks Act IV of 1889.
>
> STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS
>
> Considerable progress has been made in recent years in reviving and popularizing the spinning and weaving of cotton by hand as a supplementary occupation among the agriculturist population off this country, who stand in need of an additional source of income. Such progress as has been achieved is very largely supported by the patriotic impulse of the well-to-do classes who are purchasing khaddar at a sacrifice. The situation is sought to be taken advantage of by manufacturers of spurious khaddar both in India and abroad and purchasers have been frequently misled to the detriment of what might easily become a great national industry. The Bill, therefore, seeks to extend the protection afforded by the Merchandise Marks Act 1889 to the names 'khaddar' and 'khadi' which have come to denote hand-spun and hand-woven cloth only. The exclusive use of these terms for this cloth cannot prejudicially affect *bona fide* producers or distributors of any other variety of cloth.

The bill is short and effective and if it becomes law it can at once prevent those unpatriotic mill-owners and foreigners who manufacture coarse cloth and sell it under the label khaddar or khadi. I have already given figures showing what an extensive trade

these men have done in spurious khadi.[1] The Assam Council has already successfully piloted a resolution calling upon the local Government to make all its cloth purchase in genuine khadi. I hope that the members will not rest till the resolution is enforced in practice and will see to it that the Government do not buy mill Khadi. If the members of the legislatures are serious about the constructive programme they can keep both the boycott of foreign cloth and prohibition of liquor and opium constantly before them. There is no reason why we should not reach total prohibition at once if all the members desire it and work for it.

Young India, 28-3-1929

264. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

March 29, 1929

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I have your letter. Though I shall certainly reach there by the 5th, it would be advisable to choose another date. Please see me in Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 6593

265. INTERVIEW TO THE ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[2]

AHMEDABAD,
March 29, 1929

Mr. Gandhi said that he could not believe that the fine was paid by or on behalf of the Bengal Congress Committee. He could call nothing his own in this world from which he could pay the fine and this apart from his views on payment of fine. Mr. Sen Gupta knew this thing and therefore whoever had paid the fine could not be his friend.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 30-3-1929

[1] *Vide* "A Mill-Owner on Boycott", April 5, 1928 and "More on Mill-Owners' Greed", May 5, 1928.

[2] A representative of the Associated Press asked Gandhiji if it was a fact that a fine imposed on him by the Chief Presidency Magistrate, Calcutta, was paid by a pleader on behalf of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee.

266. SPEECH AT KATHIAWAR POLITICAL CONFERENCE, MORVI[1]

March 30, 1929

It is a matter of shame for me that you are not able to hold the Conference without me. As far as the rulers are concerned, there is nothing for them to be ashamed of in the desire, but it betrays lack of confidence, and for the sponsors it is a matter of shame. One canunderstand my coming here by chance as a native of Kathiawar, but for you to consider my coming as imperative and to fix the time of the Conference to suit my convenience puts me to shame. This condition must now be dispensed with. If you cannot do without my presence, it is better that the Conference is not held. I am saying this on my own; it is sad that there are not young people present here who hold this view. I told them that, if they brought forward a censure motion, I would support them. I am trying to free even Devchandbhai from this addiction and I wish to tell him that he should not abjectly believe that the Conference cannot be held without me. If we wish to organize the people, we should have the capacity to do so witout any man, however great or talented he may be. We all believe that there is the same self in all of us; everyone has a hidden power which he can make manifest at any time and become great. Democracy consists in developing that power. When Kitchener died, the Government machinery did not come to a halt, the Empire did not perish, the War did not end; only another man took his place. Even when Gladstone passed away, the Government machinery did not cease to function. That nation has the self-confidence that it can produce any number of Gladstones.

We have gained by that resolution[2]. It has brought us not dishonour, but greater honour. We have even served the States thereby. That service would surely pain us if we were among those who believed that the Princely States could never reform themselves, that they must be put an end to. Prominent and intelligent men after much experience are coming more and more to the position that the

[1] Fifth Kathiawar Political Conference held under the Presidentship of Vallabhbhai Patel

[2] The Porbandar resolution concerning holding of the Conference on certain conditions

rot has spread to such an extent in the States and their rulers that it is now impossible to reform them. There are reasons why more and more people are holding this view; some of these reasons have heen deliberately provided by the Princes, while some are due to the prevailing anarchy. That anarchy is dear even to me, but there is order in my anarchy, there is a kind of peace in my agitation. But my friends do not concede this. And though I am inclined to be an anarchist and a rebel, I still hold that there is scope for reform in this State. If I believed that no reform could ever take place, that the Princely States must of necessity be destroyed, I would not take part in this Conference, because howcould I make an appeal to one whose extermination I desired? But today I wish to deal with them with love, not by threats. With the British Government also I wish to deal with love, but I wish to destroy it with love. I have many friends among Englishmen. I only wish to destroy the system. Hence I make no appeal to the Government. The position is different with the Princely States, considering which, there is no dishonour in the limitation we have accepted. It is a beautiful tree; it will produce good fruit. In it lies service to the Rulers because they are dependent. We should understand that dependence and, if we do so, we should respect the limitation and should not place them in an embarrassing situation. The resolutions we pass today should be in the interests of both the parties. Only if they promote the well-being of both the rulers and the ruled, can we work along the path of peace. If your minds have become unsteady after Porbandar, I say that you should calm down and I believe you can do a lot of work within that limitation. . . .

How much have you spun, how many spinning-wheels have you got going, how much khadi have you used? What a shame it is that for Amreli khadi I have to find customers in Calcutta? You have come here as representatives of 25 lakhs of farmers, how do you represent them? If you are truthful, you must do constructive work or give the Conference a different form. How sad it is that one sees at every point artificiality and falsehood, instead of truth which should exist in a political conference? Mulchand wants lots of money for the *Antyajas*; that he should have to come to me for it is a matter of shame. Are not three or four thousand rupees a small matter? That whole sum should come in if I speak and the Sardar asks for it. Young men of character are required for this work. If you do this and such other work, your political strength will grow. If we do no political work, why should we

have the name 'Political' Conference? We may have a descriptive name—we may have a spinning-wheel conference or a world reform conference. Whatever you do you must establish your rule over 25 lakhs of farmers—that you can do only by binding them with the bond of love. What did Vallabhabhai do? When the authority of the Empire was the highest in all its history, an individual took a crore from the Government and even undertook its administration himself.[1] The Governor held out dire threats in Bardoli, but ultimately, Vallabhabhai won his point. Vallabhbhai is made of the same clay as you and I, but he became a farmer, he shared with Bardoli its joys and sorrows, he danced as they made him dance, so that today the farmers dance to his tune. But do not forget that the key to Bardoli lay in the spinning-wheel. It is not political talk that works everywhere. Give up the false notion that you can get things done by harping on the Rulers' faults. I did not speak about politics in South Africa. I did not even mention the name of the Congress in Champaran. But the maximum work of the Congress is being done there today. It will avail you nothing if you try to intimidate the Ruler by means of great speeches, it will not even amuse children. It is a different matter if you want to wrest the reins of Government through disorder. If you believe that someone may go crazy and, frightened by disorder, will grant your demands, it is useless for me to make a speech and for you to listen to it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan 7-4-1929

267. MESSAGE TO KATHIAWAR COMMERCIAL CONFERENCE

[Before *March 31, 1929*][2]

Let Kathiawar merchants prove that there is room for benevolence in trade also.

The Tribune, 6-4-1929

[1] The meaning of the sentence is obscure.

[2] The conference was held at Morvi on March 31.

268. AHIMSA v. COMPASSION

The following letter has lain with me for a long time. I had thought of replying to it when I had some leisure. A little of his I have today on the steamer. I have abridged the letter as follows:[1]

The intention of the writer is excellent, but I think his study and experience of ahimsa is slight. There is as much difference between ahimsa and compassion as there is between gold and the shape givento it, between a root and the tree which sprouts from it. Where there is no compassion, there is no ahimsa. The test of ahimsa is compassion. The concrete form of ahimsa is compassion. Hence it is said there is as much ahimsa as there is compassion. If I refrain from beating up a man who comes to attack me, it may or may not be ahimsa. If I refrain from hitting him out of fear, it is not ahimsa. If I abstain from hitting him out of compassion and with full knowledge, it is ahimsa.

That which is opposed to pure economics cannot be ahimsa. Pure *artha* is that which includes the supreme *artha*. Ahimsa is never a losing transaction. The subtraction of one side of ahimsa from the other yields zero, that is to say, the two sides are equal. He who eats to live, lives to serve and earns just enough for his food and clothing, is though acting, free from action, and non-violent though committing violence. Ahimsa without action is an impossibility. Action does not merely mean activity of hands and feet. The mind performs greater activity than even hands and feet. Every thought is an action. There can be no ahimsa in the absence of thought. The dharma of ahimsa has been conceived only for an embodied being like man.

When a person who may eat anything limits, out of compassion, the things he will eat, he observes to that extent the dharma of ahimsa. On the other hand, when an orthodox person does not eat meat, etc., he does a good thing but we cannot say that he necessarily has ahimsa in him. Where there is ahimsa, there ought to be conscious compassion.

If the dharma of ahimsa is really good, insistence on following it

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had said that, in his view, Gandhiji's use of the word 'ahimsa' in place of 'compassion' and *vice versa* was likely to give rise to confusion in the public mind. He had asked for a clarification.

in every way in our daily life is not a mistake, but a duty. There should be no clash between worldly actions and dharma. Action which is opposed to dharma deserves to be eschewed. It is *himsa* and delusion and ignorance to say that ahimsa cannot be practised at all times, in all places and fully and so to set it aside. True endeavour consists in seeing that one's daily conduct follows ahimsa. This requires real endeavour. Acting thus a man will ultimately gain the supreme state because he will become fit fully to observe ahimsa. For other men perfect ahimsa will only remain in the form of a seed. There is violence at the root in the very act of living and hence arose the negative word ahimsa indicating of the dharma to be observed by embodied beings.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 31-3-1929

269. TO GUJARATIS RESIDENT IN BURMA

How can I describe the love which I receive wherever I go? Everywhere the same enthusiasm, the same shouts, the same crowds, the same downpour of coins. Is it any wonder that my trust in God increases and I see that the power of the spinning-wheel grows every day? If the people have faith in some other power of mine, why would they give me money for the spinning-wheel? If I were to beg in order to make swords instead of spinning-wheels, the people would not pay.

I wanted to spend a month in Burma, but my schedule this year has been so tight that I could not have given, there was no question of my giving, more time than I did. Hence I had to leave out many places, disappoint thousands and, to that extent, the coffers of *Daridranaryana* remain unfilled.

I do not wish to set down all my impressions in this article. Mahadev and Pyarelal will give them. I shall only mention a few things on which I feel I must write specially.

The people of Burma appeared to me unsophisticated, simple and trusting. The freedom which their women enjoy is enjoyed by women nowhere else in the world. I did not feel that, because of that freedom, they were bad in any way. There is modesty in their eyes. We might not like some of their ways; if the Burmese system of marriage strikes us as somewhat slack the women are not to blame; they see in it no impurity at all.

My feeling is that the Indians have been taking advantage of the innocence of these simple women. The educated people of Burma do not approve of the conduct of the Indians with regard to their women. It would not pain them if Indians married Burmese girls with proper ceremony, But I could see they intensely dislike those who merely indulge in their sexual urge. Indians ought to keep their conduct in this matter above board. I know that *Navajivan* may not reach the hands of those who are guilty; if it does, they may not read this and if by chance they do, they may angrily or without thinking throw it away. But I have sounded this warning out of a hope that those who read this article and have the above experience or know those who have illicit contacts will admonish them.

It seems the work of the Congress in Burma as in other provinces is almost at a standstill. Its register of names is not a continuous record. The names which are there are those enrolled by Madanjit. One's relationship with the Congress is nominal; it both begins and ends with one's giving a four-anna coin. No other constructive work is being done apart from the running of the Bhandar by the All-India Spinners' Association in the name of the Congress. It will not be incorrect to say that even these nominal members are only Indians.

This pitiable state must change; that is not a job for Madanjit alone or any other single person. All of you should take interest in it. You should start such items of constructive work as can be done in Burma.

One good thing was observed in regard to Congress work. Their accounts are clean and are audited. The Bhandar has only a small amount of money, but accounts are maintained of every pie there is.

I just could not pay a visit to the Khadi Bhandar. But if it receives enough encouragement, there is much scope for its development. If any lovers of khadi wish to settle down in Burma and they have the requisite knowledge, they may be accommodated there. If merchants in other towns in Burma stock a little khadi in their shops and supply it to khadi lovers, these will be benefited and khadi will spread.

There is a lot of scope for spinning-wheel propaganda among the people of Burma. They are poor; they have ability; they have time. Formerly they used to spin; weaving is fairly prevalent even today. This propaganda work is chiefly for the Burmese, but if some

benevolent spinning expert takes this work in hand, he can get it going and, perhaps, make some good Burmese interested in it. A number of Burmese have taken a pledge to take up this work. Every address received from them certainly contained praises of the spinning-wheel.

Now a few words specially about Gujaratis. Because their economic condition is good, they are in a position to carry on a number of benevolent activities. In this article I wish to speak only of the Gujarati National School. They have a costly building. The school has a good number of pupils. There is no doubt that the Gujaratis need a good school. The exiting school has much room for improvement and addition. The school building is small. It is situated in a quarter where the boys and girls have no place to play in. If technical skill is to be imparted there, there is no place to house a small workshop. It has hardly enough accommodation even for the existing number of pupils and classes. Hence, there is need for a building with a playground adjoining it. If it is situated at a distance, so that boys and girls cannotwalk to it, arrangements should be made to provide transport. This facility is provided in many places. The number of classes must be increased. It is not beyond the financial capacity of the Gujaratis in Rangoon to advance as far as the Vinaya Mandir.

This school appears to be national in name only. It should be made truly national and the people should take a firm pledge. There should be a clause in its trust-deed that the school will remain national always and will never take help from the Government or seek refuge under its name. Instruction in Indian accountancy, Hindi, music and commerce should be made compulsory in the school. It should adopt the curriculum from the Gujarat Vidyapith and it should be inspected by the Vidyapith. If this school is placed on a sound foundation, its administration is improved and if the point about the control of the building and funds is clarified, Shri Chhotubhai Galiara has placed in my hands a letter promising to pay the school Rs. 50,000 immediately. It is his desire to have his name connected with the school in some way. But he has left it to the wishes of the committee or the Gujarati citizens whether this should or should not be done.

I fully hope that the Gujaratis of Rangoon will not deny themselves this gift. The school must be well organized. I have suggested that a board of trustees comprising donors of substantial sums, e.g., a minimum of Rs. 1,000 should be constituted. These should appoint a managing committee of 10 or 15 members and set

up from amongst these a small board of trustees. All administrative power should vest in the managing committee. If this much is done and an assurance given that the school will retain its national character, advantage can and should be taken of Shri Galiara's offer.

It is my opinion that the wish of Shri Galiara to associate his name with the school in some way should be respected. Charities are offered and accepted only on such conditions. Shri Galiara has not stipulated a condition, but only expressed his wish. The Gujaratis' prestige consists in acceding to it. His name can be given either to the school or the building that is to be secured.

The school cannot be placed on a sound footing even with this donation. At least another sum of Rs. 50,000 has to be collected. To do so should not take even two hours. There are so many well-to-do Gujaratis in Rangoon that they will have no difficulty at all in collecting that amount.

This work must be done forthwith. This might be accomplished even before this article comes out. I hope those who had taken a pledge to get this done forthwith will do so. There is no difficultywhatever in doing it. It is the duty of Gujaratis in Burma and, chiefly of those in Rangoon, to make this school an ideal one. Economically they are well off; they have the intelligence; only they must have a keen desire to do it.

Some may ask how they can now find this money since only recently Gandhi took away over Rs. 1,50,000. It would be uncharitable for anyone to think thus. Though the contribution of the Gujaratis to the cause of the poor is a large one, others too have given much. Again, the local Gujaratis have a personal interest in the school fund; they owe it to their children . Hence, the two things are distinct. In the first case there was 95 per cent of charity; in this there is 95 per cent of self-interest.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 31-3-1929

270. LETTER TO JANAKDHARI PRASAD

March, 1929

It is better to leave a body one has outgrown. To see the dearest ones as long as possible in the flesh is a selfish desire an it comes out of weakness or want of faith in the survival of the soul after the dissolution of the body. The form ever changes, even perishes. The informing spirit neither changes nor perishes. True love consists in transferring the self from the body to the dweller within and then necessarily realizing the oneness of life inhabiting numberless bodies.

After all we are very human. The ability to suppress is the preliminary to eradication. Let this death of one whom you loved be a means of enriching your faith in the future and in the oneness of all life. If this oneness was not a fact, we would not have been blessed with the capacity to forget the death of dearest ones. Let this death also spur you on to greater dedication to service.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Kuchh Apni Kuchh Deshki, p. 110

271. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI

Monday [Before *April, 1929*][1]

CHI. KASHI,

I received your letter. Do not in the least worry about Prabhudas. I have written in detail to Kaka about him. If it is necessary to send him to Almora, I will do so. I have already settled the matter with Hargovind Pant. I am hopeful that hip-baths will set him right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 33076

[1] Prabhudas was in Almora in April 1929.

272. TELEGRAM TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

MORVI,
[*April 1, 1929*][1]

IMPORTANCE
CALCUTTA

WIRE PROGRESS FAST SABARMATI.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6763

273. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

MORVI,
April 1, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I have all your letters. I am surprised that you had not received my wire[2] even till 27th. It was duly sent immediately after the trial. Morvi, of course, you know. Everybody wanted to know where you were.

We leave here tonight.

You will be pained to know that Chhaganlal Gandhi has been discovered to have carried on systematic petty thieving for the past many years. When he was discovered, he tried to hide his guilty by forgery.

Now of course he has made a confession. But the confession has not transformed him. His life became a burden to him at the Ashram and he left two days ago for Rajkot. He is hardly likely to find peace even there. This discovery is perhaps the worst incident in my life. However it left me unmoved. I have imposed no penance on myself. And beyond informing the whole colony of the sad thing, I have taken no notice of wrong doing. I have of course advised him that it is his duty to dispossess himself now of everything he has.

I am glad you are extending the building. If you have a large number staying with you, you are bound to have more accommodation.

[1] From the postmark
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Mirabehn", 26-3-1929.

Always omit food when there is the slightest derangement in the digestive apparatus. Never mind the weakness. Strength will return when you are able to take food. But food itself will cause weakness when the system cannot assimilate it.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5356. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9412

274. TELEGRAM TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

SABARMATI,
April 2, 1929

IMPORTANCE
CALCUTTA

GLAD LEARN PROGRESS. OMIT SOAP FOR BATH.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6765

275. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

April 2, 1929

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

I got your letters. I sent a telegram only today. I shall get the reply tomorrow at Sabarmati. Everything seems to be going on quite well. Make one change. There is no need to rub soap on the body. Dip a handkerchief in water and scrub the body with the wet cloth, it will become clean. Soap is harmful to the skin and it eats up the useful oil in the skin. The body becomes clean rubbing it hard with a towel. Occasionally soap may be used to remove outside dirt. It is not necessary for removing impurities of perspiration.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6764

276. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
April 3, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I have your further letters. I am glad you are having all the patients coming to you for help. You know what to do. This I write to put you on the right track about drugs. Even castor oil and liquorice powder are expensive things for Indian villages. There are indigenous drugs which you should use instead of liquorice powder made in England or Germany. You should use liquorice itself. It is quite effective and obtainable in every village. You get it in the form of a stick, you break the stick and get the gummy substance from the stick. A *tola* of this has simply to be mixed with a little warm milk and administered at the time of retiring to bed or better still at 4 o'clock in the morning, and patients get a clean motion. This is cheap. It can be administered in water also. Then there are the *sena* leaves cheaper even than liquorice to be obtainable everywhere. You can give *sena* leaves in powdered from or as an infusion. You can get hold of physicians who are somewhat honest and good and get through their aid these very simple drugs. There is only one thing which I fear you will have to keep and that is quinine for malarial cases. But all this is by the way. I don't want to tax you unnecessarily, and you may not wish to distract your attention by having to give your time to a study of these drugs, however superfical that study may be. You will therefore use your own judgment and do what may consider is feasible.

Love.

BAPU

SHRIMATI MIRABEHN
CHHATWAN CHHOTTAIPATTI, DT. DARBHANGA

From the original: C.W. 5357. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G. N. 9413

277. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI, B.B.C.I. RLY.,
April 3, 1929

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

I have your letter. As things are, the Andhra people have not left me a single day to enable me to go to the Ashram and then to come to Bombay, and as now the May part of the tour is really for my recreation, I would not like to leave Bombay for Allahabad on the 27th May. But I would like to come to the Ashram for a few days and then go to Almora. I could still do Cawnpore, Allahabad and Lucknow before leaving for Almora, and could even go to the Punjab if the people in the Punjab so require it. No announcement therefore need just now be made, but if you want to fix the date in advance for Cawnpore and Lucknow and even for Almora, let it be a date after 10th of June. I would like to give a clear week to the Ashram before I move out. I would like you to ascertain from the Punjab people what they would have me to do.

I have not got the Andhradesh programme rigidly fixed yet. For the time being therefore you would use Bezwada as headquarters. I expect to reach Bezwada on the 8th instant.

I would like Sitla Sahai to come here if he is not required there for the time being. I want him to be here with reference to his wife and daughter, especially so during my absence.

I send the measurements for Padma's glasses which please hand over to him. I promised to get those measurements and have them sent over to him.

Yours Sincerely,

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1929. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

278. THAT TEST CASE

Nothing that I did in connection with the cloth-burning case that has just ended in a complete triumph for the Calcutta police or the Government of Bengal should serve as copy. There are many things in one's life that one would like others to copy; there are others which are not necessarily vices and yet are not meant to be and

ought not to be copied. I was therefore glad that several friends were perplexed and distressed over my securing my release from detention even on giving a personal bound than on entering upon a defence and to crown all, being represented by counsel. How could I, they urged, as a confirmed non-co-operator, possibly do the three things and thus act contrary to all I have preached hitherto?

There is a consistency that is wise and a consistency that is foolish. A man who in order to be consistent would go bare-bodied in the hot sun of India and sunless Norway in midwinter would be considered a fool and would lose his his life in the bargain.

I am bound to do things in a representative capacity that I may not do in my individual capacity. As a trustee of the A.I.S.A., I possess lakhs of rupees; in my individual capacity, I have not a penny I can call my own. As a trustee of the same Association, I authorize, even require the filing of law suits in unavoidable cases. In my individual capacity, I can think of no such contingency. In the bonfire case as Chairman of the Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee I was a trustee. If I had thought that the police notice of prohibition of bonfire was legal, I would have advised cessation of bonfire in the Sharddhanand Park. For I was not prepared as yet to advise civil disobedience. But the Section under which the notice was issued seemed to me to bear at least a double interpretation. It therefore became a fit subject for a test case. The steps that followed were in the natural course. If the right of the police to stop the burning was to be tested, the case should be defended and if it was to be defended, I should be humble enough to allow myself to be defended by counsel rather than presumptuously rely upon my ability as a one time lawyer to argue technical points of law. Not to have signed thepersonal bail bond would have meant taking an un-warranted liberty with my position in the public life of the country. If I had refused to sign the bail bond, I fancy that the Commissioner of Police would have still let me proceed on my voyage to Burma. But I would have lost my reputation for delicate courtesy with which I am credited.

But cases such as this do not often occur to non-co-operators. They would avoid undertaking trusts wherein there might be conflict between public duty and private conduct. It is therefore that I warned the public against copying me in this case. The general test is that a non-co-operator should have nothing to do with bail bond or defence for his personal advantage or comfort.

The result of the case is a disappointment and a confirmation of my view about British courts of law. I was unprepared for the Court's justification of the conduct of the police. It was its duty to condemn the action of the police in creating the disturbance they did in the face of my clearest possible statement that in seeking to light the bonfire I was not acting as a civil resister but in the *bona-fide* belief that the Section in question did not apply to places like the Shraddhanand Park. As it is, the Calcutta police have received a certificate of good conduct for their rowdyism.

This judgment thus confirms my opinion that in cases of a serious clash between the authorities and the public, the judges would, even if unconsciously, exonerate the former.

It was however well that the case was fought as a test case. For without it, the great demonstration in Shraddhanand Park would have been impossible. The high-handed action of the police gave the boycott movement an advertisement and an encouragement it would never otherwise have had. The police are therefore welcome to their certificate of good conduct.

Young India, 4-4-1929

279. NOTES

THE INDISCRIMINATE ARRESTS

The arrests of labour leaders or so-called Communists show that the Government is in a panicky state and is betraying the symptoms to which we have been used and which presage a period of terrorism. Evidently it believes in a periodical exhibition of its capacity to supersede all law and to discover to a trembling India the red claws which usually remain under cover. Of course the farce of a trial will be duly enacted. If the accused are wise they will not run into the trap and assist the farce by being represented by counsel. But they will boldly risk imprisonment. Presently it will be the turn of thousandsnot merely to risk but to face and even to court imprisonment if this reign of lawlessness under the guise of law is to be ended once for all.

It seems to me that the motive behind these prosecutions is not to kill Communism, it is to strike terror. If by Communism is meant seizure of power and property by violent means, public opinion was successfully fighting that demon. The Congress creed, indeed the creed of all political parties, is attainment of political liberty through non-violent means. But the Government by its action has given a

strength to the cult of violence which it never possessed. They are shrewd enough to know that such was bound to be the case. The motive behind these arrests has therefore to be searched in another direction. One thing is certain. Terrorism like plague has lost its terror for the public. The movement of swaraj has found too deep a root in the public mind to be shaken or destroyed. It is bound to gain strength through these arrests and the other similar indications of the Government's intention to strike a death-blow at the liberty movement. For, the prosecution of Sjt. Sambamurti and Sjt. Khadilkar, the proscription of Pandit Sundarlal's volume, the police conduct at Shraddhanand Park and such other incidents that may have escapade my notice cumulatively point in but one direction.

DAYLIGHT ROBBERY

Proscription without trial, without examination, without the author being able to defend himself in any shape or form, of Pandit Sundarlal's learned volume in Hindi is nothing short of daylight robbery by the U.P. Government. These volumes represent years of labour. They were brought out at great expense, and if the proscription is allowed to stand, it means ruin to the author or the publisher whoever may have incurred the expense. The clear statement issued by the publisher shows that the Government was not taken unawares. They knew that the volumes were about to be published, they knew what they were likely to be. And yet they confiscated them without warning and apparently without proper examination thereof. According to the publisher's note they could not have had more than two days to examine the volumes. Surely the author and the public were entitled to know what there was objectionable in them. I write from bitter experience. Even to this day I do not know why my booklets *Hind Swaraj* and adaptation of Ruskin's *Unto This Last* were proscribed." I had no notice given to me. It was only through a friend I came to know that these copies were proscribed. But there is one consolation the public may derivefrom this daylight robbery. The Government are by such acts providing us with easy methods of civil disobedience should it be necessary for us next year to undertake it on a large scale.

"NAVAKAL" PROSECUTION

The case against Sjt. Khadilkar of *Navakal* I have headed prosecution. In truth it is persecution. But under a Government run in the teeth of popular opposition, especially when as in our case much of it is suppressed, prosecution must be as it is the lot of every plain-spoken journalist. Sjt. Khadilkar has always believed in calling a spade

a spade. And he is an effective popular writer. He had paid the price of popularity based on plain speech. I tender him my congratulations. I know that he is a philosopher. He once told me that he often wrote plays to pay the fines he had at times to pay for his journalistic adventures. He was content to run his paper and through it educate public opinion according to his lights, so long as he could do so without running into debts for paying fines. The unconcern with which he was describing his adventures enhanced the respect I always felt for his ability and constancy of purpose and sacrifice for the sake of the country. I wish that he had not thrown away good money in counsel's fees. Law-courts like every other Government institution are designed to protect the Government in time of need. We have had practical experience of this times without number. They are necessarily so. Only we do not realize it when popular liberty and Government run in the same direction. When however popular liberty has to be defended in spite of Government opposition, law-courts are poor guardians thereof. The less we have to do with them the better for us.

DUTY OF DISAFFECTION

When during the Burma tour I heard that Sjt. Sambamurti was convicted, I thought he must have said something very wicked about the Government to deserve the conviction and the severe sentence. But a perusal of the published judgment in the case which summarizes the seven speeches of Sjt. Sambamurti shows, as the Working Committee properly points out in its resolution, that there is nothing in those speeches which most Congressmen have not repeatedly said from a hundred platforms.

Sjt. Sambamurti was charged under the disaffection section. But disaffection with Congressmen, indeed with every nationalist, has long been a sacred duty. How shall a Government escape disaffection whenit continuously acts so as to deserve disaffection? The fact is that if many who use much stronger language than Sjt. Sambamurti are not honoured with convictions, it is because Sjt. Sambamurti was making himself felt, his preaching was proving infectious; whereas with most of us our disaffection is a sterile virtue. If we would deserve the honour that has been given to Sjt. Sambamurti, our disaffection must become as dynamic as Sjt. Sambamurti's was becoming. He had become a tall poppy.

He has set a good example by refusing to be bailed out or to enter upon a defence. Personally I would have certainly made a brief statement not so much for the guidance of the court as for that of the public. The public would for instance want to know whether he was

correctly reported or not. But I confess that this is a small matter. We are used to exaggerated and inaccurate reporting. And where a particular act is not only not deplored but defended, what matters it whether it is painted in loud or in subdued colours? His refusal to give a message to the public was characteristic of him. If his conviction was not a sufficient message, no words of his could coin one worth the name.

Young India, 4-4-1929

280. PROHIBITION CAMPAIGN

The following scheme[1] sent by Sjt. C. Rajagopalachari has been adopted by the Working Committee and a committee consisting of Dr. Ansari, Sjt.Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad and C. Rajagopalachari has been appointed to carry out the work.

Young India, 4-4-1929

281. TELEGRAM TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

SABARMATI,
[*April 4, 1929*][2]

IMPORTANCE
CALCUTTA

RECEIVED. WIRE WEIGHT GENERAL CONDITION LABURNUM ROAD BOMBAY WHERE REACHING TO-MORROW.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6766

[1] For the scheme, *vide* Appendix "Prohibition Campaign", 23-5-1929.
[2] From the postmark

282. TELEGRAM TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

BOMBAY,
[*April 5, 1929*][1]

IMPORTANCE
CALCUTTA

REPORT SEEMS SATISFACTORY. SIXTH SEVENTH HYDERABAD DECCAN AFTERWARDS BEZWADA.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N 6767

283. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

April 5, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have sent you a wire about P.[2] He seems to me to be an extremely straightforward man. You need not entertain any suspicion about him. If so, you need not entertain any suspicion about S.[3] either. That S. has been guilty of many lies is a different matter. If, however, he has indulged in immorality, he alone is a party to his sin. I believe that we cannot ask him to leave. No one should talk about him. You should keep him in the office under your own eyes, or give him some work in which he can do no harm. P. himself has requested that S. should be given some other work. P. wants that whenever there is suspicion against him, we should talk plainly to him about it. I think that would be right.

There was a letter from Chhaganlal, which I enclose with this . You may now do about his belongings what you think best. It would be proper to give both the letters to Narandas to read.

I have been given three excellent cows. We are trying to get some more. I hope you have sent Krishnavatar.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5396

[1] From the postmark
[2] The names are being omitted.
[3] *ibid*

284. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

BOMBAY,
[*Friday*][1], *April 5, 1929*

CHI. KUSUM,

You will know more about Sharada[2] from the other letters. Give all help in the matter. Serve Sulochanabehn. I am sure you will preserve your peace of mind. I will certainly take you with me on the next tour. Radha's[3] health is very delicate. Therefore lighten her burden if you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1783

285. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

[*April 5, 1929*][4]

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I have your letter. I do not think there will be any obstacle in forming a School Management Board there. The obstacle that exists is thevery fact that the school is there, and that obstacle we invited when the school was established there. The thing to be done now is to find ways and means to ensure that the teachers at present on the staff stay on permanently. Those of them who want to work outside Kathiawad should give. . . .[5]

The idea of the Gandhi Seva Sangh is certainly excellent. But who will invite all of you. In such matters, very often asking for an invitation shows pure humility and true self-respect. It shows one's conviction that one is worthy of being invited. If, therefore, you wish to join it, write to me to that effect.

If you can solve the problem of adult education, it would indeed be excellent. I would like you to be in regular correspondence with

[1] The source has "Thursday", which appears to be a slip

[2] Sharada H. Kotak

[3] Radha Gandhi

[4] The Gandhi Seva Sangh, referred to in the letter, was in existence by August 10, 1924. The only year after that in which Gandhiji left Bombay on a Friday, April 5, was 1929.

[5] A word here is illegible in the source.

Kakasaheb. In such matters, excessive diffidence in oneself disappears on its own and with experience of work.

Take the utmost care of your health.

I should very much like to attend your school's function in April, but I have to leave Bombay on the 5th, and so, I am not likely to get even one day free. Invite Vallabhbhai. Kakasaheb also will have arrived in Morbi. I am leaving on Friday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 33813

286. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

April 5, 1929

It was, true Gandhiji began in Hindi, that he was addressing a public meeting in Bombay after so many years. Even this time he was not aware that he would be called upon to address any meeting. He had come to Bombay in response to two telegrams from the B.P.C.C. and the Bombay Youth League. There was a time, he said, in the history of Bombay when it was impossible for him to address a public meeting in such a small place as the one where they had assembled. Even the sands of Chaupati sometimes fell short of their requirements. There was a lot of enthusiasm then among the people. Looking to the national programme which the country had undertaken for the current year, he would at once say that there was greater need now than in the years 1921-22 for all the enthusiasm and energy they could bring to the service of the country.

Speaking about the observance of the National Week, Mahatma Gandhi recalled that it was on the 13th of April that there was Jallianwala Bagh massacre. For all these years since that incident, the whole country was observing the National Week from the 6th to the 13th of April. From Kanyakumari to Kashmir and from Dibrugarh to Karachi, people had to take to work again if the resolve of the nation expressed through the Congress was not to be an empty boast.

Referring to the library which was to be opened in honour of the memory of the late Mr. Omar Sobhani, Mahatmaji observed that the services of Omar Sobhani to Bombay were, indeed, matchless. It was only meet and proper that his memory shouldbe consecrated. Gandhiji then referred to the new premises of the B.P.C.C. which he was soon going to declare open. He humorously remarked that if the Congress could open new office, it could also open a new era of freedom for the country. What was wanted, he added, was self-confidence. Proceeding, he reminded his hearers that the Congress had asked the country to prepare for a vigorous national

[1] The meeting was held in the compound of the Congress House.

fight which was to commence at the end of year 1929. He hoped that during this year the country would carry out the programme which the Congress had laid down. The first and the most important item of the Congress programme, he pointed out, was the use of khaddar and boycott of all foreign cloth. It was a pity, he added, that so many young men and even women who had come to the meeting, had put on foreign dress on their bodies. The bazaar which he witnessed before him was *videshi* (foreign) bazaar although he was called there to open the khaddar bazaar. . . . He reiterated his conviction that without khadi there would be no swaraj. He attached more importance to khaddar as a principal item of the Congress programme because, he said, it was a thing in which all could participate.

He then appealed to the audience to discard on the spot their foreign caps and other articles of dress.[1]

The Bombay Chronicle, 6-4-1929

287. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, HYDERABAD (DECCAN)

April 6, 1929

Gandhiji, seated in a chair on the dais, made a short reply in Urdu, in the course of which he said that he had come to Hyderabad before, but had not asked for money. He would ask for it now in the name of *Daridranarayana*. He pointed out that India was the poorest of the nations and that more than three crores of people were starving every day and asked them to realize what it meant. Speaking about charkha, he said it was a Kamadhenu, giving our necessities. In his opinion Hyderabad State which was endowed with several facilities could help British India by producing khadi in abundance. He was told by Shrimati Sarojini Devi that very superior kind of khadi was produced there and he was very glad of that. He had rarely come across such a fine texture of khadi which was used in the garland presented to him and if that was prepared by the depressed class boys he congratulated them and was very glad of that.

Then he referred to the Hindu-Muslim question in British India and said that the time was coming again when the unity which once was witnessed in the year 1921 was going to be witnessed once again and he asked the audience to help the people of India in achieving it. Referring to the evil of drink, he said that it was a disgrace to the nation that their children were educated out of the money raised by such means. He said conditions were different in Hyderabad and asked them to make a representation to His Exalted Highness, the Nizam, and see that a new departure was made in this

[1] Gandhiji then declared open the new office of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee and visited the Omar Sobhani Memorial Library.

respect and set an example to British India. He congratulated the Nizam for abolishing cow-slaughter and thus taking a big step forward in Hindu-Muslim unity. Lastly, he touched upon the question of the depressed classes and said that the curse of untouchability had no sanction of the Shastras and asked the Hindus to see that it was eradicated from their society.

The Hindu, 8-4-1929

288. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[Before *April 7, 1929*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I forgot to write to you about Chhaganlal Gandhi. Perhaps you do not know that the sum which he has handed over contains a part that is of the nature of stolen money. It represents the value of some jewellery and interest. I would consider it wrong to return this sum, nor has any of us the right to do so. The money should be taken to have been spent. As a trust, we have a right to accept a donation. In order to return a donation, we should have some moral or legal basis. In this case we have neither. We can give a pension to Chhaganlal. It may even be our duty to do so. We should find out what Chhaganlal intends to do and what he wishes. I wrote to him last week.

He knows that we shall not let him starve. Besides, we have the responsibility of supporting Kashi.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I return with this Sheth Govinddas's letter. Can we send anyone there just now? In the last resort, there is Sitla Sahai. Think over the matter. What has been your experience of Surajbhan in this regard?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5425

[1] From the reference to Chhaganlal Gandhi's lapse, it appears this was written before the following item.

289. MY SHAME AND SORROW[1]

I have been greatly exercised in my mind as to whether or not to write on this topic. But after fullest consideration I have come to the conclusion that not to write would constitute a grave dereliction of duty. Many friends look upon the Satyagraha Ashram, the present Udyoga Mandir, as a sacred institution and send donations on the death of dear ones in respect of its manifold activities which I have thankfully accepted.

Recently some lapses of a serious character have been brought to light on the part of some members of this institution. I have freely spoken about them to the inmates of the Mandir at prayer times. But I do not consider this publicity sufficient. My relations with the readers of *Navajivan* are not commercial, but have a strictly moral base. They are naturally founded on the assumed purity of myself and the institution. I have time and again written on the sin of secrecy. Personally I have no secrets. It is, therefore, necessary for me to take the reader into my confidence. If he has assumed me and the institution to be pure it is but meet that he should know our impurity also.

Chhaganlal Gandhi, elder brother of the late Maganlal Gandhi, is a cousin of mine. He has been like a son to me and was brought up by me under my care from his youth. He has been discovered to be engaged in a series of petty larcenies over a number of years. I should not have felt the aberration so much if the repentance had been voluntary, but as it was the thing was detected quite accidentally and brought to light by a namesake, the vigilant Secretary of the Mandir. Indeed Chhaganlal Gandhi even made an unsuccessful attempt to conceal the guilt. He is now apparently consumed with remorse and is shedding bitter tears. He has, further, of his own accord left the Mandir, but I have hopes that he will one day return to the Mandir completely purified and the Mandir will then welcome him back to its fold with open arms. His larcenies seem to have been of a very trivial character involving very inconsiderable sums of money on the whole. I am inclined to treat the lapse in the nature of a disease. So far as one can see these thefts have not meant any pecuniary loss to the Mandir.

[1] The Gujarati original of which this is a translation was published in *Navajivan*, 7-4-1929.

Chhaganlal Gandhi had laid up an amount of about ten thousand from his savings. I do not wish here to enter into the history of these savings. This amount he made over to the Mandir only a few months ago at my suggestion not from any impulse of generosity but from a sense of the duty pointed out. Private possession of wealth being inconsistent with principles of the Mandir, this ownership of not an inconsiderable sum of money jarred on me and intimated to him accordingly. After holding consultations with his wife and two sons, none of whom desired its use for their sakes, Chhaganlal made it over unconditionally to the Udyoga Mandir. So far as I am aware Chhaganlal at present owns no property whatever except his share in the ancestral property. When I think of Chhaganlal Gandhi's record of thirty years of service and his artlessness and simplicity on the one hand and these lapses on the other, I am perplexed and take refuge in the reflection that the working of the Law of Karma is inscrutable. This is but one chapter of the story of my shame and sorrow.

Now for the second chapter. I have lavished unstinted praise on Kasturbai (Mrs. Gandhi) in my *Autobiography*. She has stood by me in the changes of my life. I believe hers to have been an immaculate life. It is true that her renunciation has not been based on an intelligent appreciation of the fundamentals of life, but from a blind wifely devotion. At any rate she has never hindered me in my progress towards my ideals. By her exemplary care and nursing during my illness she has easily commanded a patient's gratitude. I have spared her no ordeals. She has been a tower of strength to me in my self-imposed vow of *brahmacharya*. But the white surface of these virtues is not without the glaringly dark spots. Although impelled by her sense of wifely devotion she has renounced so far as the world knows earthly possessions, longing for them has persisted. As a result, about a year or so ago she had laid up a sum of about a couple of hundred rupees for her own use out of the small sums presented to her by various people on different occasions. The rule of the Mandir, however, is that even such personal presents may not be kept for private use. Her action, therefore, amounted to theft. Fortunately for her and the Mandir, thieves broke into her room about two years ago. This incident resulted in the discovery of the forgoing misappropriation. For a moment her remorse appeared to be genuine. Events have proved, however, that it was only momentary. Evidently it did not root out the desire for possession. Recently some unknown visitors to the Mandir brought her a sum of four rupees. Instead of

handing over this sum, according to the Mandir rules, to the Secretary she kept it with her. A tried inmate of the Mandir was present when the donation was made. It was his obvious duty to put Kasturbai on her guard; but impelled by a false sense of courtesy he remained instead a helpless witness of the wrong. After Chhaganlal's episode the members of the Udyoga Mandir became suddenly vigilant.

The witness of Kasturbai's lapse informed Chhaganlal Joshi about it. Joshi courageously, though in fear and trembling, went to Kasturbai and demanded the money. Kasturbai felt the humiliation and quickly returned four rupees and promised never to repeat the offence. I believe her remorse to be genuine. She has agreed to withdraw herself from the institution should any other previous aberration be discovered against her or in case she should lapse into such conduct again. Her penitence has been accepted by Udyoga Mandir and he well remain there just as before and accompany me in my tours.

Now for the third chapter. Three years ago a widow was living in the Ashram. All believed her to be pure. About the same time a young man brought up in an orphanage too was living in the Ashram. His conduct appeared to be correct. He was at that time unmarried. He seduced the widow. This is comparatively old history now. But the lapse was discovered only recently. That such immorality should have occurred in the institution that imposes *brahmacharya* on its inmates is a serious tragedy. Alas for the Mandir!

If those who have believed in me and the Mandir desert us after these revelations it will serve two purposes at a stroke. Both they and myself will be extricated from the false position and I would welcome the relief and the lightening of my burden it will bring me. If all good men in the Mandir left it in disgust the problem would again be readily solved. Equally handy would the solution be if all bad men left the Mandir. Lastly, if I could bring myself to flee from the Mandir that too would be a solution. But life's riddles are not solved quite so easily. None of these things will happen. Nature's processes work mysteriously.

I hold the manifestation of the corruption in the Mandir to be merely the reflection of the wrong in myself. Nothing has been further from my thoughts in writing the above lines than to arrogate to myself superior virtue. On the contrary, I sincerely believe that the impurity of my associates is but he manifestation of the hidden wrong

within me. I have never claimed perfection for myself. Who knows myaberrations in the realm of thought have reacted on the environment round me. The epithet of "Mahatma" has always galled me and now it almost sounds to me like a term of abuse.

But what am I to do? Should I flee or commit suicide or embark on an endless fast or immure myself alive in the Mandir or refuse to handle public finance or public duty? I can do none of these things mechanically. I must wait for the voice within. I am an incorrigible optimist. I have the hope of attaining swaraj even through the purification of the Mandir. But I must first try, discover and remove my own shortcomings. Therefore in spite of the full knowledge of the grave short it comings and failures of the Udyoga Mandir, I still live on the hope that will one day justify its existence and reconvert itself into the Satyagraha Ashram.

It seems to me therefore that for the present I must go on with it, even though I have to proclaim its shortcomings to the world again and again. An activity commenced in God's name may be given up only at His bidding. And when He wishes this activity of mine to be brought to a close He will surely prompt society to hound me out of its pale and I hug to myself the hope that even in that dread hour of retribution I shall still have power to declare my faith in Him. Let me once more reiterate my opinion about the Mandir. Imperfect as it always has been, full of corruption as it has been discovered to be, this institution is my best creation. I hope to see God through its aid. I wish to be judged by the measure of its soundness. Revelations put me on my guard; they make me search within; they humble me. But they do not shake my faith in it. This may be a gross delusion on my part. If so I can say with the immortal Tulsidas that even as one who sees silver in the mother of pearl or water in mirage till his ignorance is dispelled so will my delusion be a reality to me till the eyes of my understanding are opened.

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-4-1929

290. "JODANIKOSH"[1]

The Gujarat Vidyapith has brought out this week a standard dictionary of the Gujarati language. It is, as its name *Jodanikosh* suggests, a dictionary of spellings of words. This is the first dictionary of its kind. There are a few dictionaries in Gujarati, but they have not attempted to fix the spellings of words in keeping with any accepted standard. A language which has no fixed spellings for its words is in the same position as a man without a nose. I have always felt, therefore, the want of a standard dictionary in Gujarati. The number of readers of the *Navajivan* is by no means small. Similarly, there are many who lean upon the Gujarat Vidyapith for the right guidance in linguistic and literary matters. How, then, can they do without a standard dictionary? This dictionary has been prepared and brought out to meet their needs.

It may be asked: How is one to accept that the spellings given in this dictionary are correct while those in others are not? The answer is that it is not a question of deciding which spellings are correct and which are not. The principle followed in the compilation of this dictionary is that the spellings adopted by those who have a good knowledge of Gujarati and who try to write grammatically correct Gujarati be accepted as correct.

All those who have a love of the Gujarati language, who want to write correct Gujarati, and who care to adopt those spellings of words which are used by numberless Gujaratis taking part in the national movement, will do well to have a copy of this dictionary.

We should be more ashamed of committing mistakes of spellings in our mother tongue than we are of committing them in English. After the publication of this dictionary, now no one has the right to do as his fancy dictates in the matter of spelling. I recommend to those whose knowledge of Gujarati is as incomplete as mine to use this dictionary in dealing with their correspondence.

This dictionary contains 43,743 words. It is not necessary for me to write about how it came to be written or the principles which it has followed in fixing the spelling of words. Let the readers know these details from the book itself. The well-to-do who are interested

[1] The Gujarati original of which this is a translation was published in *Navajivan*, 7-4-1929.

inlanguage should give a copy of this dictionary to their business executives and ask them to write their Gujarati with its help.

The publishers, not being confident of the sort of reception the book will get from the reading public, have brought out the first edition only of 500 copies. I hope that this number will not suffice even for the subscribers of *Navajivan*. The cost price for a copy comes to three rupees and twelve annas. The sale price, however, has been fixed at three rupees only. It is well bound and has 373 pages. I am sure that the Gujarati-loving Gujaratis will soon buy up all copies and thus dispel the doubts of the publishers and show their appreciation of the labour done by the compilers.

The problems of Education, pp. 170-1

291. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
April 7, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I had your letter in Bombay. Your letter sent to Bezwada has been redirected here at Hyderabad which I leave this evening.

Your last letter is disturbing. You continue to get fever periodically. Do not be anxious about it, but do not disregard it. If you cannot keep your health there, you must take a change. It might be good to take quinine for some days. Lemons you should send for from Patna or Calcutta wherever they are to be had. I hope you are using mosquito-net regularly. If oil disagrees, do not take it. If you cannot get good ghee, I can send it to you. In short, you should hold your body in trust and take whatever may be needed for it.

Yes for the soft spindles you have no advocate in Gujarat barring me. But my advocacy is based on ignorance. I advocate it because I like it.

Visitors waiting to see me.

[1] Permanent address

I am under Mrs. Naidu's roof.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Ba, Prabhavati, Imamsaheb, Pyarelal and Subbiah are with me. Vallabhbhai wanted Mahadev.

From the original: C.W. 5358. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9414

292. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

April 7, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

You must have got the letter[1] which I wrote to you from Bombay. I am writing this from Hyderabad. Kishorelal has advised H.[2] to see S.[3] He will, therefore, do so. He asked my permission and I have given it. You should not feel nervous about this affair. Remain calm. We should be careful and see that no injustice is done by us. There will be no harm if we are deceived, but it will certainly be wrong if we do injustice to anyone. If some people persist in their sins despite our vigilance, we may remain unconcerned by that because we shall not be responsible for their sins. I have no time to elaborate this, however. I must run now. Waman Naik is sitting before me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5397

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 5-4-1929.

[2] The names are being omitted here.

[3] *ibid.*

293. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
April 8, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I sent you a letter yesterday from Hyderabad (Deccan). I am nearing Bezwada, but still away from it. We are in a little village without a telegraphic office. The post from Bezwada has been brought here. So I have two letters from you, 2nd and 3rd. If you cannot be radically cured, you must take a change. You can go to a seaside or to a hillside.

If you can hold out till June, you might perhaps go with me to Almora. So far as I am aware, there is to be an Almora programme in June. You will have to travel 2nd class though. I should dread to put you in a 3rd-class compartment in your weak state. But this is all building castles in the air. The immediate thing is for you to get well. To spend lavishly on fruit is real economy. You cannot keep good health without fresh fruit. Lemons are the prince among fruits. Dr. Rajabali told me one lemon was equal to six oranges. I can well believe it . But you must have all the fruit you fancy. Raw green leaf is good, but it must be eaten sparingly, not more than one *tola* at a time and then too only if it does not upset the system. Perhaps the oil too does not agree with you. Your primary concern is not to discover a cheap diet, but it is to be able to live in villages without needing a yearly exodus to the hills. Your attention must, therefore, be concentrated on making your experiment a success, no matter how much it costs you to live. I am going to wire to you as soon as I am at a wiring station.[2] How nice it is to be without a wiring office at either end! I know that I need not wire. If I was really poor, I could not wire. If I was not impatient and had full trust in God. I should not wire. But I am not going to act mechanically. When that faith comes, I shall cease to think of wiring. It is enough for the time being that I am not fretting, even though I get letters about your illness and though I have no telegraph office here.

I seem to be flourishing on my diet, 3rd-class travelling and continuous engagements. I wonder myself that I have not yet

[1] Permaaddress nent

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Mirabehn", 9-4-1929

collapsed. Of course, I snatch plenty of rest and the happy knack of sleeping at will saves me. Truth is that God saves me so long as He wants me in this body. The moment His wants are satisfied, no precautions on my part will save me.

Of course, you will locate Bezwada on the map. There are five or six districts to cover.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5359. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9415

294. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

April 8, 1929

SISTERS,

I cannot banish from my mind the memory of the incidents that took place in the Udyoga Mandir. I see lack of courage in all of them. Where there is no courage there can never be truth. To do a wrong thing is sin, but to try to hide it is a greater sin. If a person sincerely admits his sin, it is washed off and he can return to the path of right. But he who hides his misdeed out of a false sense of shame sinks deeper into the pit. We have seen this to be true in every case, and hence I request you all to avoid a false sense of shame. If any of you, knowingly or unknowingly, does a wrong thing, she should confess it at once and resolve in her mind not to do a similar thing again.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–1: Ashramni Behnone, p. 60

295. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Silence Day [*April 8, 1929*]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

We were to reach Bezwada today, but Venkatappayya and his co-workers decided on some other plan. At three o'clock at night, they got me down at a place three stations this side of Bezwada and immediately drove me to a zamindar's village 20 miles away from

the station. It is nine in the morning just now. On the way, there was a sandy river-bed about a mile wide through which buffaloes were made to pull the car. I was much tired and so went to sleep in the car. I wrote a letter to you from Hyderabad too. You must have got it.

S.'s[1] affair is becoming more complicated. Do not lose your patience. Do not get nervous. Stop others from talking about the matter. We shall learn from all these incidents what love is. We shalllearn the difference between ignorant attachment and love and, in the process, shall purify ourselves too.

Since there is no letter from you, I don't write about anything else. You will get a draft from Waman Naik from Hyderabad; keep that also in the suspense account. In this amount, too, the sums earmarked will be small.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5561

296. LETTER TO PRABUDAS GANDHI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM.
SABARMATI,
April 8, 1929

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

Today is my Silence Day. I had to get down from the train at three o'clock in the morning. I am staying in a Dak bungalow in a desolate wasteland. It is only today that I am able to fulfill my desire to write to you two brothers.

Chi. Chhaganlal has crossed all limits.[2] I felt not anger but compassion. How can one be angry with a son who ruins his father's work? I went on doing this for years and all of you seem to have remained unaware of it. It seems you did suspect something but I think you kept quiet as you did not like to say anything to your father. But we have still not lostthe game. It is necessary that you should tell him it is from the Ashram and not from him that you hope

[1] The name is being omitted.

[2] He was discovered to have been engaged in petty larcenies over a number of years; *vide* "My Shame and Sorrow", 8-4-1929.

to gain everything and thereby free him from his father's attachment to you. I have given the same advice to Kashi. If Chhaganlal sincerely repents what he has done, after all these sins he has committed, he would indeed become a really good man. There is a saying in English to the effect that the greater the sinner, the more likely is he to become a good man. Does not the *Bhagavata* story of Ajamil and others suggest the same thing? If Chhaganlal is to be purified, all of you will have to help him in that. At present, he is crying his heart out. That is not sincere repentance. There is no place for tears in genuine repentance. Why mourn for the body you have laid aside? One should rather rejoice in the new body. Getting rid of our impurity, we should feel lighter. There is no need at all to continue to bear the burden of the impurity we have got rid of. But Chhaganlal could not bear the displeasure of the Ashram and went on crying all the time he was in the Ashram.

Carry out as much as you understand and can digest from what I have written. But whether or not you are able to do anything, do not at all feel dismayed.

I hope your work there is going on smoothly. A visit there in June is quite in the air. It is also in the air that we may spend more time in Almora. Let us see what happens.

I sent your article to be published in *Navajivan* and it must have been published. These days, I am not able to look into the matter that goes in the *Navajivan* and *Young India*. Despite many shocks and incessant travelling, for the present at any rate, I am dancing with joy.

After going through the Dictionary, any suggestions you may have to make for additions or corrections should be sent to Kakasaheb.

The present tour [of Andhra Pradesh] is planned for one and a half months. For the present, address your letters to Bezwada. I will be reaching Bombay on May 23rd. I will spend four days there. Then to the Ashram. I wish to stay in the Ashram till June 10. After that, Almora. But the final date of leaving for Almora will be decided later.

With me are Ba, Prabhavati, Imam Saheb, Pyarelal and Subbiah. Mahadev was kept back by Vallabhbhai for himself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S. N. 33031

297. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

BEZWADA,
April 9, 1929

MIRABAI
KHADI DEPOT
MADHUBANI

GOT LETTERS FOURTH FIFTH. ALSO WIRE ON ARRIVAL. THANK GOD MUST PROCURE LEMON MILK ANY COST. SUGGEST SIX GRAINS TWO DOSES QUININE THREE GRAINS EACH WITH SODA LEMON. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5360, Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9416

298. TELEGRAM TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

BEZWADA,
April 9, 1929

IMPORTANCE
CALCUTTA

GLAD YOU BROKE FAST. CONTINUE ORANGE JUICE GRAPE JUICE THREE DAYS. DILUTE SAME WITH WATER. DRINK PLENTY BOILED WATER COLD OR HOT WITH OR WITHOUT LEMON JUICE AND SALT OR HONEY. USE RAISED BEDSTEAD INSTEAD SLEEPING FLOOR. TAKE WEIGHT DAILY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6770

299. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[1]
April 9, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I wrote to you yesterday. I have wired today a fairly full thing. I am happy you are out of the wood just now. But these attacks are a warning you may not ignore.

Yes, I did get the translation of Rolland's letter, in Ahmedabad I think, certainly not in Calcutta. I hope to send you a reply for despatch with translation.

You will not put an undue strain on your body or your nerves.

I am still unable to give you a settled programme. The Reception committee is still undecided as to the places to which it will take me. The headquarters, therefore, remain Bezwada.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

You missed the fast on 6th[2] because of your fever. I missed it because of my wretched preoccupation, though I had thought of it before. The rush is bad. This forgetfulness is a bad symptom.

From the original: C.W. 5361, Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9417

300. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

BEZWADA,
April 9, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

You must have received the post I sent yesterday. On arriving here, I got two letters from you. It is not true that we have lost our capital. We have lost that part of it which was not genuine, why be grieved or pained by that? Our burden has become the lighter for that loss. We will certainly go on working. If only we can say that these people were sinful once, that would be profit enough to us. But my

[1] Permanent address
[2] First day of the National Week, observed since 1919

fear is that all the sin hasnot come out, and that there is no assurance that they will not sin again. Who can give such an assurance? All that we can do is to strive ceaselessly and get rid of impurity whenever we see any. We will go on serving people as long as they trust us. Indeed, the affair will make no difference to people's love for us. Perhaps they will be more generous. We will endure whatever happens.

You must have got my letter about S.[1] I cannot say definitely that she is innocent. I have no doubt about P.[2] I cannot say, however, if S. has cherished lustful thoughts. But we cannot suspect her in this fashion. We should assume the truth of what she says. She will certainly not work in the goshala. But now that H.[3] has come, our burden will be lighter.

Let Chhotelal go to Kashmir if he wants to. He will become calm only when he goes somewhere.

You need not feel unhappy on account of Ba. You have rendered a service to the Ashram by going courageously to her, have shown yourself to be a brave man and done your duty as a son. As for Ba, she has been saved from error.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I send with this a beautiful letter from Prabhudas. Show it to all. Send it to Kakasaheb.

BAPU

[PPS.]

You must have sent to Anandshankerbhai Thadani's typed book.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5399

301. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

April 9, 1929

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

I was about to send you a wire asking you to give up your fast when I got your telegram. It is well that you have given it up. You must have received my wire in which I have explained the

[1] The names are omitted in the source.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*

matter in detail. I hope you are taking complete rest. I have asked you tosend me a wire every day. If you patiently carry out my instructions, you will regain your strengthened weight. I wrote to you yesterday giving detailed instructions.[1] The address for the present should be Bezwada.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6769

302. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

Tuesday [*April 9, 1929*][2]

CHI. KUSUM,

I assume that you are giving all possible help to Chhaganlal[3]. This is the opportunity to show the best in you. Do not lose self-confidence.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1784

303. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

April 9, 1929

CHI. KUSUM,

I have your letter. The view which you have advanced can also be justified. But what is happening is all right. Gossiping should not only be discouraged, but not indulging in gossip should become second nature with us. We are making a novel experiment in the Ashram. Till we have assimilated its spirit, it may have seemingly contrary result. But we need not be afraid of that. Only by continuing in this manner shall we stop hiding sins. One of the beauties of *Mahabharata* is that Vyasa has made no attempt to hide sins. Think over this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a Photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1785

[1] This letter is not available.

[2] In *Bapuna Patro—3: Kusumbehn Desaine* this letter is placed between letters dated 5-4-1929 and 9-4-1929; also April 9 was a Tuesday.

[3] Chhaganlal Joshi

304. SPEECH AT NANDIGAMA

April 9, 1929

Mahatmaji said that he was very glad for the calmness prevailing there from 1920 onwards. His idea was that swaraj was peace of mind and peace with all the people. It was very difficult to reform the people of big cities but there were greater opportunities in the villages where he saw dirt and desolation. Could not the people who were responsible for the clean and healthy life of these villages devote their attention to this task? He hoped—and he believed that his hope would not be in vain—the hundreds of youths who had gathered there that day before him would come forward to help in this direction.

In your place cotton is available and in your addresses you said that all should wear khaddar. If only you did so I should be very glad indeed. Here I see some sisters, and a few of them are wearing khadi. Why only a few? Women also should take part in the attainment of swaraj and self-purification like the men. I do not speak of swaraj but of *Ramarajya*. If there is no Sita there is no *Ramarajya*. If you want *Ramarajya* all of you should become Sitas. History says that Sita wore khaddar and used only national things. It is on account of that purity that Ravana could not even touch Sita. Sita entered fire, but was safe. Hindu ladies can become so pure if they try.

Today drinking is a bad habit. The drunkard cannot distinguish who is his mother and who is his wife. If you want purification, you must give up drinking. You know of course that untouchability should be removed in swaraj.

You have presented me Rs. 1,170. I know you can pay more. In Andhra Desha men wear jewels like women. Ladies are afraid of coming out to see me, because when they come I look at their jewellery. I have taken their jewellery. When crores of people are starving there is no room for others to wear jewellery. They must give away all jewellery to *Daridranarayana*.

The Hindu, 10-4-1929

305. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

[After *April 9, 1929*][1]

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

I got your letter. You must have received the wire I sent you yesterday.

I write nothing about myself. I know what I am.

Others also have passed through the experience you have had. To some it is of a lasting nature, to others it is a passing thing.

It is difficult to say how far it is spiritually harmful to consume milk when breaking a fast. As far as I know, besides myself nobody else has experimented in this field, and I am still not in a position to prove anything or to arrive at any conclusion. I would, therefore, advise you not to think just now of the spiritual effects of drinking milk, but to continue to drink it for its beneficial effect on your body. If the body becomes sufficiently strong, we shall think further about the matter.

It will probably be enough if henceforth you weigh yourself only on Wednesdays and Sundays and not daily. If you wear the same number of garments and of the same material every time you weigh yourself, that will suffice.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8631

[1] From the contents; *vide* "Telegram to Madhavji V. Thakkar", 9-4-1929 and "Letter to Madhavji V. Thakkar", 11-4-1929.

306. TELEGRAM TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

BEZWADA,
[*April 10, 1929*][1]

IMPORTANCE
CALCUTTA

MAY TAKE GOAT'S MILK DILUTED WITH WATER FOUR OUNCES EACH TIME NOT MORE THAN THRICE. OMIT GRAPE FRUIT TILL SUNDAY UNLESS ABSOLUTELY SURE OF DIGESTING IT WELL.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6771

307. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 10, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. As there is no wire I take it that the slight increase was a passing phase only. Beware of over-strain. I am still keeping well.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5362. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9418

308. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

April 10, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter of the 7th. You may certainly reduce the expenditure in the Mandir wherever you think proper. You need not force yourself to close any department. It should be enough if we follow it as a fixed policy that we will not run any department by borrowing money. When friends stop their aid, the departments will automatically close down. We need not get frightened because the evil among us has been exposed; we should only remain vigilant. I feel

[1] From the postmark

lighter after writing the article[1] in *Navajivan*. I don't think it possible just now to reduce the scope of our activities. Maybe incidents like the one about M.[2] or about C.[3] will happen again. Even at that time, we will not lose courage. It is enough if you remain vigilant to see that such incidents do not occur again. There should be a voucher for every pie spent. Is it not our good fortune that C. has not acted shamelessly and run away with the money? He has returned more than he had stolen. M. had not abandoned all shame. He may even lead a pure life now. About S.[4] we can say nothing. Everything will be all right if we take no interest in [others'] sins.

We cannot trouble Vinoba or Kakasaheb in this matter. All that you can do is to insist on my presence. I am trying from right now to arrange the programme so that I may spend July, and probably August too, there. Do not lose heart. Go on doing courageously what you can.

If Jayakaran leaves against your wishes, let him. Don't give him any help if you do not think it proper to do so.

I had a letter from Ratilal and Champa. I send it with this for you to read. Read my reply to it and pass it on to them. Carry out what I have stated in my letter. If you can please them by offering a little more, do so. You can spend up to Rs. 200 a month. If, however, we give as much every month, they will save nothing for travelling expenses etc.

Yogendrababu may stay there as long as he desires; permit him to leave whenever he wishes to do so. The main object is to teach his wife to live a little freely. She will easily learn that in the Ashram.

Has the money received from Burma been handed over to Shankerlal?

I trust you are taking proper care of your health. Consume as much milk and ghee as may be necessary.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5400

[1] *Vide* "My Shame and Sorrow", 8-4-1929.
[2] The names are being omitted.
[3] *ibid*
[4] *ibid*

309. LETTER TO RADHABEHN GANDHI

April 10, 1929

CHI. RADHIKA,

I have been worrying about your health. You should observe how your body works and put it right. In no case should you work beyond your strength. I hope your mind is at peace. Does Keshu write to you regularly? He is known to be rather lazy in writing letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati : C.W. 8675. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhari

310. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

April 10, 1929

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I expect a lot from you. It is good that you are looking after the nursery school.[1] Give good thought to it. Bathe the children in love. Then their intelligence will automatically grow. They are yourown children. Why should you not feel love for them? Then jealousy and envy will automatically vanish. Lust and wanton thoughts will not come anywhere near us. Surely this is simple enough to understand?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

311. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BEZWADA

April 10, 1929

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I request you to keep silence. I thank you all, and those who have presented me with addresses. All the addresses have been written in vernacular for which I congratulate you. I congratulate

[1] A nursery school had been started in the Ashram for the children of the families staying in the Ashram.

you because it is equivalent to Hindi, the Rashtra Bhasha of India. I am glad that you permitted me to accept the addresses as read. The affection I owe to Andhra Desha is supreme. I am not amazed at your humility but on the other hand delighted. I would like to point out a better way of presenting an address. I stand before you as the representative of the poor and the down-trodden. When I have come to you as the representative of the poor I feel pained at the expenditure involved in the preparation of addresses. It would indeed be more delightful if they were manuscript addresses or palm-leaf addresses. Your affection is too sincere towards me and I feel I am unable to bear it. I have followed a translation of the address and I am afraid there is a good deal of flattery and little of what your chief needs are from which you are suffering. I would like to have known your circumstances, how you live and what relief is given to you by those who can give it.

This is the National Week of which four days have run out. This week is one of self-purification and national effort. Till the 15thinstant we have to live up to a high level of national enthusiasm. The 13th of April is a day of national reminder to us of General Dyer's act. We want now a sense of wisdom and the strength of experience. The Congress had commanded you to do your bit by the country. Boycott of foreign cloth and wearing of khaddar are the two biddings of the Congress and there is nothing more that any Indian could do now. It has given an opportunity for all Indians to participate in the national awakening. It is easy for everyone to accept khaddar. If Andhra Desha stands and works for khaddar, you will have done the greatest national service. For the first time in 1921, the national programme laid down here at Bezwada had focused the attention of the whole country and Bezwada must feel proud of it. I ask you now, what have you done since 1921? You have courage and wisdom. But you lack in unity. You have not learnt to co-operate and work. I request you to work unitedly, propagate khaddar and set yourselves against foreign cloth.

At this juncture, Christians, Hindus, Parsis and Mahommedans must join hands. It is not necessary for me to say much on the subject. There is a lot of bad blood in North India between Hindus and Mahommedans. The murder of Mahasaya Rajpal has accentuated the situation. One dastardly act of a Moslem has set the Hindus against Mahommedans. As a Hindu, I pray you not to have any bad feelings

towards Moslems. By murdering him he, the man who did it, has neither benefited himself nor Islam. In the past, too, such things have occurred. Whenever the mind is full of vice and passion, there will be a manifestation of it. Revengeful spirit must be banished from our minds.

In the Assembly also, a like crime of a ghastly nature has been committed. Swaraj has receded a step by this crime. The two youths involved in the bomb outrage have set back the progress of our national movement. The Congress members must cleanse themselves from the taint of violence. These two mad youngsters of Delhi are very much like the murderer of Rajpal. We need not be discouraged by these blunders. During this week, it is our duty to purify ourselves. I feel sorry that Mr. Sambamurti is not with us and I am also reminded now of Andhra Ratna D. Gopalkrishniah who is no more. Whether our colleagues stay with us or are severed from us, the burden of carrying on of what they left is still on us. The instructions of Congress about khaddar and drink must be carried out. In one of the addresses, it was pointed out that the Government was not able to do anything despite our waiting andwatching. Prayers and petitions to Government do not help us. Self-reliance must be our prop and not any aid from Government. For that purpose we need volunteers trained in non-violence.

There is again the problem of untouchability. Compared to towns, the obstacles in villages are many and potent. Our young men must work in the villages to remove untouchability. Their life of purity in the villages will be an example to the villagers to follow. You have given me Rs. 2,500 for khaddar but it is very little. Bezwada is capable of giving more. I will wind up today's proceedings by discharging the pleasant functions entrusted to me. I have great pleasure in now unveiling Sri Krishna Deva Raya's portrait. Next I associate myself with the pleasure of declaring the high level reservoir open. I have seen it and I thank the Municipality for sparing me the task of going to the reservoir to open it. I feel now unable to perform functions which I used to do five or ten years ago. I can now do only a fraction of that work and I am grateful that the Municipal Council has excused my inability and absence. The gift of water facilities to the people at large is considered a virtuous act according to our Hindu scriptures. In a hot country like this a reservoir is essential and I trust the poor of the city will be first served with water. I thank you for patiently listening to me and it gives me pleasure to note that Hindi *prachar* is more or less being efficiently done to these parts. There is

however a great need for its propagation. It must so progress that a Hindi speech need not be translated to you hereafter. I hope you will now give the best of your mite to the Khadi Fund. I am in the practice of auctioning the addresses and jewels I receive. At Nuzvid I was presented with three addresses and when auctioned they fetched me Rs. 60. I thank you once again.

A third duty lying undischarged still rests on me and I have pleasure in declaring the industrial house for disabled poor open.

The Hindu, 11-4-1929

312. DECK PASSENGERS

Resumption of travelling third class by rail and deck on sea is reviving old experiences in circumstances somewhat different from the old. When no one or few people knew me, I could easily be lost in the crowd and share its trials and its joys to the full. Now I am a distinguished untouchable. They must make room for me and give me facilities which they will not give to any other fellow-passenger. Consequently when I travelled as a deck passenger on board the s.s. *Aronda* on my way to Burma, I was isolated from the rest of my fellows. On the outward voyage the steamship authorities too had conspired with the passengers in the scheme of isolation. They had set apart a portion of the second saloon deck for me and insisted on my use of the second saloon latrines. I was therefore able to see little of the inconveniences of the deck passengers. On the return voyage I happened to have the same boat but the steamship authorities had allowed things to take their natural course and I found myself in the midst of the deck passengers. Though, therefore, I suffered from the disabilities of mahatmaship, I was able fairly to share their trials. And I found that as in railway carriages so in steamships, there was not much difference between the condition of travelling in 1915 and 1929 so far as the lowest class travelling is concerned. There was the same squalor, the same indeference, the same overcrowding, the same stenches and the same din and noise as before. I observed on the *Aronda* that the space reserved for the passengers was encroached upon by motor-cars, fowl and cattle. I felt keenly this criminal disregard of the welfare and the feelings of human cargo. Indeed it seemed to me that the other cargo both animate and inanimate claimed greater attention inasmuch as negligence in respect thereof by the steamship authorities might involve them in financial loss. The

latrines were filthy beyond the description. The sorest trial for me was in reaching the latrines to wade through a corridor reeking with urine and on reaching there to find that I could not lock even the half door of the latrine.

As however I was unable owing to my foregoing disability to make an inspection myself I asked one of my companions to make a diligent inspection of the whole of the deck accommodation and draw up a brief report of such inspection. I reproduce the report below:

There is deck accommodation on board the s.s. *Aronda* for about 1,500 passengers though in the busy season this limitation is overlooked. There are for the use of these 1,500 passengers two tiny bath-rooms and twelve latrines in sets of 4 for men and 2 bath-rooms and 8 latrines for women. This gives an average of one latrine to 75 passengers and one bath-room to 375 passengers.

There is only a sea-water tap in the bath-rooms, but on fresh water tap, nor any facility whatever for keeping the clothes in a dry place while one is bathing. Either the bath-rooms have no latches or the latter are out of repair. One of the bath-rooms is also used partly as a urinal and probably is not intended to be shut at all. Its door is permanently fastened with a string to a nail on the wall to prevent it from banging when the ship rolls. The space used as urinal is open to view and is not curtained from the rest of the bath-room by any partition.

The latches of the latrines are in the same condition of disrepair as those of the bath-rooms. The construction of the latrines leaves much to be desired. There is a sort of running corridor in front of each set of latrines through which the passage to the bath-room also lies. Dirty water and urine from the latrines flow into this corridor, and owing to faulty drainage, instead of discharging itself through the drain, the foul water continues to roll to and fro on the floor with the rolling of the ship.

This twin or the lowermost deck is nothing better than a black hole. It is dark and dingy and stuffy and hot to the point of suffocation. Electric lights have to be kept burning for the most part. There is no direct access to the sea air. The only ventilation is through a couple of air chimneys and a square hole in the ceiling opening on the main deck. There are no refuse bins or receptacles for the rubbish. So the passengers spit, squirt their betel-nut chew and throw orange peels and such rubbish just on the floor. At best this deck is fit only to be used as a cattlehold instead of accommodating the human cargo that it does.

The forepart of the main deck is sometimes partly used—as was the case last time when we voyaged from Calcutta to Rangoon—as a cattle-hold; the space used by the cattle being separated from the passengers just by a trellised partition. Similarly at the stern end of the shade deck there is a cage where sheep, goats, ducks and poultry

are kept. It is foul and stinking beyond description, so much so that it is next to impossible to stand anywhere near it.

There seems to be no hospital arrangement for the third-class passengers on board this boat. Nor is there any special accommodation provided for patients from among third-class passengers in case of casual illness or an epidemic outbreak.

The s.s. *Aronda* is owned by one of the biggest steamship companies in the world. It has therefore ample means at its disposal to make deck accommodation decent and progressively comfortable, if only it has the will. I was able to observe the progressive changes in the first saloon and second saloon accommodation, though obviously I could not carefully examine this accommodation. The changes obtruded themselves on my attention. There is no reason why deck passengers who are really more paying customers than saloon passengers should not have reasonable accommodation and reasonable comforts. I was told by the passengers that during that part of the year the voyage was tolerable for deck passengers but that during the rainy season when the upper deck was almost useless those passengers suffered almost indescribable hardships, most of them fell ill and some even lost their lives as a result to hardships suffered during the voyage. This is wrong for any steamship company; it is doubly wrong for a rich and world-renowned corporation like the combine of P.&O. and B.I.S.N. Companies. The owners and managers should know that day after day the number of intelligent and educated passengers travelling by the deck is increasing. It behoves the Company to anticipate their wants and reasonable desires.[1]

Young India, 11-4-1929

313. PARIAH DOGS

A manager of a U.P. high school writes:

> I would like your opinion in a matter of public interest. I mean the killing of stray dogs by municipalities. The harm that these dogs, especially the diseased ones, do to man is distressing, and a remedy to get rid of them, one way or the other, is highly solicited. I refer the point to you as people are prone to treat it as question involving *himsa*.

To kill these dogs does, in my opinion, amount to *himsa*, but I believe it to be inevitable, if we are to escape much greater *himsa*.

[1] For the Company's reply and Gandhiji's comments on it, *vide* "B.I.S.N. Co.'s Denial", 25-4-1929 and "A Malicious Libel", 2-5-1929.

Every dog should be owned and a collar attached to it. I should suggest a dog licence. Every unlicenced dog should be caught by the police and immediately handed to the Mahajan if they have adequate provision for the maintenance of these dogs and would submit to municipal supervision as to the adequacy of such provision. Failingsuch provision, all stray dogs should be shot. This in my opinion is the most humanitarian method of dealing with the dog nuisance which everybody feels but nobody cares or dares to tackle. This *laissez faire* is quite in keeping with the atmosphere of general public indifference. But such indifference is itself *himsa*, and a votary of ahimsa cannot afford to neglect or shirk questions, be they ever so trifling, if these demand a solution in terms of ahimsa. We should arrive at a proper understanding of the great doctrine only by boldly facing them even at the risk of committing serious blunders.[1]

Young India, 11-4-1929

314. PROHIBITION IN THE ASSEMBLY

It is a healthy sign that the members of the Legislative Assembly are giving attention to total prohibition. The instance I have in mind is that of Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas. I take the following interesting extract from his speech on the motion to consider the Finance Bill for the current year.[2]

Young India, 11-4-1929

315. TELEGRAM TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

BEZWADA,
[*April 11, 1929*][3]

IMPORTANCE

CALCUTTA

DESCRIPTION SIGNIFIES OVEREATING. NOW TAKE ONLY DILUTED FRUIT JUICES NO PULP NO MILK TWO DAYS. CONSULT PHYSICIAN IF NECESSARY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6772

[1] On the question of stray dogs, *vide* also the series "Is This Humanity?".

[2] In his speech, not reproduced here, Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas had strongly appealed to the Finance Member to introduce prohibition in India.

[3] From the postmark

316. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

April 11, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter. There is no need for the people there to meet and discuss what to do now. If you meet again and again, you will talk about one thing every time. You will say that we are unworthy and disperse, and all that will remain in the end is despair. It would be all right if you meet to pass a resolution to solve a particular difficulty, but really speaking there is no need even to pass a resolution. A soldier's only duty is to go on doing his work without looking up and devise measures to meet any difficulty that may arise. All of us are soldiers fighting immorality. We have done, what was necessary. We brought out the evil. We made two rules. Everyone is examining himself or herself. This is enough. Think over what I have said in my article on the *Ramayana* and the *Gita* in *Navajivan*.[1] We should not think about sense-pleasures either with interest or with repulsion. That is non-co-operation. So long as I am alive, have consciousness, none of you will exercise more freedom than you do at present. Whenever, therefore, you can act without consulting me, you should. When necessary, you may certainly consult me. Do not conceal anything out of pity for me.

I see one thing of course. The thought that I myself tolerate evil pains me. There is no one here just now who knows the *Gita.* The persons who take it up and read it are Pyarelal, Subbiah and Prabhavati. I make them read it by turns. I feel sorry that in my eyes all the three have failed. Subbiah is on leave at present. Prabhavati's deficiency is pardonable. But what about Pyarelal and Subbiah? They have been living with me for years. I am a lover of the *Gita* and they are among those dearest to me. And yet I never took any interest in their reading the *Gita* or spinning. How, then, can I blame them if they did not, either? I would not pass Pyarelal's English if it was bad. I am now forced to listen to his pronunciation of the words in the *Gita* and feel miserable within. He certainly does not spin every day. But, then, do I make him spin? I merely give a lecture on the subject and do no more. The Ashram is my most important creation, but I always

[1] *Vide* "The 'Gita' and the 'Ramayana'", 14-4-1929.

remain away from it. I see, thus, that I am myself untruthful in myconduct. Is it strange, then, that there should be theft and immorality in the Ashram?

Hence, it is more necessary that I should think than that any of you should. But what shall I gain by indulging in self-condemnation? I believe that I have the capacity to see my weaknesses in their proper measure, and I strive to overcome them.

My aim behind this self-condemnation is this:

(1) To pay special attention to improving people's pronunciation of the words in the *Gita* and see that they understand the meaning of the verses.

(2) To see that everyone scrupulously performs the spinning *yajna*.

(3) To look after the kitchen carefully.

These three activities are of general concern and none of us can escape them. Everyone cannot join in the goshala work, and all do not engage in agriculture. But all must concern themselves with the three things mentioned above. That is why I have laid stress on them. If untruth does not enter these activities, we still shall be saved. If we remain sincere in them, that will have an effect on all the other aspects of our work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5401

317. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

April 11, 1929

BHAI MADHAVJI,

I have your wire. It has alarmed me. Yesterday's telegram also had alarmed me. You started taking milk much too early. As for grape fruit, a person who has been fasting certainly cannot digest it. It contains a good amount of protein. I think that even grapes and orange pulp were started rather early. I have, therefore, sent you a warning today.[1] For the present the stomach will not be able to digest anything but juice of fruits. More art is needed in gradually returning

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Madhavji V. Thakkar", 11-4-1929.

to the normal diet after a fast than in fasting. Many people don't have the necessary patience during that time. The increase in your weight also seems too rapid. However, there is no cause for anxiety. You have now seen the right way. Even juice of fruits should be taken in smallquantities and slowly. It should be sipped or licked, not gobbled or gulped. It should be taken with a spoon and allowed to mix with the saliva. I am waiting for your next telegram, which I shall get only tomorrow. From today evening, I shall be touring in the neighbourhood of Bezwada. They will forward your telegram to me wherever I am. This is bound to cause some delay in my getting it, but that cannot be helped. May God restore and preserve your health.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6773

318. SPEECH AT GUNADALA KHADDAR ASHRAM

April 11, 1929

I expect you to work in greater earnestness. All your energy should be directed towards the country's cause. I am glad I am brought to this Ashram. I only say to you this: Produce your own cotton here and unless and until you do it, you will not be good spinners. Learn Hindi. Give me your jewellery. It will be better utilized by me. If you have not the courage to give it to me, convert it into money and invest it in a bank which could be utilized in time of need. Jewellery is worn in towns and villages and not in ashrams of this kind.

The Hindu, 11-4-1929

319. SPEECH AT PADAMATA

April 11, 1929

I am not satisfied with money alone, there should be the heart behind. If you really feel for this then, at this moment give up liquor which burns the hearts of people. The professional people who make liquor should also give up preparing it. You must all combine to drive out this devil. Then only money given by you will be of value. I get money from prostitutes and liquor dealers and I accept it hoping they would repent for their vices. I urge you to

make this reform immediately. I exhort you to give up foreign cloth and wear khaddar. I appeal to all those who have not already paid their quota to do so now.

The Hindu, 11-4-1929

320. THE FEARLESS SPEAKER

[*April 12, 1929*][1]

Whatever the outcome of the tussle between the Speaker of the Assembly and the Government, Sjt. Vithalbhai J. Patel has more than vindicated the choice of the Assembly in electing him to the Speaker's chair. He had upheld the dignity of the office by his strict impartiality.[2] But within the limits prescribed by law or tradition, he had missed not a single opportunity of advancing the national cause. This has naturally brought about a conflict between him and the Government. And he had won every time, he won even when he was betrayed by the heat of the moment into a departure from his usual urbanity. He corrected himself the very next day by tendering a dignified, voluntary, ample apology. He has never hidden his colours. By his fearless conduct in the chair, he has enhanced the prestige of the nation.

It is therefore worth while examining the cause of his great success. He has no personal end to serve. His financial needs are small for he lives simply, and therefore neither the high office nor the high salary have any temptation for him. And to this state of detachment he adds an amazing industry that has enabled him to gain an unsurpassable mastery over the rules and procedure guiding his high office. For Vithalbhai Patel politics have been no pastime for filling his leisure hours, they have been a passion with him. He has therefore dedicated all his talents and time to their study with the result that in his own field has made himself almost invincible.

Young India, 18-4-1929

[1] The article was written at Wuyyur on this date.

[2] *Vide* also "H. E. the Viceroy's Ire", 21-4-1929.

321. TELEGRAM TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

WUYYUR,
[*April 12, 1929*][1]

IMPORTANCE
CALCUTTA

DAILY ENEMA NECESSARY TILL FREE NATURAL MOTIONS COMMENCE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6774

322. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 12, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I constantly think of you. This leanness of body won't do. You must have enough flesh on you to support your big frame. But of course there is no hurry. Do insist on having a room to yourself where you can shut yourself in if you like.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5363. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9419

323. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

April 12, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter. Do not listen to anybody else's advice. Do not fail to write to me about anything which may happen and which I should know.

Tell Ratilal about Chorwad. Meet his wishes and deep him there.

Let me know what Purushottam wishes now.

Do what you think proper about S.[2] If H.[3] is ready to take her

[1] From the postmark
[2] The names are being omitted.
[3] *ibid*

away, he may do so. My consent is not necessary. He should take her away on his own responsibility.

I think I have already written to you about the conversation I had with Mama.

Have you handed over to Shankerlal the money received from Rangoon?

I can understand that P.[1] will not like to remain on the committee for some time. Meet him often.

If you still have any doubt, be fearless and write to me about it.

You may make whatever use you like of Chhaganlal's room. Do you get any letters from him?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5402

Blessings from

BAPU

324. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

April 12, 1929

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

I got your letter of the 7th. I think it is beyond my power to lay down the exact measure of food for you to take. In my opinion even a professional physician cannot prescribe for a patient the exact measure from a distance. I can, therefore, only make some suggestions. You may follow only such of them as suit you. Provided no harm seems to result, you may try the following for a week:

(1) 80 *tolas* of cow's milk in four instalments during the day. It should be boiled only once. There will be no harm if you drink the milk cold after it has been boiled once; drink it, that is, in the right quantity.

(2) If you feel the desire, after every instalment of milk suck black currants, exactly twenty in number, after washing them.

(3) If you feel no heaviness eat with the milk one *tola* exactly weighed of toasted brown bread, taking care to chew it properly.

(4) Crush one *tola* of uncooked *tandalja*, adding, if you like, a little rock salt and take it along with the toast. For the first week

[1] The name is being omitted.

take it only once and not with every meal.

If you feel thirsty between meals, boil some water once and let it cool; dissolve in one glass of it 20 grams of soda bicarb; in another glass of water press juice from one sour lemon; pour the juice in the mixture in the glass and drink it. Drink this only once.

After brushing the teeth in the morning, take a glass of hot water. You will note that I have not included honey in all this. You will get the honey from the black grapes. The vitamins you will get from uncooked vegetable and some from the lemon.

If you bring out sputum in the cough, note the fact; but there is no need to be scared by it. You should be satisfied if you get no attack of asthma. Sputum in the cough will decrease as you gain strength.

If you feel the slightest heaviness with this regimen, omit the toast.

If the heaviness persists in spite of discontinuing the toasts you should diminish the quantity of milk and the bread too. Soda [bicarb] will prove helpful. All this, again, you should regard as a general directive. There is no harm in keeping yourself busy.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6777

325. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, MASULIPATAM

April 13, 1929

I am glad to see so many of my sisters here, but I am pained to see several of them clad in foreign cloth. My prayer is that you should boycott foreign cloth and take to khadi. Let there be *Ramarajya* in India once more. There can be no *Ramarajya* without Sita and I wish to see Sita embodied in you all.

Do not consider anyone untouchable, train your children, boys and girls, in the best traditions inherited from our ancestors. Discourage and discountenance early marriages and give your children the best education that you can give. I want you to give away your valuables and jewellery for khaddar, for khaddar is more important and more useful than jewellery in our domestic and economic ills. Many of my sisters have set an example by their tremendous sacrifice in this behalf and I hope that you will not lag behind them in your goal for khaddar.

The Hindu, 15-4-1929

326. SPEECH AT ARUNDHATI ASHRAM, MASULIPATAM

April 13, 1929

I feel it an honour to have been invited to such any institution. I have always taken an abiding interest in visiting institutions where *Panchama* boys have been provided with special facilities for their education and betterment.

Let us sincerely ask ourselves wherein untouchability really lies. It is in an indifference to rules of sanitation, cleanliness and well-ordered life that we become untouchables.

I do not know if the evil of drink is prevalent among the *Panchamas* here as it is in other parts. If it is the same here, let me not hesitate to warn my *Panchama* brothers against the curse of drink, and eating cow's flesh. I cannot but express my satisfaction at seeing so many of my *Panchama* brothers being educated here. I am not in the least blind to the economic distress which so many of our *Panchamas* suffer in common with other communities and the remedy, I have never been tired of suggesting, is khaddar. I appeal therefore to *Panchama* brothers here to take to khaddar.

The Hindu, 15-4-1929

327. SPEECH AT ANDHRA JATIYA KALASHALA, MASULIPATAM[1]

April 13, 1929

It gives me the greatest pleasure to be able to renew my acquaintance with you especially as I do so on the same familiar and sacred ground of your national institution. But that pleasure is not unmixed with pain and sorrow because I miss the familiar face of Hanumantrao the originator and soul of this national college. Before, therefore, I come to other parts of my address I propose to unburden myself of the thoughts that are welling up in my breast in connection with this institution. It is an open secret that at the present moment it is a house divided against itself and there is just a danger of the noble work that has been bequeathed by Hanumantrao being swept into the sea. I will just utter one word of advice and warning to all those who are responsible for the future of this institution. Preserve at any cost its

[1] This was published as part of the article "In Andhra Desha", 25-4-1929, *vide* "In Andhra Desha [—II]", 25-4-1929.

purely national character. This institution I have proudly claimed during my tour in India as one of the oases in the desert that at the present moment surrounds us in this beloved land of ours. Let your faith be not found wanting when it is weighed in the balance. That faith is of little value which can flourish only in fair weather. Faith in order to be of any value has to survive the severest trials. Your faith is a whited sepulchre if it cannot stand against the calumny of the whole world. You will, therefore, never weigh the success of this institution by the quantity of admissions, it is quality alone that should be the deciding factor in determining the future policy of this national institution. If you have faith in yourselves you will be satisfied to teach only one lad if he cares to come to this institution. Conversely you will refuse to lower your colours even if a thousand admissions were promised you, provided only you made yourselves agreeable to affiliation.

I thank you for the several purses as also the addresses that you have presented to me. Time is too short for me to attempt a detailed reply to all these various addresses. I propose however to single out two addresses, one from the Bandar District Board and the other from the Bandar Municipality for reply, for they offer criticism. I value the addresses for it. I can profit by criticism, never by praise. In these addresses an objection has been raised against the burning of foreign cloth. It is not an original or a new argument. Some of my best friends have raised the very objections that have been raised in those addresses. But after having given the most careful consideration that I could to these objections I find myself unable to alter the views that I have always held on this question, viz., that it is the sacred duty of our people to strip themselves of their foreign clothes and consign them to the flames. And I venture to submit not only that it is consistent with the doctrine of ahimsa to burn foreign cloth but that a proper appreciation of that doctrine demands the burning of foreign cloth in India. Remember one vital thing about this burning, that it is the owner of the foreign cloth who is called upon to deliver for burning such cloth in his possession. You will concede that if I possess a piece of cloth or anything that is infected with plague germs it would be my duty to burn it, I remember how whilst I was in South Africa a market that had cost £14,000 was consigned to the flames with all its contents by the Municipality of Johannesburg because it was suspected of being infected with plague germs. I admired and appreciated this action of the Johannesburg Municipality and I still think that it

probably saved Johannesburg from what might have been a deadly plague. As a Vaishnavite I can repeat to you experiences from my own life and my friends' lives of the richest dishes being thrown into the gutter because they had suffered ceremonial pollution. My submission in connection with the foreign cloth is that it is more than polluted and is infected with germs that are fatal to the welfare of India—moral, economic and political. You of Masulipatam do not need to be reminded of the history of this port and how foreign cloth has denuded this port of India of its commercial prosperity and its once matchless art. I hold that we committed a crime against Indian humanity when we parted with the spinning-wheel and sold the economic independence of India for a pottage of foreign cloth. And today acted upon by inertia we are repeating that crime. I have therefore felt it to be my bounden duty to awaken India from her torpor. You do not need to have a knowledge of economics to understand the simple truth that if we could distribute among the starving millions of India 60 crores of rupees that go to the purchase of foreign cloth none of them need starve, nor do you need to have an extraordinary knowledge of arithmetic in order to appreciate the fact that if we could produce all the cloth that is needed in India it is possible to prevent these 60 crores from going out of the country. This is a thing that we were doing only 100 years ago. We have got ready-made power in the arms and hands of millions of able-bodied men and women that are today rusting in idleness in the cottages of India. There is no reason why these millions of idle hands should not be turning millions of spindles in the cottages of the 7,00,000 villages of India. England does not grow cotton and yet she finds it possible for her to carry cotton grown in India all the way over to Lancashire and to return it to India in the form of cloth. How much more easy should it be then for us to carry cotton that we ourselves grow from place to place in India were it may be needed, and get it woven into cloth? In spite of apathy, and in spite of passive and even active opposition the thing is being done today in two thousand villages in this country. And our needy sisters do not mind walking several miles from day to day or week to week to get money or cotton in exchange for the yarn that their delicate fingers have spun. If therefore we have the slightest feeling for these needy sisters and for the starving millions of India, one tenth of whom according to English administrators themselves hardly get a square meal from year's end to year's end, you will discard and consignto the flames every inch of

foreign cloth as the least penance, the least expiation that India expect her sons to do.

But it has been suggested in one of these addresses that khadi should not be sold through middlemen but manufactured by each one for himself. I like this counsel of perfection. Only it betrays ignorance of practical facts about khadi production. And if the framers of these addresses will permit me to say so, it betrays gross ignorance of the technique of khadi production. It is a physical impossibility for everybody to produces his own khadi just as it is physically impossible for every man to grow his own rice. It is not possible for dwellers in the cities of India to produce their own khadi even if they wished to do so. At no time in the history of India of which we have record was it possible for everyone to produce his khadi. And for the life of me I cannot understand the philosophy lying behind the statement, 'Wear either your own khadi or foreign cloth.' Let it be known that there are millions in India who can work at the spinning-wheel for eight hours a day and that it is impossible for them to use all the khadi woven therefrom . It is the bounden duty of good citizens of India to take off the surplus product that is turned out by these brothers and sisters of theirs. Let us not also forget that it is man's social nature which distinguishes him from the brute creation. If it is his privilege to be independent it is equally his duty to be interdependent. Only an arrogant man will claim to be independent of everybody else and be self-contained. But let me in all humility point out to the framers of these addresses that the movement of 'self-contained' system of khadi production is going on in several places in India and if only the Municipalities, the Taluka boards and District Boards will do their primary duty and come to assistance it will be possible to reconstruct our villages so that the villages collectively, not the villagers individually, will become self-contained so far as their clothing requirements are concerned, and if the framers of these addresses will take the trouble of reading the literature produced by the A.I.S.A. from time to time they will find what is being done in this direction. It is for that reason that I have said times without number that when khadi becomes current coin in India, it will have nothing to fear from the competition of foreign cloth or even of Indian mill-made cloth. A little reflection will show that this is a self-demonstrable proposition.

But I must pass on from this subject to other topics of equal importance. The Working Committee not only expects every Indian, who is desirous of securing freedom for his country, to boycott foreign cloth but also to make India go dry. The curse of drink is eating into the vitals of the Indian society and the labouring

population in our factories is rapidly becoming degraded through the invasion of this drink evil. I suggested to every intelligent citizen of Masulipatam that it is his sacred duty to strain[1] every nerve to bring about total prohibition, and if we do our duty we will compel even the foreign Government to introduce prohibition legislation.

Throughout the country there is too much trifling with the national finance. My friends, you do not know how much money has been voted away for Andhra Desha for khadi production and for the removal of untouchability and you will permit me to say that the way in which this money has been handled by the various workers to whom it has been entrusted has not been to me a happy experience. It is time we woke up from our dreams. Not until we are jealous of our national finances as we are of our own, not till we are jealous of the reputation of the nation as of our own shall we have swaraj. We have to be like Caesar's wife above suspicion in all these matters if we are to deserve the name of national servants. It is not enough that workers do not use it for self, it is wrong when they use it carelessly or for purposes not intended.

Andhra Desha has unlimited possibilities. It has a virile manhood. Its women I have known to be energetic and industrious even in South Africa. You are generous to a fault. Properly led you are capable of amazing self-sacrifice. Your bravery is unquestioned. But unfortunately those who are in a position to render a good account of themselves to the nation are far more eager to lead than to serve. There is hesitation and fear to pass criticism where criticism is needed and you share the common national frailty of whitewashing every blemish. I would be untrue to you if I did not during this year of grace, of discipline and probation warn you against these faults and exhort you to remove them to the best of your capacity.

You have seen how the most brilliant and effective work done by the ablest Speaker that we are ever likely to have has been undone in one single minute by one word from the lips of the mighty Viceroy. I draw your attention to this incident to enable you to visualize the great work that lies before you. Whether it comes today or years hence the freedom and emancipation of India is not to come through the so-called legislatures but through the work in the villages in the way pointed outby the Congress. If the Viceroy had the knowledge that the Speaker was the representative of a nation wide awake and capable of energetic action he would have accommodated himself to the ruling given by Vithalbhai. And the energy which can

[1] The source has "strive".

affect the Viceroy and the Government of which he is the head is never the hysterical energy of the bomb-thrower but the combined, quiet and unremitting energy generated from work done by millions of hands. Show me a united Congress with pure finances, a Congress with millions of villagers on its rolls, a Congress having khadi depots in every village, show me a congress jealous of the honour of every individual, a Congress that has washed away the stain of untouchability, a Congress that has achieved unity between Hindus and Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians, Jews and Sikhs and then you will find that no Viceroy dare ignore or set at nought the authority of the Speaker of the nation's representatives.

Young India, 25-4-1929

328. MY NOTES

SHRI MANCHERSHA AWARI

Everyone knows that Shri Manchersha Awari is in Nagpur jail. His brother writes:[1]

I have written to Shri Awari, though I have not been able to examine the matter very closely on account of my travels. I have even given my advice to the local Congress Committee. It is my view that a satyagrahi prisoner should not insist on khadi clothes while in jail. A satyagrahi should not commit a breach of the general jail regulations. Only if he is insulted or subjected to oppression, if his religion is outraged or he is forced to do a thing for not doing which he finds himself in jail, only then should a satyagrahi commit civil disobedience of jail rules. If, for example, a jailer hurls abuse at one, gives food which is not fit to eat or clothes which are not fit to wear this should be opposed. Or when it is an offence to wear khadi clothes outside and, if instead of khadi, articles made of foreign cloth are issued in jail one must insist on wearing khadi . Shri Awari has been jailed not because he wore khadi clothes; hence I think it would not beproper for him to insist on wearing khadi in jail. At the same time I believe that, If the jail officials refuse to allow Shri Awari to get khadi clothes from outside and wear them, that is an injustice and it is unbecoming obstinacy on their part to make Shri Awari give up his

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had said that Manchersha wished to use only clothes made of khadi, which the Superintendent declined to issue and would therefore like to know whether a prisoner should observe all jail regulations. *Vide* also "Letter to M. B. Niyogi", 11-7-1928.

insistence. I feel there must be some special reason in Shri Awari not being given khadi. Local leaders must closely examine this matter.

CASTE DINNERS BY INCURRING DEBT

A shopkeeper from Wadhwan writes:[1]

There is one straight and simple remedy against it. The *Antyajas* do what the so-called "high-caste" people do. If therefore the "high-caste" people stop giving caste-dinners, the *Antyajas*, who have learnt the bad habit from the "high-caste" people, will also readily give it up. But this happy consummation will take some time. Hence, the immediate remedy is to make the *Antyaja* brothers aware of their condition and to get them to effect the reform. Quite a few give caste-dinners, etc., out of fear. Even the *Antyajas* fear being ostracized; in fact, they fear it more than the "high-caste" people. The good men among the "high-caste" people who have been thrown out of their caste have the whole Hindu world at their back. Only God is there to protect the ostracized *Antyajas*; they embrace another religion out of expediency. When the *Antyajas* become conscious of their strength, their capacity for reform will far surpass that of the "high-caste" people. The "high-caste" people are troubled by self-interest and other temptations, while the *Antyajas*, once they gain understanding and fearlessness, will have no barrier to obstruct them. It is the duty of the "high-caste" people to give them such understanding and fearlessness; it will be their atonement too.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-4-1929

329. THE "GITA" AND THE "RAMAYANA"

Many young people, unable to keep away from sin in spite of their best efforts, become despondent and gradually sink deeper into sin. Some even begin to look upon sin as virtue. I often advise such people to read the *Gita* and the *Ramayana* again and again. But they don't find it interesting. For their consolation I give below an extract

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had said that an untouchable boy was being forced to incur a debt and give a caste dinner in connection with his father's death.

bearing on the subject form the letter[1] of a young man. One would scarcely find young men more despondent and cynical than the writer of this letter was. Sins had made their abode in his body. But the faith he has today should inspire hope in young people. No one who studies the *Ramayana* and such other works, placing his faith in the experience of those who have conquered their passions, can remain unmoved. Even on the study of ordinary subjects, we often have to spend many years and employ diverse means. How much effort then would be needed to study something which concerns peace not only in the life but hereafter? What can be said of one who in spite of this would spend the minimum time and attention on the *Ramayana* and the *Gita* and still expect them to be interesting? The writer of the above letter says that passions invade him the moment he is conscious of being calm. What is true of the body is true of the mind. One whose body is perfectly healthy is never conscious of his health. That consciousness in not necessary at all. Being healthy is the nature of the body. The same is the case with mind. The day we become conscious of it being clean we should understand that passions are creeping in. So the way to keep the mind ever clean is to keep it constantly engrossed in good thoughts. That is why *Ramayana* and the like were invented and sung. One in whose heart Rama dwells permanently, can never be assailed by passions. The truth is that Ramanama ultimately sinks into the heart of one who recites it with true devotion. When this happens, it become an impregnable fortress. Impurity can be combated not by brooding over it, but by contemplating purity. With good intentions we often go in for contrary remedies. We contemplate impurity when we brood: where did it come from? This is to be compared with violent remedies, the true remedy being non-co-operation. When impurity invades us, there is no need to bid it quit.

We must contemplate purity as if impurity did not exist. There is a trace of fear in bidding it quit. Courage lies in not even thinking of it. One should develop the faith that impurity will not even touch one. This method is proved by experience.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-4-1929

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had described his study of the *Ramayana* and the *Gita* had benefited him.

330. A YOUNG MAN'S PREDICAMENT

A college student writes:[1]

I do not see in this letter the bubbling optimism of youth nor its courage. It betrays rather the miserliness of a Bania and the grey pessimism of one like me nearing the brink of death. How does this young man, "seeing the prevailing conditions", conclude that the Government will not grant Dominion Status? He forgets that the Government is not going to grant anything; that we will get what we want we want by the force of our sacrifice and unity. What may seem impossible to the timid calculating mind should seem possible to the indomitable courage of youth. In making possible what appears impossible lies the bravery and the glory of youth.

But I agree that if the youth and other sections of our people continue to take things easy, we cannot achieve victory by the end of the year. However, even if it so turns out it will be something which the brave should welcome because it will give them opportunity to fight. When faced with a battle, does a fighter flee the field saying "my land may be taken from me"?

At any rate, I see no reason for the students to take alarm. Even if there is a struggle they may be sure that the college they have left will be theirs in the end. The question of the loss of fees is hardly worth consideration when one thinks of swaraj. What importance should we attach to the mere loss of fees when many will lose their all? With these observations I now come to the specific questions raised by this student. Whether to leave Government schools and colleges or not will be ultimately decided by the Congress. If I hadmy way, I should certainly urge their boycott. It is as clear as daylight that the Government carries on its rule in this country through these schools and colleges. Acharya Ramdev, in his lectures at the Gujarat Vidyapith, proved from the testimony of the English witnesses themselves that the intention of the Government in formulating the present system of education was to produce servants who would carry out the orders of their English masters. Thousands of young men struggling for degrees want them for the sole purpose of obtaining jobs. Degrees cannot give knowledge, for knowledge is acquired only by study. At the root of this desire for degrees lies the temptation of

[1] The letter is not translated here. He had written that in case the Government refused to grant Dominion Status and students were called upon to participate in the non-co-operation movement, they would have to suffer financial loss which the poorer amongst them could hardly afford.

Government posts. It is a great obstacle to swaraj. I see a new spirit arising in our youth. It delights me, but it does not make me blind. This spirit is as yet only a momentary impulse and to some extent mechanical and artificial. When the real spirit emerges, it will dazzle the world with its brilliance like the rays of the sun. And with the birth of that spirit in our people, no student will have any need for either school or college. For the present, however, like the paper currency of the Government, its schools and colleges are also current coin. And who is free of their lure?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-4-1929

331. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

April 14, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I did not write to you yesterday. I have written to H.[1] and told him that he should obey his conscience. A man cannot serve the woman for whom he feels lust, and her faults he can never see. This is the reason why a husband and wife cannot see each other's faults. Without such blindness of attachment conjugal life would be impossible. It is, therefore, natural that H. cannot see the fault of S.[2][2] I have explained this to him.

You should not worry about this and similar matters. If S. is ready to observe the rules and wishes to remain and live in a spirit of humility it is our duty to let her remain.

You will find with this a letter from Chhotelal. Neither you nor he is to be blamed for his leaving.

What does the statement, that Balkoba's attachment to the body has decreased, mean?

For how long has Giriraj left? He did right in leaving Katto and Vimala under the care of Kusum.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5403

[1] The names are being omitted.

[2] *ibid*

332. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

Sunday, April 14, 1929

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have had a letter from you after a long time. I see your point regarding Karnatak. You have done all you could in the matter.

Your idea of undertaking khadi work in Malabar appeals to me, but you cannot take it up for the present as you have already given your word to Kakasaheb. He has been trying to get you soon. I had a letter from him very recently. Perhaps you have already heard from him by now. Through you Kakasaheb has high hopes of creating a khadi atmosphere at the Vidyapith, and so you should now think only of going there. If, after doing your job there, you can go to Malabar, well and good. Considering the matter from another standpoint also, the Vidyapith work may suit you better. You are likely to get better help there in your idea of observing *brahmacharya*, and in any case you will have the company of Ashram inmates.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I write this from a village in Andhra Desha. Your reply should be addressed to me at Bezwada, if you got this letter soon. I hope you are both doing well. I follow what you say about the machine.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3730

333. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

April 14, 1929

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

I got your letter, and also the telegram. There was nothing in the latter which called for a reply.

You have not guessed rightly the reason why I advised you against the use of soap. The soda which the soap contains is not good for the body. The grime of perspiration is removed by bathing with hot water and then rubbing the skin hard with a towel. That way the skin becomes strong. Soda removes from the skin the

oil in it which is essential to its health. Moreover, the skin becomes weak and a layer of the skin which has a useful function in the body is also injured. There is no harm in your use of earth, but I do not consider it necessary. The better thing to use is gram flour, or even wheat flour. But ordinarily nothing except hot water is required. Bathe with water and then rub the body with a small wet towel. After the bath is over, cleanse the body with a dry towel of khadi. I mention a khadi towel particularly because its roughness stimulates the skin.

If you gently suck the pulp of raisins or oranges, there is no harm in taking either. But see that seeds or bits of skin do not pass into the stomach. Hence, safety lies in sucking the fruit after removing the seeds, and this will also naturally prolong the sucking.

I know of Macfadden's method of living on milk diet. I believe that it helps in increasing fat in the body. If you wish to try his method, you may certainly do so after you have gained strength. Macfadden's experiments relate to men only, and to large-bodied men of a climate different from ours. Bearing this in mind, we should adapt his method to the needs of bodies like ours. We should not take milk in the quantities mentioned by him. In this matter the safe course for you of follow is to proceed with due regard for the capacity of your body. Even my advice, if it does not agree with you, should be ignored. You may now change over to milk diet. Be in no hurry about gaining strength. It will certainly follow to the extent that you digest your food. I do not want you to start eating *rotli* very soon.

I take jaggery in the morning gruel. I do not consider it essential for me, but I take it only because I wish to have my gruel from what is prepared for all. As the doctors think honey essential for me, if I had gruel prepared for me alone I would use nothing but honey. There are friends who get me good honey. I do not know the addresses of the suppliers. However, if you are not in a position to make arrangements for getting good honey I would get it for you. You will not require much honey. Write a letter to Satis Babu of Khadi Pratishthan. Perhaps he will get you good honey.

There will be no harm if you walk a little now. It is certainly necessary to take enemas. Till you are able to clear your bowels without the slightest straining it will be necessary for you to take an enema in the morning. Do not be afraid that taking enemas will

become a habit with you. The intestines of a fasting person retain their natural strength for a certain period only and, therefore, require assistance by way of enema.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6775

334. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Sunday, April 14, 1929

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Chhaganlal writes to tell me that occasionally you get fed up with the evils which you observe in the Ashram and feel like running away.

If you know of a place free from all evil, we would both seek shelter there. However, if you believe that there is bound to be some evil everywhere, you, I and all others who regard themselves as belonging to the Ashram will have done their duty in life if they cling to the Ashram as it is and try to purify it. It is in the character of the Ashram that it will not tolerate evil and it is its distinguishing mark that this nature is being strengthened as time passes.

The general practice of men is that if any evil comes to their notice they cover it up. It is because of this attitude that evil increases in the world. However, though evil increases it is in the nature of the world to remain good and that is why it continues to exist. Otherwise, it would have perished long ago.

Reflect over what I have said, and remain firm in mind; do not worry; and keep your peace of mind. Regain your health fully.Do you eat some uncooked vegetable? How much milk are you able to digest now?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 23

335. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

Sunday [*April 14, 1929*][1]

CHI. KUSUM,

I am glad that Katto[2] and Vimala[3] are with you. Give yourself whole-heartedly to them and also to Many, if she is staying with you. Soak them in your love. You know how to look after them. Bring them up as if they were your own little sister and brother.

There is much rushing about in this tour. If, therefore, you had accompanied me it is highly doubtful whether you would have been able to bear the strain.

Imam Saheb[4] and Prabhavati[5] are barely able to do so, and I see that everyone feels exhausted. I observe that of all the people Ba is the most alert. But then she has that strength. She has not known laziness in years and her body is well trained.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1786

336. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 15, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I have your two letters. You have my promise that if anything happens to me, you shall know by wire. You must therefore reject all canards as baseless unless confirmed by me. The Ashram thing you know.[6] The events have left me undisturbed in my work. There is something deep down felt but it is natural. I feel that the Ashram is the purer for these revelations. It was corrupt whilst the sins were going on. We are the better for the exposures.

[1] In *Bapuna Patro—3: Kusumbehn Desaine* this letter is placed between letter of April 9 and April 17, 1929. The Sunday between these dates fell on April 14.

[2] Son and daughter of Girirajkishore

[3] *ibid*

[4] Abdul Kadir Bawazeer

[5] Wife of Jayaprakash Narayan

[6] *Vide* "My Shame and Sorrow", 8-4-1929.

Your duty is to rebuild your body and make it invulnerable if it is at all possible. But no anxiety even on this score.

The condition of the people as described by you is nothing new for me. But you are now understanding my impatience about their condition.

No more today.

Headquarters still Bezwada.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I am today in Masulipatam.

From the original: C.W. 5364. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9420

337. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day, April 15, 1929

SISTERS,

I have no time to write much today. I beg all of you who live in the Mandir to see that it continues and flourishes.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–1: Ashramni Behnone

338. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

April 15, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Things are happening so fast there that I cannot keep pace with time. You write and tell me that S.[1] is leaving. where and in what manner was probably explained in your previous letter, which I have not yet received. I say this because I should have received two letters today. I had a letter from Kishorelal, from which I infer that she is going away to live with H.[2] That is also good. We need not be upset if people leave on their own, without any fault of ours. If they part

[1] The names are being omitted.

[2] *ibid*

company with us, we deserve that. Those who understand the meaning of what we are doing may remain. If, because of fewer people remaining, you find difficulty in carrying on your work, you may enlist the help of some senior students. If you wish to close some of the departments, you may certainly do so. See that you do not persist in anything which you know to be beyond your capacity and invite failure.

If Krishnadas has recovered and can join you, you may call him. I see no harm in you utilizing the services of one or more from among Kanti, Bal and Jayanti who you think may be useful to you. You can certainly ask for Sitla Sahai's help. Why does Ramniklal feel dispirited?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Enclosed with this is a letter from Prabhudas. The Managing Committee should read it. Show it to Kaka.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5404

339. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

April 15, 1929

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

I had your telegram, but did not wire to you in reply as there was nothing to say. All that is required now is to have patience. Do not worry about weakness. Instead of taking milk every hour, you should have it now at longer intervals. It will be good to take it every two hours. The total quantity of milk may remain the same. The stomach requires time to digest anything.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6776

340. A LETTER

BEZWADA,
April 15, 1929

CHI. . . .[1],

Remember that untruth is worse than lechery. Sometimes what the world takes to be lechery may not be lechery; but untruth is untruth at all times and is the source of countless other sins. People may call it immoral if a widow remarries, but there is really no immorality in it if she does so openly. But it is an untruth if I have eaten a grape stealthily and then deny having done so. It is worse than lechery. Therefore save yourself from lying. Do not eat anything stealthily. If you can, try and control your palate. If you cannot, eat openly *bhajiyas*[2] or anything else you wish to. Then alone will you make yourself fit for service. Trying to appear what we are not is hypocrisy and hypocrisy is bad.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/48

341. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

Silence Day [*April 15, 1929*][3]

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I have your letter. Though I have sent an answer to the letter Harijivan[4] wrote to me, I accept your advice and shall put up with his having taken away Sharada.

I have read the comments of the *Time*. The writer was within his rights to write what he did. Even a hypocrite can write thus.

I still think that it was my moral duty to write what I did[5] in *Navajivan*. I hope you are keeping well. I stop here as it is now time for the mail to go.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10713. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

[1] The name has been omitted in the source.

[2] A fried delicacy

[3] From the contents this letter appears to have been written at the same time as the one to Chhaganlal Joshi dated April 15, 1929, which was also a Monday

[4] Harjivan Kotak

[5] *Vide* "My Shame and Sorrow", 8-4-1929.

342. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[*April 16, 1929*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I write this before leaving Masulipatam, so that I may not let go today's post without a letter.

The Mandir belongs to those who observe its rules. Those who do not observe them, who violate them, are bound to leave when caught. We should not feel sorry if any such persons are caught. We are not on a higher pedestal than the guilty ones. We should love them, thinking that in their circumstances we, too, probably would have done what they did. Dismiss the idea of a purificatory fast. Think over this and go on doing whatever work you can as if nothing had happened. You will then have no cause to feel sad. We should assume that mistakes will be committed again and be ready to face such a contingency. I have not said anything new in this. My aim in saying this is to persuade you to give up worrying how to bring about the spiritual uplift of the Mandir.

If you have not paid the money received from Rangoon, pay it now. Also pay the money received from Hyderabad. Both these amounts include certain sums earmarked for the Lalaji Found, etc., if you have received the figures of these sums, keep that money back. If you have not received them, we shall look into the matter afterwards.

How does Ratilal behave?

Is Purushottam still there? How is his health? If he is there, ask him to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5427

[1] Gandhiji was at Masulipatam on April 15. It appears this letter was written before he left for Bezwada the following morning.

343. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Chaitra Sud 7 [*April 16, 1929*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

According to your reckoning, it should be the 7th day [of the fortnight]. My calculation might be different. I wrote the enclosed two letters yesterday. Today, I received your letter. It is good you wrote it. Even after receiving my letter, you would have written the same kind of letter. You are no doubt Lakshman. By writing such beautiful letters, you have overwhelmed Bharat. As and when I think of Chhaganlal's helplessness, I feel like crying. I had cried at a time when Harilal had let me down. I had wept when Rama had indulged in theft and had deceived me. Now, Chhaganlal has reduced me to that position. That is because I have so much love for him and faith in him. He has done something improper. . . [2] I felt so bad about it. Instead of reciting the *Bhagavad Gita* in the morning, I got immersed in thoughts of Chhaganlal. I thought that . . .[3] would not have done so. Even if he had wanted to leave Phoenix, he could have. . .[4] and left in an orderly manner. I have compared him and West. I consider West to be superior to Chhangalal in some ways but in others, I feel Chhaganlal is superior to West. But in the general moral conduct, there has been a lapse on the part of Chhaganlal now. It is beyond endurance. This suggests how much discipline we all need to observe. This also suggests the need for a man to take a vow. We should direct our mind to what we want to do - that is a vow. If the mind is let loose, a man comes across hundreds of obstacles. A vow is the key to progress. Such poor resolve that "as far as possible, I will not eat meat" will certainly make me eat meat. And a firm resolve like "even if I die, I will not eat meat" will save me and help me progress. The three vows I had taken before going to England certainly saved me.

[1] From the reference to the Chhaganlal incident; *vide* "My Shame and Sorrow", 8-4-1929. *Chaitra Sud* 7 in the year 1929 corresponded to April 16.

[2,] A few words at each of these places are illegible in the source.

[3] *ibid*

[4] *ibid*

Chhaganlal had not taken any such firm vow, etc., and even though he gave me an impression of a vow regarding Phoenix, I believe that he had not taken the vow as far as he himself was concerned. Otherwise, the things would not have come to this pass.

If you want to send this letter as well as the others written to you . . . [1] you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

From the date on Chhaganlal's letter, I notice that your calculation [of the day] is the same as mine.

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32925

344. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

April 17, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

You are passing through a severe ordeal. I have pointed out to you the mistake which was made in the affair about S.[2] Instead of the matter being discussed with P.[3] all attacks were directed at S., and this was like leading an assault against an ant. I knew this, and still I joined in the assault, and, therefore, I don't blame you much for what happened. Everything was done through good motives. Whatever has happened is good. It was natural on S.'s part to go and live with H.[4] Both will be tried now. It is true that I feel unhappy at the thought that S. was unnecessarily subjected to a sort of pressure. For this, however, I blame myself more than I do you. But now this chapter is closed.

We now open that of Vasumati and Kusum. Consult me in this matter and then do what you think fit. I have written a letter today to Vasumati. I see that she will have to be given a separate room. I have advised her not to insist on being given the one which was occupied by Chhotelal. I have also advised her to give up the thought of getting a new room built for her. The only right thing for her is to accept one of the eight rooms. I shall try to persuade Be, too, to accept a separate

[1] From the reference to the Chhaganlal incident; *vide* "My Shame and Sorrow", 8-4-1929. *Chaitra Sud* 7 in the year 1929 corresponded to April 16.

[2] The names are being omitted.

[3] *ibid*

[4] *ibid*

room. I must admit my defeat in regard to the women's section. I had some hopes about Vasumati, but I see now that they cannot be realized.I do not blame her for this. Sharda has left. I don't see any possibility of Kusum living there alone at present. She wants to accompany me on my tours. On my next tour, I will not prevent her from going with me, but I cannot say what her ultimate future will be. Who else, then, remain in the women's section? We certainly cannot count Yashodadevi and Sarojinidevi. I feel that we have no choice but to give them, too, separate rooms. My defeat, therefore, is complete. I must be humble and know that such experiments cannot be conducted unless I live in the Ashram all the year round. If you wish, do about these two what you have done about Nanubhai, Provided they and their husbands desire that.

Who looks after Vimala and Katto?

I wish to reduce the burden on you. Surajbhan and Sitla Sahai do know the condition about *brahmacharya*. They should so live that it can be observed. If they cannot observe it, they may leave the Ashram. We should trust them. You can go so far without consulting me. I am constantly thinking what more we can do. My soul is ever present there.

If you think that Narandas will help you in all these things, discuss the matters with him. Perhaps he will be able to lighten your burden.

I had a letter from Harjivan. I send it with this for you to read.

Whenever people leave the Ashram, you should think that there will be so much the less burden on you. Do not lose heart if the Ashram becomes deserted and do not blame yourself for such a result.

We can ask Kakasaheb to give only as much help as he can easily give from the Vidyapith. We cannot request him to come and live in the Ashram. We do not wish to improve the Ashram at the cost of the Vidyapith. If you assume certain things as fixed, you will not get confused in your thoughts.

You cannot call either Kaka or Vinoba or Lakshmidas; you may keep Mahadev there. And you ought not to overwork yourself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5405

345. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

ANDHRA TOUR,
April 17, 1929

CHI. KUSUM,

I have your letter. I have not liked your leaving the Ashram at this time. It is true that you had secured permission to leave. But the permission is subject to an implicit understanding, namely, that one should not leave a duty one has accepted and go even for the sake of one's own mother. What would Jadavbehn[1] have done supposing you had not been there? What would she have done supposing you had been touring with me? What would she have done supposing you had been beyond the seas? You had Manu under your charge and Katto and Vimala were added, and you were a great help to Chhaganlal. You could have helped in other work also at the present time. In these circumstances you were not supposed to leave the Ashram. Can you understand that this was your dharma? This is the *Gita* dharma, as I understand it. I would expect from you at least this. Do not argue in your defence that Joshi permitted you to go. He could not have done otherwise. The milk has been spilt and that cannot be undone now. this advice is for future guidance. Do not take it as a rebuke. What would I gain by rebuking you? I myself might have often laid myself open to blame. But when we find ourselves guilty of such a lapse it will be enough if we draw from the error a lesson for the future.

You need not now rush back from Umreth. Since you are already there, you should finish the work before returning. When you do, make up your mind not to undertake any responsibility in the Ashram, or if you do, not leave it till it is taken over by somebody else.

My cart is jogging along.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1787

[1] Addressee's mother

346. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

April 17, 1929

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

My tour keeps me wandering. Seeing your letter I feel like writing to you. I hope you are well and your mind is at peace. I have not had a letter from you for several days now .

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6529

347. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

GUNTUR,
Wednesday [*April 17, 1929*][1]

BHAI RAMESHWAR,

I hope your mind is now at peace and your health satisfactory.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 197

348. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

April 17, 1929

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

I have found this [letter of yours] among the old letters. Let us not watch how others behave towards us. Let us watch how we behave towards others.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 200

[1] From Gandhiji's tour itinerary

349. LETTER TO BHOLANATH SINGH

April 17, 1929

BHAI BHOLANATH,

It is only today that I am able to reply to your letter received long ago. Regarding girls of tender age I know of no other way than to publicize each case and get in touch with the parents and persuade them not to commit such "murder" of their children.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

BHAI BHOLANATH SINGH
RASHTRIYA VIDYALAYA
P.O. HAVELI KHADAGPUR
DIST. MONGHYR, BIHAR

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7778

350. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, GUNTUR

April 17, 1929

Mahatmaji, while replying to the Municipal address, paid homage to the memory and work of the late Duggiralu Gopalakrishnaiya and said that as leaders passed away, the burden of the people's duty would become more heavy. Referring to the Municipal address, he said the Municipality had much to do in the way of combating the evil habits of people abusing public grounds and maidans. He saw a ghastly sight that day while crossing the river Krishna. That was not the way of using a sacred river. Many people were abusing also the sacred sands of that holy river and it was high time for the people and the Municipality to eradicate those habits. He would ask of the Municipality one question: what was the work they were doing now particularly in the cause of public health and sanitation?

Before I leave this place I want to ascertain from you how far the Congress programme has been carried out in these parts. Of course I ask you all, I request you earnestly, on behalf of the poor and starving millions of our land, to use khaddar and promote its production. If you think of their hunger, and the hunger of their helpless women and children, you will, as true Indians, come out to help them and then you will not mind untouchability or caste. If

youare really sincere in your sympathy and in your desire to serve those starving stomachs, then you will come out to work and remove not only the evil of untouchability from your path, but also help those poor countrymen of yours to banish the curse of drink from their lives. Now, my question to you is: are you so sincere?

The Hindu, 18-4-1929

351. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KERINCHEDU

April 17, 1929

I have heard that you have been sitting here from 5.30 onwards. I am sorry for the delay; it is now eleven in the night, but I am glad to see you and heartily congratulate you on your patience. I thank you all for that and for your purse. But I should like to ask one question, is your desire to see me equal to your desire to see your country free? Will you show the same patience there also? I want also to tell you another thing. Do not think you have done all when you have contributed to the purse fund. You should not think that you have carried out the constructive programme of the Congress by subscribing to the Khadi Fund. In addition to that, you must boycott foreign cloth and wear only khaddar. I see some volunteers here wearing foreign cloth. I also noticed that sisters who came here to give money did not wear khadi. Remember, this money is for making your own clothes. And if you do not wear clothes of your own country and give money to the Khadi Fund, your giving is not a true giving. I hope that every one of you will have a charkha in your house now and hereafter. You must give up drink, you have no time to get drunk, and no money to waste while your brothers and sisters are starving. Remember these words to you in the night.

The Hindu, 19-4-1929

352. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, PEDANANDIPA

April 17, 1929

I thank you very much for the purse you have given for the Khadi Fund. That means you have thought of the poor and starving countrymen of yours in this land. I read your address in which you have stated that you once launched civil disobedience in 1921. I am very glad to know and I congratulate you on your heroism and I hope you will show the same heroism, whenever the call comes to you. I believe you will show it when necessary. You have also stated that you

have tried to remove untouchability but that you were not completely successful. I shall hope for your complete success soon. If you want to embark upon civil disobedience in any *firka*, let me tell you we must have 50 per cent of Khaddar wearers because it means discipline and organization. You must try to rectify all defects before you want to launch civil disobedience and you must remove all signs of weakness. Besides, you must give up drink and stand on your own spirit. You must remove untouchability, for in this fight there is no room for it. And another great preparation is, we have to foster Hindu-Muslim unity. These are the most essential things for the attainment of swaraj. Remember 1930 is fast approaching and as your preparations are weak or strong, so shall the struggle commence ill or well. Need I say to you, gird up your loins? May God bless you with courage.

The Hindu, 19-4-1929

353. THE BOMB AND THE KNIFE

At the back of the bomb thrown in the Assembly by men bearing Hindu names and the knife of Rajpal's assassin bearing a Muslim name runs the same philosophy of mad revenge and impotent rage. The bomb-throwers have discredited the cause of freedom in whose name they threw the bombs; the user of the knife has discredited Islam in whose name the perpetrator did the mad deed. The Government would be Foolish if they become nervous and resort to counter madness. If they are wise, they will perceive that they are in no small measure to blame for the madness of the bomb-thrower. By their indifference to popular feeling they are exasperating the nation and the exasperation is bound to lead some astray. Congressmen whose creed is non-violence will do well not to give even secret approval to the deed but pursue their method with redoubled vigour, if they have real faith in it.Rajpal's assassination has given him a martyrdom and a name which he did not deserve. He had made full reparation in regard to his pamphlet.[1] He had also already suffered for it. The assassination has brought him posthumous renown. I tender the members of the martyr's family my condolences and hope that neither they nor the Arya Samajists will harbour any ill will against the Mussalmans because of the deed of one mad man amongst them. The assassin will, I expect, in due course pay the last penalty for his deed.

[1] *Rangila Rasool*

It is to be fervently hoped that there will not be a repetition of the sorry scenes one witnessed over the funeral of Abdul Rashid.

Of course the bomb and the knife derive their lease of life from the world's belief in violence as a remedy for securing supposed justice. Organized destruction is no less immoral because it is not a crime in the penal code of nations. The insensate speed with which the nations of the West are hourly forging new weapons of destruction for purposes of war is suffocating the world with the spirit of violence. Little wonder if hot-heads of all nations and all faiths should overstep the limits of the penal code even at the risk of their lives. The bomb-thrower and the assassin will live on so long as public opinion of the world tolerates war. But they can always be kept under check if local opinion does not approve of or tolerate their activity.

The bomb is more easily dealt with than the knife. The bomb has no *milieu* in India. The Government can stop it today if they choose, not by frightfulness but by conceding the national demand gracefully and in time. But that is hoping against hope. For the Government to do so would be a change of heart, not merely of policy. And there is nothing on the horizon to warrant the hope that any such change is imminent.

The hope therefore lies really in the nation, in the Congressmen. In my wanderings I have sensed no belief amongst national workers in methods of violence. I have however missed a living faith in the method of non-violence, I have felt even a want of faith in it. An atmosphere of despair undoubtedly pervades the air. This demoralizing uncertainty disables workers from appreciating to the full the programme prescribed by the National Congress.They do not see that if non-violence is to express itself in national activities for attainment of freedom, the Congress programme is the natural and inevitable outcome. We can to a great extent checkmate the bomb-thrower, if we would have faith in our own programme and work for it.

Young India, 18-4-1929

354. FOREIGN-CLOTH BOYCOTT

Sjt. Jairamdas, Secretary of the Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee appointed by the Working Committee, has not allowed grass to grow under his feet. The headquarters of the Committee are Congress House, Bombay. From there the Secretary is issuing bulletins and leaflets and addressing letters to municipal bodies and

others. An important leaflet gives the names and addresses of sale-and-production khadi depots throughout India. The reader can have the list by sending an anna stamp to the F.C.B. Committee, Congress House, Bombay 4. The registered telegraphic address is 'Boycott'. It will interest the reader to know that there are in all 328 such centres of which Bengal has 66 and Tamilnad 64. Next come Andhra with 39 and Bihar with 33. Whilst by itself the list is encouraging, it is but a drop in the ocean compared with the foreign-cloth shops in the country. There is no doubt that Bombay alone has more than 328 foreign-cloth sale depots. It is for the public to capture this trade which drains away crores of rupees annually from India. One rupee spent on khadi giveth life, one rupee spent on foreign cloth killeth.

The bulletins issued by the office give information about the progress of boycott. The first leaflet issued gives the case for boycott. 30,000 copies have been printed. A nominal price of one pice has been fixed for it. I copy the following interesting paragraphs[1] from the leaflet.

Young India, 18-4-1929

355. IN ANDHRA DESHA [*–I*]

I am paying this oft-postponed visit at a time trying for me as also for the workers. It is about the hottest part of the year and when owing to long travelling I am almost washed out. Happily though the tour programme is stiff and requires daily travelling mostly by motor-cars, I am left alone between 10 to 5 except for one hour when I am spinning. This gives me time for some recuperation, editing and correspondence.

The tour may be said to have commenced with Hyderabad. Dr. Latifi of Hyderabad met us at Wadi junction and covered the whole party with unobtrusive attention.

Immense crowds greeted us at Hyderabad and it took over 45 minutes to pass from the carriage to the car. By right on either side our lodging was fixed at Sarojini Devi's golden threshold where Dr. Naidu and Padmaja made us feel perfectly at home. Sjt. Vamanrao Naik was the boss of the whole show. But in spite of the able assistance of his volunteers and the help, willingly accepted, of the Hyderabad police, he could not regulate the immense crowds that pressed in from everywhere at the mass meeting. I must not however tarry over the

[1] Not reproduced here

description of the meeting or the many institutions to which Sjt. Vamanarao Naik took us.

Here is the list of the Hyderabad collection as prepared for me by Deshabhakta Konda Venkatappayya who joined us at Hyderabad leaving his paralytic wife in bed.

> Hyderabad citizens' purse, Rs. 5,025-0-0; Secunderabad purse, 2,557-1-1; Collections at various meetings, 325-10-0; Sedam Vyapari Mandal, 103-0-0; Tandur Vyapari Mandal, 101-0-0; Vikarabad, 10-0-0; Shankerpalli, 50-0-0; Miscellaneous, 60-0-0; Audi Hindu High School, Hyderabad, 161-0-0; P.B.P. School, Secunderabad, 15-0-0-; Secunderabad Merchants' purse, 116-0-0; Hyderabad Ladies' Meeting, purse and collections, 639-14-2; Miscellaneous, 174-4-0; Promised by Sjt. Dhanraj, 1,000-0-0; Total Rs. 10,337-13-3.

Leaving Hyderabad on 7th evening contrary to previous arrangement and in order to save time Deshabhakta put us down at Bonkal Station at 3 a.m. and took us by motor to the interior. The arrangement is to take me through villages which are presenting purses. This is not a self-imposed virtue but a virtue of necessity. Growing mass consciousness has awakened the people to a sense of their importance and they have dictated their terms this time. 'If you want us to give contributions, you must produce Gandhi before us,' they seem to have said. Of course the euphemism for this 'production' is *darshan*. Little do the simple good-hearted villagers realize what it means for a weak old man to move from place to place amid din and noise and receive embarrassing attentions from thousands of men and women. This 'production' is however a good experience for me. It gives me an insight, however slight it may be, into the life of the Andhra villages. Slight it is because I am able to do no more than appear before crowds and receive purses. If the Managing Committee could have given me some time for tarrying in the villages so as to enable me to have chats with them, it would have been a great privilege and an equally great education for me but it was not to be.

I must again however restrain myself hoping to give some interesting reminiscences later on. I must close these hurried lines with the following list. It would show how quick the march has been and how deep we have penetrated the interior.

> 7-4-1929 — Rajah of Munagala (in Hyderabad) Rs. 1,500-0-0; On the way from Hyderabad to Bonakal, Rs. 10-8-10.

> 8-4-1929 — Lingala, Rs. 22-11-9; Mekkapeta, 40-13-9; Jaggayyapeta, 622-0-3$^{1}/_{2}$; Ponakanchi, 116-0-0; Jayantipuram, 500-7-0.

9-4-1929 — Nandigama, Rs. 1,232-8-6; Guntupalli, 130-0-0; Ibrahampatam, 601-0-0.

10-4-1929 — Nuzvid, Rs. 1,705-9-4; Gollapalli, 280-5-0; Arugolanu, 1,196-0-0; Kanumolu, 58-8-3; Veeraoalli, 140-0-; Pottipadu, 41-0-0; Atukuru, 184-1-9; Bezwada, 4,735-3-1_.

11-4-1929 — Khaddar Samstha, Gunadala, Rs. 1,220-4-3; Mogalrazapuram, 1,211-0-9; Padamata, 1,434-0-0; (Rs. 201 earmarked for Lalaji Fund); Porauki, 141-10-0; Idupugollu, 887-8-1; Punadipadu, 629-12-0; Godavarru, 440-0-9; Neppalli, 517-1-0; Akunuru, 218-0-0 (Rs. 26 earmarked for Lalaji Fund); Gaudikunta, 8-0-0.

12-4-1929 — Kommumuru, Rs. 401-0-0; Vuyyuru, 695-0-0; Chirivada, 50-0-0 (Rs. 50 earmarked for Lalaji Fund).

Jewellery (approximate value) Rs. 600-0-0.

Total Rs. 21,570-2-5.

Young India, 18-4-1929

356. LETTER TO HARISHCHANDRA BEHRAWALA

April 18, 1929

BHAISHRI HARICHAND,

I have your letter. The doubts raised by you have been answered several times in the columns of *Navajivan*. I am pained and surprised at the ignorance of present conditions displayed in your letter.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5675

357. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

April 18, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have had so much wandering to do these days that I don't get my post regularly. And I would be putting people to difficulty if I asked for the post to be brought to me in villages. They can bring it only in a special car. I, therefore, do not Know where I shall get yesterday's and today's post.

I discovered an old letter from Rupnarayanbabu, which I enclose with this. If you know what happened afterwards, or can inquire from him, and if there is anything I can do, write to me about it or ask him to write.

I wrote to you a detailed letter yesterday.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I also enclose with this a note about the expenditure in Wardha which I had got prepared. It need not be returned.

Send me the details about the money received from Rangoon for the Kathiawar Political Conference. The money was collected by Maneklal.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5560

358. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

April 18, 1929

CHI. BRIJKISAN,

I have your letter. Jamnalalji too had a talk with me. I welcome you joining the Gandhi Seva Sangh. But remember once having got in you should not so much as think of getting out. Even here probably you will incur the displeasure of your family. They are bound to be displeased one way or another as your ideals and theirs differ. I hope you are keeping good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2363

359. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[*April 19, 1929*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I tried to write to you yesterday but could not. I had to devote all my time to *Young India*.

Do not hesitate to give me even the smallest details about developments there. I must know them. Maganlal did not write to me every day. Sometimes he did not write to me at all. He knew my ideas; and I also see that, out of false pity for me or for other reasons, he did not acquaint me with many of the defects in people. We need not, however copy anyone's shortcomings. Maganlal's unwavering faith, his burying himself in the Ashram and his ceaseless vigilance, etc., were virtues worthy of emulation. We know the truth now. Think it a sin to keep back anything from me. What more shocks can I feel now?.

I have already written to you something about M.[2] I wished to write immediately he came and saw me but did not. He declared his innocence on oath, and so I remained quiet and told him: "You may now work as you wish and on your own responsibility.Having told you of my suspicion, I have done my duty."

You should, therefore, entertain no suspicion about M. now. He is a mature and experienced person; he may do what he thinks best. If he makes a mistake or sins, others will be free from guilt but will be stained in some measure because M. is a co-worker. We need not keep that girl in the Mandir. The experiment of the Mandir is full of dangers, so is that of M.

Yashodabehn should certainly leave, if you have no doubt about her being guilty of falsehood. If Surajbhan presses you and you let her stay, I will not find fault with you. I wrote to you the day before yesterday. The ideas expressed in that letter have become stronger. Let Surajbhan and Yashodabehn live together, as Nanubhai and Dahibehn do. Both should work. I suggest that a similar arrangement should be made for Sitla Sahai and Sarojinibehn. You may, if you wish to, resolve not to admit any more couples. If you admit any, they

[1] From the reference to Surajbhan's stay in the Ashram about which Gandhiji says he wrote "the day before yesterday"; *vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 17-4-1929.

[2] The name is being omitted.

may live together on condition that they promise to observe *brahmacharya*. If they wish, they may, though living together, sleep in separate beds and avoid being along with each other; if they do not wish to do that, we should not lay down a rule that they must. If they fall, they will leave.

You are right in deciding that the buildings which fall vacant should be given to some others to occupy. It is also right that the tenants should try to observe the rules. We should not bind ourselves to supply them milk, provisions, etc., nor to keep watch to protect their residences. We may supply them milk if we can spare any. In brief, I see no harm in letting the buildings to these new tenants on the same condition on which Budhabhai lives as our neighbour. I see that we shall have to narrow the Mandir's field. That is also to the good. I have written this after only a moment's reflection; you should, therefore, fill in the details which may have been left out. Discuss the matter with Mahadev who is there.

I am surprised by Mahavir Poddar's letter. He himself had asked for more khadi to be sent. I will write to him. Meanwhile, don't send him any more khadi now. You should tell him that it was at my instance that you had sent him what you did.

There is a wire from Mahadev today saying that he has written a letter. I shall think over the matter after I receive the letter. I will not force even him to remain. That would not be for his good. Only those who will remain even after others have left should think of staying on. Do not discuss even this among yourselves. We have discussed things long enough. I suppose you have read the story ofthe Pandavas' final journey. One brother after another became exhausted. It is a wonderful story. In our Ashram, too, those who get exhausted will remain behind. Nor will it be that those who get exhausted are on a lower level and the others on a higher. Everyone should act according to his strength. Before you take in more cows, ask Parnerkar what his mental state is. If he is unperturbed and if has courage, he may certainly have more cattle.

I am not at all disturbed by reading about the theft of yarn, etc. I have not been foolish enough to hope that the Chhaganlal episode will set everything right immediately.

I send you the tour programme. Show it to Mahadev.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5559

360. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

TENALI,
April 20, 1929

MIRABAI
KHADI DEPOT
MADHUBANI

YOUR WIRE. IF WEAKNESS PERSISTS YOU MUST RETIRE AT ONCE AMBALAL'S FACTORY OR SUCH OTHER PLACE AS MAY BE ADVISABLE. CONSULT RAJENDRABABU OR LAKSHMIBABU IF FORMER UN-AVAILABLE. REPORT FINAL DECISION BEZWADA.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5365. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9421

361. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 20, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I had your two letters yesterday. And now I have your wire. I am not going to Allahabad on 14th May. I am not leaving Andhra till 22nd May and then I reach Bombay on 23rd, leave it on 28th for the Ashram which I do not leave till June 10th at least. So from 23rd May you can join me whenever you like.

It is unfortunate that you have to break up the Ashram before it has taken root. But you can't work against your natural limitations. The seed sown will bear fruit. You must not wear yourself out. More we shall discuss when we meet. I fancy that Ambalalbhai's factory will suit you. But if it does not, you must go elsewhere, Santiniketan if that would suit. Otherwise you can be sent to Matheran where Mathuradas is staying. Use the wire freely.

About milk, you should either use Nestle's condensed milk or unsweetened milk or Horlicks malted milk. The latter is claimed to posses all the qualities of fresh milk save I suppose the vitamins which you get from uncooked leafy vegetables.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5366. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9422

362. BOYCOTT AS POPULAR EDUCATION

I

An ordinary man hardly has any idea how much popular education is implied in the boycott of foreign cloth. Bhai Jethalal Govindji who is working in Bijolia writes to me from time to time his experiences of the work being done there in this direction. I give below a summary of his ideas so as to make clear to the readers the meaning of the above statement.

> The boycott of foreign cloth will succeed only when the twenty-two crores of our peasants begin to use khadi. And to convert them to the use of khadi means to explain to them the science of khadi, to show them the advantages of self-helpand to teach them the entire process of khadi production. For this we need volunteers, mobile schools and preparation and distribution of booklets describing the processes of spinning, carding,etc.

I have only given a summary. Let the reader himself fill in the details and imagine the amount of popular education inherent in the boycott programme.

Who is to impart this education? What place would educationists accord this in their scheme of education? English-oriented educationists who have to sustain the present regime will certainly give it no place. It is then for the nationalist-minded educationists who wish for the establishment of a Kisan-raj in India to take up the idea and make it the pivot of their activity. If this premise is sound, it is up to the national schools and colleges to arrange for the kind of education mentioned above. That is to say, they should undertake to train workers for its propagation. And this training should become for national workers their A.B.C.

All science is interesting. He who says that such and such a science is interesting while the others are not does not know the meaning of science. There is a great difference in merely knowing to do a thing and in knowing its why and wherefore. A tanner knows how to tan the hide and give it colour but that does not make him a chemist. A chemist finds delight in his science, is crazy about it. The tanner has merely a mechanical knowledge of the processes handed down to him from his forefathers; he performs those processes and earns his living. But if he feels so inclined, he will willingly give up the trade and find some other way of making a living. It is the same with other trades. A scientist however can derive all the joy from his particular science, can go on making new discoveries and improving

the science. This difference is at present clearly marked between weaving as a trade and weaving as a science. Maganlal Gandhi died thinking about this every hour of the day and ever inventing something new. Lakshmidas can think of nothing else but this. If her were to be removed to other surroundings, he would feel suffocated like fish out of water. Jethalal Govindji can take interest in no other work and gently upbraids me for giving my time to other activities. Mirabehn, in spite of her indifferent health, has buried herself in Bihar villages and is trying to discover the potentialities of the old type of spinning-wheel and other implements. I can cite many other such instances. But our Vidyapith will not recognize these activities, for the requisite atmosphere is lacking. If a worker like Kaka showed himself inclined to recognize them, he would lose his reputation and the learned members of the Vidyapith would feel ashamed to be found in his company. At the most they would recognize him as an expert carpenter. I don't wish to blame anybody for this. For it is impossible to change human nature under compulsion. People are not yet ready to look on weaving as a science and to systematize it.

It is not laid down that every science shall be pursued everywhere. The inhabitants of the Sahara do not know the science of navigation. Similarly, crores in India do not know that horseracing is a science and many consider it evil. But many books have been written on it and it has its own terminology. The people of the Sahara would develop an interest in the science of navigation and assign it a place in their education if the Sahara were to have water and the people wished to use it for commerce, if they saw their destiny tied with it. Once our people begin to appreciate the great power of the charkha, writers and thinkers would also be drawn to it. They would these begin to see in it poetry and art and utility and a great deal more.

Our national schools and colleges have to perform a double task. They have to work at the charkha themselves and also to create a favourable atmosphere for it in society. In a period of transition, national education has to be of this kind. Society is drawn to any innovation that helps to sustain it. To my mind, the greatest task which our national institutions or vidyapiths have to fulfil in India is to formulate the science of the charkha and to make it interesting.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-4-1929

363. H. E. THE VICEROY'S IRE

In his latest action, Vithalbhai Patel has shown uncommon courage and alertness. Legislatures never had any attraction for me. Today I find them more disagreeable than ever. They have aggravated hostility between Hindus and Muslims and selfishness among leaders. And yet, if anybody's entry into the Legislature has been illustrious, Vithalbhai's was. Whatever precious gifts he had, he poured out as President of the Central Legislative Assembly and so added to India's glory. I have already written about this in *Young India*.[1] Mahadev may have given a translation of it in this issue; hence, I shall not write much about it here.

But by a single word the Viceroy has negatived one object of Vithalbhai's ruling. the President ruled that the Public Safety Bill could not be taken up by the Legislative Assembly. So the Viceroy, through his special powers, issued it as an ordinance. He has thereby proved the futility of the legislatures.

Legislative Assemblies and such other bodies are like toys in the hands of the rulers. As long as they wish, they play with them and, when they please no longer, they wreck them. Swaraj can never be won by means of such playthings.

The second object of the President—which was to prove that the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms are useless—has been fully achieved. Vithalbhai's ruling has doubly proved that the power conferred on the people was ineffective at a time of crisis. Had the Reforms been real, Vithalbhai would not have to give his ruling; the viceroy's action proved that they were hollow.

This incident has established the people's weakness too. The President of the Central Legislative Assembly represents India; he represents the voters, which in turn means India. Hence, the insult to Vithalbhai is an insult to India. Had Vithalbhai power behind him, the Viceroy would never have been able to take the step he took. Knowing that the people have no power, the Viceroy has been able to issue the Public Safety Bill as an ordinance over the head of the President.

People can show their strength in two ways: through bombs and brute force, or through soul-force, that is, by constructive work. Constructive work is a symbol of soul-force and of faith in it. Brute force does not need organization, which is indispensable for construc-

[1] *Vide* "The Fearless Speaker", 12-4-1929.

tive work and soul-force. Hence, brute force can never be the people's power. Soul-force alone represents the people's power. Constructive work ensures the organization of popular bodies big and small. This thing is as clear as daylight, and yet workers behave as if they had not fully understood it. Who can deny that, if the boycott of foreign cloth was achieved this instant, Vithalbhai would gain strength and the insult to him would be wiped out? Who will deny that, if the liquor booths were closed down now, its impact would not be felt? These things cannot succeed without the people's unity; their success will be an ocular proof of soul-force.

Why not have civil disobedience, impatient readers might ask. Has not the Congress said that civil disobedience is impossible without this year's constructive programme? I am sure no one will believe that the people who are sleeping this year will wake up and be ready for satyagraha next year.

So, if we wish to fight be means of soul-force, the Congress programme alone is the best reply to the Viceroy's insult to Vithalbhai. Will Gujarat, if not the other provinces too, realize this simple thing and make others see it?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-4-1929

364. REGRETTABLE IF TRUE

Last month in Calcutta Kavi Hansraj had called upon Gujaratis to boycott foreign cloth. One of these Gujarati brothers writes.[1]

I feel that those who gave up their caps should not have taken advantage of the liberality of the Marwari friend. There are no Gujarati in Calcutta who cannot pay for a khadi cap. But if the teachers and pupils egged on by them took the khadi caps free of cost, having hidden their foreign caps under their arms, it is nothing but theft. It is wrong for anyone to do this. But for teachers and pupils to do it is inexcusable. I hope there is some exaggeration in the above account. If there is none, those who have committed the offence

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had reported the Birla's Khadi Bhandar has offered to give a white khadi cap to anyone who discarded his foreign cap, and that some teachers and pupils had hidden their caps under their arms and received khadi caps.

should donate money exceeding the cost of khadi cap for khadi propaganda and should take a pledge never to do such a thing again, and thus a tone for it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-4-1929

365. MERCHANTS AND KHADI

A member of the Spinners' Association writes:[1]

There is no doubt that ultimately merchants will have to adopt khadi; but if they have not yet taken to selling khadi, the fault does not lie with the khadi workers. The merchant class is susceptible to temptation and is timid. Hence khadi cannot attract it all at once. Nowadays,only people imbued with the spirit of selflessness andpatriotism take up khadi. A merchant does not generally show a spirit of altruism in his trade. Hence a merchant's altruism ends with his doing charity, etc., in such a way as not to palace his business in jeopardy. But it is only when the merchants are moved by true patriotism that they will take up the khadi trade.

We must, however, admit that there is a difficulty in their way. the manner in which they conduct their trade at present will not do in the khadi trade. As no consideration is given to the good of the buyer in present-day business, the merchant regards himself for the most part as free from any moral obligations. If this code is applied to khadi, khadi will perish. Hence only merchants with a saintly nature can trade in khadi. An average merchant will not earn much from the sale of khadi. A merchant who does ordinary business hopes to earn money quickly, whereas khadi merchants have to content themselves with merely making a living. A trader in ordinary cloth has a fixed line and has standard varieties, whereas a khadi merchant has to hit upon new ways every day. Hence we cannot expect many merchants to engage in khadi trade at present. The few merchants who trade in khadi know that they have to labour hard in order to succeed.

Hence those who work in that field at present are themselves imperfect and yet are in a position to do propaganda. The wonder is that, though imperfect, they have been keeping the flag of khadi flying.

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had endorsed Mathuradas Purushottam's suggestion about making khadi cheap and added that certain varieties of it be sold at standard prices everywhere like postcards, merchants being paid a commission.

I still do not feel that Shri Mathuradas Purushottam's suggestion is a bad one. It does not require many men being trained. From the letters I have received I know that many who know tailoring are ready to undertake tailoring of khadi clothes. The difficulty in organizing this work is the paucity of organizers. Only if one devotes oneself wholly to that work, can it be done. I believe that Shri Mathuradas's suggestion will bear fruit some day.

Attempts are being made to standardize certain varieties of khadi, but the present correspondent and others should know that there is a limit to this. Khadi is not produced in factories, but in millions of homes and hence its yarn is not uniform; therefore, there will always be variation in its quality. That there are variations is not a matter for regret. That which has no distinctiveness and individuality is no art. There is bound to be the impress of some hand on every hank of yarn. This is impossible in the case of machine-made yarn.

Hence the utility of the letter consists in the two suggestions concerning the spread of the idea of swadeshi or that of khadi and the adoption of khadi by merchants. Still, the other points in it testify tothe correspondent's love of khadi and since these ideas might have occurred also to others they have been published and discussed here.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-4-1929

366. HELPLESS CONDITION OF WOMEN

I

Here is a summary[1] of what a young man writes:

There must be many such pitiable cases in Hindu Society. There can be no instant remedy. There are some conditions which have to be put up with. What strikes me in such a case is this: if any relative of the girl wishes to help her, he should do so resolutely. If the husband, though a boy, has sense he should make use of his connection with the girl, which was brought about without his consent, in educating her, should treat her as a sister and find a husband for her. I know one can scarcely expect so much wisdom in a boy of fifteen. But in writing this I have in view a number of young men of that age who are altruistically inclined. A third way, that of educating public opinion, of bringing to light such ill-assorted unions, is of course there. If we

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had said that a boy of 15 having married a girl of 17 had developed a dislike for her and wanted to remarry. Since it was difficult for the wife to remarry, what was she to do?

do this, even if the unhappy girl cannot be saved, there will at least be fewer cases of this kind.

What has been said above implies the need for truth, fearlessness, firmness and daring. Only if we accept that that is not marriage which does not answer to the definition of a marriage can we go ahead. He who is afraid of his community or of poverty, and so on, can never bring about reforms. Reformers have had to die, to suffer, to starve; they have been maligned. No true reforms have been possible in the world without this.

II

A doctor writes:[1]

This doctor is to be congratulated. As he writes, many doctors, tempted by a fee, assist in the crime at such times. But I do not writethis to set down the duty of doctors. The above letter furnishes yet another picture of the helpless condition of women. The remedy is what has been suggested above. The present-day society which violates ahimsa in the name of ahimsa does not hesitate to perpetrate cruelties of such kind; it constantly slaughters the cow that is woman. Under the guise of protecting the purity of women, it places all sorts of restrictions on them and, tortured by oppression, they, like others, secretly commit crimes. No one can be kept pure by force. It is desirable that, instead of men and women committing sin in private, they should humbly acknowledge their weaknesses, remarry and thus save themselves from ignominy. But who would help a woman? Men have cleared a way for themselves. As an atonement for their crime in imposing oppressive laws on women, men as a class should help women. It is useless to expect this of elders whose ideas have already become fixed. It is possible for youths, acting within certain limits, to help women. Ultimately, it is women who will bring about the emancipation of women. There are not many such women in India yet. When the youths rush to help women in a big way, there will be awaking among them; and from their ranks will rise heroines dedicated to service.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-4-1929

[1] The letter is not translated here. The doctor had said that a man had approached him with the information that a widow was with child as a result of his intimacy with her, and requested him to give him some drug to induce abortion. The doctor had refused.

367. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day, April 22, 1929

SISTERS,

Today we are in a village which is without any facilities and, therefore, I shall have to get ready with the post early. Even after that, the letters will have to be carried to the post office which is at a distance of eight miles. There is a lot of discomfort here, but with it I get plenty of new experience. Contributions to the fund continue to come in.

You know that some of the women here are very good at spinning. Khadi is very much more in use among women here that in Gujarat. There is no *purdah* and no custom of keeping the face veiled, so that the women are strong in body. They also work very hard.

They have filled my collection bag with jewellery. Many of them give away their rings, some their bangles and a few theirnecklaces. I must have collected about one lakh rupees till now.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–1: Ashramni Behnone

368. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Silence Day, April 22, 1929

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. I have been more pained by your decision than by the events themselves, for I have built high hopes on you. Your duty at this time is to remain in the Ashram. If you understand that duty, doing it, that is, living in the Ashram, should give you peace. If however, you think it your duty to leave the Ashram, by all means do so. I may try to explain your duty to you but I ought not to force you to do anything against your inclination. Remain if you possibly can. Send me a wire about your decision. I will accept whatever you do as done in obedience to your inner voice and keep my peace of mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–9: Shri Narandas Gandhine—Part I, p. 51

369. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

[Before *April 23, 1929*][1]

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

Two letters from you are pending with me.

It is good to use some salt or chalk while brushing the teeth.

It is good if you do not take bread and milk on *Ekadashi* as a religious practice or even just for the sake of your health.

Let me have your height and chest measurements, normal and expanded. I hope you practice breath-control daily.

What is your occupation? Give me particulars about this and let me know how much time you are required to devote to it, how much time you can spare, whether or not you can go out, how far you have studied, whether at present you cohabit with your wife, etc. You will address your reply to Ellore [so as to][2] reach me there soon. This is because I shall be touring around Ellore for about five days.

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6781

370. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

April 24, 1929

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I got your letter. You yourself should tell Nanabhai what you wish to. Do not draw away Venilal and thus obstruct Nanabhai's work. I shall have nothing to say if Nanabhai can spare him.

Have you returned in good health? Did you go to Abyssinia?

If you had any experiences that I should know about, write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 2860. Courtesy: Shardabehn Shah

[1] The source has the date May 13, 1929, written in English in a hand other than Gandhiji's. It is clear from the text, however, that the letter was written before Gandhiji visited Ellore, which was on April 23.

[2] The original is punched here.

371. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, POTUNOORU

April 24, 1929

I thank you for the purses that you have given for the Khadi Fund and the Lajpat Rai Fund. You asked me to lay the foundation stone for the library[1] here and I am glad to do it because I am sure it is going to serve a useful purpose. I wish that you use it profitably for ever. You have given me money and jewels for Khadi Fund but I ask you to wear only khaddar and leave all foreign cloth. If you had done so there would have been no necessity for these collections. I believe there are no drunkards here. Toddy, brandy and other drinks are devils and demons. Just now I came to know that there is a law here among the*Panchamas* that if anyone is known to be drunk he is asked to pay a fine of Rs. 5. That is an excellent thing.

He then appealed to them to remove the evil curse of untouchability and child-marriage and said that they could not afford to slight even a single detail in their programme if they were determined on attaining swaraj.[2]

The Hindu, 27-4-1929

372. SPEECH AT GUNDUKOLANU [3]

April 24, 1929

Khaddar is not dear at any price. If a man dear and near to you is imprisoned, will you not try your utmost to set him free at any cost? A spirit of sacrifice is necessary if you want to attain swaraj. Khaddar should be used with the spirit of sacrifice. In saying that khaddar is dear, it means that you want swaraj without any piece. Foreign cloth is cheap, you say. Even if it is a free gift it is not worth having. Behind it there is the evil of your bondage and you weakness. Get rid of it and depend on your own self for your clothing. In any case throw not your money to be carried away from your motherland.

The Hindu, 27-4-1929

[1] Vivekananda Library

[2] At the end of the meeting a silver trowel was auctioned for Rs. 30.

[3] Gandhiji reached the village at 8.15 p.m. after crowded engagements. Before he retired for the night a number of villagers repeatedly requested him to say a few words. Someone from the audience remarked that khadi was too costly for them.

373. A SCHOOLMISTRESS'S TESTIMONY

From the letters received from America about the great success of Sarojinidevi's mission I reproduce another from Miss Dorothy Waldo, the Associate Principal of Dana Hall School, Wellesley, Massachusetts.[1]

Young India, 25-4-1929

374. FOREIGN-CLOTH BOYCOTT

DUTY OF LOCAL BODIES

Sjt. Jairamdas Doulatram has addressed a circular letter to the local bodies from which I take the following:

> The local self-governing bodies in India can render substantial help in the following ways:
>
> 1. By imposing a prohibitive octroi, terminal tax or other rate on all foreign cloth imported within the local area. Where the existing municipal or Local Boards Acts do not permit this, the local representatives on the Provincial Legislature should be approached to have the law suitably amended.
>
> 2. By exempting hand-spun and hand-woven khadi from octroi, terminal tax and every other local rate.
>
> 3. By making all its cloth purchases in hand-spun and hand-woven khadi irrespective of its so-called costliness.

It will be interesting to know how many local bodies have responded to this appeal and to what extent.

TEST FOR CONGRESS COMMITTEES

The F.C.B. Committee has circularized Congress Committees about progress of boycott in their provinces. But from the latest F.C.B. Bulletin issued by the committee I observe that many Committees have ignored the circular, some have sent perfunctory reports. If the Congress Committees are efficient bodies, there should be no difficulty about getting regular and encouraging reports. During my tour I find that the masses are ready for boycott if the natural leaders will organize them for it. Information has been sought on the following heads:

1. Amount collected towards the boycott fund.
2. Average number of boycott volunteers at work during the week.
3. Number of houses visited by the volunteers during the week.
4. Number of persons who promised to boycott foreign cloth.

[1] The letter is not reproduced here.

5. Value of foreign cloth annually consumed within the local area concerned.

6. Value of such cloth boycotted as a result of item (3) or other propaganda.

7. Number of boycott meetings, processions, Nagar Kirtan parties, or khadi bazaars organized.

8. Value of khadi sold.

9. Number of new charkhas set in motion for hand-spinning by the efforts of the Committee.

10. Number of Municipalities and District Local Boards which have not so far been able to adopt the suggestions made by this Committee at page 4 of the second F.C.B. Bulletin.

This part of the Bulletin concludes:

Besides the weekly reports, Congress Committees must send consolidated reports of work done up to 30th April 1929, as the 1st of May is fixed for the National Stock-taking. These reports must reach this office latest 6th May. Reports which are not received in time will have to be omitted from the general reports which this Committee will submit to the Working Committee in the last week of May.

It is clear that this information should be in the possession of the All-India Congress Committee which meets on 24th May.

THE SEVEN CITIES

How easy the boycott is if it is properly organized one sees from the Bulletins which shows that Calcutta, Bombay, Karachi, Madras, Delhi, Amritsar and Cawnpore are the cities that chiefly import foreign cloth. The Bulletin proceeds:

If the local workers in these cities bestir themselves vigorously, much may be achieved by them. The merchants have been formally approached in some of the centres (it is understood in Calcutta and Cawnpore). It is hoped their example will be followed by the other cities. In view of the move taken in Cawnpore, it is high time that Delhi and Amritsar workers also took affective steps to come into a line with Cawnpore.

ITS EFFECT

The Bulletin quotes the following from Tattersall as showing that even the little that has been achieved is telling on the Manchester market:

Cloth manufacturers are feeling the absence of practicable demand for India. . . . Manchester cannot be active when Indian buyers are holding aloof.

More enquiry (for Manchester goods) from China and the Straits is reported. *India is still lagging behind . . . for fear of the boycott movement.*

Some nervous patriots are already raising the question how khadi can meet the deficit that must be caused by a successful boycott of foreign cloth. The question is no doubt relevant. But it is easilyanswered. Khadi alone has an infinite capacity for expansion, if there is a demand for it. Every hamlet is a potential spinning mill requiring little capital to set it up. The wheels can be fitted up in no time. The skill and the time are there running to waste for want of use. And when there is a general and insistent demand for khadi, the petty trader who is today slaving for the foreign cloth market will deem it a privilege to work for khadi. It will then pay him to work for the additional manufacture of khadi. Moreover it should be remembered that the market will not be called upon to stock khadi for the millions, even as biscuit manufacturers are not expected to supply the millions with their biscuits. Once khadi becomes current coin, the toiling millions will spin their own yarn and get it woven by the village weaver as they used to do before. And in this very natural decentralization there will be the least fraud perpetrated. What is therefore wanted is for national workers to learn the technique of khadi and organize the villages as the occasion arises. As soon as the khadi atmosphere is established in the country, there will be a demand from the villagers for organization. Thus khadi has in it a capacity for self-production whereas millcloth has not. No doubt when the general demand for khadi rises, for the time being the public will have to be satisfied with coarse khadi. The A.I.S.A. has found from experience that the manufacture of fine khadi is matter of slow education. The ordinary woman will easily spin coarse counts, but she requires patient and persevering tuition to induce her to spin fine counts. The evolution of khadi from coarse to fine during the past seven years has been most encouraging. But it will have to suffer temporary suspension when the demand for khadi becomes imperative. And when it does, I have no doubt that in that wave of enthusiasm people will shed the fastidious taste they show now but will gratefully receive any khadi they can get so long as it is genuine hand-spun.

Young India, 25-4-1929

375. THE 'EVE'

> We belong to an Empire beside whose fame that of Rome sinks to a shadow.
>
> We control more than a fourth of the world's land and a quarter—460 million—of its 1,852,000,000 inhabitants. 300,000 of our people rule 333,373,000 natives in India, Ceylon, British North Borneo, British Malaya, Palestine, Iraq and elsewhere in Asia—an area of over two million square miles. Put that in your pipe and smoke it !!!
>
> Sixty million natives are controlled by 706,000 British in Africa in an area of 3,820,000 square miles. Five millions in Canada and over six in Australia occupy another 7,278,000 square miles of the world's surface. . . .
>
> Ours, the greatest mercantile marine the world has ever known, carries more than a billion yards of cotton cloth and more than twelve million pounds worth of machinery annually to India, from which country British shareholders, creditors and officials draw some 30 million pounds a year !!!
>
> Thank God for the British Navy and drink to His Majesty the King!

The foregoing is a condensation[1] from an article headed "Cheer Up", printed in *Britannia* of 15th February last. The article has been sent by a courteous English correspondent with the following footnote:

> If Mr. Blinking Gandhi saw this lot, he'd probably cut his throat on one of his own spinning-wheels.

I have decided not to cut my throat yet for a while. I want to live to see the spinning-wheel produce the whole of the billion yards of cloth that "the greatest mercantile marine the world has even known" carries to India from England. Only, India has to wake from her torpor.

Young India, 25-4-1929

376. A NATIONAL DEFECT

Although we have the credit for being a personally clean people, we have little reason to be satisfied with that certificate. Our cleanliness, i.e., cleanliness compared to that of other nations is based upon the almost universal habit of taking the daily bath and of keeping our cottages clean and tidy. But I fear that it ends there. We purchase that cleanliness at the expense of our neighbours. Hence our villages are a dungheap and streets not walkable in spite of the fact

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

that millions go barefoot. We do believe in removing dirt from our rooms but we also believe in throwing it in the street without regard to the well-being of society. We are clean as individuals but not as members of the society or the nation of which the individual is but a tiny part.

Whenever I travel in the South this serious shortcoming obtrudes itself on my attention and makes me feel most uncomfortable and sad. The evil is by no means peculiar to the South but it is in my opinion accentuated in the South. One does not see the defilement of rivers to the same extent in the other parts of India as in the South.

On 17th instant at 6 a.m. we left Bezwada for Guntur by motor. We had to cross the great Krishna river. The scene I have often painfully witnessed from the trains in the South now met my gaze at closer quarters. The car practically passed by hundreds of men and women evacuating themselves not many yards from the rive bank. It is the stream in which people bathe and from which they drink. Here there was a breach of the code of decency and a criminal disregard of the most elementary laws of health. Add to this the economic waste of the precious manure, which they would be if these evacuations were made in a field and buried in the living surface of the earth and will mixed with loosened soils, instead of being filth and a danger to the health of the citizens, as they are when deposited on the river banks.

Here is work for the municipalities, if they will but do their primary duty of conserving the health of the citizens under their care. There is, I know, the custom of saying that these reforms must not be permitted to take the nation's attention away from the work of swaraj. I venture to submit that conservation of national sanitation is swaraj work and may not be postponed for a single day on any consideration whatsoever. Indeed if swaraj is to be had by peaceful methods it will only be attained by attention to every little detail of national life.Such work will promote cohesion among workers and create an indissoluble bond between them and the people—a bond necessary for the final overthrow of the existing system of government. The system depends for its existence upon the weakness of the nation. If there are no weaknesses to exploit, it will automatically cease to exist. A foreign government is like a foreign body in diseased system. And even as for eradication of a foreign body the system has to be made healthy from within, so also for the removal of a foreign government, it is necessary to remove all the internal causes of diseases. Corporate insanitation is not the least of such diseases.

Any municipality tackling the evil of insanitation will have though work before it, not by way of finding money for carrying out

the reform but in the way of fighting colossal national prejudices and habits that have become second nature. It will therefore be good training in swaraj.

So far as the finance is concerned, the reform will not only cost little but it will ultimately be a source of wealth. I suggest that in this country it can be carried out only if the councillors will themselves take up the broom and the basket and not otherwise. The remedy is no doubt heroic, but it is cheap, efficient and capable of being immediately put into effect. When the city fathers are in earnest about the reform, they will be able to command the willing service of numberless volunteers.

Young India, 25-4-1929

377. B.I.S.N. CO.'S DENIAL

Whilst I am touring in the villages of Andhra Desha, I see the following Free Press message in *The Hindu*:

> The B.I.S.N. Co., in a statement to *The Englishman*, denies the allegations made by Mahatma Gandhi, who, referring to the sanitary arrangements of the boats playing to Rangoon, termed them as 'criminal disregard of the welfare and feelings of the human cargo'.[1] The Company says that Mahatma Gandhi thought that a deck passenger enjoyed second-class privileges. The space termed by Mahatma Gandhi as blackhole was the extra space place at the disposal of the deck passengers with the hatches open for allowing ventilation. As regards the sanitary arrangements, the Company says there are sufficient men to keep the latrines, etc., clean, and no complainthas been sent to the Commander about any inconvenience. There are arrangements for hospital but Mahatma Gandhi and his friends occupied it (?) on their return journey from Rangoon without permission.

I wish I had the full text of the statement[2] before me. But if the Free Press telegram is a fair summary of the B.I.S.N. Company's agent's statement, I am sorry for it. Instead of setting about correcting the disgraceful state of affairs, the agent has chosen to refute my very mild condemnation of the treatment of deck passengers based on personal observations. I hope I am not so stupid as to expect second-class privileges for deck passengers but I do resent the unnatural gulf that separates the deck passenger from the saloon passenger. The deck passenger may not claim the luxurious conveniences provided for saloon passengers but he is entitled, whether he asks for it or not, to complete sanitary arrangements, and ample and clean accommod-

[1] *Vide* "Deck Passengers", 11-4-1929

[2] For the full text of the statement, *vide* "A Malicious Libel", 2-5-1929.

ation. It should be possible for a person used to cleanly conditions to travel as deck passenger without running the risk of being ill or without having partially to starve as I had to starve for want of proper latrine arrangements.

A ‘blackhole’ may not be claimed as ‘extra space placed at the disposal of deck passengers’. I suggest that deck passengers should be prevented from occupying space not intended for human habitation. I admit that the ordinary deck passenger will take up any space to which he may have access in order to avoid the feeling of being cramped and in order to have some freedom of movement.

That the Company has sufficient men to keep the latrines, etc., clean does not prove that they do keep them clean. My charge is that the latrines were not kept clean, that the half doors were in a state of disrepair, making it impossible to lock them from within and that they were not enough for the number of passengers taken on board.

I had hoped that the Company’s agent would not resort to the trick common in such cases of saying that “no complaint has been sent to the Commander about any inconvenience”. When the class of passengers who travel deck learn the art of complaining of inconvenience, there would be no occupation for men like me. It is unfortunate that we as a nation will not air our discontent or do it clumsily and that we will put up with inconveniences which a humanbeing should never tolerate. What is worse, I admit that the ordinary deck passenger has no sense of situation. But that to me makes it all the more necessary for a carrying company to be extra careful to ensure sanitation on its boats or trains. The last statement in this extraordinary denial, if it correctly represents the original, is pure libel. I am not in the habit of occupying places to which I am not entitled; such practice is contrary to the habit of lifetime. I could not even have unconsciously occupied a space reserved as hospital accommodation, for it was allotted to me and my friends by the Company’s officers. There was thus no question of occupying anything without permission. Let me now describe what space I was permitted to occupy. It was the open space on the bow between two lifeboats and surrounded on all sides by passengers. Nor were I and my company the only passengers on this space. Moreover I observed that the space was used by the officers for lifebuoy practice by the crew. There was no notice anywhere to show that this open space was reserved as hospital accommodation. Let me add too that there was a continuous shower of coal dust blowing over our heads the whole of the three days of the voyage. It was difficult to keep anything clean. If this was hospital accommodation, it reflects little credit either on the Company or the medical officer who would be satisfied with an

accommodation dangerous even for a healthy person and almost fatal for patients in some illnesses. Needless to say there could be no privacy in an open space like this which the passengers and officers mist frequently cross and recross. I have seen hospital accommodation for deck passengers on other boats. This has been a properly fitted cabin with reserved latrine accommodation for patients. Neither I nor my companions noticed anything of this character on s.s. *Aronda*. Lastly, if I had usurped this space, surely it was the duty of the captain and the officers to draw my attention to the trespass. I expect the Company to withdraw the libel and apologize for it or substantiate the charge so recklessly made. Surely it will pay the Company to right the wrong instead of bolstering it by vain denials.

Young India, 25-4-1929

378. IN ANDHRA DESHA [*-II*]

The reader will find elsewhere the second week's itinerary and collections. Though I am gaining more and more insight into the village life in Andhra, the tour continues to be too giddy for my liking. I see the villages and yet miss seeing them for the mad rush through space. It is good no doubt to make collections but to do so at the sacrifice of the richer village experience is not good enough. But it would be foolish for me to grumble at the appointments made by the devoted co-workers who are wearing themselves out to make the tour a financial success and to enable the message at khadi to be delivered to the largest number of villages possible during the seven weeks' tour. In my speeches to the villagers, I am copying the example of the late Sir Surendranath Banerji who, when he was asked why he delivered, during his English visit about 1890, the same speech to almost all his audiences, said: 'Because I want to give to all my best. Having conceived my first speech to the best of my ability, why should I give second best to the others?' So my message to the villagers is identical:

1. Boycott foreign cloth,
2. Wear khadi manufactured in your own villages,
3. Banish untouchability,
4. Promote unity between Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians and others.
5. Banish drink, let the village elders go to the drinkers and reason with them to give up drink, and
6. Avoid internal quarrels, but when they do occur, adjust them through voluntary village panchayats.

It is at big centres where 'politicians' flourish that I enter into discussions and touch upon other matters.

Thus at Masulipatam I had occasion to dwell upon several contentions matters including those arising out of the addresses that were presented. But the majority of addresses were loaded with nothing but adjectives in praise of me. Such praise can do no good to the reciters and may possibly do harm to the receiver if he seriously believes himself to be all that the reciters make him. I therefore warned my admirers against framing their addresses in hyperboles. I told them that the best form of praise was to adopt in one's own conduct what one found praiseworthy in another. The Andhra workers I have mostlyfound to be responsive. The hint was quickly taken up. The addresses in the Guntur district have been for the most part colourless. There is yet one step further to be taken. They should contain detailed information on the following points: Number of men and women in each village or in the area covered by the particular address; number of Hindus, Muslims and others; number of 'untouchables', their conditions; number of Congress members male and female; number of people given to drink; number of spinners, their hours of work, earnings, quantity and count of yarn turned out per month, quantity of cotton grown, if any, whether spinners do their own carding, number of looms weaving only hand-spun, weaving both hand-spun and mill-spun and number weaving only mill-spun yarn; weight of khadi manufactured per month, rates of wages paid for each process; number of national schools and attendance, and such other information as may be of use from the national standpoint. Address giving accurate information on the points mentioned would be a record I should prize and treasure. They would be for me a mine of valuable information.

I must now give a condensed summary of my address at Masulipatam already referred to before. It was delivered on the Jallianwala Bagh Day.[1]

Young India, 25-4-1929

[1] For the text, *vide* "Speech at Andhra Jatiya Kalashala, Masulipatam", 13-4-1929.

379. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

BHIMAVARAM,
April 25, 1929

MIRABAI
KHADI DEPOT
MUZAFFARPUR

GLAND YOU HAVE FREED YOURSELF ASHRAM WORRY. ARE YOU GOING AMBALAL'S FACTORY? WIRE REPLY BANUKU.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5367. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9423

380. SPEECH AT TADEPALLIGUDEM

April 25, 1929

Gandhiji thanked them all and said, in the course of his speech, that after they had all given their bit to the poor millions of their motherland he hoped they were prepared for some more work than mere offering of money and jewels. He had a belief in him and a belief in Andhra Desha and he knew, that if he spoke in that country they were sure to listen to his words. First, he would mention a small matter to them. That was: they should not have put their addresses in costly frames. For, they must remember that the cost spent on those frames, made their help to *Daridranarayana* so much the less and thereby shortened the relief to that extent. They should, every one of them, give and give and still go on giving and giving in service to their *Daridranarayana*, whose blessing would come to them in their giving. They must give not only in money but also in service. They should give more and more, if they would receive more and even without expecting to receive they should still give, for therein lay their salvation and the salvation of their country. Considering their profits and their position, the mills of that place had given very little. Were their hearts so little? Why should they give? Because, the khadi movement meant a small meal to starving millions and the more they give for the khadi cause, the grater would be the food for those hungry stomachs, and if they went on giving in service, which meant their continuous wearing of khadi clothes, their poor sisters and brothers in the villages would keep on having their meal and work for them to give them clothes. The cloth the poor wove and gave them, carried with them a fine aroma of gratitude and prayer, but the mill-cloth of Manchester brought with it greed and subjection. Everyone knew of Andhra khaddar. People of Bombay were demanding Andhra khaddar of high counts. So why should not Andhra khaddar clothe all India?

When I don't see even one woman here wearing khaddar today my heart faints.

The Hindu, 29-4-1929

381. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

April 26, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

We are in an obscure place where there is little hope of my getting the post. This is the third day in succession on which I have received no post. Where indeed can it be delivered to me? We spend the day at one place and the night at another. All of us, however, keep good health. We have no end of experiences of all sorts. Tell Chi. Kanti that if Manu wants to go to Balibehn he may send her in some reliable company. I will to him afterwards.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5406

382. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

April 27, 1929

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have the satisfaction that I have been getting letters from you, however uninteresting. If you wish, you may complain of absence of letters from me. If, however, you could realize the conditions under which I have been touring at present, you would pity me and not complain that I do not write to you. And, in any case, you do have my letters in the form of *Young India* and *Navajivan.*

Even today I am writing this at 5.30 in the morning during the spare time before beginning the tour. Every day it begins at 6 o'clock in the morning and we camp at 9 o'clock. It is resumed at 5.30 p.m., and we camp again at 8 p.m., and occasionally at 9 or 10 or even 11 o'clock. In these conditions, I sometimes do not get even the day's post. This tour will be over on May 22.

I am accompanied by Ba, Prabhavati (daughter of Brajkishore Babu), Pyarelal, Imam Saheb and Subbiah. I am in good health and seem to do well at present on a diet which contains no milk. I cannot say what will happen if I fall ill.

As time passes, you will all realize more and more Sastriji's worth. As long as he was there, he was a shield to you. The Government here will do nothing. By his personal influence, Sastriji did what he could.

You must have learnt about the painful affair of . . .[1] You should be very careful. If you have to face starvation, do it cheerfully but never accept even a cowrie which is not yours. Know that it is theft to keep a debt unpaid.

If You both enjoy peace there, do not be eager to return here at the cost of the work there. Sastriji told me that *Indian Opinion* though indifferently run certainly had its value. I hope you remember that it is 24 years old.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4753

383. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

April 27, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

After I had written the postcard yesterday and the last clearance was over, I got two days' post together. I will write nothing of Gangabehn. I have still not been able to form a mental picture of what has happened.

Whatever you have done about the women, the present position is better than that which existed. There was no question of your taking the blame upon yourself. I had assumed the sole responsibility for the change. You need not, therefore, give way to despair. If anyone should feel despair it is I, but I am not likely to do so. Though I see my deficiencies and my errors and realize that my inferences prove wrong, I don't fell despair because I know that there is no other way of progressing except to speak and act according to the light within us. I saw my defeat in regard to the women's section and wrote to you about the matter in a spirit of humility. If ever I embrace Ashram-sannyasa, that is, take a vow to live permanently in the Ashram I would again take courage in both hands and try to reimpose the old restrictions on the women's section, and being present there all the time I would certainly succeed in

[1] The name is being omitted.

keeping them bound together. But alas! how can this ever be?

I wish that you should not yield to despair and should not needlessly blame yourself. Cast out the fear that perhaps you will fall and, instead, determine in your mind that you will not fall and be confident that you will succeed. If, none the less, you do fall, you may humbly admit your failure and do what may seem right at that time. If a person who has bound himself with a vow can give a hundred per cent guarantee about himself, he will no longer be a human being who has taken a vow but will have become God Himself. It is possible for a human being to rise to such a state, but history does not record the instance of any such person. Why should we die daily before we really die? Why should we fear violating a vow before we have really violated it? It should be enough if we do not take a single step which would lead to its violation. What is it about which you feel this fear every day? Does your fear relate to Ramabehn? Or to some other woman? Or merely to impure desire within you? Do you feel any other fear besides this?

You raise another question in your letter: Are you not morally falling by forcing yourself to live with me because of the strength of your live for me? The question is pertinent and was worth asking. If, while you live with me, you dwell on sense-pleasures in your mind and only outwardly give and impression to other people of being a man of self-control, you are certainly falling and it is your duty to leave me, even if the Ashram should go to ruin by your doing so.

> He who curbs the organs of action but allows the mind to dwell on the sense-objects—such a one, wholly deluded, is called a hypocrite.[1]

Think over this verse in our spiritual dictionary. If it applies to you in any measure, your ought to leave me in order to save yourself from hypocrisy. You know, don't you, that it is charged against me that this is the result of people living with me. The instance of . . .[2] can perhaps be cited in support of this charge. If, however, you control the senses outwardly, that is, physically, and are at the same time striving hard to control the mind too, and if living with me helps you in your striving, you should cling to the Mandir and to me like a spirit clinging to a human being possessed by it. You alone can know what your real state is.

> But he, O Arjuna, who, keeping all the senses under control of the mind, engages the organs in karmayoga, without attachment, that man excels.[3]

[1] *Bhagavad Gita,* III. 6
[2] The name is being omitted.
[3] *Bhagavad Gita,* III. 7

This should be my state and yours and of everybody else's. But even such persons may fall. That is why, in the same chapter, Arjuna puts this question:

> Then what impels man to sin, O Varshneya, even against his will, as though by force compelled?[1]

Read Shri Krishna's reply to this and think over this. After that, read and think over the immortal dialogue between Arjuna and the Lord towards the end of the sixth chapter, and then do what you wish.

Narandas must have by now made up his mind. It will pain me if he leaves. But I have faith in him and believe that, whatever he does, he will do after mature deliberation.

I really believe that Jamnadas will not leave the school. If he leaves, however, I will bear that too.

It is no ordinary matter that the moral fall of . . .[2] has been brought to light. Because of faith in his purity, many persons had remained pure. It is not surprising that a good any should be shaken on his guilt being published. The event will have an effect on his brothers in one way or another. Prabhudas is pure and as frank-hearted as a child. The effect on him, therefore, seems to have been good. Narandas and Jamnadas are men of the world. I would not, therefore, be surprised if they are upset, though, of course, I had not thought that the effect would be such on them. I still hope that this effect will turn out to be temporary. . . .'s future conduct, too, will produce profound effects. Let us bathe him in the purest love.

I believe that now Santok will not leave the Ashram. By giving Rukhi in marriage to Banarsilal, she has displayed great courage, shrewdness, firmness and devotion to the memory of her husband, and made it certain that she cannot live anywhere else but in the Ashram. If you examine Maganlal's life, you will see that his path in life, too, was altogether uncommon. He hewed his way through rocks, without letting any of us know. His faults were Himalayan, but his virtues and his courage overshadowed them and made them seem like particles of dust. Do not compare yourself with Maganlal and feel dispirited in any way. Maganlal did his work, you have to do yours. "One's own dharma is the best for one, though seemingly without merit."[3] Maganlal's age has ended; we have now entered another.

[1] *Bhagavad Gita,* III. 36
[2] The name is being omitted.
[3] *Bhagavad Gita,* XVIII. 47

Have Navin and Dhiru left permanently or only for the summer holidays? Whatever it is, let us be content. Navin need not have gone for the holidays.

I do believe that there is much room yet for simplicity in our life at the Mandir. But I see that Kishorelal's analogy is incomplete. The children in Ville Parle may be living in great simplicity, but they are not imprisoned by the chain of rules and may, therefore, be looked upon as living without self-control. Theirs is enforced simplicity. The labourers living near the Ashram live in still grater simplicity, but their simplicity has no value. Though you and I take milk every day, we deliberately abstain from using many other things which are available to us and, therefore, our life is simpler than that of the labourers. This is the principle of the matter. If, however, we get conceited because of this and believe ourselves on a higher pedestal, we shall fall. Our duty is to emulate the involuntary simplicity of our friends, the labourers, and, till we have succeeded in reaching the ideal, to nurse the purer type of discontent in regard to ourselves.

Do not let it trouble you whether the Mandir will remain full or become deserted. Remember the reply which Janak gave when fire had broken out in Janakpuri. After we have done our best to protect the Mandir and left not a single remedy untried for the purpose, we can say: What matters it to us whether the Mandir goes up in flames or survives? It is His concern Who may destroy it with fire or save it, as He will. Therefore, let them who wish to leave do so and bear separation from them.

It is midnight just now. Mosquitoes are plentiful. I have not covered the bed with a mosquito-net. I got up at 12.45, completed the diary and then started this letter at 12.55. I look at the watch now and it is exactly 2 o'clock. I had been thinking after I got your two letters yesterday, and this letter is the result. It is for you alone, but your are free to show it to anyone. I should like you to show it to Mahadev, etc. But I would not mind it even if you did not show it to anyone.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5407

384. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

April 27, 1929

CHI. GANGABEHN SENIOR,

You seem to have stopped writing now. I must have letters from you, no matter whether they are foolish, whimsical, long or short, so long as you pour out your heart in them.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p.24

385. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

April 27, 1929

CHI. KUSUM,

It is 2.20 a.m. I woke up today at 12-45. Letters had to be written and mosquitoes were disturbing the sleep. I was not too tired, so I got up. Your letter arrived only yesterday.

You may stay there without worrying till Jadavbehn is restored to health. If there is anything you want to ask me about my letter to you, you may do so when we meet.

I see that you suppress your thoughts. You do not write or speak your mind freely. If you wish me to act as your father and friend, then this is not right.

It will be good if you give up the habit of writing in pencil. I had that habit. I saw that the other person found it difficult to read what was written in pencil. The writing faded in the post by the time the letter reached its destination. It is true that your handwriting is good and should therefore cause less inconvenience to the reader, but there is bound to be some inconvenience. I expect Prabhavati gives you all the news about us here. At this eventful time in the Udyog Mandir I would have liked it if you had been there. But I have no doubt that, having gone to Umreth, your duty now is to stay with Jadavbehn. You have not written anything about her health.

Prabhavati must be writing to you frequently and so you probably know everything about this memorable tour. My health I may say leaves nothing to be desired. Rama alone know the future. It is 2.30 now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1788

386. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

April 27, 1929

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I received your letter yesterday. Our case is not that unjust deductions were made in 1923. It is rather that the financial condition of [the mill] is much better now than it was in 1923. If this is not proved, the workers' wages cannot be restored to the earlier levels. If we want to prove that the wages were unjustly deducted in 1923, we shall have to collect more evidence. And if that is our case we shall have to demand [the wages at the earlier rate] irrespective of the [financial] condition of the mill. Why has not that demand been put forth so far? If we made a mistake it is as well that we rectify it now. But then a beginning will have to be made. If you have even now not understood the case, write to me. I shall try to explain. Are not Shankerlal[1] and Gulzarilal[2] also of the same mind? If I am making a mistake they should point it out to me.

Is Dhirajlal in better health? How are you? How is Shankerlal?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32800

[1] Shankerlal Banker
[2] Gulzarilal Nanda

387. SILENT SERVICE

I received the following letter[1] from Thakkar Bapa[2] during my Andhra tour.

I envy this priest of the Dheds and preceptor of the Bhils. We are of the same age, but Thakkar Bapa's body does not demand the comforts which my body does. I was somewhat priding myself on my capacity to withstand all the roaming about in Andhra and also having pity on myself. I used to be harsh on friends like Deshabhakta Venkatappayya and others for making me wander about so much. Then I received this letter which drove away my pride. Where is the comparison between camels on the Sind desert and a car with sleeping space on motorable though rough roads?

But I have not published this letter to show my envy. Seeing Thakkar Bapa's camel's saddle I cannot give up my tiny car. The desert of Sind cannot persuade me to forsake the easy roads of Andhra.

The object in publishing this letter is to point out what silent service is. This alone should be called true service. If we wish to establish contacts with our brethren like the Bhils and others, we must take the cue from Thakkar Bapa. He likes the companionship only of the lame and the crippled; he cannot live without them. He finds comfort in following them. That is his vision of God; that is his food.

May Thakkar Bapa live long, may his heritage endure for ever and may his tribe increase! I learned of the Government committee only from this letter. It is excusable for him to be a member of even that committee. He remains detached even when he works on it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-4-1929

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had given an account of his tour of the Backward districts of Gujarat and Sind, as a member of a committee set up by the Bombay Government to serve the *Antyajas* and other backward communities. He felt that a separate Ashram was needed for the children of Bhils and Kolis where they would be taught the three R's, besides spinning, carding, weaving, etc.

[2] Amritlal Thakkar

388. ABOUT THE MEERUT PRISONERS

A friend writes about the prisoners held in Meerut:[1]

The writer's attitude does not seem proper to me. The Congress is like the sun. The sun shines equally on those who condemn it and those who praise it. The congress claims to represent the thirty crores. It may have only 300 members and yet it would serve the thirty crores and run to their help. It does not treat any Indian as an enemy but helps all when they get into difficulties. So in my view the question of friendship or enmity towards the Congress does not arise here. But in what manner can the Congress help the Meerut prisoners or others like them? The Congress can agitate for them, write about the matter. Their sufferings will rouse its wrath and, being more awakened it will win swaraj the sooner and open the locks of the prisoners' cells. But it will not engage lawyers for them. It has not given up non-co-operation altogether. Such prisoners should not bother about their defence. If they are jailed they should suffer imprisonment. If they themselves wish to engage lawyers, they may do as they please. If they cannot afford to do so and have friends these may help them. Or, those who, though members of the Congress, believe in engaging lawyers in such cases may help in their individual capacity. Hence it is my view that the Congress should not take the trouble of engaging lawyers and so on. Even if it wishes to do so, it lacks the strength to attend to all cases. We should havein the country lawyers like Manmohan Ghosh and Chittaranjan Das who can handle such cases gratis. It is their duty to take up such cases. The Congress should not have to pay lawyers' and doctors' fees at all.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-4-1929

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had questioned the propriety of the Congress trying to help all prisoners equally, whether they believed in the Congress or opposed it.

389. PARENTS' OPPOSITION

A resident of Bombay write:[1]

This opposition means that the parents wish to have swaraj free of cost. They do not want to put up with a single inconvenience, and yet they may be wanting swaraj. Or, perhaps, they do not even want it. So, if the resident of Bombay wishes it, he should humbly tolerate his parents' opposition and stick to khadi. A wearer of khadi simplifies his appeared to a great extent. When he does this, he saves himself laundry expenses because he washes his clothes himself. I do admit that, if no change is brought about, some more time will be required to wash khadi clothes. But a patriot does not take such difficulties into account. I too believe that khadi is at present costly. He who wishes to have it at a cheaper rate should himself spin. A man who gets frightened when intimidated by Europeans should, at least for ridding himself of such fear, wear khadi and travel first class, and if a wearer of khadi is not permitted to enter a Government school, he should abandon it. As long as there is in us fear of the Europeans and fondness for their institutions, swaraj is unattainable.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-4-1929

390. THE SUZERAIN AND VASSALS

Shri Kakalbhai has asked a number of questions which I give below along with answers to them:[2]

It only remains to free the States of British hegemony. History teaches that after the fall of the suzerain, the feudatory rules thriving under his protection do not remain as they were. Fighting among themselves, some of them perish while others emerge stronger. If the

[1] The letter it not translated here. The correspondent had said that his parents opposed khadi because (i) it was difficult to wash clothes as they were coarse, (ii) the cost of a khadi sari was four times that of a foreign sari and (iii) one wearing khadi would not be admitted to a Government school or allowed into a fist-class compartment containing a European passenger. Hence, even if one wore khadi at home, one had to put on mill- made cloth outside.

[2] The questions are not translated here. In the first question, referring to a statement by Gandhiji that he desired the destruction of the British Empire, but that there was still a possibility of reforms in Princely States, the correspondent had asked whether there was any evil in the British Empire, which made it fit for destruction, that was not to be found in the Princely States.

sovereign was tyrannous, than after his fall some of the surviving feudatories reform themselves. Here of course the idea is that sovereign authority will pass to British India; that is to say, if British India attains real freedom, it will have so much power that, notwithstanding the Butler Committee report, the Princely States will have to follow suit whether they want to or not.

I should think I know well enough the state of rottenness in the Princely States.[1] In the past they might have been able to do what they liked, but today their decadence is sustained only under the wing of the Sovereign. When the master is there we need not enumerate the faults of a slave. Shri Kakalbhai can rest assured that the Empire knows the rottenness of the Princely States better than he does himself. Kakalbhai has two eyes to see with, the Empire has a thousand. If, nevertheless, it tolerates the rottenness of the Princely States it is itself guilty of it. It is notorious that the Empire gets the Princely States to perpetrate misdeeds which it is itself ashamed of or afraid to commit. The rule is that a leader or master is responsible for a thing done by his representative or assistant. If I tolerate someone committing a theft in the Udyoga Mandir, it is as good as my having committed it myself.

The questioner has to some extent answered his own question.[2] The old situation is not likely to repeat itself in the future because theconditions have changed. All the independent States mentioned in history were not bad. In the history of all people Ramas as well as Ravanas exist. Even our experience today tells us that all Princely States are not uniformly bad. Some are very good, indeed, and if there were no bad empire over them, they would have become very much better. Had there been no Empire the rotten States of today would not have existed at all or their chaos would be marked by ebb and flow. Today there are difficulties in climbing higher, but there are none in going down under the protective umbrella of the Empire.

The answer to this question[3] is not easy to give as the questioner believes. I myself do not quite know what "feudalism" means and, if the questioner claims that he does, I am not prepared to concede the

[1] This was in reply to the question whether he was right in thinking that the prevailing conditions in the States did not fill Gandhiji with indignation because he did not know their evils well enough.

[2] The correspondent had said that small principalities tended to be tyrannous and oppressive. If there were no British power would the situation have been better?

[3] Since, in addition to British "imperialism" and "capitalism" the Princely States also represented "feudalism", did they not deserve to be destroyed; should not the system of succession by birth be put end to?

claim. I am not even willing to believe that "imperialism." and "capitalism" are included in "feudalism." It is not true that everything about "feudalism" is bad and that democratic government is the paragon of purity. Now of course all have been placed on the potter's wheel. It is to be seen which will come out a pitcher and which a jar. Nor is succession by birth always bad; all chosen successors are not incarnations of morality. We find good and bad men among Popes; there are diamonds as well as charcoal among Shankaracharyas; all American Presidents were not made of gold, some were certainly of clay.

British power is not an individual; it is a system.[1] The system by which it is exercised has ruined India and is running it further. Hence I wish destruction of that system; why only I, almost all of us wish it. By Princely States we mean individuals. There is scope for reform in man, hence also in the Princely States. If there were no Empire which supported their autocracy, the subjects of the States would have been able to secure many rights for themselves. It is clear that reform cannot be effected with such ease in big States as in Princely States, because these are small. This is not, therefore, to suggest that big States must be broken up into small States, but I am showing the advantage of smallness of the small states. Some experiments which British India cannot easily carry out can be conveniently undertaken by the Princely States. For example, prohibition, revenue reform, necessary reform in Hindu law, social reform, small-scale banking, dairies owned not by individuals but by the community, all these and others can be tried out in Princely States if the Empire is favourable. It is my firm belief that there is infinite scope for progress in Princely States, that is, on the part of their rulers. And why should we find fault with the rulers and not at all with their subjects? Of course, by 'subjects' I mean in this context 'politicians'. If this class can show more of courage and less of flattery, if it can be less selfish and more concerned with public good, it is in a position to reform the Princes. They are the hands and feet of the Princes. Who does not know that if his hands and feet refuse to move, the poor Prince will become a cripple? The interests of the rulers and the ruled are identical. The rulers have today learnt to live in England or Paris; else their England would be a hillock in their State and the money spent on their luxuries would be spent among their subjects. Their power to do evil has limits, their power to good has none. As for the Empire, wherever I turn I see lies, fraud, arrogance, tyranny, drunkenness, gambling, lechery,

[1] This was in reply to a question as to how Gandhiji would distinguish between a rule in which there was possibility of reform and one in which there was none.

plunder by day and by night and Dyerism. All are sacrificed at its alter. Its benefits are only apparent. It lives for its trade, it will die in trying to safeguard it. None should misconstrue these strong words. The Western civilization which passes for civilization is disgusting to me. I have given a rough picture of it in *Hind Swaraj*.[1] Time has brought no change in it. It is not my purpose even to imply that everything Western is bad. I have learnt a lot from the West. There are a number of pure and holy men there. I have many friends in the West. But what the Westerners worship under the name of civilization is a golden vessels.[2] I find that the questioner and others have been dazzled by its glitter.

Finally, Indian Princes will not reform themselves if we criticize them. The more we scratch the greater will be the itching. So they will go to their Sovereign and seek an ointment. The questioner must have fully digested the Butler Committee's report. Why does he then favour the protection of the Empire? If that protective umbrella disappears, he will not, he cannot, fight against free India.

Hence, I would take what I can from the Princely States by supplication, and by launching Satyagraha against them if I have the strength to do so. If I have no other power, if they disregard my supplication, I would have patience and set about uprooting the primary cause, that is, the Empire. Indian Princes are like us, they are the products of this land, they have the faults which we have and we should cultivate the charity to grant that they may have even the good qualities which we ourselves have. From what I saw at the *Antyaja* school to which I paid a surprise visit with the Thakore Saheb of Morvi, I derived much consolation.

There is one point in Shri Kakalbhai's questions with which I am not able to deal. If it is his final verdict that the rule of even the best Indian Princes is worse than that of the Empire, all my answers would be in vain. For then there would stand between him and me the Chinese Wall if difference of principles. I have remained an optimist, Kakalbhai it would seem has become a pessimist. I have faith in human nature, Kakalbhai would seem to have none. Assuming that he is not such a cynic I have been moved to answer his questions.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-4-1929

[1] *Vide* "Hind Swaraj".

[2] A reference to the *Ishopanishad*, 15

391. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, VIZAGAPATAM[1]

April 28, 1929

I thank you all for the addresses of welcome and for the contribution you have made towards the Khadi Fund. I also offer my thanks to the Bengali sister who has presented me with these gold ornaments. Mention is made in one of your addresses of the arrest of Maulana Mahomed Ali in the year 1921 by the Government and it is that fact that has brought honour to your town which we can never forget. You have also referred in your address to the advice I them gave you, which was mainly on three points—do not get angry with the Government, popularize the use of khaddar and work for inter-communal amity. You have also stated that though Vizagapatam is one of the biggest districts in the province and is coming into prominence, it is one of the poorest districts. Yet there are in your district several rich zamindars and landlords. Even though there are many facilities in your district for the development and popularization of Khaddar, I regret to find foreign cloth still flourishing here.

In one of your addresses you have mentioned that you will be ready for swaraj in the year 1930. What I have to say to you in the same spirit is, that you should not wait till the year 1930, but must be getting ready even now. If you are sleeping now, you will find no opportunities when you wake up in the year 1930. You must be up and doing even from now. Do not wait for tomorrow.

Referring to the boycott of foreign cloth, you have requested for help from the Akhil Bharat Charkha Sangh. I request you to formulate a scheme in a business-like manner and forward it on to the Akhil Bharat Charkha Sangh for its acceptance. Only let your scheme be indicative of success and you will find no dearth of help.

Another thing I want to impress upon you is that you should strenuously endeavour to banish the drink evil from out of the land. If you are sincerely and seriously bent upon doing away with the drink evil, the Government will certainly have to bend to your will and do what you want; and a colossal attempt on the part of the people in this respect is absolutely necessary. The Indian National Congress has

[1] Gandhiji spoke in Hindi. The speech was rendered into Telugu by Konda Venkatappayya.

passed a resolution that wherever the drink evil is rampant, there must be a sincere attempt on the part of the people to eradicate it; and for this purpose, the people throughout the length and breadth of India, from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, including Mahomedans, Hindus, Parsis and all the other communities, must unite. Even among Hindus, I find several communities quarrelling among themselves, and if we want to do away with all the existing evils, we must all necessarily unite.

In one of your addresses you have made mention of the Hindi language and that propaganda in this respect must be on a larger scale; and with that I fully agree. I have travelled throughout the country, and I have come to the conclusion that, if we all learn Hindi, we will be a step nearer swaraj. I have travelled throughout the Andhra Desha, and by the grace of God, instead of lecturing in English, I am speaking in Hindi. In the villages nobody can understand me if I were to speak in English. These are many words in Hindi which are spoken in the Telugu language and which you can easily understand. And hence you have to give prominence to the teaching of Hindi in your schools. I do not ask you to neglect Telugu, but work for Hindi, because Hindi *prachar* in Andhra Desha is a way of attaining swaraj for India.

Now, coming to the point, I am bent upon doing some work of a 'bania'. Wherever I might have been touring, I have not forgotten my 'bania' work. However much you might give me, you will not easily be able to satisfy *Daridranarayana* for, out of the thirty crores of people in the country, over ten crores have not even a single meal per day. You cannot expect a sannyasi who is begging on their behalf, to easily satisfy his hunger. You have mentioned that Vizagapatam is a poor place. You also say that you have many zamindars in your district. Then, as a 'bania' I am entitled for a share in their riches. If I cannot sell to these Zamindars such gold articles which this Bengali sister has given me, to whom can I sell them?

You have presented your addresses in nice and enchanting ivory boxes. I am not entitled to keep such fascinating articles for myself, and I have no place to keep them. Such articles must be kept in the houses of rich. So I beseech that all those who have not previously contributed to the Khadi Fund should give a suitable return for these articles and take them back. You have also given me some khaddar articles which I am now putting up for auction. A Bengali sister has

given me two precious gold bracelets; does not any Andhra sister give me anything? In the struggle for swaraj, women, all women, have an equal share of responsibility with men. I request that you will all maintain silence just as you have done till now, so that I might put up these articles for auction.

The Hindu, 30-4-1929

392. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 29, 1929

NARANDAS
ASHRAM
SABARMATI

CERTAINLY LEAVE ASHRAM. GOD BLESS YOU WHATEVER YOU DO. SUGGEST CONSULTATION SHANKERLAL AND DOING KHADI WORK. JAMNADAS MAY NOT COME DURING THIS HURRICANE TRYING TOUR. HE CAN JOIN BOMBAY 23RD. MEANWHILE WRITE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 7732. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

393. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

VIZAGAPATAM,
April 29, 1929

MY DEAR SATIS BABU,

I am at a point nearest you in this tour. We are at Vizag and do not leave before Wednesday morning.

I like your programme about self-contained khadi. Oh! if it works effectively. It solves the question of boycott far more effectively than anything else.

How is Hemprabha Devi? How is Tarini? How are you yourself? More when I have a little leisure.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1604

394. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 29, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I have time only to send you love and wish you well. You must regain your original vitality.

This is a seaside place.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5368. Courtesy: Mirabehn

395. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

April 29, 1929

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

I never get the time to write to you. I have gone through the Bareilly report. It says nothing, so far as I can see, about the prospect of khadi. Have you read it? What do you propose about it?

As for the tour, you would arrange as you think best. Prabhudas wrote an urgent letter. I have told him I should be ready to go after 10th June and that he should fix the programme in consultation with you.

This tour is somewhat trying but I am taking it very well indeed.

I saw a summary of your speech on the tomb[1]—I liked it.

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

My tour programme has been sent to you.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1929. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Slip for 'bomb'?

396. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

April 29, 1929

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

I hope you are at peace with yourself. Do not mind if someone has stolen your watch. Since we have discovered thievery amongst ourselves we should not wonder that other cases of thefts have been occurring. Stealing is a disease like the plague. Do not undertake a fast because someone has told a lie. For a fast, too, a certain atmosphere is necessary. Do your work and do not be disturbed by any excitement around you. Instead of doing anything which may make your body weak, see that it becomes strong. I wanted to write to Surendra, too, something to this effect. He should now take the hint from this letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 802. Courtesy : Balkrishna Bhave

397. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[*April 29, 1929*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Your letters bring fresh news every day. When a war is going on, that is bound to happen. Life is an unending war. Sunk in ignorance, we believe that it is not so. It is all to the good that the . . .[2] episode has made us more aware of the war.

I have sent a write to Narandas to tell him that he may certainly leave.[3] I have sent a similar wire to Ramniklal. You will probably see the wire to Ramniklal. It would be good if he acts as I have suggested in the wire.

My advice to you is this: let them who wish go. We have pressed people as best we could to stay on; we have gone far to make compromises. Make this one change immediately. Rent out some part

[1] From the reference to the telegram to Narandas Gandhi which was sent on this date

[2] The name is being omitted.

[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Narandas Gandhi", 29-4-1929.

of the Ashram land and lay down no rules to restrict its use. We should trust in the goodness of those whom we know from experience. They and we should be bound by one month's notice on either side. Budhabhai is subject to no restriction of rules, and stills we like him as a neighbour. We should believe the same about those to whom we rent the land. We may not give the facility of provisions from our store, etc., to any person who comes along and starts living. If that friend from Vadaj maintains a store on his own responsibility, by all means let him run it. If he does so, we shall stop our store and buy provisions from him. This, however, is for you to consider.

I should like it if the entire management of the goshala is independent of the Udyoga Mandir or the Ashram. We may set apart for it the necessary land and give it on nominal rent. Let Parnerkar then run it on his own responsibility. "On his own responsibility" means that he himself will have to think about the rules for its running. As for money, he may enjoy all the facilities which are available today. He will, however, be free to employ men of his own choice. He may, if he wishes, appoint a committee to help him. In other words, he may take up the work if he is ready to dedicate himself to the dairy. He should supply milk, etc., to the Ashram, and to other if he can manage. If any of the persons who belong to the Ashram wish to work with him, they may. Some should join even in order to help him. It should be left to Parnerkar's choice whether or not he should continue to live as an inmate of the Ashram. If you wish, you can make this change before I return there. You will require for that purpose the consent of the Cow-Service Society. But there will be no difficulty in getting it.

It does not matter if, as a result of this, the scope of the Mandir becomes smaller. It would not matter even if it should break up altogether. I shall not feel ashamed in publishing any part of this. Truth is never ashamed of itself anywhere in the world. When truth feels ashamed of itself, you may be sure that it is not truth but falsehood.

If, by acting thus, you find yourself left alone, do not feel helpless. Do then what the captain of a ship does. He first sees everybody else sinking and then drowns himself, or, if any part can be saved, he saves it and himself along with it. If he cannot save himself, all sink.

There is no room here for feeling that those who leave are bad and those who remain are good. Your conclusion that you can remain only if your are better than Mahadev is wrong. If he does not have the

strength to remain, he may leave. If you have that strength, you may remain. There can be no competition in this matter.

Never think that you would be hurting me by anything you do. I shall feel the least hurt if everybody acts according to his strength.

Do what you think necessary about the women's section. If they can remain, so much the better. If they cannot, I have already suggested to you that they should be set free. Take that as a standing instruction.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11792

398. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Silence Day [*April 29, 1929*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have sent a wire to you. You are leaving the Ashram, but I am sure you are not giving up khadi? I have, therefore, suggested that you should take up some work with Shankerlal. I have written today to Chhaganlal and made a suggestion about the Ashram. If you can stay on in accordance with it, please do so. The more important thing, however, is this. Do what will give peace to your soul and you will have my blessing in that. Purushottam lives with me and I should like it if he wishes to continue.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–9: Shri Narandas Gandhine-Part I, p. 52

[1] As in the source

399. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

April 29, 1929

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

I have your letter. In fact, I had been awaiting it. I like your idea of going to Morvi. Do you require any letter of recommendation to anyone there? Try the experiment during the time that I am away. And if you still do not improve, you should go with me to Almora. From Almora, I shall be returning to the Ashram. I have decided to spend the months of July and August at the Ashram. We will then try fasting for you.

I have missed your birthday. Your letter took six days to reach me. May you live long and may your good aspirations be fulfilled. I remember every day your recitations from the *Gita* and your *bhajans*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati: C.W. 896. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

400. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Silence Day [*April 29, 1929*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. Since Gangabehn helps you in your work, you may, if you like, take up the responsibility of the women's section. However you should not do it because of my letter. In the letter, I only explained to you your duty. But I have such faith in you that I would remain satisfied with whatever you contribute. All these years I have been only taking work from you, have not I? If I gave you anything as a father to his daughter, there is nothing so remarkable about it. You, however, contributed money on the very day you adopted me as your father. The satyagraha pledge is one that cannot be forgotten. Your contribution of money has no value in my eyes. In that way I have deprived several women of their possessions. I am not sorry for that, and do not even remember clearly many of these occasions. During this tour I took away from one Satyavati who

[1] Gandhiji met Satyavati on April 23. It appears this letter was written on the following Monday.

had been recently widowed all her jewellery, and I felt no compunction in doing so. But would she take a pledge and keep it? It would be very good if she did. On the other hand, since you have the strength to keep your pledge, I do not let you sleep but keep you constantly awake to your duty. That was my only intention in the letter. If you force yourself to do anything because of that letter and spoil your health or otherwise slacken and fall behind in your work, you will have to hear bitter words from me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 553. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

401. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

April 29, 1929

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

I have not heard from you for some time. I interpret this to mean that you are in tolerably good health. If you write to me at Tuni, the letter will take the least time to reach me.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6778

402. LETTER TO GANGABEHN ZAVERI

April 29, 1929

CHI. GANGABEHN ZAVERI,

Treat this letter as intended for all the women there.

You and Vasumati have taken up the responsibility for the women's section. In this, I see more your love towards me than your own wish and ability. If that be so I pray that God may grant you the will and the strength. Be that as it may, you should undertake nothing beyond your strength.

The Ashram as a whole, which includes the women also, has been passing through a severe test. I have written to Chhaganlal to say that those who wish can live separately. It remains to be considered what we should do for the women members of the Ashram who have no male relations at the Ashram. You should all get together and think over the problem. I have made the risky suggestion that those who give up connection with the Ashram or the Mandir will be free from

all rules and live only as tenants, for I see that there is no other way. It does not seem proper to apply to them rules which are mild. A tenant may stay as long as it suits him and the landlord wishes. I have still not been able to decide whether any of the women would like to be put in such a position, and even if any of them agree, whether we should run the risk of keeping them so. However, since all of you are there, you certainly can think over this matter before I return.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3696

403. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[On or after *April 29, 1929*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I am not surprised to know that Balkrishna has lost his watch. It could have been stolen by someone in the Ashram or by an outsider. Such things will continue to happen. We should take as much care as we can.

I would certainly like it if Pannalal takes on rent the Ashram land and cultivates it. Can we think of anything better than that the Ashram should be broken up into different units, and that our own people should live on the old premises, observe the Ashram rules to the best of their ability and carry on occupations which would have been welcomed by it? Living thus, we should strive to progress towards our goal.

My present state of mind is such that I would not press anyone. Everyone should settle down to live in the manner he wishes. I don't see any need for people to wait till I return, for I don't wish to plead with anyone. Whatever I had to say and plead, I have done.

If Gangabehn has left for a month, it is all right. She needed a change. She had suffered in health and had become weak.

Lakshmibehn and Durga can look after the kitchen. What is going to happen about bread?

You cannot go away somewhere as an experimental measure. If and when it becomes necessary for you to go, some arrangement will certainly be made.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Balkrishna Bhave", 29-4-1929.

Personally, I would see no harm in handing over the management to Raojibhai. But you can say more about this; I can say nothing.

I knew all about the grazing land near Dholka. See that you make a deal according to your means. In this matter, Parnerkar is our means. Go in for the thing only if he can manage it.

Enclosed with this is a letter from the Thakoresaheb of Morvi. The two cows which Parnerkar wanted to have should now arrive there. When they do, write a letter of acknowledgement to the Thakore saheb's secretary. Moreover, a report about the cows should be sent every month.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5480

404. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

[Before *April 30, 1929*][1]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter.

As for my article[2] I am sure I have saved Ba from injustice. And I feel Ba herself knows this, or she could not move about with me so cheerfully. I have saved Ba, Chhaganlal and others from a number of needless accusations. I doubt if anyone else has experienced to the extent that I have the sweet joy of publicly confessing one's own guilt. I am surprised that you were not able to appreciate this.

Do try to collect contributions from the mill-owners. There should be no condition attached. Khadi may or may not gain, but the mills are certainly making enormous profits as even Wadia has admitted. If only the mills understand they can benefit still further. Time alone will convince them.

[1] From the tour programme, the letter seems to have been written before April 30.

[2] *Vide* "My Shame and Sorrow", 8-4-1929.

The chief dates of my tour are:

30th		Vizagapatam
May	2	Tuni
	3	Pithapuram
	4	Samalkot
	5	Ramachandrapuram
	8	Rajahamundhry
	10	Nellore
	16	Chittoor
	22	Adoni *en route* to Bombay

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From the Hindi: C.W. 6167. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

405. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, VIZAGAPATAM

April 30, 1929

I thank you for the contributions you have made for the Khadi Fund. There is one thing which you should all well remember, namely, that you should seriously put into practice what you state in your addresses. I am immensely pleased with the address of the Co-operative Spinning and Weaving Society. This institution is an ideal institution and is unique of its kind. No doubt, there are co-operative societies in several places, such as in Mysore. But the speciality of this Society is that it contains every kind of workers and that the workers share in the profits. I will get your address translated into several languages in the country and have it broadcast in every place. I feel confident that this Society can achieve much in the economic regeneration of the country if it carries on like this and enlarges the scope of its work. I pray that all of you who are now wearing foreign cloth will once for all renounce it. It is an evil and a shame from which at the earliest possible moment we should be purified. Wipe out the stigma that we are so helpless that other nations have to clothe us. Eradicate the drink evil which is another shame in this land. Both these are the cause of our backwardness and weakness. Untouchability should by all means be removed. Hindus and Muslims should live like brothers because we have a common object to achieve. There must be inter-communal amity. Then, whatever responsibility men have for the

attainment of swaraj for India, the same responsibility have women also. I sincerely believe that women can do more of khaddar propaganda than men. I pray to God that He would give yousufficient light to guide you in the proper path for the attainment of the salvation of India, the realization of your strength and the coming of a free nation.

The Hindu, 2-5-1929

406. LETTER TO KRISHANADAS

CAMP, ANAKAPALLI,
May 1, 1929

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS,

I have your letter. It has not brought me satisfaction. Satis Babu should never have recommended the waiving of the debts due by Ram Binod.[1] The waiving can only be done by the Association. If Ram Binod disputes the amounts due, it is a matter for investigation. But seeing that he conducted a private business and had a loan on extraordinarily favourable terms, surely he must not now ask for remission of the debt due by him. He has been generous, but at whose expense? And he admits that the entries collected by Narandas represent profits. Surely a business that showed such handsome profits cannot plead inability to pay. Nor had Ram Binod ever, so far as I recollect, wanted before now discharge from his obligations. On the contrary he said repeatedly in his letters as also before me personally that he expected to discharge those obligations by such and such date, which has always shifted. I therefore think that the least that he can do is to discharge the debt.

Nor am I satisfied with the profit entries that have been made. There is undoubtedly a desire to conceal the profits.

I shall go deeper into Dwija Prasad's alleged statement.[2]

Does Ram Binod want now to give any further explanation about the entries or about the debt, for, I am ready to deliver my opinion if he has nothing further to say.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 21-2-1929.

[2] It was stated before the arbitrators that, at the time of giving charge, cloth worth Rs. 5,000 had been concealed in another shop.

I hope Guruji is now entirely free from the pain in his right arm.

Ram Binod has written to me about the first volume of the *Seven Months*. I do not think that there will any difficulty in getting Ganesan or Mohanlal of *Young India* office to consent to part with a number of copies of the first volume as against an equal number of the second volume. But the real thing is if it is transferred it will be . . .[1]

From a microfilm : S.N. 14900

407. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

CAMP, ANAKAPALLI
May 1, 1929

MY DEAR BHRRR,[2]

I have your letter. Did anything in my letter suggest that you had been neglecting Salah[3]? He certainly never gave that impression to me. On the contrary, when I went for him for not bringing his position to your notice, he, if I remember rightly, said that he did not want to worry you and that he wanted to solve his difficulties himself, which of course was quite good. It was because I realized that it was hopeless for him to extricate himself without your assistance that I got his permission to mention his difficulties to you. I know that you have been an exemplary and generous parent, indeed from my point of view even indulgent. I am glad you have written to him and if he comes to India I shall certainly hope to take my share in the consultations about shaping his future.

Yours sincerely

FELLOW-BHRRR

ABBAS TYABJI, ESQ.
BARODA CAMP

From a photostat : S.N. 9566

[1] The letter is incomplete in the source.
[2] This was the form of greeting used between Gandhiji and the addressee.
[3] Addressee's son

408. INTERVIEW TO ABEL[1]

May 1, 1929

When I saw you, my heart actually leapt with joy and I really thought of Christ when I contemplated your consecration to the service of mankind. I have specially come to ask you what you think of Christ.

GANDHIJI: I consider Christ as one of the great teachers of the world. Beyond that I have not gone.

Is there any other kind of salvation apart from Christ's way?

These things are to be taken figuratively and not literally. Christ, no doubt, said: "I am the way," etc., but he also said: "The letter killeth." Any teacher could say what Christ has said. After all, Christ is a common noun and Jesus Christ means Jesus the Anointed. Any teacher who has dedicated his life to the service of God and humanity and attained to complete purity can say that. The *Gita* said the same thing.

Have you any special plan of salvation?

My knowledge I derive from all the scriptures. What greater salvation does man need than the attainment of absolute purity in self-sacrifice and service?

Is not Jesus Christ the only sinless one?

What do we know of the whole life of Christ? Apart from the years of his life as given in the four gospels of the New Testament we know nothing of the rest of his life. As a man well versed in the Bible, you ought to have known that. Christ is, no doubt, one of those who attained sinlessness. These are, after all, not matters to be argued by the intellect but to be felt by the heart. All this is not for debate.

The Hindu, 3-5-1929

409. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, ANAKAPALLI

May 1, 1929

I thank you heartily for your welcome addresses, your purse and the precious ornaments which you have presented me to be used towards the Khadi Fund. I am glad to see so many of you today offering your mite to the poor of this land by asking them to spin and

[1] A Christian missionary of Vizagapatam

weave cloth for you. It is not possible for me to keep with me all these valuable ornaments and articles, and so I will put them up for auction here and I know the rich people here would purchase them and give me the money. You know the production and wearing of khaddar form the best and simplest means of attainment of our national goal. It is the duty of the rich as well as the poor to do something for the national cause. You referred in your address to the efforts of a local worker for the production of khaddar which has enabled some poor people to supplement their slender earnings besides providing and opportunity to purchase khaddar locally at a reasonable price. I offer him my thanks and wish you would all follow his lead and assist him. For remember, he has set the pace for freedom in this town. Help him and clothe yourself without waiting for Manchester. You have also stated that khadi work is being hampered for want of sufficient money. In a place like this, with so many prosperous merchants, khaddar production and propaganda ought not to suffer for want of funds. Perhaps you might not have money just at present. Khaddar work ought not to suffer for want of funds if there is enough sincerity of effort on your part. I will do what I can to assist you. After all money is a minor consideration. If khaddar work suffers in any place, understand that it is not for want of money but for want of energy and sincerity of effort on our part, for lack of the spirit of freedom.

There are here arrangements now for the burning of foreign cloth. It is a very holy deed because you burn away the shame of 'foreign-clothed nation' and I would request you to maintain the spirit of it. Always keep in mind the four pillars of swaraj. Wear only khaddar, eradicate the drink and drug evils, remove untouchability, and work for Hindu-Muslim unity and inter-communal unity. Physical training is essential for our national salvation, and alone withit should go our mental development and spiritual enlightenment. I beg of you to give me all you can—whether it be money, jewels or other articles.

The Hindu, 3-5-1929

410. IN ANDHRA DESHA [*-III*]

The current week's itinerary with the takings are as follows:

19-4-1929—Kavuru, Rs. 1,582-7-0; Dhulipadi, 1,116-7-0; Repalle, 3,008-9-9; Nalluriwaripalem, 500-0-0; Surepalli, 1,116-0-0; Oakespetu, 10-9-0; Vellatur, 116-0-0; Bhattiprolu, 818-1-5; Kanagala, 116-0-0; Govada, 1,358-0-0; Peparru, 116-0-0; Bodapadu, 196-0-0; Moparru, 902-6-4; Nalluru, 116-0-0; Guadavalli, 116-0-0.

20-4-1929—Anantavaram, Rs. 1,187-8-0; Tumuluru, 116-0-0; Krapa, 116-8-0; Ipuru, 116-0-0; Jampani, 776-9-0; Pedapudi, 1,116-0-0; Miscellaneous, 44-2-4; Pedaravuru, 432-0-0; Vemuru, 116-0-0; Turumella, 732-0-0; Amrutaluru, 999-0-0; Yelavarru, 60-0-0; Panchalavaram, 100-0-0; Chavavaripalem, 116-0-0; Tenali, 2,384-6-11 (Rs. 117 Lalaji Fund); Evani, 1,116-0-0; Chebrole, 644-2-0.

21-4-1929—Munagapadu and Gundalapadu, 62-8-0; Nudurupadu, 126-0-0; Narasaraopeta, 1,000-0-0; Karlagunta, 116-0-0; Miscellaneous, 12-8-0; Rentachintla, 1,197-4-10_; Chebrole, 6-8-6; Muppala, 1,771-10-9; Estimated value of jewels in Guntur District, 2,000-0-0.

23-4-1929—Gunturu, Rs. 100-0-0 (Rs. 25 Lalaji Fund). West Godavari District: Vasanthvada, 608-10-8; Pedapadu, 1,417-9-0; Punakollu, 100-0-0; Kalaperru, 134-12-0; Vatluru, 532-0-0; Ellore, 5,232-7-10; Chataparru, 1,116-0-0.

24-4-1929—Senivarapeta, Rs. 154-1-6; Vizayarai, 317-0-0; Naduapalli, 119-0-0; Dharamjigudem, 1,124-4-6; Estimated value of jewels upto the noon of 24-4-'29, 2,000-0-0.

Total up to date Rs. 1,11,653-9-7$^{1}/_{2}$.

Immediately on my arrival I told Deshabhakata Konda Venkatappayya and other co-workers that the expenses in connection with the tour should be reduced to a minimum and that if they were to be deducted from the collections as I found during several previous tours they were, they should be subject to confirmation by me. The workers told me that the expenses had to be deducted from the collections as the local Congress Committee had no funds in their coffers and if they made special collections in respect of the reception, it would be so much taken from the collections. I therefore advisedconfirmation by me. The workers accepted my advise and it seems to be working satisfactorily.

I give the first bill of expenses that has already come into my hands:

(1)	Fare of motor-cars New Ford for 31 days from 17th March to 16th April at Rs. 12 a day for B. P. Sitaramiah, M. Krishnarao, C. H. V. Narasinham all over the district		Rs. 372-0-0
(2)	Old Rugby car for 10 days at Rs. 10 a day for luggage and other rough work		100-0-0
(3)	Taluq work car charges		
	1. Divi Island; Chevrolet car from 25th March to 15th April.		240-0-0
	2. Devarakota work G. Brahmayya for 5 days		91-8-0
	3. Devarakota east K. Anjaneyulu		95-0-0
	4. Gudivada B. Anjaneyulu		58-0-0
(4)	During the visit		
	One Dodge car extra for 5 days		75-0-0
(5)	Petrol and Mobiloil and tolls paid		221-0-0
(6)	Petrol and Mobiloil bill to be paid		202-13-0
(7)	Miscellaneous		
	Telegrams	6-0-0	
	Trips	1-14-0	
	Odds and ends	1-12-0	
	Hundi boxes	5-0-0	
		Total Rs.	13-10-0
(8) Printing			70- 0-0
(9) Establishment for one month			75- 0-0
		Total Rs.	1,613-15-0

The bill accompanying given at Ventrapragada covers a net amount of Rs. 70-13-0. Hence

Total above	Rs	1,613-15-0
Ventrapragada bill		70-13-0
	Rs.	1,684-12-0

It means that if cost Rs. 1,684-12-0 to collect nearly Rs. 30,000. It comes to a little over 5%. I know that in previous cases the expenses have been far larger and have included even the charges for rations for my companions. This bill excludes all such items. If however the tour had to be devised today, I feel that it would be possible to reducethe expenses still further. As it is, Dr. Pattabhi is among the few business-like prompt workers we have. And he was able to avoid all superfluous expenses. But the number of volunteers travelling can and

should be reduced. The utmost strictness is necessary in these matters. Only those should be in the party whose services are required. I recognize that arranging village tours like this is not an easy job. It is a new field and means a great deal of previous propaganda among the people. Wherever there has been organized work, the people in spite of their being in their thousands have behaved with exemplary restraint. Where there has been no previous education, *Mahatma Gandhi-ki Jai* has rent the air compelling me literally to plug my ears with my fingers. So unbearable at times has been the noise made by what has often appeared to me to be a senseless cry. I do not think that it has added to the enthusiasm of the people. Indeed the enthusiasm has been positively greater where the people have suppressed the desire to utter the cry. Dr. Pattabhi told me that the collections this time in his district were larger than his quota when the Tilak Swaraj Fund was being collected.

TALKS ON KHADI

At every centre in the different districts where I have toured, I have held talks with workers about khadi, drink, national education, etc. I have found greater faith in khadi than in any other items. Dr. Pattabhi is decidedly of opinion that the production of khadi can be increased almost to a limitless extent if it is properly organized. Sjt. Sitaram Shastri holds a similar opinion. But I have, I am sorry to have to observe, noticed absence of a scientific and diligent study of the question of Andhra Desha. I do not know a single expert in Andhra like say the late Maganlal Gandhi or Lakshmidas or Satis Babu or others whom I can mention in other provinces. No attempt has been made to introduce carding among the spinners. It is the opinion of many experienced workers, and I share the opinion, that unless self-carding is introduced, the spinners will not be able to hold out for long and that the quality of yarn cannot be much improved.

Nor is it sufficiently realized that khadi has no status if its yarn is manufactured by those who need not spin to supplement their bread earnings. It would be a deception upon the people to collect funds in the name of *Daridranarayana*, if there are no people for whom the wheel can be the only needed accessory occupation. There should therefore be a map of Andhra showing the spots where there is grinding poverty and where the message of khadi would be taken assoon as there are men and money. I have therefore suggested the following propositions to the workers for their guidance:

1. Spinning for wages should be introduced only in those villages where people are in perpetual want because they do not get

enough from agriculture and because they have leisure. Khadi so made may be subsidized by way of not adding overhead charges to the cost price.

2. Spinning for one's own requirements should be introduced in all the villages irrespective of poverty. In such cases the help to be given to the people should take the form of teaching them ginning, carding or spinning as the case may be and supplying them with cotton and accessories at cost price and getting their yarn woven for them at ordinary rates. In this case, organizing charges will have to be incurred.

3. Sacrificial spinning should be promoted wherever possible. Help, as in the case 2, may be given but without, as a rule, costing the head office any money on this score. Sacrificial spinning loses all merit when it is organized at a loss. In this class of spinning, self-carding should be insisted upon. I am not sure that it is not the wisest plan to being one's spinning lesson with ginning and carding. As a matter of fact an intelligent worker can learn the elements of the three processes in one day.

It follows from the foregoing that there should be a standard spinning wage in all Andhra for counts below 12. For finer counts, fancy rates may be given and when given should be charged against their khadi. In this connection it is useful to mention the generous donation of Rs. 1,500 made by Raja Nayani Venkataranga Rao Bahadur of Munagala at Hyderabad (Deccan) for the special purpose of running a small technical department in Andhra. It would now appear to me as if he knew instinctively what a desideratum such a department was in Andhra. With the charkha in so much vogue in Andhra there is no reason why it cannot run the best department of the type in all India. Only it must have men with an abiding faith in the wheel and an iron determination to master the science. If this technical department is to be opened, it is necessary to send one or two promising young men for training to Sabarmati, Sodepur or some such place.

VISIT TO A YOUNG WIDOW

When we were going from Bezwada to Ellore I was told that a girl who had just been widowed wanted to give me all her jewellery valued at Rs. 1,400 and that she wished me to go to her house in a village only less than two miles from Pedapadu where we had to go. Her caste people observed the *purdah* and in no case could a girl recently widowed venture out especially to a public meeting. The jewellery had little attraction for me. In fact I did not believe my

informants when they told me that the girl widow could possibly wish to give up all her costly jewellery. But the fact of her being young and only recently widowed (I was told she was a virgin widow) was enough to take me to her house. And I was glad I went. The girl's name is Satyavatidevi. She is under 20. Her husband was a well-educated nationalist. She knows Telugu well. I found her to be a girl of courage and decision. She had both the parents alive. She placed into my hands all her ornaments so far as I am aware. And they did appear to me to be worth fully Rs. 1,400. She put into my hands also a note which asked me to take her to the Ashram. The parents were present when I met Satyavatidevi. And they were agreeable to her surrendering her ornaments for khadi work. I suggested to the parents that they should not keep her confined to the house and that she should be treated just like the other girls in the family. I told the girl that she had no need to discard her ornaments merely because she was widowed. But she was firm. She had no longer any use for them. I told her I would gladly take her to the Ashram if the parents consented. The latter have promised to give the matter their consideration and have given the girl every hope of her being sent with me at the end of the tour. The father, though he was undoubtedly cautious and reticent, appeared to me to be generously inclined towards his daughter. I was sorry I was unable to bring any greater consolation to the widow. It was with a heavy heart I parted from her.

At Pedapadu therefore my speech was devoted to Satyavatidevi. I told the audience that it was their duty to break down the *purdah* and to help the parents of the widow to remarry her if she was at all so inclined. If a young man of 18 being widowed could remarry, why should not a widow of that age have the same right? Voluntary enlightened widowhood is a great asset for any nation as enforced ignorant widowhood is a disgrace. The audience listened with respect and great attention. The father of the widow was present at the meeting. I subsequently learnt that the idea of parting with the ornaments was the widow's own original idea and that she had no desire whatsoever of remarrying. Her great desire is, I was told, to give herself to study with a view ultimately to dedicating her life to national service. All honour to Satyavati, if such is really her mature decision. Hindu society must make theway absolutely open

for such widows to remarry whenever they like. The story of Satyavati is enacted in hundreds of Hindu homes every day. The curse of every widow who is burning within to remarry but dare not for fear of a cruel custom descends upon Hindu society so long as it keeps the widow under an unforgivable bondage.

Young India, 2-5-1929

411. A MALICIOUS LIBEL

I have now before me the full text of the *Englishman* interview given by an official of the B.I.S.N. Company. I reproduce it below in full:

> Interviewed by a representative of *The Englishman* yesterday, an official of the steamship company said:
>
> Mr. Gandhi had no special privileges when he travelled as deck passenger on the s.s. *Aronda* but he and his friends occupied a portion of the deck which was actually second-class space. The isolation of Mr. Gandhi from his fellow deck passengers was by his or his friends' arrangement. The party were allowed to occupy the space hey had taken. The steamer authorities did not set apart a special portion of the second saloon deck for his party nor did they insist on his using it and if he used the second-class latrine, it was against orders. Mr. Gandhi was nominally a deck passenger; there was nothing to prevent him seeing the alleged inconveniences of other deck passengers.
>
> The din and noise complained of could only have been made by the deck passengers themselves.
>
> The space reserved for passengers, alleged to have been encroached upon by motor-cars, fowl and cattle was actually space set aside for the particular purpose of carrying this sort of cargo. It was not intended to be used by passengers. The motor-cars referred to were carried not in passengers' sleeping accommodation but on a deck only required when a full complement of passengers is being carried, far more than on that particular voyage.
>
> As to the statement that the latrines were filthy, four topasses are solely employed in keeping the latrines and decks clean. Deck passengers themselves always object to having decks and latrines cleaned but an endeavour is made to keep them clean as far as possible.
>
> Every latrine door has an automatic lock and also latches for closing. There are notices in various places round the decks informing all passengers that if they have any complaint to make they should make it to the Commanderwhen he is doing his rounds. No complaints were made on this voyage. Commanders of steamers personally go round and inspect all passenger decks at least twice a day, sometimes thrice.

It is seldom that the full number of passengers allowed by the Indian Passenger Act is carried and the occasion on which Mr. Gandhi travelled there were only about 400 passengers outward and inward.

HOSPITAL OCCUPIED

With reference to the tween or lower deck referred to by Mr. Gandhi as a 'Black Hole' this is the tween deck which the Company always places at the disposal of deck passengers. It is extra space over and above that required by law even when a full complement of passengers is carried. The lower hatches of this deck are always kept wide open which allows for good ventilation.

The forepart of the main deck which he refers to as being a cattle hold was not intended for passengers but passengers themselves apparently made use of it. The cage referred to at the stern end of the shade deck where sheep, goats, ducks and poultry are kept (actually there are never any goats) contains the steamer livestock.

There are arrangements for a hospital on board but Mr. Gandhi and his friends occupied it on the return journey from Rangoon without the permission of the officers of the ship.

In rainy weather which Mr. Gandhi speaks about, there is no necessity for deck passengers to get wet unless they, through their own wish, prefer sleeping on the exercise deck, as all passenger-carrying accommodation The original is much more malicious than the Free Press summary. I have had the misfortune to expose many falsehoods but I cannot recall more falsehoods packed in a column of newspaper than I find in this interview. The discerning reader will not fail to detect the falsehoods for himself unless he thinks me to be an inventor of lies and utterly devoid of self-respect. I wish indeed it was true that I had no special privileges when I travelled as deck passenger from Calcutta to Rangoon. My own companion had gone to buy the tickets and the Company issued a special ticket for me. For deck passenger tickets names are not entered, mine however was a special coupon and bore my name. When I boarded the vessel, the Company's men took me to a place which they said was reserved for me. I thankfully occupied that seat but had no intention whatsoever of using second saloon facilities. I went to the deck latrine. This was noticed by the officers. A messenger thereupon came to me and said that the first officer did not like my using the deck latrines and thathe would like me to use the second-class latrine. I told the messenger that I had chosen to travel deck and that I could accommodate myself to the latrine meant for deck passengers. This led to a discussion between the message-bearing official and myself, and in order not to appear fussy

or punctilious I availed myself of the courtesy extended to me. It is not likely that a Company whose officials can be so insulting and reckless in making statements as this interviewed official has been would allow me or my friends to occupy any unauthorized place we liked or to use without interference and at our own sweet will privileges to which we were not entitled.

If the space occupied by deck passengers was really not intended for them and was intended for fowl, cattle and motor-cars, it means that the latter[1] had better accommodation reserved for them than the human cargo. For this space occupied by sub-human cargo was the best and the most airy. I would certainly have loved to have taken the space occupied by the motor-cars which blocked the air in addition to occupying the floor space. And the suggestion that the Company's officers permitted without hindrance deck passengers to occupy space not allotted for the purpose is unworthy of belief. I have known Company's officials kick passengers who dared to occupy space not allotted to them.

The rest of the interview was dealt with by me last week.[2]

I am sorry that my article, the subject-matter of the interview, has missed its mark, and instead of resulting in a quiet inquiry by the Company and amelioration of the lot of deck passengers, has resulted in an insolent exhibition of power derived from wealth and Government patronage. I invite the Company to probe the matter deeply and withdraw the libellous statements so recklessly made by the interviewed official and, what is more, right the wrong that is being done to the deck passengers.

Young India, 2-5-1929

[1] The source has "former".

[2] *Vide* "B.I.S.N. Co.'s Denial", 25-4-1929.

412. SOUTH AFRICAN REPATRIATES

The Secretaries of the South African Indian Congress have sent me the following letter:[1]

> It was stated that the Government of Indian have taken no steps to assist the repatriates, that they are stranded and are unable to find employment, that the present-day conditions in India are not congenial to them, that reports have been read conveyed by letters from repatriates, that owing to absence of work and assistance from the authorities, they are either starving or undergoing much suffering and consequently many of them have, by force of adverse circumstances, migrated to Fiji or Malaya.
>
> In the Cape Town Agreement, one of the conditions accepted by the Government of India in regard to the scheme is that on their arrival in India the emigrants will be helped as far as possible to settle in the occupations for which they are best suited by their attitude or their resources.
>
> Judging from the report received from the repatriates, it is doubtful whether the Government of India are doing anything at all to help the repatriates.
>
> This Congress will be extremely grateful to you if you will afford information on the subject so that it may be guided in making full representations to the authorities.

I refrain from offering any comment at the present moment. But I shall await some statement from the authorities. There is no doubt that if these repatriates are to be received, they must be specially cared for. India to most of them is like a foreign land .

Young India, 2-5-1929

413. TELEGRAM TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

TUNI,
May 2, 1929

CHHAGANLAL JOSHI
UDYOGA MANDIR
SABARMATI

KANTI CAN GO RAJKOT IF GOSHALA CAN SPARE HIM.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 15392

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

414. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

TUNI,
May 2, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I have not been able recently to write to you as I should like to. The spare time at my disposal I have been utilizing for overtaking arrears.

I enclose herewith my letter[1] to Rolland. Please translate and send, unless you want me to revise the original.

I hope you have now my detailed programme and you know exactly where I am from day to day up to the 28th instant. I am anxiously awaiting something from you from Muzaffarpur. I want to make sure that you are definitely on the road to recovering your strength.

Love.

BAPU

Encl. 1
SHRIMATI MIRABEHN
CARE KHADI DEPOT
MUZAFFARPUR

From the original: C.W. 5369. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9425

415. LETTER TO ROMAIN ROLLAND

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,[2]
May 2, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have before me a translation made by Mira of your loving and touching letter dated 17th February, 1929. In anticipation of your permission, I have already made use of some lines of this letter discreetly and without giving your name.

I am glad that, like me, you think that I am not to come to Europe this year.

[1] *Vide* the following item.
[2] Permanent address

As for the question whether the voice of India will be heard in Europe, I am of the opinion that India must still suffer much more than she has suffered till now, and on a larger scale than before, to be heard in Europe or in the West. Today, its voice will be a voice in the wilderness. I think the European journalists, who are prejudiced and at times corrupt, will not hesitate[1] to take for gospel truth every exaggeration and self-evident, unilateral falsehood spread by the British Government if India is not represented.

I also feel that this non-violent struggle does not call for the same propaganda as a struggle based on violence. Thirdly, there is the practical difficulty mentioned by you, of finding someone who, in any case, could make himself heard. The only person I have now in view is Andrews as the Poet is not available. Certainly, Andrews will make himself heard in places that count.

I hope you are keeping good health and that God will preserve you until the battle in India is over.

Sincerely yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 9766

416. LETTER TO GANGABEHN ZAVERI

May 2, 1929

CHI. GANGABEHN,

You have taken up a big responsibility. I expect great results if the women's section is maintained somehow. Women must learn some day to live together and to get on with one another. I have seen Christian women living in this way. It has always been regarded as a sign of civilization thus to learn to live together. Now that you have taken it upon yourself I recommend you to stick to it. How is Yashodadevi getting along and how is Sarojinidevi carrying herself?

Narandas will most probably leave. I am sorry, for if he goes it will disrupt your work again. One who lives with me must suffer this inconvenience. Since the Ashram believes that knowledge of letters

[1] The source has "will hesitate".

follows character and not *vice versa*, very often we have had to sacrifice knowledge of letters at the altar of character. Though Narandas may leave, and none else may come to your help, yet do not give up your studies. One should do the best one can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3095

417. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

May 2, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your two letters of the 26th and the 27th. Don't mind the expenditure on the operation on Chi. Ratilal's son. In such matters, he will not forget so soon that he is a rich man's son, nor will Champa let him do so. Slowly teach him as much simplicity as you can. He is a young man with a very frank nature. You do the right thing in giving him a seat next to yours. It will be excellent if he spends his time in writing a little, spinning for a while and reading something. Write directly to Dr. Mehta about the operation. Mention the expenditure, too.

I don't wish to press Chi. Narandas or Ramniklal. I would not mind if you, the women, Surendra and others persuaded them to stay on. After all, it is you who have to work with them. If they refuse to stay on, I will not blame you in the least for that. It would be good if they stayed till my return. Chhaganlal's ten thousand, so far as I know, was accumulated in this manner: sale proceeds of jewellery, savings in Phoenix, accumulated interest and what was saved from the money given by Dr. Mehta. The letter had given the money for a specific purpose—for the expenses in England. If anything was saved from it, it should have been returned to him. Instead, Chhaganalal kept the amount with him, and that was theft. He, too, has looked upon it in that light. He said something of the kind at the time of handing over the money. I, however, made no comment, since I had not the slightest suspicion in my mind. But I understood what he had meant when the fact of his having kept back the money was discovered, and he, too, explained the position in clearer words. I do not know what the amount in question was. Whatever it might be, he certainly cannot us money which contains a portion which was stolen.

I advise Ramniklal to go to Jabalpur. If, however, Kishorelal is ready to go, that will certainly be the right thing. He may then ask anyone of his choice to join him-if, that is, a field exists there.

Read about the case of the widow Satyavati in *Young India*.[1] It should also appear in *Navajivan*. If she wants to join, we cannot but admit her. There is little likelihood of her joining, though.

When Mahadev is free, he should take the women's classes. Do not think of asking Maganbhai[2] and Soman[3] to come and help. We cannot just now snatch away anyone from Kaka. The training given in the Mandir is of an altogether different kind. We want knowledge of the letters, but its place is secondary. No one will judge the Mandir from its standard of literary education.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

After I had finished the foregoing litter, more letters havearrived. I am thinking of sending a wire about Kanti, so that it my be easier for you. If he can be released form dairy work without inconvenience, let him go for some time. It seems that Harilal wants to give him a camera. If he does, I do not feel inclined to ask Kanti not to accept it. However, advise him as you think best.

Personally I approve of your having given the land to Pannalal. You need not consult me about the decisions in the matter. Besides, Kaka is there; whom else do you require? But the consent of the Cow-Service Society is not enough. That Committee may consider the merit or otherwise of the proposal. It is the managing Committee's right to rent out land. Its consent, therefore, will be necessary so that the transaction may be in order. Personally I wish that Pannalal should not even put up new structures. He should pay rent for Joshi's house too. Or, is that the agreement?

It is good that Maitreyi has lift. Do Durga and Mahavir work?

Why did Jayanti get fever? And Bal?

[1] *Vide* "In Andhra Desha [—III]", 2-5-1929, sub-topic "Visit to a Young Widow".

[2] Maganbhai Desai, sometime Vice-Chancellor, Gujarat University.

[3] R. J. Soman, a teacher in Gujarat Vidyapith; later employed in the Navajivan Press

It is indeed a fine thing you are doing, running the Mandir, as you do, like a school. That is our ideal.

I welcome the present time, which you regard as "critical".

I take interest, from this distance, in everything that is happening.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5408 and 5493

418. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, TUNI

May 2, 1929

I thank you all for the addresses of welcome presented to me by the Union Board of Tuni and its people and also for the purses to the Khadi Fund. That means you realize the need of the nation today. Much is spoken about khaddar in your address of welcome. Surely you are competent to speak about khaddar, for I know that your place is a khadi-producing centre and there are several merchants engaged in that trade. But that makes it all the more disgraceful to your place even if one amongst you were to put on foreign cloth. You are able to spin and weave your own cloth here, so why should you have foreign cloth brought to you from abroad. Is it not a disgrace to your manliness? I want you to wipe out this shame and you must see that no piece of foreign cloth is here anylonger. It is necessary that your Board should do propaganda among the people for the use of khaddar alone and for purchasing the cloth spun and woven here. Also; you must go to dealers in foreign cloth and silently do propaganda work among them and win them over to your side by all peaceful means. You must tell them that to the extent to which they purchase foreign cloth, to that extent they are starving their own brothers and sisters here and impoverishing their country.

I hope they will yield to you. I further hear that some people are selling cloth woven of mill yarn as khaddar. It is unjust on their part to do so. The yarn spun by your good and devoted sisters on the spinning-wheel and then woven into cloth for you by your brother weavers on the handloom is what is known as khaddar. Everything else produced in any different manner cannot be called khaddar and to resort to such a different process or means is sinful. Pandit Motilal

Nehru introduced a bill in the Legislative Assembly to the effect that one who cheats the public by manufacturing or selling spurious khaddar should be made liable to punishment. I think a bill superfluous and unnecessary if there is a true and sincere discipline and adherence to dharma in the country. May I therefore pray that whoever sins in this respect by doing business in deceitful ways shall henceforth put a stop to it. I pray to those that wear foreign cloth in this town, where their own brothers and sisters are ready to give them the clothes they need, to discard all foreign cloth and burn it. I also pray to those who are habituated to drinking toddy, brandy and other drinks to abandon the habit. You must also see that no people are untouchables. Hindus, Muslims and others should be united in the common cause of freedom. All communal disputes should be settled amongst yourselves and you must maintain an *esprit de corps*. If we do all these things swaraj will be in our hands.

The Hindu, 4-5-1929

419. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

[Before *May 3, 1929*][1]

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

It is 5.30 a.m. now. I am attending to your letter first. I have drafted a telegram[2] to you and sent it for despatch. You should certainly obtain release from the Udyoga Mandir or the Ashram whichever you call it. I think for the present your good lies in doing this. You have an extremely straightforward nature but your judgment is immature. You are unable to decide independently what is dharma and what is not, nor is there logical consistency in your thought. You therefor often slip off the track and are bewildered. Under the circumstances I think it is only good for you to stay away and let yourself develop. Since you have a pure heart you will shine wherever you go.

Here is my advice. You should lead an independent life by hiring premises within the Ashram precincts, like Pannalal who is going to take up a separate residence near the Ashram, or like

[1] According to the source the letter was received at Sabarmati on May 3, 1929.
[2] This is not available.

Budhabhai. You should be free from such restrictions as observance of the Ashram's external rules. It is another thing if you come to the prayers of your own accord. You may have a salary if you wish to or if you need it. Immediately you should set out to investigate what scope there is for khadi around Jabalpur which is in the grip of starvation. This will take about a month or so. The climate there is said to be congenial. We shall see what you should do when you have finished this work. There are several jobs awaiting you. My feeling is that Tara needs to be in contact with the Ashram. No other place has what the Ashram offers to women. Tara may lead an independent life, take form the Ashram whatever she may and offer what she can. In this world no one can take without giving something in return. Some people give willingly, some under compulsion; some knowingly, some unknowingly.

All these are merely suggestions. If, for the sake of your peace of mind you feel that for the present you should stay away from that atmosphere by all means do so.

Now let me point out the obvious flaw in your reasoning.

Here is your statement: "I do not think that I am guilty of violating the *aswadavrata*[1] if I take spiced food, or that if I cannot memorize the *Gita* I violate an Ashram rule and my progress will stop." This statement in itself is true; it is however false in so far as it is a statement of facts. Taking of spices is bad because in our book of rules it is regarded as breach of the *aswada* vow, though in fact it may not be so. If it is not, the rule needs to be abolished. But so long as the rule stands it is our duty to observe it. The *aswada* vow many have nothing to do with the practice of taking only five articles of food but anyway I have taken the vow and since there is nothing immoral about it I must observe it. The same argument applies to the memorizing of the *Gita*. This is not covered by our rules, but we have accepted its desirability. We get the children to memorize it; we call it a spiritual treasury. I have therefore believed that you all support me in my estimate of it. Then if we make no efforts in this direction we strain our vow of truth. I can understand your inability to memorize the *Gita* owing to your many occupations; but would it not be a breach of truth if, in spite of constantly commending the memorizing of the *Gita*, you did not take some time off to undertake it?

[1] Vow of not pampering the palate

But that is enough. Thinking generally tires us and we move in endless circles. This is exactly why the votaries of truth do not let their fancy wander, but like a ghost cling to only a few things, and draw the whole truth from out of them. They would humbly stick to what they have undertaken rather than perpetually doubt whether it is correct or not.

But every single thought, every single act of ours is for ever imperfect, we are liable to err; now what can we do about this? If we would not take up these or remain sceptical about them as long as we are not perfect, well, in that case we shall never become perfect.

May you both attain bliss.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4144

420. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

COCANADA,
May 3, 1929

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. I will not write more about Chhaganlal. You may ask me about him when we meet. I have not abandoned Chhaganlal. I wish to bring him back to the Ashram. He has gone there of his own accord.

I will not be able to take goat's milk there.

I cannot decide right now who and how many will accompany me. Do you wish that there should be as few as possible? I would not wish to be a burden on anyone. Write to me and let me know if the facilities there are inadequate. You need not wire. Most probably Mirabehn will be accompanying me.

If Jawaharlal or you do not dissuade me, I will certainly come. If you can easily free me from the engagement, I should certainly like to be free for, I very much want to remain in the Ashram but not at all by disappointing you people there.

All will bring their own requirement of clothing and covering. I will be satisfied if, after keeping me engaged for six hours every day, you leave me free for the rest of the time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 33028

421. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, PITHAPURAM

May 3, 1929

Gandhiji pointed out that the Hindi translations of the addresses were in undecipherable Devanagari character and a bit voluminous. The Hindi language was not so defective. If the gentlemen who translated would take pains to meet him at Cocanada, he would be to point out and correct the defects. However he could understand the ideas contained in it. It was said therein that khaddar production was going on very well in that place. That was welcome news to him but he would not be satisfied with that. There should not be even a single person using foreign cloth. They must not be content until everyone gave up the use of foreign cloth and they should try their utmost to see that everyone wore khaddar and khaddar only. He could see children and certain adults still wearing foreign cloth before him. If khaddar production was going on very well there, why should the people be still wearing foreign cloth? Did they refuse to accept the dawn of freedom? He hoped they would one and all take a vow to wear only khadi and carry out that pledge. That meant more food to the people, more saving of money from going out of the country, more strength to the people to spin, weave and wear their own cloth and greater freedom for the land and its children.

The Hindu, 4-5-1929

422. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

COCANADA,
May 3, 1929

CHI. KUSUM,

Your letter has come. I hope Jadavbehn is all right now. No adverse effect of the journey has yet been noticed and now 'most of it is over and only a little remains.' You can see the rest of the news from Prabhavati's letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. KUSUMBEHN
UDYOGA MANDIR
SABARMATI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1789

423. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 4, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I am without any news from you for four days now. In the little village where I am writing this there is no chance of my getting anything today. Such is the most interesting tour this time. Orissa villages and Tamil Nadu were nothing. Here is all touring in the interior. I should learn much more, if I had leisure. But I must take what comes my way and be satisfied. Health still excellent.

Love

BAPU

SHRIMATI MIRABAI
C/O BABU RAJENDRA PRASAD
P.O. ZERADAI
(SARAN) BIHAR

From the original: C.W. 5370. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9426

424. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

Unrevised *May 4, 1929*

CHI. KAKA,

I have your letter. I hope work on the revised second edition of the *Jodanikosh*[1] is going on. Thinking about the subject, I feel that you should ask Balubhai to have the municipal schools to follow the spellings given in the *Jodanikosh*, that is, it should be made obligatory for the teachers to follow this spelling. You should make similar efforts to get the spellings adopted in all the other educational institutions in Gujarat.

While taking these steps to popularize the spellings of *Jodanikosh*, we should also print a much larger number of copies of it; the size should be reduced and special paper should be used. If possible we should have it printed from plates or stereotyped.

As for Mathuradas, I suppose all you have to do now is to ask him to come over. I am still using the *modhiyun*[2] designed by you. Ihave not been able to see its superiority over the one designed by Lakshmidas. It is certainly superior to Keshu's, though. Have you obtained Lakshmidas's opinion about your *modhiyun*? How much cheaper is it? You will have to discuss this with Mirabehn. She is right in looking at everything from the point of view of the villagers. She, therefore, dispenses with the pulley and favours a soft spindle. If such a spindle works perfectly well, we could obviate the need for everybody learning how to straighten it, and reduce its cost to a pice. This will be no small gain. Your *modhiyun* may not perhaps fit into such a spindle, since that particular part has to be wide enough. The spindle is held close in Keshu's and your *modhiyun*, and it seems to me that it will not work unless the spindle is absolutely straight. Think over this problem and discuss it with me when I arrive there. You may also write to me about it if you wish.

I definitely hope that I shall be there from May 28 to June 10 at any rate. Out of these days I will give one full day to you.

[1] *Vide* "Jodanikosh", 7-4-1929.

[2] Part of the spinning-wheel which supports the spindle

Whether it would be better for Prabhudas to stay with you or in Almora, we can decide only after we have more information about Almora. If I go to Almora, I will make the necessary inquiries in this connection. Or we may leave the final decision to Prabhudas himself.

It is difficult to solve the problem of Jamnadas. It is an achievement on your part that now you feel no resentment against the Gandhi family. As long as it is there, one cannot be objective. Now let any member of the Gandhi family distrust you if he will. You will have done your duty if you say and do what you think right. I suppose Jamnadas and others must have become very sensitive these days. Even ordinarily Jamnadas is rather sensitive. We have, therefore, to overlook his shortcomings as far as possible. In any case, I cannot think just now what ultimately we will have to do about the school.

Bal is silent nowadays, what is the state of his mind?

I refrain from writing to you about the Udyoga Mandir so as to conserve your energy and to save your time and mine. But you should certainly write to me anything you may wish to. Do intervene whenever it becomes necessary to do so in the ordinary course.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9481. Courtesy : Kakasaheb Kalelkar

425. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

May 4, 1929

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

You may work just as much as you can but do not accept defeat. Do not ruin your health. More when we meet, of course.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 803. Courtesy: Balkrishna Bhave.

426. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

May 4, 1929

CHI. KUSUM,

To all the letters received today I am replying at 8.30 p.m. after returning from my journey, because we are leaving in the morning. And if I do not post the letters here they cannot be posted in the other places.

I have your letter. You should never shrink from writing everything.

There is no doubt that Jadavbehn benefited by your going there. I hope you did not leave your work incomplete. I can write no more at the moment.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Sulochanabehn writes: 'I do not like this place for Kusumbehn too is not with us'.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1790

427. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

May 4, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I understand your state of mind. Go on only so long as you have the courage and faith. I am ready to bear your leaving me. My wish has always been that only those who cannot live outside the Ashram may remain, and I wish so more emphatically today. Do what you think best. Force yourself to do nothing. I shall be more than satisfied if you remain till the end of this month. Having thus released you, I tell you at the same time that all of you, or those of you who remain, can shape the Mandir in the manner you think best. I have explained to you that the present members of the Mandir can occupy the buildings and that others, too, who are fit to live in them may be invited to do so. I can tolerate every freedom being given, but I myself do not understand what freedom I should ask people to exercise. I can think more about this when I arrive there.

Mahavirprasad's letter is enclosed with this. I have replied[1] to it. He may sell what he can, may dispose of damaged goods at our cost and send the money to us at his convenience. He is an upright man. We should accept everything he does. Do not, therefore, remind him in future to remit the money, or else tell me when it is necessary to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5409

428. LETTER TO RUKMINI

May 4, 1929

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your letter only today. By all means you too may go with Radha. Now you will have but a few days at Matheran. Let us now see what Jamnalalji does. I am sending him a wire.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9045

429. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

10 p.m., May 4, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I see that you are at your wit's end. I think the suggestion that the boys and girls should be sent to the Vidyapith will be difficult to carry out. But in this, too, I don't insist on my view. If all of you think this is the right decision, and if Kaka agrees with you, you can certainly act upon it even before I return. You need not hesitate to take any step. My own view is that those children alone may remain whose parents are content with what we give them. That is our real experiment [in education]. Such an experiment can be made only in the Ashram, and we have created the necessary facilities for the purpose. We need not lose heart while making this experiment. If, however, you think that we are beaten, do what you think best.

[1] This letter is not available.
[2] Not available

It is absolutely necessary to send Radha and Rukhi for a change of air. I had thought of sending them to Matheran to live with Mathuradas. But there is no time for that now. I have, therefore, sent a wire[2] to Jamnalalji. Do what he suggests, or anything else that occurs to you. That is what Balkrishna is.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5411

430. KHADI IN HARDWAR

It is a matter of pleasure as well as of sorrow that, in a small place like Hardwar, a khadi shop was opened and closed down and it has been opened again by the efforts of Pandit Dev Sharma, a scholar worthy of the titles of Ved Visharad and Acharya. It is a matter of pleasure because a large religious class appreciates the merits of khadi. It is a matter of sorrow because in a place like Hardwar the consumption of khadi in which lies the economic progress of the millions can be brought about only with effort. You may find as many shops of foreign cloth in Hardwar as you like. But a khadi shop needs the protection of the Pandits. Pandit Dev Sharma has written a letter in Hindi about the khadi store of which I give the gist below.[1]

I hope that the store will progress and that it will receive full encouragement.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-5-1929

431. OUR IGNOMINY

The publication of the second part of Thakkar Bapa's Antyaja Directory begins from this issue. It is now many months since this Directory came to me. It did not accompany me on my tour, but when it did come, I hardly got time to have a look at it during this whirlwind tour. The tour of Andhra Pradesh is strenuous, but the people here are very kind and Deshabhakta Venkatappayya takes such good care of me that he allows no one near me in the afternoons which are

[1] This is not translated here.

supposed to be periods of respite for me, and for that reason, I am able to deal with the Directory.

That Directory is a history of our, that is, the Hindus' ignominy—I have intentionally used the pronoun "our". Among the readers of *Navajivan* are Muslims, Parsis and also Christians. I write this article, however, as a Hindu for all the Hindus of Gujarat.

What can one say about the cruelty of the followers of a religion who have a custom under which the *Antyajas* have difficulty even in getting water! Even an enemy cannot be denied drinking water. How can the *Antyajas* have courage to come to our house to quench their thirst when we do not allow them even to draw water from our well? On the trains they are shunned; they are similarly treated when they come to the shops; if they set foot into a temple, the god of the high castes is polluted. Our children object if they sit with them at school. And all this is done in the name of religion!

I see no authority for all this in *sanatana* dharma. An observer can see that hypocrisy is flourishing in the name of religion. We cannot see our own back, but others can and they say that it is shocking. However, we are not willing to admit it.

Some like me who are brought up in the same fold and have noted the horror are shunned by the *sanatanis* as polluted. But we shall not able to maintain this state of affairs for long. Not only I, but many Hindus like me have been able to see this sin and are making efforts to remove it. This Directory is a help in these efforts. It makes us conscious of ours sins and shows us how low we are.

We should make use of this Directory. We do not lack funds for rendering service to the *Antyajas*. The donation of Shri Rameshawardas Birla has not been fully spent. In fact, service to the *Antyajas* is similar to khadi work; if there is faith many young men can earn a livelihood out of it. Thousands of pure and hardworking Hindus who do not get polluted or tired by this work can earn their livelihood by doing it. But where do we find capable Hindu teachers to run an *Antyaja* school? Everywhere I see adventurous Kutchis laying railway lines. But where are the artisans and the contractors to dig wells at market rate for the *Antyajas*? Any such teachers, masons, workers and contractors should write to Thakkar Bapa and get their names registered in his office.

No one should misinterpret this article. Anyone who wishes to give a donation may gladly do so. But the aim of publishing this

Directory is to gauge the extent of our sins and enlarge the band of workers in the field.

May I suggest one thing to the compiler? There is no place in a directory for phrases like" It is likely to be such and such". A compiler has no right to make conjectures. He should set down what he observes. It is for the reader to do the guessing.

If villages with names like Gillespiepura or Brookhill occur, it will be interesting and also instructive to give details of the origin of these villages.

Also it would be worth while to give a line or two each to the prominent men among the *Antyajas*. If self-control and piety are observed in any of the *Antyajas*, the fact should be noted. The size of the Directory will not increase by incorporating such information. That can be dealt with in a line or two. It lends colour to the Directory and is useful. True art is never useless. The argument of some artists that the enmity between art and utility has existed for generations is not worth considering. We see daily that Nature abounds in art and experienced people say that art is filled to the brim with utility. There is not a single useless colour in a peacock's plumage; if we are not aware of their purpose the reason is our ignorance, not the extravagance of Nature.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-5-1929

432. MY NOTES

TOUR PROGRAMME

Many readers complain that they have no intimation of my tours or of my absence from the Udyoga Mandir, and as a result, they are put to inconvenience and are not able to contact me if they want to. The complaint is justified. Therefore I give below my tour programme of Andhra Pradesh from May 5 onwards. I am leaving out the minor villages to be covered on one and the same day. Ordinarily, the practice is to be begin the tour at six in the morning and to cover as many villages as possible by nine; to camp at nine; to

start again at 5.30 and to settle down at eight. The places I give below are those where I shall stay during the day.

5th Palivela
6th Amalapuram
7th Gollammadidada
8th & 9th Rajahmundry
10th-13th Nellore
14th Nayudupeta
15th Tirupati
16th Madanapalle
17th Anantapur
18th Tadipatri
19th Nandayal20th Kurnool
21st Pattikonda
22nd On train from Adoni to Bombay
23rd-27th Bombay
28th Sabarmati
28th May to 10th June Udyoga Mandir

The programme after the 10th of June has not been finalized yet. There is some talk about a tour in Almora. Most probably July and August will be spent at the Udyoga Mandir itself.

A WIDOW'S TALE

A widow, twenty-three years old, who has given her name and address writes: [1]

My advice to this and to her such sisters is that they should definitely remarry and put up with the obstacles that may come in their way. She will not need the help of her uncle and brothers if she gets a suitable husband. It is better to make allowances for the body than indulge in lustful thoughts. The best thing of course is that when desire enters one's mind one does not entertain it but tries to control it. But if in the absence of physical contact the mind remains engrossed in lustful thoughts as seems the case with this sister, I have no doubt it is one's duty to satisfy the body. There is no sin in a widow marrying, rather, there is as much sin in it as in a widower marrying. Widowhood is not the ultimate dharma.. It is an ornament

[1] This letter is not translated here.

to those who can carry it. If this lady is courageous, she should put the case before her uncle and brothers and solicit their help. If they are unable to help, she should leave their house and seek refuge in an institution which renders assistance to widows. My advice to those brothers and uncles who are in the same position as the relatives of this woman is to see the signs of the time and to free helpless creatures like this sister from their misery.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-5-1929

433. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

5.30 a.m., Sunday, May 5, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter and your wire. It distresses me to have to send you 'no' for my answer.[1] I am rarely for two nights at on place. The heat is daily increasing. There is no rest, no adequate arrangement for food except for me. And as I do not take milk, there is rarely good milk obtainable. There are no oranges as I have cut down my fruit requirement. In this state to bring you here in your present condition is too great a risk and too great a strain on the Reception Committee, which has to find motor accommodation. The most strenuous part of the tour commences from Nellore. I cannot procure for you all the comforts I must give you, without putting an undue strain on everybody about me. I am sure you do not want to do this. You will therefore hold yourself in patience till 23rd May after which I shall gladly take charge of you. This does not mean that I am myself put to any inconvenience. So many look after me and, what is more, I insist on my requirements being met. I have to if I am to finish the tour without collapsing. You need not therefore feel the slightest anxiety about me. I am in first-class health. But I am a big enough morsel for the people. Now all are waiting for me to be ready for the journey.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5371. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] Mirabehn had apparently asked if she could join Gandhiji at Nellore where he was reaching on May 10; *vide* also "Letter to Mirabehn", 6-5-1929.

434. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

May 5, 1929

CHI. GANGABEHN,

A letter from you after several days. You are going to act like a surgeon. The least softening on your part will ruin the children's interest. Take over the children's custody and . . .[1] will mend his ways or you will cease to be a party to his ruin only if you tell him plainly that he will not get a single penny.

Improve your health. Never subject yourself to worry. Having done one's duty one should leave the results in His hands. Take regular walks. Sleep as much as you find necessary, take fruit. Do not give up milk or ghee.

They did right in taking away Maitreyi. It would be good if she too improved her health.

You have improved your writing a lot. You have yet to improve your spelling. Take Kaku's help if he is there. Learn to consult the *Jodanikosh*.

The correct spelling is *pita*, not *pitta*; *padatu*, not *palatu*; *sweekar*, not *swikar*; *mahenat*, not *menat*.

I expect to reach Bombay on 23rd May

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: G. S. Gangabehnne, pp. 24-5

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

435. LETTER TO GANGADEVI SANADHYA

Silence Day [On or before *May 6, 1929*][1]

CHI. GANGADEVI,

How is your health now? Take nothing but milk and fruit. You must not at all exert yourself. Write to me. Tell Totaram too to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2532

436. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

[*May 6, 1929*][2]

MIRABAI
BHATAPOKHAR

DO NOT COME NELLORE TOUR TOO TRYING. HEAT INCREASING ACCOMMODATION CONVENIENCES LIMITED JOIN BOMBAY OR PROCEED THERE IF YOU LIKE. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5372. Courtesy: Mirabehn

437. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Not Revised *May 6, 1929*

Knowing your nature my caution against your coming to Nellore has disturbed me. I hope however you will reconcile yourself to the inevitable. I do not know what Pyarelal wrote to you. My instructions to him were that you should join me at any point you chose *after* the tour. Jamnadas wired to come. I had to wire to him too not come.[3] Almost the whole of the tour is being

[1] From the contents this letter appears to have been written before the letter of May 11, 1929. The Monday preceding it was May 6.

[2] In the telegram as delivered only the date is legible, not the month and year. But it is clear from the context that it was sent in May 1929. *Vide* also the following item.

[3] This telegram is not traceable.

done by motor and those in charge are hard put to it to find room for an additional person. To have you with me in your convalescent state in this tour is too great a risk. If you are not comfortable at the Vidyapith you may go to Bombay. Bombay is cool enough in May and on Revashankerbhai's terrace, it is quite good. You could even go to Matheran and stay with Mathuradas. Now you will make your choice and be and feel happy.

This tour has been so uncertain that even the dates I have sent you are subject to variations. These do not much matter so far as the post is concerned. They do matter for telegrams. However now there are practically only two weeks left. This letter will be sent by a cyclist who will have to ford two streams and cover a distance of twelve miles to reach a branch line station. Whether it will catchthe correct mail train I do not know. Well you cannot expect Western conveniences in typically Eastern tracts. And I see nothing wrong in people living miles apart not corresponding with one another daily through letters or wires. It used to be enough that they corresponded through their hearts. The so-called destruction of distance through physical extraneous means is not by any means an unmixed blessing. Whilst therefore we may make use of these Western contrivances as a concession to our weaknesses, let us not disturb ourselves when we cannot have them. On the contrary let us feel the freedom of the absense of these when it comes naturally to us.

It is early morning on the silence day and I have allowed myself a little relaxation. For it is relaxation to write what I need not. But now I must stop this love-letter. I must write other letters and edit *Navajivan* before 11.30 when the cyclist must leave. If you are in Patna by the time this reaches Bihar, you should get this on Thursday at the latest.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5373: Courtesy: Mirabehn

438. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

6.25 a.m., Silence Day, May 6, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Your recent letters make me feel a little worried. I feel that you are forcing yourself to do what is beyond your strength. Do nothing out of false regard for me. I know that you find it difficult to stand alone. Do not believe that the dairy, or for that matter even the weaving factory, should run in any circumstances. I have made it my profession in life to break up homes and have felt no wrench in the heart at any time while doing so. I started doing this in the year 1891; that is, ever since I became independent, I have been doing nothing but that. I set up a home in Bombay and broke it up; did the same in Rajkot, broke it up and went to Bombay at a mere suggestions by Kevalram.[1] Then I broke up the home in India to go to South Africa for one year only. The books remained unused, the furniture and other house-hold thing became useless, the dress became useless and I had to buy everything new. I had built up the home in Natal with much thought, had exercised much care in buying furniture of my liking. I had furnished a room as a gymnasium. I threw up all this in a moment. I gave away many of the things, something to this friend and something to another. I returned to Bombay and set up a home if Girgaum. Manilal fell ill there and was at death's door. I decided that we could not live in that air. After hunting for a house everywhere, I chose the "Viller Villa." I got a rent-note drawn up and signed it. Revashanker, too, came to live with us. I took out a first-class season ticket, and rented an office in Bombay in Payne Gilbert's chambers. At least, I felt, I had settled down. Just then came a cable: 'Come to South Africa.' I left Ba under the care of Chhaganlal and went to South Africa, accompanied by some youths who cared to come with me. There was the same story there. I cannot tell now how much money I must have wasted on furniture. But I do not remember having ever felt a wrench in the heart in all these wild adventures. I felt lighter every time and convinced that that was God's will and the change was for my good. I shall, then, feel no wrench in my heart in breaking up this Ashram and building a new one. Yes, I crave for one thing-sincerity. Only those of you who can live sincerely may remain. I would not say that those who remain out of a false sense of shame or under pressure from others are sincere in what they do. Sincerity may

[1] Kevalram Mavji Dave, a Rajkot lawyer who encouraged Gandhiji to go to London to study law.

sometimes appear cruel. You should not shrink from appearing to be cruel to me. Be sincere at any cost. Do not act unnaturally even for a minute. Please understand the meaning of the word *kritrim* here; it does not mean "making false show", but means "unnatural"[1]. Do what your conscience bids you do. That will be for your good and through that you will prosper in the end. This is what you can learn from me; though, to be sure, few havelearnt it. You will be surprised when I tell you that Maganlal earned the certificate of having done so. You will remember how he used to oppose me in meetings. Sometimes he saw that I had felt upset. He would, on such occasions, come and tell me the next morning. "Bapu, haven't you taught me to oppose you whenever I do not agree with you?" I would then smile at him and calm down. Once we had an argument about spinning. I took one side and he another. He did not understand what I was saying and all the time I was burning with misery. He saw the expression on my face and he, too, felt miserable. But he did not give up his stand. I saw in the end that my argument was not based on experience. The matter was trivial, but Maganlal felt that he would be doing no service to me by yielding to my whims. I recollect many such incidents. There was a reason, too, why he clung to me. He himself explained it in one of his letters. I did not remember the matter at all.

What more shall I write and how may I reassure you so that you may have no fear? You should be as fearless as I am. That requires only faith in God. Who are we? A mere imaginary point such as cannot be drawn on a board. He is the only Reality and is all that exists. Doesn't not the *Gita* say, "*Sarvata eva sarva*" [2]? why should we, then, form all kinds of plans in our minds? We should do, to the best of our understanding, the task that lies at hand and live with our hearts for ever light.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have written this letter to you after writing a similar letter to Mirabehn. She has also made me feel worried. She has asked for permission to come to Nellore and join me. I have had to send a wire to her saying "No". And so I have written a letter to soothe her.

I have no read this letter after finishing it.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5412

[1] Gandhiji uses the English word.

[2] XI. 40

439. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

RAJOLE,
May 6, 1929

SISTERS,

I am writing this in a village far away from a railway station. One must cross a river to go to any place from here. There is no bridge, so the village is like an island. When the river is in flood it deposits silt on the land round the village. Hence the soil here is very fertile and some of the residents are fairly well off. They have tempted me to come here with the prospect of getting contributions. And I do get them.

From Kakinada, a lady named Durgabai has been touring with us. Her husband earns Rs. 4,000 a year; out of this the lady spends about Rs. 2,000 on a women's school. She herself teaches Hindi in that school, as also spinning. About 80 girls know Hindi. The lady is kind and hard-working. I think that she has faith in her work, but not equal knowledge about how to do it. She cannot be said to know Hindi very well. Her spinning, too, is of indifferent quality. She says that she has no one in Kakinada to help or guide her. Consequently, it seems, her abilities are not being fully used.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3697

440. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

May 6, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I sent away today's letters at 11 o'clock for being posted. I got the post sent by you in the afternoon. I had put the letter to Ramniklal in a separate envelope and posted it immediately after writing it. I cannot believe that he did not get it. Please find out.

The money received from Akyab should be handed over to the Spinners' Association. You must, of course, have sent an acknowledgement to Akyab. It is all right if Yogendra has left. Sarojinidevi's

problem is a little difficult. She is a good woman, but starts crying for every trivial reason. Padma gives her enough cause to feel miserable.

I should be happy if you have been able to arrange for Radha and Rukhi to go somewhere. If, however, you cannot manage it easily, we should endure the present condition. I am sure Jamnalalji will do something. That is a comfort, but that is also the trouble. So long as such facilities are available, we are forced to avail ourselves of them. If we do so, we no longer remain poor, but only make a show of being so. This is the fruit of my divided mind. Our ideal attitude should be that we would go nowhere. As the poor cannot leave their villages, so we too should not leave our place but meet death there. Can we, however, cultivate such a state of mind by forcing ourselves? When I tolerate whole households being upset for my sake, what could I say to others? I see that the owner of the house in which we have put up today is imprisoned in his own home for my sake. And still Venkatappayya feels that the facilities are not adequate!

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5413

441. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

May 6, 1929

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

I have your letter of the 2nd. The one you wrote on the first will reach me after being redirected from place to place. You may, if you have to, increase the quantity of milk. It would not matter if the green vegetable is half fried. I hope you chew your bread well when you take it with a vegetable. Do you clean your teeth and gums by massaging and rubbing them with your finger after you have eaten? Do you brush your teeth in the morning as is the native custom? When you retire for the night do you rub your teeth clean and rinse your mouth? Whenever you have the slightest suggestion of heaviness in your stomach you should miss a meal or take light food. It is all right that you gave up fruit. What you can eat is enough. From now on till the 14th address your letters to Nellore. We are leaving Nellore on the 15th.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6779

442. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, RAJAHMUNDRY

May 7, 1929

I tender my thanks to you for the addresses of welcome and for the money that you have given me for the Khadi Fund. There are certain matters in the addresses presented to me and let me say a few words regarding them. I have not forgotten the fact that I visited this place some time back.

Among others, I take first the address of welcome presented by the Municipal Council, in which the problems of untouchability has been referred to. It is also stated there that "We members of the Council, look forward with great hopes when your efforts forcomplete prohibition (of drink and other intoxicants) would attain success." It is very surprising to me to see these two references. Let me tell you, the work is not mine alone in the matter of prohibition and the removal of untouchability. The responsibility lies more on the Municipal Councillors than on a private individual, and it rests very largely on the intelligent public. It would be an illusion that I am going to achieve these miracles. I am only urging you to be awake to your duty to your country which is now in intense suffering on account of these two evils. If we do not do our duty by our motherland, we will have been born in vain, and we would not be doing our dharma.

I wish to place another matter before the Municipal Council for consideration. While I was coming here, I noticed that a road was particularly bad and some were badly kept. Truly you must make your Municipality an ideal municipality. This is considered to be a very sacred place and many come here to bathe in the Gautami, and if all filth and sewage water is to be found outside, what do you think the result will be ultimately? It is therefore necessary that the town should be kept neat and clean and sanitary without any stench. But you know it better than I do. I congratulate the Municipality on its khaddar work. . . .

I hear that there is one Hindu Samaj working here for a very long time but Mr. N. Subba Rao Pantulu (the President of that Samaj) tells me that it is not now running satisfactorily. Those who recognize Hindu dharma ought to take interest in the study of the *Bhagavad Gita*. It is regrettable that people do not evince sufficient interest when

there is such a useful institution by their side to study *Bhagavad Gita* and learn the guiding principles of their life.

References have been made in the addresses to the *varanganas* (the fallen sisters). It is a matter for deep shame that there should be still a class of our sisters living the life of prostitution. You should not rest satisfied until there is not even one fallen sister amongst you. You must not sleep until you accomplish this and wipe out the blot of the whole nation. Remember that this could be done only through your purity and moral integrity. I request you all to be united without any jealousies and distinctions and not to engender communal feelings, as we are all trying to attain swaraj and we are all soldiers of one army. We shall win by our strength of spirit, by our calm courage and by our faith in freedom. Make the boycott of foreign cloth complete and effective. Do not touch a piece of foreign cloth, give work to all your workers by insisting on khadi and khadi alone. Do not wait for others to begin and other places to lead. Here, in Rajahmundry you have colleges and other institutions. You have many great men doing social service and public work. If you all join hands and work unitedly, I have no doubt that we would achieve our goal early.

The Hindu, 10-5-1929

443. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SITANAGARAM,
May 8, 1929

Could you please get a reputed certified auditor to audit the account books the Bengal P.C.C?

I enclose herewith the letter received from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Encl. 1

From a copy: C.W. 7880. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

444. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Wednesday [*May 8, 1929*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

Your letter has given me much peace. It does credit to you that, even after you had sent the luggage to the station, you gave up the idea of leaving. I need not write more just now. We shall discuss the matter after I return. I will not insist on anything. If all of you can arrive at a joint decision even before I return, you may certainly do so.

I am glad that Chi. Purushottam has gone to Morvi. The vaid[2] has produced on me the impression of being a very good one. Let Purushottam write to me regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine-Part I, pp. 52-3

445. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

May 8, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Two letters from you are lying with me. I would certainly be happy if Narandas and Ramniklal decided to stay on. Read the accompanying letters; you will know from them what my ideas are.

You may, if you wish, wait till I return. In my view it is not necessary. Everyone should judge his own strength and live as he can; make your own plans. Whatever be my wishes, only what is possible can be done. And the goal we shall reach by doing what is possible will be the right one. Any decision which all of you take in my absence will be more independent, though it is only after my death that your decisions will be completely independent. At present, the though, 'what Bapu wishes and what he would think', will trouble all of you.

[1] From *Bapuna Patro–7 : Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*, p.92

[2] Vaidya Lakshmiprasad Vishwanath of Morvi, also knows as Khelshankar-bhai.

The earlier Radha goes to Sinhgadh or Matheran, the better.

You need not worry if I get up before dawn and sit down to reply to your letters. I take from my body only as much work as it can give. When I can rise early without difficulty and when there is other work to be attended to during daytime it would be wrong on my part not to get up.

Kaka has reserved Mathuradas Purushottam for his work. It is for that that he is returning. Do not, therefore, expect any help from him.

Jaisukhlal's problem has become difficult to solve. I shall have to think more about him. Bring it up when I return there. Call him to the Ashram.

Who told you that my health was not good? It is excellent. Imam Saheb goes on, but with difficulty.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Enclosed with this is a letter from Raghunath. I think that we should permit his wife to come.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5414

446. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

May 8, 1929

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letters. One makes progress gradually while one goes on doing one's duty. I take comfort in the faith that this progress will ever continue.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 507. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

447. LETTER TO SURENDRA

May 8, 1929

CHI. SURENDRA,

I was surprised to read your note. It contains a serious error of reasoning. Your conduct is unnatural. The right thing is for everyone to live according to his or her nature. If a man six feet tall tries to look five feet by bending, he is guilty [of deceiving others]. A man of sincere humility may ride an elephant and a hypocrite may be living in a hut. Because a person who feels crushed by the burden of his vow releases himself from it, does it mean that another whom his vow may help to progress should give up that vow? If all others live in rented quarters, what should I do? If all are such as cannot live except in this manner, I know what to do. But I would have to think what I should do if a person like you plans living in a rented room. Supposing others wish to beget children, would you, in order to be in their company, marry and live as they do?

Before writing the note, you should have discussed the matter with me. If it is beyond you strength to observe the vows of the Ashram, you may by all means live in a rented room. If, on the other hand, you have that strength, if you have faith in the vows, admit your error and withdraw your note.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7 : Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 91-2

448. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

May 8, 1929

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

I have your letter. If even after having increased the quantity of milk you feel hungry you should increase the quantity of bread by two *tolas*. Since your weight is increasing it does not matter if you feel hungry now and then. If the weight keeps on increasing you should know that you are taking the correct diet. Your diet need not now be

regulated from here. I give below the maximum limit which may serve you as a guide:

Milk 3 seers-120 *tolas*

Bread 10 *tolas*

Grapes 4 *tolas*

Lemons 2 (with soda)

Vegetable 5 *tolas*

Almonds kernel 1 *tola*

Alfonso mangoes 2

Butter 3 *tolas*

This is the *maximum* measure. You are not to reach it today, may be you can never reach it. You have however to go up to the limit mentioned above provided a physical check-up shows that you have no sore mouth, no complaint of belching, that you do not pass gas except while evacuating your bowels. It does not matter if you take an almond or two from now, provided you chew them well.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6780

449. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

May 8, 1929

Chhaganlal writes and tells me that you, too, may want to stay on in accordance with the new idea I have put forward. I should be happy if you did. But even this you should not do against your wishes. I see nothing wrong in Tara living in any suitable institution to acquire knowledge of the letters. . . .[1] I suppose you will do the same work that you are doing wherever you are. If there is any merit in the Ashram, sooner or later you will be drawn to it.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 92

[1] As in the source

450. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, SITANAGRAM

May 9, 1929

I am very happy for having come to this Ashram.[1] I had heard of this Ashram before. I have now seen its various activities and I am very satisfied. I hope the neighbouring villages would be greatly benefited by the useful work of this Ashram. The first and foremost thing that is being done here is, to my mind, with regard to khaddar. Something is being done in the neighbouring villages also in that direction but much more is expected of them. You have to work the charkha always and on it rests the wealth vice of your country and its salvation. Of all the instruments of service the charkha is the most powerful and promises you wealth. You will produce wonderful results, only you should get into that work regularly. You must all co-operate in and help this activity.

I hope you will all co-operate with and help the Ashram to achieve still better results in all directions. You must send your boys and girls to it and see they get real education here. Help this good Ashram with all your might. I congratulate you on your heroism in banishing the drink evil and your having paid the punitive tax of Rs. 7,500 for that. Such struggles are bound to come. Be bold and face them. In the huge attempt for the attainment of swaraj such lossof money or even loss of life is nothing.

I am collecting money for the Khadi Fund. I wish to get some money from you also. I believe I have received some money from the rich. They might give a large sum. But even if you poor people offer the least pie, I will be pleased as if it were a large sum of money. When I visited Bihar and Utkal I collected even pies. Those pies went to give food and clothing to many starving villagers who were asked to spin and renew their charkha plying. In our cause every little help counts.

The Hindu, 11-5-1929

451. A BRILLIANT CAREER

Forward, a creation of Deshbandhu, fully lived up to its name and the aspirations of its distinguished founder. By its dash, enterprise, resourcefulness and, above all, fearlessness it proved a thorn in the side of the Government. It was therefore marked out for destruction by means fair or foul. It has had several prosecutions launched against

[1] Gautami Satyagraha Ashram

it for daring to speak out the nation's mind by calling a spade a spade. But it outlived all the prosecutions. It rather thrived upon them and the imprisonment of its editor and printer. But it was impossible for a moneyless newspaper to survive vindictive damages. The Judge's verdict may be right though his leanings one can read in his judgment. But the Government's action and, which is the same thing, the Railway Company's action was wrong. If the article of the *Forward* was an overstatement, surely neither of the parties attacked could suffer pecuniary damage, for they were too powerful. And no damage exacted by them could possibly recoup them if they did suffer material damage at all. If it was a question of moral damage, I suggest that neither the Government nor the Company had any reputation to keep in such matters as were the subject-matter of criticism by the *Forward*. In any case their *amour-propre* should have been satisfied by the obtaining of the precious verdict.

But the application for compulsory liquidation shows that the object of the action was not compensation for the plaintiffs but it was destruction of the defendant. Well, they have had their satisfaction. They are welcome to it. Only they are riding for a fall. The *Forward* so vindictively crushed will live in the lives of the people. The fire lighted by it will rage with redoubled fury in the breasts of thousandsas it will no longer be able to find legitimate vent through the columns of their favourite paper. Though during my tour in the villages of Andhra I cannot follow the events in their proper sequence, I observe that a mean attempt is being made even to prevent the publication of the *New Forward*. The legal resourcefulness of the brains that are backing the national movement in Bengal against tremendous odds may circumvent the Government. But even if they cannot cope with the legal and extra-legal powers possessed and unscrupulously used by the Government, they will still have deserved the gratitude of the country for bravely and fearlessly engaging in an unequal fight with the Government. A spirit has been awakened that cannot be crushed by any power on earth. *Forward* is dead, long live *Forward*.

Young India, 9-5-1929

452. IN ANDHRA DESHA [*-IV*]

The following itinerary with collections will show that the pressure continues, if also the varied experiences in the different villages and the exuberant enthusiasm of the people are enriching one's knowledge and faith:

Total collections already acknowledged in *Young India*, Rs. 1,11,653-9-7½.

West Godavari District:

24-4-1929—Potunuru, Rs. 1,810-9-0 (Rs. 78 Lalaji Fund); Dosapadu, 50-0-0; Kovvali, 1,077-13-3; Palagudem, 50-0-0; Denduluru, 751-10-0; Gundugalanu, 1,173-0-9.

25-4-1929—Kolamuru, Rs. 128-0-0; Arthavaram, 116-0-0; Ganapavaram, 401-0-0; Saripalli, 18-0-0; Javvanapalli, 51-0-0; Nidamarru, 15-0-0; Kottapali, 25-0-0; Cheruku Ganama Agraharam, 100-0-0; Tadepalligudem, 1,924-4-6; Mandalaparru, 116-0-0; Panuduvva, 162-0-0; (Rs. 20 Lalaji Fund); Pippara, 201-6-3; Palamuru, 116-0-0; Bhimavaram, 2,567-0-6; Viravasaram, 116-1-0; Undi, 329-0-0; Akividu, 1333-13-4.

26-4-1929—Penumantra, Rs. 3,319-6-6; Alamuru, 116-0-0; Velagaleru, 310-0-0; Poduru, 240-8-3; Jinnuru, 127-0-6; Brodipeta (Palacole), 57-4-0; On the way, 7-0-0; Matlapalem, 2,103-4-9 (Rs. 100 Lalaji Fund); Yelamanchili, 152-0-3; Gummaluru, 77-0-0; Narsapur Bar Association, 116-0-0; Palacole, 2,459-3-0; Pandita Valluru, 61-0-0.

27-4-1929—Achanta, 1,118-5-8_ (Rs. 50 Lalaji Fund); Deva, 179-0-0; Penumanchili, 42-9-0; Kodamanchili, 63-0-0; AchantaVemavaram, 90-0-0; Penugonda, 505-0-0; Eletipadu, 459-6-4; Tanuku, 1,577-4-8_ (Rs. 3 Lalaji Fund); Duvva, 232-0-0; Taliparru, 40-0-0; Vodduru, 116-0-0; Tetali, 35-8-0; Brahmanagudem, 116-0-0; Nidadavole 251-0-6; Nelaturu, 81-0-0.

28-4-1929—Chagallu, Rs. 397-15-6; Devarapalli, 506-5-3; Dommeru, 500-0-0; Kovvuru, 943-13-6 (Rs. 310 Lalaji Fund); Isukapalli Paugidi, 4-11-3; On the way, 5-2-0; East Krishna (subsequent collections), 20-0-0; East Godavari (collections on the way), 90-3-5; Vizagapatam, Rs. 3,081-6-9.

30-4-1929—Bhimlipatam, Rs. 116-0-0; Reddipalli Agraharam, 116-0-0; Jonnavalasa, 722-0-0; Vizianagaram, 2,986-14-4; Bhimasingi, 116-0-0; Kottavalasa, 29-0-0; Bhimali, 10-0-0: Simhachalam, 123-12-0; Sabbavaram, 10-9-0; Chodavaram, 1,142-5-0;

1-5-1929—Anakapalli, Rs. 2,262-7-9; Vizagapatam, (subsequent collections), 52-4-0; Kokkirajipalli; 13-2-3; Yelamanchili, 180-0-0;

2-5-1929—Etikoppaka, 1,167-11-3 Kailasapatam, 1,127-0-3; Nakkapalli, 116-0-0; Godicharle, 36-5-10; Estimated value of jewels of Vizagapatam Dt., 700-0-0; West Godavari Dt. (subsequent collections), 0-4-0; Guntur

Dt. (subsequent collections),46-8-0;
Total Rs. 1,54,961-15-0.

I must add too that the time sense of the co-workers has become most agreeably keen and there is a pleasant rivalry among them to conform to the scheduled time. The result is that we are at present travelling and taking meetings with the regularity of an express train. Exactly at the stated time of departure the smiling face of Deshabhakta and local friends greet me in the morning and in the evening. This regularity and comparative orderliness in the meetings make the tour in the extreme heat of summer not only bearable but even pleasant. The eagerness with which men and women bring their rupees and their pies fills one with hope and joy. I am writing these notes just after a women's meeting in Tuni[1]. An old manifestly poor woman nearly 75 years old bent double with the weight of her years but with a benign face and carrying sparkling eyes put into my hands four annas without any apology traceable in those never to be forgotten eyes. Immediately after a khadi-clad middle-aged woman put into my hands five rupees and a copper. I straightway asked her: "Whose donation is greater, yours or this old sister's? Pat came the bold, quick, decisive reply: "Both are equal." I was pleased beyond measure and was glad to be nonplussed. I was unprepared for this most intelligent and penetrating reply. She added: "I have been interested in the national movement for many years. I have always contributed to the best of my ability. I believe in khadi and I always wear it." This is only one sample from the inexhaustible store-house of joyful experiences it has been my privilege to have. I must however pass on to other matters.

WORKERS MEET

At Tanuku there was the usual meeting of workers which I always have between three and four in the afternoon at every place, more especially at the end of the tour in each district. We were about 100 workers. All kinds of questions were discussed. The question whether Congressmen's contesting seats in Taluk Boards, District Boards, Municipalities and Councils did not interfere with khadi and other constructive work has been cropping up everywhere. At this meeting it came with greater insistence. What I have found is that these bodies take up more energy of good workers than they are worth. Some of the best men had to leave their Municipalities in order to be able to do more solid work. There is too much wrangling, too much

[1] On May 2

jealousy, too much wire-pulling and too much self-seeking in these bodies to enable honest workers to hold out for long. The one advantage that was claimed by a Congressman on behalf of the policy of Congressman interesting themselves in these bodies was that the presence of Congressmen introduced a healthy mentality of resistance in the place of obsequiousness. On the whole I am inclined to think that this mentality of resistance is purchased at too great a price, if it means sacrifice of constructive work. I therefore suggested to the workers at Tanuku that if they were satisfied that there was no effective service possible in taking interest in these bodies or in taking part in the elections, they should not think of them even as they would not if no Congressmen were contesting and participating in these elections. When choice has got to be made, there cannot be a shadow of doubt that constructive work is any day far superior to working in these bodies. After all, whilst we have thousands of Congress workers, there can only be a few men in each district who can enter these so-called elective institutions. Let those who believe in them enter them. But let not the others who do not believe in them betray jealousy or impatience in respect of those who enter them.

Another suggestion made was that yarn should be brought from districts where it was spun to those districts where owing to absence of grinding poverty there was no one to spin but where there were weavers who would gladly weave khadi if they were supplied with hand-spun yarn. My answer was an emphatic no, so long as the yarn could be used up by the district producing it. The secret of successful hand-spinning lies in the yarn being woven where it is spun. There should be no impatience about weaning local weavers from foreign or mill-spun yarn so long as there is no local yarn produced and so long as there is no yarn to be had in one's district. What can however be done is to popularize self-spinning or sacrificial spinning as much as possible. If such yarn is produced in abundance it should keep all the available weavers in a district going.

A MODEL CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY

It was at Vizianagaram that I discovered a Khaddar Co-operative Society which appeared to me to be a very successful venture and without an equal in all India. I offer no apology for copying the following from the address of the Society:[1]

> The cloth in our depot is all made by us solely out of the cotton purchased by us and we have imported none of it from other places. We have resolved not to import khaddar either from other provinces or even from other

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

districts in our province, as we believe such importation will prejudice the development of khaddar even as importation of foreign cloth.

We also believe the object of the khaddar movement is to develop khaddar in each place by spreading spinning and weaving locally as wide as possible and securing livelihood for as many people as possible. . . .

In some cases, our prices are higher than the prices of A.I.S.A. by Rs. 0-0-6 per yard. We humbly offer a pair of (woven) trousers and a blanket 2_ yards wide and 3 yards long, both being the work of Pappu Jagannayakulu, who is a weaver and also a Director of our Society.

We in all humility pray that these may be kept in the Ashram as exhibits.

These pieces, the work of Pappu Jagannayakulu, will certainly be kept in the Ashram Museum as exhibits. They are both unique pieces of their kind. I also obtained from my host in Vizagapatam, Sr. Banoji Rao, a zamindar, two pieces of very fine khaddar made in his zamindary village Bontalakoduru. These two pieces are respectively 53 and 66 years old.

I have got the by-laws of this model Society. They are quite effective. They provide for the membership of spinners and weavers. They make it obligatory for members to purchase khadi produced by the Society, as also to bring to the Society for sale all khadi or yarnmanufactured by the members. I reproduce from these interesting by-laws the following[1] which appears under the heading 'Trade':

I congratulate the Society on the very useful work that it is doing and I hope that it will have a progressively successful career.

Young India, 9-5-1929

453. A COMPLEX PROBLEM

It is not without diffidence that I approach the question raised by Rev. B. de Ligt in his open letter to me with regard to my attitude towards war. To remain silent at the risk of being misunderstood is an easy way out of the difficult situation I find myself in. To say that I made a mistake in participating in war on the occasions in question would be easier still. But it would be unfriendly not to answer questions put in the friendliest manner; and I must not pretend repentance when I do not feel it. My anxiety to avoid a discussion of the question does not proceed from want of conviction, but it proceeds from the fear that I may not be

[1] Not reproduced here.

able to make my meaning clear and thereby create an impression about my attitude towards war which I do not desire. Often do I find language to be a poor vehicle for expressing some of my fundamental sentiments. I would therefore urge Mr. B. de Light and other fellow war-resisters not to mind my faulty or incomplete argument and still less to mind my participation in war which they may be unable to reconcile with my professions about war. Let them understand me to be uncompromisingly against all war. If they cannot appreciate my argument, let them impute my participation to unconscious weakness. For I would feel extremely sorry to discover that my action was used by anyone to justify war under certain conditions.

But having said this much I must adhere to the position taken up in the article[1] which is the subject-matter of Mr. B. de Ligt's letter. Let the European war resisters appreciate one vital difference between them and me. They do not represent exploited nations, I represent the most exploited nation on earth. To use an unflattering comparison they represent the cat and I represent the mouse. Has a mouse eventhe sense of non-violence? Is it not a fundamental want with him to strive to offer successful violence before he can be taught to appreciate the virtue, the grandeur, the supremacy of the law of non-violence-ahimsa-in the field of war? May it not be necessary for me as a representative of the mouse tribe to participate in my principal's desire for wreaking destruction even for the purpose of teaching him the superiority of non-destruction?

Here the analogy of the cat and the mouse ends. The mouse has no capacity in him to alter his nature. A human being, however debased or fallen he may be, has in him the capacity of rising to the greatest height ever attained by any human being irrespective of race or colour. Therefore even whilst I may go with my countrymen a long way in satisfying their need for preparation for war, I should do so in the fullest hope of weaning them from war and of their seeing one day its utter futility. Let it be remembered that the largest experiment known to history in mass non-violence is being tried by me even as I seem to be lending myself for the purpose of war. For want of skill the experiment may fail, but the war-resister in Europe should strain every nerve to understand and appreciate the phenomenon going on before him in India of the same man trying the bold experiment in non violence whilst hobnobbing with those who would prepare for war.

[1]*Vide* "My Attitude Towards War", 13-9-1928; also "War Against War", 8-3-1928.

It is part of the plan of non-violence that I should share the feelings of my countrymen if I would ever expect to bring them to non-violence. The striking fact is that India including the educated politician is *nolens volens* driven to the belief that non-violence alone will free the masses from the thraldom of centuries. It is true that all have not followed out the logical consequences of non-violence. Who can? In spite of my boast that I know the truth of non-violence and try my utmost best to practise it, I fail often to follow out the logical conclusions of the doctrine. The working of nature's processes in the human breast is mysterious and baffles interpretation.

This I know that if India comes to her own demonstrably through non-violent means, India will never want to carry a vast army, an equally grand navy and a grander air force. If her self-consciousness rises to the height necessary to give her a non-violent victory in her fight for freedom, the world values will have changed and most of the paraphernalia of war would be found to be useless. Such an India may be a mere day-dream, a childish folly. But such in my opinion is undoubtedly the implication of an India becoming free through non-violence.

When that freedom comes, if it ever does, it will have come through a gentlemanly understanding with Great Britain. But then it will not be an imperialistic haughty Britain manoeuvring for world supremacy but a Britain humbly trying to serve the common end of humanity. India will no longer then be helplessly driven into Britain's wars of exploitation but hers will be the voice of a powerful nation seeking to keep under restraint all the violent forces of the world.

Whether all these fanciful ideas are ever realized or not, my own lifeline is cast. I can no longer in any conceivable circumstance take part in Britain's wars. And I have already said in these pages that if India attains (what will be to me so-called) freedom by violent means she will cease to be a country of my pride; that time would be a time for me to civil death. There can therefore never be any question of my participation direct or indirect in any war of exploitation by India.

But I have already pointed out in these pages that fellow war-resisters in the West are participants in war even in peace time inasmuch as they pay for the preparations that are being made for it and otherwise sustain governments whose main occupation is such preparation. Again all activity for stopping war must prove fruitless so long as the causes of war are not understood and radically dealt with. Is not the prime cause of modern wars the inhuman race for exploitation of the so-called weaker races of the earth?

Young India, 9-5-1929

454. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

May 9, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got the letter in which you write about the theft. We need not believe that the thief, who stole something from under the bed on which the women were sleeping, might have done harm to them. There is only one person doing this; he is familiar with the place and is content to steal such stray articles. If he gets an opportunity, he would carry away everything. He is no more afraid of us. These thefts will go on so long as we are guilty of hiding the truth in one way or another. We cannot, however, rid ourselves of guilty thoughts by an unnatural effort. We should, therefore, protect ourselves as well as we can by arranging night-watch and takingsimilar steps, and remain composed. It required, we should be able to sleep during the day and keep awake at night without injury to our health. I hope the women did not get frightened.

Your having dreamt about me has no significance. My health is very good and in a few days we shall meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5415

455. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, POLAVARAM

May 9, 1929

I feel very glad to have come here into this remote hilly tract, which is not within the easy reach of the workers of Hindustan. Owing to the altered state of things, it has become difficult for me to reach here. I hear that owing to the intimidation of the police, the boatman that had agreed to let me cross the river (at Purushothapatnam) refused to come and that, in spite of the police intimidation and threat, the owner of the steam launch Mr. Churukuvada Ramaswami has been kind enough to bring me here. It may be a human Government and its messengers put together may devise many means to cause obstruction but they are frustrated by the Governor of the whole Universe. If we are blessed with His grace, everything will be all right. I am sure he does not want us to suffer for long; it is my faith that we will all be happy soon. I want you to take a lesson from this. You need not be afraid of the sight of any man. Fear God and none else. What

can the police do? All their power might be exercised on the physical body but they cannot exercise their power on the soul. For the things that they can do against us we should not be provoked to take revenge. The story of Rama tells you that Rama did not cause evil to Ravana but Ravana himself by his vile deeds brought ruin to himself. What is wanted now is fearlessness, but you should not bear malice or any vengeance against anyone. You must have a clean spirit, clean body and clean heart. You must abstain from drinking toddy, etc. If you feel that you are losing money every day, be busy with the charkha.

You must all live in brotherhood, whether Hindus, Mohammedans Christians or others. I have come here to tell you these words. You must remember these things. We can do nothing and are uselessif we are afraid of others. In the creation of God there is no distinction between the high and the low. God created all equal. At a short distance from you there is one Satyagraha Ashram founded by Dr. Subrahmanyam. I hear that there is another called Swaraj Ashram at this place, Polavaram. All of you can take advantage of these two. Boys are educated, trained in spinning and other work and good habits. Help these institutions and become worthy sons.

The Hindu, 11-5-1929

456. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

KAVALI,
May 10, 1929

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

What a weight upon your mind to have both Kamala and Krishna with the severe attacks you have described. I suppose these domestic troubles must also be taken as part of national discipline. I am glad that Krishna does not require an operation.

You may not know that Andhra Desha is noted for nature-cure men and some of them are really brave fellows, brave in the sense that they relentlessly pursue the search without counting the cost. This remedy has in many cases answered where everything else has failed. And it has the merit of simplicity combined with perfect harmlessness even where it may not result in a cure. I wish you would turn your attention to these cures. Of course in this strict dieting plays a most important part. Where patients do not submit to the dietetic prescriptions, the treatment becomes valueless.

I take it that in spite of Bengal's desire for a postponement, A.I.C.C. will meet on the advertised date.

I had your telegram about Almora. I shall hope to leave Ashram after the tenth of June so as to reach Almora on the 15th.

Yes, you can have me for U.P. and the Punjab and Delhi for the whole of September and October, if October is also wanted. About the Allahabad Municipal Board, you shall decide. I am fed up with addresses. You may therefore accept on my behalf if there is any political or other advantage to be derived from it. If I have received any communication from the Board I have no recollection of it.

Andhra P.C.C. has asked for extension of time up to June on the plea that most of the Congress workers are busy in their own districts with arrangements for the tour and hence are unable to supply the information I wanted. This fact in itself is an evidence of the chaos that reigns supreme in our house. For what I see throughout Andhra is true almost of every province.

I have failed to get any satisfaction from Utkal.

I expect the Tamilnad Secretary on Sunday at Nellore.

I have written[1] to Ghanshyamdas Birla instead of Ramjeebhai to find an auditor of repute for auditing Bengal P. C. C.'s accounts.

Yours sincerely

BAPU

From Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1929. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum

457. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Friday, May 10, 1929

You should be bold and pass any resolutions and introduce any changes that you wish to regarding the Ashram. In running the Ashram have I not always insisted on one thing, namely, to let the person entrusted with a task to do as he pleases and according to his ability and never to interfere with it? Through the medium of the Ashram we are conducting an experiment in absolute 'democracy'[2]. I am writing this in great haste.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 104

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 8-5-1929.

[2] Gandhiji has used the English word.

458. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BUCHIREDDIPALEM[1]

May 10, 1929

I was informed that Buchireddipalem is the richest place in the whole of Andhra Desha, I have my own spies even as the Government has. (Laughter) Although I may not be able to imitate the virtues, if any, of the Government, at least I may follow their vices in this respect. My spies satisfy me that I must have at least ten thousand rupees from this place and you must make up the balance. I am a *bhikshu* (a beggar) on behalf of India's beggar millions and I am collecting for *Daridranarayana* who will not rest till you gave as much as you can. I was in Nellore in 1921 and you will all remember one Dakshinamurti Hanumantha Rao who was almost like a son to me and at whose instance the Satyagraha Ashram of Pallipad was started. He devoted his life for the same. I stand an eye-witness to testify to the Satyagraha he made at Pallipad in regard to the solution of the untouchability problem there. Till now I have not heard anyone else excepting Mr. C.V. Krishna taking any interest and sticking to that Ashram. I have a great desire that the institution started but Hanumantha Rao should be made to go on. For that we want workers. So workers must come out of you to join the Ashram and carry on the work.

To you, ladies, I appeal to you to help in bringing *Ramarajya* in this country. You know that unless you act as Sita did, you will not be doing the needful. Jewellery is no ornament to you as your men are not free, as your motherland is not free; but it is the purity of heart that adorns a woman, it is love of mother country that becomes an ornament to you. Therefore have pure hearts and make a sacrifice of your jewellery for the sake of your starving sisters and brothers and give them work.

I learn from the address presented to me by the Union of your place that your roads are kept clean and well. I must congratulate you if it is really so. I thank you very much for the purses you have presented for the Lalaji Memorial and Khadi Fund. I expect you will make the purse amount to ten thousand before I leave your place.

The Hindu, 11-5-1929

[1] At the meeting Gandhiji was presented a purse of Rs. 7,000.

459. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KAVALI

May 10, 1929

I am pleased to receive your purse and address and also the presents of cloth. This cloth presented is very nice. It is given for *Daridranarayana* and you know I can't wear it. I am therefore putting the same for sale to get its worth in money for Him. I see you can spin very fine yarn in your place. My earnest desire is that you should give up foreign cloth and take to swadeshi. Your Taluka Board should make efforts to spread khaddar. It is said in the address that attempts are being made for its production. If you make strenuous efforts there will be no difficulty. You must put an end to drink evil. Hindus, Mahommedans and Christians must work in comradeship because in the work of your motherland there is no distinction of caste. Untouchability should be wiped out. It is a blot on Hinduism.

The Hindu, 14-5-1929

460. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

[After *May 10, 1929*][1]

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

I have your letter of the 10th.

It is not that soda is to be taken necessarily with lemon. You were asked to take lemons along with soda because the combination produces some digestive secretions. Since acid things do not agree with you I have suggested that you should take lemons separately. However, you can certainly take lemons along with your vegetables and the soda too may be taken by itself with water.

My suggestion about alfonso mangoes too is to save you from acidity. There is no harm in taking *langra* mangoes. Maybe it would not matter if you had a mango or two even now. You may, if you want to, try it.

It is good to refrain from butter for a week or two. There is not—there should not be—much difference between pure butter

[1] This was sent in reply to the addressee's letter of May 10, 1929.

froma dairy and what is extracted at home. Home-made butter should be regarded as impure if, and to the extent that, it retains acidity.

For the present it is enough that you get some sleep.

Butter can be taken with bread; another way is to take it with milk.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6783

461. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 11, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I am in an out-of-the-way place under the *pankha*. But the wind itself is blowing hot. And we have to start off at 5.30 on an 80-mile journey. Imam Saheb has nearly collapsed. He is dragging on. Prabhavati too is feeling the heat. I am praying that during these last ten days, we may be able to pull through. I hope you have got over the shock of detention. The meeting in Bombay will be all the more precious. I am personally 1st class, because I insist on what I need.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5374. Courtesy Mirabehn

462. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

May 11, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I am writing this letter at a station far away from Nellore. Your letter of the 7th is lying in front of me.

If you think it necessary, you may certainly call a meeting of all the inmates of the Ashram. I expect to be there between May 28 and June 10. All of you should consult among yourselves and fix any date that you like during that period. However, think carefully about the usefulness of calling a meeting at this juncture. The real thing to

consider is where you, the workers, stand and what you wish; who can help in that? you should, however, do what seems best to all of you.

I have known for long that Bhagwandas is crazy. I write a few things to him occasionally.

Do as you suggest about the sum of Rs. 125 belonging to the Ramashram.

For the time being, write of Jagjivandas and inform him that we have not been able to trace the amount. Write to Revashankerbhai and inquire of him what happened to it.

It is a fine thing indeed that you supply milk to Ranchhodbhai's mill.

I have sent a wire to say that I have taken Sakhi Gopal with me. If I find that everything is all right, I will write to Vallabhbhai and ask him to send money for repairs. For the widows, send the amount asked for by him. I am returning Jagannath Rath's letter. Scrutinize the balance-sheet of khadi and keep your comments ready for my perusal when I arrive there. The note should be prepared by an expert.

There is no fear at all of Mahadev's strength being taxed because of his doing routine work. On the contrary, his strength has increased because he was made to do such work. It gives clarity and firmness to one's thoughts. Anyone who merely thinks without putting his ideas as into practice will have no real force in what he writes. An instance of this is provided by the article on the Charkha by Tikekar of Indore. If you do not know how, ask me; it is worth knowing.

You were right in writing to Premraj and asking him to go to Jabalpur.

I take it you have written to Mathuradas for his consent before sending Radha.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5416

463. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

May 11, 1929

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter regarding the Lalaji Memorial. Lala Jaswant Rai's contribution will, of course, be used for the Hall. I think I should send to the Society all the money received in this connection. There is nothing more to be written on the matter.

I am at present making a dietetic experiment. Since it started only three days ago I can say nothing about it as yet. But I have met a gentleman who asserts that this experiment is usually very successful. Its secret lies in taking only uncooked food.

I got the letter from Sitaramji. I have replied to it.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6168. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

464. LETTER TO GANGADEVI SANADHYA

May 11, 1929

CHI. GANGADEVI,

I have your letter and that of Totaramji. It is good that Totaramji's eyes are all right. He should see that they are not spoiled again.

Do not leave off sun-baths. I am confident that your pain can be cured—at any rate controlled—by nature-cure, never with drugs. Your diet should be simple and not too much. Keep physical exertion to the minimum.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2546

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

KHADI AND SWARAJ[1]

WHY CAN KHADI HELP US TO WIN SWARAJ?

Because

Over three-quarters of India's population are under-employed and underfed agriculturists, and khadi can give them work and food.

Because

One of England's chief reason for holding India in subjection is that she finds in India the finest market for her cotton cloth, and khadi can put an end to that market.

WHY CAN KHADI HELP US TO WIN SWARAJ? BETTER THAN INDIAN MILL-CLOTH?

Because

Khadi can give supplementary work to the crores of distressed agriculturists who must not leave their land, and therefore cannot go to work in mills.

Because

Cotton mills could never give sufficient work to relieve the vast masses of the unemployed.

Because

The production of Khadi can be quickly organized on an enormous scale at very small cost, whereas to substantially increase the mills would mean enormous expenditure and delay of many years.

NOTE

The cost of setting up a modern yarn mill of 20,000 spindles is approximately Rs. 1,660,917. If this sum were invested in charkhas, it could provide at least 1,660,917 hand-spindles instead of 20,000 mill-spindles and the output of yarn could be at least 13 to 14 times greater than that of the mill. This is allowing 10 hours a day at the rate of 600 yards per hour for mill-spindles and 4 hours a day at the rate of 250 yards for hand-spindles.

From the original: C.W. 5345. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] Extracted from "Notes on Khadi", by Mirabehn; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 24-2-1929.

APPENDIX II

PROHIBITION CAMPAIGN[1]

1. Each Provincial Congress Committee shall appoint a Prohibition Sub-Committee or put a single person in charge in order to prosecute the Congress anti-drink and drug campaign in the province, and set aside sufficient funds for the purpose.

2. The Sub-Committee or member in charge in each province shall call for honorary workers who are willing to organize the anti-drink campaign in the talukas. The provincial Sub-Committee shall thereupon select from these one worker for each taluka who shall be the anti-drink secretary for the taluka, provided that the Sub-Committee shall have power to change the secretary if it deems necessary.

3. The organizing secretary of each taluka shall proceed to form Anti-Drink Sabhas in as many towns and villages of the taluka as possible, enrolling as members all persons sympathizing with the object, viz., the eradication of the drink and drug evil and the enactment of laws for total prohibition. Members of these Sabhas need not necessarily be members of any Congress Committee or habitual wearers of khadi.

4. Attached to every such Anti-Drink Sabha and subject to its control shall be organized a volunteer corps in which shall be enrolled men and women ready to render honorary active service strictly adhering to the principle of non-violence and carrying out the instructions issued from time to time by the Provincial Sub-Committee and the taluka secretary.

5. On the second Sunday of every month meetings and processions shall be organized against the use of intoxicating drugs and drinks and demanding total prohibition.

6. Besides the holding of the above monthly meetings, it will be the duty of primary organizations and the taluka secretary to organize as many gatherings as possible in their respective areas, and village-to-village and house-to-house visits for combating the evil within their jurisdiction.

7. Anti-Drink Sabhas and Congress Committees shall organize wherever possible healthy counter-attractions at such places and hours as may be suitable in order to divert people from the drink habit.

8. At each anti-drink meeting, pledges shall be taken in solemn form from all persons promising to abstain from alcoholic drink and drugs.

9. Sabhas may after obtaining the sanction of the Provincial Sub-Committee organize peaceful picketing of liquor and drug shops wherever the same may be usefully done by their volunteers.

10. Sabhas shall exercise their influence to prevent landholders and lessees

[1] *Vide* "Prohibition Campaign", 4-4-1929 & 23-5-1929.

from letting out their trees for tapping for manufacture of intoxicating drinks.

11. Sabhas shall dissuade people from bidding at auction sales of the right to vend drinks and drugs.

12. On or before the third Sunday of every month each taluka secretary shall gather information and send to the Provincial Sub-Committee a brief report of the meetings held on the Sunday preceding and other work done during the month in his taluka. The Provincial Sub-Committee shall consolidate these reports and send them to the Working Committee and to the Press for publication.

13. Written pledges shall be taken from voters and citizens supporting total prohibition in the following form with names and full addresses legible written:

"I hereby pledge myself to support the enactment of laws for the total prohibition of intoxicating drinks and drugs as indispensable for the moral, economic and social welfare and progress of our country. I further declare that in any election to local bodies and provincial and all-India legislative bodies I shall not vote for or support any candidate who has not signed the pledge in support of total prohibition."

Suitable books for taking these pledges shall be distributed by Provincial Committees.

14. The Provincial Sub-Committee may appoint a District Prohibition Secretary when the amount of work within the district calls for such appointment.

15. If and when elections to the Legislative Councils and Assembly are held and Congressmen participate in them the introduction and active promotion of total prohibition shall be made a part of the election pledge of Congress candidates.

Young India, 23-5-1929

1. WHAT COMPRISES FOREIGN GOODS?

A gentleman asks: "Should we boycott all foreign goods or only some select ones?"

This question has been asked many times and I have answered it many times. And the question does not come from only one person. I face it at many places even during my tour.

In my view, the only thing to be boycotted thoroughly and despite all hardships is foreign cloth, and that can and should be done through khadi alone.

Boycott of all foreign things is neither possible nor proper. The difference between swadeshi and foreign cannot hold for all time, cannot hold even now in regard to all things. Even the swadeshi character of khadi is due to circumstances. Suppose there is flood in India and only one island remains on which a few persons alone survive and not a single tree stands; at such a time the swadeshi dharma of the marooned would be to wear what clothes are provided and eat what food is sent by generous people across the sea. This of course is an extreme instance.

So it is for us to consider what our swadeshi dharma is. Today many things which we need for our sustenance and which are not imposed upon us come from abroad. As for example, some of the foreign medicines, pens, needles, useful tools, etc., etc.

But those who wear khadi and consider it an honour or are not ashamed to have all other things of foreign make fail to understand the significance of khadi. The significance of khadi is that it is our dharma to use those things which can be or are easily made in our country and on which depends the livelihood of poor people; the boycott of such things and deliberate preference of foreign things is *adharma*.

A person who loves his country and has concern for the poor would pass in review the foreign things he uses and would use indigenous articles in place of those foreign articles which he liked more and had been using so far for his pleasure.

On this tour itself I have observed that people place before me cakes of foreign soap, and never a single one produced in Madras, Mysore, Bombay and Bengal. Those who do this are all khadi-weavers. These days wherever I go for propagating khadi, I ask for a khadi-

clad barber. It is with some effort that such a barber is found. Much of his equipment is foreign-made: razor, brush, soap and mirror, and they are arranged in a foreign-made box. So I pay the barber his wages and explain to him the swadeshi dharma. I can recount many such experience. At present ink, fountain-pens, etc., are manufactured in our country. The thoughtful should be on the look out for such things and as far as possible use only those articles which are produced in the country. If it is argued that not all the things made in the country are good, that of course is true. But there are difficulties in the observance of dharma as such. What is the value of practising something which offers no trouble? Wise people can help remove the inconveniences if they use swadeshi things of their own will even putting up with hardships. If I use indigenous soap, notice its shortcomings and draw the makers' attention to them, they may perhaps try to remove them. It is only thus that things have improved in quality and design and are still being improved.

At this stage we have to consider one thing more. Do foreign goods mean only British goods or anything made outside India? I know there is a difference of opinion about this. I do not wish to discuss the problem from the point of view of non-violence but to put it before you from the practical point of view. We shall merely exhibit our weakness if we threaten to do something which we cannot do and will never be able to do. It is my belief that we use many British things even against our will. Those who are familiar with the figures of India's imports know that the Government itself imports British goods worth crores of rupees and we use them; e.g., the rails for the track and a lot of other equipment for railways. We use English books of our own will. Another objection from the practical point of view is that, while differentiating between British and other foreign goods, there is a danger of our using British goods under the label of other foreign goods. This has happened in the past and may happen in future. Who can prevent a British manufacturer of fountain-pens from writing on his products 'Made in Australia'? Some traitors among cloth merchants have torn off the British labels on British dhotis and have sold them as swadeshi dhotis. Who can prevent British cloth from coming in *via* Japan as Japanese cloth? We are not going to benefit in the least by importing articles other than British. Then we shall have to make a second attempt to boycott this other foreign cloth and it may be difficult to do so.

Our aim is swaraj, independence. We do not want other people's

domination after getting rid of British rule. Considered from all angles and from the practical point of view, we can take but one decision.

Pure khadi is pure swadeshi and one who realizes this will satisfy even his other needs by means of things produced in the country, giving up the use of those superfluous things that are not manufactured here.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-5-1929

2. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

NELLORE,
May 13, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I do hope you got the detailed programme that was sent to you. There is no letter from you today. I hope you have plenty of congenial work at the Vidyapith.

I want your criticism on my article in reply[to] de Ligt's second open letter which has been published in *Young India*.[1] I have made a change in my diet which I do not describe as we shall soon meet. The change has been made purely by way of experiment as I like it and as I have met a man who knows all about it. Of course there is nothing to worry about in this. If it does not agree with me, I shall give it up.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5375. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] *Vide* "A Complex Problem", 9-5-1929

3. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

NELLORE,
Silence Day, May 13, 1929

SISTERS,

There are only a few days to go before we meet again. It is getting hotter here every day, as it must be there. I don't feel the heat much. Your firmness in keeping up with the prayer classes, the infant-school and the kitchen is, I think, a good gesture. All the three are imperfect, and will remain so for ever. It will be enough if we remain vigilant and keep improving them. Even if we try to keep them going, some improvement will take place automatically. All of you shouldlearn the verses which make up the women's prayers and understand their meaning correctly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3698

4. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Silence Day, May 13, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Three letters from you of the 6th, the 8th and the 9th have piled up. It is all right if you have changed the time for prayers and meals; you have done nothing wrong in that.

You must have sent an acknowledgment to Lady Ramanathan.

Has not the sum been sent to Tiruchengodu? Has it not been acknowledged in *Young India*?

The money which we receive from France is not from a gentleman but from a lady. It is the same Mirbel, who had once stayed in the Ashram for about a month.

Shivabhai must have recovered.

You need not insist on the students memorizing the verses of the *Gita*. They themselves should insist on doing that. All of us, of course, should know how to recite them correctly.

My having given up breakfast is not an act of sacrifice; it was

rendered necessary by my travels. I feel helpless at not being able to go for morning and evening walks. When I teach the *Gita*, I don't set aside a special time for it; my enthusiasm shows me the way. When I was there, I used the time allotted to spinning in discussions with inmates of the Ashram. Here I give the first half hour to Prabhavati, and the half hour in the afternoon to the workers. Since, instead of everyone joining in the recitation at the time of the prayer, a different person recited the verses every day, we could correct the pronunciation of the person who was doing his turn. In this way we could effect much improvement. People still commit mistakes, but they are getting fewer. This does not impose the slightest burden on my mind or my time; on the contrary, it gives me more peace of mind. The person who learns in this manner likes doing so. He does not feel that it is a task.

It is only after I arrive there that I think I shall be able to write about the money received from Rangoon.

Do you examine the cash book every day? Do you sign it daily? Do you inspect the vouchers every day? If you do not, start doing it. Follow the rule no matter who is in charge of the work.

Sitla Sahai seems to be busy all right. I was to reach Bombay on the morning of the 23rd; instead I shall reach on the evening of the 22nd. I expect to return to the Ashram before the 28th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5417

5. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

NELLORE,
Silence Day, May 13, 1929

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. You should not hesitate to write to me even if you misspell words. You have no reason to be ashamed of your spelling mistakes. If one were to devote plenty of time just for this task it also can be mastered. But it would not be right to devote so much time to it. Do therefore what you can. We value a letter for its ideas, not its grammar.

Do settle the matter relating to Kaku's father.[1] At the same time improve your health too. Maitreyi too will benefit.

I do believe that girls too should have education. We shall talk about this. Our separation will end soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: G.S. Gangabehnne, p. 18.

6. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

May 13, 1929

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. If my health permits, I will keep the date. Be assured of that. Mirabehn will certainly be with me. Have I written that ? Will there be difficulty if there are more persons? Are there good facilities for staying, etc.? Are there places cheap enough for persons to stay on their own? Write to me if you want minimum number of persons to accompany me.

What Kishorelal writes about Chhaganlal is surprising[2]. There is nothing wrong in your letter. You have not been hasty. Even the letter I have sent, is not meant as criticism of Chhaganlal. I do not know that Narandas has interpreted it that way. Narandas has said that Chhaganlal left because of his weakness. I suggested to him to stay here on rent. So, he decided to call back his luggage which had been sent to the station and stayed on. I do not know anything about Jamnadas. But do not worry. I do not see much difficulty if Chhaganlal comes there. The article in *Navajivan*[3] had not been written when I had raised a strong objection. After its publication, Chhaganlal is free to go and stay wherever he likes. Now we have to reckon the value of that article. Many persons at fault have been protected by that. I will talk to Kishorelalbhai when I meet him in Bombay. Send him this letter if you want to. I keep writing to

[1] Damodar Saraiya, addressee's son-in-law

[2] For Gandhiji's letter to Kishorelal on the same subject, dated "About May 18, 1929" *vide* "The Agrievances of the Abritish Indians"

[3] The reference presumably is to the article titled "My Shame and Sorrow" published in *Navajivan*, dated April 7, 1929; *vide* "My Shame and Sorrow",8-4-1929

Chhaganlal as well as to Kashi. I worry about them and will keep on worrying about them and so, you may give up worrying about them. If you want to make any suggestions, certainly do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I find from the letter I am just reading that Dadabhai's grand-daughter Khurshedbehn will also be with me. Do not involve anyone in unnecessary expenses for my sake. For toilet there is no need for a western commode. A hole can be made in one of the boxes and a bucket kept underneath. For food, eggs and fruits you get there would be sufficient.

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32965

7. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER[1]

NELLORE,
May 13, 1929

I shall reach Bombay on the 22nd evening according to the revised programme. There is not much difference between this and the original programme.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6782

8. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

[About *May 13, 1929*][2]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I got your letter of the 8th inst. Can all the persons accompanying me be accommodated in the Prema Vidyalaya?

[1] The addressee is not known.
[2] As noted by the addressee. Also *vide* the preceding item.

As far as I can see today, the following at least will be accompanying me: Mirabehn, Khurshedbehn, Kusumbehn Desai, Ba, Pyarelal, Subbiah, Jamnadas, Purshottam and Prithuraj. This is but a rough guess. It may perhaps be too much of a burden to take all of them with me wherever I go. My own inclination is to bring as few as possible. But I will see what can be done.

What were the points left unanswered in your previous letter? Itore it up. It will, of course, be good if you can tempt Devdas to go to Rajkot. You should go on writing to Chhaganlal that he should go to the Ashram.

You need to have self-confidence, that is, confidence in the rightness of what you have decided to do. Even if the whole world were to tell you that the letter you wrote was improper, you should cling to your own view. That does not mean that you should cling to an error even when you have recognised it as such. If your elders think that what you did was not right, you should certainly consider their opinion and respect it. But then, we should not hastily form an opinion that if even one elder disapproves of it, it deserves to be condemned. Unless you acquire such firmness, you will make no progress.

You are not right in assuming that I will leave exactly on the 10th. What I meant was that I will enter the whole region connoted by 'Almora' on the 15th. Now I will try to leave earlier. But would not it do if I tell you the exact date after returning to the Ashram?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarat original: S.N. 33026

9. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

May 14, 1929

CHI. MAHADEV,

I write this on Tuesday at 3.30 before prayers. We must set out at 6 and I don't know about the postal arrangements where we are going to camp.

A gist of your article about Unai (regarding khadi activities and drinking) ought to appear in *Young India*. You must have noticed, haven't you, that nowadays there is no co-ordination between *Young*

India and *Navajivan*? The reason obviously is that you and I are away from each other and are both busy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11434

10. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 14, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter of 10th. I did receive all your letters but too late to enable me to send any letters to Jeradai. I began the Sadaquat Ashram address on your wire. I hope you have all the letters sent there.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5376. Courtesy: Mirabehn

11. IN ANDHRA DESHA [*-V*]

The following itinerary will give the reader an idea of the places and the amount collected during the last week.

Total collections already acknowledged in *Young India*, Rs. 1,54,961-15-0_.

East Godavari District:

2-5-1929—Tuni, Rs. 2,095-10-11.

3-5-1929—Kirlampudi, Rs. 145-1-9; Kodavali, 7-12-0; Chitrada, 122-0-0; Pithapuram, 1,488-3-6; Cocanada, 4,409-10-6 (Rs. 138-1-0 Lalaji Fund); Peddapur, 1,406-12-7_; Samalkot and Biccavole, 381-14-0; Narsapurampeta, 113-0-0; Pedabrahmadevam, 58-0-0; Medapadu, 406-12-0;

4-5-1929—Valangi, Rs. 1,772-0-9; Ramachandrapuram, 2,331-6-0; Vella, 216-0-0; Aryavattam, 536-0-0; Draksharam, 321-0-0; Gollapalem and Mutukuwalli, 313-4-9.

5-5-1929—Chodavaram, Rs. 316-0-0; Mandapeta, 316-0-0; Alamuru, 2,100-0-0; Pulletikurru, 356-8-0; Palivela, 1,117-0-3; Mukkamala, 314-0-0; Ambajipeta, 115-8-3; Gangalakurru, 166-6-9; Pedapudi,

90-14-0; Amalapuram, 5,036-12-9; Bodasakurru, 191-0-0; Nagaram, 163-0-0; Mogalikuduru, 101-3-6.

6-5-1929—Rajele, Rs. 2,500-3-3; Tatipaka, 1,281-6-9; Mungonda, 116-0-0; Ravulapalem, 175-0-0 (Rs. 25 Lalaji Fund); Ryali, 913-15-6; Utchili, 100-0-0; Vaddiparru, 100-0-0; Peravaram, 148-8-9; West Godavari (subsequent collections), 116-0-0.

7-5-1929—Dosakayalapalli, Rs. 968-0-0; Rajahmundry, 5,802-10-4; (Rs. 120 Lalaji Fund); estimated value of jewels of East Godavari Dt. 2,500-0-0.

8-5-1929—Kateru, 308-8-0; Rajahmundry, 116-0-0; Korukonda, 50-0-0; Chodavaram, 184-0-0; Muggulla, 346-5-0; Rahitapuram, 333-7-0; Vedullapalli, 110-0-0; Inugantivaripeta, 500-0-0; Rajampeta, 115-0-0; Katavaram, 13-7-0; Sitanagaram and Kondipudi, 2,116-9-10.

9-5-1929—Polavaram, Rs. 663-13-9; Singavaram and Vangalapudi, 793-1-9.

Total Rs. 2,01,792,-14-3.

Events are so crowded in one upon another that it is difficult to write about them all or to make a selection. I must therefore be satisfied with giving only an outline of some of the most important ones.

UNTOUCHABILITY

This deadly snake of untouchability is scotched but not destroyed. It shows its poisonous fangs even when you may least expect to see them. I was certainly not prepared for the following letter:

> I regret very much to bring to your kind notice, the following fact which occurred soon after the ladies' meeting held at Tanuku on the 22nd instant. At about 5 p.m. there were present three to four hundred ladies in the meeting. It was whispered by some in the meeting that the young lady who was sitting by you was a *Panchama* girl.
>
> As soon as the meeting was over, all the ladies who attended the meeting directly went to the canal and took a plunge in the water to purify themselves from the unpardonable sin of touching her. I saw with my own eyes even small children, nay more, suckling babies too, were sprinkled with holy water to save them also from this sin. We are deceiving you and honouring you. It is a pious ancient fraud with us. . . .
>
> People are steeped in ignorance and superstition. These combined with the pride of higher caste are ruining us and seem to be more powerful even than the present Government.

As it so happens the young lady sitting by me was no other than Shrimati Prabhavati Devi, the daughter of Brijkishore Babu, the well-known leader of Bihar. She has been with me in the Ashram for some time and has been travelling with me during the Andhra tour. By the vast majority of the people she has been taken to be my daughter, by some to be daughter-in-law, but it was reserved for the Tanuku ladies to confound her with Lakshmi, the *Antyaja* girl, whom I have adopted as my daughter in my own manner. And so being polluted by thetouch transmitted through me of the imaginary *Antyaja* girl the good ladies purified themselves and their children by a holy bath or a mere sprinkling. This tragic comedy has a lesson for us. Superstitious themselves, men having neglected the women folk, have allowed the latter to remain in darker superstition. After I got the letter, I became circumspective and began an examination of the composition of subsequent audiences. I found that at most meetings the untouchables were intermingled with the touchables. I asked the audience point-blank whether they had any objection. And they said they had none. At one of the villages near Rajahmundry I saw, at a well-arranged meeting, volunteers pointing with pride to the touchables, untouchables and women in their respective wards. I set a trap for them. "I suppose you have specially arranged in order to isolate the untouchables?" The poor volunteer who answered my question readily fell into the trap and said, "Yes, sir". I discovered afterwards that he knew very little English and had not understood my question. For I straightway asked the audience whether they had any objection to untouchables sitting in their midst. They showed by a chorus of hands that they had none. I was still not satisfied and therefore asked whether they would have me send the untouchables in their midst. They again raised their hands signifying assent. I asked them to signify the same with their voice. And they did so, at first softly. I asked for a loud-voiced declaration. And all sung out at the top of their voices, "*saray, saray*". Then I invited the untouchables to sit in their midst which they did without any hesitation and without any fear. Then I based my speech to the meeting on untouchability telling them that they had done a meritorious act by letting the untouchable brethren sit in their midst and that it was a sin to regard any human being as an untouchable. If, in spite of this ocular demonstration enforced by the explanation that I gave, the women or anybody had a purificatory bath, it will be a question for a psycho-analyst to dissect and consider. Let me finish this story by adding that the women also

had taken part in signifying their assent to the untouchables intermingling, and as a matter of fact the so-called untouchables sat with caste men and women touching both without my noticing any movement on the part of anybody to avoid them. In a village near by, a school is being conducted where both touchable and untouchable boys associate in large numbers without any friction. And so while I deplore occurrences such as happened at Tanuku, the fact cannot be gainsaid that untouchability is fast dying of exhaustion.

A GREAT INSTITUTION

The visit to the little village was preliminary to our entry into the area covered by the activities of the Gautami Sataygraha Ashram founded by Dr. B. Subrahmanyam in 1924. He left his lucrative practice in Rajahmundry for dedicating himself to national service. He saw at once that he could not render that service unless he himself lived in the midst of villagers and put himself in direct contact with them. Hence he established himself in Sitanagaram lying 14 miles from Rajahmundry; for, it was in a cluster of villages surrounding Sitanagram that the people had put up a brave fight with the Government in the heyday of non-co-operation. Many were the village officers who had given up their jobs. For their effrontery they were subjected to a punitive tax of nearly Rs. 5,000.

The Ashram occupies about 10 acres of ground. Khadi is its central activity and corollary activities are: rendering of free medical aid, Hindi *prachar*, library development, publication of a Telugu journal, service of depressed classes and general Congress work. According to the statement lying before me "spinning has been organized in all the surrounding villages within a radius of 5 miles form the Ashram, so as to be within, the reach of a single worker to carry on his regular weekly visits from house to house". Six carders are kept permanently at work to produce slivers at the rate of 5 annas per 3 lb. Professional spinners on the register of the Ashram number 193. Carders have up to now earned Rs. 795, the spinners Rs. 2,036. It is estimated that a spinner turns out from 6 to 9 lb of yarn per month enabling her to earn from Rs. 1-8-0 to Rs. 2-4-0. The count of the yarn ranges from 8 to 15 counts. The wage to turn out 3 lb of slivers into yarn ranges between 12 annas to 14 annas. 13 weavers belonging to the locality weave this yarn into towels, loin-cloths, dhotis, shirtings, etc. The average monthly earnings of a weaver are Rs. 15. Some very fine special work is also done in the

Ashram weavery. The weavers have earned from this work Rs. 8,114. Bleaching and dyeing has absorbed Rs. 1,217. Altogether Rs. 12,164 have been distributed amongst 235 men, women and boys in this *firka*. The Ashram has a branch at Pithapur where 450 wheels and 12 looms are controlled and their survey shows that 800 more wheels are awaiting work if capital can be found. The cloth produced in this centre won a gold medal at the Bangalore Exhibition of 1927 for the best plain cloth. The Ashram has also sale centres. There are 4 hawkers who regularly hawkkhadi in the neighbourhood. The princess amongst the hawkers is the old mother of Dr. Subrahmanyam. She is the most zealous amongst them and with her tireless energy commands the largest custom. Ashram sells khadi at half price to deserving *Panchamas*. The report says:

> A word about general khadi possibilities in the *firka* will not be out of place here. A close survey into its 22 villages will not fail to reveal the fact that the process of cotton industry up till a decade was in its full swing; that cotton was grown in every village and stocked in every house, and that an undertaking of work in the direction of developing home-spinning is necessary and can be carried on with encouraging results. As it is, the worker going on his rounds for spinning will observe that not a few families stock cotton and spin for their own use; in the Sitanagaram village alone, yarn sufficient for 400 yards of cloth was spun by 9 families last year for their own use.

I was taken to several places where self-spinning was being done by families that were doing it for pleasure and not for any economic reason. I saw two widows amongst them whose sole occupation was the spinning-wheel. Dr. Subrahmanyam as he introduced me to one of these young widows could not suppress his tears as he was describing her love of charkha to me.

The Ashram library has been replenished with the gift of the whole of his collection by the late Andhra Ratna Gopalakrishnayya of Cherala Perala fame. It has a reading room attached to it, which is well stocked with journals from all over India.

The Hindi *prachar* work is a special feature. Pandit P. V. Subbarao is at the head of this work. From September 1925 to the end of last year as many as 145 have learnt Hindi, and there is a regular class conducted at the Ashram for those who were willing to learn Hindi. Rs. 1,528 have been spent on this work including Rs. 1,495 as

salary of the Pandit.

The work amongst the depressed classes admits development. The Ashram is running a free night school for them. There is also a school where both touchables and untouchables receive instruction. *Bhajan* parties are organized amongst them.

There are 3 free dispensaries under the Ashram and there is a neatly-built indoor hospital to accommodate about 5 patients. Outdoor patients have up to now numbered 62,498, the indoor patients 300.

The *firka* registered 716 Congress members including 9 Mohammedans, one Christian of these 61 are females, 51 are untouchables.

A Telugu weekly called *Congress* is published at the Ashram, and is now regarded to be practically self-supporting . Its editor Sjt. M. Annapurniah had the honour of being arrested and imprisoned for sedition. The paper however was not allowed to die. His place was taken up by Sjt. K. Ramchandra Rao who was also arrested in his turn. Do Subrahmanyam himself stepped into the place and continued to edit the paper till Sjt. Annapurniah was released and resumed editorship. The paper began its career as a foolscap sheet printed on a cyclostyle which has now 14 pages of royal size and takes in selected advertisements, eschewing those for foreign cloth, liquor and British goods. And 'it stands for complete independence as against Dominion Status', so the report before me proudly says. The publication of a Hindi lesson in Telugu character is its regular feature. The Ashram had received up to the end of last year in donations Rs. 32,491 in cash, Rs. 3,747 in grain, Rs. 1,256 as voluntary gifts from patients ; and Rs. 4,000 in the shape of timber. It has substantial buildings in which the inmates are accommodated. Rs. 10,535 have been spent on their maintenance. There are 12 members in the Ashram. The allowance is Rs. 20 for a single man, Rs. 30 for a family of two and Rs. 5 for every additional member. This includes clothing allowance. The charges per head of inmates with their families numbering 31 amount to Rs. 7 per month.

This bald statement of facts hardly gives an adequate idea of this great undertaking. Nowhere during this extensive tour have I seen so much life as in this group of villages. Though living their own lives, they have become part of the villagers and have therefore acquired great influence over them. The collections in this group of comparatively poor villages amounted to Rs. 5,000, a collection that

beats all record in Andhra. 5 acres of land were donated at the meeting addressed by me, a marked evidence of the popularity of the Ashram amongst the villagers. The Ashram furnishes an object-lesson in village reconstruction. Living in the midst of the villagers they are bound to respond to their wants and aspirations and they are bound to expand their activities in time to the measure of their ability and self-confidence. I observed that Dr. Subrahmanyam goes about his work cautiously. He says: "We live an ordinary *grihastha* life and we have not renounced any private property for the Ashram, though the inmates possess very little of their own. There is no provision in the Ashram for the marriages or other domestic ceremonies. We have not insured the lives of members. We feel that we are quite ordinary national workers." All honour to them for beingordinary workers. Why should it be considered extraordinary for an educated Indian to live in the villages of India? The extraordinary thing is the education that is foisted upon us makes us unfit for the village life and village work.

POLICE ATTENTION

From the Ashram we were to go to Polavaram,[1] a village about 6 miles from Sitanagaram on the other side of the river. We could therefore only cross by a ferry. Polavaram is situated in an Agency area. Agency means, I learnt, non-regulation. The police here I was told succeeded in frightening the ferry man away from the workers and he refused to carry us. This was an embarrassing situation. To be thus thwarted by the police appeared to me to be humiliating. A crowded programme had preceded the morning of the visit and a crowded programme was in front of me. And instead of having to give one hour if I was to visit the village is meant I had to give four hours and a half; but the time seemed to me to be of no consequence, the going to the village became a duty. The workers could get another launch to take us directly from Sitanagaram to Polavaram instead of our going by car in front of the village and then crossing the river. I accepted the offer. To go to the launch meant also some additional strain and time; but we successfully negotiated the visit. And I was glad that the arrogant purpose of men was frustrated by the Almighty Maker who humbles the pride and arrogance of the proud and the are ogant.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Polavaram", 9-5-1929

In Polavaram there is a little Ashram conducted by Sjt. P. Kothandaramayya and A. Venkatramayya. They are bringing up some boys of the aborigines amongst whom they are working and it was they who had planned this visit. It is apposite here to mention that throughout the tour we have been followed by a party of police. They have been coming as reporters and what not. As a rule I have not found them to be troublesome. They have even been courteous to me personally at least. Once when the car in which I was travelling had broken down, they gave the use of their car. So much to their credit. But they have also been found ready to show their brief authority and they have not hesitated to encroach upon the party. At Sitanagaram, but for the stubborn resistance of workers they would have occupied the little launch that carried us from Sitanagaram to Polavaram. The reader of course must not therefore think that it was the same policethat interfered with the ferry man. I simply mention the fact of the police attention to show that if a man like me who, I presume, is not regarded as a suspect so far as violent intentions are concerned, needs to have his footsteps thus dogged, what must be the fate of those who are under a shadow of suspicion and who are too sensitive to accommodate themselves to the police attention. Throughout my life it has been part of my creed not to avoid the police but to assist them in prying into all my work for I have always abhorred secrecy and it has made my life and work easy because of my indifference to this kind of surveillance. This indifference and invariable courtesy shown to the police result in the silent conversion of several amongst them. My indifference, however, is one thing and personal to me. As a system the police surveillance cannot but be described as a despicable thing unworthy of a good Government. It is a useless burden upon an already overburdened taxpayer. For, the whole of this extraordinary expenditure, it must be remembered, comes from the pockets of the toiling millions.

Young India, 16-5-1929

12. INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The office of the Agent of the Government of India in South Africa is certainly not a bed of roses. Sir K. V. Reddi, I see from the mail letter received from South Africa, is having his hands full. The greatest cause of anxiety so far as I can see is in connection with trade

licences in the area known as the Gold Area in the Transvaal. The largest number of Indian traders in the Transvaal are to be found in this area and these trade licences are a matter of life and death for them. They have built up large business in the hope of being able to have their licences renewed from year to year. Having survived the danger in the Krugerregime of their businesses being summarily closed at any time, they have rightly or wrongly come to believe that their licences will be perpetually renewed so long as they carry on an honest trade. I have certainly thought that the settlement of 1914 covered all these traders and their successors. If these were not vested rights, I do not know what vested rights could be in the Transvaal for them. But now I understand that municipalities are refusing to issue these licences, taking cover under a section of the Gold Law. Legally speaking, perhaps the Gold Law would prohibit Asiatics' trading. But that law was in existence even during the Kruger regime. It was in existence in 1914 when this settlement was arrived at. Therefore Sir K. V. Reddi should have no difficulty in securing protection for these traders. The agreement which was brought about by the Habibullah deputation contemplates leveling up of the British Indian position in South Africa. Levelling up will be a meaningless term for these traders if the only means up will be a meaningless term for these traders if the only means of earning their bread and butter is taken away from them. It is necessary therefore for public opinion here to strengthen the hands of the Agent in South Africa and the hands of the Government of India in prosecuting the claim for the protection of these traders. The matter is not free from difficulty I know. There is the general election pending in South Africa. The Union Ministers left to themselves will probably grant the protection that is so desirable. And that should be considered as obligatory if there is to be an honourable fulfilment of the Cape pact. But the electoral conditions in South Africa are not very different from these conditions in other parts of the world. But however difficult the situation may be, these traders must be protected. There is a proper, legitimate, easy way out of the difficulty apart from fresh legislation. Law 3 of 188 of the Transvaal is still in existence. The Gold Law does not supersede that law. Therefore the Gold law has got to be read in conjunction with the law 3 of 1885. Now that law enables the Government to declare wards, streets and locations as proper for Indian habitation and trade. It is open therefore to the Union Government by administrative action to declare such areas where Indians are

now trading to be proper places for Indian trade and residence.

There are other matters equally delicate but I need not refer to them at this stage as the danger in connection with them is not imminent and as it is necessary for public opinion to be crystallized and to concentrate over this single imminent danger.

Young India, 16-5-1929

13. 'ALCOHOLISM OF THOUGHT'

An esteemed European friend approving of my decision in postponing the European visit that was contemplated last year makes among other things the following pregnant observations on the condition to which the European Press is reduced at the present moment:[1]

> You know that the first act of a modern State, when at war, is to ruin her adversary in the opinion of the rest of the world; and for that she stifles its voice, and fills the world with her own. Yon know that the British Empire is a past master in that art, and that she is preparing by every means to blockade India, to isolate her from other nations, and to inundate those nations with her own propaganda. It has already begun! Last month the events in Bombay were a pretext for giving to the world the impression that India was in a state of fire and bloodshed. . . .
>
> Now, I have too much experience of the frightful intellectual passiveness to which the people of Europe are at present prone. Since the first days of the War of 1914 their unhappy brains have been subjected to such a journalistic intoxication by the whole European Press that they have become incapable of refinding themselves. It is another alcoholism, alcoholism of thought, which causes no less ravages than the other. One can practically say that there on longer exists, in the Occident, a single free newspaper. . . .

Notwithstanding the terrible handicap which this campaign of misrepresentation puts upon us, if we are strong in action, we may afford to disregard them and feel confident that our action, if it is true, will survive the calumny that is being spread in Europe and even in America and make itself felt.

Young India, 16-5-1929

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

14. THE WAY TO DO IT

In one of the addresses received by me in Andhra Desha there occurs this passage:

> We are grieved to admit that we can show nothing to our credit in the way of removal of untouchability, temperance propaganda and Hindi *prachar*. We request your help and guidance in suggesting to us ways and means of securing the necessary capital and selfless workers for the above objects.

This is an admission of helplessness which it would be difficult to understand perhaps in any other part of the world. For I am asked not merely to show how to secure the necessary capital, but also selfless workers. The address comes from those who describe themselves "your most trusted, most humble followers, members of the Town Congress Committee". If I have any followers who are "trusted and humble". I expect them above all to be selfless. Members of Congress Committees are unworthy to sit in a Congress Committee if they are not selfless. Of course I know that at the present moment there is an unseemly rivalry even in Congress Committees for offices. Yet every Congressman would admit that a Congress representative is nothing if he is not selfless. And if the 'salt loses it savour wherewith shall it be salted'? If my followers and these Congress Committee members are not selfless, where shall I find selfless workers for such people? The only way therefore I can show to my questioners about finding selfless workers is, 'be such workers yourselves, and then I promise that the necessary capital will follow'. Shadow invariably follows the Sun. It is men who make money. Money has never been known to make men. It may give us hirelings, but hirelings will never be able to remove untouchability and do temperance propaganda and even real Hindi *prachar* . Hirelings have no doubt a place in the world economy, but they come in after reform, they have never been able to initiate reform. Congressmen have therefor to carry out the triple reform. When untouchability has become a thing of the past, when temperance propaganda has become a popular thing and when everybody wants to learn Hindi, there will be no dearth of men who would give their services on hire and carry out the work that involves no risks.

What unfortunately I notice throughout my wanderings is that many Congressmen do not care so much for constructive work as forexcitement and work that will bring them into prominence without

costing them much labour, if any at all. This mentality has to be changed before we can have a steady supply of workers. Everywhere I am surrounded by healthy-looking intelligent volunteers who spare no pains to make me comfortable and who under the impulse of service do not mind working day and night. If they could but be induced to transfer this devotion to a person who really does not need all that volume of service and who is more often than not embarrassed by such attention, to the cause which he represents, the problem is solved. Everywhere I am holding meetings of workers and I have found them to be enough for the work to be done if they will only apply themselves to it. But it is these very workers who compose addresses of the type I have mentioned and who even at these quiet meetings ask me to produce money and men. I therefore suggest to every Congress Committee to become business-like and find out true workers, fix the scale of payment for them and set the constructive machinery going. For this, Congress Sub-Committees need not look for guidance to provincial bodies or to the central body. Provincial bodies may have their provincial service or may not. They may be too heavily encumbered to attempt any such thing. Not so Taluka or Village Congress Committees. They are absolutely autonomous. There is nothing to prevent them from making collections and initiating any reform they choose. Indeed during the interesting tour in Andhra, I have noticed that in some places efficient Committees have been doing work which other Committees have grossly neglected.

Let Congressmen not think of 1930. The first of January 1930 is not going to witness a miracle. It would be an exact resultant of national activities during this year of grace and probation. No sudden change will come over the nation on the first of January 1930. Let individual Congressmen therefore do their little best. It is then possible for them to awaken the nation. Let them not think that one individual can make no impression upon the nation or a cause. After all causes are handled by an aggregate of individuals. Someone has to make the beginning. Let everyone therefore who understands the secret of success in any undertaking do his won duty unmindful of what the others do or do not do.

Let there be no shame about accepting remuneration. A labourer is worthy of his hire. And he is no less selfless because he accepts remuneration. As a matter of fact, a most selfless man has to give his all to the nation—body, mind and soul. And he has still to feed himself. The nation gladly feeds such men and women and

yetregards them as selfless. The difference between a voluntary worker and a hireling lies in the fact that whereas a hireling gives his service to whosoever pays the price, a national voluntry worker gives his service only to the nation for the cause he believes in and he serves it even though he might have to starve.

Young India, 16-5-1929

15. NOTES

PANDIT SUNDERLAL'S BOOK

The U.P. Government is not satisfied with the outrageous confiscation of the copies of Pandit Sunderlal's book *History of English Rule,* but it is now persecuting everyone suspected of having received a copy before the ban was declared. Whether egged on by the U.P. Government or of its own motion, the C.P. Government has copied the U.P. Government and proclaimed the ban on the book. The question a correspondent now puts is: what are the poor people to do who have got these books? In my opinion it is no part of the possessor of these volumes to surrender them to the police. There is no moral breach in possessing the volume. And those who believe that this confiscation is a wicked act of robbery are not only not bound to assist the process of confiscation but by every legitimate means to thwart the authorities in their nefarious attempt to take possession of the books that have gone out of the publisher's hands. If I were a possessor of such a copy and I did not want to run the risk of a prosecution, I should burn the copy. If I wanted to invite prosecution I would inform the police of possession of a copy and challenge them to arrest me. If I did not wish to invite prosecution, but did not mind it if it came, I should still retain possession leaving the police to their own resources to trace the copy in my possession.

I understand that the C. P. Notification says that even the publication of extracts form the book would be considered a crime. I hope this information is not true. But if it is, it enables newspapers to show tangible sympathy for the author and the publisher as also to defeat the purpose of the Governments concerned by publishing extracts which can be sent by those who are in possession of the volume. The Central Government and local Governments are providing us with opportunities for offering mild civil disobedience which those who believe in it should not hesitate to take advantage of.

Terribly debilitating though the atmosphere is at the present moment, those who have not yet lost their nerve need not be affected by it, but they should seek every legitimate opportunity of giving hope and courage to the workers by challenging the Government to do its worst.

ABHAY ASHRAM

The readers of *Young India* are not unaware of this important national institution. Its report of activities for the year 1928 has just been received. It is a record of all-round progress. Its khadi department is its largest activity. Here is the record of its progressively increasing sales:

1924 Rs. 21,822	1926 Rs. 1,42,960
1925 Rs. 70,620	1927 Rs. 1,42,820
	1928 Rs. 1,88,091

The total wages distributed were Rs. 70,525 as under:

Weavers	Rs. 29,492	Spinners	Rs. 30,453
Tailors	Rs. 7,081	Washermen	Rs. 3,494

The work is done through its 23 khadi centres which support 61 whole-time workers controlled by an annually elected board. The capital invested in this activity is Rs. 1,21,000, of which Rs. 55,000 is a loan from the All-India Spinners' Association. It has to pay to the banks from which it has the balance of the loan a high rate of interest which amounts to Rs. 5,000 per year. It is therefore up to the public to either pay this interest or to give loans free of interest but on the same terms as the banks advance them.

The Ashram is making experiments in dyeing and it claims now to be able "to dye fast colours of uniform shade without the use of any machine." The report proceeds, "Our khaki which has been fast to sunlight, bleaching and perspiration, we specially recommend to our buyers."

The other activity of the Ashram is national education. It controls 31 primary schools of which 17 are in the district of Dacca, 9 in Tippera and 5 in Bankura, serving 1,058 pupils. It has three schools for secondary education, serving 199 students. The total amount spent on education is Rs. 4,702-9-6. It has also a medical department with an outdoor dispensary, a hospital, a medical school and a seva samiti. The dispensary served 3,157 patients, of which 721 were females. The largest number of cases were naturally of malaria. Next comes worms 277 cases and third kalazar. The hospital has 20 beds. 215 patients

were admitted during the year under review. The expenses of the dispensary and hospital amounted respectively to Rs. 1,574 and 4,400. The medical school is training 20 students. The main function of the Sevasadan is house to house collection of rice for the maintenance of poor patients in the hospital. The Ashram is not a believer in untouchability or hereditary caste distinctions. It does a little bit of agriculture and produced 200 maunds of paddy in 18 bighas of lands and it grew vegetables enough to last 6 months for the 50 inmates of the Ashram. It has 6 milch cows and 10 buffaloes. An attempt is being made to have a model diary farm at Dacca. It has libraries at several of its centres. The Ashram collected Rs. 37,000 for its different activities from the public. Altogether it has received donations of one lakh and a half of rupees during the five years of its existence. Its requirements for the next year are Rs. 50,000 for the khadi department and Rs. 50,000 for the other departments. An institution like this should have no difficulty in obtaining necessary funds from a discerning public.

FOREIGN-CLOTH BOYCOTT

The following[1] from a precis of information published by the Foreign Cloth Boycott Committee should stimulate the other municipalities and local boards to action.

COARSE KHADI

The foreign-cloth boycott movement has naturally sent up the khadi sale and production barometers. But if production of khadi is to be limitless the quality of khadi must suffer for a time. By patient effort and instruction, A.I.S.A. has been able to show a progressive rise in the fineness and texture of khadi. But when workers go out to raw spinners and ask them for yarn they may not dictate terms. The raw spinners will not be able all of a sudden to spin fine and even yarn. The public, therefore, if they will help the khadi movement and therethrough the starving millions, should at every new wave and new opening for khadi be satisfied with comparatively coarser stuff during the temporary period. To use coarse khadi is not too great a price to pay for achieving boycott of foreign cloth or for helping India's paupers.

[1] Not reproduced here

A.I.S.A. MEMBERSHIP

The reader will have seen a notice of the A.I.S.A. in last week's issue of *Young India* announcing that it had decided to discontinue the 'B' class membership. I think that this is a step in the right direction. 'B' class membership was introduced only in order to conciliate somewho professed their inability to send 1,000 yards permonth of hand-spun yarn. Experience however has shown that not over many have taken advantage of 'B' class membership which meant spinning only 2,000 yards per year. And when a limited power of voting for the election of members to the Council was announced, the absurdity of 'B' class membership became patent. 'A' class members repeatedly applied for being classed as 'B' class members in order not to forfeit the right of voting. The Council did not want to go back upon the rules that were framed for voting. So the original list remained undisturbed. But for all future occasions it was decided to have only 'A' class members. And as the policy of the Spinners' Association has been from the very commencement to have those only as members who have the fullest faith in the message of the spinning-wheel, it was considered desirable to have only one class of members with stricter qualification. This would no doubt considerably reduce the members of the Association. But the Council has no hesitation in running the risk. It does not show much faith in the message of the spinning-wheel if members are not willing to devote even half an hour to spinning from day to day.

Apropos of this the Technical Department of the A.I.S.A. has written to the several agencies that the yarn which is sent to them as subscriptions for membership is not uniformly good. It is packed anyhow and it is sent often without considering the cost of posting. The note says:

> In some cases to postal charges exceeded the price of the yarn sent. In one agency alone the postal charges for all the yarn received amounted to Rs. 55, namely, 60 per cent of the price of the total yarn. The suggestion therefore made is that the yarn should be sent from one place in each province and it should be by goods train.

In some cases the yarn sent was so uneven and rough that it was useless. I have repeatedly said that where the yarn is useless, it really should not be accepted as subscription. Yarn subscription means yarn that is weavable just as monetary subscription means money that would

be accepted in the market and not counterfeit coins. The subscribing spinners should really know all the details about spinning and packing and this work is essentially one that the agencies should attend to.

Young India, 16-5-1929

16. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 16, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I have one letter of 11th. Of course you write as often as you like and make use of the distance-destroying conveniences. I simply pointed out that we might not disturb our peace when and if they were withdrawn.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I am going away from the Calcutta route now. So I may not write at all now. For we meet at Bombay on 22nd, God willing.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5377. Courtesy: Mirabehn

17. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[*May 16, 1929*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have to visit such obscure places these days that I do not get the post regularly, and with the slightest change in programme the arrangements get upset. I, therefore, get the mail later than I ordinarily would. But not many days remain now. Today is Thursday. I expect to reach Bombay on Wednesday evening.

So far I have kept good health. I think there is little likelihood now of its becoming bad. Even in this *Dattamandal* the heat is not as

[1] Gandhiji was to reach Bombay on Wednesday, May 22. The letter was obviously written on preceding Thursday which was May 16.

great as I had thought it would be. The people of Andhra call the "ceded tracts"[1] *Dattamandal.*

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Sankaran has arrived here. He says he will come to the Ashram after about three months. I have sent Subbiah to Rajaji. He will probably return by the time I arrive in Bombay.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p.107

18. LETTER TO MOHANLAL BHATT

May 16, 1929

BHAISHRI MOHANLAL,

I am sending as much matter for *Young India* as I have got ready. Today Subbiah is not here; so I am sending it as it is. You must get this on Monday. I fail to understand why you do not get on Mondays what should reach you on Mondays, in spite of the great care we take about it.

I went through Mahadev's articles in *Navajivan*. Owing to negligence grammatical errors have gone undetected. *Navajivan* is something to be preserved. Through it we wish to present correct language and correct spelling. The language and spelling should therefore conform to our rules. Our proofs ought to be thoroughly examined even if we have to appoint the experts needed for this. What I say will be clearer if you go through Mahadev's articles. Let Mahadev read this letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

[Encl.]
Prohibition
Andhra Notes
Need of the Hour
Liberate the Woman[2]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11756

[1] Gandhiji uses the English phrase.
[2] The source has these lines in English.

19. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

May 17, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter of the 14th only today. Others will overtake me by and by. I am glad that Ranchhodbhai has come.

I had completely forgotten that Maganlal's death anniversary was approaching. Had I not been writing the diary, I would not remember even the date and the day of the week. I, however, observe Maganlal's death anniversary every day. I am not, therefore, sorry that I did not remember the conventional day. It was the duty of you all to remember it, and you seem to have performed that duty well.

I too believe that it is not wise to encourage the practice of continuous spinning on special occasions. But I also approve of one wheel being kept going continuously on such a day.

It would be better if the sanitary work done on that day was kept up. Our lavatories and urinals are certainly not as clean as they should be.

Mahadev's letter is worthy of him. The despair it contains does not touch me. I have full faith that everyone is doing his best. We have not fallen. We should, of course, be vigilant and, therefore, to a certain degree self-criticism is necessary.

We are now counting the days before we reach Bombay. Today is Friday. Sunday and Monday will be spent in Kurnool. We intend to catch the Fast Passenger at Adoni on Tuesday night. On Wednesday night, we arrive in Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I send with this a letter from Mirabehn about the spindle for those of you to read who may be interested in the subject. It is worth reading.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5418

20. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 18, 1929

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I think it wrong to try to run the affairs of the Ashram from a distance. But that is what I have had to do all my life. It was so even during Maganlal's time. It is true that as he came to know my nature better, my burden became less and there was less need for him to consult me. But he certainly asked me whenever necessary. After I return this time, however, we shall make some other arrangement if possible. I am certainly not longing to control the Ashram affairs. I tore up your letter after reading it.

If anyone in the Ashram speaks ill of Chhaganlal, we should bear with that. If people speak ill of him, they have praised him too.

All the letters which I received were expressions of love. Do you not think that Chhaganlal should continue to stay in the Ashram as a measure of atonement, if for no other reason ? If he cannot do so, that is a different matter. Dharma requires that he should. You do not seem to have understood my meaning when I said that he should become a cipher and remain. A cipher means not a person who does not work but one who is free from egoism. Chhaganlal has always harboured the egoistic sense of being someone. That is way he was tempted by sin. All that I meant was that this egoism should disappear. If Chhaganlal cannot live according to the ideals of the Ashram and cannot be a member of the common kitchen, he may live in the same manner as you will be doing. Even by doing that he will overcome his egoism. But we shall talk more about this. I don't wish to insist on my view in this matter either.

I desire the good of Chhaganlal and Kashi and am ready to do anything which will promote it.

We shall talk about Purushottam when we meet. He must build up his health.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have written this in the midst of a crowd of people coming and going.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine—Part I, pp. 53-4

21. LETTER TO K. NARASAM

[*May 18, 1929*]

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. If a separate room does not end the struggle, you should live in separate houses or even villages.

All passion would be burnt by merging oneself in God.

If one would identify oneself with the villagers the wearing of khaddar is a religious duty.

Non-violence is the keystone of life.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. K. NARASAM
TANUKU

From a photostat: G.N. 8809

22. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

[About *May 18, 1929*][1]

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Received your letter. The expression "reducing oneself to zero" has also been curiously interpreted. I hope Chhaganlal Gandhi has not taken it in that sense. I talk about reducing oneself to zero everywhere. Chhaganlal was proud of it all—he still is—and so Istressed that point on that occasion. I think Chhaganlal had

[1] From the contents this letter appears to have been written at the same time as the one to Narandas Gandhi dated May 18, 1929; *vide* "Letter to Naranadas Gandhi", 18-5-1929

understood it. With regard to Kashi[1], I explained what our duty was. Even before Kashi and he himself confessed to the incident it had been suggested that Kashi should stay in the women's section. But I had said that she might stay in the Ashram any way she wanted. She was too ashamed to stay. I continue to have correspondence with her and I take it that she is engaged in some useful work. Jamnadas[2] appears to have a tendency to exaggerate. Even if what he says is true, it applies only to the initial stage. Time settles everything. I can find work for Chhaganlal right now if he is willing. Otherwise, I should like to go on feeding him even if he does nothing. I have also suggested that he should live in solitude if he goes to Wardha. But Chhaganlal's pain has not yet subsided.

He himself will convey to you my view about Ramniklal[3].

How can you be cured of your asthma? When will you set a limit to the amount of work you should do?

Even your hasty scribble is better than my deliberate hand. It is never difficult to decipher.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 10721. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

23. A POSER[4]

A young man who is an employee in a mill writes:

> I am employed in the engineering department of a mill but I am sick of this business. I have over half a dozen relations dependent upon me for support. But not having been trained to any other profession I do not know how else I can eke out the necessary means to provide bread to them all. My monthly requirement comes to one hundred rupees. When I see the injustice that is daily perpetrated on the mill-hands and the utter selfishness and heartlessness of the mill-owners I begin to feel that service in a mill is even worse than Government service. What would you advise me to do in the

[1] Kashi Gandhi, wife of Chhaganlal Gandhi

[2] Jamnadas Gandhi

[3] Ramniklal Modi

[4] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan,* 19-5-1929. The translation is by Pyarelal.

circumstances? I am 26 years of age and have studied up to matriculation.

As an old English adage says you cannot eat your cake and have it. Similarly you cannot leave off service in a mill and yet have your one hundred *per mensem*. A close scrutiny of all highly remunerative professions in India will reveal the fact that they are almost all of them essentially products of British rule in India, and aresuch as serve in a more or less degree to sustain that rule. A country where the average daily income per head is seven pice cannot afford to pay high salaries, for the simple reason, that it would mean so much additional burden upon the toiling millions of the land who are already well-nigh crushed by their poverty. It follows therefore that the only course for a person, who wants to escape from the system of exploitation which the mills represent, would be drastically to reduce his family budget. This can be done in two ways: by a radical simplification of one's life and by reducing the number of dependants that one has to support. Every grown-up, able-bodied member of a family ought to be made to contribute his or her quota towards the upkeep of the family by honest industry. We have a number of domestic crafts that can be easily learnt and practised at home without the investment of any large capital. If he is not prepared to do any of these two things, he had better stick to the job in which he is engaged and do whatever service he can. Let him, if he is employed in a mill, try to make a close and sympathetic study of the hardships and miseries that are a mill-labourer's lot and do whatever is possible in the circumstances to alleviate them. Let him cultivate an exemplary purity, honesty and uprightness of conduct, and infect his fellow-employees with his ideals. If the subordinate employees are all upright in their conduct, they will thereby create a pure atmosphere which is bound to tell on their masters in the end and enable them to obtain justice from them for the mill-labourers.

All action in this world has some drawback about it. It is man's duty and privilege to reduce it, and while living in the midst of it, to remain untouched by it as much as it is possible for him to do so. To take an extreme instance, there can perhaps be no greater contradiction in terms than a compassionate butcher. And yet it is possible even for a butcher if he has any pity in him. In fact I have actually known butchers with gentleness that one would hardly expect from them. The celebrated episode of Kaushik the butcher in the *Mahabharata* is an instance in point. It is an episode for all young men placed in a similar situation to this correspondent to carefully ponder over and digest.

Young India, 1-8-1929

24. A MISCONCEPTION

A friend from Bombay writes:[1]

I had heard this argument even before. No physician has yet been able to provide a remedy for misconception. Hence I have little hope that my arguments will make those caught in the love of B.A. or LL.B. to give it up. For the benefit of those who may still have doubts, I present one or two facts.

The number of lawyers is negligible. How many out of them serve the country? Of those who do, how many make use of the law examination?

Gokhale was not a lawyer and yet no one has heard of anything lacking in his service. Sir Dinshaw Wacha is not a lawyer; Dadabhai was not one, nor was Hume.

The lawyers who are in the field of public service shine not because they are lawyers, but because of some other capacity in them.

We shall find the names of only a few lawyers among the world's great servants so far.

A country cannot be liberated through the intricacies of law. That will require a sword made of either steel or satyagraha. Rana Pratap, Shivaji, Nelson, Wellington, Kruger and others were not lawyers; Amanullah Khan is not a lawyer; Lenin was not a lawyer. All of them had valour, selflessness, courage and such other qualities by reason of which they were able to serve their country.

It is not my purpose to disparage lawyers or their profession. They have a province of their own. Their contribution to the recent history of India is valuable. My object here is merely to point out that in order to serve it is not necessary to be a lawyer and that in the service rendered by lawyers their legal practice played a minor part.

Moreover, to be a lawyer and to acquire a working knowledge of law are two different things. If he so desires, every worker can acquire such knowledge of law as is necessary. Certificates are a means of earning money, never of rendering service.

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had said that a friend of his, studying in the senior B.A. class, though eager to serve the country, intended to take the LL.B. degree before taking up national work, believing that knowledge of law was essential for it. How could this misconception be removed?

Finally, we need workers in thousands. The lawyers are far too few. The field of service is infinite. Service is needed today; hence he who longs to serve will not engage himself even for a single moment in becoming a lawyer or taking some other degree. He will easily gain the knowledge which he may need in the course of service.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 19-5-1929

25. DR. DALAL

Dr. Dalal's death cannot but cause the deepest sorrow to those who had benefited from his surgery. He was more or less unrivalled in surgery. I have only sweet memories of him. Since I first met him in 1918, he had captured my heart by his self-confidence, his sense of humour and his skill. His fee was supposed to be very high. When I once criticized him for it, he asked in reply how, if he did not charge high fees from those who could afford to pay them, he could serve people like me. Many years passed since this criticism was made and I, in the mean while, secured his services for a number of patients. These included men like Deenabandhu Andrews and Acharya Gidwani. He never hesitated to treat them all. Conveying the news of his death, Mahadev writes:

> A week before his death, Dr. Dalal had told Jamnalalji that in accordance with his wishes he would start a sanatorium at Nasik and be in attendance there. He had no more desire for money. He hoped to recover in two months. Gujarat has suffered a big loss in the death of one of its best surgeons.

May God give peace to the family of Dr. Dalal. Their sense of sorrow ought to be lightened by the knowledge that there are many patients and friends who share their grief.

Such deaths should be a warning to us. Knowing that even big doctors and hakims have to pass away suddenly, we common people should be patient and recognize the limits of medicine. Out of false expectations we wander about in search of cures and waste time and money. Knowing that we may be called away any time, we should not put off to some future date whatever good deed or act of service we mean to do, but should do it here and now.

[Form Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-5-1929

26. LETTER TO S. SATYAMURTI

May 19, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have just received your letter. I have not followed the office controversy. I shall form no hasty decision. My formula is what I had framed at Sabarmati.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. S. SATYAMURTI, M.L.C.
SINGARACHARI STREET
TRIPLICANE
MADRAS

From the original: S. Satyamurti Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

27. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

May 19, 1929

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I get your letters regularly though I find them rather dry. But the grievance that both of you have is justified, since I do not write regularly, whether interestingly or otherwise. But during this touring I cannot keep count of the dates. I think I have not been able to attend to your correspondence during my tours of Burma and Andhra. I shall be more careful now that the pace of my tours will slow down.

I had learnt form Nanabhai that you did not like the name Sita. And you have mentioned the reason in your latest letter. I appreciate your reason. It may be all right for Sushila to have Sita as her ideal but the child should have someone revolutionary. I cannot at the moment recollect any girl mentioned in the classics who would fulfil all these requirements. You should have acquainted me with your sentiments earlier. I shall now think of some other name. In our society as also among the English a person may have two or three names. Let Sita have two or three. In this way I wish to justify the name Sita. Sita is the last word in wifehood as much as it is in maidenhood. Moreover it is my ideal to make a person lead a life of independence and purity in spite of being married. Sita, Parvati and others have fully attained both these ideals. According to the accounts in the *Ramayana* and other

works they were free form passion. Sita experienced no difficulty when she was separated from Ramachandra. She was so free from passion that the lascivious Ravana could not touch her. A woman should pray for freedom from passion although her name may be Sita. That is why Sita is one of the seven *satis*[1]. *Sati* does not merely mean one faithful to her husband. *Sati* signifies freedom from passion. Sita had two children. This need not be regarded as wrong on her part, because it is mentioned in this context that Rama and Sita came together out of a desire for progeny. It is not so today. Now children are born as a result of passion; a person like me therefore regards begetting children as forbidden. I am, of course, talking about the belief in regard to Sita and others; Sitashould not be regarded as a historical person but as our ideal woman. We do not worship the historical Rama and Sita. The Rama of history is no more now. But the Rama to whom we attribute perfect divinity, who is God directly perceived, lives to this day. Reciting the name of this Rama would save us; the Rama of history, who is qualified by attributes, good or bad, would not have the strength to save. If you do not follow all this you should, by all means, discuss it with me. In all my reading I have come across no ideal loftier than Sita. This name therefore is extremely dear to me. Again, it is sweet to utter, short, and the two syllables too are easy. It has no compound syllable. And the name is by itself musical, ending as it does with a long *a*. But I do not insist that you call the child by this name. There is nothing wrong if you give a name of your own choice. You may give her a name indicative of the qualities that you wish her to have. Find it in some religious books or novels. On my part I shall certainly search for another.

Well, you have come to know the regrettable episode involving Chhaganlal. It has created a great commotion in the Udyoga Mandir. Now I shall know more about it when I reach there in a few days. Devdas is still there. Nimu has returned to Bardoli. Rami's address at Morvi: Kunvarji Khetshi's House, Tribhuvan Parekh's Sheri, Morvi.

My health is all right. Ba too is fine. Imam Saheb is not wholly all right, but there is nothing special about him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4746

[1] Heroic and chaste women, namely, Ahalya, Draupadi, Sita, Tara (wife of Vali), Mandodari, Kunti and Arundhati

28. LETTER TO GANGABEHN ZAVERI

May 19, 1929

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your l etter. You have evinced keen interest in your work. I hope it will last. Chi. Kusum writes to me that you two are coming closer; I wish you will. When those like you who und erstand things become one in heart, then alone can you render service to the new women who are not trained. I have been suggesting the same thing to Vasumati also. You and Vasumati know each other well. If your association develops you can accomplish a lot. If only a couple of women get on well together, itmight give rise to selfishness.But when all of you get along together, it can strengthen your spirit of service. What I would expect from you therefore is that you should all merge in one another. For this the first step is that those who know one another well should start mixing [with the others].

It is very good that no one was scared in spite of the burglar's visit. Let the burglar repeat his visits. If in spite of all possible precautions on our part thieves come, let them. I think, though, that they do not come to do us bodily harm. They are familiar with the place and may come to mock at us.

Whatever has gone wrong with Dahibehn Patel?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3096

29. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

May 19,1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter of the 12th after it had wandered about a good deal; that is, it reached me after the letter of the 14th. Balkrishna does not know the middle path at all. But he will come round in the end. Those who can may observe his difficult conditions. I shall not write about the subject to anyone just now. We shall discuss the matter after I arrive there.

I tried hard to dissuade Jaykrishna[1] from taking the vow, but he did. How could I prevent him forcibly? We should certainly encourage anyone who attempts to do something good . What does it matter if he fails despite all his efforts?

Are there any signs by which we can recognize a man's fitness? Where could we find a fitter man than Chhaganlal? The history of the Ashram shows that it is the men of recognized fitness who have fallen. We need not be surprised or pained by this. There are limits to the application of the idea of fitness, etc. I have countless instances of persons who could not be recognized as fit but who have proved their worth. We should be as vigilant as we can and try to become better. Wecan achieve nothing in this world without taking risks. In the supreme endeavour to attain *moksha* we may accept any risk.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

After I had finished this letter, I saw Mirabehn's. This, too, throws light to the problem of judging a man's fitness. God knows whether that crazy person will utimately prove his worth. How are we to know? What is the extent of our knowledge? Who can see into the future? I think Mirabehn's letter will be useful to you in other ways too. I send it to you.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5419

30. REMARKS ON THE ORPHANAGE ASSOCIATION, NELLORE[2]

May 19, 1929

I hope that these orphans no longer feel that they are orphans.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3230

[1] Bhansali; the source has Jaykaran, evidently a slip.
[2] Reproduced in a folder issued by the Association

31. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

[About *May 19,1929*][1]

I have been unhappy at your going away. Unhappy because I have founded the Ashram for self-realization; service is its outer manifestation, while the observance of vows is the inner one. The basic purpose of the Ashram is the realization of God. I cannot understand why in these circumstances you went away elsewhere to seek God.

[From Hindi]

Bapuna Patro–7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 110

32. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

[Before *May 20,1929*][2]

CHI. KUSUM,

Indeed you were embarrassed. Nevertheless you were asked to do what you pleased. Prabhavati is exhausted and is now sound asleep near me. Throughout the night the din in the train continued. One may say the Mahatma too has sometimes to suffer the congestion in the third class. It is to be seen if Prabhavati can maintain her health.

Whatever happens I shall take you along on my next tour. We shall see how you stand it .

I hope Sulochanabehn is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1791

[1] From a reference to the addressee in "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 19-5-1929, it would appear that this was written around that time.

[2] *Bapuna Patro*—3 : *Kusumbehn Desaine,* p.28, mentions that this was written while Gandhiji was no the Andhra tour which he completed on May 21,1929.

33. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

KURNOOL,
Silence Day, May 20,1929

SISTERS,

I expect this to be the last letter during the present tour. Monday next, instead of writing a letter I myself shall be leaving Bombay to return to the Mandir.

The people of this city have allowed me a quiet time such as I have rarely known in the past. Even outside there are no crowds standing for my *darshan*. So far I have not been able to escape crowds even on Mondays. They have hung up *khas* screens on the two doors so that, despite a hot wind outside, it is very cool within. If, after experiencing all this love and attention, I complain about the hardships of touring, I would be the most ungrateful of men.

How to explain to the women here, who wear six or seven ear-rings, three nose-rings and a ring on each finger and toe, that there is no adornment in this at all?

We see even some educated women wearing those rings. Whenever I see women with such decorations I think of you all. What trouble have you not escaped?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3699

34. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Silence Day, [*May 20, 1929*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

Your letters are scarce these days. Is it to spare me or is it due to laziness or because nothing comes to your mind? It seems I shall have the reply only in person now. I shall no doubt reach before the 28th. Four days in Bombay would be hard. But it appears that much time would be needed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : S. N. 9313

35. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Silence Day, May 20, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I got the *Ashram Samachar* too. Some more letters must still be on their way, redirected from place to place.

The question of swadeshi is under discussion at present and, as I am today writing a reply to a student for publication in *Navajivan*, I feel like cautioning the inmates of the Mandir too. We may leave aside the question of what people do in their private affairs; but we must take care to use swadeshi articles whenever we write anything in connection with Mandir work. The string, the tape, etc., used by us should be made of handspun yarn. Do you know that Maganlal had made even sewingthread from hand-spun yarn ? The pencils, ink, nibs, etc., which we use should be swadeshi. The ink in my pen is swadeshi. We should thus take care about everything we use. It is necessary that there should be no avoidable inconsistency in our lives. We need not feel ashamed to accept any foreign article which is essential, but its necessity must be demonstrated.

You may now remind me about Lady Ramanathan when I arrive

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's visit to Bombay for four days before the 28th; in 1929 he reached Bombay on May 22 and was there till the 25th. It appears that the letter was written on the Monday (silence day) prior to his visit to Bombay.

there. I will write something then. I shall write for the next issue of *Young India* in Bombay on Monday, the 27th . I don't know what I will do if I don't reach Bombay before that.

I would not like to dissuade Bhansali form buying land. Though his ideals are different from ours, the direction is the same. They, too, give the first place to self-control. But this is a controversial subject. We shall discuss the matter.

I had thought that after my return I myself would tell the people there about my experiment in eating uncooked grain, and that no one would write about it from here. Yes, it is ten days now since I gave up bread. I am fine. I weighed myself today. The weight today is the same as it was there. If the scale is accurate, it may even be a little more. That is, it is 95_. I am proceeding with my experiment with great caution. I had started it at the age of 20 and then gave it up. I started it again in 1893 and again gave it up. I enjoy making the same experiment now at the age of 60, for I see big results for myself and my co-workers from the success of my experiment. I cannot say as yet how far the experiment is a success. In 1893 I had carried on the experiment for 15 days before giving it up. I ate uncooked fruit and nuts for many years. This experiment, however, stands in a class by itself. More about it when we meet. No one there should be frightened. I have taken no vow. I will not go on with the experiment at the cost of my health. In any case, I will have my meals in the common kitchen.

Since Chimanlal and others have moved out of the houses on the upper side, those houses will fall into disrepair if not used. I think they may be occupied even by persons without families.

Let Balkrishna carry on with the *Gita* in the manner he thinks best.

Panditji[1] has been roped in all right. It did not occur to me that he would have to shoulder the burden of looking after the cash too. But this is real music. True music is produced only when there is harmony in the different tunes of life. Among those who have given the other music, there have been many immoral men too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5420

[1] Narayan Moreshwar Khare, the musician

36. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI

[*May 20, 1929*][1]

CHI. KASHI,

Today is my silence-day. It is 6.45 in the morning. I am pained that there is no letter either from you or from Chhaganlal. From you, at any rate. I expect to have letters at regular intervals at the present time. How is your mental condition, how do you keep, what do you do there? I wish to know all about how Chhaganlal behaves—whether he is at peace, whether he eats properly and how he spends his time, etc. I wait for a letter from you every day and the day passes without a letter from you. I will reach Bombay on May 23; Ashram on the 28th. I should like to see both of you then.

Ba thinks of you from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati Original: S.N. 33095

37. LETTER TO MRS. SOHANLAL SHARMA[2]

May 21, 1929

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. If the account related to me is true to the letter I see no objection to your marrying the young man who is prepared to give you protection.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 2824

[1] Gandhi wrote the letter on a silence-day, i.e., Monday. The Monday preceding May 23, 1929, on which Gandhiji here says he would reach Bombay, fell on May 20.

[2] The letter was written obviously before the addressee's marriage.

38. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

May 22, 1929

BHAISHRI JETHALAL,

I am writing this in reply to your letter of February 28 in a running train. You have suggested in the letter that the spinner should be made to card and weave too. I see a fault in the suggestion. A spinner gets a quarter of an anna per hour and spins for eight hours in a day. If she cards or weaves for eight hours she will get at least one anna per hour. Those who object to hand-spinning say that spinning should be this argument. Your suggestion may be good, but then a handloom cannot be set up in every house and no single person can handle it. Helpers will be needed. So weaving is a whole-time occupation. Spinning is a part-time occupation. Carding should be included in spinning because it is an inseparable part of spinning. Think over this. Write to me again.

I have your letter about Utkal. I am not taking any further action in the matter for the present.

Keep me posted with information.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9845. Courtesy: Narayan Jethalal Sampat

39. IN ANDHRA DESHA [*—VI*]

The following is the last but one itinerary I shall be able to give of what has been to me a most instructive and interesting tour:

9-5-1929—East Godavari District: Korukonda, Rs. 50-0-0; Sitanagaram (subsequent collections), 31-2-3; Raghavapuram (subsequent collections), 64-3-0; Collections on the way, etc., 153-0-0; Vizagapatam District (subsequent collections), 37-0-0; East Krishna (subsequent collections), 20-0-0; West Godavari (subsequent collections), 13-0-0; Guntur District (subsequent collections),

617-11-6.

10-5-1929—Nellore District: Buchireddipalem, Rs. 4,506-0-5 (Rs. 570 Lalaji Fund); Vangellu, 126-0-0; Annareddipalem, 146-0-0; Pallepalli

Isakapalem, 348-0-0; Rebale, 386-0-0; Maktapuram, 75-0-0; Minagallu, 56-0-0; Damaramadugu, 10-0-0; Penuballi, 15-0-0; Kalayakagallu, 250-0-0; Vavveru, 116-0-0; Kotte Vangellu, 116-0-0; Yellayyapalem, 1,246-0-0 (Rs. 116 Lalaji Fund); Rajupalem, 116-0-0; Gandavaram, 300-0-0; Pedaputtedu, 208-0-0; Kovur Co-operative Union Society, 116-0-0; Parlepalli, 296-6-3; Vidvaluru, 400-0-0; Vutukuru, 1,127-14-6; Moporu, 1,136-0-0; Alluru, 1,296-8-0; Kavali and other villages, 1,706-9-8 (Re. 1 Lalaji Fund).

11-5-1929—Ulavapadu, Rs. 558-0-0; Kandukuru 1,343-2-3; Botalaguduru and Pamuru, 717-0-6; Sitarampuram, 15-12-0; Yelamarru, 1-0-0

12-5-1929—Peramana, Rs. 116-0-0; Sangam, 776-0-0; Pallepadu, 731-14-9; (Rs. 5 Lalaji Fund); Gangapatnam,. 640-0-1; Mypadu, 752-3-9.

12-5-1929—Venkanapalem, Rs. 30-0-0; Koduru, 50-0-0; Koruturu, 47-0-0; Indukurupeta, 176-2-0; Kottavuru Y.M.C.A., 5-0-0; Nellore, 5,178-12-6 (Rs. 20 Lalaji Fund); Pottepalem, 1,016-0-0; Potlapudi, 70-0-0; Guduru, 734-0-0; Tumburu, 50-0-0.

14-5-1929—Nayudupeta, Rs. 655-6-8; Attavaram, 116-0-0; Nidumusili, 50-0-0; Chittoor District: Kalahasti, 1,116-0-0; Bell Metal Co., 316-0-0.

15-5-1929—Tirupati, Rs. 1099-7-0; Renigunta, 67-0-0; Unaccounted. 60-0-0; Papanayanipeta, 12-0-1; Puttur, 806-0-0; Tiruttani, 115-12-0; Chittoor, 511-0-0; Palmaneru, 138-12-0 Punganuru, 536-15-11.

16-5-1929—Madanapalli, Rs. 2,475-14-0; Anantapur District: Nagireddipalli, 116-0-0; Kadiri, 1,300-8-11; Kutagulla, 116-0-0; Mudigubba, 116-0-0; Dampetla, 116-0-0; Dharmavaram, 1,148-8-0; Anantapur, 1,247-4-0; Tadipatri, 1,160-5-3.

Total up to date Rs. 2,43,283-3-6.

The tour has been no doubt exacting, the heat equally so. Nevertheless it has been for me a matter of great joy to find the villagers responding in a most wonderful manner. The rigour of the tour has been softened by the willing and unremitting attention of the volunteers, chief among whom has been Subbaramiah who gave up Government service and has ever since remained in Congress service. But the one man who has been most responsible for my well-being is Deshabhakta Konda Venkatappayya. He has been taken to task for bringing me to Andhra at this time of the year and then making a heavy programme. He is not wholly responsible for either. The

programmehad to cover the whole of Andhra Desha. He could not within the time allotted to him devise a less heavy programme. The Andhra leaders did not want me to go in February. And I was bound to give March to Burma. It was therefore April and May for Andhra or postponement of the tour this year. Postponements there have been many. Any further postponement was impossible. But no man could have made the tour less exacting than Deshabhakta. He has worn himself out in trying to keep times, avoid noises and secure comfortable lodgings. He is one of the gentlest of men it has been my privilege to be associated with. But he assumed during the tour a severe and decisive tone, so unnatural for him, that the co-workers beside him treated his severity as a huge joke, and his assumed rage over things going wrong, as they will do sometimes under all climes and in spite of the best of management, has broken for me the monotony of continuous motoring often along wretched roads. I would repeat tours like this a hundred times under the supervision of a superintendent like Deshabhakta and amid a people like the Andhras.

UNIVERSAL PROVIDER

Whilst writing of Deshabhakta Konda Venkatappayya I may not omit Deshoddharaka Nageshvarrao. I have always chaffed him about making money out of a patent ointment with a sweet name. And he has always smilingly retorted, 'Yes, it is bad, what can I do? I try to serve my country with the money I get from it. And it is an inoffensive ointment.' I have attended to the explanation with the same indifference with which I have joked about the patent ointment. I was therefore not prepared for the agreeable discovery I have made during the tour that his depot has enabled him to become the universal provider for the many public activities of Andhra. Never has a deserving beggar been turned away from his hospitable door. Wherever I have gone the addresses have made mention of his charities. If it is the Anand Ashram for the untouchables Nageshvarrao builds the substantial block of buildings for it; if it is a school that has needed assistance Nageshvarrao has been the helper; if it is Dr. Subrahmanian who wants a printery for his Ashram, it is again Nageshvarrao who comes to the rescue. He is never so happy as when he is giving. And so far as I have been able to understand, his left hand knoweth not what his right giveth. I do not wonder that a public worker remarked during the tour, in answer to my joke about the'patent loot', "I wish he would be able to loot much more than he

does. It will then all be used to help public activities." I have been secretly criticizing the Andhra lavishness of titles on national workers. But this Deshoddharaka has reconciled me to the title he had deservedly earned. But I must pass on.

A REMARKABLE ADDRESS

I must leave several important matters for the next issue. I propose to close these hurried notes, written against post time, with the mention of a remarkable address received at Ullavapadu in Nellore district. It was in Telugu and Hindi, both written on ordinary thick paper with an ornamental border by a local artist such as could be produced in a little village. The language of the Hindi address was what I should call standard Hindi without any attempt at Sanskritizing or Persianizing it. It was written in the language one hears spoken in the U.P. by those who have not developed anti-Hindi or anti-Muslim prejudices. The opening paragraph has mere courteous reference to my visit but contains no rhetoric or flowery adjectives. Here is a translation of the body of the address:[1]

> In accordance with your instructions in *Young India* we beg to lay before you as fully as we can the information asked for by you, in the hope that after perusing it you will vouchsafe to us such guidance as may be warranted by the peculiar circumstances of our village. . . .
>
> . . . The greatest hardship that the people here have to suffer is from scarcity of drinking water. This village has got a temple of Vishnu as also a dharmshala. At the latter free meals are given to sadhus and Brahmins.
>
> There are 897 members of the 'depressed classes' in this village. They dwell outside the village in a special location and are divided into two sections. Those two sections, while not observing untouchability as among themselves, do not inter-dine. Nor will one section allow the other the useof its wells. . . . They eat carrion even when animals have died of infectious disease with the result that leprosy is very prevalent among them, particularly in the Malang caste. They are also very much addicted to the liquor habit. . . . There is no Congress Committee in this village.
>
> There is no branch of the A.I.S.A. here. There are 52 spinning-wheels in this village of which 22 are working. They are worked mostly in spare time. The monthly aggregate outturn of yarn from these wheels is 10 seers. The average monthly earnings per head come to Rs. 2. The count of yarn spun is from 20 to 25.

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

There are 65 looms in this village. Twenty-six of these are ordinary pit looms. 12 of these use both mill yarn and hand-spun yarn, 14 use mill yarn only. The rest are fly-shuttle looms. None of these use hand-spun yarn.

. . . There is in this village a library and reading-room. It was established by the youth of this village. It contains 1,230 books and issues on an average 3 books every day. It receives Hindi as also Telugu journals. For the last two years Government aid to this library has been stopped as the organizers could not conform to certain restrictions sought to be imposed upon them by the authorities.

If the village was an advanced Congress village, it could not have presented a more exhaustive study of its life. The surprise is that this village has no Congress Committee, no worker of the A.I.S.A. The visit to this village was early in the morning. Through no fault of the villagers I had no advance copy. And not knowing the rich contents of the address, I was unable to give the guidance the framer had asked for. But I may give it now.

(1) The village elders should hasten to form a Congress Committee and make it a point of having on their roll every adult villager whether male or female.

(2) They should befriend the so-called untouchables, wean them from carrion and drink and draw them closer to them. To this end they should invite district leaders to visit their quarters.

(3) The village elders should meet together and enlist the help of some philanthropic engineer of the district and devise a scheme for a better supply of water.

(4) They should systematically introduce hand-spinning in every home and aim at producing at least all their khadi.

(5) They should deem the disaffiliation of their library as a blessing in disguise and make it thoroughly national in character and a center for spreading adult education.

Young India, 23-5-1929

40. PROHIBITION CAMPAIGN

The Working be the duty of the forthcoming A.I.C.C. meeting to investigate the causes of the break-down of the organization and the remedies for its effective and efficient reorganization.

Young India, 23-5-1929

41. THE NEED OF THE HOUR

The Nellore District Congress Committee presented me during my tour in that district with the following illuminating statement[1] about its conditions:

What is true of Nellore is, I am sorry to have to say, true of most Committees with which I have come in touch. I share the opinion expressed by the Nellore Committee that the entry of Congressmen into the so-called elective bodies has disorganized and demoralized the Congress. It is difficult however to discover the remedy for the evil unless Congressmen can be persuaded to revert to the boycott of 1921. There seems to be no room for dyarchy in the Congress as elsewhere. Somehow or other constructive work and Councils do not seem to go together. Those who are in the Councils and local boards have little taste or aptitude for constructive work, and those who are doing the latter have little or no taste for the elective bodies. Both however profess faith in the constructive programme if their votes and their speeches are proofof that faith. A device therefore should be possible whereby the Congress machinery may be worked at full speed and efficiently. The A.I.C.C. should really tackle that problem to the exclusion of everything else if such exclusion becomes necessary. I hear a great deal about the treasure chests of local committees being empty. Those who speak thus do not realize that the constitution has provided automatic machinery for Congress finance. If it becomes really a people's institution, it need never be in want. Nellore district alone had ten thousand members in 1921. No provincial Committee should have fewer than thirty thousand members. That means a steady annual income of Rs. 7,500 enough for smoothly running a provincial organization. And an organization that commands such membership should always be able to raise contributions for special purposes. An honestly worked Congress organization should surely have on its roll

[1] Not reproduced here

more than six millions which in round figures is the total strength of the electoral roll for elections to the legislatures. The need of the hour therefore is a complete reorganization and stabilization of the Congress. Would that the forthcoming meeting of the A.I.C.C. will realize its obvious duty.

Young India, 23-5-1929

42. LIBERATE THE WOMAN

Dr. S. Muthulakshmi Reddi, the well-known social worker of Madras, has written a long letter based on one of my Andhra speeches from which I take the following interesting extract:[1]

> Your observations on the urgent need for reforms and for a healthy change in the daily habits of our people, during your journey from Bezwada to Guntur, have appealed to me very much indeed.
>
> I may humbly submit that I as a medical woman fully concur with you. But will you kindly permit me to say that if education is really going to bring in its train social reforms, better sanitation, and improved public health, it is going to achieve this result only through the education of our women?
>
> Under the present social system, don't you think that very few women are given sufficient opportunities for education, full development of body and mind, and self-expression?
>
> If the members of the Congress believe that freedom is the birth-right of every nation and individual, and if they are determined to achieve that at any cost, should they not first liberate their women from the evil customsand conventions that restrict their all-round healthy growth, which remedy lies in their own hands?
>
> Our poets, saints and sages have sung in the same tune. Swami Vivekananda has said, 'That country and that nation, which do not respect women, have never become great, nor will ever be in future. The principal reason why your race is so much degraded in that you had no respect for these living images of *Shakti*. If you do not raise the women who are the living embodiments of the Divine Mother, don't think that you have any other way to rise'.
>
> The late Subrahmanya Bharati, the gifted Tamil poet, has echoed the same idea.

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

So, would you kindly in your tour advise our men to follow the right and the surest way to attain freedom?

Dr. Muthulakshmi has a perfect right to expect Congressmen to shoulder this responsibility. Many Congressmen are doing great work in this direction individually as also corporately. The root of the evil however lies far deeper than would appear on superficial observation. It is not the education merely of women that is at fault. It is the whole of our educational system that is rotten. Again it is not this custom or that which needs condemnation, it is the inertia which refuses to move even in the face of an admitted evil that needs to be removed. And lastly the condemnation is true only of the middle class, the town-dwellers, i.e., barely 15 per cent of the vast millions of India. The masses living in the villages have no child-marriage, no prohibition against widow-remarriage. It is true that they have other evils which impede their growth. Inertia is common to both. What is however necessary is to overhaul the educational system and to devise one in terms of the masses. , amelioration of the economic condition of the masses and the like resolve themselves into penetration into the villages, reconstruction or rather reformation of the village life.

Young India, 23-5-1929

43. TELEGRAM TO SITLA SAHAI

BOMBAY
May 23,1929

SITLA SAHAI
ASHRAM
SABARMATI

JAWAHARLAL AND I AGREE YOU SHOULD REPUDIATE LIABILITY SAYING YOU ARE LEGALLY ADVISED YOU ARE NOT LIABLE AND IF LIABLE YOU HAVE NO PROPERTY.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 15394

44. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

May 24, 1929

Had a time not come when the boycott would be made more effective by devising a definite plan of vigorous action?

Mahatmaji said everything that was possible was being done by the Foreign Cloth Boycott Committee and all that he could suggest at the present moment was that the people who believed in this movement and wanted to assist it should strengthen the hands of the Committee by carrying out its instructions from time to time.

Our representative suggested the formation of special boycott committees in which the Congress workers and also the mill-owners could work together on the basis of co-operation.

He did not think he could carry things further at the present stage.

Would the boycott not be materially advanced if the F.C.B. Committee were to co-operate with other agencies which were also working for the boycott in their own ways?

Replying to this question Mahatmaji gave an assurance on behalf of the F.C.B. Committee that whatever assistance could be secured from other sources was being applied for and would be applied for in future.

Would a pledge embodying a solemn vow that the signatory would use swadeshi articles alone in any way accelerate the progress of the boycott movement?

He did not think, he said, that any pledge was necessary for popularizing the boycott movement. He added that the question of pledge was considered by the F.C.B. Committee. It was not pledge, he said, that was wanted but actual and immediate actions.

Asked whether bonfires should be restarted on a larger scale and in an organized manner, Mahatmaji replied that it was much better for the time being to carry on this propaganda in the way it was being carried on by the F.C.B. Committee.

Since our eyes are fixed on the coming battle that we are to begin in January next and since the problem of creating effective sanctions behind our national demand is staring us in the face, is it a wise policy that our energies should be frittered away over minor issues such as the acceptance of offices by Congressmen?

Mahatmaji's prompt reply to this question was his usual diplomatic laughter followed by a still more diplomatic remark that it was a question which he was incompetent to answer.

Was it not a fact that he was acting as a mediator to bring about a reconciliation between the divergent views that had made themselves manifest within the Congress camp? A loud laughter again came as a reply.

You have had enough. You are now trying to pump out something from me which I am not prepared to give.

The Bombay Chronicle, 25-5-1929

45. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

May 25, 1929

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your letter. It may not be wrong to go hawking Khadi among the Gondal subjects. I have however just spoken in favour of emphasizing the production of Khadi. If all take to sacrificial spinning khadi can be produced without difficulty. Our present need is to improve the quality of our yarn. In Kathiawar it would be produced in bulk only through sacrificial spinning, provided of course you could create the atmosphere. About the prize-winning wheel we shall decide when I reach the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5696

46. SPEECH AND RESOLUTION AT A.I.C.C. MEETING

BOMBAY,
May 25, 1929

In view of the campaign of repression which the British Government is carrying on all over the country, as evidenced by the conviction of Sjt. Sambamoorthi, member of the Working Committee, and many other national workers, the wholesale arrests and barbarous treatment of the members of the All-India Congress Committee and the labour leaders and workers now awaiting trial at Meerut, the unwarranted house-searches and wanton confiscation of Pandit Sunderlal's *History of British Rule*, the All-India Congress Committee is of opinion that the nation should be prepared for efficient resistance to such methods; and as it is clear that no nation-wide resistance is possible unless the whole Congress organization is reconstructed on a satisfactory basis, this Committee, therefore, calls upon the provincial organizations to reorganize their respective provinces so as to fulfil the following requirements:

> The Provincial Congress organization shall have not less than _ per cent of the total population of their province as original members, and not less than 50 per cent of the districts represented by it.

The district organization shall have not less than one per cent[1] of its population as original members and not less than 50 per cent of tahsils represented by it.

The tahsil organization shall have not less than _ per cent of its population as original members, and not less than 10 per cent of the villages within the tahsil represented by it.

The village organization shall have not less than 3 per cent[2] of its population as original members.

For the Provinces of Bombay and Delhi, the original members shall not be less than 3 per cent of their respective populations.[3]

For the Province of Burma[4] the Working Committee shall issue such instructions as may appear to it reasonable after consultation with the workers in that Province.[5] No provincial organization will be recognized by the Committee that does not satisfy the foregoing test within[6] 31st August next.

It will be open to the Working Committee to disaffiliate any[7] organization that does not carry out the instructions issued from time to time by the All-India Congress Committee or the Working Committee.

In moving the resolution, Gandhiji spoke in Hindi and then in English. He said it was a summary procedure which he was adopting when he asked the Committee to adopt the resolution without having circulated copies, and without giving time to consider. But the situation demanded the summary procedure. He would ask the Committee to eschew from its mind the preamble, because the preamble claimed to be exhaustive. The principal part was the operative part. The Congress had appointed three Committees to organize boycott of foreign cloth, khaddar production and prohibition. The resolution before the Committee now related to the internal organization of the Congress. If the Congress were to be an irresistible force whose authority would be respected, it must be a strong organization with complete co-

[1] This was amended to read: "_ per cent".

[2] Amended to read : "one per cent"

[3] Amended to read: "For the Province of Bombay the original members shall not be less than 1_ per cent of its population."

[4] Amended to read: "For the Frontier Province and the Province of Burma"

[5] Amended to read: "Provinces". The following sentence was added: "Populations of Indian States and of Agencies analogous to Non-Regulation tracts may be excluded from the computation of members."

[6] Amended to read: "by"

[7] Amended to read: "an"

ordination between its component parts. There was no such co-ordination at present.

The proposal might seem to be radical, but the emergent situation demanded radical remedies. In fact originally the Working Committee had agreed to a more radical proposition, namely, that Provincial Committees should be abolished and that the District Committees should establish direct relations with the Central Committee. But when the necessary changes had to be made in the constitution difficulties were experienced. Pandit Jawaharlal was also of opinion that the Committee might regret it, but he had no misgivings. The resolution put forward radical proposals. The Committee should take the responsibility of the Congress if in its opinion the situation in the country demanded it. If the resolution was carried into effect, it would not then be feasible for the Viceroy to insult the country by extending the legislature or to insult the President of the Assembly.[1]

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-5-1929

47. "GORAKSHAKALPATARU"

Shri Rameshwardas has sent me Rs. 25 in memory of the death of his uncle's daughter with a desire that the above book may be sent to suitable places with the addressees being asked to bear the postage. The book will be sent, as far as the money lasts, to those managers of goshalas or others who serve the cow in some other way if they send a stamp of Re. 0-1-3 together with their names and addresses. Correspondence in this matter should be addressed to the Secretary, Goseva Sangh, Udyoga Mandir, Sabarmati.

I give below the gist of what Shri Rameshwardas writes in Hindi in the same letter since it deserves to be pondered over:

> There is also this reason why I make the above donation. Nowadays we make *go-dan*[2] in honour of the dead. But I believe the cow is not at all served thereby. There are no pastures nowadays; hence Brahmins are not able to maintain cows to the last and in the end they are delivered into the hands of the butcher. Therefore today true *go-dan* consists in promoting service of the cow. One way of doing so is to distribute widely books like *Gorakshakalpataru*. I do hope that Hindu society will understand this, and will order this book, read it, think over it and take the measures proposed in it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-5-1929

[1] The resolution was seconded by Srinivasa Iyengar and later passed with amendments.

[2] Gift of a cow

48. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

May 26, 1929

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

I got three letters from you at Bombay. I am reaching Sabarmati tow days earlier.

I got all the details of your career which I wanted to have.

One remedy for your temper is that you should live with me for some time. It is also my wish. During July and August I shall be at the Ashram. Now I shall be here till the 10th of June.

Almonds would certainly not be the cause of the cough attack you got. It might be the butter. It is all right if you gave it up. It doesnot matter if you soak the almonds. Peel them and grind them into a paste.

Do you have an oven for making bread? It is not convenient to prepare a small quantity. I wish you would not bother about making any and would rather take fruit, etc.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6784

49. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SABARMATI,
May 27, 1929

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
EVERGREEN
MATHERAN

RADHA RUKHI[1] MAY GO SINHGADH IF THEY WILL. OTHERWISE LET THEM RETURN IMMEDIATELY. RUKHI MAY STAY ALONE IF SHE CHOOSES.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Rukmini Gandhi

50. LETTER TO D.

May 27, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I am extremely dissatisfied with your letters. You are hysterical, easily excited, unstable and revengeful. You should cease to think about the girl. It would be improper for you to advertise the connection to the world. It must be enough for you to plead your suit before the girl's father. After all, you should recognize your own limitations. Would a father willingly give his daughter to a cripple? The girl has a prefect right to choose you as her partner if she wishes. But a girl who does so must be far above the average, and if this girl is, she will overcome her fears and all other difficulties. She is in no need of your protection. It is you who stand in need of protection from her. You are forgetting your limitations and denying your philosophy.

From the original: C.W. 6169. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

51. LETTER TO K. J. PETIGARE

[After *May 27, 1929*][1]

DEAR SIR,

I beg to acknowledge your letter. I regret to have to inform you that I am unable to comply with your request. It is true that I have Pt. Sunderlalji's *History of British Rule in India* in my possession. But I regard the action of the U.P. Government as high-handed and tyrannical.[2] I regard the action in making house searches for the book all over India as highly insulting, objectionable and vindictive. I have never been able to understand the house searches. The books have surely by this time been already read by the receivers. I may add too that I have read the book myself and many friends have done

[1] Presumably this letter was drafted by Gandhiji for Jamnalal Bajaj in reply to the letter dated May 27, 1929 from the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Bombay, demanding the surrender of *History of British Rule in India; vide* "Notes" sub-title Sheth Jamnalalji's Action

[2] *Vide* also "Notes" sub-title Daylight aRobbery", "Notes" sub-title Pandit Suanderlal's Book and "Speech and Resolution at A.I.C.aC. Meeting", 25-5-1929

likewise. It is our deliberate opinion that the book is wholly unobjectionable and is a praiseworthy endeavour to inculcate the lesson of non-violence. In the circumstances and as an humble protest against the action referred to by me I must refuse to deliver the volumes to you.

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary: S.N. 32577/50

52. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

May 28, 1929

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I have your postcard.

When I wrote I had you in mind. Let me state what I expect from you if your health permits:

(1) visiting every goshala and its management in India and carrying our message to them;

(2) a general idea about dairies and tanneries to carry out this work;

(3) a rough account in Gujarati of the dairies, etc., in Denmark and other countries which are models in this respect;

(4) an article of practical value on this subject every week in *Navajivan* and *Young India;*

(5) visiting slaughter-houses and giving harrowing descriptions of them.

This is all I can think of at the moment.

On reaching there I shall give further thought to the question of accepting the yarn spun by me in lieu of subscription.

You may write in *Navajivan* about the sale of our milk.

We may take up the responsibility of managing the Vinchhiya Pinjrapole if we have someone who can take care of it and if we are allowed complete freedom.

I am surprised to learn about the jacket for *Jodanikosh.*

Now on I shall write in *Navajivan* about Rameshwardas's money.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7401. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

53. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

May 28, 1929

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have both your letters. I too have received many letters from D. . . . I have written to him today and I enclose a copy for you. I am sorry I gave you so much trouble about such a man. My acquaintance with him was slight. I had met him only once or twice. He seemed to be a good man. He still does. But you cannot employ such people. Or possibly I am doing you an injustice in believing this. You have an altruistic instinct but it is probably too big a responsibility to collect such people around you. He now fears that he may not be able to stay on there and has written that he may be called to the Ashram. Tell me what I should do.

My article was in no way connected with what appeared in *Forward*. I am quite sure that the punishment meted out to *Forward* is cruel and inhuman. I have no doubt that *Forward* has shown courage.

The raw cereals experiment is continuing. I shall leave Sabarmati on June 11.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6169. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

54. FROM AND ABOUT SAROJINI DEVI

The latest letter from India's non-official ambassador in the West reads:[1]

> I have had since I last wrote to you one month of strenuous and continual travelling across many thousand miles of country from Chicago to Los Angeles and back through the wheat, copper, oil, cattle and cotton countries, a vast area that bears testimony to the triumph of man over Nature, of his courage, enterprise, endurance, resource, industry and vision that could coax or compel such rich results in such a short period. And yet, all the power of man becomes no more than a feather or a ball of thistle puff in the presence of Nature in the Grand Canyon of the Arizona Desert where time itself has sculptured magnificent temples to the unknown God out of rocks that are dyed

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

in all the colours of jewels and flowers. Song itself is transmuted into silence and silence is translated into worship in the midst of such awe-inspiring beauty and splendour.

The Arizona Desert is the home of many Red Indian tribes, who live their own picturesque and primitive lives, so strangely aloof and alone in the land that was once their ancestral heritage. They are more akin to us than to the foreign Western peoples who have taken away that heritage. There is a freemasonry that binds all primitive world races in a common bond, for the folk spirit, whether in India, Roumania, Zululand or the Arizona Desert expresses itself very much in the same symbols and reveals very much the same primal virtues through the folk music, folklore and folk dance. Valour, I think, is one of the primal keyvirtues and nowhere does it find more stirring expression than in the dances I saw of the Hopi tribe on the edge of the Grand Canyon, the Eagle Dance, the Dance of the Buffalo Hunt and the Victory Dance. You will be very much interested in what a proud young representative of an Indian tribe said to me at the conclusion of an address I gave in San Francisco. He was obviously well educated and may have been a graduate of one of the Universities. 'Thank you for your inspiring talk about your country. This country once belonged to me and my people. We are dying out, but *they may kill us, they can never conquer us.'* Yes, these desert children are children of the Eagle and the Wind and Thunder. Who can conquer their spirit? I felt the truth of the proud boast when I went to Arizona.

California I loved, every flowering rood and foam-kissed acre of that lovely land. But one sorrow made a cloud for me in that horizon of dazzlingsunshine—the unhappy plight of the Indian settlers who after twenty or thirty years of prosperous labours on their own farm lands have by the recent immigration laws been deprived of all right to land and citizenship. . . . I have come to the conclusion after my visits to Africa and America that the status of Indian settlers can never be satisfactory anywhere till the status of India is definitely assured among the free nations of the world.

You are aware of my inveterate habit of studying the human document in all its phases and there is no record, plain or cryptic, that does not interest me and which I do not try to interpret and understand. In the course of my travel, I sample not only every kind of climate and scenery but also every type of humanity. . . .

This week I received belated reports of all events and incidents, I was almost going to say accidents, of the great National week in Calcutta. Padmaja's little word pictures were more vivid and illuminating than all the journalistic descriptions. She writes, 'The little Wizard has lost none of his

ancient magic.' But the supreme, the final, magic still awaits expression and fulfilment in a true and fruitful formula for Hindu-Muslim friendship and unity of vision and action which alone can redeem India from her intricate sevenfold bondage.

Hearken to the entreaty of a Wandering Singer, O little Wizard. Find the formula, work the magic and help to ensure the realization of the wondrous dream of a liberated India. Good bye.

This letter is dated at Kansas city, 11th Feb., and would have been before the reader earlier but for my Andhra tour. I have removed from previous letters all personal references. But I dare not remove the reference in this letter. It demonstrates Sarojinidevi's passion for Hindu-Muslim union. How I wish I could realize her hope. But the wizard has lost his wand. He feels helpless though his passion for heart union is no less than hers and though his faith in the midst of 'the encircling gloom' is brighter than ever. It seems however that Satan's spell is not yet broken and mad fury must for a while take its own course before exhaustion overtakes it and it is self-destroyed.

Turning however from this self-musing, and returning to the songstress, it gives me joy to quote the following from Dinabandhu Andrews's letter:[1]

Sarojini Naidu's visit has been amazing. She has won all hearts, and I have been hearing nothing but praise about her visit everywhere I have gone, both in Canada and in the United States. . . . She must certainlycome back again and again. For she has won the heart of the West, and they will never forget her. Friendship such as she has won must never be lost. Those who know Quebec best tell me that the next time she comes she will have a much warmer reception (if that were possible!) even than that which was given her on her present visit. For she will start with a strong group of earnest friends eager to help her in every part of the country.

Young India, 30-5-1929

55. APATHY OF MERCHANTS

Here is an extract from an argued address received during the Andhra tour. Speaking of khadi it says:

If we had been able to enlist the unstinted support of the merchant

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

community, we would have been able to put the constructive programme about khadi in full swing and set an example for the rest of our district to follow. But sad to say it was otherwise. A spirit of apathy has permeated the major portion of this district.

The remark made in the address is unfortunately true of almost every place in India. Indeed when the mercantile community is converted to the national cause, we shall not be long attaining our goal. As I have so often remarked it is the merchants who lost India to a foreign Government and it is they who can regain it. They are after all the largest co-operators with the Government. And amongst these, piecegoods merchants take the foremost place. It is really therefore a matter for every village Congress Committee to tackle this problem. If these committees would enlist the co-operation of these merchants, they must reason with them, show to them the folly of trading in foreign cloth. I have no doubt that in many places success would attend such effort. The work has to be of a twofold character, to persuade the foreigncloth trader as also the customer. What I however find is absence of originality amongst Congress workers. They are satisfied with enrolling a few members and going to sleep. Even in canvassing original members, they, as a rule, go to those who can read and write or those who belong to the same caste or class, instead of taking the Congress message to every grown-up man and woman. For instance, I have now made it a rule instead of doing my own shave to send for a khadi-clad barber. It has meant peaceful propaganda. Congressmen stare at me and are at their wit's end to know where tofind a khadi-clad barber. They do not even realize that to procure a khadi-clad barber is the easiest thing in the world especially in villages. He would willingly wear khadi, if it is supplied to him cheap or even gratis. He requires nothing but a small dhoti. Happily he had never worn trousers, jackets, long turbans, etc. His usual costume is a small dhoti. And if Congressmen were to insist upon having a khadi-clad barber for service, barbers will immediately realize that a class of customers has come into being which requires them to wear khadi and they will not make any ado about wearing it. Add to this little bit of fellow-feeling and therefore a lesson to the barber on what khadi means, and you have a convert to khadi.

Among my audience in Andhra villages it is difficult to distinguish between khadi-clad men and men wearing foreign cloth, for the simple reason that both wear coarse cloth and when their

simple dhotis have seen a fair amount of wear and tear, from a distance khadi is indistinguishable from foreign cloth. There is therefore no difficulty that one finds with townspeople about fine khadi. All that is necessary in the villages is honest propaganda and proper organization for khadi production. And it is the villages after all that absorb crores worth of foreign cloth. Therefore when the double propaganda amongst the merchants and amongst the customers is carried on systematically, persistently and honestly, there should be no difficulty in achieving boycott of foreign cloth and replacing it with khadi, which can be manufactured almost in every village.

Young India, 30-5-1929

56. NATIONAL ORGANIZATION

For the assistance of Congressmen I quote the working resolution[1] of the A.I.C.C. in full:

The substance of this resolution is that before the end of August next there should be on the Congress register at least 7_ lakhs of men and women who have received the message of the Congress and who have accepted the Congress creed and that they should be from all the parts of India including villages. This is one-eighth of what I had originally intended. It is also one-eighth of the number of electors registered as qualified to vote for members for the legislatures. Moreover Indian States, non-regulation tracts, Burma and Frontier provinces are excluded. Every amendment in the shape of making the burden light was accepted. The resolution was enthusiastically passed. If the members were earnest the resolution ought to be carried out long before the time-limit is reached. If it is honestly worked, we should have as in 1921 an actively working organization responding to the demands that may be made upon it from time to time. This necessary if the special committees regarding three boycotts, i.e., Foreign Cloth, Liquor and Untouchability, are to be well organized.

The question of the khadi franchise was raised. Strictly, khadi is no part of the franchise. Any person of age signing the Congress creed and tendering 4 annas can demand to be enrolled as a

[1] Not reproduced here; for the text *vide* "Speech aand Resolution at A.I.C.C. Meeting", 25-5-1929

Congress member. Many including Government spies have thus found themselves on the Congress register. But at the time of voting at Congress meetings these have to be habitual wearers of khadi. This clause may be a hindrance to the proper running of the Congress machinery but not to setting it up. Whether the clause should or should not be removed from the constitution is a question which may be specially re-examined by the Congress and debated on merits. If even at this hour Congressmen do not believe in khadi, the clause should certainly be removed. If believing in khadi they do not want it in the constitution, it should also go. If it is retained, for the good name of the Congress it should be strictly enforced. If the 7_ lakhs of members are honestly canvassed, the workers would naturally talk to the men and women whom they may invite to enroll themselves on the work being done and expected of them by the Congress. If I were a canvasser I would use the occasion for selling khadi and for carrying on anti-liquor and anti-untouchability propaganda. If the persons approached are at all politically inclined, I should talk to them about the Nehru constitution and tell them that if it is not accepted by the Govt. on or before 31st December next, the Congress will be expected to scrap the constitution and declare for complete independence. I should finally tell them that in the event of such declaration, the Congress would expect them to join any campaign of non-co-operation or civil disobedience that may be ordained by it. I know that if we have a *bona fide* organization fulfilling the minimum requirements and submitting to discipline we should have tittle difficulty in working out civil resistance if it becomes necessary next year as it is highly likely to be.

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57. PROGRESS OF F.C.B[1].

The F.C.B. Committee presented the A.I.C.C. at its meeting last week with a report of its work which, I hope, everyone interested in the movement will secure from the Secretary, Congress House, Bombay. I would advise correspondents to send oneanna stamp for postage. The report covers only two months ending 30th April. Satisfactory as the

[1] Foreign Cloth Boycott

progress may be considered, it would have been far more so, if we had a responsive Congress organization working full speed. Municipalities and local bodies are slowly moving in reply to Sjt. Jairamdas's appeal. Not more than thirty have as yet sent in their replies. Every local body that has been captured by the Congress should surely carry out the boycott resolution. Meagre as the response from organized public bodies has been, the movement has already made itself felt. From the many extracts quoted in the report I take the following from a speech of Mr. J.C. Roberts, president of the Delhi Piecegoods Association:

> Another disturbing factor which was causing no little anxiety to the commercial community was the present unstable political situation in the country and its *off-shoot in the shape of the threatened movement for the boycott of foreign cloth.* Manufacturing centres were also not free from the effect of the present depression in India and by reports from home it was seen that *about one-third of the total textile mills in Great Britain had to be closed down on account of absence of demand from India and the failure of the Indian buyer to take froward contracts*....Matters were going from bad to worse and the *future looked rather gloomy and uncertain.*

The propaganda has produced a marked effect on the sales of khadi which show a rise upon last year for the same period of 50%.

But says Tattersall regarding Calcutta:

> There have been indications of more demand in piecegoods. . . . *With regard to India there are more signs of Calcutta being in need of bigger supplies especially in dhotis and rather freer buying taken place.*

Upon this the report says:

> Calcutta imported last year 2,821 lakhs of rupees worth of foreign cloth out of a total of Rs. 6,516 lakhs for the whole country. Its share came to 43 per cent. It is thus the chief port of entry of foreign cloth. This fact only increases the significance of the above comment.

Let Calcutta Congressmen take note of the warning.

Many people seem to fear that presently there will be no khadi on the market and that then we shall be as before at the mercy of the indigenous mills with the danger of being once more bamboozled and fooled into taking foreign cloth in the guise of Indian mill-made cloth or at least paying exorbitant prices. The danger is real if we will not devote our time to producing khadi in all the ways open to us. The ways are:

1. Spinning for self,

2. Spinning for hire, and
3. Spinning for sacrifice.

The first is the most important, universal and never failing once it is organized. Time for effective propaganda in this direction has only just been reached. Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta of Khadi Pratishthan has realized this and is organizing it on a large scale. It is the cheapest method of khadi production, for it does away with the bother of having to find a market for the production. The second is spinning for hire for which there is great scope. But this needs capital for stocking cotton and organizing sales. But of course it also taxes out business capacity, makes us resourceful and enables us to build up a vast organization and find honourable employment for the middle class people. The third method is noble but can be taken up only by a select class. If the nation realized the necessity of sacrifice, it could be a means of producing an unlimited quantity of yarn. All the schools conducted by municipalities can give us yarn to clothe lakhs of people. City-dwellers giving half an hour per day to the wheel can give at least 100 yards of good yarn. Let no one thoughtlessly retort that they can better employ their half hour than by merely spinning yarn. A banker finding himself stranded in a waterless desert cannot better employ his hours than by collecting fresh water. An India bent upon achieving boycott of foreign cloth during this year cannot better employ the time of even the best of her inhabitants than in spinning yarn till that boycott is achieved. We do not see this simple obvious truth because we do not *feel* the necessity of this boycott. At nay rate all the three methods are being tried and there is no danger of khadi famine if all of us would work at them to the best of our ability.

Young India, 30-5-1929

58. NOTES

ALMORA TOUR

I hope to leave Sabarmati for Almora on 11th June. It is hardly necessary to remind the workers that

1. There should be no show, no decorations causing expense,
2. No more than the absolutely required number of local

volunteers should accompany me during the tour,

3. There will be subscriptions called for, for *Daridranarayana*,

4. Nothing but simplest food should be provided for the party accompanying me,

5. I should have at least six hours during the day given to me for attending to editorial and correspondence work excluding the hours of feeding, etc.,

6. If expenses of reception are to be deducted from the purses that may be collected, audited accounts should be submitted to me, and

7. My party will travel at its own expense, the reception committee kindly providing for transport facilities.

As this tour has been devised by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru for both rest and work, I am taking with me some who will not be required for the tour but who will accompany me for health's sake. They should in no way be a burden on the reception committee.

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59. IN ANDHRA DESHA [*–VII*]

The heading this week is a misnomer. I am writing these notes at the Udyoga Mandir and not in Andhra. Nevertheless I am still surrounded by Andhra atmosphere and Andhra friends including the head jailor Konda Venkatappayya. I am still busy with the Andhra work and am now conferring with these friends and the members of the A.I.S.A. Council as to how to make the best use of the funds collected. Well then, here is the last list of the collections.

Estimated value of jewels in Nellore Dt. 200-0-0.

17-5-1929—Tadipatri (subsequent collections) 100-0-0; Cuddapah Dt., Dattapuram, 116-0-0; Muddanum, 342-0-0; Chilmakuru, 166-5-9; Nidujuvvi, 116-0-0; Yerraguntla, 1,146-5-1.

18-5-1929—Proddutur, Rs. 1,835-12-0; Gudipadu, 116-0-0; Suddepalli, 500-0-0; Peddamudiam, 116-0-0; Jangalapalli, 116-0-0; Kurnool Dt., Chagallumarru, 342-11-0; Nallagutla, 136-10-3; Sirvel, 116-0-0;Allagadda, 241-0-0; Uygalavada, 84-0-0.

19-5-1929—Nandyal, 1,177-6-0; Ayalur, 116-0-0; Panyam, 116-0-0; Kurnool, 1,705-10-10; Konidedu, 116-0-0; Estimated value of jewels in Anantapur, Cuddapah and Kurnool Dts., 100-0-0.

21-5-1929—Nagalepuram, 20-1-7; Pelakurti, 116-0-0; Kodumuru, 114-0-0; Devanakonda, 143-1-0; Pattikonda, 1,269-0-3; Anantapur Dt., Guntakal, 416-0-0; East Godavary (subsequent collections), 30-3-6; Hyderabad (subsequent collections), 10-0-0; Bellary Dt., Adoni, 1,591-2-9; Guntur Dt. (subsequent collections), 156-0-0.

25-5-1929—Cuddapah Dt. (subsequent collections), 8-14-0.

Grand total Rs. 2,56,279-7-6.

As I said at my farewell speech at Adoni, of all my many tours, this has been the longest and the most intensive I have yet had in any single province, and the subscriptions too, so far as I recollect, the largest yet collected in any single province save of course during the year 1921. I entered Andhra Desha on 6th April and left it on 21st May making exactly 45 days. In that period 319 villages were actually traversed, Guntur and East Krishna leading with 52 each and East Godavari 50, West Godavari 48. I hope next week to publish a consolidated statement that is being prepared for me by the Deshabhakta and Sjt. Narayanmurti who has indeed been preparing the weekly lists.

ITS LESSON

The tour has been a perfect study for me. Andhra has limitless possibilities for khadi production. It can be easily organized for other Congress work. There are workers but they need to be drilled, they need strong and yet sympathetic leadership. There is the spirit of sacrifice. But the workers do not know what to do and how to do it. Dissensions divide them. Different and often conflicting programmes and policies confound them. Khadi is slowly but surely binding them and putting them under discipline. I am hoping much from the conference I am having with the workers who have followed me to Sabarmati.

A TIP TO ORGANIZERS

I may draw the attention of workers to the moving platform which I may claim to have discovered. It is not a discovery of intelligence but of necessity, which is the mother of most inventions and discoveries. I have a weak body which objects strongly to rise and sit to dictation. To get off cars and push, through admiring and shouting crowds, mount platforms sometimes threatening to give way and at times making good the threat, to dismount, push again through more pressing crowds and with difficulty to remount the car and finally to sink in the seat to be again called upon fifteen minutes after

to go through the same ceremony is more than my body would now undertake. I therefore suggested to my head gaoler that the car should be brought to the centre and should serve as platform. I should sit on the edge of the back of the car and address meetings therefrom. He readily agreed. The contrivance saved time, energy, space and money. No platform, no chairs, no decorations, save the decorated hearts of the people. The arrangement proved to be perfect. And where many meetings have to be addressed, I suggest it for adoption by organizers.

KHADI-CLAD BARBER

Generally I do my own shaving. This time I discarded the safety set given by a friend and returned to an old Bihari razor left by Maganlal Gandhi. It is a first-class instrument, if it is kept properly. I have not yet mastered the art of using the stone and the strop which our barbers use with ease and native skill. I therefore sent for a khadi-clad barber at an early stage of the tour. It is the easiest thing in Andhra to procure a khadi-clad barber; it is difficult in , say, Bombay. I gave him my tackle and had a luxurious shave. I saw that thus to secure a khadi-clad barber was good khadi propaganda for the chairman of the Foreign Cloth Boycott Committee. It gave me an opportunity of preaching the message of *Daridranarayana* to a class than whom one cannot imagine better propaganda agents. But I saw that if I got the barber to use my tackle, I could not carry the message of full swadeshi to him nor give him a lesson in sanitary hygiene. Next time therefore I allowed the barber to use his own instruments, which had to be first washed and cleaned. At one place a khadi-clad barber was produced with the latest razor from the West, a Western shaving soapstick, a Western brush, a Western-looking glass, etc., nicely packed in a Western box. I have suspicions that all this belonged to my khadi-clad generous host. I realized the falsity of the situation. I had now to see that the instruments the barber brought were swadeshi so far as possible.

Here then is another tip for workers. Let them carry the message of swadeshi to their barbers, washermen and others with whom they come in daily contact. Let us not treat them as illiterate dependents unworthy of our notice. Let us treat them as fellow-citizens whose services are as necessary for the advancement of the nation as those of the tallest among us.

There was another lesson this barber incident brought home to

me. We often think that we have carried out the full message of swadeshi when we have adopted khadi. We treat it as a passport for the use of everything else from non-Indian sources and for the introduction of the latest fashions from Paris. This is a travesty of swadeshi and a denial of the message of khadi. Whilst khadi is an obligation for all time in India, surely it is equally an obligation to use India-made things wherever we can get them even though they may be inferior to foreign articles. There are several swadeshi things on the market which are in danger of disappearance of want of patronage. They may not be up to the mark. It is for us to use them and require the makers to improve them wherever improvement is possible. Rule of the best and the cheapest is not always true. Just as we do not give up our country for one with a better climate but endeavour to improve our own, so also may we not discard swadeshi for better or cheaper foreign things. Even as a husband who being dissatisfied with his simple-looking wife goes in search of a better-looking woman is disloyal to his partner, so is a man disloyal to his country who prefers foreign-made things though better to country-made things. The law of each country's progress demands on the part of its inhabitants preference for their own products and manufactures.

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60. TRIALS OF PUNJAB

It seems as if the Punjab Government is trying to thwart the Congress preparations in the Punjab in every way open to it. The use of the central site chosen by the P.C.C. has been refused. Now workers are being arrested, their houses searched and in other ways molested. Even the Secretary, Dr. Satyapal, has not been left free. It is however a happy sign that the Punjabis are undaunted and are prosecuting their preparations with unabated zeal. I hope that the Punjabis will make a resolute effort to ensure the success of the forthcoming Congress and show the Government that repression will only refine instead of crushing their spirit.

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61. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
May 30, 1929

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

I have your letter. Narandas will of course write to you. If the vaid so advises you should try his treatment at Almora. Perhaps this is better. In that case it would be better for you to stick to one place instead of running around with me. I will stay at Almora. And in the mean while you would be somewhere near me. Ratilal and Champabehn too wish for some cool air. They too can be sent away provided there is some escort. If it would not embarrass you I would hire a bungalow for them and you too should stay with them because someone has to go with them. You need not accept this suggestion if you do not like it. The suggestion to go over to Almora is independent of this and it had occurred before I thought of Ratilal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 897. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

62. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

UDYOGA MANDIR, SABARMATI,
May 31, 1929

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I am glad to learn that your health is slightly better. I too wish that we should be together for a while but God alone knows when the opportunity will occur. If you can live in peace at the Ashram it is my earnest desire that you should come and spend some time with me. I plan to stay here in July and August. I shall leave for the Almora tour on June 11. I shall return in the beginning of July.

I hope your study of the *Ramayana* goes on.

My health is good.

Blessing from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1664

63. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

UDYOGA MANDIR, SABARMATI,
May 31, 1929

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. There is no doubt that D. committed suicide. I had sent him a telegram,[1] and that too a harsh one certainly. I had several telegrams and letters from him. To him the whole world had become poisoned. People no doubt were a little unjust to him. But some injustice there always is. D. was a learned man. He had read Lecky's[2] praise of suicide. He appears to have acted on it. You no doubt gave him support. If you can find out, will you let me know whether he died before or after he got my telegram? Send me any other details you come across.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6170. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] This telegram is not available.

[2] W. E. H. Lecky (1838-1903), author of *History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne*

64. PACE OF BOYCOTT

The Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee has been conducting its work in accordance with its regulations. Since I am its President, I certainly cannot take credit for its regularity. All the credit for it goes to its enthusiastic and dutiful Secretary. Ever since he accepted that office, Shri Jairamdas[1] has forgotten all other things. No one in the world has been able to do justice to any secretaryship without such concentration. If this Committee receives full assistance, it will experience no difficulty and take no time to make the boycott an established fact, because the main thing to do in this matter is to organize. If the Congress principle becomes a living thing and workers are actuated by true faith, there is no reason at all to doubt that the people are ready for boycott. It is necessary to explain their duty to them and to prove to them that even prominent persons have given up foreign cloth and begun to wear khadi exclusively. But the thing we lack is sincerity among these prominent people themselves. Some of them pretend to wear khadi, some wear it only on occassions, etc., and some others flatly refuse to wear it and yet remain in the Congress. Misusing their high positions they do not abide by any rules and hence there is not as much impact on the people as there should be. The mass of people are not foolish but intelligent. They understand some things by a mere hint. This is one of the reasons why the pace of khadi, that is, of boycott, is slow.

But whether we call the pace slow or fast, we can see from the two months' report which the Boycott Committee has published that it is certainly beginning to have its impact on England at any rate. Mr. Roberts, President of the Cloth Dealers' Association of Delhi, has said in his speech that even Manchester has begun to feel acutely the effect of the boycott. He says that almost a third of the cotton-textile mills in England have closed down. But since our enthusiasm lasts a short while and cools off, such impact does not last for ever. In order that it should do so, we should be honest and make constant endeavours. The pace has increased so much at present that many fear that khadi will be in short supply. But if we have digested the *mantra* of khadi, there is no reason why supplies of khadi should run out. Ifanyone were to complain that there was a shortage of *rotlis* in spite of the

[1] Jairamdas Doulatram

availability of wheat flour and be struck with fear, there would be no justification for that fear; in like manner there will be no fear of a shortage of khadi as long as there is cotton in India. If we now entertain such fear, it is because we have forgotten the power of khadi and have even lost our faith in it. It is as easy to spin yarn and weave khadi as it is to bake *rotlis* in every home. Khadi depends on supplies of yarn. Even now, we come across weavers almost anywhere. But we do not get male or female spinners so easily.

There are three ways of producing hand-spun yarn: the first is the way of self-reliance, the second is doing it for wages and the third is that of sacrificial spinning. The first can be the most extensive and it should be considered the easiest. It is that the agriculturists should themselves spin yarn for their requirements of cloth and get it woven, whereby khadi so made will be cheaper for them than mill-cloth. And in this way one can save oneself the trouble of finding buyers for one's khadi. City-dwellers and thoser who are not agriculturists should get ready-made khadi. The second way is for them, i.e., to pay and get yarn spun. This method is most prevalent today because the khadi movement was started and was possible only that way. It started with the middle classes, the educated class of people. They were not in a position to produce khadi on their own and wear it. In India, there is one class tormented by hunger, which will be able to ward off its misery if it gets a few pice a day. Thus yarn began to be spun for wages. There is a great advantage in this too. That is, it has increased the organizing capacity of the middle classes, has given rise to a great agency of service, has brought into existence a class of people selling khadi for the benefit of others and has opened up a major new source of honourable income for the middles classes. This is no ordinary gain. The third way is to produce yarn by sacrificial spinning. This has been going on very slowly on account of lack of proper environment. If an atmosphere of sacrifice can be created, crores of yards of yarn can be produced by this method. In municipal schools where thousands of boys and girls study, yarn can be produced every day by means of the *takli* with the greatest ease. That will involve very little expenditure and the work can become enduring. The yarn produced can be immediately sent to a weaver and got woven, and thereby confidence can be created in the people. This work can be easily organized. Thus, if all the three ways are fully used, there willnot be the slightest difficulty in India producing as much yarn as is required, that is to say, to produce khadi in the quantity needed.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-6-1929

65. COMMITTEE FOR REMOVAL OF UNTOUCHABILITY

The Congress Working Committee has set up a separate committee for the removal of untouchability, of which Bharat Bhushan Pandit Malaviya is the President. Its Secretary is Shri Jamnalalji. Its office is at 395, Kalbadevi Road, Bombay. The main objects of the committee are:

1. to get public temples thrown open to the *Antyajas*;
2. to secure for the *Antyajas* the use of public wells;
3. removal of the restrictions which face *Antyaja* children in public schools;
4. to improve their condition in respect of cleanliness; and
5. to induce them to give up their habit of eating carrion and taking liquor.

The committee expects every Hindu to help in educating public opinion for this work. Those who are willing to assist in this task should correspond with Shri Jamnalalji at the above address.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-6-1929

66. GUJARAT'S CONTRIBUTION

The All-India Congress Committee has decided that by the end of August, every province should enrol 1 per cent of its population, excluding that of the Princely States and the Excluded Areas, and that at least half the number of districts and half the number of talukas in them and ten villages in each taluk should be covered. This proportion is certainly not too high. If a province cannot enlist even this percentage, it ought not to have the right to send a representative to the Congress.

If the Congress is at all ready to carry out the constructive work decided upon by itself and if it cannot influence one man in every four hundred, it will have no value. The programme of constructive work is such that everyone can take part in it. It is not like that of the legislature in which only a few people whose number can be counted on one's fingers can participate. If we can find volunteers, we can get work from crores of people. Khadi work is such that the boycott

cannot at all be an accomplished fact without the enthusiasm and help of crores of people. The removal of untouchability means the consent of 23 crore Hindus. Prohibition implies the effect of true self-purification on lakhs of Hindus and Muslims. These things can be done only if the Congress organization is alive, alert and pervasive. And if the Congress cannot even do this work, the job which we hope to accomplish by January 1 of the coming year will never get done. Hence I hope that even in this work, Gujarat will, as in the past, make a bigger contribution than its share, and well before the end of August. And if we want to do that, we must take a map of Gujarat and decide how many men must join the Congress from every part, that is, from every taluk, and the work must then be distributed accordingly.

We easily recall, while considering this subject, that the Congress constitution has in it the stipulation regarding yarn. A number of people wish to get exemption from that clause in many ways. I presume that the workers of Gujarat do not have such persons in their midst. But, perchance, if there is any such, I must state for his benefit that the condition is not applicable at the time of enrolling himself in the Congress. He who accepts the Congress objectives and gives four annas or 2,000 yards of yarn can compel a worker to register his name in the Congress office. The obligation to wear khadi applies to a man who wishes to exercise his voting right. It is necessary to understand this distinction. It is also meaningful. A man joining the Congress may be a lover of foreign cloth and even revile khadi, but we hope that, after coming into contact with us, after being served by us and experiencing our love, his fascination for foreign cloth will disappear and he will begin to use khadi. Perhaps, he may be moved to wear khadi if only out of a desire to earn the franchise. And despite all this, if he will not wear khadi, he will forfeit his voting right at least for that time. This is how the Congress had understood the utility and necessity of khadi. I have very often written that it is our duty to remove the condition regarding khadi if a number of people hold that that restriction retards the work of the Congress and that it must be done away with. But I have no doubut whatever in my mind that, as long as that condition stands, it must be implemented honestly.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-6-1929

67. KARACHI KHADI BHANDAR

I had paid a visit to the Bhandar when I was in Karachi, but I was not able to pay much attention to it. Moreover, as I had heard complaints about its high prices, I had kept silent on that subject. The manager of the Bhandar, Bhai Dayaram Topandas, complained against my silence. I gave him the reason therefore. Thereupon, he produced before me proofs of the fairness of his transactions, which included testimonials from Sadhu Vaswani[1], Acharya Gidwani[2] and others. Bhai Chandrashankar Buch, after a special investigation, writes:[3]

In addition, Bhai Dayaram Topandas had asked that the Charkha Sangha audit and publish the Bhandar accounts at its own expense and had stated that, if anyone else were ready to undertake to run it in a better manner, he was willing to hand it over to him. There is no doubt left in my mind about the rates and transactions. It is true that there is no loss in that shop; this is not a shortcoming but a merit; it suggests that he knows how to run the Bhandar. No one who has run a khadi bhandar with circumspection has suffered a loss. There may not be much profit in it, but there is no reason why there should be a loss.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-6-1929

68. IDEAL PRIMARY SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN

The subject of child education, which ought to be the simplest, appears to have become difficult or to have been made so. Experience teaches us that, whether we wish it or not, children do receive some education, good or bad. To many readers, this sentence may sound strange, but if we consider whom we can call a child, what education means and who can impart child education, perhaps we shall find

[1] T.L. Vaswani

[2] A.T. Gidwani

[3] The letter is not translated here. Buch had stated that a nominal marginal profit was added to the selling price and the general expenditure was quite reasonable. Four persons worked in the store and each one drew about Rs. 25 a month. He had suggested that, if only two managed the work, each of them could live respectably on Rs. 50 a month, the other two seeking jobs elsewhere.

nothing novel in the above sentence. A child means a boy or girl under the age of ten or anyone who apears to be of that age.

Education does not mean a knowledge of the alphabet. This type of knowledge is only a means to education. Education implies a child's learning how to put his mind and all his senses to good use. That is to say, he really learns how to use his hands, feet and other organs of action and his nose, ear and other organs of sense. A child who has acquired the knowledge that he should not use his hands for stealing or for killing flies, nor for beating up his companions or younger brothers and sisters, has already begun his education. He has started it, we can say, when he understands the necessity of keeping his body, his teeth, tongue, ears, head, nails, etc., clean and keeps them clean. That child has made good progress in education who does not indulge in mischief while eating and drinking, eats and drinks alone or in society in a proper manner, sits properly and chooses pure foodstuffs knowing the difference between pure and impure food-stuffs, does not eat like a glutton, does not clamour for whatever he sees and remains calm even if he does not get what he wants. Even that child has advanced on the road to education whose pronunciation is correct, who can recount to us the history and geography of the country surrounding him without knowing those terms and who understands what his country means. That child has made very good progress in his education who can understand the difference between truth and untruth, worth and worthlessness and chooses the good and the true, while rejecting the bad and the untrue. There is no need now to dilate on this point. The reader can supply other attributes himself. Only one thing needs to be made clear. In all this, one sees no need of a knowledge of the alphabet or of any script. To engage children in learning the script is tantamount to putting a burden on their mind and other organs and is like putting their eyes and hands to bad use. A child who has received true education easily picks up a knowledge of the alphabet at the appropriate time and in an interesting way. Today, knowledge becomes a sort of burden to children, their best time for development is spent uselessly, and in the end, instead of writing a beautiful hand and reading in a beautiful way, their handwriting is like the housefly's legs, and they read mostly what should not be read and even what they do read, they read wrongly. To call this education is blasphemy, or sacrilege. Before a child receives a knowledge of the alphabet, it should have received primary education.

If this is done, one can be spared in this poor land the expenditure on many series of readers and primers and a lot of nonsense. If there must be a primer, it ought to be only for the teachers, and never for the children described by me. If we are not being carried away in the prevailing current, this matter ought to appear as clear as a lamp.

A child can receive the education outlined above even in the home and that too from the mother herself. Hence children receive elementrary education from their mothers. If our homes are broken up and divided today, if the parents have forgotten their duty to their children, the children should, as far as possible, be educated under conditions providing a family-like environment. Only a mother can discharge this duty; hence child education should be placed in charge of women alone. A man has not generally till now been able to show the love and patience that a woman can. If all of this is true, the moment we tackle the question of child education, that of the education of women naturally stares us in the face. And until we have mothers capable of imparting education to children, I have no hesitation in saying that children will remain without education despite their attending hundreds of schools.

Now I shall give a sketch of child education. Let us suppose that five children have been placed in charge of woman in the role of a mother. These children do not know how to talk or walk and they have running noses, they clean their nasal mucus with their hands and wipe it on their legs or their clothes. There is rheum in their eyes, there is wax in their ears and dirt in their nails. Even when asked to sit down properly they sit awkwardly, spreading out their legs, saliva drips when they speak, they say *`hun'* for *`shun'*[1] and use the first person plural for the first person singular. They have no idea of east, west, north and south. They are wearing soiled clothes, their private parts are exposed, they toy with them and, if asked not to do so, they do it all the more. If their clothes have pockets, these are filled with some dirty sweets, which they eat from time to time, dropping some of these on the floor and making their sticky hands stickier. Their caps have become jet-black at the border and a bad odour issues from them. Only if motherly feelings spring up in the woman who looks after these five children can she teach them. The first lesson will certainly be to put them in good shape. The mother will give them a bath lovingly, she will do nothing but crack jokes with them for

[1] Meaning `what'

several days and in many ways, just as mothers have done till this day, just as Kausalya did with little Rama; she will bind them in the bonds of her love and train them to dance to her tune. Until the mother succeeds in this, just as a cow distractedly runs here and there for her lost calf, she will become anxious about those five children. She will not rest so long as the children have not learnt to be normally clean, their teeth, ears, hands and feet have not become clean, their stinking clothes have not been changed, and `hun' has not become `shun'. After gaining this much control over them, the mother will teach the children the first lesson of Ramanama. Some will call Him Rama, some will call Him Rahman, but it is all the same. Economics will surely come after religion. And so the mother will now start teaching them arithmetic. She will teach the children the multiplication tables and addition and subtraction orally. Children ought to know about the place where they reside; hence she will point out to them the adjoining rivers and channles, hillocks and buildings and while doing so given them an idea of the directions. And she will add to her own knowledge for the sake of the children. In this concept, history and geography can never be separate subjects. Knowledge of both can be imparted in the form of stories only. The mother cannot be satisfied with this much. A Hindu mother lets her children hear the sound of Sanskrit from their childhood and therefore makes them learn by rote verses in praise of God and trains the children in correct pronunciation. A patriotic mother will surely give them knowledge of Hindi. Hence, she will talk to children in Hindi, read to them from Hindi books and turn them bilingual. She will not at this stage impart to them knowledge of writing, but will surely place a brush in their hands. She will make them draw geomatrical figures, straight lines, circles, etc. A mother will not at all concede that the children who do not draw a flower or a jug or a triangle, have received education. And she will not deprive children of music. She will not tolerate it if the children do not sing in chorus and in a sweet voice national songs, devotional songs, etc. She will teach them to sing in rhythm. If she is a good teacher, she places a one-stringed instrument in their hands, gives them cymbals and teaches them a dance with sticks in which both boys and girls join. In order to develop their bodies, she makes them do physical exercise, makes them run and jump. And because the spirit of service is to be inculcated in them and they are to be taught some craft too, she would teach them to pick cotton pods and

break them open, to gin and card cotton and to spin it and the children would playfully spin for at least half an hour every day.

Most of the books we come across nowadays are useless for this curriculum. Her love will provide the books for every mother, because there will be different books of history and geography in every village and sums in arithmetic are of course to be set anew. A dedicated mother will prepare herself every day and will make up new stories and new sums in her notebook and teach them to the children.

It should not be necessary to prolong this curriculum. A quarterly course of studies can be drawn up from it, because the children have been brought up in different environments. Hence we can never have a uniform curriculum. We can draw up courses for them from time to time as and when the children come to us. Sometimes children come to us having learnt wrong things; we have to make them unlearn these. If a six-seven-year-old child is writing an indifferent hand or is in the habit of reading *ma bhu pa*[1] , we have to make him forget it. Until the false notion that the child will gain knowledge through reading is removed from his mind, he cannot make headway. It can easily be conceived that even he who has not mastered a knowledge of the alphabet throughout his life may become unlearned.

I have made no use in this article of the word 'teacher'. A teacher is a mother. She who cannot take the place of a mother can never become a teacher. A child should not feel that it is receiving education. The child whose mother's eyes follow it everywhere is receiving education all the twenty-four hours. A child who sits six hours in a school may not be receiving any education at all. In this topsyturvy life, perhaps we may not find women-teachers. It may well be that child education is practicable at present only through men-teachers. Then the men-teachers will have to acquire the noble status of a mother and ultimately the mothers will have to get ready for this job. But if my concept is right, any mother, if she has love in her heart, can become fit with a little assistance. And while preparing herself, she will prepare the children as well.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-6-1929

[1] For "Mother, give me water to drink"

69. GOSEVA SANGHA

A meeting of the Goseva Sangha was held in the Udyoga Mandir on May 28, and the following constitution[1] was approved. It is desirable that many should join this Sevak Sangha. It is at the same time necessary to sound this warning that one cannot become a worker merely by tendering money, yarn or leather by way of subscription. Among the duties of a *Sevak* which have been set down, some are compulsory and some, though necessary, have been included merely as voluntary. Only those who carry out the compulsory duties and try to observe the voluntary ones can join as members. For those who are fired by a desire to serve the cow, the obligations are not difficult to carry out. What should they do who are at present unable to carry out the compulsory duties, but are keenly desirous of maintaining a close connection with the Sangha? This question had been raised at the meeting of the Sangha. For that purpose, a class of helpers has been provided. I hope, however, that those who cannot become helpers will send donation as in the past and continue doing so.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-6-1929

70. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 2, 1929

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

I have your letter. Whenever I get back to the Ashram, I have less time to answer letters. Surely, with efforts, you will get over your temper. I see that you are vigilant. I was pleased when I went over your life sketch. May God grant you long life and health and strengthen your devotion to service. It will always benefit you if occasionally you give up bread or any other item that you find heavy.

I got your letter today after I had dictated this. I see there is a constant ebb and flow in your health. If you come over in July, we can try yet further treatment.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6785

[1] Vide "Goseva Sangha", 6-6-1929

71. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 2, 1929

CHI. JAMNALAL,

About Rukhi[1], I have spoken to Santok[2]. According to the Gujarati calender, the year ends with *Diwali*. If therefore the marriage is to take place this year, it has to be in the month of *Ashadh* because, as Santok says, there are no marriage-days after this. It would be too early to have the marriage in *Ashadh*. Again Santok is so insistent on Banarasi learning Gujarati even before the marriage that she says the marraige should be fixed for the coming *Jeth* if marriage-days are available in the next year. It is thus a matter of one year. Indeed Santok has also the desire that in the meanwhile Rukhi can further continue her studies; and it is a welcome desire. So, I think, now we should leave the matter as it is. I am trying to ascertain whether or not there are marraige-days in the coming year. I think we need not hold up other similar alliances. Let us proceed on the belief that all betrothals will surely be followed by a marraige, and any alliance that we would now settle may perhaps require to be immediately followed by solemnization. But then you know more about this. Please make the right arrangements for the work regarding untouchability, and send me some news about it regularly every week if possible. On enquiries, I learn today that there are marriage-days in the coming year.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9046

[1] Daughter of Maganlal Gandhi
[2] Wife of Maganlal Gandhi

72. LETTER TO G.D. BIRLA

UDYOGA MANDIR, SABARMATI,
June 2, 1929

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. It has given me much comfort because the feeling had been weighing on me that my advising you to keep D.[1] with you was perhaps a mistake. There can be no two opinions that he had been treated very harshly by the girl's relatives. I have received a letter regarding this which I enclose for your perusal...had hinted at it....writes that...'s death was caused by heart failure. Is it correct?

I understand about *Forward*. There will always be attacks on public figures but we have to weigh things in the scales of justice. Subhas's courage is laudable.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C. W. 6171. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

73. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

June 3, 1929

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. It is true I have become weak. But no harm to the body is perceptible. I am conducting the experim-ent[2] with caution. You should not be anxious. Such experiments are an integral part of my life; they are essential for my mental peace and self-realization. I try to keep alive within the limits I have specified for myself. But I also believe that life and death are not in our hands. I am happy to know your ideas about Keshu[3]. His father took great pains over him and we all hope to get much service from him. I do not wish to restrict his freedom in any way. His being with you frees me from anxiety.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W.6172. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

[1] The name is omitted.
[2] On dietetics; *vide* "Food Faddists", 13-6-1929
[3] Son of Maganlal Gandhi

74. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

[Before *June 5, 1929*][1]

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I shall be able to take it on my return. There were letters from Manilal at three or four places. Each letter had a different tone. He is very simple-hearted. Very often he does not even know how his words might be interpreted. I know very well that Ba's conscience does not regard my behaviour as unjust. Ba has on her own written a letter to Lilavati[2]. That letter is worth reading. I did not send it to Lilavati but gave it to Mahadev and he has preserved it. You can see it some day. In my view the *shloka* you have quoted is quite irrelevant here. There the reference is to the anguish caused by the feeling of hostility. If injustice has been done to Ba by me, it has been out of love. That even that is undesirable is another matter, but that anguish would come under the category of attachment. The meaning of the word anguish mentioned in the first part o the *shloka* is clarified in the disturbed by people? What you write may induce me to correspond with you, yet I would not feel the weight of it. I may not write if I do not find time. I had no intention of writing today. That is why I had instructed Ramniklal to scribble a couple of lines. But I wrote this much since I found the time.

Bhai Ramniklal has decided to stay on here. He has talked to me to his heart's content. I am very happy at his decision, and the Ashram is spared a difficult situation. Narandas has also arrived. He too has decided to stay on. I would like to write much more, but of course I do not have time.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 10737. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

[1] From the contents this letter appears to have been written before the one to Tara Modi dated June 5, 1929; *vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 5-6-1929

[2] Lilavati Asar

75. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

June 5, 1929

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I am glad you will join me during the tour. Copies of the reports make sad reading. I suggest your sending copies to the respective committees with your observations and suggestions. The report about Bihar surprises me. But that shows the extent of our fall.

Hope Kamala and Krishna are well.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1929. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

76. LETTER TO TARA MODI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
June 5, 1929

CHI. TARA,

I have your letter. Ramniklal had talked to me about you. I am glad that you stay at Vedchhi, get plenty of experience and are learning a lot. It is a good thing that you should learn to live in the country and get to know how to be useful to the villages and that the two of you can live apart, whenever necessary, and remain content. As for staying here, you can by all means come here whenever you want to. Ramniklal is satisfied at heart and his decision to live here has brought him great peace. I would have endured separation with both of you but never would I have been able to get used to it. In spite of all this, I would certainly wish you to stay where you are happy at heart. And of course you would have my blessings in whatever you do. Write to me from time to time. You must have got the news that Chhaganlal and Kashi[1] have come over here.

Ramniklal must have written to you about my experiment. I hope you know also the changes about the Bal Mandir. Read carefully the article[2] on this subject appearing in *Navajivan*.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N.4145

[1] Wife of Chhganlal Gandhi
[2] *Vide* "Ideal Primary School for Children", 2-6-1929

77. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Juene 5,

1929

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

I got your letter after I had written to you. It seems your weight has again returned to normal. Such increase and decrease will always persist. I shall start for Almora on the 11th. My address during the tour of that area will be: Prem Vidyalaya[1], Ranikhet. Write to me to this address whenever you want to.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6786

78. CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT

The following is the consolidated statement I promised to publish of the Andhra Desha collections. It has been prepared by Sjt. Narayanamurti as auditor of the A.I.S.A.[2] and checked by Deshabhakta Konda Venkatappayya:

I have never before had the opportunity or the inclination to supervise the conduct and expenses of tours during the past eight years as I had of this eventful Andhra tour. I had noticed before too much laxity about expenses and too much lavishness in ordering things. Much of it was done out of personal affection. But even that affection became a questionable thing when the expenditure was deducted from purses collected in the name of *Daridranarayana*. In Andhra Desha therefore, I took the law, as far as possible, in myown hands and insisted upon no deduction being made from cash collected without vouchers being produced and accepted by me. I further insisted upon all the railway expenses of my party being paid by me so that they might not become a charge upon the purses. I also insisted that all feeding expenses of my party should be paid by me when they were not paid by the local host. Thus the certified expenses include generally only motor hire, petrol, railway travelling of volunteers and the like. These expenses do not amount to more than

[1] Started in 1921 by Prem Vidyalaya Society to impart, besides the three R's mannual training such as spinning, weaving, carpet-makingm carpentring, etc., board and instruction being free

[2] All-India Spinners' Association

five per cent of the collections. To have brought about a great awakening in 319 villages was worth the expense incurred. Having said as much in defence of the expense, I must confess that even though the sums collected may be large, we cannot afford to fly from place to place and pay high motor charges. Whilst the tour was on, I published the full details[1] of one bill which the reader should recall if he will understand the full significance of my statement. There was even there considerable room for improvement and economy. It may seem ungracious to write thus of a tour which has been the most economic of all I have known. But it would be wrong to be easily satisfied or be satisfied with anything but the highest. Easy satisfaction means arrested progress leading to stagnation and finally retrogression. Speed of descent is in the inverse ratio to the snail-like speed of ascent. Workers therefore will take note that whilst Andhra expenses are some guide for the future, they may not be imitated without very considerable modification. That will come automatically when every worker realizes that he is to use national funds as jealously and as economically as a careful householder would use his own. Almora, beware!

Young India, 6-6-1929

79. GOSEVA SANGHA

The following is a translation of the constitution[2] adopted by the Standing Committee of Goseva Sangha that met on 28th and 29th ultimo at the Udyoga Mandir, Sabarmati. I hope the reader will not be disturbed over what may appear to him to be novelty in constitution-making in which members have no rights and strange duties are expected of them. The members of the Standing Committee have come to the conclusion that the very difficult work of serving the cow is not possible without a large number of men and women devoting themselves to it in a spirit purely of service combined with full desire and preparedness for learning the science of cow-preservation, nor need the reader be surprised over the alternative subscriptions in the shape of donating unslaughtered hide or self-spun yarn. It is any day easier to pay five rupees yearly than to find two hides of naturally dead cattle. The very act of procuring such hide by one's own effort

[1] Vide "In Andhra Desha [-III]

[2] Vide "Goseva Sangha"

and not through deputy, involves a certain amount of trouble and the gaining of some knowledge about hides. This is a definite gain. And if the reader will but remember that the word cow is to be taken in the widest sense and includes all life that serves mankind and demands protection, the connection of self-spun yarn with the Goseva Sangha will become immediately obvious.

Young India, 6-6-1929

80. ATROCIOUS

Though house-searches, arrests without even reasonable ground or suspicion of innocent and respectable men, putting them in veils and handcuffs are in the air, I was wholly unprepared for the search of the offices of the well-known magazine, *The Modern Review*, much less the house of its equally well-known Editor, Sjt. Ramananda Chatterjee. Therefore when I heard of the search I wired for particulars and Sjt. Ramananda Chatterjee has sent me the following letter:[1]

> On the 24th instant when I returned from my office at about 11.30 a.m., my second son told me that a Bengali police officer had come to search my house in connection with Dr. J.T. Sunderland's *India in Bondage: Her Right to Freedom*.. . .
>
> .. . I entered the sitting-room, where I found a man in plain clothes seated in a chair.... The officer asked me whether I had any printed copies of *India in Bondage*, etc., any manuscripts thereof, and any correspondence with the author relating to it in the nature of any business agreement. Thereupon I gave him one printed copy of the book…there was no other copy in my house…and two typewritten copies of the Indian and American editions. I also gave him the original copy of the agreement with the author signed by Dr. Sunderland by which I had bound myself to give him 25 per cent of the face value of each copy of the book sold. I gave the man the covering letter also.. .. He then wrote out an inventory of the things taken, got it signed by two local search witnesses, gave me a carbon copy, and went away. The warrant he had with him was only for searching my house. He was throughout polite.. . .
>
> Another Bengali police officer had gone to my press and office.. .. His warrant was for searching the premises and arresting Mr. Sajanikanta Das. .. printer and publisher of the book. ...the officer took away 42 copies of the second edition. .. one copy of the first edition, the manuscript from which the

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

book was printed, and a few cash memos and other documents to show that copies of the book had been sold and sent by V.P.P. The printer and publisher was also arrested at my office and released on bail then and there on his signing a bond for Rs.1,000. His trial for sedition will commence on June 4 at the Presidency Magistrate's Court. At my office also the police officer was polite.

I have asked my office to send you by post a copy of the second edition of the book in order that you may be able to form your own opinion of it, if you can make time to do so.

Let us thank the police that they were courteous. It would have been monstrous, if they had been otherwise. But a search is a search even though it is courteous. Golden fetters are no less galling to a self-respecting man than iron ones. The sting lies in the fetters, not in the metal. The search itself was wholly unjustified. For Sjt. Ramananda Chatterjee is not a nonentity of an editor. He is one of the foremost among journalists. He and his magazine enjoy an international reputation. *The Modern Review* is known for its sobriety and correctness of statement. It is one of the most cultured magazines commanding contributions from some of the most noted writers in India. Where was the occasion for the search? If Dr. J.T. Sunderland's book is seditious, let the publisher be prosectued by all menas, but the information the police required could have been obtained without any dramatic performance. But to the Government of the day, a dramatic performance is the thing they want. The tallest among us must be occasionally bent, lest we forget ourselves. Hence this exhibition of the red claw. There used to be in the mutiny days a rehearsal of humiliations. This search of Sjt. Ramananda Chatterjee and much that is going on at the present moment is an edition of those rehearsals. They will continue till we learn to resent and resist such wanton insults.

Of Dr. Sunderland's book, I am sorry, I know nothing. Before it was printed, the author had sent me the manuscript for opinion. My preoccupations and continuous touring prevented my ever reading it. The manuscript is still lying with me. In due course the book was published. But I know that the worthy Doctor was anxious to have my opinion even after the publication of the volume. I could not make time for reading the book though I had hoped to cope with it during the Andhra tour. But what I could not do as a friend, I shall now have to do as editor. And this is possible for it will be part of the daily editorial routine. The point however is not whether the book is

seditious. The point is that searches and arrests are wholly uncalled for where the purpose can be served without them, and that they are the order of the day in India only in order to overawe and humiliate a whole people. This studied humiliation is one of the chosen methods which the ruling race consider necessary in order that they…though less than one hundred thousand…may rule three hundred million people. It is a state of things we must strain every nerve to remedy. To command respect is the first step to swaraj.

Young India, 6-6-1929

81. FOREIGN-CLOTH BOYCOTT

Sjt. Jairamdas has addressed a general letter to every District Congress Committee as to what is expected of it in the matter of boycott. The following are the operating extracts from the letter:

> I send hereunder the full text of the new programme framed by the Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee at its meeting on the 24th May. May I request you to place it before an emergency meeting of your executive and in view of the various items of the programme, prepare your own line of action within your jurisdiction? There is no reason why the programme for enrolment of Congress members adopted by the All-India Congress Committee at its recent meeting at Bombay should in any way interfere with the carrying out of this new boycott programme. On the, contrary the enrolment programme will give very great opportunities of carrying the message of the boycott of foreign cloth to the thousands whom you may have to approach for enrolment as Congress members. The message of the Congress including the boycott of foreign cloth has naturally to be explained to the people before they are asked to join the Congress. I hope you will be able to show a far better record of boycott work done in the next four months than you have been able to do during the last five months.

FOREIGN-CLOTH BOYCOTT RESOLUTION

(a) The Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee notes the response made by the people, in the course of the last three months, to the programme of boycott of foreign cloth laid down by the Working Committee, and urges all Congress Committees and other organizations co-operating in the boycott campaign to carry out that programme with even greater vigour during the remaining part of the year.

(b) The Committee suggests that in accordance with the above programme, organized efforts should be made to concentrate on:

1. organizing propaganda parties for touring outside large towns;

2. arranging house-to-house visits for converting people to the boycott of foreign cloth;

3. holding public meetings where house-to-house propaganda is not feasible;

4. hawking khadi as often during each week as is possible ;

5. collecting sufficient funds to run small khadi depots wherever necessary;

6. organizing street propaganda and *nagar kirtans* on every Wednes-day and Sunday in the week;

7. engaging in special boycott activity on the first Sunday of each month, that is, 2nd June, 7th July, 4th August, and 1st September;

8. arranging requisitions for special meetings of local bodies which have not so far considered the suggestions made by the Foreign- Cloth Boycott Committee for securing their co-operation in the boycott campaign;

9. posting weekly reports of foreign-cloth boycott work on each Monday; and

10. observing 2nd October, 1929 (Gandhiji's birthday) as the Foreign- Cloth Boycott Day.

I showed last week[1] that the reorganization resolution not only did not interfere with the constructive programme but that it actually helped it. There is no meaning in going to the people for merely asking them to join the Congress if we will not tell them what it means and does for the nation and what it expects of every Congressman.

The need for intensive boycott propaganda is emphasized by the following extract I take from the speech recently delivered by the Secretary of State for India to the London Chamber of Commerce. He is reported to have said:

> It was difficult to realize the prodigious amount of British capital which was sunk in India, and he was quite ready to believe that it could be put even so high as £700,000,000, or even £1,000,000,000. This year the Railway Department were assured of the prospect of spending £ 20,000,000 on useful productive works. In addition to the railway capital, the Government of India had nearly £100,000,000 invested in other profit-earning enterprises, and on top of those vast undertakings which accounted for so much of the Indian

[1] *Vide* "National Organization", 30-5-1929

National Debt, one must pile the incalculable capital sunk in the great trading ventures, which had been growing in value.. . .

India bought from us something like £85,000,000 worth of our commodities, and they could readily realize what the effect on our unemployment problem would be if the Indian market were lost or seriously curtailed. If British traders took to heart the exhortation recently given by the Prince of Wales, he was confident that British fair dealing and superior British workmanship would regain the ground which had been lost in recent years. At present Indian purchases in Great Britain represented only 5s. 3d. per head, while those made by New Zealand and Australia represented respectively £13 5s. 5d. and £8 17s. 3d. per head.

We could not share Lord Peel's joy as he quoted the enormous figures of British capital sunk in India and her purchases of British goods, nor can we associate ourselves with the cheers that greeted his perorations to the eloquent figures. They teach us a different lesson. Most of these purchases spell ruin to the peasantry of India. And let it be remembered that more than half the purchases are of British cloth which India buys whilst its millions of hands remain idle during half the year and whilst they can easily manufacture all the cloth they need in their cottages and stop this terrific drain from the country.[1]

Young India, 6-6-1929

82. NOTES

A SUCCESSFUL EXPERIMENT

Very few readers know and perhaps fewer still are interested in the composition of the A.I.S.A. Council. The reader may recall that the Council timidly, before its time, tried the experiment of having three members added to its strength by election. The voters were A and B-class members who had paid up their subscriptions. Though the B-class membership was abolished for the reasons already stated in these pages[2] , for the purposes of this election, anomalous though it was in many respects, the B-class members were allowed to participate in the voting. The system adopted was proportional representation. The voting was conducted through the post. The result was very satisfactory. The voters understood their responsibility and

[1] *Vide* also "Pace of Boycott", 2-6-1929

[2] Vide "Notes", sub-title A.I.S.A. Memabership

appreciated the privilege. There were five candidates of whom three had to be elected. The following is an interesting summary of the voting lists:

Total votes cast	290
Invalid	31
Valid votes	259
Quota necessary	259
3 + 1	

FIRST VOTES

Sjt. V.V. Jerajani	148
Dr. B. Subrahmanian	55
Sjt. K. Santanam	41
" Deva Sharma Vidyalankar	13
"N. Rama Lingam	2

"Jerajani elected.

Analysis of Sjt. Jerajani's papers for second preferences:

Sjt. K. Santanam	70
Dr. B. Subrahmanian	31
Sjt. Deva Sharma Vidyalankar	9

"N. Rama LingamNilAdding first preferences received, the result is as follows:

Dr. B. Subrahmanian	86
Sjt. K. Santanam	79
" Deva Sharma Vidyalankar	22
"N. Rama Lingam	2

Dr. B. Subrahmanian and Sjt. K. Santanam elected.

Total voters:	Total votes cast(valid)
490 A class	212 A class
83 B class	47 B class
573	259

Thus without any canvassing and without fuss, a little over fifty per cent of the voters took part in an election in which there was no unhealthy rivalry and no vital issue at stake. Out of 290 voting papers,

31 were found invalid. That no doubt is a large figure but not too large for the first election on the proportional basis. It is to be wished that there will be more men and women joining the A.I.S.A. For, it is not merely a body for taking the message of the wheel to the remotest village of India but incidentally it is a training ground for evolving a vast democratic institution in which the highest position is one of pure service and that position is attainable by merit within reach of the lowliest among us. Let it be noted that the franchise of the A.I.S.A. is the most democratic the world has known. Franchise without any qualification whatsoever save that of age, is, in my opinion, no franchise. It can never lead to true democracy.

Young India, 6-6-1929

83. WANTED SELF-CONVERSION

It was at Kurnool during the Andhra tour that I received an anonymous letter complaining that members of the local reception committee who were surrounding me were khaddar-clad only for the occasion and that they were habitual wearers of foreign cloth and given to foreign fashions. At the meeting itself, I saw a fair display of foreign garments. I therefore referred to the contents of the letter whilst at the same time I criticized the anonymous writer for hiding his name. The anonymous writer who must have heard my speech promptly wrote to me disclosing his identity. As the letter does credit to the writer and is otherwise instructive, I give it below in full:

> Secrecy is a sin. But owing to the reasons set forth below, I did not give out my name in my letter of yesterday. I am a Government servant. You are fully aware of the fact that as a Government servant I am not expected to express even my sincere opinion about my country's state or its needs. This is high treason. But still I could not bear to see the palpable insincerity of many of those that came to attend on you yesterday. That was torture to me to see. The duty of the literate lies in convincing the masses. But it is very wrong on the part of the literate to think that the illiterate masses can be made to believe by insincere behaviour. If everyone takes into his head to live by your advice even within his own home, I am sure the time will not be far when India can hold up her head as a free and independent country. Utter want of sincerity cannot convince the masses. We set a bad and a damaging example by our hollowness and we give occasion to the world to mock at us. My mind was ill at ease with all these thoughts and I therefore wrote to you. Though very poor,

> I do not care whether it is well or ill for me as a Government servant to give out my name, as long as I feel convinced that I have done no wrong. I do not also much mind whether my telling out my name to you will jeopardize my position (as a Government servant) which is my sole means of livelihood.

The writer and others who may write to public journals with a reputation to keep should know that editors are bound to withhold from the public names which the owners give only for editors' satisfaction. The writer therefore may rest assured that his name will never be disclosed. If it is any satisfaction to him he may know that I destroyed the portion containing his name as soon as I had finished reading the letter and that I could not recall the name myself even if I tried.

In my opinion, even if he had written his letter for publication with his name, he could have come to no harm. The letter is perfectly innocent and such as any Government servant can write with impunity. We often hesitate to do the right only because of needless fear. We must learn to dare to do the right thing.

Whether the writers' specified charge against the Kurnool leaders can be borne out or not I do not know, but I know that what he says about the insincerity of public life has a substance of truth in it. If the leading class did as it preached, we should have no difficulty in getting an adequate response from the masses. What is therefore sorely needed is undoubtedly conversion of the leading classes. When that comes, the rest will be easy.

Young India, 6-6-1929

84. DHOTI-CUM-SOLA HAT

Pandit Durgashankar Mehta of Seoni writes:

> I was a practising lawyer but non-co-operated in 1921. Circumstances have driven me back to law but I am a strict khaddarite. I have given up the use of trousers and ties and attend court and the local legislature in dhoti. As Chairman of my District Council, I am running Famine Road Works, which require my being out in the sun. Recently I got a touch of the sun and went in for a hat, which has been specially made of pure khaddar. This has started a controversy. Will you take part in it?

This is an old controversy. My narrow nationalism rebels against the hat, my secret internationalism regards the sola hat as one of the few boons from Europe. But for the tremendous national prejudice

against the hat, I would undertake to become president of a league for popularizing sola hats. In my opinion, educated India has erred in taking to (in this climate) unnecessary, unhygienic, inelegant trousers and in betraying general hesitation to take up the sola hat. But I know that national likes and dislikes are not governed by reason. That Scotch Highlander will run the risk of being singled out by his kilt as an easy target for the enemy but will not abandon the awkward kilt. I do not expect India to take kindly to the sola hat. Nevertheless workers like Pandit Durgashankar need not be ruffled by criticism and may certainly wear khadi imitations of the sola hat. It is in reality an easily portable umbrella that covers the head without the necessity of one hand being occupied in carrying it. The Calcutta policeman who shades his head from the fierce sun by sustaining an umbrella in his belt puts himself under a double handicap when pitted against his European fellow-member. Those who have strong prejudice against sola hats, should study the contrast I have described. I may here draw the reader's attention to an indigenous and effective equivalent of the hat that is very generally worn by the poor farmers of Malabar. It is an umbrella without the handle, made of leaves with a bark hoop to fit the head. It is cheap, thoroughly effective and in no way akin to the hat and yet almost just as serviceable.

Young India, 6-6-1929

85. AN APOLOGY

I have always felt unhappy that even though I am the editor of *Hindi Navajivan* I have never written anything for the journal. There has always been a strong desire to do so, but I was not able to fulfil it before now. From now on, I intend to write something for it every week.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 6-6-1929

86. SPINNING v. WEAVING

Shri Moolchand writes from Khadi Ashram, Ringas[1] :

I feel that it is the duty of khadi workers to teach the art of weaving to those peasants who wish to learn it. But it cannot be considered as important as carding nor can it be propagated as successfully. Carding is an indivisible part of the process of spinning, as preparing dough is of that of making chapatis. If a person knows how to make chapatis but cannot prepare the dough he cannot be said to have mastered the art of making chapatis. So it is as important to teach carding as it is to teach spinning.

Weaving is quite a separate process, a distinct occupation. Moreover, it has not become extinct. India's poverty and weaving are in no way inter-connected. It is the extinction of spinning which is responsible for the greivous plight and the utter poverty in which our peasantry finds itself today. Even when we wish them to become self-reliant it is not necessary to teach them weaving. Self-reliance does not mean in any way that each man must do everything himself. It would be useless and harmful to attempt it. Man is a social being and depends on society. Self-reliance means only that each village ought to produce all the grain and all the cloth it requires. There has to be a division of labour in the villages. Only spinning will be essential for everyone. It was so in the past. So it should be now and in the future. Even a little reflection will make it clear that if spinning is to be done by hand, as it should be, then this is the way to do so.

We should not feel for a moment that because the weavers are not honest in their dealings, the peasants should learn how to weave. Our job is to make the weavers better. They are also a part of society. Of course one thing must be done…some of the khadi workers should learn to weave well so that they can influence the weavers and also save them from the injustice they have to suffer because of our ignorance.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 6-6-1929

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had described the work done in the Ashram and asked Gandhiji if weaving was not as important as spinning.

87. COUNCIL-ENTRY

A gentleman writes about Council-entry:[1]

My views on this subject are the same as they were in 1920-21. I do not feel that the country has benefited by people getting into the Councils. If however we must enter the Councils then those elected would do well to use this forum to promote the constructive programme, e.g., khadi, etc. Not to enter the Councils would be wisdom of the first order. But next best would be to join them and then to carry on there the work one would be doing outside.

I would advise the readers that they should forget all about the Councils if they have not set their heart on getting elected themselves or getting someone else elected.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 6-6-1929

88. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

June 8, 1929

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

I have your second letter. It is answered in *Hindi Navajivan*[2], which you may look up.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photos tat of the Hindi : G.N. 831

89. BURMA'S CONTRIBUTION IN 1926

Shri Manilal Kothari had gone to Burma in 1926 to make collections for the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. It was suggested to me while I was in Burma and I had agreed that the funds received at that time should be duly acknowledged in *Navajivan*. But immediately thereafter, I got caught up in tours and hence I could obtain no figures and there has been some slackness. Therefore, I apologize to those brothers who had expected to see this list. A sum of

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had described the work done in the Ashram and asked Gandhiji if weaving was not as important as spinning.

[2] Vide "Sinning v. Weaving", 6-6-1929

Rs.39,787-14-3 was realized through three cheques received at different times. Out of it, a sum of Rs.19,743-4-0, which was earmarked for being spent in Kathiawar itself, was credited to the account of the Satyagraha Ashram and was disbursed through the agency of the Ashram. The balance was credited to the account of the All-India Spinners' Association and its disbursement is recorded in its account books. I see from an old paper that a sum of Rs.3,376 out of the promised contributions has not yet been received. I have with me the names of those who had recorded their proposed contributions. I hope with me the names of those who had promised contributions will send them or that workers will collect and forward them. If any donor wishes to have further information, he should write to the secretary of the Udyoga Mandir.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-6-1929

90. GUJARAT'S DUTY

The Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee has not at all been remiss in giving effect to the Congress resolution. It has sent a copy of the resolution together with suggestions to every place and, in order to facilitate the task of workers, it has provided even figures about the number of taluks in the districts of the Province, the number of villages and the population in each taluk and the extent of the contribution it has to make. And if every taluk does its duty, the Congress resolution will have been properly implemented. As the statistics[1] given are of permanent value and as they will be useful to workers in future also, I give them below:

I hope Gujarat will not be satisfied with enrolling a quarter per cent of its population as members, but as it had earlier pledged to do special work in proportion to its special capacity, it would do likewise this time too. Every district must do at least this much: The workers of the Provincial Committee should meet and assess their capacity. The workers of every district should meet and assess their own capacity and try to exceed the share that falls to them. By doing so, very good results can be obtained without effort and the backward districts and backward taluks can be covered. Gujarat should remember that the

[1] Not given here

Congress Committee, in fixing a quarter per cent, kept the weakest provinces in view. Gujarat does not regard itself as weak in its capacity for doing work. Other provinces, too, do not consider Gujarat as a weak province. Hence Gujarat cannot rest satisfied with enrolling a quarter per cent as members. For example, at the time of collecting a crore, when there was competition in Gujarat, Surat had done much better than its allotted share. Can Surat or Kheda district draw any satisfaction by comparing itself with Panchmahals? Wherever there is unity, the strong have always borne the burdens of the weak. In accordance with that principle, if we regard India as indivisible, we would shoulder the burdens of the weak provinces and the strong among us would bear the burdens of the weak. Where such an attitude is cultivated, the weak do not feel their burden and the strong do not feel proud.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9.6.1929

91. WHAT SHOULD MUNICIPALITIES DO?

It may be worth while knowing what the municipalities and local bodies should do in regard to the triple boycott. I do not know how many of these municipalities and local bodies in Gujarat are under Congress influence. The Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee points out from time to time how much work can be done in regard to the boycott in those bodies to which Congressmen have been elected. The Committee publishes the names of these municipalities which do this work. Among them the names of local bodies in Gujarat are to be found scattered here and there. Instead of this happening, Gujarat's contribution ought to be large. There must be only a few municipalities or local boards in Gujarat or India which do not believe in boycott.

One thing they can do on a large scale. When the boycott gains momentum, there is bound to be a shortage of khadi. In overcoming this shortage, the municipalities can make a big contribution. All of them can get yarn spun in their schools and have it woven in their own villages. It is possible to do this work with ease and at a minimum cost. If the khadi thus produced is not now utilized by the respective villages or towns, it is possible to sell it off immediately at other centres. If this happens at all places, there can never be a shortage of

cloth. Just as we can never imagine a shortage of *rotlis* as long as wheat is available, people should experience no shortage of cloth whatsoever so long as cotton is available.

In order to do such lasting work, there should be an atmosphere of khadi. If there is such an atmosphere, there will be sacrificial spinners in every home and yarn will be spun in every home. An early start can be given to the creation of such an atmosphere through municipal schools.

What applies to municipalities certainly applies also to national schools. It is good that pupils go hawking, but it is even more necessary to produce khadi at present than hawk it. Greater labour, art and patience are needed in the production of khadi. Hence those who have an understanding of khadi and boycott have to give more emphasis to its production. Gujarat may well have less of yarn spun by poor sisters, but it should have an inexhaustible power to produce sacrificial yarn. At the moment Bhai Fulchand's band is hawking khadi in Kathiawar. That is praiseworthy. It also meets with success. Why should not the same band produce yarn and teach others to do likewise?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-6-1929

92. ANONYMOUS DONATIONS

A donor has written an anonymous letter under the name "Natural Feeling"and sent a hundred rupees. Of this amount, Rs.50 is meant for the Lalaji Memorial, Rs.10 for the Maganlal Memorial, Rs.25 for relief of distress in the south and Rs.15 for cow-protection work.

I thank "Natural Feeling"for this anonymous donation. I have very often written that the habit of writing anonymous letters is very bad, that is should not at all be encouraged, that it is a sign of cowardice. But the anonymous letter of "Natural Feeling"deserves none of these reproaches. The action of "Natural Feeling"is one example of the fact that there are in the world very few things which are solely good or solely bad at all times and at all places. It is desirable that people should follow the example of "Natural Feeling". Donors love to see their names in newspapers. Ultimately, almost all desire that their names should be known at least to those to

whom they send their donations. There may be some among these who do not give their names even to the recipients; such people deserve to be encouraged. This way those who receive donations are fully tested since the donors can watch how their anonymous gifts are being utilized.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-6-1929

93. "SAD PLIGHT OF BULSAR BHANGIS"[1]

1. I have published the above article without changing a single word in it under the title given to it by Thakkar Bapa. How nice it would have been had he stopped in Bulsar even for a day and solved this problem of cruelty by making a constructive suggestion! Or if a solution were not possible, we would have got at any rate an idea of the cruelty of municipal councillors and the other respectable citizens. But is such a suggestion necessary for Thakkar Bapa? He spends all his twenty-four hours in work of this sort only. It is only to be seen what the Vibhishanas[2] of Bulsar do after reading this article. The municipality can, if it wishes, remedy this inhuman state of affairs in a day. Its chief officer can assess the extent of the Bhangis' indebtedness, meet the Pathans and repay to them the loans advanced by them and can easily form a co-operative society. He can know why they have to incur debts and if they hereafter would take loans in an improper way, he can urge them not to do so. This will take a little time of the official and the work will be accomplished at once.

2. The same official can scrutinize their expenses and inquire into the additions to or deductions from their wages.

3. If no one is willing to let them draw water from his well, the municipality should construct one for them. And the Vibhishanas should, in order to set an example to the Hindus, draw water from it for themselves from time to time and on that excuse keep the well also clean.

[1] A.V. Thakkar had visited Bulsar with anti-untouchabililty workers. His report was published under this title.

[2] Vibhishana, Ravana's brother, supported the cause of Rama because it was righteous. The reference here is to the fair-minded among caste Hindus who worked against untouchability, risking social ostracism.

4. It should forthwith provide to the forty-two servants residential facilities fit for human beings and explain to the Bhangi and non-Bhangi women that the lavatories constructed near their residences are open to Bhangi women also.

5. If the admission of the Bhangis' children into the existing schools angers the residents of Bulsar, the municipality should start a good school for the Bhangis and the Vibhishanas should send their children to it. The municipality can do all these things quickly, but if it does not do its duty, the Congressmen of Bulsar should do theirs, and the youth league of Bulsar should follow suit. In improving the sad plight of forty-two men, no big economic question can arise nor that of the availability or non-availability of many workers. The question is merely one of compassion. If the Goddess of Compassion dwells nowhere in Bulsar, this story of cruelty will remain buried in the files of *Navajivan* as a proof of Thakkar Bapa's anguish of soul. If there is any vigilant person in Bulsar, he should write to *Navajivan* and intimate whether anyone has taken any steps in this respect or not.

[From Gujarat]

Navajivan, 9-6-1929

94. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

June 10, 1929

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

I have your letter. By all means do come in July. By the first week of July I must be back here.[1]

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6787

[1] From Almora

95. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

[*June 11, 1929*][1]

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

For many years now the proposal to have a well dug for the *Antyajas* in Junagadh remains unfulfilled. Devchandbhai knows about it, and was also making some arrangements about it. Please inquire into this. And your *dal*[2] ought to complete the work on this well. I have already written to Devchandbhai that the expenditure would be provided for.

Havn't you included Maniklal Kothari in the Youth Conference? He ought to be included. A sum of Rs. 750 has come from Rangoon, about which also he had been speaking to me. It would be proper to decide in consultation with Bhai Nanalal how the amount should be spent. A letter signed by both of you should go to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAI FULCHAND KASTURCHAND

KELAVANI MANDAL, WADHWAN CITY, KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9189

96. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Tuesday, June [*11*][3] *, 1929*

CHI. CHHAGANLAL JOSHI,

Vallabhbhai told me that the cheque for Rs. 900 which I brought with me from Bardoli was not acknowledged in *Young India*, and that when he made an inquiry and again after an investigation into the matter, you wrote to him that you knew nothing about it. Please letme know what the facts of the case are. Now I sleep all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5421

[1] From the postmark

[2] Team

[3] The source has "12, which however was a Wednesday.

97. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

June 12, 1929

IN THE HUMBLE SERVICE OF MU. BHAISHRI,

I got your letter. I feel at ease now. Santok and Radha also were very happy. Jamnalalji[1] you know of course. He is a man of self-restraint. He feels to be in his own family in Benares [sic]. The famous Lakshminarayan temple is at his place.

Keshu is perfectly happy. It is Ghanshyamdasji[2] who provides him with money for his monthly expenses. He is pleased with Keshu. If Keshu keeps his habits moderate, he will go very far. 1 enclose his latest letter. You will know more from it.

Purshottam is with me. After putting him at Almora, I will return. It has been decided to keep Rukhi with Janakibehn. She has fallen ill again though from Matheran she had returned with her health much improved.

Respectful prostration by

MOHANDAS

From the Gujara ti origin al: S.N. 33109

98. 'FOOD FADDISTS'

I have been known as a crank, faddist, mad man. Evidently the reputation is well deserved. For wherever I go, I draw to myself cranks, faddists and mad men. Andhra has its fair share of all these. They often find their way to Sabarmati. No wonder then that I found these specimens in abundance during my Andhra tour. But I propose to introduce to the reader only one fellow crank who by his living faith in his mission compelled my admiration and induced me to plunge into a dietetic experiment which I had left unfinished at the age of 20 when I was a student in London.[3] This is Sundaram Gopalrao of Rajahmundry. The ground was prepared for him by a survey superintendent whom I met at Vizagapatam and who told me he was practically living on raw food. Gopalrao has a nature-cure establishment in Rajahmundry, to which he devotes the whole of his time. He

[1] Jamnalal Bajaj
[2] Ghanshyamdas Birla
[3] Vide "An Autobiaography"

said to me, “The hip-baths and other kindred appliances are good so far as they go. But even they are artificial. To be rid of disease it is necessary to do away with fire in the preparation of foods. We must take everything in its vital state even as animals do.”

“Would you advise me to adopt entirely raw diet?,” I asked.

“Certainly, why not? I have cured cases of chronic dyspepsia in old men and women through a balanced diet containing germinating seeds,” was Gopalrao’s reply.

“But surely there should be a transition stage,” I gently remonstrated.

“No such stage is necessary.” rejoined Gopalrao. “Uncooked food, including uncooked starch and proteid are any day more digestible than cooked. Try it and you will feel all the better for it.”

“Do you take the risk? If the cremation ceremony takes place in Andhra, the people will cremate your body with mine,” I said.

“I take the risk,” said Gopalrao.

“Then send me your soaked wheat. I commence from today,” I said.

Poor Gopalrao sent the soaked wheat. Kasturbai, not knowing that it could possibly be meant for me, gave it to the volunteers who finished it. So I had to commence the experiment the following day—9th May. It is therefore now a month when I am writing these notes.

I am none the worse for the experiment. Though I have lost over five pounds in weight, my vitality is unimpaired. During the last eight days the weight has shown a decided tendency to increase.

Fellow faddists should know what I am doing.

I take generally eight *tolas* of germinating wheat, eight *tolas* of sweet almonds reduced to a paste, eight *tolas* of green leaves spinach or pounded [*sic*], six sour lemons, and two ounces of honey. Wheat is replaced twice or thrice during the week by an equal quantity of germinating gram. And when gram is taken in the place of wheat, cocoanut milk replaces almond paste. The food is divided into two parts, the first meal is taken at 11 a.m., the second at 6.15 p.m. The only thing touched by fire is water. I take in the morning and once more during the day boiling water, lemon and honey.

Both wheat and gram germinate in 36 hours. The grain is soaked in water for 24 hours. The water is then strained. The grain is

then left in a piece of wet khadi overnight. You find it sprouting in the morning ready for use. Those who have sound teeth need not pound the grain at all. For cocoanut milk a quarter of the kernel is grated fine andyou squeeze the milk through a piece of stout khadi.

It is unnecessary to enter into further details. What I have given is enought for diet reformers to help me with their suggestions. I havelived for years on uncooked fruits and nuts but never before beyond a fortnight on uncooked cereals and pulses. Let those therefore who know anything of unfired food favour me with literature or their own experiences.

I publish the facts of this experiment because I attach the greatest importance to it. If it succeeds it enables serious men and women to make revolutionary changes in their mode of living. It frees women from a drudgery which brings no happiness but which brings disease in its train. The ethical value of uncooked food is incomparable. Economically this food has possibilities which no cooked food can have. I therefore seek the sympathetic help of all medical men and laymen who are interested in reformed dietetics.

Let no one blindly copy the experiment. I have not Gopalrao's faith. I do not claim success for it yet. I am moving cautiously. The facts are published so as to enable me to compare notes with fellow food reformers.

Young India, 13-6-1929

99. DR. SUNDERLAND'S VOLUME

If the house of the editor of The *Modern Review* could be searched,[1] why should he not be arrested? The Government of Bengal did not leave us long in doubt. Sjt. Ramananda Chatterjee has been arrested and is to be tried for sedition. The sedition evidently consists in his having published the Rev. Dr. Sunderland's book of which the Poet Rabindranath Tagore says:

> The Rev. Dr. Sunderland became personally known to me during his visit to India and my visits to America, and won from the first my deep regard. I have greatly admired his courage, earnestness and sincerity in taking up in this book the cause of the Indian people.. .. His love of humanity, which

[1] *Vide* "Atrocious", 6-6-1929

knows no geographical boundaries or racial differences, should be a lesson to all of us who seek to share his ideals and carry on his work.

In the foreword the author says:[1]

> I very much desire not to be misunderstood as to my motive in writing this book. Let no one say, or for a moment believe, that the book means enmity to Great Britain. It means nothing of the kind, any more than pleas for freedom of the slave in the old days of American slavery meant enmity to the American nation which permitted slavery.. .. I am in no sense whatever England's foe or ill-wisher. What I advocate for India I believe to be for England's good as well as for India's. I want no wrong done to England, in connection with India or anywhere else. But I also want England to do no wrong to India, or through India to the world.. . .
>
> The plain fact is: there are two Englands, just as there are two Americas. One of the Englands…that which I like to think of as the *true* one…believes in justice and freedom, not only at home buyt everywhere else. This is the England of Magna Charta; of Milton and Pym and Hampden; of Pitt and Fox and Burke in 1776 when they demanded justice for the American Colonies; of Burke and Sheridan in connection with the trial of Warren Hastings, when they demanded justice for India; the England that abolished its slave trade in 1807 and slavery in all British dominions in 1833; the England of the Reform Bills; the England of such friends of India as Cobden and Bright, Lord Ripon, Mary Carpenter, Professor Fawcett, Charles Bradlaugh, A.O. Hume, Sir William Wedderburn, Sir Henry Cotton, and many others in the past; and many today, both inside and outside of Parliament (and particularly the Labour Party)....
>
> This England I honour and love....Unfortunately, there is another England. … It is the England which fought against Magna Charta; which refused to give justice and freedom to the American Colonies in 1776; which has constantly allied itself with militarism and imperialism; which fought two wars to force opium on China; which long held Ireland in bondage; which opposed all efforts to abolish the slave trade and slavery; which has opposed practically all political and social reforms in England; and which today, while giving profuse promises to India of pots of gold at the end of a rainbow thrusts into prison without trial Indian leaders who agitate for freedom, and gives no assurance of any real intention of ever loosening its iron grip upon what King George calls "My Indian Empire".

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

> This England I do not love or honour. It is solely against this evil, and as I believe, dangerous England, that any hostility or criticism found in the following pages is directed. ...
>
> I believe that this imperialistic, might-makes-right England, if kept in power, will as certainly lose India to Britain, as the rising of the sun. The men at this England's head are the Lord Norths of our time, who are driving India to revolution, just as Lord North and George III in 1776 drove the American Colonies to Revolution. And India's revolution, if it comes, will be sympathised with by all Asia and by all intelligent lovers of liberty in the entire world. And there will be no possibility of its being put down. India will emerge a free, independent and great nation, wholly independent of Britain.
>
> Something ought to be said here regarding my qualifications for writing about India. ... For more than forty years I have been a constant student of India's great religions, her extensive literature, her philosophies, her remarkable art, her long history, and above all, her pressing and vital present-day social and political problems. ...

Dr. Sunderland is a nonagenarian. He is no adventurer. If he is seditious, it is virtue to be in his company. Undoubtedly the book contains strong things strongly put. But there is no malice in them. The book is brimful of quotations from eminent English writers. It has passed through its second edition inside of a year. I tender my congratulations to Sjt. Ramananda Chatterjee on his having published Dr. Sunderland's book and on his being therefore singled out for the honour of a prosecution. This arrest is forcible proof of Dr. Sunderland's indictment of British rule.

Young India, 13-6-1929

100. KHADI GUIDE

The A.I.S.A. has just published a khadi guide which as well as the report of the A.I.S.A. for 1927-28 all public workers should possess. Both can be had at the offices of the A.I.S.A. or its many depots at Rs.1-2-0 and 0-4-0, respectively. The guide is profusely illustrated and gives information about the khadi activity in all the provinces. It contains too some useful maps. It should be the concern of every patriot to study the activities of an institution that finds work for nearly 1,000 middle class men and through them distributes among nearly one hundred thousand women, 5,000 weavers and 700 carders in over 2,000 villages twenty-four lakhs of rupees annually.

The report contains audited accounts which careful workers may criticise. The Association is in need of sympathy as well as informed and useful criticism.

Young India, 13-6-1929

101. BARDOLI ENQUIRY REPORT

Messrs Broomfield and Maxwell's report is an illuminating document. Its pages are an evidence of the immense conscientious labours they have put into the work entrusted to them, within the limits prescribed by the reference whose operative sentences (including an abvious grammatical slip) were word for word as the people's representatives had drawn up. Though therefore the actual finding on the question of the amount of assessment is, as Mahadev Desai has, in my opinion, conclusively pointed out,[1] faulty, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and the ryots of the tracts concerned are bound to accept it. It is upto them however at least to reason and point out to the Government the defects in the finding and to leave it to their honour to remedy them. Throughout the brave fight the people put up, the question never was one of rupees, annas and pies, burdensome though the assessment was. The question was one of principle and justice. Resentment was felt against the high-handed and contemptuous manner in which the people's case was treated. The authors of the report have completely vindicated its justice.

The Officers were to

> enquire into and report upon the complaints of the people of the Bardoli Taluk and Valod Mahal and Chorasi Taluk…
>
> (a) that the enhancement of revenue recently made is not warranted in terms of the Land Revenue Code,
>
> (b) that the reports accessible to the public do not contain sufficient data warranting the enhancement and that some of the data given are wrong; and they were to find, that if the people's complaint is held to be justified, what enhancement or reduction, if any, there should be upon the old assessment.

On all these points the Commissioners have substantially found in favour of the people. As to the first complaint the Commissioners have found that the authorities have offended against the spirit of

[1] In Young India, 23-5-1929, under the title "The Bardoli Report: An analysis"

Section 107. The Commissioners' examination of the second complaint is detailed, exhaustive, able and instructive. It is the best part of the report and covers 40 out of 77 pages of the body of the report. This examination proves to the hilt almost every one of the charges brought by the people against Messrs Jayakar and Anderson. There could be no better vindication than this:

> We are bound to hold that the complaint referred to in point (b) of the terms of reference is substantially justified. The data in the reports, apart from the rental and sale statistics, are obviously not sufficient to warrant either the general increases sanctioned in the maximum rates, or the much higher increases in the case of particular villages. The rental and sale statistics have been carelessly compiled, are demonstrably incorrect in a large number of cases, and in general must be regarded as completely unreliable. Further, the established method of using the statistics is in our opinion unsound in theory, and however it may work in practice in other districts, is not capable of giving satisfactory results in this part of Gujarat, where leases and sale transactions are affected by such a variety of disturbing factors. In view of this conclusion we submit that the present settlement cannot be allowed to stand in either of the two taluks.

Having thus found that the increase made by the Government had offended against the spirit of Section 107 of the Code and that the data relied upon by the Government were insufficient and faulty, the Commissioners had to say what the increase or the reduction, as the case may be, on the old assessment there should be. Though in my opinion the case before the Commissioners was for a substantial reduction in the old assessment, such a proposal was evidently beyond their ken. Revision has traditionally come to mean an increase, be it ever so slight, in the general rate of assessment. Though therefore they have rejected the Government rate of 22 per cent increase as excessive, they have proposed an increase of 5.7 per cent. This means an increase of Rs. 48,648 instead of Rs. 1,87,492.

For the people's representatives they have unmixed praise. I cannot resist the temptation to quote from the report the Commissioners' unqualified appreciation of their "valuable assistance".

> At all our inspections the case for the agriculturists was also watched by representatives specially delegated for the purpose, principally Mr. Narahari Parikh and Mr. Mahadev Desai. In addition to the compilation of much useful information on their own lines, these gentlemen had systematically investigated and tabulated in advance the rental or sale transactions of each

village in our programme, and their detailed knowledge of individual cases not infrequently enabled us to obtain more accurate information that would otherwise have been available. We gladly acknowledge here the conscientious and impartial manner in which this assistance was given to us and its real value for the purposes of this enquiry.

But as I have already said the report suffers from limitations. Though the total increase proposed by the Commissioners is trifling in the aggregate, it is not warranted by the facts of the case and in certain cases serious injustice has been done, unconciously no doubt, by the Commissioners. If the government is wise, it would redress the injustice. This is an injustice which it was within the power of the Commissioners to avoid and which they could and would have avoided, if they had more time, and if they had, as they should have, heard the people's representatives on the proposed increase. Such a precaution is necessary when every case or every village is never individually examined. In assessing particular villages Messrs Broomfield and Maxwell have simply drawn deductions from the condition of villages which they have thought to be analogous. What therefore they could not do or failed to do, the Government can, if they wish, do now without much time or trouble and render the needed justice in individual cases.

But the report also suffers from defects which the Commissioners had no power to remedy. Sardar Vallabhbhai's belief is shared by all those who have at all studied the land revenue policy, that the land is already over-assessed and that the case is not one of tinkering with particular assessments but it is one of overhauling the whole land revenue policy. The pages of this valuable report show that both the revenue laws and the methods of their administration are far from satisfactory. But this is a question which the people of Bardoli had not raised. It is for the country now to demand a radical change both in the law and its administration. This requires a critical study of both, and popular education and propaganda in revenue matters. It will tax the Sardar's best ingenuity and provide him with a platform for civil disobedience of an all-India character, should the Government still prove obdurate and deaf to public opinion. The illuminating report and the Bardoli triumph should render unnecess-ary any such heroic measure.

Young India, 13-6-1929

102. PANDIT NEHRU'S APPEAL

Pandit Motilal Nehru has addressed the following appeal to Congress members of the legislatures:

> You must have read with interest the recent pronouncement of the Viceroy and of some provincial Governors extending the life of the legislatures. As you are no doubt aware, the A.I.C.C.[1] and the Working Committee considered this situation and decided to call upon all Congress members of the legislatures to abstain from attending them till further notice. They were further asked to devote all their available time to the furtherance of the Congress programme in the country.
>
> It is clear that the real strength of the nation is built up by work outside the present legislatures, and even our Council work carries weight only to the extent of the organized strength behind us. All indications point to an approaching crisis and by the end of this year at the latest we must be ready to face this crisis with confidence. The A.I.C.C. has therefore laid down a special programme of reorganisation for the next three months, failure to comply with which will lead to the disaffiliation or non-recognition of the Committee concerned. Those of us who are members on behalf of the Congress of the Central Legislature or the Provincial Councils have now to demonstrate that we can work outside the Councils as well as inside. Even from the point of view of future Council work it is essential that we should work in our constituencies and consolidate the position of the Congress.
>
> I write this letter to appeal to you to give some time and energy to working for this Congress programme. You would naturally prefer working in your own constituency. This is right. I would suggest however that you should immediately get in touch with your Provincial Congress Committee so that full advantage may be taken of your time and your efforts may be co-ordinated with those of others.
>
> You may of course concentrate on any item of the Congress programme. I would specially suggest however the formation of village and local Congress Committees, the enrolment of Congress members and volunteers and the boycott of foreign cloth. I would also strongly recommend your collecting funds for Congress work. These moneys should be sent to the Provincial Congress Committee concerned which will issue receipts to the donors. The money may also be sent direct to the A.I.C.C. office in Allahabad. I would like to keep a separate record of these activities of Congress members of the

[1] All-India Congress Committee

legislatures so that the country may know what we can do outside the Councils. I would therefore request you to send me a monthly letter telling me briefly what you have done to further the Congress programme. This report may take the form suggested on a separate sheet. It should be sent to me direct.

If you have any difficulties the office of the A.I.C.C. will be glad to help you in removing them.

This authoritative pronouncement that "the real strength of the nation is built up by work outside the present legislatures" has come none too soon. If the members of the legislatures will recognize this obvious truth and emphasize it in their speeches and acts during the remaining months of this year, we should be ready to face any crisis that may overtake the country.

Young India, 13-6-1929

103. A CARDING ENTHUSIAST

Shri Mahavir Prasad Poddar writes the following in praise of carding:[1]

The carding-bow is indeed as praiseworthy as Bhai Mahavir Prasad says it is. For those who would learn the art of spinning in its totality it is essential to learn the use of this instrument as well. It is very easy to learn and the music it produces while it is operated is very sweet to the ears. I would advise all those who use clean snow-white cotton slivers to follow Mahavir Prasad's example.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 13-6-1929

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had emphasized the importance and beauty of carding. He had stressed the need to teach carding in every village and offered his services for this purpose.

104. MARRIAGE AND THE VEDAS

There is more of pomp and show and less of religion in the way the marriage rites are performed in the Hindu society these days. Those who are getting married do not know what these rites are or represent and what their obligations are after the ceremony. This is highly regrettable. The Vedas regard marriage as a sacrament and have described how it should be performed. Marriages should continue to be performed in the same way. It is the duty of the parents and the elders to explain to the couple the significance of these rites and their duties after going through the ceremony. These rites and the pledges that the couple have to take have already been published in *Navajivan*[1]. Readers may look them up.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 13-6-1929

105. NOTES

SEWING AS A "YAJNA"

Shri Mahavir Prasad also writes:[2]

Whatever we do for the good of others is a *yajna*. A number of such big and small *yajnas* are necessary to make the khadi movement successful. Spinning of course is the biggest and most universal of these. If those who have a little spare time would tailor khadi it could be made very cheap. This work can be organized only at such places where khadi bhandars exist and only the khadi bhandars can efficiently manage it. I would like to thank Bhai Mahavir Prasad and Ghanshyamdasji too for making a start in this direction. I hope they will continue the sacred work they have undertaken. It should not be difficult to find such ladies in Calcutta who would volunteer to stitch khadi.

[1] Vide "With Bare Religious Rites", 7-3-1926

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had suggested that by stitching khadi free of cost people could participate in the khadi yajna. He had referred to a scheme to this effect started in G.D. Birla's house.

There is no end to Shri Mahavir Prasad's greed. He is ever dreaming of propagation of khadi. He has extracted a number of articles regarding khadi and allied activities from *Navajivan* and distributed them in book-form in thousands. These booklets are available at a cheap price. He intends publishing them as a series to be known as *Navajivan Mala*. I have seen the first three books and I feel that they ought to be widely circulated. If enough khadi literature is made available to the public they will realize the potentialities of khadi.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 13-6-1929

106. LETTER TO LILAVATI

BAREILLY,
June 13, 1929

CHI. LILAVATI,

I could not reply to your letter earlier; I had absolutely no time. Whatever you would do rests solely on your strength. My only advice could be that you can do whatever you would, after satisfying your uncle who, you say, has such great affection for you. If you wish to take some step in spite of his dissatisfaction, it must be subject to two conditions. It should proceed with restraint and be prompted by the inner voice. The bonds of kinship too slacken before the inner voice. All the same one ought to know that the inner voice is very often wrongly interpreted.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9314

107. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

BAREILLY,
June 13, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL JOSHI,

Parnerkar had given me points to be included in the letter to Sir Purushottamdas. I enclose them with this. They seem to be all right. In

the letter make clear that it will be for him to get a fencing put up. Give him an estimate of the expenditure for that. We should get occupancy right for 25 years. After that period, we should get compensation for the buildings we may have constructed at a rate to be fixed then. If the two parties differ as regards the amount, a duly authorized arbitrator should be appointed and we should be paid the amount fixed by him. We should be bound for five years to accept their cattle, even if we are incurring losses. You may also add that, if the society in Bombay wishes to discuss the matter further, Parnerkar will visit Bombay.

Have a talk with Chi. Kanti from time to time. We cannot say yet that he has calmed down.

I send with this Ranchhodbhai's letter; make good use of his criticism.

The change about the kitchen can be introduced with immediate effect.

I shall make one criticism about the names suggested for the different places in the Ashram. I see no uniformity in them. There is a mixture of Bengali, Marathi and Persian words. No thought seems to have been given to the matter. Why *Kutir* and not *Kuti*? Why should we not call the place "Magan Kutir" or "Magan Niwas"? What shall we gain by having a new name in place of the suggestive one, "Striniwas"? Why not "Prarthanabhavan"? Or, why should we not try to find a word which can be easily understood to indicate that the place where prayers are held is an open maidan?

I see no reasoning behind the suggestion to call the guest house "Nandini". I should certainly like Bhansali's name to be connected with Mahadev's dwelling. Why should we not name it "Jaybhuvan"? Why should the kitchen be named "Sharadamandir"? Why not "Bhojanshala"? Since the place serves both purposes, its name should refer to both. "Kailas" for "Vankar Niwas" sounds ostentatious. "Rustom Block" should be changed into a suggestive name. We should find the Gujarati equivalent for "block". "Goshala" is a suggestive name, and we have no right to replace it by the most sacred name "Gokul". "Uttar Prantar" and"Dakshin Prantar" too do not sound well to me. We should dismiss "Rajmarg". I have some doubt whether to permit "Vithi" to say. "Tirtha" should be dismissed.

You will now easily understand what is at the root of my criticism. Comments were invited at the time of the prayer; take this as

in response to that. Don't think at all that my suggestions must be carried out. It will be enough if this criticism receives attention along with other criticisms. Kaka will be able to think better about this problem. Preserve the accompanying notice. It is necessary that Chhaganlal[1] should see the *Vahivatdar*[2] when he goes there. If they have started any work, there will be no problem at all.

I have gone through the new scheme drawn up by Chhotelal for the production of khadi in Bahial. I enclose it with this. The weakest part of the scheme is that relating to carding. We can succeed only if it is taken up by the new class of people that has arisen.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 15802; also *Bapuna Patro—7 Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*, pp. 114-6

108. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

BAREILLY,
June 13, 1929

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I fail to write when I am moving from place to place. I often intend to write but when it is time for the weekly mail my letter is not ready. This time too I have set out on a journey. The journey will lead me to the hills. Today we are at the foot of the mountain in Bareilly. This time I have a large convoy. There is Ba, there is Purushottam, then Prithviraj and Pyarelal too. Devdas will join us in Almora. The journey has been organized by Prabhudas. Among the women are Jamnabehn, Khurshedbehn, Mirabehn and Kusumbehn. Mahadev has been detained by Vallabhbhai. If both of you cannot come away and Sushila alone comes, it is all right. But I think there is nothing wrong if she stays on till both of you can come along provided she is keeping well and her separation from her parents is not very painful to her. What I mean is that you should do what both of you wish to. If Sushila desires to come she must not be held back. If proper arangements about the journal, etc., cannot be made, I realize that you

[1] Chhaganlal Gandhi was manager and trustee of the Vijapur Khadi Ashram. The Gaekwar State had served some notice which is referred to here.

[2] An official under the Gaekwar of Baroda State

cannot come over. Ramdas is not particularly well. He is not yet free from his mental trouble. I am of course fine. About my recent experiment in diet you will read in *Navajivan* and *Young India*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4755

109. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

BAREILLY,
June 13, 1929

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

In my reply to your letter I forgot to mention one thing. If you want to be very particular about the things to be taken with you, you may bring along a couple of bowls and a plate, and also a *lota*[1]. I have not yet been able to fix up a date on which to return to the Udyoga Mandir, but hope to do so in the first week of July.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6788

110. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

BAREILLY,
June 13, 1929

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. It is surprising that receipt of the Rs. 25 for the Lalaji Fund was not acknowledged and the contribution did not appear in *Navajivan* and *Young India*. I had given the cheque to Jamnalalji. Now that you are in Bombay you may enquire at Jamnalalji's shop by telephone or otherwise and send the information to Chhaganlal so that it can be published in *Young India.*

I shall personally see the accommodation at Almora and send you a telegram if necessary. Right now I am in a furnace. Tomorrow I shall be in the higher reaches.

[1] Metal jug

Rukhi has again fallen ill.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
C/O AMARCHAND KALIDAS
121 FORT STREET
BOMBAY (B.B.C.I. RLY.)

From the Gujara ti original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushil a Nayyar

111. LETTER TO G.D. BIRLA

BAREILLY,
June 13, 1929

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Harbhai is Nanabhai's colleague at Dakshinamurti Bhavan. Nanabhai has fallen ill. Following the talk we had at Wardha about this school I am sending him on to you. You were to consider what assistance you could give to this institution. I have today sent an assurance to Nanabhai taking it that you will make a donation. You will learn all the details from Harbhai, see the accounts of the institution and do whatever you consider proper.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6173. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

112. SPEECH AT NAINITAL

June 14, 1929

My voice is not as strong as it was in 1921. I should now stop making speeches. Here too, I did not and do not intend making a speech. But one who considers himself a representative of *Daridra-narayana* cannot stop begging. I have not much strength left. But you all keep giving me something or the other, so I cannot overcome my greed. I thank you for the address and the purse. I am grateful that in order to save time, you omitted reading the verses, and the chairman of the District Board left out the whole address. I thank you for the

same. You have not contributed enough money. Those who live here are not poor. They are the ones who have usurped the occupations of the poor. I have come to remind them of their duty. The population here has come down from 3 lakhs to 2 lakhs. Why has it decreased so much? Why this decline in spite of good climate? Why have so many people died or left? Evidently, because people have no employment here. They are suffering badly for want of employment. We send out our wool to foreign countries or sell it to the mills. We deprive the poor of their bread because we buy mill-cloth. Our tastes have changed. We consider swadeshi cloth to be bad and mill material good. We like to dress up like the sahibs. We have ruined the poor by aping others. People have become cowards. But if they try, they can cast off their fear. One should only fear God and no one else. I consider that the best remedy for India's poverty and the prevailing cowardice would be to give up foreign cloth. All the brothers and sisters should share in this effort. It can be done easily. People sing or recite poetry but this is not going to solve the problem of hunger. The truth is that only the charkha can satisfy our hunger and bring us swaraj. Ever since the message of the charkha has been spread in India it has given life to thousands of women. I would request all the brothers who use foreign cloth that they should wear the rough cloth made by their countrymen. They will thus provide livelihood to thousands. The Congress has called for prohibition. I do not know how many people here are addicted to liquor. It is this evil habit which brought about the destruction of the Yadavas even though they had Lord Krishna among them. Lord Krishna had warned them that drinking and gambling would lead them to destruction. But they did not heed his warning and were annihilated. I would request you also to give up liquor. Everyone should pay four annas and join the Congress. Those who join it have to take the pledge that they would achieve swaraj through peaceful and honest means. Everyone who fulfils these conditions can become a member of the Congress.

This then is the way to attain swaraj. If each man spins enough for himself, then swaraj cannot be far. This is what I have come to tell you. I have not much strength. But I would repeat two things which I had said in 1921. One is that if Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis were to unite and not fight with one another, we would attain swaraj today. But you have all lost your head. You have to become good. Then swaraj is within your grasp. The second thing is to remove

untouchability; otherwise the Hindu religion itself will be wiped out. How can any Hindu practise untouchability when he proclaims faith in Advaita[1]. It is our first and foremost duty to remove untouchability. Those who have not yet contributed to the purse collected here may please do so now. Women have often volunteered to give me their jewellery; they may do so here too. You have presented me with two boxes. They are very good. But where have I the place for such beautiful things? I would like to strike a bargain with you, you pay me a good sum and buy them. Where do I keep them during my travels, where can I keep them in the Ashram?

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 4-7-1929

113. DUTY OF REFORMERS

I received last week a letter dated the 29th ultimo from a reform society of Ahmedabad. It is as follows:[2]

The matter of this letter must perhaps have become old by now but the incident which has been narrated in it, is likely to recur often.

There is no doubt that the bad habits which are ingrained in us will not go all at once. To get rid of them, the same efforts are needed which we are making for winning swaraj. Such efforts will produce and are producing the same strength, which results from our efforts for swaraj, for both things are the same. We labour under the illusion that we are unable to do anything because we are powerless. The other illusion is that nothing happens because we are small in number. I have no doubt that our strength will grow if we try to destroy evil, immorality and rot wherever we see them.

[1] Non-duality; the Vedantic doctrine of the identity of the individual self with the universal Self.

[2] The letter is not translated here. It stated that the Reform of Society League which was started three months earlier had only nine members. They cleaned the by-lanes and wrote to the Municipality for a urinal. The sanitary committee visited the spot. The opponents attacked them with sticks as well as words of abuse. The situation would have taken an ugly turn had they not held their peace. Now they had two ways open to them: violence and the law-court. Their lives were in danger; they sought Gandhiji's advice.

But there is a limit to such efforts. That is the limit set by truth and non-violence; hence there will certainly be discretion and politeness. We shall do what we mean to, but shall put up with our elders' abuse, stick and knife. A court of law has no place in the limits set by me. The law-courts of today are no law-courts at all. The victory scored in them is no victory. A reformer's victory lies in melting the heart of his opponent. A law-court cannot at all achieve that, even a stick cannot. Our forbearance can accomplish that with ease. I have no doubt that if the young people bear everything in silence, the elders will relent. But to put up with things and to launch satyagraha is not the way of the coward, but of the brave. This way is not for him who sees in it weakness and cowardice. Hence even if by having resort to the law-courts, the by-lanes of Ahmedabad can be improved, the reformers should certainly do so. Great daring is needed to improve those by-lanes, those lavatories, those urinals. I shall not be surprised if a number of youths have to sacrifice their lives for accomplishing this task. Dr. Hariprasad[1] has once again taken the task in hand. If the youths assist him, a lot of reform can be brought about. They can attend meetings, stage plays and take out processions. All this is good work and is to be done in a disciplined manner. But they count for little before certain services. The youths should themselves clean the roads. They should clean gutters and drains. We all should know how to work as Bhangis. And what applies to the improvement of by-lanes, applies also to many other things. If the students really wish to form themselves into an army for swaraj, they must go beyond the speech-making stage to the action stage. Their reports should contain an account not of how many speeches they delivered and how many plays they staged but instead of or in addition to these, of how many lavatories they cleaned, and how many wells in how many villages, how many bunds they built, how many patients they attended on, how much khadi they wove, how many wells or tanks they dug, how many night-schools they conducted and so on.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-6-1929

[1] Dr. Hariprasad Vrajrai Desai, physican and Congress worker of Ahmedabad

114. RAW v. COOKED FOOD[1]

Some look upon me as a fool, a crank or a faddist. I must admit that wherever I go I am sought out by fools, cranks and faddists. One can conclude from this that I must be having the characteristics of all these three types. Andhra has its fair share of all three. Some mad men come as far as the Udyoga Mandir in Sabarmati. So, when I went Andhra, how could I escape running into them. But I do not wish, at the present moment, to introduce all the three types to the readers. Among my fads is the one concerning experiments in diet. I wish to present one such faddist, because I have begun the experiment which I wish to describe and which I am undertaking under his influence. His name is Sundaram Gopalrao. He lives in Rajahmundry. He runs an institute of hydropathy and dietetics; I have been told, and I do believe, that many have benefited by his treatment.

This Gopalrao has been living on uncooked food for the last one year. He believes that fire should not touch man's food. The sun is a sustainer, fire is a destroyer. The sun matures food, fire takes away its essence. When food comes in contact with fire, its essence is burnt out. In accordance with this reasoning, he gave up cooked food and after gaining experience, he made the experiments on his patients. He holds that the most delicate intestines which digest cooked food will necessarily diget uncooked food as well.

I have believed for many years that one should not eat cooked food. I had given up cooked food at the age of 20, but that state could not last beyond 15 days. I tried it again in the year 1893 in the Transvaal; and then too could not proceed beyond 15 days.

I have been tempted by what Gopalrao says and by his experience and I have commenced at 60, an experiment which I had abandoned out of fear in my youth. In point of results, theexperiment is very important and hence I shall tell the reader what it is. I have lived on raw fruit and dry fruit continuously for six years. But I have not lived for a long time on uncooked cereals and pulses and I have believed that a man like me could not digest it at all.

It is the opinion of contemporary Western medical men that our diet should contain a certain element in the absence of which a man cannot preserve his health. It is known as "vitamin". Vitamin means

[1] *Vide* also "Food Faddists", 13-6-1929.

the vital essence. Chemists cannot detect it by analysis. But health experts have been able to feel its absence. Having studied the effects of many types of diet, they have found out that this vital essence is a necessary thing. They believe that if any vegetable is cooked, this essence is destroyed. They have divided this essence into classes. Of them, vitamin A is to be found in leafy vegetables and germinated grains of cereals. Hence, they have been recommending for years now, the consumption of foods containing vitamins and therefore many people take raw vegetables, pulses, wheat, etc., which have sprouted after being soaked in water.

But many experts hold and Gopalrao cites his own experience in support of it that uncooked and cooked foods should not at all be mixed. If one wants to benefit fully by uncooked food, one must give up cooked food altogether.

I have faith in this argument. This view is becoming stronger day by day. We see support for this view even in the chapter on diets in the book by the T.B. expert, Dr. Muthu.

Apart from health, there is for me a great attraction in this diet. I regard the destruction of even vegetagbles as violence. Man cannot help such destruction. But despite knowing that, one who believes in the dharma of non-violence, will indulge in a minimum of such destruction. Moreover, diet has an intimate connection with physical celibacy. It has been the primary object of all my dietetic experiments to find out which diet is most helpful in the observance of physical *brahmacharya.*

It is also the purpose of all my dietetic experiments to find out which diet can be taken in the least time and at least expense and can fully safeguard health. I saw all this included in Gopalrao's experiment and so I too have plunged into it.

None should hastily copy my experiment. He who has no experience of such experiments should never do so. My experiment has not yet proceeded beyond the initial stage. I cannot even claim that it has succeeded. I do not have Gopalrao's faith. It is not even as simple as he believes it to be. I can say only this much now about that experiment that I have lost 5 lb. of weight. I shall not say that I have lost my bodily strength. Since last week, my weight has started increasing; I have regained one pound. There has been no obstacle in my incessant activities. Hence I wish to prolong the experiment. I shall keep the reader posted with its results. If the medical men having

some experience of such diet will communicate their experience to me, I shall be grateful. Now I shall describe my diet: Eight *tolas* of germinating wheat, eight *tolas* of almonds ground to a paste, eight *tolas* of green leafy vegetables crushed, eight sour lemons, five *tolas* of honey.

When I do not take wheat, I take an equal quantity of germinated gram. From this week, I have started taking wheat and gram together. I sometimes take the grated kernel of cocoanut in place of almonds, and, if there is scope, I take dried grapes or some other fruit in addition to the five constituents.

If wheat or gram is soaked in water for 24 hours and then the water is strained and it is then kept in a piece of wet cloth overnight, it sprouts. Salt is not considered necessary in this diet. I do not take it at present. I keep varying the proportion and mixture of wheat and gram. The above proportion is only by way of guidance. I have been taking wheat and gram together for the last three days. There should be no almonds when there is gram because both contain muscle-forming elements. I began with gram but the same purpose is served when it is repalced by *moong*[1] and other pulses. It is possible that wheat can be replaced even by *jowar*[2] and *bajra*[3]. This field is wide and interesting and worthy of development. It is more useful in this poor country. There is a lot of trurth in the maxim that our actions are influenced by our food. We have misused the above dictum by exaggerating our food habits to the point of looking upon them as our dharma and further have been fussing about pollution by mere touch. I have believed for forty years that, leaving aside exaggeration, the question of diet is a serious one meriting thought. I thank God because He has given me the good sense and the strength to try my last experiment today, and by means of this article, I share with the reader the pleasure I derive from my experiment.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-6-1929

[1] A kind of green gram
[2] Kinds of millet
[3] *ibid*

115. MY NOTES

WARNING TO ME

When my article entitled "Is This Humanity?"[1] had caused an uproar and I was being inundated with letters, there was one I had preserved because it was written with good intention. It was dated 15-10-1926. As that letter served as a warning to me, I kept it in my file. When every week I open my *Navajivan* papers, my eyes fall on the stanzas from Akha[2] in it. The stanzas are:

Subtle *maya* is a silent sword
Killing pleasantly;
Once she plunges, she will not withdraw,
She eats up a learned scholar from within.
Myriad are the roles she plays,
Taking what form she chooses, where.
If sense perchance dawns in any
Turned scholar, like an innocent She will pray,
A thing that deserves discarding
That itself is made a victim, sings Akha.
Many are the forms that *maya* takes;
We find them displayed wherever we look.

The letter is a long one. It contains an argument against my article. But its gist is this: whether, having fallen a prey to *maya,* I have not committed *adharma* in the name of dharma. I did not feel so at that time and do not today. But what of that? It is indeed true that *maya* sweetly kills. If I have been caught by *maya* and know it, how then can it be *maya*? If a blind man can see, how can we call him a blind man? How can I know when I shall be caught up in *maya*...I who am engrossed in many activities and finding retirement in them? Hence by publishing the above stanzas and describing the context, I gain peace praying to God to save me from *maya*. The thoughtful reader should certainly draw a lesson from this. None should act believing that what I say is gospel truth because I am called a "mahatma". We do not know who a "mahatma" is. It is a good

[1] In eight instalments; *vide*

[2] Akha Bhagat, a Gujarati poet

thing that we should subject even a "mahatma's" word to the test by means of our intellect and if it does not stand the test, we should discard it.

FAMINE IN THE SOUTH

Rajaji has once again made an appeal for funds in this cause. All his work is clear, precise and fruitful. Where the people's hunger and thirst are banished and a man to satisfy this need is available, those who have wealth should make use of it. The readers responded to his first appeal. I am sanguine that they will satisfy his additional demand without delay.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-6-1929

116. A STUDENT

PREM [VIDYALA]YA,
[*June*] 1 [*6, 192*]9[1]

A student means one who hungers for knowledge. *Vidya* means knowledge that is worth knowing. *Atma* is the only thing worth knowing and so *vidya* is the knowledge of the Self. But to acquire knowledge of the Self, one must study literature, history, geography, arithmetic, etc. These are all means to an end. Knowledge of the alphabet is necessary to get knowledge of these subjects. But we know of persons having such knowledge without the knowledge of the alphabet. Those who know this will not hanker after the knowledge of literature, etc., but they will seek the knowledge of the Self.

The student should forsake all those things which are obstacles in the pursuit of this knwoledge and should cultivate what is helpful. The student life of one who understands this, never comes to an end and he goes on gaining knowledge while eating, drinking, sleeping, playing, digging, weaving, spinning or doing any other activity. To be able to do this, one must develop a habit of observation. Such a one does not need a group of teachers daily; in other words, he regards the whole world as his teacher and he goes on learning leasons from it.

BAPU

Form a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U. II

[1] Gandhiji reached Prem Vidyalaya on this date.

117. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

June 16, 1929

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. I was somewhat worrid after I sent you back but was relieved when I duly received your letter. I hope you had no difficulty in finding out your train and obtaining a seat at Mughalsarai. Did you have to pay more than Rs.10 for your fare? Keep up your daily lessons in the *Gita*, English and Arithmetic. Write something in your diary every day. Recite the *shlokas* in the presence of someone who knows Sanskrit. Free yourself from all fear. Write to me about father's health. We are all fine. It is, of course, cold here.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. PRABHAVATIBEHN

C/O BABU BRIJKISHORE PRASAD, P.O. SIWAN, DIST. CHHAPRA, BIHAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3351

118. SPEECH AT PREM VIDYALAYA, TADIKHET[1]

June 16, 1929

I heard the tale of your woes even before I came here, but the remedy lies in your own hands. Its name is self-purification. We are today weighed down by our own selfishness and parochialism of outlook, we must cast it out. We know how to die for our family but it is time that we learnt to go a step further. We must widen the circule of our love till it embraces the whole village, the village in its turn must take into its fold the district, the district the province, and so on till the scope of our love becomes coterminous with the world. Our Congress Committees are today in a moribund condition. It should be up to you to rally round the banner of the Congress in large numbers and once more make it throb and pulsate with life. You must cultivate self-confidence and make God your shield. There is none mightier than He. A man who throws himself on God ceases to fear man.

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's report under the title. The Almora Tour II". Gandhiji presided over the anniversary celebration.

In your annual report, you have referred to your financial difficulties but I would ask you not to be disappointed by these difficulties but on the contrary, to regard them as a blessing in disguise. If the advice of a person with an experience of 40 years of public life and public institutions at his back, as I claim to have got, can have any value for you, take it from me that a little financial stringency instead of being a misfortune to be deplored, is a thing to be welcomed as a blessing in disguise by any public institution that really wants to serve the people. I hold that no institution that is worth its salt can be starved for want of funds. More institutions are smothered by opulence than are killed by poverty. Constant dependence on the public for funds teaches an institution the lesson of true humility and keeps it on the alert. On the contrary, an institution that is altogether independent of the public for its support is liable to succumb to inertia and become lax in the performance of its duties. The amount of public support that an institution can command affords a true measure of its utility. I would therefore advise every institution that is faced with financial distress to curtail its activities so as to bring it within compass of its means rather than to keep up appearances by borrowing funds. In the former case, the institution though reduced in size, will still retain its pristine health, in the latter case, its bloated size will only be a sign of its diseased condition. I would therefore earnestly beseech you to keep clear of this fatal error.

I am glad to find that your institution has dedicated itself to khadi work and has given to the spinning-wheel a central position in its activities. But that is not enough. I want you to understand the inner significance of this little wheel and to realize the full potency with which it is charged. Twenty-one years ago, I made the discovery, and since then I have never been tired of repeating it in season and out of season that there is no mightier agent for bringing together and tying in an indissoluble bond the teeming millions of India from Peshawar to Cape Comorin and from Karachi to distant Assam than the frail thread that is spun on this spinning-wheel. I would therefore suggest to you that you should not measure its worth in terms of rupees, annas and pies but in terms of the strength that it can generate, among the people. Above all, I would ask you to keep your faith unsullied and untarnished in this age of scepticism and disbelief and never to lose heart. For, remember that whilst it is given to man to strive, it is God alone who fulfils.

Young India, 27-6-1929

119. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

June 17, 1929

DEAR SATISBABU,

I have your letter. I see you are making steady progress in self-supporting method.

I see also that you have plunged into the uncooked dietary. I do not mind it so long as you can do it well without injuring the body. I have found that pounding injures the vitality and the electricity as Dr. Muthu calls it. It seems that this germinating seed food is as delicate as milk and perhaps equally, if not more, efficacious. It seems never to cause disturbance if taken whole, it does cause disturbance when it is pounded. If you have good teeth, insist upon taking the whole seed and the raw vegetable and fruit cleaned and chopped but not pounded. Mastication is an indispensable condition of doing justice to uncooked food. To avoid swallowing, let your morsels be small and well chewed, concentrate on that morsel you are chewing and see that it is reduced to a liquid before it passes down the throat. This method may take 45 minutes per meal. Do not grudge that time and have nobody near you at the time save the nearest companions. When you have acquired the habit of proper mastication, you will do your work whilst eating. For, uncooked whole food is clean and dirties nothing and can be carried about and even eaten whilst gently walking. I used to chew my nuts and fruit walking during the marches in the Transvaal. Uncooked food must contain nuts from which you get the oils. Grated undried cocoanut is perhaps the best when you take a pulse which gives you enough protein. Some books were sent to you from Sabarmati. You must go slowly.

With love,

BAPU

[PS.]

Important

I was forgetting your question. If you are summoned to give evidence, of course, you must refuse to give evidence on conscientious grounds. Write out your grounds.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1605

120. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

June 17, 1929

BHAISHRI BEHRAMJI,

I think the 7th of September is a Saturday; if it is, the day suits me. See if you can relieve me the same evening.

Blessings to both of you from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6594

121. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

NAINITAL,
Silence Day, June 17, 1929

SISTERS,

Your responsibilities are increasing fairly rapidly. I send with this a letter from Kishorelal about "An Idea Bal Mandir'. Read it and show it to the teachers. I should like those of you who take interest in the work to get trained up for it. Do so even if that means putting Narandas to a lot of trouble. It is possible to get a more intelligent guide than he, but we shall get everything we want if we cling, as the phrase goes, to the trunk of one tree.

Do your best to make the kitchen a success.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3715

122. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

June 17, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL JOSHI,

I got your letter. I like the decision not to write to anyone for advice. It will be enough if you consult from time to time those who are there. You should also come to decisions quickly. Don't be afraid of making mistakes. One cannot help making some.

You say: " I am well 'today'". I infer from this that an earlier letter is making its way to me. The letter in front of me is dated the 13th.

You must have received my letter[1] regarding Vallabhbhai's complaint.

We are all happy and in fine spirits. My experiment continues. Kishorelal's letter is meant for the women. You and the teachers also should read it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5422

123. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

June 17, 1929

CHI. MAHADEV,

I just got your letter. By' just' I mean at 8.25. I have five minutes before I shall come out of my silence and therefore I write this. It was good that both of you went there. You both needed some rest badly. I have had no rest yet, nor did I expect to have any. They are talking about a week's [rest] after the 22nd and according to the programme, I should finish the *Gita* work during this period. Let us see what happens. Here too, the collection will be tidy. We do feel your absence. The experience we get here is also not be dismissed lightly. But we cannot have everything, can we? There you have Vallabhbhai's company which too is just as precious.

Yesterday, we came to the Prem Vidyalaya. There was a telegram informing us about Jawaharlal's wife's illness; so he left this very day. Kripalani has come. Devdas joined us at Nainital; Brijkisan too is with us. I have a crowd, sure enough.

The rains have given us no trouble yet. The weather is fine. Prabhudas's health is all right.

With what you have sent, [the matter] for *Young India* is enough. I have not been able to send matter for sixteen columns. A major part was supplied by Pyarelal. I wrote to fill about three columns only. We have sent plenty [of matter] for *Navajivan* today.

[1] Dated June 11; *vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 11-6-1929.

You know, don't you, that I have now undertaken to write every week something for the *Hindi Navajivan* too? From there, you can keep an eye on the Ashram. There is a long letter from Surendra. He has come out of his swoon and now clearly sees the taint in his reason and his egotism. He is candid and was bound to see his error some day. He did not need Nath to decide.

It is very good that there you will get a chance to study revenue. I wish you would send a fitting reply.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11452

124. A LETTER

BAREILLY,

TADIKHET,

June 17, 1929

CHI. . . .,

I have your letter. Sincere repentance must leave no room for sorrow. Repentance is self-purification. It was of permanent importance that you freed yourself of the attachment. I had no doubt at all about my diagnosis. Do not now indulge in self-denigration. Whom does attachment not bring down? Do not think that even now it has completely gone. The last sentence in your letter is not proper. You should never make the distinction you have made between Nath[1] and me. Children should never remind their elders and teachers of their position. Let each person silently act as befits his position and, if possible, bring credit to it. Such relationships do not need to be acknowledge [to oneself], and relationships which do not need to be so acknowledged are made by man. Spiritual relationships are matters of the heart and are self-justified. But these are all subtle errors. All of us are guilty of them because we cannot easily forget our ego. I was certain that you would see your error, because your achievement is greater than your pride. Now engross yourself in your work. Do not even get into an argument with anybody about what has happened.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/52

[1] Kedarnath Kulkarni

125. A LETTER

TADIKHET,
June 17, 1929

CHI. . . .,

Your statement that "castes and sub-castes destroy the soul" and "degrade human beings" is hasty and betrays lack of thought. You may say that they are not necessary, that they harm society, that they have no basis in dharma and are economically harmful, and point out similar other defects. We do not observe that the thousands who live in conformity with caste rules are spiritually harmed or are degraded. We cannot say about the castes what we can about the practice of untouchability. In the original conception of castes there was much that was good. If you wish you may ask me to explain this further when I return. My purpose in writing this letter is not to suggest to you that you should withdraw your letter, though perhaps it may become necessary to do that. It is of course right that you have left your caste. But the language of the letter communicating your withdrawal needs improvement.

My purpose in this letter is to advise you to pay more attention to improving your thinking. If you are able to see the defects in you that I have pointed out do not be unhappy or disheartened. One progresses through such mistakes. It is my duty to point them out when I notice them. Your duty is only to correct a mistake when you realize it. But you should never admit one unless you can see it to be so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/55

126. LETTER TO ASHRAM CHILDREN

TADIKHET,
June 17, 1929

LITTLE BIRDS OF BALMANDIR,

In the spot where I am writing this birds in huge trees are chirping happily. How wonderful it would be if you too were in those trees chirping! I can only hear your voices from there. Here is Vimala and there is that Katto. Satyadevi is lost in painting.

And that Dhiru! How would he pay any attention at all? He does not even reply. But enough for today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/7

127. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

Silence Day [Before *June 18, 1929*][1]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I received your letter. Though aware of Chhaganlal's failings, all of you, including Maganlal, kept them to yourselves and, in doing so, you did the greatest injustice, first to Chhaganlal himself, then to me and then to the Ashram. But that chapter is over now. All have learnt a lesson or should learn a lesson from this. My writing on the subject in *Navajivan*[2] was a wise thing to do. You need not be nervous now. Instead you have to become still purer and be more devoted to duty.

I have wired today regarding my visit to Almora. Though I am very keen to be in the Ashram in June, I shall be willing to go to Almora. I hope it will not be raining there at the time. Let me know how to reach there. I would like to come down from there by the end of June. It, therefore, seems that I will get about fifteen days there.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Address your letter to Bezwada. I will get it wherever I happen to be at the time.

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 32980

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's proposed visit to Almora; he reached there on June 18, 1929 and left it on July 3.

[2] *Vide* "What is One's Dharma",21-7-1929

128. SPEECH TO CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY, ALMORA[1]

June 18, 1929

Gandhiji's reply which opened with a reference to his numerous Christian contacts in India as well as abroad and particularly his close friendly relations with the late Principal Rudra of St. Stephens's College, Delhi, was a feeling appeal to the Indian Christians completely to identify themselves with Indian ideals and Indian nationalist aspirations, and not to regard India's ancient culture and civilization as a relic of barbarism to be looked down upon and despised but to treasure it as a precious heritage that had to be enriched and enlarged. Surely a civilization that had produced such a galaxy of saints and prophets as India had, that boasted of sons like Chaitanya and Tagore and which was built on penance of so many pure souls, could not be a thing wholly evil. He held all religions to be true though at the same time no man-expounded religion could claim perfection which was the attribute of God alone. Similarly it was their duty not to disassociate themselves from their fellow-countrymen who professed a different faith from theirs but to cultivate an attitude of sympathy and broad tolerance towards them, to understand and appreciate their viewpoint and to help them not by proselytizing them but by making Hindus better Hindus, Mussalmans better Mussalmans and all of them better Indians.

Young India, 27-6-1929

129. TELEGRAM TO SWAMI[2]

[On or after *June 18,1929*][3]

SWAMI

CARE SHREE

BOMBAY

REFUSE TERMS DHOLKA LAND IF TANNING PROHIBITED.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 15402

[1] In reply to their address at the Church grounds

[2] In reply to Chhaganlal Gandhiji's telegram dated June 18 from Sabarmati which read: "Gorakshamandal meeting this afternoon unwilling incur any expense. Rent thousand rupees likely. Oppose tanning. May agree on undertaking not tan [on] their land. Purushottamdas anxious help. Advises acceptance. Offers raise rent amount. Wire Swami Care Shree." *Vide* also the following item and pp. 79-80.

[3] *ibid*

130. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Wednesday [June 19, 1929][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL JOSHI,

I have your letter. The problem of Chhaganlal is a delicate one. Discuss it personally with me. Not many days are left now.

I can offer some advice about Dahyabhai if I know whether he lives with his wife and, if yes, in what manner. Discuss this problem, too, with me after I return. I certainly wish to keep him.

Since you have written to Satyamurti, I am not writing to him. What you have written is all right.

Don't let your health suffer. The programme here is practically over. Only one place remains now. Letters, however, must be addressed to Almora. If I take rest, I can reach the place on 6th July, otherwise on June 30. I have not been able to decide what to do. I am really keen on finishing the *Gita*. I feel inclined to stay at one place for six days and do that. I must decide in a day or two.

I should indeed like it very much if you learn to work on your own responsibility. I shall take no objection if you inform me only about those things which you think it necessary to bring to my notice.

If Krishnamaiyadevi[2] wishes to go to Darjeeling, certainly let her do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am inclined to dispose of the land near Thana. Find out what Chhaganlal says about the matter. Write to Hirji afterwards and tell him to do what you think best about it.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro--7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 117

[1] As given in the source

[2] Widow of a Congress worker from Nepal; Gandhiji gave her and her children shelter in the Ashram.

131. KHADI AND BOYCOTT

Our disbelief is an extraordinary phenomenon. We have no faith in our ability to do anything. If it is total prohibition, it is regarded as impossible. Hindu-Muslim unity is a day-dream. Removal of untouchability in the face of Sanatanist opposition is unthinkable. Boycott of foreign cloth through mills we did not achieve, through khadi we cannot achieve. There thus remains nothing that we can possibly do. Hence swaraj is an impossible proposition and slavery our natural condition. This is a most debasing state for anyone to be in.

Our disbelief is the greatest stumbling-block in our march towards swaraj. Let us just examine the proposition that boycott cannot be achieved through khadi. It is said that khadi production is not enough for our wants. Those who talk or write thus do not know the A B C of khadi. Khadi is capable of infinite expansion because it can be as easily made as bread if we have the will. I need not go into the economics of khadi for the purposes of boycott. Supposing England and Japan ceased to send us their cloth and our mills somehow or other could not work, we would not think of the economics of khadi but we would simply manufacture the required quantity in our own homes. The merchants who had lost their piecegoods trade would all be occupied in khadi production. It is only because we have created a vicious atmosphere of impotence round ourselves that we consider ourselves to be helpless even for the simplest possible things. But for our hopelessness, there is no reason why we should not feel that what Bijolia has been able to do without the stress and incentive of boycott, we should certainly do under the great and patriotic incentive. It is being done today in Bardoli on such a scale that the technical department is unable fully to cope with the demand for wheels and accessories.

Undoubtedly the movement will fall flat if everybody becomes a critic and bystander and nobody says, “It is my business.” This movement depends for its success upon the willing and organized co-operation of millions. This co-operation can be had for the asking if the thinking class will put their hands to the wheel with the fixed determination to succeed. Let them remember that this is a movement which has a growing and vigilant organization with a modest capital. It

has only to be worked by the nation to its fullest capacity and success is a certainty.

Let it be remembered that there is no other constructive scheme before the nation for effective action on a universal scale. I have repeatedly pointed out in these pages how production of khadi can be indefinitely increased. I have described the three methods, viz., spinning for hire, spinning for self and spinning for sacrifice.[1] Once the spirit of true sacrifice seizes the nation, it is possible to inundate the market with hand-spun yarn. And I have shown that the secret of khadi production lies in increased production of yarn. There are over ninety-seven lakhs of pupils studying in all the schools of India. It makes a miserable percentage of less than 4 per cent of the total population, but the number is enough for easy organization of sacrificial spinning. This figure takes no account of several other institutions that can be also similarly organized without much effort, if the determination is reached that we must achieve boycott through khadi.

Young India, 20-6-1929

132. NOTES

SHETH JAMNALALJI'S ACTION

As a self-respecting man, Sheth Jamnalalji could not have acted otherwise than he had in reply to the request of the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Bombay, to deliver the copy in his possession of Pandit Sunderlalji's *History of British Rule.* He rightly regards the action of the U.P. Government as "high-handed and tyrannical" and house searches all over India as "highly insulting,objectionable and vindictive". He claims to have read the book which in his opinion is "unobjectionable and a praiseworthy endeavour to inculcate the lesson of non-violence". The action of the police in searching his house and offices in spite of his assurance that the book was not in any of them affords additional justification, if such was wanted, for the language used by him. The object of the search was clearly not to find the book but to insult Jamnalalji. The proper answer to this insult is for everyone who has Pandit Sunderlal's volume in his possession to inform the police in his or her district and the press of such possession

[1] *Vide* "Progress of F.C.B.", 30-5-1929

and challenge search or prosecution or both. If this course is adopted by the public and if there are many copies still untraced, the Government will soon discover that it will make of itself a laughing-stock by continuing the fruitless searches of numberless houses. Searches, imprisonments and the like are effective only so long as they frighten people.

"GITA" IN NATIONAL SCHOOLS

A correspondent asks whether *Gita* may be compulsorily taught in national schools to all boys whether Hindus or non-Hindus. When I was travelling in Mysore two years ago, I had occasion to express my sorrow that the Hindu boys of a high school did not know the *Gita*.[1] I am thus partial to the teaching of the Gita not only in national schools but in every educational institution. It should be considered a shame for a Hindu boy or girl not to know the *Gita.* But my insistence stops short at compulsion, especially so for national schools. Whilst it is true that *Gita* is a book of universal religion, it is a claim which cannot be forced upon anyone. A Christian or a Mussalman or a Parsi may reject the claim or may advance the same claim for the Bible, the Koran or the Avesta as the case may be. I fear the *Gita* teachingcannot be made compulsory even regarding all those who may choose to be classed as Hindus. Many Sikhs and Jains regard themselves as Hindus but may object to compulsory *Gita* teaching for their boys and girls. The case will be different for sectional schools. I should hold it quite appropriate for a Vaishnava school for instance to lay down *Gita* as part of religious instruction. Every private school has the right to prescribe its own course of instruction. But a national school has to act within well-defined limits. There is no compulsion where there is no interference with a right. No one can claim the right to enter a private school, every member of a nation has the right presumptively to enter a national school. Hence what would be regarded in the one case as a condition of entrance, would in the other be regarded as compulsion. The *Gita* will never be universal by compulsion from without. It will be so if its admirers will not seek to force it down the throats of others and if they will illustrate its teachings in their own lives.

[1] *Vide* " Students and the " Gita", 9-9-1927

A CONTRADICTION

The reader will recall a paragraph[1] I gave to a letter from an Andhra correspondent who had complained that the ladies at the women's meeting at Tanuku had a purificatory bath after the meeting under the belief that the *Antyaja* girl Lakshmi was with me at that meeting. Two correspondents have sent letters energetically protesting that the charge is wholly false. I gladly reproduce one of the letters:[2]

> We were all surprised to read your note in *Young India* for the 16th instant entitled "Untouchability" about the ladies' meeting at Tanuku. The remarks are justified if what your correspondent wrote is true. But I am sorry to say your correspondent has erred grievously. ...
>
> I was at the place of the meeting as the ladies of my family had been to the meeting. I am a Brahmin and my ladies have not had a purificatory bath. I know many ladies who attended and they assured me they never contemplated such a thing. ... Some might have bathed as they had to cook the evening meals. But to suggest that they did this to purify themselves from the touch of a so-called untouchable, is a gross libel.

Both the correspondents have given their names. I have no reason to disbelieve their statements and I am sorry for hurting the feelings of the ladies who attended the meeting. I had the name of the correspondent who had made the charge now contradicted. I have therefore written to him to inquire how he came to make the serious charge. it is a matter of joy to me that ladies nowadays resent the imputation that they would regard as pollution the presence of the so-called untouchables at meetings attended by them.

Young India, 20-6-1929

133. A FEW QUESTIONS

A gentleman has asked me some questions. This letter begins with praise of me. He has described me as completely free from fear and ill will, a perfect tyagi[3] and a perfect satyagrahi. Such adjectives are nearly always used in addresses, but as addresses are given to exaggeration, their use there may be considered excusable. But the use of such adjectives in letters is unpardonable and discourteous. It is

[1] *Vide* "In Andhra Desha [-V]

[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

[3] One who has renounced the fruit of action

uncivilized to praise a man to his face. I have noticed such praise specially in Hindi letters. That's why I have mentioned it here. In fact, I am not completely free from fear and ill will, nor am I a perfect satyagrahi or a perfect *tyagi*. *I*f you take the word 'satyagrahi' in its literal sense, I could perhaps be considered a perfect satyagrahi, because it is easy to insist on truth after we have understood its value. One must also remember that insisting on truth is not the same thing as following truth. I am fully aware that I am not completely free from fear and ill will or a perfect *tyagi*. Mere external *tyaga* cannot make one perfect in these respects. Internal *tyaga* is a highly difficult affair and I cannot claim at all that my heart is free from fear,ill will and the like. It is true that my constant endeavour is to master my mind. But the difference between effort and achievement is as great as that between earth and sun. Therefore no one should think that I can never be wrong. I try to see things dispassionately…with a mind cleansed of all impurity, and say only what I so see. But one is free to reject it if it does not appeal to one's reason. Blind faith has caused us great harm. I don't wish others to have blind faith in me, I wish to avoid it. It is a barrier in my way. I will now discuss the questions put by this gentleman. He and other readers can give them intelligent consideration.

This is the first question:

What are the ways and means needed to develop spiritual strength apart from listening to or recitation of scriptures? I mean the kind of spiritual strength Prahlad and others had.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to acquire spiritual strength if we totally ignore listening or recitation. Hearing pious things serves as the spark to light the fire of awakening during the time when the soul is asleep. However, with the attainment of the inner seeing…the intuition…the need to hear good things vanishes. Prahlad had this capacity of inner hearing in an abudant measure. For the common man, the outer hearing is the first step.

The second qestion is this:

Is there no way of dealing with the problem of widows in India except remarriage which lowers the banner of chastity…a way which will safeguard their virtue and at the same time enable them to participate in work for the country? In India, there are more girls than boys and more widows than widowers. How then can this problem be solved by remarriage?

To say that widow remarriage leads to loss of chastity is wrong. To forcibly prevent a widow from remarrying, when she wishes to do so, would be harming chastity and dharma as well. Only by marrying a child-widow can we safeguard dharma and chastity. We can safeguard *brahmacharya* only by respecting the widows, by providing them means of education, and by granting them full freedom to remarry. Mental and physical prostitution is widespread today and the reason for this is the coercion used against widows. It cannot be proved that there are more girls than boys or more widows than widowers. It is true of a few castes. It is however to be desired that the too many castes now existing should disappear. There can be no more castes than the four *varnas*. The Hindu Shastras do not authorize the existence of the innumerable castes found today. It may be that the multiplication of castes served some useful purpose. But today, castes serve no purpose and meet no need.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 20-6-1929

134. SPEECH AT ALMORA

June 20, 1929

I have noted what you wanted to tell me in your addresses. But at the moment, my heart is with Padam Singh…the man who was crushed under the car when he came to see me. The doctor had hoped that he would survive and I had shared this hope. But his life-thread has snapped. I have done a great deal of travelling and I have been doing it for the past many, many years. I have taken part in many gatherings and in order to do this, I have travelled a lot by car, but in my old age, this is the first time such an unhappy incident has taken place. I will never be able to get over it. I believe that I have no fear of death. All of us have to die one day. Padam Singh has become immortal by meeting his death in this manner. My unhappiness stems from the fact that I became the cause of his death. I have always felt that riding in cars makes men proud. The chauffeurs who drive are vain and hot-tempered. One should beware of drivers with a hot temper. But under the illusion that I will be able to serve better, I continue to use cars. I have reaped the fruit today. And yet, I cannot promise to give up the use of cars, as I canot give up the fond desire to serve the country. I must therefore content myself with expressing

my sorrow at this meeting. The chauffeurs should remember that they must not be easily excited. I could see that the driver of this car had a hot temper. Padam Singh forgave him and gave a generous statement before the magistrate. But I do not consider myself or the driver free from blame. The unforgivable fact is that I should have got down in that crowd and it was the duty of the driver not to drive fast. But that's what he did. How can I forget this sad fact? Padam Singh was brave. Yesterday, he was able to talk without effort. But to die thus was his fate and it was my misfortune to witness his death, and now he is gone, I would like you to learn a lesson from this incident. Caught in the jaws of Death, we are like puppets in the hands of Fate, more delicate than a piece of yarn. In a short while, we all have to depart from this world. Then why stray from the path of duty? Why waste time in anger and in pleasure-seeking?

In your address you say that you want freedom and swaraj for India. You have also mentioned that swaraj can only be attained through peaceful means. You must therefore remember that yourwork should be faultless. It is easy to make it so. The District Board address mentions that young pupils do spinning. I would like to congratulate you on this. You have said that you spend as much as 60 per cent of your income on education and that you consider even this insufficient. Since you are working hard in the field of education, I would like to speak to you of my experience.

Even if we have crores of rupees, it is impossible to impart education in India in this way. Education should pay for itself. That is, we should not have to spend any money on it. If we are successful in doing this, we will be able to achieve two things. Firstly, we shall save money and secondly, we shall impart true education. The eduaction given to our boys and girls today makes them unmindful of their morals, unhealthy and restless, whereas by making education self-sustaining, we will be making them mentally poised and morally excellent. I would request the District Board to try this out in two or three schools. There is no doubt in my mind that you will be successful.

I am grateful for the purse. As to the few presents given to me, you know now that I do not require such presents and I cannot accept them for my personal use. If I do so, I shall stray from the right path and it will also detract from my fitness as a leader. I will make an

exception of the fan and the *asana*[1] presented by the District Board. There is a small museum in the Ashram where the latter will be kept as a memento of the love and industry of the boys. I will lovingly use the shawl in winter and remember the boys who have made it even though I don't know their names. I would request those who have not given their contributions to do so now. You should know what the money will be used for. It will be used for financing the spinning and weaving work among the poor …among such poor folks who are even poorer than the poorest among you. There are about a crore of such people in the country whose one and only meal in the day consists of dry *roti* and salt. I call them *Daridranarayana*. It is only for them you have given your contribution.

I know that the coolie or *begar* system came to an end in 1921 and I hope you will stop being afraid of anyone whosoever he may be… a high officer or an Englishman. If we follow our own path, why should we be afraid? Fear is a barrier in the way of swaraj. There is no more time. But I will ask for some time to bargain with you. I was asked not to auction these things. But I hope there are people here who can afford to pay and buy them. There are two more points I ought not to omit. the Nayaka Community here commits *adharma* in the name of dharma. They get their women to lead an evil life. I would request them respectfully to refrain from this *adharma*. It can only cause harm to them and the country. Their girls ought to get married and be educated. No woman in this world was born to lead the life of vice. Each woman ought to become as pure as Sita. Likewise, untouchability is a stain on us. It is our duty as Hindus to wipe it off. I am thankful that Hindus, Muslims, Christians and other communities here live in amity.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 4-7-1929

135. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU[2]

[On or after *June 20, 1929*]

YOUR WIRE. 5TH JULY DELHI WILL SUIT SO AS ENABLE ME LEAVE NIGHT TRAIN. HOW IS KAMALA?

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15403

[1] Something to sit on

[2] In reply to the addressee's telegram of June 19 from Allahabad received at Almora on June 20, wherein Gandhiji had been asked to wire date and place suitable for Working Committee meeting to consider Council work

136. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*June 21, 1929*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am nestling in the lap of the Himalayas; and this king of seers clad in white is lost in delight while taking a sun-bath. His trance is enviable. It stings me that you are not here to share my envy. But your place is there. Thus the pain of the sting is blunted.

Today, I begin the end of my work on the *Gita* which is still to be completed.

It is all right that you have become the President. You must associate yourself with work of this kind.

Tell Vallabhbhai that he must not budge from there before he is hale and hearty. Do not insist on showing me everything that you write for *Young India.* It does not matter if you commit mistakes.

I don't like Sunderlal's throwing off the burden. I must have a look at his book, whether Gujarati or English, which you write about.

If I write any more, that would amount to an affront to the *Gita* and Kaka.

I can stand the luxury of this place only if I give a major part of my time to the *Gita.*

We will be leaving here on Tuesday the 2nd.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

On the 5th, the Working Committee is [meeting] at Delhi and on the 6th night [I shall be]at the Ashram.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11453

[1] Gandhiji resumed his work on the *Gita* on June 21, 1929 immediately after arriving at Kausani; *vide* also "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 17-6-1929

137. TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT CONGRESS COMMITTEE, KARIMGANJ[1]

[On or after *June 22, 1929*]

WIRE INCOMPLETE. WHO ARE YOU? GIVE DATE FLOOD. HAVE NO FUNDS TO SEND. IF I GET AUTHENTIC PARTICULARS CAN SEND REPRESENTATIVE INVESTIGATE. THEN IF NECESSARY CAN MAKE APPEAL.

GANDHI

From a phtostat: S. N. 15404

138. TELEGRAM TO G.D. BIRLA

[On or after *June 22, 1929*][2]

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
ROYAL EXCHANGE
CALCUTTA

CAN YOU SEND REPRESENTATIVE INVESTIGATE DAMAGE DONE BY FLOODS KARIMGANJ ASSAM?

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15404

[1] In reply to addressee's telegram dated June 20 received at Nainital on June 22, which read: "Devastating flood throughout Karimganj Assam rendered thousands homeless. People sheltered railway embankment hills. Five hundred square miles affected. All communication dislocated. Deaths reported various quarters. Cattle washed away. Shortage flood staff threatens death starvation. Congress Committee commenced relief. Appeal funds one lakh. Pray remit ten thousand immediately."

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

139. THE CONGRESS AND KHADI

Shri Chinoy writes:[1]

We are reaping as we have sown. As we have been indifferent in doing khadi propaganda, we are facing a difficult situation today. I shall never advise enrolment of members by keeping the people in the dark. On the contrary, I would not even say bluntly to those people: 'You become members, but you will not get voting rights until your wear khadi.' I would put in their hands a pamphlet for the purpose of explaining the position. I would include in it the Congress provisions concerning khadi and set out the benefits and explain their duty of becoming members. Our aim is not to frighten the people away but to attract them to the Congress. The problem relating to students and lawyers is a difficult one. They do understand everything. If they do not like khadi, how can they be convinced? Or, I would say to them: 'If you believe in the Congress as a great force and not in khadi, join the Congress, wear khadi if only to observe the rules and try to get the khadi clause abrogated. Congress work is carried on by majority opinion; hence, submit to the khadi clause until it is abolished and be proud to be its members.' I would say that those who do not understand even this much are not fit to remain in the Congress or any other organization because they do not appreciate the first condition of remaining in any organization…submitting to rules. They behave as if they were obliging the organization they join. Such patrons cannot serve the Congress and no help will be forthcoming from them in winning swaraj. Whichever organization they happen to be in, they will be a bruden to it. It is the workers' duty to appeal to lawyers and students, but if they cannot be brought round ultimately, we should do without them. I would only appeal to that category not to insist on the condition described by Shri Chinoy.

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent, who was the Secretary of the Surat City Congress Committee, had stated that they had decided to enrol 1,750 members. There were at the time only 70 khadi-wearing members on the register. The rule that no member who did not wear khadi could vote or fill executive positions in the Committee stood in the way of enrolment. The president of the local Youth League, too, had declined to enrol himself for this reason. The correspondent could not enrol members keeping them in the dark about this condition. So what was he to do?

Our real task is to reach the classes we have neglected so far. They are the merchants, craftsmen, farmers and labourers. I believe that these classes will not advance the argument which the president of the Youth League is believed to have offered. A bulletin meant for them would contain a short history of the Congress from its inception up to date, an account of its main activities and the benefits of joining the organization. Whether they become members or not, such a movement itself constitutes the political education of the people. It is my firm belief that where the Congress volunteers have been working and they are known , there should be no difficulty in enrolling the said classes as Congress members.

Now there remains the last question: What if, after everything is done, people do not enrol themselves because of the khadi clause? In that case, this matter should be communicated to the Congress and we should get the khadi clause rescinded. Or, if they themselves value khadi as much as swaraj, they should have patience till the people begin to believe in khadi. Do we not have in India people who say that they do not want swaraj? Again, if swaraj is interpreted to mean independence, more people will get alarmed. Even if this happens, those to whom swaraj is their life-breath will not relax the condition relating to swaraj.

I am personally neutral on the khadi clause. Khadi is the very breath of life to me. Hence I wish to see khadi wherever I am. But I do not wish to insist on retaining the khadi clause in the Congress constitution. If my other colleagues do not have as much faith in khadi as I have and if, in their opinion, that clause hampers the work propaganda will be continued even despite that. And my belief will remain unshaken forever that swaraj will come near us by as many yards as the number of yards of khadi by which we step up its production. To my mind, swaraj without khadi is as unthinkable as a barren woman having a son, becuase it would be no swaraj at all for the millions.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-6-1929

140. MAURYA EMPIRE AND UNTOUCHABILITY

A reader sends the follwoing extract[1] which is worth knowing.

The reader has culled the extract from *Maurya Samrajya Ka Itihas.* It shows that the revolt against untouchability is not a novel phenonmenon of recent date. Our ancestors too have fought against it. That poisonous tree deserves to be destroyed root and branch.

[From Gujarati)

Navajivan, 23-6-1929

141. A SUGGESTION CONCERNING "NAVAJIVAN"

A lover of *Navajivan* writes:[2]

I do not want to oppose this suggestion. I had laid down the scope of *Navajivan* when it became a weekly and came into my charge. And that was because of my inability. Purveying news is also an art. I had cultivated it specially for *Indian Opinion*. I used to give maximum news in minimum space and I had trained my associates to do so. This was necessary there. The task of *Navajivan* here was of a different sort. There is no dearth of newspapers here, hence we had no desire to issue *Navajivan* as a newspaper. Through it, satyagraha, ahimsa, etc., were to be propagated. It has succeeded fairly well in doing so. In trying to convert *Navajivan* into a newspaper also, there was the risk of having both aims defeated. That risk is present even today. Moreover, I am now older by over ten years; hence I cannot do that by myself. If I decide to give news, I shall have to increase the cost of producing *Navajivan,* its size too will perhaps have to be increased and fresh competent men will have to be employed whose

[1] This is not translated here. According to it, Chandragupta Maurya had 18 ministers of whom the first was a Brahmin. Among the enumeration of this minister's powers, there is this injuction of Chanakya's: "If any Brahmin minister, so ordered, declines to teach the Vedas to an untouchable or refuses to perform a sacrifice for him, he should be dismissed from his post."

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had suggested that just as *Indian Opinion* carried a column or two of news, so should *Navajivan*, and be a complete journal, as the number of people in this country who could afford to buy two papers were very few. He wanted foreign as well as Indian news to be given. He had requested Gandhiji to elicit the opinion of other readers on the subject.

only job will be to process news. A man of ordinary ability cannot make an abstract of news. Therefore, providing news is not such an easy thing as the lover of *Navajivan* believes.

Although I believe that the task of providing news is a difficult one, I do not wish to reject this suggestion outright. Hence, I ask for the readers' opinion in brief on the following questions:

1. Do you approve of the suggestion made by the lover of *Navajivan*?

2. If you do, do you believe in the necessity of increasing its size or will you be satisfied with its present size?

3. Do you not get the desired news by reading other newspapers in addition to *Navajivan*?

It will do even if the reader sends me his replies to these three questions on a postcard. He should superscribe at top left corner on the postcard or envelope the words "about *Navajivan*", so that the communication will surely reach me. I hope no readers make the mistake of believing that I read every letter addressed to me by name. Only those letters are passed on to me which my colleagues believe that I ought to read.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-6-1929

142. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU[1]

[On or after *June 23, 1929*]

NEHRU

ALLAHABAD

YOUR WIRE. I CERTAINLY MEANT[2] FIFTH NOT FIFTEENTH.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15405

[1] In reply to the addressee's telegram received on June 23

[2] *Vide* "Telegram ato Motilal Nehru", 20-6-1929

143. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 24, 1929

CHI. MIRA,[1]

It is well you do not want me to speak to you tomorrow on the incident. But I did want, after witnessing the exhibition, to reduce to writing my thoughts. I do that now.

The exhibition is proof of the correctness of my statement. None else would have felt like committing suicide over a simple innocent remark of mine. You want to be with me in my tours occasionally, it is true; you want to come to the Ashram leaving your work at least every four months. You recognize these desires as limitations. I make allowance for them. But why feel disturbed when I tell you what I feel to be the truth that they are not themselves the been touched. If you were not what I have described you to be, you would disease, but they are symptoms of a deep-seated disease which has not rejoice over my drawing attention to the disease and courageously strive to overcome it. Instead, you simply collapsed, much to my grief and anxiety.

This disease is idolatry. If it is not, why hanker after my company! Why touch or kiss the feet that must one day be dead cold? There is nothing in the body. The truth I represent is before you. Experience and effort will unravel it before you, never my association in the manner you wish. When it comes in the course of business you will, like others, gain from it and more because of your devotion. Why so helplessly rely on me? Why do everything to please me? Why not independently of me and even in spite of me? I have put no restrictions on your liberty, save those you have welcomed. Break the idol to pieces if you can and will. If you cannot, I am prepared to suffer with you. But you must give me the liberty to issue warnings.

My diagnosis may be wrong. If so, it is well. Strive with me cheerfully instead of being nerve-broken. Everyone but you takes my blows without being unstrung.

If your effort has hitherto failed, what does it matter? You have hitherto dealt mechanically with symptoms. There you have had considerable success. But if I say you have not been able to touch the root, why weep over it? I do not mind your failures. They are but

[1] The superscription in this and other letters to Mirabehn is in Devanagari.

stepping-stones to success. You must rise from this torpor never to fall into it again.

I have done. May God be with you.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5378. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9434

144. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Silence Day [June 24, 1929][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I got your letters.

In front of me are Himalayan peaks wrapped in snow and shining brilliantly in sunlight. Below are hills clad with greenery, as though, feeling shy, they had covered their bodies with it. The solitude of the place is beyond description. We are to stay here for seven or eight days. I can permit myself such luxury only if there is some pretext for it. This was provided by Kaka and the arrangement was also suggested by him. He had entrusted the task to Devdas and Prabhudas, and I accepted this luxury after deciding to give practically all my time to the *Gita*. I wish, therefore, to write the fewest possible letters this week and also do the minimum work for *Young India*. Accordingly, I have decided to suspend routine correspondence.

What remains of what you want, I shall give you immediately I arrive there. Keep yourself ready. Note down all the things about which you wish to consult me. Think and decide who will do in your absence the work that you are doing. It would be good if Ramniklal agrees to do it. Also think and decide where you wish to go for rest.

Many boys do what Katto and others do. Giriraj is of course responsible for his faults. His letter throws a new light on the matter.

If possible, we should dispose of the Thana land. The other conditions of Dholka, we can accept but not the prohibition of tanning[2]. We may have connection with a dairy which does no

[1] This appears to have been written on the first silence day after Gandhiji's arrival at Kausani.

[2] *Vide* also "Telegram to Swami", 18-6-1929

tanning, but owning a goshala [is a different matter]. '*Dhuni*' for 'faddist' is quite correct.

Vaydo…"Stupidly obstinate"

Chakram…"Madcap"

Are there two d's in the English word?

I have read Kakasaheb's draft and am returning it. I only expressed my view as a member. You may include the names which all of you approve.

You should send to Subbiah his usual pay. We have given him to Rajaji as interest-free loan.

There are many spelling and other mistakes in the copy of the telegram to Swami. I hope the wire was not sent with all mistakes.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall leave this place on the 2nd. On the 5th in Delhi, and on 6th morning or evening, in the Ashram. Send the mail to me only as long as I am at Almora.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5426

145. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Silence Day [*June 24, 1929*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. It is good that you observe the rules. Discuss everything with Father at length. We are in a secluded spot and we are going to spend eight days here. I will not write more as I want to finish [the work] on the *Gita.*

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3350

[1] From the reference to "the work on the *Gita*"; *vide* also the preceding item and "Letter to Prabhavati", 25-6-1929

146. TELEGRAM TO DR. M.A. ANSARI[1]

[On or after *June 24,1929*]

DR. ANSARI
DARYAGANJ
DELHI

PRAY THANK HIS HIGHNESS FOR INVITATION. DO NOT CONSIDER POSSIBLE VISIT BHOPAL BEFORE SEPTEMBER. MUST REACH ASHRAM 6TH JULY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15406

147. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

June 25, 1929

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter yesterday after I had posted one[2] to you. You must get rid of your cough. The vaids usually have some ordinary medicine for it, as also the doctors. You can take it from eithter. Have your throat examined by a doctor. Has Jayaprakash left America? If his arrival is postponed or if he has come and agrees, you can come to the Ashram and finish your [study of the] *Gita* and English. In the meanwhile, you should analyse every single word from the Hindi translation and know its meaning. In this way, you will surely avoid some of your errors of pronunciation.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

We shall leave here on the 2nd and reach the Ashram on the 6th.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3349

[1] In reply to his telegram dated June 23 from Lahore received at Almora on June 24

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Prabhavati", 24-6-1929

148. TELEGRAM TO KLOETZU[1]

[On or after *June 26, 1929*]

REACHING ASHRAM SIXTH. DIFFICULT MEET ANYWHERE TILL THEN.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 15408

149. A QUAINT ADDRESS

Among the Andhra notes still lying unattended to, I find the following extracts from a quaint but instructive address presented by the working hands of S.L.N. Factory, Nallagaka:

> It was in the year 1916 we could see for the first time our cotton being ginned by foreign mechanism driven by steam power. Till then ginning cotton in these parts was done by handgins when we had work enough for three months of summer to feed ourselves and our children. Our factory can now gin the produce of 20 villages and only a limited number of us are allowed to work.
>
> About the year 1920 when you were beginning to revive hand-spinning in storm-beaten and almost worn-out Northern India, there were few among agricultural and labour classes in these parts who could buy cloth for daily use. Eight years have rolled by. Mill-yarn has appeared in the market. Its cheapness and evenness have attracted us.Self-spinning has lost its importance. We have almost come to the stage of buying cloth, woven mainly out of mill-yarn by local weavers majority of whom come from the suppressed. We still consider mill-made cloth and foreign cloth to be matter of luxury only fit to be used by Brahmin and Vaishya communities, the foremost to adopt foreign cloth for daily use. We have still belief in the quality of khadi cloth and always prefer that if available at a reasonable price.
>
> We generally use in these parts eight-spoke charkha with an iron axis, all complete, costing Rs. 6, handgin costs Rs. 1-8-0, the cost of 20 *tolas* of seedless cotton as. 4, spindle costs Re. 0-0-6, carding charge for 52 *tolas* of cotton as. 6 to 8, spinning 20 *tola*s costs as. 2, arranging yarn to make cloth of 30'X27" is as. 3, weaving charge of cloth 30'X27" Re. 1, male dhoti measures 10-1/2'X30" weighing nearly 30 *tolas* and female sari measures

[1] In reply to his telegram dated June 24 from Ahmedabad received at Almora on June 26, which read: "Please wire Ashram where when can I meet you this week."

30'X30" weighing nearly 140 *tolas*. Carding is done by a professional carder, carding and weaving charges are often paid in *cholam* grain, the chief food crop of the district. The labourer gets his cotton as wages when picking up cotton from fields. Fortunately your visit to these parts has happened in a spinning season. You can see some of the villagers, quite illiterate of the present-day civilization, still plying their charkhas.

Though our number is small (only 50), we represent the important religions of the district, besides almost all communities and their sub-sections among Hindus. We observe untouchability as regards food and drinking water. One community of Hindus do not even drink water from the hands of another. Among the suppressed there are more than four sub-sections. One sub-section of them does not allow another to touch even drinking well. These suppressed classes are made to live outside the villages and their chief occupation is scavenging, spinning, weaving and shoemaking.

Muharram festival in these parts (we speak only of the villages) is mainly conducted by Hindus funds and help. Mohammedans help Hindus in celebrating Hindu festivals. In processions some of them actually carry on their shoulders Hindu idols. Hindus worship Muslim saints and are called by Mohammedan names, and Mohammedans worship Hindu gods and are called by Hindu names. Though this is all through our illiteracy we seem to follow the Sanskrit saying:

आकाशत्पतियं तच्य यथा गच्छति सगरम ।
सर्व देवनास्कार केशवं प्रति गच्छति ।।

Buffalo is the chief milk-producer and cow is scarcely reared for milking. Oxen used for agriculture are imported from Northern Circars. We have not got sufficient pasture land, and it is one of the chief reasons why the agriculturist does not welcome the cow.

Drink evil, on a large scale, exists among labourers and agriculturists. God bless us, none of us are habitual drunkards. Malaria, typhoid, cholera hold their sway for nearly three months in the year.

Strikes, A.I.S.A., Congress, swaraj, Hindu-Muslim question, these are all words or phrases we the villagers in general do not understand. None try to explain them for us, nor are we literate enough to know them.

> We have all today assembled here to request you to accept our few coppers which may be of use in your public work and some samples of cotton and its products for your information about the qualities availablehere. We further demand your prayer to Almighty for our sound health, so that we may daily labour to earn our bread honestly.

I have tried to make the language more readable than it is in the original. Its merit lies in its directness, its sense of humour and its perception of the true situation in spite of adverse circumstances. It is wonderful how even those whose interests are opposed to the message of the spinning-wheel do not fail to perceive its truth. It shows how the so-called higher classes are responsible for the ruin of the supplementary occupation of millions and therefore for their semi-starvation. The remarks about untouchability and Hindu-Muslim relations are no less instructive

Young India, 27-6-1929

150. SEXUAL PERVERSION

Some years ago the Bihar Government in its education department had an inquiry into the question of unnatural vice in its schools, and the Committee of Inquiry had found the existence of the vice even among teachers who were abusing their position among their boys in order to satisfy their unnatural lust. The Director of Education had issued a circular prescribing departmental action on such vice being found to exist in connection with any teacher. It would be interesting to know the results, if any, issuing from the circular.

I have had literature too sent to me from other provinces inviting my attention to such vice and showing that it was on the increase practically all over India in public as well as private schools. Personal letters received from boys have confirmed the information.

Unnatural though the vice is, it has come down to us from times immemorial. The remedy for all secret vice is most difficult to find. And it becomes still more difficult when it affects guardians of boys which the teachers are. “If the salt loses its savour, wherewith shall it be salted?”In my opinion departmental action, necessary as it is in all proved cases, can hardly meet the case. The levelling up of public opinion alone can cope with the evil. But in most matters there is no such thing as effective public opinion in this country. The feeling of helplessness that pervades political life has affected all other

departments. We therefore pass by many a wrong that is being perpetrated in front of us.

151. A TRAGEDY

Throughout a life of continuous bustle lived among crowds for nearly thirty years I cannot recall a serious accident though I can many narrow escapes. But in Almora on the day of my entry, i.e., 18th instant, and after a crowded meeting, as I was returning to my host's house, a villager named Padam Singh who came rushing as villagers do to the car for *darshan* met with what proved to be a fatal accident. He could not dodge the car in time, fell and the car ran over him. He was quickly carried by kind bystanders to the hospital where he received the utmost attention and hope was entertained that he would survive. He was strongly built and brave. He lived for two days, his pulse was good he was taking nourishment. But the heart suddenly stopped on 20th instant at 3.15. Padam Singh died leaving an orphan boy 12 years old.

Death or lesser accidents generally do not give me more than a momentary shock, but even at the time of writing this I have not recovered from the shock. I suppose it is because I feel guilty of being party to Padam Singh's death. I have found chauffeurs to be almost without exception hot-tempered, easily excitable and impatient, as inflammable as the petrol with which they have to come in daily contact. The chauffeur of my car had more than a fair share of all these shortcomings. For the crowd through which the car was struggling to pass he was driving rashly. I should have either insisted on walking or the car proceeding only at a walking pace till we had been clear of the crowd. But constant moter-riding had evidently coarsened me, and freedom from serious accidents produced an unconsious but unforgivable indifference to the safety of pedestrains. This sense of the wrong is probably responsible for the shock. It is well with Padam Singh. Pandit Govid Vallabh Pant has assured me that the son will be well looked after. Padam Singh received attention at the hospital which moneyed men might have envied. He was himself resigned and at peace. But his death is a lesson to me as, I hope, it would be to motorists. Although I may be twitted about my inconsistency, I must repeat my belief that motoring in spite of all its advantages in an unnatural form of locomotion. It therefore behoves those who use it to restrain their drivers and to realize that speed is not

the *summum bonum* of life and may even be no gain in the long run. I have never been clear in my mind that my mad rush through India has been all to the good. Any way Padam Singh's death has set me thinking furiously.

Young India, 27-6-1929

152. RASHTRIYA SANGHA AND SELF-SUPPORT

The boycott movement has its constructive as well as its destructive side. Destruction will be ineffective if it does not go hand in hand with construction. Just as a field denuded of weeds will send them up again if no crop is sown, so also will destruction of foreign cloth surely be followed by new consignments if there is no khadi available. Indeed destruction or giving up of foreign cloth is necessary because we must manufacture and find use for life-giving khadi. The Rashtriya Sangha of Bengal has taken up the constructive work. Satisbabu of Khadi Pratishthan who is the founder of the Sangha is concentrating his attention on villages being self-supporting for their cloth requirements. The Sangha is taking in its orbit parts of Utkal also. He recently visited the Alaka Ashram of Sjt. Gopabandhu Choudhry and in company with him and other friends surveyed some neighbouring villages. From his notes about the tour I take the following interesting extracts:[1]

> We selected village Ranahata about five miles from the Ashram. The inhabitants are all peasants. There is the usual poverty. The village sends a portion of its manhood as wage-earner to Calcutta. The proposition to undertake the production of all necessary cloth within the village was readily responded to. A volunteer body of 10 was formed which is to receive training in the Alaka Ashram. After their training Sjt. Parihari is to come and stay in the village for carrying on the work. ...
>
> There are some faimilies of weavers round the Ashram in Jagatsinghpur. ... there will be however no difficulty about weaving the cloth for Ranahata at present at Jagatsinghpur. Ultimately of course Ranahata will weave its own cloth. . . .
>
> We found the 30 miles road to the Alaka Ashram thoroughly lined with trees. . . . I found groups of women not only sweeping the road but the surrounding fields also for collecting leaves and stray twigs for fuel.

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

Collecting leaves one by one seemed to be an occupation. ... I sighed for the day when these women will sit by their wheels. . . .

What Satisbabu has described is typical of most Utkal villages. Those mentioned by Satisbabu are by no means the poorest. But there is not much to choose in the midst of growing poverty. If the Rashtriya Sangha succeeds in its effort, it would have conferred a real boon on the villagers of Utkal besides making a substantial contribution to the boycott movement.

Young India, 27-6-1929

153. THE EVIL OF PURDAH

The belief that anything old is good is a source of numerous wrong practices. If all that is ancient is considered good what about sin? It is very old, but it will ever deserve to be discarded. Untouchability is also old, but it is a sin, therefore we should give it up. The same is true of drinking and gambling. If a thing which lies within the province of reason…which can be proved to be right or wrong with the aid of reason, does not appeal to reason, it would deserve to be immediately given up.

However old purdah may be, reason cannot accept it today. The harm it has done is self-evident. We should not try to justify *purdah* as we do in the case of many other things by putting an ideal interpretation on this custom. In fact the way it is now observed, it can stand no such interpretation.

The truth is that *purdah* is not an external affair, it is something internal. Many women who observe *purdah* externally are found to be immodest. However, a woman who retains her modesty without observing external *purdah* deserves to be worshipped. And fortunately there is no dearth of such women in the world even today.

In the scriptures we find many terms which had an external meaning at one time but which are interpreted at present anaogically. One such is *yajna*. Now we know that the killing of animals is not a true *yajna*. True *yajna* consists in burning up the animal passions within us. One can quote hundreds of such examples. Therefore those desirous of reforming and saving Hindu society need not be afraid of ancient conventions. We cannot find better principles than the old ones. But the way they are to be put into practice must continue to change. Change is a sign of growth while stagnation is the beginning

of decay. The world changes every moment. Only the dead do not change. Immobility is thus a sign of death. We are not talking here of the immobility, the calmness of the yogi. In the calmness of the yogi there lies hidden the speediest motion. There is in that calmness the utmost wakefulness of the *atman*. We are talking here of inert immobility…in other words, of inertia. Enslaved by this inertia we are driven willingly to acquiesce in all old evil customs. It prevents us from making any progress. This very inertia comes in our way in the attainment of swaraj. Now let us see how the *purdah* causes us harm.

1. It prevents women from receiving education.

2. It makes them timid.

3. It ruins their health.

4. It comes in the way of normal relationship between men and women.

5. It engenders in them a sense of inferiority.

6. Women lose contact with the outside world and as a result they are deprived of their due experience.

7. It prevents a woman from performing her role as man's better half.

8. Those women whose observe *purdah* cannot play their full role in the struggle for swaraj.

9. *Purdah* comes in the way of children's education.

Considering all these ill effects, it is the duty of all intelligent Hindus to do away with this evil custom.

As with the other reforms so also with the *purdah*. Charity must begin at home. When others observe the good results of our actions, they will naturally emulate our example. It is, however, important to remember one thing: A reformer must always be gentle and courteous. If in doing away with *purdah* our aim is observance of restraint, then it is our duty to take this step and we will surely succeed in our effort. But if what we aim at is not restraint but licence, it will not be possible to remove the *purdah*, because the public will then resent the move and in anger may even support this evil custom. The people are pure in their hearts and cannot respect a movement with an impure objective.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 27-6-1929

154. "ANASAKTIYOGA"[1]

THE MESSAGE OF THE "GITA"

It was at Kausani in Almora, on 24th June 1929, i.e., after two years' waiting, that I finished the introduction in Gujarati to my translation of the *Gita*. The whole was then published in due course.[2] It has been translated in Hindi, Bengali and Marathi. There has been an insistent demand for an English translation. I finished the translation of the introduction at the Yeravda prison. Since my discharge[3] it has lain with friends, and now I give it to the reader. Those, who take no interest in the Book of Life, will forgive the trespass on these columns. To those, who are interested in the poem and treat it as their guide in life, my humble attempt might prove of some help.

M. K. G.

Just[4] as, acted upon by the affection of co-workers like Swami Anand and others, I wrote *My Experiments With Truth*[5] , so has it been regarding my rendering of the *Gita*. "We shall be able to appreciate your meaning of the message of the *Gita*, only when we are able to study a translation of the whole text by yourself, with the addition of such notes as you may deem necessary[6] . I do not think it is just on your part to deduce ahimsa, etc., from stray verses", thus spoke

[1] Literally, '*the* yoga of non-attachment'. The English translation by Mahadev Desai bore the title The *Gita According to Gandhi*. The English translation of the introduction to his Gujarati translation of the Gita was begun by Gandhiji on 16-12-1930, and was completed by him on 8-1-1931 in the Yeravda prison. The original manuscript in English (photostat: G.N. 7911), in addition to bearing the dates for each instalment of the translation, also mentions 24-6-1929 as the date on which introduction in Gujarati to the translation of the *Gita* was completed. However, in his letters to Mahadev Desai and Chhaganlal Joshi dated 28-6-1929 (*vide* pp. 133 & 135.), he mentions his having completed the *Gita* the previous day. The work therefore, is placed under June 27, 1929.

The English translation appeared first in *Young India*, 26-8-1931, with this prefactory note and they were both reproduced in *The Gita According to Gandhi*.

[2] On March 12, 1931 by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad

[3] On January 26, 1931

[4] The original manuscript has "Even".

[5] *Vide* "An Autobiography"

[6] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "We can appreciate your meaning of the message of the *Gita* only when you have translated the whole text with such notes as you may deem necessary and when we have gone through it all."

Swami Anand to me during the non-co-operation days. I felt the force of his remarks[1] . I therefore told him that I would adopt his suggestion when I got[2] the time. Shortly afterwards I was imprisoned.[3] During my incarceration I was able to study the *Gita* more fully. I went reverently through the Gujarati translation of the Lokamanya's great work[4] . He had kindly presented me with the Marathi original and the translations in Gujarati and Hindi, and had asked me,[5] if I could not tackle the original, at least to go through the Gujarati translation. I had not been able to[6] follow the advice outside the prison walls. But when I was imprisoned I read the Gujarati translation. This reading whetted my appetite for more and I glanced through several works on the *Gita.*[7]

2. My first acquaintance[8] with the *Gita* began in 1888-89 with the verse translation by Sir Edwin Arnold known as *the Song Celestial*. On reading it I felt a keen desire to read a Gujarati translation. And I read as many translations as I could lay hands on. But all such reading can give me no passport for presenting my own[9] translation. Then again my knowledge of Sanskrit is limited; my knowledge of Gujarati too is in no way scholarly.[10] How could I then dare present the public with my translation?

3. It has been my endeavour, as also that of[11] some companions, to reduce to practice the teaching of the *Gita* as I have understood it. The *Gita* has become for us a spiritual reference book.[12] I am aware that we ever fail to act in perfect accord with the teaching. The failure is not due to want of effort, but is in spite of it.[13] Even through the

[1] The original manuscript has "remark" .

[2] The original manuscript has "get".

[3] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "then I was imprisoned".

[4] *Gita Rahasya*

[5] The original manucript has "and asked me".

[6] The original manucript has "I could not".

[7] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "This reading whetted my appetite for reading more about the Gita and I glanced through several works on it".

[8] *Vide* "An Aaautobiaography"

[9] The original manuscript does not have the word "own".

[10] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "Then again my knowledge of Sanskrit is limited; my knowledge of Gujarati too is in no way of a higher type."

[11] The origianl manuscript does not have the words "that of".

[12] In the original manuscript the sentence reads : "It has become a spiritual reference book."

[13] In the original manuscript the sentence reads : "The failure is due not to want of effort but in spite of it."

failures we seem to see rays of hope. The accompanying rendering contains the meaning of the *Gita* message which this little ban is trying to enforce in its[1] daily conduct.

4. Again this rendering is designed for women, the commercial class, the so-called Shudras and the like, who have little or no literary equipment, who have neither the time nor the desire to read the *Gita* in the original, and yet who stand in need of its support[2]. In spite of my Gujarati being unscholarly[3] I must own to having the desire to leave to the Gujaratis, through the mother tongue, whatever knowledge I may possess. I do indeed wish that, at a time when literary output of a questionable character is pouring in upon the Gujaratis, they should have before them a rendering, which the majority can understand, of a book that is regarded as unrivalled for its spirirtual merit and so withstand the overwhelming flood of unclean literature.[4]

5. This desire does not mean any disrespect to the other renderings. They have their own place. But I am not aware of the[5] claim made by the translators of enforcing their meaning of the *Gita* in their own lives. At the back of my reading[6] there is the claim of an endeavour to enforce the meaning in my own conduct for an unbroken period of 40[7] years. For this reason I do indeed harbour the wish that all Gujarati men or women[8], wishing to shape their conduct according to their faith, should digest and derive strength from the translation here presented.

6. My co-workers, too, have worked at this translation. My knowledge of Sanskrit being very limited, I should not have full confidence in my literal translation. To that extent therefore the

[1] The original manuscript has “their”.

[2] The original manuscript has “ In spite of my knowledge of Gujarati being limited”.

[3] The original manuscript has “In spite of my knowledge of Gujarati being limited”.

[4] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: “I do indeed wish that at a time when literary output of a questionable character is pouring in upon the Gujaratis they should have before them a readable rendering of a book that is regarded as unrivalled for its spiritual merit and so that they may be able to withstand the overwhelming flood of unclean literature”.

[5] The original manuscript has “any”.

[6] The original manuscript has “rendering”.

[7] The original manuscript has “thirty eight”.

[8] The original manuscript has “For this reason I do indeed harbour the wish that every Gujarati man or woman”.

translation has passed before[1] the eyes of Vinoba, Kaka Kalelkar, Mahadev Desai and Kishorelal Mashruwala.

II

7. Now about the message of the *Gita.*

8. Even in 1888-89, when I first became acquainted with the *Gita,* I felt that it was not a historical work, but that, under the guise of physical warfare, it described the duel that perpetually went on in the hearts of mankind, and that physical warfare was brought in merely[2] to make the description of the internal duel more alluring[3] . This preliminary intuition became more confirmed on a closer study of religion and the *Gita.* A study of the *Mahabharata* gave it added confirmation. I do not regard the *Mahabharata* as a historical work in the accepted sense. The "Adiparva" contains powerful evidence in support of my opinion. By ascribing to the chief actors superhuman or subhuman origins, the great Vyasa made short work of the history of kings and their peoples. The persons therein described may be historical, but the author of the *Mahabharata* has used them merely to drive home his religious theme.

9. The author of the *Mahabharata* has not established the necessity of physical warfare; on the contrary, he has proved its futility. He has made the victors shed tears of sorrow and repentance and has left them nothing but a legacy of miseries.

10. In this great work the[4] *Gita* is the crown. Its second chapter, instead of teaching the rules of physical warfare, tells us[5] how a perfected man is to be known. In the characterstics of the perfected man of the *Gita,* I do not see any to correspond to physical warfare.[6] Its whole design is inconsistent with the rules of conduct governing the relations between warring parties.[7]

[1] The original manuscript does not have the word "before".

[2] The original manuscript does not have the word "merely".

[3] The original manuscript has "attractive".

[4] The original manuscript does net have the word "the".

[5] The original manuscript has "teaches".

[6] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "In reading these verses I do not find a single characterstic of a perfected man that can correspond to physical warfare."

[7] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "The whole design of the Gita is inconsistent with the rules of conduct governing the relations between contending parties in domestic disputes."

11. Krishna of the *Gita* is perfection[1] and right knowledge personified; but the picture is imaginary. That does not mean that Krishna, the adored of his people, never lived. But perfection is imagined. The idea of a perfect incarnation is an aftergrowth.

12. In Hinduism[2] incarnation is ascribed to one who has performed some extraordinary service of mankind. All embodied life is in reality an incarnation of God, but it is not usual to consider every living being an incarnation. Future generations pay this homage to one who, in his own generation, has been extraodrinarily religious in his conduct.[3] I can see nothing wrong in this procedure; it takes nothing from God's greatness, and there is no violence done to truth. There is an Urdu saying which measn: "Adam is not God but he is a spark of the Divine." And therefore he who is the most religiously behaved has most[4] of the divine spark in him. It is in accordance with this train of thought, that Krishna enjoys, in Hinduism, the status of the most perfect incarnation.

13. This belief in incarnation[5] is a testimony of man's lofty spiritual ambition. Man is not at peace with himself till he has become like unto God.[6] The endeavour to reach this state is the supreme, the only ambition worth having.[7] And this is self-realization. This self-realization is the subject of the *Gita*, as it is of all scriptures.[8] But its author surely did not write it to establish that doctrine. The object of the *Gita* appears to me to be that of showing the most excellent way to attain self-realization.[9] That which is to be found, more or less clearly, spread out here and there in Hindu religious books, has been brought

[1] The original manuscript has "perfect".

[2] The original manuscript does not have the words "In Hinduism".

[3] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "Future generations pay homage as an incarnation to one who, in his own generation, has been the most religious in his conduct."

[4] The original manuscript has "more"

[5] The original manuscript has "This incarnation habit".

[6] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "Man is not at peace with himself till he has become like unto God, he is not happy without it."

[7] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "The endcavour to be that is the supreme, the only ambition worth having."

[8] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "This self-realization is the subject of all scriptures as it is of the Gita."

[9] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "But the object of the Gita appears to me to be to show the most excellent way of attaining self-realization."

out in the clearest possible language in the *Gita* even at the risk of repetition.

14. *The matchless remedy is renunciation of fruits of action.* 15. This is the centre round which the *Gita* is woven.[1] This renunciation is the central sun, round which devotion, knowledge and the rest revolve like planets.[2] The body has been likened to a prison.[3] There must be action[4] where there is body. Not one embodied being is exempted[5] from labour. And yet all religions proclaim that it is possible for man, by treating the body as the temple of God, to attain freedom. Every action[6] is tainted, be it ever so trivial[7] . How can the body be made the temple of God?[8] In other words[9] how can one be free from action, i.e., from the taint of sin? The *Gita* has answered the question in decisive language: "By desireless action; by renouncing fruits of action; by dedicating all activities[10] to God, i.e., by surrendering oneself to Him body and soul."

16. But desirelessness or renunciation does[11] not come for the mere talking about it. It is not attained by an intellectual feat. It is attainable only by a constant heartchurn. Right knowledge is necessary for attaining[12] renuncation. Learned men possess a knowledge of a kind. They may recite the Vedas from memory, yet[13] they may be steeped in self-indulgence. In order[14] that knowledge may not run riot, the author of the *Gita* has insisted on devotion accompanying it and has given it the first place. Knowledge without

[1] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "The Gita is woven round this as the centre."

[2] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "Devotion knowledge and the rest revolve like planets round this renunciation as the central sun."

[3] The original manuscript does not have this sentence.

[4] The original manuscript has "work".

[5] The original manuscript has "exempt".

[6] The original manuscript has "But every action".

[7] The original manuscript has "little".

[8] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "And freedom is available only for those who become sinless".

[9] The original manuscript has "Then".

[10] The original manuscript has "activity".

[11] The original manuscript has "do".

[12] The original manuscript has "is necessary to attain".

[13] The original manuscript has "but".

[14] The original manuscript has "So".

devotion will be like a misfire. Therefore, says the *Gita*: "Have devotion, and knowledge will follow." This devotion is not mere lip worship, it is a wrestling with death.[1] Hence the *Gita's* assessment of the devotee's qualities is similar to that of the sages.

17. Thus the devotion required by the *Gita* is no soft-hearted effusiveness. It certainly is not blind faith. The devotion of the *Gita* has the least to do with externals. A devotee may use, if he likes, rosaries, forehead marks, make offerings, but these things[2] are no test of his devotion. He is the devotee who is jealous of none, who is a fount of mercy, who is without egotism, who is selfless, who treats alike cold and heat, happiness and misery, who is ever forgiving, who is always contented, whose resolutions are firm, who has dedicated mind and soul to God, who causes no dread,[3] who is not afraid of others[4] , who is free from exultation, sorrow and fear, who is pure, who is versed in action and yet remains unaffected by it, who renounces all fruit, good or bad, who treats friend and foe alike, who is untouched by respect or disrespect, who is not puffed up by praise, who does not go under when people speak ill of him, who loves silence and solitude, who has a disciplined reason.[5] Such devotion is inconsistent with the existence at the same time of strong attachments.[6]

18. We thus see, that to be a real devotee is to realize oneself.[7] Self-realization is not something apart.[8] One rupee can purchase for us poison or nector, but knowledge of devotion cannot buy us either salvation or bondage.[9] These are not media of exchange. They are themselves the thing we want. In other words, if the means and the end

[1] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "But this devotion is wrestling with death".

[2] The original manuscript has "but they".

[3] The original manuscript has "whom people do not fear".

[4] The original manuscript has "them".

[5] The original manuscript has "whose reason is disciplined".

[6] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "Such devotion is impossible in men or women with strong attachments".

[7] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "We thus see, that to know to be a real devotee is to realize oneself."

[8] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "Self-realization is not something apart from it."

[9] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "Just as one rupee can purchase for us poison or nectar so may we not use knowledge or devotion for attaining either salvation or bondage."

are not identical, they are almost so. The extreme of means is salvation. Salvation of the *Gita* is perfect peace.[1]

19. But such knowledge and devotion, to be true, have to stand the test of runnunciation of fruits of action. Mere knowledge of right and wrong will not make one fit for salvation.[2] According to common notions a mere learned man will pass as a pundit. He need not perform any service. He will regard it as bondage even to lift a little *lota*.[3] Where one test of knowledge is non-liability for service, ther is no room for such mundane work as the lifting of a *lota*.

20. Or take *bhakti*.[4] The popular notion of *bhakti* is softheartedness, telling beads and the like, and disdaining to do even a loving service, lest the telling of beads might be interrrupted.[5] This *bhakta*[6] therefore, leaves the rosary only for eating, drinking and the like, never for grinding corn or nursing patients.

21. But the *Gita* says:[7] "No one has attained his goal without action. Even men like Janaka attained salvation through action. If even I were lazily to cease working, the world would[8] perish. How much more necessary then for the people at large to engage in action?"

22. While[9] on theone hand it is beyond dispute that all action binds, on the other hand it is equally true that all living beings have to do some work, whether they will or no. Here all activity, whether mental or physical, is to be included in the term action. Then how is one to be free from the bondage of action, even though he may be acting[10]? The manner in which the *Gita* has solved the problem is, to

[1] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "The salvation contemplated by Gita is perfect peace."

[2] This sentence is not in the original manuscript.

[3] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "He will regard it as a bondage even to left a little lota."

[4] This sentence is not in the original manuscript.

[5] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "The popular notion of a bhakta is that he is a soft-hearted maniac, telling beads and disdaining to do even a loving service lest his telling of beads might be interrupted".

[6] The original manuscript has "he".

[7] The original manuscript has: "Both these have been clearly told by the Gita".

[8] The original manuscript has "will".

[9] The original manuscript has "But".

[10] The original manuscript has "doing it".

my knowledge, unique.[1] The *Gita* says: "Do your allotted work but renounce its fruit…be detached and work…have no desire for reward, and work."

This is the unmistakable teaching of the *Gita*.[2] He who gives up action falls. He who gives up only the reward rises. But renunciation of fruit in no way means indifference to the result. In regard to every action one must know the result that is expected to follow, the meansthereto, and the capacity for it. He, who, being thus equipped, is without desire for the result, and is yet wholly engrossed in the due fulfilment of the task before him, is said to have renounced the fruits[3] of his action.

23. Again, let no one consider renunciation to mean want of fruit for the renouncer. The *Gita* reading does not warrant such a meaning. Renunciation means absence of hankering after[4] fruit. As a matter of fact, he who renounces reaps a thousandfold. The renunciation of the *Gita* is the acid test of faith. He who is ever brooding over the result often loses nerve in the performance of his duty. He becomes impatient and then gives vent to anger and begins to do unworthy things; he jumps from action to action, never remaining faithful to any. He who broods over results is like a man given to objects of senses; he is ever distracted, he says goodbye to all scruples, everything is right in his estimation and he therefore resorts to means fair and foul to attain his end.

24. From the bitter experiences of desire for fruit the author of the *Gita* discovered the path of renunciation of fruit, and put it before the world in a most convincing manner. The common belief is that religion is always opposed to material good. "One cannot act religiously in the mercantile and such other matters. There is no place for religion in such pursuits; religion is only for attainment of salvation", we hear many wordly-wise people say. In my opinion the author of the *Gita* has dispelled this delusion. He has drawn no line of demarcation between salvation and wordly pursuits. On the contrary, he has shown that religion must rule even our wordly pursuits. I have

[1] In the original manuscript the sentence reads : "The manner in which the Gita has solved the problem, no other work has to my knowledge."

[2] In the origianl manuscript the sentence reads: "This unmistakable and unmistakable teaching of the Gita" [sic].

[3] The original manuscript has "fruit".

[4] The original manuscript has "for". The original manuscript has "would".

felt that the *Gita* teaches us that what cannot be followed out in day-today practice cannot be called religion. Thus, according to the *Gita,* all acts that are incapable of being performed without attachment are taboo. This golden rule saves mankind from many a pitfall. According to this interpretation[1] , murder, lying dissoluteness and the like must[2] be regarded as sinful and therefore taboo. Man's life then becomes simple, and from that simpleness springs peace.

25. Thinking along these lines, I have felt that in trying to enforce in one's life the central teaching of the *Gita,* one is bound to follow truth and ahimsa. When there is no desire for fruit, there is no temptation for untruth or *himsa*. Take any instance of untruth or violence, and it will be found that at its[3] back was the desire to attain the cherished end. But it may be freely admitted that the *Gita* was not written to establish *ahimsa*. It was an accepted and primary duty even before the *Gita* age.[4] The *Gita* had to deliver the message of renunciation of fruit. This is clearly brought out as early as the second chapter.

26. But if the *Gita* believed in ahimsa or its was[5] included in desirelessness, why did the author take a warlike illustration? When the *Gita* was written, although people believed in ahimsa, wars were not only not taboo, but nobody observed the contradiction between them and ahimsa.

27. In assessing the implications of renunciation of fruit, we are not required to probe the mind of the author of the *Gita* as to his limitations of ahimsa and the like.[6] Because a poet puts a particular truth before the world, it does not necessarily follow that he has known or worked out all its great consequences, or that having done so, he is able always to express them fully.[7] In this perhaps lies the

[1] The original manuscript has "doctrine".

[2] The original manuscript has "would".

[3] The original manuscript has "their".

[4] In the Original manuscript the sentence reads: "It was accepted as primary duty even before the Gita age".

[5] The original manuscript has "is".

[6] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "But in assessing the measure of renunciation of fruit, we are not required to probe the mind of the author of the Gita as to his limitation of ahimsa and the like".

[7] The original manuscript has "he is able to reduce them in language".

greatness of the poem and the poet.[1] A poet's meaning is limitless. Like man, the meaning of great writings suffers evolution. On examining the history of languages, we notice that the meaning of important words has changed or expanded. This is true of the *Gita*. The author has himself extended the meanings of some of the current words.[2] We are able to discover this even on a superficial examination.[3] It is possible that, in the age prior to that of the *Gita*, offering of animals in sacrifice was permissible. But there is not a trace of it in the sacrifice in the *Gita* sense. In the *Gita* continuous concentration on God is the king of sacrifices. The third chapter seems to show that sacrifice chiefly means body-labour for service. The third and the fourth chapters read together will give us other meanings for sacrifice, but never animal-sacrifice. Similarly has the meaning of the word sannyasa undergone, in the *Gita*, a transformation. The sannyasa of the *Gita* will not tolerate complete cessation of all activity. The sannyasa of the *Gita* is all work and yet no work. Thus the author of the *Gita*, by extending meanings of words, has taught us to imitate him. Let it be granted that according to the letter of the *Gita* it is possible to say that warfare is consistent with renunciation of fruit. But after 40 years' unremitting endeavour fully to enforce the teaching of the *Gita* in my own life, I have, in all humility, felt that perfect renunciation is impossible without perfect observance of ahimsa in every shape and form.[4]

28. The *Gita* is not an aphoristic work; it is a great religious poem. The deeper you dive into it, the richer the meanings you get. It being meant for the people at large, there is pleasing repetition[5]. [6] With every age the important words will carry new and expanding meanings. But its central teaching will never vary. The seeker is at

[1] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "And in this lies the greatness of the poem and the poet".

[2] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "The author of the Gita has himself extended the meanings of great current words".

[3] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "And this we are able to discover even on a superficial examination."

[4] The original manuscript has "is impossible without perfect observance of truth and ahimsa".

[5] The original manuscript has "the same thing has been said often".

[6] The original manuscript adds "Therefore".

liberty to extract from this treasure any meaning he likes so as to enable him to enforce in his life the central teaching.

29. Nor is the *Gita* a collection of Do's and Don'ts. What is lawful for one may be unlawful for another. What may be permissible at one time, or in one place, may not be so at another time, and in another place.[1] Desire for fruit is the only universal prohibition. Desirelessness is obligatory.

30. The *Gita* has sung the praises of knowledge[2] , but is is beyond the mere intellect; it is essentially addressed to the heart and capable of being understood by the heart. Therefore the *Gita* is not for those who have faith. The author makes Krishna say:[3]

" Do not entrust this treasure to him who is without sacrifice, without devotion, without the desire for this teaching[4] and who denies Me. On the other hand, those who will give this precious treasure to My devotees will, by the fact of this service, assuredly reach Me.[5] And those who, being free from malice, will with faith absorb this teaching, shall[6] , having attained freedom, live where people of true merit go[7] after death."

DISCOURSE I

No knowledge is to be found without seeking, no tranquility without travail no happiness except through tribulation. Every seeker has, at one time or another, to pass through a conflict of duties, a heart-churning.

Dhritarashtra said:

1. Tell me, O Sanjaya, what my sons and Pandu's assembled, on battle intent, did on the field of Kuru, the field of duty.

The human body is the battle-field where the internal duel between Right and Wrong goes on. Therefore, it is capable of being turned into the gateway to Freedom. It is born in sin and becomes the seed-bed of sin. Hence it is also called the field of Kuru. The Kauravas represent the forces of Evil, the Pandavas the forces of

[1] The original manuscript adds "Therefore".

[2] The original manuscript has "learning".

[3] In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "The author himself has said."

[4] The original manuscript does not have the words "for this teaching".

[5] The original manuscript has: "by the fact of this service of me will assuredly reach me."

[6] The original manuscript has "will".

[7] The original manuscript has "live".

Good. Who is there that has not experienced the daily conflict within himself between the forces of Evil and the forces of Good?[1]

DISCOURSE II

By reason of delusion, man takes wrong to be right. By reason of delusion was Arjuna led to make a difference between kinsmen and non-kinsmen. To demonstrate that this is a vain distinction, Lord Krishna distinguishes between body (not-self) and atman (self) and shows that whilst bodies are impermanent and several, atman is permanent and one. Effort is within man's control, not the fruit thereof. All he has to do, therefore, is to decide his course of conduct or duty on each occasion and persevere in it, unconcerned about the result. Fulfilment of one's duty in the spirit of detachment or selflessness leads to Freedom.

30. This embodied one in the body of every being is ever beyond all harm, O Bharata; thou shouldst not, therefore, grieve for anyone.

Thus far Lord Krishna, by force of argument based on pure reason, has demonstrated that atman is abiding while the physical body is fleeting, and has explained that if, under certain circumstances, the destruction of a physical body is deemed justifiable, it is delusion to imagine that the Kauravas should not be slain because they are kinsmen. Now he reminds Arjuna of the duty of a Kshatriya.

31. Again, seeing thine own duty thou shouldst not shrink from it; for there is no higher good for a Kshatriya than a righteous war.

32. Such a fight, coming unsought, as a gateway to heaven thrown open, falls only to the lot of happy Kshatriyas, O Partha.

33. But if thou wilt not fight this righteous fight, then failing in thy duty and losing thine honour though wilt incur sin.

34. The world will for ever recount the story of thy disgrace; and for a man of honour disgrace is worse than death.

35. The maharathas will think that fear made thee retire from battle; and thou wilt fall in the esteem of those very ones who have held thee high.

36. Thine enemies will deride thy prowess and speak many unspeakable words about thee. What can be more painful than that?

[1] The translation of the Gita verses not commented on or referred to by Gandhiji is not reproduced in this volume. The translation both of the verses and of Gandhiji's comments is from Mahadev Desai's The Gita According to Gandhi.

37. Slain, thou shalt gain heaven; victorious, thou shalt inherit the earth: therefore arise, O Kaunteya[1], determined to fight.

Having declared the highest truth, viz., the immortality of the eternal *atman* and the fleeting nature of the physical body (11-30), Krishna reminds Arjuna that a Kshatriya may not flinch from a fight which comes unsought (31-32). He then (32-37) shows how the highest truth and the performance of duty incidentally coincide with expediency. Next he proceeds to foreshadow the central teaching of the *Gita* in the following *shloka*.

38. Hold alike pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, and gird up thy loins for the fight; so doing thou shalt not incur sin.

39. Thus have I set before thee the attitude of Knowledge; hear now the attitude of Action; resorting to this attitude thou shalt cast off the bondage of action.

41. The attitude, in this matter, springing, as it does, from fixed resolve is but one, O Kurunandana; but for those who have no fixed resolve the attitudes are many- branched and unending.

When the attitude ceases to be one and undivided and becomes many and divided, it ceases to be one settled will, and is broken up into various wills or desires between which man is tossed about. 42-44. The ignorant, revelling in the letter of the Vedas, declare that there is naught else; carnally-minded, holding heaven to be their goal, they utter swelling words which promise birth as the fruit of action and which dwell on the many and varied rites to be performed for the sake of pleasure and power; intent, as they are, on pleasure and power, their swelling words rob them of their wits, and they have no settled attitude which can be centred on the supreme goal.

The Vedic ritual, as opposed to the doctrine of yoga laid down in the Gita, is alluded to here. The Vedic ritual lays down countless ceremonies and rites with a view to attaining merit and heaven. These, divorced as they are from the essence of the Vedas and short-lived in their result, are worthless.

45. The Vedas have as their domain the three *gunas*; eschew them, O Arjuna. Free thyself from the pairs of opposites, abide in eternal truth, scorn to gain or guard anything, remain the master of thy soul.

46. To the extent that a well is of use when there is a flood of water on all sides, to the same extent are all the Vedas of use to an enlightened Brahmana.

[1] Son of Kunti

47. Action alone is thy province, never the fruits thereof; let not thy motive be the fruit of action, nor shouldst thou desire to avoid action.

48. Act thou, O Dhananjaya, without attachment, steadfast in Yoga, even-minded in success and failure. Even-mindedness is yoga.

49. For action, O Dhananjaya, is far inferior to unattached action; seek refuge in the attitude of detachment. Pitiable are those who make fruit their motive.

50. Here in this world a man gifted with that attitude of detachment escapes the fruit of both good and evil deeds. Gird thyself up for yoga, therefore. Yoga is skill in action.

Arjuna said:

54. What, O Keshava, is the mark of the man whose understanding is secure, whose mind is fixed in concentration? How does he talk? How sit? How move?

The Lord said:

55. When a man puts away, O Partha, all the cravings that arise in the mind and finds comfort for himself only from atman, then is he called the man of secure understanding.

To find comfort for oneself from *atman* means to look to the spirit within for spiritual comfort, not to outside objects which in their very nature must give pleasure as well as pain. Spiritual comfort or bliss must be distinguished from pleasure or happiness. The pleasure I may derive from the possession of wealth, for instance, is delusive; real spiritual comfort or bliss can be attained only if I rise superior to every temptation even though troubled by the pangs of poverty and hunger.

59. When a man starves his senses,[1] the objects of those senses disappear from him, but not the yearning for them; the yearning too departs when he beholds the Supreme.

The *shloka* does not rule out fasting and other forms of self-restraint, but indicates their limitations. These restraints are needed for subduing the desire for sense-objects, which however is rooted out only when one has a vision of the Supreme. The higher yearning conquers all the lower yearnings.

60. For, in spite of the wise man's endeavour, O Kaunteya, the unruly senses distract his mind perforce.

[1] Mahadev Desai in The Gita according to Gandhi explains: "For starves his senses', Gandhiji has 'facts'. I think there is no violence to the meaning of the verse in applying 'starvation' to all the senses, including that of hunger."

61. Holding all these in check, the yogi should sit intent on Me; for he whose senses are under control is secure of understanding.

This means that without devotion and the consequent grace of God, man's endeavour is vain.

62. In a man brooding on objects of the senses, attachment to them springs up; attachment begets craving and craving begets wrath.

Craving cannot but lead to resentment, for it is unending and unsatisfied.

63. Wrath breeds stupefaction, stupefaction leads to loss of memory, loss of memory ruins the reason, and the ruin of reason spells utter destruction.

64. But the disciplined soul, moving among sense-objects with the senses weaned from likes and dislikes and brought under the control of *atman*, attains peace of mind.

66. The undisciplined man has neither understanding nor devotion; for him who has no devotion there is no peace, and for him who has no peace, whence happiness?

69. When it is night for all other beings, the disciplined soul is awake; when all other beings are awake, it is night for the seeing ascetic.

This verse indicates the divergent paths of the disciplined ascetic and the sensual man. Whereas the ascetic is dead to the things of the world and lives in God, the sensual man is alive only to the things of the world and dead to the things of the spirit.

70. He in whom all longings subside, even as the waters subside in the ocean which, though ever being filled by them, never overflows - that man finds peace; not he who cherishes longing.

71. The man who sheds all longing and moves without concern, free from the sense of 'I' and 'Mine' - he attains peace.

72. This is the state, O Partha, of the man who rests in Brahman; having attained to it, he is not deluded. He who abides in this state even at the hour of death passes into oneness with Brahman.

DISCOURSE III

This discourse may be said to be the key to the essence of the Gita. It makes absolutely clear the spirit and the nature of right action and shows how true knowledge must express itself in acts of selfless service.

Arjuna said:

1. If, O Janardana, thou holdest that the attitude of detachment is superior to action, then why, O Keshava, dost thou urge me to dreadful action?

2. Thou dost seem to confuse my understanding with perplexing speech; tell me, therefore, in no uncertain voice, that alone whereby I may attain salvation.

Arjuna is sole perplexed, for whilst on the one hand he is rebuked for his faint-heartedness, on the other he seems to be advised to refrain from action (II. 49-50). But this, in reality, is not the case as the following *shlokas* will show.

The Lord said:

3. I have spoken before, O sinless one, of two attitudes in this world - the Samkhyas', that of jnanayoga and the yogis', that of karmayoga.

4. Never does man enjoy freedom from action by not undertaking action, nor does he attain that freedom by mere renunciation of action.

'Freedom from action' is freedom from the bondage of acton.[1] This freedom is not to be gained by cessation of all activity, apart from the fact that this cessation is in the very nature of things impossible (see following *shloka*). How then may it be gained? The following *shlokas* will explain:

5. For none ever remains inactive even for a moment; for all are compelled to action by the *gunas* inherent in *prakriti*.

6. He who curbs the organs of action but allows the mind to dwell on the sense-objects - such a one, wholly deluded, is called a hypocrite.

The man who curbs his tongue but mentally swears at another is a hypocrite. But that does not mean that free rein should be given to the organs of action so long as the mind cannot be brought under control. Self-imposed physical restraint is a condition precedent to mental restraint. Physical restraint should be entirely self-imposed and not super-imposed from outside, e.g., by fear. The hypocrite who is held up to contempt here is not the humble aspirant after self-restraint. The *shloka* has reference to the man who curbs the body because he cannot help it whilst indulging the mind, and who would

[1] Mahadev Desai explains here: "The 'bondage of action' in Gandhiji's note is the bondage of sansara, the cycle of death and birth. All action will have its consequences the consequences in one case, as we shall see, will be the bondage of sansara, in the other case it will be freedom from it."

indulge the body too if he possibly could. The next *shloka* puts the thing conversely.

7. But he, O Arjuna, who keeping all the senses under control of the mind, engages the organs in karmayoga, without attachment…than man excels.

The mind and body should be made to accord well. Even with the mind kept in control, the body will be active in one way or another. But he whose mind is truly restrained, will, for instance close his ears to foul talk and open them only to listen to the priase of God or of good men. He will have no relish for sensual pleasures and will keep himself occupied with such activity as ennobles the soul. That is the path of action. Karmayoga is the yoga (means) which will deliver the self from the bondage of the body, and in it there is no room for self-indulgence.

8. Do thou they allotted task; for action is superior to inaction; with inaction even life's normal course is not possible.

9. This world of men suffers bondage from all action save that which is done for the sake of sacrifice; to this end, O Kaunteya, perform action without attachment.

'Action for the sake of sacrifice' means acts of selfless service dedicated to God.

10. Together with sacrifice did the Lord of beings create, of old, mankind, declaring: "By this shall ye increase; may this be to you the giver of all your desires."

11. "With this may you cherish the gods and may the gods cherish you; thus cherishing one another may you attain the highest good.

12. "Cherished with sacrifice, the gods will bestow on you the desired boons." he who enjoys their gifts without rendering aught unto them is verily a thief.

"Gods" in *shlokas* 11 and 12 must be taken to mean the whole creation of God. The service of all created beings is the service of the gods and the same is sacrifice.

22. For me, O Partha, there is naught to do in the three worlds, nothing worth gaining that I have not gained; yet I am ever in action.

An objection is sometimes raised that God being impersonal is not likely to perform any physical activity; at best He may be supposed to act mentally. This is not correct. For the unceasing movement of the sun, the moon, the earth, etc., signifies God in action.This is not mental but physical activity. Though God is without form and impersonal He acts as though He had form and body. Hence though he is ever in action, He is free from action, unaffected

by action. What must be borne in mind is that just as all Nature's movements and processes are mechanical and yet guided by Divine Intelligence or Will, even so man must reduce his daily conduct to mechanical regularity and precision, but he must do so intelligently. Man's merit lies in observing divine guidance at the back of these processes and in an intelligent imitation of it rather than in emphasizing the mechanical nature thereof and reducing himself to an automation. One has but to withdraw the self, withdraw attachment to fruit from all action, and then not only mechanical precision but security from all wear and tear will be ensured. Acting thus man remains fresh until the end of his days. His body will perish in due course, but his soul will remain evergreen without a crease or a wrinkle.

27. All action is entirely done by the *gunas* of *prakriti*. Man, deluded by the sense of 'I', thinks 'I am the doer'.

28. But he, O Mahabahu, who understands the truth of the various *gunas* and their various activities, knows that it is the *gunas* that operate on the *gunas*; he does not claim to be the doer.

As breathing, winking and similar processes are automatic and man claims no agency for them, he being conscious of the processes only when disease or similar cause arrests them, in a similar manner all his activities should be automatic, without his arrogating to himself the agency or responsibility thereof. A man of Charity does not even know that he is doing charitable acts, it is his nature to do so, he cannot help it. This detachment can only come from tireless endeavour and God's grace.

30. Cast all thy acts on Me, with thy mind fixed on the indwelling *atman*, and without any thought of fruit, or sense of 'mine' shake off thy fever and fight!

He who knows the *atman* inhabiting the body and realizes Him to be a part of the supreme *atman* will dedicate everything to Him, even as a faithful servant acts as a mere shadow of his master and dedicates to him all that he does. For the master is the real doer, the servant but the instrument.

33. Even a man of knowledge acts according to his nature; all creatures follow their nature; what then will constraint avail?

This does not run counter to the teaching in II. 61 and II. 68 Self-restraint is the means of salvation (VI. 35, XIII. 7). Man's energies should be bent towards achieving complete self-restraint until

the end of his days. But if he does not succeed, neither will constraint help him. The *shloka* does not rule out restraint but explains that nature prevails. he who justifies himself saying, 'I cannot do this, it is not in my nature,' misreads the *shloka*. True, we do not know our nature, but habit is not nature. Progress, not decline, ascent, not descent, is the nature of the soul, and therefore every threatened decline or descent ought to be resisted. The next verse makes this abundantly clear.

34. Each sense has its settled likes and dislikes towards its objects; man should not come under the sway of these, for they are his besetters.

Hearing, for instance,is the object of the ears which may be inclined to hear something and disinclined to hear something else. Man may not allow himself to be swayed by these likes and dislikes, but must decide for himself what is conducive to his growth, his ultimate end being to reach the state beyond happiness and misery.

35. Better one's own duty, bereft of merit, than another's well-performed; better is death in the discharge of one's duty; another's duty is fraught with danger.

One man's duty may be to serve the community by working as a sweeper, another's may be to work as an accountant. An accountant's work may be more inviting, but that need not draw the sweeper away from his work. Should he allow himself to be drawn away he would himself be lost and put the community into danger. Before God the work of man will be judged by the spirit in which it is done, not by the nature of the work which makes no difference whatsoever. Whoever acts in a spirit of dedication fits himself for salvation.

40. The senses, the mind and the reason are said to be its seat; by means of these it obscures knowledge and stupefies man.

When Lust seizes the senses, the mind is corrupted, discrimination is obscured and reason ruined. See II. 62-64.

41. Therefore, O Bharatarshabha, bridle thou first the senses and then rid thyself of this sinner, the destroyer of knowledge and discrimination.

42. Subtle, they say, are the senses; subtler than the senses is the mind; subtler than the mind is the reason; but subtler even than the reason is He.43.Thus realizing Him to be subtler than the reason, and controlling the self by the Self(*atman*), destroy, O Mahabahu, this enemy - Lust, so hard to overcome.

When man realizes Him, his mind will be under His control, not swayed by the senses. And when the mind is conquered, what power

has Lust? It is indeed a subtle enemy, but when once the senses, the mind and the reason are under the control of the subtle-most Self, Lust is extinguished.

DISCOURSE IV

This discourse further explains the subject-matter of the third and describes the various kinds of sacrifice.

6. Though unborn and inexhaustible in My essence, though Lord of all beings, yet assuming control over My Nature, I come into being by My mysterious power.[1]

7. For whenever Right declines and Wrong prevails, then O Bharata, I come to birth.

8. To save the righteous, to destroy the wicked, and to re-establish Right I am born from age to age.

Here is comfort for the faithful and affirmation of the truth that Right ever prevails. An eternal conflict between Right and Wrong goes on. Sometimes the latter seems to get the upper hand, but it is Right which ultimately prevails. The good are never destroyed, for Right…which is Truth…cannot perish; the wicked are destroyed because Wrong has no independent existence. Knowing this let man cease to arrogate to himself authorship and eschew untruth, violence and evil. Inscrutable Providence…the unique power of the Lord…is ever at work. This in fact is avatar, incarnation. Strictly speaking there can be no birth for God.

9. He who knows the secret of this My divine birth and action is not born again, after leaving the body; he comes to Me, O Arjuna.

For when a man is secure in the faith that Right always prevails, he never swerves therefrom, pursuing to the bitterest end and against serious odds, and as no part of the effort proceeds from his ego, but all is dedicated to Him, being ever one with Him, he is released from birth and death.

10. Freed from passion, fear and wrath, filled full with Me, relying on Me, and refined by the fiery ordeal of knowledge, many have become one with Me.

11. In whatever way men resort to Me, even so do I render to them. In every way, O Partha, the path men follow is Mine.

[1] Mahadev Desai explains: “Gandhiji's translation says: 'because of My Nature'. Prakriti is here Nature. God by His mysterious power…maya…assumes the garb of prakriti and looks as though He was born”.

That is, the whole world is under His ordinance. No one may break God's law with impunity. As we sow, so shall we reap. This law operates inexorably without fear or favour.

12. Those who desire their actions to bear fruit worship the gods here; for in this world of men the fruit of action is quickly obtainable.

Gods, as indicated before, must not be taken to mean the heavenly beings of tradition, but whatever reflects the divine. In that sense man is also a god. Steam, electricity and the other great forces of Nature are all gods. Propitiation of these forces quickly bears fruit, as we well know, but it is short-lived. It fails to bring comfort to the soul and it certainly does not take one even a short step towards salvation.

13. The order of the four *varnas* was created by Me according to the different *gunas* and karma of each; yet know that though, therefore, author thereof being changeless I am not the author.

14. Actions do not affect Me, nor am I concerned with the fruits thereof. He who recognizes Me as such is not bound by actions.

For man has thus before him the supreme example of One who though in action is not the Doer thereof. And when we are but instruments in His hands, where then is the room for arrogating responsibility for action?

15. Knowing this did men of old, desirous of Freedom, perform action; do thou, then just as they did - the men of old in days gone by.

16. 'What is action? What inaction?' - Here even the wise are perplexed. I will then expound to thee that action knowing which thou shalt be saved from evil.

17. For it is meet to know the meaning of action of forbidden action, as also of inaction. Impenetrable is the secret of action.[1]

18. Who sees inaction in action and action in inaction, he is enlightened among men, he is a yogi, he has done all he need do.

[1] Mahadev Desai explains :

"Three classes of action are here mentioned:

(1) Karma, i.e., action which is capable of being performed without attachment, but is not so performed and therefore binds; also including inaction or laziness which presupposes selfishness of attachment and therefore binds;

(2) Vikarma, forbidden action i.e., action which by its own nature is incapable of being performed without attachment, and hence necessarily binding e.g., murder, lying, adultery and so forth;

The ‘action’ of him who, though ever active, does not claim to be the doer, is inaction, and the ‘inaction’, of him who, though outwardly avoiding action, is always building castles in his own mind, is action. The enlightened man who has grasped the secret of action knows that no action proceeds from him, all proceeds from God and hence he selflessly remains absorbed in action. He is the true yogi. The man who acts self-fully misses the secret of action and cannot distinguish between Right and Wrong. The soul’s natural progress is towards selflessness and purity and one might, therefore, say that the man who strays from the path of purity strays from selflessness. All actions of the selfless man are naturally pure.

19. He whose every undertaking is free from desire and selfish purpose and he who has burnt all his actions in the fire of knowledge - such a one the wise call a pundit.

20. He who has renounced attachment to the fruit of action, who is ever content, and free from all dependence - he, though immersed in action, yet acts not.

That is, action does not bind him.

21. Expecting naught, holding his mind and body in check, putting away every possession, and going through action only in the body, he incurs no stain.

The purest act, if tainted by ‘self’ , binds. But when it is done in a spirit of dedication, it ceases to bind. When ‘self’ has completely subsided, it is only the body that works. For instance, in the case of a man who is asleep his body alone is working. A prisoner doing his prison task has surrendered his body to the prison authorities and only his body, therefore, works. Similarly, he who has voluntarily made himself God’s prisoner, does nothing himself. His body mechanically acts, the doer is God, not he. He has reduced himself to nothingness.

22. Content with whatever chance may bring, rid of the pairs of opposites, free from ill will, even minded in success and failure, he is not bound though he acts.

(3) Akarma, i.e. action, mental or physical, which is performed without attachment and therefore does not bind.

Shri Vinoba has made a bold departure in his interpretation of the word 'vikarma'. It means, he says, specific action, i.e., when the mind co-operates with the body and helps to make a self-ful action selfless. Mathematically he expresses it in this formula, Karma+vikarma=akarma.

23. Of the free soul who has shed all attachment, whose mind is firmly grounded in knowledge, who acts only for sacrifice, all karma is extinguished.

24. The offering of sacrifice is Brahman; the oblation is Brahman; it is offered by Brahman in the fire that is Brahman; thus he whose mind is fixed on acts dedicated to Brahman must needs pass on to Brahman.

25. Some yogis perform sacrifice in the form of worship of the gods, others offer sacrifice of sacrifice itself in the fire that is Brahman.

26. Some offer as sacrifice the sense of hearing and the other senses in the fires[1] of restraint; others sacrifice sound and the other objects of sense in the fires of the senses.

The restraint of the senses…hearing and others…is one thing; and directing them only to legitimate objects, e.g., listening to hymns in the praise of God, is another, although ultimately both amount to the same things.

27. Others again sacrifice all the activities of the senses and of the vital energy in the yogic fire of self-control kindled by knowledge.

That is to say, they lose themselves in the contemplation of the Supreme.

28. Some sacrifice with material gifts; with austerities; with yoga; some with the acquiring and some with the imparting of knowledge. All these are sacrifices of sters vows and serious endeavour.

29. Others absorbed in the practice of the control of the vital energy sacrifice the outward in the inward and the inward in the outward, or check the flow of both the inward and the outward vital airs.

The reference here is to the three kinds of practices of the control of vital energy…*puraka*, *rechaka* and *kumbhaka*.[2]

[1] Mahadev Desai explains: “Fires”…the plural is used to denote the different yogic processes of restraint…dharana (concentration), dhyana (meditation) and samadhi (absorption in the object of meditation)…all three constituting self-restraint…sanyama.

[2] Mahadev Desai explains: “Puraka practice consists in drawing the breath in and stopping all exhalation, i.e. in the language of shloka 29 'sacrificing the outward (called prana) in the inward (callled apana)'; rechaka practice consists in throwing the breath outward and stopping all inhalation, i.e. in the language of shloka 29, 'sacrificing the inward (apana) in the outward (prana)'; kumbhaka practice consists in checking the flow both ways and holding it in suspense either after an exhalation or inhalation.”

30. Yet others, abstemious in food, sacrifice one form of vital energy in another. All these know what sacrifice is and purge themselves of all impurities by sacrifice.

31. Those who partake of the residue of sacrifice…call *amrita* (ambrosia)…attain to everlasting Brahman. Even this world is not for a non-sacrificer; how then the next, O Kurusattama?

32. Even so various sacrifices have been described in the Vedas; know them all to proceed from action; knowing this thou shalt be released.

Action here means mental, physical and spiritual action. No sacrifice is possible without this triple action and no salvation without sacrifice. To know this and to put the knowledge into practice is to know the secret of sacrifice. In fine, unless man uses all his physical, mental and spiritual gifts in the service of mankind, he is a thief, unfit for Freedom. He who uses his intellect only and spares his body is not a full sacrificer. Unless the mind and the body and the soul are made to work in unison, they cannot be adequately used for the service of mankind. Physical, mental and spritual purity is essential for their harmonious working. Therefore man should concentrate on developing, purifying, and turning to the best use all his faculties.

33. Knowledge-sacrifice is better, O Parantapa, than material sacrifice, for all action which does not bind finds its consummation in Knowledge (*jnana*).

Who does not know that works of charity performed without knowledge often result in great harm? Unless every act, however noble its motive, is informed with knowledge, it lacks perfection. Hence the complete fulfilment of all action is in knowledge.

34. The masters of knowledge who have seen the truth will impart to thee this knowledge; learn it through humble homage and service and by repeated questioning.

The three conditions of knowledge…homage, repeated questioningand service deserve to be carefully borne in mind in this age. Homage or obeisance means humility and service is a necessary accompaniment, else it would be mock homage. Repeated questioning is equally essential, for without a keen spirit of inquiry, there is no knowledge. All this presupposes devotion to and faith in the person approached. There can be no humility, much less service, without faith.

35. When thou hast gained this knowledge, O Pandava, thou shalt not again fall into such error; by virtue of it thou shalt see all beings without exception in thyself and thus in Me.

The adage '*Yatha pinde tatha brahmande*' (…'as with the self so with the universe') means the same thing. He who has attained self-realization sees no difference between himself and others.

36. Even though thou be the most sinful of sinners, thou shalt cross the ocean of sin by the boat of knowledge.

37. As a blazing fire turns its fuel to ashes, O Arjuna, even so the fire of Knowledge turns all actions to ashes.

38. There is nothing in this world so purifying as Knowledge. He who is perfected by yoga finds it in himself in the fulness of time.

39. It is the man of faith who gains knowledge…the man who is intent on it and who has mastery over his senses; having gained knowledge, he comes ere long to the supreme peace.

40. But the man of doubt, without knowledge and without faith, is lost; for him who is given to doubt there is neither this world nor that beyond, nor happiness.

41. He who has renounced all action by means of yog, who has severed all doubt by means of knowledge…him self-possessed, no actions bind, O Dhananjaya!

42. Therefore, with the sword of self-realization sever thou this doubt bred of ignorance, which has crept into thy heart! Betake thyself to yoga and arise, O Bhrata!

DISCOURSE V

This discourse is devoted to showing that renunciation of action as such is impossible without the discipline of selfless action and that both are ultimately one.

Arjuna said:

1. Thou laudest renunciation of actions, O Krishna, whilst at the same time thou laudest performance of action; tell me for a certainty which is the better.

The Lord said:

2. Renunciation and performance of action both lead to salvation; but of the two karmayoga (performance) is better than sannyasa (renunciation).

3. Him one should know as ever renouncing who has no dislikes and likes; for he who is free from the pairs of opposites is easily released from bondage.

That is, not renunciation of action but of attachment to the pairs, determines true renuncation. A man who is always in action may be a

good sannyasi (renouncer) and another who may be doing no work well be a hyprocite. See III. 6.

4. It is the ignorant who speak of samkhya and yoga as different, not so those who have knowledge. He who is rightly established even in one wins to the fruit of both.

The yogi engorssed in samkhya (knowledge) lives even in thought for the good of the world and attains the fruit of karmayoga by the sheer power of his thought. The karmyogi ever engorssed in unattached action naturally enjoys the peace of the jnanayogi.

8. The yogi who has seen the Truth knows that it is not he that acts whilst seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, walking, sleeping or breathing,

9. Talking , letting go, holding fast, opening or closing eyes…in the conviction that it is the senses that are moving in their respective spheres.

*S*o long as 'self' endures, this detachment cannot be achieved. A sensual man therefore may not shelter himself under the pretence that it is not he but his senses that are acting. Such a mischievous interpretation betrays a gross ignorance of the *Gita* and right conduct. The next *shloka* makes this clear.

10. He who dedicates his actions to Brahman and performs them without attachment is not smeared by sin, as the lotus-leaf by water.

13. Renouncing with the mind all actions, the dweller in the body, who is master of himself, rests happily in his city of nine gates, neither doing nor getting anything done.

The principal gates of the body are the two eyes, the two nostrils, the two ears, the mouth, and the two organs of excretion…though really speaking the countless pores of the skin are no less gates. If the gate-keeper always remains on the alert and performs his task, letting in or out only the objects that deserve ingress or egress, then of him it can truly be said that he has no part in the ingress or egress but that he is a passive witness. He thus does nothing nor gets anything done.

14. The Lord creates neither agency nor action for the world; neither does He connect action with its fruit. It is nature that is at work.

God is no doer. The inexorable law of karma prevails, and in the very fulfilment of the law…giving everyone his deserts, making everyone reap what he sows…lies God's abounding mercy and justice. In undiluted justice is mercy. Mercy which is inconsistent with justice is not mercy but its opposite. But man is not a judge knowing past,

present and future. So for him the law is reversed and mercy or forgiveness is the purest justice. Being himself ever liable to be judged, he must accord to others what he would accord to himself, viz., forgiveness. Only by cultivating the spirit of forgiveness can he reach the state of a yogi, whom no actions bind, the man of even-mindedness, the man skilled in action.

15. The Lord does not take upon Himself anyone's vice or virtue; it is ignorance that veils knowledge and deludes all creatures.

The delusion lies in man arrogating to himself the authorship of action and then attributing to God the consequence thereof… punishment or reward as the case may be.

18. The men of self-realization look with an equal eye on a Brahmana possessed of learning and humility, a cow, an elephant, a dog and even a dogeater.

That is to say, they serve every one of them alike, according to the needs of each. Treating a Brahmana and *shwapaka* (dog-eater) alike means that the wise man will suck the poison off a snake-bitten *shwapaka* with as much eagerness and readiness as he would from a snake-bitten Brahmana.

19. In this very body they have conquered the round of birth and death, whose mind is anchored in sameness; for perfect Brahman is same to all, therefore in Brahman they rest.

As a man thinks, so he becomes, and therefore those whose minds are bent on being the same to all achieve that sameness and become one with Brahman.

20. He whose understanding is secure, who is undeluded, who knows Brahman and who rests in Brahman, will neither be glad to get what is pleasant, nor said to get what is unpleasant.

21. He who has detached himself from contacts without, finds bliss in *atman;* having achieved union with Brahman he enjoys eternal bliss.

He who has weaned himself from outward objects to the inner *atman* is fitted for union with Brahman and the highest bliss. To withdraw oneself from contacts without and to bask in the sunshine of union with Brahman are two aspects of the same state, two sides of the same coin.

23. The man who is able even here on earth, ere he is released from the body, to hold out against the flood-tide of lust and wrath…he is a yogi, he is happy.

As a corpse has no likes and dislikes, no sensibility to pleasure and pain, even so he who though alive is dead to these, he truly lives, he is truly happy.

27-28. That ascetic is ever free…who, having shut out the outward sense-contacts, sits with his gaze fixed between the brows, outward and inward breathing in the nostrils made equal; his senses, mind, and reason held in check, rid of longing, fear and wrath; and intent on Freedom.

These *shlokas* refer to some of the yogic practices laid down in the *Yoga-sutras*. A word of caution is necessary regarding these practices. They serve for the yogi the same purpose as athletics and gymnastics do for the *bhogi* (who pursues worldly pleasures). His physical exercises help the latter to keep his senses of enjoyment in full vigour. The yogic practices help the yogi to keep his body in condition and his senses in subjection. Men versed in these practices are rare in these days, and few of these turn them to good account. He who has achieved the preliminary stage on the path of self-discipline, he who has a passion for Freedom, and who having rid himself of the pairs of opposites has conquered fear, would do well to go in for these practices which will surely help him. It is such a disciplined man alone who can, through these practices, render his body a holy temple of God. Purity both of the mind and body is a *sine qua non*, without which these processes are likely, in the first instance, to lead a man astray and then drive him deeper into the slough of delusion. That this has been the result in some cases many know from actual experience. That is why that prince of yogis, Patanjali, gave the first place to *yamas (cardinal vows)* and *niyamas* (casual vows) and held as eligible for yogic practices only those who have gone through the preliminary discipline.

The five cardinal vows are: non-violence, truth, non-stealing, celibacy, non-possession. The five casual vows are: bodily purity, contentment, the study of the scriptures, austerity, and meditation of God.

29. Knowing Me as the Acceptor of sacrifice and austerity, the great Lord of all the worlds, the Friend of all creation, the yogi attains to peace.

This *shloka* may appear to be in conflict with *shlokas* 14 and 15 of this discourse and similar ones in other discourses. It is not really so. Almighty God is Doer and non-Doer, Enjoyer and non-Enjoyer, both. He is indescribable, beyond the power of human speech. Man

somehow strives to have a glimpse of Him and in so doing invests Him with diverse and even contradictory attributes.[1]

DISCOURSE VI

This discourse deals with some of the means for the accomplishment of yoga or the discipline of the mind and its activities.

The Lord said:

1. He who performs all obligatory action, without depending on the fruit thereof, is a sannyasi and a yogi… not the man who neglects the sacrificial fire nor he who neglects action.

Fire here may be taken to mean all possible instruments of action. Fire was needed when sacrifices used to be performed with its help. Assuming that spinning were a means of universal service in this age, a man by neglecting the spinning-wheel would not become a sannyasi.

2. What is called sannyasa, know thou to be, yoga, O Pandava; for none can become a yogi who has not renounced selfish purpose.

3. For the man who seeks to scale the heights of yoga, action is said to be the means; for the same man, when he has scaled those heights, repose is said to be the means.

He who has purged himself of all impurities and who has achieved even-mindedness will easily achieve self-realization. But this does not mean that he who has scaled the heights of yoga will disdain to work for the guidance of the world. On the contrary that work will be to him not only as the breath of his nostrils, but also as natural to him as breathing. He will do so by the sheer force of his will. See V.4

4. When a man is not attached either to the objects of sense or to actions and sheds all selfish purpose, then he is said to have scaled the heights of yoga.

[1] Mahadev Desai explains: "We have had in the discourse a comparison of the jnanayogi or the philosophic mystic and the karmayogi or the active mystic. The shlokas v. 27-29 start a new comparison now…quite a parallel dichotomy as it evidences itself in the life of the devotee. Shloka 27-28 introduce to us the contemplative or meditative mystic…dhyanayogi…to be described in discourses VI, VII and VIII while shloka 29 describes the devotinal mystic, the bhaktiyogi who worships the Supreme in His one or many manifestations to be described in discourses XI-XII. To him God appears or reveals Himself as the Accepter of all sacrifices and the Friend of all creation."

5. By one's self should one raise oneself, and not allow oneself to fall; for *atman* (self) alone is the friend of self, and self alone is self's foe.

6. His Self alone is friend, who has conquered himself by his Self; but to him who has not conquered himself and is thus inimical to himself, even his Self behaves as foe.[1]

14. Tranquil in spirit, free from fear, steadfast in the vow of *brahmacharya*, holding his mind in control, the yogi should sit, with all his thoughts on Me, absorbed in Me.

Brahmacharya (usually translated 'celibacy') means not only sexual continence but observance of all the cardinal vows for the attainment of Brahman.

15. The yogi, who ever thus, with mind controlled, unites himself to *atman*, wins the peace which culminates in *Nirvana*, the peace that is in Me.

29. The man equipped with yoga looks on all with an impartial eye, seeing *atman* in all beings and all beings in *atman*.

30. He who sees Me everywhere and everything in Me, never vanishes from Me nor I from him.

31. The yogi who, anchored in unity, worships Me abiding in all beings, lives and moves in Me, no matter how he live and move.

So long as 'self' subsists, the Supreme Self is absent; when 'self' is extinguished, the Supreme Self is seen everywhere. Also see note on XIII. 23.

46. The yogi is deemed higher than the man of austerities; he is deemed also higher than the man of knowledge; higher is he than the man engrossed in ritual; therefore be though a yogi, O Arjuna!

The man of austerities means the man practising them with an eye to fruit; the man of knowledge does not mean the *jnani* who has realized the truth, but a man of learning.

47. And among all yogis, he who worships Me with faith, his inmost self all rapt in Me, is deemed by Me to be the best yogi.

[1] Mahadev Desai explains: "I have in my translation distinguished 'atman', the higher self, from the lower self, though it is not quite clear whether Gandhiji does so in his trnaslation. Atman is, really speaking, neither friend nor foe, but the lower self makes Him friend or foe, according as it strives to lift itself up to Him or drag itself down from Him. In order that the moral end of perfection may be fulfilled, the self has to look to Him as "the Goal, the Witness, the Refuge, the Friend" (XI. 18); but it often makes Him his enemy as mortal men know to their cost."

DISCOURSE VII

With this discourse begins an exposition of the nature of Reality and the secret of devotion.

The Lord said :

1. Hear, O Partha, how, with thy mind rivetted on Me, by practising yoga and making Me the sold refuge, thou shalt, without doubt, know Me fully.

4. Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Ether, Mind, Reason and Ego…thus eight fold is my *prakriti* divided.

This eightfold *prakriti* is substantially the same as the field described in XIII.5 and the perishable Being in XV. 16.

5. This is My lower aspect; but know thou My other aspect, the higher…which is *jiwa* (the Vital Essence) by which,O Mahabahu, this world is sustained.

6. Know that these two compose the source from which all beings spring; I am the origin and end of the entire universe.

12. Know that all the manifestations of the three *gunas, sattva, rajas, and tamas,* proceed from none but Me; yet I am not in them, they are in Me.

God is not dependent on them, they are dependent on Him. Without Him those various manifestations would be impossible.

13. Befogged by these manifestations of the three *gunas,* the entire world fails to recognize Me, the Imperishable, as transcending them.

14. For this My divine delusive mysetry made up of the three *gunas* is hard to pierce; but those who make Me their sole refuge pierce the veil.

25. Veiled by the delusive mystery created by My unique power, I am not manifest to all; this bewildered world does not recognize Me, birthless and changeless.

Having the power to create this world of sense and yet unaffected by it, He is described as having unique power.

29. Those who endeavour for freedom from age and death by taking refuge in Me, know in full that Brahman, *adhyatma* and all karma.

30. Those who know Me, including *adhibhuta, adhidaiva, adhiyajna,* possessed of even-mindedness, they know Me even at the time of passing away.

The terms in italics are defined in the next discourse the subject of which is indicated in 29-30. The sense is that every nook and cranny of the universe is filled with Brahman, that He is the sole Agent

of all action, and that the man who imbued with this knowledge and faith completely surrenders himself to Him, become one with Him at the time of passing hence. All his desires are extinguished in his vision of Him and he wins his freedom.

DISCOURSE VIII

The nature of the Supreme is further expounded in this discourse. Arjuna said:

1. What is that Brahman? What is *adhyatma?* What karma, O Purushottama? What is called *adhibuta?* And what *adhidaiva?*

2. And who here in this body is *adhiyajna* and how? And how at the time of death art Thou to be known by the self-controlled?

The Lord said:

3. The Supreme, the Imperishable is Brahman; its manifestation is *adhyatma*; the creative process whereby all beings are created is called karma.

4. *Adhibhuta* is My perishable form; *adhidaiva* is the individual self in that form; and O best among the embodied, *adhiyajna* am I in this body, purified by sacrifice.

That is, from the Imperishable Unmanifest down to the perishable atom everything in the universe is the Supreme and an expression of the Supreme. Why then should mortal man arrogate to himself authorship of anything rather than do His bidding and dedicate all action to Him?[1]

[1] Mahadev Desai explains: "Gandhiji has summed up in his brief note the gist of this quatrain for those who will not bother about technical terms. A deeply spiritual friend has obliged me with an interpretation which lights up the apparent abracadabras with a deal of meaning: The shlokas describe the whole process in which the Absolute becomes conditioned and from the conditioned state becomes Absolute again. (1) We have form the Impersonal, Unmanifest, Unconditioned Absolute; (2) It chose to reveal one of Its aspects…that aspect was primordial unmanifest prakriti…here called adhyatma; (3) Prakriti next became active - this disturbance in the equilibrium of its gunas was karma work, action; (4) the next steps in the process were the countless manifestations of matter, with name and form…that is adhibhuta; (5) then the Absolute informed these with its Ego, i.e., became conditioned; that is adhidaiva; (6) but the conditioned had the potentiality to recover its pristine unconditioned state by means of giving of itself a pure sacrifice. The culmination of this self-sacrifice comes with the dissolution of the body and the merging or identification of the conditioned in the Unconditioned.
In short, it is the cycle of sacrifice that is described. The Supreme Being sacrifices Himself in the first instance and ultimately the individual sacrifices himself to be merged in the original Essence. Cf. III 15, which describes the same cycle of sacrifice."

5. And he who, at the last hour remembering Me only, departs leaving the body, enters into Me; of that there is no doubt.

6. Or whatever form a man continually contemplates, that same he remembers in the hour of death, and to that very form he goes, O Kaunteya.

7. Therefore at all times remember Me and fight on; thy mind and reason thus on Me fixed thou shalt surely come to Me.[1]

8. With thought steadied by constant practice, and wandering nowhere, he who meditates on the Supreme Celestial Being, O Partha, goes to Him.

17. Those men indeed know what is Day and what is Night, who know that Brahma's day lasts a thousand *yugas* and that his night too is a thousand *yugas* long.

That is to say, our day and night of a dozen hours each are less than the infinitesimal fraction of a moment in that vast cycle of time. Pleasures pursued during these incalculably small moments are asillusory as a mirage. Rather than waste these brief moments, we should devote them to serving God through service of mankind. On the other hand, our time is such a small drop in the ocean of eternity that if we fail of our object here, viz., self-realization, we need not despair. We should bide our time.

18. At the coming of Day all the manifest spring forth from the Unmanifest, and at the coming of Night they are dissolved into that same Unmanifest.

Knowing this too, man should understand that he has very little power over things. The round of birth and death is ceaseless.

23. Now I will tell thee, Bharatarshabha, the conditions which determine the exemption from return, as also the return, of yogis after they pass away hence.

24. Fire. Light, Day, the Bright Fortnight, the six months of the Northern Solstice…through these departing men knowing Brahman go to Brahman.

25. Smoke, Night, the Dark Fortnight, the six months of the Southern Solstice… therethrough the yogi attains to the lunar light and thence returns.

[1] Mahadev Desai explains: "This shloka should make it abundantly clear that all through in his exhortation to Arjuna to fight, it was not only the actual warfare in front of them that was meant, but the fight…moral and spiritual…that is man's lot on earth. Cf. Jesus' words: 'Whosoever would come after me, let him renounce himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.' It is the taking up one's cross daily, at every moment, that is meant here. See also shloka 14. 'Life is a perpetual striving. There is always a tempest raging in us, and struggle against temptation is a perpetual duty. The Gita says this in several places.' "…Harijan, 8-7-'33

I do not understand the meaning of these two *shlokas.* They do not seem to me to be consistent with the teaching of the *Gita.* The *Gita* teaches that he whose heart is meek with devotion, who is devoted to unattached action and has seen the Truth must win salvation, no matter when he dies. These *shlokas* seem to run counter to this. They may perhaps be stretched to mean broadly that a man of sacrifice, a man of light, a man who has known Brahman finds release from birth if he retains that enlightenment at the time of death, and that on the contrary the man who has none of these attributes goes to the world of the moon…not at all lasting…and returns to birth. The moon, after all, shines with borrowed light!

26. These two paths…bright and dark…are deemed to be the eternal paths of the world; by the one a man goes to return not, by the other he returns again.

The bright one may be taken to mean the path of knowledge and the dark one that of ignorance.

27. The yogi knowing these two paths falls not into delusion, O Partha; therefore, at all times, O Arjuna, remain steadfast in yoga.

'Will not fall into delusion' means that he who knows the two paths and has known the secret of even-mindedness will not take the path of ignorance.

28. Whatever fruit of good deeds is laid down as accruing from (a study of) the Vedas, from sacrifices, austerities, and acts of charity…all that the yogi transcends, on knowing this, and reaches the Supreme and Primal Abode.

He who has achieved even-mindedness by dint of devotion, knowledge and service not only obtains the fruit of all his good actions, but also wins salvation.

DISCOURSE IX

This discourse reveals the glory of devotion.

4. By Me, unmanifest in form this whole world is pervaded; all beings are in Me, I am not in them.

5. And yet those beings are not in Me. That indeed is my unique power as Lord! Sustainer of all beings, I am not in them; My Self brings them into existence.

The sovereign power of God lies in this mystery, this miracle, that all beings are in Him and yet not in Him, He is in them and yet not in them. This is the description of God in the language of mortal

man. Indeed He soothes man by revealing to him all His aspects by using all kinds of paradoxes. All beings are in Him inasmuch as all creation is His; but as He transcends it all as He really is not the author of it all, it may be said with equal truth that the beings are not in Him. He really is in all his true devotees, He is *not*, according to them, in those who deny Him. What is this if not a mystery, a miracle of God?

11. Not knowing My transcendent nature as the sovereign Lord of all beings, fools condemn Me incarnated as man.

For they deny the existence of god and do not recognize the Director in the human body.

20. Followers of the three Vedas, who drink the *soma* juice and are purged of sin, worship Me with sacrifice and pray for going to heaven; they reach the holy world of the gods and enjoy in heaven the divine joys of the gods.

The reference is to the sacrificial ceremonies and rites in vogue in the days of the *Gita*. We cannot definitely say what they were like nor what the *soma* juice exactly was.

21. They enjoy the vast world of heaven, and their merit spent, they enter the world of the mortals; thus those who, following the Vedic law, long for the fruit of their action earn but the round of birth and death.

22. As for those who worship Me, thinking on Me alone and nothing else, ever attached to Me, I bear the burden of getting them what they need.

There are thus three unmistakable marks of a true yogi or *bhakta*…even-mindedness, skill in action, undivided devotion. These three must be completely harmonized in a yogi. Without devotion, there is no even-mindedness, without even-mindedness no devotion, and without skill in action devotion and even-mindedness might well be a pretence.

23. Even those who, devoted to other gods, worship them in full faith, even they, O Kaunteya, worship none but Me, though not according to the rule.

"Not according to the rule" means not knowing Me as the Impersonal and the Absolute.

26. Any offering of leaf, flower, fruit or water, made to Me in devotion by earnest soul, I lovingly accept.

That is to say, it is the Lord in every being whom we serve with devotion who accepts the service.

27. Whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, whatever thou offerest as sacrifice or gift, whatever austerity thou dost perform, O Kaunteya, dedicate all to Me.

28. So doing thou shalt be released from the bondage of action, yielding good and evil fruit; having accomplished both renunciation and performance, thou shalt be released (from birth and death) and come unto Me.

29. I am the same to all beings; with Me there is none disfavoured, none favoured; but those who worship Me with devotion are in Me and I in them.

30. A sinner, howsoever great, if he turns to Me with undivided devotion, must indeed be counted a saint; for he has a settled resolve.

The undivided devotion subdues both his passions and his evil deeds.

31. For soon he becomes righteous and wins everlasting peace; know for a certainty, O Kaunteya, that My *bhakta* never perishes.

DISCOURSE X

For the benefit of His devotees, the Lord gives in this discourse a glimpse of His divine manifestations.

36. Of deceivers, I am the dice-play; of the splendid, the splendour; I am victory, I am resolution, I am the goodness of the good.

The 'dice-play of deceivers' need not alarm one. For the good and evil nature of things is not the matter in question, it is the directing and immanent power of God that is being described. Let the deceivers also know that they are under God's rule and judgement and put away their pride and deceit.

39. Whatever is the seed of every being, O Arjuna, that am I; there is nothing whether moving or fixced, that can be without Me.

40. There is no end to my divine manifestations; what extent of them I have told thee now is only by way of illustration.

41. Whatever is glorious, beautiful and mighty, know thou that all such has issued from a fragment of My splendour.

DISCOURSE XI

In this discourse the Lord reveals to Arjuna's vision what Arjuna has heard with his ear…the Universal Form of the Lord. This discourse is a favourite with the bhaktas. Here there is no argument,

there is pure poetry. Its solemn music[1] *reverberates in one's ears and it is not possible to tire of reading it again and again.*

53. Not by the Vedas, not by penance nor by gifts, nor yet by sacrifice, can any behold Me in the Form that thou has seen.

54. But by single-minded devotion, O Arjuna, I may in this Form be known and seen and truly entered into, O Parantapa!

DISCOURSE XII

Thus we see that vision of God is possible only through single-minded devotion. Contents of devotion must follow as a matter of course. This twelfth discourse should be learnt by heart even if all the discourses are not. It is one of the shortest. The marks of a devotee should be carefully noted.

Arjuna said:

1. Of the devotees who thus worship thee, incessantly attached, and those who worship the Imperishable Unmanifest, which are the better yogis?

The Lord said:

5. The greater is the travail of those whose mind is fixed on the Unmanifest; for it is hard for embodied mortals to gain the Unmanifest…Goal.

Mortal man can only imagine the Unmanifest, the Impersonal, and as his language fails him he often negatively describes It as 'Neti'. 'Neti' (Not That, Not That). And so even iconoclasts are at bottom no better than idol-worshippers. To worship a book, to go to a church, or to pray with one's face in a particular direction…all these are forms of worshipping the Formless in an image or idol. And yet both the idol-breaker and the idol-worshipper cannot lose sight of thefact that there is something which is beyond all form, Unthinkable, Formless, Impersonal, Changeless. The highest goal of the devotee is to become one with the object of his devotion. The *bhakta* extinguishes himself and merges into, becomes, Bhagvan. This state can best be reached by devoting oneself to some form, and so it is said that the short cut to the Unmanifest is really the longest and the most difficult.

[1] Mahadev Desai explains: "The music, of course, of the original! In translation, 'the glory is gone'. For a very free rendering which brings out some at least of the haunting music of the original the reader must go to Sir Edwin Arnold's flowing stanzas."

6. But those who casting all their actions on Me, making Me their all in all, worship Me with the meditation of undivided devotion,

7. Of such, whose thoughts are centred on Me, O Partha, I become ere long the Deliverer from the ocean of this world of death.

12. Better is knowledge than practice, better than knowledge is concentration, better than concentration is renunciation of the fruit of all action, from which directly issues peace.

'Practice' (*abhyasa*) is the practice of the yoga of meditation and control of psychic processes; 'knowledge' (*jnana)* is intellectual effort; 'concentration' (*dhyana*) is devoted worship. If as a result of all this there is no renunciation of the fruit of action, 'practice' is no 'practice', 'knowledge' is no 'knowledge', and 'concentration' is no 'concentration'.

DISCOURSE XIII

This discourse treats of the distinction between the body (not-Self) and atman (the Self).

1. This body, O Kaunteya, is called the Field; he who knows it is called the knower of the Field by those who know.

2. And understand Me to be, O Bharata, the knower of the Field in all the Fields; and the knowledge of the Field and the knower of the Field, I hold, is true knowledge.

3. What that Field is, what its nature, what is modifications, and whence is what, as also who He is, and what His power…hear this briefly from Me.

4. This subject has been sung by seers distinctly and in various ways, in different hymns as also in aphoristic texts about Brahman well reasoned and unequivocal.

5. The great elements, Individuation, Reason, the Unmanifest, the ten senses, and the one (Mind), and the five spheres of the senses;

6. Desire, dislike, pleasure, pain, association, consciousness, cohesion… this, in sum, is what is called the Field with its modifications.

The great elements are Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether, 'Individuation' is the thought of I, or that the body is 'I', the 'Unmanifest' is *prakriti* or *maya*; the ten senses are the five senses of perception…smell, taste, sight, touch and hearing, and the five organs of action, viz., the hands, the feet, the tongue, and the two organs of excretion. The five spheres or objects of the senses are smell, savour,

form, touch and sound. 'Association' is the property of the different organs to co-operate. *Dhriti* is not patience or constancy but cohesion, i.e., the property of all the atoms in the body to hold together; from 'individuation' springs this cohesion. Individuation is inherent in the unmanifest *prakriti.* The undeluded man is he who can cast off this individuation or ego, and having done so the shock of an inevitable thing like death and the pairs of opposites caused by sense-contacts fail to affect him. The Field, subject to all its modifications, has to be abandoned in the end by the entlightended and the unenlightened alike.

11. Settled conviction of the nature of the *atman*, perception of the goal of the knowledge of Truth,…

All this is declared to be knowledge and the reverse of it is ignorance.

12. I will (now) expound to thee that which is to be known and knowing which one enjoys immortality; it is the supreme Brahman which has no beginning, which is called neither Being nor non-Being.

The Supreme can be described neither as Being nor as non-Being. It is beyond definition or description, above all attributes.

15. Without all beings; yet within; immovable yet moving; so subtle that it cannot be perceived; so far and yet so near It is.

He who knows It is within It, close to It,; mobility and immobility, peace and restlessness, we owe to It, for It has motion and yet is motionless.

20. *Prakriti* is described as the cause in the creation of effects from causes; *Purusha* is described as the cause of the experiencing of pleasure and pain.

21. For the *purusha*, residing in *prakriti*, experiences the *gunas* born *of prakriti*; attachment to these *gunas* is the cause of his birth in good or evil wombs.

Prakriti in common parlance is *maya*. *Purusha* is the *jiva*. *Jiva* acting in accordance with his nature experiences the fruit of actions arising out of the three gunas.

22. What is called in this body the Witness, the Assentor, the Sustainer, the Experiencer, the Great Lord and also the Supreme *Atman*, is the Supreme Being.

23. He who thus knows *purusha* and *prakriti* with its *gunas*, is not born again, no matter how he live and move.

Read in the light of discourses II, XI, and XII this *shloka* may not be taken to support any kind of libertinism. It shows the virtue of self-surrender and selfless devotion. All actions bind the self, but if all are dedicated to the Lord they do not bind, rather they release him. He who has thus extinguished the 'self' or the thought of 'I' has been extinguished, there is no sin. This *shloka* shows how to steer clear of all sin.

27. Who sees abiding in all beings the same Parameshvara, imperishable in the perishable, he sees indeed.

28. When he sees the same Ishvara abiding everywhere alike, he does not hurt himself by himself and hence he attains the highest goal.

He who sees the same God everywhere merges in Him and sees naught else; he thus does not yield to passion, does not become his own foe and thus attains Freedom.

29. Who sees that it is *prakriti* that performs all actions and thus (knows) that *atman* performs them not, he sees indeed.

Just as, in the case of a man who is asleep, his 'Self' is not the agent of sleep, but *prakriti*, even so the enlightened man will detach his 'Self' from all activities. To the pure everything is pure. *Prakriti* is not unchaste, it is when arrogant man takes her as wife those of these twain passion is born.

30. When he sees the diversity of beings as founded in unity and the whole expanse issuing thereform, then he attains to Brahman.

To realize that everything rests in Brahman is to attain to the state of Brahman. Then *jiva* becomes Siva.

DISCOURSE XIV

The description of prakriti naturally leads on to that of its constituents, the gunas, which form the subject of this discourse. And that, in turn, leads on to a description of the marks of him who has passed beyond the three gunas. These are practically the same as those of the man of secure understanding (II. 54-72) as also those of the ideal bhakta (XII. 12-20).

19. When the seer perceives no agent other than the *gunas*, and knows Him who is above the *gunas*, he attains to My being.

As soon as a man realizes that he is not the doer, but the *gunas* are the agent, the 'self' vanishes, and he goes through all his actions spontaneously, just to sustain the body. And as the body is meant to

subserve the highest end, all his actions will ever reveal detachment and dispassion. Such a seer can easily have a glimpse of the One who is above the *gunas* and offer his devotion to Him.

20. When the embodied one transcends these three *gunas* which are born of his contact with the body, he is released from the pain of birth, death and age and attains deathlessness.

Arjuna said:

21. What, O Lord, are the marks of him who has transcended the three *gunas*? How does he conduct himself? How does he transcend the three *gunas*?

The Lord said:

22. He, O Pandava, who does not disdain light, activity, and delusion when they come into being, nor desires them when they vanish;

23. He who, seated as one indifferent, is not shaken by the *gunas*, and stays still and moves not, knowing it is *gunas* playing their parts;

24. He who holds pleasure and pain alike, who is sedate, who regards as same earth, stone and gold, who is wise and weighs in equal scale things pleasant and unpleasant, who is even-minded in praise and blame;

25. Who holds alike respect and disrespect, who is the same to friend and foe, who indulges in no undertakings…that man is called *gunatita*.

Shls. 22-25 must be read and considered together. Light, activity and delusion, as we have seen in the foregoing *shlokas*, are the products or indications of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, respectively. The inner meaning of these verses is that he who has transcended the *gunas* will be unaffected by them. A stone does not desire light, nor does it disdain activity or inertness; it is still, without having the will to be so. If someone puts it into motion, it does not fret; if again it is allowed to lie still, it does not feel that inertness or delusion has seized it. The difference between a stone and a *gunatita* is that the latter has full consciousness and with full knowledge he shakes himself free from the bonds that bind an ordinary mortal. He has, as a result of his knowledge, achieved the repose of a stone. Like the stone he is witness, but not the doer, of the activities of the *gunas* or *prakriti*. Of such *jnani* one may say that he is sitting still, unshaken in the knowledge that it is the *gunas* playing their parts. We who are every moment of our lives acting as though we were the doers can only imagine the state, we can hardly experience it. But we can hitch our

waggon to that star and work our way closer and closer towards it by gradually withdrawing the self from our actions. A gunatita has experience of his own condition but he cannot describe it, for he who can describe it ceases to be done. the moment he proceeds to do so, 'self' peeps in. the peace and light and bustle and inertness of our common experience are illusory. The *Gita* itself has made it clear in so many words that the *sattvik* state is the one nearest that of a *gunatita*. Therefore everyone should strive to develop more and more *sattva* in himself, believing that some day he will reach the goal of the state of *gunatita*.

DISCOURSE XV

This discourse deals with the Supreme Form of the Lord, transcending *kshara* (perishable) and *akshara* (imperishable).

The Lord said:

1. With its root above and branches below the *ashvattha* tree, they say, is imperishable; it has Vedic hymns for its leaves; he who knows it knows the Vedas.

Shvah means tomorrow, and *ashvattha* (*na shvopi sthata)* means that which will not last even until tomorrow, i.e., the world of sense which is every moment in a state of flux. But even though it is perpetually changing, as its root is Brahman or the Supreme, it is imperishable. It has for its protection and support the leaves of the Vedic hymns, i.e., dharma. He who knows the world of sense as such and who knows dharma is the real *jnani*, that man has really known the Vedas.

2. Above and below its branches spread, blossoming because of the *gunas*, having for their shoots the sense-objects; deep down in the world of men are ramified its roots, in the shape of the consequences of action.

This is the description of the tree of the world of sense as the unenlightened see it. They fail to discover its Root above in Brahman and so they are always attached to the objects of sense. They water the tree with the three *gunas* and remain bound to karma in the world of men.

3. Its form as such is not here perceived, neither is its end, nor beginning, nor basis. Let man first hew down this deep-rooted *asvattha* with the sure weapon of detachment;

4. Let him pray to win to that haven from which there is no return and seek to find refuge in the Primal Being from who has emanated this ancient world of action.

'Detachment' in *shl.* 3 here means dispassion, aversion from the objects of the senses. Unless man is determined to cut himself off from the temptations of the world of sense he will go deeper into its mire every day. These verses show that one dare not play with the objects of the senses with impunity.

7. A part indeed of Myself which has been the eternal *jiva* in this world of life, attracts the mind and the five senses from their place in *prakriti.*

9. Having settled Himself in the senses…ear, eye, touch, taste, and smell as well as the mind, through them He frequents their objects.

These objects are the natural objects of the senses. The frequenting or enjoyment of these would be tainted if there were the sense of 'I' about it; otherwise it is pure, even as a child's enjoyment of these objects is innocent.

11. Yogis who strive see Him seated in themsleves; the witless ones who have not cleansed themselves see Him not, even though they strive.

This does not conflict with the covenant that God has made even with the sinner in discourse 9. *Akritatman* अकृतातन् who has not cleansed himself) means one who has no devotion in him, who has not made up his mind to purify himself. The most confirmed sinner, if he has humility enough to seek refuge in surrender to God, purifies himself and succeeds in finding Him. Those who do not care to observe the cardinal and the casual vows and expect to find God through bare intellectual exercise are witless, Godless; they will not find Him.

DISCOURSE XVI

This discourse treats of the divine and the devilish heritage.

23. He who forsakes the rule of Shastra and does but the bidding of his selfish desires, gains neither perfection, nor happiness, nor the highest state.

Shastra does not mean the rites and formulae laid down in the so-called Dharmashastra, but the path of self-restraint laid down by the seers and the saints.

24. Therefore let Shastra be thy authority for determining what ought to be done and what ought not to be done; ascertain thou the rule of the Shastra and do thy task here (accordingly).

Shastra here too has the same meaning as in the preceding *shloka*. Let no one be a law unto himself, but take as his authority the law laid down by men who have known and lived religion.

DISCOURSE XVII

On being asked to consider Shastra (conduct of the worthy) as the authority, Arjuna is faced with a difficulty. What is the position of those who may not be able to accept the authority of Shastra but who may act in faith? An answer to the question is attempted in this discourse. Krishna rests content with pointing out the wocks and shoals on the path of one who forsakes the beaconlight of Shastra (conduct of the worthy). In doing so he deals with faith and sacrifice, austerity and charity performed with faith, and their divisions according to the spirit in which they are performed. He also sings the greatness of the mystic syllables AUM TAT SAT…a formula of dedication of all work to God.

23. AUM TAT SAT has been declared to be the threefold name of Brahman and by that name were created of old the *Brahmanas*, the Vedas and sacrifices.

24. Therefore, with AUM ever on their lips, are all the rites of sacrifice, charity and austerity, performed always according to the rule, by *Brahmavadins*.

25. With the utterance of TAT and without the desire for fruit are the several rites of sacrifice, austerity and charity performed by those seeking Freedom.

26. SAT is employed in the sense of 'real' and 'good'; O Partha, SAT is also applied to beautiful deeds.

27. Constancy in sacrifice, austerity and charity is called SAT; and all work for these purposes is also SAT.

The substance of the last four *shlokas* is that every action should be done in a spirit of complete dedication of God. For AUM alone is the only Reality. That only which is dedicated to It counts.

DISCOURSE XVIII

This concluding discourse sums up the teaching of the Gita. It may be said to be summed up in the following: "Abandon all duties and come to Me, the only Refuge": (66). That is true renunciation. But abandonment of all duties does not mean abandonment of actions; it means the abandonment of the desire for fruit. Even the highest act of service must be dedicated to Him, without the desire. That is tyaga (abandonment), that is sannyasa (renunciation).

17. He who is free from all sense of 'I', whose motive is untainted, slays not nor is bound, even though he slay all these worlds.

This *shloka* though seemingly somewhat baffling is not really so. The *Gita* on many occasions presents the ideal to attain which the aspirant has to strive but which may not be possible completely to realize in the world. It is like definitions in geometry. A perfect straight line does not exist, but it is necessary to imagine it in order to prove the various propostions. Even so, it is necessary to hold up ideals of this nature as standards for imitation in matters of conduct. This then would seem to be the meaning of this *shloka*: He who has made ashes of 'self', whose motive is undtainted, may slay the whole world, if he will. But in reality he who has annilated 'self' has annihilated his flesh too, and he whose motive is untainted sees the past, present and future. Such a being can be one and only one…God. He acts and yet is no doer, slays and yet is no slayer. For mortal man the royal road …the conduct of the worthy…is ever before him, viz., *ahimsa*…holding all life sacred.

36. Hear now from Me, O Bharatarshabha, the three kinds of pleasure which is enjoyed only by repeated practice, and which puts an end to pain,

37. Which, in its inception, is as poison, but in the end as nectar, born of the serene realization of the true nature of *atman*…that pleasure is said to be *sattvik*.

47. Better one's own duty, though uninviting, than another's which may be more easily performed; doing duty which accords with one's nature, one incurs no sin.

The central teaching of the *Gita* is detachment…abandonment of the fruit of action. And there would be no room for this abandonment if one were to perfer another's. It is the spirit in which duty is done that matters, and its unattached performance is its own reward.

68. He who will propound this supreme mystery to My devotees, shall, by that act of highest devotion to Me, surely come to Me.

69. Nor among men is there any who renders dearer service to Me than he; nor shall there be on earth any more beloved by Me than he.

It is only he who has himself gained the knowledge and lived it in his life that can declare it to others. These two *shlokas* cannot possibly have any reference to him who, no matter how he conducts himself, can give a flawless reading and interpretation of the *Gita* while conducting himself anyhow.

The Gita According to Gandhi

155. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

KAUSANI,
June 28, 1929

CHI. MAHADEV

Yesterday I completed my work on the *Gita* and experienced a profound delight. I hope I have carefully gone through everything. I have put in as much as I could digest from Kaka's notes. I have finished the preface.

I see from your letter that you will reach the Ashram about the same time as I.

Padam Singh's [death][1] was a greater shock than Rasik's[2] . It was not the shock of death but of my own dimness. But I deliberately omitted to observe a fast. If death is something that should be welcomed, why observe a fast on its account? On the occasion of this terrible death also, having again reasoned in the same way, I had my evening meal, although the time for it had almost passed. I had eaten in the morning. After this the death occurred. The day before his death Padam Singh had talked to me about his death with a quiet mind, saying, "If I do not survive, bless my son". I told him I would take him to the Ashram, and if he wished it I would make arrangements for him at his own house. He replied, "I do not ask for this, it is not necessary. What I need is your blessing." I reassured him. After his death Mohan Joshi enquired after his relatives. Govind Vallabh Pant had initiated a collection. But the relatives refused to accept so much as a cowrie. "We want the Mahatma's blessings, nothing more." There is here as much heroism as grief. This whole family seems to be brave; or may be all the villagers in this province are like this. They sell milk. Everyone has his own little piece of land. The people are poor but not helpless; they are generous [though] penniless. The hill people daily visit this forest which looks uninhabited, and leave behind something [for us]. Now I am doing nothing with the cheque except returning it to you. If the person who gave it wishes to have it back give it to him and if he does not send it to the Ashram, we shall utilize the amount for the Prem Vidyalaya

[1] *Vide* "A aTragedy", 27-6-1929

[2] Son of Harilal Gandhi, Gandhiji's eldest son; *vide* "Aa boy of Much Promise", 21-2-1929 & "Sunset at Morning", 24-2-1929

here. Please let me have the reply to this at the Ashram itself. This will be posted tomorrow. You could get it on Tuesday when I leave this place. On the 5th in Delhi the whole day will be taken up by the Working Committee. On the 5th evening I start for the Ashram.

It is most important that Vallabhbhai does not leave Simla in a hurry. The article about Bordoli ought to be seen, although it has been despatched. It is good that you have thought of a pilgrimage to Kotdal. Reaching this spot is also a good thing. Tell Stokes I often remember him. I wish the complaint of piles is cured for good. How is it you never mention anything about Vithalbhai's health?

I got the letter about Gregg's marriage only this week, though I had the news earlier from Andrews's letter.

Panditji had suggested a medicine to Sir T. Vijayaraghavachari. I had asked it to be sent from the Ashram. Did he get it or not? And did he get the letter I asked Pyarelal to write telling how it is to be administered?

I shall go through what you have written about Dashkroi. I shall write what I can. I had believed that the postal department in Simla would be wide awake and took it for granted that the Speaker's quarters at any rate would be known to all the postal employees.

While returning from Bageshwar I was drenched in the rain for two hours; that again while sitting in a *doli*. I had no strength to walk. With wet clothes we had to drive up to the next stop and climb another three thousand feet. As a result I had fever for two days. I was expecting a temperature today but it is normal. Including what I had yesterday, I have so far taken six grains of quinine. My experiment in diet continues. It has not failed totally. I cannot say it has been successful. I have no more doubt that such food can be digested. I have yet to see to what extent it is superior to cooked food. You may not worry about this. That I derive the deepest joy from this experiment should be enought for all friends.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not read this again.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11454

156. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

KAUSANI,
June 28, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I could finish the *Gita* work earlier than I had expected…that is, last night. I have, therefore, time to write.

You quite misunderstood my statement about the *Gita*. Now I shall have to hang my head in shame after I return to the Ashram, for I have not learnt a single verse by heart while here. Nor was it my intention to do so. I assumed that you knew that my translation of the *Gita* had not been revised. In any case, this must have been clear from the next letter.

Kusum's thinking that you would leave the Ashram in my absence indicates that she has judged you at less than your worth. I wonder what she must have seen in your life to form such an estimate. Never even in a dream has it occurred to me that you would for a moment leave the Ashram during my absence or without consulting me, and for a selfish end.

You should certainly pay more attention to all your children. Both of you should watch them more carefully and see that they come round. I can understand Ramabehn's strong desire to go somewhere outside the Ashram. It should be satisfied. It would even be better if you can send her away soon.

Tell Surendra that Giriraj still cannot take up the work of the tannery. It is Surendra's work to draft its report. If he does not or cannot attend to it, then Valji should do it. In any case, the burden should not fall on you.

So after all Bhansali has started a fast. I have not seen Kishorelal's speech. Show it to me when I arrive there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5423

157. LETTER TO JETHALAL JOSHI

KAUSANI,
June 28, 1929

BHAI JETHALAL,

I have your postcard. I am not competent to reduce the subscription in the form of hand-spun yarn. A thousand a month ought to be an easy job for you. As far as I remember, it would fulfil [the provision of] the Goseva Sangha's constitution[1] if you continue your efforts in regard to milk.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1348

158. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

KAUSANI,
June 28, 1929

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I have your letter. I could write this letter because I have finished the work that I had resolved to do.

Such deserving women as Bhaktibehn can certainly become volunteers. Regarding Durbarsaheb, real permission can be had from Vallabhbhai. The satyagraha in connection with Pandit Sunderlal's book cannot be offered in a native State. The prize for the spinning-wheel could not be announced on account of my absence. The amendments from Devchandbhai should go to the Committee which was appointed in connection with this announcement since they relate to fundamentals. ...[2] I understand about Manilal. What you say is correct.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9297. Courtesy: Shardabehn Shah

[1] *Vide* "Goseva Sangha", 6-6-1929

[2] A few incomplete sentences which yield no meaning are omitted here.

159. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM

KAUSANI,
June 28, 1929

BHAISHRI PURUSHOTTAM,

I have your letter. If your wife embroiders designs on khadi with foreign thread the best thing to do is to stop her from doing so. It would not be proper to tempt other to do the same by publishing this reply in the *Navajivan*.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/9

160. LETTER TO M. ANNAPURNIAH

KAUSANI,
June 29, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[1] Although I don't agree with Sri Rama Raju's violent methods, his indomitable courage, sacrifice, single-mindedness, nobility of character and simple, hardy life are a lesson to us all.

EDITOR
'CONGRESS'
SITANAGARAM

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/61

[1] For details, *vide* "An Andhra Hero",18-7-1929

161. TELEGRAM TO NAGESHWARA RAO[1]

[On or after *June 29, 1929*]

NAGESHWARARAO

AMRUTANJAN

MADRAS

CAN YOU GUARANTEE REPAYMENT SEVEN THOUSAND WITHIN SIX MONTHS?

REPLY KASHIPUR.

GANDHI

Froma microfilm: S.N. 15410

162. A QUANDARY

A young man has written a long letter about the quandary facing him. Following is its summary:

> I am 24. I passed the matriculation in 1923. Since then I have been in continuous employment. I have been putting on pure khadi since 1921. I was married in 1924. We are four brothers and four sisters. My mother is alive.
>
> I came to understand my country and swadeshi since 1920-21. And thereafter I have worn khadi, regarding that as my duty. But that much does not satisfy me. I very much feel inclined to join the fight for swaraj. But because of the immaturity of my thought and of vacillation between my duty to my parents and that to my country, I have had to mark time.
>
> Our financial condition is not sound; on the contrary we are in debt. But I feel that it is not easy to pay off the debts while having to meet expenses demanded by society.
>
> The reason why I say all this to you is that since 1921, I was feeling that when my father's economic condition permitted him to meet his daily wants comfortably and he had paid off his debts, I would join the fight for swaraj and be used up.
>
> The plight to which the families in Orissa, Madras and other places have been reduced by the foreign Government's

[1] In reply to a telegram dated June 28 from Nageshwara Rao and Garsan, Madras, recieved at Almora on June 29 which read: "Request early attention telegram and letter. Matters critical."

policy of loot and plunder will also be ours and that of every family if that policy continues; because every year our country continues to waste its valuable manpower in addition to losing crores of rupees. Hence in the present condition of the country, every man must, if for no other reason, at any rate for the benefit of his family, join in the fight for swaraj.

When I place these thoughts before my parents and seek their approval, they are deeply hurt and feel that I am not discharging my debt to them. And they argue that one does not burn down one's house to go on a pilgrimage, that service to one's family comes before service to country, that I should help the family with money and should continue to support the old evil practices of society, staying within their sight.

I have great regard for my family. They are willing to see me happy in every way. But they do not like my idea and as a consequence our relations are strained.

It is about eight days since I commenced spinning and I shall spin all my life because I have unshakable faith in the spinning-wheel. For the last seven years or so, there has been an inward conflict in me; however, I have been able to maintain reasonable self-control.

It is now two years since my wife stopped buying foreign cloth; now she purchases pure khadi.

Other people in my house buy and wear foreign clothes. For the last fifteen days, they have been promising to wear khadi if I stay on, but perhaps that may be only in order to stop me from leaving.

I am ready to offer any sacrifice for the sake of the country.

Such a quandary faces many young men. In this transitional stage, there will certainly appear to be a contradiction between service to family and service to country. Parents will desire one thing, youths understanding the country's plight will desire another thing. At such a juncture, there cannot be the same way out in every case and it is not for an outsider to indicate it. The way prompted by one's inner voice alone is the true way out. Prahlad did not disobey his father at another's instance. Nor does everyone hear the inner voice. Only he hears it whose heart has been purified by self-control. What inner

voice can a drunkard ever have? Would an adulterer commit adultery if he acted in accordance with his inner voice?

One should not hastily go against one's father's command or wish. He who has brought us up has the right to command us, we have certain duties towards him. But we see that the parents of today act selfishly. Moreover, some of them do not at all know their duty to their country; some of them are faint of heart; some are blind to their duty. It may be questioned how far it is one's duty to carry out the commands of such parents.

Considering all this, it is difficult to offer definite advice in a case like this. But a number of general rules can be suggested.

1. Whenever parents give a piece of advice out of selfishness,it can be rejected courteously.

2. When parents ask to be served and if this cannot be done in any other way, it is the son's duty to serve them.

3. But just as a son who has turned a sannyasi cannot run to the rescue of this parents even when they are in difficulty, so too the son who has dedicated his all to serving the country cannot abandon the service of his country.

4. When parents expect more from their son than is required to meet their true needs, the son has a right to refuse their demand. As for example, it is the son's duty not to satisfy the wishes of his parents when they desire to incur undue expenditure on a wedding.

5. If the parents want their son to commit adharma, it is never a duty to do it.

6. There is no contradiction between pure service to country and pure service to family. This contradiction can occur only between something supposed to be service to family and something supposed to be service to country.

It is hardly necessary to add to these rules or to frame subtler rules. Where constant thought is being given to what duty is, one automatically knows what one's duty is in a given situation. Every reader should regard the above rules merely as pointers. Where there is viveka and vichara,[1] it is easy to know one's duty.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-6-1929

[1] 1 Discrimination and thoughtfulness

163. SMALLPOX AND CHOLERA

A reader writes:[1]

As long as we are ignorant and we malign women, the reign of superstition will continue. Superstition is there even in educated Europe and America. So long as man has the craving to live, etc., so long will superstition continue in greater or lesser degree. But as we limit our cravings, so will superstition be on the decline.

But where a superstition can be recognized clearly, an attempt should be made to remove it. Many people waste money in getting evil spirits exorcized during sickness and die prematurely. In the case of a disease like smallpox, where generally no medicine is administered, superstition establishes a firmer sway. Even the gooddess of smallpox gets a fair share of it. The religious instinct is not at the bottom of this, but the craving to live. I am firmly convinced that vows, etc., which are made merely to cure smallpox are a superstition and deserve to be discarded.

It has been proved that smallpox mostly results from insanitation. In fact one whose blood has lost its vitality catches the infection. The disease is not as devastating as is believed. I have found no ground to modify what I have written in my book on health. It is my experience in many cases that the disease is cured by proper care. The patient ought to be provided enough air and light. His clothes must be changed daily. It is the experience of many doctors that hydropathy is beneficial. Nowadays even chromo-therapy is pressed into service. But the object here is not to suggest remedies for smallpox, but to deprecate prevailing superstitions and to get them discarded as well as to lessen the fear of the disease. Treatment must be sought at the hands of some knowledgeable and benevolent vaidya or doctor or one should acquire knowledge of hydropathy, etc., and master the treatment oneself.

Vaccination as a preventive remedy against smallpox is well known and, in general, doctors set great store by it. In many countries, it has even been made compulsory. I myself do not beleive in it. So

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that there was an epidemic of smallpox and cholera and a number of superstitions were prevalent about these maladies. He had also asked whether Gandhiji had modified the views given in his book on health.

far as prevention of smallpox is concerned, it does help a little. Even if it does prevent its onset, it produces a number of other complications. My opposition to it is more on religious grounds. In order to produce the smallpox vaccine, innumerable animals are tortured and it passes my understanding how vegetarians can ever take such vaccine. But those who do not get themselves vaccinated ought to know and follow the rules of sanitation; they should not blindly imitate a person like me in this matter. Social laws cannot be disregarded thoughtlessly. And if one is compelled to break them,one must put up even with the inconvenience arising from such breach. No one has the right to endanger society through his obstinacy. Hence, when smallpox spreads in a community which believes in vaccination, those who do not believe in it should, in addition to observing the rules of sanitation, segregate themseleves voluntarily from that society.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-6-1929

164. ANGUISH OF "A HINDU YOUTH"

"A Hindu Youth" writes as follows:[1]

Being a coward, he holds back his name. It is a good rule not to take cognizance of anonymous letters. This youth had no reason to feel ashamed to communicate to me his name. There was no fear at all of his name being published without his wish. But the poet's assertion that "cowards die many times before their death" is true indeed. Fewer people die of a disease itself than from fear of it. People who suffer from the fear of a certain thing, do not suffer so much when the thing itself comes to pass. There is nothing in this letter to be ashamed of. If there is shame at all, it is in doing an evil thing, not in exposing what has been done. On account of our not understanding this golden principle, we commit grave sins and turn hypocrites. Hence people like "A Hindu Youth" must get over fear.

I publish at times letters like the one under reference because, despite being anonymous, they contain matter which applies to many

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that he had to support a large family on a moderate income. There was a dearth of marriageable girls in his sub-caste, and one had to pay as much as Rs. 5,000 for getting a bride and so he had little hope of marrying. In his frustration, all manner of thoughts assailed his mind. He had pleaded for Gandhiji's advice.

people. This letter is of that sort. The condition of many Hindu youths is similar to this young man's. The narrowness of caste Hindu society's slavery to convention today are at the root of it. Instead of tradition following religion, religion is playing second fiddle to tradition. Conduct contrary to the caste is regarded as irreligious. There may be many vices current in the caste system, but, since it is an all-purifying Ganga, it has come to be regarded as faultless and as having the power to change vice into virtue. Because the practice of putting on the vertical mark of one's sect[1] on one's forehead has been handed down through generations,it is regarded as part of religion and if one does not put it on because it has become a symbol of hypocrisy or for some such strong reason, he is regarded as having forsaken his religion. Thus by surrendering to convention, we became emasculated and finally even lost our country. The slavery born in one field proved all-pervasive.

It has become the duty of forward-looking youths to destroy this tradition of castes. Nevertheless, a number of youths, instead of doing theirduty, out of weakness break the restraints imposed by castes mentally and in secret action wherever opportunity offers. And yet they keep up the external pretence of observing them. The Shastras call this dishonest conduct.

Hence in predicaments like the one facing "A Hindu Youth", one has to show courage and hew down the tree of convention. The young man has entertained perverse thoughts because of his firm belief that one may not break the imaginary or artificial restraint imposed by caste. He wants to marry in order to satisfy his sexual urge. If he has money,he is ready to buy a bride and then he would pretend that the action fell out of the category of sexual indulgence because it could be called a marriage. If such adultery approved by custom or some other pretence is not possible, he is tempted to commit open adultery even. And if he holds himself in check, it is because he is afraid of appearing bad in the eyes of people. If, however, all these things fail him, he also entertains ultimately the thought of giving up his religion. This is the limit of cowardice. He who has even a little understanding of religion, can have no excuse whatever to give up this religion. A religion cannot be put on and put off like a garment. It is more precious than even the body. A body is born and it dies. Religion has taught us clearly that it is conncted with

[1] The Vaishnava sect

the soul and cannot be changed. The rot that has set in in religion can be got rid of, but religion cannot be given up. How can one give up a religion in which the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Puranas were composed, in which myriads of men performed lifelong tapascharya, a religion whose adherents' bones have added lustre to the Himalayas and blood has made the trees and flowers of the Himalayas blossom forth? It is the reformers alone who have maintained this religion in a state of splendour by cutting down the dead wood of tradition. In opposing tradition men like the Buddha, Mahavir, Shankar, Ramanuja, Kabir, Nanak, Chaitanya, Rammohan Roy, Ramakrishna, Dayananda, Vivekananda and others have pointed out the way to us. These reformers, far from abandoning their religion, kept it fragrant and preserved it by breaking down bad traditions.

They were great; therefore they became famous as reformers. We may not be known as reformers, but it is our duty within our limited field to save our religion by pulling down irreligion wherever the latter holds sway by usurping the place of religion.

"A Hindu Youth" should now understand:

1. The married state is not meant for the purpose of sexual indulgence. It is for preserving the sacred love between man and woman and also for progeny. Moreover, when both are possessed of passion, religion permits its satisfaction while observing certain limits. People have held that the less such liberty is taken, the better it is. Sexual union outside marriage or even union with one's married partner merely for the satisfaction of one's sexual urge is adultery.

2. Adopting this attitude towards marriage, the "Youth" should seek a wife.

3. He should make a vow not to offer even a cowrie or pice by way of bribe while making that quest.

4. He should apply to his caste to secure such a girl for him.

5. If he doe not secure one, having notified his caste, he should look for a girl belonging to the varna of his caste and should have confidence that if he has worth in him, he will get a suitable girl. If he is not worthy, he should try to become so. In doing this, his passion will abate and it will be easy for him to be patient in obtaining a girl.

6. If he does not get a girl of the same varna since the varna system has now become weak and exists in name only, he should secure a girl from any other varna.

7. If he cannot get a maiden, he should marry a widow.

8. If he has the courage to effect reformin his caste, then even if he can get a girl from his own caste, he should, in order to break the practice of marrying from the circle of sub-castes, insist on finding a girl of the same varna but from another caste.

9. If he has the courage to introduce a reform in regard to widow-remarriage and if he has the requisite fitness, he should insist on marrying no one but a widow belonging to the same or any other varna.

10. Ultimately, he should firmly resolve that, if he does not get a girl despite observing the nine rules above and even disregarding caste restrictions,he will not forsake his dharma and will not indulge in adultery.

It is improbable that observing the nine conditions, he will not get a girl from the twenty-two crores of Hindus. But even if the improbable happens, every man must have the courage and strength not to forsake dharma or to fall into sins like adultery. He who does not have this, will not be regarded as a man.

While taking the nine types of liberties, calamities like boycott by the community, parents' displeasure, loss of an inheritance, etc., are likely to befall one. This article is not meant for one who does not have the grit to bear such hardships.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-6-1929

165. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

June 30, 1929

CHI MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have your letters. I am at the moment sitting in a secluded spot in front of the peaks of the Himalayan ranges covered with snow. I spend all my time in the verandah. Here I finished revising my translation of the Gita. It will now be published if my friends so desire. If it is not printed, I shall send you a copy or you will see it if you come here in the mean time.

Has the name Sita now stuck to your heart? If not, it can be given up. If it is, it would not pain me at all. The right to give a name must belong to you. My wish is that you would ask for suggestions

from elders but do what you yourselves decide. It would be a different matter if you were children. I have opened this subject because Nanabhai says the name Sita hurts Sushila. There is no reason to be displeased. Since I do not insist on this why should she be unhappy about it.

Now about the alliance with a Marwari. I do not remember whether I had told Manilal about it, but before I received the offer of Sushila, it was my plan to form alliance with an educated Bengali girl. God may have joined you, because who knows whether with the Bengali girl, you could have merged as completely as you two now have. However, it was my intention even before I betrothed Ramdas to go out of Gujarat. It is essential that we do this. Of course, I wished to limit myself to the Vaishya community. The unnatural restrictions that now prevail, have done and are still doing much harm. The alliance that I have just concluded, I expect to be as successful as yours. Here again, the main role has been Jamnalalji's. He has found a groom who is one of his distant relatives. He is modest and educated. He was introduced to Rukhi and the alliance is formed as she and Santok were willing. This too is a way of bringing about India's unity. Now do you understand, can you swallow it?

Sushila should not be impatient to come here. I can quite understand her wish to see her family. But if it is found that she must stay on for the sake of the work there, it is her duty to stay on. This is my advice. But do only that which both of you think right.

Yes, if the community does not want Indian Opinion and it involved a loss, it should be closed down, however necessary it may be. But it must be proved that the community doesnot want it and that the losses are not owing to our slackness or remissness. Our writings should not be immature. Sastriji particularly insists that the journal should never be closed down. Whateve you would do, should be done with deliberation, after considering the advice of your friends and having made all the efforts needed to keep going.

I have with me Devdas, Prabhudas, Purushottam, Kusumbehn senior, Jamnabehn, Khurshedbehn and Pyarelal. Ba is of course there. Thus, this time I have a large company. And I quite forget Brijkisan.

Now about vaccination. I do not believe in cow-pox. It is a dirty practice. The cow's teats are made to fester till they stink and a vaccine is extracted from it. This is inoculated into our system. This is tantamount to partaking of beef. This question had aristen in the

South African jail; it also confronted us in the jails here. But in the end, no one let me off. Nor does it always prove beneficial. The opponents of vaccination are growing in number.

But it would be all right if you got yourself vaccinated. What I have stated above are my personal views. Generally, people do get themselves vaccinated. Do what you think right after both of you go deep into this matter, study it with interest and form an independent opinion about it.

I hope you read in Navajivan and *Young India* about my experiment with uncooked grain.[1] It still continues fairly well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4756

166. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

KAUSANI,
June 30, 1929

BHAISHRI NANABHAI,

Please convey my repeated congratulations to mother and daughter, Vijayalakshmi and Tara, for having suppressed the letter written by you under the pretext of revising it. I had occasion to meet Malavi[ya]ji and I am pleased with the way it turned out. Khadi is decidedly progressing but, I am afraid, it is at a snail's pace.

It appears advisable to let Sushila stay there if she does not want to come over leaving Manilal behind. We should be content that the two have become united like milk and sugar and live happily. It is not at all desirable that Manial should rush here deserting his duty. I think it good for the youngsters that we give up our longing to see them when they have gone to other lands. It would be a different matter if they return at their own convenience and when they wish to.

Even before your letter came, I had known that Tara went hawking khadi regularly.

I had written to both of them to have any other name of their choice if they did not like the name Sita. The right to name one's

[1] *Vide* "Food Faddists", 13-6-1929 & "Raw V. Coaoked Food", 16-6-1929

children must belong to the parents; elders may offer suggetions, if asked for.

I have also written to them explaining Rukhi's betrothal to a Marwari. I think we ought to take such liberties within limits. I might not have told you that, before I had the offer of Sushila from you, I had almost decided to betroth Manilal to an eligible Bengali girl. For many years, I have felt that we ought to come out of Gujarat in this way.

Prabhudas will accompany me to the Ashram. Kakasaheb has asked for him for the Vidyapith. Prabhudas is his favourite pupil.

We reach Delhi on the 5th and the Ashram on the 6th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7518

167. LETTER TO G.D. BIRLA

Unrevised *June 30, 1929*

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your three letters are before me. I would have no right to be in this lovely, secluded spot surrounded by snow-clad mountains, if I had no special work to do here. The special work was revision of the translation of the Gita, which had remained unfinished at Wardha. I could complete it only in seclusion. I just sat down here for the purpose. I have postponed all other work that could be postponed till I could finish this job. That is the reason why I have not replied to you earlier. The work on the Gita is now over.

Now regarding Keshu. His father's hope and mine has been that ultimately Keshu would choose the Ashram life and dedicate himself to khadi work. But I do not wish to put any pressure on him. And now he is in your hands. You should take from him such work as he may be willing to do and as may be for his good. You should look upon him as your own son and train him.

You have trained numerous young men and I have been informed and I believe that many enterprises of the Birla family were started by you.

What shall I say about khadi when there is the opportunity of using your talent for the sale of khadi? The khadi stock is all sold out.

Still, it is bound to accumulate again. I shall then use your ability. At present we shall let the business run itself. I hope the khadi being "unasked for" does not mean I sent it without permission? As for production, it is true that here I cannot make much use of your assistance. We are making what efforts we can.

What happened about the dairy?

I have not fasted. Since I began to look upon death as my great friend I have given up fasting on account of death. I did not fast on the death of Maganlal and Rasik. Death now has ceased to hurt or, say, it hurts very little.

The experiment with uncooked food is continuing.

The meaning of [faddist][1] can be understood as 'dhuni' in Gujarati. I am unfamiliar with the word 'sanaki'[2]. 'Chakram' of course will not do. These days I try to write something every week for Hindi Navajivan. If you don't happen to read it now, begin to do so and give me any suggestions that you deem fit about the subject-matter and language.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I shall reach Delhi on July 5 and the Ashram on 6th.

From Hindi: C. W. 6174. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

168. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

[About middle of *1929*][3]

CHI. SUSHILA,

This time your letter has come early, so it should satisfy me somewhat. It contains an adequate account. I am very happy to learn that your health is improving. It seems you are also giving good training to Sita[4]. You are very wise and therefore you must be behaving properly with Pragji[5] and Parvati[6]. It is possible to win over

[1] Illegible in the original; *Vide* "Letter to Chhaaganlal Joshi", 24-6-1929

[2] Eccentric

[3] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 26-4-1929 and "Letter to Manilal and Sushila aGandhi", 19-5-1929

[4] Sita Gandhi, addressee's daughter

[5] Pragji K. Desai

[6] Parvati Desai, wife of Pragji Desai

everyone by developing generosity and love. I would like you to give a more detailed description of Phoenix. How many persons are living there and who are they? How many copies are you printing and what is the result? What are the leafy vegetables growing there? Has the approach road to the station been improved? Are all the Phoenix houses road to the station been improved? Are all the Phoenix houses occupied? Is the library being used? What is Sita's weight? What is your weight? At what time do you all get up? Is the recitation of the*Gita* going on? You know chapter XII by heart, don't you? Or is it that having learnt it for the sake of getting married, both of you have forgotten it? As you were born in a religious family, probably you already know chapter XII by heart, did you not? What did you see in Cape Town? Did you see the girl whom for a while. . .[1] was ready to marry? Is she married? There are innumerable such questions which you can guess and make your letter interesting by replying to.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4804; also C.W. 216

169. LETTER TO G. G. EARLY

KAUSANI,
July 1, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter.

I like the Englishmen for their grit.

I like the Mussalmans for their generosity.

Yours,

REV. G. G. EARLY (LUSSELTY PET)

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/62

[1] The allusion is not clear in the source.

170. LETTER TO M. P. SRINIVASAN

KAUSANI,
July 1, 1929

MY DEAR SRINIVASAN,

Your letter. I think a bridegroom has a perfect right to say what the bride shall wear as the bride has regarding the bridegroom. They are not yet husband and wife. Therefore there is no question of pressure. Every young man has a right to say what qualities his future partner shall have. So has every young girl.

Pomp and paraphernalia are a curse.

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/63

171. LETTER TO S. R. NARAYAN RAJU

KAUSANI,
July 1, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

Truth means truth in thought, word and deed. When I say I would sacrifice the country for truth it means that the country cannot be served except through truth. In other words no one can be harmed by one pursuing truth.

Yours,

S. R. NARAYAN RAJU
RAJAPALAYAM

From a copy : Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/64

172. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

KAUSANI,
July 1, 1929

MY DEAR HENRY,

This is the last day of my week's retirement to a lovely spot in the Himalayas in front of the snowy range. I have your letter before

me. I swear by adult education and many other things even as you and Millie[1] do. But may one leave *swadharma* even for a better dharma. The irons I have in the fire are more than enough for me. But through the Vidyapith we are floating adult education also. And I cannot give it the attention I would if I was free. If you have ideas and leisure write a considered, instructive, not critical, article showing the way and I shall publish it in *Young India*.

My love to you all. Whether I write to you or not, you are ever in my thoughts and conversations.

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's S.N. 32577/66

173. LETTER TO HELENE HAUSSDING

KAUSANI,
July 1, 1929

MY DEAR SPARROW,

"O ye of little faith!", I am inclined to say on reading your letter. You made no allowance for a man who is on the wheel. Letters are bridges of love no doubt but no bridge is needed if we live on the even plateau.

You are wrong in thinking that I am disappointed. Loneliness is not bad but I cannot say I feel lonely. That you feel my surroundings to be alien to you and not me betrays something wrong. Find it out. When we quarrel with our surroundings the wrong is in us, not in them. I trust you receive my general weekly letter.

Love.

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/67

[1] Millie Graham Polak, addressee's wife

174. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

KAUSANI (HIMALAYAS),
July 1, 1929

BHAI KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter.

Involuntary discharge is no cause for alarm. Water-treatment, exercise, pure air, simple wholesome diet and reciting Ramanama will stop it.

Discontinue the milk at mealtime if you find it makes your diet heavy.

Spices should be completely avoided. Drink water if thirsty and eat only when hungry. You must walk for at least two hours every day, preferably before mealtime. It is better to avoid eating at night. My book on health would be a useful guide. Give up oil. Take ghee sparingly.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4260

175. LETTER TO LILAVATI

July 1, 1929

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. I have shown it to Jamnabehn. She will, moreover, go there in a few days. You should keep in touch with her. And it is a very good thing that you see Perinbehn regularly and help her in her work. As for the Ashram rules, they can be observed wherever one may be. Passions do not arise if one does not sit idle for a single moment, and constantly engages body and mind in good deeds and good thoughts.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9315

176. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

July 1, 1929

BHAISHRI VITHALDAS,

Herewith I send you an extract from Krishnadas's letter telling what he has written about you. My purpose in sending this is that you should compose a booklet on the science of selling khadi as Maganlal wrote one about weaving.

I had your letter about a memorial to Maganlal. I have not stopped thinking about it but one after another, things kept coming up and there- fore I am silent about it. I do not wish to go begging from door to door for this collection.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9768

177. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Silence Day [*July 1, 1929*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I got your letters. You will probably get this on Thursday. I shall arrive there on Saturday evening. Can there be anything, then, to write about?

Today, too, the snowy Nandadevi and other smaller peaks are shining brilliantly in sunlight in front of me. I wish to invite you all to come and see this. Borrow Vinoba's imagination for a moment and share my joy from there.

Don't think all the time of your being weak. 'I am atman; the atman can never be weak; I will never be weak.' Resolve thus in your mind. Anyone who constantly thinks of his illness, never leaves his sick-bed. Keep yourself ready to go on your leave.

What did you do about Galiara's money which is to be spent in the neighbourhood of Kathor? Include this matter in your notes.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] As in the aove

[PS.]

Surendra will have become quite a familiar face before I arrive there. I do not write other letters; it is time for the post.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 121

178. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

July 1, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter after I had dispatched today's post. I do not remember anything about Anjani. I shall be glad if you go there and to other places so that, at least while you are there, you may feel a little lighter. You should certainly go out occasionally.

The sum of Rs.2,000 received from Galiara may be handed over to Kaka. He has decided to spend the amount for education through the Vidyapith. He was saying something about adding to this the money given by Mahadev and a few other sums. I have forgotten the details.

I did not know that Subbiah owed some money to the Ashram. You should certainly deduct something from his pay against that sum. Write to him immediately and ask him if he agrees.

Whenever there are many letters enclosed in one envelope, you should make it a rule to secure the envelope with a string. The string, moreover, should be tied fast. Instead of using an envelope, it would be easier and cheaper, when there are many letters to be despatched, to wrap them in a blank sheet of paper or a newspaper sheet and paste a blank slip on the letter. It is not obligatory to put the letters in an envelope. All that is necessary is that, if the packet containing the letters is sealed from all sides, stamps of the value required by the weight of the letters should be pasted on it. I will immediately implement this suggestion which I am making to you.

The idea had occured to me a long time ago, but I did not carry it out so far.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5424

179. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

[After *July 1, 1929*][1]

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I read the current Congress Bulletin. I think that the reproduction of that statement was out of place in an official publication which is designed merely to record Congress activities. Is it not like a government gazette? On merits too, I understand that it was prepared by their counsel. It is not the outpouring of earnest souls as you and I thought it was.

Nor did I like your advocacy and approval of the fast[2] they are undergoing. In my opinion, it is an irrelevant performance and in so far as it may be relevant, it is like using Nasmyth hammer to crush a fly. However, this if for you to ponder over.

I would like you to come to a decision soon regarding the Presidentship. Why this hesitation? I thought at Almora it was agreed that you would wear the crown. On this, read the enclosed and hand it on to Father.

I hope Kamala is well.

Yours,

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

180. THE KELLOGG PACT

In *Young India* of March 21st was printed an appeal issued at the recent Conference of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom in which occurs the following passage:

"The pact for the 'renunciation of war' has been signed by a large number of States. The logical conclusion of this renunciation can only be disarmament. And it is the only way to avoid fresh wars." It is possible that some of the readers of *Young India* are not fully conversant with the

[1] From the reference to the statement given in court by Bhagat Singh and Dutta in the Assembly Bomb case, which was published in the Congress Bulletin dated July 1, 1929.

[2] By Bhagat Singh, Dutta and some other prisoners in protest against the treatment meted out to them in jail

genesis of this Pact, the Kellogg pact. . . .On August 27, 1928, it was signed by fifteen States, and within five or six months, practically all the States of the world signified their intention of adhering to it.

It consists of only two very brief and simple articles, by the first of which the signatories, in the names of their respective peoples, renounce war as an instrument of national policy; while by the second, they agree never to seek a settlement of any dispute, of whatever nature and whatever origin, save by pacific means. It thus stands as a clear and unqualified renuncaition of war. .

How does all this affect India? Do not her poverty and her subjection make her powerless? I think not.... Let the teachers in the schools and colleges lead the way by seeing that the youths fully understand what this Pact really is...When this knowledge has been assimilated by the educated, it will in some form permeate the masses of the uneducated, preparing the way for the stand India will take when she has attained her freedom. . .

I gladly publish L.E.'s contribution[1] and have no difficulty in agreeing that the Kellogg Pact has great possiblities, the patent insincerity of many signatories nothwithstanding. I share to the full the apprehension about the Pact felt by the correspondent whose letter to *Young India*, L.E. has mentioned. But this insincerity does not trouble me. My difficulty is as to the suggestion made by L.E. about India's part in promoting peace. India's contribution to peace must in the nature of things be different in kind from that of the Western nations. India is not an independent nation. And it may be inferred from her present position that she has not the will be independent. The parties to the Pact are mostly partners in the exploitation of the peoples of Asia and Africa; India is the most exploited among them all. The Peace Pact therefore in substance means a desire to carry on the joint exploitation peacefully. At least that is how the Pact appears to me to be at present. India has never waged war against any nation. She has put up sometimes ill-organised or half-organized resistance in self-defence pure and simple. She has therefore not got to develop the will for peace. She has that in abundance, whether she knows it or not. The way she can promote peace is to offer successful resistence to her exploitation by peaceful means. That is to say, she has to achieve her independence, for this year to be known as Dominion Status by peaceful means. It she can do this, it will be the largest contribution

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

that any single nation will have made towards world peace. If my diagnosis is correct, it will be realized that the teaching such as L.E. wants in the schools can only be ineffective and what is worse, hypocritical. Even if the teachers can make themselves believe in whay they may be called upon to teach, it will find no echo in the hearts of the boys and girls of their classes, even as a person who has never hurt a fly will fail to understand the meaning of an appeal made to him to will not to spill blood.

Young India, 4-7-1929

181. A PLEA FOR COMMON SENSE

A young man writes from Kashmir:

> Some days ago, I bought a set of portraits of some of the great men of India. Today I find that all these portraits are printed in Germany. I am distressed to see what I have done…bought foreign things that were available in our own country, and the very sight of these portraits which was likely to inspire me with good ideas, is injuring my feelings. My friends who are also of the same mind suggest to me to burn them; but this is a thing which my conscience does not allow, as these are the portraits of those great men who have sacrificed their lives for our country. I request you to advise me in the matter. I await your answer through your Young India.

Well may this young man want my answer through *Young India*. I am glad the young man's conscience has prevented him from burning the portraits. It was no doubt wrong to have bought these portraits made in Germany. But there is such a thing as common sense in the world. Common sense is realized sense of proportion. The way to redress such trivial mistakes as the young man fell into, is to be more careful in the future so as not to repeat them. If the young man and his friends will search within and search also their surroundings, they will discover many more incongruities and foreign articles in and about them. Let them begin the reformation by banishing the worst foreign things and the rest will go without an effort. Here again, let these friends make use of common sense and understand that the adjective foreign is to be taken in its widest sense. Anything that harms the inner being is foreign. Do we not often strain at a gnat and swallow a camel?

Young India, 4-7-1929

182. MILL-OWNERS AND BOYCOTT

Although I have before now dealt with this question in these pages, correspondents often inquire why the indigenous mills are not invited to take part in the foreign-cloth boycott movement. Others inquire what part these mills play in the movement. Yet others ask why Congress workers should not directly encourage and advertise indigenous mill-cloth side by side with khadi.

To take the last question first, these correspondents should remember that the Congress resolution contemplates the boycott through khadi. There are sound reasons for this partiality. Mill-cloth alone has had its opportunity for the past fifty years and it has not brought boycott about. Immediate boycott through the existing mills is an impossibility. New mills cannot be started for the asking. Therefore, if the boycott is to succeed, it can do so only through khadi. Khadi cannot be pushed side by side with mill-cloth. Given the choice, it must be confessed with regret that the unthinking multitutde will prefer the apparently cheaper and easily obtainable calico to the apparently dearer and coarse-looking and not easily obtainable khadi. It follows therfore, that Congress workders, as far as their influence can reach…and it does not reach very far yet…must preach khadi to the exclusion of mill-cloth.

This brings me to the second question. But the exclusive preaching of khadi does not mean hostililty to the indigenous mill-cloth. Mill-cloth is playing an important part in the movement whether the mill-owners will or not. The multitude buys it in competition with foreign cloth. The mills have their agencies direct and indirect in all the parts of India. As a distinguished mill-owner once very properly remarked to me : “We do not want your help, we penetrate where you will perhaps never even make your voice heard. If you preach our cloth, you simply invite us to raise our prices by creating a demand we cannot cope with.” He was silenced when I told him that I contemplated boycott not through mill-cloth but through khadi. He at once agreed that was quite a feasible proposition if I could produce enough khadi to displace foreign cloth and pupularize it. Most mill-owners recognize this as did the one I have quoted. Any advocacy then on the part of Congressmen of mill-cloth can only hinder boycott and ultimately even damage the mills by reason of the certain failure of the movement through the adoption of thoughtlesss

methods. The reader should realize that repeated failures of the movement must result in deepening despondency and then making the people indifferent in their purchase of cloth. We must avoid failure this time at any cost. We may risk no avoidable mistake through sluggish or imperfect thinking. It is the popular indifference that has given the foreign-cloth dealer his vantage ground. The moment the people are induced to think for themselves and make their choice, the boycott is a certainty. The indigenous mills are therefore playing their part in the movement and profiting by it without assistance from Congressmen.

Now for the first question. There is undoubtedly a way in which the mill-owners can actively, deliberately and effectively help the movement. An attempt was made last by Pandit Malaviyaji and Motilalji and myself to invite their active participation. The attempt failed, perhaps because it was not in the nature of things possible for the mills actively to participate in terms of the Congress in any movement with which the Government do not openly associate themselves or which they are suspected of secretly disapproving. The vast majority of them are under the influence of banking concerns which depend for their exestence on Government goodwill. But if there are mills which can defy Government pressure, no matter how subtly exerted, here are the conditions under which they or anyone of them can directly participate in the movement wholly or partially :

1. They can sell khadi through their agencies;
2. they can lend their talents to the movement;
3. they can, by conference with the A.I.S.A., determine the varieties they should manufacture in terms of boycott;
4. they can cease to manufacture khadi whether in that name or any other;
5. they can standardize their prices so as neither to suffer loss nor to increase their profits; and
6. they can render financial assistance to the movement.

Several other ways may easily be deduced from the six chief ones I have mentioned. This assistance can be given only if the mill-owners and the shareholders are pariotically inclined and are prepared to limit their profits. I am sure the majority of shareholders if they were properly canvassed would not object. It is the capitalist who has

therefore, really to decide. As one of them told me, "We will come in when we must…not before." He may be right.

Lastly, the reader should know that all mills because they are built on the Indian soil may not be called indigenous. They are millsthat are indigenous only in name. They are owned and managed by foreigners, their shareholders are foreigners, they exclude Indians from management or shares, the major part of their earnings is drained away from India. The only thing that India gets out of their earnings is the paltry labourers' wages. These mills are no more indigenous than the existing Government. These can never help the movement.

Young India, 4-7-1929

183. DESTROY ALL HIMSA

Raja Mahendra Pratap is a great patriot. For the sake of the country, this noble man has chosen exile as his lot. He has given up his splendid property in Vrindavan for educational purposes. Prem Mahavidyalaya now conducted by Acharya Jugalkishore is his creation. The Rajasaheb has often corresponded with me. And I have withheld from publication communications from him. But the latest received from him I have not the heart to withhold. Here therefore is his letter.

As a friend of humanity and your fellow-countryman by birth, I demand of you kindly to publish the following thoughts in your worthy paper.

WHAT IS AHIMSA

I assert that I am a true follower of ahsima. But it needs an explanation of this word to clear my position. It becomes still more necessary when I add and affirm that many who call themselves the worshippers of this holy word have no sense of its spirit.

Ahimsa, as I understand it, is not to give pain to anybody in mind or body by one's though, talk or action. However, to be a follower of this principle does not stop here. A follower of ahimsa has to change all those conditions under which himsa is practised or becomes possible. I call it worst kind of himsa, opposite of ahimsa,when a man tolerates or aids himsa of others.

Many people in India today deliver some very fine sermons on the beauties of ahimsa; however they do little to destroy the himsa of the British.

I say all such persons are abettors and aids to all that crime which the British commit in India against the weak, the hungry and the helpless.

Of course, no one can deny that our great leader Gandhiji has a very sincere desire to serve the Indian nation. However, I am afraid that his methods alone, unsupported by some more energetic active programme, cannot bring relief to the people.

I highly appreciate and strngly endorse the khadi movement of Gandhiji. It may or may not appreciably better the economic condition of the masses because there are today so many modern factors at work in our society; but in any case, the idea from the psychological standpoint is certainly admirable. It directs the human thought to a simple life and awakens in the people a certain sense of unity.

I must, however, add that we need much more. We have to destroy in the true spirit of ahimsa all that British organization which is himsa personified.

Let the nation as a whole strive to that end. At the earliest possible moment let us put an end to the British brutalilty in India, in fact, in the whole world. Let everyone perform his duty according to his natural endowments. In the true spirit of ahimsa, I cannot force my will on others. Let everyone find out for himself what one must do. I can only point out the eternal truth that the Creator certainly wants the good of all his creatures…all the men and women…in our common human race. If any man or group acts selfishly and oppresses others he surely misuses his gifts and acts against the wishes of the Creator. I can only say: Let everyone try his or her best to destroy all himsa. This is ahimsa.

Young India, 4-7-1929

184. FOR SELF-SPINNERS

A.I.S.A. members and all those who send self-spun yarn as subscriptions or donations should be most careful about preparing and packing their yarn. Every yard of yarn spun means so much added to the wealth of the country. Let us not despise it. I have known quotations in South Africa of rice and other staples as low as 1/32nd of a penny. The keen-witted European merchants knew what these tiny fractions meant when they underwent endless multiplications as they did in transactions involving thousands of bags of rice. If we had the same wit, we would realize the value of a yard of self-spun yarn when it undergoes multiplica- tion by the three hundred million hands

that may draw yards of yarn from day to day. Let is be then further remembered that the value of fineness, evenness and strength. And since hanks of yarn in separateness would fetch only a fraction of a copper coin, all cost of transit should be saved as much as possible. Those agencies therefore, that organize and collect yarn subscriptions and donations should see to the proper labelling and classification of yarn and send such parcels to the head office at fixed periodical intervals. Little is it realized even by the best workers that the message of the wheel means a complete revolution in the national life. Its successful delivery means a solidly-knit, well-organized, well-disciplined, self-restrained, self-contained, self-respecting, industrious, prosperous nation, no member of which willing and ready to work ever need starve.

Young India, 4-7-1929

185. AN UNFORTUNATE DAUGHTER

I have countless dauthers in the country …those I know and those that I do not know. One of them has written to me from Pushkar, signing herself as "your unfortunate daughter". Here is the entire letter[1].

In India, there are many Hindu girls who suffer the same fate as this Lakshmi Devi. As soon as a girl grows up a little and begins to take interest in studies and games, selfish and bigoted parents push her into the sea of matrimony. The marriage that was forced on Lakshmi Devi cannot be considered a religious marriage. In a religious marriage, the girl should be told to whom she is getting married, her consent should be obtained for the marriage and if possible, she should be given an opporutnity to see the perspective bridegroom. Nothing of the kind was done in Lakshmi Devi's case. Secondly, she was too young for wedlock. Therefore she has a perfect right to refuse to countenance such a marriage, to refuse to recognize it as marriage. The only heartening feature of this tragedy is that her mother is with her. I congratulate the lady. I would request Lakshmi Devi's father not to regard adharma as dharma and stand in her way. I hope

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had said that she had been married off by her parents when still a child to a man who had another wife living, and that in her husbands's house, she was subjected to much cruelty. She had expressed her desire to remarry.

Lakshmi Devi will remain steadfast in her resolution in the same brave and modest spirit that she has shown in writing this letter for publication, and will marry the young man who wishes to be bound to her in holy wedlock. I also hope that she will remain steadfast in her resolve to serve the country. Those girls who wish to do away with evil customs and follow a new path, who wish to become my daughters should never give up humility, discretion, truth and self-restraint. Licence and immodest behaviour would bring them unhappiness and I should be ashamed of them. They would never be able to show a way to others. Such girls should have the dignity, modesty and purity of Sita and the courage and strength of Draupadi.

These good daughters must remember that to establish swaraj Ramrajya in India they have to work shoulder to shoulder with men and it is their special duty to improve the condition of women.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 4-7-1929

186. FOREIGN SUGAR V. KHADI[1]

A correspondent from the Meerut District writes:

> Our family consists of about 30 or 32 members. For several generations we have been following the vocation of sugar refiners. We take crude molasses from the sugar planters and prepare white sugar from it by the indigenous process without employment of any machinery. But for the last several years we have been hard hit by the competition of foreign and machine-made sugar and the profits of our business do not suffice even to cover the ordinary wages of our labour. The importation of foreign sugar further means a heavy drain of wealth from our country and yet you never open your lips on the subject which is rather surprising. But that side of the question apart, we feel really at sea as to what we should do. Our womenfolk still follow their traditional occupation

[1] Originally published in Hindi Navjivan, 4-7-1929, this and"The Running Sore", 18-7-1929, appeared under the title"Notes from Hindi Navajivan" with the following introductory note by Pyarelal:". . .Gandhiji has of late commenced regularly to write original articles for Hindi Navajivan. Apart from the fact that this special writing enables him to discharge his obligation towards a weekly of which he has been nominally editor all these years, he has found that it gives him an opportunity of coming into direct touch with the Hindi reading public and their peculiar problems which he could not do so well before. As a specimen, I give below a translation of two articles selectd almost at random that have recently appeared in Hindi Navajivan."

of cotton spinning and get the yarn thus spun woven by the village weaver into khadi....

I am sorry to have to advise these friends to give up their present occupation if sugar refining is truly an unprofitable concern. For today, I really do not know how we can completely prevent the importation of foreign sugar into our country. I consider sugar to be an unnecessary, even harmful article of consumption. 'White poison' as it has been called by dietetic experts, it is a fruitful source of many a disease. But we have become so hopelessly addicted to its use that it is not quite an easy thing to get rid of it. We cannot today produce all the sugar that we consume. Again, country sugar is dearer and not being so white as the imported sugar, is less popular. It is not an industry for which a country-wide and mass agitation can be set up as in the case of khadi. Nor can such an agitation alone, even if successful, help to convert a losing into a paying concern. I can therefore repeat what I have already said that if the sugar manufacture is no longer a profitable trade, there is no help but to leave it.

But what to do next is the question that will naturally be asked. In my opinion, weaving is any day preferable as an avocation to sugar manufacture. Unlike spinning, weaving provides a whole-time occupation and what is more, it is a growing universal occupation with practically an unlimited scope before it.

As for the question of introducing khadi in his family to which the correspondent refers, it does not require much effort to spin fine yarn at home. If only each member of the household in question will but make up his or her mind diligently to spend one hour daily on the spinning-wheel, he or she can turn out the count that will suit his or her requirement and all the clothing needed in the family including fine saris, etc., can be had just for the charge of weaving yarn into cloth, while if like spinning, weaving is introduced in the household, as it well may be, it will constitute another big advance and simplify matters still further.

Young India, 8-8-1929

187. LETTER TO R.B. GREGG

July 4, 1929

MY DEAR GOVIND,

I have not been as regular in writing to you as you have been. *Young India* gives the reason. You are never absent from my thoughts.

I knew of your marriage long before your letter. Andrews wrote a line about it. You give me a beautiful description about it all. I wish you and yours a long and happy life of service. It would be a joy to welcome you, Mrs. Gregg at the Ashram. Of course she must see all your Indian associates and Indian haunts.

I did get that book on food. It did not create much impression on me. You must have seen in *Young India* all about my latest experiment.[1] It still continues. But I am unable to report any decisive result yet. We have just descended from the Almora hills. I combined business with recreation in the coolness of the Himalayan hills. We had a glorious view of the snowy range. It was a dazzling snow-capped amphitheatre in front of us whenever the sky was clear.

I hope you are keeping perfect health now.

With love to you both,

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 4664

188. LETTER TO C. SATYANARAYAN

KASHIPUR,
July 4, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You may not interfere with your sister. It is no business of yours to keep watch over her. God alone can guide her

[1] *Vide* "Food Faddists", 13-6-1929

course, if she will let Him. Your business is to keep a strict watch over yourself. If your conduct is correct, it will react on your surroundings.

Yours,

C. SATYANARAYAN
C/O G. VENKAT RAO
NARSAPUR

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/68

189. LETTER TO N.R. MALKANI

[Before July 5, 1929][1]

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. Certainly let me have your observations on Gujarat and Tamilnad and add your observations on the conduct of the Ashram. You have now lived there sufficiently long to form an opinion.

Yes, you may develop the wool industry in Sind if cotton is impossible. If Sind really wants to boycott foreign cloth, it would do sacrificial or self-spinning. Every province should realize that boycott of foreign cloth is impossible without khadi. We must therefore learn to spin enough for our own requirements. The takli is the easiest thing in this direction.

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

I reach Sabarmati on 6th instant.

From a photostat: G.N. 892

190. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

ON THE TRAIN,
July 6, 1929

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have slept over your proposal. But I feel I must not shoulder the burden. I am sure that Jawahar should preside. Let young men

[1] The original bears the entry ,"5-7-1929", presumably written by the addressee on receipt of this letter

have their innings. We must stand behind them. There are a hundred reasons why I must not preside. There are five hundred to show why Jawahar should preside. If you get this in time and if you approve I would deal with the matter in the next issue of *Young India*.[1]

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: Motilal Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

191. LETTER TO JIVRAM K. KOTHARI

[Before *July 7, 1929*][2]

BHAISHRI JIVRAM,

Even when I wrote to you yesterday I had a feeling that there was another letter of yours I had not answered. I searched for it today and have found it. Your first letter carries a report of your work; this one has ring of despair. The letter to which I replied yesterday bears the date 20th and the one to which I am replying now is dated 10th June. I found the letter of 10th June after I had commented on the letter of the 20th for *Navajivan.* I am, however, allowing the article on the letter of the 20th to go as it is.

Your despair is natural. But how can one who has dedicated everything to God yield to despair? Let God despair if He will. Why should we, His obedient servants, yield to despair? Let us do the jobHe has entrusted to us. Whether the result is good or bad is His concern. We shall be doomed if we are found wanting in our efforts. If we are not found so wanting, we shall have won the battle of life. If you remember this you will not yield to despair again.

Do not worry that you are not able to attract other workers. If you remain steady in your place other workers will be attracted on their own. Pay more and more attention to the spinning-wheel. I am arranging to send Jethalal to you for some time. Women will not come to your meetings but Purbai can meet them in their houses. For the present she may only talk with them and invite them to meet her.

[1] *Vide* "Who Should Wear the Crown", 1-8-1929

[2] From the reference to Gandhiji's comments on the addressee's letter published in *Navajivan*, 7-7-1929; *vide* "Among athe Skeletons of Orissa", 7-7-1929

You must all acquire a working knowledge of the Oriya language. This can be done more quickly not through books but by talking to children and picking up words from them. The language is not difficult.

If you can find a few orphans, you may bring them up and train them. Some of them at least will grow into good workers.

The experiment at Bijolia and Ringus has succeeded because the spinning-wheel had been in use there and had only to be revived. The people there are not as poor as in Utkal. The poverty of Utkal has reduced the people to utter passivity. If you can find one worker there against a hundred in Ringus, I would say that a reasonable proportion had been achieved.

To dismiss the weavers who have been found stealing is in itself satyagraha. We may not do anything more. You are bound to have such experiences there.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/65

192. THE OLD STORY[1]

Elsewhere will be found a digest prepared by Mahadev Desai of reports of alleged oppression in the Dholka and Dashkroi taluks in connection with the recovery of taqavi advances. In sending the digest Sjt. Desai observes that he had hoped that the Government would have learnt wisdom from the Bardoli experience but that he had been sadly disillusioned. In my opinion both the hope and the disappointment were wholly unwarranted. The Government did not change its policy in the case of Bardoli, it was only compelled to yield under the pressure of organized resistance of the Bardoli peasantry and it is bound to do so again wherever such resistance is well organized. Even so the peasantry of Dholka and Dashkroi taluks will find that no power on earth will dare to molest them once they have fully learnt the lesson of self-respect.

The moral, however, which I want to draw from these happenings is that where the people have not shed their cowardice, they will continue to be oppressed, if not by a foreign Government, by their own kith and kin, a hundred Bardolis notwithstanding. The first

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 7-7-1929. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

and foremost duty of national workers should therefore be to inculcate the lesson of fearlessness among the people. We cannot have a Vallabhbhai to lead everywhere. But every worker can in his own humble way try to emulate his qualities. All may not have Vallabhabhai's sagacity, his matchless courage and generalship but everyone can, and ought to be able to, develop a bit of his alertness and sleepless vigilance.

The Government, evidently, is determined to go on exacting more and more revenue so long as the people continue meekly to submit to its demands. All that it cares for is the golden egg, no matter whether the goose that lays it lives or dies. And how else can it carry on its present top-heavy system of administration? "The people must be made to pay at any cost"…that is the unwritten law and policy, which consequently it has perforce to follow. To compel it to scrap this policy is half the battle of swaraj. Land revenue today forms the very basis of British rule in India. It is a wrong basis from the people's point of view. It has been proved times without number that the Indian people are already taxed far beyond their capacity. But the income of the Government falls short of its daily growing requirements and so its best brains are kept busy devising fresh ways and means of increasing taxation. Unless, therefore, the present system of administration is completely changed, i.e., the expenditure considerably reduced, the oppression of the people will continue unabated even when the reins of Government have passed into Indian hands. That is why I am never tired of repeating from the housetop that swaraj must mean a complete transformation of the present system of administration and not a mere change of hands. But that will be possible only when the people have mastered the art of resisting unjust taxes. The first step in this direction would be to make a thorough study of the present system of taxation and to demonstrate its utterly unjust character. Then when it becomes imperatively necessary, comes the undoubted right of the people to refuse to pay unjust taxes, undeterred by fines, prosecutions and worse.

But who is to teach this art to the people? It is a task essentially for our national workers who must go and settle in the villages in their midst, win their confidence by dint of selfless service, identify themselves with them in their joys and sorrows, make a close study of their social conditions and by degrees infect them with their courage and determination to do or die. But for silent, patient, constructive

work of this kind by a band of workers who buried themselves in the villages of Bardoli, even the matchless leadership of Vallabhbhai might have proved of no avail. No general, however capable he may be, can fight a battle single-handed. He can fight only with the help of his weapons and the only true weapons of a general are not rifles and guns but loyal, disciplined soldiers, who would be content to work silently and unostentatiously and carry out his orders without demur even at the cost of their lives. The instances of oppression recounted by Mahadev Desai are by no means isolated phenomena. More probably than not, they have their replicas in other parts of the country also, only we do not know them. It is a well-established principle of medical science that all the diseases that the human system is heir to have a common origin and therefore, a common cure. Even so, beneath the surface, variety of ills which our body politic displays today, there is a fundamental unity of cause. It is that we must trace out and tackle.

Young India, 25-7-1929

193. ON INCREASING THE SIZE OF "NAVAJIVAN"

I have received many comments on the opinion of a lover of Navajivan which I had published[1] regarding the inclusion of news items in it. Amongst these, "a lover of Navajivan", who happens to be a city-dweller, writes as follows:[2]

A viewpoint which is diametrically opposite to the one quoted above is expressed by a villager who happens to be a lover of Navajivan:[3]

I feel that both these viewpoints are justified as they have been expressed from different standpoints. One way of solving this problem is for me to go through the list of subscribers to Navajivan and find out whether the majority of them live in cities or in villages. However, before arriving at any conclusion in that manner, it is necessary to get the opinion of still more readers. Hence, I hope that

[1] *Vide* "A Suggestion Confereng "Navajivan" ", 23-6-1929

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had suggested that the journal might continue to be published as hitherto. In regard to its size and the choice of subjects dealt with in it, he desired that special attention should be paid to satyagraha, non-violence and swaraj or dharmarajya.

[3] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had supported the inclusion of news items and an increase in the number of pages which would add to its popularity and increase the circulation in villages.

those who take interest in this controversy will send their opinions to me.

Perhaps, even if the majority of readers happen to be villagers and desire the inclusion of news items, I would still have to investigate further how far it would be possible for me to do so. It is necessary to mention this here lest the reader conclude that a supplement will definitely be published in order to give news items. An attempt is continuously being made to see to it that Navajivan is useful to the maximum number of readers. However, the question how far it can be turned into a newspaper in addition to being the vehicle of my ideas and a means of pointing out the way to the attainment of swaraj is not a minor one. It is my primary duty to ensure that the main purpose behind it is not jeopardized in any way. The original limits set by me are dear to me. And I do not regard the attempt to keep within these as vain, whereas I doubt as to the advisability of including news items in it. However, I look to lovers of Navajivan for some light in this matter. The request for publishing news items comes from a thoughtful individual. I cannot ignore it. He also desires that other readers should send in their considered opinions.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-7-1929

194. INSTANTANEOUS EFFECT

As a result of the letter of Thakkar Bapa that I had published regarding the sad plight of untouchables in Bulsar,[1] the enthusiastic youth of that town immediately took the task in hand and made the Municipality aware of the problem. During my tour, I received letters about this from the taluk committee, the National Seva Mandal and such other organizations. I give below extracts[2] from the report which I have received of the resolution that has been passed by the Municipality as a result of this movement.

I congratulate the Municipality and those workers who have tried hard and resolved to provide facilities for our Bhangi brothers in this manner and for starting a school for Bhangi children. I hope that

[1] *Vide* "Sad Plighat of Bulsar Bhaangis", 9-6-1929

[2] These are not translated here. The Bulsar Municipality passed the resolutions sanctioning sums of Rs. 500 each for digging wells for the 'uintouchables' and for building sheds for them with full amenities.

this enthusiasm will not subside. Let them not rest in peace until they enter the hearts of the Bhangi brothers and free them from their addiction to drink.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-7-1929

195. AMONG THE SKELETONS OF ORISSA

Readers of Navajivan are not unfamiliar with the philanthropy of Shri Jivram Kalyanji Kothari. He has not been content merely with giving away his wealth. He has devoted even his body and soul to the cause of khadi. Day and night he thinks of nothing but this cause. Not being satisfied even with this, he decided to use his own physical energy also in that cause and having done so, found out the poorest and, from the standpoint of khadi, the most difficult province to work in. The idea took hold of him that the wealth that he had gained through labourers should now be returned to them and finally it bore fruit in Orissa. For the past year or so, he has been working in Orissa, accompanied by his wife. And now Purbai, the widow worker of Karachi has also gone there. With them is a gentleman, Maganbhai by name and another person known as Ghanshyam Shahu. On my requesting them to do so, they gave me in Calcutta a detailed account of their work in their broken yet sweet language. After having carefully scrutinized it and put it in the form of an article, I had sent it over during my tour of Andhra. However, that important article was lost in the post and has not yet been traced. Recently, I received another letter from Shri Jivram which contains an account of the work being done there at present. I publish it below, as it will give some idea about it to the reader:[1]

I have made few changes in the language of this letter. I have often found that such letters become less interesting if their language is altered. I realize that the minor changes that I have made in the genders, etc., have indeed made the letter less interesting. In revealing the true nature of Shri Jivram, the 'improvements' made in his letter have had the very opposite effect and made it more obscure. However, this is a matter which all readers will not ordinarily understand and I

[1] The letter is not translated here. It had described how the spinning-wheel had banished fear and idleness among the womenfolk in Orissa.

have attempted to improve the language for fear that they may get tired of reading a language that falters too much. False adornments and superficial make-up have taken such hold of us that we fail to recognize that which is genuine unless it is cast in the conventional mould. Instead of unbleached but durable and easily recognizable khadi, people prefer starched, bleached khadi, although the latter may be more expensive and they forget that repeated washing has made the latter variety less genuine or not. The same is true of such letters. However, I shall not dilate on this theme.

The changes made in Shri Jivram's letter will not affect the evaluation of his work.

It is my request to Shri Jivram and those like him who are doing difficult work in a difficult region that they should never lose hope. It is our dharma to do our work, the outcome is in the hands of God. When we have no doubts regarding the worthiness of the activity and the means employed, we should die doing it but never give it up. All great tasks in the world have been achieved in this manner. At the place where Shri Jivram lives, the only inducement is inner joy. Theclimate is inclement, milk and ghee are hardly or not at all available, the language is different, the people are lazy, not deliberately but due to the prevailing circumstances and the atmosphere is not at all congenial to the spinning-wheel. Only those whose hearts are overflowing with love and who have full faith in their duty can enjoy living in such conditions…under such risks.

Shri Jivram has been taking such risks. He should now gradually introduce the science of the spinning-wheel in his sphere of work, making spinning-wheels locally, find out how counts of yarn are calculated, learn to recognize the different varieties of cotton, understand the subtler aspects of the carding of cotton. Where there is a will, there's a way.

The example of Shri Jivram deserves to be followed by many young men and especially by those belonging to the richer classes. This latter should not rest content with contributing money, but should also put in physical labour and devote their hearts to the cause. If they are as diligent in their work as they are in their business, the cause of khadi will progress at a much greater speed. All those who have had the experience have found that the spinning-wheel is the only principal means of bringing about an awakening among crores of destitute persons, of serving them and of making them happy.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-7-1929

196. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

July 8, 1929

DEAR SATIS BABU,

What a tragedy? You plunged into the milkless experiment too soon. It is evident that Gopalrao's optimism and deductions are superficial. I am myself flourishing. I have put on 1 lbs. on a totally fruitarian diet, no wheat, no nuts, no pulses. I omitted cereals and nuts because of slight fever contracted in Almora. I was none the worse for it but better. But I can do these things I suppose because of my previous training. Mirabehn is taking germinating wheat, gram and some fruit and raw vegetable and flourishing because she has kept milk and ghee. You could perhaps do likewise. There is nothing wrong in the raw cereals if milk and ghee be not omitted. Most of the literature points in that direction. The milkless experiment cannot yet be claimed as a success. You must therefore adhere to milk and ghee for the time being. Please do not hurry over the thing.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1606

197. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Silence Day [*July 8, 1929*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

We reached the Ashram comfortably on Saturday night. I have gained two pounds. [My experiment of taking] uncooked grain still continues. Is your cought cured? Jayaprakash is not returning soon; I have therefore written to Rajendrababu that if you are sent back here, I could have your Gita and English further improved. If Father permits, come soon provided you wish to. I shall certainly like it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3347

[1] From the reference to the experiment of uncooked grain and Gandhiji's return to the Ashram.

198. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

July 10, 1929

DEAR MOTILALJI,

Here is a free translation of Vithalbhai's letter.

"If you do not accept or rather ask for the crown this year, you would be committing another Himalayan blunder. I am coming on the 17th to persuade you to see my way." I can guess what he has to say. But I shall await his arrival.[1] I thought you should know this latest development. Your wire has brought me relief. I wish Jawahar will come to a decision and end the uncertainty.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: Motilal Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

199. LETTER TO VITHALBHAI J. PATEL[2]

SABARMATI,
July 10, 1929

I have your letter. Do come. I understand. At least it will be a pretext for us to meet after a long time. But it seems to me that accepting the presidentship will diminish my usefulness. It is for you now to point out the Himalayan blunder. Come in good health.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/31

[1] Vithalbhai Patel met Gandhiji on July 17 and 18.

[2] The identity of the addressee in this and the following letter has been inferred from Gandhiji's letter to Motilal Nehru, the preceding item.

200. ALMORA IMPRESSIONS

HOSPITALITY

When one meets with nothing but deep affection and great attention everywhere, it is difficult to give their respective measures. I thought that Andhra Desha could not be equalled in this respect. The experience of Almora following closely on the heels of Andhra compels a revision of the opinion. For Almora did no less. No pains were spared by the Almora friends to make my all too short a stay in the beautiful Himalayan hills most comfortable. In one respect, they improved upon Andhra. They would not make the reception expenses a charge upon. They would not make the reception expenses a charge upon the various purses collected. All the heavy motor expenses were borne by a few private friends. The Committee would not listen to the expenses being paid of those who were travelling with me but were not of the staff and who were able to pay them. "If they intend to pay, let them give what they choose to the khadi purse," was the final reply. Enough however of the necessary acknowledgment of this generous hospitality. In these hills, Nature's hospitality eclipses all that man can ever do. The enchanting beauty of the Himalayas, their bracing climate and the soothing green that envelops you, leave nothing more to be desired. I wonder whether the scenery of these hills and the climate are to be surpassed, if equalled, by any of the beauty spots of the world. After having been for nearly three weeks in the Almora hills, I am more than ever amazed why our people need to go to Europe in search of health.

WHO IS UNTOUCHABLE?

Untouchability is a snake with a thousand mouths through each of which it shows its poisonous fangs. It defies definition. It needs no sanction from Manu or the other ancient law-givers. It has its own local smriti. Thus in Almora a whole class of people, whose occupation is, even according to the Santana dharma so called, innocent, are untouchables. They are all cultivators owning their own holdings. They are called shilpi, i.e., farmers. Another similar class of people called Boras suffer in the same manner although they do not even eat carrion or take liquor and observe all the rules of sanitation as well as any. Tradition has condemned these as untouchables. Hinduism that refuses to think accepts the tradition unquestioningly

and exposes itself to merited ridicule and worse. Reformers are trying to cope with the evil. I feel, however, that much more drastic methods are needed than are employed to rid Hinduism of the blot. We are needlessly afraid to wound the susceptibilities of orthodoxy. We have to shed the fear, if we expect to end the evil in our own generation. This untouchability naturally recoils on the heads of those who are responsible for it. In Almora, the choka…untouchability at the time of dining…has worked its insidious way even among castes and sub-castes till at last every man makes himself an untouchable. This choka exercises its evil sway even in national institutions like the Prem Vidyalaya. I was considerably relieved when upon inquiry I found that none of the trustees believed in the choka, and that they were tolerating it so as not to scare the parents of the boys attending the institution.

NAYAKS

Just as there is in the South a caste which dedicates to a life of shame girls euphemistically called Devadasis, so is there in Almora a caste called Nayak that similarly brings up its girls without anyeuphemism. Nevertheless, it too defends the practice on religious grounds and thus drags with the girls religion too in the mire. If God was a capricious person instead of being the changeless and unchangeable living Law, He would in sheer indignation wipe out all those who in the name of religion deny Him and His law. The Servants of India Society is trying to wean the Nayak parents from the sin of degrading their daughters. The progress made is slow, because the public conscience is asleep and man's lust provides material reward for the indecency.

Young India, 11-7-1929

201. FOREIGN-CLOTH BOYCOTT

This committee is pursuing its course in a very systematic way. It has followed the President's letter to the M.L.A.s and M.L.C.s by supplying them with boycott and khadi literature to enable them to do their work. A letter to the editors of newspapers, among other things, reminds them of their obvious duty to eschew foreign cloth and liquor advertisements. It would be interesting to know if the appeal has met with much, if any, response. Let the reader remember that the first Sunday in every month is to be specially devoted to boycott work.

The next day of such observance is 4th August. A general letter to Congress Committees lays down the following ten points:

1. Organizing propaganda parties for touring outside large towns;

2. arranging house-to-house visits for converting people to the boycott of foreign cloth;

3. holding of public meetings where house-to-house propaganda is not feasible;

4. hawking of khadi as often during each week as possible;

5. collecting sufficient funds to run small khadi sale depots wherever necessary;

6. organizing street propaganda and nagar kirtan parties on every Wednesday and Sunday in the week;

7. engaging in special boycott activity on the first Sunday of each month, that is, 4th August and 1st September;

8. arranging requisitions for special meetings of local bodies which have not so far considered the suggestions made by the F.C.B. Committee for securing their co-operation in the boycott campaign;

9. posting weekly report of F.C.B. work on each Monday; and

10. observing 2nd October, 1929 as the Foreign-Cloth Boycott Day.

He Publicity Department of the F.C.B. Committee gives the following interesting and encouraging report[1] of the work being done in Vile Parle, Champaran and elsewhere[2].

It is to be hoped that other places will copy these organizations. But the workers should bear in mind that the secret of the success of boycott through khadi lies in the recognition of the fact that we have to be manufacturers as we are consumers. It is the capacity for automatic production and distribution that makes khadi invincible the moment we recognize the fact. If therefore, hawking of khadi is undertaken without at the same time the same agencies working for production, soon there will be no khadi to hawk. And for the sale of khadi, just as the workers set the example by wearing it, so may they set the example in production by spinning themselves. The easiest way of doing this is to take up the takli. That little instrument has

[1] Not reproduced here..

[2] This covered Karnataka and Kathiawar.

unrealized possibilities which anyone who takes it up may verify for himself or herself.

Young India, 11-7-1929

202. SELF-SUPPORTING EDUCATION

The Almora district Board address, which narrated the story of how it educated the children under its charge, and its very laudable attempt to instruct the boys in wool-spinning and weaving, prompted me to repeat with greater emphasis than hitherto the opinion expressed before by me that education should be self-supporting. The opinion has gathered force during my wanderings. If the State has to bear the cost of education of millions of children, it will never be able to raise enough money by any conceivable measure of taxation. That it is the primary duty of the State to bring to its schools every boy and girl and give them proper, not perfunctory (as now), education is an axiomatic truth. But in a country like India such education must largely if not wholly pay itself. And if we could but shed the hypnotic spell which our English tutors have cast over us, we should not find any difficulty in discovering ways and means of achieving the end. With the best motives in the world, the English tutors could not wholly understand the difference between English and Indian requirements. Our climate does not require the buildings which they need. Nor do our children brought up in predominantly rural environment need the type of education the English children brought up in surroundings predominantly urban need.

When our children are admitted to schools, they need, not slate and pencils and books, but simple village tools which they can handle freely and remuneratively. This means a revolution in educational methods. But nothing short of a revolution can put education within reach of every child of school-going age.

It is addmitted that the so-called knowledge of the three R's that is at present given in Government schools, is of little use to the boys and girls in after life. Most of it is forgotten inside of one year, if only for want of use. It is not required in their village surroundings.

But if a vocational training in keeping with their surroundings was given to the children, they would not only repay the expenses incurred in the schools but would turn that training to use in after life. I can imagine a school entirely self-supporting, if it became say a

spinning and weaving institution with perhaps a cotton field attached to it.

The scheme I am adumberating does not exclude literary training. No course of primary instruction would be considered complete that did not include reading, writing and arithmetic. Only, reading and writing would come during the last year when really the boy or girl is the readiest for learning the alphabet correctly. Handwriting is an art. Every letter must be correctly drawn, as an artist would draw his figures. This can only be done if the boys and girls are first taught elementary drawing. Thus side by side with vocational training which would occupy most of the day at school, they would be receiving vocal instruction in elementary history, geography and arithmetic. They would learn manners, have object-lessons in practical sanitation and hygiene, all of which they would take to their homes in which they would become silent revolutionists.

The District Board of Almora and any other such Board which is unhampered by restrictions and which has a clear nationalist majority may try the experiment if it has faith and some members who will make it their business to see it through. Above all, it is a question national educational institutions must tackle if they would justify their existence. They have to conduct original researches, not reproduce clumsy imitations of those which they condemn and seek to replace.

No originality is claimed for the method advocated here. Booker T. Washington tried it with considerable success. If I recollect rightly, even the higher education he gave was self-supporting. In America, it is the most usual thing for even college boys to pay fully for their education by engaging in some kind of remunerative work. The plan is different but the idea underlying is not.

Young India, 11-7-1929

203. SYLHET INUNDATED

It was in Kausani that I received the first information[1] from the Chairman of the local Congress Committee of the devastating floods that have overtaken the Sylhet valley. Even the usual rainfall is terrible

[1] For this and Gandhiji's reply, *Vide* "Telegram to President,Congress Committee, Karaimganj", 22-6-1929

in these parts of India, but the papers before me tell me that a flood such as was reently experienced there, has not been known within living memory. The area affected is said to be 5,500 square miles and the population over 18 lakhs. I need not reproduce the terrible story of destruction which has been vividly described in the daily Press. I have had telegrams and letters from at least four committees asking for relief. These include one from Sjt. Subhas Bose informing me of the formation of the Central Relief Committee with Dr. P.C. Ray as its President. Sjt. Amritlal Thakkar has proceeded there to see with his own eyes the damage done to life and property.

Since Gujarat has had experience of such a flood only recently,it can understand Assam's tribulation. A man who is kind, has national feeling and patriotism, can never ask: 'How can one give every day if every day there are floods and famines? Who can afford to do so? Even the treasures of Kuber would be emptied if donations have to be given like this.' As long as we have the right to eat, the man who is starving has the right to ask for his share of food. If this is recognized as an established truth, then anyone who has more than his daily needs, cannot at all refuse to give if someone approaches him for donations for people affected by floods, etc.[1]

I ask those who have not already given, to send their subscriptions which will be used in a manner that would give the greatest relief with the means that the donors may put at my disposal. Relief in the case of unprecedented destructions such as this onlycomes in well after the first shock is over. First aid in such cases is rendered by Nature herself in that utter destruction is its own remedy. Man brings the healing balm through his fellow-feeling to those who remain behind to tell the tale of woe. The donations that the readers may send will be used after the most careful inquiry I may be capable of making.

Young India, 11-7-1929

204. PROHIBITION

Sjt. C. Rajagopalachari who has been entrusted with the prohibition propaganda by the Working Committee has issued the first number of the monthly Prohibition, the official organ of the Prohi-

[1] This paragraph is from the article,"Heavy Floods in Assam", published in *Navajivan*, 14-7-1929.

bition League of India. Its price is 2 annas, postage extra, and it can be had at Gandhi Ashram, Tiruchengodu. The contents are interesting. They show how the Government thwart prohibition by every means at their disposal. Damoh is a district of the Central Provinces. It carried prohibition in the teeth of opposition. I must ask the curious to read the history of the campaign in the pages of the journal. I cannot however resist quoting the following tragic story of damages claimed by a liquor vendor:

> Perumal Naidu, Village Munsiff of Singarapet, Dt. Salem, Madras, was tried departmentally by the Divisional Revenue Officer … and he was suspended for one year. ...
>
> Not content with the infliction of this departmental punishment, the local toddy shop renter filed a suit for damages for Rs.300 on the ground that by reason of the defendant's dissuasion, he lost all custom for full three months, January to March 1926, and that the defendant was bound to make good the loss. ... The suit is pending.

Is it any wonder if I call a system Satanic under which such things are possible? I need not be told that there may be other systems more Satanic than this. It would be time enough to consider such a retort if I had to make a choice between Satanic systems. The pity of it is that many educated Indians who lead public opinion are drawn into this Satanic net as witness what Mahadev Desai said[1] about the recent dinner to the Viceroy at the Chelmsford Club. All but one or two Indians drank champagne to their fill! When Satan comes disguised as a champion of liberty, civilization, culture and the like, he makeshimself almost irresistible. It is therefore a good thing that prohibition is an integral part of the Congress programme.

Young India, 11-7-1929

205. THE PUNDIT SABHA OF KASHI

When I was in Kashi, three questions were sent to me on behalf of the Kashi Pundit Sabha. I considered it my duty to answer these questions, but I did not then have time to do so. Later the questions lay in my file. I could not attend to them during my tour either. Now I am cleaning up my file. The questions are:

[1] Under the caption, "A Simla Letter" in *Young India*, 11-7-1929

1. How can a sanatani Hindu who is well versed in the doctrines of sanatana dharma and accepts the Vedas and the smritis based on them as an infallible authority, contend that there is no untouchability in Hinduism or lend his support to freely mixing with untouchables, excepting on the occasions enumerated in the well-known verse: "In religious processions, marriages, emergencies, rebellions and in all festivals, contact with untouchables does not polllute"?

2. Your work is among the people of India who are predominantly sanatana dharmis and who implicitly believe in the Gita dictum: "Let the Shastras, therefore, be they authority in deciding what is to be done and what is to be shunned." How can you then effectively carry on the work of eradicating untouchability till you have proved that this work is in conformity with the Shastras?

3. The Muslim Ulemas are firmly convinced that there is merit in killing all those who follow any religion other than Islam for they are Kaffirs, and that Muslims can mingle with them only when they accept Islam. So long as all Muslims are under the influence of these Ulemas, how can Hindus make friends with Muslims while protecting the Hindu dharma?

The pundits should not expect a very learned answer from me. I shall humbly try to answeer the questions as best I can on the basis of dharma and Shastras as I have understood them from my own experience.

The *shrutis* and *smritis* do not become scriptures merely because they are known by these respectable names. Whatever goes against the eternal principles of truth, etc., cannot be religious. *Manusmriti* and similar treatises put before us seem to be different today from what they were in their original form, as they contain some contradictory statements. In them are found statements that go against morality and reason. Having regard to the spirit of the shruti granthas, untouchability would indeed seem to be a sin. What I have said about untouchability is this: "There is no sanction in the Shastras for untouchability as we know it today." In this statement and the one the pundits have put into my mouth, there is a vast difference. Even if we accept the current smritis as our authority, we do not find in them any basis for untouchability as it is practised today. Even if we accept what the pundits have quoted as authority, three-fourths of our work is done. "Religious processions, marriages, emergencies, rebellions and festivals" are with us even today. Why do the pundits publicly support

untouchability when the smritis say that when any of the circumstances obtain, untouchability should not be observed?

There is no need for me to answer the second question any further. I have made it clear that for my purpose the statement of the pundits is enough. Let us now consider what may be called a Shastra. I have said above that if we treated every work written in Sanskrit as a Shastra then virtue could be proved to be sin and sin, virtue. Thus in the language of the Gita, Shastra can only mean, if the meaning is to be acceptable to reason, the utterances of a sthitaprajna[1]. Therefore, if the pundits wish to lead the people on the right path, along with learning they should also have a steadfast intellect, and they should give up passion and ill will. Till the pundits strive hard, do tapas and become the brahmabhutas[2] of the Gita an ordinary person like me will have no other alternative than to serve the people in the light of his experience.

That leaves the third question. In my humble opinion the pundits have only betrayed their ignorance in asking such a question. It is neither a teaching of Islam to kill the people who belong to other religions nor do the Ulemas have any such desire. All the Muslims are not under their control either. Nothing except the purity of the Hindus can save Hinduism. It is only oneself that can save oneself. According to the saying "if you are good the world will be good" it is our duty to live in amity with all. At any rate my experience teaches me only this.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 11-7-1929

206. WIDOWS AND WIDOWERS

Even since I xpressed my views about widow-remarriage[3] I have been receiving lots of questions. Many which I feel do not need answering, I forget. But the following questions deserve consideration:

1. Up to what age should widows be permitted to remarry?

[1] Man of steadfast intellect

[2] Those who have become one with Brahman; *Vide* Bhagavad Gita, II, 55-72.

[3] *Vide* "A Few Questions", 20-6-1929

2. If, after widow-remarriage has been socially approved, a widow past the specified age should desire to remarry and insists on doing so, how can she be stopped?

3. After widow-remarriage has been socially approved, should widows with children, or those who are no longer young be allowed to remarry if they want to?

4. An article written by Shri Ramanand Chatterjee, Editor, Modern Review, has appeared in Widow's Cause, an English paper published from Lahore. The article suggests that widows should be allowed to remarry up to the age of thirty-five. Is this right?

5. Once the custom of widow-remarriage becomes established, widows will wish to remarry and even those widows who had not so far considered remarriage out of respect for custom will start doing so.

There is no need to answer these questions separately for they are all prompted by a misunderstanding of my views. The rights or latitude allowed to widowers should also be allowed to widows. Otherwise, widows become victims of coercion and coercion is violence, out of which only harm can come. The questions raised about widows are not raised about widowers. It can only be because laws applying to women have been framed by men. If law-making had been the business of women they would not have given themselves fewer rights than men enjoy. In countries where women have a hand in law-making they have had the necessary laws enacted for themselves.

Thus the answer to the above questions is that it is the duty of the father to marry off his young widowed daughter. As regards the rest no obstacles should beplaced in the way of those who wish to remarry.

There is no reason to believe that when such an arrangement comes into effect all widows would remarry. In those countries where widow-remarriage is allowed all the widows do not remarry, nor do all the widowers. Only when widowhood is observed voluntarily is it worthy of praise. Enforced widowhood is to be condemned and leads to promiscuity. I know of many widows who do not wish to remarry though there are no restrictions imposed on them.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 11-7-1929

207. LETTER TO VITHALBHAI J. PATEL

SABARMATI,
July 11, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your kind letter. I think it is impossible to prevent our meeting from becoming public property. I suggest a way out. If you take the metre-gauge from Delhi, you cannot avoid Ahmedabad. I could join you at Kalol or Mehsana and we could have an hour to ourselves unless you could break journey at Ahmedabad. If however either of these courses is inconvenient to you and if you think it absolutely necessary that we should meet, I shall gladly come down to Bombay on 31st.

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/70

208. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

July 11, 1929

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL,

What is the news about you? Moti should be sent here for some length of time. I hear she has epilepsy. She is losing weight. If she comes here we can try some remedy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12144

209. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 12, 1929

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I understand what you write about Bijolia. We have invariably found amazing results wherever truth and non-violence were sincerely employed. In response to your letter I wrote out one to Kshemanandji

on the same day. I myself do not know that Kshemanandji has not himself understood my point of view. His was very clear but you may ask him when you come or write to him. Send Ramnarayanji over here whenever he wants to come. I hope you know that his wife will live apart in the women's section, or don't you?

I had fever just for two days. My experiment with the diet has nothing to do with it. The experiment continues. I am pleased to know that Vaijanathji's book has been well received.

Please do not bother yourself about giving up milk. I myself cannot as yet claim complete success in my experiment of giving up milk. But I am pulling on somehow, becuase my insistence on giving up milk is my own and also long standing. I am distressed when I take milk. I get the almonds wiped with a clean dry piece of cloth andpounded fine along with the skin. The powder turns to something like ghee. Formerly, I used to skin them after soaking them in water. Later, I came to know that the skin too contained some salts. These ought not to be wasted. Moreover, the skin is certainly laxative. If you try the experiment of almonds you must take one of these, viz., tomatoes, cabbage leaves, fresh tandalajo[1] . From these one obtains the vitamin which is to be found predominantly in green leaves alone. Nowadays it is widely believed that this vitamin is essential. Green leaves, tomatoes or cabbage must be taken uncooked. Vitamin A is destroyed by the mere applying of heat. I do not think any part of your letter now remains unanswered.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 6065.Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

210. TELEGRAM TO NAGESHWARA RAO

[On or after *July 12, 1929*][2]

NAGESHWARA RAO

POSITION COMPLICATED TRYING SEND "NAVAJIVAN" MANAGER DISCUSS WITH YOU AND DECIDE FOR HIMSELF.

From a microfilm: S.N. 15425

[1] A variety of edible leaves

[2] This was sent in reply to the addressee's telegram dated July 12, 1929 from Madras which read:"Former Press decree 3,500. Paper merchant warrant 3,000. Arranging press secruity 7,000. Please remit telegraph transfer."

211. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

July 13, 1929

CHI. MATHURADAS,

How is it that Dilip has not yet recovered? He used to be so healthy. Some lapse on his part must be the cause of his falling ill. When you are fit enough for the journey and go to Almora, I think he will regain his health. Our relations with people at Almora are such that when you go there you will feel at home.

I shall have to go to Allahabad on the 24th[1]. I shall be back here by the 29th. I shall go *via* Agra.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

121 FORT STREET

FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

212. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

July 13, 1929

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL,

I have your letter. When Moti comes here after two or three months I would certainly not be here. Moreover it is not good to let such a disease drag on in this way. What is the hitch in sending Moti immediately?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12145

[1] For the Congress Working Committee meeting

213. MEANING OF THE TERM 'FADDIST'

Readers have provided useful assistance in giving the meaning of the word 'faddist'. The equivalent of this word in Gujarati (*dhuni*) was sent in by four persons. One of themis a lady who does not know English. However, from the definition that I had given of it, she readily thought of the word 1dhuni' and that is the word which comes nearest in meaning to the word 'faddist'. Some others had suggested the Gujarati equivalent of the word 'crazy' (chakram). A faddist is never a crazy individual. In English, there is a good word for the latter type of person…a 'madcap'. The other word that was suggested was dadharigo; that, however, will not do.

For those who know both English and Gujarati, it will be an interesting pastime to find out the equivalents in one language of words in the other, and if anyone compiles such a dictionary, it will be a useful thing. It is not the function of the dictionary I have in mind to make sentences and thereby give the meaning of a Gujarati word in English and vice versa. In the dictionary which I visualize, only the equivalents of words that are used in daily life in either of those two languages are given in both languages. Anyone who is a diligent lover of the language can compile such a concise dictionary within a short period of time. Such a small dictionary will prove very useful to those like me who do not wish to use English words while speaking Gujarati. Anyone who has the ability, the interest and the time to spare should compile such a dictionary. If it is sent over to me and if it is found useful, Navajivan will be prepared to publish it and pay something for it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-7-1929

214. HOW TO DESCRIBE THEIR MAJESTY?

Although both Simla and Darjeeling are in the Himalayas, in neither of these places could I get an idea of their grandeur. I stayed in these places only for a short while and they looked like British colonies to me. It was in Almora that I got some idea of what the Himalayas are. But for the Himalayas, there would be no Ganga, Jamuna, Brahmaputra and Indus; if the Himalayas were not there, there would be no rainfall and these rivers would not be there, and without rainfall India would become a desert like the Sahara. Our far-

sighted ancestors who knew this and who were always grateful to God for the gifts that were bestowed on them turned the Himalayas into a place of pilgrimage. Thousands of Hindus have sacrificed their lives in these parts in their search for God. These persons were not insane. It is as a result of their tapas that the Hindu faith and India herself still endure.

In Kausani, while looking at the row of snow-capped Himalayan heights glittering in the sunlight, I wondered how different types of people would react to the sight of those grand white peaks. Let me unburden my mind by sharing with the reader the thoughts that overpowered me again and again at that time.

If children were to see that sight, they would say to themselves that that was a mountain made of starfeni[1] , that they would like to run up to it and, sitting on top of it, go on eating that sweet. Anyone who is as crazy about the spinning-wheel as I am would say that someone has peeled the cotton pod, separated the seed from the cotton, carded the latter and made a mountain of cotton like an inexhaustible stock of silk and remark, 'How stupid the people of this country were that despite this wealth of cotton, they roamed about half-naked and half-starved!' If a devout Parsi happened to come across this sight, he would bow down to the Sun-God and say: 'Look at these mountains which resemble our dasturs[2] clad in milk-white puggrees just taken out of boxes and in gowns which are equally clean and freshly-laundered and ironed, who look handsome as they stand motionless and still with folded hands, engrossed in having the darshan[3] of the sun.' A devout Hindu, looking at these glittering peaks which collect upon themselves water from distant dense clouds would say: 'This is god Siva Himself, the Ocean of compassion, and who by holding the waters of the Ganga within His own white matted hair saves India from a deluge.'

Shankaracharya[4] had roamed about in Almora. Even today I can hear him say, 'This is indeed a marvellous sight, but all this is an illusion created by God. The Himalayas do not really exist, I do not exist and you do not exist. Brahman alone is real. It alone is the truth, while the world is illusory. Repeat, therefore, that while Brahman is the only reality, the world is unreal.'

[1] A sweet resembling in appearance white thread.
[2] Priest.
[3] Sight of a holy person or thing
[4] Eighth-century philosopher

Oh, reader! The true Himalayas exist within our hearts. True pilgrimage, or supreme effort on the part of all human beings, consists in taking shelter in that cave and having darshan of Siva there.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-7-1929

215. IF SPINNERS ALSO WEAVE?

Shri Jethalal Govindji's self-confidence and enthusiasm are most extraordinary. He has sent me the following report[1] which deserves consideration.

Where a spinner can weave, he is being encuraged to do so; however, it should be admitted that this is not being done with the same amount of fervour as shown by Shri Jethalal. Such enthusiasm can be found only in an experienced person. It is obviously desirable that all the processes involved in making khadi, including weaving it, should find a place in the farmer's household. It is for the sake of weaving that emphasis is laid on carding and spinning. However, if we stress all these activities equally, there is danger of the importance of spinning being lost sight of. Once the activity of spinning becomes established, weaving will automatically find a place in the farmer's household. An army commander who has besieged a wall, does not start shelling the entire wall, but rather concentrates his attack upona small portion of it and makes a hole in it. He regards himself as having triumphed when the first hole is made. The mason who is engaged in the process of demolishing a wall does not bring down his hammer upon all the bricks but rather strikes a blow at a single key brick; once that crumbles, in an instant he knocks down all the rest with the help of a crowbar. A somewhat similar argument applies to the stress laid on spinning. This argument does not apply to Shri Jethalal. He should not limit his self-confidence at all. It does, however, apply to the patience of those who feel dizzy on reading this

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had argued that, if a carder were also a spinner, he would card cotton so well that the yarn would not snap while spinning; that if a spinner were also a weaver he would spin in such a way that the yarn would not snap while weaving; if a weaver were also a salesman, he would weave well enough to attract buyers.

letter. If the talk about weaving scares them, let them ignore it. For all those who can understand them the calculations worked out by Shri Jethalal are full of hope and guidance. We have not yet even touched those skeletons of whom I speak so often and whose number exceeds a crore. Compared to these, the class of persons whom we have been able to reach is better off. These human skeletons do not even have room to keep looms, many are even without homes and roam about like wild animals. For them, the takli is the only tool available.

When they get this, their eyes will regain lustre. Weaving can only come as the next step. Shri Jethalal may not even have come across such individuals. I have seen a few such persons here and there. Even after covering much ground, I did not have the good fortune of visiting their homes, or one may say that my penance has not been adequate enough. They live at a great distance from the railway line. In those skeletons dwells the real Lord of the Poor.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-7-1929

216. ABOUT "NAVAJIVAN"

I have before me a pile of opinions sent by "lovers of *Navajivan*" regarding the publishing of news in this magazine. Every day I am inundated with letters on this subject. The readers have discussed the matter well and in an interesting manner. If numbers alone are to be considered, the majority welcomes the suggestion for the inclusion of news items. However, the number of persons who have opposed this idea is not small either. And the reader will well understand that it is likely that there is deeper reflection behind the negative answers. One of these is as follows:[1]

Another gentleman has written in Hindi to this effect: 'I read Navajivan in order to find happiness from a vision of truth. I do not at all like the suggestion made by the "lover of Navajivan".'

The above-mentioned letters contain much that is in the same strain. I have merely given the substance of these. Let us put aside

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that during the nine years that he had been reading Navajivan he had no difficulty in understanding an article because no news items had been published along with them. Young India and Navajivan were better than Indian Opinion because they contained "sacred articles" and no news.

their praise of Navajivan. The sum and substance of their opinions is as follows: 'The scope of Navajivan has already been defined. By adding to its size, it would lose both ways.' I feel that this argument is correct. The temptation to include news items is indeed great. However, it appears to be some sort of a craze. No periodical can serve several purposes. The task of Navajivan is to serve the cause of swaraj. Hence my dharma is to engage my colleagues' time merely in trying to achieve that end. To utilize their energy even for other worthy causes would be as good as retarding the cause of swaraj. This then is a fundamental consideration.

While considering the matter with Shri Mohanlal, I find that there are many practical difficulties too. News items cannot at all be included without increasing the price of Navajivan and this I regard as undesirable. Some persons are indeed of opinion that news items should be included even if it means increasing the price of Navajivan. However, such generosity should not be taken advantage of. Navajivan has to reach even the poorest of the poor sections of society. If at all it were possible for me to do so, I would lowers its price, but would not increase it.

Moreover, there is a difficulty in the selection of news items. What items are to be included and what are to be excluded? The tone of the letters written by many persons implies that, since we do not get correct reports these days, Navajivan will be able to do that job. This is an illusion. The latter too, would have to depend upon inland and foreign telegrams and newspapers. Navajivan is not in a position to employ its own correspondents and get reports from them. No newspaper in India is in such a position. The cables sent by Reuter and such other agencies are not reliable. Almost all of them are motivated by self-interest, are hurriedly despatched, involve partiality and are provocative. Which of such news items should be included and which excluded?

I see other practical difficulties also. Hence, I have finally arrived at the conclusion that there is no room for news items in Navajivan. However, I found this discussion most interesting. I am indebted to those who took part in it. In particular, I have been enabled to understand my responsibility. Much remains to be done in the way in which Navajivan is being conducted. I shall attempt to do this if possible. I have to abandon many subjects owing to lack of time and to my tours. I shall try and take them up. And I shall take care to

bear in mind the original idea behind the suggestion, i.e., I shall try and give facts which have a bearing on any incident referred to in an article. In this manner, there will be no difficulty in understanding the subject-matter.

My suggetion to those who hanker after news is that they should get it from elsewhere and they will lose nothing if they give up craving for it. Balfour was Prime Minister of England; he was a highly learned man. He had said that he never read newspapers; his secretaries put up to him anything that he ought to know. This statememt was neither exaggerated nor arrogant. He did not feel any necessity for reading newspapers. Being of a studious disposition, he did not wish to give his time to reading newspapers. What would villagers gain by reading newspapers? They would come to know of the progress of motion pictures, of the progress made in aviation, stories of murders, facts describing the various revolutions that are going on in the world, dirty descriptions of dirty proceedings of law-suits, news regarding horse races, the stock exchange and motor-car accidents. Mostly items of news mean only these things.

Of course, villagers, too, should have a knowledge of history and geography. There are other means for obtaining this knowledge. That is the task of the Vidyapith. This problem involves the education of the men and women dwelling in villages and not that of rural children. Kakasaheb has taken up this task with the help of the charitable gift made by Shri Nagindas. With the grace of God, we shall be able to see its good results within a short period. It has been decided to publish an educational supplement to Navajivan. Whatever can be done through it will certainly be done. Moreover, whatever news items are necessary for mental development, for an understanding of the world and for forging unity with it will readily be available in the supplement to Navajivan or in the second half of it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-7-1929

217. LETTER TO A RUSSIAN CORRESPONDENT[1]

SABARMATI (INDIA),
July 14, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your kind and interesting letter for which I thank you. I may not have been able clearly to express my view on war and non-violence in the pages of *Young India*, but you may be sure that I am not likely to take part in any armed conflict that may arise anywhere including my own country.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9703. Courtesy: The Embassy of the U.S.S.R. in India

218. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

July 14 [1929][2]

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

Your letter. What has been said about that lady applies equally to the men. As for you, you must stop worrying and seek the support of Ramanama. All will be well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 199

219. LETTER TO JETHALAL JOSHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 14, 1929

BHAI JETHALAL,

You must obtain a testimonial from the Vidyapith; only then can something be done.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1349

[1] Exhibited at the Gandhi Darshan Exhibition (1969), New Delhi, by the Cultural Department of the USSR Embassy

[2] From the postmark

220. LETTER TO ALBERT M. TODD[1]

July 15,1929

It is kind of you to offer me pecuniary assistance if I satisfy you that I am in need. Though I always remain in need by the very nature of the philosophy of life that I have adopted, my needs are supplied by those in India who are interested in the activities that I am engaged in. I send you herewith the constitution of the Ashram[2] which will give you some idea of the various activities.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 15213

221. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

July 15, 1929

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

The customary letter from you has been missing for so long. why? It is all well here. About thirty of us are carrying on the experiement of uncooked grain.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3348

222. A LETTER

SABARMATI,
July 15, 1929

Even the most alert person may unknowingly speak and write what is not true. . . .[3] Therefore silence is regarded as an adornment of truth. Your Gujarati can be improved if you wish but what will you do by improving it? I would not even like that you should spend your time in such an effort. Intelligence has nothing to do with grammar.

[1] In reply to his letter dated April 25, 1929, which read: "Because I wholly approve of you and your work, I would like to send some money, perhpas five hundred dollars. . . . If I find that you are in need of help, I will be glad to give, so far as I am able. . . ."

[2] *Vide* "Satyaagraha Ashram"

[3] Omission as in the source

There have been many great men in the world who did not know grammar. Where did Lord Buddha go to learn it? God has granted you intelligence, faith, etc., and that wealth is not little.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/73

223. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

July 15, 1929

DEAR SISTER,

I have your sorrowful letter. What should I write to you? God alone can give you strength. May it be well with you.

You should not start on uncooked food all of a sudden. Leafy vegetables can be certainly taken raw. But if you want to experiment, you should start with leafy vegetables, fruit and milk. There is no harm in taking a little salt.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

224. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

July 15, 1929

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

I have your letter. We can achieve very little through public agitation in the States. Do what you can by discussing things personally with the authorities. Or else call off the public meetings.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 755

225. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Silence Day[*July 17, 1929*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN SENIOR,

I did shrink when I permitted you to resume the medical role. But it will not matter since you will exercise it with care. Make as little use of it as you can. Improve your own health. Do not be embarrassed

[1] As in the source, though the Silence Day fell on the 15th.

on account of the change of rooms. Let these changes go on. Indeed, do we ever have a room of our own? Aparigraha[1] is an attitude of the mind. If we regard a thing like a pen as belonging to us we commit parigraha. We should live as and where the world lets us live. A perfect spirit of service will be born only if one could conduct oneself in this manner. Be very firm regarding Krishnamaiyadevi and Maitri.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G.S. Gangabehnne, pp.25-6

226. NOTES

A GOOD SOUL PASSES AWAY

Dr. Ruth P. Hume writes from Ahmednagar:

> A cablegram came today telling of the passing on [sic] of my father…Rev. R.A. Hume, D.D.…on June 24th.
>
> I wanted to tell you, as you and my father were personal friends. And I thought possibly you might care to mention it in *Young India*. Of his life and work you know…also that he was born in Bombay in 1847, returned to India as a missionary in Ahmednagar in 1875, and retired to America in 1926. He had been active until recently. But he was in poor health. So we would rejoice for his release and give God thanks for his long life of service.

Yes, indeed, I have pleasant recollectionsof the deceased friend. He carried on an extensive correspondence with me both whilst he was here and after he had gone to America. I recognized in his letters his warm-hearted affection for India. He rendered assistance to Dinabandhu Andrews whilst he was touring in that great continent. I share with his daughter the rejoicings for the release of this good soul from the earthly tabernacle. Death such as this affords no cause for sorrow or condolence. Death always is but more especially in cases like this a”sleep and a forgetting”.

ANTI-VACCINATION

Sjt. Krishnagopal Dutt of Sialkot wires:

> Secretary, Anti-vaccination League, Palghat, was imprisoned because he refused getting his son vaccinated. Refer my statements Associatied Press.

[1] Non-possessiveness

Pity people regard things other than political unimportant. Poor Secretary imprisoned, noble cause, but country's Press callously silent. Kindly express your strong feelings in Press.

I congratulate the Secretary on his incarceration for the sake of conscience. But I have no anger in me for the indifference of the public or the Press over the incident. I am and have been for years a confirmed anti-vaccinationist but I recognize that I must not expect public support for my views. Anti-vaccination has no backing from the orthodox medical opinion. A medical man who expresses himself against vaccination loses caste. Tremendous pecuniary interests too have grown round vaccination. A sort of temporary immunity from smallpox is gained by vaccination though at much cost otherwise to the body and certainly to moral fibre. But all this argument often based on solid experience counts for nothing against the tangible though temporary immunity from smallpox, which the person who has the filthy vaccine injected into his body gets. It will be thus to the end of the world. The State can only act as it has in the case of the Secretary. It will do so even when full swaraj is established. It behoves reformers then to be patient with an unbelieving public and a Press which generally refuses to move in advance of public opinion. This imprisonment of the Secretary must be regarded by us anti-vaccinationists as a boon, but it ceases to be that when we parade or exploit it. Such imprisonments are a prelude to reform when they are taken quietly and gracefully. Soon there would be a conscience-saving clause in the law. But before it comes those who do not believe in vaccination have to prove their immunity by following a strictly hygienic life and by imposing isolation on themselves in times of epidemic. I read in the Press that the Secretary fasted as a protest. I am convinced that this fasting was wrong and uncalled for. You fast against a wrong. Here there was no wrong done by the court. A civil resister cheerfully accepts imprisonment for his resistance. Again, you may not fast against all wrongs. Fasting to be good has well-defined limitations which I have often discussed in these columns. When the limit is crossed, it becomes ludicrous when it is not worse.

SACRIFICIAL SPINNING

The Secretary of the A.I.S.A. has addressed the various khadi organizations to enlist members of the A.I.S.A. which is the same thing as saying that they should canvass for increase in sacrificial spinning. There is unlimited scope for it, if we but set our minds to the

task. Hawking khadi is becoming popular after a great deal of whipping up. But it is not yet realized that hawking is useless if there is no khadi to hawk. Spinning for wages cannot be organized in a moment. It requires money and workers. Sacrificial spinning requires no money and few workers if the spirit of sacrifice and an appreciation of spinning for sacrifice can be evoked. I hope the appeal made by Sjt. Banker will meet with prompt and adequate response.

Young India, 18-7-1929

227. AN ANDHRA HERO

During the recent Andhra tour I was presented with a portrait of a young man as that of a great patriot. I did not know anything about Alluri Shri Rama Raju. Upon inquiry I was told many stories of his exploits. I thought them to be interesting and inspiring as an instance of sustained bravery and genius, though in my opinion misdirected. I therefore asked for an authentic record. Sjt. M. Annapurniah, editor of a Telugu paper called The Congress, has kindly sent it to me. I have considerably abridged it.[1] Though I have no sympathy with and cannot admire armed rebellion I cannot withhold my homage from a youth so brave, so sacrificing, so simple and so noble in character as young Shri Rama Raju. If the facts collected by Sjt. Annapurniah are true, Raju was (if he is really dead) not a fituri[2] but a great hero. Would that the youth of the country cultivated Shri Rama Raju's daring, courage, devotion and resourcefulness and dedicated them for the attainment of swaraj through strictly non-violent means. To me it is daily growing clearer that if the teeming millions whom we the articulate middle classes have hitherto suppressed for our selfish purpose are to be raised and roused, there is no other way save through non-violence and truth. A nation numbering millions needs no other means.

> Much is not known of the early life of the great Alluri Shri Rama Raju. He was born of a respectable Kshatriya family in a village called Mogallu. in the West Godavari District . . . He studied up to the fifth form at various places

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.
[2] Trouble-maker

in Andhra Desha and was never known to be bright at school. He was a good singer, and a promising young poet . . . .

He was not known to have any great sympathy with the non-cooperation programme. His subsequent confessions and conduct show violence. But he patiently waited and allowed non-co-operation to have its trial. In the whole programme of Gandhiji boycott of courts and liquor appealed to him. He started in the Agency tracts of Godavari and Vizagapatam Districts a campaign of prohibition. His piety and devotion attracted huge crowds around him. His word was law to the Agency folk. They were guileless and his eloquent appeals touched their hearts. 'Don't dance attendance at the courts and don't drink' was his message to the villagers. His message spread like wildfire. Not one in the Agency but responded to his bugle call. A new consciousness dawned on the innocent folk. People gave up drink in large numbers. Courts were deserted. A number of panchayat courts sprang up in the villages and justice was administered locally. Raju is reported to have been a regular khadi wearer. From the confessions in the fituri trials, it is clear that Raju supplied only khadi uniforms to his troops. Sjt. Rallapalli Kasanna, a non-co-operator and khadi producer of Tuni, was put on trial for having supplied khaki khadi uniforms to Shri Rama Raju. Shri Rama's temple was his abode. There he used to perform tapas. Huge numbers flocked to have his darshan every day. They used to listen to his utterances which were, from all accounts, reported to be thrilling. He used to deliver spiritual messages, but in the milk of spirituality there was invariably the sugar of patriotism. People drank this milk with great fervour. What was the result? A young sannyasi of twenty-five, preaching revolution to illiterate Koyas, slow to move, but unapproachable, when they do move. The bureaucracy at once scented it. . . . The Mahommedan deputy collector and the saint Raju were alleged to have met. Nothing is known as to what transpired between them both. But the result was that he recommended to the Madras Government a grant of land of thirty acres to Raju with extensive facilities to undertake cultivation. The grant was actually made. The patriot was thus sought to be made a farmer.

But no! The patriot remained a patriot. He was not the man to be content with thirty acres, he wanted to wrest the whole of India from the usurping hands of the foreign bureaucracy. That was the ambition of his life. He read the Gita. He realized his svadharma. A vision of free India dawned upon him. And he quietly started his work. The situation in the Agency tracts helped him very much. He fully exploited it to the country's advantage.

The scene was the Gudem Taluk in the Agency. In the Agency, there is not the ordinary rule obtaining in the plains. . . . The Koya had lost his

elementary rights. He could not fell one tree in the forest as before for cooking his food. His cow could not freely graze on the forest pasture as before. Thus the whole of the Agency was seething with discontent.

. . . Rama Raju exploited these local grievances in the Agency for a fight for liberty. Raju was so much loved by the Agency people that they refused to give any information about him in spite of the greatest amount of coercion. . .

There were on the whole six encounters and in the first five Raju had a decided victory. The British requisitioned the services of the Malabar Force, while special troops arrived from Assam also. There was deadly fight... At one time Raju's forces were surprised by the enemy while asleep and Raju himself narrowly escaped death after heroically attacking the enemy. The last was also a surprise attack against Raju's forces and after desperate fighting the latter were vanquished. That practically was the end of the great struggle for liberty. Rumours were current in those days, that Raju was very much depressed to hear that the Agency people were put to enormous hardships by the Government by way of demanding supplies, infliction of punitive taxes and other kinds of coercion. This depression was to some extent responisible for his defeat or surrender....

But what about Raju?... His alleged death is shrouded in mystery.

Young India, 18-7-1929

228. SWORD OF DAMOCLES

Section 124A is hung over our heads like the sword of Damocles where we are feasting or fasting. It has descended upon Dr. Satyapal's devoted head whilst preparing the political feast for the Congressmen and women who will flock to Lahore during the Christmas week. Two year's rest in a prison plus a fine of Rs.500 is the reward that the Punjab Government had awarded to Dr. Satyapal for his having dared to love his country well. Dr. Satyapal has been adjudged guilty of sedition because he wants freedom for his country from misrule. Where is the Indian, be he Liberal or Nationalist, Mussalman or Hindu, who is not knowingly guilty of sedition, if Dr. Satyapal is? I have read again and again the speech which was the subject-matter of the indictment against Dr. Satyapal. A diligent man could easily find from the daily Press speeches much stronger than Dr. Satyapal's. Disaffection has been described by a commentator on the Section as want of affection. He goes so far as to say that he who

has no affection for the Government established by law is guilty of disaffection. I do not know any Indian who has actually affection for the Government as it is today established. It is a rape of the word 'law'. It is established by the naked sword, kept ready to descend upon us at the will of the arbitrary rulers in whose appointment the people have no say.

Dr. Satyapal's incarceration therefore suggests a wide agitation for the repeal of Section 124A. But repeal of that Section and the like means repeal of the existing system of government which means attainment of swaraj. Therefore the force required really to repeal that Section is the force required for the attainment of swaraj. It may be perfectly possible to make a show of repeal and retain by a concealed route the same powers now exercised under the Section. No such dodge will or should satisfy the people at this stage. If therefore we feel that Dr. Saytapal has been wronged and in him the whole movement, we must intensify the movement and evolve a government for which we can have real affection, which we can call our own. There will then be no sedition on a nation-wide scale, no political murders or attempts at such with the secret sympathy of a people tired or superimposed rule. That we have not yet changed the condition which we know to be intolerable is not proof of our satisfaction with it, it is proof no doubt of our helplessness. But that helplessness is fast going. Whether it is to find expression in anarchy and bloodshed or in well-ordered civil disobedience remains to be seen. Much will depend upon the wisdom of the English rulers, more however will depend upon ourselves. If we will look less towards Downing Street or White Hall and more towards ourselves, we shall shed our impatience. We shall then be too busy building up to be impatient. I have a suspicion that many of us want swaraj as a gift instead of earning it by the sweat of our brows.

Young India, 18-7-1929

229. UNFIRED FOOD EXPERIMENT[1]

Unusual and unexpected interest has been evoked by my experiment in unfired food. It has given rise to interesting and

[1] An article similar to this appeared in *Navajivan*, 14-7-1929, under the title "Unfired Food".

instructive correspondence. I observe that there is quite a number of men living on unfired food and many more who have at one time lived on such food. My correspondents will excuse me for my not acknowledging all such letters individually. But they may rest assured that I have taken in whatever was new and acceptable in their suggestions. Several have asked me for further information on the progress of my experiment.

The experiment still continues. There have been moments when I have weakly doubted the wisdom of continuing it. This was when extreme weakness had overtaken me during the Andhra tour. But my faith in the correctness of the theory behind unfired food and my partiality for it are so great that I would not easily give up the experiment. For it has for me a value not merely sanitary but also economic and moral or spiritual. It is of great importance to national workers who have to work in different parts of the country often in trying circumstances. This food surmounts all the difficulty arising from the different food habits of the different provinces. But of this more if I can write of the experiment with fairly absolute confidence. At the time of writing, all I can say is that it seems to have done me no harm. Dr. Ansari, who knows my body well, examined it carefully whilst I was in Delhi on the 5th instant and was of opinion that he had never found me to be in better health than now. My blood pressure (systolic) which after the breakdown at Kolhapur[1] had never been found to be below 155 was now registered at 118, pulse pressure at 46. Though 118 he thought to be subnormal, it was not bad sign as I had just risen from a slight attack of malaria and I was then living on juicy fruits only.

My resolve to continue the experiment has been considerably strengthened by reading Dr. Muthu's great work on tuberculosis and Colonel McCarrison's instructive and carefully-written food primer. The former contains an illuminating chapter on diet and the latter which is dedicated to the children of India is popularly written and gives in a very concise manner all the information on nutrition that a layman need possess. It is a book which needs to be read with caution. It puts, naturally for the author but unduly according to my experiences, much emphasis on the necessity of animal food such as meat or milk. The unlimited capacity of the plant world to sustain

[1] On March 26, 1927; for the"Medical Opinion", *Vide* "Medical Opinions", 29-3-1927

man at his highest is a region yet unexplored by modern medical science which through force of habit pins its faith on the shambles or at least milk and its by-products. It is a duty which awaits discharge by Indian medical men whose tradition is vegetarian. The fast-developing researches about vitamins and the possiblity of getting the most important of them directly from the sun, bid fair to revolutionize many of the accepted theories and beliefs propounded by the medical science about food. Be that as it may, both these authors seem to me to agree that it is best to take all foods in their natural state if we are to derive the highest benefit from them and especially if we are not todestroy some of the important vitamins they contain. They opine that fire destroys some of the vitamins and the most essential salts and vitamins are removed when the covering of wheat is removed for the attainment of extreme fineness or of rice for its policy.

In my previous article, I have warned the reader against copying my experiment[1]. But after two months' trial, I am able to say with confidence that anyone may try it provided he retains a small quantity of milk and ghee. Though my own experiment is both unfired and milkless, I am not yet in a position to rcommend avoidance of milk and ghee. Though my belief in the possibility of avoiding milk and ghee without endangering health is unshakable, I cannot claim as yet to have found a combination of vegetarian foods that will invariably produce the results claimed today for milk. These authors are undoubtedly of opinion that a little addition of milk and…or…ghee (pure) raises the food value of vegetarian proteids and fats and promotes assimilation of the latter.

I may now tell the reader what I am taking at present:

Sprouted wheat	Totals	8
Pounded almonds	”	4
Whole almonds	”	1
Green vegetable, e.g., marrow(dudhi) or cucumber or the like (grated)	”	16
Raisins or fresh fruits	”	20
Lemons	”	2
Honey	Tolas	4

Neither the quantity nor the variety is absolutely fixed. Often I avoid almonds or wheat or both. Sometimes I take sprouted gram and

[1] *Vide* “Dr. Sunderland's Volume”, 13-6-1929 & “Raw v. Cooked Food”

grated cocoanut instead of wheat and almonds. The reader need not take honey. He may take gur[1] but in no case white sugar which is decidedly harmful. Sugars are best obtained from raisins, figs or dates all of which should be taken in moderation. He may increase the quantity of wheat if he finds it to be insufficient. In the beginning stages there will probably be a feeling of emptiness. It will be due to the fact that by ill usage the stomach is distended. Till it assumes its natural size, the emptiness should be put up with. It may be partly overcome by taking juicy fruit or a little more vegetable or better still by drinking plenty of water, never by exceeding the maximum quantity of wheat or gram. Milk may undoubtedly be increased if the purse allows it. Over thirty comrades have taken up the experiment with me. The maximum fixed for them is:

Sprouted wheat	Tolas	20
” gram	”	8
Vegetables	”	16
Cocoanut	”	8
Khismis	”	4
Lemon	”	1
Milk	lb.	
Fresh fruit when available		
Ghee instead of cocoanut	*Tolas*	2

The quantity of milk and ghee is the minimum. Those who need more are at liberty to take more. We all take a little salt. I omitted it for one month. But some medical friends have warned me against giving it up. And fancying that I was feeling weak or being really weak, I began taking salt in Almora. The quantity taken by me is not more than 30 grains during the day. Honey is taken 3 times a day separately with hot water. Too much stress cannot be laid on the great necessity of thorough mastication. We have so ill used our teeth and gums that we now find it difficult to make proper use of them.

Young India, 18-7-1929

[1] Jaggery

230. ARTLESSNESS OR AUDACITY?

The following correspondence[1] will be read with interest.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER'S BUNGALOW, GONDA,
June 19, 1929

THE SECRETARY,

ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE,

SIR,

I write to draw your attention to the famine in Gonda ... They[2] have done their part and the public are beginning to do theirs. I need money to relieve poverty outside the famine area and am receiving subscriptions from private persons.

I appeal to you as to an organization which claims to promote the country's welfare not only political but also social and economic . . . you have promised £1000-0-0 to the League against Imperialism; will you not give as much to the league against starvation?

Prominent members of the Congress are collecting funds to save from prison thirty-one alleged Communists at Meerut; will you not do the same to save from famine five lakhs of hungry men at Gonda.

Moreover if you wish to further two causes, charity and politics at a single stroke, will you send me all the foreign clothes you collect? I will despatch them to this wild tract on the Nepal border where they will no longer be an eyesore to good patriots. If you commute the sentence on European clothes from burning to banishment, I guarantee that they will never return. You will not, I think, wish any longer to burn clothes when you realize that there are thousands of your countrymen wearing rags which are too scant even for decency. True patriotism is to help your fellow-countrymen in their need, and I appeal to you for a generous contribution both of money and clothes.

Yours sincerely,

B.J.K. HALLOWES

PRESIDENT, FAMINE RELIEF FUND, GONDA

B.J.K. HALLOWES, ESQ.
PRESIDENT, FAMINE RELIEF FUND
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER'S BUNGALOW, GONDA (U.P.)

SIR,

Your letter of the 19th of June was delivered to me on the evening of the 24th June . . .

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here
[2] The Government

Conditions in the district of Gonda and in its neighbouring district of Bahraich are terrible enough . . . Surely there must be something very seriously wrong somewhere in the machinery of the State or the structure of society or both.

The days when we could cast the blame on the gods for all our ills are past. Modern science claims to have curbed to a large extent the tyranny and the vagaries of nature . . .

Your relief works must bring some solace, however temporary, to many. They are certainly to be appreciated. But do you not think that all this charitable relief does not touch even the fringe of the problem of Indian poverty? . . . It is certain that the charity of the wealthy does not put down poverty and famine relief measures do not put an end to conditions which cause famines.

The whole raison d'etre of the National Congress is to put an end to such terrible conditions by removing the root causes. The Congress is convinced that only by changing the whole system of government and the structure of society can poverty be conquered and a measure of social well-being introduced . . . it is for this reason that the Congress associates itself with other organizations like the League against Imperialism, which also attack the root cause of poverty and inequality.

If the Government at present functioning in India were really desirous of attacking and eradicating poverty they would do something much more and vastly different from the petty relief they give in times of acute distress. They would feel that in a country where there is such terrible poverty it is a tragic absurdity to have an expensive and top-heavy system of administration. They would feel that the whole political and economic system they have built up in the country, and the social structure they have bolstered up, have impoverished the country with great efficiency and rapidity, and this process continues. They would realize that the responsibility for this poverty is theirs and therefore the speediest way of ending it is to remove themselves from the scene of action, liquidate their Government and make room for others who can tackle the problem with greater disinterestedness and competence than they have shown.

.. . You will want a surer remedy giving more permanent results than the quack's nostrum. I trust that you will appreciate that this sure remedy lies in the complete replacement of the present system of government and a change in the social structure .. . Your co-operation, moral and material, as well as the co-operation of all others who object to the exploitation of a country or a people or a class by another will be welcome.

. . . The Congress believes that even temporary relief should take the form of teaching an auxiliary industry to agriculture which will provide an immediate income now and a welcome addition in better times . . . . The Method of organizing this kind of relief is to encourage carding and hand-spinning by lending and distributing spinning-wheels and cotton. Hand-weaving, of course, automatically benefits by this. If you appreciate this kind of relief and are prepared to co-operate with it, I shall gladly recommend to the All-India Spinners' Association to do what they can in the matter.

Yours sincerely,

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

GENERAL SECRETARY

It is difficult to believe that the Deputy Commissioner's letter is seriously meant. It reads more like a veiled sermon to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru than a request for help. If it is a sincere request for help, the references to the League against Imperialism, the Meerut prisoners and the foreign clothes' burning are irrelevant if not impertinent. The Deputy Commissioner has got the answer he deserved. His request is like that of an army of occupation asking for help from comparatively better-off victims for the worse off, when both could be immediately relieved if the army removed the pressures by withdrawing itself. And why should Government officials expect help from organizations like the Congress which have their own method of dealing with famines and the like? The writer of the letter forgets that Congressmen who desire boycott of foreign cloth cannot consistently give it even to the famine-stricken. It will be in their opinion to perpetuate the state of starvation. Foreign cloth is believed by them to be one of the most potent causes of India's poverty. To make use of that cloth even in times of distress is to put off the day of relief from starvation.

Young India, 18-7-1929

231. SIKHS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Dinabandhu Andrews writing about the Indian settlers in British Columbia says:[1]

. . . the Sikh community in British Columbia have done great credit to India, the Motherland. They have struggled on courageously all these years

[1] Only excerpts are repruduced here.

and have helped one another in a truly brotherly manner. There has never been a case of destitution in which the Khalsa Dewan Society has not come to the rescue. It has done my heart good to see such sturdy independence of character and such manly endurance as has been shown by these brave people.

Secondly, the 'Komagata Maru' trouble is now a thing of the past. The British Columbians are ashamed of what happened and they do not in any way defend it. There has also been some amendment; because now the Sikhs are quite freely allowed to bring in their wives into Canada and many of them have done so. This is one thing accomplished...

One thing still remains, namely citizenship. They have not yet received citizenship, as Indians have done in Australia and New Zealand. Nevertheless, if this were pressed for now, it would surely be granted, and the time is ripe. What is needed is for someone, of noble character and bearing, like Mr. Sastri[1], to go out to Canada as Agent-General and live there. If this were done, then citizenship would certainly follow.

Let me give the conclusion of the whole matter. The world today is drawing closer together. India cannot any longer afford to stand apart. India should have her ambassadors in every great progressive country of the world, making for fellowship and goodwill.

Young India, 18-7-1929

232. THE RUNNING SORE[2]

A Maheshwari young man from Sholapur referring to the question of marriages of child girls with old men writes:[3]

. . . Will you please advise as to the best way peaceful satyagraha can be offered in this behalf?

What, in your opinion, should be considered to be the proper age limit for the bride and the bridegroom, respectively, for marriage? And in what circumstances would you recommend the offering of satyagraha for the prevention of unequal marriages?. . .

Would you kindly let us have your opinion on all these points in the columns of *Hindi Navajivan*?

[1] V.S. Srinivasa Sastri

[2] Originally published in Hindi *Navajivan*, 18-7-1929, this appeared under the title"Notes from Hindi Navajivan". For Pyarelal's introductory note, *Vide* footnote on "Foreign Sugar v. Khadi", 8-8-1929

[3] Only excerpts are reproduced here

There is no doubt that satyagraha is the right thing in such cases. But how to offer it is another question. I have more than once dilated, in my writings, on the limits of satyagraha. Satyagraha presupposes self-discipline, self-control, self-purification, and a recognized social status in the person offering it. A satyagrahi must never forget the distinction between evil and the evil-doer. He must not harbour ill will or bitterness against the latter. He may not even employ needlessly offensive language against the evil person, however unrelieved his evil might be. For it should be an article of faith with every satyagrahi that there is none so fallen in this world but can be converted by love. A satyagrahi will always try to overcome evil by good, anger by love, untruth by truth, himsa by ahimsa. There is no other way of purging the world of evil. Therefore a person who claims to be a satyagrahi always tries by close and prayerful self-introspection and self-analysis to find out whether he is himself completely free from the taint of anger, ill will and such other human infirmities, whether he is not himself capable of those very evils against which he is out to lead a crusade. In self-purification and penance lies half the victory of a satyagrahi. A satyagrahi has faith that the silent and undemonstrativ action of truth and love produces far more permanent and abiding results than speeches or such other showy performances.

But although satyagraha can operate silently, it requires a certain amount of action on the part of satyagrahi. A satyagrahi, for instance, must first mobilize public opinion against the evil which he is out to eradicate, by means of a wide and intensive agitation. When public opinion is sufficiently roused against a social abuse even the tallest will not dare to practise or openly to lend support to it. An awakened and intelligent public opinion is the most potent weapon of a satyagrahi. When a person supports a social evil in total disregard of a unanimous public opinion, it indicates a clear justification for his social ostracism. But the object of social ostracism should never be to do injury to the person against whom it is directed. Social ostracism means complete non-co-operation on the part of society with the offending individual; nothing more, nothing les, the idea being that a person who deliberately sets himself to flout society has no right to be served by society. For all practical purposes this should be enough. Of course, special action may be indicated in special cases and the practice may have to be varied to suit the peculiar features of each individual case.

But what about the sensual old man who even in his decrepitude cannot help his sensuality? Sensuality is blind; it cannot discriminate, it seeks satisfaction anyhow and at any cost. How should society deal with such a man? The reply is, by refusing to provide him with hapless victims. The rule about not giving in marriage any girl below twenty and against her will should be rigorously enforced. The question as to what the old man should do if no girl should be willing to marry him of her own accord naturally arises. Society has no answer to such a question; it is not bound to furnish any. It is concerened only with saving hapless girls from falling victims to blind lust. It is no part of its duty to provide means for the satisfaction of the latter. In practice, however, it will be seen that when purity pervades the social atmosphere it will serve largely to quell the lust of the lustful.

Young India, 8-8-1929

233. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

July 18, 1929

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. On the 26th I shall touch Allahabad. We shall spend two days there. It will be good if you come over then. About coming here it is your duty to obey Father's command. But I believe Father will grant you his permission. Please pass on the enclosed letter wherever it should go.

I have now discontinued wheat and gram. I take only copra, fruits and some vegetable.

You must have your cough completely cured.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3359

234. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 19, 1929

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I do not want to push you to the trouble or expense of coming to Ahmedabad. There is nothing at all to talk about. My only desire is that all the three of you should go to Almora at your earliest and benefit from its climate and natural beauty. I think you will not have any trouble there. I wish Dilip would again become as strong as he was.

I shall be going to Allahabad on the 24th *via* Ajmer-Agra. If you are to catch the train for Kathgodam at Agra and if you are leaving there on the 24th, we can meet at 8.30 on the 25th at Agra. But I consider even that unnecessary.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
121 FORT STREET
FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

235. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

July 20, 1929

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have glanced at the programme. So far as I am concerned it is all right. I think I shall easily stand it. I have not checked it for Mondays.

Pyarelal, Devdas and Kusumbehn will be with me. Vallabhbhai, Mahadev and Manibehn will reach via Jubbulpore. I do not think there will be any other company with me.

You will please not detain me on 28th. I would like to get away by the first train after finishing on 27th.

I hope Kamala is better. I do want to see her healthy and bright when I come to Allahabad.

Yours

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1929. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

236. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

July 20, 1929

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Herewith find the letter from Rajendrababu. Under these circumstances you should , for the present, remain at the Sadaqat Ashram and learn what you can, and in the month of August go to your in-laws' with courage. Having reached there you should serve your elders but observe your own discipline steadfastly. After all you have but to go there. Having pleased your parents-in-law with your humanity, you may come back. If you do not hear from Jayaprakash in the mean while, I think it would be a mistake not to go to them when they are insistent. You should go there but should not observe purdah. You should speak to your father-in-law with courage. If he is cross you should patiently bear with it. His anger will subside when he sees your purity. Even after going there you should insist on continuing your studies. You should speak about Jayaprakash's insistence on English. You should explain that the Gita is essential for inner satisfaction. You may, if you want to, visit me at Allahabad.

Ask me if you fail to understand anything. I shall reach Allahabad on the 25th morning.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3353

237. A LETTER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 20, 1929

I have your letter. I can understand your sorrow. Its remedy is patience and time. I too see the defiance which you do. But the reason

for it is the atmosphere of self-indulgence prevailing in the world today. Wherever I have personal contacts, I try to restrain it as best as I can. One can do so only by pointing out the fine distinction between self-indulgence and self-restraint. I am of the view that it can never be done by suppressing genuine freedom. I see in the present age that parents, after educating their children, overstep their limits and try to prevent the children from making use of their education. How do you expect the children to behave in such circumstances?

In publicly touching the Ashram women I do not claim the least little yogic strength. However I do claim fatherly love. I try to observe the restrictions which I believe even a father should observe. I do not understand in what other way I can behave with the women in the Ashram. Men and women have separate dwellings in the Ashram. Married women staying in the Ashram with their husbands of course live in the same rooms with them.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/75

238. MY NOTES

SUPPLEMENT TO "NAVAJIVAN"

What Kakasaheb decided long ago has at last been put into effect today. Hence along with this issue, the reader will receive with no extra cost a supplement to Navajivan entitled Shikshan ane Sahitya. The management of Navajivan have taken a risk by resolving in this manner to publish this supplement, because Navajivan is not going to receive any financial benefit by doing so. Behind this venture is, indeed, the expectation that lovers of literature will purchase more copies of these issues of *Navajivan* for the sake of this supplement. Regardless of whether that hope materializes or not, it will be brought out every month around the full-moon day. I hope that everyone will go through the supplements carefully and preserve them. It will be Kakasaheb's constant endeavour to make this supplement more and more useful from the educational standpoint. Ultimately, it is hoped that it will wholly become the organ of the expanding activities of the Vidyapith. It will also contain news of the Vidyapith and the various national schools running in india. There is, however, no need for me to anticipate the future. The reader himself will see and evaluate the improvements that will be made in these issues from month to month.

SAGRIFICIAL SPINNERS' DHARMA

Although everyone is aware of the story of bundle of sticks, it is worth refreshing one's memory about it from time to time. Even a delicate child can break a single stick. However, even a giant like Ramamurthi[1] cannot break a whole bundle of sticks. A single stick cannot even heat a little water, whereas a bundle can cook cereals for thousands of persons. Similarly, sacrificial spinning practised by a single individual may well prove ineffective. Sacrificial spinning practised by large number of persons can keep out cloth imported from Manchester, Japan and such other places and save one hundred million rupees which go out of India every year. The Charkha Sangha has been founded following the worldly law which knows of no exceptions. The very word 'Sangha' indicates the strength that underlies it. Hence, those who believe in the strength of the spinning-wheel, those who have faith in sacrificial spinning, should join the Sangha at this juncture and increase its strength. And those who have already joined it should invite their neighbours to follow suit. It should be borne in mind that even youths have a place in it. Though youth associations have been formed at various places in the country, I do not find young men making proper or full use of the strength that lies in unity. If all boys and girls studying in school realize the strength that underlies the takli, thousands of persons can enter the fold of the Charkha Sangha and a beautiful mountain of yarn can be raised every day. In this manner, every man, woman, child or aged person can readily do this in addition to his or her regular occupation and thus contribute one's share in the sacrificial offering that is swaraj. Will-power alone is required. Hence if you do not spin already, you should start doing so, inspire others to do so, start wearing khadi if you do not already do so, inspire others to do so, join the Charkha Sangha if you do not already belong to it and invite others to follow suit. Remember that spinning cotton yarn implies carding cotton and making it into strong even strands. Strands that have been spun anyhow or which appear to be like a rope are not yarn.

MAGANLAL MEMORIAL

Shri Vithalbhai Jerajani Writes:[2]

This matter certainly has not escaped my attention. However, because of my relationship with the late Shri Maganlal, I have hesitated to write much on the subject. I know that this should not be the case. I have no doubt that this task should be completed soon. It is

[1] A strong man then famous as 'the Indian Sandow'

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had asked Gandhiji to write about the Maganlal Memorial.

also true that the sum to be collected is a small one. If those who knew of Shri Maganlal's services wish to do so, they could collect the sum immediately and the nation would get a beautiful khadi museum.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-7-1929

239. RESULTS OF THE VICTORY AT BARDOLI

It is only gradually that we shall come to know the importance of the victory gained at Bardoli.[1] The final decision of the Government of Bombay which it has communicated in its correspondance with Shri Shroff[2] is the necessary result of the triumph at Bardoli. It will have its effect on the revenue department in the entire country. And if there is real improvement in this department, if that department is freed from corruption, it would amount to securing three-fourths of swaraj. This is because a foreign government largely depends upon money for its very existence. No one would run the government of another country merely for the pleasure of doing so, certainly not the British. They have withdrawn their settlements from places where they have not earned any money. One will rarely find in another department the chaos that is found in the Indian revneue department. The peasants of Bardoli have shed light on this darkness. However, there is nothing to be cheerful about the letter addressed to Shri Shroff. No great hopes can be pinned on it. Those in authority are experts in giving verbal promises and then violating them in practice; under the pretext of dispensing justice and introducing reforms, theyhave been found to perpetuate their real position and even to strengthen it further. As a result of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, officers have increased their salaries, consolidated their own positions, added to the expenditure of the army and strengthened the roots of their own businessmen. Hence caution will be necessary to see to it that the hopes that the letter from the Government has raised in regard to reforms in the land revenue system are realized. Bardoli has shown the way and cleared it. Swaraj lies on that route alone and that alone is the cure for starvation.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-7-1929

[1] *Vide* "Bardoli Report" and "Bardoli Settlement", 6-8-1928

[2] Member, Bombay Legislative Council

240. WHAT IS ONE'S DHARMA?

The following letter[1] has been written by a friend to Shri Valji Desai.

There is a verse in the Gita which says that even the learned become exhausted in the process of reflecting on the real meaning of karma. Here karma may be taken to mean dharma. In my opinion, dharma means morality. I do not know of any dharma which is opposed to or goes beyond morality. Dharma is morality practised to its ultimate limits. And morality in its turn means truth and non-violence. While the end is truth, non-violence is the means of attaining it. In such matters, however, the means cannot be separated from the end. Hence I have written that truth and non-violence are the two sides of the same coin.

However, the distinction between violence and non-violence cannot always be definitely demarcated. Non-violence would hardly have any value if it was easy to make this distinction. It is a fascinating field as it has no limits and countless persons have got tired exploring it. Many others have laid down their lives while doing so. Hence it always triumphs.

However, just because the field is so vast, some who have tried to dabble in it have also been misled. This should be no cause for despondency but rather for special efforts.

My Jain brethren regard non-violence as their monopoly; hence whenever I happen to transgress the boundaries of their non-violence and attribute non-violence to something beyond these limits, some of them are puzzled and some are annoyed, while others pity me. I would like to tell all these three cateogories of people that, if they will have a little patience, the riddle of non-violence can be solved to some extent. I am a seeker and a worshipper, not one who has already attained the end; hence I am liable to make mistakes and deserve to be forgiven. In this age of discoveries and exchange of ideas, no one will be harmed if I express my ideas. If I have committed any mistakes, I

[1] This is not translated here. The correspondent had asked whether uncooked food contained life in it, whether pulses soaked in water and sprouting should not be avoided. These questions arose from Gandhiji's article,"Raw v. Cooked Food", *Vide* " Raw v. Coolked Food", 6-6-1929

shall correct them. If there is any substance in my belief, other seekers will benefit thereby.

Let me now come to the subject-matter. My humble opinion is that perhaps there is some mistake in the prevalent Jain belief regarding diet. From the standpoint of non-violence, I feel that one commits an offence in killing plant life for the sake of food. The least amount of violence is involved when anything that is edible is eaten directly after it is plucked from the tree. All storage is full of violence. There is untold violence in the touch of fire. There is violence even in lighting a fire. Then to consign green or dried substances to the fire involves even greater violence. All this is self-evident. In not bringing vegetables near fire and not drying them, there is less processing of them. All needless processing is stained with violence. Anyone who eats vegetable products after drying or cooking them is not free from the original taint. By killing vegetable matter when it is outside of one's physical body and consuming it, one incurs the sin of killing it. Pulses allowed to germinate are not rendered stale; pulses prior to germination are not lifeless. Hence I see no objection in permitting these to germinate.

How cooked vegetables affect the body is a separate matter and one which deserves consideration. My experience and that of other experimenters suggest that the body does not get the same satisfaction from eating cooked vegetables as it does from eating them fresh and tree-ripened. Whatever is cooked over fire has an intoxicating element within it. hence it readily arouses passionate feelings. My experience of the last four years goes to show that as soon as I started eating cooked food I lost the freedom from passions which I had acquired while eating raw vegetables. I am again attaining to that passionless state now. I have before me similar experiences which doctors have reported. However I do not wish to add to the length of this article by quoting them. If anyone wishes to read the literature, I shall give him the names of the books.

I have no defence for the use of honey. I believe that it would be better if one could avoid it. I do not recommend eating it to healthy persons. Since I had not given it up, I started talking it when the doctor at Yervda specially recommended it to me and I still take it. However, at the end of this experiment, I hope to give up honey. I have already decreased the dosage. I regard honey as being less harmful than sugar. Both doctors and vaids are of opinion that, from

the standpoint of health, it is preferable to sugar. However, if this experiment succeeds, I will readily get from the items that are included in the experiment the same food value which I get from honey. Not a single bee is harmed if honey is extracted by the improved technique, but this is no justification for taking honey.

I do not differentiate as between health, non-violence and the ultimate aim of life. Whatever is health-giving should further the cause of non-violence and should not be opposed to the ultimate aim of life. What is in question here is health in its pure and real sense. In this poor country, where society has become disorganized and millions are dying of starvation, the question of the ultimate end has become a difficult one. However, it is required for the success of this experiment that it should be within the reach of the poor as well. This, however, is a long-term position. I myself cannot conduct this experiment taking into account only the body. I wish neither to survive nor to win swaraj by practising what I consider to be opposed to my dharma. I consider it to be a man's achievement to harmonize dharma and the ultimate aim of life, truth and swaraj; swaraj and government by all, the welfare of the country and the welfare of all. That alone is the path that leads to moksha, that alone is what interests me. None of my activities are carried on with any other end in view.

I do not know about the discovery made by Rishabhdev Swami.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-7-1929

241. PRODUCTION OF KHADI IN GUJARAT

Nowadays, there is an all-round increase in the sale of khadi, but its production has not kept pace with it. Gujarat has laid the foundation of the khadi movement but has not been able to build a solid structure over it. One reason for this is quite clear. Gujarat is the centre of the cotton textile industry. If Bombay too is regarded as a part of Gujarat, 99 per cent of the cotton textile mills are located in Ahmedabad and Bombay. It is for this reason that Gujaratis started wearing mill-made cloth earlier and, as compared to other provinces, Gujarat shelves the spinning-wheel sooner.

However, Gujarat has taken up the message of swaraj with entthusiasm. Its contribution to constructive activity is very large.

Hence it is befitting that Gujarat should also attain a place that is worthy of it in the matter of khadi production. Gujarati cannot possibly compete with Tamilnad and other regions. It can, however, make as much progress as it wishes in the method of self-reliance and in sacrificial spinning. It does not matter if the spinning-wheel is not adopted in Gujarat as a form of labour. For the method of self-reliance and sacrificial spinning, some sort of idealism is necessary. If this idealism is generated and if the idea takes root that swaraj is bound up with yarn, the methods of self-reliance and sacrificial spinning will succeed without the least difficulty. Why cannot the municipalities of Gujarat and other places imitate what is being practised in Almora? Why cannot those of us who have plenty of spare time learn to spin and start spinning regularly every day? It is necessary to propagate this idea in every house. Those who are engaged in door-to-door hawking of khadi should take up the task of producing khadi.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-7-1929

242. LETTER TO V.S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

SABARMATI,
July 21, 1929

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I had expected a note from you on your return from East Africa. Do please tell me what you did there. I hope your health is good. I hardly read the papers for the continuous touring. And when I do, it is merely to cast a passing glance.

Yours,

From a photostat: G.N. 8817

243. LETTER TO N. TCHERKOFF[1]

SABARMATI,
July 21, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter which was still lying in my file. I write this simply to acknowledge it with thanks. I hope to deal with it at length some day or other if I can scrape together a few hours. Meanwhile let me tell you that there is not the slightest difficulty about my endorsing the sentiment that all war under any conceivable circumstance is undesirable.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

N. THERKOFF, ESQ.
MOSCOW—66, U.S.S.R.

From a photostat: C.W. 9704. Courtesy: The Embassy of the U.S.S.R. in India

244. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

SABARMATI,
July 21, 1929

MY DEAR MIRABAI,

So the wandering Singer has returned home after winning her laurels![2] I take it you are coming to Allahabad. You will then tell me all about your doings in Europe. Of your conquests in America, American friends have told me more than your modesty will allow you to tell me. Hardly a mail passes without bringing something nice about you from America.

Love to you and Padmaja, who is sure to be there to greet you.

Yours,
'MYSTIC SPINNER'

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Exhibited at the Gandhi Darshan Exhibition (1969), New Delhi, by the Cultural Department of the U.S.S.R. Embassy

[2] *Vide* also "Notes" sub-title Welcome Home"

245. LETTER TO FULSIMHA DABHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 21, 192[9][1]

BHAISHRI FULSIMHAJI,

I have your letter. Indeed I would like the children to undertake the experiment in diet, but they can do so only under your supervision and with your consent. Here I let the children too try the experiment. It does them no harm. Sunshine, complete rest and open air all the twenty-four hours are most important for your wife. She should take as much milk and fresh fruit as possible. It is better if she takes bhakris[2] prepared from wheat roasted and ground at home rather than barley porridge. These bhakhris should be well masticated. [She should have] more of milk or curds and less of bhakhris. She should also chew green leaves of vegetable. If she does this her health will surely be all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI FULSIMHAJI
SHRI V.B. RASHTRIYA VINAYMANDIR, SUNAV (VIA ANAND)

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1293

246. LETTER TO JETHALAL JOSHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
July 21, 1929

BHAISHRI JETHALAL,

Your postcard is yet to be answered. In the matter of sticking to ideals it is as much essential to be tolerant of others as it is to be strict with one's own self. Members of the family too are to be brought round with humility. Impatience or use of force indicates lack of faith in the ideal. If you want to see me you can come at 4 o'clock on any day, other than Monday, when I am at the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1350

[1] The year is inferred from the reference to "experiment in diet".
[2] A kind of chapati

247. A LETTER

July 21, 1929

The situation there[1] is indeed serious. I am doing what I can from here.[2] But how much can I do? You will know the rest from the letter to Medh[3]. Only what you people there can do will matter. I see from the wire that Sir Jagadish[4] has declined to go. I would have done something if . . . .[5]

Now that you have taken up business, succeed in it. Preserve honesty.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S. N. 32577/77

248. LETTER TO SURENDRARAI B. MEDH

[*July 21*] [6]*1929*

BHAISHRI MEDH,

What advice can I give about the law from here? I write to the Press what I think. I write about the Agent[7], too, on occasion. I can give more practical advice only if I am present there and see things for myself. But I see no possibility of that in the present life. The dissensions among you there are indeed unfortunate. Do whatever you can.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/78

[1] Presumably South Africa

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Sir K. V. Reddy", 20-8-1929

[3] Surendrarai B. Medh

[4] Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose

[5] The rest of the sentence is unintelligible.

[6] Inferred from the mention of this letter in the letter dated July 21 1929; *vide* the preceding item.

[7] Presumably Kurma Venkata Reddi Naidu

249. A LETTER

SABARMATI,
July 21, 1929

May you succeed in your vow of spinning. It may be prudent to put up with the rudeness of customers to some extent. But when the rudeness of a customer becomes unbearable, one should stop dealings with that customer, giving the true reason for doing so. You must have faith that those who are proficient in crafts like shoe-making will always be able to earn their livelihood. Using foreign tools for your work is unavoidable. Keep up the life insurance you have taken out. I would have been another matter if you had not taken the policy.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/79

250. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KADI

Tuesday, July 23, 1929

I have been anxious to visit this institution[1] for the past year. Ever since I heard that Shri Chhaganbhai Pitambardas and other individuals are devoting their entire life to this institution, I have been eager to come here. It is laudable that this institution should be protected and nurtured by the citizens of Kadi and the people of Baroda State. Your children will receive a good education if you are prepared to send them here. Here you will find purity of thought and conduct which are even more valuable than a knowledge of the alphabet.

Along with the congratulations that I wish to offer to the secretary and the management of this institution on the simplicity and clarity of its report, I should also like to say how sorry I am that they have not yet been able to solve the problem of untouchability. Hinduism cannot be conceived of without the abolition of untouchability. If this untouchability is not destroyed in this age of reason, when one religion comes into contact with and is compared to

[1] The Kadva Patidar Ashram

another, any religion which is greatly polluted or whose roots are rotten cannot survive. If Hindusim were rotten at the roots, I would have abandoned it. I am not content with having been born in a Hindu family. As a human being one may swim in one's father's well but not get drowned in it. If it harbours this ignorance, we must sacrifice our lives in order to remove it. This institution with which Chhaganbhai is associated may tolerate untouchability because of social pressure. In the welfare of the Kadva Patidar community lies the welfare of Hinduism and of all human beings. By assuming that in the welfare of one community lies the welfare of all others, one should regard this as a matter of pride. You will not be able to serve the Kadva Patidar community if you regard any human being as untouchable. If I were to institute a comparison between child-marriage and untouchability, I would disregard the former, as that practice is prevalent among the Patidars who are regarded as high class people. It is not prevalent all over the country. If it had been, society would have perished. One can be patient with regard to child-marriage but untouchability cannot be tolerated even for one moment. The people should make their intentions known that deserving untouchables will certainly be accepted. Along with this, people should also be advised to spin. Not only should spinning be encouraged, but great stress should be laid on it. You should insist that ornaments and jewels should be taken away from the children entrusted to you and that they should be taught spinning.

If you desire to further the growth of nationalism, you should accord a place to Hindi. It is a language which can be learned easily. It sustains work and also helps in carrying it on. The Congress programme, although light and beautiful, is also extensive. It is such that it can give those who live in the country a share in something worth doing and always welcome. The programme consists in propagation of khadi and boycott of foreign goods. Khadi should be accepted to the extent that even foreign thread should be boycotted. Khadi is being sold here but the demand for it cannot be met. It is not in keeping with the principle of khadi that it should be produced at one place alone and then distributed elsewhere. You should yourselves spin, make khadi and wear it. You could be said to produce wealth for the country even if you could spin a little while carrying on your activities. If you wish to wear fine khadi, you should spin fine yarn, but you should make fullest sacrifice in the boycott of foreign cloth.

In this State the income from liquor is large. We do not wish to derive any benefit from this income. Whatever the reason for it, we should approach those who own liquor booths, those who drink, and the Government, and launch a movement in this matter. You can also lovingly persuade people to abstain from drink. You can reason with those who run the liquor booths. Those who drink ruin their lives. They forget the distinction between a wife and a sister, a distinction which even a child can understand.

Nowadays, instead of protecting cows we eat them. The reason behind a large number of cows being exported to Australia…thanks to the Hindus of India…is that beef worth crores of rupees is being produced there. Its essence is extracted from that beef. I could make you shed tears if I described that process to you. Cows are being slaughtered there. Even our Muslim brethern do not carry out so much slaughter on Bakr-Id day. A large number of cows are sent from Gujarat and Kathiawar. We thus commit this sin directly. Rearing cows does not imply tying up a cow in front of one's house in order to worship it. If the she-buffalo is to be permitted to survive, the cow will have to be slaughtered. If the latter has to survive, the former must be given up. The buffalo benefits nobody. The person who discovered the buffalo for the prupose of milk has virtually caused the slaughter of cows. If someone says that camel's milk is useful and that the she-camel is a very serviceable animal, we shall kill both cows and buffaloes. We do not yoke the buffalo to the plough. The he-buffalo can be put to use in Konkan. Both the cow and her calf can be useful. Even medical science can demonstrate that the product of the buffalo cannot be put to as many uses as those of the cow. All that I wish to say is that it is our supreme dharma to protect the cow. If we on our part afford this protection to the cow, its protection will be brought about automatically. The Hindu can save the cow throughout the world. It is because we are steeped in our selfishness that we fail to see that which is there right before us. So long as we do not castrate the bull, we shall be unable to protect the cow. We could protect the cow only if we put it to full use. By regarding hide as untouchable, we encourage the untouchables to eat beef. We have lost the use of bone-manure. If this is made available free of charge, all farmers will make use of it. There is not a single tannery functioning in India where only the hides of dead cows are being used. I am the only one running such a tannery. I have engaged a person in the Ashram specially to [help me] master this trade and am gaining proficiency in it. If the

cow is to be protected, her progeny should be developed through castration. If her offspring are healthy, we can obtain a minimum of 20 seers of milk from each cow. I have seen a cow in Bangalore which yields 80 pounds of milk. But it is fed adequately. No buffalo can yield 80 pounds of milk. As many as five or six years would pass before we could obtain even 20 pounds of milk from the cows we have. Breeding bulls should be secured and taken to various [breeding] centres. That is the duty of the State as well.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 28-7-1929

251. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

[On or after *July 23, 1929*]

JAWAHARLAL

YOU MAY FIX UNFURLING CEREMONY SUNDAY IF NO TRAIN AVAILABLE SATURDAY AFTER COMMITTEE MEETING.

From a photostat; S.N. 15434

252. FROM BRITISH GUIANA

The following from Dinabandhu Andrew's letter[2] dated Ist June at Georgetown will be read with interest.

> There can be no question whatever, that conditions in British Guiana are better than elsewhere, except for the climate which is a very damp one....
>
> The greatest of all things which draws me to this Colony is the obvious freedom from the worst forms of race prejudices. The number of Europeans is so exceedingly small...
>
> ...The African race does not compete economically with the Indians... the African people are on the whole turning away from agriculture, while the Indian people are sticking to it in all the enormous development of rice cultivation....
>
> ... We have as a people spent a very great deal of serious thought and consideration upon the Indians in Africa, but I say that here is, in the New World, an Indian population greater than that in the whole of Africa, and now I

[1] In reply to his telegram dated July 23 from Allahabad, which read: "May I announce you will unfurl National Flag Sunday morning eight."

[2] Only excerpts from this long letter are reproduced here.

feel the time has come for us to put our best energy into improving the condition of things out here in such a way that future generations may be proud of this colonization of Indians in the New World....

This letter has to be read with caution. I cannot enthuse with the Dinabandhu in his praise of Demerara as a land suitable for Indian colonization. Reports about its unhealthiness, it is clear, were not exaggerated. I should be most chary of encouraging emigration to such an unhealthy part of the world. I remember a naive suggestion once made in South Africa that the Indian settlers should be encouraged to remove themselves to tracts more suitable for their settlement and wholly unsuitable for white colonization, i.e., to the most unhealthy tracts in that continent. It was not suggested that the climate of South Africa was unsuited to the Indian consitution. If anything the Indian fared better than the European from the health standpoint. But he was not wanted there by the white man. Now Demerara is such a favourable spot. There white men can barely exist. No wonder, therefore, that there are no political disabilities from which Indians are suffering and that an African is the Attorney-General. This is a matter of necessity and carries no virtue with it. If the African refuses to do agricultural labour there, I fancy that it is not because he will not work on the land but because he is too independent to do so under unfavourable conditions. He does work on his own land in South Africa. Why should his poverty consign the Indian to the most trying occupation in the most unhealthy part of the world? It is the same story in East Africa. The Highlands are not for him. On the whole therefore the problem before the Indian public is just now to better the conditions of life here, and by attaining swaraj, to raise India's political status before considering colonization schemes. In my opinion it is enough for us if meanwhile we are able to safeguard the rights of Indians already settled in the different parts of the world.

Young India, 25-7-1929

253. URBAN V. *RURAL*

Several correspondents have sent me cuttings from Prabuddha Bharat containing an elaborate criticism of Gregg's book[1] and threa-

[1] Economics of Khaddar

nent the whole cult of the charkha. The articles are too long for reproduction in these pages. I must refer the curious to the original. But they enunciate the following propositions:

> 1. India must become industrial in the Western sense;
>
> 2. the question of physical existence cannot be solved by the charkha;
>
> 3. the conditions attached to the success of the charkha make too large claims on prevailing tendencies and human nature;
>
> 4. the justification and superiority of machines lie not so much in meeting the internal needs of a country as in invading and capturing foreign markets;
>
> 5. if India is to live and fulfil her spiritual mission among men, she *must* modernize herself. . . . Let us unhesitatingly and energetically assimilate the modern industrial methods . . . . But along with that we must practice spirituality intensely, create a mighty spiritual idealism in the mind of the nation and a great love for the country so that on the wings of them we may cross over the dark valley of modernism in which the West is sadly groping. Without spiritual idealism, modernism will spell a speedy ruin.

I have so far as possible copied the writer's words including his italics.

I am sorry that I am unable to subscribe to these propositions. They are obviously based upon the assumption that modern civilization is comparatively a good thing and that it cannot be resisted with any hope of success. There is a growing body of enlightened opinion in the West which distrusts this civilization which has insatiable material ambition at one end and consequent war at the other.

But whether good or bad, why must India become industrial in the Western sense? The Western civilization is urban. Small countries like England or Italy may afford to urbanize their systems. A big country like America with a very sparse population, perhaps, cannot do otherwise. But one would think that a big country, with a teeming population, with an ancient rural tradition which has hitherto answered its purpose, need not, must not, copy the Western model. What is good for one nation situated in one condition is not necessarily good enough for another differently situated. One man's food is often another man's poison. Physical geography of a country has a predominant share in determining its culture. A fur coat may be a

necessity for the dweller in the polar regions, it will smother those living in the equatorial regions.

The author's second proposition that "the question of physcial existence cannot be solved by the charkha" cannot hold water. On the contrary that question can only be answered by the charkha or its equivalent. Every writer of note whether Indian or European has admitted the necessity of cottage industries, if India is to live physically. The writer of the articles in question has done less than justice to himself, to Mr. Gregg and to his own country by summarily dismissing Mr. Gregg's dispassionate thesis. Mr. Gregg has considerable engineering experience and he has shown conclusively that it will be suicidal, it must mean certain death to millions of India's population, if the solar power stored in the hands and feet of her three hundred million inhabitants is allowed to run to waste in the impossible attempt to replace it with steam or such other power *for the purpose of sustaining physical* existence. It would be on a par with theattempt made by a man not to use his hand for bringing food to the lips but to let a machine do the work of the hand and run the risk in the bargain of sometimes burning his lips for want of the automatic protection that the sensory nerves connecting the hand with the brain afford against overhot dishes.

The third proposition is now simply answered. "The conditions attached to the charkha" not only make no "large claims on the prevailing tendencies and human nature", but they are based on "the prevailing tendencies and human nature" as they are to be found in India. Were it otherwise, in the midst of confusion and disappointment running through so many national activities the charkha would not have spread through 2,000 villages nor would it have shown the steady, though necessarily slow, progress it had demonstrably made during the past eight years' revival.

In the fourth proposition the writer justifies the worship of the machine age not for the reason that it may meet the "internal needs of a country" but because it means an "invasion and capturing of foreign markets". Unfortunately or fortunately for India there are no foreign markets to invade and capture. The consummate exploiters of the West have "done the trick". We may invade and capture the foreign manufacturing countries. And if writer has anysuch grand scheme in contemplation, me thinks it is more difficult of

accomplishment than the task set before themselves by the votaries of the charkha.

The last proposition gives away the writer's whole case. He will modernize India and yet retain her spirituality without which he thinks, in italics, that"modernism will spell ruin". He will have India to do what experienced sages have told us is impossible of accomplishment. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." He seems to agree that the West has failed to reconcile the two. Why does he think that India can perform the impossible task? Why should it not be assumed that if the ancients could have done it, they would have done so long ago? Indeed it was after making the attempt that the authors of the Upanishads said, "All this is God's. Therefore live so as not to covet your neighbour's property."

Surely exploitation means usurpation. And usurpation can never be reconciled with spiritualism. It pained me therefoe to read the article with such a dismal conclusion in a magazine which is solely devoted to spiritual culture.

What was more painful still was the exploitation of the name of Swami Vivekananda in connection with the double-edged theory propounded by the writer. The inferential invocation of the authority of the illustrious dead in a reasoned discussion should be regarded as a sacrilege. After all we, a handful of educated Indians, are shouldering a serious responsibility in gambling with the fortunes of the dumb millions whose trustees we claim to be. A still more serious responsibility rests upon the shoulders of those of us who claim to possess some spiritual perception.

Young India, 25-7-1929

254. NOTES

WELCOME HOME

The Wandering Singer has returned home after making many conquests in the West. Time alone will show how lasting is the impression created by her. If the reports received from private sources in America be any criterion, Sarojini Devi's work has left a profound impression on the American mind. From that triumphal tour she has returned none too soon to take her share in solving the many and intricate problems facing us in the country. May she cast over us the spell she was able so successfully to cast over the Americans.

I am publishing the first list of donations to the appeal[1] in respect of the calamity that has overtaken East Bengal and Assam. Just at the time of sending the manuscript to *Young India* office I find the following wire from Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ghosh[2] :

> Sheth Ramanlal Keshavlal of Petlad (Gujarat) accompanied by Bhim-jibhai, representative of Messrs Ranchhoddas Dayaram & Sons at Chittagong, Sjt. Harivallabh C. Shah and others came to Abhay Ashram, Comilla, on their way back from Silchar and Sylhet . . . . The method of work followed by the Ashram appealed to them, and they appreciated very much the idea of giving a sort of permanent relief to the agriculturists by the introduction of spinning-wheels, of which the Ashram has decided to have one thousand, and the idea of giving paddy for husking by which they can anyhow earn an honourableliving instead of depending on doles. Shethji and Bhimjibhai were pleased to announce a donation of Rs. 2,550 on the following heads:
>
> 1. For 200 spinning-wheels Rs. 550;
> 2 for paddy-husking work Rs. 1,250;
> 3. for two huts for the Ashram Rs. 500; and
> 4. for khadi debt of the Ashram Rs. 250.

This is merely a sample of what is being received by me.

Young India, 25-7-1929

255. MILL-LABOUR IN BARODA STATE[3]

TO

THE EDITOR

"*YOUNG INDIA*"

SIR,

May I draw your attention to the sad plight of the textile and other factory labour in the Baroda State and request you to extend your kind assistance for the betterment of their conditions? You are possibly aware that we have, in British India, a sixty hours' week rule, i.e., a general ten hours' day arrangement for the factory labour since 1922, but the mills in the Baroda State are even to this date allowed to

[1] *Vide* "Sylhet Inundated"

[2] Secretary, Abhoy Ashram, Comilla; only excerpts from his telegram are reproduced here.

[3] This appeared under the caption"Correspondence".

work as long as tweleve hours and at times even more. In the matter of child labour too whilst the Factory Act here has laid down a twelve years' rule for half-timers and a fifteen years' rule for whole-timers, children of tender age are still taken in for work... as I know that it was with your advice and under your guidance that the textile workers of Ahmedad strove for and obtained a ten hours' day even before the present Factory Act was enacted, as also that it was at your instance and under your influence that a similar reform has been effected this year by the Indore State. The Baroda State is now thinking of revising its Factory Act and has issued draft rules, which, if finally adopted, would bring the Act in a line with that prevalent in British India. I, however, understand that the local mill-owners are opposed to this much-needed and long-overdue reform...This question is coming up for consideration before the Bardoa Council during the next week and if you can kindly see your way to express your views on this matter at this juncture, it will prove very helpful both to the Council and the State in arriving at a just and sound decision.

I am, etc.,

'A FRIEND OF BOTH'

I gladly publish the foregoing letter[1] . I know the writer and I do believe him to be what he subscribes himself as. I do not know that my opinion will reach the quarters where it should, and if it does, whether it will have any weight. Anyway I am emphatically of opinion that no State, much less Baroda, can afford to do less than British India. Indeen even ten hours a day and the age limit for children in British India need improvement. If capital is not to fall into utter discredit, it behoves captialists voluntarily to exercise self-restraint and make common cause with labour.

Young India, 25-7-1929

256. A VICIOUS BOOK

Three correspondents have written to me urging me to give my opinion on a book called Swami Dayanand, A Crititcal Study of *His Life and Teachings*, by F. K. Durrani, B.A., Muslim missionary. The author is the Secretary of Tabligh Literature Society, Lahore. A fourth correspondent has given me a copy of the book. One of them reminds me that I had no hesitation about expressing my opinion on Rangila Rasuland tells me that therefore I should have none in giving it on Mr. Durrani's volume. I have gone through the volume with as much

[1] Only excerpts from it are reproduced here.

patience as I could command and I have come to the conclusion that it is a vicious, libellous book which should never have been written by a resposnible man and published by a responsible society. The author protests in his preface that he will approach his subject in a scientific and dispassionate spirit. But he breaks that promise in the preface itself. He says, "We intend neither to praise nor to condemn." But in the very next page this is what he has to say on *Satyartha Prakash*. "It is a worthless book and the teachings and ideas contained in it are so absurd and so amusingly childish that one finds it hard to believe that a man who became the founder of such a powerful organization as the Arya Samaj could be the author of such drivel." The author has not hesitated to accuse the great reformer of falsehood, trickery, incapacity and addiction to bhang "whose narcotic juice often kept him insensate.". "The account of his life left by himself is pure fiction." "A pall of mystery hangs over his origin and early years." He has not one good word to say of the Swamiji or the Arya Samaj. He has gone out his way even to abuse Hindus and Hinduism. But I may not multipy proofs. Almost every page of the book furnishes ample ground for condemning it. The author lets the cat out of the bag in his concluding chapter. He says:

> If we love our motherland, if we want to make India a great and a civilized country, it is our duty to wash it clean of the stains of anciet superstitions of Hinduism and reach out the healing of Islam to every child of the motherland...Islam is a conquering force and the Muslims were born to freedom and empire. Both can come to us, if we exert ourselves to expand our numerical strength. We are the children of the soil of India and we owe a duty to the motherland. Like other lands, she too should have a place of equality in the comity of nations. Hindu India will never be able to do that. She can be free and raise to power and glory only under the banner of Islam.

And this cherished desire of his the author has sought to fulfil by dipping his pen in venom and reviling one of the greatest reformers of modern times, his writings and the great growing sect of Arya Samaj and incidentlally Hindus and Hinduism. I advise Mr. Durrani to reconsider his views, apologize for the libellous publication and withdraw it. This advice I venture to tender because in a public letter he says:

> If anyone can prove that the book has been written out of spite and to hurt, hereby I promise to withdraw even the present edition and will not bring

it into the market. I have greater fear of my conscience than of any Government, and my conscience is clear in this matter.

If my testimony is worth anything, I can say that the book is bound to hurt every Arya Samajist and every Hindu, indeed every impartial man and woman not excluding Mussalmans. If a tree may be judged by its fruit then his book is a fruit of spite.

Young India, 25-7-1929

257. PROGRESS OF SELF-SUPPORT KHADI

Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta of Khadi Pratishthan sends the follwoing interesting account[1] of the progress[2] being made by the Rashtriya Sangha which is trying to induce people to spin for their own khadi.

This is what I call good progress for the few months that the Sangha has taken up the work. If it becomes popular, there can be no doubt that the self-support method is the cheapest and the most efficient.

Young India, 25-7-1929

258. MY IMPERFECTIONS

A reader writes.[3]

What this correspondent says is of course true. I do use honey; I have not completely given up its use so far. I am more conscious of my imperfections than others can be. The fact is there are a number of things that I would like to give up but I have not yet been able to do so. Honey has been considered good for my health. I have not had the courage to give up honey, though I know that its use involves violence, as I have already given up a good many items of diet. To be intellectually convinced that a certain thing should be given up is one thing, to really give it up with one's heart is another. Having said this I must also say that my effort to give up honey continues. But if one

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] In Hooghly, 24 Parganas, Midnapur, Bogra, Burdwan and Calcutta

[3] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had suggested that the use of honey should be given up as it involved violence to the bees. *Vide* also "What is One's Dharma", 21-7-1929

gives up honey one must also give up suagar and jaggery. From the point of view of vikriti[1], sugar is the worst thing. Preparation of sugar involves a lot of violence also. Honey has not harmed me in any way. The doctors maintain that honey is very good for health. Then there is this in its favour: the modern methods of bee-keeping do not involve destruction of the bees. But of course that is no arugment in favour of eating honey.

All enterprise carries with it some defect. All industry involves sin. The less of this the better.

I would now like to digress a little. The readers should understand that ahimsa does not end with consideration of what should or should not be eaten. But the ahimsa which has been described as the supreme dharma is much more than this. Ahimsa is the noblest feeling of the heart. So long as our relations with others are not pure and so long as we consider anyone our enemy, we cannot be said to have touched even the fringe of ahimsa.

A man who observes ahimsa scrupulously in eating and drinking, but is unscrupulous in business, does not hesitate to cheat and selfishly cause unhappiness to others, cannot be said to be observing ahimsa. But a man who, though a non-vegetarian, and not so particular about what he eats, is compassionate and has dedicated himself to helping others, must be considered a saint who knows the dharma of ahimsa and follows it whole-heartedly.

Straying from this central point we have forgotten our dharma. That is why I wish we would see the great himsa that the evergrowing distrust between us involves and prove our manliness in removing it. How should we behave with the English, with the Muslims or other communities? The search for an answer to this question provides the real field for ahimsa.

The research in pure food is the job of physicians endowed with noble qualities. The public in general cannot understand it. For this work a knowledge of science is essential. Whether I declare honey harmless or harmful does not matter at all. We should simply accept the views of one who has studied the technique of production of honey and has observed its effects. All enterprise is clouded with defect. Eating anything at all involves some violence. Having realized

[1] The correspondent had listed ghee, milk, curds, honey, liqour and meat as things producing vikriti, perturbation.

this our duty is clear: we should give up whatever we can do without. We should eat nothing to please the palate. One's body is the abode of God and one is merely its custodian. Therefore we should try our utmost to keep it pure as far as possible. We should never treat it as a means of indulgence. We should treat it as something meant to practise restraint upon and should increasingly cultivate self-control. Having once decided upon this, we are rid of the problem of what to eat and what to eschew.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 25-7-1929

259. SPEECH ON COMPROMISE RESOLUTION, A.I.C.C. MEETING, ALLAHABAD

July 27, 1929

The resolution moved by Mahatma Gandhi runs that:

In view of the general situation in the country this meeting of the A.I.C.C. is of opinion that the time has come when all national effort should be concentrated on the preparation of the country for a campaign on non-violent non-co-operation after 31st December, 1929, and agrees with the Working Committee that all Congress members of the various legislatures, central and provincial, should resign their seats to give effect to this campaign; but having regard to the views expressed by a considerable body of Congress members of the legislatures and some members outside them this Committee resolves that the question of withdrawal from the legislatures do stand over till the forthcoming Congress at Lahore.

This Committee further desires the public in general and the members of the legislatures in particular to prepare for complete withdrawal from legislatures, should such a course be necessary, on and from the 1st of January next.

Provided that nothing herein contained shall prevent members of the Congress Party in any legislature from resigning their seats before the Congress is held at Lahore if they consider it necessary to do so on any new issue that may arise hereafter.

Speaking in Hindi on the resolution, Mahatma Gandhi said that many would have been surprised at the resolution and as many would have also felt pain at it. Personally, he too felt pain at putting the resolution before the Committee. But it was

the duty of the Working Committee to take into consideration all the circumstances before arriving at any decision. The opinion expressed by the members of the Councils was, he said, very strong. They would have resigned their seats in the legislatures if they were forced to do so by the Congress Committee but they would have at the same time kept a grievance and the result would have been that the Congress, which hitherto could boast of unity in its camp, would have been exposed to the danger of a split in its ranks. The Mahatma said:

> Such a situation, none was prepared to face. At least I was not prepared to face it.

Proceeding, Mahatma Gandhi said that the Working Committee had also invited the Congress members in the legislatures to put their case before it. Some of them presented their case to the Working Committee and also to him and their case was to the effect that the time had not come when the members should be asked to resign their seats in the legislatures although his personal view was that such a time had arrived and the country would be greatly benefited by severing connection with the legislatures. What opinion the President had now, he (Mahatma) held before and even then. But they had also to see that the Congress organization could not be conducted smoothly by enforcing individual views only. Mahatma Gandhi said:

> You know that when the Swaraj Party came into existence and I came out of the jail, I entered into a compromise with your President and Mr. C.R. Das. I bent my head before them and the same thing I am doing today. Though I am not bending my head today before them but before those persons who think that they should not resign their seats in legislatures at this moment. We want to work with them.

It was this anxiety to maintain solidarity that prompted him to advise the Working Committee yesterday that although the time had arrived to take action suggested by the Committee, they should do what the Congress members of the legislatures desired today.

Proceeding, Mahatma Gandhi said that today they had postponed consideration of the question of resignations but the resolution authorized the members to resign of their own accord without asking the Working Committee in case any new issue arose necessitating their withdrawal from the legislatures before the Lahore Congress.

The resolution, he continued, also urged that it was their religious duty that they should start preparation from the 1st of January, 1930. They should prepare themselves to do from today what they would be required to do from the 1st January. On the 31st of August next, people would be called upon to give an account of their efforts for the enrolment of members for the Congress. It was not to be supposed that

the Congress members in Councils should work only in Councils and not outside them. The resolution had increased their responsibility. The Mahatma said:

I also want to tell them that when the Committee had paid great consideration to their views they should also carry on their duties very devotedly.

Concluding, Mahatma Gandhi hoped that it would not be understood by accepting the compromise resolution that they did not want independence or non-violent non-co-operation. He trusted that on 1st January, 1930 they would render a good account of themselves.

260. MY DHARMA

July 28, 1929

A father who is grieved by the conduct of his son and duaghter-in-law writes:[1]

The writer of the letter is well known to me. He is a respectable gentleman.With his permission, his son and daughter-in-law stayed with me for some time. I have a pleasant memory of my association with this couple. Both of them have self-contro1, are sweet-tempered, courteous and eager to obey their elders. Both have accepted a simple way of life. They have come of age. The son earns his own living. The daughter-in-law is not fond of clothes or jewellery. She has given up the veil and some of the evil customs prevalent in their caste. The father does not quite approve of this. Hence he is grieved and believes that they defy their elders because of their association with me.

The above letter is the outcome. I can understand a father's grief. But I do not regret my own conduct. I feel that the behaviour of the son and the daughter-in-law has been correct. Parents cannot insist upon their grown-up children following their example in all matters. In this age of independence, parents should give up such a desire. Even the Shastras say that a son of sixteen should be regarded as a friend.

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that Gandhiji's advice to youth to differ from their parents if their conscience warranted it was causing estrangement between parents and children, that before they took the vows of brahmachaya and aparigraha, they should be old enough to understand their implications and that men and women should live separately in the Ashram.

I feel that, just as the son should observe certain restrictions, the father too should check his own desire to be worshipped as a god. The father should be satisfied if the son is polite, serves his parents when the need arises and looks after them if they become invalid. I have not heard of cultured parents in the past entertaining greater expectations.

I am aware that hundreds and thousands of young men have come under my influence. I am conscious of my dharma. I believe that I had attained some success therein. My parents regarded me as an obedient son and gave me full freedom. I never felt irked by the control they excercised over me. I have sons as well as grandsons. I mpose no restrictions upon them. All who have come of age enjoy complete independence. I do not regret having given them this training. My eldest son openly goes against me. I am not unhappy over this. Despite this behaviour of his, I keep up my relationship with him as a father in accordance with what I consider my dharma. He signs his letters to me as "your obedient son". I do not feel that he is insulting me by doing so. I should realize that obedience has its limits. There are girls who stay with me as my own daughters, women who stay with me as my own sisters. They all enjoy freedom and have come to live here of their own free will. I do not feel that they should act in accordance with all my wishes. Their eleders are not displeased because they stay with me. As a result of innumerable such experiences, I have arrived at the conclusion that while teaching one to exercise self-control in life, there is nothing wrong in giving one complete freedom. I have no knowledge whatsoever of anyone having come to harm through contact with me or of his life having become morally corrupt.

There is nothing mysterious in what I teach young persons; neither is there anything frightening about it. There is no danger in putting it into practice. In many instances I have found that all of it is acceptable to both the mind and the heart. Hence to those parents who are grieved at the conduct of their sons and daughters my plea is that they should recognize the signs of the times. I am alive today but may not be here tommorrow. The march of time is not going to be halted if I stay still. This trend is dragging people into leading a life of irresponsibility. By stopping it. I am trying to lead the young men on the path of self-control. Parents and guardians should assist me in this effort.

The writer finds fault with my conduct towards the women in the Ashram, in their touching me in a motherly spirit. I have discussed this matter with my colleagues in the Ashram. I do not know of any other place in India where women enjoy the amount of freedom, restricted perhaps, that women …both educated and uneducated… enjoy in the Ashram. I see no harm in a father innocently touching his daughter in public. My touch is of that kind. I never enjoy privacy. When young girls come out for a walk with me daily I put my hands on their shoulders and walk. The girls are aware of the fact and everyone else also knows that that touch is an innocent one without any exception.

We make our girls helpless, create undesirable ideas in them, and implant in them that which is not there. Thereafter, we suppress them and then often make them victims of adulterous conduct. They come to believe that they are incapable of protecting their honour. A superhuman effort is being made in the Ashram to free young girls from this feeling of helplessness. I had started a similar sort of attempt in South Africa itself. I have not seen it bringing about any bad effects. However, as a result of their training in the Ashram, some young girls although they have reached the age of twenty try to remain free from sensuous thoughts and they are day by day becoming fearless and self-reliant. I feel that the belief that the touch or sight of a maiden stirs a man's desire is an insult to man. If that is indeed a fact, brahmacharya would become an impossibility.

During this period of truce, the relationship between a man and a woman in this country should be confined within certain limits. I have daily experiences suggesting risk in such freedom. Hence despite maintaining freedom for women, all possible restrictions are imposed in the Ashram. Except me no other man touches young girls as no such occasion arises at all. A fatherly relationship cannot be established at will.

I do not claim any power of yoga in order to justify my touching girls. I have no yogic powers. Like all others I too am a creature made of earth, subject to the same sexual instinct. But even men who have these feelings have been fathers. I have many daughters and many sisters. I am bound by the pledge of having only one wife. And my wife stays with me merely as a friend. Hence I have naturally to control the terrible sexual urge. My mother taught me the beauty of abiding by a pledge when I was in the prime of my life. The

wall of my pledge which is harder than a diamond protects me. That wall has protected me even against my will. The future is in the hands of Rama.

Except in the case of some elderly couples, the Ashram provides separate living-rooms for men and women.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-7-1929

261. WHAT HAS BEEN DONE FOR THE ANTYAJA?

A reader of Navajivan writes:[1]

It is difficult to answer the question what I am doing for the Antyaja. I cannot recount it. Hence I can reply that I have done nothing. If that appears to be a rude answer, one can say that I have done whatever my Antyaja brothers and sisters say I have done for them. As a matter of fact, I do for my own sake whatever I can by way of service to the Antyaja. It is wrong to say that anyone is uplifting these people. By doing away with untouchability, those who call themselvs high-caste people uplift themselves and thereby protect the Hindu faith. Considered from this point of view, there is no need to give a reply to the above question. In so far as the question has been addressed to me alone, the answer is that on my own I do nothing and can do nothing in this matter. Innumerable colleagues of mine are engaged in this work in India. Anyone may take into account whatever part I may have in their work.

This gentleman erroneously believes that I am especially engaged in the work relating to khadi. I cannot even show that I am doing anything in this matter or what I can show is to the extent that I spin as a daily sacrifice. The rest is what is being done through my colleagues.

Moreover, it is obvious that in serving the cause of khadi, hundreds and thousands of Antyajas are automatically served. Moreover, service of the Antyajas is not something the value of which can be calculated in yards as in the case of khadi. If anyone asks how many schools have been started for them, how many wells have been

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had suggested that, if Gandhiji's volunteers worked in co-operation with the Arya Samaj and the Hindu Mahasabha, that would prove useful in achieving success.

dug for them, how many temples have been built for them, the replies to all these would certainly not satisfy me. If one can say how far the extent of untouchability has shrunk, one will certainly find an answer. But we do not have such an instrument for gauging this. Although there may be a thousand schools for the untouchables, as many temples and an equal number of wells, it may nevertheless be claimed that not a single brick has been pulled down from the edifice of untouchability. When the task of untouchability began, friends who regarded themselves as staunch Vaishnavas told me that they would give me as much assistance as I wanted in the task of building schools, etc., if only I gave up the idea of abolishing untouchability. What did I wish to accomplish by such assistance? It could give me no satisfaction whatsoever. I did not want separate institutions for the Antyajas, but only the right of entry for them into existing public institutions. Separate institutions would bring no glory to the Hindus, but rather constitute a blot upon them. And today, if I do get involved in having separate schools, temples, etc., for them, it is only because of a feeling of helplessness, because I regard it as my dharma at this juncture and because of hope that eventually the distinction between these institutions and others will vanish.

I myself can see untouchability disappearing but I do not have an instrument to show this.

> People run away when they see the flames on the path of love. Those who have entered them enjoy great happiness, while the onlookers get burnt.

The Arya Samaj and the Hindu Mahasabha deserve to be congratulated on the service they render to the Antyajas. I do whatever little I can wherever possible. I must admit, however, that because of differences in the manner in which the work is being done, very often I cannot offer my services. I do not crave to have a hand in all that is being done, I do not even have the capacity to participate in everything. I am aware of my own limitations, and I consider myself fortunate in doing whatever I can while keeping within these limits.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-7-1929

262. MESSAGE TO BOMBAY CONGRESS MUSLIM PARTY

July 28, 1929[1]

I am glad you are having a Congress Muslim Party. If it is well supported and if it does not go to sleep, it must prove a tower of strength to the Congress and the institution will be of real service to India in general, and the Muslim community in particular.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-7-1929

263. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ON THE TRAIN,
July 29, 1929

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Your letters[2] to Indu are excellent and should be published. I wish you could have written them in Hindi. Even as it is there should be a simultaneous publication in Hindi.

Your treatment of the subject is quite orthodox. The origin of man is now a debatable subject. The origin of religion is a still more debatable matter. But these differences do not detract from the value of your letters. They have a value derived not from the truth of your conclusions but from the manner of treatment and from the fact that you have tried to reach Indu's heart and open the eyes of her understanding in the midst of your external activities.

I did not want to strive with Kamala over the watch I have taken away. I could not resist the love behind the gift. But the watch will still be kept as a trust for Indu. In the midst of so many little ruffians about me, I could not keep such a piece of furniture. I would therefore be glad to know that Kamala will reconcile herself to Indu getting back her darling watch.

My article on the Congress crown[3] is already written. It will be out in the next issue of *Young India*.

Yours,
BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, p.72

[1] The message was read out by Abid Ali on this date at the first meeting of the party in Bombay, with Brelvi in the chair.

[2] Letters from a Father to His Daughter

[3] *Vide* "Who Should Wear the Crown", 1-8-1929

264. LETTER TO N.R. MALKANI

July 29, 1929

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have just read your Tamil Nad report on the train taking me back to the Ashram. It is good. I like the frankness about it. I am sending it to Vardachari[1] for report.

What about the flood there?

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 893

265. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

ON THE TRAIN,
July 29, 1929

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

Send over the book Science and Art of Living by Dr. Leonard Hill if it is available at a low price. By low price I mean up to Rs. 3.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4713. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

266. NOTE TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI[2]

July 29, 1929

I have written to this man to bring over the girl. He must not expect that we will keep her in any case. After interviewing her and if she can stand the life at the Ashram, may be there will be no hitch.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 15432

[1] N.S. Varadachari, one of the joint authors of the essay Hand-spinning and Hand-weaving

[2] On Jangbahadursingh's letter dated July 17, 1929, from Gopiganj

267. NOTE TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI[1]

July 29, 1929

I have written to him that he can send over his representative. We shall bear the boarding expenses.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 15418

268. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

July 31,1929

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

You have despatched the book by return of post.[2] What could I send you besides my blessings?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4714. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

269. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

July 31, 1929

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I have your letter. Please read in Hindi Navajivan what I have written about . . . [2] Your advice is correct. Find out the truth if you can. We have no remedy for . . . if he is corrupt. We would protect him if he were pure.

About spinning…I have both [the classes] in view. We however, want members from the educated class; not from amongst the poor spinning women. They would not understand this. We want to increase the production and also create an interest. Production would increase if we created interest. If men of understand would take up spinning with conscious interest, they would add to the bulk of fine yarn and would also make new inventions. Not all would do it, but inventors will come from this class of spinners only.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 6066. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

[1] On B. Subramaniam's letter dated July 10, 1929, from Bezwada

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Shantikumar Morarji", p. 236.

[2] As in the source; for Gandhiji's article, *Vide* "Lakshmi Devi's Staory", 1-8-1929

270. LETTER TO BECHAR BHANJI

July 31,1929

BHAISHRI BECHAR,

I have your letter. You should put up with your wife's behaviour as long as you cannot win her over with love. You may insist on the girls putting on khadi if they are not grown up. There again I would have you use your discretion.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5576

271. A LETTER

July 31, 1929

Kaka[1] read to me your letter to Chhaganlal. I read Chhaganlal's letter also. I only learnt about that letter having been written when I returned to the Ashram. I consider the letter to be harmless. Has Chhaganlal no right to write to you? If we cannot write freely to one another to whom else can we do so? The letter however happened to be written at the wrong time. What a coincidence that just when I should arrange for money to be sent to you Chhaganlal should write to you! There was no connection between the two things, however. Chhaganlal has written such letters to many others. He and Shankerlal have been inviting people to become yarn-members. It is thus true that just as the crow alighted on the tree the tree fell. But the poor crow is innocent. You, may, if you wish, count it as its fault that it is black. If all secretaries are black, how can it be helped? I can expect only one thing from you that is, do as your conscience bidsyou, not what I wish. If my wish and your conscience agree I would consider it a fortunate conjunction of planets. But such conjunction of planets is an uncertain business. I would, moreover, expect nothing from a person to whom I had been instrumental in giving monetary help if no such condition was made while giving the money. Nor can there be any question of helping you in expectation of anything. Or, rather, one may expect everything from you. But those expectations cannot

[1] D. B. Kalelkar

be described in words. They are too many to be described and would lose their weight if described.

You may now carry on the rest of the quarrel with Chhaganlal, but do not make yourself unhappy. Have a thick hide on your back. Those who run organizations cannot afford to be thin-skinned. They would take the blows and keep on smiling.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/82

272. A LETTER

July 31, 1929

If you can find a good teacher, put up even a thatched hut and start a school in it. Have it in the Harijan locality. This degrading practice will not end without great effort and sacrifice.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/83

273. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

[End of *July 1929*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

I had hoped to be able to meet you when I was in Hyderabad. But I see it was not to be.

This is to ask you if the duty leviable on khadi manufactured in the Nizam's dominion and passing from Secunderabad and Hyderabad could be exempted from the levy and whether the co-operative department can utilize the whole or portion of Rs. 10,000 placed at its disposal for research work. Surely the duty on khadi is a tax upon the poor cultivators.

I hope you are keeping well.

Yours,

DR. HYDARI
FINANCE MINISTER
HYDERABAD (DECCAN)

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/74

[1] As in the source

274. 'IS SWARAJ WORTH HAVING?'

The following letter1 will be read with painful interest.

> I am a native of Vikrampur, and my home is only a few miles away from the home of Deshbandhu. I belong to the Namashudra community . . .
>
> The clerks in the office, where I am working, numbering 50, are all so-called high-caste Hindus . . .
>
> . . . I am looked upon here as a despised insect .. . Even the servant refuses to wash and clear away my plates . . . Although in cleanliness and decency I am not in any way inferior to any . . .
>
> . . . Is swaraj worth having when the mentality of the people is so cruel towards their fellow-countrymen? Will not the treatment of the so-called higher classes who occupy most of the top positions towards the so-called lower classes be terrible when the power is in their hands?. . .
>
> I am in intense agony of mind. Please reply sharp and also advise me what I am to do here.

As the writer does not wish to have his identity disclosed I have erased some parts of the letter. There is no doubt that what is happening to this Namashudra friend is the lot of many who are similarly placed. Though untouchability is undoubtedly going, the suppressed classes who are daily growing more and more conscious and naturally resentful of the terrible treatment meted out to them by the so-called higher classes are becoming restive. Their fear, too, that if the things remain as they are when swaraj is attained, the reformer's may be a voice in the wilderness and blind orthodoxy may reduce to nought even the little progress that has been made, has a surface justification. I wish the "suppressed" friends could be made to see that the fear is in reality groundless. They do not give sufficient credit to the reformers. It is not the quantity that will count when freedom is gained. It is the determination of the few that is going to be the deciding factor. Surely he who runs may see that in the forefront of the fight for freedom are to be found the reformers and not the reactionaries who even now seek the protection of the foreign power for sustaining their reactionary policy which they miscall religion. When therefore swaraj is attained it will be the reformers who must have the reins of Government in their hands.

Again the suppressed classes should know that in any constitution that can be conceived, there are bound to be full legal safeguards for their rights.

And lastly, they may not feel helpless and dependent on the aid of reformers. They have a just cause and they have themselves to defend it. True meaning of swaraj is that evey member of the commonwealth is capable of defending his liberty against the whole world. Swaraj is an inward growth. their restiveness is the surest and the hopefullest sign of their and India's coming freedom. Healthy discontent is the prelude to progress. But meanwhile it behoves all the clerks and others who come in contract with these classes to treat them with exemplary consideration and courtesy.

Young India, 1-8-1929

275. WHO SHOULD WEAR THE CROWN[1]

The occupation of the Congress chair is becoming more and more onerous year after year. It is a serious question who should wear the crown for the next year. It is all thorns and no roses. I have noticed my name asone of the possibilities. When I first saw it amongst the nominees of some committee, I did not treat it seriously. But now I find friends speaking to me seriously and pressing me even to ask for the crown even if it is not offered to me. I need not discuss here the reasons advanced in favour of the proposal. I admit the weightiness of some of them. I have given them all the consideration I was capable of giving them, but I must own I have neither the courage nor the confidence in my ability to shoulder the burden. I feel that I have become almost unfit for attending to the details of office work which I must do, as is my nature, if I accepted the office. I know too that I am not keeing pace with the march of events. There is therefore a hiatus between the rising generation and me. I look a back number in their company. Not that I believe myself to be a back number. But when it comes to working in their midst, I know that I must take a back seat and allow the surging wave to pass over me. I have mentioned two decisive reasons for my reluctance to shoulder the burden. There are others which I do not put in the same category as

[1] This was written before July 29, 1929, *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 29-7-1929

these. But I hold these two as sufficient to eliminate me from the list of nominees.

In my opinion the crown must be worn by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. If I could have influenced the decision, he would have occupied the chair even for this year. But the imperative demand of Bengal compelled the senior partner to capitulate.

Older men have had their innings. The battle of the future has to be faught by younger men and women. And it is but meet that they are led by one of themselves. Older men should yield with grace what will be taken from them by force if they do not read the signs of the times. Responsibility will mellow and sober the youth, and prepare them for the burden they must discharge. Pandit Jawaharlal has everything to recommend him. He has for years discharged with singular ability and devotion the office of secretary of the Congress. By his bravery, determination, application, integrity and grit he has captivated the imagination of the youth of the land. He has come in touch with labour and the peasantry. His close acquaintance with European politics is a great asset in enabling him to assess ours.

But say the older heads: "When we are likely to have to enter into delicate negotiations with various groups and parties outside the Congress, when we might even have to deal with British diplomacy, when we have yet the Hindu-Muslim knot to undo, we must have someone like you as the head." In so far as there is force in this argument, it is sufficiently answered by my drawing attention to the fact that whatever special qualities I may possess in the direction indicated, I shall be able to exercise more effectively by remaining detached from and untrammelled by, than by holding, office. So long as I retain the affection and the confidence of our people, there is not the slightest danger of my not being without holding office to make the fullest use of such powers as I may possess. God has enabled me to affect the life of the country since 1920 without the necessity of holding office. I am not aware that my capacity for service was a whit enhanced by my becoming President of the Congress at Belgaum.[1]

And those who know the relations that subsist between Jawaharlal and me know that his being in the chair is as good as my being in it. We may have intellectual differences but our hearts are one. And with all his youthful impetuosities, his sense of stern

[1] In 1924

discipline and loyalty make him an inestimable comrade in whom one can put the most implicit faith.

"Will not Jawaharlal's name be a red rag to the English bull?"… whispers another critic. We give English statesmen little credit for common sense and diplomatic skill and betray less faith in ourselves when we think like the imaginary critic. If a decision is really right for us, it ought to be right for the whole world. If in choosing our President we have to take into consideration what English statesmen will think of our choice, we show little courage of our convictions. Personally I have a higher estimate of English character than that assumed by the critic. The Englishman prizes honesty, bravery, grit and outspokenness all of which Jawaharlal has in abundance. Even if therefore British statesmen are to be considered in making our choice, Pandit Jawaharlal suffers from no disqualification.

Lastly, a President of the Congress is not an autocrat. He is a representative working under a well-defined constitution and well-known traditions. He can no more impose his views on the people than the English King. The Congress is a forty-five-year-old organization and has a status above its most distinguished Presidents. And it is the Congress as a whole with which, when the time is ripe, British statesmen will have to deal. They know this probably better than we do. All things considered therefore my advice to those concerned is to cease to think of me and to call Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to the high office with the fullest confidence and hope.

Young India, 1-8-1929

276. A.I.S.A. PRIZE

The reader may recall that some years ago Sjt. Revashankar Jagjivan Jhaveri had offered a prize of Rs. 5,000 for a spinning-wheel that would do for the spinners what Singer's Sewing Machine does for the housewife. Many tried to win the prize. A skilled man was admitted to the Ashram and given every facility to make his experiment under the best of auspices. The attempt however failed. But hope of finding a suitable cottage wheel was not given up. Sjt. Revashankar Jagjivan is one of those who never lose hope. He has succeeded in persuading the Council of the Association to announce a prize that would attract even the Western inventors to compete for it. Consequently the reader will find elsewhere the A.I.S.A. advertisement

announcing a prize of Rs. 1,00,000 or its present equivalent (roughtly) £7,700. This figure will be maintained on the expiry of the time-limit irrespective of the fluctuations that the fickle rupee may undergo meanwhile. I hope that the prize will produce a spinning Singer who would raise the income of the village spinner eightfold.

Young India, 1-8-1929

277 "BRITISH TRUSTEES"

It is a real pleasure to give elsewhere Mr. Pennington's letter. Mr. Pennington is now a nonagenarian but his fith in himself and the nation he represents is as green as ever. I wish that we could have the same faith in ourselves and the nation we are humbly striving to represent. Mr. Pennington's postscript[1] is marked "private" but there need be no privacy about it. I have printed it as it does credit to him. The reader will join me in wishing him many more years of life upon this tiny globe.

To come to the subject-matter of my correspondent's letter, I must confess that he does not convince me. There would be no quarrel with him or the English administrators if they were real trustees. Mr. Pennington's honesty is beyond question. But surely he is labouring under self-deception. Some of the highest men in the British Cabinet have frankly repudiated the doctrine of trust andenunciated for our benefit and the knowledge of the world the doctrine of the sword."By the sword we have seized India, by the sword we propose to keep it". The sword here means obviously gunpowder and all the tricks of diplomacy that accompany that substance. It was therefore the naked truth which was uttered when the doctrine of the sword was enunciated.

Nor need Mr. Pennington and those who think with him be reminded that a trust is always a burden, a responsibility. But the British people have used their possession of India predominantly if not exclusively for their benefit. In their own words, they have exploited the country and its people. In the late Lord Salisbury's words they have bled India. Surely when a trustee discharges his trust, the ward feels its good effect and grows under its protection. But

[1] Which read: "You are quite at liberty to publish this, if you like. I can hardly hope to write again having been born in 1839."

India's statesmen from Gokhale downward have testified that our growth has been stunted.

Pax Britannica is an overworked horse out of which no work is to be had now. Nobody is deceived by it. What we want is Pax Indica. And if we have to wade through a sea of blood before we reach it, the sooner we can do so the better. We do not want a superimposed pestilential peace that smothers us, we want an inward oxidizing peace that wil make us healthy and strong.

Mr. Pennington reminds us of the mandates, that euphemism for usurpation for the purpose of exploitation. Let him ask the mandated nations how much they appreciate the mandates. Hypocrisy and camouflage are among the curses of modern times. But sweet words butter no parsnips. They have ceased to decieve the people concerned. That well-intentioned people can still be hood-winked into believing in worn-out beliefs and shibboleths is a great pity. Their usefulness for service is curtailed by unfortunate self-deceptions under which estimable men like Mr. Pennington labour.

Young India, 1-8-1929

278. ASSAM FLOOD

Here is the first report[1] from Sjt. Amritlal Thakkar on this flood. The money collected is being sent.

Young India, 1-8-1929

279. 'THE CREATIVE DELIGHT'

Under the above heading there appears in St. Berchmans' College Magazine a very readable and thought-provoking article[2] by Capt. A.R. Poduval of Cochin. Though for the pages of *Young India* it may be considered somewhat long, I have not had the courage to mutilate it. I present the reader with the whole of Capt. Poduval's

[1] Not reproduced here; the report narrated losses suffered in Cachar and Sylhet districts and requested for public funds for reconstruction of houses and supply of fodder for cattle.

[2] Not reproduced here. The writer had expatiated on the 'creative delight' in labouring with one's own hands to produce things for personal use and referred to spinning and the wheel in this connection.

article in the hope that it will bring converts to the great cause of Daridranarayana.

Young India, 1-8-1929

280. BOMBAY MILK SUPPLY

Sjt. Nagindas Amulakhrai, the milk enthusiast, continues his well-thought-out agitation for procuring a cheaper and purer milk supply for Bombay. He has drawn up a memorandum showing that if the railway company would adopt a reasonable and responsive attitude it can very materially help cheaper production, i.e., by reducing the freight for milk and supplying cheap facilities for carrying milk from the suburban stations to Bomaby. He says[1] that it is owing to bad freight policy.

> that places between Palghar (58 miles) and Bulsar (125 miles), although fully grass areas,.... have no dairies started for milk supply to Bombay; that suppliers of milk in bulk have no alternative but to keep themselves and their buffaloes (16,003) confined in the stables (96) in the heart of the city in very unnatural conditions where there is no grazing area and the rent for accommodation of each buffalo in the stable is Rs. 9 or Rs. 10 per month resulting in a distinct additional loss at the rate of Rs. 240 per each of the 12 buffaloes that go dry every month after the lactation period out of a lot of 100 buffaloes in milk; and that the milk production from more than 26,000 buffaloes and supply thereof from year to year is being entirely stopped though they would again come into calf and produce milk to the same extent as before within a very short time if not slaughtered and wasted.

ontends that

> . . . Bombay milk rate is the maximum in the world. It is much dearer than in New York and London. It is 50% dearer even than in Calcutta . . . The result is the highest infant mortality of the poor of Bombay and nearly total extinction of the best breed of buffaloes . . .

I understand that a Joint Committee consisting of a sub-committee of the Railway Local Advisory Board and a certain number of the members of the Bombay Corporation has been brought into being to consider this question. The question of cheap and pure milk supply for Bombay is a vital question. It affects the health of the inhabitants and especially the babies of ‘the first city’ of India. The

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

humanitarian and the economic aspects are no less important. It is to be hoped therefore that the Joint Committee will present a solution that will enable suburban dairies to thrive and simplify the question of removing the cattle stables from the heart of the city.

Young India, 1-8-1929

281. LAKSHMI DEVI'S STORY

I have received many letters in connection with the letter of Lakshmi Devi's, which I published earlier.[1] One of them is from the young man's name is Madan Mohan Sharma. He is studying in a college. Shri Madan Mohan Sharma writes:[2]

All the other letters I have received tend to support Shri Madan Mohan Sharma's statement. Shri Haribhau Upadhyaya has looked into the matter personally. He has also written to me. I have also read an article he wrote on this subject in *Tyagbhumi*. Shri Haribhau's letter[3] is before me just now. I feel that he has given sound advice to both the parties.

I don't know which of the two statements is to be believed. If the facts stated by Shri Madan Mohan are true then Lakshmi Devi has erred greatly. And if her statement is true, then I will stick to the views I have expressed earlier. Shri Madan Mohan has written other letters too and he swears that he has neither suppressed nor fabricated anything. He has also asked me to look into this matter. Bhai Haribhau Upadhyay is a fellow-worker and I have full faith in him. He has clearly written that he thinks both the parties have suppressed some of the facts. In that case it would be difficult to unearth the truth. I would advise Shri Madan Mohan Sharma to tell Haribhauji whatever else he wishes to add on the matter and remove his doubts.

I have also been told that I have done injustice to Shri Madan Mohan by publishing Lakshmi Devi's letter and have thereby promoted the cause of untruth. I, however, feel I have served the truth as well as both the parties by publishing Lakshmi Devi's letter. Men are quite often unjust to women. For most of such women their misery

[1] *Vide* "An Unforatuanate Daaughter", 4-7-1929

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had denied the allegations Lakshmi Devi had made against him and charged her with lying.

[3] For Gandhiji's reply to this, *Vide* "Letter to Hariabhau Upadhyaya", 31-7-1929

ends only with their death. If Lakshmi Devi has been untruthful, then undoubtedly she has harmed her sex. But if I had not published her letter then this chance of exposing the untruth would have never occurred. What I said in my remarks on her letter can help her only if she is truthful, not if she is untruthful. My advice was given on the assumption that she had written the truth. If Lakshmi Devi has been truthful then it is up to her to come forward boldly and prove her innocence. But if she has been untruthful, she should admit it and atone for her sin. Many charges have been made against her in the letters I have received. Only truth, purity and steadfastness can save Lakshmi Devi.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 1-8-1929

282. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 1, 192[9][1]

BHAI BAMESHWARDAS,

I have your letter. Ramanama is a matter of faith not of the intellect. And if one thinks of discontinuing it if it fails to bring one peace, this is as good as losing one's faith. Whether or not one gets peace from it, whether one feels happy or unhappy, one ought to keep up the repetition in the faith that Ramanama alone is real. One should never accept defeat.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 201

283. LETTER TO SURENDRA

August 1, 1929

I have shown your letter to . . . .[2] Your letter is proof that it is the mind that makes one happy or unhappy. How strange it is that you do not even believe anything that I tell you. How often have I told you

[1] From the G.N. Register
[2] Omission as in the source

that I have not doubted the sincerity of your feelings? Does not the intellect of even those with the best intentions sometimes become dull? My criticism was of your wisdom, not of your intentions. And so long as I do not doubt your intentions the least little bit, why should you be pained?[1] Get rid of your pain, therefore, or you will make me unhappy. You need have no hesitation in writing anything you wish in your letters. You may write anything, sense or nonsense.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/83

284. A LETTER

August 1, 1929

Ramanama is not to be recited to the satisfaction of one's reason. It is to be recited with faith. If you think that you may stop reciting it if it does not give you peace of mind, it will mean that you have lost faith in it. One should keep reciting it, whether or not it gives one peace of mind or whether one is happy or unhappy, in the faith that it is the only real thing. One should never lose heart.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/84

285. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

SABARMATI,
August 2, 1929

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your prompt reply. Evidently I confounded customs with octroi duty but I did mean the latter.[2] All over India khadi is being exempted from octroi duty, for it means tax on the labour of the poorest and the most deserving. I wish you could exert yourself to have this tax removed. The best way to promote this village industry is to have a department as Mysore has for the supply of cheap and efficient wheels with accessories. Under capable management there is ample scope for improvement.

Yours,

A. HYDARI

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/86

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi", 13-6-1929
[2] *Vide* "Marriage and the Vedas", 13-6-1929.

286. A LETTER[1]

SABARMATI,
August 2, 1929

I was very happy to read your long letter. I would be very glad if you came here. If you give up attachments an overcome ignorance, I think you can come. If you are convinced that you have freed yourself from attachments, not only will there be no harm in living with . . ., but you will be extremely helpful to him. Will a time come when you will regard. . . as you do the others and treat the other children as you do . . . and. . .? If you wish, you have the strength to do so. You have understanding. You must also give up attachment to wealth . . .should not feel the need, and they do not. If you live as one of the Ashram inmates, you will need nothing for yourself. I will have a talk with . . . only after you have made a firm decision about this. Do keep writing to me.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/87

287. SPEECH AT TILAK'S DEATH ANNIVERSARY, GUJARAT VIDYAPITH

[*August 2, 1929*][2]

This is what I understand your question to mean: to what extent does Tilak Maharaj's life reflect the belief that tit for tat was his principle? We shall not be able to gain much from pursuing this question. But I had a brief correspondence on this subject with Tilak Maharaj.[3] As a humble student of his life and an admirer of his virtues, I can say that he had a sense of humour. Vinod means humour. Since we have not begun to use the word vinod in that sense, I have to use the English word in order to make myself clear. If the Lokamanya did not have that sense of humour, he would have gone crazy … he carried such a great national burden. But by this gift he used to save himself as also others from difficult situations. Another characteristic of his was that, while arguing with anyone, he deliberately used to indulge in exaggeration. I do not fully remember

[1] Omissions in the letter are as in the source.
[2] From Prajabandhu, 4-8-1929
[3] *Vide* "Naote on Tilaka's Letter", 18-1-1920

the correspondence I had with him on this subject; you may go through it. Tit for tat was not the guiding principle of Tilak Maharj's life; if it were, he would not have gained so much popularity. I do not know of a single instance in the world of any man having based his life on that principle and become popular. It is true that in this regard he did not venture as far as I go…that we just cannot employ deceit against a deceiver. True, there is to be found some some support for this in one or two places in the Gita Rashasya…in one or two places only. He indeed held that in the national interest the principle of tit for tat could be used if necessary. But he also truly believed that to employ truth alone against a rogue was the correct principle; but he used to say that only saints could implement this principle. According to Tilak Maharaj's definition a 'sadhu' does not mean a 'vairagi', but one who stays away from the world, he who does not participate in wordly affairs. He believed that, remaining in the world, anyone might be able to observe it, but if he could not do so, he had a right to have recourse to the other thing, that is, to employ deceit. However, if we have any right to evaluate the life of such a great man, let us not do it on such controversial points. His life is a rich legacy to India, to the world. That will be evaluated fully hereafter. That will be done by history, and only by history. The greatness of a living person can never be fully measured by his contemporaries; they cannot help being partial because it is only those with likes and dislikes that sit in judgement. Truly speaking, even historians are not free from it. Gibbon has been regarded as an honest historian; nevertheless I can perceive his partiality on page after page. Much of his writing is likely to have been influenced by his love or hate of certain individuals or institutions. There is a special likelihood of contemporaries being guilty of partiality. The best use we can make of the Lokamanya's noble life is that we recall the permanent principles in it and follow them.

Tilak Maharaj's patriotism was inexhaustible. Along with it he had a keen sense of justice. I came to know it quite by chance. He had attended the literary conference held at the time of the Calcutt session of the Congress in 1917. How could he find time from the work of the Congress? Nevertheless, he had come, delivered a speech and gone away. I could perceive his love for Hindi, the national language, at that time. But I saw a greater thing than that and that was his just and fair attitude towards Englishmen. Indeed, he began his speech in this way: "I criticize the British Government a lot. But we cannot forget the

services rendered to our language by English scholars." Half his speech was full of this theme. And he said that, if we want to cultivate and develop the national language, we would have to toil and study as much as the English scholars had done. If we have been able to preserve our script, if our grammar has got standardized, English scholars have played a large part in it. The early missionaries who arrived here had a great love for the new language. Is Taylor's Gujarati Grammar an ordinary achievement? It did not bother Tilak Maharaj at all that his popularity might diminish if he praised the English. The people expected him only to blame the English.

We cannot show even a hundredth or a thousandth part of the spirit of sacrifice that Tilak Maharaj had in him. And what of his simplicity? No furniture or any other decoration was to be found in his apartment. A stranger would not feel that this was the residence of some big man. Let us emulate his innate simplicity. Similar was his patience. He would remain steadfast and go on doing his duty and never neglect it. Even when he got news of his wife's death, his pen did not pause.[1] We wish to enjoy great luxuries and to win swaraj. These are contradictory things. In this age, hypocrisy, irresponsibility and self-willed conduct are rampant. If we wish to win swraj, self-control should be our motto, capricious conduct never. Can we point out a single moment in his life when he had spent it in enjoyment? He had infinite patience. Hence he could take work from the worst of men. A leader of men ought to have this capacity. That does not do harm. If we are so particular that we will not take work from any given person, we should either repair to the forest or sit at home leading a householder's life, provided we keep ourselves aloof.

We should not content ourselves with mere praises of Tilak Maharaj. Our principle should be work, work and work. At a time when we wish to win swaraj, we should not indulge in useless reading or thinking but utilize evey moment towards work for swaraj. You may ask, should that work be done at the cost of studies? In 1921 also, I had the same argument with students. What did Tilak Maharaj do?

[1] A footnote in Navajivan says: I cannot but recall another more wonderful event. The Lokamanya had gone to Raigadh, Shivaji's capital, to inaugurate celebrations in honour of Shivaji. He had to depart, leaving his eldest son who was lying seriously ill at home. No sooner did he reach Raigadh than a telegram arrived. He straight away put it into his pocket and only after completing the celebrations did he read it.

He wrote great books, not outside but inside the jail. It was only in jail that he could write the Gita Rahasya and the Arctic Home. He sacrificed his capacity for writing great and original boks for the sake of his country. He thought to himself: this house is on fire; let me do my best to put out the fire. If he emptied a thousand buckets of water, let us pour at least one. Education and other things are necessary, but they are secondary. If they can be used for the work of swaraj we should do so, else we should let them rust. Therein neither we nor the world stands to lose.

Tilak Maharaj accomplished this in his life. There is so much to learn from his life, so great is his legacy to us, that there is no room for the question which was asked at the outset. It is our dharma to pick up virtues.

The work that has to be accomplished at the present moment cannot be done by slack persons. The work of swaraj is difficult. The atmosphere that exists in India today is such that we deliver speeches, we behave in a disorderly manner, we perpetrate violence, we somehow enter some associations and wreck them, we enter legislatures and make speeches there. We do not find this in Tilak Maharaj's life. What we have to learn therefrom is the virtues I have mentioned. If you do that, it will be worth your while to study at the national Vidyapith; otherwise the money spent on you would be a waste. If we do not do our duty, despite the speeches which have been made and the essays read out by students, we shall remain where we were and we would have only wasted a couple of hours. Let not this happen!

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-8-1929

288. LETTER TO VISHVANATH

August 3, 1929

SHRI VISHVANATH,

I have your letter. Your dictionary is for scholars. It has its place. My demand is for something different. I have felt the need of a dictionary for a busy man like me who can immediately find the right word when he is stuck. Such a man would not ask for evidence in support of the meaning given. Your dictionary is likely to be expensive too. And what I want is simple words which people can

easily understand, like *havagadi* for a motor-car, not words coined by joining some Sanskrit words.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/90/1

289. A LETTER

SABARMATI,
August 3, 1929

I got your letter only today. I came to know about Surendra's grief from Chhaganlal's letter yesterday. It was a painful surprise to me. I have not in the least lost my good opinion of him. I never lost it at any time. I had no doubt at all about his sincerity. But I had none, have none, about his intellectual confusion either. Have not persons with the noblest feelings got confused intellectually? It happened to Arjuna. I have no doubt at all about my sincerity of motive in killing the calf. But many have ascribed confusion of intellect to me. How can I say that they are wrong? In the same way I have attributed intellectual confusion to Surendra. That should be no reason for him to feel unhappy. I have written him a consoling letter yesterday. I had also explained to him my point of view before I left. I think Nath perfectly understood it. I had even forgotten this storm in a tea-cup. I only wanted to see that Surendra did not stray from his duty. After Nath and you had reassured me on that point why should I have thought any more about his intellect? It is the Lord's promise that he who is sincere in his devotion to Him will be granted the light of understanding. What more do we need?

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/90/2

290. A LETTER

August 3, 1929

I have your letter. I know for certain that you would not be happy at Gogade. Your place is in the Ashram. You may stay at Wardha if you prefer it. But you must find your peace only here. Beyond leading the recitation of the *Gita* verses, you should give up the desire to guide anybody. You would be qualified to do so only after you have become perfectly steady yourself.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/91

291. A LETTER

SABARMATI,
August 3, 1929

I consider it equally wrong to cook grains either green or dried. I must have said that it is more sinful to dry the grain and eat it after cooking than to eat it fresh because drying involves an additional process which pains the living soul in the grain. But what I argue more strongly is that such things should not be so much linked with religion. Anyone who feels real compassion would automatically give up eating unnecessary things.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/89

292. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

AHMEDABAD,
August 3 [*1929*][1]

MY DEAR MILLIE,

I am writing this as I am watching the glorious rain descending in torrents before me. It will gladden the hearts of millions of men and women. There was a great dread of a most severe famine overtaking Western India. In the twinkling of an eye, all that fear has gone. It has given place to boundless joy. This rain is a veritable deliverance for millions upon millions of cattle. There is probably no place on earth that is so dependent on rain as India. You will now understand what part this rain must have played in giving me health. I have suffered agonies ≈ all due to my own follies. The punishment was adequate to the wrong done by me to the body. Through a faulty experiment I was suffering from dysentery. Whilst I was getting over it, I ate when I should have refrained and that brought on the inevitable crisis. I am so reduced in body and I have now to build up anew but there is no cause of anxiety. I am convalescent and regularly taking some nourishment and daily increasing the quantity and I hope to be able to walk alone in ten days' time. You ask me about nursing.

[1] From the reference to dysentery caused by Gandhiji's experiment in uncooked food; Gandhiji began to suffer from dysentery in the first week of August 1929 and gave up taking uncooked food from August 15, 1929; *vide*, "Telegram to G. D. Birla", 17-8-1929, "Telegram to G. D. Birla", 19-8-1929 and "Unfired Food", 22-8-1929

Everything that human love can do, has been done for me. It was my privilege and my pain to be on the sick-bed, privilege to find so much love rained on me, pain that I should need it all through my weakness and folly. This rich experiencing of love makes an added call on such service as I may be capable of rendering to humanity. But service to humanity is service of self and service of self is self-purification. How shall I purify myself? It is the one question that has been agitating me throughout my sickness. Pray for me.

With love,

Yours,

BHAI

[PS.]

Please pass on this letter to Henry as I shall not be dictating a separate letter to him.

From the original : Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy : National Archives of India

293. OUR SCHOOL[1]

I have published the delectable description[2] of the Raniparaj School of Vedchhi given above just as it was received by me without the alteration of a single syllable. The reader will find some obvious grammatical mistakes in it which I have deliberately allowed to remain. Manual training is naturally given a place of honour in this institution. The three R's are taught not as a task but recreation. The artistic mind of Sjt. Jugatram[3] is clearly in evidence in all this. We may not all be able to emulate his consummate art. But if we can only emulate his overflowing love, we can dot the country with such model tiny institutions, and give to our teeming agricultural population just the sort of education which it so sorely needs to alleviate its condition. This institution inculcates culture, character, a knowledge of the rules of hygiene and sanitation, self-help and love of freedom. Let no one delude himself with the idea that such an institution can be good enough only for the Raniparaj children, but not for the children of the

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 4-8-1929. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

[2] Not reproduced here

[3] Jugatram Dave, one of the tutors in the school

wealthy and the well-to-do. It can be easily shown that Raniparaj boys would feel smothered in our present-day schools for the children of millionaires. And what is smothering to the Raniparaj children cannot be uplifting for the rest. On the other hand, if the children of the millionaires attended the Raniparaj School of Vedchhi, it would enable them to breathe the pure, life-giving ozone of robust nationalism, and learn dignity of labour…a privilege which they sorely lack at present and might well envy.

Young India, 5-9-1929

294. STATEMENT ON FUNDS COLLECTED IN BURMA

A brief statement on the funds collected during the tour of Burma, prepared by the secretay of the Udyoga Mandir, is given above.[1] The figures for all towns along with their names have been received from Rangoon. It is not necessary to give them here. However, if anyone wishes to see these, he can approach Shri Nanalal. Needless to say, funds have been sent to all the institutions for which they were received.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-8-1929

295. MY NOTES

TWO CHILDREN'S SACRIFICIAL OFFERING

Chandan and Krishnavijay are sister and brother. Their mother is a widow. She is well-to-do, but has faith in khadi. Her entire family of six persons spins all the yarn that it needs. At the end of the year, some khadi is left over. All the children are studying. The two elder girls are studying at the Vinaya Mandir. Chandan is aged five, while Krishnavijay is six. Both these children spin of their own free will. No sort of pressure is applied; they spin simply because they see others doing so.

I have just seen a bolt of khadi prepared from the yarn spun by these two children and this deepened my conviction about the potential strength of hand-spun yearn. The yarn spun by them is of 5 to 6 counts. The entire bolt weighs five and a quarter pounds. Its

[1] The statement is not translated here.

length is 12 ft. 3 inches,its width is 33 inches and the count for the warp yarn is seven. I do not regard this as something ordinary. The reader may try and figure out the strength of that khadi which can be produced so easily. The mother, the uncle and the elder girls spin very fine and beautiful yearn. Let no one conclude that this family uses clothes sparingly. The children are as well and fully clad as those of any respectable well-to-do family. They use enough bed-covers, sheets, etc. Hence the example of this family is applicable to all middle-class families. The only distinguishing feature is that the family loves khadi and the uncle, who is the guardian of the family, has through his own love made all the members devoted to the cause of khadi. If all those who are dedicated to swaraj also dedicate themselves to the cause of khadi, we can boycott foreign cloth today sitting in our homes and if that boycott can be realized, the people will acquire new vigour and self-confidence. All children can follow the example of these children. Will parents inspire them to do so?

TO THE PERSON WHO IS ASHAMED TO REVEAL HIS NAME

You will not free yourself from guilt so long as you remain anonymous through shame. You should not regard the offence as a disease or try to conceal it from others. On the contrary, making it public will bring about a sense of shame and this in turn will help you in washing off guilt. So long as you have a false sense of shame, I regard your reading of the Upanishads too as something futile. The real disgrace consists in committing the offence. In trying to shield it, one is doubly guilty.

A CORRECTION

With reference to my article[1] regarding the services rendered in Orissa by Shri Jivram Kalyanji, the said gentleman writes:[2]

Despite Shri Jivram's desire not to publish this correction, I have felt it necessary to print it. This merely shows his honesty and sincerity. He does not wish to accept the credit which I gave him erroneously. For my benefit, he also wished to do away with the objection…that wealth was being accumulated at the cost of

[1] *Vide* "Amonag the Skeletons of Orissa", 7-7-1929

[2] The letter is not translated here. The writer had stated that contrary to Gandhiji's impression, labourers were not exploited by voluntary workers but helped as the hardai (myrobalans) picked by them in the forests was purchased by merchants from Europe; and that there were other dedicated workers in the field besides himself, so that all the credit could not given to him.

labourers…which lay behind the credit I gave him. Both grounds are genuine. It is not relevant to our subject-matter whether those who gather hardai can be regarded as labourers and whether trading in that which is obtained through their efforts may be regarded as earnings derived from their labour. The reader has merely to know from this that my belief that Jivram went to Utkal with a view to making money through the labour of others whom he underpaid was an erroneous one. It is sufficient for me and reader to know that the sentiment which actually prompted him to go there was also a pure one. That Shri Maganbhai is not a householder but a brahmachari is his special distinction.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-8-1929

296. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 4, 1929

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I got your letter. The restriction placed by the Conference does not prevent one from being appointed member of the executive committee or some other body of the Conference in any State. But I am very doubtful if in the present circumstances any State in Kathiawar would appoint a citizen of another State in this manner. It would be unbearable if you offer your name and it is rejected. If, therefore, Jamnadas can assure you that your name will be accepted, I see no objection to your getting yourself appointed. But I see no benefit either. Even from a practical point of view, it would be wise not to entertain such a thought at all. Having taken one step, you will not know where to stop. I am, however, ready to concede that you and others who are familiar with the local conditions, would know more about the whole matter. You need not, therefore, pay serious attention to this advice.

This time you must be made to change what has become a regular habit with you. I had never thought that I would have to attend the Conference on the dates fixed. All my time is booked. Do present an address to Jawaharlal. But it is not proper that it should be presented by me. My presenting it would look as appropriate as a father presenting an address to a son! I had a letter today from

Jawaharlal which he says that in case his wife had to be immediately operated upon he might not even attend the Conference. He is known to be very scrupulous about keeping a promise once made. If, however, unforeseen circumstances arise, like the possibility mentioned above, even the strength of a strong man avails him nothing. Let us hope that no such difficulty will arise.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this letter.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5718

297. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 4, 1929

BHAISHRI JETHALAL,

I didn't know before now that a silent worker like you would commit the impropriety of falling ill after returning to his place. I hope you will have got rid of your fever when you get this letter. Quinine is the only effective remedy for malaria. You should therefore take it. Since you are not accustomed to taking medicines, the fever will come down if you take 3 grains of quinine with 15 grains of soda bicarb. It will suffice if you take this does twice daily till you are completely free of fever. The quinine should be dissolved in water mixed with lime juice, and 15 grains of soda in four ounces of water should be added to it. The mixture should be swallowed as soon as effervescence appears. This is the best way of taking quinine. If the bowels are not clear take castor oil for purgative and eat light food. During the fever you may, with due care, continue without any fear the experiment of eating only uncooked food.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9846. Courtesy: Narayan Jethalal Sampat

298. LETTER TO SOMNATH

[After *August 4, 1929*][1]

BHAI SOMNATH,

Perfect bliss is impossible without one's being absolutely free from passion. The means of stilling the mind is recitation of Ramanama from the heart. True renunciation lies in vigilantly and ceaselessly remaining engaged in service. The best way of keeping the *atman* happy in spite of the troubles of the body is to think and feel it to be different and separate from the body. Devotion is not devotion if it is bereft of humility. What produces pride is not knowledge. He who acquires inner knowledge automatically turns inward. It is possible to erase the effects of previous actions and that alone is the true object of endeavour in life. To become a cipher means to forget the ego-self.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/97

299. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

[Before *August 5, 1929*][2]

BHAISHRI BANKER,

If the yarn received had been despatched before the deadline, accept it.

I am sure the names of Manilal Kothari and Rajaji should be removed. If the rules permit we may re-elect them after we receive the yarn from them. We can show no partiality in this matter. We will face the problems which may arise from our following the straight path.

If you can suggest anything else in this regard, you may do so. Consult Jamnalalji if you wish. Where is Manilal these days? I intend writing to Rajaji after you meet me.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/101

[1] As placed in the source

[2] From the contents this letter appears to have been written before the letter to C. Rajagopalachari, the following item.

300. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SABARMATI,
August 5, 1929

MY DEAR C. R.,

I was deeply pained to learn that in spite of repeated requests by letter and telegraph, you had failed to send your yarn subscription for the A.I.S.A. If the salt loses its savour, etc., etc. We might as well shut up shop if the tallest partner in the business is proved guilty of gross negligence. Do please send your yarn.

My experiment goes on merrily.

How are you and your prohibition work[1]?

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/93

301. LETTER TO K. V. SUBRAMANIA IYER

SABARMATI,
August, 5, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I am not publishing you letter as I still hold that your fast was wrong. You should read my article[2] again. I have said 'you should fast against wrong done by friend.' The court was no friend of yours. My advice to you is to refuse to have your child vaccinated and you should go to jail as often as they would take you. You should carry on a quiet, dignified and patient agitation against compulsion. there is no case for fasting.

Yours loving,

K. V. SUBRAMANIA IYER
SECY., ANTI-VACCINAION LEAGUE
PALGHAT

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/94

[1] With which the addressee had been entrusted by the Congress Working Committee; *vide* "Prohibition", 11-7-1929

[2] *Vide* "Notes" sub-title A Good Soul Passes Away"

302. LETTER TO M.R. JAYAKAR

SABARMATI,
August 5, 1929

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

It was an unexpected delight to receive your letter accompanying the gift of your yarn. It reminded me of the good old days. I hope you will continue to send such reminders. Every yard of yarn you will spin will be so much addition to the country's wealth. And your addition will be ineffective.

Yours sincerely,

M.K. GANDHI

Jayakar's Private Papers, Correspondence: File No. 407-VI. Courtesy: National Archives of India

303. NOTE TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[*August 5, 1929*][1]

Do what you can for this man. I shall of course be pleased if you could accommodate him. It is however for you to consider whether he is sincerely repentant.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 15815

[1] This note in Gandhiji's hand is written on a letter from Jethalal Virji in which the latter denies having misconstrued Chhaganlal's letter. A note to the effect that a letter from Jethalal Virji has been replied to on August 5, 1929 appears on the latter's letter to Chhaganlal Joshi.

304. LETTER TO BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

August 5, 1929

BHAI BANARASIDAS,

I have your letter. I have gone through the article in Maharatta. I think that we should not write anything about it. I am sure that it will produce no impact in the West. Even if it does, our reply will only make matters worse. Public servants will always be subject to such attacks. Deenabandhu[1] will certainly write to me if any action is necessary.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

SHRI BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI
91 UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD
CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2556

305. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

August 6, 1929

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have your letter and cheque[2] ; the receipt is enclosed herewith.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4715-B. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

[1] C.F. Andrews
[2] For Rs. 100 for the Assam Relief Fund.

306. LETTER TO VITHALBHAI J. PATEL[1]

SABARMATI,
August 6, 1929

I have your letter. I am enclosing the draft. If we have something in us, we may hope for everything. We should display if I could accept his and your suggestion. But what can I do when I lack the necessary courage and self-confidence? How can one who loses courage act as a helmsman? I think that what I have suggested[2] is the right course. Nothing is possible with Jinnah. Sarojini Devi has some hope. If she wishes I will meet him.[3] You do not write anything about your health.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/102

307. TELEGRAM TO PRAFULLA CHANDRA GHOSH[4]

[On or after *August 6, 1929*]

PLEASE SEE AMRITLAL THAKKAR SILCHAR.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 15449

308. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

August 7, 1929

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I do not like the title "Dawn of Histoy". "A Father's Letters to His Daughter" may be a better title than 'Letters to Indira" though I do not mind the latter.

[1] Although the source does not mention the addressee, it is clear from the contents that it was Vithalbhai Patel; *vide* also "Dr. Sunderland's Volume"

[2] Viz., that Jawaharlal Nehru be elected President of the Congress; *vide* "Who Should Wear the Crown", 1-8-1929

[3] Gandhiji was to meet M. A. Jinnah on August 12 at Bombay; *vide* " My Notes" , 16-6-1929

[4] In reply to his telegram of August 5 from Comilla received at Sabarmati on August 6, which read: "Starting spinning in relief area. Solicit arrange give us ten thousand or as much as possible for same from your relief fund."

I wish Kamala would be freed from these recurring pains. I should risk the operation, if the doctors would perform it.

I am keeping the clock under lock and key and shall bring it on my coming there.

I go to Bomaby on the 11th to meet Jinnah. I admire Sarojini Devi's optimism. But I am going to Bomaby without[1] much hope.

Yours,

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1929. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

309. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

August 7, 1929

MY DEAR PEACE-MAKER,

I have your letter giving me all the information about dogs and daughters. I suppose you put the dogs first because they are less troublesome.

I shall be in Bombay on 11th by the Gujarat Mail, *not* the Kathiawar Mail which comes an hour later. I dare not stay at the Taj. I must go to Laburnum Road. Nothing will be required at Mr. Jinnah's house as I shall have taken horse's food at Laburnum Road.

You will please send me back the same day.

Lovingly yours,

MATTER-OF-FACT

(NOT MYSTIC)

SPINNER

From the original: Padmaja Naidu papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The source has "with".

310. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

SABARMATI,
August 7, 1929

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have your two letters. you retain the same promptness of action as before. When I receive Mrs. . . .[1] pamphlets, I shall write to her. you will see more about my experiment[2] in *Young India*.

As to your letter about. . . .[3] I shall look forward to his coming. You may depend upon my straining every nerve to avoid a crisis. I am the same as I was in South Africa in these matters. There will be no standing on false dignity.

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N 32577/99

311. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 7, 1929

BHAI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your postcard. It is good that you dropped the idea of having yourself appointed to the Committee.

Either Revashankerbhai or Durbar Saheb should present the address to Jawaharlal. I believe Durbar Saheb will be attending. Vallabhbhai would be in Madras Presidency.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5697

[1] Illegible in the source

[2] With uncooked food; *vide* also "Unfired Food", 8-8-1929, "Unfired Food", 15-8-1929 and "Unfired Food", 22-8-1929

[3] *ibid*

312. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 7, 1929

BHAISHRI,

I have your letter. May your efforts bear fruit. Please excuse me for my ignorance. Who are there on the Tariff Board? What are the powers allotted to them?

The Congress does not at present have the experts you expect it to have. It is a matter of regret that the intellectual wing of the Congress has weakened with the widening of its base. May be this was inevitable during the transitional period. Students of European economics, shaped according to the Government's model, could not appreciate the organization's rural bias, could not attune themselves to it, could not make the necessary sacrifices and therefore left it. But for this divorce we could have had the custody of Congress. I want you to explain your requirements more clearly and furnish me with the necessary information so that I may do all that I can. Importing salt is as preposterous as importing water. But, indeed, is there any limit to our absurdities? Despite producing enough cotton at home we import about a hundred crore rupees worth of cloth. What is a crore and a half rupees of salt in comparison with this? But this is a digression. Please therefore regard as enough what I have written above.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: Purushottamdas Thakurdas Papers, File No.89/1929. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

313. A LETTER

SABARMATI,
August 7, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have read the portion marked. Believers in unfired food think that human intelligence is quickened by eating vital foods. But no vital-food believer entertains the hope that the whole of mankind will ever take to it. I don't despair of reading your work some day.

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/100

314. A NOTE

August 7, 1929

I do not like deception anywhere. Whether corruption increases or decreases day by day has nothing to do with the removal of untouchability. The duty of removing it remains. I am not acquainted with Shri Aurobindo[1].

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/98

315. LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

[*August 7, 1929*][2]

BHAISAHEB,

A newspaper by the name of Brahman Maha Sammelan is issued from Kashi. It proclaims itself the defender of sanatana dharma. It often publishes some very vicious attacks on Maharshi Dayanand Swami. The Arya Samajist papers have criticized it very much. Can't you do something to stop publication of such writings?

I hope you are keeping well.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

BHARAT BHOOSHAN PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYAJI

UNIVERSITY, BANARAS CITY

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8683

[1] Aurobindo Gosh (1872-1950); Indian revolutionary, politician and mystic

[2] From the postmark

316. NOTES

VACCINATION

Anti-vaccination enthusiasts rate me for having said that vaccination confers "a sort of temporary immunity from smallpox".[1] The correspondents ignore the phrase "a sort of" and repudiate my claim to describe myself as an anti-vaccinationist. I would urge my enthusiastic friends to appreciate the fact that a person may be a good anti-vaccinationist although he may believe in a sort of temporary immunity provided that he renounces the benefit of such immunity. For myself I do not believe in vaccination giving any real immunity temporary or otherwise. It gives a seeming immunity because those who submit to the unclean process in numerous cases believe that they have escaped smallpox because they see some of their neighbours getting it. Who can persuade these fear-stricken men that even without vaccination they might have escaped the infection like the rest of their numerous unvaccinated neighbours? In my note I merely mentioned a psychological fact. Anti-vaccinationists will ensure reform in tolerably good time, if they will be absolutely accurate about their facts, take due account of popular prejudices and fears and patiently cultivate public opinion against compulsory vaccination. But for the apathy in such matters of educated India there would never be compulsion in a matter in which respectable medical opinion favours the reformer's view and statistics exist which at least make out a reasonable case against compulsion. I can understand my compulsory segregation if my neighbours fear infection from me, but I cannot understand my being compelled to undergo an operation against which I have a religious or hygienic objection. A community has a right to protect itself from me but it has no right to impose an obligation on me merely for my protection. The essence of my freedom consists in my right to err so long as my error endangers no one else.

A PATRIOT'S DEATH

A correspondent writes:[2]

[1] *Vide* "Notes" sub-title Anti- Vaccination

[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

> I am sure it will cause you genuine grief to know that L. Banke Dyal, editor of *Weekly Jhang* Sial and selfless Congress worker in the Punjab, is no more. . . . he acted as your Private Secretary to collect and sift evidence in certain villages of the Punjab in connection with the Congress Committee report regarding martial law atrocities. . . . Banke Dyal lived a life of poverty and even starvation. . . . Could you possibly stir up the Punjab Congress or Indian philanthropists to do something to relieve the misery of his dependants?

I have a vivid recollection of Lala Banke Dyal when I was in the Punjab in connection with the Martial Law Congress Inquiry, and can bear out what the correspondent says about his services. I tender my condolences to the family of the deceased. There is no doubt that it is the duty of moneyed Congressmen in the Punjab to investigate the condition of the family and make whatever provision may be necessary. All genuine patriotic workers should be able to feel that their true service is the surest insurance for their legitimate survivors. And relief should always be local. There is something wrong when the family of a patriot in Karachi has to be supported from Dibrugarh.

FOR A.I.S.A. DEFAULTERS

The Secretary, A.I.S.A., complains that many members are anxious to retain their membership but they are not prompt in complying with the rules. In spite of extension, several have failed to send in their yarn and ask for further indulgence. I have reluctantly authorized the Secretary to extend the time till 21st instant when the Council meets. But an organization weakens if its members continuously seek indulgence. I know that procrastination among members is the bane of most institutions. But an association which seeks to serve individually three hundred million men and women cannot afford to be lax regarding the observance of terms of membership. Nor is the condition severe if the members will spin regularly. Many allow arrears to accumulate and then fancy that they will be able to make up by giving many hours at a stretch. Unfortunately for them those many hours never come and they find themselves in default. Regular spinning for half an hour daily is no strain and it should be a joy to be able to renew from day to day through the wheel a vital contact with the millions of paupers. I hope that the members will realize the truth of my remark and hasten to make up for arrears and make a promise to themselves never again to fall into arrears.

Young India, 8-8-1929

317. INCURABLE

Having read carefully the Governor's speech and the Revenue Member's on the proposed Land Revenue legislation and thereanent on the Bardoli Inquiry report, the conclusion forces itself upon me that the Government is incurable. The Bombay Government has accepted the Committee's report as it were at the point of the sword. It knows full well that rejection of the report would mean a resuscitation of the whole agitation in a much more serious form than before. There is no grace or dignity about the acceptance. Indeed the Revenue Member had the hardihood to say that the Government had accepted the report in order to close the matter though it could draw conclusions just the opposite of what Messrs Broomfield and Maxwell had drawn on the data collected and accepted by them. There is not one word of regret for the many acts of oppression committed by the officials or for the gross errors of Settlement officers which cost the people a protracted struggle involving terrible hardships. In the teeth of published letters of the ex-Governor, the Revenue Member dares to suggest that the inquiry was granted not under pressure but because there were definite allegations about the settlement being unlawful and the assessment being based on erroneous figures. He forgets that the ex-Governor had repudiated these charges and defended the settlement with unbecoming energy and had with equally unbecoming rashness prophesied that if any inquiry was granted the finding would show a higher figure.

The speeches make it abudantly clear that the Government does not believe in doing justice for its own sake. In important matters affecting its existence, it will yield only to pressure which if successfully exerted would place its existence in greater jeopardy than the justice demanded would. Thus it yielded to the Bardoli agitation because its pressure had become more dangerous for its existence than the reluctant grant of barest justice.

But the niggardly justice done to Bardoli has involved embarrassing implications. It has now been obliged to announce that it will bring in a revenue bill at an early date in order to obviate in future the errors discovered by Messrs Broomfield and Maxwell. But the faint outline given of the forthcoming bill by the Revenue Member need not enthuse us. It is much to be feared that the legislation will promise to the ear what it will break to the hope. All the public collection and preservation of statistics will be of no avail, if

the method of assessment is not radically altered and the decisions of Settlement officers are not made appealable in courts of law. To do this, the Government knows, means a tremendous low of revenue. And an appreciable loss of revenue means a revolutionary reform in administration. For this the two speeches referred to give no hope whatsoever.

Here then is work cut out for Sardar Vallabhbhai and his newly-formed League. It has had an auspicious beginning. It represents all shades of opinion. All its resources will be taxed in seeing that the promised legislation gives the radical relief needed by a people groaning under the weight of a tax their holdings can ill afford to sustain. Absence of graceful and frank confession by the Government of the Bardoli blunder gives no hope of true reform being made without adequate, intelligent, well-informed and forcible agitation.

Young India, 8-8-1929

318. MAHARASHTRA KHADI SANGHA

Maharashtra Khadi Sangha is one of the most efficient and methodical khadi organizations in the country. No wonder, seeing that it has Sjt. Shankarrao S. Dev of Dhulia as its head. I take the following[1] from the interesting report sent by the Sangha to the Secretary of the A.I.S.A.

> The workers undertook lecturing tours and visited principal towns in their respective divisions . . . . During these visits members in charge obtained signatures of persons who had already taken the vow or who took it newly of wearing khadi habitually and also of persons who promised to purchase khadi worth at least ten rupees per year. . . . at present nearly 4,000 people . . . . are habitual khadi-wearers. The movement of khadi in Maharashtra has undoubtedly passed through the first three stages of contempt, ridicule and indifference and has now reached the stage of active appreciation.

I hope that it will be possible for the Council to make the grant required. I would urge the Sangha to concentrate its energies in production along all the three lines often indicated in these pages, viz.,

1. self-spinning,
2. sacrificial spinning, and

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

3. spinning for wages by the semi-starved and partially idle.

The Sangha should have a map showing the places where the people are living in a state of semi-starvation and have idle hours during which they can card and spin in their own cottages. Needless to say that this work can be done only if the members of the Sangha know carding and spinning and can attend to simple repairs and adjustments.

Young India, 8-8-1929

319. UNFIRED FOOD

The interest evinced in my experiment in unfired food and the testimony received in support are truly remarkable. Some correspondents even send their experiences for publication. But I refrain. I have found among enthusiasts a tendency towards exaggeration. They often build their conclusions on insufficient data or see a connection between a result and their experiment not warranted by actuality. Whilst therefore these experiences are very helpful to me, as I am able to check them by my own, I am chary of sending them out as a guide to fellow seekers. I therefore propose periodically to give the verified results of my own experiences and observation coupled with the caution that even they are liable to variation. I have found after prolonged experiment and observation that there is no fixed dietetic rule for all constitutions. All that the wisest physicians claim for their advice is that it is likely to benefit in a given case as in a majority of cases they have found it to answer fairly well. In no branch of science is the scientist so hampered in his research as in the medical. He dare not speak with certainty of the effect of a single drug or food or of the reactions of human bodies. It is and will always remain empirical. The popular saying that one man's food may be another's poison is based on vast experience which finds daily verification. Such being the case, the field for experiment on the part of intelligent men and women is limitless. Laymen ought to acquire a workable knowledge of the body which plays such an important part in the evolution of the soul within. And yet about nothing are we so woefully negligent or ignorant as in regard to our bodies. Instead of using the body as a temple of God we use it as a vehicle for indulgences, and are not ashamed to run to medical men for help in our effort to increase them and abuse the earthly tabernacle.

But now for noting the results to date:

1. There are now twenty-two in the Mandir making the experiment with me. Most of them have given up milk.

2. They are now having bananas added to their diet and the quantity of cocoanut taken has been increased.

3. It can be stated with tolerable confidence that when milk is retained there is no danger of weakness or any other untoward result.

4. There is no difficulty about digesting uncooked sprouted grains and pulses and uncooked green vegetables.

5. Cases of constipation have in most cases yielded to the elimination of grains and pulses and a liberal use of cocoanut milk and green vegetables such as dudhi (marrow), pumpkin, cucumber, etc., all taken with their skins well washed. Cocoanut milk is prepared by grating an undried cocoanut fine and mixing it with its own or other clean water and straining and pressing through a stout cloth. A whole cocoanut may be thus taken without the slightest injury or discomfort.

6. In the majority of cases weight has been lost, but the medical authorities who favour unfired food assert that the loss of weight is a healthy reaction up to a point and is a sign of the body throwing off poisonous matter.

7. The majority still experience weakness but persist in their experiment, believing in the above-mentioned authorities that weakness is an intermediate stage in this experiment. There is no doubt that the stomach which has undergone distension through overfeeding with starchy and fatty foods feels an emptiness till it resumes its natural size.

8. The experiment is not an easy thing nor does it yield magical results. It requires patience, perseverance and caution. Each one has to find his or her own balance of the different ingredients.

9. Almost every one of us has experienced a clearer brain power and refreshing calmness of spirit.

10. Many have found the experiment as a decided help in allaying animal passion.

11. Too much stress cannot be laid on the imperative necessity of thorough mastication. I observe that even many of the careful inmates do not know the art of mastication and have therefore bad

teeth and spongy gums. A few days of hard and conscientious chewing of the cocoanut and green vegetable has brought about wonderful results in this direction.

Several physicians are taking an interest in my experiment. They send me texts from Ayurvedic writings for or against the articles I have been using. Two or three have sent me the identical text against taking honey mixed with hot water and pronouncing dire results. When I ask them whether they have verified the text from their own experience they are silent. My own experience of taking honey mixed with hot water extends to more than four years. I have experienced no ill effect whatsoever. Objection has also been raised against the use of honey on humanitarian grounds. This objection has, I admit, considerable force though the Western method of gathering honey is cleaner and less open to objection. I fear that if I would be strictly logical I should have to cut down many things I take for use. But life is not governed by strict logic. It is an organic growth, seemingly irregular growth following its own law and logic. I began taking honey in Yeravda Jail under medical advice. I am not sure that its use is now necessary for me. Western doctors bestow high praise upon it. Most of them who condemn the use of sugar in unmeasured terms speak highly of honey which they say does not irritate as refined sugar or even gur does. I do not want to weaken my present experiment by abjuring honey just now. The humanitarian aspect will be infinitely more served, if the unfired food experiment succeeds beyond doubt.

Another physician quotes a text against the use of sprouted pulses but he too lacks actual experience for supporting his text. And this has been my complaint against many Ayurvedic physicians. I have no doubt that there is abundant ancient wisdom buried in the Sanskrit medical works. Our physicians appear to be too lazy to unearth that wisdom in the real sense of the term. They are satisfied with merely repeating the printed formula. Even as a layman I know many virtues are claimed for several Ayurvedic preparations. But where is their use, if they cannot be demonstrated today? I plead, for the sake of this ancient science, for a spirit of genuine search among our Ayurvedic physicians. I am as anxious as the tallest among them can be to free ourselves from the tyranny of Western medicines which are ruinously expensive and the preparation of which takes no count of the higher humanities.

Young India, 8-8-1929

320. PROHIBITION CAMPAIGN[1]

TO

THE EDITOR, "*YOUNG INDIA*"

SIR,

> Surely Mr. Rajagopalachari's scheme on p. 112 of your issue for the 4th April is inconsistent with Mr. Gandhi's dogma of non-violence. Prohibition is force, and force is no remedy for anything, least of all for intemperance, especially among those who repudiate the use of force (violence) in any shape. 'Non-violent' prohibition is self-contradictory. Could one frame a section of the Penal Code to the effect that anyone drinking a glass of toddy (or beer) in his own house shall be liable to fine or imprisonment? I am altogether in favour of real temperature, but equally opposed to tyranny, and the prohibition of moderate (quite temperate) drinking is nothing but tyranny.

Yours truly,

May 6, 1929 J.B. PENNINGTON

I am unable to subscribe to the opinion that prohibition is always force. If I prohibit my children from doing some wrong and for a breach of that prohibition I punish not them but myself either by fasting or otherwise as I have often done with excellent results, I use no force in Mr. Pennington's sense. I use the force, that is to say, not of the body but of the spirit; not of the brute but of love. But I am free to confess that Sjt. Rajagopalachari's prohibition is not spiritual but physical, not lovely [sic] but brutal, nevertheless I must plead guilty to having endorsed it. Unfortunately for me I have to confess that my non-violence is very imperfect, inconsistent and primitive. Only, it is still miles ahead of what Mr. Pennington is likely to conceive. I hold drinking spirituous liquors in India to be more criminal than the petty thefts which I see starving men and women committing and for which they are prosecuted and punished. I do tolerate very unwillingly, it is true, and helplessly because of want of full realization of the law of love, a moderate system of penal code. And so long as I do, I must advocate the summary punishment of those who manufacture the fiery liquid and those even who will persist in drinking it notwithstanding repeated warnings. I do not hesitate forcibly to prevent my children from rushing into fire, or deep waters.

[1] This appeared under the title "Correspondence"

Rushing to wine is far more dangerous than rushing to a raging furnace or flooded stream. The latter destroys only the body, the former destroys both body and soul.

Young India, 8-8-1929

321. ADHARMA IN THE NAME OF SANATANA DHARMA

These days as I write often for Hindi *Navajivan*, relevant extracts from Hindi papers which are worthy of my consideration are brought to my notice. I have today two newspapers before me: one of the Arya Samajists and the other of the Sanatanists. The Sanatanists' paper carries a rude, indecent and obscenely-worded denunciation of Maharashi Dayanand. The language used and the charges levelled against Swamiji are of a kind that do not become a religious paper and a responsible paper. I do not know if the paper enjoys any influence among the people. I hope nobody pays attention to it.

I fear that the attack on Swamiji has been made out of some selfish motive. That is why it is so barbarous and untruthful. I would not be surprised if it turns out to have been written by a member of the C.I.D. There would seem to be no other justification for such a vicious attack.

It is the duty of the Hindu Mahasabha to stop the publication of such dirty papers. I would request the Arya Samajists not to read such papers and even if they do, not to be angry. They should not even discuss them in their papers. Writers with unclean minds are avid for opposition for they feed on such opposition. Swami Dayanand had such a noble character and his services were so great that selfish and ignorant writers can cause him no harm. If the Arya Samajists will exercise a little patience, the publication of such filthy writings will cease automatically. When there is no one to comment on such writings or take note of them, this publication will stop of its own accord.[1]

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 8-8-1929

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Madan Mohan Malaviya", 7-8-1929

322. A HUSBAND'S DUTY

A friend writes:[1]

Husbands are always eager to read sermons to their wives. Wives are even told to consider themselves the husband's property. The husband feels that he has the same proprietary rights over his wife as he has over his goods and chattels and livestock. To support this position they do not hesitate to quote from the Ramayana:

> Drums, fools, Shudras, beasts and women,
>
> All these are fit to be beaten.

These lines are considered to sanction chastisement of wives in our society. I am quite certain that this verse is not by Tulsidas. Even if it is one may be sure that it does not express Tulsidas's personal views but merely the prevailing social attitude. It is also possible that without giving the matter much thought he simply gave support to the prevailing social disposition. The Ramayana is a devotional poem written from the standpoint of a bhakta. Tulsidas did not write in the capacity of a reformer. That is why he has drawn a realistic picture of his age and described it so naturally. Although his description is not without blemishes, this does not lessen the importance of this superb work. Just as one cannot expect the Ramayana to give us correct geographical information, in the same way we cannot expect it to propound for us the modern view. But we are straying from the subject. Whatever Tulsidas's view may have been about women there is no doubt that a man who treats his wife like an animal, who considers her as his property, cuts himself from his better half[2] .

It is the duty of the husband to consider his wife a true companion, helper and his better half. He should share her joys and sorrows. A wife is never to be considered her husband's slave, nor merely meant to be the object of his lust. She has a right to the same freedoms which the husband wants for himself.

The culture in which women are not honoured is doomed. The world cannot go on without either the men or the women, it can go on only by their mutual co-operation. If the wrath of woman should be

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had mentioned a friend who was dissatisfied with his wife because in his opinion she was not a good housewife and wanted her to leave him. He had raised questions concerning the relative rights of husband and wife.

[2] The Hindi has ardhanga.

roused she could destroy man. That's why she has been considered Mahashakti.

Hindu culture has always respected women. They have always been given the pride of place. For instance, we say 'Sita Ram', never 'Ram Sita'. Vishnu is known 'Lakshmipati'. Mahadev is also worshipped as 'Parvatipati'. The creator of the Mahabharata gave the place of honour to Draupadi, as the Adikavi[1] Valmiki gave to Sita. We begin our day by reciting the sacred names of chaste women. A civilization so noble cannot bring the status of women down to the level of goods and chattels.

The questions are now easily answered. It is my firm belief that a wife has full right o her husband's earnings. She has an inalienable right to his property. It is the husband's duty to protect his wife and to do what he can to provide her food and clothing.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 8-8-1929

323. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

August 8, 1929

BHAI NAJUKLAL,

I have your letter. At the moment I have nothing at hand for you. Meet Motibai's demand. When I have anything fit for you, I shall ask for you after giving you sufficient notice.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12146

[1] Literally, 'the first poet'

324. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 8, 1929

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your letter. I enclose with this Jawaharlal's letter. It is a delicate matter.[1] Your reply, too, was not proper. You ought to have clearly stated that politics had been voluntarily excluded. You should have known that there would be agitation by the other party. And we should also admit that they have a right to carry on such agitation. Where there are differences of principle, we cannot close the mouth of our opponent. Now wait and see what happens. Your reply should have been simply: 'We have a difference of opinion with the person who has sent you the wire. It is not possible to explain anything in a wire or a letter. Our Committee, however, believes that after coming here you will feel satisfied.' Who will then say that your reply was an attack on the other party? There is nothing for it now but to wait and see what course events take.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised the letter.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: GN. 5719

325. LETTER TO GORDHANBHAI I. PATEL[2]

August 8, 1929

BHAISHRI GORDHANBHAI[3] ,

Owing to pressure of work, your letter escaped my attention. I remembered it last night. The final award could be given only inmutual consultation. My opinion however is that the petitioners have

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru was to preside over the conference of the Youth League at Rajkot and some political worker in Saurashtra had sent a telegram to him which made him hesitate whether he should attend the conference.

[2] The letter was in reply to the addressee's letter dated 2-8-1929 in connection with the dispute between the Labour Union and the Mill-owners' Association, in which Gandhiji and Sheth Mangaldas had been appointed arbitrators.

[3] Secretary, Ahmedabad Mill-owners' Association

a right to add to or alter their petitions or to vary emphasis, etc.[1] The arbitrators have not yet considered whether or not they can go into the question of the propriety of the wage-cut in 1923.[2]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 14975

326. A LETTER

August 8, 1929

About Bhagat Singh[3] I had received the same information that you have given me. But I believed you when you told me the opposite. I understand what you write now. But isn't there something not quite true in this?

Both the sides in the Punjab are doing wrong things on a large scale. Things there are beyond the depth of Mahadev. If there is anything to investigate, I myself should go. But I shall not be able toget on in the prevailing atmosphere. I feel like a hard grain that cannot cook. what can be done under these circumstances? My optimism is based on faith. There is nothing in the surrounding atmosphere that can please me and nothing in which I can see a single ray of hope. The rays of hope are constantly shooting only from my unflinching faith in non-violence.

I understand about Prabhu Dayal—which Prabhu Dayal? ...[4] I still think that my decision about the presidentship was right. Others also have approved of it. I think it would have been a serious mistake if I had yielded to the temptation.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/103

[1] The labour Union by their letter dated 31-7-1929 had withdrawn their original contention that since 1923 the condition of the mills had improved sufficiently to warrant restoration of the cut in the workers' wages effected in 1923, and had argued instead that the cut was unjustified and should, therefore, be cancelled.

[2] For the arbitrators' award on the original issue, *vide* "Arbitraators Award", 14-8-1929. For Gandhjiji's views on the new issue raised by the Labour Union, *vide* "Note on Dispute Between Mill-Owners and Workers", 7-9-1929

[3] Who had been sentenced to transportation for life for throwing two bombs in the Central Legislative Assembly on April 8, 1929

[4] Omission as in the source

327. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

August 9, 1929

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

Your love letter. I am here the whole of August except next Sunday. So come when you can and like.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 9609

328. LETTER TO J. T. SUNDERLAND

SABARMATI,
August 10, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

You will please excuse me for my not having written to you earlier about your book[1]. The fact is my time is so mapped out that outside my daily routine there is hardly a minute left. And but for the prosecution of Ramanand Babu[2] I would probably not have been able to read your book even now. Having studied it I can bear testimony to your great industry and greater love for India. I flatter myself with the belief that I have an unusual capacity for discriminating between solid writing and venomous. Though your love for India has prompted you to say harsh things of British Rule and British method, I have detected in your work no venom. The prosecution in regard to your book only confirms your indictment of the system.

Wishing you many years of active service of humanity,

Yours sincerely,

REV. J. T. SUNDERLAND

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/105

[1] *Indian in Bondage: Her Right to Freedom,* which was proscribed in June, 1929; *vide* "Atrocious" , 6-6-1929 and "Notes", sub-title The Oriental Brand

[2] Ramanand Chatterji, editor of *The Modern Review* and publisher of the addressee's book

329. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 10, 1929

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I have your letter. A reply has been sent to Jawaharlal. You must have come to know about the letter I wrote in this connection to Devchandbhai's address day before yesterday. Whatever Bhai Amritlal does, you are going to act with politeness and firmness.

I always get all manner of criticisms of the Parishad's working but I gulp them down; nor do I wish to worry you by referring them all to you. Let not however falsehood, pomp, pretence or excess come in anywhere. It is impossible for me to go over there. And I have already written who should present the address. I see nothing wrong if a person against whom a case is pending produces witnesses thoughhe might have to pay them an allowance. He should not let himself be released on bail. A satyagrahi is tested also in a false case like this and gains heaven-sent experience. We gain or ought to learn a lesson which never even occurs to us. The aforesaid satyagrahi has checked his anger towards the shepherd. He can love the shepherd. If he cannot, he is no true satyagrahi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9190

330. A LETTER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 10, 1929

. . .[1] Give up all worries about the world and show true humility. We are God's slaves only and should therefore do the task He assigns to us and leave the worrying to Him. You are no doubt a priest for the Bhils, Dheds and other backward communities. But you don't believe, do you, that you are winning glory for your priesthood? It is our Master who crowns it with glory. He uses us as His hands and feet. I

[1] Omission as in the source

am sure you know the section of the law which says that it somebody thrusts a revolver in your hands and forces you to shoot and if, as a result, somebody is killed, it is not you, but the person forcing you to shoot who would be guilty of murder. And does God not force us to do many things? So let us leave everything to Him and be at peace. And when He again pushes us into a furnace we will let ourselves be pushed. This philosophizing is for your amusement. But one may find something worth while at times even in a joke. If you find any such thing in my jest, accept it, but if not, at least laugh at the joke and, having done so take perfect rest and be strong as a young man.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/106

331. THE EFFICACY OF VOWS[1]

A correspondent who seems to be a regular and careful reader of Navajivan writes:

> I spin regularly, but the question is whether or not I should bind myself to it by a vow. If I take a vow to spin regularly for one hour every day, I suppose I must do an hour's honest spinning unfailingly, come what may. Suppose now, having taken the vow I am required to go out on a long journey, how can I fulfil my vow about spinning? Or again, suppose I fall seriously ill, even then I must do my spinning, or else be guilty of breaking my vow before man and God. On the other hand if I do not take a vow, what guarantee is there that my resolution would not give way and betray me at a critical moment?
>
> You will perhaps say that one's resolution ought to be made of sterner stuff. But when even the acknowledged leaders of the country are seen hourly breaking their resolutions, what can expect from the rank and file? What are lesser mortals like myself to do? Would you kindly resolve my dilemma?

Being accustomed from very childhood to taking vows I confess I have a strong bias in favour of the practice. It has come to my rescue in many a crisis; I have seen it save others from many a pitfall. A life without vows is like a ship without anchor or like an edifice that is built on slip-sand instead of a solid rock. A vow imparts stability, ballast and firmness to one's character. What reliance can be placed on a person who lacks these essential qualities? An agreement is

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 11-8-1929. This is a translation by Pyarelal

nothing but a mutual interchange of vows; simultanteously one enters into a pledge when one gives one's word to another.

It old days, the word of mouth of illustrious persons was regarded as good as a bond. They concluded transactions involving millions by oral agreements. In fact our entire social fabric rests on the sanctity of the pledged word. The world would go to pieces if there was not this element of stability or finality in agreements arrived at. The Himalayas are immovably fixed for ever in their place. India would perish if the firmness of the Himalayas gave way. The sun, the moon and other heavenly affairs would come to a standstill. But we know that the sun has been rising regularly at its fixed time for countless ages in the past and will continue to do so in future. The cooling orb of the moon will continue always to wax and wane as it has done for ages past with a clock-work regularity. That is why we call the sun and the moon to be witness to our affairs. We base our calender on their movements, we regulate our time by their rising and setting.

The same law, which regulates these hevenly bodies, applies equally to men. A person unbound by vows can never be absolutely relied upon. It is overweening pride to say, 'This thing comes natural to me. Why should I bind myself permanently by vows? I can well take care of myself at the critical moment. Why should I take an absolute vow against wine? I never get drunk. Why should I forgo the pleasure of an occasional cup for nothing? A person who argues like this will never be weaned from his addiction.

To shirk taking of vows betrays indecision and want of resolution. One never can achieve anything lasting in this world by being irresolute. For instance, what faith can you place in a general or a soldier who lacks resolution and determination, who says, 'I shall keep guard as long as I can'? A householder, whose watchman says that he would keep watch as long as he can, can never sleep in security. No general ever won a victory by following the principle of 'being vigilant so long as he could'.

I have before me innumerable examples of spinners at will. Every one of them has come to grief sooner or later. On the other hand, sacramental spinning has transformed the entire life of those who have taken to it; mountains of yarn stored up by them tell the tale. A vow is like a right anger. An insignificant right angle will make all the difference between ugliness and elegance, solidity and

shakiness of a gigantic structure. Even so stability or instability, purity or otherwise of an entire career may depend upon the taking of a vow.

It goes without saying that moderation and sobriety are of the very essence of vow-taking. The taking of vows are not feasible or that are beyond one's capacity would betray thoughtlessness and want of balance. Similarly a vow can be made conditional without losing any of its efficacy or virtue. For instance there would be nothing wrong about taking a vow to spin for at least one hour every day and to turn out not less than 200 yards daily except when one is travelling or is sick. Such a vow would not only be quite in form but also easy of observance. The essence of a vow does not consist in the difficulty of its performance but in the determination behind it unflinchingly to stick to it in the teeth of difficulties.

Self-restraint is the very key-stone of the ethics of vow-taking. For instance, one cannot take a vow of self-indulgence, to eat, drink and be merry, in short, to do as one pleases. This warning is necessary because I know of instances when an attempt was made to cover things of questionable import by means of vows. In the heyday of non-co-operation one even heard the objection raised, 'How can I resign from Government service when I have made a covenant with it to serve it? Or again, 'How can I close my liquor shop since I have bound myself by contract to run it for five years? Such questions might appear puzzling sometimes. But on closer thinking it will be seen that a vow can never be used to support or justify an immoral action. A vow must lead one upwards, never downwards towards perdition.

The correspondent has concluded by having a fling at the 'acknowledged leaders' of the country and cited their so-called fickleness to justify his position. This sort of reasoning only betrays weakness. One should try to emulate and imitate only the virtues of one's leaders, never their faults. Our national leaders do not claim to be paragons of perfection. They occupy the position of eminenece that they do in public life by virtue of certain qualities which they exhibit in their character. Let us ponder over those qualities and try to assimilate them, let us not even think of their shortcomings. No son can be called a worthy son of his father who only imbibes the shortcomings of his parents or pleads inability to keep clear of them. It is the virtues, not the faults of one's parents, that constitute one's true legacy. A son who only adds to the debts of his parents would be written down as unworthy. A worthy son would liquidate and increase the legacy left by them.

Young India, 22-8-1929

332. 'BITTER AS POISION'[1]

A correspondent has addressed me several posers for answers in *Navajivan*. One of these runs:

> The fateful 1st of January 1930 is approaching fast, but you are still harping on your incantatory formula of "khadi, khadi and again khadi", and refuse to give any effective lead to the country. I for one have no stomach left for this "hand-spun" war-cry of yours, and I believe it has begun to get on the nerves of the country too. Why not give a mandate to youthful leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose to raise a force of one crore national volunteers who would be ready to lay down their lives for the sake of the country? Let the wearing of khadi or in the alternative swadeshi mill-cloth be made a necessary condition for enrolment. Similarly, you may promulgate whatever other conditions as think necessary for the enrolment, and give to khadi the principal place among these. I do not mind that. The country is as impatient as ever to embark upon non-co-operation or civil disobedience; only it lacks the proper lead. Simultaneously with this I would suggest that leaders like Vallabhbhai should be called upon to organize labour and peasantry, and you will find that they would rise up and stand together like one man to face the ordeal of fire without flinching, even as the brave cultivators of Bardoli did last year.

I am sorry to say that even if khadi gets on one's nerves, as it is alleged by the correspondent to do, I have no other remedy to suggest in its place. I cannot conceive of swaraj without khadi, for the simple reason that without it the lot of the peasantry is bound to remain precarious in India, and it constitutes more than eight-tenths of her entire population.

Nor is it true to say that the country is utterly fed up with khadi, and that khadi has begun to get on the people's nerves. It may be so in the case of a handful of town-dwellers of India, but they do not constitute India. India's city-dwelling population in the midst of the teeming millions of her villages is as a drop in the ocean. The foundation of India's nationality is to be laid knot in her towns but in her villages, and the only movement that is at present actively going on among India's villages is that of khadi. It is daily expanding. It

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 11-8-1929. This is a translation by Pyarelal

today provides a living to at least 2,000 middle-class young men, and enables over one lakh of poor women spinners to eke out a living. Similalrly it is giving employment to over ten thousand weavers, and a host of washermen, dyers, carders, tailors, etc. If in spite of all these beneficent results that khadi has produced and is producing, it is as gall and wormwood to any, I can only pity them.

It is a gratuitous insult to Pandit Jawaharlal or Subhas Chandra Bose to say that they are awaiting my permission or mandate to organize the youth of the country, and are being kept back for want of it. They are already doing the work of organization to the best of their power and ability. They need no permission from me for doing their part. If they are true soldiers as I believe they are, I could not hold them back if I would. But the plain, painful fact of the matter is that today not to talk of one crore volunteers, there are not ten thousand who are prepared completely to sacrifice themselves for duty's sake. I know that they can get ready in no time if they wish, but 'the will to do' is lacking. You cannot get swaraj by mere speeches, shows, processions, etc. What is needed is solid, steady, constructive work; what the youth craves for and is fed on is only the former.

It is a gross misrepresentation of the true situation to say that the masses are impatient to be led to civil disobedience, but that I am hanging back. I know well enough how to lead to civil disobedience a people who are prepared to embark upon it on my terms. I see no such sign on the horizon. But I live in faith. I am still hoping that a way out of the"encircling gloom" will be found on 1st January next.

As for Sardar Vallabhbhai he carries my permission in his pocket always. But he needs a Bardoli to make good his leadership. How many Bardolis are there ready in the country today? It took Bardoli seven years of silent preparation to prepare for limited satyagraha for the redress of her wrongs. It is a question whether even Bardoli is today ready for utter self-immolation to obtain freedom for the whole of India. Both the Sardar and myself entertain the highest hopes about Bardoli, but her time is obviously not yet. She is herself in travail.

Young India, 5-9-1929

333. FRUIT OF SATYAGRAHA

A "Spiritual Seeker"writes:[1]

The fruit of satyagraha, howsoever slight, is the same as described by the "Spiritual Seeker". The history of the world is full of the triumph of satyagraha. Not a single instance of its defeat can be found. But one should make sure that stress is laid on truth alone. I have received the amount sent by the Spiritual Seeker". He has sent a currency note without registering it. No one should do this. Anyone who wishes to send a currency note should seal the envelope and register it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-8-1929

334. MY NOTES

TO THE PERSON WHO HAS GIVEN HIS NAME

Although doctors very often regard marriage as a cure, they are, I think, gravely mistaken in this matter. I know that some persons have benefited, but I also know that many people have been harmed, by it. It is not proper to abandon the straight path and get misled by taking a crooked path because sometimes once feels that momentary success can be thus achieved. The better alternative is not to deviate from the straight path, despite any hardships that one may have to undergo; the path of self-control is hence the only one that I can recommend in circumstances such as yours.

TO'READER OF "NAVAJIVAN'

There is much in your letter that calls for a reply, but I do not wish to encourage anonymous letters. If you send me your name and address, I shall try to give you a reply.

TO 'A KATHIAWARI YOUTH'

If there is no ill will in your questions, they are harmless. But whether they are well or ill meant, why this cowardice in concealing

[1] The letter is not translated here. Reporting that as a result of satyagraha, he had succeeded in persuading someone to take a vow of improving his conduct day by day, the correspondent had sent ten rupees to be utilized for diverse public causes.

your name while asking questions? You bring credit neither to yourself nor to Kathiawar by this concealment. Those who do not possess even the courage to reveal their names can render no service, much less join in the fight for swaraj.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-8-1929

335. DID RAMA SHED BLOOD?

This is the second question put by the very same gentleman to whom khadi is like poison:[1]

It is my confirmed opinion that non-violent non-co-operation is the strength not of the weak but especially of the strong. It is a universal principle. We practise it all the time, consciously or unconsciously. Current history takes note of wars waged by kings. The history of the people of the nation has to be written hereafter. When such history is written, we shall come across non-violent non-co-operation on every page of it. What a wife who refuses to submit to a cruel husband does, constitutes non-violent non-co-operation. The history of the Quakers[2] has been made glorious by non-violent non-co-operation. The history of the Vaishnavas in India bears testimony to the very same thing. The whole world can do what these people have been able to do.

Those who look into the matter can clearly see that the world is moving in the direction of peace. Although cast in human form, the human race has not yet given up its bestial instincts; it has no alternative but to give them up. Hence the example of cats and dogs is irrelevant and ill befits us. We are not cats and dogs but creatures who stand crect on two legs, who strive to realize the self and are endowed with the capacity to reason.

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had said that in his opinion non-violent non-co-operation was best for Indians only because they were weak and unarmed, that Rama had shed blood in his battle with Ravana, that a dog could snatch away a kitten only after killing the mother-cat, that 33 crores of Indians could not all have faith in non-violence. For the first question and answer, *vide* "Bitter As Poison", 5-9-1929

[2] Members of the Society of Friends, a religious sect founded by George Fox in the 17th century. They had adopted great simplicity of attire and were highly respected for their honourable dealings.

And what about Ramachandra? Who has proved that he shed rivers of blood in Lanka? When was a ten-headed Ravana born? Who had seen an army of monkeys? The Ramayana is a sacred book, an allegory. The Rama who is worshipped by millions of persons dwells in our heart and is its sovereign master. Ravana too is the terrible form given to the base desires which dwell within us. The Rama dwelling within us is continuously waging war against the Ravana. Rama is the very embodiment of compassion. We have not much to learn if a historical figure Rama had waged a war against another historical figure Ravana. Why should we go searching in the past for such characters? They are to be found at many places today. Rama the eternal is a form of Brahman, the image of truth and non-violence. The problem of India will be solved neither through anger nor through misinterpretations of the Ramayana, etc., nor through imitation of beasts. In order to solve this problem, we shall have to know ourselves. Non-violent non-co-operation is something that will remind Indians of their humanity. It may be that millions of men will not accept it all at once. Millions will never take up arms. Even if there are a few determined warriors in the non-violent war, they will be able to protect millions and instil life into them. Even if this is only a dream of mine, it appears fascinating to me. Even if it is a `flower of the skies'[1], it appears beautiful to my imagination and its fragrance ever haunts me.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-8-1929

336. EXPERIMENT IN UNCOOKED FOOD

I cannot give a report of progress only in regard to this experiment this week. I have had to ask two persons to give up the experiment, as I was not competent enough to deal with their weak state and their constipation and had to accept defeat. From the experiments on my own system and those of some others, I had concluded that coconut milk and raw greens would be able to cure their constipation. But that did not happen. Despite taking a large quantity of the above, their constipation could not be cured. On my own system, it is having just the opposite result. There is no sign of

[1] A Gujarati phrase meaning ‘an impossibility’

constipation whatever; coconut milk and green vegetables are having too much the contrary effect. That too is not a good sign.

I cannot also note much progress in the experiments carried out by others. Despite this, I am convinced that this is a good field anddeserves to be explored. Cooked food can never be as nourishing and tasty as food which is uncooked. As the field is a new one, we have before us relatively few experiences of it. Hence this experiment can be tried through patience alone.

Those who are carrying on this experiment should exercise caution in doing so, not stick to it obstinately, and should give it up if they do not have the capacity to carry it on. It can be safely stated that vegetables and pulses, if eaten, should be eaten raw; hence wheat would the only item which would have to be cooked. No harm and no weakness would result from taking a diet of rotis, milk, raw vegetables and sprouted pulses. The quantity of pulses should be small; vegetables too should be taken in small quantities, i.e., about three tolas of the former and about five of the latter.

One of those who are carrying on this experiment has sent in the following report[1] about this experiment.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-8-1929

337. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

August 11, 1929

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

This is an account they have sent me of the little band of satyagrahis who will present you with an address.

You may not mind the wires and protests you are receiving.[2] You will judge things for yourself when you go to Kathiawar if at all Kamala's condition permits you to do so. I leave Bombay 7th September for Bhopal and reach Agra as per programme on 11th unless you want any alteration.

Yours,

BAPU

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had given his experience of 28 days; in the beginning he felt hungry, but on increasing the quantity of intake the complaint vanished; he had constipation for some days, but when bananas were replaced by grapes, cereals were reduced and the greens and coconut milk increased, he got over the trouble.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Devchand Parekh", 8-8-1929

338. LETTER TO N.R. MALKANI

[*August 11, 1929*][1]

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. I shall now do what more is possible beyond the cheque sent by Vallabhbhai. These things are going beyond much human effort.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 894

339. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"[2]

BOMBAY,
August 12, 1929

Gandhiji granted an exclusive interview to me today.

Asked about his views on Mr. MacDonald's speech and the absence of reference to India in the King's speech, he said:

I have not read the full text of the speech. I am unable to make any pronouncement on the question.

When informed of the impressions of those who had met the Secretary of State for India and other Cabinet members about the Labour Government's "anxiety"to conciliate Indian opinion, Gandhiji said:

I quite realize the Labour Government's difficulty. Everything depends upon the offer they make.

When pointed out that the Simon Commission to which the Labour Party had committed itself had not concluded their work, Gandhiji remarked:

Where there is a will there is a way.

Referring to the Lahore Congress Presidentship, Mahatmaji declared that he would not accept the honour. He was only a back-memeber, he said. When I pointed out that he was leading in the election in spite of his article[3] in *Young India*, Gandhiji repeated:

[1] As indicated by the addressee

[2] This was published under the caption, "Lahore and India: Gandhiji on Congress Demand" as from "an occasional correspondent"

[3] *Vide* pp. 239-41.

I will not accept it. The matter will be referred to the A.I.C.C. for final decision.

Asked if the final choice did not rest with the Reception Committee, he said:

No, the matter will be considered by the A.I.C.C.

Asked whether Independence would be declared in the Lahore Congress, Gandhiji stated in clear terms:

I have no reason to lose any hope. I am for Dominion Status. I will wait for it till the midnight bell of December 31, 1929 rings. I hope Dominion Status will be given by that time; if not, on January first I will be an Independence-wallah.

Gandhiji when questioned about his experiment with unfired food said:

That is the best question you have put me.

He added, he was enjoying the same amount of health. General condition was exceptionally good. Medical opinion was favourable, but he had lost ten pounds in weight. He had not come to any decision about unfired food.

The Hindu, 12-8-1929

340. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

August 12, 1929

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I had you letter about Jawaharlal. I hope the election[1] will go through all right. The more I think over it, the more convinced I fell of the correctness of the step I have taken.

But this is just to tell you I have seen Mr. Jinnah.[2] He explained the 14 points of demands framed at Delhi. The chief however is the demand for one-third representation in the C[entral] L[egislature] and separate electorate if the other 12 demands are not clearly accepted. How that can be done or whether it should be done, you know best. My mind is in a whirl in this matter. The atmosphere is too foggy for me to see clearly.

I hope Kamala will go through the operation bravely.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[1] Of the Congress President; *vide* also "Telegram to Indian National Congress, Lahore", 19-8-1929 and "Telegram to Motilal Nehru", 20-8-1929

[2] *Ibid*

[PS.]

I saw the Ali Brothers. They had a fairly heavy list of complaints against me. But I could make no impression on them as they distrust the whole (practically) of my associates. But I was glad of the interviews. They may do good in the long run.

From the original: Motilal Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

341. LETTER TO ETHEL M. SHUTS

SABARMATI ,
August 12, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

Your claim about American achievements seems to me to be far-fetched, premature and unproved and equally unfortunate is your estimate of "barbarous" races.

Yours,

MISS ETHEL M. SHUTS
CLEVELAND

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/110

342. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

SABARMATI ,
August 12, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your two letters. The League of Nations business I do not understand. It cannot unite hearts. What I want is a union of hearts.

I am young at 60 for the work for which I have confidence. I should feel old at 16 for that about which I have no confidence.

You must get well quick and feel young like Mrs. Besant[1] who is nearly 90.

Yours,

C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR
SALEM

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/111

[1] Annie Besant (1847-1933); Theosophist, educationist and a leader of the Home Rule movement

343. LETTER TO B. S. MOONJE

SABARMATI,
August 12, 1929

DEAR DR. MOONJE,

I had your letter in time. I have been to Bombay but have committed nobody to anything. I had no right to do so.

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/112

344. LETTER TO FREDERICK B. FISCHER

SABARMATI,
August 12, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

What I think of Andrews is that India has no servant more devoted, more sincere and more hard-working than Deenabandhu Andrews. He is truly what the Fiji Indians, I think, called him, Deenabandhu, friend of the lowly.

Yours,

BISHOP FISCHER

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/113

345. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

August 12, 1929

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I get your letters all right. And now I am also getting some details.

I have very little time left to me.

Sushila seems to have become restless; it is therefore only right that she should now come over here.

Sorabji is just what he was a year ago. But I can understnad that Sushila should take to heart all that has happened since. But we have to live in this world without attachment, retaining [our] sweetness and without losing virtue.

Ramdas had been here for a few days. Nimu has gone to Lakhtar. Devdas went to Delhi from Almora.

I am keeping well.

Blessing from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4757

346. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

August 12, 1929

CHI PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. You needs must visit your in-laws for a week or two. They ask for your presence at some auspicious ceremony. They will be pleased; it will further clear your way.

The letter from Jayaprakash is all right. His return will continue to be postponed. At the moment I have no time to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3358

347. TELEGRAM TO AMRITLAL THAKKAR[1]

[On or after *August 12, 1929*]

THAKKAR

RETURNED FROM BOMBAY TODAY. WIRED RAMANLAL MORNING DETAIN HARIVALLLABH.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15461

348. ARBITRATORS' AWARD

SABARMATI ASHRAM
AHMEDABAD,
August 14, 1929

The labourers have pleaded that the present condition of mills is so good that the cut effected in 1923 should be abolished and they

[1] In reply to his telegram dated August 12, which read: "Have you written Petlad. Wiring detain Harivallabh Assam."

should revert to the minimum wages received by them in that year.[1] After hearing both sides on this point and after examining the statments submitted, the Arbitrators give their decision to the effect that, as the labourers' party could not prove its point, the plea has been rejected.

MOHANDAS GANDHI
MANGALADAS GIRDHARDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 14975

349. LETTER TO SIR PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

ASHRAM SABARMATI
August 14, 1929

BHAISHRI,

I have another letter from you and today some printed and typewritten material too, which I shall find time to go through. I shall leave nothing undone that I can. Please do keep me informed. I shall not be tired.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

SIR PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

NAVSARI CHAMBERS,

OUTRAM ROAD, FORT, BOMBAY-1.

Purushottamdas Thakurdas Papers, File No. 89/1929, Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

350. LETTER TO RAMANAND CHATTERJI

SABARMATI,
August 14, 1929

DEAR RAMANAND BABU,

I have your private letter. The information you give me does not surprise me. Personal jealousy has been the bane of our public life. I have destroyed your letter.

[1] This was the original contention of the Labour Union, which, however, was subsequently withdrawn. *Vide* "Letter to Devchand Parekh", 8-8-1929

In the absence of instructions from Dr. Sunderland the step you took was inevitable.

I thank you for copies you were sending me of this proceeding.

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/118

351. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 14, 1929

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Though we met, I could not reply to your letter.

I think it necessary that you should attend in a detached spirit the function to felicitate the young man who has returned from England. You need not eat anything there. You should also go and attend the purification ceremony of the bungalow in the same generous and detached spirit. It is quite proper not to attend weddings, etc. But I think one cannot take a vow not to attend functions such as the above.

You yourself should keep an eye on Surendra[1] from there. I do discuss things with him whenever necessary.

Bhansali seems to show definite improvement. He takes milk, etc., but he suffers from delirium.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10714. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

352. LETTER TO CHUNILAL

August 14, 1929

BHAI CHUNILAL,

Reading can be made popular by putting into practice what we read. Children can be trained to be good by our setting before them the example of our own firm conduct. The beginning can be made by wearing khadi and plying the spinning-wheel in public. You may

[1] Surendra Mashruwala

learn my views about school education from what I write in *Navajivan.* In trying to live a truthful life, one should learn to endure even seemingly unendurable hardships. In order to purify the poisonous atmosphere, one should make oneself like nectar. In order to keep the village clean, one should become a scavenger.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/114

353. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

ASHRAM SABARMATI,
August 14, 1929

BHAISHRI HARIBHAU,

I have your letter. Your own report is good. I have no time to dictate more now. Bhai Ghanshyamdas is led away by his love; he therefore gets angry even with one who makes an innocent suggestion. Nor am I going to let go the honey[1] in a hurry. I am carrying on my experiment with great care. Give plenty of reassurance to Ghanshyamdas and make him shed his fear. I am returning your two letters. I shall write if I get the time.

Blessing from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 6067. Courtesy: HaribhauUpadhyaya

354. TELEGRAM TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON[2]

[On or after *August 14, 1929*]

DO PLEASE COME SABARMATI ON OR BEFORE TWENTY-FIRST.

From a photostat: S.N. 15452

355. UNFIRED FOOD

DEAR SIR,

I have read the further account[3] of your dietetic experiment…reprinted in The Hindu of July 22…with much interest; and I am glad to see that your

[1] Like one who drops the honeycomb at the first sting

[2] In reply to his telegram dated August 14 from Lahore, which read : "Retiring from Bank 31st August. Intend seeing you before 21st. May I come Sabarmati?"

[3] *Vide* "Unfired Food Experiment", 18-7-1929

do not carry your objections to milk and its products to the extent of recommending the `youth of India' not to use it. Indeed, you are, if may say so, recording the results of your experiment with much open-mindedness. But there are in your account two mis-statements of fact: (a) the capacity of the plant-world to sutain man at his highest is not unexplored field to modern medical science, and his science has shown it to be not unlimited: one reason for the nutritive limitations of a purely vegetable diet for man is the difference in length and structure between the human gastro-intestinal tract and that of herbivorous animals. Mans digestive tube is not long enough nor capciious enough to accommodate a sufficient mass of suitable vegetable food, nor to extract from such as it can contain all the nutriment man needs for his fullest well-being; (b) there is only one vitamin… vitamin D… for which man can rely (to a considerable extent) upon the sun... there is nothing to indicate the possibility of "getting the most important of the vitamins from the sun", though, no doubt, the sun plays a great part in their production in the foods available for mankind....

One of the great faults in Indian diets at the present day is their deficiency in vitamin A, in suitable proteins and in certain salts; and the greatest nutritional need of India is the freer use of good milk... . Do not, I beg of you, decry it: for a pint of milk a day will do more for 'Young India' than most things I wot of. It is, for example, to deficiency of vitamin A that we owe so much disease of the bowels and lungs, so much disease of the bladder (such as 'stone') and so much anaemia in this country.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
R. MCCARRISON

Coonoor,
26th July, 1929

PS. When next you make an Andhra tour, avoid "the extreme weakness"which overtook you in your last one, by taking a pint of milk a day!

I publish this letter[1] thankfully and wish that other men versed in medical science would also guide me. In making the experiment, I am trying to find out the truth about food in so far as it is possible for a layman to do so.

As for Dr. McCarrison's argument about the necessity of animal food, I dare not as a layman combat it, but I may state that there are medical men who are decidedly of opinion that animal food including milk is not necessary for sustaining the human system to the full. By instinct and upbringing I personally favour a purely vegetarian diet,

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

and have for years been experimenting in finding a suitable vegetarian combination. But there is no danger of my decrying milk until I have obtained overwhelming evidence in support of a milkless diet. It is one of the many inconsistencies of my life that whilst I am in my own person avoiding milk, I am conducting a model dairy which is already producing cow's milk that can successfully compete with any such milk produced in India in purity and fat content.

Notwithstanding Dr. McCarrison's claim for medical science I submit that scientists have not yet explored the hidden possibilities of the innumerable seeds, leaves and fruits for giving the fullest possible nutrition to mankind. For one thing the tremendous vested interestes that have grown round the belief in animal food prevent the medical profession from approaching the question with complete detachment. It almost seems to me that it is reserved for lay enthusiasts to cut their way through a mountain of difficulties even at the risk of their lives to find the truth. I should be satisfied if scientists would lend their assistance to such humble seekers.

I am thankful for Dr. McCarrison's more accurate statement about vitamins.

Young India, 15-8-1929

356. NOTES

THE ORIENTAL BRAND

So the editor of a world-known magazine has to pay a fine of Rs. 1,000 for having dared to re-publish in book form articles written for and published in his magazine from time to time by an American humanitarian. Dr. Sunderland's India in Bondage is nothing more than mainly his articles collected from The Modern Review. As I have often remarked in these pages[1] the section under which Sjt. Ramananda Chatterjee was charged is so wide and so elastic that almost anyone who at all wrote truthfully and fearlessly could be found guilty under it. It is a travesty of justice to bring a man of the status of Ramananda Babu under that section. But he is labouring under the sin of possessing a brown skin. The brand of the oriental is marked on his forehead and so he and his publisher are punished as felons. I do not suppose this prosecution will in any shape or form

[1] *Vide* "Atrocious", 6-6-1929 & "Dr. Sunderland's Volume", 13-6-1929

affect Ramananda Babu's writings or his choice of articles for his magazine. He has received an unexpected advertisement. The Government has earned not immunity from disaffection but a larger measure of it for its pains in having embarked upon this prosecution. Those who are noted for their extremism expect prosectuion some time or other. Men of Ramananda Babu's type though noted for their independence of spirit but always known for their sobriety were never expected to be hauled up as criminals before courts of justice (miscalled). The unexpected has however happened. I congratulate Ramananda Babu on his good luck in finding himself in the same distinguished gallery as Lokmanya Tilak. Whatever the technicalities of law, for the ordinary citizen this prosecution and judgement will be counted as a sin against the nation.

ASSAM FLOOD

Sjt. Bipin Chandra Pal wrote to me whilst I was in Bombay:

> I am here since last Wednesday on a mission of mercy. You know that Sylhet is my native district. Sylhet and Cachar have been recently overtaken by a flood of the like of which the oldest living people of those parts have no recollection. I understand that you have already been moved by the reports of the suffering of the poor of these districts to send a few thousands of rupees for their help. The extent of the calamity is being gradually brought home to the workers there. Mr. Thakkar of the Servants of India Society had been to the afflicted districts and, seeing things with his own eyes, and realizing the inadequacy of the help already received, he asked the Sylhet-Cachar Flood Relief Committee to try and send a deputation to Bombay and other provinces and induce me to lead it. When asked to undertake this, I could not possibly refuse to do so though I am not as young as I was twenty years ago nor in the best of health. This is the story of my present visit to Bombay.
>
> I write this to ask your help in this work. I enclose a cutting from the papers giving the latest estimate of the extent of the calamity. If you are moved to say a word in support of our appeal, I have no doubt that even the present trade depression, which is certainly very bad in Bombay, will not be able to close the channels of charity for this purpose. I have no doubt that you will do this for our poor.

I gladly endorse the appeal. The calamity is appalling and every little help tells.

CHARKHA FOR FLOOD RELIEF

Sjt. Dhirendra Das wires[1] from Kulaura which is within the Assam flood zone:

> Today I am reporting how the charkha is working. there were thre spinning centres in the flooded area in Karimganj before the flood. . . . After the flood three new centres have been opened. . . . One important point to note is that the number of the ration tickets in the spinning centres is much smaller than in the other non-spinning centres that are equally affected. There is a great demand for wheels throughout Sylhet and Cachar districts. In every village there are some who know spinning. Two thousand charkhas can be introduced easily. Yarn can be consumed locally. There are weaver. Our other relief operations, namely, doling rice and paddy, house building, tank disinfection, supplying fodder, paddy husking, mat making, continue as usual. Sheth Ramanlal Keshavlal of Petlad came here and paid Rs. 250 for spinning and Bhimjibhai of chittagong Rs. 50 for general work. Sjt. Thakkar left Silchar leaving work with Sjt. Harivallabhabhai, the representative of Sheth Ramanlal. Harivallabhbhhai often consults and helps in relief works other than spinning. Our funds are too inadequate to meet the situation. May we appeal to you for help?

This shows what an important part the charkha can play when everything else fails and how when it is well organized it spares people the humiliation of living on charity.

INTERVIEW WITH MR. JINNAH

No speculation need take place regarding my meeting[2] Mr. Jinnah in Bombay. Ever since her return from her brilliant tour in the West Sarojini Devi has been busy planning schemes for bringing about Hindu-Muslim union. to that end she has been trying to bring people together. As her landing place was Bomaby, she naturally commenced operations there and met Mr. Jinnah, and suggested at Allahabad that I should go to Bomaby at an early date and meet Mr. Jinnah as also the Ali Brothers. And so I went and first met Mr. Jinnah and then the Ali Brothers. Our conversation was as between friends. The two conversations were unconnected with each other. They were mere friendly conversations and need have no importance attached to them. I have no representative capacity and I did not go as a representative. But naturally I want to explore all possible avenues to

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.
[2] On August 12, 1929

peace and never lose a single opportunity of knowing the mind of those who have any influence in India. It is best therefore for the public not to speculte about the contents or the results of these conversations. If anything comes out of them, they will certainly know. Meanwhile let those who believe in prayer pray with me that there may soon be peace between Hindus, Mussalmans and all the other communities. And let those who believe with me that such peace is indispensable for our full growth, aye, even the progress of the world, strive their best for it. Every honest effort however humble will bring peace nearer.

Young India, 15-8-1929

357. FOREIGN-CLOTH BOYCOTT

The propaganda for the boycott of foreign cloth is being steadily continued by the F.C.B. Committee as will be seen from the following extract[1] from its latest bulletin.

> More Municipalities have taken action. Nipani in Belgaum district has, in addition to increasing local tax on foreign-cloth import, exempted hand-spun and hand-woven khadi from the same and resolved to purchase as far as possible homespun khadi for peons' uniforms, etc. Bezwada Municipality (Andhra) has resolved to make all their cloth purchases in hand-spun khadi only and also to push spinning in all schools. But the credit for by far the boldest action hitherto taken by a local body goes toMurwara Municipality (C.P.) which has resolved to raise terminal tax on all foreign cloth from annas 2 to Rs. 2 per maund. It has of course exempted hand-spun khadi from the same tax. . . .
>
> Sind: 18 centres of khadi sale are working…7 in Karachi and one each at Hyderabad, Nawabshah, Bhiria, Halani, Talti, Rohri, Sukkur, Shikarpur, Naushahra, Feroze, Larkhana and Jacobabad. . . .
>
> Agra (U.P.). . . . 250 houses were visited, 300 rupees worth of khadi hawked and pledges to boycott foreign cloth were taken from 100 persons. . . .
>
> MYMENSINGH (BENGAL): Twelve lecturers with six magic lanterns and slides are touring the district and about 300 lectures have been delivered. . . .

But the Committee has its limitations. Unless there is willing, intelligent and sustained co-operation from all Congress Committees,

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

the work cannot bring about the boycott we want during the year. Much more concentration is necessary.

Young India, 15-8-1929

358. SOME RELIGIOUS QUESTIONS

A gentleman has sent the following questions:

1. What is the true nature and aim of dharma?

The evils perpetrated in the name of religion today are really amazing. We bring in religion in extremely minor matters. But are there any men today who understand the aim and nature of religion? This is all due to lack of religious education. I hope you will take the trouble of expressing your views on this and the following other questions in Hindi Navijivan.

2. What are the ways of attaining peace for one's soul and achieving one's object in this world and the next?

3. Do you think a man can escape the punishment for his past misdeeds if he atones for them?

4. What should be the prime aim and duty of man in his life?

It is a matter of joy and wonder that among the readers of Young India, Gujarati *Navajivan* and Hindi *Navajivan* it is mostly the Hindi reader who ask questions regarding religion. It does not necessarily mean that people from other provinces lack curiosity in matters of religion. It is, however, true that it is the readers of Hindi *Navajivan*, more than others, who love relgious discussions and expect my help in solving their religious problems. I cannot claim a deep direct knowledge of the scriptures. But of course I do claim to be trying to abide by religious principles. In my attempt to do so if the experience gained by me can be of any help to the readers they are most welcome to it. Having thus mentioned my limitation in this regard I will now attempt to answer the questions.

1. It is true that we lack religious education in the country. Religious instruction can only be imparted through the practice of religion, not by exhibiting mere learning. That's why someone has said: What is there that satsang[1] cannot do for a man? Who does not know the emphasis Tulsidas laid on the importance of satsang? This does not mean that there is no need to read and understand religious books. But the need for books, etc., arises only after a man has had

[1] Association with good or good persons

satsang and has purified himself to a certain extent. If one starts studying religious books before this stage then istead of bringing peace this study could hinder the growth. This means that an intelligent man should put his religion into practice straightaway instead of worrying himself with all manner of questions. Then according to the maxim "as with the individual so with the world", one is bound to influence the other. If each one of us was to take care of one's self, nobody would need to worry about the others.

2. Only by living a saintly life can one obtain peace. This is the way to fulfilment in this world and the next. A saintly life is that in which we practise truth, ahimsa and restraint. Enjoyment of pleasures can never be one's dharma. Dharma has its source in renunciation only.

3. It is possible to atone for one's past misdeeds and it is our duty to do so. Atonement is not supplication, nor crying or whimpering, though there is some scope for fasting, etc., in it. Repentance is the true atonement. In other words the resolve not to commit the mistake again is without doubt the true penance. The results of the misdeeds are wiped out to some extent. Until we atone for a sin it goes on accumulating like compound interest. This stops once we do the penance.

4. The aim of man in his life is self-realization. The one and the only means of attaining this is to spend one's life in serving humanity in a true altruistic spirit and lose oneself in this and realize the oneness of life.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajiavan, 15-8-1929

359. TRLU WORSHIP[1]

A correspondent writes:

> It is a common enough sight in this country to see men and women offering worship to stocks and stones and trees, but I was surprised to find that even educated women belonging to the families of enthusiastic social workers were not above this practice. Some of those sisters and friends defend the practice by saying, that since it is founded on pure reverence for the divine in nature and no false beliefs,it cannot be classed as superstition, and they cite

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Hindi Navajivan*, 15-8-1929. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

the names of Satyavan and Savitri whose momory, they say, they commemorate in that way. The argument does not convince me. May I request you to throw some light on the matter?

I like this question. it raises the old, old question of image worship. I am both a supporter and opponent of image worship. When image worship degenerates into idolatry and becomes encrusted with false beliefs and doctrines, it becomes a necessity to combat it as a gross social evil. On the other hand image worship in the sense of investing one's ideal with a concrete shape is inherent in man's nature, and even valuable as an aid to devotion. Thus we worship an image when we offer homage to a book which we regard as holy or sacred. We worship an image when we visit a temple or a mosque with a feeling of sanctity or reverence. Nor do I see any harm in all this. On the contrary, endowed as man is with a finite, limited understanding, he can hardly do otherwise. Even so, far from seeing anything inherently evil or harmful in tree worship, I find in it a thing instinct with a deep pathos and poetic beauty. It symbolizes true reverence for the entire vegetable kingdom, which with its endless panorama of beautiful shapes and forms, declares to us as it were with a million tongues the greatness and glory of God. Without vegetation our planet would not be able to support life even for a moment. In such a country especially, therefore, in which there is a scarcity of trees, tree worship assumes a profound economic significance.

I therefore see no necessity for leading a crusade against tree worship. It is true that the poor simple-minded women who offer worship to trees have no reasoned understanding of the implications of their act. Possibly they would not be able to give any explanation as to why they perform it. They act in the purity and utter simplicity of their faith. Such faith is not a thing to be despised; it is a great and powerful force that we should treasure.

Far different, however, is the case of vows and prayers which votaries offer before trees. The offering of vows and prayers for selfish ends, whether offered in churches, mosques, temples or before trees and shrines, is a thing not to be encouraged. Making of selfish requests or offering of vows is not related to image worship as effect and cause. A personal selfish prayer is bad whether made before an image or an unseen God.

Let no one, however, from this understand me to mean that I advocate tree worship in general. I do not defend tree worship because

I consider it to be a necessary aid to devotion, but only because I recognize that God manifests Himself in innumerable form in this universe, and every such manifestation commands my spontaneous reverence.

Young India, 26-9-1929

360. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 15, 1929

BHAI CHANDRAKANT[1] ,

Participants in Rentiya Baras[2] should take stock of their spinning for the last twelve months and, if it is found to be less than that for the year before, they should observe the day by resolving to stop observing it. This, truly, will be service unto Him. It will protect your pledge from being violated and will uphold the honour of this day. This is my message.

Blessings from

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—3: Kusumbehn Desaine, p. 82

361. LETTER TO KAKALBHAI KOTHARI

August 16, 1929

BHAISHRI KAKALBHAI,

Whatever you want to say against Gondal today, send to me in the form of a summary of the points without taking me into the evidence. But you should not include in the charges any which you cannot fully substantiate. I have not written this letter for publication, nor for you to use it, directly or indirectly, for agitation.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/116

[1] Ex-president of the municipality and a worker of Kapadwanj Seva Sangh

[2] Literally 'Spinning 12th', Gandhiji's birthday according to Vikram era; the 12th *tithi* was celebrated by non-stop spinning.

362. LETTER TO LALJI NARANJI AND MANMOHANDAS RAMJI

August 16, 1929

SHETH SHRI LALJI NARANJI AND MANMOHANDAS RAMJI,

I have your kind letter. Your questions are appropriate, but after reading my article on the subject in *Young India* you will perhaps not consider further reply from me necessary. All the same I repeat here that I am nobody's representative and I did not go to Bombay as anybody's representative. I wish to assure you that I will do nothing that will bind other people. I have no remedy for those who may consider themselves bound by any action of mine. In the course of my life it has often happened that people have accepted me as their representative because of some service I may have rendered and considered themselves bound by my actions. I have even liked that. Of course such people consider me their representative when they want and dismiss me when they want. If, even after this explanation, you wish to draw my attention to any particular point, you may certainly come.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/115

363. LETTER TO CHANDULAL

SABARMATI,
August 16, 1929

BHAISHRI CHANDULAL,

I have your letter. Real generosity lies in releasing a person who does not apologize. We praise Tilak for not having apologized to the last. Why may not this gentleman's case be like his? Why should he apologize so long as he is not convinced of his guilt? You may continue your efforts. And be patient. I want to co-operate with all the Native States, particularly with Gondal, because I was attached to Gondal. I would be very much pleased if most of what I have heard should turn out to be false. And even if it is true, I shall be very happy if I know that the Thakore Saheb has undergone a change of heart.[1]

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/117

[1] For Gandhiji's letter to the Thakore Saheb of Gondal,

364. TELEGRAM TO G.D. BIRLA[1]

AHMEDABAD,
August 17, 1929

GHANSYAMDAS BIRLA
8 ROYAL EXCHANGE, CALCUTTA

YOUR WIRE. SLIGHT ATTACK DYSENTERY. CERTAINLY VERY WEAK BUT BEST DOCTOR ADVISING NO CAUSE ANXIETY. SHALL TAKE GOAT'S MILK WHEN BECOMES IMPERATIVE. UNCOOKED STOPPED SINCE THURSDAY.

GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 7882. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

365. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS[2]

SABARMATI,
August 17, 1929

MY DEAR...,

I have your extraordinary letter. It has pained me deeply. I thought that I was showing you the most delicate consideration in consulting you in everything about Ram Binod.[3] Surely you don't expect me not to do likewise with Rajendrababu. Instead of giving an award I have been trying to arrive at a mutual settlement that should leave no scar behind. But I see I was mistaken in my calculation. I take it you have written the letter in consultation with Guruji[4]. I should like to think he had not seen it.

As desired by you I am now corresponding with Ram Binod.

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbhen Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/l 20

[1] In reply to his telegram dated August 17, which read: "Much concerned about Gandhiji's health. Wire full details. Please persuade him to keep entirely on milk diet for a few days enabling him to regain his lost weight" (S.N. 15472).

[2] The identity of the addressee has been inferred from the contents.

[3] For details about the Ram Binod case, *vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 21-2-1929 "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 24-8-1929 and "Letter to Ram Binaod", 17-11-1929

[4] Satis Chandra Mukherjee

366. A LETTER

August 17, 1929

For the present you may spend two months there. After that we shall see. My attitude is that where we feel even a little bored we should go on trying to get rid of the boredom till there is not a trace of it left. But it is not something that can be forced.

You need not be frightened if you read anything there about my health. I am in bed, of course. I have dysentery. My experiment has failed.[1] I may again have to seek the protection of Mother Goat.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/123

367. LETTER TO RAM BINOD SINHA

SABARMATI,

August 17, 1929

BHAI RAM BINOD,

Krishnadas writes that he has withdrawn himself from your work, and the Charkha Sangh may launch proceedings in court if it pleases.[2] Is that also your opinion? Wire your reply to me. You can attend the meeting of the council of the Charkha Sangh on the 21st which is being held here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/122

368. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

SABARMATI,

August 17, 1929

BHAI RAJENDRABABU,

I have a distressing letter from Krishnadas. I enclose a copy of it. I have written fully to Ram Binod. I am also enclosing a copy of

[1] For Gandhiji's article on the failure of his experiment, *vide* "Unfired Food", 22-8-1929

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Chhanganlal Joshi", 17-6-1929

my letter.[1] If he does not want to compromise then the matter will have to be taken to court. I believe you will be coming here on the 21st. We shall then talk more. I shall inform you when I get Ram Binod's letter.

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/121

369. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA[2]

[On or after *August 17, 1929*]

THANKS. REPORTS EXAGGERATED. MAKING PROGRESS.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15474

370. TELEGRAM TO KHURSHED NAOROJI[3]

[On or after August 17, 1929]

EXPERIMENT FORGOTTEN. NOT YET RESTORED NORMAL CONDITION. NO ANXIETY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15473

371. RURAL EDUCATION

Kakasaheb wishes to serve a number of purposes through this supplement. One of these is that persons who have passed what is ordinarily regarded as the school age, who are householders, are engaged in a profession or otherwise and are employed…the men and women living in about ten thousand villages of Maha Gujarat…should receive some kind of education which it is possible to give them. The term education in this sense should be interpreted in a wider sense. It is something distinct from a knowledge of the alphabet. Villagers

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] In reply to his telegram dated August 17, which read: Kindly wire Mahatmaji's health."

[3] In reply to her telegram dated August 17, which read: "All anxious for your health. Please forget all experiments."

today have no practical knowledge in many fields and we find, instead, that often ignorant superstition has established a hold over them. Through this supplement, Kakasaheb intends to rid them of these superstitions and give them some useful knowledge.

From the standpoint of health, the condition of villages is deplorable. One of the chief causes of our poverty is the non-availability of this essential knowledge of hygiene. If sanitation in villages can be improved, lakhs of rupees will easily be saved and the condition of people improved to that extent. A sick peasant can never work as hard as a healthy one. Not a little harm is being done because we have a higher death-rate than the average.

It is held that our economically backward condition is responsible for our deplorable insanitation and that if the former is bettered, the latter will improve automatically. Let this be said in order to malign the Government or to put all the blame on it, but there is not even fifty percent truth in that statement. In my opinion based on experience,our poverty plays a very small part in our insanitary condition. I know what part it plays and where, but I do not wish to go into it here.

The purpose of this series of articles is to point out the ways and means of eradicating those diseases for the incidence of which we are responsible and which can be readily eradicated at little or no expense.

Let us examine the state of our villages from this standpoint. Many of these are found to be like heaps of garbage. People urinate and defecate at all places in the villages, not excluding even their own courtyards. Where this is done, no one takes care to cover up the faeces. The village roads are never well maintained and one finds heaps of dust everywhere. We ourselves and our bullocks find it difficult even to walk on them. If there is a pond, people wash their utensils in it, cattle drink, bathe and wallow in it; children and even adults clean themselves in it after evacuation; they even defecate on the ground near it. This same water is used for drinking and cooking purposes.

No rules are observed while building houses. Neither the convenience of neighbours, nor residents' facilities for light and air are considered when buildings are put up.

Because of a lack of co-operation among villagers, they do not even grow things which are essential to ensure their own hygienic

conditions. Villagers do not put their leisure hours to good use, or perhaps they do not know how to do so, as a result of which their physical and mental capacity is depleted.

For want of general knowlege of hygiene, when there is an incidence of a disease, instead of employing some home remedies very often the villagers seek the help of magicians or get involved in the web of mantras and spend money and in return the disease is merely aggravated.

In this series, we shall examine all these reasons and see what can be done in the matter.

[From Gujarati]

Shikshan ane Sahitya, 18-8-1929

372. FLOOD RELIEF IN ASSAM

Shri Thakkar Bapa has written the following letter[1] on the above subject.

The reader will find from this that there is considerable need for assistance there and the sums contributed by him are being put to good use. I have requested Shri Harivallabhdas Shah to prolong his stay there and he would most probably have done so. It was necessary to obtain permission from Shri Naranbhai Keshavlal's firm to allow him to stay there longer. That permission was generously and promptly granted through a telegram.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-8-1929

373. NEED FOR FAR-SIGHTEDNESS

A reader makes the following comment on Shri Jivram Kayanji's "Correction"published in *Navajivan* dated 4-8-29:[2]

[1] Not translated here. Thakkar Bapa had acknowledged receipt of Rs. 24,000 and explained how it was used for distribution of rice, and encouraging spinning in flood-stricken Assam.

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated how *harde* or myrobalan, used in dyeing, tanning, etc., was exported by Indian traders, while Europeans processed the stuff and imported it into India for use in the dye industry, making enormous profits.

The above does not apply to Shri Jivram's argument. He merely argued that he had gone over to Orissa not in order to wipe out the prevalent impression that he had done an injustice to the labourers, but rather because he was touched by their sufferings. Those from whom he had purchased the harde were not labourers serving under him but persons who collected it on their own and sold it to him. The problem posed by the above correspondent is a separate but important one; hence I have published the letter. It is largely true that, although by collecting raw material and exporting it abroad, individuals may benefit themselves, the country as a whole is a loser rather than a gainer and is robbed of its wealth. However, such things also grow in India as cannot be utilized and for the utilization of which we do not have sufficient facilities. We should certainly export such items abroad and import them in the form of new products. I do not see any use for the craze that we should process all items that are grown in India. We may even do harm to ourselves by doing so. Whether harde is something that should be exported or not is a different question. I am unable to give an opinion on it. However, cotton is the most important item which should not be exported at all; so long as we are guilty of this offence, the export of other minor items is hardly of any significance. To take such small items into account is to do business without any sense of proportion. If we were far-sighted, we would devote all our time and all our talent for the present to the utilization of our cotton in our villages. If we can take care of this one factor, the rest will take care of itself. We should realize that, just as various small poisonous plants which thrive under the shade of a poisonous tree are automatically destroyed along with the destruction of the main tree, similar is the case of unscrupulous trading in cotton.

While considering this question, I have so far only taken in to account cloth that is imported from England and have shown that by doing so we throw away sixty crores of rupees. If we take into account the cloth that is imported from Japan and other countries, the figure would reach one hundred crores. However, that is not the whole story. In addition to this, lakhs of rupees are sent abroad as a result of this trade. This leaves out all the amount that the country spends on this Rs. 100 crores by way of insurance premia paid to foreign agencies and many more similar activites that are carried on.

Businessmen as a class are the greatest hurdle in the way of solving this important question. They are not prepared to give up their

trade in foreign cloth or change it for something else. They adopt many means, both fair and unfair, in order to keep up that trade and arguments can be found to support such practices. Again, just as we import our cloth from abroad, we also adopt foreign ideas. What we find here mostly are English newspapers and magazines full of beautiful pictures, well printed and written with great skill. As the owners of these journals have large sums of money at their disposal, it is but natural that their articles are clever. Hence, momentarily our own ideas appear insipid to us, whereas we are dazzled by their. And what more could we ask for when these ideas further our self-interest? Things being in such a pitiable condition, actually the main task is to bring about a change of heart in business men who deal in foreign cloth; in other words, our task in achieving swaraj will become most simple when business men introduce the concept of the welfare of others in their business and give national welfare an important place in it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-8-1929

374. IF SPINNERS ALSO WEAVE?[1]

If the above figures are correct, the reader will see that the activity of spinning alone can remain the focus and all those who spin are certainly self-reliant for ever.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-8-1929

375. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 18, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

Chhaganlal passes on your letters for me to read. And now I have one directly addressed to me. I think of you almost daily, I often

[1] Shivabhai Gokalbhai Patel in this article, not reproduced here, repudiates Shri Jethalal's plea that a person can earn more if he performs all the functions pertaining to making of cloth, i.e., carding, spinning and weaving by himself (p. 184). He further states that it is not possible to set up looms in every household. Besides that, weaving requires the help of other persons.

wish to write too, but I have no time. Besides, now I am confined to my bed. There is no cause for worry. I am better today. it is 2 o'clock now but I have had no motion since 6 o'clock. I remember the lady. The letter from her is nice. I hope you sent her a proper reply. Go on patiently doing what you can. It is essential, though, that you attain perfection in a few matters. I had a long and interesting letter from Tara. She enjoys great peace of mind at Vedchhi. You should improve your health too. How are things nowadays?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4146

376. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 18, 1929

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

I was wondering why there had been no letter from you. I have one today. There was no need for you to have offered anything, so please forget about it. Please do not be sorry. You must not invite domestic discord on that account. The weakness that you now feel will pass away if you are patient. Now that you have got a good deal of experience you will know what diet you should take. Moreover, I am now confined to bed. I had an attack of dysentery. I feel better today. On such an occasion there would be none to guide me regarding uncooked diet; my experiment is therefore suspended for the while. Eleven people are still holding their ground. Do write to me regularly about your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6790

377. LETTER TO NATHUBHAI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 18, 1929

BHAI NATHUBHAI,

My own experiment is discontinued. But you need not on that account discontinue yours. You should not give up milk though there is no need to have coconut with milk. The wheat should be properly

chewed. After sprouting it should not be used beyond twelve hours. What is left can be cooked. If the grain is of good quality, it can be made to sprout by soaking it in water for twenty-four hours and then keeping it out of water for twelve hours. If any portion of the grain remains unchewed, you should spit it out. Its remaining unchewed means that the Saliva of the person is defective. Such unchewed portion will not be digested in the stomach. In vegetables, apart from the greens, you can take in small quantities white gourd, brinjals, *tindolan*, radish, etc., as may be available. Tubers like potato, yam, etc., should not be eaten. You can certainly eat papaw. If you get constipation, take enema. Take only milk and fruit for a day, or you may even take a purgative. You should not allow your stomach to be upset.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/124

378. A LETTER

August 18, 1929

The cause of my dysentery seems to be my lack of teeth. I had early enough warning of it but I did not heed it. I took a purgative yesterday, so I am a little better today. There is no cause at all for worry.

There is a letter from Dr. Ansari today. He is surprised that the experiment has failed. That in spite of the dysentery I have no fever or other symptoms surprises the Doctor also.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/125

379. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

[On or after *August 18, 1929*][1]

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got the short letters written by you both. I am content with such short letters.

If you have read any news about my health, you need not get alarmed on that account. It is improving now. I have only to regain

[1] From the reference to giving up "the experiment of eating uncooked grain" and to resuming milk; *vide* "Telegram to G. D. Birla", 17-8-1929 & "Unfired Food"

some strength. I have given up the experiment of eating uncooked grain. I have resumed milk too and I think, therefore, that I shall not take time to regain my usual strength. I start on a tour from September 7.

Devdas is still in Delhi. Ramdas is in Bardoli and Nimu in Lakhtar. Harilal is in Rajkot just now. The Udyoga Mandir is crowded just now. Many girls have recently joined and, therefore, we face a big problem about the women's education and related matters. Let us wait and see what happens. Just now Gangabehn senior looks after everything.

Prabhudas is here at present and is working with Kakasaheb in the Vidyapith. Did I write to you about this?

I am eager to know what you two have finally decided.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4747

380. LETTER TO PRBHAVATI

[Before *August 19, 1929*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. I replied you by wire to comfort you, in case my letter miscarried. God will certainly give you that courage you need to go to your in-laws', now that you have decided to. My tour of U.P. starts from here on 11th September. On that day I reach Agra and if you can join me there do come over. I have liked the quotations from the letter from Jayaprakash. He appears to be clean young man. He is right in asking for himself freedom in regard to khadi. It would be enough if he could be won over by love and reason in this matter.

Many people have turned up, so this is incomplete.

I will write the rest at leisure later. Let me have C. Arrah's address.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of Gujarati: G.N. 3309

[1] From the reference to the addressee's willingness to go over to her in-laws', this appears to have been written before the letter dated August 19.

381. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

SABARMATI,
August 19, 1929

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
8 ROYAL EXCHANGE, CALCUTTA
COMMENCED CURDS YESTERDAY. NO ANXIETY.

GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 7883. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

382. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Silence Day, August 19, 1929

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I am writing this from my bed. I got dysentery. So I have given up my experiment of uncooked [grain]. I am better today. I shall recover my strength in a few days. There is absolutely no cause for worry. I shall send you my tour programme. I do not have it with me now. I have got your letter. I am now waiting to see what kind of a letter you will get from your in-laws. By God's grace everything will be all right. I hope there was no difficulty; and if you are confronted with one, you should get over it.

Yesterday I had to take some curds out of goat's milk. The doctor thought that without it my dysentery would not be cured. I saw no point in being stubborn. I have destroyed the letter about Jayaprakash. I do not enough time to try and recollect the questions just now. If I happen to remember them I shall write the answers [for you].

You should learn as much as you can by yourself.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3357

383. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

Monday [*August 19, 1929*][1]

RAJENDRA PRASAD
KHADI DEPOT, MUZAFFARPUR
PAY SATIS CHANDRA MUKERJEE TWO HUNDRED FIFTY RUPEES MY BEHALF.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15498

384. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[2]

[On or after *August 19, 1929*]

RAJA
AM ADVISING VALLABHBHAI PREPARE GO. UNFIRED CAN NEVER BE DOOMED. GETTING ON.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 15479

385. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL[3]

[On or after *August 19, 1929*]

RAJA WIRES AND INSISTS YOU SHOULD PRESIDE. PREPARE GO. COME HERE BEFORE LEAVING.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 15479

[1] This telegram is scribbled in Gandhiji's hand on a sheet of paper entitled "Monday Talks and Instructions", whose date, according to the S.N. Register, is August 19, 1929, which seems to be correct as August 19 was a Monday, and on the same sheet is written in Gandhiji's hand: "I want Harivallabhadas's reprot on Assam" which obviously refers to the Assam floods. *Vide* "Food Relief in Assam", 18-8-1929 A copy of this telegram was sent to Satis Chandra Mukerjee also as just below the above draft telegram Gandhii has written: "Satis Chandra Mukerjee, C/o" and added: "Now please send these. . . ."

[2] In relpy to his telegram his telegram dated August 18, received at Sabarmati on August 19, which read: "Convinced no harm will result by reason difference over issue which nobody takes as real. Vallabhhai's presiding is like your presence important for moral effect. Pray avoid disappointing. Now you have doomed uncooked food for ever hope inflammation subsiding."

[3] This is drafted on the back of the telegram from C. Rajagopalachari; *vide* the preceding item.

386. TELEGRAM TO INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS, LAHORE[1]

[On or after *August 19, 1929*]

CONGRESS
LAHORE

YOUR WIRE. WHILST THANKING YOU UNABLE ACCEPT HONOUR. CONSIDER SELF UNFIT. APART FROM WANT OF ENERGY IT IS WELL UNDERSTOOD AM OUT OF TUNE WITH MANY THINGS DONE CONGRESSMEN. MY OCCUPANCY CHAIR CAN ONLY EMBARRASS EVERYBODY INCLUDING MYSELF. PRAY ELECT PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15480

387. TELEGRAM TO KRISHNAGOPAL DUTT[2]

[On or after *August 19, 1929*]

THANKS. CONDITION BETTER. PARTIAL FAST. FRUIT JUICE FOLLOWED NOW BY DILUTED CURDS.

From a photostat: S.N. 15482

388. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ[3]

[On or after *August 19, 1929*]

UNNECESSARY TROUBLE JIVRAJ JUST NOW.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 15483

[1] In reply to the following telegram dated August 19: "Congress reception committee forty-fourth session elected you president 83 overwhelming majority. Kindly accept"

[2] In reply to his telegram dated August 19, which read: "Wire health Gandhiji what treatment following."

[3] In reply to his telegram dated August 18,received on August 19, which read: "Leaving Monday night with doctor Jivraj, unless receive wire contrary."

389. TELEGRAM TO M. M. MALAVIYA[1]

August 20, 1929

MALAVIYAJI

THANKS. PROGRESSING. TAKING CURDS SINCE SUNDAY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15485

390. LETTER TO SIR K. V. REDDY[2]

SABARMATI,
August 20, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your very full letter. I have been delayed in replying to it, owing to my peregrinations and then illness from which, by the grace of God, I am recovering.

I do hope that the trade licences matter has been or will be satisfactorily settled. I continue to receive anxious enquiries from South Africa. I am obliged to tell them all that they should worry you and not expect much from here. However, when you think that intensive work here will assist you, you will please tell me.

The news you give me about matters educational is most encouraging. The success of Sastri College must in the end go a long way towards raising our status in South Africa.

I know how true you are when you tell me about our people's apathy in matters in which they are expected to exert themselves. I know even in our time the difficulties of the poor vegetable hawkers. It was their amazing industry that I thought enabled them to walk long distances early in the morning and dispose of, in the best manner they could, their produce before 9 a.m. May success attend your effort on their behalf.

Thank you for interesting yourself in Manilal and his wife. I hope they are helpful.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 9241. Courtesy: S. V. Subba Rao

[1] In reply to his telegram dated August 19, received on August 20, which read: "Very sorry. Hope improving. When doctor advises please resume taking goat milk. Avoid almonds for sometime."

[2] Agent-General of the Government of India in south Africa

391. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU

[On or after *August 20, 1929*][1]

BOTH WIRES RECEIVED. THANK GOD FOR KAMALA. REPLYING CONGRESS MESSAGE LAHORE[2] SAID COULD NOT PRESIDE AS AM OUT OF TUNE MUCH GOING ON UNDER CONGRESS NAME. HAVE AGAIN RECOMMENDED JAWAHAR'S NAME.[3] SEE NO USE MY PRESIDING.[4]

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15494

392. LETTER TO PANACHAND

August 21, 1929

BHAISHRI PANACHAND,

I have your letter. I don't mind what you say, but you have not understood the situation. I do not write about the Native States because I do not like to write a single word uselessly. In British territory I know we can exert some influence on the happenings, big and small, and so I write about them whenever I find it necessary. I write nothing about the Native States because I know that nothing can be done publicly about even the most glaring cases of oppression there. But to say that since I write nothing I do nothing betrays ignorance. I am doing what I can according to my lights. I do not feel disheartened because I am unable to show results. I can therefore understand the criticism by persons like you. For, except the result, what other criterion can you have to measure the success of what I may have done? You are therefore entitled to criticize. It is my duty to listen to and put up with the criticism.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/128

[1] One of the addressee's telegrams to which this appears to be a reply was dated August 20. It read: "Strongly recommended your accepting presidentship. Kamala progressing. Am returning Allahabad tonight." 41-20

[2] *Vide* "Atelgrama to Vallabhbhai Patel", 19-8-1929

[3] A telegram from Jawaharlal Nehru datedAugust 21 read: "Beg of you not to press my name for presidentship" (S.N. 15496).

[4] Motilal Nehru's telgram dated August 21 in reply to this read: "Your telegram. Consider your reason for refusal strong reason for acceptance and reorganizing Congress on correct lines. Besides forcing Jawahar on country against its will unfair both to Jawahar and country" (S.N. 15497).

393. LETTER TO RUDRANATH

[*August 21/22, 1929*][1]

BHAISHRI RUDRANATH,

I have your letter. You do not seem to have understood the life of Zaghloul[2] and Lenin. Both of them worked very hard at first and only then were they able to achieve what they did. I have only the spade, the [carding-]bow, the spindle and the basket fit for youthful blood. You are not ready to accept with faith any of these four. Had you really learnt to spin on the *takli* with courage, there would have been no need for me to write anything.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/129

394. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

[On or after *August 21, 1929*][3]

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have your second wire. I do not take the view you do about Jawahar. Jawaharlal would have been elected had I not been in the way. If the Congressmen concerned can be induced to think that I shall be of greater service without the chair they would surely have Jawahar. You may depend upon my not being unmindful of Jawahar's self-respect. I would not on any account thrust him on the country. But let us see how things shape. I shall take no hasty step.

I expect more news about Kamala. I hope she will now be entirely free from recurring pains and that this operation was all that was necessary to put her on her feet.

Yours,

From a copy. Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/133

[1] As placed in the source

[2] (1860-1927) Zaghloul Pasha, Egyptian patriot and leader of Wafd Party

[3] This appears to have been in reply to the addressee's telegram dated August 21, 1929 which read: ". . . forcing Jawahar on country against its will unfair to Jawahar and country"; *vide* "Telegram ato Motilal Nehru", 20-8-1929, *fn.* 4.

395. UNFIRED FOOD[1]

Instead of hopeful progress, I have to report a tragedy this week. In spite of great carefulness in experimentation along an unbeaten track, I have been laid low. A mild but persistent attack of dysentery has sent me to bed and not only to cooked food but also to goat's milk. Dr. Harilal Desai used all his skill and patience to save me from having to go back to milk, which I had left last November in the hope of not having to go back to it, but he saw that he could not reduce the mucus and the traces of blood that persistently appeared in the bowels without making me take curds. At the time of writing this therefore I have had two portions of curds, with what effect I shall note at the foot of this article which is being written on Sunday[2] night.

It appears that I was not digesting the raw foods I was taking, and what I had mistaken for good motions were precursors of dysentery. The other conditions including vitality being good, I had no cause to suspect any evil.

My companions too have one after another fallen off, except four, of whom one has been on raw food for nearly a year with great success as he thinks.

The companions have left off because they were feeling weak and were losing weight week by week.

Thus Sjt. Gopalrao's claim that unfired food is suitable for any stomach and can be taken with impunity by young and old, sick and healthy, is to say the least of it 'unproven'. This apparent failure should serve as a warning to the zealots that they should move most cautiously and be scrupulously exact in their statements and careful in their deductions.

I call the failure apparent, because I have the same faith in unfired food today that I first had nearly forty years ago. The failure is due to my gross ignorance of the practice of unfired food and of right combinations. Some of its good results are really striking. No one has suffered seriously. My dysentery has been painless. Every doctor who has examined me has found me otherwise in better health than before. For my companions I have been a blind guide leading

[1] An article similar to this appeared in *Navajivan*, 25-8-1929, under the title "Food Untouched by fire."

[2] August 18, 1929

the blind. I have sadly missed the guidance of someone who hasknown the virtue of unfired food and who would have the patience of a scientist.

But if I regain my health and have a little leisure, I hope to revert to the experiment with better hope in that I shall know what mistakes to avoid. As a searcher for Truth I deem it necessary to find the perfect food for a man to keep body, mind and soul in a sound condition. I believe that the search can only succeed with unfired food, and that in the limitless vegetable kingdom there is an effective substitute for milk, which, every medical man admits, has its drawbacks and which is designed by nature not for man but for babies and young ones of lower animals. I should count no cost too dear for making a search which in my opinion is so necessary from more points of view than one; therefore I still seek information and guidance from kindred spirits. To those who are not in sympathy with this phase of my life and who out of their love for me are anxious about me, I give my assurance that I shall not embark upon any experiment that would endanger my other activities. I am of opinion that though I have been making such experiments since the age of 18, I have not often suffered from serious illness and have been able to preserve tolerably good health. But I would also like them to feel with me that so long as God wants me for any work on this earth, He will preserve me from harm and prevent me from going too far.

Those who are making the experiment must not give it up because of the temporary check I have received. Let them learn from the causes of my failure.

1. If there is the slightest danger of insufficient mastication, let the ingredients be finely pulverized and dissolved in the mouth instead of being swallowed.

2. If there is an undissolved residue in the mouth, it must be put out.

3. Grains and pulses should be used sparingly.

4. Green vegetables should be well washed and scraped before being used and should also be used sparingly.

5. Fresh and dried fruits (soaked) and nuts should be the staples at least in the beginning stages.

6. Milk should not be given up till the unfired foods have been taken without any harm for a sufficiently long period. All the

literature I have read points to fruits and nuts with only a small quantity of green vegetables as a perfect food.

(I am able to report on Tuesday morning that dilute curds are working well.)

Young India, 22-8-1929

396. TOWARDS A PROPER WHEEL

I gladly publish the foregoing well-thought out specification.[1] I wish that many young men will evince in the spinning-wheel the interest that Sjt. Hiralal Amritlal Shah has. His preoccupations and his business have not prevented him from studying the movement with close attention. He has sent me a drawing to accompany the specification. I am unable to publish it, at any rate this week, as the article came into my hands just at the time of sending the last Young India matter to the printers.

Young India, 22-8-1929

397. REPORTERS A NUISANCE

The recently published Press report that my weight was reduced to 80 lb. and that I had fainted was utterly baseless but it succeeded in giving a fright to probably hundreds of well-wishers. I have wires from all over India, including Burma, making anxious inquiries. On more than one occasion, Press agencies have in my case rendered themselves liable to legal action by giving currency to false and harmful news. Often has my anger against them got the better, for a moment, of my non-co-operation. It is cruel to give a shock to the credulous public by spreading false reports. Good faith and ignorance are no excuse when thousands of men and women are concerned. Reporters are bound to take every precaution possible to ensure accuracy. In the case in point, it was easy enough to ask a responsible person at the Udyoga Mandir or Dr. Harilal Desai as to my exact condition and much grief and anxiety could have been avoided. I suggest to the agencies that they warn their reporters that they would be fined or dismissed for repeated offences of the character I have described.

Young India, 22-8-1929

[1] Not reproduced here

398. OUR CHOICE

An American correspondent has sent me a cutting from an old number of The World Tomorrow (August 1928). It is a remarkable article on "Pacifism and National Security"by John Nevin Sayre which is worthy of perusal by every patriot. The following opening paragraphs[1] show which way the writer would lead us:

> Pacifism, first of all, askes people to consider whether national armament can really conduce to security in a civilization which uses the tools of twentieth century science. No matter what may be said for defence by armament in the past, we believe that it is an utterly obsolete and extremely dangerous way of attempting to attain security now. In the world in which we live and in the decades immediately ahead, it is open to the double objection: (1) mounting cost and (2) diminishing effectiveness for defence.
>
> . . .every time the hands of the clock traverse twenty-four hours, the United States spends £2.000,000 [on] upkeep for army and navy. . . .
>
> There is also an increasing human cost not measurable in dollars. . . today military strategists plan to conscript the activity of the entire manpower of the nation. . . . Compulsory military training in time of peace and the invasion of schools and colleges by military departments run by the Department of War are requisitioning study time of youth, and tending to regiment youth's thinking. The post office, the newspapers, the radio, the movies, artists and men of science are in danger of being drawn in to give their support to the building of war's preparedness machine. All this means an increasing cost to human liberty, to freedom of thought and discussion, to the possibility of social advance. . . .
>
> Even worse is the fact that increase of expenditure for armament does not in the modern world purchase increase of security. It may do so, possibly, for a score of years, but the policy is subject to a law of diminishing returns and leads straight towards a climax of disaster. Senator Borah in discussing 'What is Preparedness?' recently called attention to the huge public debts and constantly increasing tax burdens which governments are putting on their peoples thoroughtout the world. . . .

The fashion nowadays is to take for granted that whatever America and England are doing is good enough for us. But the figures given by the writer of the cost to America of her armament are too terrible to contemplate. War has become a matter of money and

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

resourcefulness in inventing weapons of destruction. It is no longer a matter of personal bravery or endurance. To compass the destruction of men, women and children, it might be enough for me to press a button and drop poison on them in a second.

Do we wish to copy this method of defending ourselves? Even if we do, have we the financial ability? We complain of ever-growing military expenditure. But if we would copy America or England, we would have to increase the burden tenfold.

'Why not, if the thing is worth doing?' asks the critic. The question then is, 'Is it worth doing?' Mr. Sayre answers emphatically and says, "It is not worth doing for any nation." I say nothing about our so-called naval or military programme when it is resisted by the Government. The nation cannot be kept on the non-violent path by violence. It must grow from within to the state it may aspire to. The question therefore for us to consider is, 'What is our immediate aspiration?' Do we first want to copy the Western nations and then in the dim and distant future after having gone through the agony, retrace our steps? Or do we want to strike out an original path or rather retain what to me is our own predominantly peaceful path and therethrough win and assert our freedom?

Here, there is no question of compromise with cowardice. Either we train and arm ourselves for destruction, be it in self-defence, and in the process train for suffering too, or we merely prepare ourselves for suffering for defending the country or delivering it from domination. In either case, bravery is indispensable. In the first case, personal bravery is not of such importance as in the second. In the second case too we shall perhaps never be able to do without violence altogether. But violence then will be subservient to non-violence and will always be a diminishing factor in national life.

At the present moment, though the national creed is one of non-violence, in thought, and word at least we seem to be drifting towards violence. Impatience pervades the atmosphere. We are restrained from violence through our weakness. What is wanted is a deliberate giving up of violence out of strength. To be able to do this requires imagination coupled with a penetrating study of the world drift. Today, the superficial glamour of the West dazzles us, and we mistake for progress the giddy dance which engages us from day to day. We refuse to see that it is surely leading us to death. Above all we must recognize that to compete with the Western nations on their terms is to

court suicide. Whereas if we realize that notwithstanding the seeming supermacy of violence it is the moral force that governs the universe, we should train for non-violence with the fullest faith in its limitless possibilities. Everybody recognizes that if non-violent atmosphere had been maintained in 1922, we could have completely gained our end. Even as it is, we had a striking demonstration of the efficacy of non-violence, crude though it was, and the substance of swaraj then gained has never been lost. The paralysing fear that had possessed the nation before the advent of satyagraha has gone once for all. In my opinion therefore non-violence is a matter of patient training. If we are to be saved and are to make a substantial contribution to the world's progress, ours must emphatically and predominantly be the way of peace.

Young India, 22-8-1929

399. NOTES

A WORTHY SACRIFICE

Sjt. Purushottamdas Tandon has given up the lucrative post of manager of a premier bank in order to join the Servants of the People Society founded by Lala Lajpat Rai of revered memory. Lalaji had made rigid rules. No life member could engage in any lucrative kwork. Sjt. Purushottamdas Tandon was a dear comrade of the deceased patriot, and this sacrifice is in obedience to the call of duty towards a deceased leader. What is however a great step for us is nothing in the estimation of Sjt. Purushottamdas Tandon. He has been used to making sacrifices. For many years past he has ceased to believe in making money for its own sake. He has been progressively simplifying his life. But there were family obligations he could not shirk unless he could carry with him in his own evolution towards the higher life the members for whom he was responsible. He has now evidently got over the difficulties and the way has been clear for him to take the final plunge. By such only are nations made. I congratulate Lalaji's Society on the event. Do the public deserve such sacrifice? The amount that was asked for in the Lalaji Memorial has not yet been subscribed in respect of a memorial to one of the noblest of Indians is a sad reflection. Let me hope Sjt. Purushottamdas Tandon's sacrifice will spur the lethargic to action and evoke a response adequate to the occasion.

DESOLATION IN SIND

Sind has had a second disaster. I have purposely refrained from saying a word hitherto. The floods have this time wrought greater mischief than before. Only familiarity has made us indifferent. The distress however is not less felt by the afflicted on that account. Professor Malkani has sent me some harrowing details of the havoc wrought by the floods. The latest news is that cholera has followed in the wake of the floods. I suggest to the donors who have been sending donations for the Assam flood relief that they combine their donations for both the areas and leave me to apportion the amounts in the best manner I know. And unless or the other list, I shall treat the donation as jointly for both. Whatever is received for Sind will be disbursed through Professor Malkani. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel has already sent Rs. 10,000 out of the late Gujarat Famine Fund.

Young India, 22-8-1929

400. 'THE OLD STORY'

THE EDITOR, "YOUNG INDIA"

SIR,

> In your issue of the 25th instant you deal with the oppression by revenue officials, and whilst putting the blame on the Government on account of the system in force, you recognize that acts of oppression are committed on cultivators "by their own kith and kin". Further on in your leader you say that unless the present system of administration is completely change, "the oppression of the people will continue unabated even when the reins of Government have passed into Indian hands". Two things therefore appear to be necessary: first, alternation in the Land Revenue Rules providing for closer consideration of the condition and interests of cultivators which can and ought to be secured by agitation and representation in the Councils, and second, a 'change of heart' … an expression much favoured when making demands on the conscience of Government … in those who, being the kith and kin of the cultivator, now exercise their petty power in the direction of oppression, often to secure their own ends. It is much to be feared that the second measure will be the more difficult to secure . . . .
>
> Would you essay an improvement, Sir? Start ryotwari tenants' associations and limit their activities to educating the ryots as to their rights. Then fight their cause in Councils, and finally, discourage them in the consumption of liquor, not as a weapon against what it pleases some to call

the 'satanic Government' but as a measure of moral uplift of the poor but lovable, over-labouring cultivator.

30th July 1929 J'AI ACCUSE

This letter[1] is from a well-known Anglo-Indian settler. His accusation is as old as the British rule. The accuser forgets that it is the system that is bad. What does it matter whether it is worked by the puggree or the sola hat? And it should be remembered that from the Patel to the Deputy Commissioner, they are all nurtured in the same traditions and have often been known to do better than their teachers. Those who carry out the tyrant's will often outdo the latter in the execution of his designs. So long as the system continues to be top heavy and the tallest Indian administrators have to remain subservient to the imperious will of a white chief whether in Simla or Whitehall, the evils 'J'ai Accuse' draws attention to will continue.

Young India, 22-8-1929

401. A PAINFUL STORY

A gentleman writes from Ramgarh (Jaipur):[2]

One comes across such tragic incidents all over India. They would seem to be more common among the well-to-do. For even very old men of this class want to marry and when they die it is considered honourable to keep the girl in perpetual widowhood. The question of religion does not arise here at all. This is the reason why such cases are to be found more in the Marwari and Bhatia communities, etc., than among others. There is only one remedy for this evil. One should start in every community a peaceful agitation to rouse public feeling against such evils. When this happens, old men will not dare to marry again and young girls will not be condemned to widowhood. Besides, once public opinion has been created, no one will support the custom of keeping child-widows in perpetual widowhood and blaming it on fate or the sins of a previous birth. When a young man happens to lose his wife no one stops him from remarrying by bringing in the argument of the sins of previous birth. My advice to the reformers is not to lose heart. They should remain firm in their duty and go ahead with faith and self-confidence. Of course they must remember that

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had written about a girl of twelve who had been widowed within two months of marriage.

this work cannot be accomplished by merely delivering speeches. They may even have to resort to satyagraha. I have given my views concerning the scope of satyagraha in previous issues. The darkness that is child-widowhood cannot but vanish before the sun of satyagraha, for in the dictionary of satyagraha there is no such word as 'failure'.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 22-8-1929

402. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

August 22, 1929

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I am delighted over Kamala's operation. I hope she will be fully restored now.

You may depend upon my not unduly pressing your name on the country. I felt bound to express my opinion to the committee at Lahore in reply to their wire.[1] It is enough for your self-respect that you do not want the crown. It is an ugly business for anybody this time. I have simply pressed your name as of a principle. If the country is not ready to assert that principle, we can wait.

If you are not to be the helmsman, the only alternative I can think of at this juncture is re-election of Father, or failing that, of Dr. Ansari. Can you think of any other name?

I am preparing for the U.P. tour. I am daily recovering lost strength. I am in no way sorry for my experiment from which I have learnt a lot.

Yours,

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1929. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Indian Nataional Congress Lahore", 19-8-1929

403. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

August 22, 1929

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. I have no time left after attending to my illness, so I content myself by thinking [of your]. I am recovering strength. I take plenty of curds.

Do you have peace of mind there? How is your health? Have you regular motions? How is your appetite? Do you feel strong? Can you go for a walk?

Surajbehn has arrived from Bomaby today. There is at present crowd of other people too.

I am expecting a detailed letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9261; also C.W. 508. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

404. LETTER TO KARSANDAS CHITALIA

August 22, 1929

DEAR KARSANDAS,

I have gone through the draft of the trust deed[1]. If the mistake was made by me, please help me see in what way I made it. If there are any letters from me to that effect, send them to me. I do not recall having suggested any such thing. Chhaganlal Joshi was actually astonished to see the document. But if I did decide to include the entire amount in the trust, I consider it my dharma to adhere to that decision. It is not enough for me that you agree to whatever I do. I am in a moral dilemma. I have made it a rule to keep even one-sided promises made by me and have been saved by that habit. You and Kishorelal should help me in this matter. I feel it is my duty to settle thismatter quickly. Jamnalalji has left for Poona. See him when he

[1] Of the Stri-Seva Ashram being set up in Bombay. Gandhiji laid the foundation-stone of the Ashram on September 7, 1929, *ibid*

returns. If he says no, you too between yourselves may consider and let me know. I am slowly recovering.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/132

405. LETTER TO ANJANADEVI CHOWDHURY

August 22, 1929

DEAR SISTER,

Jamnalalji has just informed me that Shri Ram Narayanji[1] has been taken seriously ill. Jamnalalji is coming that way. I know you to be a devoted wife and a devoted worker. It will be a good thing if Ram Narayanji gets well because of your nursing him. There is no death, however, for the soul residing in that body. Then why should we grieve over the body? Tell Ram Narayanji that he should remain calm and recite God's name.

From a copy of the Hindi: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/131

406. TELEGRAM TO RAJA OF KALAKANKAR[2]

[On or after *August 22, 1929*]

THANKS WIRE. HEALTH SATISFACTORY. PROGRESSING.

From a photostat: S.N. 15500

407. LETTER TO HORACE ALEXANDER

August 23, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter.

I expect nothing but hindrance generally from the India office to the crusade against opium and drink. The reply you have sent me therefore does not surprise me.

When Mr. Silcock comes, he shall most surely receive a warm welcome. Of the young friend, I have already written to you. Of course he may come and stay here if it suits him.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: G.N. 1408

[1] Ram Narayan Chowdhury

[2] In reply to his telegram dated August 22, which read: "Anxious to know welfare. Wire health."

408. LETTER TO AMIR AHMED

SABARMATI,
August 23, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter.

Please tender my thanks to His Highness the Nawab Sahib for inviting me. I do expect to reach Bhopal on the 8th September next by the train which arrives there by 3.28 p.m. from Bombay. But I expect to leave, if you don't mind, on the 10th September by the night express which leaves Bhopal at 8.41. My programme for Agra is fixed and I am due to reach there by the morning train on the 11th. I hope this will cause no inconvenience. We shall be a party of about five, including Dadabhai Naoroji's grand-daughter Shrimati Khurshedbai.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

COL. AMIR AHMED
MILITARY SECRETARY TO
HIS HIGHNESS, THE RULER OF BHOPAL

From a copy: Ansari Papers. Courtesy: Jamia Millia Islamia Library

409. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL

August 23, 1929

BHAISHRI JAISUKHLAL,

I have seen your resignation from the presidentship of the Congress Committee. There is no need for you to take such a step now. I will tell you to be ready when such a time comes. If you resign now, whatever little work is being done will come to a stop. I wish you to withdraw your resignation.

From a copy the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/135

410. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

August 23, 1929

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. Do give up worrying on my account. People fall sick even when they take regular diet. What does it matter if the same happens to me in the pursuit of truth? I am taking plenty of curds these days. May I tell you that even milk and curds are admissible only to a certain extent. They are not man's natural food. The argument you advance in support of milk is the same as that in support of beef-tea and liquor because some physical benefit is derived for the time being from all of them. But physical benefit [is not] everything. The abatement of carnal desires experienced by so many people while taking raw cereals is not the result of starvation. During the four years I was on fruit diet I used to walk forty miles daily and experienced the same mental peace. But I do not wish to emphasize this point overmuch. The mere physical benefit is not the only consideration in my experiement. I shall not change over hastily to raw cereals nor shall I give up milk in a hurry. At the moment many doctors are taking interest in this experiment. Many have sent me literature [on this subject]. If I resume the experiment, it shall be under Dr. Haribhai's supervision.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6175. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

411. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, RECEPTION COMMITTEE U.P. TRADE UNION CONFERENCE, KANPUR[1]

[On or after *August 23, 1929*]

PLEASE CONSULT PANDIT JAWAHARLAL. PROGRAMME HIS HAND[S].

From a photostat: S.N. 15503

[1] In reply to the addressee's telegram received on August 23, which read: "Reception Committee U.P. Trade Union Conference requests you join session 14th, 15th September and accept labourers' humble purse. Wire acceptance."

412. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL

[*After August 23, 1929*][1]

BHAISHRI JAISUKHLAL,

May I thank you for withdrawing your resignation at my request. I expected that of you. Your motive in resigning was indeed worthy of you. When you are placed in a moral difficulty, I will certainly not let you be in an awkward situation. For the present, preparing for civil disobedience means propagation of the spinning-wheel, removal of untouchability, propagation of Hindu-Muslim unity, propagation of prohibition, organizing the Congress, enrolling members, internal unity and self-purification. Nothing more than this at present. If the whole country takes up this programme there will be no need even for civil disobedience and we shall attain our objective with the least effort.

Yours,

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S. N. 32577/142

413. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS TUPTA[2]

[Before *August 24, 1929*]

SATISBABU
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
SODEPUR

YOUR ASTOUNDING LETTER.[3] NEVER DREAMT HEMPRABHA DEVI'S LETTER BUSINESS LETTER. KRISHNADAS SUGGESTION MISCHIEVOUS. MUST KNOW WHAT NIRANJAN SAID. YOU MUST NOT BE HYPERSENSITIVE. NEVER LISTEN OTHER PEOPLE'S VERSIONS ESPECIALLY WHEN PARTIES CONCERNED ALIVE.

BAPU

All the three wires go together. Show me after preparation.

From a microfilm: S.N. 15194-b

[1] From the contents; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] This telegram and the following item appear to have been sent on the same day before Gandhiji wrote to the addressee on August 24.

[3] *Vide* "Letter from Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 24-8-1929

414. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

[Before *August 24, 1929*]

MY DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have wired about your astounding letter.

I know nothing about any business letter from Hemprabhadevi. Even if she wrote a business letter, I should take a long time before taking it as such. As it is, her letters to me have been all love and no business. Your business letters too have been love letters for me. Such I have believed to be the relations between you and me. I had never thought you to be capable of misunderstanding me. Krishnadas's other suggestion seems to me to be equally mischievous. How he has drawn deductions passes my comprehension. His behaviour is inscrutable. Your taking him on trust regarding my doings and without reference to me is painful. I can say nothing of Niranjan till you tell me what he has told you. You should take it from me that I have told them nothing that I have not told you about your decision regarding Ram Binod.

You may come and see me about this if you are still not satisfied. Henceforth in all matters no matter who is concerned, never believe telltales. And those are telltales who regale their company with irrelevant tales about others. Again never believe anything against anybody without first referring the damaging statement to him. So you remember what I did when I heard unworthy suggestions about Dadabhai?

Say now your owe me ten thousand apologies for being so cruel as to believe things of me of which I have not ever dreamt.

With love,

BAPU

[PS.]

My health [is] improving.

From a photostat: G.N. 1607

415. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

August 24, 1929

MY DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your note. I cannot make out how Niranjan thought that I was irritated on your account. All I can tell you is that you have never given me cause for irritation. I have doubted often the soundness of your judgment, never your motive. Irritation can only come when the motive is questioned.

Subhas Babu will never pardon the loin-cloth. We must bear with him. He cannot help himself. He believes in himself and in his mission. He must work it out as we must ours.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1608

416. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

August 24, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

There was no need for apology for your letter.[1] you are right in assuming that I could not be unaware of the difficulties you have mentioned in your letter. I went to Mr. Jinnah as Mrs. Naidu had arranged the interview. I think it was my duty. But I have bound nobody. I have no representative capacity even if I wished to bind anybody. I simply listened to Mr. Jinnah's exposition of his position. Similarly with the Ali Brothers too, I heard what they had to say. With the latter, the talk turned upon their grievance against me for my reticence.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Jayakar's Private Papers, Correspondence File No. 407-VI. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* "Letter from M. R. Jaayakar", 23-8-1929

417. A KATHIAWARI'S WAIL[1]

An enraged Kathiawari youth writes:[2]

> I must painfully tell you that you have put us in a very awkward fix by sealing our lips, and unless you release us from this disability you will unman us altogether. Even the restrictions imposed by Sjt. Mansukhlal which you decried were far more liberal than the disabilities that you have now imposed. . . . Is it not rather curious that whereas in British India the slightest wrong is enough to make you flare up in righteious indignation,you won't allow even a single condemnatory syllable to be uttered against any individual State though it might perpetrate the worst tyranny on its innocent ryots? It is time that you reconsidered your self-denying ordinance. And if you cannot withdraw it altogether you should at least revise it to the extent of restoring the liberty to protest against cases of "flagrant injustice". Remember, at Bhavnagar you undertook to obtain a redress of our grievances. Now that you have been disappointed in your efforts, does it not become your sacred duty to ventilate those questions before the public? But that duty you have not discharged yet and have prevented others from discharging. That is why we are today ground down by oppression. Freedom of public discussion is our sacred and inalienable right and you ought to teach the Kathiawar public to exercise that right. But you are doing just the reverse and by your curious silence are in fact conniving at the wrong. In moments of despair, I am tempted to charge you with showing an undue partiality towards the States. ...
>
> Won't you remember and make good the promise you made at Bhavnagar?

The Kathiawari friend in question has an undoubted right to write to me as he has done, just as it is my duty to give a patient hearing to what the youth might have to say. Every duty performed confers upon one certain rights, whilst the exercise of every right carries with it certain corresponding obligations. And so the never-ending cycle of duty and right goes ceaselessly on. In the present case for instance the Kathiawari youth began by exercising his right to pour forth his grief to me. I discharge my duty by giving him a patient hearing, with the result that the right to speak out my mind to the Kathiawari youth has now accrued to me, and it is the duty of the

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 25-8-1929. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

Kathiawari youth in question to hear and try inwardly to digest and assimilate what I might have to say.

I very well remember the promise I made at Bhavnagar. I have not yet lost hope. My efforts still continue, but their result is not in my hands, but in the hands of God who alone controls results. Nor is it necessary that my efforts in this direction should be before the public or involve my personally meeting the rulers in question. They may or may not even be direct, indeed they may begin and end with a heart-felt prayer. Let no one laugh at this. I want to enter into no special pleading on my behalf. I mention this method of work because it is part and parcel of my life. For years together in South Africa my efforts consisted practically only in waiting and prayer, and it is my firm conviction that that period of silent prayer was the most fruitful for that work. It constituted the bedrock on which whatever little was accomplished was based. Even today, perhaps I may be said to be doing nothing tangible for the attainment of Hindu-Musim unity, yet it is my claim that I am striving for it ceaselessly. Even so in the matter of the Indian States, I am always on the look-out for an opportunity. Opportunities have always come to me for the waiting and praying. Let no one therefore be led away to think that I have ceased to concern myself about the question of the Indian States or to do anything in that behalf.

But I know that the impatient reader can judge my efforts only in the light of concrete tangible results. He may therefore well feel angry if he fails to understand my way of doing things. I must hold my soul in patience.

I may not here enter into a discussion of Mansukhlal's restrictions. My opinion in that respect has not undergone the least change. But circumstances alter cases. I have simply laid down the indispensable conditions for the holding of conferences in the Indian States. If such conferences must be held at all without observing these restrictions, I maintain that it is not possible as yet to hold conferences within the boundaries of the States.

But these restrictions apply to conferences only; they do not affect individual action. Anyone in his individual capacity has always perfect liberty to criticize as much as he likes any Indian prince, subject only to the measures of his own strength and consideration of sobriety and common sense.

Again I have never suggested that individual rulers of Indian States may never be criticized or that conferences untrammelled by any restrictions may not be held at all. On the contrary I hold that there is nothing improper in holding in British territory conferences at which individul States may be freely criticized. There is also the undoubted right of the subjects of any State to criticize the administration of that State within its own border. That this right is not fully exercised today is a matter of deep sorrow.

It is true that personally I do not through *Navajivan* or otherwise criticize individual rulers. But that is a different matter altogether. I claim to be a practical man. I have got a fair measure of my strength and I know how to conserve it. I have deliberately cultivated the habit of avoiding a useless or superfluous word. I do not hesitate unsparingly to denounce all wrongs great and small in British territory because I know that such denunciation is backed by consciousness of potential strength. In the case of the States, though I am not unaware of the terrible things going on in some of them, I have no strength to back my exposure of the wrongs.

I disclaim any undue partiality for the States. At the same time I owe them no grudge; I do not desire their destruction. There is an abundant scope for reform in them which it should not be impossible to effect today. But it is my firm belief that it is impossible to reform the States in the true sense while India is in bondage. It may be possible to obtain redress here and there in cases of flagrant injustice by leading a crusade against it. But such tinkering does not interest me. It gives me no satisfaction. I am therefore today concentrating all my energy on the root evil. If I can effectively touch the root, the branches will in time drop down of their own accord. Whereas on the contrary to divert public attention from the root evil and mobilize it against the branch evils in the States would mean lending an additional lease of life to the former. That is a risk that I for one am not prepared to run.

Let no one, however, understand me to mean from this that no action whatsoever is at present possible in the case of the States. I shall repeat here what I have already said. Wherever the subjects of States are ready for it they can and ought to organize an agitation against maladministration in that State especially if they have the strength to make use of the never-failing weapon of satyagraha. But it is a matter of deep sorrow to me that today the ruled are often tools in the hands

of wicked rulers. Grinding oppression has rendered the people nerveless. No one has yet been able to save goats from the clutches of tigers. The goats' emancipation would be possible only if one could envisage the goat world itself giving birth to its would-be emancipator. Though reduced to the position of the goat man is today in this country, especially in the States, all hope is not lost forhim. He belongs to a higher species. Strength lies dormant in the weak. If they find an environment in which bipeds exactly like them exhibit strength, it is not unlikely that they will catch the infection. Bardoli was only a modest forerunner…a beam from the powerful sun. If Bardoli exhibited the full strength and qualifications necessary for full satyagraha, its example would spread throughout the length and breadth of the land, and we should find ourselves, including the people of the States, a free nation.

Young India, 29-8-1929

418. MY NOTES

EVIL-MINDED GOVERNMENT

Bhai Mahadev has given in this issue a summary of some noteworthy corresondence between Sardar Vallabhbhai and the Government on the report[1] presented by the official inquiry committee on Bardoli and Chorasi. It is worth pondering over. There are two points in it: one about redressing the injustice done to several villages through oversight, and the other about the benefits, if any, likely to accrue to Bardoli and Chorasi as a result of the new changes proposed to be made by the Government. The Government has returned a negative reply in regard to both the matters. It would not even hear the plea of injustice. It is not willing to concede the benefits of future changes. Even if a rope is burnt, its twist endures.[2] The Government is aware that, if it cannot remove through negotiations the injustice done to certain villages, the Sardar will definitely not have recourse to a weapon like satyagraha. Such a weapon cannot be used in this way. Being thus free from fear the Government declines to do justice. Because of its policy of not doing justice until its hands are forced, the Government has become unpopular and is becoming more so. The officials are not inclined to understand the simple thing that

[1] The Broomfield-Maxwell Report

[2] A Gujarati saying

the Government does not stand to suffer any loss if a slightly reduced revenue was received from three or four villages. Their "prestige"[1] stands in the way. The other thing concerns the future. Just as we cannot launch satyagraha for the sake of particular villages only, we cannot but do so if the future benefits do not go to Bardoli and Chorasi. Then satyagraha will become inevitable. Hence the Sardar has told the Government politely but firmly that, if the new legislation proves to be beneficial and if Bardoli and Chorasi do not receive its benefits, satyagraha will surely be launched for their sake. There is one small legal loophole in the case of the villages of Bardoli. The Sardar cannot expose it, but if it exposes itself, the above-mentioned villages can perhaps take advantage of it.

Therefore, it is a different matter if the loophole exposes itself. Else those villages should be ready to put up with this injustice and if it becomes necessary to launch satyagraha, Bardoli should be ready for it. No one knows when the future will become the present. The legislation which the Government had promised to enact has hung fire for a number of years. But Bardoli has yet to discharge its original debt. The swaraj yajna commenced by Bardoli has still remained unifinished. If it gets ready to complete it, there is no need even to talk of the miniature satyagraha of the future.

ANOTHER TEMPLE THROWN OPEN

Thanks to Shri Jamnalalji's efforts, the famous Lakshminarayan Temple at Wardha was thrown open to Antyaja brothers and sisters. Now owing to his efforts, even the well-known Dattatreya Temple at Elichpur in Berar has been thrown open. Elichpur was the old capital of Berar. It has even today a population of 38,000. At a public meeting held on July 1, the temple was thrown open. Dr. Patwardhan of Amaraoti presided over the meeting. The ceremony of declaring the temple open was performed by Jamnalalji. The temple was built fifteen years ago at a cost of Rs. 83,000. Its management is in the hands of a committee of twenty-four members. The resolution to throw it open to the Antyajas was voted by eighteen out of twenty-four. There are five trustees, all of whom were unanimous in regard to the decision to throw it open. Now this signboard adorns the temple gate:

[1] The English word is used.

This temple is thrown open from today for free access to Mangs, Mahars, Chamars and all Hindus alike for purposes of darshan, bhajan, for offering worship and prayers and for attending religious discourses, etc.

This temple was erected by the efforts of Swami Vimalanand. The Swamiji was present on the auspicious occasion. At the time of declaring the temple open, Jamnalalji entered the temple with about fifty Antyajas. Jamnalalji and Vinoba Bhave of the Satyagraha Ashram, Wardha, delivered the main speeches on the occasion.

I congratulate the citizens of Elichpur, the trustees and Jamnalalji on this event. I can well imagine the joy of the *Antyaja* brethren at that time. Why should they not rejoice over securing that which Hindu society had till now deprived them of and which they had always hankered after? But this is only a beginning, a drop in the ocean. There are lakhs of Hindu temples in India. As long as the doors of every one of the public temples do not open to our Antyaja brethren, so long will the followers of Hinduism remain discredited and be unable to stand boldly before the world. By boycotting the Antyajas, Hindu society itself has been boycotted by the world. Let it learn from Elichpur and Wardha how to get out of that boycott.

BHANGI BRETHREN OF BULSAR

I have received a sad letter[1] about this which runs as follows.

If what is stated is true, it should put the Bulsar Municipality and the citizens of Bulsar to shame. It is to be regretted that a responsible body or responsible individual should remain indifferent where matters can be improved with a little money and much smaller efforts. How sad is it that the Bhangi brothers and sisters have to pull on in hope and to pay for water which rich people can get gratis and with ease? If these facts are true, the Municipality and citizens of Bulsar will, I hope, strive to set things right at once.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-8-1929

[1] Not translated here. The municipality and its officers had done nothing to release them from the clutches of Pathan money-lenders or from difficulties about residential quarters. They still had to pay for water. The so-called respectable citizens of Bulasar had turned a blind eye to their woes. The correspondent eulogized the services rendered to the Bhangis by Navsari Municipality and hoped that Bulsar would emulate that example.

419. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

August 25, 1929

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. You cannot claim the right to commit errors simply because I make some mistakes of language. If I lose my teeth, should you have yours extracted? My lack of knowledge was tolerated but my successors' would not be. My health is now all right. I am recovering strength. You should stubbornly keep up yourwalking. It is now raining heavily here. My diet consists mainly of curds.

BAPU

CHI. VASUMATIBEHN

UDYOGA MANDIR, VIJAPUR

VIJAPUR OF GAEKWAR VIA KALOL

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9262; also C.W. 509. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

420. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Silence Day, August 26, 1929

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I get your letters regularly. You should shake off your worry. You should learn to win peace from perturbation. External circumstances are seldom what we desire. But it is within our power to train our mind to overcome circumstances. Even in adverse circumstances one should find occasions for rendering service. We should have only love for those who oppose us.

You will yourself arrange for your visit to Agra, won't you? Whom could I write to from here? You have to be courageous and find your own way. God will of course help you.

My health is steadily improving. I take only milk or curds; also fruits. I go for short walks too. I had not stopped writing and spinning altogether. So you are not to worry at all on my account.

I have written about your studies.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3354

421. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

August 26, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

No independent work can be assigned to Shivabhai, but if he wishes to live in the Udyoga Mandir he may, making his own arrangements, as he agreed to yesterday. Ask me more about this if you want to.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 15510

422. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

August 26, 1929

CHI. DEVDAS,

Vallabhbhai and Mahadev are leaving for Madras today.

You must have read about me. What should I do? I do not have the courage to accept the presidentship. But now Motilalji also is after me. The proposal about Jawaharlal may be considered as good as closed. Now he also does not wish to be president. I am quietly waiting. God will show the way. How is your new residence? It will be enough if you are careful about your expenditure. I do not wish to suppress you. I want you to look after your health and be happy. Are you going on with the Urdu?

I hope you will meet me at Agra. I am likely to reach there at 6.30 on the 11th. Do write about the situation there.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S. N. 32577/139

423. LETTER TO KARSANDAS CHITALIA

August 26, 1929

BHAISHRI KARSANDAS,

I have your letter. Arrange for the foundation ceremony on the 7th to be performed by me.

I will have a talk with Jamnalalji once about the Trust.

Joshi had even drawn my attention to the point when I read the document. I said that the amount of Rs. 25,000 was mentioned, but that it was not in the Trust. It was the amount belonging to the

institution[1]. 1 have to do everything in such a hurry that such things happen at times. I assume that since what I think is the natural thing to do, my words on an occasion like this would bear the meaning I intend. But as you are not in a position to say definitely that it is so, I will do for the present what I had intended.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/141

424. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

August 26, 1929

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I have your letter.

You will know about the Trust from the letter to Karsandas.

I knew about glucose. Dr. Desai[2] told me that glucose and jaggery water were much the same and taking the latter would do equally. The next day he corrected himself. However, there is no difference between glucose and fresh grape juice. It is known as invert sugar and is easily digested. That is what the doctors say. But grape juice is far superior to glucose. I have never needed glucose and I do not believe that jaggery water has done me any harm either. Now I am taking milk, curds and fruit juice.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Tomorrow Vallabhbhai and Mahadev will be passing by there on their way to Madras.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10715. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

[1] The Bhagini Samaj; *vide* also "Khadi and Boycott"

[2] Dr. Harilal Desai

425. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

August 26, 1929

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

What have you done about the auditing of the Bengal Congress Committee [accounts]?

Yours,
MOHANDAS

SJT. GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
BIRLA COTTON SPINNING & WEAVING MILLS, LTD.
SUBZI MANDI, DELHI

From Hindi: C.W. 6176. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

426. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

August 27, 1929

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

You are certainly going on well with your experiment. Do not insist on not taking fruits with milk. But do continue it so long as it agrees with you. It will do you no harm at all.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR
178 LOWER CHITPORE ROAD, CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6791

427. LETTER TO VITHALBHAI PATEL

[*August 27, 1929*][1]

DEAR VITHALBHAI,

I have your letter. I am suffering the consequences of my foolishness. Had I been wiser, nothing would have happened. I am now gradually improving. There is nothing to worry about. I think my health will improve as a result of this illness. I don't have the courage to accept the presidentship.

[1] From the reference to Vallabhbhai Patel's leaving for Madras; *vide* p. 68.

I have already written to Lahore accordingly.[1] Vallabhbhai left for Madras last night.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/127

428. LETTER TO LILAVATI GOKALDAS

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 28, 1929

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have received your letter. You certainly cannot ask for slivers from outside. You must quickly learn carding. You should see Kishorelalbhai and arrange to learn it at Ville Parle. You may even be able to find someone in Bombay proper. You can find out from Bhai Vithaldas[2].

You should not feel weak from a fruit diet. Do not give up milk and curds. You will then retain your strength. There is no harm if you lose a little weight. You have done well to begin the study of Hindi. You must make a practice of writing in ink.

My health is gradually improving.

Blessings from

BAPU

LILAVATI GOKALDAS
C/O DWARKADAS GOKALDAS
BACKSIDE CHAWL
THIRD FLOOR, ROOM NO. 3
KALBADEVI ROAD
BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

429. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 28, 1929

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. We had as usual the recitation of the whole Gita today because of Janamashtami. On this occasion I thought much

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Vallabhbhai Patel", 19-8-1929
[2] Vithaldas Jerajani

about all the members of our Ashram. The recitation was performed with great enthusiasm and in a very sweet tone; it was interspersed with stotras. Being held at daytime, others too could read and this made the singing all the sweeter.

We have no rain today. After many days there is a little sunshine, perhaps you too have some relief today. Most of us are today on a fruit diet. Even if only one or two women take to carding, others will follow suit. Govindji should be relieved of other duties except carding and you should make him do this work. I am accordingly arranging to send someone from here. All of you should read this letter. My health is all right. It is certain, at any rate so far, that we start on the 6th. Today we are going to have bhajans in the evening at 7 o'clock. Panditji's band will also play. Ba sends her blessings to all.

From a photostat of the Gujarati:S.N. 9263; also C.W. 510. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

430. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 28, 1929

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I have your letter. I am gradually improving. I see no need for you to come. I have written to Bhai Jawaharlal regarding the address. He comes here tomorrow evening. We have had a telegram.

He will leave this place in the evening, day after tomorrow. I take it that you will start the welcome from Viramgam onwards. It is not possible for me to come. Kaka is in Bombay.

Anasuyabehn can hardly go. I shall see if someone else could be sent.

You are all competent to explain the condition of Kathiawar. There is Revashankerbhai too. I do hope you have invited people from all groups. They should all be given freedom to see and say what they want to.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2859. Courtesy: Sharadabehn Shah

431. LETTER TO DHARAMSIMHA BHANJI KHOJA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 28, 1929

BHAISHRI DHARAMSIMHA,

What you write about khadi appears to be correct. Khadi made from mill-yarn would not do, because hand-spinning is our basis, our focal point. Occasionally I do speak out something about mechanization. As regards the native States see the current issue of *Navajivan*.[1] What you write about ghee and milk is quite correct. Ginning is certainly coming to life in the footsteps of spinning. If an occasion comes up in the Ashram a widow re-marriage may be celebrated by all means. But things cannot be brought about by force. Being beyond attributes God deserves to be called even by seemingly contradictory epithets such as 'without attributes', 'full of good qualities', 'immutable', 'ever-changing', etc. It is best not to become a soldier but having once taken up this profession, a soldier forfeits his right to consider whether a battle is right or wrong. Many ask for a contents [column] in *Navajivan*. Accepting contributions too is a necessary aspect of *Navajivan*. We have drafted a scheme under which the profits accruing to the *Navajivan* firm may be utilized mainly for the *Navajivan* staff.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I could not revise this.

SJT. DHARAMSIMHA BHANJI KHOJA
VICCHIA, KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 19847

[1] *Vide* "A Kathiawari's Wail", 29-8-1929.

432. LETTER TO NANABHAI MASHRUWALA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 28, 1929

BHAISHRI NANABHAI,

I have your letter. My health is steadily improving. I know of all the arguments in favour of accepting the presidentship, but what should I do if I cannot summon the courage? I have left everything to God. He will do what He wants to.

It seems now after all Sushila has got somewhat reconciled to the name 'Sita'. She makes no complaints nowadays.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6679

433. THE ANGLO-INDIAN

Some Anglo-Indian friends have often complained to me that I do not give the Anglo-Indian friends sufficient notice in these columns. I have always repudiated the charge. It is not my lukewarmness towards them that I do not often mention them in Young India. Indeed I have the honour to have many friends among them. My conception of swaraj requires the same consideration for them as for any other group. Only they stand in little need of any advocacy in these columns. Those who are despised in the country, those who are neglected by the Government or those whose interests are hostile to those of the Government claim a lien upon these columns. Just as Englishmen do not need the protection of these columns, so do the powerful Anglo-Indian interests stand in no need of it. I can mention several such indigenous interests that stand in little need of the assistance of Young India. But this general assurance I have tendered more than once that in these columns there never would be any sacrifice advocated or encouraged of a single legitimate interest.

I note in the constitution of the Anglo-Indian League the definition of the phrase Anglo-Indian community which I had not known hitherto. It "means and includes":

(1) All persons of mixed European and Indian descent whose father, grandfather or more remote lineal ancestor in the paternal line shall have been of European, American or Colonial birth, and

(2) Europeans, Colonial British subjects of European descent, and Americans domiciled in India.

In the circumstances these friends of the League really need not only no advocacy from these columns, but they have ranged themselves against the millions of India in so far as the European interest may be regarded as against that of India. If the half-borns claim the rights and privileges of the ruling race, theirs is an interest which as the occasion may demand will, if the ruling race can help it, override that of the indigenous inhabitants whenever the latter is in conflict with theirs. These columns stoutly resist such usurpation, no matter by whom advanced. At any rate the Anglo-Indian of the League may regard himself as well protected as the ruling race.

But I know that the Anglo-Indian not represented by the League is in an overwhelming majority. He does claim my sympathy, friendship and even pity in several cases. The half-born who takes the hue of his Indian parent and has no money is in a most unenviable condition. His political right is in no danger. It is his social status which is non-existent. He frets over his Indian parentage and he is disowned by the European race. He is therefore between Scylla and Charybdis. I often meet him. He is washed out in the process of living above his means and trying to live the European life and look like Europeans. I have pleaded with him to make his choice and to throw in his lot with the vast multitude. If these men and women will have the courage and the foresight to appreciate this very simple and natural position, they will serve themselves, they will serve India and they will be spared the galling position in which they find themselves. The greatest problem before the dumb Anglo-Indian is that of determining his social status. He is saved, the moment he recognizes himself as an Indian and lives like one.

To the vocal Anglo-Indian of the League I submit that the activities of the League are a mere tinkering with the grave problem. The League should, if it will truly represent the bulk of the Anglo-Indian community, revise its policy radically, change the definition to which I have adverted and step forward boldly and unequivocally on behalf of the glorious battle for India's freedom. Today in my opinion the League is attempting the impossible.

Young India, 29-8-1929

434. NOTES

A MUTE REFORMER

Sjt. Manilal Kothari writes:

> You will remember that, writing on the Bhil situation in Rajputana in Young India in 1922, you recommended pardon for the Bhil leader, Motilal.[1] In 1924 Sir R. E. Holland, the A. G. G. in Rajputana, after sympathetic consideration of the whole case and in view of the peaceful situation then prevailing in Rajputana, advised the States concerned to pardon Motilal, so that some time later, his influence could be utilized for some useful social work amongst the ignorant and backward Bhils. I understand that all the Rajputana States, including Mewar, agreed to the proposal, and I was distinctly told by Sir R. E. Holland as well as by his successor Lt. Col. Patterson that I had their authority to tell the Government of Bombay that Rajputana had no objection to pardon being granted to Motilal by the Bombay States, viz., Idar and Danta. It is, therefore, surprising that of all the States, Mewar should now keep him under detention and that too without any trial.
>
> The authorities allege that you had disowned Motilal. I believe it is not a fact. You have, I believe, known him personally and something of his work. I would, therefore, request you kindly to clear the misunderstanding and advise the Mewar Durbar to take a sympathetic view of the case and release the reformer.

The reader is not llikely to know Motilal. Well, he is an unassuming, ignorant social reformer among the Bhils of Rajputana. His passion is to wean them from meats and drink. At one time he exercised among them very great influence. And now though it is not as great, his name commands respect among his tribesmen. who owe so much of their social transformation to him. I have had the privilege of meeting Motilal after my discharge from Yeravda. He is no man of letters and hardly talks to anyone. But he means business and believes in himself and his people. I am afraid that there is a colouring of truth in the imputation that I had disowned him in 1922. I had said that he had no authority to use my name which he was alleged in 1922 to have done. But after that and when I had come to know something of his mission I had strongly recommended that he should be pardoned. I had flattered myself with the belief that Sir R. E. Holland's recommendation had something to do with the Young India paragraph. Be that as it might, I had hoped that Motilal was pardoned,

[1] *Vide* "Notes" sub-title The "Bhils" of Rajpuatana

and that the incident of 1922 was wholly forgotten by the States concerned. If therefore surprises me that Mewar States has arrested and detained him not for anything he has done since but for the offences alleged against him in 1922. Apart from every other consideration, surely the Mewar State will avoid the charge of bad faith which the simple Bhils will bring against it, if their beloved leader is now detained under custody for what they have been led to believe had been pardoned. So far as I am aware Motilal has done nothing to deserve detention. I trust therefore that this simple and sincere reformer will be released and encouraged in his prosecution of social reforms among his own people.

BARDOLI[1]

The correspondence between Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and the Bomaby Government published in the Press affords interesting reading, and is proof of the incorrigibility and the inelasticity of the existing system of Government. It sacrifices everything on the altar of prestige. In important matters it does justice only when pressure compels it. the few instances of unconscious injustice done in the brooffield-Maxwell Report and brought to light by the Sardar would under a responsive system have secured redress for the asking. Not so with this Government. It knows that the Sardar cannot and will not give battle on the question if he cannot secure edress by negotiation. And so the Government refuse to lok at his proposal. I may mention parenthetically that there are legal difficulties in the way of enforcing any enhanced assessment. But Vallabhbhai is too proud to mention them and seek shelter behind them. The Government will deserve precious little thanks if it finds itself unable in virtue of its own laws to enforce payment. It has earned discredit by rejecting the Sardar's courteious advances. But there is another point on which the Sardar dare not yield even though it may cost another protracted struggle. He had naturally expected the Government to admit that bardoli and Chorasi would receive the benefit, if any, of the proposed new legislation and consequent revision of settlements. Bardoli which has made such legislation obligatory on the Government cannot possibly be made to lose the benefit, if there be any,of such legislation. The Government thinks otherwise, and the Sardar promises battle, if there is any benefit and the then Government proves unebnding. But on this the public need not speculate except to note the woodenness of the

[1] *Vide* also "My Notes", Evil-Minded Government

Government, and hearten itself to destroy a system under which such procedure is possible.

"INDIA IN BONDAGE"

It would not have been in keeping with their tradition if the Government of Bengal had not followed up the prosecution of Sjt. Ramananda Chatterjee by proscription of Dr. Sunderland's innocent volume. The seizure consequent upon the notice of proscription was effected with all the pomp, indignity and offence the police were able to accompany their brave performance [sic]. For it is reported that instead of politely asking Ramananda Babu to deliver the copies in his possession, they "raided his office and took away 350 unbound copies, 101 cloth binding cases, 5 bundles of loose formes of the book, one bundle of the pictorial dust cover and 44 bound copies of the book".

The police and the Government of Bengal are welcome to the satisfaction of having subjected to indignity one of the foremost journalists and public workers of the land. Let them know that they are by such acts sending up the barometer of disaffection. Helpless we may be today to avenge such wrongs, but the time is fast coming when we shall no longer be so helpless.

LALAJI MEMORIAL

Sjt. Purushottamdas Tandon could not rest after having formally taken up the burden of guiding Lalaji's Society.[1] He therefore came over to Sabarmati to confer with me as to how best to collect the balance of the Memorial Fund. He being a U.P. man and having passed a lifetime (practically) of service there, his eyes were turned to his own province. Would his tour interfere with my khadi collection was the question that worried him. I told him that he was not to mind the effect of his collection on my tour. Indeed I would love to combine the two collections myself. But experience has taught me that only one thing could be done at a time. Whilst therefore I could not combine the two, as in Andhra and Burma, I would love to receive subscriptions for the Memorial from whomsoever would give them to me. I therefore welcome Purushottamdasji's touring for the Memorial Fund, and I should be glad if those who revere the memory of the deceased tribune of the people (and who does not?) will subscribe to the Memorial, and if they will, hand them to me. At any rate my tour ought in no way to interfere with the Memorial Fund to be collected

[1] *Vide* "Notes" sub-title A Worthy Sacrifice

by Purushottamdasji. Indeed it is a matter for sorrow and shame that this collection has been hanging fire for such a long time.

ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY CAMPAIGN[1]

Sjt. Jamnalalji, the Secretary of the Congress Anti-untouchability Committee, has succeded in having the famous Dattatreya temple of Elichpur, the former capital of Berar, thrown open to the so-called untouchables. He performed the opening ceremony before a distinguished gathering on 31st July last. The temple is one of the biggest in Elichpur which has a population of 38,000. It was built 15 years ago at a cost of Rs. 83,000 by the efforts of Swami Vimalanand. The Committee of Management consists of 24 of whom 18 voted for the opening. There is a board of 5 trustees who were unanimous in their decision in favour of the opening. The new signboard put up at the entrance reads:

> This temple is thrown open from today for free access to Mangs, Mahars, Chamars and all Hindus alike for purposes of darshan, bhajan, for offering worship and prayers and for attending religious discourses, etc.

The opening ceremony was preceded by a public meeting presided over by Dr. Patwardhan of Amaraoti.

The organizers of the ceremony deserve congratulations for the service they have rendered to Hinduism and the nation. Let us hope that Jamnalalji will be able to induce the trustees of other temples to follow the example of Wardha and now of Elichpur. This beginning is but a drop in the ocean. For there are lakhs of temples that await this initial purification of lifting the ban on 'untouchables'. Hindus must hang down their heads in shame so long as the curse of untouchability persists.

SELF-SPINNING IN RAJPUTANA

Sjt. Mulchandji who is organizing self-spinning in Ringas sends an interesting report of the work done there from which I condense the following information:

> The work was commenced in March 1928. It was started with a school through which contact was sought to be established. But it was found that direct contact with the elders was essential. So the workers visited the homes of the peasantry after they had returned from their fields. They had spinning-wheels which were in danger of being put away. The work was

[1] *Vide* also "My Notes" sub-title Another Temple Thrown Open"

however commenced by inviting them to learn carding. This some of them undertook to learn. Teaching was imparted at night between 7 and 10. This however excited the jealousy of the professional pinjaras who spread all kinds of wild rumours among the credulous peasantry. Nothing daunted, the workers called a meeting of the whole peasantry and explained the philanthropic object of their mission. Confidence was restored and the work went on smoothly. As a result in a population of 5, 289 in 61 villages, 410 families out of 933 had taken part in the movement up to the time for which the report has been drawn up. Of these 67 families have had all their clothing made out of self-spun yarn. This means 349 souls. 595 men and women had a portion of their cloth prepared from self-spun yearn. 915 persons learnt carding during the period under review, i.e., eight months. Altogether 2, 398 yards of khadi was thus woven. This is encouraging progress, and shows how by patient toil contract can be established with eople, and they can be persuaded to take an interest in their own well-being. What has been possible in the villages surrounding Ringas is surely possible more or less throughout India.

SAROJINI DEVI'S WORK IN THE WEST

Sjt. Dhan Gopal Mukarji writes:[1]

> Mrs. naidu's visit was fortunate for the Indians in america, and also beneficial to the Americans themselves. She was not afraid to make enemies. That is why she succeeded so eminently. She pleased all because she curied favour with none. ... There is no living person that uses any language as well as she did her English. to rown all, she was not proud of her knowledge of the conquerors' language. This last bit of honest sarcasm ran the amor propre of her opponents like the finest rapier. A slave cannot be proud of his mastery over his conquerors' language.
>
> You can see from the above how well we liked "our silver-tongued Sarojini of Hyderabad". She did her work well. Do send her again.

FOREIGN-CLOTH BOYCOTT

Sjt. Jairamdas Doulatram, Secretary, Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee, writes:[2]

> Only about five weeks ramain before the second stock-taking of the nation's progress in regard to the programme of boycott of foreign cloth.
>
> . . . The 2nd of October is the day for such national stock-taking. ... Unless in the course of the remaining few months of the year the Congress is

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.
[2] *ibid*

able to organize the masses to an adequate extent through the medium of the boycott campaign, the Lahore Congress will not be placed in a position to decide upon taking any large step towards national satyagraha on the 1st January, 1930.

I would, therefore, earnestly appeal to all organizations to put forth as large an effort as is possible from 1st September to the end of December, 1929 to make the boycott programme a great success.

Measured by the past eight months it does not seem as if we are to make much progress with the movement during the remaining months. No doubt something has been done. For this we may be thankful, but nothing commensurate with the task before us hs been accomplished. What we need is a hurricane campaign. That can come only if we have the adequate fire within us. The sad part of the work is that the Congress Committees do not respond. Very few have sent in regular reports. Many have sent none. Unless all Congress Committees act as one man and promptly, no effective work is possible.

Young India, 29-8-1929

435. THE DEVADASI

The indefatigable Dr. S. Muthulakshmi Reddi writes:[1]

As you have been openly denouncing the Devadasi system in the Hindu temples, I make bold to appeal to you for help in the great task of getting rid of that evil. In this Presidency, I find it an uphill task, as the so-called educated men and even some of the most prominent Congressmen oppose my reform measures and defend that infamous institution.

My Devadasi Bill, which has now become an Act, deals only with the Inam-holding Devadasis, but there is a section of that community which practise dedication under the cloak of religion simply to make a living out of prostitution. This is nothing but traffic in children; because children are even bought and adopted (adoption by Devadasi is allowed by our Hindu Law) . . . I have had many memorials and petitions from the enlightened section of that community asking me to bring about legislation to punish such wicked people who trade upon the children's souls and bodies.

The Penal Code Sections 372 and 373 have proved ineffective. Hence, I have given notice of another Bill for the success of which I want your blessings. Some may argue that legislation is no good so long as the people

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

do not realize the evil in that custom; but my contention is that a good section of our people perceive the injustice.

Among the Devadasi community itself there is a great awakening, and they have been doing propaganda on a large scale, but I am pained to observe that the high-caste people do not help them in that community's efforts to reform themselves. And further, our laws for the protection of children are almost nil in this Presidency . . .

I heartily endorse the writer's proposal. Indeed I do not think that the proposed legislation will be in advance of public opinion. The whole of the enlightened public opinion that is vocal is against the retention of the system in any shape or form. The opinion of the parties concerned in the immoral traffic cannot count, just as the opinion of keepers of opium dens will not count in favour of their retention, if public opinion is otherwise against them. The Devadasi system is a blot upon those who countenance it. It would have died long ago but for the supineness of the public. Public conscience in this country somehow or other lies dormant. It often feels the awfulness of many a wrong, but is too indifferent or too lazy to move. But if some active spirit like Dr. Reddi moves, that conscience is prepared to lend such support as indifference can summon up. I am therefore of opinion that Dr. Reddi's proposal is in no way premature. Such legislation might well have been brought earlier. In any case I hope that she will receive the hearty support of all lovers of purity in religious and general social life.

Young India, 29-8-1929

436. IMAGE WORSHIP

An inquirer writes:

1. What ritual would you suggest or the kind of image-worship which you support? Would it be enought just to have the darshan of the image or would you also recommend the offering of food, etc.? Considering that the image cannot eat, how far is it proper to offer it food?

A. I have no specific ritual for the worship of an image. Each man or society can create his or its own ritual. And this is what usually happens. The ritual indicates the person's or the society's conception of good form. It is after all mostly a matter of convention. The devotee, as the saying goes, conceives of his deity in his own image,

which means that it is a matter of imagination, but so long as imagination holds sway it represents the real.

2. Inasmuch as man is an embodied being, even the greatest of men is bound to have a few defects. As I see it, the worship of him will result in the transmission of these defects to the worshipper, because both the merits and defects of the worshipped tend to be transmitted to the worshipper. Do you approve of this kind of worship?

A. For the object of one's worship one can choose either an ideal, that is, an imaginary figure, or a historical person. I prefer the former. Krishna conceived as a Sampurnavatara, i.e. a plenary incarnation of God is an ideal, that is, an imaginary incarnation. A historical Krishna may have defects. I agree that the merits and defects of the worshipped tend to be transmitted to the worshipper.

3. The body with the jivatma[1] is called chetana, i.e. the sentient, and after the soul has departed from it, it is called jada, i.e. the inert. If it is contended that the all-pervading divine Principle is present also in the lifeless image, how can one who considers God to be all-pervading limit Him merely to the image? Would it not amount to an insult to an emperor if one were to call him the ruler of a small village?

A. It is true that we cannot limit the authority of an emperor to just a village, but he is ruler of a small village in the same degree as he is of countless villages. And it is quite possible that the resident of a particular village may be completely ignorant of the existence of other villages. The prince of devotees, Tulsidas, had for his God the bow-bearing Ramachandra and not the discus-wielding Krishnachandra. That is why he had the darshan of Ramachandra even when he looked at the image of Krishnachandra.

4. You often say that for success in the tasks that we have undertaken, such as Hindu-Muslim unity, people should pray to God. That being so, will you say that the people who worship trees and other things should pray to them for selfish or altruistic ends?

A. There is no detachment in a petitionary prayer. There is in it an element of attachment and necessarily therefore of aversion. My ideal prayer is free from attachment and is therefore addressed to the all-pervading and unknowable Divine. But those who worship trees and other things may pray to them for success in such altruistic prayers as for Hindu-Muslim unity.

[1] Individual self

5. Along with faith, is not discrimination also necessary? Won't you say that faith devoid of discrimination is blind faith or superstition? And is not blind faith responsible for many evils in the world?

A. My faith includes both knowledge and discrimination. Faith has no place in things which can be dealt with by reason. It is thus clear that blind faith is not faith at all.

6. You prescribe the way of truth and non-violence as the only true way for all men. Could you not similarly prescribe some specific form of upasna[1] …no matter what language is used for ritual or prayer?

A. Truth and non-violence represents a universal principle. Upasna, however, is only a means, though a necessary and powerful means, evolved by man. It is therefore determined by time and place. It admits of variation, and rightly too, though the final result is the same. Just as the waters of all rivers flow into the sea, even so do the prayer and adoration offered to the different deities find their way to Keshava.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 29-8-1929

437. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
August 29, 1929

BHAISHRI JETHALAL,

I have your letter and article. I am sending it to *Navajivan* as it is.[2] Critics challenging Shivabhai[3] and supporting you had comeforward even before your letter was received. But now that I have your letter I am dropping their articles and publishing yours. You need not fear that anybody will be misled by my opinion based on limited knowledge. I got your previous letter also. I did not find anything in it worth publishing. Just now we do not need praises of spinning and weaving; we need knowledge based on experience. I therefore consider your experience of great value, and that is why I am tempted to publish your reply to Shivabhai immediately. I do not mind the bad handwriting. It is but natural while travelling. I have not

[1] Waiting on God, spiritual or religious exercise, meditation
[2] *Vide* "Scheme of Self-Reliance", 1-9-1929
[3] Shivabhai G. Patel; *ibid*.

been able to revise the letter.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

SHREE JETHALAL GOVINDJI
C/O JEEVANLAL & CO.
55 CANNING STREET
CALCUTTA

From the Gujarati: C.W. 9847. Courtesy: Narayan Jethalal Sampat

438. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

August 30, 1929

MY DEAR SATISBABU,

I have your precious letter. Krishnadas's attitude I cannot condemn too strongly. He has been a severe disappointment to me. The whole story you relate is sickening. You may show this to him if he is there or send it to him. I can only say that his conduct has deeply hurt me. I have shown your letter to Jamnalalji. He is amazed. He has always entertained great regard for you. Krishnadas's version is a perfect distortion. What I said was that Ram Binod's attempt to transfer book-debts would be like transfer of book-debts by Satisbabu, which he would never think of doing, but on the contrary he had given security for the loans given to Khadi Pratishthan. No one has ever thought of enquiring into the K.P.'s affairs. No one has ever dreamt that you had served self. Therefore you must not base any action on this painful episode. You have to stick to your post. You must not be sensitive and henceforth never listen to tales.

With love.

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/143

439. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

August 30, 1929

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. You should make a trip by all means, if you can free yourself from there. I take my daily walk regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9264; also C.W. 511. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

440. LETTER TO JAYASHANKAR

August 31, 1929

BHAISHRI JAYASHANKAR,

Why do you feel so nervous? What is there in your letter which only 1 may read? Your letter is absolutely innocent. Anybody may read it and no harm will come to you or to Jamsaheb. But this is a superfluous lecture. You will be amused and happy to know that I have not even read up to now the story in the press about the papers having been lost, though I have even received cutting from two places. And you will be happy to know that not a single paper has been lost. That file is lying on my table right before me. Of course, it did happen that Amritlal wanted his letters, but a co-worker had kept them safe somewhere and he was in Madras and the others did not know where they were. So I asked Amritlal to come later. In the meantime the place where the letters were kept was discovered. Now I will send your papers by registered post and relieve you of your worry. I have not yet been able to attend to them, but now I am giving up that desire. It is not possible to register the packet today and tomorrow is Sunday. But it will definitely be dispatched with Monday's post.

Please take care of your health.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/144

An argument advanced by the mill-owners is that even today the mills are running at a loss. I regard the evidence given in support of this as rather weak. It is possible that a few mills are running at a loss; but the majority of them would not incur losses. If the shareholders were given a smaller dividend or if the percentage in respect of

depreciation were not deducted before declaring the dividend and if nothing can be taken to the Reserve Fund, I would not place these as losses as against the wages of labourers.

I must mention one point here. Labour had put forward two arguments in support of its demand. I have already discussed one of them. The second was that mills were at present making such profits that they should withdraw the wage-cut. Labour, on its part, could not prove this and on this the panch has given a unanimous verdict.[1]

It is my opinion that the other point has been proved by labour. There is an understanding between my colleague and myself that the papers put before the panch should be sent by both these parties to a Sarpanch[2] .

I have to write out my verdict first; after seeing it my colleague should write out his[3]; after seeing the latter, I should offer my comments.

If the Sarpanch wishes to consult the panch, they should meet at a time and place convenient to all three.

If the *Sarpanch* feels that any further proof is necessary, he has the right to ask for it.

Besides the papers which have already been presented, if any of the parties wish to present any more facts relating to the point in question before the Sarpanch, they can do so after showing it to each other.

Finally since unrest is spreading among the labouerers as a result of the delay in the decision, the Sarpanch is requested to give his decision as early as possible.

I have to tour the U.P. till the 24th of November, but if the Sarpanch wants to ask me anything, he should write to me careof the Satyagraha Ashram, whence the letter will be forwarded to me wherever I am and I shall send the Sarpanch whatever replies I may have to after consulting my colleague.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 14974

[1] *Vide* "Arbitrators Award", 14-8-1929

[2] Umpire

[3] For the note by Sheth Mangaldas, *vide* S.N. 14975.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

GOSEVA SANGHA

The Cow-protection Conference held at Belgaum on 28th December 1924 resolved to found a permanent body called 'All-India Cow-protection Association' and appointed a committee to frame a constitution for it. the Committee met in Delhi on 26th and 28th January 1925, and the constitution drafted by it was adopted with some amendments at a public meeting held in Madhavbag, Bombay, on 28th April 1925. This 'All-India Cow-protection Association', having not been able to command such public attention and sympathy as to entitle it to be called an all-India organization, its members met at the Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, on 25th July, 1928, disbanded it and adopted the following resolution:

"Inasmuch as the All-India Cow-protection Association has not been able to command public attention and sympathy commensurate with the all-India character it has claimed, and inasumuch as its activities have been confined to the slow spread of the objects of the Association and especially to helping to conduct a dairy and tannery at the Satyagraha Ashram in terms of the objects of the Association, and inasmuch as the subscriptions and donations are mainly confined to friends who are interested in the experiment, and inasmuch as the numerous goshalas and pinjrapoles which were expected to respond to and be affiliated to the Association have nearly entirely failed to do so, the existing members of the Association resolve to disband it, and not retaining the existence of the Association in any shape or form, to adopt the less pretentious title of Goseva Sangha (Cow-service Society) and irrevocably to entrust the affairs, management and control of the funds and stock of the Association to the following Permanent Standing Committee of management of the Society (for names of the members, see below), with full powers to disburse the funds, conduct the said experiments, to add to their number, to fill up vacancies caused by the resignation or the death of a member, to expel a member by a majority vote and otherwise carry out the objects of the expiring Association and to frame a constitution and rule for the management of the Society and to make such amendments thereof as may from time to time be required."

In pursuance of this resolution the Standing Committee of the Cow-service Association hereby adopts the following constitution for it:

The object of the Cow-service Association and the means by which it shall carry on its work are identical with the object and the means of the late All-India cow-protection Association, which are as follows:

OBJECT

Whereas the Hindus have failed in cow-protection which is an obligation imposed on them by their religion, and whereas the cows in India and their progeny are deteriorating day by day:

The All India Cow-protection Sabha is formed for the proper fulfilment of the religious obligation of cow-protection.

The object of the Sabha shall be to protect the cow and her progeny by all moral means.

'Cow-protection' shall mean the protection of the cow and her progeny from cruelty and slaughter.

NOTE. It will be against the fundamental policy of the Sabha to bring physical force or pressure to bear on those communities whose religion does not prohibit, or regards as obligatory, cow-slaughter.

MEANS

The Sabha shall carry on its work by the following means:

1. by pleading with those who may be ill-treating cows, bullocks, etc., and by carrying on propaganda against such ill-treatment by means of leaflets, lectures, etc.;

2. by taking charge of diseased and disabled cows and oxen from their owners wherever the latter cannot afford to maintain them;

3. by superintending and inspecting the administration of existing pinjrapoles and cow-protection institutions, and by helping in their better organization and management, as also by establishing fresh institutions;

4. by breeding model cows and draught cattle by means of cattle farms, etc., and by providing clean and cheap milk through properly kept dairies;

5. by opening tanneries for tanning hides of dead cattle and thereby stopping or reducing the export abroad of disabled cattle;

6. by enlisting men of character and education in the cause, and founding scholarships, etc., for training them in the work;

7. by holding an inquiry into the causes of the disappearance of grazing lands and into the advantages or disadvantages thereof;

8. by investigating into the necessity or otherwise of the practice of castrating bulls, and if found necessary and useful, investigating into the possibilities of discovering a harmless method of castration or a wholsesome modification in the present method;

9. by collecting funds; and

10. by taking whatever other steps as may be necessary for the work of cow-proection.

MEMBERSHIP

Any person of the age of eighteen years, who subscribes to the object of the Association, and

1. who pays to the Association an annual subscription of five rupees; or

2. who sends to the Association 12,000 yards of even and well-twisted self-spun yarn; or

3. who sends to the Association every year two cow or bull hides whether raw or tanned,

shall be a member of the Association.

Any person who pays to the Association in advance a consolidated amount of Rs. 500 shall be a life-member of the Association.

DUTIES OF MEMBERS

This Association has been conceived as a body of servants, who have not so much rights as duties, or to whom duties should be as rights. The following therefore shall be the dutgies of members:

1. They shall, as far as may be, use only cow's milk whenever they have an occasion to use milk or milk products.

2. Whenever they have to use leather articles for personal use they shall use only the hides of dead cattle and never use the hides of slaughtered cows or bullocks. With regard to other things made of leather, they shall also, as far as may be, use only dead cattle hide.

3. If members keep cattle for milk, they shall keep cows only and not buffaloes. They will reason with buffalo-keepers to replace buffaloes with cows.

4. They will carry the message of the Association to pinjrapoles, goshalas and similar humanitarian organizations.

5. In case they follow cow-keeping as a profitable occupation, they will devote all profits beyond their maintenance to the cause of cow-protection so long as cow-protection in India has not been placed on a satisfactory footing.

6.They will induce moneyed men to take up dairying and tanning for humanity's sake.

7. They will try to acquire the knowledge requisite for carrying on dairying or tanning, and will, wherever possible, seek to maintain themselves through the service of the cow.

SYMPATHIZERS

Any person, who, while approving of the duties laid on members, is unable to discharge them fully but is anxious to acquire the ability to shoulder them, may be a sympathizer of the Association, provided that he fulfils the conditions of membership in other ways.

ADMINISTRATION

The entire administration of the Association shall vest in a Standing Committee consisting of the following members:

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (President)
Revashanker Jagjivan Jhaveri (Treasurer)
Jamnalal Bajaj
Vaijnath Kedia
Manilal Vallabhji Kothari
Mahavirprasad Poddar
Shivlal Mulchand Shah
Parameshvariprasad Gupta
Dattatreya Balkrishna Kalelkar
Vinoba Bhave
Chhaganlal Khushalchand Gandhi
Chhaganlal Nathubhai Joshi
Narayandas Khushalchand Gandhi
Surendranath Jayasval
Chimanlal Narasinhadas Shah
Pannalal Balabhai Jhaveri
Yashvant Mahadev Parnerkar
Valji Govindji Desai (Secretary)

with full powers to disburse the funds, to conduct dairying and tanning experiments and otherwise carry out the objects of the Association, to add to their number, to fill up vacancies caused by the resignation or death of a member or otherwise, to remove a member by a majority vote on proper and sufficient grounds, to frame a constitution and rules for the management of the Association and to make such amendment thereof as may be required from time to time.

Only members of the Association shall be eligible for appointment to and continuance on the Standing Committee.

Five members shall form the quorum for a meeting of the Committee.

In case of emergency the president shall have the power of taking necessary action without waiting for calling a meeting of the Committee, and also when there is

no quorum at a meeting actually called. The President however shall immediately inform the members of action thus taken.

Whenever it is difficult or unnecessary to convene a meeting of the Committee, the Secretay shall have the power to circulate a resolution among members and obtain their votes by correspondence. Such resolution shall be considered as duly agreed to if none of the members objects. If a member does not reply within a fortnight, he will be held to have waived his right to object.

The books of the Association shall be open to public inspection and shall be audited by competent auditors every year. A statement of accounts shall be published every six months.

The treasurer shall be responsible for the account of all the receipts and disbursements, all amounts exceeding one thousand rupees to be kept depositedin a bank of his approval.

All communications relating to the Association should be addressed to the undersigned.

VALJI GOVINDJI DESAI
SECRETARY,
COW-SERVICE
ASSOCIATION

UDYOGA MANDIR
SABARMATI

Young India, 6-6-1929

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

[Before *August 24, 1929*]

BAPU,

I have your letter on Niranjan Babu's affairs. I welcome your decision about him. I have been trying to help him in my own way. I suggested to him that he should readjust his family obligations if he wants to stick to khadi and avoid similar grief in future.

Kristodasji saw me yesterday. He told me about a letter Hamprabha wrote to you. You took this letter to be a business one, being of the nature of an invitation to you to take up the responsibility of Pratishthan's ownership! I laughed loudly and heartily over it, for it was a love letter, pure and simple. Could love be so dull as to mistake it? And what was the origin of this? Hemprabha felt an yearning to be near you and being unable to take the journey and desiring all at Sodepur to be benefited by your presence, she desired that you should regard Sodepur as your own place and grace it with your presence for the spiritual uplift of all the inmates.

But the matter of this letter was not all. I could not laugh away all the rest that Kristodasji said. He reported to me the conversation he had with you at Almora in which myself and Pratishthan were drawn in.

Niranjan Babu on his way back from Sabarmati met me. He also told me about your sarcasm about my Utkal report which I did not then understand at all, although what he said jarred painfully. Now after Kristodasji's interview Niranjan Babu's utterances become explicable. You have wronged yourself hopelessly in all these. But let time pass.

As I woke up this morning and was going to the prayer-ground a thought of Marcus Aurelius came across my mind and from the depth of my heart I repeated, "Today I shall meet with blows . . . But I cannot be injured by anyone of them." At 2 p.m. Kristodasji came and blows there were sure enough.

My pranams,
SATIS

From a microfilm: S.N. 15194

APPENDIX III
LETTER FROM M.R. JAYAKAR

Private

THAKURDWAR
BOMBAY,
August 23, 1929

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I am writing this letter to you because I feel certain that you will not misunderstand its motives. It is nowadays the fashion in Bombay to condemn, as a communalist, any Hindu who happens to speak in favour of his community. Mahommedan leaders, of course, are immune from this charge. I am sure that you will not judge me by such a partial test.

My purpose in writing this letter to you is to make you acquainted with the apprehensions of a very large body of Hindus (outside the Hindu Mahasabha) that any atempt at this time to vary the solution of the Hindu-Muslim question adopted in the Nehru's Committee's report is fraught with far-reaching consequences. I am sure, you are aware that many Hindus, who were against the continuance of communal representation, accepted the Nehru's Committee's solution as a kind of compromise for the sake of peace and harmony. As I said in my speech at the Calcutta session of the All-Parties Convention last December, with reference to Mahommedan demands, that compromise had proceeded on four well-recognized principles, and that the demands set up by the Mahommedans at the Calcutta session were flagrant variations from those principles. These demands were then only five or six in number. They have since risen to 14. Even when they were five or six, they were turned down at Calcutta by an overwhelming majority of All-India delegates, including Sikhs and Christians.

One of the grounds of their decision was that the Mahommedans were divided, on these demands, into four well-known groups. Three of them were against joint electorates at any price. It was therefore not clear on whose behalf Mr. Jinnah spoke, and what bulk of the entire Mahommedan community would be placated if his demands were conceded.

My own opinion in the matter is that it would be desirable for us all to concentrate on the Nehru Committee's report, accepting it on all essential points. If any minor adjustments are needed in its proposals about the Hindu-Muslim question, which, if met, have a possibility of being accepted by the bulk of the Mahommedans, these may be considered when we reach the stage of finality, I mean in the sense that the stage is arrived at when the representatives of the Hindus, Mahommedans and Government meet and in a spirit of give and take, arrive at a compromise which is *final* and forms the terms of our future Constitution. I refer to this feature of finality, because to me the danger of making any further concessions to Mahommedans at this stage appears to be great. The Government will clearly pick out all these concessions and make them parts of a constitution entirely different from the one of which they were intended to be a part. Hindus then will be regarded as being stopped from raising objections on the ground that the items objected to are a matter of agreement between Hindus and Muslims.

Past experience shows that this fear is not without justification apart from what may have happened at and after the Lucknow Pact of 1916, I will quote a very fresh instance. You will remember that Mr. Jinnah, the Muslim League spokesman at Calcutta, openly claimed that, although the separation of Sind was, in the Nehru Committee's report, conditional on India having the Constitution recommended therein, Mahommedans ought to have the liberty of accepting Separation of Sind, even if Government made it a part of a totally different Constitution. This makes clear the danger I am referring to.

I have good reasons to believe that Muslims will not get from Government any undue privileges this time. A section of that community is therefore anxious to make it appear that the concessions they want have been agreed to by the Congress. Hence the need of caution.

These are a few considerations which I thought it was my duty to respectfully urge on your attention. Perhaps you are yourself well aware of them all.

Offering you my apology for disturbing you in this matter in the present state of your health.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M.R.J.

MAHATMA GANDHI
SABARMATI

Jayakar's Private Papers, Correspondence File No. 407, vi, pp. 149-51
Courtesy: National Archives of India

1.CARDING OR ARCHERY

The word pinjan[1] has become disagreeable in our language. Even in figurative language, it is a term implying censure. When a person keeps on pointlessly repeating the same thing, we say of him that he is doing pinjan. This usage of the word has become so established that we do not like the word 'pinjanshastra'[2] or 'pinjanvidya'[3]. A new form of the tool used in carding,which is known as the "Bardoli Bow", is made of a bow-shaped bamboo, and looks like a bow too. Hence I have made bold to use a word which has become endeared in the terminology of the Kshatriyas, i.e., 'dhanurvidya'[4] instead of the word ‘pinjanshastra’. I apologize to the intellectual class for doing this. If other lovers of the language also get enraged at me for taking such liberties with a word with such an established usage, I beg their forgiveness too.

I feel, however, that at a time when our language is developing, when new ideas are being brought into it, new discoveries are being made, when the scope for courage, etc., is being enlarged, we should be accommodating in the usage of those words.

The reader is not unfamiliar with the liberties I have been taking with words for many years. I have given a new definition of the word Kshatriya. The latter is not a person who knows how to kill others but rather one who acquires the art of sacrificing his own life so that others may live. A Kshatriya is one who has well mastered the mantra of never retreating in the battle between gods and demons which is raging in this world. A Kshatriya is one who is the very embodiment of compassion. What knowledge of archery should such a Kshatriya possess? While reflecting on this problem, just as a carpenter invariably thinks of a babul tree, is it any wonder if my mind turns towarding carding? If we learn the craft of carding, if the young people acquire mastery over it, they would by daily devoting some time to it, serve hundreds of thousands of women. Those who have mastered the science of spinning repeatedly declare that, if carding is properly done, if the strands in a sliver are separated and

[1] Carding
[2] Science of carding
[3] Knowledge of carding
[4] Knowledge of archery

symmetrically arranged, the resulting yarn will easily be good, even strong and fine. If someone makes slivers free of charge, that will berendering great service to those of our women who do not card today and are not likely to do so. And if this is done, it will go a long way towards helping make khadi cheap. The activity of spinning is progressing at snail's pace. The same is not true of carding or what we may now call ‘dhanurvidya’. Moreover, this vidya presupposes both physical and spiritual strength. Let anyone who wishes, have a look at a carder's chest. Every carder's chest is something that would make another envious. It is round, expanded and beautiful. The muscles of his arms too are likewise well developed. If one carder is earnest, he can surely serve at least twenty women because he cards at least ten pounds [of cotton] in ten hours. This amount of cotton is more than what is required by twenty women working ten hours, who spin yarn of ten to twelve counts. From this it is clear that anyone who acquires this skill can find work to his satisfaction.

Moreover, the activity of spinning has been carried on as an independent trade from ancient times, and has been able to compete with other trades. Today a carder demands and gets thirty rupees a month. In the beginning the Ashram had engaged a carder on a wage of seventy rupees a month. Even an ordinary carder can make eight annas a day today. One has to have a book in order to acquire easily a knowledge of such a beautiful form of archery. This has been included in Maganlal Gandhi’s book entitled “The Science of Weaving”. However, that contains only the basic principles. Again, this vidya has taken great strides since then. The Gujarat Vidyapith has given a proper place to this great science, which is a prop of the nation and sustainer of millions of men and women. It has laid down the examinations to be held and is realizing and increasing its importance day by day. Hence the necessity has been felt for having a textbook on this subject. In order to see to it that the text is a very useful one, a questionnaire has been issued by the Principal to those who have mastered the art. The questions go into minute detail and occupy a fair amount of space and as only a particular section of readers would be interested in it, I do not publish them here. However, those who are interested in this subject should write to the Principal, Gujarat Vidypith, Ahmedabad, and obtain a copy of the questionnaire. His office will find it convenient if the words ‘Regarding dhanurvidya’ are written on the left-hand side of the address.

Perhaps, it is necessary to add that the term has been accepted by the Vidyapith. I have coined it for the very first time for this article. I alone am responsible for its use. Kakasaheb or the other office-bearers can reject it. The reader who does not like this use of the word may suggest any other sonorous word instead. A carder is also known as a tanti. Since a tanti[1] is the principal factor involved in carding, the term 'tantvidya' or 'tantshastra' may also be employed. But I must admit that I like the word 'dhanurvidya'.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 1-9-1929

2. MY NOTE

SHRI HIRALAL'S SCHEME

Three experienced persons have independently pointed out the same defect in Shri Hiralal's scheme published in Young India and *Navajivan* for a new type of spinning-wheel. Since others who are giving thought to this scheme also find this and other defects in it, I publish below one letter from among the many that I have here with me:[2]

Let Shri Hiralal and others interested in innovations give thought to this. Even if Shri Hiralal's scheme is regarded as faulty and considered useless, his efforts will still be dear to me. Such efforts are very necessary. Although the farmer's heirs did not discover in his field the golden egg mentioned in his will, they got by digging it up untainted wealth in the form of a golden harvest which proved even more valuable than the golden egg and the heirs learned the importance of body labour.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 1-9-1929

[1] A thread

[2] The letter is not translated here. Hiralal had suggested the use of a hollow spindle. The correspondent contended that it would result in untwisting the yarn, and making it weak and fragile.

3. FIT FOR ALL TO READ

The Navajivan Prakashan mandir has just published Shri Mahadev Desai's "History of Bardoli Satyagraha"[1]. As it has been written by Shri Mahadev Desai, it is indeed authoritative and the reader can rest assured about the authenticity of each event mentioned in it. At a time when the fragrance of a gigantic satyagraha has filled the air and people are eagerly looking forward to the coming year, everyone who desires to secure swaraj should know what kind of weapon satyagraha is, what its limits are, how Bardoli, the Sardar and the people of Bardoli employed it, what kind of triumph they achieved thereby, what fine after-effects flowed from it and how far-reaching they have been. Hence this history is very opportune. Everyone should make a detailed study of it. Considering its subject-matter, it is neither too long nor too short and it occupies 389 demy octavo pages. It contains six illustrations the most useful of which is the one giving a map of Bardoli, showing all its principal villages. The inquiry committee had visited 47 villages, which are indicated with the help of numbers. Other useful details are also given. Among other useful illustrations, that of a women's meeting attracts special attention. This history has been priced at only twelve annas.[2] I hope that all will get a copy of this book, read it carefully, reflect upon it, and derive some inspiration from it regarding the kind of sacrifice they may in their turn be able to make at the altar of swaraj.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 1-9-1929

[1] *Bardoli Satyagrahano Itihas*

[2] The source has a footnote advising those ordering the book by post to send three annas extra for postage.

4. SCHEME OF SELF-RELIANCE

Of course, I did publish Shri Shivabhai's article[1] but I have received three articles contradicting it. The last one is from Shri Jethalal. It is not easy to oppose him because he writes from his experience and adheres firmly to his views. His rejoinder[2] runs as follows.

All lovers of khadi who have made a study of its science should consider this reply carefully. If those who do not know this science master the arithmetic behind it, they will find it interesting and enjoymable. Having said this, I may add that I cannot deviate from my basic statement. I still feel that, in the widespread propaganda for khadi, the principle that those who spin should also weave cannot work. That certainly is not the ideal situation. At the very basis of this scheme lies lack of faith in human beings. As weaving is a complete and independent activity, it cannot be carried on in every house and in attempting to do so, one would run counter to the previling principle of division of labour. Man is as independent as he is dependent. And he must be so in order that he may be able to preserve his humility. If he can be visualized as a totally independent being, he will cease to be social animal and if, in turn, he ceaes to be that, he will cease to be non-violent and will be unable to achieve a sense of unity with all living beings.

It has been said that, if all those who spin do not weave, they will not turn out good yarn. This amounts to maligning the human race. If those textile mills which only produce yarn can make fine yarn, why should not persons who merely spin on the spinning-wheel do likewise? Love will make them spin fine yarn. The reader should bear in mind that it is a different matter that, in order to have a complete knowledge of spinning, it is necessary to have a knowledge of weaving also. There should certainly be no need for every spinner to weave for himself in order to improve the quality of the yarn spun by him. I am becoming increasingly convinced day by day of the need to make anindpendent effort to improve the quality of yarn. The spinner

[1] "If Spinners also Weave?", 18-8-1929 published in *Navajivan*, 18-8-1929.

[2] Not translated here. Taking into account the cost of cotton and wages for ginning, carding and spinning, the correspondent had shown that khadi produced thus would cost nearly three rupees a yard of 10 count yarn and 30 inches width.

stands to gain by such improvement. Let us take full advantage of this and bring about an improvement in the quality of yarn. We shall never be able to make innumerable women take to weaving. Even at present we have been able, with some effort, to make the women produce better yarn. The improvement that has taken place in yarn in the course of the last seven years is a hopeful sign.

Moreover, there are hundreds of thousands of expert weavers in the country and it is our duty to make use of their skill. They too form a section of the people. We have yet to win them over with ove. We have still to convince them that in the reform of their trade lies the welfare of the country. And it is through such mutual trust and dependence alone that we are going to march ahead.

I regard the question of competing with cloth made in textile mills…whether foreign or Indian…as a temporary and futile one. When farmers store their own cotton, carry on all the activities up to that of spinning in their own homes, they will certainly get their own khadi made by paying the proper wage to the weaver and not touch mill-made cloth. The economics of khadi is unique. It has soul whereas the economics of textile mills is soulless. Hence the two difer in kind. Just as the waters of the ocean and those of the Ganges being qualitatively different cannot be compared to each other, similarly there can be no comparison between cloth produced in textile mills and hand-made cloth produced in villages.

However, no one should interpret my article to imply that, where the farmer is well-to-do and has a large family, he should not introduce weaving into his house; he certainly should do so. My emphasis is on keeping the activity of spinning separate; there is a danger of suffocating it by combining it with weaving or of slackening the pace of the widespread use of the spinning-wheel. For the purpose of propaganda for the spinning-wheel, it is necessary to realize and demonstrate the limits of weaving. Whereas crores have to spin, only lakhs have to weave; while spinning will always remain primarily a subsidiary occupation, weaving will always remain chiefly an independent one. On the revival of spinning depends the economic and, consequently, the oral upliftment of crores of people and in order to make the activity successful, it is necessary to bring about development in all sections of society such as weavers, business men and others. Spinning is an activity which awakens religious sentiment and purifies the soul.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-9-1929

5. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

[*September 1, 1929*][1]

DEAR BHUR-R-R[2] ,

The check is being duly acknowledged. What does it matter what others think of it so long as your conscience and your doctor tell you, you dare not go far from home? But you must soon be a young man of seventeen and not an old mare of seventy.

Yours,

BHURRR

[PS.]

I shall tell Raihana your message when she comes.

M. K. G.

ABBAS TYABJI, ESQ.

CAMP, BARODA

From a photostat: S.N. 9567

6. LETTER TO RAMPRASAD VYAS

SABARMATI,

September 1, 1929

BHAI RAMPRASAD,

I have your letter. Herewith the acknowledgment. Both the items of work are good. That relating to *Daridranarayana* is wider in scope. Whatever others may do, you cannot offer a bribe. I would see nothing wrong in entering in the accounts such expenditure as is incurred purely in connection with the business.

The problem of those with large families is not one to be discussed in *Navajivan.* It raises many other questions. It is of no importance compared to the great misfortune of India's slavery.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/145

[1] From the postmark

[2] This was a form of greeting used between Gandhiji and the addressee.

7. LETTER TO SAM HIGGINBOTTOM

SABARMATI,
September 2, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

Your frank and free letter does my soul good. But I had expected nothing less from you. My rule always is never to criticize even strangers about anything said or done by them without first verifying facts through them whenever they are within reach.

As for the girl she is the most difficult problem we have. The attention of our best men and women is given to her. We are trying the method of no corporal punishment regarding her, though the temptation is often great. But we have not lost hope. I have personally tested the method for over 20 years with growing confidence. Of course it does not apply to infants though even in their case, punishment is rare.

Don't you think the quotation from *Hebrews* is irrelevant? May we copy God Who is infallible in His judgments and Who creates if He also destroys?

Yours, etc.,

SAM HIGGINBOTTOM

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/147

8. LETTER TO THAKORESAHEB OF GONDAL

SABARMATI,
September 2, 1929

MEHERBAN THAKORESAHEB,

I learn from Chandulal that after many years you have released the political prisoners. I congratulate you on that. I feel it would have been more becoming if you had released them without making them tender apology.[1] Saints have sung that the adornment of a king lies not in forcing his subjects into submission but in forgiving them.

I also like your efforts towards bringing out an encyclopaedia. But I must confess that I was greatly pained by what I heard

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 17-6-1929

about you from trusted friends. I tried to seek a meeting with you about what I had heard, but I failed and received a negative reply.

I believe myself a friend of the native States, and am therefore constantly on the look-out for rulers whose rule may, in some measure at least, approximate to the ideal of Ramarajya. When I find such a ruler I feel happy; when I do not, I am distressed. I had expected that quality in you, and so when I was studying in England and you also were studying there I had tried to meet you. I had built hopes on you even when I met you in Gondal. I still hope that your administration is faultless or will become so, and that you yourself will be and remain free of any stigma.

Your well-wisher,

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/146

9. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

SABARMATI,
September 2, 1929

BHAI BHAMBHATTA,

I have your letter. I expect to reach Revashankerbhai's place at two in the afternoon of the 7th. I shall get down at Dadar by the first morning train reaching there and then go to Vile Parle. From there I shall reach Bombay at 2 p.m. The programme you have drawn up is all right. It would be good if you can begin at 5.30 and still better if at 6 o'clock. Being forbidden by doctors to speak much, I shall speak for a few minutes only. Can you not manage to go through the programme in an hour and a half? Of course I do not wish to put you to inconvenience. You need not do anything else for me. Arrange to take me to the place. If you wish, you may see me at Dadar.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6595

10. TELEGRAM TO THAKURDAS BHARGAVA[1]

SABARMATI,

[On or after *September 2, 1929*]

MY OPINION EIGHTEEN YEARS GIRLS TWENTY-FIVE BOYS.

From a photostat: S.N. 15523

11. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SABARMATI,

September 4, 1929

MATHURADAS
TARA HOUSE
ALMORA

SORRY. NO DANGER WHEN NURSING EFFICIENT. FOOD ONLY FRUIT JUICE. KEEP INFORMED.[2] LEAVING TOUR SIXTH.[3]

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

12. APPEAL TO TEMPLE TRUSTEES

Sjt. Jamnalalji in his capacity as Hon. Secretary, Anti-untouchability committee of the Indian National Congress, has addressed the following forcible appeal[4] to the trustees of public Hindu temples:

> You are probably aware that the Indian National Congress has appointed a separate Committee this year for making special efforts for the removal of untouchability. The work has obviously to be done through the Hindus, and the Congress resolution is explicit on the point. In these days of terrific

[1] In reply to his telegram dated September 2, which read: "Sarda Bill fixing fourteen for girls. Wire your opinion minimum marriage age for girls and boys."

[2] Taramati, addressee's wife, had fallen ill.

[3] For Gandhiji's article on his forthcoming U. P. tour, *vide* "Forthcoming U. P. Tour", 5-9-1929

[4] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

advance in material science while the world is shrinking fast, India has constantly to be weighed in the scale of nations as a single indivisible unit, and when an evil within the fold of a community apart from its inherent injsutice becomes a nuisance to its neighbours and a reproach to the entire nation, it is only appropriate, you will agree, that the premier national institution such as the Congress should interest itself in it, and help the community concerned to achieve its speedy elimination. . . .

. . . The barest justice requires us to let them draw from the village well drinking water, to let their children have the same benefit of learning the three R's at the village school as our own, and to fling open for them the temples of God that we open to the rest of the Hindus. . . .

I shall be thankful if you will let me know what action you propose taking in response to my appeal to you.

Let us hope that the appeal will not fall on deaf ears. Wardha has led the way. In this connection it is pleasurable to note what a correspondent writes. He says:

Of late there has set in a healthy tide of thoughtful and sympathetic consideration of this question among class Hindus throughout Maharashtra. The recent opening of the temple at Elichpur has added further stimulation. Two or three more temples have been thrown open to untouchables quietly. Sjt. Bhopatkar, as President of the local Asprishyata Nivarak Mandal has issued through the Kesari a reasoned appeal to all the trusteees of Hindu temples in Maharashtra, inviting them to throw open the temples under their charge to untouchables. He has also issued a special appeal to the trustees of the famous Parvati Temple of Poona built by the Peshwas. It is managed by trusteees who are known to be public-spirited. This appeal has been ably reinforced by Rao Bahadur Prof. Sahasrabuddhe of Poona. The Rao Bahadur makes a passionate appeal to the local Mahasabha, Youth League, Brahman Sabha, Students' Brotherhood, the pundits and all the general public to strengthen the hands of the trustees by publicly supporting the latter emphatically and unequivocally.

It is to be hoped that the Hindu public will support these appeals by calling meetings and otherwise. Perhaps the most effective way is to organize local meetings in places where there are important temples and take deputations to the trustees. After all they are not owners, but agents of the public, and if the public demand freedom of entry for the 'untouchables' into a particular temple, the trustees concerned have to carry out their desire irrespective of their own opinions.

Young India, 5-9-1929

13. CONGRESS ORGANIZATION

Sjt. Jairamdas reports that out of 172 possible District Congress Committees only 27 have been sending reports of work done in connection with the foreign-cloth boycott movement inaugurated by the Congress, which is really the most important part of the Congress work in the sense that it affects the whole nation and it is a programme in which everyone can take part. It is moreover a programme whose successful working cannot but produce a tremendous impression both on ourselves and the rulers. Sjt. Jairamdas further states that repeated reminders fail to bring even acknowledgements. Some Provincial Congress Committees have ignored his appeals altogether. Thus there is nothing from seven provinces, viz., Delhi, C.P. Hindustani, Burma, Assam, Andhra, Ajmer and North Western Frontier. Out of a total of 2,230 reports bespoken only 86 have been received, i.e., 4 per cent! The districts are distributed as follows:

Berar	6	Punjab	15
Maharashtra	11	Utkal	6
Bihar	16	Kerala	[3]
Tamil Nad	9	Sind	8
U.P.	37	Bombay	7
C. P. Marathi	4	Karnataka	11
Gujarat	4	Bengal	32
			169

There are more than 250 districts in British India. Thus ony two-thirds of the total number of districts are covered nominally by the Congress organization. This is not a bright outlook. The Congress is the one organization that appeals to the nation. It is the one organization which, if efficiently worked, can without doubt secure freedom for the nation. But it cannot do so if its component parts do not respond with the quickest dispatch to instructions from the central office, or if it does not cover every district and taluk, let alone every village. Foreign-cloth boycott is a matter largely of organization. There are no two opinions about its desirability and even necessity. But the ablest secretary will fail, if those who have to be organized are lazy or indifferent. It is time for responsible workers throughout the provinces to ponder over the painful facts narrated by me, and to

remedy an evil which is so easily avoidable. The Secretaries of District and Taluk Committees should know that failure to carry out instructions from headquarters brings them under the disciplinary resolution passed by the A.I.C.C. meeting at Bomaby. Personally I should prefer to have only 16 swift-moving, co-operating committees instead of 169 indifferent, irresponsive and irresponsible committees. The 16 real committees can show some work. The 169 inactive, sleeping committees can only be a dead weight. What shall we be?

Young India, 5-9-1929

14. FORTHCOMING U.P. TOUR

Local organization have asked me for instructions regarding the forthcoming tour in the United Provinces. I had thought that what I had said about the Andhra tour[1] would suffice, but I observe that the paragraphs then written escaped the attention of workers in the other provinces, as they were not then directly concerned.

To come then to the U.P. tour, organizers will please remember that I have just risen from a sick bed to which I was driven by my own ignorance and premature trustfulness. Medical and other friends have therefore reconciled themselves to the tour on my promise that I would take as much rest as possible during the day, refrain from making long speeches or from undertaking much other exertion. Therefore the organizers will beware of multiplying functions or expecting long speeches from me. Nor must I be called upon to walk or mount huge platforms.

Even apart from medical instructions consequent on my convalescence, from the strict business point of view…and this tour is to be purely a business and businesslike tour…it is necessary to save time and expense.

I have a horror of touching-the-feet devotion. It is wholly unnecessary as a mark of affection, it may easily be degrading. It interferes with free and easy movement, and I have been hurt by the nails of the devotees cutting into the flesh. The performance has often taken more than fifteen minutes to pass through a crowd to a platform only a few yards from the farthest end.

[1] *Vide* “Forthcoming Andhra Tour”, 7-3-1929

The platform is comparatively a costly affair, and sometimes when unskilfully constructed, a dangerous contrivance. It is therefore better to take my motor to the centre of the meeting and use it as a platform. this proved a most effective and expeditious method in Andhra. Reception Committees should on no account cut through the purses for the purpose of defraying decoration or feeding expenses. There should be a separate collection where required. All decoration should therefore be avoided. Even where some decoration is resorted to, foreign cloth, foreign paper and the like shold be altogether excluded.

Noises at the meetings should be avoided. This can only be done by some leading men going to the meetings in advance, and coaching the audience to observe silence, not to press, not to shout, not to smoke, not to attempt to advance towards me for touching the feet etc.

Strictest economy should be observed about housing and feeding me and my company. The companions should have the plainest fare, no spices, no sweets. Local fruit if obtainable may be given. Expensive fruit must not be ordered from Bomaby, Calcutta or Delhi. I carry a supply of dried fruit with me, and I should be thankful for it to be locally replenished wherever obtainable. Lemons are a necessary article of food. Unfortunately for me, I have been obliged to revert to goat's milk. It will be therefore necessary to procure for me about 4 lb. of goat's milk, and where possible, curds made from goat's milk, in whose manufacture no other curds are mixed for fermentation. A few drops of lemon added to boiled and cooled goat's milk curdles it in twelve hours.

My lodgings should be so selected as to afford me quiet and privacy. We carry enough cloth to make our own beddings. but where anything in this direction is supplied, it should be entirely of khadi. It hhas been a torture to me at times to be placed in luxuriously fitted rooms where everything is foreign, cloth included.

Work should not commence before 7 a.m. and should not take more than two hours. In every case it should stop at 10 a.m., and not reocmmence before 5.30 p.m. and should not go beyond 8 p.m. From 10 to 3, I should have the whole time to myself for rest and my editorial and other work. Between 3 and 4, I should spin and see workers. Workers' meetings I hold to be necessary in every place, big or small.

Spectacular functions should be strictly avoided, except where they are meant to serve an educational purpose.

Organizers should remember that this is a khadi tour undertaken on behalf of the All-India Spinners' Association. It is the largest national organization run on business lines for the sole purpose of bringing the message of the wheel to the homes of the seven hundred thousand villges of this vast country. On its successful working depends the relief of the growing and grinding economic distress of the semi-starved millions. I want every pie I can get for this work. One rupee in the chest of the A.I.S.A. means a day's drink or a day's drink cigar or a day's sweets bringing diseases in their train.

Moneys collected from the populace should on no account be diverted for any other purpose. The measses give trustingly. The safest way to use their donations is for the propagation of the wheel. Donations so used return to their kind charged with double interest. In these collections, all should take part irrespective of party or status. Even judges have paid me for khadi.

But I want to do other Congress work also. I want to learn about and help in the organization of the Congress. The addresses where presented should therefore be full of information:

(a) The population with its component parts in the area covered by the address;

(b) national schools with attendance;

(c) number of wheels and looms working, monthly production of yarn and khadi in quantity and value;

(d) monthly sale locally and outside of khadi produced;

(e) number of self-spinners;

(f) number of volunteers and the nature of their work;

(g) number of members, men and women, according to religious denominations;

(h) state of Congress finance;

(i) quantity of work done for boycott of foreign cloth, liquor and untouchability, and state of Hindu-Muslim relations.

This is merely a sample of the information I should like to be supplied to me. I should like a map drawn to scale of each taluk visited with the villages shown where Congress activity is carried on.

Those who are interested in cow welfare and pure milk supply will give me the information about the condition of the cattle in their respetive areas.

Lastly, I should of course love to see students, not to address them but to meet them so as to enter into their hearts and to share their sorrows and difficulties. Women's meetings I always expect everywhere with their jewellery and well-spun yarn.

Young India, 5-9-1929

15. NOTES

AFFLICTED SIND

The pen refuses to move to record the tale of Sind's woe. Day after day, I follow the harrowing accounts in the daily Press, and realize our helplessness. But we may not therefore sit idle. Every rupee received will relieve some distress. We have simply to do the little we can. The widows's mite coming from a pure heart goes much faster than millions given grudgingly. All the contributions received will be spent through the very careful and tried agency of Professor Narayandas Malkani. Let the donors not delay their contributions.

A NATIONAL INSULT

The insulting and impossible (for a self-respecting man) conditions imposed by the Union government on the Ali Brothers in respect of their contemplated visit to South Africa demonstrate once more the truth of the proverb: "The leopard cannot change his spots." One had thought that after the friendly agreement arrived at the historic round table conference, after the wonderful work done by the Rt. Hon'ble Sastri in South Africa, the insult offered to the Ali Brothers and through them to the nation by the Union Government was impossible. In view of the undertaking voluntarily given by the Brothers, the Union Government could have felt sure that they would never deliver political speeches. With reference to notabilities the convention is to assume correct contrictions. And even when in such cases there is any doubt about such conduct, the convention is to ensure safety through diplomatic and courteous channels. For instance, in this very case the Union Government, instead of conveying the restrictions to the Ali Brothers, could have secured their purpose through the Government of India…in so far as it was legitimate. In no case could they exact pecuniary security or impose a

ridiculous time-limit as the Union Government have sought to do. It is to be hoped that the government of India will see that this palpable wrong is righted, the restrictions wholly withdrawn and the Brothers permitted to proceed to South Africa without hurting their self-respect and without undue restrictions, direct or indirect, tacit or implied.

PURE CHEAP LITERATURE

I have not much faith in the efficacy of cheap literature, however pure it may be, when it is pitted against dirty literature. I believe in the contact of pure conduct. But on the principle that something is better than nothing and that the spread of pure literature can do no harm even where it fails to do good, I welcome the enterprise of Sjt. Mahavirprasad Poddar and his band of purist friends in publishing good, pure, healthy literature. These publications are very cheap, very handy and all in Hindi. It consists of abridgments from *Navajivan*, Young India and other publications, Eastern and European. Much consists of khadi literature. I recommend this for stocking in all khadi bhandars. Full information may be had from Shuddha Khadi Bhandar, 132 Harrison Road, Calcutta.

THE CHARKHA SUPPLEMENT

I very nearly promised[1] the reader the plan that Sjt. Hiralal had accompanied his specification. He has now very kindly supplied me with the block and letter press. The reader will see both[2] in the supplement to this issue. It is perhaps only proper that I should tell him that three Gujarati correspondents have independently of one another raised idential objections[3] to Sjt. Hiralal's conception, objections which they hold to be radical and fatal to its success. I have published one of the letters in *Navajivan*. Shortly, the objection is that the hollow spindle will not wind the yarn if it is to work at both ends. The twist received at one end will be undone at the other end[4]. This is as far as a layman can describe a technical objection. I have brought this to Sjt. Hiralal's notice, and suggested to him that he should now translate his theory into practice, and have a model made of his plan and work at it regularly, till he can make the next announcement not of a well-reasoned specification, but of a complete charkha constructed according to his specification.

[1] *Vide* "Towards a Proper Wheel", 22-8-1929
[2] Not reproduced here
[3] *Vide* "My Note" sub-title Shri Hiralal's Scheme", 1-9-1929
[4] The source has "hand."

At any rate the labour spent by Sjt. Hiralal Shah is its own reward. He has endeavoured to stimulate and provoke the inventive faculty of khadi lovers. Whether he can now follow up his specification with concrete action or not, it is for others to take up the thread of their conception where Sjt. Hiralal has left it. The plan nowpresented to the reader should help him in that direction.

Young India, 5-9-1929

16. INDIAN CULTURE

When I was touring in U.P. in 1924 a peasant called out to me near Ayodhya and threw a sheet of paper in my car. I picked up that sheet and found that he had written on it many precious quatrains and couplets from Tulsidas's Ramacharitamanasa. This made me very happy and enhanced my reverence for Indian culture. I preserved this sheet in my file hoping to publish it some day.

I would take it up every week and put it aside. For, at the time I got it, I was not writing anything for Hindi *Navajivan* and I did not feel that it would be so useful for the Gujarati *Navajivan*. Part of what he had written on it was published in both the Gujarati and Hindi editions in 1927.[1]

As these days I am regularly writing something every week for Hindi *Navajivan* and also as my tour of U.P. is to begin shortly, I am publishing below the remaining part:[2]

I have left out the words of praise. This peasant brother has a neat hand and he has formed his letters with care.

Historians have testified that nowhere in the world are the peasants as civilized as in India. This sheet of paper is proof of it. Tulsidas has played a leading part in the preservation of Indian culture. Without the awakening influence of Ramacharitamanasa of Tulsidas, the life of the peasants would become dull and dry. One cannot say how it happened but it is unquestionably true that the life-giving force in Tulsidas's language is not found in other writers. Ramacharitamanasa is a storehouse of gems of thought. The above couplets and quatrains give us some idea of its value. I firmly believe

[1] *Vide* "Our Culture" sub-title Gift from a Peasant", 8-9-1927

[2] Not translated here

that the peasant writer did not have to put in much effort in the selection of quotations. He has supplied them from his repertory.

We need not despair as to our morality, when we hear from a peasant's mouth saying like, "Can an adulterer find salvation?", "Can a kingdom stand without a knowledge of statecraft?", "Is there any vice to match backbiting or any virtue to match compassion?"[1] and so on.

It is said these days that the peasants are living in darkness, that in our country tamas is predominant and that it must move on into rajas. First of all I do not believe that tamas, rajas and sattva can be divided into such watertight compartments. I feel that everyone has within him all the three gunas in some measure or other. The difference is only of degree. I firmly believe that in our country it is not tamas which rules supreme but sattva. This sheet of paper is a proof of this. If this had been an exception, it would not have served as a proof of the predominance of sattva in India. But when we know that millions of peasants know by heart the quatrains and couplets of Tulsidas and that they also understand them, then we can say with a measure of certainty that people who have such ideas have a sattvik civilization and that these quatrains and couplets are a proof of it.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 5-9-1929

17. NOTE TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[*Before September 6, 1929*][2]

Lest I forget, I shall note down just now:

1. Whatever the pressure of work, do not entrust any responsible work to the new person.

2. Giving Bhagawanji account work just now will mean his fall and ours.

3. Be firm and do what you think best about Jaisukhlal.

[1] From *Ramacharitamanasa*, 'Uttarakanda'

[2] According to the source, this was written sometime in September or October before the addressee left the Ashram for Lahore. Evidently, the note was written when both the addressee and Gandhiji were at the Ashram. On September 6, prior to his U.P. tour, Gandhiji left the Ashram for Bombay from where he went to Bhopal and Agra. This may be read after "Indian Culture", 5-9-1929.

4. I will have a talk with Kasumba and explain the position to her. I have had one with Umiya.

5. I have refused to agree to his appointment as an agent. I have agreed to his appointment as a secretary, but there is a great difference between the two.

6. Have a talk with me about the cow-protection work. Kanti indeed works hard, but there is discontent below the surface. I have pacified the people, but that is not right. If we want the dairy to shine, Kanti will have to exercise restraint over his outside activities. If he does not, he will never get trained up and you may be sure that the work done so far will come to nothing. What would happen if Somabhai went to every place as an observer? Apply his example to the case of the dairy.

If Somabhai looks after farming and acquits himself well in the task, he also exercises restraint on himself; that is why the agriculture work is safe in his hands. Parnerkar flies in the air and that is why the dairy is not safe in his hands and no justice is done to students.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 176-7

18. LETTER TO G.V. MAVALANKAR

September 6, 1929

BHAISHRI MAVALANKAR,

I wonder what I should say to you. You have many things to attend to, and there must be several mendicants like me waiting at your door. However, as compared to the other, the fee-paying, clients, the beggars have either a prior right or none at all. This by way of introduction.

The Trust Deed relating to the *Navajivan* Karyalaya has been lying with you, and it has now got to be registered without delay. One can never know what will happen when. Before anything happens, you, I and all others concerned must [take this step and] run the risk of incurring humiliation. Please, therefore, have done with the job in a week's time. As two years have already passed, it may be necessary to make some changes. Please consider this.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1226

19. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

SABARMATI,

September 7, 1929

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

I have seen your letter to Sjt. Shankarlal Banker about the forthcoming Exhibition[1]. What I have said in my previous communication abides. Unless, therefore, there is a clear official declaration that the A.I.S.A. should have a predominant [say] in the technique of arrangement and the choice of goods to be admitted, I am afraid the Association cannot undertake any work or be represented.

The profits if any from this Exhibition may all go to the Reception Committee. It is not the profits that worry me. I do not want repetition of Madras[2], much less, Calcutta[3].

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/149

20. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[*September 7, 1929*][4]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I am writing these few lines in the midst of much work and surrounded by a number of people.

1. Sharma will arrive there on Monday. I shall enclose his telegram with this if I can find it. He is an expert on the consumption of uncooked grain. He has even written several books on the subject. Those who eat such grain, and Lakshmidas, should have a discussion with him. If, after that, he wishes to come to Agra, he may do so. Tell him that, if he wishes, he can stay there for two and a half months. Look after him. I feel sorry that he will be coming from such a long

[1] Congress Exhibition at Lahore

[2] Khadi exhibition held at the Congress session at Madras in December 1927; *vide* "the National Congress" sub-title Irresponsibility.

[3] Khadi exhibition at the Congress session held at Calcutta in December 1928

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 8-9-1929; also the following item.

distance and his visit will be fruitless. I had written to him and told him that he could come, if he wished.

2. I was alarmed to read about the mistakes in our account books. You know my faith in Narandas in this matter. I should like you to take his full help for this work and be guided by him. Lakshmidas, too, knows this job well. There should be neither a moment's delay about this nor any slackness.

3. The water in the well must have been cleaned.

4. Think and decide soon whether the house occupied by Bhansali should be used for women's work.

5. What happened about Zaverbhai's wife?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro —7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 122-3

21. LETTER TO DR. HIRALAL SHARMA

September 7, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

You will be at the Ashram on Monday to find me away. I am sorry. But I am glad you have come. Please discuss the food question with those who were trying unfired food. You can stay as long as you wish at the Ashram. And if you will follow me you can come to Agra. I shall be there till 20th. We can discuss my failure. I should love to resume the experiment if I get proper guidance. Thanks, I had your book. The two principal volumes I have brought with me.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5429

22. NOTE ON DISPUTE BETWEEN MILL-OWNERS AND WORKERS[1]

BOMBAY
September 7, 1929

There are approximately more than 55,000 labourers employed in the textile mills of Ahmedabad. In 1923, the mills were not in the same happy position in which they were in 1920-21; mill-owners, therefore, cut the workers' wages by 15-1/2 per cent. This reduction was not made through the medium of the panch in accordance with the agreement between the mill-owners and the workers. The latter resorted to a prolonged strike in which they were not successful. For the last eight months or so, the labourers have been demanding that this cut should be restored. Finally, this issue was entrusted to the panch, which includes Sheth Mangaldas Girdhardas and myself. I regret to say that we could not reach unanimity about our decision. The mill-owners have raised the objection that the cut made in 1923 was effected with the consent of both the parties. It was also argued that the cut was introduced through the panch and that, in whateverway the cut might have been effected, the workers had no right now to ask for its annulment. Moreover, the owners maintain that the financial condition of the mills does not permit this and finally that the wages which the workers get at present are in excess of their needs.

As against this, the labourers say that

1. no verdict was given by the panch in 1923;

2. the labourers had not accepted the wage-cut willingly but because of their inability to prolong the strike;

3. whatever the facts of the case, the wages received by the workers in 1923 were barely sifficient to meet their needs. They have had to bear greater loss because of the cut.

From the evidence presented before the panch I have come to the conclusion that all the three points put forward by the labourers are valid. I am of opinion that in matters regarding wages, etc.,

[1] This note, intended for submission to an umpire, was on the fresh issue raised by the Labour Union viz., that the cut in the workers' wages effected in 1923 was not justified. *Vide* "Letter to Gordhanbhai I. Patel", 8-8-1929

decisions given at any particular time do not hold good for ever. Hence, whenever such cases are put forward by the workers or the mill-owners, the panch is bound to examine the pros and cons and then give its verdict.

Two official publications were presented before the panch.

1. Report on an Inquiry into the Wages and Hours of Labour in the Cotton Mill Industry, 1923

2. Report on an Inquiry into Working-class Family Budgets of Ahmedabad, 1923

The actual average wage of an Ahmedabad mill-worker amounts to Rs. 27-7-0 and, provided he is not absent even for a single day, it can go up to Rs. 33-7-6 (vide the first publication, pp. 11-2).

The figures of expenditure presented from the side of labour indicate that the monthly expenditure of a family amounts to Rs.49-13-6 (see Appendix A). These figures relate to a Hindu family. The expenditure of a Muslim family is even more. Hence, on the whole, the labourers do suffer a loss. The expenditure figure accepted in the second publication mentioned above is Rs. 39-5-8 (*vide* p. 37).

The reason for this discrepancy is that, as proved by that document, it does not take into account item No. 22 (interest) and No. 24 (social expenses), and the figures for item No. 8 (milk) and No. 14 (fuel) are lower. In my opinion, this expense is necessary and reasonable. The amount which has to be paid by way of interest is partly unavoidable and partly avoidable. Interest which has to be paid on grocery which is bought on credit as the wages are low is unavoidable, whereas the expense on liquor and such things which is incurred by borrowing money can be avoided. Hence the interest that is actually paid is not taken into account, but rather that which would have to be paid. Social expenses are also inevitable. Labourers, or for that matter anyone else, may starve but will see to it that social obligations of his family and caste are met. Hence, even after hearing all that was said on the side of the mill-owners, I find no reason to reduce the figures of expenditure presented by the labourers.

The various classes of textile workers deserve to be noted:

(a) Those numbering 13,482 who earn wage of Rs. 30 to Rs. 40.

Persons working in the weaving department mainly constitute this class. It is made up exclusively of men…there are no women in it.

(b) Those numbering 32,828 who earn a wage of Rs. 6 to Rs. 30.

This includes people working in the following sections of the textile industry: carding, blow-room, frame, spinning, reeling, binding, engineering, etc. Besides men, women as well as children are employed in these sections. Their numbers are as folows:

1. Men workers	17,381
2. Women workers	6,602
3. Children (from 14 to 18 years of age)	2,263
4. Children (who work for half a day and under 14 years of age)	

(NOTE: The figures given in b (2) include the 1,976 women who are employed in the winding department. Their income, unlike that of the women working in other sections, does not add up to the income of the men working in this section.)

These figures indicate that even in class (b), there remains a large section in which, as in class (a), only men are employed.

The wage-earning class in section (b) earns only around Rs. 33. This is testified by the second publication mentioned above (*vide* table 1, p.11).

The families of workers belonging to class (a) do not generally work.

There are about 2,300 labourers whose income exceeds Rs. 40. In addition, there are 1,670 jobbers, 1,651 clerks, 1,171 watchmen and others. There had, however, been no cut in their wages in 1923.

NOTE: These figures have been extracted from publication No.1 in which detailed information has been given regarding all workers employed in the textile mills of Ahmedabad in August 1923. The total number in that year has been shown as 52,038 but since then there has been an increase in this number.

In publication No. 2, the average income of all labourers in Ahmedabad has been calculated as Rs. 44-8-0. In publication No. 1, the maximum amount has been given as Rs. 33-7-6. In the latter, labourers working in places other than textile mills have not been included. Also it does not include income earned outside of that occupation. But it does give the average income of all labourers employed in textile mills. In publication No. 2, the income from all sources and the entire labour force have been taken into account but

the principal distinction in No. 2 is that the inquiry is restricted to only 872 families, whereas in No. 1, the wages of all labourers employed in textile mills have been taken into account. In publication No. 2, the inquiry covers the following wage-earners:

INCOMEWISE NUMBER OF FAMILIES

NUMBER OF INCOME GROUP	TOTAL FAMILIES	PERCENTAGE
Under Rs. 20	17	1.15
Between Rs.20 and Rs. 30	146	16.74
” Rs.30 and Rs. 40	182	20.87
” Rs.40 and Rs. 50	220	25.23
” Rs.50 and Rs. 60	157	18.01
” Rs.60 and Rs. 70	73	8.37
” Rs.70 and Rs. 80	45	5.16
” Rs.80 and Rs. 90	32	3.67
	872	100(p.c.)

In other words, the income of 527 families is over Rs. 40. Whereas, as indicated by me above, the larger part of the class of labourers who are demanding the withdrawal of the cut has an income below Rs. 40 and of this too the majority has an income of under Rs. 30. Hence any kind of inquiry proves that the majority of workers earn less than they spend.

An argument advanced by the mill-owners is that even today the mills are running at a loss. I regard the evidence given in support of this as rather weak. It is possible that a few mills are running at a loss; but the majority of them would not incur losses. If the shareholders were given a smaller dividend or if the percentage in respect of depreciation were not deducted before declaring the dividend and if nothing can be taken to the Reserve Fund, I would not place these as losses as against the wages of labourers.

I must mention one point here. Labour had put forward two arguments in support of its demand. I have already discussed one of them. The second was that mills were at present making such profits

that they should withdraw the wage-cut. Labour, on its part, could not prove this and on this the panch has given a unanimous verdict.[1]

It is my opinion that the other point has been proved by labour. There is an understanding between my colleague and myself that the papers put before the panch should be sent by both these parties to a Sarpanch[2] .

I have to write out my verdict first; after seeing it my colleague should write out his[3]; after seeing the latter, I should offer my comments.

If the Sarpanch wishes to consult the panch, they should meet at a time and place convenient to all three.

If the *Sarpanch* feels that any further proof is necessary, he has the right to ask for it.

Besides the papers which have already been presented, if any of the parties wish to present any more facts relating to the point in question before the Sarpanch, they can do so after showing it to each other.

Finally since unrest is spreading among the labouerers as a result of the delay in the decision, the Sarpanch is requested to give his decision as early as possible.

I have to tour the U.P. till the 24th of November, but if the Sarpanch wants to ask me anything, he should write to me careof the Satyagraha Ashram, whence the letter will be forwarded to me wherever I am and I shall send the Sarpanch whatever replies I may have to after consulting my colleague.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 14974

[1] *Vide* "Arbitrators Award"14-8-1929

[2] Umpire

[3] For the note by Sheth Mangaldas, *vide* S.N. 14975.

23. "IF SPINNERS ALSO WEAVE?"

I have received one or two similar articles. I have published this one[1] as I felt that it was the best. The others deal with the same subject but the treatment is not so good.

Shivabhai's calculations appear to be effective.[2] However, we should overlook this and understand the underlying principle. Very often it has been the case that, whereas the results calculated by us or our conjectures are correct, the arguments or figures adduced in support thereof are either weak or incorrect. What I feel basically is the fact that spinners can never become weavers on a large scale. Hence, it cannot become an indivisible part of the scheme of self-reliance, and no attempt should be made to do so. The other pole of this scheme should be voluntarily accepted dependence on others. In this case, it is futile to cite the examples of Bijolia and Bardoli. The circumstances in both those places were of an unusual nature. In ordinary circumstances, it is the case that everyone has moments of leisure when he must spin and get the yarn spun by him woven in his own village. Not only is there no objection here to spinners learning to weave, but rather it is our duty to provide facilities for them to do so. However, there is no need to carry on any propaganda for this.

Let me put this in another way. If a brahmachari who lives by himself or a widow who has no means of support gins, cards, spins and weaves, that will be regarded as doing business at a loss. Such a person will by weaving alone earn six to eight times as much as one who merely spins; and, he or she should indeed do so or find out some such independent occupation. However, where there is a large family, one person can become a weaver. It is my idea that we should enlarge the concept of our members. Our ideal is not a Robinson Crusoe living on a desolate island, but a family which extends over the entire world. In order to reach it, it is but a natural step forward to turn over village into a single family. Man is a social animal. His country is this small planet…the world. In it everyone will carry on an all-pervasive activity. What extends over the family will be done by the family and the same applies, in its turn, to the town and the country as a whole. However, this will be done not with a view to destroying one another,

[1] This article by Sitaram Purushottam Patwardhan is not translated here.

[2] *Vide* footnote 2, "Scheme of Self-Reliance", 1-9-1929

but rather to sustain one another. In my view, the spinning-wheel is a universal thing, while the loom is confined to either the family or the village. The cooking-fire and the spinning-wheel are to be found in every home but the same cannot be said of the loom. It can be clearly shown that this involves an economic disadvantage. Whatever is basically harmful on economic grounds is also certainly harmful from the religious point of view. Untainted wealth can never be opposed to religion.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-9-1929

24. MESSAGE TO KATHIAWAR YOUTH CONFERENCE[1]

Youths, listen to everyone, but decide your own course of action; do not be carried away by speeches. Concentrate on work and learn to be quiet. Your speech being your work, you will be worthy of being heard after you have rendered substantial service to the people.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 8-9-1929

25. MY NOTES

NATURE'S WRATH

The fury that Nature has let loose on Sind is indescribable. The thought of it stuns me and it reveals the might of Nature on the one side and our littleness on the other. But man's dharma is compassion above everything else. When he is under its influence, he is led to do his utmost, aware of his own limitations. We sympathize with a man or a family, if we can. We get some satisfaction by sharing our food with anyone who is hungry. Our humanity consists in giving away everything and still not feeing satisfied about it. To give away everything is a noble human quality and there is no room for pride in something which is one's inborn quality. A Gujarati should notconsider himself different from a Sindhi when patriotic fervour is in the air. Just as family members though having different names do not consider themselves different, so also we are all one though belonging to different States. That is why we should share each

[1] Held under the presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru and attended by 1,400 delegates

other's sorrow. Gujarat has the ability to give much and keep accounts properly. All those who feel sorry for Sind should donate generously. They should send their names if they sincerely want to go and serve there. All the money will be sent to Professor Malkaniji who has shouldered the responsibility of this work. Sardar Vallabhabhai has already sent Rs. 15,000 out of Gujarat Flood Relief Fund. But what is Rs. 15,000 when the disaster is much greater than Gujarat's?

THE MEANING OF YAJNA

A reader writes:[1]

It is a fact based on actual experience that violence is involved in lighting a fire. The Shastras have not said that the yajnas of the past did not involve violence. However, they regarded as innocent the violence practised in the course of a yajna, just as we salve or cheat our conscience by regarding as innocent a diet of vegetables although we are aware that it involves violence.

If the *rishis*[2] and *munis*[3] of the past had sacrificed animals, it is my firm belief that at that time, the need for such sacrifice was felt; however, today there is no need for doing so; it is a savage and cruel practice. I regard such acts of offering animals as sacrifices as not only not religious in this age, but as irreligious acts, and hence wish to see them stopped for good. That the concept of yajna in the Gita has a universal and altruistic implication may be construed from the verses preceding and following that verse and from the central argument itself of the Gita. Hence the meaning of yajna approved by the Gita is: It is an act which is performed solely for the sake of service or from a purely altruistic standpoint. And here a narrow interpretation of the term has been wished or done to any living creature.

SELF-PURIFICATION

In many parts of the country, the yajna for self-purificationbegun in 1920 is still going on unperceived. A fresh proof of this is the purification that is going on among our Antyaja brethren. A weaver, Ramji Gopal, has handed me a letter. It contains the names of 53 persons from 13 towns in Kathiawar who have taken a pledge to give up liquor and such other things. All of them have given up drinking; some have given up smoking and opium, and some others have given up even meat. Shri Ramji has given me their

[1] The letter is not translated here.
[2] Seers
[3] Ascetics

names after they had kept their pledge for a year. There is no doubt that such activity is going on at many places. And its distinctive feature is that there is no artificiality in it or in other words there is no element of compulsion in it, and also that it is not being carried on by persons who do not belong to that society, but rather volunatrily by reformers thrown up by that very society. I offer congratulations to such invisible, silent workers. Let them accept my best wishes and let there be widespread emulation of these persons.

A BHANGI BROTHER FROM BULSAR

Shri Chhotubhai Shah writes from Bulsar:[1]

I hope that the necessary reforms will be carried out now without further delay.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-9-1929

26. REBIRTH OF THE SPINNING-WHEEL

I do feel some hesitation in publishing this letter[2] as, both Kakasaheb and Balkrishna, who understand the structure of machines and to some extent know how to construct them, feel that the basic defect is such that it cannot be remedied. I also keep receiving other letters which testify to the basic defect. Then again, a gentleman writes.[3]

Despite this, I felt it was proper to publish the above letter, as what I wrote[4] while publishing the original scheme holds good even today. Whether his scheme succeeds or fails, Shri Hiralal's efforts are praiseworthy. His own faith in the scheme is equally praiseworthy. Hedoes not believe that it is perfect. All that he wishes to say is that a new type of powerful spinning-wheel is a possibility and that it can be produced at a very low cost, and he has put before the public, in as

[1] The letter is not translated here. The addressee had written that the rains had delayed the work of digging wells and putting up roofs for the Bhangis of Bulsar. He promised to relieve them of their debts.

[2] The letter by Hiralal Amritlal Shah is not translated here. It described an improved type of spinning-wheel devised by him.

[3] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had contended that if yarn was subjected to twisting at a later stage, as in the case of the hollow spindle, it became weak.

[4] *Vide* "My Note" sub-title Shri Hiralal's Scheme, 1-9-1929

systematic a manner as he could, whatever ideas occurred to him in this regard. I now wish to make a suggestion to Shri Hiralal and other innovators like him. They should not merely discuss the merits or demerits of their schemes, but those like Shri Hiralal who regard improvement as a possibility should have spinning-wheels made according to their designs and, after testing them, put the results before the public. I regard it as futile waste of time and energy merely to discuss a scheme which can be readily tested by putting it into practice. Shri Hiralal claims that the basic defect which has been pointed out does not exist. I hope this is the case and if so, it is something which can be easily proved. And the greatest achievement is his who has an unflinching faith. Hence my advice to Shri Hiralal is that, rather than enter into controversies in newspapers, etc., he should devote some time every day to putting his scheme into practice. The diagram accompanying Shri Hiralal's scheme and an explanation regarding it are being published as a supplement[1] to this issue of *Navajivan*.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-9-1929

27. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

[ON THE TRAIN,]

September 8, 1929

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I know that you have a heavy responsibility. But as you have faith in God, everything will surely be all right. Withdraw your resignation. Regard both respect and disrespect alike.

Never forget the smallest thing; if you have an orderly mind you will forget nothing at all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8728. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] Not translated here

28. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

September 8, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

We reach in a few minutes. I am keeping good health. You must have got the letter[1] I wrote yesterday. Kishorelal keeps indifferent health. He had a litle fever yesterday.

Tell Surendra that I met Nathji. He will come there in a few days to meet Marathe.

I may get some news about Gopalrao today in Bhopal. But the probability is slight.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5430

29. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

Sunday, September 8, 1929

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got the letters of you both. Sushila may certainly come when she wants to. I shall arrange to keep everything ready for her to return immediately if she so desires. I am dictating this letter at Bhopal. Kanti is taking it down and I am spinning at the wheel. Today is Sunday. It is already evening. My silence period is about to begin. Among the others accompanying me are Kusumbehn and Jamnalalji, too, will remain with us at least till we leave this place. The scenery around here is very pleasant. Sanchi, the place known for Buddhist art, is near here. We shall visit it on Tuesday. The lake here also is famous all over India. The surrounding scenery is beautiful and stretches some six or seven miles.

Silence Day

You have put me a question regarding the continuation of Indian Opinion. It is useless for me to write anything on the matter from here. You may do there whatever seems possible. If you finally

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chhanganlal Joshi", 7-9-1929

decide to close it down, you should certainly consult the Trustees there before doing so. Take the advice of Umar Sheth also.

It is surprising that you should have raised the question of marriage with a member of the Marwari community. I think I once told you that, if the proposal for Sushila had not been received, I had nearly decided to betroth you to a Bengali girl. What I had said was that I was not prepared to go so far as to approve of marriage with anyone outside one's community…though of course there is no sin even in such a marriage. But it has been my considered opinion that inter-provincial marriages are a very good thing.

Others would have nothing to say against us for not being vaccinated as long as we remain in a given place while the epidemic rages there. However, why should I involve either of you in that botheration? Do what your conscience tells you and what is within your capacity. You need not now be guided by me on this subject. The proper course for you is to read the literature on the subject and form your own views independently, and then action them. The majority of people get vaccinated. Only a few like me do not.

Nimu will have her delivery shortly. She is at Lakhtar. I cannot say why Ramdas does not write. I have written to him. As for Nimu, she is lazy.

Devdas has gone to Almora as Mathuradas's wife has fallen ill. Otherwise he would have seen me at Agra the day after tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4759

30. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

BHOPAL,

September 8, 1929

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have reached Bhopal today. I kept thinking on the way about Taramati. You will have received my letter. Devdas will have reached there too. And Taramati will have been freed from anxiety. If that is the case and if Devdas can be relieved, please relieve him. I

hope that Taramati's illness has not caused you worry. My health is fine. You will get more news from my letter to Devdas.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

31. APPEAL TO MILL-WORKERS

September 9, 1929[1]

Mahatma Gandhi and Sheth Mangaldas to whom the question of restoration of the cut in the wages was referred with a view to arbitration by the labour Union and the Mill-owners' association have now announced that owing to difference of opinion betwen them, the question will be referred to an umpire for final decision and that they have selected as umpire Dewan Bahadur Krishnalal Mohanlal Zaveri, retired judge, Bomaby High Court. Mahatma Gandhi has issued an appeal to the workmen to have patience and preserve peace. He says that he is aware that there is some restlessness among them owing to the delay in the announcement of the arbitrators' decision. He assures them that he will try to obtain the decision of the umpire as soon as possible. He will do what he can for them during his tour in the United Provinces and get information regarding their welfare.

The Bomaby Chronicle, 10-9-1929

32. LETTER TO SECRETARY, A.I.S.A.

BHOPAL,
September 9, 1929

TO
THE SECRETARY
ALL INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATIONS
BHAISHRI,

I have had a talk with Shri Jivanlal in Bombay regarding the khadi work at Amreli. Its substance is that if there is a deficit of up to Rs. 1,200/- in the next year's budget he will provide the money to make it up. If the deficit is larger, Shri Jivanlal will make it up to the tune of Rs. 2,000/- every year. There is in Amreli a sum of Rs. 5,000/-

[1] Released on this date by the Associated Press from Ahmedabad

given by him as loan for khadi work and while the Ckarkha Sangh is carrying on khadi work in Amreli and the nearby villages, he will let that sum remain with them without charging any interest. If, however the Charkha Sangh discontinues the work it should pay back the amount to Shri Jivanlal.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/148

33. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

September 9, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter and the pile of other mail sent by you. I will write to Jagjivandas. I think it best to send him your letter. Truth may be bitter like poison in the beginning, but in the end it proves to be as sweet as amrit[1]. We should not, therefore, feel worried. We have got into the wrong habit of saying nice things to one another, and we must overcome it.

You should indugle in self-depreciation less often now. Hold firmly to the thought that the man of faith always succeeds and offer up your very thoughts in the yajna of duty. Self-examination is good, but there are limits to the utility of self-depreciation.

We must become perfect in making the bread on which depends the health of so many. The person in charge of the job should not therefore, be changed.

I approve of the changes you have made in regard to keeping of accounts. We should become perfect in this sphere too. The truth is that a secretary should have a thousand eyes and a thousand hands. He should be attentive to the smallest detail.

I suppose I told you about Perrins of Jamshedpur. Sitting in his room, he used to be in contact with all departments with the help of the telephone, get reports from them day and night and give whatever instructions he wanted to give. This was vigilance of a demoniac character. We do not go to the length of installing a telephone but our vigilance should be greater even than that of Perrins. If the disinterested attitude really develops in us, though occupied with our daily work we would be enjoying infinite peace and also would not

[1] Nectar

appear worn out in body. The inert machine wears out through use, whereas the *atman* shines the brighter through the exercise of its powers and seems to grow ever new, and, therefore, the body which is its habitation also seems ever fresh. I have written about the ideal state. I know that I myself am far away from that state, and I have, therefore, little right to write about it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5431; also Bapuna Patro…7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 124-5

34. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

September 9, 1929

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have been of course a little anxious on your account, and that is because you do not at present seem to be quite yourself. Do only what you can and never worry. That is what you need. You must not worry simply because you cannot fulfill the high expectations that I might have of you. It is my duty to have such expectations, but a son or daughter can only do his or her best. If they try to do more, they would break down or become quite unnatural in behaviour and their lives would be wasted. Take care of your health. The climate here at Bhopal is excellent. The natural scenery also is beautiful. We shall reach Agra the day after tomorrow. Perhaps Jamnalalji will part company with us here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9265; also C.W. 512. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

35. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

Silence Day, September 9, 1929

CHI. PREMA,

I understand your suffering, and still more, your love. I very much like your devotion to duty. Never have any doubt that now it is only by following the path you are doing that you will be able to achieve self-purification, enjoy peace and do service to the country. If

you have learnt something from your stay at the Ashram, be determined not to leave it so that you may bring credit to yourself, to the Ashram and to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10213; also C.W. 6661. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

36. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

September 9, 1929

SISTERS,

Today I have to do the work for the Gujarati *Navajivan*, the *Hindi Navajivan* and Young India and have little time. Please, therefore, excuse me if I am brief and be as pleased as if this were a long letter. Though I am here, think of me as in your midst. All of you should be one in heart, help one another and bring credit to yourselves and to the Mandir.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3700

37. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[*September 9, 1929*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Hand over the enclosed letter to Raghunath. Hope you and Kashi have stopped worrying over Prabhudas. I would like both of you to stop being possessive over him. All the youngmen who come in contact with you, are your sons. And you do get everything in the service you are able to render there. Your son is now self-reliant and there are many to worry about him. Therefore your worries are meaningless.

Both of you should look after your health. Please see to it that there are no spices in the food for those who arrive there from the Ashram. Raghunath has asked a subtle question but you will see my

[1] From Gandhiji's itinerary mentioned in the last para; he left Bhopal for Agra on September 10, 1929 and visited the Sanchi Stupa the same day.

reply to him. He has not written anything about spices. What he has written is about rice, *ghee*, buffalo's milk etc. Recently I have persuaded many to give up rice.

The air here is good and cool. This too, is like a sanatorium. There is scenic beauty too. Sanchi's sculpture is nearby. We will be taken there tomorrow. We leave the place tomorrow night and reach Agra on the 11th.

Jamnalalji is with me. Jamnabehn too has come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32897

38. A LETTER

On Tour

SABARMATI,[1]

September 9, 1929

THE SECRETARY

A.I.C.C.

HEWETT ROAD

ALLAHABAD

DEAR SIR,

I send you herewith the information which at last I have been able to secure from the Utkal Provincial Congress Committee.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure

A.I.C.C. File No. 151, 1929. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

39. A LETTER

September 9, 1929

There is a Sanskrit verse which says that a man who does not love music is like an animal unless he is a yogi. Even a *yogi* cannot do without music. His music emanates from the *veena* of his heart, and

[1] Permanent Address

that is why we are not able to hear it. A *yogi* worships God in his heart. We worship Him vocally and hear with our ears others so worshipping Him. Doing so we may learn to hear the music continually going on in our hearts.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/1

40. A NOTE

September 9, 1929

I think the time has come for us to save ourselves from the nuisance of the handwritten monthly. He who is convinced that his intellect is going to develop only through action will write only what is relevant to action. This is worth pondering by us who live in the Udyog Mandir.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S N. 32578/2

41. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[*September 10, 1929*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

you must have received the mail sent yesterday. I completely forgot to include the letter to Bhansali.[2] I remembered about it late at night at 11 when retiring to bed and immediately rushed Pyarelal in a car to post it after affixing a late fee stamp. It was duly posted. I hope you got it.

Credit the amount received from New York in the Relief Fund. I have just returned from a visit to Sanchi. I have not yet seen the post. I will write if there is anything important.

How many attend the prayers? Is anyone enthusiastic about committing a chapter of the *Gita* to memory?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 171

[1] In the source the letter has been placed between the letters of October 19 and October 21, 1929. From the reference to Gandhiji's visit to Sanchi, however, it is evident that the letter was written on September 10, 1929. This may be read after "A Letter", 9-9-1929.

[2] This letter is not traceable. The source, however, in a footnote here quotes a letter to Bhansali dated October 20, 1929, which is included in Vol. XLII in its chronological order.

42. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BHOPAL[1]

September 10, 1929

I confess that when yielding to the loving insistence of His Highness[2] and Dr. Ansari I accepted the invitation to visit Bhopal, I was prepared to find here the same regal splendour, the same wasteful blaze of luxury as one comes across in our other present-day Indian States. But to my agreeable surprise, I found His Highness living in a 'palace' which could be called as such only by courtesy, and which in fact would not stand comparison even with the lovely palatial residence of Dr. Ansari who was after all medical adviser to His Highness....

Gandhiji reiterated his belief that the existence of the Indian Princes' rule was in no way inconsistent with the evolution of true democracy. He was therefore no enemy of Indian States, and he entertained every hope of their reaching his ideal of democratic swaraj which he often interpreted as Ramarajya. Using the word 'Ramarajya' in a Mussalman state and for an audience which had a very large number of Mussalmans in it, he immediately said:

I warn my Mussalman friends against misunderstanding me in my use of the word 'Ramarajya'. By 'Ramarajya' I do not mean Hindu Raj. I mean by 'Ramarajya' Divine Raj, the Kigdom of God. For me Rama and Rahim are one and the same deity. I acknowledge no other god but the one god of Truth and righteousness. Whether the Rama of my imagination ever lived or not on this earth, the ancient ideal of Ramarajya is undoubtedly one of true democracy in which the meanest citizen could be sure of swift justice without an elaborate and costly procedure. Even the dog is described by the poet to have received justice under *Ramarajya*.

In alluding to his belief in Hindu-Muslim unity he recalled his friendship with the late Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan and asked for contributions to the Ajmal Jamia college and in so doing mentioned the heroic sacrifice of Dr. Zakir Husain and his colleagues who had reduced their honorariums to what might be termed a starvation point. He asked the Hindus to give up untouchability if they would save Hinduism, and he reminded both Hindus and Mussalmans, that if they would identify themselves with the poorest in the land they were bound to exclude from their wardrobes all

[1] This appeared under the title "The U.P. Tour."
[2] The ruler of Bhopal

foreign cloth and take to khadi and encourage the spread of the spinning-wheel. In response to his appeal for contributions for the Ajmal Jamia fund, a committee was formed at once to make house-to-house collections.

Young India, 19-9-1929

43. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

[Before *September 11, 1929*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. I see that things have gone well there. Do everything as steadfastly as you can and God will see you through. Explain to others also the importance of the morning prayer; teach them the benefit of body labour, and insist on doing some labour yourself. With gentleness and firmness you will succeed in everything.

Do not worry in the least. There is no cause at all for worry. To one who has studied the *Gita* all conditions should be the same. Since one has to mind only one's duty, why worry? Wherever we go we should make ourselves as useful as we can. Practise writing English. Send something written in English to me here. Translate it. I will send it back after getting it corrected. This is also a way of learning.

My health is steadily improving.

Blessings form

BAPU

[PS.]

Below is part of my programme. The rest afterwards.

Agra	11
Mainpuri, etc.	13
Kanauj	14
Kanpur	15-16
Unav	17
Nawabganj	18
Lucknow	20
Faizabad	21
Akbarpur	22
Banaras	23

From a photostat or the Gujarati: G.N. 3355

[1] From Gandhiji's tour programme supplied at the end of the letter

44. RESOLUTION ON AJMAL JAMIA FUND[1]

[*September 11, 1929*]

Whereas it is necessary to maintain the Jamia Millia, Delhi, as a memorial to the late Hakim Ajmal Khan Saheb, this meeting of the Trustees of the Ajmal Jamia Fund hereby resolves that out of the sums so far collected a sum of Rs. 1000/- be retained with the treasurer and the balance be transferred to the Jamia to constitute a reserve fund for permanent investments and meeting the deficit between the current income and expenditure and in future all sums received be handed over to the Jamia for the same purpose.

All sums received prior to the date and not passed through the hands of the Treasurer shal be accounted to him and this meeting authorizes the Treasurer to legalize the expenditure of that money by the Jamia authorities under the sanction of the President. The Treasurer be authorized to appoint a duly certified auditor for the auditing of the accounts of the Fund.

From a microfilm: S. N. 15580

45. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

AGRA,

September 11, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I send with this a copy of the letter I have written to Jagjivandas. You must have received the letters which were posted yesterday at Bhopal. Prabhavati arrived here yesterday. Sharma too has come. I am very happy indeed. We are not likely to learn much even from him. I have told him that he may go home from here. Devedas has gone to Almora. Whenever you write to me, give me news about Bhansali. Gopalrao must have recovered, and come back to the Mandir.

[1] In a letter to Gandhiji dated December 11, 1929, Dr. Zakir Husain wrote: "I beg to enclose herewith copy for your file of the resolution passed by the trustees of the Ajmal Jamia Fund on the 11th September, 1929, at Bhopal." The source contains the names of Gandhiji, Zakir Hussain, Dr. M.A. Ansari and Jamnalal Bajaj as signatories.

Let me know what was done about my suggestion to shift the women's work centre to the house occupied by Bhansali. I hear from Manilal that it is already fixed that Dr. Mehta will come in October. We should, therefore, make our arrangements soon. What happened about Zaverbhai's wife?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5432; also Bapuna patro…7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 125-6

46. LETTER TO JAGJIVANDAS

AGRA,
September 11, 1929

BHAISHRI JAGJIVANDAS,

I enclose Bhai Chhaganlal Joshi's letter on the subject of the temple at Lathi. You will see that his criticism is severe; if it is well founded, he deserves to be thanked for it. If his criticism does you injustice in any way, you should not get angry, considering that the criticism proceeded from a pure motive. If the criticism is justified, you should acknowledge the great mistake you have made and, in future, think many times before shouldering such a responsibility. You will see from Bhai Chhaganlal's letter that an effort is being made to obtain money for the expenditure already incurred. As for the work that remains to be done, get necessary help from some source and finish it. Please return Chhaganlal's letter.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 15422

47. A LETTER

AGRA,
September 11, 1929

I have written to Surajbhan advising him that if they, husband and wife, wish to live a life free of lust they must avoid being alone together. And if they are disturbed by passion even when they meet publicly they must stop accepting personal services form each other.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/4

48. A LETTER

September 11, 1929

I am dictating this letter in Agra. If in an adverse situation we can preserve our calm while fighting against the situation and can continue to love the person responsible for it, we shall then gradually overcome the situation. Do not ever lose heart.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/5

49. A LETTER

AGRA,
September 11, 1929

I have your letter. I would rather buy pure swadeshi than buy from a firm that combines foreign and indigenous.

It would be very difficult for me to distinguish between a wholly foreign firm and one with mixed stock. I would venture to give an opinion only after examining the particulars of each case. The best course in such matters is for each person to follow his own judgment.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/6

50. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, AGRA[1]

September 11, 1929

Gandhiji whilst thanking them[2] on their collection[3] and the admirable restraint which they had shown in presenting all their addresses at a single function declined to accept their plea in the Agra citizens' address that hard times justified the limited size of their purse.

I know that the moneyed citizens of Agra could have made the purse bigger if they had wished. Hard times cannot serve as a justification for them, for it is a notorious fact that famine conditions present opportunities for profiteering to the middlemen class of which they are not slow to take advantage. Hard times instead of putting a curb on your generosity ought to serve as a stimulant in the present case, because khadi work for which the various purses are being raised is just the activity par excellence which is calculated to alleviate the distress caused by famine conditions.

He asked the audience to give substantially to the volunteers as soon as they approached them. He had made it clear in his Andhra speeches that he did not want addresses framed, for he had no place to keep them and every rupee spent in framing meant the loss of one woman's subsistence for 16 days. He said he meant no disrespect if he wanted to auction them. He had done so before and one address in Andhra fetched Rs. 10,000.[4]

I am here to redeclare my faith in the potency of non-co-operation. You have all got to prepare for January 1930 from now. The A.I.C.C. has already laid down the conditions by fulfilling which alone, in its opinion, swaraj by non-violent means can be attained. It is the triple constructive programme, viz., the boycott of foreign cloth through khadi, the suppression of the drink and drug evil and the elimination of untouchability by the Hindus. And since all this work can be effectively done through a proper Congress organization, the reorganization of the Congress by the enrolment of Congress members is a necessity. Let me warn you solemnly that if we do

[1] This appeared under the title "The U.P. Tour."

[2] District Congress Committee, District Board, Municipal Board and Agra Youth League.

[3] A Joint collection of Rs. 8,000 out of which Rs. 4,000 represented Agra citizens' purse.

[4] This paragraph is from *The Leader*, 15-9-1929.

nothing now, swaraj or independence is not going to drop down from heaven by a mere declaration by the Congress in December. I will go further and say, that unless in the mean time we shall have forged an effective sanction to back our declaration which we want to make, if the Government should refuse to accept by the midnight of December 31, 1929 the national demand, our declaration will remain a dead letter and we shall be unable to do anything effective during 1930.

Young India, 19-9-1929

51. MY LIMITATIONS

It is not without grief and great hesitation that I have been instrumental in a meeting of the A.I.C.C. being called for the purpose of electing the president for the forthcoming session of the Congress. Friends have been sending me urgent wires and writing to me not to precipitate a crisis, to reconsider my decision and avoid the convening of the A.I.C.C. meeting. I have been reluctantly obliged to disappoint them. The only consolation I can give them is that their grief over my decision cannot be greater than mine. I believe in waiting on God for guidance. I have no light from within. Confidence does not come to me.

I have a lively sense of what must be regarded as my limitations. I have no faith in the council programme. I have no faith in Government schools and colleges. I have still less in the so-called courts of justice where when justice is obtained it is found to be too dear, and where it is almost unobtainable when the question for decision is as between the ruling race and the subject race on a vital point. I have no faith in spectacular demonstrations. Whilst I want power for labour and its progressive welfare, I do not believe in its exploitation for a mere political end. I believe in unadulterated non-violence, I do not believe in the possibility of India (whatever other countries might have attained) attaining swaraj in terms of the millions by violent means. I believe that unity between Hindus, Mussalmans, Sikhs, Parsis, Jews, Christians and others is essential for the attainment of swaraj. I believe the removal of untouchability to be equally essential for our purpose. Indeed I have no desire to obtain swaraj, even if it was possible, at the sacrifice of a single legitimate interest of a single minority. I do not believe the Mussalman to be the natural enemy of the Hindu nor the Englishman of the Indian. I want for my

compassing my end the co-operation of both the Mussalman and the Englishman. My non-co-operation though it is part of my creed is a prelude to co-operation. My non-co-operation is with methods and systems, never with men. I may not harbour ill will even agains a Dyer. I regard ill will as beneath the dignity of man. The reader should now have no difficulty, if he had been patient with me so far, in bearing with me for saying that I am no enemy of capital nor of Indian States. I believe the one to be consistent with the highest status attainable by labour and the other with the highest status attainable by the people. Need I repeat my growing faith in the life-giving wheel and khadi?

I feel that among Congressmen there can only be a microscopic minority going with me in this long recital of credos. With most one or the other of the credos must be a veritable stumbling block. Is it any wonder, if I feel that as president of the Congress I should be a round man in a square hole? The president of the Congress must be a man, not one commanding respect from a safe distance, but one who represents in every fibre of his being the sum total of what the nation stands for. I dare not submit myself for that test.

But I know that if I am allowed to work in detachment, in spite of my limitations I can render useful service to the nation. My advice therefore to the members of the A.I.C.C. and those who can influence them is not to press me to accept an office for which I seem to myself to be so ill-fitted. They will recognize that it is not want of will, it is the want of capacity, that deters me. An incapable president is surely worse than useless.

Young India, 12-9-1929

52. FOUR FUNCTIONS

During my day's stay in Bombay on my way to Bhopal I had four interesting functions to attend to. The first was the opening of a crafts block in connection with the national school in Vile Parle. It is an institution to which several young men have dedicated their lives. It should be the pride of the men and women of Bombay to support it. An ill-equipped national school is any day preferable to the best-equipped school run under the aegis of an anti-national authority, even as a humble, dilapidated hut is any day preferable to a palatial jail with all creature comforts anticipated. The distinguishing feature

of the two varieties is, that in the national school the first lesson of the boys and girls is loyalty to one's country without limitations, in the second even this indispensable thing is subject to loyalty to a foreign rule.

The second function was the laying of the foundation stone of a building which is to serve as a nucleus for the service of India's women. It is a creation of the energy and devotion of Sjt. Karsandas Chitalia of the Servants of India Society. He has set himself apart for mute service of the woman's cause. Though in my opinion the erection of the building is premature till he has found a steady, selfless, sober, tired woman who would devote herself to the cause and a few girls at least who would follow her, I have yielded to his superior faith and devotion, and not only laid the foundation but devoted a large part of the purse of nearly Rs. 25,000 presented to me ten years ago through his and Shrimati Jaiji Petit's labours. True service of any cause is rendered by raising of stout hearts than buildings. Brick and mortar have no power to attract true hearts. But they come into being whenever they are needed by true and stout hearts. At any rate it is my prayer and hope that this building will fulfil the noble aspirations of Karasandas Chitalia. I know that he would not have been happy without it.

The third function took place at Vanita Vishram for helping the blind. I must again make the confession as in the case of Karsandas Chitalia, that it was not the demonstrable strength of the cause as the faith and devotion of Sjt. H. D. Chhatrapati, and Sjt. B. Khambhatta that induced me to preside at the function. I had the privilege of knowing the blind brother of Sjt. H. D. Chhatrapati, i.e., Dr. Nilkanthrai Chhatrapati. But being wholly immersed in the cause of the starving millions who are worse than the physically blind, I have not been able to take any active interst in the latter. It required the magnetic touch of these two friends to draw me. there is at Tardeo the Happy Home for the Blind. It was for this institution that the meeting was called. How happy that Home is the curious and philanthropically minded reader must find out for himself or herself. The conductors invite scrutiny, but they also invite all

(a) to furnish the Home with funds,

(b) to send the blind they can get hold of, and

(c) to induce Municipalities and the like to do likewise.

It is stated that there are 15,00,000 of totally blind people in India and that nearly 70 per cent of these are curable if treated in time. They state also that the number of partially blind is 2 times as much as that of the totally blind. Sjt. Chhatrapati also mentioned the interesting but painful fact, that the blind beggars in Bomaby received from 4 to 5 rupees daily and that the money mostly went into the pockets of the conductors whom the blind beggars employed. If therfore instead of our charity being blind, as it undoubtedly is today in many cases, it became enlightened, and if then we refused to pay anything to the beggars but took the trouble of sending them to the home or homes designed for them and helped the homes, we should save the nation's money and in the bargain make the blind fit for earning their livelihood as they can be made without much difficulty.

The fourth function was a visit to the new and more commodious abode of the A.I.S.A. Khadi Bhandar at 396, Kalbadevi. During its seven years' existence it has sold nineteen lakhs rupees worth of khadi. It employs today 31 salesmen, 18 tailors and a varying but large mumber of washermen, dyers and printers. For tailoring it pays yearly over Rs. 15,000, for washing over Rs. 9,500 and for dyeing, etc., Rs. 8,800. Khadi is stocked today in 1,660 separate items. The slow yet marvellous evolution that khadi has undergone during the short period of its revival is stimulating and encouraging. A visit only should be enough to convert the sceptic who would go there with an open mind.

Young India, 12-9-1929

53. A TRUE HERO

Sheth Jamnalalji has just told me of the heroic death of a brave Sind worker. He was working in Larkhana and was known for his bravery and sacrifice. The reader knows that cholera has broken out in many parts of Sind, including Larkhana. Sjt. Lahori…for that is the name of this worker…was at that time working there. He sent away his people, but himself he would not move in spite of the expostulations of friends. The goddess of cholaer being no respector of persons caught Lahori also in her trap, and he is now gone leaving Larkhana and all those who knew him wailing after him. For him here as well as up above there is nothing but shouts of 'Well done, Lahori!' I do not send my condolences to the bereaved family. To them I tender my

congratulations as also to the people of Larkhana for having given to India such a noble example of unadulterated heroism. To the young men and young women of India in general and Sind in particular I commend the example of Lahori for emulation. Let us learn to shed all fear of death in the face of calamity, and let us also learn the spirit of sacrifice which actuated Lahori to hold fast on to the post of duty.

Young India, 12-9-1929

54. NOTES

KENYA INDIANS

The deputation from Kenya is to be congratulated on taking a firm stand about the fundamentals, not that justice will be done to them on that account. The Kenya Europeans have so entrenched themselves as to dictate terms to the authorities in Downing Street. Justice therefore can only be expected if they could develop the spirit of civil resistance or we in India could assert ourselves. But whether our countrymen overseas could show resistance or not or whether we in India could clothe them with protection or not, we may not voluntarily surrender the principle of equality. The franchise must be common to all and there should be equal property rights.

ANNA AGAINST IDLENESS

Replying to the criticism that spinning brings a poor return, Sjt. C. Rajagopalachari said at the opening of the Khadi Exhibition at the Tamilnad Conference at Vidyaranyam:[1]

> We offer spinning as a nationwide remedy for present conditions. The relief may be insignificant, but it is certain and immediate, and does not base its efficacy on depopulation or expropriation. If anyone is able not merely to decry and ridicule but to discover a better remedy and organizes a better, new supplementary occupation for the masses, spinning may be withdrawn in favour of it.
>
> Destructive criticism without any positive contribution tends but to kill the spirit of human effort. Khadi puts the spirit of industry in place of the deadly darkness of idleness. ... We all want our millions to earn not merely one anna more but one rupee more per working day. ... but until the rupee is found let no one despise the extra anna. ...

Young India, 12-9-1929

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

55. COMMUNICATIONS WITH SPIRITS

Several correspondents have been inquiring whether I receive communications from the spirits of the dead, and whether I do or not, whether I believe in the possibility of, and if yes, approve of, such communications. The latest inquirer writes as follows:[1]

> ... I have had the occasion to know a bit of the Indian Spiritualist Society of Bombay. ... Recently a boy was drowned in the Tilak tank, Deccan Gymkhana, Poona, and the parents of the boy have sought communication with his spirit through this Society. I am informed the boy-spirit has spoken to them. In his book Subhadra or Life after Death Mr. V.D. Rishi, the organizer of the I.S. Society; writes that during his experiences at the seance the spirit of his wife as also other spirits have communicated to him that they take much pleasure and feel a sort of relief to talk to their relatives and friends on this earth. They have thanked him often and often for the good he has done to them by the spread of the science of spirit communication. Mr. Rishi believes that scientists have not done proper justice to this branch of science . . . to know exactly what is life after death.
>
> .. . Could you not … for the benefit of so many who are seeking and those who might yet seek intercourse with the spirits as also for my own benefit …very kindly express your views (publicly if you so please) on this matter, advancing some convincing arguments against what has been mentioned above . . . .

My answers must be categorical. I never receive communications from the spirits of the dead. I have no evidence warranting a disbelief in the possibility of such communications. But I do strongly disapprove of the practice of holding or attempting to hold such communications. They are often deceptive and are products of imagination. The practice is harmful both to the medium and the spirits, assuming the possibility of such communications. It attracts and ties to the earth the spirit so invoked, whereas its effort should be to detach itself from the earth and rise higher. A spirit is not necessarily purer because it is disembodied. It takes with it most of the frailties to which it was liable when on earth. Information or advice therefore given by it need not be true or sound. That the spirit likes communications with those on earth is no matter for pleasure. On the

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

contrary it should be weaned from such unlawful attachment. So much for the harm done to the spirits.

As for the medium, it is a matter of positive knowledge with me that all those within my experience have been deranged or weak-brained and disabled for practical work whilst they were holding or thought they were holding such communications. I can recall no friend of mine who having held such communication had benefited in any way.

Young India, 12-9-1929

56. DISTRESS IN SIND —AN APPEAL[1]

This is a calamitous year for Sind . . . . Sind is a dry tract and the average annual rainfall is hardly 5". But the total rainfall this year varies between 25" and 50". All this has fallen within a period of less than 3 weeks . . . Not one district has escaped the disaster. . . . The central parts of Sind have suffered most.

.. . A few days back it rose to 73" . . . . The Punjab rivers are in full flood . . . This tremendous volume of water is expected to reach Sind within 24 hours . . . Government has . . .kept special trains ready for an emergency . . . .

The People's Flood Relief Committee, which did some useful work during the floods of 1927, has been revived. It started with a generous donation of Rs. 10,000 from the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee and has since collected a sum of about Rs. 15,000 in Sind. But misfortunes never come single, and rains, pests and pestilence have disorganized the trade of Karachi and Hyderabad. The zamindars are unable to pay because of the losses of crops, and the merchants are hard hit by cholera in Upper Sind and floods in the Punjab. We are therefore obliged to appeal for funds outside our province. There was a noble response from Bombay during the floods of 1927, when the People's flood Relief Committee received nearly 2 lakhs of rupees from the Bombay Central Relief Fund. The distress is much more acute now, and my Committee is confident that its appeal for funds will not be made in vain.

3-9-1929 N. R. MALKANI
HYDERABAD SECRETARY

This was received early last week, and was written, as the reader will notice, on 3rd instant. At the time of its publication in *Young India* therefore the final fate will have been decided. Whatever the fate

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

may be, the distress depicted in the appeal cannot be lessened. If God so wills it, the further calamity feared might have been avoided. In every case the appeal ought to find a generous response.

Young India, 12-9-1929

57. SELF-INTEREST V. SUPREME GOOD

Shri Mahavir Prasad Poddar writes:[1]

I have no doubt at all that if the profit motive in introduced into the sale of khadi, it can never become popular. It has been the policy of the Charkha Sangha that the administrative expenses on the production and sale of khadi should not be more than 6 per cent of the actual cost. If the expenses are more, they should not be recovered from the buyers, rather we should beg for donations to make them up. The proposal is that if possible the expenses should be less than 6 per cent. The ideal thing would be for us not to charge more than what is spent on production up to weaving, etc. If it is found necessary a little profit can be charged on the sales. When khadi becomes as popular as ghee it will begin to sell among the millions and then the profit should not be more than 3 per cent. Secondly, we should also hope that the millions of peasant of our country following what has come to be called the self-reliance system in khadi will be able to spin for themselves and have enough khadi woven for their needs. If they can produce more khadi they will sell it themselves. Whether this golden time ever comes or not, the idea of making money by sale of khadi should be shunned. Khadi is certainly a powerful means of finding livelihood for the poor. But it cannot be a means of making money. Every industrious person has a right to a livelihood. But no one has a right to amass wealth. To be sure, amassing wealth is theft. He who takes more money than he needs for his living whether knowingly or unknowingly others of their living. Artha, i.e., good, is of two kinds…swartha or individual good and paramartha[2] or the higher good. The latter is what one should seek; it is not opposed to dharma. Individual good which is opposed to dharma should be shunned. Khadi shastra is the shastra of paramartha and therefore it is true

[1] The letter is not translated here. It dealt with the question of profits in Khadi.

[2] Literally, supreme good; here it means higher good or altruism as a means to the supreme good.

economics. No one should therefore charge excessive price for khadi.

Those who burden khadi with the cost of other activities do aninjustice to khadi. Khadi today is in need of help from other constructive activities. To burden khadi with the cost of other activities is like killing a buffalo for shoes.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 12-9-1929

58. EVIL CUSTOMS IN U.P.

September 12, 1929

Seeing that my tour of the United Provinces is about to start an experienced and well-educated friend writes:[1]

If get the chance I shall certainly study these questions and write about them. It is indeed a pity if, as the correspondent states, the students in U.P. are more keen on marraige than the students elsewhere and a lot of money is wasted on the marriage ceremonies.

But there is no need in this matter to compare U.P. with any other province. What does it matter if such evil customs are more or less in U.P. than in other provinces? It is the duty of every sensible man to try and do away with evil customs as such. It is improper and against religion to entangle students in the web of marriage. Our religion teaches us that one who does not observe brahmacharya as a student, does not have the right to enter life as a householder. Likewise one who cannot run a household should not enter into matrimony. The grihasthaashram is not meant for indulgence and the gratification of the senses. A householder can have intercourse with his own wife with proper restraints if he desires an issue. Intercourse for its own sake has been condemned not only in Hinduism but in all religions.

If it is true that a great number of students in U.P. are married, then I have discovered the cause of an unhappy experience of mine. Propagation of Hindi throughout India is a special duty of U.P. When I mentioned teaching Hindi in the South I had hoped that many unmarried young men of good character, capable of sacrifice and well versed in the national language would be coming forward for this

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had referred to early marriages, the extravagant ceremonies and the custom of *Purdah*.

work. But readers will be sorry to know that U.P. was not much of a help in this work. Due to the scarcity of workers, the work of teaching the national language in other provinces, such as Bengal, Sind, Utkal, etc., had not progressed much. The reason for this is not lack of funds but lack of good workers.

The extravagant expenditure incurred during marriage is also a matter of regret. Everywhere those who have money spend lavishly, in an attempt to make a show of their wealth, and misled the poor. In this matter also the students should pledge themselves not to let their parents spend too much money on weddings. I have met the friend who has written the letter. He reminds me of Jamnalalji's example and asked me to put the same before the students and their parents. On the occasion of his daughter Kamala's wedding Jamnalalji spent hardly Rs.500. He gave no community dinner. He just invited a few friends to bless the couple. The ceremony was limited to the performance of the religious rites. There was absolutely no ostentation. Both the bride and bridegroom wore simple khadi dresses. It is the duty of every rich man to curb his vanity on such occasions and save the society from harm.

The third question is about the purdah. I have already written a lot about this evil custom. It causes harm in every way. It has been proved by experience that instead of protecting the women, the purdah causes them great mental and physical harm.

What can I write about the landlords? I do not think anyone of that class reads *Hindi Navajivan*. But since I believe that our human nature impels us towards nobility I hope the landlords will follow the example of the samurai of Japan and living a life of simplicity and dedication, work for public welfare. But this is a mere hope. It cannot be realized by my simply mentioning it in *Hindi Navajivan*.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 12-9-1929

59. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

AGRA,
September 12, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Your letter of the 9th I got today, the 12th. Counting the days, I think I should have got it yesterday. The fact that I got it on the 12th means that what generally happens with the letters written to people in Kathiawar is happening also with letters written to me in Agra, that is, that letters are not carried to Ahmedabad on the day on which they are posted. Send someone to the Post Office and inquire about this. For the delay in the arrival of the letters means that, though we post them in time, they remain unattended to for twenty-four hours or are held up somewhere between Sabarmati and Ahmedabad.

Surajbehn's case is somewhat difficult. You must of course have sent for the doctor. If she wishes to leave, let her. I am writing a letter to her. Please hand it over to her.

As the work becomes more systematic, the burden will become lighter. My experience is that one feels the burden not of work but of worry. A person with a well-ordered mind knows easily how much he can carry and takes up a task within the limits of his capacity, but in the eyes of others it seems much heavier than it is.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4533; also Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp.126-7

60. DISCUSSION WITH WORKERS, AGRA[1]

September 13, 1929

Workers from Agra and the districts who were over 31 in number, met Gandhiji at his residence in an informal gathering..."It is so late in the day and we have so few trained workers for khadi work; what can we do?"they bitterly complained to Gandhiji. Gandhiji, as he proceeded to lay bare his grief to them sharply retorted:

[1] This appeared under the title "The U.P. Tour II".

Whose fault? By the sheer strength of its size and numbers the U.P. can dictate terms to the whole of India. What is then the meaning of this helplessness which I see before me? A Kripalani from Sind can today come and create in your midst a splended field for khadi work. Round about you is the spectre of starvation and want. Look how people are dying on all sides without anyone to give them even a decent cremation. You have an unlimited opporutnity for khadi work before you, if only you knew how to use it. If you believe that the cure for starvation lies in khadi, you will not mind whether you are many or whether you are few. You will forge ahead with your work in the fulness of faith without flagging or looking back. In things like this it is the quality of work that tells in the long run.

After reciting his South African experiences he proceeded:

You say you have the workers, but I make you a sporting offer. I am prepared to place all my present companions at your disposal. They know carding and spinning. I shall shift for myself without their services, if you think that you need them for teaching you spinning and carding....

"If we send all our best workers into khadi work,"they objected, "it would either mean a complete paralysis of our political activity, or if with the khadi work they carry on their political activity, the latter will jeopardize the former, as in the event of their arrest their khadi work would come to a standstill and the public would lose confidence in the movement."

That shows that you have not yet learnt the A.B.C. of the soldier's art. A soldier never worries as to what shall happen to his work after him, but thinks only of the immediate duty in front of him. Garibaldi never thought about his crops, when he left his farm and his plough in response to the call of duty. General Smuts never paused tothink of his splendid practice at the bar or of his still more precious farm when he joined the fight. Botha had a flock of 40 thousand sheep. They did not worry him when he plunged into the life-and-death struggle. Neither of these great generals doubted that if their property was seized by the enemy, as in fact it was, it would only be for the time being, and was bound to be ultimately restored to them or their descendants when the fighting was over. Even so ought to be the case with khadi workers. As for the public viewing with distrust an enterprise whose conductors were liable to be marched off to jail for its cause, what is likely to happen is just the reverse. When public opinion is sufficiently roused, far from condemning the jail-going

worker, it would be the shirker who would find it morally impossible to stay outside the jail.

The last question asked by the workers was as to how they could utilize the services of their womenfolk for the movement. "By freeing them from the incubus of purdah,"replied Gandhiji and proceeded to describe vividly how the backward condition of the women in the U.P. was due to her subjection by man and how she would respond the moment her disabilities in this respect were removed.

Young India, 26-9-1929

61. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

AGRA
September 13, 1929

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

How is it that there has been no letter from you so far? How are you keeping? Who are the persons staying at Vijapur these days? Do write to me about everything. Since the above was written I have your letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2364

62. SPEECH TO STUDENTS, AGRA[1]

[*September 13, 1929*][2]

Before beginning his address Gandhiji asked such students as were already married to raise their hands....A similar query about the number of khadi-wearers elicited the fact that hardly a dozen from that vast audience wore khadi....

I am not prepared to hear this confession of incapacity from students.[3] All your scholarship, all your study of Shakespeare and Wordsworth would be vain if at the same time you do not build your character, and attain mastery over your thoughts and actions. When you have attained self-mastery and learnt to control your passions you will not utter notes of despair. You cannot give your hearts and

[1] To students of Agra College and St. John's college at Neston Hall, Agra College. This appeared under the title "The U.P.Tour".

[2] From *The Leader*, 16-9-1929

[3] The students of one of the colleges had confessed, in their address, their inability to put into practice Gandhiji's ideals although they believed in them.

profess poverty of action. To give one's heart is to give all. You must, to start with, have hearts to give. And this you can do if you will cultivate them.

But what is it instead that we find today? The students in the U.P. today get married, not under compulsion from the parents, I am told, but out of their own insistent desire. During student days you are expected not to dissipate energy but to conserve it. I observe that over 50 per cent of you are married; If your will make the best of a bad job, you will in spite of your marraige put a severe restraint upon your passions and lead whilst you are prosecuting your studies a life of pure brahmacharya. And you will find that at the end of your studies you are all the better for that restraint, physically, mentally and spiritually. Do not by any means consider that I am presenting to you something that is utterly impossible of execution. The cult of those who, though they may be married, are exercising perfect self-restraint on themselves, is increasing with much profit to themselves and to the general benefit of mankind. To those who are unmarried I would appeal to resist temptation. After all we are a slave nation struggling to break asunder the fetters that keep us in that condition. Surely you at least should realize the sinfulness of bringing slave children into the world. Many young men from various colleges, not excluding your own, write to me pathetic letters asking me to tell them how they can get rid of their mental weakness. I have suggested to them the age-old prescription. They will no longer feel helpless if they will seek the help of God through all their weakness. The same friend that told me about the marriage evil also complained to me that students were guilty of involving their parents in extravagant expenditure on marriage ceremonies. Surely, marriage, you ought to know,is a sacrament and ought not to carry any expenditure with it. If those who have money will not curb the desire to spend it on feasting and revelry, the poor people will want to copy them and incur debts in so doing. You will, if you are brave, rise in revolt against any extravagant expenditure when you are ready to be married.

Coming to the subject of khadi Gandhiji said he was not ashamed to be called khadi-mad, and those who invited him to address them must be prepared to listen to his message of madness. As he was coming over he was shown from a distance the hostels which they were occupying. They looked like palaces to him. If the students were not selfish they would wish every son and daughter of India to live even as they were living. But they knew full well that such a thing was impossible of fulfilment for

many a generation yet to come, in a country which was known to have atleast ten crores of its population going without a full meal per day. If they believed in this statement which they could verify for themselves, if they explored the village conditions of India, they would one and all identify themselves somewhat with their starving countrymen by adopting khadi.

Young India, 19-9-1929

63. LETTER TO ALLEN MELTON[1]

CAMP AGRA,
September 14, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. My message to the Christians would be to cultivate humility instead of arrogating to themselves the exclusive possession of absolute truth.

The only way I know of bringing about better understanding between different peoples is to treat all as of ourselves.

Yours sincerely,

ALLEN MELTON, ESQ.
PRESIDENT, WORLD FELLOWSHIP COUNCIL, DALLAS, TEXAS

From a photostat: S.N. 15239

64. LETTER TO A. K. BHAGWAT

CAMP AGRA,
September 14, 1929

DEAR DRIEND,

I have your full letter. If unfired food requires the extraordinary precautions that you suggest it is surely worse than cooked food for in practice nobody can guarantee absolute prevention of contamination. What I have hitherto understood was that uncooked food did not become contaminated so rapidly as cooked food. However I value the hints that you have given me. They would be serviceable in future experiments I may make.

Yours sincerely,

DR. A. K. BHAGWAT
C/O SHRIMATI PANT PRATINIDHI, OUNDH STATE, DT. SATARA

From a photostat: S.N. 15522

[1] In reply to his letter dated July 30, 1928, asking for a "heart-felt message to the people who call themselves Christians", and to offer "suggestions to bring about a better understanding between people of foreign birth and those who are natives".

65. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA SHUKLA

CAMP AGRA,
September 14, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I have no notion of the date of my arrival in Unao nor do I know that Unao is included in the programme. Will you please correspond with the Secretary of the Reception Committee?

Yours sincerely,

SHRI BALKRISHNA SHUKLA
CHAIRMAN, DISTRICT BOARD, UNAO

From a microfilm: S.N. 15525.

66. LETTER TO A. A. PAUL

CAMP AGRA,
September 14, 1929

MY DEAR RAJAN,

I was glad to hear from you after such a long time. I see you are making steady progress. I am afraid that I have not been able to give you the thing I thought I might be able to give you.

Yours sincerely,

A. A. PAUL, ESQ.
FEDERATION OF INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIPS
"MAITRI", KILPAUK
MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 15526

67. LETTER TO KEDAR

CAMP AGRA,
September 14, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You were certainly right in bringing Prof. Higginbottom's statement to my notice. Nothing now remains to be done.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI KEDAR
AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE
ALLAHABAD

From a photostat: S.N. 15533

68. LETTER TO T. R. SANJIVI

CAMP AGRA,
September 14, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 7th instant. Also a copy of the Kalpaka[1]. As you know I rarely mention any books in the columns of Young India except those dealing with the things I am working for.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI T. R. SANJIVI
PRESIDENT, THE LATENT LIGHT CULTURE
TINNEVELY (S. INDIA)

From a microfilm: S.N. 15535

[1] An English monthly published by the addressee

69. LETTER TO JAGANNATH AGGARWAL

CAMP AGRA,
September 14, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

You can see me on thursday next at 3 p.m.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI JAGANNATH AGGARWAL
HEAD MASTER, R. K. HIGH SCHOOL
JAGRAON

From a microfilm: S.N. 15539

70. LETTER TO SECRETARY, G.I.P. RAILWAY UNION

CAMP AGRA,
September 14, 1929

THE SECRETARY
G.I.P. RLY. UNION, BHOPAL

DEAR FRIEND,

I have read your address. It was impossible for me to do anything during my brief sojourn at Bhopal. I suggest your adopting the usual method of writing to the Central Union and asking its guidance.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 15552

71. LETTER TO NIRANJAN PATNAIK

CAMP AGRA,
September 14, 1929

MY DEAR NIRANJAN BABU,

I have your letter. I cannot now recall the exact words I used. All I know is that I had nothing unflattering to say about Satis Babu that I could not mention to him. My advice for future guidance is never to repeat the words of another person without having them confirmed by him when those words are likely to be in the nature of an adverse criticism of any person who is not present at such conversation.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI NIRANJAN PATNAIK
BERHANPORE, B.N. RLY.
(DIST. GANJAM)

From a photostat: S.N. 15553

72. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA MUKHERJEE

CAMP AGRA,
September 14, 1929

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I expected a letter from you after your telegram but I have nothing so far. But I have heard today from Rajendra Babu that Krishandas has not received my letter which I wrote to him immediately on receipt of his. Fortunately Pyarelal kept a copy of that letter. I therefore send it to you as I have no other address before me for Krishnadas. Rajendra Babu also says that Ram Binod has not

received my letter but I had a telegram from him yesterday saying that he had my letter. Your telegram I may mention was, owing to the stupid blunders at the receiving station, almost indecipherable but I could gather the meaning.

I hope you are keeping well. Jawaharlal has left for me shorthand assistance of which I am taking advantage and giving my hand and body a little more rest which I am supposed to be taking here in Agra for seven days before proceeding further. Not that there is now anything wrong with me except weakness.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI SATIS CHANDRA MUKHERJEE
C/O SHRI SATIS CHANDRA GUHA
DARBHANGA

From a microfilm: S.N. 15554

73. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

AGRA,
September 14, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I could not dictate a reply to your letter yesterday, for I had to leave at 3 o'clock to go to a village 25 miles away.

Disputes like the one over the exhibition will arise frequently. As you bear them in patience, you will become seasoned. Do not lose heart and, so long as you have not lost heart, do not give up the captainship. When you lose self-confidence, do not hesitate to give it up. Always bear in mind the distinction between the mind's imperfection or unsteadiness and its impurity. Against the latter, you should even force yourself to employ non-co-operation; the former, however, will remain with us for ever. Even the greatest sages have not been able to overcome them; who are we, then? Bhai Madhavlal has written about this case. Since he has requested a personal reply, I have

sealed the cover and enclosed it with this. But I hope that he will show the letter to all. Even if he does not, I have nothing to write to you about. You should go on working patiently as circumstances require. There is God above to protect us and to shape the result; why then should we worry?

I have written to Karsandas about Surajbehn. You should also write to me from time to time and convey to me the impression which you form. I have sent to him your earlier letter and also Gangabehn's. It is our duty as friends to inform Karsandas about the result of our test of Surajbehn.

Have you carried out the measures which I had suggested for cleaning up the goshala? Is there any change in the quality of the water after the cleaning of the well? Do they now make the bread of the right quality?

Krishnadas arrived yesterday. I have sent a wire today saying that Chhotelal should be sent here. When he arrives, I will send both to Almora. It seems advisable for the present to put both of them in Uttamchand's place. The difficulty from that side will then disappear. I do not see much change on krishnadas's face, and he tells me that Chhotelal's health is not at all good.

Mahadevprasad had written some criticism about the goshala; it is with Surendra. We should think over it. Introduce immediately as many reforms as possible.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5434; also Bapuna Patro—7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 127-8

74. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

AGRA,
September 14, 1929

CHI. NARANDAS,

May you prosper in the new year which you are entering. May your firmness of mind increase and your spirit of self-sacrifice become stronger.

If the women in the women's ward keep attending a day will also come when they will pay attention. We may try to impart to them the best we can and remain content with the effort.

I write to Bhansali from time to time, as you suggest. If you think it necessary for someone to go to Rajkot, do remember Santok's name.

Jamnadas seems to have neglected his eczema. It is the easiest thing to cure. That it has developed into a boil is a sign of utter carelessness.

What is Purushottam's weight these days? Has the tongue become clear? Has the constipation disappeared? What food does he eat?

Ba sends her blessings.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro —9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, Pt. I, pp. 54-5

75. A LETTER

September 14, 1929

Let us not give up all hopes of our Muslim sisters. If we try to reason with them whenever occasion arises, some at least will respond. Everything can be done with love. . . .[1] The expenditure there should be managed in the same way as in the Ashram. That is the only ethical course. So long as a public worker has any money of his own, it will not be ethical for him to take a single pie from a philanthropic fund.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578|12

[1] Omission as in the source

76. A LETTER

AGRA,
September 14, 1929

I cannot give a satisfactory reply to your letter from this distance. I must know many more details. But some points can be clarified. A wrong should never be concealed. If there has been a lapse, it should be immediately made public. This applies particularly to a turstee. It is quite easy thus to lay down a principle. But so long as the erring person who is expected to confess is not able to see his error, the difficulties of such a problem multiply no end. Nobody can be forced to repent his error. Nobody will, or should, till he sincerely sees his error. Take, for instance, my attitude in the case of the calf. People could have lovingly tried to show me my error. But what was the use of attacking me? If it failed to make me see my error, may not the same be true in this case? But I must be fully acquainted with all the facts to know whether it is so. However, where do I have the time for that? And how can it be done through correspondence? I therefore wish to show another and easier way. The duty of ahimsa arose from the imperfections of man. Ahimsa means forgiveness, which in turn means generosity. We should try to be generous to the guilty. This is very necessary in the management of institutions. Where there is generosity there will be patience.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary S.N. 32578/11

77. LETTER TO RANCHHODLAL

AGRA,
September 14, 1929

CHI. RANCHHODLAL,

The desire for more and more of everything is not confined to the labourers but has spread in the whole society. The labourers have only been infected by the example of those considered affluent. The argument that labourers should be given higher wages only if they reform their lives and use the increase in wages for improving themselves is like the condition that we can get swaraj only if we reform ourselves. The only relevant consideration for deciding whether the labourers should get more is whether what they are

getting at present is enough for their subsistence. If it is not, they must get more. It is for their servants, that is, the Majoor Mahajan, to see that the increased wages are used well by the labourers. I may not have told you, but I am trying to do something exactly like that. If the arbitrators recommend building of houses for labourers in lieu of cash increase in wages, parsonally I would sign the award.[1] I know that this would lead to many complications. The house assigned to a worker should in the end become his own property. But once the mill-owners become servants of the workers, all complications will automatically be resolved.

Now for an ideal mill:

It will take ages for our workers to be able to run an ideal mill. Why do you think it a futile hope that an unselfish capitalist may set up an ideal mill? Cadbury has opened an ideal factory. Lever Brothers have built an ideal settlement for their workers. Some such effort has also been definitely made by Narottamdas at Sholapur. Tata certainly laid the foundation of such a settlement at Jamshedpur. It is unfortunate that the person who laid that foundation is no more.

Your own effort, even if it be on the very smallest scale is in the same direction. If the mill-owners and the workers are not to bepermanent enemies of each other, ideal capitalists have got to arise. I think it to be quite easily practicable. The beginning may be gradual. We can discuss this further when we meet.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/13

78. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

AGRA,
September 14, 1929

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

There can be no comparison between Godhra and Tadikhet. Mama's[2] complaint is meaningless, but I understand Kakasaheb's inability to find a Principal. Krishnadas arrived yesterday. I have

[1] Gandhiji and Sheth Mangaldas had been appointed arbitrators in the dispute between the Labour Union and the Mill-owners' Associations; *vide* "Letter to Gordhanbhai I. Patel", 8-8-1929 and "Note on Dispute Between Mill-Owners and Workers", 7-9-1929

[2] V.L. Phadke, who ran an Ashram in Godhra for the aboriginal tribes of the Panchmahal District

wired Chhotelal today to come over. I am thinking of putting both of them there and thereby release Uttamchand. If the Kashi Vidyapeeth can send over a Principal, I would immediately free myself, but that seems to be beyond its capacity for the present.

Your weight must increase and it will, if you are not worrying. But you must in no case let your health deteriorate in the attempt to increase your weight. Moreover, it has been our experience that our health does not necessarily improve with increase in weight.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PRABHUDAS GANDHI
GUJARAT VIDYAPEETH
AHMEDABAD
B.B. & C. I. RLY.

From the Gujarati Original: S.N. 33001

79. NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

A national school, judged from the point of view of size and influence, may be likened to a she-goat while the Government schools are like a lion. A lion is far far stronger than the goat; one lion may make short work of a multitude of goats. Is it not then rank folly to talk of national schools or to hope that they can withstand all competition and grow? Only those who are devoid of the capacity to think or can think only superficially will speak like that. But the lovers of national education should not, on that account, feel defeated or dismayed.

There can be no comparison between a national school and a Government school. There can be no proper appreciation of the importance of a national school until the spirit of nationalism is fully developed…thus leading to an understanding of its meits. It is necessary to understand the distinctive characteristic of a national school. It is this: In the national school the first lesson is that of love and service of the motherland; of sacrificing oneself for the sake of the country. In the Government school, love for the country is subordinate to loyalty to the foreign rule. Who does not know that when there is a conflict between the two, the Government school teaches its students to align themselves on the side of the protection of

the foreign regime? Therefore, those who have in their heart the love of the country will prefer the cottage of the national school to thepalace of the Government school. Is there a man who will give preference to the slavery of a prison-house even though it may provide all physical comforts and have the appearance of a big palace…over the freedom of his dilapidated cottage? Had we not forgotten this decisive difference between the two, blinded by our selfishness and attachment to false glitter, the national schools, far from suffering from want of an adequate number of students in them, would have been full, and the rich would have vied with one another in setting up good buildings for these institutions. Be that as it may, even though the national school has to meet underneath a tree, even though it has only a handful of boys, our teachers should never lose their faith.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-9-1929

80. THE BLIND IN INDIA

In Tardeo, Bombay, there is a home for the blind. Shri Hariprasad Chhatrapati is in charge of it and the osteopath Mr. Behramji Khambhatta and his wife take interest in it. We are all more or less familiar with three categories of blind persons. The first category suffer from the blindness of ignorance. No one has been able to ascertain their number. We may perhaps not be able to recognize this type of blindness; however, it is much worse than physical blindness. The second category of blind people are those who suffer from the pangs of hunger. Their number can be ascertained. It has been set down as not less than one hundred million. Although they can see, they are blind as their eyes have lost all lustre. Eyes set in a wax model can be mechanically operated, but they do not see. Similarly, although the pupils of the eyes of these hundred million people do function, they have lost their vision. As I am all the time absorbed in serving these blind persons, I have been indifferent to those others who are physically blind.

Shri Khambhatta's love, however, dragged me to Bombay to serve for a short while this last category of persons in whatever small way I could. The third function that I had to attend on the 7th was to

preside over a meeting held at the Vanita Vishram in aid of the above-mentioned Home.[1]

The sum and substance of the literature published by this institution and the speech delivered by Shri Chhatrapati is that there are 15,00,000 blind persons in India. Of course, about 70% would recover their sight if they received treatment in time. This is the figure for those who are blind in both eyes. The number of those who are blind of one eye amounts to 21/2 times the above number. It appears that every blind person living in Bombay receives on an average Rs. 5 per day from kind-hearted but indiscreet people living in that city. However, the whole of this amount does not reach the blind persons. Their hired servants who guide them along take away the major share of it.

Those who run this institution are making an attempt to improve this unfortunate situation. There are blind people everywhere in the world. The benevolent people and researchers of the West have done much work in this matter. In the United States of America one finds the maximum propaganda of this sort of compassion. The recent attempts that are being made in India are a feeble imitation of this. In that country, there are many schools for the blind, trained teachers and a famous, well educated woman like Helen Keller has been able to come up whose books are read with affection by the people. That is to say, the blind there, instead of becoming a burden on others, ultimately get engaged in various kinds of trades and earn their living.

The blind people who had been trained at Tardeo were brought to the meeting. They sang songs. One of them played on the harmonium, another played on the drums, while yet another read out from a book written in Braille. Others demonstrated their ability to write. One person threaded a needle. The canework done by them was also exhibited.

The demands of this institution are as follows:

1. The rich should contribute funds for running it.

2. None should give alms to the blind; instead, if the money is sent to the above institution, they will be looked after and treatment given to them, if possible, to restore their sight.

[1] *Vide* "Four Functions", 12-9-1929

3. The whole or part of the amount thus saved by not giving alms should be paid by generous people to the above institution.

4. Those who have no money to spare but feel concern for such handicapped persons should reason patiently with them and send them to this institution where they will be examined.

If genuine sentiment for swaraj has been generated in us, even the blind would start deriving some solace from it. It is not necessary to wait for swaraj in order to remove their miseries. Even before the sun of swaraj has risen fully, its light and its comfort will surely spread all round. No time or energy is wasted in putting my suggestions into practice. The sentiment for swaraj implies the same enthusiasm for the liberation of all the blind, crippled, dumb, half-starved persons, orphans and all those who are miserable in this country as one has for oneself. Anyone who has suffered such a change of heart will not miss a single opportunity of serving those who suffer.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-9-1929

81. MARRIAGE AND ITS RITES

I had carried on correspondence with a dear friend on this subject and of these letters, I had carefully set aside one. I present to the reader today its main part:[1]

This is not a letter, but an article worth reflecting upon. I agree with the larger portion of it. There may be a difference of opinion regarding two ideas. I use the words "may be" as very often when there is agreement, people appear to differ owing to a difference in the points of view.

I do not feel that the sentiment about bringing forth children should necessarily be there in marriage. I have today before me instances in which a man and a woman have been united in wedlock

[1] This extract is not translated here. The correspondent had suggested that certain additions be made to the marriage vow of the Hindus as the Shastras had declared that if a man did not have a son he would not enter heaven. He also pleaded that the *saptapadi* should not be interpreted merely spiritually. *Saptapadi* are the seven steps a Hindu bride and bridegroom walk together, making at the same time promises of mutual fidelity and devotion, after which the marriage becomes legally complete.

despite the absence of any sexual desire or the desire to bring forth children. Olive Shreiner had such a relationship; there is a couple[1] in Austria whose relationship today is of such a kind and was also like that from the very outset. There is another couple which was notguided at all by this sentiment when it entered into this relationship, but later on, as a result of this relationship, they did have children. They did not regard this result as an auspicious one. They put this result to good use after it had already materialized. They took the warning and, insisting upon leading a life of self-control, restricted themselves to having only two children. I know of such Indian women who have got married merely in order to avoid being censured by the world or feeling helpless and seeking the protection offered by men. There are many widowers who look for a companion only in order to run their household and look after their children by the previous marriage. At present the course of the lives of those who practise self-control contradicts the belief that marriage and begetting of children are one and the same thing. There is no need to conclude hastily that begetting children is indeed there at the root of the union of the two sexes. Why cannot the purity of conjugal love imply the supreme striving towards the unity of all living beings? Cannot that which appears to be an impossibility today become possible tomorrow? Can there be any limits to self-control? Let us not set any restriction to higher states to which a human being can reach, by looking at the example of creatures other than human beings.

If it is desirable to put an end to the sexual relationship between man and woman after five years, will it not be desirable to eliminate this relationship from the very beginning? If thereby there will be fewer marriages, it does not matter; even if there will be fewer marriages of that type it does not matter either. To show the practicability of my idea even a single example of purity is sufficient. Although Jaya and Jayant may be living in the poet Nanalal's imagination today, why may they not become realities tomorrow?

However, the important thing that fills my mind right now relates to something else. The sentiment about begetting children should certainly not find a place in the vows of *saptapadi*. Why should there be a vow for something which is going to take place if no

[1] Frederic and Francisca Standenath, *vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 12-10-1928

attempt is made against it? Although we may not regard the begetting of children as our duty, it is something that is bound to continue to happen. Hence if there is a vow relating to it, it should run somewhat as follows: 'Even if we enjoy sexual pleasures, they will not be an end in themselves, but only to beget children if we are fit to bring them up.' The reader will see that this vow and the one taken for the sake of begetting children are poles apart, as the north is from the south. Is there anyone who is ignorant of the harmful practices that are being daily carried on because of the desire for a son in Hindu society as a result of the vow concerning the begetting of children?

We can readily visualize an age when people will find it necessary to regard the begetting of children as the primary object of marriage. Such an age prevails in France today. There in order to gratify freely their sexual desire, the people have artificial methods of preventing conception. Hence the number of deaths now exceeds that of births. Therefore the dharma of begetting children is now being taught there! When in times of war, the men on both sides are slain, not only does the dharma of begetting children become essential, but it is also regarded as the dharma of each man to marry more than one wife. It is obvious that the roots of both these examples are corrupt. In the first case, there was an excess of indulgence in sexual pleasure, while in the second instance, human violence had reached its zenith. The result that followed from this was inevitable. Hence despite the fact that it was irreligious in that particular age, it came to be known as something religious. Dharma is and always was as follows: 'You shall now be destroyed as you have over-indulged yourselves in sexual pleasures; you have proved to be worse than beasts, you have slain one another, let those who survive be destroyed now.' The welfare of the world lies in the destruction of such peoples as it involves a direct reaping of the fruit of one's own actions. The *Bhagavad Gita* asserts the same thing. The author of the *Mahabharata* has also depicted the destruction of the handful of persons who survived at the end.

Now that we find that there are many good uses to which marriage can be put, let us accept them as our objectives and let the begetting of children depend upon our natural inclinations. This is what I find to be desirable and essential. What people should resolve on is service, it is only through helplessness that they should gratify their sexual desires.

Now to turn to the meaning of the ceremony. I have no hesitation in declaring that an interpretation which has been arrived at by doing violence to truth is to be wholly shunned. However, in a case where after considering the context a new but desirable interpretation can be construed, it is right to do so. And it is our duty to do so. People will continue to put right or wrong interpretations in cases where the meaning has not been previously determined. Together with the moral elevation of the people, there is bound to be an improvement of their means of communication. As language is the most important vehicle of their mutual relationship, it will continue to develop. And this will take place in two ways … by the formation of new words and new sentences and by giving new interpretation to them. It is a matter of discretion to decide what is proper at a particular time and under what circumstances it is possible to accept it. No principle is involved in this. Meanings that have been deduced with discrimination are bound to appear beautiful. There is only one stipulation; truth must not be sacrificed at any point.

I have not considered here where and what kind of changes should be instituted in the *mantras* of *saptapadi*. This is because it will be easy to take a decision regarding the ceremony once we clarify in our minds the two basic issues.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-9-1929

82. MY NOTES

SERVICE TO WOMEN

Whenever I happen to go to Bomaby, the men and women of Bomaby refuse to leave me alone. A large gathering of men and women always assembles at Mani Bhuvan. However, on this occasion, on the 7th, when I passed through Bombay on my way to Bhopal, four functions were arranged. Two of these were held at Vile Parle and the other two in the heart of the city itself. The first of these was the laying of the foundation-stone of an Ashram for the benefit of women.

Shri Karsandas Chitalia has been the guiding spirit behind this. He had been dreaming of such an Ashram every day. He has always had his eyes fixed on Surajbehn and other women. Unfortunately, the former has become a widow. One way to make her forget her

widowhood was to get her fully occupied in the task of serving women and make her forget her own sorrow. Shrimati Ramabai Ranade and such other distinguished women have kept this ideal alive. Shri Karsandas has a unique faith in Surajbehn. Although she has had no education, she has a very soft heart and has always been enthusiastic about serving women. However, I believe that she has yet to train herself. Shri Karsandas is of opinion that regardless of whether she has received any training or not, if once a small building is built for her, she will train herself as she is kind-hearted and will be at peace with herself if she throws herself whole-heartedly into the work. Other women too will do likewise. I see haste and impatience in this. I feel that as soon as women become ready, a building will surely be ready for them. It is necessary to prepare the temple of one's heart before preparing structure of brick and mortar. Once the former is achieved, the rest will certainly follow. If this is not done, other things even if present, are useless, and very often difficulties crop up in the way of getting them or fraudulent practices have to be resorted to for that purpose. Today there are buildings in which only crows live. There are others which put the name 'Ashram' to shame, where self-interest rather than the ideal of welfare, immortality rather than morality reigns.

However, I am a humble creature who is a slave of love. I am bewitched by Shri Karsandas's simple-minded devotion. Ten years ago, due to his and Shrimati Jaiji Petit's efforts I had received a purse of Rs. 25,000 on behalf of the Bhagini Samaj. Ever since then I was determined to make use of that amount for the service of women alone and in using it to seek the advice of this lady and this gentleman. Shri Karsandas had collected some funds for this Ashram, while a portion of the amount was donated by Surajbehn. That was not sufficient to start an Ashram. Hence, at the suggestion of Shri Karsandas, I decided to make use of that sum in order to make up the needed amount. Not resting satisfied with this, Shri Karsandas insisted upon my laying the foundation-stone of the building. Hence yielding to his insistence, I have performed this ceremony. Now I hope and pray that those women on whom Shri Karsandas is relying will justify his faith in them. A trust is being formed and a constitution is being drafted for the Ashram. Hence all precautions dictated by practical common sense are being and will be taken in order to safeguard its objectives.

As a matter of fact, service to women can be rendered only by other women coming forward to serve. Women ought to learn to live together, to work together, to tolerate one another's temperamental differences, to think independently and to put these thoughts into action with courage and determination and to put up with hardships. Women have a far greater capacity for renunciation than men. However, the women of India have not developed a viewpoint that enables them to look beyond the narrow limits of the family. One of the aims of this Ashram is certainly to remedy this drawback.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS

After having performed the ceremony of laying the foundation-stone of Stri-seva Ashram, I had to perform the inauguration ceremony of the Udyoga Mandir and the khadi exhibition of the national school in Vile Parle which has been recognized by the Vidyapith. This school continues to survive amidst many advertisities, because of the determination and steadfast devotion of Shri Gokulbhai and other workers. It has been brought over to Vile Parle in order to reduce expenses and at present Shri Kishorelal Mashruwala is the guiding spirit behind it. Attempts are being made in this school to give crafts a primary place in actual practice and the spinning-wheel and khadi have the place of prime importance among these crafts. It is in this connection that a hall was required. It is now ready and a small khadi exhibition has been arranged in it.

How can one compare this lamb to the tiger-like government schools? Considering the law in accordance with which a single tiger devours several lambs, large as well small, is there no limit to the stupidity of those who are fascinated by the idea of running national schools? Perhaps a person who lacks discretion and thinks superficially may say so. There is no reason for the protagonists of national education to feel defeated or scared because of this.

There can be no comparison at all between national schools and government schools. There cannot be full appreciation of the former so long as the spirit of nationalism is not fully felt and so long as its merits are not fully understood. But why should, for that reason, those who understand nationalism doubt their own conviction? It is necessary to understand the distinctive feature of a national school. It is this: the first and last lesson in it is one of patriotism, national service and sacrifice for the sake of the country. In a government school, patriotism comes after loyalty to foreign rule. Who does not

know that when a conflict arises between the two, the lesson of loyalty to the foreign government is taught? Hence those who are devoted nationalists will prefer the hut of a national school to the palace of a government school. Who would prefer subservience in a gorgeous, comfortable prison to freedom in one's own leaking and dilapidated hut? If, as a result of our craze and our inherent selfishness, we had not wiped out this decisive distinction between government schoolsand national schools today, the latter would have been overflowing with pupils instead of having a handful of them, and wealthy people would have been vying with one another to build beautiful buildings for these. However, although national schools may have to be run under the shade of a banyan tree, although only a handful of children may attend them, let nationalist teachers never lose their faith. I believe that the school in Vile Parle is of this type and hence I regarded myself as fortunate in having visited it.

NEW BUILDING FOR KHADI BHANDAR

The Khadi Bhandar of the All-India Spinners' Association in Bombay is a symbol of the progress of khadi and a measure of Shri Vithaldas Jerajani's love for it. From the standpoint of swaraj the progress made by this Bhandar may well appear to be very slight. However, viewing it as a store, its progress may be regarded as good. From a small building it moved to a somewhat large one and when even this was found to be inadequate, it has been shifted to a new and still larger building at No. 396 Kalbadevi. A visit to this new place was the fourth function on the 7th.[1] What a contrast between the coarse variety of khadi produced at its inception… to persons crazy about khadi like myself that would appear to be beautiful even today… and the 1660 varieties and textures being produced today! What a contrast between the swaraj flag made then and the woolen khadi flag made today with permanent dyes! But let me give below the account of this progress which was written down in a beautiful hand and read by Shri Jerajani:[2]

The original bhandar was opened in January 1920 in the Morarji Gokuldas Market. The sales during six months in that year amounted to Rs. 28,276. Last year, they amounted to Rs. 3,97,282. The total sales for seven years amount to Rs. 19,60,072. However, this

[1] *Vide* "Four Functions", 12-9-1929

[2] This is not translated here. It stated that about 50 persons worked in the store. 18 sections were to be opened in order to provide facilities to buyers of khadi.

is an insignificant figure considering the boycott, even the store at Kalbadevi is of no significance. This Bhandar should have its own building. If the idea of boycott really catches on, if the love of khadi runs in the blood of every Indian child, there will be a khadi bhandar in each locality in Bombay, not merely the one we have at present. The only way to generate such widespread love is for those who love khadi at the moment to continue to do so, to help this and such other bhandars, and for workers not to let their faith diminish even in the least. This Bhandar will confirm the faith of those who have it and create faith in those who do not have it.

BEGGARS FOR ANTYAJA SERVICE

The Kathiawar Antyaja Committee has sent Shri Ramji Jutha Hirani and Shri Ramnarayan Nagardas Pathak to East Africa and other places to collect funds for their work. Shri Ramji is a worker in Vartej Antyaja Ashram and Shri Ramnarayan, a worker in the Chhaya Antyaja Ashram. The ideal thing is that the burden of such expenditure in Kathiawar should be borne by the people living in Kathiawar itself. However, today we are facing tasks with regard to which public opinion has not been sufficiently educated. There are some who regard untouchability as their dharma. In these circumstances, people who love the *Antyajas* and would serve them should hold out their hands and beg for their sake. It is in keeping with this practice that these two workers have been sent to East Africa. I hope that the Indian residents of East Africa, and especially the Gujaratis, will give them as much as they consider proper and to the best of their capacity. At present the Antyaja Committee is running three ashrams and ten schools. Approximately, 800 boys and girls are taking advantage of these. Is there any compassionate person who will not help them? I had told these gentlemen that I would notice their begging mission in the issue of the very week when they would leave. However, owing to heavy pressure of work I could not keep my promise. Had Shri Mulchand Parekh, the Secretary of the Committee, not reminded me of it, I might still have forgotten about it. I have not written this in order to justify my error but in order to confess it. We should beware of making promises to anyone, but when we do, we should promptly carry them out. As I could not do so in this instance, I beg forgiveness of these two friends and of the Antyaja Committee.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-9-1929

83. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

AGRA,
September 15, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Has anything been done about Kathor? Hasmukhrai should write to me and keep me informed about Bhansali. Has his weight increased? Can he walk now without help? What does he eat? I ought to know all this. How does Marathe keep? Nathji was to go there to meet him and plead with him. It was proposed to frame rules about personal cleanliness; have they been framed? Have the roads been named at last? If they have, I have not seen the list.

I wish to remind you of a suggestion which I had made some months ago. It was that we should get the Khadi Vidyalaya recognized by the Vidyapith and that those who pass its examination should be awarded degrees or diplomas by the latter. We have given no further though to this matter. I think we should do so now. Discuss the matter with Shankerlal and Kaka and give effect to the suggestion. Perhaps you remember that I had gone to the extent of suggesting that even those who had passed the examination in previous years should, if they desired, be given certificates after going through a special procedure, and that the names of all such persons should be entered on our register and that of the Vidyapith. There are two or three similar matters which sometimes occur to me, but I do not recollect them at the moment.

Doctor Hariprasad must have now started the nursing class. Tell Shivabhai that in consultation with Jethlal and Appasaheb he should fully reconcile the discrepancies in the accounts to which they have drawn attention. I think that Narandas, too, does not accept Shivabhai's figures. Shivabhai should resolve the differences with all the three either through correspondence or by personal discussion. Mirabehn told me that a new method of estimating the quality of yarn had been recently introduced in the Ashram. If this is true, it should be explained both in *Navajivan* and *Young India*.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5435; also *Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*, pp. 128-9

84. LETTER TO BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

AGRA,
September 15, 1929

BHAISHRI BANARASIDAS,

I have received both your letters. I shall visit Dayalbagh[1]. At Firozabad I do hope to meet your father, your son and others. If Ramnarayan has already met me he did not introduce himself. I hope to meet Chiranjilal also. I trust that the loss in *Vishal Bharat*[2] will be made up soon enough. How is the Hindi-propagation work progressing in Bengal?

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2522

85. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

September 16, 1929

CHI. GANGABEHN SENIOR,

I have your letter. Do not mind if you cannot help saying unpleasant things at the Managing Committee meetings; if you remain on it, you will get experience. One cannot learn to control anger and other weaknesses by keeping idle at home. One can do so only by trying while discharging the responsibilities one has undertaken. To run away from responsibility because one is apt to lose temper is a form of cowardice and, moreover, one will not then know whether one has learnt to control anger.

Write to me if Lakshmi has been giving trouble. I will then write to Dudabhai and he will take her away. I am happy to learn that the Dehra Dun girls have shown their merit. Surajbehn of course will take time to learn things.

Do not mind if you have started taking coffee again. You have tried your very best to give it up, but you have not succeeded. There is a limit beyond which one cannot fight one's body. Take care of your

[1] An industrial colony established at Agra by a religious sect
[2] A Hindi monthly edited by the addressee

health. Have no hesitation at all in taking as much milk as you think necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G.S. Gangabehnne, p. 26

86. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day, September 16, 1929

SISTERS,

Do not expect long letters from me for the present. I get very little time on Monday, since I have to finish the work for both *Navajivans* on that day. I must wait and see what happens as the tour progress. Though we are here only for a few days, Mirabehn has started a class for spinning and carding. Jamnabehn has brought from Bombay garments made by the women there and sells them. She is helped in this by Prabhavati, Kusum is always occupied in her work. I may be said to be in fairly good health, but I get very much annoyed if any person in our circle makes a mistake. From that I see that my body has still not become what from the body that it can control the latter whatever its physical condition might be.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3701

87. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

September 16, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got today the mail sent by you, but I find in it no letter from you. You need not worry if occasionally you cannot write for want of time. I want you to recover your composure as early as possible. What way can I suggest to you for this? The truth is that composure is not acquired by following anyone's advice; it springs from within.

I myself am fighting with the demon of Anger these days. The moment anyone in our circle makes a mistake, this adversary Angerrides on my back. This betokens weakness of both body and mind. If the mind has become completely indifferent, in what way

can the body's weakness affect it? The reason knows this, but the heart has not felt this knowledge. One day, however, this anger is bound to leave me. My harshest attacks are on Pyarelal and Kusum. As I must win God's grace by my own effort, so also must you. Do not imagine that there is any difference between you and me…both of us have the same *atman,* and both of us have an element of the brute in us. The latter will disappear if the darkness of ignorance vanishes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5436; also *Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine,* p. 130

88. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Silence Day, September 16, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL

Narandas's letter and yours were caught between other letters and so I did not see them when replying to the other letters today.[1] After the mail had been dispatched, I started reading the letters which I had read incompletely and, as I removed the clip, I saw the two letters. I was glad. I wish that your reconciliation should endure. I shall certainly be convenient if the women's work can be located in the enclosed courtyard. Gangabehn ought to have obtained my permission for starting a fast. It does not matter if she is fasting only for a day or two. I propose to send a wire about this tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5437; also *Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine,* pp. 130-1

89. LETEER TO ASHRAM CHILDREN

AGRA,

September 16, 1929

BIRDS OF THE BAL MANDIR,

If you do not dictate any letters to me, why should I go on writing to you? You should dictate to respected Gangabehn whatever kind of letter you may like for me. There are beautiful buildings here

[1] *Vide* the preceeding item

in Agra. I remember you when I look at those buildings. Learn from your teacher where Agra is and all about its history.

From a copy of Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/16

90. TELEGRAM TO UDYOGA MANDIR, SABARMATI

September 17, 1929

WIRE RESULT GANGABEHN'S FAST HER HEALTH.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 15822

91. TELEGRAM TO KHADI SHOP, SRINAGAR [1]

September 17, 1929

WIRE RECEIVED. KEEP CHHOTELAL FOR PRESENT. WHEN CAN YOU RELIEVE EARLIEST? DO YOU NOW RECEIVE LETTERS?

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 15556

92. MESSAGE TO BOMBAY CHILDREN [2]

AGRA

September 17, 1929

The children who live and study in Bombay ought to know that they are but a drop in the ocean of the crores of children in India. Also they must realize that a large number of these crores of Indian children are only living skeletons. If the Bombay children look upon them as their own brothers and sisters, what are they going to do for them?

With blessings of

BAPU

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-10-1929

[1] In reply to addressee's telegram dated September 16, which read: "Relieving Chhotelalji soon will disturb work considerably. Please wire" (S.N. 15555).

[2] Received preparatory to celebration of Gandhiji's birthday by them

93. LETTER TO CHAIRMAN, MUNICIPAL BOARD, LUCKNOW

CAMP AGRA,
September 17, 1929

THE CHAIRMAN
MUNICIPAL BOARD
LUCKNOW

DEAR SIR,

I have your letter. With reference to the hoisting ceremony of the national flag I take it that you have fixed the time in consultation with the Reception Committee for I am not my own master when I undertake these tours. The Reception Committees in each place regulate my movements.

Yours faithfully,

From a microfilm: S.N. 15560

94. LETTER TO SWAMI GOVINDANAND

CAMP AGRA,
September 17, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have just heard that you are conducting, in the name of the Congress, a khadi bhandar uncertified by the All-India Spinners' Association at which spurious khadi is sold. I have received also the specimen of a handkerchief which obviously contains mill yarn. I would like you to tell me how far there is truth in the statement brought to my notice.

Yours sincerely,

SWAMI GOVINDANAND
PRESIDENT, SIND P.C.C.
KESARI OFFICE, KARACHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 15547-a

95. LETTER TO SECRETARY, A.I.S.A., AHMEDABAD

CAMP AGRA,
September 17, 1929

THE SECRETARY ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION
MIRZAPUR, AHMEDABAD

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1] about the Khadi Bhandar run by Swami Govindanand. I have written[2] to him directly of which a copy is sent herewith.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosures:

From a microfilm: S.N. 15547

96. LETTER TO ZIAUDDIN AHMAD[3]

CAMP AGRA,
September 17, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I have received advice from Sabarmati that the book mentioned by you has been received there. I have a long tour in front of me and I am not likely to be at the Ashram for a long time to come. I am afraid therefore that I shall not be able to look at your book before next year.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 15530

[1] This read: "Swami Govindanand's Bhandar is not one certified by the A.I.S.A. Still it is feared that as it is run by the President, Congress Committee, difficulties may arise. . ."(S.N. 15546).

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] In reply to his letter requesting Gandhiji to write a few words about his book, *Systems of Education* (S.N. 15529).

97. LETTER TO D. VENKATESWARLU

CAMP AGRA,
September 17, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. When you have finished your course if you are till intent on coming to the Ashram there would be no difficulty about your admission. But you will write again after next June if you are still so minded. I would, however, recommend your living the Ashram life where you are by way of preparation. And it would be advisable for you to come at first alone and after you are acclimatized and satisfied that you can lead the Ashram life, your wife can follow. I would also sugget your both learning Hindi. I presume you have a copy of the constitution of the Udyoga Mandir. If you have not you should send for one from Sabarmati.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. D. VENKATESWARLU
FINAL YEAR, GOVERNMENT TEXTILE INSTITUTE
WASHERMENPET, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 15537

98. LETTER TO K. GANESAN

CAMP AGRA,
September 17,. 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and I have advice from Sabarmati that your mother's yarn[1] was safely received. Please thank her on my behalf for the value of it.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. GANESAN
C/O SJT. K. KUPPUSWAMI IYER, B.A., B.L.
HIGH COURT VAKIL, DINDIGUL

From a microfilm: S.N. 15543

[1] Thirty thousand yards sent as gift on Gandhiji's birthday

99. LETTER TO M. S. ADHIKARI

CAMP AGRA,
September 17, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. I suggest your showing your scheme to someone better qualified to examine it and having more leisure for it.

Yours sincerely,

M. S. ADHIKARI
C/O MODERN HINDU HOTEL
FORT, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 15545

100. LETTER TO KANNOOMAL

CAMP AGRA,
September 17, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry I could not see you when you called as I was just closing my eyes. I have now got your books for which I thank you. I do not find the price of the books of which you have sent me a list nor do I find it in the books themselves, for instance, *Sayings of Kabir* in Hindi which I have been just glancing through.

Yours sincerely,

LALA KANNOOMAL
DHOLPUR (RAJPUTANA)

From a microfilm: S.N. 15551

[1] Dated September 9, which read: "I have herewith enclosed a copy of the Rules and Regulations of a certain company in Bombay which professes to grant loans on co-operative basis at 1 per annum. . . .If the scheme can alleviate and better the present economic condition of the country, I think it is worth the trial. . . ." (S.N. 15544)

101. LETTER TO V.V. DIKSHIT

CAMP AGRA,
September 17, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter enclosing Sjt. Seshagiri Rao's letter. I suggest by way of preliminary that his machine be shown to Sjt. Narayana Raju of Ellore who knows something of spinning-wheels. If he is absolutely sure of his invention he can send it to Sabarmati for examination. If the machine is at all promising every facility will be given to him to perfect his conception. He will have to bear the cost of sending the machine and of returning it if he wants its return in the event of its being found unsatisfactory. His board and lodging will be found for him by the Udyoga Mandir in the event of his coming to Sabarmati. It am not writing separately to Sjt. Rao. Let this serve as an acknowledgment of his letter also.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. V.V. DIKSHIT
ELLORE, WEST GODAVARI DISTRICT

From a microfilm: S.N. 1558

102. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

CAMP AGRA
September 17, 1929

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

I have your letter. I am sending today to Purushottamdas Tandon the covering letter. You will see in *Young India* the use I have made of some figures quoted by you in the Mysore Bulletin[1]. There should be more work along this line. The very figures you have given can be still further worked out and they will show startling results. For instance the average income of 1 anna 7 pies means that the income of 11 crores who have four months in the year at least lying absolutely idle on their hands is much less than 1 anna 7 pies because the average includes the incomes of big zamindars and the fat salaries of highly placed officials as also the equally fat fees of

[1] *Vide* "Soe Telling Figures", 19-9-1929

doctors and lawyers. It should not be difficult for someone to work out these figures and find the average income of the 11 crores. It must be nearer 1 pie than seven. Surely, 66 crores for foreign yarn and foreign piece-goods is a wrong figure for the imports from England alone of piece-goods excluding yarn amount to nearly 60 crores. If you add to this imports of yarn from England and imports of yarn and piece-goods from Japan and Italy they are likely to be 100 crores, but this requires checking. Who has prepared these figures? Here is a copy of my itinerary revised to date.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure 1

SJT. JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
SECRETARY, FOREIGN-CLOTH BOYCOTT COMMITTEE
CONGRESS HOUSE
414 GIRGAUM BACK ROAD, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 15559

103. LETTER TO DESH RAJ

CAMP AGRA,
September 17, 1929

MY DEAR DESH RAJ,

Though your report on Mr. Brayne's rural work is unquestionably late I welcome it as I have been anxiously waiting for it. I am now devouring it. May I make public use of it? If you can absolutely vouch for every statement made by you it is a valuable document. It would not do to have a single statement successfully contradicted. Attempts at contradiction probably there would be but you must have chapter and verse in support of what your have said. You realize that some of your statements are most damaging. If therefore you want to revise any portion you may do so. There are some obvious slips at page 6. You say "they have got an agricultural farm of about 40 yds". I suppose you mean acres. At page 14 you say "from the last year Government sanction an annual grant of Rs.2,50,000 for the village guides". This seems to be surely an error but I cannot guess the correct figure unless it is Rs.250 or Rs.2,500. Please let me know the correct figure. But in view of these slips I would like you to revise the report and make it absolutely accurate inconnection with every single detail. And I need hardly ask you to

be prompt in your reply. Please let me have your reply if possible at Lucknow where I expect to be from 27th to 30th.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 15561

104. LETTER TO JAGANNATH

CAMP AGRA,
september 17, 1929

MY DEAR JAGANNATH,

Better late than never. I have been boiling with indignation against you for being so late with the report. After your last visit to the Ashram with Tandonji I thought that I would get the report at once but you know what time it took before you could send it to me. However there is some compensation in that the report is exhaustive. I am now studying it carefully. You will find my letter[1] herewith to Desh Raj. Please send it to him. I am keeping my health as well as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure: Tour Programme[2]

SJT. JAGANNATH

From a microfilm: S.N. 15541

105. LETTER TO EVELYN GEDGE

CAMP AGRA,
September 17, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am writing at once to Cornelius and I hope that the result of my correspondance will prove happy though his letter to Mr. Vergese fills me with doubt. During our conversation you wanted me not to mention your name but I think that it would be wrong not to mention your name. Cornelius ought to know the source of my information and it is better not to leave him to guess it. I hope therefore I am right in using your name. I did not gather at our

[1] *Vide* the preceding item
[2] Not available

conversation that you intended absolute prohibition. I return the two letters sent by you.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosures: 2

MISS EVELYN GEDGE
UNIVERSITY SETTLEMENT
VACCHANGANDHI ROAD
GAMDEVI, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 15562

106. LETTER TO N.S. HARDIKAR[1]

CAMP AGRA,
September 17, 1929

DEAR DR. HARDIKAR,

I have your letter about the flag. I am already attending to it. Your suggestion is quite good and workable. It may take a little time before the thing is in working order. I note what you say about the size. I had similar complaints from one or two other workers. I note also what you say about the fastness of colours.

Yours sincerely,

DR. N.S. HARDIKAR
HINDUSTAN SEVA DAL, HUBLI

From a photostat: S.N. 15528

107. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

CAMP AGRA,
September 17, 1929

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter about the doings of Congressmen there. What you say is too true. I am simply sitting still. I enclose Dr. Hardikar's letter. What he says about the size of the flag is, I think, quite true.

[1] In reply to his letter dated September 6, which read: ". . .as per resolution of the Calcutta Conference of the Dal in December 1928, a good number of places have been observing the monthly flag salutation function regularly at 8 a.m. on the last Sunday of every month. . . .We have been getting oders for national flags from distant places both in India and outside. . . .I shall feel highly obliged if the A.I.S.A. arranges that its provincial branches at least keep national flags of different sizes ready for sale (with the charkha on them) . . ." (S.N. 15527)

Can you prepare these flags to the standard size required by Dr. Hardikar and supply all the stores? I would like you to consult Jerajani in this matter. He has also been making experiments in flag making. He has been fairly successful. The colour must undoubtedly be fast. Jerajani has used hand-spun woollen stuff for making good flags. We might have both woollen and cotton varieties but you know best.

Herewith is Niranjan Babu's letter. In so far as his narrative means the slightest reflection upon you it is a bad narrative. There is nothing wilful in it but it shows how cautious a man has to be especially in talking to one who is nervous under a shock delivered to him. I have sent Niranjan Babu a prescription[1] for future use which you will see from the copy of the letter herewith enclosed. I have had nothing yet from Krishnadas nor from his Guruji to whom I had to write about the incident owing to a letter received from him. He sent me a long telegram apologizing for Krishandas but of course it is not the apology I need. I want an absolute clearance. Hemprabhadevi is absolutely silent nowadays. I wonder if her silence is also due to the recent disturbances. Have you regained your weight and are you quite well now? One thing seems to me to be clear from the dietetic literature that has come under my notice, namely, that polished rice is unfit for consumption and a grain which requires so much delicate handling as rice need hardly be taken when other cereals are at hand. Wheat, milk or curds, uncooked green vegetables and fruits seem to be just now a workable proposition. That the plant world does hold an absolute substitute for milk I have no doubt but the secret is still to be found. American friends as also English friends have suggested the Soya Bean milk. I am trying to secure the Soya Bean.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

Encls. Letter of Sjt. Niranjan Patnaik and reply

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR
NEAR CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 1609

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Niranjan Patnaik", 14-9-1929

108. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

AGRA,
September 17, 1929

CHI. VASUMATI,

Once again I have had no letter from you for some time. I must get one regularly. I have sent to Chhaganlal the programme of my tour. Read that letter. I keep good health. I have not yet started eating bread, nor do I feel the need for it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9266

109. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

September 17, 1929

BHAISHRI MAVALANKAR,

I got your letter.

I am writing this reply in great haste. I am under the impression that the printing press valued at Rs. 20,000 was also donated. Bhai Shankerlal knows the true position. Please show the Deed to him.

Swami's name will continue. Isn't our position merely that of the parties making the Trust?

I think it necessary to continue all the new Trustees. There is of course a reason for keeping each name. I can explain it when we meet or in a letter when I get sufficient time for that.

I think I have omitted no point in this reply.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1225

110. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

AGRA,

September 17, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

If you get some time from your miscellaneous administrative work, you or Panditji or Narandas should go to Gangabehn's help. Without someone to help her, she cannot manage the women who are misbehaving. It has been proved that ... behn[1] steals. I have always felt that ...[2] had this defect. Everyone knows what trouble ...[3] gives. ...[4] is a careless, thoughtless and bad-mannered girl.

I think one of you should take [A][5] into confidence and tell him about [B]6. If her bad nature cannot be reformed, [A] should take her out of the Udyoga Mandir and reform her with love. He ought not to be angry with her and abandon her. In the Udyoga Mandir, however, she will not improve. Those who live in the Mandir ought to have certain virtues. If they lack them, they are likely togrow worse instead of improving there, for they will abuse the freedom which prevails in the Udyoga Mandir and, in the absence of the restrictions which exist in the outside world, they would slacken even those restraints which they used to exercise before joining the Mandir. It is also likely that [A] does not see the defects of [B] which we see. I have known few husbands who can see the shortcomings of their wives. If every husband can do this, conjugal life would probably be impossible. I would not, therefore, blame [A] if he cannot see [B's] defects. But it is clear to me as daylight that, if that is so, both of them should leave the Udyoga Mandir, for so long as he does not see her defects she will have a powerful shield in him. It is but natural that he should be partial to her so long as he does not see her defects. And so long as this goes on, [B's] interests will suffer.

In admitting married women, we do assume that we shall get the fullest co-operation from the husband and that, when we confess our

[1] The names are omitted in the source
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*
[4] *ibid*
[5] *ibid*

helplessness in regard to the wife, both will leave the Mandir. What applies to [B] and [A] also applies to [C][1] and [D][2].

If Lakshmi does not behave properly, Dudabhai should again take her away. This should be done every time it is necessary; in course of time, then, if it is our and her good fortune, she will learn to behave better.

I have written all this for consideration by you. Carry out as much from it as is practicable.

How is Krishnamaiyadevi behaving?

It was a narrow escape for Fulchand. But we should not always trust to similar good fortune. It is desirable to keep ready facilities of ropes, etc., near the place where children go for swimming. In any case, we should caution them from time to time.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5438; also *Bapuna Patro...7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*, pp. 130-2

111. LETTER TO JAYANTI PAREKH

AGRA,
Septembcr 17, 1929

CHI. JAYANTI,

The time for your joining me is drawing near. I keep thinking how best to utilize the services of pupils who come from the Ashram. I am not able yet to utilize Kanti's services as fully as I would wish. One thing, however, is going on well, or, say, fairly well, and that is prayer. Kanti knows all the chapters [of the *Bhagavad Gita*] by heart. He knows by heart many *bhajans* too. And so this is going on well. Prepare yourself for the same as well as you can in the time left to you. I take it for granted that you will be able to teach spinning, carding, etc., well.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/19

[1] The names are omitted in the source
[2] *ibid*

112. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

CAMP AGRA,
September 18, 1929

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. The news you give me has deeply grieved me. Swami Govindanand wrote to me asking me to bless some Congress Relief Committee he had formed. I told him I could not do so as all the moneys I could collect were to be distributed through you and you only. I see now what a fix you have found yourself in. You must now keep intact the balance of the moneys sent to you from Gujarat. If you are again free to work out relief measures independently of official interference or control, the Gujarat money will be set free. Otherwise you will return it to me. When you find that you are being exploited instead of being able to serve the people, you will wash your hands clean of the present Committee and if you cannot do relief work quietly and without stirring up dirt you will realize that the fates are against you and that they do not require your services. We hold ourselves ready to serve where our service is needed. We do not need to thrust ourselves anywhere. It is enough that we are willing. Have I made myself quite plain and understandable?

Now for Choithram[1]. Jairamdas and I had a long talk about him. He is sinfully wasting his body. Why can he not, whilst there is time, give himself one whole month's rest or more if necesary and recuperate himself, and become thereby a fitter instrument for service? I think you who surround him should declare a strike and satyagraha against him and compel him to take rest. Please show this leter to him and tell me how far you have succeeded.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

PROF. NARAINDAS MALKANI
DISTRICT CONGRESS COMMITTEE OFFICE
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat: G.N. 895

[1] Dr. Choithram Gidwani

113. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

AGRA,

September 18, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter. Raojibhai's fever seems to have continued for quite a long time, but it must have gone now. I wrote to you about Narandas the day before yesterday.

Today all of us went and paid a visit to the institutions run in Dayalbagh.[1] We met their head, Sahebji Maharaj. No work on raw hides is done in these institutions. They make footwear, buying leather from elsewhere. I saw nothing in the goshala from which we could learn. the expenditure on it is very high. the institution maintains connection with the Government. It runs a college, etc., and accepts grants from the Government for the purpose. There is great cleanliness in the place. The buildings are palatial, and the roads metalled. The institution has its own guards. It employs water-pumps and has electric lights. I would not regard this as an institution of the poor and for the poor. It is certainly one which would do and bring credit to the rich. It is extremely well managed. The residents have great love for the Saheb Maharaj. Women enjoy freedom. Not only are there no caste restrictions, but their observance is actually prohibited. Marriages are deliberately arranged outside caste circles. The marriage ceremony is absolutely simple. Women are always clad in white. Except bangles and a small neckalce, all other ornaments are banned. Even those which they wear are made in Dayalbagh, and it is a rule that they must be made in Dayalbagh. The women's dress imitates the Parsi dress. They even tie a white kerchief round the head. Attendance at morning and evening prayers is compulsory, and the prayer lasts one hour in the morning and two in the evening. Sahebji Maharaj is full of enthusiasm and takes interest in all activities. Everything is done under his supervision. His aim in life is self-realization. The *satsangis* are forbidden to take part in politics. I send with this a copy of the pamphlet giving a description of the institution. More about this when we meet.

[1] A description of this appeared in *Young India*, 26-9-1929, under the title, "U. P. Tour".

There is a gentleman here named Pratapnarayan Vatal. He has had experience in the tannery of the Rewa State. He has promised to help us through correspondence in running our tannery. If he immediately initiates correspondence and writes to you, explain the position to Surendra and ask him to keep up the correspondence. I was told that he has had twenty years' experience.

If I meet Premraj's guru in Farrukhabad I will try to get acquainted with him.

Gopalrao's wound seems to have taken a rather long time to heal. But he must have returned now.

You need not do anything now about [the delay in] the post. I think the time it takes to arrive here is correct. I see that I made a mistake in counting the number of days. For a letter posted on the 13th can leave Ahmedabad earliest on the 14th. It will reach Agra on the evening of the 15th and will be delivered on the 16th. I got your letter of the 15th on the right day according to their reckoning.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Chaman Kavi writes to me and tells me that you promised to write to him daily about me but did not write and did not even reply to his letter.

Narandas had merely asked my permission in his letter. Harjivan will not let Chhotelal go away just now.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5439; also *Bapuna Patro...7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*, pp. 132-3

114. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

AGRA,

September 18, 1929

I have your letter. It is a good thing that Yashoda[2] is now in Ahmedabad. Her illness causes anxiety, but it is possible that she will recover with careful nursing.

If Father has arrived, tell him I expect to meet him in Lucknow on the 27th.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chhanganlal Joshi", 12-9-1929

[2] Wife of the addressee's brother

I know about [the death of] Bhai Indulal's wife. For her this is a release from pain. I am a little surprised about . . .[1] bhai. But where is the need for surprise when such things are in the air?

I enjoy good health, and live at present on milk, curds and fruit.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 68

115. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

AGRA,
September 18, 1929

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I got your letter of September 2. My impression is that I wrote to you during the Andhra tour to arrange for the auditing of the Bengal Congress Committee accounts.[2] I was hoping your auditors would agree to do the job free of charge. You may write to the Secretary of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee. I shall write to him today.[3]

I have had enough rest in Agra. My health is better. I am only taking goat's milk, curds and fruits. I could eat *roti* but I have not tried it. If we get some opportunity to sit down together at leisure as we had in Wardha, I would like to know your views regarding food. Because of weakness or inability, one may not be able to adopt an ideal diet and yet one may have well-considered views about it.

The sages had arrived at fairly well-founded views regarding this matter of an ideal diet but my mind does not accept that they had reached a solution which must hold good for all time to come. But as I have been unsuccessful for the time being in my experiment this subject is no longer of immediate interest.

I trust you are keeping good health. Mahadevlalji had written to me in July a letter which contained some charges against you I drew his attention to the impropriety of it and asked his permission to pass

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to G. D. Birla", 26-8-1929

[3] The letter was, however, written on September 19; *vide* "Letter to Abbas Tyabji", 1-9-1929

on the letter to you. the impropriety consisted in his not mentioning the matter to you first. In his reply he gave me permission to forward his letter to you. the letter, however, was not despatched perhaps bcause I was on tour or for some other reason. Meanwhile, Mahadevlal came to the Ashram. At present he is touring with Jamnalalji. He does not seem to have any selfish motive. I am sending his letter to you now. Read it t leisure and take your own time in sending the reply. And return his letter with your reply.

Yours,

MOHAN DAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6177. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

116. JUDGE'S INDICTMENT

I condense the following from a newspaper report:

> It is extremely common for advocates for the defence in criminal cases to argue that the prosecution story is an entire concoction by the police, and in the vast majority of cases no evidence whatever, whether elucidated in cross-examination or offered in examination-in-chief, is ever produced in support of this argument. Now either the contention is raised on directinstructions of the client, or it is deliberately raised by counsel without any instructions from the client. In the former case the accused has aggravated the heinousness of the offence with which he is charged. In a clear case of this kind the tribunal trying the case should take this into account as a circumstance warranting an increase in the sentence. In the latter case where the legal practitioner has acted without reasonable cause he is guilty of the grossest professional misconduct. Cross examination on these lines is often grossly absued, and it is the duty of the trying judge, if he has any suspicion when an advocate begins an attack upon the prosecutor or a witness, to demand from the advocate an assurance that he has good grounds for making the suggestion. If such is not forthcoming, cross-examination on these lines should be promptly stopped. If an assurance is given, but if it appears on the termination of the trial that no such grounds had existed, the tribunal should bring the conduct of the advocate to the notice of the High

Court. I make these observations in order that a check may be placed on a growing and serious evil.

These are the remarks of the Chief Justice of the Patna High Court.

I have said enough in these columns to show that justice is practically unobtainable in the so-called courts of justice in India. But I was unprepared for a Chief Justice (assuming that he is correctly reported) becoming the framer of a gratuitous indictment against lawyers and their clients. These remarks of the Chief Justice of the Patna High Court, in my opinion, amount to a threat to the accused persons and their counsel.

If the fear of an increase in sentence or being disbarred hangs like Damocles' sword on the accused person or his counsel as the case may be, it would be impossible for either to impugn the conduct of the police. Whatever the learned Chief Justice's experience may be, the experience of the man in the street is, that in a vast number of cases the police story *is* manufactured, and the growing evil is *not* in the accused or his counsel, but it is in the police who therefore need to be checked in their excessive zeal to fasten a particular crime upon someone. The ordinary policeman is in mortal fear of degradation or dismissal, if he cannot secure convictions. It becomes therefore his interest to manufacture a case in the absence of reliable evidence. The judge therefore whose duty is to presume the innocence of every accused person coming before him would think twenty times before he puts a single obstacle in his way. Where is the lawyer who has not often felt the truth of the statement which he makes but which he is unable to prove? And even a Charles Russel will be hard put to it to demonstrate the truth that he feels within himself if for fear of being disbarred in case he fails to prove his charge, he is hampered in the course of his cross-examination or examination-in-chief? The Piggot forgeries would never have been proved but for his fiery cross-examination. A lawyer who believes in the innocence of his client, whether he is prompted by him or no, is bound, in order to discover the truth, to impugn by way of cross-examination or otherwise the prosecution story. This however is common sense and common law, but both are at a discount in India's courts of justice. When it is a question of the prestige of the Government which in its turn depends upon the prestige of the police, the judges consider it their duty to protect that prestige by turning prosecutors themselves. It is sad, but it

is true. The Chief Justice of the Patna High Court is to be congratulated upon his boldness in emphasizing the fact.

Young India, 19-9-1929

117. NOTES

ARBITRATION V. BRUTE FORCE

The Working Committee of the Congress being invited to express its opinion on the Golmuri Tinplate Workers's strike instructed the Secretary to correspond with the employers and put the correspondence before its next meeting so as to enable it to understand both sides of the question and to form an opinion. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru immediately entered into correspondence with the employers and has now prepared an elaborate note. I must not go into the merits of the strike. From the correspondence and the note I see that there are vital differences of opinion even on facts between the employers and those who represent the strikers. One thing however stands out prominently that this is a strike on the part of workers in a concern which is heavily protected at national expense. The Congress members supported the protective tariff in the full belief that the industry was a national industry, that the workers were well treated and that the industry deserved support on merits. The Congress therefore is bound to interest itself in the doings of a concern of this description. The main demands are:

1. that there should be an impartial committee of enquiry into all the grievances;

2. that there should be no victimization;

3. that the case pending in the courts against strikers for picketing, etc., be withdrawn.

Hitherto the employers appear to have ridden the high horse. They are represented by the powerful Burmah Oil Co. and Messrs Shaw Wallace and Co. They can afford to lose money to any extent. The correspondence before me shows that they are unwilling to go to arbitration, and they are relying upon the force which money and prestige can give them. The public need not worry over the intricacies of the case which is becoming complicated by the intervention of the Pathans and many other things that have happened in the course of this unusual strike. The employers seek to hide themselves behind the plea that the strike was premature. Surely at best it is but a technical

defence. Public opinion therefore should concentrate upon the reasonable demands that the men have made. They do not say that their case should be accepted by the public as such, but they ask for the public opinion in favour of the appointment of an impartial committee of enquiry into their grievances with the usual conditions as to restoration of the pre-strike position. On this there can be no two opinions. The strongest combination of employers must accept the principle of arbitration if capital and labour are even to live in peace.

WHAT IS UTOPIAN?

I have before me a report of the speech recently delivered by Acharya Kripalani before a meeting convened to protest against the resolution of the Meerut College Board regarding participation by the students and professors of the College in political meetings. Speaking on the non-co-operation programme he is reported to have said:

> It has become the fashion in our days to consider the non-co-operation programme to be Utopian, but I ask you what can be more Utopian than to suppose that this country can content itself with political liberty witout asserting its economic independence? What can be more Utopian than to think that we can be free without even the limited swadeshism implied in the boycott of foreign cloth and the manufacture of our own? What can be more Utopian than to expect real national workers out of those who live and move and have their being in Government schools and colleges which are in every way soulless foreign institutions? If national life means anything, there must surely be a scheme of national education wholly under national guidance and control, in tune with the past, responsive to the present and fully conscious of the country's destiny in the future. I ask again what can be more Utopian than to expect swaraj from the activities of the imitation Parliaments at Delhi and Simla and their provincial off-shoots. Were they designed for enabling India to realize her full height? They could only fulfil this purpose by destroying themselves and giving place to institutions natural to the soil and created by our own strength and initiative, not descending as doubtful gifts from our foreign masters. Take again the low-courts. I say that to expect justice from them as they are constituted today is all moonshine. Lastly, to believe that the din and noise created by a few toy-bombs and pistol shots can overthrow the organized and mailed despotism that passes muster under the name of Government is mid-summer madness that can appeal only to immature and over-emotional brains, rightly impatient of thraldom but still lacking in the exact calculation involved in solving the great national problem.

I hope that these words went home to the Acharya's audience. The students will never be able to give a good account of themselves in the struggle for freedom unless they become silent, effective, stout-hearted, self-sacrificing workers.

Young India, 19-9-1929

118. SOME TELLING FIGURES

The Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee has collected the following facts and figures:

Foreign yarn and cloth imported	Rs. 66 crores
Total cloth consumed per head	13 yards
Villages population	29 crores
Persons dependent on agriculture	23 crores
Persons employed for part of the year	11 crores
Agricultural indeStedness of India	700 crores
Average daily income per head	1 anna 7 p.
Average daily income from spinning	1 anna
Total employees in mills, factories, workshops and industries	15 lakhs
Capital invested in textile mills	Rs. 51 crores
Persons employed in textile mills	3 4/5 lakhs
Capital invested in Khadi by A.I.S.A.	Rs.21 lakhs
Persons employed by A.I.S.A.	1 lakhs
Cost per head of giving employment through mills	Rs. 1,328
Cost per head of giving employment through	Rs. 21
Proportion of wages for labour to cost of mill cloth	25%
Proportion of wages for labour to cost ofkhadi	73%

I am almost sure that the import figures given by the calculator in the Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee's office are considerably below the total.[1] I know that that office always errs on the right side. Let us therefore take the 66 crores as the correct figure. It means a tax we are paying per head of over Rs.2 per year and it is a tax which we pay for our idleness. If the 66 crores of rupees could be kept in the country and circulated among the 11 crores who are unemployed for four months, they will then have Rs.6 added to their incomes for

[1] *Vide* "Letter to V. V. Dikshit", 17-9-1929

part employment during the year, a by no means insignificant addition. The service rendered by indigenous mills compared to that rendered by khadi appears too insignificant to be of any account. They can never cope with the problem of the terrible unemployment of millions of men and women and even the few labourers for whom they can find employment get only 25% of the cost of textile manufacture whereas the labourers for khadi get 73% for work done in their own cottages and without the demoralizing atmosphere that surrounds factory labour.

Young India, 19-9-1929

119. REASON v. FAITH

I said in my article "Image Worship"[1] that faith begins where reason fails. That is to say, faith is beyond reason. Many readers argued from this that if faith is beyond reason, it can only be blind. My view is just the opposite of this. That which is blind cannot be faith. If someone asserts with full conviction there are flowers in the sky the assertion cannot be considered valid. For the experience of the vast masses of people contradicts it. Belief in the existence of flowers in the sky is not faith; it is crass ignorance. Whether there are flowers in the sky is something that is amenable to rational inquiry and such an inquiry will prove the falsity of the assertion. On the contrary, when we say, "God is", no one can prove that the proposition is false. However hard we might try through reason to disprove the existence of God, some doubt would still remain in the mind of everyone. On the other hand the experience of millions proves the existence of God. In every matter, faith must be supported by empirical knowledge. For ultimately experience is the basis of faith and everyone who has faith must at some time pass through experience. He who has faith, however, does not desire experience for true faith does not admit of doubt. This does not mean that one having faith becomes dull-witted. He whose faith is pure always has a sharp wit. His reason tells him that faith is higher than experience, that it transcends experience, that it reaches where reason cannot. The seat or reason is the mind, that of faith is the heart. It has been the uniform experience of man that the heart is a thousand times more

[1] *Vide* "Image Workship", 28-8-1929

potent than the mind. Faith makes ships sail; faith makes men do great deeds…even move mountains. None can vanquish one who has faith. The wise are always afraid of defeat. The child Prahlad was perhaps to some extent lacking in intellect but his faith was unshakable as the Meru[1] Faith does not admit of argumentation. Therefore the faith of one man is of no use to another man. One man with faith will ford a river, while another who blindly follows him will surely be drowned. That is why Krishna says in chapter XVII of the *Gita*: A man is what his faith makes him.

The faith of Tulsidas was unsurpassed. It was his faith that presented to the Hindu world a treasure like *Ramayana*. The *Ramayana* is a work filled with learning, but the effect of its learning is nothingcompared to the effect of its *bhakti*. Faith and reason belong to two different spheres. Faith helps us to cultivate inner knowledge, self-knowledge, and thus leads to inner purity. Intellect helps us to acquire external knowledge, worldy knowledge, but it has no causal connection with inner purity. Men of great intellect are also sometimes the most depraved in character. But it is impossible to associate moral depravity with faith. Readers can understand from this how a child may reach the highest point in faith and yet retain intellectual balance. How to find that faith? The *Gita* and the *Ramacharitmanasa* provide the answer. It can be had through devotion, through cultivating the company of the good. Those who have had the benefit of *satsang* will have realized the truth of the saying: "What good will not *satsang* do to men?"

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 19-9-1929

120. TESTIMONIAL TO MUNSHI AJMERI

AGRA,
September 19, 1929

While in Agra I had the privilege, in an abundant measure, of enjoying the music of Bhai Ajmeriji. His melodious voice and his knowledge of Hindi and Sanskrit gave me immense joy.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Jyotsna, Munshi Ajmeri Commemorative Issue, 1969

[1] Name of a mountain

121. LETTER TO SECRETARY, BENGAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE

CAMP AGRA,
September 19, 1929

THE SECRETARY
BENGAL PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE
116 BOW BAZAR STREET
CALCUTTA

DEAR FRIEND,

As you know I have yet to report to the Working Committee about the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee. The office has been worrying to choose an auditor and send the auditor's report. I have asked Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla to select an auditor and send him. If he does, please give the auditor he may send the facilities he may require for auditing.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 15565

122. LETTER TO B. NARASIMHAM

CAMP AGRA,
September 19, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I would love to give you a certificate for your ink. I have invariably used it whenever it has been possible. My own experience is that it is an ink that is at least useful but the others who make use of fountain pens much more than I do tell me that it is not as serviceable as the standard foreign ink we get. I do not think that it matters that your ink might not be equal to the best so long as your ink gets the minimum use that might be required of any ink for the purpose for which it might be intended. But when it comes to a matter of issuing a certificate I have the greatest hesitation. I do not want to exaggerate and mislead the public. I therefore advise you to stand on your own merits just now. Let me use your ink freely in the Ashram for some time and when I have got universal testimony from all those who might use your ink in the Ashram I will be more free to give you a certificate than I am now. You will therefore send me a

moderate quantity from time to time of the ink that you may issue for the market and I shall see that you get reports from time to time and when I am ready to give the certificate you shall have it.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. B. NARASIMHAM
SECRETARY, GUNTUR MANDALA JATHIYA VIDYA PARISHAD
TENALI

From a micro film: S.N. 15549

123. LETTER TO L. BANARASIDAS

CAMP AGRA,
September 19, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is difficult for me to believe that the Servants of the People Society would not give you a hearing. I am forwarding your letter to them.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. L. BANARASIDAS, B.A.,LL.B.
MANAGER, RADHA KISHAN HIGH SCHOOL
JAGRAON

From a microfilm: S.N. 15563

124. LETTER TO BHANU PRASAD

CAMP AGRA,
September 19, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It would certainly be much more convenient for me to see you personally before I give you any advice. I therefore accept your suggestion that you should see me when I am in Fyzabad or you may anticipate the date and try to see me at Banaras or Lucknow. I hope you are better.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. BHANU PRASAD
RAKAGUNJ
FYZABAD (AUDH)

From a microfilm: S.N. 15564

125. LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI

AGRA,
September 19, 1929

CHI. RADHA,

Nowadays I have to carry on my work mostly by dictating letters, because, if I must take rest and also attend to business, I have to dictate letters while taking meals or while spinning. How did you happen to have an attack of fever? It does not matter if Manu has left. When Santok comes, tell her to write to me in details.

I wish to solve the problem of Umiya as early as possible. It would be very good if she improves her Gujarati a little more. Write to her about it from time to time. How is Rukmini's health? Whenever you two sisters get an opportunity for service, you should acquit yourselves well and cultivate the utmost humility.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8676. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

126. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

AGRA,
September 19, 1929

CHI. PREMA,

I have your[1] letter. In using the singular I have yielded to my trust in you. Your lengthy reply was welcome. Sons and daughters should be satisfied if the father, busy with his work, writes only a line, but they on their part ought to pour out their hearts when writing to him.

It is of course quite true that I wish to catch anyone that walks into my net. One may be completely ruined if caught in somebody else's net. But I do not know of any person that was ruined by being caught in mine. Your request for money to pay the fare to Bomaby is right and I was happy that you made it. I have written to Chhaganbhai Joshi about it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro—5: Kum. Premabehn Kantakne, p. 5

[1] Gandhiji has used the pronoun in the singular.

127. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

AGRA,
September 19, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter. Read the letters on Gangabehn before passing them on, so that you may know my view. Manji has given her a real fright, whereas he ought to have offered his sympathy to her. Personally I am convinced that . . .[1] has committed theft. You know, do you not, that she had committed some thefts even in the past?

The doubt which I had expressed in a previous letter about [A][2] has proved correct for the present at any rate. If he can cultivate the ability to see his wife's defects, she will cease to be a wife to him and become one among his countless sisters. This case of [A] proves to me for the thousandth time that a husband is a wonderful creature. I have said what I wished to. You may now do what you think best.

I should like you to believe firmly that your mind is not impure. You should fulfil only one condition to be entitled to hold this belief, and that is that you should not nurse impure thoughts even for a moment but fight them every time they invade your mind. The mind will always be running in all directions; our manhood and our duty lie in taming and controlling it. A person who believes that his mind is impure sometimes nurses his impurity or becomes weak. Hence, so long as we are continually battling against impurity, we should never admit that we are impure. This is worship of the truth in its purest form.

It is good indeed if Marathe now admits the failure of his experiment. In that case, however, it is necessary that he should make his experiments in the presence of all and given whatever he has to the pupils learning carpentry, that is, become a teacher. If you can politely explain this to him, try to do so. Or put it before Nathji.

You need not send money to Sind just now, for the work there is being mismanaged and Malkani's services cannot be utilized fully. He has been, much against his will, drawn into a Government Committee. I have, therefore, written to him and told him that he

[1] The names are omitted in the source.
[2] *ibid*

should not spend the money sent to him in the past through that committee.

You should also keep with you for the present the money received for the Assam Flood Relief Fund.

In this season of fever, everyone should drink boiled water. It would be better still if they keep the bowels light with the help of purgatives or enema, and reduce the quantity of food. If anyone has the slightest fear that he is getting fever, he should take 3 grains of quinine and 15 grains of soda bicarb in lime juice.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5440; also *Bapuna Patro…7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*, pp. 134-6

128. LETTER TO MADHAVJI THAKKAR

AGRA,
September 19, 1929

CHI. MADHAVJI,

I had to keep aside your letter for some days. As for continuing the present diet, I think it necessary that you should get yourself examined for an assessment of the results. There is no doubt that you will regain strength. Eat only as much as you can digest. Be in no hurry about putting on weight. Certainly, it is an ideal thing to leave off business and devote yourself entirely to public work in a spirit of service to others, but this cannot be done in a hurry. You may retire from business only when you feel certain in your mind that it is quite impossible for you to stay on in business. It is absolutely necessary not to take a hasty step and have to repent later. My advice to many has been that they should begin by regarding themselves as trustees oftheir business, and that, while they ran it in this spirit, they should make their personal life plain and simple, maintaining themselves at the least possible expense. If a person can do this, he will feel no pain on having to give up the business altogether just as the trustee feels none on relinquishing his trust, and will find it easy and natural to

devote himself to public service. I hope you will try to carry your wife with you in your plans.

I am enclosing the programme of my tour.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6792

129. LETTER TO SURAJBEHN

September 19, 1929

CHI. SURAJBEHN,

I have your letter. You should now improve your handwriting. Surely you are not going to turn round and tell me that you cannot improve your handwriting at your age? Whatever the age, nothing is difficult for one who has determination.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/23

130. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI[1]

September 19, 1929

CHI. . . .,

I had not given up hope of hearing from you. I now have your letter. I would not exactly call it a letter, but never mind the world knows from experience that when parents do not get letters from their grown-up sons, it is a sign that the latter are happy and contented. Therefore, when parents receive no letters from their children, they should feel happy rather than distressed. That is what I had assumed in your case.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/27

[1] The source does not mention the addressee. However, from the contents it would appear that this was addressed to Ramdas Gandhi; *vide* also "Letter to Manilal And Sushila Gandhi", 8-9-1929

131. A LETTER

September 19, 1929

I wish the marriage to take place when I arrive there in November. Do not be agitated because I dictate such a thing in an open letter. We have to give up this false sense of shame. Why should we feel ashamed of talking or writing about a thing which we are going to do with the world as witness? We lose our reason through a false sense of shame as a result of which often unhappy consequences follow.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/24

132. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

MAINPURI,

September 20, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I had expected to get your letters today here in Mainpuri, but did not get any. I, therefore, expect to receive them in Kanpur the day after tomorrow. Today my mind is engrossed in *Young India* and, besides, visitors are waiting to see me. I, therefore, dictate nothing further.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Bal that I have had no time to write to him. I shall write now.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5441; also *Bapuna Patro…7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*, p. 136

133. A LETTER

MAINPURI,
September 20, 1929

What you have written about the Indian states is all right. I have revised the English at places. I see no harm in publishing it after incorporating the revisions. I am returning the Hindi and the English drafts. I have sent a copy of the English to manilal Kothari. In my opinion, we should wait a little longer before publishing this. You may get together in my present or absence, and consider it further. It seems advisable to consult Vallabhbhai also. You may ask the ruler also if you wish. I consider it necessary to have consultations with Abhyankar and the others. It will do not harm if you discuss the matter with Amritlal[1] also. And whatever small body you may in the end set up with Motilalji, it will be better to discuss the matter with everybody in it. You will not, therefore, be able to use this statement during your present travelling. If you wish to expedite the matter, it would be advisable for you to come to Lucknow, because there you will be able to meet many of the persons I have mentioned. I think it desirable to meet Amritlal also. There has been no reply from Bhopal. I had sent a copy their immediately. Perhaps there may be no reply. The *hundi* from Bhopal was received. I have already sent it to the Bombay firm.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/30

134. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

FARRUKHABAD,
September 21, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

We are in Farrukhabad today. I did not get the post even here. I believe I shall have a pile tomorrow in Kanpur.

Gopalrao must have returned now. I should know what effect the operation has had on him.

Narandas must have taken up the work now. You had asked me about the expenditure incurred by Ratilal. I never told him that he

[1] Amritlal Sheth

could spend as much as he liked, though I certainly told him that he need not obtain permission for every pie he spent. that is, as is the case with a bank account, when he has finished his 150 rupees, anything he draws in excess of that figure will be an overdraft, and, when that happens, we should inform him. All this requires tact. It would even be good if you gave him one book. He would then know immediately how much he had drawn. it will be necessary for him to know this whenever he wishes to draw a large sum. We should treat him with love and save as much as we can.

Waman Pataki conducts the Hindi class well enough. I met Premraj's guru today. He had come to bring me to Farrukhabad. He is President of the Congress Committee. He has, therefore, not two children but more. I have told him that, if Premraj settles down and agrees to look after the children, there will be no difficulty in taking charge of them. Most probably I shall get an opportunity to see those children today.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5442; also *Bapuna Patro—7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*, pp. 136-7

135. DOES A VILLAGE MEAN A DUNGHILL?

Mr. Curtis who toured India in 1918 and who played some role in framing the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms has in the course of an article about our villages, said that compared to villages in other countries, Indian villages seemed to be raised on dunghills! It is understandable that we do not find this criticism palatable, but no one can deny the truth in it. If we approach any village, the very first thing we encounter in the dunghill and this is usually placed on raised ground. On entering the village, we find little difference between the approach and what is within the village. Here too there is dirt on the roads. At any time, children may be found defecating on the streets and in by-lanes. As for making water, even adults will be found doing it anywhere. If a traveller who is unfamiliar with these parts comes across this state of affairs, he will not be able to differentiate between

the dunghill and the residential part. As a matter of fact, there is not much of a difference between the two.

However ancient this habit may be, it is, nevertheless, a bad habit and should be eradicated. The *Manusmriti* and other Hindu religious scriptures, the Koran, the Bible, and the injunctions of Zoroaster…all give detailed suggestions regarding maintaining the cleanliness of roads, courtyards, homes, rivers and wells. However, today we are simply disregarding this so much so that there is a good deal of filth to be found even in our places of pilgrimage. Perhaps one could say that there is more of it in these places.

I have seen thousands of men and women dirtying the banks of the Ganga at Hardwar. Piligrims defecate at the very spot where people sit, wash their faces, etc., in the Ganga and then again fill their pots at the very same spot. I have come across pilgrims defiling lakes in the same manner at places of pilgrimage. In doing this we destroy the dharma of compassion and disregard our duty to society.

Such recklessness leads to pollution of air and water. Is it surprising then that cholera, typhoid and other infectious diseases follow as a result of this? It is dirty water which is the very source of cholera. The same can be largely said of typhoid too. It is no exaggeration to say that almost 75 per cent of diseases are caused by our insanitary habits.

Hence the primary duty of a village worker is to educate villagers in sanitary habits. Speeches and leaflets occupy the lowest place in such education. This is so because these insanitary habits have taken such deep root that the villagers are not prepared to listen to the volunteers, and, even if they do so, show a singular lack of enthusiasm to act accordingly. If leaflets, etc., are distributed, they will surely not read them. Many will not even know how to read and, not being inquisitive, those who can read, will not read them out to the others.

Hence it is the dharma of the volunteers to give object-lessons. Only if they themselves perform the tasks that have to be performed by the villagers, will the latter follow their example; then doubtless they will positively do so. Even so, patience will certainly be required.There is no reason to conclude that people will start doing things on their own just because we have served them for a couple of days.

A volunteer should first of all collect the villagers together and explain their dharma to them. And at the same time, he should start cleaning operations, whether or no he can recruit volunteers from amongst the villagers. He should obtain from the very village a spade, a basket or a bucket, a broom and a pickaxe. If assured that these articles will be returned to them after use, the people will probably not refuse to lend them.

The volunteers should now inspect the roads and go round to all the places where there are any human excreta. They should collect all faeces in their baskets with the help of the spade and cover up those spots; wherever they find that people have urinated, they should collect the wet earth from those spots in those very baskets and throw over it clean earth from the surrounding area. If there is any other filth lying around, they should sweep it with the broom and make a heap in one corner and remove it in the same baskets after having diposed of the excreta.

Where to dump the excreta is an important question. It is a question both of cleanliness and of economics. If permitted to lie around, the thing emits a foul smell. Flies which sit on it and then sit on our bodies or our food spread infectious diseases all round. We would give up eating many sweets and other items of food if we examined them with the help of a microscope.

To the cultivator the dirt is gold. If put in the fields, it becomes fine manure and increases the yield. The Chinese are experts in this matter and it is said that they save crores of rupees by preserving excreta like gold and, at the same time, avoid the incidence of many diseases.

Hence the volunteer should explain this matter to cultivators and, if permitted to do so, should bury it in their fields. If any farmer, through ignorace, disregard the sanitary methods suggested by the volunteer, the latter should find a spot in the dunghill and bury the excreta there. Having completed this task, the volunteers should now approach the garbage heap.

Garbage is of two types. The first is that which is suitable material for manure … such as peels and skins of vegetables, grain, grass, etc. The other type includes bits of wood, stones, sheets of iron or tin, etc. Of these, the first type should be kept in fields or at places where manure from it can be collected, and the second should be carried and buried at places where pot-holes, etc., need to be filled in.

As a result of this, the village will remain clean and people who walk bare-footed will be able to do so fearlessly. After a few days' labour, the people will surely realize the value of it. And once this realization dawns on them, they will start helping and finally start doing things on their own. Every farmer will utilize in his own fields the excreta of his own family, so that no one will find anyone else being a burden to him and everyone will go on enriching his own crop.

We should never get into the habit of defecating on the road. It is uncivilized to do so in the open in public and to make even little children do so. We are aware of the uncivilized nature of this act, for we avert our eyes if anyone happens to pass at that moment. Hence every village should have the most inexpensive water-closets built at one place. The spot at which the dunghill is located can itself be used for this purpose. Farmers can share among themselves the manure accumulated in this manner. And so long as they do not start making such arrangements, volunteers should clean dunghills in the same way as they clean streets. Every morning after the villagers have performed this function, they should go to the dunghill at an appointed hour, clean up all the filth and sipose of it in the manner mentioned above. If no field is available, one should mark out the place where the excreta may be buried. If this is done, it will facilitate the task everyday and when the farmers get convinced of the matter, they can make use of the manure that is collected there.

This excreta should not be buried very deep in the ground, as innumerable germs which usefully serve us live within nine inches of the surface of the earth. Their task is to turn everything within that layer into manure and purify all filth. The sun's rays too render great service and act as the messengers of Rama. Anyone who wishes to test this may do so through experience. Some of the excreta should be buried nine inches below the earth's surface and the ground dug up after a week in order to take note of what happens to it. Another portion of the very same excreta should be buried three to four feet below the surface of the ground and then what happens to it should be examined. One would, thereby, learn through experience. Although the excreta should not be buried deep in the earth, it must be well covered with mud, so that dogs cannot dig it up and foul odour is not emitted. It would be advisable to place a thorny hedge around the spot in order to prevent dogs from digging it up.

When I speak of burying excreta we should understand that there should be a large square or rectangular pit for it. For, no further excreta is to be put on that already buried and the pit is also not to be opened up soon. Hence the following day there would be ready another small square pit near where the excreta was buried the previous day. The earth removed from it would have been kept on one side. All that would have to be done the next day would be to bury the excreta, cover it up with the earth, level it properly and go away. Garbage consisting of peels of vegetables, etc., should be turned into manure on a spot near the above. This is so because human excreta and peels of vegetables, etc., should be turned into manure on a spot near the above. This is so because human excreta and peels of vegetables, etc., cannot be turned into manure by burying them together. Worms do not operate on the two in the same manner. It must now have been clear to volunteers that the place at which they bury excreta will always remain clean, will have an even surface, and look like a newly ploughed field.

Now remains the heap that is not fit for making manure. The rubbish accumulated in it should be buried in a deep hole at a single spot or wherever holes have to be filled up around the village. It too must be buried every day, should be pressed down from above and kept clean.

If this activity is carried on for a month, villages will cease to be dunghills and become instead clean and beautiful. The reader must have realized that no expense is involved in this. This neither requires any help from the Government nor any great scientific power. All that is required is a volunteer with zeal.

It is not necessary to add that what applies to human excreta also applies to the excreta of animals. However, we shall consider this in the next chapter.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Shikshan ane Sahitya, 22-9-1929

[1] *Vide* "Cowdung Cakes or Manure", 17-11-1929.

136. OX v. BULLOCK

A young man wants to know why although a bull does not fetch as good a price as a bullock, it is regarded a sin to castrate the bull.

This question has already been discussed in *Navajivan*. However, many people may not recall it. It is a question that arises readily. One cannot say that there is no harm involved in castration. The Shastras have taught us both our ideal dharma and our practical dharma. The latter not only permits castration but enjoins it. This is a very ancient custom, as old as the custom of drinking cow's milk. The reader must also be aware that horses and such other domesticated animals are castrated when this is found necessary.

The facts are as follows. All undertakings (or volunatry actions) are tainted, and from this standpoint, castration too is tainted since the calf subjected to it does suffer, however slightly it may be. It is tainted again, as the calf has no knowledge of what is done and would prevent it if it could.

However, we do not seek solutions to such problems by regarding them as matters of absolute dharma. Relative dharma does not proceed on a straight path like a railway track. It has, on the contrary, to make its way through a dense forest where there is not even a sense of direction. Hence in this case, even one step is sufficient. Many circumstances have to be considered before the second step is taken and, if the first step is towards the north, the second may have to be taken towards the east. In this manner, although the path may appear crooked, since it is the only one which is correct, it can also be regarded as the straight one. Nature does not imitate geometry. Although natural forms are very beautiful, they do not fit in with geometrical patterns.

If it is desirable for us to drink cow's milk and use the bullock for ploughing, it is our dharma to castrate the calf; not doing so would amount to an irreligious act. In this manner, something which when regarded independently is the very opposite of dharma, becomes dharma when considered with reference to a given situation. If we do not subject calves to castration, do not run dairies, do not conduct tanneries, do not put the bones, hides and intestines, etc., of the cow to practical use and still wish to drink cow's milk, we shall become beef-eaters like the Westerners or, in the alternative, our cattle-wealth will be destroyed. This latter is taking place today. Experienced people are

aware that the cow which decreased the burden of the earth, or in other words, yielded more milk than the quantity of fodder that it consumed, that very cow has become a burden to India. In other words,it yields much less in proportion to what it consumes. Hence, many persons, through ignorance and carelessness, have started keeping buffaloes and drinking their milk. Myriads of cows are sent to Australia for being slaughtered. Innumerable cows are slaughtered in India and their beef is exported to Burma. Countless others die a premature death. No one has the figures of cows which perish in this manner. Those that still survive live as if on sufferance. They are not given sufficient fodder as they do not yield sufficient milk.

If we had not become apathetic to our dharma, if we had not been indifferent to it, we would have studied the science of cattle-breeding in the same way we study the other sciences and would relinquish those ancient superstitions or ancient practices which have lost their utility or become harmful today.

For many years now, I have in effect come to the conclusion and have tried to persuade others that it is the dharma of everyone wishing to serve the cow to see to it that those calves which do not belong to the best pedigrees and are therefore not fit to beget cows are castrated while still very young and reared as bullocks. It is a sin to disregard the necessary dharma which is in keeping with the times under the pretext of following an imaginary but ideal dharma which is not practicable.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-9-1929

137. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

September 22, 1929

CHI. MATHURADAS,

You have taken a difficult vow. But it is good that you have done so. May God help you. To control one's anger is not easy, and very often one is not even conscious that one has become angry. However, one can succeed in every aspiration through persistent effort. Our duty is to make such effort.

I hope you keep good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3731

138. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

KANPUR
[*September 22,1929*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

We arrived in Kanpur at half past eleven. Here the post leaves early. If I wish to catch today's post, and I must, I should be brief. Ramniklal has come here to see me. He is in excellent health. We have observed that it does good to send out people from the Ashram by turns.

The worries of running the Ashram will waste away the health of anyone with a sense of duty. So long as we have not cultivated non-attachment, this is bound to happen.

I once again find that the packets of letters I get from you are secured carelessly. You should tie the string round the packet so tight that not a single letter can fall out. The string round this packet was for show, as it were. The cover was torn, so that any letter could slip out of it. Look into this. The person who ties up the packets should be properly trained. I am writing to Gangabehn. More by tomorrow's post.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 137-8

139. SPEECH AT KANPUR[2]

September 22, 1929

Gandhiji, in his reply, referring to the first, told them that experience had shown that there were three definite conditions which must be fulfilled to make the introduction of spinning in schools and colleges a success. The first essential condition was to have a spinning expert to do the teaching and organizing work. This could be done by inducing the teachers already employed to master the art by promise

[1] As in the source

[2] In a joint reply to addresses by District Board and Municipal Board. This appeared under the title "The U. P. Tour…III". The District Board address stated that they had introduced compulsory spinning in schools and had spent Rs. 35,000 to solve the milk problem.

of a small increment in salary. The second condition was to adopt *takli* instead of the charkha for teaching spinning in schools. The third condition was to have arrangements for getting the yarn spun by the students into cloth. Referring to the problem of milk supply he emphasized the need of expert guidance. The reason why the milk problem was daily becoming acute in India was that dairying had been criminally neglected. There was cow slaughter in India today because the killing of cows today was economically profitable. If they wanted to save the cow and to solve the milk problem of India, tanneries must go hand in hand with dairies. They must improve the breed of the existing cattle so as to render their slaughter ultimately an uneconomic proposition.

Young India, 3-10-1929

140. SPEECH AT PIECE-GOODS MERCHANTS' MEETING, KANPUR[1]

September 22, 1929

Gandhiji, while thanking them for the purses and the addresses they had presented, said:

You could have easily excused yourselves from contributing anything to the khadi fund on the ground that you could not help a programme which, if successful, was bound to ruin your business. But to your credit be it said, you have chosen a better way. You know that the movement of boycott relies upon conversion, not on compulsion. And you know that if the people want khadi instead of foreign cloth, you will find your trade in the production and sale of khadi. You know that foreign cloth business has spelt economic ruin to millions from whom it has taken away the only supplementary occupation which could enable them to keep their heads above water. It is as their representative that I have come to you with my beggar's bowl. If I could persuade you, I would make you close up your business, and turn all your talent and business acumen to the service of khadi. But I know that you are not yet ripe for it. I would, therefore, ask you to give liberally by way of penance and not patronage.

Young India, 3-10-1929

[1] In a joint reply to addresses by piece-goods merchants and their employees. This appeared under the title "The U. P. Tour…III".

141. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 22, 1929

CHI. MAHADEV,

I get your letters. During this tour I have not been able to write to you at all. I remained content with writing what was unavoidable, and thus saved much time. However, I have sat down to write out this. My silence has commenced. It is now 9 p.m.

You have sent a good number of cuttings. I had read none except one. As yet I cannot write anything about Jatin. I am not surprised that what may be called our own circle fails to understand me. Personally, I have not the least doubt regarding the correctness of my view. I see no good in this agitation. I have been obliged to keep silent because what I would say might be misused. But people seem to have understood my position. No one has asked for my opinion. In saying this, I do not take into account questions by Press correspondents.

What you write about Vallabhbhai does not seem proper to me. To make him President now would be like swallowing a hair. However, we shall think about the matter further when we meet, since all of you are coming to Lucknow. I give no thought to the matter now. At the proper time, God will help us. No one has been pestering me either.

At Madras Vallabhbhai rose to the occasion and did an excellent job. As for Karnatak and other places, I am looking forward to your account when we meet. I liked those of your contributions to *Navajivan* and *Young India* which I have read.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11455

142. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

9.30 p.m., September 22, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Your letter of the 20th I got on the 22nd in Kanpur. In Agra I would have got it on the 23rd. This seems strange to me.

We should take care of the cows sent from Morvi, use them for our purpose and return them in improved condition.

I suppose you know what I meant by my suggestion to get the weaving school recognized. The certificates should be awarded by the Vidyapith and the examination, too, should be held by it. The same about the dairy…when we have made sufficient progress to enable students to appear at an examination.

It is better still that Lakshmi goes to teach [spinning to] Lady Chinubhai.

I have been taking interest in Budhabhai's quarrels with his wife for many years. This time I met the wife too. I have always thought that she was to blame. If the women talk about this among themselves, they should inform us too. I do not write more to you for want of time. If, however, you want to know the facts, see Budhabhai.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

How did it happen that the door of the goshala was not closed? Whose fault was it? There will be no harm if the people who have come from Lahore are arrested. Such things may happen. Some persons may even come to us seeking refuge with us. It should be enough if we do not get involved in their affairs.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N.5443; also *Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*, pp. 138-9

143. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

KANPUR,
September 23, 1929

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I was glad to have your letter. Why was my reference to you "the unkindest cut"? On the contrary have I not expressed the hope that you had not seen the letter? And now that I see that you werewholly unaware of it, it gives me very considerable relief. I have every hope of Krishnadas some day seeing the gross error into which his partiality has betrayed him.[5] I quite see the propriety of your not having said anything to him about the incident. Very often silent prayer is the only remedy.

What makes you feel restless and anxious? I hope not Krishnadas's behaviour. He will be all right in the end. He is not wilfully corrupt-minded. He does not even know that he has erred.

I now understand your wire. Hope you will keep good health. I am keeping quite well. Now that Krishnadas has ceased to write to me, you must keep me informed of your health.

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/34

144. LETTER TO RATANLAL TARA

KANPUR,
September 23, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

If you have enough courage, the remedy is incredibly simple. Your sister should ignore the so-called marriage and take a suitable person for husband or if she has no carnal desire, she should lead a life of pure service. When a girl is given in marriage without her knowing the person, that . . .[1] is no marriage according to law.

RATANLAL TARA
PLEADER
KAFOW STREET
GUJRANWALA

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/35

145. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

KANPUR
Silence Day, September 23, 1929

SISTERS,

I got the letter written by Gangabehn on your behalf. I am very happy that Valjibhai has been doing my work. See that all of you take full advantage of his learning. I cannot give what he can. While, therefore, he is in a position to give more time, take the utmost advantage of his store of knowledge.

Lakshmibehn must have arrived there by now. I can understand why Ramabehn and Dahibehn cannot attend at prayer-time. Devotion to duty is itself prayer. We come together for prayer in order that we may be fit for physical service of others. When, however, one is required to do a physical duty, the doing of that duty becomes a prayer. If any woman absorbed in meditation hears the cry of someone stung by a scorpion, she is bound to get up from her meditation and run to the help of that person. Meditation finds its fulfilment in the service of the distressed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3702

146. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Silence Day, September 23, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I enclose with this Chi. Chhaganlal's letter. You will see from it that he continues to feel a little hurt. Is he a member of the Managing Committee? If he is, it seems he was not informed. There may be nothing behind such things, but the fruits can be bitter. You should ask in clear terms the information which you want. The framework of the budget should be prepared, as the Spinners' Association has done. That is, you should keep ready the heads for which you require detailed information, so that you will know the position as soon as it is received.

What Chhaganlal writes about management expenses is not correct. Where, however, extra assistants are also employed, the price

of khadi which is arrived at by adding 6 per cent to cost as management expenses may be accepted for comparison.

But the main thing is the resentment which Chhaganlal seems inwardly to feel. Try to discover its cause. Ignore what cannot be helped and try to remedy what can be remedied.

On a spring balance yesterday my weight came to 98 [lb.]; on our balance, therefore, it must be not less than 94.

Note what Chhaganlal says in his letter about Raghunath's carding. It shows that our work is below standard. Those who card should be able to do so for eight hours. The fact that Raghunath gets tired shows that his hand has not set and the muscles have not become trained. We may not expect him to acquire the capacity of a professional carder, but certainly he should not get tired. This applies to all processes. Everyone should become an expert in every process.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5444; also *Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*, pp. 139-40

147. A LETTER

KANPUR,

September 23, 1929

I have your question. There is on the whole an element of violence in all means. But that is unavoidable at present, because the method of punitive law has been practised since ages. In trying to reform it at present, we make the principle of means into a fetter. When though conforming to many violent customs we are still able to advance dharma a step further, we would certainly say that in spite of the means being faulty the action was on the whole non-violent. The principle that all undertakings are morally impure applies here. It is morally wrong to keep oneself alive by drinking milk, but people have been doing that. Hence, if by keeping oneself alive in that way one is able to render real service, the action will count as non-violence. That is why our forefathers treated the violence of actions performed as part of *yajna* as non-violence. Today we clearly see the sin of killing animals and do not regard that act as non-violent. When society has advanced a step further and eliminated punishment from

law, anyone who gives a place to punishment even in law will be considered guilty of violence. Ask me if you have still not followed the point.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/33

148. A LETTER[1]

September 23. 1929

I am convinced that we must not open a school for the sake of running an Ashram at Godhra. If the Ashram cannot go on under its own impetus, if it cannot develop the power to attract people, it may as well close down. It surprises and pains me that Mama[2] is not able to understand so simple a thing.

I should be happy if the Ashram passes under the management of Thakkar Bapa. If Mama places himself under his discipline, it will be to his good. But if, having done that, he is asked by Thakkar Bapa to leave, he should be ready quietly to submit. Such a contingency is not impossible. Mama has many other fields of service. Amalgamating the Ashram with Antyaja Seva Mandal should not be taken to mean that the ownership of the land or the buildings should be passed to to the latter. If the Ashram is handed over, the Antyaja Seva Mandal can only be given a lease of the buildings at nominal rent.

Show this letter to Mama. . . .

Dedication to duty is prayer. We attend prayer in order to qualify ourselves for concrete service. Prayer passes into the background in the face of concrete duty. A woman sitting in meditation must rush to help if she hears the scream of a person stung by a scorpion. The fulfilment of meditation lies in serving people in distress. . . .

I expect hundred per cent performance in dedication to duty from all of you. If anyone remains absent without cause even for a day from the duty of cleaning the latrines and no substitute takes his place, we will be doomed, to filth and sickness. Supposing the person in charge of cooking out of lethargy absents herself from work at her whim? Most of our work is of this nature. No one, big or small, should ever be negligent in his duty. This is true of all activities of *yajna*. The

[1] Omissions in the letter are as in the source.

[2] V. L. Phadke

consequences of remissness in the yajna of service are not directly visible, nor are the beneficial results of ceaseless vigilance in such work. But if we have faith in beneficial results following we should also believe in the harmful consequences of indolence. The harmful or beneficial effects of indolence or vigilance in the performance of *yajna* have a great bearing on the good of the soul and we regard it as a speciality of the Ashram life that we expect the inmates to be very particular in this regard. Girdhari is here today. I was very pleased to hear his melodious *bhajan* last evening.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kushmbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/32

149. A LETTER[1]

September 23, 1929

CHI. . . . ,

I wish to advise you that you should adopt a strict regimen if you can and pull yourself together.

. . . Even a twelve-year-old constipation can be cured by effort. I am firm in my view that achieving health of the body by spiritually pure means is a *yajna* and therefore a duty.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/36

150. LETTER TO ISHWARLAL

KANPUR,
September 23, 1929

BHAISHRI ISHWARBHAI,

The performance of *shraddha* can be made a purely religious practice. Feasting has no place in it. *Shraddha* means remembering the dead, dwelling upon and extolling their good qualities and emulating them. This includes everything that the scriptures may have considered beneficial.

I do not believe that wearing a particular metal can either increase or decrease bodily strength. Even if such were the case I would not encourage such possession.

The events narrated in the *Ramayana* are not history. The poet has included in it whatever he thought instructive. The episode of the

[1] Omissions in the letter are as in the source.

deer-skin could be intended to show that even a woman like Sita could succumb to temptation. The deer has often been used as a symbol of craving. And it should not be difficult to imagine what can follow once a person yields to temptation. That the poet's description may not conform to our present ideas of morality is another matter. The *Ramayana* cannot be judged by picking out isolated incidents and condemning them. It can be judged only by the effect it has had and still has on the people.

One should remember that man is happy or unhappy as a consequence of his previous actions. But this law is not meant to make men callous. Just as man reaps the fruits of his previous actions, his present actions will also bear fruit. Hence, a process of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division is continuously going on. The process is influenced by the actions of others as much as by one's own. This is the divine attribute of the *atman* and only by recognizing it can one realize in experience the oneness of all life. I would advise you not to be a prey to superstition about good and bad omens.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/38

151. LETTER TO MOHANLAL M. BHATT

KANPUR,
September 23, 1929

DEAR MOHANLAL,

I have your letter. Legally Swami's name will be necessary as one of the founders of the Trust[1]. Having your name would not be legal. It is my impression that there is or was some property in Swami's name also. Hence his name should be there. Swami or Shankerlal or I can be entered as the founders of the Trust because we three had assumed the original responsibility. Shankerlal was there before we two. His name has not been included as one of the founders of the Trust because he had subsequently withdrawn. The question in this is only one of law and policy.

Now regarding the trustees. There is substance in your argument. Rajaji's name can be omitted if you wish. Even if it is, his advice will always be available. Valji's name is not included because

[1]i.e., The Navajivan Trust. For the Trust Deed, *vide* "Declaration of Trust", 26-11-1929

he does not wish to spend his intellectual energy in administrative work. He wants to do only writing work. Personaly I would certainly like to have his name. Vallabhbhai's name should be kept, for he is in a position to take interest whenever you trouble him for advice. He was a great support to Swami. I have always felt that Shankerlal should be there. His devotion is wonderful. His intelligence is sharp and he takes great interest in such activities. I have kept him in reservebecause by temperament he is not able to mix with everyone. If you wish, however, his name may be kept out. Your name should definitely be there. Since Swami insisted on withdrawing I was helpless. Ultimately, you are going to run the press. You have succeeded to Swami's chair, such as it was, and are definitely bringing credit to it. I cannot imagine the Trust without you. Who in this world is wholly free from failings?

We must insist on your name being included. As for the other names, your view will be mine. Show this letter to Kaka. If you arrive at a decision only after consulting him, I shall abide by it. Mahadev takes interest in this matter, and if you wish, you may trouble him also.

Kaka has not yet sent me the *Gita.*

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/31

152. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[After *September 23, 1929*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I have your letter.

Your weight has gone down very much indeed. You seem to worry too much about things. You should go somewhere and live for a few months in a place like Almora and build a strong body. You ought not to have allowed your health to decline so much.

If someone feels hurt without any cause, you need not worry on that account. You had every right to ask Chhaganlal for estimates.

Munnalal, it seems to me, will not stay for long. Madhavlal is riding on the waves of imagination.

I was surprised to know that Narandas had changed his mind. Try and know the reason.

[1] From the reference to asking Chhaganlal Gandhi for estimates; *vide* the preceding item.

I believe that Ramniklal will arrive there after the Diwali.

I do believe that we shall have to send someone to the Lahore Exhibition.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5474; also *Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*, p. 175

153. LETTER TO DUDHABHAI

KANPUR,
September 24, 1929

BHAI DUDHABHAI,

Recently I have been again having unfavourable reports about Lakshmi. But I do not despair. We shall be able to discipline her only by keeping her alternately at Sayla and at Sabarmati. Her pranks are once again on the increase. At Sabarmati she cannot keep her mind under control for a long time. Gangabehn has showered the utmost love on her. She even spent some of her own money on Lakshmi, but she is still not mature enough to understand such love. Take her away, educate and send her back. These days she does not even write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 15823

154. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

KANPUR,
September 24, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter. Jagjivandas has not felt hurt at all by your or my letter; this is a very good sign.

I have written to Mulchandbhai about the money. You, too, should write from there.

It is not necessary to discuss further the mistakes regarding the Mandir. In any case Ramji should not be involved in the affair.

I had another letter from Madhavlal. I do not worry about the matter. Such disputes will arise and end.

If Lakshmi cannot stay with Gangabehn in any circumstances, write to Dudhabhai and tell him that he should take her away for sometime; he may send her back when she agrees to return. If this is done every time it is necessary, she will become wiser in course of time. I enclose with this a letter to Dudhabhai; you may use it if you wish.

I have had a letter from Galiara on the lines I had expected. It would be good if we could now start as early as possible.

I enclose with this the letter from that Englishman. Note down the particulars of his ship. Find from the newapapers on which Friday it will arrive in Bombay. You will get the information easily from *The Times.*

I am sorry that I shall not be there, but you should look after him. Do for him what I did for Mirabehn. That is, see that he uses a mosquito net, drinks only boiled water, does not eat pulses, consumes as much milk as he can, and eats butter instead of ghee. If necessary, supply him the fruits to which he is used … you may even consult him about this. When he moves in sunlight, he must wear his hat. He should go out very little in sunlight. There is a letter on this from Mr. Alexander who had stayed with us for one or two weeks. Perhaps you have seen it. I will send it for you to read.

You need not send anything to Malkani just now. I have already written to you about this.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5445; also *Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine,* pp. 141-2

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 19-9-1929

155. SPEECH TO STUDENTS, KANPUR[1]

September 24, 1929

MAHATMAJI, REPLYING, SAID:

The words in which you have indicated your affection would be most welcome only if all the students that are present here have room in their hearts. But I am afraid this is only the spirit of the speakers and, if that is true, then those words have not the same value. All religions have preached self-control as the first step towards progress.

Pointing to the students, he said they were self-willed, but had no purity. After roaming amongst thousands of students, he had come to the conclusion that unless they had real purity and simplicity of heart, all institutions like the Young League, etc., would be of no use. His 45 years' experience told him that without it people were useless. The students had desire, but that alone did not help in the matter.

Further, Mahatmaji compared the students to a person addicted to drugs, who under their influence spoke in plenty and showed various activities, but, when back to the normal state, did not amount to anything. Mahatmaji made a reference to the absence of the students of the Agriculture College, whom he called cowards because they allowed themselves to be confined even when they did not like the orders, but got ready to obey them because fear dominated their hearts, lest they might lose some job of Rs. 50 after finishing their studies.

Pointing to the students present, he said: "You must have done the same if your Principal gave a similar order." He begged to be excused for being plain and asked, if he was not plain to them, to whom would he be so? He further pointed out that with a spirit like that neither they nor the country could gain anything.

Mahatmaji further made reference to Swami Shraddhanand who never went to any meeting where he did not make a reference to *brahmacharya* and did not give it up even in his Gurukul. Likewise, Mahatmaji pleaded for control of the senses and told the audience that western books coming to this country never taught any control of the senses.

[1] At D.A.V. College; Chatterji and Diwan Chand, the Principals, welcomed Gandhiji.

You ask me as to what I would have you to do in 1930. Well, I would expect you in 1930 smilingly to face death if need be. But it must not be the death of a felon. God accepts the sacrifice of the pure in heart. You therefore must purify yourselves before you can become fit instruments for the service of the country even unto death. Unless you cultivate a snow-white purity of character first, you may rest assured that you will not be able to do anything in 1930.[1]

Continuing, he said that simply to change the Government would mean nothing. As was seen, the present Indian officials were no better than Europeans. What was needed was a change in the system of government. He had everything to take but nothing to given when January came. They could have blessings from the poor women for the money given to him, but in January they would not get even this much. Mahatmaji made a vigorous appeal to prepare for the occasion during the three coming months and to show some signs as before sunrise the dawn was visible. Nothing was to be achieved unless they prepared during these months. Freedom could be achieved only after making a sacrifice with clean hearts. No swaraj was possible without purification of the heart. This was the first thing to be done and then came the working of the Congress creed.

The Leader, 27-9-1929

156. LETTER TO GULZARILAL NANDA

BANARAS,
September 25, 1929

DEAR GULZARILAL,

I have your letter. I am enclosing copies of the letters I have written. Let me know the developments now.

After I had dictated the above I got your letter dated the 22nd. The file containing the papers of the case should be returned. I think I have mentioned this also in my statement[2]. My award cannot be published in the *Majoor Sandesh* just yet. The workers know that there is a difference of opinion. That is sufficient. They can get the reply drafted by a lawyer if they wish; but we should see that they do

[1] This paragraph is from *Young India*, 10-10-1929.

[2] Regarding the Ahmedabad labour dispute; *vide* "Note on Dispute Between Mill-Owners and Workers", 7-9-1929.

not take too long to do so. I hope that my letter to the Umpire[1] will ensure that Shankerlal should continue to meet Mangaldas Sheth.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kushumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/39

157. SPEECH AT BANARAS

Wednesday, September 25, 1929

Addressing the untouchables Mahatma Gandhi asked them to have patience. He said that though much work had been done for their betterment, it could not at all be considered satisfactory. As far as he could see, there was no such thing as untouchability in Hindu dharma; on the contrary it was built on the foundation of touchability. Just as one cast off a garment when it got dirty and put on a better one, Hindu dharma could be discarded only if one could find a better dharma.

He would not mind if anyone addressed him as a Bhangi or a Chamar. One was called thus because of one's occupation. And the occupation of a Bhangi or a Chamar was not a bad one. A doctor also performs similar work, there is no difference between their work and his, but a doctor's occupation cannot be called bad. Doctors charge more for their services, whereas Bhangis take just enough for their sustenance. They should pray to God that those who were opperessing them would purify their hearts.

Referring to some undesirable practices prevailing among the untouchables, he said: No one eats carrion except some of the untouchables. Achhutoddhar Mandal should be thanked for trying to wean them from this undesirable habit and they also deserve thanks for giving it up. But it is equally bad to drink alcohol. They could argue that even the doctors and Sahibs drink. But those who are well off escape reproach. Therefore they should not imitate the example of the doctors in this respect. One should not imitate the bad actions of others. These days Malaviyaji is going about purifying them.[2] But the real purification has to be achieved through their own efforts. The awakening amongst their people should not be used for any

[1] Krishnalal Jhaveri, who acted as umpire in the dispute between the Mill-owners' Association and the Ahmedabad Labour Union; *vide* "Apeeal to Ahmedabad Labourers",7-12-1929

[2] The reference is to Madan Mohan Malaviya initiating the untouchables in a purificatory *mantra*.

wrong purpose. One should not accept what is bad nor feel hate or something of the kind for others. They must always try to remove their own imperfections. Once the people find that the fault lies with them and not with the untouchables, they will worship them.

It was his wish that they too should make a sacrifice. He was asking for something small and simple. They were not dying of starvation and were also able to earn enough for their needs. But there existed crores in the country who were starving to death but who did not wish to leave their villages as they owned some land. How could they leave it and go elsewhere? If people wanted to share the troubles of such men, they should wear khadi.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 26-9-1929

158. SPEECH AT HINDU UNIVERSITY, BANARAS

Wednesday, September 25, 1929

ACHARYA, STUDENTS, TEACHERS, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

This is not the first time I am visiting this University. I have been here before. On one occasion you gave me money for the khadi fund and for *Daridranarayana*. You have given me just now a purse of Rs. 1,286-14-2 and perhaps, you will give some more. I am grateful to you for whatever contributions you have given so far and are likely to give. I say this as a matter of courtesy. But if you were to ask me whether I am satisfied with the amount I have received, then I would like to say 'no'. I regularly get news about you. Respected Malaviyaji keeps sending me news about you. Whatever I have been told gives me the impression that your capacity is much greater.

Shri Jamnalal Bajaj visited this place. He told me of the work you have been doing regarding khadi. At that time I became hopeful. But from whatever I am seeing now and from whatever I have been told it seems that the message of khadi has not touched your heart. It is not a surprising thing, but it saddens me all the same.

The Hindu University is the biggest creation of Malaviyaji. He has been serving the nation continuously for the past 40 years. We all know how great his services have been. The Hindu University is the epitome of his life-work. Respected Malaviyaji and I have our differences of opinion. But the differences do not stop me from paying tribute to him for his services. The success of this University

will be the measure of his success, and the success of this University can be judged by the way the students have moulded their characters, how far they have contributed towards the progress of the country and how much religion they have imbibed.

What are you doing to deserve the monumental service of the great son of India? He expects you to become not literary giants but defenders of Hinduism and the country through expressing true religion in your own lives. . . . Remember that this, the greatest creation of Malaviyaji's, will be judged not by the magnificence of the buildings or the 1,300 acres that they cover, but by what you become. . . . If you will express the requisite purity of character in action, you cannot do it better than through the spinning-wheel. Of all the myriads of names of God, *Daridranarayana* is the most sacred inasmuch as it represents the untold millions of poor people as distinguished from the few rich people. The easiest and the best way of identifying yourselves somewhat with these starving millions is to spread the message of the spinning-wheel in the three-fold manner suggested by me. You can spread it by becoming expert spinners, by wearing khadi, and by pecuniary contributions. Remember that millions will never have access to the facilities that Malaviyaji has provided for you. What return will you make to these your brothers and sisters? You may be sure that, when he conceived the plan of this University, he had the question in mind, and he embarked upon the mission in the hope that you would so conduct yourselves as to deserve the training given to you.[1]

The charkha is a small instrument but in my eyes a very important one. You may or may not agree with me about the charkha. But my faith in the charkha is ever increasing. You have a very big building here, and you can get all kinds of facilities you wish to have. Some of the students here do not have to pay any fees. There are some to whom Malaviyaji even grants some scholarships. He is doing all that a great man can do for the students…men or women.

Such is your condition here. And on the other hand there are crores of human beings in our country who do not get any thing except dry *roti* and dirty salt once in a day. In Jagannathji[2] , people are dying of starvation. There is no lustre in their eyes. I could count

[1] Taken from the report in *Young India*, 10-10-1929, which appeared under the title "The U. P. Tour…IV".

[2] Puri in Orissa.

every single bone in their bodies, and this did not happen long ago, it is happening now. In some places people get full meals, they over-eat so that they require the services of doctors and physicians, elsewhere there are people dying of starvation. I would like to know what you are doing for these dying men. Do you have no sympathy for these skeletons?

Daridranarayana is the aptest name for God. So long as a single such person is denied the *darshan* of Vishwanath, God cannot dwell there. The untouchables are not allowed to enter the place. If any untouchable does go to Vishwanath temple, it is only when "God" is specially kind that his bones remain intact. If you wish to meet God, then serve the *Daridranarayana*. You have given me Rs. 1,286. It is better than giving me nothing. But if you do not use khadi for the sake of *Daridranarayana* then what's the use of giving this money?

If you wear khadi you are being thrifty. You need clothes. If you wear khadi worth one rupee, 13 annas will be paid out of that to the poor people. But if you were to buy foreign cloth that money would go out of the country. The poverty witnessed in this country is not to be found elsewhere in the world, and if you wish to remove it, you should wear khadi.

I am aware that amongst those who wear khadi many men may be hypocrites, impostors, frauds and scoundrels. But those are common faults. Even those who do not wear khadi can have them. Even those who do not use khadi can be impostors or scoundrels. So if such a man is an impostor or a fraud at least one good thing about him would be that he does wear khadi. I came across a prostitute who wears khadi. She said to me: 'Pray to God so that fallen women like me are absolved of our sins.'

You should purify your hearts and whatever sacrifices you choose to make, make them with the purest intentions … whether it is going to jail or the gallows. You must cleanse your heart first. Degrees can be had from any college. But there should be something special about your University. You can given something more now, if you wish to as you have not given according to your ability. Malaviyaji pins people down for contributions. He should demonstrate his ability now.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 30-9-1929

159. CONVOCATION ADDRESS AT KASHI VIDYAPITH, BANARAS [1]

September 25, 1929

Acharya Narendradeva, who is the soul of the Vidyapith, had arranged a Vedic ceremonial which every *snatak* had to go through before he could be declared qualified to receive his diploma and the blessings from the Kulpati Dr. Bhagavandas . . . . When Gandhiji entered the *pandal* that was specially erected for the function, he was made to wear the yellow robe which the Kulapati and the officials of the University had to . . . .

This solemn ceremony being over Gandhiji had to deliver his address.... It was delivered in his own simple Hindi . . . . He began by saying that his faith in national education was daily growing and that he fully expected students discharged from national institutions to give a good account of themselves and find themselves in the forefront in the fight for freedom.

He said:

You are doomed to disappointment if you compare your schools or colleges with Government schools and colleges. The two are different in kind. You cannot command the palatial buildings nor a multiplicity of highly paid and learned professors and teachers that Government institutions which live upon the people can command. You will not have them even if you had pecuniary resources at your disposal. The aim of Government institutions is pre-eminently to turn out clerks and others who would assist the alien Government to carry on its rule. The aim of national institutions is just the opposite. It is to turn out not clerks and the like but men determined to end the alien rule, cost what it may and that at the earliest possible opportunity. Government institutions naturally must be loyal to the alien Government. National institutions can be loyal only to the country. Government institutions promise a lucrative career. National institutions promise instead only the barest maintenance for full service. You have just taken an oath[2] to discharge a triple debt. Truly,

[1] This appeared under the title "The U.P. Tour…IV".

[2] This was in Sanskrit. It read:

"Q. What is your duty towards ancestors?

A. To banish injustice, helplessness and indigence from among mankind and substitute brotherliness, self-respect and truth in its palce.

as Max Muller reminded us, life with us is duty. Duty well done undoubtedly carries rights with it, but a man who discharges his obligations with an eye upon privileges generally discharges them indifferently and often fails to attain the rights he might have expected, or when he succeeds in gaining them they turn out to be burdens. Yours therefore is the privilege of service only. There can be no rest for you till you have played your part in gaining freedom for the country. If you will assimilate this fundamental distinction between Government educational institutions and your own, you will never regret your choice. But I know that your fewness worries you often, and some of you doubt the wisdom of having given up your old institutions and secretly cherish a desire to return to them. I suggest to you that in every great cause it is not the number of fighters that counts but it is the quality of which they are made that becomes the deciding factor. The greatest men of the world have always stood alone. Take the great prophets, Zoroaster, Buddha, Jesus, Mohammad…they all stood alone like many others whom I can name. But they had living faith in themselves and their God, and believing as they did that God was on their side, they never felt lonely. You may recall the occasion when pursued by a numerous enemy Abu Bakr, who was accompanying the prophet in his flight, trembled to think of their fate and said, 'Look at the number of the enemies that is overtaking us. What shall we two do against these heavy odds?' Without a moment's reflection the Prophet rebuked his faithful companion by saying, 'No, Abu Bakr, we are three for God is with us.'[1]

What kind of faith do we require? Not the kind Ravana had when he considered none his equal. We should have the faith of a

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Q. What is your duty towards *rishis*?

A.To propagate enlightenment in the place of ignorance, righteousness in the place of unrighteousness, altruism and true culture in the place of selfishness and to make spirituality the basis of individual and corporate life.

Q. What is your duty towards the gods?

A. To propagate righteousness among mankind, to conserve the forces of nature and to utilize them for the service of man and to dedicate *charamashram* to the devotion of God.

Q. Will you fulfil these duties?

A. With the Effulgence of God as witness, I promise that I shall strive my best to fulfil these duties. May my effort be fruitful through your blessings and God's grace".

[1] What follows is from *Aaj*.

Vibhishan or a Prahlad. They had the faith that, even though alone, they had God with them and so their power was infinite. You have joined the Vidyapith to find such faith.

A gentleman told me this story in Agra. A Brahmin did not have any knowledge of God, but on being questioned by a simple and trustful man, advised him to throw himself headlong into a well if he wished to meet God. The man believed him and acted accordingly, and he found God. It was the Brahmin who went to perdition. Similarly if the teachers have no faith but you have it and youwish to win freedom, then be firm in your faith, remember God and make an effort in that direction. You will be successful. The students of the Vidyapith should not, like the other students of Government institutions, make the mistake of thinking that to secure a job is the ultimate aim of their education.

I have defined swaraj many times. Swaraj can only be obtained through peaceful and civil means. Swaraj means Dharmaraj; without dharma it would mean nothing to me. The students of national institutions do not have the power to attain the other kind of swaraj. I am fully aware of my responsibilities when I say this. Do not be under any delusion nor delude others. I say so because I feel it to be true. Those who forget their duty towards their country and their religion, are sinners and unworthy men. It is the duty of the students to become truly brave soldiers in this struggle for swaraj.

Young India, 10-10-1929, and *Aaj*, 27-9-1929

160. TWO VALUES OF A RUPEE

It is remarkable but true how the value of a coin varies in accordance with the way in which it is used. If you spend a rupee in buying a death-dealing instrument for murdering someone, that rupee is dipped in blood, worthy only to be thrown away, whereas if you spend that same rupee for buying food for a starving man it may mean life to him. The rupee so spent is thus charged with life-giving properties. The one has earned hell for the user, the other has brought heaven nearer to its user. Similarly every rupee spent in purchasing khadi according to the calculations carefully worked out by the Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee brings relief to the starving. It is distributed as follows:

	Rs.a.p.
Cotton grower	0 3 9
Ginner	0 0 6
Carder	0 1 9
Spinner	0 3 9
Weaver	0 4 9
Washer	0 0 6
Salesman	0 1 0
Total	1 0 0

Thus not a fraction of the rupee leaves the country if it is invested in khadi, and the whole of it goes to the deserving poor, the workers in the fields or in the cottages of India, whereas a rupee given for foreign cloth may mean with the exception of 1 anna for the salesman, that it is sent out of the country at the expense of its own starving people, and if the cotton of which this foreign cloth is made is grown in India, 3 a. p. might find their place out of the rupee into the pockets of the cotton-grower. But even there the speculator divides the 3 a. 9 p. with the grower. But for the huge export of cotton from India we should not have the ruinous gamble in the shape of cotton speculation which goes on every day in Calcutta and Bombay. Will the patriots understand this simple national arithmetic and shun foreign cloth for ever?

Young India, 26-9-1929

161. SIMPLIFYING MARRIAGE

A correspondent sends me an account of a marriage ceremony performed in Karachi. At the time of the marriage of a girl 16 years old, the daughter of a moneyed man Sheth Lalchand, the father is reported to have curtailed the expenditure to a minimum and given the marriage ceremonial a religious and dignified form. The report before me shows that the whole ceremony did not take more than two hours, whereas generally it involves a wasteful expenditure spread over many days. The religious ceremony was performed by a learned Brahmin who explained to the bride and the bridegroom the meaning of what they were called upon to recite. I congratulate Sheth Lalchand and his wife who actively supported her husband upon initiating this belated reform, and hope that it will be copied largely

by other moneyed men. Khadi lovers will be glad to know that Sheth Lalchand and his wife are thorough believers in khadi, and that both the bride and the bridegroom were clothed in khadi and are themselves convinced khadi wearers. This marriage ceremony calls to my mind the scene I witnessed at the Agra students' meeting.[1] They confirmed the information that was given to me by a friend, that in the United Provinces young men studying in the colleges and schools were themselves eager to be married early, and expected their parents to go in for a lavish expenditure involving costly gifts, and equally costly and sometimes even more costly entertainments. My informant told me that even highly educated parents were not free from the pride of possession, and that so far as expenses went they beat the Comparatively uneducated wealthy merchants. To all such the recent example of Sheth Lalchand and the less recent example of Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj should serve as a stimulus in cutting down expenditure. But moe than the parents it is the duty of young men firmly to resist premature marriage, more especially marriage during student life, and at all cost to resist all expenditure. Indeed not more than Rs. 10 should be required for the performance of the religious ceremonial, and nothing beyond the ceremonial should be considered a necessary part of marriage rites. In this age of democracy, when the distinction between the rich and the poor, the high and the low, is sought to be abolished, it is for the rich to lead the poor to a contented life by exercising self-restraint in all their enjoyments and indulgences, and let them remember the verse in the *Bhagavad Gita*, "Whatever leaders of society do, the others will follow."[2] The truth of this statement we see daily verified in our experience, and nowhere more vividly than in marriage ceremonies and rites in connection with the dead. Thousands of poor people deprive themselves for this purpose of necessaries of life, and burden themselves with debts carrying ruinous rates of interest. This waste of national resources can be easily stopped if the educated youths of the country, especially sons of rich parents, will resolutely set their faces against every form of wasteful expenditure on their account.

Young India, 26-9-1929

[1] *Vide* "Speech to Students, Agra", 13-9-1929

[2] III.21

162 REASON v. AUTHORITY

A correspondent has sent me the September number of *Prabuddha Bharata* in which the editor has answered my endeavour to reply to his recent articles on the cult of charkha and khadi. If that answer has satisfied the editor and satisfied the reader, I cannot carry my own arguments any further, and must leave the final answer to time and experience. But one thing in the editorial reply deserves notice. The editor questions the propriety of my remark that "the inferential invocation of the authority of the illustrious dead in a reasoned discussion should be regarded as a sacrilege". The editor resents this, more specially because *Prabuddha Bharata* is an organ of Swami Vivekananda's order. I must however adhere to my statement. I think that the duty of avoiding in a reasoned discussion inferences from the writings of the founder of an order devolves more specifically upon its members and its organ, for to sceptics the authority of the founder will be of no avail, even as the authority of Shri Krishna is of no use to one who is not his follower. And experience has shown that in every case where there is an appeal to reason, any inference drawn from the writings of a great person, however illustrious he may be, is irrelevant and calculated to confuse the issues at stake. I would like the editor and the reader to note also that I have not criticized the citing of the specific writings of great men, but I have suggested the impropriety of drawing deductions from their writings instead of leaving the reader to draw his own from such writings. Thus, for instance, have not the so-called Christians distorted the undiluted message of Jesus? Have not sceptics drawn opposite deductions from the identical sayings of Jesus? Similarly have not different *Vaishnavite* sections drawn different and often opposite deductions from the same texts in the *Bhagavad Gita*, and is not the *Bhagavad Gita* today quoted in support even of assassination? To me it is as plain as a pikestaff that where there is an appeal to reason pure and undefiled, there should be no appeal to authority however great it may be. Curiously the correspondent who has sent me the *Prabuddha Bharata* has also sent me two apposite quotations from Sister Nivedita's writings. Here they are:

Like others, he (Vivekananda) had accepted without thought the assumption that machinery would be a boon to agriculture, but he could now see that while the American farmer, with his several square miles to farm, might be the better for

machines, they were likely to do little but harm on the tiny farmlands of the Indian peasantry. The problem was quite different in the two cases. Of that alone he was firmly convinced. In everything including the problem of distribution, he listened with suspicion to all arguments that would work for the elimination of small interests, appearing in this as in so many other things as the perfect, though unconcious, expression of the spirit of the old Indian civilization (*The Master as I Saw Him,* p.231)

His (Vivekananda's) American disciples were already familiar with his picture…that called to his own face a dreamy delight…of the Punjabi maiden at her spinning-wheel listening to its 'Shivoham Shivoham' (*Ibid,* p. 95)

Whether these extracts correctly represent the master or not is more than I can say.

Young India, 26-9-1929

163. NOTES

THE BAN ON THE ALI BROTHERS

The following cable, which I have extended, has been received by me from the Secretaries of the South African Indian Congress:

> At an emergency Executive meeting held at Durban on the situation arising out of restrictions imposed upon the Ali Brothers' contemplated visit to the Union by the Union Government, the subject occupied the earnest consideration of the Committee and the following resolution was passed:
>
> "South African Indian Congress Executive as representing the Indian community of South Africa deeply deplores conditions imposed by the Union Government upon the contemplated visit of the Ali Brothers to the Union, and hereby requests the Agent of the Government of India to take all the necessary steps for the removal of all such conditions."

We know now what the result of the Agent's intervention has been. the obstinate refusal of the Union Government to waive the restrictions, especially in view of the unsolicited and gentlemanly assurance of the Ali Brothers not to engage in any political controversy or discussion during their sojourn in South Africa, shows in what estimate even the Government of India is held by the Union Government. That estimate will persist so long as the Government of India is an irresponsible Government and therefore remains a body whose wishes can be flouted with impunity by any foreign Government, whether it may be one occupying the Dominion Status

or one wholly unconnected with Great Britain. I fear that we will have to submit to such humiliations so long as we, through our own disunion, dissensions and the like, remain impotent and powerless to help ourselves.

THEY KNOW

It has often been said that khadi propaganda means harm to the mill industry, and this has been said even by some Congressmen who should know better. Of course so far as I am concerned, khadi should hold the field even though it might ostensibly damage the mill industry; surely the vital welfare of the starving millions should have predominance over the material advancement of the few rich people. But as a matter of fact khadi propaganda has not only done no harm to the mill industry but it has resulted in demonstrable advantage to that great industry. The confirmation of this view comes from no less a source than Mr. J.A. Wadia who, when asked at shareholders' meeting, "whether khaddar propaganda had in any way affected the sale of Indian mill-made cloth", as chairman, promptly replied that 'he was absolutely in favour of khaddar'. He added that 'it was owing to khaddar that their consumption of locally made yarn had gone up considerably. Mahatma Gandhi was not against Indian mill-cloth. His propaganda was benefiting the mill industry.' I hope that this unsolicited testimony will dispel the suspicion working in the minds of many that khadi had damaged the indigenous mill industry. A little reflection will show that it can do no damage to the mill industry for the simple reason that against the crores of rupees worth of cloth that the mills produce annually the All-India Spinners' Association can show no more than 30 lakhs. But the khadi propaganda has produced in the people a love for swadeshi on a scale unknown before, and it has resulted in preference being given by the poor villagers to indigenous mill-cloth over foreign cloth. But the reader may note what many mills have done to khadi. They have unscrupulously and unfairly resorted to the manufacture of coarse cloth, and have not felt ashamed even to label it khadi with the pictures of the charkha printed upon that spurious stuff. This is the return some of them have made khadi for the swadeshi spirit it has been instrumental in infusing amongst the people.

A correspondent writes:

> In the course of an article you have said at one place: "Where marriage is a sacrament, the union is not the union of bodies but the union of souls indissoluble even by the death of either party. Where there is a true union of souls, the remarriage of a widow or widower is unthinkable, improper and wrong."
>
> At another place in the course of the same article you say: 'I consider remarriage of virgin widows not only desirable but the bounden duty of all parents who happen to have such widowed daughters.' How do you reconcile the two views?

I find no difficulty in reconciling the two views. In the giving away of a little girl by ignorant or heartless parents without considering the welfare of the child and without her knowledge and consent there is no marriage at all. Certainly it is not a sacrament and therefore remarriage of such a girl becomes a duty. As a matter of fact, the word 'remarriage' is a misnomer in such cases. The virgin was never married at all in the true sense, and therefore on the death of her supposed husband it would be the most natural thing, it will be a duty, for the parents to seek for her a suitable companion in life.

Young India, 26-9-1929

164. HOW LOVE ACTS

Richard Gregg whom the reader knows as the author of the *Economics of Khaddar* sends me the following French parable by the poet Richepin:

> A widowed mother was living with her only son; they were the best of comrades, the most intimate of friends. But an adventuress got hold of the young man. She took away his money, his health, his position, his self-respect, and turned him into a vagabond. One day she told him that he must give her a supreme example of his devotion: he must murder his mother and bring to his mistress his mother's bleeding heart. Accordingly the young man went to his mother, killed her, cut the heart from her body, and holding it in his hand, hastened to the evil woman. In his haste he slipped on the pavement and fell headlong. The heart rolled out of his hand. Then the heart spoke and said, "Did you hurt yourself, my dear son?"

Let not the reader scoff at the parable as a figment of a diseased imagination. A loving heart does pity the erring loved one, and love even when it is itself wounded. It is not love that shines only in fair weather.

Young India, 26-9-1929

165. TO A CORRESPONDENT

TO "A CONFUSED BELIEVER, A TEACHER OF HISTORY"

I am sorry I may not notice your letter, somewhat important though it is. I do not encourage correspondents who have not the courage to give their names not for publication but for the assurance of the editor, whom they must trust to keep confidence where confidence is asked. If you are anxious about a reply to your doubts and to that end will disclose your name, please rewrite your arguments as your letter is destroyed.

Young India, 26-9-1929

166. TWO QUESTIONS

September 26, 1929

When I was in Agra a gentleman sent the following letter[1]:

If anyone stopped this gentleman from seeing me, then it is a matter of shame and regret. It is true that the poor volunteers in their solicitude for my health were scrupulous about my time. They evinced their love in shielding me from my visitors while the love of those who wanted to see me and ask me questions would have them violate the time limit. The result was a constant tug of war. Visitors were put to some inconvenience, but everyone could come to attend the evening prayers. None was prevented from doing so. As the prayers were held in open grounds everyone could take part in them. One must understand that when so many people wish to meet one particular person restrictions of some kind become necessary.

Now to answer the first question:

I try to have an equal regard for everyone on this earth, as far as it is possible for a humble human being. Accordingly, I try to love

[1] No translated here

India and Gujarat no more than other parts of the world. This equal regard does not necessarily mean that I can and do serve everyone alike. My heart, being free from the bonds of time, place and circumstances, can love everyone to the same degree. But my body has limitlations and, therefore, the service it can render is also limited. My intentions are not to blame for this. The fault is inherent in the way this service is rendered. The way being what it is, India will feel that I belong especially to her. Gujarat will feel it in an even greater degree and in Gujarat those staying at the Udyoga Mandir will feel most of all. In fact my services are made available to the whole world through the Udyoga Mandir, if only because my services to the Udyoga Mandir are not in any way opposed to my serving Gujarat, India or the rest of the world. And this is what I call pure patriotism. This indeed is how I can discharge my duty to all concerned. This indeed is at the root of that great saying "as with the individual so with the universe".

Now to take up the second question:

In my humble opinion I have been truly able to understand India's condition. This is not because I have been travelling, but because of my intense desire to understand it. Many travellers from the West come here out of curiosity. They may travel more than I do, but they cannot know the country because they lack that intense desire to know it. My travelling undoubtedly helped me to know my country, but the root is my desire to do so. There is not and cannot be much difference between the conditions of one province and those of others. There can be some difference in degree. India is under foreign yoke and poverty-stricken. That is the greatest ill it is suffering from. To cure this would be to remove all other ills. Nothing can be achieved without doing this first. Anyone who would understand this plain, simple fact will have no trouble in understanding the remedies I have for the maladies that India is suffering from.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 26-9-1929

167. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

BANARAS,

September 26, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

Yesterday I got two letters of yours of different dates. The same thing had happened in Kanpur. There is something strange in this. I see in this nothing but the alertness or otherwise of the postal staff. When there are different routes for carrying the post to a particular place, the postal clerks dispatch the letters according to their whim. I think that Raghunath and others who have come there from Vijapur to join in the birthday celebrations or for other reasons have acted wrongly. For this I would blame the sense of irresponsibility which prevails in our atmosphere more than the persons concerned. I come to this conclusion especially from Raghunath's action. We are always short of slivers. Raghunath and Govindji, the two working together, could barely supply our needs. And now Raghunath has come away. This does not seem to be good. Chhaganlal too seems to have been unduly lenient. I am writing to him also about this. It was his duty to have detained those whose presence was necessary. It is possible that such persons would have gone nevertheless. We would then have known where we stand and learnt something even from that. I write all this so that people may reflect over our shortcomings and think how we should act in future. We have got to consider how to meet the needs of slivers in Vijapur. If we get hold of the remedy for this, which is devotion to duty, it would be easy enough to meet these needs. I think Raghunath should return to Vijapur. If those who know carding well make slivers even in the Udyoga Mandir and if these are sent to Vijapur every week, would not their shortage decrease? Think about this.

We must master bread-making without delay. From the women's section, Gangabehn should be spared for the required number of hours and our bread-making should be made perfect, or we should give up making bread altogether. If we do not do one of these two things, I foresee danger to our health.

I see much more meaning in acquiring the ability to do our daily work systematically and efficiently than in organizing functions like birthday celebrations which come once in a way.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5446; also *Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*, pp. 142-3

168. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

BANARAS,
September 26, 1929

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. I am glad to learn that you kept good health at Vijapur. That makes me think that it would be best for you to continue your stay at Vijapur for the present. You should gradually recover complete health.

You should learn to recite the *Gita* verses with correct pronunciation of the words. Can you read the Gujarati script? How did you feel at Vijapur? I keep good health at present. I take plenty of fruit, milk and curds. I have not yet resumed eating bread. Devdas arrived yesterday. He will be with me for the present.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2365

169. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, BANARAS

September 26, 1929

MOTHERS AND SISTERS,

I would like to say a few words to you. We want swaraj for the country. We should therefore know what swaraj means. Swaraj means *Ramarajya*. Swaraj does not mean unrestrained freedom. But how can we bring about *Ramarajya* without first attaining *Sitarajya*? If you all become as pure as Sita, *Ramarajya* is sure to follow. Sita did not wear fine clothes, nor did she wear a lot of jewellery. She had compassion in her heart for those who were suffering. And what cannot one achieve who has compassion in one's heart? Women are

compassionate by nature. You will surely reflect how millions of women do not get food and do not get clothing. Their children do not get milk. By simply giving them money, bread or clothes, you will turn them into beggars. God has given them hands and feet and they are human beings like us. They must therefore work to earn their livelihood. We should enable them to earn their livelihood by spinning. We import cloth worth sixty crores of rupees from other countries. A large part of this foreign cloth is consumed by the women. You should all wear khadi so that this money remains in the country.

You should not marry off your children before they grow up. Girls under eighteen ought not to be married. Given them the right education. Do not even mention marriage in their presence; on the contrary relate to them the stories of Gargi, Maitreyi, etc.

Do not dispise the untouchables. They are also human beings like us. They too have been created by God. They do not become untouchable or despicable just because they remove night-soil. If we adopt that attitude our mothers also become untouchables as they perform similar functions for the children. But they command our respect, because if they did not do this work, human beings would not survive. You all give me money and jewellery with great love. Give me your blessings too, so that I may be able to fulfil my work. Now you may all give what you can.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 27-9-1929

170. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BANARAS

September 26, 1929

MR. PRESIDENT, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

My voice cannot reach you all, I hope you will forgive me. I have not the strength that I had in 1920. I thank you for your address. I thank you also for your contributions. You must understand that you cannot appease the hunger of one who comes to you as a representative of *Daridranarayana*. The money you have donated is not enough for him. It has been rightly said that the amount your have given as your contribution is not large. Malaviyaji and others had signed an appeal for five lakhs of rupees. This amount has not yet been collected. It is a matter of shame for us. We

should have received more money from you. Even so I thank you for whatever your have voluntarily given.

I do not wish to take your time and I have not much time to spare either. I have nothing new to tell you. The Congress has chalked out the path we are to follow. It has asked us to boycott foreign cloth and if we cannot do so in Kashi where else can we do it? You should wear khadi. You have given money for khadi work and if you do not take to khadi, what is the use of your giving money?

The second point emphasized by the Congress is that Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Parsis should all purify their hearts and live in amity.

Please don't pay attention to what is happening outside.[1] You have come for the meeting. You should give all your attention to the meeting. I am not going to stir from here.

We do not want either Hindu Raj or Muslim Raj. The Raj that we want is one which will ensure equal status to the rich and the poor, the worker and the landlord. All will enjoy equality of status. So long as this does not happen we shall not have swaraj.

Thirdly, we must remove the blot of untouchabiity. There is nothing like untouchability in Hinduism which has books like the *Gita* and which preaches the doctrine of *advaita*[2]. In the Hindu society we have four varnas: the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. But this does not mean that anyone of them is lower in status than any other. We must remove this blemish of untouchability and embrace the so-called untouchables. Schools and temples must be thrown open to them and they should be allowed to draw water from the wells.

Fourthly, I would request that those addicted to intoxicants like liquor, opium, etc., should give up their use. Those who are not addicted to them should gently persuade those that are to give up their use.

Fifthly, you should all become members of the Congress. Membership of the Congress means that you will undertake the vow to follow the Congress programme as explained above. You will then be bound to follow all such instructions issued by it as do not go against your religion. If you can fulfil these five tasks, then in the

[1] Owing to a disturbance outside the Town Hall, there was some shouting.

[2] Non-dualism

new year beginning on 1st of January 1930,you can stand up and act on your pledge. If we have the will, the perseverance and the strength, nothing can stop us from following this programme. It is such an easy programme that even an illiterate woman or a feeble old man can follow it. I pray to God to give us the strength to fulfil it and to grant us success.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 28-9-1929

171. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

BANARAS,
September 26, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

You know that Parsuram who has stayed in the Ashram in the past, is at present working in the Banaras Hindu University. He will come there in a few days. At present he has holidays for a month and will spend the time there. Give him some work to do. He will certainly do such labour as sanitary work. But, in addition, those who are making special efforts to learn Hindi may avail themselves of his services.

There is also a student of Tilak Vidyalaya who is at present studying in the Hindu Vishvavidyalaya; he too is filled with the spirit of renunciation and now wishes to come and stay in the Ashram. I have asked him to write to you. If he remains firm in the decision which he announced to me today, he should be admitted. he seems to know Wamanrao Pataki quite well.

LUCKNOW,
September 27, 1929

I dictated the paragraph above in Kashi, and now I finish the letter in Lucknow. We get today the post which reaches here yesterday. Among others, I have your letter giving detailed information. You have given a good description of your difficulties. The fewer the women's classes conducted by Narandas that are broken up, the better. We had better not give up making bread in sheer helplessness. Those who fell ill did not become ill because of this work. There is nothing in it which should cause illness. There

can be only one reason for their illness. Those engaged in making bread may have eaten too many sample bits of bread. Was not this the case with that graduate?

We should be able to satisfy Lakshmi's desire to learn Gujarati better. If Valji's time can be spared, he has the necessary qualifications and he has satisfied others who learnt the subject from him.

I understand from your letter that the house occupied by Mahadev has not been made over to us. I am certainly ready to write to Santok whenever you want me to do so.

It was not my suggestion that Gangabehn should herself make the bread. I felt, however, that it would do if she could supervise the mixing of materials. Hasmukhrai, Pataki or perhaps Bhanushankar may be able to do the job.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5447; also *Bapuna Patro—7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*, pp. 143-4

172. LETTER TO JAMSHED MEHTA

BANARAS,

September 26, 1929

BHAISHRI JAMSHEDJI[1],

I have your letter. I never like to refuse any request of yours. But in regard to your present request I am helpless. I cannot transfer any money to an official committee[2]. In all donations there is the unspoken condition of the donors that whatever money they send me must be used independently. I should also confess that your having drawn Malkani[3] into it has made me unhappy. But I shall say no more

[1] Mayor of Karachi

[2] The People's Flood Relief Committee; *vide* "Letter to N. R. Malkani", 18-9-1929 and "Letter to Jairamdas Doulatram", 27-9-1929

[3] N. R. Malkani

about that. You friends should decide whatever you think proper after considering the circumstances there. At this distance I feel that you will not now be able to utilize Malkani's abilities to the full. And the money which I have received will be blocked for the present. I may be wrong in my reasoning in what I have said, in which case please forgive me, knowing that I can do only what appears right to me.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/42

173. LETTER TO SECRETARY, A.I.S.A., MIRZAPUR

CAMP LUCKNOW,
September 27, 1929

THE SECRETARY, A.I.S.A.
MIRZAPUR
AHMEDABAD
DEAR SIR,

I have your letter of the 24th instant enquiring about the forthcoming Congress Exhibition. I have no reply to my letter to Dr. Gopi Chand from which I should deduce that the Association did not participate in the Exhibition. If there is any change I shall let you know, if necessary, by telegram.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 15610

174. LETTER TO JAGANNATH

CAMP LUCKNOW,
September 27, 1929

MY DEAR JAGANNATH,

Both you and Desh Raj have been very prompt this time and from what I have learnt about Mr. Brayne's activities, Desh Raj's report may prove a most valuable document, of course on the assumption that it is an absolutely accurate statement. I understand that Mr. Brayne has been vilifying us in London practically at our expense. I have seen Purushottamdasji regarding Lala Benarasidas and I now know the position. I shall await the further letter from Desh Raj before I do anything.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 15607

175. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

CAMP LUCKNOW,
September 27, 1929

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

I have your several letters but just now I want to notice the one regarding Malkani. I quite agree with you that it would have been better if Malkani had not joined the semi-official committee or could have avoided it. I have told him as much and I have told him also that so long as he is working for that committee the money sent from Gujarat must be held over. It cannot be spent through an official committee. I wish that Jamshed[1] had spared Malkani. It is not just to the donors in Gujarat to have their money left unused. It would be still more unjust and unlawful if I allowed it to be used through semi-official channels. Jamshedji has written to me asking me to authorize Malkani to hand over the balance of Gujarat money to his Committee. I have written to him regretting my inability to comply with his request and regretting also that he should have drawn Malkani into the net and thus have lesened his capacity for service. Now you will do what you think is best. I hope you had a truthful and reponsive atmosphere about you in Gujarat.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
CONGRESS HOUSE, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 15611

[1] Mehta Mayor of Karachi

176. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

ON TOUR,
Bhadrapad Krishna 9 [*September 27, 1929*][1]

DEAR SISTER,

Your letter came a long time ago, but being on tour I have not had time to reply to it. The money you have collected can be used only for cow-protection. It is good that you thought of devoting yourself to the service of the poor instead of coming to me. Is it difficult for you to persuade the elders of the need to give up the *purdah?* Women must resolve to discontinue a custom which only causes harm to the country. You are bound to succeed if you humbly but firmly make the effort.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

177. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

LUCKNOW
September 28, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Imamsaheb arrived here this morning. He is fine.

It is quite true that there cannot be real non-attachment without spiritual knowledge. Non-attachment does not include ingorance, cruelty and indifference. The work done by a person filled with the real spirit of non-attachment shines far more and succeeds better than that of a man who works with attachment. The latter may sometimes get upset and forget things because of worries; he may even feel ill will and in the result may spoil the work. The man of non-attachment is free from all these defects. I need not write and explain this to you. But, when a thing we know is brought to our notice by someone else

[1] From the reference to the addressee's efforts to abolish the *purdah* system, the letter appears to belong to the year *1929; vide* "The U. P. Tour-VI" sub-title Prejudices Die Hard"

at the right time, it has an altogether different effect on us. I send to you from time to time useful thoughts like these which occur to me in order that you may not get nervous.

The correspondence which you carried on with the Vidyapith seems quite all right to me. As a trustee, you could have done nothing else. If your action gives rise to a misunderstanding, bear it in patience as temporary. For, so long as you yourself are certain that you have done a particular thing without ill will or without being carried away by emotion, you need not worry about the matter at all.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5448; also *Bapuna Patro—7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*, p. 145

178. SPEECH TO LUCKNOW UNIVERSITY STUDENTS, LUCKNOW

September 28, 1929

Mahatma Gandhi, replying to the address[1], regretted that the address was in English and not in Hindustani. Lucknow being a seat of Urdu culture, the address should have been in Devanagari and Urdu scripts which would have shown perfect amity and concord between the Hindu and Muslim boys of the University. He deprecated the attitude of those who neglected the mother-tongue and concentrated on learning a language which was foreign. He himself edited an English newspaper which decidedly proved that he was not against the English language as such. What he wanted was the proper thing in the proper place. He instanced the case of General Botha who, when summoned by the King, took an interpreter, although he understood English quite well, just to emphasize that he was Dutch in origin and valued the Dutch language above anything else. Mahatma Gandhi hoped that in future greater stress would be laid on the cultivation of the national language in the Lucknow University.

The Leader, 2-10-1929

[1] Presented by the Lucknow University Students' Union

179. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING, LUCKNOW

September 28, 1929

I know my name was proposed and elected by a majority of votes, but I find myself quite unfit for such a heavy responsibility, though it is a great honour. I, therefore, utilize this opportunity to explain to you that it is my weakness indeed that I am shrinking from it and the same I have explained so many times through *Young India*.

What I felt most was for Pt. Malaviya who had no mind to come over here.

His mission in coming over to this place was only to persuade me, but I find that he is going back dejected.

While I do not want to undertake this responsibility, I do not mean that I shall keep myself aloof from the Congress programme. Suggestions have come from certain quarters that if I do not accept it, I shall commit another unprecedented mistake. Anyhow I could not be convinced, and my conscience does not permit me to shoulder the responsibility.

I assure you that in every programme adopted by you at the Lahore Congress, I would be with you.

I feel I can do more work by not becoming the President of this year's Congress and I assure the house that I am firm on my words of responsibility that I gave at Calcutta. This crown, though, the thorny crown of the Congress, is unacceptable to everyone. Why? Because it is a question of great responsibility. I would suggest to you to elect one forgiving all that has so far happened. I shall be very ready to assist him to my best capacity. I shall be prepared for the worst if the chance comes. I am not to run away from the coming battle on the 1st January, 1930. I shall wilingly extend every help in formulating the programme and scheme for congress work. What I wish from you is to discard this futile mentality that if Gandhi is not on the chair or Motilal not in the front, the Congress would collapse. You should stand boldly on your conviction of heart and push the work ahead.[1]

The Hindustan Times, 2-10-1929

[1] The meeting elected Jawaharlal Nehru as Congress President.

180. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[After *September 28, 1929*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL JOSHI,

I have your letter. There must be more money received through Kothari from Rangoon. So far as my memory goes, about Rs. 35,000 was received. Look into the Kathiawar Parishad's or some other account. It may even be that a part of the sum is lying in the Deshbandhu Khadi Fund, for the entire sum was not intended to be spent in Kathiawar. You will, therefore, get the necessary information about this by writing to inquire at Jamnalalji's or asking Kothari. the people in Rangoon want the account to be published.

I understand your reason for again postponing the change concerning the women's section. It would of course be fine if you could make the change permanent. But do not force things on them. We should take care and see that Gangabehn and Vasumati do not break down in the attempt to carry out the change. If their attempt is voluntary, we need not worry about their breaking down. When, however, such experiments are undertaken through love or regard for others, it is not right that those who make them should break in the attempt.This time Mahadev is there . . . .[2]

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 145-6

181. THREE QUESTIONS PUT BY A YOUTH

A young man has asked three questions. The first of these is as follows:[3]

Such horrible marriages are, in my opinion, not marriages but rather an exhibition of brute force. They are certainly contrary to religion whatever the legal opinion regarding them. I would certainly liberate a girld who has been sold in this manner and, if that were

[1] As in the source

[2] The letter is incomplete.

[3] This is not translated here. It referred to the fact that some old men got secretly married to young girls. The caste leaders took them back into the fold on payment of a small fine.

possible, get her married to a deserving groom. Wherever such marriages take place, young men should give publicity to them, find out the whereabouts of the girl's parents and visit them and try and convince the old man who has got married to set the girl free. In order to carry out this task young men should be worthy of it, be respectable and polite. The bride should in fact be a child. There is no help if the bride, although young as compared to the bridegroom, is mature enough to understand the situation and has married him of her own free will. There are such young women who, being tempted by wealth, sell their virginity to old men and then commit misdeeds. Who can deal with them? Measures can be adopted only in cases where the bride is a child, not old enough to understand, and where the father or some other guardian has sold her solely for money. Old men will stop looking for child-brides where young men can prevent one or two such instances and the former can satisfy their desires by searching out mature widows.

The second question is as follows:[1]

Speculation clearly constitutes gambling and does not benefit the public at all. There is no doubt that it adversely affects business. Wealth gained through speculation is like wealth obtained by theft.Public opinion should be cultivated in order to prohibit speculation. This is a very ancient corrupt practice and has become widespread today. It will continue in one form or another so long as the human race does not give up greed. Young men will be unable to cope with all the evils in the world, but much can be achieved if they themselves become pure.

Now the third question:[2]

A bridegrooms party of this kind is as fit to be abandoned as a caste-feast. It is a useless expense and is detrimental to the solemnity of the religious ceremony. Young men who are about to marry should oppose firmly both the feast and the marriage party consisting of the bridegroom's relatives.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-9-1929

[1] This is not translated here. It referred to the fact that educated young men took up jobs with speculators despite their dislike of this form of gambling, but later themselves engaged in private speculation.

[2] This is not translated here. It related to the propriety of holding wedding feasts and of large numbers joining the bridegroom's party.

182. MY NOTES

FASTING OR TRUE CONDUCT?

A reader writes to say:[1]

It seems that this association has not examined the consequences of fasting and truthful conduct. Otherwise this question would not have arisen. Fasting has no independent power to control one's emotions. These are often found to have become enfeebled in an individual who is fasting. Those who fast on the *Ekadashi* and such other occasions, become so ill-tempered during these fasts that those around them shudder to approach them. Had there been any independent power in fasting which would lead one to restrain one's emotions, many persons who die of starvation would have been blessed long ago. It could indeed be claimed, however, that anyone who wishes to restrain his emotions would derive some … however little … help from fasting.Truthful conduct, however, is the best means of restraining one's emotions. It has unlimited power to control one's emotions and this power never fails to bring about results. Hence fasting cannot be compared to truth at all. Anyone who is not truthful cannot succeed in controlling his emotions, whereas anyone who is truthful can readily exercise control over his emotions. One cannot help doing so while practising truth.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-9-1929

183. NOTE TO JAYKRISHNA BHANSALI

September 29, 1929

Even the trees and plants converse with a person who is wholly devoted to God, for he sees Him and His sport even in these. We have not understood all this joy of *bhakti*. If we understand it, the beauty of *bhakti* would immeidately be heightened for us.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p.164

[1] The letter, not translated here, read: "There was a discussion in our club as to how to conquer one's emotions. We all came to the conclusion that this could be done through fasting or good conduct. We could not, however, come to a decision as to which of the two could be practised more easily".

184. SPEECH AT LUCKNOW

September 29, 1929

Mahatmaji performed the National Flag-hoisting ceremony this morning in the Municipal Hall. After the ceremony was over, Mahatmaji begged pardon of the public for the delay in his coming.

I am grateful for the honour you have done me in giving me this opportunity but I would ask you to understand the full significance of this tri-coloured flag. It is not merely a piece of khadi without any meaning. The red colour in the flag signifies sacrifice, the while, purity and the green, hope. The three colours stand for one ideal, that of unity. It is the duty of the citizens to see that when once it is unfurled, it should never be allowed to drop down.

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-9-1929

185. INTERVIEW TO FREE PRESS OF INDIA

September 29, 1929

In an interview given exclusively to the representative of the Free Press of India, Mahatma Gandhi, expressing his impression of the A.I.C.C. meeting's decision reached at Lucknow, said:

The proceedings at the A.I.C.C. meeting were marked with cool-headedness and no unnecessary excitement was witnessed after I had made my position clear as to why I do not accept the presidentship of the Lahore Congress. Yesterday's proccedings showed the wisdom of the A.I.C.C.

Questioned as to what programme would be adopted at Lahore for leading the country ahead, Mahatmaji said:

What the Lahore Congress would do is more than I can say.

The Hindustan Times, 2-10-1929

186. LETTER TO NAWAB OF BHOPAL

LUCKNOW,
September 30, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter.

I fear the alteration suggested by you is not likely to serve the purpose intended by you. For I know states which have preferred neither to consent nor to prohibit. They have simply tolerated the presence of quiet workers. Moreover, perhaps, you have not realized that it is not contemplated that those who may work under the scheme may not agitate in the Press or otherwise than through the state concerned in the event of prohibition order. However, if you still consider it necessary to make the alteration I am open to conviction. Of course it is possible to remove the clause altogether. It is a clause introduced as an earnest of the *bona fides* of the workers under the scheme.You will be interested to know that I have had several protests against my praise of the simplicity of your 'palace'.[1] You will set in the current issue of *Young India*[2] my reply to the critics. But a correspondent has sent some papers describing the supposed grievances of the people of Bhopal. I am sending them through Hayat. I would like your Highness, if you think it is worth while, to send me a reply to the charges for my private use only unless you will desire or not mind public use thereof.

I am,
Yours Sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/44

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Bopal", 10-9-1929.
[2] *ibid*

187. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

LUCKNOW,

Silence Day, September 30, 1929

SISTERS,

Lucknow is the home of the *purdah* system. There are many Muslim women here. They have sent a message to me and asked me how their hardship may end. I can naturally give only one reply, that we forge our own bonds. Only yesterday we had a meeting of such women. They were not compelled to attend it in *purdah*, but they thought that they could not do otherwise. The Ashram exists to remove such hardships, and its success depends on you. *If you break the shackles, observe self-restrain, acquire knowledge and cultivate devotion to duty, you will automatically have set an example to other women.*

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3703

188. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

LUCKNOW,

September 30, 1929

Devdas gave me the news about your father's death. I thought of writing to your immediately, but before I could do so the matter went out of my mind. I soon recover from the shock which death gives me, and console others so that they, too, may do the same. I see more clearly day by day that there is no difference at all between birth and death. The two are aspects of the same state and we keep on passing from one to the other. I have often watched mice playing such a game. In the prison cell I had to do the same thing myself. I used to walk fro one walled side to the other and back again. So, then, which side did I leave and to which did I move? I have been talking philosophy, but it is full of truth and you should draw from it as much

consolation as you can. In any case, time is doing its work of erasing all memories. Were it not so, God knows in what plight we would have been.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 96-7

189. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

LUCKNOW

September 30, 1929

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letters. I am writing this from Lucknow. You will see from the newspapers that I have declined the Presidentship. I keep good health. The weight has improved fairly well and seems likely to go up still.

I am now waiting for Sushila to arrive.

My tour of this part (U.P.) will continue till the last week of November. I have no time to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4760

190. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

LUCKNOW,

Silence Day [*September 30, 1929*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter conveying your [birthday] greeting. You have frightened me at the same time. Chhaganlal is losing weight. He now weighs only 96 lb. Go to his help. Maybe your temperaments do not agree in some respects. You have not explained your reason for not going. All that he said in his letter was that you might have felt hurt. I think it necessary to let him have rest for a few weeks. This seems possible only if you shoulder his burden. If there are difficulties in your way, please let me know about them. Purushottam's weight remains very low. Does he have motions naturally, without using medicines? It would be good if you can arrange for him to stay in Hajira. I should advise him to spend some time there and see if that helps him.

Why is Jamnadas's eczema not cured? Does he write and give any reason?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, Part I, p.41

[1] Gandhiji was in Lucknow on Monday, September 30,1929.

191. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

LUCKNOW,
Silence Day [*September 30, 1929*][1]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I got both your letters. Look upon your ailment as a trustee of your body and doing what you can about it, stop worrying. Give up your desire to get better in Gujarat itself. You have set up home in Almora. There, too, you are doing service. God will take service from wherever He wishes. It may be generally assumed that He does not want you to serve at a particular place if you do not keep well at that place. The rule that, despite illness, one should go on doing one's best at a place where it is one's special duty to serve, does not apply to you. It was so for Maganlal in regard to the Ashram. It was his dharma to die[2] serving the Ashram, which he fufilled to perfection and I believe that, in that way, he in a large measure gave new life to the example of Bharat. If such a time comes for you, we will consider what you should do.

If you feel the slightest inclination to take an injection, you need not at all consider what I would desire. In such matters, one's own inclination is the only thing that matters.

If this does not cover answers to all your questions, ask me again.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33029

[1]Gandhiji refers in the letter to Prabhudas having made Almora his home; Prabhudas was in Almora in the year 1929; *vide* pp. 97-8 and 100-101 In 1929, Gandhiji was at Lucknow between September 27 and 30 and Monday, Gandhiji's silence-day, was September 30.

[2] Maganlal Gandhi had died in Patna on April 23, 1928.

192. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[End of *September 1929*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I have had no letter from you for two days. You should not understand from this that you must write every day even when there is nothing to write about.

I return the bill of the Khalishpur Ashram. The khadi which we have received from there was not ordered by us. If, however you thing that its cost is as shown in the bill, remit the amount. Write to me and let me know what the quality of the khadi and of the yarn is.

Has the elder Gangabehn calmed down? What happened about Yashodadevi?

See how things are with Krishnamaiyadevi. If you think it advisable to ask her to leave, let her go. If you can take Mahavir into confidence and find out why those people are frequently ill, try to know it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 146

193 LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

FAIZABAD,
October 1, 1929

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I have your letter. Why should not the Meghwal brethren of Vanathali obtain from the State the money needed for the building too? Did any of them apply for the purpose to the State? If you think they ought to be helped, why should the Antyaja Committee not help? Even if from other points of view it is thought proper to give the help, whether we should spend money in a State like Jamnagar needs to be carefully weighed. If there seems to be no objection to that, the Commitee should address a formal letter to the State and ascertain why it is unwilling to put up the building.

[1] In the source, this letter is placed before the letter of 1-10-1929.

If it is considered necessary for the Wadhwan school for the *Antyajas* to have a plot of land of its own, the Committee ought to consider and decide that matter too.

In such matters the better thing, wherever the need for special help from me is felt, would be to approach me through the Committee.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2858. Courtesy: Fulchand Shah

194. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI

FAIZABAD,
October 1, 1929

BHAI SHIVABHAI,

I have read your letter. I do not have the required knowledge to be able to judge the matter for myself. On the face of it, your argument seems to be correct, but you should communicate on the matter with Appasaheb and with Jethalal. In any case I am sending your letter to Appasaheb.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9493

195. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

FAIZABAD,
October 1, 1929

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I am happy that you have taken up the work of running a spinning class. Attain, if you can, perfection in the task. For that purpose, you should build sound health. Take as much exercise as your body can bear. Take especially milk and preparations of wheat and green vegetables. The latter should form the main part of your diet. If you can digest, take a little of fresh vegetales uncooked. It is good that your sons are taking up work one after another. I hope Motibehn is now quite free from her fever.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3732

196. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[*October 1, 1929*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I am in Akbarpur today. With me are Ba, Kripalaniji and Kanti. Abbas is with me by chance. He was travelling to this place. As there were no facilities for staying here, I have left the others behind in Lucknow. We are here only for a few hours.

In your letter received yesterday, you have written about winning my confidence. You have it in unlimited measure. Were it not so, we could not have worked together for so long. What worries me is the state of your health, your unsteadiness and your lack of self-confidence. If you have these, you will be able to manage other problems.

Do not attempt anything which you cannot manage. Even if you find it necessary to give up the responsibility which you have assumed, I will not stand in your way. You should not lose your strength, and whatever you do should be done well. Nothing should be done in impatience.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5479

197. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Tuesday [*October 1, 1929*][2]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letters. I feel that you should stay on in Bijapur as long as you feel physically and mentally fit, so that some propaganda for khadi is done and Chhaganlal gets assistance. Help as much as you can in carding and making of slivers. Introduce, if possible, spinning in the children's school at Bijapur. Make friends, if you can, with the leading families there. But in the last resort you must do what appeals to you. You cannot teach carding now to those who do not spin. Once

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's presence in

[2] From the reference to Gandhiji's U. P. tour; he left Lucknow on September 30, 1929 and the next day, i.e., Octobers 1, 1929 was a Tuesday.

they have mastered the art of spinning there is no harm in teaching them what they like. The carding-bow cannot be given free to anyone. There is no harm in giving it at concessional rates.

We are today in a village. We have arrived here after leaving Mirabehn and others in Lucknow. We will all assemble tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9377

198. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

JAUNPUR,

Wednesday [*October 2, 1929*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

The post addressed to faizabad was received yesterday.

I send with this a cheque for Rs. 300 received from Shirinbehn. Credit it in the miscellaneous account so that we can draw from the amount for khadi or *Antyaja* work or similar purposes whenever we are short of money.

Enclosed with this is a letter for Madhavlal. Pass it on to him after reading it. Discuss the matter with him if he opens the subject.

Give me an account of the cow-protection exhibition. How many attended the city exhibition and how many the cow-protection exhibition? Take care of your health. Your request to Maganbhai seems to me quite reasonable. all of us have not learnt to understand the spirit behind such frank dealings. Have I not told you about Mr. Ireland of Delhi? He is a great friend of Andrews. Once the latter used his bicycle, for which he charged two or three rupees, for he considered himself a trustee for the cycle. When going to simla, he refused to accept from me second-class fare and accepted only intermediate fare. Even the closest friends should have such perfectly truthful dealings with one another. We have before us the examples of Harishchandra, Taramati, Rohit, etc. You should have no fear.

Blessings from

BAPU

From photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5478

[1] Gandhiji was in Jaunpur on this date

199. THE HINDU WIFE

The following[1] is a summary of a long letter of a brother describing the miseries of his married sister:

> Some time ago my sister was married to a man whose character was hidden from us. This man has been discovered to be a rake ... She remonstrated. The man could not brook this ... My sister is heart-broken. ... We are helpless. What would you advise her and us to do? This is one of the most shameful aspects of Hinduism, where woman is left entirely at the mercy of man and has no rights and privileges. ... Thousands of such women are groaning and weeping. As long as Hinduism is not purged of these and such-like evils, can there be any hope of progress?

The writer is an educated man. His is a much more graphic description than the summary is of his sister's distress. The correspondent has sent me his full name and address. His condemnation of Hinduism, though pardonable under intense irritation, is based on a hysterical generalization from an isolated instance. For millions of Hindu wives live in perfect peace and are queens in their own homes. They exercise an authority over their husbands which any woman would envy. It is an authority which love gives. The case of cruelty brought to light by the correspondent is an illustration not of the evil in Hinduism, but of the evil in human nature which has been known to express itself under all climes and among people professing different faiths of the world. The facility for divorce has proved no protection against a brutal husband for a plaint wife incapable of asserting and at times even unwilling to assert herself. It is therefore in the interest of reform for reformers to avoid hysterics and exaggerations.

Nevertheless the occurrence to which this article draws attention is not an altogether uncommon occurrence in Hindu society. Hindu culture has erred on the side of excessive subordination of the wife to the husband, and has insisted on the complete merging of the wife in the husband. This has resulted in the husband sometimes usurping and exercising authority that reduces him to the level of the brute.

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

The remedy for such excesses therefore lies not through the law but through the true education of women as distinguished from unmarried girls, and through cultivating public opinion against unmanly conduct on the part of husbands. In the case in point the remedy is incredibly simple. Instead of the brother and other relatives feeling helpless and weeping with the distressed girl, they should clothe her with protection, educate her to believe that it is no part of her duty to placate a sinful husband or to seek his company. It is quite evident that the husband himself does not care for the wife. She may therefore without breaking the legal tie live apart from her husband's roof and feel as if she had never been married. Of course there are two legal remedies open even to a Hindu wife for whom a divorce is unobtainable, and that is to have the husband punished for common assault and to insist upon his supporting the wife. Experience tells me that this remedy is in most cases if not in all worse than useless, and it never brings any comfort to a virtuous woman and makes the question of husband's reform more difficult if not impossible which after all should be the aim of society, more so of every wife. In the present instance the girl's parents are well able to support her but where it is not possible, the number of institutions that would shelter to such ill-treated women is growing in the country. There still remains the question of the satisfaction of the sexual appetite on the part of young women thus leaving the inhospitable roofs of their husbands or being actually deserted by them when the relief given by divorce is unobtainable. But this is really not a serious grievance in point of numbers, for in a society in which custom has discountenanced divorce for ages, a woman whose marriage proves unhappy does not want to be remarried. When public opinion in any social group requires that particular form of relief, I have no doubt that it will be forthcoming. So far as I understand the correspondent's letter, the grievance is not that the wife cannot satisfy her sexual appetite. The grievance is not that the wife cannot satisfy her sexual appetite. The grievance the gross and defiant immorality on the part of the husband. For this, as I have said, the remedy lies in a revision of the mental attitude. The feeling of helplessness is imaginary as most of our ills are. A fresh outlook, a little original thinking, is enough to dispel the grief brought about by defective imagination. Nor should friends, and relatives in such cases be satisfied with the mere negative result of isolating the victim from the zone of tyranny. She should be induced to qualify herself for public service. This kind

of training would be more than enough compensation for the doubtful privilege of a husband's bed.

Young India, 3-10-1929

200. THE THOUSAND-HEADED MONSTER

The monster of untouchability shows his deadly fangs from his thousand mouths nowhere more persistently than in the South. Thus writes a correspondent from that quarter:

> Whereas it has been apprehended in orthodox circles that the preachers of untouchability are apt to confound the issues and implications involved in the principle by an attempt to push it to an undue extent so as to create unnecessary friction, I wish to elicit from you a definite pronouncement as regards the scope and extent of untouchability, in the light of the undermentioned observations offered in the form of questions.

Though I do not think that the "preachers of untouchability"or rather of anti-untouchability have done anything so as to create any avoidable friction, it is best to deal with the questions that often arise even in the minds of men who are not in any way mischievously inclined, and who would, if they could, endorse the anti-untouchability movement but who are unknowingly to themselves obsessed by agelong prejudices.

The correspondent's first question is:

> Do you think that the principles of varnashrama dharma are inconsistent with the formation of Indian nationality?

In the first place, varnashrama has nothing to do with untouchability or with castes as we know them today. In the second place, varnashrama, as I know it, is in no way inconsistent with the growth of Indian nationality. On the contrary if it has the meaning that I have given to it, it is calculated to promote a truly national spirit.

The second question is:

> Do you think that sins of touch and sight are of Vedic origin?

Though I cannot speak with authority based on first-hand knowledge, I have full confidence in the purity of the Vedas, and therefore have no hesitation in asserting that the sins of touch and sight have no support in the Vedas, but scholars like Sjt. C.V. Vaidya and Pandit Satavalekar can speak with much greater authority than I can lay claim to. I would, however, add that no matter what is credited

with Vedic origin, if it is repugnant to the moral sense, it must the summarily rejected as contrary to the spirit of the Vedas, and perhaps what is more, as contrary to fundamental ethics.

The next four questions may be condensed as follows:

Don't you think that the *karmakanda* is based upon a knowledge of the laws of magnetism, and that the rules regarding touch and sight, birth pollution and death pollution are intended for the purification of the mind?

In so far as they are so intended, they have a certain relative value, but the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Puranas and all the other Shastras as also the other religion of the world proclaim in no uncertain terms that purification of the mind is an inward process, and that the magnetism produced by the inter-action of physical bodies is nothing compared to the other subtle magnetism of mind upon mind, and the outward purificatory rites become soul-destroying, when they result in making man arrogate to himself superiority over fellow-human beings and in making him treat them virtually as beasts or even less.

The seventh question is:

> Do you think that the procedure adopted by *jivanmuktas*, that is those who have in the present body attained salvation, who are above rules of the do and don't, are conducive to the spiritual growth of ordinary folk?

I do not think that anybody, however highly evolved he may be, who lives on the earth and among earthly beings, can be himself above the obligations binding on common mortals, and therefore these rules have to appeal to reason and must never be allowed to crush the spirit within. The rules about untouchability have been demonstrated and can be demonstrated to be injurious to the growth of the spirit, and they are wholly contrary to all that is best and noblest in Hinduism.

Then the question is:

> Do you not believe in varna dharma?

I do in the manner often explained in these pages. In my opinion varna dharma has nothing to do with untouchability or superiority of one division over another.

The next question is:

> Exceptions to untouchability are contained in the following verse:

कल्याणे तीर्थयात्रायां राष्ट्रकोपे च संभ्रमे ।

देवोत्सवे च दारिद्ये स्पृष्टिदेषो न विघते ॥

> "Auspicious occasions, pilgrimages, political agitations, occasions of fright or fear, festive occasions of deities, poverty." These exceptions go to prove the rule. Will you please press this authority into your service and prescribe a limit to it?

The wise man who conceived this verse has taken in the broad sweep of his exceptions every conceivable occasion. I would, therefore, like the protagonists of untouchability to present the reader of *Young India* with occasions which will not be covered by fright or fear, poverty or auspicious occasions. And this correspondent has also not seen the terrible poverty of thought of those who hug untouchability in that in the various provinces sanction for untouchability merely rests upon tradition. No one has yet given an intelligent definition of 'untouchable', 'unseeable' and 'unapproachable'.

The last question is:

> In the attempt to spiritualize politics, what is the limit to which you want to relegate untouchability?

There is no limit. The very beginning of spiritualization of politics rests in the banishing, root and branch, of untouchability as it is practised today. Untouchability attaching to birth or a calling is an atrocious doctrine repugnant to the religious sense of man.

Young India, 3-10-1929

201. SPINNING SONG

Marjory Kennedy Fraser sends me all the way from America the following beautiful song rendered into English from the Gaelic:

Love gave I to thee, my lover,
Love that sister ne'er gave brother,
Love that sister ne'er gave brother,
To her lull'd one ne'er gave mother.
Thou the wheel and I the thread,
While fate spinning o'er our head.

Young India, 3-10-1929

202. 'YOU ARE BEING DRIVEN'

Before leaving America Dinabandhu C. F. Andrews sent me the following[1] from Reinhold Niebuhr's pen appearing in the May number of the *Christian Century*. The article is given in full together with the original headlines to the paragraphs. I reproduce the article, as it shows in a practical manner the fallacy of speed and over-production or rather production merely for the sake of gain. If we have our ills, the Westerners have theirs no less serious than ours. The moral that I would have the reader to draw from the narrative is that we may not deal with our ills by copying the doubtful methods of other peoples. We will have patiently first to understand the causes of our ills and then equally patiently to discover our own remedies and apply them with hope and resolution.

Young India, 3-10-1929

203. YOUTH ON TRIAL

It was a great and a wise step the All-India Congress Committee took at Lucknow on 29th ultimo in electing Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as the Congress helmsman for the coming year. No man however great, be he even a Mahatma, is indispensable for a nation conscious of itself and bent upon freedom. Even as the whole is always greater than its part, the Congress which claims to represent the nation is always greater than its greatest part. To be a living organization it must survive its most distinguished members. The All-India Congress Committee has by its decision demonstrated that it believes in the inherent vitality of the Congress.

Some fear in this transference of power from the old to the young, the doom of the Congress. I do not. The doom was to be feared from the sceptre being held by paralytic hands as mine are at present. I may take the reader into the secret that before recommending Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's name for the burden, I had ascertained from him whether he felt himself strong enough to bear the weight. "If it is thrust upon me, I hope I shall not wince," was the characteristic reply. In bravery he is not to be surpassed. Who can

[1] Not reproduced here

excel him in the love of the country? "He is rash and impetuous," say some. This quality is an additional qualification at the present moment. And if he has the dash and the rashness of a warrior, he has also the prudence of a statesman. A love of discipline, he has shown himself to be capable of rigidly submitting to it even where it has seemed irksome. He is undoubtedly an extremist thinking far ahead of his surroundings. But he is humble and practical enough not to force the pace to the breaking point. He is a knight *sans peur sans reproche*. The nation is safe in his hands.

But the youth are on their trial. This has been a year for the youth's awakening. Theirs undoubtedly was the largest contribution to the brilliant success of the Simon Commission boycott. They may take the election of Jawaharlal Nehru as a tribute to their service. But the youth may not rest on their laurels. They have to march many more stages before the nation comes to its own. Steam becomes a mighty power only when it allows itself to be imprisoned in a strong little reservoir and produces tremendous motion and carries huge weights by permitting itself a tiny and measured outlet. Even so have the youth of the country of their own free will to allow their inexhaustible energy to be imprisoned, controlled and set free in strictly measured and required quantities. This appointment of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as the captain is proof of the trust the nation reposes in its youth. Jawaharlal alone can do little. The youth of the country must be his arms and his eyes. Let them prove worthy of the trust.

Young India, 3-10-1929

204. NOTES

CREDIT WHERE DUE

Correspondents have taken me to task for giving the Chief of Bhopal a guarded compliment.[1] I would have been guilty of discourtesy and what is more suppression of truth if I had not paid it. Having accepted His Highness's hospitality and having noticed the remarkable simplicity of his abode, miscalled palace, how could I claim to be true to my host and myself if I suppressed the fact when its mention had become relevant? I issued no general certificate of merit. I had no evidence before me to form an opinion about the

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Bopal", 10-9-1929

general administration of Bhopal. I had no time to study it even if I had wanted to. I therefore possessed no qualifications for pronouncing any opinion. One correspondent has sent me a copy of the note from among the notes prepared by the Indian States Conference. I am unable to base any opinion on that, nor would I be justified in publishing it without first submitting it to the States authorities and obtaining their version about the charges made in the note. But the paying of the reserved compliment and the declaration of my general belief about Indian States enable me to forward that note to His Highness in full confidence that it will be carefully read by him and even sympathetically considered.

NAGARI PRACHARINI SABHA

The General Secretary, Nagari Pracharini Sabha, sends the following notice for publication:

> The Bharat Kala Parishad of Benaras has handed over its entire art collection of paintings, statues and other historical and literary exhibits to the Nagari Pracharini Sabha of Benaras. This valuable collection is valued at more than a lakh of rupees, and the whole of the second storey of the Sabha building erected at a cost of Rs. 25,000 has been given by the Sabha for this Museum. It is requested that the members of the Sabha and others interested in this work may help the Sabha by giving or procuring articles of artistic or historical interest for this Museum. Persons who wish to lay down any conditions, if any, will be duly observed. It is hoped that gentlemen interested in art, archaeology and literature will help this work.

Before receiving this notice for publication I had seen the commodious hall in which the Museum is to find an abiding place. And I saw also the promising collection already installed there. The appeal of the Sabha should receive a generous response from all lovers of art.

Young India, 3-10-1929

205. DUTY OF THE UNITED PROVINCES

The reins of the Congress this year are in the hands of a great U.P. leader. For the coming year too they will remain in the hands of his youthful son. The responsibility of U.P. towards India has therefore increased a great deal. I do not recollect any leader having ever succeeded another from the same province as President. Of course, this is not the first occasion where a son succeeds his father. It is certainly a matter of great pride for a province that a son is recognized during his father's lifetime as fit to succeed his father as the leader of a great nation in the very next year.

Secondly, U.P. is situated in the heart of India. A battle of the campaign for India's freedom has already been fought in U.P. It is the arena of *Pujya* Malaviyaji's services. It is in U.P. that the Hindus' most holy places are situated. And there are also numerous relics of the Muslim emperors in the form of monuments. If the people of such a province work hard and try their utmost there should be no difficulty in realizing India's ambition next year.

U.P. is the home of so many big landlords and *talukdars*; at the same time there is poverty too. Possibly the poverty in U.P. is not worse than that in Utkal. Many areas have had famines for three years consecutively. The people have neither work nor money. They are starving. It can be true swaraj for them only when they have regular work and can keep the wolf from the door. If the young men of U.P. so wish, they can provide for the people both work and wages by going to the villages and popularizing the charkha. At the same time they can help boycott foreign cloth. I have mentioned the charkha by way of example only. What I want is that we should somehow destroy unemployment and hunger among millions of our brethren and merge ourselves completely in their service. So long as we think of them from a distance only and do not go to them, and until we try to remove their trubles after understanding them, one must know that we shall have done little for them. Under these conditions swaraj will remain a mere dream.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 3-10-1929

206. LETTER TO M. HINDHEDE

CAMP AZAMGARH,
October 3, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and your pamphlets.[1] I am sorry to have to inform you that my experiment having apparently proved a failure I had to suspend it for a more auspicious occasion when I could have more leisure. I must confess that I have not yet found the substitute for milk. I have been recommended soya bean milk which I have not yet tried, soya bean not easily procurable in India. I am trying, however, to procure it. There is no difficulty about living healthily without milk but there is considerable difficulty in becoming strong after having lost it by protracted illness. Over forty companions tried unfired food with me and the majority of them could not make it a success and had to leave it.

Yours sincerely,

M. HINDHEDE, ESQ.
ERNAERINGSUNDRSOGELSER
FREDERIKSBERG ALLE 28
KOBENHAVN V

From a photostat: S.N. 15197

207. LETTER TO FREDERICK B. FISHER

CAMP AZAMGARH,
October 3, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your lettr of the 25th ultimo. In the papers forwarded to me from Sabarmati I do not find the letter from the Golden Rule Foundation[2] of New York referred to by you. But I can guess the purport of that letter from your letter. As I am dictating this, one thing does occur to me, namely, the scarcity of milk for Indian children. What American friends may do in giving constructive

[1] The addressee had sent a few English pamphlets on diet. He advocated eating vegetables and fruit but did not believe in taking milk.

[2] The Golden Rule Foundation which was being founded for child welfare throughout the world was the successor to Near East Relief Association.

help is not to send doles of charity but to send expert knowledge in dairying, experts who are not exploiters in the disguise of philanthropists but true philanthropists who will give knowledge for the sake of giving it and who will study the condition of India's cattle and show us the way of improving our cattle breed and the supply of milk from the existing cattle. This idea, if it is entertained in a proper spirit, can be considerably amplified.

Yours sincerely,

FREDERICK B. FISHER, ESQ.
BISHOP'S RESIDENCE
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
3 MIDDLETON STREET, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 15602

208. LETTER TO DR. H. W. B. MORENO

CAMP AZAMGARH,
October 3, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I do not know how to console you. You sent me a report and you did not want me to hide my thoughts. I could not serve you by so doing. Why is 'half-borns'[1] a most degrading epithet? It has a well-known meaning and I have seen it used in writings which are not intended to ridicule the Anglo-Indians. Should I be wrong in stoutly resisting any claim that may be put forth by anybody as by the ruling race? This must be so of course because the claims put forth by the ruling race are being resisted and are now in the melting pot. I know that your birth is not a matter of your choice but the attempt that is being made to conceal the birth is a matter for sorrow even as an attempt made by Indians living in the colonies or in Europe has appeared to me to be a matter for sorrow when they have vainly tried to conceal their birth. Perhaps I am in much closer touch with Anglo-Indians who do not even know the name Anglo-Indian and who only know that their male parent was a European who had deserted them and their mothers. Are you sure that the leaders are "now prepared to throw in their lot with the Indians"? I know that such is your own personal wish but such by no means is the opinion

[1] *Vide* "the Anglo-Indian", 29-8-1929

even of the majority of leaders. You ask me in the last paragraph of your letter to reproduce it in *Young India*. I shall gladly do so if you insist but I would dissuade you from so insisting. Your letter lends itself to much hostile criticism. The Anglo-Indian problem is far deeper than you seem to imagine and it cannot be dealt with by mere writing in the newspapers. It can be dealt with by enlightened Anglo-Indians realizing the gravity of the position and stooping to lift those who have neither a fair skin nor money to live up to the dangerously artificial life that the leaders are living. I must confess that I am not so much interested in the affairs of the microscopic well-to-do minority of Anglo-Indians as I am in the multitude that are living in a state of awful isolation neglected by their own and despised by those who consider themsleves to be full-born.

Yours sincerely,

MR. MORENO, GENERAL PRESIDENT,
THE ANGLO-INDIAN LEAGUE
2 WELLESLEY SQUARE, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 15631

209. LETTER TO AMINA QURESHI

AZAMGARH,
October 3, 1929

CHI. AMINA,

I was very glad to have your letter. The Gujarati is Qureshi's, but that does not matter. I hope you are keeping good health and that the young Begums are also in the best of spirits. Are you going on with Urdu studies? What have you been reading? Have you kept up the practice of writing regularly? If you have given it up, resume it.

Tell Imamsaheb that Maulana Suleman Nadvi who lives here, that is, at Azamgarh, took me to see Shibli Manzil. There are a number of Arabic and Urdu books in this Manzil which was established to commemorate the late Maulana Shibli.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6655

210. LETTER TO BASANT KUMAR BIRLA

AZAMGARH,
October 3, 1929

CHI. BASANT KUMAR[1],

I was most delighted to receive your letter and the yarn. For you, the yarn is good enough. Here is my message: Having made a start you must continue to spin in the spirit of *yajna* and always remember *Daridranarayana*, i.e., our poverty-stricken brethren.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6178. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

211. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

GAZIPUR,
October 3, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. It is natural that you should feel worried about Prabhudas. But insted of letting the worry grow, try to overcome it. Prabhudas writes and tells me that he is more worried about my worrying on account of you both than about his fever. If it becomes clear that the plains will not suit him, we will let him remain in Almora. There is work there too, and he has already formed contacts there so that he will have no diffculty in staying on. It is likely, however, that by the time you get this letter, Prabhudas himself will be with you. I hope that he has no fever now.

I have written to Raghunath asking him to return there. I have written to Imiya, Kusum and Vasumatibehn too. The difficulty about slivers, therefore, will disappear. What have you been doing during their absence? I think that when you are short of slivers there you should even get them from the Ashram and supply them. The reputation of a person or thing becomes established when all people have the same experinece of that person or thing. I wish, therefore, that the work there may be reduced in scope as much as you like but should be systematized. At present you are getting work done with the

[1] Son of G.D. Birla

help of whoever is available to you. Instead of doing that, you should now think what the minimum number is that you require, and arrangements should be made accordingly.

This must be fixed as a rule, that we should get slivers made exclusively through the new volunteers who are being trained. We shall then know who are capable of being trained. What will it cost to send one maund of slivers from the Ashram? Calculate this. It is necessary to estimate the likely expenditure if the work in Vijapur is organised into an institution. We shall consider afterwards how much to add to the cost of the khadi produced there.

I have two things in view: one, to provide work to the really poor women there and, two, to run an ashram on an extremely small scale but well organized. You are, however, the centre in all this as Vinoba is in Wardha. Wardha has developed along its own lines as planned, and Vijapur along a different line. We went to Wardha of our own choice. To Vijapur we went by chance. The latter is a memorial to Gangabehn and Rustomji Sheth. As one of the oldest inmates of the Ashram, you seem to have settled down there in peace. I would, therefore, be happy if an independent weaving school could be run there as a branch of the Ashram and following the rules of the Ashram. Think about all this and write to me.

I have taken some time over this letter, and, therefore, I send a copy of it to Chhaganlal Joshi so that he too may know my views and make his suggestions. In any case remember that we wish to buy up the plot there whenever we can get it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp.148-50

212. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

GAZIPUR,

October 3, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I send with this a copy of the letter[1] I have written to Chhaganlal. Write to me when you have the time, and let me know the thoughts which occur to you on reading it. Discuss the matter with others too.

There is nothing more to write about today. You do quite right in giving me news about the illness of Rukmini[2] and others. You ought to give me such news. I hope by now no sign of the illness is left. If the charts which were prepared are good, you should get them printed.

I return with this Govindbabu's letter. I have never been satisfied with his work. But he has gone through much, works to the best of his ability and is self-sacrificing. We should, therefore, continue to send him money for the maintenance of his wife. About other matters, you should write to him from time to time, in the hope that it will have some effect. You should call for reports, etc., so that there may be some control on him. He does not seem to have faith now in spinning but he goes on doing the work as a matter of duty. In saying this, however, I may be doing him an injustice.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5450

213. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MUNNALAL

October 3, 1929

The distinction which you make between the Udyoga Mandir and the Satyagraha Ashram is not correct. The same men and women who lived in the Satyagraha Ashram now live in the Udyoga Mandir. But having realized their imperfection, they adopted a more fitting name. Work in a spirit of self-sacrifice by itself brings self-realization. The same is true about national uplift work. We are sincere

[1] *Vide* the preceding item
[2] Sir Raghavachari's daughter

workers in the cause of national uplift, we shall naturally be working for our spiritual uplift. "Servant of the country" is a more modest phrase than "workers in the cause of national uplift". Have no doubt, therefore, that true service includes service of the country, of the *atman* and of God.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 151

214. A LETTER

AZAMGARH,
October 3, 1929

CHI. . . .[1]

That you all have my blessings goes without saying.

But any special feelings I may have had about my birthday, etc., have been extinguished. I have received many telegrams, some of them very beautiful. I do not know why it is but they have made no impression on me. I do not feel either that my birthday is an importantday in my life. Of course one thing happened which I mentally noted. I liked the coincidence that it was also a Monday,[2] the day of silence and the writing work went off fast and at a stretch and I felt no strain. From that time till October 2 I had to work much more than I wished or had expected. On Octobers 2 I had actually to be up by 1 a.m. to catch the train for Jaunpur and the whole of yesterday was spent in travelling and addressing meetings. The car having broken down, I had to travel by a small bullock-cart. I liked all that because it suited my way of life. Today I have taken some rest.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/48

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

[2] Gandhiji's birthday according to the Gujarati calendar fell on September 30, 1929.

215. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

AZAMGARH,
October 3, 1929

CHI. BHANSALI,

Nobody in this world remembers everything. Some have sharp memories, some weak. Your memory now has become weak. Why should you feel unhappy about it? You very well know the verse we recite in the morning. Does it not say that happiness is not happiness and misery is not misery, that the only misery is forgetting Vishnu, and the only happiness thinking of Narayana? You have that happiness because you have certainly not forgotten God. So one may say that you have all happiness.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kushumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/49

216. ANSWER TO "THE ENGLISHMAN"[1]

[*Before October 4, 1929*][2]

Any such conference to attract me will have to be, like Caesar's wife, above suspicion.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-10-1929

[1] In reply to its "enquiry as to his attitude in the event of his being invited to the Round Table Conference in London."

[2] Released on this date by the Free Press of India from Calcutta

217. LETTER TO H.B. TEJUMAL[1]

CAMP GORAKHPORE,
October 4, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

1. It is necessary to pray because prayer is food for the soul as food is for the body.

2. The body cannot live on prayer. For the body, honest labour is prayer.

3. It is a misuse of God's gift to use prayer for curing diseases.4. It is a greater misuse to harness prayer for one's promotion of life or such material comforts.

5. Prayer is most helpful in spiritual progress and for subduing animal passions.

6. *Harinama* cannot be overpraised but *Harinama* in prayer has its limits.

7. If the prayer of one is more quickly answered than that of another it is a clear indication that the other lacks earnestness to that extent.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 15359

[1] In reply to his letter dated September 29, 1929, which read: "Kindly reply yourself for the satisfaction of my soul and each question may kindly be separately answered: (1) Is it necessary to pray and why? (2) Can a person live on prayer alone, doing no work whatsoever for his livelihood, etc.? (3) My son has recently got a chorneal opacity of one eye as a result of small-pox. All surgeons and doctors opine that he will be permanently blind. Can it be corrected by prayer? (4) I am a doctor in Barrage on temporary list and there is no chance of becoming permanent. Can I, by prayer, become permanent, and rise in position, pay, comforts and happiness to my heart's satisfaction? (5) Is prayer helpful in spiritual progress and in subduing the animal passions.? (6) There is too much praise of *Harinama* in our religious scriptures, so much so that one who concentrates on *Harinama*, has no more to do for this world and the next. All that he needs, will he get by *Harinama*? What is your opinion? (7) Why the prayer of one soul is quickly answered and that of another not heard at all? What is the reason?" (S.N. 15358)

218. LETTER TO HARISH CHANDRA DAS

CAMP GORAKHPORE,,
October 4, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You can certainly serve the country while studying and that is by doing constructive work and rendering other social service. You can spin for at least one hour daily with your whole heart in it in the name of the starving millions. You can also pass your vacation going to the villages and serving them by doing sanitary work. There are many other things that will suggest themselves to you.

Yours sincerely,

MASTER HARISH CHANDRA DAS
P.O. BARIDPADA
MAYURBHANJ STATE

From a microfilm: S.N. 15608

219. LETTER TO PRATAP S. PANDIT

CAMP GORAKHPORE,
October 4, 1929

DEAR PRATAP,

Giri Raj continues to write to me about his doings but I would like you to tell me about his progress either through your own observation or your foreman. You can hand the letter to Giri Raj for despatch or get my address from him.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 15616

220. LETTER TO GIRI RAJ[1]

CAMP GORAKHPORE,
October 4, 1929

MY DEAR GIRI RAJ,

I have your letter. I am glad you have taken long boots to protect your legs. I hope you have now thoroughly recovered. You must keep your health.

Dead cattle hide is certainly enough for our wants. Have I told you that we are exporting nine crores worth of dead cattle hide out of India? You must remember that millions in India go barefooted. Sir Nalini Ranjan Sarkar told me that the reason why many tanneries have failed was because the leather want was limited in this country. Anyway I did not expect you to raise such an academic question because it is exactly on such academic questions that many of the evils in the world are sustained, as for instance meat-eaters justify meat eating on the plea that the earth will be overrun by the animals they ate if they became vegetarians. Birth-control people justify birth-control on the ground among others that there would be over-population if there was no artificial control. Even war has been justified on the ground that without it we should perish of pestilence and disease. Celibacy is condemned for one reason among the others that the earth will cease if all became celibates. Does it not strike you that it will be time enough to consider the question when we have absorbed nine crores worth of dead cattle hide? I am writing to Pratap Pandit and enclosing the letter with this. Your argument about machinery is not happily worded. Surely we can run a tannery both for the instruction of villagers and for supplying the wants of those who need foot-wear made out of dead-cattle hide. The main consideration about machinery is that it should not displace the labour of those who cannot otherwise be employed. You will find that this one argument answers all objections. We do not want to displace hand processes. We want to cultivate hand processes to perfection but where it is found to be absolutely necessary let us not hesitate to introduce machinery. Do you know that some of the most delicate life-saving appliances would have been impossible without the aid of some machinery? After all the simple charkha is also a machine. What we

[1] In reply to his Hindi letter (S.N. 15612) dated September 28, 1929

must dread is huge machinery run not by hand but by non-human power such as steam, electricity, etc. But even this need not be tabooed. If this is not still clear to you, you must continue to challenge my arguments.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GIRI RAJ
SURAJ MAL ONKAR MAL'S CHAWL
MATUNGA

From a photostat: S.N. 15613

221. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA MUKHERJI

CAMP GORAKHPORE,
October 4, 1929

DEAR SATIS CHANDRA,

I enclose herewith for your information copy of a letter written to Satis Babu of Khadi Pratishthan. I thought that I ought not to withhold the contents of that letter from you although they might be painful to you but I would like you not to be pained but take a detached view.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure 1

From a microfilm: S.N. 15630

222. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

GORAKHPORE,
October 4, 1929

CHI. MADHAVJI,

I have your letter. Before I can guide you in regard to your business, it is necessary for me to see you both at leisure. What have your brothers to say in the matter? If you have not resumed work for the present, how do you pass your time? I should like to ask you several such questions. As you cannot explain the position clearly in letters, nor can I understand it well if so explained, I should like you, if you are not in any hurry, to see me at some place where I may have leisure. According to the programme I am at Gorakhpur for four days; but barring Monday, on all other days I shall be touring places in the neighbourhood of Gorakhpur and return only to go to bed at

night. I would then feel exhausted, and be hardly disposed to take up other work and, moreover, there is bound to be some local problems demanding my attention. I have therefore decided not to call you to Gorakhpur, and hence I am sending you no telegram. I will decide where we shall meet after getting your reply to this letter, which should reach you on Sunday morning. Your present diet is all right. There should be no persistent coughing. I am not worried because of your bringing out sputum occasionally. If you put ten to twenty grains of soda bicarb into the butter-milk or curds before taking it, the acidity will have disappeard completely. I take curds daily, but I regularly mix soda bicarb with them. There will be effervescence when you stir the curds after mixing soda; you should know then that the acid has turned into carbon dioxide gas and that the acidity has completely disappeared. If you keep up your strength, be in no hurry to start solid food. You should not mind the expenditure on food.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6793

223. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

GU.,

October 5, 1929[1]

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have your letters, as also Sita's photograph. It is a fine one. I hope you do not dress her in too many clothes and render her delicate.

I believe that the prevailing ill will between Hindus and Muslims is for the present unavoidable. Its remedy lies in patience and in passage of time. Go on doing whatever service you can and take offence at nothing. Bear with any opposition that people may offer. You should not lose heart or get tired because of persistent opposition. I certainly wish that you are not forced to run away from there in despair. But remember that the right course would be to judge your own strength and act accordingly, rather than bow to my wishes.

[1] Gandhiji undertook an extensive tour of U.P. in 1929. The single letter available in the photostat is "Gu" which obviously stands for some obscure place in U.P. Gandhiji was in Gorakhpore on October 5, 1929.

I am dictating this letter at a village in U.P. Probably I wrote to you earlier that Devdas had joined me at Kashi and is still with me.

So far I have been able to live on milk, curds and fruit. They seem to have agreed with me well enough. All are in good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4761

224. LETTER TO KASHINATH

ON WAY TO GORAKHPORE,

Saturday night, October 5, 1929

BHAI KASHINATH,

As most of the accompanying note had to be written in the train, I could write it only in pencil. It is based on the article on tea sent by you. Send me any questions which may arise in your mind after reading it, so that if I think it neessary I may write further. I have not still been able to read the article on butter. About that, next time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5240

225. TELEGRAM TO H. T. SILCOCK[1]

[After *October 5, 1929*]

C/O G. W. MAW

FRIENDS MISSION

ITARSI, C.P.

YOUR LETTER. TWENTY-SEVENTH OCTOBER FIRST NOVEMBER MEERUT DISTTRICT SECOND DELHI THIRD BULANDSHAHR FOURTH FIFTH ALIGARH SIXTH MATHURA SEVENTH BRINDABAN. COULD YOU COME MUSSOORIE BETWEEN SEVENTEENTH TWENTY-FOURTH INSTANT?

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15247

[1] In reply to his letter dated October 5, 1929

226. ACADEMIC v. PRACTICAL[1]

A student writes:

> Very often you give replies to your critics which are quite correct in the academic sense; they give a sort of temporary satisfaction to the mind but in actual practice leave the riddle as unsolved as ever. Take for instance your saying, "Only a coward fights on the strength of numbers." It is all right in the abstract. It does for the time being bring one a sort of mental reassurance, but of what avail is it in actual practice? You preach your gospel of soul-force to all and sundry. But do you think that there is any chance of your utopian advice being seriously taken by those who have not faith even in the spinning-wheel and khadi? Won't your preaching be, like pouring water over a duck's neck, utterly futile?"

I certainly hope that my advice about soul-force is not altogether wasted though it might seem unavailing for the time being. As an English proverb says, "Constant dropping will wear away a stone."And it is my faith that what seems utopian to the correspondent today will be regarded as practical tommorrow. History is replete with such instances. If the word 'soul-force' appears a meaningless term to our students today, it only shows to what an abject plight we are reduced. For is it not most tragic that things of the spirit, eternal verities, should be regarded as utopian by our youth, and transitory makeshifts alone appeal to them as practical?

We have an ocular demonstration of the futility of mere numbers before us evey day. What stronger proof of the proposition can be needed than that a nation of three hundred million Indians is today being ruled by less than one lakh Englishmen? The very sight of a lion puts to flight a thousand sheep. The reason is plain. The sheep are aware of their weakness, the lion of its strength. And the consciousness of strength in the latter over-powers the numerical strength of the former. By analogy may we not deduce that 'soul-force' may not after all be a mere chimera or figment of imagination but a substantial reality?

I do not wish to disparage the strength of numbers. It has its use but only when it is backed by the latent spirit force. Millions of ants

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 6-10-1929. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

can kill an elephant by together attacking it in a vulnerable place. Their sense of solidarity, consciousness of oneness of spirit in spite of the diversity of bodies, in other words, their spirit force, makes the ants irresistible. Even so that moment we develop a sense of mass unity like the ants, we too shall become irresistible and shall free ourselves from our chains.

It is my firm faith that the students of our national schools, a mere handful though they may be, if they are inspired by a real spirit of sacrifice and service and a living faith in their ideals, will stand the country in far greater stead than all the students in Governemnt educational institutions put together. That quality is more than quantity is sound theory because it is true in practice. Indeed I hold that what cannot be proved in practice cannot be sound in theory.

When Galileo declared that the earth was round like a ball and turned on its axis, he was ridiculed as a visionary and a dreamer and was greeted with abuse. But today we know that Galileo was right, and it was his opponents, who believed the earth to be stationary and flat like a dish, that were living in the cloudland of their ignorance.

Modern education tends to turn our eyes away from the spirit. The possibilities of the spirit force therefore do no appeal to us, and our eyes are consequently riveted on the evanescent, transitory, material force. Surely this is the very limit of dull unimginativeness.

But I live in hope and patience. I have an unshakable faith in the correctness of my proposition, a faith that is based on my and my companions' experience. And every student, if only he has got the faculty of patient, dispassionate research, can experimentally prove this for himself:

1. That mere numbers are useless.

2. That all force other than soul-force is transitory and vain.

It goes without saying, that if the above propositions are correct, it should be the constant endeavour of evey student to arm himself with this matchless weapon of spirit force by dint of self-discipline and self-purification.

Young India, 6-10-1929

227. CONCERNING GOD

A friend writes:[1]

This problem confronts many people; hence I should like to discuss it here a little. As the friend has observed, there may be weakness in my writing, but I am not aware of it. I have of course written what I have learnt from experience. But the experience is indescribable. I can give you only a glimpse of it and that can only be done in ordinary language. How can one compare divine intervention with human intervention? God and His laws are not disparate. Neither karma nor God spares anyone. Both are the same thing. One thought makes us cruel, another makes us humble. In this world an extraordinary sentient power is at work and we recognize it by whatever name we wish. But it does intervene daily in all our tasks. Every one of our thoughts is karma, which has its fruit. The fruit is subject to divine law. Hence either God or His law does intervene in all our actions whether or not we are conscious of it or acknowledge it.

Nothing is accidental in this world. What happens is subject to law. Only our ignorance is so great that we are not aware of its working. How can I construe it as an accident if a snake passes by me and still does not bite me? Why should not I regard it as God's grace? Or why should I not look upon it as due to my religious merit? The sting of pride born of religious merit is more poisonous than a snake-bite. Pride melts away in the presence of divine grace.

As there is an article[2] about faith in this very issue, I do not repeat it here. I have no use for blind faith. I put my intelligence to work where I see a palpably wordly reason. But when the intelligence tires out, I push faith to the fore and attach little importance to accidents. But I cannot kindle faith in God by rational argument. I

[1] The letter is not tranalated here. It had referred to Gandhiji's following statement in An *Autobiography*, Pt. V. Ch. XXI:

"The rule of not killing venomous reptiles has been practised for the most part at phoenix, Tolstoy Farm and Sabarmati. At each of these places we had to settle on waste lands. We have had, however, no loss of life occasioned by snake-bite. I see, with the eye of faith, in this circumstance the hand of the God of Mercy. Let no one cavil at this, saying that God can never be partial, and that He has no time to meddle with the humdrum affairs of men."

[2] *Vide* "Reason v. Faith"

have tried here a little logic. It is good if there is someone to whom this argument appeals. I cannot impart to others faith in God through my writings. I must admit that my experience is of use only to me. A doubting heart must seek the company of the Good. Its quest constitutes an endeavour worthy of man… even though it might not succeed.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-10-1929

228. WHAT DOES KHADI MEAN?

A twelve-year-old boy writes:[1]

There is nothing new in this use. Even if there is a coarse mill-made *dhoti* and one wants to put it to such use, that can be done. But the significance of the above statement is that mostly one gets such ideas only after donning khadi. Khadi sets us thinking about the poor people and thereby we use it carefully. Moreover, it is a matter of surprise that a youth of twelve years has imbibed such sense of thrift. Such fine results have been experienced by many families on account of khadi activity. May the other youths also emulate the example of this youngster. The reader should know that from the financial condition of this young man's family, there is no need for him to be thus economical. But when the whole of India is looked upon as a family, it is necessary even for a millionaire's son to be economical and to utilize the money thus saved for his poor brethren, the other children of Mother India.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-10-1929

[1] The letter is not transalated here. The correspondent had used a *dhoti* for a year and then out of the torn garment he had made six handkerchiefs, one of which had been sent to an exhibition in order to show how worn and torn clothes could be turned to good use.

229. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

GORAKHPORE
October 6, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. As I have not become the President, my responsibility for doing something in January—according to my nature and to the teaching of the *Gita*—has doubled now, in the same way that the responsibility of a voluntary worker is greater than that of a person who works for money. To put this in the language of the *Gita*, there is a possibility of attachment in work done with a crown on one's head, whereas work done without such a crown is more likely to be free from attachment.

And if my responsibility has increased, that of the inmates of the Ashram also increases. If the country is able to do nothing and if I see the fitness of the Ashram inmates, something can certainly be done through them. None of you, therefore, has any reason to despair or to be complacent. This, of course, does not mean that I have now a plan of action. That will come when God inspires it. My life is ruled by faith.

You can read this at prayer time. It may be read at the time of the morning prayer, not at the time of the evening prayer. About other matters, I shall see what I can write with all this pressure for time on me.

At 5.45

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5451

230. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

GORAKHPORE,
October 6, 1929

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Your letter to hand. As your mother takes no service from you, I do not feel you have a duty to go to Delhi. I can understand that your duty might consist in staying on at the Ashram or Vijapur because by living at either of these places you can prepare yourself

for the future as also build up your health. But you must not go by what I feel. Follow the dictates of your conscience. If you cancel the trip to Delhi I would advise you to proceed to Vijapur which, as you have found, suits your health better. Therefore it is preferable to stay there for the time being. Raghunathji, Govindji and others are well versed in carding. They will certainly teach you something of it. The gaps in your training there can be filled up at the Ashram. Most of it you will learn by practice and as you gain strength you will gradually find it more interesting. I would not dare to introduce any changes from here.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Now you have learnt enough by experience to know what food you should take or avoid.

My health is good. The same diet is continuing. The frequency of meals and the quantity of milk have been reduced. Instead of four I am taking three lb. of milk and curds.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2366

231. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

Silence Day, October 7, 1929

BOYS AND GIRLS,

I have not letter from you. I sometimes wonder who from among you can accompany me on my tours. The only underlying idea is that boy and girl students should get better trained for service. From that point of view, some things appear essential to me:

1. According to his or her present idea, the candidate intends to dedicate his or her life to service.

2. He or she is an expert in spinning, can card, gin, spin as fine yarn as we want, can repair implements, recognize the varieties of cotton, test the quality of yarn and calculate its count, etc.

3. He or she has a good handwriting and can write fast.

4. He or she has learnt most of the *bhajans* by heart and can sing them.

5. He or she prefers and observes self-control in food and drink, and is ready to observe it at any place where he or she may go.

You can add other points besides these. You and the teachers should think over this matter.

I would be surprised if you were taken aback by these conditions. I know that we have not remained as vigilant as we should have. What I have put forward here should be a common thing for most of you. It should not be found that any boy or girl student between 12 and 15 does not know the *Gita* by heart. If he or she learns one verse every day, the whole of the *Gita* will have been learnt by heart in two years. Drop by drop fills the lake.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 152-3

232. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

GORAKHPORE,
[*October 7, 1929*][1]

SISTERS,

I am reminded of you on so many occasions. As I see women and observe their condition in the course of my tours, I think of the tasks before you and realize that real education is of the heart. If pure love springs in it, everything else will be added. The field of service is unlimited. Our capacity for service can also be made boundless, for there is no limit to the strength of the soul. If but the doors of one's heart have opened, it can contain everything. Even a little work done by such a person will shine out. On the contrary, he whose heart is sealed may do much work, but it will get little appreciation. This is the significiance of the story of Vidura's offering of *bhaji* and Duryodhana's of fruit.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3704

233. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

GORAKHPORE,

Silence Day, October 7, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I enclose with this Chhaganlal Gandhi's. The suggestion that if anyone from Mansa offers to come and learn [carding] he should be taken in, seems all right to me.

I return the telegrams sent by you. I have thrown into the waste-paper basket the heap of other telegrams which came here straight.

The locusts have done much damage here too. We shall know now what the result there has been.

My free time today is over, and so I shall write no more.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Today's post arrived after this was written. I am surprised to read about the pain which Kaki suffered. How did it come on all of a sudden? I am also likely to hear from Kaka.

It cannot be said that your weight has increased. It would be good if you could go out. You should certainly not allow your health to waste away.

If Jayanti meets me in Hardwar, it will be all right. But you should now have the whole programme with you. He may see it and select any place from it which suits him. However, 14-15 at Hardwar seems convenient. Before that, I have to visit small villages.

I had a letter from Narandas. You should win over a man like him. I am simply in love with his straightforwardness, purity and frankness. We, that is, chiefly you, ought to be able to use his services fully. This, however, is my view and my wish. What matters is your view and your wish.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5466

234. LETTER TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

GORAKHPUR,
Silence Day, October 7, 1929

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I do not remember to have written to you about your note on the *Gita.* I liked it. I am of the view that the Sanskrit text need not be printed along with the translation. This translation[1] is not intended for those who wish to read the Sanskrit. They will manage somehow. This attempt is meant for those who do not know Sanskrit or know so little of it that it cannot help them to follow the meaning. Nevertheless, we can make a pocket edition available to those who wish to go to the Sanskrit text after reading this translation. We should free ourselves from the slavery to Sanskrit. If the path of the *Gita* is for women, Vaishyas and even Shudras, it should be possible to explain it, and it should be as intelligible in any other language as in Sanskrit. Hence, in my view, one part should consist only of the Gujarati translation, the second of a concordance and the third of the Sanskrit text. Anyone who so wishes can buy all the three parts together or only one. Kaka has discussed this idea at some length with Mahadev and Swami. It is my impression that Kaka and Swami have fully understood my point of view. I believe that Mahadev has some reservations. Vallabhbhai also has taken some interest in this matter. He has opted for a separate Gujarati edition.

What is relevant is this: is the translation of it literary quality, simple and intelligible? If not, it should be consigned to the flames. I would not feel unhappy if it was. I had intended to attempt something like the present translation for my own amusement and better understanding. To add to it, Swami was after me that I should give a translation that would reflect my views and should only venture to put forward my explanation of the teaching of the *Gita*. I had no right [to talk on the subject] till I did that. I was convinced by this argument of his. My experience proved its correctness, and I have therefore reaped the fruit of my effort. It would now be an additional reward if wepublish it for the people. If necessary, you may still consider the matter from this point of view also. Interest Nath also in the subject. Ask him to pay at least a flying visit to the Ashram when he has the

[1] *Anasaktiyoga; vide* "Anasktiyoga"

time. Mahadev has taken away your note with him. You may have known about it. He and Kaka together are vetting the translation.

How is your health and Gomati's? So, Surendra has stayed on there. Has he calmed down? You must be keeping an eye on Giriraj[1].

God keeps my cart trundling along. If you ask me how it does, I cannot answer. It is certainly not doing so through my strength. What wonder, therefore, that my faith in God daily grows stronger?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati Original: C.W. 10711. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

235. TELEGRAM TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

[*October 8, 1929*][2]

BANKER

MAJUR OFFICE

AHMEDABAD

MANGALDAS'S STATEMENT FOR UMPIRE RECEIVED. GET FROM HIM COPY AND WIRE IF ANYTHING DEMANDS SPECIAL REPLY. I DON'T THINK REQUIRES ELABORATE REFUTATION.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 15516

236. TELEGRAM TO MANGALDAS GIRDHARDAS

[*October 8, 1929*][3]

SHETH MANGALDAS GIRDHARDAS

AHMEDABAD

RECEIVED STATEMENT FOR UMPIRE. PLEASE GIVE COPY MAJUR OFFICE IF NOT ALREADY SENT. ENABLE ME GET THEIR STATEMENT IF ANY. HOPE YOU ARE WELL.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 15516

[1] Girirajkishore
[2] As in the S.N. register
[3] *ibid*

237. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

GORAKHPORE,

October 8, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I send with this Ayodhyaprasad's letter to me and a copy of my reply to him. Go through both. I do not follow what he wants to say. I do not understand what he says about Mathuradas either. Nor do I understand what his complaint is. Write to me and explain if you know what it is.

I have gone through Ranchhodbhai's speech. I found in it nothing worth reproducing. I went through Parnerkar's speech too. It does not give an account of the progress made by the goshala, but explains what needs to be done. It is not necessary to print the speech. A report of this kind should give figures of the increase in the yield of the cow's milk, the fodder consumed, the cow's weight, the percentage of fat in milk, the average price of the cows, the expenditure on maintaining crippled and infirm cattle and that on maintaining milch cows only, the profit earned from castrated bulls and the expenditure involved in not castrting the bulls, a comparison of the prison [*sic*] cows and the *kankareji* and other cows in Gujarat, a comparison of the cows in Gujarat with cows in Hissar, a comparison of cows with buffaloes, etc. A report containing such information would be of great value. We ought to have such a report with us, for we have now started a school and train students, and also intend to institute certificates in this field as we have in khadi work. We wish ultimately even to award degrees. We ought, therefore, to have a report of the kind I have set out. We see some reports of this kind which have been published as books and become famous. Ours is an unexplored field so that all our reports can be of that kind. I expect such reports from our workers. Show this letter to Parnerkar and Valji. Surendera, too, may read it.

Were necessary reforms carried out at the time of the Exhibition? Are the dung and urine of the cattle fully utilized? Has the uncleanliness to which I had drawn attention been removed now?

I heard a startling thing in Agra. Whereas the hide of one of our cows weighs about 20 lb., that of a cow in Europe weighs about

80 lb. I believed till now that we supplied to the whole world hide for the soles and heels of shoes. I discovered in Agra that in Europe they always make the soles and heels from the hide of cows and bulls, and that their hide is stronger than even the hide of our buffaloes. There may be some exaggeration in this, but all this is interesting information.

I have not yet read Surendra's report fully. I shall also let you know the thoughts which occur to me after I have read it. I return with this Parnerkar's report.

I dictated the paragraphs above at half past five in the morning in Gorakhpur. I am dictating what follows in Basti. I got the post sent to this address.

We cannot give to Prabhashankar the bungalow reserved for the doctor, for the latter may now arrive any day. Moreover Ratilal and Prabhashankar are at present on extremely unhappy terms with each other. The latter harrassed even Dr. Mehta a good deal. He cannot, therefore, be lodged in the doctor's bungalow. If there were a vacant room in the Ashram, we would have certainly offered it to him. Write to him, therefore, and tell him that apart from Dr. Mehta's bungalow there is nothing else in the Ashram and that a part of the bungalow is occupied by Manilal Kothari, and the ground floor, which is vacant, was especially got vacated for Dr. Mehta; add further that all the rooms in the Ashram are occupied.

My certificate to Budhabhai is not to be treated as gospel truth. I can state only the impression which I have formed from a distance; if I imagined anything contrary to that impression or refused to state, when the occasion demanded, what my impression was, that would be a blot on my vow of truth. Hence, the certificate I gave was the only one I could give though in point of fact it might be understood. I think you should attach more weight to what Harihar and others, who have come into contact with him, may have to say. If, therefore, you meet Budhabhai, tell him only what you think right and feel no hesitation in doing so. You will thereby have done your duty as friend and served Budhabhai's true interests. If he has beaten his wife, he has of course committed a sin. He has no right at all to beat her. If he does not speak with her, that also is difficult to understand, though of course sometimes this can be a form of satyagraha.

I understand what you say about Madhavlal. I have no letter from him. Ordinarily, we can say that we cannot give him money for

his wife. Madhavlal is slow of understanding, and so we should take no offence at what he says. If we can tolerate his dullness, he may even become intelligent. Take him into confidence and have a talk with him when he is alone. Tell him all that you think. Having taken him in and let him stay for so long, we cannot abandon him. He seems to be sincere, and so he cannot but be of some use. We should find out in what way he can be used.

It is necessary to take the advice of an experienced engineer about how to change the course of the river. Such an engineer can suggest some practical means.

Fever seems to have claimed many victims and harassed them a good deal.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5452

238. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

GORAKHPORE,
October 8, 1929

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I am enclosing Bhai Nagindas's letter and his article. He desires the article to be published as a Supplement to *Young India*. Though its basic idea is true and the figures, etc., given in it are valuable, the article has not been written so as to be readily understood by the man in the street. I believe it can be very much abridged. If you can find the necessary time, you may make out of it a new article, short and pointed. If that is not possible, for want of time or for any reason, you may return both.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7402. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

239. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

GORAKHPORE,
October 8, 1929

BHAISHRI,

You are aware of Bhai Jagjivandas's efforts in connection with milk supply to Bombay and about the B.B.C.I. rates for carrying milk and its containers. From what he writes it appears as if the officers are merely arrogant in not acceding to his request, but I hesitate to believe this. Bhai Jagjivandas says that you are aware of the problem and in a position to do something about it. If you can give me some news about it, please do so.

What about salt? I have not yet been able to write about it myself; but I have been revolving it in my mind. I have looked through the old speech of Pennigton. I got nothing out of it. Please send me better literature if you know of any. I shall be in Hardwar on the 14th and the 15th.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Purushottamdas Thakurdas Papers, File No. 84/1929. Courtsey: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

240. LETTER TO BHUPENDRA NATH BANERJEE[1]

CAMP BASTI,
October 8, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I have preferred to observe silence over the self-immolation of Jatindra Nath Das because I feel that by writing on it I would have done more harm to the country's cause than good. There are many things on this earth on which I hold decided opinions but I retain those opinions to myself when I think that expression of those opinions can serve no useful purpose.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. BHUPENDRA NATH BANERJEE
3-1 LANSDOWNE LANE
KALIGHAT, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 15598

[1] In reply to his letter (S.N. 1559) dated September 25, 199

241. LETTER TO BHUPENDRA NATH GHOSH

CAMP BASTI

October 8, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. If you will look up the articles I have written in *Young India* about fasting and hunger-strikes you will discover that so far as my silence is required by anybody it is to be found there. I have preferred to be silent over Jatindra Nath Das's self-immolation because any expression of my opinion at this juncture is likely to do more harm than good to the country's cause.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. BHUPENDRA NATH GHOSH
9/1/A NANDARAM SEN STREET
P.O. HATKHOLA, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 15598-a

242. LETTER TO GIRI RAJ

CAMP BASTI,

October 8, 1929

MY DEAR GIRI RAJ,

I have your letter. I fear you may not go to the V.G. Institute. If Prof. Chhaya would give you private tuition and if you want it you may take it. But really speaking you ought to be able to do all this by self-study. This condition of helplessness that we find around us must be got over. You have had sufficient training to enable you to prosecute further studies in practically any branch without the help of any instructor. The use of a laboratory may be necessary. That can be easily arranged but I would like you not to be in a hurry. The first thing is to become a practical tanner. When you have done that you will find the theory to be much easier to grasp and a previous knowledge of practice would help you in checking wrong deductions from theory. I know of many who possess full theoretical knowledge of tanning, who cannot tan a single hide. I would, therefore, like you to concentrate your attention just now upon becoming a perfect practical tanner, even to hold his own against the village tanner. You will find this to be no light task and you will remember that village

tanners have no knowledge of chemistry. The modern system of education has made everything so difficult and therefore so inaccessible to the vast majority of people. Our business is to reverse the process.

From a microfilm: S.N. 15615

243. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

CAMP BASTI,
October 8, 1929

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

Jamshedji Mehta has written to me two letters giving me chapter and verse that his Committee is in no way official except that it has an official nominally [as] its preisdent who was elected at a public meeting and not officially imposed. He tells me also that the whole responsibility is entrusted to the Executive Committee. Kripalani who paid a flying visit to Hyderabad recently confirms this. I therefore propose to lift the embargo on the Gujarat money held by Malkani but I am awaiting his letter. If meanwhile you have to say anything to me please write or telegraph. Here is a a copy of my programme. I can understand your difficulty about domestic affairs. You shall certainly attend to them but it is too early to say how things will shape themselves in December and January. We shall of course meet before then when we shall be able to discuss the programme for the next year. You will give me your impressions of your tour in Karnatak as also in Gujarat.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure: Programme

SJT. JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
CONGRESS HOUSE, 414, GIRGAUM BACK ROAD, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 15637

244. LETTER TO O.B. DE SILVA[1]

CAMP BASTI,

October 8, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. You have an expert in Ceylon itself trained at the Ashram and in charge of spinning work. His name and address are as follows:

Jaivardhan Jairamdas

59 Wellam Pitya, Colombo

With reference to the Labour Conference any Asiatic organization can be represented at the Conference. I am sure you have only to apply. If there is any difficulty you will please let me know.

Yours sincerely,

MR. O.B. DE SILVA

"LAURISTON"

MUTWAL

COLOMBO (CEYON)

From a photostat: S.N. 15202

[1] In reply to his letter (S.N. 15201) dated September 20, 1929, which read: "You must be aware that the charkha has no vogue here.. . .But unemployment and a financial breakdown have given a nasty shock to our habitual complacency. . . .There is only one cotton-mill here, and the field for a charkha programme is ready to be worked. When we have arranged the finance could you give us for even one month a helper from your Ashram? There is further an Asiatic Labour Conference being held in Bombay. Ceylon is left put. Could you not use your influence to discover why?. . . I know you will help us."

245. LETTER TO GANGA NATH JHA[1]

CAMP BASTI,
October 8,1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your invitiation to address the students of your University during my forthcoming visit to Allahabad. I note that your will arrange the exact date and time with Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru.

Yours sincerely,

THE VICE-CHANCELLOR
ALLAHABAD UNIVERSITY
SENATE HOUSE, ALLAHABAD

From a photostat: S.N. 15627

246. LETTER TO J.C. KUMARAPPA

CAMP BASTI,
October 8, 1929

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

You will please forgive me for not acknowledging at once your very full, frank and exhaustive letter. Continuous travelling has prevented an earlier acknowledgment. What led you to infer that I had already formed an opinion? I consider your letter to be so good that I have taken the opportunity of sending it to Miss Evelyn Gedge and I have suggested to her that she should write to you directly. I appreciate all that you have said in your letter. I hope you are getting on well there and keeping good health.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KUMARAPPA
VIDYAPITH, AHMEDABAD

From a photostat: S. N. 15636

[1] In reply to his letter (S.N. 15626) dated October 2, 1929; Gandhiji addressed the students on the morning of November 17, 1929.

247 LETTER TO K.A. FITTER [1]

CAMP BASTI,
October 8, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. The books[2] you mention have been received at the Ashram. I am not likely to reach the Ashram before the end of November. I am not therefore not sure when I shall get the time to see the books. I may, however, mention to you that *Navajivan* is not a review paper at all.

Yours sincerely,

K.A. FITTER, ESQ.
SECRETARY, THE IRAN LEAGUE
HORNBY ROAD, FORT, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 15246

248. LETTER TO ASA SING [3]

CAMP BASTI,
October 8, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

If you send your invention to the Secretary, Spinners' Associaition for inspection your invention would be secretly guarded from being copied. But it is open to you to patent your invetion before showing it to anybody and if you will patent it. it does not matter who copies it because it cannot be used commercially by anybody else.

Yours sincerely,

ASA SINGH ESQ.
C/O THE COMMERCIAL BOOK CO.
BRANDRETH ROAD, LAHORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 15357

[1] In reply to his letter (S.N 15245) dated September 23, 1929

[2] A set of *Avestana Javahiro* written by F.K. Dadachanji. They were comparative studies in religions, throwing a new light on the Zoroastrian and other religions. The addressee wished to have them reviewed in *Navajivan*.

[3] In reply to his letter dated September 24, 1929, which read: "According to your advertisement about a spinning-wheel that you may spin 16,000 yards per day of 8 hours, etc., I have designed one which is quite agreeable to the requirements desired. It will spin 6 times more than the present one which I understand spins from 2,500 to 3,000 yards per day of 8 hours. May I know the procedure I should adopt for keeping the invention secret in submitting it to the Spinners' Association? I am afraid of its being copied by someone if I apply for a patent" (S.N. 15356)

249. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

BASTI,
October 8, 1929

CHI. KAKA,

Mahadev has just informed me by wire about Kaki[1] having departed for her *swadhama*[2]. Please see the wire I have sent to him. What a beautiful word *swadhama* is! Haven't men of knowledge imagined the world to be a caravanserai? One's true state is, and can only be, beyond life and death. Isn't that so? Nevertheless the idea that to die is to return to *swadhama* fascinates me. I have known the use of the word *swadhama* in this meaning; but as far as I remember, it is for the first time while writing this letter to you that I have used it with reference to Kaki. I learnt only yesterday that you had wished to keep her at Baroda. But it seems she was firm about accompanying youto the Ashram. I am glad that she succeeded in having her way. I am impatient to have a report of her last days[3].

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/55

250. LETTER TO JAMSHED MEHTA

BASTI,
October 8, 1929

BHAISHRI JAMSHEDJI,

I have both your letters.[4] There is no limit to your plain-speaking. I own defeat before you. I do not need any witness to support what you say. Your statement is sufficient for me. You would not need any money just now, would you? I had already written to Malkani before your letters arrived. There is no reply from him. I am awaiting one.[5] Where is Malkani at present and what is he doing? I

[1] Lakshmibai, addressee's wife, who died on October 7
[2] Literally, one's own home
[3] *ide* also "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 21-10-1929
[4] *Vide* "Letter to Jairamdas Doulatram", 8-10-1929
[5] For Gandhiji's reply to N. R. Malkani's letter, *vide* "Letter to N. R. Malkani", 18-10-1929

should like to allocate the contributions received from Gujarat. Consult him and guide me as to how I should allocate them.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/54

251. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

BASTI
October 8, 1929

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Your letter.

You should not have this recurring fever. I think you should go to Vijapur and help as much as you can but never at the cost of your health. There is no harm in taking *roti* if you can digest it. I hope to reach the Ashram on November 26. The remaining days I intend to share equally between the Ashram and Wardha.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2367

252. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

CAMP BASTI,
October 9, 1929

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

What sorrowful news you give me about Father? I know how helpless he becomes when he has any illness at all. Your letter was received only two days ago. It is now therefore more than three weeks after operation[1] and I hope that Father is as chirpy as ever before. Anyway you would give me fullest information and if necessary telegraph to me at Hardwar where I shall be about the 14th instant. I shall be in Mussoorie from the 17th to the 24th. I like your energetic plea for equal rights of inheritance for women. Evidently you do not read *Young India*[2] regularly, much less *Navajivan* although I see you can trace Gujarati letters. I did deal with the question of inheritance in *Young India*[1] but I shall carry out your desire and revert to the subject using a portion of your letter as my text. I do not need to be a girl to be wild about the disqualifications imposed by the man in power on woman.

[1] Of the nose
[2] *Vide*, "Position of Women", 17-10-1929.

Now about Jatin Das. I have been deliberately silent because I have not approved of the fast. But I have refrained from saying anything as my opinion would have been distorted by the officials and grossly misused.

Yours,
BAPU

MISS RAIHANA TYABJI
CAMP BARODA

From a photostat: S.N. 9611

253. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

BASTI,
October 9, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I dictated yesterday a long letter to you. I forgot to mention one thing, and that was your reference to confidence. I smiled as I thought what an imperfect means of communication language is. It was after your explanation that I could understand the meaning of your words "deserving the confidence". But in the context in which you wrote the sentence, I understood it to mean that you were eager to make an effort to win my confidence. I could not see that you were referring to your effort to deserve the confidence which you already enjoyed. But now I understand. That effort, of course, you should always make. But worry should have no place in it at all.

The effort not to lose the confidence of a person after we have won it indicates attachment on our part. Man is so imperfect a creature that he may place confidence today and withdraw it the next day over a trifle. What difference does it make whether or not we enjoy the confidence of such a person? We should, however, aspire to be worthy of the confidence of the entire world, for if we are able to take a single breath, the reason is the whole world's confidence in us. If that were not so, people would have killed one another long ago. Hence, being worthy of other people's confidence is no more than devotion to duty and this we should practise without attachment.

What I ask from you, therefore, is a mind at peace with itself in the midst of any amount of work and an attitude of extreme generosity towards the environment. When you acquire these, you will find your work quite easy, for your words will then penetrate directly

to the heart like an arrow and neither Madhavlal on one side nor Narandas on the other will ever misunderstand your meaning.

I have made this letter short. If, therefore, you find it difficult to follow my meaning, return it along with your question and I will try to explain more clearly.

I expect to get details of the passing away of Kaki.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5453

254. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

ON WAY TO MANAKPUR,

October 9, 1929

CHI. JAMNADAS,

As I am writing this letter in a running train, I can use only a pencil. I have read your School Report. It does not include what I require. At the end of the Report the demand should be stated clearly. Now let me know this in a letter or send a telegram. My programme is enclosed. What is the minimum amount you require, and in how many instalments? If you wire to me state only this. In the letter state also the maximum you would like to have. As it is, you feel the pinch of the rent for the school land. It will be good to buy the land outright. See the Thakore Saheb if you have not done so. What will it cost to buy it outright? How is it that your eczema is still not cured? What remedy are you applying?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8699. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

255. MESSAGE TO SIKH LEAGUE

MANAKPUR,
[*October 9, 1929*][1]

Please convey my good wishes to the Sikh League meeting at Lyallpur. I hope the League will have the wisdom not to boycott the Congress and realize that the question is not closed but open for discussion and adjustment.

The Tribune, 12-10-1929

256. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

MANAKPUR,
October 9, 1929

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

I have had no letter from you for many days. Do write once a week at least.

I think you must have been by Kaki's side at the time of her death. If you were not, whoever was present should send me an account of her last moments.

What is your present weight? What is your diet? How does Lakshmi behave nowadays? How is Raiya's condition now? How much of your time do you have to give to making bread? And what is its quality now?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro — 6: G.S. Gangabehnne, p. 27

[1] Gandhiji was in Manakpur on this date.

257. LETTER TO DAHIBEHN R. PATEL

Tuesday, [About *October 1929*][1]

CHI. DAHIBEHN[2],

Why do you faint so often? Steady the mind. Ignore anything that disturbs your mind. Eat very simple food. Don't let the stomach get heavy. Sit naked in the sun; but take care that the head does not get heated. If you wish to do any work, do it sitting. Take a hip-bath and walk a little every day. Take someone as an escort, when you wish to go anywhere. Take blue-ray treatment. Purushottam will guide you. Take it on the face. Don't allow depression to weigh your heart down.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9207

258. CONGRESS ORGANIZATION

These columns have repeatedly insisted that a perfect Congress organization almost means attainment of swaraj. This will not be true of every country. It is true of India because of its peculiar position. We are ruled by the hypnotic spell that the British rule has cast over us. But British rule means British organization more than its military strength. Military depotism on the part of a handful of foreigners alien in language, culture and habits can do very little if they had no organization to which the people were made by very subtle methods to respond. The moment that spell is broken, that moment the rule disappears. The British can then remain only as friends and servants of the nation at its will. The guarantee for the safety of their persons and legitimate interests will be the goodwill and honour of the nation, instead of the mounted forts which after all are a poor protection for a handful against an awakened nation counted in myriads.

The test of a perfect Congress organization is simple:

1. The Congress must be represented in every village.

2. Every member must know what the Congress means and must respond to the demands made upon him by the Congress.

[1] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Raojibhai M. Patel", 27-10-1929
[2] Wife of Raojabhai M. Patel.

The Congress is the only truly national political organization in the country. It is the oldest of its kind. It has had the services of the most distinguished sons and daughters of the nation. It is admittedly the most powerful organization in the land. It ought not to be difficult for such a body to expand itself and find its flag flying in every village.

Let us with this end in view study the very interesting and instructive bulletin just issued by the Secretary. It contains an exhaustive analysis of the returns received from the provinces of their work regarding the enrolment of members in terms of the A.I.C.C. resolution passed at the Bombay meeting. Here is the consolidated table:

	PROVINCE	QUOTA	MEMBERS ENTROLLED
1.	Ajmer	1,120	14,594
2.	Andhra	36,763	29,000
3	Assam	8,337	(?)
4.	Bihar	72,588	78,107
5.	Bengal	1,24,413	93,385
6.	Berar	7,688	7,688(?)
7.	Burma	2,000	1,904
8.	C.P. Hindustani	20,505	28,827
9.	C.P. Marathi	6,586	11,651
10.	Bombay	17,000	11,889
11.	Delhi	6,954	6,071
12.	Gujarat	7,396	15,990
13.	Karnatak	13,244	10,038
14.	Kerala	7,747	3,265
15.	Maharashtra	21,720	24,608
16.	N.W.F.P.	2,000	2,000(?)
17.	Punjab	51,784	27,490
18.	Sind	8,200	2,615
19.	Tamil Nad	51,784	4,500(?)
20.	United Provinces	1,07,724	67,849
21.	Utkal	12,421	6,945
	TOTAL	5,87,908	4,48,16

The reader should not be satisfied with this table. He must procure the bulletin and study the analysis given for each province and each district wherever it was available. It will repay perusal, if he is at all patriotically inclined. Barring Ajmer whose membership is

under dispute, Gujarat tops the list with double its quota. Besides Gujarat, Bihar, C.P. Hindustani and Marathi and Maharashtra are the only provinces that have done more than their quota. Berar and N.W.F.P. have just done their quota. The rest have not been able to reach it. It will be remembered too that the requirement was one in every four hundred of the population, barring the Indian States population and barring Burma and N.W.F.P. This was low enough in all conscience. There was a penalty attached to non-fulfilment of the provision. A fair effort was undoubtedly made by the workers in general to reach the quota required from their respective provinces. At the Lucknow meeting the A.I.C.C. waived the penalty as it would have meant disqualifying most of the provinces. But this waiver should really mean redoubled effort by the defaulters to make good their debt.

There is however a deeper truth underlying the figures presented by the bulletin. We have not yet got enough workers nor have we penetrated the villages. Many districts supposed to be backward have not been touched. For Congress workers no district is backward, or if it is, it should command their greater ear and attention. The backward portions of Bardoli are showing the greatest constructive activity. The backward Champaran of yore has to its credit the highest number of marks. It has 15,000 members enrolled against its quota of 4,522. It is invariably the experience that where solid, honest and sustained work has been done, people considered the most backward have responded in a most surprising manner. Though, then, much has been done, infinitely more needs to be done for the attainment of our goal. We may not be satisfied with the negative result that we are numerically better than the other political organizations.

Indeed there should be no competition between the Congress and the other organizations. If we would be true to ourselves, the Congress would be admitted by all to be the only national organization to which the members of the other organizations, whilst retaining their own, would deem it a pride to belong. For this consummation Congressmen should show striking results in constructive effort and broadest toleration towards those holding opposite views, so long as they do not come in conflict with the avowed object of the national organization.

Nor may we be satisfied with mere nominal membership. The workers have to keep themselves in touch with the newly-entrolled members. They have to share their sorrows. The new members may be strangers to khadi when they are enrolled. The only requirement of membership is signing the creed and paying the trifling monetary or yarn subscription. But a member loses the privilege of voting at Congress elections and other meetings, if he does not habitually wear khadi. It is the duty of workers to explain this clause to the new members as also to give them the history of the Congress. The workers should share their sorrows and their troubles, so that it may be noised abroad that the Congress is an instrument never of oppression and ever of real service to everyone in distress. Given a reasonable fulfilment of these elementary conditions, there is no reason why the Congress should not become an irresistible organization.

Young India, 10-10-1929

259. NOTES

THANKS

My thanks are due to the numerous friends who were good enough to send me birthday congratulations. They will excuse me for not sending them individual acknowledgments.

A PROMISING EFFORT

Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta Pratishthan, sends me the following table[1] showing progress of work during the months of July and August and in forwarding it, says:

> The progress of work of the Rashtriya Sangha has been very slow on account of the season of sowing and transplantation of paddy covering the whole of July and August and some portion of September. The work has again begun, and it remains to be seen whether the first spell of enthusiasm will continue or not.

Though the actual work turned out will be considered by the reader to be little, it is not to be despised, for the beginnings of all constructive work have been known to be small, and where the workers have been true and the effort sustained, it has been known to have fructified a thousandfold in the fulness of time. Leaving aside the spinners for Bogra, for their return is not given in the table, there are 379 spinners who spun 102 seers in two months. This means 20 tolas roughly per head in two months, that is to say, 1/3 of a tola per

[1] Not reproduced here

day which again means not more than half an hour's work per day. For these villagers even half an hour's work per day throughout the year is not a small thing. Again 102 seers means nearly 75 saris of ordinary length under 10 counts. This is so much added wealth production without interference with any other lucrative occupation. It should be remembered that this was the work turned out during a season of exceptional activity in the fields in the shape of sowing and tranplantation of paddy. The Rashtriya Sangha deserves every encouragement in its efforts. It work bears the seeds of a majestic tree.

THE RIGHT WAY

One of the fine results of the new awakening is that young men are realizing more and more fully the dignity of labour and the dignity of callings that do not carry with them any breach of morals. Thus in Ghazipur I found a barber who was educated there. He was a schoolmaster in a primary school belonging to the Municipality of Ghazipur, but had not given up his hereditary calling and was adding to his meagre salary of Rs.17 nearly Rs.10 from his profession. He said he could easily earn much more as a barber if he gave the whole of his time to it. This barber schoolmaster is a convinced khadi wearer, and he told me that all his people spun during their leisure hours and they were all wearing khadi. A barber is now undergoing a khadi service course at the Udyoga Mandir though he has not abandoned his calling. I wish that these examples will prove far more contagious than they have hitherto done. It is not enough that stray lawyers and doctors spin and weave, or stray barbers and tailors do national service, but thousands of professional men, artisans and agriculturists should, whilst following their callings, render national service by qualifying themselves, the literary professions by realizing the dignity of labour and the labouring professions by realizing the dignity of literature, and all doing everything to uplift the nation and refraining from doing anything that would degrade it.

Young India, 10-10-1929

260. TULSIDAS[1]

Several friends on various occasions have addresed to me criticisms regarding my attitude towards Tulsi *Ramayana*. The substance of their criticisms is as follows:

> You have described the *Ramayana* as the best of books, but we have never been able to reconcile ourselves with your view. Do you not see how Tulsidas has disparaged womankind, defended Rama's unchivalrous ambuscade on Vali, Rama as an avatar in spite of his gross injustice to Sita? What the poetic beauty of the book compensates for everything else? If it is so then we venture to suggest that you have no qualifications for the task.

I admit that if we take the criticisms of every point individually they will be found difficult to refute and the whole of the *Ramayana* can, in this manner, be easily condemned. But that can be said of almost everything and everybody. There is a story related about a celebrated artist that in order to answer his critics he put his picture in a show window and invited visitors to indicate their opinion by marking the spot they did not like. The result was that there was hardly any portion that was not covered by the crititics' marks. As a matter of fact, however, the picture was a masterpiece of art. Indeed even the Vedas, the Bible and the Koran have not been exempt from condemnation. But their lovers fail to discover those faults in them. In order to arrive at a proper estimate of a book it must be judged as a whole. So much for external criticism. The internal test of a book consists in finding out what effect it has produced on the majority of its readers. Judged by either method the position of the *Ramayana* as a book par excellence remains unassailable. This however does not mean that is absolutely faultless. But it is claimed on behalf of the *Ramayana* that it has given peace to millions, has given faith to those who had it not, and is even today serving as a healing balm to thousands who are burnt by the fire of unbelief. Every page of it is overflowing with devotion. It is a veritable mine of spiritual experience.

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Hindi Navajivan*, 10-10-1929. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

It is true that the *Ramayana* is sometimes used by evil-minded persons to support their evil practices. But that is no proof of evil in the *Ramayana*. I admit that Tulsidas has, unintentionally as I think, done justice to womankind. In this, as in several other respects also, he has failed to rise above the prevailing notions of his age. In other words Tulsidas was not a reformer; he was only a prince among devotees. The faults of the *Ramayana* are less a reflection on Tulsidas than a relfection on the age in which he lived.

What should be the attitude of the reformer regarding the position of women or towards Tulsidas under such circumstances? Can he derive no help whatever from Tulsidas? The reply is emphatically 'he can'. In spite of disparaging remarks about women in the *Ramayana* it should not be forgotten that in it Tulsidas has presented to the world his matchless picture of Sita. Where would be Rama without Sita? We find a host of other ennobling figures like Kausalya, Sumitra, etc, in the *Ramayana*. We bow our head in reverence before the faith and devotion of Shabri and Ahalya. Ravana was a monster but Mandodari was a *sati*. In my opinion these instances go to prove that Tulsidasji was no reviler of women by conviction. On the contrary, so far as his convictions went, he had only reverence for them. So much for Tulsidasji's attitude towards women.

In the matter of the killing of Vali, however, there is room for two opinions. In Vibhishana I can find no fault. Vibhishana offered satyagraha against his brother. His example teaches us that it is a travesty of patriotism to sympathize with or try to conceal the faults of one's rulers or country and to oppose them is the truest patriotism. By helping Rama, Vibhishana rendered the truest service to his country. The treatment of Sita by Rama does not denote heartlessness. It is a proof of a duel between kingly duty and a husband's love for wife.

To the sceptics who feel honest doubts in connection with the *Ramayana*, I would suggest that they should not accept anybody's interpretations mechanically. They should leave out such portions about which they feel doubtful. Nothing contrary to truth and ahimsa need be condoned. It would be sheer perversity to argue that because in our opinion Rama practised deception, we too may do likewise. The proper thing to do would be to believe that Rama was incapable of practising deception. As the *Gita* says, "There is nothing in the

world that is entirely free from fault." Let us, therefore, like the fabled swan who rejects the water and takes only the cream, learn to treasure only the good and reject the evil in everything. Nothing and no one is perfect but God.

Young India, 31-10-1929

261. LETTER TO GANGABEHN ZAVERI

GONDA,

October 10, 1929

CHI. GANGABEHN,

As the President of the Stree Mandal you may be regarded as being a person with a sense of responsibility. You have discretion, wisdom and considerable experience of the world. You have seen both prosperity and adversity. You are B.s[1] neighbour. Hence I should like you to answer the following questions and guide me.

What do you know about B.'s wife? Does B. always do her injustice? I of course know the wrong he committed in beating her for stealing cotton. My question, however, is about B.'s general conduct. Do you believe the relations between B. and N.[2] to be in some way impure? If so, on what basis do you hold it so? It seems that the women talk a great deal about the two. Why is that so? Our rule is that no one should say anything against a person behind his or her back, that we should banish from our mind any doubt that may arise against a person and that, if the doubt is too strong to be banished, we ought to put it to the person concerned and listen to him or her patiently in the matter before any word on the subject escapes our lips anywhere else. If I had not observed this rule, I would have had to part company with a good many people. I often like writing to you, but restrain my wish and content myself with the general letter I may have written to the women.

How is Nanibehn Zaveri doing? She was to write to me about something, but she never did. Has Pannalal been keeping good health? Is agriculture prospering? Was any damage caused by the

[1] The names have been omitted.
[2] *ibid*

locusts? I hope Mahesh does not do as much mischief as he used to at the evening prayers.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3097

262. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

GONDA,
October 10, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I send with this B.'s letter for you to read. I enclose my reply; read it and pass it on to him. Talk with him plainly. I have found his letter quite frank. B. is certainly prone to anger, but he has given me the impression of being a truthful man.

I have always believed his relation with N.[2] to be pure. I came to know only recently that she is not his sister.

I see that B. had shown his letter to you. I need not, therefore, send it. Write to me and tell me what injustice he did.

We have known from experience that many false rumours are spread about the relations of other men and women. It is true that sometimes these relations have been discovered to be impure. But that is no reason for us to be shocked. Such things will go on in the world. Our duty, therefore, is to examine every case with an unprejudiced mind. So long as we have no strong reason to look at any such relation with suspicion, we should believe it to be pure. There is always the risk of our being deceived if we act in this manner, but it is any day better to run the risk of being deceived than of believing an innocent person to be guilty. Bear this in mind in coming to your conclusion.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this.

Read the letter to Champa, so that you will find it easy to come to a conclusion.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5454

263. LETTER TO A

GONDA,

October 10, 1929

DEAR FRIEND ...[1] ,

I got your letter. There is nothing in it which need be kept secret. You have admitted yur error, and so nothing more need be said about it.

A man has no right at all to beat any woman. Are men less guilty towards their wives? If, however, wives started beating their husbands for every misdeed, we would see very few husbands alive. If a woman has no such right, how can a man cliam it? I do not write all this to point out your fault, but only to open your eyes so that you may feel the seriousness of your error still more and refrain from repeating it.

Moreover,you observe *brahmacharya* even in relation to your wife, so that it is all the more your duty to remain unaffected by her. You should forget the very thought that she is your wife. You should regard her as your friend and serve her as best as you can. If she stole cotton, you should have paid its price. If she steals again, you can fix a maintenance allowance for her and ask her to live separately from you.

Moreover, you had really no right to use her cushion. So long as your relations are unhappy, you should never accept a service or obligation from her, and in using her cushion you accepted, if not a service, an obligation from her.

I also place before you a rather subtle consideration. No person who wishes to observe *brahmacharya* should use any article belonging to a woman towards whom impure feelings are likely to be aroused in his heart. Especially, he should not use an article like a cushion which she must have touched every day and which the man may have used together with her when in an impure state of mind. The vows which you have described are good. If they do not forbid milk, you may benefit by taking milk or curds. Do not take any vow which is beyond your strength. There is no harm if you cannot take a

[1] The name has been omitted in the source.

vow, but it will do you much harm if you take a vow and then are forced to give it up.

Have no fear at all if people talk ill of your relation with ...[1] If you can say, with your soul as witness, that their evil talk has no basis in fact,you are safe. Have a frank talk with your wife. If she goes on harrassing you though you commit no fault, you can be firm and tell her to go and live elsewhere. For the present, you must let her live with you as atonement for your fault in your relation to her and as a test of your capacity for tolerance. If you have anything more to ask, let me know.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 160-1

264. A LETTER

MUSSOORIE,

October 10, 1929

There is peace only in being faithfully engaged in a worthy endeavour. There is no way to knowledge except through service and contemplation. The awareness of being in the abode of *guru* is valid. But the abode of *guru* is in one's own heart; therefore it is necessary to purify the heart, which is possible only through ceaseless service.

From a copy of the Hindi: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/63

265. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

BARABANKI,

October 11, 1929

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
ANAND BHAVAN
ALLAHABAD
AS PREVIOUSLY ARRANGED SIKH LEAGUE MESSAGE[2] ALREADY SENT THROUGH SARDULSINGH LAHORE.

GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 134E, 1929. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The name has been omitted in the source.
[2] *Vide* "Congress Organization"

266. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

BARABANKI,
October 11, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

We have now come to Barabanki from Gonda. After bath, we attend a meeting and then resume the tour. I, therefore, stop here today. We shall spend the night at Hardoi. Pyarelal tells me that he has asked for the post to be sent there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5455

267. SPEECH AT POLITICAL CONFERENCE, HARDOI

October 11, 1929

Mahatmaji in his speech said:

We are habituated to pass resolutions without acting on them. I advise you to give up this mentality. This is one main obstacle in our path of progress. Had we fulfilled our promises of 1921, we should[have] attained swaraj long before. Another occasion is approaching on the people of this province as it is your provicne which has given the President of the next Congress. The responsiblity is all the greater on the youth. Pandit Jawaharlal belongs to your province. At the same time, he is a youth. If you want to preserve your prestige and his too, you have to act as you say. You have already passed a resolution on untouchability. I hope you will pass similar resolutions on Hindu-Musilim unity and boycott of foreign cloth, which is possible only if you use khaddar. If you pass these resolutions, you have to abide by them. I hope and pray that you be prepared for the great struggle before us.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-10-1929

268. KHADDAR AND UNTOUCHABILITY: DUTY OF INDIAN MUNICIPALITIES

CAMP HARDOI,

October 12, 1929

I have been asked by the Editor to answer the following question for this Gazette:

> What can Indian municipalities do in the matter of khaddar and untouchability?

My answer is as follows:

In the matter of khaddar a muncipality can help…

First, by prescribing the use of khaddar for the uniform of its employees. This will be effective only if the members will themselves wear khaddar.

Secondly, by making all purchases of cloth for hospitals and the like in khaddar only.

Thirdly, by introducing the *takli* and carding-bow in all the schools under its control.

Fourthly, by removing all duty upon khaddar and by giving grants to khaddar depots within municipal limits.

In the matter of untouchability a municipality can help…

First, by promoting the reform by insisting upon inspectors of municipal schools securing admission therein of a minimum number of ‘untouchable’ boys and girls

Secondly, by opening model schools specially for the instruction of ‘untouchable’ children.

Thirdly, by opening night schools for grown-up ‘untouchables’ in its employ.

Fifthly, by inducing trustees of temples to open them to ‘untouchables’, and where this is not possible, by building attractive temples in suitable places, specially for the use of ‘untouchables’, but generally for public use, and encouraging the public to make use of these temples in common with the ‘untouchables’.

Sixthly, by giving grants to schools, temples and clubs, etc., that would specially cater for ‘untouchables’.

Untouchability is perhaps the greatest evil that has crept into Hinduism. The nearest approach to it to be found in the West was untouchability of the Jews, who were confined to the ghettos. I do not know the historical origin of this disease. Socially it seems to have arisen from the desire of the so-called superior classes to isolate themselves from those whom they regarded as inferior. It is the excrescence of varnashrama dharma which has been misrepresented as the cast system with which, as seen in the multitudinous castes of latter-day Hinduism, the original four divisions have little to do.

Untouchability in its mildest form takes the shape of not touchaing or having any social intercourse with the 'untouchable'. In its extreme form it becomes *unapproachability* and even invisibility. The approach of a man within a defined distance or his very sight in some parts of the extreme south pollutes the 'superior' classes. The 'unapproachables' and the 'invisibles' are very few in number, whereas the 'untouchables' are roughly estimated at sixty million. In my opinion this is a highly exaggerated estimate.

Though I regard myself as a staunch Hindu believing in and having great veneration for the Vedas and the other Hindi religious books, and though I claim, not as a scholar but as a religiously-minded man, to have made a serious attempt to understand the Hindu scriptures, I can discover no warrant for this brutal doctrine of untouchability in it. Save for a few texts of doubtful authority in *smritis*, the whole doctrine of 'untouchability' is utterly repugnant to the spirit of Hinduism whose glory consits in proclaiming non-violence to be the basis of religion and which lays down the bold formulae that all life, including the meanest crawling beings, is one.

But to a reformer like me this philosophical foundation of Hinduism affords but little comfort in the face of the cruel fact that professors of that religion regard innumerable fellow-beings as beyond the pale of society solely on the ground of their birth in a particular group of men and women in every way like them.

But this untouchability will soon be a thing of past. Hindu society has beocme conscious of the hideous wrong done to man by this sinful doctrine. Hundreds of Hindu workers are devoting themselves to the uplift of these suppressed classes. Among them may be named late Swami Shraddhanandji and the late Lala Lajpat Rai. These, however, may not be regarded as orthodox. Pandit Madan Mohan Malviyaji, who is accepted by all Hindus as an orthodox

Hindu, has thrown in the weight of his great influence on the side of reform. Everywhere one sees the process of emancipation silently but surely and steadily going on. The so called higher-class Hindus are conducting schools and building hostels for them, giving them medical relief and serving them in a variety of ways. The effort is absolutely independent of the Government and is part of the process of purification that Hinduism is undergoing. Lastly, the Indian National Congress adopted removal of untouchability as a vital part of its constructive programme in 1920. It may not be superfluous to add that while untouchability is undoubtedly a grave social wrong, it has no legal sanction behind it. So far as I am aware, there is no legal disability against the 'untouchables'.

The reformer has still a stiff task before him in having to convert the masses to his point of view. The masses give intellectual assent to the reformers' plea, but are slow to grant equality in practice to their outcaste brethren. Nevertheless, untouchability is doomed, and Hinduism is saved. And, as I have indicated above, our municipalities can do much to bring about this salvation.

M. K. GANDHI

The Calcutta Municipal Gazette, Fifth Anniversary Number, Saturday, 23rd November, 1929; also S.N. 19854

269. LETTER TO AMAL HOME

CAMP HARDOI,

October 12, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your two letters. I have not the leisure to write anything of value for your Gazette. Nor have I much faith in anything I may write bearing fruit. However I send you the enclosed[1] for what it is worth.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure.

AMAL HOME, ESQ.

EDITOR, "THE CALCUTTA MUNICIPAL GAZETTE"

CENTRAL MUNICIPAL OFFICE

CALCUTTA

From a copy: S.N. 15605

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

270. LETTER OF FREDERIC STANDENATH

CAMP HARDOI,
October 12, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your birthday greetings. I know that you are advertising me for all your work. Only I hope that you are not consciously or unconsciously exaggerating anything. Remember it is always best to underrate the merits of friends. I must not write to you more whilst I am continously travelling. I am keeping good health on milk, curds and fruits. I am not taking any grains or pulses or vegetables yet.

Yours sincerely,

FREDERIC STANDENATH, ESQ.
GRAZ (IN SYRIA)
AUSTRIA

From a photostat: S.N. 15654

271. LETTER TO HARI G. GOVIL[1]

CAMP HARDOI,
October 12, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and the cutting[2]. You should ask Mr. Homes as to what is happening to the American Edition of the *Autobiography*.

Yours sincerely

HARI G. GOVIL, ESQ.
INDIA SOCIETY OF AMERICA
1107 TIMES BUILDING
NEW YORK CITY

From a photostat: G.N. 1025

[1] In reply to his letter (S.N 15656) dated 6-9-1929
[2] From *New York Herald Tribune*

272 LETTER TO TAGE BUNDGAARD[1]

CAMP HARDOI
October 12, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I am much touched by your kind invitation but I do not see any chance of my being able to go to Denmark in the near future.

Yours sincerely,

TAGE BUNDGAARD, ESQ.
SILKEBORG, DENMARK

From a photostat: S.N. 15185

273. LETTER TO ELEANOR M. HOUGH[2]

CAMP HARDOI
October 12, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You will please excuse me for my inability to send you the introduction you want.

Yours sincerely,

MISS ELEANOR M. HOUGH
2115 F STREET, N.W.
WASHINGHTON, D.C., U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N. 15661

[1] In reply to his letter (S.N 15184) dated August 1929. The addressee had sent birthday greetings to Gandhiji and had invited him to visit Denmark and, in particular, his native town which had a beautiful atmosphere.

[2] In reply to her letter (S.N. 15660) dated August 30, 1929. Miss Hough wanted Gandhiji's endorsement of a study she planned to make in India, namely, "The Relation of the Co-operative Movement to Indian Nationalism", it being the subject of her doctoral dissertation at the George Washington University. She wished to obtain a year's scholarship for the purpose from the Guggenham Memorial Foundation on the basis of Gandhiji's endorsement of the projected study.

274. LETTER TO HENRY S. SALT[1]

CAMP HARDOI,
October 12, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I was agreeably surprised to receive your letter. Yes, indeedyour book[2] which was the first English book I came across on vegetarianism was of immense help to me in steadying my faith in vegetarianism. My first introduction to Thoreau's writings was I think in 1907 or later when I was in the thick of passive resistance struggle. A friend sent me Thoreau's essay on civil disobedience. It left a deep impression upon me. I translated a portion of that essay for the readers of *Indian Opinion* in South Africa which I was then editing and I made copious extracts from that essay for that paper. That essay seemed to be so convincing and truthful that I felt the need of knowing more of Thoreau and I came across your life of him, his "Walden" and other short essays all of which I read with great pleasure and equal profit.

Yours sincerely,

HENRY S. SALT, ESQ.
21 CLEVELAND ROAD
BRIGHTON (ENGLAND)

From a photostat: S.N. 15663

[1] In reply to his letter (S.N 15662) dated September 18, 1929

[2] *A Plea for Vegetarianism*; Salt had seen a mention of his book in Gandhiji's *Autobiography*. About forty years earlier, he had published a life of Thoreau. Now he was handing over his material to an American friend Ramond Adams who intended to write a fuller life of Thoreau. Salt had enquired if Gandhiji had read anything of Thoreau's and the extent to which he had been influenced by it as on many subjects Gandhiji's views seemed akin to Thoreau's.

275. LETTER TO K.V. SWAMI[1]

CAMP HARDOI,
October 12, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I was pleased to find that you were on the fair way to be cured of your leprosy through *Surya Namaskar*. I would like you to report to me again when the restoration is complete. It would be better also if you could secure a medical testimony of the cure.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SWAMI, B.A.
MERCHANT, PARLAKIMEDI

From a photostat: S.N. 15665

276. LETTER TO ADELE KAUFMANN

CAMP HARDOI,
October 12, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. If you do find your way to India I shall welcome you to the Ashram.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 15655

277. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

CAMP HARDOI,
October 12, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter enclosing copy of the proceedings of the public meeting held on the 2nd instant at Salem. Mahadeo was telling me all about you but I was grieved to hear that you were not

[1] In reply to his letter (S.N 15664) dated September 12, 1929. The addressee had been in an advanced state of leprosy when he started *Surya Namaskar* as described by Chief of the State of Oundh in his book titled *Surya Namaskar*. After 13 months of this exercise he had benefited greatly and expected to be completely cured in another six months. Swami wanted Gandhiji to publicize his case so that he could help other fellow-sufferers.

yet enjoying the best of health. I hope however that this will find you in better health.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C.VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR
THE ARAMA, SALEM
(S. INDIA)

From a photostat: S.N. 15666

278. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

HARDOI,
October 12, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter. When you are busy and have nothing in particular to write to me about, you need not write for the sake of writing. In any case there would be other letters from the Ashram. I would know from them that everything was all right.

If you let Dwarkanath remain or keep him, we should pay him Rs.60. I think it would not be right to pay Rs.150 to Dinkarrai at present. So long as both husband and wife live in the Ashram, they will be saved much expenditure. They will have no rent to pay. Their manner of living will also change somewhat, so that, if they wish, they can easily reduce their future requirements. If he has, therefore, no special requirements outside, I would prefer to pay them Rs.75 when we have had experience of him and can send him anywhere without hesitation. Then he may, if he wishes to save money, be paid Rs.150. For the present we should think of keeping him in the Ashram in the hope that he will become an ideal dairy worker. We should, therefore, decide to pay him according to our standard. The Managing Commitee may take all this into account and decide what it thinks best.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5456

279. GUJARATIS' LOVE

When I am being inundated in every place by love, it would be pointless and even invidious for me to measure or compare the affection showered on me in the different regions. the best way to acknowledge this debt of love is to imbibe it silently or, if one may say so, to endure it. Though I know this, I cannot always observe the rule. Where there are Gujaratis, they single me out for favoured treatment and they do not expect me to repay my debt of love even to the extent of my acknowledging it. One such recent incident took place in Kanpur which I cannot forget. There the Gujaratis invited me to a separate meeting and considering their numbers and the extent of their business they gave me quite a decent sum when compared to the collections made there. The amount was Rs. 1,152. But I am an avaricious man. Therefore the collections of the citizens of Kanpur struck me as meagre. I complained to Dr. Murarilal and he endorsed the complaint. It was decided to make collections in the city. It was after this was arranged that I went to the meeting of Gujaratis. There also I lodged a similar complaint. The meeting took up the complaint forthwith and added Rs. 1,039-14as-6 pies to the sum of Rs. 1,152. Apart from this, the children and their teachers contributed Rs. 25-4 as. Thus, the total collection amounted to Rs. 2,217-2as-6 pies. The money that Gujarati women contributed is not included in this. I have all the details before me but it is not necessary to give those names. This article has not been written to record donations or names of donors. It is the overflow of my feelings. There is no exaggeration if I say that such love keeps me alive and increases my optimism. One can expect Rs. 200 from the man who donates Rs. 100, but not a pie from one who donates nothing. The Gujaratis who feed me with this potion of love should not sit back contented. I have written often and reiterate that foreign traders rule over us and hence if Indian traders are vigilant, the winning of swaraj will be child's play. If gunmen were ruling over us, some revolutionaries would have proved the necessity of guns. But where the Government is carried on for the sake of trade, it can be easily seen that if trade goes, the Government will also follow suit. That trade can be captured in two ways: One is to become like the foreign trader, the other is not to let that trade go on. Now his main trade is that in cloth, the others are organized behind it. Many of his cargo ships are dependent on the cotton trade. And if the

cotton trade goes, the steamers too come down crashing. This is not my assertion but that of an English writer. Hence those Gujaratis and other Indians who contribute money are to a small extent doing atonement. True atonement consists in purifying one's trade. The giving up of a trade which harms the nation is alone the true atonement. Those who contribute money say themselves that they have become conscious of this. When those who have understood act according to that understanding, one should take it that swaraj has been won. And this alone will be true swaraj.

This biggest of trades is in the hands of Gujaratis and Marwaris. Here the world 'Gujaratis' should be understood in its larger connotation as referring to those who speak the Gujarati language, so that the term includes all the people who live in Gujarat such as Muslims, Parsis, Christians and others. Therefore, if these two provinces wake up, the other provinces will surely do so of their own accord. I daily look forward to that auspicious time. The Gujaratis' love for me fills me with the hope that their contribution towards this end will be a large one.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-10-1929

280. A RUINOUS VICE

A gentleman from distant Uganda writes:[1]

We can call this a national vice. It betrays our rudeness and apathy towards our neighbours. That this vice still persists despite the awakening among us shows our indolence. It of course spreads diseases and we are rightly maligned for it in the West.

This vice is contrary to religion. When I returned to our country in the year 1915, this filthy habit had caught my attention well enough and I tried to find out what the various religions had to say about it. I do not remember where the collection of extracts is at the moment. But during this tour I came across one or two stanzas from the Hindu Shastras whose gist I give below:

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had referred to the Indians' bad habit of spitting almost anywhere…near them, on the road or in a railway carriage…and thereby causing the spread of infection through flies. He had also alluded to the practice, prevalent in Paris, of carrying small boxes for use as spittoons.

No one should urinate or defecate or spit into rivers, ponds, etc.

—*Krishnayajurveda*

No one should urinate or defecate in the middle of a village or a town or in temples, cremation grounds, open spaces, watering places or on roads.

—*CHARAKA*

One should not indulge in such acts as rubbing the nose, gnashing the teeth, biting the nails, cracking one's finger joints, digging the ground [with one's toe], plucking grassblades or playing with the earth, etc., etc.

—*CHARAKA*

From this we now see that that civilization has been destroyed. Or one may say that at the time when the above treatises were written, these habits were prevalent among the people and therefore the saints drew our attention to them. But these habits have not been corrected till today. Whatever the state of affairs in the past, we should devise remedies to get rid of them now.

The correspondent regards as unacceptable two of the remedies adopted in the West. They are no doubt disgusting but how can we hope for plesant remedies when our body itself is a storehouse of urine and excreta? We should perform these activities in such a way that we ourselves and our neighbours are spared the risk of spread of disease. Only this much is possible. While walking on a public road, if one coughs and has to spit out phlegm, there is no other way but to spit into a handkerchief or a spittoon such as a clean box. If one has to spit into a handkerchief, the handkerchief which has been used once should be folded and put into the pocket in such a way that neither the hand nor the pocket gets soiled. Only a man who has got tuberculosis and is obliged to spit very often needs to keep a small box. But there are many occasions when it is not necessary to do so. When we are seated in a train, one should take the trouble to spit out of the window. When going along a road, one should seek a lonely spot which is not frequented and spit, etc., in a bush or in some corner there. To one who has the power of discriminating between good and evil and who cares for the convenience of others, easy solutions will readily suggest themselves. Before setting out on a short or long journey, a thoughtful man will so arrange the calls of nature as to cause the least inconvenience to others.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-10-1929

281. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

MORADABAD,
October 13, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL JOSHI,

Your letter of the 9th has been received here. It is surprising that no letters from me were received there for two days. I have to write to Bhansali every day. I have, therefore, not allowed a single day to pass without writing to you. But as the place changes every day, it may have happened that letters posted at successive places may not have been received by you in the order in which they were posted.

I am surprised to know that Ramachandra's health has gone down so much. Is the bread which they make all right now? Jayadev came and saw me yesterday. In Hardwar he will be the person in charge of arrangements for me. Devsharmaji will also see me not later than tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5457

282. LETTER TO ISHWARLAL JOSHI

MORADABAD,
October 13, 1929

CHI. ISHWARLAL,

If Chhaganbhai permits you, you may certainly have one year off. I would advise you to go to Madras. There you will be able to communicate with people only in English. I would put you in Rajagopalachari's Ashram so that you may learn English and also help him. One cannot learn English by reading a book for eight hours. But one learns it easily if one speaks and hears only English. That purpose is likely to be served there; but if you can think of any other course, by all means follow it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9278. Courtesy: Ishwarlal Joshi

283. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

MORADABAD,

October 13, 1929

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I received your letter. Since we are going to meet, I am not writing much. I will be reaching Mussoorie on the 17th. So it is best that you plan to come there. You know of course how you can reach that place. From Kalol to Mehsana, and from there to Delhi on the meter guage line; from there to Dehra Dun and then to Mussoorie in motor-car. You may have to hire a litter or pony or rickshaw for two or three miles if you cannot walk that much distance.

I got Chhotelal's and Krishnadas's long letters only yesterday. I will preserve them for you. They only discuss the question of the Vidyalaya.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PRABHUDAS CHHAGANLAL GANDHI
UDYOGAGRIHA
VIJAPUR
"VIA" KALOL
B.B. & C.I. RLY.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33003

284. SPEECH AT MORADABAD

October 13, 1929

Amidst the cries of "Long Live Revolution" and "*Vande Mataram*", Mahatma Gandhi was received at the railway station by a large concourse of people. He and his party statyed at the house of Moulvi Abdul Salam where a grand dinner was given in his honour.

In the morning Mahatmaji performed the opening ceremony of the Brijratan Hindu Public Library. He put to sale a chain attached to the library lock which fetched Rs. 76.

On the town-hall grounds he received addresses from the municipal and district boards and put to sale the caskets in which the addresses were presented. He was very

keen on the collection of funds while the audience wanted to have a long speech on the burning problems of the day.

When a purse of Rs. 2,385 was presented to him he was requested to accept it in the spirit in which shri Krishna had accepted rice offered by Sudama.

Mahatma Gandhi, however, said that whereas Sudama had given his all which consisted of only rice, Moradabad with its large population had contributed very little. he had received a telegram saying that Moradabad was not prepared to offer a large purse, but received later a telegram from the students saying that they were working hard to collect funds and were inviting him. He asked where those students were then. If they could not offer a purse befitting the position of Moradabad why did they invite him?

Referring to the addresses, he said that the best use he could make of the caskets was to sell them as he did not want them for himself.

He complained of a circular issued by the district board asking teachers to see that their pupils abstained from talking of the freedom of the country. He did not want to see their children wearing the chains of slavery and characterized such a circular issued by a board with an elected chairman and a majority of elected members as shameful. People generally got themselves elected for personal gain which he condemned.

Referring to the municipal board address, he said that though it boasted of the absence of communal friction he would call this state of affairs a mere armed neutrality. He would like to see real love between the communities and by having such love Moradabad could set an example to the whole of India. It was doubly the duty of the young men of these provinces to make the Congress a huge success as India had successively selected two Presidents, father and son, from U.P.

The Leader, 16-10-1929

285. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

HARDWAR,

Silence Day [*October 14, 1929*][1]

SISTERS,

Today we have arrived near the source of the Ganga. The Ganga entering the plains is very near here. If we go further up the river, we have to climb the hills.

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's visit to Hardwar

Today being my day of silence, Kusum, Prabhavati and Kanti have gone out with Devdas for sightseeing. Nature is bountiful here, but man has spoiled the place all over.

I end here today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3705

286. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

HARDWAR,

Silence Day, October 14, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have received here two days' post together.

You say you have enclosed Prithuraj's letter, but you forgot to do so. I do not see it with your letter.

You should not be indifferent about your health. If you are getting low fever, you are bound to feel exhausted. I feel like sending you away to Mussoorie. After sending you there, however, I cannot keep you long there and the visit would do no good. I should like you to go to Wardha or Pudupalayam. If you think you require a cold climate, go to Almora. I think it will be enough if you merely go out of the Ashram. You should not think, either, that you can leave only if Ramniklal reaches there. If Narandas agrees, hand over the charge to him. I will persuade him if you want me to do so. You should go away somewhere, somehow. Never over tax your health.

I send the second letter from Chhaganlal, too, for your information. Slowly he will start writing directly to you. He has always suffered from this kind of excessive diffidence. You should tolerate it.

It is with my consent that the workers of the National Women's Council use foreign silk thread for embroidery on khadi. I have once written about this in *Navajivan*. There is no need to write about it again. Some reader may exaggerate the importance of the thing. We do use foreign thread for stitching our clothes. Embroidery is one step further than the stitching of dresses. At present we have reached the ground of khadi. In beautifying that ground, we use foreign dyes and foreign thread. Even so, I have opposed the proposal to stock such articles for sale in khadi stores. I have not, however, opposed

separate stalls for such articles in exhibitions. No issue of principle is involved in this; it is a question of practical wisdom, discretion and what is feasible.

We must encourage, within certain limits, inter-provincial marriages. I would regard it as essential that the husband and the wife should learn each other's language. This was so in Rukhi's marriage. In this case the husband does possess a fairly good knowledge of Gujarati. I do not mind if the other members of his family do not have such knowledge. When a man and a woman marry at a mature age, the idea would be that they should have a separate establishment of their own. The members of the husband's family cannot stand in the way of their doing so. The wife ought not to be made to suffer at their hands. In this case, moreover, the two languages are nearly alike. Hindi, again, being the national language, both know it. In these circumstances, there is no possibility of any difficulty arising for want of knowledge of a common language. I shall not, however, elaborate this reasoning. It is of course necessary to think before forming a connection with someone from another province, but I see no need to ban such connections.

I had expected that I would get information about Kaki's death in today's post, but there was none. I am sure I will get some tomorrow. It is four days since Mahadev's telegram.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5458

287. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[*After October 14, 1929*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Yesterday I got the post in the evening, two days' post together. I got Prithuraj's letter too.

As for the problem of disposing of Gujarat's khadi, we shall discuss the matter when I arrive there, and after I have thought about it I will write on the subject in *Navajivan*. It will not be difficult to dispose of it. You need not get alarmed if a small stock accumulates.

[1] From the reference to Prithuraj's letter ; *vide* the preceding item.

It may prove useful at a time of difficulty. Only, we should have the necessary facilities to store it.

You may certainly go to the Punjab.[1] The climate there will become colder day by day and the cold will be more intense than in Ahmedabad. You should, therefore, take sufficient warm clothing and covering.

We shall certainly have to keep a watch over Bhansali.

Narandas feels that you have no faith in his capacity for work and that, deep in your heart, you do not want his help. He even suspects that perhaps you do not wish his presence in the Udyoga Mandir at all. I have written to him and told him that this might possibly be his illusion. But, so long as he entertains this fear, he will not accept responsibilities with an open heart. You alone can remove his suspicion. How, it is diffuclt to say.

If the work in Vijapur goes on all right, I would advise you not to worry about the slightly high cost of khadi for some time. I am sending your letter to Chhaganlal. I feel that, whenever anyone writes such a letter to me, it would be good if I sent it to the person concerned. Anyone would understand the frank sincerity behind your letter.

I see no need to invite a doctor to live permanently in the Ashram. If the secretary's notebook is maintained properly, it would give the correct information about such matters. How often in the course of a year do we require a doctor's services? A few visits, but in quick succession, may sometimes appear numerous. I do feel, however, that we should offer something to the doctor, though I would not mind if he refused to accept anything. Whatever he accepts will not be sufficient to cover his fees. The only return we can make to him is through our vigilance, our self-control, our daily growing spirit of service and our devotion to duty. The very fact that the doctor comes every time we call him shows that he looks upon us as worthy servants.

I shall have no objection if dispensaries are opened in places where spinning work is going on. Only, we should take care to see that the former do not overshadow the latter. Govindbabu's activity in

[1] To attend the Lahore Congress; *vide*, "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 23-10-1929

this field certainly does that. I have an impression that the Abhoy Ashram at Comilla has combined the two in a beautiful manner.

What you write about the Maganlal Memorial is correct I suppose you will be there in Wardha, will you not?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5477

288. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

HARDWAR,
October 15, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Jayanti should have reached here yesterday morning, but he arrived in the evening. He had not been able to sleep the previous night, and so at Saharanpur, where he should have changed he was asleep and woke up after the station had been left behind. He travelled back to Saharanpur and lost time in that.

I had become impatient to hear more about Kaki's death. I got out from Jayanti as much information as he could give. Shankar must have recovered now. Chhaganlal Gandhi's letter was left out yesterday; I enclose it today. Wherever you find an error in his figures, please do draw his attention to it, and also let me know about it. I suppose the matter about Kathor will now be attended to after Diwali.

We are nearing the Diwali. When we were children, we felt right from the Dussehra day that the Diwali had arrived. We felt sad on the new moon day, thinking that the Diwali was now over. But we used to console ourselves with the thought that there was still the Dev Diwali to be celebrated and neglected studies, etc., till then. But at present the problem which we have to tackle is whether, after the Diwali, we should continue the common kitchen. If there is anything about this which you think you should discuss with me, do so. But you can even decide independently of me if you wish to. The chief responsibility in this matter rests on the women, and so they should think very carefully about the problem. Let everyone among them think for herself whether she has found advantage or disadvantage in the common kitchen. Do not hold too many meetings or take too many

days for coming to a decision. Do not even spend too many hours. We gave the people freedom to reconsider the matter after Diwali. That is why, though my views are fixed, I have touched upon this matter so that all of you may use without hesitation the freedom that was given. We do not, however, wish to make it a subject for daily discussion.

Devdas requires an assistant in Jamia. He has come to know that Ishvarlal wishes to go out of the Ashram in order to learn English. He, therefore, suggested today that, if Ishvarlal went to Jamia, he, Devdas, would get some help and would himself teach the latter English. In Jamia Ishvarlal would not get the kind of English atmosphere which he would in Rajaji's Ashram. He would, however, get in Jamia the leisure which he would not at the other place. Ask Ishvarlal. If he wishes, he may immediately go to Delhi. Devdas will not be able to return to the place quite so soon, so that for the present Ishvarlal will act as a substitute for Devdas and teach the children spinning. By and by Devdas will return there. I do not wish to press Ishvarlal on this matter and ask him to go against his inclination. He may go only if he wishes to. Devdas's request was for Kanti, but I have assumed that you would not be able to spare him. I also feel that, if Kanti were to remain away from the dairy for a long time, he would lose interest in it and also the knowledge which he has acquired. In the end, therefore, he would succeed in neither task. If Ishvarlal is not ready for this but some others are, let me have their names.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5459

289. LETTER TO GANGADEVI SANADHYA

HARDWAR,
October 15, 1929

CHI. GANGADEVI,

How are you keeping now? I often remember you. Has the doctor put off the operation? If the doctor suggests it, do undergo it. Have no fear. How long do you sew these days? How is Totaram's eye?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2541

290. STATEMENT ON AHMEDABAD LABOUR DISPUTE[1]

DEHRADUN,
October 16, 1929

Shethshri Mangaldas has sent me for my comments a copy of the statement presented to the *Sarpanch*. I have gone through it.

I think that a number of points made in it are improper.

According to my understanding, the insistence that the cut in wages effected in 1923 was binding for all time had been given up. Moreover, even in his statement, Sheth Mangaldas does not insist that the labourers cannot demand, after the cut of 1923, that the same be abrogated and hence, though he has written at length about it, there is no propriety in my giving a reply to it. As an arbitrator, he gave no award in 1923. This much is clear that for whatever happened in 1923 he is not to blame, but if there is anyone to be blamed it is the Mill-owners' Association.

According to me there is truly speaking only one point before the *Sarpanch* for decision: Whether the wages which the labourers receive today are less than their expenditure in the light of the prices of foodgrains, etc., obtaining today and if they are less, whether at

[1] Between the Mill-owners' Association and the Ahmedabad Labour Union; Mangaldas Girdhardas and Gandhiji acted as arbitrators and K. M. Jhaveri as the Umpire. For Gandhiji's comments on the award, *vide* "An Important Award", 12-12-1929.

least in order to make up the deficit their wages should be increased or not.

The evidence given from the side of the labourers on this point clearly proves that the total of all their earnings is less than the necessary expense which they incur every month. In Sheth Mangaldas's statement I have not been able to see any rebuttal of this submission. Therefore there is not much that I can add to what I have said in my verdict[1]. But I should draw the *Sarpanch's* attention to one thing. The cut in wages is a question of life and death to the labourers. To the mills it was and is one of effecting a cut and maintaining it with a view to increasing their reduced profits. I hold that, as long as the mills make some profit, one cannot effect any cut in the living wage of the labourers. Prior to the cut, this living wage was not a living wageat all. It is however true that the prices of foodgrains today are lower than those prevailing in the year 1923. Nevertheless it is a sad and surprising thing that the evidence put before the arbitrator proves that the expense incurred by the labourers today on foodgrains at those lower prices is higher than their wages. The figures presented by the labourers have been supported in two ways. An examination of the wages received and the calculation therefrom of the total savings and of the figures emerging from two Government enquiries makes it clear that the Government reports also support the statement of expenditure presented on behalf of the labourers.

I feel that both the mill-owners and Sheth Mangaldas have failed to understand the present condition of the labourers. It is to be hoped that the *Sarpanch* will appreciate that position.

If the *Sarpanch* has nothing specific to know from me, I have nothing more to say.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 14979

[1] *Vide* "Note on dispute Between Mill-Owners and Workers", 7-9-1929

291. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 16, 1929

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your letters. For some time now I have not been able to write at all. I got the article about Kaki[1] only today. It is well written. Let the critics say what they will.[2]

The *Gita* proofs sent to Gorakhpur have not yet reached here. I don't know when I shall get them. At Mussoorie[3] I shall have a good opportunity of disposing of them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11457

292. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

DEHRADUN,
October 16, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

There is no letter from you. I got, however, Jamnalalji's letter written from the Ashram and that means the mail from the Ashram has been received here. I read in it about Umiya's[4] betrothal. May both be happy. I send with this Chi. Shankerlal's letter, which you should hand over to Umiya. Read it and pass it on to her.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5460

[1] D. B. Kalelkar's wife; the article, "Death of a Virtuous Woman", an obituary by Mahadev Desai, was published in *Navajivan*, 13-10-1929.

[2] *Vide* "Has *Navajivan* Become Dull", 3-11-1929.

[3] Gandhiji was in Mussoorie from October 17 to October 24, 1929.

[4] Jaisukhlal Gandhi's daughter

293. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

DEHRA DUN,
October 16, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,[1]

I received your letter. I sent you two telegrams from Hardwar. Both came back with the remark that there is no such place as 'Udyogalaya' at Vijapur. The telegrams were sent as addressed to 'Chhaganlal, Udyogalaya'. When the first telegram was returned, I thought I might have committed some detail and sent you another telegram. The substance of both the telegrams was that Prabhudas should be sent to Mussoorie. There is no point now in sending you another telegram, since I do not know what address I should give so that it might reach you. Let me know for future guidance what address should be given in the telegram. Fortunately, before sending the telegram, I had written to the same effect to Prabhudas and I am therefore hoping that he will come. The dilemma that Prabhudas says he is in, seems correct. When I reach Mussoorie, 1 will consider in which hill station to arrange his stay. We will also know how Mussoorie suits him. While proceeding cautiously, do get at least as much khadi woven as you can. Do not mind it if it costs a little more. Send me a piece by way of sample. It is very good that you have got the boys from Mansa to help you. It is as well that you did not allow Raghunath to join you. It will be enough if your work there is not held up. Do keep me informed of all developments in detail.[2] Do write to Joshi as well. It seems that Vasumati has arrived there. You must have heard about Umiya having been betrothed.

Blessings from

BAPU

MUSSOORIE
October 17, 1929[3]

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33100

[1] The letter is in Mahadev Desai's handwriting.

[2] The remaining letter including the place name and date is in Gandhiji's handwriting. It seems that Gandhiji completed the letter the next day at Mussoorie.

[3] *ibid*

294. TELEGRAM TO K. T. GILCOCK

[*Before October 17, 1929*][1]

YOUR LETTER. TWENTY-SEVENTH OCTOBER FIRST NOVEMBER MEERUT DISTRICT SECOND DELHI THIRD BULANDSHAHAR FOURTH FIFTH ALIGARH SIXTH MUTTRA SEVENTH BRINDABAN. COULD YOU COME MUSSOORIE BETWEEN SEVENTEENTH TWENTY-FOURTH INSTANT.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S. N. 15247

295. IS IT VILLAGE UPLIFT?

Some time ago prominent notice was taken in the public press of Mr. F. L. Brayne's work for the uplift of the villagers in the Gurgaon district in the Punjab. Mr. Brayne was in charge of that district. These notices attracted my attention, and I felt that if the account given by Mr. Brayne was a true picture of the progress made in Gurgaon, it was worthy of close study and imitation. I therefore requested Lalaji's Society[2] to undertake local inspection of the actual work done. Lala Deshraj, a graduate member of the Society, was deputed for the work. He has prepared an exhaustive report of his inspection. I reproduce it[3] with but slight omissions. It will repay perusal. Mr. Brayne has procured cautiously worded certificates of his work from the Viceroy as also the Governor of the Punjab. But I would not anticipate Lala Deshraj. My remarks I reserve till the reportis fully published.[4] The reader will have to wait for another issue of *Young India* to see the conclusion of the report.

Young India, 17-10-1929

[1] Inferred from the contents of the wire. Gandhiji was in Mussoorie from October 17 to Octobers 24, 1929. The rest of the tour programme also fits in with Gandhiji's itinerary in October, 1929.

[2] Servants of the People Society

[3] Not reproduced here

[4] *Vide* "Village Improvement", 14-11-1929.

296. POSITION OF WOMEN

A fair friend[1], who has hitherto successfully resisted the matrimonial temptation, writes:

> There was a women's conference yesterday at the Malabari Hall at which many sound speeches were made, and many resolutions passed. The question of the evening was the Sarda Bill. We are so glad you uphold the age of 18 for girls. Another important resolution dealt with the laws of inheritance. What a help it would be if you wrote a strong article on this subject in *Navajivan* and *Young India* ! Why should women have either to beg or to fight in order to win back their birthright? It is strange—and also tragically comic—to hear man born of woman talk loftily of 'the weaker sex' and nobly promising 'to give' us our due! What is this nonsense about 'giving'? Where is the 'nobility' and 'chivalry' in restoring to people that which has been unlawfully wrested from them by those having brute power in their hands? Wherein are women less important than men? Why should their share of inheritance be less than that of men? Why should it not be equal? We were discussing this very heatedly with some people a couple of days ago. A lady said, "We don't need any change in the law. We are quite content. After all, it is but fair that the son, who carries on the name and family traditions, should have the greater share. He is the mainstay of the family...." We said, "And what about the girl?" "Oh", intervened a strapping young man who was there, "the other fellow will look after *her*!" There you are. The 'other fellow'! Always the other fellow! The other fellow is an absolute nuisance! Why should there be another fellow? *Why* should it be taken for granted that there will be another fellow? They talk as though a girl were a bale of goods to be tolerated in the parental house until 'the other fellow' comes round, and then coolly handed over to him with a sigh of relief. . . . Really wouldn't you be wild if *you* were a girl?

I do not need to be a girl to be wild over man's atrocities towards woman. I count the law of inheritance among the least in the list. The Sarda Bill deals with an evil far greater than the one which the law of inheritance connotes. But I am uncompromising in the matter of woman's rights. In my opinion she should labourunder no legal disability not suffered by man. I should treat the daughters and sons on a footing of perfect equality. As women begin to realize their strength, as they must in proportion to the education they receive, they will naturally resent the glaring inequalities to which

[1] Raihana Tyabji; *vide* "Letter to Raihana Tyabji", 9-10-1929

they are subjected.

But to remove legal inequalities will be a mere palliative. The root of the evil lies much deeper than most people realize. It lies in man's greed of power and fame and deeper still in mutual lust. Man has always desired power. Ownership of property gives this power. Man hankers also after posthumous fame based on power. This cannot be had, if property is progressively cut up in pieces as it must be if all the posterity become equal co-sharers. Hence the descent of property for the most part on the eldest male issue. Most women are married. And they are co-sharers, in spite of the law being against them, in their husbands' power and privileges. They delight in being ladies this and what not, simply for the fact of being the wives of particular lords. Though therefore they may vote for radical reform in academic discussions over inequalities, when it comes to acting up to their vote, they will be found to be unwilling to part with the privileges.

Whilst therefore I would always advocate the repeal of all legal disqualifications, I should have the enlightened women of India to deal with the root cause. Woman is the embodiment of sacrifice and suffering, and her advent to public life should therefore result in purifying it, in restraining unbridled ambition and accumulation of property. Let them know that millions of men have no property to transmit to posterity. Let us learn from them that it is better for the few to have no ancestral property at all. The real property that a parent can transmit to all equally is his or her character and educational facilities. Parents should seek to make their sons and daughters self-reliant, well able to earn an honest livelihood by the sweat of the brow. The upbringing of minor children will then naturally devolve upon the major descendants. Much of the present imbecility of the children of the wealthy will go, if the latter could but substitute the worthy ambition of educating their children to become independent for the unworthy ambition of making them slaves of ancestral property, which kills enterprise and feeds the passions which accompany idleness and luxury. The privilege of the awakened women should be to spot and eradicate age-long evils.

That mutual lust too has played an important part in bringing about the disqualifications of the fair sex hardly needs any demonstration, Woman has circumvented man in a variety ofways in her unconsciously subtle ways, as man has vainly and equally unconsciously struggled to thwart woman in gaining ascendancy over

him. The result is a stalemate. Thus viewed, it is a serious problem the enlightened daughters of Bharat Mata are called upon to solve. They may not ape the manner of the West which may be suited to its environment. They must apply methods suited to the Indian genius and Indian environment. Theirs must be the strong, controlling, purifying, steadying hand, conserving what is best in our culture and unhesitatingly rejecting what is base and degrading. This is the work of Sitas, Draupadis, Savitris and Damayantis, not of amazons and prudes.

Young India, 17-10-1929

297. MY SILENCE

I had hoped that by this time my correspondents had realized that, if I was silent on any question that agitated the country, the silence was maintained in its interest or on similar valid grounds, and that therefore they would not deluge me with inquiries and protests regarding my deliberate silence over the self-immolation of Jatindranath Das[1] and the question of hunger-strikers generally. At Gorakhpur in one of the addresses received by me the question was directly put to me, and I was in courtesy bound to answer it. My answer was that the silence was observed entirely in the national interest. I had felt that an expression of my opinion was likely to do more harm than good to the cause for which brave Jatindra fasted unto death. There are occasions when silence is wisdom. This I hold to be such an occasion. I may inform the reader that there are very many important questions affecting the nation on which, though I hold strong and decided views, I maintain absolute silence, for I believe that it often becomes the duty of every public man to be silent even at the risk of incurring unpopularity and even a much worse penalty, as it undoubtedly becomes his duty to speak out his mind when the occasion requires it, though it may be at the cost of his life. So far as the philosophy of hunger-strikes is concerned, I have given the fullest expression to my general views in these pagesmore often than once. It is therefore unnecessary for me to expound them any further. I regret

[1] A political worker who, while being tried in the Lahore Conspiracy case, went on fast in the Lahore jail as a protest against the discriminatory treatment meted out to Indian prisoners. He died on September 13,1929, the sixty-fourth day of his fast.

that I can give my numerous correspondents no further satisfaction.[1] I may however give them this assurance that my silence has no connection whatsoever with Jatin's crime or innocence. For I hold that even a criminal is entitled to decent treatment and decent food. I also hold that an under-trial prisoner must be presumed at least by the public to be innocent, and for that matter what I have heard about Jatindranath Das is all in praise of him, and I have been assured that he was no more capable of doing or contemplating violence than I should be myself.

Young India, 17-10-1929

298. SYLLABUS IN INDIAN ECONOMICS

Our economics syllabus is not concerned with world economics, but with Indian economics. We know from experience that the economics of each country varies in some ways from the economics of other countries. Looked at from the point of view of the towns and the villages, the difference may be more pronounced. The following syllabus is chalked out on the assumption that the civilization of India is dependent on the condition of the villages and their full growth.

FIRST TERM

Teachers should take the pupils with them and visit some village and, there, get the pupils collect facts relating to the economy of the village and thus give them a practical lesson in economics; that is, make them ascertain its population, the number of men, women, boys and girls living in it and prepare statistical tables; then compile a statement of the occupations, the number of people employed in the various occupations, and the income accruing from them. They should also measure the area within its boundaries, calculate the per capita area of land, find out what crops are raised on the land, how it is manured, what kind of farm implements are used, what the expenditure on agriculture is and how much the produce. Then they should get them to collect figures for the produce and expenditure during the past ten years and from that deduce whether agriculture is a profitable occupation or a losing concern. Let them find out thenumber of live-stock, the expenditure on them, the amount of milk, etc., their feed, availability of a stud bull in the village, the utility of

[1] *Vide* "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 18-10-1929,

calves, the extent of pasture land, and if such land is not available whether there is enough space for the cattle for movement and fresh air. Whether the farmer keeps accounts, and if so, what manner of accounts he maintains should be inspected. How much leisure the farmers get and how they spend it should also be ascertained. After this extensive observation and investigation the pupils should draw their own conclusions and give suggestions for the improvement of the village. The pupils' reports should be written in ink neatly and in a good hand.

SECOND TERM

All the information gathered by various groups of such students should be collated, the results of their findings should be compared with those of other agricultural countries and then the differences between India and those other agricultural countries should be analysed.

THIRD TERM

The results of these independent investigations should be compared with the economic data taught in India and any additions or deletions that are necessary should be made and through such practical training alone should the student learn the economics of India.

NOTE: If every year new students undertake the study of economics according to the aforesaid syllabus, it will entail no harm. On the other hand, such work may lead to new conclusions or may progressively confirm the accepted theories. There should be no need to go to a village which has already been studied and surveyed.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 17-10-1929

299. THE DUTY OF A VOLUNTEER

As I am getting to know the volunteers during my tour of the U.P. I find that they badly need training. The volunteers' ideals are pure, they are not lacking in love but the energy which should spring from idealism and love is missing for want of training. They have very little organizing capacity. Because of this, rather than any help forthcoming often new difficulties crop up. It is therefore essential to

train them. They may well be volunteers at heart but nothing much will be achieved by that. Even for the easiest of jobs, some training is required. Even the work of a scavenger cannot be performed without training. How can the work of a volunteer succeed without it?

The volunteer is the soldier of the nation. Ultimately we hope to win swaraj through him. The members of a national organization should possess great qualities. The volunteers

1. should be capable of maintaining order in large gatherings;
2. should know the national language;
3. should be able to communicate their thoughts to other volunteers through signals;
4. should be able to stop noise;
5. should be able to clear a way through a mass of people;
6. should be able to march to drum-beat;
7. should be able to render first aid in case of injury;
8. should be able to put up with people's abuses, acrimony, assault, taunts, etc.;
9. should be able to endure Government's punishment, such as imprisonment, etc.;
10. should possess the qualities of patience, truthfulness, firmness, bravery, ahimsa and the like.

Besides, in my view, the volunteers should always wear khadi. They should also spin regularly by way of *yajna*.

In order to impart this kind of training every province should have volunteer training centres as also textbooks suitable to our country.

All the strength necessary in a 'violent' soldier is essential for a non-violent soldier also—except the violence part of it. But compared to the violent soldier, the non-violent soldier requires many more qualities. The readers must be aware of them.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 17-10-1929

300. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

MUSSOORIE,
October 17, 1929

CHI. VASUMATI[1],

I have your letter. I would not advise you to go to Almora just now. For some time the conditions there have been unsettled. It is also a question whether Prabhudas[2] should be sent there. We shall consider later whether you can go. If you wish to go to some hill station, it may of course be possible to make arrangements elsewhere. Or, it may be possible to put you up with Mathuradas in Almora. But, if you keep well at Vijapur, what is the advantage of going to a hill station? At a hill station it will be very cold now. Here in Mussoorie I am just now sitting wrapped in blankets.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati, S.N. 9267

301. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

October 17, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have both your letters. I feel worried about your health. See that your body becomes as strong as steel. There is no rule which forbids us from giving anything at all to Jagjivandas. We certainly cannot let him: remain in debt. However, the Kathiawar Antyaja Committee should pay the balance of Rs. 400. I have asked Jagjivandas to write to the Committee again.

I have no objection to the decision to fix Umiya's marriage for December 4. I shall be there on that date.

I understand about Ayodhyaprasad Mathur. Has he stayed on there?

Yes, give the authority to signcheques to Panditji and Ramniklal.

[1] An inmate of the Sabarmati Ashram, widowed daughter-in-law of Navalram Pandya, a well-known literature of Gujarat

[2] Chhaganlal Gandhi's son

Also consider why Imamsaheb should not be included. Do you intend to give joint authority to Panditji and Ramniklal? If so, why? I see no need for joint authority. Also consider why this authority should not be given to Narandas. My point is that this responsibility should be given to a member of the Managing Committee who is doing office work. If Narandas is not such a member, it is a different matter. All this is for you to think over. In any case, joint signatures, I am sure, will not look right.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Kanti[1] expressed a strong wish to accompany me as far as Mussoorie and so I have let him. He will leave tomorrow or the day after.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5461

302. MESSAGE TO "THE INDIAN LABOUR JOURNAL"[2]

CAMP MUSSOORIE,
October 18, 1929

MY DEAR RAGHAVAN,

I have your letter. Here is my message:

"Labour must learn to help itself and to be self-reliant."

Yours sincerely,

. G. VIJIARAGHAVAN
I NDIAN LABOUR JOURNAL"
SITABULDI, NAGPUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 15205

[1] Harilal Gandhi's son
[2] Official organ of the B. N. Railway Indian Labour Union

303. LETTER TO B. S. GOPALA ROW

CAMP MUSSOORIE,
October 18, 1929

MY DEAR GOPALA ROW[1],

I have your letter. I admire your zeal and confidence but I miss the scientific discussion that should back all confidence and zeal if they are to be fruitful. Do you not see that any number of certificates[2] are utterly useless for me in the teeth of overwhelming experience to the contrary? Supposing there is a man who does not feel the glow of a raging fire before him, do you suppose that the testimony of a thousand people who may feel the glow will convince him contrary to his own experience? And you may not also realize that all those whose names you mention have not been as thorough as you fancy in the description of foods they have taken, that is to say, if they have added milk to the raw food or cooked chapatis; it alters the state of the whole complexion of the whole experiment and vitiates it. Several writers tell me they eat unfired food and in the same breath inform me they occasionally take cooked rice, cooked vegetables and cooked chapatis and invariably take curds or milk. My experiment among the 44 was carried on without milk and without any cooked food and the vast majority failed hopelessly. There are three or four persisting in the face of odds. I cannot say what will happen to them in the end.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. B. S. GOPALA ROW
ADVOCATE, RAJAHMUNDRY

From a microfilm: S.N. 15639

[1] An advocate who had opened a Hydro-Chromopathic and Nature-cure Academy at Rajahmundry; for his suggestions on unfired food and Gandhiji's comments, *vide*

[2] The addressee had enclosed a list of nine persons cured by him,

304. LETTER TO C. C. DAS

CAMP MUSSOORIE,
October 18, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your note. I had a very happy time under your hospitable roof[1]. I do hope that the fatigue of those days has left no trace upon your health now and I hope too that domestic peace prevails in the home now. Please ask Mrs. Das to write to me. She may do so in English or Hindi just as it pleases her.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 15643

305. LETTER TO P. RANGANADAN

CAMP MUSSOORIE,
October 18, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I had hoped to deal with your matter much earlier but the papers you gave me were left buried in an unassorted heap. I have now come across those papers and you will find reference in the ensuing number of *Young India*.[2] The reason for writing this letter is only to know what

you are doing now and whether the

Board took any further action.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. RANGANADAN
SRI RAMANA BHAVANAM
ARNI (N. ARCOT DT.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 15678

[1] From October 4 to October 7

[2] *Vide* "Elected Boards", 24-10-1929. It gives the actual name of the addressee as P. Ranganatha Ayyar.

306. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

CAMP MUSSOORIE,
October 18, 1929

MY DEAR C.R.,

There was one question which I forgot to deal with when I wrote to you. That was regarding the late Rev. Wizia[1]. I cannot deal with the matter satisfactorily because I am wholly against hunger-strikes for matters such as Wizia and Jatin died for. Any expression of such opinion would be distorted and misused by the Government. I therefore feel that my silence is more serviceable than my criticism. Do you not agree with my judgment of the hunger-strikes and with my consequent silence?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
RAJAPALAYAM (S. INDIA)

From a photostat: S.N. 15683

307. LETTER TO A. SUBBIAH

CAMP MUSSOORIE,
October 18, 1929

MY DEAR SUBBIAH,

I have your letter. I was wondering why you had not written for so long. It does not matter whether I reply at once or not. I would like to have a weekly budget from you. I never expected the prohibition work to go faster than it is. Nevertheless regular plodding is bound to bear fruit. I am glad *Vimochanam*[2] is doing so well. You must send me a copy. I am glad too that you and Lalita are together and flourishing. Many happy returns of the day to the year-old baby Krishnamurti. Ba and I send our joint blessings. I hope Seshan is not over-worrying you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SUBBIAH
C/O SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
RAJAPALAYAM (S. INDIA)

From a microfilm: S.N. 15684

[1] A Buddhist monk of Burma who, imprisoned for sedition, undertook a hunger-strike demanding better treatment and the right to wear yellow robes on special days. He died on September 19, 1929.

[2] A Tamil journal

308. LETTER TO KATESHWAR PRASAD PANDAY

CAMP MUSSOORIE,

October 18, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I send you herewith the letter of Maulvi Mohamed Adil Abbasi. Please return the letter with whatever you might have to offer.

Encl. 1

Yours sincerely,

PT. KATESHWAR PRASAD

BASTI (U.P.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 15685

309. LETTER TO MOHAMED ADIL ABBASI

CAMP MUSSOORIE,

October 18, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. I should be sorry to find the facts to be as you have stated them. I hope that there is some misunderstanding. I am forwarding your letter to Pt. Kateshwar Prasad for reply. I quite agree with you that in every little matter the utmost delicacy is necessary while both the communities' feelings are tender and likely to be hurt on the slightest pretext.

Yours sincerely,

MAULVI MOHAMED ADIL ABBASI

BASTI (U.P.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 15686

[1] Wherein the addressee had complained that during Gandhiji's visit to Basti, the Urdu address was printed a day later than the Hindi address.

310. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

CAMP MUSSOORIE,
October 18, 1929

MY DEAR MATHEW,

I have your letter[1] but I do not think that I need to deal with it now as you must have received my previous letter. If you have not please tell me. Any way the purport of my previous letter was that I could not give you any monetary help. My advice to you was to gain much more practical experience than you had.

Yours sincerely,

P. G. MATHEW, ESQ.

From a microfilm: S.N. 15687

311. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

October 18, 1929

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter and I had one from Jamshedji[2] also. I have therefore telegraphed to him saying that you could not usefully serve on his Committee[3] and that therefore you should be excused. His own previous letter to me said that you had willingly joined his Committee and that you had in no way compromised yourself. I therefore told him that if that was so and if you wanted to remain on his Committee I would waive my objection. But I told him that before I did so, I would have to wait for your letter of confirmation. Your letter has crossed mine to him. There is therefore now no question of your having to serve on the Committee or rather assisting the Committee without being put on it. I hope that you are now once more breathing free. Iwould like you henceforth to harden yourself and never accept a charge or a burden unless you feel absolutely sure of what you are

[1] In which the addressee, who was staying at Sabarmati Ashram, had requested Gandhiji to finance a project which needed an initial outlay of a few thousand rupees

[2] Jamshed N. R. Mehta, a public worker of Sind and for a long time Mayor of the Municipal Corporation of Karachi

[3] The People's Flood Relief Committee of Sind of which Malkani was the Secretary

doing. Very often the best service that we can render friends is to disappoint them and even displease them if what they say does not commend itself to the inner being. It is better even to risk the loss of friends than to compromise oneself and run the greater risk of being rendered unfit for service.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

PROF. MALKANI
CONGRESS OFFICE
HYDERABAD SIND

From a photostat: G.N. 896

312. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

MUSSOORIE
October 18, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Today I have not yet received the mail sent by you. I see that Panditji, too, worries about your health. Bring it round soon.

I cannot write more today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5462

313. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

CAMP MUSSOORIE,
October 19, 1929

MY DEAR BHRRR[1],

It was a delight to receive your letter after so many days and a cheery letter at that. I really did not need your letter to know that I had your good wishes. From this distance I could listen to the tick in your heart—much truer than the written word. Raihana told me all about your operation. But I got her letter long after everything was over and it is such an exhilarating thing toget bad news

[1] This was a form of greetings used between Gandhiji and the addressee.

when that news has lost all its force. One is then in a position to enjoy the unadulterated happiness of the thought that everything went on well in the end. I have no misgivings about Jawaharlal's conduct in the chair[1].

Yours,

BHRRR

SJT. ABBAS TYABJI

CAMP BARODA

From a photostat: S.N. 9568

314. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

MUSSOORIE,
October 19, 1929

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

Do you know the beautiful story of Nachiketa in the Upanishads? His father was a miser. He once gave as a donation a cow that was a burden to him. Nachiketa gently asked his father why he had done so and what he expected to gain by such a donation. The father cursed N. who took it in good part [and] wrested from Yamaraj[2] a change of heart for the father. Love melts mountains. Not to speak to father when you have something against him will be sin. Most probably he has good reasons for his action but supposing he is in error, he will retrace his steps the earliest when he is warned by loved ones. Therefore the sooner you speak to father the better. Only you should have no anger in you. I am sure he will take it all in good part. You should wean him too from speculation. He needs to hoard wealth for nobody now. Even you in spite of your frail body can earn your way. God has given you a voice that would any day support you. And after all God alone is responsible for our maintenance if we would but trust Him.

I have a cheery letter from father. Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 9612

[1] That is, as President of the Congress
[2] God of Death

315. LETTER TO S. SRINIVASAN

CAMP MUSSOORIE,
October 19, 1929

MY DEAR SRINIVASAN,

I thank you for your letter and the enclosures. You are quite right in being indifferent about *After Mother India*. However, if I get some leisure I shall go through the chapters you have sent and if I find anything that I can usefully deal with I shall do so.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

K. SRINIVASAN, ESQ.
FREE PRESS OF INDIA, LTD.
24 BRIDE LANE, LONDON E.C.4

From a photostat: S.N. 15827

316. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

CAMP MUSSOORIE,
October 19, 1929

MY DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. I have given the Exhibition Committee[1] my idea about swadeshi. They will have an expert in their midst to guide them. But another difficulty has cropped up. This however is not of much moment. They want to charge for khaddar stalls just as they will for others. I feel that they ought not to charge for khaddar stalls. I am not aware of the practice at the other exhibitions, for instance, Madras. Was there a charge made at Cawnpore or Gauhati? I do not want to set up a new practice but we must not follow the Calcutta example either. Please let me have your views per return.

I am glad that Kumar Babu is with you. I do want to write to Hemprabhadevi as soon as I get a moment to spare.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1610

[1] Of the ensuing Congress session at Lahore

317. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

MUSSOORIE,

October 19, 1929

CHI. MAHADEV,

Look into this. It is not necessary to take any notice of it in *Young India*. We constantly receive such anonymous letters. I had a wire informing me that the Gita proofs had been despatched, but they have not yet arrived. The accompanying address was presented at the Kanya Gurukul[1]. It was sung in a very sweet tune. It is good that I retain my balance of mind. I hope that when I reach the Ashram you will be there.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11460

318. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

MUSSOORIE,

October 19, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Today's mail has most probably arrived, but I have not been able to see it. The postal hours here are rather awkward, so that I cannot wait till I have looked into the mail which has been received. I return the letter received from Utkal. Kanti is leaving today for Ahmedabad. You may learn everything from him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5463

[1] On October 17

319. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

MUSSOORIE,
October 19, 1929

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have both your letters. I wrote briefly to Chhaganlal after receiving your first letter and had intended to write to you later. Meanwhile I got your second letter. I don't believe that you have taken any step in haste or anger. Having regard to what you believe about Joshi, your step is the right one. I only hope that you have made some mistake in judging him. Whatever that may be, I don't mind your keeping away for the present. We do get the benefit of your time. Do some office work only when you feel that Joshi sincerely desires your help. I have put on him the burden of creating that confidence in you.

May I take it that Purushottam's health has come round?

I do believe that Kasumba[1] is very unhappy. There is no doubt that Jaisukhlal has been much too strict in the matter. Now that she has gone to Ranavav, she will have some peace.

Do pay a visit to Rajkot.

You say that even the work regarding the plague was done in 1902. I still remember that the plague occurred in 1896. But in such matters we do sometimes forget the year or the date. Ask Khushalbhai and be more definite. I have mentioned the famine, the plague and the jubilee, all the three things. Do you think that all of them relate to the year 1902?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, Part I, pp. 55-6

[1] Jaisukhlal Gandhi's wife

320. ANARCHY OF THOUGHT

As a small example of unrestrained imagination, I publish the following letter[1]:

I receive many similar and even worse letters. Friends have sent me newspaper cuttings containing similar views. Where there is freedom of expression, such things are bound to happen. It only shows how incoherently one can think. This disorder exposes weakness of mind. Because of this weakness, the thought process works haphazardly instead of in an orderly manner and no correlation gets established. Many times this happens owing to anger also. The effects of anger resemble those produced by wine and opium. In the first fit, an angry man runs amuck. And then after the fit is past, the anger works like an opiate and dulls the rational faculties just like opium. Like opium, it consumes his mind. Infatuation, failure of memory and destruction of the mind are the successive symptoms of anger.

I find all this in the above letter according to my lights. The writer is a good man but in a fit of anger he has forgotten what has been written in *Navajivan*. All of a sudden he has become incapable of judging whether articles on social reforms can appear in a newspaper which exists only for swaraj.

The writer has narrowed down the very meaning of swaraj itself. The gentleman seems to believe that swaraj means the transfer of power from British hands to Indian hands. To my mind swaraj means regulated power in the hands of thirty crores of people. Where there is such rule, even a young girl will feel herself safe and, if the imagination of a poet is correct, animals like dogs, etc., who live among human beings will have a similar feeling of safety. We shall have to arrive at various basic decisions in regard to swaraj because under swaraj such decisions are not subject to officials in power but are based on truth and justice. I have succinctly called

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had objected to Gandhiji's giving an account of his tours in *Navajivan* week after week, and writing on such topics as form of marriage, remarriage, marriages contracted by old men, the Gujarati dictionary, cow-protection work, and sometimes philosophical dissertations while he had turned a blind eye to the political condition in the country and the lawless rule obtaining in many Indian States.

this kind of swaraj *Ramarajya*. As the Muslims and othersmay misinterpret it, I call it the rule of dharma too. Here there is room for a king, but a king means a protector, a guardian and a trustee, the best servant, the servant of servants. A king subsists on the leavings of his subjects; hence he should sleep after making his subjects sleep, eat after feeding them and live after enabling them to live. May such kings live for ever. If such kings do not arise in this age, I am certain that the very word 'king' will perish.

I am not concerned whether the ruler of Bhopal or other rulers possess any such qualities or not. I have declared what kind of ruler can survive in this age of public awakening.

My praise of the ruler of Bhopal was restrained.[1] I have not yet read the reports which have appeared in the newspapers on my praise of him and I am not even keen to read them. It is my experience that correct reports of my speeches or others' rarely appear in the newspapers. If I were to trust the newspaper reports about me, today I would have to believe that I had suffered from giddiness about three months ago. But my experience and that of my friends are quite different from the newspaper reports. Therefore I have warned all and do so again that only what is written in *Young India* and *Navajivan* should be believed as truth. I should not be held responsible for the rest. Even now I adhere literally to each word written in praise of the Nawab of Bhopal. The simplicity of his palace reminded me of the simplicity of Hazarat Omar. No one should interpret this to mean that the Bhopal palace was as simple as the shack of the great khalifa. It only meant that I did not find even a multi-storeyed building like that of an ordinary rich man where I had expected to see a gorgeous palace costing lakhs of rupees. The mansions of many of our millionaires in Ahmedabad are a hundred times superior to the palace of the Nawab Sahib. The philosophers and critics of the administration in the native States can be said to have reached the limit of intolerance, if they cannot bear even what little I have said on seeing the simplicity of the palace which I liked very much.

No one should consider me so innocent or good that I would give a certificate to a person who would buy khadi worth Rs. 200 to 400 from me. I can in most cases spot out wearers of khadi who deceive me or those who want to get some work done by me through

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Bopal", 10-9-1929 and "Notes", Credit Where Due"

buying khadi. Sometimes I prefer to be deceived. And sometimes I get deceived because of my foolishness or my imperfection, say what you will.

There is a lot of exaggeration in the charges that rulers kill their subjects by poisoning them, etc., etc. The writer has levelled these allegations without adducing any proof. Idle persons believe wild rumours. The correspondent has done something similar. If he has valid proof of a ruler having killed a subject by poisoning him, he should send it to me. Hearsay cannot be considered as proof. Let not anybody who reads this part of my article misunderstand me. It is not in the least my intention to say that no ruler ever kills people unjustly. I know of murders having been committed at the instance of the rulers. I am not unaware of the rot that has set in in the native States. Despite this I believe that they can be reformed and brought under control. This faith of mine is based on my faith in humanity. The native rulers are the product of the atmosphere prevailing in India. Their bodies are like ours, their physical needs are similar to ours and they have all the virtues and vices that we have. If we have trust in ourselves, we shall have trust in them also. The whole science of satyagraha is based on faith in all living beings. That faith may well prove wrong in the end. But those who have faith in satyagraha will never say that all the rulers are worthless or that the States' administrations can never be reformed. Another belief implied in satyagraha is also worth noting. Satyagrahis believe that sin does not have the strength to exist independently on its own. It must have the support of *punya*[1]. That is to say, evil subsists on the strength of good. If this is true, the native States, if they deserve such a fate, will perish on their own provided we do not help them in spite of knowing them to be evil. In this reasoning lies the origin of no-co-operation. Those who serve the native States even though they believe them to be bad are preserving them. Those also help them who consider them bad and want to destroy them with evil means. Wickedness has never been destroyed by wickedness. But persons like me who praise them for whatever good they find in them, though mistakenly but with a pure motive, thereby either reform them or secure the right to resort to satyagraha or non-co-operation.

The correspondent has criticized my silence on the martyrdom of Jatindra Das. I am not dealing with it here as it has been separately

[1] Merit accruing from virtuous action

commented on in *Navajivan*[1].

Now there remains the writer's assurance. He writes: "You believe that the subjects of the native States are afraid of jails. But I can assure you that we are not afraid of jails. We are not afraid even of death." I must regretfully say that this assurance is of little or no value to me. I believe that among the subjects of the native States, the number of people who will be found ready to go to jail can be counted on one's fingers, and fewer still would be ready to court death. If the subjects were not cowardly and were prepared to undergo all the hardships of jail-going, etc., the atrocities committed in the States would have been impossible. The writer should bear in mind that in the native States, as in the British provinces, no one is prevented from courting jail. All the evil will stop only when the spirit of sacrifice and the power of self-immolation pervade the whole country.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-10-1929

321. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

October 20, 1929

CHI. BHANSALI,

I have your letter. You should not worry about what food you asked to be served after the fast was over. You ought not to stop eating on that ground. At the end of a fast, most men are bound to feel the desire for all manner of dishes. If a person does not feel such a desire, it can be said of him that he no longer takes pleasure in sense objects. But that state can result only from God's grace. For earning that grace, the right means is not the giving up of food, but intensely earnest prayer.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p.171

[1] Dated October 20, 1929; for the English article, *vide* "Ideal Primary School for Children", 2-6-1929

322. LETTER TO ANANDANAND[1]

MUSSOORIE,

October 20, 1929

No one has so far asked me about a satyagraha in Poona. Ultimately a satyagraha has to be launched. Our movement is not so vigorous that we can achieve our aim while mischief-makers are still inactive. There are many to incite the untouchables. And since the demands of the latter are just, we cannot oppose them either. Under the circumstances, our duty, it seems to me, is to remain neutral and go on with our work. I should not be surprised if we had to resort to satyagraha on a limited scale as we did in Vykom. But I see little possibility of it in the present atmosphere.

I do not at all insist on my suggestion regarding the Navajivan Trust.[2] I should be happy to let your name be there. But if, as you say, Mohanbhai's name will do, I have no objection. It appeared to me from the language of the draft that you and I were regarded as the original owners of *Navajivan*. If that assumption is correct, either you must be there or, if wego as far back as the first stage, Shankerlal should be there. According to your interpretation of the sentence, it can be only Mohanlal. In that case, why should my name be there? I do not remember anything about my name being there. I am writing to Mohanlal.[3] Let him do what the law requires, and nothing more. Let Mavalankar[4] examine the legal position and include the name or names he considers necessary.

I shall find it unbearable if next year you are not in India or not by my side. You seem to attach so much importance to fate that individual effort and will have no place at all. Fate is only the fifth wheel. Hence, if the four wheels are all right, the fifth would hardly be needed. This indifference does not become you at all. You are at present giving most useful service to Jamnalalji and Jairamdasji. Both are workers worth helping and serving. Before that work is finished, I wonder what January will demand of us. I consider your contribution

[1] Although the source does not mention the addressee, it is clear from the contents that is was Anandanand.

[2] *Vide* "The Evil of Purdah", 27-6-1929.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Mohanlal Bhatt", 22-10-1929.

[4] G. V. Mavalankar

of very great value in giving that account. I am hoping that even if unwillingly, you will be at your place at that time.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/60

323. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

MUSSOORIE,
October 21, 1929

JAMNALAL BAJAJ

395 KALBADEVI ROAD

BOMBAY

DOCTOR RAJABALI'S SCHEME APPROVED. HOPE YOU WELL.

BAPU

Panchven Putra ko Bapu ke Ashirvad, p. 71

324. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

MUSSOORIE,
October 21, 1929

CHI. MAHADEV,

At long last today I got your letter giving an account of Kaki's passing away. I had been waiting for it. A person like you is bound to regret his failure to reassure Kaki fully in response to her request. But that is how we all act. How can one know what is going to happen? One can serve only according to one's capacity. How could you have known that Kaki was going to pass away in a single day? Considering how long Durga[1], during your continued absence from home, could nurse Kaki on her sickbed, the reply you gave was a truthful one. If merely to reassure her you had said 'yes', the reply would have been considerate but untruthful. You should, therefore, give up vain regret and cherish sweet memories of Kaki. She had humbly acknowledged whatever services she was given and expressed her gratitude.

The *Gita* proofs seem to be still somewhere on the way.

Shall I take it that I have your promise for contributing three columns in *Young India* and *Navajivan*?

At present I am overwhelmed by disappointments. What

[1] Addressee's wife

need to write to you about them? Somehow I was impelled to mention the fact. Draw no inferences. "Immortal hope stands coveredbehind a cloud of disappointments''[1]: "Covered" is my improvement to suggest that my disappointments are always momentary. Why, then, should one draw any inferences? With empty hands we came, and so shall we depart. We shall have won the battle of life only if we depart in that manner. I have no time to write more. But you should not plead that excuse.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11461

325. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

MUSSOORIE,
Silence Day, October 21, 1929

SISTERS,

Mussoorie is one of those places where pleasure-seeking abounds. There is no *purdah* here. Wealthy ladies spend their time in dancing at parties, paint their lips, deck themselves in all sorts of ways and blindly imitate the West in a good many ways. Ours is a middle path. We do not wish to keep alive superstitions and *purdah* nor to encourage shamelessness and self-indulgence. This middle path is straight but difficult to follow. It is our aim to seek it and follow it steadily.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3706

[1] From a poem by Manibhai Nabhubhai Dwivedi; the original has "hidden" instead of "covered".

326. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

MUSSOORIE,
Silence Day [*October 21, 1929*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

There is nothing special today to write to you about. Read the letter to Raghunath Prasad and also Chhaganlal's which accompanies it.

Bhansali must be his normal self again. Request everyone to refrain from talking to him about the events during and following the fast.

Let me know your final decision about Budhabhai[2].

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5565

327. LETTER TO ASHRAM CHILDREN

October 21, 1929

BIRDS OF THE BAL MANDIR,

I have your letter. Now you should hear a description of Mussoorie. For that you may invite Kanti and hear it from him.[3] I may, however, tell you just now that you would love to jump about and frolic in Mussoorie. Practically every morning we can see from here the mountains covered with *sutarfeni*[4], but where are the birds here to fly over them and peck at even one thread with their beaks?

By the time you grow as big as Kantibhai I shall have flown away to God knows where. But if not I, somebody else will try to fulfil your aspirations.

What Dharmakumar[5] writes is correct. My letters are short. But I thank God that He grants me the time to write even this much. You too should thank Him.

From a copy of the Gujarati: . Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/62

[1] The date is from *Bapuna Patro*-7: *Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*.
[2] A Jain gentleman who lived near the Ashram
[3] Kanti Gandhi had accompanied Gandhiji as far as Mussoorie.
[4] A variety of sweet of white colour
[5] Dharmakumar Giri

328. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

MUSSOORIE,
October 21, 1929

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

Both your letters have been received. I shall use one in *Navajivan*. As regards the one about Devasinghji I think that for the present he should simply carry on in his military job but with a detached attitude. We shall see when the time comes.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 774

329. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

MUSSOORIE
October 21, 1929

CHI. BRAJKISAN,

I have been unable to answer your letter earlier. I appreciate your devotion to your mother. Do what the inner voice bids. Ultimately it is this devotion which has to be sublimated into much wider service. But this change cannot be forced. Even when it is accomplished it will not diminish the filial devotion which will however become more refined. At present it is tinged with *moha*[1], albeit of the *satvik*[2] kind.

I trust your health is better.

I shall reach Delhi on the night of November l.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2368

[1] Attachment
[2] Pure

330. LETTER TO GIRIRAJKISHORE

CAMP MUSSOORIE,
October 22, 1929

MY DEAR GIRIRAJ [1],

I have your letter. I have heard from Pratap Pandit also. He says that he is taking a personal interest in you and that he will certainly watch what you are doing. At present he wants you to read and understand what is written in the light of the experience that you are having. I suppose that is much the best thing to do. You should also try to procure all the literature on the economics of the leather trade. You will find therein much to strengthen the method that we are pursuing. There must be in Pandit's library literature of this type too. If there is not, Kishorelal will be of assistance in finding out such books. You should collect all the information about the various tanneries in India, the condition of the leather trade, the requirements in India, the import of leather goods from outside, the history of the failure of the British Government to capture the leather trade from Germany. All this is interesting reading. You should avoid fever and when you do get any such thing deal with it at once. How are you doing otherwise? I hope you write to the Ashram regularly.

From a microfilm: S.N. 15617

331. LETTER TO R. THADANI

CAMP MUSSOORIE,
October 22, 1929

MY DEAR THADANI,

I have your kind letter. I appreciate all you say about Girdhari. My own feeling is that no matter whom you get he will not be able to do justice to your firm's work as also to khadi. A little bit of sale may be effected but the work of production requires all a man's time. If therefore you aim at production you must get hold of an all-time worker and pay him specially either out of your own salary or out of the firm's income if the firm is willing.

But the latter, I imagine, is not feasible and probably not

[1] An inmate of the Ashram who had gone to Bombay for training in tannery

advisable even if it were feasible. You are as it is paying a lot for national purposes out of your income. It may be quite the proper thing to use this portion under your own supervision and see whether your plan of production amongst the men and amongst the villagers surrounding you succeeds. If you will entertain some such proposal Girdhari of course is not the man for it because he has his work cut out for him where he can be more usefully employed. The reason why Girdhari had taken up some other than national work was because Girdhari himself was uncertain as to his future plans and uncertain as to his future wants. After much cogitation and consultation, so far as I read him, he has now made his choice. He thinks that he wants to dedicate himself to national service and have his reasonable wants satisfied up to a point out of national service. So you see that the parable you quote will not apply in Girdhari's case.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. THADANI
BURHANPUR (C.P.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 15698

332. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

MUSSOORIE,
October 22, 1929

CHI. VASUMATI,

You must have got my letter[1] giving my opinion regarding Almora. I still hold that opinion. I may think of other possible alternatives after I talk over the matter with Prabhudas in Delhi. If I had been able to set up an ashram at Almora, I would have certainly sent you there. But that could not be, and now I don't think that it is possible. Let me also know why you particularly wish to go to Almora. I would look for other places for you if in any way you do not feel at home there. If you are keen on going to a hill station, there are other such places too. About Almora, I am in a moral difficulty.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9270

[1] of October 17

333. LETTER TO MOHANLAL BHATT

October 22, 1929

BHAISHRI MOHANLAL,

Your letter and mine crossed. I have read the Declaration of Trust[1]. The names are all right. If possible, my name may be omitted as I had suggested. If so desired, a statement may be included to the effect that the beginning was made under my guidance, but it would be better if my signature is not required. I have received the *Gita* proofs today.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MOHANLAL BHATT

NAVAJIVAN KARYALAYA

AHMEDABAD

B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1224

334. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

MUSSOORIE,

October 22, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have not received today's mail till this hour.

No mail seems to have gone astray. Sooner or later I get every letter.

There seems to have been some misunderstanding regarding Ishwarlal.[2] I thought that he had asked for my permission in addition to yours. When he first spoke to me, I had asked him to obtain your permission. Henceforth we should make it a rule that no one should ask my permission directly. After the person in question has obtained your permission, he or she may ask me for my consent if desired. I should be kept out of as many things as possible.

[1] *Vide* "Declaration of Trust", 26-11-1929.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Ishwarlal Joshi", 23-10-1929.

You may consult me on any matter. If, however, everybody asks for my opinion directly, there will be no order. This is an old complaint.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5464

335. TELEGRAM TO GULZARI LAL NANDA[1]

MUSSOORIE,
October 23, 1929

GULZARILAL
MAJUR OFFICE
AHMEDABAD

YOUR WIRE SURPRISES ME. ON BEHALF LABOUR THERE WERE TWO GROUNDS FOR REQUEST RESTORATION CUT. ONE WAS ALLEGED INCREASE IN PROSPERITY. THIS FAILED. SECOND WAS IN ANY CASE CUT WAS UNWARRANTED BECAUSE IT REDUCED WAGES WHICH WERE ALREADY HARDLY ENOUGH PAY LIVING EXPENSES. THIS STATE OF THINGS STILL PERSISTS. HENCE MY FINDING THAT MAJURS' REQUEST SHOULD BE GRANTED IRRESPECTIVE OF ECONOMIC CONDITIONS MILLS. SHOW YOUR WIRE AND THIS SETH MANGALDAS AND THEN SURPUNCH.

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 9642. Courtesy: Gulzari Lal Nanda

[1] This was in reply to the following telegram from the addressee dated October 22: "Surpunch sends following message to you. You find that present condition of industry not so prosperous as would justify increase. You still differ from colleague and hold cut of 1923 unjustifiable which means cut should be restored. This seems inconsistent. Please explain fully. Surpunch arrives Ahmedabad from Bombay 25th."

336. LETTER TO KANNOOMAL

CAMP MUSSOORIE,
October 23, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your letter some time ago. When I return to the Ashram I shall see what copies of some of your books I require and I shall trouble you, if I find it necessary, to post more copies of any of your books. If I get the time I shall certainly endeavour to go through some of your other books and shall write to you if there is anything worth conveying to you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KANNOOMAL
DHOLPUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 15199

337. LETTER TO HARCHARAN LALL VARMAN

CAMP MUSSOORIE,
October 23, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1] for which I thank you. Everything that goes to *Young India* is overlooked by me. So is almost everything that goes to Gujarati *Navajivan*. *Hindi Navajivan* is prepared by a trustworthy co-worker from Gujarati *Navajivan* and *Young India*. It may therefore have in some respects ampler details and in some others an abstract only of what may appear in either of the two papers. The English passed under my eyes before it was sent to the press. The Hindi I have now read after the receipt of your letter. I consider both to be unexceptionable. Do you see any conflict between the English and the Hindi versions and do you take any exception to either? If the slightest injustice has been done anywhere I shall endeavour to correct it.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 15649

[1] Expressing surprise at the discrepancies in the reports of Gandhiji's visit to Dayalbagh published in *Hindi Navajivan* and *Young India*

338. LETTER TO KONDA VENATAPPAYYA

CAMP MUSSOORIE,

October 23, 1929

MY DEAR VENKATAPPAYYA,

I have your letters. I endorse the arrangements you have made for the Pallepadu Ashram. I shall see to it that you get the sum of Rs. 1,000 somehow or other. And of course you have the absolute right to remove anybody and to employ any other person. What I would love to see is that you or Sitarama Sastri should occasionally stay at the Ashram. It will hearten the young men whom you have placed in charge and it will draw the sympathy of local people and you might be able to influence the villagers near the Ashram. I should like it to become a living centre of activity.

With reference to Tenali please let me know what grant is actually required by the Tenali institution and give me also a somewhat accurate idea of how the amount is expected to be laid out. What qualifications should the technical instructor have? Will he have to know Telugu or English, a requirement that it would be difficult to fulfil? Where is Punnayya working now? Cannot he or someone be sent to the Ashram to complete the training required? Most of the instructors are otherwise engaged but I do want to meet your wishes if it is at all possible. You have said nothing about your wife's health or your daughter's. How are they both getting on? You must prepare to attend the meeting of the Council at Wardha in December.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA
GUNTUR (MADRAS PRESIDENCY)

From a microfilm: S.N. 15699

339. LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENT, GOVERNMENT TELEGRAPH CHECK OFFICE, CALCUTTA

CAMP MUSSOORIE,
October 23, 1929

THE SUPERINTENDENT
GOVERNMENT TELEGRAPH CHECK OFFICE
CALCUTTA

SIR,

I enclose herewith a pre-paid reply form in connection with cablegram No. 559/11 handed in at Durban addressed to me and received at Sabarmati on the 12th instant. I could not use the reply form as the cablegram reached me during my tour too late for reply. Will you please therefore send Rs. 7-6-0 or its equivalent to the sender of the cablegram? The sender is the Secretary, South Africa Indian Congress, Durban.

Yours faithfully,

Encl. l

From a microfilm: S.N. 15700

340. LETTER TO ISHWARLAL JOSHI

October 23, 1929

CHI. ISHWARLAL,

I have your letter. It will be enough if you give six months to Delhi. I have told them to let you go, if you willingly agree, only on the condition that Devdas teaches you English and so arranges your work that you can spare time for study. I will send the letter through Devdas himself. He is out of Delhi at present. During the six months we will think out where to send you after the period. We need not think about that just now. I hope you understand that the question of consulting me or obtaining my consent in addition arises only after the Secretary's permission has been obtained.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9279. Courtesy: Ishwarlal Joshi

341. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

MUSSOORIE,
October 23, 1929

CHI. MAHADEV,

At long last I got the *Gita* proofs yesterday. Redirected from place to place, they arrived very late. Now I shall be here today and tomorrow only. I don't think it will be possible even to have a look at them during that time. Both of you seem to have taken a good deal of pains over the thing. How is Durga's health nowadays? Has she resumed her kitchen duties? I hope she does not exert herself beyond her strength.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11462

342. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

October 23, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. Read the letters to Ishwarlal and Dwarkanath and hand them over. Now I need write nothing to you about them.

My consent for your visit to Lahore was conveyed in a previous letter. As, however, you have requested a reply by wire, I am sending one.

I understand what you say about signatures.[1] When you can create confidence in Narandas, he will certainly work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5465

[1] *Vide* "Goseva Sangha", 2-6-1929

343. A LETTER

MUSSOORIE,

October 23, 1929

Your way is clear. You must become a labourer. It requires no great effort to become like me. With a little firmness of mind everyone can do at least as much as I do.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/65

344. A LETTER

MUSSOORIE,

October 23, 1929

May you succeed in your vow. If the mind succumbs in the slightest degree to physical passion, you should bear complete separation from each other, rather than break the vow. The lady should improve her language. Keeping the mind engaged the whole day would weaken disturbing thoughts and increase her knowledge. Both of you should also keep yourselves regularly engaged in some kind of physical labour.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/67

345. LETTER TO VENILAL

MUSSOORIE,

October 23, 1929

BHAISHRI VENILAL,

It would be desirable for the members of the Satyagraha Volunteer Corps to form the habit of doing every day some work fixed in advance rather than a lot of it all together.

From a copy of the Gujarati . Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/66

346. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

MUSSOORIE,

October 23, 1929

CHI. VIDYADEVI,

I have received your letter. The problem is a difficult one. Nothing wrong should be done even when the motive is good. If you satisfy Jang Bahadur's[1] physical desires, his addiction to drinking will increase and you will then not have the same influence on him as you now have. That is my view. But in the end, of course, your duty does not lie only in following what I say. You must do as your conscience dictates and having done it not feel unhappy. It is very difficult to know one's duty and doing it can differ from individual to individual.

Ba will visit Shahabad. Send somebody to take her there. Let Jang Bahadurji read this letter. Surrender to Rama is his sole help. He will succeed if he is firm in his decision.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Lakshmi Devi's[2] lamentation was unbearable. Tell her that she should spin finer yarn and get cotton from Surat.

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

347. ECONOMIES OF CATTLE BREEDING

When I was convalescing in Bangalore two years ago,[3] Mr. William Smith, the Imperial Dairy Expert, gave me a precis of a statement he submitted to the Agricultural Committee in Poona. I extract from it the following valuable information[4] and commend it to the attention of everyone interested in the economic well being of India.

[1] Raja Jang Bahadur Sinh of Barua, addressee's husband

[2] Addressee's sister-in-law

[3] April 19 to August 31, 1927

[4] Not reproduced here. William Smith had analysed the causes and recommended remedies for the poor condition of milch Cows and draught bullocks.

This is a tremendous problem. The poverty of the cow is reflected in the poverty of the people. The reader will note the emphasis put by Mr. Smith upon two points. The milk-producing quality of the cow does not affect her capacity for giving a proper draught animal. In Mr. Smith's opinion based on long experience the two go together. The cow that gives a substantial quantity of milk will also give a substantial bullock. The second point made by Mr. Smith is, that whilst the buffalo may apparently do good to the individual, she kills the cow and therefore kills agriculture. Both these important things can only be handled by adequate education of those who own cattle. of course if the State interested itself in the true welfare of the people as the States have done in many other parts of the world, the problem can be handled effectively inside of a few years but private effort too can do a great deal to arrest the growing decay of our cattle which are becoming an economic burden instead of being as they ought to be a blessing.

Young India, 24-10-1929

348. ELECTED BOARDS

It came upon me as a shock to find the District Board of Moradabad issuing a circular forbidding school teachers from taking part in politics, i.e., even collecting funds from their pupils or others for *Daridranarayana*[1]. That same Board gave me an address with a beautiful casket. Probably the Board knew nothing aboutthe circular. The loyal zeal betrayed in the circular no matter by whom evidently outruns the loyalty of Government schools and colleges which have been inviting me to address their students and presenting me with purses for khadi. Government servants have openly given donations to the same cause. It has come to be recognized that khadi as such had no politics in it, and that whilst there may be two opinions about its economic value, its undoubted moral value may not be ignored by any educationist. Unquestionably it has its political side, but so have many other very important questions at present engaging the attention of the people as well as the Government. Hindu-Muslim unity and untouchability are pre-eminently social questions, but they have today a political importance of the first magnitude, and they are items in the forefront of the Congress programme. But no one has yet been known on that account to prevent Government servants from

[1] God in the form of the poor

interesting themselves in either of these questions. Indeed many District Boards have heartily joined the khadi movement and co-operated with the A. I. S. A. in promoting this the only national cottage industry of universal application. The only Board that has acted like the Moradabad Board and that has come under my notice is the District Board of North Arcot, which had the effrontery to issue the following warning:

> P. Ranganatha Ayyar[1], 1st Assistant, Board Middle School, Arcot, is informed, that his conduct in having lent himself to the raising of subscriptions by pupils to the khaddar fund is blameworthy and should not recur. As a whole-time servant of the Board, it is his duty to attend to the duties assigned to him by the Head Master in the school, and he should not fritter away his time in other avocations calculated to undermine the discipline or the popularity of the institution. He is hereby warned that a repetition of such conduct will entail summary removal from service.
>
> 2. The subscription notebook filed by him is returned and it is advisable for him to destroy it at once.

Note the rudeness of the language that omits even the common courtesy due to an employee enjoying the rank of a schoolmaster. Note too the excess of loyalty that demands destruction at once of an inoffensive little exercise book containing the names of equally inoffensive little children with the few coppers marked against their names. I regret to have to inform the reader that the poor schoolmaster was dismissed by the ultra-loyal North Arcot Board. Whether it has since felt repentant I do not know. I hope it has,

In any case schoolmasters and others whom a fate similar to Sjt. P. Ranganatha Ayyar's may overtake need experience no despondency. No able-bodied honest man or woman who has no prejudice against honest labour has any occasion to starve for want of work. The cry that I hear everywhere is that many public movements want good and true workers.

But though the dismissed persons may be indifferent about what may befall them in the execution of a public duty, the public dare not be. The Boards are now overwhelmingly elective with elected chairmen in most cases. I expect that the circulars such as the one to which I have drawn attention are issued departmentally without the knowledge of the members. It is the duty of the members to take notice of every high-handed and anti-national action by chairmen or depart-

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 5-6-1929

mental heads. And it is equally the duty of electors to keep a strict watch over the misdeeds of the Boards for whose existence they are responsible and who are their mouthpieces. Indeed if the electors only knew their rights and realized their duty, they would make any irregular or unpatriotic action by their Boards utterly impossible. It is the apathy of the general public which renders these elective Boards often instruments of oppression rather than of service. There is nothing to prevent the Boards from becoming powerful political bodies so long as they do not neglect or damage the social local service which is a first charge on their attention. It is possible even to demonstrate that it is necessary, in order to ensure social efficiency, for them to take part to a discriminating extent in the national movement for political emancipation.

Young India, 24-10-1929

349. LALAJI ANNIVERSARY

The Lalaji anniversary will be on us on the 17th November. The question that every patriot would naturally ask himself or herself is: 'What have I done during the year to vindicate Lalaji's death? What have I done to advance the cause of swaraj for which he lived and died? What have I done for the so-called untouchables whose cause he had made his own? What have I done in response to the appeal made by Pandit Malaviyaji and Pandit Motilalji?' There are many other questions which nationalists would ask themselves according to the emphasis they would put upon a particular characteristic in Lalaji's many-sided life, but my purpose is to suggest to all Congress Committees that they should celebrate the anniversary by making up the amount of the appeal for five lakhs issued by Pandit Malaviyaji and Pandit Motilalji.[1] It is a matter of shame that we have yet been able to collect out of the five lakhs not more than' two. If sufficient exertion is put forth there should be nodifficulty in making up the deficit on or before 17th November. If they will do so, they must begin the preparations in right earnest from now.

Young India, 24-10-1929

[1] For the appeal drafted by Gandhiji, *vide* "Apeeal for Lajpat Rai Memorial Fund", 26-11-1928

350. THE U.P. TOUR-VI[1]

Here is the itinerary[2] for the week ending 18th instant.

PREJUDICES DIE HARD

From Barabanki we had to take the Express for Hardoi. The train was crowded. Gandhiji's insistence upon third-class travelling has become almost as rigid as before. The party got seats not without some difficulty which was removed by the railway authorities. Devdas Gandhi, whenever he is of the party, finds room for himself among the. general travellers in order to make our party one less. At Barabanki he found room only in a compartment which had a card stuck upon a window "for Europeans and Anglo-Indians". He found in the compartment some Europeans and Anglo-Indians and some Indians too. There was no objection taken to him at Barabanki. But at Lucknow two European ladies objected to him on the plea that he was not properly dressed. He had a full khadi dhoti, vest and cap. They asked Devdas to go out of the compartment and, as he says, used offensive language Young Gandhi would not oblige them. The good ladies summoned the guard to their assistance. Devdas Gandhi stuck to his guns. The usual procedure followed as a matter of course. The guard summoned the station-master. Then came the police. Naturally there was the inevitable crowd. Gandhiji was duly informed of what was happening. He decided to leave Devdas free to do as he chose and to remain indifferent. Professor Kripalani and others went to this 'reserved' compartment,while the argument was developing. There was a missionary in the compartment. The discussion between him and the missionary was fairly warm, for the Professor could not appreciate the latter's argument that Devdas should yield because the good ladies objected to his dress. The end of it all was that the police would not or could not arrest the offending wearer. The train steamed out, and Devdas says the missionary and the ladies subsequently became friends. The incident is tragic showing how prejudices die hard. Europeans and Anglo-Indians have not yet realized that the

[1] This and other items under this title signed 'A' were written by Gandhiji; *vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 18-11-1929. Although there Gandhiji mentions 'three letters' as having been written by him, actually six of them appeared over the initial 'A' and these are reproduced in this volume.

[2] Not reproduced here

dhoti is the national costume of the vast majority of India's population. So long as there are compartments reserved for Europeans and Anglo-Indians, so long will race and colour prejudice assert itself giving rise at times to unforeseen consequences. For the reservation feeds the insolent prejudice and keeps it alive. In Devdas Gandhi's case the label too was probably put up illegally. The compartment was not stamped in the usual manner. This insulting reservation can only be kept up so long as the multitude of passengers mutely and meekly submit to the injury. No regulation which lacks popular support has any chance of being respected. Let us hope that the courteous and successful resistance offered by young Gandhi will move the authorities to abolish the offensive reservation.

A TRUE SHRADDHA

The visit to Hardoi was interesting for several events. The activity of one selfless woman had altered the complexion of things. Shrimati Vidyadevi, the wife of Raja Jungbahadursinh of Barua, a small zamindari, has moved her husband and other relatives to a spirit of service. She has broken down the purdah for herself and for those who have come under her influence. She is a regular spinner, and her sister-in-law Shrimati Lakshmidevi spins exceedingly fine yarn. A khadi piece woven in Barua out of her yarn was presented to Gandhiji who auctioned it for Rs. 105 at the public meeting in Hardoi. Rani Vidyadevi gave up at the women's meeting some costly jewellery. The gifts at the women's meeting amounted to nearly Rs. 1,700, Rs. 700 being in cash and jewellery worth about Rs. 1,000. The bulk of it came from this one family. Moved probably by the same silent influence Kunvar Maheshvarsinh had a khadi store opened by Gandhiji in memory of his wife who died in January last. The address presented to Gandhiji on the occasion stated that the late Shrimati Sarasvatidevi was a woman of learning, had torn down the *purdah*, was a regular spinner, and a regular worshipper of God.

She used herself to distribute free medicine among needy women and children, and took delight in sewing garments for the latter. There could be no better *shraddha* or memorial to a woman so pure and devoted to the cause of the poor as the Shrimati was. No wonder Gandhiji made her life the text of his address to the women's meeting.

I must pass by many interesting events, noting only a few as I pass by those that crowd upon my mind as I am writing these notes. The visit to Moradabad was noteworthy for the fact of Gandhiji being the guest of an old Mussalman friend Maulvi Abdus Samad Saheb—a rare event nowadays. He opened a new house for an old library, the donation of one citizen Lala Brajlal. In Dhampur we found the khadi activity in full swing. The orderliness of the reception evoked great praise from Gandhiji. The noise, the jostling, etc., had tired him out. He felt therefore refreshed as he alighted on the platform and moved through the motionless rows of men and women who had crowded at the station. The work of the Arya Pratinidhi Seva Samiti too delighted Gandhiji. In Hardwar an attempt was made by the so-called orthodox Brahmins to boycott Gandhiji, but it failed signally. The purse, which the most sanguine thought might not exceed Rs. 500, was fully Rs. 2,500 owing to the exertions of the Vice principal of the Kangri Gurukul, Pandit Devasharma Abhaya, assisted by a band of associates. Due to his exertion there is also a khadi bhandar which is well nigh self-supporting. of the insanitation both moral and physical of this great and ancient place of pilgrimage I need say nothing at present, as Gandhiji proposes to write himself next week.[1] I may not touch Dehradun and Mussoorie this week.

Young India, 24-10-1929

351. SERVANT OR MASTER?

Whatever was said about volunteers in a previous issue[2] bears repetition. I have noticed during every one of my tours that volunteers do not know whether they are servants or masters. For instance, during meetings if some instruction is to be conveyed to someone, it sounds more like a command than a request. When they lead me up to the platform, instead of requesting the villagers politely and gently to make way, they push them and order them in harsh tone and language to move off. At stations, wherever I get off, there is naturally a crowd. The volunteers, instead of politely requesting the crowd to make way, shout at them; so the people neither understand nor listen to them. On

[1] *Vide* "Physical and Moral Insanitation", 31-10-1929,
[2] *Vide* "The Duty of a Volunteer", 17-10-1929

the other hand, the uproar makes confusion worse confounded. Not to mention my own distress, although the object of all these orders is to save me from hardships. When the whole procession leaves the platform, no consideration whatever is shown to the passengers. People trample on their luggage, push them about, and if a passenger is sitting in their path, he is shown no consideration either. Similarly, when we proceed along a road and some villager walks in the middle of the road, volunteers consider it their duty to swear at him and remove him out of the way. I can give many more such examples. I don't believe that this incivility is deliberate, but is due to lack of discretion and education. The air is charged with notions of high and low. The townspeople look down upon the rural folk. When the kings set out in procession, their retinue accompanies them with great fanfare, even abusing the people without hesitation. The white masters have only imitated this. The foreigners are adept at copying such things. We have also been influenced, unwittingly, by this atmosphere. But in these days of public awakening volunteers must become true servants. Their service should be sincere and silent. The poor and the helpless must be served. Hundreds are willing to serve famous leaders who are pestered with excessive and unnecessary attention; but very few come forward to serve the poor; and of those few, many consider that they are doing the poor a great favour by serving them. The truth is that he who serves the poor discharges a small partof his debt. India's poor die of hunger, they have become helpless, and of all this misery, we the middle class people are the cause. The volunteers too belong to this class. It is we who have sustained ourselves by sitting on their backs so long and are doing so even today. When the poor realize their right and their might, then they will become our masters and we shall be forced to serve them. When that happens no one will call us volunteers; we shall certainly be called their slaves or servants.

Therefore, no volunteer should think even in his dream that when he serves the village folk courteously, respectfully and sincerely, he is doing anyone a favour. His greatness and the greatness of the country lie in such service only.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 24-10-1929

352. LETTER TO HEMANTA S. CHATTERJEE

CAMP MUSSOORIE,
October 24, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of September 24th[1] and enclosure which I have now had time to read. I must confess that your scheme for ensuring a better milk supply does not appeal to me in spite of the findings of various Committees to the contrary. I am of opinion that there is no escape from municipalization of the milk supply if we are to make it uniformly cheap and accessible to the poorest citizen of Cawnpore. If it is a fact that a municipality cannot handle such enterprise because of the likelihood of corruption I should imagine that no other institution will, whether private or public. The secret of municipal government must consist in evolving honest enterprise by municipalities themselves setting the example. It bodes ill for corporate life if municipalities cannot handle big enterprises with success, efficiency and comparative cheapness. A municipality has facilities a private corporation can never command in a well-ordered State. There are two or three maxims which must be borne in mind for ensuring the supply of cheap and pure milk in a commercial centre like Cawnpore. Milk must be largely produced in a municipal farm, afair distance from Cawnpore. Secondly, there must be a method of ensuring cheap transport. Thirdly, sale of milk should be a municipal monopoly even as the manufacture and sale of postage stamps is a monopoly of the Central Government.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. HEMANTA K. CHATTERJEE, B.A., LL. B.
CAWNPORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 15253

[1] Seeking Gandhiji's opinion on a milk supply scheme proposed by the Public Health Committee

353. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[*October 24, 1929*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I had already written to you about Lahore in a previous letter, and my letter of yesterday would reach you tomorrow at the latest. Hence I dropped the idea of sending you a wire and saved 12 annas.

You will receive a request from the Princess of Amava for a portable spinning-wheel with ball-bearings. If you receive such: a request and if you have a model ready, send it. If you do not have any, get one made and send it. It would be good to keep one or two more ready in stock. You are likely to receive a letter from the Princess of Jasdan, too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5488

354. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

CAMP SAHARANPUR,

October 25, 1929

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

I noticed in the papers that you and Lala Shankerlal are appealing for a purse to be presented to me on my arrival in Delhi earmarked for local Congress work. Nowhere have purses of this description been countenanced. Purses earmarked for provincial service have been accepted in some places but everywhere the principal purse has been for khadi. Here if the paperscorrectly report you the purse is exclusively for local Congress work. This may not be done on any account. If nobody cares for khadi I think that no collections should be made. I must also say that I would discountenance anything done by Lala Shankerlal in connection with my visit. My experience of him has not been happy. He has still not refunded so far as I am aware the moneys due to the All-India

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 23-10-1929

Spinners' Association. He has not sent the full amount collected in the name of the Bardoli struggle to Bardoli. There have been several other complaints made to me from time to time about his financial dealings but I have not thought it worth while to investigate them. I know that Jamnalalji and several others have the same experience of him. I am sorry. But as I saw his name associated with yourself I thought I should tell you what I feel about him. You may certainly show this letter to him. If any injustice has been done to him and if I can be convinced of it I shall tender my apology to him. I did write to him once or twice about the All-India Spinners' Association money and then in despair gave up writing anything to him further. I would have preferred silence even now. But I would have been guilty of suppressing the truth if I had not told you of my opinion of Lala Shankerlal. I hope you will not arrange for any public meeting either unless it is really called for. I must visit Delhi now as it has been announced and I have sent appointments to some people. I am staying with Raghbir[1] as he wrote to me whilst I was in Mussoorie reminding me of the promise I made him when I was last in Delhi that on my next visit I shall stay with him. I expect to reach Delhi on the 1st proximo, by car from Meerut time in the evening.

I hope you got a fat sum from Bhopal and that you had a successful tour in the South so far as the Jamia is concerned. I saw in the public Press that your tour was wholly successful otherwise. Hayat[2] met me in Mussoorie. Rest of this when we meet.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 15709

355. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

SAHARANPUR,

October 25, 1929

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. I too had thought of Wardha and even mentioned it in a previous letter. For my part I am scheduled to reach Wardha on December 6, but you need not wait till then. Go there earlier if you are not keeping good health. Whether Prabhudas goes to

[1] Raghbir Singh, founder of Modern School, New Delhi

[2] H. M. Hayat of Bhopal

Almora or not, I may make independent arrangements if you wish to have a taste of the Almora winter. Just now Almora is bound to be very cold and will become colder day after day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9269

356. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

SAHARANPUR,

October 26, 1929

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

Just now I am so much in arrears with my correspondence that I cannot remember to which letters I have replied and to which I have not. I see that I have not been able to reply to your letter of October 8. I have the impression that you had enclosed with it the stamps for an express telegram, but now I am only writing this letter as I believe that sending a telegram is meaningless. If you two decide to come, I shall be in Allahabad from Nov. 15 to 20th. I shall be staying in Anand Bhavan with Pandit Motilalji. There are so many items in your food that even very small quantities of each will make the total quantity excessive. Do give up the groundnuts. When one takes milk and/or curds, it is not necessary to eat groundnuts or any other nutritious food. I hope you follow the practice of taking whey only after putting soda bicarb into it. The rest when we meet. We can talk at leisure only in the Ashram, and I should prefer you seeing me there. Ishall reach the Ashram on the night of November 25. Leaving it on December l, I shall go to Wardha where I shall stay up to the 20th. It would be all right even if you come and see me at Wardha. It would be more convenient for you to do so. I think you know that there is a Satyagraha Ashram at Wardha. When at Wardha, I invariably stay there. You will find my programme in *Young India* and *Navajivan*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6794

357. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN,
ON WAY TO MUZAFFARNAGAR,
OCTOBER 26, 1929

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I got your letter. Your minimum demand is for Rs. 2,500, and the maximum for Rs. 16,500. As far as I see things, there are risks even in the purchase of land. My idea in suggesting that you should see Thakore Saheb was that you might accept the land if he offered a deed making a free gift of the land. As I visualize the possibility of his taking back the land even after making an outright grant, you should drop the idea for the present. As for the other expenses to be incurred, we shall think of the matter later and hence, for the present, I will arrange to get you Rs. 3,000. As desired by you, you will get the first instalment of Rs. 500 at the end of *Kartak*. I am writing to the Ashram about it. I hope you have been cured of eczema. How did you get it?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8700. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

358. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

MUZAFFARNAGAR,
October 26, 1929

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Recently you have become slack in writing to me, and I have always been so. However much I hurry, I cannot cope with each day's programme of work and something or other is always left out. As I cannot gather the courage to resist the people's love and enthusiasm, even at the cost of over-straining myself I yield to many of their wishes and am obliged to give them more time than I had intended. As a result, letters remain unanswered, nor can I manage to write other letters which I may have intended to write.

I got your letter regarding Kaki. There is no doubt that she was very fortunate. She had no reason to wish to live longer.

I hope Bal[1] and Shankar[2] have now completely got over their grief.

I trust things are going on all right with the girls who have newly arrived. May God give you the strength for all such services. Your faith is such that you are bound to get it. Do not count the expense in taking milk and fruit. You are right in what you say about the girls. We give them much, but there is much still which we can give and much that remains to be done. I am, however, sure that, as we have been trying to give them the basic things of life, God is bound to grant us the strength to give them the rest. We have not yet been able to train women workers who can give the girls all that they need, and no women workers from outside whom we would welcome have offered to help. We should, therefore, have faith in what we have been doing and keep patience.

Take utmost care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: G. S. Gangabehnne, pp. 27-8

359. LETTER TO MADHAVLAL

MUZAFFARNAGAR,
October 26, 1929

BHAISHRI MADHAVLAL,

I wrote about one who is in *samadhi* in the waking state. The person who is in *samadhi* and is not aware of the world does not need to be helped.

True *samadhi* can certainly be the purest service. Silence can be the best speech and service. But it should be natural. Such a path is very difficult. It is possible for one in a million. There is much danger of self-deception in it. I have seen that happening. The path of *samadhi* is not for the common people. We may adopt it when the path of *karma* naturally leads us to it. An action can be learnt by imitation, *samadhi* never. We are now nearing a station.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/70

[1] D. B. Kalelkar's sons
[2] *ibid*

360. A LETTER[1]

October 26, 1929

For the present, instead of taking a vow about what to eat, try to limit the quantity of your diet and to purify your thoughts . . . . Bear all angry attacks by your wife. Cultivate sincere love for her in your heart. If your love becomes completely free from passion, it will melt her heart . . . . If you bear her taunts and remain unaffected and do nothing to deserve them you may happily sing 'He who reviles us is our brother'. . .

I got your and Swami's letters. This letter answers both. What you are doing seems all right. I think it would be desirable for me to keep silent for the present. If I write anything, Kelkar[2] and other are likely to misinterpret it. Perhaps they would prefer that I should say nothing. And, moreover, what I write is most likely to have an adverse effect on the Poona untouchables.[3] In the present circumstances it seems sufficient that you who are in a position to go there should go and do whatever needs to be done from time to time and ask for my opinion whenever necessary. Let me know if you desire any change in this arrangement.

I do not feel that Sadanand[4] should receive any kind of help from us. Such should be our method of working. We have little need of help from the press. Only such help as is given without our seeking it would be proper. When help comes from a source to which we have made even the smallest monetary contribution, it cannot be consideredto have been given on merit. I have, however, stated the ideal. You may do what Vallabhbhai, Raja[5], you and other wish.

There may be some technical difficulty in appointing Raja president of the Committee for the Removal of Untouchability. But I am not sure. I have an impression that the president should be a member of the Working Committee. But now the year is about to end. So let the present position continue.

Karsandas is a good man. He has also spent money. I am

[1] Omissions in the letter are as in the source.
[2] N. C. Kelkar
[3] *Vide* also "Letter to N. M. Khare", 4-11-1929
[4] S. Sadanand, editor of *The Free Press Journal*
[5] C. Rajagopalachari

therefore of the view that we should bear with him and keep him on. If the building is lying vacant we shall make use of it. In some matters man can see his mistakes only by experimenting.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/68

361. LETTER TO ANANDANAND

DEOBAND,

October 26, 1929

BHAI ANANDANAND,

I got the copies of your letters about the *Gita* and about untouchability[1]. The reference to you in the Introduction[2] is also enclosed. The reference was necessary to show how I came to undertake tasks such as this in my life. I have sent a note for *Y.I.* on the Manifesto about untouchability that has been published[3]. It will be a great thing indeed if the *Ekadashi* is celebrated in the way suggested in the Manifesto. Be that as it may, we should do our best and let the result be what it will. If we cannot solve this problem, I again fear that it will not be possible to hold back the "untouchables". Justice being on their side, who can hold them back in this age of awakening? How can talk of ahimsa appeal to them? Our actions, too, are not a lesson in non-violence to them. If, therefore, they imitate us, we shall reap the fruit of our own folly. I can understand the anger of the *sanatanists*, but it is wholly futile.

You know about Deoband, don't you? It is the biggest centre of Islamic studies, where Maulanas converge.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/69

362. WONDERFUL ACHIEVEMENTS

The Students' Association of the Gujarat Vidyapith conducted an inquiry to find out the views of its ex-students about national education, their ideological and financial position, etc., and has

[1] *Vide* "Temples for Untocuhables", 28-11-1929.
[2] To *Anasaktiyoga; vide* "Anasktiyoga"
[3] By the Untouchability Committee; *vide* "A Great Manifesto", 31-10-1929

brought out its findings in the form of a small pamphlet. It is now a year since the pamphlet was published. It has been constantly with me on my travels, and though it is rather late it will still not be out of place to give a summary of the results mentioned in the pamphlet, in view of its usefulness.

The number of graduates who passed out of the Vidyapith from 1921 to 1926 was 251. Omitting those from Sind and Madras, a questionnaire was sent to more than 200 students. of them 82, including two ladies, sent in their replies. The pamphlet mentioned above gives an excellent summary of their replies, which should be read by those eager to make a study of national education. Here I can give only a few hurriedly jotted points:

Replies as to why they quit Government schools are as below:

Out of political fervour	33
Because of faith in non-co-operation	10
Because of conviction of the need for national education	10
In obedience to the call of the nation	11
At the instance of relatives	6
Being carried away by the prevailing current	12
Total	82

Of these, one student writes the following about the conditions under which he non-co-operated:

> "I left my college against the advice of the elders in my family and caste, and against that of the institutions which were helping me. I thus lost the monthly scholarship of Rs. 10 which I was getting at the Government college."

The following are a few of the opinions given by the ex-students about the atmosphere of the Gujarat Mahavidyalaya, i.e., the college section of the Vidyapith:

> "There was great freedom. A notable fact was that the Mahavidya laya completely changed my life. I might say that it brought about a rebirth for me."

"To begin with the atmosphere was political but afterwards it underwent a change. On the whole, it was such as to foster noble thoughts, though one cannot say that it also gave the power to translate those thoughts into action or even prepared us for that."

"The distinction of the Vidyapith lay in its religious and pure atmosphere."

"Throughout the three years I spent there the atmosphere was so good and uplifting that I dare say one could not find it anywhere else in India."

"The atmosphere was very helpful both for study and contemplation."

"Gujarat Vidyapith shows us the path, direct and straight, as to how a man can lead the highest kind of life. The atmosphere prevailing there offered me the best opportunities for the experience of life in the world —a gift by no means inconsiderable when one comes to think of its importance in one's own life."

"The atmosphere was very pure. There was not that narrow-mindedness which one comes across in Government schools and colleges. Everybody had the utmost freedom which was very helpful in the intellectual development of the students. At the same time there was also scope for the boys to abuse the freedom because not having had it before they could also misuse it. Under the circumstances there is little danger of the boys' mental deterioration."

At the time the pamphlet was prepared, the graduates were employed as follows:

		Total
In educational institutions		
l. Vidyapith	9	
2. Recognized or unrecognized national schools	21	
3. Government schools	7	37
In institutions for depressed classes		
l. Institutions for untouchables	2	
2. „ Bhils	2	
3. „ Kaliparaj	l	
4. „ Labour	3	8
Independent employment		
1. Agriculture, business, etc.		11
2. Private employment, business, office jobs, etc.		18

3.	Legal practice	2
4.	Journalism	3
5.	Not engaged in any particular profession	3
		82

The readers will note that out of 82 as many as 45 were earning their living through social service work.

As for the figures of their earnings, no one earned less than thirty rupees a month.

Twelve graduates were earning sixty rupees per month. The number of those who had a monthly income of seventy-five rupees was 15. One of the graduates was earning Rs. 200, another Rs. 130 and three earned Rs. 125. Thus those who earned from Rs. 50 to Rs. 200 were 57. Eighteen graduates could not send the figures for their incomes because they were engaged in independent business or professional work. It would not be an exaggeration to say that these results are very satisfactory. Graduates of Government universities are of ten found to be earning even less than 30 rupees a month. Here there is only one who gets 30 rupees and very likely he too is doing so voluntarily as a sort of discipline. Today there are many among the educated in India who are ready to take up service for no more than a living—for just enough to keep body and soul together. We have seen that of the aforementioned, 42 are already engaged in social service work. And this is indeed the ideal which the Vidyapith seeks to set before its graduates, namely, that they should take up some sort of social service work at just a subsistence wage. As against this, the ideal in a Government university, if it can be called an ideal, is, understandably, career, i.e., a lucrative profession meaning mainly to secure Government service. A national institution devotes itself to training national workers, while a Government university addresses itself to preparing Government servants whom we consider to be slaves. In a national college service is its own reward while in a Government college there is the inducement of a rise in salary and the promise of a pension. The only pension a national worker can look for lies in the hope that there is in every man the instinct of grateful appreciation of pure service and that the people cannot fail to develop love and regard for their benefactors. That is why I regard the result mentioned above as excellent. The figures for monthly income prove that the graduates of the national university are able to make enough

income even in the sphere of service. And as time passes, and the spirit of sacrifice spreads, I hope to see a reduction made in the above earnings, not of course by force but voluntarily. As long as crores of our people are starving, a man who takes two rupees when he can do with one is really guilty of thieving.

The following extracts are from the replies to the question "What would you prefer to adopt as your life-work?"

"To be a soldier in the struggle for the freedom of the country and society"

"Any such activity as will enable me to take part in doing service to the country"

"Education and khadi"

"Harijan work or work in the primary or secondary schools in villages"

"I will have the satisfaction of having done my life-work if I could have the opportunity to serve the people in any form."

These graduates of the Gujarat Vidyapith admit the superiority of national education and its many advantages. Nevertheless, they have not hesitated to express their view that national education in its present form is imperfect. This freedom of thought raises the pamphlet's worth.

The figures given below show that up to 1926 only a small number had appreciated the value of sacrificial spinning:

Those who spin for an hour or more daily	5
Those who spin only for half an hour	10
Those who spin 1000 yards per month	9
Irregular spinners	9
Those who did not spin	49
	82

This indifference towards a thing which people like me regard as a great *yajna*, whose importance has been ever recognized by the Congress in its resolutions, is certainly disappointing. But I know that there has been an improvement in the situation after 1926 and I am therefore satisfied.

The number of those who stuck to pure khadi for their clothing was 56 which, though inadequate, may yet be regarded as fair, seeing that something is better than nothing. of course, there were others who used khadi to a limited extent. Those who did not use khadi explain

their difficulties thus:

> "We have to work among the people who belittle our value on account of the simplicity of khadi. This results in less work for us and therefore less earning."
>
> "The dearness of khadi, the difficulty of getting it, and the keen desire for fine mill-cloth are a hindrance."
>
> "Ready-made garments of mill-cloth are available at the shops at very cheap prices, It is not so with khadi."

That such excuses are put forward to explain why they do not use khadi shows that many do not yet know what a great help khadi is to the starving poor and what a great contribution it is making to our freedom struggle. It is to be remembered that no country has won freedom in this world without suffering privations and difficulties.

It would be very useful if developments in respect of khadi and other things, subsequent to the publication of the pamphlet, could be made available. I congratulate the editors on bringing out this pamphlet. Every national worker can learn much from it. The Association would do well to continue their inquiry. It should be the primary object of the Association to maintain spiritual contact with all the graduates of the Vidyapith, share their joys and sorrows and not allow a slackening of the ideals for which the Vidyapith has been founded.

I feel that those who read this pamphlet cannot but come to the conclusion that the national schools and colleges have done much good to the country, and that the strength which we find in the students today owes its origin to these institutions.

I have had the same experience in regard to the results of the work of the Kashi Vidyapith as of those of the Gujarat Vidyapith which have been noted above and I am sure that the same will be found to be true, on examination, in the case of the Jamia Millia and the Bihar Vidyapith. I also advise the Association to establish contacts with all the national universities, and collect and collate all information about them. It may perhaps be desirable to hold occasional or annual conferences of the teachers and graduates of these universities. Professor Gidwani had, in fact, attempted this. If such a conference is held, it should not synchronize with the Congress week. Our tendency to hold all conferences simultaneously with it is, I think, harmful. It distracts people's energy instead of concentrating it; and the people gain little from these conferences. If a conference is worth holding it

should be held separately. It is not possible that all people would be interested in all the conferences. Rightly the Congress is the organization which should interest all people. Therefore, during the Congress week, the people's attention should be directed to the sole purpose of strengthening the Congress.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan , 27-10-1929

363. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

October 27, 1929

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I have not replied to your letter. I hope that Bhai Hemshankar is now completely free from his teeth trouble.

In my suggestion[1] to avoid personal criticism I did not think merely of practical wisdom, but it was and is a matter of principle also. Just as it would be uncivilized on my part to criticize you behind your back or outside your home, though it would be a duty to do so in your face, it is also improper to criticize one princely State in the territory of another, particularly when the latter is known to be on friendly terms with the former.

I know that we do not always follow this principle, but that does not prove that as a principle it is wrong.

Such being my views, I hold it to be the duty of a person, who believes in the principle I have stated, to dissociate himself from an organization—in the present instance, the youth movement—which indulges in such criticism as a matter of principle and makes it its chief aim. It is one's duty to resign from an institution whose defects carry one in a direction one does not approve of . There may be no objection to remaining, and occasionally it may even be a duty to remain, in the institution whose defects we hope to remove or remedy, keeping ourselves aloof from those defects. I think I have fully replied to your letter from Broach, dated September 29.

Now I turn to your second letter. The problem of Wadhwan is a complicated one. The chief question is what strength you have—you,

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Kathiawar Political Conference, Porbandar", 22-1-1928.

that is, your organization as a whole. How far all the members of your organization can feel love for the wrongdoer is for you to examine. If you are satisfied in the matter, you have the full right to offer satyagraha. Whether you have the strength to offer it, whether the time for it is ripe, whether you have acquired the necessary fitness—all these questions should be considered beforehand. This means that, in deciding the question, what is first needed is detailed knowledge of the facts;after that, all that is necessary is application of practical wisdom. You alone know the facts. If an error from the point of view of practical wisdom is committed, it can be overlooked.

After this you may act as you think fit. If you wish to consult me in the matter, you may see me in the Ashram after November 25. But it seems that you will have already taken, before you get this reply, many of the steps you propose to take. You know my tour programme. If you so desire, you may write to me at any of the places included in the programme and ask me about any matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2836. Courtesy: Fulchand K. Shah

364. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI M. PATEL

MUZAFFARNAGAR,

October 27, 1929

BHAISHRI RAOJIBHAI[1],

I got your letter. I have no doubt at all in my mind about the need of running the kitchen and succeeding in it. The problem of its management will be solved through actual experience. Our duty is to see that though the burden and the responsibility rest on the women, we act in such a manner that the women do not feel the burden and the responsibility and yet are aware that they are theirs. There is the well-known illustration of Queen Victoria and her ministers. Though the responsibility was the Queen's, the ministers let no burden fall on her. However, this after all is wisdom from a distance. The main thing is to ensure that the experiment succeeds, whatever the method we follow in running the kitchen.

[1] A khadi worker at Sabarmati Ashram

The cure for Dahibehn's illness lies in sun-bath, hip-bath, open air, light exercise and avoidance of starchy food. All of us eat much more starch than we need. We may, therefore, look robust, but in fact the body is flaccid. I had actually proved this once to Velanbehn in her own case.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8985

365. DISCUSSION WITH MEERUT CONSPIRACY PRISONERS[1]

MEERUT,
October 27, 1929

The accused were rather surprised to see Mahatmaji coming to them in jail and some of them actually exclaimed it was a great surprise that he had come to them. Mahatmaji replied:

I hope it would not be a painful surprise.

After the comrades were personally introduced, Mahatmaji said he would be satisfied if Dominion Status in terms of the Nehru Report were given immediately. He would consider it independence, if, as is implied by the Nehru Provisions, it contained the organic ability of severance of connection.

Questioned if he would adopt the same attitude of thankful acceptance as he did in Amritsar on Montagu Announcements, if the new reforms were less than the terms of the Nehru Constitution, but a slight advance on 1917, Mahatma Gandhi said he would not accept them.

After this the Bombay comrades had a long discussion as to why Gandhiji did not help the 1928 general strike. Asked why he did not give them help, when several workers visited Ahmedabad to collect funds for the strike, Gandhiji said he thought the strikers were wrong in their action....

[About] the grievances of the workers in the 1928 strike, he said none of the strike-leaders had cared to see him and explain things.

[To a suggestion] that he should have at least helped the women and children who were starving, Gandhiji said instead of that he would have told the women to ask their men to go to work and feed them!

[1] At his own initiative and quite unexpectedly, Gandhiji visited the Meerut Jail and saw the Communist undertrials in their barracks. *Vide* "The *U. P.* Tour-VIII", sub-title, "With the Prisoners", 7-11-1929.

[On a remark] that unless the Congress accepted the programme of organizing the workers and peasants there would be no effect on the Government, Mahatmaji said he welcomed everyone to convince the Congress of any programme and put it through.

Gandhiji's attention [was drawn] to a very serious complaint . . . regarding the method of collecting money for his purse in some places in U. P. districts.... Big zamindars with the help of lawyers and intellectuals, [it was alleged,] forced a fixed tax per head on the peasants in their zamindari for contribution to Gandhiji's purse. Mahatmaji asked if Mr. Dange[1] could cite any particular name or place.

Mr. Dange said he would not do it just now, as he did not want to involve anybody's name.... Mahatmaji said he would mention it that very day in the meeting, and would inquire, if names were given, and would refuse to handle the money obtained by forcing the peasants to pay under the threats of a zamindar.

Mahatma Gandhi is reported to have reiterated his faith in non-violence as an efficacious political weapon and declared that he would retire from politics if it proved otherwise. A strike, opined Mahatma Gandhi, was non-co-operation and as such a good weapon in the hands of workers for the removal of genuine grievances.

To another question he replied:

I will certainly become an independencewallah, provided Dominion Status is not granted or promised by responsible heads of the British Government in India and England by the midnight of 31st December next. Whether the administration in such conditions would improve in quality depends on the personnel of the Government then.

He entertained hopes of attainment of Dominion Status within this period. He explained that he suspended civil disobedience in Bardoli[2] not because Bardoli was not prepared but as a direct consequence of the outbreak of violence in Chauri Chaura. Asked if Dominion Status was not forthcoming and another Chauri Chaura happened in the course of the contemplated civil disobedience whether he would advise another suspension of the programme, he replied:

That is the weak spot in me and you have to bear with me.

Asked what he would do for the Meerut case, Mahatmaji said:

If it were in my hands I would withdraw the charge, as in my scheme of things, holding opinions of any kind would be perfectly permissible.

Questioned as to his opinion previously expressed in *Young India*[3] that a case of this nature required no defence, Mahatma Gandhi explained that India had produced

[1] S. A. Dange of the Communist Party of India

[2] In February 1922

[3] *Vide* "Notes" sub-title The Indiscriminate Arrests

a sufficient number of legal practitioners who could take up a case of this nature without remuneration. He was never opposed to defence individually arranged but public subscriptions should not be utilized towards lawyers' fees in political trials.

Concluding his interview, he remarked that in the whole of his tour of the province this was the most pleasant hour he had spent.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-11-1929; *The Leader*, 31-10-1929 and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 29-10-1929

366. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MEERUT

October 27, 1929

Mr. Gandhi . . . gave a joint reply in Hindustani to the several addresses presented to him by the local bodies and the Congress Committee. He thanked the citizens of Meerut for their contributions. He said Meerut's record of national service, though it fell short of the 1921 level, was a fairly good one. Rs. 14,000 was no small amount but it failed to satisfy his demands. He had taken upon himself a mission of service to *Daridranarayana*, the incarnation of poverty, and hence his needs would not be easily appeased.

Alluding to the Meerut alleged "conspiracy" case, he said the responsibilities of Meerut had increased a thousandfold in view of the trial being held there, a small city which was ill-chosen for the occasion. That city was lacking in suitable lawyers, books and other conveniences. Mr. Gandhi exhorted his audience to try to bring about the acquittal of the accused. Mr. Gandhi said: "I am not a Communist or any ist," but the accused were their brothers, and even if they were wrong it was not for Government to bring them to book, but for their countrymen to bring them round.

Mr. Gandhi pleaded for an extensive use of khaddar, removal of untouchability and Hindu-Muslim unity. Thirty crores of Indians could move the whole world, and he took upon himself the task of getting the Meerut "conspiracy" prisoners out of jail if his countrymen took to khaddar. He exhorted the people to give up liquor and other intoxicants, and criticized the excise policy of the ministers under local self-government. Twenty-five crores of rupees was annually wasted on intoxicants. He deprecated the policy of financing the Education Department out of excise revenues.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-10-1929

367. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

October 28, 1929

I was delighted to have your first letter from Sabarmati. As I was motoring from a village I was thinking of you and lo! as I reached Meerut at 11.30 I found your letter awaiting me.

I am sorry we shall not meet before 25th November. In a way I am glad. Your first experience of the Ashram will be on merits. My presence at the Ashram prevents a dispassionate experience.

Anyway please conserve your health. The best way to do it is to feel perfectly at home there and have all your necessary comforts supplied. Use the sun-hat freely in the hot sun. Do not attempt suddenly to walk about barefoot. Use the mosquitonet, if you find the mosquitoes about you. Do not use much ghee in the beginning stages at least. Avoid dal, try a little raw green vegetable whenever available. Keep your bowels in good order, if necessary, by taking castor oil, epsom salt or an enema. To ensure clearance, it is of ten better to go without one meal or to fast altogether for 24 hours, drinking freely hot water at intervals.

As you go on, I would like you to pick up a few Hindustani words daily. Note down every word you pick up. You can master the Devanagari character in 4 days' time, if not earlier. And please do not omit to get the meaning of the verses and hymns sung at the prayer time. These two prayer times I hold to be more essential than mealtimes.

Do make it a point to give me a weekly letter giving me freely of your impressions.

May you feel and be really happy and healthy at the Ashram.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 4526: Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

368. LETTER TO RAMNARESH TRIPATHI

MEERUT,
October 28, 1929

BHAI RAMNARESHJI,

What I have been able to see of your collection of folk songs[1] has enabled me to have some idea of the extent of your labour and your love for the national language. It is a fine collection and I would like every Hindi-lover to study it. The book deserves a place in educational institutions. Your translation of the folk songs has further enhanced its worth. Congratulations on your effort.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: C.W. 9240. Courtesy: Municipal Museum, Allahabad

369. LETTER TO KRISHNAN

October 28, 1929

MY DEAR KRISHNAN,

I have been expecting to hear from you all these days. So I was glad when I got your letter. I do not know the merits of the exhibition controversy. But no man is infallible. It is enough if our associates do not err deliberately. We should be ready to excuse one thousand mistakes unconsciously committed. More when we meet.

Though my partiality for the common kitchen is well known I have no desire to influence anybody's opinion. And I know that if there are willing hands the kitchen will not be broken up. What is needed is the will to co-operate. Where there is hearty co-operation a kitchen is the easiest thing to manage. There is really very little work to do when it is equitably divided, each attends thoroughly to his or her own portion. Keeping time to the minute is of the greatest importance when many are working at the same thing. One person getting out of time is like one note out of time spoiling the whole piece. I would like all therefore to work away with hearty goodwill and there will be no more thought of a break-up.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 9277

[1] *Gramya Geet,* published in four parts

370. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

MEERUT,
October 28, 1929

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I got your letter the day before yesterday. Of course, I have forgiven K.[1] I know that it is a temporary aberration. What I have felt is the deep grief caused so totally unnecessarily to Hemprabhadevi. She has not got over it completely, I fear. The memory of it haunts her although she does now know through her reason that I was incapable of thinking of her in the way K. thought I had. But all this is the greater reason for me to pity K. than to get angry with him. Your analysis is correct. Only that does not alter the fact of his blind partiality towards Ram Binod in whom, at least so far as transactions with the A.I.S.A. are concerned, he sees no blemish. But whatever the reason, both you and I have to pray for K. and I have to guard myself against harbouring any anger against him.

Pray don't think that I have forgotten K.'s volumes[2]. I am waiting for the proper wording. That wording has not yet come to me. How far K. himself believes in what he has written in the volumes is the question that agitates me. I want a wording that would keep me clear of any committal about his opinion. But it will come.

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/74

371. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Silence Day, October 28, 1929

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. I have already written to you about Wardha. You need not wait for me to reach there before you go. I am not at all happy that your fever persists. No matter how long you have to stay at Wardha, you must shake of f the fever completely.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9268

[1] Krishnadas

[2] *Seven Months with Gandhiji*, a narrative by Krishnadas in two volumes. For Gandhiji's comments on the work, *vide* "Notes" sub-title "Seven Months with Gandhiji", 26-12-1929.

372. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

MEERUT,
October 28, 1929

CHI. MAHADEV,

I cannot bear your falling ill. I hope you have completely recovered by now. One must observe moderation even in serving, and it will probably help you to render good service if you follow the maxim, 'Dharma without risking one's health'. We have, of course, the Englishman's experience in the saying, 'He enjoys the greatest leisure who works the hardest', and that is true indeed. Its point is that one who has done his duty sincerely is entitled to some rest. No one has the right to encroach on that much-needed rest.

As Diwali is now approaching, we should reconsider the question of the common kitchen. Give some time to it and decide the question finally as may seem best to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Yesterday I visited the Meerut prisoners. I spent with them an hour and a quarter or perhaps a half, listened to their taunts to my heart's fill and made them laugh a great deal before leaving them. They did not expect that I would visit them and seemed very pleased to see me. As for the actual conversation[1], you will get it if Devdas or Pyarelal reports. Professor had accompanied De[vdas] and P[yarelal]. I did not at all expect that whoever accompanied me would be permitted to enter.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11463

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with meerut onspiracy Prisoners", 27-10-1929.

373. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

MEERUT,
October 28, 1929

SISTERS,

Today we are in Kripalaniji's ashram in Meerut. Here too, therefore, we feel the atmosphere of our Ashram.

I write to you today about our common kitchen. Diwali is approaching. I have already received several letters. I write this to remove your fears. You have now had one year's experience. The entire burden of the kitchen was carried by you. I only enjoyed the benefits of the kitchen. I, therefore, put no value on my opinion. It is your opinion which should count. I will, therefore, accept any decision at which all of you arrive. But I do suggest this: Do not discuss the matter too much, nor take much time in deciding. Discuss important points and come to a quick decision. And whatever decision you arrive at, stick to it.. Only thus shall we progress. There will always be arguments for and against a proposal, and we shall even make mistakes in our decisions, whatever they are. You need not worry on that score.

It is very necessary to learn to come to a decision and stick to it afterwards. It would be a different matter, of course, if we later feel that our decision was morally wrong. There can be no legitimate occasion of clinging to a decision which required us to commit a sin.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3707

374. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

MEERUT,
October 28, 1929

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have your letters.

From your telegram to Shanti I understand that Sushila, and perhaps you also, will start after Shanti reaches there. Be that as it may.Chi. Nimu[1] has given birth to a daughter. Both the mother and

[1] Ramdas Gandhi's wife

the daughter are doing well. The delivery took place at Lakhtar and Nimu is still there. She did not suffer much.

My journey will continue till the end of November. Devdas is still with me. Krishnadas is at Almora.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4762

375. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

October 28, 1929

Interviewed by the Free Press representative about the much-talked-of invitation to prominent Indian Nationalist leaders to be issued by the British Cabinet for a Round Table Conference to discuss the question of the future constitution of India, Mahatma Gandhi said that he was not much interested in it and he preferred to be silent in the matter. He also preferred to be silent on the question of the programme to be settled in the Lahore Congress if Dominion Status was not granted by that time; but he reiterated his view that if Dominion Status was not granted within this year, he would be for complete independence from the next year.

The Hindu, 29-10-1929

376. SPEECH AT MEERUT COLLEGE, MEERUT

October 28, 1929

Replying to the welcome address, Mahatmaji thanked the students and the staff for the purse which he said had surpassed all purses presented to him in proportion to the number of students of the Meerut College. Mahatmaji expressed the fear that the welcome address given to him was not shown to all students and approved by them before being finally printed. He knew it had been rather customary to praise guests lavishly in welcome addresses. But he did not expect such welcome addresses from students. A welcome address by students, said Mahatmaji, should contain at best two things. Instead of being full of lavish praises it should contain much information about the students themselves as well as some instructions for them. Mahatmaji was afraid he was not worthy of the lavish praises sung in the welcome address and he pointed out that the real praise of a man was to follow his ideals.

Continuing, Mahatmaji said he knew many students who did not support his ideals and were for present-day Western civilization and as a matter of fact many such students had written to him to that effect. So he did not know whether all the students

of the Meerut College did subscribe freely to his ideals as expressed in the welcome address. However, said Mahatmaji, if they wanted to serve the motherland they should at least know what *samyama* or self-control was and they Should at least make attempts to practise self-control. The reason for weakness and fear of present-day students was that they had forgotten to practise *samyama*. Mahatmaji exhorted the students to observe celibacy and advised married students to observe *samyama*. The students, he said, were soldiers and as such they should not be cowed down by threats. He knew, that very of ten students were asked not to do this thing or that by the authorities of institutions they read in and very of ten such restrictions were sought to be enforced by threats. He believed that students should not do many things but at the same time he hoped as soldiers the students should not allow themselves to be defeated by victimization. The worst that might happen to them for not obeying improper dictations by the authorities was that they might be expelled from schools and colleges. But certainly it did not matter much to them. They might prosecute their studies in many other places. Moreover, learning should never be regarded in terms of rupees, annas and pies, but it should be acquired for enlightening their souls.

Mahatmaji advised the students to take to khaddar which would give some relief to crores of their toiling and starving masses who were the real source of all their comforts in life including even their studies in schools and colleges.

Mahatmaji expressed regret in not being able to keep the plate and the welcome address. . . . He said that pledged as he was as a representative of *Daridranarayana* he could not keep those things.

At the conclusion . . . the servants of the college presented Rs. 21 to Mahatmaji to which Mahatmaji replied, "It is proper that servants are paying to a servant."

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 30-10-1929

377. LETTER TO SYED ROSS MASOOD

CAMP ASAURA,

October 29, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. It will certainly give me pleasure to renew my acquaintance with the students of the college and the professors. I shall gladly address them[1] at the time mentioned by you. As you have conferred with the Reception Committee I take it that

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Muslim University, Aligarh", 4-11-1929.

there will be no conflict with the other appointments the Committee might have made.

Yours sincerely,

SYED ROSS MASOOD, ESQ.
VICE-CHANCELLOR
MUSLIM UNIVERSITY
ALIGARH

From a microfilm: S.N. 15725

378. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

ASAURA ,
October 29, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I have not yet been able to read the other mail forwarded with it. I see that you will start from there on the 4th. That means we shall not meet in Delhi. It will be enough if you plan to meet me, wherever I am, before you proceed further on your journey.

The problem about Bhansali is becoming delicate. Let us wait and see what happens. It was wise of Lilabehn[1] to have left.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5467

379. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

October 29, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Just now [I saw][2] the other mail in which [I found][3] your letter.

The resolution . . .[4] about the kitchen has not pained me but, on the contrary, has satisfied me, for I do not wish anything to be done under pressure from me. Everything done under pressure is likely to

[1] Bhansali's widowed sister-in-law
[2] According to the source, a corner of the sheet having been damaged, some words are illegible.
[3] *ibid*
[4] *ibid*

end in failure. I, therefore, welcome the Managing Committee's resolution. Whatever changes need to be introduced in conformity with it, let them be introduced by all means.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Twice or thrice have I conveyed my permission to you to go to Lahore. One of these letters has come back to me, which I am returning with this.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 173

380. LETTER TO B. L. RALLIA RAM

October 30, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

You have asked the wrong man for naming the best book he might have read during the year. The book I get the time to read is the book of Nature which is not to be found on any book-stall.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. B. L. RALLIA RAM
NATIONAL COUNCIL, Y.M.C.A.
5 RUSSELL STREET, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 15706

381. LETTER TO K. S. SUBRAMANIAM

October 30, 1929

MY DEAR SUBRAMANIAM,

With reference to your letter regarding Satis Babu here is my reply.

In my opinion if the A.I.S.A. cannot take part in the general Congress exhibition a separate function should not be organized at the same time as the Congress. I entirely agree that all the exhibits should show clearly the selling price of each article. The question of

pooling the prices of khadi coming from different provinces is very difficult till we reach standardized cloth and standardized prices for all India for ordinary seasons. We cannot pool prices only for the exhibition and till we have the same quality in all the provinces for particular varieties. I think therefore that for the time being we shall have to be satisfied with different prices charged at different stalls from different provinces. What we can and must ensure is that no more than a certain percentage has been added to the cost price as it left the weavers' or the subsequent artisans' hands. My recollection is that Satis Babu knows all these views of mine. I believe that he corresponded with me in similar terms.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. S. SUBRAMANIAM
ALL INDIA SPINNERS ASSOCIATION
MIRZAPUR, AHMEDABAD

From a microfilm: S.N. 15726

382. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

ASAURA,
October 30, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I received your letter from Chalala also only yesterday. That is to say, letters dated the 21st and the 27th were also received yesterday. Sometimes it happens like that. I see from your letter that you were unable to write all the things you had in mind and so please make a note of all the points you wanted to tellme about before you come to see me. It is really very good that your health has improved because of your walks. It is indeed a very good practice to have a change of air while doing one's work.

It was really good that Lilabehn left. She badly needed a change of atmosphere mentally.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 15828

383. A LETTER

MEERUT,
October 30, 1929

BHAI,

I have your letter. I would only caution you that if either of you feels disturbed by passion in the slightest degree you must immediately start living apart before the feeling takes definite shape. If after thus living apart for three months you feel that self-control has become stronger you may again resume the experiment of living together. Thus gradually you can become free from passion towards each other. Both of you must be firmly resolved in your mind in order to attain this. Both of you should be so resolved to observe *brahmacharya* that while practising self-control you should feel cheerful. When the desire for self-control is keen, however painful the effort, one feels joy in it even as a greedy man does in acquiring wealth.

The other point is the constitution of the Seva Sangh. I am firmly of the view that it should not be made public at present. But those who have accepted the underlying principles should fully practise them in their own lives. Is not as if the objectives and the means laid down in the constitution were worthy of practise only collectively in an organization and not individually. Your letter further confirms my view. If your mind is unsteady, and an unsteady mind is always full of doubt, Manilal's is not less so. Besides he is prone to doubt. Jamnalal's is not unsteady. But I have a real doubt whether you two and others who are likely to join the Sangh can be free from this weakness.

Since you know your weakness, you are somewhat indifferent to the formation of the Sangh. Therefore my view is that for the time being you should thoroughly examine your own mind and practise the principles of the constitution independently in your life and find out from experience their truth or otherwise. Other also who wish may do the same. If after two or three months of experience the constitution is found to be good it can be made public. The question then remains how in the meantime you are to shoulder the responsibility of *Young Rajasthan.* If you have understood my way of working, write a letter immediately to Manilal and Jamnalalji

informing them that if they do not sent the required financial help within a certain time, you will stop *Young Rajasthan*. You will lose nothing if that has to be done. There are many field of activity for one who is keen to serve.

Be firm in your resolve that if no help is forthcoming from either of these two sources, you are not going to take it from any third source. Also resolve not to have *Young Rajasthan* published from anywhere except Beawar. The person who is resolved to follow the path of truth will learn to be indifferent even as to the things most dear to him. My conviction that the path of non-attachment taught by the *Gita* was the result of the realization that truth and non-violence were supreme, grows stronger day by day. The author of the *Gita* saw with his divine eyes that the results of truth and ahimsa are always good, but he also saw that man is not able to see them when he wishes. And very often he is also not able to decide what is good and what is bad. The author therefore showed him the path of non-attachment. After you come to a decision and inform me, I shall be ready to write to Jamnalalji and Manilal. No question of yours now remains unanswered. If you still feel confused and think it necessary to see me alone or with Haribhau[1], consult the dates of my tour programme and come to any place convenient to you.

There is a long and very good reply from Bhopal, but it is not meant for publication. I have asked for permission to show it to co-workers. When I receive it, I will show it to co-workers like you.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/75

384. THE U.P. TOUR-VII[2]

The foregoing has been, as the following itinerary[3] will show, a week of comparative rest so far as movement is concerned.

IN DEHRADUN

Dehradun has long been a favourite health resort for Europeans. It has an altitude of over 3,000 feet lying at the foot of beautiful Mussoorie described as the Queen of Hills. It has now become popular with well-to-do Indians too. It therefore boasts many

[1] Haribhau Upadhyaya
[2] *Vide* footnote 2, "The U. P. Tour-VI", 24-10-1929
[3] Not reproduced here

educational institutions. It has what has been euphemistically but incorrectly called the Indian Sandhurst School. It has also several schools where boys for Cambridge Senior are prepared. It has too the famous Anglo-Vedic College founded in 1904 with an attendance of over 800 boys owing its existence to the munificent sole donation of 2_ lakhs by the late Thakur Poonamsinghji Negi. It has the Kanya Gurukul, an offshoot of the Kangri Gurukul and conducted amid great difficulty by Shrimati Vidyavati Devi. And when Gandhiji reached Dehradun it was holding a political conference with Sjt. Purushottamdas Tandonji as its President. Gandhiji was to stay there only for a day. The programme therefore was fairly crowded. It commenced with the laying of the foundation-stone[1] of Shri Shraddhanand Abala Ashram on a spacious plot of ground. In laying the foundation-stone Gandhiji laid stress on the necessity of making the inmates of such institutions feel as members of a family with the manager as father or mother. He therefore added: 'The foundation of such ashrams is laid not in brick and mortar but in securing the services of a manager who would eat with the inmates and live with them as their father? friend and guide,' Addressing the many women who had gathered there Gandhiji said, 'If you truly revere Shraddhanandji's memory you will provide from among you a mother for this place. That men mostly manage such institutions is but a penance they are doing for having grossly neglected the education and training of girls and otherwise deprived women of the opportunity of bettering themselves.'

At the Anglo-Vedic College, where students presented their address and a purse of Rs. 500, Gandhiji asked the students to spread out in the villages as the Chinese had done and give the proper type of education and information both to the children and adults. This they could do during their long vacations.

There was also the meeting of the so-called untouchables. They have adopted the name Raidasi from the great Chamar saint Raidas. These are all well-to-do families at present. From day labourers they have become owners of limekilns. They presented a purse naturally for the Lalaji Memorial. They owe much to the work done for and amongst them by the young men sent out by Lalaji. Gandhiji told them that they should learn to help themselves by carrying on intensive internal reform. Lala Beharilal, who is an elected member of the Union Board, is their leader owing his training to the Anglo-Vedic

[1] On October 16

College. No one could possibly detect any difference between him and any other educated young man. Had I not known his antecedents, I should not have known that he was a tanner.

There was of course the Union Board address. Gandhiji in reply said, 'I cannot be satisfied unless you can make Dehradun a model town. Your roads are good only in fashionable quarters. The business centre where the workers and the poor live is not much better than when I saw it fifteen years ago. You do not supply pure and cheap milk to the aged and the children. Nor have you got rid of the drink curse in your midst. And yet you have among you good Hindus, good Mussalmans and good Englishmen and you proudly inform me that you are all working in a spirit of co-operation and goodwill. Let the Union work for the benefit of the poor.'

The day closed with a monster meeting of women. It was too noisy for Gandhiji to make any speech worth recording.

The next day on his way to Mussoorie he went to the Kanya Gurukul. The girls recited in a beautiful voice an address composed in Sanskrit. There was then a neat little speech by Shrimati Vidyavati recounting her trials and difficulties. This was followed by a spinning competition in which Gandhiji, Shrimati Kasturbai and Shrimati Mirabehn had joined There was a big bundle of yarn too spun by the girls f or Gandhiji which he returned asking them to turn it into khadi and then send it to him. In blessing the girls Gandhiji hoped that the institution would have its own abode instead of as now having to live in a state of uncertainty and suspense.

From the Kanya Gurukul we took on the way a purse from motor drivers' association and then halted at Rajpur where the late Dr. Keshav Dev Shastri had his sanatorium and where Mrs. Shastri with her sister though American is living the life of a strict Hindu widow. There were living there for the vacation over hundred boys of the Kangri Gurukul School. Gandhiji unveiled there the portrait of the late doctor and planted a tree in his memory. He received too an address from the boys and a pile of yarn which the boys had spun as also a purse which the boys had collected by their own labour.

IN MUSSOORIE

And then at last Gandhiji went uninterrupted to Mussoorie. The cars do not go beyond Bhatta. An uphill distance of nearly three miles had to be covered either on foot, by dandy or rickshaw or on

horseback. Gandhiji insisted on walking and got into a rickshaw only when he was about to enter the bazaar. This however proved most trying for him. Crowds pressed in upon the rickshaw from all sides. The din and the dust and the shower of flowers choked him. This went on for nearly an hour. He sat dazed and dejected in the rickshaw feeling perfectly helpless. Truly is a crowd's affection embarrassing when it is blindly exhibited.

The Reception Committee had left no stone unturned to make Gandhiji as happy and comfortable as possible. The weather was superb. The snowy range sparkling in the morning sun opened upon the sleeping citizens silently calling them to wake up and remember and thank God who had created for them the mountains with their luxuriant foliage and the life-giving waters that descended to the plains. Mussoorie is the resort of rajas and their ranis who pass their idle hours in luxurious dissipation. I understand that lakhs are spent in dances and the like to which we Indians are unused and which are as strong wine for us. In this exciting pastime, I was told, even the ranis, who otherwise live in seclusion, take part pretty freely as deeply interested spectators when they cannot take part in it themselves. Gandhiji found himself in this atmosphere like a fish out of water. When therefore he received the Municipal and other addresses[1] he pointedly reminded the citizens of their duty towards the poor people. The European members of the Municipality and some other Europeans had attended the public meeting. And Gandhiji was called upon to speak to them in English. Addressing them he said, 'I do not envy you your amusements and enjoyments, but I would like you not to forget the poor in your midst. Your very existence on a hill like this depends upon their unremitting toil. They carry you and your luggage and furniture for a mere pittance. They are said to get no adequate return for their labour. They wear dirty rags, are said to live on *ata*[2] and salt and dwell in dirty, ill-ventilated hovels. You owe it to them to better their lot.' The Hindi address mentioned the fact that though they had little untouchability in their midst, yet the only Hindu temple was barred against the so-called untouchables. Gandhiji expressed painful surprise that in Mussoorie where mostly enlightened people lived such a thing was tolerated. He had therefore asked Devdas Gandhi to inquire into the affairs of the temple. It was

[1] On October 21
[2] Flour

discovered that some trustees had actually flung open the temple to the untouchables. But the permission lasted but a day. Some enemy of Hinduism incited the unthinking Hindus of the bazaar to opposition. They threatened the of fending trustees with excommunication. The latter took fright and meekly yielded. Gandhiji therefore vehemently urged the workers at their special meeting to bestir themselves and see to it that the temple was made accessible to the untouchables on the same terms as to the caste Hindus.

The only other public function was a ladies' meeting. This was largely attended by European ladies and the girls from a European girls' college. Gandhiji had again therefore to speak in English. He said to them, 'You can, if you will serve this country, do at least two things. You can help the poor in a tangible manner by adopting khadi and you can help the total prohibition movement. It is for you to shame your men into doing their duty towards Indian labour. The drink curse has desolated many a labourer's home. There is no halfway house between drunkenness and prohibition. Well-to-do men may pretend to be moderate. But there is no such thing as moderation possible among labourers. You can therefore create an atmosphere favourable to total prohibition and earn the silent blessings of the unfortunate victims.'

Young India, 31-10-1929

385. CHARKHA AS FAMINE RELIEF

Prafulla Babu of Abhoy Ashram writes about relief work undertaken by it in connection with the recent terrible floods:[1]

In the face of facts like these percolating through many sources, East and West, North and South, under varying conditions no one can deny the value of the spinning-wheel as a very substantial aid in famine times.

Young India, 31-10-1929

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. It described how spinning and the sale of rice at cost price helped the flood victims.

386. NOTES

NON-VIOLENCE *v.* COWARDICE

Dr. Hardikar sends me an account of an assault said to have been committed on the 31st July last at Bagalkot on some volunteers of the Hindustani Seva Dal. The volunteers were distributing handbills and marching with their bands playing without noticing a mosque which could not be seen as it was situated on a low level. The band continued to play even when they had approached it. Enraged men inside the mosque therefore came out and are alleged to have assaulted the volunteers with stones, sticks, pickaxes and other tools. The volunteers, according to the description given by Dr. Hardikar, apologized for the mistake that was unconsciously made but the assault was continued. The volunteers however never retaliated. They decided also not to conduct any legal proceedings. The question is whether this restraint could be called non-violent or cowardly. In my opinion, here there is no question of cowardice. The volunteers would have been cowardly if they had run away. On the contrary they are stated to have stood their ground and suffered the assault without retaliation at any stage. Non-violence and cowardice are contradictory terms. Non-violence is the greatest virtue, cowardice the greatest vice. Non-violence springs from love, cowardice from hate. Non-violence always suffers, cowardice would always inflict suffering. Perfect non-violence is the highest bravery. Non-violent conduct is never demoralizing, cowardice always is. I can detect no cowardice in the conduct of the volunteers. No one claims the highest form of bravery for them. The assault, it is said, was so brutal that some Mussalman women who were nearby expostulated with the assaulters for continuing their assault in spite of the apology that was tendered. If the facts are as they are related, in my opinion the conduct of the volunteers was exemplary and strictly non-violent in terms of the Congress creed. Opinions may differ as to the propriety of such conduct, but there can be no two opinions about the bravery of the volunteers. It is undoubtedly in keeping with the creed that no court proceedings have been taken by the injured parties. My own conviction is that the more the volunteers learn the law of suffering bravely and consciously, the greater will be their efficiency for service when the critical time comes.

WHO SHOULD PROTECT?

An Assam correspondent writes a fearful letter describing abductions of girls, married, unmarried and widowed, and he indignantly asks what measures are being taken to protect the honour of our women. He sends me newspaper cuttings in corroboration of his statement. It is possible, as I have been repeatedly told, that these cases are exaggerated, but whether they are or not there is no doubt that abduction in well-organized society should be almost an impossibility. But I know that newspaper reporting can do very little in the way of securing protection for the girls who are in fear of being abducted. It is proof of rank cowardice on the part of relatives, friends and neighbours. A society that is unable to protect its womenfolk is unfit to marry and procreate. Licentious men will satisfy their lust whenever and wherever they can with impunity. The only agitation that can or should be set up is to shame those who do not protect their womenfolk into doing their duty.

ADVERTISING LEWDNESS

Sjt. Jairamdas, the Hon. Secretary of the Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee, has sent me mild specimens as he calls them of indecent pictures which unscrupulous sellers of foreign cloth put in the pieces of calico, etc., they sell. He tells me that there were pictures far more indecent than the specimens he has sent to me. Whether the interpolation of these pictures is the work of the agents or of the principals it is difficult to say, but the pictures are there and they bear also names appropriate to the lewdness they advertise. One is marked 'Vilas Jivan'[1] for instance The unscrupulous ways adopted for enticing simple folk to buy foreign cloth ought to disgust decent men and make them boycott foreign cloth even for these unscrupulous ways apart from any other reason.

A CORRECTION

Writing with reference to a recent weekly letter[2] Professor Gautama of the Udaya Pratap Kshatriya College, Banaras, asks the Editor to correct the spelling of the name of his college from Udaya Pratap Khatri College to Kshatriya College, and he says that the money paid should be Rs. 370-2-6 instead of Rs. 369-2-6 as Re. 1 was paid later to Sjt. Sri Prakasa.

Young India, 31-10-1929

[1] Voluptuous living

[2] By Pyarelal in *Young India*, 3-10-1929

387. A GREAT MANIFESTO

The following manifesto[1] has been issued by the Untouchability Committee.

It will be noted that it is extensively signed and bears weighty names. It has been issued none too early. It is impossible to hold the so-called untouchables under suppression when everywhere there is a yearning for liberty. Those who seek it must be prepared to recognize it for those whom they have hitherto deprived of it. There is a wholesome legal maxim which says that those who seek justice must come with clean hands.

Young India, 31-10-1929

388. PHYSICAL AND MORAL IN SANITATION

There can be no doubt that at one time Hardwar and the other celebrated places of pilgrimage were really holy. Their natural beauty, their ancient popularity would seem to show that at one time they were sanctuaries for the preservation and purification of Hinduism. In spite of my innate love of Hinduism, in spite of my conservatism that ever seeks to respect and justify ancient institutions, these holy places have few man-made attractions for me.

It was in 1915 that I first visited Hardwar[2] as a volunteer working under Pandit Hridaynath Kunzru who was in charge of the Seva Samiti organized by the Servants of India Society. I was therefore able to come in intimate touch with many men and things which otherwise I would not have done. I had gone there full of hope and reverence. But whilst I realized the grandeur of the holy Ganga and the holier Himalayas, I saw little to inspire me in what man was doing in this holy place. To my great grief I discovered insanitation both moral and physical. I found during the recent visit[3] not much change for the better. There is the same defilement of the mighty stream even in the name of religion. Thoughtless ignorant men and women use for

[1] Not reproduced here. Signed by influential persons, it called upon all the Hindu organizations to observe the next *Kartika Ekadashi* as a day for the extinction of untouchability.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Gurukul, Hardwar", 8-4-1915

[3] On October 15

natural functions the sacred banks of the river where they are suppposed to sit in quiet contemplation and find God. They violate religion, science and laws of sanitation. All the religions in the world prohibit the pollution of streams, their banks, public roads and all thoroughfares. Science teaches us that human evacuations, whether liquid or solid, make most valuable manure if they are properly conserved. Hygienists regard it as a crime against humanity for any person to perform natural functions in the places enumerated by me. This pollution is a sin born of ignorance or laziness. But there goes on deliberate pollution too in the name of religion. I was taken to the river to perform the usual ceremony. Flowers, yarn, curds, coloured starch, rice and the like were thrown into the river whose waters millions drink in the faith that they are doing a meritorious act. I protested that it was harmful to throw these things into the waters. "It is a tradition handed down from ages," was the priestly reply. Add to this the reported criminal emptying of the drain-pipes into the sacred waters.

Although the passenger traffic is very heavy, the station is as primitive as it could be made. There are very few conveniences for the passengers. The streets are narrow and unkempt. The roads are indifferently kept. Thus the authorities have conspired with the people to render Hardwar as little attractive as possible.

So much for the physical insanitation of Hardwar. I was reliably informed that moral insanitation was far worse. I have not the heart to narrate here the stories I was told of the horrible vice that went on in Hardwar. There was a naive admission in an address presented to me by the Pandas. They said that in Hardwar perfect sexual restraint was obligatory. They therefore left Hardwar to the pilgrims and not being celibates, were living outside the prohibited boundary. Needless to say there is not the least sign of this form of self-denial in Hardwar.

And yet there is no reason why Hardwar should not become an ideal place of pilgrimage. There are three educational institutions designed to revive the best of ancient tradition. There are rich *mahants*[1] living in and near Hardwar. If any or all of these institutions will it, they can transform insanitary Hardwar within a measurable distance of time into a model sacred place. Acharya Ramdeva, who presided at the public meeting where I disburdened myself of my grief over the physical and moral insanitation of Hardwar, promised to

[1] Heads of monasteries

work wholeheartedly through the Kangri Gurukul which has been shifted to Hardwar to bring about the desired reform. There are too some silent workers doing their best to make things look better. Hardwar uses only swadeshi sugar but imports annually seven lakhs of rupees worth of foreign v cloth. There is a drink shop and a butcher's shop in Jwalapur. There is no reason why Hardwar should not stop all drink. A butcher's shop in a Hindu place of pilgrimage is an anomaly. The optimistic Acharya hopes to make Hardwar sanitary and to banish foreign cloth, liquor and butcher's meat from Hardwar. It is a worthy ambition. May it be fulfilled. It will be the truest education for the boys of the Gurukul if to their studies they add this service of the country and religion.

Young India, 31-10-1929

389. HIGH AND LOW

We say this man is high, that is low. Sciences, both physical and metaphysical, tell us that we are all identical both physically and spiritually. Scientists) having analysed the human body, state that our bodies are made up of the same five elements, there being no difference on account of origin, race or sex. The ant and the elephant, the Brahmin and the sweeper, man and woman, the bodies of them all are composed of clay and the other things. The Upanishads and other scriptures teach us that an inward view will reveal only one soul pervading us all. So the subtle-seeing Acharya Sankara has told usthat the differences apparent to us in name and form and such other things are all nothing but maya[1]. Others call it *upadhi*[2] and some others call it *moha*[3] too. Everyone admits that this conglomeration of names, forms, etc., is ephemeral.

In spite of a knowledge of these facts, the stress on the high and the low is not as pronounced in any other society as it is in the Hindu society. One gentleman, who has had experience of this, writes:[4]

[1] Illusion

[2] Disguise, cover

[3] Delusion

[4] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had referred to the prevailing distinction between *kachchi* and *pakki* food—persons of a higher caste would not partake of *kachchi* food of offered by persons of a lower caste but there were no restrictions in accepting *pakki* food—and had asked whether khadi workers should not agitate against such distinctions which strengthened caste prejudices.

Two questions have been posed in this letter. Should khadi promoters fall a prey to popular beliefs and observe *kachchi-pakki* differences? Should they admit the distinction between the high and the low? It is my firm belief that, even for the sake of khadi, no khadi lover should give up his principles, resort to incorrect behaviour, or ever have recourse to evil ways even with the best of intentions. Nothing good can ever be accomplished through unclean means. The power that we look for in khadi will be completely destroyed if we resort to undesirable means in our work. The annihilation of the distinction between high and low is a glorious result of khadi.

Now, the second question is why not agitate against this difference of *kachchi-pakki?* The agitation for the spread of khadi can only pertain to khadi. Having given up the difference of *kachchi-pakki* in one's own life, one has nothing more to do in this direction. One must also realize that there can be no greater propaganda than one's own conduct. What one wants others to do, one should do oneself. This would be his most effective propaganda.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 31-10-1929

390. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

MEERUT,
October 31, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letters yesterday. If Raghunath's work can be improved and if it can be extended, that should be done. The defects you have noticed today in our method of education have always been in my mind. This education has not yet become true in spirit because I have always remained at a distance from it and have contented myself with critic zing it. Today we have not found anyone who is intelligent enough and who will devote all his twenty-four hours to it. There are only you, Ramniklal and Narandas. After that I shall place Raojibhai and Shivabhai and Shankarbhai. I have others too in my mind. We can do something only when some of them get ready.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 15829

391. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

MEERUT,

October 31, 1929

DEAR SHIVABHAI,

I still cannot say that the printing of the *Ashram Samachar* is such that it can be read in full. And it is likely that the clearest copy is sent to me. If the lettering is faint even in that copy, how much fainter it must be in the other copies! I therefore feel that we must instal a litho or get the *Ashram Samachar* printed. It must itself raise the money for that expense.

The list of the inmates is well given, but I consider it a big mistake that you have shown the three untouchables separately. You could have mentioned 'Hindus (including three untouchables) 198.' I also do not like the statement that the list of the labourers will be given later. The number of the labourers staying there must be known and it should be easy to give it. We cannot have in the Ashram a separate class of labourers distinct from other inmates.

the labourers should be identified in some other way, because all of us are labourers. We should drive this point into our heads as firmly as we can. And we must give up in practice and in principle the idea which often persists that a particular job is the responsibility only of the labourers.

We should make a distinction between students and paid workers or members receiving maintenance and paid workers in keeping with our principles. But even while making such a distinction we must strive to absorb the labourers among ourselves.

In other words, the number of labourers should diminish day by day and we should try to absorb among ourselves as many of the present ones as we can. You have given the number of Muslims as seven. Does this number include Amina's[1] children? If it does, according to my reckoning the number comes to eight. Sixth is Imam Saheb, seventh Abbas and the eighth another student whose name I have forgotten.

[1] Amina Qureshi

You write suggesting that I should check your figure with Jethalal. I shall do so now, for Jethalal has returned to Bardoli.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9494

392. LETTER TO KISHORELAL

BULANDSHAHAR,

[*November 3, 1929*][1]

BROTHER KISHORELAL,

I have your letter. The uplift of the aborigines can be justified solely so that that caste is made to sacrifice itself for the whole of India, not that it may forget the people in furtherance of its own selfish interests.

Love From

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal Papers.

393. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

MEERUT,

November 1, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. The question of keeping a motor-car has of ten been talked about. Doing so may possibly reduce our expenses, but it will add to our worries. Besides, people will use a car more of ten than they use one at present, so much so that ultimately, I think, we would have to get rid of it. A car had also been offered as a gift once or twice. The offers were declined deliberately and after discussion with Maganlal and others.

More than a motor-car, we need electricity which is more useful and less expensive. If we have it, we can also have an electric stove. Even then, however, I have not had the courage to get

[1] Gandhiji was in Bulandshahar on this date.

the connection. I do believe, though, that one day we shall have a car and electricity, both. We may even have them during my lifetime and I, too, may accept defeat and vote for them. Atpresent, however, the inner voice tells me distinctly that we had better not have these things.

We certainly cannot have a zebra in any case. We must use a bullock for our work and incur the expenditure of getting him shod from time to time. And since he is our brother bullock, we should be content with whatever work he gives. The cow being our mother, the bullock surely is our brother. And so long as we recognize the distinction between kinsmen and others, we must tolerate a brother even if he is lame or infirm.

I will write to Jamnadas and get from him the information which you desire. I have so much faith in him that even when he incurs some expenditure which seems excessive I am not disturbed. I know, of course, that too much has been spent on putting up the building for the national school. That at any rate is my view. I had most probably expressed this view in the public meeting itself when I declared the school open. At any rate I did tell Jamnadas about it and he had even admitted his mistake. This is my position. Your position is different. You should certainly ask questions about the smallest details. The questions which you have asked are, therefore, all right.

Exhibit in the museum the cloth received from Farrukhabad.

I have left the letter incomplete here.

Delhi, 1-11-1929[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5469

[1] The letter was completed at Delhi.

394. ALL-PARTIES LEADERS' JOINT STATEMENTS[1]

November 2,1929

We, the undersigned, have read with careful consideration the Viceregal pronouncement on the question of India's future status among the nations of the world.

We appreciate the sincerity underlying the declaration, as also the desire of the British Government to placate Indian opinion. We hope to be able to tender our co-operation to His Majesty's Government in their effort to evolve a scheme of Dominion Constitution suitable for India's needs. But we deem it necessary that certain acts should be done and certain points should be cleared so as to inspire trust and ensure the co-operation of the political organizations in the country. We consider it vital for the success of the proposed Conference that:

(a) a policy of general conciliation should be definitely adopted to induce a calmer atmosphere;

(b) political prisoners should be granted a general amnesty; and (c) the representation of progressive political organizations should be effectively secured and that the Indian National Congress, as the largest among them, should have predominant representation.

Some doubt has been expressed about the interpretation of the paragraph in the statement made by the Viceroy on behalf of His Majesty's Government regarding Dominion Status. We understand, however, that the Conference is to meet not to discuss when Dominion Status is to be established but to frame a scheme of Dominion Constitution for India. We hope that we are not mistaken in thus interpreting the import and implication of the weighty pronouncement of H. E. the Viceroy.

Until the new Constitution comes into existence we think it necessary that a more liberal spirit should be infused in the

[1] Signed by Gandhiji, Madan Mohan Malaviya, Tej Bahadur Sapru, M. A. Ansari, B. S. Moonje, Sherwani, M. S. Aney, Syed Mahmood, P. Thakurdas, Maharaja of Mahmadabad, Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru, Annie Besant, Sarojini Naidu, A. R. Ayyangar, J. M. Sen Gupta, Vallabhbhai Patel, Jagat Narain Lal, G. A. Natesan, Duni Chand, P. Iyer and others. The All-Parties' Conference had met on November 1 and 2, 1929, at Vithalbhai Patel's house to consider the Viceroy's pronouncement of October 31; *vide* "Goseva Sangha", 6-6-1929

Government of the' country, that the relations of the Executive and the Legislatures should be brought more in harmony with the object of the proposed Conference and that greater regard should be paid to constitutional methods and practices. We hold it to be absolutely essential that the public should be made to feel that a new era has commenced even from today and that the new Constitution is to be but a register of that fact.

Lastly, we deem it as an essential factor for the success of the Conference that it should be convened as expeditiously as possible.

The Hindustan Times, 4-11-1929

395. SPEECH AT CIVIC RECEPTION, DELHI

November 2, 1929

Mahatmaji, in replying to the address, said he was thankful to the Municipality for the honour done to him. He expressed his regret for being late and said that doctors, pleaders and national servants were not masters of their time. He congratulated the Municipality for the work it had done for the city, but he told the City Fathers that the service of the poor alone should be their primary duty. Service to the poor, the needy and the helpless was the only real service that the Municipality could do.

Continuing, he said it was wrong for them to think that national work was out of the municipal scope. To establish Hindu-Muslim unity in the city was their prime function. A municipality which did not perform its duty in this respect, simply because it was not included in its rules and regulations, failed in its duty. He said:

If today the City Fathers of Delhi resolve that they will completely root out discord and disunity from the capital of India they will be doing nothing more than their duty to their country. I am a very poor man and regard myself as a representative of the poor—*Daridranarayana*—and you have presented me with an ivory box of great cost. How can I keep it with me? I present it to you and will charge you sovereigns for it. (Laughter) I have no home and no safe where I can keep this precious box. Being a municipality you cannot give me cash but I put it to auction and ask you to pay liberally. Every rupee of it will give food to 16 helpless women, through spinning-charkha and they will pray for your prosperity. I have sold such boxes everywhere and have charged very heavy sums—up to Rs. 1,000 for a box. Do not deal with me as a Bania, but deal with me as a representative of the poor. (Cheers)

The Hindustan Times, 4-11-1929

396. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, DELHI

November 2, 1929

Mahatma Gandhi . . . thanked the Congress Committee for "the long address", the Mazdur Sabha for "a small address" and the public for the purse.

According to the rules of his tour, said Mahatmaji, the addresses ought not to have been read out but because he allowed the municipal address to be read over and thus "committed a sin", he had to undergo more sins. (Laughter)

In a rather pathetic tone Mahatmaji said:

Delhi, where the great Hakim Ajmal Khan and Swami Shrad dhanand once lived, is not nowadays giving the true lead to the country. What can we helpless people do in the absence of the two great souls? I feel pain when I come to Delhi.

Continuing, he said he had not come to Delhi for receiving addresses. He had come to Delhi many times before, but this time he had come for a selfish purpose. (Laughter) He had become greedy, said the Mahatma, for the sake of the poor and was begging money to provide khadi work to the teeming millions.

He felt pain in saying that Delhi had fared worse than even the small towns which had paid him more than Rs. 5,000. The citizens of Delhi, he knew, spent on luxuries and useless articles, but if even after their expenses, they would give him savings, that could have satisfied his hunger. (Laughter)

The ladies and the students had paid their due share, but he expected more from the audience.

Reverting to the subject, Mahatmaji said Delhi was such an important and historic city that if the citizens of Delhi once resolved to unite themselves, it could become an ideal city for the whole country.

Pray to God to relieve us from the curse of disunity and I ask you what can the bold statements of leaders like the one made today achieve if Hindu-Muslim unity is not established?

Delhi if it desired could successfully boycott foreign cloth and give lead to other cities. There were many other trades open to the citizens of Delhi. He also appealed to everyone in the audience to join the Congress as a member so that the Congress purse may no longer remain empty. He appealed to Hindus to do away with the curse of untouchability which was against God's nature and will. He made a strong appeal for giving up liquor saying, "Give up this animal-like habit."

Mahatmaji then referred to the address of the Mazdur Sabha. He said the labourers knew him well and he knew them well, as he too was a labourer. The labourers had every right to get good food and decent dress and it was the duty of

labourers to perform their duties truthfully and properly.

I want to do away with the distinction between the master and the servant or labourer. Our ancient civilization teaches us that there is no such status as master and servant but it is that of father and son, and if this relation is adopted there can be no dispute between capital and labour. (Cheers) If the employers regarded themselves as fathers and guardians of labourers and labourers regarded the factories as their own, then both could give an ideal lesson to the world. (Cheers)

He concluded:

Our strength is immense, we need strong determination and well-considered action. I pray to God to bless us with a will and power to enable us to drive away fear and plunge into the field of action so that Mother India be free once again. (Loud applause)

The Hindustan Times, 4-11-1929

397. HAS "NAVAJIVAN" BECOME DULL?

A simple-minded lover of *Navajivan* writes:[1]

Reading this letter, I was reminded of the well-known artist's argument. I must wind up *Navajivan* if I were to collect the views of all the critics and act on them. But I wish to do no such thing. My colleagues and I are trying our best not to let *Navajivan* become dull. Not one line is written which will not help the swaraj *yajna*. That there is and may be a difference of opinion about the procedure of this *yajna is* proved by the critic himself. Therefore, differences will always be there. Now I know some readers who have liked the articles which this critic has not liked. Anyone who comprehends the magnitude of the swaraj *yajna* should not find it difficult It to appreciate the usefulness of the articles in *Navajivan.* I know it very well that I shall never be able to make all the articles in *Navajivan* interesting to all its readers. No journal can be run on such a condition. Various features are included in a newspaper to suit the varying tastes of its readership and appreciative readers should be liberal enough not to condemn a feature that does not interest them. They should understand that articles which do not interest them might possibly interest others. For instance, when the above critic's letter criticizing the article

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had complained that articles in *Navajivan* did not reflect the current political ferment in the country. He had criticized many articles published in *Navajivan* 13-10-1929.

"Weaving Craft in Vedic Literature''[1] arrived, I had another suggesting that all such articles be published in book form. Everyone knows that we wore khadi in the olden days or even a hundred years ago. Only a Vedic scholar would know and tell us that khadi was held in high esteem then as now. The activity of spinning was widespread and was regarded as a religious act. How can it be said that knowing it is of no use? I know that many have been inspired to take to spinning because this activity has been praised in the Vedas. The activity of spinning, etc., was so widely prevalent that many of its terms were used to express spiritual ideas. That is no mean thing. There need be no doubt that those things which prove the greatness of our ancient lore and arts and enhance our respect for them lead us on to the path of swaraj.

Now take "A Ruinous Vice"[2]. This writer appears to have no idea how much harm our unhygienic practices in regard to toilet, etc., cause to the people; otherwise he would not have grudged me the quotation or two that I have exiguously cited from the Shastras in support of my stand. In order to eradicate this habit no number of quotations are too many. We have been amply criticized in South Africa for our dirty habits. For this very reason, persons who respect the laws of health keep away from our neighbourhood. This very habit gives rise to a number of diseases and causes loss of crores of rupees. I have not the least doubt that those who inspire us to get rid of this bad habit lead us on to swaraj.

Now about "Death of a Virtuous Woman"[3]. There is no doubt that there may be many such virtuous women in India. But whenever we come across such instances, we should cherish them, remember them and emulate them. If we want to do this, we should publicize a genuine case when we come across one. Is it not desirable that many such women are born in India? I havealready written about Jatin Das.[4] He has been praised all over the country and abroad. It is the special dharma of *Navajivan* to sing praises of those poor but heroic men and women whom no one knows nor would care to know. It is my firm belief that we are going to achieve true swaraj

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had complained that articles in *Navajivan* did not reflect the current political ferment in the country. He had criticized many articles published in *Navajivan* 13-10-1929.

[2] *Vide* "A Ruinous Vice"

[3] By Mahadev Desai

[4] For the English version, *vide* "My Silence", 17-10-1929

or *Ramarajya* with the help of such unknown people. Those who believe that without self-purification such swaraj is impossible should preserve such articles.

Lastly, I had never expected any criticism of the innocent note "Gujaratis' Love"[1]. I rarely praise anyone. It is my belief that those articles which this reader has criticized lend colour to *Navajivan*. Without them it would become drab. I recommend to this correspondent that he read again all the articles he has criticized from my point of view.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-11- 1929

398. MY NOTES

THAKKAR BAPA CRAZY WITH JOY

A true priest always feels happy when the employer does something good or looks well or fares well. Thakkar Bapa is a true priest of the *Antyajas*, Bhils and others and so, if the latter, i.e., his employers, do something good or gains something, he becomes crazy with joy and in his ecstasy he forgets his old age and, if he is ill, even his illness. He experienced this joy in Navasari. The readers of *Navajivan* know that a fine *Antyaja* ashram is functioning there. It is under Thakkar Bapa's management. But he is likely to forget himself when he finds there something good. If someone were to accuse him of self-praise, he has enough self-confidence to swallow the charge. Describing the gathering held under the chairmanship of Bhai Dayalji, Thakkar Bapa writes:[2]

Let us also share his happiness.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-11-1929

[1] *Vide* "Gijaratis Love", 13-10-1929

[2] The letter is not translated here. It described the participation of Bhangi children and their guardians in the annual gathering.

399. CABLE TO "DAILY EXPRESS"[1]

[*November 3, 1929*][2]

EDITOR,

"DAILY EXPRESS

LONDON

I DO NOT WISH ADD ANYTHING TO ALL PARTIES JOINT STATEMENT COMPLETED LAST NIGHT BEYOND SAYING THAT I AM DYING TO GIVE AND SECURE TRUE HEART CO-OPERATION IN PLACE CO-OPERATION FALSELY SO CALLED.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 14722

400. LETTER TO S. SHANKAR

CAMP KHURJA,
November 3, 1929

MY DEAR SHANKAR,

I was glad to hear from you after a long time.[3] Your letter is very scrappy. I would like you to give me an accurate account of your khaddar work. Are you spinning regularly? Are you making up Hindustani? I observed that you have more time at your disposal than you need and I should have expected you to utilize it for mastering the details of khadi technique and in mastering Hindustani.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. SHANKAR

REDDY GARDEN

PERAMBUR (MADRAS)

From a microfilm: S.N. 15206

[1] In reply to the cable: "Your views Viceroy's declaration prospects its acceptance Indian opinion."

[2] From the reference to All-Parties Leaders' Joint Statement signed on November 2, 1929

[3] The addressee was doing khadi work in Madras and enrolling Congress members for the Hindustani Seva Dal

401. LETTER TO DR. H. W. B. MORENO

CAMP KHURJA,
November 3, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[1] I would like you not to worry over our different points of view. I assure you that I am no less a friend of the Anglo-Indian cause than[2] you can be. Proof of the pudding is in the eating. I hope that whenever the occasion arises I shall not be found wanting but I must act naturally and not artificially.

Yours sincerely,

DR. H. W. B. MORENO
GENERAL PRESIDENT, THE ANGLO-INDIAN LEAGUE
2 WELLESLY SQUARE
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 15633

[1] Referring to Gandhiji's letter dated October 3, 1929 and article "The Anglo-Indian", 29-8-1929, *vide* "Letter to Dr. H.W.B. Mareno", 3-10-1929 and "The Anglo-Indian", 29-8-1929 respectively, the addressee had written: "What I have striven to do for the last quarter of a century is to bring about rapprochement between AngloIndians and Indians. You will admit . . . that there is already a better liaison than there was before. One thing remains—and you told me that when we last met—that the Anglo-Indian should not only say: 'I am an Indian', but should be proud of the dignity and should not say it in a half-hearted manner as if forced to admit it . . . If you and other Indian leaders keep on taunting, or appear to taunt us with every advance we make, that 'we belong to the ruling race', are 'half borns' of that race, etc., etc., it does not help us to come nearer to you; on the other hand the Anglo-Indian crowd will be bound to say: 'There you are, we told you so, you wish to become one with these Indians, and see already what treatment you will be likely to receive, you are already receiving an earnest of it.' . . . It is for you . . . to write again in *Young India;* and to tell all what anxious solicitude the Indian has to draw the Anglo-Indian to his side. . . " (S.N. 15632).

[2] The source has "as".

402. LETTER TO GOVIND MISRA

CAMP KHURJA,
November 3, 1929

DEAR GOVIND BABU,

Mr. Banker has sent me Copy of your letter[1] to him regarding Niranjan Babu. Your letter is vague and general. If you have really anything against Niranjan Babu that you can substantiate, you must be absolutely precise and give full particulars which you can establish. When did you first entertain doubts about his honesty?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GOVIND MISRA
GANDHI SEVASHRAM
CHAMPAPURHAT, DT. CUTTACK

From a microfilm: S.N. 15675

403. LETTER TO C. P. MATHEW

CAMP KHURJA,
November 3, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I have intimation from the Ashram of the receipts of the gifts[2] from the students. My message is this:

Real education consists in character-building. Let the students therefore cultivate the taste for character-building side by side with their literary pursuits.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. P. MATHEW
LECTURER, UNION CHRISTIAN COLLEGE
ALWAYE (S. INDIA)

From a microfilm: S.N. 15693

[1] The addressee had alleged that Niranjan Babu had misused and squandered the funds for khadi work and requested Shankerlal Banker to visit Orissa and investigate into the matter (S.N. 15674).

[2] On the occasion of Gandhiji's sixtieth birthday, the students had sent him an address and a purse of Rs. 30.

404. LETTER TO B. SHIVA RAO

CAMP KHURJA,
November 3, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter.[1] Though the money was advanced to the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee through me it does not follow that I could therefore today influence its course. In democratic institutions property passes from one charge to another or one influence to another. I have therefore no control over the money today but you may let me know in whose possession the property is today. And if I can do anything to assist you I shall try.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. B. SHIVA RAO
THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
ADIYAR, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 15703

405. LETTER TO PAPMA RUKMINI

CAMP KHURJA,
November 3, 1929

MY DEAR PAPMA,

I was pleased beyond measure to receive your well-written letter. Why did you not come to me? If I had the time I would have come over to see you. You must continue to write to me and tell me how you are getting on.

Yours sincerely,

MISS PAPMA RUKMINI
1 NORTH END ROAD, DELHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 15714

[1] The addressee had written: ". . . About 8 years ago when there was a lock-out in the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills, Madras . . . you were generous enough to send Rs. 30,000 to the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee for the use of the labourers. I am also informed that of this amount, Rs. 15,000 were spent in acquiring a piece of land for the use of the labourers. I do not know what happened to the balance.... Our proposal is that the property should be handed over to the Madras Labour Union. . ." (S.N. 15702).

406. LETTER TO S. M. JOSHI

CAMP KHURJA,
November 3, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[1] The question you raise is very delicate. The best answer I can give you is that you should follow Seth Jamnalalji's advice. Generally speaking, he shares my view. Therefore, when I know that he has a local knowledge of a particular situation I rely upon his judgment and do not form an independent judgment.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. MAHADEV JOSHI
SECRETARY, POONA YOUTH LEAGUE
POONA CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 15717

407. LETTER TO J. M. SARKAR

CAMP KHURJA,
November 3, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Engaged as I am in continuous touring I do not get many newspapers to read. Even as it was I was not in touch with the newspaper world but now I am even less in such touch. I therefore did not even know that the differences between the two leaders[2] had become so much accentuated as tolead to a public

[1] The addressee, who was one of the twelve volunteers in the satyagraha to be launched on November 2 for the temple-entry of Harijans, had asked whether the trustees should not be given sufficient time and favourable public opinion be created before launching the satyagraha (S.N. 15716).

[2] Subhas Chandra Bose and J. M. Sen Gupta. The addressee had written: ". . . In connection with election of of office-bearers of Chittagong District Congress Committee recently some workers were assaulted and one Sukhendu Bikash was so brutally assaulted that he had to be taken to Calcutta for treatment and he is on the verge of death. This is attributed to the quarrel amongst our aforesaid two leaders. We had been expecting your interference but as we find you still remain unmoved, we cannot but approach you and fervently hope that you will be pleased to exercise your kind influence and put a stop to this quarrel and see that amity is established..." (S.N.15720).

discussion about them. I share fully your grief over them but I do not know what I can do, circumstances as I am. I can therefore only satisfy myself with the hope that all will be well and that local pressure will be sufficient to put an end to the differences.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. JNANENDRA MOHAN SARKAR

VICE-PRESIDENT

MURSHIDABAD DT. CONGRESS COMMITTEE

BERHAMPORE (BENGAL)

From a photostat: S.N. 15721

408. LETTER TO C. HANUMANTHA RAU

CAMP KHURJA,

November 3, 1929

MY DEAR HANUMANTHA RAU,

I was pleased to receive your letter. I hope that you are still feeling well both in body and mind. DO make the best and the most use of the time you have at the Ashram and let me have a weekly review of the work done by you from week to week.[1]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. HANUMANTHA RAU

UDYOGA MANDIR, SABARMATI

From a microfilm: S.N. 15723

409. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND

CAMP KHURJA,

November 3, 1929

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

Your letter was delivered to me last night at half-past eleven. It is quite clear to me that neither the hosiery you mention nor the silk prepared in Kashmir in the manner described by you can be admitted. This question comes up before me almost every year. I would like you to know also that this is not a trade that is in need of any

[1] The addressee had come to stay in the Ashram for study and experience for six months.

encouragement. The hosiery prepared from indigenous mill yarn is all taken up and so is every yard of silk prepared in Kashmir. The value of our exhibition should be in exhibiting things which have not yet found vogue in the country and not in providing facilities for those whose wares can be sold otherwise without any difficulty. I know that I have not succeeded in persuading everyone to understand this very simple point. What I am anxious for is to keep our exhibition a vehicle for true education. Nothing more and[1] nothing less. I am therefore positive that we must not on any account introduce the commercial spirit in the exhibition. That an exhibition of a purely educative character properly organized may also result in profits being made is true. The very first exhibition organized strictly according to the lines suggested by me was a great success. I wish that the Lahore exhibition could also be of that character. About the choice of Kashmir silks you should be guided entirely by the advice of Sjt. Harjivan Kotak, the A.I.S.A. representative in Srinagar. Sjt. Chhaganlal Joshi of the Satyagraha Ashram will be with you in two or three days' time and will stay there for some time.

Yours sincerely,

DR. GOPICHAND
RECEPTION COMMITTEE, INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
LAHORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 15737

410. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

CAMP KHURJA,

November 3, 1929

MY DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I have your letter of the 30th ultimo regarding Pallipadu Ashram. You know that I gave from the Rustomji Trust Fund over ten thousand rupees to that Ashram. As far as I recollect some other monies too were given. And then there is the substantial sentiment behind it that Hanumantha Rao[2] gave his life for the Ashram. The money collected at Nellore the people knew would go to the Ashram.

[1] The source has "nor".

[2] A Congress worker of Nellore who died in March 1926; *vide* "A Servant of India", 25-3-1926

Although therefore it may not reach the standard generally fixed by us, I think that it should be supported by the Association to the extent that we have the Nellore money. You probably know also that Nellore has given us very fine weaving and if the men whom Konda Venakatappayya has selected stick to the Ashram we may expect it even to be self-supporting. About Tenali we should await Konda Venkatappawa's reply. I hope you have sent Pt. Deo Sharma Rs. l,500. I wrote a letter from Hardwar long ago and as Pt. Deo Sharma had not received the money I telegraphed yesterday.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SHANKERLAL BANKER
ALL-INDIA SPINNERS ASSOCIATION
MIRZAPUR, AHMEDABAD

From a microfilm: S.N. 15741

411. LETTER TO ZN. M. KHARE

ALIGARH,
November 3, 1929

BHAI PANDITJI,

By the time this reaches you Chhaganlal would have left. I hardly come to know when a new year[1] sets in and such other occasions. I got some letters from there and came to know about it. All of you should of course take my blessings for granted.

I hear the new rule about the kitchen has invited adverse comments. Tell everybody that this is contrary to the basic tenets of the Ashram. The Managing Committee was free to adopt the resolution. It is plain violence to bear a grudge against anybody who takes advantage of this resolution to run a separate kitchen. I wish you would all avoid this. In fact it ought not to be discussed. We should not grudge anyone his weakness, on the contrary we should pity him. We all deserve mutual sympathy. If we are not tolerant towards one another the world shall come to an end. Similarly, if members of an institution, instead of being liberal towards one another indulge in

[1] The Gujarati New-Year Day

perpetual bickering just because one does not or cannot do what the other does, the institution would be nowhere.

Blessing from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 208. Courtesy: Lakshmibai Khare

412. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

ALIGARH,
November 4, 1929

MY DEAR REYNOLDS,

Another good letter from you.

You shall certainly learn the other things you wish to. If you have strength of body and freshness of mind, I would like you to learn as much of all the activities as you possibly can.

Mr. Silcock who knows you and Mr. Wigham motored with me yesterday from Delhi to Aligarh.

Yours

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 4527. Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

413. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ALIGARH,
November 4, 1929

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have just got your letter. How shall I console you? Hearing others describe your state, I said to myself, 'Have I been guilty of putting undue pressure on you?' I have always believed you to be above undue pressure. I have always honoured your resistance. It has always been honourable. Acting under that belief I pressed my suit. Let this incident be a lesson. Resist me always when my suggestion does not appeal to your head or heart. I shall not love you the less for that resistance.

But why are you dejected? I hope there is no fear of public opinion in you. If you have done nothing wrong, why dejection? The ideal of independence is not in conflict with greater freedom. As an

executive of ficer now and President for the coming year, you could not keep yourself away from a collective act of the majority of your colleagues. In my opinion your signature[1] was logical, wise and otherwise correct. I hope therefore that you will get over your dejection and resume your unfailing cheerfulness.

The statement you may certainly make. But there is no hurry about it at all.

Here are copies of two cables[2] just received. Please show them to Father too.

If you feel like talking things over with me, do not hesitate to catch me wherever you like.

I hope to see Kamala hale and hearty when I reach Allahabad.

If you can do wire that the blues are over.

Yours,

BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, p. 76

414. LETTER TO N. M. KHARE

November 4, 1929

BHAI PANDITJI,

I hope Manu is now all right. I suppose the prayers must have been reorganized. It is absolutely necessary to preserve the solemnity of the prayer. The theft of Kalavati's[3] ornaments does not appear to be the act of an outsider. Howsoever it might have happened, do caution everybody that they should keep no valuables with them.

We were looking for the meaning of the word *ap*[4] in the trio of *apbala, tapabala* and *bahubala*[5].... Please incorporate this correction if you have not done so and ask everyone else to do it in their own

[1] On the All-Parties Leaders' Joint Statement of November 2, 1929

[2] *Vide* footnote 1, "Cable to "Daily Express", 3-11-1929 and footnote 1 to "Letter to A. Fenner Brockway", 14-11-1929.

[3] Wife of Kashinath Trivedi, an inmate of the Ashram

[4] A word from a popular Hindi *bhajan of* Surdas; *ap is* a corrupt form of *aap* which is derived from the Sanskrit *atman* meaning self.

[5] Strength of self, strength of penance and strength of arm

copies. We ought to get our Hindi *bhajans* revised with the help of some Hindi expert.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 209. Courtesy: Lakshmibai Khare

415. LETTER T0 PANNALAL JHAVERI

ALIGARH,
November 4, 1929

BHAI PANNALAL,

I was glad to have your letter. I see no error in your reasoning. If your experiment succeeds, many young men will certainly benefit. You have my blessings for its success and I also trust that it will succeed, for I have such faith in you. I am sure you are keeping a record of the experiment and proper accounts.

You are bound to succeed in your effort to observe celibacy because both of you are sincere, both are persevering and bothpossess a good measure of self-control. Success is certain for him who perseveres. That is the assurance the *Gita* gives and it cannot fail.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3098

416. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

ALIGARH ,
Silence Day, November 4, 1929

SISTERS,

Do not expect long letters from me at present. May you all prosper during the New Year.

It is a matter of shame that Kalavati's ornaments have disappeared. But I do not feel sorry for her. Any man or woman who keeps jewellery or other valuables with him or her is untrue to the code of the Ashram, and should not feel unhappy if those things are stolen. Let us take a lesson from this incident and look into our boxes. Everybody should have the confidence that he will get, whenever he wants it, what he has kept as deposit with the Ashram.

It is good that you have made a definite rule about the kitchen. There should be no further discussion about the matter. Any family which has been living in the Ashram for many years may run a separate kitchen if it is permitted to do so, and nobody should grudge it this concession.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3708

417. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

ALIGARH ,

November 4, 1929

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

Vallabhbhai met me in Delhi. I see some difference between the account he gave and the one given by you. As Vallabhbhai puts it, since the officials gave an apology the Thakore Saheb suggested to the President to discontinue the inquiry and because Manilal did not do so, an order was issued to stop the inquiry. If this is true, I think your struggle was unjustified. Fight on if the struggle is for a pure cause.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9191

418. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

ALIGARH,

Silence Day, November 4, 1929

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

I have your letters. Never worry, come what may. We have done our duty when we have done what we can. He is the Lord of whatever merit or fault results from it. Do give up the worrying that you always do.

Wait till Nath[1] comes there. Now you cannot leave your work to

[1] Kedarnath Kulkarni, Kishorelal Mashruwala's guru and addressee's guide

go anywhere.

You must eat some fruit. You cannot coerce your body to build itself.

I shall see if I can accommodate Lakshmi in some other place when she comes.

Kalavati has lost her ornaments owing to her own grave fault. It was a good riddance, though it is painful that someone has stolen them. But thefts are bound to be there as long as our *tapascharya*[1] falls short.

Don't brood over the fast. We shall talk over it when I go over there; but you need not bother about this either. It is all for your good that you could not complete the fast. If you had gone through it successfully it would have been an excuse for some pride. God has been kind to you; He has spared you this occasion for pride. Even Narada had his pride smashed when he was puffed up. Please do understand that a fast in itself is no miracle.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 83

419. A LETTER

ALIGARH,

November 4, 1929

I have your beautiful letter. May you succeed in your vow. Do not feel sorry about the vows which you cannot observe. He who tries always succeeds. He who rises also falls. Only by keeping on climbing and falling does one reach that fourth state[2] from which there is no falling. Practice is the only remedy for it. That is what the *Gita,* our spiritual dictionary, teaches us. The word for practice, *abhyasa,* includes everything—effort, attention, devotion, contemplation, etc. It does not have the limited meaning we give to it in Gujarati.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/79

[1] Self-suffering as moral discipline

[2] *uriya*—unconditioned self-awareness beyond the third state of dreamless sleep

420. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI

ALIGARH

Silence Day [*November 4, 1929*][1]

CHI. KALAVATI,

The loss of your ornaments is a matter not for sorrow but for rejoicing. You broke the Ashram rules, therefore you have been taught a lesson by God. The ornaments were of no use to you. If you would but listen to me you would take of f even the ornaments that you are wearing, sell them and deposit the proceeds in a bank. You will be happier. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5292

421. SPEECH AT MUSLIM UNIVERSITY, ALIGARH[2]

November 4, 1929

The Mahatma . . . apologized for his inability to speak standing since God was not pleased to keep him in normal strength. He asked his hearers to pray to God to keep him deserving of the honour they had conferred upon him and to keep his heart unspoiled. He said he had known from his very boyhood that Hindu-Muslim unity was an integral part of Indian nationhood and he believed that national liberty was meaningless if Hindus and Muslims could not live together open-heartedly with complete harmony. He did not like that the two big communities should oppress the minority communities or should make them even feel that Hindu-Muslim unity was a bad thing. He rather wished the unity of the two to be a model for the whole world and a giver of peace. He agreed with the late Sir Syed[3] that Hindus and Muslims were the two eyes of Mother India. He exhorted the students to be as true and sincere soldiers of India as they were true sons of Islam. He said further that having read and studied much of Islam and having long lived and even dined with Muslims, he knew the Islamic religion well. He advised the students not to be a prey to ease and luxury since only he

[1] From Gandhiji's presence at Aligarh and another letter to the addressee dated November 14, 1929 from Kalakankar; *vide* "Letter to Kalavati Trivedi", 14-1 1-1929.

[2] *Vide* also "The U. P. Tour-IX", sub-title, "In Aligarh", 14-11-1929.

[3] Sir Syed Ahmed Khan

could serve the country well whose heart was simple and whose habits were simple. He farther exhorted the students to pity the lot of the millions of poor people who were having hardly one meal a day. In his opinion God could not be pleased with them merely by their daily readings of the Koran or by their daily prayers. The real thing that could please God was their practical mercy and real compassion for the millions of their distressed brethren. He, therefore, urged them to encourage khaddar.

The Leader, 7-11-1929

422. LETTER TO N. M. KHARE

ALIGARH,

November 5, 1929

BHAI PANDITJI,

Chhaganlal must have left by now. I shall therefore not reply to his letters. I hope Manu is keeping up the steady recovery in health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 210. Courtesy: Lakshmibai Khare

423. A LETTER

ALIGARH,

November 5, 1929

CHI. . . .[1],

May the New Year be fruitful for all the three of you. I know that my saying this has no meaning, since the distinction between the old and the new has lost its meaning for me. And when there is no joy for the new and no sorrow for the passing of the old, what is the meaning of wishing the New Year to be fruitful? However, in a sense there is some meaning. In wishing the New Year to be fruitful for you I suggested that you always have my blessings. And even though I may make no distinction between the old and the new, those who do appreciate elders' blessings will certainly feel happy if they receive an

[1] The names are omitted in the source.

assurance of blessings from them. Send this letter to . . .[1] also.

Are you reading anything these days? Even if you reserve only five minutes for reading the practice will be useful. Those who carefully save their minutes add to their span of life, lessen the weight of their burdens and increase their knowledge. By not taking care of their minutes one may sit erect, purposefully, and with a pure heart and closed eyes medidate on God. Or, if there is a *takli* lying around, one can read a verse from it, think about it and learn it by heart. One can find many other similar things to do. One may engage in any innocent activity of one's choice. I have mentioned only a few things by way of illustration. The point is that by intelligently keeping account of every minute one lightens the load on oneself and does not feel by new work to be a burden. Whatever time such a person gets he devotes to the work and if, after honestly doing his best, he cannot complete it he remains unconcerned. He does not feel unhappy. It would be difficult in the beginning to form the habit I have suggested. But by and by it becomes a natural thing and one feels no effort.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/83

424. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

MUTTRA,
November 6, 1929

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ANAND BHAVAN

ALLAHABAD

DEEPLY APPRECIATE MORAL DIFFICULTY YOUR SECOND LETTER[2]. BUT THERE SHOULD BE NO HURRY ARRIVING AT DECISION. RESIGNATION[3] MUST NOT BE PRESSED. IF STILL AGITATED MEET ME WHEREVER YOU LIKE.[4]

Gandhi-Nehru Papers,52 1929. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The names are omitted in the source.
[2] *Vide* "Letter from Jawaharlal Nehru", 4-11-1929
[3] Of the Secretaryshipof the A.I.C.C.
[4] *Vide* also "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 8-11-1929,

425. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

MATHURA,
November 6, 1929

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I have your letter. If the lady wants to have some experience of life at the Ashram she can certainly do so. If she arrives will she come single or will it be the couple? I have already sent the Introduction that Vaijnath had asked for. Till now my health has been quite all right. I hope to leave Agra for Sabarmati on the 24th evening via metre gauge. The 25th falls on a Monday. I hope you are all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 6068. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

426. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI PATEL

MATHURA,
November 6, 1929

BHAI SHIVABHAI[1],

I have your letter. I think that the Ashram's well-wishers who wish to subscribe have a right to get a copy. It is not anything confidential. I believe that a copy of it should be placed in the Ashram Reading Room. It should be possible to discuss fully the internal problems which may be of interest to many others. If the litho can be obtained cheap, I think it is worth buying. I regard it desirable that the *Ashram Samachar* should include the news about internal developments in institutions run on the same lines as the Ashram. If we wish to give such news, the size should be enlarged. This of course would add very much to the editor's work. He would have to give atleast seven hours a week to the work. If he cannot at present spare that time, we should give up the idea of enlarging the size.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9495

[1] An inmate of the Sabarmati Ashram; he assisted in the maintenanceof accounts of the khadi section.

427. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI M. PATEL

MATHURA,
November 6, 1929

BHAI RAOJIBHAI,

I got your letter. When we have several tasks on hand and are not in a position to do full justice to all of them, we should arrange them in order of their priority and assign each its place so that we can know which task can be dropped. And if all the tasks are of equal importance, we should drop those which are beyond our capacity to manage. The latrines, the kitchen and the accounts—these three I regard as having the highest priority. If the accounts are not correctly maintained, money will be wasted, our reputation will suffer and our conscience will be troubled. I have often explained that care of the latrine and of the kitchen are aspects of the same task. If either of them is imperfectly done, bodily health would suffer. I have also shown that scavenging and cooking involve important moral and scientific principles. A cook doing his or her duty religiously will not only cook the food well but will also observe the principles of good health, that is, of brahmacharya. And a scavenger doing his or her duty religiously will not merely bury the night-soil but also observe the stools passed by each and inform each person about the state of his or her health. We have with us neither such an ideal scavenger nor such an ideal cook, but I have no doubt that the Ashram should produce a crop of them. There are several defects about the kind of tank you suggest. We cannot of course build a pukka tank. We may dig a temporary pit. But we can think about this further only when I go over there. In any case this much is certain, that the shallower the pit the better. The first nine inches of the soil is exceedingly valuable. It is within this depth that the germs decomposing the stools, etc., live. The effect of the sun's rays also is the greatest up to that depth. Moreover, a shallow pit is no obstacle to the use of night-soil as manure wherever required. Instead of burying night-soil where we do at present, we may adopt this method. We should get two pits made side by side, each eighteen inches deep and having a surface area of 36 sq. yards. After one pit is filled with night-soil we might start using the other for the purpose and, after the night-soil in the first pit has been transformed into manure, take the manure out leaving the pit to

dry up until the second pit gets filled with night-soil buried there. This method will serve the purpose behind Somabhai's suggestion and largely remove the difficulty pointed out by you. The lavatories should remain as they are, and we should master the art of keeping them as clean as possible. For this one of us must shoulder the responsibility. The working men will go on changing from time to time, and it is necessary that they should. It is, therefore, essential to have one inspector. It is not enough that he take a round in the morning and inspect the places. He should inspect the lavatories at least thrice a day. For maintaining greater cleanliness, it may also be necessary to have more buckets.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8986

428. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

MATHURA,
November 6, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have your letter. You have accepted a fairly heavy responsibility[1]. Learn the art of preserving your health while discharging that responsibility. You must know for certain that so long as you have not learnt that art, you will not have cultivated perfect non-attachment. Chhaganlal is likely to reach here tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4147

[1] Managershipof the Ashram during the absenceof Chhaganlal Joshi who had gone to Lahore

429. THE U.P. TOUR–VIII[1]

ON THE PLAINS

Saharanpur was the first station visited[2] on the plains. Besides the usual meetings of men and women there was the students' meeting. There was a meeting of the students and teachers of the Kashiram High School who together gave Gandhiji the largest purse of the tour comparing their numbers with the numbers of the other schools and colleges. This evoked from Gandhiji a well-deserved compliment as also the frank admission in their address that the khadi he saw them wear at the meeting was only purchased for the occasion and they assured him that what they had commenced they proposed to continue. The wearing of khadi for the occasion only has taken place everywhere without there being any secret about it. But this was the first occasion when a frank and penitent admission of weakness was made and a definite assurance of shedding it given. I was told that the head master and the staff were earnest men and that they fully meant to carry out the promise they had made. Taking Deoband on the way the next halt was at Muzaffarnagar. From Muzaffarnagar we went to Meerut, taking Kandhla, Shamli and several other places on the way. We settled down to a heavy programme in the Meerut district.

WITH THE PRISONERS

We reached Meerut at 11 a.m.[3] and had to tackle a ladies' meeting and a public meeting. But Meerut was the place where the famous Communist trial is taking place. Though as he remarked he was neither a Communist nor any other ist, he could not miss seeing the prisoners if he was permitted. The Superintendent readily granted the permission and though it meant considerable interference with his rest and the day's programme Gandhiji went to the jail precisely at 2 p.m. and gave himself a happy 1_ hours' time with the prisoners. The party squatted on the coir matting that was spread on the floor. The prisoners' cell was an open well-ventilated rectangle studded withcharpais for them. The prisoners who were quite cheerful and gay greeted Gandhiji with 'we frankly did not expect you to visit us'.

[1] *Vide* footnote 2, "the U. P. Tour-VI", 24-10-1929
[2] On October 25, 1929
[3] On October 27, 1929

Gandhiji at once replied, 'Of course you did not. You do not know me. I may have my differences with you. You may even cause me trouble at Congress meetings but my creed teaches me to go out of my way to show regard to my opponents and thus demonstrate to them that I can mean no ill to them. Moreover in the present case by coming here I wanted in my humble way to show in a practical manner that this prosecution is wrong and that in any event it is atrocious that you should be put under a heavy handicap by being tried in an inconvenient place like Meerut where you cannot get the facilities obtainable in the presidency towns for conducting a proper defence.' There was quite a variety of topics which the prisoners discussed with Gandhiji. They wanted to know the implications of the Calcutta resolution about Dominion Status. They wanted to know also why he was silent on Jatindra Nath's self-immolation, about strikes, etc. Interesting though the whole of the conversation was, I must not attempt to give the whole of it. Suffice it to say that Gandhiji kept them laughing the whole of the hour and a half he was with them. One could see that he was loath to part with them and when he could stay no longer he told them that if they were not free men before the end of December he expected to join them early next year.

I must omit many other interesting events of the Meerut tour.

GANDHI ASHRAM

Chaudhuri Raghubir Narain Singhji is an enthusiast in the national cause and a lover of khadi. He was in charge of the tour in Meerut and the surrounding villages. He had therefore prepared as heavy a programme as Gandhiji's health could stand. Out of the numerous engagements in Meerut itself and the rich experiences gained in the numerous villages visited I have time and space for picking out only two things. The first is Acharya Kripalani's Ashram and the second is the visit to the Chaudhuri Saheb's own village Asaura.

The Ashram which is named Gandhi Ashram was established in l920 in Banaras when some students of the Hindu University left it and with Professor Kripalani established an Ashram. Those who have remained staunch throughout have developed into good businessmen. The members took up khadi work in 1921. The production then amounted to Rs. 48 and the sales to Rs. 3,01l [*sic*]. For the year ending October last the production was Rs. 129,189-8-0. The sales were Rs. 171,512-13-6. No wonder the Ashram has purchased property worth Rs. 35,000 away from the business centre

and on spacious ground. I regard it as a necessary and sound investment. Every available room is occupied. The Ashram has production, sales, dyeing, printing, washing and calendering departments. Its prints are day by day increasing in popularity, as indigenous art is being introduced in its prints and innovations are being continuously made. The price of one yard of 36" khadi in 1921 was as. 9. Today that quantity but improved in quality sells at as. 5. And yet they expect to reduce the price. The Ashram prices compare favourably with the ruling prices throughout India. It has 29 permanent workers, 14 apprentices and 11 servants. The salary paid during the year was Rs. 12,123-4-6 averaging about Rs. 18 per month per head. This includes the apprentices. No one gets or can get more than Rs. 50 per month. Only three workers are taking Rs. 50 each. Needless to say most of these workers would in the open market any day get double the amount they are drawing today. Some of them were brilliant University men.

Who can say that the khadi or the Ashram has not a big future? What is needed are workers with grit, self-sacrifice and ability. There is illimitable scope for them.

IN ASAURA

In Asaura of course there is a strong khadi atmosphere. It would be strange if such was not the case in the zamindari of a khadi lover such as the Chaudhuri Saheb is. But what delighted Gandhiji most was the discovery made in the ordinary course that the family mandir[1] which is open to the public has been open since the days of Non-co-operation to the so-called untouchables. And I have understood from the Chaudhuri Saheb himself that the throwing open the portals of the mandir to the untouchables has not in any way affected the attendance of the touchables. Like the Lakshmi Narayan temple of Seth Jamnalal of Wardha this too has an elegantly built structure. It adjoins the beautiful garden belonging to the zamindari. There is a precious courtyard attached to it and the courtyard contains a school attended by the untouchables. Here is an example for the zamindars to copy. There are thousands of temples in the thousands of zamindaris. There is nothing to prevent the zamindars from throwing open their temples to the untouchables and in other ways befriending them as the Chaudhuri Saheb has done.

Young India, 7-11-1929

[1] Temple

430. WHAT MAY YOUTH DO?

I got now some time ago a letter on behalf of the Agra Youth League asking the following question:

> We are in the dark with regard to our main activities in future. We wish to co-operate with the peasants and neighbours of the locality but no practical method seems to be at hand. We hope that you will kindly suggest some practical way out of the difficulty. We think ours is not the only institution facing this difficulty. Accordingly it is highly desirable that you should suggest a definite solution of this problem through the columns of *Navajivan* or *Young India*.

The address of the Youth League at Gorakhpur[1] contained a similar sentiment and also asked how to face the bread problem that stared the youth in the face. In my opinion the two questions are intertwined and both can be solved, if the youth can be persuaded to make village life their goal rather than city life. We are inheritors of a rural civilization. The vastness of our country, the vastness of the population, the situation and the climate of the country have, in my opinion, destined it for a rural civilization. Its defects are well known but not one of them is irremediable. To uproot it and substitute for it an urban civilization seems to me an impossibility, unless we are prepared by some drastic means to reduce the population from three hundred million to three or say even thirty. I can therefore suggest remedies on the assumption that we must perpetuate the present rural civilization and endeavour to rid it of its acknowledged defects. This can only be done if the youth of the country will settle down to village life. And if they will do this they must reconstruct their life and pass every day of their vacation in the villages surrounding their colleges or high schools and those who have finished their education or are not receiving any should think of settling down in villages. The All-India Spinners' Association with all its multifarious branches and institutions that have sprung up under its protection affords an easy opportunity to the students to qualify themselves for service and to maintain themselves honourably if they will be satisfied with the simple life which obtains in the villages. It maintains nearly 1500 young men of the country drawing anything between Rs. 15 to Rs. 150, and it can take in almost an unlimited number of earnest, honest and industrious young men who will not be ashamed of manual work.

[1] Gandhiji was in Gorakhpur district between October 4 and 7.

Then there are national educational institutions affording a similar though limited scope, limited only because national education is not in fashion. I therefore commend to the attention of all earnest young men who are dissatisfied with their existing surroundings and outlook to study these two great national institutions which are doing silent but most effective constructive work and which present the youth of the country with an opportunity both for service and for honourable maintenance. Whether however they avail themselves of these two great nation-building agencies or do not, let them penetrate the villages and find an unlimited scope for service, research and true knowledge. Professors would do well not to burden either their boys or girls with literary studies during the vacation but prescribe to them educative outings in the villages. Vacations must be utilized for recreation, never for memorizing books.

Young India, 7-11-1929

431. KHADDAR FRANCHISE

Lala Har Dayal Nag writes a letter on the working of the khaddar clause in the Congress constitution. I take from that letter the following relevant extract[1]:

> I was the President of the Tippera District Congress Committee of which the annual general meeting came off on the 27th ultimo. The meeting was timed to be held at Comilla.... Just after my arrival I was asked by some friends not to give any ruling on the dress of the members and to allow all, including those who are not habitual wearers of khaddar, to vote. I refused to comply.... This did not satisfy my friends and I was asked not to preside at the meeting. I could find no other way of satisfying them than by resigning the president hip. I accordingly wrote out a letter of resignation and handed it over to them.
>
> I did not go to the meeting. . . . My letter of resignation was not placed before it. One of the Vice-Presidents was voted to the chair. After the disposal of some preliminary matters objection was raised to the non-khaddar dress of many members present. The president of the meeting ruled that the clause "habitual wearers of khaddar" did not require the members to wear khaddar at the time of voting. This rulingproduced an unhappy division among the members present.... Those who thought that none but the habitual wearers of khaddar could vote seceded from the meeting and held a separate meeting.... The questions that arise from these facts are: (I) Is the ruling of the president of

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

the original meeting about the khaddar wearing rule of the Congress correct? (2) If not, does the violation of the Congress rule invalidate the Committee formed at the original meeting? (3) If this Committee be found invalid, is the Committee formed by the seceders valid? In my humble opinion these are very important questions. I therefore request you to answer them through the pages of *Young India*, if possible.

If what Lala Har Dayal Nag says is true, it betrays an unfortunate state of affairs. Apart from the question whether khaddar wear should be obligatory or not on Congress voters at Congress meetings, it seems to me to be an extraordinary procedure for anyone to suggest to the President-elect not to give any ruling which is entirely within his province. Stranger still is the procedure said to have been adopted at the meeting itself where Lala Har Dayal Nag's letter was not even read. Such proceedings unperceivably but unmistakably weaken the hold of the Congress on the public and make the immediate Congress workers lax in discipline and manners. So far as the working of the khaddar clause is concerned, I cannot help saying that the ruling of the chair was totally wrong. The plain grammatical, common sense meaning of the clause is that a voter should not only be wearing khaddar from head to foot at the time of voting but that he should be a habitual wearer of khaddar. I am certainly of opinion that if any members were allowed to vote in breach of the rule, the proceedings of the Committee were void *pro tanto*. I do not think that the Committee itself became invalid by reason of an irregular procedure adopted at a particular meeting. That a recalcitrant Committee might be disbanded in the exercise of the extreme powers of the President of the Working Committee is another matter. The seceders could not form a Committee of their own without the previous sanction of the Working Committee of the Congress. Such is my opinion as a layman. If Lala Har Dayal Nag wishes a proper ruling on the points raised by him he should, in due course, refer the matter to the President.

But Lala Har Dayal Nag's letter raised too the important question of the utility of the khaddar clause in the Congress constitution. My own personal view is well known. Khaddar has caught the imagination of the masses as no other constructive effort has. That the town-dwellers who flock to the Congress meetings flout the clause is to me a reason for stiffening the procedure for enforcing the rule, not its abrogation. But my opinion should most decidedly be set aside if the majority of those who are running the Congress

machinery do not like the rule or do not intend to carry it out. I have been told that the clause is retained only for my sake and that if the members could be persuaded to think that I shall not be hurt by its removal, it will go today. Those who think so pay me a poor compliment, do themselves an injustice and the Congress a positive disservice. For the sake of a cause we must dare to offend even the most eminent among us. In my case there is no question of offending me. Those who will not, for my sake, do what they think proper, do not know me and most certainly offend me.

Young India, 7-11-1929

432. CLOSE UP

I am given to understand that the Punjab which is to have the honour of holding the Congress session this year is still not united and that the party spirit runs high. If the information given to me is true, I hope that the responsible men and women belonging to different parties will put the nation before party, put the honour of the country before self, pocket false pride and bring together under the Congress banner all who may be under their influence including themselves. The Punjab must rally round the Congress and its young President and show by exemplary manners that we are well able to subject ourselves to discipline and thus govern ourselves by working harmoniously under one great national organization.

Young India, 7-l1-1929

433. NOTES

IS IT TRUE?

The manifesto[1] which bears the signatures of Pandit Motilalji, Dr. Ansari, Dr. Besant, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, the Rt. Hon. Sastri, M. Mahomed Ali, and other leaders of public opinion is based upon trust. The signatories have, in spite of indications to the contrary, put on the Viceroy's statement[2] about Dominion Status a construction which may prove to have been wholly unwarranted. The Dominion Status contemplated by the Viceroy's declaration may be as indefinite and illusory as the 'responsible Government' of 1919. There can however

[1] *Vide* "All-Parties Leaders Joint Statement", 2-11-1929
[2] *Vide* "Viceroy's Statement", 31-10-1929

be no doubt about Lord Irwin's sincerity. Even therefore if the high expectations raised by the Viceregal pronouncement are not realized, the reciprocation of the sincerity evinced by the manifesto will have done no harm to the country. It will provide further justification for any strong action that the Congress may feel called upon to take at its forthcoming session. Had the signatories rejected what appears to be the Viceregal advance, they might easily have put themselves in the wrong. But let us entertain the hope that the pronouncement is all that the signatories believe it to be and that a new era is about to dawn upon unhappy India.

There may be no mistaking the intentions of the signatories. Stripped of the courtesy becoming a document of that nature, the co-operation promised there is conditional upon certain events happening. They are all easy of fruition, if the interpretation put upon Lord Irwin's pronouncement is correct. For if the contemplated Conference is to result in India obtaining a charter of Dominion Status, there must be amnesty, the composition of the Conference must be thoroughly nationalistic and the administration must from now correspond as nearly as possible to Dominion Status. The charter to be true must be simply a register of an accomplished fact. The face of the land will not be suddenly changed at the moment the charter is signed. If tie Viceroy's statement signifies a real change of heart, everything is easy. Then Dominion Status is from now. If it means no change of heart, any charter however tempting it may be to look at will be but a piece of waste paper to be thrown into the basket designed for such papers.[1]

Young India, 7-11-1929

434. VIRTUE OF SELF-RESTRAINT

Madam Clara Burger-von Dubu who signs herself as "daughter and widow of a German University professor, whose husband fell in the War 1916, mother of two sons, two daughters, for some time here (Italy) in a Dutch friend's house, to whom she owes the knowledge of *Young India*" writes as follows from Italy:[2]

> Will you allow a mother to add some words to your article "Influence of

[1] *Vide* also "Conditions for Co-operation", 10-11-1929.
[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

Attitudes", *Young India* 37?[1] I perfectly agree with you that "birth-control by contraceptives is race suicide," . . . No action has so deep an influence and far reaching in consequences as this terribly abused act destined to create "Images of God". In it we ought to conceive the Mystery of Incarnation in love, not in animal instinct, as a consecration of spirit, soul and body.

Thus marriage becomes a sacrament, the highest religion, in which the greatest contrasts are blended: crossing and crucifixion—life and death.

Young India, 7-11-1929

435. THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE

From the addresses I am receiving in the United Provinces I have come to know many things. In this article I wish to consider them only from the point of view of language. I have with me three examples from which I choose the following sentences[2]: These three are examples of Hindi or Hindustani, that is, the national language. One is stuffed with only Persian-Arabic words which an average Hindu will not be able to follow. Another is replete with Sanskrit words which an average Muslim can never understand. The third is such that it can be grasped by any average Hindu or Muslim. Here, Sanskrit or Arabic-Persian words do not appear to be deliberately avoided or chosen. If we wish to make Hindi the national language, if Hindus and Muslims both wish to build up unity, we cannot deliberately banish Sanskrit or Arabic-Persian words. That is to say, while writing or speaking the language, we should not harbour hatred in our minds towards each other or towards each other's speech. On the other hand, there should be love for each other. When a Muslim finds a Hindu using Persian-Arabic words, he feels pleased. In the same manner, the Hindu's regard for the Muslim grows when he aptly uses Sanskrit words also on occasion.

By adopting suitable words from all the three languages Hindi is enriched and gains in prestige; the language becomes sweeter. The fact is, if we do not harbour hatred for a particular language, we shall not feel embarrassed in borrowing from it to enrich and develop our language.

Shri Ramnaresh Tripathi writes in the preface to his book

[1] *Vide* "Influence of Attitudes", 16-9-1926

[2] Not translated here

Gramya Geet[1]:

> The number of words most used in the essays and books that are written in Hindi nowadays will not exceed three hundred according to my estimate. Within so few words is all Hindi learning circumscribed. We think, write essays or books and give speeches within this narrow compass. How many things used every day in our homes, fields and factories have no Hindi names and how many ideas have no appropriate Hindi words?

If this is true, it is very sad and shameful; it is a sign of poverty of thought. It is said that Shakespeare used 20,000 words in his works, and Milton 10,000 words. What a wealth of words in their language and what poverty in ours! In spite of this state of affairs, if we wish to make our national language glorious, then, at least for its own sake we must increase our knowledge. It is not a matter of shame to borrow words from another language and make them our own. It is shameful only when we do not know the words current in our language and therefore use those of another; for example, when we forget the word ghar and say house, or employ mother for mata, father for pita, husband for pati and wife for patni.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 7-11-1929

436. LETTER TO M. MUJEEB

CAMP BRINDABAN,

November 7, 1929

MY DEAR MUJEEB[2],

I had a chat with Dr. Ansari about you in Delhi and Dr. Ansari undertook to speak to your father himself and ensure your allowance from him. He asked me not to worry about you. In Aligarh I made it a special point to speak to your brother[3]. It was there that I discovered that he was Sohaila's[4] husband. And Sohaila to me is like my own daughter. Such is the intimacy I have the privilege to enjoy with the Tyabji family. I had therefore much less hesitation to speak to your brother than I would have had without a knowledge of this

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Ramnaresh Tripathi", 28-10-1929

[2] Joined the Jamia Millia in 1926; became its Vice-Chancellor in 1948.

[3] Professor Mohammed Habib

[4] Abbas Tyabji's daughter

relationship. To my agreeable surprise I found your brother to be most receptive and reasonable. I did not need to argue with him at all. As soon as I mentioned the matter he said he would do as I asked him to and he agreed that you should be supported by your father and brothers. He seemed to be quite proud of you and proud of the fact that you were serving the Jamia. Sohaila was present during the whole of the conversation. I mentioned Rs. 150 as that was the sum you thought would be enough for you. Devdas just now tells me that your brother told him subsequent to the conversation with me that Rs. 150 might not be enough for you. I hope however that you will so regulate your life as to make Rs. 150 pay your way. If you are now restored to health completely I would like you to go to Delhi at once and take up your work. Your brother asked me to write to your father which I am doing today.[1]

I must not omit one thing your brother wanted me to speak to you about. He told me that you did not listen to him in anything. I said in reply that such could not be the case unless it was on matters of vital principle. Anyway you know exactly what Habib means. I would like you to write to him if you at all feelup to it a sweet letter. I must confess that by his humility and yet dignified bearing he captured me entirely.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 15749

437. A LETTER

BRINDABAN,

November 7, 1929

BHAISHRI . . .[2],

You are right in saying that we should not imitate others in our behaviour. Our guiding star must only be the ideal in which we believe. Let us not worry if all our neighbours cannot reach it. But I found another thing in your letter which I cannot endorse. Both of you disapprove of the behaviour of the Ashram inmates. I see a certain lack of generosity in this. We need to be as generous to our

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mohamad Nasim", 8-11-1929.

[2] The name is omitted in the source.

neighbours and co-workers as we need to be strict with ourselves. One reason for this can be grasped by the intellect. We can easily see others' shortcomings, but can never know about their efforts and the success of these efforts. It does not means much to us if a man has successfully lived a life of purity for fifty long years. But if, after fifty years, he is found to have fallen just one day, he immediately loses all value in our eyes. My personal opinion about the inmates of the Ashram is that all of them are striving to the best of their abilities. I observe regarding the Ashram experiments that if persons who did not before now live in society with family ties with anybody are required to do so, their failings are easily noticed. Consider all these points, and if you feel that I am right revise your attitude. After cautioning you thus, I wish you to explain what failings you have noticed in the Ashram inmates and in whom. I may then, if I think it necessary to do so, be able to bring those failings to the notice of the persons concerned.

It is sad that you are not able fully to observe *brahmacharya* in thought. But I see no need for you to leave the Ashram for that reason. It is of course our aim to acquire control over the mind, and so long as you are sincerely striving for the both the Ashram and you are safe. But anyone who nurses impure thoughts inwardly and only refrains from giving them concrete expression certainly does not deserve to be in the Ashram.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/84

438. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

BRINDABAN,

November 8, 1929

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

I have your letter[1]. You must have got my wire[2]. You must not resign just now. . I have not the time to argue out my point. All I know is that it will affect the national cause. There is no hurry and no principle at stake. About the crown[3], no one else can wear it. It never was to be a crown of roses. Let it be all thorns now. If I could have

[1] *Vide*"Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 8-11-1929,

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Jawaharlal Nehru", 6-11-1929

[3] Presidentship of the Congress

persuaded myself to wear it, I would have done so at Lucknow[1]. The contingency I had in mind when I would be forced to wear it was not of this type. One of them was your arrest and increased repression. But let us reserve the whole of this for calm and detached discussion when we meet.

Meanwhile may God give you peace.

BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, PP. 77-8

439. LETTER TO NIDHALAL NIDHISH

CAMP BRINDABAN,
November 8, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and your gifts for which I thank you. I cannot withhold from you my grief that you had insisted on my calling at your house to receive your gift. I thought that it was decided that I was not to stop near your house and I was absolutely taken aback when the car suddenly stopped. I felt that it was some other placewhere, for some reason unknown to me, the car was stopped. The companion who was with me was not present at the time.

The other companions had come to the conclusion that it would be wrong to make me stop at your door or anywhere else for receiving single donations when you could have easily paid your donation at the public meeting or sent your donation to the place of my sojourn. You can easily imagine the embarrassment caused to me if I was called upon to go to individual houses to receive purses of Rs. 21. You can understand how physically impossible it would be if such requests were multiplied and there is no reason why others should not do what one man takes in his head a fancy for doing. I must confess to you that had I known that I was being taken to the house where it was decided I was not to be taken I would have refused to receive the purse. Now of course the thing is finished. My letter to you is for future guidance.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. NIDHALAL NIDHISH
NIDHISH NIKETAN, ALIGARH

From a photostat: S.N. 15751

[1] At the A.I.C.C. meeting held on 28-9-1929

440. LETTER TO MOHAMAD NASIM

CAMP BRINDABAN,
November 8, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I had the pleasure of meeting your son Prof. Habib in Aligarh and it gave me the greatest pleasure to understand that he was my old friend and co-worker Abbas Tyabji's son-in-law. I knew that Sohaila was married to a Lucknow man who was a professor in Aligarh but I did not know that he was also Mujeeb's brother. I had a chat with him about Mujeeb. You may know that I dote on Mujeeb. He is one of the purest minded young men whom I have the pleasure of knowing. Mujeeb is an acquisition to the Jamia. The Jamia is passing through a financial crisis. Many professors have cut down their honorarium to Rs. 75 per month. Hitherto you have been good enough not only to give Mujeeb to Jamia but to support him. Mujeeb told me that you had now refused to give him your support. Will you not reconsider your decision and not only bless Mujeeb in his work at the Jamia but also give him all the financial assistance he may need which I was glad to be informed you were well able to do? If Mujeeb was not working in a poor national institution I would fully appreciate your refusal to support him for I do believe in parents not pampering their children. But here it is not a question of supporting a pampered boy but supporting an institution to which he has the spirit of sacrifice enough to dedicate himself without reserve. Professor Habib Was good enough to assure me that he would have no objection to supporting Mujeeb. It will be a great relief to me and I am sure to Jamia staff to feel the assurance that you would support Mujeeb. Yes, I am anxious to have your reply as early as you can send it to me. I give you my dates during the week following:

November	10th and 11th	Shahjahanpur
„	12th	Lakhimpur or Sitapur
„	13th	Rae Bareili
„	14th	Kalakankar
„	15th-18th	Allahabad

Yours sincerely,

MOHAMAD NASIM, ESQ.
ADVOCATE
BUTLER ROAD, LUCKNOW

From a photostat: S.N. 15752

441. TELEGRAM TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

CAMP HATHRAS,
November 8, 1929

SHANTIKUMAR

SHANTIBHAVAN

PEDDAR ROAD

BOMBAY

JUST RECEIVED JAMNALALJI'S WIRE ADVISING FATHER'S[1] DEATH. DEEPEST SYMPATHY YOUR GRIEF. CONSOLE MOTHER[2] MY BEHALF. SHE AND YOU AND OTHERS MUST USE YOUR FAITH IN GOD SUSTAIN YOU. MAY GOD ENABLE YOU TO BEAR BURDEN. JAMNALALJI WANTS ME ENQUIRE IF YOU NEED HIS ASSISTANCE ADVICE. TOUR PROGRAMME IN "YOUNG INDIA".

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15754

442. TELEGRAM TO BAJAJ

CAMP HATHRAS,
November 8, 1929

SETH JAMNALALJI

WARDHA

JUST TELEGRAPHED SHANTIKUMAR CONDOLENCES AND YOUR OFFER. CONSIDER YOUR PRESENCE ALLAHABAD[3] VERY ADVISABLE THOUGH NOT ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. ATTEND IF POSSIBLE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15755

[1] Narottam Morarjee who died on November 4
[2] Addressee's grandmother
[3] For the A.I.C.C. meeting scheduled for November 16, 1929

443. LETTER TO ALBERT M. TODD

CAMP HATHRAS,
November 8, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 25th September. I do not remember having told you in my letter[1] that we would be having an election campaign in the spring and at that time I would be glad to receive financial help from you. It may interest you to know that I do not take part either directly or indirectly in any election campaign, being wholly against ourselves having anything to do with election campaigns till we have got redress according to our demands. I enclose herewith a copy of the latest number of *Young India* which I am editing. This will give you some notion of my activities. And if you are still further interested you can have upon application to Mr. S. Ganesan, Printer and Publisher, Triplicane, Madras, a copy of my writings in book form.

Yours sincerely,

ALBERT M. TODD, ESQ.

KALAMAZOO

MICHIGAN (U.S.A.)

From a photostat: S.N. 15600

444. LETTER TO GIRIRAJKISHORE

CAMP HATHRAS,
November 8, 1929

MY DEAR GIRIRAJ,

I have your letter. I hope by this time you have no fever and that you have regained your whole strength. Your description of the discourse with the Magistrate does not show dignity about it. I should resent the word charity. Though we are under a vow of non-possession and poverty we do not live on charity. You may discuss this problem with Kishorilal and accept his judgment

[1] *Vide* "Letter to albert M. Todd", 15-7-1929

implicitly in this matter. I am still keeping well. You must tell me what progress you have made in your work.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GIRIRAJ

SURAJMAL ONKARMAL'S CHAWL

MATUNGA

From a microfilm: S.N. 15619

445. LETTER TO PEN HASSELROT

CAMP HATHRAS,
November 8, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter as also the sum mentioned in it by you.[1] I enclose herewith the form sent by you duly receipted. The second volume of [*The Story of*] *My Experiments with Truth* may be translated by you whenever you wish to upon the same terms as the first.

Yours faithfully,

ENCL. 1

PEN HASSELROT, ESQ.

POSTGIRO 675, STOCKHOLM 7

From a microfilm: S.N. 15652

446. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

CAMP HATHRAS,
November 8, 1929

I have your letter. As there was nothing particular to write to you about I have been silent because there is not one moment to spare. But I am following your work from the letters you send me. I am asking the *Young India* Manager to put you on the complimentary list so that you may continue to get your *Young India* whether you send the subscription or not and henceforth if you really

[1] The addressee had written that the translationof the first volumeof An Autobiography had been published and had sent a sum of £11-0-5d.

cannot afford it do not pinch yourself and send the subscription. You have a right to receive a free copy. You will see what I have done in connection with the Viceregal letter.[1] I do not know what will come out of it. Write to Mohanlal yourself asking him to send a complimentary copy to you.

MURIEL LESTER

KINGSLEY HALL, BOW. E/3

From a photostat: S.N. 15677

447. LETTER TO A. A. PAUL

CAMP HATHRAS,

November 8, 1929

MY DEAR RAJAN,

I have your letter as also the minutes[2]. I went through the minutes perfunctorily. I have hardly time for more. Of course I have studies on the *Gita*[3] in mind but I have almost despaired of getting the time for them. Let me however hope and pray. I am keeping well. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

A. A. PAUL, ESQ.

FEDERATION OF INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIPS, MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 15728

[1] *Vide* "All-Parties Leaders Joint Statement", 2-11-1929

[2] Of the meeting of the Council of the Federation of International Fellowships

[3] The addressee had sent a copyof Studies in the Gospels by Verrier Elwin and wanted to have Gandhiji's studies on the Gita mainly for the useof Hindu students.

448. LETTER TO LADY MONCRIEFF-SMITH

CAMP HATHRAS,
November 8, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1] for which I thank you. The monies that I receive are earmarked for Certain definite charitable purposes. I am therefore unable to use them for any other purpose however laudable it may he.

Yours sincerely,

LADY MONCRIEFF-SMITH

CHAIRMAN, DELHI HEALTH AND BABY WEEK 1930

19 AKBAR ROAD, NEW DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15739

449. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

CAMP HATHRAS,
November 8, 1929

MY DEAR SHANKERLAL,

Here is a letter I received from Lala Shankarlal. I would like you to reply to it in detail and send it to me. And if Manilal Kothari is there I would like you to get his reply also but even if he is not there you may send a Copy of this letter to him and get him to send a reply as early as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 2

SJT. SHANKERLAL BANKER

ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION

MIRZAPUR, AHMEDABAD

From a microfilm: S.N. 15753

[1] Requesting Gandhiji to contribute some funds for an exhibition on the dangers of tuberculosis

450. LETTER TO "KAISER-I-HIND"

CAMP HATHRAS,
November 8, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your circular letter dated 26th October. The only thing I can say with reference to the Viceroy's declaration is that unless there is a full response to what must be frankly considered to be the conditions enumerated in the leaders' manifesto there can be no peace.

Yours sincerely,

THE EDITOR, "KAISER-I-HIND"

FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 15757

451. LETTER TO UNDER-SECRETARY, HINDUSTANI SEVA DAL

CAMP HATHRAS,
November 8, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

With reference to your enquiry I am sorry I have not got the repatriation rules regarding indentured labourers at the Assam Tea Plantations but you are likely to have them either from Pt. Banarsidas Chaturvedi, *Vishal Bharat*[1], Calcutta, or Servants of India Society, Poona.

Yours sincerely,

THE UNDER-SECRETARY

HINDUSTANI SEVA DAL

HUBLI

From a microfilm: S.N. 15758

[1] A nationalist Hindi daily

452. LETTER TO K. SANTANAM

CAMP HATHRAS,
November 8, 1929

MY DEAR SANTANAM,

I enclose herewith copy of reply[1] from Satis Babu of Khadi Pratishthan in reply to my enquiry. Chhaganlal Joshi and Subramaniam are now with you. You will do whatever you think proper.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

PT. K. SANTANAM

From a microfilm: S.N. 15759

453. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

CAMP HATHRAS,
November 8, 1929

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I am surprised that you had not heard from me up to the 28th ultimo, the date of your letter. I hope however that you did receive the letter after the despatch of yours. In any case now you do not need my letter as you have made up with Jamshedji[2]. I hope the work[3] will go on without a hitch now.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

SJT. MALKANI
TILAK CONGRESS BHAWAN
HYDERABAD, SIND

From a photostat: G.N. 897

[1] Satis Chandra Das Gupta had written: "Lahore Exhibition Committee may gracefully agree to let khadi have (1) free stalls (2) free food tickets for exhibition, and (3) free housing in special huts within the exhibition grounds."

[2] Jamshedji N. R. Mehta, Mayor of Karachi

[3] Flood relief work in Sind

454. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

CAMP HATHRAS,
November 8, 1929

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. You did not tell me anything about your going to Rajahmundry but I knew from Dr. Pattabhi that you had gone there and I was glad. I understand what you say about Utkal. I would love to go to Utkal after the Congress if I get the time. But whether I do or not there need be no difficulty about finding funds for Utkal if they are really required, that is to say, deserved. It would be quite good if you and Shankerlal go there before we meet at Wardha. Sukhendu's death is a murder.[1] The world's history shows that you cannot be violent towards one and non-violent towards another. All our violence is bound to recoil upon our heads more and more as we go on and if we do not retrace our steps. We will have to discover a method of dealing with this violence among ourselves. Of course there is not one word in Hind Swaraj that cannot be substantiated. If I have to rewrite it today I may change the language but never the thought. I hope you are much stronger. How is Hemprabhadevi? Whether I write to her or not she must give me an occasional letter. Correspondence is still going on with the Exhibition Committee about the charges. I am passing on the relevant extracts from your letter to Pt. Santanam.[2]

With reference to Utkal I have not attached any importance to Govind Babu's insinuations about Niranjan Babu. However I have written to him[3] a strong letter either to substantiate his innuendoes or to apologize for having made them.

With love,

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1611

[1] *Vide* footnote 2, "Letter to S. M. Joshi", 3-11-1929
[2] *Vide* "Letter to K. Santanam", 8-11-1929
[3] On November 3; *vide* "Letter to C. P. Mathew", 3-11-1929

455. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

HATHRAS,
November 8, 1929

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

You must have received the telegram which I sent you today. I read about it in a newspaper only a while ago and soon after I had a telegram from Jamnalal. I was shocked. How did this accident happen? I make this inquiry because Jamnalalji, according to his nature, has left it to me to ask you if you need any advice or help. You are brave and I have no doubt that you will show patience. Why should we grieve when we know that the way Father has gone is the way all of us are destined to go? Mataji has knowledge and self-control and, therefore, she is bound to be above joy or sorrow. Bring honour to Father's mantle which you inherit. In all your work act with great patience. I should like you to write to me regularly for some time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. C.W. 4716. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarjee

456. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

HATHRAS,
November 8, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have not received any mail from you today. A letter on the Bank is enclosed with this, which you may use if necessary.

Ba and Devdas have gone to Shahabad today to attend a women's meeting. Others have gone to Etah ahead of me.

Maintain your health in excellent condition.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Chhaganlal has separated from the party today and left for the Punjab.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4148

457. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

ETAH,
November 9, 1929

CHI. MATHURADAS[1],

I have the letter you wrote while on your way to Karachi. Has Jivandas's death increased your responsibilities? Has he made any provision for his widow? Or can she support herself? As I view things, it should be the duty of every husband devoted to his wife to teach her at the earliest opportunity to be self-reliant. To leave money for her is, according to me, the lowest of duties. Of course, if one keeps the wife always dependent on oneself, the only course then is to leave money for her. The logical thing is that, as a wife does not leave money for her husband and, if she does, the latter feels ashamed, a wife too, should feel so if the husband leaves money for her. About the children, too, my thinking has been on the same lines, as you must have seen from my article in *Navajivan*. In the light of this, your duty to the widowed sister lies, not in supporting her for life if she is penniless, but in teaching her to be resolute and self-reliant.

The progress of the spinning-wheel class is slow because still there are very few persons who recognize spinning as a science and are interested in it as a science. Because of these two factors we do not have a tradition of good teachers. Moreover, you will observe that we have not so far had even one single teacher who has clung to the work throughout after once taking it up. As you have understood this secret, I hope that you will stick to this work and do well in it.

I hope that both of you are keeping good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3733

[1] An expert carder and khadi worker at Sabarmati Ashram

458. LETTER TO ISHWARLAL JOSHI

BADAYUN,

November 9, 1929

CHI. ISHWARLAL,

As long as you were at the Ashram it was not necessary for you to write to me except when there was some reason. But now it is necessary that you should. You may write to me whenever you have any difficulty.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9280. Courtesy: Ishwarlal Joshi

459. A LETTER

November 9, 1929

In order to avoid social disapproval it is one's duty to refrain from doing a thing one need not do. Where a principle is likely to be violated, one should put up with any degree of disapproval, but where no question of principle is involved one should avoid social disapproval.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/3

460. A LETTER

November 9, 1929

CHI. . . .[1],

How can you dry up? If you know my plight, you would not expect any letter from me. It has become quite difficult to cope with the writing work. I have returned from Karaganj quite exhausted, but from the moment I returned, that is from seven-thirty, I have been busy writing or dictating. Raghavachari has been typing. I am dictating this at a quarter to ten. I will have to send someone to Mathura especially to post this letter at eleven. But whether I write or not, I shall expect your letters.

[1]The name is omitted in the source.

My question regarding *Navajivan* and *Young India* still remains unanswered.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/4

461. A LETTER

November 9, 1929

BHAISHRI . . .[1],

I do not think it is part of religion to regard a woman in her periods as untouchable. I think the restriction must have had its origin in the knowledge that man is lustful. If I am right in my belief, everyone should examine the strength of his or her passion and formulate his or her own rule.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/2

462. LETTER TO RANCHHODLAL

ETAH,
November 9, 1929

CHI. RANCHHODLAL,

Your article is bound to contain technical terms and jargon which only experts can understand. None the less you can so simplify it that readers with some general knowledge can follow its meaning if they read it carefully. In the West many such attempts have been made. Jules Verne's books have been so written that even people who have not studied science are able to understand them and read them with interest. He has written whole novel in that style. The ability to write in that way is also an art.

I have read one of the American articles, the one in which there is criticism of the prize. I will comment on it in *Young India*[2]. I will read the other article and write to you about it if necessary. I am not at present placing the spinning-wheel before the whole world because even here it is still in the experimental stage. But I am convinced that the people of the West will be forced to adopt the spinning-wheel if

[1] The name is omitted in the source.
[2] *Vide* "Implications of the Wheel", 21-11-1929.

they do not do so voluntarily. If India becomes really free, she can do noting else. America, England, Australia and other countries of the West areable to make money with machines which are superior to human beings because they export what they produce. If every nation became self-reliant, many of their industries would close down. If all nations became equally efficient, — and they should become so —, exchange of goods would be so much reduced that America which earns millions of rupees today will not be able to do so. In that case life would naturally have to be made simple and the lifeless machines would to a great extent have to be abandoned. I am not the only one who thinks along these lines. The number of those who think in the same way is growing day by day.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/86

463. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

ETAH,

November 9, 1929

CHI. PRABHUDAS,[1]

For the present, you ought to write to me twice a week at least. Fix Mondays and Thursdays for doing so. It will do even if it is only a postcard. You ought to give me an account of the state of your body and mind. You should also tell me what is your present diet. Moreover, you should also give me some idea of the experiences you have had at that place. How is Ishwarlal getting along? Does he get proper material for his study of English?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33007

[1] The letters are in a different hand but the subscription in both is by Gandhiji.

464. A MISTAKE IN BARDOLI?

A correspondent writes:[1]

Just as a person cannot see his own back, he cannot see his own faults! Hence wise men have advised us that we should be prepared to see those faults in ourselves which others find in us and point out to us and we should not insult through anger or impatience those who do so. Being aware of this, I have always welcomed those who have pointed out my faults. But I am always faced with a serious dilemma: everyone does not see the same faults. That which seems a virtue to some appears to be a failing to others. What should a person like me do when faced with such a difficult situation? When such a dilemma arises, if one is not convinced despite considering the critic's observations dispassionately, one should follow the dictates of one's inner voice. I am in such a predicament with regard to Bardoli. Until this day, I have felt that I have served the country and the world by calling off the Bardoli struggle. I am confident that history will look upon it as a form of perfect satyagraha and not as an act of cowardice. On my part, I have seen even its results to be excellent. If I had deliberately continued the struggle, the nation would have been crushed. As a result of the postponement of the struggle, the nation has made progress, though at a slow rate, its thinking power has increased and the awakening that followed in its wake has been stabilized.

The opinion expressed by the Governor of Bombay or any other official is irrelevant. It is not possible for an outsider to think of a solution that suggests itself to a person directly involved. I, as the leader, or my companions who are involved in the struggle alone can judge it. A commander who gives up his own opinions as a result of being influenced by the criticism made by others is fit to be dismissed. He must have the capacity to assess his own decisions; failing this, he should never take such a responsibility upon himself.

Having said so much in support of my decision, I am prepared to admit that it is possible that my being a Bania by birth prevents me from perceiving my cowardice. If that failing remains, it is

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had referred to the reported remarks about India being within an inch of swaraj when the non-co-operation movement was withdrawn after the Chauri Chaura incident in February 1922.

unavoidable. But it is for the people to decide whether to overlook this failing or to reject my services because of it. People wish to be served and yet desire perfection—how can both these be possible? I must also add here that I do not recall having admitted defeat in any struggle. The struggle which was begun in 1920-21 has not yet ended. I have not admitted defeat. I live in the hope of either winning swaraj in this birth or dying while fighting for it. There is no such thing as defeat in satyagraha. Once a satyagrahi has chalked out his path, he never retreats from it. Anyone who does so is not a satyagrahi.

It is not necessary now to discuss the question as to what I would do if incidents similar to those of Chauri Chaura occur again. This is so because I do not have the capacity to take such a decision in advance. It is my desire to plan my strategy by taking into account incidents such as those which took place in Chauri Chaura so that we can deal with them when the time comes for launching the struggle. I do not know whether it is possible to plan this way or not. While man aspires and tries,: it is for God to fulfil his wishes.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-11-1929

465. THE YOUTH AND AGRICULTURE

A co-worker who has received modern education and wishes to become self-reliant by taking to farming writes:[1]

I sincerely regard myself as a farmer. Some people were amused at my evidence in the court. I had described my profession as farmer and weaver[2]. Even today, if my ability is taken into consideration, I have no right to call myself a farmer, but I have no doubt that my flesh and blood are those of a farmer. I am fascinated by the farmer's life. I am a worshipper of his natural virtues and I envy him his indifference to death. When I see his sturdy physique, I take pity on my own frail body. I have had personal experience of the fact that the common sense which he possesses can never be acquired in schools. I do not feel ashamed of cleaning latrines, of sweeping or of handling the spade and the hoe; on the contrary, I like doing these things. Hence I know that, if I give up that which I have come to regard as service or am forced to give it up, and I continue to be physically fit, I

[1] The letter is not translated here.

[2] *Vide* "Message to Bombay", 11-3-1922

shall start farming that very day. But I was not destined to do so and hence I have had to be content with living on a farm and inspiring my co-workers to take to farming.

But because I have realized the importance of agriculture in this manner, I am happy when any educated person takes up this occupation. Moreover, I am well acquainted with the hardships involved in it as I have come into close contact with farmers, and experiments in agriculture are being carried out under my direct supervision. I have reproduced the above extract from my coworker's letter in order to give some idea of those joys and hardships.

Without both, health and wealth, it is not possible to do farming. Multi-millionaires earn money by owning hundreds of thousands of bighas of land. They do not till the land, but carry on business; their success is similar to that of the person who runs a factory with the help of workers. But if those who have a limited sum of money invest it in farming, they must certainly have both the desire and the capacity to put in body labour. No other profession requires the same degree of alertness as that required of a farmer.

If a farmer so desires, he can with the slightest effort become a yogi. It is for this very reason that the saying has originated to the effect "Agriculture is the best of professions, business comes next and service is the most inferior one." I have no doubt, therefore, that the larger the number of young men who take to farming, the better it will be for us. I have not written at length about it as I know that it is a difficult path. This precious profession cannot, however, be suggested to everyone. Anyone who wishes to take up farming should, first of all, serve silently as a labourer under some farmer. He should learn to use a plough, acquire the same knowledge as an ordinary farmer about the soil and crops, and learn well how to dig round and square pits. He should then acquire a knowledge of farming from books written in the West. Soil chemistry is a distinct subject. Some improvement can certainly be brought about in our agriculture by obtaining some knowledge of it. Hence if the educated young man who wishes to make a success of farming does not have inexhaustible patience, he should never take up this experiment. Anyone who carries out the experiment must also develop self-confidence. Initial failures should not dishearten him. Success has always been born out of failure.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-11-1929

466. MY NOTES

AN ASPECT OF JAPAN

The following extract from a letter written by an Indian residing in Japan is worth reading:[1]

This is an example of blind patriotism. It is not necessary for us to decide whether Japan is what it has been described to be. Let ours be an enlightened patriotism, full of truth and compassion.

WEAKNESS OF THE FLESH

An unhappy gentleman writes:[2]

Many persons have experienced the same age-old difficulty as this gentleman. Arjuna had put the same question to the Lord. Mastery over the senses was offered as a remedy. It was suggested that the soul should rest in itself. Constant endeavour, self-abnegation and devotion had also been pointed out as paths to self-conquest. Innumerable people have attained self-purification through devotion alone. This gentleman is well aware of his own weaknesses; hence his disease cannot be regarded as incurable. He and those like him should exercise self-control and keep themselves fully occupied in work in order to gain control over the mind and, along with this effort they should repeat Ramanama or use whatever epithet of God they like and have the faith that finally their effort is sure to succeed. Again, we come across many persons who, having failed, give up their efforts and despite this discuss their vices with everyone, ask for a remedy, declare their inability to adopt it and obtain permission to do sinful deeds. The correspondent should not commit this grave error through lack of effort. He should have faith that God always responds to the cry of a person in distress.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-11-1929

[1] This is not translated here. The correspondent had described certain virtues and defects of the Japanese people.

[2] The letter is not translated here. The khadi-wearing correspondent had confessed his failure in giving up immoral relations.

467. CONDITIONS FOR CO-OPERATION[1]

It is my advice to readers that they should not evince undue interest in the leaders' parleys, nor should they be very inquisitive about them. For, despite promises from the Government and even if the promise of Dominion Status is translated into a law, if the people do not prove worthy of it, they will not be able to see its results at all. However potent *svarnabhasma*[2] may happen to be, if one who takes it has no power to digest it, that *bhasma* is useless for one. Exactly similar position obtains in regard to Dominion Status, independence, swaraj and freedom—or by whatever other name it is known. As we keep developing our strength to win and preserve it, so and to that extent we shall have won swaraj. If this reasoning is accepted there is no need for conferences and the like. When a conference is held, one can merely conclude from it that the opponent is inclined to recognize to some extent our strength. Suppose the Conference is to meet and there are even Congress representatives in it, and yet if atthat time the people's power is at a low ebb, that cannot but affect the Conference. Hence all those who are not required to attend the Conference should keep themselves engaged in constructive activities which are an expression of the people's strength. We do not yet know at all what the Viceregal pronouncement means. Suppose the interpretation made in the leaders' manifesto is correct, suppose the conditions stipulated by them are accepted, even then we cannot at all slow down the tempo of our present activities. That is to say, rather than abate activities like boycott of foreign cloth, production of khadi, prohibition, Hindu-Muslim unity, removal of untouchability, etc., we should accelerate their pace. Instead of that happening, if the people go to sleep, nothing will materialize today or hereafter. In other words, one cannot go to heaven unless one dies; or the winning of swaraj depends only on our own strength.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-11-l929

[1] The first two paragraphs of this article are not translated here as they cover the same ground as "Notes", 7-11-1929; *vide* "Notes", sub-title Is It True

[2] An oxide of gold

468. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

SHAHJAHANPUR,
November 11, 1929

MY DEAR REYNOLDS,

I do think of you on my silence day. You are charitable about your being debarred from temple-entry and it is right for us all to be so towards one another. But the hideous truth is that this bar is a variety of the curse of untouchability which in its worst form we are making a mighty effort to remove.

Pray do not be greedy about doing many things at once. I would have you do some things at least well. We shall not be long meeting now. If all goes as expected I reach there[1] the night of 25th.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 4528. Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

469. LETTER TO FULCHAND S. SHAH

SHAHJAHANPUR,
November 11, 1929

BHAI FULCHAND,

I have your letter dated November 5, 1929. I have already replied to the letters which preceded.

I am sure you admit that *Saurashtra Mitra* has been at fault. If so, what struggle do you wish to take up on its behalf? I expect to reach Sabarmati on the night of the 25th, and to leave again from there on the morning of December 6. Come and see me during this period if you have anything to tell me. Do not come if there is nothing to explain and if you have no doubt whatever about what you propose to do. Even if there is a possibility of a mistake somewhere, do not hesitate to act according to what your conscience says. How long will you seek my protection?

I cannot accept your statement that you bear no ill will against

[1] Sabarmati Ashram

the evil-doer. The freedom from such ill will results only from constant striving. It has not seemed to me that many members of your organization have so much as tried to cultivate that virtue. That is why I gave you a general caution.

One may regard the Ashram at Chhaya to have been put on a sound footing now, if the strong foundation for a building serve also as strong foundation for its inner spirit. Or else, we may persuade ourselves that the spirit was already well-founded and that is why the Ashram had a strong building constructed for itself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2838. Courtesy: Fulchand K. Shah

470. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN SHAH

SHAHJAHANPUR,
Silence Day [*November 11,1929*][1]

CHI. SHARDA,

I have your letter. One should not put a wrong interpretation on the restrictions I mentioned. Why should those who have in them Bhaktibehn's[2] spontaneous courage not join the Corps? In doing good one should not wait for others to begin. Bhaktibehn is of course as good as enlisted. If, therefore, one has the spontaneous courage to follow truth unswervingly, if one has the strength to endure the hardships of jail life, etc., one should have absolutely no objection to enlisting in the Corps. You should not believe that all those who are at present members of the Corps will bring credit to it. Do not ever take satyagraha to mean no more than resistance to tyranny. The strength to oppose tyranny may be one of the marks of satyagraha. I have seen quite a good number of those who resist tyranny practising untruth. It is certain that mastery of the art of following truth unswervingly does give one the strength to resist tyranny, but the capacity for firm pursuit of truth results only from devoting each day diligently to some pure benevolent activity—from the performing of a pure sacrifice by way of unselfish service to others without attachment to such service. I have observed that such strength comes easily to a

[1] Gandhiji was at Shahjahanpur on this date.
[2] Darbar Gopaldas's wife

woman who has developed a general understanding of things and that it remains with her for the rest of her life.

I don't mind your having kept the yarn for a sari. It is enough that you spun it. I hope you remember the rule that only the spinner who does his own carding is regarded a spinner.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2839. Courtesy: Shardabehn Shah

471. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

SHAHJAHANPUR,

Silence Day, November 11, 1929

SISTERS,

After this, I shall be required to write to you only on one more Monday.

It is being proved every day that the reason for frequent thefts in the Ashram is our own negligence. We are negligent in two ways: We are not watchful enough, and, though frequently warned, some of us keep jewelry with them and some others keep money. There will always be thieves in the world. There are three ways of protecting ourselves against them. One is that we should keep nothing with ourselves. That is not quite possible.

If we keep things with us, to that extent we should remain watchful. *The third method is to let the thieves feel the fear of punishment through the Government, and to co-operate with the Government in punishing them. We have renounced this third course.* The first course is our ideal. The second is the one that we follow at present. We should have the fewest possible possessions, and be watchful about the few things we keep with us as being absolutely necessary.

Since this letter has turned out to be of common interest, let it also be read out at the time of the evening prayers.

Do not get disheartened by the burden of the kitchen. Ask for whatever help you require, but do not give up in despair. It does not matter if we do not embark upon some task; but, having undertaken it, we should do it at the cost of our lives. God always helps those who

work steadfastly in this manner. That is the lesson to be learnt in the story of *Gajendramoksha*[1] and in the *bhajan* about the male and female tortoise.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3709

472. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

SHAHJAEXANPUR,
November 11, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

This theft has agitated me. I see in it our fault and God's grace. If, despite our fault, we remain complacent, I would look upon it as a sign of God's wrath. It is my view that anyone who is found negligent in his duty of keeping watch should leave the Ashram. There are certain tasks which permit no laxity. A vaidya who gives his patient arsenic powder instead of salt ought not to be permitted to practise as a vaidya; this case is on a par with that. It seems that even at 4 o'clock it is necessary to maintain a watch.

Though we have a rule that no one should keep any money in his room, why is it that the rule is not observed? Personally I feel that those who violate the general rules of the Ashram should leave it. I don't think that asking people to leave the Ashram is a punishment; it is a form of non-co-operation.

You may consider whether the Managing Committee should make such a rule, but read out the above to all people as an expression of my feelings on the subject. It is not the loss of ten rupees which I mind, but the fact that we are still so lax. If Nathji has arrived there, ask him what his view is.

I certainly see our deficiency in the fact that we have not gone into the neighbouring villages. That we have not been able to do so shows that we do not know how. Think over how we can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4149

[1] The story of an elephant who, being caught by a crocodile, was rescued by Vishnu

[2] A devotional song by Bhoja Bhagat narrates the story of a male and female tortoise saved by their faith in God.

473. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

SHAHJAHANPUR,
November 11, 1929

CHI. GANGABEHN

Nathji must have come now. He will give you consolation. I can see that you are firm in your decision but not calm.

For the sake of health, take the necessary fruits as medicine. It is not a sin to take care of the body, treating it as a temple, but certainly it is a great sin to consider the body to be an abode of pleasure and pamper it. But you have freed yourself from it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 2 9

474. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SHAHJAHANPUR,
November 11, 1929

CHI. PREMA,

A postcard which I wrote to your Bombay address does not seem to have reached you. It seems you had left before it could.

If your weight keeps going up at Bombay and going down at the Ashram, wouldn't you at last develop aversion to the Ashram?

Experience alone can show whether or not it was right for you to have spread the good name of the Ashram in Bombay. At present I can see only the defects of the Ashram, and that is what I like. When we see no defect in us but all the time see our virtues, you may know that that is the beginning of our fall.

As for the preparations, we shall talk about them when I return.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-5: Ku. Premabebn Kantakne, pp. 5-6

475. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

SHAHJAHANPUR,
Silence Day [*November 11, 1929*][1]

DEAR KASHINATH,

I do not remember having received your letter from Muradabad. My impression is that I have already replied to the letters I have received. I am glad that the number of subscribers to *Hindi Navajivan* is increasing.

Kalavati[2] will have to be patiently brought round. It is my experience that God opens the eyes of those who refuse to listen to reason. You did well in sending money to Father. About the letter to Indore, remind me to write it when I come.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5288

476. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Tuesday [*November 12, 1929*][3]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letters. I agree that it will be advisable for you to continue to stay at Vijapur as long as you keep physically and mentally fit there. That will enable you to do some propaganda work and Chhaganlal will get some help. Help him as much as you can in carding and making slivers. See if you can introduce spinning in the primary school at Vijapur. If possible, cultivate social relations with good families there. You may do, however, what pleases your mind. For the present, carding should not be taught to those who do not spin. After some headway is made, there would be no objection to

[1] The date has been inferred from the contents. In 1929 Gandhiji was at Shahjahanpur on this date, a Monday.

[2] Addressee's wife, whose jewellery had been stolen the previous week; *vide* "Letter to Kalavati Trivedi", 4-11-1929 and "Letter to Kalavati Trivedi", 14-11-1929

[3] The date is inferred from the reference to Lucknow in the last paragraph. On this date Gandhiji was at Lakhimpur which is about 85 miles from Lucknow. Gandhiji passed through Lucknow on November 13 on his way to Rai Bareli.

teaching it to anyone. The carding-bow should not be supplied to anybody free of charge. There is no harm in giving it at a concession price.

Today we have been camping at a village. We came here leaving Mirabehn and others at Lucknow, but we shall again be united tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9377

477. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

AMARU,
November 12, 1929

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I feel ashamed that I have not been able to write to you for so long, though your letters came regularly.

Since we are going to meet at Wardha, I do not want to write at length.

I had sent a wire in connection with the prevailing imposts in South Africa.

The episode of the calf and that of the monkeys did cause me pain, but also gave me an opportunity to understand man's nature and to keep anger under control.

Mahadev told me many things about you. I felt happy. I already knew much of what he told me .

I intend to reach Wardha on the 24th.

More when we meet.

Jamnalalji is leaving for Bombay today. Mahadev is staying at Bardoli nowadays. He has come here for three days.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Prem Prasadi, Vol. I, p. 135

478. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

SITAPUR,

November 13, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I got your letter. I have arrived at a principle of conduct on the basis of experience, namely, that one should never think of doing good to others with a selfish motive. If while pursuing his own interest a person incidentally does some good to others, he should notregard it as benevolence. He earns no merit for such a deed either. His neighbours may indeed benefit from what he has done, but the benefit results from the usefulness of the deed and not from the goodness of its author.

For instance, if a Bhangi cleans lavatories conscientiously, his work is of great benefit to others. But he earns no merit for it, since he works for his livelihood. As, however, his work is useful, society benefits from it as much as from that of any other person who might clean lavatories purely in a spirit of service. In the same way, if anyone practises *pranayame*, etc., for the sake of health, the benefit he derives from these activities is limited to health. His soul enjoys no peace through such *praneyama*.

This preface has reference to your question regarding our harassment at the hands of thieves. We can clean villages, dispense medicines and take up similar other activities. If, however, we start them now, they will have been prompted purely by self-interest and we shall be given no credit for our work. From the beginning we have cherished the intention of doing such work. We should hold to it, and take up the work in future. At the present time we can go into the villages only by declaring our interest in doing so.

I had drafted a leaflet with this aim. It was even printed. But, thanks to lack of faith on the part of the Ashram inmates, their timidity and their false sense of shame, its circulation was abandoned. My position is still the same and even now I give the same advice. I for one believe that we should go among the people and talk to them at present about nothing but our wretchedness and beg them to have pity on us. If I get time, I will draft and send a leaflet for this purpose, else I will draft one after I return. All of you may decide then whether or not to use it. I am dictating this letter while visitors are coming and

going, and so I cannot finish what I wish to say. You may fill in the rest.

I wrote to you on Monday in regard to the signing of cheques.

About putting up a hedge, ask me after I return. However, if you feel that you cannot wait till then, do what you think best.

I have not revised this.

Blessings from
BAPU

LUCKNOW

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4150

479. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

RAI BARELI,
November 13, 1929

BHAISHRI HARIBHAU,

I have your letter. It would have been nice if you yourself could have come. But now it will do if some responsible representative comes. A satyagrahi must be wholly pure. Then only can he be invincible. We shall further discuss this when we meet if we feel the need to do so. I presume that you will surely come to Wardha although you did not come to Sabarmati Ashram.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 6063. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

480. LETTER TO ISHWARLAL JOSHI

RAI BARELI.,
November 13, 1929

CHI. ISEIWARLAL,

I have your letter. I was glad to learn that your study of English is making good progress. Do your work there with careful application. Write to me regularly. Tell what books you are asked to read. If you have been doing some written work, send me one of your exercise books so that I may be able to see your handwriting and also get an idea of the kind of English you can write.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9281. Courtesy: Ishwarlal Joshi

481. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

RAI BAREILY,

November 13, 1929

CHI. PRABHUDAS,[2]

I have your letter, I am prepared to send you to Vijapur if you can keep well there. And Kashi and Chhaganlal will have less worries for you. They will get some help also. Moreover, if you find one or two students in Vijapur, they will learn from you and you will get some help. I may take the final decision but let me know your own views. A person who takes the decision should have all the information. It is possible that you know something which I do not and therefore arrive at a wrong decision.

I understand about Prem Vidyalaya. I will take care of it. I have written to Bhagirathji. Your going there at this time would have been improper. Keep on writing to me regularly. Your health should not deteriorate there. If there is the slightest chance of it, you are not going to stay there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32948

482. TELEGRAM TO VITHALBHAI PATEL

[On or after *November 13, 1929*][1]

PRESIDENT PATEL

SARDARGRIHA

BOMBAY

GOT VALLABHBHAI'S LETTER[2]. CO-SIGNATORIES[3] INVITED I 8TH. NO DEPARTURE WILL BE MADE WITHOUT CONSULTATION WITH THEM.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15569

483. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU

[On or before *November 14, 1929*][4]

PANDIT NEHRU

LUCKNOW

IF NOTHING ANNOUNCED REGARDING LALAJI ANNI-VERSARY WHICH COMES SEVENTEENTH INSTANT PLEASEANNOUNCE OBSERVANCE BY MEMORIAL COLLECTIONS.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15570

[1] From the reference to Vallabhbhai's letter which was dated November 11, 1929 and which would have reached Gandhiji on November 13

[2] *Vide* "Letter from Vallabhbhai Patel", 11-11-1929. Vallabhbhai had also sent a telegram on November 11 which read: "Can you arrange meet Vithalbhai Jinnah myself at Ahmedabad twenty-fourth or Bombay twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth. Wire reply President Patel Sardargriha."

[3] To the All-Parties Leaders' Joint Statement

[4] Motilal Nehru's reply dated November 14 reads: "Issuing appeal for Lalaji Memorial through Associated and Free Press".

484. CONDOLENCES[1]

The tragic death of Sheth Narottam Morarjee removes from our midst a merchant prince who combined patriotism with commercial ambition. As an employer of labour he combined humanity with its exploitation. His latest enterprise, the Scindhia Steam Navigation Company, was conceived as much through patriotism as through ambition. His charities were wide, discriminating and in keeping with the modern requirements.. The removal of such a son of India at this juncture is a great loss to the country. His mantle has fallen upon the shoulders of his only son who is yet in the making. But Sjt. Shantikumar has all the patriotism of his distinguished father and if possible, a greater love of the labourers employed in his father's many businesses. I tender my condolences to him, his aged grandmother and the other members of the family with whom I have had the privilege of enjoying intimate relations.

Young India, 14-11-1929

485. VILLAGE IMPROVEMENT[2]

I hope the reader carefully followed the articles by Lala Deshraj which were published in five parts.[3] They constitute, I think, a dispassionate review of the famous experiment made by Mr. Brayne, the late Deputy Commissioner of Gurgaon District, known as the Gurgaon Programme. Whilst the articles were being published, I took up Mr. Brayne's book called *The Remaking of Village India*, being the second edition of his *Village Uplift in India* as it was originally called. So far as one can judge from Lala Deshraj's articles, the Gurgaon experiment for village remaking must be pronounced virtually a failure. After Mr. Brayne's back was turned upon Gurgaon, the people who were working under hisinspiration or pressure seem to have gone to sleep, the manure pits lying neglected, the new ploughs rusting and co-education dissolving.

[1] A similar obituary appeared in *Navajivan*, 24-11-1929.

[2] Gandhiji's articles on the same subject also appeared in *Navajivan*, 24-11-1929, 1-12-1929 and 8-12-1929.

[3] In fact these articles appeared in four issues of *Young India*, 17-10-1929, 24-10-1929, 31-10-1929 and 7-11-1929. For Gandhiji's introductory remarks, *vide* "Is it Village Uplift", 17-10-1929

The reason for the failure is not far to seek. The reform came not from within but was superimposed from without. Mr. Brayne made use of his official position to put as much pressure as he could upon his subordinates and upon the people themselves, but he could not carry conviction by force, and conviction so essential to success was lacking. Mr. Brayne thought that the results would convince the people. But that is not how reform works. The reformer's path is strewn not with roses but with thorns, and he has to walk warily. He can but limp, dare not jump. Mr. Brayne was impatient and wanted to cover a long distance in one stride, and he failed.

When an official becomes a reformer, he must realize that his official position is not a help but a hindrance. In spite of his Herculean efforts people will suspect him and his motives, and they will scent danger where there is none. And when they do certain things, they often do them more to please the official than to please themselves.

The other handicap that Mr. Brayne laboured under was the almost fatal facility he had for receiving money. In my opinion money is the last thing that a reformer needs in his campaign. It comes to him unsolicited in exact proportion to his strict needs. I have always distrusted reformers. who have pleaded want of financial aid as an excuse for their ill-success. Where there is zeal, adequate knowledge and faith in oneself, financial assistance has always come; but Mr. Brayne relied more upon money for the success of his experiment than upon his faith in himself and the people. So in spite of his having had Rs. 50,000 a year according to Lala Deshraj's estimate, he complains that many things await development only for want of money. His ambition is insatiable. So much for the actual experiment itself.

The book deserves careful study apart from the experiment. There can be no doubt about Mr. Brayne's sincerity. Every page of the book proves it. The intrinsic worth of many of the author's suggestions is indisputable. The book is ably written, and everyone who wishes to do village reconstruction work should make haste to study Mr. Brayne's volume. The defects in the villages described by Mr. Brayne are as follows:

1. The peasant's methods of farming are bad.

2. His village is filthy; he lives in dirt, squalor, disease and suffering.

3. He is the prey of epidemic diseases.

4. He wastes all his wealth.

5. He keeps his womenfolk in degradation and slavery.

6. He pays no attention to his home or his village, and spends no time or thought over bettering himself and his surroundings.

7. He resists all change; he is illiterate and ignorant of what progress village folk in other civilized countries and in other parts of his own country are making, and what he can himself make if he sets his mind to it.

There is much exaggeration in this description. The Indian villager's methods of farming are certainly not bad. Many have testified that he has a workable knowledge of agriculture which is not to be despised. The second and third defects have, I fear, to be admitted. The fourth is largely, if not wholly, inadmissible if only because he has no wealth to waste. The fifth, sixth and seventh are largely true. The remedies suggested are eighteen. I summarize them as follows:

1. Keep good cattle.
2. Use modern implements.
3. Use good seed.
4. Put up Persian wheels.
5. Stock the manure in pits.
6. Stop making dung cakes.
7. Make use of village banks.
8. Bank your fields and divide them into squares according to levels to prevent wastage of rain water.
9. Consolidate your holdings.
10. Harvest for the whole year through the well.
11. Sow trees on every vacant space.
12. Inoculate your cattle against disease.
13. Kill the field-rats, porcupines and pests that share your crops with you.
14. Develop pasture land.
15. Cultivate half your land well and devote the rest to pasture.
16. Use underground pipes for carrying your well water.
17. Stop the sand-dunes by sowing whatever vegetation will grow and hold the sand.
18. Straighten and clean your canals and channels.

Many of the suggestions are admirable. What is new requires

careful experiment. Much of what is old is not capable of enforcement. As to modern implements, after fifteen years' continuous experimenting and without any prejudice against implements and after having tried many of them at the Ashram, we have come to the conclusion that most of these implements are useless, and I may assure the reader that we have not made a hash of it all. We are making steady progress, but there are very few modern implements which we have found to be of much use. I hope to give later a definite note upon this Ashram experiment. Meanwhile I would say to those who go in for modern implements: 'Hasten slowly.' Conservation of manure and the consequent stopping of its wanton destruction through dung cake-making are suggestions worth taking up. Fragmentation of holdings is undoubtedly a crying evil. Drastic legislation alone can cope with an evil so extensive as this meaningless fragmentation. All the suggestions require true education and self-confidence. The starving peasant has no education and has no self-confidence, because he thinks that penury is an inheritance from which he cannot shake himself free. Mr. Brayne has valuable suggestions about sanitation. He would allow no sweepings, rubbish, dung, ashes, etc., to be thrown anywhere but into properly dug pits. He gives elaborate instructions for using manure pits as latrines. I cannot resist quoting the following long but truthful instructive paragraph:

> This rubbish lying in heaps all round and inside the village, and this night-soil, scattered thick everywhere outside the village, and sometimes inside too, dries up and is blown all over the village by the wind and is stirred up by the feet of men and cattle. It falls into your food and drink, gets into everyone's eyes and nose, and goes into their lungs with every breath they breathe. It thus forms part of your air and food and drink, and you and your children are daily poisoned by the filth of your village. Besides this, it breeds innumerable flies, which sit first on the filth and then on your food, your dishes, and on your children's eyes and mouths. And remember that the flies do not wash their feet or takeoff their shoes when they visit you. Can you imagine any quicker way of securing permanent ill health and bad eyes, and an early grave for yourself and your family?

"The Gurgaon village houses", says the author, "are the direct successors of the caves of pre-historic man." He would therefore have the villager to open windows in his house. He will guard against smallpox by free vaccinations. He would guard against plague by

inoculation and rat-killing, against cholera by well-cleaning and proper arrangements for drawing water and against malaria by quinine and mosquito-nets. The assurance with which Mr. Brayne speaks of vaccination and inoculation is amazing when one knows that medical authorities speak of both with the greatest caution. Vaccination is daily being proved as an exploded remedy, and plague inoculation and the like, whatever merit they may possess as a temporary relief measure if they do at all, are soul-destroying remedies making man a weakling dying many times before his natural death. There is abundant testimony to show that where there is clean living there is no fear of plague or smallpox, both being diseases born of filth and insinuation. Well-cleaning and a clean method of drawing water are no doubt good not only as a precaution against cholera but many other things. Quinine without milk is a useless remedy, and mosquito-nets, I know from personal experience, are not within the reach of mil lions. More than once has Mr. Brayne betrayed ignorance of the chronic economic distress of the seething millions of India. It is perfectly useless to suggest remedies which are beyond the present means of the people. What the people may be capable of doing when the reformer's dream is realized is irrelevant to a consideration of what they ought to do whilst the reform is making its way among them.

The following is the remedy suggested for waste:

> Eradicate the present ideals of absurd expenditure on *kaj*[1] and other such ceremonies, jewellery, weddings and quarrelling.

I fear that this 'absurd expenditure' exists largely only in Mr. Brayne's imagination. It is confined to the fewest people. The vast majority of the masses have no money to spend on any ceremony. The jewellery hoarding is the old official trick. I have now moved amongst lakhs of women all over India. I have myself inveighed against jewellery and dispossessed many sisters of it. I know that there is no beauty about it. But if the number of those who can afford ceremonies is small, that of those who can afford jewellery is smaller still. Millions wear either hideous stone or wooden pieces. Many wear brass or copper ornaments and some wear silver bangles and anklets. A microscopic number have any gold on their persons. Whilst therefore the advice to turn jewellery into cash and bank it is in my opinion perfectly sound, it is irrelevant when considered as part of a

[1] Socio-religious ceremonies

programme for village re construction. The same may be said about quarrelling. Whilst the amount of litigation is no doubt great in itself and shameful, it is again confined to those who have, but the millions are the have-nots, and in a programme of village reconstruction one has to think of this vast, helpless, ignorant and hopeless majority.

To ensure a happy home Mr. Brayne would humanize the women and make them honourable and equal partners in the home. He will send the girls to the school with the boys till they are too big to be so sent. He will not marry them while they are children. He is energetic and even eloquent on the rights of women. Here are two passages worthy of consideration:

> When your wife is to have a baby, you choose a dark and dirty room and send for a sweeper's wife. Why do you not send for the sweeper when you break your arm? Why not train some of your own women as midwives? Sweepers' wives have no more business to be midwives than they have to be doctors. Would it not be far nicer for your wife to be attended by one of her own people at such a risky time than by the lowest caste in the village? There is no more noble work for a high-caste woman than the work of a nurse or dai.
>
> Don't reserve the darkest and least airy part of the house for your wife and family. They are just as important as you, and their ill health is just as bad for you as your own. You can keep fit by going to the fields. Your women and children must spend a lot of their time at home. Therefore give them the best and airiest part of the house.

Here is another passage of poetic beauty:

> Man is the only creature that discriminates between his male and female children, and treats the females as inferior. Your mother was once a girl. Your wife was once a girl. Your daughters will one day be mothers. If girls are an inferior creation, then you are yourselves inferior.

I hope the reader will share my appreciation of the following passage about dogs:

> The dog is called the friend of man. In Gurgaon he is treated not much better than a woman, and is the enemy of man. Keep a dog by all means, but feed it regularly, give it a name and a collar, train it and look after it properly. Don't allow uncared-for dogs to roam the village, spoil your food, keep you awake at night by barking, and finally go mad and bite you.

There is much more that is valuable in his book. There is not a defect in the villages that has escaped his eagle eye. His ideas on village education are in my opinion perfectly sound and difficult to improve upon. I cannot resist quoting the following passage:

> The object of a village school is to make better, more intelligent, and happier villagers. If a ploughman's son comes to school, his schooling should so pepare him that when he comes to follow the tail of his father's plough he will pick up the work more quickly and display more intelligence in all his business than his father did. Above all, the children must learn at school how to lead healthy lives and protect themselves from epidemic diseases. What is the use of teaching boys who are going to go blind, become in some way physically incapacitated, or even to die before they reach manhood? What is the use of education when the home is dirty, uncomfortable, and epidemics are liable to sweep away the whole family, or leave the children blind or maimed?

And to this end he would make the village teacher not a man who could only impart a knowledge of the three R's. He must become a genuine village leader, a centre of light and culture whom the people trust, to whom they refer their problems and whom they consult when they are in doubt or difficulty.

> The teacher must take and hold his proper place in village life. He must practise what he preaches, and set the example of working with his own hands at all the uplift measures he recommends. His gospel is the dignity of labour and the dignity of social service, and he must be as willing to set about cleaning the village or adjusting an iron plough as he is to teach reading and writing.

I must restrain myself now, and be satisfied with recommending a perusal of this valuable contribution to village reconstruction literature. The scheme so far as it goes is on the whole good and practicable. If the information that has been given by Lala Deshraj is to be relied upon, as in my opinion it should be, the execution has been, to say the least, extremely defective, not however through want of will and effort on the part of both Mr. Brayne and his partner, but because of the official environment and groove which he and his were unable to overcome. But this limitation is one which all of us similarly placed would labour under. I know that Mr. Brayne has been libelling India and putting before his English audiences deductions from his limited observations which they could not possibly challenge and which at that distance would appear in a much more exaggerated form than they would if repeated in India. But I have not allowed my examination of his book to be affected either by his English calumnies or by the apparent failure of his experiment. As a reformer myself deeply interested in village reconstruction I have endeavoured to take what good I can out of a book sincerely written.

Young India, 14-11-1929

486. MY POSITION

English friends have been sending me cables[1], as I suppose, to others, telling me in substance to reciprocate the effort of the Labour Government to help India. After the joint manifesto which bears my signature in common with others, nothing more remains to be said or done. Nevertheless, perhaps, I owe it to the personal friends, who are interested in what I think and do, and who are affectionately solicitous that I should think or do the right thing, to explain my own position more definitely than a joint manifesto can ever do.

Let me repeat what I have said before in these e pages[2] that I am dying for co-operation. My non-co-operation is a token of my earnest longing for real heart co-operation in the place of co-operation falsely so called. I . have therefore responded on the very first opportunity that offered itself. But I have meant every word of the joint manifesto as I have the now famous Calcutta resolution[3] of the Congress. The two are in no sense contradictory. The letter of a document is nothing if the spirit of it is preserved in fact. I can wait for the Dominion Status constitution, if I can get the real Dominion Status in action, if, that is to say, there is a real change of heart, a real desire on the part of the British people to see India a free and self-respecting nation and on the part of the of officials in India a true spirit of service. But this means substitution of the steel bayonet by that of the goodwill of the people. Are the Englishmen and Englishwomen prepared to rely for the safety of their life and property upon the goodwill of the people rather than upon their gun-mounted forts? If they are not yet ready, there is no Dominion Status that would satisfy me. My conception of Dominion Status implies present ability to sever the British connection if I wish to. Therefore there can be no such thing as compulsion in the regulation of relations between Britain and India. If I choose to remain in the Empire, it is to make the partnership a power for promoting peace and goodwill. In the world, never to promote

[1] For cables from *The Daily Express* and A. Fenner Brockway, *vide* footnote 1, p. 87 and footnote I to "Letter to A. Fenner Brockway", 14-11-1929.

[2] *Vide* "Notes", sub-title Is It True

[3] *Vide* "Speech on Resolution on Nehru Report, Calcutta Congress- III", 31-12-1928

exploitation or what is known as Britain's imperialistic greed. It is highly likely that the Labour Government has never meant all the implications mentioned by me. In my opinion I have not stretched the meaning of the manifesto in stating the implications. But whether the manifesto can bear the weight of these implications or not, it is due to the friends in England and in India that they should clearly realize my own fundamental position. I am fully aware that India has not developed strength enough to assert the position here adumbrated. If therefore it is realized now it will be largely through the good grace of the British people. It will be nothing strange if they exhibit it at the present juncture. It will be some reparation for the past wrongs done to India.

But if the time is not yet ripe for India to come to her own I have patience enough to wait. I can work and live for no other goal. I recognize that mine is but the voice of an individual. How far it is representative of India's millions, no one can say; I certainly cannot.

Young India, 14-11-1929

487. THE INCOME OF POTENTATES

A correspondent sends a strongly worded letter giving a digest of figures showing the takings by the different European monarchs in every 1,350 rupees of the income of their States and has compared them with the income derived by only one Maharaja, that is of Mysore. I take the following[1] from it.

I do not know whether the figures given by the correspondent are approximately true. If anyone can supplement the correspondent's figures, they will be a most helpful study alike for the princes as for the people. Assuming the correctness of the figures, they furnish food for reflection for Indian princes.

Young India, 14-11-1929

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had furnished figures from the *Statesman Year Book of* 1926.

488. THE U. P. TOUR-IX[1]

IN DELHI

In Delhi Gandhiji had to face a crowded programme which he could scrape through with the greatest difficulty, for he had to finish not merely the items of his tour but to attend the unexpected meeting of the members of the Working Committee as also a joint meeting of these members and the leaders who at the urgent invitation of Pandit Motilal Nehru had arrived in Delhi. I must however omit the political meeting, as it was not part of the tour and its result is already before the public. The tour programme began with a visit to the Jamia. It became a solemn function owing to the short but solemn speech made by Gandhiji in acknowledging the Jamia khadi purse of Rs. 500. Speaking under a visible emotion he said how it was a matter of grief to him every time he visited Delhi which was the scene of Shraddhanandji's assassination and Hindu-Muslim riots. He loved to call it the Delhi of Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan and Shraddhanandji which alas it was no more. But he was consoled by the fact that the very first function in Delhi began with a visit to the Jamia for whose existence in Delhi Hakim Saheb was principally responsible. He entertained the highest hopes of the Jamia boys in achieving Hindu-Muslim unity. He expected them to remain untouched by communal passion and communal prejudice. That was the least the boys owed to the memory of Hakim Saheb and to the self-sacrifice of the teachers who were devoting themselves to the moulding of the Jamia boys. From the Jamia the party motored to Indraprasth Gurukul situated about 14 miles from Delhi on an extensive piece of lofty ground. The teachers, the boys and the servants altogether contributed over Rs. 855 to the purse, probably the largest sum yet contributed in proportion to their numbers by any educational institution. This Gurukul has 141 pupils. The analysis of their contribution is also interesting. Servants Rs. 36-4-0, the earnings of labour specially put in by the pupils Rs. 80-8-6, denial by the pupils of part of their clothing Rs. 570-8-0, contribution by the teachers Rs. 186-4-0[2], total Rs. 855-8-6. Over and above this thestudents contributed a very large

[1] *Vide* footnote 2, "The U. P. Tour-VI", 24-10-1929

[2] Perhaps a slip for 168-4-0 which would give the total 855-8-6 152

amount of yarn. It has been a special feature of gurukuls to make up their contributions by manual labour and self-denial. Here too Gandhiji redelivered the message delivered to the Jamia boys. He told the boys that the only proper manner in which they could do penance for Shraddhanandji's assassination was to purify themselves and there through Hindu religion. In the afternoon there was the meeting to receive the Municipal Committee's address. Then women's meeting. Then students' meeting and then the public meeting. The women's contribution was a notable effort. It amounted to over Rs. 1,000 besides a large amount of jewellery. Owing to the political conference to which I have referred, the whole of the afternoon programme was upset. The women who had gathered at 2 o'clock patiently waited till 6.30, and yet they showed no resentment, no sullenness, no impatience. India may well be proud of her women who are capable of such forbearance. The reader need not run away with the idea that those who had gathered in their large numbers at this meeting were illiterate women. On the contrary many of them were highly educated, but they knew that Gandhiji was helpless and therefore out of their natural charity forgave him for the inconvenience that was undoubtedly caused to them, many of whom had left young children behind for the purpose of attending the meeting. I must pass by the other meetings in Delhi and take the reader to Aligarh, omitting also the several places visited on the way to Aligarh.

IN ALIGARH[1]

The Vice-Chancellor of the Muslim University had invited Gandhiji to address the students. The hall where he gave the address[2] was packed to suffocation. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Mr. Horn, presided. At this meeting Gandhiji was made honorary life member of the University Union. His address was an impassioned appeal to the University boys to produce servants of the country and Islam like Gokhale. The speaker recalled to the students the simplicity of the second Caliph Umar, told them how he, although the treasures of the world lay at his feet, denied himself every form of ease and luxury, and rebuked his lieutenants when they pampered themselves by using soft silk garments instead of coarse khadi and fine flour instead of unsifted stone-ground coarse flour. Khadi was practically conspicuous

[1] On November 3

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Muslim University, Aligarh", 4-11-1929

by its absence among the students. Gandhiji therefore made a moving appeal to them to adopt khadi if they would establish a living bond between themselves and the millions of India's paupers whose children could never have access to the facilities for education which the foresight and genius of the late Sir Syed Ahmed had provided for them. And thirdly he asked them to consider themselves custodians of India's honour and makers of Hindu Muslim unity. He would expect them to be found amongst the first to help a Hindu in distress as he would expect Hindu students to be found among the first to help a Muslim brother in distress. Though there was no want of enthusiasm at the meeting, it was impossible not to notice the absence of any purse from the students and professors. Throughout the tour this was our first experience of a students' gathering addressed by Gandhiji where there was no purse presented for *Daridranarayana*. The omission was all the more noticeable for the fact that Gandhiji scrupulous]y refrained from making any mention about it at the meeting. At the end of the meeting he was besieged for autographs. He straightway named his price: 'If you will have my autograph you must promise to wear khadi.' After a little hesitation on the part of the first applicant many came forward with their promises and received autographs. Several others came the next day to receive the autograph in exchange for promises to wear khadi. There were of course the usual functions in Aligarh which do not require any special description.

IN MATHURA[1]

From Aligarh taking several places on the way as usual we passed on to Mathura. The absence in this celebrated holy place of Hinduism of anything to remind one of the nativity of Krishna, the first among the cowherds of the world as Gandhiji called him at the public meeting, preyed upon his mind, and in reply to the addresses Gandhiji emptied his soul before the meeting on behalf of the cow. He said a visitor to Mathura and the surrounding places reported to be the birthplace and the playground of the divine keeper of the cow had a right to expect this part of the country to show the finest cattle in the world and to produce rich, pure unadulterated milk almost at the price of water even as it was said to have been in Krishna's age. A visitor would expect the people of Mathura to show the rigorous piety,

[1] On November 6

simplicity and bravery of Krishna. He would also expect to find the despised untouchables to be treated with affection and everyconsideration. 'I see, as I go through the streets of Mathura, cattle with their bones protruding, cows who give so little milk as to be an economic burden. I see in this holy place the slaughter-house where the cow whom Krishna protected and venerated is slaughtered for man's food. Do not imagine that it is the Muslim or even the Englishman who is in the first instance responsible for this shameful state of things. We Hindus are primarily responsible for it. Cattle will be killed as they are fast becoming an economic burden on the land, and if they are not killed in India they will be shipped as they are already being shipped to Australia for its butcheries. Hindus are in the first instance possessors of the vast majority of India's cattle. It is they who sell them to butchers or their buyers. If we would but do our duty towards the divine child whom we affect to worship, we could study the science of cattle-keeping and would make it a point of ensuring that they are superior to any cattle in the world in their capacity to give milk and bear burdens. If we would do this we have to discard foolish prejudices and superstitions however ancient they may be.'

GOVARDHAN[1]

From Mathura we went to Govardhan on our way to Brindaban. The sight that Gandhiji saw in Govardhan grieved him more even than in Mathura. Govardhan was visited in the early morning at 7 o'clock. As we passed through the ill-kept street of Govardhan we faced a yoke of bullock and buffalo both with their protruding bones. At the meeting we found men looking as if they had just risen from their sleep, youngsters in dirty clothes, with eyes and ears unwashed and without any lustre in their eyes, or intelligence in their features. to add to his grief, the secretary who presented the khadi purse said: "This place is filled with Brahmins who are *bhikharis*—beggars—and so we are unable to give you a large purse." This drew from Gandhiji a speech which showed his great grief. He made no reference to the purse and would not make the appeal he invariably makes for money. 'You have brought me,' he said, 'to a place which stirs me to my depths. I belong to a Vaishnava family. From my childhood I have been taught to think of the birthplace and the playground of Shri Krishna as places which would make a man discard his sins if he

[1] On November 7

visited them. I had no such feeling as I passed through the streets. This is the place where Krishna is alleged to have lifted with his little finger the hill of Govardhan and protected hiscowherd companions and their cattle from being deluged by the rains that were pouring upon them. But the spirit of that sermon of humanity and its companion the cow I miss here. Instead I see dilapidated cattle and I see before me men and boys without life or lustre and I am told about and I find Brahmins described as beggars. Not so were those, the Brahmins of old. They were those who had seen God face to face and imparted to all men the secret of so seeing God. It was not on charity that they lived. Their maintenance was found for them as a matter of privilege by those whom they endowed with divine knowledge. They were in the days of Krishna the custodians of true religion. They arrogated no superiority to themselves but they commanded respect and veneration by reason of their service of humanity. I see no trace of this in sacred Govardhan.' The meeting in Govardhan did not occupy more than twenty minutes, for we had to take several places before reaching our destination which was Brindaban.

IN BRINDABAN[1]

In Brindaban we stayed at the Prem Mahavidyalaya, that standing monument to the charity of that brave patriot Raja Mahendra Pratap. I must not however tarry to describe this institution or the Ramakrishna Mission or the Gurukul—all of which Gandhiji visited. At the public meeting there was the unveiling of the Raja Saheb's portrait by Gandhiji and an address to the students of the Prem Mahavidyalaya. Acharya Jugalkishore had purposely postponed the annual function of the Vidyalaya to the time of Gandhiji's visit. Gandhiji used the unveiling ceremony as an occasion for paying a glowing tribute to Raja Mahendra Pratap whose noble example of self-sacrifice and patriotism he commended to all the zamindars. to the students he said: 'You will not have deserved the munificent donation of Raja Mahendra Pratap if you do not labour for your neighbours. Your education, if it is a vital thing, must shed its fragrance in your surroundings. You must devote a certain portion of your time daily to serving the people around in a practical manner. You must therefore be prepared to take the spade, the broomstick and the basket. You must become voluntary scavengers of this holy place.

[1] On November 7

That would be the richest part of your education, not learning by heart literary theses. I learn that Brindaban contains a very large number of widows who have come principally from Bengal to pass the remainder of their lives in Brindaban. The poor amongst them are paid a small pittance daily for repeating in congregation the divine name Radhe-Shyam.[1] It is to be hoped that those who are responsible for organizing this charity will give some work to the widows rather than make them feel helpless by doling out charity as against their repeating the name of God. Surely a vain repetition can have no virtue about it.'

Young India, 14-11-1929

489. AN IDEAL ADDRESS

In the last issue I had given some examples of the language used in addresses.[2] At every meeting I receive three, four, or even more addresses. In most of them I find nothing artistic. Mostly the addresses are only full of fulsome praise of me. In my opinion this shows lack of wisdom and ideas. By flattering a person to his face we neither honour nor please him. Much of my work would cease if I were to believe the words of praise applied to me. God has given me a sense of humour; with this I laugh away all such epithets; and, because I try to practise the teachings of the *Gita,* to my knowledge praise and blame have no effect on me. But, in this article, I have not set out to describe what effect the addresses have on me. Here I only wish to tell the readers how an ideal address should be framed, so that people who present addresses in future may also get some help in preparing them. An ideal address can be prepared by observing the following rules.

l. The language of an address should be such that both Hindus and Muslims alike can understand it.

2. An address should not need a frame.

3. As far as possible the address should be written on handmade paper. Such paper can be secured if an attempt is made to obtain it. Granted that hand-made paper cannot compare with machine-made paper, even so we should not let this handicraft die. The survival of such handicrafts depends on the partiotism of the rich and the wise.

[1] The source has "Radha Shyam".
[2] *Vide* "the National Language"

4. The address should only be written by hand. If this becomes the rule, then the art of calligraphy will flourish. Such an address. should not be written by any and every person. It should be written only by someone who is an adept at calligraphy. It is quite a different matter to say that for the sake of publicity it is necessary to have an address printed. In my opinion there is no necessity to distribute addresses in this manner. Before the guest arrives, the address should be read out to the gathering.

5. Nowadays, it has become the vogue that an address to be presented in the name of an association or society is prepared by some one individual without other members being consulted about it. Our people are indifferent to such matters; therefore, whatever is to be said or to be done, only one person acts on behalf of all. But the proper thing is for the contents of the address to be known to all the people who are giving the address. Only then has the address any value. For instance, if an address is to be presented in the name of students, a committee of the students should be formed; and even then, the address, when ready, should be approved by an assembly of all the students.

6. An address should contain very few words of praise. Rather, what has been done in accordance with the ideals of the addressee, and what would be done in the future, should be spelled out in the address. together with this, particulars of the society or association presenting the address should be given in it.

If the above suggestions are followed, then, the addresses which are dull and meaningless today will become interesting and purposeful.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 14-11-1929

490. LETTER TO JOHN S. HOYLAND

CAMP RAI BARELI,
November 14, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of October 18th. I have not yet received the book.[1] When I return to the Ashram I suppose I shall see it and if I at all get the time I shall read it and see what I can do with it. Generally books are not reviewed in *Young India*. I wish indeed that I could come to England but there is no call from within as yet., I hope that medical reasons will soon cease to operate against your return to India.[2]

Yours sincerely,

JOHN S. HOYLAND, ESQ.
BIRMINGHAM (ENGLAND)

From a photostat: S.N. 15682

491. LETTER TO ALI MOHAMAD A. ALLADIN

CAMP RAI BARELI,
November 14, 1929

DEAR FRIEND

I have your letter[3]. I know nothing of the incident referred to by you but assuming that some Sikhs and some Hindus misbehaved themselves that is no reason why it should be a bar against Hindu-Muslim friendship or that the sins of a few should be imputed to the whole people.

Yours sincerely,

ALI MOHAMAD A. ALLADIN, ESQ., M.A.
ALLADIN BUILDINGS
SECUNDERABAD, DECCAN

From a microfilm: S.N. 15744

[1] The *Case for India*

[2] The addressee had been in India for sixteen years.

[3] It stated: ". . . Some time ago at Quadian in Punjab Sikhs and Hindus joined together and demolished completely the abattoir for cows.... At this atrocious incident the Hindu leaders instead of condemning the perpetrators never raised a single voice of protest Under such circumstances how Muslims of India can be convinced that when India gets swaraj or even Dominion Status their rights would be safeguarded?" (S.N. 15743)

492. LETTER TO C. D. SMILEY[1]

CAMP RAI BARELI,
November 14, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You could see me in Wardha near Nagpur between the 8th and 15th of December. My movements are just now subject to alteration hut in all probability during the dates mentioned by me I shall be in Wardha. On enquiring about that time at Sabarmati you will know whether I am then in Wardha or not.

Yours sincerely,

MISS C. D. SMILEY
AMERICAN MARATHI MISSION
BYCULLA, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 15746

493. LETTER TO ALAVI

CAMP RAI BARELI,
November 14, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I went through a few pages of your book. A book like yours is not in my line. I am no judge of English poetry and I have no time to give myself for pleasures of that character. But I saw sufficient of your pages to discover that it contained many errors typographical and others. And as I was going through the few pages I could not help asking myself why you had devoted your precious time to writing on a thing on which Englishmen would write with greater confidence and authority and why you had not given your time to writing something in Urdu and for the Urdu-knowing countrymen of ours.

Yours sincerely,

PROF. ALAVI
MUSLIM UNIVERSITY
ALIGARH

From a photostat: S.N. 15765

[1] An American on a visit to India 159

494. LETTER TO SECRETARY, A.I.S.A., MASULIPATAM[1]

Registered

CAMP RAI BARELI,
November 14, 1929

DEAR SIR,

I am writing a note in *Young India* about the dealers in spurious Andhra khadi.[2] I return the papers sent by you.

Yours sincerely,

Encls.

From a microfilm: S.N. 15766

495. LETTER TO A. FENNER BROCKWAY

CAMP RAI BARELI,
November 14, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your cablegram[3]. I have done whatever was possible but you will be patient with me if I do not take things quite on trust. I would want some absolute guarantees that things are not what they seem. The two Parliamentary debates contain nothing, not even in Benn's[4] speech that would give me assurance that I may approach the Conference[5] with confidence and safety. I would far rather wait and watch and pray than run into what may after all be a dangerous trap, may be quite unintended. The Montagu reforms have proved illusory. They have not eased the misery of the poor. On the contrary they have demonstrably increased their burdens. The price that was paid for the reforms was altogether too heavy. I want to pay no price for Dominion Status or whatever name the reality is called by. Why

[1] From the S.N. Register

[2] *Vide* "Notes", sub-title, "Khadi Buyers Beware", 21-11-1929.

[3] Which read: "Convinced after seeing Benn sincere desire meet India basis equality. Beg you co-operate this opening door friendship. Arranging amnesty. Love."

[4] Wedgwood Benn, Secretary of State for India

[5] Proposed Round Table Conference

should a creditor have to pay anything for the repayment of debts due to him? I will follow the methods that I have adopted throughout life and, as for instance, in South Africa. Immediately I found that Smuts meant well I capitulated but I did so after having taken a written assurance from him. How the events will shape themselves in the next few days I do not know. But I owe it to you to make my position as clear as I can in a brief letter dictated in the midst of an exacting tour and at night after a fatiguing journey.

Similar letter sent to two other friends who sent cables like yours.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

FENNER BROCKWAY, ESQ.

From a photostat: G.N. 1407

496. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

CAMP RAI BARELI,
November 14, 1929

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

I have nearly finished your monograph on Public Finance. So far as I have gone I like it and I would like to publish it in *Young India*[1] and then perhaps separately in pamphlet form. If you are agreeable please telegraph your assent Anand Bhawan Allahabad.

This letter should be in your hands on Saturday.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

SJT. KUMARAPPA
GUJARAT VIDYAPITH
AHMEDABAD

From a photostat: G.N. 10084

[1] It was published serially in *Young India* from 28-11-1929 to 23-1-1930 with an introduction by Gandhiji; *vide* "Public Finance and Our Poverty", 28-11-1929. It was later published in book form in 1930 with a foreword by Gandhiji; *vide* "Foreword to *Public Finance and Our Poverty*", 20-4-1930.

497. TELEGRAM TO SAROJINI NAIDU[1]

[KALAKANKAR,
November 14, 1929][2]

SAROJINI DEVI
TAJMAHAL
BOMBAY

CONSIDER IT IMPOSSIBLE INTERRUPT PROGRAMME DISAPPOINT TENS OF THOUSANDS WHO CANNOT UNDERSTAND INTERRUPTION. INTERVIEW CAN COME IF NECESSARY AFTER 24TH. MEANWHILE HOPE MR. JINNAH OTHER FRIENDS WILL RESPOND MOTILALJI INVITATION.

From a photostat: S.N. 15777

498. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU[3]

[KALAKANKAR,
November 14, 1929]

PANDIT NEHRU

REPLIED SAROJINIDEVI SAYING IMPOSSIBLE INTERRUPT PROGRAMME. INTERVIEW CAN COME IF NECESSARY AFTER 24TH. THANKS FOR APPEAL LALAJI MEMORIAL.

From a photostat: S.N. 15777

[1] The addressee's telegram, communicated by Motilal Nehru to Gandhiji, read: "Viceroy expected Bombay sixteenth. Private interview as suggested feasible if authorized by you . . ."; *vide* also *Vithalbhai Patel, Life and Times,* Book II, p. 1064.

[2] The telegram to which this is a reply was received at Kalakankar on November 14 at 12.40 p.m.

[3] Quoting Sarojini Naidu's telegram, *vide* footnote 2, the addressee had wired: "Our common friend will take initiative immediately and wire authentic invitation direct if in view important situation you could possibly alter your programme. Specially reach Bombay that date. Wire immediately."

499. LETTER TO J. B. PENNINGTON

CAMP KALAKANKAR,
November 14, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

However much we may differ, your letters are always welcome. They serve as a tonic. I am reproducing your letter in full in *Young India* with a short reply[1] of which I send you an advance copy herewith so as not to keep you waiting for the reply for a fortnight which it would take before it is printed as I am sending it to *Young India* from an out-of-the-way place in my U.P. tour. May you live long enough to send me many more letters still. There is no reason why you should not live to see India reach her cherished goal.

Yours sincerely,

J. B. PENNINGTON, ESQ.
NATIONAL HOMECROFT ASSOCIATION LIMITED
CARDIFF

From a photostat: S.N. 15249

500. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

CAMP KALAKANKAR,
November 14, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I remember having received during this tour the letter you refer to but travelling along with me it got itself lost in a pile of papers and escaped my attention altogether. Pray, forgive me. You certainly have my blessings, both you and your wife, and may you have a happy long life dedicated to the service of the motherland. So far as I can see, you were right in leaving your father's house and your father is also right in saying that you may not have it all your own way so long as you depend upon him even for maintaining you. My own feeling is that no boy is fit to be married so long as he is not capable of maintaining himself and is actually not so doing. I feel that even if a grown-up young man is living in his father's house he

[1] *Vide* "Honest Differences", 21-11-1929.

should contribute his quota of labour to the household and earn his living so that both father and son feel interdependent and free to sever the joint life whenever either party so desires it. I do hope that you will not take up railway service. If you can put up with a life of hard toil you can certainly come to the Udyoga Mandir, see the thing for yourself and if it suits you, you can remain there. And if you can become acclimatized there your wife may follow. The law of the Udyoga Mandir requires strict celibacy even between husband and wife and therefore if your wife comes she would be expected to live apart from you. But if the Udyoga Mandir is too rigorous for you, you can still be accommodated in some national service if you will be content with a humble salary.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. ANAND T. HINGORANI

P.O. BALLOKI, DT. LAHORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 15690

501. LETTER TO SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN CONGRESS

CAMP KALAKANKAR,
November 14, 1929

THE SECRETARIES

SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN CONGRESS

[DURBAN]

DEAR SIR,

I enclose herewith letter received from the Accounts Officer, Telegraph Check Office, Calcutta, with reference to my application[1] for refund to be made of the amount sent by you for a message which amount was not used.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

From a microfilm: S.N. 15767

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Superintendent, Government Telegraph Check Office, Calcutta", 23-10-1929

502. LETTER TO NARGIS CAPTAIN

CAMP KALAKANKAR,
November 14, 1929

I have your letter. I think you did talk to me about the German lady. If she comes to the Ashram of course I shall see her. I hope you were none the worse for the rushing you had during the tour. I am doing well. How is baby doing? You must give me all your impressions as you had promised. I shall reach Allahabad tomorrow and I hope to see Kamala in a comparatively healthy state.

MRS. NARGIS CAPTAIN
78 NAPEAN SEA ROAD
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 15768

503. LETTER TO SECRETARY, FIJI CONGRESS

CAMP KALAKANKAR,
November 14, 1929

THE SECRETARY
CONGRESS LAUTOKA
SUVA (FIJI)

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your cablegram[1] about the throwing out of the motion for common franchise. I congratulate the members who have resigned by way of protest. I hope that they will stick to their decision and not seek re-election till a common franchise is granted. United effort and agitation will surely bring about relief at an early period but whether it comes early or late it is perfectly useless to go to the Council unless this elementary thing is done. Please keep me informed of further developments.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 15769

[1] *Vide* "Notes", sub-title, Indians in Fiji", 21-11-1929.

504. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

KALAKANKAR,

November 14, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have your letter. The laxity about sacrificial spinning which is growing among us strikes me as dangerous. It is of course necessary that those who do not spin should give the reason why they do not do so. But these external remedies are just attempts to keep up appearances. Those who do not spin should declare what their real faith is.

I have held for many years that one external step remains to be taken. All activities which are looked upon as *yajna*, that is, dharma or duty, have a fixed time assigned to them. The *namaz*, the *gayatri*, etc., are performed at fixed hours. This is themeaning behind the notion of *mahurta*[1]. It would therefore be worth while to fix the hour for sacrificial activities as we have fixed hours for meals. If we put upon these activities the same value in our hearts as we do with our lips, we would be able to solve all the difficulties which may arise in fixing such a time. I can understand that all the members of an institution cannot spin at the same hour. For instance, those who are engaged in cooking cannot spin at the same time as others. We may even fix a separate hour when such persons may spin. Think over this suggestion and, if you think it is practicable, discuss it with others. We shall discuss it further after my return and then do what seems best. If you do not think it has any significance, ignore it. You may, if you wish to, remove the rule about the length of the time [for spinning]. If my suggestion can be carried out, the question of removing that rule will not arise. If, however, you wish to fix the hour for spinning and not the length of time, you may do that. Adopt whichever method will safeguard truth.

I had a wire from Mahadev today, telling me that Santok[2] had been operated upon for piles and fistula. This seems to have been a sudden development, for I did not even know till now that Santok suffered from piles. of course it was good that she was operated upon.

[1] Auspicious hour

[2] Maganlal Gandhi's widow

I shall know more details when your letter arrives. It would be good if you get Manu's tonsils also removed just now. You need not wait for me, for the operation is a simple one.

Nath must have arrived there. I understand what you say about Marathe. By trying to keep his art a secret, he limits its scope and obstructs its progress. If Nath can convince him of this, Marathe will be happier and have more peace. Ishwarlal told me that, because of this defect of his, students did not like to work under him. I felt that there was a good deal of truth in what he said. I shall have no objection if you wish to show this portion to him. Tell Surendra that, though I write nothing concerning him, I have been every day looking for a letter from him.

Ask Bal to write. Enclosed is a letter for Bhansali. Pass it on to him after reading it. I have discussed some principles in it which it would be good for you to know.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4151

505. A LETTER

KALAKANKAR,

November 14, 1929

CHI. . . [1],

I should very much like to write about the Jam Saheb and other Princely states. I know a great deal about them, but at present I can serve best by keeping silent. Time is not yet for me to speak. But that does not mean that I do not think about the states. I think a great deal, I am learning a great deal, and if I live I will also gather the strength to speak.[2]

In spinning, the time spent in joining the string, if it breaks, can be included in the hour to be spent in spinning. But there is much room for self-deception in that practice. Hence after personal experience I have suggested that while fixing the time we should also fix the number of rounds. Just as we fix the minimum of one hour for

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

[2] *Vide* also "Princely States", 28-11-1929.

spinning, if we also fix the maximum or minimum of 160 rounds, there would be less room for self-deception, because it is my experience that if we have not fixed the number of rounds to be spun, very often the appointed time may be spent in fixing the spinning-wheel and we shall not have spun even one round. That happened with me in Yeravda Prison. So I set three types of conditions; so much weight and so much time. In fixing the limit of weight I was prompted by a desire to spin fine yarn, because I had seen that at time I span a lot but the weight was excessive, so that the yarn proved to be only of three counts. This made me angry with myself, and I decided to reduce the weight and spin the same number of rounds within it. After that I learnt to spin fine yarn. I can point out yet another necessary restriction. But this is enough for the present.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/8

506. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI

KALAKANKAR,
November 14, 1929

CHI. KALAVATI,

I have your letter. It is good that you have now got over the loss of your jewellery. If we think deeply over it we shall find that nothing in this world belongs to any one individual. When a certain thing that we had come to regard as ours is lost or destroyed we feel grieved. But if we look upon a thing as belonging not to us but to God, there would be no grief. The question then arises: If nothing belongs to anyone, who should take care of anything and why? The answer is that though we are not the owners of a thing, we hold it, when it has come to us through our labour or through some other rightful means, in trust or guardianship for God. It then becomes our duty to guard it. And, if, in spite of our guarding it with diligence and care, it comes to be destroyed or lost we should not feel grieved.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5241

507. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

KALAKANKAR,
November 15, 1929

CHI. BHANSALI,

I have your letter. You are perfectly entitled to write to me about the Ashram for you have been regarding it as your own. By all means discuss the question with me to your heart's content when we meet. There is certainly much in what you write. The things I do and encourage others to do, I describe as experiments because we cannot be definite about their results. If I had been following the beaten path, I would not have given it the name ''experiment". As I have not deduced any new principle, I do not describe the experiment as a fresh discovery. However, as an element of novelty is necessarily involved in putting ancient principles into practice, risks have got to be taken in such experiments. If there is scope for reform or change in the common practice of those principles, it becomes one's duty to effect such reform even if risks have to be taken for the purpose. The rest when we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4208

508. LETTER TO SANTOK GANDHI

November 16, 1929

CHI. SANTOK,

I have now Mahadev's letter from which I learn the details. It is very good that you underwent the operation. I hope you are resting now. Ask Radha[1] or Rukhi[2] to write to me a detailed account.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8678. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] Addressee's daughters
[2] *ibid*

509. THE VALUE OF NATIONAL EDUCATION[1]

Shri Jethalal Jivanlal Gandhi, Secretary of the Gujarat Vidyapith Graduates' Association, writes:[2]

The readers will see that this letter confirms what I said in my first article.[3] If the prevailing atmosphere in the country is good, or if our youth shows the capacity to rise above it, the national schools will brim over with students. Life throbs in the national schools. If nothing more, it does at least produce in the students a spirit of service and self-confidence.

The progress registered in spinning and the use of khadi may be considered satisfactory. But, in my opinion, there is still room for improvement. No one who has been in a national school for any length of time can afford to be half-hearted in his use ofkhadi. For instance, if one omits any part of a uniform, one cannot be said to be in uniform. It has to be remembered that khadi is the accepted uniform of national schools and colleges. Just as every right angle has 90 degrees, even so it is with the uniform to be used by the graduates of a national college. We restrict the meaning of uniform only to the kind of cloth used. There is no restriction about the type of clothes to be put on. I think that it should be so. The practice obtained in the gurukuls of olden times and prevails today in the well-known schools of the West. I am inclined to believe that there is a sound basis for it.

The graduates do not yet take sufficient interest in spinning for they have not still fully appreciated its value. If they do, they can easily produce every month heaps of beautiful, well-twisted fine yarn and it will not take much of their time. As long as they are not convinced that swaraj does indeed lie in the self-spun khadi yarn, we have to wait for that full interest to be shown by them in spinning and khadi.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan 17-l 1-1929

[1] Translation of this article is adapted from *The Problem of Education*.

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had given the latest

[3] information on the activities of the ex-students of the Gujarat Vidyapith

510. COWDUNG CAKES OR MANURE?[1]

In the last chapter[2] we discussed human excreta and urine. Since we make no use of animals' urine like that of cows and buffaloes, it only serves to accentuate the filth. Cowdung is mostly used for making cakes for fuel. There is no reason to doubt at all that this is the least use—if not misuse—of cowdung. This is like killing a buffalo for making a lash. The heat produced by cowdung cake is considered to be mild. It is used by those who smoke a hookah or *chilam*[3]. In the Punjab there is a belief that cowdung cake fire is better for making ghee. It is possible that there is some truth in it. But all these arguments are advanced because we use cowdung as fuel. If we make full use of cowdung, various other means can be found to produce a mild fire. If cowdung cakes cost one pie each, the value of the same quantity of cowdung, if fully utilized, will be ten times more. And if we take into account the indirect losses, they are hard to estimate.

To make full and good use of cowdung is to use it as manure. Agricultural experts opine that, if we misuse cowdung for fuel, the fields suffer in fertility. A field without manure is as dry as a sweetmeat without ghee. I presume that there are no such farmers in India foolish enough to burn cowdung and buy chemical manure. Moreover, farmers believe that the value of chemical manure when compared with cowdung manure is much less. There are advantages as well as disadvantages in using chemical manure. Although scientists are still making experiments, many of them believe that the use of chemical manure increases the quantity of yield and sometimes improves its appearance also, but the quality certainly suffers. It is the opinion of some scientists that, by using chemical manure in a field of given area the yield of wheat would increase, the grain would be bigger in size and better in appearance, while the yield of wheat in a field of equal size having natural manure may be less, but will excel the former in sweetness and nutritional value. It is possible that after sufficient research the value that is attached to chemical manure today will be considerably lowered.

[1] This appeared in the *Shikshan ane Sahitya* supplement.
[2] *Vide* "Does A Village Mean A Dunghill", 22-9-1929
[3] Clay pipe

Whether it be so or not, there can be no two opinions that cowdung must be used only as manure. Hence it is but the village level worker's job to impart full knowledge about the use of cattle dung and urine as manure. It is the volunteer's duty to remove the people's misconception about cowdung cakes, to find out some other substitute fuel, to explain to them by various means the value of cowdung arid urine as manure and to gain enough knowledge to be able to explain the above points to the people. The subject is as profitable as it is interesting and, for an industrious researcher, there is a mine of knowledge in it. Readers will see that in this as in regard to human excreta, money or great knowledge is not required, but what is needed is love, the love to which I referred in the last chapter.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-11-1929

511. THE SAME OLD QUESTIONS

A reader of *Navajivan* asks:[1]

Such questions have been asked in the past and replies to them have also been given. It seems, however, that the same questions pose themselves before other people. How would a new subscriber or reader of *Navajivan* know what has been written before? Hence, as soon as doubts arise, he asks for a clarification. So long as the majority of people do not take an intelligent interest in public activities, answers to the same questions will have to be given repeatedly.

The above correspondent also writes:

> I ask these questions not for myself; I have full faith in you. Answers are necessary for reassuring others.

Now the replies.

Anyone who has taken the vow of *aparigraha*[2] may not keep anything for himself, but he can keep crores in his custody while acting as a trustee. I am a representative of the poor, the cow, etc. So long as the people put their trust in me, I have a right to ask for

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had questioned the propriety of an austere person like Gandhiji collecting funds, and sought particulars about such funds and property.

[2] Non-possession

money and keep it in my possession on their behalf.

I have not yet been able to collect a sum amounting to rupees one and a half crore but if I live longer, I certainly hope to do so. The one crore rupees belonging to the Tilak Swaraj Fund were entrusted to the Congress. Its accounts have been published in full and the publication can be obtained even today by writing to the secretary or the treasurer of the Congress. The amount collected for the poor is being deposited in the account of the All-India Spinners' Association. Seth Jamnalalji is the treasurer of both these organizations. The money is deposited in well-known banks. The accounts of the All-India Spinners' Association are also published every year and whoever wants them can obtain them by writing to its secretary.

The documents relating to the Ashram and its land have been registered in the names of its trustees.[1] I am not one of them. The accounts of the Ashram have also been published and are sent to those friends who contribute towards its expenses.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-11-1929

512. A DILEMMA

A Brahmin youth aged thirty writes:[2]

I was hesitating to publish this letter, but finally decided that this should be done. I have received such letters from two or three different quarters. Some young men have also personally talked to me. From this I conclude that such incidents are not altogether uncommon. Hence discussing them may prove useful to some people.

If what this unhappy Brahmin has written is wholly true, he should be regarded as having knowingly ruined the poor girl. He married at the age of 25. At that age he was a fully mature person. His weakness was not of recent origin, it was there even at the time of marriage. Hence he should have explained his condition to his parents without any false sense of modesty and should have refused to get married. But thinking about what has already been done is futile except in so far as it is useful in seeking a remedy. I feel that even under Hindu law, such a relationship would not be regarded as marriage. If a woman

[1] *Vide* "Ashram Trust-Deed", 2-2-1926.

[2] The letter is not translated here.

disguises herself as a man and marries another woman, that marriage is not recognized as legal and the latter has full freedom to marry again. Likewise, the marriage of a man who for whatever reasons is impotent even at the time of marriage cannot be regarded as marriage at all. Hence the girl should look upon herself as unmarried and get married again. The young man should frankly admit his mistake before the members of his caste and others and take it upon himself to get her married again. If the parents come in the way of his doing this, he should face their opposition, but carry out his dharma and save the girl.

Young men conceal their impotency and such other ailments; but this should not be necessary. It is the parents and not the children who are responsible for the bad habits the latter contract in their childhood. If the former are negligent, teach their children a false sense of modesty, do not make them their, friends and later, if the children unconsciously form bad habits, the fault is nottheirs but it is the parents alone who are to be blamed.

Hence, when children reach maturity, they should courageously make known their impotency if any and such other defects. If treated in time, such weakness can even be cured. But I cannot advise this particular husband to torture the girl while he makes efforts to regain his potency. If he wishes to undergo treatment after having got the girl settled in another marriage, he is free to do so. But certain precautions are necessary even in doing this. No one can gain true virility by taking *matras*, *tejabs* and *yakutis*[1]. What they do get through these is artificial stimulation. No one has been able by means of *yakutis* to turn a weak mind into a strong one. The remedy for one who has lost his virility is exercise, a wholesome diet, open air and hydrotherapy. And the first thing is to make an effort to give up one's bad habits. Hydrotherapy strengthens the nerve-cells and one gains peace of mind. As a result, bad habits too are brought under control.

It is possible that the girl is not prepared to marry again. In that case she should stay in some institution, accept the dharma of service and get educated. If she is occupied the whole day in ennobling service and studies, it is possible that her desire for sex and for having children will be subdued. Why should she not regard all the children

[1] These are various types of medicinal preparations, oxides of metals, acids and intoxicants.

in the world as her own?

But the first step has to be taken by the young man and that is resolutely to make his own weakness known. to be afraid of receiving letters through the post may be regarded as the very limit of degradation. But the present-day atmosphere in our country has become so pathetic that there are many young men who are afraid to get replies to their letters by post. Parents too -are certainly to be blamed for this. They have the audacity to read without hesitation letters addressed to their children. Grown-up children are not at all obliged to tell everything or show their letters to their parents. Those parents who desire to read their children's letters without the latter's permission are not parents, but tyrants.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-11-1 929

513. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

CAMP ALLAHABAD,
November 17, 1929

MY DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. I have not yet got the soya bean packets. I note what you have written to Govind Babu. I do not attach any importance to his opinion. You are having your share of sorrows and worries with a vengeance, Tarini incapable, Charu following suit and Hemprabhadevi again bed-ridden. It is appalling. May YOU have the strength to bear the burden.

I have got a letter from Ram Binod of which I enclose a copy herewith. I also enclose a copy of my reply[1]. Have I correctly represented your position?

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

Encls. 2

From a photostat: G.N. 1612

[1] *Vide* the following item.

514. LETTER TO RAM BINOD

CAMP ALLAHABAD,
November 17, 1929

MY DEAR RAM BINOD,

I have your letter[1] many days after your telegram. From your letter I gather that you propose to take up a legal standpoint. If you wish to do so I have nothing to say. The Association mustthen decide according to the opinion of its legal advisers. But I wish to put three things before you. Firstly, I have never looked upon these proceedings as a legal arbitration. Secondly, I was to be the final judge. Satis Babu and Vithaldas Jerajani were to advise me. Thirdly, so far as I am aware Satis Babu himself does not regard his judgment as a legal award. On the contrary he considers it to be a judgment submitted to me for my approval. I have never thought that even I was to give a legal award. My one aim was to arrive at an amicable settlement. You will now please let me know whether you propose to take up your stand upon law and regard the proceedings before Satis Babu as legal [or] as part of an attempt to arrive at an amicable settlement.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RAM BINOD
GANDHI KUTIR
MALKHACHAK
P.O. DIGHWARA (BIHAR)

From a microfilm: S.N. 15761

[1] The addressee had written: ". . . the dispute between me and the Bihar Branch of the A.I.S.A. has been settled finally by arbitration. I have nothing to say in regard to it. I do not see how the matter can now be reopened. Both Rajendra Babu and myself agreed in writing in Calcutta, at your intervention and with your concurrence, to refer the dispute for final decision to arbitration and to accept the award loyally and faithfully as the last word upon the subject.... And after going into the matter thoroughly the arbitrators came to a decision which vindicated and upheld me. . . . The Bihar Branch of the A.I.S.A. having agreed to accept the award as final must abide by it. . . . "

515. LETTER TO NAWAB OF BHOPAL

CAMP ALLAHABAD,
November 17, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I am much obliged to you for your letter[1] of 11th inst. I can in return give you my assurance that I shall not make any indiscreet or illegitimate use of the information you have so generously placed in my possession.

Yours sincerely,

HIS HIGHNESS THE NAWAB SAHEB OF BHOPAL
BHOPAL (C.I.)

From a photostat: S.N. 15770

516. LETTER TO B. RAM VARMA

CAMP ALLAHABAD,
November 17, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The Raja Saheb of Avagarh has promised a fat contribution but I have not received anything yet. He however said that he would send the contribution at an early date. I have no doubt that he will do so. I have nothing but sweet recollections of my visit to Etah.[2] You were all very kind and I think that the Etah contribution was not bad.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. B. RAM VARMA
PRESIDENT, DT. CONGRESS COMMITTEE
ETAH

From a photostat: S.N. 15774

[1] This is not available. In an earlier confidential letter to Gandhiji, the addressee had regretted that people were needlessly criticizing the administration, that he had voluntarily curtailed his expenses and his income was derived from investments made prior to becoming the ruler. With his letter he had enclosed some State documents.

[2] On November 8

517. SPEECH AT ALLAHABAD UNIVERSITY

November 17, 1929

Mahatma Gandhi, expressing appreciation of the address and the purse presented, said what they had done was in the performance of their duty and so he thought that there was no occasion for congratulating the students and the staff on contributing to the Lajpat Rai Fund and for khaddar propaganda.

He referred to a letter[1] which he received after his visit to Lucknow from a student of Lucknow saying that he too had joined in contributing at Lucknow to the purse in the hope that from that moment those contributing would resolve to use always khaddar. But this student expressed his surprise that after leaving Lucknow none appeared to be disposed to work for and use khaddar.

Mahatma Gandhi did not see any meaning in making those presents for khaddar and charkha if they were not at the same time determined to work for khaddar. So I say that there would be no occasion for my expressing gratitude if it is not your resolve that from today you will work for khaddar.

It was, therefore, his earnest request that they should start doing the work, an appreciation of which they made by presenting the purse.

You say in your address that charkha has a great power but have you made up your mind to work it yourself? I know you can if you only decide to do so.

He was sure that it would not in the least interfere with their studies nor would it affect their mental powers if the students only decided to give half an hour a day to spinning. Mahatma Gandhi next appealed to the students to form their *sangathan*[2], for their organized effort only could bring swaraj.

He next paid a tribute to the late Lala Lajpat Rai. Some thought, he said, that Lajpat Rai was an enemy of Mohammedans.

But I would say that he was the enemy of none. Lalaji was an advocate of Hindu-Muslim unity which was his creed and so was his religion and if you want to respect him you should at least do this that you should make an effort for bringing about unity.

The Leader, 20-11-1929

[1] *Vide* "Notes", sub-title, "Is It a Sale of Indulgences", 21-11-1929.
[2] Organization

518. SPEECH AT CIVIC RECEPTION, ALLAHABAD

November 17, 1929

Mahatma Gandhi giving a joint reply to the addresses expressed his feeling of gratitude at the addresses presented by the Municipal and District Boards and also for the purse presented by the former Board.

He congratulated the Municipal Board on giving instruction in charkha to the children and hoped that the District Board also would introduce charkha in its schools. He also congratulated the Municipal Board on having a leather working school. Mahatma Gandhi said that as he regarded himself a spinner and cultivator he also considered himself a Chamar[1] in view of his having some knowledge of the Chamar's craft as well. He therefore ventured to make a suggestion in respect of the leather industry in India.

He noticed that these days from India nine crores of rupees were sent to foreign countries through the skins of the animals being sent out for tanning. In order to save the drain of such a large amount annually, he desired that earnest efforts be made to find out some ways of improving the tanning industry in India. Hitherto even the British had failed to compete successfully with the Germans. Indians were, therefore, advised by Mahatma Gandhi to content themselves with chrome tanning only and to use shoes of chrome leather. If that was done nine crores of rupees would be retained in the country.

Proceeding, Mahatma Gandhi said that he was shocked to hear that like Hardwar, the sacred rivers of Prayag were also allowed to be polluted by sewage water of the Municipality. This news caused much pain to Mahatma Gandhi. The Board thereby not only polluted sacred rivers but also threw in the river thousands of rupees, for otherwise sewage water could be beneficially utilized. He expressed his surprise at the Board being unable to do anything in that respect.

Mahatma Gandhi emphasized the need for making arrangements for the supply of good milk to their constituents. The Boards, in his opinion, would not be considered to have discharged their duties if they did not make arrangements for that. He failed to understand why the Boards had hitherto failed to do such a simple thing.

Concluding, Mahatma Gandhi asked the audience to go to that evening's public meeting with their pockets full of money to contribute towards the Lajpat Rai Fund as that was the day of Lala Lajpat Rai's death anniversary when they should try to give away as much as they could.

The Leader, 20-11-1929

[1] Leather worker

519. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, ALLAHABAD

November 17, 1929

Mahatma Gandhi said that it was not for the first time that he had come to Prayag. Pandit Motilal Nehru brought him generally whenever he desired and whenever he liked. But this visit. he said, was his first visit to Allahabad on the mission of begging for *Daridranarayana*.

Allahabad had given him more than Rs. 30,000 of which more than Rs. 16,000 was the share of *Daridranarayana*. For that Mahatma Gandhi offered his congratulations but cautioned the citizens not to feel that they had given him much. Considering the population of two lakhs of Allahabad the collection of a sum of Rs. 30,000 or Rs. 40,000 was not a great achievement. He knew that in Allahabad there were men who could pay Rs. 40,000 each, if they only so desired. Mahatma Gandhi's feeling was that when he left Allahabad he would have with him at least- Rs. 35,000.

But, he said, he wanted sixty crores of rupees and they could get sixty six crores if all Indians decided to use only khaddar. The use of khaddar would save the drain of sixty-six crores of India's money annually to foreign countries and sixty-six crores so saved would be sent into the villages. He paid a tribute to the Raja of Kalakankar and the Lal Sahib of Samastipur[1] who, he said, brought out their precious clothes of foreign stuff and got them burnt. Mahatma Gandhi, therefore, asked the citizens of Allahabad to resolve from that day to use nothing but khaddar.

Mahatma Gandhi next paid a tribute to the late Lala Lajpat Rai's memory and expressed suprise that although a year had passed they had not been able to collect even five lakhs of rupees. He referred to the appeal[2] issued under the signatures of some leaders for the Lajpat Rai Memorial Fund and the suggestion of Pandit Motilal Nehru that they should collect at least two lakhs on the day of the first anniversary of the death of Lala Lajpat Rai. If they put their heart into the work he did not think it was a great thing to collect two lakhs.

If they had the least respect, Mahatma Gandhi added, for the late Lala Lajpat Rai they should give as much as they could that day for the Memorial Fund. Allahabad was the place where the present and future Presidents[3] of the Indian National Congress lived, it was the place where the Committee[4] was located and where a big university was established and so if they would not get money here where else would they be able to get it? Lala Lajpat Rai, he said, had given his life in the work for swaraj and India

[1] Samaspur; *vide* "The U. P. tour-IX", 21-11-1929.
[2] *Vide* "Appeal for Lajpat Rai Memorial Fund", 26-11-1928
[3] Motilal Nehru and Jawaharlal Nehru
[4] All-India Congress Committee

should, therefore, resolve to do within a year what Lala Lajpat Rai wanted to do.

People should forget what the Viceroy said or would say or what Mr. Wedgwood Benn said or would say and what the leaders would discuss. What India was to get would not come from London but would come from the Indians themselves from their own strength. Mahatma Gandhi, therefore, appealed to the people to organize themselves for the work to attain swaraj. Until there was an awakening about his rights in even the smallest cultivator there would be no real swaraj. Everything depended on the power of the people themselves and therefore he appealed to the people to do everything to increase their strength and organization.

The Leader, 20-11-1929

520. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

November 18, 1929

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

Here is my draft[1]. I want you to consider it carefully and take your full share in the discussion tonight. I do not want you to suppress yourself in any way whatsoever except where *you* feel that self-suppression is better than self-expression on particular occasions. After all we must each serve according to our lights, not borrowed.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1929. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* the following item.

521. DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE[1]

November 18, 1929

Having considered the Viceregal pronouncement[2] of 1st instant and the manifesto bearing the signatures of Congress members and members belonging to the other political parties in the country, the events that have happened thereafter both in India and England and the advice tendered by friends and well-wishers, the Working Committee approves of the action taken by Congressmen and defers further consideration pending the holding of the forthcoming session of the National Congress.

From a photostat: S.N. 15593

522. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

PRAYAG [ALLAHABAD],

November 18, 1929

BHAISHRI VALJI,

It is not worth while to do that business in grass. The other expenditure will be more than the cost of the material itself. It is necessary to inform Nagindas about this.

The venture proposed by Vrajmohanlal Varma is of little value. I saw him. Reply to him directly from there and tell him that we cannot give him any help.

If I still have the subscription list relating to Hasanand, it may be

[1] As passed by the Congress Working Committee, the resolution read: "Having regard to the Viceregal pronouncement of November 1, the Delhi manifesto bearing the signatures of Congress members and members belonging to other political parties in the country and the events that have subsequently happened and having regard to the opinions of friends that the response from the British Government to the Delhi manifesto should be further awaited before the policy laid down therein is revised, the Working Committee confirms the action taken by Congressmen at Delhi, it being clearly understood that this confirmation is constitutionally limited to the date of the holding of the forthcoming session of the Congress." *The Pioneer*, 20-11-1929

[2] *Vide* "Viceroy's Statement", 31-10-1929

somewhere in the file there. I shall search for it after I return there.

I have still not been able to take those essays in hand.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7403. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

523. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI PATEL

November 18, 1929

BHAI SHIVABHAI,

I have your letter. It is the assurance of the *Gita*, and is proved in experience, that anyone who strives sincerely for self-control is bound to succeed in his effort. of course such striving requires patience. More when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9496

524. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

PRAYAG,

November 18, 1929

CHI. MAHADEV,

I got your letters. For some time now Pyarelal's inspiration has dried up. I was put to such trouble in revising his articles that I relieved him of the burden of writing. The articles became so weak that, even after revision, they lacked vigour. Pyarelal also saw this and so, for the present, he looks after the correspondence. The last three letters from U.P.[1] were written by me. I thought it advisable during this tour to write the letters myself and sign them. None of us knows how the signature A originated. Personally, I wanted the signature P to continue to appear. But I thought that Valji may have deliberately replaced P, and if that was so I did not wish to alter the new practice and did not ask any question about it.

I do not remember anything about the cow Jill.[2]

[1] *Vide* "The U. P. tour-X", 21-11-1929 and ''The U. P. tour-XI", 28-11-1929.
[2] *Vide* Frontispiece of

It is surprising that though the matter for *Navajivan* was posted with great care, it reached there on Saturday instead of Friday. to run a journal from a distance is certainly a species of bravado, but that has been the position ever since I started running a journal.

As Jamnalalji is also here, you are the only one absent from the company. How can I manage to give accounts of the events here? Devdas is lazy in such matters, and Pyarelal is happy-go-lucky. You may, therefore, go on complaining as much as you choose.

I have finished reading Brayne's second book[1] too. That man's zeal atsonishes me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11464

525. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

PRAYAG,
Silence Day, November 18, 1929

SISTERS,

I write about an idea which occurred to me from Santok's operation. Indian women feel reluctant to get themselves examined by doctors. This is a wrong attitude. We have suffered much because of it. *This sense of shame has its origin not in purity but in impurity*. I should like the women in the Ashram to get rid of this superstition. If Dr. Haribhai had not been permitted to operate upon Santok, the operation would not have been performed and her life would have been in danger. No woman should hesitate to let herself be examined even by a male doctor. Since the patient would be accompanied by her relatives and friends, she need have no fear. Perhaps you do not know that I had called in a male doctor at the time of Ba's last confinement. She had an operation once and that too was done by a male doctor. Ba lost nothing by this. In such matters, all that is necessary is to change one's attitude. That is why I have put this matter before you. If you wish to ask me anything about this, do so on Tuesday the 26th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3710

[1] On village uplift; *vide* "Is It Village Uplift", 17-10-1929

526. LETTER TO NANDKISHORI

PRAYAG,
Silence Day [*November 18, 1929*][1]

CHI. NANDKISHORI,

You have asked a pertinent question. Whether one's love is pure or not can be judged only by its manifestation. The love of a mother indulging her offspring with luxuries proceeds from ignorance. That wife's love is selfish who is reluctant to stay away from herhusband even in the interest of his dharma. We can note innumerable such instances.

Those people who do not wish to observe the rules have no place in the Ashram. But the others, who are making honest though unsuccessful efforts, do have and should have a place.

In the Ashram we do not follow the policy of punishment for transgression of the rules or for other lapses.

May you ever pass your life in such a thoughtful manner.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 1638. Courtesy: Ramniklal Modi

527. LETTER TO TOTARAM SANADHYA

PRAYAG,
Silence Day [*November 18, 1929*][2]

BHAI TOTARAMJI,

The doctor's opinion about Gangadevi is not to be entirely relied upon. For the present she needs nothing besides milk, curds and fruits. Anyway I am returning soon. After observing Gangadevi's health and her wishes I shall make the changes that may be necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2335

[1] In 1929, Gandhiji was in Prayag on this date. This letter was included in the collection of letters received from Ramniklal Modi who was Manager of the Ashram in late 1929.

[2] Gandhiji was in Prayag on this day in 1929.

528. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI

PRAYAG,
Silence Day [*November 18, 1929*][1]

BHAI TYAGIJI,

Enquire from Pandit Devsharmaji regarding Balbir and the climate. If coconut is not available sesame or linseed [oil] may be used.

I am keeping good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI CHAND TYAGIJI
GURUKUL MAYAPUR
P. O. KANKHAL
DT. SAHARANPUR

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6096

529. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

Unrevised

CAMP MIRZAPUR,
November 19, 1929

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I got your letter from New York yesterday at Allahabad, took the early morning train today to come to Mirzapur and here I am dictating this letter to Pyarelal whilst I am spinning. I am glad that you will not write anything final without consultation. I was receiving so many cautions and I had distrusted with good reason so many things said about Br.[2] that I thought if I published your letter as I wanted to, I ought to utter the word of caution I did.[3] I am glad about the improved climate. The touring has never hurt me but there certainly was some defect in the raw food experiment. Almost everyone broke down and four or five who are bravely carrying on are not able to

[1] From the postmark
[2] Presumably Brockway; *vide* "Letter to A. Fenner Brockway", 14-11-1929
[3] Presumably in the article "My Position", 14-11-1929; *vide* "My Position", 14-11-1929

show brilliant results. But they are carrying on because they have the scientific spirit in them.

Of course, anything that might be received from the Macmillan Company[1] will be going to the Pearson Memorial in the Shantiniketan for which, I am glad, you have secured the services of a quaker doctor. You will be glad to learn that prompted by H. G. Alexander, a young quaker, whom perhaps you know, Reginald Reynolds has come to the Ashram. I have not yet met him but hope to do so on the 25th. His two weeks' experience, he tells me, confirms the first happy impression produced upon him by Indian contacts.

Of course, I want you whenever you can come. But I do not want you to interrupt your work. So long as you think that the West needs you do by all means stay there. of events here you know everything I suppose.

The Joint Conference took place last night at which we came to a workable formula. I am doing my utmost best to smooth the way of Lord Irwin. The rest I must leave Pyarelal to fill up.

Love.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 996

530. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

CAMP ALLAHABAD,
November 19, 1929

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your tragic letter in Mirzapur.

What a sad fate ! What crimes do we not commit in the name of service! Has Prasannababu left any children?

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

[PS.]

May God make Hemprabhadevi healthy.[2]

From a photostat: G.N. 1613

[1] Royalty payments for the American edition of *An Autobiography* edited by C. F. Andrews

[2] The postscript is in Hindi.

531. LETTER T0 RAMNIKLAL MODI

MIRZAPUR,
November 19, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have your letter. I have already written to you concerning spinning.[1] I need not, therefore, write more about it. I have even written to Chhaganlal and told him that I do not agree with his view. If his objection is valid, it strikes at the very root of all rules. If we need the restriction of rules, we have to relax or stiffen them as we may find necessary from experience. That involves no question of principle. If, however, it is necessary to discuss this matter, we shall do that when all of us meet.

I intend to send away Ba, Kusum and Jayanti four days earlier. The journey from now onwards will be rather difficult. The facilities available will be few. Cars will have to be hired. In such circumstances, I wish to have the smallest number accompanying me. Prabhavati left for Patna yesterday. Mirabehn will start tomorrow. Hence, only Pyarelal, and possibly Devdas, will remain with me. I have not looked up the time-table to see by what train they will reach Ahmedabad. I will, therefore, send a wire later. Send word to Ranchhodbhai or Anasuyabehn to have a car waiting at the station.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4152

532. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

MIRZAPUR,
November 19, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I myself find it difficult to understand my telegram of which you have sent me a copy. The message does not seem to have been transmitted correctly. Be that as it may. The Bombay Women's Council workers use English thread for

[1] On November 14; *vide* "Letter to Ramniklal Modi", 14-11-1929

embroidery work on khadi, but their articles are notboycotted for that reason. This practice has been going on for many years. Hence follow it this time too. I have no time to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5470

533. A LETTER

ALLAHABAD,
November 19, 1929

CHI. . . .[1],

I should not have asked what your mental condition was. Where one forget the past, thinks not about the future and only wants to be engrossed in the present duty, no question arises about one's mental condition being either good or bad. The mind of one who fully keeps it occupied in the immediate duty is bound to be pure, just as a machine that is kept in working order will be free from dirt. It is wrong to say that he who is only striving is necessarily a pretender; one may only say that pretence is likely to creep into his conduct. Striving which has an element of pretence in it is no striving at all. The same is true about a moral teacher. He may develop hypocrisy. But though one may be imperfect, one can avoid hypocrisy. In Kaka's words there is self-condemnation in the attempt to express humility. No other meaning is to be read in to them.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/10

534. LETTER TO BUDHABHAI

MIRZAPUR,
November 19, 1929

BHAISHRI BUDHABHAI[2],

I received your letter. As long as Parvati harbours impure feelings in her heart and you two do not get along well with each other, you should not accept any services from her. But in thus

[1] The name is omitted in the source.
[2] The letter is in a different hand but the subscription is by Gandhiji

refusing her services, you should have no feeling of anger or ill-will against her and you may unhesitatingly accept any service from her which your inner voice prompts you to accept. That which I believe to be dharma. . . .[1] If, however, you do not believe that to be dharma, you need not, in spite of that, act in that manner. As for eating the things seasoned in the kitchen with condiments, I will think over the matter when I come there. I understand what Nanibehn says, too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33127

535. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN CHOUDHRI

MIRZAPUR,

November 19, 1929

BHAI RAMNARAYAN,

I got your letter. I had forgotten about ghee. There was no need to abstain from ghee in my presence. Give up the restriction and take the required quantity of ghee. You must build up your body. My train will reach Ajmer on the 25th morning. It will be my day of silence.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapu: Maine Kya Dekha, Kya Samjha?

536. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

BANDA,

November 20, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I should have had a letter from you, but did not get one. Probably I shall get it at some other place. I told you in my letter yesterday that Ba, Kusum and Jayanti would arrive there on Thursday, but later I changed my mind about Jayanti. I thought that he should

[1] The source here is damaged.

utilize this opportunity and see Agra, Jaipur and Ajmer. In my judgment, there was nothing special for him to see or get experience of during the remaining four days of the tour, and so I sent him away to see the three cities. Ba and Kusum seemed reluctant at the last moment to leave early and arrive there ahead of me, and, therefore, I did not insist. Having stayed on, however, she collected today her share of the contributions. Because she was with me, by her presence she consoled hundreds of women in places which I could not visit.

And on the way, travelling in another car she received purses while I slept. That was a gain for the poor and gave some satisfaction to the people. Now all of us will arrive there together on Monday evening by the meter gauge. Send word to Anasuyabehn and Ranchhodbhai to arrange for a car.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4153

537. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised

BANDA,
November 20, 1929

CHI. MIRA,[1]

Our train being two hours late, the whole of the programme was upset. It was somewhat set right by my forgoing the afternoon rest and putting off the bath for the night station. I finished spinning at 9.30. It is now nearly 10 p.m. But I may not retire before writing this.

The foregoing preface is to show you I have been thinking of you the whole day long. Now that you are away from me, my grief over having grieved you is greater.[2] No tyrant has yet lived who has not paid for the suffering he has caused. No lover has ever given pain without being more pained. Such is my state. What I have done was inevitable. Only I wish I did not lose temper. But such is my brutality

[1] The superscription in this and other letters to Mirabehn is in Devanagari script.

[2] Gandhiji had reproached the addressee for being over-anxious about his health.

towards those I love most. But now that you are away from me, I can think of nothing but your extraordinary devotion. May God remove what I consider is your *moha*[1] or may He open the eyes of my understanding and let me see my error.

You are to keep well.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5379. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9435

[1] Ignorant attachment

1. NOTES

INDIANS IN FIJI[1]

A cablegram from Suva says, "Indian members motion common franchise rejected Council today all three resigned". This means that the Fijian Legislative Council would not have Indians on a common franchise. That would be too much for the white exploiters of Indian labour. The Indian members elected by Indian electors only have really no influence in the Legislative Council. I congratulate the three members on their patriotic spirit in having resigned from the Council by way of protest. I hope that they will on no account reconsider their decision unless a common franchise is obtained. Having resigned however they must not sit idle but continue their agitation for the simple justice to which they are entitled. If the Indian colony in Fiji is well organized, the citadel of anti-Indian prejudice is bound to break down through united effort.

IS IT A SALE OF INDULGENCES ?

A student writes from Lucknow as follows:[2]

I should be sorry to discover that the students and others who pay to the khadi fund do so not with the intention of using khadi themselves but merely as a salve for their conscience. I have warned audiences paying their subscriptions that their payment of subscription is an earnest of their desire to wear khadi as far as they can. The writer of the letter seems to think that khaddarites do not subscribe. The fact however is that those who wear khadi are the largest single subscribers. If people merely paid subscriptions to the khadi fund and none used khadi, the subscriptions would be perfectly useless, for they are not given as donations to the poor but as a return for work done, and if the fruits of their work are not used by the people, their work becomes useless.

KHADI BUYERS BEWARE[3]

The Secretary of the All-India Spinners' Association writes:[4]

This is a very serious matter. It is necessary for all buyers of

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Secretary, Fiji Congress", 14-11-1929.

[2] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent reported that students considered their duty ended with payment of subscription to the khadi fund. *Vide* also "Speech at Allahabad University", 17-11-1929.

[3] A note on the same subject appeared in *Navajivan*, 15-12-1929.

[4] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had listed names of merchants in Tuni (Andhra) who were passing off mill-yarn cloth as genuine khadi.

khadi to be very cautious about their purchases. of course those who are satisfied with the ordinary khadi that one gets in the different provinces are generally safe, but those who will wear fine Andhra khadi or none at all have need to be most particular about what they buy. The Association has repeatedly warned the public that they should not regard any khadi as genuine which does not come from a certificated khadi bhandar. The list of cerificated khadi bhandars has been already published in the papers and can be had for the asking against an anna stamp from the Secretary of the Association. So much for the public. What is one to say however of those who are selling spurious khadi and thus damaging a vast national movement specially designed in the interest of famishing millions? Even as a butcher may to a certain extent be humane, so should these merchants set a limit to their greed and exempt at least the famishing millions from their fraudulent operations. I shall be glad to learn that this paragraph has caught the eye of these Tuni merchants and that they will cease to sell spurious khadi.

Young India, 21-11-1929

2. HONEST DIFFERENCES[1]

Mr. J. B. Pennington whom the readers of *Young India* will recognize as the nonagenarian friend writes under date 6th October:

> This is most likely the last time I shall worry you with my despairing efforts, but I must just say that I am glad you declined the Presidentship of the Congress because I suppose it means that you prefer to be independent, and I hope, determined to exercise your own judgment in these critical times, no matter what happens. You never answered my question as to whether you were prepared to be the first president of the Indian republic, perhaps because you thought it was a ridiculous question which it certainly was not; because if you with your unrivalled experience and reputation, are not fit for the job, I don't know who is —and it must be a republic or chaos, if you get rid of us. Is it quite impossible for you to work with the present administration, say, for another 10 years, till you find your feet? Your experience at Bardoli shows that you can influence even the Present Government by ordinary means and once associated with it on equal terms you could easily get all you want *without bloodshed* of which, God knows, we have had more than enough for one generation. Still hoping for the best in India.

I have no doubt the reader will share with me the wish and the hope that Mr. Pennington may live many a long year to send his letters and even to see India reach her cherished goal. Who can withhold admiration for the consistent zeal and industry Mr. Pennington is evincing in the pursuit of what he considers to be the

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to J. B. Pennington", 14-11-1929.

right course? Nor can one deny his downright honesty. That he may not think as we toiling under the British harrow do is a limitation for which he is not responsible. In any case his wonderful zeal, industry and optimism are worthy of imitation by the youth of the country.

And now for the reply to Mr. Pennington's question. I do remember his question about the first president of the future Indian republic. If I must for the time being give up my modesty, I must tell Mr. Pennington in confidence that if there was an Indian republic in my lifetime and the burden was imposed upon me by the simple people of the country, I daresay that it would not break me. At any rate I should make a fair effort to shoulder it. What however I am striving for is not a life of isolation for India but a life of association with the British on absolutely equal terms. Republic or chaos is, in my opinion, an easy thing to get if we would but make up our minds to copy our English tutors and begin to break heads here, there and everywhere without dreading the consequences. That however would not please me, and a republic so gained would not probably find me alive, but if it did, its first duty would be not to install me on the throne but to put me under the gallows. The republic therefore of my imagination would have to be a republic gained by non-violent means, and if the country would continue its choice of non-violence and truth as the method *par excellence* fo attaining its goal, it would not need to drive the English out, but it would have converted the English who under that state of conversion would work as willing servants of the country and would deem it an honour to live on Indian sufferance. If such a consummation comes to pass, it would be something of which India will have every reason to be proud and forwhich the world will be the richer. It may be a dream never to be fulfilled but it is enough for me that it makes me happy. Mr. Pennington will now see why it is quite impossible for me to work with the *present administration*, even for a day, let alone 10 years. Under the present administration equality is an impossibility. It is an administration which, I hold, has proved ruinous to India and is based upon brute force. The fundamental difference between Mr. Pennington and Indian nationalists is that the latter consider. that India is fit today for administering her own affairs without the patronizing help of any outsider. If a robber by sheer force of arms has dispossessed me of my estate and holds me as his slave, it does not mean that I therefore consider myself to be unfit to own my estate although I may not have sufficient arms to enable me to dispossess him of the estate unlawfully gained by him. Thirdly, Mr. Pennington's memory surely betrays him when he says that the present Government was influenced by ordinary means with reference to Bardoli[1]. It was just the extraordinary means discovered by non-co-operators that were

[1] The Bardoli Satyagraha.

employed by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel with consummate skill and absolute faithfulness that influenced the Government, and it is just these extraordinary means which I would like the country to adopt, and I know that it will reach its goal as surely as the simple peasants of Bardoli did.

Lastly, I would like Mr. Pennington to follow up the ideal for which the Association with which he is intimately connected is working. The printed letter-heads which Mr. Pennington uses for his letters are issued from the office of the National Homecroft Association Ltd., whose object is

> to promote the development of homecroft settlements; i.e., suburban food-raising areas designed to accommodate working class families in individual homes, erected upon individual crofts, of such size and equipment as will enable the family food to be produced from the family's soil by the family's own off-time labour.

At the bottom of each sheet the following quotation from Ruskin is printed:

> But since we live in an epoch of change and too probably of revolution, and thoughts which are not to be put aside are in the minds of all men capable of thought, I am obliged to affirm the one principle which can and in the end will close all epochs of revolution—that each man shall possess the ground he can use and no more.

I hope both Mr. Pennington and the readers will recognize the inconsistency between the mentality which on the one hand tolerates an empire based on exploitation and on the other believes in 'each man possessing the ground he can use and no more'. I wonder if Mr. Pennington thinks that the 100 thousand English men and women who are in possession of India can really use an area 1,800 miles long and 1,500 miles broad. Again, how can the dispossession of 300 millions of people by a nation which has its own home possibly be justified?

Young India, 21-11-1929

3. IMPLICATIONS OF THE WHEEL

A friend sends the following cutting[1] headed "A Century Behind the Times" from the *Textile World*:

This is an instance of argument suiting preconceived ideas. The author of the note has evidently not taken the trouble of understanding the implications of what he calls the "Gandhi Movement", meaning of course the hand-spinning movement. The spinning movement aims at restoring spinning to the millions of

[1] Not reproduced here. It described the offer of a prize by the "Gandhi Movement" for a speedier spinning-wheel as an open admission of its basic economic error.

cottages of India from which it was removed by unjust, illegal and tyrannical methods. The movement could not have been started, if somehow or other the cottages which were deprived of this universal supplementary industry had had a substitute provided for it. Unfortunately or fortunately no substitute was provided. Hence sheer necessity compelled the students of village life, after having exhausted all other means, to resort to the spinning-wheel as the only immediate solution for the serious economic distress that had overtaken the millions of India's homes by reason of the extinction of cottage spinning. The moment these millions can have a better substitute, they are at liberty to give up the spinning-wheel, and no one would be more glad than I to see these millions possess a better substitute. No doubt the authors of the movement do think that so far as human understanding can go, there seems to be no hope of finding a better substitute than the spinning-wheel. Indeed their conviction is that, as soon as the existing exploitation of the so-called weaker nations of the earth by the strong nations of the West ceases as it is bound someday to cease, the whole world will have to return to the spinning-wheel. Whether however that event comes to pass or not, unless India becomes an exploiting nation and discovers new nations to exploit, or unless an independent India develops brute strength enough to compel the nations of the West to buy the goods that she may dump down on their soil as India is virtually compelled today to receive goods dumped down on her soil, India must, if she is to rid herself of her economic distress, manufacture the articles of necessity in her own cottages just as she produces her corn, the prime necessity of life, in her own fields. There is therefore no contradiction in the authors of the spinning movement trying to secure a wheel or a machine which would enable the cottagers in their own cottages to spin more or finer yarn in the same given time as the existing spinning-wheel does. The writer of the note should know that this progressive method of improving home machines has been handed down from ancient times. The *takli* or the distaff was displaced by the spinning-wheel. The spinning-wheel itself underwent gradual improvement as one sees even today from the different old patterns working in different provinces. The process of improvement was suddenly arrested when the spinning-wheel went out of fashion. The Council of the All-India Spinners' Association is therefore but following the course that was suddenly stopped by the machinations of the East India Company's agents. The fact is that neither the Council nor I have any objection to machines as such, but we do submit that it is wrong to carry the process of mechanization of industry so far as to kill the cottage industries and concentrate them within a narrow field; in other words,

they are against urbanization of India at the expense of her rural civilization and rural life. The writer in the *Textile World* states that a machine meeting practically all the requirements of the contest was in use in America more than a century ago. The adverb 'practically' is a disturbing factor, but if there is such a machine in America in existence and if any American inventor will take the trouble of so adjusting it as to meet all the requirements of the contest, he will not only receive the prize offered by the Association, but he will earn also the thanks of the dumb millions. But let the critics understand that even if such a machine is not invented and the prize is not won, the spinning movement will still continue its onward march. The Association feels thankful for its ability to serve l,50,000 women in nearly 2,000-villages of India and through them serve also a number of weavers, washermen, tailors, printers and the like. The Association hopes, too, to cover every one of the seven hundred thousand villages and bring a ray of hope to their cottages where today blank despair reigns supreme.

Young India, 21-l l-1929

4. IN THE NAME OF RELIGION

The Secretary of the Youth League, Dharwar, writes:[1]

If what is stated in the letter is at all true it betrays a shocking state of things and an undoubted reversion to barbarism. It is a matter for deep sorrow and humiliation that there should be educated men enough in the country who believe that there are gods who can be appeased or conciliated by the sacrifice of animals and if the manner of killing the innocent goats is correctly described by the Secretary of the Youth League of Dharwar, it is an inhuman act done in the name of religion. I should hope that there is exaggeration in the statement made by the Secretary. There is a similar letter from Bengal also in which the writer asks me to condemn the animal sacrifices that go on daily in the name of religion in that great province. If my condemnation of these sacrifices can save a single animal from slaughter it is there with all the force It can command. But there seems to be just now the fashion to encourage such sacrifices and to justify them. A correspondent from Madras sends me papers containing accounts of such slaughter done by learned Brahmins in the Madras Presidency. I wish that Youth Leagues all over the country will rise in revolt against these sacrifices and cultivate public opinion so as to

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had described revival of animal sacrifice by some Brahmins in his district.

make them impossible. I have heard it argued that since the stopping of animal sacrifices people have lost the warlike spirit. There were animal sacrifices enough in Europe before Christianity. Europe does not seem to have lost its warlike spirit because of the stopping of degrading and debasing animal sacrifices. I am no worshipper of warlike spirit, but I know that warlike spirit is not to be cultivated by the slaughter, in a terribly cruel manner, of helpless, innocent, unresisting dumb fellow-creatures.

Young India, 21-11-1929

5. ILLUSTRATED KHADI CATALOGUE

Sjt. Vithaldas Jerajani has brought out an illustrated khadi catalogue in English in connection with the A.I.S.A. Khadi Bhandar, 396 Kalbadevi Road, Bombay. One finds in that catalogue numberless varieties of khadi and many varieties of ready-made clothing such as banians, half-sleeves *bandis*, shirts in several styles, coats, jackets, caps, hand-spun woollen frocks, jumpers, baby suits, etc. The catalogue enables one clearly to see what evolution khadi has undergone. I would recommend all lovers of khadi to possess a copy of the catalogue whether for themselves or their friends.

Young India, 21-11-1929

6. THE U. P. TOUR-X[1]

As the U.P. tour is drawing to a close the programme is becoming more and more crowded if also less eventful. During the past week we passed through Rohilkhand where not much Congress work has been done and where the possibilities are very great. From Brindaban we went to Hathras[2] taking several places on the way. Hathras having many spinning-wheels and being a good cotton centre could easily have paid much more than it did. From Hathras we passed hurriedly to Etah, thence to Kasganj, thence to Badaun[3] and from Badaun we went to Shahjahanpur[4] where Gandhiji peeped even though it was a Monday into an American Methodist Mission Girls' School which has introduced hand-spinning and weaving with some degree of success. The girls all belonged to the so-called depressed

[1] *Vide* 1st footnote to "The U. P. Tour-IV", 24-10-1929.
[2] On November 8
[3] On November 9
[4] On November 10

classes. From Shahjahanpur we went to Pilibhit which with its fabulously rich zamindars could easily have paid much more than it did. From Pilibhit we passed through Lakhimpur which was slightly better. From Lakhimpur we reached Sitapur[1] where the energy ofLala Shambhunath of non-co-operation fame and the zealous sacrifice of Pandit Shivaram brightened things a bit. There can be no doubt that wherever some solid work has been done amongst people, some sacrifice shown even by one or two leading lights, the results have been obvious. We found a fairly well-attended national school still going in Sitapur. Everywhere one could see the Biblical saying exemplified "The harvest is indeed rich but the labourers are few." Given a few labourers there is absolutely no reason why we should not show much better results. From Sitapur we went to Sidhauli. There a summons was waiting for Gandhiji from Pandit Motilalji, asking him, instead of going by train as he had intended, to go by car to Lucknow through which he had to pass *en route* to Rae Bareli. So he went by car in advance of the party, passed an hour with Panditji and went straight to Rae Bareli.[2] At Rae Bareli the perfection of all the arrangements arrested attention of every one of the party. There was perfect order observed from start to finish at the public meeting. No rush was made by the crowds towards Gandhiji although the meeting was very largely attended and was composed of peasants. The platform was made of solid brick mud-plastered, sides of which were painted in yellowish colour, a colour that was in perfect keeping with the surroundings. Broad avenues were kept in order to allow the motor-car to pass to and fro without any difficulty. The decorations also were mild, cheap and effective. There were two arches for ingress and egress. They were made of evergreens. What delighted Gandhiji most was to find that the whole of the decorations had cost no more than Rs. 4 for the simple reason that bricks were lent, labour was given free by the District Board, fencing materials were lent by a dealer and so there was little expense to be incurred. From Rae Bareli taking Lalganj and Salon on the way we went to Kalakankar.[3] We had made the discovery at Lucknow and it was strikingly confirmed at Kalakankar that the young Talukdars of Oudh were gradually shedding their fear and helping in their own way the national cause. Some of these young men had contributed to the khadi purse and Lalaji Memorial. The Raja Saheb of Kalakankar was anxious for Gandhiji to pass a day or two in his unpretentious ancient well-built

[1] On November 12
[2] On November 13
[3] On November 14

palace just on the bank of the beautiful Ganges. And as we went through this little village we realized what natural beauty there was about the peaceful surroundings of this little palace. Gandhiji andindeed the whole party were quite glad to be away even for 24 hours from the din and noise of eager crowds. But there were also several other things here that added to Gandhiji's happiness. The young ladies of the Kalakankar house do not observe the *purdah*. The Raja Saheb and they are habitual wearers of khadi. But in order to clear his wardrobe of every vestige of foreign cloth the Raja Saheb had devised a foreign cloth burning ceremony as part of the public meeting. There was a new bride who had arrived only eight days ago. She had a fair amount of foreign cloth in her wardrobe. She too gave up its foreign contents for the altar. But the largest and the richest contribution had come from Raja Lal Saheb of Samaspur. Before igniting the pyramid of foreign cloth arranged on the altar in a corner of the meeting well-fenced and well-protected, Gandhiji scanned every article carefully, and we could observe that it delighted him to see heavily embroidered robes, richly decorated fine Parisian lace, very expensive *saris* and the like. As he ignited the pyramid and the flames rose to the skies, there arose also a loud shout of joy from the crowds who now eagerly surrounded the fence and witnessed the ceremony. The handle of the torch which was given to Gandhiji for igniting the pyramid was silver mounted. It was of course auctioned and it was knocked down to Lal Saheb of Samaspur for Rs. 500. I must close this rapid sketch of the events of the past week with a summary of a portion of Gandhiji's speech to the Kalakankar public meeting.

'It gives me great joy,' said Gandhiji, 'to see you all and to see the Raja Saheb dressed even as you are and mixing freely with you. I had the privilege of meeting him in Lucknow when on behalf of the Reception Committee he had housed me in his Lucknow residence. As he was dressed like a volunteer, the members of my party could not distinguish between him and the other volunteers, and he had therefore been unconsciously entrusted with menial duties without the slightest hesitation by one of my party. As if it was perfectly natural for him he performed that duty with alacrity. When a member of the party subsequently came to know who it was who was given menial work he reported the matter to me. Personally I was delighted that the zamindars and Rajas were to be found to delight in rendering service involving menial work. It gives me additional joy to find that the Raja Saheb is living here in the midst of his own ryots just as simply and naturally as I found him living in Lucknow. I hope that the other young talukdars will copy this example, and

if only the rich people whether titled or not will act as I believe the Raja Saheb is actingthat is, as trustee for the people and holding the zamindari as their trustee and protector, they should soon be perfectly happy. The dream I want to realize is not spoliation of the property of private owners but to restrict its enjoyment so as to avoid all pauperism, consequent discontent and the hideously ugly contrast that exists today between the lives and surroundings of the rich and the poor. The latter must be enabled to feel that they are co-partners with their zamindars and not their slaves, to be made to labour at the latter's sweet will and to be made to pay all kinds of exactions on all conceivable occasions. You and they the zamindars should shed mutual fear and mutual distrust, and if both do so, you will also shed the common fear of authority. The Government can do no harm to you or to them if only you both act on the square. You have seen me give up to flames expensive robes and other clothing of zamindars made of foreign yarn. I regard it as a sacred rite. You may not today understand the significance of this *havan* —sacrifice. But I doubt not that this silver-mounted torch will, if it is preserved by its would-be buyer, find a lodgment one day in the national museum which the future national Government is bound to establish for all such collections reminding posterity of the phases that the struggle for freedom went through. This campaign against foreign cloth through khadi and all it means for the starving millions will, I have not a shadow of a doubt, go down in history as one of the most important if not the most important item in the national programme. The burning of foreign fineries means that the owners have from today established a living bond between you and them, and secondly it means that they have discarded the enervating, debasing and unmanly taste for gaudy garments and jewellery and have made up their minds henceforth voluntarily to live as simply even as you are living, perhaps under compulsion.'

Young India, 21-11-1929

7. SOME POSERS

A reader writes:

> I have the honour to state that I am a humble servant and a faithful follower of the Congress. In connection with your non-co-operation movement I have also undergone nine months rigorous imprisonment. I hope you will kindly answer the following questions and remove my doubts.

His first question is:

> Do you know that . . . has co-operated with the Simon Commission and has sent in a memorandum also notwithstanding the fact that he is a prominent Congressman and wears khadi? With such gentlemen in the Congress do you still expect the country's deliverance through the Congress ?

A country's deliverance does not depend on one man. Everyone whether good or bad, has a right to be in the Congress. If the number of those that follow all the mandates of the Congress is large, then the country's deliverance is certain. So we should not worry about what others do. Let each one ask himself 'what am I doing?'

The second question is:

> By encouraging the students to boycott schools and colleges have you benefited the country?

I am thoroughly convinced that those who boycotted schools and colleges have done nothing but good to themselves and to their country. On account of this the colleges and other institutions have lost prestige. The country has gained good volunteers in the few students who left these institutions. It is to the credit of the boycott that today, even though in a small number, there are some national schools in the country that help much in the struggle for freedom. I have already mentioned in the *Hindi Navajivan* how much the Gujarat Vidyapith alone has helped in this struggle. If we evaluate in this manner the work of the other national universities we shall understand, to a certain extent, the importance of the boycott of Government schools and colleges. I have up till now met very few people who find fault with the principle of boycott. People are mostly of the opinion that the country was not prepared for such sacrifice in 1920-21 nor is it even now. This meansthe country was not prepared for swaraj in those days, nor is it now. If this is true let us stop denouncing boycott and prepare the ground for it.

Here is his third question:

> How far is it profitable for each and every person to spin on the charkha and what can he earn from this for his living? In that same time can he not earn more by doing some better work?

This question has been asked several times and the answer has been given again and again. It is that those who ply the charkha for pecuniary gain can certainly give it up if they get a more profitable occupation. The main object of the promoters of the charkha has been to provide occupation for crores who have no other occupation. To those who consider it a sacrifice to ply the charkha the question of gain or loss does not arise. The sacrificer never thinks of his own gain. He considers the good of all as his own good.

The fourth question is:

> From the political point of view, how far can the charkha help? In the olden days widows and women of ordinary families used to spin on the charkha. Today why do you force men to ply the charkha?

In my opinion, the political contribution of the charkha is very great; because from the political point of view it is very essential to boycott foreign cloth and this can be successful only with the help of khadi. In such matters there can be no difference between man and woman, between widow and married woman. The charkha sacrifice is universal.

The fifth question runs thus:

> Did you and other leaders ever give any help to the workers who have come out of jail? If not, what advice did you give them regarding their future career ? What should they do now ? Is it proper for a freedom fighter to tell his comrade courting arrest that he should expect nothing from the Congress leaders and that he should be prepared to be left in the lurch as the volunteers of the Congress appear to be left today?

I have not come across even one such worker released from jail who, deserving help, has not received it. I know workers who have received much help. I also know some workers who make fantastic demands and take offence at a refusal.

The sixth question is:

> The Congress leaders are entitled to special privileges in jail while volunteers are treated like common prisoners. Have they—the leaders— any right to such privileges? And if they accept these should the public have any regard for them?

In my opinion the satyagrahi prisoners should not ask for any special privilege. They should not even expect any such favour.

The seventh question is as follows:

> You collected one crore of rupees for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Can you kindly say how that money which was collected in the name of the poor is being spent and how the common people benefit from it?

The accounts of the Fund have been published. Even today, copies of it can be had from the Congress office. With this money

the Congress has been able to carry on its work vigorously for nine years.

The eighth question is:

> Why was it wrong to sit at a Round Table Conference with the Viceroy after 1921? If so, can you kindly say how it is right to take part in the very same Round Table Conference now? Will you attain swaraj for India only through this Round Table Conference? Did you mean swaraj to be only this? If so, why did you not announce it in 1921 itself ? If not, what was the point in non-co-operating with the Government and starting a kind of dreadful war between the King and his subjects, which resulted in the destruction of hundreds of homes? And for obtaining Dominion Status in this way what do we owe to the Congress leaders?

If the Viceroy had accepted the conditions presented to him a second time by the Congress then there was no harm in taking part in the Round Table Conference. But the demands of the Congress were not accepted. Even today because the demands of the Congress have not been accepted, I think it is wrong to take part in the Round Table Conference.

Freedom cannot be secured by a conference or by any outside means. If a conference is called under proper conditions it can certainly be a measure of the people's strength. For this reason, I have already stated that the people should not even think of the Conference. Our work is to consolidate the people's strength; in other words, we must succeed in the boycott of foreign cloth and other constructive activities. His last question is:

You also claim that the Congress is the only body that can give a true picture of the hardships of the country and also redeem it from them.

Do you still have faith in the Congress leaders after witnessing their performance? If so, can you say that the public also has faith in them? If not, can you say what ways you have thought of to reform this body? The Congress has many faults. Nowadays many selfish people have entered the Congress; yet, compared to other bodies, the Congress has more good points; there is certainly plenty of room for reforming it. If it is not reformed the Congress cannot be saved from destruction.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 21-11-1929

8. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

BANDA,
November 21, 1929

CHI. VASUMATI,

Jamnalalji informed me about your having arrived at Wardha. During your stay there regain your health completely and have no hesitation at all in asking for whatever things you may find necessary for the purpose. While you are there, finish your study of the *Gita,* etc., which you may have planned to do.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9271

9. LETTER TO MOHANLAL K. MEHTA

KULAPAHAR,
November 21, 1929

BHAISHRI MOHANLAL,

I have your letter. A vow once taken ought not to be given up even though not merely three but three thousand friends urge you to do so and hold out threats against you if you do not comply.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 235

10. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

November 22, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I am writing this in the train which is taking me to Jhansi. I have had no letter from you for some days. The letters must be following me from place to place, or you may not have written any. Chhaganlal seems to have been detained by the Punjab workers. I think that he should stay on. That will give him experience and some rest too from the worries in the Ashram.

You should not carry excessive burden.

When I arrive there on Monday, I intend to go and see

Santok the same night and then proceed to the Mandir. Make arrangements accordingly. That is, Santok should know. She need not, of course, keep awake. Those with the car should know where she is.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4154

11. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

KULPAHAR,
November 22, 1929

BHAISHRI SHAH,

I have your topical letter. I appreciate the questions you have discussed in your letter and in the newspaper. I will discuss them in the newspapers if I get the time. But I also fear that I may not be able to do so.[1] Let me therefore give my brief reply here.

Dominion Status means partnership with the British Government on a basis of equality with complete freedom to end the connection. Whether we shall be able to win this type of Dominion Status from the discussions at the Conference[2] or something else will depend not only on the attitude of the British Cabinet or the Parties but also on our situation here is India at that time.

In the sudden importance given to the Princely states I smell not the fragrance of wise statesmanship but the stink of crafty politics. But we should not be surprised if it turns out in this case regarding to the saying, 'he reaped the fruit of his own folly'. The outcome of this also would depend on us.

Even if the Conference arrives at agreed conclusions, in law the [British] Parliament can certainly alter its decisions. But there is little possibility of that happening. Nobody can give a guarantee that that will not happen and we cannot even ask for such a guarantee.

There is a trap in the stress that is being put on the Act of 1919. The letter from the leaders at Delhi seeks clarification on this point.

There is no need to seek clarification now on the point of economic independence. But if the Conference is held, that clarification will have to be sought. Why do you assume that the

[1] The addressee's questions were, however, discussed by Gandhiji in *Navajivan* under the title "Some Significant Questions", 18-12-1929

[2] The first Round Table Conference which was shortly to be held

Congress resolution about the debts passed in 1922[1] stands cancelled? If we are going to have a genuine Dominion Status, there can be no question of our having to bear the entire burden of the debts. We cannot ask for a guarantee for such things right now. But persons like you should keep the people alive to such problems, so that the delegates at the Conference do not go to sleep over the issue and forget it. On what ground do you believe that the Haji Bill[2] will be withdrawn or that all the illegitimate rights usurped by the foreign banks will remain untouched? All these points cannot be included in a letter to Irwin. But they must be included in the draft of the Swaraj Act. What the leaders, however, purposely or under pressure or out of ignorance may omit, God alone can say. It is for you to remove the ignorance. It is my duty to contribute something to create the atmosphere which would prevent the leaders from giving up anything under pressure.

Do not be remiss in doing your duty. If you think that you should write a series of articles on the subject, signed or unsigned and if you have the time and the zeal for it, you may do that too.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/1

12. LETTER TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

November 22, 1929

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I am writing this after the prayer. As I cannot find my pen I am making do with a pencil. We are camping in a village in a health in Bundelkhand, where there is a khadi centre. On dwelling is an ancient fort. It is said that in 1857 women of the royal household had taken refuge here. But it is not about this I want to write. I want to write about the mischief done by your allopathic doctors. I know only one doctor who would never cheat—though even in this I may be mistaken—and he isDr. Ansari. The trouble is regarding the substance from which medicines are made. I have tried to ascertain that about the medicines I need. I suggest the same to you. These days doctors have made it a practice to prescribe medicines with non-vegetarian content. But even after acquiring such knowledge and learning to be cautious, we shall have to go by faith.

I had written so far when the workers of the khadi ashram came to see me. I have now returned after travelling 56 miles. It is ten o'clock. I have found my pen. This description will give some idea of

[1] At Gaya; *vide* also "Speech at Subjects Committee, A.I.C.C.-II", 1-1-1930.

[2] Coastal Reservation Bill to reserve for Indians the trade along Coastal ports

my tour. Do not think from this that I am tired. If I were tired, I would not sit down to write to you so promptly. I sleep even while travelling. I therefore remain fresh.

Now the most important thing about medicines is that you should keep as far away from them as possible. But for that purpose you must be acquainted with modern remedies. There is certainly some good in the established medical system. But I have no doubt that on the whole it is devilish. The new discoveries which cultured, religious-minded men are making are godly and morally pure. Hence, though they are often imperfect in their reasoning, they are worth thinking over and adopting. They advise simple natural remedies accessible to all. All this is not unknown to you. But I am stressing this so that you may study the subject for your need and patiently try such remedies. You will be able to examine and ascertain your needs better than others can advise.

Let us understand Bhai Karsandas's mistake. I think Surajbehn has finally remained in the Trust. That is all right. What is she doing now? I am reaching Sabarmati on the 25th and will leave on December 6th morning for Wardha.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10716. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

13. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

ORAI,
November 23, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

We have just motored from Chirgaon where I got your note sent by hand. It was a clear 51 miles' drive. Ba is preparing hot water. Meanwhile I am writing this to you. It is a somewhat taxing programme today, only half of it is finished. Tomorrow the last day is not very heavy.

You were bound to have cheering company there. Let your study of village life be thorough this time. And you must give yourself enough leisure. There must not be a collapse as on the last occasion. You must procure some privacy daily.

I was sorry I could not correct your pronunciation of those verses. It proved really impossible. I made an effort often. But I saw that I could not put off the work in hand. If Wardhagives me some

leisure, I must try there. But of course you have Balkrishna there to help. But we must see.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

This was not posted at Orai. On reaching Amraiya I got your wire. I expect to hear more now at Sabarmati about the new development.

From the original: C.W. 5380. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9436

14. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

ORAI,
November 23, 1929

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

It is about ten o'clock just now, but before I leave this place tomorrow, I thought I would dictate this postcard for you. I will write to Chhotelal. At the moment, I do not at all feel inclined to send you to Almora. We will think about it later. I must solve some of the difficulties without your help and I think I will be able to do so gradually one after another. Govind Vallabh also met me in Allahabad[1]. I could give him only two or three minutes. I have advised him too, to go to Tadikhet. The Vijapur problem too will be solved in the same way. I see now no reason for worrying. You at any rate, have no reason at all to worry. You will be going when and where I suggest that you should go, or alternatively somewhere else. All you need to do is to keep me informed about your health. What is the name of the dentist? I think in this case,it was like a thief turning round and accusing the police constable. He has charged you two rupees extra for his inefficiency as a dentist. But it was good in a way that you did not question his demand since you believed that the doctor had taken due pains and had committed no mistake of any kind.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. PRABHUDAS GANDHI
JAMIA MILIA ISLAMIA
KAROL BAGH, DELHI

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33004

[1] On November 16

15. TELEGRAM TO RUCHIRAM SAHNI

[On or after *November 23, 1929*][1]

WHILST I APPRECIATE HONOUR SHALL HAVE NO TIME SHOULDER BURDEN. MOREOVER MY WAY OFTEN DIFFERENT FROM ORTHODOX REFORMER'S. PRAY EXCUSE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15574

16. BECOME A CHILD

A four-year-old boy asked: "Father, what do you mean by women ?"

Father, disconcerted, said: "Sisters and mothers are known as women."

The boy said: "I see, women are persons who cook, clean utensils and wash clothes, is it not so?"

This is not an imaginary conversation but one which has been selected from many conversations which have actually taken place. The father's definition did not appeal to the child as he had seen women mostly engaged in the tasks described by him.

A friend sent me a collection of such dialogues for my amusement, and, when I read them, I felt that, if we could become innocent like children and derive our meanings from innocent observations like theirs, we could spare ourselves much trouble, many disputes and much waste of time. And our intellect would become increasingly keener. A great deal of argumentation may sharpen our wits but it does not sharpen our intellect. Who has not come across instances of too much argumentation leading to intellectual confusion?

This child is—in fact, all innocent children are—unconscious worshippers of truth and hence they go an advancing We should, therefore, become children, that is to say, we should shed all fear and worship truth. We should do that which our heart believes to be true. We shall certainly err, but we should put up with the penalty and see to it that such error is not repeated. If we make another mistake, it does not matter; on every occasion we should suffer the penalty and go on rectifying our mistakes.

Whoever errs does not commit a fault. In the case of a fault knowledge is presumed. Knowingly committing a wrong is both a fault as well as sin. If we err unknowingly, that act will not be called

sinful. Punishment may be meted out for both— error and sin—one meted out for the former is welcome, whereas that meted out for the latter is as bitter as poison. Both society and God shudder to punish anyone for the former, but are furious in punishing anyone for the latter.

It is not easy for a person advanced in age to become and continue to be, like a child, innocent and simple and, a conscious worshipper of truth. But it is our duty to do so.

The perfect incarnation of God as conceived by Hinduism is the child Krishna. Jesus said: "Wisdom flows from the mouths of babes and sucklings." He said to those who desired salvation: "Become like children."

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-11-1929

17. MY NOTES

GUJARAT'S DUTY

The Viceroy's pronouncement has created such a sensation that the newspapers are full of discussion over it. Likewise, we also come across all sorts of speculation about it. I want that Gujarat should not indulge in any kind of conjectures, good or bad. Whether a conference is held or not, whether it be a round table conference or a square table one, let no one worry about it and let everyone do only his own work. Let no one get entangled in a wordy maze. If anyone gives a poisonous name to a rose, the latter will neither lose its colournor its fragrance, and a poisonous flower, if called a rose, cannot change its colour or its fragrance. Likewise slavery will not cease to be so by being referred to as independence, and real independence will not become foreign domination by being called Dominion Status. Gujarat is regarded as having practical sense. A practical person is concerned with actual results and never with mere words. Let the administration under swaraj be given any name, but it must fulfil certain conditions. The principal among these is that India should be free to sever its connections with the British Empire whenever it wishes. Another condition, which is included in the first, is that the safety of the Britishers living in India at present must rest, not on their swords, cannons or their frightening forts, but on the fortress in the form of our goodwill and friendship. The third condition should be that the British officials and the so-called Indian officials, who have the same attitudes as the former, should cease to consider themselves as masters and start regarding them selves as true servants

of the people of India. In my opinion, a scheme which would truly fulfil these three conditions implies true independence. At the moment, I do not see here the climate which would bring about such a situation. Hence there is no reason to hope for such a swaraj, but if it comes our way, it should not be turned down. True swaraj can also be established if the attitude of eminent Britishers undergoes a change and they are prepared to be just despite the fact that we have not become strong enough to deserve swaraj. We do not at all ask for any favour. That which has been granted as a favour has never till this day been anywhere recognized as independence. If, however, the sense of justice is awakened in Britishers, a part of our task will become straight and simple. At the root of a peaceful struggle lie the hope and the effort to bring about a change of heart in the adversary. It is my confirmed belief that if India adheres to the path of peace till the very end, the hearts of the most callous of British officers is bound to undergo a change. Hence, if an honourable settlement is possible, I am always ready to accept it. And by adopting this attitude, neither my leaders nor I have ever lost anything. I would, therefore, specially request Gujarat not to let its mind be even slightly affected by all that is being said at the moment but to utilize all its time in completing the programme drawn up by the Congress.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-11-1929

18. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

ETAWAH,
November 24, 1929

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Though I did feel sorry when you left, I immediately controlled the feeling as your real duty required that you should go. I got your letter. God will certainly give you the strength to follow the path you have chosen for yourself. I have faith in Jayaprakash too. Tell him that he should write to me, that he should accompany you to Wardha and that even if he is unable to come for some reason, he should make it easy for you to go.

Take care of your health. Recite the Gita verses regularly with attention to their meaning. In reciting the chapter for the day . . .[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3352

19. A LETTER

ETAWAH,
November 24, 1929

Your brother has given me news of your husband's passing away. In his letter he has dwelt on your late husband's goodness and vividly described your grief at your bereavement. Your brother writes that you are unable to eat from grief and that when you try to eat under the loving pressure of friends and relatives you throw up the food. I can understand your grief. Please know that I fully share it. But from what I heard about you I believe that you are a sensible and wise woman. You should therefore spiritualize your grief. You are overcome by ignorant attachment. Spiritualizing grief means that you should engross yourself in your husband's work and imbibe and improve upon the virtues you may have seen in him. There is no better memorial than this to your husband and no better way of performing his *shraddha* and of consoling yourself. If you have understood this, you should try to sustain your body if only for your husband's sake and take food as you would take medicine. May God grant you peace.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/14

20. DECLARATION OF TRUST[1]

November 26, 1929

1. We, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, age about years 60, Hindu, profession weaving and farming, residing at Satyagraha Ashram, Vadaj, Taluka Uttar Daskroi, District Ahmedabad, and Mohanlal Maganlal Bhatt, age about years 31, Hindu, residing at Bhoivadani Pole, Kalupur, Ahmedabad, declare by this Deed:

That in the year 1919 with the object of serving the people we, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and some of our colleagues, together started a printing press named "Navajivan Mudranalaya" in the city of Ahmedabad and with its help began to print, circulate and conduct as an institution for the service of the public, two weeklies, the *Navajivan* and the *Young India,* both of which we had begun to conduct some time before after securing them by buying them fromtheir previous owners and managers with their total rights of ownership and possession. The weekly *Hindi Navajivan* and a department for publishing books under the name "Navajivan

Prakashan Mandir[1]" and other activities were carried on afterwards by us through the same institution. The said weeklies, printing press, and the department for publishing books have continued as a public institution for the education of the people under one comprehensive name of the "Navajivan Institution". When the said Navajivan Institution was started under the name of the Navajivan Mudranalaya, its property was worth about ten thousand, in figures 10,000 rupees. Together with the said printing press and the increase earned through the weeklies the property that belongs to the Institution today without any burden on it is worth about rupees one lakh.

2. The management of the said Navajivan Institution and the use and administration of its property was carried on by Swami Anand for the past several years and is now being carried on for the past two years by one of us Mohanlal Maganlal Bhatt on its behalf in pursuance of the aims and objects of the Institution as mentioned in paras 3 and 4 of this Deed. Having declared these aims and objects, we declare by this Deed that the said printing press, weeklies, the publishing house, its rights of publication and goodwill and all other property belong to the said Navajivan Institution; that its management and administration was carried on behalf of the Institution in the name of Swami Anand in the beginning and is now being carried on in the name of one of us Mohanlal Maganlal Bhatt as Trustee of the Institution; that we, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and Mohanlal Maganlal Bhatt or guardians and heirs of both of us never did have or have any personal share, interest or right in it, and that we have not drawn for our personal profit or benefit or in any other manner any amount of money from it.

3. The aims and objects of the said Navajivan Institution which have been referred to in the previous para 2 are as under:

OBJECTS: To propagate peaceful means for the attainment of Hind Swaraj, i.e., swaraj for India, by educating the people through cultivated and enlightened workers devoted to the Gujarati language who desire to identify themselves with the life of Gujarat through the means of Gujarati and to serve India in this pure manner.

4. For the fulfilment of this object to conduct the *Navajivan*, through it to carry on propaganda for peaceful attainment of swaraj; and particularly

(a) to propagate the spinning-wheel and khadi;

(b) to propagate for the removal of untouchability;

(c) to propagate for unity between the Hindus and Mussalmans and the various communities who have settled in India;

(d) to present before the people constructive ways for protecting the cow by propagating for starting and managing tanneries, dairies and such other establishments;

(e) to propagate for ways for the advancement of women such as 1. Opposition to child-marriage, 2. Propagation of the idea of widow remarriage in a restrained manner, 3. Education for women;

(f) to break the unnatural glamour the English language has gained in the eyes of the people all over the country and to propagate for the establishment of Hindi or Hindustani in its place;

(g) to propagate by publication of journals and books such other ways as would conduce to the religious, social, economic and political advancement of the people;

(h) not to take advertisements in the newspapers conducted by the Institution and in pamphlets, books, etc., published by it; nor to accept in the printing press of the Institution such work for printing as is against the aims and objects of the Institution;

(i) to publish a statement of the activities of the Institution and of its accounts within three months after the end of the administrative year;

(j) always to insist on carrying on all the activities of the Institution on the basis of self-reliance.

5. We declare hereby that the following persons have been appointed Trustees to carry on the entire administration and management of the Institution in accordance with the said aims and objects:

NAMES OF TRUSTEES

SHRI VALLABHBHAI JHAVERBHAI PATEL

SHRI JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SHRI DATTATREYA BALKRISHNA KALELKAR

SHRI MAHADEV HARIBHAI DESAI

SHRI MOHANLAL MAGANLAL BHATT

6. We declare that the said Trustees have the following rights regarding all the property of the said Navajivan Institution:

(1) To perform all acts and to take all measures as seem necessary from time to time for the fulfilment of the aims and objects of the Trust; to administer and use the property of the Trust for that purpose as they deem proper; and to keep the property of the Trust in the names of two of the Trustees.

(2) To sell or mortgage the property of the said Trust for the fulfilment of the aims and objects of the Trust.

(3) To appoint as Trustee by a majority decision another person in the event of one of the Trustees resigning his place or in the event of his demise.

(4) For carrying on the business of the Trust the minimum number of Trustees is three.

(5) If deemed necessary to add two more Trustees to their present number by a majority decision.

7. The Trustees will continue the publication of the weekly *Hindi Navajivan* so long as they deem it proper for the fulfilment of the object as mentioned in sub-clause (f) of para 4 of the Deed. The Trustees have the right to run newspapers or publish and propagate books or pamphlets, etc., in other languages when they deem it inevitable for the fulfilment of the aims and objects of the Institution for a definite period but they shall consider such activity as secondary or subsidiary. The Trustees will carry on the same basis the activity of conducting the weekly *Young India* and publication of books in English as at present carried on under the Navajivan Institution and such other activities till they deem it proper.

8. The Trustees have the right to add to or modify the objects of the Trust in such manner as is not opposed to the principles of truth and non-violence.

9. The Trustees have the right to manage and administer affairs of the Institution in such manner as is not in any way detrimental to the aims and objects of the Institution; to form a body of workers who pledge themselves to their work for life and will perform their work in the spirit of pure service and to give the charge of the internal management or the whole conduct of the affairs of the Institution to such a body of workers if they deem it proper; to lay down rules, bye-laws, etc., and to execute them for such a body of workers and for other purposes regarding management and administration.

10. The property of this Trust as mentioned in para 2 of the Deed is at present housed in the building in the Sarkhigarani Wadi in Sarangpur bearing municipal numbers of 5512 to 5521 which has been rented by the Navajivan Institution. Besides, the land described below is situated in the village Achar, Taluka and *Petatukadi*[1] Uttar Daskroi, District Ahmedabad.

The land is *jat sarkari*[2]*:*

[1] Sub-division of a taluk

[2] Tenure A lands

Survey No.	A.G.[1]	East	West	North	South	Rate of Revenue
13	1-37	47	33-34-11	34	12	7-0-0
34	2-6 *Kh.*-2[2]	45-46-47	15-14	32-35	13	6-11-0
45	2-23 *Kh.*-12	39-41 *Kharabo*	34-36	37-35	44	9-0-0
47/5	2-22	48	*Lat Hisso*[3] 1-2-3-4-5	46	49	9-4-0

We have made this Deed of declaration of our own free will and with sober minds on this the 26th of November of the year A.D. 1929 and is binding on us as well as on our guardians and heirs, our lawyers, managers, administrators, etc.

Ahmedabad

Date: 26-11-'29

Signed	Witnesses
MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI	SD: SHANKERLAL BANKER
MOHANLAL MAGANLAL BHATT	SD: RATILAL P. MEHTA

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan (Supplement), 1-12-1929

21. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SABARMATI,
November 26, 1929

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
TARA HOUSE
ALMORA

POSITIVE YOU OUGHT STAY WINTER OUT IN ALMORA. GOD WILL TAKE CARE DECEASED'S[4] FAMILY.

BAPU

[1] Acre and *guntha;* a *guntha* is one-fortieth of an acre.
[2] *Kharabo,* wasteland
[3] Sub-plots
[4] Addressee's brother-in-law; *vide* the following item.

22. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SABARMATI,
November 26, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I have your three letters. My weight was found to be 100½ lb. Your last entry[1] shows 89[1b.]15 *tolas.* The increase is therefore 11½ lb. net. Not a bad bargain! Otherwise too all well.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I did not know that there was an address already on the p.c. I hope this reaches you all right.[2]

From the original: C.W. 5381. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9437

23. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

November 26, 1929

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. Make your body strong as steel. The programme of studies, etc., is certainly creditable. If the body requires anything which it is proper to have, we may feed it even while sitting in a public place. It is enough if we are able to exercise control over it. If you feel ashamed of eating thus in the presence of others, you may eat in private for some time. In doing so, you will not be guilty of hiding anything from others, for that is not your intention. You only wish to observe decorum. I expect to leave here on the 6th.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. VASUMATIBEHN
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
WARDHA (C.P.)

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9272

[1] The addressee maintained a register of Gandhiji's weight.
[2] The Bihar address was substituted for the Lahore address on the postcard.

24. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

November 26, 1929

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have sent you a telegram today[1]. Of course you are grieved by your brother-in-law's death. But in my view you should not go there. The winter in Almora is worth facing and worth enjoying.It is my earnest wish that you should stay there for the period for which you have taken the lodgings. Then the chances of a relapse will be very much reduced.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

My pain disappeared long ago. I have gained 11 Ib. in weight. I am now 100½ Ib.

BAPU

SHRI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

TARA HOUSE

ALMORA—U.P.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

25. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM,

November 26, 1929

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

Advise Chhotelal after reading the enclosed letter. Write to me. I have written to him that if it was done in the past and if Hari Vallabhji advises that a holiday be declared, he should do so.

Where should I write if I want to write to Bhagirathji at his residence? I should get letters from you regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32971

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

26. THE U. P. TOUR-XI[1]

From Kalakankar taking Pratapgarh and other places on the way we reached Allahabad on 15th instant, to face a crowded programme and, as in Delhi, a meeting of the Working Committee and the Joint Conference to consider the situation in the light of the events subsequent to the Delhi manifesto. But the strain in Allahabad was less because the hand of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was visible in everything. When all is well arranged, times are kept and noises and rush avoided, the strain is but little felt.

The programme began with a visit to Dr. Sam Higginbottom's experimental farm and agricultural institute. Gandhiji wanted to visit it not for collecting funds for *Daridranarayana* but as a farmer to learn what he could of Dr. Higginbottom's experiment. It was a packed one and a half hours' programme. Gandhiji was hurried through the workshop, cattle-farm, sewage farm, soil reclamation area, etc. Cross cattle breeding is being tried at the farm. Sewage is buried in shallow pits and used with good results on the very spot where it is buried. The liquid manure in cattle shed is treated separately from the solid and is carried in a diluted form to a farm prepared for lucerne-growing and the like. Gandhiji could not help noticing the contrast between this economical and scientific treatment of sewage and the woeful neglect of the Municipal Board which allowed thousands of rupees worth of sewage to be annually wasted and the sacred waters of the Ganges and the Jamna to be polluted at the very spot where they meet and to view which tens of thousands of devotees travel long distances from all parts of India. We had a peep at the little children whom Mrs. Higginbottom is bringing up with a mother's care. Most of these are children born of lepers. This part of the visit finished with a five minutes' function at which the students presented a purse containing earnings from their own labour specially dedicated to *Daridranarayana* and a huge basket full of the delicacies that mother earth had yielded at this farm. From this function Dr. and Mrs. Higginbottom took the party to the leper asylum nearby conducted by them. They seemed to take special pride in this work of theirs and Gandhiji could not help envying Mrs. Higginbottom the spontaneous love that the little children bestowed upon their adoptive mother who with pardonable pride introduced the 'troupe' to Gandhiji as "my children"! The chaulmoogra oil injections are regularly given to the lepers with, it is said, 80 per cent success

[1] *Vide* 1st footnote "The U.P. Tour-VI", 24-10-1929.

complete or partial in recent cases and less success in advanced cases. But it is claimed that the ravaging progress of the fell disease is arrested even in advanced cases.

From the farm the party visited the Ewing College and School students and received a good purse and address. Thence we went to Crosthwaite Girls' School where the proceedings were protracted though interesting. The girls sang Mirabai's bhajans and some of the little girls danced with admirable rhythm as they sang the famous bhajan of Mirabai:

" मैं तो हरिगुण गावत नाचूँगी"

(I shall dance as I sing the praises of the Lord) This gave Gandhiji the cue for his address. He asked the girls to sing these sacred hymns with understanding and from their hearts. From the girls' function the party went to Kayasth Pathashala to receive their purse and address. The afternoon was devoted to visiting villages in the district. This was Saturday 16th.

The morning of the 17th opened with a meeting of the University students and professors.[1] It was presided over by the Vice-Chancellor Sjt. Ganganath Jha. The largest purse yet presented by students and professors was presented here. It was over Rs. 3,000 and the address was taken up by the Students' Union at Rs. 357. The tour has been remarkable for the fact, among others, that the students' purses have been rising almost invariably at every stage. Allahabad beat all previous records and came miles ahead of the others.

From the students the party migrated to the Municipal Offices for Gandhiji to receive addressees from the Municipal and District Boards.[2] Gandhiji drew the attention of the members of the Municipal Board to the question of sewage disposal, and suggested that it was criminal to pollute with the city sewage the sacred rivers at their very confluence. He said that it was the duty of the Board to adopt a wise and scientific system of disposing of the sewage and thereby to replenish their empty treasure chest. The Municipal Board is runninga leather manufacture school. Congratulating the Board on having such a school, Gandhiji told the Board that it should begin with indigenous tanning of dead cattle hide of which there must be a considerable quantity available out of the cattle dying in Allahabad. It was possible, he added, to increase the wealth of the country if tanning instead of remaining in the hands of a despised neglected class received a proper treatment.

The afternoon opened with a monster meeting of ladies where little Indira, now rendered famous by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's letters

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Allahabad University", 17-11-1929.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Civic Reception, Allahabad", 17-11-1929.

to her, presented a purse containing a cheque for over Rs. 8,000. This cheque represented by far the largest purse presented during the tour by the women.

This was followed by the public meeting where the balance of the collections amounting to Rs. 10,000 was presented. The total for the Allahabad district amounted to nearly Rs. 35,000. This was wholly unexpected. Gandhiji, the most optimistic of the party, never expected it to go beyond Rs. 25,000. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was the most diffident. But Shrimati Kamala Nehru, who though only recently discharged from the hospital after a difficult operation had taken up the onerous duty of Secretary of the Reception Committee and had given herself and her co-workers no rest, made the great response possible. Pandit Motilalji had headed the list with Rs. 2,500. From Allahabad the party visited Mirzapur and Chunar. The latter is situated on the banks of the Ganges and is a place of historic importance. But it was visited solely for the fact that it was the place chosen by Dr. Bhagvandas for leading *vanaprastha*[1] life. There, in perfect quiet and beautiful surroundings, he is living not far from his beloved Kashi, the seat of his life-long activities, and yet protected from all noise and bustle of a great city.

From Chunar we retraced our steps to Allahabad *en route* for Bundelkhand the last of the great group of provinces known as the United Provinces.

Taking Fatehpur on the way we passed into Bundelkhand, impoverished through a pitiless visitation of famines. At Kulapahar there is a khadi ashram. Bundelkhand needs more than one khadi centre and many workers. It can give relief to thousands of semi-starved families and enable them to tide over years of scarcity and add to their scanty income even during good years. Years of plenty the Indian peasant has not known for generations.There are in Bundelkhand thousands of families belonging to the Kori class. They are hereditary weavers who do also their own spinning. A family of four having one loom earns no more than from 11 to 12 rupees per month and therefore ekes out a bare living only on an indigenous grain corresponding to *ragi* or bajri[2]. They have no milk nor ghee ! It was a sad sight to meet them. There is no reason whatsoever why, like the Raniparaj[3] of Bardoli, these men and women should not be transformed in a few years and the winter of their despair turned into the summer of hope through the life-giving wheel.

From Kulapahar we passed to Jhansi and thence to Orai,

[1] The third of the four ashramas of life during which one prepares for complete renunciation

[2] A variety of millet

[3] A scheduled tribe of South Gujarat

Ooraiya, and lastly Etawah where Swami Swarajswarup, a *snatak* of Prem Mahavidyalaya, who has dedicated himself to the country's service, is trying to do village reconstruction work.

The U.P. tour commenced at Agra on 11th September and ended at Etawah on 24th November, i.e., after exactly two months and a fortnight. If one adds the previous three weeks of Almora[1] the tour took three months and one week. Friends will be glad to learn that though the tour was undoubtedly exacting Gandhiji has kept excellent health.

Young India, 28-11-1929

27. NOTES

CONGRESS COMMITTEES BEWARE

The Secretary, F.C.B. Committee, has circulated the following to the Press:[2]

It is up to the Congress Committees to send the reports required by the F.C.B. Committee. Had they done their duty as Champaran has, the story of boycott of foreign cloth would have been differently written.

LALAJI MEMORIAL

The U.P. tour gave about Rs. 30,000 to the Lalaji Memorial. This would not have been possible without Sjt. Purushottamdas Tandon's efforts. But I do not regard this as at all an adequate contribution. The U.P. is well able to give more towards this national memorial. I hope that the collections will continue. Let each province insist on doing its utmost and we shall soon finish, as we ought to, the full five lakhs.

Young India, 28-11-1929

28. SOME THOUGHTS ON U.P. TOUR

The long awaited U.P. tour was by the grace of God finished on 24th instant. Friends had feared a breakdown in my health but the wall of protection that Acharya Kripalani and the other companions had erected round me ensured for me as much comfort and rest as was necessary and possible in the circumstances. The brunt of this

[1] From June 13 to July 2, 1929

[2] The circular, not reproduced here, requested Congress Committees to send reports of the year's foreign-cloth boycott work,

protection however fell upon the broad shoulders of Acharya Kripalani who was sometimes really angry and more often feigned anger when leaders of places visited wanted more time and more appointments or when people insisted on seeing me or crowding into my car. The result was that he came in some places to be regarded as a fiend without feeling, and without consideration for others. He quietly pocketed all these epithets and went about his way. But as we parted at Agra, his message to me was, "I have neither the heart nor the aptitude for offering apologies. I do my duty as I know how and there my task ends. You should offer all the necessary apologies for me." Acharya Kripalani when I first met him in 1915 was already a seasoned warrior. He was then earning Rs. 400 per month but was a *brahmachari* taking only Rs. 40 for himself and sending the balance to Dr. Choithram who was conducting a *brahmacharya* ashram at Hyderabad. He became my most efficient door-keeper in Champaran[1] when I was besieged by crowds of eager and pressing ryots.

In utter disregard of consequences he threw himself in the thick of the non-co-operation fight and from professor became a khadi hawker and organizer. When the call came from Sardar Vallabhbhai, he responded and gave a new lease of life to the Vidyapith. And now surrounded by a band of faithful workers he is conducting khadi ashrams in the U.P. with a zeal which any young man may well envy. For the sake of his country he has exiled himself from Sind and is equally at home with Biharis as with U.P. men. At the pressing instance of the A.I.S.A. he has become its co-agent withPandit Jawaharlal Nehru for the U.P. And it was in this capacity that he supervised the tour. I am sure that those who came under his lash will forgive him his quick temper. I wish we had more workers of the Kripalani type. Their quick temper would be forgotten in the quick and sure invigorating change that their solid work will bring about in our enervating surroundings.

Even the hopes that Acharya Kripalani had to disappoint, I know, sprang from affection of which I had as much abundance in U.P. as in Andhra and elsewhere. Indeed the attention received by me and my companions was often embarrassing. Where one volunteer was wanted, ten were ready. The hospitality was imprudently lavish. And I regret to have to confess that we were not always insistent on refusing such as was unnecessary. My own experience is that a gentle but firm refusal to accept what is not strictly needed for creature comforts is never mistaken for rudeness.

My advice to workers is:

[1] In 1917

2. Take national workers at their word. If, for instance, they say they do not need sweets, believe them and do not provide sweets to them. Know that every rupee spent on unnecessary things is so much taken away from the mouths of the semistarved millions.

3. Keep your appointments rigidly to the minute.

4. Having made promises fulfil them at the cost of your life. Let your word even in small matters be as good as your bond.

There was too much dilatoriness and loose talk among organizers. The result was loss of time, disappointments and vexation of spirit.

I must postpone a consideration of the provincial service and one or two other matters to the next issue.[1]

Young India, 28-11-1929

29. PUBLIC FINANCE AND OUR POVERTY

Sjt. Coomarappa, M.A., B.Sc., is a Fellow of the Society of Incorporated Accountants. He has travelled abroad to gain practical experience and is now for the time being at any rate, if not permanently, in the Gujarat Vidyapith. He has written several informing chapters on public finance and our poverty. These being seasonable I propose to publish in instalments in these pages.[2] The reader will learn as he proceeds that according to Sjt. Coomarappa India spends 93.7 % on debts, military and administrative expenses as against 48.8 % spent by America. The money thus spent by India largely goes out of it; what is spent by America remains in it. Thus the richest country in the world spends about half of what India the poorest country in the world spends on administration. So long as this crushing burden is not removed there is no swaraj whether one knows it by the name Dominion Status or Independence. The reader should carefully study these chapters which contain facts rather than arguments.

Young India, 28-11-1929

[1] *Vide* "Zamindars and Talukdars", 5-12-1929. and "U. P. National Service", 12-12-1929.

[2] These are not reproduced here; *vide* also footnote to "Letter to J. C. Kumarappa", 14-11-1929.

30. TEMPLES FOR 'UNTOUCHABLES'

Swami Anand who has been leading a valiant fight for the so-called untouchables writes:[1]

In the beginning of the movement as I had conceived it on my return from South Africa in 1915, I had thought that it was wholly inconsistent with the movement for removing untouchaability to build separate temples or schools for them. But experience taught me that the movement could not proceed upon strict logic and that we Hindus had so much suppressed a third of ourselves that even after the articulate Hindus had with one voice declared for removal the suppressed brethren would for a long time need the helpinghand in a variety of ways. After the theoretical lip-removal of untouchability, if no special effort was made, the vast bulk of them would not readily take advantage of the removal and the ignorant mass would not tolerate them especially when the latter would be naturally clumsy in their deportment or pardonably forward in the enjoyment of long withheld freedom. I am therefore convinced that the two things will have to go hand in hand—perfect freedom to enter ordinary temples and ordinary schools and to use common wells at the same time as erection of model schools and model temples specially designed for the convenience of 'untouchables' but open to the others subject always to priority for 'untouchables'. It was along this line of reasoning that I suggested in the brief note for the *Calcutta Municipal Gazette* that the municipalities could foster removal of untouchability by erecting temples and model schools for the suppressed classes side by side with the attempt to have the existing temples thrown open to these countrymen of ours.

My note may therefore on no account be taken as an excuse for condoning prohibition against entry into temples, etc. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of the manifesto of the Bombay leaders who have advised the removal of the prohibition against temple-entry throughout the Bombay Presidency. I have therefore just read with great joy the news that Ramchandra temple in Bombay has been thrown open to the suppressed classes by Sjt. Thakordas Nanabhai, a trustee of the temple. I hope that there will be no relaxation in the effort initiated in Bombay.

Young India, 28-11-1929

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent, referring to an article by Gandhiji in the *Calcutta Municipal Gazette*, hat said that his "plea for building special temples for untouchables is likely to be misconstrued". For Gandhiji's article in the *Gazette, vide* "Khaddar and untouchability: Duty of Indian Municipalities", 12-10-1929.

31. PRINCELY STATES

A gentleman, writing about the many immoral rulers in Central India, asks me why, knowing the facts, I am silent about them. Several of the rulers are aged. Many have several wives but not content with them they keep many women as half-wives or concubines. Do I expect anything even from such rulers?

I expect every human being to be virtuous, because I expect the same thing of myself. In this world no one is perfect. By trying hard all can become virtuous. Some: rulers are immoral, but that is because the subjects are also wanting in morals. Therefore, let us not be annoyed with the rulers. Rather, when we think of the princely system let us not confuse the issue by mixing up in our deliberations thefaults of individual rulers. This, then, is a theoretical appraisal of the aforesaid subject. But from this let no one think that according to my belief nothing should be done regarding the princely order or regarding matters like the immorality of the rulers. Whatever efforts are made to wipe out social evils in India must have some impact on the rulers as well. We have no means of measuring this impact. The truth of the matter is that our efforts at social reforms are very feeble. So the pace of social betterment is also very slight. There can be a special way of dealing with immoral rulers and that is the non-co-operation of his subjects with his rule. It is sad that this kind of awakening or strength is almost absent among the public. Not only this; the officials of the ruler, guided by self-interest, give full support to the ruler in his misdeeds.

Lastly, we consider the Indian princely rule. As the Emperor so his vassals. Our Imperial Government is Satanic. Therefore, from 1920 onwards the mighty weapon of non-co-operation is being wielded. When the Imperial Government is replaced by a national government, the rulers also will become virtuous automatically. This is the universal law—an ancient tradition. An agitation against the Indian rulers today only makes the Imperial Government stronger, because the agitation may also amount to inviting the Imperial Government to suppress the Indian States.

I hope, after reading this explanation, it would not be difficult to understand my silence about the Indian States. This silence of mine is part and parcel of non-co-operation.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 28-11-1929

32. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

November 30, 1929

DEAR MOTILALJI,

Messrs Jinnah, Vithalbhai and Vallabhbhai were with me this afternoon. The upshot of the conversation was that if there was an interview with the Viceroy, we would be free to discuss all the terms of the manifesto and that if the Viceroy was sure of our responding to his invitation he would invite us at the instance of Vithalbhai or Jinnah. The Viceroy will be free to see us on 23rd December. The proposal is that if the invitation is received we should meet in Delhi on 22nd December. The party is to be composed of you, Dr. Sapru, Jinnah, Vithalbhai and me.I feel that if the invitation is issued we should respond. If you agree please wire your yes to Vithalbhai at Delhi and to me at Sabarmati up to 5th. I leave for Wardha on 6th.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Motilal Nehru Papers, File No. G-1. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

33. TELEGRAM TO DINSHAW MEHTA

[*November 1929*]

DR. DINSHAW MEHTA
HEALTH HOTEL
POONA CITY

YOUR WIRE, REPLIED LETTER. FOR PRESENT BETTER SERVE COMMON CAUSE AND MOTHER. LOVE TO YOU ALL.

BAPU

From a photostat : G. N. 10513

34. THE WITCH'S LAST BREATH

Sjt. Ramnarayan who is a worker in the cause of the *Antyajas* writes from Mombasa:[1]

The residents of East Africa deserve congratulations on

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had given an account of the work he was doing in East Africa.

contributing their share to the fund for the service of the *Antyajas*. People can ask only those persons to contribute who have the means to do so. Hence it is not surprising that those who collect funds go so far as East Africa and such other places. The glory of the philanthropist lies in giving alms only after examining with discrimination the merits or otherwise of each recipient. It is the dharma of the wealthy not to contribute a single pie where the beggar begs merely in order to satisfy his hunger or the wicked does so in order to further his evil deeds. Both good and wicked people are bound to approach them. Their sense of discrimination is to be measured by their capacity to put these persons to the test.

On the basis of the help that he received in East Africa, Sjt. Ramnarayan has concluded that the witch of untouchability is drawing her last breath. To draw such a conclusion merely from the funds received by him is to go too far. However, many symptoms bear witness to the fact that the witch is indeed drawing her last breath. The fact that due to the efforts of Sjt. Jamnalalji, eight famous temples in Jabalpur simultaneously opened their gates to the *Antyaja* brothers and sisters and that respectable gentlemen took part in it, and that in Bombay Sheth Thakoredas Nanabhai opened the gates of the Ramchandra temple to them suggests an epoch-making reform. Some who regard themselves as orthodox Hindus are trying to carry on an agitation against these efforts. However, if the reformers are not indiscreet and if they do not give up their patience and at the same time do not abandontheir task, if they do not exceed their limits, the opposition of their opponents is bound to die down.

It is easy to understand the impatience of the *Antyaja* brethren. It is but natural to feel impatient when there are no two opinions about the propriety of one's rights, and where there is a consciousness of the injustice that is being done to one. Nevertheless, where Hindus other than *Antyajas* are making constant efforts on behalf of reformers, if the *Antyajas* have forbearance, it is most likely that the desired result will be achieved sooner. It is understandable that the *Antyajas* would have to take some steps in the matter if no Hindus other than their own community lent support to their cause or that support produced no results. However, there is complete justification for patience in a situation where ceaseless efforts are being made by reformers and where we can actually see the good results achieved in Jabalpur, Bombay and other places.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-12-1929

35. THE NAVAJIVAN TRUST

The reader will recall that in the year 1919, at a time when a fierce struggle was being conducted against the Rowlatt Act, I accepted the editorship of *Young India* and *Navajivan* in deference to the wishes of Sjt. Shankerlal Banker, Sjt. Umar Sobani, Sjt. Jamnadas Dwarkadas and Sjt. Indulal Yajnik. A printing press was set up because everyone clearly felt that the periodicals could only be published in their own press. It was immediately felt that a man of determination and courage was required to run it. We supplied the requirement in bits from the Satyagraha Ashram. However, if it was to prove its worth and become self-supporting, it was necessary to get a worker who would be single-minded in his devotion to it and think only of its welfare day and night. It was not possible to spare such a person from the Ashram who would lend lustre to this post. I thought of Swami Anand and like a soldier he honoured my wishes. As a result, the press became self-sufficient and Navajivan as an institution handed over Rs. 50,000 to Sardar Vallabhbhai for public service. This cannot be regarded as a profit but rather a result of the sacrifice made by those serving on the staff of *Navajivan.* Neither Swami Anand nor any of the other principal office-bearers has accepted a salary. The entire institution has been run to date for the love of public service.Its affairs have been managed on my behalf by Swami and later by Sjt. Mohanlal who was trained by him and was his right-hand man. Everyone had concluded long ago that although this situation was unexceptionable, it could not be regarded as permanent. I had thought out the names of its trustees or guardians. However, due to some extent to laziness and to a larger extent to various other preoccupations, some time elapsed before this deed was legalized and duly registered. Owing to the grace of God and that of a lawyer friend who charged no fees, Sjt. Mohanlal and I became on the 27th relieved of the burden, having affixed our signatures.[1] What was there in the heart was transferred to the public registers. Readers will see that document along with this issue. This institution has always belonged to the reader, those who want to regard it as theirs even more may do so and cherish it as much as they wish. The junior staff of *Navajivan* may be regarding themselves as salaried employees today. It is my hope as well as that of my colleagues that tomorrow they will become its true owners. With this intention, we have bought a small plot of open land near the Sabarmati station. It is our hope that the workers will live there in fresh air, set up an ideal township, be happy, water the plant of service, enjoy its shade and pass it on in their turn to the country. The aims of the institution are all-embracing. In order to

[1] *Vide* "Declaration of Trust", 26-11-1929.

ensure their success, the organizers, the workers and the readers must give their full co-operation. That co-operation has been there till today more or less. I have not found it cumbersome to run this journal. I have derived immeasurable delight from the kindness of its readers and the unique loyalty of my colleagues. And from it, I have had a glimpse of swaraj and have nurtured hopes of knowing the *atman*. However, just as one who is given the support of the finger hopes for the support of the wrist, I hope for more effective co-operation from the reader. If this bears fruit, swaraj is within our grasp.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-12-1929

36. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

December 2, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Since you are not in the Ashram, I do not take the trouble of writing to you every day. But I see from your last letter that you have carried with you the burden of the Ashram. You should lay it aside. You have gone out on Ashram work, leaving your charge to someone else. Why, then, should you carry any burden? Let things happen as they will. We have the example of Janaka constantly before us. Gibbon's history, though beautifully written, is not true history, for it is written with external materials. It is based on imperfect events of the hour. The *Mahabharata*, on the other hand, is based on the timeless and imperishable inner experience, and therefore it alone is true history. We should not, therefore, regard Janaka's example as an ancient one, but treat it as belonging to the present time. Have faith that Krishna, Arjuna and Yudhishthira are talking about the same things and acting in the same manner today, though not under the same names. Is it not through faith that we believe in Gibbon's historical narrative, too? We have, in fact, more reliable evidence to put our faith in the stories of the *Mahabharata* than we have in Gibbon's history. If we understand this simple and plain truth, many of our problems will be solved in no time. Let us, therefore, not regard Janaka's example as a mere brinjal in a book, but believe it to be as fresh brinjal, to be plucked and eaten, as the ones growing in our field.

You will now understand that the resolutions which I have permitted to be passed, or say inspired, in your absence should not make you unhappy. You wanted a clarification of certain matters,

which I procured by patiently discussing them with others and persuading others to discuss them among themselves. Nothing more than this can be done, and nothing less could have been. The thing boils over again and again, but that can be controlled by gently blowing over the boiling liquid or adding a little water. We need not, however, remove the milk off the stove. If we are vigilant, it is not likely to get burnt or to boil and spill over. If it does despite our vigilance, the responsibility is not ours. The *Gita* is our authority for this.

You feel that some of the things are good there and bad here: this is both true and not true, more "not" than otherwise. It is but right, however, that we should magnify our defects. It is only by constantly doing that that we get the proper perspective. I, therefore, believe that you are in the right. This is my reply to your previous letters, as far as I remember their contents.

Now I shall reply to your last letter. If you keep bad health there, I cannot permit you to stay on. Your health has suffered because you have given way to false civility or shame. You ought not to eat imperfectly cooked food. If you cannot get food there according to your requirement, you should, without taking or giving offence, go outside and get what you want. This is real friendship. You cannot eat the dal prepared there; but you can easily live on milk and *roti*, with such vegetables as can be eaten raw, like tomatoes.

I want to be lodged in a tent. That is what I have told Tandonji. It will suffice if the facilities similar to those provided by Vallabhbhai in Ahmedabad are provided at Lahore. And I see from your accounts that they will be. Dr. Gopichand should remember that I shall be accompanied by quite a number of invalids. There should be sufficient space to accommodate them all. In other words, those who undertake to provide me the facilities I need should put up an ashram on a small scale. They should also put up a fencing to imprison me so that I may be protected against crowds wanting *darshan* of me. If this is done, I may not have to give nor they need take more trouble.

Everywhere we come across individual votaries of khadi such as you find there; this is a very hopeful sign. I will certainly remember about the Maganlal memorial. I doubt whether we can look after it in the Ashram. The rule that we can employ only an associate[1] comes in the way of such additions. Nor do I see anything wrong in this. If, however, you are confident enough, though knowing that we shall not get an associate, let me know. We cannot get, or use, the building meant for the doctor. I do not think, moreover, that the ground floor

[1] Gandhiji uses the English word.

is sufficient for the purpose. We have, thus, no choice but to put up a new building for the memorial. I do not think it would be improper to locate it in the Vidyapith or in Jamnalal's farm at Wardha. But I cannot come to a firm decision to that effect just now.

We need give no thought to the objections which Ratilal might raise about water, etc. He is the proprietor. But we arethe trustees and, therefore, it is for us to decide independently to what extent and how to use that water. I have explained this to Ramniklal.

You are quite right in reminding me about Sind relief. The matter is not out of my mind. But we shall not have done our dharma by spending the money in a hurry. I have not advised that the money collected for the Malabar Relief Fund should be used for khadi work, but I have taken the freedom to use that money for relief work outside Malabar. The relief was carried out through khadi work, for we have accepted khadi as a means for such relief. In Malabar, much relief work was done through khadi. My conscience is clear in this matter. We have already come to a decision about Sind. It is that we should send the money when Jairamdas or Malkani asks for it. Both of them are planning to organize relief to the distressed through khadi. Malkani has plenty of money with him just now. More than half of what he had has been wasted, and he has been looking on helplessly. I forgot to mention one thing about Malabar. An alternative name for Malabar Relief [Fund] was Southern Relief [Fund]. I had, however, inserted a notice to clarify the matter in order that there might be no misconception among people. The money has been spent for relief in the South. I have not been able to decide about the Assam money. I need Satis Babu's opinion before I can do that. I have been in correspondence with him for one month.

There are two candidates for the honour; one, Dhiraj of Sylhet, and the other, Suresh of Comilla. The only thing to be considered is which of them, or whether both, should get the honour.

Let the account of overseas help stand. I explained this matter to Ramniklal long ago. I am not in a position just now to get the money from Jehangirji. However, if I do not succeed in getting it during my lifetime and if you have not written off the sum and forgotten about the account, you may be able to get the money from him even after my death. Even today, if I spend some time going after the thing, take up the issue seriously and see a lot of people, I may succeed in getting it. But I have no wish to do that at all, nor is it necessary that I should. I am convinced that this account has a claim over the money lying with Jehangirji and that is enough for me. We may get something from Birla next year, we do not know how much. If he and his firm

are safe, we are bound to get something. We should continue to give to the Labour Union what it has been receiving fromthis fund, as long as Anasuyabehn wishes. She is trying to make some other arrangement.

I may have to examine what look like bad debts. They should, however, be shown separately in our balance-sheet, so that no misleading impression is produced. For I remember right now one or two debts which appear to be bad and which are not likely to become good in future. For instance, Sitla Sahai's and Rupani's.

I am trying to take in Nanubhai. He came and saw me yesterday. He feels shy to live in the Ashram, and will not feel comfortable at Vijapur. He has requested to be posted elsewhere. I do not think that will be possible. I believe, however, that it will be possible to attract him to the Ashram. He asked for more time to think over the matter and went to Vijapur yesterday.

Manji's problem will give no trouble. The mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law may certainly stay as long as Gangabehn has no objection. I have dictated so far by 4.15. To do that, I got up at 2.45. I have done this not to oblige you, but to guide one through whom I have to get work done. This gives satisfaction to my soul.

When I talked to Gangabehn about Krishnamaiyadevi, she told me, "Things are going on well just now, and she has been doing good work." Mauni, too, seems to be working. So long as there is no complaint against her, nothing need be done at present.

I have had no talk with Bhansali. After he saw me in connection with Nanibehn, he has not come again, and I have not been able to go myself. But, I will have a talk with him. I do not like his children going to the Vidyapith. But I reconcile myself to the position with the thought that he lives in a certain manner as a guest. The inmates of the Mandir cannot follow his example and send their children to the Vidyapith. We should tolerate Nayan's and Rupi's going there, since they are being trained not for village-life but for city-life.

I have had a talk with Dinkarrao. I had also called a meeting of the Goshala Committee to consider the matter. I have now to draft rules for a case like his. It is enough if he agrees to observe *brahmacharya* as long as he lives in the Mandir. We or I shall lose nothing by this arrangement. We cannot say that, if a man observes *brahmacharya* for the sake of his moral well-being or service, what he does is improper or is a waste of effort. It should be enough if he does not cheat us. I am sure in my mind that most of the inmates of the Mandir are honestly doing their best. It is possible that there are some who are deceiving us.That does not diminish the value of our rules, nor prove them unnecessary. We can, however, draw this

conclusion from the presence of such persons, namely, that while the world exists, there will also be people in it who deceive others. What we have to consider is whether there are any persons who have found peace under the cool shade of these rules. The reply to this is so clear that no one can have any doubt about it. Maganlal and others came through all difficulties under the protection of the rules. Prabhudas and the other boys and Radha and the other girls are holding on because of the strength they derive from the rules. Dinkarrao does not seem to me to be a person who is likely to deceive us. However, who can ever give a guarantee about anyone? "Man commits sin against his will"[1] is a statement for ever true. I believe that Dinkarrao will keep his word. Parnerkar and the others believe it. At present we should run the dairy subject to the same rules as for the Mandir. It has not reached the stage when it can function as an independent institution. This is the independent view of those people, including Dinkarrao.

I have told them to permit old families which wish to opt out of the common kitchen to do so. Ramabehn[2] made a start yesterday. I immediately agreed. I complimented her in my mind for her frankness. You need not feel hurt by this, but should be pleased. I have not had a frank discussion with her. Perhaps she would not desire that.

I cannot bring myself to accept a separate kitchen for the girls. We shall know by and by what happens about this.

At present, by "the rules about the girls' section in the Ashram" we mean Gangabehn. She may bear those other rules in her mind and manage the affairs.

Let us hope that in future we shall be able to do all these things which we cannot do now. If we fail and see our error, we shall correct it.

I look upon Shivabhai as a person with a sense of responsibility. If he falls, he will be going out of the way. Wherever people are required to obey rules, impostors have some scope. What shall we do about that? Darkness always follows the sun. Nothing remains now from your letters to be replied to.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4211

[1] *Bhagavad Gita,* III. 36

[2] Addressee's wife

37. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

5.30 a.m., Silence Day, December 2, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I am writing this after having taken the weekly silence. I have all your letters and wire. I have also your notes for *Young India.* One will appear [in] the coming issue.[1] It was crowded out this time.

That you are now keeping normal health gives me relief. I hope there will be no setback now.

Mathuradas has introduced a new method of carding. I am trying to learn it.

Dr. and Mrs. Sherwood Eddy and Mr. and Mrs. Kirkley Page are coming tomorrow. I wish you could have met them. I expect to find them extra-good.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

You are likely to meet Mahadev before this reaches you. Then he will give you all the news.

I have read your two notes—railway travelling[2] and violence[3]. You have begun the second on the same sheet where the first ends. This is inconvenience for me and the compositor. A separate note should be commenced on a separate sheet. Tom-tom is a drum, a gharry is called and spelt tum-tum. The two notes will go in. In one place I have corrected what appeared to me loose thought, in another an irrelevant mention of events. You will perhaps detect both the corrections. There are a few minor ones. Though the notes are going, they are not for you up to the mark. There is ample room for improvement. Perhaps when you see yourself in cold print, you will realize it yourself. Therefore do not attempt to be regular. Concentrate on what you want to write and rewrite it ten times if you like, till at least you can say to yourself you can make no further improvement. For the time being you must write not to relieve myimmediate pressure, but to replace me in future. The pressure is already removed. Valji has given me matter of which I am able to take

[1] *Vide* "Our Brethren the Trees", 5-12-1929.

[2] *Vide* "The Third-Class Carriage", 12-12-1929.

[3] Published under the title "The Futility of Violence" in *Young India,* 19-12-1929

for the current week only one-sixth. Coomarappa's and Mahadev's contributions you have seen.

BAPU

[PPS.]

You are quite correct in having decided for yourself about Monghyr.

From the original: C.W. 5382. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9438

38. NOTE TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

Silence Day [*December 2, 1929*][1]

MY DEAR REYNOLDS,

I saw your nose bleeding. You need not feel distressed about it. Take rest for a while and sip cold water through the nose and bring it out through the throat and splash cold water over the head and at the back of it.

M.K.G.

From a photostat: C.W. 4537. Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

39. LETTER TO M. J.

UDYOGA MANDIR, SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 2, 1929

BHAI M. J.,

If you use all your money for public good, then you have no longer a duty to give something to the sister. The lapse you committed cannot be undone. The sister has no debts to pay. The debt of which you write is an idea of the mind, and it is not possible to discharge it with money. It can be discharged partly through service to womankind.

Now about you. If you have money, why do you at all draw any money from here? A *jijnasu*[2] or *mumukshu*[3] would never doso without good reason. This, however, is only a general observation. If Bhai Chhaganlal Joshi has committed himself to you in any way, the

[1] Inferred from the addressee's article, "Letters from Bapu", in *Incidents of Gandhiji's Life*, p. 279, wherein he writes this and another note, *vide* "Note to Reginald Reynolds", 3-12-1929 were "evidently written between Gandhiji's return to the Ashram at the end of November 1929 and his departure to Wardha." Gandhiji reached the Ashram on November 26 and left for Wardha on December 6.

[2] Seeker of knowledge

[3] Aspirant for *moksha*, i.e., salvation

commitment is binding on the Udyoga Mandir and on me, so that either Joshi himself may decide whether the money which you are asking for should be given to you, or I may give an opinion in the matter after hearing him. If Bhai Ramniklal or Shivabhai knows the facts the matter can be settled immediately. Even though it may be possible thus to give you the money, the moral question remains unsolved for you.

Regarding your going on leave. This matter is entirely within Bhai Ramniklal's jurisdiction. If he lets you go, you may by all means go. It is certainly necessary for you to go.

I do think it wrong that you should have been given the accounts work. I do not know why it became necessary to give you that work. Generally speaking, my opinion is that, till newcomers have properly mastered the processes leading to and including spinning, no advantage should be taken of their knowledge of book-keeping, etc.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 15839

40. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

December 2, 1929

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I got your telegrams and your letter. I have assumed that you will take what has happened as my reply to them. So thick is the jungle of work around me that I feel suffocated. Had it not been so, I would have replied to you in detail. Just now I can only tell you that I keep in mind what friends like you write to me from time to time. I assure you, however, that I shall be guided entirely by what the *atman* within tells me. Who knows if, because of my evil deeds, that inner *atman* gets frozen and quite another power begins working in its place? How can one know when the inner voice is speaking and when one or more or all of the six inner enemies are speaking? It is only after death, isn't it, that one can know it? My health is quite good. It seems you are on the whole keeping the promise to visit the Ashram once a month.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5911

41. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

Silence Day, Magshar Sud 1, 1986 [*December 2, 1929*]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I did not wish to suggest that one should not write long letters even on one's birthday. Your letter is all right. I do send you my blessings. The pain is deep. But Ramanama is not meant for a boil, which can be cured with poultice. Ramanama is meant for making a bridge across the sea, for making paper boats sail, for turning stone into water and water into stone. So, you cling to it with faith and devotion. Do not worry if you can see no results on the surface. You will triumph in the end. Your letter is torn. I do not remember the questions. You find your own answers or ask again. The paper should be such that it does not get torn. I do remember one question. While uttering Ramanama, I do not concentrate on any idol. I do not worship Rama as an idol. Have you not seen that we worship the name? Tulsidas has said that the name of Rama is greater than Rama himself. In other words, the indescribable element which is beyond physical existence is greater than what resides in the body. Utter the name of God kind and do charitable deeds. The significance is not of Rama the king but of the name of Rama. Have you not seen my definition of God? Usually I had been saying and writing that God is Truth. In the new manual I have deliberately improved upon that definition and Inow say Truth is God. I am here thinking of that Truth which transcends even God. It is not only at prayer time that I have this realization. I may say it is in me while eating and drinking, evacuating, reading, writing this, writing other things, delivering speeches—it is there every moment. In spite of that, there is no limit to my imperfections, because the realization is only awareness; it has not permeated my being. That may not even happen during this life. However, why should I worry about it? It is within my power to make an effort. The result is in the hands of *Satyanarayana*.

This does not give you the complete answer. No matter what lustful thoughts come, it is sufficient if you do not succumb to them and are not defeated. You just sing and dance to the glory of the Lord. Do not feel distressed that lustful thoughts assail you but fight against them. The great quality of a Kshatriya is not victory but not flinching from battle. This is enough. Chhaganlal and Kashi have just arrived. They will be staying at least for two days. Do not worry about them.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised the letter. I shall be going to Wardha on the 6th. Tell Devdas not to deprive me to letters.

[From Gujarati]

Ashram Bhajanono Swadhyaya, p. 253

42. NOTE TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

Silence Day [*December 3, 1929*][1]

MY DEAR REYNOLDS,

I am somewhat troubled about the guests who are coming today. I am most anxious that they should have the necessary creature comforts supplied to them so long as it is within our power to do so. Will you please act as co-host with Sitla Sahai and see that they do not feel strangers in a strange place?

M.K.G.

From a photostat: C.W. 4538. Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

43. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Wednesday [*December 4, 1929*][2]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. I very much liked Jayaprakash's sincere letter. His frankness is remarkable. I shall be reaching Wardha on the 7th. Come over when you can. I have no time to write more today.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am at the moment sitting in the gathering at Umiya's wedding.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3356

[1] *Vide* 1st footnote to "Note to Reginald Reynolds", 2-12-1929 and "Letter to Mirabehn", 2-12-1929.

[2] Uma was married to Shankarlal Agrawal on this date, which was a Wednesday.

44. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

SABARMATI,
December 4, 1929

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

I was delighted to have your letter. I cherish the wish that your marital life may be an ideal one. About Prabhavati's attitude of indifference we shall talk when we meet.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: Jayaprakash Narayan Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

45. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, SABARMATI ASHRAM

December 4, 1929

It might be argued how do an Ashram and the performing of a marriage go together.[1] My reply is that the two are not contradictory of each other. Those who can exercise control over the self should do so; those who cannot, may marry. This is proper. None need think that those who practise self-control are pure and those who marry are all impure. It is possible that a married person may be virtuous and a bachelor a hypocrite. This is why we consider marriage desirable, although a nuisance.

In this marriage we have gone one step further. In Manilal's marriage we broke the caste barrier; in this we blast the provincial prejudices. From Gujarat we have come to Mewar. This is a good sign. This has added to our responsibility. Whichever marriage is performed here, we keep the duty aspect before us and we do it in a religious way. We adopt for ourselves a code of conduct. Considering the present conditions in these troubled times, if we can master the passion it will indeed be good. But we ought not to resort to compulsion. If, therefore, a boy or a girl so desires, a partner should be found, and they should be blessed into wedlock. This is theduty of the Ashram. So far,we have been acting on this premise and the result has not been bad. We perform the wedding without pageantry, in a short time, and with pure minds. This is a matter of joy.

This marriage was precluded by uneasiness and anxiety which have now vanished. All possible precautions were taken. The bride

[1] Shankarlal Agrawal and Umiya were married in the Ashram on this day.

and the bridegroom were both consulted. I have given importance to national interests over personal. Through this marriage one province has been drawn nearer to another. This is the first experiment.[1]

You have hundred times more responsibility upon your shoulders than has Umiya. Umiya's courage has pleased me. Keep abreast of her desires and needs. In Hindu society, women have suffered in status. They are regarded as dependent. Give her freedom. You are a scout. It is the duty of a scout to give protection to others. She should not feel unhappy, but should feel that everybody holds her dear. I could not teach her enough Hindi. So put up with this. If all of us realize our duties, the difference between a Marwari and a Gujarati cannot last. Keep duty and tradition before your eyes. I advise both of you to lead a life of restraint and never forget the interests of the country.

Umiya, what should I say to you? I have not time enough to talk to you separately. You have shown courage and shed lustre on the name of the Ashram, the province and the family. Do nothing wrong. I have put small garlands around your and Shankarlal's necks. In my estimation they are big. Do not fail to read the *Gita* every day. When disappointment stares into your face, select a hymn from the *Bhajanavali* and recite it. When you have some leisure, spin on a *takli* and live peacefully. May God make you true servants and grant you a long life. Live in such a way so that I may not have cause for regret.

[From Hindi]

Bapu: Maine Kya Dekha, Kya Samjha? pp. 25-6.

46. OUR BRETHREN THE TREES[2]

Gandhiji wanted to card some cotton and make slivers before going to bed, even though it was getting late. I went to put the bow, etc., ready and, being in a hurry, I asked a local volunteer to fetch me from the garden some *babul* tree leaves, which one requires for applying to the gut of the bow.

The boy brought me a large bunch, and as he handed it to me, I was surprised to notice that each little leaf was tightly folded up.

I took them to Gandhiji's room. "Do you see, Bapu," I said, "the little leaves have all gone to sleep!"

"Of course," replied Gandhiji, looking up with indignation and pity in his eyes. "Trees are living beings just like ourselves. They live and breathe, they feed and drink as we do, and like us they need sleep. It is a wretched thing to go and tear the leaves off a tree at night when it is resting! And why have you

[1] The following paragraph was addressed to Shankarlal Agrawal.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 2-12-1929.

brought such a huge quantity? Only a few leaves were necessary. Surely you heard what I said at the meeting yesterday about the poor flowers, and how deeply it pains me that people should pluck those masses of delicate blossoms to fling in my face and hang round my neck. Was not it thoughtless to send someone out like that to worry and pain a tree at such a late hour when it had folded its leaves in sleep? We should feel a more living bond between ourselves and the rest of animate creation."

"Yes, Bapu, I know—I understand," said I, hanging my head in shame. "It was very thoughtless of me, In future I will always go myself, and I will endeavour never again unnecessarily to disturb the peaceful sleep of the trees by plucking at their foliage after dark."

And I felt doubly ashamed of myself, as many and many a time have I gained comfort and guidance from our forest brethren. Often have I put my arms round the trunk of an old mighty tree and listened to his hushed words of wisdom and peace.

How could I have been so heartless !

Let not the reader call this sentimental twaddle, or accuse me or Mirabai of hopeless inconsistency in that we swallow a camel when we eat vegetables by the cartload and strain at a gnat because we would not care to pluck a leaf from a tree having its night's rest. 'Even a butcher may be to a certainextent humane.' Because a man eats mutton, he does not slaughter a herd of sheep when they are asleep. The essence of manliness consists in showing the utmost consideration to all life, animal as well as vegetable. He who in search of pleasure shows little consideration for others is surely less than man. He is thoughtless.[1]

India has cultivated no small respect for trees and other sentient beings. The poet describes Damayanti going from tree to tree in the wood bewailing her lot. For her companions, Shakuntala had trees as also the birds and beasts. The great poet, Kalidasa, tells us how her separation from them all was painful to her.

Young India, 5-12-1929 and *Navajivan*, 12-1-1930

47. ZAMINDARS AND TALUKDARS

Nothing during the recent U.P. tour pleased me more than the way in which several young zamindars and talukdars had simplified their lives and fired by patriotic zeal were easing the burden of the ryots. I had heard fearful accounts of the alleged atrocities of many zamindars and their mode of levying cesses, legal and illegal, on all conceivable occasions with the result that the ryot was reduced to serfdom pure and simple. The discovery therefore of so many young

[1] *Navajivan*, 12-1-1930, has the following additional paragraph.

talukdars was a very pleasant surprise to me.

But the improvement has to go further and be thorough. There is yet even among the best of them a wide gulf between themselves and the ryots. There is yet a great deal of patronizing and self-satisfaction over the little that has been done. The fact is that whatever may be done is no more than a belated return to the ryots of their due. The hideous caricature of varnashrama is responsible for the air of superiority that the so-called Kshatriya assumes and the status of inherited inferiority the poor ryot submissively recognizes as his deserved lot in life. If Indian society is to make real progress along peaceful lines, there must be a definite recognition on the part of the moneyed class that the ryot possesses the same soul that they do and that their wealth gives them no superiority over the poor. They must regard themselves, even as the Japanese nobles did, as trustees holding their wealth for the good of their wards, the ryots.Then they would take no more than a reasonable amount as commission for their labours. At present there is no proportion between the wholly unnecessary pomp and extravagance of the moneyed class and the squalid surroundings and the grinding pauperism of the ryots in whose midst the former are living. A model zamindar would therefore at once reduce much of the burden the ryot is now bearing, he would come in intimate touch with the ryots and know their wants and inject hope into them in the place of despair which is killing the very life out of them. He will not be satisfied with the ryots' ignorance of the laws of sanitation and hygiene. He will reduce himself to poverty in order that the ryot may have the necessaries of life. He will study the economic condition of the ryots under his care, establish schools in which he will educate his own children side by side with those of the ryots. He will purify the village well and the village tank. He will teach the ryot to sweep his roads and clean his latrines by himself doing this necessary labour. He will throw open without reserve his own gardens for the unrestricted use of the ryot. He will use as hospital, school, or the like most of the unnecessary buildings which he keeps for his pleasure. If only the capitalist class will read the signs of the times, revise their notions of God-given right to all they possess, in an incredibly short space of time the seven hundred thousand dung-heaps which today pass muster as villages can be turned into abodes of peace, health and comfort. I am convinced that the capitalist, if he follows the Samurai of Japan, has nothing really to lose and everything to gain. There is no other choice than between voluntary surrender on the part of the capitalist of superfluities and consequent acquisition of the real happiness of all on the one hand, and on the other the impending chaos into which, if the capitalist does

not wake up betimes, awakened but ignorant, famishing millions will plunge the country and which not even the armed force that a powerful Government can bring into play can avert. I have hoped that India will successfully avert the disaster. The privilege I had of meeting intimately some of the young talukdars in the U.P. has strengthened the hope.

Young India, 5-12-1929

48. KHADI AND HONESTY

Sjt. C. R. Rajagopalachari sends me an interesting letter, which with the omission of personal references and one or two redundant passages I publish below:[1]

> . . . I admit that till now I have been indifferent regarding khadi. But I have now realized that khadi men are men who follow truth. The day before yesterday I went to Coimbatore khadi depot. . . I had with me notes of the value of Rs. 10,000 . . . which I placed . . . on the table. I quite forgot about the money and left the depot. After some time, your manager saw the money and in the hot sun came to Podanur . . . handed over the money to me . . .

This letter shows how unreasoning and illogical we are. Surely there is no necessary connection between honesty and khadi. Even rogues must cover themselves and therefore may wear khadi. I am sorry also to have to confess that not all the workers in the employ of the A.I.S.A. have always been found to be honest. Would that every one of them was incorruptible. But alas! khadi service like every other service has its black sheep. And supposing for the moment that all khadi servants were incorruptible, it is still possible for khadi to be a huge mistake or an economic waste. But I know that many have come to khadi not on the strength of its merits but on grounds irrelevant to khadi, and I knew too that some others have left off using khadi not because it is an error but because they have not liked something some khadi men have done or not done. Whilst therefore I do not mind the adventitious aid such as the possessor of the ten thousand rupees notes promises to give, khadi to be stable must stand on its own unassailable merits. These are fortunately being proved day after day.

The other reflection the foregoing letter gives rise to is somewhat humiliating. Why should anyone run into ecstasies because someone is found to possess the ordinary honesty of not stealing other people's property? Have we fallen so low that a man forgetfully leaving valuables in a shop may not feel as safe about them

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

as if they were in his possession? At any rate this letter has a lesson for men and women in khadi service. Their honesty maybring rich votaries to the altar of *Daridranarayana.* And He needs them all.

Young India, 5-12-1929

49. "THE STORY OF BARDOLI"

Mahadev Desai who was the literary secretary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel during the Bardoli Satyagraha campaign wrote some months ago the history of that great and eventful struggle in Gujarati. Sardar Vallabhbhai had intended that an English edition too should be published so that a wider public may be in possession of a faithful record of the events. Mahadev Desai had first-hand and intimate knowledge of most of the stirring events of those exciting times. He has now placed before the public an English edition. In view of the impending upheaval during the coming year, the book should be read by every national worker. The text covers 323 pages and including the appendices and the index extends to 363 pages. It is published by the Navajivan Press at Rs. 2/8 cardboard binding with khadi back. It contains a specially prepared map, fine illustrations and a helpful glossary.

Young India, 5-12-1929

50. OUR DELUSION

Tulsidas says:

> Like the appearance of silver in conch shell
> And of water in the sun's rays;
> Illusions, though ever unreal,
> Are impossible to remove.

Every day I experience the profound truth embodied in these lines. Any notion—whether good or evil—is hard to remove once it takes possession of one's head or heart, unless experience destroys it.

So has the delusion in the form of untouchability taken deep roots among the Hindus. Reason tells us that no one is untouchable. People have neither a name nor a definition for an untouchable. If an untouchable conceals his so-called untouchability no one, excepting a few who recognize him, will guess that he is an untouchable. That is why several 'untouchable' brothers can freely visit temples and other places.

If untouchability were a part of religion an untouchable of one province would be treated as such in every other province. In fact, however, the untouchables of Assam are not considered untouchables in Sind. The untouchables of Travancore are not treated as such anywhere else. Not a trace of the untouchability and unapproachability prevalent in Travancore is to be seen in other places.

This delusion of untouchability has assumed monstrous and terrible proportion among the Hindus. Shri Jamnalal is striving hard to eradicate it. His success in getting the temples thrown open to the untouchables is no mean achievement. Events like the opening of the eight temples to the untouchables at Jabalpur and the participation of distinguished citizens, etc., are quite hopeful signs. The best way to remove this delusion of untouchability is that those who have overcome it should by their actions convince others still labouring under it that untouchability has no connection with religion.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 5-12-1929

51. CABLE TO SAROJINI NAIDU

[Before *December 6, 1929*][1]

DEVI SAROJINI NAIDU
NAIROBI

COUNTRYMEN THERE MAY ON NO ACCOUNT COMPROMISE NATIONAL HONOUR,

GANDHI[2]

From a photostat: S.N. 15518

[1] The addressee was to preside over the Congress at Nairobi beginning from December 6, 1929.

[2] This is followed by instructions for his secretary: "Make sure of the address".

52. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU

AHMEDABAD,
December 6, 1929

PANDITJI NEHRU
LUCKNOW

YOUR WIRE[1]. I CONSIDER MY PRESENCE WHOLLY UNNECESSARY DELHI. THINK SITUATION WILL BE EN TIRELY MET BY YOUR SEEING HIM REPLY WARDHA IF NECESSARY.[2]

GANDHI

Motilal Nehru Papers, File No. G-1. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

53. LETTER TO HARDATTA SHARMA[3]

[Before *December 7, 1929*][4]

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The second (reason) I gave only for the sake of completing the truth. The decisive cause was my utter inability to do justice to anything else than the political situation that will confront us during the Congress week.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Tribune, 10-12-1929

[1] Dated December 5, 1929. It read: "Your letter. Viceroy's invitation to me personally for twentythird received through Sapru and accepted long ago. Viceroy intended inviting you also but feared you had no time. He can now be informed you can meet him. His object is discuss Congress view freely with us. Presence of non-Congressmen with entirely different views will not help. I think only we two should interview. Have therefore not wired Vithalbhai. Wire your view."

[2] Addressee's reply dated December 7, 1929 read: "Your wire. Think your presence interview indispensable. Meeting Vithalbhai Delhi tomorrow night. Shall wire."

[3] In reply to addressee's request to Gandhiji to explain his inability to preside over the Social Conference; *vide* "*Telegram* to Ruchiram Sahni", on or after 23-11-1929.

[4] *The tribune* report is date-lined December 7.

54. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

WARDHA,
December 7, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

We arrived here at six in the morning.

I had a frank talk with Jugatram about Tara. He is of the view that it would do Tara good if she stays on in Wardha; after she has recovered, she may resume work at Vedchhi. He will give her the work which we have thought about. After the talk, I wrote to you yesterday. I am waiting for a wire today. I enclose with this papers which should be filed with you.

Important changes have been introduced in the Ashram this time. Keep a note of them. We must have a record of lapses due to carelessness on everyone's part. Say, for instance, someone did not do his work in the kitchen in time; in such a case a note should go to the office. Even if no action is taken in the matter, the thing should not remain out of notice of the manager and the chief manager of the department concerned. The registers of all adult students, that is, of students who are above 16, should be complete so that we may know from them which of them attended prayers both times on how many days and did or neglected sacrificial spinning on which days. All of them must hand over their yarn every week. The quantity received from each should be stored separately and khadi be made from it. No one should be asked to give more than 160 rounds of yarn for this.

The work of the sanitary department must become regular. The person in charge of the department should go round all the lavatories every day. Others besides Gangabehn should learn to make bread.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a Photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4155

55. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

WARDHA,
December 7, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I shall not write much today. If you wish to come to Wardha to attend the meeting of the Spinners' Association or simply to meet me,

and if you can come, certainly do so. But you need not put yourself to trouble in order to come. I will certainly think about the Maganlal memorial. With me are Ba, Pyarelal, Kusum, Bal and Kamala. There are two others who have arrived from Banaras.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5471

56. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHA,
December 7, 1929

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I received your letter as soon as I reached here. I am very happy at your decision. It is my wish that you should stay there till June and if your health remains good, come down to Bombay when it begins to get cooler there. In any case, even there your time is not wasted. Dilip and Tara are getting physical and mental education. Almora is the Himalayas. And in the Himalayas countless sadhus have stayed. Many seekers have found self-realization there. If Tara understands this, it will also mean spiritual education for her. You are always busy doing something or other. Hence it is only desirable that you do not come down from there in a hurry.

My health is fine. Ba, Pyarelal, Kusum, Kamala and Bal are with me. Mahadev is touring in Bihar with Vallabhbhai. Ask Taramati to write to me. I am here till the 20th at least.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
TARA HOUSE
ALMORA

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

57. APPEAL TO AHMEDABAD LABOURERS

December 7, 1929

Mahatma Gandhi has issued an appeal to the workmen following the award of the Umpire, Diwan Bahadur Krishnalal Mohanlal Jhaveri, in which Mahatma Gandhi says that he is grieved, as they might have been grieved, because the Umpire has not fully accepted their demand. Their demand was perfectly proper, but after accepting the principle of arbitration they must accept the decision of the arbitrators or Umpire

whether they like it or not.

The Umpire has accepted one principle which is of great importance from the viewpoint of workers. They have been contending for years that they are not getting even a living wage which they have a right to obtain and from which there can be no reduction. The Umpire has accepted this principle. He agrees that the figures of expenditure which they have produced are legitimate and in comparison with those figures their wages are less. On this ground their demand was bound to be fully accepted. But it is their duty to be satisfied with what the Umpire has given.

This does not, however, mean that they should give up their effort to secure a living wage. That effort will continue to be made by all legitimate means and they will make that demand at the first suitable opportunity. Meanwhile it is their duty to make good use of the increase in wages which they have got by bettering themselves, by giving up their vices and by increasing their efficiency. They should thank the Umpire for the great care with which he has examined their case.

The Bombay Chronicle, 10-12-1929

58. MY NOTES

GUJARAT VIDYAPITH

I would like to draw the attention of readers to the appeal issued by Sardar Vallabhbhai and Kakasaheb Kalelkar on behalf of the Gujarat Vidyapith. Gujarat is not ignorant of the services rendered by the Vidyapith and the contribution made by it to the non-co-operation movement. Acharya Gidwani, Acharya Kripalani and now Kakasaheb have nurtured this plant. Gujaratis have supplied the required quantities of water to it. More water is required now. The Vidyapith, instead of pursuing a policy of accumulating wealth and building up capital, has relied on the generosity of the public. It is an institution of the people. They should water it so long as they wish. This is one of the best external methods of preserving the integrity of a public institution. Ordinarily, funds are collected from people by going from door to door. This time, Sardar Vallabhbhai and Kakasaheb have expressed a new hope. They expect the people to contribute to the best of their abilities without expecting a visit to their homes. It should not be necessary for the principal organizers to give their time to the collection of funds. Gujaratis should send their contributions, according to their capacity, for the institution which they love. It is my hope that they will fulfil the expectations of Sardar and Kakasaheb. This appeal is addressed not to Gujarat but to Gujaratis. That is to say, it is imperative for Gujaratis living outside Gujarat, whether in other provinces, in Burma, Singapore, Japan, East, South or North Africa, Mauritius, Madagascar or other countries also to send in their contributions.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-12-1929

59. SOME SIGNIFICANT QUESTIONS

A friend has asked some significant questions with reference to the bombshell that the Viceroy has thrown in our midst, the resulting tumult and the hopes entertained in some quarters. These questions must have arisen in the minds of many others too. Hence it is necessary to some extent to express my views on them. I give below the questions and the replies.

1 . What is meant by Dominion Status ? Does it imply a genuine partnership and an equal status in the British Empire, or does it mean responsible government under the leadership of the British? Does it imply the Dominion Status as understood prior to 1919 or the status as defined by the Imperial Conference of 1926?

The term Dominion Status has no definite connotation. If the terminology applicable to living beings can be applied to it, it may be said that it has not even attained maturity yet, and hence it deserves to be protected and can be made very healthy if fed on a proper diet.If the atmosphere is unfavourable, there is a possibility of its becoming pale since it happens to be delicate. And it may even be suffocated if it does not get oxygen. Hence the health and vitality of that baby depend upon the country where it is nurtured. If it happens to come to India, its development will depend upon how we look after it. Hence, in my opinion, we have little to do with the definitions given in 1919 and 1926. Its definition will be determined by our ability to obtain it. And when its precise connotation has not been defined, every person can interpret it as he chooses. My definition is this: Dominion Status implies the fullest equality and a voluntary relationship with the British Government in India which either party can freely break off with or without giving reasons for doing so. It does not exist where there is any room whatsoever for the distinction of superior and inferior. Dominion Status means independence.

2. The Indian States may, of course, be invited to the same Conference as British India. But what if the former come in the way of true independence of British India? What guarantee is there that the British Government will not side with them and prevent us from progressing by making their treaty with the Indian States a pretext? Right up to the present day, the States have been deliberately kept aloof from the political activities of British India; why is this policy being reversed today all of a sudden? Even the Butler Committee is opposed to the amalgamation of the Indian States with British India without the former's consent. Why then this sudden reversal of outlook? And what about the subjects of the Indian States? Have their representatives no place whatsoever in the forthcoming Conference?

Whether the Indian States intend to do so or not, they will certainly stand in our way if we—that is, the party demanding

swaraj—lack spirit. I myself have scented some diplomacy in the bringing of the Indian States to the forefront at this juncture. The Empire has earlier used them as pawns in their game. It seems that these pawns have been used this time. The princes are dependent on the Empire for their very existence. Hence they have no alternative but to dance to the tune of the Empire, and if we realized this we shall also know that we shall not be able to derive any advantage by maligning them. We should realize their dependence, regard them as merely the limbs of the Empire and be on our guard, and, knowing that in whatever they say or do on such an occasion they merely echo the words or the deeds of the Empire, we should concentrate our attention upon the latter alone. I entertain no fears regarding the subjects of the Indian States. So long as independence is not secured, many of the evils of the Empirewill be found to be magnified in the Indian States. I cannot visualize a form of swaraj in which the Swaraj Party would have bartered away the rights of the people of the Indian States.

3. Supposing there is unanimous agreement at the Conference, does Parliament still have the authority to make changes in its decisions? It has been authoritatively proclaimed that Parliament continues to maintain its independence in this context and even the political parties in Britain are not in any way committed in this matter. Is there not then the possibility of the labours of the forthcoming Conference coming to naught? There should be some guarantee regarding this also—and that too before we agree to cooperate.

This question is an echo of our weakness. From the legal standpoint, Parliament is certainly the supreme body. It can wipe out the work of the Conference. However, there is no need to ask for any guarantee regarding the decision of the Conference, as suggested by the person who has put the question, at a conference which India will be attending by reason of its strength. Moreover, I am also of opinion that it does no credit to us to ask for such a guarantee and that no party in Britain has the right to give it.

4. Why is such great emphasis laid on the policy of 1917 and the Act of 1919? Lord Irwin claims that India will get swaraj as a matter of course according to the policy of 1917. What does the phrase "in the fulness of time" signify? Mr. Benn says, "There is no change, in substance or time, until after the Conference has met.''[1]

Do they not appear to be threatening words? And, in all this, there is no reference whatever to the economic rights—economic independence— of India. According to the Congress resolution of 1922, the Indian people are not bound to pay up their national debt. Has that resolution been completely set aside? Will Haji's Coastal Reservation Bill[2] also be set aside? Foreign banks have usurped many rights;

[1] The source has the passages in quotes in English.

[2] To reserve for Indians trade along the coastal ports

shall we ever take these into account ? These points are not included in the clarification issued by Lord Irwin; but could we, for that reason, forget them?

The fact that the Act of 1919 has been stressed gives rise to fear. And even if there is nothing to fear in it, it certainly is an ambiguous statement. It is for this very reason that the leaders who have signed it have been asked to clarify its meaning. I am not unhappy because the economic independence of India has not been mentioned in the official communication issued by Lord Irwin. Anything that does not include economic independence cannot be regarded as swaraj at all. The Congress resolution of 1922 regarding the debt has not been nullified; it still holds good and its consideration is essential in the scheme of swaraj. The same may be said of the Haji Bill and the banks. We cannot expect to find the plan for swaraj to be given in the official communication of the Viceroy. However, it should certainly be made clear that the Congress Party can attend a conference only on condition that each and every question relating to swaraj can be freely discussed there. This has not been clarified in Lord Irwin's communication and in my opinion it is the dharma not only of the Congress Party but of all other parties also to have this point clarified before attending the Conference.

Let me finally say this too. The Labour Government does have the authority but lacks the strength to utilize that authority to its fullest extent. We on our part lack the strength to get our demands accepted. Hence I entertain only a meagre hope of two parties which lack strength getting together and doing any great service to India. My inner voice tells me that if the British Labour Party really wishes to see India gain her independence, it should muster all its strength at present and then carry on a life and death struggle until this independence is achieved. We, on the other hand, should realize our want of strength and keep away from such intricate matters like conferences. However, worldly affairs are not carried on in such logical manner. Hence, we cannot suddenly turn down a hopeful proposal even if it be one from the weak Labour Party. We may attend the Conference, in fact, it should be the dharma of the satyagrahi to do so, provided conditions are granted which would ensure success and an atmosphere is created where we are assured that these will be abided by. A satyagrahi will not let go an opportunity, however small it may be, for any possible compromise.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-12-1929

60. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

WARDHA,
December 8,1929

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I hope you are carrying out my suggestions to you regarding daily attendance, etc. Keep me informed from time to time how the work is going on.

Inform me about Motibehn's daily work. See that she writes her diary.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3734

61. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

WARDHA,
December 8, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have your letter. Anyone who has kept a regular diary for the whole year may, if he or she wishes, get that book. For the present, it will be enough if all the people start using a small notebook like the one I use. Keeping a good diary is an art, and it can be of much benefit to the person keeping it and to the Ashram. One can record one's work for the day in the fewest possible words and give a brief description of the things done.

I had sent a letter for you from Bardoli itself in regard to Tara. I had enclosed it with Apte's[1].

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4156

[1] Who had come from Kolhapur to learn khadi work

62. LETTER TO VITHALBHAI PATEL

WARDHA,
ON THE GRANT TRUNK EXPRESS,
Sunday morning, December 8, 1929

BHAISHRI. . . [1],

On the last day I got a long wire from Motilalji saying that he had received the invitation[2] for the 23rd December and that he had accepted it. He also writes that the Viceroy does not wish to meet all the leaders together, but for the present only wants to know the attitude of the Congress. That is why he has invited Motilalji. If I wished to go with him, the Viceroy would certainly invite me. In these circumstances I think it is not at all necessary for me to go.[3] For the present it is best that Motilalji alone should meet him. In my opinion it will be useless for you or Mr. Jinnah to go. I think my going can only do harm.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/17

63. A LETTER

WARDHA,
December 8, 1929

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT,

I hope the conference will succeed. Day by day I am being confirmed in the views I have expressed from time to time regarding the Princely States.

1. So long as we have not attained freedom, I think true reform in the Princely States is impossible.

2. The evils of the States are never going to be remedied by merely condemning them.

3. Nor is real reform going to take place so long as there is no real awakening among the subjects of the States.

4. Those who are full of anger can never offer satyagraha. Bear in mind these points during your deliberations and give them whatever importance you can.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/18

[1] The name is omitted in the source.
[2] From the Viceroy; *vide* "Telegram to Motilal Nehru", 6-12-1929.
[3] Gandhiji, however, met the Viceroy on December 23, 1929; *ibid.*

64. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

WARDHA,
December 9, 1929

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

Why do you get ill so often? I hope Baby is flourishing as well as I. You may send the bowl through someone minus the coppers. Let them multiply with you.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3175

65. TELEGRAM TO VITHALBHAI PATEL

[On or after *December 9, 1929*][1]

PRESIDENT PATEL
NEW DELHI
WROTE YOU SATURDAY.[2] MOTILALJI WIRES THE IS SEEING YOU.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15579

66. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

WARDHA,
Silence Day, December 9, 1929

SISTERS,

When I was with you this time, there were so many things to keep me busy that I forgot to talk to you about two matters. One of

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram received on December 9,1929 which read: "Anxiously awaiting your wire for writing to the Viceroy. Sapru has consented."

[2] Conveying the contents of this letter, the addressee wrote to the Viceroy on December 11, 1929: "Gandhi now writes to me that he has received a telegram from Motilal . . . that he (Motilal) has already received and accepted an invitation from Your Excellency to meet you on the 23rd of December and that the idea is to discuss the Congress point of view with Your Excellency with *Congressmen alone.* In these circumstances, Gandhi adds that it was wholly unnecessary for me to move in the matter. On receipt of this letter, I at once sent a copy of it to Mr. Jinnah and informed him that the arrangement had fallen through." *Vithalbhai Patel: Life and Times,* Book II, p. 1072

them came to my notice so late that there was no time then to talk about it. The other went out of my mind altogether.

I shall take up the second matter first. Our women do not let themselves be examined by [male] doctors or even be operated upon. This is a false sense of shame and has its origin in an impure state of the mind. In this matter I prefer the practice in Western countries. I do know that at times it has had undesirable consequences. When an unscrupulous doctor has a simple-minded woman patient whose passion is easily aroused, evil results have followed. But this happens all over the world in any conditions. That should not deter us from pursuing good and necessary activities. We should have confidence in ourselves. I, therefore, liked it very much that Santok got herself operated upon by Dr. Haribhai and my belief in her courage was confirmed. In Phoenix we had made this a common practice. When Devdas was born, a male doctor was in attendance. Ba had a complaint of the vaginal canal and required an operation. It was performed by a male doctor. Ba is very brave but simple about such matters. She certainly requires my presence at such times, but that is a small matter. Everyone requires a trusted person by his or her side on such occasion, and that is but right. My purpose in writing about all this is to explain to you that in the Ashram we should cultivate this type of courage and abandon false shame. Hundreds and thousands of women suffer because of such shame. We have before us Vidyavati's example. She would not let her private parts be examined even by a woman doctor. We wish to cultivate the innocence of Shukadevji. We should not, of course, pretend to have it so long as we have not succeeded in acquiring it. There are men whose passion is aroused by the mere touch of a woman, and there are, likewise, women who are aroused by the mere touch of a man. Such persons should certainly force themselves to live as untouchables, even if that means their continuing to suffer a disease. Here I have only suggested that you should give up false shame. Those who are afraid of impure feelings being aroused in them by the mere touch of a man should admit that candidly and behave with due regard to the limitations of their nature. Such a passionate nature is a kind of disease and a man or woman who suffers from it should avoid the touch of a person of the opposite sex The disease will probably disappear in course of time.

Read this part of the letter several times and try to understand its meaning. If you do not understand it, ask me. Valjibhai, too, will explain it if you ask him. It is, of course, simple enough.

The second point arises from Umiya's wedding. Immediately after the wedding, she started wearing ornaments in her ears and nose. I did not like this at all. The giver and the receiver were both at fault.

What was done was against our practice in the Ashram. Umiya could have started wearing ornaments after she had gone to live with her husband, but the poor girl could not wait till then. I mention this incident not as a complaint, but in order to draw a lesson from it. Let no other girl follow Umiya's example. Poor Umiya, after all, has not been trained in the Ashram. Jaisukhlal has not paid sufficient attention to her. Her mother is a good-natured woman who follows tradition, good or bad. Umiya's fault, therefore, is pardonable. I have drawn Umiya's and her husband's attention to this matter. From him, she has received nothing except a small *choodi*[1]. I have, however, mentioned this matter so that no man or girl who knows the rules of the Ashram may act in this manner. I also wish to draw another moral from this. Lustful men have degraded woman. They have taught her ways of dressing and behaving which might please them. They have taught her to adorn herself. Woman did not see in all this her slavery and her degradation. She, too, was attracted by lustful thoughts and, therefore, consented to get her nose and ears pierced, put on fetters on her feet and became a slave. An evil man can easily drag a woman behind him by getting hold of her nose-ring or earring. It passes my understanding how any thoughtful woman can put on such things which make them helpless. Real beauty is of the heart. Let every woman in the Ashram save herself from external adornment and resist being pierced in the nose. Is it not enough that draught animals are so pierced? It is now six o'clock and so I stop here. Iremembered you so early in the morning, for I expect much from you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3711

67. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

WARDHA,
Silence Day, December 9, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have your letter.

I am returning Chhaganlal's letter. His view is correct. The tannery is certainly a school. There should be no objection to its becoming self-supporting. There are many such institutions which are self-supporting, and still they are known as schools. Our aim is not trade, but research and service. If, therefore, you can save money, you should do so. Find out and send me the clause stating the circumstances under which the charges cannot be increased. Meanwhile, if this

[1] Bridal bracelet

exemption is possible, secure it.

You are not adding to my work by writing to me long letters. It was certainly necessary to write about Budhabhai.

How is it that Chimanlal's health does not improve?

I have no time now to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4157

68. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

WARDHA,
Silence Day [*December 9, 1929*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN—ELDER,

I have your letter. I have returned it after correcting the Gujarati. Go through the corrections. You may go on writing as you can. Do not feel discouraged because of my corrections. If you go through the corrections your Gujarati will automatically improve. You must say to yourself. 'I must write correct Gujarati.'

You will have been to Bombay and met Nathji.

Chandrakanta[2] tell me you did permit her to come. Now her mother wishes to come. She wants to work and earn her living. She says she is good at sewing. But she does not wish to have her meals at the Ashram. I have told her that if she is skilled at serving and will give her full time to the Ashram she can have a room in Budhabhai's house. If she comes, she will have to observe all the Ashram rules and will receive Rs. 25 a pay. She may be willing to do this. She seems to be a nice and good woman. Her husband is well-to-do but he gives away all his money in charities. Let me know what you think of this.

Madhavji is expected to come with his wife. It is not possible to say no to him. His wife is an experienced lady. They have two fine children, they are like Hari and Vimala.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 11267; also C. W. 8716. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] From the reference to the expected arrival of Madhavji Thakkar and his wife, Mahalaxmi, who came to Wardha before December 12, 1929; *vide* "Letter to Ramniklal Modi", 12-12-1929.

[2] Cousin of Sumangal Prakash

69. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

December 9, 1929

CHI. NIMU,

I did not get any opportunity at all to talk to you to my fill. I called you to massage my legs so that I might talk to you but I was so tired that I soon fell asleep. However, I had nothing more to say about Bachu[1] than Idid. You should go out for a walk every day taking Bachu with you. You must get rid of your constipation. Bachu's health will depend on your own.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

70. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

[*December 10, 1929*][2]

BHAISHRI DAHYABHAI,

I was very unhappy to hear first from Ramjibhai and then from Thakkar Bapa that you scolded and sent back the *Antyaja* workers whom, as you knew, Thakkar Bapa had accepted. I think you have
made a big mistake. Thakkar Bapa told me that you asked for his forgiveness. You should have asked forgiveness of the*Antyaja* men and women. If I am unfair to you in this, please correct me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Your report is not to be published.

From Gujarati: C.W. 2700. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

[1] The addressee's first child, a daughter, born in October 1929 and later named Sumitra

[2] From the postmark

71. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

WARDHA,
December 10, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

There is no post from you today. The manager of every department should inspect it daily and should note having done so in his notebook. You should look into the notebooks when you are free from other work. If we want to remain vigilant and keep a watch over ourselves, we should never neglect such proceedings. We of all people cannot neglect them, for we have attached so much importance to this thing that we sent away Jagannath from the Ashram. We have relieved some others, too, for the same reason. I forget the names of these persons. If there is laxity in observing rules which are easy to observe and if we tolerate it, the Ashram will not only break up one day but I am sure there will also be a blot on its fair name. If deficiencies remain despite our vigilance, the world will forgive us for them. But it will have a right to censure us for what may happen through our remissness.

I have been thinking a great deal these days about such matters. I feel extremely concerned and am becoming confirmed in the views which I expressed when I was there. That is, those who regularly violate rules which are easy for all to observe should be asked to leave the Ashram or should themselves leave it. That will save us from many dangers.

Our Ashram is not an asylum for the infirm and the crippled. There grown-up men and women have come together inspired by a certain ideal. I exclude from this, but only partially, the women who have been there from the beginning. If those who have thus voluntarily come together do not observe the rules which they themselves have made and if we tolerate that, I think we are traitors to dharma and society.

If all of you in the Ashram do not know, you may know by this that Rajibehn, who lived in the Ashram for some time, died of illness in her village. Chandulal had come here and he gave me the news. She was guilty of serious lapses, but she had eaten the salt of the Ashram and it is, therefore, our duty to pay her the tribute of remembrance.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4158

72. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

WARDHA,
December 11, 1929

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have tour letter. I wonder why you have not received my letters. I replied to every one of your letters. I have informed you of the date of my leaving here. At the earliest I may leave on the 20th. I have received all your letters and I was quite satisfied. With one letter I wrote, I had posted one to Jayaprakash too. Was that also lost in transit? Come as early as you can.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-10: Shri Prabhavatibehnne, pp. 25-6

73. A LETTER

December 11, 1929

Your diagnosis is not correct. The men and women living in the Udyoga Mandir are very happy. They can and do laugh freely. Visitors have often expressed their happiness at seeing these people so happy. The Mandir itself is a club. There is no need for us to set up separate bodies for entertainment and recreation. We can find greater joy in doing well the work which we are doing. It is true, however, that notwithstanding the happiness we seem a little listless. But the reason for it lies in the laziness in our blood and the consequent lack of method in our work. In comparison with other institutions people notice our activity and praise it. But we recognize our failings. I am sure that they will gradually disappear. In any case do not base your pessimism on the views which I occasionally express.

It is not for me to praise such virtues as I may see in the Udyoga Mandir. On the other hand it is my duty to magnify into mountains the defects I may notice and draw your attention to them. We can never see our own faults till we so magnify them.

I think that the children somewhat lack in courtesy. But we need not be upset by this. True courtesy will develop on its own from the present lack of courtesy. We may certainly teach it. As we are teaching equality, it is bound to lead to lack of courtesy for some time.We are

[1] Here follows a note that as Gandhiji was engaged in a competition of spinning on the *takli* and the spinning-wheel, he could not sign the letter himself.

far from feeling ourselves as small as grains of sand. Hence there is no reason at all at present to fear our overdoing it. We have not yet stopped bothering about rights. There are no rights. There are only duties. If we realize that this is rightly so, true courtesy will develop in us on its own, and we shall ultimately learn to become real cyphers.

The C.I.D. is really our friend. Let it watch all our activities that it wants to.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/20

74. NOTES

ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY CAMPAIGN

The trustees and the others concerned-in the opening to the so-called untouchables of eight temples in Jabalpur and one in Bombay[1] deserve congratulations for their timely action. By it they have rendered a service to Hinduism and India and brought fresh hope to the untouchables who had begun to show signs of impatience. It is impossible to avoid an exhibition of impatience and worse if, after having awakened them to a sense of their awful position, we do not succeed in easing it for them before it becomestoo late. They must drink the ozone of freedom just as much as the so-called higher classes expect to do as a result of the mass awakening that has come into being. We Hindus may not expect freedom so long as we hold a fifth of ourselves as bondsmen unfit even to be touched and sometimes even to approach us within a certain distance or to be seen by us.

LALAJI MEMORIAL

Writing from memory on the collection for Lalaji Memorial in the U.P. I said over Rs. 30,000 was collected.[2] Sjt. Purushottamdas Tandon sends me a reminder and I have now the figures before me that the total collected during the tour was Rs. 42,138-8-9. This is apart from the sums collected before the tour and the sums promised during the tour but not yet realized. But whilst the actual total is more satisfactory than I had thought, my complaint that the U.P. has not done enough justice to the memory of a great patriot stands. I hope that Sjt. Tandon will undertake another collection tour and not rest till the U.P. has paid at least Rs. 1,00,000.

[1] Ramchandra temple. *Vide* "Temples for 'Untouchables'", 28-11-1929.
[2] *Vide* "Notes", 28-11-1929.

The Principal, Hindu College, Delhi, writes:[1]

The amount actually received was duly included in the total for Delhi in the usual columns, and I am grateful for Rs. 800 now received. No doubt no mention was made in the notes even as none was made of several other important and interesting items. It was impossible to take such a detailed notice of all the events. Only the most outstanding items were selected out of the many in a crowded programme in a tour which had to be finished during half the time required for covering such a vast area as that of the United Provinces.

Young India, 12-12-1929

75. U.P. NATIONAL SERVICE

It was a happy idea of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru during my recent tour to ask for funds for forming a national service for the province. Rs. 12,036-15-9 were collected for the purpose. Though the sum is not adequate for the purpose intended, it is a goodly sum as a nucleus. The idea of having a national service is not new. Ever since 1920 it has been before the country. But Pandit Jawaharlal has given it a shape and a habitation. National work must suffer so long as we have to depend upon volunteers who give only a part of their time and that too by fits and starts. Permanent work requires permanent whole time workers. This can best be done by each province establishing its service in accordance with its needs and out of funds collected locally. Feeling hampered at every step for want of trained and tried permanent workers, Pandit Jawaharlal seized the opportunity that the tour gave him of getting funds. I hope now that no time will be lost in framing rules and inviting applications.Untouchability, Hindu-Muslim unity, boycott of foreign cloth, total prohibition, national education, etc., can absorb a large number of permanent workers. Indeed our ideal should be to have at least one worker to every one of the seven hundred thousand villages. But apart from the A.I.S.A. we have hardly a worker even for every district. All the provinces will naturally watch the coming U.P. national service organization. Experience teaches that any such service to be truly national and permanent, though a creation of the Congress, must stand outside of its varying politics and must enjoy complete responsible self-government. We

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. While sending Rs. 800, as promised, the correspondent had pointed out that Gandhiji's visit to their college and the sum collected there were not mentioned in the tour account published in *Young India*.

must be able to give an absolute assurance to our workers that they will not be subject to dismissal with the annual change in the elected office-bearers of the Congress. This assurance is possible only under an autonomous board with well devised constitution.

Young India, 12-12-1929

76. THE THIRD-CLASS CARRIAGE

> I was a third-class passenger from Allahabad to Patna on 20th November last. . . .
>
> I have travelled thousands of miles in third-class carriages throughout the length and breadth of India during the last four years, and my experience is that ordeals of this kind are of common occurrence.
>
> Such a condition of things would be utterly impossible in any well governed country.[1]

Having become a Mahatma, although I have resumed third-class travelling for the past twelve months or more, my experiences of overcrowding that more than resemble Mirabai's can only date back to 1915 to 1917. These were duly recorded in the Pressat the time I had gone through them. I had however flattered myself with the belief that as a consequence of these disclosures, overcrowding had been at least made bearable. But I see that I was mistaken. The railway management is no respecter of persons so far as non-Europeans or un-Anglicized Indians are concerned. For Europeans and Anglicized Indians there is no doubt more than needed comfort in third-class carriages. For the 60,l7,78,000 third-class passengers who made in 1925-26 payment of Rs. 34,76,45,000 to the railways, they must be content to be 'packed like sardines' in boxes. Though they pay fares as passengers having wants of the same kind as 1st and 2nd class passengers, they are treated as if they were so many parcels to be thrown in a heap into a luggage van. If Mirabai had exercised the privilege of her colour and birth she would either not have gone through the experiences she has, or if she had, her complaint would have been heard in the proper quarters. Let the reader and the other concerned ponder over the following instructive figures for 1925-25:

	Passengers			
	1st	2nd Inter	Inter	Third
Numbers in thousands	11,69	1,04,87	1,40,09	60,17,78
Income in thousands of rupees	1,20,42	1,89,42	1,59,61	34,76,45

[1] Only extracts from Mirabehn's article are reproduced here.

But at present it is of course doubtful whether her article will have any effect on the authorities.[1]

We ourselves are one of the causes of this disease. The sayings 'Only he can sell his goods who shouts their names' and 'Not unless you ask will even mother serve you a helping at a meal' are as true as they are trite and common. Our spirit of tolerance passes all limit, and the result is laziness and painful indifference. Many of the difficulties can be removed if our sense of self-respect is awakened, if we look upon it as our duty to end discomforts which it is not our duty to submit to, and if we gladly suffer the hardships which follow from our doing this duty. Passengers should refuse to go into a carriage whenever they find in it more than the lawfully fixed number. They should be prepared to run the risk of missing their train occasionally, if necessary. If after the matter has been brought to his notice a railway official does not find for the passengers the room required, I think he can be sued in a court of law. Ordinary passengers cannot take that step. They would either abuse or fight. Action which requires patience, firmness and knowledge is only for the educated and experienced passengers to undertake. Whenever they have to face such occasions they ought to take proper steps without fail.

Young India, 12-12-1929 and *Navajivan,* 19-1-1930

77. AN IMPORTANT AWARD[2]

The award given by the Umpire, Diwan Bahadur Krishnalal Mohanlal Jhaveri, in the matter referred to him by the unofficial permanent arbitration board appointed voluntarily by the Ahmedabad Mill-owners' Association and the Textile Labour Union is, as the reader will recognize from the text printed elsewhere, an important document. The Umpire's judgment is a preparation evidencing a careful study of the facts of the case and is a bold enunciation of the doctrine that when 'the worker does not get enough wages to enable him to maintain a suitable standard of living', 'he can ask his employer to pay him wages which would enable him to do so.' The contention advanced by labour for the past many years and denied by employers that it is entitled to a living wage has been wholly accepted, as I maintain it was boundto be, by the Umpire. It is also worthy of note that he has found as a matter of fact that the average earnings of families of labourers including the lowest paid and the highest paid are not more than Rs. 40 per month and the expenses not less than

[1] This and the following paragraph are from *Navajivan,* 19-1-1930.

[2] *Vide* "Appeal to Ahmedabad Labourers", also "Textile Labourers' Demand"? 15-12-1929

Rs. 50 per month. Now the matter referred to the Umpire was the demand made by labour for full restoration of the cut of 15% made in 1923 by the mill-owners in labour wages. The learned Umpire having granted the contention that labour is entitled to a living wage and that as a matter of fact Ahmedabad textile labour is not getting such a wage, it is not easy to understand why the whole of the cut has not been restored. The reader will note that even the restoration of the whole cut would not send up the wage to Rs. 50 per month. The only explanation I can discover for this discrepancy between the finding on the theory and its actual enforcement in terms of wages is that the Umpire was afraid of his own finding, or that he hesitated to condemn, even by implication, the action of the mill-owners in making the cut in 1923, and that too not by arbitration, but by an arbitrary exercise of their power to coerce labour. For whilst it is quite true that the condition of the mill industry was not as prosperous as it was in the War period, it was a period of merely less profits, not of loss and encroachment upon capital. The question of cut can occur, if at all, only when the wages are so good as to leave a margin after paying for living expenses and when the industry concerned has to face an actual deficit. But the men are wedded to the principle of arbitration and therefore they must cheerfully submit to the Umpire's decision even though they do not get the full restoration of the cut. They must thankfully accept what the Diwan Bahadur has allowed, and perseveringly and peacefully work for the balance. Indeed there can be no rest for them or the employers so long as the living wage is not actually reached and better housing and other ordinary comforts are not secured. But it will be a great gain if strikes become unnecessary and the principle of arbitration is strictly adhered to by both parties. In spite therefore of the partial failure of the men, I tender my congratulations to the Diwan Bahadur for the labour of love that he gave to the task that was entrusted to him and for the prompt and impartial manner in which he approached the difficult question referred to him by both the parties.

Young India, 12-12-1929

78. IMMORALITY IN HOLY PLACES

A resident of Banaras writes:[1]

It is likely that this description is exaggerated. But after allowing for exaggerations what remains deserves to be deplored. No one should ignore these evils by saying that such immoral practices are found in the holy places of other religions as well, or in other Hindu

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had described the various immoral practices in Banaras, its widow-homes, orphanages etc.

places of pilgrimage. In any case, such immorality is reprehensible everywhere, and efforts must be made to remove it. The best method to remove these evils is for those who know them and regard them as reprehensible to purify their own lives and make it progressively purer every day. This is an ancient method. When *adharma* is on the increase, virtuous people practise penance. And penance means purification.

The other and modern method is to organize a movement through young men. These days young men's associations are multiplying. The spirit of service has grown and is still growing among young men. Much can be done if they take up this work. After making a list of all the temples, contacts should be developed with their custodians and priests, and all possible enquiry should be made about the temples against which there are complaints. Pilgrims and other visitors should be forewarned against these evils. Information should be collected about orphanages and other institutions. Much improvement will come out of these efforts. For immorality can thrive only in darkness, not in light.

The lives of young men who take up such work should be pure. Those who want to purify others can have no influence if they are not pure themselves.

A third possible course is to set up a committee of respectable and virtuous people and strive to reform religious places.

These three methods can be adopted simultaneously. We are dishea-rtened at the sight of such immorality. But there is no need to lose heart. Several evils persist on account of our despondency and ignorance. We should have the faith that immorality is atransient thing and it cannot face the dynamic morality of even a few.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 12-12-1929

79. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

WARDHA,
December 12, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have your letter. I am not worrying about Padma. What I have written about Budhabhai is enclosed with this. The reply which you have given to Lilabehn is correct. If she wants a separate kitchen for

her mother, she can start one in Budhabhai's house. We keep Bhansali because he is still not a person who may be described as responsible. I think it is our duty to keep him till he regains his memory. Discuss this matter with Surendra and let me know if he sees any error of reasoning in this.

Parnerkar and others came and spent a few hours here. I understand what you say about Mathuradas. He is bound to meet with difficulties.

I cannot say that I enjoy more peace here than I did there if it means that I did not enjoy peace there. What I can say is not that I had no peace there but that I did not enjoy sufficient rest there. I get plenty of it here. There is very little outdoor work and I don't have to take interest in the Ashram affairs.

Mahadev and Mirabehn are expected the day after tomorrow. Pyarali and Noorbanu were here. Madhavji and his wife Mahalakshmi have also come. There are sixteen people in the Ashram here, but at present we are as many as 32. Everyone, therefore, feels cramped for space.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4159

80. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

WARDHA,
December 13, 1929

DEAR SISTER,

How are you now? I want you to be perfectly healthy. My own health can be described as pretty good. I am taking milk, curds and fruit only, no cereals at all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1665

81. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

WARDHA,
December 13, 1929

CHI. MATHURADAS,

The way before you is not without thorns. Read the enclosed letter. I have also written to Ramsahai and advised him to have a talk with you. Show boundless love, keep patience and never lose hope. If you do so you are bound to win in the end. Never feel easily satisfied with your own work and always be generous in assessing another's. Bear with the imperfect work of an honest worker. With the dishonest non-co-operate. Have love for both. That is what is meant by *samabhava*. Giving bread to the hungry, but refusing food to one suffering from indigestion, as both these acts are inspired by love for the persons, such an attitude is called *samabhava* which means treating the ant and the elephant on the same footing.. Do not proceed on the belief that your new method has succeeded outright. The friction will be minimum, if you proceed by persuading and carrying with you those insisting on following the old method. Whether the method adopted is old or new, it should be followed faithfully. Write to me from time to time about the difficulties that arise. Do not f eel the least embarrassed in doing so. If on any points you find my inferences based on insufficient information or mistaken, caution me about them. It may be very well to have faith in any principles which I may laydown, but the inferences which I draw from facts can never be a matter of faith, as faith has no place at all in matters belonging entirely to the field of the intellect. Do therefore correct me whenever you find me misinformed about facts and hence mistaken in my conclusions. If you follow this practice, I shall be able to write to you more freely and guide you better.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3735

82. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

WARDHA,
December 13, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have your letter. It was good that you wrote to Jayantiprasad conveying permission for his wife to come. Do the same about

Vrajbandhu Mishra's wife. Do not mind if Dinkarrao's wife has left. I believe that when he is absent she will never stay there. We should unfailingly observe one rule about admitting women, and that is that a woman may be admitted only if approved by Gangabehn. Her wishes should also be respected in regard to permitting any woman to stay on as an inmate. This she has a right to demand, and more than that, I believe, she does not desire. Let me state in this connection that Chandrakanta, Sumangalprakash's cousin, has arrived here. I believe that Gangabehn has agreed to her being admitted. The managing committee, too, has given its consent. In my judgment, this girl will bring credit to the Ashram. Though she is only sixteen, she is very wise, and is firm and brave. Her intelligence, too, is sharp. Her character seems to be pure and her thoughts and aspirations are mature. Who can say, though, what kind of a woman she will grow to be? If, therefore, the matter has not been considered there, let Gangabehn think about it and then the managing committee.

The entire amount received from Delhi is to be handed over to the Spinners' Association. I suppose the money received for the Lajpat Rai [Memorial] is also being sent through the Association.

It is desirable that Chimanlal and Sharda should go out somewhere. Sharda needs some control over her. She on her own cannot exercise control over herself. She requires strict supervision. Be that as it may, it will certainly be a good thing for both of them to go out for some time. I shall write to Govind Babu.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4160

83. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
December 13, 1929

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. Even before I got it, I had sent off a long letter to Bhagirathji. I will spare some time, if necessary, and solve the problem. I have written to him about all the matters. I will reach Delhi on the 22nd. I will be travelling by the Grand Trunk Mail which reaches there at eleven o'clock.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PRABHUDAS GANDHI
JAMIA MILIA
KAROL BAGH
DELHI

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 33002

84. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
December 14, 1929

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I wired you yesterday in answer to your letter that I shall be with you in Delhi on 22nd. I have since discovered that 23rd is a Monday. I do not know when the appointment with the Viceroy comes off. It must not be in the morning. If it is any time in the afternoon, there will be no difficulty. I would take silence on Sunday at about that hour. But what of our talk before the interview? My train reaches there at 11.28 a.m. If the interview takes place in the afternoon we would easily have some time on Sunday. The other way is for us to meet somewhere on the train and the third is for you to talk and for me, if I have anything to say, to put it down on paper. After all I have not much to say. At the interview you should lead. I do not know what I could say beyond reiterating the four conditions. As a matter of fact we go to listen to what H.E. has to say about our conditions. Now you will direct me.

I observe that your professional engagements keep you fully busy. I shall look forward to a fair share of the spoils. *Daridranarayana's* belly is never full.

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/24

85. LETTER TO VITHALBHAI PATEL

WARDHA,
December 14, 1929

BHAISHRI VITHALBHAI,

I have your letter. So ultimately Motilalji could not go there. He has written to me saying that my presence is very necessary. I will therefore reach Delhi on the 22nd. According to Motilalji the Viceroy wants to meet the leaders of different parties separately. And he also thinks that to be the best course. I would be of only limited use in all this. Nevertheless I will go. Motilalji will have met the Viceroy by then.

Narayan-Narayan from
MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/23

86. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI PATEL

WARDHA,
December 14, 1929

BHAI SHIVABHAI,

I have your letter. The question itself is based on faulty reasoning. Work and rules are not two independent things, just as the elephant and the curb are not unconnected with each other. An elephant which is not properly controlled can be of no service and is actually a danger. Similarly, undisciplined work is also useless. Now tell me yourself which of the two is more important. That the number of labourers cannot be reduced and that they do not mix with us—both these are defects which it is the duty of all inmates of the Ashram to remove. If my view of the matter is correct, a rule should mean that anyone who cannot observe it should leave the Ashram. What you write about the kitchen is true. I see that our activities are increasing, but I do not feel inclined to check them since it is the same activities which are expanding. I think that work has not been properly assigned to Jethalal, Manji and Bhagwanji. At present, however, it is not my job to interfere with the running of the Ashram; my duty is to watch things and offer criticism when necessary. You are right when you say that the necessity for too many rules means that the secretary is weak. The secretary himself knows, and so do we all, that he is weak. But he will do nothing wrong knowingly. It is enough for me, and should be so for all of us, that he strives to do his best. All the questions you have asked are good. Discuss them with me when I return, and we shall then do what we can.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9497

87. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

WARDHA,
December 14, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have your letter. Nothing else could have been done about Lilabehn. If guests feel hurt, we are helpless in the matter. I understand your difficulty about the rules. It will be enough if you do what you can. I certainly don't like Navin and Kusum and others

being able to run away from the Ashram whenever they wish. I can see disadvantages even in the facilities provided by trains, and besides there are the well-known inconveniences obvious to all. Relations lived at distant places even when there were no trains and mail was carried by runners. But people endured their misfortunes then and did not, could not, run from one place to another for anyone's sake. Even today that is the condition of millions. The rich can run about in all manner of ways. On every occasion like the present one, it hurts me to think that we are in that category. I did not, therefore, like Ba's running up to Rasik. You can draw your conclusions from this. We cannot force our views on others in such matters. Let us know, however, that Ashram-dharma is a difficult one. As on one side the field of service expands, on another it contracts. When we cultivate spiritual bonds, the worldly bonds should progressively lose their force. This seems empty wisdom today and we do not follow it, but it is worth bearing in mind.

I understand what you say about Moti and Totaramji.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4161

88. LETTER TO RAGHUNATH

[After *December 14, 1929*][1]

BHAI RAGHUNATH,

I wanted to have a talk with both of you but I had not a moment to spare. And neither of you asked for it.

Do not worry over the future. The present duty well performed gives an indication of the future.

There are no objective tests of Truth. What our heart assents to is Truth. In most cases we recognize Truth; but purity of heart is essential for the correct perception of Truth. That is where the *yama*[2], *niyama*[3] and other disciplines come in.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4215

[1] This undated letter is placed after a letter of December 14,1929 in a series of photostat letters chronologically arranged and preserved by Ramniklal Modi

[2] Rules of moral discipline

[3] External religious observances

89. VIDYAPITH'S APPEAL FOR FUNDS

Those who have in principle approved of the appeal made by Vallabhbhai and Kakasaheb should remember the following Latin proverb: "He who gives in time gives twice." We have the following parallel saying: "There is a great deal of merit in giving immediately." We experience every day the truth of the point underlying this saying. If a doctor or a vaid does not give timely medical help the patient will suffer and there are even cases in which the latter dies. We see every day that if anyone who is bitten by a snake is immediately given medical aid, he can be saved; if not, he dies. Although it is our dharma to feed a hungry person, he who does not do so immediately is guilty of violence towards the hungry individual. This should be regarded as holding good for all acts of philanthropy. There is no generosity in giving alms indiscriminately to anyone who begs. This may imply thoughtlessness, foolishness, or even pride. However, despite knowingthat the person who begs is a worthy individual and the cause for which he begs is a deserving one, anyone who contributes his share only after the former has approached him wastes public time and forfeits his own prestige, and thereby misuses the worthiest persons belonging to the institution. Considering the Vidyapith's appeal in this light is a form of education for the people. This appeal is not addressed to people who do not approve of the Vidyapith. Its object is to point out their dharma to those who entertain no doubts regarding its usefulness or the service it has rendered and its object is also to encourage and draw those who are neutral towards it but may contribute if they come to realize its value. At this time of public awakening, no one should, as far as possible, stay neutral. Those who do not stand by their country in its hour of need also help the cause of the enemy. It is the dharma of every individual to make his choice. The Vidyapith is an institution for non-co-operation, that is, one which serves in this time of distress. Its additional advantage is that its usefulness will always endure. However, it was born in the hour of the struggle in order to assist in it. Hence it is my expectation that those who have not arrived at the conclusion that the Vidyapith is a harmful or a useless institution should come to know what it stands for, what its achievements are and what it can achieve in future. It is the dharma of such people to send in their contributions after they have known of and have been convinced about it. Contributions may be sent to the following addresses; Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj, Treasurer, 395-397, Kalbadevi Road, Bombay 2; Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad; Provincial Committee,

Ahmedabad; Navajivan Karyalaya, Ahmedabad and Udyoga Mandir, Sabarmati.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-12-1929

90. A PERPLEXED HUSBAND

A perplexed husband writes:[1]

I do wish to console him; but in such matters if a person does not himself find consolation, others will hardly be able to give him any. However, a person can derive some solace from an intellectual discussion. Let us, therefore, analyse the problems faced by this young husband. One can see that the power exercised by traditionlies at the root of his problems. It seems that in his heart of hearts, the husband desires to exercise the authority vested in him by virtue of his being lord and master. If this is not the case, and if the husband regards the wife as a friend, there will be no cause for despair. We reason with patience with a friend and, if he is not convinced, we neither feel disappointed nor use force. If the husband has a right to entertain any expectations of his wife, will not the latter also entertain some of the former? What do many wives who regularly go to temples to have *darshan* of God do when they do not approve of the modern habits of their reformed husbands? They would not even dare to persuade their husbands. Hence, I would first of all advise this husband and others in similar predicament deliberately to give up the right of exercising authority over their wives. In order to serve and educate their wives, they should suppress all physical desire during the period of education and later patiently explain to the latter that false superstitions, faith in the priests of temples, visits to so-called places of worship, etc., are not only futile but may also prove harmful. I have not the slightest doubt that if the husband's love is pure, the wife will surely be convinced. Mango trees do not bear fruit quickly. If a tree like the mango tree requires to be tended for a number of years, how much tender care will a woman require who is like a tree and who has been kept ignorant for so long? It has been my experience that both satisfaction and success lie in such daily care and tending. One should not give up one's efforts if, after having told a person once, the latter is still unconvinced. One should have faith that such daily care will finally lead to a change of heart. Hence I am unable to advice either

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had described the feeble understanding of his wife whom he had been forced to marry in early childhood.

that one should put up with one's lot or abandon one's wife. To try in the above manner to rectify the error made by one's parents in arranging such a marriage is a truly manly effort. It is easier to be happy by abandoning one's wife; but that is not true happiness; it is not a truly manly effort and hence it is not dharma. Anyone who is aware of the poverty-stricken state of his country does not, therefore, abandon it but, on the contrary, tries until his death to free his country from the grip of poverty, puts up with many hardships and finds happiness in doing so. Once we understand this, we shall behave towards our wives accordingly. The gentleman himself admits that there are others who are faced with the same difficulties as himself. If all such husbands abandon their wives, what will be the plight of all these women in our country? Who will look after them if not their husbands ? Perplexed husbands should realize that the incompatibility that is found between husbands and wives today is also a symptom of the present plight of our country and adopt a path accordingly. Moreover, by solving such problems, they will readily learn the correct way of solving the difficulties that lie in the way of attaining swaraj and this will be an additional advantage both to themselves and to the country.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-12-1929

91. MY NOTES

TRUTH BOWS BEFORE AUTHORITY

A young man writes:[1]

This is a good question. Peace is possible only where truth is pursued. Truth can be returned only by truth. Just as a person who sells the most valuable object cannot expect to get something even more valuable in return, similarly, what more than truth can a truthful person expect? I do not wish to belittle Harishchandra but it is erroneous to say that he and Dharmaraja[2] had been unhappy. They had regarded misery as happiness, so that they welcomed that which we regard as sorrow. It is for such reasons that the poet-devotee has sung:

> The path of God is the path of the courageous; here cowards have no place.

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had said that one does not get peace of mind by following the path of truth.

[2] Yudhishthira, eldest of the Pandava brothers

Just as the sun radiates heat and also sustains life so does truth. If the sun stops radiating heat even for a fraction of a: second, this universe will become lifeless; a similar result will follow if the sun in the form of truth ceases to radiate heat even for a moment. It is a fact that we come across untruth in the world, but that is like the dross within coming out. We should never be oblivious of the fact that crores of individuals by their very nature employ truth. My own experience, without exception, suggests that no one has been able to misuse till the end whatever purity there may be in me. As against this, those who have come forward to misuse my single-minded devotion to truth have suffered loss of prestige and even much else besides. I have had to face difficulties for the sake of my adherence to truth in thought, word and deed, but I have never suffered on that account.I have derived only total happiness and peace from it. I have put before the world an instance of my untruth. So long as it was within me, it was eating me up. I gained peace only when I purified myself by ridding myself of it. I can also recall many other similar instances in my own life. So far as I am aware the world has accepted that the satyagraha in South Africa ended in nothing but triumph. It appears that the gentleman who has raised the above question has no knowledge of the events in South Africa. The experience of the world as well as my own teaches me that it is incorrect to hold that truth bows before authority. On the contrary, the latter has always to remain a servant of the former.

KHADI CATALOGUE[1]

I would request all lovers of khadi to obtain a copy of the catalogue issued by Shri Vithaldas Jerajani as a supplement to the *Khadi Bulletin* on the 1st of this month—(December). This catalogue is a new edition of the original one. Just as a great deal of improvement can be found in the new one as compared to the old one, similar is the case of khadi too. Beautiful new illustrations have been included in the new edition. We also find here descriptions given of a shopping-bag, a school-bag, a Bardoli-bag and a Burma-bag. The illustrations regarding the incorrect and correct methods of washing a khadi-cap are worth seeing. By following the correct method its life can be increased and it will always maintain its proper shape. If anyone who wears a khadi-cap does not keep it clean and allows it to become dirty, his own prestige as well as that of khadi will suffer. On looking at the picture it becomes quite obvious that to wash a khadi cap is a very simple matter. While on the subject of khadicaps, let me

[1] A shorter note on the subject appeared in *Young India,* 21-11-1929; *vide* "Illustrated Khadi Catalogue", 21-11-1929.

also add that I find the method discovered by Sjt. Dayalji, which consists in making as and when necessary a cap from the required length of khadi without sewing it up, to be the best one. I have requested that a description of it be-given in the next issue of the catalogue. Moreover, this would facilitate washing and save on tailoring charges. However, the most attractive part of this catalogue is the assurance given in it. I give it below:[1]

The guarantee given here is not a false one as in the case of guarantees carried in many advertisements. I know of cases wherepeople have been refunded the amount when khadi was purchased in this manner. Apart from this, many other informative items worth knowing will be found in this catalogue, e.g., the method of making old Kashmiri cloth look like new. Such other informative items and hints regarding the washing of woollen clothes and the method of preserving them will be found in this catalogue.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-12-1929

92. TEXTILE LABOURERS' DEMAND

I am both grieved and surprised that the Umpire, Sjt. Krishnalal Jhaveri, has been unable fully to accept the demands of the textile mill workers. I am grieved at their non-acceptance, as I continue to hold the opinion that their demands should have been fully accepted and I am surprised as I do not find any reasons for their non-acceptance in the verdict of the Umpire. However, the Umpire has fully accepted the principle put forward by the Majoor Mahajan, namely, that labourers have the right to receive and demand wages which are needed for their livelihood. Moreover, he has also accepted the figures given by the Majoor Mahajan. Sjt. Krishnalal Jhaveri states that the average monthly income of a labourer's family does not exceed Rs. 4D, while his expenditure does not fall below Rs. 50. He also admits that in the figures of expenditure given by the Majoor Mahajan, some necessary items of expenditure such as those involved in ceremonies concerned with birth and death have not been included. Moreover, the Umpire admits that the mills have suffered no loss of capital.

In my opinion, any amount that has to be withdrawn from the capital should be regarded as a loss. No loss is incurred if there is less profit. A fall in profits should never be a reason for decrease in labourers' wages. Such a situation can arise only when labourers

[1] This is not translated here.

become owners in the same manner and to the same extent as shareholders. If we are not narrow-minded, we shall immediately realize that labourers should have a greater right to ownership than shareholders. All that shareholders do is to pay money whereas a labourer contributes the sweat of his brow every day and, if he happens to be a loyal worker, will not desert his work at all. A mill can be run without shareholders but it is impossible to run it without labourers. Someone may say that as the labourer is not an intelligent person, the mill will be ruined if he becomes its owner.This contention also is without any foundation. All shareholders are not intelligent persons. No one examines their hearts and their heads. Nevertheless, they have a right to vote, and the mills continue to function. In my opinion, they will function better if the labourers are given ownership rights. The experience of certain multi-millionaires in the United States of America who are experimenting on these lines lends support to my views. If labourers are given wages which exceed their bare cost of living and provide room for improving or bettering their condition, one can certainly conceive of situations in which they can be reduced. Just as it will be regarded as improper to touch the capital of the capitalists, similarly it is improper to touch the wages of the labourers which barely provide them with a livelihood. A happy state of affairs will be the one in which an arbitrating body will annually determine the wages sufficient to cover the cost of living in accordance with the price of foodgrains, and just as shareholders receive dividends, labourers should, similarly and in the same proportion, receive an increase in wages every year. I would regard it as wholly proper that this increment should vary in proportion to an increase or decrease in dividends. However, here I have digressed from the original subject-matter.

The Umpire has arrived at the conclusion that the mills are making larger profits than they did in 1923. Hence not a single valid reason can be found for not making good the percentage of the wages that was cut in 1923. Yes, the Umpire has indeed made one observation. He has stated that it was not fair to have regarded the cut effected in 1923 as improper. At that time, the mills were in a condition much worse than that during the War. That has not been repudiated on behalf of the labourers. However, during that year the mills did not have to draw upon their capital. Just because conditions prevailing in a particular mill may be proved to have been so bad, the same cannot be said to hold good of the industry as a whole. Hence, in my humble opinion, there was no reason for the Umpire not to have resolved to restore in full the fifteen per cent cut after having accepted the principle that wages should be sufficient to cover the cost

of living and concluded that the wages paid fell short of this. We should bear in mind that even if the fifteen per cent cut is fully restored, the emoluments will not amount to a living wage. The Majoor Mahajan has shown good sense in not demanding a living wage for the present.

Although I believe that full justice has not been done to labour, I have nothing but congratulations to offer to Sj Krishnalal Jhaveri. The labours that he put into this task were in an honorary capacity. And yet he exerted himself to the maximum. He examined the entire case carefully, there has not been a single day's delay on his part, and his efforts have left on me an impression of nothing but impartiality. In other words, he has dispensed nothing but what he has regarded as justice. None can expect more than this. It is beyond the capacity of human beings to satisfy everyone equally. All that we can do is to make an attempt to do so, and we can clearly see an attempt in this direction in the award of the Umpire.

Hence, the labourers have done well in gratefully accepting the decision of the Umpire. I have already indicated in the leaflet[1] addressed specially to them what their duty is. As the Umpire's award has been acceptable to both the mill-owners and the Majoor Mahajan, it is the dharma of both the parties to honour it fully in thought, word and deed.

I would, therefore, like to congratulate the mill-owners on having resolved to accept the award of the Umpire. I find that they have expressed dissatisfaction. I do not understand this. I am also unable to understand how this will have an adverse effect on the textile industry. Even if the mill-owners agree in principle to wages being equal to the cost of living—and they are, in fact, bound to do so—they should be happy realizing that they have been saved a sum of about Rs. 20 lakhs. And they should make preparations right from today to increase the wages at the first and earliest opportunity so that they are sufficient to meet the cost of living. They should realize that a demand from labour for an increase to that extent is bound to come up at the proper time. It would redound to their credit if they agreed to the increase and offered the increased amount even before it was demanded. If the figures arrived at by the Umpire, viz., Rs. 40 as the average wage and Rs. 50 as the average expenditure, are not acceptable to them, it is their duty to go deeper into the matter and examine these figures. If they take the very first step rather unwillingly, the gap between the two sides will widen instead of the friendship between them increasing as it should do.

[1] *Vide* "Appeal to Ahmedabad Labourers", 7-12-1929.

An acceptance of the principle of arbitration should lead to an increase in friendship and mutual confidence. And in order to foster them, both the parties should implement the award of the Umpire not by harbouring any secret grievance but wholeheartedly. If the labourers are careless even to the smallest extent in this matter, they shouldcorrect their attitude. It is a publicly known fact that the mill-owners have been indifferent to this. Although they have agreed to make provision for water, overhead cover, etc., nothing has yet been done in these matters in many mills. Although there are awards relating to such matters already given by arbitration boards, the capitalists display an attitude of unconcern. I hope that these drawbacks will be rectified in good time.

There is another matter which needs to be resolved without any delay. Both Sheth Mangaldas and I are fit to retire. I see old age approaching me, hence I conclude the same about my colleague as well. I now see the necessity to appoint other arbitrators. As I have to do a lot of touring, Sheth Mangaldas, the mill-owners, and the Majoor Mahajan have been kind enough to meet my convenience. I also had to ask the Umpire to grant me that concession. So far as I was concerned, this was indeed a pitiable condition for me to be in. I am aware that it was my dharma to suit the convenience of the Umpire and go whereever he happened to be; but he realized my awkward position and himself bore the inconvenience. However, this cannot be done every day. Even the petty grievances of labourers should be heard regularly and immediately. And for this purpose, there certainly ought to be local arbitrators. The already existing board may be continued for the sake of formality or as a court of appeal. It is not even necessary that two persons should be present. It should not be difficult to find a single, impartial person from Ahmedabad. I believe that it is better to appoint somebody on a salaried basis if a man or woman cannot be found who can devote this amount of time in an honorary capacity. I do not believe that it is essential to have only a man as an arbitrator. Fortunately for Ahmedabad, we have such educated women here who have the capacity to serve, who can remain impartial, and can understand the problems. I believe that one of them can easily be chosen. At the moment, I put all this by way of a suggestion before both the parties. So far as the industry in India is concerned, Ahmedabad is second only to Bombay. Hence, if the industry in Ahmedabad is put on a stable basis, if a healthy relationship can be established between capital and labour, between owners and workers, it will be worthy of imitation by the whole of

India. It is the mill-owners who have to play the principal role in this matter. Will they do so?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-12-1929

93. PLIGHT OF WOMEN

A gentleman from Kathiawar who has given his name and address has given some account of the plight of two women. I abridge his letter as follows:[1]

So many details have been included in this that there is no danger of any exaggeration. It is an important question as to what women who are in such a pitiable plight should do. In a majority of cases, such women are in a sense helpless, that is to say, they are not aware of their own rights, and even if they are, they do not know what can be done in the matter. Perhaps even if they knew what was to be done, they are unable to do it. Hence they can be saved only if their relatives and friends help them. The article[2] to which the above correspondent has referred is meant for intelligent and brave women. So far as these two women are concerned, legal assistance should be enlisted and local public opinion should be cultivated, if possible. There is no need to be awed by wealth or the power of the authorities. There are at present in Gujarat ashrams for women which offer shelter to such women. These two should be taken there, educated and an attempt made to make them self-supporting too. Very often, such injustices are shielded for fear of public criticism. I regard this as unnecessary and improper. Many unjust and immoral acts cease being perpetrated once they become known.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-12-1929

94. INCORRECT NEWS

A reader of *Navajivan* has sent the following cutting from a magazine and writes:[3]

[1] This is not translated here. The correspondent had described the plight of two deserted wives. For a contradiction of this, *vide* "To Contributors and Correspondents", 23-2-1930.

[2] *Vide* "Position of Women", 17-10-1929.

[3] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had requested Gandhiji to comment on the report that Kasturba touched the feet of holy men.

Although, both my wife and I belong to the Vaishnava sect ever since we entered public life, that is, for about thirty-fiveyears now, neither of us has the slightest recollection of my wife ever having gone for *darshan* of a maharaj[1]. I fail to understand how the writer could have gathered the courage to publish such news. I myself do not have faith in touching anyone's feet. Even if this sentiment is worth nurturing, it will only be worthy of those individuals who are known for their integrity and character. I have never been able to convince myself that all persons born in the family of traditional maharajs are like gurus.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-12-1929

95. TO WEARERS OF FINE KHADI

I am very sorry to say that a good deal of deceit is being practised with regard to the fine khadi from Andhra which has become famous. Just as the priests in temples are not afraid of stealing the temple property, the custodians of the poor do not hesitate to misuse khadi which is like God's blessings to the poor. They are not ashamed to sell fine cloth made of foreign yarn by passing it off as khadi. The Charkha Sangh has taken drastic measures after this fact came to its notice. However, it is necessary for those who wear fine khadi to help the Charkha Sangh. They should not even touch a bolt of khadi which does not bear the stamp of the Charkha Sangh or one which has not come from a bhandar that has been certified by the Sangh. Those who wish to obtain a list of certified bhandars can do so by sending a one-anna stamp to the Secretary of the Charkha Sangh. It is the dharma of those who wish to wear pure but fine khadi to take this trouble. Those who do not wear khadi for the sake of outword show but for the sake of swaraj and for the sake of those who are dying of starvation should not rest satisfied until they have convinced themselves of its genuineness. Such men and women should also make themselves familiar with the method of discerning genuine khadi.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-12-1929

[1] Priest of a temple

96. DISEASES IN VILLAGES[1]

In the consideration of public education, knowledge of the alphabet takes a subordinate place. It can be said that knowledge of the alphabet has no place at all among the important aspects of life. *Moksha* is for us the final state to be desired. Who will deny that knowledge of the alphabet is not necessary for *moksha* here and hereafter ? If we have to wait until crores of people have gained a knowledge of the alphabet in order to win swaraj, attainment of the latter will become almost an impossibility. Moreover, no one has claimed that the great teachers of the world like Jesus Christ had this knowledge.

Knowledge of the alphabet has been given the least important place in this series of articles. It is a means and not an end. It is a well-known fact that as a means it is very useful. However, when considering the type of knowledge that is required for crores of farmers who are engaged in their occupations and have reached a mature age, we find that there is much else that they should be taught before being given a knowledge of the alphabet. We find the same thing in Mr. Brayne's book from which I have given summaries of some parts.

We have already considered the sanitation of villages from this standpoint. Farmers can readily acquire a knowledge of the improvements mentioned in the earlier chapters. It is the dearth of good volunteers and the lethargy of farmers that come in the way of their acquiring this knowledge.

Today we shall consider diseases which are commonly found in villages. It has been the experience of all my colleagues who have lived in villages that fever, constipation and boils are the most common ailments. There are many other diseases, but they need not be considered at the present moment. The above three are the ones that come in the way of the farmer carrying on his profession. It is very necessary for him to know the household remedies for them. By ignoring these complaints, we suffer a loss of crores of rupees. And yet these maladies can be cured very easily. The eradication of these ailments was of course included in the work thatwas begun in Champaran under the supervision of the late Dr. Dev. The volunteers there had no more than three medicines with them. Later experience also leads to the same conclusion. However, this series of articles does not envisage a knowledge of how those

[1] This appeared in *Shikshan ane Sahitya* supplement.

treatments are to be carried out. That is a separate and interesting subject. What is to be pointed out here is that the farmers should be taught how to treat these three ailments in a scientific way and that this is an easy task. If sanitary conditions are maintained in the villages, some diseases will just not occur. And every vaidya knows that prevention is the best cure. Constipation can be prevented if one can prevent indigestion, fevers are prevented if the atmosphere of the village is kept free from pollution. Boils can be prevented if the water in the village is kept clean and if one takes bath with clean water daily. Fasting is the best remedy if any of these three ailments occurs and a hip-bath and sun-bath are useful aids during fasting. This has been discussed in detail in "General Knowledge About Health". I would request every volunteer to go through it.

I find everywhere a feeling that a village should have a hospital, if not that, at least a dispensary. I have, however, not seen the need for it at all. It would be nice if such an institution existed in the vicinity of several villages. However, this is a matter that does not deserve to be given much importance. Wherever there is a hospital, it is bound to be filled up with patients. From this, it should not be concluded that it would be a great boon to the villagers if there were seven lakh hospitals in the seven lakh villages. The village school should serve as a dispensary, and its reading-room should also be located there. Diseases are there in every village, a reading-room should be there in every village and a school is also needed there; but if one thinks of having separate buildings for each of these three institutions, one will realize that taking all the villages into consideration crores of rupees will be required for it and also it will take a long time. Hence, while considering the problem of public education and village improvement, there is no alternative for us but to keep the country's extreme poverty in mind.

Had we not borrowed our ideas on such matters from a nation which has enriched itself by robbing foreign countries and, had there been a true awakening amongst us, the face of our villages would have altered long ago.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-12-l929

97. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

WARDHA,
December 15, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

After reading the *Ashram Samachar* I had asked you to write about certain matters; I had the news concerning them read out to me yesterday. The note about the changes is a good one. I see from the news that Velanbehn has started a separate kitchen. All right.

Mirabehn has arrived. Prabhavati is likely to come, accompanied by her husband and Mahadev.

A Marwari merchant who sells pure ghee in Bombay was here. He sells cow's ghee too. The rate is one and a quarter rupees for a pound, but he promised to sell it to us at one rupee a pound whenever we required it. His name is Khemraj Agrawal. Address: 192 Kalbadevi Road, Bombay. He is known as 'ghee merchant'. I have sent these particulars for your information thinking that they may be useful to us when we need it.

I dictated the foregoing after the morning prayer. I have now received today's mail, which contains a letter from you too. Did I write to you and tell you that Madhavji and his wife are here? Pyarali and Noorbanu also are here. I think it is necessary to note in the diary particulars about every kind of work done. If, however, someone does not wish to write about work done in addition to eight hours' work or about social duties outside the Ashram, we cannot force him or her to do so. I would, however, say that such a person does not even know how to think. However, this is only about khadi students. You and I can claim no hour as private. To keep aside an hour as private or to think a private thought is certainly as much personal possession as money can be, but it can be personal possession of even a worse kind. Frightful instances of this occur to me even as I dictate this. Really speaking, the diary should contain notes about everything done from four in the morning to eight in the evening. If it is a sacred duty for the Ashram to maintain a daily cash account, it is equally a sacred duty for all to maintaina diary. Metal is not the real money; time is. The Lord has said: "Of reckoners, I am Time"[1] and he who does not keep an account of his time is a prince

[1] *Bhagavad Gita,* X. 30

among deceivers.

Perhaps I too would not understand the meaning of the sentence: "We should tell anyone who does not attend prayers—if you do not come, leave the Ashram." But what I wished to say was this: "We should tell those who have agreed to join in prayers or any other compulsory duties and yet do not take part in them, that they should leave, for if they break their word in one respect they are likely to do so in other matters too." Is not this as clear as light? But you will not be able to carry out this all at once, even after you have realize the necessity of observing rules, for we have been lax for quite a long time. At present, therefore, you should merely wake up the people. After I return, I shall, if all of you agree, take upon myself the responsibility of acting upon my suggestion.

It is not as if I do not understand Tara's love for me even in her refusal to come. I have a beautiful letter today from her too.

I can readily say what lesson we as a body can take from the Ashram at Wardha. The peace, the respect for rules and the sacrificial work done here have appealed to me very much. By peace I mean absence of noise. Respect for rules means doing everything, from prayer onwards, at the fixed time so that the outward life of the Ashram may go on in an orderly manner. In the sacrificial work, everyone is bound to spin yarn of not less than 30 counts. A sari of eight and a quarter yards length and fifty [inches] width has just been made. The Ashram inmates themselves wove it. Weaving it took 24 hours. The yarn is excellent. All cloth of such fine count is sold. The inmates of the Ashram themselves do not wear khadi of more than eight or ten counts. Since all work is done according to rules, I don't see anyone who worries. One of the reasons for this condition here is of course that the number of inmates is small. I have merely replied to your question.

I send with this letters received from Umiya and her husband. They should be read out without fail at the women's prayer meeting. Convey the news to others.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4162

98. LETTER TO RAMANAND CHATTERJEE

WARDHA,
December 16, 1929

DEAR RAMANAND BABU[1],

I received your letter of 26th November only today. You want me to give you 1000 words. It is like drawing 1000 live teeth at present. And you wanted this for your Xmas number. Does it not mean I am too late? But if I am not, to find time for writing out something of the size you want, is physically impossible. Every minute is premortgaged.

I have forgotten all about the promise but I would gladly fulfil it if you can wait and send me a reminder, if you find that I am still not resting somewhere near Yeravda in January.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 9282. Courtesy: Santadevi

99. LETTER TO K. S. NARAYANA IYER

WARDHA,
December 16, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

In wishing the Conference success I do hope that Travancore will wipe out the curse of untouchability and unapproachability and the like.

Yours,

K. S. NARAYANA IYER
THE ALL-INDIA HUMANITARIAN CONF[ERENCE]
TRIVANDRUM

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/27

[1] Editor, *Modern Review*, Calcutta

100. LETTER TO V. THARAI SWAMY PILLAI

WARDHA,
December 16, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry I have not been able to overtake your letter earlier. My message is:

In all you do always think of the old country and her starving millions.

Yours,

V. THARAI SWAMY PILLAI
'ALCOVE', TURRET ROAD
COLOMBO

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/25

101. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Silence Day [*December 16, 1929*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have received both your letter. Do not mind if your language is not grammatically correct. If the grammar of thought is correct, what need for the grammar of words? None the less, practice will improve the grammar of words too.

I do not feel embarrassed to address some women as '*Chi*.' in spite of their being grown up in age. As you made me feel like this towards you, I found it natural to use '*Chi*.' in addressing you. I am returning one letter of yours after correcting it. I would correct even more if I had the time. Do not be disheartened by my corrections. One who has made herself as daughter to another should not feel ashamed on any defect of hers being known to the latter. One who is ashamed of his or her defect being known cannot overcome it.

Make your body strong and sturdy.

Janakibehn expects you to come here after the condition of your vow is fulfilled.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 11268

[1] From the contents this letter appears to have been written after the letter to the addressee dated December 9, 1929. The first silence day after this date fell on December 16.

102. LETTER TO VITHALBHAI PATEL

Monday [*December 16, 1929*][1]

CHI. VITHALBHAI,

Many telegrams have been exchanged since your letter and there is therefore no need to write anything. I am now only waiting for the wire from Delhi. I shall leave for Delhi after I get it. If I do start I will reach there on the evening of the 21st[2]. Your are of course dragging me there, but I do not know what I shall be able to do at present.

I am returning the letter you had asked for. I have not shown your letters to anyone to read; but I had to give the substance to my associates. It is for you to decide whether by doing that I have disobeyed your order.

So far everybody has been acquitting himself creditably.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I have just received the wire from the Viceroy. I will reach Delhi on the 21st.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Vithalbhai Patel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

103. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

WARDHA,
Silence Day, December 16, 1929

SISTERS,

Having written to you a sufficiently long letter last time, I wish to be brief today. I have many other letters to write, and the time at my disposal is up. I may write about all manner of things, but you may accept from my letters only that which you can digest. You can leave the rest. Strive hard to act upon what you understand and accept.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3713

[1] From the contents

[2] The source has "1st", which could be the result of some confusion in deciphering, for the letter is clearly concerned, with the meeting with the Viceroy on the 23rd; *vide* also "Speech at Khadi and Village Industries Exhibition, Lucknow", 28-3-1936.

104. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

Silence Day, December 16, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have your letter. Tell Budhabhai that he can certainly make in the document the change which he suggests. I shall see Chhotubhai when he comes.

My view about [attendance at] prayers will be clear from what I wrote yesterday. If Mathew has a religious objection, we may respect it, though, according to the rule, such persons too should remain present. My attitude, however, is that those who have accepted the rule should not remain absent.

I have already informed you that Madhavji and his wife are here. They are thinking of renouncing everything and devoting themselves to service. For the present, they wish to join the Ashram to get some experience. I believe that, if they come, we should permit them. I have said this in my letter to Gangabehn. You and the managing committee should also think about this. I think the husband and the wife are good in every way and have respect for rules.

The question about Chandrakanta's mother is altogether different. She is a capable lady. I have no time just now to go into the whole case. She will probably be reluctant for some time to have meals in the common kitchen. She wants to be selfsupporting and live near her daughter. I have told her that she should give all her time to the Ashram and do the work assigned to her, and that she will be paid Rs. 25. She will have to live in a room in Budhabhai's house and cook her meals there. She will probably accept this suggestion. She says that she knows tailoring well. I think, if she does work of that type, she will not be a burden on us. If, in addition, she observes the other rules, I think there should be no difficulty in permitting her to stay with us. Think about this case too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4163

105. LETTER TO M

December 16, 1929

BHAI M,

If you do everything thoroughly, after careful thinking, the next steps will suggest themselves to you and you will find contentment.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4216

106. LETTER TO M

December 16, 1929

CHI. M,

It is not wrong to refuse to undertake a task, but it is altogether wrong to leave off a task once begun. Now that you have vowed to write the diary, it should not be discontinued. As spinning is a sacrificial activity for us, we ought to learn it properly. Write to me from time to time.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4217

107. LETTER TO C. RAMALINGA REDDY

WARDHA,
December 17, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

My recollection is that Deshbandhu did insist on the release of prisoners but he was satisfied even if the Fatwah prisoners were excluded. This time we have to mount many steps before we come to the question of release.

Your sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. C. R. REDDY
VICE-CHANCELLOR
ANDHRA UNIVERSITY
BEZWADA

From a copy : C. W. 11337. Courtesy : Dr. N. Rama Murthy and C. A. Reddi

108. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

WARDHA,
December 17, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have your letter. Let all the people think further, and afresh too, about the note which I dictated. We shall think about it again when I return there in January. In the mean time, it is necessary that everyone should think about it from his or her own point of view.

I do not mind the permission which has been given to Santok to cook her meals in a separate kitchen. I have adopted a neutral attitude in this matter. I shall be satisfied if we do not go down further still. I understand the suggestion about going to Wardha too, and have agreed with it. I do not remember about Calcutta, nor do I wish to.I shall, however, think about the matter when I go over there. I shall not let it happen that you are obliged to take the responsibility upon yourself.

The Ramachandra lift has tried our patience well enough. The *Gita is* almost finished. I intend to leave this place after I have completed it and dispatched the proofs from here.

Jawaharlal Nehru arrived today. He will be here for two days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4164

109. A LETTER

WARDHA,
December 17, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

My recollection is that Deshbandhu[4] did insist on the release of prisoners but he was satisfied even if the Fatwa prisoners were excluded. This time we have to mount many steps before we come to the question of release.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/29

110. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

WARDHA,
December 18, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have been trying to come into close contact with Bhai Madhavji. I have formed a good opinion about the couple and have high hopes of them. They have been voluntarily observing complete *brahmacharya* for a year and a half. The desire for service has awakened in Madhavji for quite some years. He is full of enthusiasm. He is a capable businessman and we shall, therefore, be able to utilize his ability. I have advised him to understand the work of all the departments. My advice to you is that you should give him work so that he should at any rate become proficient in all the processes up to spinning. He will require agricultural work for at least some time daily. I also believe that he will be able to look after the store. And he is bound to know bookkeeping. His wife is a fine woman, but how she acquits herself there the future alone will show.

Chandrakanta and her mother are-getting ready. Now the mother, too, has agreed to take her meals in the common kitchen, so that there will be no problem of a separate kitchen for her and of paying a salary to her. I had a letter from Chandrakanta, which I am sending with this to be filed. I will send. her mother's letter too.

I will leave this place on the 21st., 22-23 in Delhi and 24 in Lahore. Letters intended to reach me on 22-23 should be addressed C/o Lakshminarayan Gadodia. You should get this letter on the 20th.

Post letters on that date to Delhi, as also on the 21st. From the 22nd onwards, to Lahore.

Do not mind if Lilabehn has started cooking her meals in Budhabhai's house. I believe that Bhansali will certainly not stay on after he has recovered. Since Lilabehn has started cooking separately, I should not be surprised if he goes and lives in Budhabhai's house.

I did not see any letter from Ayodhyaprasad. Carry out what you have suggested about him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4165

111. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

WARDHA,
December 18, 1929

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I am glad that you have come home. Manilal will certainly go to Lahore. As for Sushila, Ramdas says in his letter that Ba desires that she may also be permitted to go. I am certainly not against her going. I have merely given advice. Ba believes that Sushila may wish to see the Congress session. If this is true and she wishes to go, she may do so provided Sita's health is all right and Sushila herself has regained her physical strength. In short, you two are no longer children; you are grown-up persons and free to decide for yourselves. That you nevertheless ask my permission is an act of courtesy on your part and a voluntary limitation of your freedom out of respect for me. I, therefore, wish only that you may do as you both like.

Whether Manilal ought to return within four months, we shall discuss when we meet.

I have decided to return to the Ashram before January 11.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4764

112. A MILITARY PROGRAMME[1]

George Joseph has been one of my dearest comrades. When I was having rest in Yeravda, he was editor of *Young India*. Before that at my instance he was editor of the now defunct *Independent.* He had sacrificed a lucrative practice for the sake of the country. He went to jail for the same cause. He is an earnest and honest worker. He is therefore entitled to a respectful hearing, the more so when such a man differs from you and rejecting the old recommends with the fervour of a convert the adoption of a new policy. George Joseph has done it. One of his old associates sends a cutting from a newspaper containing Joseph's enunciation of his new policy and marks it 'George Joseph's confession of faith'. Another man, an unknown admirer of George Joseph, copies out from the report the whole of his

[1] Another article on the subject appeared in *Navajivan,* 29-12-1929 under the title "Khadi v. Khaki".

criticism of the khadi programme. He writes in a most distracted mood and insists that I must take notice of the remarks about khadi.

There is no cause for distraction, grief or alarm. It would be surprising, if, in a great national upheaval, we did not find men honestly recanting old views and enunciating new. Change is a condition of progress. An honest man cannot afford to observe mechanical consistency when the mind revolts against anything as an error. We must therefore patiently try to understand what George Joseph has to say and not hesitate to accept what appeals to our reason even though it may mean a sacrifice of some cherished ideal.

It is, I hope, in that spirit that I have endeavoured to study Joseph's speech. He condemns khadi, he is 'quite satisfied that the removal of untouchability is not primarily a problem of statesmanship'. His programme in one simple sentence is: 'Militarize India'. Here is an extract from the speech:

> We cannot all become soldiers. There is not enough room for us. But it should be possible for us to set about the idea of training about 5,000 men every year in this Presidency in urban units. The men will go to drill two or three times a week, go out to camp three weeks in the year. Such training should be made available not only for the students who are at college but also for men of sufficient social and educationalstatus, the educational standard being the membership of the School Leaving Class. If you see in every street such people going about in khaki, there will be a new element in our life. This kind of training would make people to stand straight, to think straight and to speak straight. It will be a great enrichment of our life.

My experience teaches me differently. I have known men in khaki rolling in gutters instead of standing straight, I have seen a Dyer thinking crooked and speaking not straight but nonsense. I have known a commander-in-chief being unable to think at all, let alone thinking straight. Let those who are enamoured of military training have it by all means, but to suggest it 'as a new constructive programme' betrays impatience and hasty thinking. There is not much danger of 'the new programme' taking root in the Indian soil. Moreover it is against the new order of things that is coming into being even in the West which has grown weary of the war-god. The military spirit in the West bids fair to kill the very humanity in man and reduce him to the level of the beast. What is wanted and what India has, thank God, learnt in a measure undreamt of before is the spirit of unarmed resistance before which the bayonet runs to rust and gunpowder turns to dust. The vision that Joseph puts before us of an armed Government bending a minority to its will by a clatter of arms is a negation of the democratic spirit and progress. If that is the promise of the new programme, we have the armed coercion even now

not indeed of a mere minority but of an overwhelming majority. What we want, I hope, is a Government not based on coercion even of a minority but on its conversion. If it is a change from white military rule to a brown, we hardly need make any fuss. At any rate the masses then do not count. They will be subject to the same spoliation as now if not even worse. When George Joseph has lived down his impatience, I know him to be too honest not to retrace his steps and become the fine democrat that to my great joy I had discovered him to be on the Madras beach in 1919.

Let us then turn to what he has to say about khadi:

> As long as I was within the fold of the Congress, the only thing the constructive programme represented was khaddar, removal of 'untouchability', and in later years prohibition. Now I must frankly tell you that I have come deliberately to the conclusion that not one of these goes to the root of the fundamental need of this nation. Khaddar does not. I think it will not survive the creator of the movement, Gandhiji. I have come to that conclusion, because of the fundamental economic defect which is attached to khaddar. It costs far too much to produce and to buy, and is, consequently, unjust to the consumer. Khaddar which costs about a rupee a yard will not stand against the cloth produced by the machine industries costing as. 6. My experience of khaddar is that it results in injustice to the producer also. The women, the spinners, who are at the root of khaddar, working for 10 hours a day, have got to be content with a wage of as. 3. I suggest that an industry based on the payment of as. has wages to the fundamental producer thereof cannot succeed, because it amounts to sweating of labour. The sweating of labour consists essentially in paying to the labourer less than is sufficient for her physical maintenance. It is no answer to say that the country is stricken with famine, that there are millions of people without occupation, and to say that for these as. 3 is better than no income whatever. I refuse to accept that argument. That cannot be an argument which can appeal to any human employer of labour, or any statesman with a forward looking view, in reference to the affairs of his country. It is no consolation to be told that I shall be right in offering as. 3 wages a day, when I know as a matter of economic necessity that the wages would not be sufficient to maintain the worker, much less her family. That is to my mind the hopeless ineradicable and inexorable vice that attaches to khaddar. That is why today, in spite of 7 or 8 years of labour by Gandhiji, and in spite of lakhs of money poured like water into the organization of the industry, the production of khaddar is infinitely small compared to the magnitude of the problem that has got to be solved, that is, to produce clothing for the whole of India and to put an end to the importation of Rs. 60 crores worth of cloth every year.

Here George Joseph's impatience for reform has betrayed him into lapse of memory. For he brings no new argument in support of his summary rejection of khadi but quotes as facts what he himself used to refute as fallacies. Arguments may be revised on further

consideration, but facts may not be unless they are proved to have been false.: Khadi as conceived for the use of millions does not cost more than foreign cloth for the simple reason that the millions must, if khadi is to be used by them, be their own manufacturers and consumers. These pages have shown that in Bardoli, Bijolia and several other places khadi is being so manufactured and consumed even as in millions of homes people cook and eat their own food. It is possible to demonstrate, in terms of metal, that rice or bread cooked in a few factories would cost less than they cost today in the millions of homes. But nobody on that account would dare suggest that the millions should cease to cook and should send their raw rice and wheat to be cooked in centralized factories.

Again it is not true to say that women spinners work ten hours per day. Whatever spinning they do is done during their spare hours and what they get is not a day's wage but in the majority of cases a substantial addition to their daily earnings from their daily avocation. The earning from spinning is waste turned into wealth and not the price of 'sweated labour' as Joseph puts it. And let me correct Joseph by saying that no spinner even working for 10 hours per day can earn 3 annas per day. Spinning has never been conceived as a full day occupation. Lastly it is untrue to say, that "lakhs of money have been poured like water into the organization of the industry". No organization on a nationwide scale has been known to cost less in organizing than this has. What is true is that a paltry 25 lakhs have been invested as capital for organizing this great and daily growing cottage industry which brings water to thousands of parched lips. Joseph must think cheap of his countrymen when he prophesies that an organization which employs at least 1,500 willing workers in 1,500 villages, an organization which brings daily relief to nearly 1,50,000 women, an organization which commands the self-sacrificing labours of a Mithubai Petit, the Naoroji sisters, of a Banker, a Jamnalal, a Rajagopalachari, an Abbas Tyabji, a Venkatappayya, a Pattabhi, a Gangadharrao, a Vallabhbhai, a Lakshmidas, a Rajendraprasad, a Jairamdas, a Mahadev, a Kripalani, a Satis Chandra Das Gupta, a Suresh Banerji, aye a Jawaharlal and a host of others, lawyers, doctors, merchants and laymen too numerous to mention though known to fame, will die after the death of one man. It will be a tragic miracle if all these men and women find the morning after my death that khadi was a 'huge blunder'.

And the pity of it all is that Joseph does not suggest an alternative. Not even if every educated Indian was dressed in khaki and knew how to shoot straight, would the problem of the growing poverty and the forced partial unemployment of millions of the

peasantry be solved without a special programme devised for the purpose. For better or worse khadi is that programme till a better is evolved.

Young India, 19-12-1929

113. THE DUTY OF CAPITALISTS

Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla, presiding the other day at the Maharashtra Merchants' Conference (Sholapur), delivered a speech that was noteworthy for the freedom with which he expressed his opinions. He would have no distinction made between English cloth and other foreign cloth in the matter of protection. He said:

> What I want to tell the Government is that while the country would not tolerate any duty based on principle of differentiation[1] even in the interests of the cotton industry, it is vitally essential that an extra uniform *ad valorem* protective duty should be imposed. I maintain that the Bombay cotton industry requires protection not only against imports of cheaper goods but also against imports of finer goods.

Speaking on the duty of capitalists he presented an ideal which it will be difficult even for a labour man to improve upon. Pleading for unity among the merchant class he said:

> But let me make it clear that the unity which I propose for the businessmen should be unity for service and not for exploitation. The modern capitalist has been much abused of late. In fact, he is being looked upon at present as belonging to a separate class. But in the days of yore the situation was something quite different. If we analyse the functions of the Vaishya of the ancient times, we find that he was assigned the duty of production and distribution, not for personal gain but for common good. All the wealth that he amassed, he held as a trustee for the nation. Capitalists, if they are to fulfill their real function, must exist not as exploiters, but as servants of society. No Communism or Bolshevism can thrive if we know and discharge our duty. If I may say so, it is we who provided a fertile soil for the development of Communism and Bolshevism by relegating our duty to the background. If we knew our duty and followed it faithfully, I am sure that we could save society from many evils. I have mentioned that our true function is to produce and distribute.... Let us produce and distribute for the service of the community. Let us live and be prepared, if it comes to that, to sacrifice ourselves for the common good.

Young India, 19-12-1929

[1] Presumably the reference is to the Cotton Textile Industry (Protection) Bill which was passed by the Legislative Assembly in March 1930.

114. TO WHOM DOES CONGRESS BELONG?

During my tour of the U.P. someone asked me a few questions and requested me to give the answers through the columns of the *Hindi Navajivan*.

One of them was:

> Is the Congress a joint organization of the Hindus and Muslims? If the answer is 'yes', can Congress workers who are responsible for Hindu-Muslim clashes be called Congressmen and have a following ? When such a situation arises what is the man in the street expected to do?

Congress, of course, belongs to Hindus and Muslims but it is much bigger than that. The Congress belongs to every citizen of India—Hindu, Muslim, Parsi, Sikh, Christian, Jew and others. Men and women who accept the ideals of the Congress Party can become its members. If any Congress member becomes the cause of Hindu-Muslim clashes, such a person can be expelled from the Congress. He, who, being a Congress member, causes discord between the two communities, is an enemy not only of the Congress but of the country as a whole.

This is only a bare answer to the above question. But when I myself am not satisfied with this much of an answer, how can I expect the questioner to be content with it? The sad fact, however, is that hatred between the two communities already exists and there is no need to create it. This state of affairs affects Congress also to some extent. How can such mutual hatred be removed? The questioner must have had this problem in mind though he has not put it into words.

In order to eschew hatred, purity of mind is necessary. Courage should be generated in the minds of both. Today we are afraid of each other. If this fear could be replaced by mutual trust all hatred and enmity would soon vanish. The best way to get over such weakness is not to follow anyone in this matter but to shed fear and suspicion from our own hearts. If even a few such men could rise today, then the Congress would come out unscathed. Yes, I do realize that there is an endeavour to create such an atmosphere and, knowing this, I cannot give up my own hope and faith.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 19-12-1929

115. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

WARDHA,
December 19, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I had a letter from Somabhai. Since you have made no reference to him, I infer that you have not read the letter. Let me know if what he has stated as facts are such. You will realize that many questions arise from what he has stated. Ask Surendra to write to me and tell me what he had said to Somabhai. It is but proper that I should not discuss anything relating to that letter till I have heard from you.

Dr. Mehta will probably land in Bombay on the 23rd. Write to Manilal Kothari about the kitchen and get it vacated and cleaned. I do not know where Manilal is at present. In any case I am sending from here a wire to him at his Wadhwan address. If the key of the kitchen is with you, make a list of his things and put them away in a safe place and then get the kitchen swept and cleaned.

Chandrakanta will start tomorrow and reach Ahmedabad on Sunday morning. She will be accompanied by her parents. Her father, too, seems to have the spirit of self-sacrifice in him. I have, therefore, suggested to him that he himself should accompany Chandrakanta to the Ashram, see the place for himself and live there for a few days, so that I may feel less worried on her account. The husband and the wife wish to have separate arrangements for their meals for the present. If the mother decides to stay in the Ashram for some time at least, she will certainly take her meals in the common kitchen. At present, lodge the husband and the wife in any vacant rooms in Budhabhai's house. Nanibehn is not there, nor Parvatibehn. Hence some rooms are bound to be vacant. The two may stay in them and cook their meals as they wish. Supply them provisions from the store against their names. Give them a bill if they ask for it. If they do not, keep the amount pending in the department's account, and consult me about it after I return.

Chandrakanta will of course stay in the women's wing. The parents are thinking of staying there till my return. Do not get confused because I thus give you new information about this in every letter. I have no time to narrate the whole case. IfI could do that, you would easily understand the indecision of this couple. I cannot say positively yet when Madhavji will come. If he decides to come after I have left this place, he himself will write to you and let you know the date.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4166

116. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

WARDHA,
December 20, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

You attribute to me powers I know I do not possess. There are no-changers and pro-changers nowadays. It would be wrong on my part to interfere with the discretion of co-workers in matters outside the operations which keep them in touch with me. If there is any specific thing against any of them, I shall gladly go into it.

But whether I can be of any service or not I wish you could find a way out of this unseemly wrangling.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. G.
SUBHAS BOSE

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/32

117. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

WARDHA,
December 20, 1929

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have your letter. I cannot but feel extremely unhappy in refusing to accede to your request. But, frankly, I shall be quite out of place at such a meeting[1]. The very list of names frightened me. What place can I have in such a meeting, and what would I do there? Sir Purshottamdas or Sir Dinshaw Petit will certainly fill the place with honour. Personally, I would advise you to think of no other name.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4794. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarjee

[1] Condolence meeting on the addressee's father's death

118. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

December 20, 1929

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. I had also expected you to give in it an account of the Bal Mandir and a description of the state of things there. May I expect them still?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—5: Ku. Premabehn Kantakne, p. 6

119. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

WARDHA,
December 20, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have always been indifferent about Dattajayanti[1], etc. I am not moved by such things. But I do not feel repulsion towards such things either. I do not, however, wish that the public should come to know about the temple and that people from outside may even come to worship there, for I visualize the evil consequences which are likely to follow. I cannot easily imagine any beneficial results from such a development. Those in the Ashram who wish to use the temple for devotional purposes may do so, but I wish that we should not go further than that. Let Panditji also read this.

I, too, would have decided as you did about Premabehn. I missed mildness in your decision. It is desirable that we should not attend marriages. But we have not adopted a rule that no one may attend a marriage at any time. Of course, I do feel that we should not spend the Ashram money for such a visit and that we should dissuade those who would listen to us.

I have already written to you about Somabhai in my letter of yesterday. If he and Hasmukhrai have settled the matter between them, the problem is solved. If it is necessary to write to me further about this, do so.

I wrote to you about Chandrakanta yesterday. There is no question now of paying Rs. 25. If I like a certain idea from a distance,

[1] Birth anniversary of Lord Dattatreya

it does not follow that you or anybody else should approve of it. My view may be wrong. Now Kanta's parents are also accompanying her as guests. I have come to regard *Antyajas* and the common kitchen as two shields which protect us. I see every day that without them we would be blown up.

Send the sums mentioned by Chhaganlal Gandhi. They are earmarked for such purposes. A note about this is also filed in the office there. If we don't have a list of all such papers, we should have one, and on the page on which the account of an earmarked sum commences the conditions for its use should be mentioned, or the serial number of the document in which they are mentioned should be quoted. If that is done, anyone who takes charge of the work will be able to find the necessary information the moment it is required; our method of maintaining accounts should be thus clear.

If Kashinath is there, tell him that I could not follow what he says about his widowed sister. He may, however, consult Gangabehn and they two may decide about the matter as they think fit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4167

120. A LETTER[1]

WARDHA,
December 20, 1929

CHI. . . . ,

I have announced during the morning prayer at the Ashram that Chi. . . . has violated the vow of *brahmacharya*. . . . I have also written a detailed letter to the Managing Committee. You will get a copy from there. Chi. . . .has fully atoned for his sin. I do not see any need for you to step down as . . . of the Managing Committee. Today Chi. . . . is with me. Most probably I will not bring him there.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/30

[1] Omissions in the letter are as in the source.

121. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

[On or after *December 20, 1929*][1]

PRIVATE SECRETARY

VICEROY'S CAMP

YOUR WIRE[2]. SHALL GLADLY WAIT ON HIS EXCELLENCY AS DESIRED MONDAY NEXT FOUR THIRTY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15587

122. TELEGRAM TO VITHALBHAI PATEL

[On or after *December 20, 1929*][3]

PRESIDENT PATEL

NEW DELHI

YOUR WIRE. PRAY EXCUSE. SHALL EXPLAIN WHY I MAY NOT STAY WITH YOU.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15576

[1] The addressee's telegram was dated December 20, 1929.

[2] It read: "His Excellency has received intimation that you along with Pandit Motilal Nehru Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru Mr. Patel Mr. Jinnah would be glad if invited to meet him and place him in possession of your views on his recent announcement. He would therefore be very pleased if [you] would come to see him at Viceroy's House, New Delhi at four thirty on afternoon of Monday December Twenty-third. Kindly confirm by telegram. His Excellency has been in communication with Mr. Patel who I understand is writing to you in this connection."

[3] Presumably this was sent after Gandhiji's decision to meet the Viceroy; *vide* the preceding item. The drafts of this and the following three telegrams. are found on the same sheet of paper,

123. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

[On or after *December 20, 1929*]

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI

SURAT

EXPECT LETTER POSTED TODAY. GOD BE WITH US.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 15576

124. TELEGRAM TO LAKSHMINARAYAN GADODIA

[On or after *December 20, 1929*]

GADODIA

DELHI

WILL THANKFULLY STAY WITH YOU PARTY DEVDAS.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15576

125. TELEGRAM TO D. B. KALEKAR

[On or after *December 20, 1929*]

KAKASAHEB

GUJARAT VIDYAPITH

AHMEDABAD

YOU MAY ANNOUNCE CONFERENCE[1] DATES.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 15576

[1] Presumably the All-India National Education Conference held on January 13, 1930.

126. TELEGRAM TO MANILAL KOTHARI

[On or after *December 20, 1929*][1]

MANILAL KOTHARI

JORAWA[R] NAGAR

DOCTOR MEHTA EXPECTED 23RD. KITCHEN SHOULD BE VACATED.

From a photostat: S.N. 15576

127. TELEGRAM TO VITHALBHAI PATEL

December 21, 1929

YOUR WIRE. HAVE ACCEPTED INVITATION. STAYING GADODIA[2].

GANDHI

From a copy: Vithalbhai Patel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

128. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI[3]

WARDHA,
December 21, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have not written again about Chi. . . . That episode will certainly not be discussed. There should be no mention of it just now in the *Ashram Samachar* also. We have to draw from it the proper lesson and therefore have to take every step with caution. Whatever may have been. . . . 's error, he needs no persuasion to atone for it, as Chhaganlal Gandhi did. The latter's secret remorse was great. But as he was in ignorance as regards his lapse, so was he in regard to atonement. I do not think it is so in the case of . . . , and I am actually observing that he is fully atoning for his error in the right manner. If he emerges successful in his atonement I would consider that his test

[1] Drafted on the reverse of the sheet containing the drafts of the preceding four telegrams; *vide* also "Letter to Ramniklal Modi", 19-12-1929.

[2] Lakshminarayan Gadodia; *vide* "Letter to Ramniklal Modi", 18-12-1929 and "Telegram to Lakshminarayan Gadodia", on or after 20-12-1929.

[3] Omissions in the letter are as in the source.

had been light. I am testing myself, too, for . . . has not left it to himself what he should do; he has left the decision to me.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/31

129. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

WARDHA,
[Before *December 21, 1929*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I can understand what Shankerlal has told you. The idea behind the activities in Vijapur is different. Bear in mind that we are not obliged to women. If they really need the work, they will do it.There can be no comparison between a *bidi* and a spinning-wheel as there can be none between liquor and *Gangajal*. Let those who make *bidis* go on making them gladly. You should carry on your work without any fear. Make any improvement you can think of. Write to me when the time for sending khadi to Calcutta is at hand. *Kundi* can be made there. I have seen hand-made *kundi* at Mir[pur] Ashram. Krishna has reached. . . .[2] We should be satisfied with what . . .[3] of his can be tolerated.

I expect that you will be able to cope with the land affairs provided Subani is keeping a close watch over it. Keep me informed.

You have done the right thing in paying a visit to Talwalkar. That was one debt to be repaid. Giving the . . .[4] does not settle it, but we have derived satisfaction from it. True debt we have to repay by rendering outstanding service to the society. I will leave here for Delhi on the 21st. From there to Lahore on the night of the 23rd.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 32884

[1] From Gandhiji's itinerary mentioned in the last para; in 1929, he reached Delhi on December 22 and Lahore on December 24.

[2] The source is not clear at these places.

[3] *ibid*

[4] *ibid*

130. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

December 21, 1929

I have your letter. I never knew that in spite of your company Taramati would believe herself to be in prison. Moreover, the silent companions there—the natural scenery—make any company superfluous. But I was glad that all of you went there. More so because you all stayed there so long. So you may gladly come down at the end of January. I am leaving for Delhi today. Just now it is five o'clock in the morning. Have to meet the Viceroy. I am not going there with any hopes.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 97

131. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI PATEL

ON THE TRAIN,
December 21, 1929

BHAI SHIVABHAI,

I have your letter. The get-up of *Ashram Samachar* is fairly good. Very probably, I know the stuff on which you have printed it. I shall be able to tell when I see it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9492

132. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 21, 1929

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. I am writing this reply in the train which is carrying me to Delhi. I have understood your reasons. I will, therefore, say nothing for the present. If I get some peace, I will go deeper into the matter in January. The women's class must be going on very well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, Part 1, p. 56

133. WHAT SHOULD BE DONE FOR FARMERS?

A young man who has mentioned his name and wishes to see me but has forgotten to give his address writes:[1]

The desire expressed by the father of this young man is shared by many other parents today. Those young men who have been infused with patriotism and who are prepared to undergo any amount of hardship on account of this sentiment will certainly not like toserve the Government or a State after graduation. Parents should accept this fact. They should give up their insistence upon forcibly guiding along boys and girls who have reached the age of maturity, and young men like the one who has posed the above question should, with humility but with equal firmness, place their ideas before their parents and put them into practice. However, how who are ready to do so should also be prepared to renounce their parents, wealth. A son or daughter who is looking forward to receiving, or is actually receiving, an inheritance from his or her father has no right to disregard his or her parents' wishes. The question as to what should be done about the poor people or the farmers now takes a subordinate place. Anyone who has the strength to give up politely and for the sake of serving the country the shelter afforded by his father will find hundreds of ways of serving the poor farmers. One can make a beginning by living like a farmer. This naturally suggests to me the spinning-wheel. But to whomsoever it does not, may not start serving through the spinning wheel. If he goes and settles down in any village, a number of ways of serving it in accordance with his capacity will strike him. If however, anyone poses the question as to what is to be done there for the sake of one's livelihood, the answer to it is that all such persons should join an institution like the Charkha Sangh, accept an adequate salary and work there. All readers of *Navajivan* are aware of the fact that hundreds of young men are working in this manner at present. Hence the way is dear for all those who truly wish to serve. For all those who have the enthusiasm to serve, but not the training to do so, there are available today means whereby they can acquire this knowledge. However, very often it is found that there is not the same amount of understanding as the fervour that is found behind the patriotic urge. Some young men believe that this fervour is by itself sufficient. However, jut as vapour without control is useless or sometimes proves harmful, similarly, such thoughtless fervour is also futile and may even at times prove harmful. Those young men who wish to serve the

[1] The letter is not translated here.

farmers should possess a great deal of patience, self-confidence, physical strength, capacity to withstand heat, cold, etc., and the willingness to get training.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-12-1929

134. WOMEN AND ORNAMENTS

I have never been able to understand our rajas' and maharajas' fondness for ornaments. Or I may say that the rajas heavily laden with jewellery have reminded me of women. I do not wish to malign women by comparing the rajas with them. Even women would not appear beautiful to me if they looked like men. Every person looks well in his or her rightful place and can make a useful contribution only by remaining there. He loses his status if he tries to go above it and we also say that he does likewise if he attempts to climb down from it. This is what is meant when it is said that better one's duty bereft of merit, than another's well performed.[1] However, after having spoken of the ornaments of the rajas, I wish to speak of those of women. The former may not even be reading *Navajivan*. Even if they do, they will not pause to ponder over such matters. And even if they wish to do so, the Emperor will not permit it. These vassals derive their lustre from the latter. They are not self-luminous; if they give up their ornaments, perhaps they may also have to give up their thrones. They themselves say that it will be regarded as an insult to the Emperor if they do not deck themselves with ornaments on State occasions, and the Emperor will be displeased with them. Whether they desire it or not, they have no alternative but to possess and wear expensive ornaments and attend such functions. Hence there is no point in raising at present the question of the rajas. The planets will automatically find their proper places once the sun finds its own. These rajas are like the planets. They do not at present have any independent powers of doing good or evil. They can react independently to what they are told only when they can escape from the Emperor's clutches or free themselves from his influence.

But what about women? The uplift of women is one of the principal aims of running *Navajivan*. During my tour of the U.P., I was very much irritated at the sight of the ornaments worn by rich and poor women alike. At that very time, I read Mr. Brayne's book. I was largely convinced by his criticism of ornaments. He has held the men

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 35

folk too responsible for this fondness for ornaments. I believe that men are or were responsible for this; their responsibility may now have decreased, but the women's responsibility for this fondness is no less. I was unable to convince many women to give up their ornaments.

How and whence did women develop this fondness? I do not know its history, hence I have only made some conjectures. The ornaments which women wear on their hands and feet are a sign of their bondage. Some of the ornaments worn on the feet are so heavy that a woman cannot walk fast, let alone run. Some women wear such heavy ornaments on their arms that they prevent them from fully utilizing the latter. Hence I regard these ornaments as fetters on the hands and feet. I have found that by means of the ornaments which are worn by piercing the nose and ears, the men lead the women as they wish. Even a child, by firmly taking hold of a nose or ear ornament of a woman, can render the latter helpless. Hence I have looked upon these principal ornaments as mere symbols of slavery.

I have found even the designs of these ancient ornaments ugly. I have beheld no true art in them. I have seen and known them as objects which harbour dirt. A woman who is loaded with ancient ornaments on her hands, feet, ears, nose and hair cannot even keep these parts of her body clean. I have seen layers of dirt collected on those parts. Many of these ornaments are not even removable every day. When some women gave me their heavy anklets and bangles, they had to call in a goldsmith to have these removed from their hands and feet. When these were taken out, they left a good band of dirt on the hands and ankles, and the designs carved on the ornaments were full of layers of dirt. These women too felt as if they were rid of an age-old burden.

The modern woman is oblivious of this origin of ornaments and, regarding them as objects which beautify her gets delicate ones made for her. She has them made in such a way that they can be readily worn and removed and if she happens to be very wealthy, she has them made of diamonds and pearls instead of gold and silver. They may gather less dirt, it may well be the case that they are regarded artistic, but they have no utilitarian value and their capacity to beautify is also imaginary. Women of other countries would not wear the ornaments worn by our women. Their idea of adorning themsleves is different. Ideas of adornment and artistic beauty vary from one country to another; hence we know that in such matters we have no absolute standards of beauty or art.

Why is it then that many reasonable, educated women still

continue to be fond of ornaments? On considering the matter, itseems that as in other matters, here too tradition reigns supreme. We do not find reasons for all our actions and do not even stop to consider whether they are proper or otherwise. We do them because it is customary to do so and later we like them independently. This is called thoughtless life.

However, why should all those women who are awakened, who have started thinking for themselves, who wish to serve the country, who are taking or wish to take part in the yajna of swaraj, not exercise their discretion with regard to ornaments, etc.?

If the origin of ornaments is what I have imagined it to be, they are fit to be renounced, however light or beautiful they may be. Fetters, though made of gold, diamonds or pearls, are fetters only. Whether in a small dark room or in a palace, men and women imprisoned in either will be regarded as prisoners only.

Moreover, wherein lies the beauty of a woman? Does it lie in her ornaments, her mannerisms, her new clothes which she changes daily, or in her heart, thought and action? The cobra which has a precious stone on its hood has poison in its fangs. Hence, despite the fact that it wears a crown of precious stone, it is not considered worthy of *darshan* or of being embraced. If a woman realizes that this 'artistic device' leads to the downfall of countless men, why should she garner these ornaments although they may possess any amount of artistic value? This is not a matter of individual freedom, nor is it a question of the rights of an individual; it is merely a wilful act and hence fit to be renounced, because it involves cruelty. It is the dharma of every thoughtful and compassionate man and woman to see what effect his or her actions have on others and to desist from them if they are not otherwise proved to be useful and produce a harmful effect.

Finally, in this poverty-stricken land, where the average daily income of a person is seven pice or at the most eight pice, who has the right to wear even the lightest of rings? A thoughtful woman who moreover wishes to serve her country, cannot ever touch ornaments. Looking at it from the economic standpoint, the gold and silver that we lock up in making ornaments causes threefold harm to the country. The first harm is that where there is a shortage of food, we increase it by wearing ornaments. It should be borne in mind that our average daily income is seven or eight pice. As those whose daily income is a thousand rupees are also included in these calculations, even if we leave the destitutes aside and take into account only thepoorer classes, their income would amount to one or two pice. Hence the amount spent on jewellery is something that we have taken

away from the poor. The second is that these ornaments do not yield any interest, hence we prevent an increase in the national wealth to that extent. The third is that a large portion of these ornaments finally wears off or, in other words, that amount of wealth is lost for ever. Just as if an individual throws away some of the gold bars in his possession into the ocean, his wealth will decrease to that extent, almost the same can be said of a woman who invests her money in ornaments. I use the word "almost", as some ornaments are sold in straitened circumstances and hence they may be regarded as having been put to some use. The loss that they have suffered through wear and tear before their sale is of course there; moreover, anyone who buys them can never recover their original value when reselling them, and the loss suffered thereby is also there. Therefore, any woman who wishes to keep aside ornaments as her own property or as property which may be useful in times of distress should put their equivalent in cash in her name; either her parents or her partents-in-law should open an account in a bank and give her the pass-book. Such times may well be far off. However, if thoughtful women, who wish to render service, give up their love of ornaments, I would regard this article as having fully served its purpose at least for the time being.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-12-1929

135. MY NOTES

THE LATE JAIKRISHNA INDRAJI

A reader of *Navajivan* writes [1]

I had become acquainted with Sjt. Jaikrishna in Porbandar and that very time I was astonished by his diligence in trying to excel himself in his own field and by his simplicity which matched his diligence. In trying to discover new plants, he had often roamed the hills of Barda and as a result of his vast experience, he had also written a beautiful book. In his own house, too, he had built up a collection which included many botanical specimens and he showed it with pride to anyone who visited him. He thought ofnothing but of making discoveries in the field of botany. He felt his spiritual well-being in this world as well as the next to lie in this only. Hence I always regarded him as an ideal student. During my tour of Kutch, I

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had informed Gandhiji of the death of Jaikrishna Indraji.

renewed my acquaintance with him. His passion for planting new trees increased rather than decreased with advancing age. Men with such single-minded devotion to their subject are indeed rare. Sjt. Jaikrishna Indraji was one of them. He has now left us after fulfilling his duty; hence his soul is of course at peace. Let us all emulate his single-mindedness and his self-confidence.

LABOUR AND CAPITAL

Nowadays labour and capital have formed two distinct camps and it is found that the two are generally opposed to each other. A sect has arisen in the world which believes that the capitalist class should not exist at all, or that everyone should belong to the class of owners. In my opinion, such a state of affairs will never come about in the world. What is possible, and what should happen, is that instead of mutual distrust and enmity, there should be trust and love between them. Just as a sect has arisen which aims at destroying the capitalists, today in the West another has arisen which believes that it is possible to create trust and love between the two. If such a situation is possible, it is primarily the responsibility of the capitalists to bring it about. This is so not only because theirs is the stronger side, but also because it is their class which will have to make the requisite sacrifices. Labour has no privileges on its side, or the only privilege that it does enjoy is the one to feel aggrieved, that is to say, to offer satyagraha. That, however, is not the special privilege of labour. All human beings enjoy it. Sheth Ghanshyamdas Birla had recently made a speech in Sholapur[1] in which he has accepted the fact that capitalists should make this type of sacrifice. In it, he had clearly stated that it was against the dharma of the mill-owners to misuse or make anything in order to earn profits, that their dharma was to produce goods and sell them only in order to serve and benefit the public. And he has also expressed the view that if mill-owners do not do so, they cannot continue to survive in the long run. If all mill-owners act in this manner, all disputes will be banished and an atmosphere of trust will be created between them and the labourers and along with it, the two canbe united by a bond of love. In the language of the old times, this is known as conduct in accordance with one's dharma and in modern language it is known as just conduct. While judging the matter by these very standards, Sjt. Ghanshyamdas has also expressed the opinion that they should not abandon what is important in order to reap a minor benefit or, in other words, if the temptation arises to levy an import duty on foreign cloth other than that manufactured in

[1] *Vide* "The Duty of Capitalists", 19-12-1929.

Britain, they should not yield to it. Sheth Ghanshyamdas Birla had delivered this speech as President before the business community of Sholapur; and it has not been reported that anyone raised any objections to it. However, it is one thing not to object to such ideas, and quite another to put them into practice. What is essential is to act in accordance with such ideas, because even the best of ideas have ultimately no value if they are not put into practice.

HAJAM OR 'VALAND'?

A gentleman from Palitana writes:[1]

The contemptible implication underlying the word *hajam* is actually directed towards that profession. This word is used with reference to persons whose profession is to shave or cut the hair. If this word is not approved of, I shall only use the word *'Valand'* in *Navajivan*. However, it is my confirmed opinion that this is no remedy for the basic problem. The real remedy consists in ending the prejudice against those professions which are essential but are concerned with the removal of dirt. Thereafter, we can remain indifferent to names that may be used to indicate them. What can we do when 'a boy fondly named Hari dies at an early age'? We should not, therefore, look upon the word Hari with contempt. The prestige of words increases or diminishes in the world with that of persons and it will continue to do so.

In this age of reforms, everyone has learnt to shave himself and the sting in the barber's profession will easily disappear—it has already half disappeared. For me, words like *Valand*, Bhangi Chamar, Dhed, etc., have no repugnance. I myself do the work of all those professions and inspire others to do so and I find pleasure in it. My advice to those of my brothers who follow the above professions isthat they should disregard the contempt that society has for these professions, that they should become adepts in their trades, purify their own thoughts and actions and enhance their own prestige as well as that of their trade. Although I can shave myself well, through these very same motives, I avail myself of the services of a barber clad in khadi wherever I happen to find one and try to lead him to do national service. As we wish to win swaraj which is untainted, it is necessary that we should take the help of all those who are engaged in such professions and also try to improve their lot. We have had

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had requested Gandhiji to use *Valand* instead of *hajam* to denote a barber because the latter word had become a term of contempt.

Chamars, weavers, cobblers and Dheds, etc., among us who had attained the highest knowledge and had become *bhaktas*. Should it then be surprising if one of them, by virtue of the strength of his services, becomes the President of the State? Persons who follow such a profession can maintain the highest degree of integrity in their conduct and can also sharpen their intellect. The sorry part of the story is that when persons who practise such trades happen to be intelligent individuals, they are ashamed of their professions and finally give them up. The President of my imagination will be one who while earning a livelihood by practising a barber's or a cobbler's profession, will also be guiding the ship of the State. It is possible that because of the burden of national work he will be unable to ply his trade regularly but that is a different question.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-12-1929

136. A LETTER

[Before *December 23, 1929*][1]

I have your letter. I shall try to do whatever I can for political prisoners. It has never happened that I kept quiet out of fear. Even with regard to political prisoners, I would consider it improper to do anything for those who are in prison for crimes of murder. I shall not argue the point. I shall of course do my utmost for Bhai Vinayak Savarkar.[2] But as I have said earlier anything I can do will be inconclusive. In any case Pt. Motilalji will be the chief spokesman. I shall only be a witness. I suggest everything should be submitted to Motilalji in writing.

What you said was certainly irrelevant to some extent. But that was because of the fever. The realization made me sad. I hope you are now better.

From a copy of the Hindi: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/28

[1] From the contents this letter appears to have been written before Gandhiji met the Viceroy on December 23, 1929.

[2] Vinayak Damodar Savarkar had been sentenced to two consecutive terms of transportation for life on charges of treason and spent ten years in the Andaman Jail. In 1921 he was brought to India and was released in 1924 on the condition that he should not leave the Ratnagiri district and should not take part in politics.

137. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

DELHI,
December 23, 1929

SISTERS,

I am writing this in Delhi after the morning prayers. It is severe cold, so severe that Mirabehn's feet have become stiff. She has slipped back into bed and is lying near me. Lahore, of course, is even colder than Delhi.

But I do not wish to write to you about the cold. I wish to write about our duties. Just now I shall say only this, that those among you who are thinking about their selfish desires are bound to fall. Those who devote themselves to their duty, when can they have the time to fall? It has always been my experience that those who fell had remained, or become, indifferent to truth. A sinful actrequires the cover of darkness. It is always done in secret. We certainly see persons who have abandoned all sense of shame and act sinfully in the open. There are even people who regard sin as virtue. We are not talking about them. One reason why progress in many of our activities is held up is the selfishness I have mentioned above. In that selfishness lies the danger of our fall and that of society. Think over this, fix your mind on it and let each one examine her life in the light of it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3712

138. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

DELHI,
Silence Day, December 23, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have your letter.

Mahadev is here. Vallabhbhai, too, is here.

You were right in sending Henry's[1] wire by post. In such matters, you may decide for yourself and do what you think best. No one rule can be laid down which can be followed in all cases. Our aim should always be to save money.

[1] Polak

Your reply to Manilal Kothari was correct.

Budhabhai is our neighbour. I intervened in his affair. If, now, we do not accept the deposit, our service will remain incomplete. The burden on us will not be much. If Budhabhai and Nanibehn are innocent, we should keep the money. If they are guilty, we cannot but know that by this means. In this complex world, who can say which man or woman is pure and which impure? To me it seems our clear duty to accept the deposit and to maintain relations with both. It is not we who have to provide a room to Nanibehn. She is to be given a room in Budhabhai's house. If she comes and lives in the Ashram, she will of course live as the other women do. More about this when we meet.

If the Thana land can be disposed of for Rs. 9,000, nothing will be better than that. Pyarali separated from us from Wardha. Write to him at his Bombay address,

We have to meet the Viceroy at 4.30.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Giant;: G.N. 4168

139. SPEECH AT SERVANTS OF THE PEOPLE SOCIETY, LAHORE

December 24, 1929

Mahatamaji speaking on the occasion[1] said he considered it a privilige that immediately on his entry into Lahore, he should be called upon to perform the opening ceremony of the Lajpat Rai Hall.

He said he did not like to say many words of praise about Lalaji and his Society because they were well known to all Punjabis. He was a Bania and he had always acted Bania-like. From the report read by Mr. Purshottamdas Tandon he found that the full amount of five lakhs appeal for the Lalaji Memorial Fund by Pandit Malaviya, Dr. Ansari and Mr. Birla had not been subscribed yet He hoped the Punjabis would subscribe the amount remaining to be realized.

He knew fully well the capacity of the Punjabis for public work but he had not been able fully to realise the Punjabis' love for Lalaji, because the Punjabis, in the midst of whom Lalaji lived and did, had not St paid their Me share towards this appeal. He hoped the full amount would be subs the people of the Punjab before the end of the present year and he would be relieved d the anxiety on that account.

He had tried his best to collect as much money as possible during his tours in different parts of India, but he had not been able to collect the total amount. He appealed to all men and women present at the gathering to give him as much money

[1] Anniversary celebrations of the Society

as they could for the Lalaji Memorial Fund.

He said he had a mind to come to the Punjab long before, but as the Congress had been invited in the Punjab and Congressmen were busy raising subscriptions for Congress, he postponed his visit

Mahatmaji said he had heard that Punjabi women were very fond of silk and ornaments, that they used many foreign articles and foreign scented oils. This pained him much. He said until India got swaraj no woman should wear ornaments and whatever ornaments they had they should hand them over to him.

Addressing the assembled men, Mahatamaji; said they always raised loud shouts of *Vandemataram* but when they were asked to do solid work theyrefused to do it. He had been repeatedly asking them to wear khaddar, but they would not wear it. He asked them to save all their money by curtailing useless expenditure and give it to him.

Mahatmaji then asked the volunteers to go round the men and women sitting at the meeting and collect money for the fund....

Mahatmaji congratulated all on their response to his appeal. He said they had, by their action, fulfilled his hopes. He was satisfied with what he had collected.

The Hindustan Times, 26-12-1929

140. SPEECH AT ALL-INDIA SUPPRESSED CLASSES CONFERENCE, LAHORE

December 24, 1929

Mahatma Gandhi while delivering his presidential address at the Suppressed Classes Conference declared:

> Freedom can never be attained by exploding bombs on an innocent man. I regard it as a most outrageous crime.

He said no other power on earth could prove a barrier against the attainment of freedom, but our own weaknesses were our greatest enemy. Continuing, Mahatmaji urged the untouchables to remove all social evils, to give up drink and meat of dead animals. He laid stress on sanitation, education, etc. He paid a tribute to Rishi Balmiki, their ancestor and author of the *Ramayana*, and exhorted the untouchables to follow him.

Referring to the question of temple-entry, Mahatma Gandhi said entering temples by force was not satyagraha. They should learn satyagraha from him. He cited the example of the satyagraha at Vykom in South India five years back. He said compulsion whether by the British or by Indians was a crime. They must not compel high caste people for temple-entry. He said they could not see God by force. God was present within their hearts and not in temples and mosques. He advised the untouchables patiently to undergo sufferings and pray that high caste cruelty may come to an end.

Continuing, Mahatmaji said a large section of people in India had resolved to put an end to untouchability under the lead of the Congress Anti-untouchability Committee under the guidance of Pandit Malaviya and Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj. If they could not remove untouchability and attain real Hindu-Muslim unity, swaraj for the

masses could not be attained. Concluding, he declared:

The key to swaraj was not in London nor with the Viceroy but in the hands of Indians themselves.

He then appealed for the Lalaji Memorial Fund.

The Hindustan Times, 27-12-1929

141. NOTES

A VICIOUS INFERENCE

The estimated drink and drug bill paid by Madras in 1928-29, according to the statistics collected by Sjt. C. Rajagopalachari, was Rs. 16,83,00,000, i.e., seventeen crores in round figures. The revenue got out of this was Rs. 5,10,00,000, i.e., a little over five crores. The net waste was therefore say 113 crores. This is more than the land revenue by over four crores. These figures are startling enough to make a reformer think. But the worst is yet to follow. The same vigilant eye has observed that the drink bill increases year after year as also crime against Abkari[1] laws. From these statistics the Madras Government is reported to have drawn this vicious inference:

> The continued increase of crime against Abkari laws and its appearance in all parts of the Presidency must give pause to any immediate drastic action in the way of cutting of the supply of licit liquor lest the result should prove more serious to the general morality than are the present conditions.

This is the same as saying that because the crime of thieving is on the increase there should be a progressive relaxation of the laws against thieving. The inference is based on the assumption that drinking intoxicating liquors is not a disease or an evil in the same sense as thieving. The fact however is that the drink habit has been demonstrated to be a parent of thieving as of many other crimes. The proper inference to be drawn from the increasing crime is that the existence of liquor shops is a fatal trap for poor humanity and that therefore the true method is forthwith to declare total prohibition without counting the cost. Crime there will still be against the prohibition laws as there is and always has been against laws prohibiting thieving, etc. If there is no licensed thieving, there may be no licensed drinking. For an unsophisticated mind that is the only inference possible and that is the straight and simple logic. A Government whichwants a revenue anyhow to run an expensive foreign administration manufactures logic to suit its evil purpose.

[1] Excise

This is the title of two volumes brought out by Sjt. Krishnadas who was with me as my valued assistant during the stirring non-co-operation days whilst I was touring through Assam and elsewhere[1]. He recorded the events of those days in his diary chiefly meant for his guru, Sjt. Satischandra Mukerji who had lent Krishnadas' services to me when Mahadev was wanted by Pandit Motilalji. The volumes are chiefly extracts from that diary and have been before the public for some time. Satish Babu having received inquiries from foreign friends as to the authenticity of the facts narrated in the volumes asked me whether I would read the volumes and testify. Krishnadas himself was anxious to know my opinion of his volumes. I have gone through them. And the facts appear to me to be correctly set forth and exhaustively dealt with. For the inferences and opinions drawn from and based on the facts I can say nothing. We know that different minds applied to the same facts draw different inferences. We know too that the same mind by efflux of time and maturer experience draws opposite inferences from the same facts. So far as these volumes are concerned, whilst the pen is that of Krishnadas, the directing mind is that of his master and guide Satischandra Mukerji. The volumes are the only narrative we have of the seven months with which Krishnadas deals. The first volume is published by S. Ganesan, Triplicane, Madras, and the second is published by Babu Ram Binode Sinha, Gandhi Kutir, Dighwara (Bihar).

Young India, 26-12-1929

142. DEFINITE SUGGESTIONS

During the U.P. tour I received the following letter[2] from Allahabad students:

Though I dealt with the matter in one of my addresses to students and though a definite programme has been placed before students in these pages, it is worth while reiterating and perhaps more pointedly the scheme adumbrated before.

The writers of the letter want to know what they may do after finishing their studies. I want to tell them that the grown-up students

[1] In 1921.

[2] Not reproduced here. The students had complained that Gandhiji's article "What May Youth Do?", pp. 108-9, was vague, and wanted some definite outline to be clearly chalked out

and therefore all college students should begin village work even whilst they are studying. Here is a scheme for such part time workers.

The students should devote the' whole of their vacation to village service. To this end, instead of taking their walks along beaten paths, they should walk to the villages within easy reach of their institutions and study the condition of the village folk and befriend them. This habit will bring them in contact with the villagers who, when the students actually go to stay in their midst, will by reason of the previous occasional contact receive them as friends rather than as strangers to be looked upon with suspicion. During the long vacation the students will stay in the villages and offer to conduct classes for adults and to teach the rules of sanitation to the villagers and attend to the ordinary cases of illness. They will also introduce the spinning-wheel amongst them and teach them the use of every spare minute. In order that this may be done students and teachers will have to revise their ideas of the uses of vacation. Often do thoughtless teachers prescribe lessons to be done during the vacation. This in my opinion is in any case a vicious habit. Vacation is just the period when students' minds should be free from the routine work and be left free for self-help and original development. The village work I have mentioned is easily the best form of recreation and light instruction. It is obviously the best preparation for dedication to exclusive village service after finishing the studies.

The scheme for full village service does not now need to be elaborately described. Whatever was done during the vacation has now to be put on a permanent footing. The villagers will also be prepared for a fuller response. The village life has to be touched at all points, the economic, the hygienic, the social and the political. The immediate solution of the economic distress is undoubtedly the wheel in the vast majority of cases. It at once adds to the income of the villagers and keeps them from mischief. The hygienic includes insanitation and disease. Here the student is expected to work with his own body and labour to dig trenches for burying excreta and other refuse and turning them into manure, for cleaning wells and tanks, for building easy embankments, removing rubbish and generally to make the villages more habitable. The village worker has also to touch thesocial side and gently persuade the people to give up bad customs and bad habits, such as untouchability, infant marriages, unequal matches, drink and drug evil and many local superstitions. Lastly comes the political part. Here the worker will study the political grievances of the villagers and teach them the dignity of freedom, self-reliance and self-help in everything. This makes in my opinion complete adult education. But this does not complete the task of the village worker.

He must take care and charge of the little ones and begin their instruction and carry on a night school for adults. This literary training is but part of a whole education course and only a means to the larger end described above.

I claim that the equipment for this service is a large heart and a character above suspicion. Given these two conditions every other needed qualification is bound to follow.

The last question is that of bread and butter. A labourer is worthy of his hire. The incoming president is organizing a national provincial service. The All-India Spinners' Association is a growing and stable organization. It furnishes young men with character an illimitable field for service. A living wage is assured. Beyond that there is no money in it. You cannot serve both self and country. Service of self is strictly limited by that of the country and hence excludes a living beyond the means of this absolutely poor country. To serve our villages is to establish swaraj. Everything else is but an idle dream.

Young India, 26-12-1929

143. THAT CRUEL CUSTOM

Sjt. Gangadharrao Deshpande writes as follows[1] on the practice of animal sacrifice prevalent in Karnatak and reported in these columns :[2]

How I wish public opinion moved fast enough to stop this inhumanity altogether and now ! How can we who value freedom deny it to our fellow creatures and practise unthinkable cruelties on them and that too in the name of religion?

Young India, 26-12-1929

144. 'GOANS'

The editor of the *Voice*, a Goan organ, writes:[3]

I wish the editor of the *Voice* had imagination enough to know that if we are worth our salt, the India of the future will not be British but Indian. British India is a contradiction in terms. India is the name of the country where Indians live. But for the slave habit which we

[1] The letter is not reproduced here.

[2] *Vide* "In the Name of Religion", 21-11-1929.

[3] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had enquired about the status of Goans in "the British India of the future".

have never questioned, we would refuse to use any such term as British or other India. The India of the future will be India under swaraj, not Britain. In India under swaraj 'Goans' will pride themselves in being called Indians. Why should they even now call themselves 'Goans' when they are born in India? India will not always remain vivisected into British, Portuguese, French, etc., but will be one country although its parts may be under different systems of government. In any event India free cannot deny freedom to any son of the soil. It gives me both pain and surprise when I find people feeling anxious about their future under a freed India. For me an India which does not guarantee freedom to the lowliest of those born not merely within an artificial boundary, but within its natural boundary is not free India. Our fear paralyses our thinking powers, or we should at once know that freedom means a state at any rate somewhat better than the present for every honest man or woman. It is exploiters, money-grabbers, pirates and the like who have to fear the advent of freedom.

Young India, 26-12-1929

145. THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE

Although all people theoretically admit that Hindi alone can be the national language, yet the requisite love for the Hindi language is not apparent among young men of the provinces where the mother tongue is Hindi. Whatever literature is being published in Hindi is mostly translation. If, however, some original piece does come out it is found to be insignificant. It might be argued that aRabindranath is not born every day and Tulsidas is one among millions. Nevertheless, all of us can at least create a climate for the advent of poets like Tulsidas and Rabindranath, namely, a sincere zeal among young men. As their devotion to Hindi grows so would Hindi pervade the environment, leading to a flowering of a few genuine poets as well.

Today neither the fervour nor the endeavour is manifest in the language of the young men having Hindi as their mother tongue. The grammatical errors occurring in the Hindi of the young men of U.P. and Bihar are not at all to be seen among the Bengalis and Maharashtrians. No doubt the national language is being propagated in provinces like Madras, etc.; but I have seen that Hindi teachers are not easily available. They are not energetic and their capacity for self-sacrifice is very limited. There ought to be innumerable young men ready to dedicate themselves exclusively to the propagation of Hindi; but I have not come across such persons, if any. Undoubtedly

young men are available who are eager to serve at subsistence wages, but they are not equipped to teach Hindi.

If young men will it, this shortcoming can be overcome. With the initiative of a single young man this work can make progress. If one loses heart and rests on one's oars in face of a distressing situation in a certain field, the situation deteriorates further. It is the duty of a devoted person to try to relieve the distress without delay and not sit with folded hands fearing obstacles on the way. Every school should have an association for the promotion of Hindi. It would be the duty of such associations to make progressive use of Hindi in all fields, to evolve new technical words, never to use a foreign language in politics, etc., to make a sound study of abstruse books, to provide Hindi teachers wherever necessary and to organize volunteer Hindi teachers for honorary work, etc. Even if a single young man in every school is fired with this zeal he will not stay inert but will sprout into an association and will induce his fellow-students to join it. The only way to keep up the awakening among the young men today is for them to utilize every moment of their lives for some sort of social service.

It is to be noted that in this article Hindi also means Hindustani. To me a language which deliberately discards Arabic and Persian words is not Hindi.

[Form Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 26-12-1929

146. DRAFT RESOLUTIONS FOR A.I.C.C., LAHORE[1]

[*December 26, 1929*][2]

l. This Congress deplores the bomb outrage perpetrated on the Viceregal train and warns those who believe in violent activities that such action is not only contrary to the creed of the Congress but results in harm being done to the national cause, and congratulates His Excellency the Viceroy, Lady Irwin and the nation on the fortunate and narrow escape Their Excellencies and party had on that occasion.

2. This Congress, whilst endorsing the action of the Working Committee in connection with the Manifesto signed by party leaders, including Congressmen, in connection with the Viceregal announ-

[1] According to the Free Press of India, the resolutions were circulated among the Congress Working Committee members for consideration. Gandhiji drafted the resolutions in consultation with Motilal Nehru and other leaders.

[2] The report is date-lined "Lahore, December 26, 1929".

cement of 31st October relating to Dominion Status and appreciating the efforts of His Excellency the Viceroy towards peaceful settlement of the national movement for swaraj and having considered the result of the meeting between the Viceroy and Pandit Motilal Nehru and other leaders, is of opinion that nothing is to be gained in the existing circumstances by the Congress being represented at the proposed Round Table Conference, and, in pursuance of the resolution passed at the Calcutta Congress last year, declares that swaraj in Congress creed shall mean complete independence; and therefore, further declares the Nehru Scheme of Dominion Status to have lapsed and hopes that, now that the communal question drops out of the purview of the Congress, all parties in the Congress will devote their exclusive attention to the attainment of complete independence, and hopes also that those whom the tentative solution of the communal problem suggested in the Nehru Report has prevented from joining the Congress or actuated them to abstain from it, will now Join or rejoin the Congress and zealously prosecute the common goal, and as a preliminary step towards organizing the campaign for independence and in order to make the Congress policy consistent with the change of the creed, declares complete boycott of Central and provincial legislatures and calls upon Congressmen to abstain from participating, directly or indirectly, in future elections, and calls upon the present members of the legislatures to tender their resignations and also calls upon the nation to concentrate attention upon the constructive programme of the Congress and authorizes the All-India Congress Committee, whenever it deems fit, to launch the programme of Civil Disobedience, including non-payment of taxes whether in selected areas or otherwise, and under such safeguards as it may consider necessary.

3. This Congress congratulates the Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee, the Anti-Untouchability Committee and the Prohibition Committee on the vigorous prosecution of programmes entrusted to them, but notes with regret that the response from the nation has not been as adequate as the Congress had a right to expect. The experience gained by these Committees and by the All-India Spinners' Association show that far more effective work becomes possible through autonomous organizations created for specific activities and this Congress, therefore, hereby declares the foregoing Committees to be permanent, with complete autonomy and without any control or interference from the Congress and with powers to add to their number, to frame their respective constitutions and to raise funds, provided, however, that Congress reserves to itself full authority to disown or to disaffiliate any of these bodies when and if they

appear to the Congress to be acting contrary to national interest.

4. In order that the Congress may become a swift-moving and more efficient organization, it has become necessary to separate its spectacular, as distinguished from its practical and businesslike function, and to make it a more compact body, the Congress hereby resolves to reduce the number of delegates to under 1,000 and the A.I.C.C. to under 100, and hereby authorizes the A.I.C.C. to incorporate the necessary changes in the constitution and to make the necessary redistribution.

5. Inasmuch as the annual Exhibition in connection with the Congress is intended to be predominantly and progressively of an educative character and to further the programme of the boycott of foreign cloth through khaddar, this Congress authorizes and appoints a permanent Committee, composed of, or alternatively the A.I.S.A. with powers to co-opt local men to manage and conduct the whole of Exhibition and to raise funds for the purpose.

6. Inasmuch as the Congress is intended to be representative of the poor masses and inasmuch as holding of the Congress at the end of December involves very considerable expense to the poor peoplein providing for extra clothing for themselves and is otherwise inconvenient to them, the date of the Congress session is hereby altered to February or after, according to the convenience of the province concerned.

7. This Congress wholeheartedly endorses the idea propagated by the President of organizing Provincial National Services, and advises all provinces to initiate such services and to that end appoints permanent committees, with autonomous powers in the manner indicated in Resolution 3 regarding Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee and other committees.

The Hindustan Times, 28-12-1929

147. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

LAHORE,
December 26, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have kept your letters for replying to them. Having some free time now, I am dictating this. Your argument against my suggestion regarding the use of Budhabhai's house appeals to me. It is correct. You have done right in lodging Chandrakanta's parents in the room adjoining Valjibhai's.

Our ideal, of course, is that a husband and wife should, having overcome desire, live either separately or together for the sake of service and adopt a mode of life which suits the nature of the work, exactly as two friends may do. But so long as such relationship has not been cultivated and the two can save themselves from the power of passion only with great difficulty, it is best—and it is a duty—to live separately. I think this answers all your questions. If you think, however, that any point is left out, please write to me.

Bhansali's idea certainly seems erroneous. But we tolerate it because he is a fine man, is frank of heart and says what he believes. He lives as our co-worker, and, moreover, is at present attacked by a disease. We should, therefore, tolerate him as long as we can.

I am not bound to Budhabhai by any promise. But it was I who drew him to the Ashram kitchen. I was happy when he said that he had taken a vow to have his meals in the Ashram kitchen for one year and told him that it was a good idea. This is all the binding there is on my part. But I don't look upon the thing in thenature of a binding. If he accepts my advice and goes a step further in the same direction, I would welcome it. This should not be interpreted to mean that I have bound myself by any promise. If, therefore, you and the managing committee come to an independent decision, I will get it accepted.

The consideration in favour of my view is that I have regarded . . . bhai[1] and . . . behn[2] as innocent, and still regard them so. Even if my belief is erroneous, I can discover my error only by taking their innocence for granted. If, however, my action has not produced a good effect on others in the Ashram, you should do what they think proper. For, a group that harbours suspicion about a person will not accept him. That is, they cannot behave frankly towards him. But this raises another issue, namely, if I believe a person to be innocent and you or others do not agree with me, they should not respect my wishes in regard to that person. It is morally wrong, untruthful, to respect them. I, on the other hand, can keep aside my own view in the matter and act upon the view of the group. I have done so in the past, and that is what duty requires. This raises no question of principle. It is a question of our experience, of our likes and dislikes or of error of judgment. If all the others regard the two as innocent, it becomes our duty as neighbours to accept both. If you have not followed this whole argument, note it among the points to be discussed with me.

It is very cold here. I believe that it would have been better if

[1] The name has been omitted.

[2] *ibid.*

some of those who have come had not done so. No one should have come besides those whom duty required to come.

I believe that I shall be able to return there earlier than I had expected. The necessity of having to stay here after the Congress has disappeared by itself. Do not, therefore, be surprised if I leave on the 30th.

According to me, we need do nothing about Mahadev. He will live on the same terms with us as at present. I am trying to arrange that he should live in the Ashram itself. I will write about other things if I get time.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4169

148. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE, A.I.C.C.[1]

LAHORE,
December 27, 1929

The first part of the resolution deals with the Delhi Manifesto[2] and it is based on political necessity, or wisdom as you may choose to call it. I and Pandit Nehru tried to get Dominion Status for the country and I must confess in spite of the best possible efforts we have been unsuccessful. I would like to mention one thing in this connection. I do not think the Viceroy is to blame in any way for this failure. We must praise his efforts to come to some agreement. But considering his point of view, I cannot lay any blame upon him. He was very courteous all through the interview we had with him and his manners were attended with sweetness. After all that has happened, I must say that no good can be expected of the Congress being represented in the Round Table Conference. So thinking about the question from all its aspects, we feel that no good can be had for the country by the Congress sending representatives to the Round Table Conference. I hope there will be no amendment to this part of the resolution.

The second part of the resolution is regarding the change of

[1] Gandhiji spoke in Hindi on the resolution on complete independence; *vide* Resolution 2, "Draft Resolutions for A.I.C.C., Lahore", 26-12-1929.

[2] *Vide* "All Parties Leaders' Joint Statement", 2-11-1929.

creed of the Congress. This again is nothing but the logical conclusion of the resolution passed in the Calcutta Congress last year.[1] The Madras Congress[2] had set up the ideal of swaraj within the Empire if possible and without it if necessary. And by the exigencies of circumstances, we are now compelled to declare that the Congress wants complete independence and fixes it as its "swaraj". The Madras Congress did not actually change the objective of the Congress. The Calcutta Congress too did not take up definitely any attitude in regard to this matter. But now we are going to change our objective into definite form of complete independence.

Today, I do not want to say swaraj within Empire is possible at all, and we say clearly that swaraj means complete independence.

The third part of the resolution deals with how to work up this new creed of complete independence. The first step as suggested by the resolution is for boycott of legislatures and local bodies, or in other words we want that the legislatures both provincial and central should be boycotted by Congressmen. Not only that, the Congress further wants the boycott of local bodies such as municipalities, local boards, etc. It is no doubt a great step. But for the attainment of that great ideal of complete independence, we must have to take up such rather drastic steps. We must be now prepared for great struggles ahead. We must cease to have any more internal difference and dissensions. Another thing I want to make clear before you. Now that the Nehru Report on the line of Dominion Status will be declared to have lapsed, there cannot and should not be any further fighting over it and I hope the Sikhs and Muslims and all other sections who had one or other grievances against the Nehru Report will see no objection to join the Congress and unite within its fold for the battle of independence. Even if you have got unavoidable dissensions, still we should act unitedly within the Congress. If Mussalmans cut the throats of Hindus let them cut it. But the consolation there must be, that we have got freedom. Or if the Sikhs have got any quarrel either with the Hindus or Mussalmans, let them sink all such differences and unite within the Congress.

I never thought of going to the legislatures and I am glad that the same feelings are being entertained by other leaders regarding these legislative bodies. Now it is being widely felt that no good can be brought to the country by taking part in them and today we want to decide to leave them. As regards municipalities and local bodies, I

[1] *Vide* "Speech on Resolution on Nehru Report, Calcutta Congress-III", 31-12-1928.

[2] In 1927

should like to say that the desired amount of good cannot also be had from these institutions, however self-governing they might be characterized. For example, I may mention that our President did yeoman service in the Allahabad Municipality. But at last he felt disgusted with it and left it. So, Babu Rajendra Prasad did much in the Patna Municipality and he too was disgusted in the long run and left it. If we want independence for the country, if we sincerely desire to have independence, we cannot afford to go inside these institutions which cause such distraction of our energy.

Therefore we should now have no hesitation in deciding that no longer do we want to go to the legislatures and local bodies.

It is clear that the non-payment of taxes is the final stage of the national fight and I admit we have not reached it. It is also clear that either you must do this work or that. Either you must choose to go to the councils and local bodies and stop to talk of civil disobedience or you must choose to boycott those places and concentrate all your energy for civil disobedience. There is no good in saying that both these things can be done side by side. If you like to take part in the legislatures and local bodies, I must frankly tell you that civil disobedience is an impossibility. Civil disobedience undoubtedly requires much discipline, much vigour and, most of all, absorbing concentration. If you go to the councils, you cannot work up all these absolutely requisite conditions for civil disobedience. If you want to do what has been done in Bardoli,[1] you should now cease to think about things such as the legislative councils, the Assembly, etc. It must be admitted that the country is not at present prepared for civil disobedience and the country must be prepared for it. If you want me to conduct the civil disobedience movement, I would conduct it. But you must be soldiers of the battle and you must acquire all that is required for civil disobedience.

In conclusion, Mahatmaji asked all not to vote for the resolution because he had moved it and said:

I want you to think about the whole resolution in all its aspects and implications properly and then to vote as you think best.

The Hindustan Times, 30-12-1929

[1] Bardoli Satyagraha.

149. DISCUSSION WITH SIKH LEADERS[1]

December 27, 1929

It is understood that Mahatmaji placed before the Sikh leaders the text of the Working Committee resolution withdrawing the offer of Dominion Status. Mahatmaji, it is said, told them that he did not think it best to give the Sikhs special protection under the Nehru Report.

Since the Sikhs are not satisfied the Congress is prepared to review the question; but the situation has changed now and with the Working Committee withdrawing the offer of Dominion Status, the Nehru Report has automatically lapsed and no review of the question is called for.

Mahatmaji also made it clear that in an independent India the right shall not be apportioned on a communal basis; but, if at all communalism is made the basis of political rights, he shall see that satisfaction is given to the Sikhs.

The Bombay Chronicle, 28-12-1929

150. DEVELOPMENT OF THE VIDYAPITH

Kakasaheb is writing about what Gujarat Vidyapith has done and what it is trying to achieve. There is one bit of criticism, however, to which he cannot reply. Some say that the Vidyapith has met with disaster since he took charge of it. If it has been ruined, I am responsible for it, not Kakasaheb. This is because so long as the people are enamoured of me or are fond of me and largely accept my advice, I am responsible for the changes that have been made in the Vidyapith. I was primarily responsible for the boycott of Government schools and for formulating a policy for national education. This I must humbly say or admit. It was I who brought over Acharya Gidwani and it is I who asked him to step down. Kakasaheb was connected with the Vidyapith ever since its inception. Again, it was I who took him away from the Vidyapith. During Acharya Gidwani's term of office, the Vidyapith attracted students, land was bought for it and buildings were erected. Perhaps the Vidyapith would not be there if there were no Acharya Gidwani. He had promised me twice that he would readily come over whenever I summoned him. I received Vallabhbhai's telegram in Bhiwani in which he had suggested that Acharya Gidwani should take charge of the Vidyapith. He immediately agreed to do so. And in a few days, the first

[1] An informal conference between the Sikh leaders including Sardar Kharag Singh, Sardar Bahadur Mahtab Singh, Sardar Tara Singh and Sardar Amar Singh on the one side and Gandhiji, Motilal Nehru, Dr. Ansari, Dr. Satyapal and Sardar Sardul Singh on the other.

non-co-operation university in India was launched. The treaty that was made between Gujarat and Sind by bringing him over to the former place is still there. I withdrew Acharya Gidwani because of a difference of opinion that arose in the Vidyapith. That did not imply any slur on anyone. It is my conviction that even today, Acharya Gidwani belongs to Gujarat. He went over to Prem Mahavidyalaya because Gujarat sent him there. And today he is inKarachi, only as a delegate from Gujarat. At all the three places, it is hoped, the national viewpoint will be fostered. At all the three places, there will certainly be propaganda for khadi.

Acharya Kripalani was borrowed from the Kashi Ashram, which is his own creation. I relieved him as I had promised to do so. Under his leadership, too, the Vidyapith has not taken a retrograde step. At the time of the students' strike, we saw that he had stolen the hearts of the students. Acharya Kripalani was a second gift that Sind gave to Gujarat. Even today, he belongs to Gujarat. In my opinion, under his leadership also the Vidyapith has progressed. Although all may have a common ideal, there is naturally a difference in the work and character of every man. And, it is in accordance with this that an institution which is in charge of a particular person develops and takes on a distinct colour. However, in regard to the Vidyapith, I have felt that this variety has been as beautiful as the variety in the colours of a rainbow. Whereas one principal has strengthened one aspect of it, another has done the same for another aspect of it. The result has only been good. At present the rudder is in the hands of Kakasaheb. He has been moulding the Vidyapith. The Vidyapith has not crumbled; it is going ahead. So long as Kakasaheb is at the helm, all that needs to be said with regard to it is that anyone who has any doubts about it should go there and inspect it. Just as all the three principals have been complementary to one another, the periods to which they belonged also stand in the same relationship to one another. As all the three are fruits of the same tree, there is a continuity hidden behind their work. Not even one of them has wiped out what had been achieved before, but has added to the sum total of its achievements. The present state of the Vidyapith itself bears testimony to this. At the very inception of the Vidyapith, I had suggested a test for judging it; that holds good even today. The Vidyapith is going to be judged neither by its buildings nor by the number of its students, nor again by the knowledge of English that its students possess. It is going to be judged by the patriotism of its students, by their capacity to give to others the knowledge of the subjects which they have learnt, by their knowledge of Hindi, by their knowledge of the science of the spinning-wheel, by the strength of character of its students and

teachers, and by their turning towards the villages. Judged by these standards, it is my confirmed belief that the Vidyapith has taken forward strides and anyone who wishes to ascertain this can do so by going over to examine it. Just as a tree is judged by its fruit, theVidyapith can be examined in a similar manner. It is not a distant institution about which an investigator would need a testimonial from me or from anyone else. Moreover, it is fair to scrutinize a thing personally, wherever this is possible and where such a scrutiny is necessary. After conducting this inquiry if it is felt that the Vidyapith has made continuous progress and has augmented its capacity to serve, it is only fitting that contributions should flow in to its doors.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-12-1929

151. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE, A.I.C.C.[1]

LAHORE,
December 29, 1929

The President has commanded me to address you to the amendments that have been moved. Mr. Kelkar has reminded me that I had said in my first speech that I did not want to speak again on the resolution. He is partially correct. What I said was that I would like to be silent as I do not want that at the time of voting you should be influenced by any appeal I might make to you. I wanted you to vote according to your conviction judging the resolution on its merits and leaving out of your mind considerations for me personally. But if you desire to hear me so that I may explain to you my views on the amendments and on the debate, it is your right to demand it and my duty to comply with.

VOICES: Mahatmaji, kindly address us.

I shall do so. Let me first apologize for my brief absences yesterday when the debate was continuing. I left only to meet nature's needs. I have listened with great care and attention to the speeches made on the resolution.

I would first utter a word of caution. The resolution submitted to you is a resolution proposed by the Working Committee. On dealing with the amendments to the resolutions you should be careful that the Working Committee has been appointed by you and they are your servants. You must have confidence in your servants that they would not press on you any resolution if they did not consider

[1] Gandhiji spoke first in Hindi and then in English.

it absolutely necessary after taking into consideration all aspectsof the question. I would, therefore, urge you not to press any amendment unless you are very certain that the Working Committee is in the wrong and it is your duty to press the amendment.

This is also a rule which is observed in all well conducted and responsible organizations.

I shall not refer to the words 'in the existing circumstances' which has made several speakers to smell some loophole. I quite agree that it would not be correct to think that all doors for negotiations would remain closed for all times. There is bound to be a round table or a square table conference at some time or other. Many say that once we declare independence as our goal, there will be no conference for us. Even if you have violence as your creed there will have to be a peace conference. The only question is what will be discussed at that conference. I can tell you that now that Congress is declaring independence it would not be right for any Congressmen to go to any conference to discuss Dominion Status. Congressmen can enter any conference only to discuss independence.

Now a complaint has been made that we have not disclosed the conversations that took place between the Viceroy and Nehru and myself and other leaders in the agreed statement which has been published in the Press. Whatever you had the need to know, whatever you had the right to know has been conveyed. Nehru went to that meeting with the Viceroy as your ambassador and he ought to be relied upon. In view of what had been published regarding the conversations with the Viceroy the word 'in existing circumstances' are quite intelligible.

Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Kelkar have pleaded for postponement of the decision. I have great respect and affection for them. They have pleaded for the revival of the All-Parties Conference. Let me tell you that I have no regrets about the All-Parties Conference. It has done very valuable work. It has brought the Congressmen and the leaders of other parties together. It has enabled them to understand one another. It has brought about co-operation between them. It has brought the Liberals and other friends nearer to us. Therefore, I am fully alive to the very useful work done by the All-Parties Conference.

My reply to our friends like Pandit Malaviya and others is that we of the Congress have got our duty to perform. We have to chalk out our programme. The Viceroy's refusal to give an assurance that we wanted and non-fulfilment of other conditions makes our course of action clear.

At Calcutta I pleaded for the grant of two years' time. I would

have been glad if that had been granted. That would have given us more time to be prepared but to meet the wishes of our youth who wanted the pace of progress to be increased, I agreed to the reduction of the period from two years to one year. I must keep to my pledge. I believe that once the nation makes a resolve it ought to adhere to it whatever may be the consequence. Otherwise, it would be degrading. That is why I want you to declare for independence and keep your resolve. There are amongst us those who believe that we are not yet ripe to declare independence. If you are of that opinion and if you think that it is a wrong move to declare independence do not hesitate to say so. It is urged that we should postpone the declaration for independence until inter-communal unity has been attained. I do not agree with that view. Nations must, having once resolved, adhere to their resolves whether they have the support of only a handful or of millions. Of course, we must try to secure the support of the largest number of our countrymen.

Now I shall refer to boycotts. I have been asked why the boycott of courts and schools has been omitted. I may tell you frankly that I am never in favour of omitting any of the triple boycott. In fact, I want a fivefold boycott, but that is another matter. I am certainly for the triple boycott. That is my view. But are we ready for it? As one of the nation I must keep pace with the nation. I have therefore included only the boycott of councils and local bodies because of the feeling that time has not come for calling on the lawyers and the students. If you think the time has come to make that call and that call would be answered, do so.

I have been reminded in the discussion of council boycott of the valiant actions of President Patel. I yield to none in my admiration of President Patel's achievements. I recognize that he had enhanced the prestige and status of India and Indians, but neither President Patel nor the resolutions in the Assembly or the councils can give us independence. They would not get us Dominion Status either. The Working Committee was unanimous in adoption of boycott of councils.

As regards local bodies and municipalities I want to tell you that I had not included them in my original draft, but I do not believe that local bodies can do any good to national work. The experiences of Pandit Jawaharlal who was the Chairman of the Allahabad Municipality, of Babu Rajendra Prasad who was the Chairman of the Patna Municipality and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel who wasthe Chairman of the Ahmedabad Municipality confirm my view. I have no personal experience. I can however tell you that if Sardar Patel had not relieved himself from the Chairmanship of the Ahmedabad

Municipality there could have been no Bardoli campaign. I have not seen any local body having strengthened the people. I want the villagers to be strengthened. We ask for independence, but we are not prepared to forgo even the small benefits. We must be prepared to forgo small benefits. We must retain only those which would help us attain our goal. But these are my personal observations. The decision rests with you.[1]

We can only non-co-operate step by step. Please do not tamper with the resolution as it is one united whole. But do not talk vaguely. Vote my resolution down if you do not believe in it or, amend it. I did not include the boycott of law-courts because I was not sure of response.

I shall now deal with the objections raised to the preamble of this resolution, namely, endorsement of the Delhi Manifesto and the appreciation of the Viceroy. The preamble is quite necessary. The leaders acted in obedience to the Calcutta Resolution in holding themselves in readiness for any conversations for the attainment or guarantee of Dominion Status. As regards appreciation of the Viceroy, Pandit Motilalji as well as myself feel that we have in the Viceroy a genuine person whose sincere aim is to secure peace. I think I can say it of the Viceroy. That is my impression as the result of my contact with the Viceroy. That is also Nehru's view.

I shall now come to the doubts expressed that independence cannot be attained by non-violence. I do not agree with that view. If you do not agree with me and if you do feel that violence should not be eschewed from consideration say so and change the creed. Do not stay your hands out of consideration for me. Do as your convictions tell you. Let me however tell you my conviction that if the nation carried out the non-violent programme loyally, there need not be any doubt about the attainment of our goal. Where is room for misgivings if we do not fill the Government treasury with our tax moneys, if our soldiers decline to serve and withdraw, if our lawyers boycott the courts, if our students boycott the schools? Where is the necessity for violence? For our nation with its three hundred millions of people there is no call for violence. But I do not want to say more to you on the efficiency and efficacy of non-violence after you have given thisnon-violent creed a trial for all these years. Now it is ten years and you have not been convinced about its potency. What can I say in its defence? Review the course of the last ten years. Look at the national awakening, at national assertion, at the freedom of opinion, association and action shown by the people. Are these not the fruits of the

[1] The paragraph which follows is from The Tribune.

working of the non-violent creed? But if you are not of my opinion, do not hesitate to vote against the non-violent creed but do not mean one thing and say another thing. Be frank, courageous and vote according to your convictions.

Mahatma Gandhi next spoke in English traversing the ground covered in his Hindi speech. He emphasized that his regard and affection for Malaviyaji and Mr. Kelkar and other friends could not possibly deflect him from the course which suggested itself to him as being in the interests of the nation. The step he and Pt. Motilal took at the meeting with the Viceroy as representatives of the Congress with the Calcutta resolution in view [was the only step they] could have taken and it was impossible for them today to recommend any other resolution. He knew that they had unanimity behind the All-Parties Conference but unanimity would be too great a price to pay if they had to sacrifice immediate Dominion Status. If they had broken that unanimity, they did so only to come together again, but not now on Dominion Status but on the platform of independence. He knew they would come in for a great deal of condemnation here, in England and elsewhere but they must run the risk in the interests of the nation.

As for that part of the resolution relating to the boycott of legislatures, Mahatma Gandhi declared himself still a believer not in the triple boycott alone but in fivefold boycott programme which he originally enunciated. But he could go only so far as the nation could go. There was no question of principle and when he saw that most valued associates and friends could not see eye to eye with him he loyally accepted their decision and went as far as he could with them in associating himself with the programme of entry into the legislatures. But when he found to his joy that their experience as they told him was that nothing more could be achieved through the councils than what had already been done, he put forward the idea of the boycott of legislatures. He could not say likewise in regard to the boycott of law-courts and schools but when the time came for it he would be glad to submit that also for consideration. But now as far as he could sense the opinion in the country there was yet no atmosphere for these two boycotts.

As for the boycott of local bodies it was adopted by the Working Committee on the suggestion of one member of it. This house was to judge whether these should be boycotted or not. But his view was that independence could not come through local bodies and the less they looked up to these agencies which were a creation of the Government and which had still to derive sustenance even to certain extent from the Government the better.

Much had been said about boycotting insurance companies, banks, etc. He for one would certainly try to give up every activity with which the Government was associated, but that had been an impossibility even for him, the author of non-co-operation. He was ashamed of having to make that confession but there it was.[1]

As for the preamble to the resolution Mahatma Gandhi emphasized the creed of non-violence necessarily carried common courtesy.

If any Englishman meant well by India then this house would be unworthy of

[1] What follows is from *The Tribune*.

its trust if it did not show courtesy to him. He did not want to vindicate the independence by harming Englishmen. It would do Englishmen good if they retired from India, but he did not want to make them retire by firing a single shot.

Mahatma Gandhi proceeding explained that he had more effective means of making Englishmen retire from India. That was to cease to salaam them and to cease to pay tribute. The moment they all did that Englishmen would cease to be slave-holders. The last word was imperfectly heard. But there was no doubt that the impression which the Viceroy gave him and Pandit Motilal was that he was a sincere man.

Lastly Gandhiji addressed himself to the amendment that complete independence should be attained by all possible means and not necessarily by peaceful means. He said the nation had shed a large part of fear by the non-co-operation movement. If they had no trust in non-violence and truth vindicating not merely Dominion Status because that was buried once for all but even independence, then he asked them to respect it.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 31-12-1929 and *The Tribune*, 31-12-1929

152. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

LAHORE,
Silence Day, December 30, 1929

SISTERS,

I am writing this simply to let you know that I remember you on this Silence Day. I hope to arrive there on the 5th. It is very cold here. There is noise all around me. I am sitting in a meeting and shall not, therefore, try to write more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3714

153. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

LAHORE,
December 30, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

Though it is my Silence Day, Jawaharlal has dragged me to the Subjects Committee. Sitting in the meeting, I am writing letters. There is nothing special to write about to you. But wherever I happen to be on the Silence Day, I remember you all. That is why I write this.

I think we shall be able to start from here on the 3rd. A situation has arisen which does not permit me to go away.

It is very cold. Everyone feels it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Everyone must have been introduced to Dr. Mehta. He must have been carefully looked after.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4170

154. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA R. VYAS

LAHORE,
Silence Day [*December 30, 1929*]

CHI. KANTA,

I was expecting your letter. I hope you, your mother and father are well. Now we shall be meeting very soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

155. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE, A.I.C.C.–I[1]

December 30, 1929

With the President's permission I would refer to one matter before I speak on the resolution. Mr. Harisarvothamarao appealed to me on council boycott amendment[2] to omit the council boycott after having seen the strength of the feeling on the subject, seeing that it would result in fraternal war. Now Mr. Raja has appealed to me to delete the preamble[3] to the main resolution seeing that the amendment has been retained by one vote only.

Mr. Harisarvothamarao has reminded me how I stayed my hands in Allahabad and asked me to do the same now. Now let me tell you that I would withdraw my proposal for the council boycott not once but hundred times if it was in my hands and also if I had hands and also if I thought it was in the interests of the country. I have

[1] Gandhiji spoke in Hindi.

[2] Which was lost, 116 voting for and 117 against

[3] Moved by N. C. Kelkar and lost, 113 voting for and 114 against. The amendment sought to delete from the resolution the mention of appreciation of the Viceroy's services towards peaceful settlement of the national struggle.

placed the main resolution before you not on my behalf but on behalf of the Working Committee. If it had been left to me alone I would have placed before you a triple boycott. As regards an appeal to me to accept the amendment which has just been lost by a strength of one vote let me remind you that we claim to work under democratic constitution. One vote has today meant that the amendment has been lost, but one vote the other way could have easily meant the retention of the amendment. What you have to consider is whether the country would suffer by the loss of the amendment.

The Bombay Chronicle, 31-12-1929

156. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE, A.I.C.C. –II

December 30, 1929

This Congress congratulates the Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee, the Anti-Untouchability Committee and the Prohibition Committee on the vigorous prosecution of the work entrusted to them, but notes with regret that the response from the nation has not been as adequate as the Congress had the right to expect. Experience gained by these Committees and by the All-India Spinners' Association shows that far more effective work becomes possible through autonomous organizations created for specific activities. This Congress, therefore, hereby declares the foregoing Committees to be permanent with complete autonomy and with powers to add to their number, to frame their respective constitutions and to raise funds, provided that they shall follow the general policy of the Congress and further that the Congress reserves to itself full authority to disown any of these bodies when and if they appear to the Congress to be acting contrary to the national interest.[1]

Mahatmaji then spoke.

As regards the resolution which has been submitted to you several questions have been asked. It has been asked: 'Is it intended to create an empire within the empire?' My reply is in the affirmative. Even they say *imperium in imperio*. I want you to give these Committees, which it is proposed to create, dominion status.You have given dominion status to the All-India Spinners' Association and the result is that they are carrying on work in l,500 villages and the prestige of all the work which is done goes to the Congress. If the All-India Spinners' Association ever becomes anti-Congress in its tendency, then you can withdraw the permission that you have given them to use your name. Today the Congress is for khaddar. But we

[1] The resolution was placed before the Subjects Committee by Jawaharlal Nehru on behalf of Gandhiji. For the draft by Gandhiji, *vide* Resolution No. 3, "Draft Resolutions for A.I.C.C., Lahore", 26-12-1929.

have amongst us a school of thought which is against khaddar and works against it. Then we have also a school which believes that production of khaddar alone will not effect a complete boycott of foreign cloth and that mill-cloth also should be included in the Congress programme. The All-India Spinners' Association believes that khaddar would give us swaraj. If tomorrow the Congress fails to believe in khaddar and is of opinion that the policy of the Spinners' Association is against the policy of the Congress, it has only to pass a resolution at a general meeting and to disown that body. The Congress should, when such conflict arises, non-co-operate with that body.

Then it is asked what about the prestige, authority and strength the Spinners' Association would have attained during the time that it had the use of the name of the Congress. Yes, there is that risk. But you must be prepared to take risk. You must have the self-confidence that as long as the Congress works on lines of truth it alone will remain as the supreme body and that no subordinate body can ever usurp its authority or prestige. In history there are instances where such usurpations have taken place. But you must be willing to take that risk. There is no compulsion in this matter. This is one way of getting work done. To those who have a special taste for one kind of work the Congress says go forward and do good work in our name and with our approval. It results in good work being done and the Congress prestige and authority is enhanced thereby. In this connection I am reminded of the Chirala-Perala example. Duggirala Gopalakrishnayya, when he started the Chirala-Perala satyagraha[1], consulted me. I told him and when I went to Chirala-Perala I told the people that they must not take the name and authority of the Congress for their movement. They must do it on their own responsibility. If they succeed the Congress will get the credit. If they failed they would take the odium.

Here I am proposing to you something reverse. Under this resolution work will be done and the Congress will get the credit. But it would not give money. It would not exert itself. It is opento you today to wind up the Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee as also the Prohibition Committee and the Anti-Untouchability Committee. For the last two years I have been trying to do anti-untouchability work through Jamnalalji.

Not much work could be done for long years. Meanwhile the Calcutta Congress[2] passed a resolution appointing the Anti-

[1] *Vide* "Chirala-Perala", 25-8-1928.

[2] In 1928

untouchability Committee and the work was entrusted to Jamnalalji who was able to achieve some result and the credit for it went to the Congress. It is not the main work of the Congress to take full responsibility for social work. It should at the same time promote it. The Congress is a political body in which there are bound to be frequent differences of opinion. I would urge to have a far-sighted vision and to create these Committees and to let them do good work by organizations which are of their own making and with money which they collect.

I am your servant. I am bound to your service. Let me tell you frankly. What is the good of ignoring facts? It is not easy to get all the money which the Congress would want for all these purposes. In the name of the Congress I can tell you so. From my experience in my wide travelling I note and observe many things. In Andhra and in the United Provinces I had to face several questions regarding the Congress fund. They ask what happened to the Tilak Swaraj Fund? Who spent it? And how did you spend it? Where is the account? Then they also say, 'We will give you money in your name. We will give it to you but not to the Congress.' I tell them give it to me in any name. I shall render you account for every pie and I now ask you let me spend this money on the objects which the Congress approves today. But in return I ask you to grant these Committees dominion status. As regards the Congress we ought to know what response we get for our appeals for funds. We levied a tax of one per cent on the income and to our shame we know how few have paid the levy. These Committees want from you no money, no men but only permission to work in your name. But you who cannot find money or men say: 'No we must have control.' I tell you that you have no right to it. If you had that right you would not be granting to these Committees dominion status which I beg of you to give to them. There it is. Give these Committees dominion status or do not. But let there be no misconception. I tell the foreign Government that independence is my right. But I tell you, I beseech you, I beg of you to give medominion status or freedom for these Committees. But do as you think right.

But let me make one appeal to you in connection with the main resolution. You have tried your strength with me for two days. You are free to do so in the open Congress also on that resolution. I am prepared to meet you and fight with you. But please do not be obstructive in respect of other resolutions. Show that you have the sense of value of time. Please be businesslike. You refuse to be businesslike. You take two days over one resolution. You give no time to the Working Committee and then you take it to task for not supplying copies of the resolution to you. Is that right? Is that

workable? I read in the papers recently that the annual meeting of the Bank of England which is concerned with the management of crores of rupees was over in thirteen and a half minutes. Let us learn from them. I appeal to you to decide as you like, but to be businesslike and to have less of speeches. Ask questions to get information, but do not argue because it would be an expenditure of time.

Replying to Dr. Rahim, Mahatmaji said that these Committees were proposed on the principle of specialization of work. Mahatmaji instanced the work which Dr. Hardikar was doing through the Hindustani Seva Dal in the name of the Congress, but under an autonomous constitution. Continuing, Mahatmaji said:

If the Congress wants to keep everything in its hand then there would be no doing of work and no progress. There are some people who have a taste for one kind of work only and who are prepared to give their time and energy for specific purposes. They should be mobilized in the service of the objects which the Congress has in view and which would also enhance its prestige.

Replying to Mr. Ramanarayan Singh, Gandhiji said that it was true that in certain cases khaddar had to be popularized on the basis of its economic appeal only. Khaddar had both economic and political aspects. In Rajputana as also in some other States khaddar was 'red rag' to the rulers. In such cases khaddar was presented in its economic aspect. Gandhiji said:

I went the other day to one Chief Justice and asked him for money for khaddar. He said it is political. I said it may have political effects, but you have nothing to do with it. It's humanitarian.

Replying to Mr. Aney, Gandhiji said that once the Committee was created the Congress would have no voice in its personnel.[1]

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-1-1930

157. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE, A.I.C.C. –III[2]

December 30, 1929

I know you have just now thrown out one resolution moved by me and you may throw off this resolution too. But because you like to overthrow some resolutions, the Working Committee and myself cannot stop our work. The members of the Working Committee are your servants and they must perform their work whatever decisions

[1] The resolution was then put to vote and defeated by an overwhelming majority.

[2] Gandhiji spoke after moving the resolution on reduction in the number of delegates to the A.I.C.C. For the text, *vide* Resolution No. 4, "Draft Resolutions for A.I.C.C., Lahore", 26-12-1929.

you may make upon their work. Since you seem to have lost your confidence in your Working Committee I think you should elect a separate Working Committee of yours. Since the Nagpur Congress[1] I have been urging upon this important change in the Congress constitution. I am confirmed in my belief that delegates are too heavy for the Congress to proceed with its work smoothly, promptly and in a businesslike manner. I also believe that 350 members for the All-India Congress Committee are also too heavy. I feel it my duty to place before you a programme for your work and it is for you to decide it. You must fully realize what your work is. I would like to urge upon you that if you do not pass this resolution today you will have to pass it tomorrow or the day after. If you so . choose you may elect another Working Committee of yours. But so long as this Working Committee is there you should see that whatever is placed by it is passed. I am convinced that the demonstrative part of the present-day Congress should be separated. It means a lot of waste of money and energy. This resolution means concentration of the Congress force. If you have not got so many members in the Assembly why should you think it proper that the All-India Congress Committee should have such a number of members? You talk of National Parliament. You should then realize what should be the size of your National Parliament. If the Congress wants to spread away all over the country it should concentrate on its programme. You want civil disobedience. But you can never expect civil disobedience to be a practical thing with such an unwieldy national body which is to set to the work: I am living for civil disobedience and if need be I willcarry on civil disobedience separately. You can never think of civil disobedience with such indiscipline as exists there today. I do not want to say more on the resolution. Now you are to decide in any way you like.[2]

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-1-1930

158. SPEECH AT CONGRESS SESSION , LAHORE–I

December 31, 1929

Mr. M. K. Gandhi . . . moved the following resolution:

This Congress deplores the bomb outrage perpetrated on the Viceroy's train and reiterates its conviction that such action is not only contrary to the creed of the Congress but results in harm being done to the national cause. It congratulates the Viceroy and Lady Irwin and their party including the poor servants on their fortunate and narrow escape.

[1] In 1920

[2] The resolution was declared lost by 111 against 101 votes.

After speaking in Hindustani Mr. Gandhi continued:

MR. PRESIDENT AND FRIENDS,

I have been asked to give you in English the substance of what I have said. In my opinion, it will be a good beginning if our resolutions dealing with the task before the Congress are passed unanimously. In appearing before you I have realized my responsibility in the matter to the fullest and my certain conviction is that the Congress will fail in its obvious duty if it does not record this resolution. You find the reason for it stated in the resolution itself. So long as the Congress creed remains what it is, namely, that we want to attain swaraj, not by any means, but by peaceful and legitimate means, it is our bounden duty to take note' of anything that happens in India in breach of that condition. You might be told, as I dare say you will be told, that when people who do not belong to the Congress organization and are not connected with it in any shape or form do particular acts which may be contrary to our creed, we are in no way and in no sense responsible. Those who think like that have, I say in all humility, little sense of the tremendous responsibility that rests on their shoulders; and they have little sense also of the great status that belongs to the Congress. We either claim to represent the thirty crores of Hindustan or we do not. If we claim to represent them, as I, a humble Congress worker, most certainly do, and asI hope, you also do, then it is our duty to consider ourselves responsible for anything that any single person born in Hindustan may do and it does not matter to me in the slightest whether that person is a reasonable human being or whether he belongs to the C.I.D. I hope that you consider the C.I.D. Indians also to be our kith and kin. Every Indian we expect to convert by our deeds to our creed and use his services in the attainment of our goal. Not only that, but the resolution states, and I hope you believe it, that such acts do great harm to the national cause.

I do not wish to take up your time by drawing your attention to the various landmarks in the history of the Congress, which would enable you to prove to your own satisfaction that each bomb outrage has cost India dear. You may say, if you wish to, that the reforms that were obtained could not have been obtained without bomb outrages or without violence. Let me tell you that every one of these reforms has cost far more than you would care to pay. We have paid millions in exchange for mere toys.

The Congress Resolution also congratulates the Viceroy and Lady Irwin and their party including the poor servants. In my humble opinion it is a natural corollary to what has been said in the previous

part of the resolution, that we congratulate the Viceroy and Lady Irwin and their party. We lose nothing by using common courtesy. Not only so; we would be guilty of not having understood the implications of our creed if we forget that those Englishmen, whether in authority or not, who choose to remain in India are our charge, that we who profess this creed of non-violence should consider ourselves trustees for the safety of their lives. We have a tremendous military burden which is crushing the starving millions who are living in the 700,000 villages of India. That military burden is really not due to the necessities of frontier defence, but let me assure you, that burden is due to the fact that thirty crores of people are held bond-slaves by a few thousand Englishmen coming all the way from England. If we would get rid of this military burden at any stage, it would be a necessity of the case that we hold the lives of those whom we may even consider our enemies as a sacred trust. That is the clearest possible implication, in my humble opinion, of the creed of non-violence for the political salvation of India, and if you hold with me, then it is not only a matter of courtesy on your part, but it is a matter of duty to tender our congratulations to the Viceroy and Lady Irwin and their party including the servants, and tender congratulations, if you will, to ourselves also. I hope that after having listened to everything that might be said against this resolution you will pass it unanimously and heartily.[1]

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I know I have spoken enough on this resolution and the less I speak now the better. But strong faith in some particular thing sometimes impels one to speak on in its favour in the hope that it might convince others. This impulse has drawn me here again.

Your Congress is about to undertake a major task. It is in the offing. All of you have assembled here in this Congress with great hopes, namely, to define swaraj as complete independence. To my mind we can be completely independent only when we preserve the liberty of different communities residing in India. In the light of what I have told you—provided you consider it right —what is our duty today? We should be able to assure each and every Englishman, even a child, that his safety is the sacred concern of those Indians who seek independence. We do not say this out of any fear. It is quite possible that in the heat of excitement you may not follow my viewpoint but I am sure later on you will also be persuaded to it.

[1] A debate on the resolution followed in which M.A. Ansari, Swami Govindanand, Purushottamdas Tandon and others spoke, What follows is translated from Gandhiji's speech in Hindi.

Several friends have opposed this resolution. In the opinion of Swami Govindanand and Dr. Alam this resolution is unwarranted. Let me tell you that if we oppose this resolution it means we are not true to the creed of non-violence—and Dr. Alam claims to be a votary of non-violence. Whatever we do, we should be able to say unhesitatingly, "Yes, we have done it." The atmosphere, however, has changed lately. It is being suggested that no note should be taken of a recent violent outrage. The argument advanced is: "Let us go our way and let them go their way." But I can assure you that this is not the way to attain independence. When we claim that the Congress is the largest organization in India, nothing should deter us from registering the views of the Congress regarding such incidents in the country.

If you want to reject the resolution, do so by all means. If you desire to discard the creed of the Congress, you are welcome to do so. But if the Congress creed remains what it is, then you cannot but adopt this resolution. One thing more—it has pained me to hear that the youth would be enraged at the adoption of this resolution by the Congress and they may leave the Congress. What does this mean? It is not as if I do not know the younger generation. I have come in contact with young men by thousands . . . even in Europe. I claimthat not one of them has opposed me in anything. Even here they come to confer with me. If I emphatically proclaim in the Congress what I consider the truth, I daresay that not a single young man would desert me. Granting, however, that young men are not happy about it, even then, at the risk of their displeasure we shall continue doing our duty in the best interests of the country. May God endow us with strength to follow the better course. The moment I forsake my duties in apprehension that others might abandon me, I shall consider myself unworthy of being a servant of the Congress. If you have faith in the Congress, then your duty is to do what you consider right.

You are votaries of independence. You are going to undertake major tasks—do national work—but I would submit to these friends that they lack the strength for all that. They are trying to cover up their weakness. They aspire to attain independence, whether they have the strength or not. They are trying to talk big. But I wish to tell them that we ought to cleanse our hearts if we decide to launch the new programme.

It is being alleged that this resolution smells or rather stinks of cowardice. I would like you to consider which part in this resolution amounts to flattery of Englishmen. Nothing here can be called flattery. Congress has abandoned all forms of flattery. May I request you to give up the suspicion that we are airing independence and flattery in the same breath. That man is a coward who gives up his

duties. Why should a person, who is not afraid of anyone except God, fear the partisans of the bomb? I for one have faith in nothing but our duties—and our creed. There may be persons who have no faith in the creed of the Congress and pay it only lip-service, but the Congress must express its opinion on acts of violence or terrorism. Even at the cost of displeasure or rage of the persons concerned, the Congress must voice its opinion. Whenever this was done, people have become infuriated. May I hope that the young men have grasped my viewpoint? I simply want you to bear in mind that you have come here as delegates. You have taken a pledge, you believe in God, you believe in Truth and if you believe in the Congress you must decide now whether you adhere to it or not. If you have faith in God then with God as your witness take the right step. If, however, you come to the conclusion that the resolution is not correct, then reject it by all means.[1]

Report of the 44th Indian National Congress, Lahore

159. SPEECH AT CONGRESS SESSION, LAHORE–II

December 31, 1929

This Congress endorses the action of the Working Committee in connection with the manifesto signed by party leaders including Congressmen on the Viceregal pronouncement of the 31st October relating to Dominion Status, and appreciates the efforts of the Viceroy towards a settlement of the national movement for swaraj. The Congress, however, having considered all that has since happened and the result of the meeting between Mr. M. K. Gandhi, Pandit Motilal Nehru and other leaders and the Viceroy, is of opinion that nothing is to be gained in the existing circumstances by the Congress being represented at the proposed Round Table Conference. This Congress, therefore, in pursuance of the resolution passed at its session at Calcutta last year, declares that the word "swaraj" in Article I of the Congress constitution shall mean complete independence and further declares the entire scheme of the Nehru Committee's Report to have lapsed, and hopes that all Congressmen will henceforth devote their exclusive attention to the attainment of complete independence for India. As a preliminary step towards organizing a campaign for independence and in order to make the Congress policy as consistent as possible with the change of creed this Congress resolves upon a complete boycott of the central and provincial legislatures and committees constituted by Government and calls upon Congressmen and others taking part in the national movement to abstain from participating directly or indirectly in future elections, and directs the present Congress members of the legislatures and committees to resign their seats. This Congress appeals to the nation zealously to prosecute the constructive programme of the Congress and

[1] The resolution was then put to vote and declared carried.

authorizes the All-India Congress Committee whenever it deems fit to launch upon a programme of civil disobedience including non-payment of taxes, whether in selected areas or otherwise, and under such safeguards as it may consider necessary.[1]

MR. PRESIDENT, SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

Please tell me whether or no you are able to hear me. (No, no.) I hope now you can hear me. Please be kind and listen to me. (Laughter) If you do so, you are likely to gain but if youdo not, I don't mind. (Laughter) I shall read out the second resolution copies of which are already in your hands.

If you will kindly permit me I would like to omit reading the resolution. Since you have the resolution in English I hope you must have understood to some extent. With your permission, therefore, I shall not read out the resolution but only explain its purport in Hindi. In the first place, it is a lengthy resolution constituting the very basis of future Congress programme. That is why I wish that all of you must have a clear conception and a firm conviction as regards this resolution.

We have tremendous tasks lying ahead of us. I submit that we should strive to carry on our programme. The first part of the resolution states that the Congress approves the action of the Working Committee regarding the manifesto signed by our leaders replying to the Viceregal announcement of the 31st October, and laying down specific conditions for attending the Round Table Conference.

In the second part it is said that the Congress appreciates the Viceroy's efforts towards a settlement of the national movement for swaraj.

The third part of the resolution states that notwithstanding the appreciation mentioned above, the Congress, having considered the outcome of the meeting between Gandhi, Pandit Motilal Nehru, Tej Bahadur Sapru and Jinnah, etc., and the Viceroy, considers that nothing is to be gained in the present circumstances by the Congress being represented at the Round Table Conference. The Congress delegates, therefore, ought not to attend the Round Table Conference, if there is one. Many others may go but we have to decide what we ought to do.

In a resolution passed at last year's Congress session at Calcutta, swaraj was defined, in political terms, as complete independence.

[1] For the draft of the resolution by Gandhiji, *vide* Resolution No. 2, "Draft Resolutions for A.I.C.C., Lahore", 26-12-1929. What follows is translated from Gandhiji's speech in Hindi.

Henceforth it becomes our immediate objective. That is why the Congress wants to declare that Nehru Report, which we wanted the British Government to accept, has lapsed since the time-limit fixed for its acceptance at Calcutta has come to an end. As the British Government has failed to accept it within a year the Nehru Report ceases to exist for the Congress. All this is covered in the resolution. The Congress, therefore, expects that all the organizations working under it shall do their utmost for the attainment of complete independence. The resolution goes on to say that since the Congress has subscribed to complete independence we have to work in. consistence with that creed. Accordingly, the Congress now resolves not to participate in the Assembly and Council elections, and hasenjoined upon the present Congress members of the Assemblies and Councils to resign their seats. The Congress has hereby made a vigorous appeal to the nation—to the masses—to devote themselves with zeal and vigour to the constructive programme of the Congress, viz., khadi, removal of untouchability, etc. Moreover, the Congress is empowering the All-India Congress Committee to launch a programme of civil disobedience—including non-payment of taxes—whenever and wherever it finds conditions favourable. I would like to tell you that this resolution authorizes total civil disobedience.

I do not want to speak any more on the resolution at present. You must have noticed that some ten or twelve amendments have been moved to it. I shall not take up your time any longer as I wish to give some rest to you as well as to myself. Please listen carefully to whatever is being said in opposition to this resolution. One word of caution I must utter. The first part of the resolution is just a statement—in no way does it amount to flattery of the Viceroy. In fact it is something separate. Another matter to be considered is the proposed resignations from the Assemblies and Councils. I would like you to listen to the debate bearing these things in mind. Actually this lengthy resolution is one organic whole and it should be discussed as such. The resolution seeks to implement the decision taken by the Congress at its Calcutta session. I leave it to you, having heard the arguments, to accept what is good and reject the rest. (Laughter)[1]

MR. PRESIDENT, SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

I hope the loudspeakers now work properly. (Laughter) Are they all right?

[VOICES]: Yes, yes.

[1] Then followed a debate in which Motilal Nehru, Madan Mohan Malaviya, N. C. Kelkar, S. C. Bose and others spoke. What follows is translated from Gandhiji's speech in Hindi.

To begin with, I owe an apology to you all. I could not be present here to hear the debate on the resolution, on the refutations and the amendments. It might be considered a discourtesy on my part, but I am sorry I could not help it. Since I was feeling very exhausted I retired with the kind permission of the President. Moreover, you know, one cannot resist nature and I had to attend nature's call. I have come back on being summoned. I am a little sorry that I could not listen to what my friends had to say on thissubject. Nevertheless, as I have read all the amendments and heard these friends argue in the Subjects Committee, I can imagine what they must have spoken.

Moreover, I do not believe in arguing and answering. If I simply say what I wish to convey that in itself serves my purpose to a considerable extent. When I said that the resolution should be read out my venerable friend, Pandit Motilal, explained it in Hindi and also gave its genesis. The President asked me to address you in English to enable the Tamil and Bengali friends also to follow me. I told the President that I had nothing new to say. As is already known to you, we had gone to the Viceroy as your message-bearers; and now I stand before you with his response. The Working Committee's reaction was put before the Subjects Committee and now it has come to you.

You must have noticed that this resolution consists of three parts—no doubt they could be further sub-divided. I wish to comment on all the three parts. The first part is the preamble or introduction. It reiterates 'complete independence'. The moment has arrived for realizing the resolve made earlier. The next part gives the reasons behind this reiteration. It spells out what the Viceroy did and how the Working Committee reacted. You must all have a clear grasp of the whole story. This resolution is like an edifice. If a brick is removed, the structure is weakened; if a wall is taken away the edifice collapses. It means that if you reject a part of this resolution you disfigure it—you topple its whole structure, you mutilate its form. If you understand this I ask you to kindly reject all the amendments.

Let us consider one point. Every year you appoint a Working Committee whose duty it is to decide what should be done in the interests of the Congress all the year round. It is left to the discretion of the Working Committee to frame an issue and thereafter place it before you. If the ultimate responsibility is left with the Working Committee it might result in harm. Hence it is open to you to amend its decision as you desire. The Working Committee places the resolution before the Subjects Committee and only after being scrutinized there it is brought to you. That is why I would request you not to make any change now in the resolution which is being moved in the names of Panditji and myself.

Let us see the issues posed here. One is in respect to the Viceroy. I emphatically say that votaries of independence will never renounce their fundamental principles, viz., their steadfastness, valour and courage. Courage does not mean arrogance. You ought not to oppose this part of the resolution. A truly courageous person willnot hesitate to pay a compliment even to his enemy. Granted that being a representative of the British Empire the Viceroy is our enemy—as we regard the British Empire our enemy so we do its representative—nevertheless even enemies are after all human beings. It is, therefore, a gesture which we owe to humanity as such—but the Viceroy wields authority and rules the nation. It is, however, our duty towards any and every human being. It is true that the Viceroy works for the interests of the Empire. Still whatever good efforts he has made have been appreciated here. Since this topic was discussed in the Subjects Committee I have spoken a few words here also on it.

I would like to speak on other amendments as well. According to one of them the phrase 'existing circumstances' should be deleted. In this respect I shall state most humbly that I do not imagine that our delegates need ever go to the proposed Conference. Whenever England is constrained to call the Conference we have in mind, it might become imperative for us to attend it, but not under the existing circumstances. I would like to clarify that such an eventuality can arise and our delegates may then attend a conference. If you take away the phrase 'existing circumstances' you will leave a void there. It is, therefore, not open for you to delete it.

Another issue discussed in the Subjects Committee was in regard to the Councils. My friend Jamnadas Mehta has argued that Gandhi has not said that Councils should be boycotted. To this I shall have to say that you are free to do what you like. However influential a person may be, he cannot issue commands. Who am I? Considering myself a humble servant of the nation, I only draft resolutions. Hence what authority do I have to issue commands? I can only offer advice. Of course, I tender it with all the good intentions and only after having gone into the pros and cons of the matter. I agree that you can gain as much as you desire from the Councils and the Assemblies for your near and dear ones and not only for them but for your country as well. You can have grants amounting to thousands of rupees for the schools. People keep domestic animals like dogs and bullocks, so were slaves kept at one time. These animals do get something to eat; even slaves are fed. But mind you, an animal is after all an animal. No doubt some benefit or other can be had from the Councils but if you aspire to attain complete independence what can you achieve there?

I for one have faith in the boycott of schools and courts as well.

I believe in the boycott of many other things. But as I can only givemy advice, I try to co-operate with others, hence I wish to take up only those steps which are approved by others. For example, Pandit Motilalji has gained some experience by working in the Councils. His achievements there have done some good to the nation. He, if not others, has today turned against the Councils. You are aware that at one time these friends resolved to enter the Councils and I agreed as I thought that since they were so keen about it they should have their way. But now they have had enough of it. You have assembled here in thousands. If from your experience you conclude that Councils are essential and but for them the attainment of swaraj will be delayed, then give up the council boycott by all means; but if your experience proves otherwise then please think it over. I believe that the Councils will not be of any good to us, so does Pandit Motilalji. Moreover, he has come to this conclusion after his own experience. Therefore if you are convinced of it please reject the amendments and retain the boycott.

Now let us come to the schools. It is being proposed why not boycott the schools also. I do desire that all the young boys should sacrifice themselves on the altar of the nation. At least those above sixteen should enter the arena, but do we have the atmosphere? I say it is not there. What sort of education are our boys receiving? Of what avail could that education be which is financed from the 25 crore rupees of the revenue derived from liquor and opium? But is it possible today to convince people about this? Years have rolled on and we have seen things for ourselves. Do you think that lawyers would boycott the courts and break stones or spin? Not a single lawyer would do so. Everyone wants to have good food, and money to spend. These lawyers argue that if they boycott the courts they would not be able to pull on. In 1920, when a call was given to boycott the courts, Pandit Motilal and Deshbandhu Chitta Ranjan Das responded, but not the other lawyers. The conditions are not ripe for undertaking these boycotts simultaneously, hence this omission. We do not say that it would be wrong on the part of the lawyers if they would leave their practice and proceed to the villages to participate in the constructive programme but we do feel that the requisite atmosphere has not been created yet.

Besides these, there are other amendments too, but I do not want to go into all of them. One topic, of course, is there, viz., civil disobedience. You want it and I also want it. I would like to say a few words about it. It has been suggested that civil disobedience should be launched throughout the length and breadth of India. I wish I could do so but I think the time is not yet. This task has

been delegated to the All-India Congress Committee but I do not consider that even the All-India Congress Committee will be able to initiate it under the present circumstances. For that you should be peaceful and calm—should have faith in the Congress creed. It is alleged that persons violating laws are criminals, but I declare that mere disobedience of laws does not constitute sin or crime; on the contrary it can have some virtue. But, mind you, only that person is entitled to disobey law who is calm and collected—who believes in the Congress creed, approves it and acts upon it. Today I find that everyone is for division. We do see nothing conducive to civil disobedience. Today I do not see the environment wherein we can challenge the Empire within a month or so. God willing we may do so. His power is great. But perhaps He knows that we are in error at the moment.

The young men who desire to overthrow the Empire by simply waving red pamphlets and flags will be of no help to us. To attain freedom we must cultivate strength. Several persons are of the opinion that strength is generated by drawing the sword, not by remaining peaceful. I prefer to say that we should calmly face the enemy's assault. Brave were those Sikhs who got themselves massacred in 1921, 1922. I admit and believe that cool courage is mightier than the sword. Cool courage can very well implement civil disobedience. If one thinks that complete independence cannot be achieved through peaceful means, it implies that he has no faith in cool courage. The moment we acquire cool courage, complete independence will be ours.

After all what does independence mean? Independence means freedom of the 7 lakh villages. Therefore I ask you to reject the amendments and pass the resolution.

Another amendment suggests the continuation of the *status quo* till February; let no decision be taken just now, it says, let an All-Parties Convention be summoned. I do not approve of this and I feel that it would produce no results. According to another amendment it is being proposed that along with civil disobedience we may set up a parallel government to frighten this Government. This amendment has been moved by Subhas Chandra Bose. At Calcutta too this proposition was mooted. I have great regard for Subhas Chandra Bose. But he considers me just an old man of sixty. It is true that I have grown weak and he can physically lift me up if he desires to. But I claim I am still young at heart. (Laughter) I can outdo younger men. That is why I claim that notwithstanding the belief that

one becomes Senile after sixty,I do not feel so at all. I think even today I can control young people. Supposing today I am offered a horse to ride, I shall gladly accept it—I shall not ride the horse myself (Laughter) but I shall lead it; for holding the reins Jawaharlal Nehru is there. (Laughter) Today the reins of the nation are in the hands of the youth. It is up to them to strive unitedly for the independence of the country. Let them not say afterwards that the opportunity was not offered to them. It is being alleged that I think too much of Jawaharlal. I do not deny it. I find that he is keen on work. It would be highly detrimental if you do not unite to work. The programme of parallel government will yield no benefit. We are not yet prepared for parallel government. We ought not to bite more than we can chew.

You have to carry on propaganda in 7,00,000 villages. So far nothing has been done there. It is hard to find even 7,00,000 Congress members in those villages. Our villagers are not even familiar with the name of the Congress. Under such circumstances instead of talking of parallel government we should work in the villages—should educate the villagers. Only after having accomplished this much can we think of parallel government. The hour is not ripe for it today.

Friends, I have had my say regarding the amendments. And having analysed the resolution I have made it clear to you what ought to be accepted. That is why I earnestly say that you are welcome to reject the resolution if you desire to do so but for heaven's sake do not mutilate it. It is far better to kill a handsome man than chop off his nose or ears. It is not decent to chop off ears and noses. (Laughter) It is wrong to do so. Do not try it. The thing has been placed before you; you may keep it if you like it or reject it if you don't.[1]

Now a few words to the friends from the south and to the friends from Bengal. Twice I got a note as I was coming here, from one of the delegates, that now it was high time that, in the Congress at least, nothing but the Rashtra Bhasha, Hindi or Hindustani, was spoken and heard. That is really a counsel of perfection. Years have rolled by and yet even delegates have not fitted themselves for conducting the proceedings in the national language. I hope that next time when we meet we will all come prepared to understand everything that may be said here in Hindustani; but today let us face facts as they are andunderstand that there are some who do not understand Hindustani, and for their sake I will say only a few words.

With reference to the amendments that have been moved in

[1] Gandhiji then spoke in English.

connection with this resolution, I want to use the same simile that I have used in Hindustani that this resolution has got to be considered as a whole, as a building or as a whole picture. He who destroys a part of the picture or a part of the building destroys the whole of it. You take off a few bricks here or a wall there from the building and it is bound to topple; it has become shaky; it is not the building that had been conceived by the architect. Similarly with a picture. You paint a picture and any interference with a part of it destroys the whole of the picture. The Working Committee gave all the skill that they were capable of commanding to the framing of the resolution. Then it went into the Subjects Committee and there it was sought to make it undergo all sorts of changes and now it has come to you. Now, it is really for you either to reject that proposition *in toto* or to accept it *in toto*, but not to interfere with it or disturb it. There are amendments, for instance, to strike out the phrase 'in the existing circumstances'. I assure you that it has a definite place there. It is time that we realized that some day or other we shall have to meet in conference with the enemy for the establishment of independence. The phrase is necessary. But it is equally true that that phrase makes it incumbent on the Congress not to be represented in a conference where independence is excluded.

Similarly there is the appreciation of the efforts of the Viceroy in connection with the swaraj settlement. Either you believe the testimony of your two chosen representatives or you reject that testimony. If you really believe that your representatives have told you the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth when they say: "The Viceroy seemed to us to mean well; he was courteous throughout; he patiently went through the whole thing as if two friends had met"—if you accept all this testimony, does it not behove you, is it not a matter of common courtesy, is it not your bounden duty to appreciate that effort, if, as I say, you believe their testimony? If, on the other hand, you do not believe their testimony, then you must hound them out of the Congress. It is not a sign of courage that one should be ashamed of saying what one feels; but it is a sign of decided courage when a man openly admits the good that even his enemy does. As a matter of fact a people that are pledged to the creed of non-violence will always go out of their way to perform an act of courtesy to the enemy, to think well ofthe enemy and to see hope where there seems to be utter darkness, because a man of truth and non-violence is always filled with hope. Hope begets hope, hope begets courage and hope therefore begets decisive action. Therefore as men pledged to a creed of this character it is your double duty to accept this statement in the original resolution and summarily to reject

the amendments that have been moved.

Then there is the question of boycott of the legislatures. I can only say with reference to it that it is supported by the testimony of some of those who went into the legislatures with high hopes, and amongst these towering above all is Pandit Motilal Nehru. When he who did brilliant work in the Assembly and commanded the respect even of his opponents says that we can make no further progress in the legislatures his testimony is final for me as it should be for you also. I have no personal experience of these legislatures, but I have got the fixed immovable conviction that what I used to say about the legislatures and the rest in 1924 applies even today, if possible with greater strength.

Again it is said that if you boycott the legislatures, why not boycott the schools and the law-courts? It is a perfectly consistent and logical proposition, but mankind is not governed always by logic and consistency alone. Sometimes mankind gets illogical; it vindicates its weakness as also its strength by being frankly and even brutally inconsistent. Inconsistent we are in boycotting the legislatures and not boycotting the schools and the law-courts and the post office and the railways and what not. But there comes our wisdom in understanding our limitations and the Working Committee did understand those limitations; and although the proposition was contested in the Subjects Committee, the majority of the Subjects Committee have come to the conclusion that we may no longer go to the legislatures, and that we have got strength enough to remain outside the legislatures. There is one stock argument, I know, that no matter what you do your places will never remain vacant; but it is not the idea that the places should remain vacant. If there is an opium den and if you imagine that fifty thousand people go there including yourselves, will we hesitate to empty that opium den because somebody else will go and occupy that place? I am quite certain that we will not. If we believe that the legislatures are played out for the nation and for the Congress, then it is wisdom for us to stay out. That others will occupy our places is not a relevant consideration. The relevant consideration is this: can we or can we not, in terms of complete independence, go to these legislatures or hasten our progress towards ourgoal by entering or remaining in thelegislatures? If you feel that we can hasten our progress towards independence by going into these legislatures, by all means go there. I will not talk to you now about the oath that has got to be taken in the legislatures, though for a man like me that also

becomes a conclusive argument.

As for the boycott of the schools and law-courts, as I have told you, I do not see today the atmosphere about us necessary for such boycott. If there is no such atmosphere, what is the use of putting in a clause which is not going to be operative, which is not going to be acted upon by the very people to whom it is addressed ?

Then there comes the question of civil disobedience. Civil disobedience is a thing which I swear by because I possibly cannot conceive India winning her freedom by criminal disobedience; and criminal disobedience means the bomb and the sword. I can conceive of freedom and independence being achieved by and on behalf of the starving millions scattered over the length and breadth of India, in the seven hundred thousand villages, by legitimate and peaceful means only. Disobedience to be absolutely effective has got to be always civil, that is always non-violent; and if you want that civil disobedience should come in the near future you will have to transform yourselves. You will then not have jugglery of thought; you will not then deceive yourselves and, unconsciously it may be, deceive the nation also into the belief that the bomb and non-violence can run on parallel lines. In a place like India where the mightiest organization is pledged to [non-] violence, if you really believe in your own creed, that is to say, if you believe in yourselves, if you believe in your nation, then it is civil disobedience that is wanted; and if it is civil disobedience that is wanted, then, you must observe the strictest discipline, you must see that no passion arises at least amongst ourselves, no ugly demonstrations of the sort that we have seen here and that we saw in the Subjects Committee; we must be calm, cool, collected, courageous, brave; and we must speak to the point, never obstruct. It does not matter a bit if every one of my propositions is lost; I must have toleration for those who have moved and supported these amendments. Then only shall I be able to vindicate my faith in non-violent organization. And so, if you really want civil disobedience in the near future, it is necessary for you to conduct the proceedings of the Congress and of the Subjects Committee in a manner behoving peaceful men. If you have got real love for freedom, then there is no room for irritation, mutual jealousies, quarrels; but there is room only for united, brave, calm and collected action. Hence I ask you with all the strength that I can possibly command to carry this resolution with acclamation because this is the central resolution of this session. Let it not be said in the world that we, who today pledge ourselves to

independence, pledge ourselves with divided counsels, that we are a house divided against itself and therefore bound to fall. Let us go forth to the whole world that we rose to a man to vindicate our freedom and that we pledged ourselves to attain that freedom by the quickest possible manner. Hence I ask you to reject summarily the resolution of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose also. I know that he is a great worker in Bengal; he has shone in many a field; he was the commander-in-chief of our forces in Bengal. He has moved a proposition which is not an amendment, it is really a substantive resolution to be substituted for the original resolution. It is a good proposition, I do not deny that; but it goes far beyond my resolution. It suggests a parallel government. If you think that you can have a parallel government today then let me tell you that the Congress flag does not at present fly even in one thousand villages. All honour to those who favour this amendment but it is not bravery, it is not prudence, it is not wisdom. You cannot establish freedom by the mere passing of a resolution. You will establish freedom not by words but by deeds. Therefore, consider whether you can establish a parallel government today, whether you can carry out all the boycotts mentioned in that resolution. We are not declaring independence, mind you. In Madras we declared independence as our goal. Here we go a step further and say that independence is not a distant goal but it is our immediate objective. But Subhas Chandra Bose wants you to go a step further still. I would like to follow him through and through if I considered parallel government a present possibility. Parallel government means our own law-courts, our own schools and colleges, etc. If you think that we have the ability to do today all the things enumerated in Subhas Babu's resolution you should pass it and reject my proposition. But I suggest to you that we have not that ability today and therefore I ask you to think with me that the step suggested by the Working Committee is the longest step that we can take today; a step further and it lands you in a pitfall. That is my certain conviction and hence I urge you with all the strength that I can command to carry this resolution without the change of a comma.[1]

Report of the 44th Indian National Congress, Lahore

[1] The resolution was put to vote and carried.

160. LETTER TO BIJON KUMAR SINHA

[*1929*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

The books I can recommend are: Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of Heaven Is Within You, What to do,* Edwin Arnold's *Song Celestial,* Max Muller's *What Can India Teach Us?*

If you have not read *Ramayana* you should read it too.

Yours,

BIJON KUMAR SINHA

UNDER-TRIAL PRISONER

BORSTEL JAIL

LAHORE

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/26

161. A LETTER

[*1929*]

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I cannot endorse the appeal you propose to make for a new journalistic venture. I do not know how *Liberty* is being conducted. But if it is not well conducted the remedy is persuasion and not a counter-enterprise. In my opinion we have too many newspapers in the country at present. Such being my opinion please put me out of your mind.

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/134

162. LETTER TO RUSTOMJI

[*1929*]

BHAISHRI RUSTOMJI,

I do not believe that the observance of *brahmacharya* in one's relations with one's wife is necessary in order to build character. I do believe, however, that for one who wants to dedicate himself

[1] This and the following items have been placed as in the source.

completely to service, such extreme *brahmacharya* is essential. For the purpose of building character, ceaseless search for truth and non-violence and following them in practice are sufficient. Everything else is included in that.

Every human being has or should have only one aim, and that is the knowledge of his Creator or realization of the Self. Service of the country is not an independent aim, but without it realization of the Self is impossible.

I find great peace in observing silence. My work becomes cleaner and easier. I can be more introspective. Silence is very helpful in controlling anger.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/12

163. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

[*1929*]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have not corrected the whole of your letter as there was no time. Shouldn't the letter for you be dispatched on Monday?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 11269

164. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

[*1929*]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Herewith the common letter[1], and your letter after corrections.

The *sh* at the end of a verb indicating tense is always palatal. You will improve your handwriting quickly if you write slowly with your pen and write big letters.

Do no grudge the expense on thing that may be necessary to improve your health. Do not be impatient either.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 11271

[1] For the Ashram women

165. A LETTER

[*1929*]

Our aspiration is to reach the state of nothingness. Unless we destroy the 'I' in us, where will 'He' come and sit? How can two occupy one place?

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/81

166. A LETTER

[*1929*]

I hope you have calmed down now. You have to live long and serve and through service have to realize God. Remember the words of Arjuna: "My delusion has gone and I have regained knowledge of my true self."[1] When you also gain full knowledge of your self, delusion will pass away and, instead of trying to conquer your body by fasting, you will have faith and realize the self by serving and also be of great help to others in their quest for self-realization.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/76

167. A LETTER

[*1929*]

CHI. . . . ,

You need not apologize. It will be enough if we realize that such mistakes are an indication of our state of ignorance. No one is wholly free of this ignorance. All we can do is to try to free ourselves of it.

I understand the change. It will be enough if you do everything after careful thought. Do not let your improved health have a set-back. Remember what I have told you. You should not do any service which causes you mental suffering. Even out of fear of hurting my feeling you should not take up any burden beyond your capacity. I am not easily hurt and whatever pain I feel is only momentary. Even that I should not feel.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/53

[1] *Bhagavad Gita,* XVIII, 73

168. LETTER TO JAGAT NARAIN LAL

[*1929*]

Krishna was the servant of His servants. He was always immersed in work of service without the least slackness. No task was too small for Him. One can truly worship Him only by following Him.

PT. JAGAT NARAIN LAL

'MAHAVI', PATNA

From a copy of the Hindi: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/119

169. LETTER TO GOVIND BALLABH PANT

[*1929*]

DEAR GOVIND BALLABHJI,

I have your letter. As for Sitalakhet, I shall find out about it when I have some leisure. There is no hurry.

As regards the Prem Vidyalaya, I have sent a draft for Rs. 2,000 to Bhai Har Govind Pant, as I had said I would. I had intended to send it to you; but I sent it to Har Govind because you are mostly touring and away from the Prem Vidyalaya, while Har Govind is at hand. I assume that the conditions I have sent to the press will be conveyed to you by Har Govind. After seeing those conditions, you may do what you consider proper. I hope you will visit the Prem Vidyalaya now and then and take more interest in it. On that assumption alone I have sent the money.

From a copy of the Hindi: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/130

170. A LETTER

[*1929*]

It is not proper for a man devoted to duty to be disheartened in any situation.

We must consider death as our friend. Why should we grieve when our dear ones embrace a friend? We have got to give up fear of death.

From a copy of the Hindi: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 35277/72

171. A LETTER

[*1929*]

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. All is well if you are content at heart. I am afraid of being disappointed by being hasty in Sodepur. We shall find an opening by proceeding slowly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/59

172. A LETTER

[*1929*]

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I want to see you restored by whatever means. Do not work beyond your capacity.

I shall try to regard Sodepur as I do Sabarmati. I do not yet so regard it because I doubt if the experiments that have to be conducted at Sabarmati and Wardha can be conducted at Sodepur. I do not intend ruining Sodepur by carrying on those experiments there. Sodepur exists for khadi; Sabarmati is meant for experimenting with truth, etc. This should not give you the idea that Sabarmati is superior. I have merely pointed out the fields of activities of both. I do hope that theexperiments at Sabarmati will also be carried out at Sodepur. But all that depends on God. Whatever happens at Sodepur I regard you as an inmate of the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/56

173. A LETTER

[*1929*]

I have your letter.

A devoted wife serves her husband best by being perfect and free from blemish.

You cannot save from your scholarship and send the amount to

your in-laws. But you can earn something by doing some work in the Ashram and send it to them.

You have done well in having stopped visiting Raghunath. You should not even mentally desire to meet him. Such restraint cannot be forced.

From a copy of the Hindi: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/73

174. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
[*1929*][1]

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I have committed a great blunder. Driven by a particular thought I just said that you should go to Calcutta. By all means, go to any place where you can find your peace of mind. I have had long arguments with you. I have prevented you from doing many things. We must give up the habit of indulging so much in arguments. In that state of mind I just told you to go to Calcutta if you so wished. But I cannot give you such a permission. It is one thing if you wish to go and go. But it is another if I happily permit you to go. Not only am I not in favour of your going to Calcutta, but I am against it. Considering my view, take an indepedent decision. It would not hurt me in any way. My reason for opposing your going to Calcutta is as under :

I have believed that there is no other city in India as wicked as Calcutta. The atrocities that are perpetrated in Calcutta can hardly be witnessed in any other city of the world. This comparison may be somewhat exaggerated. My knowledge about other cities is incomplete. But I have no doubt at all about the cities of India. In Calcutta, thousands of innocent lambs and goats are slaughtered in the name of religion. Such a thing is done nowhere else in India. Everyone, big and small, the learned and the foolish, are a party to this slaughter. No one stops to think about it even for a moment. The enlightened Calcutta does not even protest against it. And in this so-called age of reform, this cruel act is being performed day after day. Stand anywhere in the Bhawanipur area of Calcutta early in the morning and you will see flocks of sheep around. I have witnessed that sight with my own eyes. Right from that moment, I had decided that I would never agree to any suggestion of my settling down at Calcutta. Again, in Calcutta, cows and buffaloes are milched after

[1] From the contents. In 1929 Gandhiji returned to Ahmedabad from Calcutta.

blowing. This process of blowing is so cruel that I cannot even describe it. This time I witnessed that too with my own eyes. Such cruel things always go on in Calcutta. The very thought that you should spend your life in that city and waste your time by engaging yourself in futile business is terrible for me. It seems to me that you cannot chalk out an ideal life from it. Only some divine creature may remain unaffected in spite of living in such hell. I do not take it for granted that you belong to that category. Think a thousand times about what you wish to do in life and then decide. This is all I wish to say.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy : Sabarmati Museum, Ahmedabad

175. LETTER TO RAMDAS AND NIRMALA GANDHI

Silence Day [SATYAGRAHASHRAM, *1929*][4]

CHI. RAMDAS AND NIMU,

You may forget me, but not Ba. She is deeply grieved and crying out her heart. She imagines all kinds of fearful things to have befallen you: 'Could Nimu be ill, or something have befallen Ramdas?'

When I, a baby in the cradle;
Started crying, who came
running to soothe me?[5]

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

176. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE, A.I.C.C.-I

January 1, 1930

Mahatma Gandhi, in supporting the resolution[1], said:

I have travelled throughout the country more than anybody else.

MR. JAMNADAS MEHTA: I think except Seth Jamnalal Bajaj.

MAHATMAJI: I do not think there is any exception.

MR. JAMNADAS MEHTA: But Jamnalalji claims that.

MAHATMAJI: I refute this charge. I have travelled throughout the country in the third class and have mixed with the poor more than anyone else and I have seen with my own eyes how the poor suffer in winter. This proposal has been placed before you after the most careful consideration of all the months of the year. During the month suggested there is no rain, no malaria or any other epidemic or diseases. It may be said that we get railway concession during the Christmas. But I think it is immaterial. And we hope to be in control of the railways before long. (Laughter) Similarly the question that we will not get students as our volunteers seems to be also immaterial, because besides students there are lakhs of people who are non-students and I hope these poor men will take part in the Congress. The months of February and March are the best months for the poor from the point of view of convenience and cheapness. I very much realize the remark that we are Xmas politicians. Henceforth: we want to dispose of our business most promptly and I think I need not speak much on this resolution.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-1-1930

[1] Which read: Inasmuch as the Congress is intended to be representative of the poor masses and inasmuch as the holding of the Congress at the end of December involves a very considerable expense to the poor people in providing for extra clothing for themselves and is otherwise inconvenient to them, the date of holding the Congress session is hereby altered to some date in February or March to be fixed by the Working Committee in consultation with the Provincial Committee of the Province concerned,

177. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE, A.I.C.C.-II

January 1, 1930

Mahatmaji then moved the resolution of the Working Committee repudiating the national debt and declaring that at the time of final settlement of India's national debt a tribunal would be appointed to judge which debt India should pay and would pay according to the decision of that tribunal.

This Congress is of opinion that the financial burdens directly or indirectly imposed on India by the foreign administration are such as a free India cannot bear and cannot be expected to bear. This Congress, whilst reaffirming the resolution passed at the Gaya Congress in 1922, therefore records its opinion for the information of all concerned that every obligation and concession to be inherited by independent India will be strictly subject to investigation by an independent tribunal, and every obligation, every concession, no matter how incurred or given, will be repudiated if it is not found by such tribunal to be just and justifiable.[1]

The resolution was unanimously passed.

MR. SANYAL: May I know who would constitute this tribunal?

Mahatmaji, amidst loud laughter, said:

If you want this information you may correspond in the matter. I cannot interpret it. Independent India would do that.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-1-1930 and Young India, 20-2-1930

178. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE, A.I.C.C.-III

January 1, 1930

Mahatmaji in replying to the opposition said:

I believe you will realize the real significance of this resolution[2].You all know Pandit Motilal Nehru had come to Lahore

[1] The resolution is reproduced from *Young India*, 20-2-1930.

[2] It read: In view of the lapse of the Nehru constitution it is unnecessary to declare the policy of the Congress regarding communal questions, the Congress believing that in an Independent India the communal question can only be solved on a strictly national basis. But as the Sikhs in particular and the Muslims and other minorities in general had expressed dissatisfaction over the solution of communal questions proposed in the Nehru Report, this Congress assures the Sikhs, the Muslims and other minorities that no solution thereof in any future constitution will be acceptable to the Congress that does not give full satisfaction to the parties concerned.

some days before this National Week and he came here only for two reasons, namely, for clearing the misunderstanding entertained by the Sikhs and for deciding the Punjab Congress dispute. To clear the misunderstanding, Panditji, myself and Dr. Ansari had been to see Sardar Kharag Singh, the Sikh leader, about it. Their grievance was that they were not properly treated in the Nehru Report. We discussed with the Sikhs[1] and gave them the assurance that in future if any national problem is solved on the communal basis we shall satisfy them and other minorities. At the same time I say that in an Independent India every problem is to be solved on a national basis and not on a communal basis. Still since these brothers of ours have been offended by the Nehru Report I want to satisfy them and bring them into our fold. I do not say that the moment we pass this resolution this pandal will be full with Sikhs and Muslims. If they come let us welcome them, and if they do not come still we are to carry on our battle for independence. Even if there are only five men, still we five are to attain independence.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-1-1930

179. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

[LAHORE,
January 1, 1930][2]

What is the difference between the Non-co-operation Movement of 1921 and the present movement?

The present movement is directed towards independence, whereas that of 1921 was directed towards the redress of the Khilafat and Punjab wrongs and the attainment of swaraj within the Empire if possible and without if necessary. The boycott is confined this time only to the legislatures, but civil disobedience including the no-tax campaign is common to both, as also truth and non-violence.[3]

The civil disobedience will be of the Bardoli type?

You mean the satyagraha of 1928? Yes, somewhat of that type; only in Bardoli the people fought for the redress of a specific local grievance.

How about the other boycotts?

It may not be necessary to resort to them if we can place civil

[1] *Vide* "Discission with Sikh Leaders", 27-12-1929.

[2] A report in *The Statesman*, 5-1-1930, giving portions from the interview, says it was given just before Gandhiji left Lahore, that is, on January 1, 1930.

[3] What follows appeared also in *The Statesman*, 5-1-1930.

disobedience on a proper basis.

When do you expect to succeed?

It is more than a human being can say.

Assuming that there is Chauri Chaura again, would you call off civil disobedience ?

I am trying to conceive a plan whereby no suspension need take place by reason of any outside disturbance—a plan whereby civil disobedience once started may go on without interruption until the goal is reached.

Have you any such plan?

I have nothing concrete before my mind at the present moment. But I think it should not be impossible to devise such a plan. I am going to leave no stone unturned. It is likely that although one maytake all the safeguards that it is humanly possible to do, an outbreak may occur. The plan I am trying to think out is to prevent a discontinuance in case such an event happens.

But supposing you see your mistake?

Well, then, I shall have strength enough to atone for it.

But if you cannot hit upon a plan such as you are thinking of, what would you do?

If I do not succeed in discovering such a formula, and if there is a recurrence of Chauri Chaura, I should not hesitate to stop the movement.

Young India, 30-1-1930

180. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO MIRABEHN

[On or after *January 1, 1930*][1]

What are your impressions of the A. I. C. C. meeting?

Considering the revolutionary character of the two resolutions,[2] the criticism was restrained and the voting showed an extraordinary sense of responsibility and appreciation of facts. The attendance too was quite good.

From the original: C.W. 5440. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9442

[1] From the reference to "the revolutionary character of the two resolutions" which were adopted during the A.I.C.C. meeting held in Lahore from December 26, 1929 to January 1, 1930

[2] *Vide* "Draft Resolutions for A.I.C.C., Lahore", 26-12-1929.

181. THE CULT OF THE BOMB

There is so much violence in the atmosphere immediately surrounding us, politically minded part of India, that a bomb thrown here and a bomb thrown there causes little perturbation and probably there is even joy over such an event in the hearts of some. If I did not know that this violence was like froth coming to the surface in an agitated liquid, I should probably despair of non-violence succeeding in the near future in giving us the freedom which we are all violently-minded and non-violently minded people yearning for. Happily I have a certain belief based upon ceaseless experience during my tour in the heart of India for the past twelve months very nearly, that the vast masses who have become conscious of the fact that they must have freedom are untouched by the spirit of violence. In spite therefore of sporadic violent outbursts such as the bomb explosion under the Viceregal train I feel that non-violence for our political battle has come to stay. It is because of my increasing faith in the efficacy of non-violence in political warfare and the possibility of its being practised by masses of people that I propose to reason with those who may not be so much saturated with violence as to be beyond the pale of reason.

Let us think then for a moment what would have happened if the Viceroy had been seriously injured or killed. There certainly would have been no meeting of 23rd ultimo and therefore no certainty as to the course to be adopted by the Congress. That surely would have been, to say the least, an undersirable result. Fortunatelyfor us the Viceroy and his party escaped unhurt, and with great self-possession he went through the day's routine as if nothing had happened. I know that those who have no regard even for the Congress, who hope nothing from it and whose hope lies only through violence, will not be affected by this speculative reasoning. But the others, I hope, will not fail to realize the truth of the argument and to put together several important deductions that can be drawn from the hypothetical case put by me.

Take again the net result of political violence practised in this country. Every time violence has occurred we have lost heavily, that is to say, military expenditure has risen. As against this, I am willing to put the Morley-Minto reforms, the Montagu reforms and the like. But an ever widening circle of politicians is now beginning to realize that they have been like toys given to us against heavy economic burden. Whilst paltry concessions have been made, a few more Indians have

found employment under Government, the masses in whose name, and for whose sake, we want freedom, have had to bear greater burdens without having any return whatsoever therefor. If we would only realize that it is not by terrorizing the foreigner that we shall gain freedom, but by ourselves shedding fear and teaching the villager to shed his own fear that we shall gain true freedom, we would at once perceive that violence is suicidal.

Then consider its reaction on ourselves. From violence done to the foreign ruler, violence to our own people whom we may consider to be obstructing the country's progress is an easy natural step. Whatever may have been the result of violent activities in other countries and without reference to the philosophy of non-violence, it does not require much intellectual effort to see that if we resort to violence for ridding society of the many abuses which impede our progress, we shall but add to our difficulties and postpone the day of freedom. The people unprepared for reform because unconvinced of their necessity will be maddened with rage over their coercion, and will seek the assistance of the foreigner in order to retaliate. Has not this been happening before our eyes for the past many years of which we have still painfully vivid recollections?

Take now the positive side of the argument. When, that is in 1920, non-violence came to be part of the Congress creed[1], the Congress became a transformed body as if by magic. Mass awakening came no one knows how. Even remote villages were stirred. Manyabuses seemed to have been swept away. The people became conscious of their power. They ceased to fear authority. The system of *begar*[2] vanished like mist in Almora and several other parts of India, wherever the people had become awakened to a sense of the power that lay within themselves. Such as it was, it was their freedom that they had attained by their own strength. It was true swaraj of the masses attained by the masses. If the march of non-violence had not been interrupted by events culminating in Chauri Chaura, I make bold to say that we would have been today in full possesssion of swaraj. No one has been found to dispute this proposition. But many have shaken their heads as they have said, 'But you can't teach non-violence to the masses. It is only possible for individuals and that too in rare cases.' This is, in my opinion, a gross self-deception. If mankind was not habitually non-violent, it would have been self-destroyed ages ago. But in the duel between forces of violence and non-violence the latter

[1] *Vide* "Speech on New Congress Creed, Nagpur", 28-12-1920.

[2] Forced unpaid labour

have always come out victorious in the end. The truth is that we have not had patience enough to wait and apply ourselves whole-heartedly to the spread of non-violence among the people as a means for political ends.

We are now entering upon a new era. Our immediate objective and not our distant goal is complete independence. Is it not obvious that if we are to evolve the true spirit of independence amongst the millions, we shall only do so through non-violence and all it implies? It is not enough that we drive out Englishmen by making their lives insecure through secret violence. That would lead not to independence but to utter confusion. We can establish independence only by adjusting our differences through an appeal to the head and the heart, by evolving organic unity amongst ourselves, not by terrorizing or killing those who, we fancy, may impede our march, but by patient and gentle handling, by converting the opponent, we want to offer mass civil disobedience. Everybody owns that it is a certain remedy. Everybody understands that 'civil' here means strictly non-violent, and has it not often been demonstrated that mass civil disobedience is an impossibility without mass non-violence and without mass discipline? Surely it does not require an appeal to our religious faith to convince us that the necessity of our situation, if nothing else, demands non-violence of the limited type I have indicated. Let those who are not past reason then cease either secretly or openly to endorse activities such as this latest bomb outrage. Rather let them openly and heartily condemn these outrages, sothat our deluded patriots may for want of nourishment to their violent spirit realize the futility of violence and the great harm that violent activity has every time done.

Young India, 2-1-1930

182. HINDI IN THE CONGRESS

It is our strange misfortune that we are not as familiar with the name "Mahasabha" as we are with the name "Congress". When the name Mahasabha is mentioned some take it to mean the Hindu Mahasabha and others take it for some other organization. During my tour of the United Provinces when I used the word Mahasabha for Congress I was told no one would recognize Mahasabha as the Congress. This is the influence of habit. We have got into the habit of using an English word; therefore when someone uses a Hindi word we find it difficult to understand.

Therefore, even though it is a rule that only the Hindi language

should be used in the Mahasabha, it is English that is largely used. The Mahasabha notices are generally printed in English. In the Mahasabha office too English is generally used. Correspondence is carried on in English. In the lanes of Lajpat Nagar[1] wherever one looked, one found only English signboards. All this is lamentable. But the remedy for this malady is not rigorous enforcement of the rules. The remedy is love for the national language in the masses and the resultant effort. If the public wishes, it can insist on all the business of the Mahasabha being transacted in Hindi. The fact is, there is neither sufficient awakening nor enthusiasm nor love for their language in the masses.

There is one great practical difficulty in running the Mahasabha office in Hindi. President Jawaharlal Nehru has drawn the attention of the members to it. As I have already written last time,[2] in the United Provinces, Bihar and other Hindi-speaking provinces there are very few people who are willing to take up this work. Those very few who are or who can, are engaged in their own work. Be it in the Mahasabha office or in offices elsewhere, very few Hindi-speaking people are available for national work. In these circumstances it is not surprising that the work of the Mahasabha is done mostly in English only in spite of the rule about the use of the national language.

Ten years ago all the work was done only in English. Now there is considerable change in the desirable direction; even then, much remains to be done. All debates and discussions in the Mahasabha should be conducted only in the national language. And there should be no need for their English translation. Two difficulties crop up in achieving this. One is that, members from Bengal, Tamilnad and other such provinces understand very little Hindi and the second is that, the speaker who wants to say something wishes to explain what he means to all. If he knows both the languages he gains his end by arguing in both of them. To overcome these difficulties there are two ways. One is that, when any member begins to speak in English, he and the President should be reminded of this. Secondly, the Bengali and Tamil brothers and sisters should declare that they have no need for English. Their duty is to learn Hindi or get the sense of the proceedings from their neighbours. The change of heart in the Bengali, Tamil and other brethren depends entirely on the love, determination and courtesy of the Hindi-speaking people. Without courtesy no work can be done. Force and compulsion will not secure for Hindi its rightful place.

[From Hindi]
Hindi Navajivan, 2-1-1930

[1] The venue of the Congress session in Lahore
[2] *Vide* "Letter to a Friend", 2-2-1921.

183. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Thursday [*January 2*][1]*, 1930*

CHI. MANI,

I have your two letters. I am writing this in a moving train. Do resolutely whatever you can. If the situation referred to in your second letter arises, you should go to Vile Parle or to Wardha. If you come and see me, I will explain this more fully and you will be comforted. Come on Tuesday or Wednesday, so that you will be able to bring more news from that end. Do what you can with the help of even a few women as co-workers.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MANIBEHN PATEL

NADIAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 70

184. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

DELHI,

January 3, 1930

DEAR MOTILALJI,

In Lahore there was no time to talk or to read the newspaper or to think of anything else but the next hour's work. Here, in Delhi, on a cattle farm five miles away I saw the *Hindustan Times* and the Kelkar manifesto. It struck me immediately that it was absolutely necessary to have from you a brief statement to show why the boycott of Legislatures is an absolute necessity. The sooner you issue it to the Press, the better it would be. Jawahar surpassed all expectations. Even the critics were silenced. If we can but take some decisive step and come to grips this year it will be a fitting finish to the presidential year so well begun.

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S. N. 32579/35

[1] This was the only Thursday on which Gandhiji travelled by train before his arrest in 1930.

185. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 3, 1930

DEAR SUBHAS BABU,

You are becoming more and more an enigma to me. I want you to live up to the certificate that Deshbandhu once gave me for you. He pictured you to me as a young man of brilliant parts, singleness of purpose, great determination and above pettiness. Your conduct in Calcutta[1] therefore grieved me, but I reconciled myself to its strangeness. But in Lahore[2] you became inscrutable and I smelt petty jealousy. I do not mind stubborn opposition. I personally thrive on it and learn more from opponents than from friends. I therefore always welcome sincere andintelligent opposition. But in Lahore you became an obstructionist. In connection with the Bengal dispute, in your writings to the Press you were offensive and the discourteous, impatient walk-out nearly broke my heart. You should have bravely recognized the necessity and the propriety of your and other friends' exclusion. It was not aimed at you, Prakasam[3] or Srinivasa Iyengar. It was meant merely to strengthen the hands of the young President by providing him with a cabinet that would be helpful in carrying forward the national work.[4]

There was no question surely of distributing patronage, of placating personal interest, however high they may be. The question was one of devising measures for achieving independence in the shortest possible time. How could you, having no faith in the programme, or Prakasam, with philosophic contempt for the present programme, or Srinivasa Iyengar, with his unfathomable unbelief in Jawaharlal and Pandit Motilalji, forward the nation's work? But all the three could help by becoming sympathetic critics offering sound suggestions along their own lines. There was certainly no undemocratic procedure. If the putting of the names *en bloc* did not

[1] In 1928.
[2] In 1929.
[3] T. Prakasam
[4] For the Working Committee two independent lists had been prepared, one by Motilal Nehru in consultation with Gandhiji and the other by Jamnalal Bajaj. The addressee and Srinivasa Iyenger, along with a few others, staged a walk-out against this procedure as they wanted the Working Committee to be formed by election.

commend itself to the Committee, the Committee could have so expressed its opinion and that would have been also a fair measure of the strength of your party.[1] But I do not want to continue the argument. I simply write this to ask you to retrace your steps and otherwise also prove to me and those whose co-operation you would seek, the truth of the certificate issued by Deshbandhu. I do not want to change your view about anything, but I do want you to change your conduct in enforcing those views.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S. N. 32579/37

186. LETTER TO S. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 3, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

I was deeply distressed over your walk-out and the whole of your uncertain behaviour. Uncertainty there always has been behind your acts, but I had not detected before any unworthiness about them. When we first met your sincerity and high aspiration attracted me towards you. That attraction was increasing with closer contact. How is it that it has been decreasing of late and reached almost the ebbing point? I do not mind difference of opinion, but it would cut me if my regard for you were to be diminished. Please correct me if I have erred. If I have not, I would have you retrace your steps and be what you were when I first knew you. Political life need not debase us.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10754. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] After the Congress session at Lahore the addressee and S. Srinivasa Iyengar announced the formation of a new party, the Congress Democratic Party.

187. LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI

DELHI,
January 3, 1930

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

I see that we are definitely moving in opposite directions, but that should not mean any breach of friendship, though it was born of political co-operation. You must therefore not empty your pocket of me altogether and I want you to make me a promise always to write to me in the frankest manner possible whenever you feel I am wrongin my views or in the expression of them.

Yours sincerely,

[PS.]

Please pass it on to Mohd. Ali.

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S. N. 32579/38

188. LETTER TO S. SATYAMURTI

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 3, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

It would be wrong of me to conceal from you the grief which I have expressed to others over your highly ungentlemanly, unpatriotic and uncalled-for conduct on the 1st instant at the A.I.C.C. meeting.[1] I do not mind opposition even though it may be merely destructive, but I do mind want of manners, which I am afraid you were betrayed into on the very day when you would be expected to be restrained and helpful, even though you did not believe in the programme or even the procedure.

Yours sincerely,

S. SATYAMURTI

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/39

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Ramniklal Modi", 13-11-1929.

189. LETTER TO SHUAIB QURESHI

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 3, 1930

MY DEAR SHUAIB,

I was grieved that you did not have the chat to which I had looked forward in Lahore. You must now go even out of your way, if necessary, and come to Sabarmati and have at least a day there. I was delighted at the news Mohd. Ali gave me.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/40

190. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

DELHI,
January 3, 1930

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. The situation is such that Jamnalalji cannot go there for the present. But if at least ten acres of land[1] with water on it was available near Almora things could be managed. I hope all of you are well.

What could I write about Lahore? I am dictating this at Delhi.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
TARA HOUSE
ALMORA, U. P.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] For Gandhi Seva Sangh

191. YOUNG JUDGE

A young judge has put me the following question:[1]

This question refers to the time when Gujarat was ravaged by floods and a large number of young men and other volunteers were working hard under Sardar Vallabhbhai's guidance. That a man reaps as he sows is an immutable principle which admits of no exception. The above extract is an example of how the principle can be misinterpreted. Many persons think in this way, and the question deserves consideration because I know that the correspondent has not advanced his plea merely for argument's sake. The maxim "Reap as you sow" is true for all times. Holy books in Sanskrit state the same thing, and so does the Bible. Nowhere does the maxim imply that we are to inflict on the doer what his deed deserves. The present correspondent, however, has put such a construction on the original sentence, and that has led to a terrible misunderstanding of its meaning. When we say 'man reaps as he sows', we mean that God will bestow on him his due and not that any of us might sit in God's place and mete out justice to the doer according as he thinks of the latter's deed. If we had the right to judge a man's deed and reward or punish him as the case may demand, there would be nothing left for anyone to do for anyone else. In that case, the idea of service would lose all meaning. If that idea should disappear, the world would perish. But the fact is that the world has not perished. Countless men have been rendering service to one another, correcting one another's mistakes and even forgiving one another. From this we see that the meaning of the great maxim in question is not what the correspondent conceives it to be, but it is what I have suggested above.

We do not fully know how to judge a man's action. With limited experience, we can only draw an inference about a given action. Each one of us often draws a different inference. The seven blind men in the fable came each to his own conclusion according to the elephant's limb that he could feel. Thus, though each was true in respect of his own experience of the elephant, all the seven remained ignorant and none could form a correct idea of the elephant. Similarly, thejustice we mete out is the justice of the blind and is therefore imperfect. Hence, it is our religious duty always to hunger after service and find fulfilment in only serving one another. To reward or punish is God's

[1] This is not translated here. The correspondent had objected to relief work in Gujarat.

exclusive right, for He sees the past, the present and the future. There certainly exists some sentient Power that pervades this world, to whose tunes we dance, no matter whether we call the Power God, or Lord, or describe him as a principle, or whether or not we apply any epithet to it. That Power alone rewards or punishes us as our actions might deserve. In any case, we are not the Power; and so, instead of saying 'Let us give a man what he deserves', we say 'A man gets what he deserves.' It was from the realization of man's imperfection that there arose the family of virtues, such as service, generosity, love, forgiveness and non-violence. We do not, therefore, know whether the calamity suffered by Gujarat was the result of people's sin or goodness in this life or another. But certainly, those who participated in the alleviation of the suffering have done their duty and found self-fulfilment to the extent they did so. If they had put a wrong construction on the law of karma and kept to their homes with hands folded, they should have shown themselves ignorant of duty.

I hope the correspondent will now see that his statement was not merely one-sided, but was entirely mistaken, and will take care not to commit such a mistake again.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-1-1930

192. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

January 6, 1930

CHI. RAMDAS,

We arrived here on Saturday night[1] without any mishap during the journey. Write and tell me how you are keeping. Is Lakshmidasbhai's dietetic experiment still going on? How is Jivandas? Has he returned? If not, where is he? Ba will leave tomorrow for Vijapur. Nimu is there, and so is Manu, as also Kashi. She is therefore keen to go there. Manilal has gone to Akola. He will return with Sushila in a few days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

193. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

January 7, 1930

BHAISHRI HARIBHAU,

. . .[2] and . . .[3] had a long talk with me and said all that they wished to say. There is little worth in . . . I did not form a good opinion about . . . About . . ., I formed a better opinion. . . . admitted that they had become, and remained, fairly enslaved by physical attraction for each other. That is their condition even now.... says that they felt attracted while helping each other with innocent motives. ... kept silent on this subject. She agreed to let herself be medically examined. But I doubt very much if, when produced before a doctor, she would not run away from him. . . . says that they did not go as far as the ultimate act, being held back by shame at the thought of their guilt becoming known to you and me. I met . . .'s father. I infer from my talk with him that he may not be aware of this illicit relationship. I did not, however, think it necessary to ask him about it and make sure. I was not much impressed by him. I see from one of your articles that you believe it as proved that he is not . . . 's father. In the second article, I see that you have changed your opinion. . . . says that he is

[1] On January 4, 1930, after attending the annual session of the Indian National Congress at Lahore

[2] The names have been omitted.

[3] *ibid*

her father. I have given my decision below after considering all the facts.

l. . . . should go and live as . . .'s wife.

2. If she does not wish to do that and if she can keep herself pure, she may observe *brahmacharya*.

3. If she cannot overcome the desire for sex-gratification, she may marry some other young man.

4. Her relation with . . . ought to have been kept pure till they were married. Though both of them have claimed that their relation has remained pure, I do not believe that it is moral. If, however, the two cannot control their desire for gratification, they may openly have relations with each other. But they will not have my blessings or my consent if they adopt this course. Nor can they remain in any institution with which I am closely connected. I am afraid . . . will not be able to live without . . . I believe that she gets hysteria because of her craving for sex-gratification. . . . 's touch being impure, it increases her hysteria.

You may now act as you think best.

I have not revised this after dictating.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 6069. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

194. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 8, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have a letter from you after many days. Even though I am in the Congress, I can sleep over not only postcards but even letters from my sons and daughters. What is your weight? How is your health? If you are not regular in writing your diary, try to be so and also describe in it your thoughts and feelings. One who does not conceal one's good or bad thoughts from oneself deserves compliments. One who conceals them certainly violates the vow of non-stealing. If you do not understand this idea, ask Vinoba to explain it. Tell Kamala to write to me. She, too, should write a diary. My health is fine. I have worked hard and even feel fatigued, but my health has not suffered.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9273

195. LETTER TO NAUTAMLAL BHAGWANJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 8, 1930

BHAISHRI NAUTAM,

Doctor[1] arrived here last evening. Immediately on arrival, he told me that he wished to have Chi. Maganlal's[2] marriage, like Ratilal's,[3] celebrated in the Ashram, and that I should write to you for that purpose. Women everywhere look forward to a wedding and wish to enjoy the occasion in various ways. If, however, you have regard for Doctor's wishes, entreat the women on my behalf and win them over. I am sure you will agree with me that, if rich parents have a truly religious ceremony for the marriage of their sons and daughters, theyserve the good of the community and provide an example to the poor. I, therefore, hope that you will obtain the consent of the women and let the marriage be celebrated here. Probably you know that there is no music and dancing and no feasts on the occasion of a wedding in the Ashram. The celebration consists entirely of the religious ceremony and the dresses of the bride and the bridegroom are all of khadi.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2583

196. LETTER TO ANANTRAI PATTANI

SABARMATI,
January 8, 1930

TO PATTANI SAHEB,

I had got the letter of recommendation you sent with the two Japanese gentlemen. But I am writing this letter to make you a request. You will no doubt have been pained by the resolutions passed at Lahore.[4] But when did I ever shrink from causing pain to friends? If I please friends like you by suppressing my conscience I may earn

[1] Pranjivandas Mehta
[2] Pranjivandas Mehta's sons
[3] *ibid*
[4] *Vide* "Speech at Congress Session, Lahore-I & II", 31-12-1929.

their congratulations for a while, but ultimately they will have to leave me. Would it not be better to inflict momentary pain and preserve real friendship? I assure you that neither the main resolution[1] nor any otherresolution was passed to please the public. I drafted the resolution only according to my understanding of the good of the people.[2] I therefore wish you not to be pained by my action.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/42

197. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

SABARMATI,
January 8, 1930

BA,

I am sending herewith a letter from Ramdas. If I sat down to write myself, I would have to stop the spinning for that time. That would be so much loss to the country. Is it not better that I dictate this letter?

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/43

198. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM SABARMATI,
January 8, 1930

CHI. RAMDAS,[3]

I got your letter. I am sending it on to Ba. I am writing to her to keep herself ready to let Nimu leave whenever you desire her to be with you. For myself, I do approve of your wish. I quite understand Nimu's desire. I should like that from their very childhood, Sumitra, Savitri, Rumbha and Bachu should grow up with you and according to your manner of living and, therefore, I am wholly with you in the suggestion you have made. Ba is simple-hearted and will immediately agree. Keshu[4] being ill, has been sent away to Devdas in Calcutta. He is better now. Santok and Radha, too, had left this place without consulting me. If I had known of their intention to leave, I would have asked Devdas not to go.

Dr. Mehta arrived last night with Manekbai. He will be here for

[1] About complete independence
[2] *Vide* "Draft Resolutions for A.I.C.C., Lahore", 26-12-1929.
[3] The letter is in Mahadev Desai's handwriting.
[4] Keshav, Maganlal Gandhi's son

four or five days. And I myself having arrived, the place is beginning to get crowded. You did well to send the invitations. I am keeping perfectlywell. A diet of milk, curds, and fruits is suiting me very well. That you are keeping well these days is good news to me.

Blessings from

BAPU[1]

From the Gujarati original : Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

199. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM SABARAMATI,
January 8, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

How did you manage to fall ill ? You must have of course known that I was opposed to your going to Lahore. You should for the present avoid going after new adventures and even resist the temptation of seeing new places. Your duty is to be content with what you can think and do without moving about and to live according to a fixed schedule. When Devdas arrives there and relieves you, you may certainly go to Vijapur.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PRABHUDAS GANDHI

JAMIA MILIA

KAROL BAGH

DELHI

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33006

200. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 8, 1930

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. I was expecting to see you even today. Prabhudas must be all right by now. I hope you continue writing your

[1] The subscription is by Gandhiji.

daily diary. It must not be interrupted now. Fix the date of departure for Wardha and let me know it. Are you keeping up carding?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2371

201. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

[About *January 8, 1930*][1]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,[2]

I read your letter to Chi. Jamnadas. I did not like it. You cannot be considered fit for a pilgrimage to Badrinarayan. Though I have sentShantilal to be your companion, it does not mean that he should spend his time in sight-seeing. A man who loves work, will engage himself in some work anyhow. It would be proper for him to help in the weaving work or some other similar work. If you also wish to take up some responsible work, I should like you not to think of going to Badrinath, etc. It would be another matter if you thought of the pilgrimage when a suitable occasion arose, provided that your health was good enough and provided also that your work there had been properly set going. Or, again, there would be no harm in going to Badrinath if you had stayed on there purely for the sake of your health and had taken up no responsible work. Moreover, I am not at all certain that a trip to Badrinath will not harm your health. It would be better to be content with the improvement in your health which has already taken place. I am of opinion that, for the present, you should hold back your desire for sight-seeing. If Jamnadas can go and does go, let him go by himself. But I wish that none of us should forget that we wish to compete with the beggars of India.

Blessings from

BAPU[3]

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33010

[1] From Gandhiji's advice to the addressee to withhold his "desire for sight-seeing'', it appears that this letter was written about the same time as the preceding one.

[2] The letter is in Mahadev Desai's handwriting.

[3] The subscription is by Gandhiji.

202. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

[Before *January 9, 1930*][1]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I did not answer your last telegram. What instructions can I give from this distance? There can be nothing lacking in your attention. I am aware that Keshu[2] needs some comforting. To that end I am sending Devdas. I have little faith in medicines. But I do not interfere in the treatment of those away from me. Hence there was no need for any instructions in response to your telegram. My treatment isquite well known—fasting or fruit juice, sun-baths, sleeping at night in a well-ventilated room and enema in case of constipation. Many patients like Keshu have been cured by this treatment. But I do not wish to practise my theories from a distance. You can do whatever you like. Medicines should not be suggested to Keshav unless he asks for them. I hope Keshav will be out of all danger by the time this reaches you.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6179. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

203. STATEMENT TO " THE NEW YORK WORLD"

[Before *January 9, 1930*][3]

The world should realize that as Congressional representatives, Pandit Motilal Nehru, leader of the Nationalists in the Legislative Assembly, and I could only treat the Viceregal pronouncement about Dominion Status in India as a response to the Calcutta Congress resolution of 1928.[4] We were bound, therefore, in pursuance of that resolution to press for a clear declaration that the proposed Round Table Conference would consider only ways and means of framing a scheme for a Dominion Status constitution and no other. This the Viceroy, Lord Irwin, could not do. While, therefore, we appreciated his good efforts and his difficulties, we had no course left open but to decline to have Congress represented at the proposed Conference. The

[1] From the contents it appears this letter was written before the one to the addressee dated January 9, 1930; *vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 9-1-1930.

[2] Maganlal Gandhi's son, Keshav

[3] The statement was published in *The New York* World, 9-1-1930.

[4] *Vide* "Speech on Resolution on Nehru Report, Calcutta Congress", 28-12-1928.

Conference, so far as Congress was concerned, having miscarried, the independence resolution[1] need frighten nobody. I had repeatedly declared that for me, as for all other Congressmen, Dominion Status could mean only virtual independence; that is partnership at will for mutual benefit and to be dissolved at the instance of either partner. It only clears the issue, especially after Secretary of State for India, Wedgwood Benn's unfortunate statement that India already had a Dominion Status in action.

The real cause for satisfaction to lovers of peace consists in the fact that through the full debate Congress supported methods of non-violence and truth, to the exclusion of other methods. Civildisobedience is a dynamic expression of non-violence. It is undoubtedly fraught with great danger and difficulties, but infinitely less so than the present danger of unbridled but secret violence breaking out in many parts of India, owing to understandable and pardonable impatience on the part of many youths. Responsibility for initiating civil disobedience rests on me and I am not likely rashly to embark upon it. At the same time I must confess that I shall not hesitate to run a certain minimum of risk which is inevitable in any struggle for freedom. The risk for prolonging the present agony caused by the realized slavery here is any day much greater than I am ever likely to run.

The boycott of legislatures is also part of the programme for enforcing the national demand. This was a natural corollary to the independence resolution, and I am glad to say it is finding an adequate response from Congressmen. A constructive programme such as removal of untouchability, communal union, liquor prohibition, and the boycott of foreign cloth remains. These have tremendous social and economic value and also bear great political consequences. The Nehru constitution, with its tentative communal solution, naturally lapses.

Congress, therefore, will concentrate on solving the communal question, not on differential lines, but on strictly national lines. There was also a resolution on financial obligations.[2] It need not disturb any foreigner who has a legitimate interest in India. It should be remembered that there are always, under any foreign Government, obligations incurred and concessions granted that are in no way in the interest of the country concerned, and are indeed often hostile to it. These can never be acknowledged by successors who are free to examine every such obligation and concession. Congress has offered

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Congress Session, Lahore- II", 31-12-1929.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Subjects Committee, A.I.C.C.-II", 1-1-1930.

investigation of these by an independent tribunal. Lastly, the door against a conference purposely convened to satisfy national aspirations, that is, to frame a scheme of independence has been left open.

The Hindu, 25-3-1930

204. NOTES

THE LATE MAZHAR-UL-HAQ

Mazhar-ul-Haq was a great patriot, a good Mussalman and a philosopher. Fond of ease and luxury, when Non-co-operation came he threw them off as we throw superfluous scales off the skin. He grew as fond of the ascetic life as he was of princely life. Growing weary of our dissentions, he lived in retirement, doing such unseen services as he could, and praying for the best. He was fearless both in speech and action. The Sadakat Ashram near Patna is a fruit of his constructive labours. Though he did not live in it for long as he had intended, his conception of the Ashram made it possible for the Bihar Vidyapith to find a permanent habitation. It may yet prove a cement to bind the two communities together. Such a man would be missed at all times; he will be the more missed at this juncture in the history of the country. I tender my condolences to Begum Mazhar-ul-Haq and her family.

PROHIBITION CAMPAIGN

At the Temperance Conference in Lahore one of the resolutions adopted was as follows:[1]

It is a matter for sorrow that in a country like India, where drink is almost universally admitted to be a vice, there are respectable newspapers enough to be found to take advertisements for the sake of spirituous liquor whilst their editorial columns favour total prohibition. I hope that the resolution of the Conference will move the newspapers concerned to stop taking the offending advertisements. There may be the question of contracts made with advertisers. Since the proprietors of the newspapers concerned have wronged the nation in taking the advertisements, it is not too much to expect them to part with a portion of the ill-gotten profits in paying for such damages as may be necessary for ending contracts before their times.

Young India, 9-1-1930

[1] The resolution is not reproduced here. It demanded immediate ban on the display of liquor advertisements in public places and newspapers.

205. THE CONGRESS

PRESIDENT

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru more than justified the choice of the people. His address brief and to the point was bold, extreme in conception but moderate in expression. It bore evidence of a man capable of viewing things with complete detachment. A confirmed socialist, he wants for his country only what the country can manage. He is a practical statesman tempering his ideals to suit his surroundings: But for himself he is an idealist who would ever strive to live up to his ideals.

As in his address, so in the chair. He was strong, yet accommodating. His wit came to his rescue on many an awkward occasion. He never hesitated when action was required. His tireless energy and entire self-forgetfulness, his natural simplicity and affability captivated everyone. No Government that is at all anxious to do what is right can have any reason to fear Jawaharlal Nehru. A wicked Government would soon feel the strength of a stalwart who counts no price too dear to pay for ridding the country of wicked rule.

The youth of the country has every reason to be proud of their representative, the nation may well rejoice to find in Jawaharlal Nehru such a noble and worthy son. May God's blessings descend upon him and may the nation reach her destination during Jawaharlal's year of service.

INDEPENDENCE

The resolutions[1] of the Congress strictly followed the trend of the Presidential address. Let us first consider the central resolution[2]. In strict accordance with the Calcutta resolution[3] and owing to a combination of circumstances undesigned by anybody, Dominion Status gave place at the stroke of midnight 31st December 1929 to complete independence as the immediate objective of the Congress. Swaraj in article 1 of the Congress constitution is now to mean complete independence. It is as well. Apart from the Calcutta resolution, Mr. Benn's statement that India already had

[1] *Vide* "Draft Resolutions for A.I.C.C., Lahore", 26-12-1929.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Congress Session, Lahore- II", 31-12-1929.

[3] *Vide* "Speech on Resolution on Nehru Report, Calcutta Congress-II", 28-12-1928.

DominionStatus in action made that phrase impossible of acceptance to convey the nation's meaning. If representation, at important functions, of India through representatives chosen by the British Government, means Dominion Status in action, Heaven help India. The Congress means something totally different from it. For the Congress, Dominion Status meant complete independence plus voluntary partnership with Britain as it might be with any other nation for mutual good. Lastly it has been of late loudly whispered that independence was illegal, and a resolution replacing Dominion Status with independence would mean the death of the Congress. This threat made it a sacred obligation for the Congress to incorporate complete independence in the Congress creed. The Congress would not be worthy to represent the nation if, for fear of consequences, it hesitated to enunciate the nation's birthright. If swaraj was a doubtful word, it becomes unequivocal by becoming *purna* swaraj.

'PEACEFUL AND LEGITIMATE'

But the Congress rejected by an overwhelming majority any change in the description of the means. They still remain 'peaceful and legitimate'. There were members in the Subjects Committee who suggested that independence would not be vindicated by non-violent and truthful means. Violence there undoubtedly was in the air. But I feel that those who flock to the Congress session year by year have a living faith in non-violence as the only possible means for India at least to regain her lost freedom. Non-violence and truth are the vital need for India if the stupor of the millions is to be removed, if the warring communities are to be welded into one. A foreign power must be a necessary factor for any community that will coerce any other or the others into submission to its will. But the Congress must perforce remain non-violent if it will represent, as it claims to represent, all communities. Whether therefore it takes a year or ages to reach political independence, non-violence and truth are in my opinion the shortest way to it. Complete independence of the Congress is no menace to a single legitimate foreign interest or the presence of a single Englishman who will live as a friend willing to submit to the rules applicable to the whole of independent India.

This is clear from the condemnation of the bomb resolution and the clause in the central resolution appreciating the efforts of the Viceroy to arrive at a peaceful solution of the national problem. Both the bomb resolution and the clause were hotly contested, but the Congress accepted both, the one by a substantial majority ascertainedafter a division and the second by an overwhelming majority. I am sure that by passing the resolution and the clause the

nation has conformed to its creed, and risen in the estimation of the world, as it would have denied its creed and lost in the world's estimation if it had refused to condemn the bomb outrage and perform the common courtesy of recognizing the good even in a representative of a rule which we seek to destroy.

BOYCOTT OF LEGISLATURES

To the constructive programme the Congress has added boycott of legislatures. This was in my opinion inevitable. Those who would have independence have to work outside the legislatures and among the people. That no single seat will remain vacant because of Congressmen withdrawing from the legislatures is no reason for opposing the boycott. Let those who believe in the legislatures by all means go there. It is enough that Congressmen employ themselves otherwise and cease to give those bodies any prestige through their presence there. For me the decisive opinion of Pandit Motilalji in favour of boycott was enough to incorporate it in the resolution.

The programme would have been undoubtedly strengthened if law-courts and Government schools were also boycotted. But the atmosphere was absent. The Congress is not an organization to enunciate theories, but to anticipate national wants and wishes, and forge practical sanctions for their fulfilment.

Local bodies stand on a different footing. They were included in the original draft. But as opinion was sharply divided, I did not press for their retention in the boycott clause. Let no one however run away with the idea that it is now any Congressman's duty to seek election to or capture these institutions. On the contrary it is the duty of every Congressman to retire from or avoid them, if they take away best workers' attention from better work or if they mean continuous wrangling, dissensions or worse. They are at liberty to remain in them or seek election thereto when they are convinced that by their presence there, they can promote not merely some legitimate interest but national independence.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

The greatest and the most effective sanction however is civil disobedience including non-payment of taxes. Whilst the task of choosing the time and the method of it has been nominally and properly left to the All-India Congress Committee to decide, I know that it is a duty primarily devolving upon me. I must confess that I donot see the atmosphere for it today. I want to discover a formula whereby sufficient provision can be made for avoiding suspension by reason of Chauri Chaura. A time must come when there my be a fight

to the finish with one's back to the wall. With the present temper of many Congressmen, with our internal dissensions, with the communal tension, it is difficult to discover an effective and innocent formula. It may be impossible to offer civil disobedience at this stage in the name of the Congress, and it may be necessary to offer individual civil disobedience without the Congress *imprimatur* and apart from it. But just now every thing is in the embryonic state. I can only give the impatient patriot the assurance, that I am concentrating all my powers on discovering a workable formula. He can help me materially by assisting to promote a non-violent atmosphere and to push forward the constructive programme. I know that many have refused to see any connection between the constructive programme and civil disobedience. But for one who believes in non-violence it does not need hard thinking to realize the essential connection between the constructive programme and civil disobedience for swaraj. I want the reader to mark the qualification. Constructive programme is not essential for local civil disobedience for specific relief as in the case of Bardoli. Tangible common grievance restricted to a particular locality is enough. But for such an indefinable thing as swaraj people must have previous training in doing things of all-India interest. Such work must throw together the people and their leaders whom they would trust implicitly. Trust begotten in the pursuit of continuous constructive work becomes a tremendous asset at the critical moment. Constructive work therefore is for a non-violent army what drilling, etc., is for an army designed for bloody warfare. Individual civil disobedience among an unprepared people and by leaders not known to or trusted by them is of no avail, and mass civil disobedience is an impossibility. The more therefore the progress of the constructive programme, the greater is there the chance for civil disobedience. Granted a perfectly non-violent atmosphere and a fulfilled constructive programme, I would undertake to lead a mass civil disobedience struggle to a successful issue in the space of a few months.

'IN THE EXISTING CIRCUMSTANCES'

Whilst thus the central resolution lays down the country's objective and the methods for its attainment in no uncertain terms, it does not rule out the idea of a conference in every circumstance. It merely and most properly says, that 'in the existing circumstances' no good purpose can be served by the Congress being representedat the proposed Conference. What are then the conceivable circumstances in which the Congress may be represented at such a conference? I can mention at least one such circumstance. If the

British Government invites the Congress to a conference, that is to discuss and frame not any scheme but a scheme definitely of independence Government, and fulfils the other conditions suitable for such a conference, I take it that the Congress leaders will gladly respond. Indeed a conference there must be at some stage or other. It can take place as the proposed Conference was expected to take place out of Britain's good grace our land pressure of world opinion, or out of pressure from us as we hope it will be if we develop sufficient strength. Whether such a time is to be far or near depends upon how we utilize or waste this year of grace.

OUR FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Next in importance and almost part of the central resolution must be deemed the one dealing with our financial obligations.[1] Everyone who knows anything of public finance knows how extravagant this Government is and how heavy is the load of debts that is crushing the nation. Everyone knows also what concessions have been given to foreigners in utter disregard of the national interest. These cannot demand, dare not expect recognition from independent India under the much abused name of vested interests. All vested interests are not entitled to protection. The keeper of a gambling den or of a brothel has no vested interest. Nor has a corporation that gambles away the fortunes of a nation and reduces it to impotence. The Congress at Gaya[2] therefore passed a comprehensive resolution repudiating certain debts. The last, whilst reaffirming the Gaya resolution, laid down that obligations or concessions pronounced to be unjust and unjustifiable by an independent tribunal shall not be recognized by the independence Government to come. No exception can, in my opinion, be possibly taken against such a reasonable proposition. To shirk the issue is to invite disaster.

COMMUNAL QUESTION

Equally important is the communal resolution[3]. Though it was adopted for the sake of the Sikhs, it was necessary other wise too toenunciate the principles underlying it. Independent India cannot afford to have communal representation, and yet it must placate all communities if the rule of independence is not based on coercion of minorities. But the Congress has now to cultivate a spirit of common nationality and refuse to resort to camouflage or expedience in a matter so vital as the communal question. In the Congress we must

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Subjects Committee, A.I.C.C.-II", 1-1-1930.

[2] In 1922

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Subjects Committee, A.I.C.C.-III", 1-1-1930.

cease to be exclusive Hindus or Mussalmans or Sikhs, Parsis, Christians, Jews. Whilst we may staunchly adhere to our respective faiths, we must be in the Congress Indians first and Indians last. A good Hindu or a good Mussalman should be a better Hindu or a better Mussalman for being a lover of his country. There never can be any conflict between the real interest of one's country and that of one's religion. Where there appears to be any, there is something wrong with one's religion, i.e., one's morals. True religion means good thought and good conduct. True patriotism also means good thought and good conduct. To set up a comparison between two synonymous things is wrong. But if the Congress is ever forced to consider a solution based on communalism, the resolution binds it to reject any that does not satisfy the parties concerned. In order however that the Congress may never be faced with a situation demanding a communal solution, it should now be joined in large numbers by Mussalmans, Sikhs and others who will have India as one indivisible nation. I for one would welcome the Congress passing into Mussalman, Sikh, Parsi, Christian, Jewish hands rather than that it should be in any sense a sectional organization. Anyone who has the spirit of service in him can capture the Congress. It has the most democratic franchise. Its doors are ever open to those who would serve. Let all join it and make it a mighty instrument for gaining complete independence for the poorest, the weakest and the most downtrodden. I must defer the consideration of other resolutions and the other matters relating to this remarkable Congress to a future issue[1], if not the next.

Young India, 9-1-1930

206. MR. PENNINGTON THE EVERGREEN

My remarks on the Congress[2] are a fitting answer to this letter[3]. We must be the judges of our own wants, not Englishmen, however well-intentioned they may be.

Young India, 9-1-1930

[1] *Vide* "What Not to Do?", 16-1-1930.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] Not reproduced here. Referring to Gandhiji's article "Honest Differences", pp. 192-5, Pennington had written that the evils of British rule had been exaggerated and immediate independence for India was an impossibility.

207. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Jawaharlal[1] Nehru has proved to be a jewel of India. In his address lofty thoughts are couched in sweet and courteous language. Several topics have been dealt with thoroughly and yet the address is short. The splendour of the soul shines in every sentence. The apprehension that lurked in many hearts disappeared after the oration. As was the address, so was his deportment. During the Congress session he did all his work independently and impartially. And since he worked incessantly and strenuously everything was completed on time and without any hitch.

If under the Presidentship of such a brave and righteous young man we can achieve nothing it will greatly surprise me. But if the ranks are unworthy, what can the brave captain do? Therefore, we should do some introspection. Are we fit to be under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru? If we are, then the outcome must be propitious. Liberty cannot be secured merely by proclaiming it. An atmosphere of liberty must be created within us. Liberty is one thing, and licence another. Many a time we confuse licence for liberty and lose the latter. Licence leads one to selfishness whereas liberty guides one to supreme good. Licence destroys society, liberty gives it life. In licence propriety is sacrificed; in liberty it is fully cherished. Under slavery we practise several virtues out of fear; when liberated we practise them ofour own free will.A slave will not steal out of fear, will not quarrel with anyone, will not lie and will appear honest. He will be protected from dacoits and others by his master. A slave does not exercise his free will in whatever he does. A free man's thoughts and actions are identical. Whether for good or for evil he acts of his own free will. Therefore, a free man reaps the full benefits of his good actions, and when this happens society progresses from day to day. A free man will not fail in his duty of protecting others.

Therefore, if we have understood true freedom, we will shed communal fear. Hindus and Muslims will cease to fear one another. If both could shed fear at the same time all the better; but a free spirit should not expect the help of others to cast off fear. If the other side violates justice, even then he would not seek the help of a third party. He will depend only on his own strength, and if he loses, he will try to augment his own strength. To die fighting is itself victory, it is one's duty. To run away from the fight is slavery and humiliation. Real freedom is impossible without the spirit of a true Kshatriya. Therefore,

[1] Literally, 'jawahar' means jewel

the unique quality of a Kshatriya is considered to be his determination never to shrink from a battle. For this reason we too, in everything we do, must never run away from the battlefield.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 9-1-1930

208. LETTER TO KHALIQUZZAMAN

SABARMATI,
January 9, 1930

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

Even before the Independence resolution[1] Congress chairmen of local boards have refused to give addresses. I am quite clear that you should not present the address and therefore should resign the chairmanship.

KHALIQUZZAMAN
LUCKNOW

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/45

209. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 9, 1930

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I received your cheque for Rs. 345. The sum will be used as desired by you. I hope both of you keep good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7543

[1] The resolution on complete independence called upon the Congress members of Central and Provincial legislatures and Government Committees to resign their seats; *vide* "Speech at Congress Session, Lahore- II", 31-12-1929.

210. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 9, 1930

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter has arrived. Devdas writes that Keshu is receiving loving attention from you all. So writes Radhabehn too. What more can I say in this matter? The treatment too conforms more or less to what I would have wished. Enough; it would be discourteous to write anything further on this subject. I am free from all anxiety.

The Lahore resolutions are very much to my liking. And my opinion is further strengthened by the current happenings. Go through what I have written in *Young India*[1] and offer whatever comments you think fit. You have every right to express your views and offer advice.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6180. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

211. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

January 10, 1930

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Here is my draft resolution or declaration[2] for 26th instant. I have nothing as yet from anybody. But I thought I would not now wait till the last moment. You will cut it up or extend and amend it as you like. The shorter the sweeter.

Ever since we have separated at Lahore, I have been evolving schemes of civil disobedience. I have not seen my way clear as yet. But I have come so far that, in the present state of the Congress, no civil disobedience can be or should be offered in its name and that it should be offered by me alone or jointly with a few companions even as I did in South Africa if you have studied the History ofSatyagraha. If you have not, you should. If I do finally see my way clear, I shall think out what part the Congress can play in that event. All this, however, I have no time to discuss through correspondence. If I make

[1] *Vide* "The Congress", 9-1-1930.
[2] *Vide* the following item.

further progress, I shall let you know. If you have any remarks to offer, please let me know. In any case prepare yourself to come here a day or two earlier than the Working Committee meeting day. Of course you can come earlier still . . .[1] before 26th inst. if necessary.

I hope father is going to Bengal on the appointed day.

I am most anxious to come to grips during your year of office, but that strictly according to my lights. Please therefore feel free to criticize whatever I say or suggest. I want to do nothing that would cross your purpose or thwart your plans, if you have conceived any independently. The more I think, the more convinced I feel that it was a happy thing for the country that I did not become President. I would have felt hampered in maturing plans in complete detachment. As it is, I cannot conceive a more favourable opportunity for me for making my experiment than when you are the helmsman of the Congress.

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

Since writing this, I have your letter[2]. In view of what I have said above, I must not go out. The one who may travel through a few places with effect is father. The weight that he can carry in the matter of the councils boycott is not to be rivalled by anybody. Can he go?

After reading your notes[3], I did think it necessary to alter my draft.

BAPU

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-A, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Illegible

[2] Which read: ". . . I shall expect your statement and resolution for the 26th in a few days. Could you also add some directions for the observance of the day? . . . I enclose a letter from Rajagopalachari. I think there is something in what he says. There are so many statements and counter-statements in the Press that the issues are likely to be clouded. Personally I dislike touring on a big scale but if you think I should rush about I shall do so. Rajagopalachari's idea that we may get some of the non-Congress members out of the legislatures seems to me to be amazingly optimistic. . . . But even apart from the council boycott it seems desirable to make the country feel that we are in earnest. If we remain quiet for some weeks it may have a bad effect. . . ." (S.N. 16335)

[3] On exploitation of India by England (S.N. 16335)

212. DRAFT DECLARATION FOR JANUARY 26[1]

[*January 10, 1930*][2]

We believe that it is the inalienable right of the Indian people, as of any other people, to have freedom and to enjoy the fruits of their toil and have the necessities of life, so that they may have full opportunities of growth. We believe also that if any government deprives a people of these rights and oppresses them, the people have a further right to alter it or to abolish it. The British Government in India has not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom but has based itself on the exploitation of the masses, and has ruined India economically, politically, culturally and spiritually. We believe therefore that India must sever the British connection and attain *purna* swaraj or complete independence.

India has been ruined economically. The revenue derived from our people is out of all proportion to our income. Our average income is seven pice (less than 2 pence) per day. The taxes we pay are 2.5 pies per day and of these the land revenue derived from the peasantry is 20% and the salt tax, which falls heaviest on the poor, is 3% of the total.

Village industries, such as hand-spinning, have been destroyed, leaving the peasantry idle for at least four months in the year, and dulling their intellect for want of handicrafts, and nothing has been substituted, as in other countries, for the crafts thus destroyed.

Customs and currency have been so manipulated as to heap further burdens on the peasantry. British manufactured goods constitute the bulk of our imports and customs revenue from these, which ought to have been used to lessen the burden of taxation on the masses, is 44 times lighter in India than it is in Russia and 44[3] times and 24[4] times, respectively, less heavy than it is in the United Statesof America and Germany. The arbitrary manipulation of the exchange ratio has resulted in millions being drained away from the country.[5]

Politically, India's status has never been so reduced as under the British regime. All administrative talent is killed and the masses have

[1] For the final declaration, *vide* "Things to Remember for 26th", 23-1-1930.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] For the correction of these figures, *vide* "Telegram to Jawaharlal Nehru", 16-1-1930.

[4] *ibid*

[5] All the figures quoted in this paragraph relate to the year 1904. For the changes made by Gandhiji, *vide* "Telegram to Jawaharlal Nehru", 17-1-1930.

to be satisfied with petty village offices and clerkships. The tallest of us have to bend before foreign authority. No reform has given real political power to the people.

Culturally, the system of education has torn us from our moorings and our training has made us hug the very chains that bind us.

Spiritually, compulsory disarmament has made us unmanly and the presence of an alien army of occupation, employed with deadly effect to crush in us the spirit of resistance, has made us think that we cannot look after ourselves or put up a defence against foreign aggression, or even defend our homes and families from the attacks of thieves, robbers and miscreants.

We hold it to be a crime against men and God to submit any longer to a rule that has caused this fourfold disaster to our country. We recognize, however, that the most effective way of gaining our freedom is not through violence. We will therefore prepare ourselves by withdrawing, so far as we can, all voluntary association from the British Government, and will prepare for civil disobedience, including non-payment of taxes. We are convinced that if we can but withdraw our voluntary help and stop payment of taxes without doing violence, even under provocation, the end of this inhuman rule is assured. We therefore hereby solemnly resolve to carry out the Congress instructions, issued from time to time for the purpose of establishing *purna* swaraj.

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-A, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

213. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

SABARMATI,
January 10, 1930

DEAR DR. MAHMUD,

I have your touching letter. This death[1] at this time in our history is a blow indeed. I hope my wire was received by Begum Saheba. Tell her please that she must not grieve. We must all bravely bear an event which is the common destiny of all life.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5074

[1] Of Mazhar-ul-Haq; *vide* "Notes", 9-1-1930.

214. A LETTER

SABARMATI,
January 10, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

I have a letter from Abbas Saheb. I do feel that if you can possibly avoid attending the Governor's function, you should do so.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: MMU/XXII/66

215. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

SABARMATI,
January 11, 1930

DEAR SUBHAS,

I like your letter though it does not satisfy me. I wrote[1] and did as I felt. I cannot tax my memory as to . . . [2] now about the details. The exhibition I remember vividly. But there of course our ideals differed. I do not believe in the showy part in connection with what is intended to be a pure education for the masses. But I should have a battle royal with you on these things if you had leisure. I assure you I have no partiality for khadi workers. They naturally engage my attention because they have so much in common with me. I would love to have the same contact with you. But I cannot have that privilege as our methods and outlook on life seem to differ. I do not mind these differences, what I mind is bitterness. But do let me have your second letter. I am anxious to come nearer to you.

I should be sorry to think or to discover that I do not know young Bengal which I love and adore.

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/46

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Ramniklal Modi", 13-11-1929.
[2] Illegible

216. LETTER TO S. SATYAMURTI

January 11, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. We must agree to differ.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

S. SATYAMURTI
2/18 CAR STREET
TRIPLICANE
MADRAS

From the original: S. Satyamurti Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

217. LETTER TO DUNICHAND

January 11, 1930

DEAR LALA DUNICHAND[1],

I thank you for your letter. I shall certainly bear in mind what you say.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5580

218. SPEECH AT GUJARAT VIDYAPITH CONVOCATION

January 11, 1930[2]

Sjt. Narendra Dev just told you, "You are eager to serve the nation. You are pure in heart, brave and self-sacrificing. Being eager for national service, you will prove your mettle one way or another upon entering worldly life." I wish that all his praise should be well deserved. But my experience leads me to ask you to be pure and remain pure. Let not the vow you just took remain on paper, but inscribe it in your hearts and let the people's money and the teachers' energy spent after you be fruitful. My blessings of course always go with the students.

[1] Advocate, High Court, Lahore
[2] From Bombay Secret Abstracts

Sjt. Vallabhbhai and Kaka Kalelkar are holding forth their begging bowl before the public. Their appeal for contributions is not to be seen in any of the English papers, for their aim is to see how Gujarat views its special duty to the Vidyapith. My hope was that by now all the sixty thousand asked for would have been collected. If this national work is to progress speedily, people should set our national workers free from anxiety in the matter of money. The citizens of Ahmedabad by themselves can do this if they mean it. If this is done, the teachers can give their whole attention to their proper work. In the Vidyapith we require ability more than numbers. Behind the introduction of the civil disobedience and behind the resolution as a whole, lay the confidence that some students at least would play their part well and bring us success.

The Congress at its Calcutta session had resolved that if the Dominion Status of Pandit Nehru's scheme was not granted within a year's time, a resolution demanding independence would be passed even at the risk of incurring the world's censure. If the choice is between independence and Dominion Status, even a person like me would prefer independence.[1]

You will naturally expect me to say something about the independence resolution passed at the Lahore Congress, especially the civil disobedience part of it, and you will want to know what is goingto be your share in the struggle. Well, as I have often said here, we rely not on numerical strength, but on the strength of character, and the civil disobedience resolution was moved more because I had faith in a few men sacrificing themselves for the cause than in the number of men coming forward in response to the call. You know that the Calcutta resolution pledged us to changing the first article of the Congress constitution and preparing for a programme of civil disobedience, provided Dominion Status was not forthcoming by the end of 1929. This not having been fulfilled, there was nothing for us but to carry out the pledge even at the risk of adverse criticism and misrepresentation. Events that have happened after the resolution have added force to it. Earl Russell[2] has given us plainly to understand that India's Dominion Status is something different from what we have always believed it to be, viz., a status allied to that of Canada, New Zealand and Australia. These, the noble Earl admits, are virtually independent. I never had anything else in mind when I talked of Dominion Status for India. What Earl Russel says is tantamount to

[1] This and the preceding two paragraphs are translated from the Gujarati in *Prajabandhu*, 12-1-1930. What follows is from *Young India*.

[2] Under-Secretary of State for India

saying that instead of being in the iron chains that India has been in for years, she may now have the choice of changing them for golden ones. And some of us seem to hug the proposal. We are so very much fear-stricken that a severance of the British connection means to us violence and chaos. Well, I want to make myself clear once more. Votary as I am of non-violence, if I was given a choice between being a helpless witness to chaos and perpetual slavery, I should unhesitatingly say that I would far rather be witness to chaos in India, I would far rather be witness to Hindus and Mussalmans doing one another to death than that I should daily witness our gilded slavery. To my mind golden shackles are far worse than iron ones, for one easily feels the irksome and galling nature of the latter and is prone to forget the former. If therefore India must be in chains, I would they were of iron rather than of gold or other precious metals.

The spectre of an Afghan invasion is raised in certain quarters the moment we talk of independence. Well I don't mind the invasion when we have severed our slavish connection with Britain. But I am an incorrigible optimist, and my faith in India winning her freedom by a bloodless revolution is unshakable. We have a helmsman like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and I do not think we are ever going to have a better young man as our President. Would that weachieved our goal whilst he has the reins of our affairs in his hands. And I think it is quite possible, if you will be true to your pledge. I would like to see the graduates of this Vidyapith in the front in any campaign for swaraj. I want you to visualize what is coming. You have a harder ordeal than going to jail. Robbers, dacoits and murderers also can go to jail, and they make themselves thoroughly at home there. But they do not serve the country by going to jail. A mere jail going man does not help the country. What I want from you is the preparedness to offer yourselves willing and pure sacrifices in the struggle. There is a lot of violence in the air, and you will have to immolate yourselves in the flames, if there are violent outbursts when and if I am put into jail. If you are true to your pledge of truth and non-violence, you will not hide yourselves in your houses whilst violence or incendiarism is going on, nor will you be active participators in it, but you will go and rush into the conflagration with a view to extinguishing it. For surely that will be expected of you. Even the votaries of violence will expect that and nothing else from you. Vice pays a homage to virtue, and sometimes the way it chooses is to expect virtue not to fall from its pedestal even whilst vice is rampant round about.

You will be ready of course to march to jail, but I do not think you will be called upon to go to jail. The higher and severer ordeal I

have just now pictured to you awaits you. I do not know what form civil disobedience is to take, but I am desperately in search of an effective formula.

If you have become indifferent to constructive work, overcome your indifference. Get rid of any violence and untruth that may be present in it. We must do something and show concrete results this year, and the responsibility for this rests on me in the country. All expect that I shall succeed in the task. I also have the faith that I can do so. I am saying this not to fill you with enthusiasm, but in order to wake you up. Rest assured that tomorrow will see something achieved.[1]

I am impatient to reach the goal if we can through non-violence and truth. I have infinite patience to wait, if we cannot reach the goal without the sacrifice of non-violence and truth. Both spring from my unshakable faith in the supremacy of non-violence and truth.I know that however long the route may appear, it IS in my opinion the shortest.

Young India, 16-1-1930 and *Prajabandhu*, 12-1-1930

219. WELLS AND PONDS[2]

As in the past, so in the present also a person wanting to found a village would first look for water. If there exists no proper facility to obtain water or it is not possible to create it, he would give up all thought of founding a village at the place. In South India we come across dry, though otherwise beautiful, regions where no villages can be founded for want of water. Man's first elementary need is air, for which one does not have to go in search. The next is water. Though it cannot be obtained as easily as we get air, the getting of water does not involve the amount of labour needed for producing grain. However, the water we use has to be as clean as the air or food we take in.

We all know that the villagers are ignorant of this requirement, or are indifferent to it though they know it. Education in the uses of water, therefore, has an important place in the programme for rural education entrusted to the *gramsevaks*[3]. Imparting education in the subject will test the *sevak's* patience. It is not to be expected that the villagers would of themselves take pains to think out or employ ways

[1] This paragraph is translated from the Gujarati in *Prajabandhu*, 12-1-1930. What follows is from *Young India*

[2] This appeared in the *Shikshan ane Sahitya* supplement.

[3] Workers engaged in village uplift

and means of keeping the water clean. Slowly we should teach the villagers the advantages of keeping water clean and the rules to be observed for doing so. We should also get their assistance in this work. In several places, it happens that none of the inhabitants comes forward to help though the work is for their own benefit. In such circumstances, the only way open to the *sevak* is to work hard by himself and, by doing single-handed as much as he can, to induce in the villagers a feeling of shame for their unhelpful behaviour.

Let us now go a little into the details of what we might do. Many of the villages have only one pond, where the cattle drink and people bathe or wash, cleanse utensils and wash clothes, and people fetch the water for drinking and cooking from the same pond. Experts on hygiene have demonstrated through numerous experiments how poisonous germs are born in such water and diseases like choleraresult from drinking it. With a little care, it is possible to keep such ponds clean. The village pond should be enclosed so that no cattle can approach it. Of course there should be a provision for them to drink water. For that purpose there should be built a separate drinking trough near the pond as we find done near many of the wells. If everyone in the village makes it a point every day to fetch and add to it a potful of water from the pond, the daily requirement of the cattle would be met without much difficulty.

Never should utensils be cleansed or clothes washed in a pond from which drinking water is drawn. There are two ways to ensure this. Everyone should do the washing at home with the water fetched for domestic use. The other way is to have a water tank just near the pond. Everyone should fetch and put into the tank his share of the water needed for this kind of work. Then the tank water may be used for washing and cleansing by the village population. This would be possible only if there exists among the villagers a spirit of co-operation and mutual service. If it is not feasible to get the tank and the drinking trough filled through personal labour in the way I have described, this could be done by incurring a little expense on that account. As water is bound to get spilt and spread at a washing place, the immediate open space around should be paved so that no mud gets formed there. Before any utensil is dipped into the pond of drinking water, it ought to have been cleansed outside the pond. Moreover, there should be an arrangement so that the feet of the person fetching water do not have to wade through any part of the pond. This is about the villages that have one pond only.

In some villages there are, or it is possible to have, more than one pond. At such a place the pond for drinking water should be set apart for the purpose.

In the third category of villages there are wells. The water in these wells ought to be kept clean. With that view, the place should have an enclosure built around it and no mud should form there. From time to time the well water should be cleaned to remove the dross at the bottom. To get all this done by the village inhabitants, the *sevak* should himself be prepared to do it. This is cheap, true and necessary education.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-1-1930

220. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SABARMATI,
January 12, 1930

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I omitted to reply when I wrote to you[1] to your important question about 26th instant. I think there should be nothing mentioned about processions. We do not want the people to hold processions under licences, nor do we want them to hold them without. The only thing, therefore, they should do is to hold meetings and devote the day, if possible, to enlisting members. I do not think that speeches are necessary or advisable. I am anxious to avoid anticipation of a crisis. I would value perfect calm for ushering in civil disobedience. I am writing about this in *Young India.*[2]

I hope you received my draft declaration in good time.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-A, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

221. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

SABARMATI,
January 12, 1930

DEAR BROTHER,

This is to ask you if you can depute someone to go to South Africa and take charge of *Indian Opinion*. Manilal is here with his wife. They would both like to be in India now. Manilal is by no means

[1] On January 10, 1930; *vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 10-1-1930.
[2] *Vide* "Independence Day", 16-1-1930.

a brilliant or even passable editor. Devdhar[1] was at one time thinking of sending someone. If you think that the proposal is at all feasible, please let me know.

I do hope you are not over-angry with me for my doings in Lahore. I have but followed the inner voice. I saw no otherhonourable way out. Russell's speech[2] has justified the decision, i.e., in my opinion of course. But I know that we can love one another in Spite of sharp differences of opinion.

And how are you now in body?

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, p. 189

222. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

SABARMATI,
January 12, 1930

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

I have your letter.

Yes, you may bring your draft resolution for the Working Committee's[3] consideration. It will be a great step if we can avoid the scandal of one province sending as delegates the wastage of other provinces.

I like too your idea of inviting a few friends outside the Working Committee. Will you make up a list?

I am concentrating hard on finding a civil disobedience formula. I hope to find it soon. I feel that we must do something during the year consistently with non-violence. We must run the boldest risks. But of this more when we meet. You will come a day or two earlier please.

Choithram must keep his health. He must not get excited as he did when he was inviting the Congress to Karachi.[4]

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/49

[1] G. K. Devdhar of the Servants of India Society

[2] He was reported to have said at a Labour Party meeting at Cambridge that none knew better than Indians themselves how very foolish it was to talk of complete independence.

[3] Which was scheduled to meet at Ahmedabad from Feb. 14 to 16, 1930

[4] Karachi was selected as venue of the next Congress session.

223. LETTER TO RAMI PAREKH

SABARMATI,
January 12, 1930

CHI. RAMI[1],

I suppose I should not expect any letter from you. Ba yearns to see you. I, on the other hand, get no time even to think about you all. But I too wish that you should come and pay a visit, if Kunvarji permits you and you feel inclined. Just now Ba has gone to Vijapur. She will return in a few days. Manilal is here, and Sushila too.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9713

224. LETTER TO NAUTAMLAL BHAGWANJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 12, 1930

BHAISHRI NAUTAMLAL,

I got your letter. I showed it to Doctor. He was happy. I hope you will succeed in your effort.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

SJT. NAUTAMLAL BHAGWANJI
JETPUR, KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2582

225. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 12, 1930

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. If Prabhudas and Uttamchand are fit to travel, escort them here *via* the branch line and then proceed to Wardha. Devdas says that Prabhudas need not be detained there till his arrival.

[1] Harilal Gandhi's daughter and wife of Kunvarji Parekh

Assure Prabhudas that there is no harm in continuing with the powders prescribed by the vaidya.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2372

226. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

AHMEDABAD,
January 13, 1930

WIRE IF TEXT CELEBRATION DECLARATION[1] RECEIVED AND APPROVED. WISH PUBLISH FORTHCOMING YOUNG INDIA. IF MANY CHANGES MADE WIRE TEXT TO REACH TOMORROW MORNING.

GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-A, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

227. SPEECH AT ALL-INDIA NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE, AHMEDABAD[2]

January 13, 1930[3]

The Vidyapith owes its origin to the non-co-operation movement, and, as I said some years ago, the object of the Vidyapith is the attainment of swaraj. All those studying in national educational institutions and connected with them must do all the thingsthat the country has to do, and must go through the same discipline as the country has to go through for the attainment of swaraj, so that they may be ready to offer themselves willing sacrifices when the time comes.

Ours is a movement of self-purification. There are some who think that morality has nothing to do with politics. We do not concern ourselves with the character of our leaders. The democracies of Europe and America steer clear of any notion of morality having anything to do with politics. Bad characters are often great intellects, and they can manage certain affairs well enough by the force of their intellect. The private character of some of the leading men of the House of Commons will not bear examination. We too have often

[1] *Vide* "Draft Declaration for january 26", 10-1-1930.

[2] Published in *Young India*, 23-1-1930, under the caption "Not a Policy But Creed"

[3] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 14-1-1930

carried on our political movement in the same fashion, we did not concern ourselves with the morals of the Congress delegates or leaders. But in 1920 we struck an entirely new departure and we declared that since truth and non-violence were the sole means to be employed by the Congress to reach its goal, self-purification was necessary even in political life.

Today there is not much open opposition to the idea, though there are many who secretly believe that politics should have nothing to do with morality. That is why our progress is so slow and in some respect even nil. If we had acted up to our creed of 1920, we should not have taken nine years to arrive even at the present stage. If swaraj was not meant to civilize us, and to purify and stabilize our civilization, it would be nothing worth. The very essence of our civilization is that we give a paramount place to morality in all our affairs, public or private. And as one of the functions of the Vidyapith is to civilize us, the battle of swaraj calls for the greatest sacrifice from the national educational institutions.

I want you all to realize the implications of our creed. If you think that truth and non-violence constitute not the *creed* but the *policy* of the Congress, I do not know where I should be. But if you are convinced that they are your personal creed, I need not expatiate on them. The very fact that a person belongs to the Vidyapith should be sufficient guarantee of his truthfulness and non-violence. The first thing therefore that this national educational conference and those who are attending it should do is to ask themselves whether all their doings have been in consonance with that creed. If you have gone about your work, following truth and non-violence as a policy, there will come a day when you might be tempted to alter the policy. For instance my friends the Ali Brothers accepted truth and non-violenceas a policy, and they never made a secret of it. They always said that they could not accept them as a creed. There are many others of their way of thinking, and they undoubtedly have their place in the service of the country, but for you, students and teachers of national educational institutions, that attitude will not suffice. You must accept both the principles as your creed and they should be part and parcel of your being. If all make of ahimsa a policy, and I remain the only votary of it as a creed, we can make very little progress. Let us therefore ask ourselves once again, and make sure, that we will in no circumstances harbour untruth and violence for the attainment of swaraj. Then everything will be well.

The constructive programme has sprung out of the creed of truth and non-violence. Let us examine every item of it. Hindu-Muslim unity will be impossible so long as the Hindu cherishes

violence against the Mussalman and the Mussalman against the Hindu. The Congress resolution at Lahore on the communal question was a corollary to the creed. The Sikhs wanted bare justice, but the resolution, as you will have noticed, has gone further, and it is meant not only for the Sikhs but for all the communities of India.

Then take the removal of untouchability. While talking of this question, some think of removing physical untouchability, some talk of the removal of the so-called untouchables' disabilities as regards the use of public wells, schools and temples. But you should go much further. You should love them even as yourselves so that the moment they see you they might feel that you are one of them. Then and then only will you be able to have their co-operation in the constructive programme.

The same is the case with prohibition. Also with the khadi programme. But need I talk about it here? This work is so concrete and tangible that a man who maintains a regular diary of his day's work can give a clear account of how much he has added to the national wealth. If we had approached the task in that spirit we should have made considerable headway by now. The Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee has told us what we have been able to achieve even by means of our very little work of last year. To my mind it is trifling, but if all of us had done the thing with a will and an active faith, what would have been the result? We badly need true and efficient workers. But I know that even amongst you there are quite a number of men in whom the will and therefore the capacity are both lacking. We have toshed our inertia, our want of faith, and the capacity will follow as a matter of course.

I have told you what to do. I shall tell you now something as to what not to do. Literary training, scholarly research and linguistic pursuits, study of English and Sanskrit and fine arts had better take a back seat. All our national schools ought to be converted into factories of our national ammunition, viz., constructive work. There are millions of children in India today who have to go without any education, much less national education and the other big things I have mentioned. Why then can't *we* do without them until at any rate we have won our freedom?

The Working Committee has appealed to the country to enlist members and volunteers. Why should there be any other organization necessary for this work? You can all be members and volunteers and take charge of the work. Think what the students in Europe did during the great War. Are we prepared to make the sacrifices that they made? If deep down in us is the conviction that we may not even

breathe in peace until we have freedom, we will live and move and have our being in carrying out the constructive programme.

Lastly, may I sum up in a word what is expected of you? Even as we have to be pure, let us shed the fear of death. An Englishman has recently told us that though Gandhi may think that India will be none the worse if Englishmen left India, he has no doubt that not a rich man's property will be safe and not a virgin will be inviolate the moment his countrymen leave India. That shows what a low opinion he has of us Indians. But how can it be otherwise? We are so fear-stricken today that we have to maintain the services of hired men for the defence of our property and our honour. The moment we shed the fear of death, we shall escape from this wretched plight. I expect every maiden studying in the Vidyapith to wake up and muster sufficient moral strength to withstand even the touch of a wicked individual. I want you all to shed the fear of death, so that when the history of freedom comes to be written, the names of the boys and girls of national schools and colleges may be mentioned therein as of those who died not doing violence but in resisting it, no matter by whom committed. The strength to kill is not essential for self-defence; one ought to have the strength to die. When a man is fully ready to die he will not even desire to offer violence. Indeed I may put it down as a self-evident proposition that the desire to kill is in inverse proportion to the desire to die. And history is replete with instances of men who by dying with courage and compassion on their lips converted the hearts of their violent opponents.

In reply to a question at the end of the speech, Gandhiji said:

If I am so keen on the students' share in the struggle, why did I not press for the boycott of schools and colleges, you ask. I say there was no atmosphere. But I hope you will not retort that if there was no atmosphere, what can even these students do? They can do a lot. Had their devotion to their mission been intenser than it has been, they would have created an atmosphere that would have compelled the students of Government schools and colleges to leave them. What they have not been able to do hitherto, they can do even now.[1]

Do not be agitated because I have said this. On the one hand, you must be pepared to die, while on the other hand you must bury yourselves in your present duties as if you were immortal and would never perish.

Young India, 23-1-1930 and *Navajivan*, 19-1-1930

[1] The following paragraph is translated from the Gujarati in *Navajivan*, 19-1-1930.

228. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM SABARMATI,
January 14, 1930

CHI. RAMDAS,

Manilal and Sushila left for Vijapur yesterday. Manilal said he would return in two or three days bringing with him Ba and Nimu from there. If you wish, I can arrange for Nimu to be sent with somebody. Someone or the other keeps going from here to Bardoli. I write this only from the point of view of saving expense. If you are thinking of coming here just to take Nimu with, it is not at all necessary to do so and it will save so much of your money. I am not very eager to see you so that you need come here on that pretext for, how am I to find time even to have a look at you, let alone talk with you? I will be satisfied if I know that all of you are living in peace and contentment, and are doing your duty wherever you are. For my part, I am furiously thinking about some way of startingthe fight.[1] If the government lets me remain free this year, something big is bound to happen. If, on the other hand, they arrest me, would not that by itself count for something?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI RAMDAS GANDHI
SWARAJYA ASHRAM
BARDOLI, 'VIA' SURAT

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

229. INDEPENDENCE DAY

It was easy enough to pass the independence resolution at Lahore. It is difficult enough to achieve it even by 'peaceful and legitimate means'. The first essential is to let the masses know, understand and appreciate the message of the Congress. They must know what independence means and what it is likely to cost. And so the Working Committee whose business is to make the Congress live in the daily life of the people has fixed Sunday, 26th instant, as Purna

[1] That is, the civil disobedience movement contemplated by the resolution passed by the Indian National Congress on December 31, 1929, at its session in Lahore under the Presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru

Swaraj (Complete Independence) Day when a declaration[1] approved by the Working Committee will be made by those present. It is intended to be complete by itself. No speeches are therefore necessary. They are inadvisable, because the idea is abroad that people may indulge in loose talk when independence is in the air. These should understand that loose irresponsible talk is not independence, it is licence; it is not energy generated by love of freedom, it is froth to be thrown away as useless and harmful, whereas 26th instant isintended to be one of complete discipline, restraint, reserve, dignity and real strength. It would be good, if the declaration is made by whole cities, whole villages even as happened on that ever memorable 6th of April 1919. It would be well if all the meetings were held at the identical minute in all the places. In order that these meetings may be numerously attended, there should be house-to-house visits, there may be also leaflets circulated among the people. The villages may follow the customary method of advertising the time by the drumbeat. Those who are religiously minded may as before begin the day by ablutions and concentrating on the task before the country and the means for its fulfilment. They will therefore pass the day in doing some constructive work, whether it is spinning, or service of 'untouchables', or reunion of Hindus and Mussalmans, or prohibition work, or even all these together, which is not impossible. Thus a Hindu may get hold of an 'untouchable' and invite a Mussalman, a Parsi, a Christian, a Sikh to join in a spinning competition for a stated time, and then they may all go together for say one hour to hawk khadi which they can together buy to resell and then devote an hour to visit the neighbouring liquor shop and speak to the keeper about the evil of gaining a livelihood or making money by such means. They may also speak to the visitors to such places and wind up the day by attending the celebration. It should be remembered that Sunday is also the flag-hoisting day. The day may be well begun by attending the flag-hoisting ceremony.

If the Congress Committees and Congress workers are serious about the resolution, I hope they have already begun enlisting new members and inviting old ones to pay their subscription for the current year. In doing so, they, the old and the new ones, should be informed of the change in the creed and its implications. And if Congress Committees begin methodical work, they will materially help in reorganizing the Congress on a solid foundation, and the people who may then attend the celebration on the 26th will be not merely curiosity-mongers or idlers, but men and women gathered together

[1] *Vide* "Things to Remember for 26th", 23-1-1930.

with a fairly full knowledge of what they are about and determined to fulfil their common purpose. It ought to be possible to make the demonstration universal and yet ensure perfect orderliness throughout the whole length and breadth of India. Nothing untoward or unintended should happen on this Independence Day. In order to enable the central office to gauge the strength of the movement andthe Congress organization, it is as necessary to send an absolutely accurate account of the day's doing in each village or locality as it is to have the celebration itself. A full and faithful record of the day's happenings will enable the Working Committee that is to meet on the 14th February to shape its future course.

All this work requires whole-timers, in other words, permanent paid volunteers. Part-time workers are good and valuable only when and where there is at least one whole-time worker. I have already suggestedthat there should be a permanent Provincial Service Board formed for the U.P. which should draw up a workable constitution and immediately set about enlisting recruits. Let us hope that there will be no time lost in bringing into being this very desirable organization. If it works efficiently and honestly it will serve as a model for the rest of the provinces.

Young India. 16-1-1930

230. WHAT NOT TO DO?

In my opinion it was a very wise thing the Lahore Congress did in shifting the time for holding the Congress session from December to some time in February or March.[1] December is no doubt a fine month for the leisured and well-to-do class. For the poor who flock in ever-increasing numbers to the Congress, December is a trying month in most parts of India. They sleep anywhere in the open with the scantiest clothing, and succumb to influenza or the like. The railway concessions during Christmas holidays benefit the poor but little. The Reception Committees are always hard put to it to make the delegates and the visitors comfortable. And lastly it was necessary to break the spell that December had cast over Congressmen. It was originally chosen for the sake of lawyers and others who were connected with the administration of the country and therefore its exploitation. It was therefore but meet, that with the passing of the independence resolution the unbecoming tradition was broken. The Congress has been generally regarded as a pantomime, a holiday show. If independence is to be achieved, it must cease to be a show, it has to

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Subjects Committee, A.I.C.C.-I", 1-1-1930.

become a stern reality.

It was therefore unfortunate that the Subjects Committee refused to reduce its own number or that of the delegates.[1] But I do not wonder. Even the Congress has become a venue for coveting office, distinction and worse. There is so much scramble for office in the various committees, that election disputes have become a painful feature in our national organization. A coach and four is sought to be driven through every section of the Congress constitution in order to seize office. Well has it therefore been said, that reduction of the organization may work contrary to the expectation, and may even increase the corruption instead of removing or decreasing it. I am fully aware of the danger, and am also aware of the fact that what is needed is not external remedies but internal purification. It behoves us however to use every legitimate external means to purify the Congress, and make it an efficiently working irresistible organization which it undoubtedly can become if it honestly works up to its creed.

I am looking forward to Karachi[2] with great hope. It may be that by that time I may be in a better place, it may be that the whole face of the land will be changed by the time the Congress meets. But I must review the past for the sake of the future as we may expect in the ordinary course.

Though the reduction of the number of delegates is not in the hands of the Sind workers, there are many other things that they can do to make the next session less unbusinesslike and much less expensive. A city of tents is an expensive affair for this country. Open grass sheds with half walls 10 feet apart for comparative privacy are likely to be the cheapest contrivance. Nothing of the material to be used for the purpose will be valueless after use. The ground chosen should be levelled and well laid out, and open squares may be given on hire for the use of delegates and visitors who may make their own arrangements if they so wish. A small committee of experts should set to work now to consider the best and the cheapest method of building a temporary city. No kitchen should be run by the Reception Committee, but licences may be issued to selected patriotic caterers who would serve meals according to provincial tastes and at pre-arranged rates both *a la carte* and table d'hote. We waste much effort and more money in trying to do things in amateurish fashion, and what is more, we lose each year the experience gained in the past.

[1] *Vide* Resolution No. 4, "Draft Resolutions for A.I.C.C., Lahore", 26-12-1929.

[2] Which was selected as venue of the next Congress session

Had it not been so, at the end of forty-five years of experience, the holding of the annual assembly should be child's play, and the arrangements should be a pattern of perfection. As it is, the Reception Committees in their respective cities where the session is held have a most anxious time, and thank theirstars if everything goes tolerably well. Sanitation, waterworks, medicine, ambulance, catering, building should all be departmentalized and done through honest, nationalist, licensed contractors. Thus alone could corporate national life be built up. The nation's representatives must be able to deliberate and transact national work in perfect peace and quiet.

The exhibition too should not be a side-show to defray the expenses of the Reception Committee which should easily pay its expenses if it did its work in a businesslike manner. The contractors I have in mind should, through the licence fees they would pay, defray all the expenses of the central office which under the plan suggested by me would only have to do the work of inspection of the several departments and general management. The exhibition must be entrusted to an expert body. I have suggested the A.I.S.A. But if there is prejudice against that body, some other agency may be chosen. To be of real educative value it must satisfy the following conditions:

1. There should be no games and pantomimes. These are amply provided during festivals and by other agencies.

2. Nothing but swadeshi goods should be admitted. Only that may be called swadeshi which is wholly made in India by indigenous skill and for predominantly Indian shareholders where the concern is controlled by a company. Thus a harmonium whose parts are imported and only put together in India is in no sense swadeshi, nor is cloth woven from foreign yarn swadeshi, nor cloth manufactured by a company whose shareholders are principally foreigners.

3. Not all swadeshi goods may be exhibited. Only those should be exhibited that are struggling for existence and that are of real benefit to the nation. Thus cigars, indigenous intoxicating liquors and drugs, obscene indigenous literature, patent medicines, mill-cloth, etc., will be excluded.

4. The spinning-wheel and khadi will be the centre round which all the other exhibits will find place.

Such an exhibition will be of the greatest value to the nation, and if it has a permanent organization behind it, it would provide education of the highest economic value to the masses. Let the Sind workers profit by the mistakes of the past. They have more than twelve months in front of them. Let them not suspend their thinking or their action because something untoward or serious

or grand is going to happen. It is a sign of panic to suspend ordinary and necessary business in anticipation of an uncommon event.We may hold ourselves in readiness for it even as we do or ought to for the supreme event, death, without interrupting the even tenor of life. If the Congress is to be the instrument for achieving independence, it must be disciplined, compact, united and responsive to the needs of the dumb millions.

Young India, 16-1-1930

231. POSERS

A political science student of the Benares Hindu University has asked the following questions[1].

This student's questions are just the ones that used to be asked in 1922. But they do not surprise me. Very few readers besides the questioners themselves go through answers to questions. Out of them only a few are satisfied. Many others forget these questions and answers. Therefore every time such questions are asked it is the duty of the editor to go on answering them.

The first refers to the lack of a spirit of sacrifice. This is true and at the same time not true. True, because in the immediate environment of the questioner the spirit of sacrifice is not apparent, and, for this reason, he assumes that the spirit of sacrifice is lacking in the whole country. It is not true, because, if the spirit of sacrifice were entirely absent, any national work would have been impossible. Even admitting that there is plenty of room for the growth of the spirit of sacrifice, my experience tells me that the spirit does exist in the country and it is ever growing. There is not the least doubt that in order to achieve complete independence the spirit of sacrifice should be more intense. Regarding the wearing of khaddar the commercial attitude, which the student speaks of, must progressively make room for a benevolent and altruistic outlook.

Regarding the triple boycott, I see more of ignorance in what the student has written because the Congress has not revived the boycott of schools and courts. I do believe, however, that these three boycotts are necessary. To say that someone or the other will go to the Councils, then why should Congressmen not do so, is not right.

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had argued that the triple boycott expected a degree of sacrifice which the people were not prepared to make, that even if successful, the boycott was not going to overthrow the Government and that the earlier satyagraha movements seemed to succeed because they did not challenge the very existence of the Government.

Liquor shops will not remain empty, so must we enter them too? If we consider the Councils useless or harmful, why should we attend them? Now take the case of the schools. I see dangerous self-deception in the view that boys will remain uneducated by quitting Government schools. Boys did not remain uneducated before the advent of the British rule. It is a fact that before the British rule was established in India, primary education was much more widespread than it is today and higher education too was imparted in a great measure. Have we fallen so low today that by ending Government-sponsored education our education will come to an end? This student should know that national schools exist in India today and thousands of youths are receiving national education there. Even if all the boys boycott Government schools they need not remain uneducated. Yes, they will certainly not have grand school buildings built with the money soaked in the blood of the poor nor will they receive an education that destroys independence.

Regarding the boycott of law-courts it must be admitted that it is a difficult task. The attachment to them that is evident today is harmful to the interests of the country. We have to rest satisfied only by trying to remove this attachment as far as possible. But it must not be forgotten that the courts are the main refuge of every Government. Therefore, the more lawyers, plaintiffs and defendants shun them, the better. We should lower the prestige of the courts day by day.

In the end, it should be remembered that any institution or person rests on its or his own prestige only. The Government gains prestige through the Councils, schools, courts, etc. Boycott undermines prestige. Therefore the Government's prestige is lowered by the preaching of boycott. This is most natural. No Government can remain stable on the strength of the gun alone.

To say that the people of Bardoli earned less and lost more on account of the satyagraha is not the truth. They themselves know that they gained immensely by the satyagraha. If one wants tangible proof of this one can visit Bardoli and see for oneself even today. It is true that a hard struggle will have to be waged for attaining freedom; but this is neither regrettable nor surprising.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 16-1-1930

232. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SABARMATI,
January 16, 1930

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
ALLAHABAD

RECEIVED WIRES. FIGURES RETESTED. FOUND ACCURATE. YOU MAY ADD SHORT RESOLUTION IF NECESSARY.

GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-A, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

233. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SABARMATI,
January 16, 1930

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
ALLAHABAD

YOUR LETTER RECEIVED AFTER DESPATCH WIRE. RESOLUTION DRAFTED BY YOU WHOLLY UNNECESSARY. REVISED DECLARATION SHOULD BE CIRCULATED. TARIFF RATIO SHOULD READ TWENTY-FOUR TIMES AND EIGHT TIMES RESPECTIVELY LESS HEAVY THAN IN UNITED STATES AND GERMANY.

GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-A, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

234. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

January 16, 1930

BHAI GHANSHAYMDASJI,

I have both your letters. I am so busy these days that there is no time to answer letters. I shall make my comments after going through the speech. I too had a talk with Malaviyaji Maharaj. Things can improve much if he inculcates tolerance in the other party. Do whatever you can in this direction.

We shall discuss your health when we meet.

I have no anxiety on Keshu's account.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6181. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

235. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

AHMEDABAD,
January 17, 1930

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ALLAHABAD

READING THREE O'CLOCK THIS MORNING PARA REGARDING CUSTOMS CURRENCY. DO NOT LIKE IT. IF DECLARATION NOT SENT PRESS PARAGRAPH REFERRED SHOULD READ QUOTE CUSTOMS AND CURRENCY HAVE BEEN SO MANIPULATED AS TO HEAP FURTHER BURDENS ON THE PEASANTRY. BRITISH MANUFACTURED GOODS CONSTITUTE BULK OF OUR IMPORTS. CUSTOMS DUTIES BETRAY CLEAR PARTIALITY FOR BRITISH MANUFACTURES AND REVENUE FROM THEM IS USED NOT TO LESSEN BURDEN ON THE MASSES BUT FOR SUSTAINING HIGHLY EXTRAVAGANT ADMINISTRATION. STILL MORE ARBITRARY HAS BEEN MANIPULATION OF EXCHANGE RATIO WHICH HAS RESULTED IN MILLIONS BEING DRAINED AWAY FROM THE COUNTRY UNQUOTE.[1]

GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-A, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] This was substituted in the final declaration; *vide* "Things to Remember for 26th", 23-1-1930.

236. LETTER TO S. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

SABARMATI,
January 17, 1930

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The prayer bell is just ringing 4 o'clock early morn. Preoccupations compel me to burn after-midnight oil. I can no longer delay acknowledging your angry letter. Though I have an answer to every one of the statements you have made I must restrain myself. I can only give you my assurance that my affection for you is no more diminished because of political differences than for Malaviyaji for the same cause. But this I cannot prove by words. Future conduct alone can prove the truth of my assurance. I did not write my letter to hurt your feelings. I wrote in order to be true to you, a friend and associate, and to myself.

We shall know each other better when the mists have rolled away.

Meanwhile I anticipate your forgiveness for offence given utterly unconsciously.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S. Srinivasa Iyengar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

237. SPEECH AT HOSTEL BOYS' CONFERENCE, AHMEDABAD[1]

January 17, 1930

My idea of a hostel is that it should be like a family. The superintendent and the students living in the hostel should live as members of one family. The superintendent should take the place of the mother and the father of the students. If the superintendent's wife is also staying there the husband and wife together shoulddischarge the functions of mother and father. Right now the conditions prevailing in the country are pitiable. Unless the superintendent observed *brahmacharya* his wife can never function as a mother in the hostel. She may not be even approving of her husband working in the

[1] Delivered at the request of hostel superintendents who wanted to know Gandhiji's views on an ideal hostel for students

hostel. She may be putting up with it just because he earns a certain amount as salary. Even if he stole some ghee from the hostel, his wife would be happy that her own children would have a little more ghee to eat. This is not to suggest that all superintendents belong to this category. But our whole society today is in a state of disintegration.

There are not many ideal hostels such as I have described either in Gujarat or in India. If there are, I have not come across them. India has very few such institutions outside Gujarat. Students' hostels are a special product of Gujarat. This can be attributed to many causes. Gujarat is a land of businessmen. It is natural for those who earn money from business to be prompted to build hostels for the students of their community. It was much later that these institutions acquired the big name of hostels. Those poor creatures called them just "Boardings". They did not aim at anything more than providing for the boys facilities of food, etc. When cultured superintendents came to be associated with these institutions, they began imbuing idealism into them.

Personally I consider hostels more important than schools. A great deal of knowledge which cannot be acquired in school can be acquired in a hostel. A school may be imparting some formal education. But the student is not able to digest what he learns in the school though he may retain something in his mind in spite of himself. At the moment I am picturing only the dark side of schools. The strength of mind that can be developed in boys and girls in a hostel can never be done in a school. In the final analysis my idea is that the hostel itself should be the school.

The hostels which the rich businessmen built turned out to be of a different type. Having established the hostels, they kept themselves aloof. The superintendents too felt that once the boys had taken their meals and gone to their schools or colleges their work was done. Had the businessmen and superintendents taken sufficient interest, the hostels would not have remained as they are. We must now study their conditions and find out what measures could be taken to improve them. We can completely transform this institution if we are keen about it. We can accomplish through the hostels much that cannot be achieved in the schools. Let the superintendent not confine himself to looking after the accounts. Let him also keep himself in touch withwhat the students learn at school, and look after them with care like his own children or disciples. Today the conditions are such that in many places the superintendent is not even aware of what the students eat or drink.

A serious form of moral indiscipline prevails in our hostels. I

specially want to draw your attention to it. The thing is usually winked at. The superintendents are hesitant and hide it thinking that it would spoil the name of their hostel. They feel that they cannot expose the misconduct of the students and do not inform even their parents. But the superintendent never succeeds in keeping it a secret. The superintendent may be thinking that nobody knows anything about it. But the stink spreads in no time. Experienced superintendents must have understood what I am hinting at. I caution the superintendents in this regard. They must be vigilant and realize their duty thoroughly. Those who cannot keep the hostels pure must resign and relieve themselves of this work. It is a reflection on the fitness of the superintendents if, by staying in hostels, the students become cowards, their strength of character is destroyed, their thinking becomes disorganized and their intellect becomes sterile.

I can cite many instances in support of my statement. I receive heaps of letters from students. Many of the letters are anonymous and I consign them to the waste-paper-basket. But I do take in the substance of these letters. Many simple-hearted students give their names and addresses and ask me to suggest solutions. When the new habit is being formed, they are not comforted by the superintendents and helped to fight against it. On the contrary they are encouraged. Later when they awaken they find themselves wanting in will-power. They have no control over their minds nor the strength to follow the advice from someone like me.

Some persons who can handle the work of a superintendent quote high prices for themselves. They have widowed sisters to be supported and children to be married. Such superintendents, even if they are worthy, are unacceptable to us. There are others who think that they are meant for this very work. They would not be attracted by any other work. And some have come forward who are ready to work getting in return just enough for their subsistence.

It should be clear from what I have said that a superintendent should be almost a perfect man. Only such a man who can impress the students and enter into their hearts can become a superintendent. To collect boys together in the absence of such a superintendent would be a terrible thing.

So much for the superintendents. Now something for the students. If the students forget themselves and look upon the superintendent as their servant and believe that all their work should be done by servants and they may do nothing themselves, they are making a mistake. The students should realize that the hostel is not meant for their pleasure. Let them not think that they are paying for

their stay in the hostel. Whatever they may be paying is not sufficient to meet the expenses of the hostel. The donors who have built the hostels are under the impression that students benefit by being pampered, that they would be doing their duty by providing them comforts. Under such a belief they provide comforts to the students; but quite often this results in violation of dharma rather than observance of dharma. The students, on the contrary, are spoilt and tend to depend on others. Let the students who can use their brains calculate the rent of the hostel premises and the salaries of the servants and the superintendent. All that is not recovered from the students. They pay only for their board. In some hostels, even food, clothes and books are provided free. The businessmen would be doing well if they took an undertaking from the boys that they would serve the country after completing their studies. But they are so generous that they do nothing of the kind. But the students should realize that if they do not do something in return for what they have been getting, it is like enjoying stolen wealth. I had learnt a poem by Akho Bhagat when I was a young boy:

"Enjoying stolen wealth is like eating unprocessed mercury."

Students will not become brave by enjoying stolen wealth. They will become miserable. Let all of you here resolve that you would not eat the food that is offered as charity. You may well take advantage of the facilities provided for you. But when you have gone back from here you should give notice to the superintendent that all the servants should be relieved forthwith. Or, if you feel pity for the servants, let them be continued; insist on doing all your work yourself. Resolve to do all the work yourself, including the cleaning of lavatories. Then alone will you become householders and will be able to serve your country. Today people do not even have the strength to support themselves and their wives and mothers by any honest occupation.

Anyone who believes in his pride that since he has secured employment he is following an honest occupation should consider why he is getting Rs. 75 as a clerk in the mill and that a worker with a large family gets only Rs. 12. If he examines this carefully he will know that he does not deserve a higher salary and that it is not an honest earning. All of us in the cities eat stolen food. We are all commission agents working for a giant gang of plunderers. Ninety-five per cent of what we collect from the people we send away to foreign countries. Any earning from such an occupation is, as good as no earning at all.

If you have faith in what I have told you today start practising it immediately.

A hostel is like a hermitage. All those who live there must be *brahmacharis.* Even those who are married should have renounced their family life. If you spent some 5 to 10 years in such ideal conditions you would be able to do for India whatever you might wish to do. The sacrifice for freedom has begun. But what can anyone depending on charity contribute towards it? Someone like me would be ready. But I would be carrying with me bread made from *jowar* or *bajra* while you will want spicy food every evening! Some of you may be proud enough to say that everything will be done when the time comes and that there is no need to worry right now. I have seen many people talking in this vein. But when the time comes they hang back. We have already had the experience of how people behave in jail after they are arrested. It is well known to everyone how the people who had gone to jail during 1920-21 had created a row over food and what practices they had resorted to. We had all been put to shame by it. Do not be under the impression that you can learn to make sacrifices all at once. It can be learnt only after long training. Anyone who is eager to make a sacrifice but has not tried to overcome his subtle craving for pleasures is betrayed by them at the critical moment. This is proved by experience. If you students would but understand you would find that what I have said today can be easily put into practice,

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-2-1930

238. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, SABARMATI ASHRAM[1]

[On or after *January 17, 1930*][2]

I am glad that you all want me to speak to you on the meaning of and the necessity for prayer. I believe that prayer is the very soul and essence of religion, and therefore prayer must be the very core of the life of man, for no man can live without religion. There are some who in the egotism of their reason declare that they have nothing to do with religion. But it is like a man saying that he breathes but that he has no nose. Whether by reason, or by instinct, or by superstition, man acknowledges some sort of relationship with the divine. The

[1] This was mainly addressed, after the evening prayers, to hostel boys who had participated in a students' conference at the end of the National Educational Week. They sought Gandhiji's advice on the necessity of making congregational prayers compulsory, a proposal which was earlier rejected at the Conference.

[2] The National Educational Conference concluded on January 17, 1930.

rankest agnostic or atheist does acknowledge the need of a moral principle, and associates something good with its observance and something bad with its non-observance. Bradlaugh, whose atheism is well known, always insisted on proclaiming his innermost conviction. He had to suffer a lot for thus speaking the truth, but he delighted in it and said that truth is its own reward. Not that he was quite insensible to the joy resulting from the observance of truth. This joy however is not at all worldly, but springs out of communion with the divine. That is why I have said that even a man who disowns religion cannot and does not live without religion.

Now I come to the next thing, viz., that prayer is the very core of man's life, as it is the most vital part of religion. Prayer is either petitional or in its wider sense is inward communion. In either case the ultimate result is the same. Even when it is petitional, the petition should be for the cleansing and purification of the soul, for freeing it from the layers of ignorance and darkness that envelop it. He therefore who hungers for the awakening of the divine in him must fall back on prayer. But prayer is no mere exercise of words or of the ears, it is no mere repetition of empty formula. Any amount of repetition of Ramanama is futile if it fails to stir the soul. It is better in prayer to have a heart without word than words without a heart. Itmust be in clear response to the spirit which hungers for it. And even as a hungry man relishes a hearty meal, a hungry soul will relish a heartfelt prayer. And I am giving you a bit of my experience and that of my companions when I say that he who has experienced the magic of prayer may do without food for days together but not a single moment without prayer. For without prayer there is no inward peace.

If that is the case, someone will say, we should be offering our prayers every minute of our lives. There is no doubt about it, but we erring mortals, who find it difficult to retire within ourselves for inward communion even for a single moment, will find it impossible to remain perpetually in communion with the divine. We therefore fix some hours when we make a serious effort to throw off the attachments of the world for a while, we make a serious endeavour to remain, so to say, out of the flesh. You have heard Surdas's hymn.[1] It is the passionate cry of a soul hungering for union with the divine. According to our standards he was a saint, but according to his own he was a proclaimed sinner. Spiritually he was miles ahead of us, but he

[1] Where is there a wretch
So loathsome and wicked as I?
I have forsaken my Maker,
So faithless have I been.

felt the separation from the divine so keenly that he has uttered that anguished cry in loathing and despair.

I have talked of the necessity for prayer, and therethrough I have dealt with the essence of prayer. We are born to serve our fellowmen, and we cannot properly do so unless we are wide awake. There is an eternal struggle raging in man's breast between the powers of darkness and of light, and he who has not the sheet-anchor of prayer to rely upon will be a victim to the powers of darkness. The man of prayer will be at peace with himself and with the whole world, the man who goes about the affairs of the world without a prayerful heart will be miserable and will make the world also miserable. Apart therefore from its bearing on man's condition after death, prayer has incalculable value for man in this world of the living. Prayer is the only means of bringing about orderliness and peace and repose in our daily acts. We inmates of the Ashram who came here in search of truth and for insistence on truth professed to believe in the efficacy of prayer, but had never up to now made it a matter of vital concern. Wedid not bestow on it the care that we did on other matters. I awoke from my slumbers one day and realized that I had been woefully negligent of my duty in the matter. I have therefore suggested measures of stern discipline and far from being any the worse, I hope we are the better for it. For it is so obvious. Take care of the vital thing and other things will take care of themselves. Rectify one angle of a square, and the other angles will be automatically right.

Begin therefore your day with prayer, and make it so soulful that it may remain with you until the evening. Close the day with prayer so that you may have a peaceful night free from dreams and nightmares. Do not worry about the form of prayer. Let it be any form, it should be such as can put us into communion with the divine. Only, whatever be the form, let not the spirit wander while the words of prayer run on out of your mouth.

If what I have said has gone home to you, you will not be at peace until you have compelled your hostel superintendents to interest themselves in your prayer and to make it obligatory. Restraint self-imposed is no compulsion. A man, who chooses the path of freedom from restraint, i.e., of self-indulgence, will be a bondslave of passions, whilst the man who binds himself to rules and restraints releases himself. All things in the universe, including the sun and the moon and the stars, obey certain laws. Without the restraining influence of these laws the world would not go on for a single moment. You, whose mission in life is service of your fellowmen, will go to pieces if you do not impose on yourselves some sort of discipline, and prayer is a necessary spiritual discipline. It is discipline

and restraint that separates us from the brute. If we will be men walking with our heads erect and not walking on all fours, let us understand and put ourselves under voluntary discipline and restraint.

Young India, 23-1-1930

239. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 18, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. I understand what you say. You may write your diary in any manner you think proper. It is very strange that you have not yet been able to overcome your constipation. Do you have to take pills? I think your handwriting has improved a little, but there is room for further improvement.

This place has become overcrowded.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9274

240. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

January 18, 1930

The description which you give of the site is beautiful indeed, but the lack of facility of water is in my eyes a serious drawback. Even if the supply of water was assured, I do not wish to start anything new this year. The plan of the struggle that is taking shape in my mind is of a fight of such magnitude that no one can say how it will end. It is also possible that ultimately I do not succeed in thinking out an effective plan and decide to do nothing. But 75 against 25 the chances are that my inner voice will prompt me to fight and not to drop the plan.

When you return to Bombay, where do you intend to stay? You can maintain the improvement only if you take a small bungalow in a suburb and live there. Would you not like to take a small house on the outskirts of a fine village and go there to live? And serve the village in every way you can ?. . .

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 98-9

241. LETTER TO BARJORJI BHARUCHA

January 19, 1930

BHAISHRI BHARUCHA,

Here is the message for the *Kaiser-e-Hind*[1]*:* 'No sincere Englishman need be afraid of free India.'

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary . S.N. 32579/54

242. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM SABARMATI,
January 18, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I got your letter. Now build up your body and make it quite sturdy. I, on my part, had written to you advising you to go to Vijapur at the earliest but you did not get the letter in time. It was good that you came over. Ramdas wants Nimu to be sent over soon. You also must have received a similar letter. We have here somebody who can escort her. You may therefore write and suggest to me if Nimu can come here by herself, you would let her do so, or you would arrange for somebody to accompany her here or, whether Manilal should be sent from here to bring her. Write whichever alternative suits you best. Write to me regularly telling me how you are keeping. Kashi must be quite fit.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI PRABHUDAS GANDHI
UDYOGALAYA
VIJAPUR, "VIA" KALOL

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33005

[1] Gujarati daily on Bombay

243. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

January 19, 1930

BHAI BENARSIDAS,

At present I do see no need to make any changes in the profession and the treatment of immigrant Indians. Moreover, a discussion would serve no purpose.

I am fully informed about the anti-Andrews happenings in America.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

SJT. BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2561

244. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

January 20, 1930

DEAR SATIS BABU,

Either a p.c. or none. I have yours. It is well you are now going thoroughly into the Utkal khadi business. When I was in Utkal, I had spoken to the workers about their laziness and ignorance in the presence of Niranjan Babu. I hope both of you are well. Have you not sent Rs. 2,500 to Abhoy Ashram? Have you got the amount? I have a reminder from the AA[1].

Yours,

BAPU

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

KHADI PRATISHTHAN

SODEPUR

From a photostat: G.N. 1614

[1] Abhoy Ashram

245. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

ASHRAM,
January 20, 1930

MY DEAR C. R.,

I had your letter. But I am so immersed in work that I have no time to attend to correspondence to my satisfaction.

I cannot agree that any purpose can be served by my touring. And what matters if those who believe in Councils enter them? We shall not prevent them even if we entered upon a hurricane campaign. It is for me and should be for you enough that the Congress is no longer interested in the legislatures. Touring for that purpose can only create bad blood. Vallabhbhai too agrees.

What I am doing is to think hard about civil disobedience. I have some idea of what I want to do. This much seems to me to be clear that civil disobedience must not be started under the Congress aegis, it must be started by me. Further I have not yet been able to see. I want you to come here a few days before 14th Feb. I am asking Jawaharlal to do likewise.[1]

I hope you are keeping well in health.

[PS.]

Mahadev is taking 7 days' fast for peace of mind and Durga for health. They are both doing well.

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/55

246. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

SABARMATI,
January 20, 1930

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have your letter. I did not realize you were so bad. In the circumstances there is no occasion for touring. After all we have said our say. Let those who wish seek election.

I do not think they will begin arrests so soon. But if they do, all the better. They are not likely to take all of us at the same time. If they do and if they put us all together, we shall have a rare time of it.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 10-1-1930.

I am giving careful hints in *Young India* and *Navajivan*.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I am not writing to Jawaharlal today. The messenger is being detained for the time being.

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/57

247. LETTER TO ANANDANAND

SABARMATI,
January 20, 1930

BHAISHRI ANANDANAND,

Vallabhbhai shares with me your letters to him. About the Chamber let it be what it will. Bomanji has wired to say that he is coming on Friday.

I am writing this letter with regard to your suggestion for a tour. I do not think it would do any good to undertake a tour to campaign against the legislatures. If anything, I think it might do harm. It would certainly lead to more bitterness. Those who are keen on entering the legislatures will do so in any case. Let them. Such a campaign was necessary in 1920-21 because the idea was new then. The aim then was to get those who were in the legislatures to leave those bodies. This time everybody has decided that they should leave legislatures. Since the Congress is free from that bother it has rid itself of the corruption.

My task is to organize civil disobedience. I am thinking how to plan it. I cannot do that if I undertake a tour. I have got to be in the Ashram for that purpose. I have already made some decisions. The whole picture is not yet clear.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/56

[1] *Vide* "Independence Day", 16-1-1930 and "Posers", 16-1-1930.

248. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

January 20, 1930

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I got your letter. If meetings are prohibited, I think it would be best not to hold them in Indian States or in localities in which they are prohibited.

What can we do about the report in *Arjun*? What do you suggest ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 6071. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

249. NOTE TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Silence Day [*January 20, 1930*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Tell me about the following things either at mealtime or during the afternoon or in the evening whenever you get time.

To whom did you give the bangles on the *Rentia Baras*[2] day? Why did you give them?

To whom are biscuits served in the afternoon? What is the quantity served if the persons concerned do not eat ghee and sugar?

Does anyone supervise the children's spinning class? If no one does so, somebody should be asked to do it from today. What is the duration of the class and when does it commence?

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–6: *G.S. Gangabehnne*, p. 34

[1] As in the source

[2] *Bhadarva Vad* 12, Gandhiji's birthday according to the Gujarati calendar, celebrated as Spinning Day

250. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN SHAH

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 21, 1930

CHI. SHARDA,

Your original name becomes you best. A Sharada[1] would understand through a mere hint why a well-wisher forbids a thing. One reason for doing that is provided by you three sisters. You have all said the same thing in your letters, but instead of signing the same letter you wrote three separate letters and thereby wasted your time and money, which really belong to the people. A satyagrahi's time or money is not his own. He has offered up everything to the Lord. The second reason is that.[2] a woman of careful habits does not write important letters with a pencil. I had to stop in this letter at the point where my handwriting starts, and complete it today, the 21st.

The real reason is that I think it desirable that you should wait for some time. It is not necessary for everyone to join a struggle. This being my view, I do not send a wire.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2840. Courtesy: Fulchand K. Shah

251. LETTER TO DEVCHAND U. PAREKH

January 21, 1930

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your letter. I do believe that, if the Thakore Saheb of Morvi offers to use his good offices to settle the dispute, they should slacken the satyagraha. I don't understand why Manilal is so impatient. Moreover, Fulchand, too, is there to help them. Write to me from time to time. If possible, you should even run down to Malia.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5724

[1] Goddess of learning
[2] From here the letter is in Gandhiji's handwriting.

252. LETTER TO KUNVARJI PAREKH

Wednesday [*January 22, 1930*][1]

CHI. KUNVARJI,

Rami and the children arrived here quite safe. I got your letter after the train for Viramgam had left. I have not, therefore, been able to send anyone there. Write to me from time to time and keep me informed about your condition.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9714

253. LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA DESAI

Wednesday [*January 22, 1930*][2]

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA,

I was happy to read the letter written by you three sisters. Write to me like that from time to time. Instead of my going there, why should not you all come here? How are your studies progressing? You ought not to give up spinning. How could you ever think of that?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7462

[1] From the postmark
[2] From the G.N. Register

254. LETTER TO BENARSILAL BAZAJ

January 22, 1930

CHI. BENARSILAL,

I have a letter from Jamnalalji and another from Rukmini's paternal grandfather. *Phalguna Shukla* 2 is an auspicious day. It falls on Sunday, March 2. Regard this date as fixed for the weddingwhich will be solemnized in the Ashram. I hope it suits you. If you wish to write anything please do.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRIYUT BENARSILAL

NEW SWADESHI MILLS RAILWAYPURA

AHMEDABAD

From Hindi: C.W. 9301. courtesy: Benarsilal Bazaj

255. INTERVIEW TO "THE DAILY EXPRESS"

AHMEDABAD,

January 22, 1930

The great trial of strength in this country is at hand. Events now depend entirely on the British Government, for we shall not in any circumstances, now or in the future, participate in any conference unless it is called to consider our complete secession from Great Britain. The day has passed when we could accept anything less than that.

We are engaged, as the world must know, in a struggle for the absolute severance of the present British connection and we shall not rest until that aim has been achieved.

We have begun now. You shall find in every section of the land millions of our men and women in their cottages spinning hour after hour. This means a nationwide boycott of foreign-spun cloths, and in time must mean the end of British predominance in an industry which is the principal reason for the presence of your British troops in this country.

Asked to outline the details of his plans for the execution of his crusade of civil disobedience, Gandhiji replied:

I am not yet sure of the form it will take. I have come here and in my seclusion I hope to evolve a plan of civil resistance which will

not cause destruction or involve bloodshed, but which will be large enough to make the impression I desire. That is all I am doing here, otherwise, as you can see, I am spinning.

He lapsed here into a long theoretical explanation of the necessity for careful preparation. He was not certain that the precise moment had arrived which would ensure the success of this first step in the coming revolution, but it would be a guide—the measure of its success would be a guide to him. He went on to explain:

It is absolutely necessary for the person controlling such a movement to keep himself in tune with the voice of his followers, and therefore he must be as impervious to outside influences as he has to be sensitive to every little thing that goes on within.

I asked Gandhi if it was not possible that he might yet be able to avoid the extreme measures to which he was proceeding. When he replied promptly in the affirmative and said that the slightest gesture from the British Government would work the miracle, I inquired what that gesture in his view should involve. He replied:

Any real gesture from the British Government and the British people, or any unexpected combination, spontaneous and healthy among ourselves, which would in itself constitute sufficient pressure to compel world attention, and not merely the attention of the British people.

That meant, of course, combination with extremists, but what kind of gesture from Britain?

Supposing the British Cabinet were to say tomorrow, 'We are prepared to consider and further a scheme of Indian independence', and produce an atmosphere, as it can certainly do, congenial to the framing of such a scheme, that would automatically prevent any further preparation for civil disobedience.

Does not the proposed Round Table Conference offer you an opportunity for full discussion in this respect?

He answered with some emphasis:

No, not in any shape or form. Because the Round Table Conference scheme so far as I have understood it from authentic sources is designed to discuss anything between a form of government infinitely less than the present and Dominion Status. There is, for example, this proposition made by responsible ex-officials that powers hitherto enjoyed by the people of India, such as they are now, should be taken away, because these critics actually suggest that we have proved ourselves unworthy of the powers. Therefore, such a Round Table Conference, where even the capacity of India for full freedom is in question, has no place for me whatever. It is entirely out of the question that I should attend. I can only attend a conference which is pledged not to consider how much power India should or should not

enjoy, but to consider ways and means of framing a scheme of complete independence. This is the only conference I could consider for a moment attending.

I asked Gandhi bluntly at this point whether he seriously believed his methods would frighten the British Government into subjection to his demands. It all depends on the response of the people. I am confident, but I am not certain. I think the time is ripe now to formulate my plans. It is my own limitations that make it impossible for me to penetrate the surrounding darkness.

In other words, the atmosphere round me is depressing, and there are undoubtedly forces of violence to be seen on the surface which I may not be able to control.

But, as I have said, true non-violence which I advocate might yet be able to circumvent and rise superior even to these forces, but being myself an imperfect instrument I may not be able readily to lay my hands on the proper form of non-violence which will meet these circumstances. It is this menacing force of violence which threatens the land which must first be sterilized.

Gandhi emphasized here that civil disobedience was the extreme limit of action that he would countenance, declaring it to be the limit of non-violence, anything more involving a programme of violence, to which he would never be a party.

Replying to a further question, he said:

The strength of the extremists is not great today, but is growing.

But supposing the extremists got out of hand and the responsibility for bloodshed becomes theirs, and therefore yours—what then? Supposing the British Government are then forced to take the action which the British public will demand of them, and they make arrests and arrest you—what then? He replied solemnly:

I am not afraid of arrest and it is quite open for the British Government to precipitate the reign of violence as they have done in the past. What the consequences then will be I cannot say but such a step would, in my opinion, be the sheerest folly.

Then your view of the immediate future is what?

The immediate future is, for a man so optimistic as I am, quite bright, but if I were to calculate the pros and cons and to enter into the arithmetic of the situation, I must confess that the problem is insoluble. I do not know what is going to happen. I am not in the happy position of a general who knows beforehand the whole of his plan, who works according to a time-table, and can profess to be able to forecast results with certainty.

But I can assure you of this much. The trial of strength in India

is now at hand. The outcome depends entirely on the British Government.

There are two courses which they may pursue. One way is the old panicky way which will lead to Dyerism, to frightfulness and mad repression, and then anarchy. The other course is the way of the wise man who reflects on his past sins, repents, and retraces his steps. Let us hope.

The Searchlight, 12-2-1930

256. TO THE INDIAN CRITICS

I know that you are angry with me for my having been the supposed breaker of the negotiations with the Viceroy. You think I have made a hash of it. If I have done so, I was driven to it. I was disinclined to join the party. But I was wanted if only for my supposed influence over the masses. I went and spoke in accordance with the dictates of the inner voice. This ability to hear and obey that voice gives me whatever power I may have and has enabled me to render some little service to the country. You will not have me at this time of my life to change my course and listen to any other voice but the inner.

And what is the offence that I have committed in common with Pandit Motilalji? Not to depart from the Congress instructions, not to depart from the terms of the now famous Delhi manifesto? It is well known that the terms mentioned therein, no matter by what name they are called, were binding on all Congressmen. We broke on the very central point of Dominion Status. I make bold to say that the country has gained by the correct attitude Pandit Nehru and I adopted.

Surely nothing will be lost by the Congress abstaining from participation in the Conference if the British Cabinet mean well. Let those that have faith attend, and if they bring anything worth looking at from the independence standpoint, the Congress will capitulate. The days of being satisfied with costly toys are over. It is the substance that India wants.

British domination must cease.

British administration, that is costing the country far beyond its means, must end now, not in the remote future.

The vast majority of Congressmen believe that this cannot be had through any round table conference unless a proper atmosphere for it is created. Diplomatic language that may mean one thing for the British voter and another for the Indian peasant will never make India free. The British people must realize that the Empire

is to come to an end. This they will not realize unless we in India have generated power within to enforce our will. The English have paid dearly for their freedom such as it is. They therefore only respect those who are prepared to pay an adequate price for their own liberty. The real conference therefore has to be among ourselves.

Instead therefore of looking at the independence movement with hostility, the critics should bless it even when they cannot identify themselves with it.

But perhaps they do not mind the independence propaganda so much as they mind the idea of civil disobedience. Will they have an armed rebellion instead? The Congress cannot stay its hands after having passed the independence resolution. It was no bluff, no showy nothing. It was a deliberate definite change in the Congress mentality. It is then as much up to the critics as to me to devise ways and means of achieving independence.

There is undoubtedly a party of violence in the country. It is growing in strength. It is as patriotic as the best among us. What is more, it has much sacrifice to its credit. In daring it is not to be surpassed by any of us. It is easy enough to fling unkind adjectives at its members, but it will not carry conviction with them. I am not now referring to the frothy eloquence that passes muster for patriotism I have in mind that secret, silent persevering band of young men and even women who want to see their country free at any cost. But whilst I admire and adore their patriotism, I have no faith whatsoever in their method. They and I are as poles asunder. India's salvation does not lie through violence. I am convinced that their methods have cost the country much more than they know or will care to admit. Let them study the reforms which they claim were a result of their activity. Assuming that their claim is just, let them remember that the reforms have cost more than the country could at all pay. But they will listen to no argument however reasonable it may be, unless they are convinced that there is a programme before the country which requires at least as much sacrifice as the tallest among them is prepared to make. They will not be allured by our speeches, resolutions or even conferences. Action alone has any appeal for them. This appeal can only come from non-violent action which is no other than civil resistance. In my opinion it and it alone can save the country from impending lawlessness and secret crime. That even civil resistance may fail and may also hasten the lawlessness is no doubt a possibility. But if it fails in its purpose, it will not be civil resistance that will have failed. It will fail, if it does, for want of faith and consequent incapacity in the civil resisters. This argument may not appeal to the critic. I shall be sorry, if it does not. Even so, he will

perhaps admit the purity of my motive.

We must cease to dread violence, if we will have the country to be free. Can we not see that we are tightly pressed in the coil of violence? The peace we seem to prize is a mere makeshift, and it is bought with the blood of the starving millions. If the critics could only realize the torture of their slow and lingering death brought about by forced starvation, they would risk anarchy and worse in order to end that agony. The agony will not end till the existing rule of spoliation has ended. I would have waited if I could have been convinced that the condition of the masses has undergone progressive amelioration under British rule. Alas, he who runs may see that it has progressively deteriorated under that rule. It is a sin, with that knowledge, to sit supine, and for fear of imaginary anarchy or worse, to stop action that may prevent anarchy, and is bound, if successful, to end the heartless spoliation of a people who have deserved a better fate.

Young India, 23-1-1930

257. TO ENGLISH FRIENDS

To the many known and still more unknown English friends, I owe perhaps a word on the eve of what may end in being a life-and-death struggle. In spite of myself I tried to believe in the possibility of self-respecting Congressmen attending the proposed Round Table Conference. I had my doubts because I knew that the Congress, though it is admittedly the most representative organization in the country, had no adequate power behind it for vindicating its position. It could therefore be represented at the Conference, only if it knew that the British Government and people had, either through a generous impulse or through the pressure of world opinion, decided to grant immediate Dominion Status, and that the Conference was to meet in order to discuss not anything the different groups liked but to discover the contents of a Dominion Status constitution. The Viceroy made it clear in no uncertain terms that he could give no such assurance. Such being the case, consistently with its past declaration and with the national interest of which the Congress claims to be the principal trustee, clearly it could not allow itself to be represented at the Conference. But it may be asked: Granting that the Congress could not in the circumstances be expected to send its representatives, where was the necessity for going from Dominion Status to independence? The answer is plain. Organizations like men, if they are to command respect and grow, must have a sense of honour

andmust fulfil their promises. Well, the Congress promised at Calcutta to change the creed to independence if Dominion Status was not forthcoming by the 31st of December 1929. It did not come nor was there any prospect of its coming for certain in the immediate future. The Congress therefore had no other course left open, if it was not 'to commit suicide', but to declare its immediate objective to be complete independence instead of Dominion Status.

But what is there intrinsically wrong in wanting independence? It is not possible for me to understand this opposition from sober Englishmen to the enunciation of an inalienable right of every nation to be independent except on the supposition that even they, the sober Englishmen, do not want India to be free.

'But you are not fit for independence', say some. Surely it is for us to judge whether we are fit or not. And granting that we are not, there is nothing wrong or immoral in our aspiring after independence and in the attempt rendering ourselves fitter day by day. We shall never be fit by being taught to feel helpless and to rely upon the British bayonet to keep us from fighting among ourselves or from being devoured by our neighbours. If we have to go through the agonies of a civil war or a foreign invasion, it won't be a new thing in the history of nations that have struggled for freedom. England has gone through both the experiences. After all freedom is not a hot-house growth.

It is open to those English friends who are sincerely anxious for India's welfare to assist India in her fight for freedom and on her terms. She knows best what she needs. Complete independence does not mean arrogant isolation or a superior disdain for all help. But it does mean complete severance of the British bondage, be it ever so slight or well concealed. The opposition therefore to the demand for immediate independence raises the strongest suspicions about the good intentions of those who have conceived the idea of the Conference. It must be clearly understood that the largest nationalist party in India will no longer submit to the position of a dependent nation or to the process of helpless exploitation. It will run any risk to be free from the double curse.

Is it not now intelligible why, notwithstanding its undoubted risks, I am planning some sort of civil disobedience so as to get together all the non-violent forces and see if it stems the tide of onrushing violence? Hatred and ill will there undoubtedly are in the air. They are bound sooner or later to burst into acts of fury if they are not anticipated in time. The conviction has deepened in me that civil disobedience alone can stop the bursting of that fury. The

nationwants to feel its power more even than to have independence. Possession of such power is independence.

That civil disobedience may resolve itself into violent disobedience is, I am sorry to have to confess, not an unlikely event. But I know that it will not be the cause of it. Violence is there already corroding the whole body politic. Civil disobedience will be but a purifying process and may bring to the surface what is burrowing under and into the whole body. And British officials, if they choose, may regulate civil disobedience so as to sterilize the forces of violence. But whether they do so, or whether, as many of us fear, they will, directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously, provoke violence, my course is clear. With the evidence I have of the condition of the country and with the unquenchable faith I have in the method of civil resistance, I must not be deterred from the course the inward voice seems to be leading me to.

But whatever I do and whatever happens, my English friends will accept my word, that whilst I am impatient to break the British bondage, I am no enemy of Britain.

Young India, 23-1-1930

258. THINGS TO REMEMBER FOR 26TH

1. Remember that 26th is the day *not* to declare independence but to declare that we will be satisfied with nothing less than complete independence as opposed to Dominion Status so-called. Hence the word swaraj in the Congress constitution now means complete independence or *purna* swaraj.

2. Remember that on 26th we do not start civil disobedience, but merely hold meetings to declare our determination to attain *purna* swaraj and to that end to carry out Congress instructions that may be issued from time to time.

3. Remember that since we desire to attain our end by non-violent and truthful means only, we can do so only through self-purification. We should therefore devote the day to doing such constructive work as lies in our power to do.

4. Remember that at the meetings there are to be no speeches. There is to be mere recitation and approval by show of hands of the declaration distributed among all the Congress committees. The recitation should be in the provincial language.

For ready reference here is the text of the declaration[1] to be

[1] For Gandhiji's draft, *vide* "Draft Declaration for January 26", 10-1-1930.

made on 26th:

We believe that it is the inalienable right of the Indian people, as of any other people, to have freedom and to enjoy the fruits of their toil and have the necessities of life so that they may have full opportunities of growth. We believe also that if any government deprives a people of these rights and oppresses them, the people have a further right to alter it or to abolish it. The British Government in India has not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom, but has based itself on the exploitation of the masses, and has ruined India economically, politically, culturally and spiritually. We believe therefore that India must sever the British connection and attain *purna* swaraj or complete independence.

India has been ruined economically. The revenue derived form our people is out of all proportion to our income. Our average income is 7 pice (less than two pence) per day, and of the heavy taxes we pay, 20 per cent are raised from the land revenue derived form the peasntry and 3 per cent from the salt tax, which fals most heavily on the poor.

Village industries, such as hand-spinning, have been destroyed, heaving the peasantry idle for at least four months in the year, and dulling their intellect for want of handicrafts, and nothing has been substituted, as in other countries, for the crafts thus destroyed.

Customs and currency have been so manipulated as to heap further burdens on the peasantry. The British manufactured goods constitute the bulk of our imports. Customs duties betrary clear partiality for British manufactures, and arevenue from them is used not to lessen the burden on the masses but for sustaining a highly extravagant administration. Still more arbitrary has been the manipulation of the exchange ratio which has resulted in millions being drained away form the country.[1]

Politically, India's status has never been so reduced as under the British regime. No reforms have given real political power to the people. The tallest of us have to bend before foreign authority. The rights of free expression of opinion and free association have been denied to us, and many of our countrymen are compllled to live in exile abroad and cannot return to their homes. All administrative talent is killed, and the masses have to be satisfied with petty village offices and clerkships.

Culturally, the system of education has torn us from our moorings and our training has made us hug the very chains that bind us.

Spiritually, compulsory disarmament has made us unmanly, and the presence of an alien army of occupation, employed with deadly effect to crush in us the spirit of resistance, has made us think that we cannot look after ourselves or put up a defence against foreign aggression, or even defend our homes and families form the attacks of thieves, robbers and miscreants.

We hold it to be a crime against man and God to submit any longer to a rule that has caused this fourfold disaster to our country. We recognize, however, that the most effective way of gaining our freedom is not through violence. We will therefore prepare ourselves, by withdrawing, so far as we can, all voluntary association from the British Government, and will prepare for civil disobedience, including

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Jawaharlal Nehru", 17-1-1930.

non-payment of taxes. We are convinced that if we can but withdraw our voluntary help and stop payment of taxes without doing violence, even under provocation, the end of this inhuman rule is assured. We therefore hereby solemnly resolve to carry out the Congress instructions issued from time to time for the purpose of establishing *purna* swaraj.

Young India, 23-1-1930

259. HAS NON-VIOLENCE BEEN ABANDONED?

A friend writes:[1]

It is very improper of any editor to publish incorrect reports about someone in this manner, without proper investigation and verification. I have never said what has been quoted above. Non-violence is an integral part of my life; I can never forsake it. My faith in non-violence is growing day by day. I have also been getting visible proof of its success. Whatever I said regarding what people should do after my arrest is the exact opposite of what is quoted above. In other words, I said that if people should turn violent under these circumstances the adherents of non-violence should endeavour to restrain them. As for slavery, I said that if I were compelled to choose to be a witness to slavery or violence, I shall certainly choose to be a witness to violence. There is a vast difference between these words and what is published in the papers. There is no word in favour of violence in what I spoke. We are all witnesses to violent and other undesirable actions, even though it be unwillingly; but we have always been so and must remain so.

One lesson has to be learnt from the above letter, namely, when one hears or reads anything unusual about a well-known public servant or a public leader, it should never be believed without corroboration from him.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 23-1-1930

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had reported that some newspapers quoted Gandhiji as suggesting violent action in the event of his arrest.

260. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

[*January 23, 1930*][1]

I value your frank criticism[2]. But much of it is hasty. Its value lies in its honesty. You can certainly be with me on my walks.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

261. LETTER TO DR. ROMER

SABARMATI,
January 23, 1930

DEAR DR. ROMER,

Could you please repair the accompanying set[3] for Mrs. Gandhi? It slipped from her hand and broke.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4582

262. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 23, 1930

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

I got your letter. You need not worry. I will now set the matter right. You have not violated truth in any way. I can be blamed for an oversight, though I do not know what mistake I made. I distinctly remember that I told Pyarelal or Kusumbehn what should he done. If either of them made a mistake, it should be regarded as mine. This is not formal justice but real justice.[4]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 202

[1] From the addressee's diary
[2] Of the functioning and atmosphere of the Sabarmati Ashram
[3] Of dentures
[4] *Vide* also "My Notes", 2-2-1930, sub-title, "Attention to Detail".

263. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM SABARMATI,
January 23, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. Chhaganlal and Ramniklal are immediately leaving the Ashram because of the new rules. I do not want to go deep into the reasons for their leaving as I do not have the time. I have received your letter regarding Chandradutt. He is not at all ready to go to Vijapur. He started crying when I talked to him about it. What was the use of sending him against his wishes? So I am keeping him here. I will see what I can do. I am unable to look after him. From what you write, it seems that the situation is difficult. I hope you do know that Bhagirathji is here.

Keep making efforts to improve your health. Do not worry about us. I will go through the *Ramayana*. Ba sends her blessings.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32946

264. TELEGRAM TO NALINI RANJAN SARKAR

[On or before *January 24, 1930*][1]

MY CONGRATULATIONS TO SUBHAS AND OTHER FRIENDS[2]. SEND ME FULL PARTICULARS. TELL ME ALSO WHAT STEPS BEING TAKEN.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 25-1-1930

265. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 24, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. You may come whenever you wish to. I shall be here up to the 2nd of March, if I am not arrested before then. On the 2nd is Rukhi's wedding.

[1] The report is datelined "Calcutta, January 24".
[2] On their conviction

How did Kamala develop constipation? Never forget that it should not be tolerated even for a day.

Gangabehn must be giving you all the news about the ebb and flow here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9275

266. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 24, 1930

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I got your letter. Somehow or other your digestion must improve. There are several remedies, but ultimately you have to find one yourself.

As regards work, I would advise you to perform cheerfully whatever task is assigned to you. You will derive true strength out of that. Do discuss with Jamnalalji if you feel the need of doing anything in particular. He will delegate that job to you if he approves. Even otherwise have no worry. This is the duty of a true soldier. Our welfare lies in the welfare of the organization and only the man at the helm must judge the interests of the organization, even though the judgment may not be the right one.

You can certainly pay Vinobaji the boarding expenses incurred by the Ashram on you and you must not hesitate to inquire from Jamnalalji what you owe him for the expenses incurred in his kitchen. He will not only not mind it but will appreciate it.

Prabhudas has reached Vijapur. He shook off his fever only after reaching there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2373

267. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

January 25, 1930

CHI. JAMNALAL,

What advice should I give you regarding Shantikumar? Do whatever you think is right. Do nothing beyond your capacity. I may however say this, that the step I am contemplating this time will be the final step. It will be either the greatest mistake of my life or its purest act. I for one have no doubt at all about its purity. I am examining myself as carefully as I can. My self-confidence has grown greatly.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/60

268. LETTER TO ANANDANAND

January 25, 1930

BHAISHRI ANANDANAND,

I have your letter. I do not know what agitation Malaviyaji is carrying on. But if it is against the Congress he can hold no position in the Anti-Untouchability Committee.[1] I have no doubt about this. Let Jamnalalji trace Malaviyaji's speech against the Congress and send it to him, and, like a son to his father put to him his doubt about the propriety of his remaining in the Anti-Untouchability Committee. Malaviyaji is not hurt by such questions, and even if he is, he has a great capacity for suppressing his feelings. I had thought that he would never carry on an agitation against the Congress for whatever reason. It is necessary to clear this matter at once.

I have still not understood Rajaji's suggestion regarding Vallabhbhai and myself touring. Boycott of the Assemblies is a necessary but negative and not a very important part of our new programme. The important and constructive part is civil disobedience. And for that I do not think it necessary for anybody to tour the country. On the contrary, those who regard non-violence as an essential means for the attainment of independence should avoid touring. If you do not follow this, ask me for further clarification, for it is necessary that Jamnalalji, you and others should understand it well.

The letter up to here was dictated at five o'clock in the morning.

[1] Set up by a resolution passed by the Calcutta Congress in 1928. Jamnalal Bajaj was appointed to look after the work of the committee.

Afterwards I got your letter regarding Shantikumar. I am writing to Jamnalalji today leaving the matter to his decision.

I note what you say about Nataraj. Many will come round now. This is no new experience for me in my life. We should go on doing what seems right to us. You are however doing well in meeting all these classes of people.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/59

269. NAVAJIVAN KARYALAYA

A full report of the activities of the Navajivan Karyalaya accompanies the present number of *Navajivan.* I invite to it the attention of every lover of the journal. The reader will please consider it pardonable if he notices anywhere in the Report a sense of pride resulting from self-satisfaction. This Karyalaya came into being in circumstances that no one had ever imagined. It got the services of Swami Anand, who helped to give the Karyalaya the stability which it now has. My purpose in drawing attention to the Report is to show that a business, run with honesty and in a spirit of service but in a businesslike manner, can succeed, and to dispel the illusion that one cannot afford to be entirely honest in business.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-1-1930

270. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

ASHRAM,
January 27, 1930

MY DEAR C.R.,

I cannot give you the letter I would love to. Every ounce of energy is taken up in attending to the details of life here.

I do not still see the necessity of touring. In view of the impending C.D. I do not want to create occasions for other resistances. Let the critics have a clear board as far as platform propaganda is concerned. More of this when we meet. I want you to be here at least on the 12th if not much earlier. I want you to understand me of today as thoroughly as you can.

Yes, I wrote to Srinivasa, Satyamurti and Subhas. S.N. has sent me a book of choice adjectives in reply. S.M. has sent an

argumentative apology. Subhas's is a good reply. Anyway I am glad I wrote to them.

I feel that I have now a scheme of effective C.D. The picture is not yet complete. But I think I am nearing completion.[1] I am thinking of nothing else. You must keep your health in full working order.

What a strange letter from *The Hindu*? Yet it did not surprise me.

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/62

271. LETTER TO A. SUBBIAH

ASHRAM,
January 27, 1930

MY DEAR SUBBIAH,

I grieve for you and your wife, for you must naturally have felt it. Death causes no sorrow in me now. It has become to me averitable friend. Comparing death with birth, death may almost be an event for rejoicing and birth for sorrow. Death may be a deliverance, birth is imprisonment. Even a living baby dies after and never before . . .[2] If there are still more debts to pay, there is another body to inhabit.

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/63

272. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

January 28, 1930

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

I thank you for your note[3]. I said that if everything was in order I should try to help the friends. I had heard however that Sir Purshottamdas was unwilling to shoulder the burden. If my recollection is correct[4], the friends were also to raise an equivalent amount. I had entrusted the whole thing to Mr. Baban Gokhale

[1] For the resolution adopted by the Working Committee on Civil Disobedience and Gandhiji's comments, *vide* "Never Faileth", 20-2-1930.

[2] The rest of the sentence is obscure in the source.

[3] About Gandhiji's promise to secure for N. D. Bhosle a fund of Rs. 15,000 for a hostel for the depressed class students in Bombay; *vide* "Letter to N. D. Bhosle", 17-3-1928.

[4] The source has "correction".

who was not well impressed. If you could spare the time,I would like you to send for and see Mr. Gokhale. I would welcome your active intervention in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Jayakar's Private Papers, Correspondence File No. 422. Courtesy: National Archives of India

273. PREFACE TO "KATHAKUSUMANJALI[1]*"*

UDYOGA MANDIR, SABARMATI,
January 29, 1930

This is a collection of articles by Sjt. Valji Desai. All readers of *Navajivan* know by now the labour which preceded the writing of each one of these articles. They were not written to serve a journalist's immediate aim, but were written to serve permanent public good. Hence they deserve to be published in book form. The subjects dealt with in these articles will be of great help to anyone seeking *satsang*[2]. From the point of view of language, too, their value is no less, for Valji Desai commands a unique style.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9276. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

274. CLEARING THE ISSUE

I have never sought to delude Indian opinion into the belief that a definition of purpose, however plainly stated, would of itself by the enunciation of a phrase provide a solution for problems which have to be solved before that purpose is fully realized. The assertion of a goal, however precise its terms, is of necessity a different thing from the goal's attainment. No sensible traveller would feel that a clear definition of his destination was the same thing as the completion of his journey.

* * *

But though the Conference cannot assume the duty that appertains to His Majesty's Government, it will be convened for the purpose, hardly less important, of elucidating and harmonizing opinion, and so affording guidance to His Majesty's Government on whom the responsibilitymust subsequently devolve of drafting proposals for the consideration ofParliament.

The foregoing titbits from His Excellency the Viceroy's address

[1] Literally, 'a floral tribute in the form of stories'
[2] Company of righteous or religious men

to the Assembly[1] make it as clear as possible that Dominion Status was never to be the immediate objective of the proposed Round Table Conference. And why need any of us doubt that even Lord Birkenhead will concede that Dominion Status may be India's distant goal? Where time is of essence, it makes a difference not in degree but in kind. And when that difference in kind was discovered at the interview at Delhi[2], there was no meeting ground left between the Viceregal mentality and the Congress mentality. The Viceroy would not mind waiting for the grant of Dominion Status till every millionaire was reduced to the level of a wage-earner getting seven pice per day. The Congress will today, if it had the power, raise every starving peasant to a state in which he can at least get a *living* even equal to a millionaire's. And when the peasant is fully awakened to a sense of his plight and knows that it is not *kismet* that has brought him to the helpless state but the existing rule, unaided he will in his impatience abolish all distinctions between constitutional and unconstitutional, even violent and non-violent means.

The Congress expects to guide the peasant in the right direction.

The Viceroy's speech has cleared another thing. We now know why Sir John Simon has made the discovery that the question of Indian princes should be made an integral part of his precious inquiry. A pure creation of the British Government, unlike those in British India, bereft even of speech, they are to be pawns in the game of exploitation to be played at the Conference. The Conference room will ring with the name of Dominion Status whilst further burdens will be sought to be heaped upon the devoted heads of the starving millions. Let those who wish join a game where one party plays with loaded dice.

His Excellency is offended over the Congress resolution on financial obligations! Why? Be it noted that the Congress has referred the examination of the justness or otherwise of these obligations to an impartial tribunal. Is it a crime to question the propriety of some of these obligations? Lord Irwin's impatience over that most innocent resolution is typical of the British mentality. Thousands of Englishmen honestly believe that all obligations have been incurredvoluntarily and for India's good, and that it is the height of ungratefulness even to suspect unfairness about any of the transactions of the Secretary of State for India.

Prominence has been exclusively given in that speech to the

[1] On January 25

[2] On December 23

unity which is impossible of full achievement so long as a foreign rule divides the varied interests and unconsciously or consciously plays one against another for the purpose of perpetuating itself. The Congress is well out of the tangle. It can afford even to be in a minority if need be. But the demonstrations of 26th are an unmistakable proof that the Congress still remains the one body to rule the hearts of the masses. Thank God, they have unity in their starvation. This Government is wholly impartial in the discharge of its duty of extracting the last pie from the peasantry whether Hindu or Mussalman or any other.

I make the same 'childish' offer (almost) to Lord Irwin that I had the honour of making to Lord Reading.[1] Let him and the British Cabinet initiate the following reforms:

1. Total prohibition,
2. Reduction of the ratio to ls. 4d.,
3. Reduction of the land revenue to at least 50% and making it subject to legislative control,
4. Abolition of the salt tax,
5. Reduction of the military expenditure to at least 50% to begin with,
6. Reduction of the salaries of the higher grade service to one half or less so as to suit the reduced revenue,
7. Protective tariff on foreign cloth,
8. The passage of the Coastal Traffic Reservation Bill,
9. Discharge of all political prisoners save those condemned for murder or the attempt thereat by the ordinary judicial tribunal, withdrawal of all political prosecutions, abrogation of Section 124 A, the Regulation of 1818 and the like, and permission to all the Indian exiles to return,
10. Abolition of C.I.D. or its popular control,
11. Issue of licences to use firearms for self-defence subject to popular control.

This is by no means an exhaustive list of pressing needs.[2] But let the Viceroy satisfy these very simple but vital needs of India.He will then hear no talk of civil disobedience, and the Congress will heartily participate in any conference where there is perfect freedom of expression and demand.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 1-2-1922.

[2] These were the terms which Gandhiji communicated to Bomanji who undertook to negotiate with Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald. (*The History of the Indian National Congress,* Vol. I, p. 366)

Our disunion is no bar to these reforms. The Congress is not agitating for a shadow. Hundreds of thousands of people do not gather to the annual session of the Congress in order to secure independence in mere name, they gather in the hope that the glow of freedom, when it comes, will be felt in the remotest village. The greatest evil is undoubtedly the economic pressure and the corroding feeling of inferiority which the people experience in every walk of life. We are like Sir Narayan Chandavarkar's goat whom, when released from airy surroundings to which she was forcibly taken, the deceased Knight saw frisking about on a Poona road being led by her mistress to her dungeon home. We refuse to be satisfied with the airy peace, we would rather risk the dark anarchy if perchance thereby we can be released from the grinding pauperism.

The threat of dire vengeance uttered against civil and criminal resisters is idle and therefore uncalled for. There is this in common between both. Both have counted the cost. They are out for suffering. Would that their means were also common. Unfortunately instead of being complementary, they neutralize each other. I know that the non-violent revolutionary like me impedes the progress of the violent revolutionary. I wish the latter would realize that he impedes my progress more than I do his, and that I, being a Mahatma, if left unhampered by him, am likely to make greater progress than he can ever hope to make. Let him realize too that he has never yet given me a fair chance. Some of them no doubt have been most considerate. I want full suspension of his activity. If it will please him, I am free to admit that I dread him more than I dread Lord Irwin's wrath.

His Excellency the Viceroy deserves the thanks of every Congressman for having cleared the atmosphere and let us know exactly where he and we stand.

Young India, 30-1-1930

275. DIFFICULTY OF PRACTICE

The reader should read Rev. B. de Ligt's letter printed elsewhere in this issue[1]. I welcome the letter as of a fellow-seeker in the field of ahimsa. It is entitled to respectful consideration. And such friendly discussion leads to a clearer conception of the possibilities and limitations of non-violence.

In spite of the greatest effort to be detached, no man can altogether undo the effect of his environment or of his up bringing. Non-violence of two persons occupying different positions will not

[1] Under the title "Cat and Mouse"

outwardly take the same shape. Thus the non-violence of a child towards his father would take the shape of conscious and voluntary submission to his violence when he loses his temper. But if the child has lost his temper, the father's submission to the child's violence would be meaningless. The father would take the child to his bosom and instantaneously sterilize the child's violence. In each case it is of course assumed that the outward act is an expression of the inward intention. One who having retaliation in his breast submits to violence out of policy is not truly non violent and may even be a hypocrite if he hides his intention. It should also be remembered that non-violence comes into play only when it comes in contact with violence. One who refrains from violence when there is no occasion for its exercise is simply unviolent and has no credit for his inaction.

Dominion Status ceasing to be a factor, the points raised from that imaginary event now need not be discussed except to say, that the enjoyment by India of Dominion Status would have meant India, then become an equal partner, instead of being ruled by it, dominating the foreign policy of Great Britain.

My general and hearty approval of the Nehru Report must not be taken to mean endorsement of every word of it. My approval need not carry endorsement of the constructive programme for the future governance of free India. My non-violence would prevent me from fighting my countrymen on the many questions that must arise when India has become free. A mere academic discussion can only hamper the present progress of non-violence. I know however that if I survive the struggle for freedom, I might have to give non-violent battle to myown countrymen which may be as stubborn as that in which I am now engaged. But the military schemes now being considered by the great Indian leaders are highly likely to appear even to them to be wholly unnecessary, assuming that we have come to our own demonstrably through non-violent means deliberately chosen and used.

My collaboration with my countrymen today is confined to the breaking of our shackles. How we would feel and what we shall do after breaking them is more than they or I know.

It is profitless to speculate whether Tolstoy in my place would have acted differently from me. It is enough for me to give the assurance to my friends in Europe, that in no single act of mine have I been consciously guilty of endorsing violence or compromising my creed. Even the seeming endorsement of violent action by my participation on the side of Britain in the Boer War and the Zulu revolt was a recognition in the interest of non-violence of an inevitable

situation. That the participation may nevertheless have been due to my weakness or ignorance of the working of the universal law of non-violence is quite possible. Only I had no conviction then, nor have any now, of such weakness or ignorance.

A non-violent man will instinctively prefer direct participation to indirect, in a system which is based on violence and to which he has to belong without any choice being left to him. I belong to a world which is partly based on violence. If I have only a choice between paying for the army of soldiers to kill my neighbours or to be a soldier myself, I would, as I must, consistently with my creed, enlist as a soldier in the hope of controlling the forces of violence and even of converting my comrades.

National independence is not fiction. It is as necessary as individual independence. But neither, if it is based on non-violence, may ever be a menace to the equal independence of the nation or the individual as the case may be. As with individual and national independence, so with the international. The legal maxim is equally moral: *Sic utere tuo ut alienum non laedas.* It has been well said that the universe is compressed in the atom. There is not one law for the atom and another for the universe.

Young India, 30-1-1930

276. NOTES

BENGAL PATRIOTS

My congratulations to Sjt. Subhas Bose and his companions on one year's rigorous imprisonment for having dared to serve the country. Bengal may be rent into many divisions and parties. But Bengal's bravery and self-sacrifice can never wane. The only way the country can react to these imprisonments is to fill the prisons to overflowing till the Government has a surfeit of political prisoners. A few discharges occasionally obtained take the attention off the real thing which is to make such prosecutions impossible. That will only happen when either the British people have changed their viewpoint, or when we have, by filling the prisons honourably, made it profitless to imprison any more people. No government puts people in prison, if the punishment does not deter a single soul from so-called offence.

FORTY-FOUR DEATHS

Sjt. Benarsidas Chaturvedi and Pandit Bhavani Dayal send me the following wire:

Forty-four emigrants died on *Sutlej* returned West Indies. Bad diet, worse accommodation. Letter follows.

I await the letter. But the brief telegram is enough to show that there is hardly any improvement upon the old system after the happening of the tragedy that took place not long ago regarding such emigrants. The whole thing calls for a thorough investigation, and complete stoppage of all facilities to the countries that care not for the lives of those who labour for them.

LOCAL BOARDS

Sjt. Sasadhar Ganguly, a member of the Manbhum District Board and Purulia Municipality, writes:[1]

I heartily endorse the suggestion made in this letter. No municipality represented by nationalists can accept dictation as to the holidays to be observed. And it would be an insult to thememory of departed patriots if members stole in the observance of their memory under cover of another holiday. It is the right of every nationalist municipality and local or district board to maintain its own holidays.

Young India, 30-1-1930

277. MONSTROUS MARRIAGES

Shri Benarsidas Chaturvedi writes:

I draw your attention with great shame to the article "Surfeit of child-marriages in Mathura" which was published in the 30th December issue of *Mathuri Hitaishi.* These weddings took place in our Mathur Chaturvedi caste. It is the misfortune of our caste that girls of 2, 2_ and 3 years are given in marriage. There has been considerable agitation over this. The well-known leader Shri Radheylal Chaturvedi, who belongs to our caste, tried very hard but these child-marriages could not be prevented. Last year an eight-month-old girl and a 15-month-old girl were given in marriage. One does not know how to reform these people. It must be pointed out that we, the Chaturvedi community, consider ourselves the highest Brahmins. We consider it a sin to eat food cooked even by other Brahmins.

What else can the marriages described by Benarsidasji be called than monstrous? It is sad that those who perpetrate such marriages continue to be respectable. This creates many difficulties in thwarting them; and when scriptures are quoted in their favour, the difficulties multiply. However, satyagraha can become a sure means of overcoming all kinds of tyranny. Always and under every

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had asked whether members of local bodies should resist dictation from bureaucracy and suffer the consequences.

circumstance we may not have the strength to resort to satyagraha or we may not know how to employ it. This is a different matter. It points to the limitations of the satyagrahi, not of satyagraha.

In the above circumstances every person can resort to one method. The family in which such marriages are recognized should be boycotted and no help of any kind should be expected of it. For example, if a father wishes to get his little daughter married, or if he wishes to sell her, then, in that case, the boys and girls of that house, or at least any one of them who has the courage, must leave the father's house and should accept no help whatever from him. If this is done it will surely have some effect on the father's heart. Even if there is none, those who have left the father's house will escape from the sin. And let them remember that the ultimate result of such a sacrifice can only be good. I have cited one method of satyagraha in this case only as an example. According to the circumstances every satyagrahi can find other ways and means for himself.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 30-1-1930

278. LETTER TO RAJA MAHENDRA PRATAP

January 30, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

Just a line to thank you for your letter. I am too preoccupied to say more just now. I know that you are doing all you can for the country.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

RAJA MAHENDRA PRATAP

KABUL

AFGHANISTAN

From a photostat: Raja Mahendra Pratap Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* also "The U. P. Tour-IX", 14-11-1929.

279. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 30, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

Your criticism of the poet's praise of the wicked has not appealed to me. It is an expression not of Tulsidas's charity but his satire. It is a condemnation of the wicked. It commends the company of the good and non-co-operation with the wicked. This is shown by every quatrain and every couplet of this group of verses.

The one on meeting causes great pain.

The other on parting takes away one's life.

What does this suggest? Hence, though your effort is commendable and your imagination good, the writing needs improvement in certain places. You must be going ahead with the other cantos.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/65

280. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

SABARMATI,
January 30, 1930

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

I have your letter. I was glad to know that you were able to find work in the Congress office. Now we shall only be able to meet when your work brings us together. If I stay out of jail for any length of time, you must keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Jayaprakash Narayan Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

281. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

[*January, 1930*][1]

Well written[2] but this expensive note-book is of foreign make, I fear. You must learn to be thrifty . One pice ill spent is so much gone out of the pockets of the poor where it should belong.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

282. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

February 1, 1930

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

I have your sweet letter. It was a great day the 26th. You always have my blessings. Sing away.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 9613

283. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 1, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. Since you are coming shortly, I do not write anything in this letter. This time I am thinking of providing you a room near the place where I sit. The houses occupied by Jaisukhlal and Kashi have become vacant. They can accommodate a large number. "Hridaykunj"[3] is overcrowded just now. Perhaps you can sleep in it, but we shall think more about this after you come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9279

[1] From the addressee's diary

[2] The addressee had noted down in his diary what had motivated him to come to the Ashram.

[3] Gandhiji's cottage in the Ashram

284. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 1, 1930

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Your letter. Don't you lose heart like this If the climate of Vijapur suits you, most certainly go there; or go to Bardoli if that suits you. And during summer you can stay at Tadikhet. Your health must improve. If you are drawn towards Vijapur, come here and we shall discuss about Morvi too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2374

285. MY NOTES

THE KHAKHRECHI SATYAGRAHA

The Khakhrechi satyagraha was a simple one and on a modest scale. The demand put forward by the farmers was actually small, but the satyagraha owed itself to the cultivators' courage, which was remarkable for Kathiawar and indeed surprising for a principality that lies in a remote corner of the region. What deserved the notice of all the States was how the farmers had initiated the satyagraha on their own. Their demand was so just that no one could have opposed it. The injustice against which the satyagraha was aimed was obvious. It was a painful surprise that the Durbar made the cultivators suffer for about six weeks. When a batch of satyagrahis arrived there to assist these farmers, it was only doing its duty. The satyagrahis deserve compliments for going through their sufferings patiently with no violation of limits of propriety. One cannot say that at the end of this satyagraha the prince on his part had showed any grace. It is true that the farmers have been pacified by doing them some justice and a promise to do some more. If the prince desires congratulations on the point, he might have them. But according to my information, the prince's behaviour towards the volunteer corps lacked grace, decencyand courtesy. It does no honour to him that the members of the corps should have been banished from the territory in spite of their modest conduct, and insolently dealt with by the State police. It is an unpleasant fact that the victorious end of the satyagraha is not

followed by the sweetness which we should have expected. The people of Kathiawar have a right to expect from all the States there courteous conduct towards such public men as Sjt. Manilal Kothari and Sjt. Fulchand, so well known for their love of peace. The princes and the people both have a lesson to learn from this small-scale satyagraha.

CHILD-MARRIAGES

A Patidar youth writes:[1]

Many others must be in such a plight. I would advise all such persons to refuse firmly to get into the bonds of such a marriage and to suffer whatever consequences follow from the refusal. Such marriages are a sign of our weak minds. This weakness retards our growth socially, economically, politically and spiritually. If we should assert our mental strength in one field, its effect cannot but be felt in the others. Hence I particularly advise youths in such a plight not to submit themselves, whatever the cost, to evil customs like child-marriage which are a bane to the society. Let them however show the utmost courtesy in their conduct towards the elders and equally scrupulous regard for truth. Courtesy without full regard for truth is no courtesy. It is only flattery, it is hypocrisy, and, therefore, truly speaking, it is discourtesy.

FEASTS AFTER DEATH

The Secretary, Visnagara Nagar youth Association, writes:[2]

My note on the subject of child-marriage above applies in this case too. I hope that the deceased's father himself will understand his dharma and refrain from following the savage custom of giving a caste dinner on his son's death. If the father does not so refrain, let the Youth Association stick to its resolution, and let all the youths of the town of Visnagar support it. For the sake of their principle, youths ought to be, and remain, prepared to forgo the advantages of living in the family home and other monetary help received from their elders, or be ready to be boycotted by them.

ATTENTION TO DETAIL

Last December when I was in Wardha, the inmates of the Satyagraha Ashram gave me a piece of cloth of very fine count spun and woven by them. It was big enough for a khadi dhoti to be made

[1] The letter is not translated here. Marriages of the correspondent, aged 15, and his sister, aged 10, were being planned by their father.

[2] The letter is not translated here. The young men had decided to boycott the customary dinner after the death of a sixteen-year-old boy leaving behind a thirteen-year-old widow.

out of it. I could not bear the thought of taking it into personal use. Hence I thought of making money out of it. The cloth attracted the attention of Rameshwardas who offered Rs. 500 for it. He suggested that he would like me to give the five hundred rupees to the funds being collected for the Vidyapith rather than get it credited to any other account. Moreover, he put in the condition that in the Vidyapith account the money should not be shown and acknowledged in his name as was done;[1] if at all it should be shown as proceeds of the sale of the khadi cloth. I had accepted this suggestion, and promised to write, when sending the money to the Vidyapith, that the acknowledgement was to be as I have described here. My impression is that I had given instructions to write to the Vidyapith accordingly, but the sum has not been acknowledged in the manner desired and was shown as a donation by Sjt. Rameshwardas in the note published. He was uneasy at this. For one thing, he thinks that the credit of having made a donation to the Vidyapith is too much for him to accept. Moreover, he does not have the means to make such donations. He fears that some persons, happening to read the mistaken acknowledgement published in his name, might seek such other donations, and it would not be nice to have to disappoint them. Hence Rameshwardas desires the true facts to be published, which I do here. In this case, directly or indirectly, even if the donation was for propagation of khadi, the religious merit earned belongs to Rameshwardas alone. However, a person who is particular about the uprightness of his worldly transactions would of course ask for the correction desired by Rameshwardas. That has been made here and I hope it will satisfy him. And let me take this opportunity to tell the well-wishers of the Vidyapith that the purse of the Vidyapith has not yet been filled and that they should fill it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-2-1930

286. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

February 2, 1930

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

You have written to me more or less regularly, but owing to your wanderings[2], I have not known where to write. Your latest has given me a deliberate address. I hope therefore this will reach you safely

[1] For Gandhiji's reply, *vide* "Letter to Rameshwardas Poddar", 23-1-1930.

[2] In Canada and U.S.A.

wherever you may be.

I have read your article in the *New Republic*. I am not taking it in *Young India*. It is therefore being sent to Brelvi[1] as you have desired.

The events have moved fairly fast. I see as clearly as never before that the spirit of violence must be dealt with by non-violent *action* if the situation is to be at all saved. There is the growing violence of the Government expressing itself in a variety of ways — the subtle exploitation and the necessary prosecutions as a consequence of that exploitation, for instance. You will note the extended meaning I have given to violence. Greed, pilfering, untruth, crooked diplomacy—all these are phases or signs or results of violent thought and action. The reaction of this violence upon the thinking educated people is remarkable and daily growing. I have therefore to deal with this double violence. To sit still at this juncture is stupid if not cowardly. I have made up my mind to run the boldest risks. I have arrived at this definite conclusion as a result of deep and prayerful thinking. Lahore revealed it all to me. The nature of the action is not yet clear to me. It has to be civil disobedience. How it is to be undertaken and by whom besides me, I have not yet seen quite clearly. But the shining cover that overlays the truth is thinning day by day and will presently break.

I hardly wanted to write this when I began this letter. But there you are.

Gurudev[2] passed a delightful two hours with me. He has aged considerably. We came nearer each other this time and I was so thankful. We had fully intended to meet again, but Bomanjee suddenly took him away to Baroda.

Manilal and his wife and baby are here. Ramdas has a baby. He is in Bardoli assisting Vallabhbhai's work. Mahadev is just now here.

We did not get your first volume[3] from the publishers. I asked the *Young India* people to purchase a copy. It is on my desk at present. I have read the first chapter. It is a fair presentation of my religious attitude.

Love.

MOHAN

[1] Syed Abdullah Brelvi, Editor of *The Bombay Chronicle*

[2] Rabindranath Tagore

[3] *Mahatma Gandhi's Ideas* (1929)

[PS.]

I do hope you have had your copies of *Young India.*

From a photostat: G.N. 997

287. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

SABARMATI,
February 2, 1930

DEAR BROTHER,

I have your two letters. Of course, if you could send someone to take charge of *Indian Opinion,* he will shape its policy not according to my instructions but most decidedly yours. I should not interfere at all.

I wish you had written the letter you intended to. You know how I prize your opinion. It would give me immense relief to be able to adopt your mode of thought. But it has been my misfortune often to differ from most valued friends. My consolation lies in the fact that the mutual affection has never suffered.

Yours sincerely,
M. K GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2192

288. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI[1]

February 2, 1930

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

Will you please accompany Motilalji?[2] It will serve a double purpose. You will treat him and help the treatment of the greater patient—our country. Please do not say 'no'.[3]

Tell Motilalji I shall reply to the conundrum of 11 points[4] when we meet. I have a complete answer.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Ansari Papers. Courtesy: Jamia Millia Library

[1] This should be read after "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", p. 445.

[2] He was going to Ahmedabad to attend the meeting of the Congress Working Committee.

[3] In his reply dated February 10, 1930, Dr. Ansari expressed his inability to go to Ahmedabad "owing to an unforeseen professional responsibility".

[4] *Vide* "Clearing the Issue", 30-1-1930 & "Some Implications", 6-2-1930.

289. LETTER TO PURSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

SABARMATI,
February 2, 1930

DEAR SIR PURSHOTTAMDAS,

There was no need for an apology for writing to me in English. My own impression is that the depreciation is largely manipulated and the letter from the India Office is intended to frighten us.[1] At the same time when the effect of the Congress resolution comes to be really felt, I know that all the gilt-edged securities are bound to suffer heavy depreciation unless the British Government underwrites all losses and is in a position to do so. I know that during the South African War even all the Republican notes, which 24 hours before the declaration of war were fully worth their face value, became scraps of paper and I understand that such was the case in :France and Germany during the late War. It would not surprise me, if we have to go through the same purgatory. The meaning to me of the resolution is that the poor people who have invested their little savings in these securities should not suffer and that the British Government should be made to take over such liabilities as are held by the tribunal referred to in the resolution to be unjust or unjustifiable.

Lastly, you will agree with me that the interpretation of the resolution as also the momentary depreciation are not of so much importance as what action India is going to take in the near future. We are so many and our case is so overwhelmingly justthat, if the other parties instead of belittling the Congress resolution and the Congress efforts were to endorse them, even if by reason of their weakness, they cannot make common cause with the Congress, we

[1] The addressee had written: "The repudiation of debts as approved of by the Indian National Congress at their Lahore session by their Resolution No. 10 has had considerable effect on the securities market both in England and in India as you are perhaps already aware. In the course of this week there has been published a letter addressed by the India Office to an investor in London, and I mention this to show what anxiety this Resolution of the Congress has created in the minds of investors in London.... My principal motive in addressing this letter to you is to draw your attention to the serious depreciation of Indian sterling securities in London since December last. . . . There is no doubt that an enormous amount of loss is being encountered by the present holders of Indian Government paper, either rupee or sterling, and it cannot be to the advantage of any school of politicians to make the innocent ones suffer. . . ." *Vide* also "Speech at Subjects Committee, A.I.C.C.-II", 1-1-1930 & "Some Implications", 6-2-1930.

should come to our own without much disturbance of the present life in the cities. A radical reshaping of the life in the cities which is today related to the false and artificial standard that is set up by the British administrators and that is out of all keeping with the life of the millions is in any case necessary, if the terrible burden of taxation upon the poor is to be removed. I hope you are not among those who believe that by a mere change of the constitution the starving ryots will find themselves in a position to pay a larger revenue than they are paying today or even to pay comfortably what they are paying now. In my opinion the only meaning of swaraj to these people will be an appreciable reduction in the taxes that they are paying directly and indirectly and fixity of tenure. This cannot happen until we, who are partners with the British administrators in the game of the exploitation of the masses, are prepared to change the angle of our vision even as we expect the former to do.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Purshottamdas Thakurdas Papers, File No. 96, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

290. LETTER TO WILFRED WELLOCK

February 2, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

You will forgive me for not being able to write to you earlier. It is impossible for me to deal with every friendly letter separately. I only hope that you are following carefully the pages of *Young India* in which I pour out my heart weekly.[1] It seems to me the problem is beyond Mr. Benn's[2] capacity even if he has the will. Justice will not be done to India till Britain realizes that India has been terribly wronged and that, therefore, she has to part with millions that are being yearly drained from India.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

WILFRED WELLOCK, ESQ.

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S. N. 32579/70

[1] *Vide* "Clearing the Issue", 30-1-1930 and "Some Implications", 6-2-1930.

[2] Wedgwood Benn, Secretary of State for India, who had made a statement that India already had Dominion Status in action

291. LETTER TO SONJA SCHLESIN

February 2, 1930

DEAR MISS SCHLESIN[1],

I have your letter. I do wish you will come in time to correct the many inaccuracies you have discovered in the volumes. It is highly likely that when your long leave is on I may be in one of the king's hotels. Even so, you will see my spirit incarnate in the Ashram. It certainly brings into prominence all my shortcomings and some of my good points.

Manilal, Sushila and Sita are here. Ramdas has also a baby[2]. I think I told you of the event. He is in Bardoli. Manilal is anxious to bewith me during these times. He is waiting for a word from Sorabji.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S. N. 32579/71

292. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

February 2, 1930

MY DEAR HENRY,

What shall I do? I fear I have again disappointed you by my action in Lahore. If you had lived here as I have during the past 15 years, you would have done what I have. No tinkering will cope with the daily loot that is going on here. You should treat my writings in *Young India* as my weekly letter to you and other friends. Anyway our love will stand the strain of any difference in views and action based thereon.

Yours,

BHAI

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S. N. 32579/72

[1] A Jewish woman who was Gandhiji's secretary for many years in South Africa

[2] Sumitra Gandhi

293. LETTER TO REVASHANKAR JHAVERI

February 2, 1930

RESPECTED REVASHANKARBHAI,

I have your letter. I have read the matter enclosed with it. I would advise you to issue a brief notice and hold a meeting here of the original donors. It will not matter if you cannot attend the meeting. The statement of accounts should be published and a copy of it should be sent to each donor along with the notice. I shall be present at the meeting and try to guide the proceedings. I shall try to get a resolution passed to hand over the amounts to the Vidyapith in accordance with certain rules and cautions which will be framed. If anyone suggests a better arrangement, we shall consider it at that time. Please let me know if you approve of this idea. I will then make a draft of the notice and send it to you. Get the rest done by Jamnadas. I do not wish to involve you in any worries or responsibilities in this matter. The proper thing would be to do what we can without too great an effortand then let things take their own course.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S. N. 32579/67

294. LETTER TO MANILAL KOTHARI

February 2, 1930

BHAI MANILAL,

If it is likely that the Maharaja of Jodhpur will see you, it would be better for you to go to Delhi. Even if you think of going to Jodhpur, a visit to Delhi would be worth while. I would not advise you to go to Jodhpur by defying the State's prohibitory order. I have often said that if we accept the policy of utmost peace, we have got to endure some consequences that follow from that policy. By all means let the subjects of Jodhpur do all they can. They can never do enough. But I believe that you can do nothing more than carry on correspondence with the Jodhpur state. Having said this, I may tell you that my advice to you would always be finally to do as your conscience bids you.

I did not follow the point about the car. Vallabhbhai will explain when he comes. Take care of your health. You seem to have done well in Bhavnagar. Return to Vallabhbhai the balance of Khakhrechi money.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/66

295. A LETTER

February 2, 1930

1 have your letter. I am sure what the people should do if I am arrested will be clear when that time comes. Shri Aurobindo Ghosh is not likely to come out at present.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S. N. 32579/68

296. A LETTER

February 2, 1930

RESPECTED THAKORE SAHEB,

Only today I saw in the papers that your father had passed away. I remembered my happy relationship with him and felt sad. Man's body perishes but his good actions do not. You are heir to your father's good actions. May you add to them. Be happy and make your people happy. This is my wish and also my blessing.

From a copy of the Gajarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/73

297. LETTER TO AMBALAL

February 2, 1930

BHAISHRI AMBALAL,

I have your letter. If you are regretting not having given the customary funeral dinner under pressure from people, you should give one. But the truth is that the dead neither eat nor drink. If you feed others, is that food going to reach the dead person's stomach? But do what you think right.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/74

298. NOTE TO MAHADEV DESAI

Silence Day, February 3, 1930

CHI. MAHADEV,

I did not find a single word in "If We Let Go"[1] which required to be changed.

[1] A note by Mahadev Desai published in *Young India*, 6-2-1930

Vallabhbhai himself had suggested four or five days. Whatever happens, you must be present on the morning of the 12th. You know it is your job to persuade others to come forward. Has Durga stopped crying?

I understand about the Gujarati translation. We shall decide about it after I break my silence. If you have left today, we shall decide about it after you return. Counting the days, I think it is necessary that you should return on the 8th. If Durga wishes to go with you, you may take her.

I will send a letter to Reginald.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11470

299. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 4, 1930

MY DEAR REYNOLDS,

Here are two letters for you.[1]

I hope you received my previous letter. I want you to tell me all your experiences after you separated at Lahore. I have called *Young India* my weekly letter to friends. I hope, therefore, that you are carefully taking in that mouthful.

No time to dictate more.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 4529. Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

[1] *Vide* the following item.

300. LETTER TO C. Y. CHINTAMANI

SABARMATI,
February 4, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

This is to introduce a young English friend, Mr. Reynolds, who has come to India in a spirit of purest service. He has no axe of his own to grind and he holds views that may startle even the most advanced nationalist.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. C. Y. CHINTAMANI
ALLAHABAD

From a photostat: C.W. 4530. Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

301. LETTER TO S. P. PATWARDHAN

February 5, 1930

BHAISHRI APPA,

I have your letter. We may certainly participate in all Congress activities to which the authorities of the states do not object. There should be no need to seek permission, but it would be good to know their attitude indirectly if it can be done. I am not in favour of carrying on the Congress activities in the states by defying prohibitory orders wherever such orders exist. This is because states are helpless in such matters. In all such matters we have to use our discretion. In some places it may be easy to carry on such activities and in some others it may be wisdom not to do so. There is, of course, no room for cowardice on any occasion. Nor would it be proper to think that because some people have been carrying on such activities in some particular states, we also may do so in others. Whether or not the Congress activities should be carried on in a particular state should depend on conditions in that state and the skill of the worker.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/75

302. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

February 5, 1930

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your letter. There was also a long letter which deserved to be read by all. So I had it passed on to Mahadev, who may already have sent you some reply. Your letter of today has not impressed me. The earlier one did. In today's letter I notice fatigue. The meanings you read in the speeches of Benn and the Viceroy are forced. If you read my recent articles carefully you will find in them the answers to all your arguments. The eleven points I have put forward[1] have silenced even a bitter critic of mine like Natarajan. He believes that my demand is perfectly just. Why don't you understand that neither Benn nor the Viceroy is willing to concede even a single one of those demands or could do so even if he were willing? To make that possible responsible Englishmen will have to educate the British public opinion. Till that is done nothing is possible.

Vallabhbhai does not at all have the feeling you attribute to him. I asked Vallabhbhai and he told me positively that he did not in the least feel as you thought he did. He gave me his clear opinion that after the Viceroy's reply nothing else is possible. You must be observing what Raja is doing at present. Or do you think that he is striving so hard in Madras against his better judgment merely to please me? From his letter I see that the effect of the 26th January celebration has been unexpected. Even the papers which had beenagainst us have now become silent. What more can I write to console you?

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/76

303. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 5, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I have received your letter. If somebody takes away our spinning- wheel by force, we must spin on a *takli*. If even the *takli* is taken away, we can prepare *takli* from a piece of bamboo and spin on it. If even this is not possible let us not feel that the *yajna* has been

[1] *Vide* "Clearing the Issue", 30-1-1930.

violated.

It would be wonderful if you could work in a village. Where is Lakshmi Devi? How is your health? Why have you written in pencil? Are you cheerful?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

304. THE ISSUE

I gladly publish the foregoing circular letter[1]. I have the privilege of knowing Mr. Horace Alexander personally, and I believe him to be a true friend. Common courtesy demands utmost frankness at this stage. I am as anxious as he and other English friends for honest co-operation as between equals. But the element of equality is wanting. The interview broke on the one single issue of Dominion Status, but not as Mr. Alexander puts it. No promise was asked for, 'that the outcome of the Conference would be the immediate establishment of full Dominion Status'. In the words of the Viceroy this is what was asked for:

> On behalf of the congress Party the view was expressed that unless previous assurances were given by His Majesty's Government that the purpose of the Conference was to draft a scheme for Dominion Status which His Majesty's Government would undertake to support, there would be grave difficulty about Congress participation.

This is totally different from what Mr. Horace Alexander has understood. Both Lord Irwin and the Cabinet must have their own opinion apart from Simon Commission. That the latter has been a misfit and misfire everybody knows, though it may not be diplomatic to acknowledge it. If the farce of the Commission needs to be kept up for hoodwinking the British electorate, it is bad game at which the Indian reformer should not be invited to play. In the language of the man in the street, unless the reformer knows that he has in the Cabinet and the Viceroy his staunch supporters, he may not attend the Conference except to court disaster. If all the parties that are likely to

[1] Not reproduced here. In his letter, Horace G. Alexander had described how most English people remained in complete ignorance of Indian conditions and concluded: "Whatever may come, I believe you will not forget that you have friends in England, and you will not forget, as I hope we shall not either, that we are all children of one Father, even though some of us may be erring children. With sincere good wishes for a year that may still belie our fears and more than justify our hopes, . . ."

be invited could agree upon what they want, they would not need to go to London to demonstrate the fact. The Viceroy knows, the world knows, that the parties that are supposed to represent Indian opinion do not agree and are not likely to agree just yet. For them to beinvited to London for any proposal they may wish to make is to accentuate their differences. The fact is that there is really only one party in the country that has weight with the masses. It is the congress. There is perfect agreement among Congressmen as to the demand. But I am free to confess that the Congress does not yet command such recognition from the Government. It has not yet the sanction behind it for enforcing its will. If therefore the Congress sends representatives to a heterogeneous conference, it must know definitely what the British Government intend doing. It must not have an open mind as to what India should have. The Conference, therefore, to serve any useful purpose, must necessarily have only one thing in view, i.e., to frame or recommend a scheme of Dominion Status (now independence) to suit India's needs. This Lord Irwin could not do; hence the break. The other points raised by Mr. Alexander were never reached at the interview. But there never has been any indication of a real change in the British policy. Political prosecutions, or to speak more correctly, political persecution has never ceased. And it cannot cease unless the British residents in India will be content to live only on the goodwill of the people. And this they will not do, so long as they consider it to be their right to exploit the starving masses of this land. Every approach to the Indian problem is made by them on the basis that British commerce must not suffer. Congressmen hold that British commerce as it is carried on today must suffer a radical change if India is at all to live.

Young India, 6-2-1930

305. SOME IMPLICATIONS

Well might the points suggested by me as for immediate attention[1] raise a storm of indignation in the British Press. They mean more to the British investor, and in fact every Britisher, than Dominion Status or even Independence. Dominion Status or independence may conceivably be hedged in with stipulations that may make it impossible for India to get rid of the burdens that have brought her to the verge of utter starvation. Hitherto progress towards the so-called constitutional freedom has meant more burdens upon the dumb millions and more money into the pockets of the Britisher. And

[1] *Vide* "Clearing the Issue", 30-1-1930.

British imagination pictures to itself an India under Dominion Statusremaining a perpetual *El Dorado* for the British. If Dominion Status is feared, it is because the reality of it would mean ability to undo continuing wrongs and therefore unjust burdens whether in the shape of Government of India loans or guarantees given to the military and the civil services, or favours shown to British manufactures at the expense of India, or concessions granted to the British trader, capitalist or prospector.

Whether therefore a *bona fide* Round Table Conference comes today or the day after, it is as well to know the truth lying behind the remarkable demonstration of 26th ultimo. The masses feel that the Congress will remove the burdens which they vaguely feel but cannot describe. I venture to claim that in formulating the eleven points, I have somewhat and to the extent of my ability given a concrete shape to their feeling.

It is not difficult to understand the resentment felt in England over the 'demands' nor the hysterics of Sir Malcom Hailey over the idea of repudiating debts in any circumstance whatsoever. Yet that is precisely what every ward, when he comes of age, has the right to do. If he finds the trustee having buttered his own bread at the ward's expense, he makes the trustee pay for his malpractices or misappropriation or breach of trust or whatever other name by which his selfishness may be described. There will thus be no atmosphere for a dispassionate examination of the case of the dumb masses either in India or in England till the Englishmen realize that they must part with some of the ill-gotten gains and cease in future to expect the inflow to England of millions that are annually drained from India under one pretext or another. If the stopping of the drain means a revision of the tastes of the city people of this land who live upon the commission they make from their British principals, it means also that the British as a whole will have to revise their tastes by reason of the sudden stoppage of the millions looted from India for their sakes.

It is clear, that the riches derived from the tillers of the soil are not a voluntary contribution or a contribution compelled for their benefit. The villages are not affected by the *Pax Britannica* so-called; for they were untouched even by the invasions of Timur or Nadirshah. They will remain untouched by anarchy if it comes. But in order that this enormous contribution may be exacted without resistance, violence has been organized by the British Government on a scale unknown before and manipulated in so insidious a manner as not to be easily seen or felt as such. British rule has appeared to me to be a perfect personification of violence. There are snakes that by theirvery appearance paralyse their victims. They do not need to make

any further demonstration of their power. Even so, I am sorry to have to say, has the British power worked upon us in India. Frightfulness is not a word of: Indian coinage. It was coined by a British judge[1] in order to bring vividly to light the meaning of Jallianwala massacre. And we are promised a multiple, if we dare lift up our heads and say: 'We will have no more of this loot that has bled India dry.'

Let us, too, understand how organized violence works and is on that account far more harmful than sporadic, thoughtless, sudden outburst. Ordered violence hides itself often behind camouflage and hypocrisy as we see them working through the declarations of good intentions, commissions, conferences and the like, or even through measures conceived as tending to the public benefit but in reality to the benefit of the wrongdoer. Greed and deceit are often the offspring as they are equally often the parents of violence. Naked violence repels like the naked skeleton shorn of flesh, blood and the velvety skin. It cannot last long. But it persists fairly long when it wears the mask of peace and progress so-called.

Such awe-inspiring violence concealed under a 'golden lid' begets the violence of the weak which in its turn works secretly and sometimes openly.

Non-violence has to work in the midst of this double violence. But if it is the supreme law governing mankind, it must be able to make its way in the face of the heaviest odds. Violence such as we have to face may well make us cowards utterly unable to discover the method of working non-violence. If therefore the forces of violence arrayed against us cannot be checkmated during our time, it would be no proof of the futility of non-violence, it would certainly be proof of the pervading cowardice.

The greatest obstacle in the path of non-violence is the presence in our midst of the indigenous interests that have sprung up from British rule, the interests of monied men, speculators, scrip holders, land-holders, factory owners and the like. All these do not always realize that they are living on the blood of the masses, and when they do, they become as callous as the British principals whose tools and agents they are. If like the Japanese samurai they could but realize that they must give up their blood-stained gains, the battle is won for non-violence. It must not be difficult for them to see that the holding of millions is a crime when millions of their ownkith and kin are starving and that therefore they must give up their agency. No principal has yet been found able to work without faithful agents.

[1] Jastice Rankin; *vide* "Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.

But non-violence has to be patient with these as with the British principals. The aim of the non-violent worker must ever be to convert. He may not however wait endlessly. When therefore the limit is reached, he takes risks and conceives plans of active satyagraha which may mean civil disobedience and the like. His patience is never exhausted to the point of giving up his creed. But working in a hostile atmosphere, he runs the risk of forces of violence, which till then were held under check from mutual fear, being let loose through the restraint of such fear being removed. The Government will spread out its red paws in what it will call self-defence, the party of violence may commit the mistake of seeing its chance of coming out in the open. The non-violent party must then prove its creed by being ground to powder between the two millstones. If there is such a party, all is well for India and the world. My hope and plans are built upon an ever-increasing faith in the existence of that party of true non-violence.

Young India, 6-2-1930

306. NOTES

THE FINISHING TOUCH

It will be remembered that the Broomfield Committee[1], whilst holding that the Bardoli peasants' complaints were substantially justified, and cancelling the enhanced assessment to the extent of something over 89,379 rupees, still recommended a net increase of Rs. 30,806 over the old assessment. But there was a legal flaw about this recommendation. Government seem to have rectified the error by revising the assessment in something like 40 villages, and now they are making arrangements for giving full effect to the Broomfield Committee's recommendations about the rectification of errors in the classification of lands and kindred matters. The net result of all this might amount to, in effect, a restoration of the old assessment of the Taluk. That would put a finishing touch to the success of that historic struggle. No wonder that an English friend, writing to Mahadev Desai about his *Story of Bardoli*, says, "Lahore made me feel most scepticalof the power of India to work unitedly and effectively for swaraj, but the *Story of Bardoli* has more than answered my fears."

Though both the Lahore demonstration and the Bardoli struggle were offshoots of the Congress, the difference the English friend noticed is easily explained. The Lahore demonstration was the whole

[1] Comprising R. S. Broomfield and R. M. Maxwell

Congress at its best and its worst. It necessarily included every variety of character. Moreover it was the yearly deliberative function. The Bardoli struggle on the other hand was a Congress body in action. It was Congressmen who conceived it. The Sardar[1] himself was the President of the Provincial Congress Committee, and he mobilized the whole resources of the Committee for the struggle. The forces of violence were hushed in the presence of non-violent action. It remains to be seen how the all-India struggle for independence will shape. The law that governed the Bardoli struggle which centred round a local grievance will govern the greater struggle for independence. The partakers will have to be strictly non-violent; they will have to visualize the grievance of slavery as the Bardoli peasant visualized the grievance of an unjust assessment; they will have to submit to the strictest discipline even as the Bardoli peasants did.

THE POET ON BARDOLI

The Bard of Shantiniketan[2] writing to Mahadev Desai on his *Story of Bardoli* says:

> I have finished your *Story of Bardoli*. It has the spirit of the Epic Age in its narrative of the triumph of moral right over arbitrary powerthrough a fight moral in character, unique in modern times. I thank you, and the leader of the fight and the fighters, also your great guide. My blessings.

Let us all on whom the Poet showers his blessings accept them in all humility and qualify ourselves for the task that awaits us. For if the blessings pronounced by the great are given for something accomplished, they also carry with them the expectation of something greater still.

Young India, 6-2-1930

307. WHY 'PURNA' SWARAJ?

A fair friend writes:[3]

This letter raises two questions. I shall take the last first. To qualify 'swaraj' is no doubt doing violence to art. The writer's logic is also irresistible. But very often in national and similar complex matters logic and art have apparently to be sacrificed. In substance that which carries out a good intention is both true logic and true art.

[1] Vallabhbhai Patel

[2] Rabindranath Tagore

[3] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had doubted the nation's capacity to win independence by non-violent means and questioned the propriety of prefixing the adjective *'purna'* to 'swaraj'.

‘Swaraj’ in the Congress constitution was given a double meaning; it could be within the Empire if possible, without if necessary. A word or an expression had therefore to be found in order to connote the last meaning only. We could not do without the word ‘swaraj’. Hence the expedience of *‘purna* swaraj’. I admit that it does not sound well to the ear. But if it carries out the nation’s meaning as it does, it will presently sound well. We could not have managed with a dubious word.

The second question is more difficult to dispose of. But attainment of swaraj means conquest over all difficulties. Non-violence or rather non-violent men are on their trial. They have to find out the best method of offering battle in spite of the violent atmosphere surrounding them. Non-violence is not of much consequence if it can flourish only in a congenial atmosphere. It is not then non-violence. It may easily be fear of being hurt. But my reading of the national temper is somewhat different from the friend’s. Dissensions and squabbles do not affect those who have ultimately to take part in the struggle. The latter will instinctively react to active non-violence. But whether they do or not, the party of non-violence must now use up all its resources. There can be no more waiting without its creed being laughed at or itself being thoroughly and rightly discredited. If it cannot act, it must own its incapacity and retire from the field of battle.

Young India, 6-2-1930

308. CONFUSION OF THOUGHT

A correspondent who is an honours graduate and an LL.B. writes:[1]

This letter shows how even a trained lawyer can become confused when he is obsessed with an idea. The group that would not have liked the interview to succeed is the very group I had in mind. They are not the avowed enemies of India, but they are ‘deluded patriots’. The other group the writer refers to could never concoct a plot to assassinate the Viceroy for whose protection they are paid. Of course nothing is impossible, but we can only act on probabilities. Moreover the outrage deserves condemnation even if the plotter was a person belonging to a Government department. The Congress could

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. Referring to Gandhiji’s article “Cult of the Bomb”, 2-1-1930, the correspondent had written that the bomb outrage might have been manoeuvred by the guardians of law and order to justify their existence or magnify their importance.

not pass the incident by without laying itself open to the charge of hypocrisy or criminal indifference about its own creed.

And why am I guilty of participating in violence when I condemn the outrage? Condemnation or no condemnation, the Government would go its own way in trying to find out the guilty parties. I would be participator in violence if I approved of the penal code and its sanctions. If I had my way I would fling open doors of prisons and discharge even murderers. But I know that in holding this opinion, I am in the proud position of being in the minority of one. I must not however take up the valuable time of the reader by discussing my pet theories about crimes and punishments.

The writer pays poor compliment to the party of violence or by whatever name it may be called, when he imputes to them fear of death. They forfeited their lives when they dedicated themselves to their creed. That they keep themselves in hiding does not mean that they fear death, but it means that they want to hang on to life as long as possible so as to carry out their project. They stand in no need of my protection, active or passive. They know that I hold their lives as dear as my own, but they know too that I am a determined enemy oftheir creed. But my enmity resolves itself into an attempt to convert them to my own. Condemnation of the outrage was a method of conversion. That it may fail in its purpose does not affect it. I must act according to my lights and leave the result to the Higher Power.

Lastly, the writer's complaint that I had not a word to say about the policy that is responsible for the existence of the cult of the bomb shows what a superficial reader of *Young India* he must be. He must know that almost every issue of *Young India* contains some condemnation of the Government policy. What perhaps he means is that I should have said something about it in the very article. Well, it would have been wholly irrelevant, and what is more, my analysis of the doings of the cult would have lost much of its force. The point to be made in the article was that violence was ineffective, no matter how wicked was the policy of the Government.

Young India, 6-2-1930

309. "KHADI PRADARSHAK"

The book series called *Navajivan Mala* of the Shuddha Khadi Bhandar of Calcutta has already been mentioned by me in a former issue of *Hindi Navajivan*. I have, today, before me the booklet *Khadi Pradarshak* published by this Bhandar. This is the fifteenth number of the series. Besides the eight pages of appendix, it has eighty-six

pages and costs only four annas. This booklet is a Hindi translation of the *Khadi Guide* published by the Charkha Sangh. A lot of information has been given in this guide. It gives particulars of the progress of khadi in every province, the output and the sales in each one of them. Every person who loves khadi should have a copy of this booklet. There are several addresses where the books of *Navajivan Mala* are obtainable. The principal one is 132/1 Harrison Road, Calcutta.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 6-2-1930

310. VARNADHARMA AND DUTY OF LABOUR[1] *I*

Questions asked and my answers to them are given below:

Q : Do you accept the duty of [bread] labour expounded by Tolstoy ?

A: Yes, certainly.

Q : Do you expect that every person should do all his work himself ?

A: I do not expect it and I do not think it practicable; Tolstoy too did not consider this essential. Man's dependence is no less than his independence. So long as he remains in society, and remain he must, he has to curtail his independence to fit into that of others, that is, society. Therefore it can only be said that each person, as far as it is possible, must do his work himself; that is to say, I may fill a mug for my use, but may not dig a well myself. Not to fill the mug is pride; to plan or begin digging a well is stupidity. One must, therefore, exercise discretion in deciding whether a task is to be done by oneself or with the help of others.

Q: Do you wish that all should earn their livelihood by the sweat of the brow ?

A: Certainly. Everyone does not do so and that is why dire poverty has arisen in the world and especially so in India. This is also the main cause of ill health and the immense greed for acquisition of wealth. If all earned their livelihood by physical work, greed would decrease and much of the power to acquire wealth would weaken automatically. If physical labour is done, ill health will almost disappear and the greatest gain will be the complete obliteration of the distinction between high and low in society.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 6-2-1930

[1] Published serially in four consecutive issues of *Hindi Navajivan*

311. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

February 6, 1930

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I never thought you would miss the importance of the 11 points.[1] However I do not propose to waste your time by arguing when a day or two after this reaches you will be on your way to Sabarmati. I expect you here for certain on 12th. I hope to satisfy you that our case has been strengthened not weakened by the 11 points. Will Kamala accompany you?

Yours,

BAPU

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ANAND BHAWAN, ALLAHABAD

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

312. LETTER TO LILAVATI KODIDAS

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 6, 1930

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. It will be a good thing if you form the habit of writing with ink and in a good hand. See that you keep hysteria at arm's length now. You should reason with Uncle and explain to him that, since the jewellery is lying unused, it would be better to [sell it and] get interest on the money. Do not be in a hurry to return. You are, however, free to return as soon as you can do so with complete peace of mind. Live on milk and fruit.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. LILAVATIBEHN KODIDAS

C/O MR. DWARKADAS GORULDAS

KALBADEVI, BOMBAY NO. 2

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9271

[1] *Vide* "Clearing the Issue", 30-1-1930.

313. LETTER TO MANILAL KOTHARI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 7, 1930

BHAI MANILAL,

It would be better if you slowed down a little even for the sake of the service which you are yearning to take up. Humbly recognizing that nobody's service is indispensable to the world, we should serve only within the limits of our physical capacity. If we imagine that though ill, we should climb heights and earn the applause of the world it will never do. Rather we should regard it as ignorance to do such a thing. I am firmly of the view that no harm would have come to Rajkot if you had not addressed a public meeting for one hour at Wadhwan. Now take complete rest. If you cannot do so there, come here or go to Chorvad. Observe self-control in eating. You can eat allthe sweets you like after you have recovered. Know that moderation in eating is a hundred times more beneficial than fasting.

Regarding the car, write a polite letter to the Thakore Saheb of Morvi and ask him. No satyagraha is going on against him at present.

From the Gujarati original: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Sabarmati Sangrahalaya

314. A LETTER

February 8, 1930

I have your letter. I see some risk in holding the conference at present. It is likely to produce unnecessary bitterness. It will not be possible to prevent trouble-makers from getting in. They may harm our work by making or inspiring all sorts of demands and forcing unsatisfactory replies. Our duty is to go on doing what we can and be content to satisfy as well as we can those who bear real hardships. This, however, is only a personal opinion expressed without knowledge of the actual circumstances. It need not therefore be given more importance than it deserves.

From the Gujarati original: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Sabarmati Sangrahalaya

315. A LETTER

February 8, 1930

Condemning the wicked does not necessarily betray want of moderation. The condemnation is not of the wicked but of their wickedness. We often criticize the English in strong language, but we never wish ill of them. From that we claim that we condemn not the wicked but their wickedness. As a matter of fact the word condemnation is wrongly used here. There is no condemnation of the crow in calling it black, but there is of the swan in calling it black. Saying that Yudhishthira resorted to falsehood on one occasion in his life is not to condemn him, but saying that he was a coward because he did not protect Draupadi when she was being disrobed is condemning him and shows one's ignorance. If you understand this distinction, my meaning, will become clear to you. Bowing in respect both to the saintly and the unsaintly may be regarded as an explanatory comment on Chapter XVI of the *Gita*. There the description of the demoniac nature was necessary in order to explain the meaning of the divine nature and show its excellence by contrast.

From the Gujarati original: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Sabarmati Sangrahalaya

316. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
February 8, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,[2]

I have your letter. There is no need to be humble in the criticism of the wicked. In such criticism, you criticise wickedness, not the wicked. We speak ill of the British many a time but we never wish them ill. From that, we can claim that the criticism is of wickedness and not that of the wicked. In fact, the word 'criticism' is wrongly used here. Calling a crow black is not criticism of the crow but calling a swan black, is criticism. It is not a criticism of Yudhisthir when we say that he lied once in his life, but to call him a coward because he did not rescue Draupadi when she was being derobed, is his criticism. It is ignorance. What I want to say will be clear to you if you understand the difference. Praise of saints and satan alike can be considered criticism of the 16th chapter of the *Gita*. But in order to bringout fully, the meaning of a divine temperament, and to lend it

importance, it was necessary to describe the qualities of the satan.

I understand about Chandradutt and Devidutt. It is certainly necessary to know how the work ought to be done in the villages. I hope you are gaining weight.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32941

317. MY NOTES

OUR CARELESSNESS

A friend writes:[1]

As has been stated above, there is no doubt that smokers transgress limits, and non-smokers do not even attempt to prevent the former from smoking, out of shame or fear. We no longer have such respect for women that in their presence we would not smoke, would not use obscene language or be guilty of any other discourteous conduct!

I cannot blame the railway servants in this matter. What can they do when passengers themselves are indifferent to their own comforts? We should bear in mind that these persons do not take up employment for the service of others. Moreover, even in accordance with the law, they have no authority to prevent without reason any passenger from smoking. This is because the regulations do not prohibit smoking under all circumstances, but only when one passenger objects to another doing so when the latter happens to be smoking in a compartment which is not meant for smokers. How can an officer know whether or not a particular passenger has been asked not to smoke? Hence so long as any passenger does not complain, the officer does not have the authority to prevent anyone from smoking.

Volunteers can render much assistance in this. They can politely reason with smokers and, if the latter are not amenable to reason, they can complain to the officer and pull the alarm-chain and stop the train. But I would not advise them to do this.

Difficulties are bound to arise in trying all at once to enforce a regulation, enforcement of which has not been attempted since it was made. Clashes too will arise. Hence, for the present, the task of the volunteers consists in educating public opinion and in explaining to

[1] The letter is not translated here.

the non-smokers their rights and to the smokers their limits. When the passengers begin to understand this matter and the smokers realize that many people are inconvenienced by their smoking, it is possible that they will stop doing so. Moreover, a satyagrahi volunteer will not as far as possible make anyone obey regulations by getting himpunished. By trying to perform the duty of a policeman a reformer often fails to perform his own duty. The dharma of a reformer lies in trying to bring about a change of heart in those who violate regulations. In the beginning, patience is required for doing this but in the end the result endures and becomes widespread. Despite this, where certain ill habits have taken root, the law where it prevails can be helpful in eradicating them. This has happened in the past and will also happen in the future; for instance, the task of prohibition can be carried on very speedily if it is given the backing of law. Those who are addicted to smoking have formed such an evil habit that they would seldom listen to anyone however courteously they may be approached. For the enthusiastic volunteer, therefore, this is a fine occasion for testing his own forbearance and courtesy. In doing so, the volunteers can also utilize this fine occasion for cultivating among the people respect towards women. And, an attempt can be made to prevent those who create public nuisance just as those addicted to smoking keep doing so on all occasions without any consideration for the feelings of others.

KHADI WHILE ABROAD

A gentleman asks:[1]

I do not think so. If after going abroad, it is desirable or necessary to compete with the Britishers in all matters, why not do so here also? With regard to virtues, we should always compete with an enemy, with regard to vices, there can be no such competition. Anyone who wishes to wear khadi can do so even when he is abroad. When Pandit Motilal went abroad, he had his entire outfit—from head to foot—made out of khadi. The definition of khadi here also includes material which is made out of hand-spun and hand-woven wool. It is true that I have expressed an opinion that there is no reason to regard khadi as something compulsory when living abroad. It may not be possible there to get the kind of khadi one requires or it may not be possible to buy the quality one wants as it may be too

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had sought advice whether Indians going abroad might give up khadi and compete with the British in all matters.

expensive; in that case, it would not be regarded as *adharma* to buy cloth which is mill-made but swadeshi or even that which is foreign.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-2-1930

318. "GANDHISHIKSHAN"[1]

Bhai Nagindas Amulakhrai writes:[2]

It is not surprising that I should be enamoured of my own writings. Hence, readers will not set much store by my testimonial to these volumes; nevertheless, those who are attracted towards *Navajivan* would like to make a collection of these volumes which are available almost at the price of its paper. My request to such persons is that they take advantage of Bhai Nagindas's suggestion. His address is as follows: Sjt. Nagindas Amulakhrai, Sukhadwala Building, Ravelin Street, Hornby Road, Bombay.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-2-1930

319. SPINNING-WHEEL WITH TWO SPINDLES[3]

I, too, believe that the speed of spinning can be much increased if the sliver is of a good quality. I am a slow spinner. Hitherto I could spin in an hour 160 rounds of 20 counts. As the slivers I am at present using are good I am able to spin 200 rounds per hour without effort. Good slivers are obtained when cotton pods are plucked by hand and are free from impurities, the cotton-wool is ginned by hand so neatly that no seeds get crushed and mixed with the cotton and, finally, such cotton is carded carefully.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-2-1930

[1] A set of thirteen volumes of Gandhiji's teachings

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had requested Gandhiji to take such note through *Navajivan* as he thought proper of the reduction in the price of this set from Rs. 8-10-0 to Rs. 2-0-0.

[3] These are Gandhiji's remarks published along with an article by Prabhudas Gandhi under this title.

320. VILLAGE ROADS[1]

We have seen how to remove dung-hills and prevent harm being done to the village health and to produce from it manure worth its weight in gold.[2] We also saw how to increase village income without much hardship by not using cow-dung for making dung-cakes for fuel, but instead by producing manure from it. Moreover we discussed how village health might be protected by cleaning wells and ponds and maintaining them clean.[3]

Now let us consider village roads. One glance at them tells us how tortuous they are. They look like heaps of dust just levelled. Great hardship is caused to men walking along the roads, as also to cattle drawing cart-loads over them. For use on such roads we have to build heavy carts with heavy wheels, with the result that the bullock is unnecessarily required to draw a double load. To the hardship of the journey over roads full of dust heaps, we add the expense involved in having to draw heavy carts. If the roads are metalled, the bullock would draw double the load ordinarily carried, the carts would be less expensive and the health of villagers would improve. The present state of things illustrates the proverb, "Butter is given away with whey and, moreover, the giver is branded a slattern." On these roads so much mud is formed in the rainy season that it gets highly difficult to drive the cart through it, and men have either to swim or walk waist-deep in water. And in addition, people get the gift of all kinds of diseases.

Where the village is an extended dung-hill, where no one takes care of wells and ponds, where roads are what they were in Grandfather Adam's days, how can the state of children be any better? The behaviour of children, their culture—everything is bound to reflect the conditions of the village life. A look at the children will show that they are cared for no better than the roads. To speak of this now, however, would be to digress.

What, then, is to be done for these roads? If the spirit of co-operation prevails among the inhabitants, with no cost or with a little expense on account of gravel, etc., villagers can buildmetalled roads and add to the wealth of the village. Moreover, both the young and the old would get true education free of charge through such co-operative activity. As far as possible, villagers should employ no labourers for any work. The village inhabitants are mostly peasants

[1] This appeared in the supplement *Shikshan ane Sahitya*.

[2] *Vide* "Cowdung Cakes or Manure?", 17-11-1929.

[3] *Vide* "Wells and Ponds", 12-1-1930.

and hence their own labourers.

When necessary they may ask their neighbours to help them. By giving a little of their time to the roads daily, the village people would soon set their roads right. To be able to do this, they should prepare a map of the village streets and also of the approach roads leading to neighbouring villages. Then they should arrange a programme of work according to their capacity so that, men, women and children, all might participate to some extent. The present state of our culture embraces family life only. The improvement of villages depends upon an extension of the family feeling to the whole village. The look of our villages would be a measure of our culture. Just as every member in a family joins in keeping the home clean, every family should be prepared to do the same for the village. Not until this is done can the village people live happily and become self-reliant. Today, however, we look up for everything to the Government—for clearing dung-hills, for making the roads and keeping them in repair, for cleansing wells and ponds, for children's education, for protection against wild animals, for protection of our property, etc. This attitude of the mind has crippled and disabled us. This helplessness goes on ever increasing and adds to the burden of taxes. If all the villagers regard themselves answerable for the cleanliness, the neatness and the safety of the place they live in, most of the necessary improvement would take place immediately and almost without cost. Moreover, with increased facilities for travel and transport and with improved health, the economic condition of the village would also improve.

Some application of intellect is certainly needed for cleaning the roads. I have already spoken of the road map. All the villages do not have the same kind of facilities for building good metalled roads. Some villages may have stone, but in several regions of Bihar no amount of search would find any stone. What ways should be adopted to make strong roads is left to the volunteers contemplated in this series of articles. Let him go and examine the neighbourhood. Let him see if there is anything worth learning from Government methods in the matter. One could certainly adopt such Government methods for making strong roads as are suitable. At times we might come across village elders who have much practical knowledge of suchmatters. The village worker should have no hesitation in finding and using such talent in the countryside. As in other matters, so in this one of making strong roads, let the village worker make a beginning by setting an example with his own personal labour.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-2-1930

321. LETTER TO PURSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 9, 1930

MY DEAR SIR PURSHOTTAMDAS

I thank you for your letter[1].

I must not enter into argument with you, for argument is useless when conviction on either side is deep-seated. I can only give you my assurance that I shall take no hasty step. A risky step need not necessarily be a hasty step.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR PURSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS
BIRLA HOUSE, ALBUQUERQUE ROAD
NEW DELHI

Purshottamdas Thakurdas Papers, File No. 96, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

322. LETTER TO R. B. MOTWANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 9, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

The problem you present should not cause any difficulty to a real lover of his country. He will neither marry nor fall other wise. Love of the country should be sufficient to keep him untouched by base passions.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

R. B. MOTWANI
C/O SIND CENTRAL CO-OPERATIVE BANK, LTD.
KARACHI (SIND)

From a photostat: G.N. 2777

[1] Wherein the addressee had written: "I do not believe India will benefit either now or within a few decades by revolution as much as by a process of evolution. . . . If the constitution is not sufficiently changed after the Conference in London as to make us masters in our own house . . . I can understand your impatience. But to resort to civil disobedience during the brief intervening period does strike me as being a hasty step."

323. LETTER TO MANILAL KOTHARI

February 9, 1930

BHAISHRI MANILAL,

. . .[1] Shankerlal is not here at present. It is within his authority to call for the figures you have asked for. I have sent your letter to the Charkha Sangh office and asked for the figures. But I am afraid you are unnecessarily prejudiced against Harjivan[2]. Harjivan is an experienced man. He has won the confidence of all his superiors. He is a capable and self-sacrificing worker. He cannot take more profit and put it in a safe. He keeps accurate accounts. The Charkha Sangh has not accepted the policy of taking limited profit on all varieties of cloth, but has adopted the policy of limited profit on the total stock and permitted more profit on some special varieties of cloth because on some other varieties it takes even less than the permitted limited profit. For instance, there should be no objection to taking 100 per cent profit on khadi lace, while on dhoti no profit need be taken or very little if at all. Some things may even be sold at loss. Business can be carried on only in this way.

Kashmiri items are made for luxury-loving people like you and me, while the khadi sold in the general market is for persons who do not know patriotism but are forced to adopt simplicity. Hence some of the things are sold even at a loss. If you have anything to say against this policy adopted by the Charkha Sangh you may certainly do so. You and I get from friends money for first-class fare when we ask them for third class. Similarly we get the costliest variety of Kashmiri shawl when we ask for an ordinary Kashmiri shawl. And when we ask for dates from an orchard we get dates neatly packed inelegant boxes more expensive than the dates. If we condemn the people taking profit on such dates and shawls, don't you think we would degrade ourselves? How many crores do you think there would be in India who consumed such dates and wore such shawls? As I am dictating this letter I have in front of me a Kashmiri shawl which would cost not less than twenty-five or thirty rupees. And though I know this, I am shamelessly using it every day. I hope you will understand my meaning.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Sabarmati Sangrahalaya

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] Harjivan Kotak, A. I. S. A. representative in Srinagar

324. LETTER TO JYOTI PRAKASH

ASHRAM SABARMATI,
February 9, 1930

BHAISHRI 5 JYOTI PRAKASH,

I have received your letter. Do include the *Ramayana* in the curriculum. Keep sending me your diary every week. Give each hour's account of your activities in it.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI JYOTI PRAKASH
LALA GYAN PRAKASHJI MASTER
RAMJAS SCHOOL, NO. 2
ANAND PARBAT
DELHI

From the Hindi original: S.N. 34066

325. LETTER TO CHHOTUBHAI PATEL

February 10, 1930

BHAI CHHOTUBHAI,

It saves me time to write out a reply instead of asking you to come over. When one comes across a suitable girl one can hardly resist the temptation to marry. You may, if you can, overcome the temptation, if you are convinced of the greatness of *brahmacharya.* If you insist more and more on qualifications in the bride, you would find no one eligible. You would find them all [fit] to be your sisters; but no one to be your wife.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10469

326. LETTER TO KUNVARJI PAREKH

ASHRAM SABARMATI,
February 12, 1930

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I have your letter. Chi. Rami will leave for Rajkot by the 6th or the 7th[1]. Will that be all right and serve the purpose? I hope you are keeping good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9715

327. AN ADVOCATE'S DILEMMA

The following[2] from an advocate has been passed on to me for reply:

The dilemma is there. My sympathies and my opinion are with the advocate. But the argument goes deeper than the advocate has carried it. When I use a postage stamp or a coin bearing the King's portrait, I seem to belie my profession of independence. When I obey a policeman's instructions or pay taxes, I acknowledge the King's authority. And some of these things I should be doing even if we declared an independent parallel government which we have not as yet. How am I to solve the puzzle? Must I, because I do not or cannot go the 'whole hog', continue to bear allegiance to the King? One escape from the dilemma is to withdraw all such voluntary co-operation as it is possible for me to withdraw and as is calculated to diminish the prestige and the authority of that rule. The Congress could not go further than it did without weaning from it a large number of useful and able workers. Experience has shown that the Congress organization breaks down where lawyers withdraw their assistance. They have from the very commencement taken the most active and effective part in the Congress. It is unfortunate, that the other classes still feel powerless to run Congress Committees without the assistance of lawyers. They are called officers of the Court. They know what foreign rule means. By training they are the fittest to carry

[1] According to the Gujarati calendar

[2] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had asked how a practising lawyer owing allegiance to the King could be a member of the Congress after the independence resolution.

on political agitation when they are honestly and patriotically moved. They have undoubtedly done much for the national movement, but much more is expected from them. And I have no doubt, that when the movement demands from them the last sacrifice, many if not all of them will prove equal to it. Meanwhile since the Congress has not declared boycott of law-courts, the matter rests with individual conscience. Where, consistently with it, a lawyer cannot both practise and remain in the Congress and cannot give up practice, he may give up Congress, and still help it as effectively as if he was in it, provided of course that he believes in independence being the right andthe duty of every Indian to work for and achieve. I may mention incidentally that many lawyers think that they have a lien on the Congress, and they resent as intrusion the advent of laymen to office, whereas they should deem it a privilege to prepare laymen to take office and make them feel that, if they the laymen have bravery and sacrifice, they can run Congress organizations just as well as lawyers. Indeed there are today several Committees that are being efficiently and ably managed by non-professional men. The movement in that direction however needs to receive a much greater impetus. We want a Committee in every one of the seven hundred thousand villages. Thank God we have not got in all India even seventy thousand lawyers. Cobblers, scavengers, tanners, tailors, bricklayers and the like should be found willing and able to work Congress Committees. The educated few can hasten the event, if they will.

Young India, 13-2-1930

328. 'THE DUTY OF LAWYERS'

The first number of the English edition of the bulletin of the Organizing Committee of the International Juridical Conference has been on my file for the past three or four months. The bulletin is edited by a Board of Directors drawn from Austria, Czekoslovakia, Cuba, France, Germany, Holland, Indonesia, Mexico, Poland and Venezuela. The Organizing Secretary is Dr. Alfred Apfel of Berlin where the bulletin is issued. The editorial notice says that the bulletin is only a temporary publication. The opening article is headed the 'Duty of Lawyers' from which I take the following two interesting sections[1] as being not irrelevant in the present times in India.

Young India, 13-2-1930

[1] Not reproduced here. The extracts described how the fundamental rights in a democracy are abridged through the creation of extraordinary courts and emergency laws and the attitude a jurist should adopt in the situation.

329. MY INCONSISTENCIES

Thus writes Sjt. Trivikramrav, a Bezwada barrister:[1]

Some others have also written much in the same fashion. I must admit my many inconsistencies. But since I am called 'Mahatma', I might well endorse Emerson's saying that 'foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds'. There is, I fancy, a method in my inconsistencies. In my opinion there is a consistency running through my seeming inconsistencies, as in nature there is a unity running through seeming diversity.

Boycott of legislatures is wholly consistent with the demand for the reforms suggested in the eleven points.[2] I would myself sit if need be in a legislature in which the passage of the reforms is assured. But the existing legislatures are powerless to pass most of those measures if any at all. I have not said that the struggle for independence is to cease the moment [the] eleven points are gained. What I have said is that, if they are gained, the Congress will lift the ban on the Conference and that civil disobedience will be suspended. The points were mentioned in order to prevent the misconception that the Viceroy's speech had given rise to. Even an Independence Constitution is not an end in itself. Independence is wanted in order to remove the grievous defects of the present rule. Independence means at least those eleven points, if it means anything at all to the masses, the man in the street. Mere withdrawal of the English is not independence. It means the consciousness in the average villager that he is the maker of his own destiny, he is his own legislator through his chosen representatives. The eleven points are some of the vital tests of the villager's authority. The very letter of the Bezwada barrister shows how necessary it was to clear the issue. By mentioning the eleven points I have given a body in part to the elusive word independence. I should be prepared to reconsider my attitude towards the legislatures if the legislators can accomplish the things covered by the eleven points. And if they are covered, I should have no hesitation in advising Congress representation at the Conference where independence could be made the basis.For I do conceive the possibility of a conference even for discussingan Independence Constitution.

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had pointed to the inconsistency of advocating boycott of legislatures while voicing 'minimum demands' and allowing Congressmen to associate with local bodies.

[2] *Vide* "Clearing the Issue", 30-1-1930.

As to the local bodies, I am aware of my weakness. I have little faith in their substantial usefulness. I admit that they have led to bad blood and disgraceful wrangling. But one cannot take things by storm in a vast body like the Congress. There is no question now of capturing local bodies. A wise and selfless man, when he finds that he can render no service through these bodies, will retire from them as did Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai and Babu Rajendra Prasad.

As for my leadership, if I have it, it has not come for any seeking, it is a fruit of faithful service. A man can as little discard such leadership as he can the colour of his skin. And since I have become an integral part of the nation, it has to keep me with all my faults and shortcomings, of some of which I am painfully conscious and of many others of which candid critics, thanks be to them, never fail to remind me. Of this however I am certain, that if they and those who would never criticize me will have the patience to understand my programme and have the steadfastness to follow it, *purna* swaraj is near.

Young India, 13-2-1930

330. TREATMENT OF SMALLPOX

Friends have pressed me to publish the modes of the treatment of smallpox patients. The Udyoga Mandir has not escaped the infection. There have been in all seven cases in the Mandir. One has proved fatal. It is possible to say that that case was not treated like the rest. It was an early case, and I feel guilty of having shown want of firmness. Contrary to my conviction, the girl remained without hydropathic treatment and was permitted even to take solid food. The treatment adopted in the cases that have recovered or that I hope will recover was:

l. Complete rest;

2. Free ventilation;

3. Light received through a red medium;

4. No solid food, and milk diluted with equal quantity of water when there was no fever; otherwise orange juice or dried grapes juice;

5 Occasional opening medicine and regular enema;

6. Wet sheet pack. Rolling the patient in a sheet wrung out of cold water and put between blankets till perspiration.

During the 1915 epidemic I had two very serious cases of

confluent smallpox. I knew nothing then of red light treatment. In the 1916 cases the boys were given a bath daily with hot water in which *neem* leaves were boiled. This was regarded by me somewhat a substitute for Condy's fluid. After convalescence the boys were stronger than before.

The treatment given in a book called *Why Vaccinate* by Harold W. Whiston, price 6d., published in Macclesfield by Claye, Brown and Claye is copied below.[1] The book can be also had from the National Anti-Vaccination League, 50 Parliament Street, London, S.W.

I have no doubt that more people die of fright than of disease itself. I notice this fright even in my children who, poor things, have been taught from childhood to dread the disease. There is no reason whatsoever that smallpox is any more fatal than many other diseases. Smallpox yields to nature's treatment just as well as any other illness. It is nature's way of purging the body of latent poison. In order to drive away the fright and to prevent simple people from rushing to the vaccination depot, I give the most salient passages from the book to show how unnecessary, even dangerous and filthy the practice of vaccination is.

This is how a medical man describes the process of preparing lymph :[2]

The following emphatic testimony[3] against vaccination of Dr. Walter R. Hadwen will be read with interest.

There is ample other medical evidence against vaccination collected in the booklet.

Young India, 13-2-1930

331. NOTES

AMAZING IGNORANCE

The Secretary, C. P. (Marathi) Congress Committee, writes:

> In the C. P. Legislative Council, while opposing the motion of Mr. G. R. Pradhan, recommending to the Local Government a grant of amnesty to political prisoners, etc., Mr. Gordon on behalf of the Local Government is reported to have stated that offenders like Avari, who incited murders and preached open violence, would never be pardoned by the Government.

The ignorance of some of these officials is equalled only by their arrogance. They do not even care to study the facts on which

[1] Not reproduced here
[2] *ibid.*
[3] *ibid.*

they claim to speak with authority. If Mr. Gordon had taken the trouble to inquire, he would have discovered that Sjt. Avari had never incited to murder or violence. Whatever his faults, he was never guilty of incitement to violence. And Mr. Gordon added injury to insult by associating Sjt. Avari's name with pardon. If I know him at all, I know that he will never be guilty of asking for pardon. As a satyagrahi that he has always professed to be, he could not ask for pardon. If he commits an offence, he serves his deserved punishment; if he seeks imprisonment as a civil resister, he could never seek pardon.

MORE TEMPLES OPENED

The Anti-Untouchability Committee appointed by the Working Committee is making steady progress. It reports that eight more temples owned by the Telugu Munurvar community residing in cosmopolitan Bombay were declared open on 2nd instant to the so-called 'untouchables'. This opening was no hurried matter. The proposal was discussed in various meetings of the community, and the temples were thrown open to the 'untouchables' only when there was almost complete unanimity. At the last meeting presided over by Advocate Sayaji Lakshman Silam, member of the Corporation, there was only one dissentient when the final vote was taken. The resolution also appealed to the suppressed brethren to carry out internal reforms

The Committee further reports that Dr. Patwardhan of Amraoti, President of the Hanuman Vyayam Prasarak Mandal, which has 4 branches in the town besides the Central Gymnasium which alone has a daily attendance of about 1,000 boys, and which has about 50 branches throughout Berar, has addressed a letter to the Secretary, Anti-Untouchability Committee, in the course of which he says:[1]

> Boys of the so-called untouchable classes are admitted to our gymnasiums along with the boys of the so-called caste Hindus on terms of absolute equality, and no distinction whatever is made as to their instruction or treatment....

These are encouraging events. All the parties concerned deserve congratulations. But for the ready atmosphere Advocate Silam could never have carried the whole of the Munurvar community with him. Dr. Patwardhan's letter does not surprise me. He is an old worker in the field, and it would have been surprising indeed if he had been found behind the times. Let us hope that before long temples and institutions shutting their doors against the suppressed classes will be among the exceptions and not the rule as they still unfortunately are today. The appeal made by the Munurvars to the suppressed class for internal reform is quite relevant. The two movements, internal reform

[1] Only an extract is reproduced here.

by the latter and repentance by the so-called 'touchables', should go hand in hand.

OVERCROWDING IN TRAINS

Sjt. T. N. Sharma of Anandaniketan, Andhra Desha, writes:[1] In my opinion the idea of stopping the train by pulling the chain to avoid overcrowding is quite sound. If the railway authorities enforce the rule of numbers for 1st and 2nd class compartments, why will they not for the 3rd class? The overcrowding is at times suffocating as was described the other day by Shrimati Mirabehn in these pages.[2] It is largely greed of profits that makes the authorities indifferent to the comfort of the uncomplaining submissive 3rd class passengers who provide the profits, not 1st and 2nd class passengers. It will be interesting to know why Sjt. Shrihariray is being prosecuted if the facts are as stated above.

FIVE CONUNDRUMS

Sjt. P. K. Majumdar, Bar-at-Law of Jalapahar, asks the following questions which are preceded by a long argument which I omit, as it is contained in the questions themselves:

1. Is Man a special creation of God?
2. Does the 'Inner Voice' mean the 'message of God'?
3. Defenceless as India is in the way of arms and ammunition, is it wise to court 'force' from a war-equipped opponent on the off chance of being successful by the use of 'soul force' with the consequent risk of civil war or foreign invasion?
4. Does 'soul force' mean what a man cannot do physically but is latent in his 'soul'?
5. Is 'soul' something apart from 'life'?

The answers are:

1. Man is a special creation of God precisely to the extent that he is distinct from the rest of His creation.

2. The 'Inner Voice' may mean a message from God or from the Devil, for both are wrestling in the human breast. Acts determine the nature of the voice.

3. The most defenceless mouse struggles for liberty against his born enemy the cat who is armed to the teeth. The mouse does not court 'force'. It is his nature to struggle though he knows that he will be worsted in the unequal contest. It is only reserved for man to act less than the mouse, if it is also reserved for him to act infinitely better than the mouse by recognizing the inner power within him which has

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. It described how a young man campaigned against overcrowding in trains and how he was arrested.

[2] *Vide* "The Third-Class Carriage", 12-12-1929.

been known repeatedly to defy all the physical forces arrayed against it. The *risk* of civil war is nothing against the *fact* of the existing condition in which an enslaved India *feels* powerless to struggle for freedom even to the extent that the poor mouse does.

4. Soul force begins when man recognizes that body force, be it ever so great, is nothing compared to the force of the soul within, which pervades not only him but all creation.

5. Soul is apart from life. The latter is conditioned by the body, the former is not.

Since my legal correspondent has asked for my opinion as 'senior counsel', the fee for it is that he should give up his gown, and wear the Congress uniform and join the battle for freedom in spite of the odds against us. If he pays the fee, he will discover that the opinion was worth it.

Young India, 13-2-1930

332. VARNADHARMA AND DUTY OF LABOUR–II

QUESTION: Is not the division of labour under varnashrama dharma sufficient for the development and welfare of humanity? Which do you value more—varnadharma or duty of labour?

ANSWER: The purport of this question is that varnadharma and duty of labour are incompatible obligations. In fact they are not. Both are concurrent and imperative. Varnadharma pertains to the society and duty of labour pertains to the individual. The sages divided society into four sections for its welfare and thereby attempted to root out rivalry which is fatal to society. Therefore they made one varna responsible for the growth of knowledge in society, the second responsible for the protection of life and property in society, the third for trade in society, and the fourth for service to society. All the four functions were and are equally essential; therefore there was no reason to consider one high and the other low. Adverting to the equilibrium of scales Maharshi Vyas has indeed said that each individual by performing the duties of his own varna acquires fitness for salvation; whereas mutual rivalry and distinctions of high and low bring about ruin. Varnadharma does not in the least imply that any Varian is exempt from manual labour. The duty of labour is incumbent on every person belonging to every varna. The Brahmin also had to approach his guru with firewood in his hands, that is to say, he also had to go into the forest and glean firewood and tend cattle. This work he did for himself and his family, not for society. Only children and cripples were exempt from such manual work.

The doctrine of manual labour for a living which Tolstoy has expounded is a corollary of the duty of labour. Tolstoy felt that if everyone had to do manual work then it means that man must earn his bread by manual labour, never by mental work. In varnadharma the work of each varna was for the welfare of society. Livelihood was not the motive. Gain or no gain, the Kshatriya had to defend the people. The Brahmin had to impart knowledge whether he received alms or not. The Vaishya had to farm and tend cattle whether he earned money or not. But Tolstoy's doctrine that every person must do manual work for a living is perfectly true. We come across distressing disparities in the world today because this universal duty has beenneglected or forgotten.Disparitics will always be there, but like the several leaves of a tree they will look beautiful and pleasant. In the pure varnadharma disparity is no doubt there, and when it was in its pure form, it was pleasing, peaceful and pretty. But when several people use their talents for amassing wealth, distrassing disparities are created. Just as, if a teacher (Brahmin), a soldier (Kshatriya), a businessman (Vaishya) and a carpenter (Shudra) follow their professions for amassing wealth, not for the welfare of society, then varnadharma is destroyed. Because in matters of duty there can be no room for amassing In society there is need for lawyers doctors, soldiers and others. But when they work for selfish ends they no longer are protectors of society but become parasites on sockt.

The *Gita* III, 10 has expounded a great principle where it says:

Together with sacrifice did the Lord of beings create, of old, mankind, declaring: "By this shall ye increase; may this be to you the giver of all your desires.:'

Now we can clearly comprehend the etymology of the word *yajna*. The meaning of *yajna* is manual work and this is the first and foremost act of worship of God. He has given us bodies. Without food the body cannot exit and without labour food cannot be produced. That is why manual labour has become a universal duty. This duty of labour is not Tolstoy's alone but of the whole world. Ignorance of this great *yajna* has led to the worship of mammon in the world and intelligent people have used their talents to exploit others. It is clear that God is not covetous. Being all powerful, He creates every day only as much food as is sufficient for every human being or living creature. Not knowing this great truth, several people indulge in all kinds of luxuries and thereby starve many others. If they could give up this greed and work for their living, and eat enough to meet their needs, the poverty that we find today will vanish. I hope the

interrogator would now see that varnadharma and duty of labour are concurrent, complementary and essential.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 13-2-1930

333. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

[Before *February, 14, 1930*][1]

MY DEAR REGINALD,

If you need my apology for my silence so long, you have it. But my correspondence is lying neglected. I simply cannot cope with it. I have been thinking of your letter for these last three days.

The real thing is likely to begin not before March.

I know you are doing your work in a thorough manner. Come when you can. I wish you will be here on 14th February. But I don't want you to interrupt your experiments. The Ashram is your home to come to whenever you like.

No more today.

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/64

334. LETTER TO KASTURBEHN BHATT

February 14, 1930

CHI. KASTURBEHN BHATT,[2]

Where are you [now]? You may write to me. Have you now mastered all the things? Do you meet Harihar? Where are Taranath, Tansukh?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9249

[1] Inferred from the contents

[2] Wife of Harihar P. Bhatt, an inmate of the Ashram

335. LETTER TO NAUTAMLAL BHAGWANJI

February 15, 1930

BHAI NAUTAMLAL BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. I understand your feelings. Doctor will not desire to do anything which may make you unhappy. I will write to him.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

SJT. NAUTAMLAL BHAGWANJI

JETPUR, KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2581

336. LETTER TO MANILAL KOTHARI

February 15, 1930

BHAISHRI MANILAL,

I have your letter. I am writing this at 3-30 in the morning, so please do not expect me to write more.

There is no need to pass any resolution about satyagraha just now. All the things that I expect from people will be clearly explainedin *Young India*[1] and *Navajivan*. I will write to you if I have to add anything. What I expect from you is that you should make your body strong.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Sabarmati Sangrahalaya

337. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

February 15, 1930

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your long letter. The session of the W. C. is going on. It has been decided that I should start civil disobedience. That of course does not mean that I alone should start it; it means that all those to whom ahimsa is a creed in the striving for swaraj should resort to it. I

[1]*Vide* "Some Rules of Satyagraha", 23-2-1930 and "When I am Arrested", 27-2-1930.

am inclined to start with you. Are you ready? Are you willing? If you are, obtain Zakir Saheb's permission and reach here soon. Whatever I decide to do I wish to do at once.

There is no time to reply to the rest of your letter, nor is it necessary to do so.

I am writing this before the 4 o'clock morning prayer. Keshu arrived yesterday. Mathuradas is here. A nice group has gathered here. Manilal and Ramdas also have come.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Sabarmati Sangrahalaya

338. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, SABARMATI ASHRAM

February 15, 1930

Gandhiji addressing the inmates referred to the names he had received and said that it was not necessary that one and all should give their names. If they felt the slightest doubt about their ability to join the campaign they might withdraw their names even then.

He continued:

People expect you to join in the fight with great preparedness on your part. The whole world is looking at the Ashramwith great expectancy. It may be that you might not be ready when you joined the Ashram, but the discipline and atmosphere must have brought that much confidence in you and must have helped you in preparing yourselves for the ensuing fight.

Gandhiji apprised them of the sufferings and hardships they would have to undergo during the fight. They might be sent to jail, and they might be beaten, but that was not all. They might have to go without food or might be driven out of the Ashram or a worse fate might befall them. But under all circumstances they must be prepared to remain non-violent in thought and in action and must never lose their temper or get angry. They must try to have a thorough change of heart. The time might come when even God might be angry with them, but they must not lose patience.

He continued:

Suffering is writ large on the face of every devotee. Even Rama and Sita had to suffer. God tests you on the touchstone and if it is found that you have withstood that test, then nothing remains to be desired. In the Ashram itself, you have enjoyed yourselves to a certain extent, but enjoyment is worth while only when you show your mettle and sacrifice yourself when the time comes. You must now convert the

Ashram into a lamp of sacrifice. Those who feel themselves weak or unable to join the fight must quit the Ashram. Once you have plunged yourselves in battle, if you retreat, it will be a blemish on you and blot on the whole fair name of India.

The Hindu, 17-2-1930

339. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI.[1]

SABARMATI,
February 16, 1930

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

It is now 3.30 a.m. I have been struggling to find time to give you a few lines. Your letter I appreciate. It was first seen by Motilalji and Jawaharlal and then read to the Working Committee. There were various comments. No one, however, thought that there was anything in it to warrant a departure from the Lahore programme. I agree that the Hindu-Muslim problem is the problem of problems. But I feel that it has to be approached in a different manner from the one we have hitherto adopted—not [as] at present by adjustment of the political power but by one or the other acting on the square under all circumstances. Give and take is possible only when there is some trust between the respective communities and their representatives. If the Congress can command such trust the matter can proceed further, not before. The Congress can do so only by becoming fearless and strictly just. But meanwhile the third party—the evil British power—has got to be sterilized. There will be no charter of independence before the Hindus and the Muslims have met but there can be virtual independence before the charter is received. Hence must civil disobedience be forged from day to day by those who believe that there is no escape from non-violence and that violence will never bring freedom to India.

I do not know if I have made myself clear. Anyway my own personal line is cast. I fancy that I see my way clear now. There will be no turning back. I can live if God wills and if He finds work for me. I have no interest in living if there is no work for me in the direction for which. He appears to me to have called me. If all this be hallucination I must perish in the flames of my own lighting. I want you then to

[1] This should be read after "Speech at Prayer Meeting, Sabarmati Ashram". For the addressee's letter dated February 13, 1930 to which this was a reply, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Dr. M. A. Ansari", 13-2-1930.

cheer up. It does not matter at all if we do not see eye to eye. It is well with us if our hearts are pure, as I know they are.

Yours ever,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I had a heart to heart chat with Shuaib. He has promised to meet you. I would love to see as he does. You may share this with him or any friend you like.

M. K. G.

Ansari Papers. Courtesy: Jamia Millia Library

340. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

February 18, 1930

BHAI SATIS BABU,

I have your two letters. I miss you these days. But I have deliberately refrained from sending for you. I feared that it might arouse envy. What more can I talk to you about ahimsa? I have always discussed only ahimsa. However, if you feel the necessity of talking over anything, do not hesitate to come.

I believe they will arrest me in the middle of March. I expect my letter to the Viceroy will be despatched on the 2nd.

I had some talk with Antarjami. It was not very satisfying. I am awaiting the arrival of Shankerlal [Banker]. It will be good if the Utkal work is organized well.

I am awaiting Hemprabha Devi's letter. How is she keeping?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Do tell me if you find any difficulty with my handwriting or language.[1]

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1615

[1] In the G. N. series this is the first letter in Hindi to the addressee.

341. LETTER TO AMBALAL SARABHAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
February 18, 1930

DEAR BROTHER,

I have received your gift of books. I understand your affection and I am thinking of you all the time.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11125. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

342. LETTER TO UDIT MISHRA

February 19, 1930

BHAI UDIT MISHRAJI,

Only today have I been able to read your letter to the end.

Persons with views or faith contrary to ours should never be employed to teach our children. And in no case should half the study time be devoted only to English. Knowledge of Hindi is not essential for an English teacher.

If the children [distrust][1] any teacher, he ought to be removed.

When a junior teacher gives wrong lessons to the children, it is the duty of the Head Master to check him. It is also his duty to warn the guardians of the children if he notices any impropriety in the conduct of the junior.

The consideration of anyone's pleasure or displeasure has no place in following the right path.

The children should be taught to reject courteously gifts of foreign articles by whomsoever made.

Sacrificial spinning on the *takli* should never be given up; I am arranging to send *taklis.*

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[1] The source is illegible.

[PS.]

It would be right to inform Ghanshyamdasji of all this. This letter too may be shown to him.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4219

343. 'NEVER FAILETH'

अहिंसाप्रतिष्ठायां तत्सन्निधौ वैरत्यागः[1]

'HATE DISSOLVES IN THE PRESENCE OF LOVE.'

In the opinion of the Working Committee civil disobedience should be initiated and controlled by those who believe in non-violence for the purpose of achieving *purna* swaraj as an article of faith, and as the Congress contains in its organization not merely such men and women, but also those who accept non-violence as a policy essential in the existing circumstances in the country, the Working Committee welcomes the proposal of Mahatma Gandhi and authorizes him and those working with him who believe in non-violence as an article of faith to the extent above indicated to start civil disobedience as and when they desire and in the manner and to the extent they decide. The Working Committee trusts that when the campaign is actually in action all Congressmen and others will extend to the civil resisters their full co-operation in every way possible, and that they will observe and preserve complete non-violence notwithstanding any provocation that may be offered. The Working Committee further hopes that in the event of a mass movement taking place, all those who are rendering voluntary co-operation to the Government, such as lawyers, and those who are receiving so-called benefits from it, such as students, will withdraw their co-operation or renounce benefits as the case may be, and throw themselves into the final struggle for freedom. The Working Committee trusts, that in the event of the leaders being arrested and imprisoned, those who are left behind and have the spirit of sacrifice and service in them, will carry on the Congress organization, and guide the movement to the best of their ability.

This resolution[2] of the Working Committee gives me my charter of freedom if it also binds me in the tightest chains. It is the formula of which I have been in search these long and weary months. For me the resolution is not so much a political as a religious effort. My difficulty was fundamental. I saw that I could not work out ahimsa through an organization holding a variety of mentalities. It could not be subject to the decision of majorities. To be consistent with itself, it might have to be inconsistent with the whole world.

A person who has a choice before him is ever exposed to temptation. The instinct of those therefore, with whom non-violence is

[1] Patanjali's *Yogadarshanam*, ii. 35

[2] Adopted on February 15, 1930 at Ahmedabad

a policy, when tempted by violence, may fail them. That of those who have no remedy but non-violence open to them can never fail them if they have non-violence in them in reality. Hence the necessity for freedom from Congress control. And I was thankful that the members of the Working Committee saw the utter correctness of my position.

It is to be hoped, that no one will misunderstand the position. Here there is no question of superiority. Those, who hold non-violence for the attainment of freedom as an article of faith, are in no way superior to those with whom it is a mere policy, even as there is no such inequality between brown men and yellow men. Each acts according to his lights.

The responsibility devolving on me is the greatest I have ever undertaken. It was irresistible. But all will be well, if it is ahimsa that is guiding me. For the seer who knew what he gave to the world has said, 'Hate dissolves in the presence of ahimsa.' The true rendering of the word in English is love or charity. And does not the Bible say:

> Love worketh no ill to his neighbour,
> Believeth all things,
> Hopeth all things,
> Never faileth.[1]

Civil disobedience is sometimes a peremptory demand of love. Dangerous it undoubtedly is, but no more than the encircling violence. Civil disobedience is the only non-violent escape from its soul-destroying heat. The danger lies only in one direction, in the outbreak of violence side by the side with civil disobedience. If it does I know now the way; not the retracing as at the time of Bardoli. The struggle, in freedom's battle, of non-violence against violence, no matter from what quarter the latter comes, must continue till a single representative is left alive. More no man can do, to do less would be tantamount to want of faith.

Young India, 20-2-1930

344. SOME QUESTIONS

With reference to the imminent civil disobedience some pertinent questions have been put by friends as well as critics. These need answering.

Q. Surely you are not so impatient as to start your campaign without letting the authorities know your plans and giving them an opportunity of meeting you and arresting you?

A. Those who know my past should know that I hold it to be

[1] *I Corinthians*, xiii

contrary to satyagraha to do anything secretly or impatiently. My plans will be certainly sent to the Viceroy before I take any definite step. A satyagrahi has no secrets to keep from his opponent or so-called enemy.

Q. Did you not say even at Lahore that the country was not prepared for civil disobedience, especially no-tax campaign on a mass scale?

A. I am not even now sure that it is. But it has become clear to me as never before that the unpreparedness in the sense that a non-violent atmosphere is wanting will, as time goes by, very likely increase as it has been increasing all these years. Young men are impatient. I know definitely many stayed their violent designs because in 1921 the Congress had decided to offer civil disobedience. That school has been more active than before because of my repeated declarations that the country was not prepared for civil disobedience. I feel then that if non-violence is an active force, as I know it is, it should work even in the face of the most violent atmosphere. One difficulty in the way was that the Congress claiming to represent the whole nation could not very well offer civil disobedience and disown responsibility for violence especially by Congressmen. I have procured discharge from that limitation by taking over the responsibility for launching on civil disobedience. I represent no one but myself and at the most those whom I may enroll for the campaign. And I propose at present to confine myself only to those who are amenable to the Ashram discipline and have actually undergone it for some time. It is true that I may not shirk responsibility indirectly for any violence that may break out on the part of the nation and in the course of the campaign. But such responsibility will always be there and can be only a degree more thanthe responsibility I share with the British rulers in their sins against the nation in so far as I give my co-operation however reluctantly and ever so slightly. For instance I give my co-operation by paying taxes direct or indirect. The very salt I eat compels my voluntary co-operation. Moreover it has dawned on me never so plainly as now that if my non-violence has suffered the greatest incarnation of violence which the British imperialistic rule is, it must suffer the crude and ineffective violence of the impatient patriots who know not that by their ineffectiveness they are but helping that imperialistic rule and enabling it to consolidate the very thing they seek to destroy. I see now as clearly as daylight that my non-violence working as it has done against the British misrule has shaken it somewhat. Even so will it shake the counter-violence of the patriot if taking courage in both my hands I set my non-violence actively in motion, i.e., civil disobedience. I reduce the risk of the outbreak of

counter-violence to a minimum by taking sole charge of the campaign. After all is said and done, however, I feel the truth of the description given to my proposal by *The Times of India.* It is indeed 'the last throw of a gambler'. I have been a 'gambler' all my life. In my passion for finding the truth and in relentlessly following out my faith in non-violence, I have counted no stake too great. In doing so I have erred, if at all, in the company of the most distinguished scientist of any age and any clime.

Q. But what about your much vaunted faith in Hindu-Muslim unity? Of what value will even independence be without that unity?

A. My faith in that unity is as bright as ever. I do not want independence at the cost even of the weakest minority, let alone the powerful Mussalman and the no less powerful Sikh. The Lahore Congress resolution on unity[1] finally sums up all its previous effort in that behalf. The Congress rules out all solution proposed on a communal basis. But if it is ever compelled to consider such a solution it will consider only that which will give (not merely justice) but satisfaction to all the parties concerned. To be true to its word therefore, the Congress cannot accept any scheme of independence that does not give satisfaction, so far as communal rights are concerned, to the parties concerned. The compaign that is about to be launched is calculated to generate power for the whole nation to be independent. But it will not be in fact till all the parties have combined. To postpone civil disobedience which has nothing to dowith communalism till the latter is set at rest will be to move in a vicious circle and defeat the very end that all must have in view. What I am hoping is that the Congress being free from the communal incubus will tend it, if it remains true to the nation as a whole, to become the strongest centre party jealously guarding the rights of the weakest members. Such. a Congress will have only servants of the nation, not office-seekers. Till independence is achieved or till unity is reached it will have nothing to do with any office or favours from the Government of the day in competition with the minorities. Happily the Congress has now nothing to do with the legislatures which have perhaps more than anything else increased communal bitterness. It is no doubt unfortunate that at the present moment the Congress contains largely only the Hindu element. But if the Congresss Hindus cease to think communally and we take no advantage that cannot be shared to the full with all the other communities, it will presently disarm all suspicion and will attract to itself the noblest among

[1] *Vide* 1st footnote to "Speech at Subjects Committee, A.I.C.C.-III", 1-1-1930.

Mussalmans, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians, Jews and all those who are of India. But whether the Congress ever approaches this ideal or not, my course is, as it always has been, perfectly clear. This unity among all is no new love with me. I have treasured it, acted up to it from my youth upward. When I went to London as a mere lad in 1889 I believed in it as passionately as I do now. When I went to South Africa in 1893 I worked it out in every detail of my life. Love so deep seated as it is in me will not be sacrificed even for the realm of the whole world. Indeed this campaign should take the attention of the nation off the communal problem and to rivet it on the things that are common to all Indians, no matter to what religion or sect they may belong.

Q. Then you will raise, if you can, a force ultimately hostile to the British ?

A. Never. My love for non-violence is superior to every other thing mundane or supramundane. It is equalled only by my love for Truth which is to me synonymous with non-violence through which and which alone I can see and reach Truth. My scheme of life, if it draws no distinction between different religionists in India, it also draws none between different races. For me "man is a man for a' that"[1]. I embark upon the campaign as much out of my love for the Englishman as for the Indian. By self-suffering I seek to convert him, never to destroy him.Q. But may not all this be your hallucination that can never come to pass in this matter of fact world of ours?

Q. But may not at all this be your hallucination that can never come to pass in this matter of fact world of ours?

A. It may well be that. It is not a charge wholly unfamiliar to me. My hallucinations in the past have served me well. This last is not expected to fail me. If it does, it will but harm me and those who may come or put themselves under its influence. If my hallucination is potent to the authorities, my body is always at their disposal. If owing to my threatened action any Englishman's life is put in greater danger than it is now, the arm of English authority is long enough and strong enough to overtake any outbreak that may occur between Kashmir and Cape Comorin or Karachi and Dibrugarh. Lastly no campaign need take place, if all the politicians and editors instead of addressing themselves to me will address themselves to the authorities and ask them to undo the continuing wrongs some of which I have inadequately described in these pages.

Young India, 20-2-1930

[1] Robert Burns

345. 'BUCCAANEERING COMMISSION'[1]

As the public have a short memory, I reproduce below the two Congress resolutions which have been defended by Professor Coomarappa and which have been so misrepresented here and abroad:

GAYA CONGRESS RESOLUTION (1922)

> Whereas by reason of unjustifiable military expenditure and other extravagance, the Government has brought the national indebtedness to a limit beyond recovery, and whereas the Government still pursues the same policy of extravagance under cover of the authority of the so-called representative assemblies constituted without the suffrage of a majority or any substantial fraction of the voters and despite their declared repudiation of the authority of such assemblies to represent the people:
>
> And whereas if the Government is permitted to continue this policy, it will become impossible for the people of India ever to carry on their own affairs with due regard to the honour and happiness of the people, and it has therefore become necessary to stop the career of irresponsibility:
>
> This Congress hereby repudiates the authority of the legislatures that have been or may be formed by the Government in spite of the national boycott of the said institutions in future to raise loans or to incur any liabilities on behalf of the nation, and notifies to the world that on the attainment of swarajya the people of India, though holding themselves liable for all debts and liabilities rightly or wrongly incurred hitherto by the Government, will not hold themselves bound to repay any loans or discharge any liabilities incurred on and after this date on the authority or sanction of the so-called legislatures brought into existence in spite of the national boycott.

LAHORE CONGRESS RESOLUTION[2] (1929)

The Gaya resolution is surely innocuous and even charitable at the expense of posterity, in that it makes the people liable for the then existing debts whether 'rightly or wrongly incurred'. The Lahore resolution undoes the mistake, and adopts the honourable and usual method of submitting all accounts, past, present and future when the time comes, to the scrutiny of an impartial tribunal. What happens when an institution or a business passes from one steward to another?

[1] In this article to which Gandhiji appended his comments, J. C. Coomarappa had explained how the people of India had been burdened with debts by the British Government to the tune of over £200 million—all by unjust transactions—and had invited the readers' attention to the resolution on the subject passed at the Gaya and Lahore Congresses.

[2] Not reproduced here.

Does not the outgoing steward render accounts to the incoming one? Are not those accounts subject to scrutiny? The future national Government will betray its trust at the very threshold of its career, if it fails to perform the obvious duty of submitting to the strictest scrutiny all the obligations it may take over. If Great Britain and India are then solvent, no investor need fear the loss of a penny or a pice. For whatever India takes over, she will have to pay. Whatever cannot be charged justly against her has to be taken over as a matter of course by Great Britain. It is only the present helpless voiceless India that is made to pay against her will what cannot be justly charged against her. When the time comes for reckoning, it will be the sacred duty owing to India's millions to repudiate every transaction proved to be unjust. But that would mean merely an inevitable and just transference about which the investor, the scripholder and the like need not be concerned.

Young India, 20-2-1930

346. NOTES

'NO SURRENDER'

Here are the choicest bits from Northcliffe House just received:

> . . . *Politicians must for ever drop their gibberish about Dominion Home Rule for the Eastern Empire*. Those of them who persist in toying with so fatal a policy must be remorselessly driven from public life.
>
> *The retention of India is more important to the welfare of Great Britain than tariffs or any other political question.* That country may fairly be described as the very keystone of the Empire. Its trade is vital to our people. The total loss of the Indian market would mean bankruptcy for Lancashire and misery for her industrial workers. In the last year for which figures are available British exports to India were £; 83,900,000 in value (one-ninth of our total exports), and there is no other country or territory, British or foreign, which takes anything like that amount of British goods. This trade it is the deliberate purpose of the revolutionaries to destroy if they get the chance.
>
> British investments in India reach the enormous figure of £1,000,000,000, according to evidence given before the Simon Commission. Again, it is the declared intention of the revolutionaries to repudiate the Indian debt and to confiscate the plantations and factories which British capital has created on Indian soil. *From the loss of such a sum Great Britain could never recover.*
>
> *The policy of surrender in India has got to slop.* . . . There are two courses, and only two. The first is to get out and hand over the country to the Princes, who would pretty quickly settle the Hindu lawyers of the All-India Congress. The second is to stay in India and govern. That second course is the one which this country will take.

The title is the *Daily Mail's* as also the italics and different types. The writing is as outspoken as it is true notwithstanding Mr. Benn's belittling of it. But 'no surrender' is a game at which either party may play. If the millions of India play 'no surrender' their non-violence will be more than a match for the British 'no surrender' in spite of the combined aid of the military, the naval and the air forces which it can summon. It is the material benefits which England derives from the connection that matter to the British public. It is the extinction of those benefits that matters most to the Indian masses who can no longer bear the crushing burden. For India considers many of them ill-gotten. Let this double no surrender stagger humanity. British bullying must stop at all cost.

NO CONVERSION PERMISSIBLE

The English Press cuttings contain among many delightful items the news that Miss Slade known in the Ashram as Mirabai has embraced Hinduism.[1] I may say that she has not. I hope that she is a better Christian than when four years ago she came to the Ashram. She is not a girl of tender age. She is past thirty and has travelled all alone in Egypt, Persia and Europe befriending trees and animals. I have had. the privilege of having under me Mussalman, Parsi and Christian minors. Never was Hinduism put before them for their acceptance. They were encouraged and induced to respect and read their own scriptures. It is with pleasure that I can recall instances of men and women, boys and girls having been induced to know and love their faiths better than they did before if they were also encouraged to study the other faiths with sympathy and respect. We have in the Ashram today several faiths represented. NO proselytizing is practised or permitted. We recognize that all these faiths are true and divinely inspired, and all have suffered through the necessarily imperfect handling of imperfect men. Miss Slade bears not a Hindu name but an Indian name. And this was done at her instance and for convenience. We have more such instances. Richard Gregg who is not suspected of having given up Christianity is to us Govindji. An old Christian sister, Miss Ada West now in Louth, became Devibehn to us in Phoenix.

Young India, 20-2-1930

[1] This was observed in the introductory remarks to the "Interview to *The Daily Express,*" 22-1-1930.

347. VARNADHARMA AND DUTY OF LABOUR-III

Q. It is of course good to find the virtues of all the four varnas in any one individual but can the majority of human beings acquire them all and is it proper to place this ideal before society?

A. Many virtues and functions are common to all varnas and ought to be so; but it is neither necessary nor possible for everyone to have all the virtues of all the varnas.

Q. If Tolstoy's duty of labour is universally accepted will it not be difficult for poets like Kabir and Rabindra to live in this world? And would this not be a misfortune for the world?

A. Acceptance of the duty of labour is not a denial of Kabir and Rabindranath; on the other hand it is capable of making the poetry of both more forceful and radiant. Manual labour does not weaken the mental faculty; on the contrary it nourishes it. The difference merely is that the votary of manual labour will never earn a living by only writing poetry nor will he give up manual labour altogether. Kabir was of course an advocate of manual labour. He never earned a penny by composing religious songs and hymns. He earned his living as a weaver of cloth. Propagation of religion and morality had become his nature or hobby. Rabindranath is a great poet of this age because he does not earn his living by writing poetry. Whatever he earns by writing poetry is all donated to his institution. He lives by the income from his estates. I do not know how far he believes in the duty of labour; this I do know that he certainly does not despise it. We learn from history that ancient poets or sages had accepted the duty of labour even if it might have been implicitly. As a result their benedictions are with us even today.

Q. According to the doctrine of the duty of labour, Jesus, Buddha and Tolstoy himself are blameworthy. Tolstoy's wife herself has said that beyond writing books he could do nothing else. He might have learnt carpentry and some other manual work only to become a laughing-stock; but this does not satisfy Tolstoy's concept of the duty of labour. Is it not therefore necessary to examine it very carefully?

A. This view takes no note of history. Jesus was a carpenter. He never used his intellect to earn his livelihood. We do not know how much manual work Buddha did before he attained wisdom. Yes, we know this much, that he did not propagate religion for securing his livelihood. He lived on charity. That could not militate against the duty of labour. A roving ascetic has to do a lot of manual work. Now, to come to Tostoy, what his wife has said is true but it is not the whole truth. After the change in his outlook Tostoy never took for himself the income from his books. Although he had property worth millions, he lived like a guest in his own house. After the attainment of wisdom,

he worked eight hours a day and earned his wages. Sometimes he worked in the field and sometimes he made shoes at home. Although he did not earn much by doing such work, still he earned enough to feed himself. Tolstoy strove hard to practise what hepreached. This was characteristic of him. The sum and substance of all this discussion is that the duty which the ancients observed themselves and which the majority in the world discharges even today has been presented to the world in an explicit manner by him. In fact this doctrine was not Tolstoy's original idea; it was thought of by a great Russian writer by name Bondoref. Tolstoy endorsed it and proclaimed it to the world.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 20-2-1930

348. LETTER TO NAUTAMLAL BHAGWANJI

[*February 20, 1930*][1]

BHAISHRI NAUTAMLAL,

I have your letter. I am glad that your worry is over. Observe as much simplicity as possible.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

BHAISHRI NAUTAMLAL BHAGWANJI

JETPUR, KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2580

349. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 22, 1930

MY DEAR ANAND,

I was delighted to receive your letter. I hope that your firmness will last and will increase day after day. Take no hasty step and do not try to coax your wife[2] to come. If she comes she must do so of her own absolutely free will. You know too that she will have to live

[1] From the postmark
[2] Vidya

separately from you.[1] Let her also know that the impending struggle may upset all arrangements and may result in her having to go back soon.

I hope you are keeping as well in body as you seem to be in mind.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

350. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

February 22, 1930

CHI. DEVDAS,

You will have received my reply to your wire. Now I am awaiting your letter. A letter to the Viceroy will go from here on the 2nd.[2] You will see everything if you are here at the time. It will not be surprising at all if they arrest me any day after the 4th. Let those who wish to join you in the march, have patience for the present. My desire, if I myself lead the march, is to keep you with me. Alternatively, I may send you in the first batch and try to follow after all of you have been arrested. They are sure to arrest me to prevent all this.In that case you should court arrest. And after that most of the Ashram inmates should get themselves arrested. I should like you to be here at least to enable me to give you a complete picture of this plan. Manilal also will be here by about the 27th. Motilal and Jawaharlal are coming.

You may now do what you think best.[3]

From a copy of the Gujarati: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers, Courtesy: Sabarmati Sangrahalaya

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Anand T. Hingorani", 14-11-1929.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Irwin", 2-3-1930.

[3] Someone adds in a post-script: "After the above was written Bapu received your letter. He wants me to write that what he has written above is still the best plan."

351. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 22, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I got your letter. Keep me informed about the effect of the injections. I had told Narandas about your budget for the spinning-wheel. I will note down your name. In the satyagraha movement, physical illness is no impediment. Even though Kishorelal is bed-ridden, he goes on sending his own and Gomatibehn's names. And I have also entered them. This of course does not mean that all are to be sent to jail. But it does mean that they will take up whatever duties relating to the struggle are assigned to them by me or by those who remain behind after I am arrested. Devidutt should not be encouraged, but he should not be discouraged either. His services too will be used when the time comes. He should be told that for that he should daily make progress in self-purification.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. courtesy: Sabarmati Sangrahalaya

352. LETTER TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 22, 1930

CHI. KISHORELAL,

All the three types of people mentioned by you can join this struggle. But discussing these distinctions in *Navajivan* at present is likely to confuse people's minds. I think everyone has understood the broad meaning of the Working Committee's resolution. Almost all men and women here have sent in their names. All of them cannot understand the distinctions suggested by you. But I think they all have faith in non-violence and understand that no Englishman should be harmed or permitted to be harmed in any way. They believe in non-violence not as an expedient but as a creed. Who can say how far their ahimsa will endure when the testing time comes? What can we say even about you and me? Peter who was as hard as stone turned out to be soft as wax at the moment of crisis. And those two women who were only guided by their faith remained as firm as rock. If you have any questions pertaining to the articles I am writing these days, do place them before me. Read the rules about satyagraha carefully and

let me know if you notice any omission in them.

And now for the monthly periods. A couple of women who had not during their periods joined others for meals for fear of criticism followed Mirabehn's example and joined. That gave rise to some discussion. The matter had been settled earlier. It had been agreed that any woman who, like Mirabehn, wished to join others for meals during her periods could do so. She must observe three rules: she should not enter the kitchen for the four days of menses; even from outside the kitchen she should not look at the food being cooked or at the water used for cooking; she should not touch the cooked food. This decision was arrived at after correspondence with Nathji through Panditji. But a couple of women were in panic after a woman in menses had joined at the meals. Therefore, benefiting from Nathji's presence the conditions necessary for preserving the sacredness of *mantras* have been ascertained and clarified. We have among theinmates some persons who practise *mantras* and such persons also constantly visit the Ashram. I believe that it is the duty of the Ashram for the sake of such persons to observe as fully as possible the conditions for preserving the sacredness of the *mantras*. If I can understand the purpose of the conditions better, I shall help in their still stricter observance. I had asked Ramniklal to get one or two points clarified by Nathji. But he does not seem to have been able to do so. Is milk polluted by the look or touch of a woman in menses? From the papers I have with me it seems that it is polluted by touch. In Nath's opinion, even if a person practising *mantras* does not know that a particular sample of milk has been touched by a woman in menses, the fact of the touch itself has the power of nullifying the effect of the *mantra*, to some extent at least. This means that a person practising *mantras* should practically live without milk, because whether in the Ashram or outside, particularly outside, women in menses do happen to look at milk. We can think of hundreds of ways of milk being polluted by look. Hence the question of milk needs to be carefully considered. I understand that uncooked grain is not polluted either by touch or look. Is it not the same with regard to ghee and oil? At what stage can look or touch affect water? For I understand that the water meant for cooking is affected both by look and touch. Nath says from experience that cooked food is affected both by the look and the touch of the woman in menses. But he is not able to explain the reason. Have you thought about the reason? If you have, send me your opinion on it and also on the other questions above after discussing them with Nathji or independently if you can.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Sabarmati Sangrahalaya

353. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 22, 1930

BHAI TULSI MAHER,

I received your letter.

You are carrying on your work quite well and I hope it will continue so. Do not be perturbed by the news of the struggle here. Your duty lies in sticking to your post.

These days smallpox is rampant here. We are being tested in this way too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6537

354. SOME RULES OF SATYAGRAHA[1]

Satyagraha literally means insistence on truth. This insistence arms the votary with matchless power. This power or force is connoted by the word satyagraha. Satyagraha, to be genuine, may be offered against parents, against one's wife or one's children, against rulers, against fellow-citizens, even against the whole world.

Such a universal force necessarily makes no distinction between kinsmen and strangers, young and old, man and woman, friend and foe. The force to be so applied can never be physical. There is in it no room for violence. The only force of universal application can, therefore, be that of ahimsa or love. In other words it is soul force.

Love does not burn others, it burns itself. Therefore, a satyagrahi, i.e., a civil resister will joyfully suffer even unto death.

It follows, therefore, that a civil resister, whilst he will strain every nerve to compass the end of the existing rule, will do no intentional injury in thought, word or deed to the person of a single Englishman. This necessarily brief explanation of satyagraha will perhaps enable the reader to understand and appreciate the following rules:

AS AN INDIVIDUAL

1. A satyagrahi, i.e., a civil resister will harbour no anger.
2. He will suffer the anger of the opponent.

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 23-2-1930.

3. In so doing he will put up with assaults from the opponent, never retaliate; but he will not submit, out of fear of punishment or the like, to any order given in anger.

4. When any person in authority seeks to arrest a civil resister, he will voluntarily submit to the arrest, and he will not resist the attachment or removal of his own property, if any, when it is sought to be confiscated by authorities.

5. If a civil resister has any property in his possession as a trustee, he will refuse to surrender it, even though in defending it he might lose his life. He will, however, never retaliate.

6. Non-retaliation excludes swearing and cursing.

7. Therefore a civil resister will never insult his opponent,

and therefore also not take part in many of the newly coined cries which are contrary to the spirit of ahimsa.

8. A civil resister will not salute the Union Jack, nor will he insult it or officials, English or Indian.

9. In the course of the struggle if anyone insults an official or commits an assault upon him, a civil resister will protect such official or officials from the insult or attack even at the risk of his life.

AS A PRISONER

10. As a prisoner, a civil resister will behave courteously towards prison officials, and will observe all such discipline of the prison as is not contrary to self-respect; as for instance, whilst he will salaam officials in the usual manner, he will not perform any humiliating gyrations and refuse to shout 'Victory to Sarkar[1]' or the like. He will take cleanly cooked and cleanly served food, which is not contrary to his religion, and will refuse to take food insultingly served or served in unclean vessels.

11. A civil resister will make no distinction between an ordinary prisoner and himself, will in no way regard himself as superior to the rest, nor will he ask for any conveniences that may not be necessary for keeping his body in good health and condition. He is entitled to ask for such conveniences as may be required for his physical or spiritual well-being.

12. A civil resister may not fast for want of conveniences whose deprivation does not involve any injury to one's self-respect.

AS A UNIT

13. A civil resister will joyfully obey all the orders issued by the leader of the corps, whether they please him or not.

[1] Government

14. He will carry out orders in the first instance even though they appear to him insulting, inimical or foolish, and then appeal to higher authority. He is free before joining to determine the fitness of the corps to satisfy him, but after he has joined it, it becomes a duty to submit to its discipline irksome or otherwise. If the sum total of the energy of the corps appears to a member to be improper or immoral, he has a right to sever his connection, but being within it, he has no right to commit a breach of its discipline.

15. No civil resister is to expect maintenance for his dependents. It would be an accident if any such provision is made. A civil resister entrusts his dependents to the care of God. Even in ordinary warfare wherein hundreds of thousands give themselves up to it, they are able to make no previous provision. How much more,then, should such be the case in satyagraha? It is the universal experience that in such times hardly anybody is left to starve.

IN COMMUNAL FIGHTS

16. No civil resister will intentionally become a cause of communal quarrels.

17. In the event of any such outbreak, he will not take sides, but he will assist only that party which is demonstrably in the right. Being a Hindu he will be generous towards Mussalmans and others, and will sacrifice himself in the attempt to save non-Hindus from a Hindu attack. And if the attack is from the other side, he will not participate in any retaliation but will give his life in protecting Hindus.

18. He will, to the best of his ability, avoid every occasion that may give rise to communal quarrels.

19. If there is a procession of satyagrahis they will do nothing that would wound the religious susceptibilities of any community, and they will not take part in any other processions that are likely to wound such susceptibilities.

Young India, 27-2-1930

355. TO CONTRIBUTORS AND CORRESPONDENTS

An article with the caption "Plight of Women"[1] was published on p. 125 of *Navajivan*, dated December 15, 1929. I was taken in by the correspondent having given names, addresses and other details. I took the writer to be entirely truthful. Now, from the facts supplied to me in this matter, I find that the letter was full of exaggeration and was

[1]*Vide* "Plight of Women", 15-12-1929.

libellous. The truth has been so twisted in the presentation that the chief actor in the incident comes out as cruelty incarnate. The information now reaching me puts the whole incident in a different light. However, I do not desire to go into the details of the case. My aim in writing this is to request correspondents to give facts only. Exaggeration does not help improvement in any way or anywhere. I advise the correspondent who wrote the original letter to apologize to the person whom he has slandered for the exaggeration he has made. If he still desires to adhere to his statement, he should write to me permitting me to send his letter to the persons concerned.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-2-1930

356. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

SABARMATI,
February 23, 1930

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

I am quite clear that those who believe in and would fight for immediate independence cannot take part in conferences such as you mention.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 9614

357. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

SABARMATI,
February 23, 1930

MY DEAR MURIEL,

Your letter is lying in front of me demanding an answer. On the eve of what promises to be a life and death struggle I think of all my English friends known and unknown. You are not the least among them.

My love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6561

358. LETTER TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

Sunday [*February 23, 1930*][1]

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Although it did not occur to me when I spoke to Nath, the thought suddenly came to me while talking to Surendra that it would be better if you both did not come here right now. It seems so from all points of view. Surendra thinks that in the interest of the health of both of you, it might be better to come over. If that is so, I would wish you to come post-haste. I have been hesitating to call you only from considerations of your health, fearing that the water of this place may suit you even less. If you think that since sooner or later you have to face up to it, you might as well do so now? then you had better come over. I would wish you to be around on the 2nd when the letter to the Viceroy is to be despatched.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 10710. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

359. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

February 24, 1930

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter. I had not read the speech. I hardly get time to read.

You will see the forthcoming issue. It will contain much. The substance has already appeared in Gujarati *Navajivan.* Perhaps we shall get a few moments to discuss things more fully when wemeet on 1st March. My letter to the Viceroy[2] will also clarify the issue.

I am glad there is nothing serious with Kamala. But why should she not now go to a hospital and have the necessary treatment?

Yours,

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru papers, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] From the reference to the letter to the Viceroy to be sent on the 2nd. The reference presumably is to the letter of March 2, 1930. The Sunday preceding was February 23, 1930.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Irwin", 2-3-1930.

360. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 25, 1930

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I have your letter. I am including your name in the list but how can I ask you to give up the responsibility which you have undertaken there and call you here?

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. JAISUKHLAL GANDHI
KHADI KARYALAYA
CHALALA (KATHIAWAR)

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: MMU/III/75

361. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

February 26, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I was eagerly awaiting your letter. Come on the 1st. Jamnabehn, Perinbehn, Khurshedbehnn Jawaharlal, etc., will also have arrived on that day.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. MITHUBEHN PETIT
SWARAJ ASHRAM
SURAT

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2685

362. LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA DESAI

February 26, 1930

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA,

I got your letter. May you live long and render much service. I would have been happy if you could have come. Janakibehn will come in a day or two.

I got Chandan's letter too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7463

363. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

[*February 26, 1930*][1]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your postcard. You ought to complete the course of injections which you have commenced. If necessary, therefore, you should stay either in the Vidyapeeth or the Ashram for that purpose. I believe the Ashram air to be very bad these days.Small-pox is widespread. I should therefore like it if Manu too, stayed on there.

It is good that Brijkishan is quite well. Let him improve his health to the utmost.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. PRABHUDAS GANDHI
STRI UDYOGALAYA
VIJAPUR "VIA" KALOL

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33046

364. WHEN I AM ARRESTED

It must be taken for granted that, when civil disobedience is started, my arrest is a certainty. It is, therefore, necessary to consider what should be done when the event takes place.

On the eve of my arrest in 1922[2] I had warned co-workers

[1] From the postmark

[2] *Vide* "Message to the Public", 9-3-1922 & "Message to the Country", 18-3-1924.

against any demonstration of any kind save that of mute, complete non-violence, and had insisted that constructive work which alone could organize the country for civil disobedience should be prosecuted with the utmost zeal. The first part of the instructions was, thanks be to God, literally and completely carried out —so completely that it has enabled an English noble contemptuously to say, 'Not a dog barked.' For me when I learnt in the jail that the country had remained absolutely non-violent, it was a demonstration that the preaching of non-violence had had its effect and that the Bardoli decision[1] was the wisest thing to do. It would be foolish to speculate what might have happened if 'dogs' had barked and violence had been let loose on my arrest. One thing, however, I can say, that in that event there would have been no independence resolution at Lahore, and no Gandhi with his confidence in the power of non-violence left to contemplate taking the boldest risks imaginable.

Let us, however, think of the immediate future. This time on my arrest there is to be no mute, passive non-violence, but non-violence of the activest type should be set in motion, so that not a single believer in non-violence as an article of faith for the purpose of achieving India's goal should find himself free or alive at the end of the effort to submit any longer to the existing slavery. It would be, therefore, the duty of everyone to take up such civil disobedience or civil resistance as may be advised and conducted by my successor, or as might be taken up by the Congress. I must confess, that at the present moment, I have no all-India successor in view. But I have sufficient faith in the co-workers and in the mission itself to know that circumstances will give the successor. This peremptory condition must be patent to all that he must be an out and out believer in the efficacy of non-violence for the purpose intended. For without that living faith in it he will not be able at the crucial moment to discover a non-violent method.

It must be parenthetically understood that what is being said here in no way fetters the discretion and full authority of the Congress. The Congress will adopt only such things said here that may commend themselves to Congressmen in general. If the nature of these instructions is to be properly understood, the organic value of the charter of full liberty given to me by the Working Committee should be adequately appreciated. Non-violence, if it does not submit to any restrictions upon its liberty, subjects no one and no institution to any restriction whatsoever, save what may be self-imposed or voluntarily adopted. So long as the vast body of Congressmen continue to believe in non-violence as the only policy in the existing

[1] Of February 1922 to suspend the civil disobedience movement; *vide* "Working Committee's Resolutions at Bardoli", 12-2-1922.

circumstances and have confidence not only in the *bona fides* of my successor and those who claim to believe in non-violence as an article of faith to the extent indicated but also in the ability of the successor wisely to guide the movement, the Congress will give him and them its blessings and even give effect to these instructions and his.

So far as I am concerned, my intention is to start the movement only through the inmates of the Ashram and those who have submitted to its discipline and assimilated the spirit of its methods. Those, therefore, who will offer battle at the very commencement will be unknown to fame. Hitherto the Ashram has been deliberately kept in reserve in order that by a fairly long course of discipline it might acquire stability. I feel that if the Satyagraha Ashram is to deserve the great confidence that has been reposed in it and the affection lavished upon it by friends, the time has arrived for it todemonstrate the qualities implied in the word satyagraha. I feel that our self-imposed restraints have become subtle indulgences, and the prestige acquired has provided us with privileges and conveniences of which we may be utterly unworthy. These have been thankfully accepted in the hope that some day we would be able to give a good account of ourselves in terms of satyagraha. And if at the end of nearly 15 years of its existence, the Ashram cannot give such a demonstration, it and I should disappear, and it would be well for the nation, the Ashram and me.

When the beginning is well and truly made I expect the response from all over the country. It will be the duty then of everyone who wants to make the movement a success to keep it non-violent and under discipline. Everyone will be expected to stand at his post except when called by his chief. If there is spontaneous mass response, as I hope there will be, and if previous experience is any guide, it will largely be self-regulated. But everyone who accepts non-violence whether as an article of faith or policy would assist the mass movement. Mass movements have, all over the world, thrown up unexpected leaders. This should be no exception to the rule. Whilst, therefore, every effort imaginable and possible should be made to restrain the forces of violence, civil disobedience once begun this time cannot be stopped and must not be stopped so long as there is a single civil resister left free or alive. A votary of satyagraha should find himself in one of the following states:

1. In prison or in an analogous state; or
2. Engaged in civil disobedience; or
3. Under orders at the spinning-wheel, or at some constructive work advancing swaraj.

Young India, 27-2-1930

365. SALT AND CANCER

I gladly publish this letter[1]. I have glanced at the literature. As an ardent food reformer I have lived without any salt for over six years. Even now I take very little salt internally. But even a food reformer like me has many other uses of salt. To cure a cold, a hot salt water nasal douche is effective. As a tooth powder, finely powderedsalt is precious. The way to teach people moderation in salt is not to tax that otherwise most valuable commodity. And above all what is true of well-fed or overfed people, who can provide for themselves every variety of condiment and salt-charged foods that the earth can produce or the ingenuity of man can manufacture, may not be true of millions who are semi-starved and live on rice or stale unleavened cakes. Who can say with certainty that these do not need much more salt than they get? At any rate there are doctors who do say that India's millions need more salt than they eat, and that her cattle too need much more than the poor farmers can afford to give them.

Young India, 27-2-1930

366. SALT TAX

A paragraph appeared in the Press that I would advise non-payment of the salt tax to begin with. The manufacturer of the canard did not know, perhaps, that the salt tax was so ingeniously devised that it would not yield to easy non-payment. Nevertheless there was this truth in it, that I was contemplating some method of attacking this nefarious monopoly. The garbled report has however resulted in most valuable information having been supplied to me by known and unknown writers. Among the publications thus received is the monograph issued by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce on salt. It is a valuable publication giving an authentic history of the process of killing by wicked methods salt manufacture in Bengal and dumping down Liverpool salt on a soil which could produce good salt for only a little labour. This history of the evolution of the salt tax furnishes by itself complete condemnation of the British Government.

Next to air and water, salt is perhaps the greatest necessity of

[1] From Frederick T. Marwood, not reproduced here. The correspondent had enclosed literature proving causal connection between salt and cancer and had asserted that the salt tax was a blessing in disguise.

life. It is the only condiment of the poor. Cattle cannot live without salt. Salt is a necessary article in many manufactures. It is also a rich manure.

There is no article like salt outside water by taxing which the State can reach even the starving millions, the sick, the maimed and the utterly helpless. The tax constitutes therefore the most inhuman poll tax that ingenuity of man can devise. The wholesale price per maund of 82 lbs. is according to Government publications as low as 10 pies, and the tax, say, twenty annas, i.e., 240 pies. This means 2,400 per cent on sale price! What this means to the poor can hardly beimagined by us. Salt production like cotton growing has been centralized for the sake of sustaining the inhuman monopoly. The necessary consequence of the wilful destruction of the spinning-wheel was destruction of cottage cultivation of cotton. The necessary consequence of salt monopoly was the destruction, i.e., closing down of salt works in thousands of places where the poor people manufactured their own salt. A correspondent writes to me from Konkan, saying that if the people had freedom, they could pick up salt from the deposits made by the receding tides on the bountiful coast. But he sorrowfully adds that officers turn the salt over into the sea as fast as nature deposits it. He adds however, that those who can successfully evade the salt police do help themselves to this sea salt. Gujarat workers report the existence of many places where, but for the prohibition, people can get their salt as easily as they can dig out earth for many household purposes. Bengal free can today manufacture all the salt she can ever need. And yet she is forced to import all the salt she eats.

Here is what a retired salt officer writes without disclosing his name:

> Under the law the manufacture of salt includes every process by which salt is separated from *brine* or earth or any other liquid or solid substance and also every process for the purification or refinement of salt.
>
> Contraband salt means salt or salt earth which has not paid duty.
>
> 1. Manufacture, removal, or transport of salt without licence;
>
> 2. The excavation, collection, or removal of natural salt or salt earth;
>
> 3. And possession or sale of contraband salt are punishable with a fine up to Rs. 500 or imprisonment up to six months or both.
>
> The whole western littoral of the Bombay Presidency from Cambay to Ratnagiri; the whole coast of Kathiawar and the southern coast of Sind is a huge natural salt-work, and natural salt and salt earth from which salt can be easily prepared is in every creek.
>
> If a band of volunteers begin the work all along the coast, it would be impossible for the whole strength of the police and customs staff to prevent them from collecting natural salt and salt earth, turning them into salt in the

interior and retaining it. The people of the presidency or at least the men and women of the older generation firmly believe, that locally manufactured sea salt is healthier than Kharaghoda salt, and they would love to have it, while everyone would like to have cheap salt. The poor people on the coast will join to get salt from Government salt-works without paying duty would be stealing or robbery, an act of First Class Hinsa that would justify even shooting down of the offenders if they persisted in the act.

I have given the letter as it was received. When salt can be manufactured much more easily than it can be taken from salt depots, I am not likely to advise people to help themselves to the article from salt pans or storehouses. But I do not share the salt officer's characterization of such helping as first-class *himsa*. Both the helping from pans and manufacturing contraband salt are statutory crimes heavily punishable. Why is the manufacturing without licence a virtue and taking salt from a manufacturing pan a vice ? If the impost is wrong, it is wrong whether in connection with manufactured salt or the crude article. If a robber steals my grain and cooks some of it, I am entitled to both the raw and the cooked grain. I may draw a distinction for the sake of avoiding inconvenience between in the collection of salt spontaneously in these days of unemployment. Trying manufactured and crude salt, and adopt the easier method of manufacturing salt. But that does not alter the legal position in the slightest degree. When therefore the time comes, civil resisters will have an ample opportunity of their ability to conduct their campaign regarding the tax in a most effective manner. The illegality is in a Government that steals the people's salt and makes them pay heavily for the stolen article. The people, when they become conscious of their power, will have every right to take possession of what belongs to them.

Young India, 27-2-1930

367. NOTES

THE NATIONAL FLAG

The more the National Flag is gaining in importance, the nicer become the questions that are being raised about its colours, size, the charkha symbol, etc. It should be remembered that the National Flag has become national only by convention and not by any Congress resolution. With the growing consciousness of oneness, Congressmen have begun to dislike the communal meaning that as inventor of the

design I gave to the colours on the Flag.[1] A correspondent some days ago sent me a cutting describing a new meaning a lady gave to the colours. So far as I recall her speech, red was suggestive of bravery, green of calmness and white of purity. I have no hesitation inaccepting this meaning in the place of mine. When we have achieved heart unity, there is no doubt that we shall be ashamed of recalling things which had no use but to placate warring elements in the nation. When we are really united, we shall never need to remember our differences, we shall want to forget them as soon as we can. But we shall always need to cultivate and treasure the virtues of bravery, calmness and purity. This new meaning therefore should set at rest all differences about the colours. As for the spinning-wheel, I shall be sorry to find anybody objecting to the wheel which means energy, which binds the poor and the rich, and which ever reminds Congressmen that in anything that they may do, they dare not forget the masses.

SMOKING NUISANCE

A correspondent writes:[2]

In this case at any rate the authorities are not to blame. Unless the passengers affected complain the railway authorities can take no action. The passengers can do much to abate the nuisance which is very real. The smoker all the world over is perhaps the most inconsiderate of all the slaves of habit. He takes it for granted that everybody else smokes or ought to. He will part with many things before he will part with his pipe. He will spit anywhere and smoke in your very face and expect you to enjoy the smoky curl that mounts up in front of you. And it would be the height of insolence if you were to protest against the enjoyment thus thrust on you. Our proverbial docility enables the Indian smoker to outdo his foreign companions in indifference. And so the smoker in India appears to have acquired a prescriptive right to make of himself a nuisance. Who can deny that he is in a majority? For of the travelling public almost every other man one meets with is smoking tobacco in one form or other. The only remedy is for volunteers to come into being, who will courteously ask the offending smokers to desist from smoking, and then if need be, to report to the authorities. Of course the best course

[1] *Vide* "The National Flag", 13-4-1921; also "Speech at Flag-Hoisting Ceremony, Ahmedabad", 28-2-1929 & "The National Flag", 7-3-1929.

[2] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had questioned why the railway authorities and passengers did not enforce the legal provision to penalize passengers smoking in trains.

is as elsewhere to set apart smoking compartments or perhaps to reserve compartments for non-smokers.

Young India, 27-2-1930

368. HISTORY OF SALT MANUFACTURE

The following[1] is abridged from the publication *Moral and Material Progress* 1910-11. Many curses have been handed down to us from time immemorial as salt monopoly is claimed by the publication to have done. Only the whole people were never in the grip of the salt tax curse in the pre-British days. It was reserved for the British Government to reduce the curse to a perfect formula covering every man, woman, child and beast.

Young India, 27-2-1930

369. RAISING FALSE HOPES

With the deeper penetration among the masses, there is danger of Congressmen making thoughtless promises and raising false hopes which may never be realized. As an illustration I have before me a Hindi circular issued by a Youth League which among twenty-five promises contains these:

> Cow-slaughter will stop altogether.
>
> Milk, ghee and curds being cheap, all will put on flesh and be strong. Child mortality will decrease.
>
> Grain will not be exported to foreign parts. Knavery will cease and all will be honest
>
> Boys and girls will receive free instruction up to the age of 14.
>
> Life will be clean and healthy.
>
> Everyone will have arms for self-defence.
>
> There will be no child widows.
>
> Postage and railage will be reduced.

The promises are admirable, but extravagant and hardly likely to be fulfilled by the mere fact of India gaining independence. Many of the reforms hoped for will require tremendous social effort. Foreign domination is undoubtedly responsible for many evils, but we need to remember that many pre-existing evils were also a potent cause of that domination. Therefore the mere throwing off of the foreign yoke, whilst it is as essential as life breath, will never be the cure-all.

Take the cow-slaughter. This will not stop for the mere

[1] Not reproduced here

independence. It will come by the good grace of our Mussalman countrymen and still more by hard thinking and harder acting. It is much more an economic than a religious problem. If we knew and acted according to the science of cow keeping, cow breeding and some other things mentioned in these pages, the cow can be saved today. To mention her in an enumeration of the future hopes is to retard the process of her preservation.

I will run through the other items.

Cheap milk, ghee, curds will come from applied knowledge, never from independence.

Child mortality will not decrease except by banishing poverty and instructing the adult population in the art of rearing children.

Grain, if we produce more than we need, will certainly be exported as well for our benefit as that of mankind in general.

Knavery will cease only if we achieve our freedom by non-violent and truthful means, *not otherwise.*

I doubt if we shall ever be able to give free instruction to boys and girls up to anything like 14. But we might be able to take their labour as fees. This will happen if the nation is weaned from false notions of education.

Life will be as dirty as it is today unless we learn corporate sanitation.

I am certain that everyone will not have arms for self-defence, but there will be much freer issue than hitherto. Issue of arms will still be regulated but from wholly different motives from now.

There will be child widows in abundance, unless by the time we achieve freedom, blind orthodoxy and lust have given place to reasoned faith and self-restraint.

I am not sure that postage can be further reduced. Railage may be.

But I may be wrong and the Youth League in question may be right in its estimate of the capacity of independence to do things for us. The point is not who is right. The point to be made is that it is rash and imprudent to make hasty promises. It is more than enough to be able to say without fear of contradiction, that Independence means the removal of the greatest obstacle in the path of our economic, political, cultural and spiritual progress, that without the removal of that obstacle there is no progress, and that delay means national bankruptcy, suicide.

Young India, 27-2-1930

370. KHADDAR FRANCHISE

The clause in the Congress constitution requiring Congressmen to wear hand-spun and hand-woven garments on pain of being debarred from voting at meetings continues to cause trouble. A correspondent writes:

> These Congress members, though they are clad top to toe in foreign and Indian mill-made garments, do not hesitate to say when questioned that to the best of their ability and knowledge they are dressed in khaddar garments. In the face of Pandit Motilalji's decision at Calcutta the chairmen at Congress Committee meetings feel obliged to accept such Statements though they are manifestly false. Honest men who when challenged admit that they are not dressed in khaddar are debarred. Can you not show a way out, or cannot the Working Committee provide a remedy?

The remedy that comes to me on the spur of the moment is that the chairmen at such meetings should firmly rule out of order those who are manifestly clad in any but khaddar garments. Pandit Motilalji's decision was given, I imagine, to obviate a difficulty. It establishes no precedent, and he will himself refuse to be bound by a decision which was neither serious nor considered. On the eve of the great struggle that we are about to enter upon, it behoves all Congressmen to carry out the Congress constitution honestly. Those who do not like the khaddar clause are free to agitate for its repeal but they are in honour-bound to give effect to it while it forms part of the constitution.

Another correspondent asks questions which present no difficulty. The following answers obviate the necessity of copying the questions:

1. No one at the time of becoming a four anna member is obliged to wear khaddar. The idea behind the wording of the clause was first to enlist everyone who would subscribe to the 1st article and pay 4 annas or the required quantity of self-spun yarn and then to induce him to wear khaddar.

2. Those who are entitled to vote at meetings must be habitual wearers of khaddar. It is not enough therefore to wear khaddar only for the purpose of attending Congress functions. But the practice has grown up of not making any further inquiry when a person attending any meeting is found to be wearing khaddar.

3. Those who are partly dressed in khaddar cannot be considered khaddar clad.

4. Mill-made cloth is *not* khaddar.

Young India, 27-2-1930

371. THAT NOXIOUS PALM [1]

This reminds me of what is now going on in Bengal. The water hyacinth beautiful to look at is a deadly plant floating on the great Bengal rivers. The local Government are trying to destroy it as otherwise it bids fair to destroy the crops that are watered by the rivers. I have known of straingent legislation requiring people on pain of being imprisoned to destroy noxious plants. The central point of the world crusade against opium is to destroy and prevent the cultivation of the poppy. It was not therefore surprising to find condemnation of this 'wild date palm' as it has been called in the extracts unearthed by Mahadev. It has no value apart from the fiery liquid it provides. The sooner the other owners destroy it to make room for life-giving crops, the better it will be for them and society.

Young India, 27-2-1930

372. BORDERLAND OF INSOLVENCY

The address of Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla as President of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, delivered recently at Delhi in the presence of the Viceroy, has justly attracted wide attention. I take the following seasonable paragraphs[2] from it our foreign liabilities.

Sjt. Birla as a financier can only deal with the arithmetic of the transactions and find how those liabilities just or unjust may be met. Reformers claim to go behind these liabilities and to know how and why they were created. We need not be squeamish about repudiation of liabilities only so called and imposed upon us involuntarily and often without our knowledge. Constitution making is a good pastimeunder healthy conditions. But it is deceptive and ruinous when the patient for whom a new constitution is prescribed is about to die. An impartial and unfettered examination of our financial position should therefore be a condition precedent to any scheme of constitution making.

Young India, 27-2-1930

[1] Mahadev Desai's article under this title giving extracts from settlement reports and other documents, is not reproduced here. It showed that toddy trees were injurious to cultivation and fit only to be destroyed.

[2] Not reproduced here. They analysed the extent and impact of British investments, home charges and charges for such services as transport, insurance, etc.

373. VARNADHARMA AND DUTY OF LABOUR-IV

Q. Tolstoy has written "Money and slavery are one and the same thing. Their object is the same and their outcome is also alike. . . . Money is a new and frightful image of slavery and like the ancient personal bondage, it degrades and depraves the slave as well as the master. That is not all. It is worse; because it destroys the human affection which subsisted between master and slave in the ancient form of personal slavery."

Do you support this view? Can money never become a harmless medium of exchange? If so, how? and if not, why not?

A. I am not aware that Tolstoy wrote what the questioner quotes as the former's statement. Slavery and money do not belong to the same class and therefore they cannot be compared. Slavery is a status and always abhorrent. Money is only a medium for one's dealings with the world. However powerful a medium it may be, it is just as likely to be beneficial as to be harmful. This same can be said of many other material things. Under every circumstance and in some form or other, the need for money will surely exist. Slavery never was and never could be necessary. We must understand the meaning of money here. When I barter grain for shoes, then, as the grain is the medium of exchange for shoes, it becomes money. But because barter by grain becomes difficult for a large number of people, a bit of metal or paper is used to represent it. This metal or paper is money. There can be no objection to this. But when a person hoards such paper, metal or grain beyond his needs, it leads to evil. It is therefore clear that money by itself is not harmful, but greed for it is harmful. As opposed to this, slavery is a sign of greed. It is wrong and greedy to make a man a slave, but possession of money becomes wrong only when it is held in excess.

However, the man who believes in varanadharma is contented and therefore will not be greedy of wealth. And the man who believes in the duty of labour will never make another a slave,

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 27-2-1930

374. LETTER TO NAUTAMLAL BHAGWANJI

ASHRAM SABARMATI,
February 27, 1930

BHAISHRI NAUTAMLAL,

I got your letter. I make the following suggestion. The bridge should be dressed in as simple garments as possible. The ornaments, too, should be as few as possible. Whatever you wish to give to her, give it in the form of a *hundi*[1]. Do the same if you also wish to give a dowry to the bridegroom. Apart from that, give him a very simple dress of khadi. There should be no dinner party at all. There will be some guests on the day of the wedding and it will of course be necessary to feed them. The menu for them should include as few delicacies as possible. The noisy singing by women should be altogether forbidden. There should be no band. The wedding should be made a purely religious ceremony. The guests should not be pressed to stay on after the wedding is over. The custom of giving presents to members of the caste should not be observed. If you wish to spend something on the occasion of the marriage, spend it on some good cause, and, if possible, on a cause which will benefit all people. It would be better if you spend nothing specially for the benefit of the caste. Sub-divisions of the caste deserve no help. I have dictated these suggestions in some haste; you may carry out as many of them as you can.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2584

[1] Bill of exchange or indigenous cheque

375. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

SABARMATI,
Thursday [*February 27, 1930*][1]

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your letter. I understand your desire not to leave the Ashram this time, I do wish to frame some rules. How is the girl? And Nimu?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

376. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

February 28, 1930

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. I have reproduced your speech at length.[2] Whatever was done is all to the good. I have practised my 'gift' well by this time. I now see that they have no answer to it. They merely exploit our ignorance and cowardice.

The sooner the Assembly dissolves the better. I have little hope of remaining out of jail by the end of March.

I have a query. Keshu and his mother were there, so were Radhabehn and Devdas. Tell me what you think of them? How did Keshu behave during his illness?

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6182. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

[1] The date suggested in the source is February 26, 1930. Thursday, however, corresponded to February 27.

[2] *Vide* "Borderland of Insolvency", 27-2-1930.

377. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAJAJ

[Before *March 2, 1930*][1]

CHI. RUKHI,

I have received your letter.

I am astonished to read what you write about Narandas. He has never shown himself disinclined. And I am sure Jamnadas can never oppose it, judging from his views on the subject. However, I am pleased to know that you are not the least perturbed and that both of you, mother and daughter, are steadfast. In this matter, your opinion alone should count most. But when Santok also completely agrees with you, then the likes and dislikes of other people do not matter much. If you and Benarasi become an ideal couple, then all criticism will be silenced and you will have shown the path to the Hindu community. I say to Marwari friends in jest, "You have taken away a daughter from me. Therefore, my tax on you will now be doubled." Only today I have collected Rs. 201/- for khadi from a Marwari gentleman by using this joke on him. He gave the amount with great pleasure.

Radha's health creates anxiety. I am enclosing a letter for her. Learn Hindi either from Totaramji or from Kashinathji.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9047

378. THAKKAR BAPA'S BEGGING-BOWL

What shall I add to the details[2] below, which Thakkar Bapa has sent? Even if there should be war trumpets blowing, even if conditions should be hard, for such public good and at the instance of this aged worker, the rich will certainly loosen their purse-strings. The next donor should be a Jugal Kishore Birla not of Marwar but of Gujarat. That will be to the glory of Gujarat.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-3-1930

[1] From the contents, the letter appears to have been written some time before the addressee's marriage to Benarasidas; they were married on March 2, 1930; *vide* "Speech at Wedding, Sabarmati Ashram", 2-3-1930.

[2] Concerning expenditure incurred on digging 49 wells for untouchables, out of funds donated by Jugal Kishore Birla, and giving a list of 37 villages where work had to be suspended for lack of funds.

379. TWO LETTERS

A young man writes:[1]

Not all parents are like this. Here is a letter[2] that a mother wrote to her son at the Gujarat Vidyapith, who was wanting to join the satyagraha movement.

This mother deserves congratulations. If India has many such mothers, our struggle will end successfully and quickly. Fortunately, the number of such parents is well on the increase. There are two well-to-do girls whose parents, too, have given them full encouragement and put no restrictions on their self-disciplined freedom. I have intentionally used here the adjective "self-disciplined" before "freedom" to suggest that freedom can be either self-disciplined or self-willed.

Where there is opposition to one's good intentions, as in the case of this young man, from one's father or teacher, one should, if one is an adult son or daughter over sixteen years of age, first humbly try to persuade the elders concerned, and then respectfully disobey their order or their will. That is the clear duty of the son or the daughter in a situation like this. If the son's description of his father in the letter above is true and if the latter recognizes himself as the father referred to, I would request him to honour the khadi he wears, give his blessings to the son and encourage him in his idea of self-sacrifice. The father should also discard both tea and the thermos. Tea is never a necessity of life, and a thing like a thermos has no place in his poor home. I have no prejudice against such foreign articles as are needed for maintaining one's health or for similar uses. However, to decide what is essential is a matter to which considerable thought should always be given. It is not enough to wear khadi. The wearer should also realize that khadi symbolizes the spirit of patriotism and modesty. Wearing khadi does not give one the licence to enjoy all kinds of liberty, but is the first step in the direction of self-restraint and a sign of our desire to curtail other unnecessary freedoms. I shall show here a cheap, indigenous way of preserving the temperature of hot water or any similar drink. If hot water or a similar drink is put in a vessel that can be closed tight, and if the vessel is then wrapped up on all sides in a woollen blanket or in cotton and kept inside a chest or box, the drink will preserve its temperature for twenty-four hours.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-3-1930

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had complained that guardians discouraged the patriotic urges of their wards. He had also referred to his khadi-wearing father using a foreign thermos flask.

[2] Not translated here. It complimented the son on his eagerness to court arrest.

380. LETTER TO LORD IRWIN

SATYAGRHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 2, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

Before embarking on civil disobedience and taking the risk I have dreaded to take all these years, I would fain approach you and find a way out.

My personal faith is absolutely clear. I cannot intentionally hurt anything that lives, much less fellow human beings, even though they may do the greatest wrong to me and mine. Whilst, therefore, I hold the British rule to be a curse, I do not intend harm to a single Englishman or to any legitimate interest he may have in India.

I must not be misunderstood. Though I hold the British rule in India to be a curse, I do not, therefore, consider Englishmenin general to be worse than any other people on earth I have the privilege of claiming many Englishmen as dearest friends. Indeed much that I have learnt of the evil of British rule is due to the writings of frank and courageous Englishmen who have not hesitated to tell the unpalatable truth about that rule.

And why do I regard the British rule as a curse?

It has impoverished the dumb millions by a system of progressive exploitation and by a ruinously expensive military and civil administration which the country can never afford.

It has reduced us politically to serfdom. It has sapped the foundations of our culture. And, by the policy of cruel disarmament, it has degraded us spiritually. Lacking the inward strength, we have been reduced, by all but universal disarmament, to a state bordering on cowardly helplessness.

In common with many of my countrymen, I had hugged the fond hope that the proposed Round Table Conference might furnish a solution. But, when you said plainly that you could not give any assurance that you or the British Cabinet would pledge yourselves to support a scheme of full Dominion Status, the Round Table Conference could not possibly furnish the solution for which vocal India is consciously, and the dumb millions are unconsciously, thirsting. Needless to say there never was any question of Parliament's verdict being anticipated. Instances are not wanting of the British Cabinet, in anticipation of the Parliamentary verdict, having pledged itself to a particular policy.

The Delhi interview[1] having miscarried, there was no option for Pandit Motilal Nehru and me but to take steps to carry out the solemn resolution of the Congress arrived at in Calcutta at its Session in 1928.[2]

But the Resolution of Independence[3] should cause no alarm, if the word Dominion Status mentioned in your announcement had been used in its accepted sense. For, has it not been admitted by responsible British statesmen that Dominion Status is virtual Independence? What, however, I fear is that there never has been any intention of granting such Dominion Status to India in the immediate future.

But this is all past history. Since the announcement many events have happened which show unmistakably the trend of British policy.

It seems as clear as daylight that responsible British statesmen do not contemplate any alteration in British policy that might adversely affect Britain's commerce with India or require an impartial and close scrutiny of Britain's transactions with India. If nothing is done to end the process of exploitation India must be bled with an ever increasing speed. The Finance Member regards as a settled fact the 1/6 ratio which by a stroke of the pen drains India of a few crores. And when a serious attempt is being made through a civil form of direct action, to unsettle this fact, among many others, even you cannot help appealing to the wealthy landed classes to help you to crush that attempt in the name of an order that grinds India to atoms.

Unless those who work in the name of the nation understand and keep before all concerned the motive that lies behind the craving for independence, there is every danger of independence coming to us so changed as to be of no value to those toiling voiceless millions for whom it is sought and for whom it is worth taking. It is for that reason that I have been recently telling the public what independence should really mean.

Let me put before you some of the salient points.

The terrific pressure of land revenue, which furnishes a large part of the total, must undergo considerable modification in an independent India. Even the much vaunted permanent settlement benefits the few rich zamindars, not the ryots. The ryot has remained as helpless as ever. He is a mere tenant at will. Not only, then, has the

[1] Which took place on December 23, 1929.

[2] *Vide* "Speech on Resolution on Nehru Report, Calcutta Congress-I", 26-12-1928.

[3] The resolution referred to is the Congress resolution passed at Lahore in 1929. *Vide* "Speech at Subjects Committee, A.I.C.C.", 27-12-1929.

land revenue to be considerably reduced, but the whole revenue system has to be so revised as to make the ryot's good its primary concern. But the British system seems to be designed to crush the very life out of him. Even the salt he must use to live is so taxed as to make the burden fall heaviest on him, if only because of the heartless impartiality of it incidence. The tax shows itself still more burdensome on the poor man when it is remembered that salt is the one thing he must eat more than the rich man both individually and collectively. The drink and drug revenue, too, is derived from the poor. It saps the foundations both of their health and morals. It is defended under the false plea of individual freedom, but, in reality, is maintained for its own sake. The ingenuity of the authors of the reforms of 1919 transferred this revenue to the so-called responsible part of dyarchy, so as to throw the burden of prohibition on it, thus, from the very beginning, rendering it powerless for good. If the unhappy minister wipes out this revenue he must starve education, since in the existing circumstances he has no new source ofreplacing that revenue.If the weight of taxation has crushed the poor from above, the destruction of the central supplementary industry, i.e., hand-spinning, has undermined their capacity for producing wealth. The tale of India's ruination is not complete without reference to the liabilities incurred in her name. Sufficient has been recently said about these in the public Press. It must be the duty of a free India to subject all the liabilities to the strictest investigation, and repudiate those that may be adjudged by an impartial tribunal to be unjust and unfair.

The iniquities sampled above are maintained in order to carry on a foreign administration, demonstrably the most expensive in the world. Take your own salary. It is over Rs. 21,000 per month, besides many other indirect additions. The British Prime Minister gets £ 5,000 per year, i.e., over Rs. 5,400 per month at the present rate of exchange. You are getting over Rs. 700 per day against India's average income of less than annas 2 per day. The Prime Minister gets Rs. 180 per day against Great Britain's average income of nearly Rs. 2 per day. Thus you are getting much over five thousand times India's average income. The British Prime Minister is getting only ninety times Britain's average income. On bended knees I ask you to ponder over this phenomenon. I have taken a personal illustration to drive home a painful truth. I have too great a regard for you as a man to wish to hurt your feelings. I know that you do not need the salary you get. Probably the whole of your salary goes for charity. But a system that provides for such an arrangement deserves to be summarily scrapped. What is true of the Viceregal salary is true generally of the whole administration.

A radical cutting down of the revenue, therefore, depends upon an equally radical reduction in the expenses of the administration. This means a transformation of the scheme of government. This transformation is impossible without independence. Hence, in my opinion, the spontaneous demonstration of 26th January, in which hundreds of thousands of villagers instinctively participated. To them independence means deliverance from the killing weight.

Not one of the great British political parties, it seems to me, is prepared to give up the Indian spoils to which Great Britain helps herself from day to day, often, in spite of the unanimous opposition of Indian opinion.

Nevertheless, if India is to live as a nation, if the slow death by starvation of her people is to stop, some remedy must be found for immediate relief. The proposed Conference is certainly not the remedy. It is not a matter of carrying conviction by argument. The matter resolves itself into one of matching forces. Conviction or no conviction, Great Britain would defend her Indian commerce and interests by all the forces at her command. India must consequently evolve force enough to free herself from that embrace of death.

It is common cause that, however disorganized and, for the time being, insignificant it may be, the party of violence is gaining ground and making itself felt. Its end is the same as mine. But I am convinced that it cannot bring the desired relief to the dumb millions. And the conviction is growing deeper and deeper in me that nothing but unadulterated non-violence can check the organized violence of the British Government. Many think that non-violence is not an active force. My experience, limited though it undoubtedly is, shows that non-violence can be an intensely active force. It is my purpose to set in motion that force as well against the organized violent force of the British rule as [against] the unorganized violent force of the growing party of violence. To sit still would be to give rein to both the forces above mentioned. Having an unquestioning and immovable faith in the efficacy of non-violence as I know it, it would be sinful on my part to wait any longer.

This non-violence will be expressed through civil disobedience, for the moment confined to the inmates of the Satyagraha Ashram, but ultimately designed to cover all those who choose to join the movement with its obvious limitations.

I know that in embarking on non-violence I shall be running what might fairly be termed a mad risk. But the victories of truth have never been won without risks, often of the gravest character. Conversion of a nation that has consciously or unconsciously preyed

upon another, far more numerous, far more ancient and no less cultured than itself, is worth any amount of risk.

I have deliberately used the word "conversion". For my ambition is no less than to convert the British people through non-violence, and thus make them see the wrong they have done to India. I do not seek to harm your people. I want to serve them even as I want to serve my own. I believe that I have always served them. I served them up to 1919 blindly. But when my eyes were opened and I conceived non-co-operation, the object still was to serve them. I employed the same weapon that I have in all humility successfully used against the dearest members of my family. If I have equal love for your people with mine it will not long remain hidden. It will be acknowledged bythem even as the members of my family acknowledged it after they had tried me for several years. If the people join me as I expect they will, the sufferings they will undergo, unless the British nation sooner retraces its steps, will be enough to melt the stoniest hearts.

The plan through civil disobedience will be to combat such evils as I have sampled out. If we want to sever the British connection it is because of such evils. When they are removed the path becomes easy. Then the way to friendly negotiation will be open. If the British commerce with India is purified of greed, you will have no difficulty in recognizing our independence. I respectfully invite you then to pave the way for immediate removal of those evils, and thus open a way for a real conference between equals, interested only in promoting the common good of mankind through voluntary fellowship and in arranging terms of mutual help and commerce equally suited to both. You have unnecessarily laid stress upon the communal problems that unhappily affect this land. Important though they undoubtedly are for the consideration of any scheme of government, they have little bearing on the greater problems which are above communities and which affect them all equally. But if you cannot see your way to deal with these evils and my letter makes no appeal to your heart, on the 11th day of this month,[1] I shall proceed with such co-workers of the Ashram as I can take, to disregard the provisions of the salt laws. I regard this tax to be the most iniquitous of all from the poor man's standpoint. As the independence movement is essentially for the poorest in the land the beginning will be made with this evil. The wonder is that we have submitted to the cruel monopoly for so long. It is, I know, open to you to frustrate my design by arresting me. I hope that there will be tens of thousands ready, in a disciplined manner, to take up the work after me, and, in the act of disobeying the Salt Act to lay themselves open to the

[1] The march, however, started on March 12.

penalties of a law that should never have disfigured the Statute-book.

I have no desire to cause you unnecessary embarrassment, or any at all, so far as I can help. If you think that there is any substance in my letter, and if you will care to discuss matters with me, and if to that end you would like me to postpone publication of this letter, I shall gladly refrain on receipt of a telegram to that effect soon after this reaches you.[1] You will, however, dome the favour not to deflect me from my course unless you can see your way to conform to the substance of this letter.

This letter is not in any way intended as a threat but is a simple and sacred duty peremptory on a civil resister. Therefore I am having it specially delivered by a young English friend who believes in the Indian cause and is a full believer in non-violence and whom Providence seems to have sent to me, as it were, for the very purpose.[2]

I remain,

Your sincere friend,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. LORD IRWIN
VICEROY'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI-3

Young India, 12-3-1930; also S.N. 16624

381. SPEECH AT WEDDING[3], SABARMATI ASHRAM

March 2, 1930

Whenever a wedding is arranged through the Ashram, I say a few words while offering my blessings. On this occasion again I wish to express the hope which I expressed on the occasion of the marriage of Shri Shankarlal and Umiya.

Bhai Benarsi, I have a right to hope for much from you. I have been very happy to observe your humility and your religious devotion. I hope that you will devote yourself to national work to the best of your ability and inspire Rukmini to do likewise. Try to

[1] The Viceroy's reply was simply an expression of regret that Gandhiji should be "contemplating a course of action which is clearly bound to involve violation of the law and danger to the public peace".

[2] Reginald Reynolds who took the letter to the Viceroy, referring to it in *To Live in Mankind*, observes: "Before I went Gandhi insisted I should read the letter carefully, as he did not wish me to associate myself with it unless I was in complete agreement with its contents. My taking of this letter was, in fact, intended to be symbolic of the fact that this was not merely a struggle between the Indians and the British. . . ." *Vide* also "About That Letter", 6-3-1930.

[3] Of Benarsilal Bazaj and Rukmini, daughter of Maganlal Gandhi.

understand fully the meaning of the *saptapadi* vow and preserve it in practice in your life. In this vow, the bride and the bridegroom promise to be each other's friends; but their friendship is real only if they try to remedy each other's defects and to strengthen their own virtues. The cause of the attachment and aversion we see in the world is people's habit of observing one another's defects. Those whoseonly aim is enjoyment in life are bound to be filled with such feelings. I should, therefore, like to see a bond of friendship between husband and wife, instead of one of sensual enjoyment. I know that it is difficult to cultivate such a relationship, but nothing is too difficult for determined effort. The vow requires the bride to say that the bridegroom is her guru and her god. I had wanted this time to alter the vow in this regard, but refrained from doing so for fear that that might confuse people's minds. I intend to omit the words 'guru' and 'god' in future, because it is not right that a husband should regard himself as a guru or god. Anyone who serves another does become a guru or god without his claiming to be one. This, however, does not mean that today's vow is not binding. Rukmini has accepted you as her guru and god, understanding quite well the meaning of the vow. You should, therefore, be worthy of her trust. Take care of her as you would of a flower. Tolerate the differences in outlook and manners which may arise from the fact of you two belonging to different provinces. May the bond between Marwar and Gujarat which has been formed grow and bear happy fruit. May your relationship become an ideal for others.

Rukhi, the choice of Benarsi was not mine; it was Maganlal's. I have only tried to be worthy of his legacy. You should fulfil the hope which Maganlal had cherished about you. You know that his entire life was dedicated to service. I have occupied the seat left vacant by him in the hope that his virtues may grow in me. You know my views. Follow them and so live your life that you will win praise for your father and grandfather. My ambition for you is that your mother-in-law and others should never detect a trace of selfishness in you, and that you will do nothing of which I, Khushalbhai, Devbhabhi or Santok need feel ashamed. I would be pained if you should be guilty of a single act which would make us feel ashamed of you. People will admire you if you exercise self-control even in your enjoyments. Let self-control be your aim in all that you enjoy. We obey the instincts of our nature and do certain things. For instance, music at the time of prayers is a form of enjoyment, for the experience of sweetness is a pleasure. But we wish to learn renunciation through this enjoyment. Similarly, married life is a form of enjoyment but we should know that the aim behind it is

self-control. Our enjoyment is for the purpose of overcoming the desire for enjoyment. You have been learning this lesson from the time that we were in South Africa. Always serve others. Let Benarsi not repent having married a Gujarati girl, and one brought up in the Ashram. Even if he does not have virtues which would make him worthy of being regarded by you as a guru or god, you should be a women of such ideal character that he may acquire those virtues. My sincere blessings to you both for a long life.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9296

382. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI[1]

March 3, 1930

You are a good young man of promise. If the surrounding atmosphere responds, it will be well with you. I hope to go through your other diary. Look at my remarks on your 'who am I.'

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives Of India and Anand T. Hingorani

383. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

SABARMATI,
March 3, 1930

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

I have your message, It does not move me. I want you to read my letter to the Viceroy with an unbiased mind. You seem to have made up your mind that the Independence Resolution is wrong and that Civil Disobedience—its corollary—is also wrong, i. e., at the present moment. You will find neither to be wrong. We cannotachieve unity through any Conference. But we can through fighting for common causes. At the time of the flood in Gujarat four years ago, all without exception in the flood area made common cause. There was no difficulty about Mussalmans seeking the same shelter as the Hindus. The blindly orthodox Hindu suspended his prejudice against the untouchable. The snake discarded his venom for the time being. True, they are again "as you were", but a few more such lessons will certainly set them right. I want you to realize the new orientation I have given to the struggle. I seek independence through a redress of the age-long grievances which touch the masses more than us. I want you to throw yourself heart and soul into this battle. If your

[1] The addressee in a note had asked Gandhiji what he thought of him.

preoccupations prevent you, you must at least give it your blessing. I have smallpox raging in the Ashram. We are most of us anti-vaccinationists from religious motives. No provable virtue of vaccination will therefore move us. If you know of a remedy apart from vaccination, please send me the prescription. The treatment we are having is red colour, strong permanganate solution warm baths followed by wet-sheet pack and liquid food, chiefly fruit juices, and when the virulence abates a little milk and water, but of 12 cases three have proved fatal. Two obstinate cases of confluent smallpox have completely recovered. There is uncertainty about one bad case. We are trying to keep children from the patients but it is so difficult to isolate patients completely. It is an expensive process if you will not make it heartless and leave the patient practically to his fate.

If you have leisure please dictate full instructions.

Id mubarak.

Yours ever,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Ansari Papers . Courte sy: Jamia Millia Islamia Librar y

384. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

Monday, 3.45 a.m. [*March 3, 1930*][1]

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I was expecting your letter. I was relieved to learn from Chhaganlal and Kashibehn that your fever had gone down.

If you can digest milk with ghee added to it, do take it. It would be all right too if a little milk taken with chapati can sustain you. The finding of vaidyas is that those who find milk constipating are bound to find other things excepting fruit constipating, too. But there is no need of other things. Take whatever relieves you.

Now, for Delhi. Send a telegram restraining your brother and mother from coming over. Tell them there is no likelihood of your going to jail now, and that they must not interfere in your activities. If, in spite of this, they do come, remain firm and say courteously that they must give up all hope of exerting pressure upon you. Bear with their suffering. A time will come when they will be reconciled.

Mahadev has not gone to Delhi. Reynolds has taken the letter.

Blessings from

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2375

[1] The date is inferred from the reference to the letter to Lord Irwin, which was delivered by Reginald Reynolds.

385. LETTER TO MANMOHANDAS P. GANDHI

March 3, 1930

BHAISHRI MANMOHANDAS,

I got both the books sent by you. You already see that I have been using the book on the subject of salt. If you have this further information, send it to me; if you don't have it, please get it for me. What is the expenditure incurred on the collection of the salt tax? Some say it is eight per cent and some that it is twenty per cent.Compare the percentage of expenditure on this tax with the percentage of expenditure on other taxes.

If you have a copy of the latest Administration Report on salt, send it to me. If you have no spare copy, I will return it to you.

Send me any other information which you think will be useful to me.

Now about your book on cotton. I have been reading it. But I may point out two errors just now. You say that formerly weaving and spinning were probably independent professions and not subsidiary occupations. Weaving and spinning are two independent activities. Weaving was (chiefly) an independent profession and is so even today. That spinning, on the other hand, has always been (chiefly) a subsidiary occupation we can prove with thousands of instances even today. The individuals were alive when the movement for the revival of spinning started in 1919. This is an important distinction, and so you must have seen that your error is a serious one. This error will continue to be made in the absence of personal knowledge of the facts. Even writers who have gone deeper than you have committed it. But that defence will not serve an humble student. The second error is this. Writing about the Mogul period you say that there were then such frequent and widespread massacres that no profession could flourish. There are two errors in this view. Such massacres were never widespread. Before Akbar, no Muslim ruler had entered villages. The massacres always took place in cities and there, too, they had little effect on the artisan classes. Even today we see these classes going on with their occupations under this anarchical rule. Formerly, the government touched the lives of only those who were connected with the administrative machinery. It is only in the present age that governments have become eager to extend their grip over entire populations. And, among them all, the British Government has acquired the utmost efficiency in this. It is this efficiency which is ruining us, for British rule is inspired by no philanthropic motives.

I found some time in the morning to write this, for I expect you to make a valuable contribution to the cause.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6

386. LETTER TO MANGALDAS, KASTURBHAI AND GORDHANBHAI

SABARMATI ,
March 4, 1930

SHETH SHRI MANGALDAS, SHETH SHRI KASTURBHAI AND SHETH SHRI GORDHANBHAI,

I remember it was a condition that in the administration of the sums contributed by the mill-owners to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, my advice also would be sought. For some time, the workers have not been getting the benefits from that amount which they were getting previously. It is likely that I may have to go to jail after the 11th. If, therefore, you call a meeting to the mill-owners before that date, I may place my views before them and we may discuss how the amount might be utilized.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 33141

387. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 5, 1930

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

I must dictate this letter or not write to you at all.

Whilst you are at liberty to use or not to use anything you like, I think the position taken up by Father and Mother is unassailable. They are the rulers of the household. You may make gentle suggestions but you may not resent their dispositions. Nobler parents no one can desire. It is enough that you do not make use of Western facilities and contrivances wherever it is possible for you to avoid them. By being strict with yourself and charitable towards your surroundings you can affect them as in no other way.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 9615

388. REMARKS AT PRAYER MEETING, SABARMATI ASHRAM

March 5, 1930

The campaign will start on the morning of the twelfth, and, therefore, all joining me have to get ready in five days. You should not worry about food or water. Let us put our trust in God and we shall have everything.

We shall march in the direction of Pethapur.[1] A horse will accompany us, and if I am not well I shall ride it. I shall be marching with Shri Abbas Tyabji and a batch of fifty. Let everyone have a copy of the *Bhagavad Gita* with him. In the jail too, if it should be necessary, we shall offer civil disobedience. Only men will accompany us. Women and others will stay in the Ashram.

Women will have enough opportunity to offer satyagraha.[2] Just as Hindus do not harm a cow, the British do not attack womenas far as possible. For Hindus it would be cowardice to take a cow to the battlefield. In the same way it would be cowardice for us to have women accompany us. In the coming struggle, even children might get killed. Knowing this, if we take children with us it would be sheer folly.

I wish the struggle to come to an end in a month or so, but it may continue longer.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 9-3-1930

389. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

March 5/6[3]*, 1930*

BHAISHRI JERAJANI,

I have your letter. You may go to any place which Shankerlal may ask you to visit. Don't think it necessary to obtain my permission in such matters. When I need you, I will call you from wherever you are.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9769

[1] Gandhiji said this in answer to a boy's question about the place to which they were to march.

[2] It had been suggested that four or five women might be allowed to go along.

[3] The letter was dictated on the 5th and signed by Gandhiji on the 6th.

390. PENAL SECTIONS OF THE SALT ACT

The following sections[1] copied or abridged from the Bombay Salt Act and the Indian Salt Act will show the design underlying their operation. The Bombay Act is a refined reproduction of the India Act of 1882. Most of the penal sections of the Bombay Act show a stiffening of the original which evidently experience of administration had shown to be necessary. Only one section has been taken from the central Act. The reader will not fail to notice a strange section which makes "cowardice" on the part of the salt-revenue officers a crime punishable with imprisonment extending to three months. The word "cowardice" is not defined. But the reader with an imagination will have no difficulty in understanding what cowardice can possibly meanin the administration of an Act which takes in its sweep millions of human beings, men and women, young and old, cripples and healthy.

Young India, 6-3-1930

391. PUBLIC DEBT ANALYSED

Sjt. Haridas Muzumdar has prepared a note on Public Debt. I give below the following condensation[2] which will assist the reader to know what this debt is.

Young India, 6-3-1930

392. ABOUT THAT LETTER

My letter to the Viceroy went on the 2nd instant as anticipated by the newspapers. Forecasts have been published of its contents which are largely untrue. I wish these correspondents and the news agencies will, instead of making the publication of news a matter merely of making money, think of the public good. If there had been anything to give to the public, surely Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru would have given it. But it was thought advisable to wait for an acknowledgement from Delhi before publishing the letter. I am not intent on a fight. I am leaving no stone unturned to avoid it. But I am ready for it the moment I find that there is no honourable way out of it. Premature publication of news indirectly obtained by means not always straight ought not to be the function of journalists. I know that the newspaper said to be the greatest in the world makes it a boast to obtain by secret methods news which no other agency can. It makes it a boast to publish news which the keepers are most anxious often in the public interest to withhold for the time being. But the English

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Penal Sections of the Salt Act", 6-3-1930.

[2] Not reproduced here.

public submits tothe treatment, because moneyed and influential men conduct *The Times*.We have blindly copied the rulers' code of manners without discrimination in the matter of publication of news as in many others of still greater importance. I know that mine is a voice in the wilderness, though I speak with the authority of an unbroken experience of practical journalism for over twenty years, if successful conducting of four weeklies[1] can be regarded as such.Be that as it may, the imminent fight includes among the points of attack this slavish habit of copying everything English. No one will accuse me of any anti-English tendency. Indeed I pride myself on my discrimination. I have thankfully copied many things from them. Punctuality, reticence, public hygiene, independent thinking and exercise of judgment and several other things I owe to my association with them. But never having had the slightest touch of slave mentality in me and never having even a thought of materially benefiting myself through contact, official or otherwise, with them, I have had the rare good fortune of studying them with complete detachment. On the eve of battle therefore I would warn fellow journalists against copying the English method of obtaining and publishing news. Let them study my original method which was introduced long before I became a Mahatma and before I had acquired any status of importance in the public life of India. It was a hard struggle, but I found in the field of journalism as in many others that the strictest honesty and fair dealing was undoubtedly the best policy. Any shorter cut is longer at least by double the length sought to be saved. For there must be a retracing. I say all this not for the sake of reading a lesson to fellow-journalists but for the sake of the struggle in which I would value the co-operation of journalists whether they approve of or oppose my methods of political warfare. Let them not add to the risks I am already taking. The rule I would like them to observe is never to publish any news without having it checked by someone connected with me and having authority.

With this long preface I may inform the reader that the letter was sent through a special messenger to be personally delivered to the Private Secretary to His Excellency the Viceroy. The messenger selected was a young English friend Reginald Reynolds who came to India some months ago and who has identified himself completely with the Indian cause. For me the sending of the letter was a religious act as the whole struggle is. And I selected an English friend as my messenger, because I wanted to forge a further check upon myself against any intentional act that would hurt a single Englishman. If I have any sense of honour in me, this choice should prove an automatic restraint even upon unconscious error. It pleases me also to have the unselfish and unsolicited association of a cultured, well-read,

[1] *Indian Opinion, Young India, Navajivan* and *Hindi Navajivan.*

devout Englishman in an act which may, in spite of all my effort to the contrary, involve loss of English life.

As for the letter itself, when the reader has the text before him he will see that it is not an ultimatum, but it is a friendly, if also a frank, communication from one who considers himself to be a friend of Englishmen. But the reader must hold himself in patience for a while.

Young India, 6-3-1930

393. STUDENTS AND CHARACTER

A retired Inspector of Schools (Punjab) writes:[1]

I have already written about the cries in a previous but recent issue of *Young India*.[2] I fully agree that "Down with the Union Jack" smells of violence. There are several other objectionable cries that have come into vogue. One who believes in non-violence even as a policy may not utter those cries. They do no good and may do harm. A disciplined young man will not utter those cries. It is certainly opposed to satyagraha. As for the second point raised by the writer, he has evidently failed to see that the authorities are reaping as they have sown. The system of education is responsible for the lack of character wherever it shows itself. The remedy now is not to seek my opinion or assistance, but for the teachers to make common cause with the students and lead them to victory. The latter know the tragic history of their own nation, they know how the other nations have gained their liberty. It is impossible to restrain them from working for the freedom of their own country. If they are not properly guided in their approach to their goal, they will take the means that their unripe and unaided reason will suggest. In any event, in so far as I am concerned, I have shown them the way. If I am responsible for their enthusiasm, I am glad. I am trying too to guide it in the right direction. If they go wrong in spite of my effort, I cannot be held responsible.

No one can be more grieved than I over the bomb outrage at Amritsar through which an innocent young man, Sardar Pratap Singh, who was undoubtedly not the target of the bomb-thrower, met his death. These outrages are surely due to the lack of character to which the retired inspector of schools has drawn attention. The word "character" is perhaps not the happiest expression.Ballast is the right word. If it was the Principal of the Khalsa College who was aimed at, the incident is proof of a deep-seated disease. There is no bond between the teachers and the taught. The teachers of educational

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had sought Gandhiji's opinion on the growing violence, hatred and indiscipline among students.

[2] *Vide* "Some Rules of Satyagraha", 23-2-1930.

institutions, whether entirely owned or aided by the Government, naturally feel it incumbent upon them, whether they have it in them or not, themselves to profess and inculcate in others loyalty to the existing Government. The students have no sense of loyalty in them. They have become impatient. Impatience has led to loss of self-control, and so their energy finds its vent through dubious channels. For me these incidents are no warning to stay my hand, but to go on with my programme and gain control over, or break myself in the attempt to stem the surging tide of violence on either side.

Young India, 6-3-1930

394. THE PUBLIC DEBT

Thanks to the Congress resolution on public debts, important literature on the subject is springing into being. *The Bombay Chronicle* is rendering a service by publishing the informing series of articles by 'Politicus' on this subject. Financial problems are always a dry subject requiring concentration and some previous study. It is for our learned economists to put these problems in an interesting manner capable of being understood by the public. The series by 'Politicus' is an attempt in that direction. I am not however sure that the presentation of his subject cannot be made simpler even if that should require a fuller treatment. I pick up from the series two things for the reader's consideration. After examining all available figures, 'Politicus' concludes that:

> the aggregate burden of all kinds of Public Debt, owed by all sorts of authorities and incurred for no matter what purpose or in what form, will be not much short of Rs. 1,200 crores at the present moment. This is about half of India's total annual wealth in material goods of all kinds. And that wealth barely suffices to give only one meal a day of the coarsest kind to every human being in the land and that too if we exclude all other needs of human life.

If this statement is true, it constitutes a black record of crime against India. It shows that the debts are largely unproductive. If these obligations were healthy, our wealth should have so increased as to give more than enough to every one of us to eat. Having summed up the total debt, 'Politicus' examines the ethics of the obligations and sums up thus:

> The fact, however, must be repeated that, hitherto, the debt has been contracted by the Government without consulting the people of India; that the latter have no power to vote the borrowing programme or the debt charges, even under the reforms of 1919-20; and that any condition precedent to the recognition of our political majority, even in the form of a full Dominion Status, which will serve as an encumbrance for all time to come on the people of India, without their explicit consent or confirmation, must, in law as well as conscience, be held to be void. The trustee liquidating or dissolving the

> trust is entitled, of course, to a full statement of accounts regarding his management of the trust, so that no unexpected claims or counter-claims be urged against him subsequently by the beneficiaries coming into their own. But that is no reason why the trustee should be permitted to insist, on the occasion of dissolving the trust, that *all his* claims against the trust estate shall be passed and adopted, without examination, by the erstwhile beneficiaries under his trust.

The Congress resolution means no more than this, save that it suggests also an unexceptionable machinery for a due examination of these transactions.

But they have the power to impose their will, we have not yet generated strength to resist that will. Or Sir Malcolm Hailey would not be able to say as he is reported to have said. He was speaking to the U. P. Legislative Council. In the course of his address he said:

> First and foremost, every legal means would be adopted to defeat the campaign of civil disobedience, and in the event of legal resources proving insufficient, we shall attempt to secure such legal provision as is required to effect our purpose.

This was not enough, and so His Excellency warmed up and said:

> He might even feel that it would not be wholly amiss if the Government were, on this occasion, to furnish some proof of the demoniac character of which he has been told so much.

I trust that civil resisters have counted the cost. For the rulers to give an exhibition of that admirable character would be no new experience for India. I hope that the campaign will so shape itself as to allow the fury exhaustively to expend itself. That is the inevitable result of the law of non-retaliation.

Young India, 6-3-1930

395. NO RULE v. *MISRULE*

This letter[1] is obviously meant for publication. Mr. Pennington must always command respect for his great industry at his age and for his sincere advocacy of a cause he believes in. Professor Kumarappa is well able to take care of himself. He, being in village, is not easily accessible. But whether he has any answer or not to Mr. Pennington's facts, I can say this from my own experience. Most of the "facts"

[1] Not reproduced here. J. B. Pennington had criticized J. C. Kumarappa's chapters on "Public Finance and Our Poverty" which were serialized in *Young India* from November 28, 1929 to January 23, 1930. Pennington had pointed out some benefits derived by India from *Pax Britannica* and expressed misgivings about the proclamation of independence.

such friends as Mr. Pennington can produce may be true, and yet do not affect the conclusion arrived at by nationalists, nor do those facts warrant the deductions their authors base upon them. "One swallow does not make a summer." Nor can high prices paid for a few acres in a rich tract prove the general prosperity of a continent. As against isolated facts of isolated prosperity stands the grim fact of the general pauperism of India as a whole. This pauperism can be seen with physical eyes by anyone who would care to wander through India's villages. *Pax Britannica* is not a beneficial operation. It has as much value to India as the slave dwellers have in an estate whose owner keeps the slaves from fighting with one another, protects the estate from foreign inroads and makes the slaves work with a regularity that is just enough to keep the estate going in his, the owner's, interest. The slaves of this imaginary estate will, when they grow to consciousness of their position, prefer anarchy to slavery if there is no other choice. Even so should I prefer anarchy to the existing rule and its much-vaunted peace if I can have no other choice. Surely no-rule is better than bad rule. As for the friends who "are most anxious to hold me in respect", I can only say that while I would always esteem their affection, I must be content to go without it if I cannot retain it consistently with obedience to the Inner Voice. What shall it profit me even though I may win the esteem of a whole world, if I have to lose my soul?

Young India, 6-3-1930

396. OBSCENE LITERATURE

No country and no language is free from obscene literature. As long as there are self-indulging and immoral people in the world, obscene literature will continue to be produced and read. But when such literature is disseminated through newspapers of good standing, and under the guise of art or service, it is truly horrible. I have received this kind of obscene literature from the Marwari community. I have also received a copy of the statement published on behalf of respectable Marwaris. The statement seeks to rouse the Marwari community and calls upon it to boycott literature which goes under the name of art but in reality has money as its end. What provoked the statement was the Marwari number of a monthly called *Chand*. I could not read all of it, nor do I wish to do so, but whatever I could read was so obscene and loathsome that no man who has any sense or who has the good of society at heart would ever publish such things. To publish such things in the name of reform is unnecessary and harmful. People who sing filthy songs such as are published in *Chand* do not read newspapers. Its readership can only be of two types: the

educated debauchees who wish to satisfy their lust by any means, and innocent men who, though so far free from the ways of vice, are so impressionable that they may be corrupted. For such people obscene literature is fatal. This is also the experience of all. I hope that the effect of the statement issued by these distinguished Marwari gentlemen will be felt by the editor of *Chand* and his associates, and that they will withdraw this number of *Chand* and will refrain in future from publishing such obscene literature. A greater duty as regards this is that of the Marwari community and of society in general. It should never buy nor even read such obscene literature. Editors of Hindi papers have a twofold responsibility. Since we want to make Hindi the national language, it becomes their duty to protect this language. One like myself who worships the national language would expect only books with lofty ideas. Therefore, if it is possible, the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan should appoint a language committee whose function it would be to scrutinize every new book for its language, thought, etc. The committee should then prepare lists of books adjudged best and those adjudged obscene, and it should popularize the goodbooks and boycott the obscene ones. Such a committee can only be successful if its members are well versed in literature and are willing to devote themselves whole-heartedly to the service of literature.

[From Hindi]
Hindi Navajivan, 6-3-1930

397. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

AHMEDABAD,
March 6, 1930

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
ALLAHABAD

LETTER[1] HANDED PRESS FOR PUBLICATION. MARCHING EARLY MORNING 12TH WITH SIXTY COMPANIONS.

GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 178, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

398. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 6, 1930

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I have your letter. I do not think it advisable to ask you to leave that place just now. I will start on the march on the 12th, accompanied

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Irwin", 2-3-1930.

by most of the men in the Ashram.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U. III

399. LETTER TO TEHMINA KHAMBHATTA

March 6, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I can understand that you will feel hurt if Bhai Khambhatta joins the struggle at present. Just now I agree with you. I hope you do not wish that he should not join the struggle at any time? It is one's duty to do everything possible to preserve one's body. When, however, a situation arises in which one can be faithful to dharma only by laying down one's life, it becomes one's duty to do so. I am sure, therefore, that if and when such a time comes both of you will be ready to sacrifice yourselves. Rest assured that, to those who fight in the name of God, He gives the strength to endure all hardships.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7544

400. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

March 6, 1930

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I have your letter. Though you have not joined the Ashram, to me you are more than an inmate of the Ashram. Your regular study of *Young India* and *Navajivan* and your manner of life are not unknown to me. You are quite fit to join the struggle. But you should not be in a hurry just now. You should respect the feelings of Tehminabehn. There is some substance, too, in what she says. The way you are neglecting your body, who can guarantee how long it will be able to stand the life in jail? Hence it would be better to be humble. My advice, therefore, is this: Hold yourself back for the present and join the struggle when it takes a crucial turn. If you get an opportunity in Bombay itself, you may certainly take the plunge. At that time, I think Tehminabehn also will not restrain you but, on the contrary, will encourage you. If it becomes necessary, she herself will plunge into the struggle. I think women, too, will have to join in this final struggle.If, moreover, violence breaks out in Bombay, it will become your duty to try to preserve peace and even lay down your

life in doing so. It would, therefore, be better if you hold yourself in reserve for the time being. It is indeed necessary that some persons should do so.

I was glad, all the same, that you sent a letter to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7545

401. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 6, 1930

BHAISHRI PUNJABHAI,

I have your letter.

The march will start on the 12th. If you wish to join, you should come and see me before that.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4010

402. DRAFT OF RESOLUTION FOR THE WORKING COMMITTEE

[Before *March 7, 1930*][1]

The W. C. notes with sorrow that Dr. Syed Mahmud has recently had three deaths in his family including the loss of his elder brother[2] who was the manager of his large joint household and its mainstay. The difficulty is intensified by the fact that Dr. Mahmud's wife is suffering from a serious illness. In the circumstances the W. C. is of opinion that Dr. Mahmud should not be allowed to run the imminent risk of being arrested and therefore relieves him of the office of Secretary of the Congress and membership of the Committee till such time as may be necessary for making satisfactory arrangements for the management of his domestic affairs.

DR. SYED MAHMUD
BAR-AT-LAW
CHHAPRA
BIHAR

From the original: Dr. Syed Mahmud Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also G. N. 5085

[1] From the postmark, which bears the date March 7, 1930
[2] Mazhar-ul-Haq, who died on January 4, 1930; *vide* also "Notes", 9-1-1930

403. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

March 7, 1930

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

After a talk with Sitla Sahai, I have decided to send him there. Let him see what he can do there and you will watch developments. If he and you decide that he should come back, he may do so. His wife and children will remain here and he can draw upon the Ashram for his bare upkeep. The rest you will hear from him.

Yours,

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

404. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

March 7, 1930

CHI MRIDULA,

You can come tomorrow (Saturday) at 9.30 a.m. if it is convenient. If this time does not suit you, come any time and we shallmeet. If you can make it at lunch time, it will be good. We shall lunch together.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11108. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

405. STATEMENT ON ARREST OF VALLABHBHAI PATEL

March 7, 1930

It is a good omen for us that Sardar Vallabhbhai has been arrested and sentenced. It remains to be seen what use we make of this happy beginning. The fight has now commenced and we have to carry it to its conclusion. People should celebrate the Sardar's arrest and the sentence passed on him by observing a general hartal. I request the mill-owners to close the mills, the students to absent themselves from their institutions and all shopkeepers to close their shops. There should be no need to tell Gujarat to preserve peace. Our struggle must remain non-violent from beginning to end.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 9-3-1930

406. CABLE TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

[On or after *March 7, 1930*][1]

NOBODY HAS AUTHORITY REPRESENT ME AMERICA. MOVEMENT ABSOLUTELY PEACEFUL. CONGRESS POLICY OF NON-VIOLENCE REMAINS UNCHANGED. IN EVENT MASS RESPONSE DIFFICULT SAY HOW THINGS WILL SHAPE BUT THOUSANDS BENT ON KEEPING. PEACE UNDER GRAVEST PROVOCATION. NO ONE EVEN WHISPERS ABOUT MILITARY RESISTANCE. NO ONE ARMING NATIONALISTS. CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE UNDER STRICTEST RESTRICTIONS BEING STARTED ON 12TH.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 16637

407. FOREWORD TO COW-PROTECTION[2]

SABARMATI,
March 8, 1930

Those who are interested [in] the preservation of the priceless wealth of India in the shape of the cow through constructive means will find much food for thought in the following well-written pages.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9327

[1] This was sent in reply to the following cable of March 6, 1930, received at the Ashram the following day: "Friends Indian independence universal peace most anxiously watching nationalist movement under your leadership redoubling efforts rallying American sympathies. Subsidized imperialist agencies permanent obstacle but most serious damage being done Indian cause by Sailendranath Ghose styled representative Indian Congress, your agent, etc. His persistent wildly violent misrepresentations like announcing Indian resolve military resistance arming million nationalists would [*sic*] your sponsorship increasingly alienating sympathies millions who pinning faith your non-violence victory. Respectfully urge Congress immediately disavow Ghose's representative character prevent further injury. Rezmie founder India Independence League ceaselessly influencing all shades American Press public through accurate temperate sympathetic interpretation nationalist position your creed acts. Rezmie zealous trustworthy could splendidly represent you and Congress. First time we venturing advise you but condition very serious danger permanently losing American support imminent. Kindly act before disobedience starts. . . ."

[2] A book by Valji Desai

408. FOREWORD TO "DRAUPADINAN CHIR"

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 8, 1930

Those who wish to study the subject of khadi from a historical point of view or understand why spinning is a moral duty will find the following chapters by Shri Valji Desai immensely interesting.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9273. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

409. FOREWORD TO "RAJKATHA"

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 8, 1930

A study of the mutual obligations of rulers and subjects has a special relevance at the present time. Shri Valji Desai's collection of essays helps us to understand clearly the duties of a king, the distinction between a good king and a bad king, how kings were elected and dethroned in ancient times, and so on.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9272. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

410. LETTER TO TOTARAM HINGORANI

March 8, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

I am glad you have written to me about Anand. The more I see him the more I like him. All he needs is a little firmness. I wish you will not press him to go to you just now. Leave him to develop along his own lines and you will be proud of him. He has decided to join the column I am to lead.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

411. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

Saturday [*March 8, 1930*][1]

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

If you have the strength this is your duty.

Assure mother that you will not court imprisonment, but that you will have to go if arrested. She must return to Delhi in peace. Even if she does not go you will have to leave for Vijapur.

And having said your say, go away to Vijapur. Whatever your mother may do, even if she should die, you cannot deviate from your dharma. And it would be *adharma* to shirk on this occasion. Your duty is to strengthen your body and devote yourself to your work. If mother will stay on here, she will be looked after and served. Your brother told me that he quite understood; I think mother too will come round. Anyway, your path is quite clear.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

See me for a minute before leaving.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2376

412. SPEECH AT AHMEDABAD

March 8, 1930

I know that my voice will not reach you all. In the first place it does not have the power it once had. And then no man's voice can be heard by such a large crowd. I must be content if a few of these men and women can hear me. More people will be able to hear if those that cannot hear will be quiet and wait till their neighbours can give them a report of the speech.

I have nothing new to tell you. I have already given to the people of Ahmedabad and the whole of India the message which I had to give. Now the time has come when you and I will be finally tested, and in that matter the Government has made our path easy—yours as well as mine. I had never dreamt that Sardar Vallabhbhai would be imprisoned so soon. I think his services to Gujarat, and more particularly to this city, exceed mine a hundred times. Hence it is no wonder that he has been honoured by imprisonment before me. That certainly is his good fortune and yours also. But I find myself in a difficult situation because he has been imprisoned before me. I am

[1] The date is from *At the Feet of Bapu*, p. 57

eager to get arrested at any cost. I want to deprive the Government of its illegitimate monopoly of salt. My aim is to get the Salt Tax abolished. That is for me one step, the first step, towards full freedom. Sardar Vallabhbhai is no longer with us in this task. The people of India are now impatient and will not rest until they have won complete freedom. My voice is bound to reach the Government somehow, but Gujarat should preserve complete peace. The imprisonment of Vallabhbhai is the Government's way of rewarding his services in preserving complete peace during the satyagraha at Bardoli.

We have known it for years that this is the only way in which the Government can reward an independent-minded and freedom-loving person like Sardar Vallabhbhai. Let us all get so completely absorbed in our task that we win at once what we have been yearning for all these years. To fulfil the pledge we took on the 26th we should offer civil disobedience. Though Vallabhbhai had broken no salt law, the Government has arrested him and broken my right hand, so to say. If it has imprisoned and removed one Vallabhbhai, you, the men and women of Ahmedabad, should take his place and work as his representatives. Get ready at once, if you have love for him and have come here to sacrifice yourselves. If you are ready to follow him in his self-sacrifice, we shall show to the Government and to the world how our aspirations are bound to be realized. May God grant us the strength necessary for the sacrifice we have to make.

My determination to march on Wednesday morning with the first batch, comprising the Ashram inmates, stands unchanged. Let everyone present here do his duty. Vallabhbhai has said in his message that his speech at Broach clearly indicates what people should do if and when Gandhi is arrested. By going to jail himself, he has beenas good as his word. Let the Government reward us all in that way. I have no intention of asking you to pass any resolution here. But I expect you to put into practice the pledge which I have drafted for you to take now.

We the citizens of Ahmedabad, men and women, hereby resolve to follow Sardar Vallabhbhai to jail, or win complete independence. We shall have no peace, nor will we let the Government have any, till we have won complete independence. We believe that India's freedom is to be won through peaceful and truthful means.

I hope that the thousands of men and women present here will raise their hands and take the pledge for which I have been training the country in general, and the citizens of Ahmedabad in particular, for the last fifteen years, and which was taken at the time of the labour

strike here. Raise your hands only if you have the strength to act upon it.[1]

I congratulate you on the peaceful strike you have observed. I expect the men, women and students of Ahmedabad to do their duty by Sardar Vallabhbhai and the country.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 10-3-1930

413. TALK TO MILL-OWNERS' ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

March 8, 1930

The Majoor Mahajan used to be paid the interest on the National School funds. That pleased me and I believe you too were pleased. But now that money has stopped coming in. I had asked M. Sheth not to stop it. Nevertheless it was stopped. The objection was that the mill-owners should have a say in its management—this was of course a difference of principle. It is for the Mahajan to decide how the Majoor school should be run. Moreover, it is they themselves who run it. Even the inspectors have been satisfied. I too have inspected it. I have noticed progress every time. Be that as it may, we cannot have a hand in managing the affairs of an institution to which we make a donation. For then it ceases to be a donation. I had explained this even at the time I asked for donations from you. You had remarked that my work was of a political and social nature. After this was made clear, you gave me this money for social work. Likewise you accepted my views generously. It is not proper that you should now demand a hand in the management. I ask you to have a committee of inspection. If you feel that the work is not being carried on properly, you may stop your donations. Even the Government does not participate in the management though it does supervise. You too can do what you like as inspectors. Even then if you do not like to donate funds, I shall make another suggestion. The people are filled with admiration for the school that is being run there, the Montessori school. Donate money to him—to Prof. Miller. . . .[2] The labourers need that money. You talk of the increase in the wages of labourers. I must tell you that even sons of big men study there and do not pay full fees. You seem to desire that this school should be run on the small sum that the labourers save. Do the labourers collect money for the purpose of fighting? You should be thankful to me because they do not collect funds to launch a fight.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 16657

[1] Thousands of hands were raised.

[2] One sentence here is obscure.

414. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, SABARMATI ASHRAM

[Before *March 9, 1930*][1]

How can I go back on the principles I have held dear all my life, when I find that it is these principles that are being put to the test? I have no doubt in my mind that vaccination is a filthy process, that it is harmful in the end and that it is little short of taking beef. I may be entirely mistaken. But holding the views that I do, how can I recant them? Because I see child after child passing away?[2] No, not even if the whole of the Ashram were to be swept away, may I insist on vaccination and pocket my principle. What would my love of truth and my adherence to principle mean if they were to vanish at the slightest touch of reality?

. . .[3] But God is putting me through a greater test. On the eve of what is to be the final test of our strength, God is warning me through the messenger of death. I have tried hydropathy and earth treatment with success in numerous cases. Never has the treatment failed as it seems to have done during the month. But does that mean that I must therefore lose faith in the treatment and faith in God? Even so my faith in the efficacy of non-violence may be put to the severest test. I may have to see not three but hundreds and thousands being done to death during the campaign I am about to launch. Shall my heart quail before that catastrophe, or will I persevere in my faith? No, I want you, everyone, to understand that this epidemic is not a scourge, but a trial and preparation, a tribulation sent to steel our hearts and to chain us more strongly and firmly to faith in God. And would not my faith in the *Gita* be a mockery if three deaths were to unhinge me? It is as clear to me as daylight that life and death are but phases of the same thing, the reverse and obverse of the same coin. In fact tribulations and death seem to me to present a phase far richer than happiness of life. What is life worth without trials and tribulations which are the salt of life? The history of mankind would have been a blank sheet without these individuals. What is *Ramayana* but a record of the trials, privations and penances of Rama and Sita? The life of Rama, after the recovery of Sita, full ofhappiness as it was, does not occupy even a hundredth part of the epic. I want you all to treasure death and suffering more than life, and to appreciate their cleansing and purifying character.

Young India, 12-3-1930

[1] A brief report of this speech was published in *Navajivan*, 9-3-1930.

[2] Three children had died of smallpox in the Ashram.

[3] As in the source.

415. THE FINAL TEST

The letter[1] to the Viceroy was despatched from here on Sunday. It reached him on Tuesday. As proposed therein, it was given to the Press on Thursday for publication after awaiting the Viceroy's telegram. The reader will find in this issue a translation of the letter.

God willing, I hope to start the march at daybreak on Wednesday. Workers from Surat side tell me that there are many facilities there for easy manufacture of salt. Moreover, as they say, complete peace is likely to be preserved there and, along with it, help from the general public is also very probable. In the district of Surat, again, the choice has fallen on Jalalpur taluka for the marching corps to enter. In 1921, when the struggle for swaraj was launched at Bardoli, the Jalalpur taluka had applied for being chosen for the honour and I still have several sweet memories of my experience of the place. Even today the constructive programme there is in a flourishing state. The taluka has many facilities for the manufacture of salt. The people of the place are full of enthusiasm and in every way ready to participate in the struggle. This is Sardar Vallabhbhai's view, and he has, therefore, selected Jalalpur taluka for offering civil disobedience against the salt law. Whether my co-workers or I shall be able to proceed so far in our march, that is, whether Government will let us reach there, is a question. I believe we shall not be so allowed. Even then, I expect, Jalalpur taluka will take full part in the struggle. The Sardar is quite sure that it will. But I shall not be satisfied with that. I hope the whole of Gujarat will join this time. If Gujarat takes the initiative, I have no doubt that the whole of India will rise up. When a great awakening takes place among a people, there is always the fear of violence breaking out. This non-violent war is not free from that fear. No one is pained at the outbreak of violence where no question of violence or non-violence arises. Many even welcome it. But in this struggle we have a large number whose duty it would beto prevent, and not welcome, the outbreak of violence. Deterred by the fear of violence, I had been holding back civil disobedience and trying till now to dissuade the people from launching it. But I am now ready to take the ultimate step even at the risk of a violent outbreak, because I find that there is no other way in which I might prepare the people for the struggle. Looking at the other side, I find that the Government's organized violence goes on increasing day by day and the group wanting to meet violence with violence is becoming correspondingly stronger. Hence, if non-violence has the power to

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Irwin", 2-3-1930.

check violence or if I am truly non-violent, I must be able to find a non-violent way to restrain the double violence which I have mentioned. That way, I believe, is the way I am now adopting. And if I am mistaken, I have no doubt that I ought to cease obstructing the progress of the people any more. I do clearly see that I would put my non-violence to shame if I remained content with working only for khadi. There is no doubt in my mind that the power of non violence is a million times greater than that of khadi. Nor do I in any way doubt that khadi is an essential element of the non-violent way to win swaraj and that without khadi, there can be no swaraj. I have no doubt also that unless khadi had made the progress it has I should not have had the self-confidence to adopt the way I am now preparing to take. But it is clear that there should now be some other action besides the manufacture of khadi. There is need of greater awakening among the people even for giving more impetus to the khadi movement. If we are able to rouse the people and also maintain non-violence, there is no doubt that swaraj will be ours here and now. Having thus considered the matter I am taking the plunge. The reader will observe that this reasoning occurred to me after I had first seen the way. It is my belief that great things are achieved by man in obedience to the prompting of the inner voice. It is another matter whether the inner voice is from God or Satan. It has been my experience, with regard to myself and many others, that after one has heard the inner voice, one finds arguments in support of it.

It is clear as daylight that I ought to get out of the way if this inner voice is wrong or devilish. I believe the inner voice to be divine and hence the only way open to me is to follow the way shown by the light within and demonstrate its success or die in the attempt.

I, therefore, look upon this struggle as the final test. Those who join it may join on this understanding only.

If countless multitudes join the struggle and if peace is preserved, we shall win swaraj sooner than we imagine.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 9-3-1930

416. SATYAGRAHIS' MARCH

Our party is likely to consist of about a hundred men. I have not been able to finalize the list yet, as, besides the present inmates of the Ashram, I am selecting for inclusion some others who observe the rules of Ashram life and are eager to join, and who have to be included.

The march will begin at 6.30 on the 12th morning. I give below

the programme as tentatively fixed:

Wednesday, the 12th		Aslali
Thursday, the 13th	Morning	Bareja
	Evening	Navagam
Friday, the 14th	Morning	Vasana
	Evening	Matar
Saturday, the 15th	Morning	Dabhan
	Evening	Nadiad
Sunday, the 16th	Morning	Boriavi
	Evening	Anand
Monday, the 17th	Morning	Napa
	Evening	Borsad
Tuesday, the 18th	Morning	Raas
	Evening	Badalpur

I request the *mahajans* and the workers of the respective places to bear in mind the following. The satyagrahi party is expected to reach each place by 8 o'clock in the morning and to sit down for lunch between 10.00 and 10.30 a.m. It may be half past nine by the time the party reaches Aslali on the first day. No rooms will be needed for rest at noon or night, but a clean, shaded place will be enough. In the absence of such a shaded place, it will be enough to have a bamboo-and-grass covering. Both bamboo and grass can be put to use again.

It is assumed that the village people will provide us food.

If provisions are supplied the party will cook its own meal. The food supplied, whether cooked or uncooked, should be the simplest possible. Nothing more than *rotli* or *rotla* or kedgeree with vegetables and milk or curds, will be required. Sweets, even if prepared, will be declined. Vegetables should be merely boiled, and no oil, spices and chillies, whether green or dry, whole or crushed, should be added or used in the cooking. This is my advice for preparing a meal:

Morning, before departure:	*Rab* and *dhebra*; the *rab* should be left to the party itself to prepare.
Midday:	*Bhakhri*, vegetable and milk or butter-milk.
Evening, before the march is resumed:	Roasted gram, rice. Night:Kedgeree with vegetable and butter-milk or milk.

The ghee for all the meals together should not exceed three *tolas* per head: One *tola* in the *rab*, one served separately to be smeared on the *bhakhri*, and one to be put into the kedgeree. For me goat's milk, if available, in the morning, at noon and at night, and raisins or dates and three lemons will do. I hope that the village people will incur no expenses whatever, except for the simple food items named above.

I look forward to meeting the people of each village and its neighbourhood.

Everyone in the party will be carrying his own bedding, so that the village people will have to provide nothing except a clean place for resting in.

The people should incur no expense on account of betel leaves, betel-nuts or tea for the party.

I shall be happy if every village maintains complete cleanliness and fixes beforehand an enclosed place for the satyagrahis to answer calls of nature. If the villagers do not already use khadi, it is clear that they should now start using it.

It is desirable that information under the following heads should be kept ready for each village:

1. Population: Number of women, men, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis, etc.

2. Number of untouchables.

3. If there is a school in the village, the number of boys and girls attending it.

4. Number of spinning-wheels.

5. The monthly sale of khadi.

6. Number of people wearing khadi exclusively.

7. Salt consumed per head; salt used for cattle, etc.

8. Number of cows and buffaloes in the village.

9. The amount of land revenue paid; at what rate per acre.

10. The area of the common grazing-ground if any.

11. Do the people drink? How far is the liquor shop from the village?

12. Educational and other special facilities, if any, for the untouchables.

It will be good if this information is written out on a sheet of paper neatly and handed to me immediately on our arrival.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-3-1930

417. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

March 9, 1930

CHI. MANI,

I was waiting every day to hear from you. Not a day passed on which I did not remember you, but I quite understand your feeling that I neglect you. My pitiable condition is responsible for it. I have no time even to raise my head to look at anybody. I was content with knowing where you were and what you were about.

Father did not leave any instructions for you. He had no idea [he would be arrested]. You should live in any place where you will be happy and at peace.[1] You can certainly go to jail when the time comes. Mahadev has written about it. I understand why you like to live in the Ashram. But I think your attitude is not proper. Compulsion in such matters however is out of the question. So I will say nothing more about it. I only wish that you should be at ease, no matter where you live.

I expect to be arrested before Tuesday.

Be brave and improve your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. MANIBEHN
C/O DAHYABHAI VALLABHBHAI PATEL
SHRIRAM NIWAS, PAREKH STREET, BOMBAY-4

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro-4: Ku. Manibehn Patelne, p. 69

418. LETTER TO SATIN D. GUPTA

[Before *March 10, 1930*]

I know my absence will bring a fresh leader to the forefront. Let every man constitute himself into a leader and conduct the movement whose success must depend on the deep faith of the mass in non-violence.

The Bombay Chronicle, 10-3-1930

[1] The addressee had been ailing and was receiving treatment in Bombay.

419. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, SABARMATI ASHRAM [1]

March 10, 1930

I am glad that you have been coming to our prayer in such large numbers, and generally I would say, 'May your tribe increase.' But I must utter a few words of warning. If it is mere curiosity that draws you here, you had better not come at all. If it is the prayer that attracts you, you are quite welcome, but in that case this sudden inroad cannot be accounted for. But I presume you come both for the prayer and for understanding the significance of the campaign I am about to launch.

As for the prayer, I assure you that mere utterance, parrot wise, of the name of God is of no avail. All your trouble in coming this long distance from the town would be wasted and the quiet of our prayers would be disturbed. If therefore your desire to take part in the prayer is genuine, you must be prepared to fulfil a condition which alone can prove your *bona fides*, and that is that you come here dressed in khadi. You may or may not admit the many claims made on behalf of khadi, but one thing is now practically universally admitted, that khadi unites the wearer to the poorest of the land. And I may tell you that but for the progress that khadi has made in recent years I should not have been able to launch this campaign. It is the spread of khadi that infuses in me the hope that the message of non-violence has spread to the masses, for I have always associatednon-violence with khadi. A believer in violence may wear khadi, but he would do so in order to exploit it.

As for the other desire that also prompts you to come here, you know that the march begins on Wednesday morning. Everyone is on the tiptoe of expectation, and before anything has happened the thing has attracted world-wide attention. Now I should like to analyse the thing for you and to implore you to appreciate its implications. Though the battle is to begin in a couple of days, how is it that you can come here quite fearlessly? I do not think anyone of you would be here if you had to face rifleshots or bombs. But you have no fear of rifleshots or bombs. Why? Supposing I had announced that I was going to launch a violent campaign (not necessarily with men armed with rifles, but even with sticks or stones), do you think the Government would have left me free until now? Can you show me an

[1] This is a condensed summary of Gandhiji's speech made at the end of the prayer meeting, which was attended by about 2,000 people.

example in history (be it England, America or Russia) where the State has tolerated violent defiance of authority for a single day? But here you know that the Government is puzzled and perplexed. And you have come here because you have been familiarized by now with the idea of seeking voluntary imprisonment.

Then I would ask you to proceed a step further. Supposing ten men in each of the 700,000 villages in India come forward to manufacture salt and to disobey the Salt Act, what do you think can this Government do? Even the worst autocrat you can imagine would not dare to blow regiments of peaceful civil resisters out of a cannon's mouth. If only you will bestir yourselves just a little, I assure you we should be able to tire this Government out in a very short time. I want you, therefore, to understand the meaning of this struggle and to do your part in it. If it is only curiosity that moves you to walk this long distance, you had better not waste your time and mine. If you come here to bless us and our movement, the blessings must take some concrete shape. I don't want any money from you. I am hoping that it may be possible to fight this battle with the least possible money. At the time of Kheda Satyagraha in 1918 I had to refuse several offers for raising contributions. In Bardoli an appeal was made and there was a spontaneous response, but much of the money was saved and is now being utilized for constructive work. So I do not want you to contribute any money just now. That you will do unasked when our suffering has reached that stage which cannot but compel your sympathy. But I want you to take your courage in both hands and contribute in men towards the struggle which promises to be fierce and prolonged. I certainly expect the city of Ahmedabad, the Ahmedabad of Vallabhbhai, who is already in jail, to furnish an unlimited supply of volunteers to keep the stream unbroken, in case batch after batch happens to be arrested and marched to jail. That is the least I expect of you. May God give you the strength to rise to the occasion.

Young India, 12-3-1930

420. MESSAGE TO ANDHRA[1]

[Before *March 11, 1930*]

This is a battle to the finish. The Divine Hand is guiding it. It must be prolonged till the last man offers himself for satyagraha.

The Hindu, 14-3-1930

[1] This was read out at a public meeting held on March 11 under the auspices of the Rajahmundry City Congress Committee.

421. INTERVIEW TO H. D. RAJAH [1]

[On or before *March 11, 1930*]

I had a prolonged interview with Gandhiji regarding the coming struggle and the part youths are to play. Gandhi said:

I begin the struggle in right earnest on 12th morning. This struggle must be continued to the successful end. Either we shall be effaced out of the earth or we shall spring up as an independent nation enjoying full freedom. We shall face the bullets with our backs to the wall. In our fight, we shall be engaged in active civil disobedience campaign and fill the prisons with men and women, but there will be no retreat at any cost. I hope to return to Ashram triumphant in our struggle for India achieving her independence.

Questioned by me as a to what the people should do when he is arrested, Gandhiji said:

Yes, I expect arrest at any moment. But the fight should continue. The Congress Committees, Provincial, District or Taluka, should organize the campaign.

What part can the Youth Leagues play in this fight?

The Youth Leagues should organize volunteers and offer them to the Congress Committees which decide on a course of action. If any Congress Committee of a particular place fails to do the work, the Youth League would take up the work and do it. . . .

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-3-1930

422. INTERVIEW TO "THE MANCHESTER GUARDIAN"

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
[On or before *March 11, 1930*][2]

I don't believe that the slightest good for India can come of the Round Table Conference in London. I would like to spare the world the melancholy spectacle of Indians fighting against Indians in a foreign country, but this is what the Conference would lead to, as it seems to be composed at present. I shall waste no time. I expect my movement to be successful. I hope that my movement will not lead to deeds of violence, but even in this case there can be no going back for me. Yet I supported the Nehru Report once; but many things have

[1] This was published as a letter to the Editor.

[2] Evidently the interview was given before Gandhiji started on his march on March 12, 1930.

changed since then.

I admit that this may be my last chance, and if I do not seize it, it may never come again. The revolutionary and, of course, violent movement has gained ground heavily. The need for the speediest action is absolutely clear. The question of religious antagonisms and the problem of the native States are subordinate questions, and cannot be solved until we have the power in our own hands. I do not believe that there is any solution to the Indian problem except the one I have now proposed.

The Hindu, 11-6-1930

423. ON RECORDING OF MESSAGE[1]

[On or before *March 11, 1930*]

If there is truth in my message, then whether I am inside or outside the jail, people are bound to pay heed to it. But if there is no truth in it, then in spite of all your efforts, and even with the help of gramophone, you would not be able to carry it to the people. If the satyagraha we are going to start is really satyagraha, that is to say, if it means an insistence on truth, and if we are prepared to go ahead on the basis of truth and non-violence, it is bound to succeed, whether people hear my words or not, and whether my voice reaches their ears or not. Therefore, a record like this is neither necessary nor likely to be of any help.

At the Feet of Mahatma Gandhi, pp. 181-2

424. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS [2]

[On or before *March 11, 1930*]

Q. What sort of Government do you want?

A. I want a Government that would obey and carry out the wishes of the people.

Q. You want a democracy?

A. I am not interested in words, and I never worry myself about the form of government.

Q. But don't you mind methods?

A. I do mind them very much indeed, but I don't mind the form.

[1] Rajendra Prasad had suggested that a message of Gandhiji might be recorded so that it could be played after his arrest. This was Gandhiji's reply.

[2] These were reported by Mahadev Desai under the heading "Talks before the Trek".

Q. Then you would not mind a monarchy?

A. I said form and machinery do not much matter to me.

Q. Well, then, tell me what form your democracy will take.

A. I do not know; the method alone interests me, and by method I mean the agency through which the wishes of the people are reached. There are only two methods; one is that of fraud and force; the other is that of non-violence and truth. Force always includes fraud, non-violence always excludes it.

Q. Can't you have fraud with non-violence?

A. No. Impossible. Fraud itself is a species of violence.

Q. Well, I have seen fraud associated with non-violence. China is reputed to be one of the most peaceful countries in the world, and if I were to tell you about the frauds there, you would be shocked.

A. I repeat, words do not capture my imagination. As a people, the Chinese are one of the most peaceful in the world, but that peace cannot be real and voluntary if there is fraud in it. If I harbour ill-will in my breast but do not express it in acts, I am still violent. By non-violence or peace I mean the peace which comes through inner strength. If I have that peace, that non-violence, I won't have any hate in me. Violence does not necessarily mean bodily harm. What I want to impress on everyone is that I do not want India to reach her goal through questionable means. Whether that is possible or not is another question. It is sufficient for my present purpose if the person who thinks out the plan and leads the people is absolutely above board and has non-violence and truth in him. Non-violence works organically, not mechanically. It was for that reason that I asked for unrestricted authority from the Working Committee of the Congress to work out my plan of non-violence.

Q. Don't you think, Gandhiji, boycott of foreign goods would be more potent than civil disobedience?

A. Years ago I heard that futile cry and I replaced it by one for the boycott of foreign cloth. It made some impression, but that of boycott of foreign goods made none at all.

Q. My impression is that in Bengal boycott of British goods was tried with success, but no other province took it up.

A. No. It fizzled out. The mills in Ahmedabad and Bombay defrauded the nation by sending spurious cloth; and when genuine mill-cloth was sent, exorbitant prices were charged.

Q. That is what I mean to say. The thing was not tried seriously.

A. If it was not, it means that the people did not want to. So far as I am concerned, I never believed in it and so I could never back it.

Q. But would it not be easier to handle foreign-cloth boycott than civil disobedience?

A. No. It is far more difficult. In one case you want the co-operation of 300 million people. In the other, even if you have an army of ten thousand defiant men and women, your work is done.

Q. Why? They can be all clapped in jail and nothing more will happen thereafter.

A. Let them try the experiment. They would have to hang these men before they could dismiss them from their minds. If these men are trusty and true their very presence will worry the Government unto death.

Q. Will they worry Government even in prison?

A. For one thing they can't keep them there for any length of time. The fact is that we never had even 5,000 full civil resisters in 1921. Every political prisoner is not necessarily a civil resister.

Q. Will not your movement lead to violence?

A. It may, though I am trying my best to prevent any outbreak of violence. Today there is greater risk of violence, in the absence of any safety-valve in the shape of a movement of non-violence like the one I am contemplating.

Q. Yes, I have heard you say that you are launching this campaign for the very purpose of stopping violence.

A. It is one argument, but that is not the most conclusive argument. The other and most conclusive argument for me is that if non-violence has to prove its worth, it must prove its worth today. It must cease to be the passive or even impotent instrument that it has come to be looked upon [as] in certain quarters. And when it is exercised in the most effective way, it must act in spite of the most fatal *outward* obstructions. In fact non-violence by its very nature must neutralize all *outward* obstruction. On the contrary, inward obstacles in the shape of fraud, hatred, and ill-will would be fatal to the movement. Up to now I used to say: "Let me get control over the forces of violence." It is growing upon me now that it is only by setting the force of non-violence in motion that I can get those elements under control.

But I hear people say, "History will have to repeat itself in India." Let it repeat itself, if it must. I for one must not postponethe movement unless I am to be guilty of the charge of cowardice. I must fight unto death the system based on violence and thus bring under control the force of political violence. When real organic non-violence is set to work, the masses also will react manfully.

Q. But after you are removed the movement will no longer be in your control?

A. In South Africa the movement was not in my control during the latter part of it, when it gained considerable momentum without any action on my part. Thousands joined the movement instinctively. I had not even seen the faces of them, much less known them. They joined because they felt that they must. They had possibly only heard my name, but they saw in the twinkling of an eye that it was a movement for their liberation; they knew that there was a man prepared to fight the £3 tax and they took the plunge. And against what odds? Their mines were converted into jails; the men who oppressed them day and night were appointed warders over them. They knew that there would be hell let loose on them. And yet they did not waver or falter. It was a perfect miracle.

Q. But would not the movement add to the already numerous divisions existing in the country?

A. I have no such fear. The forces of disunion can be kept under control, even as the forces of violence. You may say that there is fear elsewhere. The party of violence may not respond to my advances and the masses might behave unthinkingly. I am an optimist and have an abiding faith in human nature. The party of violence will give me fair play and the masses will act rightly by instinct. It is possible that I may be living in a fool's paradise. But no general can possibly provide for all contingencies. For me it is the opportunity of a lifetime. The movement is none of my seeking. Almost in spite of myself I was irresistibly drawn to Calcutta. I entered into a compromise to which I was driven. The period of two years I changed to one, simply because it did not involve any moral principle. In Lahore I had to conceive and frame practically every resolution. There I saw the forces of violence and non-violence in full play, acting side by side; and I found that non-violence ultimately triumphed over violence.

Q. You said some time ago that the time was not ripe for civil disobedience. What has happened between that time and today that has helped you to alter your view?

A. I am quite positive that it is fully ripe. The reason I will tell you. Nothing has happened externally, but the internal conflict in me, which was the only barrier, has ceased; and I am absolutely certain now that the campaign had been long overdue. I might have started it long before this.

Q. And what was that internal conflict?

A. You know I have always been guided solely by my attitude towards non-violence, but I did not know then how to translate that attitude into action in the face of growing violence. But now I see as

clearly as daylight that, pursuing the course that I have adopted, I minimize the risk I am taking.

Q. Are you sure that the salt campaign will lead you to jail?

A. I have not a shadow of doubt that it will. How long exactly it will take is more than I can say, but I feel that it will be much sooner than most people would be inclined to think. I expect a crisis to be soon reached which would lead to a proper Conference—not a Round Table Conference, but a Square Table, one where everybody attending it would know his bearings. The exact lineaments of that Conference I cannot at present depict, but it will be a Conference between equals met to lay their heads together to devise ways and means for the establishment of an Independent Constitution in India.

Q. Were you not responsible for allowing the Viceregal negotiations to come to an abrupt end?

A. I know that is the impression in certain quarters; the public blamed me for a time, but now it has come to understand the true position.

Q. Are you quite sure that in the position you took, the influence of the younger generation did not weigh with you?

A. No. Not a bit. I had never been sanguine about the Round Table Conference. I went of course as far as I could. But the central thing I always insisted on was that the Conference should apply itself to a scheme of Dominion Status suited to the needs of India. If the Viceroy had said 'Yes', I should gladly have asked him to proceed to the other points.

Q. Then you had no objection to the scheme coming into operation some years hence?

A. If the scheme was such as to come into operation at a future time, I should rule it out. But I may not talk about our interview with the Viceroy. The public might know more about it some day. I can assure you however that there was no question of a real Dominion Status scheme being framed.

Q. Just a question about your now famous eleven points. If some of them are conceded, would there be room for a compromise?

A. If they were to concede a few main points and couple the concession with a promise that the rest would be conceded as soon as possible, I would be prepared to consider a proposition for a Conference. But the justice of all those demands must be admitted. You will agree that there is nothing new about them. Most have been handed down to us from Dadabhai Naoroji's time.

Q. Supposing they conceded your demand about the reduction of civil and

military expenditure, would you not regard it as a sufficient proof of their *bona fides*?

A. I should seriously reconsider my position, but it would all depend on the spirit in which the concession was made.

Young India, 20-3-1930

425. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, SABARMATI ASHRAM

[On or before *March 11, 1930*][1]

Let me, moreover, make one thing clear. Either we shall win the goal for which we are marching or die in the attempt to win it. There can be no turning back for us hereafter. We will keep on our fight till swaraj is established in India. This will be the last fight. The soldiers who accompany me must note that there is to be no retreat. Those of them that are married should take leave of their wives, and the wives should congratulate their husbands on their being the first soldiers of the country's freedom battle. We are as good as parting from the Ashram and from our homes. Only with complete victory can we return to this place.

[From Gujarati]
Gujarati, 16-3-1930

426. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, SABARMATI ASHRAM

March 11, 1930

In all probability this will be my last speech to you. Even if the Government allow me to march tomorrow morning, this will be my last speech on the sacred banks of the Sabarmati. Possibly these may be the last words of my life here.

I have already told you yesterday what I had to say. Today I shall confine myself to what you should do after I and my companions are arrested. The programme of the march to Jalalpur must be fulfilled as originally settled. The enlistment of volunteers for this purpose should be confined to Gujarat. From what I have seen and heard during the last fortnight I am inclined to believe that the stream of civil resisters will flow unbroken.

But let there be not a semblance of breach of peace even after all of us have been arrested. We have resolved to utilize all our resources in the pursuit of an exclusively non-violent struggle. Let no

[1] According to the source the speech was delivered to a large gathering either on the 10th or 11th of March.

one commit a wrong in anger. This is my hope and prayer. I wish these words of mine reached every nook and corner of the land. My task shall be done if I perish and so do my comrades. It will then be for the Working Committee of the Congress to show you the way and it will be up to you to follow its lead. That is the only meaning of the Working Committee's resolution. The reins of the movement will still remain in the hands of those of my associates who believe in non-violence as an article of faith. Of course, the Congress will be free to chalk out what course of action commends itself to it. So long as I have not reached Jalalpur, let nothing be done in contravention to the authority vested in me by the Congress. But once I am arrested, the whole general responsibility shifts to the Congress. No one who believes in non-violence, as a creed, need therefore sit still. My compact with the Congress ends as soon as I am arrested. In that case there should be no slackness in the enrolment of volunteers. Wherever possible, civil disobedience of salt laws should be started. These laws can be violated in three ways. It is an offence to manufacture salt wherever there are facilities for doing so. The possession and sale of contraband salt (which includes natural salt or salt earth) is also an offence. The purchasers of such salt will be equally guilty. To carry away the natural salt deposits on the seashore islikewise a violation of law. So is the hawking of such salt. In short, you may choose anyone or all of these devices to break the salt monopoly.

We are, however, not to be content with this alone. Wherever there are Congress Committees, wherever there is no ban by the Congress and wherever the local workers have self-confidence, other suitable measures may be adopted. I prescribe only one condition, viz., let our pledge of truth and non-violence as the only means for the attainment of swaraj be faithfully kept. For the rest, everyone has a free hand. But that does not give a licence to all and sundry to carry on on their individual responsibility. Wherever there are local leaders, their orders should be obeyed by the people. Where there are no leaders and only a handful of men have faith in the programme, they may do what they can, if they have enough self-confidence. They have a right, nay, it is their duty, to do so. The history of the world is full of instances of men who rose to leadership by sheer force of self-confidence, bravery and tenacity. We too, if we sincerely aspire to swaraj and are impatient to attain it, should have similar self-confidence. Our ranks will swell and our hearts strengthen as the number of our arrests by Government increases.

Let nobody assume that after I am arrested there will be no one left to guide them. It is not I but Pandit Jawaharlal who is your guide. He has the capacity to lead. Though the fact is that those who have

learnt the lesson of fearlessness and self-effacement need no leader, but if we lack these virtues, not even Jawaharlal will be able to produce them in us.

Much can be done in other ways besides these. Liquor and foreign-cloth shops can be picketed. We can refuse to pay taxes if we have the requisite strength. The lawyers can give up practice. The public can boycott the courts by refraining from litigation. Government servants can resign their posts. In the midst of the despair reigning all round people quake with fear of losing employment. Such men are unfit for swaraj. But why this despair? The number of Government servants in the country does not exceed a few hundred thousand. What about the rest? Where are they to go? Even free India will not be able to accommodate a greater number of public servants. A Collector then will not need the number of servants he has got today. He will be his own servant. How can a poor country like India afford to provide a Collector with separate servants for performing the duties of carrying his papers, sweeping, cooking, latrine-cleaning and letter-carrying? Our starving millions can by no means afford this enormous expenditure. If, therefore, we are sensible enough, let us bid good-bye to Government employment, no matter if it is the post of a judge or a peon. It may be difficult for a judge to leave his job, but where is the difficulty in the case of a peon? He can earn his bread everywhere by honest manual labour. This is the easiest solution of the problem of freedom. Let all who are co-operating with the Government in one way or another, be it by paying taxes, keeping titles, or sending children to official schools, etc., withdraw their co-operation in all or as many ways as possible. One can devise other methods, too, of non-co-operating with the Government. And then there are women who can stand shoulder to shoulder with men in this struggle.

You may take it as my will. It was the only message that I desired to impart to you before starting on the march or for the jail. I wish there to be no suspension or abandonment of the war that commences tomorrow morning, or earlier if I am arrested before that time. I shall eagerly await the news that ten batches are ready as soon as my batch is arrested. I believe there are men in India to complete the work begun by me today. I have faith in the righteousness of our cause and the purity of our weapons. And where the means are clean, there God is undoubtedly present with His blessings. And where these three combine, there defeat is an impossibility. A satyagrahi, whether free or incarcerated, is ever victorious. He is vanquished only when he forsakes truth and non-violence and turns a deaf ear to the Inner Voice. If, therefore, there is such a thing as defeat for even a

satyagrahi, he alone is the cause of it. God bless you all and keep off all obstacles from the path in the struggle that begins tomorrow. Let this be our prayer.

Young India, 20-3-1930

427. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

[*March 11, 1930*]

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

It is nearing 10 p.m. now. The air is thick with the rumour that I shall be arrested during the night. I have not wired to you especially because the correspondents submit their messages for approval and everybody is working at top speed. There was nothing special to wire about.

Things are developing extraordinarily well. Offers of volunteers are pouring in. The column will proceed with the march even thoughI may be arrested. If I am not, you may expect wires from me; otherwise I am leaving instructions.

I do not know that I have anything in particular to say. I have written enough. I gave a final message this evening to a vast crowd that gathered for prayer on the sands.

May God keep you and give you strength to bear the burden.

With love to you all,

BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, pp. 83-4

428. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 11, 1930

BHAI SATIS BABU,

This may be my last letter—before my arrest at any rate. Tomorrow I feel they are bound to arrest me. There are rumours also to this effect. I have received your letters. What reply can I give? Do whatever is possible. I am giving instructions that a copy of the *Gita* be sent to you. It is ready.

I have no time to write separately to Hemprabha Devi. May God grant you both the strength to give up all, the wisdom always to discern your duty and a long life for service.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1636

429. TELEGRAM TO BHAWANIDAYAL SANNYASI[1]

[On or after *March 11, 1930*]

WISH YOU SUCCESS.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 16668

430. MESSAGE TO BOMBAY PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE

[Before *March 12, 1930*]

I have the telegram of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee about Jamnalalji. I agree with the Committee that Jamnalalji's presence in Bombay at the present moment will be of greater benefit to the country than elsewhere. I have conferred with him and he has decided to give Bombay as much time as he can. I only hope that Bombay will make the fullest use of his presence and will take a leading part as has been its wont in the movement of emancipation. I hope that Bombay has fittingly celebrated Sardar Vallabhbhai's arrest.

The Bombay Chronicle, 13-3-1930

431. SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

Sardar Vallabhbhai is the one man who has been responsible for keeping the peace in Gujarat during these troublous times. He is the man whose unique administration of the Ahmedabad Municipal Board drew unstinted praise from the Government. He is the man whose tireless energy put heart into the flood-stricken people of Gujarat in 1927 and when the Government machinery had broken down, his workers were responsible for saving the lives of thousands of people. It was Vallabhbhai Patel who waged a peaceful war in Bardoli the other day resulting in a settlement honourable to both the parties. This man of peace, this idol of the Gujaratis, their uncrowned king, is now a prisoner for disregarding a notice prohibiting speech when there was not even the remotest danger of breach of the peace. He had not gone, the authorities knew, for disobeying the provisions of the Salt Act. He had gone simply to prepare for my march. He had to be removed somehow or other. The Viceroy is sorry for my

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram received on March 11, 1930, which read: "Accepted presidentship Shahabad District Congress, Starting satyagraha after your arrest. Send blessings."

contemplated breach of the law. What is to be said of this act of corrupting and abusing the law, interfering with a man's liberty in the name of the law?

And where is Sardar living and how? He is in a common cell, unable to sleep in the open and without any light. He is given food which may induce dysentery to which he is prone.

He may not receive any but religious books. As a satyagrahi, he wants no special treatment. But why should the commonest felon be prevented, if he is no danger to safety, from sleeping under the sky in this hot weather? Why should a felon not be given light to read or write if he needs it? May not a murderer read and instruct himself ? And why should Sardar Vallabhbhai not have food that his health demands? But this is a matter of prison reform. Sardar Vallabhbhai is not the man whose spirit will be broken, if he does not get the necessary creature comforts. Did not the learned journalist and dramatic author Sjt. Khadilkar have similar treatment only the other day? The spirit of satyagraha will not be broken by shabby treatment in the Indian prisons. Only let those who have faith in the proposed conference know what Dominion Status in action really means. Gujarat, nay, India, is perparing to vindicate the authority of the supreme law which will supersede the utter lawlessness masquerading under the name of law. The authorities have imprisoned Vallabhbhai in the hope that his work will languish. Before long they will realize that his work will continue as if he were bodily in the midst of his people.

PS.

Information has just been received that Sardar is being better treated. He is to be allowed literature and the food he may need.

Young India, 12-3-1930

432. BEGGING THE QUESTION

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

> His Excellency the Viceroy desires me to acknowledge your letter of the 2nd March. He regrets to learn that you contemplate a course of action which is clearly bound to involve violation of the law and danger to the public peace.

Yours very truly,
G. CUNNINGHAM
PRIVATE SECRETARY

The reader is familiar with this reply. He will note, too, that it begs the question; and if further justification were needed, this stereotyped reply affords it. On bended knees I asked for bread and I have received stone instead.

It was open to the Viceroy to disarm me by freeing the poor man's salt, tax on which costs him five annas per year or nearly three days' income. I do not know outside India anyone who pays to the State Rs. 3 per year, if he earns Rs. 360 during that period. It was open to the Viceroy to do many other things except sending the usual reply. But the time is not yet. He represents a nation that does not easily give in, that does not easily repent. Entreaty never convinces it. It readily listens to physical force. It can witness with bated breath a boxing match for hours without fatigue. It can go mad over a football match in which there may be broken bones. It goes into ecstasies over blood-curdling accounts of war. It will listen also to mute resistless suffering. It will not part with the millions it annually drains from India in reply to any argument, however convincing. The Viceregal reply does not surprise me.

But I know that the salt tax has to go and many other things with it, if my letter means what it says. Time alone can show how much of it was meant.

The reply says I contemplate a course of action which is clearly bound to involve violation of the law and danger to the public peace. In spite of the forest of books containing rules and regulations, the only law that the nation knows is the will of the British administrators, the only public peace the nation knows is the peace of a public prison. India is one vast prison house. I repudiate this law and regard it as my sacred duty to break the mournful monotony of the compulsory peace that is choking the heart of the nation for want of free vent.

Young India, 12-3-1930

433. THE FOURFOLD CURSE

> The moral influence of British rule on personal character, on the position of women, in stimulation of public spirit, in the attitude to children and the poor and infirm, far outweighs the great material burdens imposed by it.

Thus writes the *Indian Daily Mail* of 7th March. I was unprepared for this defence of the British rule at this hour of the day. It reminds me of a learned Indian saying fifteen years ago, at a conference, that he was proud to own the British Tommy as his master as he owed all his knowledge to his British professors. A Governor and his wife were present at this conference. I hung my head in shame when I heard the learned sentiment and the vigorous clapping of it by the Governor's wife. One sees in the two sentiments quoted by me an exemplification of our cultural conquest which is worse than the material.

But for the cultural conquest, it must be the plainest thing to see

that it is *not* the British rule but British contact that has exercised whatever moral influence we may feel. Surely the two things are different and may well be contradictory. British contact may be a godsend, British rule may be a curse. And we may have the one without the other. My description of the rule as a curse would be accurate even though a knowledge of the good influence of British contact might be present with me at the time of giving the description. Personally I dispute much of the glorification whether of the British contact or the British rule painted in the sentence quoted. Nor must it be forgotten that the masses are wholly untouched by the influence described by the writer. Is the doubtful character of the moral results on the educated few an ample or any compensation for the pauperization of millions? And what is this moral influence on the few educated among us? Are we more truthful, are we cleaner, are we more sober, are we more humane, are we braver than the masses? Are the wives of the educated few better off than those of the masses who fearlessly work in their fields without molestation from their husbands? Is our record about venereal diseases—that infallible index to the moral content of a human being—better than among the masses? Are we less selfish than they? What do we do for the poor and the infirm? How much do we set apart even from our superfluities for their sake? I need not prolong the agony. I fear that the confinement to the city life and the comparative ease that the city life has given us have made us too lazy and too indifferent to study the condition of rural India and to think for ourselves.

Nor do we fully realize the meaning of economic distress. It is below par in the sense that the distress has reduced man in India below his species. He is an underfed beast of burden in human form and is daily sinking. The money taken from him is never used for his betterment. He is untouched by any moral or other good influence.

But the article under consideration says that the Indian States are much worse. If they are, our thanks are again due to the British rule. The Princes have no incentive to be good, they are exposed to every temptation to 'go wrong'. They are more irresponsible than they were before. The ryots were once able to rise against Princely tyranny; now the Princes are protected by the awe-inspiring British power. It is true that they are free to do what good they like. But the hot-house culture which they are given from infancy has given them a taste for pleasures and pomp they will not forgo, and the seclusion which isimposed upon them in childhood so isolates them from their people as to make them strangers in their own land. It speaks volumes for the ancient culture that in spite of every influence to the contrary, there are bright examples now and then to be seen. Remove the dead weight of the

British rule which 'stunts' them and us, and they and we as independent parts of the same ancient land will grow as if by magic. But if they hug the golden chains that bind them to the British footstool, they are at liberty to hold on to the chains. India outside the States zone is awake and will bear the yoke no longer, even if it has to break in the attempt.

The exclusive stress in my letter to the Viceroy on the economic exploitation was inevitable for my purpose. But the moral and spiritual wrong which is a direct result of the foreign rule is probably greater even than the economic wrong. Those who are engaged in the war of independence are not, it is obvious, moved by the economic wrong. *They* do not *feel* it. *They* are moved solely by the moral and spiritual wrong which they feel in every fibre of their being. The degradation they scent in the air, the very knowledge that a whole continent of which they are children lies prostrate at the feet of a handful of men coming from a distant island fills them with horror and disgust with themselves. In their impatience to break through the snaky coil they do not mind what they do so long as they do something, even though it may destroy them. I claim to have presented India with a sovereign remedy for dealing effectively with the fourfold curse. The remedy is designed to free India and also Britain. It will not be long before her people will acknowledge that I am not their enemy. I claim to be their true and wise friend and an equally true and wise servant of India.

Young India, 12-3-1930

434. MISREPRESENTATION

Having lost caste with some Mussalmans, there are numerous misrepresentations about me to be seen in the Muslim Press. A friend has brought the latest to my notice. It is to the effect that I have prevented the Imam Saheb, an inmate of the Ashram and an honoured life co-worker, from joining the Ashram group of civil resisters, on the plea that he could not subscribe to non-violence as an article of faith for achieving the national purpose. The fact is quite the reverse. Imam Saheb's name is on my list. He gave it after full deliberation. I personally never had any difficulty about reading the message of non-violence in the Koran. Imam Saheb is notjoining the march as he is too weak to undertake the exertion. But it is quite likely that he may offer himself for arrest when the actual manufacture of contraband salt commences. Two Mussalmans are actually enlisted for the march, as they have no difficulty about subscribing to the creed of non-violence for the purpose of swaraj.

Thus the insinuation referred to is baseless in two ways. But the moment there is suspicion about a person's motives, everything he does becomes tainted. The present plan of campaign is so designed as ultimately to dispel all suspicion.

Young India, 12-3-1930

435. WHAT IT IS NOT

Maulana Shaukat Ali is reported to have said that the independence movement is a movement not for swaraj but for Hindu Raj and against Mussalmans, that therefore the latter should leave it alone. On reading the report I wired to the Maulana inquiring whether he was correctly reported. He has kindly replied confirming the report. The Maulana has launched a grave charge against the movement. It needs to be repudiated once for all. Whatever the movement is, it certainly is not for Hindu Raj, nor is it against Mussalmans. It bears within itself a complete answer to the charge. The Congress has taken the first step in final non-co-operation. No Congressman can enter the legislatures, much less accept employment under the Government. No Congressman can seek or receive favours from the Government. Does not the Hindu-Muslim question centre round a division of political power—spoils of office? How can the movement be anti-Mussalman or for Hindu Raj when no one identified with it has the slightest notion, till independence is reached, of possessing any political power? True, the Congress has still left open the entrance to local boards. What is at present going on in Calcutta almost makes me think that instead of being weak, I should have pressed for the boycott even of these boards. The Congress is better without these temptations. They are just now mere snares for the unwary or the selfish rather than instruments of national service for the patriot. But I am sure the Maulana did not have the local boards in mind when he said that the movement was against Mussalmans. The only ground for the belief, in so far as I can fathom it, can be that those who are engaged in it must, by its very nature, become more self-reliant, more defiant and more capable of resisting any encroachment on their liberty than before, and that since the vast majority of them are Hindus, they will in course of time become more powerful than the Mussalmans. But such reasoning would be unworthy of the brave Maulana I have known him to be. He must therefore explain to the public what he means by his serious charge.

I grant that if till the end of the chapter only Hindus join the movement in the right spirit, they will become an irresistible force of the right, i.e., non-violent type. But the obvious deduction from this

fact is that all those who are keeping aloof should join the movement at the earliest moment. And I prophesy that, if the movement keeps the chalked path, the Maulana and the other Mussalmans, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis, Jews, etc., will join it.

Surely all are equally interested in securing repeal of the salt tax. Do not all need and use salt equally? That is the one tax which is no respecter of persons.

Civil disobedience is a process of developing internal strength and therefore an organic growth. Resistance to the salt tax can hurt no single communal interest. On the contrary it must, if successful, help the abstainers equally with the participants.

As against this absolutely national method of gaining our end, put the unnatural, artificial and diplomatic method of a Round Table Conference in which conflicting interests will be represented by interested parties, and all the Indian groups together will be moved and dominated by the paramount and all-powerful British group. This conference without the power of the people behind it and composed of the powerful and the weak will bring anything but swaraj. In the existing circumstances therefore it can only result in further consolidating the British power.

Civil resisters can have nothing to do with such a conference. Their business is merely to generate and conserve national strength. They have nothing to do with communalism. But if they are compelled by force of circumstances to countenance a communal solution, they are pledged only to consider such as may be satisfactory to the parties concerned. How the Maulana can call such a movement anti-Muslim or one for obtaining Hindu Raj, passes comprehension.

The fact that those taking part in the movement are preponderatingly Hindus is unfortunately true. By proclaiming a boycott the Maulana is helping the process. Even so, there can be no harm, if the Hindu civil resisters are fighting not for themselves but for all—Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis, and others who will make the nation of the future free India.

Not much imagination is required to see that even when civil resisters have acquired sufficient influence to make themselves felt, it will still be open to anyone at the time of framing a constitution to block the way. The only time when abstainers, be they Mussalmans or Hindus or any other, will be helpless against the civil resisters is when they drive out the English or when the latter retire in a huff or in disgust. In the first place, however, they can never do this if their means are uniformly peaceful. Secondly, Mussalmans above all can

help themselves and the nation by joining the struggle. Thirdly, if no violence on the part of the people is offered, civil resistance *must* result in complete conversion of the English. They will then consider it their duty, it will be their penance, to help us, at their own expense, to arrive at a solution of the many difficulties of which they will own themselves to have been the authors. They will help us as absolute equals and friends to inaugurate an independent organized government.

As for the irritation felt by the Maulana against me personally, I need not say much. Since I have no counter-irritation in me, I prophesy that when his temper has cooled down and when he discovers that I am not guilty of the many sins he imagines against me, he will restore me to 'his pocket' in which I had the honour to be only the other day as it were. For it is not I who have gone out of his pocket. He has thrown me out of it. I am the same little man that I used to be in 1921. I can never be an enemy of Mussalmans, no matter what any one or more of them may do to me or mine, even as I can never be an enemy of Englishmen, even though they may heap further wrongs upon the Everest of wrongs their representatives have already piled. I am too conscious of the imperfections of the species to which I belong to be irritated against any single member thereof. My remedy is to deal with the wrong wherever I see it, not to hurt the wrongdoer, even as I would not like to be hurt for the wrongs I continually do.

Young India, 12-3-1930

436. A NEW ORIENTATION

The discussion that has raged round the eleven points mentioned in my article[1] on the Viceregal address to the Assembly and my reference to some of them in my letter to the Viceroy shows how necessary it was to bring them out. Critics have said that these points fall far below even Dominon Status, not to speak of Independence. They could not have carefully read my article ormy letter. If they will re-read them, they will find it stated therein that the conceding of those points was a preliminary to a conference about Independence.

Whilst therefore there is no substance in the criticism levelled against my presentation of the case, I am free to admit that I have endeavoured to give a new orientation to the national demand. Just as it was necessary in 1921 to keep the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs separate from swaraj and I used to say then that for me to have their

[1] *Vide* "Clearing the Issue" 30-1-1930.

redress purely through our effort was tantamount to swaraj, so has it become necessary for me on the eve of battle to lay stress on the eleven points and even to say that they are swaraj. For if they are not included in swaraj, it can have no meaning for the nation; and if we generate sufficient strength to gain those points, we have strength enough to gain an Independence Constitution.

Let me illustrate my point. There is the proposal for protecting the mill industry and at the same time of Imperial Preference. I call this a dangerous trap, especially when the expression Dominion Status is being bandied about in connection with the proposed Round Table Conference. If against the grant of Dominion Status or even Independence a stipulation is made that there should always be preference for British cloth, Dominion Status or Independence will have no meaning either for the millions or for the indigenous mills. There can never be preference for things British when India is capable of manufacturing them to the full extent of the demand thereof within her own borders. She may share foreign trade with others; she dare not share her inland trade with anybody so long as she is able to cope with it herself. Indeed she is entitled and it is her duty to protect growing industries against even a friendly England or any other friendly power. It would be wrong and unpatriotic for the mill-owners to fall into the trap laid for them. They should stoutly refuse to have anything to do with Imperial Preference for British cloth, even if they gain a prohibitive tariff against all other foreign cloth.

But to revert to my point. The new orientation consists in familiarizing the nation with the contents of Independence. It must know what it is to mean for the masses. There was much meaning in the circular letter of a Youth League recently criticized in these pages. The masses should know both what Independence will and will not mean for them. If the main features are not constantly kept in view and public opinion formulated, when the time comes, they are likely to be overlooked or even deliberately sacrificed. The controversy over public debt has now made itimpossible, I hope, for any representative to bind the nation to its payment without being satisfied that it was all incurred in the national interest. It is, I hope, impossible similarly to bind the nation in any future constitution to the high cost of civil and military expenditure. And so it may be said regarding all the illustrative points and many more that can be mentioned by me.

The plan therefore I have in mind is to concentrate the national attention on all these points one after another or simultaneously and demand relief preparatory to Independence.

This is the most expeditious plan, if Independence is to be achieved through peaceful means. Satyagraha works only in this manner. It arms people with power not to seize power but to convert the usurper to their own view till at last the usurper retires or sheds the vices of a usurper and becomes a mere instrument of service of those whom he has wronged. The mission of satyagrahis ends when they have shown the way to the nation to become conscious of the power lying latent in it.

Young India, 12-3-1930

437. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, SABARMATI ASHRAM

[*March 12, 1930*][1]

God willing, we shall set out exactly at 6.30. Those joining the march should all be on the spot at 6.20. If our first step is pure, all our subsequent steps will be good and pure. As Manilal is joining us, I would say something for his benefit. He should not join just because he is my son though he cannot help being my son, nor can I forget that I am his father.

We who are setting out with a great responsibility on our heads—we the Ashram inmates—have but one capital. We can boast of no learning. We who took certain vows and pledged ourselves to the Ashram way of life ought to adhere to those vows scrupulously. The seventy-two[2] men joining the march should once again read the Ashram rules and think whether or not they should join the march. Those inmates of the Ashram who have any dependants will not be able to draw money from the Ashram for them. None should join thestruggle with that hope. This fight is no public show; it is the final struggle—a life-and-death struggle. If there are disturbances, we may even have to die at the hands of our own people. Even in that case, we shall have made our full contribution to the satyagraha struggle. We have constituted ourselves the custodians of Hindu-Muslim unity. We hope to become the representatives of the poorest of the poor, the lowest of the low and the weakest of the weak. If we do not have the strength for this, we should not join the struggle. For my part I have taken no pledge not to return here, but I do ask you to return here only as dead men or as winners of swaraj. Chhaganlal Joshi will not be able to run up here if Dhiru falls ill. Even if the Ashram is on fire, we will not return. Only those may join, who have no special duty to their

[1] The source does not mention the date. It is, however, apparent that this was delivered on the morning of the 12th before the beginning of the march.

[2] Actually seventy-eight; for a list of the names, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Jawaharlal Nehru", 4-11-1929.

relatives. The marchers have vowed to follow life-long poverty and to observe *brahmacharya* for life. They leave here with the determination to observe *brahmacharya* and will remain faithful to that determination. The man who always follows truth and always proclaims what he does is a brave man. Anyone who deceives others is not brave. I cannot speak to anyone privately for I have not a minute to spare. Though addressing myself to Manilal particularly, I say this to all.

We are entering upon a life-and-death struggle, a holy war we are performing an all-embracing sacrifice in which we wish to offer ourselves as oblation. If you prove incapable, the shame will be mine, not yours. You too have in you the strength that God has given me. The Self in us all is one and the same. In me it has awakened; in others, it has awakened partially.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary

438. PARTING MESSAGE AT CHANDOLA[1]

March 12, 1930

Your surpassing love for me has drawn you thus far. I appreciate your affection for me which has been so vividly demonstrated by you . . . There were rumours of my arrest last night.God is great, mysterious indeed are His ways. I am here to say good-bye to you. But even if I were in prison, with your strength I could come back. Indeed, it is your strength that will bring us swaraj. Go back and resolve to do your share. Propagate khaddar work, be prepared to offer yourselves as civil resisters. Let there be no flinching. Your way at present, however, lies homeward; mine straight on to the sea-coast. You cannot accompany me at present, but you will have an opportunity to accompany me in a different sense later. . . .

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-3-1930

439. INTERVIEW TO HARIDAS T. MAJUMDAR

ASLALI,
March 12, 1930

While he was having lunch, I asked our beloved captain if such an uninterrupted walk of over eleven miles did not tire him out.

[1] Gandhiji and party left Sabarmati Ashram at 6.30 a.m. followed by a huge procession. They reached Chandola lake at 8.30 a.m. after covering seven miles. Gandhiji addressed those who had come to see him off. The message has been extracted from a letter to the Editor by Haridas T. Majumdar who was among the volunteers marching with Gandhiji.

I should not say I am very tired; to be sure, I am tired, but it is ordinary fatigue. I myself am amazed that I should have been able to walk so far at a stretch. You know I have had no practice for some time in long-distance walking....

I asked him what he would like to say in regard to the parallel between the great march of 3,000 men, women and children he had organized in South Africa and the present march to the sea-coast.

Well, the technique is the same even though the organization is different. Soul-force is the weapon common to both. In South Africa, however, there were 3,000 persons, here we are only 79. Again in South Africa we were in the midst of a hostile environment, social as well as political, and we had to carry our own foodstuffs with us; here we are in the midst of a hospitable environment and do not have to carry our food. The march in South Africa was attended by greater hardships than the present one.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-3-1930

440. SPEECH AT ASLALI

[*March 12, 1930*]

Do not be content with merely wearing khadi and plying the spinning-wheel, thinking that you have done all that you could do.

Take the case of your own village: For a population of 1,700, 850 maunds of salt will be required. For 200 bullocks, 300 maunds of salt will be required. That is, a total of 1,150 maunds of salt will be required.

The Government levies a tax of Rs. 1-4 on one pukka maund of salt. Hence, on 1,150 maunds, which is equal to 575 pukka maunds, you pay a tax of Rs. 720.

A bullock must be given two maunds of salt. In addition, there are 800 cows, buffaloes and calves in your village. If you give them salt, or if the tanner uses salt for treating hides, or if you use salt as manure, you would be paying that amount of tax in excess of Rs. 720.

Can your village afford to pay this amount in taxes every year ? In India, the average income of an individual is calculated at 7 pice or, in other words, hundreds of thousands of persons do not earn even a single pice and either die of starvation or live by begging. Even they cannot do without salt. What will be the plight of such persons if they can get no salt or get it at too high a price?

Salt, which sells at 9 pice a maund in the Punjab, salt of which

heaps and heaps are being made on the coast of Kathiawar and Gujarat, cannot be had by the poor at less than Re. 1-8-0 a maund. What curses the Government may not be inviting upon itself from the poor for hiring men to throw this salt into mud!

The poor destitute villagers do not have the strength to get this tax repealed. We want to develop this strength.

A democratic State is one which has authority to abolish a tax which does not deserve to be paid. It is one in which the people can determine when a certain thing should or should not be paid.

We, however, do not possess such authority. Likewise, even our supposedly great representatives do not have it. In the Central Legislative Assembly, Pandit Malaviya said that the manner inwhich Sardar Vallabhbhai was arrested could not be called just ; that it was unjust and high-handed. And this resolution was supported by Mr. Jinnah. To this the Government official replied that their magistrate had acted in a manner which befitted a loyal subject, if he had acted otherwise, he would have been regarded as a traitor. If, however, that is the case, this bearded person (Abbas Saheb) and I should also be arrested, because I on my part openly make speeches about preparing salt.

We want to establish a government which will be unable to arrest a single individual against the wishes of the people, which cannot extract ghee worth even a quarter pice from us, cannot take away our carts, cannot extort money from us.

There are two ways of establishing such a government: that of the big stick or violence and that of non-violence or civil disobedience. We have chosen the second alternative, regarding it as our dharma. And it is because of this that we have set out to prepare salt after serving notice on the Government to that effect.

I can understand there being a tax on such things as the hookah, *bidis* and liquor. And if I were an emperor, I would levy with your permission a tax of one pie on every *bidi.* And if *bidis* are found too expensive, those addicted to them may give them up. But should one levy a tax on salt?

Such taxes should now be repealed. We should make a resolve that we shall prepare salt, eat it, sell it to the people and, while doing so, court imprisonment, if necessary. If, out of Gujarat's population of 90 lakhs, we leave out women and children, and the remaining 30 lakhs get ready to violate the salt tax, the Government does not have enough accommodation in jails to house so many people. Of course, the Government can also beat up and shoot down those who violate the law. But the governments of today are unable to go to this extent.

We, however, are determined to let the Government kill us if it wishes.

The salt tax must be repealed now. The fact that a sea of humanity had gathered and showered blessings upon us—for a distance of seven miles from the Ashram to the Chandola lake —a sight for the gods to see—that is a good omen. And, if we climb even one step, we shall readily be able to climb the other steps leading to the palace of Independence.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 16-3-1930

441. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

DURING DANDI MARCH,
[After *March 12, 1930*]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letters. Find some work for Ranchhodbhai. It can be manual labour. If you can find even some teaching work discuss the matter with him and fix it up.

In this weather Punjabhai can sleep outside. If he does that, mosquitoes at any rate will not bite him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8091. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

442. HINDI IN BENGAL AND ASSAM

Teachers know that in 1928 a society for the spread of Hindi was formed in Calcutta. The treasurer of the society was Shri Ghanshyamdas Birla. I have received a statement of the working of this society and a statement of accounts. I give the following facts[1] from the statement of its working.

From this it is apparent that the work is progressing in some measure. There is much room for expanding this work. An effort is being made to meet the expenses of each school with local help, which is praiseworthy. Only thus can success be achieved. The start may well be made with the main centre but ultimately all local work should become self-supporting. Only then will the publicity work widen and take on a permanent shape. Bengal and Assam are two places where thousands of people can be taught Hindi. This work is already divided into two parts. The first is instruction and the second is expansion of this work by lectures arranged by local branches. There is need for a third part; and that is revision of the methods of making instruction

[1] Not translated here

easy. Competent and resourceful teachers are daily in search of means to make this work of instruction yield quick results. Many Bengali and Assamese words resemble Hindi. Books tomake this fact known should be written, pocket-size Hindi-Bengali and Bengali-Hindi dictionaries should be prepared, Bengali books in Devnagari script and Hindi books in Bengali script should be published. Such books can pay their way as has been shown in Madras. When the books are really useful and good they gain value and they become popular.

One word more. Bengal is a big centre of Marwari traders. The task of spreading Hindi in Bengal is a special responsibility of these traders. So, there should be no hitch in this work for want of funds.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 13-3-1930

443. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

March 13, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

Whilst there is time, you should write and that fully or as fully as time permits. Yesterday's demonstration was a triumph of non-violence. I know it won't be everywhere and always like that during the struggle, but it was a great and good beginning.

You will be patient, anxious for nothing, charitable towards those who do not do as you would have them do. Your central work is women and children.

See that Reginald takes care of himself and is not rash.

Everything must be in an apple-pie order.

Your diary will be fully kept.

And you will not be anxious about me. He will keep me fit so long as He needs me.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 5426. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9660

444. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

March 13, 1930

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I hope you received what might have been my last letter[1]. The news given to me of my impending arrest was said to be absolutely

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 11-3-1930.

authentic. But we have reached the second stage safely. We take the third tonight. I am sending you the programme[1]. All the friends are most particular that I should not go to Ahmedabad for the Working Committee. There is considerable force in the suggestion. The Working Committee may, therefore, come to the place where we may be for the day or you alone may come. The sentiment that we won't voluntarily go back without finishing the struggle is being well cultivated. My going back will mar it a bit. Jamnalalji told me he had written to you about it. I hope Kamla is keeping well.

I asked yesterday that full wires should be sent to you.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, p. 84

445. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

March 13, 1930

MY DEAR REYNOLDS,

Take care of yourself. Besides looking after *Young India,* do please identify yourself with the activities of the Ashram. I am anxious for it to become an abode of peace, purity and strength. You I hold to be a gift from God for the advancement of that work.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 5431. Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

446. LETTER TO GANGABEHN ZAVERI

March 13, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN ZAVERI,

I believe you have joined the common kitchen now. Will you also stay in the Hostel? Nanibehn should live only on milk and fruit. If she does that, she will be all right.

This is a rare opportunity for women. I think it will be a great achievement on their part if they assume the entire burden of the internal management of the Ashram.

I have no time to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3099

[1] Not available; *vide,* however, "Satyagrahis' March", 9-3-1930.

447. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

March 13, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

You are certainly mad, but your madness endears you to me. You have been working with greater devotion than I had expected from you and God keeps you in good health. Never be impatient. Try to speak less loudly. If you do so, you will not aggravate the condition of the tonsils.

Tell Kusum that something still remains to be done about her tongue, and that the doctor should attend to it at his leisure.

Write to me. I have no time to write more.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—5: Ku. Premabehn Kantakne, pp. 8-9

448. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

March 13, 1930

CHI. KUSUM[1],

I have your letter. I should have got it yesterday, but Pyarelal forgot to put it up to me and it came into my hand just as I was finishing a letter to Ba.

You have done very well in deciding to move to the Hostel.

Now persuade Dudhibehn to do the same. If, instead of living in a separate room, she went to live in the Hostel, it would be possible to look after her. See that Sarojini works. Do not hesitate to talk to her plainly about it. Get Shantu's [2] teeth examined by Haribhai[3]. Give me reports about all who are ill. Do not neglect to maintain your diary. Study the *Gita* carefully. Clear the Gujarati file. Give me your daily programme of work. I cannot say when I shall be arrested. They may arrest me whenever they wish. In any case, you should write to me regularly. For one day more a car will come from there[4]. Try once again to write about Haribhai[5]. Do not give up the effort in despair.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1792

[1] Kusum Desai used to act as Secretary of the Ashram in the absence of male inmates.

[2] A trainee of the Charkha Sangh

[3] Dr. H. M. Desai of Ahmedabad

[4] Ahmedabad

[5] Haribhai Desai, the deceased husband of the addressee. The reference is to his biography that she was intending to write.

449. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

March 13, 1930

CHI. MAHADEV,

I did get your letter. God will grant you everything. We may take it the Ashram has done well so far. But there is scope for much further awakening still. Let us not feel elated too soon. If I remain free, you should certainly take the plunge. I want an account of the good or the harm which the fast may have done Durga.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I had intended to write a separate letter to her, but have dropped the idea.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11471

450. SPEECH AT BAREJA

March 13, 1930

This is our second halt after the march began. As at our first halt, here too I was given the required information about this village. I was pained to read it. It is strange that a place so near Ahmedabad has zeroes against the columns for consumption of khadi, the number of habitual khadi rearers and spinning-wheels at work. During my tours of North and South India, I used to follow a rule, namely, that the barber cutting my hair should be a khadi-wearer. But here you keep yourselves far away from such a thing as khadi. Khadi is the foundation of our freedom struggle. All like khadi, but people are nowadays deterred by the fear that those wearing khadi will have to go to jail and die. Bareja has not a single khadi-wearer, which is indeed a very painful fact. There is a khadi store here and you can certainly remove this blot. We do not disown our mother because she is fat or ugly to look at and adopt another woman, more beautiful, to fill her place. Foreign cloth will never bring us freedom. I request you to renounce luxuries and buy khadi from this heap before you.

At present Sardar is in jail, and I have come here to ask you to join in our common struggle for freedom. Think over the matter and get ready to join. The state of our villages is pitiable in various ways. With the help of these soldiers of freedom, you will be able to make your village clean. It does not take much time to do so. Diligence and care are all that is necessary. The people of this place number twenty-five hundred. If you so resolve, you can make the village

beautiful and have as many amenities as you choose. By doing so, you will help agriculture here and also add to your strength. The education imparted in present-day schools is, according to me,no education at all. The village has a large number of Christians and Muslims also. If you all come together, you will be able to achieve much for the village. For winning complete freedom, all these communities will have to unite.

As for the Bhangis, you believe that they are the scum of the earth. We do nothing at all for their betterment. We only lower ourselves by believing them to be of low birth.

Now, having said this, let me turn to other things. We have come forward to win our freedom from this tyrannical and oppressive Government. If we cannot put our own house in order in an organized manner, how shall we run the country's Government? I ask you, therefore, to learn order and organization. Think of cow-protection also. In this band marching with me, there are experts on animal husbandry who will be able to help you. Introducing improvements by slow degrees, you can solve the question of cow-protection. Do think about these things. This struggle against the Government on which we have embarked is not going to reach its conclusion with five, or twenty-five, or even millions of men getting killed. We have to look after these other things also simultaneously.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 16-3-1930

451. SPEECH AT NAVAGAM

March 13, 1930

As I enter the Kheda District, memories—some sweet, some bitter—fill the mind. It was while working in the Kheda District that I became one with the lives of people. I have seen nearly all the villages here. I covered many of them on foot. I have come to Navagam in the middle of a battle. This is our third halt: Aslali was the first, Bareja was the second and Navagam now is the third. Vallabhbhai had great expectations of the Kheda District. Having been arrested in this district, he has won glory for himself.

The Government found some pretext or other to arrest Vallabhbhai. It knew well that his, and not the Government's, writ would prevail in Kheda if he was free. Pressure was brought to bear on the Magistrate somehow to serve a notice on Sardar, and he was arrested. What could a poor Magistrate do where the entire atmosphere is vitiated? We do not yet have the necessary spirit of

self-sacrifice and the necessary self-confidence for anyone of us to tell the Government that he could not issue such a notice. What does it matter that a person receives salary from the Government? And, moreover, who pays that salary? Who am I to explain to the Magistrate that it is God who does that? How can I do it? To the Magistrate the Government is God, the protector, and everything.

The Patidars and the Dharalas, the two principal communities of the Kheda District, are both courageous. What will they do to fight this Government? Before I ask the question, I have to congratulate you all. All the Matadars here have shown great courage in my presence and stated that they would not accept the Headman's office, with the result that the latter has now resigned. I congratulate you on your resignations. If you have been offering resignations under pressure from anyone, I must ask you to withdraw them. Not only will that cause me no pain, but I will protect you against those who might try to force you to resign. This fight is based on truth. I want no victory with unworthy help.

It is after many days and nights of heart-searching that I have decided to stake my life on this last struggle, and to take my co-workers with me so that they, too, may sacrifice their lives. I depend on truth alone for winning this war. I shall be happy if I have your support in that. It will make no difference to me even if you do not resign.

When we win swaraj, even a scavenger will be free to take Vallabhbhai to task. When he was in jail Vallabhbhai used to ask whom he could fight when all officials from the peon upward were Indians. You should remember this. With the present Government might is right. But, against me, its guns and gunpowder are no more than dust or pebbles. Your present duty is to show the Government your strength through your work.

Be true to your word, Headman and Matadars, if you are bent on winning complete independence. You should remember and act upon Tulsidas's words:

"The way of the Raghus it has been ever,

Life may be lost but a pledge never."

Before all these present here I remind you of this. Listen to me and, if you so feel, admit truthfully that you do not have the strength to resign. The people of the Kheda District have bathed me in their love. No resident of this district should first give me a promise and then stab me in the back.

I shall regard you as brave men if you truthfully withdraw your

resignations, and also if you truthfully adhere to them.[1]

In the present struggle, which we have started to establish *Ramarajya*, both the poor and the rich are ready to give me monetary help, but I look up to the people for strengthening me. You will have redoubled my strength when, following me, you come forward to manufacture salt. By leading you along my path, I wish to bring glory to one and all among us. I may ask for your resignations or for money from you; but for the present I am asking for soldiers for this fight. Civil disobedience of the salt law is within the power of all—men and women, young and old.

I have gone through the figures regarding Navagam. In the population numbering a thousand, only one person is a habitual khadi-wearer and there is just one spinning-wheel to swear by. I ask you now to take a vow to produce and wear khadi. That way you will save Rs. 5,000 a year. By working at the spinning-wheel, women too will be adding to their power greatly.

Remember that in the resignations you have handed in I see God's hand. The Kheda District has made an auspicious beginning. I have embarked on this last struggle of my life because God wishes to make me His instrument for this work. The life of this skeleton which is addressing you is God, and it does whatever good He desires. Let us now part with Ramanama on our lips.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 16-3-1930

452. TALK TO PRESS REPRESENTATIVES [2]

NAVAGAM,
March 14, 1930

I wish to offer some consolation to the Press representatives present here. I am responsible for the hardships caused by the application of Ashram rules. I have been asking for alms from the people, though I have no right to demand any. Hence, I cannot permit everybody to accompany me and live on the alms. We do need the help of newspapers. But this struggle is a unique one. If theyhave respect for the movement they may help it. No one need write anything for my sake. They may criticize me. From the village people I receive food in measured quantities and no one can accept more

[1] At this stage the Headman and the Matadars explained how they had resigned of their own free will, and the Headman presented Rs. 125 to Gandhiji on behalf of the village.

[2] Given at the end of the morning prayer meeting

than what the rule permits. I request the Ashram inmates and the Press representatives that if they need any item in excess of what is permitted by the rule, they may get it only with my permission. In the last analysis, even the Press representatives have come for public service, have they not?

Hundreds of thousands will follow this batch of seventy-eight in whatever they do. People will criticize us if we do not cultivate self-sacrifice. If the people feel the slightest distrust of us, they will condemn the whole movement. We have, therefore, to treat them with love, not force. The mountain is an assemblage of earth particles sticking together. Similarly, all great accomplishments in the world are the result of homogeneous effort. When the effort is heterogeneous the result is quite different. Because the river Ganga has the power to sanctify all waters, it absorbs all impurity within itself.

If the satyagrahis follow truth in carrying on this struggle, they will show, not merely to India but to the whole world, that ours is a holy war. My speech yesterday was also in the nature of a prayer to all.

People fall ill through their own negligence. The rule for one who falls ill is that he should be left where he falls ill. I am indeed sorry that I cannot try to meet you all. I ask you, therefore, to come and see me when you need to consult me. The burden of work on me is too heavy to leave me time to see you.

It is my advice to you that no person should come here without special permission. Only after obtaining previous permission may anyone accompany this batch. Those who desire to come here and see what is happening should rather stay where they are and do their duty there. They should persuade every one to offer civil disobedience and offer it themselves.

[From Gujarati]
Prajabandhu, 16-3-1930

453. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

March 14, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I want a full account of the arrangements made for you. Send me your daily programme of work and also tell me about your health. Let me know whether or not you can clearly understand the translation of the *Gita.* Read it with great care. Do you enjoy complete peace of mind?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

My blessings to Kamla. What work does she do?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9281

454. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

March 14, 1930

CHI. SUSHILA,

I don't know how to compliment you as well as you deserve. I had observed your strength of character even when I first saw you before you were married. But the strength which you have actually revealed has surpassed my expectation. If you cannot keep your peace of mind there, you may go to Akola without any hesitation. But I should certainly like you to remain there if you can be tranquil and if you and Sita can keep good health, for the Ashram is at present the best school for women. You will not get at any other time the experience you are getting there just now. I am sure you will not worry about Manilal. God has given him a strong physique. And he is all simplicity of heart. Nothing makes him unhappy. There is no limit to his courage. How can such a person suffer? He has been looking after me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4765

455. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

March 14, 1930

CHI. KUSUM,

If Krishnakumari's eyes are sore, get them examined by Haribhai. Tell Chandrakanta that I expect much from her. Get Shantu's teeth examined by Haribhai and ask him to remove the loose ones. Send me a report about Dhiru and about anybody else who may be ill.

Send me your daily programme of work. Do you have a separate room to yourself? How do you feel there?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1793

456. SPEECH AT VASANA[1]

March 14, 1930

You have all given us an excellent reception. You have seen to it that there is nothing wanting. You have raised this pandal and erected a cottage for me, which I very much like. I am glad that you have arranged things as I had wanted them. But a doubt lingers in my mind about this village, and as a satyagrahi I should tell you the thought that occurs to me. Of course it is not practical wisdom in a man to speak out all that he thinks. Still, for my part, I regard myself a very practical man. One should have nothing to do with the practical wisdom which goes against the world's welfare. My co-workers or I have lost nothing through this attitude of mine. I wonder if you thought that, since there were five *Antyajas*, and possibly some Muslims, accompanying me on this campaign, it would be best to lodge me and my party outside the village. I hope you have not been clever and thus quietly avoided trouble. I first asked people to inquire about this, but subsequently decided to put the question to the meeting here. I am determined to reach Jalalpur, having given you all that I have. Those accompanying me are only students. A true studentalways hungers for knowledge, which he seeks to garner with the world as his school and with nature and mankind as his books. Many saints were illiterate, but they had trained themselves in the art of thinking and so they were students. I even sent some students to inspect the *Antyaja* locality here.

This fight is based on truth and non-violence and, therefore, we are true satyagrahis. And I ask you to believe me when I prophesy that a day will come when the British will apologize to us. Shri Vallabhbhai turned nights into days and rendered help to the British. He served the people, and the Government is repaying him now by arresting and removing him away from us. I tell you, though the Government has been able to imprison for the present a man like Vallabhbhai it will have to apologize to him. Of course he does not care that he has been arrested. To me, he was my hands and feet. Had he not worked and prepared the ground here in this district, I could not have mustered the courage to speak these few words before you.

What is going to be your reply to the salt law? All of you have to reform yourselves and offer a fight to the Government. We can prepare ourselves to win complete freedom by serving our *Antyaja* brethren. I should be happy if my doubt about your village is

[1] The meeting was held at 3 p.m.

ill-founded. May you serve one and all without exception. Abolition of the salt tax or remission of some other taxes will not mean swaraj for us. Winning swaraj is not going to be so easy as that. That is only a way to it and by following it we shall reach the goal of freedom.

It is indeed a good thing that the Headmen of Navagam, Vavdi, Agam, Mahelaj and other villages have tendered their resignations. Why should they stick to Headmanship for the mere five rupees a month that the Government pays them? If the Collector summons a Headman, let him say, "Give us back our Sardar. Grant us a remission in land revenue." To give up Government service is to exorcise an evil spirit haunting the home. In resigning his job, your Headman has done a meritorious deed. When we have a people's Government, we shall see what to do. Satyagraha means disobedience to every law of the Government. Disobedience of the salt law is one item of such satyagraha. Such disobedience is our duty; it is our right. In the fight for that right, I need your help, not in the form of money but of volunteers to break the law.

The next item on my programme is khadi. How shameful that your village shows a zero against the columns for the number of spinning-wheels and khadi-wearers! If you have not been wearingkhadi hitherto, wake up and begin now. I appeal to you to help our poor country by using khadi. It is my wish that there should be none among you who does not wear khadi, I earnestly ask you to be dressed in khadi clothes. For women, spinning used to be a *yajna*. There were five such *yajnas*. The first was the kitchen fire. Performing that *yajna*, my mother set apart a *go-grasa*, a morsel for the cow. The second was the quern, the third was the broom, the fourth the spinning-wheel and the fifth was fetching water. Now all these *yajnas* are on the wane, because selfishness has crept in among us. If you wish to follow the path of dharma, start again the spinning-wheel sacrifice and follow the good sense that God has bestowed on you.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 16-3-1930

457. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

ON THE DANDI MARCH,
March 15, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS

Credit to the *Navajivan* account the money which you are receiving.

I am writing to Mathew. That is how he always works. Unless he

is able to fix his attention, he is of no service even in the G.S.S.[1]

Ask Prabhudas to write to me. So far I have experienced no difficulty in walking.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8090. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

458. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

[*March 15, 1930*][2]

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

It pained me to have to use harsh words with you, but it had to be done, as I wished to remove your pusillanimity. Unless you are determined and firm in your purpose, your energies cannot be fully utilized. Tenderness of heart is essential, but for true tenderness determination is even more essential. Thereby family ties are purified, and delusion is overcome. You must also give up your desire to meet me. Whatever I could give you I have already given. A time will come when you too will have to go to jail like so many of us, but for the present your work is your prison. Therefore do not leave Vijapur unless it is on important business. Improve your health, and continue to render whatever help you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2377

459. SPEECH AT DABHAN

[*March 15, 1930*]

I have come to know that a Headman, a Matadar and a watchman of Kanakapura have submitted their resignations. I hope that you have handed in those resignations willingly and that none of you will yield if any of the officials intimidates you and that you would not, seeking pardon, withdraw them. When we have once taken a vow, we shall not withdraw them even if we die.[3]

Your Headman has submitted his resignation but his old uncle has registered himself as a volunteer. It is not that only young people can join this struggle. This is a religious as also a non-violent struggle

[1] Gandhi Seva Sangh

[2] The date is from *At the Feet of Bapu*, p. 58.

[3] This and the following three paragraphs have been taken from *Prajabandhu*, 16-3-1930.

and even children can take part in it. The names of some women have also been received by me. I have received names even of children below the age of fifteen and I do not hesitate to mention them.

I have received names of many more old men also and they say that it is better to die in jail than outside it, but only out of thoughtfulness I do not take them along with me. On reaching Dandi, we shall call them first and send them first to jail.

I hope that the Headmen and Matadars from the neighbouring villages also will send in their resignations.

Although we claim to practise cow-protection, we should now call it buffalo-protection or service to buffaloes. In this town of Dabhan, there are three hundred buffaloes as against three cows. This suggests that we are ignorant of animal husbandry. In this district, it is difficult to obtain cow's milk or ghee for sick persons or for those who have taken the vow to serve only the cow. *Goseva* does not mean saving the cows from Muslims or Englishmen— this amounts to cow-slaughter. That is a misinterpretation of the term *goseva*.[1]

The number of cows sent to Australia to be slaughtered is a hundred times the number that are slaughtered in India by the Muslims. If you desire to see to it that cows are not exported abroad, you should all train yourselves in animal husbandry and act in accordance with that science.

I do not recall the taste of buffalo's milk. Hence I cannot distinguish it from cow's milk. However, doctors have testified that buffalo's milk and ghee are not as nourishing as those of the cow and Europeans do not even touch the milk of the buffalo.

Ours is a holy war. It is a non-violent struggle. Even women and children can take part in it. The soldiers of satyagraha will never do what the ordinary soldiers do. Your village consumes 800 maunds of salt a year, and thus pays money to the Government without reason. The Government appropriates to itself all the taxes you pay without making any return to you. We wish to throw off that burden and hence we demand complete freedom. If you feel strong enough, give up Government jobs, enlist yourselves as soldiers in this salt satyagraha, burn your foreign cloth and wear khadi. Give up liquor. There are many things within your power through which you can secure the keys which will open the gates of freedom.[2]

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 16-3-1930, *Navajivan*, 30-3-1930, and *Gujarati*; 23-3-1930

[1] This and the following two paragraphs have been extracted from "Swaraj Gita", *Navajivan*, 30-3-1930.

[2] This has been taken from *Gujarati*, 23-3-1930.

460. SPEECH AT NADIAD

March 15, 1930

I have visited Nadiad often and made many speeches here, but never before did I see such a huge mass of men. Bound by the chains of slavery, we are being crushed at present, and we want to shake them off. I am sure you have come here today not for my sake or for the sake of my troop of eighty, but because you hunger for complete freedom. Since I left Ahmedabad, on my way here large numbers have showered their blessings on me and my mission. The showers have swelled into a flood, as it were. You, too, are witnessing the same thing.

Vallabhbhai's services to Kheda District have been many and various. At the time of the floods he saved thousands of men. That Vallabhbhai is now behind the prison bars. I too have done some work in this district. You have, therefore, a threefold duty to discharge. The imprisonment of Vallabhbhai is your imprisonment. Arresting him in Kheda is arresting Kheda itself. Of course by imprisoning Vallabhbhai the Government has honoured him, but you it has insulted. What is to be your reply to this insult? Your reply can only be winning complete freedom. How could you do that? Only by following my path. That is as clear as the rule of three.

I wish all Government servants to give up their jobs. What is Government service worth after all? A Government job gives you the power to tyrannize over others. And what do you earn in the job? By dint of independent labour a man can earn thousands if he chooses to do so. The local Headman has resigned his post. But is that enough? Nadiad produced Govardhanram and Manilal Nabhubhai. It has been a city of men of letters. Are there any heirs of these learned men now? What is the duty of the students in this city of learned men? And the duty of their sisters and mothers? It is up to you all to give a reply to these questions. You all have to enlist yourselves as volunteers. As soon as I get behind the bars or as soon as the All-India Congress Committee gives a call, you should come forward to offer yourselves for being jailed. Then alone shall I believe that Nadiad has made its contribution to our struggle.

Nadiad is thirty-one thousand strong. You spend three hundred and ten thousand rupees on cloth year after year. Instead of letting this wealth flow out of the city, what a gain it will be if you keep it in your homes! You will then have obeyed the most beautiful law of nature. That is the simple calculation I ask the heirs of Govardhanram and Manilal to make. If they do not do so, they would be bringing

disgrace on the good name of Nadiad. Will not Nadiad, the pride of Gujarat, do even this much? May God grant you the strength to do it.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 23-3-1930

461. LETTER TO DURGA GIRI [1]

[On or after *March 15, 1930*][2]

CHI. DURGA,

I have your beautiful letter written in a beautiful hand. What you write about Mahavir is correct. He who regards all as equals wins. Kaka's Shankar too has joined the caravan. Immerse yourself fully in works of service. Do not be lazy about anything. We are all well here. Tell Maitri not to be indolent in the least. Does she dip her hands in potassium permanganate solution? She must observe restraint in her diet.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Virat Vatsalta, pp. 30-l

462. WE ARE ALL ONE

God is present in all of us. For my part, every moment I experience the truth that though many we are all one. He does not reveal Himself in the same form in all of us, or rather the hearts of all of us not being alike we do not see Him in the same form— just as in mirrors of different colours and shapes a thing is reflected in different colours and shapes.

From this it follows that the sin of one is the sin of all. And hence it is not up to us to destroy the evil-doer. We should, on the contrary, suffer for him. From this thought was born the idea of satyagraha and of civil disobedience of law. Criminal, violent or uncivil disobedience is sin and ought to be abjured. Non-violent disobedience can be a holy duty. It is with this thought that Deenabandhu Andrews has often said that he is doing atonement on behalf of the English, that Mirabai has come to live in the Ashram and that Reginald Reynolds is staying in the Ashram.

Shri Khadgabahadur Giri is known to all. He killed a man for committing adultery and then surrendered himself to the police. This friend had lived in the Ashram for some time. In his statement to the

[1] The text of the original, which is in Gujarati, is not available.

[2] Shankar, D. B. Kalelkar's son mentioned in the letter, joined the Dandi March on this day.

court he described himself as a believer in the principles of the Ashram. Though I could not understand his meaning, I was not prepared to examine his action. This led many to write strong letters to me, but I did not reply to them and I remained silent, as I did not think it my duty to pronounce an opinion. Now this friend has come to join in the present pilgrimage. Missing his train, he arrived a day late. Now, since he cannot join unless he has my permission, he has had to stay back at the Ashram. I believe that the struggle which is in the offing should be started only by those who observe the principles of the Ashram. I have, therefore, written to him: "You may come if you accept the principles of the Ashram as binding on you."

This account, however, is irrelevant to the present article. It has been given merely to introduce Shri Khadgabahadur. The reason for publishing his name is that he, too, has come to do atonement for the sins of others. He has given his reason for insisting on being included in the very first batch as under:[1]

The Mahavir mentioned in this letter is the son of the late Dalbahadur Giri. Following the line of thinking in the extract above, Dalbahadur Giri himself had joined the Non-co-operation movement in 1921 and also suffered imprisonment. When he came out of jail he had been suffering from severe dysentery, which proved fatal. He had advised his wife to go and live in the Ashram. The widow communicated her resolve to come and stay in the Ashram. I had known Dalbahadur Giri. I could not disregard his death-bed wish, and the wish of his wife. I thought it my duty to respect it. This widowed mother encouraged her son to join the present struggle. The boy is being brought up at the Ashram for the last nine years. As Mahavir's guardian, I also permitted him to join. Such boys as had completed fifteen years of age had the permission to join if they so wished. Mahavir has joined the struggle of his free will and with the blessings of his elders. My experience of him has been a sweet one.

These facts will probably enable the reader to see the struggle in a better light. He will also have a better understanding of what satyagraha means. The whole conception rests on unbounded faith in the unfailing power of non-violence. The satyagrahi always acts in the spirit of atonement. He believes that he shares in the sins of the ruler or the ruled. He regards himself also as a sinner. One is certainly a sinner as long as the possibility of sin remains in one. One is guilty of passion if one has potentiality for passion.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-3-1930

[1] The letter is not translated here.

463. THE DEPARTURE

Thousands of Ahmedabad citizens, both men and women, kept vigil on the night of the 11th. Thousands flocked to the Ashram. One heard rumours all through the night. “Here is some news,” someone with a grave face twice whispered into my ear! “Reliable news has been received that a special train is arriving this evening and will take you away to be borne to Mandalay.” As it is the same to me whether I am in jail or outside, the news had no effect on me and I went to bed in perfect peace. But the sight of the mill-workers and mill-owners around me could not but make me happy. Though eagerly expected, “they” did not come, and at the appointed hour and minute God gave us the send-off. We walked on between rows of people who had come to see us set out, the rows extending to as far as the Chandola lake. I cannever forget the scene. For me, this was the form in which God’s blessing descended on me. In the face of such a spectacle, how could I believe that there was no prospect of success in this struggle? Both the rich and the poor were present in proportion to their numbers in the population. If the spectacle has any meaning, it is this, at any rate, that all people want freedom and they want it through peaceful means. In the eyes of men lining the road from the Ashram to Ellis Bridge I saw not poison but nectar. I saw in their eyes no anger against British rule or rulers, but I saw there the joy born of the confidence that complete freedom was now at hand.

The authorities on their part had acted wisely. Not one policeman was to be seen. What business could the police have where people had come together for a festive occasion? What would the police do there?

May the self-confidence displayed by the citizens of Ahmedabad last for ever! Let that confidence spread all over the country, and complete freedom will be ours without much effort. If such freedom is our birthright, how much time should we need to win that right? To breathe is my birthright, and breathing therefore proceeds with ease. It is the long history of slavery that has given us the illusion that slavery is our natural state. The truth is that it is not the natural state of any man whatever. If three hundred million men and women are determined to win freedom, you may take it that it is theirs. The scene on the 12th was a sign of that determination.

But I am not a man to be easily taken in by appearances. All over the world, the common mass of men move like sheep following one another. It was so on the 12th too. Many had come out just because others had done so. For many others, this coming out for the

festival was the beginning and the end of their self-sacrifice. If that was the truth, their coming out was no sign of the approach of freedom. If a hundred thousand men oppress three hundred million and the latter come together to struggle to get rid of the oppression, they will win their freedom from slavery with very little effort and sacrifice. But some sacrifice there has to be. Winning freedom is not child's play. It requires the labour of thoughtful men, so that if the three hundred million would not become khadi-wearers, at any rate three million must come forward to offer civil disobedience. If many join in this sacrifice for swaraj they would share the labour. If the number of such people is small, they will have to bear a greater burden, for the labour needed for winning freedom will always be the same. The only question therefore, is who should bear this burden and how. The immediate burden of bringing success to the present march falls on the Gujaratis. Bringing success to the march does not mean only providing regular meals and rendering other services to the party. The mahajans at the various places are doing that with love. To bring success to the march means men and women coming out in large numbers to join the struggle. People should get ready for civil disobedience of the salt law as soon as the marching party reaches Jalalpur. Every village should get ready its own quota of civil law-breakers so that at the proper time they plunge into the fight.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-3-1930

464. "BHAGAVAD GITA" OR "ANASAKTIYOGA"

It is more than forty years since I have been reading, pondering and following the *Gita.* Friends expressed a desire that I should put before the Gujaratis my understanding of that work. I embarked on translating it. From the point of view of scholarship my qualifications for attempting the translation would seem to be nil, but as one following its teaching I may be considered to be fairly well qualified. The translation has now been published. Many editions of the *Gita* carry the Sanskrit text also. It has been intentionally left out in this one. I would like it if all knew Sanskrit, but all will never learn Sanskrit. Moreover, many cheap editions with Sanskrit are available. I, therefore, decided to leave out the Sanskrit text and reduce both the size and the price. This edition has 19 pages of introduction and 187 pages of translation so that it can be easily carried in one's pocket. Ten thousand copies have been printed. My aspiration is that every Gujarati will read this *Gita,* ponder it and practise its teaching. An easy way to ponder it is to try and understand the meaning without

referring to the Sanskrit text and then to conduct oneself accordingly. For example, those who interpret the teaching of the Gita to mean that one ought to kill the wicked without making a distinction between one's kinsmen and others, should kill their parents or other relatives if they are wicked. In practice, they will not be able to do so. Naturally, then, it would occur to the reader that where destruction is prescribed the work contemplates some other form of destruction.Almost every page of the *Gita* advises us not to make a distinction between our own people and others. How is this to be done? Reflection will lead us to the conclusion that we should perform all our acts in a spirit of non-attachment. In the very first chapter we find Arjuna facing the troublesome question of one's own people and others. In every chapter the *Gita* brings out how such a distinction is false and harmful. I have called the *Gita Anasaktiyoga.* The interested reader will be able to learn from the work what that is, how non-attachment is to be cultivated, what its characteristics are, etc. Trying as I do to live according to the teaching of the *Gita,* I could not avoid the present struggle. As a friend says in his telegram to me, this is a holy war for me. It is a happy augury for me that this book is being published just as the holy war is entering its last phase in the form of the present struggle.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 16-3-1930

465. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

March 16, 1930

DEAR BHRR,[1]

What a joy to have received your letter ! Of course, you must take rest. Sardar has filled me with many anecdotes about you and now Mahadev has come in to give us the latest. I am glad this time you have not brought any illness with you. Can't afford to think of you as an old man in spite of the whiteness of your ample beard. Mahadev tells me you can dance. I feel like asking for a short leave to come and see you dance. But that cannot be. I am, therefore, imagining all sorts of movements. You should be put with the Poet!!!

Love from us all.

Yours ever,
M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 9569

[1] This was a form of greeting used between Gandhiji and the addressee.

466. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

March 16, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. Restrain your desire to come and see me. If, despite your best efforts, you cannot do that there is no harm in coming. Keep in mind the condition that you should take proper care of your health while working. You will not get such an opportunity again. You should, therefore, preserve your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9282

467. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

ON THE DANDI MARCH,
Sunday [*March 16, 1930*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I get your letters. I send with this a letter on the Bank. If it does not serve your purpose, please let me know.

I have asked those three gentlemen from Madras and the two from Bengal to return. They do feel sorry. If you see them repenting when they arrive there and if they are keen on joining the Ashram again, take them back. There is no harm in doing so if they are real workers. But I do not wish to interfere with your management, and that is why I refused to give them any letter.

How is Purushottam keeping? Cannot Keshu lead the recitation of the *Gita*? He can sing the *bhajans* too. If he does not agree, in any case Premabehn is there.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Enclosed with this is a letter written by Jamna, which seems to have been sent to me by mistake.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8092. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] From the enquiries about Purushottam's health and arrangements regarding recitation of the *Gita* and *bhajans*, this appears to have been written on the first of the three Sundays during the Dandi March.

468. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Sunday [*March 16, 1930*][1]

CHI. CHANDRAKANTA,

I hope your work is proceeding well. I have pinned great hopes on you. May God grant you the strength to fulfil these hopes. Sumangal[2] had a slight touch of fever. There is no cause for anxiety. He is being nursed well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Keep writing to your parents.

From a photos tat of the Gujara ti: Chandr akanta Papers . Courte sy: Gandhi Nation al Museum and Librar y

469. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

March 16, 1930

CHI. VIDYA,

I have heard much about you from Anand, and I was glad to hear about your devotion to God. You should not be anxious on account of Anand. God will protect him.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

470. SPEECH AT BORIAVI

March 16, 1930

In this peaceful struggle there is no room for coercion of any kind. We will coerce no Englishmen nor any of our countrymen. I do not want anyone to resign under compulsion. Resignations tendered under duress or in awe of somebody ought to be withdrawn. They have jailed your Sardar, that is, they have taken from you swaraj itself. We must get him released from prison and, you will have proved your strength if you can see to it that he is out in one month instead of after three. After Vallabhbhai is released, take care that you do not

[1] From the contents the letter appears to have been written on the first of the three Sundays during the Dandi March; *vide* also "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 17-3-1930.

[2] Sumangal Prakash, addressee's cousin

apologize and withdraw your resignations. You can withdraw the resignations and become Headmen again only when we get control of the Government.

If you drink liquor, tea, etc., and still think that Gandhi who has gone to battle with his band will bring you swaraj, you are making a mistake. Gandhi will leave for ever and his troop will be lost in the sea. Swaraj can be won only if you all take up constructive work. Those of you who do not enlist as soldiers of swaraj should at least wear khadi.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 23-3-1930

471. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

March 17, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter and the flowers that were struggling to find me out. My fatigue so far seems to be health-giving. For it enables me to take milk twice instead of once and plenty of fruit. Today the fatigue of the past five days made me sleep five times during the day. I hope to find myself thoroughly fit to undertake the ensuing week's march or whatever else may be in store for me. So you will not worry about me.

I see you are now finding yourself there. The struggle has been a veritable godsend for all of us. It is, as it should be, a process of cleansing. Let us never be slack.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5427. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9661

472. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

ANAND,
March 17, 1930

BHAI SATIS BABU,

I saw in the newspapers that Bengal has appointed you dictator. Is it true? If true, have you been appointed by both the factions or only one? Whatever it may be, I know that your love will put everything right. Only yesterday Panditji[1] gave us a song in the prayer meeting which can be translated thus: "The way of love is like the purifying flame." When true love is born it destroys all impurities.

[1] Narayan Moreshwar Khare

Your job is the hardest of all, I realize. Your penance of eight years will give you wisdom and strength. May God give you and Hemprabha Devi a long life.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1616

473. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

ANAND,

Silence Day [*March 17, 1930*][1]

O PARSI LADY,

There is no limit to your cunning. You seem to be preparing an alibi in advance. If parents lift you up, haven't they the right to throw you down? And why do you believe that I have lifted you up in order that I may afterwards throw you down? Why did I have Chapter XII [of the *Gita*] read out on the day of your marriage? If you believe that you do not possess the virtues I attribute to you, you should pray to God to grant them to you. But your uncle calls you Dhairyamata[2]. What do you say to that?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4766

474. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

ANAND,

Silence Day [*March 17, 1930*][3]

CHI. KUSUM,

I have your letter. What you say about a house is quite correct. But your duty was to move into the Hostel, and it was good that you did so. We should love what is good for us. Work as much as you like, but preserve your health. And be sure that you write to me from time to time.

The secretaryship still clings to you. When you get time, clear up everything. Don't worry about me. I know that I have made

[1] From the contents the letter seems to have been written in 1930. In that year, Gandhiji was at Anand on this date.

[2] Literally, "Mother of Courage"; the addressee's daughter was named Dhairyabala.

[3] The reference to the addressee moving into the Ashram Hostel suggests that this was written in 1930.

you unhappy, but I don't feel sorry that 1 have done so. Who else could have that privilege?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1794

475. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Silence Day, March 17, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have had no letter from you for some time. It was expected that I would be arrested on the 12th itself. Now six days have passed, and since it is Monday today I have sat down to write this letter. Though I have been walking a great deal, I have kept fine till now. You must be reading the accounts in the papers. Hence I do not write anything about it here, nor have I the time to do so. If you like, you may show the accompanying letter to Jayaprakash, and if he permits, inform Father and go to the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev came a moment ago and read out your letter. I felt happy. If you can come, please do.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3361

476. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Silence Day [*March 17, 1930*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter.

The fact that people still come presents a very difficult problem. Keep those who work. Those who do not work should immediately leave.

I certainly like your going to the common kitchen for your meals. But give your body the food which it requires and preserveits health. You seem to me to be a follower of the *Gita* and I believe, therefore, that the burden of your happiness and welfare will be borne by God.

Kevalram's wife may certainly come. Illness dogs us here too.

[1] Sumangalprakash was left behind at Anand where Gandhiji was on March 17, 1930.

Three persons are ill. Sumangalprakash has a mild attack of measles. I will leave him here.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Has Purushottam left? If so, who conducts the prayers? I suppose you know how to do that? Do not forget that Keshu also is an expert. No burden should be put on Prabhudas.

From Gujarati: C.W. 8094. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

477. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Silence Day [*March 17, 1930*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

I have your letter. You will always be doing good, doing service. Lakshmibehn came and told me something. As you know, I could not spare time to ask her for more details. Take care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8743. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

478. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

ANAND,
March 17, 1930

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

Nowhere else have I observed such zeal for sacrifice as has been displayed by the Ashram women. At present the women are to a great extent managing the internal affairs of the Ashram. The chance of acquiring such experience will never be repeated. I would therefore advise you to send Prabhavati there. After my arrest the Ashram women too will court imprisonment. I think Prabhavati should join them. She is worthy in every respect. I hope your work is proceeding well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3362

[1] The source bears the date March 20, 1930 in the addressee's hand which could be the date of receipt. The preceding Monday was March 17.

479. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

March 17, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. When the women at the Ashram are ready to go to jail, you ladies may also go. In the meantime you should do organizational work in villages.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RANI VIDYAVATI
BARUA
Via HARDOI
U. P.

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

480. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Silence Day [*March 17, 1930*][1]

CHI. CHANDRAKANTA,

It was discovered today that Sumangal has smallpox. You should not feel unhappy about Bhaiya's illness. Nor should you worry. Anand is like a big city. All kinds of facilities are available there. The house is also good. I shall make all arrangements and look into everything. I shall be getting news every day. Do not cause worry to your parents by informing them. There are not many pustules noticeable. You do know that the satyagrahis are under a vow and cannot return on any account. Still, I have ascertained what Bhaiya wants. I have not been able to speak today. I shall do it tomorrow and then go.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

481. SPEECH AT ANAND

March 17, 1930

You have just heard Panditji sing that the path of love is like a flame. A satygrahi's path is the path of love, not one of enmity. It

[1] From the reference to the illness of Sumangal Prakash, who was left behind at Anand where Gandhiji was present on March 17, 1930; *vide* also "Letter to Kapilrai Mehta", 3-4-1930.

should be the ambition of a satyagrahi to win over even the most hard-hearted of enemies through love.

How can one demonstrate that there is nothing but love underlying civil disobedience? Pritam must have had a direct experience of this, as a result of which this *bhajan* poured forth from his heart.

Ill feeling perhaps could be compared to fire. How could that be said of love? Whereas ill feeling burns others, love burns oneself and purifies the other person. When love assumes this intense form, it may well appear to some as fire, but you may be sure that in the end it will make its cooling effect known. This band of satyagrahis which has set out is not staging a play; its effect will not be merely temporary; even through death, it will prove true to its pledge—if death becomes necessary. The Government will, in the end, have to admit that these persons practising satyagraha were devotees of truth and non-violence. Nothing will be better than if this band of satyagrahis perishes. If the satyagrahis meet with death, it will put a seal upon their claim. None of us can assert today whether we have the strength to die a satyagrahi's death. To stab someone in the abdomen in a fit of rage or to die harbouring anger in heart, but keeping up an appearance of non-violence through shame is not to die a satyagrahi's death.

Not only should there be no anger within one's heart at the time of death, but on the contrary, one should feel and pray: 'May good befall him who kills me !' When anyone meets death in such a manner, I would call it a satyagrahi's death and only in such a death would the dying person be considered to have been true to his pledge. Even with regard to myself I cannot give anyassurance today. It is only others who can judge a person by this test after his death.

Here in Anand, you have Narsinhbhai's hut. Anand is the educational centre of the Patidars. Kheda district is the home town of the Patidars of Vallabhbhai, of Motibhai Amin, and of the volunteers of the Charotar Education Society. Where can I give expression to the feelings within me if not before such an audience? I have come to you filled with great expectations.

I have asserted at many places that this time I have not set out to beg for funds. I know how to do that. This struggle is not one based on money. It is going to be carried on without it. In a trice this morning, the yarn merchants of Bombay presented me with Rs. 2,501. The Diamond Association has sent me Rs. 2,000. Moreover, if I make even a feeble appeal for funds, Gujarat and India would shower money upon me; I would be buried under its weight and would be

unable even to reach Jalalpur.

I have come to ask for a big contribution. In your hands lies the honour of the Patidars of Charotar. You are like salt in the sea of Patidars. If the salt loses its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? Salt is more sapid than either sugar or jaggery. The latter may even cause jaundice, whereas a pinch of salt adds flavour to the meal. If Anand gives up its savour, if courage and such other virtues which have been attributed to the Patidars are not displayed in Anand at this juncture, where else can one see them?

You must have understood the reason for this introduction. Are the students of Anand and Kheda district going to sit down with their books, or will they follow the lead that has been given by the Vidyapith? We have already received a return with interest for the 2_ lakhs of rupees spent by Dr. Mehta for the Vidyapith and contributions made by other well-wishers. Today the Vidyapith has wound up its book-learning and has proved its motto: That is learning which liberates.

All the students who have entered their sixteenth year have united in giving up their studies, and the teachers too have joined them. What more can be expected of a place where all the students as well as the teachers obtain cent per cent marks? Why do you also not adopt this path?

It is my hope that Gujarat will set an object-lesson to the rest of the country. One cannot say yet whether the fight will be a prolonged one or will end quickly. If, however, we have sacrificed our all in the movement, we should not worry about whether it will be long or short.

I have a right to entertain such hopes of the Patidars of Kheda district. They have been giving me hopes ever since my South Africa days. Kheda district has a population of seven lakhs which includes our Thakore brethren. If the Patidars show the way, the Garasias are bound to follow them. Has not Tulsidas said that base metal shines at the touch of the *parasmani*[1].

You students must suspend your studies for as long as this struggle continues. At this time, I recall the words of the late Deshbandhu. He was unhappy about non-co-operation in schools. He used to say that we should certainly call out students when the time came for the final struggle but that we should leave them alone at the moment. I did not agree, and he joined in the boycott of schools. But these words were uttered in 1920. Not five, but ten years have elapsed since then. The final battle has to be waged. Hence there is no reason why students should now remain in schools.

[1] Philosophers' stone

Today I am not asking for preparing one battlefield only. Today, everyone from Kanyakumari to Kashmir and from Karachi to Dibrugarh will be able to practise non-co-operation either individually or collectively.

Until last December, I felt that the atmosphere was not favourable for civil disobedience and I said what I felt. I now claim that if ever the circumstances were opportune, they are today. This is the auspicious moment. If at this auspicious time we do not develop the strength for civil disobedience we shall never do so.

What student is he who will continue to study at such a time? Formerly, I asked the students to leave schools and to set up national schools. Today I ask them to leave schools and come out on the battlefield and become mendicants for the sake of the country. If a business man continues to carry on his business today, he will not enhance his prestige. If India wishes to launch satyagraha on a wide scale, this is the time when it should do so.

God will provide food and drink; countless people will provide it. If there is a flare-up in the entire country, and if the whole of India starts practising civil disobedience, how long will it take for 30 crores of people to free themselves from the grip—the domination—of a hundred thousand Britishers? School children will work this out by the rule of three.

The army consists of 70 thousand Britishers and others including Sikhs, Pathans, Gurkhas and Marathas. This army is sitting astride both our shoulders; although it may be stationed in Meerut and other cantonments, we see nothing else behind the laws that suppress us. The British make us dance to their tune on the strength of the backing of this army.

Please remember again I am not asking you to give up your studies for good, but only to give up book-learning while the struggle lasts. It is up to you whether it will be a protracted one or not. Youth leagues—that is you students—proclaim many big things. This year our Congress President is a young man who rides a horse. Hence a large part of the burden of this struggle is to be borne by you students.

May God give you inner strength. This is not a question of utilizing your intellect. If something has to be made convincing through the use of the intellect, it can be set out in the same manner as a proposition of geometry with a Q.E.D. at the end of it. However, here the intellect becomes helpless if there is no strength of heart. The intellect is a handmaid of the heart.

I am helpless, however, if you feel at heart that this man has only

begun a stunt, that at the end of a month he will call the thing off saying he has committed a Himalayan blunder and withdraw quietly to the banks of Sabarmati. If, however, you do not believe this to be the case, rest assured that so far as you and I are concerned this is indeed the final struggle and the means to be adopted are peaceful, involving civil disobedience and so on.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-3-1930

482. TALK TO VOLUNTEERS[1]

March 17, 1930

Ours is a sacred pilgrimage and we should be able to account for every minute of our time. Let those who cannot finish their quota or do not find time to spin or to write up their diaries see me. I shall discuss the thing with them. There must be something wrong about their time-table and I should help them to readjust it. We should be resourceful enough to do all our daily duties without the march coming in our way. I dare say we are not hardy enough for a strenuous trek, and I am, therefore, providing for a weekly day of rest. But I should listen to no proposal for the relaxation of the regular discipline of the Ashram. I repeat that ours is a sacred pilgrimage, and self-examination and self-purification are essentials which we cannot do without. The diary is a great help in this matter. This regular spinning, counting the yards spun each day, the daily diary—all these things were thought out by me in the Yeravda Jail, and for us whose ambition it is to lay the foundation of the edifice of swaraj, inasmuch as ours will be the first sacrificial offering, it should be as unsullied as possible. Those who follow us may dispense with the rigid discipline we are going through, but for us there is no escape. That rigorous self-discipline will generate in us a force which will enable us to retain what we have won. It is the natural result of active non-violence and should stand us in good stead after swaraj. It is hardly likely that when we are imprisoned, we shall all be kept together. Therefore if our life is well-regulated from now, we should not have the slightest difficulty in going regularly through our daily task.

Young India, 20-3-1930

[1] Extracted from an account by Mahadev Desai

483. SPEECH TO SATYAGRAHIS[1]

[After *March 17, 1930*][2]

It is possible that what you say is true. If you regard the rules burdensome, they are so. However, in this matter, the condition was laid down before we set out that only those who were prepared to shoulder this burden should join the march. Hence, these rules cannot now be relaxed. It is only through total adherence to these rules that any massive strength can be generated. The inner, spiritual rules have a greater effect than the external and material factors. Such is the idea behind this march. In this struggle we are attempting to eradicate the pervading violence by means of non-violence and in it we need humility as much as determination and courage. So long as we are arrogant, so long as we try to progress through our own efforts, we are bound to fail. So long as the elephant relied on his own strength, it did him no good. This demonstrates a fundamental principle.

Do we not find that those amongst us who appeared to be weak are hale and hearty today, while those who appeared to be strong are bed-ridden? When a man gives up his arrogance and becomes humble like dust, only then is the power of non-violence awakened in him and the divine strength becomes his. Hence we should all become fully devoted to our duties. We should pray to God that He alone do everything. In this manner, if the eighty persons who have set out become like ciphers, our task will certainly be accomplished.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-4-1930

484. A GREAT SEER

NAPA,
March 18, 1930

Kavi Rajchandra was born in a place called Vavania in Kathiawar. I came in touch with him in 1891, the day of my return from London, at Dr. P. J. Mehta's residence in Bombay. Kavi, as I used to call him, was nearly related to Dr. Mehta. He was introduced to me as a *shatavadhani,* i.e., one who can remember a hundred things at a time. Kavi was quite young at the time, not much older

[1] This has been extracted from "Dharma Yatra".

[2] This speech was delivered after one of the satyagrahis had had an attack of smallpox and had to be left behind at Anand, where Gandhiji was on March 16 and 17.

than I was then, i.e., 21 years. He had, however, given up all public exhibition of his powers and was given to purely religious pursuits. I was much struck by his simplicity and independence of judgment. He was free from all touch of blind orthodoxy. What struck me perhaps more was his combining business with religion in practice. A student of the philosophy of religion, he tried to practise what he believed. Himself a Jain, his toleration of the other creeds was remarkable. He had a chance of going to England for studies, but he would not go. He would not learn English. His schooling was quite elementary. But he was a genius. He knew Sanskrit, Magadhi and, I believe, Pali. He was a voracious reader of religious literature and had acquired through Gujarati sources a knowledge, enough for his purpose, of Islam, Christianity and Zoroastrianism. Such was the man who captivated my heart in religious matters as no other man has till now. I have said elsewhere that in moulding my inner life Tolstoy and Ruskin vied with Kavi. But Kavi's influence was undoubtedly deeper if only because I had come in closest personal touch with him. His judgment appealed to my moral sense in the vast majority of cases. The bedrock of his faith was unquestionably ahimsa. His ahimsa was not of the crude type we witness today among its so-called votaries who confine their attention merely to the saving of aged cattle and insect life. His ahimsa, if it included the tiniest insect, also covered the whole of humanity.

Yet I never could regard Kavi as a perfect man. But of all the men I knew he appeared to me to be nearer perfection than the rest. Alas! he died all too young (thirty-three years) when he felt that he was surely going to see truth face to face. He has had many worshippers but not as many followers. His writings, largely consisting or soulful letters to inquirers, have been collected and published. An attempt is being made to have them translated in Hindi. I know that they would bear an English translation. They are largely based on inward experience.

Modern Review, June 1930

485. LETTER TO RAMANAND CHATTERJEE

BORSAD,
March 18, 1930

DEAR RAMANAND BABU,

Under great stress I was able today to scribble the enclosed[1]. You may do what you like with it. I hope you are giving

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

the movement your unreserved support and blessing.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 9287. Courtesy: Sita Devi

486. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

March 18, 1930

CHI. CHANDRAKANTA,

I have your letter. Brother has been well today, I get news of him twice in the day. If Gangabehn[1] and Narandasbhai[2] permit do go to look up brother for a day. Narandasbhai has written that you are doing good work in the office.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

487. SPEECH AT BORSAD

March 18, 1930

At one time I was wholly loyal to the Empire and taught others to be loyal. I sang "God Save the King" with zest and taught my friends and relations to do so. Finally, however, the scales fell from my eyes, and the spell broke. I realized that the Empire did not deserve loyalty. I felt that it deserved sedition. Hence I have made sedition my dharma. I try to explain it to others that while sedition is our dharma, to be loyal is a sin. To be loyal to this Government, that is to say to wish it well, is as good as wishing ill of the crores of people of India. We get nothing in return for the crores of rupees that are squeezed out of the country; if we get anything, it is the rags from Lancashire. To approve the policy of this Government is to commit treason against the poor. You should free yourselves from this latter offence. I believe I have done so. Hence I have become ready to wage a peaceful war against this Government. I am commencing it by violating the salt law. It is for this purpose that I am undertaking this march. At every place, thousands of men and women have conferred their blessings upon it. These blessings are not showered on me but on the struggle.

Our patience has been severely tried. We must free ourselves

[1] Gangabehn Vaidya

[2] Narandas Gandhi

from the yoke of this Government and we are prepared to undergo any hardships that we may have to suffer in order to secure swaraj. It is our duty as well as our right to secure swaraj.

I regard this as a religious movement since sedition is our dharma. Every moment I desire the end of the policies of this Government. I have no desire to touch even a single hair of our rulers. But we certainly shall not bow down to them. Kindly, therefore, become conscious of your responsibilities and wash away your sins against India. Today we are defying the salt law. Tomorrow we shall have to consign other laws to the waste-paper basket. Doing so we shall practise such severe non-co-operation that finally it will not be possible for the administration to be carried on at all. Let the Government then, to carry on its rule, use guns against us, send us to prison, hang us. But how many can be given such punishment? Try and calculate how much time it will take a lakh of Britishers to hang thirty crores of persons.

But they are not so cruel. They are human beings like us and perhaps we would be doing the same things that they are doing if we had been in their position. Man does not have the strength to fight circumstances; the latter mould his actions. Hence I do not feel that they are to be blamed for this. But I find their policy so bitter, that I would destroy it today if I could. It will be destroyed regardless of whether I am put behind the bars or allowed to remain free. I breathe here before you and with every breath that I take, I desire this very thing. I am fully convinced that there is nothing base in it. I act exactly as I believe.

No one has been able to reply to the complaint I have registered before God and mentioned in my letter to the Viceroy. No one says that the salt tax is just. No one says that the expenditure on the army and the administration is justified. No one holds that the policy of collecting land revenue is justifiable, nor indeed that it is proper to extort 20 to 25 crores of rupees from the people after making drunkards and opium-addicts of them and breaking up their homes. Both foreigners and British officers testify to the fact that all this is true. However, what can be done about it? Money is required. For what purpose is it required? In order to repress the people.

Recently the Government has appointed all police officers above the rank of constables as officers dealing with salt. As a result of the authority vested in him, even a policeman can arrest me and perpetrate any indignity on me that he likes; if he fails to arrest me he would be guilty of the offence of cowardice. Here we find this offence of cowardice which does not exist in any other Act of the Government.

Any constable who sees us making salt, who sees us heating a pan of salt water, can arrest us, snatch away the pan and throw away the water. What can he feel in throwing away the salt? In Lansundra near Kapadvanj there is a mound of salt, which has been covered with dust. Why is this so? Why this injustice? It is our dharma to oppose such outrageous conduct and such inhuman policy.

If you feel that I should be grateful to you for the purse you have presented to me, I should say I am grateful. But my hunger will not be satisfied with money. I desire that all of you men and women should enrol yourselves in this sacrificial movement. It is my cherished desire that all students studying in this high school who are above the age of fifteen, and all teachers too, should enrol themselves. Wherever revolutions have taken place, that is, in Japan, China, Egypt, Italy, Ireland and in England, students and teachers have played a prominent role. In Europe, war broke out on the 4th of August in 1914, and when I reached England on the 6th of that same month, I found that students had left colleges and marched out with arms.

Here, in this righteous war, truth, non-violence and forgiveness are the weapons. The consequence of using such weapons can only be beneficial, and it is the duty of every student and teacher to take part in such a struggle. At a time when the final struggle is being waged in order to free India from slavery, any student or teacher who takes shelter in his home or in the school will be regarded as having acted as a traitor to his country. Will you be engaged in learning poems by heart or in doing sums at a time when a person like Sardar is behind the bars? Just as when a house is on fire everyone comes out to extinguish it, similarly you should all come out to put an end to these sufferings of our country.

Those who say that Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Jews and others have not united speak an untruth. This salt tax applies equally to all. If it is the case that whereas Hindus have to pay this tax, Muslims can get themselves exempted from it, they may very well do so. If anyone can save himself in this manner, I shall have to modify my dharma. I am prepared to get this tax abolished even if I have to prostrate myself on the ground in order to do so. Why should not everyone unite in order to have that tax abolished from which even a buffalo and a cow cannot escape?

My prostrating myself on the ground for the sake of removing the hardships of crores of people was of no avail. I have spared no efforts in drafting appeals. Everyone knows that I know how to use polite language. However, I have become a revolutionary when politeness and persuasion proved infructuous. I find peace in

describing myself as a revolutionary and I practise my dharma to some extent. In a revolution which is calm, peaceful and truthful, you should get yourselves enrolled regardless of the religion to which you belong. If you enlist yourselves with sincerity and if you can keep up your courage, the salt tax will have been abolished, this administration will have come to an end and all the hardships enumerated in the letter to the Viceroy as well as those which have not been so enumerated will have to cease. Then when new administrative policies are to be formulated, the time will be ripe for solving communal disputes and satisfying everyone.

I invite you all in the name of God. Even the Britishers will join in this movement. Will they perpetrate many injustices in order to justify one? And will they put innocent men behind the bars, whip them and hang them?

God can never be identified with that which is untruth, that which is injustice. It is as plain as I am speaking to you here and now. I see equally clearly that the days of this administration are numbered and total swaraj is in sight. The Goddess of Independence is peeping in and wishes to garland us. If at such a time we run away, who will be as unworthy as we?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-3-1930

488. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

RAS,
March 19, 1930

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

You are in for a whole night's vigil but it is inevitable if you are to return before tomorrow night. The messenger will bring you where I may be. You are reaching me at the most trying stage in the march. You will have to cross a channel at about 2 a.m. on the shoulders of tried fishermen. I dare not interrupt the march even for the chief servant of the nation.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

This is the place where Vallabhbhai was arrested. All the hereditary officials of this village have just gone, leaving their resignations in my hands.

PUNDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

489. SPEECH AT RAS

March 19, 1930

Today we have entered the taluka in which Sardar Vallabhbhai was arrested and sentenced to prison and in which he had carried on such a vigorous struggle in 1924 that the Government had finally to admit its error and mete out justice that should not have required a struggle. It is as if Sardar was sentenced to prison as a reward for having served you!

The question now is what you can do to serve the cause for which he has been sent to jail and what I should do.

Some of the Headmen and Matadars have handed in their resignations. I congratulate them. However, there are still many who cannot abandon the line. I have not come across a single person who has accepted the post of a Headman for the sake of the salary attached to it. Headmen have the privilege of perpetrating indignities on the people or it may be said that they have the right to participate in the indignities perpetrated on the people. The improper reason for their clinging to their posts is that this privilege satisfies their base self-interest or assists them in their work. But how much longer will you keep on doing your part in squeezing these villages?

Have not your eyes yet been opened to the robbery that is being committed by the Government?

The Headman, the Talati and the Ravania are the representatives of the Government in the villages, and it is through these persons that the latter carries on its administration. A village which is afraid of a handful of men and continues to act in a manner contrary to its own wishes, neither enhances the prestige of the Headman, the Talati or the Ravania nor that of the villagers themselves. Sardar was making great efforts to end this indignity.

Sardar neither made speeches nor came here to foment trouble. Neither the Magistrate nor you had expected any sort of trouble. The task for which Sardar had approached you was not a secret to anyone. A satyagrahi has no secrets. Even a child can see how a satyagrahi stands, sits, eats and drinks. It can also examine the latter's accounts. What secret can a satyagrahi like Sardar have? He had come here to clear the way for me. He had not come here to convey the message regarding salt. We had both so planned that it would be through me and those whom I took along with me that the salt law would be violated. You do not know many of the persons who are accompanying me. They are all public workers devoted to Sardar. I

have not been able to understand the nature of Sardar's offence. Even the Magistrate did not know it. That Sardar should be awarded a sentence of three months' jail is a matter of shame both to Sardar and to the Government. A person like him should be sentenced to a term of seven years' imprisonment or be exiled. It would not befit the Government to sentence me to three months' imprisonment. Exile for life or hanging would be a punishment fit for a person like me. I am guilty of sedition. It is my dharma to commit sedition against the Government. I am teaching this dharma to the people. A regime under which tyranny is being perpetrated, under which the rich andthe poor are made to pay the same amount of tax on an item like salt, under which exorbitant sums are being spent on watchmen, the police and the army, under which the highest executive receives a salary which is five thousand times the income of the cultivator, under which an annual revenue of 25 crores of rupees is derived from narcotics and liquor, under which foreign cloth of the value of Rs. 60 crores is imported every year, and under which crores of persons continue to remain unemployed, it is one's dharma to rise against and destroy such a regime, to pray that fire may consume it policies.

For such a treasonable offence, I was once sentenced to six years' imprisonment but, unfortunately for the Government and myself, I fell ill and I was released as it was felt that I should no longer be held in prison. Now again a cloud, if you choose to call it so, or a procession with a fanfare if you wish so to describe it, is approaching me. It will be good if I am arrested. The magistrate will be put to shame if he sentences me to three months' imprisonment. One guilty of sedition should be banished to the Andamans, sentenced to a life-term of exile, or to hanging. What other punishment can be meted out to anyone like me who regards sedition his duty?

The Government must have believed that by sentencing Sardar to three months' imprisonment, it will be able to scare the people and suppress them. However, the fact that you have turned out here in thousands appears to signify that you are looking forward to a celebration. You must regard it as something to celebrate if my colleagues and I are arrested. But will you sit quiet after regarding this as an occasion for celebration? Will the Headmen and the Matadars cling to their offices as flies cling to dirt? That would indeed be a matter of shame and grief.

Durbar has come and settled in this taluka for many years. Who is this Durbar? He has given up his kingdom—however tiny a village it may be. He does not want any comforts; he only wants to serve. You should learn courage and sacrifice from him. What an adverse impression it will create if the Headmen of such a taluka do not give

up their office !

The money that you have given me today has no value for me. When I collected a crore of rupees, it did have value for me. Those crores of rupees have rendered service many times their value. Today, however, I do not need money but your services. All the men and women present here should get themselves enrolled. Say that you are prepared, when your turn comes to violate the salt law. Even women can participate in this righteous struggle and many have already enrolled themselves.

This religious struggle does not involve hurting even a hair of anyone. We shall teach the Government a lesson by suffering hardships ourselves, and by doing so create world opinion in our favour. And, finally, we shall achieve a change of heart in our rulers. At present, however, the Government is inclined to indulge in oppression instead of meting out justice.

A person like Shri Sen Gupta, Mayor of Calcutta, whose name is familiar to everyone in Bengal, has been imprisoned in Burma. The Government has adopted the policy of arresting those who are not guilty of any offence. At a time when the nation cries out in despair and thousands are coming forward to express their grievances, the Government should abolish a thing like the salt tax and redress other grievances as well. But this Government cannot afford to do so. It cannot afford to see a crore of rupees remaining with the people. It is behaving in such an outrageous manner in order that this sum is sent out to England. The first step towards freeing ourselves from such oppression is to seek the abolition of the salt tax. We shall violate the salt tax law to such an extent that we shall be prepared to suffer whatever the penalty we may have to face—be it imprisonment, flogging or any other.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-3-1930

490. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

DURING DANDI MARCH,
Wednesday, 10.30 p.m. [*March 19, 1930*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. If those young men are so keen, I believe that we should admit them. They did repent before me at any rate. I refused to give them a letter of recommendation, so that you may

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 16-3-1930.

decide there as you think best. That is the position even now. Do only what you think right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8093. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

491. NOTES

SALT TAX

Fifteen villagers of Bhangore and Matla in 24 Parganas District have been fined eight annas each by the Sub-Divisional Officer of Alipore on a charge of illicit manufacture of salt. The men pleaded guilty and throwing themselves at the mercy of the Court, submitted they were too poor to buy salt and were manufacturing it for their own consumption.

This seasonable item is from the public Press. Eight annas fine for poor people is no joke. The magistrate might have discharged the men with a caution or he might, as magistrates have done before now, have paid the fine from his own pocket, if he felt that he was bound to impose a penalty. It is likely of course that in that case, he might have laid himself open to the charge of cowardice under the Salt Act. Be that as it may, the fact that the men "threw themselves at the mercy of the court," and "submitted that they were too poor to buy salt," and that the magistrate rejected the plea of the villagers, is eloquent testimony in favour of the civil disobedience campaign. No milder agitation would have answered the purpose. Moreover, the salt tax is but a sample from the mountain of such grievances, from which it is the duty of every Indian who knows the wrongs being done to India to strain every nerve to free her.

HOW TO BREAK IT

A correspondent writes to say that there is no salt tax in Portuguese India, that Daman is quite near Pardi, that salt is sold at 2 annas per maund in Daman, and that any quantity may be imported from Daman and payment of tax refused on passing the British border. A similar suggestion has come too from Kathiawar. There also there is no tax, though there is the State monopoly which makes the salt dearer than the cost price. Nevertheless it is much cheaper than in the British territory. Thus a maund (*cutcha*) costs, I understand, Rs. 1-4 in Ranpur whereas the same quantity outside Ranpur will cost probably no more than 10 annas, if that. Anyway, when the instructions for civil disobedience on a mass scale are issued, there is no doubt that the salt law is the easiest to break.

The Government is naturally preparing to combat the civillaw

breakers after its usual fashion. Every police officer above the rank of a constable in the Bombay Presidency except in Sind and Aden has been appointed a salt officer. These men, armed with new powers, may be fully expected to give a good account of themselves. And when they have stained their hands with innocent blood, there will be no doubt the usual inquiry followed by a repeal of the Salt Act. But this time the object of civil disobedience is double—the repeal of the tax and the repeal of the British bondage of which the salt tax is but an offshoot. No inquiry merely into the Salt Act followed by its repeal can stop the campaign of civil disobedience. It behoves all who want the repeal of the salt tax to join the agitation at least to that extent, unless they would have the tax rather than success of civil disobedience even for a specific grievance.

SOMETHING ADDED, NOTHING DEDUCTED

It has been said that I have now abandoned my first love and that I have given up Hindu-Muslim unity, removal of untouchability and khaddar as conditions of swaraj. This is a mischievous suggestion. The fact is that I have given up nothing. Many new things have been added. Hence have I called the recent presentation a new orientation. There will be no swaraj without the old conditions being fulfilled. But there will be none if some more conditions are not also fulfilled. They might have been neglected altogether at the time of formulating the constitution. Now they form an integral part of any scheme of swaraj if it is conceived in the interest of the masses. Again civil disobedience is being offered irrespective of the full fruition of the various points; for it, being in substitution for an armed rebellion, can go on side by side with the prosecution of the amplified constructive programme—even as an armed man will be fighting, whilst the civil population may be engaged in various other national pursuits, suspending them to the extent necessary for supporting the armed man. There is no danger of any one of the conditions of swaraj being neglected or given up as those who are engaged in civil disobedience are irrevocably committed to them. The question therefore is, who are guiding the civil disobedience movement? It is well if they are pure nationalists not directly or indirectly fostering communalism. Civil disobedience is the method whereby the nation is to generate the strength to reach her formulated goal.

DEENABANDHU ANDREWS

The reader knows that C. F. Andrews had become a convert to Independence before I came to it. I had hugged the belief thatDominion Status was superior to Independence. But Deenabandhu

knew his England better than I did. In this latest letter written on his birthday he says:

> I cannot tell you how much I have been thinking of you! At such times as these I have realized that thoughts are prayers. The greatest of all struggles has begun, and India is right, as I have always believed, in claiming nothing short of Independence. She *cannot* be part of an Empire. It is unthinkable.

The idea behind this letter evidently is that India with Dominion Status can only be part of an Empire, not a member on an equal footing of a commonwealth of nations. Of course when I talked of Dominion Status, I had no thought of being anything but an equal partner. Apart therefore from the Calcutta resolution, when the experience of 1929 proved that partnership on a footing of absolute equality was out of the question, I became a convinced Independence-wallah.

Young India, 20-3-1930

492. THE CHOICE BEFORE STUDENTS

It has been often said that the money spent on national education in general and the Gujarat Vidyapith in particular has been so much waste. In my opinion the Gujarat Vidyapith by its supreme sacrifice has more than justified its existence, the hopes entertained by its authors and the grants made to it by donors. For the Vidyapith has suspended its literary activities save for boys under 16 who are already under training there. The teachers and students of over 15 years of age have offered their services as volunteers and nearly forty students with the teachers are already in the field. A class for giving fifteen days' emergency training in connection with satyagraha has been opened for the sake of those who may need such training. I congratulate the students and the teachers on the promptitude with which they have acted. I may state that twenty of these are with me on the march. They are divided into two parties, both preceding the 80 pilgrims to make preparations in advance and assisting the villagers. They are under orders not to offer civil resistance till the 80 are arrested and immediately to replace them as soon as they are arrested.

I am sure that every national educational institution will copy the noble example of the Gujarat Vidyapith which was the first to come into being in response to the call of non-co-operationin 1920. And I hope that the Government and aided institutions will also copy the example. Every revolution of modern times has found students in the forefront. This, because it is peaceful, ought not to offer less attraction to the students.

The motto of the Gujarat Vidyapith is: सा विद्या या विमुक्तये. It means:

That is knowledge which is designed for salvation. On the principle that the greater includes the less, national independence or material freedom is included in the spiritual. The knowledge gained in educational institutions must therefore at least teach the way and lead to such freedom.

The most superficial observer will not fail to notice that the daily routine of the satyagrahi pilgrims constitutes by itself a perfect education. It is not a company of violent rebels who are moving about creating ravages and letting loose every passion; it is a band of self-restrained men who have declared non-violent rebellion against organized tyranny and who seek to secure freedom from it by severe self-suffering, spreading on their march the message of freedom through non-violence and truth. No father need feel the slightest anxiety about dedicating his son or daughter to what is after all the truest education that can be conceived in the existing circumstances of the country.

Let me distinguish between the call of 1920 and the present call. The call of 1920 was for emptying Government institutions and bringing into being national ones. It was a call for preparation. Today the call is for engaging in the final conflict, i. e., for mass civil disobedience. This may or may not come. It will not come if those who have been hitherto the loudest in their cry for liberty have no action in them. If the salt loses its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? The students are expected to precipitate a crisis not by empty meaningless cries but by mute, dignified, unchallengeable action worthy of students. It may again be that the students have no faith in self-sacrifice, and less in non-violence. Then naturally they will not and need not come out. They may then, like the revolutionaries, whose letter is reproduced in another column, wait and see what non-violence in action can do. It will be sportsmanlike for them either to give themselves whole-heartedly to this non-violent revolt or to remain neutral, and (if they like) critical, observers of the developing events. They will disturb and harm the movement, if they will act as they choose and without fitting in with the plan of the authors or even in defiance of them. This I know, that if civil disobedience is not developed to the fullest extent possible now, it may not be for another generation. The choice before the students is clear. Let them make it.The awakening of the past ten years has not left them unmoved. Let them take the final plunge.

Young India, 20-3-1930

493. OFFICIAL PETTINESS

The Government of Burma knew that Sjt. Sen Gupta was but a bird of passage when he was in Rangoon the other day. Yet he, the Mayor of the Calcutta Corporation, has been taken under warrant to

Rangoon for prosecution. A prosecution so vindictively brought is bound, if past experience is any guide, to result in a conviction. The inference is irresistible that there is an unwritten but well understood conspiracy among the high officials to 'lop off tall poppies'. It was Sardar Vallabhbhai yesterday, it is Sjt. Sen Gupta today. It will be other leaders tomorrow. There is no other way open to the Government than either repression or relief. The latter the Government does not propose to give; the former therefore is inevitable. The swifter and stronger it is, the better it is for the movement. For if it has inherent vitality in it, it will grow with every wave of repression. I therefore tender my congratulations to Sjt. Sen Gupta on his arrest.

I observe that a spontaneous movement has grown up in the country to appoint convinced believers in non-violence as dictators in the various provinces. Tamil Nad has taken the lead by appointing Sjt. C. Rajagopalachari; Andhra Desha has followed by appointing Deshabhakta Konda Venkatappayya. Now comes the news that Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta has been similarly appointed in Bengal. I am a little nervous about Bengal. For the Press message is not clear whether the appointment is on the part of both the groups or only one. I hope it is by both. They may have their vital differences, if any. But on the question of the goal and the method of civil disobedience, there can be none. And since Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta has no designs either upon the Council or the Corporation, he should be able to weld the two elements together. The two great leaders being taken away, surely it is the duty of the rival groups to coalesce and assist Satis Babu.

In any event the task of a dictator is no bed of roses. He may himself be taken away any moment. He allows himself to be appointed for that purpose. But he ought to receive the unanimous and unquestioned support of the people. Once a person is called to such an office, he should have absolute allegiance. All argument should be hushed at the time of battle. The time for argument was when the appointment was made.

The word "dictator" is, in my opinion, ill-chosen and has a bad odour. I should name him First Servant. The definition of his duties will give the precise meaning to the office. Use of some words from current and apparently similar movements is inevitable. But we ought to avoid the use, in a movement in which dictatorship is altogether out of place and impossible, of a word bearing that meaning and having that force.

Young India, 20-3-1930

494. GOOD IF TRUE

I publish the foregoing[1] just as I have received it. I have not the privilege of knowing "Colonel Bedy". If he and the letter are not a hoax and if the letter is genuine, I congratulate the revolutionary party on its decision. Three years' limit given to me is ample. If during three years of active non-violence under the auspices promised by the party are not enough to carry conviction, I should regard myself to be an unworthy representative of non-violence. I hope therefore that the revolutionary party will not only suspend its own activities but will also prevent so far as is possible, sporadic violence from breaking out.

Young India, 20-3-1930

495. SWARAJ AND RAMARAJYA

No matter in how many ways swaraj may have been defined, no matter how many interpretations I myself may have given it, to me its only meaning which is eternally valid is Ramarajya. If the word Ramarajya offends anyone, then I shall call it 'Dharmarajya'. The sense of the word Ramarajya is this that under such a rule the poor will be fully protected, everything will be done with justice, and the voice of the people will always be respected. But in order to attain Ramarajya all must help. But in order to achieve this khadi alone is the universal and constructive instrument. But in order toincrease the power of the people something else with a wider appeal was needed. That something is salt tax. Both the poor and the rich use salt equally and because a tax is levied on this universally useful thing, one that is necessary for everyone, one and all can offer civil disobedience against the salt tax law and thus strengthen their power. The power that we shall gain by this sort of civil disobedience will, because of its civil and peaceable nature, help us in securing Ramarajya. There are many other taxes like the salt tax which weigh heavily on the people and in resisting which people can get a good training, and their strength can increase. Ramarajya, by such means, will become easy to establish. No one can predict when we shall attain full Ramarajya. But it is the duty of every one of us to contemplate it day and night. And true contemplation is that in which proper methods also have been used for the establishment of Ramarajya. It should be remembered that in order to establish Ramarajya no

[1] The letter from "Members of the Executive Council of R.L.R. represented through Secretary, Colonel Bedy" is not reproduced here. It said that the revolutionaries had decided to give three years' time for "Gandhism" to succeed after which they would declare the "civil war of independence".

learning is necessary. The necessary talent is found in all—men and women, young and old, and in people of all religions. The only sad thing is that not all perceive its presence now. Cannot every one of us, if we want, today give proof of qualities such as truth, non-violence, propriety of conduct, bravery, forbearance, courage, etc.? The fact is we are under a delusion and for this reason we are not able to perceive what is in us, and instead we strive, in vain, to understand things that are beyond us. Undoubtedly this is a very sad thing. But even then I shall request the readers of *Hindi Navajivan* that in this great *yajna* which has been started in the country today they should be prepared to do their full share.

[From Hindi]
Hindi Navajivan, 20-3-1930

496. SPEECH AT KARELI

March 20, 1930

It should not be difficult to get 5,000 volunteers out of a population of 2,75,000. If all the officials of the four hundred villages resign we would not be required to go to jails to achieve our goal. But circumstances are not yet favourable for that. We can manufacture salt on the banks of Mahi near its mouth. But Sardar Vallabhbhai has asked me to go to Jalalpur for the purpose. If I and my troop of volunteers get arrested, every volunteer should begin manufacturing salt. The people of Baroda State may also comeinto the British territory and make salt. Meanwhile, all should put their hands to the production of khadi and work to stop consumption of liquor.

[From Gujarati]
Gujarati, 23-3-1930

497. LETTER TO GANGADEVI SANADHYA

KARELI,
Thursday [*March 20, 1930*][1]

CHI. GANGADEVI,

I received your letter. Take good care of your health and render what service you can. Whatever the doctors may say, you must not even think of including in your diet anything except milk and fruit.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2533

[1] The date has been inferred from Gandhiji's presence at Kareli.

498. LETTER TO ABDUL KADIR BAWAZEER

GAJERA,
March 21, 1930

BHAI IMAM SAHEB,

I think about you every day. How shall I describe your love? I feel extremely happy to see that you have risen very high. The Ashram is yours and I need not entrust it to your care. Take care of your health. Qureshi[1] has been doing fine work. I observe that everyone is pleased with him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6645

499. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

March 21, 1930

CHI. KUSUM,

If you do not write letters, how can you call yourself a secretary? I do not expect anything from Mahadev at this time. He can get no time. Though he is a secretary, he is not doing a secretary's work but is doing some other work more important than a secretary's. You have not risen beyond being a secretary. I expect reports about people who are ill. I also wish to hear about the activities there. You may also write about anything else which you may think about. How is Ba's health? How is your health? Do you study hard? Do you card? Do you spin? Do you write the diary? And the life-sketch?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1795

500. SPEECH AT GAJERA[2]

[*March 21, 1930*][3]

You should be firmly convinced that you have performed a meritorious deed by bringing the *Antyajas* in your midst and have

[1] Gulam Rasul Qureshi, addressee's son-in-law
[2] Extracted from "Swaraj Gita"
[3] Gandhiji was at Gajera on this date.

taken a step forward towards swaraj. You can see from the dress and behaviour of the two Brahmins who sang "*Raghupati Raghava Rajaram, Patitapavana Seetaram*", that they are not new-fashioned Brahmins, that they are persons who would not gamble, eat meat or be guilty of licentious conduct. They are Brahmin teachers who are well-versed in the *Gita*, know Sanskrit and fully understand their responsibilities. They do not regard it as a sin to live with the *Antyajas* or with those who belong to other religions, but rather look upon it as a sin not to do so. Hence, you should be convinced that you are not guilty of irreligious conduct.

When Shri Ramachandra left Ayodhya and arrived on the banks of the Ganga, King Nishad rowed him across to the other bank, and offered him fruits and vegetables to eat. Who was Nishad? He was regarded an *Antyaja*. When Bharata met him, he embraced him and congratulated him on having served Shri Ramachandra in his hour of need. There is an *Antyaja* family which has also joined our group.

Besides the 60 crores of rupees that go out of the country every year by way of payment for the foreign cloth that we import, millions more are sent out of the country. During the days of the Gazni, Ghori, and the Mogul Empire, the wealth of the country stayed within it, but under this Government, the pensions of all officers are sent out of the country. How can one rest when the country is being robbed in this manner?

There are three hundred districts in India and in all these districts the Collector reigns supreme. It is truly a matter of shame to them and to all of us, if we only stop to think, that these three hundred men should rule over 30 crores of us.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 30-3-1930

501. SPEECH AT ANKHI[1]

[*March 21, 1930*][2]

I have received a complaint that villagers do not supply provisions or water to the police officers or other Government officers who happen to come here. We are not guilty of any violence in doing so; however, whether these officers happen to be Indians or Britishers, if they are really dying of hunger or thirst, it is not our dharma to let them perish in either manner. The dharma in obedience to which I act and which has made an outlaw of me teaches me that if Dyer and O'Dwyer, whose deeds, which were the very incarnations of cruelty, I

[1] Extracted from "Swaraj Gita"
[2] The date is from *Prajabandnu*, 23-3-1930.

had termed as "Dyerism", shoot me and if I am still conscious and come to know that one of them has been bitten by a snake, I would go running to them to suck out the poison. I have done such things in the past. In South Africa once I was beaten by a certain person[1] and when I regained consciousness, I beseeched the Government to releasehim. However, if an officer approaches us with arrogance which derives from the office he holds, he would get neither food nor drink, neither a bed, nor matches nor even fodder for his horse.

A potter is not born in order to fetch water for others. Even if we happen to lose our hands, we shall no longer salute the Government. We shall ourselves settle all our disputes and, when a new era begins, washermen, barbers and other workers will be ready to serve those who serve the people. However, in a democracy, there will be no distinctions of high and low. Even a Brahmin will become as much of a public servant as a Bhangi.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-3-1930

502. MESSAGE TO MAHARASHTRA

AMOD,
March 22, 1930

I am extremely glad to hear that in Maharashtra both wings of the Congress have come together and have decided to take part in the fight for swaraj. I hope in this religious fight Maharashtra will take the foremost place.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-3-1930

503. INTERVIEW TO YUSUF MEHERALLY

[AMOD ,
March 22, 1930][2]

Q. What part do you expect the youth movement to play in the present struggle?

A. The Youth League can do a great deal. They can supply recruits in large numbers in the civil disobedience campaign. They can, moreover, help to carry the message of independence to every nook and corner of the land. They can usefully picket foreign cloth and liquor shops.

[1] Mir Alam; *vide* "My Reward", 22-2-1908.

[2] According to the source this was published in the *Vanguard*, 22-3-1930. Gandhiji, however, arrived in Amod on the evening of the 22nd.

Those of its members who are unable to participate actively in the present campaign can render good service in the realm ofsocial reforming, popularizing khaddar and swadeshi articles, in pushing forward prohibition propaganda, etc.

Indeed at this juncture great things are expected from the youth of the country and I have no doubt they will fully rise to the occasion.

Q. Will you advise students to leave schools and colleges immediately?

A. Yes. I wish to point out that the present appeal to the students differs from that of 1921. In the latter case, the students were asked to quit their Government-controlled educational institutions and join national educational institutions. The present call is: Suspend your studies and join in the fight for freedom. When victory is won and you happen to be alive, you will resume your studies in schools of our own Government. For to my mind it is a fight to the finish. The greatest service that the youth can now render is to empty schools and colleges and swell the ranks of satyagrahi volunteers.

Q. Would you advise Youth Leagues to call out even those students whose examinations are a month or even a week ahead?

A. Yes. If the students themselves feel the call they should come out at once. As I said, I consider it a fight to the finish. If they have not the faith, they won't do it.

Q. Would you approve of the suggestion mooted in Youth League circles that the houses of "blackleg" M.L.C.'s who have not resigned their seats and those of selected other officials be picketed, and they be harassed in other ways as much as possible?

A. I should say no. During the N.C.O.[1] days three specific instances of this type came to my notice. They did no good. I know they did harm.

Q. Would you suggest any method by which the Muslims could be still more attracted to the Congress fold and protected from the pernicious propaganda of communalists? '

A. The best way to increase Muslim interest in the Congress is for Congressmen to serve them. Convince them that the Congress is as much theirs as anybody else's. My present programme—the breaking of the salt laws—should appeal to all the communities in India, for it affects them all alike. I am an optimist. I have no doubt that soon the Congress will stand higher in the affections of the Muslims than it ever did before. The masses are sound at heart. They only require a correct and courageous lead.I repeat that the best way of winning over the Mussalmans is by seeking occasions

[1] Non-co-operation

of service and assuring them that the resolution of the Congress on the communal question means what it says.

Q. In case you are not arrested in the next few days, are the other Provinces not to embark on satyagraha?

A. If I am not arrested till I reach Jalalpur, I expect that the Provinces will be free to start civil disobedience soon after I have committed the breach of Salt Act.

The Hindu, 25-3-1930

504. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[Before *March 23, 1930*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

I have your two letters. No time to say anything. I notice that everywhere they say you have taken charge of the Ashram. This needs contradiction.[2] I am trying to think out something.

I hope those [who] were stung have now recovered.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5387. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9621

505. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

AMOD,
Before prayer, March 23, 1930

CHI. KUSUM,

I have your letter.

If Narandas and Gangabehn permit you, come and spend a day. I hope you know that we reach Broach on Wednesday. You should get this letter on Monday. You would have got it today, but I had no time at all to write.

It is foolish of you to feel sorry that you could not get up at three. How can you help if your body is not strong enough? Besides,everything depends on God's will. It is enough if you do not remain complacent. I know that you are striving hard. I have no time to write more.

I have of course written to Dudhibehn.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1796

[1] On the back of the letter is noted "March 23, 1930", which appears to be the date on which it was received by the addressee.

[2] *Vide* "Notes", 27-3-1930, sub-title, "Mirabai Not Manager".

506. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

BUVA,
Sunday, March 23, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

You seem to have taken a vow not to write to me. I know that you are submerged in work. That is precisely why I must have a letter from you. You should not work so much that you may fall ill. Speak less loudly and spare your throat.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—5: Ku. Premabehn Kantakne, p. 9

507. SPEECH AT BUVA

March 23, 1930

Although I make strong speeches and have set out to violate the law, the Government dare not arrest me. Why are you afraid of such a Government? The Government took Shri Sen Gupta to Rangoon and sentenced him to about 10 days' simple imprisonment. Should we not conclude from this that as compared to 1857 and 1919, it has lost some of its strength? I have only 80 volunteers with me. Even then the Government cannot arrest me. What then could it do if there were 80,000 volunteers? Hence Hindus and Muslims, men and women, should participate in this struggle.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 30-3-1930

508. SPEECH AT SAMNI[1]

March 23, 1930

To date, at least 80 persons have handed in their resignations. It will be regarded as cowardice to hand in one's resignation and then to withdraw it. There is no compulsion to resign. It is advisable to give up the post of Headman, looking upon it as something base, dirty and filthy. In the Ashram, classes have been started to train up women in fifteen days. Dadabhai's grand-daughter[2] is a teacher there. The women of Samni should also come forward. If you cannot do so, will you not at least produce khadi? Nowadays a large number of people

[1] The meeting was held at 9 p.m.

[2] Khorshedbehn Naoroji

wear khadi. But if those who make it go to jail, who will continue to produce khadi? You should therefore produce khadi.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 30-3-1930

509. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SAMNI,
Monday [*March 24, 1930*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I send seven articles in this packet. It is about 10 p.m. now. I have revised the articles, but you should revise them further if necessary. I do not think I have left out anything. I am sending with this some letters for Ashram inmates. See that you do not forget to pass them on to the persons concerned and do not lose them.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I wished to write to the women there, but all the available time was taken up by *Young India* and rest. There are three loose letters and two envelopes.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11484

510. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

TRALSA,
March 25, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

I have just sent a p.c. to Nonami.

You will see a paragraph[2] I have devoted to you in *Young India*.

Give me your latest time-table. I have suggested to Narandas that Keshu may be asked to lead the prayer. He sings well. He has an excellent ear for music and his Sanskrit pronunciation is perfect. Is the women's prayer recited daily?

I am taking my journeyings very well indeed. But over 15 have become disabled. They expect to be all right by tomorrow. They are all in Broach which we reach tomorrow morning.

I am feeling sleepy now.

Love.

BAPU

[1] Gandhiji was at Samni on this date.

[2] *Vide* "Notes", 27-3-1930, sub-title, "Mirabai Not Manager".

[PS.]

If the 5 young men who came to me were repentant and undertook to abide by the rules, I did contemplate their being taken.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5389. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9623

511. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

TRALSA

Tuesday, March 25,1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,[1]

I have your letter. Your anger is meaningless. The *Gita* teaches us restraint. At the same time, it says that it is not possible for a man to change his nature. So far as possible, restrain your temper and be satisfied with that. It is enough if you never try to deceive yourself. If you can master your health you will be able to do so many other things. You have done the right thing in holding the childrens' prayer in a separate courtyard. I had sent you that information while I was on tour of U.P.[2] and therefore have nothing to say against it. There are two advantages in having separate prayers for the children. The prayers of the grown-ups can be conducted with more seriousness and we will be able to pay more attention to the prayer for the children.

Keep on writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 32942

512. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

Tuesday [*March 25, 1930*][3]

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. You must give up all worry. Your achievement lies in your effort.

"Never, O loved one, does the doer of a good deed meet with a sad end."[4] Look up the meaning. Keep doing whatever you can.Go to Morvi if your health is not satisfactory, there is no harm at all in going. Keep on writing to me as long as I am free. Learn the

[1] The letter is in a different hand but the subscription is by Gandhiji.

[2] In September-October, 1929.

[3] The letter was received by the addressee on March 26, 1930.

[4] *Bhagavad Gita*, VI. 40

pronunciation of the *Gita* verses from Krishnadas.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2378

513. DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR A.I.C.C.

[*March 25, 1930*][1]

This meeting of A.I.C.C. endorses the resolution[2] passed by the Working Committee giving full authority to Gandhiji in the matter of civil disobedience and congratulates him and his companions and the country on the march begun by him on 12th instant,[3] in pursuit of his plan of civil disobedience. The Committee hopes that the whole country will respond to the action taken by G. and his band in a manner befitting the occasion .

The A.I.C.C. hereby authorizes the Provincial C.C.s to undertake such civil disobedience as to them may seem proper and in the manner that may appear to them to be most suitable. The committee, however, hopes that so far as is possible the Provinces shall concentrate on a civil breach of the Salt laws. The committee trusts that whilst preparations may be fully made civil disobedience for Poorna Swaraj shall not start till Gandhiji has reached his destination, actually committed a breach of the Salt laws and given the word to the other Provinces through this committee or he has been earlier arrested.

In the purview of the A.I.C.C. time has arrived for all educational institutions whether Government-owned, aided or national to suspend their literary activities and devote their whole attention to the compaign for liberty.

The A.I.C.C. congratulates Sardar Vallabhbhai, Sjt. Sen Gupta on their arrest and notes with satisfaction that their arrestinstead of weakening has strengthened the national resolve to reach the goal without any delay.[4]

From a copy: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The meeting of the A.I.C.C. was held on March 25, 1930.

[2] *Vide* "Never Faileth", 20-2-1930.

[3] *Vide* 1st footnote to "Parting Message at Chandola", 12-3-1930.

[4] *Vide* also "Official Pettiness", 20-3-1930 and "Mountain in Labour", 27-3-1930.

514. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, TRALSA

March 25, 1930

Mahatmaji said he heard that some Muslim friends had complained that he and his party did not pass through their villages. If he was invited he would surely have included such villages in his programme but his present tour was such that he could not go to any village uninvited and he could not force the villagers to receive him.

In Dandi, a Muslim has invited me and I will be putting up in his bungalow. Satyagraha will commence from the Muslim friend's house. My Muslim friends should not, therefore, feel aggrieved. I only want their blessings so that I may achieve success in my religious fight. Muslims and Hindus both want that this tax should go as both consume equal quantity of salt and both feel the pinch. Only when they are able to get the tax abrogated, will they get enough strength to get swaraj. They must know that crores are being sent away to England by various means.

Making a passing reference to the Sarda Act, Gandhiji said they need not be afraid of that Bill. He could not think of the Government interfering in such things but the people also should understand that nothing is gained by marrying their children of tender age.

This is not the time for marriages when this fight is going on. They must not put any restraint on their sons but all this abysmal ignorance is due to our bondage and dependence.

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-3-1930

515. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

Wednesday, March 26, 1930

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. I also read your letter to Manilal. I will not, therefore, rag you in this letter.

I can justify your point of view. And I believe that you wish to keep Sita at Akola. You, too, must then stay there. She should live where you do, and you should live where she does.

But I do not believe that you cannot bring up Sita in the Ashram as you would wish to do. If you use your imagination, you will realize that you will get nowhere else the atmosphere you have in the Ashram. Old and young, all absorb imperceptibly a great deal from the moral atmosphere surrounding them. There is only a half-truth in your belief that the children there are ill-mannered. In the Ashram we try to make the children independent-minded. They are not punished

physically and, therefore, they seem to have become ill-mannered. But I am sure that the ultimate result will be good. However, if you decide to stay in the Ashram and to keep Sita there, you must observe the following rules:

1. You should not leave Sita unattended to do any work.

2. You must take a promise from anyone to whom you may entrust Sita that he or she will give her nothing to eat.

3. Sita should be fed at fixed hours.

4. If possible, she should be kept on milk and fruit only.

5. [You] must take some exercise every day.

6. If you or Sita do not keep good health, you should run away from the place.

You should follow these rules disregarding opposition from anybody. If you do not have the strength of mind to do that, I think it will be difficult for you to stay in the Ashram. Do come and see me at Surat.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4767

516. SPEECH AT BROACH[1]

March 26, 1930

Chandubhai has asked for my blessings. But who am I to give blessings? I have myself come to seek blessings. I hope that by the time I reach Dandi the blessings I am receiving at every village on this march will have added up to such a mountain that even this monster of a Government will cower at the sight.[2]

A Muslim youth has sent me questions on the Hindu-Muslim problem. One of them is: "Do you expect to win swaraj through your own single effort or assisted merely by the Hindus?"

I have never dreamt that I could win swaraj merely through my effort or assisted only by the Hindus. I stand in need of the assistance of Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians, Sikhs, Jews and all other Indians. I need the assistance even of Englishmen. But I know too that all this

[1] A summary of the speech was published in *Young India*, 3-4-1930, under the heading "Hindu-Muslim Question", with the following note from Gandhiji: "The speech delivered at Broach on 26th ultimo deals with the communal question and is rather important. A full summary is therefore given below." In what follows, the *Young India* version has been collated with the Gujarati report.

[2] The following thirteen paragraphs are from *Young India*.

combined assistance is worthless if I have not one other assistance, that is, from God. All is vain without His help. And if He is with this struggle, no other help is necessary.

But to realize His help and guidance in this struggle, I need your blessings, the blessings of all communities. The blessings of thousands of men and women belonging to all communities that have attended this march are to me a visible sign of the hand of God in this struggle.

I know that there are occasions when the hand of God has to be traced in the curses of men. But this is not such an occasion. Today I am doing what the nation has been yearning for during the past ten years. Have I not been rebuked for delaying civil resistance? Have not friends angrily said, "You are stopping the progress of the nation towards its goal? You have only to say, 'Let there be civil resistance', behold ! there is swaraj." There is some truth in the taunt. Full civil resistance does mean swaraj. But I was staying my hand. I had no confidence in myself. I was straining my ear tolisten to the still small voice within, but only up to yesterday there was no response. It was in Lahore I had told a journalist that I saw nothing on the horizon to warrant civil resistance. But studdenly, as in a flash, I saw the light in the Ashram. Self-confidence returned. Englishmen and some Indian critics have been warning me against the hazard. But the voice within is clear I must put forth all my effort or retire altogether and for all time from public life. I feel that now is the time or it will be never.

And so I am out for battle and am seeking help on bended knees from this white beard[1] as also the little girls. For in this battle even they can help; and thank God, they are eager to do so. I have insistent letters from them demanding enlistment.

Thus the answer to the Muslim youth's question is complete. I need the help of all races and from all climes.

A satyagrahi has no power he can call his own. All the power he may seem to possess is from and of God. He therefore moves towards his goal carrying the world's opinion with him. Without the help of God he is lame, blind, groping.

Ever since 1921 I have been reiterating two words, "self-purification" and "self-sacrifice". God will not assist him without these two. The world is touched by sacrifice. It does not then discriminate about the merits of a cause. Not so God. He is all-seeing. He insists on the purity of the cause and on adequate sacrifice therefor.

[1] Gandhiji here pointed towards Abbas Tyabji.

The question was put by a Mussalman representing a powerful interest. But had a little Parsi girl representing but a hundred thousand Parsis asked the question, I should have given the same answer and said: "Without the help of Parsis there is no swaraj." I am thankful to be able to say that I have had during the march abundant proof of the blessings of these communities. I have read friendliness in the eyes and in the speech of the Mussalmans who along with the rest have lined our route or attended the meetings. They have even given material aid.

Yet I know that I have not the Ali Brothers with me. Maulana Shaukat Ali will no longer have me in his pocket. Do not think, I do not miss him. I hold no distinction between him and blood brother. His resistance therefore can only be short-lived. If truth is in me, the Brothers must capitulate. They cannot long keep out of the battle. I crave too the assistance of Englishmen. It was neither empty formulanor a touch of vanity that prompted me to send an English friend with my letter to the Viceroy. But choosing Reginald Reynolds as my messenger, I sealed the bond between them and me. For my enmity is not against them, it is against their rule. I seem to be born to be an instrument to compass the end of that rule. But if a hair of an English head was touched I should feel the same grief as I should over such a mishap to my brother. I say to them as a friend: "Why will you not understand that your rule is ruining this country? It has got to be destroyed even though you may pound us to powder or drown us. We must declare what we feel."

The second question is: "Under swaraj how many seats will Mussalmans, have in the legislatures? " What answer can I return to such a question? If I were Viceroy of India I should say to the Mussalmans, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis, etc. "Take what you like, the balance will go to the Hindus," It is true that the Sanatani Hindu will never let me become Viceroy. The fact is that I am unfit to do such accounting. But it should be sufficient to know that the Congress has pledged itself not to accept any communal solution that does not satisfy the parties concerned. I am bound by that pledge. For the Congress all are one. They are all Indians and therefore their freedom is guaranteed. No more can be expected by any community.

Civil resistance will merely give the power to the nation to assert her will. But when the time comes for its assertion, the document embodying the will will have to be sealed by all the communities. Thus without the co-operation of all communities, there is no Independence.

But what should we do meanwhile? We must at least be true to

the salt we eat. Her starving millions are the salt of India's earth. To be true to them we must free the salt from a tax which they have to pay equally with the rich and in the same proportion as the rich. In our ignorance we have been paying this inhuman imposition. Having realized our folly we will be traitors to the starving millions if we submit to the exaction any longer.

Who can help liking this poor man's battle? The cruel tax is no respecter of persons. It is therefore as much the interest of the Mussalman as of the Hindu to secure its abolition. This is a fight undertaken in the name of God and for the sake of the millions of the paupers of this country.[1]

Who does not approve of a struggle to do away with a salt tax amounting to Rs. 6 crores? What a great hardship it is for a poor Muslim if he cannot get salt. Is there any Indian who will not participate in this struggle to get this tax repealed?

This struggle is being carried on in the name of God. It is being carried on for the benefit of the poor and the needy and not for the sake of the wealthy. And is there anyone who will keep away from a struggle for the needy?

I have answered the questions. Shri Chandubhai has vehemently asserted that the Broach District will contribute the largest share in this struggle and, although the people of this district may lose their lives, they will not fail to serve the people. I hope that the men and women who have assembled here will fulfil Chandubhai's hopes. If all of them get themselves enrolled, Shri Chandubhai's hunger will be satisfied and I shall consider that I have received more than what I had asked for.

I pray to God, in Whose name I began: may He grant you the ability to understand what I have told you and the strength to act accordingly.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-3-1930

517. SPEECH AT ANKLESHWAR

March 26, 1930

By merely saying that a government is "foreign", no idea is conveyed as to its nature. It may be that though a government is foreign, the plight of the people under it may not be so miserable. Although Rajpipla is an Indian State, I would regard it as "foreign"

[1] What follows has been taken from *Navajivan*.

since it has such a large number of liquor booths.

One can understand the Government levying a tax on ghee. Liquor or cigarettes can also be taxed. This Government is, however, so cunning, arrogant and inhuman that it levies a duty on an item which is consumed by the poorest of the poor. We are lucky, at any rate, that there is no tax on the air we breathe! There is a tax on water and the tax on salt amounts to 1,400 per cent. When people develop the strength to abolish the tax that is levied on salt, we shall not have to hear the complaint that there are so many liquor booths. The wealthy consume liquor, but they do not pay Rs. 25 crores for it; this amount comes from the pockets of the poor.

Resignations have been received from Headmen. I do not, however, trust these people as some of those who have resigned have informed the Collector that they were compelled to do so. Moreover, where one person has resigned, another has taken charge. If there is such a scramble for this office, we should find out whether those who have resigned have actually relinquished charge.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 30-3-1930

518. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[After *March 26, 1930*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

Your reference to Reynolds is instructive. You must come closer to him and not let him feel lonely. There is something wrong in his resistance to the wheel. He must see the truth lying behind it. The wheel is not an Eastern institution. At one time it was common to mankind. When Adam delved and Eve span, who was then the gentleman? But you know how best to make him feel thoroughly at home. He may be as Western as he can be and yet should be able to feel at home in the Ashram. There must be something wrong with it, if he cannot do so. All things are possible with love.

Totaramji is all you describe him to be.

You must cope with the noise. Confer with Narandas.

My health seems to be excellent. I have put on 2 lb. weight. All have. We were weighed in Broach.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5383. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9617

[1] Gandhiji was at Broach on March 26. The letter was evidently written some time after.

519. MOUNTAIN IN LABOUR

The mountain was in labour in Rangoon and it brought forth a ridiculous mouse. A powerful Government put a distinguished son of India, who was suffering from a dangerous illness, under the strain of an utterly unnecessary prosecution, and spent public money. The ostensible reason was that Sjt. Sen Gupta had delivered, whilst he was passing through Burma, two speeches the like of which are delivered every day from a thousand platforms all over the country without being noticed by the Government. The prosecution could find no witness who was affected by the "seditious" performance. The magistrate was apologetic for having to deliver the judgment he did. Had he been in an environment of freedom he would have discharged the distinguished prisoner and reprimanded the Government for bringing a frivolous complaint before him.

Sjt. Sen Gupta is none the worse for the prosecution. It has enhanced his popularity, and his resolute refusal to defend himself or to answer any questions has furnished an additional proof of the courage for which he has always been known.

But this judgment has a deeper meaning. If Sardar Vallabhbhai was really guilty of the crime imputed to him, he deserved a severer punishment; if Sjt. Sen Gupta was guilty of sedition he deserved exemplary punishment, not mere ten days. If disaffection is a crime and the section has any reality about it, I who have made of sedition a religion should have been tried and heavily punished long ago.

Let no one think that lighter punishments are being awarded or I am being left alone because the Government is afraid of anything. The real reason is deeper and perhaps creditable to the Government. They are ashamed of punishing people for holding opinions and publicly expressing them. They are sensitive to the world opinion rising against them for such conduct. The Rangoon magistrate felt constrained to say that inasmuch as there was in Sjt. Sen Gupta's speech no incitement to violence, he saw no reason to award a penalty befitting the crime of sedition. Section 124A is really concerned with violence. The authors of the section probably never conceived the possibility of anybody harbouring sedition and yet having no trace of violence in him. This reluctance or evenincapacity to punish heavily or even to prosecute in the absence of violence is an eloquent tribute to non-violence. He who runs may see that if the campaign that has hitherto remained wholly untainted by violence retains its character, victory in the near future is a certainty. Not only will the salt-tax go, but the other difficulties in our progress towards swaraj will also vanish like smoke, in the pure air of non-violence.

Young India, 27-3-1930

520. 'RENDER UNTO CAESAR'

An unknown English friend has thought it worth while cabling to me that in launching upon civil disobedience I am going against the teaching of Jesus: "Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's". Another, an Indian Christian, writes from the Punjab somewhat in the same fashion and, forsaking charity, pours abuse upon my devoted head for my action. He says further that whereas he considered me to be a good man formerly, he is now utterly undeceived. I can reassure this friend that civil disobedience is no new thing with me. I began to preach and practise it in 1906. His regard for me therefore was evidently from ignorance, if his present dislike of me is wise. But I have learnt from the New Testament, as also from other sources, that if one wishes to walk in the fear of God, one should be indifferent about popular praise or blame.

Now for the question. As I hold my conduct to be in utter agreement with universal religion and as I hold the New Testament teaching in great esteem, I should not like it to be justly said of me that I was going against the teaching of Jesus. "Render unto Caesar" was quoted against me before too. I have not read into the celebrated verse the meaning that my critics have sought to put into it. Jesus evaded the direct question put to him because it was a trap. He was in no way bound to answer it. He therefore asked to see the coin for taxes. And then said with withering scorn, "How can you who traffic in Caesar's coins and thus receive what to you are benefits of Caesar's rule refuse to pay taxes?" Jesus's whole preaching and practice point unmistakably to non-co-operation, which necessarily includes nonpayment of taxes. Jesus never recognized man's authority as against God's. He who disregarded the whole host of priesthood, which was in those days superior to kinghood, would not have hesitated to defy the might of emperors had he found it necessary. And did he not treat with supreme disdain the whole of the farcical trial through which he was made to pass?

Lastly, let me warn honest friends against running into the trap of literalism. The "letter" surely "killeth", it is the "spirit" that "giveth life". In the present case I find no difficulty in reading into the text a satisfactory meaning. But it would matter little to me that some text should confound me, if there was no mistaking the spirit of the whole teaching of a book respected as among the world's religious scriptures.

Young India, 27-3-1930

521. DUTY OF DISLOYALTY

There is no halfway house between active loyalty and active disloyalty. There is much truth in the late Justice Stephen's remark that a man to prove himself not guilty of disaffection must prove himself to be actively affectionate. In these days of democracy there is no such thing as active loyalty to a, person. You are therefore loyal or disloyal to institutions. When therefore you are disloyal you seek not to destroy persons but institutions. The present State is an institution which, if one knows it, can never evoke loyalty. It is corrupt. Many of its laws governing the conduct of persons are positively inhuman. Their administration is worse. Often the will of one person is the law. It may safely be said that there are as many rulers as there are districts in this country. These, called Collectors, combine in their own persons the executive as well as the judicial functions. Though their acts are supposed to be governed by laws in themselves highly defective, these rulers are often capricious and regulated by nothing but their own whims and fancies. They represent not the interests of the people but those of their foreign masters or principals. These (nearly three hundred) men form an almost secret corporation, the most powerful in the world. They are required to find a fixed minimum of revenue, they have therefore often been found to be most unscrupulous in their dealings with the people. This system of government is confessedly based upon a merciless exploitation of unnumbered millions of the inhabitants of India. From the village Headmen to their personal assistants these satraps have created a class of subordinates who, whilst they cringe before their foreign masters, in their constant dealings with the people act so irresponsibly and so harshly as to demoralize them and by a system of terrorism render them incapable of resisting corruption. It is then the duty of those who have realized the awful evil of the system of Indian Government to be disloyal to it and actively and openly to preach disloyalty. Indeed, loyalty to a State so corrupt is a sin, disloyalty a virtue.

The spectacle of three hundred million people being cowed down by living in the dread of three hundred men is demoralizing alike for the despots as for the victims. It is the duty of those who have realized the evil nature of the system however attractive some of its features may, torn from their context, appear to be, to destroy it without delay. It is their clear duty to run any risk to achieve the end.

But it must be equally clear that it would be cowardly for three hundred million people to seek to destroy the three hundred authors or administrators of the system. It is a sign of gross ignorance to

devise means of destroying these administrators or their hirelings. Moreover they are but creatures of circumstances. The purest man entering the system will be affected by it and will be instrumental in propagating the evil. The remedy therefore naturally is not being enraged against the administrators and therefore hurting them, but to non-co-operate with the system by withdrawing all the voluntary assistance possible and refusing all its so-called benefits. A little reflection will show that civil disobedience is a necessary part of non-co-operation. You assist an administration most effectively by obeying its orders and decrees. An evil administration never deserves such allegiance. Allegiance to it means partaking of the evil. A good man will therefore resist an evil system or administration with his whole soul. Disobedience of the law of an evil State is therefore a duty. Violent disobedience deals with men who can be replaced. It leaves the evil itself untouched and often accentuates it. Non-violent, i.e., civil, disobedience is the only and the most successful remedy and is obligatory upon him who would dissociate himself from evil.

There is danger in civil disobedience only because it is still only a partially tried remedy and has always to be tried in an atmosphere surcharged with violence. For when tyranny is rampant much rage is generated among the victims. It remains latent because of their weakness and bursts in all its fury on the slightest pretext. Civil disobedience is a sovereign method of transmuting this undisciplined life-destroying latent energy into disciplined life-saving energy whose use ensures absolute success. The attendant risk is nothing compared to the result promised. When the world has become familiar with its use and when it has had a series of demonstrations of its successful working, there will be less risk in civil disobedience than there is in aviation, in spite of that science having reached a high stage of development.

Young India, 27-3-1930

522. VOLUNTEERS' PLEDGE

The A.I.C.C has framed a brief pledge for volunteers. It had necessarily to be the simplest possible. We may not expect hundreds of thousands to sign meticulous pledges. Beyond therefore signing the Congress creed, which includes non-violence and truth as I translate the expression 'peaceful and legitimate', and beyond the undertaking to obey orders, the pledge contains nothing more. Later on, when the whole mass of people join, there will be no pledges. There will then be many silent nameless heroes; if there will also be some bad or weak men. Let it be also understood that the pledge is an

application. It does not entitle the applicant to be admitted for the mere signing of the form. Let it be remembered too that the old stringent forms are in no case superseded. The present form is devised for the emergency. The responsibility of recruiting officers is indeed great. The form in no way means that we have now said goodbye to communal unity, khaddar, or removal of the evil of untouchability and drink and drugs. It means that these things are an integral part of the Congress. Only in bringing into the Congress fold thousands of men and women for the fight for swaraj we present to them a simple formula in the certain belief that those who are controlling the Congress will not, in any shape or form, water down the integral parts of the Congress programme. The present plan is based upon implicit trust in the Congress organization being run with absolute honesty. Lastly it should not be forgotten that these volunteers do not become Congress voters.

Young India, 27-3-1930

523. SOME SUGGESTIONS

The resolution passed by the A.I.C.C. at its Ahmedabad meeting throws the burden on me of giving the signal for starting civil disobedience all over the country, assuming that I am kept free till I reach Dandi. The reason is obvious. The A.I.C.C. wishes to take every reasonable precaution against mishaps. In the event of my arrest, it would be dangerous to stop the movement. Before my arrest, the A.I.C.C. will not anticipate me. So far as I can judge now, the workers may assume that the date for making an all-India start will be the 6th of April. It is the day of commencement of the national week. It is the day of satyagraha that in 1919 witnessed a mass awakening unknown before. The seven days that followed witnessed some dark deeds on our part and culminated in the inhuman Jallianwala massacre. If all goes well I should reach Dandi on April 5th. April 6th therefore appears to me to be the most natural day for commencing satyagraha. But the workers, while they may make preparations, must await the final word.

The release of the embargo however does not mean that every province or every district is bound at once to commence civil disobedience although it may not be ready and although its First Servant does not feel the inner urge. He will refuse to be hustled into action if he has no confidence in himself or in his immediate surroundings. No one will be blamed for inaction, but blame will most decidedly descend upon the shoulders of him who instead of controlling the surroundings is carried away by them.

What we all are after is mass civil disobedience. It cannot be made. It must be spontaneous, if it is to deserve the name and if it is to be successful. And there certainly will be no mass response where the ground has not been previously tilled, manured and watered. The greatest precaution has to be taken everywhere against an outbreak of violence. Whilst it is true, as I have said, that civil resistance this time will continue even though violence may break out, it is equally true that violence on our part will harm the struggle and retard its progress. Two opposite forces can never work concurrently so as to help each other. The plan of civil disobedience has been conceived to neutralize and ultimately entirely to displace violence and enthrone non-violence in its stead, to replace hatred by love, to replace strife by concord.

The meaning then of not suspending the fight in spite of any outbreak of violence simply is that votaries of non-violence will allow themselves, will even seek, to be consumed in the flames if any should rise. They will not care to remain helpless witnesses either of the organized violence of the Government or of the sporadic violence of an enraged group or nation. The workers will therefore take, in each province, all precautions humanly possible and then plunge into the fight even though in so doing they run the greatest risks imaginable. It follows that everywhere there will be willing submission to the judgment of those who may be in their own provinces known for their belief in non-violence as an article of faith for the purpose of gaining Purna Swaraj.

There has been talk of disobeying other laws. The proposal has not attracted me. I believe in concentrating attention upon the salt laws. Salt mines are to be found almost everywhere. The idea is not to manufacture salt in salable quantities but through manufacture and otherwise to commit a deliberate and open breach of salt laws.

The *chaukidari* tax laws have been suggested for possible disobedience. This tax does not in my opinion comply with the conditions that the salt tax fulfils. The idea is to disobey such laws as are bad for all time as far as can be seen today. We do not want the salt tax even under swaraj. *Chaukidari* tax is perhaps not such a tax. We may need *chaukidars* even under swaraj. If such is the case, it may be wise not to touch that tax so long as we have other taxes or other laws to combat.

Then there are the forest laws. I have not studied them. I must therefore write with reserve. There can be no doubt that we do not want our forests to be destroyed altogether or wood to be cut uneconomically. There is a need, I have little doubt, for mending these laws. There is greater need perhaps for humaner administration

of these laws. The reform may well await the establishment of swaraj. Nor so far as I am aware has there been any popular education about the grievances arising out of these laws or their administration .

Closely allied to the forests are grazing areas. I do not know that regulations governing their use are so irksome as to be a just grievance.

Much better from my standpoint is the picketing of liquor shops, opium dens and foreign-cloth shops. Though picketing is not by itself illegal, past experience shows that the Government will want to suppress all effective picketing. That does not much matter. We are out to resist it wherever we can, consistently with our creed. But I fear the unscrupulous behaviour of liquor dealers and the ignorant wrath of foreign-cloth dealers. I should like public opinion to consolidate itself more fully around these two evils and would like workers to undertake more systematic education of the dealers as also of their customers. We have to eradicate both the evils some day or other. Wherever, therefore, workers have confidence in their ability to carry on picketing without taking undue risks of the type I have mentioned, they should start the campaign, but in no case because they must be doing something when the word is given for action and because they do not see their way to take up the salt laws. It seems to me to be the safest thing to take up the latter for the time being; what I have said above is merely by way of caution. Wherever workers feel that they have the real inner call for action and are themselves free from violence, they are at liberty, as soon as the word is given, to take up such civil disobedience as they may consider necessary and desirable, subject of course to the A.I.C.C. control.

Meanwhile between now and the 6th of April the provinces should lose no time in making their preparation for mobilization.

Young India, 27-3-1930

524. NOTES

SCARCITY OF KHADDAR

There is naturally nowadays a run on khaddar and letters are being received at the A.I.S.A. office that there is going to be shortage of khaddar in the near future. This is as it should be. The remedy is for full khaddarites to cut down their requirements, for converts to buy only what they need and for all to help to manufacture more khaddar. Just as there never can be scarcity of bread if there is an ensured supply of wheat, so need there be no scarcity of khaddar if there is an ensured supply of cotton. There is no danger of the supply of the cotton running out. The tragedy consists in the people needlessly believing that khaddar cannot be manufactured in our

villages and streets as food is prepared in every home. People need not take up the spinning-wheel if they will take up the *takli* and begin spinning at once. They have then to go to the ordinary weaver and coax him to weave their yarn. If there is a proper awakening of national consciousness, the weavers will not look askance at hand-spun yarn as many of them undoubtedly do today. For such organization of khaddar on a large scale, there must be a real yearning for it among the people. Everyone will not take part in civil disobedience, but everyone can take part in the manufacture of khaddar. Let the reader know that the leaders in the civil disobedience campaign all over the country are, in the vast majority of cases, derived from confirmed khaddarites. Their withdrawal from khaddar manufacture will tend seriously to tell upon the output of khaddar unless people take to self-spinning and self-help generally.

MIRABAI NOT MANAGER

I observe that papers persistently report that Shrimati Mirabai Slade is managing the Ashram as its head in my place. This is not true. The Ashram has been now for a long time under the control of a managing board of which Mahadev Desai is the Chairman, Imam Saheb Bawazeer the Vice-Chairman and Narandas Gandhi the Secretary. Mirabai became head of the sanitary department as other women took up other departments in order to relieve the men joining me in the march. She is also taking her due share in teaching the infant class and rendering such other service as may be required. What she will ultimately be, no one can tell, she least of all. Suffice it for the reader to know that she has thrown in her lot with the Ashram and me for all time to come. Her desire for serving India is an overmastering passion. It was a privilege to receive her in the Ashram. Over four years of closest contact have not diminished the affection she evoked in me when I knew nothing about her parentage, and knew her only through her two reticent letters which I had received when she first applied for admission. No member of the Ashram has striven more strenuously than Mirabai to observe the rules of the Ashram and to realize its ideals. But she is not the head of the Ashram.

Young India, 27-3-1930

525. THE LAW OF THE SWORD

A teacher writes:[1]

Reading this letter, one is reminded of the story of the wolf and the lamb. The wolf wanted to eat up the lamb anyhow and was only

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had criticized the system of land revenue introduced by the British in India.

looking for an excuse. Unable to find a better it accused the lamb's forefathers of some guilt and ate it up. If one has land, what concern is it of the Government to investigate who the rightful owner of the land is? The Government is hungry for money and it collects the money by the strength of the sword. In the Council the bureaucracy allows lengthy debates. But there is always behind the debates the assumption that ultimately there will be no decrease in land revenue that will accrue to the Government whoever might be the rightful owners of the land.

Therefore, the real question before us is how we are going to meet this power of the sword. Shall we do it with the sword? If we have to fight the sword only with the sword, we shall remain in slavery for years and years to come; because, whatever kind of government there may be, the strength of the sword of the crores of farmers who pay land revenue cannot increase in a day. To establish the farmer's ownership of the land, there is only one way; and that is to teach him the *mantra* of satyagraha. This is a power which is inherent in everyone. The farmer has only to be aware of this power. If a farmer could realize that by peacefully resisting injustice his land could be prevented from being seized by anyone, he would never fall a victim to injustice. Today, the whole of India is taking lessons in the school of satyagraha. It would be good if peasants were to join this school. Then the intricate question of the ownership of land would be solved by itself.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 27-3-1930

526. MESSAGE TO HINDUSTANI SEVA DAL

SAJOD,
March 27, 1930

I expect the volunteers of the Hindustani Seva Dal to stand by their pledge of non-violence under every conceivable circumstance.

The Hindu, 29-3-1930

527. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

ANKLESHWAR,
March 27, 1930

CHI. MRIDU,

I have received your letter. I was of course intending to write to you, but some work or other kept coming up and writing to you got postponed.

The newspaper report was incorrect. Only Sumangal Prakash was really ill. The members of the Anand Mandal gave him very good treatment. Others stayed on merely to take rest. There is no such thing as opening a camp for the sick. Had it been so, I would have sent for you first. I feel that it will not be long before women too plunge into the struggle. I have no doubt at all that God will fully nourish your desire to serve. Khurshedbehn will be most probably coming to meet me. If you wish, you may come here at that time.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11178, Courtesy . Sarabhai Foundation

528. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, SAJOD[1]

[*March 27, 1930*][2]

It is deplorable that we do not listen to one another. If someone listens to everyone's advice, everyone will finally stop advising him. Each one of us should become humble and carry on. No one should find fault with others but each should seek out and rid himself of his own shortcomings. None should arrogantly believe that because everything has gone on well so far, we have as good as arrived at Dandi. Who knows what will happen tomorrow or the very next moment? On the night prior to the coronation, Shri Ramachandra and the people were under the impression that it would take place the following morning, but God's ways are inscrutable. Hence we should not fail to remember God every moment. When setting out from the Ashram, the condition was laid down that those who wished to leave should do so before the march began. Today I go further and say that those who wish to leave before we reach Dandi may do so. It is all right even if I alone stick on. I shall keep smiling. If the world criticizes me, I shall join in that criticism and conclude that I merit the charge of being stupid. However, despite this, I shall fight alone and continue to prepare salt.

From today, the first batch will form the rear and the line will begin with the batch which is at the tail end now. Those who are unwell or weak or are bothered by dust may go ahead and rest at the next halt or may follow later. If crowds of people try to rush in, we should make up the rear of the line. We shall have no difficulties if we

[1] Extracted from "Dharma Yatra"

[2] The speech was delivered one day after Gandhiji and party left Ankleshwar, which was on March 26.

do so. Perhaps they, too, will understand and make things easy for us.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-4-1930

529. SPEECH AT SAJOD

March 27, 1930

Tomorrow morning the tour of the Broach District will be over, and it will be proper to sum up my impressions at this place. If we are to depend for swaraj on what has been done so far, it will take us very long to win it, because it cannot be secured by mere attendance at meetings or by large numbers joining the civil disobedience movement against the salt tax. The achievement in the field of constructive work is very meagre in other districts indeed, but here also it is just as poor. We have not achieved complete boycott of foreign cloth and have not succeeded in popularizing khadi. The entry in the column for the quantity of khadi produced is nil. You have a rich crop of cotton in this district, but you put it to no use yourselves. Consumption of liquor has spread widely. Even in these circumstances, however, I have the hope that this movement will bring about a great awakening among us. The use of khadi is spreading widely in the whole of India. If, in consequence of this, there is shortage of khadi, you can even help in producing more of it. After I leave this place they may or may not let me reach Dandi, but take it from me that the salt tax is gone. If you start doing all that I have suggested, I believe we shall have stormed and won not merely the fort of the salt tax but many other forts as well. As I have the blessings of you all, this monstrous salt tax—no adjectives can be strong enough to describe it—is bound to be abolished. If you produce and spread the required climate by boycotting foreign cloth, we will win the next fort. That is, we shall win Rs. 60 crores. Through liquor and opium we have been throwing away Rs. 25 crores for the privilege of becoming mad. That third fort also we will certainly win, but only if you give up drinking. Rs. 60 crores for foreign cloth, Rs. 25 crores for intoxicants and Rs. 6 crores for the salt tax—if we save all this money our faces will beam with lustre and swaraj will be won in no time. The salt tax is as good as gone, and hence those ofyou who do not wish to join the present movement should all co-operate and help in these two matters. I request all brothers and sisters here to give up foreign cloth and wear khadi. Understand what your true duty is.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 30-3-1930

530. SPEECH AT MANGAROL

March 27, 1930

Let us be under no delusion. As long as we accept the presence of God's hand behind all things, we may keep up our courage and self-confidence and believe the abolition of salt tax a certainty. So far we had been untrue to our salt, but now we must be true to it. It was only on the 12th that we started talking about breaking the salt law. But we have been speaking of two or three other things since 1920. If you remember, according to the Bezwada Congress programme, we were to have two million spinning-wheels working and to boycott all foreign cloth. How much of that have we accomplished? This is a painful, shameful thing. The same can be said about the drink habit. Liquor is being freely consumed. In regard to these two, we believe that we shall be able to enforce them only when we have captured power. But take it from me that the power to remove this Government will drop into our hands when we do away with the evils of foreign cloth and liquor. If we mean to work, here is work for us. All men in this village eat salt; let them manufacture salt for their own use.

Even children should openly steal salt, as it were. Let us burn foreign cloth and buy khadi to wear in its place, or manufacture it with our own hands. At the same time, we should see the licence-holders running liquor booths and persuade them to close the booths. We shall then enjoy fighting for swaraj and become really interested in swaraj. We shall win it only when we do all these things. The fight may start even before the 6th of next month. It only awaits my arrest. No sooner do they arrest me than you should start making salt. When I am arrested, you may do with only a loin-cloth but wear no foreign cloth at all. I repeat even today my old slogan: swaraj hangs by the hand-spun yarn and the khadi woven from it.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 30-3-1930

531. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

RAYMA.
March 28, 1930

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

You are often in my thoughts. Father's watch, which is always hanging from my waist, constantly reminds me of him. The enclosed is among the letters which Mahadev has sent to me to see. I pass it on to you, as it contains a reference to Father. It need not be returned.

I hope you maintain your peace of mind even in the midst of this calamity. Has the burden now lightened somewhat? Do write to me. If you wish the letter to reach me during the march, it may be sent to Surat. If sent to the Ashram, it will be forwarded to me.

Is grandmother at peace with herself? Do not fail to write to me. God bless you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4717. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarjee

532. SPEECH AT RAYMA[1]

March 28, 1930

I cannot live in a district where salt cannot be prepared. So although I am conscious of the affection you have all shown me I have to proceed to Dandi. Although I find it difficult to leave this district, I must go to Dandi and break the law. If on the 12th we can oppose this tax with the blessings of all, Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Parsis, we may take the law as abolished. All of you, Hindus and Muslims, should unite and start making large quantities of salt on the 6th. If the Government chooses to do so, it can even levy a tax on the mud that is dug out of the ground; so why should we pay this tax that it levies on salt? Just as poor women go about selling *babul* twigs which we use for cleaning our teeth, let us all set forthand sell salt to everyone. Shall we not even do this much for the poor millions? History has no instance of a tax as cruel as the salt tax. However, we shall not secure swaraj as soon as the salt duty is abolished. We have to become alert and do other things. We have to get rid of foreign cloth. It is not enough that we wear khadi made in the Punjab. Every one of us should spin for himself and have cloth made out of that yarn. It is our stupidity that we do not all—from children to old men —engage ourselves in this simple and beautiful task. This bespeaks disloyalty towards our country. We can win swaraj immediately by getting rid of foreign cloth and liquor. After having won independence for India, we shall carry out our tasks from the seat of office. Hence by participating in this salt satyagraha and by accomplishing these two other objectives—the latter by those who cannot participate in the struggle itself—you should demonstrate the fact that the Broach district is wholly engaged in India's freedom struggle.

[From Gujarati]
Prajabandhu, 30-3-1930

[1] Delivered at 3.30 p.m.

533. SPEECH TO VOLUNTEERS[1]

[*March 28, 1930*][2]

This is the last week of our pilgrimage. At its very beginning, let us all wash away our sins. We have come across a river while crossing the boundary of each district. We regard a river as sacred. A river is after all an external sign of purification. We should become pure even with its help, we should become humble. We have looked upon Dandi as Hardwar. Let us become worthy of entering a place as holy as Hardwar.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-4-1930

534. SPEECH AT UMRACHHI[3]

March 28, 1930

If a man wishes to undertake a march at the age of sixty-one, he should go to the Himalayas, so that he can at least attain *moksha,* at least have *darshan* of God. But I have learnt an opposite dharma. I want to have this *darshan* through this march only. After having had *darshan* of you, I beg you also to participate in it. This is so because so long as we do not succeed in overthrowing the Satanic Government that exists in the country, we are all participants in it. Such participants will not attain *moksha* even if they go to Dhaulagiri. The *darshan* of God is fraught with difficulties. He dwells in the hearts of thirty crores of people. If you wish to catch a glimpse of Him there, you should establish total identification with their hearts. These thirty crores include all the skeletons of Orissa, Muslims, Parsis, Christians, Sikhs, men and women. We shall continue to be atheists and not believers so long as we do not achieve this unity with every section of the community. Hence I thought to myself that even at the age of sixty-one, I must not rest in peace. How can there be any rest for me so long as this Empire is not destroyed? Until today I held my peace; I used to listen to and suffer hosts of friends. I was afraid lest people take to the wrong path. What if people did not listen to me? I felt, however, that I was a coward. This was a weakness of my spirit. What right did I have to distrust people?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-4-1930

[1] Extracted from "Dharma Yatra"

[2] Gandhiji made these remarks when he and the party crossed the river Keem into Surat district, which was on March 28.

[3] Extracted from "Swaraj Gita"

535. SPEECH AT BHATGAM[1]

March 29, 1930

I have been asked to deliver a sermon. I have little fitness for the task. But tonight I propose to make a confession and turn the searchlight inward. You may call this introspection a sermon if you like.

India in general and you in particular are acquainted with one part of my nature. Moreover, more than in any other part of Gujarat, in this district are concentrated workers who have come in closest touch with me. They know this habit of mine from personal experience.

I am plain-spoken. I have not hesitated to describe the mountain-high faults of the Government in appropriate language. And I have not hesitated often to picture as mountain-high our faults appearing to us as trifling. You know, the common rule is to see our own big lapses as tiny nothings. And when we do realize our blemishes somewhat, we at once pass them on to the broad shoulders of God and say He will take care of them; and then with safety thus assured we proceed from lapse to lapse. But as you know I have disregarded this rule for years. So doing, I have hurt the feelings of many friends and even lost some of them. Tonight I have to repeat the painful operation.[2]

I have already told the group of people who are accompanying me that this is the last week of our march. As we shall reach our destination next Saturday, we shall not have to march any further. But we shall be faced with another task. During this last week we shall have to go through Surat district.

Only this morning at prayer time I was telling my companions that as we had entered the district in which we were to offer civil disobedience, we should insist on greater purification and intenser dedication. I warned them that as the district was more organized and contained many intimate co-workers, there wasevery likelihood of our being pampered. I warned them against succumbing to their pampering. We are not angels. We are very weak, easily tempted. There are many lapses to our debit. God is great. Even today

[1] This appeared in *Young India* under the title "Turning the Searchlight Inward" with the following note from Gandhiji: "At Bhatgam (Dist. Surat) on 29th ultimo I delivered an introspective speech which moved both the audience and me deeply. As it turned out to be an important speech, I give a free and somewhat condensed translation below."

[2] The paragraph that follows has been translated from *Navajivan,* 6 4-1930.

some were discovered. One defaulter confessed his lapse himself whilst I was brooding over the lapses of the pilgrims. I discovered that my warning was given none too soon. The local workers had ordered milk from Surat to be brought in a motor lorry and they had incurred other expenses which I could not justify. I therefore spoke strongly about them. But that did not allay my grief. On the contrary it increased with the contemplation of the wrongs done.

In the light of these discoveries, what right had I to write to the Viceroy the letter in which I have severely criticized his salary which is more than 5,000 times our average income? How could he possibly do justice to that salary? And how can we tolerate his getting a salary out of all proportion to our income? But he is individually not to be blamed for it. He has no need for it. God has made him a wealthy man. I have suggested in my letter that probably the whole of his salary is spent in charity. I have since learnt that my guess is largely likely to be true. Even so, of course, I should resist the giving of such a large salary. I could not vote Rs. 21,000 per month, not perhaps even Rs. 2,100 per month. But when could I offer such resistance? Certainly not if I was myself taking from the people an unconscionable toll. I could resist it only if my living bore some correspondence with the average income of the people. We are marching in the name of God. We profess to act on behalf of the hungry, the naked and the unemployed. I have no right to criticize the Viceregal salary if we are costing the country, say, fifty times seven pice, the average daily income of our people. I have asked the workers to furnish me with an account of the expenses. And the way things are going, I should not be surprised if each of us is costing something near fifty times seven pice. What else can be the result if they will fetch for me from whatever source possible, the choicest oranges and grapes, if they will bring 120 when I should want 12 oranges, if when I need one pound of milk, they will produce three? What else can be the result if we would take all the dainties you may place before us under the excuse that we would hurt your feeling if we did not take them? You give us guavas and grapes and we eat them because they are a free gift from a princely farmer. And then imagine me with an easy conscience writing the Viceregal letter on costly glazed paper with a fountain pen, a free gift from some accommodating friend!Will this behove you and me? Can letter so written produce the slightest effect?

To live thus would be to illustrate the immortal verse of Akho Bhagat, who says that “stolen food is like eating unprocessed mercury”. And to live above the means befitting a poor country is to live on stolen food. This battle can never be won by living on stolen

food. Nor did I bargain to set out on this march for living above our means. We expect thousands of volunteers to respond to the call. It will be impossible to keep them on extravagant terms. My life has become so busy that I get little time to come in close touch even with the eighty companions so as to be able to identify them individually. There was therefore no course open to me but to unburden my soul in public. I expect you to understand the central point of my message. If you have not, there is no hope of swaraj through the present effort. We must become real trustees of the dumb millions.

I have exposed our weaknesses to the public gaze. I have not yet given you all the details, but I have told you enough to enable you to realize our unworthiness to write the letter to the Viceroy.

Now the local co-workers will understand my agony. Weak, ever exposed to temptations, ever failing, why will you tempt us and pamper us? We may not introduce these incandescent burners in our villages. It is enough that one hundred thousand men prey upon three hundred millions. But how will it be when we begin to prey upon one another? In that event dogs will lick our corpses.

These lights are merely a sample of the extravagance I have in mind. My purpose is to wake you up from torpor. Let the volunteers account for every pice spent. I am more capable of offering satyagraha against ourselves than against the Government. I have taken many years before embarking upon civil resistance against the Government. But I should not take as many days for offering it against ourselves. The risk to be incurred is nothing compared to what has to be incurred in the present satyagraha.

Therefore in your hospitality towards servants like us, I would have you to be miserly rather than lavish. I shall not complain of unavoidable absence of things. In order to procure goat's milk for me you may not deprive poor women of milk for their children. It would be like poison if you did. Nor may milk and vegetables be brought from Surat. We can do without them if necessary. Do not resort to motor-cars on the slightest pretext. The rule is, do not ride if you can walk. This is not a battle to be conducted with money. It will be impossible to sustain a mass movement with money. Anywayit is beyond me to conduct the campaign with a lavish display of money.

Extravagance has no room in this campaign. If we cannot gather crowds unless we carry on a hurricane expensive propaganda, I would be satisfied to address half a dozen men and women.[1]

It will be said that in that case reports will not appear in

[1] The paragraph that follows has been translated from *Navajivan*, 6-4-1930.

newspapers. I wish to tell you once and for all that this campaign will not succeed through newspaper reports, but with the assistance of Shri Rama. And, no light is necessary when we are near Him; neither are pen and ink and such other accessories required, nor even speech. An appeal can be made to Him even if one has lost one's limbs.

We may not consider anybody low. I observed that you had provided for the night journey a heavy kerosene burner mounted on a stool which a poor labourer carried on his head. This was a humiliating sight. This man was being goaded to walk fast. I could not bear the sight. I therefore put on speed and outraced the whole company. But it was no use. The man was made to run after me. The humiliation was complete. If the weight had to be carried, I should have loved to see someone among ourselves carrying it. We would then soon dispense both with the stool and the burner. No labourer would carry such a load on his head. We rightly object to *begar* (forced labour). But what was this if it was not *begar*? Remember that in swaraj we would expect one drawn from the so-called lower class to preside over India's destiny. If then we do not quickly mend our ways, there is no swaraj such as you and I have put before the people.

From my outpouring you may not infer that I shall weaken in my resolve to carry on the struggle. It will continue no matter how co-workers or others act. For me there is no turning back whether I am alone or joined by thousands. I would rather die a dog's death and have my bones licked by dogs than that I should return to the Ashram a broken man.[1]

I admit that I have not well used the money you have given out of the abundance of your love. You are entitled to regard me as one of those wretches described in the verses sung in the beginning. Shun me.

Young India, 3-4-1930

536. LIMITS OF BOYCOTT

In my speeches during this march I have said quite a lot about boycott. I have no idea how the newspapers have reported those parts of my speeches. It is necessary to consider and lay down the limits of boycott here as the subject is an important one. As this struggle is a sacred, truthful and non-violent one, that is to say, as it is a religious struggle, it is absolutely essential that no mistake should be made consciously or otherwise. Even the minutest error committed cannot

[1] Gandhiji here says: "Turning to the women, I concluded and nearly broke down as I finished the last sentences."

but harm it.

Boycott has been working in two ways: one is directed against the Government officials and the other against those who do not respect public opinion—for instance, Headmen and such other persons.

It is necessary, indeed it is our duty, not to bow to the official when he visits our village and not to go and pay homage to him. Non-co-operation implies that we should not attend to this official's needs and provide no facilities to him. A bullock-cart-owner should not put his cart at his disposal. The potter should not fetch drinking water for him, the grocer should not provide him with any provisions, and the Headman should not give him a mattress belonging either to the village or to himself. This is so because the official expects these facilities by virtue of his office. The purpose behind not providing these facilities is not to impose any hardship on him but to put an end to his authority and it may also involve an element of civil disobedience.

What if the official is dying of hunger or suffering pain and no one is there to attend on him? At such a time, even at the cost of personal inconvenience, we should serve him. For instance, if his car breaks down, and he is in need of food, we should provide him food and not expect any money in return if he does not happen to have any. Supposing he is suddently taken ill and there is no one to attend on him, we should nurse him with as much care as we would show in nursing our own relatives. We bear him no ill will as a human being. We hate his administration. The Government has not so far become insane, as it has not had to put up with much inconvenience in carrying on the administration. However, once it is really inconvenienced, there is every possibility of its becoming so and transgressing all bounds.It is possible that when this does take place, its officials will be ordered forcibly to exact anything they need from the public. At such a time full use could be made of boycott as explained above. At such a time we realize that boycott is surely our dharma. The official assumes that by virtue of his office the people are obliged to provide all facilities for him. People would be said to have set themselves free only when they can disprove this belief and in the process put up with any hardships that they may have to face. They will be said to have triumphed when they do not yield to such force. Today boycott can be regarded as being extremely simple. However, even when Government officials receive permission to commit robbery and the people, despite the fact that they have been rendered penniless, do not voluntarily give even a twig to be used as a toothbrush, they will be

regarded as having carried out their duty of boycott. However, it should be borne in mind that even when this does occur, if the official is placed in a difficult situation and the authorities do not come to his rescue, we should attend to his needs. This should be considered an occasion for practising the same towards a friend and an enemy. For a satyagrahi there are no enemies in this world, he cannot have any, he should not regard anyone as such. He would boycott even his own son or father if either of these two happened to be an official. For a satyagrahi, there should be no distinction between his own relatives and those holding no such relationship. He would never do to others what he would not do to his own relatives. Let us now take the case of a Headman. Although the entire village wants him to resign, he does not have the courage to do so, or he does not wish to do so out of self-interest. He should not be boycotted on this ground. Such boycott would amount to coercion. Compelling the Headman to resign would amount to making him forcibly perform a meritorious deed. But there can be no use of force, so far as our dharma is concerned. A democratic form of government can never be established by getting anyone to do something by force. To use such force on this nation which is half-dead would be a great sin and, considering the matter solely from the point of view of expediency, we shall see that we shall never be able to serve our purpose by the use of such force. Whether we succeed or not, such force is nothing but violence. Whether the Headman resigns or not is for him to choose. It would be a good thing if he did so yielding to public opinion, but force cannot be used against him if he does not resign.But he cannot exercise his authority; he cannot make the people do anything whatsoever for him by virtue of his authority. He has a dual role to play: he is an official and he is a villager. He will not get any services as an official; as a villager he has a right to get provisions, etc., which he wants. To refuse him these amounts to compelling him to resign. A satyagrahi cannot do so.

The people have a right to carry on a limited social boycott of those who defy public opinion and at times it becomes their duty to do so. Society should not honour a Headman who clings to his office for selfish reasons; in other words, although it would meet its daily requirements, it would sever all other connections with him; people would not attend marriages in his home, decline invitations to dinners from him and although they would share his sorrows, they would refuse to share in his enjoyments. There should be neither bitterness, nor ill will nor violence in such boycott. What should we do if the Headman happens to be our own brother? We should give him the treatment that we would expect from society for ourselves.

We have now considered three types of boycott:

1. boycott of officials because of their office;

2. boycott through use of force of such persons as Headmen; and

3. limited boycott of such persons as the Headmen who refuse to respect public opinion.

The first type of boycott deserves to be practised; it is our dharma to do so. Only those who have courage should practise it. It is well to remember that such boycott may result in occasions when we shall have to put up with extreme hardships. At present the Congress does not ask for such boycott. This latter has already begun in certain parts of Gujarat as the Gujaratis are used to it and have developed a good ability to practise it. It is the special dharma of Gujarat to do so in view of Sardar Vallabhbhai's imprisonment. However, those who cannot continue to carry it on at the critical hour should not do so as there is no harm in their not practising it. It will be harmful, however, if it is given up once it has begun.

The second type of boycott involving the use of force is always to be eschewed, as it involves violence, and there is every possibility of its doing great harm to the people.

The third, that is, limited boycott, is well worth practising. In every task which the satyagrahi undertakes, he has himself to bear suffering but he must never make the opponent suffer. The former is helpless if in the course of his own suffering or hispractising his dharma, the opponent has to suffer or put up with inconvenience.

At present what I ask of the people is civil disobedience of the salt law. If nothing more can be done, let everyone sit quiet but it will be both dangerous and harmful if they retreat after having taken a step forward.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 30-3-1930

537. ABOUT HEADMEN AND MATADARS

Since so many Headmen and Matadars have handed in their resignations, the need has arisen to write something about them. I have heard so many rumours concerning these resignations that I myself have doubts about their veracity. If the resignations have been tendered without pressure, they are indeed very valuable. However, as compared to the services of Sardar, against whose imprisonment they are a protest, they have little value. The Gujarat for which Sardar Vallabhbhai has sacrificed his all—any sacrifice that Gujarat may make will not be too great. Although Sardar has sacrificed his all for

Gujarat, his ultimate goal is swaraj. Hence Gujarat should make all possible efforts for it.

Let us examine the office of Headman from this standpoint. I did not understand its implications before as clearly as I do now. The Headman is the policeman or the Headman. It is through him that the Government collects the revenue and it is through him that it exercises its authority. Mamlatdars and other officers would become ineffective without him. It is not just anyone who is appointed a Headman, but only one who carries weight in the village. A register of such persons is maintained in Government offices and they are known as Matadars. It is from among these persons that Headmen are appointed by rotation for a period of five years. The Government pays a certain sum annually to these Matadars, amounting to about four or five rupees as allowance. A Headman gets a sum of thirty to fifty rupees every year as *nazarana*[1]. I use the word *nazarana*. No one regards it as salary. The amount received by the Headman is not of any great consequence to him, as ordinarily he is a well-to-do person. While considering what term should be used for this amount given tohim, I called it *nazarana*. The Amir of Afghanistan also receives a *nazarana*. However, I am aware that there is a great deal of difference between the *nazarana* received by the Amir and that given to the Headman. While the former consists of a large sum, the latter is a small one. There are other differences also. Nevertheless, the purpose underlying both these payments is to gain a hold upon the recipients.

Why do Headmen and Matadars get committed in this manner? It is certainly not for the purpose of enjoying an empty office, but because the office will enhance their prestige and because they can use their status in order to get money out of it. This cannot be done with honesty. It necessarily involves dishonesty. Hence, the office of Headman implies that by accepting this office the person concerned ceases to be the village *mahajan* and protector, and preys upon the villagers. It is not my intention to say that all Headmen are like this. But this is a conclusion I have reached after talking to a large number of Headmen.

Such Headmanship and Matadarship should be given up not for the sake of Sardar or swaraj, but rather for the sake of one's dharma and morality. These two classes of persons can make a significant contribution to the movement for self-purification that is on in the country at the moment. Others may advance the excuse that they have to earn their livelihood, but this does not apply in the case of these Headmen and Matadars. For them, it is like giving up titles. It is for

[1] Allowance or bounty

this reason that I have described this situation as a garbage heap and the description is fitting. May the Headmen and the Matadars save themselves from this.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 30-3-1930

538. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

March 30, 1930

CHI. SUMANGAL,

I have your letter. You should both come to Surat on Tuesday. Anyone at the station will direct you to the place of our stay. We shall all be reaching Surat late at night.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. SUMANGAL PRAKASH
SEVASHRAM
BROACH, B.B. & C.I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

539. SPEECH IN OLPAD TALUK[1]

[On or before *March 30, 1930*][2]

I feel that in this struggle for freedom, the contribution of women will exceed that of men. Even today, women are making a far greater contribution to the Charkha Sangh. It is the women who operate the one lakh or one lakh and a half spinning-wheels that are plying in fifteen hundred villages. It is on account of the skill of women that we can get the fine khadi made in Andhra. I tell you that it is absolutely true to say that swaraj is tied to a strand of yarn. These are the words of Brahma. Hence, whether we wish to boycott foreign cloth through the means of khadi or through mill-made cloth, it is women who are the spinners. Therefore, it is women who will play a larger part in the non-violent struggle for swaraj and children of the future will say that it was their mothers and sisters who had played the more significant role. You are capable of doing this. However, you should not touch a spinning-wheel if you do not know what compassion is.

[1] Extracted from "Swaraj Gita"

[2] Gandhiji entered Olpad Taluk on March 28 and left it on March 31, 1930, but the 31st was Silence Day for him.

Even in the cause of prohibition, if young girls come forward in the same manner as Mithubehn, you can make Olpad a dry area. If men approach drunkards, the latter will resort to obscene language; however, if young girls approach them and question them as to why they drink, ask them what indeed they are up to, whether it befits them under the influence of drink to fail to recognize a mother or a daughter, than on hearing such words steeped in affection, even the worst of drunkards will hang his head in shame and he will possibly burst into tears, and will take a vow in the name of Rama to give up liquor. But do Indian women have this moral fervour, this courage and this benevolence? However, I can provide this courage. Who will cast an evil eye on you if you walk straight on with the name of God on your lips? Be convinced at heart that purity itself is a shield.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 6-4-1930

540. SPEECH AT SANDHIYER

March 30, 1930

I would like to congratulate yet another Talati who has handed in his resignation. Today, it is your special duty to cast away Government offices, regarding them as filth or refuse. You should practise your special dharma although you be imprisoned, hanged or have to starve. The Headmen of this place are especially loyal and ask others not to resign. They talk of unrealistic things. I humbly request them to hand in their resignations. You must carefully go through the article on this subject entitled "Limits of Boycott"[1] in *Navajivan*, and act on it afterunderstanding its implications. As we are practising non-co-operation against the Government, to that extent we shall have to boycott it.

Let me not talk of salt now. The tax is unjust and evil and has a long history behind it. The Government will not be able to say whether the imposition of this tax is moral or immoral. However, look upon it as already abolished. I make this statement depending upon your courage to fight. Swaraj will not be won as soon as this tax is abolished. Other tasks will have to be accomplished after this is done.

Cloth merchants of Bombay have come here today. They have realized the importance of the boycott of foreign cloth far more than they did in 1921. My thoughts are directed only towards furthering the growth of Indian villages and Indian merchants. The latter have now realized that this struggle is as much for their benefit as for that

[1] *Vide* "Limits of Boycott", 30-3-1930.

of the poor. They alone are going to be the cloth merchants in independent India. Today theirs is an inhuman occupation, whereas under swaraj it will become a divine one. What then can merchants contribute to this struggle? They say that they will import goods from Japan and not from England. However, there are two great drawbacks in doing so. In the first place, it is not because of our enmity towards the British that we refuse to buy their cloth. We wish to eschew doing so as the Britishers want to extract money from the poor masses of India by means of trade. We should not even dream that by foreign cloth we refer to British cloth. Although you have been engaged in business so long, you have been unable to understand their cunning methods of carrying on business. Perhaps you do not know how they conquered Delhi. They are able to get all they want from even the smallest hole. That is how they captured Kashmiri Gate and became masters of Delhi. The Government of the East India Company won only after this. All this is tragic history. We should not allow a single loophole for foreign cloth through which they may make entry. No one can surpass them in betrayal. If you permit Japanese goods to be imported, Britishers will send their goods *via* Japan. They can do so even by giving a commission to the Japanese. Hence if you allow even a single yard of cloth to be imported from abroad, bale after bale will soon be coming in. It is the business community of India that is responsible for India losing her independence and it is through the strength of this community alone that it has to be regained. Hence those who have already put in orders should bear in mind that their cloth will be lying about like unused goods. We shall get rid of eventhese through our self-sacrifice.Now let us take the other subject of prohibition. Shrimati Mithubehn has sacrificed so much for this. Let us all join in this cause. If all this can be achieved, we can save Rs. 60 crores on foreign cloth, Rs. 25 crores on liquor and opium, and Rs. 6 crores on salt. However, in order to do so we should have the capacity for self-sacrifice, the capacity to unite and act as a group, intellectual capacity and the capacity to think. If all this is there, swaraj is near at hand.

You are aware of the virtues of my colleagues as scavengers. Now today I wish to talk of women volunteers. One of them is the grand-daughter of Dadabhai. She arrived today. She went to the village of Sayan and asked for brooms. She found the entire village filthy. Dadabhai's grand-daughter did not approve of the filth, so she started to sweep it away. The people who had not recognized her at first then recognized her and accorded her a very warm welcome. I do not speak of this example in order to give it publicity, but because it is worthy of imitation by all volunteers. Village sanitation is very

essential today. Hence we are going to clean filthy villages. We have learnt from this lesson that she has brought swaraj near to us. I wish to sacrifice our women too. I wish to remind you that we have to effect self-purification. On the one hand we should practise civil disobedience, while on the other we should become progressively purer. May God give you the ability to understand all this.

[From Gujarati]
Prajabandhu, 6-4-1930

541. SPEECH AT DELAD[1]

March 30, 1930

As has been said in the *Gita*, that which tastes bitter at first but is finally sweet is wholesome. Hence, although I was agitated yesterday and still am, I have not lost my peace; the fiery words of love which I had directed towards my friends, companions and the assembly were not regarded by them as such. Instead of the dazzling lights of yesterday I see small, dim lights of hurricane lanterns.

Yesterday I did not find the outer and inner peace which I find in today's assembly. There was an artificiality in yesterday's lights. Ifound no affinity between those lights and our rural life. Such lights are a consequence of contact with cities, but vast numbers of villages are hundreds of miles removed from cities or railway lines. Our idea is to serve such villages. You do not even know those villages. Perhaps there are no such villages in Gujarat. But then, is Gujarat the whole of India? It is only a fraction of India. What is Gujarat as compared to Bengal, Bihar and the United Provinces? While travelling through the last-mentioned province, one does not come across even one light at night; one only hears the barking of dogs. In comparison with the houses of Gujarat, houses there seem like ruins; one feels like crying and saying, 'O God! are there such houses in India!' And the people there are like skeletons. They cannot even get a mattress in the severely cold winters. They bolt the doors and just lie down covering themselves with rags. I remember those villages. Could we afford to have such lights in those villages? If a wealthy person were to give me five lamps for such villages and I were to take them there I would be committing *adharma* and be party to the sin to that extent. At places where the houses are like rubbish heaps and people are suffering from want of food and water, if anyone gives me the money I would first of all have wells dug and get their houses repaired, I would give them cows and spinning-wheels and, if it is convenient, also get gardens laid

[1] Extracted from "Dharma Yatra"

out. But I would certainly not take money for lights. Despite this, I am aware that because of the absence of light, about 20 lakh persons die of snakebite in such villages according to Government's figures. And there must be many others who are not accounted for! There are neither medicines nor lights to save their lives; however, I shall not dare to take such a lamp even there. That would amount to adding to their needs. That will be like giving *churma*[1] to a person who is fasting. Once anyone has added to his needs, he would go to any lengths to satisfy them. While millions of persons do not get even half a *roti* and enough of inferior salt, I ask myself while I eat what right I have to eat even this much. However, owing to attachment as also in the hope of doing service, I continue to take milk.

We have to consider our dharma. We want to face the might of a *rakshasi* empire, and this cannot be done either by looking upon it with contempt or by shouting loudly; it can only be done through the path of non-violence. Ahimsa may appear to be blind and crippled or clad in rags, but when God-given strength is addedto it, the opponent loses his strength before it, he becomes paralyzed. We have to work with such a power, and this cannot be done with lights. I have hurt my companions by dispensing with these lights. They felt that without these the people would become restless. However, in my opinion, there was no need for such fears. The message that I am conveying to you at the moment does not appear to you to be a harsh one. Lights could not have brought about this result.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 13-4-1930

542. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

Unrevised *March 31, 1930*

MY DEAR REYNOLDS,

I have been daily thinking of you and thinking of writing to you too. But time would not permit my writing. Today I must begin the day after the morning prayer with this.

I did not like your writing in the *Chronicle*.[2] It is not ahimsa. *The Indian Daily Mail* did not deserve the notice you took of it. If the notice had to be taken, the way was bad. Why should you spoil a good case by bad adjectives? And when you have a good cause never descend to personalities. Yours is a case where the saying 'Resist not

[1] Kind of sweet

[2] Replying to a "particularly vicious attack on Gandhiji", the addressee had written to *The Indian Daily Mail* "in a sudden explosion of anger".

evil' applies. It means: 'Resist not evil with evil.' You have neutralized the evil writing of the *I.D.M.* by a writing of the same kind. That you had a good case makes no difference. The *I.D.M.* writing was a piece of violence. You have supported your good case with counter-violence. So you see, what I want to emphasize is not merely bad manners. It is the underlying violence that worries me. Is this not quite clear to you? If it is, I would like you to promise to yourself never to write any such thing without submitting it to someone in whose non-violence you have faith. If you have realized the fundamental truth of what I have said, you will even partially mend the evil by apologizing to Wilson by writing a private note somewhat after this style: "Although I hold your charges and innuendoes to be wrong, I feel that I ought not to have adopted towards you the language I did. I want to follow Christ. I own that my conduct was not Christian. I had no right to judge you. I would feelsomewhat relieved if I could have a line from you to say that you had accepted my apology."[1]

You have undertaken at the call of duty a great task. I do not want you to damage it on the threshold of your career.

Your writing in *Young India*[2] was unexceptionable.

If my argument does not convince of course you will go on as you have begun. I know you are well able to take care of yourself. My concern was merely to elucidate the principle we hold in common.

How are you getting on? Are you keeping good health and insisting on getting what your body may need?

What is this paragraph about your engagement, etc.! Is it all true? Is your mother correctly reported?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 4532. Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

543. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

DELAD,
March 31, 1930

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter. I have not wired, as I do not think there are any Pathans at Dandi and, if there are, we shall cope with them. The

[1] The addressee send an apology and informed Gandhiji accordingly. *Vide* also "Letter to Reginald Reynolds", 4-4-1930.

[2] The article "Modern English Mythology" appeared in the issue of March 27, 1930.

advent even of good and true friends from the Frontier will cause complications. I want to present at Dandi, if I am allowed to reach it, the one issue without any avoidable complications. Things seem to be shaping very well indeed in Gujarat.

I am surprised that they have already arrested so many in Rae Bareli. I feel you are right in confining your attention to the salt tax for the time being. We shall know during the next fortnight what more we can or should do.

Unless you hear from me to the contrary, please take 6th April as the date for simultaneous beginning.

It is now nearing 10 p.m., so good night.

BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, p. 85

544. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Silence Day [About *March, 1930*]

CHI. KANTA,

I do think of you often. I have built great hopes on you. Are you getting letters from Brother? Where is he? What are you doing? Has Krishna gone home? Write all details.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

545. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[About *March, 1930*]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I don't worry at all, since you are not likely to feel any burden. I know that guests will continue. Please look after them. Dissuade anyone who may wish to follow me.

Shri Mullick is the Municipal Engineer. He will go there in a day or two and advise you on how to increase the supply of water. Show him the Chandrabhaga[1] also. I have talked to Shri Mullick about Parner-kar. Get acquainted with him and introduce Parnerkar to him also.

What is Purushottam doing? Will he go for a change of air? If he had keen will, I would certainly have taken him with me. If you

[1] A rivulet near the Sabarmati Ashram, now dried up

think it is necessary to consult me about anything, please do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Narandas Gandhine, Part I, p. 273

546. LETTER TO KASTURBHAI LALBHAI

March 31, 1930

BHAI KASTURBHAI,

I thank you for your letter. All of you brothers may surely come. We will talk about each other's joys and sorrows.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 33142

547. SPEECH AT CHHAPRABHATHA

April 1, 1930

Every day people tell me, "Today you will certainly be arrested." However, the tiger does not appear! The newspapers claim that I have become impatient at the Government not arresting me. This is partially true as it had been decided that while Sardar should remain free, I should court arrest. However, now that Sardar is in prison, I shall remain free. If we wish to secure the release of Vallabhbhai, we can only do so by carrying on this struggle.

Choryasi took full advantage of the last fight of Sardar, so you must make your full contribution to this movement. The Government has acted on the principle that all places will get the rainfall of swaraj in equal measure. We certainly have the strength to secure his release. If we were determined, we might say, from a superficial glance at the villages, that swaraj was round the corner. I am not however a person who will thus deceive himself. For the present I am trying to gauge the situation.

On inquiring about spinning-wheels I found a single one here. If matters are in such a state, we cannot secure Sardar's release. We have to go forward in all directions. At present we have set out to get the salt tax abolished. We shall tire out the Government by making salt at any number of places. However, all this can be achieved only when you put into practice the aphorism that 'swaraj lies in a strand of yarn'. The saying that it is easy to secure swaraj will only be proved true when 30 crores of people start wearing khadi and develop all

aspects of swaraj, giving due consideration to rural problems. Swaraj is within our grasp if we practise this simple and easy duty. Consider how the bridge on the river Keem was built in a single night. If people act voluntarily in accordance with their capacities in this manner, swaraj is not difficult to secure. I thank all the wealthy capitalists of Bombay and Ahmedabad who have come here and contributed large amounts. I see the blessing of God in the fact that all sections of the community are helping this movement.

[From Gujarati]
Prajabandhu, 6-4-1930

548. SPEECH AT SURAT

April 1, 1930

There is no alternative but for us to do something about our troubles and sufferings and hence we have thought of this salt tax. You may say it is a godsend. It is so beastly and inhuman that through salt the Government taxes even little children and young girls. I have read the texts in which it is claimed that those who would carry on administration must find ways to collect taxes from all members of the public. I have gone through the holy books of Islam, Hinduism, Christianity and Zoroastrianism. All these state that women and the poor should at no time be taxed. If we go through the rules of war, we shall find that they lay down that old persons, children and women should be left untouched in war. The same is applicable to this tax. Muslims, Hindus, Parsis—all consume salt in like quantities. The Government has, however, found a device whereby all have been taxed at an equal rate. This is an inhuman law, a Satanic law.

I have not heard of such justice anywhere in the world; where it prevails, I would call it inhuman, Satanic. To bow to an empire which dispenses such justice is not dharma but *adharma*. A man who prays to God every morning at dawn cannot, must not, pray for the good of such an empire. On the contrary while praying or saying the *namaaz* he should ask God to encompass the destruction of such a Satanic empire, such an inhuman government. To do so is dharma. Although I have been saying this openly for the last twenty days, the Government has left me and my colleagues free. I admit that this is a familiar trait in this Government. I have been calling this Government inhuman till today. I admit however that I do not believe even for a fraction of a second that it does not have power or authority. It has an army, it has gun-powder and it can, by merely moving a finger, destroy someone like me. But it cannot readily transgress the limits it has set for itself. It is ashamed of itself before the world. I have never

in my dreams or waking moments desired and not a single one of my colleagues or the thousands of persons who have come into contact with me has ever desired, that either the King or any of the officers of this Empire should be destroyed even though we call the Empire-tyrannical. This is for it something new and it does not know how to deal with it.

Today, on the banks of the Tapi, I wish to tell you the very same thing that I said on the banks of the Sabarmati on the eve of my departure. Would the Government have left even one of us free if we had said that we wanted to throw so much as a pebble at officers? Some people say that I want to be arrested. I do not regard it as my dharma to get arrested; but I am not afraid of it and I am giving you the *mantra* that none of you should be afraid. I want that you should not be afraid of being arrested or hanged while you do your duty. I wish to convert prison into a palace. If I wished to be imprisoned I would commit theft, practise deceit, resort to assault and abuse. I would then certainly be arrested, no one would spare me. The Government would not then say 'the Mahatma is dead; we shall not arrest him'. If the Government does arrest me, while in prison I will pray to God to bring about a change of heart in this Government and eradicate the sentiment which it has developed and which does not befit a human being. Sooner or later, it has no alternative but to arrest me and if it does not do so the whole of India will flare up within a short while. It is difficult for the Government either to imprison me or to leave me at large. Hindus, Muslims, Parsis—all should do their duty. When all of us start doing so, it will be beyond the power of the most tyrannical Government to arrest us.

Then there will hardly be any talk about arrests. Laws will get broken fast. One today, another tomorrow. And, when laws are destroyed, how can the Empire continue to function? Headmen and Talatis should resign. They should know that it is God alone who provides us our daily bread. What difference does it make whether or not you get Rs. 37 as a Talati? Mill workers—of whom I happen to be one—earn fifty rupees. However, although they can threaten mill-owners to go on strike, the latter do not dismiss them. They cannot do without the workers. If a Talati seeks employment in a mill and works faithfully, he can earn Rs. 50 or more if he shows good work. It will be the easiest thing for him to earn Rs. 37. Even if he happened to be a cripple, he could earn a living through spinning. Earning a livelihood is no problem to one who is prepared to work. What will the Government do when Talatis and Government servants are no longer afraid? Will it send for troops from England and entrust to them the work of Talatis and Headmen? What action will it take

when Hindus, Muslims and Parsis all refuse to co-operate with it? It will be able to do nothing. All its limbs will become immobilized. In this manner, swaraj will be in our pocket without any effort, without a single person having to go to jail. But whom shall I teach all this?

You find khadi coarse and expensive. You wish to appear naked while I wish to clothe you. It seems to have become a dharma today to appear naked in spite of the clothing that is worn. It is a *rakshasi* dharma, it is only under this Empire that going naked becomes a dharma. We wear clothes to cover our bodies. If you wish to go about naked, why clothe yourselves? Under this Empire, going naked is no crime at all. You may therefore remain so. If you do wish to clothe yourselves to cover your bodies, what better material than khadi can I offer you? Why do you wish for anything else? You are ashamed to wear clothes woven out of yarn spun by your mothers and sisters who are starving at home.

Today you must understand the dharma of the boycott of foreign cloth, because it is impossible to give up British cloth while still using Japanese material. If we attempt to do so, we shall not be able to achieve either of our objectives—we shall not be able to do away with British goods and Japan will start ruling over us instead of Britain. Then again, you may claim that cloth from both countries could be boycotted by using mill-made cloth. Mills have existed now for fifty years. Nevertheless there has been no boycott. Why? I have been shouting repeatedly that boycott is impossible without khadi. You could practise boycott with the help of khadi and the textile mills. But it is impossible today to carry on boycott depending on mills alone. Maybe it can be done in fifty or a hundred years. If you intend to do so through fighting and bloodshed that is a matter about which I know nothing, it is beyond my conception, it is something which I have renounced. If the women of Surat come to Mithubehn's assistance, prohibition can be accomplished in Surat district in no time. And what is so attractive about that trade? Those who run liquor dens can earn a living from some other occupation.

Whatever may happen in India, I am resolved that either I shall die offering civil disobedience or I shall win swaraj. I, therefore, called these people together and set out on this march. If I am alive tomorrow, I shall start out from here after receiving your blessings. I invite those who care to accompany me.

It is a blessing that Hindus and Muslims here are, for the present, united and are not quarrelling. I was afraid that since I am tired of the fighting, I might not like to go to a place where these two communities were fighting and if I did go there, that I would

die. So I wrote to the workers not to take me to the city in order to kill me, but to let me reach Dandi. I was informed, however, that for the present they were as good as united and that there were no quarrels between them. I do not believe, however, that Hindus and Muslims have become one yet. Why should there be any ill feeling, any distrust, or any fear of one another even for a fraction of a second between them? Can there be a worse government than the present one? There would be about a lakh officers in this country. What will you do with the remaining 299.9 million people? How will you account for them? To what purpose will you fight against one another? Give me a seat in the legislative assembly only if there is any left after giving them to Muslims, Parsis, Christians and all others. You may consider the salt tax as abolished if you are true to your salt. Even poor, needy Muslims are its victims. We can fight amongst ourselves after it is repealed. The religious books of both Hinduism and Islam regard liquor as something sinful. The Zoroastrians do not read their religious texts carefully. They should read what they say about liquor.

Please give me your blessings and pray to God that He may grant my wishes. Postpone the settlement of your disputes till after the salt tax is repealed. What strength you will gain if you do so! If this tax is repealed we shall save six crores of rupees. Then adding 25 crores to be saved by prohibition and 60 crores from boycott of foreign cloth—it makes a total of Rs. 91 crores. Take it as a present. If you refuse it, you will be answerable not to me but to God. May God grant you the wisdom to understand all this and to act accordingly.

[From Gujarati]
Prajabandhu, 6-4-1930

549. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Wednesday [*April 2, 1930*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. You have been doing very good work. If it is very necessary for you to go to Bombay for the sake of your sister, you may. But you should remember that such occasions will arise again and again. You and I can give no help in such matters. We cannot attend to two things at a time. When you arefaced with such problems, you may consult Nathji. I am here today; tomorrow I may not be.

[1] *Bapuna Patro-6: G. S. Gangabehnne* gives April 1 as the date, which was a Tuesday.

I cannot say when they will arrest me. Here, too, there are rumours every day. So great is the power of non-violence that they do not have the courage to arrest me.

So long as you maintain good health, I am not particular about your eating fruit.

I am writing this before the morning prayer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8744. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

550. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

April 2, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I have your perfect letter. You do not mention in it your having received my letters, but I presume that you have received them.

I have not received the pansy,[1] but I shall take it as received. Your rearing the plant with love is as good as presenting the flower to me. Giving it physically is mere ceremony.

Is it true that you beat children? Mirabehn has gently complained to me that you do.

I hope you take care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 6667. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

551. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

April 2, 1930

CHI. CHANDRAKANTA,

Received your letter. Brother came away to Surat yesterday. He walked today. His health has improved. There is no cause for worry. You have done well in restraining yourself from coming. Those who come here to meet me are truly guilty of a lapse. But what can they do? They cannot control themselves.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] The addressee had planted a few pansies near where Gandhiji slept at the Ashram. They flowered after Gandhiji had set out for Dandi.

[PS.]

You are doing wonderful work.

From a photostat of the Hindi: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

552. LETTER TO TRILOKCHANDRAJI

Wednesday, [*April 2, 1930*][1]

MUNISHRI TRILOKCHANDRAJI,

I feel that you need not join the satyagraha but should propagate its teaching to all in clear terms.

It will not be necessary to keep a watch as you suggest when the satyagraha becomes widespread. The latent power of truth and non-violence will act like electric current and keep the people under control.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Jainprakash, Margashirsha, 1987

553. SPEECH AT DINDOLI

April 2, 1930

We were told that it was doubtful whether Congress workers would be allowed to halt here at all. I must say, however, that so far we have received nothing but warm welcome everywhere. Both the factions in this village have united in looking after us well and have been equally warm in welcoming us.

There is the hand of God in this struggle. That is why one finds today that people have ceased to be enemies and become friends of each other. It is all the grace of God. In the Privy Council, disputes are not settled for generations together. You must free yourselves from that snare. We are carrying on this struggle against those who are riding on the backs of others. We have to free our millions of the

[1] According to the source Gandhiji replied to the addressee's letter which was given to him in the morning before he left Surat during the Dandi March. This was on April 2, 1930, which was a Wednesday.

burden which the white man has placed on them. But first we ourselves have to get off the backs of the poor. If anyone says that the Government will cease to function if the salt tax is repealed, I will say that such a person is not true to his salt. From the fact that a larger quantity of salt is sold when the tax rate is lowered, we can conclude that it is the poor who suffer the most from this tax. In the past the poor used to get even clothes. And in the past the workers in villages got everything in kind in exchange for their labour. However much the Government may try, can it ever make these foreign rags cheaper than khadi?

I congratulate the Headman for the other bit of news given me. I also congratulate the village which has such a courageous Headman. Those who have not yet resigned should do so and cease to be afraid of the Government. I am surprised a person like me who cannot wield even a tiny stick can make such a mighty Empire tremble. However, if Rama dwells in your hearts, it is easy to shake the foundations of not one but twenty empires more powerful than this one. Like the old lady at the charkha you should earn honest money.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 6-4-1930

APPENDIX I

VICEROY'S STATEMENT[1]

I have have just returned from England where I have had the opportunity of prolonged consultation with His Majesty's Government. Before I left this country I said publicly that as the King-Emperor's representative in India I should hold myself bound to tell my fellow-countrymen, as faithfully as I might, of India's feelings, anxieties and aspirations. In my endeavours to discharge that undertaking I was assisted by finding, as I had expected a generous and sincere desire, not only on the part of His Majesty's Government but on that of all persons and parties in Great Britain, to hear and to appreciate everything that it was my duty to represent.

These are critical days, when matters by which men are deeply touched are in issue and when, therefore, it is inevitable that political feeling should run high, and that misunderstandings, which would scarcely arise in conditions of political tranquillity, should obtain firm foothold in men's minds. I have, nevertheless, not faltered in my belief that behind all the disquieting tendencies of the time, there lay the great mass of Indian opinion, overflowing all divisions of race, religion, or political thought, fundamentally loyal to the King-Emperor, and, whether consciously or not only wanting to understand and to be understood. On the other side I have never felt any doubt that opinion in Great Britain, puzzled as it might be by events in India, or only perhaps partially informed as to their true significance, was unshaken in its determination that Great Britain should redeem to the full the pledges she has given for India's future. On both countries the times have laid a heavy and in some ways a unique responsibility, for the influence on the world of a perfect understanding between Great Britain and India might surely be so great that no scales can give us the measure either of the prize of success or, the price of failure in our attempts to reach it.

In my discussions with the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State, it was inevitable that the principal topic should have been the course of events in India. It is not profitable on either side to discuss to what extent, or with what justification, the appointment of a Parliamentary Commission two years ago has affected the general trend of Indian thought and action. Practical men must take facts andsituations as they are, and not as they would have them be.

Sir John Simon's Commission, assisted as it has been by the Indian Central Committee, is now at work on its Report, and until that Report is laid before Parliament it is impossible, and even if it were possible, it would in the view of His Majesty's Government clearly be improper, to forecast the nature of any constitutional changes that may subsequently be proposed. In this respect every British party is bound to preserve t itself complete freedom of action. But what must constantly engage our attention, and is a matter of deep concern to His Majesty's Government, is the discovery of means by which, when the Commission has reported, the broad question of British Indian constitutional advance may be approached in co-operation with all those who can speak authoritatively for opinion in British India. I would venture to recall some words which I used in addressing the

[1] *Vide* 1st footnote to "All-Parties Leaders' Joint Statement", 2-11-1929 & "Draft Resolution for Congress Working Committee", 18-11-1929.

Assembly eight months ago in reference to the then existing political situation. "On the one side," I said, "it is judgment on the problem as it would be short-sighted of Parliament to underrate the importance of trying to reach a solution which might carry the willing assent of political India." We shall surely stray from the path, at the end of which lies achievement, if we let go either one or other of these two main guiding principles of political action.

But there has lately emerged, from a totally different angle, another set of considerations which is very relevant to what I have just stated on this matter to be the desire of His Majesty's Government.

The Chairman of the Commission has pointed out in correspondence with the Prime Minister, which, I understand, is being published in England, that as their investigation has proceeded, he and his colleagues have been greatly impressed, in considering the direction which the future constitutional development which may, at some future time, develop between British India and the Indian States. In his judgment it is essential that the methods, by which this future relationship between these two constituent parts of Greater India may be adjusted, should be fully examined. he has further expressed the opinion that if the Commission's Report and the proposals subsequently to be framed by the Government take this wider range, it would appear necessary for the Government to revise the scheme of procedure as at present proposed. He suggests that what might be required, after the Reports of the Statutory Commission and the Indian Central Committee have been made, considered and published but before the stage is reached of the Joint Parliamentary Committee, would be the setting up of a Conference in which His Majesty's Government should meet representatives both of British India and of the States, for the purpose of seeking the greatest possible measure of agreement for the final proposals which it would later be the duty of His Majesty'sGovernment to submit to Parliament. The procedure by Joint Parliamentary Committee conferring with delegations from the Indian Legislature and other bodies, which was previously contemplated and is referred to in Sir John Simon's letter to myself of 6th February 1928, would still be appropriate for the examination of the Bill when it is subsequently placed before Parliament, but would, in the opinion of the Commission, obviously have to be preceded by some such Conference as they have suggested.With these views I understand that His Majesty's Government are in complete accord. For, while they will greatly desire, when the time comes, to be able to deal with the question of British Indian political development under conditions the most favourable to its successful treatment, they are, with the Commission, deeply sensible of the importance of bringing under comprehensive review the whole problem of the relations of British India and the Indian States. Indeed, an adjustment of these interests in their view is essential for the complete fulfilment of what they consider to be the underlying purpose of British policy, whatever may be the method for its furtherance which Parliament may decide to adopt.

The goal of British policy was stated in the declaration of August 1917 to be that of providing for the gradual development of self-governing institutions, as an integral part of the British Empire. As I recently pointed out my own Instrument of Instruction from the King-Emperor expressly states that it is His Majesty's will and pleasure that the plans laid by Parliament in 1919 should be the means by which British India may attain its due place among His Dominions. Ministers of the Crown,

moreover, have more than once publicly declared that it is the desire of the British Government that India should, in the fullness of time, take her place in the Empire in equal partnership with the Dominions. But in view of the doubts which have been expressed both in Great Britain and India regarding the interpretation to be placed on the intentions of the British Government in enacting the Statue of 1919, I am authorized on behalf of His Majesty's Government to state clearly that in their judgment it is implicit in the declaration of 1917 that the natural issue of India's constitutional progress, as there contemplated, is the attainment of Dominion Status.

In the full realization of this policy, it is evidently important that the Indian States should be afforded an opportunity of finding their place, and even if we cannot at present exactly foresee on what lines this development may be shaped, it is from every point of view desirable that whatever can be done should be done to ensure that action taken now is not inconsistent with the attainment of the ultimate purpose which those, whether in British India or the States, who look forward to some unity of all India, have in view.

His Majesty's Government consider that both these objects, namely, that of finding the best approach to the British side of the problem, and secondly, ofensuring that in this process the wider question of closer relations in the future between the two parts of Greater India is not overlooked, can best be achieved by the adoption of procedure such as the Commission has outlined. When, therefore, the Commission and the Indian Central Committee have submitted their reports and these have been published, and when His Majesty's Government have been able, in consultation with the Government of India, to consider these matters in the light of all the material then available, they will propose to invite representatives of different parties and interests in British India and representatives of the Indian States to meet them, separately or together as circumstances may demand, for purpose of conference and discussion in regard both to the British-Indian and the all-Indian problems. It will be their earnest hope that by this means it may subsequently prove possible on these grave issues to submit proposals to Parliament which may command a wide measure of general assent.

It is not necessary for me to say how greatly I trust that the action of His Majesty's Government may evoke response from and enlist the concurrence of all sections of opinion in India, and I believe that all who wish India well, wherever and whoever they are, desire to break through the webs of mistrust firmly assured that the course of action now proposed is at once the outcome of a real desire to bring to the body politic of India the touch that carries with it healing and health, and is the method by which we may best hope to handle these high matters in the way of constructive statesmanship.

31st October, 1929

IRWIN
VICEROY AND GOVERNOR-GENERAL

India in 1929-30, pp. 466-8

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE,
52 HEWETT ROAD, ALLAHABAD,
November 4, 1929

MY DEAR BAPUJI,

I have thought well for two days. I can take, I think, a calmer view of the situation than I could two days ago but the fever in my brain has not left me.

Your appeal to me on the ground of discipline could not be ignored by me. I am myself a believer in discipline. And yet I suppose there can be too much of discipline. Something seems to have snapped inside me evening before last and I am unable to piece it together. As General Secretary of the Congress I owe allegiance to it and must subject myself to its discipline. I have other capacities and other allegiances. I am President of the Indian am intimately connected with the youth movement. What shall I do with the allegiance I owe to these and other movements I am connected with? I realize now more than I have ever done before that it is not possible to ride a number of horses at the same time. Indeed it is hard enough to ride one. In the conflict of responsibilities and allegiances what is one to do except to rely on one's own instincts and reason?

I have therefore considered the position apart from all outside connections and allegiances and the conviction has grown stronger that I acted wrongly the policy underlying it. I am afraid we differ fundamentally on that issue and I am not likely to convert you. I shall only say that I believe the statement to have been injurious and a wholly inadequate reply to the Labour Government's declaration. I believe that in our attempts to soothe and retain a few estimable gentlemen we have ruffled and practically turned out of our camp many others who were far more worth having. I believe that we have fallen into a dangerous trap out of which it will be no easy matter to escape. And I think that we have shown to the world that although we talk tall we are only bargaining for some tit bits.

I do not know what the British Government will do now. Probably it will not agree to your conditions. I hope they will not. But I have little doubt that most of the signatories—excluding you of course—will be quite prepared to agree to any modification of the conditions which the British Government might suggest. In any event it is quite clear to me that my position in the Congress will become daily more and more difficult. I accepted the presidentship of the Congress with great misgivings but in the hope that we shall fight on a clear issue next year. That issue is already clouded and the only reason for my acceptance has gone. What am I to do with these "Leaders" Conference"? I feel an interloper and am ill at ease. I cannot have my say because I am afraid of upsetting the conference. I repress myself and sometimes the repression is too much for me and I break out and even say things which I do not wholly mean.

I feel I must resign from the Secretaryship of the A.I.C.C. I have sent a formal

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Jawaharlal Nehru", 6-11-1929 and "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 8-11-1929.

letter to Father, a copy of which I enclose.

The question of the presidentship is a far more difficult one. At this late hour I do know what I can do. But I am convinced that I was a wrong choice. You are the only possible president for the occasion and the year. I cannot be president if thepolicy of the Congress is what might be described as that of Malaviyaji. Even now if you agree there is a possible course which does not necessitate a meeting of the A.I.C.C. A circular might be sent round to A.I.C.C. members saying that you are agreeable to accepting the presidentship. I would beg of them to excuse me. This would be a formal matter as of course all the members, or nearly all, would welcome your decision with joy.

An alternative course is that I should declare that in view of the circumstances, and also in view of the difficulty of choosing another president now, I shall not retire now but immediately after the Congress is over. I shall act as the chairman and the Congress can decide what it likes regardless of me.

One of these two courses seems to me to be necessary if I am to retain my physical and mental health.

As I wrote to you form Delhi I am not issuing any public statement. What others say or do not say does not worry me very much. But I must be at peace with myself.

Yours affectionately,

JAWAHARLAL

[PS.]

I am sending a copy of this letter to Father. I feel a little lighter after writing this letter. I am afraid it will trouble you a little and I do not want to do so. I feel half inclined not to send it to you just yet but to wait for your arrival here. Ten days more will no doubt lessen my agitation and give me a better perspective. But it is better that you should know how my mind has been working.

A Bunch of Old Letters, pp. 74-5

APPENDIX III

LETTER FROM VALLABHBHAI PATEL[1]

Personal

SARDARGRIHA,
BOMBAY
November 11, 1929

PUJYA BAPUJI,

I have been here for the last two days. Vithalbhai is also here. I sent you a wire after having had a long talk with Mr. Jinnah.

The Working Committee is meeting on the 16th. We wish its final resolution does not result in a complete break. Ultimately, it is for us to do what we like. But before it is finally decided to close the door upon all future negotiations or before the original Delhi statement is amended, it would be fair to invite to a meeting all thosewho have signed it. Before any resolution is passed, yourself, Jinnah, Motilalji, Vithalbhai and Sapru should confer together or Jinnah and Vithalbhai

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Vithalbhai Patel", on or after 13-11-1929.

should be given an opportunity to discuss the matter with you personally. There would be no problem if the Working Committee is to adhere to the Delhi manifesto. But in view of the subsequent debate in Parliament, if we choose to break off with the Government, I see no harm in postponing such a decision for a few days. Besides, it will be proper that another opportunity of looking at the manifesto is given to those who have signed it. Mr. Jinnah and Vithalbhai wish to discuss a few things with you some time.

According to Mr. Jinnah, the Conference can be summoned in July. If an announcement is made about the personnel and general amnesty to our liking, can this be regarded as evidence of a change of heart? Another important matter would remain to be settled, namely, the Government should announce before we decide to attend the Conference that it has to frame a scheme for Dominion Status. This needs to be discussed with you since there could be no two opinions that under the present circumstances no government would make any such announcement. Mr. Jinnah wishes also to know in what other manner we can be reassured. He for one thinks that if these three things are settled, we get practically everything that we seek; and in that case, he is prepared to do whatever he can in respect of the fourth matter. He is quite convinced of the good faith of the Labour Government as well as the Viceroy, and thinks that this opportunity should on no account be missed. He is prepared to play his part to the best of his ability.

We shall decide the venue when I have your reply to my wire.

Vandemataram from
VALLABHBHAI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 15568

APPENDIX IV

LETTER FROM DR. M. A. ANSARI[1]

JAORA,
February 13, 1930

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I wrote to you from Delhi last Monday. The letter was dictated in a hurry in a few moments snatched during a very strenuous day. It naturally did not express all that I wanted to tell you. Further, I was hoping I would be able to get away from here in time to be with you on the 14th or the 15th. I find, however, to my disappointment, that my patient here is suffering from peritonitis and is so very ill that I cannot even mention my leaving her. Indeed, it does not seem possible to get away from here for another week or ten days. I am, therefore, writing to you as the next best thing to my being with you in person at such a critical moment. I feel I owe it to Pt. Jawaharlal, Pt. Motilal, yourself, and your colleagues in the Working Committee, who have got the reins of the Congress in their hands and are leading the country, to tell you frankly what I feel abut your policy and programme in relation to the present situation in the country. I would try to be as brief as possible, but you would excuse me if this letter becomes somewhat long in spite of my efforts to curtail it.

Hindu-Muslim unity is not only one of the basic items in our programme, but

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. M. A. Ansari", 16-2-1930.

according to my firm belief and conviction, *the one and only* basic thing. I would have liked to trace the whole history of our efforts to achieve unity, but I would take up the most recent history, viz., from autumn of the year 1927. You would remember how the Unity Conference at Simla failed in spite of every effort made there. I felt after its failure that it was not possible to have agreement between extreme communal groups, but that it was feasible to have a workable agreement between Nationalist Hindus and Nationalist Mussalmans. I, therefore, urged Srinivasa Iyengar, the then President of the Congress, to convene another Peace Conference at Calcutta under the aegis of the Congress, and in more suitable surroundings than the Simla Conference. The Calcutta Conference brought about an understanding between the Congress and the Mussalmans of all shades of opinion, as evidenced by the warm welcome given to the Pact even by such Mussalman as Sir Mohd. Shafi, Sir Zulfiqar Ali, Dr. Muhammad Iqbal and many others. This Pact, with certain modifications suggested by you, was passed by the Madras Congress and was agreed to by Pt. Malaviya. I have not the slightest doubt that if we had stuck to it we would have gradually overcome the opposition of the Hindu Mahasabha, and Hindu-Muslim unity would have been an accomplished fact by now. But, we wanted to be more just and fair and in our effort to do justice and bring greater harmony and unity in the shape of the Nehru Report at Lucknow, followed closely by the Sikhs. But, at the Calcutta Convention, it was the Hindu Mahasabha which completely did the work of destruction. I cannot help expressing that the speech made by Mr. Jayakar and subsequently the attitude in the Committee taken by Pt. Malaviya, Dr. Moonje, and Hindu Mahasabha friends destroyed all chances of understanding. Prof. Jatindra Lal Bannerji's motion for the reservation of seats for 45 per cent Hindu minority in the Bengal which was carried in the Convention and only withdrawn at my special appeal and request was a painful revelation. Pt. Motilal's cold reception to Mr. Jinnah, whom I had succeeded after a great deal of effort in persuading to come and see Panditji at his house, was also a great disappointment. After that, the communalistMussalmans got the chance and the Muslim attitude hardened [as] shown by the absurd resolution passed at the All-Parties' Muslim Conference at Delhi and subsequently the fourteen points of Mr. Jinnah.

The year 1929, in spite of the great influence and efforts of Panditji, yourself and Pt. Jawaharlal, did not see the constructive programme advance and the quota fixed in May last year was not completed by most of the Congress Committee. The Sikh situation was, in the mean time, going from bad to worse.

In such circumstances when I read the advance copy of the Viceroy's statement of November 1st,[1] I considered it a godsend (as the telephonic message sent by me to Panditji and received by Jawaharlal would bear out). I, at once, took Vallabhbhai with me and met you at Meerut. We found you less enthusiastic, more cautious, but on the whole, taking a very favourable view of the announcement. At the Conference held in Delhi on November 1st, you would remember I pressed for certain parts of Dr. Sapru's statement to be embodied in yours. The reason was that I found myself in agreement with him. I was representing not only my own personal views, but, those of a group consisting of Messrs Khaliquzzaman, Tasadduq Ahmed Sherwani, Rafi [Ahmed]

[1] *Vide* "Viceroy's Statement", 31-10-1929; the statement was issued on October 31, 1929.

Kidwai, Dr. Mahmud, and a few others. At Lahore, I expressed the same views in the Working Committee. When asked by Panditji, to give my opinion on the 22nd of last December in Delhi, I told him that owing to our internal dessensions, unpreparedness and weakness, I would advise him not to let the Conference with the Viceroy break up, but to utilize it to the fullest advantage. Panditji characterized my observations as based on weakness. I repudiated the charge, but our conversation ended. When I heard that the Conference between you and the Viceroy had ended without any agreement, I was disappointed. At the meeting of the Working Committee held in Lahore last December and on one or two subsequent occasions, I expressed similar views but with the exception of Mrs. Naidu, I did not find support. I have felt that the situation has been mishandled both by the Viceroy and our own representatives. The Viceroy was obviously very much shaken by the bomb outrage, and was not in his normal frame of mind. For I do not see how even with the limited powers given to him he could have failed to give you the necessary assurance for a scheme of Dominion Status to be the basis of discussion at the Round Table Conference. I cannot, for the life of me, imagine after reading and re-reading the statements of the Viceroy and the Secretary of State, what else could be the basis of discussions at the Round Table Conference if not a scheme of Dominion Status. It may be a very incomplete scheme which would form the basis; even our own scheme presented in the Nehru Constitution was not a scheme of complete Dominion Status. The final decision would be matters for adjustments, understandings and bargains, as it is bound to be at any time. But, at any rate, it would have given us the chance of placing the demand of India before the British on communal matters, they would have been obliged to concede our demand of Dominion Constitution to a very great extent. This has been my view all along and is my view today.

I did not feel that it would be in the interest of the Congress [for me] to resign from the Working Committee at Lahore and express my views in the All-India Congress Committee or in the open Congress. I felt that there were already sufficient divisions in the Congress and one more division would not have improved the situation. Out of loyalty to the Congress and my personal devotion to you. Pt. Motilal and Jawaharlal, I kept quiet. But I deliberately refused the General Secretaryship and the membership of the Working Committee, and took the risk of being misunderstood rather than say or do anything to injure the Congress. At the same time, not being in sympathy with the policy and programme of the Congress, I could not be one of its executive. The same reason led me to resign from the Presidentship of the Preventive. Indeed, the only thing possible for me and those who think like me was to drop out of the Congress Executive. And whilst not opposing the policy and programme of the Congress or doing anything to injure it by our actions or words, to remain as one of its camp followers. So far as I am aware, Mrs. Naidu, Rangaswami Iyengar, Pt. Harkaran Nath Misra, Choudhary Khaliquzzaman, R. A. Kidwai, T. A. K. Sherwani and a few other leading Congressmen (whose names I may not mention) hold similar views.

You are taking a great responsibility on yourself by declaring war against the Government today. The situation today is quite the reverse of what it was in 1920, when you started the campaign of non-co-operation. I would briefly compare the

situation in a comparative table as under; of course, it is not complete, but I am giving only the salient features:

1920	1930
(1) Great dissatisfaction against the Government, owing to war-time promises, owing to war-time promises not having been kept. Dissatisfaction against Rowlatt Act, Martial Law, and Khilafat wrongs.	(1) Large number of people believe in the goodwill of Labour Government and sincerity of Labour Government and sincerity of the Viceroy, rightly or wrongly.
(2) Highest water-mark reached in Hindu-Muslim unity.	(2) Lowest water-mark reached in Hindu-Muslim unity.
(3) Sikhs entirely with the Congress.	(3) Sikhs almost entirely against the Congress.
(4) Complete unity inside the Congress. Great enthusiasm amongst the workers and the rank and file.	(4) Disunity in the Congress (Revolt against its mandate), diversity of purpose, complete lack of enthusiasm amongst the workers. Lukewarmness among the rank and file.
(5) Complete non-violent atmosphere and yet breaking of violence in Chauri Chaura.	(5) Obvious existence of violence, even large number of leading Congressmen believing in it and the certainty of violence breaking out.

Like Harishchandra you seem to be bent on keeping the word given by you at Calcutta, irrespective of consequences. I feel as if you are deliberately offering yourself as a sacrifice. I earnestly submit to you for your consideration that to the demand made at Calcutta there has been a response. It is not satisfactory from our point of view. But, it is all that the Government can make, and certainly, it cannot be said that there has been no response. I, therefore, urge that the question of keeping your word in case of no response to the Calcutta offer does not arise and, therefore, the idea of keeping your word at all costs is not morally justifiable and certainly it is not politically expedient.

I hope I have made my position quite clear to you. Holding the views stated above and feeling that the real test of our preparedness lies more in the results achieved with regard to the enrolment of members and volunteers, collections of funds, and above all, in the achievement of Hindu, Muslim and dependence Day, it is my conviction that the country is not the least ready for starting a campaign of civil disobedience in any shape or form, and it would do an incalculable damage should you decide to embark on such a campaign now or in the near future. I would, therefore, earnestly urge you and the members of the Working Committee to desist from doing

so. I believe, that if you could see the wisdom of passing a resolution asking the Congress organization for intensive preparation including H.M.S. understanding, but, in the mean time, postponing the campaign of civil disobedience for the present, until you find yourself ready and obliged to start civil disobedience, it would meet the present situation much better and give a chance to those countrymen of ours who are thinking of participation in the London Round Table Conference.

I wish you to share this letter with Pt. Jawaharlal and Pt. Motilal Nehru. I hope this would find you in the best of health.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,
M. A. ANSARI

Ansari Papers. Courtesy: Jamia Millia Library

APPENDIX V

PENAL SECTIONS OF THE SALT ACT[1]

SEIZURES, DETENTION SEARCH AND ARREST

Section 39 of the Bombay Salt Act which is practically the same as Sections 16-17 of the Indian Salt Act (XII of 1882), empowers any Salt-revenue officer to do the following among other things:

1. To enter any place where illicit manufacture is going on;

2. "In case of resistance, break open any door and remove any other obstacle to his entry upon or into such land, building, enclosed place or premises";

3. To take possession of or destroy salt illicitly manufactured;

4. "To seize in any open space, or in transit, any article which he has reason to believe to be contraband salt and any package or covering in which such article is found and the other contents, if any, of such package or covering in which the same is found, and any animal, vessel or conveyance used or intended to be used in carrying the same";

5. "To detain and search and, if he thinks proper, arrest any person, whom he has reason to believe to be guilty of any offence punishable under this or any other law for the time being in force relating to salt revenue, or in whose possession contraband salt is found".

THINGS LIABLE TO CONFISCATION

Section 50 of the Bombay Salt Act (in which Sec. 12 of the Indian Salt Act is incorporated) lays down that

"All contraband salt, and every vessel, animal, or conveyance used in carrying contraband salt and

[1] *Vide* "Penal Sections of the Salt Act", 6-3-1930.

All goods, packages and coverings in or among which contraband salt is found, and every apparatus, implement, utensil or material employed for the manufacture, excavation, collection, or removal of salt without a licence or for the purpose of utilizing natural salt or salt-earth contrary to any of the provisions of this Act or any rule made thereunder shall be liable to confiscation."

ADDITIONAL PUNISHMENT FOR REPETITION OF OFFENCE

Section 10 of the Indian Salt Act (Act XII of 1882) lays down that

''Any person convicted of an offence under Section 9, after having been previously convicted of an offence under that section, or Section II of the Inland Customs Act, 1875, or under any enactment repealed by that Act, shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months, in addition to the punishment which may be inflicted for a first offence under Section 9, and every such person shall, upon every subsequent conviction of an offence under Section 9, be liable to imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months in addition to any term of imprisonment to which he was liable at his last previous conviction."

DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 41 of the Bombay Salt Act makes it "incumbent on every village officer" to do the following among other things:

1. To communicate to some salt revenue officer of the rank of a Sarkarkun or a Daroga any information concerning offences under the Act;

2. ''To interpose for the purpose of preventing and to prevent, by the use of all reasonable means within his power, the commission of any such offence".

Section 48A lays down among other things that any salt-revenue officer,

''who is guilty of cowardice shall on conviction before a magistrate be punished with imprisonment which may extend to three months, or with fine which may extend to three months' pay, or with both."

Young India, 6-3-1930

1. NOTES

DOG IN THE MANGER

The volume of information being gained daily shows how wickedly the salt tax has been designed. In order to prevent the use of salt that has not paid the tax which is at times even fourteen times its value, the Government destroys the salt it cannot sell profitably. Thus it taxes the nation's vital necessity, it prevents the public from manufacturing it and destroys what nature manufactures without effort. No adjective is strong enough for characterizing this wicked dog-in-the-manger policy. From various sources I hear tales of such wanton destruction of the nation's property in all parts of India. Maunds if not tons of salt are said to be destroyed on the Konkan coast. The same tale comes from Dandi. Wherever there is likelihood of natural salt being taken away by the people living in the neighbourhood of such areas for their personal use, salt officers are posted for the sole purpose of carrying on destruction. Thus valuable national property is destroyed at national expense and salt taken out of the mouths of the people.

Nor is this all. I was told on entering the Olpad taluka that through the poor people being prevented from collecting the salt that was prepared by nature or from manufacturing it they were deprived of the supplementary village industry they had in addition to the spinning-wheel.

The salt monopoly is thus a fourfold curse. It deprives the people of a valuable easy village industry, involves wanton destruction of property that nature produces in abundance, the destruction itself means more national expenditure, and fourthly, to crown this folly, an unheard-of tax of more than 1,000 per cent is exacted from a starving people.

I cannot help recalling in this connection the hue and cry that was raised when I first proposed the burning of foreign cloth. It was considered to be an inhuman, wasteful proposal. It is generally admitted that foreign cloth is harmful to the people. Salt on the other hand is a vital necessity. Yet it has been and is daily being wantonly destroyed in the interest of a wicked exaction.

This tax has remained so long because of the apathy of the general public. Now that it is sufficiently roused, the tax has togo. How soon it will be abolished depends upon the strength the people

are able to put forth. Happily the test will not be long delayed.

EXAGGERATED STATEMENTS

Paragraphs have appeared in the Press to the effect that 18 of my companions have become ill and incapacitated. This is a gross exaggeration. It is quite true that that number had to take two days' rest at the Broach Sevashram. But that was because they were fatigued and footsore. With the exception of the case of smallpox which proved to be quite mild, there was no illness worth the name. One of the companions certainly had strong fever. But that fever too proved to be due to overzeal in marching. He had a wiry constitution and was over-confident about his ability to pull through without resting. He would not therefore rest till nature absolutely compelled him. But both are quite well now though being weak they are still being made to rest a few days. They expect to join the company at Surat. A third, though still a little footsore, insisted on walking, but had to rest at Ankleshvar. All the others are fit and marching daily. It has become necessary to make this statement in order to prevent anxiety on the part of guardians and friends. It would be ungrateful not to mention here the great attention the villagers are paying to the satyagrahis and the exceptional care that was bestowed upon the smallpox patient by the Charotar Education Society at Anand and on the footsore men by Dr. Chandulal's staff at Sevashram.

A moral may also be drawn from these accidents. The modern generation is delicate, weak and much pampered. If they will take part in national work, they must take ample exercise and become hardy. And no exercise is as good and as effective as long vigorous marches. Gymnastics and the like are good and may be added to walking. They are no substitutes for walking, justly called the prince of exercises. Our march is in reality child's play. Less than twelve miles per day in two stages with not much luggage should cause no strain. Those who have not been footsore have gained in weight. I may add too that the hot Condy's fluid, baths and wet sheet packs are proving a most efficient remedy for smallpox.

THE TRUE SPIRIT

Shrimati Khurshedbai Naoroji came the other day to Sandhier, a halting station during the march. She was accompanied by Mridulabehn, the daughter of Sjt. Ambalal Sarabhai, Madalasa, the little daughter of Jamnalalji, Shrimati Vasumatibehn and Radhabehnfrom the

Ashram. They had to await a lift for Sandhier. They wanted to turn to national account the time at their disposal. They saw that the surroundings of the place were not overclean. They therefore decided to clean up the rubbish and so asked for brooms from the surprised villagers. As soon as the villagers realized what had happened, they also joined these national scavengers, some of whom were drawn from aristocratic families and the village of Sayan perhaps never looked as clean as when these sisters utilized their spare time for scavenging. I commend this true service, this mute speech of the sisters to the army of young men who are pining to serve and free the country. Freedom will come only when we deliver a simultaneous attack on all the weak points. Let it be known that all these sisters have enlisted as civil resisters and are eagerly, even impatiently, awaiting marching orders. In this campaign of swaraj by self-purification, it will be nothing surprising if the women outdo the men.

MOTILALJI'S MUNIFICENCE

The palatial Anand Bhavan, the pride of the Nehrus, is to be national property from 6th instant, the national Satyagraha Day. Motilalji has much service to his credit. Jawaharlal is his living gift to the nation. There was no need to add brick and mortar. But I know he has been pining to part with that spacious house which has the historical associations now made known to the public. Truly, Motilalji has spent as he has earned. Let us prove worthy of his services and his gifts.

Young India, 3-4-1930

2. REMEMBER 6TH APRIL

This will be in the readers' hands on Thursday 3rd instant. If there is no previous cancelling, they all may regard this as the word from me that all are free and those who are ready are expected to start mass civil disobedience regarding the salt laws, as from 6th April.

Let me gather up what has been said in these pages at various times.

The only stipulation for civil disobedience is perfect observance of non-violence in the fullest sense of the term.

Mass civil disobedience means spontaneous action. The workers

will merely guide the masses in the beginning stages. Later the masses will regulate the movement themselves.

Congress volunteers will watch developments and render aid wherever needed. They will be expected to be in the forefront.

Volunteers may not take sides in any communal quarrels.

Wherever there is a violent eruption, volunteers are expected to die in the attempt to quell violence.

Perfect discipline and perfect co-operation among the different units are indispensable for success.

If there is true mass awakening, those who are not engaged in civil disobedience are expected to occupy themselves and induce others to be engaged in some national service, such as khadi work, liquor and opium picketing, foreign-cloth exclusion, village sanitation, assisting the families of civil resistance prisoners in a variety of ways.

Indeed if there is a real response about civil resistance regarding the salt tax, we should by proper organization secure boycott of foreign cloth through khadi and secure total prohibition. This should mean a saving of 91 crores per year, and supplementary work for the millions of unemployed. If we secure these things, we cannot be far from independence. And not one of these things is beyond our capacity.

Young India, 3-4-1930

3. PROHIBITION

Pandit Dev Sharma "Abhaya" proposes to launch a prohibition campaign in the area around Hardwar. I have given him my approval saying that if he has the self-confidence he should certainly take up the work. The idea of non-co-operation was born out of the spirit of self-purification. That is why in 1920-21 such a great campaign for prohibition became possible and even succeeded. The campaign had later to be halted, or one may say it stopped by itself, because impurity, that is, coercion, had entered it.

This time people have realized that coercion will not bring lasting results. Therefore, in areas where there is no risk of violence and where workers in sufficient numbers are available, prohibition campaign can and should be launched.

This campaign can be carried on in three ways:

1. by visiting the homes of addicts and dissuading them from

drinking;

2.by persuading the liquor-booth owners to close their business; and

3. by picketing the liquor booths.

All these three can also be taken up simultaneously. In the first two there is no risk whatever. In the third a risk of violence exists. In regard to this the Government may issue prohibitory orders. If such orders are issued we should not be frightened. The easiest way to offer civil disobedience is to disregard them.

Clearly, everyone cannot do picketing nor can it be resorted to everywhere. So the campaign will be somewhat restricted in area. But even though it is restricted it is good work and it may also bring good results. Therefore if those who have the self-confidence take up such a campaign, it can only give me pleasure.

[From Hindi]
Hindi Navajivan, 3-4-1930

4. LETTER TO KAPILRAI MEHTA

Midnight [*April 3, 1930*][1]

CHI. KAPILRAI,

I got the news about you. There is no hurry. Come on Saturday, but only if you have no temperature. They will send you back from Navsari. Do not apply the wet-sheet pack any longer. Do take milk. There is no harm in taking hot-water bath. As for the cough, consult the doctor. He says that you should remain in Surat for at least ten days. I also see no harm in your coming on Saturday if you have no temperature on that day.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Show this to the doctor.

CHI. KAPILRAI SAINIK
ANAVIL ASHRAM, SURAT

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1594. Courtesy: Kapilrai Mehta; also G.N. 3972

[1] From the postmark

5. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, VANJH [1]

April 3, 1930

Only two days now remain before we conclude this march. We shall then set to work. A large number of people will be present. I told you about the scarcity of water in Dandi. We shall have to use water as if it was milk, like the Jain sadhu who lived in the forest. I must also tell you that they are finding it very difficult to arrange for our meals. So after reaching Dandi all that you will be given three times a day would be _ seer of gram, _ seer of puffed rice, and boiled water with a *tola* of ghee and jaggery added. You shall get used to this for we have to lead austere lives.

Another piece of information that I have received is that the Government intends to use fire-engines to stop us. We have prepared ourselves for death from cannons and guns, compared to which this is nothing. Of course, even with jets of water, the Government can kill us through torture. It is certainly painful. However, you must bear in mind that not one of us will retreat. I do not think the Government will be so cruel, but we must be prepared.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 6-4-1930

[1] Held at 4 a.m.

6. SPEECH AT NAVSARI

April 3, 1930

Navsari is the headquarters of our Parsi brethren. The total number of Parsis in the world is less than a hundred thousand and of these the majority live in the Bombay Presidency, chiefly in Navsari and Bombay.

If I come across a Parsi friend anywhere in the country while touring, I never fail to recognize him.

An English writer called Lang while comparing charitable attitudes the world over has established that in generosity Parsis, if we consider their number, top the list. The Parsi brethren who are like a drop in the ocean, have made the world talk of their generosity. History records no other instance of a community having practised such dispassionate generosity. Whenever I have stretched out my hand before Parsis, it has never returned empty.

In the satyagraha in South Africa too, Parsi brethren were in the forefront. Sheth Rustomji sacrificed his all. That is why I have sung his praises like a minstrel.

How can I repay this debt to the Parsis? Being a beggar, how can I repay my debts with money? I am not a saheb or a Viceroy that I may give them high offices or titles. Hence, today, having come to Navsari, I shall sing their praises and take away something from them. Parsi brethren are, of course, there in this struggle. A Zoroastrian friend who is like a brother to me and who is suspected of having cancer, is nevertheless dying to take part in this struggle.

Take the case of Dadabhai's grand-daughters. These sisters are just crazy and impatient to join the struggle. What more then need I say about the assistance from Parsis? However, I want something special.

You may take it that the salt tax is as good as abolished. Ever since I set out from the Ashram, at various places Parsis have showered blessings on me and said: "May you triumph. God is with you. And come back after securing swaraj." And I shall return, if I am alive, after winning swaraj.

You can make the largest contribution if, instead of joining in the salt struggle, you participate in the prohibition movement.

We ruin ourselves by spending Rs. 25 crores on liquor. Because of this evil habit our homes have been destroyed. Although I was a lawyer in South Africa, I moved about a good deal among our labouring brethren there. These labourers also came to see me about their problems. And, since I had made myself part of their lives they told me their joys and sorrows, their tales of woe. And they would break down and cry while telling me how they had ruined themselves through drink. I know from experience that many of my labourer brethren in Ahmedabad are in a similar plight. Those who are given to drink often cannot distinguish between wife, mother and daughter. Man degenerates into brute. Whoever gets entrapped in this vice becomes an animal. I have with my own eyes seen the captain of a ship, when drunk, rolling in vomit. I ask my Parsi brethren to help me rescue addicts from this vice.

Mithubehn saw people given to drink. It moved her and leaving her mother, her home and her belongings she has plunged into the cause of prohibition. However, the sacrifice by one Parsi lady is not sufficient to complete this task. The heart of every Parsi must be touched for the sake of this cause. And, where it seems necessary, persons like me may even have to offer satyagraha. Parsis are intelligent and capable and they earn crores of rupees. They are godfearing. If, from today, Parsi owners of liquor booths give up this trade on realizing that to do business in liquor is a sin, other liquor-booth owners will certainly follow their example.

When we save thus 25 crore rupees we shall have rehabilitated crores of poor homes. The gods will then shower flowers upon us.

If you can enter the hearts of people and make them give up liquor, it will generate such power that we shall be able to achieve whatever we want.

I ask the ladies in particular to help in this. They should visit the homes of those who drink and plead with them. I have seen women of the Salvation Army do this. Why should not the women of India do the same? Are they—the Hindu, Muslim and Parsi women—less capable of doing good? Are not those who are caught in the vice their own brothers? If I go and reason with them, they will quarrel with me as they will with other men. They will not, however, be disrespectful or insulting to any woman. They are not such beasts that they will not understand you. As soon as they come in contact with you they will be awakened, they will step back and, seeing the love and affection

pouring from your eyes, they will conclude that it is some *sati* or *yogini* confronting them and ashamed of themselves they will give up liquor.

When you sisters come to know the wives and daughters of drunkards, when you make friends with their ignorant, straying children, when you see that they continue to drink although they own nothing but the sky above them and the earth below, you cannot but feel inspired to take up this sacred cause.

I leave this message for the sisters in case the Government whisks me away to prison. Gujarati women are trained in such matters. Women in no other part of India have received as much training as they have. Hence all you sisters must plunge into the field which has already been prepared by Mithubehn.

In this non-violent struggle, women can play an even greater part than men because they are the very embodiment of renunciation and compassion, i.e., of non-violence. A man understands the dharma of non-violence through his intellect whereas a woman has imbibed it even before her birth. A man escapes with very little responsibility, but women have to serve their husbands, their children and other members of the family.

Parsis have laid me under a crushing burden of debt to them. They have made a slave of me by their words of love. And a slave enjoys the right to demand more from his master. In this *yajna* of self-purification, I shall not be satisfied even if you drown me in money or provide me with volunteers. I shall be satisfied only when the entire Parsi community hears my appeal and when Parsi brothers and sisters identify themselves with the work that Mithubehn is doing.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-4-1930

7. SPEECH AT DHAMAN

April 3, 1930

Many people from this taluka were my clients in South Africa. Many people from the surrounding villages also had contributed their share in South Africa. Of the eighty of us many are from Baroda State, since this state is spread all over Gujarat. Hence we cannot make any distinction between the two. The natives of this place gave me much help in the Satyagraha in South Africa. Their leaders also were Muslims. Right to the present moment the Congress has pursued the policy of having a certain number of people from this community in

its higher echelous. In South Africa, however, this was not the practice. Among the Muslims there was Ahmed Kachalia who roared like a lion. He was a man of his word and I can say as a satyagrahi that I have not come across a single Hindu or Muslim in all India who could surpass him in courage and integrity. Kachalia qualified himself as a satyagrahi even in difficult circumstances. He put up with everything in order to keep his word. His son Ali too studied under me in South Africa. I knew him quite well.

I have greater expectation from Dhaman because I have found here thirty spinning-wheels. I am happy that there are so many here. The fact is that although the subjects of Indian States cannot participate in this struggle, they can work for khadi and prohibition to their hearts' content. Secondly, I should like to congratulate you that your village has not been guilty of the cruel and stupid practice of many parents who get their children married without understanding the implications of the Sarda Act. Amongst the *Antyajas* of this village, nine men and ten women have vowed not to take liquor or carrion. In such things women must go along with men.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 6-4-1930

8. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

BIJALPUR,
April 4, 1930

MY DEAR REGINALD,

I was delighted to have your letter. There is no question of restoration of confidence, for it was never lost. Assimilation of true ahimsa is a slow and sometimes painful process. And very few realize that there is such a thing as mental *himsa* and that it needs to be eradicated. It is to me a great joy that you saw the thing at once. I do not mind the other letters you have written. I should be glad if you will make another promise to yourself, viz., never to write for the Press for the time being. Let *Young India* be your sole vehicle for the time being. What do you say to your writing a brief note in *Young India* repenting of the unconscious indiscretion?[1] I understand what you say about your engagement.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 4533. Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

[1] No such note appeared in *Young India*.

9. SPEECH IN VIJALPORE

April 4, 1930

After this meeting is over, I have to make two more speeches before I reach my destination. I shall make a speech at Dandi if I have to. Forty-one Headmen have handed in their resignations and the President of the Taluka Committee has congratulated them. Besides the 47, I have been informed today of some seven more.

Bharat Bhushan Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya has resigned from the Legislative Assembly and six others have followed him. These six are also well-known men. On the one hand Bharat Bhu-shan Malaviyaji has resigned, on the other the Headmen have resigned. The action of the latter is more valuable, for Malaviyaji was not a Government servant. He had entered the legislature with a view to serving the coun-try if possible. I can think of no one who has served the country with such single-minded devotion as Malaviyaji has. Nevertheless I assign greater value to the resignations of the Headmen of Gujarat. The reason is that Malaviyaji has not been a part of the administration of this country. The latter is run by these Headmen and Malaviyaji in fact only lends a gloss to the administration which we fear. The gloss can always be separated from the utensil. Headmen, however, are not a gloss which can be separated. They along with the Talatis are the two legs on which this Government rests. An enumeration of the Headmen and Talatis in the seven lakh villages of this country would give us fourteen lakhs of such legs and in this manner the resignation of each Headman would amount to the loss of one leg. It is for this reason that these resignations have value. This is so, however, only if they have been tendered sincerely. Sardar, who once had an income ranging bet-ween Rs. 1,000 and Rs. 2,000 a month has to beg for his meals today. For him, it was not easy to resign. The poor Headman, on the other hand, receives a paltry sum of Rs. 50 or 51-8-0 by way of a bounty. What are the Headmen then clinging to? If they want to be loyal to Sardar they will have to be disloyal to the Government.

I am going to Dandi. But I would request you not to follow me there. If you do, come as soldiers carrying your food on one shoulder and water on the other. Come with the intention of doing some work. Do not come with the idea of having a picnic. The stock of khadi is fast being exhausted. You must use it sparingly in the same manner as you use ghee. If you cannot obtain khadi, it is your duty to come clad

only in loin-cloths made of khadi, but on no account must you come clad in foreign cloth. Those who drink must not come to take the pledge.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 6-4-1930

10. STATEMENT TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

DANDI,
April 5, 1930

God be thanked for what may be termed the happy ending of the first stage in this, for me at least, the final struggle for freedom. I cannot withhold my compliments from the Government for the policy of complete non-interference adopted by them throughout the march. After the graceless and childish performance in the matter of Mr. Vallabhbhai's arrest and imprisonment and equally unprovoked arrest and imprisonment of Mr. Sen Gupta, I was wholly unprepared for this exemplary non-interference. I am not so foolish as to imagine that the Government has suddenly lost their proved capacity for provoking popular resentment and then punishing it with frigh-tfulness. I wish I could believe this non-interference was due to any real change of heart or policy. The wanton disregard shown by them to popular feeling in the Legislative Assembly and their high-handed action leave no room for doubt that the policy of heartless exploitation of India is to be persisted in at any cost, and so the only interpretation I can put upon this non-interference is that the British Gove-rnment, powerful though it is, is sensitive to world opinion which will not tolerate repression of extreme political agitation which civil disobedience undoubtedly is, so long as disobedience remains civil and, therefore, necessarily non-violent.

It remains to be seen whether the Government will tolerate, as they have tolerated the march, the actual breach of the salt laws by countless people from tomorrow. I expect extensive popular response to the resolution of the Working Committee. I have seen nothing to warrant the cancellation of the notice I have already issued, that all committees and organizations throughout the length and breadth of the land are free, if they are prepared, to commence from tomorrow civil disobedience in respect of the salt laws. God willing, I expect with my companions (volunteers) to commence actual civil disobedience at 6.30 tomorrow morning. 6th April has been to us, since its culm-

ination in Jallianwala massacre, a day for penance and purification. We, therefore, commence it with prayer and fasting. I hope the whole of India will observe the National Week commencing from tomorrow in the spirit in which it was conceived. I am positive that the greater the dedication to the country's cause and the greater the purification, the speedier will be the glorious end for which millions of India consciously or unconsciously are striving.

Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi, p. 761

11. A MESSAGE

DANDI,
April 5, 1930

I want world sympathy in this battle of Right against Might.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: *Mahatma Gandhi* (Album), p. 87

12. MESSAGE TO AMERICA[1]

DANDI,
April 5, 1930

I know I have countless friends in America who are in deep sympathy with this struggle but mere sympathy will avail me nothing. What is wanted is concrete expression of public opinion in favour of India's inherent right to independence and complete approval of the absolutely non-violent means adopted by the Indian National Congress. In all humility but in perfect truth I claim that if we attain our end through non-violent means India will have delivered a message for the world.

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-4-1930

[1] This was given to S. A. Brelvi, correspondent of the Eastern News and Press Agency, New York.

13. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

DANDI,
April 5, 1930

CHI. MRIDU,

I have received your letter. I have never had any doubt that we have to do real service only in the villages by living in villages. I have thought about a special work for women. You will read about it in *Navajivan*[1]. If you like it, there is courage in it, and there is bravery. May God shape you into a first-class volunteer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11178. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

14. LETTER TO KANTIPRASAD C. ANTANI

April 5, 1930

BHAI KANTIPRASAD,

May the conference[2] be a success. If there is nothing else you can do, you should at least do khadi work.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Purusharthi Kantiprasad Chandrashankar Antani, p. 83

[1] *Vide* "To the women", 6-4-1930 and "To the women", 13-4-1930.

[2] The Anjar Prajakiya Parishad which was to be held on April 20, 1930

15. SPEECH AT DANDI

April 5, 1930

When I left Sabarmati with my companions for this seaside hamlet of Dandi, I was not certain in my mind that we would be allowed to reach this place. Even while I was at Sabarmati there was a rumour that I might be arrested. I had thought that the Government might perhaps let my party come as far as Dandi, but not me certainly. If someone says that this betrays imperfect faith on my part, I shall not deny the charge. That I have reached here is in no small measure due to the power of peace and non-violence: that power is universally felt. The Government may, if it wishes, congratulate itself on acting as it has done, for it could have arrested every one of us. In saying that it did not have the courage to arrest this army of peace, we praise it. It felt ashamed to arrest such an army. He is a civilized man who feels ashamed to do anything which his neighbours would disapprove. The Government deserves to be congratulated on not arresting us, even if it desisted only from fear of world opinion.

Tomorrow we shall break the salt tax law. Whether the Government will tolerate that is a different question. It may not tolerate it, but it deserves congratulations on the patience and forbearance it has displayed in regard to this party.

If the civil disobedience movement becomes widespread in the country and the Government tolerates it, the salt law may be taken as abolished. I have no doubt in my mind that the salt tax stood abolished the very moment that the decision to break the salt laws was reached and a few men took the pledge to carry on the movement even at the risk of their lives till swaraj was won.

If the Government tolerates the impending civil disobedience you may take it for certain that the Government, too, has resolved to abolish this tax sooner or later. If they arrest me or my companions tomorrow, I shall not be surprised, I shall certainly not be pained. It would be absurd to be pained if we get something that we have invited on ourselves.

What if I and all the eminent leaders in Gujarat and in the rest of the country are arrested? This movement is based on the faith that when a whole nation is roused and on the march no leader isnecessary. Of the hundreds of thousands that blessed us during our

march and listened to my speeches there will be many who are sure to take up this battle. That alone will be mass civil disobedience.

We are now resolved to make salt freely in every home, as our ancestors used to, and sell it from place to place, and we will continue doing so wherever possible till the Government yields, so much so that the salt in Government stocks will become superfluous. If the awakening of the people in the country is true and real, the salt law is as good as abolished.

But the goal we wish to reach is yet very far. For the present Dandi is our destination but our real destination is no other than the temple of the goddess of swaraj. Our minds will not be at peace till we have her *darshan*, nor will we allow the Government any peace.

Those Headmen who have resigned their posts should prove themselves true to their word and should regard it as a sin to serve this Government till freedom is won.

For the last four or five days, I have been speaking about other constructive activities also, and they should be taken up immediately in this Jalalpur taluka. Surat district is notorious for the drink habit, and the Jalalpur taluka is particularly so. Now that the wind of self-purification is blowing here, it should not be a difficult task to eradicate the drink evil altogether. There is sin in every leaf of the palm tree. Its only value lies in the ruin it brings us. This plant is like poison to us. All palm trees should therefore be cut down.

There should not be a single person in Jalalpur taluka wearing foreign cloth. Everyone who comes to Dandi should come with the intention to participate in, and offer his mite to, this swaraj *yajna*.

I would not like anyone coming to Dandi wearing foreign cloth. If it is our wish to turn Dandi into a place of pilgrimage or a bulwark of swaraj, everyone coming here should be dressed exclusively in khadi. I know that the stocks of khadi in the khadi stores are about to be exhausted, and if, therefore, you fail to get a full-length sari or dhoti and come wearing only a khadi *langoti*, you will be welcome here as a civilized person. If, ignoring my suggestion, any of you come to Dandi wearing foreign cloth, I shall have to place at the points of approach to Dandi, volunteers who will kneel before you and request you to wear khadi. If you feel offended by their doing so and slap them in the face, those satyagrahis will let themselves be slapped.

Dandi was chosen not by a man but by God. How otherwise

could we have chosen for the battle-field of satyagraha such an out-of-the-way place—a place where no food grains are to be had, where there is scarcity of water, where thousands can assemble only with difficulty, walking ten miles from the railway station, and where if you are travelling on foot, you have to negotiate creeks full of slush and mud? The truth is that in this struggle we have to put up with suffering. You have made the road from Navsari to Dandi famous throughout the world by arranging for free drinking-water at frequent intervals all along it. If this struggle did not have your approval, your blessings, why would you be doing this?

Dandi should be a sacred ground for us, where we should utter no untruth, commit no sin. Everyone coming here should come with this devout feeling in his heart. If you brothers and sisters come forward as true volunteers and commit civil disobedience of the salt law, no matter what force the Government threatens to use against you, and if you do whatever else you may be required to do, we shall have in us the power to attain in a single day what we hold to be our birthright. Time was when I was infatuated with British rule, as British law taught that the person of every individual is sacred. According to that law, the police cannot kill or manhandle a man even though he might be guilty of murder. It is the duty of the police to produce the man alive before the court. Nor has the police any authority outside the jail to seize from a person even goods alleged to have been stolen. But here the very opposite is true. How otherwise can the police have the authority to decide whether I hold a handful of salt or pebbles?

Every man's house is his castle. Our body also is a fort of a kind. And once salt has entered that fort, it should not be allowed to be forced out of it even if horses are made to trample on your heads. From today we should begin cultivating the strength of will to see that a fist holding salt does not open even if the wrist should be cut off.

Unauthorized entry into a house is a barbarous act. It is for a judge to decide whether I hold in my hand salt or dust. The English law holds the human person to be sacred. If every official assumes the authority of a judge and enters our homes, he would be acting as a robber.

But the officers in India, when they feel impelled, throw the English laws to the winds or ignore them completely at their sweet will and, resorting to the Act of 1818, render them all ineffective.

They have started arresting one leader after another. But

according to the principle of this struggle, that the leader is one who endures the utmost suffering, one of those left outside should assume leadership and take the movement forward.

This is a struggle not of one man but of millions of us. If three or four men can fight and win swaraj, they will rule the country afterwards. Hence, in this struggle for swaraj millions should offer themselves for sacrifice and win such swaraj as will benefit the vast masses of the country.

The Government is taking away from us all the eminent leaders one after another. If we get ready to follow in their footsteps and do the duty shown by them, we can smile at what the Government is doing, but if we fail to do our duty we should feel ashamed. The leaders are behind the bars, and now we in our turn should take their place.

It is true that many of the leaders in and outside Gujarat have been jailed, that many volunteers have been wounded because they would not part with the salt in their hands, and that, at places, some were beaten so hard that they became unconscious. But I remain unmoved. My heart now is as hard as stone. I am in this struggle for swaraj ready to sacrifice thousands and hundreds of thousands of men if necessary. Since we have embarked upon a movement which will send thousands to jail, how can we weep over their imprisonment? In this game of dice we are playing, the throw has been as we wanted. Should we then weep or smile? This is God's grace; let us remain unmoved and watch His miracles.

If in spite of our breaking several salt laws the Government takes no notice of the camp here till the 13th, we shall disband it after that date and go somewhere else. But this plan depends entirely on the Government. For the present, we can but take what the Government gives.

If you have not yet gone out to remove salt, let the whole village get together and go. Hold the salt in your fist and think that you are carrying in your hand salt worth Rs. 6 crores. Every year the Government has been taking away from us Rs. 6 cores through its monopoly of salt.

You can today take the pledge not to eat salt supplied by the Government. You have a mine of salt right at your doorsteps.

There is at Rohtak a humble, brave and selfless publicworker named Lala Shyamlal. At the time of the non-co-operation movement

in 1921 he gave up his law practice but resumed it whenthe tide was low and earned thousands of rupees. However, his heart melted once more after the Lahore Congress and he pleaded to be taken into the Ashram. He also expressed his eagerness to join this march of satyagrahis to Dandi. But why should I exchange this gold mohur for a mere pice? So I sent him back to Rohtak. As he writes to me, he took leave of me after he had understood the value of non-violence better than before. He has now vowed never to give up non-violence and never to prove disloyal to the Ashram principles. This Lala Shya-mlal has now been arrested on a charge of spreading disaffection against the Government.

He must have made some speech on the lines of my writings in *Young India* in which I preach disaffection as our moral duty. In the first place, they should apply Section 124A to the person who has been every moment praying for the destruction of the Empire and has also been attempting to destroy it—apply it, that is, to myself. But the true position is that Section 124A can be applied only to a person who wishes to overthrow the Government by rebellion or armed action. It can never apply to a person who wishes to destroy the Empire through self-suffering by following the path of non-violence and truth. But I am no judge. I have even been disbarred.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-4-1930

16. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

DURING DANDI MARCH,
[Before *April 6, 1930*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

If Reginald has asked for a name and if you call him Angad[2] the name is quite appropriate.

Send money to Krishnadas as and when he asks for it. You need not consult me so long as he asks for Rs. 100 at a time and the total does not exceed Rs. 1,000. If you yourself feel like asking me, you may do so.

[1] From the contents it appears this was written before the letter to the addressee dated April 6, 1930.

[2] A *Vanara* messenger in the *Ramayana*

You should remove all luggage from Jamna Kutir and similar buildings in which in any case there is hardly any luggage and which require no watch.

If Giriraj is not restless, he should remain there for the time being and look after the tannery. It is necessary that we go on making shoes, etc. If, however, he is keen on coming, he may. I am writing to him.

It is difficult to say what we should do about the money which we receive for the satyagraha campaign. My view is this. The money which has been received from villages during the march should be handed over to the Provincial Committee. The other sums which we receive may remain in the Ashram for the present. However, do as Mahadev advises. If you have doubt, consult Vallabhbhai. His word should be final.

I am of the opinion that if Bhansali keeps watch at the Ashram at night, you should let him do so. He is a man of a frank nature. He sleeps very little at night. His keeping watch will be a pure action, and he will probably catch the thief. However, discuss the matter with Imam Saheb, Mahadev and Mirabehn.

We have given to the Labour Union school Rs. 25,000 from the Birla Fund. Whatever the figure, send a date-wise statement of account to Gordhanbhai Patel, Secretary of the Mill-owners' Association. Send a copy to me too.

Blessings from

[PS.] BAPU

Send it immediately. We shall get that money.

From Gujarati: C.W. 8095. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

17. EXTRACTS FROM SPEECHES IN SURAT DISTRICT [1]

[Before *April 6, 1930*]

It is within your power to remain peaceful and at the same time set Sardar free before his sentence of three months and three weeks expires. I ask one hundred per cent of the Headmen, and not fifty per cent of them, to resign. The same applies to the Talatis also. These two are the two pillars on which the Government rests. The political structure of India is supported on these. If these crack, the whole structure will crumble and mingle with the dust.

* * *

Beware! Burn up all false resignations. We can do without these. If there are people who think that since I am a Mahatma and have practised penance, and since Sardar is on my side, they will be able to go back to their posts in a couple of months, they are in for disappointment. Swaraj may be won within a couple of months or may take a lifetime. It may be that we shall not win swaraj even after my bones and those of Sardar are reduced to ashes. Now, however, we have become outlaws, and that too of a kind that cannot be disregarded. We have become outlaws by refusing to co-operate with an Empire on which the sun never sets. This Empire is a mass of untruths, however large that mass may be. It will bow at the very touch of the breath of truth. However, this can only be accomplished when such truth is kindled within us. Hence today, at the very outset, I wish to make up my accounts and warn you not to betray us. To betray me is to betray Sardar, Mother India and yourselves. No one craves for your resignations. Do not tender them under the assumption that the task will be accomplished in a trice. Resign only on the understanding that you will never again get back your posts as headmen or Talatis.

* * *

The women sang the song "It is easy to win swaraj", but that has yet to be demonstrated. I have said so much about salt, now I shall add a couple of lines about the spinning-wheel. Do not conclude from this that whereas swaraj lies embedded in a mountain of salt, it does not lie concealed in a strand of yarn. In fact, swaraj lies in the latter

[1] Extracted from "Swaraj Gita". The source does not mention either the places or the dates of the speeches.

only. There is no other means of bringing happiness and peace to millions of human beings. Whether all of you come forward to prepare salt or not, keep chanting the *mantra* of khadi. And what about liquor? Mithubehn is crazy about this cause. We should be ashamed of continuing to drink when a Parsi lady gives up her home because of it.

* * *

I am tired of repeating the conditions for swaraj every day. Let me now practise the dharma that still remains even in addition to it. I have only to point out your dharma to you As I had decided that regardless of what happened in the country, I should lay down my life or win swaraj through civil disobedience, I invited others to accompany me and I have set out. If I am alive tomorrow, I shall set out from here also after receiving your blessings. I invite those of you who are ready to accompany me. The others who do not do so should wear khadi and produce it. There is a dearth of khadi. I, who am one of its producers, am going away. If I were around, I would supply it to all by getting it from anywhere. Here I am, a producer of khadi, setting forth with others who also produce it, and those of its producers who are left behind do not have the capacity to meet the needs of all. It is therefore your duty to produce as well as wear khadi.

* * *

Even in my dreams, I would not wish anyone ill—be he an Englishman, a Parsi or a Muslim. I am a well-wisher of all. How then can it do anything to me? It dare not do so. It would arrest me, if it could muster up the requisite courage. And even if I should be arrested, while in prison I would pray to God to bring about a change of heart in this Government and to eradicate the sentiment that has been born within it which does not befit a human being. In other words, even in prison I would wish it well. I do not wish to see the King or his officers murdered; hence, it becomes difficult to arrest and imprison a person like me. The authorities could certainly arrest me if they wanted to, but I congratulate them on being ashamed to do so. However, such a situation will not continue always. They have no alternative but to arrest me some day, and, if they do not do so, the whole of India will flare up within a short period. I am aware that all you men and women have not come here today to court arrest. For me, it is all the same whether I am arrested or remain free. All of you will be in that position one day.

The Government's plight is that of the serpent which has swallowed a rat. It would find it hard to resort to either course of action—allowing me to remain out or putting me behind the bars. I am pointing out this ordinary duty to you. Everyone, whether a Hindu, a Muslim or a Parsi, should follow it. When all of us do so, it is beyond the power of any Government to arrest us.

* * *

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 6-4-1930

18. TO THE WOMEN [1]

As I am fully aware of the fact that countless women in India are illiterate, the principles of education which I have formulated are concerned with how they can attain their due status in spite of their lack of education; and it is from these that the means for securing swaraj have been derived. I can make the claim that this struggle has been so organized that the women of India, if they so desire, can make a bigger contribution than the men. The entire khadi movement depends on the women. This movement would collapse today if the women were to refuse to extend their co-operation to it. At least five times as many women as men are lending support to the cause of khadi. As a matter of fact, their number should be regarded ten times as large since there will be ten women working on a loom which runs for e-ight hours. Everyone knows that the contribution of men towards providing yarn for looms is very small, but even in other aspects of khadi work a good number of women are contributing their share. There are of course a large number of women working the loom. Hence, with regard to khadi it has already been established that this activity depends solely on women and it is because of this that women in India have made such progress which is unprecedented in Indian history and beyond what anyone had imagined to be possible. I saw this in the course of my three tours around India and today, walking through Gujarat, I see the same thing and that in a measure which can be calculated by the rule of three. That is to say, the awakening among women in a particular area has been in proportion to the number of spinning wheels working there.

[1] The first three paragraphs of this article are not translated here. They are covered by the first three paragraphs of "To the Women of India", pp. 219-20.

Considering this and keeping in mind the impatience of women to take part in civil disobedience, I felt that if women truly wished to take risks, if they wished to leave a stamp not only on the history of India but on the history of the world, if they wished to see a resurgence of the civilization of India, they should find an exclusive field for themselves. Let us consider this. If women wish to participate in civil disobedience, they can do so in a very few days. But, after having found something, I am not interested ininviting them to offer civil disobedience against the salt law. Even if women participate in this, they will be lost amongst the men. For I expect that at every place large numbers of men will come forward. I do not believe that women will come forward in such numbers. And even if they do, neither the women nor the men will have anything to do and the salt tax will be repealed. The more I think the more I feel that we shall not have much difficulty in getting the salt tax abolished.[1]

I feel that it is, or it can become, the special field of women to bring about a change of heart in these people [the drink addicts]. History testifies that man cannot conquer hearts as speedily as woman can. If women wished they could take up the work of prohibition today. The following is my idea of it:

1. Trained women should start satyagraha units at various places, go in deputations to the owners of liquor booths and request them to give up this trade.

2. They should go to the homes of drink addicts and also start picketing liquor booths, singing devotional songs and preventing those entering them from being caught in the vice.[2]

If liquor booths and opium dens were closed down, it would mean a saving of 25 crores of rupees of the people's money. It is possible to collect 25 crores of rupees of revenue in some other way. Only one result would follow from this; there would be a heavy reduction in the expense on the army and the administration—so heavy a reduction indeed that the very nature of the administration would be changed. The present policy is based on distrust of the people. Tomorrow's policy will be based on trust of the people. In a policy so based there would be neither a large police department nor a large army. But why should I involve women in this tangle? At this

[1] One paragraph following this is not translated here. It is covered by paragraph 4 of "To the Women of India", p. 220.

[2] One paragraph following this is not translated here. It is covered by paragraph 5 of "To the Women of India", p. 220.

juncture I merely offer to women the field of prohibition without entering into discussion of any other field of activity. I believe that Gujarat is the best place for carrying on this activity. The physically delicate Parsi lady Mithubehn Petit is the person who has prepared the ground for this work. And it was her remarkable effort that suggested this field of work to me. Hence, all that remains to be done is that Mithubehn's work should be multiplied a hundredfold. Not that only a hundred women should prepare themselves for the work, but, rather, that countle-sswo-men should prepare themselves and the activity should increase a hundredfold. The manner in which the work is at present being carried on should be slightly modified. All men should step aside. They should only do such work as is allotted to them by women. But the principal work of picketing, of persuading people, of pleading with them and of taking deputations to the liquor-booth owners should be done by women alone.[1]

I have only given an outline of the scheme as I visualize it. Details may be filled in. It is my desire that women should become pioneers in this task and should give this activity such momentum that it will shake up the people as well as the Government.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-4-1930

19. WELLS FOR ANTYAJAS

A few weeks ago, *Navajivan* published Thakkar Bapa's appeal for wells for our *Antyaja* brethren. Some men from Bombay recently came to see me at Sandhiyer. Thakkar Bapa, too, was present at the time. I suggested to those friends that they themselves should fill Thakkar Bapa's purse. Rs. 40,000 was not too big a sum for them to give. These *Antyaja* friends require that amount. Immediately, one of the rich visitors paid the sum needed for sinking one well. Shri Narandas consulted the others and undertook to raise without delay the whole sum needed. This filled me with great joy and I comp-limented the visitors. I now advise these friends to collect this sum and place it at the disposal of Thakkar Bapa. Wells can be sunk only during the next three months. No well can be sunk after the monsoon has set in.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-4-1930

[1] Two paragraphs following this are not translated here. They are covered by the last two paragraphs of "To the Women of India", p. 221.

20. MY NOTES

SOME QUESTIONS

QUESTION. Should one insist upon khadi in jail?

ANSWER. I was not aware of this problem when I conceived the khadi vow. I feel that such insistence is unnecessary. Ordinarily a satyagrahi should not oppose any of the prison rules which do not violate his dharma. But everyone should decide his own duty in this regard. If someone has taken a vow that under no circumstances will he wear anything but khadi, he should certainly insist upon khadi. But I would consider it improper for one to take such a vow and go to jail.

Q. Anyone who follows the rule of eating only after having spun 160 strands of yarn would prefer the spinning-wheel to the *takli.* Should one therefore insist on being provided with a spinning-wheel and facilities for carding? Spinning on a *takli* would take much time and interfere with prison work, hence the spinning-wheel is an absolute necessity. Is one justified in insisting upon spinning 160 strands or should one be satisfied with less?

A. Spinning is a *yajna* so one can insist upon being provided with a spinning-wheel and facilities for carding. Anybody who has taken the vow of spinning must insist on both. It is not enough that a *takli* is provided. Whether one should be satisfied with less than 160 strands depends upon the vow. If the vow is to spin 160 strands one cannot do with less.

Q. What should one generally do when, for instance, the food provided is dirty, or when no urinals are provided, or when one is required to complete the calls of nature within two or three minutes and is not allowed to visit the lavatory again if the need arises, or when one is over-burdened with work, or when one cannot sleep owing to the warders shouting out the roll-call all night long? What kind of insistence concerning what matter would be regarded as dharma?

A. The common rule in such matters is that those inconveniences with which one can put up and which do no harm to one's self-respect, should be tolerated while in the remaining matters one should fight as befits a satyagrahi. I would not tolerate dirty food or filthy utensils. I would not tolerate dirty urinals, but if facilities for this were provided in my cell I would not object to these. I would certainly take my own time with regard to evacuation of the bowels and would not tolerate being hustled in this matter. I would tolerate the noise of roll-call.

The heartless Gujaratis do not appear to be concerned about Gujarati women being killed every day by Primus stoves. I have just been informed of the death of two women. During the present pilgrimage, I have had first-hand experience of the dangers involved in using these stoves. Even one of my experienced and skilled colleagues has had two narrow escapes. As a result of this, I have prohibited the use of such stoves altogether. Women do not know how to use a Primus stove, for it does require some skill. And our women cannot put it on a table. Hence, it is the duty of men to boycott it. So long as they do not do so, the deaths of the young girls and women from the use of this stove will be on their heads. Even Primus stoves which have been bought should be discarded. It is an illusion that the Primus saves time. We must also consider all the attention it needs when it goes out of order.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-4-1930

21. SWADESHI

The cloth merchants of Bombay are talking of boycotting foreign cloth. The Gujarat Sabha of Ahmedabad is doing the same. The intention of both is to help as much as possible the movement for the boycott of foreign cloth. However, if either of them should make a mistake, harm may be caused to the movement.

We now find the following varieties of swadeshi:

(1) Pure khadi, i.e., khadi made from hand-spun and hand-woven yarn.

(2) Cloth made in India in mills owned and run by Indians and from yarn that is also produced in such mills.

(3) Cloth made in such mills out of yarn that is wholly or partly of foreign origin.

(4) Cloth made in any mill which, although located in India, is owned and controlled by foreigners.

(5) Any object that is made in India.

(6) Any object for the making of which part of the work has been done in India, for instance, a musical instrument assembled here, though all its parts were made abroad.

The following are the various forms of boycott.

(a) Boycott of *all* foreign cloth.

(b) Boycott of British cloth alone.

(c) Boycott of all British goods.

(d) Boycott of all foreign goods.

In my opinion (1), i.e., pure khadi alone is swadeshi and, true boycott implies (a), i.e., boycott of all foreign cloth . If item No. (1) is proved to be swadeshi, other necessary items will prove their swadeshi character. We shall be unable to satisfy the need for even one article of swadeshi which is essential, if we try to obtain all swadeshi goods which may be found to be desirable.

Only one form of boycott, i.e., item (a), boycott of all foreign cloth, is essential and this can be achieved through khadi alone.

The reader should remember that discussion on other swadeshi goods has been going on ever since the Congress came into existence forty-five years ago. Even so, no conclusion has been reached. The question of pure swadeshi, that is khadi, was first taken up only nine years ago. Nevertheless, we have achieved a fair amount of success there. For the furtherance of this cause a national institution has come into being the like of which I do not find anywhere else in the world. It is only through khadi that the experiment of civil disobedience on such a large scale became possible.

The reader should remember that although we have been talking about boycott of British goods for the past forty-five years, we have not met with any success in this sphere. Boycott of foreign cloth on the other hand has now proved so effective that the people have developed faith in the possibility of such a boycott.

In my opinion it would be harmful from a practical standpoint to divert the attention of the people from the boycott of foreign cloth and it will be short-sightedness to think of attempting such a boycott without the help of khadi. If such a boycott were possible with the help of Indian mills, this could have been achieved by now, i.e., during the last fifty years. Yes, the mills could certainly help khadi in making the boycott effective. I have already shown how this could be done in practice.

The swadeshi of Indian mills is not merely useless, it is also harmful. This is because it puts khadi on a par with mill-made cloth. This is like the friendship between a tall and a short man. If the

short man has the same rights as the tall man, he really has none. One can see with the naked eye that someone who is short cannot stand alongside someone who is tall. Hence, if the tall man wishes to be just to the short man he should always put the latter in the front. He should be ready to renounce anything in his favour. It may even be necessary for him to lift the short man on his shoulder in order to sustain him. The relationship between khadi and mill-made cloth is exa-ctly of this nature. Whereas the latter is well set on its feet, the former has as yet only learnt to crawl. Hence anyone who has not taken the vow to wear pure khadi can at least act in the following manner. He can refuse to wear any cloth which has a single thread of foreign yarn in it. Instead, he should take the vow of using pure khadi alone. And, in case he is unable to do so, he should use cloth made in mills which are exclusively owned and controlled by Indians.

If khadi is not constantly kept in view, the result will be that the price of cloth made in mills in India—not Indian mills—will keep increasing and the boycott will never become effective.

1. In this age, no amount of effort would make it possible for mills to make cloth sufficient to meet the country's needs.

2. The concern of mills generally is, and will be, profits.

3. The Government can, at any time, suppress the mills.

4. The present trend indicates that mills in this country are passing under foreign ownership and control.

5. As mills are dependent upon foreign machines and foreign techniques, they could, all of a sudden, be faced with a difficult situation.

While on the contrary:

(1) If the sentiment for khadi becomes widespread in the country, we can produce today as much khadi as we require.

(2) Khadi does not require as much capital as mills do.

(3) It does not require as much technical skill.

(4) It may be said that potentially there are thirty crores of labourers employed in the production of khadi.

(5) All the implements required for the production of khadi are made in the country.

(6) Khadi cannot be suppressed either by the Government or any other power.

(7) Khadi can be produced in every home.

(8) It is not necessary to make khadi at one place and send it to another. At present it does have to travel to some extent because the sentiment for khadi has not gained much ground.

The reader will see from all this what precisely swadeshi dharma means. While practising it, anyone who has imbibed the spirit of swadeshi will also readily abide by it in all other things. Anyone who wears khadi out of ignorance, by way of imitating others or out of hypocrisy, will not be regarded as having taken the vow of khadi, despite the fact that he wears it. Such fashionable khadi-wearers could not be regarded as advancing the sentiment for khadi. Anyone who uses khadi with knowledge will start denying himself all foreign goods which he can do without.

Let us now turn to boycott. It is madness to try and boycott everything. The idea is indefensible.

It is impossible to boycott only British goods or British cloth. This is because such goods or cloth can find their way into the country under the guise of other foreign goods or cloth. During the days of the Partition of Bengal, British cloth was being sold as swadeshi with the British markings on it removed. So when we think of boycotting British cloth alone, no purpose is served except that of giving an impetus to cloth made in Japan and other countries.

So far I have considered the matter only from the view-point of the boycott of foreign cloth.

But if we consider the situation after swaraj, if we consider the interests of the starving millions, we can only think of khadi.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-4-1930

22. MILL-OWNERS OF AHMEDABAD

In saying that I am greatly pleased at the kindness shown by the mill-owners of Ahmedabad, I am not merely being polite: I am expressing the deepest feelings of my heart. Their presence on the eve of my departure from Sabarmati, their visits to me from time to time and finally their coming to Surat in a group out of their affection for me are a happy indication that this struggle is not directed against mill-owners or against capitalists.

However, I myself attribute a special significance to their presence and their blessings. I have been associated with them now for almost fifteen years. During this period, despite the fact that perhaps some of them regarded my conduct as being detrimental to their interests, they have accepted me as a friend and our relationship has been cordial even when there has been a dispute between us. I believe that their co-operation on this occasion is, to some extent, because of that relationship. If this conclusion is correct, I have the right to expect some more practical support from them in addition to their presence and their blessings.

They have taken a step forward by their decision that hence-forth they will boycott foreign cloth and use only swadeshi cloth. This resolution, though commendable, has loopholes. Some may regard khadi as swadeshi. Others may prefer mill-made cloth with a border that is made of foreign yarn. The dharma of swadeshi cannot be practised in this manner. In my opinion, the purest form of swadeshi to the extent it is practicable is khadi. If this is not possible, then swadeshi should mean cloth made in mills owned and controlled by Indians out of yarn spun in those mills. If even this cannot be done, not only is swadeshi meaningless but it is also harmful from the point of view of boycott.

If mill-owners encourage khadi and run their mills with an eye to attaining the object of swadeshi, I regard the boycott of foreign cloth as something very simple. If I find the time, I hope to consider this subject in detail in a separate article. Here I wish to show how and in what ways mill-owners can specially assist this movement. It is beyond argument that the relations between mill-owners and workers should be friendly. If, instead of opposing each other, they were to help each other they would encourage the cause of swaraj. In this

regard the following points should be borne in mind:

(1) Mill-owners should carefully remove the everyday inconveniences the workers have to face.

(2) Since mostly I am not there and Sheth Mangaldas is old—even older than I am—there should be a permanent *panch* to solve problems as they arise.

(3) Mill-owners should consider the Majoor Mahajan a friendly body and have faith in it. They should make full use of its assistance and co-operate fully with it.

(4) With a view to improving their moral and social condition labourers should be given financial and other assistance whenever there is need for it. In other words, schools, hospitals, reading-rooms and such other institutions meant exclusively for them should be supported without anything being expected by way of return.

(5) Those labourers, clerks and others who wish to participate in civil disobedience or such other national work, should be given help and wherever it becomes necessary to relieve them, this should be done reserving their right to return. If it becomes necessary to support the families this should be done.

(6) In order to free labourers from the vice of drink, millowners should start canteens and provide recreation to suit their tastes. In order to induce abstention those who give up liquor should be recognized and encouraged in various ways.

(7) There should be no profit motive behind the production of cloth by mills. The purpose of such production should be boycott of foreign cloth.

(8) Mills should never produce cloth with the intention of passing it off as khadi; they should not mark it as khadi or stamp it with the spinning-wheel; instead, they should produce such qualities of cloth as cannot be found in khadi at present. In other words, they should decide upon the quality of cloth to be produced in consultation with the Charkha Sangh.

(9) Mills should stock khadi, propagate it and give of their talent and experience for its production.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-4-1930

23. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

April 6, 1930

MY DEAR REGINALD,

I hope you had my previous letter[1].

The letter from Wilson[2] is quite good. God will keep you out of harm's way.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4534. Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

24. LETTER TO LALA DUNICHAND

DANDI,
April 6, 1930

DEAR LALA DUNICHAND

The news that Lala Shamlal of Rohtak has been arrested has prompted Lala Surajbhan to rush to the Punjab. I have approved of the suggestion. Please make what use you like of him. I do hope that you and Mrs. Dunichand will not fail to sacrifice your all in this final battle for freedom.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5588

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Reginald Reynolds", 4-4-1930.

[2] After the addressee had written an apology to Wilson, author of the critical comment in the *Indian Daily Mail*, the latter sent a "very friendly reply" which was forwarded to Gandhiji.

25. INTERVIEW TO FREE PRESS OF INDIA[1]

DANDI,
April 6, 1930

Now that a technical or ceremonial breach of the salt law has been committed, it is now open to anyone who would take the risk of prosecution under the salt law to manufacture salt wherever he wishes and wherever it is convenient. My advice is that a worker should everywhere manufacture salt and where he knows how to prepare clean salt should make use of it and instruct villagers to do likewise, telling the villagers at the same time that he runs the risk of being prosecuted. In other words the villagers should be fully instructed as to the incidence of salt tax and the manner of breaking laws and regulations in connection with it, so as to have the salt tax repealed and it should be made absolutely clear to the villagers that this breach is to be open and in no way stealthy. This condition being known they may manufacture salt or help themselves to salt manufactured by nature in creeks and pits near the seashore, to use it for themselves and for their cattle and to sell it to those who will buy it, it being well understood that all such people are committing a breach of the salt law and therefore running the risk of prosecution or even without prosecution to be subjected by the so-called salt officers to harassment. Thus the war against salt tax should be continued during the national week up to the 13th instant. Those who are now engaged in this sacred work should devote themselves to vigorous propaganda for boycott of foreign cloth and use of khaddar. They should also endeavour to manufacture as much khaddar as possible. As to this and prohibition of liquor I am preparing a message for the women of India who, I am becoming more and more convinced, can make a larger contribution than the men towards the attainment of independence. I feel they will be worthier interpreters of non-violence than men, not because they are weak, as men in their arrogance believe them to be, but because they have greater courage or the right type and immeasurably greater spirit of self-sacrifice.

[1] Gandhiji gave the interview after he had broken the salt law by picking up a lump of salt mixed with mud.

QUESTION. Now that you have infringed the salt law and Government have not interfered with you what do you intend doing afterwards? —the Free Press representative. Gandhiji replied:

ANSWER. Oh, I shall continue to manufacture illicit salt.

You must subordinate bread-earning to national interest. You must take interest in gaining independence for India and freeing her from the heavy burden of this infernal tax. You must all take concerted action and co-operate in India's interest.

The Amrita Bazar Patrika, 7-4-1930

26. SPEECH AT DANDI

April 6, 1930

At four in the afternoon Gandhiji addressed a meeting. Reviewing the day's Programme he remarked that the beginning of the national week had been very auspicious. Whether Government arrested them or not they had to do their duty. He was sure that all over India people must have started satyagraha on this day. Proceeding, he said there was not much of natural salt at Dandi since Government servants had taken timely care to destroy it. That was a monstrosity which it was their duty to get rid of. When they made a beginning in the morning he had himself picked up more mud than salt, but after washing and cleaning he could get two *tolas* of pure quality which was sufficient for his day's requirements. That was only a beginning but that signified great things. Today those who had broken the law had become either thieves or owners.

He then referred to the raid at Aat. Mr. Antia, the police officer in charge, had shown considerable prudence in his behaviour. That was the victory of ahimsa. What an amount of public money Government had wasted in confiscating that salt!

Gandhiji then made a reference to the arrest of Lala Shamlal of Rohtak under section 124A. He paid a glowing tribute to Lala Shamlal for his excellent national work.

He could not understand the policy of Government in arresting other workers and leaving him alone. Not that he was anxious to be arrested, but that was not a just course. He did not expect any greater honours by his arrest. He was already a Mahatma. He did not want the title of Mahatma.

He was not at all anxious to go to jail. Surely he enjoyed the good climate of Dandi. Government must arrest him before others, because he was the greatest offender. It was the duty of every person in Rohtak to commit breach of 124A under which Lala Shamlal was arrested. In conclusion, Gandhiji asked the people not to eat taxed salt any more.

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-4-1930

27. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Sunday, After 10 p.m. [*April 6, 1930*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I hear that Manilal Kothari has been arrested. Ramdas and others have already been arrested. All this is very good. For you also it is a matter of days or hours. As for me, it will make no difference whether I am inside or outside jail.

I have sent the articles for *Young India* directly to Mohanlal. You may or may not be there to receive them.

If you get time, organize the women. There will be no harm if the Ashram women make a start. On the contrary, it may be necessary that they do so. I am referring to the campaign against drinking.

Surajbhan is going to the Punjab, with my permission, after hearing about the arrest of Lala Shamlal.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Here they have not laid hands on anyone so far. Sarojini Devi has remained here and has decided to take Abbas's place if the old man is arrested.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11472

[1] The arrests of Manilal Kothari, Ramdas and others were reported in *Navajivan*, 13-4-1930. The letter was evidently written on the preceding Sunday.

28. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI,

KARADI,
10.15 p.m. [*April 6,*][1] *1930*

CHI. NARANDAS,

You must have received the reply to your question. Perhaps it will be better if Purushottam comes over here. The air here is very good. About arrangements for water we must wait and see what can be done. There are no signs yet of my being arrested.

That lady Kamaladevi is a vary good-natured woman. She will stay for about fifteen days. If the place suits her child, she may even stay on. If she wishes to, she is worth encouraging. See that she does not feel lonely.

A Bengali gentleman from Santiniketan will be arriving there for a fortnight's stay. Cultivate his acquaintance. He, too, is a frank-hearted man. After gaining some experience, he will return to Bengal.

It will be very good indeed if Ratilal sticks to the work he has taken up.

Tell everyone that it is because I do not get time that I do not write letters to them.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Surajbhan is going to the Punjab with my permission.

From Gujarati: C.W. 8096. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] From the reference to Surajbhan's going to the Punjab, it appears this was written the same day as the preceding item.

29. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 6, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

No time to send you a long love letter. It is now nearing 11 p.m. How much yarn have you now left to be paid for the two Sanghs, to what dates have payments been already made?

More when time permits. Manilal has gone to replace Ramdas.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5388. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9622

30. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Silence Day [On or before *April 7, 1930*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

If you feel like coming, you are at liberty to come. You won't see Dandi. If you are quite calm, you need not come. Even if you are to join the prohibition work at a later stage, you will be none the wiser for coming. All the talk will be in Gujarati. But if you want to come because you must see me, then come some other day for that sole purpose. But you must judge for yourself. I leave you entirely free to decide.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

You will carefully follow *Young India* nowadays.

From the original: C.W. 5384. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9618

[1] Gandhiji seems to refer to the women's conference held at Dandi on April 13 which passed a resolution on prohibition. The preceding Monday was April 7.

31. BARBAROUS

[*April 7, 1930*]

The threatened has after all happened. I congratulate the Government on having commenced arrests in right earnest of salt tax resisters at least in Gujarat. They have arrested Sjt. Manilal Kothari and all his com-panions, so also Sjt. Amritlal Sheth and his companions, Dr. Chandulal Desai of Broach Sevashram and his companions. They have arrested Darbar Gopaldas, Sjt. Fulchand, Sjt. Ravishankar, the intr-epid reformer who has weaned the brave but ignorant Rajputs of Kheda from many an error. They have arrested Ramdas Gandhi, Keshavbhai Ganeshji, Chimanlal Pranshankar and others. All this the Government had the right to do. But they had no right to do what they did today[1] at the village Aat four miles from Dandi. The police tried by force to snatch salt from the civil resisters. This they had no right to do, if they were representing a civilized Government. There was no provocation offered. The resisters were not running away. Their names could have been taken. But they insulted these brave men and through it the nation by touching their sacred persons without warrant and without just cause. One of the resisters by name Ukabhai Rama of Bardoli was slightly injured on the wrist. I admit that the police went unarmed to the scene of action. They will probably admit that there never was the slightest occasion for carrying arms. For the people were obviously and absolutely peaceful, nevertheless this laying hands on the people for the purpose of seizing the salt they were carrying was morally wrong and even wrong I fancy according to English common law. But I do not know what powers are given by a statute that makes a crime of undefined cowardice.

This first drawing of blood, however little, brought down practically the whole of the village to the scene. Women were just yet to take no part in the act of civil disobedience, nor were the men of the village expected as yet to do so. But they, men and women (some with babes in arms), immediately they heard that salt was being forcibly seized and that one of the volunteers was injured, rushed out, and men on one side and women on the other descended to the cha-

[1] Monday, April 7, 1930

nnel and began to dig out the salt. As soon as I heard of the attempt at forcible seizure from the persons of the resisters, Monday being my day of silence, I wrote on a piece of paper that Shrimati Sarojini Devi and Sjt. Abbas Tyabji should go, and if the police did not desist they should also dig out salt and challenge them to seize it from their hands. But I charitably assume that the police had seen their mistake before these friends reached the scene and had not the heart to touch a whole villageful of people including women. The sat-yagrahis, however, would not be satisfied without my presence although I might not speak. They wanted me evidently to see with my own eyes how they had behaved and with what zest the whole village was participating in the struggle. Ukabhai Rama was brought to me with the salt rescued. I went. For me it was a soul-stirring sight. The forcible seizure served a good purpose. It brought life to the whole village. Nevertheless, for the sake of the Government and for the sake of keeping the salt war on the gentlemanly plane, I wish this ugly incident had not happened.

Legal procedure may be a cumbersome business for the Government. But since they have begun well let them not end ill. Let it be a pure trial of strength between them and the people. If they will resort to terrorism and if I am not mistaken, they will find the people, men as well as women. ready for any ordeal they may prepare for them. Salt in the hands of satyagrahis represents the honour of the nation. It cannot be yielded up except to force that will break the hand to pieces. Ukabhai, as he was describing the action of the police, said, "God gives strength to a satyagrahi to defend what is entrusted to him." Let the people defend the salt in their possession till they break in the attempt, but they should do so without malice, without anger, without an angry word. The police have the easiest way open to them of taking possession of the salt. Let them arrest the civil resisters, and they can take possession of the salt for they have possession of their persons. But it can become forfeit only after conviction, not before.

Young India, 10-4-1930

32. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

April 7, 1930

The reports received so far indicate that the magic wave of mass civil disobedience in Gujarat has had its effect on the Government. The Government has lost no time in arresting the leaders of this movement but I understand that it must have paid similar attention to the leaders in other provinces as well. This is something we can congratulate ourselves on. It would have been surprising if the Government had allowed the satyagrahis to act as they pleased. It would have been considered barbaric if it had attacked the life and property of the satyagrahis without any previous inquiry. One cannot object to trial and conviction according to established procedure. Prison and such other punishments are the ordeal through which a satyagrahi must pass. A satyagrahi can be said to have fulfilled his purpose only when he does not flinch, when he does not betray those whom he represents and when he is not scared by the arrest of his leader. The time has come when everyone will have to be both soldier and commander.

I shall be deeply grieved if even after these arrests, students who attend schools or colleges run or controlled by the Government do not leave these institutions. People should make salt only after realizing the risk involved in doing so, or, alternatively, they should collect the salt that has naturally accumulated increeks and holes on the seashore and use it for themselves and their cattle and sell it to those who may wish to buy it. Everyone should realize that in defying the salt law they run the risk of legal action being taken against them. It is also possible that the officers of the so-called salt department may harass them without resorting to any legal steps. The struggle against the salt law has to be carried on in this fashion during the whole of the National Week ending on 13th April. All those who do not take part in this sacred task should devote them-selves wholly to the powerful movement for the boycott of foreign cloth and use khadi. They should try and make as much khadi as possible and carry on the struggle for prohibition.

I am preparing a message to the women of India. I am becoming increasingly certain that in the struggle for securing swaraj, the women of this country could contribute a greater share than the men. I feel that women will be able to explain the meaning of non-violence

to the country more effectively than men. Not because men, out of vanity, regard them as weak but because they possess real courage in a greater proportion and an immeasurable sense of dedication.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 13-4-1930

33. LETTER TO GEOFFREY MAW

DANDI,
April 7, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter[1] of 26-3-30 and the book. I have read the passage[2] referred to by you. From my experience of such incidents I doubt if the deceased ever uttered the sentiments imputed to him or that the Indians referred to by the author or ever said what has been reported of them. But I should be sorry to discover that the deceased made the remarks ascribed to him, although he had never met me and although he had never studied the movement. For I hold with many Christian friends that Jesus himself was a confirmed non-co-operator. His whole life as we know it was one of sustained non-co-operation with priesthood because it was identified with evil.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Geoffrey Maw Papers. Central Library of the Selly Oak College, Birmingham. Courtesy: Marjorie Sykes

[1] In which the addressee had said: "Forgive me if I appear to criticise. Your way of non-co-operation appears good for you. . . though you foresee bloodshed and enmity and further cleavage of the two races ahead . . . Aggrey's way seems to me to be truly 'the more excellent way'. I think he would have counselled 'patience and still more patience'. . ."

[2] The passage from the book titled *Aggrey of Africa* by Edwin Smith had quoted Aggrey to say: "I stand for co-operation with the white man. Your friend Gandhi makes a mistake when he goes in for non-co-operation. So long as he persists in that policy he will never help India . . ."

34. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

DANDI,
April 7, 1930

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your letter. The first day at any rate Gujarat celebrated very well and the Government on its part may also be said to have celebrated it quite well. Except for what happened at Aat village, there has been nothing that one might complain about. I have written about Aat for *Young India* and you will find the article there among the papers. The sentence awarded to Durbar and others may be regarded as reasonable. As my article is based on the information I have received, you may make in it any alterations and additions you think fit. If you have the courage and if you wish, you may distribute salt at a public meeting; but from this distance I still think that it will be an unnecessary risk to try to distribute salt at a public meeting. I have explained to Gangabehn everything about women and about the drink evil. If you have time, think on the subject and discuss it with others. If you don't, you may drop the idea.

I am busy at the moment with a long letter which I have just received from the Kheda district.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11473

35. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

DANDI,
Silence Day [*April 7, 1930*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I do get your letters. But what can I do? I can get no time and, therefore, have not been able to write to you. I very much wish to write, of course. I have to write about the struggle under the everpresent possibility of arrest and days pass. I should indeed be happy if you are permitted and go to the Ashram. The Government has still not arrested me. It has started arresting others. Ramdas has been arrested. I have, therefore, sent Manilal to take his place. Our work is going on very well here. Dandi is a small village; its water and air seem to be excellent.

I stop here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3363

[1] From the reference to Ramdas Gandhi's arrest the letter appears to have been written on Monday, April 7, 1930. *Vide* also "Letter to Prabhavati", 10-4-1930.

36. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 7, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

I send with this a cheque received from Bhai Shantikumar. Treat it as an anonymous contribution.

Gangabehn will start from here tomorrow morning.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have permitted Jayantiprasad to go to the U.P.

From Gujarati: C. W. 8097. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

37. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

DANDI,
April 7, 1930

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have your letter enclosing a cheque. I would not expect a cheque from you just now. If, however, you send one, it will have for me a hundred times its value. I know that your heart is here. We have, however, to practise non-attachment. It is the quintessence of all religious teaching. I have given autographs and blessings in both the copies of the *Gita.* May God give to both of you *Shanti* [1] and *Sumati*[2] and may you be worthy of your names.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4718. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

[1] Peace of mind

[2] Wisdom. Sumati is the name of the addressee's wife.

38. ADVICE TO VOLUNTEERS, AAT [1]

April 7, 1930

Gandhiji asked them to cling to their resolve under any circumstances. He warned them against putting any resistance that would encourage violence on the part of the police. They had every right, he said, to hold, tight to their bosom the salt which they might collect. That was no violence. To them their salt was as dear as their blood. He hoped that by their patience and suffering they would change the hearts of police even. Gandhiji advised volunteers to carry on their work without minding such interference of police.

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-4-1930

39. MESSAGE TO KATHIAWAR

DANDI,
April 7, 1930

From what I hear it seems that the Government have conferred upon Kathiawar greater honour. While information from other centres states that leaders have been arrested, as regards Kathiawar, Mr. Manilal Kothari and Sheth Amritlal are arrested with their volunteers. Nothing could be more creditable and welcome for Kathiawar. Moreover, the recent death of Mr. Kothari's wife has added more to the valour. The tragic sentiment is there in the death of a dear one and when a warrior is deeply affected by such departure without succumbing to sorrow and plunges into the field without a moment's delay, his bravery shines even more. I hope Kathiawar will understand this sentiment and will nurture it. There is only one way to do so. If Kathiawar is pouring incessantly to join satyagraha and take up the work left by these men, success will be theirs.

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-4-1930

[1] After the arrest of two volunteers at Aat, Gandhiji accompanied by Abbas Tyabji and Sarojini Naidu, visited the spot where satyagraha was offered. As Gandhiji was observing silence, he wrote a brief message on a piece of paper which was read out by the captain of the volunteers.

40. MESSAGE TO GUJARAT

DANDI,
April 7, 1930

Gujarat has worked wonders. The hopes which Pandit Motilal Nehru had expressed at Jambusar seem to fructify. The first day of self-purification week has begun with auspicious omens. Good news is pouring in from all centres from Ranpur right up to Surat. Messrs Manilal Kothari and Amritlal Sheth have been arrested with the volunteers and the news just now reaches us that Durbar Gopaldas, Talati and Ravishanker, all leaders of Kaira District, have been arrested. They have enhanced the prestige of Gujarat and India as well. But what will the remaining workers in Gujarat do? I hope the volunteers will pour in large numbers from all quarters, without waiting for any call and fill up the gap immediately caused by the arrests. The time has now come when students, pleaders, Government servants and others will be put to test. Will those who remain outside keep on waiting and watching when seasoned soldiers are being arrested?

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-4-1930

41. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI

DANDI,
Silence Day [On or after *April 7, 1930*][1]

CHI. KALAVATI [2],

I got your letter. I liked it. What are you doing? Are you at all studying? Are you happy?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5285

42. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

DANDI,
Silence Day [On or after *April 7, 1930*][3]

CHI. CHANDRAKANTA,

Write to Mother now that she should stay on there in peace. When she feels truly inspired from within, she can register herself in the Satyagraha Camp there itself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

[1] Gandhiji reached Dandi on April 5, 1930.

[2] Wife of Kashinath Trivedi, then Assistant Editor of *Hindi Navajivan*. She was at the time residing in the Sabarmati Ashram.

[3] Gandhiji reached Dandi on April 5, 1930. April 7 was a silence day. Gandhiji was at Dandi on the following silence day also.

43. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

DANDI,
Tuesday, April 8, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter and postscript. I hope Mother is not suffering from cancer. But the life is so artificial that one wonders that we do not suffer more than we do.

Yes, the things are hastening to an end. You were right in not going when you did not feel like it.[1] You will hear all about the exclusive field I have suggested for women.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5390. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9624

44. LETTER TO AMINA TYABJI

DANDI,
April 8, 1930

MY DEAR SISTER,

Abbas Saheb is going tonight to Nadiad as even Fulchand has been arrested. Now there is hope of his being arrested. He thinks that here I am blocking his way. He may be right.

Khuda Hafiz.

Love.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9687

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 7-4-1930.

45. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

DANDI,
April 8, 1930

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

I got your letter. If you stop worrying and go on doing your best, God is bound to be pleased with whatever you can do. And do not give up Ramanama in any circumstances.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 219

46. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Tuesday, April 8, 1930

CHI. MAHADEV,

Bhai Amritlal has been arrested. And on the Dholera side the authorities seem to be acting in a novel fashion. I think you should pay a visit to that part. From today I have started visiting the neighbouring villages. I don't intend this week to go outside the limits of this taluka or its neighbourhood. If, however, it becomes necessary I will be ready to go to Dholera or any place near it. I suppose you have heard about the arrests of Jamnalal, Ishvarlal, etc.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11474

47. SPEECH AT AAT

April 8, 1930

I am glad the Government has allowed me to remain free so that I can fulfil the promise I made to you yesterday. Yesterday when Ukabhai was beaten and all of you suddenly jumped down in order to collect salt, you all, including even the women, must have found it difficult to stand the sight. That incident will remain indelible in the history of India. Our first battle is going to be fought at Aat. Ours is a war of love in which we have to suffer too. We shall not allow the salt to be taken away even at the risk of losing our lives, just as a mother would not allow herself to be robbed of her child even if she had to die for it.[1] When this happens the whole of India will rise up. India cannot tolerate such insult even when it is perpetrated against men. God is the only ammunition that we possess. You have glorified the second day of your struggle and I hope that all the villages of Gujarat and the whole of the country will follow your example. Let the Government arrest all the national leaders it wants to. It will find that its belief that the struggle will be terminated for want of leaders is false. When you have collected the salt, do not waste a single grain of it. You should be determined to eat only that salt upon which no tax has been levied. If the Government levies an excise duty on paddy you would have no alternative but to eat paddy grown in your own fields; you have to follow a similar course with regard to salt also.

Do not let go of salt when the police tries to snatch it from your hands. So long as your wrists are intact, do not let your fists be loosened. Your fists will acquire the strength of iron if you have faith in satyagraha.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 13-4-1930

[1] This sentence is from *The Bombay Chronicle*, 9-4-1930.

`48. MESSAGE TO THE NATION [1]

DANDI,
April 9, 1930

At last the long expected hour seems to have come.

In the dead of night my colleagues and companions have roused me from deep slumber and requested me to give them a message. I am, therefore, dictating this message, although I have not the slightest inclination to give any.

Messages I have given enough already. Of what avail would this message be if none of the previous messages evoked a proper response? But information received until this midnight leads me to the belief that my message did not fall flat, but was taken up by the people in right earnest. The people of Gujarat seem to have risen in a body as it were. I have seen with my own eyes thousands of men and women at Aat and Bhimrad fearlessly breaking the Salt Act. Not a sign of mischief, not a sign of violence have I seen, despite the presence of people in such large numbers. They have remained perfectly peaceful and non-violent, although Govern-ment officers have transgressed all bounds.

Here in Gujarat well-tried and popular public servants have been arrested one after another, and yet the people have been perfectly non-violent. They have refused to give way to panic, and have celebrated the arrests by offering civil disobedience in ever increasing numbers. This is just as it should be.

If the struggle so auspiciously begun is continued in the same spirit of non-violence to the end, not only shall we see Purna Swaraj established in our country before long, but we shall have given to the world an object-lesson worthy of India and her glorious past.

Swaraj won without sacrifice cannot last long. I would, there-fore, like our people to get ready to make the highest sacrifice that they are capable of. In true sacrifice all the suffering is on one side — one is required to master the art of getting killed without killing, of gaining life by losing it. May India live up to this *mantra*.

[1] This was published with a note which read: "The following is an English translation of a message dictated by Gandhiji at Dandi on April 9, when there was a strong rumour of his impending arrest. A month has gone by, but the message still holds good. We publish it today as a challenge to the honour and loyalty of India to meet the fiery ordeal that now lies before her."

At present India's self-respect, in fact her all, is symbolized as it were in a handful of salt in the satyagrahi's hand. Let the fist holding it therefore be broken, but let there be no voluntary surrender of the salt.

Let the Government, if it claims to be a civilized Government, jail those who help themselves to contraband salt. After their arrest the civil resisters will gladly surrender the salt, as they will their bodies into the custody of their jailors.

But by main force to snatch the salt from the poor, harmless satyagrahis' hands is barbarism pure and simple and an insult to India. Such insult can be answered only by allowing our hand to be fractured without loosening the grasp. Even then the actual sufferer or his comrades may not harbour in their hearts anger against the wrongdoer. Incivility should be answered not by incivility but by a dignified and calm endurance of all suffering in the name of God.

Let not my companions or the people at large be perturbed over my arrest, for it is not I but God who is guiding this movement. He ever dwells in the hearts of all and he will vouchsafe to us the right guidance if only we have faith in Him. Our path has already been chalked out for us. Let every village fetch or manufacture contraband salt. Sisters should picket liquor shops, opium dens and foreign cloth dealers' shops. Young and old in every home should ply the *takli* and spin, and get woven, heaps of yarn every day. Foreign cloth should be burnt. Hindus should eschew untouchability. Hindus, Mussalmans, Sikhs, Parsis, and Christians should all achieve heart unity. Let the majority rest content with what remains after the minorities have been satisfied. Let students leave Government schools and colleges, and Govern-ment servants resign their service and devote themselves to service of the people, and we shall find that Purna Swaraj will come knoc-king at our door.

Young India, 8-5-1930

49. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

April 9, 1930

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am halting in Surat for a few hours on my way to Bhimrad. The car took the wrong road, with the result that I missed the train and came here by car. At present my very thoughts have grown wings and they seem to have effect even when not expressed in speech or action. That is a fact. Thoughts which are part of *tapascharya* are single-pointed, and hence their power is greater than that of electricity or of still subtler ether. Your suggestion, therefore, was acted upon immediately yesterday. All the men in my batch will have to be dispersed and posted wherever they may be needed. Surajbhan has already left, and so has Jayantiprasad, each for his own district. Vamanrao Pataki also has gone to his district. I did not have to suggest to any of the three that he should go. They themselves felt that they should go. Surendra is waiting at Navsari to proceed to Bhimrad. Puratan and Haridas Gandhi are at Navsari waiting to leave for Olpad. I have sent Abbas Saheb to Nadiad, where I will send other men whom he may ask for, provided I am not arrested by then. However, if I am not free and you are, it will be for you to send them; and if even you are not free, those who are left behind will make the necessary arr-angements. Fortunately, Dayalji at least will stay behind, and he will issue orders through the children. If none else, there will always be Lord Krishna whose orders are bound to be felt by all in their hearts and the work will go on somehow. I am certainly ready to send Chhaganlal to Wadhwan, but Kevalram can go there as well. I think you know that he has offered to do so. However that may be, you may, if you are free, communicate to me any other suggestions which may occur to you. I have sent word to the Broach Sevashram people that they may ask me if they need any men. As for you, I think you will not be a free man for long.

I also have written to Saraladevi, but that was only about the drink evil. Yesterday I sent a letter addressed to Kaka on this subject. I think you must have read it. You will have seen from it that I, at any rate, wish to start the movement against the drink evil and foreign cloth along with the salt agitation on the13th. Even if that should not be possible, I should like the fight against the drink evil to start from Monday if you, Kaka and other men and the Ashram women and other women visitors feel the necessary self-confidence. I

wrote to Saraladevi suggesting that she might throw herself into this very work. If, however, my plan itself does not appeal to all of you, you may leave it. I do not at all believe that the salt tax will go in seven days. But I think it very necessary to utilize this golden opportunity and combine these three aims of our movement. Personally, I am convinced that if we should succeed in these three things, swaraj would soon be an acco-mplished fact, the women would realize their power in no time and, without any effort on our part, the whole world would see for itself how ours was indeed a holy war. Many women can contribute their share in this movement even while attending to their domestic duties. We have the land revenue tax as a last resort. That is why, though I have discussed the subject in my article "The Immoral Foundation"[1], I do not wish to touch the tax just now. Nor is it necessary to do so. At pres-ent, my eyes are fixed on the 91 crore rupees and considering the prevailing atmosphere in the country I think we shall easily succeed in our aim.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have talked at length on these matters with Mithubehn. She has made up her mind. The Anavil Ashram will be handed over to her for the use of women workers. Those women who are willing to give all their time to the work will be admitted to it. Of course there will be other conditions for admission. The present idea is to make an intensive effort in the Surat district where some work of this kind has been done, and to extend the area of activity as the women's self-confidence increases. Such of the Ashram women as are ready for this, like Mithubehn, should start coming here. Mithubehn herself has already had experience of this work and, therefore, the women who come here will have the benefit of that experience. As the women coming from the Ashram are trained in discipline, Mithubehn will find it easier to take work from them. I have already discussed the matter with Shardabehn. She and Dr. Sumant liked the idea very much. Shardabehn said that she would certainly go there.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 16785

[1] *Vide* "The Immoral Foundaion", 10-4-1930.

50. SPEECH AT BHIMRAD

April 9, 1930

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

This is the camp of civil resisters. Some of you have been arrested but instead of being sorry for it I find you all more cheerful. We prepared for a thing and asked for it. After receiving it we must not be afraid of it, otherwise we would be considered ungrateful to the Almighty God. We pray to God for imprisonment, hanging or independence. We do not want slavery and dependence. God has said that without sacrifice you will get nothing. We must qualify ourselves to go to jail. It will be useless to go to jail for thefts or for being drunk. We only congratulate those who go to jail for pure actions. From our point of view those who go to jail for good deeds do not deserve imprisonment but freedom. In a Satanic Government innocent persons must suffer. Under this rule, if we are good, we will get handcuffs, kicks, daggers and gallows. Women will have to make greater sacrifices. I have brought material for sacrifice. We consider it a picnic and I hope it will continue as such till the end. This is just a beginning. Sardar Vallabhbhai ought to have been sent to jail for 30 years. The Government is trying us. At Bhimrad you will not be killed. Salt will be snatched away from you but if you have courage you should not part with salt in your possession until you are unable to withstand the force used for snatching it away from you. I understand that by keeping salt in our possession we [shall] have kept with us 6 crores of rupees and in it lies the independence of India. We want boys who are 16 years old for the present struggle. If a fist containing salt be clenched, none dare to open it. They may open fire upon you. Men may come with bayonets and sticks and use them on you, but salt should not be taken out of your hands. If none of you then cry over it, I would consider it a picnic. Bodies may be lying dead, hands may have been cut off but still you keep to your promise. I will then understand that swaraj is approaching. The Government is testing us because this Government is of bold persons. Do not consider that we are fighting against impotent persons. They would not suffer defeat quietly and we cannot defeat them soon. If 30 crores unite in the struggle, the Government would yield to it. If you remain true, I am sure I shall see the light of success. I have come here to request you to stick

to the present struggle until we have won. You are all doing good work. Do not doubt about the salt tax. When Ukabhai received an injury I consid ered it a sign that the salt tax would go. Do not consider that you will be happy after the repeal of the salt tax. Rs. 6 crores are nothing for a nation of 30 crores. I asked Tyabji and he left willingly (for Kaira district). Picketing of liquor shops should be done by women and not by men. If men go there, it will be presumed that they were there to assault others. Government would not like it because they would lose Rs. 25 crores income from the sale of liquor. I therefore advise all of you sisters to act according to the instructions of Mithubehn. Foreign cloth is as bad as liquor. Those who have put on foreign clothes should burn them. If you use khaddar 60 crores of rup-ees will remain in India. You should spin cotton. You sisters should do three things, viz., assist the temperance movement, use khaddar and do spinning. I have sent my son Manilal for the work, and he will do it. Do not fight in the jail for food but for your self-respect. *Patels* who have resigned have not yet been relieved by the Government. There is some trick in it. They should hand over the records to the Government or lock the office and hand over the key to the Mamlatdar

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1930

51. TO THE WOMEN OF INDIA

The impatience of some sisters to join the good fight is to me a healthy sign. It has led to the discovery that however attractive the campaign against the salt tax may be, for them to confine themselves to it would be to change a pound for a penny. They will be lost in the crowd, there will be in it no suffering for which they are thirsting.

In this non-violent warfare, their contribution should be much greater than men's. To call woman the weaker sex is a libel; it is man's injustice to woman. If by strength is meant brute strength, then indeed is woman less brute than man. If by strength is meant moral power, then woman is immeasurably man's superior. Has she not greater intuition, is she not more self-sacrificing has she not greater powers of endurance, has she not greater courage? Without her man could not be. If non-violence is the law of our being, the future is with woman.

I have nursed this thought now for years. When the women of the Ashram insisted on being taken along with men something within

me told me that they were destined to do greater work in this struggle than merely breaking salt laws.

I feel that I have now found that work. The picketing of liquor shops and foreign cloth shops by men, though it succeeded beyond expectations up to a point for a time in 1921, failed because violence crept in. If a real impression is to be created, picketing must be resumed. If it remains peaceful to the end, it will be the quickest way of educating the people concerned. It must never be a matter of coercion but conversion, moral suasion. Who can make a more effective appeal to the heart than woman?

Prohibition of intoxicating liquors and drugs and boycott of foreign cloth have ultimately to be by law. But the law will not come till pressure from below is felt in no uncertain manner.

That both are vitally necessary for the nation, nobody will dispute. Drink and drugs sap the moral well-being of those who are given to the habit. Foreign cloth undermines the economic foundations of the nation and throws millions out of employment. The distress in each case is felt in the home and therefore by the women. Only those women who have drunkards as their husbands know what havoc the drink devil works in homes that once were orderly and peace-giving. Millions of women in our hamlets know what unemployment means. Today the Charkha Sangh covers over one hundred thousand women against less than 10,000 men.

Let the women of India take up these two activities, specialize in them; they would contribute more than man to national freedom. They would have an access of power and self-confidence to which they have hitherto been strangers.

Their appeal to the merchants and buyers of foreign cloth and to the liquor dealers and addicts to the habit cannot but melt their hearts. At any rate the women can never be suspected of doing or intending violence to these four classes. Nor can Government long remain supine to an agitation so peaceful and so resistless.

The charm will lie in the agitation being initiated and controlled exclusively by women. They may take and should get as much assistance as they need from men, but the men should be in strict subordination to them.

In this agitation thousands of women, literate and illiterate, can take part.

Highly educated women have in this appeal of mine an opportunity of actively identifying themselves with the masses and helping them both morally and materially.

They will find when they study the subject of foreign-cloth boycott that it is impossible save through khadi. Mill-owners will themselves admit that mills cannot manufacture in the near future enough cloth for Indian requirements. Given a proper atmosphere, khadi can be manufactured in our villages, in our countless homes. Let it be the privilege of the women of India to produce this atmosphere by devoting every available minute to the spinning of yarn. The question of production of khadi is surely a question of spinning enough yarn. During the past ten days of the march under pressure of circumstances I have discovered the potency of the *takli* which I had not realized before. It is truly a wonder worker. In mere playfulness my companions have without interrupting any other activity spun enough yarn to weave 4 square yards per day of khadi of 12 counts. Khadi as a war measure is not to be beaten. The moral results of the two reforms are obviously great. The political result will be no less great. Prohibition of intoxicating drinks and drugs means the loss of twenty-five crores of revenue. Boycott of foreign cloth means the saving by India's millions of at least sixty crores. Both these achievements would monetarily be superior to the repeal of the salt tax. It is impossible to evaluate the moral results of the two reforms.

'But there is no excitement and no adventure in the liquor and foreign-cloth picketing', some sisters may retort. Well, if they will put their whole heart into this agitation they will find more than enough excitement and adventure. Before they have done with the agitation, they might even find themselves in prison. It is not improbable that they may be insulted and even injured bodily. To suffer such insult and injury would be their pride. Such suffering if it comes to them will hasten the end.

If the women of India will listen and respond to my appeal, they must act quickly. If the all-India work cannot be undertaken at once, let those provinces which can organize themselves do so. Their example will be quickly followed by the other provinces.

Young India, 10-4-1930

52. NOTES

CONGRATULATIONS

Pandit Malaviyaji and the other members of the Assembly who have resigned deserve the heartiest congratulations of the nation for their patriotic resignations. How any self-respecting person can cling to an institution where he cannot preserve his self-respect it would be difficult to understand if we did not know our capacity for self-deception. The Government, instead of telling us, show by their many unmistakable acts that they will do anything but sacrifice the material interest of their principals the British manufacturers and the like who live on India's exploitation. The legislatures, central and provincial, are like their other institutions, powerful and tempting devices for draining India of whatever she has still left. They would, if they could, leave her only when she has no more left to be plundered.

Pandit Malaviyaji and the others have left the Assembly none too soon. With a faith worthy of a better cause he stuck to the so-called legislatures for a quarter of a century in the teeth often of popular opposition. He rendered at critical moments valuable services to the Government. No Indian living has the unbroken record Pandit Malaviyaji has of service rendered with a single-mindedness not often to be found in men. The Government have therefore lost an ally whom they will never be able to replace. I hope that Panditji and his companions will now devote their energy to the popular work that awaits them. They will soon discover as many have done that the real work can only be done outside the legislatures. They will be good only when they are so fashioned as to register real public opinion, not that of certain groups or classes. They are positively harmful when they are so manipulated as merely to give effect to the official will. For the time being, therefore, servants of the nation have to forge sanctions and create a public opinion that will not be flouted.

A VICIOUS INSINUATION

An M. B. writes as follows :[1]

> ... The *Lancet*, a leading medical journal of London, in its edition dated 8th March 1930 (page 531) has made the following observations: "Whatever political agitators may say and in spite of the growth of medical education in India, that country will need British doctors for a long time to

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

come. Even Mr. Gandhi (who was himself operated by a British surgeon in the I. M. S.) would probably admit the truth of this statement."

So far as I know you were operated by the Civil Surgeon of Poona while you were a prisoner in jail. But the insinuation seems to be that you preferred to be operated by a British I. M. S. officer, because he was more capable.

The insinuation made by the writer in the *Lancet* is baseless and vicious. At the time the operation was performed I was certainly a prisoner, but I was given the choice of having my own surgeon to perform the operation. I did not distrust Col. Maddock, the British surgeon referred to, and the late Dr. Dalal and Dr. Jivraj Mehta (my surgeon and physician respectively) not having arrived in time, the operation was performed by Col. Maddock, whose care and attention I have acknowledged more than once. I have never felt the dearth of Indian surgeons or physicians of the highest calibre. Indeed, I have sent several of my European friends to Indian surgeons and physicians and they have derived full benefit from the skill of these Indian medical men. It is in military science alone, thanks to the British policy, that India perhaps stands in need of assistance from European instructors. But, so far as I am aware, in every other dep-artment, if the British withdrew India could be self-contained without the slightest difficulty and that in spite of open or veiled obstruction from the ruling caste.

Young India, 10-4-1930

53. THE IMMORAL FOUNDATION

This Indian Empire was conceived in immorality, for it was to perpetuate the exploitation of India's resources that it was founded. The pages of history written by Englishmen amply prove the assertion that no fraud was considered too much, no force too frightful by Englishmen, to gain the end. There is perhaps not an inch of ground lawfully acquired by or for the British crown in India.

The rule is nurtured by immoral means. English statesmen assure us that it is the British bayonet that keeps the Empire free from attack both from without and within.

It is supported by revenues derived from immoral sources. I have sufficiently demonstrated the hideous immorality, because inhumanity, of the salt tax. The immorality of the drink and drug revenue is self-demonstrated.

The immorality of the land revenue is not self-demonstrated. But those who have followed the Bardoli agitation, who have studied the so-called revenue laws and their administration, cannot fail to perc-eive the immorality of the system. I call the revenue laws so-called bec-ause they give arbitrary powers to revenue officers whose decisions are not subject to judicial control. This land revenue, like the salt tax, presses most heavily upon the poor ryot whether under the *ryotwari* system or the permanent system. How it oppresses the peasant under the *ryotwari* system we saw in Bardoli and recently in Matar and Mehemedabad. The permanent settlement crushes the ryot more than those affected by the *ryotwari* system. That the ryot himself is partly to blame for his woes I have no hesitation in admitting. But that fact is irrelevant to the present consideration. There is no inherent or independent right belonging to the State to tax the land, whether it be considered to be the State property or the individual's. The State has no more right to exact its toll from land under any circumstance than the owner of an ox has a right to exact work from it irrespective of its capacity. That there is a kind of classfication of land and some regulations about remissions, etc., is no answer to the charge here made. The claim here made is that in the vast majority of cases the ryot is wholly unable to pay any tax. In shaping its taxation policy a wise State will always take note of the citizen's habits, customs and even his weaknesses. This Government had no time for such consideration. It had its fixed minimum to exact anyhow; and so in the words of the late Lord Salisbury the lancet had to be applied where there was yet any blood to be drawn.

So much about some of the visible sources of revenue. The invisible sources are equally tainted if not much more so. The unco-nscionable forced inflation of the rupee has by a stroke of the pen drained India of millions. The favoured treatment of British cloth in a variety of unseen ways drains India of sixty crores of rupees annually, leaving behind partial unemployment of the starving millions.

Thus the Government trades upon our vices and exacts payment by questionable methods principally from those who are least able to make it.

There is therefore no way open to the people save to end a system whose very foundations are immoral. Let us therefore pray and work for the destruction of this demonstrably immoral system and for ending it take the boldest risks consistently with the national creed or policy (as the case may be) of non-violence.

Young India, 10-4-1930

54. AN ENGLISH FRIEND'S DIFFICULTY

An English friend writes:[1]

> To us India is a composite country sharply divided by the caste system, by religious differences, and by semi-independent and loyal kingdoms, which could by no means be left to act together without the most careful safeguards against civil strife or religious persecution, and which, if left alone, would soon be a chaos of conflicting forces. But we are anxious to do the right thing as the Government responsible for the welfare of the land.
>
> A mere political reform is quite useless unless it improves the lot of the people and removes any injustice from which they suffer and it appears to us that the British could do these things far better than a mixed Indian Government.
>
> The question is: *What is the injustice from which they suffer?*
>
> Are they too heavily taxed? Are the courts of justice unfair?
>
> Do the British rulers act with tyranny?
>
> Are there any monopolies which are unjust?
>
> Are the wages of the workers *less* than they would be under a native government? Or hours longer? Could such a Government prevent the famines which afflict the country? Or, when they came, relieve them so effectually? . . .

This letter is typical of the average good but ill-informed Englishman.

Take the 4th[2] paragraph. It betrays the false teaching with which Eng-lishmen are fed from their school-going age. It does not occur to the writer that India left to herself will deal with the difficulties pointed out. He does not see that if a century of British rule has not dealt with the difficulties but has, if anything, rather accentuated them, with the pro-gress of time they are not going to be solved or diminished during British occupation. The writer does not know that according to the testimony of English historiansthe innumerable villages have rem-ained unaffected by the difficulties mentioned by him and many more I can name. It should be remembered that India's is a predominantly rural civilization. Before the devastating British occupation the seven hundred thousand villages of India were so many self-contained rep-ublics. It was left for the marvellous

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

[2] The first three paragraphs having been omitted, this refers to the first paragraph of the letter as given here.

organizing British ability, used not for "the welfare of the land" as the writer imagines, but misused for its systematic exploitation, to disturb the placid and comparatively happy life of the villager. Rulers have before now come and gone leaving these villages untouched and without leaving chaos behind. Why should the disappearance of British rule result in chaos? If the British people play the game, they will be expected to undo the great wrong they have done to India by rendering to free and independent India such assistance as her free Government may need. If they will not play the game what need is there for any Englishman to worry whether there is chaos or concord after the end of British rule? Ruthless exploitation of India is too great a price to pay for securing the so-called orderly Government.

I have no difficulty in agreeing with the writer that "a mere political reform is quite useless unless it improves the lot of the people and removes any injustice from which they suffer." But it is a fatal mistake to suppose that "the British could do these things better than a mixed Indian Government."

English friends like the writer will better understand the nationalist position by the following answers to the very relevant questions he puts:

1. The people are too heavily taxed as has been maintained elsewhere in this very issue and as can be amply proved from authoritative sources.

2. The courts have been proved to be unfair in political cases and in cases as between Indians and Europeans.

3. British rulers have been known repeatedly to rule with tyranny and almost invariably to act arrogantly and in total disregard of Indian opinion.

4. There are numerous unjust monopolies of which the salt monopoly is a glaring example.

5. If by workers only city labour is meant, it is but a drop in the ocean of Indian humanity. They do not number more than two million in all India, i.e., 150th of the whole population. Moreover these are a British institution. How they will fare under an indigenous Government it is difficult to foresee except that they will be better able to wrest justice from it than from an all-powerful alien Government that can afford to be indifferent. In so far as the vast mass of the workers in the Indian villages are concerned, I maintain, and it has been proved in these pages, that they are worse off now than they ever were.

6. Whenever there is famine in the land it is a famine of money, i.e., incapacity of the people to buy the grain and the cloth they need. Under indigenous Government, therefore, when the spinning-wheel is restored, no one need starve for want of money as they do today because they are unemployed for at least four months in the year.

7. The chief wrongs have been enumerated in my letter[1] to the Viceroy published in these pages.

8. What India wants is independence pure and simple. This need not exclude British help if Great Britain will lend it on India's terms.

I do not ask the friend to accept the categorical statements made by me. I should be satisfied if my reply stimulates an impartial study of the charges made by me. There is ample literature on the subject. The volumes of *Young India* will provide instructive reading. Let the Eng-lish friends who will know the truth not summarily reject all Indian evidence. Surely we must know better what we feel and want.

Young India, 10-4-1930

55. SOME CONDITIONS

Securing complete independence is difficult as well as easy. It is difficult if we wish to do nothing. It is easy if the masses understand their duty. We cannot say this about everything. Take for instance the mastery of the Vedas. It is not easy work for everyone. It requires years and years of study. But for swaraj all that is needed is change of heart. For swaraj is our birth-right.

What are the conditions, one may ask for gaining swaraj that everyone can fulfil? Here they are:

1. Everyone can offer civil disobedience of the salt law. For this no training is needed. Men, women, boys and girls of no less than eight villages were able to do this. They had not received any previous training.

2. Everyone can spin on the *takli.* Everyone of course cannot get a spinning-wheel, for it is a little costly. But *taklis* can be made in every home even from bamboo. The general public can also buy *taklis* for a few pice each. If millions of people take to carding and plying the *takli* we can produce as much khadi as we may need. This

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Irwin", 2-3-1930.

work also does not require any elaborate training. Besides, it is work for leisure hours. If people can grasp this, if they undergo a change of heart, millions of men and women, young and old, can take up this work and save sixty crores of rupees every year. Let us boycott all foreign cloth and wear khadi alone. It is the only fit attire for us. If we cannot afford more, we may do with the very minimum of clothing—even a bare *langoti*.

Since this is a struggle for self-purification we must, this very day, give up liquor, opium, tobacco, etc., if we have these vices. There are various other things also which we can do if we want to. I have merely cited an example or two.

For the attainment of swaraj it is also essential that Hindus, Muslims and followers of other religions treat one another as brothers. We should banish the sin of untouchability and love our depressed brothers and sisters. All these, to be sure, are not conditions for securing swaraj. They are part of the definition of swaraj. Today when there is such wonderful awakening in the country every reader must make his contribution to this *yajna*.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 10-4-1930

56. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

DANDI,
April 10, 1930

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Your letters of resignation[1] have filled me with joy. I am writing this at 2 a.m. as some friends have brought the news that I shall be arrested today.

Jamnalalji is ensconced in jail.[2] I am confident that you will do all you can in connection with salt satyagraha, prohibition and the boycott of foreign cloth.

We shall have good support if Malaviyaji remains firm about this.

The awakening in Gujarat, at least for the present, is beyond words. God alone knows the future.

[1] From the Legislative Council

[2] Jamnalal Bajaj was arrested at Juhu, Bombay, and sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment.

I see only good coming out of these arrests. The present is shaping as we had anticipated.

What more shall I write?

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6183. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

57. MESSAGE TO BOMBAY CITIZENS[1]

DANDI

April 10, 1930

I don't know whether to trust the citizens of Bombay when Jamnalal Bajaj and Nariman have been jailed and still the citizens of Bombay have not shown sufficient spirit. Bombay should break the salt laws and more particularly they should boycott foreign cloth and thereby break the chain of foreign domination and the leaders of Bombay should work to free the labouring classes from the drink evil.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-4-1930

58. MESSAGE TO B.P.C.C., BOMBAY

April 10, 1930

I congratulate the Bombay Congress Committee and the people of Bombay on the recent arrest of Abidali and Meherali. It is the duty of every citizen of Bombay to fill the places of those who have been arrested. The arrest of the leaders should not make us falter. The unprecedented enthusiasm which was witnessed during the national week shows that, following the arrest of the leaders, people's enthusiasm in the whole of India has increased. I hope the recent arrests in Bombay will create similar enthusiasm. We should make salt and use only that salt. We should boycott foreign cloth and eradicate the evil of drinking. I have entrusted the two latter activities to the women of India. If we wish to succeed in the boycott of foreign cloth and exercise control over mills which are purely Indian it is women who can do it. We should carry on propaganda for khadi and this will not be possible until every one of us takes up the *takli.*

[From Gujarati]
Gujarati, 13-4-1930

[1] Given to a deputation of brokers from Bombay

59. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 10, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter. Glad mother out of danger. It *may* be possible for you to do something in the drink campaign if it ever comes into being. If it comes, it will come naturally. No time for more.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5391. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9625

60. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

DANDI,
April 10, 1930

MY DEAR BHRRR,

Your sweet letter. So being on your mettle, you have evolved a splendid programme. May you never grow old.

Dadubhai's conduct is a painful surprise. However, Kheda has worked wonders. Fancy Darbar and others being handcuffed, shaved! It is good news one way, it is bad another way. Good because it must nerve the people for greater effort, bad because it hurts one to see human nature so debased. But that's the system. Let us end it or end ourselves in the attempt.

I have a good letter from Mrs. Abbas.

Yours ever,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9570

61. LETTER TO TOTARAM HINGORANI

DANDI,
April 10, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

Anand is proving worthy of you. He is also keeping well. Please do not worry about him.

If Vidya wishes to do public work I am sure you will encourage and bless her. And when she does such work, she cannot observe the *purdah*. In any case the *purdah* is now gone.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

62. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

DANDI,
April 10, 1930

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

Shankerlal and you should carefully study the suggestions I have made to the women and if they appeal to you, take up the work. Do not do it because I have suggested it, but consult your own desire. No work once started must be abandoned afterwards.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G. N. 11548

63. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 10, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

We cannot smuggle salt even for committing disobedience of the salt law. How can we employ as a means of satyagraha what is in itself wrong?

The contributions from the Surat district were quite big, but they seem to have been passed on to the Provincial Committee.

Talk to Mahadev about this. I am writing to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11476

64. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

DANDI,
April 10, 1930

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your letter. Kalyanji brought news that I was certain to be arrested today, so I have kept awake the whole night. I go to sleep for a while, then get up, write and again go to sleep. That is how it goes.

It appears Devdas has been arrested. That you have still not been arrested is surprising. I see many risks in picketing colleges and courts. I have explained the whole matter to Kaka. Those students who wish to boycott the Matriculation examination may do so on their own, but my advice is that we should not post pickets around the examination pandal. Liquor booths and foreign-cloth shops are a different matter.

I have been thinking how to arrange the dispersal of the batch. Before the 13th, I intend to send away only those who may be needed elsewhere.

I don't think I have anything more to write today.

Blessings from

BAPU [PS.]

The money coming from other places which was received in the

Surat District has also gone to the Provincial Committee. Even now, as I see things, the best thing would be for all the money to remain with Narandas for the present. However, you may do as you think proper. I have explained to Kaka this matter also.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11475

65. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

April 10, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

What do you think about my idea concerning the anti-drink campaign and boycott of foreign cloth?

I did get your letters. You should continue to write to me. Dhurandhar[1] seems to be a fine man. I liked Kamaladevi, too, very much. She says that she will stay in the Ashram if the climate agrees with her daughter. You should try and see that she stays on.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 6668. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] Assistant Editor, *Navakal,* a Marathi daily from Bombay. He had joined the Dandi March as a satyagrahi.

66. LETTER TO LILAVATI

April 10, 1930

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your letter. Your name cannot be chosen for drill, but you will certainly be in the struggle when the time comes. They will accept you. Those who have faith always get opportunities for service. Do not feel anxious. Ask Gangabehn what to take for your constipation and your menstrual trouble.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9316

67. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

DANDI,
April 10, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have already replied to your letter. You two must have discussed the matter by now. It is being rumoured that I shall be arrested today, and so I don't write more. May God bless you both and give you sufficient firmness of mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3364

68. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

DANDI,
April 10, 1930

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your two letters. I have no time to write a long letter. I am happy to know that you are happy. I suppose you do get *Navajivan*, etc., there. Ramdas has been jailed. Devdas has been arrested. Jamnalalji and Kishorelal have also been sentenced to imprisonment. Indeed hundreds have been jailed. There is no limit to people's enthusiasm.

I am sure that you will mix with the people there as naturally as sugar mixes with milk.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9048

69. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

DANDI,
April 10, 1930

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I was awaiting a letter from you. I don't think that the diet which has benefited you will benefit others. You should remain where you are and go on organizing the production of khadi. That also is an important task. When I think it necessary to throw you as an offering in the salt *yajna*, I will not hesitate a moment before doing so. Every day we hear rumours of my arrest being imminent, but the day passes and I am not arrested. It will make no difference whether or not they arrest me. Shivabhai does bring out here a news-sheet named *Satyagraha Samachar*. So far as I know, only one copy is prepared and circulated. A summary of its contents always appears in *Navajivan*. I have had no letter from Umiya after she went to Ajmer. Now that she has got used to the place, probably she does not think it necessary to

write to me. Rukhi seems to be happy, too.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAISHRI JAISUKHLAL GANDHI
KHADI KARYALAYA
CHALALA
KATHIAWAR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U. III/73

70. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

April 10, 1930

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I send herewith a draft of your acceptance letter. I understand about khadi. Krishna would have gained some strength by now. About me, there is a scare daily about the proverbial tiger coming. It kept me awake the whole of last night but the tiger did not come. Let me see when it does.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original S.N. 32853

71. LETTER TO BENARSILAL BAZAJ,

April 10, 1930

CHI. BENARSI,

I have your two letters. I am immensely glad that you two are happy. May God grant you both long life and the spirit of service.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 9302. Courtesy: Benarsilal Bazaj

72. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

April 10, 1930

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. If you have self-confidence, come out for some voluntary service. They need not hinder you. I have written to Father[1]. He will never oppose this. It will be good if you can gain some experience in the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] Totaram Hingorani. her father-in-law; *vide* "Speech at Dandi", 5-4-1930.

73. SPEECH TO VOLUNTEERS

JALALPUR,
April 10, 1930

Addressing his volunteers this morning, Mahatma Gandhi said that their mettle would soon be put to the test. There should, however, be no impatient hurry to court arrest. They should refuse to be stampeded into hasty action by provocation from police. Should authorities at any place "go mad and terrorize people" they should proceed there and set an example of calm courage and undaunted suffering.

Mahatma Gandhi exhorted them to prefer death to national humiliation of the type perpetrated by General Dyer.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-4-1930

74. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

April 10, 1930

My attention has been drawn to the report in *The Times of India* of my Aat speech. It is a mischievous distortion of what I said. On seeing a man's wrist bleeding from a slight injury done to it, whilst the police, four or five against one, were snatching the salt in his possession, I said that the salt picked up by civil resisters was a token of India's honour, and the civil resisters were expected to defend India's honour with their lives. People, I said, should hold on to the salt in their possession as long as it was possible for them to bear the force that might be used against them, and that they should not mind even if blood was drawn while the police were delivering their assault upon their defenceless victims. I added that, in resisting this dispossession, people should not bear any malice nor should they be angry nor utter a word of abuse. In order to avoid needless injury, I advised the people to take only a handful of salt which could be contained in their closed fists and invited even women and children, if they had the courage to take part in the battle, and challenged the police to lay their hands upon women and children. If the police laid their hands upon women and children, I said that the whole of India would bec-ome inflamed, and resent the insult by inviting suffering ofthe same kind as they. The manner in which I expected Indians to respond to such an insult was by taking up other methods of civil resistance, and by students boycotting schools and Government servants giving up

service by way of protest. There is no departure from my creed of non-violence, and I regard this snatching of salt from the civil resisters as a piece of barbarity. The greater the barbarity of the Government, the greater will be my call for self-suffering.

The Hindu, 11-4-1930

75. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

JALALPUR,
April 10, 1930

I asked Mahatmaji to define the scope of "defensive non-violent resistance". A volunteer, Mahatmaji had advised, should not yield his salt to the police until it was wrested from him by superior force. "Is it permissible for the volunteer," I asked, "to struggle with the police in clinging to it desperately, moving this way and that in his attempts not to yield, and possibly causing hurt to his opponent?" Mahatmaji said:

It is his duty to cling to the salt as though it was his life, provided he was not offering violence to his opponent. Just as a mother would save her child against the attempts of others to deprive her of it, so should a satyagrahi cling to his salt.

Gandhiji, continuing stated that in no civilized country was it considered proper for the police to take the law into their own hands. When a volunteer refused to hand over his salt he would have committed an offence, but on that account, the police should not inflict corporal punishment on him. The police officers had got the right
of arresting a volunteer and marching him to the police station and of putting him up for trial.

Asked how a police officer could discharge the duty imposed on him of seizing the salt, Gandhiji said that his quarrel was exactly with that sort of law.

The conversation then turned on Mahatmaji's statement that if women were touched by the police, the whole country would be inflamed unless people were *napunsakas*. That passage, I pointed out, had been criticized as a threat against the legitimate arrest of women.

Mahatmaji laughed and said he had deliberately made the statement that the country would, in such a contingency, become inflamed, but not necessarily into committing acts of violence. He continued:

When Sri S. Subramania Aiyer threw away his titles because Dr. Besant had been arrested he had been inflamed, but his feelings involved no violence. It is that kind of inflammation that I had referred to.

Referring to a report circulated by a news agency that his volunteers were

revolting against the diet prescribed for them, Mahatmaji pooh-poohed the idea, adding:

There was some difficulty in the choice of diet, but once I decided on it, all accepted it without a murmur.

The Hindu, 11-4-1930

76. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, ABRAMA[1]

April 10, 1930

I was told that last night I was going to be arrested and hence at about 11 o'clock I finished some of my correspondence and did some writing. The night went by but the expected did not happen I have read in the papers today that the price of salt has fallen by half but my contention is why should there be any price for it?

Gandhiji then stressed the necessity of complete prohibition and promotion of khaddar.

Proceeding, he referred to the reports of his speeches appearing in a distorted form in various papers and especially in the *Times* and remarked that these Press reporters were doing a definite disservice to the country. He had to contradict a report appearing in *The Times of India.* That report was a sheer distortion of his views. It would be wrong to say that all reporters were so but he had to admit that many were or else they did not understand his village dialect. I did not ask for the reporters but if the papers wanted to send them they should select such as knew his language. Ignorant reporters did harm both to him and the cause. Non-violence was not a new creed with him, he had laid stress on it for at least fifteen years. Nobody should imagine that with the advance of years he had lost his sense to such an extent that he should wish to go to jail by paying the price in blood. Even for going to jail he would not wish harm to anybody. What he had said was that they should not give up salt in their fists even if that might involve serious injury. That was not at all contrary to non-violence. He had received a wire from Delhi that four volunteers were so much battered there that at last they fainted. Government had started the game in which only a beginning was made. That should not come in the way of their duty. It was ashame that Government were arresting even ladies. He wanted to show to the world that theirs was a fight in which everyone could take part.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-4-1930

[1] About 5,000 villagers attended the meeting.

77. TELEGRAM TO N. C. KELKAR[1]

April 11, 1930

YOUR WIRE. DELIGHTED BEYOND MEASURE YOUR RESIGNATION DECISION ORGANIZE SATYAGRAHA. REPORT ABOUT HEALTH GROSS EXAGGERATION. TOOK MORNING MASS MEETING SEVEN MILES AWAY TODAY.

GANDHI

The Hindu, 16-4-1930

78. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

DANDI,
April 11, 1930

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

I have your letter.

I would like you, Mother and others to attend here on Sunday. I am holding a conference of Gujarat women for the purpose of discussing the propriety and possibility of their tackling the problem of drink and foreign cloth.

Here are the messages you want.

Kamladevi has written a good letter in reply to mine[2]. Here it is. You may destroy it.

There is every hope of Mother capitulating since she is capable of blushing. It is a good sign.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 9616

[1] This was sent in reply to the following telegram from the addressee: "After returning from the Assembly work at Delhi I immediately held conference of Maharashtra National Party and have decided to start and organize Salt Civil Disobedience in Maharashtra. Papers report your ill-health. Kindly relieve anxiety by wire."

[2] This is not traceable.

79. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

DANDI,
April 11, 1930

CHI. MAHADEV,

There was no harm in your having replied to the question about the prize of Rs. 250. But why should we reply, even if we have received the sum? If we are prosecuted for not replying, that would make our path clear.

I should be happy if Saralabehn, Nandubehn and others attend the conference. Ask Ranchhodbhai to send Motibehn and tell him that, if he wishes, he also may accompany her.

Today they have been stopping the cars coming from Navsari. They stop all cars coming from the Gaikawad limits.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11477

80. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

DANDI,
April 11, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

I intend to hold a small conference of women in Dandi on the 13th. Send those from among the women there who wish to come and who can be spared to attend it. Meet the expenditure from the Satyagraha Fund. Those who have money with them should come at their own expense. If Khurshidbehn volunteers to come, offer her the fare. Probably she will refuse to accept it. Try if you can press her courteously to accept it. In the conference we are going to think only about propaganda against the drink evil and boycott of foreign cloth. These activities do not seem to have appealed to Khurshidbehn, that is, she does not wish to take them up as specially women's work. Hence she may not wish to come.

How is Purushottam? How is Kanu? How does he spend his time?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8098. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

81. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

DURING DANDI MARCH,
[*April 11, 1930*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I cannot choose the names. Only those women who wish to take up these two activities and whom you can spare need come. You alone can think and decide in this matter. Prompted by love, everyone may wish to come. That is a different matter. We have no choice but to exercise self-control in this matter.

Brijkrishna and Krishnadas have come here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8099. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

82. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Friday, April 11, 1930

CHI. MAHADEV,

I got your letter. It does not matter that you did not show my letter to Narandas. You may, however, do so now as my reply is in any case the proper one. If people do not hide a thing there is no smuggling. There is "smuggling" only when there is an intention to hide. What you are doing, therefore, is all right. The person carrying salt also should declare (at the end) from where he brought it. Is it not permissible for a person to get salt by post?

I understand what you say about lawyers. No purpose will be served by Broker alone giving up practice. I am afraid that lawyers will not give up practice just now. If schoolboys, however, leave their schools, that will be enough. Congratulations to Mridu.

I am no longer enamoured of Dadubhai. Abbas Saheb writes to inform me that Dadubhai asked him to go to Baroda but refused to

[1] From the abrupt introduction of the subject-matter it appears this was written as an afterthought to the preceding item. Besides, this was to reach those wishing to attend the conference on April 13; it could not therefore have been written later than April 11.

return. Dadubhai refused even to accompany him. What can a man do after all? Who can successfully fight against his nature? Let us therefore be content with what we get.

Delhi has done very well indeed. Every place presents a different spectacle. It appears that Atul Sen in Bengal has suffered a fracture.

In Delhi at any rate the picketing of foreign-cloth shops by women has started.

The women's conference at Dandi has now been fixed for Sunday. Read my letter to Narandas on the subject.

See that no mistake occurs in passing on the accompanying letters to the persons concerned.

Take rest from time to time as you work. Entrust to others what they can do.

I have just returned from Matwad.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11478

83. LETTER TO SHIVANAND

DANDI,
April 11, 1930

BHAISHRI SHIVANAND,

I had heard the news about Fulchand and others even before I got your letter. I hope Shardabehn is all right. We should never feel unhappy when we get what we had asked for. If you require any volunteer on that side, tell Mahadev about it and he will then write to me. If he is arrested before that, write directly to me.

Will Shardabehn be ready to join the new activity?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2841. Courtesy: Fulchand Shah; also G.N. 9203

84. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL

DANDI,
April 11, 1930

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I had your letter. I was glad to know that your health was all right. What was the cause of the improvement—the air and water of Vijapur or reduced burden of worries or were both these the causes? If the air and water of the place were the cause, you should occa-sion-ally go to Vijapur and stay there for some time and improve your health. If you do that, by and by the body will get stronger. You ought not to feel unhappy that you are not among the volunteers with me. We shall have done our duty if we do with single-minded devotion the tasks which may fall to our lot.

For megrim light food and a mud-pack every night as also when the attack comes has proved a successful cure in all cases in which it has been tried. I hope Babu does not get attacks of asthma now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. G. 6

85. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

April 11, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I have your frank letter, It has been arranged to hold a small conference[1] of Gujarati women at Dandi on Sunday. You, Mridula and other women should attend it if possible. We shall talk more about swadeshi. There is no more time left to meet.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11132. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

86. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

DANDI,
April 11, 1930

CHI, BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. You must not thus break away from your family. At present you should simply appeal to them. It will be of no use at all if you go there[2] just now. The time for the total boycott of foreign cloth is coming by itself and the people will then of their own accord renounce foreign cloth. You have given no news of your health this time. Come over if there is no work in Vijapur. The climate here is very bracing. As the house faces the sea we have cool breeze day and night. Dandi is situated 10 miles from the Navsari station. You will have no difficulty in staying on even if I am arrested and the camp is shifted.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2379

[1] Women's conference to further anti-drink campaign and boycott of foreign cloth. For Gandhiji's article on the Conference which took place on April 13, 1930; *Vide* "Special task before women", 17-4-1930.

[2] To Delhi

87. LETTER TO SITLA SAHAI

DANDI,
April 11, 1930

BHAI SITLA SAHAI,

I am late in replying to your letter. Kalakankar's brother should be instructed to prepare salt even at the risk of imprisonment.[1] The work is proceeding very well at all places. There is no time to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. SITLA SAHAI

C/O SATYAGRAHA COMMITTEE

RAE BARELI, U.P.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8684

88. STATEMENT TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

JALALPUR,
April 11, 1930

Embarrassing invitations are being received by me to go to several parts of India on the strength of the unauthorized report in the Press that I would be free to go wherever I wanted. But such is not my intention. So far as possible, I propose to concentrate all my attention upon Gujarat and, health permitting, will next week make myself free to go to those parts of Gujarat where my presence may be required. I may possibly go as far as Bombay but not farther.

The Hindu, 12-4-1930

[1] Kunwar Suresh Singh, brother of Raja Saheb Kalakankar, was arrested in June 1930.

89. MESSAGE TO HANSA MEHTA

[Before *April 12, 1930*]

Tell Mrs. Hansa Mehta[1] that Bombay women should take up energetically the cause of preventing liquor consumption in the city of Bombay, as their contribution towards the fight for Purna Swaraj. Not only will that save crores of rupees to the poorest workmen in the world, but it will make a constructive step for the successful accomplishment of India's complete independence. India expects every woman to do her duty at this moment in the fight for freedom.

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-4-1930

90. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO PRESIDENT, B.P.C.C.

[Before *April 12, 1930*]

I know Bombay is doing extremely well. Indeed the whole country is suffering, surpassing all expectations. But the real heat is still to come. If it can stand that heat without retaliation and without weakening, the way to swaraj is clear. Let us hope we shall end as we have begun.

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-4-1930

[1] Wife of Dr. Jivraj Mehta, physician and Congress leader of Bombay

91. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

DANDI,
April 12, 1930

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Your wire. I was out visiting the villages in the morning and had instructed Pyarelal to send you a reply telegram but he forgot. I will not send one now at double rates. See my letter of yesterday and decide on the right course. Come here if you wish to or proceed to Delhi if that seems proper.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2380

92. LETTER TO NANUBHAI DAVE

DANDI,
April 12, 1930

BHAISHRI NANUBHAI,

I got your letter. The description which you give is heartrending but I remain unperturbed knowing that our victory lies in enduring all this. If, however, the repression continues, we shall have to think of some form of agitation much more intense than the present one and invite upon ourselves still greater suffering. Write to me from time to time and give me all details. The information which you give should be verifiable. I shall be able to find a solution only with the help of such facts. If you can get the names of the officers who commit such repression, give those names too. Give also the names of those who may have been assaulted and send the results of medical examination as well.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 16795

93. ARRESTS AND BRUTAL JUSTICE

Gujarat, it may be said, has saved our honour. Whole villages here have set out to offer civil disobedience. Men, women and children are taking part in it. At many places, we can see fields of salt. Illegal salt has found its way into people's houses. Gujarat no longer needs Government salt for its use. With a little bit of effort anyone who requires salt can carry away as much readymade salt as he wishes.

But how could the Government tolerate this? It started arresting people. From Dholar at one end to Jalalpur taluka at the other there has been an awakening and leaders have been arrested. Amritlal Sheth, Manilal Kothari, Fulchand Kasturchand Shah, Dr. Hariprasadji, Rohit Mehta, Durbar Gopaldas, Gokuldas Talati, Ravishankar Vyas, Raojibhai Man-ibhai Patel, Ashabhai, Dr. Chandulal, Keshubhai Ganeshji, Ramdas Gan-dhi, Chimanlal Pranshankar, Bhikshuk or Darbari Sadhu, Kikubhai, Manubhai and others are gracing prisons with their presence. There are many names which I have omitted. What does it matter whether all the names are mentioned or not? Durbar and his companions are in fetters and their heads have been shaved in prison. All this is good provided Gujarat values it.

The fact that those who at Aat, Ahmedabad and Dholka tried to protect their honour through the medium of salt were beaten is significant and unexpected. I had expected that the Government would not indulge in brutality and that it would send people to prison after duly trying them under laws. My expectations have been belied. How can one change one's nature all of a sudden? The Government has yet only given us a taste of its bloody claws; we can be sure there is more to come.

Going beyond Gujarat, we find Jamnalalji, Nariman and others have been arrested in Bombay. The cases are proceeding at great speed. But the sentences, it is apparent, will depend upon the whim of the magistrate.

In Delhi, Devdas Gandhi's companions have been beaten. Devdas and his companions have been arrested.

What reply will the nation give to this now? By the time this article is published, much else will have happened.

I expect still more from the people. A bonfire should be made of foreign cloth, there should be a *takli* in every hand. Schools and

colleges should become empty. Lawyers and doctors can help in various ways. I have written separately regarding women. All aspects of a nation aspiring for freedom should be developed. It is a sign of weakness that Government jobs have not yet lost their fascination.

Weakness and freedom, however, do not go together. We can win swaraj today if we completely do away with weakness and selfishness wherever we find them. We can then open up the prison gates and have the satyagrahi prisoners also released.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-4-1930

94. MILL-OWNERS AND KHADI

Shri Ranchhodlal Amritlal, who is himself a mill-owner, writes to say:[1]

It is a distressing tale. I am convinced, however, that as people's sacrifices increase, the hearts of the mill-owners will melt. I know that the khadi activity has benefited Indian mills. If, however, the latter instead of enjoying the sweet fruit of the tree attempt to eat up its roots, they will find they cannot do so and will even lose the fruit. Let me cite a brief example. Let us suppose that boycott of foreign cloth is successful; let us suppose that spurious khadi is passed off as genuine; and let us suppose that genuine khadi is unable to lift its head. In that case, one of two results could follow. Spurious khadi and other cloth made in mills would not be adequate. As people are not used to khadi they would clamour for foreign cloth and we would be worse off than we previously were, Indian mills would be swept away in the storm, the chain of non-violence would be broken and the enraged public would take to boycotting Indian mills. Or, supposing the goods from Lancashire were totally rejected, since the shield of khadi would not be there, the capitalists from Lancashire might start their mills in this country and Indian mills would suffer as a result of foreign capital and foreign talent establishing themselves here and thereafter swadeshi mills would regard it their duty to join the foreign mills in exploiting the people. Though one cannot yet claim that the sentiment for khadi has taken root in villages, nevertheless it has established itself to the extent that many well-educated persons are prepared to dedicate themselves to the cause of khadi. They will not allow khadi to

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent, enclosing samples, had complained that many mills were manufacturing spurious khadi and selling it under the stamp of "pure swadeshi khadi".

die so long as they are themselves alive. If, therefore, mill-owners do not stop producing and selling mill-made cloth as khadi, there is every possibility of a fierce movement being launched against them. It will become our duty to start such a movement.

They ought to save themselves from such a movement. It is in their hands to do so. Here are the terms:

(1) Indian mills must not produce cloth which resembles khadi.

(2) That which has been already produced should he exported.

(3) They should altogether stop using the khadi stamp.

(4) They should give up making cloth which could compete with khadi.

(5) They should consult with the Charkha Sangh and produce only such cloth as is beyond the scope of khadi.

(6) In consultation with the khadi committee, they should fix reasonable prices for mill-made cloth.

(7) No foreign yarn should be used in mills even for making borders.

(8) Mill-owners and others should totally give up using foreign cloth and wear only khadi as far as possible.

(9) They should stock khadi in the shop attached to mills.

During this period of self-purification it is highly essential for the mills to observe the above rules. If they do so the boycott of foreign cloth can be accomplished soon.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-4-1930

95. TO THE WOMEN

Last week, writing about prohibition, I had mentioned that there was another activity also which women could and ought to take up. This activity is the boycott of foreign cloth through khadi. This is, or should be, the special field of women. For foreign cloth has ruined millions of homes and taken away from millions of women an employment which sustained them. Foreign cloth has ruined seven lakh villages in India. While on the one hand women have lost employment, on the other they have to pay for cloth which they could have produced in their own villages. People have developed a great liking for foreign cloth and they will not give it up without great effort and great penance. It is the women who embody that penance. Man can never make an impression upon people such as women can.

Besides, amongst those who wear foreign cloth the number of women exceeds that of men. And, in the final analysis, women will create a greater impact upon other women.

Hence it is for women to start picketing in front of shops selling foreign cloth. Men have failed in this task. But there is no reason why women should fail. Moreover, in 1920-21 we did not have the same climate that there is now. It is women alone who can take advantage of this climate.

But there is also another aspect of this work. Supposing everyone was to burn their foreign clothes today, what then would they wear? Indian mills would not be able to produce all the cloth within a short period and perhaps even if they did we would not achieve the purpose that we wish to.

That purpose would be served through khadi alone. Khadi implies the *takli* or the spinning-wheel. In the latter lies the prosperity of India. It is *Annapurna*[1]. If people in every home work on the spinning-wheel, we can produce today as much khadi as we want. Producing khadi means spinning yarn. Men may well spin, but for generations the profession of spinning has been practised by women and men's hands do not possess the same skill in this that women's do. Women alone can bring about this solidarity among their own sex. I would, therefore, advise women to make this their special field of work.[2]

[1] Giver of plenty

[2] Two paragraphs following this are not translated here. They are covered by paragraphs 11 and 12 of "To the Women of India", p. 221.

In this non-violent campaign, although our weapons are small they are very powerful since they have in them the power of God. Therefore, all those sisters who have faith in the spinning-wheel and the *takli* and who wish to devote themselves to saving sixty crores of rupees every year, should take up this work of boycott and the task of propagating spinning.

It should be remembered that those sisters who wish to take up this work have to be prepared to go to the villages.

Sisters who have faith not in both but in only one of these activities should take up only that. I have suggested the two activities through which millions of women can develop themselves and contribute their full share in the *yajna* of swaraj.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-4-1930

96. MESSAGE TO " THE HINDU "

April 13, 1930

I have full faith in Southern India making adequate response to the country's call for the uttermost sacrifice. I expect that the response is not only in connection with salt tax, but also in regard to intoxicating drinks and boycott of foreign cloth.

No part of India is perhaps better equipped for the boycott of foreign cloth and the promotion of khadi than South India. Civil disobedience with reference to the salt tax should be easy for the Southern people owing to the extensive seaboard near by from almost every part of that country.

The Hindu, 15-4-1930

97. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

DANDI,
April 13, 1930

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your letter. I have been having a talk with some women who have arrived. The conference itself will not start before 3.30. The reason for calling them here was that Janakibehn and some other women have arrived from Vile Parle and Mrs. Tyabji also has come from Baroda. Consult your own convenience and come on the 16th. There is no need to reach here on the 15th. At the moment, at any rate, I cannot think of any additions to your list. I will write if I have any suggestion to make. Tell Ba that she has been posted to do picketing of liquor booths at Jalalpur and that she should, therefore, come after making all necessary preparations. She will not be in a position to return as Mithubehn is quietly starting the picketing work right from tomorrow. The idea is to begin with three booths, of which only one will be taken up tomorrow. The next will be the one at Olpad and the third at Jalalpur. Kanjibhai and Dr. Sumant will help and advise Mithubehn. As Olpad has Muslim residents, Hamida will work there. Kanjibhai's daughter is also there. Motibehn will have to be posted there. Probably Surajbehn will also be there. But I shall have to consult Swami. Karsandas, who will be arriving this afternoon, will bring some more news.

Considering all aspects of the matter, and in order that we may have a quiet atmosphere, I think it best to have the meeting of the 16th at Dandi. The women will arrive after breakfast, etc., [by the first Mail].[1] They will spend the whole day here and be back at their respective places in time for their evening meal. If they wish to have their meal here, arrangements for that can also be made; but the arrangement here is bound to be a little unsatisfactory. Let me know if you have any change to suggest in this. You and Narandas or the women themselves should decide who should come from the Ashram. Khurshedbehn at any rate will not come and do not press her. Only those who have faith in this programme can carry it out.

Mohanlal Pandya, Nanubhai and Ishwarlal Desai, these three from Untadi have been arrested. Now it will be the turn of Kalyanji and others. It seems possible that in the end I shall remain at Dandi enjoying its air and you will remain there with no work to do.

Blessings From

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11479

[1] The source here is illegible.

98. SPEECH AT GUJARATI WOMEN'S CONFERENCE, DANDI

April 13, 1930

There are certain activities which are meant only for women. Prohibition and boycott of foreign cloth are such activities; which if you do not take up, will never be accomplished. In 1921 I compelled men to take up these tasks and they did so out of fear, but how long could it last? In the end I had to accept defeat and suspend the activities. I would not have had to do so had I entrusted the work to women. But when I was utterly confused and had been defeated on all sides, God, like in that *bhajan* of the tortoise couple, made me entrust the work to women. It is no doubt very difficult to picket shops but women had been taking great risks in the past. It is for tha reason that the world is still going on. Moreover both these activities required persuasion and change of heart. Women alone can enter the hearts of men and trans-form them. Moreover those women who have come here must be aware of the plight of the families where husbands drink. It is your duty to help your sisters' families from breaking up. Foreign cloth has taken away from fifteen crores of your sisters the noble profession of plying the spinning-wheel and have rendered crores of villagers unemployed. Khadi activity of ten insignificant years have brought ten lakhs of rupees to the women's homes. I want you to expand the activity so that crores of rupees are brought in. Once you take up this work, you have to discard foreign clothes—you should burn them. You may say you will wear out whatever you have or that you will pre-serve them. Even a drunkard might say that he would consume whatever liquour he had or keep it. How can we keep a thing which we consider to be a poison even for a day? We should throw it away lest our children by mistake take the poison. You may think that you have thrown that much money into water.

A woman picketer of Vejalpore had asked what the women should do if they were attacked while they were picketing. Gandhiji replied:

There is no danger of such attack. However if that happens or if the police try to disperse you with the help of horses then put up with it quietly. A woman has a remarkable capacity for suffering. Take it from me that the liquour shops will be closed down the day there is such an attack on women. You may be certain he will give up drinking for ever from that day,

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 20-4-1930

99. SPEECH AT DANDI [1]

April 13, 1930

I am happy that you have on your own come here in such large numbers on this the last day of the self-purification week, but you will not be happy if I do not say something to you on this occasion.

I have just concluded the women's conference. You will like to know your place in what I have told the women to do. The womenhave resolved to picket shops selling foreign cloth as also those who use it, and those who sell liquor as also those who drink it. We men may not interfere in this work. Let us treat this as the special field of women.

The success of this work depends entirely on the self-control of men. The assumption behind this is that men cannot easily control their anger, cannot easily practise non-violence, while women can do so. Renu-nciation and non-violence come naturally to women. Having been insp-ired by this idea I have tried to explain it to women. If my assum-ption is false, my conclusion will also be false to the same degree.

It is the duty of men to make the atmosphere congenial for women to do their work. We men should go to the dealers in liquor and foreign cloth and try to convince them that now that the women of India have come out they should give up trade in these two things.

Confronted by the large groups of women even liquor-booth owners and owners of shops selling foreign cloth will be startled and give up their trade. I know it is not easy to give up one's trade. But, at a time when the atmosphere is filled with national pride and patriotism, the people's capacity for renunciation automatically increases. During this week alone this capacity has increased a hundredfold, but it should increase a thousandfold.

Dealers in foreign cloth still seem to be calculating whether to give up their trade. They take a vow for three months or a year. Behind this act there is a lurking belief that they will be able to buy foreign cloth after a year. They do not make the effort that is needed to secure swaraj. This is because they lack the faith. But as this movement makes progress—trading in liquor and foreign cloth cannot but come to an end.

[1] Extracts from the speech were also published in *Young India*, 17-4-1930, under the heading "Men's Part".

When hundreds of thousands of our countrymen have sacrificed their all, even these sceptical traders are bound to develop the strength to make sacrifices.

If women lack funds to continue the work after once starting it, I shall stretch out my hand to you, though at present, by the blessing of God, I am able to get more funds than I need. Only today, about a thousand rupees were collected at the women's meeting and a lady belonging to the Galiara family of Kathor gave four gold bangles without even being asked.

If we men are not indifferent and begin the work on our own, if, for instance, for want of enough khadi it becomes necessary to wear only a loin-cloth and we start doing so, to that extent we shall have lightened the burden of our womenfolk.

Miss Mayo has accused us saying that many of our men have no consideration for women, that we make them work as drudges, as if they were born to be slaves. The world will be convinced that what Miss Mayo said was not true when women wake up and accomplish the tasks of boycotting foreign cloth and of prohibition.

The stocks of khadi in the country are dwindling and I am therefore asking everyone to spin and wear khadi and I am demonstrating this before you every day by spinning on the *takli*. Just as we grind and cook cereals which are available in every home we ought to spin the large quantities of cotton which grows in India into some kind of yarn, make cloth from it and then wear that cloth. When spinning becomes a universal activity in the country, you can rest assured that the trade in foreign cloth will come to an end.

Mills can never entirely meet the cloth needs of India and as most mills in India are either wholly or partly foreign, cloth made by only a few of them can be used if the need arises.

Women from good families have come out to take up these activities. Divan Shri Manubhai's daughter Shrimati Hansa Mehta and some other ladies have only recently issued a circular and begun the work of prohibition in Bombay. If Gujarati women continue to work in this spirit and if the men lend them support this activity will become widespread in India. All these three things are easy. When we have accomplished these three things we shall have saved six crores from the salt-tax, twenty-five crores from prohibition and sixty crores from the boycott of foreign cloth—ninety-one crores in all. We shall have become purer and added to our strength, and then it will not take long

for us to secure swaraj.

Finally, we should take care that we do not lose what we have gained during these seven days.

I have just received news that some youths in Calcutta, who were reading out passages from proscribed books at meetings, were dispersed. On seeing the police committing such atrocities, Shri Sen Gupta, the Mayor of Calcutta, also started reading out paragraphs from those banned books and was immediately arrested.

Dr. Suresh Chandra Bannerjee, the able khadi worker of Abhoy Ashram, who at one time received a salary of Rs. 600 a month from the Government, has been sentenced to a term of two and a half years' rigorous imprisonment for violating the salt law.

Notwithstanding such atrocities, just as we in Gujarat have not become frightened and given in, there too, they are not onlynot frightened but have become more resolute. Whatever the atrocities perpetrated on us, we do not want to use force on anyone or to insult anyone. A certain gentleman has informed me that in Bombay when they were making bonfires of foreign cloth caps from other people's heads were forcibly removed and burnt I do not know how far this is true. But if it is true, rest assured that this struggle cannot go on. If force is used, people will not tolerate it; they will start fighting amongst themselves and the Government will take advantage of this situation.

If people do not want swaraj through the boycott of foreign cloth, we cannot make them do good under compulsion. In order to melt their hearts, we must make greater sacrifices and even practise satyagraha against them if it becomes necessary to do so.

What should I do if I was convinced that people were deceiving me, that having decided to boycott foreign cloth through khadi alone they pledged themselves to do so and then broke their pledge ?

If I was convinced that I had become purified and wholly compassionate, I should, when the occasion arose, offer satyagraha and go on a fast. What should I do if you should raise your hands every day, say that if there is not enough khadi you will wear *lungotis* and then it should turn out that not a single sister spins? I might perhaps even at this advanced age have to say the same thing I said when I saw that the labourers of Ahmedabad had broken their pledge, and do what I did at the time of the riots in Bombay. I would do so unwillingly if I felt that we were deceiving God daily. I have faith that the people of Guja-

rat will never deceive me.

We want to live in peace and win swaraj peacefully. I do not wish to live to see disturbances in the country.

You just came on this day of my fast and I have said simply what I wanted to. You must prevent any use of force whether in Bombay or elsewhere. Whenever I hear of one of our men having abused someone, having been discourteous to someone or having used force against someone I feel deeply hurt and truly my heart begins to thump violently. If a doctor were to examine me at the time he would hear the sound. Despite this, I am able to survive, for at such times I close my eyes for a couple of seconds and repeat Ramanama. If I did not do so, my heart would stop beating there and then. You all may well call me Mahatma, but my task is that of a weak person. Do not, therefore, deceive me, at any time in this struggle. It will be all right if you sit at home, but once you join the campaign work sincerely.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-4-1930

100. LETTER TO GULAM RASOOL QURESHI

April 13, 1930

CHI. QURESHI,

I got your letter. Our duty is to do all we can. It is for God to reward our efforts. Every rule should be observed. Meet Muslim friends. Spin on the *takli* daily and persuade others to do the same.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The women's meeting today was good.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4295. Courtesy: Hamid Qureshi; also G.N. 6650

101. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS SHRIKANT

DANDI,
April 13, 1930

BHAISHRI LAKSHMIDAS,

I got your letter today. I only read it just now at 9.30 p.m., Sunday. So there was hardly any time for a message. I always wish you success in your tasks. Keep me informed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4204

102. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[Before *April 14, 1930*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. Take great care of your health. For that purpose, observe regularity in everything. Go out for walks every morning without fail. Take the morning sun directly on your skin. Let milk and fresh fruit be your principal diet. Do not worry about the expense. If you run short of money, ask from the Ashram. If I have to go away, use this letter.

I like your advice that I should not go to Bombay. Swami insists that I should go. You can stop me from going. Swami can drag me there. Talk it over between the two of you and send me a wire. I have fixed Thursday for going. Until I hear from you, I shall keep Friday and Saturday free. Inform Revashankarbhai if you want to call me. I may forget to write.

Who will now attend to the affairs of the Provincial Committee? Do what you can to see that the money is not squandered away.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The letter reached the addressee on April 15, 1930. Besides, Gandhiji in his letter to Mahadev Desai dated April 14, 1930 (*ibid.*), mentions a change in his plan of going to Bombay on Thursday.

103. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[On or before *April 14, 1930*][1]

MY DEAR MIRA,

Just one line to acknowledge your long love-letter. It is now nearing 10 p.m. So good night for the time being.

Love.

BAPU

Silence day or night? Silence breaks at midnight.

From the original: C W. 5386. Courtesy: Mirabehn

104. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL G. BANKER

Monday, [On or before *April 14, 1930*][2]

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I can understand your requirement. But I would value even a single minute I may get in Gujarat. I have sent you a telegram only yesterday morning. You would surely have received it. I have sent a telegram to Bhai Khatri also saying that I should be spared.

I am sending herewith a booklet[3] which you should print and ell. I had intended to publish it on Wednesday as a supplement of the *Navajivan* but now I am sending it to you. Carry on with it. Even then, if you think it necessary, let me know at once so that I could come there on the 16th and return the same night. I think if necessary I should come earlier by a day, instead of on the 17th. You would, of course, come to Surat on the 22nd. Look after your health well.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati : S. N. 32708

[1] From its placing in *Bapu's Letters to Mira* this seems to have been written in April 1930. There was no letter on April 28 (*vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 29-1-1930) and the one of April 21 is available. So this could belong to April 14 or some other Monday before that.

[2] From the reference to the "booklet" about which Gandhiji wrote in *Hindi Navajivan* dated April 17, 1930; *vide* "Satyagraha Yuddha", 17-4-1930. The Monday prior to April 17 was April 14. Gandhiji was in Surat for a day on April 22.

[3] *Satyagraha Yuddha*

105. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU

NAVSARI,
April 14, 1930

HAVE JUST HEARD JAWAHARLAL ARRESTED. I GREET YOU AND SARUPRANI AS HAPPY PARENTS. JAWAHARLAL HAS EARNED THE CROWN OF THORNS. WHO WILL OFFICIATE HIM ?

The Bombay Chronicle, 15-4-1930

106. APPEAL TO THE YOUTH OF INDIA

[*April 14, 1930*]

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's arrest was what I was hourly expecting. It was impossible for the Government to ignore the young President and an ideal patriot. If I know the country, the response, if it was tenfold after the arrest of the other leaders, will be a hundredfold after this crowning act of the Government. This arrest should cost the Government its existence.

Will the youth of the country realize this hope and now leave their schools and colleges and work solely for the attainment of independence ?

No doubt there will be an all-India hartal, though it has little meaning in these times of big action.

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-4-1930

107. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

DANDI,
April 14, 1930

DEAR MOTILALJI,

So Jawahar is to have six months' rest. He has worked like a Trojan. He needed this rest. If things continue to move with the present velocity, he won't have even six months' rest. The Jambusar[1] you saw the other day is different today. Whole villages have turned out. I never expected this phenomenal response. In many villages Government servants can get no service. The removal of some of our picked men has only stiffened the resistance of the people. But enough of this optimism. He will be a wise man who can say what will happen tomorrow. Accounts arriving from Bombay too are most encouraging. I take it you are following the pages of *Young India*.

How are you keeping?

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 9285. Courtesy: Allahabad Municipal Museum

108. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[April *14, 1930*][2]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your letter.

I have arranged to meet all of you on Wednesday at Vejalpur. I shall go there from wherever I happen to be. I shall try to reach the place early in the morning. The headquarters will be mostly at Karadi now. If Swami's request stands, I shall leave for Bombay on Thursday evening and return from there on Sunday morning. I don't feel inclined to go to Bombay just now.

Your description of the happenings in Ahmedabad. . . .[3]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11481

[1] The addressee along with Jawaharlal Nehru had visited Jambusar towards the end of March 1930 to see Gandhiji on his way to Dandi.

[2] Gandhiji reached Vejalpur on April 16, 1930. Besides, in the "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 14-4-1930 (p. 260), Gandhiji mentions having written to him in the morning. It is likely this was the letter referred to.

[3] The rest of the letter is not available.

109. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

April 14, 1930

CHI. KUSUM,

I have written about the anti-drink campaign and boycott of foreign cloth. Do you think you can do anything in the matter? Do you have the courage to take a leading part in that work?

I got your letters.

What are you doing there?

They told me yesterday that there was definite information that my arrest was imminent and kept me awake the whole night. I am still waiting.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1797

110. LETTER TO MANILAL V. DESAI

DANDI,
April 14, 1930

BHAI MANILAL DESAI,

I got the book about salt which you sent with Keshavram. I am grateful.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII/8

111. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Monday [*April 14,1930*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I wrote to you one letter in the morning. This is the second. It is 10.30 p.m. Jawahar has also been arrested. Pandya, Ghia and others have been arrested here. It is rumoured that they also intend to arrest Jugatram. All these persons certainly needed rest. They had been working ceaselessly. People seem to have learnt now to work on their own.

I shall not have to go to Bombay this week. Swami writes and tells me that he will invite me to go there next week after more preparation.

Bring Ba fully prepared. She should bring with her whatever things she may want. I have found some work for her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11480 and 11481

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru was arrested on April 13, 1930.

112. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU

NAVSARI,
April 15, 1930

NEHRU

ALLAHABAD

FEEL SURE MY WEARING CROWN UNNECESSARY MAY EVEN BE HARMFUL. IF YOU CAN SHOULDER BURDEN YOU SHOULD.[1]

GANDHI

Motilal Nehru Papers, File No. G-l. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

113. LETTER TO PRESIDENT, B.P.C.C.

April 15, 1930

Your wire fills me with joy. I wonder what response the youth of Bombay will make to the imprisonment of the President of the Congress. I am hourly needed in Gujarat for consolidating the work but I will come when absolutely needed.

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-4-1930

[1] Motilal Nehru, in his reply dated April 17, said: "Your telegram. Fully appreciate your point. Would have liked personal talk but consider longer interregnum harmful and gladly place my whole-time services such as they are at nation's disposal under your guidance. Assuming charge today. Issuing statement."

114. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS SHRIKANT [1]

April 15, 1930

. . . There must be a Divine plan even in the fact that the Panchmahals district is waking up late. It would not be surprising if, in this holy war, those who started first fall behind and those who started last take the first rank. There is no limit to the strength of the Panchmahals district. The pity is we often do not realize our own strength. This is the time to realize it. I certainly hope that Pan-chmahals will do so.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4206

115. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

DANDI,
April 15, 1930

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have just heard that you are going to be arrested soon! ! ! So be it. You will get some rest. The wonder is that they left you free even as long as they did. The more the people are tested the better.

"For this once, O Girdhari, save Thou my honour."

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11482

[1] The source does not give the name of the addressee. But in the G.N. collection the letter is listed as addressed to Lakshmidas Shrikant.

116. SPEECH AT UMBER

April 15, 1930

Mr. Gandhi asked the village women gathered there if they knew Pandit ,Jawaharlal Nehru.

They said, "How can we know?" Gandhiji remarked:

It is not your fault but of us men who have hitherto been satisfied with your being and remaining as house-keepers, cooks, scavengers and drawers of water but now you will no longer remain in that position. If this movement is to succeed, yours will have to be as big a share as men's if not much bigger.

Referring to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Gandhiji said:

He was to all India what Sardar Vallabhbhai was to us in Gujarat. He was wearing himself out in the nation's service and has been punished because he was the greatest among us all.

Hitherto I have asked you to resist snatching of salt by the police from your closed fists and suffer mutely and meekly whatever injuries the police might inflict upon you. If you have got strength of suffering and faith in your mission I want to go many steps further.

I would like you henceforth to regard yourselves as trustees or guardians not merely of the precious national wealth locked up in your fists but of the whole treasure now being prepared in salt pans. Defend that treasure with your life if that be the price you have to pay for it. When the police come and raid these pans, surround them and do not let the police touch them till they have overpowered you by sheer brute force.

Even if you are beaten you must not lose your temper. I hope that Gujarat has now become courageous to that extent. I am getting my strength from the strength of Gujarat. You must be prepared to endure suffering and keep the peace at any cost. Let them destroy pans but only after they have either arrested you, or beaten you. This is altogether a new experiment and I leave it to you to make more pans wherever possible.[1]

From your sufferings will rise into being not only Purna Swaraj but a non-violent army for its defence. Women ought not to take part alongside of men in defence of salt pans. I still give credit to

[1] This paragraph is taken from a report in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 16-4-1930.

the Government that it will not make war upon our women. It will be wrong on our part to provoke them into so doing. This is men's fight so long as the Government will confine their attention to men. There will be time enough for women to court assaults when the Government has crossed the limit. Let it not be said of us that men sought shelter behind women, well knowing they would be safe if they took women with them in what may be called, for want of a better name, aggressive non-violence. Women have in the programme I ventured to place before them enough work and to spare and all adventure and risk they may be capable of undertaking. The Labour Association of Ahmedabad has undertaken to picket liquor shops. Selling of contraband salt which was going on in Ahmedabad is now stopped. It will be done in villages by sending batches of volunteers.

He said that they must either make their own arrangements for food or must take whatever is cooked for them. They could not maintain kitchens for different tastes. This was a fight for self-purification and therefore they must leave off all bad habits. They must have perfect discipline and strength to suffer hardships. He asked all those who cannot submit themselves to discipline to resign in the beginning. But let them not cheat the community and nation. Even if there were only a few true volunteers the fight would go on. The fight has been well begun, and Gujarat has earned credit for it. Let it not be said that Gujarat lost the fight because of mistakes and lapses.[1]

The Hindu, 16-4-1930

117. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

April 16, 1930

MY DEAR MIRABAI,

I have your letter. What advance shall I make? Of course I should greet the friends just as before. But not having any sense of sin, how shall I give them satisfaction by talking? Their grievance is evid-ently most against me. The only way I can give them satisfaction is by correct conduct. Can you tell me where I have erred?

I often sing to myself, 'We shall know each other better when the mists have rolled away.'

I am likely to come to Bombay next week.

Yours

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] This paragraph is taken from *The Bombay Chronicle* report.

118. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI MADHAVJI THAKKAR

April 16, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I received your beautiful letter. I am replying rather late. I have no time. I got up today at a quarter past two in the morning.

I will give you sufficient work to do. I have understood the natures of you both. Your resolves are noble.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6795

119. UNTOUCHABILITY

As in the matter of Hindu-Muslim unity so has there been misrepresentation in the matter of untouchability It has been stated that I am sacrificing the interest of the untouchables for the sake of swaraj. I know that the lacs of untouchables will not believe any such thing of me. For me just as there is no swaraj without communal unity, so is there no swaraj without the removal of untouchability. But what I do feel is that without swaraj there will be neither communal unity nor removal of untouchability. He who runs may see that it is to the interest of the ruling caste to keep up the divisions among us. That caste is no more interested in Hindus and Mussalmans coming together than in the removal of untouchability.

In examining the sources of revenue I endeavoured the other day to show how the Government was built on an immoral foundation. Even so has it built itself upon our weaknesses and our vices.

Take the disgraceful Nasik quarrel. The Government knows that the Sanatanists are in the wrong. But what has it done? Because they repr-esent a powerful interest, the untouchables have been sacrificed. It was open to the authorities to get together the Sanatanists and reason with them. It was open to them to reason with the untouchables and ask them not to precipitate a fight. But this required an impartial mind, disinterestedness. But the Government is not disinterested. It rejoices to see the parties quarrel and then side with

the strongest. I know that many good natured but ignorant Englishmen will cavil at this opinion. I can only tell them that it is based on everyday exp-erience. I do not suggest that every time the action is deliberate. 'Might is right', 'divide and rule', have become the daily routine of the official world.

Such being my deep conviction, I would be wronging the minorities and wronging the untouchables if I stopped the progress towards swaraj by inaction. I hold that as soon as we have realized the power that is lying dormant in every one of us, that very moment we shall be free and we shall feel the glow of real unity and the unto-uchables will also feel an accession of power.

Let it be understood that everywhere the bands of civil resisters contain Mussalmans, members of other faiths as also untouchables, be these ever so few. The fact is that the foundations of swaraj are being laid by those who regard communal unity, equality of rights and opportunity and removal of untouchability as articles of faith.

Let the untouchable brethren not be lured from the common goal because it was the presence of Englishmen that stimulated Hindu thought and brought to the untouchables a sense of their rights. The fact is there. But the English did not descend upon India with any such benevolent motive. Their civilization or rather the Western civilization does not recognize distinctions in the manner decayed Hinduism does. We could have profited by this excellence of theirs without having the infliction of their rule. My indictment is not against the English as men, it is against Englishmen as the ruling caste. As men they are as good as we. In some respects they are better, in some others they may be worse. But as rulers they are highly undesirable. As rulers they can do, have done, no good to any of us. They have pandered to, and accentuated, our vices. And as we have developed the inferiority complex, their contact demoralizes us. I have watched ourselves acting one way in their presence, another way behind their backs. This is an unmanly and unmanning process; it is unnatural. "The tallest of us," said Gokhale, "has to bend before them." When they come to their senses, they too will realize that their rule has no less debased them than us.

Now a word to the untouchables. I have advised them and I repeat the advice that it is wholly unnecessary for them to seek to force entry into the orthodox temples even through the method of satyagraha. It is the duty of the 'touchable' Hindus to secure for the

untouchables the freedom of the temples. It is for the 'touchables' to offer satyagraha when the time is ripe. The untouchables know that the Congress has appointed, with Jamnalalji as the head, a committee for that very purpose. They know that very great progress has been made in the matter of removal of untouchability, they know that all over India are to be found hundreds of well-known believing Hindus who will lay down their lives to remove untouchability. The reformers hold it to be their duty and penance to purge the Hindu society of the evil. Let the untouchables know that the vast majority of them are today engaged in this life-and-death struggle. If they realize the truth of the statements I have made, they will at least suspend the satyagraha pending the struggle even if the whole mass of them will not join it as some of them have already done. The Hindu reformers have undertaken the work not as patrons, not to do the favour to the untouchables, certainly not to exploit them politically. They have undertaken the task because their conception of Hinduism peremptorily demands it. They have either to leave Hinduism or to make good the claim that untouchability is no part of it but that it is an excrescence to be rooted out.

Young India, 17-4-1930

120. THE INHUMAN TAX

Every new experience gained of the incidence of the salt tax shows it to be more inhuman than it appeared at first. Living and moving as I am in the midst of the salt area in Gujarat, I find that villages have been ruined because of the prohibition of salt manufacture by the villagers. The only use the people can make of the land is to extract salt from it which nature deposits in abundance from month to month. This was the poor man's staple industry in these parts. Now all this land lies fallow. Dandi itself has a tragic history. It is a beautiful seaside place. It takes its name from the fact that it was a place for a *diva dandi*, i.e., a lighthouse. Now it is a deserted village. A European and then Indians tried against nature to reclaim the soil for cultivation. As I walk about the otherwise beautiful peace-giving shore and listen for the heavenly music of the gentle waves, I see about me wasted human effort in the shape of dilapidated embanked fields without a patch of vegetation. These very fields, immediately the hateful salt monopoly is gone, will be valuable salt pans from which villagers will extract fresh, white sparkling salt

without much labour, and it will give them a living as it did their ancestors.

Mahadev Desai has already shown that the Government communique that this salt is injurious to health is a wicked falsehood.[1] In spite of the inhuman regulations, the people round about this area have used none but the salt that nature provides here in abundance. They do not seem to have felt any the worse for it. Thousands all over this area have been during the past week eating this salt with impunity. I hear that in Konkan people have all these years used what they regard as swadeshi salt in contradistinction to the taxed salt which they regard as *sarkari* or foreign, although in the first instance it was yielded by India's earth and seas. The recipe which I publish in this issue has been prepared by two careful men who have graduated in science. According to it every household can prepare its own salt without any expense whatsoever. One boy has merely to fetch a *lota*-ful[2] of salt water and it has merely to be strained or filtered and put near the fire in a shallow pan and treated in accordance with the recipe and the householders have every day's supply of salt much cleaner and healthier than the '*sarkari*' [3] or 'foreign' dirty salt to be had in the bazaars. Let the salt satyagrahis (and they are to be counted in their tens of thousands now) not waste a single grain of swadeshi salt. Law or no law, there is now no excuse for anyone to eat the bazaar salt. Swadeshi salt must be introduced even where there are no salt beds. It can be easily transported in small quantities from place to place. Let the Government prosecute tens of thousands of men and women or, if they dare, send their officials to search their persons and brutally force it from them. Let them say: 'The salt law allows it.' I have already shown that the salt regulations are as inhuman as the tax itself. If the history of the administration in the early stages of these regulations were known, it would be found that these inhuman regulations were as inhumanely administered in order to deprive the people of their natural calling and compel them to take the bloodstained *sarkari* salt. Let the reader know that even palanquins bearing *purdahnashin*[4] women were searched in order to prevent the transport of illicit salt. If

[1] Mahadev Desai's article entitled "A Brazen Lie" was published in *Young India*, 10-4-1930.

[2] A *lota* is a metal jug.

[3] Literally, of the Government

[4] Wearing *purdah*

today we have to bear hardships in the attempt to have this iniquitous tax removed, we are but doing a modicum of penance for our past neglect and shameful submission to the impost. The reader will thus see that it is not merely the tax, heavy as it is, that is offensive. It has not one redeeming feature about it. The revenue it brings is not the only cost to the nation. The cost to the nation is probably twenty crores per year besides the loss of an equal amount of salt which is wantonly destroyed or prevented from being gathered.

Young India, 17-4-1930

121. A SURVEY

The mass manifestation in Gujarat has exceeded all expectations. Bombay and its suburbs have done no less. And the reports slowly coming to me at this out-of-the-way place from all over India are fully encouraging. It is a matter of the keenest joy to me to see Maharashtra united once more and Sjt. N. C. Kelkar and his friends joining the struggle. Sjt. Kelkar's and Sjt. Aney's resignations are events of great importance in the struggle. Bengal is the most tempestuous province in all India. It is pulsating with life. Its very factions are symptomatic of its great awakening. If Bengal responds in the right style it is likely to overshadow every other province. I do not know that any province, even Maharashtra, can claim the credit that Bengal can for voluntary sacrifice. If its emotional side is its weakness, it is also its greatest strength. It has the capacity for reckless abandon to non-violence, if such use of language is permissible. Sjt. Sen Gupta's action in response to the wanton assault on the students' meeting has evoked the sentiment above expressed. The sentence of Dr. Suresh Bannerji and others pales into insignificance before the possibilities of the move on the part of the Bengal students and the savage counter-move on the part of the police. I know what the Calcutta Commissioner of Police will say if he sees these lines. I hear him saying, 'But you do not know my Bengal.' Well, I know his Bengal more than he ever will. His Bengal is the creation of the Government. If the Government will cease to molest Bengal and not keep India from her cherished goal, Bengal will be as gentle as the greatest province of India. If Bengal is seething with the violent spirit, it is because of her sufferings.

But I expect Bengal's imagination to come to her assistance and to realize that non-violence is the trump-card. All the suffering must be dedicated to the goddess of ahimsa.

Soon after the Jallianwala massacre, I used to express and reiterate the hope that next time in no part of India must people run away on bullets being discharged against them, and that theymust receive them in their chests with arms folded and with courageous resignation. That testing time seems to be coming faster than I had expected. And if we are to train ourselves to receive the bullet wounds or bayonet charges in our bare chests, we must accustom ourselves to standing unmoved in the face of cavalry or baton charges. I know that it is easier said than done. Nevertheless, I must say it if we are ever to complete our training in mass non- violence. That mass non-violence is a perfect possibility has been sufficiently demonstrated during the past eight days. Mahadev Desai has given a realistic account of the brutal treatment of volunteers in the Dholera saltbed and the volunteers suffering the brutality with meek heroism. What thousands in Bombay did when the police acted with rashness and harshness if also with comparative considerateness can be studied from a condensed translation published elsewhere of a graphic description sent to me by Pandit Malaviya. His report is in the main corroborated by Dahyabhai, Sardar Vallabhbhai's son, who was also an eye witness.

Perinbai and her companions as also Kamaladevi acted with rare courage and calmness. But they would allow me to say that they would have done better to remain outside the venue of the men's fight. For women to be in the midst of such danger as they put themselves in was against the rule of chivalry. Anyway that time is not yet. Let them by all means manufacture salt in their thousands. But they may not remain deliberately in crowds which they know are likely to be charged. I have in all humility suggested to them an exclusive field in which they are at liberty and are expected to show their best qualities. There is in that field enough scope for adventure and heroism.

To revert, if then we are to stand the final heat of the battle, we must learn to stand our ground in the face of cavalry or baton charges and allow ourselves to be trampled under horses' hoofs or bruised with baton charges. An armed crowd would stand firm and retaliate if there were such charges. We, if we would learn the lesson of non-violence, should show greater courage by standing our ground without anger, without retaliation. Then a reincarnation of Dyer will

find us ready for receiving bullets in the bare breast.

People have already begun to defend their salt pans. If we have evolved that sufficient amount of courage, it must be done methodically and regularly. As soon as the police come to charge us and break through the living wall, women should, if the police give the opportunity, stand aside and let their men be wounded. They do so all the world over in armed conflict, let them do so in a conflict in which one party deliberately chooses to remain unarmed.

When there are no men left to fight the battle of free salt, if [they] have courage let them take up the work deserted by men. But I have no doubt that men will give a good account of themselves in this struggle.

I have already examined elsewhere the argument that the police must use force if people will not surrender the contraband salt in their possession. Here I would only remind these critics that even from confirmed thieves they do not take stolen property by force except after they are brought under arrest and then too never if they are not to be brought to trial. The property still remains the thief's until he is convicted and the court adjudges the property not to be his. That the salt regulations make the policeman the arresting officer, prosecutor and judge all rolled into one is no answer to my charge of barbarity in respect of the procedure adopted by the authorities.

Young India, 17-4-1930

122. PRESIDENT'S REWARD

The President of the Congress has had his laurels cheap. For a telegram just received from Pandit Motilalji tells me that Pandit Jawaharlal has been sentenced to six months' simple imprisonment. But even a day's imprisonment of the nation's first servant is an affront offered to the whole nation. Through this imprisonment the Government have told us to do our worst. And the worst we can do is to invite more suffering upon ourselves. This can only be done by our intensifying the campaign. Great as is the work being done by the youth of the country, I must confess that I am not satisfied with the response from the students. They have not yet got self-confidence. They do not believe that swaraj is coming soon. They do not realize that it is for them to anticipate its advent by simple faith and acting upon it. But faith cannot be given by anybody. It has to come from

within. The country will watch the effect of Pandit Jawaharlal's incarceration upon the thousands of students who are still hankering after degrees and diplomas.

Young India, 17-4-1930

123. SPECIAL TASK BEFORE WOMEN

The conference of women on Sunday last at Dandi became a Congress as I had wanted it to be. Thanks to the Government prohibition against the Baroda territory cars plying between Navsari and Dandi, many had walked the full 12 miles to Dandi. The following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

I

This conference of the women of Gujarat assembled at Dandi on 13th April, 1930 having heard Gandhiji, resolves that the women assembled will picket liquor and toddy shops of Gujarat and appeal to the shop-keepers and the shop-goers [to desist] from plying their trade or drinking intoxicating liquors as the case may be, and will similarly picket foreign-cloth shops and appeal to the dealers and the buyers to desist from the practice of dealing in or buying foreign cloth as the case may be.

II

This conference is of opinion that boycott of foreign cloth is possible only through khadi and therefore the women assembled resolve henceforth to use khadi only and will so far as possible spin regularly and will learn all the previous processes and preach the message of khadi among their neighbours, teach them the processes up to spinning and encourage them to spin regularly.

III

This conference appoints the following Executive Committee with power to draw up a constitution and to amend it from time to time and add to their number:[1]

1. Mrs. Tyabji (President)
2. Shrimati Mithubehn Petit (Secretary)

[1] These four paragraphs have been taken from "Women in Conference", *Young India*, 17-4-1930.

MEMBERS

3. Shrimati Manibehn Patel
4. „ Rohini Desai
5. „ Chandubehn

This conference hopes that Gujarati women will welcome this activity and participate in it.

This conference hopes that women all over Gujarat and the other provinces will take up the movement initiated at this conference.[1]

The same resolutions were passed also in Vejalpur; only the first resolution was divided into sections. Two distinct sections dealt with prohibition and the boycott of foreign cloth through khadi, so that wo-men who believed in only one of these causes could vote for that one alone. At the second conference three more names were added:

Shrimati Shardabehn Sumant Mehta

Shrimati Savitabehn Trivedi

Shrimati Surajbehn Manilal

This vote need not be considered as having much value. It is valuable to the extent that not a single resolution was opposed at the meeting, for it shows that even if the women present may not be prepared to put the resolution into practice, nevertheless they approved of its substance. At both these conferences women from villages were present in greater numbers. The struggle this time is of the villages especially. The awakening in the villages is astonishing which is a good sign. Salt, the boycott of foreign cloth and prohibition—all these three are specially meant for villages and the women would benefit especially.

Even if a few women are ready to lay down their lives for the sake of this resolution, they will come forward. If this does not happen the conference will not be deemed to have completed its work. If the number of women present at the conference is any indication, the women would seem to be prepared for work.

The soul of any organization is its executive committee. Hence the success of the work depends upon the enthusiasm, the *tapascharya* and the skill of the ladies who have given their names for the committee.

[1] This paragraph has been taken from *Young India*.

Mithubehn Petit has started the work with great alacrity. According to her accounts habitual drunkards are enthusiastically breaking earthen jars containing toddy. Thousands of persons in Surat who are given to drinking, have started having resolutions passed by their castes prohibiting drinking.

Once women become self-confident and gain faith, they will find from experience that the fear which they entertain has no basis. Rama and Ravana dwell in every human being. If women would act through the Rama who is in them, the Ravana who dwells in man would be powerless. Rama awakens less readily in men than in women. Who can harm one who is protected by Rama? Who can protect one with whom Rama is displeased ?

In the work of prohibition, once the initial fear is shed, things become easy. For all it involves is picketing. Those who drink are not wicked. They are simple folk. Their self-interest is not involved in drinking. Once they are convinced, they will give up liquor. The liquor-booth owners do have their self-interest involved but they realize that this is an immoral trade.

I regard this extension of the swaraj movement as of the highest importance. I need not reiterate the argument already advanced in these pages. Mithubehn has already commenced operations. She is not the woman to let the grass grow under her feet. The idea is for twenty to twenty-five women to go in one batch and plant thems-elve-snear each liquor shop and come in personal contact with every visitor to the liquor or toddy shops and wean him from the habit. They will also appeal to the shopkeepers to give up the immoral traffic and earn their livelihood through better means.[1]

Foreign-cloth shops are to be treated in the same way as liquor shops as soon as there are enough trained women volunteers. Though the same committee will carry on the two boycotts it will necessarily have two branches. It will be open to any woman to offer her services for only one branch of work, nor is it necessary that every worker should belong to the Congress. Only this must be clearly understood, that the work is part of the Congress programme and has tremendous political results if it has also equally great moral and economic consequences.

[1] This and the following two paragraphs have been taken from *Young India*, 17-4-1930.

Those who will belong to the foreign-cloth boycott branch should realize that without the constructive work of khadi production the mere boycott will be a mischievous activity. Its very success without the production of khadi will prove the ruin of the national movement of independence. For the millions will take it up in simple faith. But they will curse us if they discover that they have no cloth to wear or the cloth they can get is too dear for their purse. The formula therefore is: discard foreign cloth and make your own khadi and wear it. Already there is a dearth of khadi.

The boycott of foreign cloth is, however, a difficult matter. It has two aspects; boycott and khadi production. The boycott does not require much effort Only a few women would suffice for the work. For the production of khadi thousands and even hundreds of thousands would have to be regularly active. Hence it would require organization and planning. However, it is a work needing patience, as it requires intelligence and faith. In the course of it you have to come in contact—directly or indirectly—with crores of women. It requires a pure co-ordination between towns and villages. And, through it all the khadi India needs can be produced in a short time. We have before us all the means to produce it. We have the necessary skill too. All that we lack is workers. It is the sisters who must create these workers. They can do so only when they themselves learn to card and spin and disseminate the art among others. Most of the khadi workers are in the salt campaign. Therefore the production has suffered a temporary check.[1]

But there need never be any dearth of cloth the moment the country gets disabused of the superstition that it must buy cloth to cover its nakedness. It would be on a par with someone saying that we must starve if we cannot get Manchester or Delhi biscuits. Even as we cook our food and eat it so can we, if we but will it, make our own cloth and wear it. We did it only a hundred years ago and we can relearn the trick now. All the vital processes are almost too simple to learn. At this supreme crisis, this turning point in the nation's history, we must not hesitate and nurse idleness. I do not need to restate the argument about our mills. Even if every mill were genuinely swadeshi and even if all became patriotic, they could not supply all our wants. Whichever way we look at it, whether we like it or not, we cannot

[1] The last two sentences and the following two paragraphs have been taken from *Young India*, 17-4-1930.

escape khadi if we are to achieve independence through non-violent means and if we are to achieve the boycott of foreign cloth on which we began concentration in 1920.

Of men's part in the boycott I have said enough in my speech which I unexpectedly delivered to the men who had come to Dandi. Relevant parts of this speech are reproduced elsewhere.[1] Suffice it here to say that men will damage the movement if they will meddle with women's picketing wherever it is undertaken by them.

By passing the above two resolutions Gujarati women have taken up the responsibility and Begum Amina Tyabji and their committee have shouldered the responsibility on their behalf.

May God grant them strength!

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-4-1930 and *Young India,* 17-4-1930

124. "SATYAGRAHA YUDDHA"

The Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, has issued a booklet under the above title. Let everyone read it. Those who are not regular readers of *Hindi Navajivan,* or those who have to train themselves for the satyagraha campaign will find the booklet especially useful.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 17-4-1930

125. PRESIDENT IN PRISON-HOUSE

Pandit Jawaharlal is in jail. This means that the Government has thrown the whole of India into prison. If we understand this, then our duty becomes clear at once. If we wish to force the jail doors open we must do these things.

1. We should make salt everywhere and distribute it.
2. Women should picket liquor shops, that is, they should humbly plead with the sellers and consumers of liquor to desist from selling and drinking it.
3. Women should similarly dissuade those that sell and those that wear foreign cloth.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Dandi", 20-4-1930.

4. Spinning should be started in every home.

5. Students should leave schools and dedicate themselves to national work.

6. Lawyers should give up their practice and devote all their time to this national *yajna*.

7. Those in other occupations should also give for these activities as much time as they can.

8. People should leave Government jobs.

9. Under no circumstances should people become disorderly or commit violence.

10. They should not look down upon anyone. They should live at peace with all.

If we did this much our strength would certainly increase and no one would dare deflect us from our path.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 17-4-1930

126. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 17, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

Yesterday I sent the replies to your questions orally through Gangabehn . They must have been conveyed to you.

What you write about accounts is correct. I intend to write in *Navajivan* about the matter.

I had sent to you by return of post my reply to your question concerning. . .[1] Mahadev must have explained to you why you did not get it. If Ramji Sahay wants to go to his own province to work, he may do so. He should pay his own fare if he can.

I have already written to you asking you to send some women. Have you found some work for Keshu?

Think of all possible plans to increase the production of khadi.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] The name has been omitted.

[PS.]

You will have to send the thing to Malkani, since I had not written to him to say no. Now I do not wish to write.

From Gujarati: C.W. 8100. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

127. INTERVIEW TO FREE PRESS OF INDIA

JALALPUR,
April 17, 1930

It is too early for me to speak with certainty anything about the so-called riots in Calcutta and Karachi. Having become used to grossly exaggerated accounts and distorted versions of things happening before my eyes, I am inclined largely to discount the stories of violence alleged to have been done by people. But be it ever so little, I have no manner of doubt that it harms the struggle, and at the same time the struggle has to go on unchecked. If non-violence has to fight people's violence in addition to that of Government, it must still perform its arduous task at any cost. I see no escape from it. At the very outset of the campaign I had declared that there was every possibility of some violence breaking out on the part of the people. It seems now to have broken out; and it hurts me, only because it hurts the cause I hold as dear as life itself. But I must say that Government have provoked it in dispersing the meeting where no violence had been done; to prohibit public meetings and processions altogether is a thing calculated to precipitate violence. Government have with utmost deliberation picked up the leaders of the people who were known to be partial to non-violence and to possess controlling influence on the people. It would have been miraculous if this gross interference with popular liberty had not evoked reprisals from easily inflammable people, who were to be found in every community and in all parts of the world. Take Gujarat itself; and in the out-of-the way Dholera and near Viramgam unnameable and indecent atrocities are said to have been committed upon defenceless national workers. Their only crime was that they would not easily yield up the salt in their possession.

In the first place, I do not know that outside India under any civilized government, authority has been given to the police forcibly to take away from people anything unless it is of a dangerous character. I know that Salt Acts do give such powers. That merely illustrates my view. A barbarous act does not become less so

by having the authority of law, and the practice of indecent torture is uterly intolerable and calculated to exhaust the patience of any-people. The obvious fact is that Government [do not] want peace. I observe that Mr. Jairamdas Doulatram has come in for a bullet wound in the thigh. I am delighted it is Mr. Jairamdas Doulatram rather than some unknown person to have been thus injured. Mr. Jairamdas is one of the greatest persons to be found in all India. If he was in the crowd, he was there not to incite people to violence but to prevent it.

Spilling of such innocent blood will hasten the end, but such casualties will only result in the manifestation of greater response from people. Let me, however, warn those whom my message may reach that if they cannot restrain themselves, they must not interfere with the struggle. If they do, they will only retard the country's progress towards its goal.

I know, however, that soon my word will cease to reach the people. All instruments I possess will have been snatched away from me, but they cannot snatch away one thing from me and that is my unshakable faith in my cause. A mass movement like the one we see in front of us is regulated not by men but by God. Manifestation has been spontaneous. It has required but little guidance.

If what I have seen happening in Gujarat is an index to what has happened in other provinces of India, the movement has been largely self-directed. I have, therefore, still every hope that at the end of the struggle it would be possible to say of it that even though regrettable violence now and then broke out, it remained predominantly and overwhelmingly non-violent. Not what happens in cities but what happens in villages will decide the fate of India.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-4-1930

128. SPEECH TO VOLUNTEERS, VEJALPUR

April 17, 1930

Gandhiji at the outset said that they had gathered to decide about their future programme. The Government was doing quite the opposite of what he thought would be done. They had belied the expectations of the satyagrahis. He expected that he would be arrested, but he was still free. The Government has miscalculated. The word 'defeat' is not to be found in the dictionary of a satyagrahi. There was no defeat for them who were ready to die and suffer. Out of these sufferings mighty strength would be created with which all Government laws could be broken.

They had broken the salt laws successfully. What should they do next? He had heard of riots in Calcutta and Karachi. From what he had read in the newspapers he could find that somewhere there was some mistake on the part of the people and it was regrettable. Though he expected that the people would remain non-violent, he did not think that such occurrences would never happen.

I cannot teach peace and non-violence by stopping the fight. How can one man keep in check crores of people? We must do our duty and the people will understand by themselves. I hope Gujarat has well understood the lesson of non-violence, which is our religion at the present moment. We must suffer till the goal is reached.

Continuing, Gandhiji said that he wanted that all should be prepared to serve as national volunteers till swaraj is attained and asked those who wanted to retain their services under the condition to raise their hands fearlessly. All the volunteers except 48 raised their hands.

Gandhiji congratulated those 48 satyagrahis who did not raise their hands for their courage and assured them that they would be given other work in their own villages.

The question of ration for the national army was then discussed. It was unanimously resolved by the volunteers, at the suggestion of Mahatmaji, that their food should be simple and should not cost more than annas 5 per head per day. But option was given with the permission of the Captain to take meals privately at the volunteers' own expense. But Gandhiji wanted them to use the option as rarely as possible, as they as national soldiers were expected to behave with self-restraint. He said that in England even Kings had to work as sailors where they got the same food as ordinary sailors.

The resolution regarding smoking by soldiers of the national army evoked keen debate. Gandhiji said that he did not want to dismiss all those who were habituated to smoke, but suggested that they must try to do without smoking.

Concluding the conference, Mahatmaji laid great stress on the fact that they must always be at their post and asked them to observe all the rules they had themselves passed after full deliberation and of their own free will. He asked them to be of good moral character. If they did national work with impure conscience swaraj would go farther away from them. He said he would be glad if he saw his own national soldiers suffering and receiving bullets on their own chests and out of the ashes of these non-violent soldiers of freedom, swaraj would be born.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-4-1930

129. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

VEJALPUR,
April 17, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

I have your two letters.

I can understand how the mishap occurred as to the yarn.

I understand too your natural desire to come. But I am [sure] restraint was better. It is a fine saying "there is no remission of sin except by being born again."

You know however that you are at liberty to come if you cannot help it. But then you must come plainly to satisfy the natural desire. If you can suppress the desire, so much the better.

Calcutta and Karachi have broken the spell. Somehow I am unmoved. But there is no suspending even if moving violence takes place.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5392. Courtesy: Mirabehn

130. LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI

VEJALPUR,
April 17, 1930

DEAR BROTHER,

I have your astonishing letter today. The original has not been received. It is now 10.30 p.m. But I may not let your letter go unanswered even for a night.

I had no knowledge of the extent to which I had fallen in your estimation.

If I had lost confidence in you, I should certainly have told you. What I have lost I have told you—confidence in your judgment. Even now I shall defend the Nehru Report.[1] But I own it is useless if it cannot satisfy the Mussalmans or the other minorities. That was why I moved the saving resolution in Calcutta in Motilalji's absence, but with his full consent and approval. Surely it should be enough for you that the Nehru Report and, with it, the communal scheme are buried. What the scheme shall be in an independent India will be for Mussalmans, Sikhs, other minorities and Hindus to decide. If I erred in endorsing the Nehru Report, I did so with Dr. Ansari. This was enough for me.

Your charge that I did not consult you on embarking on civil disobedience is true. But how could I when I knew there was no meeting ground between us?

Can you not see that, although I may act independently of you, it might not amount to desertion? My conscience is clear. I have deserted neither you nor the Mussalmans. Where is the desertion in fighting against the salt tax and the other inequities and fighting for independence? Lastly, time will prove what no assurance from me can prove.

You are at liberty to publish the whole of the correspondence between us.

I hope that your fears about Mahomed Ali's eyes will never be

[1] A draft constitution for India prepared by a committee headed by Motilal Nehru.

realized. His eyes are wanted even if it be to fight me. May God bless him and you.

Yours ever,

From a photostat: S.N. 16810

131. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

April 17, 1930

CHI. CHANDRAKANTA,

I have your letter. You are a girl with immense patience. May God always prosper you.

Let Uncle continue giving money to Narandasbhai.

It is now getting on for 11 o'clock in the night.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

132. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

April 17, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. Now it is about 11 at night. So, 1 will not be able to write much.

Give up worrying about the struggle. There are persons to guide you, aren't there? Do what they say.

You cannot go to Delhi but it is sufficient that Krishna has reached there. Write to him. He is at the Jamia. I hope you know that.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 32945

133. ADVICE TO VOLUNTEERS

NAVSARI,
April 17, 1930

A question arose in Mahatma Gandhi's camp today about volunteers requiring more khadi to replace their torn clothing. Mahatma Gandhi said that the volunteers should dispense with the torn or lost pieces and should be satisfied with mere loin-cloth as the millions in India had to.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-4-1930

134. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU [1]

April 18, 1930

THANKS. YOU HAVE CONSIDERABLY RELIEVED ME. MAY GOD GIVE YOU STRENGTH.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] This was sent on receipt of intimation from the addressee that he had assumed charge of the presidentship of the Congress; *vide* also "Telegram to Motilal Nehru", 15-4-1930.

135. TELEGRAM TO N. R. MALKANI

NAVSARI,
April 18, 1930

MALKANI, CONGRESS

KARACHI

CONSIDER JAIRAMDAS MOST FORTUNATE. BULLET WOUND THIGH BETTER THAN PRISON. WOUND HEART BETTER STILL.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 9261. Courtesy: Jairamdas Doulatram

136. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI N. PATEL

April 18, 1930

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

I have sent all of you there with great hopes. Mahadev writes and tells me that they are spending money extravagantly in the Kheda district. Put a check on this. One of you should remain with Abbas Saheb, so that no one harasses him for money. There is no one there to act as leader. You should take up the leadership and assume control of things.

The boycott also seems to be turning violent in spirit. Be vigilant about this, too. Meet the Headmen who have resigned and, if any of them are resorting to coercion against others, check them. If any of those who have not resigned are being harassed, that should be stopped. Allay the fears of all who have not resigned. The supply of provisions to such persons ought not to be stopped.

Think carefully about every step you take.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8987

137. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 19, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have written in *Navajivan* about money falling into the hands of too many people. I have also told Mahadev to take all possible steps.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8101. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

138. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

POST JALALPUR,
April 19, 1930

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

I have your letter. How can I advise you? After giving up legal practice, one can only go on with the cases which are pending. This is what Motilalji, Das and others had done. You should decide for yourself what you should do.

Have you positively decided to invite me to Bombay? In reply to my letter to him, Swami had wired to say that I should not go till I had heard from him. He must have seen you. I have really no time to go to Bombay just now. I shall be satisfied if things here are properly organized.

It is very good indeed that you have decided to go to Broach.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From Gujarati: C.W. 7512. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

139. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

April 19, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Tell all the women that no one should suppose that I will not call them here. I will call them here soon, but write to me immediately and tell me who must remain there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original C.W. 8745. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

140. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Saturday [*April 19, 1930*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. Sarojini could not carry on without me, so she has come. No harm will come to her as long as she is by my side. When she is away, she cannot help being affected by the surrounding atmosphere. We shall take from her as much service as she can give.

I shall write about mills in *Young India*[2]. I have not put forward any particular conditions to Ambalalbhai or anyone else. Whatever there are have been mentioned in the *Navajivan*[3]. You will see them. No mill has accepted those conditions as yet.

I am not at all in favour of the strike. But I do not know how it can be avoided under the prevailing conditions. Still, I am making all efforts. This time the struggle will be against twofold violence. God's will be done.

Only you and Swami can deal with the money-grubbing going on in Bombay. The proper thing in my view would be to appoint a trust to which the money should be paid. Otherwise it will be eaten up. In my view some things cannot be stopped.

I shall of course write about that, too.[4] Why should Hiralal,

[1] The letter reached the addressee on April 21, 1930. The Saturday preceding fell on this date.

[2] *Vide* "Our mills and foreign-cloth boycott", 24-4-1930.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] *Ibid.*

Paramanand, and others not involve themselves in the Provincial Committee? What about Vithaldas Jerajani? I have written to him to come over for a discussion on khadi matters. But he has not yet come

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Munshi[1] has been pressing me to go there. I have agreed to go on Friday if something else does not prevent me. I am glad that Swami has not come. Meet Munshi and decide.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

141. SPEECH AT MEETING OF HEADMEN, VEJALPUR

April 19, 1930

The way of ahimsa by itself is such that it can produce riches out of dust. The Government's is the way of violence. It mixes earth with salt, while we produce salt out of earth. The Government destroys, we create. It has guns and cannon, we have no such arms. It has huge factories, we have nothing of the kind. Our factory is in our cottage, and our machinery is the *takli*. For you it is a matter of faith that swaraj hangs by a thread of yarn. It was you who took the pledge to carry out in six months the constructive programme for swaraj. Keep that pledge and justify my faith in you. If you do so, Bardoli can win swaraj for India.

Now that you have given up being Headmen of the Government you should become Headmen of the people. In the villages where you served as Headmen you should now work as true Headmen; in other words you should serve the people of these villages.

There are many ways of serving. But first take up these.

Every man in your village should break the salt law by making salt not only for use in his home, but also some to be stored for people living away from the sea-coast.

But this work is not likely to take the whole of your day. Hence,

[1] K. M. Munshi; *vide* also "Interview to *The Bombay Chronicle*", 20-4-1930.

the next item of work for you is to see that foreign cloth is banished from your villages. The right way to do so is to sit in your homes and twirl the *takli*, which you can make without spending a pie. If you Hea-dmen start spinning on it the other people in the village willfollow suit. In numbers is strength, as the saying goes. And by making all people in the village wear khadi you will be able to save the village wealth from being drained away.

Moreover, if all of you take up the work seriously, you can soon get the liquor shops closed, since you have your finger on the pulse of the village.

Then you should provide arbitration in village disputes, which is important work. You are well versed in these matters. Some of you probably are addicted to this kind of work. If they have to remain idle after resigning as Headmen they may regret having resigned. I was myself a practising lawyer. Having left practice I have never had to repent since I found for myself work that kept me occupied even more than legal practice had. The Headmen may very well give up their jobs, but they should have village council meetings in their homes. They should set up boards of arbitration. Being well acquainted with the affairs of the village, these boards will be able to settle disputes in a just and satisfactory manner.

In order that you can do all this work in an organized way I suggest that you establish an association of ex-Headmen. If such an association comes into being, I should like to have regular reports of its work so that I am kept informed about all your activities.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-5-1930

142. EXTRACTS FROM SPEECH AT BARDOLI

April 19, 1930

Headmen and Talatis are looking frightened. They have a lingering belief that through the present Government they can enjoy prestige and status and plunder the people in the name of the Government. That is why you find it necessary to persuade them to resign and to employ the weapon of social boycott against them. Truly speaking, there should be no need to persuade anyone or to put pressure on anyone in the form of boycott. A person should himself be able to see that his dirty job and soiled power are things to be abjured. And why talk only of the Headmen and Talatis? I do not believe that even others have full faith in this struggle. But we have to build on the courage that has been roused among the people. I want that the Headmen and Talatis who have not yet resigned should do so at once. And those who resign should do so totally.

To keep charge of the village books and to continue waiting on the officers after resigning the post would be deceiving the people. Rather than do so, they should boldly say: "Boycott us if you like. But we do not yet see the need to resign."

Defying the salt law is only a part of our work. Our aim is to win swaraj. To that end, it is necessary to undertake other items of work also. We should see to it that all the liquor shops are closed down. For the present, a few of our sisters have boldly come forward and taken up the task. It is not necessary for all the women to come out of their homes. They should banish liquor from their own villages. We should not abuse anyone, we should not lift our hand against anyone. Go to the owner of the liquor shop, and entreat him to close his shop. Plead humbly with the drink addicts also. This is easy for women to do. Men should help them in their work of persuasion and cut down the toddy palms for their owners. Both men and women can do all this without leaving their villages.

The third item is the boycott of foreign cloth. That task, too, we have entrusted to our sisters. It may appear to you a difficult job, but to me it seems easy. Or, to the extent that it is difficult, when accomplished it will make the winning of swaraj easy. There is no exaggeration in saying that this Government remains in our country chiefly for its cloth trade. You cannot think of all the other trade that

is allied to this direct trade of 66 crores. You will, like the people of Karadi, collect and burn foreign cloth. Brothers and sisters of Bardoli, burn with faith all the foreign cloth you have, but at the same time take a pledge that you will wear khadi. If you do so, you will save so much expenditure on clothes. If you wear fine garments of foreign or mill-made cloth, you will each need a score or more of them. But if you wear khadi a loin-cloth for men and just a sari for women will do. Also, the khadi vow should be a vow to wear khadi woven from yarn spun by oneself. That is not difficult to do. For though you cannot learn weaving in a short time, I can teach you spinning on the *takli* right away. If you spin the yarn, the ashrams will undertake to weave it into cloth. All the ashrams in the neighbourhood here are devoted to khadi activity. They have done some work though not so much as they might have done.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-5-1930

143. FOREWORD TO "PUBLIC FINANCE AND OUR POVERTY"

KARADI,
April 20, 1930

The booklet is a reprint, revised where necessary by the author, of the chapters written by Professor Kumarappa and published in *Young India*. They examine the economic policy of the British Gover-nment and its effect upon the masses. They are therefore very seasonable. The value of the chapters is enhanced by the addition of a very careful and copious index prepared by the author himself. I commend the booklet both to the Indian as also the Western readers.

M. K. GANDHI

Public Finance and Our Poverty; also G.N. 10085

144. MY NOTES

BEWARE

When a great struggle is on, generous people empty out their pockets and look upon everyone as a public worker. At such times, traitors see their opportunity and rob everyone wherever they can. Any-one who wants to sells swadeshi salt; anyone who wants to collects funds. People, being gullible, pay up. At such a time, it is necessary for people to be on their guard. No one should make any con-tributions unless they know those making collections and never without getting a receipt. The receipt should bear the signature of an office-holder of the Congress and the stamp of that office. The committees should maintain accounts of every pie and publish the names of the donors. The receipt books should be numbered and the rule should be that only these should be used for acknowledging contributions. And then accounts should be maintained accordingly. Despite such care, however, some misappropriation is bound to be there. A thief has a hundred prying eyes; a banker can glance only now and then. Nevertheless, it is the duty of all public institutions to be as much on their guard as possible.

MILL-HANDS OF AHMEDABAD

The mill-hands of Ahmedabad are contributing their share in the *yajna* of swaraj in an excellent manner. Many of them wear khadi. Their children, if not they themselves, spin and they are picketing the liquor booths. Some have also offered civil disobedience against the salt law. As a result of the movement for prohibition, the income from liquor has greatly diminished. In 1928-29 the average sale of six liquor booths in Ahmedabad was 231_ gallons. The sale this year has been 45_ gallons. In other words, there has been a decrease of over 81 per cent, that is, only 19 per cent is left. If this movement continues, we may hope that the liquor booths in Ahmedabad, at least, will have to close down. Labourers as well as the organizers deserve to be congratulated on such good results. Labourers alone act as pickets before liquor booths and it may be said that this is done in an ideal manner. Perfect peace has been maintained. If other labourers follow the example of these, their incomes will at once be doubled as money

saved is money earned. Besides there is the added gain that homes will become more peaceful.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-4-1930

145. MESSAGE TO PEOPLE OF DHOLERA AND VIRAMGAM

The reports from places around Dholera and Viramgam are becoming intolerable. The barbarous atrocities which are said to have been perp-etrated there make one shudder. Those who have sent in the reports should be careful and be prepared to substantiate them. The inhuman atrocities which have been described are not supposed to have been perpetrated secretly but openly in public. I hope the accounts are untrue. However, if they are true, there are satyagrahi measures more severe than the ones that are being adopted at present. Through them these inhuman acts could certainly be prevented. Those on whom these indignities have been inflicted should not be afraid. I am eager to go to that area. And, if these atrocities do not cease, God willing, I shall go and suggest ways of preventing them. I assure them that although I am trying to cope with the work in Surat district, my mind is occupied with the Dholera and Viramgam events.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan 20-4-1930

146. CALCUTTA AND KARACHI

The news from Calcutta and Karachi is shocking. Only time will show how much of it is true. Newspapers contain so much falsehood that it becomes difficult to get at the truth. A regime given to violence always needs to be sustained through villainy. Who does not know that at time of the Bardoli Satyagraha false rumours were spread concerning the activities of satyagrahis? Do I not have experience of the lies that have been spread about me? Nevertheless, there would seem to be some truth in the attack on us. Some Indians, whoever they may be, have caused harm to life and property. They have caused harm to the movement and put me in awkward position. Such incidents stand in the way of the Service which the people expect from me. It is a painful thing. Such incidents agitate me. That is my temperament, so how can I prevent it?

But my path is straight. Whatever happens, I cannot stop the struggle. I cannot gauge my non-violence. I go on working in faith. All will be well if untainted non-violence is at work. Nothing but good will result from the steps which are being taken.

There is only one path and one duty for the readers of *Navajivan*. They should work for peace wherever they go; they should not say one harsh word to anyone; they should not encourage among the people hatred for the British and for Indian officials. It is our dharma to love even the wrongdoer. We do not wish to injure even a hair on his body. We have to face greater atrocities by undergoing greater suffering.

There is a bit of good news in the reports from Calcutta and Karachi. Jairamdas has received a bullet wound in his thigh. I have not known anyone more pure-hearted than he. The intelligence he possesses and the prestige he enjoys are as great as his purity. He is a member of the Congress Working Committee; he is the secretary of the committee for the boycott of foreign cloth. He is a staunch votary of non-violence. In this struggle, the sacrifice of such persons is expected. So I regard Jairamdas lucky that he was the first to receive a bullet-wound. If there was a riot he surely did not go there to instigate it but rather to try and quell it. It is good that he has been injured.

It is with the blood of such Indians that the temple of swaraj will be built. If we too wish to make the final sacrifice in this *yajna*, we should cultivate Jairamdas's purity, simplicity and determination.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-4-1930

147. FOREIGN-CLOTH DEALERS

I have just received a telegram from Delhi which says:

> "Dealers in foreign cloth want certain conditions to be considered with regard to the round-the-clock picketing of foreign-cloth shops. They want to be given time to cancel orders against which goods have not been received and to sell goods which they have in stock."

The question is whether such conditions can be conceded. I have sent my opinion as follows:

> "Such time certainly cannot be granted. If the traders have the faith they should rest assured that such poor merchants who have suffered a loss will be suitably compensated in swaraj. Those who are well-to-do will get no compensation. They should regard the loss that they incur on account of the goods lying in stock as a token *prayashchitta* for their past sins."

I feel that it is essential for swarajists to make things fully clear.

The desperate souls who have entered the field will either triumph or perish, but even while perishing they will clarify many matters. There was not in the world a single war in which thousands did not suffer losses.

If, however, this struggle does have a peaceful ending, there would be the minimum loss with the maximum gain. But the satyagrahis must harden themselves to put up with this loss. Why should the boycott which is possible today be postponed? Where would we be if every dealer in foreign cloth asked for time? The strength of the boycott move-ment would be frittered away and the doors to betrayal would be opened in front, from behind and on the sides. Who would keep watch on which traders? The traders who lack faith but do not wish to practice deceit can act in the following way:

They can keep their goods for the time being. If the people lose and enter into a fresh indenture of slavery, such traders will easily be able to sell their goods. They should make out lists of their goods andhand them to well known volunteers and get these stamped by the Congress, so that, at the proper time, if it is felt that they should be given compensation, the swaraj Government could do so. Another alternative is for them to export their goods to countries where foreign goods are sold. Anyone who wishes to do something, finds many straightforward ways of doing it. But a poor dancer will always find the courtyard uneven.

But why sympathize with the sufferings of traders? What about educated lawyers? With great difficulty we find a person like Kanaiyalal Munshi, who saw his way clear and sacrificed his legal practice and his, what in Government circles is called, "career". Other lawyers are afraid of offering civil disobedience. What if they are disbarred? These good but timid lawyers would see if they reflected a little that if all of them offered civil disobedience, no one would be disbarred. But, what if all of them do not do so? Even then what is there to fear? Why should not a sacrificing lawyer have the conviction that by making his own contribution he will bring swaraj nearer? Why cannot he have the faith that such a mighty struggle cannot but end in swaraj? Then those who were disbarred will again be called back to their practice in honour. Dr. Krause was a famous lawyer in the Transvaal. He was very nearly sent to the gallows. His legal practice was forcibly taken away from him. He, however, reestablished himself with honour and not only did he regain all he had lost but his prestige increased. Many such instances could be cited. Want of faith is the most expensive thing in this struggle. If we have the least bit of self-confidence swaraj is within our grasp. Otherwise we victims of delusion shall be like the woman who is looking all over the village for the child who is in her lap.

What applies to the traders and the lawyers applies also to the students. We do not even have an idea of the full extent of our fall. And so we have not developed sufficient dislike for our miserable plight. Ignorance of our plight stands in our way.

Even so if we maintain our present progress, traders, lawyers, students, doctors and even barbers will gain courage and we shall soon secure the end we desire.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 20-4-1930

148. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 20, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have sent Chhotelal to Ahmedabad today, as I sent away Pyarelal. Retaining both of them in my service encouraged them and me in indulgence and resulted in their services being not fully utilized. I have, therefore, sent Pyarelal to Wadhwan and other places and Chhotelal to Ahmedabad to stay in the Vidyapith and elsewhere and propagate the *takli*, the spinning-wheel, etc. Let me know which women ought to remain there.

The sum of Rs. 250 which I have sent with Chhotelal was received from a Marwari gentleman. Credit it to the Satyagraha Fund.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 8102. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

149. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

April 20, 1930

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I had been expecting your letter. You seem to be doing good work. Is your throat all right? It would be very good indeed if Khushalbhai joined the movement. According to me, it is pure dharma to join it. Write to me from time to time and give all the details.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. JAMNADAS GANDHI
OPP. MIDDLE SCHOOL
NAVA PARA, RAJKOT
KATHIAWAR

From the original in Gujarati: C.W. 9307. Courtesy: Jamnadas Gandhi

150. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

April 20, 1930

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

I have a letter today which says:

> Shri Munshi has produced a good effect by his bold step, but he has issued a circular letter to his lawyer friends telling them that he would be able to attend to work in his chambers from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

There is another letter signed by seven persons, which is full of allegations against you. The signatories desire the letter to be published. I have categorically refused to do so. This is merely for your information.

Shri Mukund Malaviya sends a long letter. He says that none of them desires me to go there at present. I have seen the Congress leaders too. They also say the same thing, adding that I might visit the place after they do something which I would welcome.

For the present, therefore, I would ask you to free me from the engagement. The work here does not leave me a moment to spare. There is little need to arouse enthusiasm in Bombay. I am making this suggestion for the sake of the rest and peace that I need. You may come here and bring with you a few Congress leaders. You will spare me for the present, won't you?

Tell Lilavati that I shall expect her to make her own contribution, and a big one. If it was with her approval that you made a public reference to our old relations, I may say that those bonds were as between a father and his daughter. Imagine what expectations a father who had lost his daughter would have from her when she was found.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

After this was finished, I received a letter of praise also, which I must send to you. Do not return it. Tear it up.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7513. Courtesy: K.M. Munshi

151. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

9.30 p.m., April 20, 1930

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have had no letter from you for two days. I am eager to know about what is happening in Viramgam and Dholera. Either write to me yourself or ask someone else to write. There seems to have been an actual revolt in Chittagong. May everything be as Rama wills.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11483

152. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

JALALPUR,
April 20, 1930

I see that several friends expect me to be in Bombay next week. In reply to Sjt. Munshi's pressing invitation I said weather permitting I might go to Bombay next week. But I see that my presence in these parts is urgent and letters from several friends in Bombay tell me that I should not move from Gujarat till Bombay is better prepared. Of enthusiasm, so far as newspapers can tell me, there is no lack in Bombay. Of discipline I do not know. At the present moment what we want is the rigidest discipline, more rigid than in an army made to wage bloody warfare, side by side with the utmost defiance of the sele-cted laws and consistently with the principles of non-violence and truth. There must be continued and continuous constructive work as if swaraj was to be established today. How far this is being done in Bombay I do not know. I, therefore, advise friends in Bombay not to be hasty in asking me to come there. If Gujarat alone responds to the work put before the men and women, it would be a great thing and a large step towards swaraj.

I would, therefore, ask friends in Bombay not to build upon my coming there in the near future but I would go there with the greatest pleasure as soon as I can free myself from Gujarat and when Bombay is really ready.

After all the struggle is becoming a mass movement. Nobody's presence is therefore indispensable. What is most necessary is consolidation of the present phenomenal manifestation into dynamic energy of a purely non-violent type. That is possible. The world has had ample demonstration since the 12th of March last.

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-4-1930

153. ADVICE TO FOREIGN-CLOTH DEALERS

April 20, 1930

Gandhiji said he feared that wherever foreign-cloth boycott can be organized perfectly non-violently, it cannot be suspended upon any undertaking save that of refraining from selling.

This is no time for bargaining. Those who have faith in this and therefore in swaraj coming as the certain result of the present movement and who believe that it is good to stop buying foreign cloth should stop altogether and not for a certain period. But for those who have no faith and would stop selling foreign cloth in obedience to rising public opinion against it, I would make the following suggestion. Instead of asking for suspension of picketing, let them suspend selling of foreign cloth which they will resume if the movement fizzles out. If it succeeds they will find a market for their wares elsewhere. If they suffer loss and are too poor to bear it they should trust the national Government of the future to give them reasonable compensation. I would, however, warn those who would undertake to picket against using the slightest violence either directly or indirectly. That was one of the reasons why I conceived the idea of confining picketing of foreign-cloth shops and liquor shops to women but where women are not ready and men have confidence in their ability to conduct non-violent picketing, they should certainly take it up.

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-4-1930

154. THE BLACK REGIME

KARADI,
April 21, 1930

The past week has not been one of unmixed joy. It has seen disturbances in Calcutta[1] and Karachi. And now comes the sad news from Chittagong. It shows that in spite of the striking demonstration of non-violence all over the country, there is still violence in the air and cities are the storehouses of it. Calcutta and Karachi can be distinguished from Chittagong. The first two appear to have been mad outbursts of the moment. Chittagong seems to be a deliberate planning. Whatever they were, they are most regrettable and interfere with the growth of the movement which is otherwise shaping itself marvellously well and gaining fresh momentum from day to day. I can only appeal to those who believe in violence not to disturb the free flow of the non-violent demonstration. Whether they listen or not, this movement will go on. Violence is bound to impede the progress tow-ards independence. I am unable to demonstrate how it will impede. Those who survive the struggle will know how.

Meanwhile satyagrahis must continue their activity with redoubled vigour. We must deal with the double-edged violence ranged against us. For me popular violence is as much an obstruction in our path as the Government violence. Indeed I can combat the Government violence more successfully than the popular. For one thing, in combating the latter, I should not have the same support as in the former. Then again the motive in the latter being as honourable as that of the satyagrahis, the method to be employed has to be somewhat different from that employed in regard to the Government violence.

I hope that as in Karachi, so in Calcutta and Chittagong, there were satyagrahis attempting to check mob violence. Brave young Dattatreya Mane who is said to have known nothing of satyagraha and being an athlete had merely gone to assist in keeping order, received a fatal bullet wound. Meghraj Revachand, 18 years old, has also succumbed to a bullet wound. Thus did seven men, including

[1] There had been disturbances in Calcutta during the hartal observed on April 19 following the arrests of Jawaharlal Nehru and J. M. Sen Gupta.

Jairamdas,receive bullet wounds. Jairamdas's injury gave me unmixed joy. It is the injury to leaders that would bring relief. The law of sacrifice is uniform throughout the world. To be effective it demands the sacrifice of the bravest and the most spotless. And Jairamdas is of the bravest and the cleanest. I therefore could not help wiring when I heard of Jairamdas's wound that a wound in the thigh was better than prison and wound in the heart better still.[1]

Whilst therefore I tender my sympathy to the parents of the two brave lads who lost their lives, my inmost desire is to congratulate them for the finished sacrifices of their sons, if they would accept my congratulations. A warrior's death is never a matter for sorrow, still less that of a satyagrahi warrior. One of the lessons that a nation yearning for freedom needs to learn is to shed several fears; fear of losing title, wealth, position, fear of imprisonment, of bodily injury and lastly death.

Accounts from all over India tell the same tale of growing fearlessness. The Bihar letter published elsewhere makes soul stirring reading.

One thing we must get rid of quickly. Lawless physical violence must be stopped even if it is to be through forcing the Government to use its guns. And this can be done non-violently.

I give only one out of several samples of indecent assaults by the police at Viramgam:

STATEMENT OF ANIRUDDHA VYAS, A STUDENT OF DAKSHINAMURTI VIDYARTHI BHAVAN VOLUNTEER NO. 35/3:

> I with a number of my companions got down from the 6.30 evening Mail with bags of salt at the Viramgam railway station, when from 8 to 10 policemen surrounded us. To save the salt from being seized I sat down with the bag of salt on the ground, clinging to it with all my might.
>
> All efforts of the police to make me get up having failed, one of them thrust apart my legs and squeezed my private parts with his hands so as to compel me to get up. But the weight of my body and the push and the pull of the surrounding police disengaged the parts and I fell down. I was then pulled up again. But I bent double and held the salt bag tight under my crossed arms. A policeman thereupon straightened my back by poking it with his foot which caused me intense pain. Then two policemen gave a violent jerk, twisted my fingers as they liked and loosened my arms and wrested the bag from me. I was

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to N. R. Malkani", 18-4-1930.

then let go, one officer taking my name and number.

Mahadev Desai tells me that these assaults have stopped for the time being. But there is no knowing that they have stopped for ever and there certainly is not the slightest ground for supposing that they will not occur in other parts of Gujarat or of other provinces. In Broach the things are growing from bad to worse. A bullet wound is any day better than these barbarous, unnecessary, unprovoked assaults. The person of a citizen must be held inviolate. It can only be touched to arrest or to prevent violence, never in the manner being done now. It is a prostitution even of the salt laws to use them against civil resisters. The provisions were designed to deal (even then unjustly as I hold) with surreptitious breaches of its new provisions, never to deal with masses of men openly defying them. If the Government do not stop this brutal violation of the body, they will find the satyagrahis presently compelling them to use the guns against them. I do not want this to happen. But if the Government will have it, I should have no hesitation whatsoever in giving them the opportunity. They must not physically interfere with the bands of civil resisters manufacturing or vending salt, they may arrest every man, woman and child if they wish. If they will neither arrest, nor declare salt free, they will find people marching to be shot rather than be tortured.

It is true that the barbarous interference with the body and the indecent assaults are a heritage of the past. This Government has by its tacit approval given it a currency which it never had before.

As I am writing these notes two volunteers have brought me salt said to have been poisoned. Not only do the authorities wantonly destroy salt and salt pans now, they are said to poison the sources of salt manufacture. If the report is true, the blackness of the regime becomes blacker still. And all this against a people who without hurting anybody are seeking to gain freedom through self-suffering!

Young India, 24-4-1930

155. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 21, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

I hate writing letters in pencil. But I am writing this whilst I am waiting at the prayer ground for the others to come. It is just nearing 4.20.

You must speak to Premabai with all the love you can command and she will listen. She is a capable girl and a good girl. She wants to do the best she can. She is aware of her shortcomings. All she needs is gentle helping. I am writing to her too.

How is Reginald getting on now?

I am[1] moving from place to place and concentrating on spinning. Boycott of foreign cloth will be a trap without spinning. And *takli* is the only thing to make spinning universal. You will therefore do there whatever is possible to manufacture more khadi there.

I am sending you a cutting regarding yourself.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

The ink portion was written after prayer.

From the original: C.W. 5393. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9627

[1] Up to here the letter is in pencil.

156. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Monday Night [*April 21, 1930*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

It is 11.15 p.m. now. I will not, therefore, write much. There is a great rush of work these days.

The women who have remained there are also helping the movement. I have often explained that the Ashram activities and this movement are not unconnected with each other. For anyone who has given up fear of jail, it is the same whether they are in jail or at home. We should avail ourselves of whatever opportunities of service we get unsught. If women's help is sought for picketing, all the women may of course come forward. When nobody else remains to carry on the work and fear rules all, let the Ashram women come out and lay down their lives to the last of them. Just now, many many women are coming forward for picketing, you should do whatever work falls to your lot.

I have told Kusum that the inmates of the Ashram cannot be divided into two classes. If she joins as from the Ashram, she must sign the pledge. If she does not sign the pledge and yet wishes to remain in the Ashram, she can observe the other rules and remain there. Hearing this, on the very day on which the women came here she went to consult her mother. I do no know what happened after that.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8746. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] The date is from *Bhapuna Patro — 6: G.S. Gangabehnne.*

157. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

KARADI,
Midnight, Monday, April 21, 1930

CHI. MAHADEV,

Pyarelal has arrived. Your statement was not found useful, you will see why when you read my article. What is happening in Broach and what has happened in Bihar have overshadowed the incidents in Dholera and Viramgam. Now that the repression at these places has stopped, why rake up the matter? What little you may have mentioned in your weekly account may remain. A part of your statement was, I felt, fit to be dropped, but I have no time just now to explain why. I wrote the whole day, after which I went to the Navsari hospital to see someone who had been seriously injured while cutting toddy-palms and has now only a few breaths left. After my return from there, I have been at the spinning *yajna* and dictating this. I am sending Pyarelal to Broach. You also seem to have sent someone there. To err on the safe side, I am sending Pyarelal. The services of Chhotelal, who was sent there yesterday, will mainly be utilized for khadi propaganda work. I have explained this to Kaka. However, Chhotelal is known for his ability to attend to a number of jobs at the same time and you may take from him any work you wish to. I have been thinking how to give the last instructions. I am not sure, but I may be able to finalize them in a day or two. Tomorrow afternoon I shall reach Surat and be there till the evening, when I will return.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am sending all the affidavits. The bundle of papers for *Young India* has been sent direct. I have included in my article the translation of one affidavit. Pyarelal's translations are incomplete and faulty I have dropped the idea of sending Pyarelal.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 16824

158. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

NAVSARI,
April 21, 1930

Chittagong news makes sad reading. It shows that there is a large or small body of men in Bengal who do not believe in non-violence whether as a policy or as a creed. That there were such people all over India I knew but I had hoped that they would give non-violence a chance. If Chittagong is an indication and not an isolated act, as I believe Calcutta and Karachi acts to be, it is a serious affair. But, however serious the situation becomes, there can be no suspension of the fight. There can be no retracing. I observe that the Viceroy has answered the Chittagong disturbance with the exercise of his extra-ordinary powers. That was only to be expected. So long as the British people are determined to impose their rule upon unwilling people, so long must they rule in reality without law. We in India easily delude ourselves into the belief that we have duly constituted legislatures. Presently there will be no one remaining under any such delusion. Civil resisters must, therefore, fight an unequal struggle—the violence of the Government and the violence of those among us who have no faith in non-violence. Satyagrahis, if they are true to their creed, will either come out victorious or will be ground to atoms between the two mills.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-4-1930

159. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

April 22, 1930

BHAI SATIS BABU,

I am not getting from anywhere a true account of what is happening in Bengal. I do not even know how your organization[1] is working. Instruct someone to keep me posted with correct information.

How is your health?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

After writing this I saw the telegram regarding the fast. I have wired and am awaiting the reply.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1617

[1] Presumably, the Ashram at Sodepur

160. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

April 22, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

There has been no letter from you for several days. I have no idea how long I shall be allowed to remain free. But you must keep writing to me. After I am arrested we shall see.

How is your health now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1666

161. SPEECH TO HEADMEN, SURAT

April 22, 1930

Remember that you have pledged your services in the cause of the country. Your duty now is to work whole-heartedly for the swaraj "Government".

If you have resigned your jobs unwillingly I consider that you are doing the greatest disservice to your country. If you have faith in yourselves and, therefore, in swaraj, then alone I invite you to join this fight.

Do not purchase Government salt. Do not wear foreign clothes and shun liquor. You are taking a step towards swaraj.

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-4-1930

162. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 22, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

What you write about Sharja[1] is correct.

The accompanying letter[2] is for Gangabehn. Read it and give it to her. I have no time to write more. It will be 11.30 p.m. in a few seconds.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8103. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

163. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TRIKAMDAS

10 p. m., April 23, 1930

BHAISHRI PURUSHOTTAM,

I was glad to have your letter, for which thanks. We need as many lawyers as we can get. Bhai Munshi has shown the way to all.[3]

May God give you strength.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

SJT. PURUSHOTTAM TRIKAMDAS
29 D DONGONSI ROAD
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Purushottamdas Trikamdas Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Sharja Apte wanted to live independently of her husband and do some work.

[2] No letter of this date to Gangabehn Vaidya is available. It is likely the reference is to the letter of April 21.

[3] *Ibid.*

164. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

April 23, 1930

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I have your letter. After all of you are arrested, I will write for *Young India* and *Navajivan* if I am not arrested by then. There is some matter even today on which I must write in *Navajivan.* I will sit down and write out something. Ramnarayan has expressed a desire to go there and I have also given my consent. The movement is certainly gathering momentum. If we can keep up the present tempo, I am confident that we shall be able to gain our object in quite a short time.

I wrote this yesterday and was then called away. I got your wire at Navsari. I got your letter, too. I have used that letter itself and written something for *Hindi Navajivan.*[1] If I can write something for the next issue of *Young India*, I will do so. Take care of your health.

Perhaps by next week I shall have been arrested.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 6072. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

[1] *Vide* "Salaaming or Flogging?", 24-4-1930.

165. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

KARADI,
April 23, 1930

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Your letter. What purpose can be served by calling you here? I know the conditions in Delhi well enough. Do as much as you can. Increase the production of khadi in and around Delhi if possible. Make bamboo *taklis,* teach others to make them and organize collection of yarn. Meet Nair and do whatever is possible. I see no harm in making the Ashram permanent. But if you have faith in our pledge, you may be sure that the Ashram will automatically become permanent because this struggle is going to be decisive and the Ashram is bound to exist till the establishment of swaraj. And after attaining swaraj all the ashrams will, as a matter of course, become a permanent feature. It is very good that Mother and others have taken to khaddar. How is your health?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2381

166. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 23, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

Herewith is a cheque, along with its particulars. Send the acknowledgment to Allahabad.

It is 10 p.m. just now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8104. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

167. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

April 23, 1930

BHAISHRI VITHALDAS JERAJANI,

There have been, from time to time, several changes in the khadi propaganda movement and consequently in your work. In my view, those changes were necessary in the interest of the khadi movement and of *Daridranarayana* though, at the time those changes were made, they did not immediately appeal to reason. Our experience so far has been that ultimately all those changes stood the test of reason too, and were justified by the results. The change which I am now suggesting may, I think, seem much more risky than the earlier changes. However, I believe that the change is as essential in the interest of khadi as it may seem dangerous to khadi lovers on a superficial view. Anyone who has properly understood the rationale of boycott of foreign cloth will immediately see the necessity for this change. We do not have in stock enough khadi to meet the present demand. The demand is daily increasing and we are not in a position to produce sufficient khadi to meet it. Hence, if we do not somehow increase our capacity to produce khadi, the supply of khadi would be inadequate. It can be proved with mathematical certainty that, if that happens, the boycott of foreign cloth will fail. The new suggestion which I, therefore, wish to make is as under:

As quickly as feasible, that is, immediately in a day or two, you should inform the Bombay public that no one who wishes to buy khadi will get it for money but that it will be sold only against

hand-spun yarn. This is the only way to make it clear to people that khadi is not a mere commodity, like foreign cloth, which can be bought for money, but that it is a symbol of the nation's strength and aspiration. According to the science of khadi, as long as cotton is available there can be no scarcity of khadi. However, this requires that the people should be imbued with a zeal for spinning. Khadi will have no meaning if, at this critical time and when we are about to win swaraj, we cannot make the zeal for spinning universal. Moreover, it is not possible for us at short notice to produce ten million pounds of khadi. Our duty, therefore, is straight and simple. If the people have real love for khadi, they ought to spin. My suggestion is not in fact as extreme as it may appear on a superficial view, since the prospective buyer of khadi is required to produce yarn not spun by himself but by any person. Hence a resident of Bombay may procure hand-spun yarn in any way he chooses. He may spin it himself or get it spun by members of his family or his poor neighbours or by the residents of any village in India. The Bombay man will have to take some trouble, of course. If he does not take even that much of trouble and has in consequence to go without khadi, it would be best for himself, for others and for the cause of khadi that he should go without it. You may think and decide for yourself what the quality of the yarn should be and what articles can still be sold for cash. I hope that the residents of Bombay, who have been making a great contribution to the present struggle, will understand this simple suggestion and take the little trouble they are being asked to, for obtaining the khadi they require.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9772

168. HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

As so much misrepresentation is being made about my attitude on the communal question, without entering into any argument I would state my position as clearly as my knowledge of the language would enable me to do.

1.The views that I have held for the last 40 years remain unchanged.

2.I hold that there is no swaraj without communal unity as without several other things I have repeatedly mentioned.

3.The present campaign is not designed to establish independence but to arm the people with the power to do so.

4.When the power has been generated and the time has come for the establishment of independence, Mussalmans and all other minorities will have to be placated. If they are not, there must inevitably be civil war. But I live in the hope that if we succeed in generating the power, our differences and distrust will vanish. These are due to our weakness. When we have the power from within we shall shed our weakness.

5.The Nehru Constitution having lapsed the communal solution has naturally lapsed. The Lahore Congress resolution mentionsin so many words that the communal solution not having given satisfaction either to the Sikhs or the Mussalmans the question might have to be reconsidered so as to give satisfaction to all the parties concerned.

6. The only non-violent solution I know is for the Hindus to let the minority communities take what they like. I would not hesitate to let the minorities govern the country. This is no academic belief. The solution is attended with no risk. For under a free government the real power will be held by the people. That demonstration is being given now. The mightiest government will be rendered absolutely impotent if the people realizing their power use it in a disciplined manner and for the common good. In Gujarat the people are within reach of success if the strength and cohesion they are showing today are genuine and not derived from blind faith. It must be remembered that only an infinitesimal proportion of the people can hold positions of responsibility and power in a country's government. Experience all the world over shows that the real power and wealth are possessed by people outside the group that hold the reins of Government. We in

India hanker after power, because our people are ignorant and will be exploited. The power wielded today is corrupt to the core. Ind-epen-dence achieved through non-violent power must by its very nature reduce corruption to a minimum. It is thus my practical wisdom which has suggested the solutions. The fact is that we are today unable to visualize anything contrary to our experience present or inherited. Yet what can be clearer than that an independent India must be something quite outside our present experience? It is of course open to the critic to say that both non-violence and inde-pendent India achieved through it exist only in my imagination. My retort then is that, God willing, I shall not be found surviving in an India that remains slave in spite of this struggle or under so-called independence achieved through violent means. I admit that under an independence violently achieved, minorities have to take care of the-mselves. But this, thanks to the existing Government, they do not need much exertion to do. For the Government exists by playing one community against the other or others. The difficulty of my critics arises from their ignoring or doubting my creed. I remain unmoved, because they won't be able long to ignore or doubt my creed.

7. My so-called inconsistencies are no inconsistencies to those who understand, be it only intellectually, the implications of non-violence.

8. There can be nothing to suspect in resisting the salt tax or the drink and drug devil or the inroads of foreign cloth through khadi. I therefore do not hesitate to invite all to take their due share in the campaign. Those who will not, simply deny to themselves the opp-ortunity of gaining the power of resistance to evil under every con-ceivable circumstance.

9. I have embarked upon civil disobedience without any reservation save that of non-violence for the simple and peremptory reason that non-violence itself was in danger of being worsted in the fight. I could not possibly contemplate such a calamity with equanimity. I saw at once that if non-violence was a potent force, it must be able to make its way even through violence and finally supersede it.

Young India, 24-4-1930

169. MASS ACTION

A friend having seen the wonderful manifestation of mass action sends the following extracts from an aritcle by Sir Martin Conway in *Commerce and Finance:*[1]

> What any generation can accomplish in faith and growth is little compared with what has been accomplished for them by the generations that have gone before. This is evident enough; in the case of material possessions and the great treasure of the world's art, but it is still more true for the world's ideals. It is those that are the most precious of all its belongings, and for the preservation of these it has, not individuals, however great, but crowds to thank. For let me declare again that *it is in crowds that ideals reside.* It is they that incorporate them and they that *transmit them.* An individual may invent an ideal, but unless he can get it incorporated in a crowd it is barren of effect, and dies with him. Rail against the crowd as we may for its intolerance, its pride, its fickleness, its lack of measure and all the other shortcomings of which we are only too easily aware, it yet remains true that *upon crowds our spiritual life depends,* that from them we draw our enthusiasms, and to them we owe those flames of love and passion and glory which make the life of each individual the splendid opportunity that it is.
>
> A crowd that has never come physically together gains greatly in vigour if it can be in whole or even in part embodied. If it can be seen it will bring to bear on outsiders that attractiveness which every embodied crowd possesses. If it can see itself it will grow hot. . . .
>
> An even more rudimentary application of the principle of crowd-attractiveness is the organization of processions. The longer they can be made the more useful they are, and the more they attract and impose upon the outside. . . . An English movement dates its success from the day when it can fill the Albert Hall with a shouting throng; and it is an obvious fact that one successful, enthusiastic Albert Hall gathering is worth more for purposes of propaganda than a score of smaller gatherings in unimportant halls and chapels.

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

The use at the present moment of this article consists in the help it gives one in measuring the progress of non-violence. An idea whether good or bad can be said to have gained ground only when it strikes the imagination of masses of men. Whatever crowds do is not necessarily always good. Nor is it true to say, as some have said, that non-violence is necessarily confined to individuals. On the contrary the test of the sincerity of one's belief in non-violence lies in the measure of its acceptance by masses of men. If non-violence could not affect masses of mankind, it is a waste of effort for individuals to cultivate it. I hold it to be the greatest gift of God. And all God's gifts are the common heritage of His creation and not a monopoly of cloistered monks or nuns. They may specialize in non-violence, they may teach us its wonderful effects, but if their discoveries and their claims are sound they must be adaptable by masses. If truth be not a monopoly of the few why should non-violence, its counterpart, be otherwise? My reverent study of the scriptures of the world has led me to the belief that all register emphatic and unequivocal testimony in favour of non-violence being practised by all not merely singly but collectively as well. In all humility I have often felt that having no axes to grind and having by nature a detached mind, I give a truer interpretation of the Hindu, Christian, Islamic or other scriptures. For this humble claim I anticipate the forgiveness of Sanatanists, Christians and Mussalmans.

Young India, 24-4-1930

170. NECESSITY OF PURITY IN ACCOUNT-KEEPING

Simple people are in pure faith pouring in their copper, silver and paper coins into the bowls of volunteers who sell salt or otherwise collect money. No unauthorized volunteers should make collections or sell salt at fancy prices. Accounts should be accurately kept and frequently published. Books should be weekly examined by auditors. It will be well if monied men of proved honesty were to constitute themselves treasurers to take charge of and collect funds and work in full co-operation with Congress volunteers. Active workers are being quickly picked up and it may be difficult before long for local organizations to hold funds and keep proper accounts. As it is, the public have everywhere taken over the financing of the movement. Let it be done responsibly and methodically.

Young India, 24-4-1930

171. LIQUOR PICKETING

A Parsi correspondent writes as follows:[1]

> If there is negligible profit in liquor trade, the Parsis will leave it at once and join you gladly in all your undertakings. Can you find out any means and ways of making this profit of liquor shops negligible? It is a fact that these shop-keepers make a good profit by (a) short sale (b) adulteration, and keep the staff of the Excise Dept. well in hand by paying them their dues.
>
> The only suggestion I can think of for stopping this middleman's profit is to insist on Government to first introduce the 'bottle system', as is introduced in Indore and Gwalior States. . . .
>
> The second point is that the liquor now distilled in Nasik is quite unfit for human consumption. . . . They should distil liquor of one uniform strength (say 35^0 to 45^0) and bottle it at Nasik and then distribute it for sale.
>
> The third point I have to suggest is that it is rather difficult to introduce peaceful picketing of liquor shops. Why not open magic lantern shows or cinema shows in every big town and a few big villages and show such pictures to the public pointing out the harm and disadvantages of liquor? . . . Such temperance movements will have better effect. Government cannot stop such

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

shows and this will lead to temperance. . . .

This is a sincere letter. It is a frank admission that if the Parsis can be persuaded to give up the drink traffic, the solution of the drink problem, at least up to Bombay if not throughout India, becomes simple. But the remedy suggested by the correspondent will not answer the purpose. No matter what is done the traffic all the world over bears an immoral taint. The only true remedy is therefore prohibition. Even as thieving cannot be regulated save by prohibition so may drink traffic not be regulated save by prohibition.

There is no doubt danger of violence in picketing. Hence my appeal to the sisters of India to take charge of it. If only the educated few will shed their fear and disbelief the other sisters are sure to follow.

And as to the Parsi liquor dealers, surely it is not beyond the capacity of Parsi philanthropists to take them in hand and find for them a suitable employment. Parsi leaders can create an atmosphere against the traffic and thus make picketing easy. Anyway I should be surprised if during this wave of self-purification the traffic is not swept away. It needs but a little sustained effort on the part of the sisters. In six canteens of Ahmedabad frequented by the labouring population, thanks to the quiet picketing done by the Labour Union, the traffic has fallen to 19 per cent. Though I have not accurate figures as yet, the traffic in the area covered by Mithubai's activity has also fallen considerably. And I know that in both these places picketing has been absolutely non-violent. Thousands in Surat are said to have voluntarily come forward to forswear drink.

The mention of Mithubai Petit reminds me of two other Parsis who are working in the same field. Dhanjishah known as Darbari Sadhu or Bhikshu or Sannyasi and who has now gone to jail under the Salt Act has been for years working in the village where I am writing these notes. It was partly in his honour that I decided to shift from Dandi to Karadi. The other is Baheram Mehta, a non-co-operating graduate. He was picked up by the police in Olpad, because he was respected and loved by the people. I need not mention the four grand-daughters of the G.O.M. who have been for years unas-sumingly serving the cause with a single-mindedness worthy of their noble-hearted grandfather. I can name several other Parsis who are also selflessly helping the cause. I have therefore every hope that the Parsi liquor dealers will themselves not repel the appeal of their sisters. The liquor traffic like the salt tax is doomed.

Young India, 24-4-1930

172. HOW TO DO THE PICKETING

1.At least ten women are required for picketing a liquor or foreign-cloth shop. They must choose a leader from among themselves.

2.They should all first go in a deputation to the dealer and appeal to him to desist from carrying on the traffic and present him with leaflets setting forth facts and figures regarding drink or foreign cloth as the case may be. Needless to say the leaflets should be in the language understood by the dealer.

3.If the dealer refuses to suspend traffic, the volunteers should guard the shop leaving the passage free and make a personal appeal to the would-be purchasers.

4.The volunteers should carry banners or light boards bearing warnings in bold letters against buying foreign cloth or indulging in intoxicating drinks, as the case may be.

5.Volunteers should be as far as possible in uniforms.

6.Volunteers should at frequent intervals sing suitable *bhajans* bearing on the subject.

7.Volunteers should prevent compulsion or interference by men.

8.On no account should vulgarity, abuse, threat or unbecoming language be used.

9.The appeal must always be to the head and the heart, never to fear of force.

10.Men should on no account congregate near the place of picketing nor block the traffic. But they should carry on propaganda generally through the area against foreign cloth and drink. They should help and organize processions of women to parade through the area carrying the message of temperance and khadi and the necessity of boycott of drink and foreign cloth.

11.There should be at the back of these picketing units a network of organization for spreading the message of the *takli* and the charkha and thinking out new leaflets and new lines of propaganda.

12.There should be an absolutely accurate and systematic account of all receipts and expenditure. This should be periodically audited. This again should be done by men under the supervision of women. The whole scheme presupposes on the part of men a genuine respect for women and sincere desire for their rise.

Young India, 24-4-1930

173. OUR MILLS AND FOREIGN-CLOTH BOYCOTT

Foreign-cloth boycott is coming, if we will do our duty and tax ourselves to understand its purpose and the conditions of success. I must not at present adduce reasons for the propositions set forth below. They have been often argued in these columns. I am having the figures prepared for reproduction. But for the present I give my conclusions for those who are interested in them. They are arrived at dispassionately and after due consideration of every factor and every argument for and against.

1.It is impossible for the indigenous mills to cope with the deficiency to be created by a complete boycott within the time we expect it to come to fruition.

2.All the mills situated in India are not swadeshi; some of them are as foreign as the foreign Government inasmuch as they drain the wealth of the country away from it. They are close preserves for Europeans only employing Indian labour.

3.The majority of swadeshi mills will not work for the national benefit only or even predominantly.

4.Even when they will, they can be crushed by the Government in a variety of ways.

5.The majority will not resist the temptation to exploit the present favourable times.

6.Many mills use foreign yarn for weaving, especially for borders.

7.We can only use them by not counting upon them to replace the cloth boycotted and by putting them upon their own resources and honour.

8.This last we can do only if we can replace the cloth boycotted through cloth not manufactured in our mills. This can only be khadi.

9.An unlimited quantity of khadi can be manufactured without the slightest difficulty inside of one month if the spirit of khadi and the will to manufacture it can be created.

10.Skilled weavers are to be found all over India. The only problem therefore is that of spinning.

11.Spinning and the antecedent processes can be learnt inside of one week by those who have the will and the industry.

12.India produces more than enough cotton for all her requirements.

13. Therefore all those who work for boycott of foreign cloth should concentrate on khadi production through spinning. This does not mean boycott of swadeshi mill-cloth but it means an intelligent reco-gnition of the fact that the mills do not need any effort for selling their cloth. The boycott movement sufficiently helps them by removing foreign cloth which competes with them and stifles them as it had suppressed the spinning-wheel. To do more for the mills than procure boycott of foreign cloth will be to harm khadi.

Mill-owners can, if they will, help boycott through khadi by publishing the list of those mills which are owned, controlled and managed by Indians, which use no foreign yarn at all in weaving, and which will not manufacture cloth corresponding to khadi, will not use the name khadi or the wheel on their labels and will not inflate prices.

I am convinced that those who merely carry on boycott propaganda without insisting on boycotters contributing towards khadi production by themselves spinning or procuring spinners and who talk loosely of swadeshi, retard the boycott movement if they do not actually harm it. Boycotters must not stray away from their path even though for the moment they are unable to satisfy the demand for khadi. Let them know that that very moment is the one most propitious for khadi production. Necessity is the mother of invention. It knows no law, for it invents new laws. They need not worry if people refuse to give up foreign cloth if they are also called upon to spin. This restraint will truly push forward the boycott movement. It is no empty formula. Just as we want swaraj not to punish Englishmen but because we cannot live without it, so also we need boycott of foreign cloth not to punish Englishmen but to bring work and therefore food through the wheel to the starving millions.

Young India, 24-4-1930

174. BOYCOTT THROUGH TAKLI

Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, having been for years interested in co-operative banking and being a khadi expert in Andhra, may be presumed to know his figures. He makes the calculation that five million charkhas working for five hours daily can spin enough yarn to replace the whole of foreign cloth to be boycotted. He thinks that there are already that number of wheels lying in India's homes. But we will take some time to unearth these wheels and make them work. New wheels we cannot make fast enough to meet the demand that a spinning atmosphere will create. The wheel will again require some capital, be it ever so little. When we think of crores of people, even the capital of one rupee per head mounts up to crores. We want to work with as little capital as possible. We want to teach spinning to the largest number available as quickly as possible. This can be done only through the *takli.* If the average output of a wheel be 300 yards per hour, that of the *takli* will be 100. Therefore to manufacture the amount of yarn that five million wheels will spin, we require *taklis* to work. And if the workers would spin not five but only fifteen million one hour, we need seventy-five million *taklis* to work. Seventy-five million is one fourth the total population of India.

Our disbelief makes our heads turn giddy to think of eight crores of people working for one hour per day for the nation. But if there be true national consciousness there is nothing extraordinary about one in every four inhabitants of India giving one hour per day as the price of deliverance.

Be that as it may, let workers take up the *takli* in faith. Let them not think of the steel *takli* which was invented by Maganlal Gandhi for the city people. If there was an immediate demand for eight crores of steel *taklis,* the cost would amount to a respectable sum, and the time required to manufacture so many would also be fairly long. We must therefore dismiss the steel *takli* from our minds. *Taklis* can be made from split bamboos and broken tiles or bad coins the size or weight of a half-anna piece. A pointed sharp knife is the only tool absolutely necessary. The point is required to bore a hole. Here are full instructions:

HOW TO MAKE A TAKLI

1.Take a broken Mangalore tile or slate or the like and make

out of it a disk the size of a pice. This can be done by gently breaking the edges and rounding them on a rough surface.

2.Punch a straight hole in it, make it slightly larger on one side.

3.Take a well-dried bamboo splinter seven inches in length. Smooth it round with a knife to the thickness of a pencil. Sharpen it from one end so as to taper it to a point the thickness of a knitting needle. Half an inch from the tapering end, make a little notch to hold the thread.

4.Insert the length so made into the side of the disk with larger circumference to the hole so as to leave half an inch at the thick end.

5.Test the *takli* by revolving it on a flat surface. If it spins like a top it is true. If it does not, you know that either the hole is not straight or is not in the centre of the disk or the tapering of the splinter is not even. It is easy to detect the error and to correct it.

The highest output of the *takli* after a week's practice has been found to be 110 yards per hour. And it takes about half an hour to make such a *takli.*

This *takli*-making is a pleasant pastime. Spinning is a positive recreation. It is the solace of the perturbed heart and a mute companion. The wheel sings to you and may therefore distract your attention. The *takli* is eloquent in its very muteness, and in that way is perhaps a fitter representative of the dumb millions. Try it and you will experience the same joy that many of us do. In any case he or she who spins adds to the wealth of the country and hastens the boycott movement and thus brings swaraj nearer.

Young India, 24-4-1930

175. FOREIGN-CLOTH DEALERS

I have given my opinion to the Press representatives on the question of foreign-cloth boycott. The nervousness of the dealers is a symptom of want of faith in the country. Why do they want terms and time if they are sure that swaraj is coming in the near future? Why will they not come in unconditionally and make it a greater certainty? All this uncertainty instead of strengthening the swaraj atmosphere, weakens it and fills peoples' minds with doubts. This movement is largely based on faith. There is nothing organically wrong with us to make us unfit for swaraj. It is our hallucination that makes us—a nation of three hundred millions—feel helpless and diffident. Let not the foreign-cloth merchants strengthen the hallucination by indefinite statements. Let them rid themselves of it and help others to do likewise. If they cannot do so, let them not ask for terms but bravely say that they will not stop their foreign-cloth trade.

To the weak and the unbelieving I make a tangible suggestion. Let them cancel all unexecuted orders. If swaraj is not attained and if they want to revert to their old occupation, no power can prevent them. Let them lock up their existing stock unless they can sell it outside India and let those who are poor rely upon the swaraj Government giving them such compensation as may be necessary. But they should make an inventory of their stock and have it certified by authorized volunteers. The wealthy merchants may not expect any compensation. The loss they may suffer will be part penance for the sin committed against the nation. Lastly, though the last is a bad suggestion, if they have no faith in the country getting swaraj, let them keep their stock and begin selling it when the popular movement has died of inanition or been suppressed by force. God forbid however that the present enthusiasm is a mere bubble or that it is capable of suppression under the severest repression. I hope therefore that whatever the result of the movement, the foreign-cloth dealers will see clearly that the terms suggested by them are harmful to the cause and that there is ample protection for them without the terms. Let them be patriotic enough to rise to the occasion and render picketing unnecessary by stopping the sale of foreign cloth of their own motion.

Young India, 24-4-1930

176. SALAAMING OR FLOGGING?

Shri Haribhau Upadhyaya writes from Ajmer:[1]

If what Shri Haribhau says is true there is plenty of scope for satyagraha in the jail. Normally it is proper for a prisoner to salaam the jailor, but if a satyagrahi does not salaam he should not be forced. If therefore force is used against someone for not salaaming it may become the duty of others also to refuse to salaam.

It is surprising that the concessions provided in several other jails to satyagrahis have been denied to satyagrahis in this jail. In my opinion of course satyagrahi prisoners should be treated the same as other prisoners. But if a satyagrahi is treated in a particular way all other satyagrahis should be similarly treated. So far as the Congress is concerned there is no difference between Pathikji or Nrisinhdasji and the President. But how can one expect justice and fair play from this Government?

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 24-4-1930

[1] The letter is not translated. The correspondent had said that a satyagrahi, Baba Nrisinhdas, had been placed in solitary confinement for refusing to salaam the jail officials and might even be flogged.

177. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

KARADI,
April 24, 1930

I broke the news of Mr. Prakasam's arrest and Dr. Pattabhi's sentence.

Yes, all prominent men are being taken away and the number is increasing.

All of you will remain free outside.

Gandhiji added after a while bursting into laughter once again, referring to Press reporters in general. I pointed out that the Government did not appear intent on touching him at present and therefore he would also be free.

Yes, I am also a journalist. We all journalists will be free.

The conversation turned to the contemplated "No Tax" campaign in Raas. Gandhiji was of the opinion that he must not come in their way if the people were ready and confident about success. He declared:

Of course, they have thought of starting after informing me and I gave my permission but they must be able to conduct the campaign themselves. If they are prepared let them do it.

The Hindu, 25-4-1930

178. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

11 p.m., April 24, 1930

MY DEAR REYNOLDS,

Just one line.

How will you fare about *Young India* now that Mahadev is off ? I hope you are well both in mind and body.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 4535. Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

179. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

April 24, 1930

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have received your two letters. Kevalram Bhimji has gone there. He is staying at the Ashram. He is an absolutely pure man. He is honest and frank. He gave up his business and came here. His wife came too. I have now sent him back. He can be used for the accounts. If he has not already met you, please trace him. His address can certainly be ascertained from the Zandu Pharmacy. I shall be at Bardoli on Sunday. Let Nagarajan come there, I shall reach Bardoli in the morning and leave in the evening.

Mahadev had become too active.[1] How could they fail to arrest him? Now he will get some rest.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

When you see Jamnalal,[2] tell him I know that he and others will come out better qualified.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Mahadev Desai was arrested on April 24 at Ahmedabad.

[2] Jamnalal Bajaj had been sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment.

180. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[After *April 24, 1930*][1]

I have your letter only just now with the post that brings me the news about Mahadev.

Yes, you may take up the khadi work with Chhotelal. Ask Balkoba to write to me. He must take milk and fruit.

I am conceiving the last move[2] that must compel decisive action. But it is all in God's hands.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5385. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 5385

181. LETTER TO DOROTHY D'SEUA

CAMP KARADI,
April 25, 1930

DEAR LITTLE FRIEND,

Don't you be afraid of the doings of the processionists. They mean no harm to you whatsoever and if you believe in God why should you fear anything or anybody. However I shall do whatever may be necessary.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MISS DOROTHY D'SEUA

NO. 47 GOUGH ROAD

AGRA (U. P.)

From a photostat: G.N. 1369

[1] The "news about Mahadev" presumably refers to his arrest on April 24 at Ahmedabad.

[2] The reference presumably is to the proposed raid on Dharasana Salt Depot; *vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 4-5-1930.

182. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

April 25, 1930

MY DEAR WHITE BEARD,

Here is Manibehn also coming to you. This accession must delight your heart and Raojibhai and Co.'s. Let her be used unsparingly to wake up the women of Kheda.

Hamida[1] is working wonders in Olpad. She is a chip of the old block. God bless her.

Love.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 9571

183. LETTER TO KAZI NIZAMUDDIN AHMED

CAMP KARADI,
April 25, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter giving me full information about the progress of the campaign in Meerut. I hope all the prisoners are doing well. Please keep me informed from time to time.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

KAZI NIZAMUDDIN AHMED

PRESIDENT

DIST. CONGRESS COMMITTEE

MEERUT

From a photostat: G.N. 10855

[1] Grand-daughter of Abbas Tyabji

184. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

April 25, 1930

CHI. MAHADEV,

Of course you have my blessings. Though I see that you had no choice but to get on the lorry, in my view you did commit an error. I am pointing it out in fact for the benefit of others, but let my criticism be for your benefit too. There was no need to forfeit the vehicle. I had thought that you would devise a method of carrying the salt by stages as they used to do in carrying Ganga water, and had very much liked the idea. Suppose that we have a camp of twenty-five men at every five miles or so. A batch of twenty-five, each man starting with five seers, would mean three maunds and five seers. The first batch would hand over the stock at the second camp and stay there. The second batch would deliver the stock at the third camp and return to its camp, after which the first batch would proceed to Dholera. This would have provided very good training and it would have been easy to protect the salt. There was nothing to lose in this arrangement. The method which you followed involved the possibility of losing the cart and the certainty of losing the lorry. Moreover, it required your hiding something, and the success of your plan depended on your ability to do so. We should, of course, have nothing to hide. Any method in which we have to hide something requires the cunning needed in the ordinary kind of war, which we ought not to practise. Moreover, for taking possession of the salt carried in a lorry, the police would be required to use much greater force. We should not needlessly compel them to do so. Hence, though your plan certainly required much courage and no less intelligence, it was not based on perfect non-violence. But in the prevailing atmosphere, I do not think you would have realized this by yourself. Who knows where I myself may be going wrong? All I can say is that I never take a single step without thinking carefully and that I get time to do that. My thinking nowadays takes the form exclusively of prayer. I do not use my reason, but look into my heart.

Swami's idea of lifting salt from Bhayander would also have involved a similar error. Dharasana is very near from where I am but I do not let anyone approach even that. When it is ultimately decided to attempt to seize the stocks there, a pilgrim party will start

for the purpose, after giving public notice of its intention.

Please do not blame yourself or feel sorry for what you have done because of my criticism. I have written this only to help you in jail to think and understand the fine and subtle aspects of non-violence and as guidance for the future to Kaka, Narahari and others. But in any case it is good that you have been arrested. You would have had no opportunity of facing bullets and on account of excessive work you would probably have fallen ill. By the time you come out, some thousands will have lost their lives. What grace of God to the few chosen ones that they will be automatically saved. Those who die and those who survive, both classes of persons should be regarded as equally blessed. We need not believe that he alone is blessed, or more so, who gets killed.

Personally I do feel, after the incidents at Peshawar and Chittagong, that there are bound to be two or more big massacres of innocent people. Or it may be that they would deliberately and firmly put the innocent behind the bars. In Karachi at any rate, only the innocent were killed or wounded. The truth is that even the Government does not know where it stands and what it wants to do. What is happ-ening is something quite new for it and for the whole world. Now take good rest. Make a *takli* of wood and spin on it as much as you can. Khadi stocks have been exhausted. Ask other prisoners also to spin.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9858

185. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 25, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

Obtain the salt for the Ashram from the Provincial Committee. Write to me if it is not available there or from any other source in Ahmedabad.

Consult Imam Saheb about selling the salt.

Where has Sharjabehn sent her daughter?

I will write to Khushalbhai. I have received no request from Orissa for women workers. If you cannot send Sonamani and others, let them remain and get more training.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Bhai Bhansali wants work. In any case he wants to be permitted to take up the night watch. Give him any work you think proper. He may do even sanitary work.

From Gujarati: C.W. 8105. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

186. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

April 25, 1930

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I got your letter. It was not necessary to send the wire. I believe that at any rate Khushalbhai will not be arrested. It would be a fine thing if he was accompanied by a batch of men. He should think about one thing. Perhaps they will stop his pension for participating in civil disobedience. Personally I think it would be good if they did so. The more injustice they do, the sooner will it end. If, however, he has not the courage to forgo the encumbrance that this pension is, he should give up the idea of civil disobedience, though I have no doubt at all that, in the present circumstances, civil disobedience has become the supreme religious duty. He should not detrain at Viramgam, but proceed further to Lakhtar or to any other place which has a camp. He may stay there as long as he feels inclined and then return home. He may afterwards offer civil disobedience when an opportunity occurs and, if circumstances arise anywhere, should even go and face bullets. In brief, he should be ready for everything. He should do this only if Devbhabhi agrees. If not, it is enough for me that all of us have his blessings. You may come to see me whenever you wish to.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9308. Courtesy: Jamnadas Gandhi

187. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

April 25, 1930

MU. KHUSHALBHAI,

The very old people are also joining this fight. Kashi's revered mother is eager to join it. Just now, the fight has taken a purely religious form. Even the most eminent persons having faith in ahimsa have joined it and are in jail. Would not both of you, on an occasion like this, make the fullest sacrifice and thereby uphold the principle of ahimsa? If you do so, the place which Tulsidas has had in our family would have been fully justified.

Respectful prostration by

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33923

188. SPEECH AT PANNAR[1]

April 25, 1930

Gandhiji asked villagers to prepare themselves to go to jail but they should remember their fight was non-violent. They should not lift their little finger against the police even if they were assaulted.

Men like Pandit Motilal and his wife, who had grown old in the service of country had plunged into the fight. Why then should they stand back, asked the Mahatma.

Gandhiji referred to the police *zulum* and cruelties practised in some quarters under the law. The police had no right to use force even against prisoners. He condemned police atrocities and said their action was indefensible. But this should not deter the maintenance of the non-violent character of the struggle.

Gandhiji next exhorted the villagers to spin and weave their own cloth. They should not depend on outside villagers for the supply of cloth.

His message to students was to spin at least a *tola* of yarn per day. Prohibition, he said, was equally important. Liquor and foreign cloth drained India of

[1] Gandhiji read out a letter from Mahadev Desai in which, describing his own arrest, he had written that young Gujarati graduates had courted arrest with him while accompanying lorries of contraband salt.

crores of rupees.

Gandhiji asked if the village Headman had resigned. A khaddar-clad villager got up and said, long ago he had done so. He asked the parents to withdraw students from the Government-aided schools and start a National school. They should have nothing to do with the British Government. The village leader announced that 500 *khajur* trees had been cut down and the village had declared social boycott of Government officials.

That is good, but you must also boycott foreign cloth vigorously.

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-4-1930

189. LETTER TO A. SUBBA RAO

April 26, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

You should not join C.D.[1] but confine yourself to carding and the spinning-wheel.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. A. SUBBA RAO,

RAZAVARAM ATREYAPURAM

Via KOTHAPETA, E. GODAVARI DIST.

From the original: C.W. 9286. Courtesy: A. Subba Rao

190. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 26, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

I think I shall be arrested in about eight or ten days.

After I know the names of the women who have been selected by Khurshedbehn and who agree to go with her, I will think about the

[1] Seeking Gandhiji's advice the addressee had written that he wanted to join the civil disobedience movement but his aged parents did not allow him to do so.

remaining. The more the women who go with Khurshedbehn the better. She is an extremely pure woman. Is Sarojinidevi of any service?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have written to Anjanadevi and told her that she should go with Ramnarayan.

From Gujarati: C.W. 8106. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

191. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 26, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

Moulvi Syed Rauf Pasha is a professor in Colombo. He is coming to see the Ashram and may stay there for a few days. Look after him and introduce him to Imam Saheb and Mirabehn.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8107. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

192. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI M. THAKKAR

April 26, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I got your letter. You certainly need not change your diet. You should continue to live on milk and fruit. I only wrote to Tarabehn and told her that if you did not get fruit at the place where it was proposed that you should go, there would be a problem. I therefore dropped the idea of sending you with her. I will certainly put you in circumstances in which you will remain in contact with an experienced woman who can teach you things. Most probably I shall go there tonight, and I will further talk with you then. Do not worry at all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6796

193. SPEECH AT AMBHETI

April 26, 1930

"Court death: serve your country" was the gist of the Mahatma's message.

He said he had visited the aged mother of Vithaldas, not to express sorrow but to congratulate her for giving her son to the cause of the country. Every mother must give her son to serve the country. Vithaldas had not really died, but lived in the memory of his country for ever. Many would have to die to liberate India.

The moment they ceased to fear death swaraj was near. They should prepare for death when fighting Government which had resorted to excesses.

He appealed to the people to continue the unfinished work of Vithaldas, by uprooting every *khajoor* tree in the village and by completely giving up drinking.

The Bombay Chronicle, 28-4-1930

194. SPEECH AT BULSAR

April 26, 1930

I was here at Bulsar only a few days ago. If you had done some special work since and called me here to have a view of it, my visit would have been worth while. But neither you nor the Government has done any such thing. Ramniklal Modi was with me on the Dandi March. The Government conferred upon him the distinction of sending him to jail. You called me here to celebrate the occasion. But what is there to celebrate in that? Only a year for a co-worker of mine ! This time we are playing a more serious game. Jail is now a familiar thing to us and its hardships are no hardships. Even women and children ask to go to jail as if it was some tasty dish. In a word, we have given up the fear of jail. People have realized that to go to jail is to share in the struggle for swaraj. I welcome all this, but I attach no value now to jail-going. I feel no exhilaration whenI hear that some co-worker of mine was sentenced to one year or two years, or, for that matter, even five years. It would exhilarate me to hear that a co-worker like Jairamdas was shot dead or that another co-worker, of an equally spotless character, had had his skull broken. The Government's

actions so far proclaim to us, 'We shall break your heads, but will not repeal the salt tax.' Our answer to the Government is, 'We are willing to offer you as many heads as you want, but do please remove the salt tax.' If Ramniklal had made an offering of his head and a patch of Bulsar land had been besmeared with his blood, then you would have been justified in asking me to come. But Ramniklal has displayed no such heroism, nor has the Government. Such heroism is being displayed at Anand and at Dehwan. There volunteers were beaten up in the night and, so that the police might enjoy beating them, lights were put out. If they call me there, I would immediately go. That is an occasion worth celebrating. By all means ask me to come here when you have such an occasion. Whether such an occasion will come is in the hands of you brothers and sisters of Bulsar.

The Headmen of your villages are still clinging to their posts. But I am not interested in their announcing their resignations. Their resigning and their clinging to their posts exposes us to ridicule. If any Headmen are present here, I beseech them to withdraw the resignations rather than expose us to ridicule. If there are none here, the local workers should convey my request to them. The Bulsar Municipality has still not dug a well for the Bhangis of the place. If you do not get a contractor for the work, give me the contract. The people of Bulsar should take a vow that as long as the Bhangis are not given water, they too will draw no water. Entrust the administration of Bulsar to me for a day, and I will show you if this cannot be done. If you cannot do this much, take it from me that you will not win swaraj for Bulsar. This is said to be a civilized town. Toddy worth Rs. 45,000 is sold here. I must admit that this is a mark of civilization. At the same time, let me respectfully submit this also that your civilized town ought not to have invited at such a time a man like me, a man who is impatient to secure swaraj, to get the salt tax abolished and to end the Government's barbarity.

What have you done to stop the consumption of liquor? At least the women here are civilized, not in the sense I have just mentioned though! They sing in such a sweet voice. If they sang their beautiful *bhajans* to people given to drinking, it could have an excellent effect. Our sisters in Olpad and Jalalpur talukas and in Surat have in this way brought about very good results. The question which worries the

owners of liquor booths is how they would live if their business stopped. People should go to them and offer to find for them other trades if the drink trade is given up. At Karadi yesterday, four Parsi brethren came to see me. They said, “Only two months are now left. Permit us to continue our business for that period.” After joking with them for a while I said, “Now when the whole country is swept by a wave of awakening, shall I for the sake of your trade entreat the people not to give up toddy?” They said, “No, but why should there be picketing?” “If picketing makes the drink addicts feel ashamed of themselves and they turn away from the shops, why should I not do it?” I said. Then I asked them if any of the women pickets exercised coercion on them or the addicts. They admitted that they would not say that.

Picketing is done everywhere by women only, and that gives good results. If all the women present here work in that spirit, they can get all liquor shops closed in twenty-four hours. No man, however bad a drunkard, can remain unmoved by the loving appeal of you sisters. Go to the addicts and humbly tell them, ‘Brothers, why do you do this?’ When you appeal to them in this way, the addicts will reform themselves and so too will the owners of the booths. People do not want to be coerced, but, when you bathe them in your love, their love for liquor will dry up. The *Bhagavad Gita* says that a fasting man’s craving for sense objects diminishes but his instinctive pleasure in them does not disappear. It disappears only when God’s grace descends on him. And your love is that divine grace. I have no doubt that it will dry up the drunkard’s pleasure in drinking. If you do really mean to achieve something positive, see that the liquor and toddy booths in your place are closed and the toddy palms uprooted from everywhere.

I have been told that your city has 100 *taklis* and 7 spinning-wheels. That is not enough to accomplish the boycott of foreign cloth. The *takli* should be plying in every home. I cannot of course provide spinning-wheels for you all. Even if some benevolent carpenter of Bulsar came forward, he too would find the task impossible. But *taklis* you can make for yourselves. If you cannot make a hole in a pice you may use broken pieces of children’s slates, or even potsherds. If you are hoping that I will get you khadi from Bombay

and make you wear it, it is not going to happen. Khadi stocks in Bombay are already exhausted. If you want to wear khadi you must ply the *takli.*

You may break the salt law, but that by itself will not get you swaraj. It will no doubt bring about repeal of the law. But if you want swaraj you will have to die for it—of course not in the way they died at Chittagong. That way swaraj would take four months when it could be won in four days. And I do not know when it will be actually won. But what shall we call this beating of innocent workers at night? Is it *goonda raj*? It looks as if it was. There is nothing but *goondaism* in all the accounts that reach me. The *mavalis* are after all ignorant men, and we may endure their methods, but how can we tolerate this *goonda* rule? All of you men and women who have gathered here, if you have met to do something and not merely to witness a show, resolve here and now that you will not suffer this *goonda* reign, that your answer to all laws that offend against morality will be civil disobedience. We do not wish to follow the path that Chittagong took. The more the suffering inflicted on us, the more of it shall we invite.

You are all civilized people and you should take it that though I have said little I have said a good deal. And do kindly act upon it. They have taken from your shores a good man like Ramniklal. He is a good man and given to *tapascharya.* The imprisonment of such a pure man has indeed brought swaraj a little nearer. Now it is up to you to prove that you deserve workers like Ramniklal, Mohanlal Pandya, Ishwarlal and Nichhabhai.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-5-1930

195. SPEECH AT CHHARWADA

April 26, 1930

People have conferred on me the title of salt-thief as a substitute for Mahatma. I like it. But it is no easy thing to be a salt-thief, while it is easy enough to be a Mahatma. If one makes a fuss of eating and drinking and wears a *langoti,* one can easily acquire the title of Mahatma in this country. In a little while I shall go with you and get some salt from the nearby creek. We shall not get pure salt, as the benign Government has had it all mixed with earth. Anyway, we shall take what we can find. But when can we be called thieves? Only when we are punished for theft. What kind of theft is it which no one even so much as takes notice of ? We shall pick up a little dust. It may well be considered theft under the law, but the world will not take it as such nor will the Government. It will be real theft when you have your hands broken in committing it. Though we shall be collecting salt, possibly neither you nor I will have our hands broken.

It will be real theft only when we raid those mounds of salt over there. When I went to Untadi, I saw them from a distance and thought them quite beautiful. Having a near view today, I find them dirty and ugly. Let them be what they are, we shall be real salt-thieves only when we lay hands on them and have our hands and wrists broken or get thrown into jails.

I would even ask you not to confer the dearly bought title of salt-thief on everyone who merely goes to jail. You do not have your ribs smashed in going to jail. Just now I had a letter informing me that in the Kheda district some people were beaten. They were all respected public workers. Those who had beaten them were Government functionaries but they too were our own men. In order that they might enjoy the beating better, they even put out the light. Six or seven men are now in hospital undergoing treatment. None of them is likely to die, but, if anyone should, we would call him a true leader of salt-thieves. You will of course come with me to take salt from the creek here, but you will not thereby earn the title of salt-thieves. Yes, we may be said to be candidates for that title. When we have committed real theft of salt, there will no longer be any salt-thieves at all. For the Government will then say to us: ‘You all refuse to obey the salt law. Very well then. All those salt dunes are your property from now on.’ That property is not worth even seven crores of rupees. That

amount we pay direct. If we add to it the expenditure involved in collecting the sum, we save 20 crores. How can the Government persuade itself to forgo such a large amount? At present we have in the country thousands and even hundreds of thousands of volunteers who are ready to steal salt. But would that be enough to make the Government let go such a large income? Before it does so it will wound a good many, even kill some of them. However, after it has done its worst even this tyrannical Government will have no escape from having to give up the income. When that stage is reached, then alone will you have the right to call me a salt-thief and I the right to be so called.

For the present, however, Mahadev has proved himself a greater salt-thief than I. Since Sardar was taken away, he has not had a single moment's rest. The Police Superintendent on his part was not very eager to arrest him. He saw that so long as he was free he would at least provide the authorities correct information. But what was he to do? Just as men were bringing from Dholera a motor lorry full of salt, Mahadev jumped onto it. But I am unwilling to call even him a salt-thief though he was arrested for the act. l have written to him to say: "It is well that you have been imprisoned, but your duty was to die for the cause." It was good that at Anand some had their arms and skulls broken. What trouble can there be in jail—and A class at that? What is wanting for the saheb? There is more to eat and drink than at the Ashram. One cooks for you, another fetches water and a third will wash your dhoti for you. Are these the marks of a prisoner? When men like Mahadev and Jairamdas have their heads bleeding and their clothes beautifully splattered with fresh warm blood, then, from some corner or other of the world human pity cannot but spring forth. Surely, there must be God somewhere? When blood flows from heads not only will the salt tax go but many more things will also be washed away into the sea. And then our numerous sins will disappear under the earth as this salt heap before us is covered with it.

You may call me a salt-thief but only when we take possession of the salt-beds of Dharasana. What is there in picking a seer or two of salt from here and there? Even the Government must be wondering what a childish game we are playing. If you mean to play the real game, come out and loot the salt-sheds of Dharasana, or Bhayander, or Kharaghoda. The game we are now playing is, I admit, a children's game, but from that one day we will proceed to serious business. And

on the day the real game begins, I invite you all, brothers and sisters of Chharwada and Dharasana to join me in the fun. But the day is not yet. When an account of the Dharasana raid is being recorded what will you, the immediate neighbours of these salt-beds, have to say about your part? Will you have it recorded that you ran away at the time or that you bared your bosoms and remained? We will not be angry with those who put out the light and beat the volunteers, nor will we abuse them. We want to follow a different rule of justice. Do you remember the saying: "Offer a finger and the wrist is bitten"? If these Government men seize our finger, We will offer the wrist and if they seize the wrist, we will offer the shoulder; and if they seize the shoulder we will offer our very neck. Now that they have started beating our volunteers, let us plan a campaign so that we invite all the beating on our heads.

But whatever we do should be above reproach. I did not like at all what happened in Peshawar. If the reins of Government fall into the hands of such persons, will they not rule in the same way? Will they not break the heads of the poor? I want every head in the country to be well-protected. Even a small girl should be able to move about safely in any part of India. Our struggle is for self-purification and I wish you all to become pure. It is impossible that you should be able to carry out a raid on Dharasana salt-beds wearing those black caps or foreign saris. In any case, for my part at least, I would not let you accompany me. When you all come out for the raid, each should be wearing khadi; if enough khadi is not available, you will wear only a khadi *langoti*. Today you may all come with me as candidates to be salt-thieves, but when I come again for a raid, I will have with me none who does not wear khadi and who is not plying a *takli* at the time. I should indeed like all of you to join me. But if you have not carried out the programme of self-purification by then, I shall not hesitate to go alone.

Do not tell me that khadi is not available. Get a *takli* and spin on it. Send yarn as well as money to pay for the weaving. Then I undertake to supply you khadi. If you do not pay weaving charges you will get so much less khadi. If this is done there will be no shortage of khadi. I have entrusted this work to our sisters. Men, by making salt, will save Rs. 7 crores, but women, if they are proficient in the work, will be able to save Rs. 60 crores.

I have been telling you about the Dharasana raid. Do not think it will be two or three years before the raid takes place. An old man like me, past sixty years of age and nearing death. cannot speak in terms of years. I can speak only in terms of a few months, and, if you give me your co-operation, a few days. But why should I come here if I find that the people of Dharasana are liars, drunkards and debauchees? If I did come even then I would fight for salt with the help of other men, not with your help.

I have made it clear to you that only if you wear khadi and give up liquor will I let you join me in the raid on the Dharasana salt-beds. If you do not fulfil the condition and still insist on coming, I will offer satyagraha against you. I shall offer satyagraha against you as I would offer it against the bayonets of policemen. I do not wish to take possession of Dharasana salt with the help of drunkards or of people who wear foreign cloth. I will do that with the help only of the pure and spotless. The volunteers who are present here should go from house to house and carry this message of mine to the people. I shall be content if people stay at home but I will not tolerate their interfering in my work without fulfilling the conditions I have mentioned. If you do not like that, you are free to abandon me. You may give me no food, not even a glass of water to drink. I know how to carry out the raid on a hungry stomach. I will be here again in a week or two; and if you have not done by that time what I have asked you to do, you may stay away and sing *bhajans*. Rather, I would shun the *bhajans* and shouts of '*Jai*' coming from such people.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-5-1930

196. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[Before *April 27, 1930*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. You are right that we should not have any secret dealings. Let them get at the money any time they choose.

I shall write to Taramati about her brother. Let us see what happens about the mills.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

197. MESSAGE TO AMERICA

[Before *April 27, 1930*][2]

The national demand is not for immediate establishment of Independence, but is a preliminary step to a conference, that must take place if Independence is to be established peacefully, to remove certain prime grievances, chiefly economic and moral. These are set forth in the clearest possible terms in my letter, miscalled an ultimatum to the Viceroy. Those grievances include the salt tax, which in its incidence falls with equal pressure upon rich as well as poor and is over 1,000 per cent of the cost price. Having been made a monopoly, it has deprived tens of thousands of people of their supplementary occupation and the artificially heavy cost of salt has made it very difficult, if not impossible, for poor people to give enough salt to their cattle and to their land.

This unnatural monopoly is sustained by laws, which are only so-called, but which are a denial of law. They give arbitrary powers to police, known to be corrupt, to lay their hands without warrant on innocent people, to confiscate their property and otherwise molest them in a hundred ways. Civil resistance against the laws has caught the popular imagination as nothing else has within my experience. Hundreds of thousands of people, including women or children from

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's writing to Taramati

[2] This appeared in *The Sunday Times*, 27-4-1930.

many villages, have participated in the open manufacture and sale of contraband salt.

This resistance has been answered by barbarous and unmanly repressions. Instead of arresting people the authorities have violated the persons of people who have refused to part with salt, held generally in their fists. To open their fists, their knuckles have been broken, their necks have been pressed, they have been even indecently assaulted till they have been rendered senseless. Some of these assaults have taken place in the presence of hundreds and thousands of people, who, although well able to protect the victims and retaliate, being under a pledge of non-violence, have not done so. It is true that-violence has broken out in Calcutta, Karachi, Chittagong, and now Peshawar. The Calcutta and Karachi events should be isolated from those at Chittagong and Peshawar. The Calcutta and Karachi incidents were an impulsive outburst on the arrest of popular leaders. The Chittagong and Peshawar incidents though also caused for the same reason, seem to have been serious and well-planned affairs, though wholly unconnected with each other, Chittagong being in the extreme east and Peshawar being in the north-west border of India.

These disturbances have so far not affected other parts of India, where civil disobedience has been going on in an organized fashion and on a mass scale since the 6th instant. People in other parts have remained non-violent in spite of great provocation. At the same time, I admit that there is need for caution but I can say without the least hesitation that, consistently with the plan of civil disobedience, every precaution conceivable is being taken to prevent civil disobedience from being used as an occasion for doing violence. It should be noted that in Karachi, 7 wounded persons of whom 2 have died of their wounds, were volunteers engaged in keeping the peace and restraining mob fury. It is the opinion of eye-witnesses that the firing in Karachi was wholly unjustified and that there was no firing in the air or at the legs in the first instance.

In fact, the Government have lost no opportunity of incensing people. Many of the best and purest and the most self-sacrificing leaders have been arrested and imprisoned, in many instances with mock trials. Sentences, though, for the same offence, have varied with the idiosyncrasies of the magistrates. In several instances they have been for more than 12 months with hard labour on well-known citizens. The enthusiasm of the people has up to now increased with every

conviction. Thousands of people regard the manufacture of contraband salt as part of their daily routine. In any other part of the world with a Government at all responsible to public opinion, the salt tax would have been repealed long since, but whether now or later, repealed it will be, if the present existing atmosphere of resistance abides as it promises to do.

That this is a movement of self-purification is abundantly proved by the fact that women have come into it in large numbers and are organizing the picketing of liquor shops. Thousands have taken vows to abstain from intoxicating liquor. In Ahmedabad, a strong labour centre, receipts of canteens have dropped to 19 per cent and are still dropping. A similar manifestation is taking placein the district of Surat. Women have also taken up the question of boycott of foreign cloth. It is spreading all over India. People are making bonfires of foreign cloth in their possession. Khadi, i.e., hand-spun cloth, is so much in demand that the existing stock is well-nigh exhausted. The spinning-wheel is much in demand and people are beginning to realize more and more the necessity of reviving hand-spinning in the cottages of 700,000 villages of India. In my humble opinion, a struggle so free from violence has a message far beyond the borders of India. I have no manner of doubt that after all the sacrifice that has already been made since April 6, the spirit of the people will be sustained throughout till India has become independent and free to make her contribution to the progress of humanity.

M. K. GANDHI

The Modern Review, June 1930

198. DRAFT LETTER TO VICEROY[1]

[On or before *April 27, 1930*][2]

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

We, the undersigned women of Gujarat, have come to the conclusion that we may not keep ourselves aloof from the great national upheaval that is taking place. We are in full sympathy with the civil disobedience campaign in respect of the salt tax. Our sisters in the villages have already begun the manufacture of contraband salt.

But we feel that we must, as women, find an additional and special field for our activity. We feel the force of Gandhiji's argument that women are better fitted for dealing with the question of the prohibition of intoxicating drinks and drugs and boycott of foreign cloth. Drink has desolated many a home, and foreign cloth has deprived millions of India's women of their employment during leisure hours, which amount in the aggregate to no less than four months in the year.

These two are therefore questions that concern the women more than men. And in so far as they can be dealt with through picketing, i.e., an appeal to the hearts of those who traffic in these things and those who are lured to the drink and the drug or the foreign-cloth shops, we feel that we can make a more successful effort than men. And women doing the work must automatically ensure its peaceful nature.

As we embark upon the campaign we should respectfully point out that it is essentially the duty of the State to prohibit traffic in intoxicating drinks and drugs because they ruin both mind and body and homes of those who indulge in them and to prohibit the entry of foreign cloth inasmuch as it has brought about the economic ruin of the villages of this unhappy land.

As to the importation of foreign cloth it might be urged that the argument that applies to foreign cloth applies also partially to the cloth manufactured in Indian mills. Only the output of Indian mills is so far short of the requirements that khadi can have nothing to fear from them.

[1] This was drafted by Gandhiji.

[2] The draft was ready for signatures on April 27, 1930; *vide* "Letter to Amina Tyabji", 27-4-1930.

We wish that we had time enough to canvass the opinion of our sisters in the other provinces. But we know what their opinion is likely to be. After all we are not dealing with new problems. These have already been before the nation through its national organization, the Congress. What we are seeking to do is to dedicate ourselves more to these questions than to the others which along with these are being dealt with in terms of the independence movement.

We are,

Yours faithfully,

SHARDA MEHTA
INDUMATI C. DIVAN
MANORAMA CHINUBHAI
PARVATIBEHN GIRDHARLAL AMRITLAL
VIJAYAGAURI DURGAPRASAD
LASHKARI
MAHALAKSHMI MANSUKHRAM
CHATURLAKSHMI JIVANLAL DIVAN
VIJAYAGAURI BALVANTRAO KANUGA
AMINA KURESHI
LAKSHMIBAI KHARE
MITHUBEHN PETIT
AMINA TYABJI
RAIHANA TYABJI
KANCHANGAURI MANGALDAS GIRDHARDAS
SULOCHNA CHINUBHAI
TANUMATI CHINUBHAI M.
RANCHHODLAL
SARLADEVI AMBALAL SARABHAI
VASANTGAURI NARSIDAS
MRS. CHIMANLAL NAGINDAS
ANASUYA SARABHAI
MOTIBAI RANCHHODLAL
LILAVATI HARILAL DESAI
NIRMALA BAKUBHAI MANSUKHBHAI
SANTOK M. GANDHI
DURGA MAHADEV DESAI
GANGABEHN RANCHHODDAS BHATIA
SAVITA TRIVEDI
MRS. JAYANTILAL AMRITLAL

Young India, 1-5-1930

199. DRAFT OF APPEAL TO WOMEN OF GUJARAT

[About *April 27, 1930*][1]

SISTERS,

Here is a letter to the Viceroy. Please sign it if you feel you can do so. The original letter is in English. This is a translation of it. You will understand the contents carefully and sign it only if you wish to join the movement. If you sign it, please give full particulars: such as your name, address, age, etc. The names will be published in the papers and your signing the letter will mean that you will be ready to join in picketing liquor booths and foreign-cloth shops and to work under the instructions of the self-appointed committee formed by the signatories below.

However, there is also another way in which you may function. Instead of working under this Committee, you may form your own committee and determine your own area of activity. That is, you may picket only those liquor booths or foreign-cloth shops which you may choose. Even if you do so, we shall ultimately come together and work in co-operation with one another. If you wish to join in this sacred work, you should intimate while sending your signatures whether you would form a separate committee or work under this one.

We remain,

INDIA'S WOMEN VOLUNTEERS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 16845

[1] It is likely this was drafted about the same time as the preceding item.

200. HONOURING THE MEMORY OF VITHALBHAI LALLUBHAI

This struggle will claim many lives. One must die to go to heaven. Unless thousands die, swaraj, which is dearer than heaven, will not be secured. The purer the men sacrificing themselves in this cause, the earlier shall we get swaraj and the less will be the number of people sacrificed. If everyone realizes and does his duty, there will be no question of dying in the struggle. But this ideal state hardly ever occurs in this world. Sacrifice, therefore, consists in oneself being pure and innocent, but laying down one's life [as atonement] for another's evil. If no one committed sin, where would be the need for sacrifice?

Sacrifice does not simply mean accepting the penalty of death at the hands of the Government. It certainly is a sacrifice if one engaged in the struggle undergoes unmerited suffering and dies. It is of course a sacrifice to suffer an accident, while uprooting toddy trees as part of our struggle, and to die on that account.

Such a sacrifice was made by Vithalbhai Lallubhai yesterday. Vithalbhai was a teacher in a national school. Being enthusiastic he had joined as a volunteer. While he was cutting a toddy tree, the axe fell on his leg, he sustained a fracture and thorns pricked his hands. The doctor spared no pains in treating him. But God's will was otherwise, and on the fourth day Vithalbhai breathed his last.

I saw Vithalbhai on the very day on which he was hurt. I was impressed by his courage. Though it had been a serious operation, he was cheerful. The doctor was all praise for his fortitude. All of us had expected that he would recover. However, having fulfilled his life's aim, Vithalbhai departed doing his duty and discharging his debt to the motherland fully.

The town of Navsari realized the grave loss in Vithalbhai's death. People flocked to where he lay, grieving. A great crowd formed into a procession and followed his body to the cremation ground. The procession seemed to be a celebration. Navsari observed a hartal on that day.

Who would not ask for a death so glorious? I regard Vithalbhai's mother, brother, wife and all others of the family worthy of

congratulations on their good fortune.

Why is such a death desirable, one may ask. It is so because it purifies those left behind and awakens a greater spirit of service in them. Has it so happened in this case? If it has, let us fittingly honour his memory. Vithalbhai gave his life in the fight against the drink evil. It behoves us to apply ourselves to the task and even risk our lives in it. Vithalbhai lost his life in Jalalpur taluka. It, therefore, becomes the special duty of this taluka to see that the toddy trees, stained with his blood, are rooted out, that the liquor and toddy shops are closed down and that the addicts give up drinking.

I had been to Bodali yesterday. The people there paid a glowing tribute to the departed soul. On my request a number of leading men of the place granted permission for felling the toddy palm trees owned by them.

As we lost Vithalbhai, so did we lose Dattatreya and Meghraj. These latter offered their lives to bullets at Karachi. For Vithalbhai, who was engaged in ending the drink evil, I suggested a method of honouring his memory befitting the cause he served. As for Dattatreya and Meghraj, let us honour their memory by promoting peacefulness among us. In the measure that disturbances increase, we shall have to suffer more acutely and in larger numbers; and to that extent the winning of swaraj will be delayed. The greater our peacefulness, the less our need of sacrifice. It is not by throwing stones, shouting slogans, attacking offices and other buildings and setting fire to tram-cars that we can win swaraj for the poor.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-4-1930

201. THE SPIRIT OF RAAS

I have seen the pledge taken by Raas. The people of Raas should understand that they have taken the pledge on their own responsibility. The Kheda district has been displaying wonderful strength. Abbas Saheb, who has renounced all, has made it his home. He has dedicated his tender daughter Hamida to the abolition of the drink evil. His wife had already dedicated herself for that work. Raihana, poor cripple, spends her days and nights thinking of India only. The old gentleman is himself working in Kheda, and he is not to be intimidated by anybody.

Kheda has the help of a man like him. Some tried workers from the Ashram batch have also been working in this district. And now Kheda has Sardar's own daughter, who fears none and whom God has endowed with inexhaustible energy for work. So Kheda has all the help it needs.

If Kheda lacks the ability to preserve peace or the tenacity to hold out till the last, it will put both itself and Gujarat to shame in the eyes of the public.

The Government will not tolerate refusal to pay land revenue. We have not yet reached that stage in the programme. However, those who have the courage may certainly withhold payment. Did not Panchia Patel do it all by himself ? But those who adopt this course run great risks. They should not be surprised if their goods, chattels and livestock are put up for sale. What happened in Bardoli is no guide to what may happen in Kheda. The Bardoli struggle was in a way limited in scope. It was a fight for securing a right. This is afight to wrest power from the Government. The one is as far removed from the other as the earth from the sky.

Hence, to be able to stand firm in the step taken by it, Raas should cultivate the requisite purity of spirit and self-sacrifice. Other villages wanting to follow in its footsteps should first take a measure of their own strength quietly. I may say, however, that the district from which they carried off Sardar and then Durbar and in which Mohanlal Pandya and Ravishankar (Maharaj) have their homes, can never do enough.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-4-1930

202. MY N0TES

STRIKES

A trader has expressed sorrow at the frequent hartals. I feel that a hartal should not be observed on any and every occasion and on the arrest of every leader. In all matters the middle path is the only right path. Excess is never good in any matter. When in some village a leader is arrested, it may be necessary to observe a day's hartal in that village. But I personally do not regard it proper to have a hartal all over when a leader with some reputation is arrested somewhere. I hear that it is the intention of some traders to observe a hartal for seven days when I am arrested. I hope that this is not true. If it is true, I wish that those contemplating it will change their mind. Observing a week-long hartal will not bring us swaraj. Only by working for the constructive programme, not merely for seven days but on all days until swaraj is won, shall we get swaraj and set free everyone who is in jail. The present time calls for careful thinking, wisdom and quiet work. Dangers of Picketing A woman correspondent says that picketing may increase friction. So according to her we should be content with pro-pagation of swadeshi. My humble opinion is that both are necessary.

If the picketing is left entirely to women without any men joining there will be no friction. What women need is endurance and patience. Picketing does not mean coercion. It means appeal or request—and a request may be made to all the communities. The picketing programme includes organizing meetings everywhere, takin-gout, processions, caste meetings passing resolutions, going about singing *bhajans,* etc. In no case does picketing mean that anyone is to be prevented by force. For the rest, if one wants boycott to succeed one must produce khadi. Those sisters who consider picketing risky may card and spin and create an atmosphere for such work.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-4-1930

203. IMAM SAHEB

Mahadev has appointed Imam Saheb Abdul Kadir Bawazeer as his successor. The whole of Gujarat is familiar with the name of Imam Saheb. I had kept him buried in the Ashram; he is like my own brother. From being a client of mine, he became a satyagrahi, after becoming a satyagrahi he became an inmate of Phoenix and, not resting at that, he came over to India with a few other inmates of the Ashram. An acquaintanceship which began in 1902 has lasted until 1930. Hence this relationship of ours is not a recent one.

Imam Saheb is not a reformed Muslim but an orthodox one in the sense that he never misses his prayers or his fasts. His father was the Muezzin of the Juma Musjid of Bombay. He is himself styled Imam because he officiated as priest in several mosques in South Africa.

It was Sardar who brought Imam Saheb out into the public, but Sardar is not a person to do so with a view to flattering Imam Saheb. He realized Imam Saheb's freedom of spirit and hence brought him out into the open and took him with him wherever he went.

Although Imam Saheb may be called illiterate, he is shrewd and well versed in the practical affairs of life. He understands many things from mere hints. It is not for the first time that Imam Saheb is being given an important position. He had often occupied such a position in South Africa. If he is not arrested, those who come into contact with him will soon realize that he is not one to sit in a chair like a dummy. He can guide a meeting and give considered decisions.

I have had no hand whatsoever in the choice of Imam Saheb. I do not recall suggesting his name to Mahadev. Of course I approved his name after it had been suggested by the latter.

The age for having dummies as chairmen is now past. Only those persons who are capable of guiding us, who put into practice the commands of the public or resign if they are unable to do so can become important public servants.

And today? Well, today only a person who will yield up his head with a smile can become the leader. Imam Saheb is such a person. The

veteran Abbas Tyabji is another such person. Swami has found such a person in our brother Abdulla. In this choice the Swami has put himself to the test and has set the limits of this struggle. I could not dream of Swami giving the chair to Abdullabhai. I myself could not have made that choice, despite the fact that it was I who first made his acquaintance and brought him over to the Ashram. Swami has chosen a person who has cut off his own head and put it on a platter. Nevertheless, the reason for these three being chosen by Gujaratis is not only because they are Muslims. These selections have not been made in order to please anyone. They have been selected because besides being Muslims they are worthy of the offices for which they have been chosen, because they are prepared to lay down their lives, to make sacrifices and are as sincere Indians as they are Muslims.

This struggle is not one only of Hindus or of Muslims or of any one community. It is of all Indians. And, if we go a step further, this struggle is for freeing the world from the monstrous tyranny of material greed; it is a struggle to prove that money is not God, but that God alone is everything and that nothing else except Him is real.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-4-1930

204. KHADI AND BOYCOTT OF FOREIGN CLOTH

Those who believe that boycott of foreign cloth is impossible without progress in khadi know that the boycott can be deemed successful only when and to the extent that khadi is available to replace boycotted cloth, and that then alone shall we be saved from repenting afterwards. Thus production of khadi is at present the most important issue facing us in regard to boycott. If khadi is not available foreign cloth is bound to enter India by the back door if not openly. In this state of things the khadi bhandars should think what they can do.

THE RESIDENTS OF BOMBAY

What in particular should the Khadi Bhandar of Bombay do? The Bombay Khadi Bhandar is the biggest in India. It receives khadi stocks from all around. But everywhere the consumption of

khadi has gone up and it is with great difficulty that the Bombay Khadi Bhandar can supply khadi to its customers. If in these conditions this Bhandar does not find a solution, it had better close down. Discussing this question with Shri Vithaldas Jerajani, I told him: "Now you should ask customers to pay for khadi not in cash but with hand-spun yarn. When you do this, those alone will come to buy khadi who wish really to effect the boycott through the use of khadi. In this way, moreover, the use of khadi will become clean. The number of those spinning cotton will go up, and you will get heaps of yarn. When things are properly organized, you will again have a huge stock of khadi. It would be best if the yarn had been spun by the customer himself. However, it may be open to him to offer the yarn spun by members of his family. Some resourceful men may go to villages, get yarn spun there and bring it to you. With a population of tens of millions, it is quite easy to produce yarn. You will have to make immediate arrangements to get the yarn received woven into cloth. There are many weavers in Bombay, and we should see to it that, when boycott of foreign cloth becomes effective, no foreign yarn finds its way into the Indian market. The yarn from Indian mills may be there, but the mills may be persuaded not to compete with hand-spun yarn. Weavers in whom the spirit of patriotism can be aroused will use only hand-spun yarn to make cloth."

"But what if by adopting this method we estrange people?" —asked Jerajani.

"Those who understand our aim will not be angry. As for others, let them be angry if they must. If they do not wear khadi, they will be the losers. Khadi has nothing to lose."

If the method I have suggested is adopted, we shall realize the place of khadi in the boycott of foreign cloth. If we are convinced that the boycott cannot be effected unless the use of khadi spreads, why should we be afraid of telling the truth? Our duty is to do the right and have others do it, leaving the fruit to God.

If I know Bombay, however, it will, I am sure, realize the necessity of the method I have suggested. It will not be offended but will help the cause to the best of its power.

Let us all take to the *takli* as an emergency duty and make handsome *taklis* from bamboo and potsherds. Let us ourselves card

cotton and begin producing yarn. It will be enough if one gives just two hours a day to the work. All employees of khadi bhandars should become *takli* experts, and teach people coming to the bhandars to make *taklis*, to card and to determine the count of yarn. Aftersix months of this work, there will be no scarcity of khadi. We should also realize that if the khadi spirit becomes universal, the villages will never be short of khadi, for they will quickly produce what they require.

Everywhere in Bombay one question is likely to be asked: "On the one hand you are advocating mass civil disobedience and, on the other, you are advising people to use the *takli.* How can a person offering civil disobedience think of plying the *takli* in the midst of all the excitement?" My reply is: "Breaking a law merely for the sake of breaking it may mean excitement. How can there be excitement in civil disobedience? 'Civil' means 'peaceful'. Peace and excitement are incompatible with each other. If there is true peacefulness in our disobedience, the *takli* will be plied with all the greater enthusiasm, because it is the very embodiment of peace. Going round volunteer camps, I find that in several places they idle away their time and say, "Give us work or get us arrested." To get them arrested is not quite in my hands. I can give them work, and that is plying the *takli* and the cardingbow. These thousands of soldiers can certainly produce yarn in thousands of *tolas* a day. A thousand *tolas* of yarn means twenty-five seers of it, or not less than seventy-five square yards of khadi. Our requirement of cloth is estimated at one inch and a quarter per head per day. This means that we shall have met the requirement of twenty-one hundred persons for a day. The result thus worked out is enough to astound any man. But it will be no surprise to those who understand the principle behind "strength from many threads woven together". A person spinning a *tola* of yarn supplies the raw material to clothe in khadi himself and 1.25 other persons. It is child's play for everyone to spin one *tola* of yarn. And if we are carrying on a peaceful struggle, it is possible to ply the *takli* even while picketing or facing bullets. We do not wish to protect our persons. Let us suppose that we go to take possession of a salt-water basin owned by the Government, but the officers will not let us have it. Since we continue to confront them they would arrest us, or shoot at us or charge at us with lathis to prevent entry. Until this stage is reached, why could we not peacefully ply our *taklis*? The *takli* is the satyagrahi's weapon. If the opponent has guns, we have our *takli,* made of bamboo and potsherds. I can think of no sight more magnificent than this. Will not

Bombay and other towns or villages welcome this suggestion?

Let us consider this further. Tens of millions won't come out to face bullets or spend the whole day making salt or join processions. What, however, will women, children and the old do? If they spin, they too will have offered their contribution to the swaraj *yajna*.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-4-1930

205. TESTING ME

The Government has been putting me to a stiff test. It is entitled to do so. The Government perhaps thinks that if it cuts off my hands, I may lose the battle, or, even if I don't, at least I shall be isolated. It would seem to be the right thing in the eyes of the world. And that is why Mahadev was removed and Swami, too, not to mention other old co-workers and some new ones like Bhai Munshi.

Mahadev and Swami stand for *Young India* and *Navajivan*. Though Swami had left *Navajivan* formally it did not mean that his connection with it was cut off. It is like my connection with the Ashram, which is not broken even though I am no longer among its Trustees. The *Navajivan* means Swami. Even from Bombay he had been looking after *Navajivan*. He took great pains to help Jamnalalji in serving the untouchables. The activities at Ville Parle prospered because of his tireless labour in their behalf. And as for Mahadev, the Gujarati people living near Ahmedabad know his recent work better than I from this distance can know it.

But what would it matter even if every one of my co-workers was taken to where Mahadev and Swami have been taken? I do not regard myself isolated at all. God is my only friend, philosopher and guide, call Him what I may. I have not embarked upon the present struggle counting upon the strength of Mahadev, Swami, Sardar or any other person. I remain therefore unconcerned, no matter how many of my co-workers are sent to jail. Why should a weak man worry? The strength of the strong may be destroyed, but who can destroy the strength of the weak?

Though a weak man, I feel I am strong too, but I rely in this struggle on God's strength. He guides me in what I eat and drink, in what I speak and write. I, therefore, feel no burden at all. I do not feel

the arrest of Mahadev, Swami, or Ramniklal. For their part, they will have some rest. They needed it. If I must worry, there are Chittagong and Peshawar to worry about. They touch my heart of course, but they do not cause me worry.

This is a struggle between violence and non-violence. To the extent that I am non-violent in spirit, non-violent remedies will occur to me; and these I shall put before the people so long as I remain free. In my absence also, if the spirit of non-violence has then become general, people will follow non-violent methods. Those who have not come under the spell of non-violence are bound to do so in the end if the true spirit of non-violence comes to prevail among the people.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-4-1930

206. LETTER TO AMINA TYABJI

April 27, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

Herewith the letter to the Viceroy.[1] Please sign and give it to bearer to be posted to the Viceroy.

How is Raihana?

Hamida is doing great work in Olpad.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9688

[1] *Vide* "Draft letter to Viceroy", 27-4-1930.

207. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO ASAF ALI

April 27, 1930

Personally I am of opinion that picketing may not be suspended anywhere. But if the local Congress has committed itself to a suspension directly or indirectly, it must be carried out in any case and at any cost.

Strict performance of promises is the essence of satyagraha.

A.I.C.C. File No. 182-F, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

208. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

April 27, 1930

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your letter. I was glad to read it. If you continue to exercise such intelligent self-control, your restlessness will disappear. I do not think there will be any harm in applying the plaster. If, however, you take hip-baths, menses will certainly start. It would be better if you did not join the drill. If you keep yourself calm and do not work too hard, and if you sleep outside in the open, your fainting fits will stop.

If you do not pass stools easily, you must take enemas. The bowels should not remain uncleared for more than 24 hours.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9562

209. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

April 27, 1930

CHI. TARAMATI,

Mathuradas has informed me of your brother's death. The *Gita* teaches us not to grieve over death. Birth and death are our two friends and both are equal. Let us try each day to be pure and alert in the knowledge that death is certain.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayya

210. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[Before *April 28, 1930*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have written to you about Kevalram.[2] He is very shy. Hence I have sent him this note. He can look after the Congress office. It will be good if both of them join the Congress and work there. I do not know what the situation in the Congress at present is and so I am sending you this note. Kevalram has lived in the Ashram. I have known him for many years. His father is the Dewan of Vadhwan. Nirmala is the daughter of the late renowned Kevalram Dave of Kathiawar. At one time there was a plan for me to undertake the responsibility of bringing her up in S.A. But just then Bhai passed away and I lost his son. Similarly Nirmala and others were also lost to me, and Kevalrambhai's aspiration remained unfulfilled. Bhai's sons could not be recovered but the lady, it would seem, can now be reached. This is the reason I have been cultivating her and Kevalrambhai for some years now. I have written this so that you know with whom you have to deal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The addressee got the letter on April 28, 1930.

[2] *Vide* "Extracts from speeches in Surat District", 6-4-1930.

211. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS BIRLA

JALALPUR,
April 28, 1930

BHAI RAMESHWARDASJI,

I have your letter. I know your love for khadi. That is why I hesitate to offer comments on your scheme. However, I must tell you that your scheme is not workable because the mill-owners will not give up their interests.

For many matters Government aid is essential; it will never be available for the boycott [of foreign cloth].

If the boycott can be successfully implemented by the efforts of the mill-owners only, khadi need have no place in it. But I am confident that boycott will be successful only with khadi.

This does not mean that mills have no place in the scheme at all. The mills can take their proper place only by recognizing the worth of khadi. According to the doctrine that various individual deities are included in God, we destroy them by worshipping them separately because they have no independent existence, and we do not reach God either.

For all these reasons, the prosperity of the mills and the success of foreign-cloth boycott lie in spreading the love of khadi and increasing its production. *Verb Sap.*

Hope you will not find any difficulty in deciphering my hand-writing.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6184. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

212. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

April [*28*][1]*, 1930*

BHAI NARAHARI,

I have just heard that Kaka has been arrested. In a way it is good if he insists on being supplied the food which he requires, such as milk, etc., and even fights for that purpose. Let me know what you intend to do now.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have explained to Khurshedbehn what to do in regard to that Parsi liquor-booth owner. Women should undertake to picket his booth. They should go to him in a procession. They should even pass a resolution at a meeting. All this if Anasuyabehn approves.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9047

213. INTERVIEW TO " THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

JALALPUR,
April 28, 1930

A raid on Government salt depots was inevitable, but the plan of action was incomplete.

Asked if a raid on Dharasana salt depot was finally decided upon, Mahatmaji said:

I have taken no final decision. I am praying for light.

In reply to a question if he would send intimation of the raid to the Viceroy, Gandhiji observed:

I shall certainly not take the step without due intimation. If the raid comes at all it will come very soon.

Asked how he proposed to carry out the raid if the police barred the entrance to the salt pans. Gandhiji replied:

I do not know; but I shall know the way when the block stares me in the face. When I talk about the raid I simply think audibly, as is my wont. But so far as I can see the raid is inevitable.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-4-1930

[1] Kaka Kalelkar was arrested on this date.

214. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

April 29, 1930

CHI. NARAHARI,

Why do you even entertain the suspicion that it is because you are unfit to go there that I do not take you with me to Dharasana? Just now, however, we will be exercising self-control if, instead of laying down our lives in an attempt to seize the Dharasana [stocks of salt], we refrain from such self-sacrifice and quietly do the task which has fallen to our lot. At present your duty is to wait quietly by Imam Saheb's side. All the same, if I require you or think it necessary, I will call you. If occasion demands, you may sacrifice yourself too as Kaka has done.

Did you get my letter regarding Mahadev's work? In it I have analysed his action in great detail.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9048

215. SPEECH AT BILIMORA

April 29, 1930

Gandhiji addressing the meeting said he did not want to put the Indian States in an awkward position either by making speeches or breaking the Salt Act. Let us first of all settle everything with the British and everything that is to be done in the States will be done later.

I would not ask you to break the salt law but I would certainly appeal to you to adopt khaddar and carry on a vigorous campaign against liquor. You could participate in the two items of boycott of foreign cloth and liquor shops. Liquor trade has ruined our labour class and it is the duty of every citizen, be he a State subject or a British subject, to save them and ladies alone can successfully bring about that change of heart among the drunkards, which is so essential.

There is an impression in certain circles that I am starting picketing against Parsi owners of liquor shops only but that is not a fact. Picketing is to be against liquor-shop owners of all communities:

Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and others. Parsis are like my brothers.

I would like to picket even Englishmen's liquor shops, but at present I am afraid to do so. They would not like to be our brothers but would prefer to be our masters.

We will not get swaraj by non-violent means if we do not drive away the evil of drinking from amongst us. We do not want a drunkard as our President during swaraj nor do we want him as a voter. We must destroy that cup of Satan wherever it is found.

In the end Gandhiji asked them to settle their disputes by arbitration.

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-4-1930

216. VEILED MARTIAL LAW [1]

[BILIMORA,
April 29, 1930]

The revival in the form of an ordinance of the Press Act that was supposed to be dead was only to be expected, and I observe that in its new form the Act contains additional provisions making the whole piece more deadly than before. Whether we realize it or not, for some days past we have been living under a veiled form of martial law. After all, what is martial law if it is not the will of the commanding officer for the time being? The Viceroy is that officer, and wherever he considers it desirable he supersedes the whole of the law, both common and statute, and imposes ordinances on a people too submissive to resent or resist him. I hope, however, that the time for tame submission to the dictation from British rulers is gone for ever. I hope that the people will not be frightened by this ordinance. The Press men, if they are worthy representatives of public opinion, will not be frightened by the ordinance. Let us realize the wise dictum of Thoreau that it is difficult under tyrannical rule for honest men to be wealthy. And if we have decided to hand over our bodies without a murmur to the authorities let us also be equally ready to hand over our property to them and not sell our souls. I would, therefore, urge

[1] This formed the basis of an interview to *The Bombay Chronicle* and was published with the following note: "Below is given the full text of Gandhiji's statement on the Press Act that has already appeared in a more or less mutilated form in the various English Papers."

Press men and publishers to refuse to furnish securities, and if they are called upon to do so, either to cease publication or to challenge the authorities to confiscate whatever they like. When freedom is actually knocking at our door and when for the sake of wooing it thousands have suffered tortures, let it not be said of the Press representatives that they were weighed and found wanting. They may confiscate type and machinery, they will not confiscate pen and still less speech, but I recognize that they can succeed in confiscating even these last two. But what they will never succeed in suppressing and what is after all the thing that matters is the thought of the nation and at the present moment there is hardly a man or woman breathing in India who with every breath does not breathe in disaffection, sedition, disloyalty and whatever other term one may use to describe the mentality of the nation which has set its mind on destroying the existing system of Government.

Young India, 8-5-1930

217. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 29, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

I was unable yesterday to send you anything though I fully intended. But I worked till midnight to finish *Y. I*. Now these lines whilst I am in the train.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5394. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9628

218. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

April 29, 1930

BHAI SATIS BABU,

Your letter caused me much pain, Today I have had a letter from Krishnadas too. I am enclosing it with this. He seems to be somewhat lacking in sense. I had never thought Krishnadas could harbour deliberate malice. Look him up and have a talk. I have written to him too. Is it not a part of our struggle to try to overcome our differences? Write in English if you find any difficulty in expressing yourself in Hindi. At present it is essential that we understand each other well. If Hindi is not adequate we must make do with English. If you have sufficient time then write both in English and Hindi.

Do you feel any after-effects of the fast? Please ask Hemprabha Devi to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1618

219. INTERVIEW TO "THE LEADER"

BILIMORA,
April 29, 1930

I need hardly say I join the chorus of congratulations that has been showered upon Mr. Vithalbhai Patel on his resignation which was daily expected by many of us, especially after the deliberate withdrawal by perhaps the oldest living servant of the nation, I mean Pandit Malaviyaji, who, braving hostile criticism, had stood by Government even during the sunniest days of non-co-operation in 1921 and refused to leave the Legislative Assembly.

The Leader, 2-5-1930

220. MESSAGE TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[1]

[On or before *April 30 ,1930*][2]

It is good that our hands and feet are tied so that we sing with joy, 'God is the help of the helpless'.[3]

The Illustrated Weekly of India, September 24-30, 1978, p. 39

221. STATEMENT ON POISONING OF SALT-BED

JALALPUR,
April 30, 1930

Since the repudiation, after further and careful investigation my informant sticks to the statement that he made to me. I had the samples analysed, and the result of all my investigation is that there certainly was some tampering with the salt-bed in question. Whether the substance added rendered the salt poisonous or not I am unable to say, but it certainly contaminated it. The sudden change in the complexion of the bed and the colour of the water are absolutely beyond question. What then remains to be proved is, whether this change happened through human agency or a superhuman one, and if through a human agency, whether it happened through that of the Government or some other. Seeing that Government officials have been tampering with salt-beds, destroying them by mixing mud in them and otherwise, the burden of proof rests on their shoulders that there was no contamination produced so as to render the salt unfit for human use.

The Hindu, 4-5-1930

[1] In reply to the addressee's letter regarding the order of the Madras Government permitting the collector of Tanjore to prosecute the satyagrahis breaking the salt law in the South

[2] The addressee had been arrested on April 30, 1930, during the Vedaranyam Salt Satyagraha.

[3] A Tamil proverb, written in the Tamil script by Gandhiji

222. CONGRATULATIONS TO DELHI JOURNALISTS

NAVSARI,
April 30, 1930

I am delighted at the brave gesture of the Delhi newspapers,[1] which have been served with peremptory orders under the Press Ordinance to furnish security. It would have been terrible if on the very first application of the Ordinance important newspapers had weakly submitted to the insult embodied in the Ordinance. I hope that the refusal to conduct their newspapers under security is permanent and that other newspapers will follow the courageous example set by the Delhi editors and publishers.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-5-1930

223. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

April 30, 1930

CHI. NARAHARI,

Qureshi is required in Chikhli only in order to work among the Muslims. You can send him after a few days.

It would not be wise just now to start disobedience of the *mahura* law. The three things which we have taken up are enough. And now the Government's Press Act will provide further opportunities. Chhotelal is going there. Use his services.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9049

[1] They had decided to suspend publication as a mark of protest.

224. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

April 30, 1930

CHI. NARAHARI,

As Imam Saheb is ill, you should not call him to the office. Let him remain in the Ashram and give his decisions from there. When it is absolutely necessary for him to go to the city, he should go in a car. You should save his energy in other ways, too. We can make no change now till he becomes altogether incapable of work. Have you all considered what you should do in that contingency? It seems to me that you yourself will have to assume charge of the affairs. But I cannot judge. How can I know the present circumstances there? Do what all of you think proper. What about Balubhai?

Maganbhai will meet you and give you the message about *Navajivan.* Hence I do not write about it here. If I am arrested, Mohanlal should become both the Editor and the Publisher. How is Kamalnayan?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9050

225. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

April 30, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Kaka writes to say that with his arrest you may become more fidgety. It is his considered view that for you sacrifice consists in remaining behind in the Ashram. I agree with him. Bear everything in patience. To preserve one's peace of mind even in the midst of a conflagration is also an art, it is a form of *sadhana*[1].

Blesings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8748. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] Spiritual effort

226. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

April 30, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I will not mind your living on gram and puffed rice, if you can keep fit on that diet. But do not deceive yourself. Give the body the food it requires and keep it fit for service.

If you wish to come and bring with you the girls and the women who have not visited me, you may certainly come. Not that your coming will do any good, for you will have to run back as soon as you come.

Relationships depending on the body are noxious. They are as transitory as a mirage. Why should we be blindly attached to them? Through physical life, we should cultivate a relationship of the soul and know that it never ends, that it alone can be pure and free from ignorant attachment.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8747. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

227. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

[*April 30, 1930*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I was in fact expecting a letter from you. It is 10 p.m. now. I will not, therefore, write more. Kamalabehn also should write. It will be at least a week before we start on the march. Come before that.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. VASUMATIBEHN
SATYAGRAHA CAMP, BHIMRAD
Via SURAT

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 544. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit; also S.N. 9280

228. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

[*April 1930*][2]

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. Yesterday I could not after all write the note you had asked for. Now you will surely go. I enclose the note although it is unnecessary.

See that you act in a manner worthy of yourself, of Father and of me. Try to read and understand the *Gita* as well as some Gujarati books.

Write to me regularly. Inquire into the report about the poisoning of salt-beds in Kheda and let me know.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MANIBEHN PATEL

NADIAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro — 4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 70

[1] From the postmark

[2] From the reference to poisoning of salt-beds it appears the letter was written in April 1930.

229. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

April 30, 1930

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I have your letter. You need not have given your name. I think they will not arrest Khushalbhai[1]. It will be befitting if he is accompanied by a batch of volunteers. He should consider this. They may stop his pension for participating in civil disobedience. In my view it would be good if they did. The greater their tyranny the sooner they will go. If, however, he does not have the courage to forgo the pension, he should give up the idea of joining civil disobedience. For the rest, at the present moment civil disobedience has come to be the supreme duty for everyone. I have no doubt about it. If he is not arrested when he gets down at Viramgam, he may as convenient to him go to Lakhtar or any other place where there is a satyagraha camp, and then return home. When another occasion arises he mayagain offer civil disobedience and may even face bullets if occasion arises. In other words, he should be ready for everything. He may, however, do all this only if Dev Bhabhi[2] is agreeable. In any case we all have his blessings and that is sufficient. You may come any time you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati; Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Sabarmati Sangrahalaya

[1] Addressee's father

[2] Dev Kunvar, addressee's mother

230 LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

KARADI
April 30, 1930

BHAI HARIBHAUJI,

Bapu has received your letter. He has asked me to write that Kashinathji may well join you if Ramnarayanji can conduct the *Hindi Navajivan* by himself. So please write to him. It is very likely that Ramnarayanji may have to share some work of *Young India* and *Navajivan* on account of Mahadevbhai's arrest. Maybe he will be unable to manage all the work by himself.

Respects from
KANTI

From the Hindi Original: Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

231. PLEDGE FOR SWARAJ WORKERS

[*April 1930*][1]

We, the undersigned, join in the fight for Purna Swaraj and, till it is won, we will not take up any work other than what is assigned to us.

From Gujarati: C.W. 8108. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] In *Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine* this is placed between letters of 26-4-1930 and 3-5-1930.

232. LETTER TO AMINA QURESHI

10.30 p.m., Thursday [On or before *May 1, 1930*][1]

CHI. AMINA,

You know very well the reason why I have not asked you to go out and work. Do not worry. You may do whatever you can staying at home. You may freely write to me anything you wish to. Imam Saheb will soon be in jail. He will probably get there earlier than I do. May it be so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4294. Courtesy: Hamid Qureshi; also G.N. 6649

233. MAHADEV DESAI AND HIS SUCCESSOR

I have hardly time to notice arrests and imprisonments even of eminent Indians. I do not even come to know of them immediately. Being constantly on the move and living in a village, often twenty-four hours elapse before I know some of the important events. Happily it is unnecessary for me to know them. When many important persons act as one man and undergo suffering and when many important events take place at the same time, both become common things and it is a happy sign. We take no notice of the myriads of sunbeams each as important as the sun itself. We pay homage to each when we worship the sun which is the crowning act of the simultaneous action of the beams. Even so do we worship daily the ever-waxing sun of India's freedom which is in the process of formation.

But I must take notice of Mahadev's conviction. In themidst of

[1] This was the last Thursday before Gandhiji was arrested on May 5.

chaos going under the false name of Government, Mahadev's arrest was a courteous and reluctant business on the part of the authorities. Though he set ablaze the whole of Gujarat from Viramgam and Dholera to Ahmedabad, the authorities recognizedthat it was a life-giving fire, that they were safer under Mahadev's rule than their own and that he was well able to control the forces he had brought into being.

But Mahadev made it impossible for the authorities to keep him free. He had managed to "smuggle in" a lorry load of salt from Dholera. The authorities were wide awake. They intercepted the lorry. They had hoped not to find Mahadev in it. But when he saw that the lorry was to be arrested together with its precious load, he got out of the car in which he was following and jumped into the lorry. And so if they were to arrest the lorry they could not help arresting him. Nor could Mahadev help jumping into the lorry in the circumstances. With him was a youth who was to have appeared for his final L.L.B. the following day; two were young men from the Gujarat College and two were sons of wealthy men. The lorry was given by Sjt. Ranchhodlal, a mill-owner who, when warned what might befall the lorry, said, "What fear about the loss of the lorry when I am prepared to lose all for swaraj?"

Mahadev has got his well-deserved rest. For hundreds of strenuous workers the jail has become a resting house. Mahadev yearned as he says after "a better fate but evidently had not yet deserved it".

He has appointed as his successor Imam Saheb Abdul Kadir Bawazeer, a comrade from South Africa and Vice-Chairman of the Ashram Committee and one of its trustees. Imam Saheb is an elderly man hardly capable of strenuous labours. He may be said to be illiterate. But he is a seasoned soldier and son of a devoted Muslim who was till the time of his death muezzin of the Juma Musjid of Bombay. He is himself styled Imam because he officiated as priest in several mosques in South Africa. He is an orthodox Mussalman in the sense that he never misses his prayers or his fasts. But he is also most liberal-minded or he could not have lived with me in the closest

contact in the midst of all sorts of people for an unbroken period of nearly twenty years.

But the swaraj of my—our—dream recognizes no race or religious distinctions. Nor is it to be the monopoly of lettered persons nor yet of moneyed men. Swaraj is to be for all, including the former, but emphatically including the maimed, the blind, the starving toiling millions. A stout-hearted, honest, sane, illiterate man may well be the first servant of the nation as Imam Saheb has become in Gujarat and another still less known friend, by name Abdullabhai, has become in Ville Parle. He is the successor of Swami Anand who by his inexhaustible energy and amazing self-denial made Navajivan Karyalaya, though a purely philanthropic institution, also a sound business proposition which has been bringing to the doors of the Gujaratis the truest gems of Gujarati literature understandable by the masses. But these are not rare instances. These are typical of what the struggle has thrown up all over India. The Government is making its last desperate effort to retain India as the milch cow of the White Islanders in the far off West. But selfless servants of the nation will no longer permit the rape of the cow at the expense of her three hundred million children.

Young India, 1-5-1930

234. TO CORRESPONDENTS

My correspondence accumulates daily. I have purposely deprived myself of much assistance. Seasoned workers have been better occupied. It is therefore impossible for me to cope with the correspondence from day to day. I have invited co-workers whom I have sent away to different parts of the country to keep me duly informed of their doings. They naturally expect at least an acknowledgment. I find however that I am unable even to do that. The fact is that I should be regarded as a half prisoner permitted to receive letters but prevented from writing in reply except occasionally. Presently I shall be a full prisoner if not something higher. Therefore when fellow-workers and others do not receive letters from me they should know that I have had no time to write to them.

Young India, 1-5-1930

235.GOONDA RAJ

If what is going on in Gujarat is any indication of what is going on in other parts of India, even Dyerism pales into insignificance. This may appear to be an exaggerated statement. But it is meant to be literally true. The massacre of Jallianwala was a clean sweep. It created an impression both in the intended and the unintended sense.

The death by inches that is being dealt out in Gujarat is unimpressive either way, and may, if care is not taken, prove utterly demoralizing. It may weaken the victims and decidedly debases the tyrants.

If I have the time I shall summarize the events of the past week for these columns. In any case the reader will find the whole of the evidence in the daily press.

Mahadev Desai had hugged the belief that after the efforts he made by going there himself and sending lawyer friends, the barbarous torture had ceased at Viramgam. But it was not to be. A volunteer was for a few minutes isolated from his company, and this gave the representatives of law and order an opportunity of falling upon their victim and treating him as his predecessors had been treated at Viramgam.

This is what Dr. Narsinhbhai Mehta, a retired Chief Medical

Officer of Junagadh, who at the age of 66 was enthused with the spirit of satyagraha, saw with his own eyes:

I brought a party of about 120 satyagrahis, each with a bag of ten lb. of contraband salt from Wadhvan Camp this evening.

As I led the party, I was the first to meet the inspecting party consisting of one European officer, two Indian officers and about 4 or 5 police constables. Over and above this there were about fifty spare constables watching the entrance of the staircase.

I was asked what I had got in the bag under my armpit. I replied, "Ten lb. of contraband salt." "All right, old doctor, you can go," they said. I said, "I am leading a party of about 120 satyagrahis, each with a bag of such salt. So I want to see personally how you deal with them, or whether you allow them to go freely just like other passengers." He said, "All right, you stand apart on one side, and watch." One by one the satyagrahis were made to pass through the said inspecting party and immediately all the seven or eight of them, including the European officer, caught hold of each resister and snatched the bag from the hands of the satyagrahi, handling the resister most roughly. Almost every satyagrahi was treated likewise. It was a disgraceful proceeding. I had a very high opinion of Englishmen all throughout my life. This was the first experience of the kind during sixty-six years.

When I could bear the treatment no longer and expostulated, the officer said: "Speak to the public outside about this and write to the papers!" And the whole performance went on as before.

Mark the callousness with which Dr. Mehta's entreaty was met. It was a jolly performance for the British officer and his fellow-loyalists to indulge in the sport of dispossessing young men of their precious possession. It was no use telling them that the victims were not running away nor hiding anything. The law had to be respected without any waiting for the law's delay on the part of its administrators.

But even this was nothing compared to the scenes enacted in the Kheda district. I own that the brave sons and daughters of Kheda have carried out fairly successfully the legitimate boycott of officials who are no longer able to impose their will upon the people. They have brutally struck a graduate and professor of the Gujarat Vidyapith who had committed no offence, but who had gone simply to see what was happening when he heard the beating. In the same district near Borsad a few police supported by a local Thakore and his minions armed with long armed sickles without notice put out the lights at a meeting and mercilessly fell upon their victims. The audience consisted of Patidars

and Rajputs who were fully able to defend themselves. But not a stone was thrown, not a word was uttered. For the sake of discipline they suffered. One man narrowly escaped death. Seven are still lying in a hospital. Altogether thirty-five have been traced as having been injured. This was a cowardly edition of Jallianwala.

Then take Ahmedabad. A liquor dealer finding his till empty from day to day got so exasperated that he savagely attacked the pickets one of whom lay senseless. The picketing was of the most peaceful as acknowledged by everybody. There was not even any demonstration. Only the names of those who visited this were taken down by the pickets who knew them. The success of the picketing lies in this case in moving the caste machinery which still works fairly among the labouring classes.

Have the administrators of law and order done anything to prevent this savagery? No. They have secretly enjoyed it. They are welcome to the joy of it. Only let this be not called 'law and order'. Let it be called Goonda Raj.

The duty before the people is clear. They must answer this organized hooliganism with great suffering. If they have the will and the power, freedom is assured. Freedom is a fruit of suffering, licence is born of violence. What we are all pining for is freedom that imposes restraints upon itself for the sake of society. Licence imposes suffering upon society so that it may enjoy exclusive privileges. This is a Government of unbridled licence because it is a Government whose chief, if not sole, aim is to exploit Indian society.

PS. Since writing the above I have almost identical pictures from Balasore and Mathura. I reproduce them in full. Authorized hooliganism is evidently India-wide or fast becoming so.

Young India, 1-5-1930

236. NOTES

THE SPEAKER'S RESIGNATION

Vithalbhai Patel's resignation does not come as a surprise upon us. It would have been surprising if he had not resigned. By his courage combined with impartiality, he won the affection of Congressmen and commanded the admiration of opponents. I am glad he recognizes that the way to serve the country is not through the Asse-mbly. The legislatures are but a pawn in the game of exploitation. Ostrich-like we hide our heads in the sand and refuse to see what is plain as a pikestaff to the onlooker. Vithalbhai Patel's resignation is a severe blow to the prestige of the Government. His firmness in the Chair was undoubtedly embarrassing to the Government; his vacating it in the manner he has done is still more so.

FRONTIER PROVINCES

When I marched to Dandi, friends in the Frontier Provinces had offered to send some volunteers to help me. I sent them thanks in appreciation of their offer but did not avail myself of it. How nice perhaps it would have been if they had not actively participated in the movement. Those who, not being sure of perfect non-violence being observed, do not take an active part in the struggle are most assuredly helping it. Those who wanting to serve take part in it and violence results, as happened at Peshawar, are as assuredly harming the movement. That the people in Peshawar meant well I have no doubt. They are perhaps more impatient (if such a thing were possible) than I am to win freedom. But nobody can get freedom today in this land except through non-violence. We cannot get India's freedom through the way of violence; we are within reach of it if we would but keep up non-violence to the end. The way lies not through the burning of armoured cars and taking the lives of administrators of the Government machinery; it lies through disciplined organized self-suffering. I deeply regret the occurrences in Peshawar. Brave lives have been thrown away without the cause itself being served.

NECESSITY OF FULFILMENT

There is a great deal of bartering among us. The position taken

up by foreign cloth merchants is but a symptom of that spirit. They want to give up foreign cloth trade only if they can do so without suffering any loss. But patriotism does not admit of barter. People are expected like Dattatreya to face death, like Kachalia in South Africa to face compulsory insolvency, like the late Gopabandhu Das and others, not known to fame, to face poverty and like the widow of Vithalbhai of Ambheti to suffer the death of nearest and dearest ones. Therefore the reluctance of foreign cloth merchants to suffer losses, in my opinion, betrays want of real patriotism.

But the Delhi merchants contend that the local Congress Committee has bound itself to stop picketing under certain conditions. If that be so, the promise has to be fulfilled at any cost. If the word of a Congressman or a Congress organization cannot be relied upon, we shall ultimately lose the battle. Satyagraha means insistence on Truth. Breach of promise is a base surrender of truth. I have therefore advised the parties, if they cannot agree as to the text of the promise, if any, to refer the matter to arbitration.

I understand too that in Delhi, they have resorted to mixed picketing. I have suggested that it should be confined only to women. It does not matter if picketing is suspended for want of sufficient women pickets. Every occasion for violence must be avoided. Men can produce by careful propaganda and production of khadi an irresistible atmosphere for the boycott. But picketing wherever it is done must be confined to women.

RASHTRIYA STREE SABHA

This body has now formed a sub-association whose sole object is to do the work of the two boycotts—liquor and foreign cloth. It has made a public appeal for funds. I have no doubt that it will receive greater public support than hitherto. The public should know that the ceaseless workers in this association are the G.O.M.'s grand-daughters. His spirit is watching over their devotion and India's work with pride and satisfaction.

FROM OVERSEAS

I have had cables from Mexico, the Phillippines, South Africa, East Africa and elsewhere wishing the cause success. I have purposely refrained from publishing them, not out of ungratefulness, but

because I know that valuable as the wishes of other people are, what will decide the issue will be our own wishes and consequent action. If our action is correct the good wishes of the whole world will be with us if they are not already. Nevertheless I must reproduce the two following messages as they are from English friends. It is the conversion of England that civil resisters are aiming at. I have enough criticism from England, some of which I have published in these pages. It gives me pleasure therefore to publish good wishes of some English friends.

DEAR MAHATMA GANDHI,

We the undersigned members of the Executive of the War Resisters' International are watching with intense interest the progress of your campaign in India. In accordance with the principles of the War Resisters' International we believe in the possibility of overthrowing imperialism by pacifist means and we rejoice that you are relying upon the method of non-violence.

We send you our love and sympathy in the hardships and difficulties which you will undoubtedly have to face and assure you that we will do our best, by propaganda in whatever circles may be open to us, to assist you in your fight for truth and justice.

Yours sincerely,

A. FENNER BROCKWAY

HAROLD F. BING

MARTHA STEINITZ

STEPHEN J. THORNE

H. RUNHAM BROWN

May non-violence achieve success.

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM

WOMEN'S APPEAL TO THE VICEROY

The appeal of the women of Gujarat made to the Viceroy, printed elsewhere,[1] deserves world-wide attention. The appeal has been promoted by the Gujarati women only. For an all-India appeal much time would have been required. But it is to be hoped that the action of

[1] *Vide* "Draft letter to Viceroy", 27-4-1930.

the Gujarati sisters will be copied by all the other provinces with such changes as may be necessary. The organization has to grow naturally. Therefore a variety may be invited. It would not matter, so long as the central facts are allowed to remain intact. They are (1) no mixed picketing, (2) Boycott of foreign cloth, not merely British cloth, and this through khaddar.

Young India, 1-5-1930

237. QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Professor Syed Rauf Pasha caught hold of me when last I was in Bulsar[1] and asked me some pertinent questions on Hindu-Muslim unity. At my request he reduced the questions in writing so that I could give precise answers. The reader will find the questions and the answers below:

Q. 1. You say that the present campaign is intended only to create the necessary strength among the people to gain independence rather than to establish independence. If you feel that Dominion Status on the basis of the Nehru Report will create that strength, will you accept it when the Muslims feel that it would be only Hindu strength rather than National strength that would be gained thereby?

A. I should never feel that any *grant* can give us strength. In no case could the Nehru scheme be revived or accepted if only because the communal solution suggested therein does not satisfy those concerned in it and also because it does not stipulate for Independence as it obviously could not at the time.

Q. 2. Do you consider the Ali Brothers to be sincere in differing from you over the time of starting the disobedience of the salt law and over the question of participation in the Round Table Conference; and that they were in no way influenced by the British Government in the adoption of such an attitude?

A. I certainly consider the Ali Brothers to be sincere in what they say. If I believed them to be insincere or capable of being influenced by the British Government, I should never hope of their being weaned from what to me appears to be a grievous error as my action appears to them to be.

[1] On April 26, 1930

Q. 3. Do you realize or not that the Ali Brothers still have a great following among the Muslim masses throughout India and who would swell your ranks tomorrow if only the Ali Brothers assure them that such a step will not be detrimental to their interests?

Further, don't you think that even the Ali Brothers with all their influence were and still are powerless to dispel their suspicion of the Mahasabha Hindus just as you were and still are powerless to carry the Hindu community with you in the settlement of the communal question although your leadership in other matters is not questioned?

A. How can it be otherwise? Their record of service will always secure for the Ali Brothers a following among the Muslim masses. There is no doubt therefore that their coming would mean additional strength to the cause.

Deep-rooted suspicions cannot be dispelled by leaders however influential they may be.

Q. 4. Do you think that Muslims specially of the N.W.F. Province and Malabar are sufficiently trained for non-violent fight as the Hindus specially of Gujarat are; and do not past recent occurrences in these provinces impress on you the necessity of stopping such unprepared provinces from immediate participation until such organization is complete and that otherwise there would be an unnecessary loss of Muslim life?

A. I have repeatedly warned those provinces that are unprepared for strict non-violence against participation in the struggle. It is quite enough if they can give their sympathy.

Young India, 1-5-1930

238. LIQUOR AND PARSIS

Several Parsi friends seem to be under the apprehension that liquor picketing is to be confined only to Parsi liquor dealers. This is wholly a misconception. Picketing is now going on all over India in a more or less organized fashion. And in the parts other than Gujarat there are more Hindu dealers than Parsis. Even in Gujarat the thousands of toddy trees that are being uprooted belong overw-helmingly to Hindus. Toddy booths owned by Hindus are certainly to be picketed on a most extensive scale. Organized picketing, it should be remembered, has only just commenced. In my speeches I have made a pointed appeal to Parsis because there is an indissoluble bond between them and me and because they are the most advanced and organized community in all India and therefore more readily ame-nable to reason. They read newspapers. Parsi liquor dealers attend my meetings, whereas Hindu dealers are too ignorant to do so. The latter can only be reached by personal visits made to them in their own booths or homes. Indeed the response I am getting from Parsi friends is quite encouraging, though not yet adequate. It is a Parsi sister—Mithubai Petit—who, assisted among others by a Parsi pleader, is org-anizing picketing in the Surat district. Behram Mehta and Dhanjisha Darbari have gone to jail in the same cause. They were ostensibly arrested for breach of salt laws, but I have a suspicion that they were arrested for the possibility of their undoubted influence spreading among liquor dealers. Anyway, they were engaged in the anti-drink work as much as the Salt Satyagraha. It was a matter of joy to me too that some Parsi liquor dealers who came to me the other day went away satisfied to find that I had fully the intention of picketing toddy booths just as much as liquor shops. One complaint was that we were leaving alone the liquor shops in the adjacent Baroda territory. The charge is true. But I am hoping that the Baroda State people will organize the picketing of Baroda canteens. Prohibition is first and foremost a moral reform. The Indian States are as much interested in it as the rest of India. The States' people may take up this reform, and ought to do so.

The friends who saw me raised also the question of their living. It is here that the Parsis as a community have to step in to find a solution. Parsi associations can prepare statistics and organize bureaux for the employment of those who would need relief when the only

source of their income is gone, as it ought to have long ago. It cannot be a matter of pride that this great community has so many of its members living on an immoral traffic.

Young India, 1-5-1930

239. 'TRIUMPH OF NON-VIOLENCE'

Who does not know Shri Rajendra Prasad? He writes from Patna:[1]

The more I become aware of the present trend in the country the more I am convinced that people have fully learnt the lesson of peace. There is still something lacking to be sure. But if people are peaceful and fearless to the end swaraj is not far away.

There are three prerequisites for swaraj: purity, fearlessness and work. Giving up of liquor and other intoxicating things is a sign of purity. Through civil disobedience of the salt law people are learning the lesson of fearlessness. When the charkha or the *takli* has become universal one can say that people have become industrious. The economic gain from these things is of course there. Giving up of liquor, etc., will save us Rs. 25 crores. Abolition of the salt tax will save at least Rs. 6 crores and the takli through the manufacture of khadi, Rs. 60 crores.

May God grant the people of this country strength to do all this.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 1-5-1930

[1] The letter is not translated here. Rajendra Prasad had described how events in Patna had ended in a procession of about 15,000 being taken out on April 23 and how in the face of police violence the huge assembly had remained wholly peaceful and disciplined. He had called it a triumph of non-violence.

240. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

May 1, 1930

MY DEAR WHITE BEARD,

I had your letter. Kheda has become the storm centre. It is there that the danger exists. You will please keep the boycott clean and absolutely free of any compulsion. The little underlings ought not to be molested in any way. And I feel that you should transfer yourself to where the Thakore of Dehvan is residing. If you are satisfied about the atrocities, let me have a brief statement for publication. Try to see the Thakore if it is at all possible. Who is this Foujdar Munshi?

I am writing this in a moving train. Going to Hamida's seat of action and looking forward to seeing her.

Love.

Yours,

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 9572

241. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

Unrevised *May 1, 1930*

CHI. NARAHARI,

Getting used to 'Chi.' will take me some time.[1]

1 There should be no boycott of petty police officials. Provisions, etc., should be freely supplied to them.

2. But they should be disobeyed when they come as policemen. Any services demanded by them as policemen should be refused.

3. Big officers should not be asked to vacate the houses in which they may be living.

4. In spite of the boycott, our relations with those boycotted should be happy. If they become bitter, take it that there is hatred in the boycott.

It is not the officials, but their authority that we boycott. We boycott not Dyer, but Dyerism. We should examine our attitude by putting ourselves this question: "How would I behave with the officer

[1] Gandhiji first wrote "Bhaishri 5" and then struck it off.

if he were my own brother?" For example, how do I behave with Harilal? This will enable you to understand your attitude a little more clearly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9051

242. EXTRACTS FROM SPEECH AT OLPAD

May 1, 1930

The Government has been testing us thoroughly by taking away our leaders from us one by one. It believes that, deprived of our leaders, we shall either hide ourselves in our homes or become violent. What can be better for the Government than if we hide? If we do not raise our heads, if we go on paying the land revenue year after year, continue drinking liquor, buy salt at a rupee and a quarter a maund and wear foreign cloth, the Government will want nothing more. On the other hand, if we resort to violence it can stand it since the consumption of ammunition will then go up, the industry in England will stand to gain, and its generals, captains and soldiers will have honours and awards conferred on them. There is just one thing the Government cannot put up with, and that is that we should refuse to obey its laws and to submit to its authority.

We have not been true to our salt. That is why we disregard the cloth made by the hands of our poor and virtuous brothers and sisters and import cloth from abroad. Islam had a Caliph who was the greatest among all the Caliphs. What did he tell the great governors from Baghdad who had come dressed in silken robes? "Your Prophet wore only coarse cloth. Where did you learn to wear such soft garments?" Holy men in those days had such power that people trembled before them. And this they did, not because they brandished the sword, but because they wielded spiritual power. Now people, whether Hindus or Muslims, tell me that they find khadi too coarse. I laugh when I hear that, though, in truth, I ought to weep.

I have been told that in Surat when some of our sisters were on their round, the owners of toddy booths behaved badly. Some even threw clods of earth at them. I was ashamed to hear this. A man should die before he insults such women or swears at them or lifts a stone against them. What though the person behaving thus be a

drunkard? Haven't drunkards their mothers and sisters? These women do not go and abuse them. They only humbly entreat them. Is it a crime to do so? Every man in this country should have the spirit in him not to tolerate women being insulted. This does not mean that one should lose one's temper with the person who abuses them. But how can any man have the audacity to abuse a woman or lift a stone against her? He ought rather to pray: O God, may my hand come unstuck before I commit such a crime.

Against whom can you raise your hand? Perhaps against a man who attacks you, though even that is at present forbidden. To raise one's hand against a woman is cowardly. It is unthinkable. I hope no Indian is behind these incidents. I hope the clod of earth fell accidentally on some sister. I had believed that though there might be wicked Indians, even they would observe some decorum. However, even if a few women have their heads smashed as some men have had theirs, we will not give up what we have undertaken in the name of God. If it is the fate of our sisters to be beaten they will be beaten. But let those who drink as well as those who sell liquor note that drinking will soon be a matter of the past.

> The way of the Raghus it has been ever,
>
> Life may fail but a pledge never.

We all brothers and sisters have now learnt to recite this quatrain and we are no actors in a play who only sing and do not act. Just as we know that the salt law is as good as abolished, let us also have the faith that the drink evil, too, will be gone.

Remember my humble prayer. I also want you to carry my message—the message of an old man—to all concerned and to the liquor-booth owners of Surat.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-5-1930

243. SPEECH AT RANDER

May 1, 1930

I appeal to Muslim friends to realize that at present we have embarked upon a movement of self-purification. The time has not yet come to divide the gains among ourselves. When that time comes, we shall decide the share of each. If it is our misfortune to fight then, we shall fight it out. But personally I believe that when that day comes, there will be no need for us to fight. There will be no cause then for mutual distrust or fear. At present our fight is directed mainly against the salt tax. Such a tax is forbidden in Islam. Salt is a necessity for all. The majority of Hindus and Muslims are poor people and the burden of the tax falls on them. In Rander, however, we have millionaires and multi-millionaires. They can see the facts if only they go with me into villages.

Our second task is to banish foreign cloth. Everyone can see from the accounts of the Spinners' Association that because of this movement we pay thousands of rupees to Muslim women and weavers. The large number of women in Vijapur who earn a living through this work and bless me are all Muslims. These poor women have often wept when my workers could not supply them enough slivers.

The third task is eradication of the drink evil. In which religion is drinking not forbidden? In the course of my life I have mixed a great deal with Muslims and attended many dinners given by Muslim hosts. Muslims cannot but join the movement for ban-ishing liquor and other intoxicants from the country. Are those mill workers not Muslims who picket liquor booths in Ahmedabad and plead with proprietors and drink-addicts, patiently submitting to assaults and abuses?

This is God's work. He alone can do it who is ready to sacrifice his life for it. Only he who is ready to dive into the sea can bring up pearls from it. I only beg of my Muslim clients and other Muslims to realize that this movement of self-purification is not a monopoly of any community, and wish that all people shouldheartily join it. We will see afterwards how to share the gains when the Government asks us what we want. My prophecy about that day, however, is that we shall then no longer think it necessary to fight, that one brother will invite another to take anything he wants. We shall then have nobility among us and the bargaining spirit will have disappeared. We have to do this

work in God's name, in the name of the poor. Let all the communities help in it and let the town of Rander, too, give all the help it can and bring glory to its fair name.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-5-1930

244. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

[After *May 1, 1930*][1]

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. What is the name of the lady who is angry with me? Send her here. Are all of you concerned with substance or with unimportant details? I maintain good weight and sufficient energy; what does it matter, then, whether or not I eat fruit? I have kept a way open to permit me to start eating it again if it becomes necessary to do so for my health. I have not taken a vow not to eat fruit. But why should I if there is no need? I had read in a paper that you go out to picket liquor booths.

To you all,

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1184. Courtesy: Sushila Gandhi; . also G.N. 4772

[1] According to *Navajivan*, 11-5-1930, picketing of liquor booths by Ahmedabad women started from this date.

245. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

May 2, 1930

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

I was in fact expecting a letter from you when I got one. If you keep good health in the Ashram, you should stay either there or in Vijapur. If you have overcome the fear of death, you should be equally contented in all circumstances and go on doing the work which may fall to your lot. I do not feel inclined at present to call up here any of those who are left behind. If, however, you wish otherwise. let me know.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 898. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

246. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

May 2, 1930

BHAISHRI VITHALDAS,

I got your letter. You have asked for someone to help you. Maganbhai is going there. He is a very exact man in all matters. He will prove very useful to you. I wish you all success.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9773

247. LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI

May 2, 1930

CHI. RADHA,

Mithubehn told me that you were eager to work with her. She intends to entrust you with a responsible task. If you really wish to work with her, I will not dissuade you. But Khurshedbehn also told me that you wished to work with her. If you gave her your word first you should work with her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8682. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

248. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

May 2, 1930

CHI. KUSUM,

I have still not received the letter which you said in your hurriedly-written last letter you would write.

I keep with this the two letters received from you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1798

249. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

May 2, 1930

CHI. JANAKIBEHN,

I got Madalasa's letter today. I do not remember to have received any from you. Why should I get angry? You seem to have plunged into work there. I am glad that you are working with Perinbehn.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2886

250. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

May 2, 1930

CHI. NARAHARI,

I do not know all the facts about the Headman. But why should he try to defend himself ? If he has the necessary strength, he should suffer whatever is done to him. But otherwise he may by all means defend himself. I can conceive of only one situation in which a person may defend himself, and that is when a false allegation is made against him. Then he may, if he wishes, defend himself. In such cases, however, only those who are on the spot can decide what is right.

Bhagavati tells me that there will be darkness there after you go. There is no one, he tells me, who will give all his time to the work. Think about this and let me know your view.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9052

251. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

May 2, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I was very happy to see your signature on the letters about the meetings. You know how much I value your signature.[1]

Shankerlal told me about your activities and I was glad to hear it.

Ask Mridu to give me a report of her work.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11133. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

252. MESSAGE TO SAHU SABHA, BOMBAY

KARADI,
May 2, 1930

I hope that the Sahu Sabha will receive support from all patriotic non-Brahmins. The present struggle is intended to bring relief to millions and not to any particular class or caste.

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-5-1930

[1] *Vide* also "Draft letter to Viceroy", 27-4-1930.

253. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

May 3, 1930

MY DEAR K.,

Publish in the *I.S.R.*[1] only.[2] You are doing bravely. If *I.S.R.* refuses, let me know.

BAPU

SJT. J. C. KUMARAPPA

GUJARAT VIDYAPITH

AHMEDABAD

From a photostat: S.N. 10086 and 10087

254. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 3, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS

Bhai Sundaram was formerly an inmate of the Ashram. He has the virtues suggested by his name. He had left the Benares University and come to us. He will stay there for a few days. Cultivate his acquaintance and introduce him to the others. I shall write about other things after I get the mail.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8109. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Indian Social Reformer*

[2] This sentence is not in Gandhiji's hand but has been retained out of the four alternatives typed on the postcard.

255. LETTER TO OCHCHHAVLAL PANDYA

May 3, 1930

BHAI OCHCHHAVLAL,

Bhai Kamalashankar is very keen to join the struggle. Earlier you have encouraged your brother to take part in such activities. I should like you to do the same now. Every family should take part in this struggle.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: Kamalashankar Pandya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

256. CERTIFICATE TO V. A. SUNDARAM [1]

[About *May 3, 1930*][2]

V. A. Sundaram has been in touch with me since 1915 and was in the Satyagraha Ashram for a long time from its foundation. He has left the Benares Hindu University with Pandit Malaviyaji's blessings to join the Struggle. The best use that can be made of him and his wife[3], who is also with him in his decision heart and soul, is for both to go to Tamil Nad and there to break the salt laws, to assist in organizing, especially in his own district of Coimbatore, boycott of foreign cloth through the *takli* and boycott of intoxicating drinks.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3207

[1] The original bears no title. The G.N. register however, describes it as a certificate.

[2] It appears, this was written about the same time as the preceding item, in which Gandhiji wrote to the same effect.

[3] Savitri

257. TO THE PEOPLE OF KHEDA

In Gujarat at present the Kheda district seems to have become the centre of our struggle. Nowhere else in Gujarat do we find the same repression as in that district. There they arrest or release whom they like, beat up or abuse all and sundry. People may be said to have remained fairly quiet and peaceful in spite of provocation. But Kakasaheb observed some shortcomings also. People submit to the repression but in their severe boycott of the Government men there is anger and ill will and hence violence. They harass the Government officials in petty ways and call them names. This is not the way to success. We may denounce bureaucracy to our heart's content, but not the men in office. The poor officer is like any of us. Time was when, if not we, our own kinsmen wanted to be Headmen or Mamlatdars and we flattered the Mamlatdars. Now that our love of office is gone, how can we expect that theirs too should go? It is true that it should go. We should humbly try to cure them of their infatuation, and show them the evil that is there in the office of Mamlatdar or Sub-Inspector of police, but in no way should we vent our anger on a Mamlatdar or a Sub-Inspector of police. No matter how severe our boycott, it should be full of sweetness and courtesy. If it is not so, some day even a riot may break out. The Mamlatdar or the Sub-Inspector may cross the limits of decency. One might say that the Sub-Inspectors of Police have already crossed the limits, for I know that one of them insulted a person like Maganbhai Desai and manhandled him. Would it be surprising, then, if people should similarly cross the limits? If some regard it decent not to go beyond abusive speech, how can they blame others who draw the line at slapping the former? And once violent hands are laid on another, where will it all end? As things are still under control, it is time for the Kheda people to take heed and change things wherever necessary. Within the limits I have laid down, they are free to continue the different boycotts they have put into effect. Let me mention those limits. The reader should go through and understand Kakasaheb's article along with this. Let us take a Headman as an example.

If the Headman belongs to the village, he cannot be deprived of his place of residence or denied provisions. The boycott should be confined to his duties as Headman. That is, his orders should not be carried out, not a drop of water demanded by virtue of his authority

should be given and no provisions demanded by him for the visiting officials should be supplied. Should he, however, fall ill, we ought to serve him lovingly. If we lack the power or the love to help him thus we should give up the boycott altogether. Take it as gospel truth that if any boycott proceeds from a feeling of malice or enmity it will bring us no good, at any rate in our present struggle.

Some may say that this non-violence is a difficult thing. That is true. And still non-violence is as easy as it is difficult. It is easy for those who understand it. For others it is more difficult than even flying in the air. It was because I was fully aware of this that I did not include in our programme the boycott of officials. As the people themselves took it up, I have let it go on and even encouraged it in my speeches. But I have always mentioned the limits within which it should be practised. Nothing will be lost and it is still not too late, if the boycott is given up because the limits of non-violent boycott cannot in practice be observed.

I ought to admit that I am unconcerned with defeat or success. For I know that victory will come only with non-violence and that, whatever the good results violent methods may seem to promise, ultimately they will bring defeat. The ruddy cheeks of a tuberculous patient are not a sign of health, but a portent of imminent death. This, however, is not my whole story.

It does not surprise me that people cannot digest the non-violence that requires them to suffer beatings without demur. And yet that is what our original pledge contains. People have on occasion done quite well. I know that when the Thakore of Dehvan in complicity with the police made an attack on the people, the people could have fought back but did not. There have been several other occasions of the same kind, but people proved their fortitude by remaining quite peaceful. They deserve to be congratulated on their conduct. However, if they do not regard peaceful conduct as their duty but remain peaceful reluctantly, such peace will not last long. People will either begin to run away or fight back in self-defence, and both these are forbidden in our present struggle. People can neither run away nor fight back. The present struggle is one which requires us to learn the secret of living by dying.

No one has ever said so far that there is no victory in store for those prepared to face death. Some there are who doubt whether the people have the capacity to die, but many no longer have that

doubt. It is possible to take the figures for the last World War and show that our loss in men and money during the four weeks of this struggle is only a fraction compared to that borne by each State participating in the terrible war in Europe. And, moreover, we have advanced. If our present struggle remains non-violent to the very last, we shall win swaraj without having incurred, during our whole struggle, the loss in men and money incurred in a single day of the European War. After this there should be no room for doubt. And if doubt goes, the necessary climate of public spirit is certain to build up.

So much for social boycott.

Now about discipline.

If the volunteers lack the sense of discipline, we shall find ourselves in a difficult position. In war discipline is everything. At the time of the Crimean War, the officers of the British army committed such blunders that vast numbers of soldiers were killed. The poor soldiers went on obeying the orders given and met their death. The stupidity of the officers has been forgotten, but the bravery of the soldiers has been immortalized in the golden words of a famous poem by Tennyson. This is how he enumerates the virtues of true soldiers:

> Theirs not to make reply,
> Theirs not to reason why,
> Theirs but to do and die.

I feel that this is as it should be. It does not mean that the true soldier suppresses his reason. Before a man enlists in the army he should fully use his power of reason, know his commander and study the rules of service. After this, if he discusses at every step the sub-rules as and when they are framed, and if he weighs the pros and cons of the orders issued, his time would be wasted in thinking and arguing and the progress of work will be hindered. If every soldier claims for himself the right to argue with the commander, the battle might be lost. Therefore a soldier, having enlisted himself, should suspend his reason. If after enlisting oneself as a soldier, one gives free rein to one's reason and indulges in arguments on the subject of one's duties, one's reason will lose steadiness of purpose. That would be misuse of reason.

Everyone in Kheda who understands this should carefully observe our rules of discipline.

Carding and spinning are essential aspects of this discipline. The

volunteers who do not card and spin should leave this movement for swaraj. Our motto is: 'Swaraj through the thread of yarn.' To those who have accepted the motto, it is no longer a subject of discussion, but a duty to be practised. No matter if spinning does not seem necessary as part of the Salt Satyagraha; it is essential as part of the swaraj movement. True the salt tax has not been removed; our struggle, however, is not merely for its abolition but for winning our freedom.

Just as carding and spinning are essential, so is being clad in khadi from head to foot. This goes without saying.

The people of Kheda have been evincing boundless enthusiasm. If that enthusiasm is pure and non-violent, the peaceful activity of spinning is both its sign and its food. Quiet enthusiasm is always constructive, and its opposite begins and ends only as a wave of excitement.

I have one thing in particular to add. Not only Raas, but other villages also have taken the pledge of non-payment of land revenue. I like this pledge. Those who keep it will make a name in Indian history as heroes. But the consequences of the pledge need to be considered.

The person taking the pledge should be ready to let go his land, his homestead and his cattle, and do it without resorting to violence himself or through others. He who has faith that we shall get swaraj will not let anything disturb him. He is prepared to lose his land and his homestead. Even if he loses them now, he will have them returned to him. The Government can never appropriate them for all time. But those who lack such faith should at present take no risk at all of non-payment of the land revenue. In the Congress programme at present there is no mention whatever of non-payment of revenue, and hence one who pays up the tax has nothing to be ashamed of. However, the man who has self-confidence, who has the power to endure suffering, who can make sacrifices for his country or his commander, such a person will, on his own responsibility, refuse to pay land revenue. He has the right not to pay it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan,*4-5-1930*

258. LAWYERS' DUTY

I have never minced words in criticizing lawyers. Mahadev, during his short reign, castigated them to his heart's content. But the lawyers did not misunderstand him. They saw that the shafts he aimed at them were shafts of love. Though the lawyers deserve criticism, their contribution to the fight for freedom is no mean one. Pherozeshah Mehta, the uncrowned king of Bombay, was an eminent lawyer. The Lokamanya was a lawyer. Manmohan Ghosh, Lalmohan Ghosh and Lalaji, the Lion of the Punjab, all of them were lawyers. Deshbandhu, who sacrificed lakhs in the service of the country, was also a lawyer. Motilalji, Malaviyaji, Vithalbhai Patel, Sardar, Jairamdas, Rajagopalachari, Prakasam, Venkatapayya, Santhanam, Munshi, Kamdar, Purushottamdas Trikumdas and Broker, all these are lawyers, and the President of the Congress himself is a lawyer. This list is not exhaustive. I have mentioned only the names which occur to me at the moment, but many others can be mentioned.

The lawyers have, therefore, no reason to feel ashamed of their contribution, but there is none to feel elated either. If despite the sacrifices of all these lawyers people speak ill of lawyers—even I have done so—there is reason for that.

People expect every lawyer to be a patriot, as they expect every Brahmin to possess spiritual knowledge. A lawyer, by his very profession, is an advocate of people's rights, an expert in law and politics and one who saves the victims of oppression by the State. When, therefore, a class of people who should regard service of the country as their profession give themselves up to the pursuit of self-interest, lead a life of self-indulgence or have no other aim than making money by encouraging litigation, people naturally speak ill of them. Though, taken absolutely, the number of patriotic lawyers named above will not appear insignificant, if we have regard to the total number of lawyers and the magnitude of their task, it will appear small indeed.

Lawyers have not remained untouched by the present awakening. The sacrifices of Shri Munshi and other lawyers stem from the present struggle. I see that lawyers who dare not or cannot give up practice, still wish to do some service. I hear that many lawyers in Bombay have stopped wearing hats and foreign clothes. Some lawyers in Gujarat have come forward to investigate the cases of those against

whom atrocities are being committed. All this is welcome indeed. But, leaving aside the question of their giving up practice, the important thing is that they should come forward in large numbers to offer civil disobedience and remain undeterred if the courts cancel their *sanads*. They cannot betray the country for the sake of their *sanads*. If in consequence of their doing national work they lose their *sanads*, they should welcome this as if they had been cleansed of dirt. If lawyers thus become fearless they can help the people of their districts in many ways. If they shed fear, lawyers can

1. keep accounts of public funds;
2. explain legal intricacies to the people;
3. enquire into civil disobedience cases which have been arbitrarily dealt with and bring them to light;
4. be present at places where there is fear of violence;
5. explain to the people all cases of arbitrary use of authority;
6. enquire into injustices being perpetrated at present and point out to the public the Government's misdeeds;
7. help in manufacturing khadi;
8. help the women in bringing about boycott of foreign cloth;
9. since in every province almost all the prominent leaders have been arrested, lawyers can lead the people and encourage the present spirit of fearlessness.

I have suggested these items only by way of illustration. Those who are keen on doing service will think up many fields in which they may do it.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 4-5-1930

259. NOTES

PICKETING

The proprietor of a liquor booth in Ahmedabad thrashed innocent labourers who had committed no crime. In Surat, foul abuses were hurled at women and clods of earth thrown at them. In Jalalpur, they have started using filthy language towards women. The women who endured all this deserve to be complimented. But what about men? When women are abused, it is not necessary for any man to come forward to fight on their behalf. One should not fall into a panic when abused by a drunkard or the proprietor of a liquor booth. All the same, men cannot remain idle in such circumstances. They should go and meet the proprietor, plead with him courteously, collect people's signatures on statements condemning such conduct and publish them. The proprietors of liquor booths should also realize that they ought not to insult women. I am convinced that, if every case of such misconduct is brought to people's notice in courteous language and public feeling in this regard is explained to the proprietors, the latter will certainly desist from such misconduct. They should wisely give up on their own a business which is becoming less and less paying.

GIFT FROM A PARSI GIRL

I reproduce below, without any change, the letter which a Parsi girl has written to me.[1]

In just the same manner, Parsi children in Vapi gave Rs. 300 and one little girl among them asked whether she might join the struggle. When such innocent children show a desire for service, who can help believing that they are prompted by God? I see no insincerity in these girls.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-5-1930

[1] The letter is not translated here. The girl, aged 7, had said she was sending Rs. 10 as her contribution to the cause.

260. ATTACK ON PRINTING-PRESSES

I hope that no one will be frightened by the sword which the Viceroy has hung over the printing-presses.

It is the duty of the people to criticize the bureaucracy. It is our duty to wish that it be destroyed, to commit civil disobedience, to persuade Government servants to give up their jobs and the recruits to leave the army, and to persuade the people to refuse to pay taxes when they have the strength to do that. And yet, under the Government's law, every one of these acts is an offence. The new Ordinance notifies that the Government can seize any press which is guilty of any one of these offences. Every editor and printer of a newspaper should regard it as a sin to obey such a law. If at the present time, when the people have shed fear and are committing civil disobedience of immoral laws, editors of newspapers show weakness, they are bound to harm the cause of the country.

Any press, therefore, which is served with a notice to furnish security should refuse to do so and prefer to close down the paper instead. If all the presses act in this manner, the Government's Ordinance will remain unenforced.

In this struggle full advantage is being taken of the help which newspapers can give, but it does not at all depend on such help. People have realized their strength and know what they should do. So there is little at present which newspapers can give them. We may not get some news of distant places, but we can do without it. I hope, therefore, that no press will furnish security. If people observe this measure of self-restraint, they will find that the new Ordinance does not remain in force for long.

Newspapers can be brought out hand-written and, if people now feel a burning desire to work for the welfare of the country, countless such newspapers can be brought out every day. If people really wish, they can make thousands of copies of hand-written papers. For instance, I may dictate the contents of one issue to fifty men at a time and distribute the copies to fifty persons. The latter should then produce fifty copies each with the help of their friends. We shall thus have 2,500 copies. If these 2,500 copies repeat the process once again, how many copies would we get? The poor at any rate would not object to doing this. All that is necessary is to create such zeal in them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-5-1930

261. CAUTION ABOUT KHADI

At the present time, when khadi is not easily available in the market, traders who love neither their country nor their own good name and whose only aim is to make money anyhow wish to secure khadi of some sort from any source, and do not hesitate to pass off mill-cloth as khadi, charging eight rupees for stuff worth two rupees. Shri Shankerlal Banker writes as under so that khadi-wearers may save themselves from such traders.[1]

I wholly agree with these views and I hope that no one will buy cloth sold as khadi from any store not certified by the Spinners' Association. Those who have fully understood the process by which boycott of foreign cloth is to be brought about and know that the boycott cannot succeed unless we produce khadi, should wait if khadi is not available and should not, in their haste, let themselves be deceived and wear as khadi cloth which is not really khadi.

An effort is being made to stock khadi in khadi bhandars approved by the Spinners' Association. If people follow the new method which I have suggested, we shall have a huge pile of khadi in a few days. Those who wear khadi should spin and persuade others to spin. Those who are required to spin should not buy yarn from known sources in the market, but should increase the number of spinners. That is, they

1. should spin themselves;
2. should persuade their relations to spin;
3. should persuade their neighbours to spin;
4. should introduce new spinning-wheels in the neighbouring villages or persuade the residents to spin on the *takli;*
5. should induce pupils and teachers in schools under their influence to spin.

I have merely mentioned a few of the possible fields in which they can work. In this country of thirty crores, one can think of coun-

[1] The letter is not translated here.

tless methods of inducing people to card and spin, and I have no doubt that if all men and women who have some experience of this work exert themselves, they will change the face of the country.

I appeal to greedy traders to exclude khadi from the sphere of their operations. They should not sell khadi at all; or, if they sell it, they should sell only pure khadi and be upright in their dealings. Let it not be said of khadi that when it becomes scarce its price goes up. When khadi has won its rightful place, there will be no scarcity of it. Cotton will be grown in one's own fields and the skill will be supplied by the family; how, then, will there be any scarcity of khadi? Today we do a business which cannot but ruin us. We have cotton in our homes but we sell it away to foreign countries and, though we can manufacture khadi with our own hands, we let the hands remain idle and wear cloth imported from foreign countries. Let us, at this time of national awakening and self-purification, give up our lethargy, work hard and, with the help of khadi, make a perfect success of the programme of foreign-cloth boycott.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-5-1930

262. KAKASAHEB

Kakasaheb has now followed Mahadev and it can be said, therefore, that *Navajivan* has made a good contribution to the struggle. Kaka, however, was connected recently more with the Vidyapith than with *Navajivan.* He was its Principal, and so his imprisonment brings credit to the Vidyapith. The Vidyapith's Chancellor is in jail, its Principal is in jail; its graduates, its students and teachers are candidates for imprisonment or for something better even than that. Can there be any better measure than this of the worth of the Vidyapith?

But a time is now coming when imprisonment, instead of earning praise, will earn ridicule. When a thing becomes common, it no longer requires compliments. That it is necessary to praise something is not a good sign. We desire that what we praise should become common and, when it becomes so, we cease praising it. There was a time when imprisonment was looked upon as deserving praise. Now praise is given to people who are beaten by the police or who face bullets. It is, therefore, probable that in a very short time people who are imprisoned will be regarded with suspicion. They will say: 'So and so was afraid of bullets and, therefore, courted imprisonment.' We can sense such an attitude in the cases of Mahadev and Kaka, and it is natural.

In truth we can go much further than this. No one should wish to go to jail or be beaten or hanged. We should be ready to face all that and more, if there is any 'more'. If a man to whom being hanged and being garlanded are the same does national work in his home, his doing so has the same value as—or even greater value than—his being hanged. There is great honour in being hanged. But ordinarily no one honours a person who is busy writing day after day, his head bent low, keeping accounts or courteously listening to people's complaints and helping them with advice. But often such work can have greater value than facing death.

Kaka's statement teaches something else too. The description of the atrocities being committed in the Kheda district is honest testimony. It gives us some idea of the *goonda* rule which prevails there. Kakasaheb was pained, and rightly, that some people ran away when assaulted. If no one runs away in the face of a police assault, such assaults will stop automatically. When we get such strength, we shall

soon get the strength to face bullets.

In his statement, Kaka has drawn our attention to one more fact. Though there is an atmosphere of non-violence in the Kheda district, everybody has not been able to assimilate the spirit of non-violence. Kaka has drawn up the rules laying down the limits of social boycott after observing the conditions in Kheda. Everyone should read them, understand them and abide by them. There can be no malice or anger in satyagrahi boycott.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-5-1930

263. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU

JALALPUR,
May 4, 1930

I SUGGEST 10TH OR 13TH AS THE DAY FOR THE MEETING OF THE WORKING COMMITTEE, THE 12TH BEING MONDAY, THE DAY OF MY SILENCE. NO DOUBT THE EARLIER DATE WOULD BE BETTER AND I SUGGEST JALALPUR AS THE VENUE.

The Hindu, 6-5-1930

264. LETTER TO VICEROY

[*May 4, 1930*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

God willing, it is my intention on . . . to set out for Dharasana and reach there with my companions on . . . and demand possession of the Salt Works. The public have been told that Dharasana is private property. This is mere camouflage. It is as effectively under Government control as the Viceroy's House. Not a pinch of salt can be removed without the previous sanction of the authorities.

It is possible for you to prevent this raid, as it has been playfully and mischievously called, in three ways:

1. by removing the salt tax;

2. by arresting me and my party unless the country can, as I hope it will, replace everyone taken away;

3. by sheer goondaism unless every head broken is replaced, as I hope it will.

It is not without hesitation that the step has been decided upon. I had hoped that the Government would fight the civil resisters in a civilized manner. I could have had nothing to say if in dealing with the civil resisters the Government had satisfied itself with applying the ordinary processes of law. Instead, whilst the known leaders have been dealt with more or less according to the legal formality, the rank and file has been often savagely and in some cases even indecently assaulted. Had these been isolated cases, they might have been overlooked. But accounts have come to me from Bengal, Bihar, Utkal, U.P., Delhi and Bombay confirming the experiences of Gujarat of which I have ample evidence at my disposal. In Karachi, Peshawar and Madras the firing would appear to have been unprovoked and unnecessary. Bones have been broken, private parts have been squeezed for the purpose of making volunteers give up, to the Government valueless, to the volunteers precious salt. At Mathura an Assistant Magistrate is said to have snatched the national flag from a ten-year old boy. The crowd that demanded restoration of the flag thus illegally seized is reported to have been mercilessly beaten back. That the flag was subsequently restored betrayed a guilty conscience. In Bengal there seem to have been only a few prosecutions and assaults about salt, but unthinkable cruelties are said to have been practised in the act

[1] The letter was drafted on the eve of Gandhiji's arrest. He was arrested at 12.45 a.m. on May 5.

of snatching flags from volunteers. Paddy fields are reported to have been burnt, eatables forcibly taken. A vegetable market in Gujarat has been raided because the dealers would not sell vegetables to officials. These acts have taken place in front of crowds who, for the sake of Congress mandate have submitted without retaliation. I ask you to belie-ve the accounts given by men pledged to truth. Repudiation even by high officials has, as in the Bardoli case, often proved false. The officials, I regret to have to say, have not hesitated to publish falsehoods to the people even during the last five weeks. I take the following samples from Government notices issued from Collectors' offices in Gujarat:

> 1. Adults use five pounds of salt per year, therefore pay three annas per year as tax. . . . If Government removed the monopoly people will have to pay higher prices and in addition make good to the Government the loss sustained by the removal of the monopoly. . . . The salt you take from the seashore is not eatable, therefore the Government destroys it.
>
> 2. Mr. Gandhi says that Government has destroyed hand-spinning in this country, whereas everybody knows that this is not true, because throughout the country, there is not a village where hand-spinning of cotton is not going on. Moreover in every province cotton spinners are shown superior methods and are provided with better instruments at less price and are thus helped by Government.
>
> 3. Out of every five rupees of the debt that the Government has incurred rupees four have been beneficially spent.

I have taken these three sets of statements from three differ- ent leaflets. I venture to suggest that every one of these statements is demonstrably false. The daily consumption of salt by an adult is three times the amount stated and therefore the poll tax that the salt tax undoubtedly is at least 9 annas per head per year. And this tax is levied from man, woman, child and domestic cattle irrespective of age and health.

It is a wicked falsehood to say that every village has a spinning-wheel, and that the spinning movement is in any shape or form encouraged or supported by the Government. Financiers can better dispose of the falsehood that four out of every five rupees of the public debt is used for the benefit of the public. But those falsehoods are mere samples of what people know is going on in everyday contact with the Government. Only the other day a Gujarati poet, a brave man, was convicted on perjured official evidence in spite of his emphatic statement that at the time mentioned he was sleeping soundly in another place.

Now for instances of official inactivities. Liquor dealers have assaulted pickets admitted by officials to have been peaceful and sold

liquor in contravention of regulations. The officials have taken no notice either of the assaults or the illegal sales of liquor. As to the assaults, though they are known to everybody, they may take shelter under the plea that they have received no complaints.

And now you have sprung upon the country a Press Ordinance surpassing any hitherto known in India. You have found a short cut through the law's delay in the matter of the trial of Bhagat Singh and others by doing away with the ordinary procedure. Is it any wonder if I call all these official activities and inactivities a veiled form of Martial Law? Yet this is only the fifth week of the struggle!

Before, then, the reign of terrorism that has just begun overwhelms India, I feel that I must take a bolder step, and if possible divert your wrath in a cleaner if more drastic channel. You may not know the things that I have described. You may not even now believe in them. I can but invite your serious attention to them.

Anyway I feel that it would be cowardly on my part not to invite you to disclose to the full the leonine paws of authority so that the people who are suffering tortures and destruction of their property may not feel that I, who had perhaps been the chief party inspiring them to action that has brought to light the Government in its true colours, had left any stone unturned to work out the satyagraha programme as fully as it was possible under given circumstances.

For, according to the science of satyagraha, the greater the repression and lawlessness on the part of authority, the greater should be the suffering courted by the victims. Success is the certain result of suffering of the extremest character, voluntarily undergone.

I know the dangers attendant upon the methods adopted by me. But the country is not likely to mistake my meaning. I say what I mean and think. And I have been saying for the last fifteen years in India and outside for twenty years more and repeat now that the only way to conquer violence is through non-violence pure and undefiled. I have said also that every violent act, word and even thought interferes with the progress of non-violent action. If in spite of such repeated warnings people will resort to violence, I must disown responsibility save such as inevitably attaches to every human being for the acts of every other human being. But the question of responsibility apart, I dare not postpone action on any cause whatsoever, if non-violence is the force the seers of the world have claimed it to be and if I am not to belie my own extensive experience of its working.

But I would fain avoid the further step. I would therefore ask you to remove the tax which many of your illustrious countrymen have condemned in unmeasured terms and which, as you could not

have failed to observe, has evoked universal protest and resentment expressed in civil disobedience. You may condemn civil disobedience as much as you like. Will you prefer violent revolt to civil disobedience? If you say, as you have said, that the civil disobedience must end in violence, history will pronounce the verdict that the British Government, not bearing because not understanding non-violence, goaded human nature to violence which it could understand and deal with. But in spite of the goading I shall hope that God will give the people of India wisdom and strength to withstand every temptation and provocation to violence.

If, therefore, you cannot see your way to remove the salt tax, and remove the prohibition on private salt-making, I must reluctantly commence the march adumbrated in the opening paragraph of my letter.

I am,
Your sincere friend,
M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 8-5-1930

265. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

P. O. JALALPUR,
May 4, 1930

DEAR DR. MAHMUD,

I was delighted to receive your frank letter. I would have been disappointed if you had concealed your opinion.

I do not plead guilty. I was not indifferent. I was most considerate to every Mussalman who came to me. I spent hours with several who had come to see me. This is no matter to parade about. I simply acted according to my wont. There was nothing special about it. But with you I stood on no ceremony. I felt that it was no business of mine to pay attention to you. I expected you to tackle me on any and every point that called for criticism or alteration. You may not know that to those who know me and whom I know and work with I am most inattentive. In no other way can I possibly go through the work before me. I wonder if I have made my point clear and given you satisfaction. If not, please tackle me again.

I have not yet got your appeal which you said you were sen-

ding. But I have seen a reference to it. Nevertheless I am concocting some formula and if I succeed I shall publish it in *Y. I.*

I expect to see you at W.C.[1] meeting if I am still free.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

This was written at three places: at the camp, in the train and finally at Surat.

From a photostat: G.N. 5082

266. LETTER TO PADMAVATI

May 4, 1930

CHI. PADMAVATI,

I was very glad to read your letter. I do remember our conversation. Keep the pledge which you have taken. Give yourself wholly to the work there. Go outside and work fearlessly. If you do so other women will also come out. Forget the difference between Gujaratis, Madrasis, etc. Like Draupadi, have trust in God and give up all fear.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4587

[1] The Working Committee of the Congress; *vide* "Telegram to Motilal Nehru", 4-5-1930.

267. LETTER TO SURAJBHAN AGRAWAL

KARADI,
May 4, 1930

BHAI SURAJBHAN,

I have your letter. You all have my blessings of course. Keep writing to me. Where is Yashoda Devi? What work are the ladies doing? No doubt there are difficulties. But endeavour and God's grace will overcome them.[1]

lt does not surprise me that Lala Dunichand's wife is engaged in work.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT SURAJBHAN AGRAWAL
SATYAGRAHA CAMP
ROHTAK (PUNJAB)

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

268. INTERVIEW TO J. B. KRIPALANI[2]

May 4, 1930

Mahatmaji had anticipated the situation which had arisen today. He had fully expected that his lieutenants would be taken from him and he was glad to observe that the younger folks had kept up their spirits and were yearning for more work. He was, however, most anxious that this energy should be harnessed to the utmost in constructive work. If the Government did not arrest the volunteers, Mahatmaji felt they should engage themselves in constructive work, such as producing more yarn and carrying on intensive propaganda to popularize the charkha and the *takli.* He also wanted them to learn to live the camp life, and to live like soldiers. The soldiers did their own cleaning and polishing and engaged in mock fights and other healthy sports and the volunteers also should do so. Volunteers should not lose sight of drilling. Discipline, Mahatmaji felt, would be half the battle won.

[1] On heating of the arrest of Lala ShamlaI of Rohtak, the addressee with Gandhiji's permission, had gone to Punjab in April; *vide* also. "Letter to Lala Dunichand", 6-4-1930.

[2] Based on a report of the interview. J. B. Kripalani had met Gandhiji a few hours before the latter's arrest.

Mahatmaji felt that it was the Government game not to arrest the rank and file of law-breakers but to tire them out. He wanted the volunteers not to play into the Government's hands by losing their patience. He wanted them to carry on the work in every branch of national regeneration, namely, production of khaddar and more khaddar to replace foreign cloth. He also wanted the volunteers to engage themselves in an intensive prohibition programme by propaganda, picketing and felling of date trees. It was not necessary that women alone should do all this, especially in the United Provinces and Bihar, where there are very few women. In provinces like Bihar and U.P., Mahatmaji wanted that women should be helped by men. He felt that the initiative in these provinces should be taken by men.

. . . Mahatmaji also felt that the people could select other laws also to break wherever they could conveniently do so without prejudice to the salt laws. Mahatmaji also felt that this should be the case particularly in the provinces in which salt could not be produced on an economic basis, or where there were no facilities to manufacture salt. Mahatmaji had in view in this connection, the Chaukidari Tax in Bihar and the Forest Laws in the Central Provinces.

Mahatmaji also felt . . . that Dharasana would supply many volunteers with work, as volunteers from other parts of the country might be required if the Government were to effect the arrest of the "raiders". Mahatmaji saw the possibility of another Gurukabag at Dharasana. He also felt that the stage had come when those who could do constructive work need not court jail. If the present enthusiasm were to be utilized for the lasting good of the country, it must be directed into constructive channels even as the electric current generated by a dynamo.

Regarding picketing, Acharya Kripalani said that he had narrated to Mahatmaji his experiences of picketing of shops, which contained both foreign and swadeshi cloth. He explained how some merchants dumped on the market mill-cloth as khaddar. In reply, Mahatmaji said that he had expected that picketing would not be quite effective but it was necessary to create an atmosphere for swadeshi, which could succeed only by the production of khaddar on a mass scale. Will agents, he said, could help if they co-operated with the political workers, and themselves helped in the production of khaddar by refraining from producing cloth below a particular count, which could be left to hand-spinning.

In this connection, Mahatmaji said he had many talks with Seth Ambalal Sarabhai and Mr. Birla. Mr. Birla had understood his point of view, and had decided to open a khadi organization near his village in Marwar under his own supervision. Seth Ambalal Sarabhai also had very nearly understood his point; but it looked as if other mill-owners only wanted to use him (Gandhiji) as their advertising agent. Mahatmaji was apprehensive that unless there was extensive spinning taken on hand at once the swadeshi movement would fail in the absence of production and it would be possible for merchants to cheat the public. When once the public discerned that they were paying higher prices for doubtful stuff, their confidence in the national workers would be so shaken that they would cease to listen to them and even would fight them.

Therefore, the only possible way for the mill-owners to fight Lancashire and Japan was to co-operate with the nationalist workers by refusing to spin yarn below a particular count and, what was also equally important, by controlling the prices.

The Hindu, 14-5-1930

269. SPEECH AT SURAT

May 4, 1930

It is not by means of the power of intellect that people are able to observe vows they take.[1] There must be a thorough change of heart and faith in God, which alone could give them the necessary strength. I have been defeated in prohibition campaign as a man and therefore I have asked women to help the movement. If anybody could melt the heart of drunkards it is woman. I have often asked Ministers in charge of Excise Department to put a stop to drink traffic. They have replied that I must find out for them new sources of revenue. I have told them to stop giving education to boys but they would not adopt the suggestion. If in swaraj we have liquor traffic, our President will have to face a similar problem afterwards. We are also not as adventurous as Americans, who are successfully making America dry. We have become emasculated and therefore I appeal to you to tackle this question first.

The present time is the most opportune and auspicious. I appeal to you with all earnestness to observe the vows you have taken. Do not deceive me; if you are unable to give up drinking, say so openly; I will congratulate you even then. My own son confesses honestly that he is not able to give up the drinking habit, and I congratulate him on his truthfulness. Even so you must be truthful so that I may not mis-calculate. God alone will help him, my son, and you, who are unable to give up drink. If you deceive me, you deceive your community and the whole country.

Referring to the insult offered to some women picketers at some places Gandhiji said that if they had not considered women as low creatures working for men and as objects of their lust then nobody could have dared to raise a finger against them.

But even if they will stone them, they will continue picketing. “Pussyfoot” lost his eye in anti-drink propaganda to make America dry, but did not give up his campaign. India will have to answer for every insult offered to women. This is my last throw; and I am out to lose my all. But all this I do for the liberation of India. If one district

[1] Panchayats of Surat city had passed resolutions asking members of their respective communities not to drink liquor.

is ready, we will surely have swaraj. You must purify yourself, you must be industrious; there is no other way for achieving swaraj.

The Bombay Chronicle, 6-5-1930

270. THE PROBLEM OF MINORITIES

[Before *May 5, 1930*][1]

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru sent the following note[2] to Mahadev Desai on March 16th. Mahadev Desai being too busy was unable to attend to it. It has now been forwarded to me, and I have no hesitation in presenting to the public the President's views on the vexed question of minorities. It derives added significance from the fact of his incarceration.

Young India, 15-5-1930

271. NOTE ON J. B. PENNINGTON'S LETTER[3]

[Before *May 5, 1930*]

Mr. Pennington's argument cannot appeal to one like me who has experience. A mountain of argument is dissolved before one touch of experience. Great as is my regard for the late Sir T. Madhav Rao, I must be pardoned for not endorsing his encomium of British rule. I shared the deceased statesman's views myself at one time. But bitter experience corrected them. Every one of the arguments advanced by Mr. Pennington has been answered in these pages.

Young India, 8-5-1930

[1] This was evidently written before Gandhiji's arrest on May 5.

[2] *Vide* Appendix III.

[3] The letter is not reproduced here.

272. LETTER TO SATYAGRAHA COMMITTEE, BOMBAY

[Before *May 5, 1930*]

Friends from Bombay have been to me asking me to lead a raiding party from there instead of from Karadi, assuming of course that a raid is to be decided upon. I should be proud and consider it a privilege to lead it provided that certain preliminary conditions are fulfilled. I observe that there is a great deal of misunderstanding about this contemplated raid. It has arisen because of the use of the word "raid". Now all my speeches in Gujarat are invariably delivered in Gujarati. The word "raid" therefore is not the one I had used. I admit, however, that it is a legitimate translation of the original. But my audience knew the original word "dhad" used to alliterate with "dhar" in "Dharasana", was used playfully. Fortunately or unfortunately even for a non-violent war military expressions have got to be used. But even as nobody is deceived by the use of such military expressions, no one need be perturbed over the use of the word "raid" when it is to be civil, non-violent or satyagrahi. The use of that potent adjective alters the whole colour of the transaction. But however innocent the raid, if it ever comes into being, may be, it will be fraught with consequences perhaps far more serious than those flowing from a violent raid. Those, therefore, who would join the contemplated raid have to satisfy some test, and since the battle is meant not merely for the removal of the salt tax but for establishing Purna Swaraj, the conditions have to be in keeping with the objective. They are three: 1. Observance of complete discipline. 2. Complete abstention from drink under a permanent pledge. 3. Wearing of hand-spun khaddar also under a permanent pledge and actual spinning on the *takli* for one hour per day except when spinning is made impossible through want of time or capacity. If Bombay produces a hundred thousand such men I should lead them without the slightest hesitation. I know that the citizens of Bombay will not laugh at my conditions nor will they consider them impossible of fulfilment. The only difficulty they might feel will be about the *takli.* Surely if a hundred thousand men in Bombay have the will *takli* spinning is child's play. Sustained work from day to day may be a task for easy-going citizens of Bombay but Freedom's battle has never been won by easy going people. No one need be irritated against me for maintaining these conditions because they are not in

any sense obligatory; they are meant to be a consideration in a voluntary contract. It is open to the citizens of Bombay to reject my terms and do as they please. Rejection then of terms will not make them less Congressmen than they are today.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-5-1930

273. ARREST AT MIDNIGHT

KARADI,
May 5, 1930

The Magistrate proceeded to Gandhiji's hut and woke him up.[1] "I have a warrant for your arrest, Mr. Gandhi," said the Magistrate. Gandhiji asked politely:

I am not surprised, but will you read out the warrant to me?

The Magistrate complied with this request and read the following which was signed by Sir Frederick Sykes, Governor of Bombay.

"Whereas the Government view with alarm the activities of Mr. M. K. Gandhi, they direct that he should be placed under restraint under Regulation 25 of 1827 and suffer imprisonment during the pleasure of the Government and be immediately removed to the Yeravda Central Jail."

Gandhiji was smiling when the warrant was being read. He said:

I am prepared to accompany you, but will you allow me to have a wash and clean my teeth?

"With pleasure," said the Magistrate.

In the meantime, the whole Ashram was up, and everyone was anxious to have a parting 'darshan' of Gandhiji. Having finished his wash, Gandhiji came out of the cottage to say his prayers. The whole Ashram knelt down to recite the prayers while the police officers watched. Gandhiji himself led the chorus. He then collected his papers and gave them in charge of a volunteer whom he had chosen as Captain during his incarceration.

The Bombay Chronicle, 6-5-1930

[1] The District Magistrate accompanied by the Superintendent of Police and a party of 20 armed constables arrived at Gandhiji's camp at 12.45 a.m., when Gandhiji was asleep.

274. INTERVIEW TO "THE DAILY TELEGRAPH"

BORIVLI,

May 5, 1930

Gandhi seemed surprised when he saw my companion and myself, for both of us were known to him. He greeted us in the most friendly manner.

"Have you a farewell message you would like to give, Mr. Gandhi?" I asked. He replied:

Shall I give it now or shall I wait?

"You had better give it now," I replied.

He paused, seeming to be at a loss for words and somewhat dazed by events. Then he answered:

Tell the people of America to study the issues closely and to judge them on their merits.

"Have you any bitterness or ill will towards anyone?" I asked.

None whatsoever; I had long expected to be arrested.

Do you think your arrest will lead to great disturbances throughout India?

No, I do not; in any case I can honestly say that I have taken every possible precaution to avert disturbances.

Then you anticipate no troubles?

The Mahatma hesitated for a moment and then replied:

I hope not; I have done my best to prevent them.

At this point the law intervened. Inspector Gordon stepped forward, saying; "Now, Mr. Gandhi, if you are ready, please." Only one person accompanied Gandhi from the train, a doctor of the Indian Medical Service, who remained silent in the background. He now took his seat alongside the prophet, with Inspector Gordon sitting by the chauffeur. . . .[1]

The Hindu, 27-5-1930

[1] Gandhiji was escorted in a train to Borivli, a suburban station of Bombay, and from there taken by car to Yeravda. *Vide* "Extracts from *The Daily Telegraph* report", 27-5-1930.

275. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL ROHTAGI

May 6, 1930

DEAR DR. JAWAHARLAL,

Sjt. Ramratan Gupta has been to see me regarding foreign- cloth picketing. I have given it as my opinion that picketing once begun cannot be easily suspended. But I do feel that it should be done methodically and by women even if they are few. It is suggested there will be no picketing in Delhi and none in Calcutta. I do not know what is happening at the two places.[1] But I feel sure that Cawnpore alone should not be singled out for picketing. But of course what I am saying is to be taken for what it is worth. Not knowing all the facts, I am unable to say anything about the parti-cular Cawnpore case. I can therefore suggest a general formula which I have done.[2]

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile: *Dr. Jawaharlal Rohtagi Abhinandan Granth*, between pp. 176-7

[1] *Vide* also "Notes", 1-5-1930.

[2] *Ibid*.

276. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE[1]

YERAVDA,
May 10, 1930

DEAR MAJOR DOYLE,

Having thought over our conversation, I have come to the conclusion that I must avoid, as much as possible, the special privileges offered to me by the Government!

Books and newspapers I do not want through the Government. Of newspapers, I would send for these if permitted:

The Bombay Chronicle,

The Times of India,

Indian Social Reformer,

Modern Review,

Young India and *Navajivan* (Hindi and Gujarati).

If these are allowed, I take it that they will not be mutilated.

The Government have suggested Rs. 100 as monthly allowance. I hope I shall need nothing near it. I know that my food is a costly affair. It grieves me, but it has become a physical necessity with me.

Neither you nor the Government will, I hope, consider me ungrateful for not accepting all the facilities offered to me. It is an obsession (if it is to be so called) with me that we are all living at the expense of the toiling semi-starved millions. I know too that the saving caused by my economy can but be an infinitesimal drop in the limitless ocean of waste I see going on round me, whether in prison or outside of it—much more out of it. I admit nevertheless it is given to man only to do very little. He dare not omit to do that little.

Again, I hold radical views about prison treatment.

I have never taken kindly to the classification recently made. I hold that a murderer is just as much entitled to have his needs supplied as any other prisoner. What is therefore needed is not a mechanical makeshift, but a human adjustment.

[1] The text of this was communicated by Doyle to the Home Department on May

One thing I must mention. I do feel the necessity of contact with the satyagrahi prisoners who are in this jail. It is wholly unnecessary, it is cruel, to isolate me from them.

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 750(5)-A; also S.N. 19971

277. LETTER TO MIRABEHN[1]

YERAVDA,
May 12, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

Yours is the first letter I take up to write from the jail and that on the silence day.

I have been quite happy and have been making up for arrears of rest. The nights here are cool and as I am permitted to sleep right under the sky, I have refreshing sleep. About the change made in the manner of taking the diet, you will learn from my general letter.

It was a great treat to receive the wheel so thoughtfully sent and with things so carefully packed in it. The carding-bow, the Superintendent tells me, was lost on the way by the friends who brought it. I am in no hurry for it as you have sent me a liberal quantity of slivers.

I do not know who sent me the books. They are not what I wanted. They were to be sent back to the library. The list of books that were to be sent to me when I was arrested was given by me to Kusum. But I suppose she left the Ashram without giving instructions to anybody as to what was to be sent or, if she did, she gave wrong instructions. However this mistake does not matter much as I do not miss the books just now. I am giving as much time as I can to the *takli*. I find that I have no speed on it at all. I hardly get thirty rounds in one hour. For the first day I gave nearly seven hours to nearly reach 160 rounds. I was washed out at the end of the performances. I must learn the trick of getting more speed. I am therefore in no hurry to go to the books.

[1] This was actually posted on May 16; *vide* "Letter to Miraben", 18-5-1930.

I hope you had good news from mother about her health and otherwise.

The prison officials are all kind and attentive.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I believe it will be possible for me to receive the Ashram post. You may therefore send a weekly letter together with the Ashram post.

From the original: C.W. 5395. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9629

278. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[*May 12, 1930*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

Show this letter to all, so that I need not write about the same things to everyone.

Most probably I shall be able to write to you and you will be able to send a reply once a week.

I keep excellent health. I get up in the morning and go through the routine according to the Ashram rules. There is a light in the room so that, according to my rule, I can read chapters from the *Gita*. I have been resting after many days of fatigue and, therefore, must be sleeping for probably two or three hours during the day. Generally I sleep at eight in the morning and twelve at noon. I have resumed eating oranges, which I had given up during the march. On the first day I took cold milk, and I have continued it for the time being. I take about three seers. Probably I shall have to reduce the quantity a little. Or I may have some of it made into curds. In the morning, too, I drink cold water instead of hot water. This I do only as an experiment. The authorities have of course supplied the facilities for heating water, etc. If, however, I can preserve my health with cold water, why should I go to the trouble of heating it? I have given up honey. Even for bathing I have been using cold water, but I intend to change over to hot water from tomorrow. The goat is brought before me and milked in my presence, so that the milk is as clean as I would like it to be. If cold milk does not suit me, I will certainly heat it. They have given me

[1] From *Bapuna Patro — 9: Shri Narandas Gandhine*, Part I

one person to clean the utensils and do other work. The diet includes dates and raisins too. No one need worry in the least about my food. Write to Jamnabehn and tell her that no one need take the trouble to send me any fruit. I shall get from here everything I may require. Tell Anasuyabehn that she need not pay any money here, as she used to do on the previous occasion. It is not at all necessary to do so. We have no time, ought to have none, to take unnecessary care of anyone. We have no money, ought to have none, to throw away.

The air here is considered to be good. I sleep in the open as I used to do there.

If you have still not received the money from Gordhanbhai Patel, remind him to send it.

I do spinning regularly. I make a skein of what I spin each day and get someone to spray water over it. Send me *Vanatshastra* and *Takli-shikshak* along with other books. I never ascertained my speed with the *takli* when I was outside. I tried to ascertain it here and found that I hardly spin 30 rounds in one hour. I ought to be ashamed of this speed. It means that I went on spinning but did not learn the secret of doing it well. I can now master it only by experimenting. I, therefore, give plenty of time to the work. I practise on a bamboo *takli*. It is necessary for everyone of us to acquire complete control over the *takli*. It is easy to do so if there is someone to teach us. I saw children in Karadi who could draw out thread with playful ease. All that is necessary is that they should feel interest in the work. In Wardha there are persons who have reached the speed of 80 rounds in half an hour. Kanti Parekh told me that he spun that many. The people there who have learnt to spin on the *takli* should ascertain their speed; let me know what it is in each case.

How is Purushottam? How is Kanu?

Give me news about Khushalbhai. I had written to him.

Is Mathew at peace?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8110. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

279. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA,
Silence Day, May 12, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

You had stopped writing to me. But I knew that you did not write because you wished to save my time and also because you yourself had no time. Nevertheless, I regularly enquired after you and got news of you. I like your self-restraint very much. I had not expected it from you. You should now write to me every week without fail.

You will get news about me from my letter to Narandas.

To whom did Kusum hand over my things when she left the Ashram? Did she entrust to you the books which were to be sent to me in prison if I was arrested? Among them were the *Ramayana*, the Koran, etc. Inquire about the matter and if you find the books easily, send them to me. I am in no hurry to get them.

Write to me and tell me who remain in the Ashram and what work they are doing. What is your own special work?

No one should worry about me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Who is in charge of the library?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 6669. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

280. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

YERAVDA,

Silence Day, May 12, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I hope you do not worry. I often think about you. Write to me. Did Nath pay a visit there? For how many persons do you have to cook now? I am not writing today to the other women.

You will get news about me from my letter to Narandas. Inquire from Narahari and let me know how Kamalnayan, who lives in the Vidyapith, is faring.

Who has been specially asked to look after Hari and Vimala? How is Lakshmi? The manner in which we look after Hari and Vimala will be a test of our love.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3083

281. LETTER TO ASHRAM CHILDREN

YERAVDA PALACE,
Silence Day [*May 12, 1930*][1]

BIRDS,

Birds are real birds when they can fly without wings. With wings any creature can fly. If you, who have no wings, can fly, you will feel no fear at all. I will teach you how to fly in this manner. See, I have no wings and still I fly every day and come to you, for in my mind I am in your midst. There is Vimla, and here are Hari, Manu and Dharmakumar. You also can fly with your minds and feel that you are with me. A child who can think does not require much help from a teacher. A teacher may guide us, but cannot give us thoughts. Thoughts arise in our own minds. A child that behaves well will always have good thoughts. Who, amongst you, does not pray properly with Prabhubhai?[2] Write a letter to me, signed by all of you. Any child who cannot sign may draw a swastika.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati *Ashram Samachar*, 18-5-1930: S.N. 16834-a

[1] The Monday before May 18, 1930, the date of the source

[2] The name is omitted in the source. This is taken from *Young India*, 22-5-1930, where Mirabehn has translated this letter.

282. LETTER TO BALBHADRA[1]

[On or after *May 12, 1930*][2]

CHI. BUDDHICHAKRA,

It seems the name Buddhichakra has clung to you. It is not a bad name. One whose *buddhi*[3] is like a *chakra*[4] may also be a person of perfect character, for a circle is a perfect thing. It has no beginning and no end as a straight line has. Moreover, he who lives with his mind turned inward should be regarded as a person whose intellect is like a circle. That is the true intellect which turns our mind inward.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati *Ashram Samachar*, 18-5-1930: S.N. 16834-a

283. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI [5]

[On or after *May 12, 1930*]

Take this letter as meant for all. How good it was that I met you all on Sunday evening and accompanied you back as far as your camp? I was very happy that I did so. God is showering His grace on me. Let all the women write to me. All the letters should be put in one envelope. Most likely I shall get those letters. If I don't get them, it will not matter. Do not feel nervous, any of you. All the verses in the section of women's prayer were purposely selected. The very first verse teaches us a great deal. The last three verses of the *Gita* which have been included sum up the whole prayer. They are like the *kalasha* on the top of a temple which adds lustre to the temple and completes its beauty. I hope the verses in this prayer are recited every morning with careful attention to their meaning.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati *Ashram Samachar*, 18-5-1930: S.N. 16834-a

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Balbhadra", 11-9-1930.

[2] Gandhiji started writing letters from jail on May 12, 1930.

[3] Intellect

[4] Wheel

[5] The source does not mention the addressee, but Mirabehn, writing *Young India*, 22-5-1930, says that this was addressed to Kasturba Gandhi.

284. EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS TO ASHRAM INMATES[1]

[On or after *May 12, 1930*]

1

This letter is for all the girls. Do all of you live as you should? Do you work? Do you think Gangabehn would give you a certificate? Have you kept up the habit of rising early? If you have given it up, resume it.

Blessings from

BAPU

2

CHI.

I was often told that you were impatient to go outside the Ashram and work. You are now of an age when you can understand things. We should do with the fullest sense of responsibility any work which falls to our lot. What difference does it make whether you go outside to work or remain in the Ashram?

Blessings from

BAPU

3

CHI.

I hope you had calmed down soon afterwards. I had not thought that you were such a nervous type. But do not worry. Are Kasturbehn and you still together or have you separated? You should not feel it necessary to remain with her all the time. One should learn to be independent and take up responsibility on oneself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati *Ashram Samachar*, 18-5-1930: S.N. 16834-a

[1] Addressees are not known.

285. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
[On or after *May 12, 1930*]

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

Does your being senior mean that you are counterfeit or genuine? You have left the Ashram but do not forsake the path of service. You can write to me. May God bless you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1799

286. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Silence Day [On or after *May 12, 1930*][1]

CHI. RAMA,

I used to be happy to see you. I had not thought that you would show such courage and fortitude. How is Mahalakshmi? How are the two Dahibehns?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5321

[1] The year is given in *Bapuna Patro—7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*.

287. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI[1]

YERAVDA MANDIR,
May 13, 1930

CHI.

Since I do not know where you are, I write to you at the Ashram address. There is God to worry for us all and we need not, therefore, worry on account of one another. You know about me, that ultimately I never come to harm. God always clears my path. Where else in the world would you find a sweeper like Him? If he did not always purify us of our mental uncleanliness the world would have become unbearably filthy long ago. Outward filth is only a sign of the uncleanliness in our minds. If the inner uncleanliness remains, what does it help however completely we wash away the outward filth? I at any rate derive much strength from this thought. . . .[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati *Ashram Samachar*, 18-5-1930: S.N. 16834-a

[1] Mirabehn, in *Young India*, 22-5-1930, says that this was addressed to Devdas Gandhi.

[2] As in the source

288. LETTER TO VICEROY

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
May 18, 1930[1]

H. E. THE VICEROY OF INDIA

DEAR FRIEND,

The authorities having permitted the use of newspapers, I am able somewhat to follow the course of events in the country. I should fail in my duty if I did not express my opinion on your latest statement.[2]

You seem to ignore the simple fact that disobedience ceases to be such immediately masses of people resort to it. Do you not see that hundreds of men who have been known for their peaceful nature, who have an unbroken record of service to their credit[3] and whose integrity is beyond suspicion are imprisoned? They are no law-breakers; they are no haters of the English. And what of the most peaceful demonstration of thousands of simple villagers who are by instinct the most law-abiding? To describe the movement of such men and women as lawlessness is, in my opinion, doing violence to the language. The very motive which is the essence of crime is lacking. It is the noblest of motives which[4] takes away men like the hoary-headed Abbas Tyabji from their soft ease to court the hardships of a jail life.[5]

You protest your affection for India. I believe in your profession. But I deny the correctness of your diagnosis of India's disease. The best constitution that can be devised will fail to bring real contentment and peace unless the grievances on which public attention is conc-entrated are immediately removed. The salt tax cannot remain. The liquor revenue must go. The foreign cloth importation which has produced a partial paralysis of the village life must be stopped. Have you not noted the strength of popular feeling in these matters? Or are the hundreds of thousands of men and

[1] The letter was drafted on May 12, finalized on May 18 and handed to the Superintendent, Major Martin, the following day.

[2] On May 12, announcing that steps were being taken to hold the Round Table Conference in October, the Viceroy had declared: "Neither my Government nor His Majesty's Government will be deflected by these unhappy events from our firm determination to abide by the policy I was privileged to announce in November last."

[3] The draft did not have the words: "to their credit".

[4] The draft has "that".

[5] Abbas Tyabji was arrested on May 12.

women who are taking part in the movement wicked-minded or misled or fools and the English officials the best judges of what is good for India?

If I am not mistaken, you will find the spirit of the people to be proof against repression, no matter how severe[1] it may be. You will not coerce millions of people into subjection for all time. India must not live for England. She must live for herself, so as to enable her to make her contribution to the world's progress. As a slave nation she is a mere burden on earth because it is a false life. No Round Table Conference can therefore be of any avail, unless you see things from our standpoint and, leaving coercion, rely simply on carrying conviction. Even those who you think are with you are with the Congressmen so far as wants are concerned.

I remain,

Your sincere friend,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 750(34), pp. 41-2; also S.N. 19972

289. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised *May 18, 1930*

CHI. MIRA,

You must be in possession of my last silence day letter. It was posted only on Friday I fear. This should go earlier. It is now after 8 p.m. Sunday. I take silence at 3 p.m. on Sundays as a rule. Of my life here you will learn from my general letter. I have more than doubled the quantity of yarn spun. It is nearly 400 rounds on the wheel and 55 to 60 on the *takli*. It is all well moistened and properly packed. For the wheel yarn it is 5 strands of 75 C.A.[2] put together daily. The *takli* yarn is one strand of nearly 160 rounds. It will be interesting to know what strength I am spinning. The whole performance takes up 6 hours daily. I do not grudge the time. I am not doing much reading this time nor do I want to collect a lot of books as I did last time. I should like to perfect my spinning if I can. Presently I shall have to card. I observe I have still 10 days' supply of slivers. All this news is not given in the letter to N.

[1] The draft here has "however severe".

[2] The letter as published in *Bapu's Letter's to Mira* here has "rounds".

And how is Reynolds getting on? How is he taking the heat? My love to him. In your weekly letter you may give all the news that is not political.

I think I told you last time that I had started translating the verses and hymns in the hymn book. I am nearing the end of the morning verses.

I hope you are keeping perfect health. You will not overstrain yourself on any account.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5396. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9630

290. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

May 18, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

Hope you are keeping well. What have you ultimately decided about Vijapur? Write to me in detail. Do the children now pay attention to the prayers? Has the heat affected you adversely?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32947

291. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Silence Day [*May 19, 1930*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I remember every day all the women and the children, but I do not worry about anything. Here, too, I keep myself busy and do not remain unoccupied even for a minute. That way alone can I have peace of mind. I can see God only through work. The Lord says that He is ever working without taking a moment's rest. How else, then, can we know Him except through work?

If you do not read the translation of the *Gita* and if you have time, read it. If, however, you have no time, you need not read it. Devotion to duty is the living *Gita*; the other one is merely a book.

I have written to as many persons as I could. But I do think of even those men and women to whom I have not written. How can I possibly write to all? I write to those who I feel specially need some words of comfort from me.

How is your son-in-law?

Does Nath visit the Ashram? When you write to him, tell him that I often remember him. He ought to visit the Ashram occasionally.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8749. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] From *Bapuna Patro — 6: G. S. Gangabehnne*

292. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

May 19, 1930

CHI. MANI,

God will be your shepherd. I remember you daily. I hope you are no longer depressed.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MANIBEHN PATEL

NADIAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro — 4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 71

293. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

May 20, 1930

CHI. NARAHARI,

I do not know if your tongue dances, but I see that your pen has been dancing. How many benefits flow from my living in the jail palace?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9053

294. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

YERAVDA JAIL,
May 20, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I can do a little sewing on the machine. While I have time here, I wish to learn it well. The authorities have permitted me to secure a machine. Since you are helping some women to earn their livelihood, I believe that you will certainly have some machines, and hence I trouble you with this request. If you have them and if you can spare one, kindly send it. If you don't have any, please let me know. I shall get your letter.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

LADY PREMLILA VITHALDAS THACKERSEY

POONA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4813. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey; also G.N. 71

295. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

May 20, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

What shall I say to comfort you? God will assuredly protect you. You can write to me. I should indeed like you to do so. Tell Kamalabehn[1] to take care of her health. Convey my respectful greetings to Swarup Rani[2]. My blessings to Sarup[3], Krishna[4]. If Jayaprakash is outside convey my blessings to him. Write to me at the Ashram address. I keep fine health. I eat the same food here that I did outside.

Do not worry about me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3388

[1] Wife of Jawaharlal Nehru
[2] Wife of Motilal Nehru
[3] Vijayalakshmi Pandit
[4] Krishna Hutheesingh

296. INTERVIEW TO " DAILY HERALD" [1]

May 20, 1930

Our conversation began with a general exchange of ideas on British and Indian politics. I then asked him to explain frankly what he meant by Independence. Did he demand Independence as ultimately implied in Dominion Status? Or did he insist on separation from the British Commonwealth?

I have always heard that in England Dominion Status is understood to mean Independence, but by the Indian authorities it is not so understood. Therefore when Independence is resisted by them in contradistinction to Dominion Status we naturally asked for Independence.

When I asked him if he thought that Canada and South Africa were not in all essential respects independent, he acknowledged they were. He added significantly:

But we are not offered a status like theirs.

I asked him if he had calculated all the perils involved in his campaign of civil disobedience. He replied that he had:

I have taken what has been called a mad risk. But it is a justifiable risk. No great end has been achieved without incurring danger.

Nevertheless he was gravely alarmed at the violence said to have been committed at Sholapur. He grieved at the death of two policemen killed there, but he was convinced the violence had not come from the civil resisters. They had, he said, been ordered to suffer everything, even violence, without offering resistance.

I asked if he thought that in a struggle between law-breakers and the authorities Government could acknowledge defeat, and Gandhi smiled. He said:

I am an optimist. In forty years of struggle I have frequently been told I was attempting the impossible, but invariably I proved the contrary.

Nevertheless he did not refuse to negotiate.

My life has been nothing but a record of settlements. If the Government is in earnest in its desire to satisfy India it should grant the eleven points demanded in my last letter to the Viceroy.

[1] The interviewer was George Slocombe.

I can only judge the tree by its fruits. Until we get satisfaction we shall fight on until the end, and give our lives if need be in the cause of Indian freedom. We shall fill all the jails in India with our passive resisters and our breakers of the salt laws, and we shall make all administration impossible by our opposition.

Mr. Gandhi admitted, however, that even in the remote event of victory negotiation would still be necessary, and he was prepared to do anything to avoid bloodshed and suffering if the essential cause of Indian nationalism did not lose thereby.

From our subsequent conversation I gathered that even at this critical hour a settlement is possible and that Mr. Gandhi is prepared to recommend to Congress the suspension of the Civil Disobedience Movement and co-operation in the Round Table Conference on the following terms:

(1) The terms of reference of the Round Table Conference to include the framing of a Constitution giving India "the substance of independence".

(2) Satisfaction to be granted to Mr. Gandhi's demands for the repeal of the salt tax, the prohibition of liquor, and a ban on foreign cloth.

(3) An amnesty for prisoners convicted of political offences to coincide with the end of the Civil Disobedience campaign.

(4) The remaining seven points raised in Mr. Gandhi's letter to the Viceroy to be left for future discussion.

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-5-1930

297. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
May 18/21, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

The letter I wrote to you last Monday seems to have been posted as late as Friday. That is what a jail is, after all.

See that my letters are not published.

Write to Thakkar Bapa and inquire whether the work on wells for *Antyajas* is proceeding. If he is short of funds, give him some money from what is lying with us, that is, from the money which we have handed over to Jamnalalji.

My hours are divided as follows:

Brushing the teeth, lavatory, bath	2	hours
Prayers, twice	1	hour
Nap during day-time	1_	hours
Meals and preparation for them	3	hours
Repairing the spinning-wheel, blowing and spraying the yarn, etc.	3_	hours
Spinning on the *takli*	2_	hours
Walking in the yard	1_	hours
Reading, meeting the Jailor	2	hours
From 4 a.m. to 9 p.m.	17	hours

I discovered from experience that oranges were not necessary. I have, therefore, given them up for the present. This means that my diet consists of dates, raisins, milk and curds, and sour lime and soda bicarb. If I find it necessary to do so, I will include oranges. I found today that by adding a fairly good quantity of curd to unboiled milk, we get well-formed curd. Yesterday I had mixed curd in unboiled milk. I still take unboiled milk. I keep good health. I was weighed again and I found that I had lost no weight.

I am at present reading Edwin Arnold's *The Light of Asia*. I do get a newspaper. It is the *Times*[1]. I shall now be supplied the *Chronicle*

[1] *The Times of India*

too. I have been permitted to get *Young India*, *Navajivan*, *The Modern Review* and *Indian Social Reformer*. If I want, I can get some others too.

I think I wrote to you that I had started bathing in hot water.

You need not worry about me at all. This time going to jail is enjoying oneself.

I was very glad to read Kumarappa's name in *Young India*. He is certainly a worthy man.

You can write a letter giving general information and send with it as many others of the same type as you like.

I cannot give any political message. You can give information about everyone.

Does Rukhi write to you? How is she? Do you hear from Umiya? Tell Kusum junior that she has not replied to my special letter. She is a cunning girl. Navin and Dhiru must be doing fine. Boys, girls, all of them can write to me.

How is Dr. Kanuga, the person for whom vegetables are sent from the Ashram?

You must have made arrangements for Amina's confinement. Where is Imam Saheb? How is he?

Who were the four boys who were let off as being too young? Where are they? Which are the places the women have spread themselves over?

How is the work going on in the dairy, the tannery and on the farm? How many looms are working?

The well near the office was to be cleaned. If it has not been cleaned and if it can be, get it cleaned. Is Keshu contented? How is his health?

Tell Radha to write to me. I do not write separately to her. I feel like writing to many others, but how can I do that ?[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] This was written on May 18 and 19. The postscripts were written on May 21.

[PS.]

I do not regard the experiment of making curds from unboiled milk to have succeeded completely. On the first day, I thought it was all right. I do not know whether the quantity of curd mixed in the milk was not correct, but the next sample was not well formed. The experiment is continuing.

BAPU

[PPS.]

Prabhavati's address: A.I.C.C. Office, Allahabad.

From Gujarati: C.W. 8111. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

298. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

May 22, 1930

MY DEAR REYNOLDS,

I have your love-letter as also news about you from Mira. By all means go. If you feel like coming and seeing me before you leave, do come. There will be no difficulty about your seeing me.

God be with you wherever you may be.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I wanted to write to your fiancee but it was not to be. But if you send me her address, I would still write. Tell her I received her letter the day of my arrest.

From a photostat: C.W. 4536. Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

299. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA PLEASURE HOUSE,
May 25, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

Again I commence this on Sunday after the silence and after the evening prayer.

When you came time seemed to be running against us. I therefore simply allowed you all to talk instead of myself talking and asking a lot of questions. You were not at all looking well. You seemed to have been pulled down. That won't do. You must take proper exercise and proper food. You must take all the fruit you may need and keep yourself fit.

I realize now as never before how careless I was not to have mastered the details about arranging the large bow. As I have some mechanical ability, I have suspended it and have already begun working at it since Thursday last and have a fair stock of *punis*[1] but there is something wrong about it. The long cord hangs from the roof. There are two strings hanging from the bamboo. I have joined the two and I pass the thin cord over the joined strings thus:

The bamboo work does not stand steady but is inclined to turn round and round. Of course, the wall prevents it. But I fancy that it should not turn at all even if there was no wall preventing it. If you have understood what I have described and if there is any flaw, you will tell me.

Your *takli* is well made but it [is] too heavy for fine spinning. I have no doubt that the bamboo is the thing. My speed is better now. I have done 65 rounds today in 1_ hours—not bad for me. I would do better when I shed my nervousness and draw the thread without fearing to break it.

My translation of one verse per day from the prayer-book continues. I wish I could do more. But the spinning and carding won't leave me any more time. And now I must make time for the sewing-machine. I was glad you came.

Love.

BAPU

[1] Slivers

[PS.]

How do you make rigid the little wheel on the spindle when it gets loose?

From the original: C.W. 5397. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9631

300. LETTER TO SARALADEVI[1]

YERAVDA MANDIR,
May 25, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I have received the fruit sent by you. I am asked to write to you not to send them hereafter. Any fruit I require is given to me here. Mangoes and oranges are given to the Jailor to eat. When there has been conflagration on all sides how can I eat mangoes? I took oranges for two or four days and [then] gave them up. I do not see any necessity for them. [If] I require I shall indeed take them. I shall ever cherish the love behind the idea of sending fruit. I hope the children are all right.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Part III, p. 574

[1] This is a translation. The original letter is not available.

301. LETTER TO CHANDRASHANKAR SHUKLA[1]

YERAVDA MANDIR,
May 25, 1930

DEAR CHANDRASHANKAR,

The Jail Superintendent has shown me your letter. For the present I will not ask for any book. The books already here are lying [unread]. The whole of the spare time is spent in spinning and carding. Some time is devoted to reading.

I hope your health is all right. If it is not so, improve it. You must have forgotten the pang [of separation]. You must be seeing Kaka. Where is Kamalnayan? If he is there, ask him to write.

Blessings from

BAPU

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, part III, P. 573

302. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
May 26, 1930

CHI. SUSHILA,

What kind of a husband have I given you? But no, you cannot say that I gave him to you. He was your own choice. You cannot, therefore, blame me. I hope you do remember how much I had cautioned you. In any case, you can go one better than he; so how can you or I complain? I hope Sita alias Dhairyabala is quite happy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1180. Courtesy: Sushila Gandhi; also G.N. 4768

[1] This is a translation. The original letter is not available.

303. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
May 26, 1930

CHI, NARANDAS,

Gujarati letters were received here last week, but they have not yet been given to me. I got Mirabehn's and Mathew's letters because they were in English. That is how it is! But this will not go on for many days—if God wills.

My weight is practically the same; perhaps it has gone up by half a pound.

The diet, too, continues to be the same. Now I get perfect curds from unboiled milk. The milk forms into curd in 24 hours. I had mixed a fairly good quantity of curd with the milk.

I have finished reading two books: *The Light of Asia* and *The Saints of Islam*. I am now reading a book on prisons written by an Inspector-General of Prisons of the Punjab, which was sent to me by a friend. I simply get no time for reading. Seven hours are taken up by the spinning-wheel, the *takli* and carding. On some days, when the wheel requires no repair, it is less than seven hours, and on some other days it is more. I am not unhappy about this. I love work. My skill in the work increases because I have to do everything myself, and I discover very small faults. The yarn which I spin on the *takli* has improved very much in quality. The speed, too, has gone up.

I think very little about things outside. I am so busy with work that I get no time to think about them. I fix my eyes on the central teaching of the *Gita*, and so enjoy peace of mind. If I did not do that, though I am supplied newspapers, reading about all that happens would have made it difficult for me to experience peace. The prayers twice a day and the daily reading of the *Gita* have proved a great support to me.

Is there any news about Krishna Nair, Surajbhan and Jayanti Prakash? How is Satis Babu? Write to all to whom you send letters and tell them that they are not to be published. Friends may certainly read them.

How is Jamna's health?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8112. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

304. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ [1]

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Silence Day [*May 26, 1930*][2]

DEAR JANAKIBEHN,

How are you? I hope you have not lost your courage. How is Madalasa? Do not be anxious about Kamalnayan. Have you not learnt this much by hearing *Gita* from Vinoba that we need not be anxious about anything?

Blessings from

BAPU

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Part III, p. 575

305. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI [3]

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Silence Day [*May 26, 1930*][4]

DEAR JAMNABEHN,

This is to tell you this much that no women should be anxious about me. I remember you all daily. Get a letter written to me and send it through the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Part III, p. 576

[1] This is a translation. The original letter is not available.
[2] The date has been inferred from the placing of the item in the source.
[3] This is a translation. The original letter is not available.
[4] The date has been inferred from the placing of the item in the source.

306. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI [1]

Silence Day [*May 26, 1930*] [2]

DEAR NIMU,

I hear from Ba that both you and your mother have returned to the Ashram. It was good. But what about your complaint about constipation? Are you not brave? How is Savitri[3]? Is she called by this name or any other?

Blessings from

BAPU

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Part III, p. 576

307 LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI [4]

Silence Day [*May 26, 1930*][5]

DEAR RADHA,

Your letter must be in the post which I have not received. If you have not written to me any letter, write to me one giving all the news. Where is Rukhi? How is she?

In great haste.

Blessings from

BAPU

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Part III, p. 578

[1] This is a translation. The original letter is not available.
[2] The date has been inferred from the placing of the item in the source.
[3] This seems to be a slip for "Sumitra", daughter of the addressee.
[4] This is a translation. The original letter is not available.
[5] The date has been inferred from the placing of the item in the source.

308. LETTER TO MAITRI GIRI [1]

Silence Day [*May 26, 1930*][2]

DEAR MAITRI,

Have you become wise? Be a credit to the name of your father. How is Krishnamaiya Devi? Write to me a letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Part III, p. 578

309. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI [3]

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Silence Day [*May 26, 1930*][4]

DEAR GANGABEHN JHAVERI,

[I hope] you and Nanibehn are all right. Now can you stay alone? I do not write more as it is dark.

Blessings from

BAPU

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Part III, p. 576

[1] This is a translation. The original letter is not available.
[2] The date has been inferred from the placing of the item in the source.
[3] This is a translation. The original letter is not available.
[4] The date has been inferred from the placing of the item in the source.

310. LETTER TO GOMATI MASHRUWALA[1]

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Silence Day [*May 26, 1930*][2]

DEAR GOMATI,

I hear that Kishorelal is keeping good health. Write to me in detail. How is your health? Where is Tari? If she is there ask her to write. Where is Nathu? How is he? Does he go to the Ashram? Which sisters are there?

Blessings from

BAPU

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Part III, p. 575

311. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN [3]

Silence Day [*May 26, 1930*][4]

DEAR MOTIBEHN[5],

Ba told me that you were melancholy. How is that? One who studies *Gita* cannot have melancholia. How can one be melancholy who is daily in meditation with God and believes that He resides in the heart? Drive out melancholia.

Blessings from

BAPU

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Part III, p. 577

[1] This is a translation. The original letter is not available.
[2] The date has been inferred from the placing of the item in the source.
[3] This is a translation. The original letter is not available.
[4] The date has been inferred from the placing of the item in the source.
[5] Wife of Mathuradas Purushottam

312. LETTER TO DR. PRANJIVANDAS MEHTA[1]

YERAVDA MANDIR,
May 26, 1930

DEAR BROTHER PRANJIVAN,

I remember you many times in the jail. You must be in good health. Do not worry about me.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Part III, p. 577

313. LETTER TO RATILAL MEHTA[2]

May 26, 1930

DEAR RATILAL,

How do you and Champa fare? What work do you do? Do you write letters to Bapu[3]?

Blessings from

BAPU

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Part III, p. 578

[1] This is a translation. The original letter is not available.
[2] *ibid*
[3] Addressee's father, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

314. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PARIKH [1]

May 26, 1930

DEAR MANIBEHN,

Narahari did after all go to jail. He received beating also. He is doubly fortunate. Are you completely courageous? Take care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Part III, p. 577

315. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT [2]

YERAVDA MANDIR,
May 26, 1930

DEAR MITHUBEHN,

May God protect you.

Blessings from

BAPU

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Part III, p. 576

[1] This is a translation. The original letter is not available.
[2] *ibid*

316. LETTER TO AMINA QURESH [1]

May 26, 1930

DEAR AMINA,

At last Imam Saheb has after all gone to the jail palace. Perhaps Qureshi may have also gone. Is your health good? What arrangements have been made about confinement? How do children fare?

Blessings from

BAPU

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Part III, p. 578

317. LETTER TO SHANTA[2]

Silence Day [*May 26, 1930*][3]

DEAR SHANTA,

How do you fare? Is your mind absolutely calm? Perhaps there might be a letter from you in the post which I have not received. If you have not written to me any letter, write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Part III, p. 578

[1] This is a translation. The original letter is not available.

[2] *ibid*

[3] The date has been inferred from the placing of the item in the source.

318. LETTER TO SONAMANI [1]

Silence Day [*May 26, 1930*][2]

DEAR SONAMANI,

How are both you sisters? Have you learnt Hindi well? Write me all news.

Blessings from

BAPU

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Part III, p. 576

319. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI [3]

Silence Day [*May 26, 1930*][4]

DEAR KALAVATI,

I await a letter from you. How is the state of your mind at present? What are you doing? Write to me your account.

Blessings from

BAPU

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Part III, p. 575

[1] This is a translation. The original letter is not available.
[2] The date has been inferred from the placing of the item in the source.
[3] This is a translation. The original letter is not available.
[4] The date has been inferred from the placing of the item in the source.

320. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA[1]

[*May 26, 1930*][2]

DEAR GANGABEHN (ELDER),

I remembered you when I was reading Ch. XII and XIII. I have written at the top of the translation of Ch. XII,[3] which is short, that it is worthy of being committed to memory by all, if not in Sanskrit, at least in Gujarati. It is easy to understand it in Gujarati. When we know the line of devotion shown therein, we have finished all. You must have undoubtedly written a letter, but it has not yet come to my hands.

Blessings from

BAPU

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Part III, p. 575

321. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

May 26, 1930

MY DEAR MATHEW,

I was glad to have your note. If you have patience God will give you light and peace.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1552

[1] This is a translation. The original letter is not available.
[2] The date has been inferred from the placing of the item in the source.
[3] In *Anasaktiyoga*; *vide* "Anasaktiyoga".

322. LETTER TO PATRICK QUINN

May 27, 1930

DEAR MR. QUINN[1],

Will you please order raisins 2 lb., *kishmish* 1 lb. and send me some common writing paper or a scribbling pad?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Part III, p. 240

323. LETTER TO MOHANLAL BHATT[2]

Tuesday [*May 27, 1930*][3]

DEAR BROTHER MOHANLAL,

You are indeed doing well. Some two mistakes have been observed in the [translation of] *Gita*. I shall rewrite. Please send *Indian Social Reformer* and *The Modern Review* to me. We [used to] receive both of them. If they are not received please write to Messrs Natarajan and Ramananda Babu.

Blessings from

BAPU

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Part III. p. 577

[1] Superintendent, Yeravda Central Prison
[2] This is a translation. The original letter is not available.
[3] The date has been inferred from the placing of the item in the source.

324. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
May 30, 1930

DEAR MAJOR DOYLE,

Today four visitors came to see me. Among these were Mrs. Captain and Mr. Reginald Reynolds. The other two were Miss Slade (Mirabai) and Mr. Mathuradas Trikumjee. The last two were admitted. As the Superintendent could not admit the other two, I had to decline to see Miss Slade and Mr. Mathuradas. At our very first conversation, you will recollect, I made it clear to you that I recognized no distinction between blood relations and others and that if the Government wanted me to meet my blood relations they should appreciate my viewpoint and let me also see those who like Mrs. Captain and Mr. Reynolds are as good as blood relations. I thought you had agreed to the position. But I may have misunderstood you. I want to blame nobody. I want no special privileges. I simply wish [you] to understand my position and would like the Government to know my viewpoint though they may not endorse it. I may not see my relatives if I may not see the others. This is no new attitude with me. I took it up in 1922 also and at that time there was no difficulty about my seeing those who were not blood relations. Of course, it is understood all along that there can be no political messages received or sent by me.

There are, too, my weekly letters hanging fire. These too I wrote as per our understanding, as I thought it was, namely, that non-political affairs[1] written to my Ashram friends in one envelope would count as one letter.

I would appreciate an early clearance of both these issues.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 750(5) A, p. 65; also S.N. 19973

[1] The draft (S.N. 19973) here has “letters”.

325. LETTER TO EDITOR, "WORLD FEDERATION"

May, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

Just a line to thank you for your letter. I am too preoccupied to say more just now. I know that you are doing all you can for the country.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

326. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

[*May-June, 1930*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I get your letters regularly now. I have already written to you about my health. Mirabehn wrote saying that she would give you some work where you are. If she has not done so, and if Jayaprakash is willing and Kamalabehn permits you may certainly go and join Ba. There is much to learn there these days. My weight is normal. You can write to me about anything you wish to do.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

What is Mrityunjai[2] doing? How is Grandmother[3]? How does Vidyavati keep? Write to Father and tell him that I often think of him.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3307

[1] From the contents the letter appears to have been written some time in May-June, 1930 when Prabhavati was staying with Kamala Nehru; *vide* "Letter to Prabhavati", 20-5-1930 and "Letter to Prabhavati", 29-6-1930.

[2] Son of Rajendraprasad and husband of Vidyavati, addressee's sister

[3] Rajendraprasad's wife

327. LETTER TO PATRICK QUINN

June 4, 1930

DEAR MR. QUINN,

Could you please send a jailor inspector if only for half an hour at the outside?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Part III, p. 241

328. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
June 11, 1930[1]

DEAR MAJOR MARTIN,

You have told me that the Government will permit seven of my blood relations to see me twice per week and the others only by their special permission. This means that my wife, who is not a blood relative, and naturally her brothers and other relatives, have to obtain special permission. I am sure this is a mere slip. But what is obviously contemplated is that those who are not related to me by blood or through marriage can, except Shrimati Mirabai Slade,[2] see me only by special permission of the Government. If this decision is not revised, I fear I must not see my relatives. I have in the Ashram and outside many widows, girls, boys and men, who are perhaps more to me than many a blood relative. If they may not see me on the same terms as relatives, to be just to the former, I must not see the latter.[3]

[1] The letter was delivered to R. V. Martin, the Jail Superintendent, the next day.

[2] The words "except Shrimati Mirabai Slade" do not appear in the draft available under S.N. 19974.

[3] Regarding the privileges to be allowed to Gandhiji, the Secretary of the Home Department on June 17 wrote to the Inspector General of Prisons: " . . . I am directed to state that the word 'relations' should be substituted for the words 'blood relations' . . . . It was of course not intended to exclude Mr. Gandhi's wife, or his brother-in-law and the like. I am further to say that if Mr. Gandhi refuses to see his relations, the only thing that can be done is to treat them like strangers and interviews regulated accordingly. . . ."

Although it is now a fortnight, I do not know what has happened to the Ashram letters that were received and those that I wrote. You told me that you had sent them[1] to the I.G.

There is one more matter. I see Sjt. Kalelkar is to be brought here as companion for me. He is an esteemed co-worker, but if I conveyed the impression that I would like him to be brought here to keep me company, I am sorry. I would not like him to be torn from so many companions with whom he is placed at the Sabarmati Jail and come here to share my isolation. If he could mix freely with the other satyagrahi prisoners and keep company with me, I would naturally value his company, but I have no desire to have the joy of his company at his expense. What I would desire is naturally to be able to see all my satyagrahi friends who are in this jail. I repeat what I have told you so often: I do not desire special privileges. But if an ordinary prisoner may have the company of his fellows who may chance to be in the same prison, it may be lawful for me to entertain such a desire.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original: C.W. 9316; also S.N. 19974

329. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,

Silence Day [On or before *June 16, 1930*][2]

CHI. PREMA,

It seems it is your letter the authorities have held back. I am sure it was entirely innocent. But what can we do? If every letter were to be received a jail would have no meaning. Write again.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 6676. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] The draft has "both".

[2] In *Bapuna Patro—5: Ku. Premabehn Kantakne* it is suggested that this might have been written between May 12 and June 23.

330. LETTER TO RAMANANDA CHATTERJEE

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
June 18, 1930

DEAR RAMANANDA BABU,

Your letter of 25th May was given to me three days ago. I thank you for all you say in it. I was glad to learn that my brief account of Kavi Rajchandra was safely in your hands.[1] I was wondering whether it had reached you or not.

I have permission to receive *The Modern Review* among other magazines. Will you please send me copies from the May number? I asked the *Young India* office some time ago to send me the magazine but somehow I have not received the copies. I did not write directly.

I hope to see your contribution in *Young India* before long.

Please remember me to Pandit Benarsidas Chaturvedi.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. RAMANANDA CHATTERJEE
120-2 UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD
CALCUTTA

From the original: C.W. 9314. Courtesy: Sita Devi

[1] *Vide* "A great seer", 18-3-1930.

331. LETTER TO PATRICK QUINN

June 18, 1930

DEAR MR. QUINN,

Will you please order:

Raisins 2 lb.

Dates 2 lb.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Part III, p. 266

332. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI

June 18, 1930

CHI. KASHI,

I hope you are keeping well. I take it that you are at Vijapur. I will not write separately to Krishnadas. He should write to me a detailed letter. Who are the other persons with you there?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33084

333. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 22, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

After many weeks I take up the pen to write Ashram letters again. The batch I sent you last I knew was held up and so was the batch from the Ashram. In the circumstances, I did not want to write. The way now seems to be fairly clear though I have not yet got all the weekly letters and I know that some have been withheld. They are from children. I am trying to secure them. I must have some reminders now and then at least of prison life.

No visits can be entertained so long as the difficulty remains, as it does, unremoved. If visits cannot be had on honourable terms, we must be content with writing letters if they can be honourably continued. If, therefore, you do not hear from me regularly, know that I am a prisoner. If I am really ill, walls will speak. The authorities will themselves proclaim it as they did last time and you could always inquire from them whenever you hear rumours, and I expect they will promptly give you the information. But I am hoping that there will be plain sailing so far as letter-writing is concerned. Just at present there is nothing wrong with me save for a trifling constipation. There is no cause for any anxiety whatsoever.

I have your latest letter, i.e., of the 9th instant. Nothing since. The instructions you give about the bow are quite good and quite enough. Yet I have hung it up the wrong way up but it has worked with perfect smoothness. The bow itself has not required any attention. I have finished carding all the cotton I had. The gut has not given in at all as yet. I used not *neem* leaves but leaves of some other tree resembling the tamarind. They are quite serviceable. You may send two pounds of cotton per anyone who may be going to Poona. There is no hurry. I have slivers enough to last till 15th July at least. I need not touch the bow till then. When I do, I shall rearrange the apparatus in accordance with your instructions.

About adjusting the wheel on the spindle too I understand. But here again nature has been kind to me. I adjusted the wheel inmy own way and it has remained quite fixed. If there is trouble I shall try your prescription.

I note all you say about your own work. You shall act just as

God leads you and your strength permits. May God bless you. More from the general letter.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5398. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9632

334. LETTER TO PATRICK QUINN

June 22, 1930

DEAR MR. QUINN,

(1) Will you please order 2 lb. dates?

(2) My companion did not get vegetables and salt yesterday.

(3) He is still without the commode-pot, he has the box.

(4) He has not got his utensils, charts, etc., returned to him.

I am obliged to write for him because he has been brought here for my sake. His discomfort therefore becomes my discomfort. I therefore write about him quite selfishly.

And of course the eternal letters!!!

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Part III, p. 266

335. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
June 22/23, 1930

CHI NARANDAS,

I get your letters one by one. You will read about this from my letter to Mirabehn. I got three letters of yours, of 19th and 26th May and 10th June, one after another during the last six days. Other letters sent by you must be passing from hand to hand. I think I have still to receive two letters, of June 2 or 3 and of June 16. In future give me inyour letters the names of those whose letters you may have forwarded. This is because some of them have not been given to me.

Do everything you can to please Ratilal. I am writing to him.

Please give the Japanese friend who wants to translate *My Experiments with Truth* the permission to do so. With this is a letter for the Bengali women. Rasjibhai and Shivabhai must have completely recovered now.

What work is Jagannath doing?

The experiment of making curds from unboiled milk has proved completely successful. Mostly I take curds instead of milk. Hence my present diet is curds, raisins or dates and juice of a lemon once a day. I still do not take any hot drink. Once only, when I had to take castor oil, I had taken hot water, lemon juice and salt twice. I drank milk on that day, but it was unboiled. This diet has had no harmful effects. I think, therefore, that I shall keep to this diet for the present. The weight is practically steady. It fluctuates by a pound. It is 105 at present.

Kakasaheb was brought here four days ago. He is keeping very fit. His diet is milk, bread, ghee and some fruit from what is allowed to me. He has made a request for vegetables, which will probably be granted.

I have added sewing to my daily work. I had asked for a sewing-machine from Lady Vithaldas and it has now arrived. I sew jail caps at present. I give to this work three-quarters to one hour daily.

My rate of spinning is 375 rounds minimum. The average would be 400. Spinning on the *takli* is also going on. I also spend considerable time in making my *takli*. I am trying to spin fine yarn.

The hand has set well and I spin with greater ease every day. I disover new virtues in the *takli* daily. Even more than the spinning-wheel it may prove to be the support of people in want, though, of course, both give peace of mind. I compared them today with the sewing-machine and clearly realized the moral value of manual work. Though I look upon the sewing-machine as an invaluable benefit, I do not regard it as a source of peace. When you work on it, you naturally wish to increase the speed and in the end the brain is bound to get tired. But once a person has acquired control over the *takli*, time passes more peacefully for him as he works on it than for the driver of a bullock-cart. This is my experience, though I have not become an expert spinner as yet I must wait and see what exp-erience I have when I have acquired perfect control over the *takli*. Kak-asaheb, too, spins on it, but he has not discovered its secret yet.

These things are difficult for him to master. He knows that they are for our good and, therefore, is trying to love them. He does not want to start the spinning-wheel at present. He wishes to master the *takli* first.

I read only after I have performed the spinning *yajna*. I look upon sewing as a part of this sacrifice. I had received, and welcomed, the suggestion sent by Mathuradas. I implement it whenever I get an opportunity. Since Kaka is here, I am quite eager now. I started Marathi yesterday. I would be happy if I make at least some progress in it. If I advise everyone to commit the verses of the *Gita* to memory, should not I, too, do that? The attempt is like fixing the shape of a pot after it is baked. If at all it is worth making, however, this is the right place. I, therefore, started learning the verses eight days ago. I have learnt by heart Chapter XII and have now started Chapter XIII. Kaka's coming has naturally interrupted the progress. I will do nothing by stealing time from the hours apart for the spinning *yajna*. I, therefore, do these things in spare moments in the course of other work or in the "library"[1], etc. Let no one be shocked to read that I try to learn the verses of the *Gita* by heart in the "library". We have learnt from childhood that there is no spot where He is not present. We should, therefore, feel no qualms in taking His name or doing His work there. Yes, this certainly means that our "libraries" should be as clean as the buildings in which books are stored. Mine at any rate is.

[1] Lavatory

For here in the jail everyone has to do all the things in the cell itself. They have given me three cells. That does not mean that the position is different. In jail I, too, have done all the things in the same cell, whether in South Africa or here. I have had to do that. Both of us felt that your long letter of 26th May was none the less short, or rather not too long. It did not contain one superfluous word. If anything was left out, the letter was short to that extent, but we did not feel at all that anything was left out. I got this letter of the 26th after I had received that of June 10th. In fact I got it only yesterday.

I shall not write more now. I think I have replied to all your questions.

In the letters which you write in future, mention the names of those whose letters you may enclose.

I have written this letter in two sittings. The first part was written yesterday evening. I suppose it is Purushottam who attends on Khushalbhai at present.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

If Mirabehn is not there, or if she is too busy otherwise to find time, you should, when you can, carry out the suggestion about sending cotton. I will reply to Balkrishna next time.

From Gujarati: C.W. 8113. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

336. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
June 23, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I got your beautiful letter. If I were not eager to get your letters, I would not merely out of courtesy ask you to write.

I like Dhurandhar and Kamala very much. I do not know when I shall meet the other lady.

You should not stop eating uncooked vegetables. You can certainly eat bitter gourds uncooked. I have done so. You should take some tender ones, mash them and mix lemon juice with the pulp. If, however, you get no vegetables on some day, you should do without. You may eat raisins instead. Your health has improved and you should not spoil it again. If you feel more hungry than before, you may increase the quantity of milk or curds. Do not worry about the expense. Write to me and tell me what you finally decide.

If I have left out any point in my reply ask me again.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 6671. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

337. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y.M.,
June 24, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

You must know Gujarati by now. I am writing in Devanagari today, but later on, when you are willing, I shall write in the Gujarati script. I have not received your letter. Write again. Give me news of your parents.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

338. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
June 24, 1930

CHI. SUMANGAL PRAKASH,

I have your letter. It is good you have arrived. Please keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

339. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
June 24, 1930

CHI. KALAVATI,

You must be following Gujarati well enough by now. Write to me and tell me all your thoughts. Is your mind at peace? How do you occupy yourself?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5245

340. LETTER TO PATRICK QUINN

June 26, 1930

DEAR MR. QUINN,

I hope you have ordered dates.

Please send salt and commode-pot.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Part III, p. 269

341. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

June 27, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

You must now be getting my letters regularly. You should assume that as long as I am permitted to write from here I will regularly write to you. My weight is satisfactory. It is a little above 103, and so there is no cause for worry. It is indeed welcome news that Father's health is improving. You have lost much weight. How is that?

Take special care and improve your health. You should take milk or curds and fruit, and also have exercise. A letter for Jayaprakash is enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3360

342. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
June 29, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter. My letter-writing had stopped, and so how could you get any letter from me? Probably I shall be able to write regularly now. I keep fairly good health. My diet consists of milk or curds, raisins or dates and lemons; this seems enough. Even milk, I have been taking unboiled. That has done me no harm. They have been keeping Kakasaheb with me since about a week ago.

How do you two manage about your food? Do you have a servant or do you cook for yourself? Do you read anything? I had sent you a copy of *Anasaktiyoga*[1]; did you get it? Have you read it? Did you understand it?

Write to Father and tell him that I often remember them all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3392

[1] A Gujarati translation of the *Bhagavad Gita* by Gandhiji.

343. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

YERAVDA MANDIR,
June 29, 1930

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your letter. You must have gone to the Ashram by now. Your first duty is to make your body strong. You have no excuse now to neglect doing that. Now that you are married and live with your husband's family, you ought not to fall ill. If you do, will not the elders in the family lose face in society?

Write to me and tell me about your experiences in your husband's family. Do not be restrained by a false sense of shame when writing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9049

344. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
[*June 29, 1930*][1]

CHI. KALAVATI,

Your letter. The earlier one was not given to me. It is good that Shantabehn has come. She must be quite well by now. Improve your handwriting.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5244

[1] The source has ''29-3-1930", which seems to be a slip.

345. LETTER TO BENARSILAL BAZAJ

YERAVDA MANDIR,
June 29, 1930

CHI. BENARSILAL,

I heard something about you. I hope you are happy with Chi. Rukmini. Write to me frankly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9050; also C.W. 9303

346. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
June 30, 1930

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

I do hope you left your bed long ago. Tell me how you are faring. Have you seen Father? Please remember me to Mother.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 9617

347. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
June 30, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter.

I think the Ashram letters will be now regularly received by me and mine by you all. The condition is that no politics can be discussed on either side. But if you find again an interruption, you will infer that some hitch has occurred.

I am glad you are keeping fit. Only your weight must not go below a minimum which for your build must be 116 lb.

Yes, I am doing some sewing regularly. Of course, it is all jail work. When Mathuradas suggested it for cheapening khadi, I was attracted to the suggestion. I thought I would practise on the machine here. The machine has been sent by Lady Vithaldas who was for some time in the Ashram, if you can recall her.

As I am not likely to have visitors now, it would [be] better to send me 3 lb. of cotton. I said 2 in my last letter[1] but perhaps it is as well to send me 3. Kakasaheb too will need slivers. You may pack the cotton in paper and then sew it up in sacking. This suggestion is made to save khadi.

I told you all about the bow in my last letter. Though the way I have fixed it works all right, I shall try your way when I get the cotton.

My love to all the friends.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

If you cannot attend to cotton, let someone else do it.

From the original: C.W. 5399. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9633

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 22-6-1930.

348. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Silence Day, June 30, 1930

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

I have had no letter from you. Send me your diary. What is your weight? Do you still take medicine? My respectful greetings to the elders.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 899. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

349. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
June 30, 1930

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. From here I cannot send you a letter in a sealed envelope. But what is there to hide for one who has a pure heart? You should throw away the letter you have received. After having once given up the thought of marriage, why think about the matter again? Moreover, for you now true marriage lies in clinging to the duty to which you have wedded yourself. It is only in such marriage that true happiness is found. It gives rise to no problems and there is no possibility of widowhood in it. So you should dismiss the thought altogether from your mind. Meditate on the last portion of the second chapter of the *Gita* which we daily recite. If this does not help you to feel at peace you may write to me again and you should have no hesitation in writing freely. Forget the past. Take care of the present, and the future will then take care of itself. This is the meaning, plain and simple, of non-attachment. If we do our duty today, we shall automatically know our duty tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9563

350. LETTER TO MUNNALAL

YERAVDA MANDIR
June 30, 1930

BHAI MUNNALAL,

I am both surprised and pained to know that you have fled. As long as we live in the body, how can we run away from work? Even if it is right for some persons to refrain from physical activity altogether, that cannot be so for you or me. One who has attained perfection can perhaps become free from the duty of working. I have already drawn your attention to your unsettled state of mind. Wake up and start working.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 6648. Courtesy: Munnalal; also G.N. 8648

351. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
June 30, 1930

CHI. SUSHILA,

I got your letter. How can you deny that you are a Parsi lady? If you were not one, you would not write *anadharya*[1]. Vanias pronounce the word with a palatal *na*. You seem, however, to be better than even a Parsi lady. It seems you have given up all fear. It is because you know that Manilal is not a body but a soul that you expressed sentiments which befit a brave woman. My choice has been fully justified. May God grant you a long life.

Convey my blessings to Father and Mother.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1181. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi; also G.N. 4769

[1] Literally,'unexpected'. She had spelt the word the way Parsis usually pronounce it.

352. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
June 30, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have now received all your letters.

We have thought long about the trouble being given by the Bharwads. To me our dharma is plain. It is the same towards the entire world. We should win over the Bharwads by love, and at the same time try to protect what it is our duty to protect. That can be done only by giving our lives to the Bharwads. In other words, we should lay down our lives in protecting our things but should never attack the Bharwads in doing so. However, I do not wish to blame anyone for what has happened. We can follow dharma only within the limits of our capacity, otherwise we would be guilty of artificiality. We should, therefore, do what the impulse of the moment dictates. That impulse is the measure of our strength. As for the future, I have no doubt that our dharma is what I have stated it to be. But before and after adopting that course for protecting our things, we should discharge two other duties. I have been observing and saying for the last fifteen years that we have not mixed with our neighbours. What pains me is that I myself did not follow that path. I tried to persuade Maganlal to follow it. Some kind of a start was made. There were, however, difficulties in the way and the attempt was abandoned. We are now paying for our indifference. But recalling the past is of no value except for drawing lessons from it. Let us look to the present. Just now, therefore, we should discuss the problem with the Bharwads. We should ourselves try to plead with them in the presence of persons who know them. We should also tell them what we wish. If they want to graze their cattle [on our land], they should pay us something. If, however, we have no land we should explain that to them. We should also appeal to our neighbours to plead with the Bharwads. We should render them whatever other service we can, and should continue to do so irrespective of their behaviour. We should explain to them why the Ashram has been established and what it aims at doing. Even if we do all this, it is possible that they will occasionally raid the Ashram. If they do, those

of us who can, may lay down their lives and let the Bharwads take away what they will after killing them. If we do not have the will and the strength for this, you may do what seems best to all of you. I have only explained the duty, as I understand it, that is proper to an Ashram. You should, however, put out of consideration what I may write, for beyond expressing my views I can do nothing. Moreover, an opinion expressed from a distance is likely to be erroneous. What I might think if I were present there may very well be different from what I think from here. Moreover, no matter with what detachment a prisoner tries to think, his conclusions are likely to be based on incomplete data. You need not, therefore, attach much weight to my view. I shall be satisfied if it helps you to come to your own decision. In any case it was good that afterwards you treated the Bharwads for injuries.

I am writing to Bhansali; read that letter. Your decisions about Chandrakanta and Giriraj seem all right.

I am getting on well. These days I am also trying to learn by heart verses from the *Gita*. I have completed Chapter XII and done half of Chapter XIII. Does man know what he wants? I liked Kaka's coming, but I also see that it has turned out to be an obstacle. Since his coming my daily study has fallen behind. Without him I would have proceeded faster with the *Gita*. Actually, I tried to prevent his coming, but failed. My reason for doing that was quite different. I did not like that he, too, should be confined within four walls as I was. But the Government had made up its mind to provide me company and did so. I, therefore, tolerate Kaka. And he has to bear separation from the large company at Sabarmati. Thus we find the situation a mixture of all sentiments—there are at least the pathetic, the humorous and the heroic. However, if I have relaxed in one field of my daily study, I have started Marathi. I would have become proud if I had become altogether self-reliant. Now that I have been receiving invisible services from Kakasaheb, they will help me in reminding me of my right place. Besides, the exercise which my reason gets in sweet discussions about the *Gita* and other works is an additional benefit. Thus I get an opportunity of another kind for self-examination. I can, therefore, say that I would have been content if Kaka had not come, and am also content now that he has come. Who can weigh and decide whether his coming is a gain or a loss to me? To him who believes that

anything he gets unasked comes from God, every such thing is a benefit—is a gift of His grace. Kaka's coming, therefore, is such a gift. It does not matter if the study of the *Gita* has slowed down.

Convey my greetings to Vallabhbhai. The question of Kaka's diet has been settled. He gets two pounds of cow's milk, ten *tolas* of butter, twenty *tolas* of fresh, uncooked vegetables and twenty *tolas* of chapati. He turns the milk into curds. He is getting on quite well. His weight has increased by one pound. By way of vegetables, he gets brinjals and radishes by turn during the week. He cooks the brinjals and eats the radishes raw.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8114. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

353. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Silence Day [*June 30, 1930*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

All of us are far away from our ideal and will remain so. Our duty lies in striving to reach it. Man's ideal grows from day to day and that is why it ever recedes from him. You are ever striving and that is all that you can do. Our effort should be pure and unremitting.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I do not write separately about Kaka, because the long letter contains all the news.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8751. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] From the reference to news about Kaka Kalelkar; *vide* the preceding item.

354. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y.M.,

June 30, 1930

CHI. KANTA

I have your letter of May 26th. They did not give me the previous one. Do you follow my Gujarati? Did you get my Gujarati letter of last week?

It seems quite proper that you went and stayed with Mother. She must have left by now. Your good lies in the attitude you have now adopted. It is to one's good to abide by the advice of a person whom one has willingly accepted as one's guardian. It makes for peace of mind at least. Keep perfectly cheerful and remain engrossed in your duty. I have high expectations of you. Write to me frankly about everything.

I am very happy to learn that Krishna Kumari feels at home.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy. Gandhi National Museum and Library

355. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
June 30, 1930

CHI. NIMU,

I got your letter. Nobody will object to your experimenting with *juwar*[1] in order to improve your health. Try it once and if it does not agree with you, give it up. Moreover, when our dear ones are in jail, we may certainly eat what they do, provided it is possible for us to do so. You may stay wherever you like. Blessings to Ba. You seem to be quite engrossed in your work. 'Sumitra' is a good enough name for the baby.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

What is Navanit doing?

From the Gujarati original : Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] A variety of millet

356. LETTER TO KAMALA NEHRU

June 30, 1930

CHI. KAMALA,

I was very happy to have your letter. You must not let your body become weak. It has to render much service. How is Indu keeping now? Has she grown up a little?

My *pranam* to Mother and blessings to Sarup and Krishna.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

357. LETTER TO AMINA QURESHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,[1]
Tuesday [*July 1, 1930*][2]

CHI. AMINA,

I think of you every day. Your confinement must be over by now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6670

[1] Gandhiji was arrested on May 5, 1930, and placed in Yeravda Central Prison, Poona.

[2] In his letter to the addressee dated July 6, 1930, Gandhiji mentions the addressee having had a baby. Presumably this letter was written on the preceding Tuesday.

358. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 1, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

How is your state of mind now? And your health? When did you see Satis Babu last?[1] How is he? Who are all at Sodepur? What do you study and what is your daily routine? Keep this in mind:

Who rejoices not, neither frets nor grieves, who covets not, who abandons both good and evil—that devotee of Mine is dear to Me.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Write to me care of the Ashram.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1667

359. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 3, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN JHAVERI,

The letters received in May were handed over to me only a short while ago. I have faith in your strength and devotion to God. He will certainly give you wisdom. Take care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Give my *Vandemataram* to Chhotubhai.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3101

[1] Satis Chandra Das Gupta had been arrested and sentenced to one year's rigorous imprisonment on a charge of sedition in connection with the publication of Satyagraha Bulletins.

[2] *Bhagavad Gita,* XII. 17

360. LETTER TO NANIBEHN JHAVERI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 3, 1930

CHI. NANIBEHN (JHAVERI),

I got your letter of May 27, 1930 only a little while ago, more than a month after it was received here. This is what being a prisoner means. It was their kindness that I got it at all.

If you can digest cereals and pulses, by all means eat them. But don't eat them for the pleasure of the palate. Your body will become strong only if you live on milk and curds. Give up all worries. Meditate on the verses which we used to recite daily. Read the *Anasaktiyoga*[1] over and over again, reflect over its teaching and follow it in practice.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3100

361. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI[2]

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 3, 1930

CHI. MANUDI,

So Balibehn[3] has turned you away. Never mind. Only learn now to behave like a grown-up girl. Do household work. Spin and card as much as you can, and write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1502. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

[1] A Gujarati translation of the *Bhagavad Gita* by Gandhiji; *vide* "Anasaktiyoga".

[2] Daughter of Harilal Gandhi

[3] Balibehn Vora, addressee's maternal aunt

362. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 3, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

After I started addressing Ramdas, Devdas and others in the second person singular, I don't feel at ease addressing you in the plural. And now I simply cannot bring myself to do that. From today, therefore, I have started using the singular form of the pronoun, which is the right one. Ever since I came to know you, you have held a daughter's place in my heart. And you have shown yourself fully worthy of that place. Need I say more? Show yourself worthier still. I don't know when I shall be a worthy father to the many daughters whom I have adopted. Don't regard this merely as the language of modesty. Let this be enough for today. I am all right. Kakasaheb[1] has been placed with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9276

363. LETTER TO LAKSHMIBEHN KHARE

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 5, 1930

CHI. LAKSHMIBAI,

It was in July that I was given your letter of May. There is little we can do about this. It would be enough if I could write Marathi as well as you write Gujarati. I am of course learning it from Kakasaheb.

Always look upon all children of Vasant's age as if they were Vasant himself.

Write to me regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 285. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn Khare

[1] D. B. Kalelkar

364. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 5, 1930

CHI. MOTIBEHN,

The letter which you wrote to me long ago was handed to me just now. You must have received the letters which I wrote to you. Read Chapter XII[1] over and over again and reflect on it. I am sure you get news about the children regularly from Cochin. Don't grieve about Meghji at all. He rests in peace. He who dies uttering Ramanama with devotion, what evil can he meet with ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3737

365. LETTER TO AMINA QURESHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 6, 1930

CHI. AMINA,

I was very happy to read your letter. I was glad to know that you had a baby. May God grant him long life and may he be as brave as Qureshi and you. Do the girls remember me? I trust you keep good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6656

[1] Of *Bhagavad Gita*

366. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 6, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

They gave me your letter of July l. It is good that you get fruit with your meals.

I took in Dhurandhar because I saw that he was scrupulous in observing rules. I also liked his frankness. This should not be published at present.

Give my love to the flower plants and trees. Here, too, I see their brothers and sisters. Shouldn't I be satisfied with that?

In all, I got only two letters from you. I didn't get the one in English.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10224; also C.W. 6672. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

367. LETTER TO DAHIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 6,1930

CHI. DAHIBEHN (RAOJIBHAI),

You should write to me. I often remember you two Dahibehns.

I hope you never get fainting fits now. My blessings to all thewomen who may be with you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9204

368. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI THAKKAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 6, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I got your letter. I was happy to learn that all the women were doing their work well. Please tell Ramabehn that I got her letter. I am not writing to her this time. The women to whom I don't write must not think that I have forgotten them. I write to as many as I can. But when I write to one, the letter should be regarded as meant for all. I note what you say about the children. I was pained by their going away. I get news about Madhavji from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6826

369. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 7, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter given to me intact and in good time. There is not likely to be any difficulty now in the early delivery of letters on either side.

I am glad you have good news from London. It was evidently a thoroughly successful operation.[1] The West has always commanded my admiration [for] its surgical inventions and all-round progress in that direction.

In your menu you do not tell me how much ghee you are taking and whether you are taking oranges or not. Ghee you need and so also oranges. I would like you not to cut off or reduce these two things.

If you have not sent cotton as yet it should now be sent at once. I have told you 15th July is the last day.

I am keeping well. I find the doing of 375 rounds somewhat of

[1] The addressee's mother had undergone an operation.

a strain nowadays. I am trying to probe the cause. That being so the *takli* practice has slowed down considerably.

I have complaints about the non-appearance of extracts from my letters. You may, therefore, resume publishing extracts of a general character. I have discussed this with the Superintendent. The people will be intensely dissatisfied if they see nothing from my letters.

Nothing yet settled about interviews.[1]

My love to all those to whom I do not write but of whom I constantly think.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5400. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9634

370. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 7, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

What does Bhansali write about Lilabehn[2]? Has she left the Ashram?

This time I got your letter of July 2 soon after it was received here. I had received the wire about Revashankerbhai and replied to him direct.

I suppose Ratilal is quiet now.

Some portions of my letters can certainly be published. I have suggested the limits in my letter to Mirabehn.

Amina, I hope, is all right now. If necessary, you can write to me at any time. Most probably I shall get the letter immediately.

Where was Shambhu beaten up?

You are being put to a good test. You had no choice but to endure the wild behaviour of the sadhu; not because he was a sadhu,

[1] Gandhiji had refused to see anyone in Yeravda prison till permission as of right was given to him to see close friends as well as blood relations; *vide* "Letter to R.V.Martin", 8-7-1930; also "Letter to R.V.Martin", 11-6-1930.

[2] Bhansali's widowed sister-in-law who lived in the Ashram with her three children.

for to us a sadhu and an emperor are the same. Would we not treat an emperor in the same manner if he created similar nuisance? If we could and had the time to do so, we would try to come into closer contact with the mischief-makers and to teach them to be civil. We would go and see them at their places and plead with them. We would try to discover their disease and observe their way of living. I know that all this is difficult. But that is the only way. What would we do if such a sadhu were our own brother? Would we not spend on him as much time as we could spare and plead with him? The next thing is that we should learn from such experiences to reduce our possessions. This of course cannot be done in regard to milk,[1] for we have regarded running the dairy as our duty and done that duty. We cannot, therefore, stop it. The only thing for us to do is to think out methods of protecting it which would be worthy of the Ashram. I have written this only by way of discussion. You may take from it what is practicable.

The problem of the thieves, whom you are not able to catch, is more difficult than that of the mendicant. Its only solution is that we should mix with the people of the villages in our neighbourhood. These are external remedies, and necessary ones. In the last resort, and even as the first, we have prayer. "So long as the elephant depended on his own strength, nothing availed him; if a weak person cries out for help to Rama, He will come the moment His name is uttered." This is a great truth. It is realized in experience in the measure we have faith in it.

Do write and inform me about every harassment. Such things give me spiritual exercise. I get an opportunity to think what my mind would prompt me to do in such circumstances.

Keep me informed about the results of Prabhudas's experiments with the spinning-wheel.

If they want to translate the *Anasaktiyoga* into Urdu, permit them to do so.

The article on *brahmacharya* is kept in a safe place—only Pyarelal or Kusum can say where. You will find it nowhere but among the papers which are kept duly arranged.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] The sadhu had been wasting the milk in the dairy.

[PS.]

There are 47 letters today. I don't see Kanu's and Sharja's letters which you have mentioned in your list.

If you have not sent cotton, send it by return of post. Today I am short of time and, therefore, a few things are left out.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

371. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI PANDYA

July 7, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. Please do not feel miserable. Since you have not given up effort I have no doubt all will end well. The body is under our control and therefore we ought to check it and restrain our feelings. One who makes a show of physical self-control but indulges in all manner of pleasures mentally is a hypocrite, a double-dealer. One who controls one's body and also endeavours to always restrain one's mind is an active aspirant; one whose mind as well as body are fully under control is God [Himself]. It is enough if we are or [try to] become active aspirants of the middling category. We should never let our minds remain unclean. An evil thought should be thrown out no sooner than it occurs. We should know that our mind is like our body, which gets soiled every day and which we clean every day. The fact that we are obliged to accommodate Shankarbhai's father or others like him is a help to us in preserving our dharma. Non-violence means being strict towards one's self and liberal towards others; this is the sign of tolerance. Those who do not observe the rules, etc., deserve to be pitied, never to be hated. That we have given up tea, etc., that we abide by the rules is because we like it; if some do not, how can it be an excuse for us to swerve from our own stand? On the contrary let us hope that having observed our humble yet firm conduct people like Shankarbhai's father would be touched and give up their undesirable habits.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 320. Courtesy: Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

372. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
July 8, 1930

DEAR MAJOR MARTIN,

With further reference to my letter about interviews, I enclose herewith a trial list to show what I mean when I say that I can see Mrs. Gandhi and others of my family only if on the same terms I can see those who are like blood relations to me, as those in the list are.

The alternative proposed by the Government is unacceptable to me for the simple reason that I do not wish to expose my wife and children to the indignity of having to apply to the Government for permission each time they may desire to see me.[1] I recognize that the Government need not let anybody see me. But if they do let me see anybody, I must refuse to avail myself of such permission if it is bereft of grace as, in my opinion, the present position about interviews is.

I know the Government's preoccupations and it pains me to have to take up their time over what is for them comparatively a trivial matter. I have reverted to it only because I had a talk with you about it and because I would like it finally decided one way or other.

If the list is approved, I reserve the right to submit a further list. It is impossible for me to recall at once the names of all who are intimately connected with me and are not known to political fame. I may observe that such names I have purposely omitted. A large number are boys and girls under 16. I have also omitted the names of relatives as they are already allowed and I have omitted those who to my knowledge are already imprisoned.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M . K. GANDHI

[1] *Vide* "Letter to R.V.Martin", 11-6-1930.

[Enclosure]

Trial list referred to in the letter to which this is the enclosure.

Damodardas and his wife
Manibai Galiara and her children
Lakhmidas Asar
Vellabai Asar
Laxmibehn Bar
Motibehn Choksi
Mani Asar
Lilavati Asar
Amina Qureshi
Mathuradas Purushottam
Motibai Mathuradas
Jankibai
Laxmibai Khare
Rambhau
Chhaganlal Joshi
Ramabai Joshi
Motibai Ranchhodlal
Ramabehn Ranchhodlal
Sarla Devi Ambalal
Nirmalabai
Ambalal Sarabhai girls and boys
Ansuyabai Sarabhai
Shankerlal Banker
Vinoba
Gopalrao
Balkrishna
Shardabehn Mehta
Dahibehn Patel
Dahibehn Somabhai
Kamalabehn Patel
Harihar Sharma
Begum Tyabji
Raihana Tyabji
Hamida Tyabji
Pyar Ali
Noorbanu
Abdullabhai
Gomatibai Mashruwala
Naoroji Sisters
Khambhatta
Tehmina Khambhatta
Mithubai Petit
Gangabehn Senior
Gangabehn Jhaveri
Manilal Jhaveri
Gulabbehn Manilal
Ratilal Mehta
Champabehn Mehta
Nanibehn Jhaveri
Nanibehn Budhabhai
Bhansali
Mathew
Kumarappa
Chandrashanker Shukla
Manibehn Parikh
Manibehn Patel
Nandabehn Kanuga
Lalita
Lilabehn
Shantabai
Shantabehn

Kamala Haridas
Vasumatibehn
Kusum Desai
Jethalal Gandhi
Maganbhai Patel
Kapilrai
Mahavir
Maitri
Durga
Krishnamaiya Devi
Sarojini Devi
Satyavati
Kantabehn
Krishna Kumari
Kasturbehn
Prithuraj
Laxmi Dadabhai
Lalji
Vithal
Jethalal Bhatia
Babalbhai
Kevalram
Nirmala Kevalram
Godse
Somabhai
Hasmukhrai
Giriraj
Mannalal
Jagannath
Shambhu
Ishvarlal
Tapu
Shivabhai Patel
Rowjibhai Patel
Jankibai Bajaj and children
Kamalnayan
Nathji
Kunverji Patel
Pundit Sukhlal
Bechardas
V. Sundaram
Emma Harker
Padmaja Naidu
Krishnabai Santanam
Laxmi Rajgopalachari
Dahyabhai Patel
Narmada Dahyabhai
Shanti Kumar Narottamdas
Narsimha Prasad
Mama Phadke
Haribhai Phatak
Dilkhush Divanji
Nandlal Shah
Punjabhai
Budhabhai
Karasandas Chitalia
Surajbehn Manilal
Gangabehn Ramji
Motibehn Ramji
Chelibehn Shah
Keshavrao Deshpande
Ramibai Kamdar
Lady Vithaldas
Kamalabai
Vithaldas Jerajani
Chhotelal
Kikibehn Lalvani
Girdhar

Sharjabehn
Premabai
Sarda Kotak
Harijivan Kotak
Parvati
Nirmala Desai
Balbhad[r]a
Dudabhai Motji
Anandi
Indu Parekh
Kantilal Parekh
Amritlal Nanavati
Samalbhai
Mangala
Pushpa
Mahalaxmi
Nirmala Pandya
Durgabehn Desai
Ramchandran
Juthabhai
Punjabhai Junior
Chimanlal
Gulab Bajaj
Kaku
Bapubhai Shelat

M.K.G.

From a photostat: G.N. 3850; also S.N. 19975

373. LETTER TO KAPILRAI MEHTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 8, 1930

CHI. KAPILRAI,

Whence this illness again? It is the duty of every student to shake off illness forthwith. It is a crime to fall ill.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3973; also C.W. 19595. Courtesy: Kapilrai Mehta

374. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 8, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

How is it that there is no letter from you? How are you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3389

375. LETTER TO ISHVARLAL JOSHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 8, 1930

CHI. ISHVARLAL,

How are things with you? What progress have you made? Have you kept up your study of English ? Is Lakshmidasbhai satisfied with your progress?

Is Indu there? How is she? Ask her to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the original in Gujarati: C.W. 9311. Courtesy: Ishvarlal Joshi

376. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

July 8, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I got your letter. How is Kaka? What news of Ramibai?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 39; also C.W. 8752. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

377. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Silence Day, July 9, 1930

CHI. SHARDA (BABU),[1]

Is it any wonder that we who are housed in the Mandir are in fine spirit? But why should you be suffering from asthma? Is it not due to their own fault that children or grown-ups fall ill? If this is true, you must find out where your fault lay and should not repeat it. Once you have recovered, your asthma would not visit you again if you follow a regular course of deepbreathing exercises, sun-bathing, massage, etc., and if you observe restraint in food, etc.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9885. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] Daughter of Chimanlal and Shakaribehn

378. LETTER TO WILFRED WELLOCK[1]

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
July 11, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. From a prison cell it would not be proper for me to enter into any argument. But you may depend upon my not missing a single real opportunity for co-operation. But I confess that I see no sign as yet in the midst of fraud, falsehood and force that appear to me to surround so many of the acts of the powers that be.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 750(34), p. 117

379. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 11, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

I got your letter. It is good that you poured out your heart in it. I have known very few persons who have been free from the evil which you have described. The environment in which we live is so demoralizing that most young men are unable to save themselves from that evil. But, now, instead of repenting for the past, take proper care of the present, and leave nothing wanting in the attempt.

By all means, take Kalavati to a doctor. Let that lady doctor examine her. A note from me is not necessary, and it would be improper to send one from here. If you require any, a note from Narandas will serve the purpose. She is a kind-hearted lady.

I understand what you say about the *Gita.* I will try to read the Calcutta translation. I am sending a letter to Mahavir Prasad along with this. Read it. You did the right thing in showing it to Vinoba.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5247

[1] Member of Parliament, Birmingham

380. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI

July 11, 1930

CHI. KALAVATI,

Your letter.

The only desire you may keep should be that for service. In or out of the Ashram, all service should be the same to you. It is no service if we find joy in doing those things only that suit us. It will mean self-satisfaction not service. We must never indulge in that. Kashinath has written about your pain. You need hipbaths and certainly purity of heart. Try to keep your mind calm.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5246

381. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 12, 1930

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

I have your letter. Just now your duty is to make your body strong. Your diet is all right. Take proper exercise. Do as much khadi work as you can. Write to me regularly. How is Kamala? And Madalasa? Ask Janakibehn to write to me. What does Father eat? How much do you spin daily? Do you get time to do any reading?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Kakasaheb sends you his blessings.[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3043

[1] This is in Hindi.

382. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y.M.,
July 12, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

I have your letter. Only the woman who controls her desires and finds joy only in doing her duty can truly serve. There is always a conflict going on in our minds between the good and the desirable. To be truly human one must choose the good and find it desirable. We are not always certain what should be regarded as good. Hence, in the course of one's striving it is necessary to have faith in one's superiors and in the received word and to act accordingly. Of course, it will always be well with you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

What is Brother doing? Give him my blessings.

From a photostat of the Hindi: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

383. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 13, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your letter. What does work mean? Is not spinning and carding work? All work done sincerely has equal value. True soldiership or devotion to God or spiritual living consists in being content with the duty which falls to our lot. Absorption in the work of service which has come to us unasked is the only true *samadhi*. It is quite true that attaining this state of mind is a slow process. All that one can do, therefore, is to go on striving. The result lies in God's hands. We are both in good health. I will give more information on this subject in the common letter for the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 3283

384. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,

July 13, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. Nirmala's letters reveal the beautiful influence of her Hindi and yours that of Marathi. For instance, *bet rahit karyo*[1]. *I* like a language being enriched in this manner. I hope in a short time to be able to follow Marathi very well. I am at it every day.

I have finally given up hope of getting the English letter.

I know about Krishnan Nair.

Your handwriting in Gujarati seems to be improving.

Idealism sometimes causes pain but a human being without idealism is like a brute. Our highest duty is to see that our idealism takes the right direction.

You should try once to eat bitter gourds uncooked.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10225; also C.W. 6673. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] "Dropped the intention for the time being".

385. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

YERAVDA MANDIR,

July 13, 1930

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I got your letters. I was glad that you wrote out and sent me the instructions for improving the method of carding. How can I expect to get copies of the *Navajivan* here ? I have no copy of the *saptapadi*[1] pledge with me. If you send one, I will try to revise and improve it with Kakasaheb's help.

As for the book on non-violence, I am at present trying to live it. The book will have real value only if I can practise the idea in my own life. What I write will become a dead letter one day. What I live will ever grow. And haven't I written enough on the subject in short articles from time to time? What can I say now which I have not said already? Even if I try, I cannot think of anything new to say. However, the request which you have made has been made by some others too. If, therefore, I feel an urge within me in future, I may write one. Cease grieving over Meghji's death. We have countless Meghjis with us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3739.

[1] *Vide* "With bare religious rites", 7-3-1926.

386. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

Y.M.,
July 13, 1930

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

I have your letter. One who understands the meaning of ahimsa must realize the importance of the *takli* and the charkha. It becomes clearer each day that they are visible manifestations of ahimsa.

Take care of your health. Did Gulzarilal receive my letter? Ask him to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 11549

387. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Y. M.,
July 13, 1930

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I was pleased to read your letter. The weaving school students are doing credit to the name and the work of their Ashram. I am getting along well. Take care of your health.

What more need I write?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 11550

388. LETTER TO DURGA GIRI[1]

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 13, 1930

CHI. DURGA,

Your letter is good. The handwriting too is good. Will you test me in sewing or shall I test you? Over there you are learning cutting too. Who can teach me all this here ? But I shall see who surpasses, my walking sticks[2] or I? I have praised your handwriting in the hope that you would further improve it. You girls have an example in Radhabehn's handwriting. Mistakes due to oversight can be corrected by revising the letter.[3]

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]
Bapuki Virat Vatsalata, p. 30

389. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

UNREVISED,
July 14, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. I am likely now to get the Ashram post regularly.

Your taking cold baths I do not mind so long as the body reacts immediately. There should be no chill felt. The full benefit of a cold bath according to the Indian style is dependent upon vigorous rubbing as the water is being poured. This is followed by equally vigorous rubbing with a dry towel till all the parts are thoroughly dry. But please do not try unboiled water. My case here is different. I get the same water, which is strained and stored in a separate earthen pot. The whole water supply for the jail is filtered.

[1] Daughter of Dalbahadur Giri who, along with her brothers, sisters and widowed mother, was residing in the Ashram

[2] Girls on whose shoulders Gandhiji leaned while walking

[3] The original letter was in Gujarati.

My constipation has almost altogether abated. This was due to my having reverted to milk in the morning instead of curds. If I find the heating of milk or hot water necessary, I shall not hesitate to take either or both. But I am hoping that it will not be necessary. Fresh fruit does not appear to be necessary for me. I am not losing weight. Last week it was between 103 and 104 lb. I do not consider this a bad weight. You will thus see that there is no cause for anxiety on my account.

You ask for the *Gita* translation. I should love to do it. But just now what little time I do get is given to the translation of the *Bhajanavali*[1] also undertaken for you. I am going at a snail's pace. I therefore do not know when that will be finished. The *Gita* translation is a big task. You will agree I may not suspend the spinning for it. For the spinning is applied translation of the *Gita* if one may coin that expression. But if I have long enough of this quiet, I shall certainly undertake the translation.

We cannot have at the Ashram the worship of the kind you refer to. Of course, we have the little *samadhi* near Magan Kutir. But nobody save a few look at it. The inmates of the Ashram have no living faith in that kind of worship. For the worship of the invisible, the intellect is ready but the heart does not respond. We have, however, to plod in that direction. As pointed out in the 12th chapter, that way is undoubtedly hard to tread but it is not impossible. It will come. Everyone is subconsciously recognizing the worth of the Ashram prayer. It has been the sole solace of many. Those that attend it are not scoffers. They are not wittingly irreverent either. The spirit is willing, the flesh is weak. They are all striving. And no one who has honestly striven has ever been known to have failed. Ours is, you should remember, a somewhat original attempt. We have no solemn-looking building for prayer. We have simply the open space. But it is a sound thing especially as we represent the famishing millions. For us the sky must be an all-sufficing roof and the four directions our limitless walls. But we shall take time before we outgrow habits handed down from generations, if not ages. And yet, if we are to break through all bonds of race, class and creed, we can have but the openest of house of prayer and in the way we are having it. Am I clear?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5401. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9635

[1] *Vide* "*Ashram Bhajanavali*", the last item in this volume.

390. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 14, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

I have a letter from you after many days. You have joined a good place. Ultimately, you will have to return to the Ashram. Do not ruin your health. Write to me from time to time. Don't take up sewing before you have acquired mastery over carding and spinning on the wheel and the *takli.* It is easy to learn sewing. Nor is it absolutely necessary. I would be satisfied if your spinning could become perfect. Is Purani still out?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1800

391. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 14, 1930

CHI. MANI (PATEL),

Well done. No sooner did you meet the real father[1] than you forgot the adopted father. And now you are a speaker at public meetings and thus all the more likely to forget me. How are you in body, and in mind? Did you get my letters?

How is Dahyabhai ? And how is Yashoda ? Has she recovered completely?

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MANIBEHN PATEL
DR. KANUGA'S BUNGALOW
ELLIS BRIDGE
AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 71

[1] Vallabhbhai Patel, who was released from jail on June 26, 1930.

392. LETTER TO HARIPRASAD

YERAVDA MANDIR,

July 14, 1930

CHI. HARIPRASAD,

It is good that you have returned. Now tell me your routine and also your thoughts.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2549

393. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 13/15, 1930[1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

This time all the letters were delivered to me as soon as they were received, and probably that is what they will do in future too .

Last time I wrote 47 letters and then added two at the last moment, but could not change the figure which I had mentioned in your letter. For the Jail Superintendent arrived then and I handed over the packet to him after inserting into it those two slips of paper.

My speed has not increased to 400 rounds, or even yards, and it is not likely to do so. I believe that my body simply does not have the capacity for that. Formerly I used to spin 160 rounds during the day; instead, I now spin 375 rounds. But to spin that takes on an average four hours. Even on days on which everything goes well, I take not less than three hours. The average probably comes to 400 rounds a day. The speed used to be 160, which has now risen to 200 rounds, but that only on the day on which I have sufficient energy and the materials are well arranged. Make this correction. I have become slackabout the *takli* these days. I get pretty tired working on the spinning-wheel. Ever since my illness I have lost the strength to sit up

[1] This letter written on different days is placed under the date on which it was completed. Similar letters to Narandas Gandhi and Mirabehn are placed accordingly.

for four hours at a stretch. I, therefore, find it difficult to accustom the body to that. But this is my only spiritual discipline at present and hence I cling to it. Of course I take care of the body. The weight is steady, so I don't believe any harm is being done. I have good sleep. I of course give some time to the *takli.* I cannot yet make a very good *takli* with my own hands and, for want of time, I do not try to learn to do so by constant practice. I give primary importance to spinning, as I should like to spin as much yarn as I can. Sewing is going on all right. The hand has set well on the machine. I still do not know its intricacies, for there is no one here to teach them to me. You will read more about these matters in my letters to Mirabehn.

Kakasaheb is in excellent health. After his coming here his weight has increased by two pounds. He walks for about two and a half hours daily, in addition to the walking he has to do in connection with work. He takes all the milk in the form of curds, so that the milk he consumes is easily digested. He toasts bread. Ordinarily he gets the vegetables by turns. He gets radishes and brinjals, and sometimes *turiya* or *guvar*. He does not cook the radishes. He digests ten *tolas* of butter. He still spins on the *takli* only. A Gandiva spinning-wheel arrived from Surat only recently and Kakasaheb has started to learn spinning on it from today. He continues to teach me Marathi. It is he, again, who puts the fruit into water for me or washes it and also washes the utensils in the evening. Besides these, I accept many other small services from him.

You need not worry about either of us.

I am happy that the problem of the Bharwads has been solved.

I have not received any cotton from there till today. I am writing this on Saturday night. If no cotton has been sent up to the time that you get this letter, post some immediately. I think there will be no difficulty if I get it by return of post in reply to this letter. I do hope, indeed, that since I have given the time-limit up to the 15th, I shall get the cotton on or before Tuesday. As days pass, I have certainly become a little impatient.

I did not see Sharja's letter. Kanu's I got this time.

Give me news about Punjabhai. How is he ? Where does he live? How does he spend his time?

July 14, 1930

One of the boys asks me in his letter why I use slips of paper. The reply is that a prisoner should consume the minimum of everything. Secondly, he who observes the vow of non-possession is a trustee of all property and, therefore, I must use the property of this prison, too, like a miser. Thirdly, isn't this property really ours ? With whose money have these things been bought ? Fourthly, in this poor country the less the consumption of such things the better. Fifthly, it hurts me to use anything extravagantly at a time like this.

I hear today that there is a railway receipt in the office, which means that the cotton is likely to have arrived. If I cannot mention the total number of letters, I am sure you will see the serial number on the last letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

It is now 5.30 a.m. on Tuesday.[1] I stop writing the letters. In all there are 52. If there are people to whom I have omitted to write and if they expect letters from me, send me their names. How is a man with a large family to decide whom he would write to and whom he may omit? Where is Subbiah?

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

[1] July 15

394. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 15, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

The last two packets from the Ashram contained no letter from you. Since as a rule you write regularly, the absence of a letter from you worries me. How is Father? What is Jayaprakash engaged in at present? I am all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3390.

395. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 15, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

Because I do not write to you every week, it does not follow that you need not do so either. I can know about the state of your health and your group's only if you write and tell me every week. You may write whatever else you wish to.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Send me the names of all the children in the Bal Mandir.

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 33012

396. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 15, 1930

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Give me an account of your health and your mental state. You can write care of the Ashram. Do you see Devdas?[1] Where is Krishnan Nair?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2382

397. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
July 16, 1930

MY DEAR HENRY,

Your cable was given to me only yesterday.

As a prisoner, I may not write to you as fully as I would like. All therefore I can say is that if you knew the circumstances as much as I do, you would not press me to go to the R.T.C. I should be perfectly useless there. I see nothing in the Viceregal statement to give me any cause for hope. The fact is swaraj is for us to take. It cannot come by way of donation.

My love to Millie, Celic, Leon and all those we knew. Where is Maud nowadays? With my love to Andrews tell him I had his cable just after my imprisonment.

Yours,

BHAI

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Pt. III, p. 182

[1] Devdas Gandhi had been arrested and sentenced in Delhi early in April for offering civil disobedience.

398. LETTER TO GOVIND PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 17, 1930

CHI. GOVIND,

I was glad to see your letter written in a beautiful hand. Now write to me regularly in future. I had altogether forgotten you. Probably all persons with a large family find themselves in such a plight. Out of sight, out of mind.

I am very happy to learn that your health has improved. I have no doubt at all that you will always do your work carefully. May God give you a long life and make you a true servant.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3944

399. NOTE TO MIRABEHN

[*July 18, 1930*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

It hurts me but I must deny myself this pleasure, if I am to be consistent with myself.[2] Please leave the wheel, etc., and I shall manage the best way I can. It is on such occasions that we test ourselves. God be with you.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5402. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9636

[1] According to a note by Mirabehn in *Young India*, 24-7-1930, she took the wheel to Gandhiji on Friday, which was July 18. *Vide* also "The final test", 9-3-1930.

[2] The following note by Mirabehn appears along with this letter in *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, p. 101: "I had prepared a wheel on the Bihar pattern and taken it to Yeravda Jail, as I knew it would be difficult for Bapu to understand the method of fitting it if I did not explain it personally. But this proved not to be possible, and Bapu sent me the following note in the Superintendent's office."

400. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 18, 1930

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

I have your letter. To be ready for jail is a duty. To wish to go to jail is ignorant attachment. We should have only one wish, and that is to serve. Any condition in which we can serve should be welcomed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8988

401. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 18, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got the bag of this week's love letters yesterday evening. I will reply to most of them on the Silence Day. I write this just to tell you that you should either put the letters in an envelope lined with cloth or secure the packet with a string on all sides. The letters were about to fall out of the packet. I got the cotton on the 16th.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. NARANDAS GANDHI
SABARMATI ASHRAM
B.B. [&] C.I. RLY.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U. /I

402. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 18, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I had a letter from you after many weeks. I was relieved.

I keep good health. The weight remains at about 103-104. The diet consists of milk, curds, raisins, dates and lemons. Do not worry on my account. I spin 375 rounds daily. I have learnt sewing on the machine. Kakasaheb is with me.

You may write anything you wish to.

Does Father tour in villages?

My blessings to Jayaprakash.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3365

403. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 18, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I got your letter. Stop worrying about your health. It will be as God has ordained. Worrying about health will not improve it. We may try our best. This is my emphatic advice. You should go away purely for the sake of your health to some hill station where you can stay comfortably. You may do there whatever khadi work in cotton or wool you can. Live as if the fight[1] was not going on at all.

If this advice does not appeal to you or is rejected by Chhaganlal or Kashi, do as they advise you. You should not decide on your own because just now, it is beyond your capacity to do so. You may, if you wish, consult the Vaidyaraj at Morbi. I insist on one thing only. I cannot order you from here. Do as Chhaganlal and Kashi advise you after reading this letter. Regard their advice as an

[1] That is, the civil disobedience movement which was then in porgress

order. If Narandas has any suggestion to make in this matter, listen to him. I have not shown this to Kakasaheb. If his view is different from mine, I will include it in this letter.

Kakasaheb has not yet gone through what you have written about the *Ramayana*. I will let you know his opinion after he has done so. Go on doing what you have been doing by yourself.

What you say about prayer is quite right. All our undertakings are in the experimental stage. None among us is omniscient. All of us are blind, but some of us who have more knowledge than the others, are trying to find remedies for the blindness and to employ them. That being so, how can it be otherwise than that our prayer should be imperfect? If Narandas has the time to do so, I have suggested to him to introduce whatever reforms are possible. The prayer ultimately is a matter of faith. We have to bring ourselves to take sufficient interest in prayer to keep up that faith. After all, if you go in the mornings and join the prayer group in that spirit, it will be sufficient prayer for you, no matter in what language the prayer is offered. The practice of collective silent prayer also is prevalent in the world. Devout men and women among the Roman Catholics can sit for hours together, absorbed in silent prayer. Our aim is somehow to find peace of mind. You need to cultivate the habit of reading with proper attention whatever you read. It can be cultivated by practice. Even in this, however, if thinking too much confuses your mind, then give up the effort to think. Do not be overeager in this matter either. We have clung to the practice of prayer all these years with a pure motive. We are therefore sure to discover the right key some day. Till then, be content with the fact that the people have begun coming. For some things, time is the only remedy. The more we think about it, the worse the thing gets but if we wait in patience, we will discover the remedy. This is not likely to give much satisfaction to one like you. But just now I cannot think of anything more satisfying than this. It is therefore best to endure what cannot be cured.

I understand what you say about the spinning-wheel. Insist that all the girls who are carrying on the experiment, clean their spinning-wheels properly. Banish from your mind the thought that the girls will never do or cannot do this work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32998

404. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 19, 1930

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I got your letter. The Lord has stated it as a law, to which there is no exception, that everyone gets what he seeks with devotion. We seek the spirit of disinterested service which would require us to sacrifice our all. If, therefore, we fail to cultivate such a spirit, the Lord's words would be proved untrue or maybe our aspiration is not sincere. We should, therefore, have faith and pursue with single-minded devotion the task to which we have dedicated ourselves.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9499

405. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN DESAI

July 19, 1930

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

I have your letter. You must have returned to the Ashram now. Do you go and see Valji? How is he? When you meet him next, tell him that I often think of him. Take care of your health.

How are Hari-ichchha and the others?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7404. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

406. LETTER TO AMINA QURESHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 19, 1930

CHI. AMINA,

I have your letter. Father and Qureshi are in jail. You wish to be there and, moreover, you live in the Ashram. You should, therefore, believe that you are in the struggle too. It is more than enough if we are content to live where and in the condition that God wills. Do not give up your study of Urdu. Giriraj will be able to teach you. Tell Father or Qureshi, whoever it is you see, that I cannot forget either of them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6657

407. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 19, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

I have your letter. It seems Kaka is getting useful experience. Write to Ramibai and ask her to write to me. I often remember her and Kamdar[1].

What you said to Shankerlal was quite correct. We should certainly take in any *Antyajas* who may wish to join.

Don't be anxious to economize on fruit at the cost of your health.

You must have read about Kakasaheb's diet. If you wish to suggest any change in it, do so. He does indeed keep good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 39; also C.W. 8753. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] Ramibai's husband

408. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 19, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I got your humorous letter crammed with news. Continue to write in this manner. I do hope that I shall not fall ill here. How can I have here Prema and Vasumati who would remain by my side whenever I seemed to be passing through a difficult time, fearing that something must have happened to me? Don't believe the rumour about my having lost weight. My health is indeed good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10226; also C.W. 6674. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

409. LETTER TO LALJI PARMAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 19, 1930

CHI. LALJI,

Kakasaheb and I were pleased to read your long letter. In future, write in ink. Work very hard. Never swerve from truth or forsake self-restraint and modesty. As far as you are concerned, you should form the habit of getting up regularly at four. You will realize in future the great benefit of such a habit.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Ask Mamasaheb to write to me

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3294

410. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 19, 1930

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Both of us have gone through your glossary of technical terms. I should like to suggest one change. For *baithak,* it is not enough merely to sit on the floor with the right leg drawn in. It is necessary to sit with the toes of the right foot pressed, under the left thigh. If this is not done, the leg may at times brush against the string or the rod. Think over this. If I can do so, I will think about the other definitions too. I like your zeal for perfection very much.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3740

411. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 19, 1930

CHI. RAMA,

I have your letter. It is beautiful. You have taken upon yourself a big responsibility, but I know that it is not beyond your strength. Haven't we, moreover, learnt that verse which tells us that the Lord takes upon Himself the burden of the prosperity and welfare of those who think of Him with single-minded devotion?[1] Why then should we worry? You have done quite right in changing the time of the prayer.

My blessings to all the women.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5322

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, IX. 22.

412. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,
July 19, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

I have your letter. I have received Brother's also. Has not the Lord said in Ch. XII [of the *Gita*] that if we cannot absorb ourselves in this service, that is, in the service of His creation, we shall be able to do so by practice and yoga? By "practice" we should here understand effort. Very few persons are inclined by nature towards service, but everyone can make an effort. Sincere effort makes it natural in the end and then it becomes a thing of joy. Do you follow this? Should I continue to write in the Devanagari script or may I change that also to Gujarati?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

413. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

UNREVISED

July 20, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

It pained me to have to refuse to see you.[1] But the proof of my having done the right thing came the next morning. The Government have rejected my offer and therefore there can be no interviews now. It would be unbecoming for me to press my view-point. They are entitled to refuse every facility to prisoners as was done all the world over only a century ago or even much later. It is enough that the exchange of letters is permitted. But you will recognize that even this is a precarious thing. Any moment they may stop the correspondence or impose unacceptable conditions.We can only gain by self-denial. Therefore, there need be no heartburning over this stoppage of interviews. It is better that spirit meets spirit. No power on earth can stop that blessed contact.

Now for the gifts you left. I note the extraordinary care over the smallest detail. I began the use of the new wheel immediately. This, therefore, was the second day of use. Today is Sunday after the commencement of silence. But whilst this love is deep, it is not as wise as it might be. Your wheel has not lessened the strain. As I explained to Mathuradas, the strain was in the having to sit out for five hours in practically one posture. If I could reduce the hours and get the same amount of production, it would be another matter. That the new wheel is not likely to do. As it is, the strain on the left arm is felt in using the new wheel. For in this you have to move the arm away from you and raise it too, where [-as] in the box wheel, the arm is in a horizontal position and moves towards oneself. Moreover, you could ill afford to give time to a matter like this and take up that of skilled workmen unless it is required by me. I must be allowed to be capable of looking

[1] *Vide* "Note to Mirabehn", 18-7-1930.

after myself and expressing my wants. Thirdly, I have not yet been able to draw as fine a thread as on the box wheel. The result is the use of 50 per cent more slivers—a national waste! Enough however of criticism. I am not going, lightly, to leave aside a thing that has come charged with so much love. I am, therefore, going to continue the use of the wheel and report to you from time to time. What oil do you use for the holders and the axle ? How often do you apply the resin to the *mal*? The *taklis* I have tried. They are not as good as the one I have made here. The discs are too large, the bamboo not well polished. There seems to be a proportion between the thickness of the rod and the circumference of the disc. If weight is wanting, it must be made up by making the disc thicker. Next time you make a *takli*, you will consider these points and let me know your opinion.

There is nothing new to report about my health. The weight keeps steady.

You will please take no liberties with your body during the tour.

I am putting in more time for the translation of the *bhajans*. I have now finished the Sanskrit verses and am now on the *bhajans*.

Give my love to Hariprasad.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5403. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9637

414. LETTER TO PATRICK QUINN[1]

July 20, 1930

DEAR MR. QUINN,

Will you please post the enclosed p.c. which you will see is a mere acknowledgment? Did you order the irrigator?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Pt. III, P. 284

415. LETTER TO PATRICK QUINN

[*July 20, 1930*][2]

DEAR MR. QUINN,

Will you please send for dates 2 lb., raisins 2 lb.?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Pt. III, P. 285

[1] Superintendent, Yeravda Central Prison

[2] The date has been inferred from the placing of the item in the source.

416. LETTER TO RATILAL SHAH

July 20, 1930

BHAISHRI RATILAL,

I have your letter. The event is sad but it is the kind of thing that is going on all the time. I have come to the conclusion that we needlessly regard death as a matter for sorrow. Like all other natural processes, death is also a necessary and beneficial phenomenon. Hence even to a person denying the existence of the soul or its attributes, it is no cause for fear, and it is much less so for one who believes in the soul and its immortality. We should not regard it as a cause for grief that Behn Zabak left the body that had outlived its utility.

As for books, I have not come across many which deserve to be read carefully and pondered. For me, the *Gita* and Tulsidas suffice, and, among modern writings those of Raychandbhai. However, if you wish to read anything recent you may read Kishorelal's *Jivanshodhan*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7164; also C.W. 4658. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

417. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM D. SARAIYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 20, 1930

CHI. KAKU,

I hope you have not taken a vow not to write to me. Or probably you are waiting for a letter from me before writing yourself. You had escaped very cleverly indeed. But it must have been God's will to reserve you for a greater task. We shall have done our duty if we do our work with single-minded devotion. Do write to me. Both Kakasaheb and I shall be pleased.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2805. Courtesy: P.D. Saraiya

418. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 20, 1930

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

We got the letter addressed to us both. You are serving to the best of your ability and that is enough. This will give you strength to do more. If you let Ramanama sink from the lips into the heart, your discontent will disappear.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 217

419. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 21, 1930

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

Your note. When your brother returns he must first come to the Vidyapith and see things for himself. Then, but not till then, he is free to make his choice. You had my previous letter sent from Karadi about him, had you not? Give my love to him when he comes. And remember me to your sister when you write to her.

'Thodsow' is a Tamil corruption of 'Dodhso' nks<lks-

Love from us both.

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

Yes, your book was duly received, thanks.

From a photostat: G.N. 10087

420. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 21, 1930

CHI. MANU (TRIVEDI),

Maganbhai has given detailed news about you. We were both happy to read it. May God grant you good health and increase your zeal for service from day to day. I have certainly not forgotten that you used to bring fresh grapes for me. When you write to Father, tell him that I have many sweet memories of him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7758

421. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 21, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I got your two letters together.

Some of the devotees are tried very severely. God is testing you thus. But that He grants strength to endure is also His blessing. How is Arun[1] now? Is any improvement noticed in Tarini and Charu's health ? How many people are working at Sodepur? By the grace of God Kshitish Bapu[2] is with you and has been blessed with a sound constitution and a stout heart. You have also the support of Dr. Ray. Convey my best wishes to both.

Does Satis Babu get milk, etc.? Has he proper facilities for sleeping and resting?

Give me all the news.

May God grant you health, peace and patience.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1668

[1] Addressee's youngest and the only surviving child
[2] Younger brother of Satis Chandra Das Gupta

422. CABLE TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI[1]

[YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
July 22, 1930][2]

THANKS CABLE. DEPEND UPON DOING MY BEST. AM PRAYING FOR LIGHT. LOVE.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 750(56), p. 21

423. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
July 22, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

I have been given your letter with enclosures. Many thanks. You may depend upon my doing my best. I had a cable from Shastriar. I am praying for light, but as yet I do not see a ray in this impenetrable darkness.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. G. A. NATESAN
"INDIAN REVIEW"
GEORGE TOWN, MADRAS

From a photostat: G.N. 2236

[1] Srinivasa Sastri had cabled to Gandhiji "to receive the proposals of Sapru and Jayakar with sympathy".

[2] According to a note just below the cable, the covering letter from Major Doyle with which this was forwarded was dated July 22, 1930; *vide* also the following item.

424. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 18/22, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your packet yesterday. So many letters cannot be carried safely in an envelope of ordinary paper. It was quite torn when it arrived. You should either use envelopes lined with cloth or even though the cover is treated as a letter for purposes of postage, you should secure it strongly with a string on all sides so that the letters cannot slip out unless the string is broken.

I got the cotton as late as on the 16th. But I was put to no difficulty. Prabhudas and Munnalal speak in their letters about the prayers being dull. Does not Balkrishna lead *bhajans?* Would not you or somebody else speak something about the *Gita* or on some other subject? Balkrishna can do so if he decides. If we cannot do anything besides reciting Sanskrit verses, we may be content with that, but if we can we must introduce something more. Or start reading something in Gujarati. Discuss the matter with Prabhudas and Munnalal, then have a talk with Balkrishna and do what you think proper. I know that you cannot spare time even to think about a matter like this. Even then I make the suggestion. Do what is possible.

We should make an attempt to mix with the Bharwads and make them feel one with us.

July 19, 1930

Much of what I write in these letters is meant for the whole of our group there and so I don't mention those things in the letters to others. One such thing is Kakasaheb's blessings. Let everyone know that the letter to him or her carries them. Kakasaheb receives greetings from all the persons there, for he reads all the letters which they write and his name is mentioned in every one of them. Both of us are glad to know this and to realize that the members of our group have humility.

Thinking about the diary, I feel that it is of priceless value to me. For a person who has dedicated himself to the pursuit of truth, it

serves as a means of keeping watch over himself, for such a person is determined to write in it nothing but the truth. If he has idled away his time or has done less work than usual, he must mention that. Thus a diary helps in many ways. It is, therefore, necessary that everyone there should realize its value. Once we start keeping a diary regularly, we know automatically what to write and how to write it. Yes, there is one condition, namely, that we should aim at being truthful. If that is not so, a diary will be like a false coin. If it contains nothing but the truth, it is of greater value than a gold mohur.

Letter No. 60 is for Mrs. Zaulinger; read that. Try to find out from her what her difficulty is.

I see that it is a hardship for you to have to make a list of the letters. If that takes too much of your time, you may stop doing it. It will suffice if you merely give the total number. You may make a list if you can do so without inconvenience.

I must now write off visits. You will know the reason from my letter to Mirabehn. I don't write about it again in this letter. What would I do if I could not even write ? I should give up doing that, too, if I cannot preserve my self-respect while writing. The path of *bhakti* is a difficult one. But we have no other before us.

Do not worry if the number of letters goes on increasing. Let anyone who wants to write do so freely. It will be enough if they observe the restrictions imposed by jail rules. Political questions should not be discussed, nor can I write anything about them. There is, and should be, no objection to giving news about everyone.

Tell Dr. Haribhai that I often remember him. Has Dr Kanuga completely recovered now?

After morning prayers, July 22, 1930

There is a suggestion in Vishvanath's letter that every week I should write and send a discourse to be read out at prayer time. I thought about the request and felt that it deserved to be complied with. Treat these discourses as my contribution to the attempt to make the prayers more alive. I am considering with Kakasaheb if we can send anything for the other six days as well. Here is something for this week.[1]

[1] This and the other discourses on the Ashram vows contained in the letters to

I deal first with truth, as the Satyagraha Ashram owes its very existence to the pursuit and the attempted practice of truth.

The word *'satya' is* derived from *sat,* which means that which *is. Satya* means a state of being. Nothing is or exists in reality except Truth. That is why *sat* or *satya* is the right name for God. In fact it is more correct to say that Truth is God than to say that God is Truth. But as we cannot do without a ruler or general, the name God is and will remain more current. On deeper thinking, however, it will be realized that *sat* or *satya* is the only correct and fully significant name for God.

And where there is Truth, there also is knowledge which is true. Where there is no Truth, there can be no true knowledge. That is why the word *chit* or knowledge is associated with the name of God. And where there is true knowledge, there is always *ananda,* bliss. There sorrow has no place. And even as Truth is eternal, so is the bliss derived from it. Hence we know God as *Sat-chit-ananda,* one who combines in Himself Truth, knowledge and bliss.

Devotion to this Truth is the sole justification for our existence. All our activities should be centred in truth. Truth should be the very breath of our life. When once this stage in the pilgrim's progress is reached, all other rules of correct living will come without effort and obedience to them will be instinctive. But without Truth it is impossible to observe any principles or rules in life.

Generally speaking, [observance of the law of] Truth is understood merely to mean that we must speak the truth. But we in the Ashram should understand the word *satya* or Truth in a much wider sense. There should be Truth in thought, Truth in speech and Truth in action. To the man who has realized this Truth in its fullness, nothing else remains to be known, because, as we have seen above, all knowledge is necessarily included in it. What is not included in it is not Truth, and so not true knowledge; and there can be no real bliss without true knowledge. If we once learn how to apply this never-failing test of Truth, we will at once be able to find out what is worth doing, what is worth seeing, what is worth reading.

But how is one to realize this Truth, which may be likened to the

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Narandas Gandhi first appeared in book form under the title *Mangal Prabhat* (Tuesday Morning). The translation is reproduced from *From Yeravda Mandir,* with a few changes to bring it into conformity with the Gujarati. Gandhiji states in the preface to the booklet that he had gone through it carefully and revised the translation in places.

philosopher's stone or the cow of plenty? By *abhyasa*, single-minded devotion, and *vairagya*, indifference to all other interests in life—replies the *Bhagavad Gita*. Even so, what may appear as truth to one person will often appear as untruth to another person. But that need not worry the seeker. Where there is honest effort, it will be realized that what appear to be different truths are like the countless and apparently different leaves of the same tree. Does not God Himself appear to different individuals in different aspects? Yet we know that He is one. But Truth is the right designation of God. Hence there is nothing wrong in every man following Truth according to his lights. Indeed it is his duty to do so. Then if there is a mistake on the part of anyone so following Truth, it will be automatically set right. For the quest of Truth involves *tapascharya*, self-suffering, sometimes even unto death. There can be no place in it for even a trace of self-interest. In such selfless search for Truth, nobody can lose his bearings for long. Directly he takes to the wrong path he stumbles, and is thus redirected to the right path. Therefore the pursuit of Truth is true *bhakti*, devotion. Such *bhakti* is "a bargain in which one risks one's very life". It is the path that leads to God. There is no place in it for cowardice, no place for defeat. It is the talisman by which death itself becomes the portal to life eternal.

But now we have come to the border-line beyond which lies ahimsa. We shall discuss it next week.

In this connection, it would be well to ponder over the lives and examples of Harishchandra, Prahlad, Ramachandra, Imam Hasan and Imam Husain, the Christian saints, etc. How beautiful it would be if all of us, young and old, men and women, meditated, till next week, on these thoughts at all hours of the day, whether working, eating, drinking or playing, and were rewarded with innocent sleep?

God as Truth has been for me, at any rate, a treasure beyond price. May He be so to every one of us.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

There are 66 letters. If you do not read all the letters before handing them over to the persons concerned, do so henceforth. Some of the accompanying letters contain suggestions to those to whom they are addressed.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

425. NOTE TO NEHRUS[1]

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
July 23, 1930

CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUE[2]

1. So far as this question is concerned, my personal position is that if the Round Table Conference is restricted to a discussion of safeguards that may be necessary in connection with full Self Government during the period of transition, I should have no objection, it being understood that the question of independence should not be ruled out if anybody raises it. I should be satisfied before I could endorse the idea of the Congress attending the Conference about its whole composition.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE AND ITS CALLING OFF[3]

2. If the Congress is satisfied as to the Round Table Conference, naturally civil disobedience would be called off, that is to say, disobedience of certain laws for the sake of disobedience, but peaceful picketing of foreign cloth and liquor will be continued unless the Government themselves can enforce prohibition of liquor and foreign cloth. But manufacture of salt by the populace will have to be continued and the penal clauses of the Salt Act should not be enforced. There will be no raids on Government Salt Depots or private depots. I will agree even if this clause is not made a clause in these terms, but is accepted as an understanding in writing.

3 (a) Simultaneously with the calling off of the civil disobedience, all satyagrahi prisoners and other political prisoners convicted or under-trial, who have not been guilty of violence or incitement to violence should be ordered to be released, and

(b) properties confiscated under the Salt Act and Press Act and

[1] With a view to restoring normal conditions and ameliorating "the present situation by discussing the question" Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and M. R. Jayakar wrote to the Viceroy on July 13 seeking his permission to interview Gandhiji in Yeravda and Motilal Nehru and Jawaharlal Nehru in Naini Jail. On July 23 and 24 they met Gandhiji who gave them this note to be delivered to Motilal Nehru and Jawaharlal Nehru.

[2] These sub-headings are in Gandhiji's hand in S.N. 19976.

[3] *ibid*

Revenue Act and the like should be restored, and

(c) fines and securities taken from convicted satyagrahis—or under the Press Act should be refunded.

(d) All officers including village officers who have resigned or who may have been dismissed during the civil disobedience movement and who may desire to rejoin Government service should be restored.

N.B. The foregoing should refer also to the non-co-operation period.

(e) Viceregal ordinances should be repealed.[1]

This opinion of mine is purely provisional, because I consider that a prisoner has no right to pronounce any opinion upon political activities of which he cannot possibly have a full grasp while he is shut out of personal contact. I therefore feel that my opinion is not entitled to the weight I should claim for it if I was in touch with the movement.

Mr. Jayakar and Dr. Sapru may show this to Pandit Motilal Nehru, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel and those who are in charge of the movement. Nothing to appear in the Press.

This is not to be shown to the Viceroy at this stage.

Even if the foregoing terms are accepted I should not care to attend the Conference unless, in the event of going out of the prison, I gained self-confidence which I have not at present and unless among those Indians who would be invited there was a preliminary conversation and an agreement as to the minimum by which they should stand under all circumstances.

I reserve to myself the liberty, when the occasion arises, of testing every swaraj scheme by its ability to satisfy the object underlying the eleven points[2] mentioned in my letter to the Viceroy.[3]

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi-Sapru Correspondence. Courtesy: P.N. Sapru; also S.N. 19976

[1] These clauses were incorporated in the joint letter to T. B. Sapru and M. R. Jayakar, pp. 81-4.

[2] *Vide* "Clearing the issue", 30-1-1930.

[3] This note was handed to Sapru and Jayakar along with the covering letter, *vide* the following item.

426. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 23, 1930

DEAR MOTILALJI,

My position is essentially awkward. Being temperamentally so built, I cannot give a decisive opinion on matters happening outside the prison walls. What I have therefore given to our friends is the roughest draft of what is likely to satisfy me personally. You may not know that I was disinclined to give anything to Slocombe and wanted him to discuss things with you. But I could not resist his appeal and let him publish the interview[1] before seeing you.

At the same time I do not want to stand in the way of an honourable settlement, if the time for it is ripe. I have grave doubts about it. But after all, Jawaharlal's must be the final voice. You and I can only give our advice to him. What I have said in my memorandum given to Sir Tej Bahadur and Mr. Jayakar is the utmost limit to which I can go. But Jawahar and, for that matter, also you may consider my position to be inconsistent with the intrinsic Congress policy or the present temper of the people. I should have no hesitation in supporting any stronger position up to the letter of the Lahore resolution. You need therefore attach no weight to my memorandum unless it finds an echo in the hearts of you both.

I know that neither you nor Jawahar were enamoured of the eleven points brought out in my first letter to the Viceroy. I do not know whether you still have the same opinion. My own mind is quite clear about them. They are to me the substance of independence. I should have nothing to do with anything that would not give the nation the power to give immediate effect to them. In restricting myself to the three only in the memorandum, I have not waived the other eight.But the three are now brought out to deal with civil disobedience. I would be no party to any truce which would undo the

[1] *Vide* "Interview to *Daily Herald*", 20-5-1930.

position at which we have arrived today.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi-Sapru Correspondence. Courtesy: P. N. Sapru; also S.N. 19976

427. LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 26, 1930

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA,

I often think about you, of course, but I have been prompted to write this on seeing your name mentioned in Haribhai's letter. I trust that you and all your sisters keep good health. What work do you do these days? If you are permitted to go to the Ashram, and if you yourself wish to do so, I should certainly like to tempt you to join it. If you feel tempted, take the step. Write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7464

428. LETTER TO BALI AND KUMI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 26, 1930

CHI. BALI, KUMI,

I got Bali's letter. Kumi also should write. I don't mind your having taken away Manu. Anything which pleases you two sisters pleases me. Your love for these children sometimes brings tears of joy to my eyes. I used to restrain you lest your love should become blind attachment. I caution you both against it from time to time. But, knowing your nature, I hesitate to do even that. How can I ever hurt you? Are the relations of you two sisters happy?

[1] With this letter and the note to Nehrus, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and M. R. Jayakar met Motilal Nehru and Jawaharlal Nehru on July 27 and 28. For the text of joint note from them and a letter from Jawaharlal Nehru, *vide* "Note from Nehrus", 28-7-1930 & "Letter from Jawaharlal Nehru", 28-7-1930.

I was happy to know that Tulsidas had recovered.

Kusum must be perfectly all right now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:. C.W. 5060. Courtesy: Surendra Mashruwala

429. LETTER TO RAMI GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 26, 1930

CHI. RAMI,

I got your letter. Ba had written to me about you. How did it happen that Kusum fell ill so seriously? Ask Kunvarji to write to me. I don't write a separate letter to him. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5061. Courtesy: Surendra Mashruwala

430. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 26, 1930

CHI. MANUDI,

I have your letter. Even if, as you say, you went away of your own accord, I don't mind. I only wish that you should become a real worker and that your body should become strong. In future write in ink.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1503. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

431. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI PANDYA

July 26, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. What you did in the case of Manibehn is quite correct. In the case of a lady whom we have accommodated we would have done our duty after having pointed out her faults dispassionately. In this case too you should do the same. You should explain to her that your suspicion will not be removed by [her] undertaking a fast. Why should she undertake a fast if she has committed no fault? If she has, fasting is no cure. She should confess it and resolve never to do it again. If she refuses to be persuaded in spite of all this, let events take their own course. But tell Manibehn on my behalf that fasting without my permission is forbidden. She should therefore give up her fast if she hasn't already done so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 321. Courtesy: Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

432. LETTER TO BALIBEHN M. ADALAJA

[After July 26, 1930][1]

CHI. BALI,

Your letter has come after a long time. I can understand that Harilal's behaviour pains you. But what else do we have to learn in the world except facing happy as well as unhappy times?

It is true that even though I have regarded you sisters as daughters. I have not been able to do anything. Nor has Ramdas been able to do anything. But at present, do I have anything except good feelings for my kith and kin? My way of life is unusual. If you can understand that while serving a miserable untouchable I am also serving you, then you will forgive me; but if you do not understand, you are bound to be angry. I must put up with it. I asked you to live with me and absorb yourselves with my work, but you have not done it. Hence, far that I am, what more can I do except wish you well? You have started giving ornaments to Manu[2]. I have just heard that you have pierced her ears. I was pained to hear that. By doing that, you have broken your agreement with me. I do not wish to hurt your feelings. But let us not make Manu a shuttle-cock between us. If you are agreeable to my request, bring her up according to my wishes. If you insist on not listening, then what can I say to you? I am not able to tell you anything and I am not able to bear such an act on your part. Write and explain.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 5050. Courtesy : Surendra Mashruwala

[1] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Bali and Kumi", 26-7-1930.

[2] Manu Gandhi, addressee's niece

433. LETTER TO RAMI GANDHI AND MANU GANDHI

[After July 26, 1930][1]

CHI. RAMI AND MANU,

It is not nice that both of you have written the letter as Bali Masi dictated. I can understand if Manudi does not realize this. But what should I say about Rami? I have not the faintest memory of having turned back Rami from Amreli. Of course, I was not in favour of giving more money for meeting Manilal. I had asked Manilal to spend the money if he had something on him. But surely he did not have. Kunvarji is a poor man and how can he be made to spend? And what money can I have? After all, public money cannot be used indiscriminately. I would certainly wish that Rami should remember this much teaching. Bali Masi is an elder, her ideas are great, her capacity is great. You cannot imitate her.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Manu should have taken my permission before she had her nose and ears pierced.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 9704

[1] *Vide* the preceding item which has reference to piercing of Manu's ears.

434. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

July 26, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. Do not at all hesitate to write to me a long letter. I like your letters and for you that is a kind of consolation. I have already written to you about your health last week. It is better for you to go somewhere on the hills. Your decision regarding Chandradutt and Devidutt is correct. Pampering them is a sin. If we let them go, they will learn and when they get tired, they will come back. At that time, we should welcome them.

I do not think there is any responsibility on you and if there is, it is only one of improving your health. However, you should not consider that as a responsibility. Do what you easily can. Kakasaheb will not be able to send your writing as early as you expect.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 32939

435. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

[*About July 26, 1930*][1]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

It seems that you have come to the Ashram to fall ill. Only yesterday I came to know from Krishnadas's letter that your health has again deteriorated. So far, I have not received a telegram from you and therefore believe that the illness is not serious. Why did you leave Ranavav? If your health is not improving there, would not it be better to return to Ranavav? I am waiting for more details. I am all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32936

436. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 27, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN (JHAVERI),

I have your letter. I trust that you take proper care of your health. Kanjibhai's self-sacrifice is great indeed. My blessings to him, to all the members of his family and to the women who live with you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3102

[1] From the reference to addressee's ill health, this letter appears to have been written about the same time as the preceding one. Also, references in *Vive* " Letter to Narandas Gandhi" , 7-7-1930 and 18/22-1930 confirm that the addressee was at the Ashram in July 1930 as indicated in the first sentence above.

437. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 27, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. How many women live with you ? Have they learnt the prayers? Do you get time to read the *Anasakti-yoga? Is* your mind at peace? I am all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9277

438. LETTER TO KALAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 27, 1930

CHI. KALAVATI,

I have your letter. Since you are learning Gujarati, I write this letter in Gujarati. If you ask me not to write in Gujarati in future, I shall write in Hindi. You, in any case, should write in Hindi. Improve your handwriting. Now that you have started spinning on Prabhubhai's spinning-wheel, put your whole heart into the work. Learn how to clean and repair the wheel. Whatever you do, you should do with proper care and as well as you can do it. Working in this manner develops both the intellect and the heart. Get Shantabehn examined by a doctor.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5242

439. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 27, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

I have your letter. What I said in my last letter regarding prayers must have partly answered the questions which you ask in your letter. Regarding image-worship, we don't forbid anyone to use an image. But we cannot have one in our common prayer.

I have suggested that Shantabehn should be examined by a doctor. But I can offer no proper guidance from this distance.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I get no time to attend to the Hindi translation.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5243

440. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 27, 1930

CHI. JANAKIBEHN,

I have your letter. It would be strange if you did not feel cheerful now. You make speeches and your name appears in newspapers. As I frequently see the name Janakibai Bajaj in papers, what else should I think but that it was good that Jamnalal and I were arrested and that we had better remain in prison. I was sure that there was confidence behind your seeming diffidence. May God increase it. Kamalnayan need not be in a hurry. Let him remain occupied in khadi production work. When the batch comes forward, he may write to Valjibhai.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2888

441. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[1]

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 27, 1930

CHI. MATHURADAS (TREASURER),

Have you understood me regarding the interviews? The Government has found my list too long. Now I shall not get into further argument. Let us be content with exchange of letters.

You must take Tara Mashruwala[2], who was injured while picketing liquor shops, to Dr. Jivraj and have her examined for head injury. I hope it has not left any permanent damage.

Tell Hansabehn[3] : 'Congratulations. May you live long.'

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

442. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 27, 1930

BHAI VITHALDAS,

I got the figures for April, May and June. I see from them that no one yet gives yarn in sufficiently large quantity. You can write to me a detailed letter on this subject.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9775

[1] An extract from this letter appears in *Vide* " Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", 16-11-1936

[2] Nanabhai Mashruwala's daughter

[3] Hansa Mehta, wife of Dr. Jivraj Mehta, who had begun the work of prohibition in Bombay in April with a band of Gujarati women

443. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 27, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I have your two letters. They are a boon for me. It gives me great joy to note that your self-confidence is growing day by day. May God increase it further. What can I write about Satis Babu? I have been watching him grow for quite a time.

You have such faith in khadi that God will provide you with the required assistance. The sacred text goes: to each according to his faith. It cannot prove false.

May God grant some peace to Charu. Where is Arun?

Convey my blessings to Satis Babu and also to Charu, Arun and Tarini.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

You can write everything in connection with khadi.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1669

444. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*July 28, 1930*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. I am sticking to your wheel. It is now causing less strain. The *mal* has not given any trouble at all. In that respect yours is a better wheel. I have still difficulty in getting the required fineness. Anyway, I shall not easily let it go. The speed is still poor. Today for the first time I got 154 rounds in 65 minutes. This was encouraging for me. On the travelling wheel I had reached 200 rounds per hour when the machine went on without a break.

In translating the hymns for you I am giving myself much joy. Have I not expressed my love oftener in storms than in gentle soothing showers of affection? The memory of these storms adds to the pleasure of this exclusive translation for you. But it is a long affair. I did the 10th hymn today. The verses took me a long time. The hymn I am doing one per day. And I have still nearly 170 to do! There is, therefore, not much likelihood of my reaching the *Gita* just yet.

Your fever is disturbing. You are still sensitive to changes. Do please take care of yourself and do not hesitate to travel 2nd if you find it at all necessary. I am looking forward to this week's letter.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5404. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9638

[1] The 10th hymn referred to in the letter was translated on this date, *vide* "*Ashram Bhajanavali*", 15-12-1930. The letter, however, bears the date "27th July 1930" in Mirabehn's handwriting.

445. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Silence Day [*July 28, 1930*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

I am glad to see that you are completely at peace. In being content with opportunities of service which come to us unsought lies the growth of the soul; that is the only way in which we can realize it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: *G. S. Gangabehnne*, p. 40; also C.W. 8754. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

446. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 28, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

It is no trouble to me to write to you. Your diagnosis is correct. We should feel more interest in solving the problems of the Ashram, especially of the women in it; than we do in solving the problems of the country. For the solution of these problems contains the key to the solution of bigger problems. "As in the body, so in the universe." Trying to know the universe we would lose our way, but the body is in our hands.

The infant class seems to be getting well organized.

Shila must have recovered now.

I have deliberately advised you to try bitter gourds.

Idealism can follow the right path. To lead it along that path is

[1] From the printed source.

paramartha[1]. The word *'purushartha'*[2] *is* one-sided in its connotation. Can you think of a neutral word?

Dhurandhar may certainly translate *Anasaktiyoga. :*

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10227; also C.W. 6675. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

447. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,

July 28, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

I have your letter. The family seems to be increasing. That is as it should be. So long as we have the spirit of service in us, people will continue to come.

How serious was Nath's eczema?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 40; also C.W. 8755. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] The highest end

[2] Human effort; the goal or purpose of human life, the four traditionally accepted ones being *dharma, artha, kama* and *moksha*

448. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 28, 1930

CHI PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. Where does Mrityunjaya live? What are his present activities ? Does Mataji[1] feel the separation from Rajendra Babu ? How is Vidyavati's health ?

My diet continues to be the same. The weight remains steady at 103-104. That is not bad.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3391

449. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 28, 1930

Bismillah[2]

CHI. RAIHANA,

Khuda Hafiz[3]

I was filled with joy to see your letter in Gujarati. Your handwriting also was fairly good, and the language simply could not be improved upon. Even the prayers of the pure in heart serve the cause as well as, or even better than, public work. Hence, what does it matter if you cannot work actively? Don't feel unhappy about that. How did you find Father's health? Is he happy and cheerful? How is Mrs. Lukmani now? The Tyabji family has indeed given a wonderful account of itself. Tell Mother that her smiling and modest face comes before me every day.

[1] Wife of Rajendra Prasad
[2] These expressions are in Urdu.
[3] *Ibid*

Write to me again.

If you experience any difficulty in reading this, let me know.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9618

450. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,

July 28, 1930

CHI. MANI (PATEL),

It is after many a week that you have favoured me with a letter. I know you are busy and doing good work in a field of your own choice, but I want you to write all the same.

Live long and serve the country to the best of your ability.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MANIBEHN PATEL
SHRIRAM MANSION
SANDHURST ROAD, BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 72

451. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y.M.,
July 28, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

I got your letter. Get your teeth examined by Haribhai immediately. Kaka Saheb says that he has been advised by a competent doctor that saline gargle repeated ten or twelve times a day helps the teeth. He has also suggested gargling with coconut oil. Both things can be done side by side, though not at the same time. Even while trying this remedy, you must consult a doctor. There is no need at all to worry. The jaw must be healing. You of course did well to write to me. Write and give my blessings to Brother.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

452. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Y.M.,
July 28. 1930

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I have your and shankerlal's letters. I am observing all the work and see God's grace in it.

Do keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G. N. 11551

453. LETTER TO SHOORJI VALLABHDAS

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 29, 1930

BHAISHRI SHOORJI VALLABHDAS,

I got your English letter and the book. I have still not got the Gujarati letter. The Superintendent has definitely no authority to permit me to send a Foreword from here. He must write to the Government, and the latter will never give such permission. If you think it proper to write to the Government yourself, you may do so.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4094

454. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 29, 1930

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter. Now I am given almost all the letters. Still, you did well in writing in English. It was good that you did not come to Poona. I cannot see anybody. The conditions placed on receiving visitors are not acceptable to me; I have therefore had only one visit so far. There is no possibility of a second. It causes me no pain. In fact a prisoner has no rights at all. Incarceration is a kind of moral death, it can mean only that.

I had a good laugh over your account of the dream. That dream is a sign of love. We do not dream of strangers.

I am keeping well. The water here is somewhat constipating. But it causes me no trouble.

If you are plying the *takli* now and then, why not ply it regularly? My experience is that the worth of a job done irregularly increases at least fourfold if performed regularly. The whole world is governed by order. Such experiences have given rise to the saying: To disordered minds even blessing comes as a calamity.

Your description of the trend for khadi gave me joy. Your son must have fully recovered by now.

How is your health? What do you eat? My diet consists of milk, curds, raisins, dates and lemons. I take the lime juice with soda or hot water and salt.

Tell Bhai Manmohan Gandhi that I have received his book as also his letter. There is very little time for reading books. Almost all my energy is devoted to spinning and carding.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6186. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

455. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 28/31, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. Kakasaheb remarks that the ink and the paper which you use are such that the ink comes out on the other side of the sheet, and hence it will not do to write on both sides. What he says is correct. In such a case, it is desirable to write on one side only.

This time the letters were properly packed. I preserve the envelopes and will use them when I need them. I have already told you in my previous letter that I had received the cotton. I could card some of it only today. The air was very moist because of the rains. It is not the spinning which tires me out, but the sitting for long hours. I shall discover some way by and by. I will not readily accept defeat. There is nothing in this which need cause you concern. Even when I was out of jail, did I ever sit at the spinning-wheel for four or five hours at a stretch?

The injury to Keshu's finger must have healed by now. Can Balkrishna's body stand the strain of night watch? He should not do anything beyond his strength.

Both of us keep good health. On a spring balance Kakasaheb weighed 109 lb. He must be walking about 8 miles a day, including the walking he does for exercise and during work. The exertion of spinning is in addition to this. His diet is still the same.

If there are any men or women to whom I have not written and who expect letters from me, let me know their names. I should have had a letter from Ramabehn (Ranchhodbhai's). She must have received mine.

Now about ahimsa.

Tuesday morning

The commencement of this discourse is both comic and painful. We two had a discussion on how to economize in the use of cloth-lined envelopes and save the same envelopes for use again and again. The question was whether to paste a blank sheet on the whole side of the envelope or paste only slips over portions where something was written. This was a futile discussion. We wasted on it 15 minutes of beautiful time after prayers, demonstrating our foolishness thereby. In doing this we violated truth and ahimsa and displayed lack of discrimination. Truth was violated, because the discussion was not inspired by an ardent desire for its search. Ahimsa was shamed, because I, who ought to give every moment of my time to discover the sufferings of the people and in thinking about the ways of ending them, wasted 15 priceless minutes in a futile discussion. We displayed lack of discrimination, because if we had thought about the utility of the discussion, it would not have lasted even a minute. After we had stolen 15 minutes from people's time, we realized our foolishness and thanked God for opening our eyes.

I have purposely given this introduction.

The path of Truth is as narrow as it is straight. Even so is that of ahimsa. It is like balancing oneself on the edge of a sword. By concentration an acrobat can walk on a rope. But the concentration required to tread the path of Truth and ahimsa is far greater. The slightest inattention brings one tumbling to the ground. One can realize Truth and ahimsa only by ceaseless striving.

But it is impossible for us to realize perfect truth so long as we are imprisoned in this mortal frame. We can only visualize it in our imagination. We cannot, through the instrumentality of this ephemeral body, see face to face truth which is eternal. That is why in the last resort we must depend on faith.

It appears that the impossibility of full realization of truth in this mortal body led some ancient seeker after truth to the appreciation of ahimsa. The question which confronted him was: "Shall I bear with those who create difficulties for me, or shall I destroy them?" The seeker realized that he who went on destroying others did not make headway but simply stayed where he was, while the man who suffered those who created difficulties marched ahead and at times even took the others with him. The first act of destruction taught him that the truth which was the object of his quest was not outside himself but

within. Hence the more he took to violence, the more he receded from truth. For in fighting the imagined enemy without, he neglected the enemy within.

We punish thieves because we think they harass us. They may leave us alone; but they will only transfer their attentions to another victim. This other victim, however, is also a human being, ourselves in a different form, and so we are caught in a vicious circle. The trouble from thieves continues to increase, as they think it is their business to steal. In the end we see that it is better to tolerate the thieves than to punish them. The forbearance may even bring them to their senses. By tolerating them we realize that thieves are not different from ourselves, they are our brethren, our friends, and may not be punished. But whilst we may bear with the thieves, we may not endure the infliction. That would only induce cowardice. So we realize a further duty. Since we regard the thieves as our kith and kin, they must be made to realize the kinship. And so we must take pains to devise ways and means of winning them over. This is the path of ahimsa. It may entail continuous suffering and the cultivating of end-less patience. Given these two conditions, the thief is bound in the end to turn away from his evil ways and we shall get a clearer vision of truth. Thus step by step we learn how to make friends with all the world; we realize the greatness of God, of Truth. Our peace of mind increases in spite of suffering; we become braver and more ent-erprising; we understand more clearly the difference between what is everlasting and what is not; we learn how to distinguish between what is our duty and what is not. Our pride melts away and we become humble. Our worldly attachments diminish and likewise the evil within us diminishes from day to day.

Ahimsa is not the crude thing it has been made to appear. Not to hurt any living thing is no doubt a part of ahimsa. But it is its least expression. The principle of ahimsa is hurt by every evil thought, by undue haste, by lying, by hatred, by wishing ill of anybody. It is also violated by our holding on to what the world needs. But the world needs even what we eat day by day. In the place where we stand there are millions of micro-organisms to whom the place belongs and who are hurt by our presence there. What should we do then? Should we commit suicide ? Even that is no solution, if we believe, as we do, that so long as the spirit is attached to the flesh, on every destruction of the body it weaves for itself another. The body will cease to be only when

we give up all attachment to it. This freedom from all attachment is the realization of God as Truth. Such realization cannot be attained in a hurry. Realizing that this body does not belong to us, that it is a trust handed over to our charge, we should make the right use of it and progress towards our goal.

I wished to write something which would be easy for all to understand, but I find that I have written a difficult discourse. However, no one who has thought even a little about ahimsa should find any difficulty in understanding what I have written.

It is perhaps clear from the foregoing that without ahimsa it is not possible to seek and find Truth. Ahimsa and Truth are so intertwined that it is practically impossible to disentangle and separate them. They are like the two sides of a coin, or rather of a smooth unstamped metallic disc. Who can say which is the obverse and which is the reverse? Nevertheless, ahimsa is the means and Truth is the end. Means to be means must always be within our reach, and so ahimsa becomes our supreme duty and Truth becomes God for us. If we take care of the means, we are bound to reach the end sooner or later. If we resolve to do this, we shall have won the battle. Whatever difficulties we encounter, whatever apparent reverses we sustain, we should not lose faith but should ever repeat one *mantra:* "Truth exists, it alone exists. It is the only God and there is but one way of realizing it; there is but one means and that is ahimsa. I will never give it up. May the God that is Truth, in whose name I have taken this pledge, give me the strength to keep it."

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

There are 57 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

456. LETTER TO GOVIND PATEL

Wednesday [*July, 1930*][1]

CHI. GOVIND,

I was happy to read your letter. Your handwriting is beautiful and your spelling is better than mine. You could certainly have given me news of your health. Do so in your next letter. How did Rambhau fall ill? How is Jayanti now? How do you spend your day? What do you eat? Where do you live, and what is your weight?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3947

457. NOTE TO M. R. JAYAKAR[2]

August 2, 1930

(1) No constitutional scheme would be acceptable to Mr. Gandhi which did not contain a clause allowing India the right to secede from the Empire at her desire and another clause which gave the right and power to India to deal satisfactorily with his eleven points.

(2) The Viceroy should be made aware of this position of

Mr. Gandhi in order that the Viceroy should not consider later that these views of Mr. Gandhi had taken him by surprise when they were urged at the Round Table Conference. The Viceroy should also be made aware that Mr. Gandhi would insist at the Round Table Conference on a clause giving India the right to have examined by an independent tribunal all the British claims and concessions given to Britishers in the past.

The Hindu, 5-9-1930

[1] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Govind Patel", 17-7-1930.

[2] On July 31, August 1 and August 2, M. R. Jayakar again saw Gandhiji who dictated this note which was to form the basis of negotiations with the Viceroy.

458. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 2, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your letter. When we are required to assume leadership only for service, we should do even that and carry on the work. It may be that faith begins as faith in the doer but it should be transformed into faith in his work. Only then can we feel satisfied. The doer lives for a while and is no more; he is only an instrument. Actions live for ever. Where is Harishchandra now? But truth has always been, and is and will be. Harishchandra's immortality is the result of his action in the service of truth. Truth existed even before he was born. He served only as an instrument. Fix this thought in your mind with the help of other examples; the goblin of despair will then run away from you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9298

459. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 2, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

In order to get dreamless sleep one's thoughts and conduct during waking hours should be pure. The state of sleep is a mirror reflecting one's condition during the waking state. All of us have the strength to prevent our idealism from following the wrong path. That is the supreme end. There is no question of defeat in such striving.

In what does Krishnakumari differ from Kamalabehn?

Here we have been seeing clouds in the sky for the last one and a half months, but there has been very little rain, though not less than the average in Ahmedabad.

Convey my blessings to Krishnan Nair and tell him that it is my understanding with the authorities that I should not write to prisoners. I

have great hopes of him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10228; also C.W. 6676. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

460. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 2, 1930

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

I got your letter. Can you read my handwriting in Gujarati? If you cannot read it, I will write in Hindi. Write to me often in the same way that you have done this time. Anyone who goes to visit Father should tell him that he should come out with added weight.

You should write a neat and clear handwriting. Improve your health as much as you can.

Kakasaheb sends you his blessings.

Where is Om? Tell Madalasa that she should write to me. Ask Kamala and Rameshwar also to write.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Where is Radhakisan? How is he?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3044

461. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,
August 2, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

All right, here is a letter in Devanagari. You will have fully recovered. I can understand Mother's continuing to worry. You should write to her politely but firmly. If you do so, she will calm down. Have faith that all will be well with you.

I hope Brother is now keeping good health. How many persons are there with him in the Ashram? How many women? My blessings to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

462. LETTER TO SHARDA G. SHAH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 3, 1930

CHI. SHARDA (BABU),

I receive your letters fairly regularly. You must make it a habit to revise whatever you may write. No letter should be regarded as completed unless you have revised it. Ask Chimanlal to write to me. I hope you are having no more asthma.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9886. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

463. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

August 3, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

I got your letter. No one inspired by a noble idea has ever laboured in vain. You are the first to give me precise information about Indulal[1]. I am glad.

I see that you are keeping up a fairly good correspondence with all friends. Do you write to Sushila (the Punjabi) ? If you know her address, ask her to write to me. What does she do?

My regards to all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1801

464. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI PANDYA

August 3, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. We cannot ask Manibehn to leave so long as she observes the rules as far as her conduct goes. You are needlessly worrying. No matter how she has fallen, you are equally responsible for it. You should realize this and hold your patience. [I say] you were equally responsible because you had not given up your conjugal relationship. As long as a man continues his carnal relationship with his wife it should be regarded as pardonable if the wife is drawn by such passion even towards other quarters, just as a wife tolerates such weakness in her husband.

After such relationship has ceased, if a woman commits adultery the man may be separated from her and support her if necessary.

Please calm down. The *bhajan* is nice.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 322. Courtesy: Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

[1] Indulal Yajnik

465. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 3, 1930

CHI. NIMU,

I got a letter from you after so many weeks. Do not be tardy in writing to me. I hope Sumitra has completely recovered by now. Do not worry about Ramdas. Rama will protect him. He has always enjoyed Rama's blessings. You may stay where and as you like.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

466. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 4, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

I want to be brief this week. There is no special reason for it. As a matter of fact the general letter is long enough.

I do hope your health has kept quite good throughout the travel.[1]

I am glad you met Parasram. I wonder if he had received my note.

The wheel has worked better. I reached today more than 160 rounds in an hour. I have rearranged the bow and it works better. I realize more and more that good slivers are indispensable for gaining speed in spinning. It is wonderful how attention to every detail counts.

Health keeps all right.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5405. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9639

[1] The addressee had set out on "an extensive khadi tour".

467. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 4, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

Your handwriting is improving. Just as you may be said to have spun only if you have done it well, so also about handwriting. You may write only one line, but it should be neatly written. If we have resolved that every breath of ours will be for the love of God, then even the least important work which we do should be done well.

I have written to Bal and told him that most probably he will be able to see Kakasaheb.

I have received the clothes sent by you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 40; also C.W. 8756. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

468. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 4, 1930

CHI. MANU,

Both of us liked your letter. You do everything with determination and you will, therefore, do well whatever you attempt. Don't be eager to do anything beyond your strength. When Shankar is released, tell him that I expect a detailed letter from him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7759

469. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 4, 1930

CHI. RUKMINI,

How is it that though you have come to the Ashram, you have not been able to find time to write two lines to me ? Do you have peace of mind and are you contented and happy ? I shall be satisfied if you tell me this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9312. Courtesy: Benarsilal Bazaj

470. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 4, 1930

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I was awaiting your letter. It has been hinted that I should not write to Devdas, Krishnan Nair and other prisoners. Give my blessings to all.

Never lose cheerfulness. Take up whatever duties come your way. Keep your body healthy and of course it will help if you give up worrying.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2383

471. LETTER TO AN ASHRAM INMATE

[Before *August 5, 1930*][1]

[2]. . .It is our duty to be ready for jail, but it is ignorant attachment to wish to go to jail. . . .[3] Work is becoming slack; try to put life into it. Anyone who does not do his best is a thief, and we have taken a vow not to steal. Those who work but without proper care, are also thieves. If we are really sincere in what we profess, we should, at long last, start working. We should daily pray to God, as we rise in the morning and go to bed at night, that our laziness may leave us, that He may make us sincere and give us the strength to be good.

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 16865

472. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 3/5, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

You need not have written the letter despite the pain in your hand; or you should have dictated it to Radha or somebody else. It is God's grace that even in this condition you could go on with the *yajna* of spinning. How did the hand slip? It must be completely all right by now.

Ask the person who bakes our bread to write to me and explain the process. How does he make the yeast? How much does he add to a given quantity of flour? When does he knead the flour, and after kneading it how long does he let it remain? Let him give all these details. There is a bakery adjoining our cells. They make quite good bread from *maida*[4] but cannot produce fermentation in whole-wheat flour like that which we use. So they were asking me. This need not be published.

The fact that Mirabehn got her letter late indicates my subject

[1] From the *Ashram Patrika*, 5-8-1930
[2] Omissions as in the source
[3] *Ibid*
[4] White flour

state. 1 will play on the pipe as long as I can.[1] You should not, therefore, be surprised if my letters stop. I will go on writing them as long as I can with self-respect. Can a prisoner write letters at all? He and his relations and friends should know that he has no rights with regard to the outside world. Be that as it may, both of us are doing fine.

The . . . behn's[2] affair was a painful one. I am not at all surprised by such occurrences now. Our experiment does carry with it such risks. Since you will be reading my letter to . . . behn and others, I need not write more here. In such situations we should show the utmost charity. God is the only witness of secret sins. We should never persecute those whose sins become known. We may explain to such persons their duty as we understand it and leave them to God. You did right in not giving . . . behn the permission asked for. I do hope that both . . . behn and . . .[3] will see their error one day.

If Amidas has confidence in himself and knows how to make the experiments, you need not interfere with him. Personally I feel that 72 lb. weight is too little. Dates are not enough. I think there will be no harm if he takes curds or milk at the same time. Show this to him. If he has no experience in this matter, he should be guided by my advice. If he feels cold, he should not be obstinate and avoid using a covering. If he does, not feel cold, there will be no harm in keeping the body uncovered. Ask him to write to me.

If Damodardas continues to spit blood, he must go to a place like Panchgani. He may return after he is all right. It is my experience that persons who suffer from such a disease do not get well in the air on the banks of Sabarmati. Instead of going to Panchgani or some such place when it is too late for recovery, if he goes now when the disease is under control he will get well in a short time and return to Sabarmati.

In my letter to Giriraj, read what I have written concerning him.

Write to Jamnalalji, KishoreIal and others that there is an understanding [with the Government] that I cannot write to other prisoners. I got Kishorelal's letter. If his experiment in diet succeeds, I would envy him. Ramniklal's matter is settled quite satisfactorily now. I cannot write to him either. Write to Narahari and tell him that he enjoys the fullest grace of God, otherwise he would not again and again get such opportunities for service.

[1] A Gujarati saying
[2] The names have been omitted.
[3] *ibid*

It is not likely to help me even if you send me a spinning-wheel made of bamboo. I am a lame duck in so far as spinning is concerned. I love it, I work hard and pay great attention to it but the speed simply does not increase. How can I blame the spinning-wheel which I use? I have not been able to see where my stupidity lies. When I was out of jail, no one took the courage to explain it to me. I was satisfied with drawing 160 rounds and did not pay sufficient attention to increasing the speed. I see my error now. But every fool has the words 'too late' inscribed on his forehead. If now I let you send a bamboo spinning-wheel, that would be our illustration of the saying "a dull student needs a lot of pens to use". I don't want that. I must suffer the consequences of my folly. I am patiently observing, and improving my method wherever improvement is possible. Moreover, I can increase the speed if my physical strength improves. If it does not, I shall be content to live as Rama wills. Ultimately, the blame will be His. If I do my best, He cannot blame me. His law ever prevails without exception, and since He is the first to obey His law, and does that perfectly, we need have no fear. Being as great as He is, if He were to act wilfully, wouldn't we be utterly destroyed ?

Tuesday morning

Next among our observances comes *brahmacharya.* As a matter of fact all observances are deducible from Truth and are meant to subserve it. The man who is wedded to Truth and worships Truth alone proves unfaithful to it if he applies his talents to anything else. How then can he minister to the senses? A man, whose activities are wholly consecrated to the realization of Truth, which requires utter selflessness, can have no time for the selfish purpose of begetting children and running a household. Realization of Truth through self-gratification should, after what has been said before, appear a contradiction in terms.

If we look at it from the standpoint of ahimsa, we find that the fulfilment of ahimsa is impossible without perfect *brahmacharya.* Ahimsa means universal love. If a man gives his love to one woman, or a woman to one man, what is there left for all the world besides? It simply means, "we two first, and the devil take all the rest of them." As a faithful wife must be prepared to sacrifice her all for the sake of her husband, and a faithful husband for the sake of his wife, it is clear that such persons cannot rise to the height of universal love, or look upon all mankind as kith and kin. For they have created a boundary wall or

one has been created round their love. The larger their family, the farther are they from universal love. We see this in the wholeworld. Hence one who would obey the law of ahimsa cannot marry, not to speak of gratification outside the marital bond.

Then what about people who are already married? Will they never be able to realize Truth? Can they never offer their all at the altar of humanity? There is a way out for them. They can behave as if they were not married. On this path I have known nothing as beautiful as such a relationship. Those who have enjoyed this happy condition will be able to bear me out. Many have to my knowledge successfully tried the experiment. If the married couple can think of each other as brother and sister, they are freed for universal service. The very thought that all the women in the world are his sisters, mothers or daughters will at once ennoble a man and snap his chains. The husband and wife do not lose anything here, but only add to their resources and even to their family. Their love becomes free from the impurity of lust and so grows stronger. With the disappearance of this impurity, they can serve each other better, and the occasions for quarrelling become fewer. There are more occasions for quarrelling where the love is selfish and bounded.

If the foregoing argument is appreciated, a consideration of the physical benefits of chastity becomes a matter of secondary importance. How foolish it is intentionally to dissipate vital energy in sensual enjoyment! It is a grave misuse to fritter away for physical gratification that which is given to man and woman for the full development of their bodily and mental powers. Such misuse is the root cause of many a disease.

Brahmacharya like all other observances must be expressed in thought, word and deed. We are told in the *Gita,* and experience will corroborate the statement, that the foolish man who appears to control his body but is nursing evil thoughts in his mind makes a futile effort.[1] It may be harmful to suppress the body, if the mind is at the same time allowed to go astray. Where the mind wanders, the body must follow sooner or later. It is necessary here to appreciate a distinction. It is one thing to allow the mind to harbour impure thoughts; it is a different thing altogether if it strays among them in spite of ourselves. Victory will be ours in the end if we non-co-operate with the mind in its evil

[1] III. 6

wanderings. We experience every moment of our lives that often while the body is subject to our control the mind is not. This physical control should never be relaxed, and in addition we must put forth a constant endeavour to bring the mind under control. We can do nothing more, nothing less. If we give way to the mind, the body and the mind will pull in different ways and we shall be false to ourselves. Body and mind may be said to go together so long as we continue to resist the approach of every evil thought.

The observance of such *brahmacharya* has been believed to be very difficult, almost impossible. In trying to find a reason for this belief, we see that the term *brahmacharya* has been taken in a narrow sense. Mere control of animal passion has been thought to be tantamount to observing *brahmacharya.* I feel that this conception is incomplete and wrong. *Brahmacharya* means control of all the organs of sense. He who attempts to control only one organ and allows all the others free play is bound to find his effort futile. To hear suggestive stories with the ears, to see suggestive sights with the eyes, to taste stimulating food with the tongue, to touch exciting things with the hands, and yet at the same time to expect to control the generative organ is like putting one's hands in the fire and expecting to escape being burnt. He, therefore, who is resolved to control the one must be likewise determined to control the rest. I have always felt that much harm has been done by the narrow definition of *brahmacharya.* If we practise simultaneous self-control in all directions, the attempt will soon be possible of success; nay, only then will it be possible. Perhaps the palate is the chief sinner. That is why in the Ashram we have assigned the control of the palate a separate place among our observances. We shall discuss it next time.

Let us remember the root meaning of *'brahmacharya' 'Charya'* means course of conduct; *'brahmacharya',* conduct adapted to the search of Brahman, i.e., Truth. From this etymological meaning arises the special meaning, viz., control of all the senses. We must entirely forget the incomplete definition which restricts itself to the sexual aspect only.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

There are 45 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

473. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 5, 1930

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

I have read your essay[1]. It is very good.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10088

474. LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 8, 1930

CHI. RADHIKA,

I got your letter written in a hand as neat as print. I wish I could write like that. Don't think that one can never practise truth as I have defined it.

Write to me and tell me, if you know, about Rukmini's mental condition.

I had completely forgotten about the poems. After you have read and fully understood Gray's *Elegy*, *Horatius* and the *Psalms* of David, I may suggest other poems. The three are different kinds of works and are among the best. You will be able to understand them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8683. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

[1] Not available

475. LETTER TO BALIBEHN VOHRA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 8, 1930

CHI. BALI,

I got the letters of you two sisters, and also Manudi's. I read the news about Rami having delivered. I hope the baby is growing well. You two sisters are excellent nurses, and so I need not worry about Rami at all. No one can equal you in serving those whom you love.

I was very happy indeed to know that there is nothing but love between you two.

I don't write to Manudi this time. I have many other letters to write.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5059. Courtesy: Surendra Mashruwala

476. LETTER TO MAITRI GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 8, 1930

CHL. MAITRI,

I have your letter. Don't mind if you make mistakes. You should go on writing to me, with proper care. I was very happy to learn that your health had improved.

You are perfectly right when you say that, as moderation in eating is good, so is moderation in providing food to the mind. Prabhubhai is very well qualified to teach you; learn from him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6216

477. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 8, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I remember last year's *Rakshabandhan*[1] as also everyone's surprise. The fact that you, too, became bound with it need not be recalled, for that bond between us continues. Your privilege will be exercised by Kakasaheb this time. Will not he, too, become bound then? But, then, why should he fear that, being already bound? There will be, therefore, no difficulty in the matter. The position is all right from the point of view of the person who lets his wrist be tied with it.

I like your paying such attention to the library. Shila's health ought to improve.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10229; also C.W. 6677. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

478. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 8, 1930

CHI. RUKMINI,

At last I have a letter from you. Take immediate steps to make your body strong. Let there be no weight on your mind. Occupy yourself with any work or reading you can take up. I shall be happy if you write to me and open your heart. What does the doctor say now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9313. Courtesy: Benarsilal Bazaj

[1] A festival during which sisters tie wrist-bands on brothers as token of securing their protection

479. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y.M.,
August 8, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

I have your letter. True, I have written to you about saline gargle, but you should still have your teeth examined by the dentist. Visit him again. You must improve your impaired health at once. It is said that a disease should be tackled at its incipient stage.

Your jaw will have healed by now.

Keep writing to Krishna Kumari.

Blessings to Brother. Let him not feel disappointed because women's work cannot be done at present.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Read the discourse on truth and non-violence over and over again.[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 28/31-7-1930.

480. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 8, 1930

CHI, MANGALA,

Are you a walking-stick or a spoilt girl or both? I did not write to you because I wanted to save time. Do you get letters from Kamala[1]? I hope you are not neglecting spinning?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11087. Courtesy : Pushpa Naik

481. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 9, 1930

CHI. SHARDA (BABU),

I received your delightful letter. If we sing *bhajans* in our dreams, come face to face with God or meet saintly people, our dreams are innocent. If we pamper our palate, cheat people, get angry and have impure thoughts, our dreams are sinful.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9887. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] Addressee's sister

482. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 9, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. I can't understand why you did not get my letter. I don't remember to have missed a single post in writing to you. If, however, you do not occasionally get a letter from me, you should know that I am not a free man. Generally all the letters are now dispatched from here. Don't worry about me. Take care and see that you do not become weak. Replies to your other questions were given in my last letter. How shall I admire Father? Though ill in bed, he has the energy and courage of a lion. That you are born his daughter is bound to show itself. God will make you a lioness.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Kakasaheb is doing fine. He asks me to convey his blessings to you.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N: 3366

483. LETTER TO SATYADEVI GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 9, 1930

CHI. SATYADEVI,

I have your letter. You have drawn the trees well. Now you should have real trees as your models so that your drawing may give an impression of reality. You must practise your letters well before you start giving them curves. You like learning good things that is why I ask you to learn correct spelling even from now. Do not slacken about spinning.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Virat Vatsalata, pp. 33-4

484. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 9, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

The account of Satis Babu's daily routine gives me great pleasure. If a man spins 1,000 yards of yarn on the *takli* in one day, what would be his output for an hour? This speed is beyond me. Who is looking after the children of the lady who has been arrested?

Have you any news of Krishnadas? Do you have any letters from him?

Give my blessings to Tarini. Where is Arun ? Is Charu with you? My blessings to both,

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1670

[1] The original was in Gujarati.

485. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 10, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

I have your love letter from Patna. Your experiences are valuable. I hope that the symptoms of dysentery have disappeared altogether.

I am sticking to the new wheel. The speed is still the same. But I am not going to give it up. It is a precious possession.

The translation of the hymns is going on with clock-work regularity but I have not been able to give them more time; the time-limit therefore remains as I said in one of my letters.

When you write to Mr. Hassan Imam remember me to him and tell him I was delighted to learn that he recalled the conversation of ten years ago.

My weight has gone down by 2 lb., but there is nothing to worry over. The obstinate constipation necessitated reduction in the quantity of milk. I shall pick up if I can revert to the original quantity. It is better to lose weight than to lose health. Energy remains the same. This news is not for publication. I have given it to you for the sake of truth. I am bound to tell you about my health and I may not suppress the fact of the loss of weight.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5406. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9640

486. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 10, 1930

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I don't remember if I got the letter you posted to me separately. What had you written in it?

One method of overcoming one's weaknesses is this. Pick up any verse you like from the chapter of the *Gita* read on the particular day and go on reciting it while doing any work during the whole day. This will keep away other harmful thoughts from your mind. I have tried this method. I know that Raychandbhai used to do this. Many others too have had the same experience.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9500

487. LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 10, 1930

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA,

I was very happy to read your letter. Why was the handwriting so poor ? There are some *ovis*[1] of Ramdas Swami[2] on how to acquire a good handwriting. I have sent a translation to the Ashram. Ask Haribhai to send you a copy of it.

See that in the spinning competition one of the women wins. How did you become ill? I thought that you were quite strong. Get rid of your fever. How is your eye? I should be happy if all of you immediately went to the Ashram. Chandan, Tara and Vasant should also write to me. Kakasaheb sends his blessings.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7465

[1] Stanzas
[2] Seventeenth-century saint poet of Maharashtra

488. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 10, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

I have your letter. I hope it is not necessary for you to leave the Ashram. I think, however, that you have not realized the importance of sacrificial work and the necessity of keeping a diary. It is at a time like the present that discipline proves to be the fabled wish-fulfilling tree. All persons cannot realize the value of a thing equally well. The best course, therefore, is to obey blindly all the rules of an institution of which we are members. It would not matter if the entries in the diary were the same every day. The importance of the diary lies in this very fact, provided the entries are a faithful record. Anyone who can truthfully record that his days pass with the unvarying movement of the planets of the solar system would be truly blessed. I would, therefore, advise you to do, with full faith, everything which Narandas may ask you to do. I have the utmost confidence in his decisions.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5248

489. LETTER TO LAKSHMIBEHN KHARE

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 11, 1930

CHI. LAKSHMIBEHN (KHARE),

Chhaganlal has written to me about your adventures. May God give you all strength and a long life.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 275. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn Khare

490. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 11, 1930

BHAISHRI VALJI,

This letter is meant for the whole batch. Write to me and tell me how many of you have been released and how everyone is. What did you all do [while in jail]? How did you keep there? Have you improved your health and become stronger?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Anyone who wishes to write to me may do so.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7405. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

491. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

August 11, 1930

CHI. PRABHDAS,

I got your letter. Kakasaheb has liked your translation of the *sthitaprajna*[1]. I had expected something different. I cannot of course make any corrections from here[2] and send the thing back to you. For the present, therefore, the translation will remain with me. Your effort is certainly very good. Continue learning in that manner. It will be good if now you go to Almora as early as possible. Let me caution you somewhat regarding your model of the spinning-wheel. I am of no use and you may take it that Kakasaheb is of no use either, nor Vinoba. Our reasons for desiring that you should study the matter, are different from one another's. But from your point of view, it is sufficient that we are useless for your purpose. Your reasoning does not seem to be correct. The experiences which you have gathered through others, convincingly show that there will not be much increase in speed, nor will the yarn spun be even. The fact is that your model of the spinning-wheel follows the model in use at present, that is, it is not purely a machine. A mac-hine is that which requires no intelligence or dexterity. Plying the spi-nning-wheel is an art and it can, therefore, be mastered only by one who has the required skill. You should copy the Singer [sewing-machine] or the spinning-jenny but you are not such an expert mechanic. It seems that a spinning-wheel on which the speed can be increased only with great difficulty and which moreover is costly, has no place in our programme. Have I been able to make this quite clear to you? If not, write to me again. It will be a different matter if, though you have understood what I have said, you think that my reasoning is faulty. I have not written all this to dishearten you, but only to suggest that you should not lose your head over this particular model of the spinning-wheel. You have many other things to do in that

[1] Presumably the verses 54 to 72, chapter II of the *Bhagavad Gita* which describe the characteristics of a *sthitaprajna*, i.e., of one who is firmly established in spiritual wisdom.

[2] In Yeravda Prison

direction.

Try to understand what I have been saying about the *takli.* I do not propose the *takli* as a substitute for the spinning-wheel but the *takli* can enter a field where the spinning-wheel cannot. The whole plan of spinning depends upon the number of people who take it up. If merely a handful of us had occupied this vast country, spinning would have had no place here. If a small number of people occupy a large area, that small number has to be violent by nature. Of what use is the *takli* or the spinning-wheel to them as a symbol of ahimsa? The *takli* or the spinning-wheel is a tool to man as mandestroys the very basis of competition. We must not think of either of them from the present day commercial point of view. Rather, they imply the transformation of the commercial point of view itself. In Almora, therefore, you should pursue your work in regard to wool from this point of view and not from the point of view of Kashmir. If you give more and more importance to the principle that one should wear cloth made from yarn spun by oneself, you will have no cause to be disappointed, and will readily appreciate the great value of the *takli*. Yes, if you can make suitable changes in the spinning-wheel so that wool can be spun on it, do so. That is done even in this jail. With but a few changes, even the spinning-wheels in current use will permit the spinning of wool and will produce more yarn than the *takli*. However, for the roaming tribes of cowherds and shepherds, etc., the *takli* will certainly remain. In that way, on the whole, the *takli* will be found superior from the point of view of numbers. If you have still not followed all this, ask me again. Belief in the usefulness of the *takli* is a matter not of faith but purely of reason. In such a matter, to depend on faith may be a sign of indolence.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33018

492. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Tuesday morning,
August 12, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

Control of the palate: Control of palate is very closely connected with the observance of *brahmacharya.* I have found from experience that the observance of celibacy becomes comparatively easy if one acquires mastery over the palate. This does not figure among the observances of time-honoured recognition. Could it be because even great sages found it difficult to achieve ? In the Satyagraha Ashram we have elevated it to the rank of an independent observance, and must therefore consider it by itself.

Aswad means not to enjoy savour; savour means pleasure. Food has to be taken as we take medicine, that is, without thinking whether it is palatable or otherwise and only in quantities limited to the needs of the body. Food means everything we eat. Hence milk and fruit are also included in it. Just as medicine taken in too small a dose does not act or acts only partially, and as too large a dose injures the system, so it is with food. It is, therefore, a breach of this observance to take anything just for its pleasant taste. It is equally a breach to take too much of what one finds to one's taste. From this it follows that to put salt in one's food in order to increase or modify its taste or in order to cure its insipidity is a breach of the observance. But the addition is not a breach if it is considered necessary for health to have a certain proportion of salt with food. Of course it would be sheer hypocrisy to add salt or any other thing to our food, deluding ourselves that it is necessary for the system if as a matter of fact it is not.

Reasoning along these lines, we find we have to give up many things that we have been enjoying, as they are not needed for nutrition. And one who thus gives up a multitude of eatables will acquire self-control in the natural course of things. The proverbs "one cooking vessel expects thirteen different ingredients", "the stomach makes one submit to forced labour", "the stomach makes one a flatterer", etc., are full of meaning. This subject has received such scant attention that choice of food with this observance in view isa very difficult matter. Parents, out of false affection, give their children a

variety of foods, ruin their constitutions and create in them artificial tastes. When they grow up, they have diseased bodies and perverted tastes. The evil consequences of this early indulgence dog us at every step; we waste much money and fall an easy prey to the medicine man. Most of us, instead of keeping the organs of sense under control, become their slaves. An experienced physician once observed that he had never seen a healthy man. The body is injured every time that one overeats, and the injury can be partially repaired only by fasting.

No one need take fright at my observations or give up the effort in despair. The taking of a vow does not mean that we are able to observe it completely from the very beginning; it does mean constant and honest effort in thought; word and deed with a view to its fulfilment. We must not practise self-deception by resorting to some make-believe. To degrade or cheapen an ideal for our convenience is to practise untruth and to lower ourselves. To understand an ideal and then to make a Herculean effort to reach it, no matter how difficult it is, this is *purushartha,* manly endeavour. (The word *'purusha'* should be interpreted in its etymological sense, and, not merely to mean a man. That which dwells in the *pura,* the body, is *purusha.* If we interpret the word *'purushartha' in* this sense, it can be used equally for men and women.) One who at all times fulfils the key observances in their perfection has nothing else left for him to do in this world, he is *Bhagavan,* perfect man; he is a yogi. We are but humble creatures, aspiring after *moksha* and seeking knowledge, determined to follow Truth and dedicated to its quest. As taught in the *Gita,* therefore, we should keep on struggling humbly but vigilantly. If we do so, one day we shall be fit for God's grace and then all our pleasures in objects of sense will disappear.

If we have realized the importance of this observance, we should make fresh effort to practise it. For that, it is not necessary to think about food all the hours of the day. The only thing needful is perpetual vigilance, which will help us to find out very soon when we eat for self-indulgence and when in order only to sustain the body. This being discovered, we must resolutely set our faces against mere indulgence. A common kitchen where this principle is observed is very helpful, as it relieves us from the necessity of thinking out the menu for each day, and provides us with acceptable food of which we may take only a limited quantity with a contented and thankful mind. By eating thus we are able to observe without any difficulty the vow of

controlling the palate. The authorities of a common kitchen lighten our burden and serve as watch-dogs of our observance. They will not pamper us, they will cook only such food as helps us to keep the body a fit instrument for service. In ideal conditions we should require the use of fire but rarely or not at all. We should find our food from what the great fire, the sun, cooks. If we look at the matter from this point of view, it becomes clear to us that man is purely a herbivorous creature. But here we need not go so deep into the matter. All that is necessary for us to consider here is the nature of the vow of controlling the palate, the difficulties involved in its observance and its close connection with the observance of *brahmacharya*. Having understood this, let everyone make an honest effort to observe the vow to the best of his or her ability.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, Part I, pp. 102-4; also C.W. 8121. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

493. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[*August 12, 1930*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got the packet sent by you in time. If you have there the guide book to the Singer sewing machine, send it here. Kakasaheb has got interested in the machine and wants to know all about it.

As regards Hasmukhrai, read my letters to him, to Lilabehn and to Bhansali. I like your suggestion. Do serve Lilabehn so long as you can. If she decides to marry, she certainly cannot stay.

The English translation of my discourses[2] is not good. What I read in the *Bo*[*mbay*] *Chro*[*nicle*] is not at all good. I think the practice

[1] The discourse on 'Control of Palate' with which this letter concludes is already included in Vol. XLIV, pp. 79-81 and bears the date August 12, 1930. It is therefore not being reproduced here.

[2] On the Ashram vows written every Thursday morning and therefore called "Mangal Prabhat" in Gujarat, the phrase meaning 'Auspicious Morning'. The discourses commenced with the letter to the addressee dated July 22.

of translating the discourses should be stopped, or, the translations should be really good. There is no need at present to give the people the translation of the discourses. Draw Kumarappa's attention to this, or Premabehn's if she has done the translation. The quality of the English also does not do us credit. Keshu's health is bad and causes concern. If he needs change of air, arrange for it. Sheela and Rambhau must have again got back on their feet. Read the letter to Kashinath. You do get problems to solve but you are quite upto the task, and so I do not worry. Consider all this as no more than my ideas and opinions and do what you-yourself wish. Go on doing fearlessly what you can and what your conscience permits you to do. I have no right whatever to guide you from here. You have wakened up Somabhai, Vithal and the others very well indeed. The letters meant for Kakasaheb should not be put into the packet meant for me. If there are any letters which he should see, they should be addressed separately to him. Everyone has Kakasaheb's blessings of course. I have not written separately to each of you. Kakasaheb keeps quite good health. This time, too, there is some increase in his weight. It has increased at least by one pound. This increase should be considered solid since it has taken place in spite of his doing exercise. He can digest about two and a half *seer*[1] of curd. He takes less of butter. At present, he is living on fruit. I am unable to report improvement in my health. There is some information in the letter to Mirabehn. There is nothing to worry over.

I have been reading with Kakasaheb, Vinayak Ode—the third Marathi book. It contains some fine stanzas by Ramdas Swami in the *ovi* meter. I give below for you all an extract on how to write a translation which has been seen by Kakasaheb.

HOW TO WRITE?

The characters should be round, easy to read, well-formed and as black as if written with lamp-black. The lines should be so pleasing in appearance as if the characters forming a line were so many pearls smoothly moving forward. All the characters should be of uniform size, clear, neither too large nor too small, and there should be

[1] A measure of weight current before the introduction of the metric system, approximately equivalent to two pounds

sufficient space between two characters. The *kana*[1], the *matra*[2], the *ref*[3], and the *veiaali*[4] (the sign for 'e') also should be clearly formed. All the characters from the beginning of a book to its end, should be so formed that they appearto be written with the same nib. The blackness of the characters, the thickness, the bent and the corners of the nibs used, also should be of uniform quality. The lines should not touch each other. The *ref* and the *matra* should not be so marked that either might be higher than the other. The line below a vertically long character, should not touch its lower end. A line should be drawn with a pencil across the sheet and then the characters should be written along that line. The space between the lines should not be uneven. There should be no corrections anywhere. If examined, not a single error should be found . . . .[4] Kakasaheb cannot understand the exact meaning of this *ovi.* If Balkrishna, Shripatrao or anybody else knows its meaning, let me have it. One should be very careful in childhood when learning to form the characters. They should be so formed as to be pleasing to the people. When one is young, one should not form the characters so small that when one has grown old, one cannot decipher them at all. One should cultivate the habit of forming medium-sized characters. One should leave blank spaces as margins on both sides of a line and form clearly visible characters between them. Let the sheet of paper used for writing crumble into pieces when it will, the characters should remain as clear as when they were formed.

RAMDAS

It is not as if we did not know all this. My purpose in reproducing it here is to show the great importance Ramdas Swami attached to the subject that he composed *ovis* on it. Good characters are like an ornament to one. Our ancestors wrote pearl-like characters. The art of printing had not been invented then and writing was a fine worldly accomplishment. It should be so even today. I stress all this because I myself painfully suffer [because of my deficiency in this respect]. I made no effort at all to improve my handwriting, and now I

[1] A vertical line after a letter as a sign of the long 'a' sound
[2] A bent above a letter as a sign of the sound 'e' as in 'hen'
[3] A circular mark 'c' as a sign of an indistinctly pronounced 'r'
[4] A verticle line half bent at the top as a sign of either the 'i' or 'ee' vowel sound

feel reluctant to spare time necessary for the effort. It seems to me that I cannot at present afford to expend the necessary energy for that. Let everyone take a lesson from my miserable deficiency in this respect and try to improve his or her handwriting as much as he or she can, while they have the time to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

There are 52 letters in all.

From the Gujarati original : S N. 33961

494. LETTER TO T. B. SAPRU AND M. R. JAYAKAR[1]

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
August 15, 1930

DEAR FRIENDS,

We are deeply grateful to you for having undertaken the duty of trying to effect a peaceful settlement between the British Government and the Congress. After having perused the correspondence between yourselves and His Excellency the Viceroy and having had the benefit of protracted talks with you and having discussed among ourselves, we have come to the conclusion that the time is not yet ripe for securing a settlement honourable for our country. Marvellous as has been the massawakening during the past five months and great as has been the sufferings of the people among all grades and classes representing the different creeds, we feel that the sufferings have been neither sustained enough nor large enough for the immediate attainment of the end. Needless to mention we do not in any way share your view or the Viceroy's that civil disobedience has harmed the country or that it is ill-timed or unconstitutional. English history teems with instances of bloody revolts whose praises Englishmen have sung unstintingly and

[1] A joint interview took place in the Yeravda Jail on August 14 and 15 between Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and M. R. Jayakar on the one hand and Gandhiji, Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, Dr. Syed Mahmud, Jairamdas Doulatram and Sarojini Naidu on the other. After the discussions this letter was given to Sapru and Jayakar with permission to show it to the Viceroy. For Sapru and Jayakar's reply, *vide* "Letter from T.B.Sapru and M.R.Jayakar to congress leaders", 16-8-1930.

taught us to do likewise. It therefore ill becomes the Viceroy or any intelligent Englishman to condemn a revolt that is in intention and that has overwhelmingly remained in execution peaceful, but we have no desire to quarrel with condemnation, whether official or unofficial, of the present civil disobedience campaign. The wonderful mass response to the movement is, we hold, its sufficient justification. What is, however, the point here is the fact that we gladly make common cause with you in wishing, if it is at all possible, to stop or suspend civil disobedience. It can be no pleasure to us needlessly to expose the men, women and even the children of our country to imprisonment, lathi charges and worse. You will, therefore, believe us when we assure you and through you the Viceroy that we would leave no stone unturned to explore any and every channel for honourable peace, but we are free to confess as yet we see no such sign on the horizon. We notice no symptom of conversion of the English official world to the view that it is India's men and women who must decide what is best for India. We distrust the pious declarations of the good intentions, often well meant, of officials. The age-long exploitation by the English of the people of this ancient land has rendered them almost incapable of seeing the ruin, moral, economic and political, of our country which this exploitation has brought about. They cannot persuade themselves to see that one thing needful for them to do is to get off our backs and do some reparation for the past wrongs, by helping us to grow out of the dwarfing process that has gone on for a century of British domination, but we know you and some of our learned countrymen think differently. You believe a conversion has taken place, at any rate, sufficient to warrant participation in the proposed Conference. In spite, therefore, of the limitation we are labouring under, we would gladly co-operate with you to the extent of our ability.

The following is the utmost response it is possible for us, circumstanced as we are, to make to your friendly endeavour.

We feel the language used by the Viceroy in the reply given to your letter about the proposed Conference is too vague to enable usto assess its value in terms of the National Demand framed last year in Lahore nor are we in a position to say anything authoritative without reference to a properly constituted meeting of the Working Committee of the Congress and if necessary to the A.I.C.C., but we can say that for

us individually no solution will be satisfactory unless (a) it recognizes in as many words the right of India to secede at will from the British Empire, (b) it gives to India complete national Government responsible to her people including the control of defence forces and economic control and covers all the eleven points raised in Gandhiji's letter to the Viceroy and (c) it gives to India the right to refer if necessary to an independent tribunal such British claims, concessions and the like including the so-called public debt of India as may seem to the national Government to be unjust or not in the interest of the people of India.

NOTE. Such adjustments as may be necessitated in the interests of India during the transference of power to be determined by India's chosen representatives.

(2) If the foregoing appears to be feasible to the British Government and a satisfactory declaration is made to that effect, we should recommend to the Working Committee the advisability of calling off civil disobedience, that is to say, disobedience of certain laws for the sake of disobedience but peaceful picketing of foreign cloth and liquor will be continued unless Government themselves can enforce prohibition of liquor and foreign cloth. The manufacture of salt by the people will have to be continued and the penal clauses of the Salt Act should not be enforced. There will be no raids on Government or private salt depots.

(3) Simultaneously with the calling off of civil disobedience (a) all the satyagrahi prisoners and other political prisoners convicted or under trial who have not been guilty of violence or incitement to violence should be ordered to be released, (b) properties confiscated under the Salt Act, the Press Act, the Revenue Act and the like should be restored, (c) fines and securities taken from convicted satyagrahis or under the Press Act should be refunded, (d) all the officers including village officers who have resigned or who may have been dismissed during the civil disobedience movement and who may desire to rejoin Government service should be reinstated.

NOTE. The foregoing sub-clauses refer also to the Non-cooperation period.

(e) All the Viceregal Ordinances should be repealed.

(4) The question of the composition of the proposed Conference and of the Congress being represented at it can only be decided after the foregoing preliminaries are satisfactorily settled.[1]

Yours sincerely,

MOTILAL NEHRU
M. K. GANDHI
SAROJINI NAIDU
VALLABHBHAI PATEL
JAIRAMDAS
DOULATRAM
SYED MAHMUD
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

The Hindu, 5-9-1930

495. LETTER TO RADHABEHN GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 18, 1930

CHI. RADHIKA,

I have your letter. How much milk do you drink and what fruits do you eat? Do you feel constipated? If you drink enough milk, I am sure you will not feel tired.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8684. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

[1] With this letter Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and M. R. Jayakar met Lord Irwin at Simla between August 21 and 28.

496. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 18, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

You should not lose patience. It is not easy to control the mind. But you should have faith that, with proper effort, it can be done.

What effect did the eating of bitter gourds have on your health? It is not necessary to squeeze out the juice from them. If you crush or mash them, you can eat the pulp after adding lemon juice and salt.

The necessity of prayers is a matter of universal experience. If you have faith in them, you will feel interest in them.

I am in a great hurry.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10230; also C.W. 6678. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

497. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 18, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. We should learn to preserve peace of mind in all circumstances. Today I could get a little time only at the end to write letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9285

498. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

August 18, 1930

CHI. RUKMINI,

I have your letter. Who reads everyone's letters? Those which are marked "not to be read" should certainly not be read. Make your health absolutely all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9051

499. LETTER TO KUNVARJI PAREKH

August 18, 1930

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I have your letter. Let me know what ultimately happened about the cap. Write to me from time to time.

Convey my compliments to Bhai Hirji.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9716

500. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 18, 1930

CHI. RAIHANA,

Khuda Hafiz[1],

Your Gujarati letters are wonderful. Do continue to write to me. It is fine indeed that you taught prayer songs to Mrs. Lukmani's monkey-army. Take care of your health in everything you do. I have not seen your card and public letter.

Which *Sirat* is Father translating? Convey my *Vandemataram* to Mother, as also to other members of the family who may be there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9619

501. LETTER TO ROHINI KANAIYALAL DESAI

August 18, 1930

CHI. ROHINI,

I have your letter. I was very glad. When you get an opportunity, teach Hamidabehn Gujarati. May God grant long life to every one of you and make her a sincere worker.

Blessings from.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2651

[1] In Urdu.

502. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 18, 1930

CHI. MANI (PATEL),

I have your letter. Father was brought here and stayed with me for four or five days. I got news of you. God will see that it is all well with you. Do write to me, and ask Dahyabhai also to write.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 72

503. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 18, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. With the conditions prevailing in the country I do not feel like taking dry fruit unless necessary. I have no time to write more today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3427

504. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,
August 18, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

I have your letter. If you take to Premabehn's diet your blood may show improvement. Do you go for walks? Are Your periods regular? Your body must become as hard as steel. Blessings to Brother.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

505. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 18, 1930

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

Your letter. I am glad to note that you are calm. These days Jawaharlal is with me. I hope you are both keeping good health.

Keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3428

506. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 18, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

I must be briefer even than last week. It is just striking 10 p.m. — very unusual for me. And this is the last night, if I am to keep time as I must. But there is nothing much to say either.

Yesterday I went back to the travelling wheel. The strain was at once reduced and the output greater for the same time— though not much. But I know that I shall get a greater output on it. I saw that it was a wrong expression of love to persist in using your charkha if it did not fulfil the purpose for which you sent it. Only I did not want to give it up without a full trial. My health is all right but the weight is still on the downgrade. But that is nothing. As soon as constipation is under control, it will go up. I expect a rise this week.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5408. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9642

507. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Unrevised

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Tuesday morning, August 19, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

We now come to the observance of non-stealing. On deeper reflection we see that all observances are implicit in Truth and ahimsa or truth alone. This can be expressed thus:

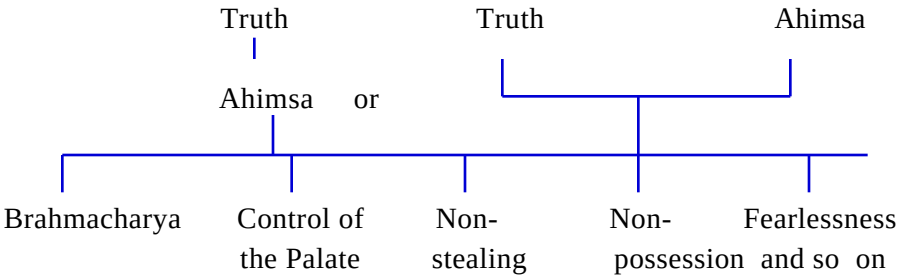

Ahimsa may be deduced from Truth, or may be paired with Truth. Truth and ahimsa are one and the same thing. I am partial to Truth, however. In the final analysis there can only be a single reality. The highest Truth stands by itself. Truth is the end, ahimsa is the means thereto. We know what ahimsa or non-violence is, although we find it difficult to follow the law of love. But as for Truth, we know only a fraction of it. Perfect knowledge of Truth is difficult of attainment for man even like the perfect practice of non-violence.

Asteya means non-stealing.

It is impossible that a person should steal and simultaneously claim to know Truth or cherish love. Yet every one of us is consciously or unconsciously, more or less, guilty of theft. We may steal not only what belongs to others, but also what belongs to ourselves, as is done, for instance, by a father who eats something secretly, keeping his children in the dark about it. The Ashram kitchen stores are our common property, but one who secretly removes a single crystal of sugar from it stamps himself a thief. A child who takes another's pen steals. It is theft to take anything belonging to another without his permission, even if it be with his knowledge. It is equally theft to take something in the belief that it is nobody's property. Things found on the roadside belong to the ruler or the local authority. Anything found near the Ashram must be handed over to the secretary, who in his turn will pass it on to the police if it is not Ashram property. Thus far, it is pretty smooth sailing. But the observance of non-stealing goes very much farther. It is theft to take something from another even with his permission if we have no real need of it. We should not receive any single thing that we do not need. Theft of this description generally has food for its object. It is theft for me to take any fruit that I do not need, or to take it in a larger quantity than is necessary. We are not always aware of our real needs, and most of us improperly multiply our wants and thus unconsciously make thieves of ourselves. If we devote some thought to the subject we shall find that we can get rid of quite a number of our wants. One who follows the observance of non-stealing will bring about a progressive reduction of his wants. Much of the distressing poverty in this world has arisen out of breaches of the principle of non-stealing.

Theft thus far considered may be termed external or physical theft. There is, besides, another kind of theft, subtler and far more

degrading to the human spirit. It is theft mentally to desire acquisition of anything belonging to others, or to cast a greedy eye on it. It is mental theft if anyone, whether a grown-up person or a child, feels tempted by the sight of an attractive thing. One who takes no food, physically speaking, is generally said to be fasting, but he is guilty of theft as well as a breach of his fast if he gives himself up to a mental contemplation of pleasure when he sees others taking their meals. He is similarly guilty if, during his fast, he is continually planning the varied menu he will have after breaking the fast. One who observes the principle of non-stealing will refuse to bother himself about things to be acquired in future. This evil anxiety for the future will be found at the root of many a theft. Today we only desire possession of a thing; tomorrow we shall begin to adopt measures, straight if possible, crooked when thought necessary, to acquire its possession. Ideas may be stolen no less than material things. One who egotistically claims to have originated some good idea, which, really speaking, did not originate with him, is guilty of a theft of ideas. Many learned men have committed such theft in the course of world history, and pla-giarizm is by no means uncommon even today. Supposing, for instance, that I see a new type of spinning-wheel in Andhra and manufacture a similar wheel in the Ashram, passing it off as my own invention, I practise untruth and am clearly guilty of stealing another's invention.

One who takes up the observance of non-stealing has, therefore, to be humble, thoughtful, vigilant and in habits simple. I have written the Ashram letters today under much pressure of time. Motilalji and others are here and I spent practically the whole of the last week in discussions with them. Even now I must give some time to them. I could, therefore, take up writing letters only yesterday evening after the prayers and started writing this after the morning prayers today. There are, therefore, the fewest letters this time and I have made them as short as I could. You will read about . . .behn[1] in my letters to Gan-gabehn and Bhansali. Be firm and go on doing what you think proper. My immediate reaction is that, if . . .behn's mind has become steady and recovered its purity, we can condone her violation of the pledge to go away and live outside the Ashram. The chief thing to consider now is how to help her to overcome her passion and, on the other hand, to safeguard her freedom. Women have been so completely suppressed that in their helplessness they cannot even think. The Ashram,

[1] The name has been omitted.

therefore, should adopt a very liberal attitude tow-ards them. This involves many risks. We should take them if we wish to serve women. Act upon this view within the limits of your capacity. When I see . . .behn's face in my mind's eye, I see nothing but inno-cence and fear on it. She is not the cause of her fall. After hearing about this misconduct, I can see the signs of impurity on the face of . . . .[1] I cannot see such signs on the face of . . .behn. What I see on her face is simplicity. And ignorance, of course. She can almost be compared to Rishyashringa. There is of course this important difference that . . .behn has had the experience of passion, whereas Rishyashringa had never had such experience. The poet, however, has described him as if he was only waiting for a touch. That is the condition of countless seemingly innocent men and women today. "Desire is aroused by coming together." Hence we have no right to condemn anyone. Our duty, plainly, is to show love and to exercise more vigilance in regard to ourselves. I have written enough today.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

There are 30 letters in all.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

508. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 21, 1930

CHI. RAMABEHN,

I have a letter from you after a long time. I was indeed eager for one. I never feel concerned about Dhiru and Vimu. I have observed that children who are troublesome like them afterwards become very quiet. You have done well in restraining your desire to go and see them. Look upon any children who may come to you as Dhiru and Vimu and show them love. Then in course of time your love for

[1] The name has been ommitted.

Dhiru and Vimu will become pure and help them to become good.

My blessings to all the women.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5323

509. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,

August 21, 1930

CHI. MANU,

I don't mind your having written a "long" letter. I don't think it was "long". My advice to you is that, till Kakasaheb arrives there, you should do what work you can staying where you are. That will be true self-dedication on your part and will also be a test for you. A public worker should also learn to keep patience. It is for the leader to think in what way any worker can serve best. If we do with perfect devotion the work assigned to us, we shall have done our true dharma. Only through experience can one know what is beyond one's strength. If we are free from ignorant attachment to anything, it is easy enough for us to discover the limits of our strength. I have given this advice after discussing the matter with Kakasaheb. If you still do not feel peace of mind, write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7760

510. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 21, 1930

BHAI PANDITJI,

Both of us felt happy after reading your letter. I had heard that your health had suffered. Since you have brought no disease with you, you will recover your former strength by and by. Take care of your health. Rambhau[1] and Mathuri[2] do write to me occasionally. I read in one or two letters that Lakshmibehn had displayed great courage and fortitude. Her face itself reveals her courage. Your voice as you used to sing at the time of prayers haunts me every day. Neither of us can sing *bhajans*, as you know. We content ourselves with *Ramadhun*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 231. Courtesy: Lakshmibai Khare

511. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 21, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. After some time, we get used to working for a public cause under anyone's leadership and don't feel hurt. We can claim to have become true servants only if we learn to do so. When the sense of 'I' has vanished, we cease to feel that we are subject to anyone's authority. He who feels himself to be a cipher experiences peace in all conditions of life. Such a state of mind is not easy to attain, but it is certainly possible for everyone who strives for it. I have no doubt at all that you, at any rate, will attain it one day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9284

[1] Addressee's son and daughter
[2] *ibid*

512. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 21, 1930

CHI.MATHURADAS,

I have your letter and the chapter on carding. The oil has not arrived yet. Have you tried the use of kerosene ? It also helps to keep away mosquitoes. If the spot where they often settle is besmeared with kerosene, they keep away from it. I did not know about cotton-seed oil. As we are permitted to sleep in the open here, we are not harassed.

I like all your articles on carding. In some places the language seems to be unduly emphatic. My experience is that there can be no guarantee that yarn will be evenly drawn if the cotton has been well carded. Though I am a very careful spinner, the yarn is not always even, even if the carding has been of the highest quality. The drawing of even yarn is also an art by itself and depends on deftness in using one's fingers. Anyone whose fingers have become inert, so to say, will certainly find difficulty in drawing even yarn. I have seen spinners with quick fingers drawing even yarn from badly carded cotton. I do not say this to minimize the importance of carding. I only wish to make it clear that good carding does not solve all the difficulties of the spinner. The art of spinning, as I have said, includes all activities from the plucking of cotton from the pods to the making of hanks, and a spinner should have acquired mastery over all of them. If even one of these processes has not been efficiently carried out, careful spinning by itself will not compensate for the deficiency. We should not assert anything if we are not perfectly sure about it. Ask Lakshmidas to go through your articles before publishing them. It will be good if you show them to some other person also who is an expert in the craft. Perhaps Shankerlal will help you. It is desirable that the book should be as perfect as possible. Once again, I find Motibehn's letters have stopped coming. How is she now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3742

513. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

[After *August 21, 1930*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. You have taken much care about the book. I have not yet been able to read the last portion. Spinning leaves me very little time for anything else. Most of what remains is taken up in writing letters. See that you do not harm your eyes. If necessary, get them examined by Dr. Haribhai. He has very good knowledge of the subject. The parcel of cotton-seed oil has arrived in the office. Motibehn has not yet replied to my last letter.

About *saptapadi*, in my next letter.[2]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3743

514. LETTER TO RADHABEHN GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 22, 1930

CHI. RADHIKA,

I shall wait for your letter. I can't bear the thought of Keshu's remaining ill all the time. You should take special care of his health. How did he again get fever ? What food does he eat ? Give me all details.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have just received your letter. I understand.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8685. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

[1] From the reference to cotton-seed oil it appears this was written some time after the preceding item.

[2] The rest of the letter is not available.

515. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 22, 1930

CHI. MANI (PATEL),

You have given a good report of your experiences. I now know you met Father. But he has not met me [since then]. Write to me regularly. When in Bombay, meet Perinbehn [Captain] and Lilavati [Munshi].

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 73

516. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 22, 1930

CHI. MAHAVIR,

I have your letter. Dhanurdhari's batch will be a fine sight. We should acquire the utmost proficiency in the work which falls to our share and feel satisfied. If you try and make an effort, you will be able to improve your handwriting. What vows did you take on the *Janmashtami*[1] day? Don't neglect to write the diary through laziness.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6217

[1] Krishna's birthday, observed on the 8th day of the dark fortnight of *Bhadrapada (Shravan* in Gujarat) corresponding to August-September.

517. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 22, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (DESAI),

I have your letter. You see that I am never behind in replying to any of your letters. Learn from Sushila all that you can. But do you get any time for reading? Do you write the diary? Have you kept up prayers? I keep good health.

How many women work there? Is there any news from Kapadwanj ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1802

518. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 22, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. Kaka tied the sacred string on my wrist on the *Balev*[1] day and also bowed to me on your behalf.

Panditji's patience and capacity for self-sacrifice are as great as you describe them to be. He has also displayed forbearance of a high order.

Henceforth, you should not delay your going to bed or prevent someone from doing so till ten. The moment it strikes nine, we should be in bed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10231; also C.W. 6679. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] *Rakshabandhan*

519. LETTER TO KAPILRAI MEHTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 22, 1930

CHI. KAPIL,

I don't mind your staying at Vile Parle. Who else are there ? How is Abdulla Sheth ? Improve your health and make it robust. Kakasaheb keeps good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Kakasaheb sends his blessings.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3974

520. LETTER TO SATYADEVI GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 22, 1930

CHI. SATYADEVI,

It is better you correct the mistakes in your letter then and there than that I should read it making the corrections. The benefit is twofold. You will notice your own errors and I will have no corrections to make. Isn't it good?

Tell Mother[1] to write to me describing her present activities.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Virat Vatsalata, p. 34

[1] Krishnamaiya Devi.
[2] The original was in Gujarati.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

PERSONS WHO ACCOMPANIED GANDHIJI ON THE DANDI MARCH [1]

GUJARAT, 31: 1. Chhaganlal Joshi, 2. Jayanti Parekh, 3. Rasik Desai, 4. Vitthal, 5. Harakhji, 6. Tansukh Bhatt, 7. Kanti Gandhi, 8. Chhotubhai Patel, 9. Valjibhai Desai, 10. Pannalal Jhaveri, 11: Abbas, 12. Punjabhai Shah, 13. Somabhai, 14. Hasmukhram, 15. Ramjibhai Vankar, 16. Dinkarrav, 17. Bhanushankar, 18. Ravjibhai Patel, 19. Shivabhai, 20. Shankarbhai, 21. Jashbhai, 22. Haridas Varjivandas Gandhi, 23. Chimanlal, 94. Ramaniklal Modi, 25. Haridas Majumdar, 26. Ambalal Patel, 27. Madhavlal, 28. Manilal Gandhi, 29. Lalji, 30. Ratnaji, 31. Puratan Buch.

MAHARASHTRA, 13: 32. Pandit Khare, 33. Ganpatrav Godshe, 34. Bal Kalelkar, 35. Dwarkanath, 36. Gajanan, 37. Govind Harkare, 38. Pandurang, 39. Vinayakrav Apte, 40. Keshav Chitre, 41. Vishnu Pant, 42. Haribhau Mohani, 43. Vishnu Sharma, 44. Chintamani Shastri.

U.P., 8: 45. Ramdihalray, 46. Munshilal, 47. Sumangal Prakash, 48. JayantiPrasad, 49. Hari Prasad, 50. Jyotiramji, 51. Bhairv Datta, 52. Surendraji.

CUTCH, 6: 53. Prathviraj Asar, 54. Madhavjibhai, 55. Naranjibhai, 56. Maganbhai Vora, 57. Dungarsibhai, 58. Jethalal.

KERALA, 4: 59.Raghavanji, 60.Titusji, 61.KrishnaNair,62.Shankaran.

PUNJAB, 3: 63. Pyarelalji, 64. Surajbhan, 65. Premrajji.

RAJPUTANA, 3: 66. Sultansinh, 67. Madan Mohan Chaturvedi, 68. Narayan Dutta.

BOMBAY, 9: 69. Daudbhai, 70. Harilal Mahimtura.

SIND, 1: 71. Anand Hingorani.

NEPAL, 1: 72. Mahavir.

TAMILNAD, 1: 73. Tapan Nair.

ANDHRA, 1: 74. Subrahmanyan.

UTKAL, 1: 75. Motibasdas.

KARNATAK, 1: 76. Mahadev Martanda.

BIHAR, 1: 77. Girivardhari Chaudhari.

BENGAL, 1: 78. Durgesh Chandra Das.

Young India, 12-3-1930

[1] *Vide* "Speech at prayer meeting, Sabarmati ashram", 12-3-1930.

APPENDIX II

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S NOTE ON MINORITIES[1]

The curtain has gone up again on the Indian stage and all the world is witness to our struggle for freedom. It is a strange struggle and our methods are novel. But it is also a grim struggle and the pledge that India took on Independence Day, January 26th, will not be forgotten. The spark that was lit by our leader on the banks of the Sabarmati is already spreading like a prairie fire throughout the country, and soon the whole land will try to redeem that pledge. Many a tragic scene will be enacted and many an actor on this vast stage will suffer torment before the curtain rings down finally on a free India.

But even when the fight is fiercest and consumes all our energies we must remember that the true solution of our difficulties can come only when we have won over and given satisfaction to our minorities. Today it is unfortunately the fact that some of them fear the majority and for fear of it keep apart from the struggle for freedom. It is sad that some who were our comrades-in-arms ten years ago are not with us today. None of us who had the privilege of marching shoulder to shoulder with them then can forget the brave part they took and the sacrifices they made. We cherish that memory and we are assured that when the fight thickens they must take their rightful place in the forefront.

The history of India and of many of the countries of Europe has demonstrated that there can be no stable equilibrium in any country so long as an attempt is made to crush a minority or to force it to conform to the ways of the majority. There is no surer method of rousing the resentment of the minority and keeping it apart from the rest of the nation than to make it feel that it has not got the freedom to stick to its own ways. Repression and coercion can never succeed in coercing a minority. They but make it more self-conscious and more determined to value and hold fast to what it considers its very own. It matters little whether logic is on its side or whether its own particular brand of culture is worth while or not. The mere fear of losing it makes it dear. Freedom to keep it would itself lessen its value. The new Russia has gone a long way in solving its minorities' problem by giving each one of them the fullest cultural, educational and linguistic freedom.

Therefore we in India must make it clear to all that our policy is based on granting this freedom to the minorities and that under no circumstances will any

[1] *Vide* "The Problem of Minorities", 5-5-1930.

coercion or repression of them be tolerated. There is hardly any likelihood of economic questions affecting the minorities as such, but should they do so we can also lay down as our deliberate policy that there shall be no unfair treatment of any minority. Indeed we should go further and state that it will be the business of the State to give favoured treatment to minority and backward communities.

In a free India political representation can only be on national lines. I would like this representation to be on an economic basis which would fit in with modern conditions far more than territorial representation and would also automatically do away with the lines of demarcation along communal lines. With religious and cultural and linguistic freedom granted, the principal questions that will arise in our legislatures will be economic ones and divisions on them cannot be on communal lines. But whatever the method of representation adopted may be, it must be such as to carry the goodwill of the minorities.

If these principles are accepted and adhered to, I do not think any minority can have a grievance or feel that it is ignored. It is possible however that, while agreeing to these principles, the minority may doubt the *bona fides* of the majority in giving effect to them. To that the only effective answer can be the translation of these principles into action. Unfortunately the ability to translate them into action can only come with the conquest of power in the State. If the *bona fides* of the majority are doubted, as they might well be, then even pacts and agreements are of little value. A general and countrywide adoption of certain broad principles can create a public opinion strong enough to prevent even an aggressive and evil-intentioned majority from going astray. But temporary pacts between individuals or even representatives cannot have the same value.

These principles should apply to all minority groups. To the Muslims who really are in such large numbers in India that it is inconceivable that any majority can coerce them; to the Sikhs who, although small in number, are a powerful and well-knit group; to the Parsis; to the Anglo-lndians or Eurasians who are gradually drifting to nationalism; and to all other minorities.

What is the present position of the Congress on this vital question? The Nehru Report has lapsed, but surely the non-controversial parts of the report remain. The Fundamental Rights, as stated there, included religious, cultural, linguistic and educational freedom. This declaration must remain, and it removes at once the major fears of a minority. So far as other matters are concerned, minorities as such will hardly be affected, and the Lahore Congress has declared that in an Independent India such questions should be solved on strictly national lines. It has gone further. It has assured the Muslims, the Sikhs and other minorities that if any solution of any communal problem is proposed in future, it will not be accepted by the Congress unless it gives full satisfaction to the parties concerned. A more complete guarantee

could not have been given, and if the Congress remains true to its word no minority need have the least fear.

Thus the Congress has endeavoured to give effect to the principles that should govern the treatment of minorities. If in the eyes of some it is still suspect, it is not because of what it has done but because of want of trust and unjustified fear. The Congress, I trust, will remain true to these principles and will demonstrate to the country that in communal matters it will not deviate to the right or the left and will hold the centre impartially. It will, I hope, prove to the minority communities that in Independent India, for which we strive, theirs will be an honoured and a favoured place. And by its sacrifices and its determined courage in the fight for freedom it will convince all of its *bona fides*.

Young India, 15-5-1930

APPENDIX III

EXTRACTS FROM "THE DAILY TELEGRAPH" REPORT [1]

The prophet is no longer at large, and he is now safely interned at Yeravda, close to Poona, in the most comfortable prison in the presidency, writes Mr. Ashmead Bartlett, the special correspondent of *The Daily Telegraph* in its issue of 6th instant.

Gandhi will be charged with no specific offence as his followers have been: he will be interned under Ordinance 25 of 1827, without trial in Bombay.

This Ordinance is framed in such general terms that it enables the Government to intern almost anyone on any charge which can possibly be construed as a menace to public order, or for stopping internal commotion. It was last employed in the year 1906 for the detention of the Natu brothers after the Rand murder.

The arrest itself was carried out with the utmost quietude at dead of night.

The Mahatma was fast asleep in his camp at Karadi, near Surat, when about 1 a.m. the District Police Superintendent with the District Magistrate and a score of armed police, entered his room. They turned a flash lamp on him and he awoke at once.

Gandhi took matters very coolly, and merely asked that the warrant be read to

[1] *Vide* "Interview to *The Daily Telegraph*", 5-5-1930.

him, and that he be allowed to clean his teeth, which is with the Hindus an invariable religious rite on getting up.

Both requests were complied with, and shortly afterwards he was taken to a motor lorry, which, accompanied by police, was driven off to the railway station. There he and his guards entered a special saloon attached to the Ahmedabad-Bombay Express, *en route* for Borivli, whence he was to be taken by motor to the Yeravda prison. On arrival at the jail he appeared to be in excellent health and spirits, and expressed gratitude for the manner in which his journey had been arranged.

It was generally known throughout Bombay yesterday that Gandhi's arrest was imminent, and in the afternoon details of the Government plan of operations were made known to foreign correspondents, but not a word was allowed to be cabled, a strict censorship having been in force for the past three days. . . .

The main object of the Government has been to put Gandhi safely under lock and key, before the news became known to the public, so as to avoid any demonstrations leading to riots and bloodshed in the course of his journey to Poona. The mere fact of handing in despatches to the cable office containing the news would at once have made known the Government's plans all over Bombay.

Gandhi's arrest was finally decided upon at the Council of State held in Simla a few days ago, and was originally planned for May 4, but the change was decided upon to avoid Sunday, and 1 a.m. on Monday (Indian time) was therefore named as the "zero hour" for his apprehension in Surat.

Mr. Hotson kindly informed me of his programme, which was to take Gandhi from the train at a small wayside station called Borivli, thirteen miles from Bombay, and from there to send him by car to Poona. . . .

The Hindu, 27-5-1930

APPENDIX IV (A)

NOTE FROM NEHRUS[1]

CENTRAL PRISON,
NAINI, ALLAHABAD,
July 28, 1930

We have had a long conversation with Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar and they have informed us of the various events which led to their seeking interviews with Gandhiji and with us in our respective prisons in order, if possible, to terminate or suspend the present hostilities between the people of India and the British Government. We appreciate their earnest desire for peace and would gladly explore all avenues which might lead to it provided such a peace was an honourable one for the people of India who have already sacrificed so much in the national struggle and want freedom for our country. As representatives of the Congress we have no authority to alter in any material particular its resolutions, but we might be prepared under certain circumstances to recommend variation in details provided the fundamental position taken up by the Congress was accepted. We are, however, faced with initial difficulty. Both of us are in prison and for some time past have been cut off from the outside world and the national movement. One of us for nearly three months was not allowed any daily newspaper. Gandhiji has also been in prison for several months. Indeed almost all our colleagues of the original Working Committee of the Congress are in prison and the Committee itself has been declared an illegal organization. Of the 360 members of the All-India Congress Committee which is the final authority in the National Congress organization subject only to a full session of the Congress, probably 75 per cent are in prison. Cut off as we are from the national movement, we cannot take upon ourselves the responsibility of taking a definite step without the fullest consultation with our colleagues and especially Gandhiji. As regards the Round Table Conference we feel unlikely to achieve anything unless an agreement on all vital matters is previously arrived at. We attach great importance to such an agreement which must be definite and there must be no room for misunderstanding or misinterpretation. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar have made very clear and Lord Irwin has also stated in his published letter to them that they are acting on their own behalf and cannot commit him or his Government. It is, however, possible they may succeed in paving way to such an agreement between the Congress and the British Government. As we are unable to suggest any definite terms for truce without

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Motilal Nehru", 23-7-1930.

consulting Gandhiji and other colleagues, we refrain from discussing the suggestions made by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar and by Gandhiji in the note of his dated 23rd July which has been shown to us. We might, however, agree generally with Gandhiji's 2nd and 3rd points, but we should like the details of these points and specially his point (I) to discuss with him and others before we can finally make our suggestions. We suggest this note of ours be treated confidential and be shown only to such persons as see Gandhiji's note dated 23-7-1930.

The Hindu, 5-9-1930

APPENDIX IV (B)

LETTER FROM JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

CENTRAL PRISON, NAINI,
July 28, 1930

MY DEAR BAPUJI,

It is a delight to write you again after a long interval even though it be from one prison to another. I would like to write at length, but I am afraid I cannot do so at present. I shall, therefore, confine myself to the matter in issue. Dr. Sapru and Mr. Jayakar came yesterday and had a long interview with father and me. Today they are coming again. As they have already put us in possession of all facts and shown us your note and letter, we felt we could discuss the matter between us two and arrive at some decision even without waiting for a second interview. Of course if anything new turns up at the second interview we are prepared to vary any previously-formed opinion. Our conclusions for the time being are given in the note which we are giving to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar. This is more or less brief but it will, I hope, give you some idea of how our minds are working. I might add that father and I are in full agreement in regard to what our attitude should be. I might confess your point (1) regarding the constitutional issue has not won me over nor does father fancy it. I do not see how it fits in with our position or our pledges or with the realities of today. Father and I entirely agree with you that we can be "no parties to any truce which would undo the position at which we have arrived today". It is because of this that fullest consideration is essential before any final decision is arrived at. I must confess I do not see an appreciable advance yet from the other side and I greatly fear a false or weak move on our part. I am expressing myself moderately. For myself I delight in warfare. It makes me feel that I am alive. Events of the last four months in

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Motilal Nehru", 23-7-1930.

India have gladdened my heart and have made me prouder of Indian men, women and even children than I had ever been, but I realize that most people are not warlike and like peace and so I try hard to suppress myself and take a peaceful view. May I congratulate you on the new India you have created by your magic touch! What the future will bring I know not, but the past has made life worth living and our prosaic existence has developed something of epic greatness in it. Sitting here in Naini Jail I have pondered on the wonderful efficacy of non-violence as a weapon and have become a greater convert with the response of a convert to it than ever before. I hope you are not dissatisfied with the response of the country to the non-violence creed. Despite occasional lapses, the country has stuck to it wonderfully, certainly far more grimly than I had expected. I am afraid I am still somewhat of a protestant regarding your eleven points. Not that I disagree with any one of them. Indeed they are important. Yet I do not think that they take the place of independence. But I certainly agree with you that we should have "nothing to do with anything that would not give the nation power to give immediate effect to them". Father has been unwell the last eight days ever since he took an injection. He has grown very weak. This long interview last evening tired him out.

JAWAHARLAL

Please do not be anxious about me. It is only a passing trouble and I hope to get over it in two or three days. Love.

MOTILAL NEHRU

PS.

We have had another talk with Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar. At their desire we have made some alterations in our note, but they do not make any vital difference. Our position is quite clear and I have no doubt whatever about it. I hope you will appreciate it.

The Hindu, 5-9-1930

APPENDIX V

LETTER FROM T. B. SAPRU AND M. R. JAYAKAR TO CONGRESS LEADERS [1]

WINTER ROAD, MALABAR HILL,
BOMBAY,
August 16, 1930

DEAR FRIENDS,

We desire to express our thanks to you all for the courteous and patient hearing which you have been good enough to give us, on the several occasions on which we have visited you either at Poona or at Allahabad. We regret that we should have caused you so much inconvenience by these prolonged conversations, and we are particularly sorry that Pandit Motilal Nehru should have been put to the trouble of coming down to Poona, at a time when his health was so bad.

We beg formally to acknowledge receipt of the letter which you have handed to us and in which you state the terms on which you are prepared to recommend to the Congress the calling off of Civil Disobedience and participation in the Round Table Conference.

As we have informed you, we took up this work of mediation on the basis of

(l)the terms of an interview given by Pandit Motilal, the then Acting President of the Congress, to Mr. Slocombe in Bombay on 20th June 1930, and particularly

(2)the terms of the statement submitted by Mr. Slocombe to Pandit Motilal Nehru in Bombay on 25th June, 1930, and approved by him (Pandit Motilal Nehru) as the basis of informal approach to the Viceroy by us.

Mr. Slocombe forwarded both the documents to us, and we thereupon approached His Excellency the Viceroy for permission to interview Mahatma Gandhi, Pandits Motilal Nehru and Jawaharlal Nehru, in order to explore the possibilities of a settlement. A copy of the second document referred to above has been taken by you from us.

We now find that the terms embodied in the letter you gave us on the 14th instant are such that, as agreed between us, it must be submitted to His Excellency the Viceroy for his consideration, and we have to await his decision.

We note your desire that the material documents relating to these peace negotiations including your said letter to us should be published, and we shall proceed

[1] *Vide* "Letter to T. B. Sapru and M. R. Jayakar", 15-8-1930.

to do so after His Excellency the Viceroy has considered your letter.

Before we conclude, you will permit us to say that we had reasons to believe, as we told you, that with the actual calling off of the Civil Disobedience Movement, the general situation would largely improve, non-violent political prisoners would be released, all Ordinances, with the exception of those affecting Chittagong and the Lahore Conspiracy cases would be recalled, and the Congress would get a representation at the Round Table Conference, larger than that of any other single political party. We need scarcely add that we emphasized also that, in our opinion, there was substantially no difference between the point of view adopted by Pandit Motilal Nehru in his 'interview' and the statement sent to us by Mr. Slocombe with Pandit Motilal's approval and His Excellency the Viceroy's letter to us.

Yours sincerely,

T. B. SAPRU

M. R. JAYAKAR

Gandhi-Sapru Correspondence. Courtesy: P. N. Sapru

1. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

Y. M.,
August 23, 1930

MY DEAR ANAND,

I have your delightful letter. You do not tell me how you fared physically. I have already written to you. I am glad Vidya is with you and has seen a little of the Ashram life. Tell me how you are in mind and body.

Love.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

2. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 23, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

I have your letter. After Shanta and Kalavati have tried the medicine given by the doctor, write to me and tell me what effect it has. If the latter has taken a pledge to join the struggle, I think she cannot leave. But you have already written to Father. You should both do as your hearts bid you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5249

3. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,
August 23, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

I have your letter. If any questions arise with regard to the vow of not indulging the palate, ask me.[1] You have not mentioned anything about your health in your letter this time. I therefore assume

[1] For Gandhiji's observations on the control of the palate, *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 12-8-1930.

that you are well. Do you go for a walk every day? Physical exercise is necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Blessings to Brother. When you write to Mother and Father, say that I often think of them.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

4. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 23, 1930

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. Look upon the Ashram as your home. Try to improve your Hindi handwriting still further.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

5. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 24, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

I have your love letter written during your journey to Madras. I am hoping that this strain will not prove too much for you. Your descriptions are all valuable. Yes, I had a strenuous time during the Nehrus' visit. It was with difficulty that I was able to spin 375 rounds without doing which I should feel most unhappy. The box wheel is working very well and undoubtedly causes less strain. It gives more satisfactory work now that I have put on it the thin *mal* you sent me. The thick *mal* was causing trouble. The carding-bow is working to perfection. It imposes no strain on me. Kakasaheb rolls the slivers. He has yet to learn carding which he proposes to begin shortly. The translation of the *bhajans* continues as before regularly but slowly

and I see no immediate chance of greater output. I am keeping well. The weight fluctuates. Last week I regained one pound out of two or three I seemed to have lost. There has been no loss of energy. The water here is hard and therefore constipation requires a little handling.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

You will be glad to know that the *tant* has not once broken.

From the original: C.W. 5409. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9643

6. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 24, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I didn't see any letter from you in the mail this week. You must have received my letters to Jayaprakash and to you. My weight, which was going down, has again increased by one pound. What is your daily programme of work these days? Vallabhbhai told me that Jayaprakash was not in good health. How is that?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3367

7. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 24, 1930

CHI. SUSHILA (MANILAL),

You seem to have dried up? Is it out of compassion for me or through laziness? If you had compassion for me, you would write to me. How is Sita? Why does she fall ill so often? I hope you are not being miserly about fruit. What is the condition of your ears? How do you keep generally? How is Tara? How is Nanabhai's health? Think about other similar questions yourself. I hope you, always find Manilal with a smile on his face and joking. Does he read anything in jail?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4770

8. LETTER TO RASIK DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 24, 1930

CHI. RASIK (DESAI),

Did you uphold my honour? Did you keep the vows which you had taken? Give me all the details. How did you spend the time? Were you lazy? Were you talkative? Did you keep good health? Reply to these and many other similar questions. What friends did you make?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6617

9. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 24, 1930

CHI. MRIDU,

I have preserved your last letter. I did not reply to it. But after reading about your heroism I cannot help writing. Deal patiently with the situation. I would advise you not to do anything on an impulse. Does it need mentioning that pure sacrifice calls for careful thought, a sense of discrimination, restraint and patience? Since Khurshedbehn was with you, I felt reassured and satisfied.

Blessings from both of us.

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11109. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

10. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 24/26, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

This time I got the letters earlier than usual, that is, on Wednesday instead of on Thursday. Among the letters is one for Satis Babu. He is Krishnadas's guru, Satis Mukherjee. His address is Harra Road, Calcutta. I have forgotten the number of the flat. You will find it somewhere in my papers. Surendra is likely to know it. Or you will get it in the Ashram office itself. How is Devdas's health? Tell him that I often think of him. Has Ramdas's health recovered? I have before now asked for the names of those who have been released. It would be better if against each name the quantity of carding and spinning done by the person is also mentioned. If, when you do not get a cloth-lined envelope, the ordinary envelope is tightly secured by a string, like a packet sent as book post, there will be no risk afterwards. Keshu seems to have lost health again.Take immediate and effective measures to help him to recover. Giriraj's illness has lasted quite long. His blood must be impure. I have not received the guide to Singer's. If you find it difficult to secure a copy, give up the attempt. I understand what you write about Hasmukhrai. Give him the letters if and when you think you may. Read the letter to Zaulinger before giving it to her. Hence I don't write about her in this letter. You must have sent an acknowledgment to Dhangopal. How is Jamnadas? Do the authorities let you visit him occasionally?

Tuesday morning, August 26, 1930

Non-possession is allied to non-stealing. A thing not originally stolen must nevertheless be classified as stolen property if we possess it without needing it. Possession implies provision for the future. A seeker after truth, a follower of the law of love, cannot hold anything against tomorrow. God never stores for the morrow; He never creates more than what is strictly needed for the moment. If, therefore, we repose faith in His providence, we should be assured that He will give us every day our daily bread, meaning everything we require. Saints and men of faith have always found justification for it from their experience. Our ignorance or negligence of the Divine Law, which gives to man from day to day his daily bread and no more, has given

rise to inequalities with all the miseries attendant upon them. The rich have a superfluous store of things which they do not need, and which are therefore neglected and wasted; while millions starve to death for want of sustenance. If each retained possession only of what he needed, no one would be in want and all would live in contentment. As it is, the rich are discontented no less than the poor. The poor man would fain become a millionaire, and the millionaire a multi-millionaire. The poor are not content if they get their daily needs. They have a right, however, to get enough for their daily needs and it is the duty of society to help them to satisfy them. The rich should take the initiative in dispossession with a view to universal diffusion of the spirit of contentment. If only they keep their own property within moderate limits, the starving will be easily fed and will learn the lesson of contentment along with the rich. Perfect fulfilment of the ideal of non-possession requires that man should, like the birds, have no roof over his head, no clothing and no stock of food for the morrow. He will indeed need his daily bread, but it will be God's business, and not his, to provide it. Only very very few, if any at all, can reach this ideal. We ordinary seekers may not be repelled by the seeming impossibility. But we must keep the ideal constantly before us, and in the light thereof critically examine our possessions and try to reduce them. Civilization, in the real sense of the term, consists not in the multiplication, but in the deliberate and voluntary reduction of wants. This alone promotes real happiness and contentment and increases the capacity for service. Judging by this criterion, we find that in the Ashram we possess many things the necessity for which cannot be proved, and we thus tempt our neighbours to steal. If people try, they can reduce their wants and, as the latter diminish, they become happier, more peaceful and healthier. From the standpoint of pure truth, the body, too, is a possession. It has been truly said that desire for enjoyment creates bodies for the soul and sustains them. When this desire vanishes, there remains no further need for the body and man is free from the vicious cycle of births and deaths. The soul is omnipresent; why should she care to be confined within the cage-like body, or do evil and even kill for the sake of that cage? We thus arrive at the ideal of total renunciation and learn the use of the body for the purposes of service so long as it exists, so much so that service, and not bread, becomes for us the staff of life. We eat and drink, sleep and wake, for service

alone. Such an attitude of mind brings us real happiness and the beatific vision in the fulness of time. Let us all examine ourselves from this standpoint.

We should remember that non-possession is a principle applicable to thoughts as well as to things. A man who fills his brain with useless knowledge violates that inestimable principle. Thoughts which turn us away from God or do not turn us towards Him are unnecessary possessions and constitute impediments in our way. In this connection we may consider the definition of knowledge contained in Chapter XIII of the *Gita*. We are there told that humility, *amanitvam*, etc., constitute knowledge and that all the rest is ignorance. If this is true—and there is no doubt that it is true—much that we hug today as knowledge is ignorance pure and simple, and therefore only does us harm instead of conferring any benefit. It makes the mind wander and even reduces it to a vacuity, and discontent flourishes in endless ramifications of evil. Needless to say, this is not a plea for inertia. Every moment of our life should be filled with mental or physical activity, but that activity should be *sattvik*, tending towards truth. One who has consecrated his-life to service cannot be idle for a single moment. But we have to learn to distinguish between good activity and evil activity. This discernment goes naturally with a single-minded devotion to service.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Kakasaheb's weight has again increased by one pound, and his cheerfulness has also increased. I have regained one pound from what I had lost. For the past three days, I have been taking boiled vegetables in addition to curds. You will see that today's letters are put into one of the envelopes received from you, fresh slips of paper being pasted on it. You can use the envelope again.

BAPU

[PPS.]

There are 53 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

11. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 29, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. No one should be amused at my writing on slips of paper or be angry with me for that reason. That is the proper thing for me to do. Though I write on such slips, I try to make each letter as interesting as I can in the time I get.

Why are you alarmed by the suspicion that you have got some disease in your body? What would it matter even if you had a disease and that too a grave one? "The body may live or perish, what should endure is one's devotion to God.''[1] We have learnt at least this in the Ashram, if nothing more. If you fast for a few days, the body will be cleansed. You require Kuhne baths, hip-baths and particularly friction sitz-baths. If you do not know about them, ask Kanta or Radha. I think they know. You may also read about them in Kuhne's book. Whenever women suffer from any disease, it becomes necessary to know the facts about their monthly periods. Are they normal with you? Are they regular in appearance and duration? Are they painful? If necessary, consult a doctor.

I have not read Arvind Babu's book. I alone know how limited is my reading. My main interest is in reading the book of nature. I shall never finish reading it.

You should have enough sleep. You should observe the rule of sleeping from 9 to 4.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10232; also C.W. 6680. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] From the Marathi saint Namdev

12. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI MADHAVJI THAKKAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 29, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

Was there any letter to which I did not reply? I do think every day about you and all other sisters. I would have been happy, too, if you had spent a few months with me. However, both of you have so trained yourselves, though you lived away from me, that I don't know what more you would have gained if you had stayed with me. It is good that the children still live on fruit, etc., and that you have started on it again. Why has not Dahibehn written to me? My blessings to all sisters.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6797

13. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 29, 1930

CHI. MANU (TRIVEDI),

Gangabehn writes and tells me that you have become impatient to go out [for work]. This was before you got my letter. I hope that my letter has overcome your restlessness. Can a soldier ever ask why? He goes on doing, silently and cheerfully, the work assigned to him. Let Kakasaheb's condition be fulfilled. It is not long now before he will be released. If you are still not satisfied let me know.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7761

14. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 29, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. If Kamalabehn willingly lets you go and there is an opportunity for work in Bihar, it is your first duty to take it up. I hope Jayaprakash is keeping good health. Take care of your health. I got Mrityunjay's letter.

I am more or less all right. I have at present substituted fresh vegetables for raisins and dates in my diet. I shall watch the effect of the change. Don't worry about me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3368

15. LETTER TO MAITRI GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 29, 1930

CHI. MAITRI,

You should write regularly to me. I feel happy to hear from Gangabehn that she is satisfied with you. I hope you keep good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6218

16. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 29, 1930

CHI. MANGALA,

I have your letter. Your handwriting is tolerable but there is much scope for improvement. You should see Radhabehn's[1] handwriting. In seeking to tie up Narandasbhai, you girls are yourselves properly tied up. While I bathe I shall have to test you in Ch. XVIII[2]. Is you pronunciation correct? You must write out that chapter from memory a couple of times in neat handwriting.

Why did you fall ill?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11088. Courtesy: Pushpa Naik

17. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

Y. M.,
August 29, 1930

CHI. VIDYAVATI,

Narandas has given me news of you. I hope you are well in body and mind. What is Laxmi Devi doing? Both of you should write to me. It is good that jang Bahadurji has gone to jail. My blessings to him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

[1] Radhabehn Gandhi
[2] Of the *Bhagavad Gita*

18. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 29, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. Both of us feel that you should take with you both Dhiru and Rambhau[1] if they are willing to go. In each other's company, they will stay there longer and you will have less to worry about. With either Dhiru or Rambhau alone, you will have to go out of way to give him company. At present, I would not like you to be in that predicament.

I had forgotten about Damodardas and therefore wrote nothing about him. I would not have seen any harm if he had come, and you had accompanied him. But I like the present arrangement more.

I understand what you say about the spinning-wheel. My argument was altogether different. I appreciate that it does not bother you. May your faith be rewarded. You have mentioned the right *shlokas.* If you have the self-confidence demanded by the *shloka,* if you are hard-working and if your idealism is based on reality, you will certainly find the rest of the means and will also acquire the required knowledge. So, I have no objection at all if you intend to persist in your efforts. The only condition is that you are not to do it at the cost of your health. If your health had reached beyond recovery stage, I would not have allowed you to go to the hills. This time you are going with the blessings of Kashi and Chhaganlal. No doubt blessings from both of us are always with you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original S.N. 32962

[1] Rambhau Khare, son of Narayan Moreshwar Khare

19. LETTER TO GULAM RASOOL QURESHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 30, 1930

CHI. QURESHI,

I was happy to read your letter. You did a good thing in studying the Koran. Get hold of *The Mystics of Islam* and read it. You may write to me anything you wish to. Regular inclusion of curds in your diet will probably benefit you. Take moderate and regular exercise. When you visit Imam Saheb next time, tell him that both of us think of him with great love, and his name frequently comes up in our conversation. Ask Amina to write to me. Blessings from us both to both of you.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6651

20. LETTER TO SHARDA C . SHAH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 31, 1930

CHI. SHARDA,

Your letters come quite regularly. If one's mind indulges in thoughts of pleasure, one might as well get it done with the body. But when the mind itself does not want it, it would indeed be better if one works away at something with concentration. In matters like these, children cannot be forced to do anything. If you are feeling too lazy for *udyoga*[1] the feeling can by persistent effort be got out of the system. You must realize the necessity of work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9888. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala.

[1] Industry; here the Ashram activities like spinning, etc.

21. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,
August 31, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

I got your letter. It would be well to try out Premabehn's diet. I think it is necessary to resume regular sitz-baths. It can easily be done in my bathroom. It also has sunlight filtering through the thatched roof. You should have your periods regularly. If you do not you must immediately take remedial measures. When the date is due it would help if you took a steam-bath once or twice. I think Radhabehn knows how it is done. They follow your suggestions in making the bread here. They say there is still some defect. I have conveyed to them the improvement suggested by Gangabehn.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Are there any letters from Krishna?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

22. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 31, 1930

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Your letter. Do go to Almora if there is an opportunity. How is your mental state? Convey my blessings to Krishnan Nair.

Continue writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2384

23. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[About *August 31, 1930*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter though written in a shaky train was wonderfully legible. If you had not drawn my attention, I should not have noticed any difference at all.

I think I have got my control over the travelling wheel and I hope to gain greater speed than now. As it is I am saving about an hour and there is much less fatigue. But your labour has not gone in vain. Kakasaheb was using the Gandiv. But it did not give him satisfaction. And he was not able always even to do one unit, i.e., 160 rounds. On your wheel he has no difficulty in making one unit in two hours which is the least he has vowed to give to the charkha.

You did the right thing in transferring to the 2nd class. There can be no harm and certainly no shame in going 2nd class, when the 3rd is clearly impossible or next to it.

I am glad you had a quiet 36 hours with Miss Petersen. Is not your sister somewhere in Madras?

Send my love to Andrews, Reginald and those others who may be thinking of me.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5407. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9641

24. LETTER TO AMRITLAL THAKKAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 1, 1930

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

Why should you think that because you have done no work for me you cannot write to me? Really speaking, is there any work which is mine? All of us should do God's work to the best of our ability and

[1] From the reference to the travelling wheel it appears this was written some time after August 18; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 18-8-1930 In another letter to her of October 5, Gandhiji says he did not miss a week in writing to her. Since no letter dated between August 24 and September 7 is available, it is likely this was written on or about August 31, 1930.

according to our lights. And you are doing that every moment of your life. Kaka and I often talk about you. If there is anything about which you think you should write to me, please do so. I don't ask you, and I do not wish, that you should write to me merely for the sake of writing. I know that you keep, and would be ready to give, an account of every minute of your time.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Kanya Ashram Rajat Jayanti Smritigranth, p. 16

25. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN

Silence Day [*September 1, 1930*][1]

CHI. MOTIBEHN,

Ba told me that you feel depressed. Why should you? One who reads the *Gita* and reflects over its teaching should never feel depressed. How can that man or woman who daily meditates on God and believes that He always dwells in our hearts ever feel depressed? Try and get rid of your depression.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3736

26. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 1, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN (JHAVERI),

I have an impression that Nanibehn and you owe me a reply to one letter of mine. There is nothing particular to write about this time, and I write this letter only to tell you that I think about all of you every day. I know that you devote all your time to work. That is the right thing to do and is sure to give proper results in course of time. Devotion to duty is the fabled wish-fulfilling tree.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3101

[1] The original letter has a remark, in a different hand, "about 1-9-30". Monday fell on September l.

27. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

September [*1, 1930*][1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

You are too greedy. However long my letter, you will think it too short. I send between 50 and 60 letters to the Ashram every week, and I must write them during whatever time I can spare from spinning. Hence, and also because I don't have much to write about from here every time, I write short letters in which, however, I say all that I wish to say. If I had to write only one or two letters, I could fill them with long description of conditions here. The letter meant for the whole Ashram is always long. Since Mirabehn cannot read Gujarati, I write a long letter to her. All other letters are short and to the point. Look; I have filled half this letter explaining why I write short letters. Kakasaheb and I were weighed on Friday; my weight came to 104 and Kakasaheb's to 114. This is a fairly good increase. We pray regularlyevery day. The *Gita* is also read daily. Recently I have given up raisins and dates and, instead, eat boiled vegetables. Generally I eat sweet potatoes and uncooked tomatoes every day or some other vegetable like cabbage. This diet has done me no harm. The weight has increased and constipation has been relieved. You must have read the reports about the negotiations with the Government. There was no truth in them at all. Let me know your future programme, and also Jayaprakash's. Has your mother-in-law recovered now? I am sure you will nurse her with the utmost love.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3370

[1] The source has only September, as the original seems to have been damaged here. However *Bapuna Patro-10: Shri Prabhavatibehnne*, pp. 33-4, gives this date.

28. LETTER TO DURGA GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 1, 1930

CHI. DURGA,

Are you cross with me? You don't even write to me and yet will be cross. What sort of justice is this? Is this the way of the Ashram or that of the hills? Or are you simply shirking letter-writing by pretending to be cross? How much do you spin daily? What other work do you have? Do you regularly get up in the morning? How many chapters have you memorized?[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Virat Vatsalata, p. 31

29. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 2, 1930

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I got your letter. If it is only your gums which bleed, you should gargle with salt water three or four times a day and in the morning massage them with a finger using pure, finely-powdered salt, taking care not to spit out the saliva meanwhile. You may use coconut oil instead of salt. You should also gargle with some potassium permanganate solution. If the bleeding does not stop with this, you should consult a dentist. Sometimes such bleeding is brought about even by indigestion. You should eat daily a little quantity of uncooked green vegetables.

Were you forced to eat *rotlas* of *bajra* and *jowar* or did you eat them to keep company with the other prisoners? I have seen you refusing to take advantage of the shade even when sitting under a green tree. I should like to get, if available, an account of the carding and spinning done by everyone.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7406. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

[1] The original was written in Gujarati.

30. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[*September 2, 1930*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got the Ashram packet on Thursday. If you get the discourses printed, send one or two copies here. It would help if I had with me a copy of the previous discourse. Send me also the set of Ashram rules. If Surendra, Madhavji and Madhavlal have still not written to me, ask them to write. Others, too, should write. Kusum's hand must be all right. Has Mrs. Zaulinger calmed down a little? Try to win her over.

I remember to have written to someone and given permission for a translation of the *Autobiography* in Swedish. Accept the sum of £11 and credit it in whichever account you think proper.

You utilized the occasion of *Rakshabandhan* very well. Take care of Lilavati. If she gets fainting fits, she should come over to the Ashram and rest. If you come to know Devdas's weight, mention it in your letter. In that place he should improve. You can get a garland made from yarn spun by Jamnalalji. The spinning-wheel gives me no difficulty now. The speed has not increased much, but it is good enough. This is a portable spinning-wheel and it required a thin *mal.* If anyone knows a simple method of making a *mal*, he should write to me. Abbas had explained it to me, but I have forgotten it. One packet of cotton has been exhausted. Together with what I can make from the second one, I shall have enough slivers to last a month. But someone is bound to visit Kakasaheb. Send one packet with him. Vallabhbhai, too, has a visitor once a week or fortnight. You may send the packet with one of the persons. If neither course is possible, send some cotton by post as you did previously. There is no hurry at all. Along with it, send some pieces of leather for repairing the heels of my sandals. If no such pieces are available and if you can find my pair of sandals, send that. There was an extra pair during the march. Kanti will probably know about it. There was one in the Ashram too. Kusum may know about it, or the person to whom she has handed over charge of these things.

[1] As in the printed source.

FEARLESSNESS. As every reader of the *Gita* knows fearlessness heads the list of the divine attributes enumerated in Chapter XVI. Whether this is merely due to the exigencies of metre or whether the pride of place has been deliberately yielded to fearlessness, is more than I can say. In my opinion, however, fearlessness richly deserves the first rank assigned to it. For it is indispensable for the growth of the other noble qualities. How can one seek Truth or cherish love without fearlessness? As Pritam says: "The path of Hari is the path of the brave, not of cowards." Hari here means Truth. And the brave are those armed with fearlessness, not with the sword, the rifle and the like. These are taken up only by those who are possessed by fear.

Fearlessness connotes freedom from all external fear, fear of disease, bodily injury and death, of dispossession, of losing one's nearest and dearest, of losing reputation or giving offence, and so on. One who overcomes the fear of death does not surmount all other fears, as is commonly but erroneously supposed. Some of us do notfear death, but flee from the minor ills of life. Some are ready to die themselves, but cannot bear their loved ones being taken away from them. Some misers will put up with all this, will part even with theirlives, but not their property; others will do any number of black deeds in order to uphold their supposed prestige. Some will swerve from the straight and narrow path which lies clear before them, simply because they are afraid of incurring the world's odium. The seeker after Truth must conquer all these fears. He should be ready to sacrifice his all in the quest of Truth, even as Harishchandra did. The story of Harishchandra may be only a parable; but every seeker will bear witness to its truth from his personal experience and, therefore, that story is as precious as any historical fact.

Perfect fearlessness is almost impossible to cultivate. It can be attained only by him who has realized the Supreme, as it implies freedom from delusion. One can always progress towards this goal by determined and constant endeavour and by cultivating self-confidence

As I have stated at the very outset, we must give up all external fears. But the internal foes we must always fear. We are rightly afraid of animal passion, anger and the like. External fears cease of their own accord when once we have conquered these traitors within the camp. All such fears revolve round the body as the centre, and will therefore disappear as soon as we get rid of attachment for the body. We thus find that all external fear is the baseless fabric of our own

vision. Fear has no place in our hearts when we have shaken off attachment for wealth, for family and for the body. "Enjoy the things of the earth by renouncing them''[1] is the sovereign precept. Wealth, family and the body will be there just the same; we have only to change our attitude towards them. All these are not ours, but God's. Nothing whatever in this world is ours. Even we ourselves are His. Why then should we entertain any fear? The Upanishad, therefore, directs us to give up attachment for things while we enjoy them. That is to say, we must be interested in them not as proprietors but only as trustees. He on whose behalf we hold them will give us the strength and the weapons requisite for defending them against all usurpers. When we thus cease to be masters and reduce ourselves to the rank of servants, humbler than the very dust under our feet, all fears will roll away like mists; we shall attain ineffable peace and see Satyanarayana, the God of Truth, face to face.

Kakasaheb had not so far taken a categorical vow of spinning; he has done so now. The vow is that he will spin for not less than two hours and not less than 160 yards daily. He has also started carding. He spends most of his time in physical activities. He maintains good strength. For the last four days or so I have given up raisins and dates and eat instead boiled vegetables, raw tomatoes, etc. If this122 dietdoes not meet my needs, I shall add fruit. I have made the change in order to overcome constipation. If the change proves economical, so much the better. I will not be obstinate about any item.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

There are 58 letters.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8123. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi; also *Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine*, Pt. I, pp. 112-5

[1] *Ishopanishad*, v. 1

31. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 3, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got both your letters together. Which other women are with you at Sarbhon? Only God is completely free from the pride of the ego. Everyone among us, however, should strive daily to get rid of such pride.

"The brave never run away from a battle; fight against lust and anger, pride and greed." Only yesterday I was trying to translate this *bhajan*.[1] I then felt its beauty more powerfully than I had done before. For us that is the only real battle. If we fight on, we are bound to win in the end.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 531. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit; also S.N. 9286

32. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

September 3, 1930

We may claim our experiment to have succeeded only if the Ashram women can swim across even in a storm. We need not worry if we stumble. Whenever we try to climb, there is always a risk of falling. We must take that risk. We may not knowingly take such a risk, but we should not turn back if circumstances force us to take it. We should learn to adopt towards women the same liberal attitude that we do towards men. Will not Lord Krishna protect our honour? We sing a *bhajan* which says that He will. Let us show that faith in our actions.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6798

[1] For Gandhiji's translation of this *bhajan* by Kabir, *vide "Ashram Bhajanavali"*, 15-12-1930 under the date 5-9-1930.

33. STATEMENT TO T. B. SAPRU AND M. R. JAYAKAR[1]

September 5, 1930

DEAR FRIENDS,

We have very carefully gone through the letter, written to you by H. E. the Viceroy, dated 28-8-1930. You have kindly supplemented it with a record of your conversations with the Viceroy on points not covered by the letter. We have equally carefully gone through the Note signed by Pandit Motilal Nehru, Dr. Syed Mahmud and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and sent by them through you. This note embodies their considered opinion on the said letter and the conversation.

We gave two anxious nights to these papers and we had the benefit of a full and free discussion with you on all the points arising out of these papers. And as we have told you, we have all arrived at the definite conclusion that we see no meeting ground between the Government and the Indian National Congress so far as we can speak for the latter, being out of touch with the outside world. We unreservedly associate ourselves with the opinion contained in the Note sent by the distinguished prisoners in the Naini Central Prison, but these friends expect us to give in our own words our view of the position finally reached in the negotiations for peace, which you, with patriotic motives, have carried on during the past two months at considerable sacrifice of your own time and no less inconvenience to yourselves. We shall therefore allude as briefly as possible to the fundamental difficulties that have stood in the way of peace being achieved.

[1] After meeting Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and M. R. Jayakar the Viceroy addressed a letter to Sapru on August 28, *vide* Appendix Viceroy's letter to Sir T.B. Sapru", 28-8-1930. Sapru and Jayakar then met Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. Syed Mahmud at Naini Jail on August 30 and 31 and showed them the Viceroy's letter as also notes of conversation with him, *vide* Appendix "Notes of Conversations with Viceroy's", 5-9-1930. The Nehrus then gave them their final note addressed to Gandhiji, *vide* Appendix "Note From Nehrus", 31-8-1930.. With these documents Sapru and Jayakar saw Gandhiji and other leaders at Yeravda Jail on September 3, 4 and 5. A draft of this Statement available in Gandhiji's hand in S.N. 1927 bears some changes and additions in a handwriting other than Gandhiji's.

The Viceroy's letter, dated July 16, 1930, is, we have taken, intended to satisfy, so far as may be, the terms of the interview Pandit Motilal Nehru gave to Mr. George Slocombe on June 20th, and the statement submitted by Mr. Slocombe to him on June 25, and approved by him. We are unable to read in the Viceroy's language in his letter of July 16 anything like satisfaction of the terms of the interview or the said statement. Here are the relevant parts of the interview and the statement.

> In the interview it was stated: "If the terms of the Round Table Conference are to be left open and we are expected to go to London to argue the case for Dominion Status, I should decline. If it was made clear, however, that the Conference would meet to frame a constitution for a Free India subject to such adjustments of our mutual relations as are required by the special needs and conditions of India and our past association, I for one would be disposed to recommend to the Congress to accept the invitation to participate in the Conference. We must be masters in our household, but we are ready to agree to reasonable terms for the period of transfer of power from a British administration in India to a responsible Indian Government. The Conference must be to meet British people to discuss these terms as nation to nation and on an equal footing.''[1]

The statement contained the following:

> "The Government would give private assurance that they would support the demand for full responsible Government for India subject to such mutual adjustments and terms of transfer as are required by the special needs and conditions of India and by her long association with Great Britain and as may be decided by the Round Table Conference."[2]

Here is the relevant part of the Viceroy's letter:

> It remains my earnest desire, as it is that of my Government—and I have no doubt also that of His Majesty's Government—to do everything we can in our respective spheres to assist the people of India to obtain as large a degree of management of their own affairs as can be shown to be consistent with making provision for those matters in regard to which they are not at present in a position to assume responsibility. What those matters may be, and what provisions may best be made for them, will engage the attention of the Conference, but I have never believed that, with

[1] The draft did not have this paragraph.
[2] The draft did not have these paragraphs.

mutual confidence, on both sides, it should be impossible to reach an agreement.[1]

We feel that there is a vast difference between the two positions. Where Pandit Motilalji visualizes a Free India enjoying a status different in kind from the present as a result of the deliberations of the proposed Round Table Conference, the Viceroy's letter merely[2] commits him and his Government and the British Cabinet to an earnest desire[3] to assist the people of [4] India to obtain[5] as large a degree of the management of their[6] own affairs as can be shown[7] to be consistent with making provision for those matters in regard to which they are not at present in a position to assume responsibility. In other words, the prospect held out by the Viceroy's letter is one of getting, at the most, something more along the lines of reforms commencing with those known to us as the Lansdowne Reforms.

As we had the fear that our interpretation was correct in our letter of 15-8-1930 signed also by Pandit Motilal Nehru, Dr. Syed Mahmud and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, we put our position negatively and said what would not in our opinion satisfy the Congress. The letter you have now brought from H.E. the Viceroy reiterates the original position taken up by him in his first letter, and, we are grieved to say, contemptuously dismisses our letter as unworthy of consideration and regards discussion on the basis of the proposals contained in the letter as impossible.

You have thrown further light on the question by telling us that "if Mr. Gandhi definitely faced the Government of India with such a question", i.e., the right of secession from the Empire at India's will, the Viceroy would say, that "they were not prepared to treat it as an open question". We, on the other hand regard the question as the central point in any constitution that India is to secure and one which ought not to need any argument. If India is now to attain full

[1] The draft did not have these paragraphs.

[2] This word is added in the draft.

[3] The draft has "a desire".

[4] The words "the people of ", not found in *The Hindu version*, were added in the draft.

[5] The draft has "get".

[6] The draft has "her".

[7] The words following this do not appear in the draft. Gandhiji simply wrote "take" indicating that the remaining part of the sentence, quoted from the Viceroy's letter, was to be copied here.

Responsible Government or full Self-Government or whatever other term it is to be known by, it can be only on an absolutely voluntary basis, leaving each party to sever the partnership or association at will. If India is to remain no longer a part of the Empire but is to become an equal and free partner in the Commonwealth, she must feel the want and warmth of that association and never otherwise. You will please observe this position is clearly brought out in the interview already alluded to by us. So long, therefore, as the British Government or the British people regard this position as impossible or untenable, the Congress must, in our opinion, continue the fight for freedom.

The attitude taken up by the Viceroy over the very mild proposal made by us regarding the salt tax affords a further painful insight into the Government's mentality. It is as plain as daylight to us that, from the dizzy heights of Simla, the rulers of India are unable to understand or appreciate the difficulties of the starving millions living in the plains whose incessant toil makes[1] Government from such a giddy height at all possible.

If the blood of innocent people spilt during the past five months to sustain the monopoly of a gift of nature[2] next in importance to poor people only to air and water has not brought home to the Government the conviction of its utter immorality, no Conference of Indian leaders as suggested by the Viceroy can possibly do so. The suggestion that those who ask for the repeal of the monopoly should show a source of equivalent revenue adds insult to injury. This attitude is an indication that if Government can help it the existing crushingly - expensive system shall continue to the end of time. We venture further to point out that not only does the Government here, but Governments all the world over, openly condone breaches of measures which have become unpopular but which for technical or other reasons cannot straightway be repealed.

We need not now deal with many other important matters in which too there is no adequate[3] advance from the Viceroy to the popular position set forth by us. We hope we have brought out sufficient weighty matters in which there appears at present to be an unbridgeable gulf between the British Government and the Congress.

[1] The draft here reads: "starving millions living in the plains of India who make".

[2] The draft has "substance" which was changed to "gift of nature".

[3] Added in the draft

There need, however, be no disappointment for the apparent failure of the peace negotiations. The Congress is engaged in a grim struggle for freedom. The nation has resorted to a weapon which the rulers being unused to it will take time to understand and appreciate. We are not surprised that a few months' suffering has not converted them[1].

The Congress desires to harm no[2] single legitimate interest by whomsoever acquired. It has no quarrel with Englishmen as such, but it resents and will resent with all the moral strength at its command the intolerable British domination. Non-violence being assured to the end, we are certain of the early fulfilment of the national aspiration. This we say in spite of the bitter and often insulting language used by the powers-that-be in regard to Civil Disobedience.

Lastly, we once more thank you for the great pains you have taken to bring about peace, but we suggest that the time has not arrived when any further peace negotiations should be carried on with those in charge of the Congress organization. As prisoners, we labour under an obvious[3] handicap. Our opinion is based, as it must be, on second-hand evidence and runs the risk of being faulty.[4] It would be naturally open to those in charge of the Congress organization to see any of us.[5] In that case, and when the Government itself is equally desirous for peace, they should have no difficulty in having access to us.

M. K. GANDHI

SAROJINI NAIDU
VALLABHBHAI PATEL
JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

The Hindu, 5-9-1930

[1] The draft has "Government".
[2] *The Hindu* version here has "the", evidently a misprint.
[3] The draft has "a tremendous".
[4] The draft here reads: "is more likely to be faulty."
[5] The draft here reads: "It is another matter if those in charge of the Congress organization desire to see any of us."

34. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI PANDYA

September 5, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I have your painful letter. . . . behn[1] appears to be a most sinful woman. We shall however now win her over by kindness, if we can. Your dharma is clear. At least for the present you should leave her company altogether. You should neither serve her nor accept service from her. I have written a letter to her which Narandas will read to her. You should read it. A man or a woman susceptible to mutual passion has no right to accept help from or offer it to each other. You have ceased to be man and wife, but even when the relationship exists the husband who is susceptible to carnal desire can never render pure service to his wife. Know this to have been proved by experience. Therefore, forget, at any rate for some time, that a person named . . . behn lives in the Ashram. That alone will do you good. If . . . behn finds this an impossible situation she will go. And if she goes indeed, let her leave with pleasure. Ask me if you have not understood all this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 323. Courtesy: Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

35. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 5, 1930

CHI. PUNJABHAI,

I got your letter. We should certainly feel ashamed if we fall ill. But very often illness comes to us without our knowing how it comes. Knowing this, we should be tranquil and humble and have greater faith in God. This is a good way of utilizing an illness. What remedies are you trying? Who is your physician?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4015

[1] The name has been omitted.

36. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 5, 1930

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

Narandas tells me in his letter that I have not written to you. But I do remember that I wrote to you. Do you remember any letter of yours to which I did not reply? Send me a report of the activities on that side. How is Kasumba? Why did Yukti come away? If she can write, she should write to me. How is your health?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

37. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 6, 1930

CHI. SHARDA (BABU),

I do receive all your letters. It is true that I do not write to you every week. I realize that what I have been writing about non-stealing and the other vows is rather complicated and it does not interest you. It is not the language that is difficult, but the ideas are difficult to grasp and they are stated tersely. That is the way of explaining a lot in a few words. Now, if you understood those things from Chimanlal or Premabehn and read them again, you would get interested. You can definitely understand it if you have the desire. I hope you are not having the asthma trouble now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9889. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

38. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 6, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I hope you have stopped worrying about your health. Why did Jamnadas[1] refuse to see visitors? If you have more news, let me know.

Has anyone ascertained how many volumes in each language the library contains? How much time do you have to give to it? What about the harassment by thieves? I suppose the rains have stopped now. The rainfall here has been very little. It is raining hard today. It was badly needed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10233; also C.W. 6681. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

39. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 6, 1930

CHI. LILAVATI (ASAR),

I got your letter. Narandas tells me in his letter that your fainting fits have become more frequent. In such a case you require rest. Spend a few days in the Ashram or at any other place where you think you will feel happy. But you can do this only with Khurshedbehn's permission. You should write pure truth in your diary. Don't mind who reads it. It is to our good to appear to the world exactly as we are. There is in this no humiliation at all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9564

[1] Jamnadas Gandhi, then in Rajkot jail

40. LETTER TO BECHARDAS DOSHI

September 6, 1930

BHAI BECHARDAS,

I have your letter. Really speaking Kakasaheb should reply to it. But just now I reply as he can write only a limited number of letters. Take it that the view expressed here is that of us both. I will say nothing about the method of giving the etymology[1]. If Kakasaheb wishes, he will write about it later. After discussing the matter with him, I understand that your main work is to translate the *Agamas*[2]. Shri Punjabhai has given the money for that work, and it is our duty, therefore, to carry out the object of the grant as quickly as possible. You should not mind it if in devoting your time to that work you have to postpone or delay work on etymology; or you may get it done through somebody else if that can be conveniently arranged. The idea in placing Bhakti Prasad at your disposal was not that he might do original work on his own, but that he might work under you and help you, and might, if he was persevering, acquire proficiency in the work.

As for your eyes I think you should lay down a limit. You should be satisfied with whatever help is available in Gujarat. Dr. Haribhai is a specialist in eye diseases. If he cannot help you, you should assume that nobody else will be able to and rest content. There should be a self-imposed limit like this for anyone who has decided to live a simple life. Do the countless poor have the benefit of help even from a Dr. Haribhai? This of course is my personal view. I can say that Kakasaheb now agrees with this view. But this is a delicate matter. Everyone should lay down the limit for himself according to his own lights and his own wish. The limits accepted by one person cannot, in such a matter, apply to all.

BAPU

[PS.]

My reason for using "now" and saying that "Kakasaheb now agrees" is that, as he tells me, he himself had formerly advised you to consult one or two other doctors. He now thinks that my view is right.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1340

[1] In the Gujarati dictionary under preparation then in the Gujarat Vidyapith

[2] Jain scriptures.

41. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 6, 1930

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

I have your letter. It is well written. If you have enough work there I do not see any need of your going to Ajmer. But someone must go if the need in Ajmer is urgent. It is difficult to give a decisive opinion from here. What has Mother to say? Only the leader of the batch can take a policy decision. Ask Surendraji who is there these days.

As yet it is well-nigh impossible for me to write letters in Marathi. I get very little time even to read. Tell Janakibehn to write to us.

Blessings from Kakasaheb.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 276-7

42. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 7, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter from Tirupur. You now know all about our peace talks. I have regained the weight I had lost here. I weighed 104 lb. last Friday. I have dropped the dried fruit also. The sour limes remain. I take vegetables in the place of dried fruit. Sweet potatoes and raw tomatoes are standing vegetables. The former are roasted. A green vegetable is boiled—generally it is cabbage or marrow or the like. This change accounts for the restoration of the weight andconstipation no longer worries me. If the change proves successful in the long run, the cost is considerably reduced. Let us see. I have made no hard and fast rule about the avoidance of fruit. But just now it is no deprivation whatsoever and possibly a gain in health.

My mastery over the wheel is increasing. The fatigue is no longer felt. I see that if you concentrate on the *puni* end whilst the thread is drawing, then on the point of the spindle when the thread is being shifted to the cone and then on the cone when it is brought there, you avoid breakage if the *puni* is sound. I hope shortly to increase the speed appreciably. It is better even now. But there is much room for improvement. Anyway, just now it is the wheel that absorbs my attention to the exclusion of other studies. Kaka is still at your wheel. He is getting on slowly. The carding-bow is quite all right. I have no difficulty in adjusting it. Ever since it has been with me the gut broke only once and that too after Kaka too began to work on it. He is absolutely new to it but is an extremely careful worker. Then too I deliberately cut it where I saw it had worn out. Kaka had devised a new catch for holding the spindle whilst unwinding. It is fixed to the box. The spindle is mounted on it and the thread is held between the left hand fingers. The result is that it winds tightly on the winder. There is saving in time too. On your wheel of course the spindle remains on the holders whilst the unwinding is done. The catch was wanted for the box.

I hope you have had some rest somewhere. Do not rush.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5410. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9644

43. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 7, 1930

CHI. MANI (PATEL),

I have your letter. Once again Father and Jairamdas were with me for a couple of days. Your letter to me was received at the same time and was read by Father. He also gave me your letter to him to read.

Your sketch of Mother is moving. Such indeed were most mothers of old; hence I found nothing unusual in your description.

Maternal affection however is so luminous that, although mixed with infatuation, it is ever fresh. Do not break the rule about writing to me. It would be different if you were in prison.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 73-4

44. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 7, 1930

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have a letter from you after a long time. But you blame me, like a thief turning round on the policeman. You must have got my previous letter. Sita's illness has lasted too long. Are you not able to discover the cause? As I have not seen her myself, I do not have the courage to say anything in the matter. But I make this suggestion. It would be advisable to keep her chiefly on milk, curds and fruit instead of giving her a variety of things to eat. If she is given toast, it should be of brown bread. I see no need to give her porridge. If you wish, you may give her cod-liver oil. I myself would never think of giving it to anyone. But you should attach no importance to this view. How is your ear? Write to me every week. And write in ink.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4771

45. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 7, 1930

CHI. MANU (TRIVEDI),

Have you calmed down? If you are still not satisfied, you should continue to struggle against me. I don't wish to force you to be virtuous. No one in the world has ever been made so through force. In

any case, your desire is good in itself and I don't want to force you to remain against your wish.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7762

46. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 7, 1930

CHI. RAIHANA,

I got your letter. Because my letters are short, don't make yours also short. You know why mine are short. Into which language is Father translating the *Sirat?* During my first imprisonment, I had read that book and *Asva-e-Sahaba* and found them extremely interesting. But now my Urdu has become rusty, and in any case this time spinning leaves me no time to read.

We have no choice but to trust in God to restore your health. "What God, World Teacher and Master, has willed for the day, it is futile to grieve over". Bhrrr to Father and *Vandemataram* to Mother. To your sisters, *Khuda Hafiz.*[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9620

47. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

September 7, 1930

I hope Mathuradas's imprisonment has not upset you. Where do you live at present? How is your health and Dilip's? What does Mathuradas say in his letters? Does he feel any hardship? How do you spend your time? Do you take any part in public activities? Do you get any visitors? Do you visit any friends?

[From Gujarati]
Bapuni Prasadi, p. 102

[1] This is in Urdu.

48. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

September 7, 1930

SARALABEHN,

May God grant you increasing strength.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11134. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

49. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,
September 7, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

I have you letter.

You can write to me as long letters as you please. If Father visits you there, you may tell him: 'I am here with your consent. You have entrusted me to Bapuji. It is therefore my duty to do as he says. Please do not insist on taking me away. Dasharatha was prompted by his ignorant love to suggest to Rama that he ignore his pledge. But Rama refused to do so and saved Dashratha's honour and upheld the sanctity of dharma. Let me do the same, and bless me that I may remain firm in observing the vow taken by you and me.'

You may show this letter to Father. It is good that you are learning English. Improve Your health. For controlling your mind, try giving up the extra salt in your food. Pleasure of the palate also is a mental habit. You do have strength of will. I am writing a separate letter to Brother.

Are you able to understand this letter?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a Photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

50. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 7, 1930

CHI. SUMANGAL,

I have necessarily to think of you every day, because I have with me your translations of the Hindi *Bhajans* of the *Bhajanavali*; Kakasaheb had asked for them. I am translating them into English with his help.[1] We both find your translation inaccurate at places. It is certainly hasty. Still, as a whole it can be considered satisfactory. We are both well. Write to me in detail about the work going on there. Kakasaheb sends his blessings.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

51. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 7, 1930

CHI. KALAVATI,

Your letter reached me belatedly. Go if you must to serve your mother-in-law. Most probably this letter will reach you there. Observe the rules well. Be very strict regarding your diet also.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5250

[1] The work of translation was begun on May 6, 1930 and the last hymn was translated on December 15. For Gandhiji's version of the *Ashram Bhajanavali, vide* "Ashram Bhajanvali", 15-12-1930.

52. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 8, 1930

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

Have not yet got the pamphlet sent by you. There is a thrill that is *sattvik* and one that is *rajasik.* What category would your writings fall in? We expect to hear more about the American lady. I hope the Ashram life will not prove too trying for her. Our joint congratulations to Mrs. Appasamy on her introduction of the wheel and the *takli* in her school.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10090

53. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 8, 1930

MY DEAR MATHEW,

Human speech is inadequate to express the reality. The soul is unborn and indestructible. The personality perishes, must perish. Individuality is and is not even as each drop in the ocean is an individual and is not. It is not because apart from the ocean it has no existence. It is because the ocean has no existence, if the drop has not, i.e., has no individuality. They are beautifully interdependent. And if this is true of the physical, how much more so of the spiritual world !

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1554

54. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN CHOKSI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 8, 1930

CHI. MOTI,

I am happy that you have gone to the Ashram. I hope you will live in peace now. If you don't receive any money even from Broach, how do you meet your expenses? Did Najuklal save anything?

Ask Lakshmi to write to me. Where is Jivandas, and what does he do at present? Where is Jethalal? Is there any news about Mani? What does she do in Bombay? Does Gokibehn take any part in public service? What is your daily programme of work? Vallabhbhai told me that Lakshmidas had fever. Is that true? They have now removed Vallabhbhai from me. He was brought here only for two or three days. That is what a prison is.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12147

55. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 8, 1930

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

Your regards have been conveyed to me. You are in my thoughts every day. As usual, I have the watch before me as a constant reminder. You can write to me. Are you out of the wood? My regards to Grandmother. May God give you peace of mind.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4719. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarjee

56. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 8, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

One should not think too much about one's mental condition. We should keep ourselves absorbed in our appointed work and be cheerful. When impure thoughts trouble the mind, we should drive them out with good thoughts and remain peaceful. If we remain firm in our decisions, we automatically acquire self-confidence.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5251

57. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 8, 1930

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter, but see none from Motibehn.

In regard to degrees, after discussing the matter Kakasaheb and I have both come to the conclusion that there should not be more than three stages and that for each stage the name of the diploma or the degree should be the same for all subjects, whether craft or industry or art or letters or philosophy. At present there are three diplomas or degrees, *Vineet*, *Visharad* and *Pundit*, in the Vidyapith. *Vineet* (Matriculation, Entrance) is one who has acquired general knowledge in a subject. *Visharad* (Graduate) is one who has acquired proficiency in his subject to the extent of being able to teach it to others also. And *Pundit* is one who can do research in the subject and write dissertations and articles concerning it. Having regard to this, we should for the present, award the degree of *Pundit* to no one, we may award the diploma of *Dhanur-Vineet* or of *Dhanur-Visharad*. If you award the degrees or diplomas, see that you do not make them cheap. Appoint examiners and give the degree or the diploma only to those who pass according to a prescribed standard.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3744

58. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 5/9, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

I again got the packet of letters on Wednesday. Read the letters to Manibehn and Bhagwanji. Read out yourself to Manibehn the letter meant for her. If you read both the letters, everything will be clear to you. I need not, therefore, give you any other instructions. I had not thought that you would have to attend to such duties too, but I should have known. It is God's kindness that you are capable of attending to them. The problem of Keshu seems to be difficult. Be careful and carry on as well as you may. What made him break with Navin? The two used to get on very well with each other. You may send me letters received from abroad, if there are any which you think should be sent to me. If a letter is very important, make a copy and send me the letter or the copy. If Dudabhai is eager to have Lakshmi with him and if the latter wishes to go, do not stop her. She is sufficiently obstinate, but watch if you have a different experience of her now.

September 8, 1930

There is barely sufficient cotton for carding to last me up to the 20th. If you have not sent any so far, send some immediately. It will be all right if you send 4 Ib. Since slivers have to be made for both of us, a good deal of cotton is consumed. Kakasaheb has started only recently. He is likely to spin more as time passes. I have already written to you about the sandals.

Read about our weight and the changes in my diet, etc., in the letter to Mirabehn.

Tuesday morning, September 9, 1930

REMOVAL OF UNTOUCHABILITY

This, too, is a new observance, like control of the palate, and may even appear a little strange. But it is of vital importance. Untouchability means pollution by the touch of certain persons by reason of their birth in a particular caste or family. In the words of Akha, it is an excrescence. In the guise of religion, it is always in the way and corrupts religion. None can be born untouchable as all are sparks of one and the same Fire. It is wrong to treat certain human beings as untouchables from birth. It is also wrong to entertain false

scruples about touching a dead body, which should be an object of compassion and respect. It is only out of considerations of health that we bathe after touching a dead body or after an application of oil, or after a shave. A man who does not bathe in such cases may be looked upon as dirty, but surely not as a sinner. A mother may be "untouchable" so long as she has not bathed or washed her hands and feet after cleaning up her child's dirt, but if a child happened to touch her, it would not be polluted by the touch. But Bhangis, Dheds, Chamars and the like are contemptuously looked down upon as untouchables from birth. They may bathe for years with any amount of soap, dress well and wear the marks of Vaishnavas, read the *Gita* every day and follow a learned profession, and yet they remainun-touchables! This is rank irreligion fit only to be destroyed. By treating removal of untouchability as an Ashram observance, we assert our belief that untouchability is not only not a part and parcel of Hinduism, but that it is a plague, which it is the bounden duty of every Hindu to combat. Every Hindu, therefore, who considers it a sin should atone for it by fraternizing with untouchables, associating with them in a spirit of love and service, deeming himself purified by such acts, redressing their grievances, helping them patiently to overcome ignorance and other evils due to the slavery of ages, and inspiring other Hindus to do likewise. When one visualizes the removal of untouchability from this spiritual standpoint, its material and political results sink into insignificance and we befriend the so-called untouchables regardless of such results. Seekers after Truth will never waste a thought on the material consequences of their quest, which is not a matter of policy with them, but something interwoven with the very texture of their lives. Similar is the case of those who have vowed to remove untouchability. When we have realized the supreme importance of this observance, we shall discover that the evil it seeks to combat is not restricted in its operation to the suppressed classes. Evil, no bigger than a mustard seed in the first instance, soon assumes gigantic proportions and in the long run destroys that upon which it settles. Thus this evil has now assailed all departments of life. We practise untouchability against followers of other religions than our own, against those who belong to other sects than our own within the Hindu fold and even against members of our own sect, so much so that, ever busy observing untouchability, we .become a burden on the earth. We have hardly enough time even to look after ourselves,. thanks to the never-ending ablutions and exclusive preparation of food necessitated by false notions of untouchability. While pretending to pray to God, we offer worship not to God but to ourselves. This observance, therefore, is not fulfilled merely by our making friends

with untouchables but by loving all life as our own selves. Removal of untouchability means love for and service of the whole world and thus merges into ahimsa. Removal of untouchability spells the breaking down of barriers between man and man, and between the various orders of beings. We find such barriers erected everywhere in the world; but here we have been mainly concerned with the untouchability which has received religious sanction in India and reduced lakhs and crores of human beings to a state bordering on slavery.

Blessings from
BAPU

PS.

One Kantu Gajiwala is a resident of Surat and lives in Khapatia Chakla. I think he gave me Rs. 5 during the march. I had given instructions to make a khadi-bound diary from the handmade paper which we have and send it to him. Because of my arrest, the matter could not be pursued further. Now get a small diary, of a hundred or more pages, bound by anyone who knows the art and send it to Gajiwala. And write to me when you do so. In any case drop a postcard to him immediately.

BAPU

[PS.]

There are 53 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

59. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI MADHAVJI THAKKAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 10, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I got your letter. As your work increases, your handwriting improves. You should improve it still further. You should not try to give a flourish to the characters. For instance, the sign for the sound "u" should be written thus— é and not thus— ~. If you form the habit of writing each letter of the alphabet as it is printed, your handwriting will appear very beautiful. I wish to see you and all other women perfect in every respect. I do not exaggerate when I say that 1 have put all my hopes in you women. I strongly feel that the ultimate victory of non-violence depends wholly on women.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6799

60. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN

[About *September 10, 1930*][1]

CHI. MOTIBEHN,

I hope you have overcome your grief now. The *Gita* is the medicine for your grief. Read the Gujarati translation every day and read it over and over again. Get Shantu examined by Dr. Haribhai and take the necessary measures about his teeth. Read a little every day.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3738

61. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 11, 1930

CHI. RAMA (JOSHI),

I have your fine letter. I see that Mahalakshmi copies you. There is no difference even in the handwriting of you two. This is good. But, then, does not this increase your responsibility? You should, therefore, go on rising higher in all respects. God has given you the strength to do so. He has now provided even the circumstances in which you can rise as high as you wish to. "Go forward"— that is my prayer and my blessing. I had seen even in Wardha those virtues in Mahalakshmi which you describe.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5324

[1] The source bears this date though not in Gandhiji's hand.

62. LETTER TO ROHINI KANAIYALAL DESAI

September 11, 1930

CHI. ROHINI,

I have your letter. I was very glad to read in Hamidabehn's letter about the courage which you displayed. It is but natural that Kanjibhai's daughter should be so brave. On reading about your courage, I was reminded of a parable in one of the Upanishads. It compares our senses to horses. The human soul is described as the charioteer and that which can control these horses, the senses, is described as a conqueror. That [soul] which lets itself be carried away by the horses is said to be defeated by them. As you could stop that horse by the power of your courage, so you and other young women there ought to ride the senses and control them. If you succeed in doing so we shall live in *Ramarajya*, no matter what the outward circumstances are. Show this to Hamidabehn and explain the idea to her. May God grant you still greater strength and courage. Teach Gujarati to Hamidabehn.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2652

63. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

September 11, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. You must have recovered completely by now. You must observe the rule for the night. Reduce your work during day time, or keep aside your reading, etc., for the time being. If you have as much sleep as you need, you will feel fresher and be able to do the same amount of work in less time. Irrespective of whether this happens, you should let your mind rest between 9 and 4 and lie down to sleep. Start doing this immediately. I should be happy if you wouldn't argue about this. You may argue as much as you like about matters in which there is room for argument, but not on this matter.

Have you cultivated friendship with Kamalabehn Lundy?

Tell Dhurandhar that Prof. Limaye has translated *Anasaktiyoga* and that the translation will be soon published.

'Bheek' in Marathi is *'beek'* in Gujarati.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10234; also C.W. 6682. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

64. LETTER TO NIRMALA DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 11, 1930

CHI. NIRMALA (AUNT),

Your imprisonment is real and ours not so. But it is in your power to get out of your prison, and it is not in our power to get out of ours. You need not get frightened by the bone growth. You should take sun-bath only in the early morning at the time of sunrise. At least that part of the body where there is bone growth should be exposed to the sun's rays. You will benefit more if you expose the whole body. If you eat simple food, you will certainly be able to digest it. Apart from this, do whatever else Haribhai advises.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9456

65. LETTER TO BALBHADRA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 11, 1930

CHI. BALBHADRA (OR BUDDHICHAKRA),

Narandas is full of praise for you. You have done quite a good deal of carding. How nice it would be if you thus worked regularly! Why don't you write to me?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9210

[1] *'Bheek'* (Marathi) means alms; *'beek'* (Gujarati) means fear.

66. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 11, 1930

CHI. LILAVATI (ASAR),

I got your letter. Take some rest now before you resume work. See that your handwriting does not become worse. Compare yours with Radhabehn's. With a little effort, you will be able to improve it. Once it has improved, it will not become worse again even if you write fast.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9565

67. LETTER TO NARAYAN MORESHWAR KHARE

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 11, 1930

CHL. PANDITJI,

'Chi.' does not seem to go well with 'Panditji'. I use this form very freely these days. Sometimes I even tremble when using it. One should be fit to claim to be anybody's father. I frequently examine myself to see if I feel the love and sympathy which a father should feel and am as vigilant as a father should be, and sometimes I tremble as I do so. I can only state truthfully that I sincerely strive to cultivate these, and console myself with that thought. I certainly know that whenever I address anyone as 'Chi.', my responsibility increases to that extent. I hope God will make me worthy of that responsibility.

The early morning processions can produce much strength. I am sure that you can make a big contribution in organizing them properly. Please do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 212. Courtesy: Lakshmibai Khare

68. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 11, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

How is it that there has been no letter from you? You must write every week. Do you write to, and keep yourself in touch with, all the women who are engaged in picketing work outside the Ashram? If you are not doing so, start writing to them. Remember that you are in the position of a mother to many of them. You have no dearth of sons and daughters. We know that all those daughters are doing work which involves danger to their persons. It is but our duty to undertake such work. We may not seek it, but when it comes to us unsought, we should welcome it and pray for God's help to succeed in it. Those women alone who, though outside the Ashram, observe the vows will be said to have succeeded in the struggle.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 41; also C.W. 8757. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

69. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 11, 1930

CHI. MANU (TRIVEDI),

I got your letter. Both of us were relieved. We should be happy, rather than feel sorry, that others of our age do better work than we. "What God, World Teacher and Master, has willed for the day, it is futile to grieve over." We can work only as much as the body which has been given us permits us to do. He who shirks work and does less than what he is capable of has cause to feel ashamed. A person like you has no such cause at all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7763

70. LETTER TO BENARSILAL BAZAJ

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 11, 1930

CHI. BENARSI,

I have your letter. You were arrested and released too ! I am confident that in all that you do you will be calm, truthful and non-violent. I have, therefore, no worry.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 9304. Courtesy: Benarsilal Bazaj

71. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 12, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. Give me details about the work being done at Sarbhon. Where are you staying? Are there any men or is everything managed by women? To which place does the old lady belong? How old is she? What work does she do?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9287

72. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 12, 1930

CHI. RUKMINI,

I have your letter. I was in fact waiting for a letter from you. How is your health now? Didn't Vijapur agree with you? I hope you do not worry at all about Benarsi. He is a careful man. And ultimately it is only God who protects us.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9052

73. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 12, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (DESAI),

I got your letter. I was waiting for one in the hope that it might give me news about Pyarelal. I knew that Pyarelal was here only when I accidentally saw your wire with the jailor. Afterwards, I got a letter from Chhaganlal [Joshi] giving me news about his bad health. Here they tell me that he is all right. I shall know the truth now from your next letter.

Do not neglect your work. Have faith. Faith is required when reason fails you. Isn't that so? Have no hesitation in telling me about anything you fail to do through lethargy or any other cause. Even your writing to me will protect you, for the very thought that you will have to tell me will prompt you to be regular.

What can I do about Ba from here? You yourself should complain to Mithubehn. She certainly cannot act independently. She has gone there to work under the leadership of Mithubehn and ought to submit to it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1803

74. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 12, 1930

CHI. MADHAVDAS,

I read in the letter from the Ashram that you went and visited Ramdas and others. I was glad. How are you? How is Krishna? Has she recovered her health now? Can you two do any work in the present movement? Where do you live?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII

75. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,
September 12, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

I got you letter. I will of course write to you regularly. It will be another matter if I have to stop writing letters altogether. You too may go on writing as you please. By all means eat boiled vegetables instead of raw. When the vegetable for the day is radish, gourd, pumpkin, tomato, etc., make a habit of eating a little of it raw. If you cannot digest it, you may discontinue it.

Make only such changes as suit your body. When you get time, improve your arithmetic. Is there no letter from Krishna at all?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

76. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PARIKH

September 13, 1930

CHI. MANIBEHN (PARIKH),

Please write to me and tell me if you know now the cause of Narahari's bone growth. I trust you keep good health. How are the children? Do they study and learn anything? How do you spend the day? Write to me giving all details. Our being able to write to each other is quite an uncertain matter. Nobody knows when we may have to stop. There are no such signs just now, but after all a prison is a prison. A prisoner has no personal rights.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Mohan's getting jaundice means some error in regard to his food.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5960

77. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 13, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. I have not missed a single post. But it may be that letters are not dispatched from here in time. I hope Jayaprakash has recovered now. How is it you don't get any newspapers there? They get a good many in the Ashram, and can send you some. Mother-in-law must have recovered by now.

I have already informed you about my weight. Both of us are keeping fine? Can you go out for a daily walk there? Do the people also pray daily? How do you spend the day? What is the approximate population of the place? What are Jayaprakash's plans now? Will he be able to earn anything? Does he worry about anything? Even if you write directly to me, most probably I shall get your letters. At present, at any rate, I get such letters. I myself cannot write many letters direct.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3369

78. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

Y. M.,
September 13, 1930

CHI. VIDYAVATI,

I shall not use the formal '*aap*' in addressing you. But can love be expressed through words? Love is related to the heart and can be recognized through the heart. When words come from the heart, they do have some meaning. Tara's[1] is a sad story. If Tara is firm, if she has humility, courage and tolerance, she can leave the house of her in-laws and live with you in the Ashram. You alone can know if you can give her refuge. Through humility, Tara will be able to win over her

[1] Addressee's daughter

relatives in the end. That is the certain result of satyagraha. For this result, there should be sincere love even for the oppressor. Just as fire is always extinguished by water, anger is also calmed down by love.

How is your health? How is Laxmi Devi? We should have known about her. How is Jang Bahadur?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have just seen Laxmi Devi's handwriting. My blessings to her.

RANI VIDYA DEVI
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
HARDOI

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

79. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 14, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

Your Coimbatore letter before me. It is remarkable how well you have kept on the whole in the midst of the tremendous rush. It is a sign of mental calm I expect.

Keshu did offer to send me a bamboo charkha. I would not let him. The fault was mine in that I did not master the detailed working of it when there was ample opportunity for so doing. I am now doing penance by mastering it by making mistakes. I see that the *mal* and its proper adjustment have much to do both with speed and efficient working. I am getting on. I am by no means despondent. The extraordinary fatigue is gone. There need be no anxiety therefore about the wheel. Kaka is at your wheel. He can't yet get more than 80 rounds per hour.

I am sorry about Mrs. Asher's miscarriage. The chief thing they should do is to impose restraint upon their carnal desires for at least three years if they expect a full-grown healthy baby and Mrs. Asher is to become a strong and healthy mother. To this end they should live

separately if need be. Of course this restraint is in addition to simple diet, open-air life and plenty of gentle exercise. It would do her a world of good if she would take Kuhne baths both hip and sitz I am sure that if she follows the course for three years and has patience she will be a new woman. You may pass this on to Mrs. Asher if you like.

My walks must still be confined. But I am keeping quite well. The wheel and thinking about it make the time fly. And at the end of the day I get good sleep which to me means more than food. I have finished translating the 65th *bhajan*. But there is yet a long distance to cover. I rarely get time to do more than one and I have not yet failed to do one per day. Though therefore the progress is steady, it is undoubtedly slow.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5411. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9645

80. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

Y. M.,
September 14, 1930

MY DEAR ANAND,

I am glad you are feeling well in both body and mind. The greater your moral progress the greater will be Father's reconciliation and happiness. The only way to serve elders and for that matter anybody else is to do the right thing without ostentation and never to feel irritated. I know this is more easily said than done. But it has got to be done.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I am quite well.

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

81. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 14, 1930

CHI. MANI (PATEL),

I write this as you wanted me to write. But goodness knows if it will reach its destination. They allowed me to send your letter to me for Father to read. Write if you get the necessary permission. Make full use of the enforced rest you have got.[1] That too I consider a part of our service. Take good care of your health. Draw up a regularprogramme of work. Let me know what food you get.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 74

82. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[*September 14,*][2] *1930*

I smell mental violence even from here. People have not much appreciated non-violence as a religious principle, but even the fact that they have adopted it as a policy is evidence of a great change. From this they will one day appreciate it as a religious principle. If we could make ourselves living embodiments of non-violence, we would, when the atmosphere was unfavourable to it, be twice as vigilant and do twice as much *tapashcharya* as when the atmosphere might be favourable.

We don't pay much attention to the danger concerning women which you mention, since we always condone men's misdeeds. It is good indeed that women have come out. About those who come out successful from the test, we will say that they have really observed the Ashram vows and have understood the meaning of dharma. If any woman falls despite her striving, she will strive again and rise. If a woman had been secretly nursing gross desires and, having an opportunity now, gratifies them, we should know that she did not

[1] The addressee was put in the Arthur Road Prison, Bombay.

[2] *Vide* the following item. The year has been supplied by the addressee.

really observe the vows and that her hypocrisy has been exposed. We should welcome that too.

Have no fear, therefore, and don't worry on their account. Let each of us take care of himself or herself. It is for God to look after all. If even a few of us remain pure, they will save those who stray from the path. Personally I am confident that a good many of us will remain pure. I don't like the present state of affairs in which the two classes have become a mixed crowd. But it is inevitable.

So long as I can write with self-respect, my effort through letters will continue. I strive through prayers too; no one can prevent me from doing that.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 204-5

83. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 14/16, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I follow your hint concerning the women. Read my letter to Chhaganlal Joshi. You or Gangabehn should keep in correspondence with the women who have settled down for work in different places outside the Ashram. If it seems necessary and if she can find time, Gangabehn should even pay visits to some of those places. Lapses will occur in some of them, but we need not be afraid about them. We should remain, and see that others, too, remain, sufficiently vigilant and leave the result to God. What indeed is our *tapashcharya* in comparison to the degree of self-control we expect from and wish to see in others? Whatever that is, we wish to follow no other path. We wish to uphold the fullest freedom for women. It does not matter if we miss the path on our way, if we stumble, are pricked by thorns or fall down. I gave the letter on Tuesday as usual, but it must have been posted late by the office here either deliberately or through negligence. I have not complained. You should, of course, write to me whenever you do not get the letters in time. It is good that Punjabhai has returned. Have you appointed anyone from the Ashram

to look after him? I am writing to Manibhai[1] about the money for honouring the memory of the poet[2] which is lying with Revashankerbhai.

Tell Mrs. Zaulinger that I am awaiting her reply. She may write to me anything she wishes to without any hesitation. You have acted rightly in regard to Kamalabehn Lundy. For the present it is best that she should say or write nothing. There is plenty of silent service she can do. Balbhadra has done fine work indeed in carding. This shows that, if we refuse to regard a person as too dull-minded for a particular thing and go on encouraging him, the result is bound to be good.

I am getting on all right just now. As usual I take milk and curds. Instead of raisins and dates, I eat daily seven or eight tomatoes, four or five big-sized, baked sweet potatoes and about six spoons of cabbage or any other vegetable that is available. This helps me in passing stools. I drink at 7.30 in the morning the juice of one lemon with hot water and salt. In the afternoon, I take the juice of one lemon with soda bicarb. If this regimen suits me, it will solve the problem of constipation and effect considerable economy. I get the vegetables from what grows in the garden here. If we count the expenditure, I don't. think it exceeds two annas daily, whereas raisins and dates probably cost every day not less than six annas. Those who suffer from constipation may try this diet. I cannot say that it will benefit all. About myself, too, I cannot yet say that the good effect will last. If this experiment is followed, any other food should be avoided. The baked sweet potatoes should be eaten by themselves and chewed well. They should not be dipped in milk or curds. Probably it will do no harm if one eats the skin. I do eat some. Because of my delicate stomach I am afraid to eat all. Anybody else who has a similar stomach and who tries this experiment should also avoid the skin. I would be really happy if you could find my sandals. Kusum is bound to know about them. She may have entrusted them to Premabehn. If you have not yet sent the cotton send it even by post in the last resort. Both the belts, one of six strings and the other of eight strings, were found to be too thin. They come off the pulley and go on revolving without

[1] Manibhai Revashanker Zaveri
[2] Rajchandra

moving the latter. Do not send me new ones in their place. Some are ready with me and I will somehow manage to make others. I asked you to let me know a simpler method because such a method would save my time.

September 15, 1930

My silence ended a little while ago and Kakasaheb read out to me Ramdas's letter to him. Ramdas says in it that he wrote a letter to me which I have not received. I was very happy that Ramdas gave in the letter to Kakasaheb detailed information about his health and studies. When he is released from jail, we shall be able to write to each other. I shall then get any letter written by him if I can keep up this correspondence. I send you the letters in cloth-lined envelopes now. I have with me only the envelopes received from you. I retain their size when returning them, so that you may be able to use them again. Otherwise I could have made them smaller and used them.

Tuesday morning, September 16, 1930

I read in papers about Ba having been harassed in Surat by the police. Is there any truth in the report?

The law, that to live man must work, first came home to me upon reading Tolstoy's writings on bread labour. But even before that I had begun to pay homage to it after reading Ruskin's *Unto This Last.* The phrase *'jatmahenat'* is a translation of the English expression 'bread labour'. Literally it means labour for *roti.* The divine law that man must earn his bread by labouring with his own hands was first stressed, not by Tolstoy but by an obscure Russian writer named T. M. Bondoref. Tolstoy took it from him and gave it wider publicity when he accepted it. In my view, the same principle has been set forth in Chapter III of the *Gita* where we are told that he who eats without offering sacrifice eats stolen food. Sacrifice here can only mean bread labour. Be that as it may, that verse is the origin of our observance.

Reason, too, leads us to an identical conclusion. How can a man who does not do body labour have the right to eat? "In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat thy bread," says the Bible. A millionaire cannot carry on for long, and will soon get tired of his life, if he rolls in his bed all day long and is even helped to his food. He, therefore, induces hunger by exercise and helps himself to the food he eats. If everyone, whether rich or poor, has thus to take exercise in some

shape or form, why should it not assume the form of productive labour, i.e., bread labour? No one asks the cultivator to inhale fresh air, or to use his muscles. And more than nine-tenths of humanity lives by tilling the soil. How much happier, healthier and more peaceful would the world become if the remaining tenth followed the example of the overwhelming majority at least to the extent of labouring enough for their food. And many hardships connected with agriculture would be easily redressed if such people took a hand in it. Again, invidious distinctions of rank would be abolished if everyone without exception acknowledged the obligation of bread labour. At present these distinctions have invaded even the varna system in which there was not a trace of it originally. There is a world-wide conflict between capital and labour, and the poor envy the rich. If all worked for their bread, distinctions of rank would be obliterated; the rich would still be there, but they would deem themselves only trustees of their property and would use it mainly in the public interest. Bread labour is a veritable blessing to one who would observe non-violence, worship Truth and make the observance of *brahmacharya* a natural act. This labour can truly be related to agriculture alone. But at present at any rate everybody is not in a position to take to it. A person can, therefore, spin or weave, or take up carpentry or smithery, instead of tilling the soil, always regarding agriculture, however, to be the ideal. Everyone must be his own scavenger. Evacuation is as necessary as eating; and the best thing would be for everyone to dispose of his own waste. If this is impossible, each family should see to its own scavenging. I have felt for years that there must be something radically wrong where scavenging has been made the concern of a separate class in society. We have no historical record of the man who first assigned the lowest status to this essential sanitary service. Whoever he was, he did us no good. We should, from our very childhood, have the idea impressed upon our minds that we are all scavengers, and the easiest way of doing so is for everyone who has realized this to commence bread labour as a scavenger. Scavenging, thus intelligently taken up, will help one to understand religion in a different and truer light. If children, the old and those disabled by illness do not do bread labour, that should not be regarded as violation of the law of bread labour.

The child is, as it were, included in the mother. If nature's laws were not violated, the old would not be disabled and there would be no disease.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Khurshedbehn that, if she requires money, she should have no hesitation in obtaining it from the Ashram. If she got it from any other source, it would pain me.

There are 55 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

84. LETTER TO PATRICK QUINN

September 18, 1930

DEAR MR. QUINN,

We both waited for you last evening in accordance with your message.

(1) Please send yesterday's *Chronicle*.

(2) Could you not arrange to have it sent at the regular hour daily?

(3) Please send also the Ashram post. It was due yesterday.

(4) I expect a parcel from the Ashram containing sandals and cotton.

(5) Any other parcels of books and magazines. I have of [*sic*] a pamphlet called *Caesar or Christ* and there should be *Hindu* of Madras.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Pt. III, p. 287

85. LETTER TO GULAM RASOOL QURESHI

September 18, 1930

CHI. QURESHI,

I got your letter. You did well in paying a visit to Bombay. Sultana would never come near me when I was there. No wonder she remembers me now. Whenever she saw me, she would run away. Since Manilal is there with Imam Saheb to look after him, I am perfectly easy in my mind about him. Amina's courage is boundless. Though I don't mind her having given her name as a volunteer, how will she be able to keep the children in jail with her if she is imprisoned? It would be all right if she did whatever she could remaining at home. It is enough that she is ready to go to jail if it becomes necessary.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6652

86. LETTER TO KAMALA NEVATIA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 18, 1930

CHI. KAMALA (RAMESH WARDAS),

I got a letter from you at last. So you understood the suggestion in my letter that you should write to me. Don't be lazy in future. How is your health? Write to me from time to time. If you do so, even that will help you to shake off your laziness. Did you meet Kikibehn[1], Gangabehn[2] and others in Karachi?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3042

[1] J. B. Kripalani's sister
[2] A. T. Gidwani's wife

87. LETTER TO RALIATBEHN VRINDAVANDAS

September 18, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

Mani tells me in her letter that you sometimes think about me. It is but natural that you should. On my part, I think about you quite often. I see your face in my mind and remember Narottamdas, for your face resembles his. May God give you and Mother peace of mind.

Jai Shrikrishna from

MOHANDAS

SMT. GOKIBEHN
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9810

88. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Y. M.,
September 18, 1930

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

If I were free you would be the first visitor I would be seeing in the morning tomorrow[1]. It has been many days since I last saw your handwriting. Do keep writing to me. Is your health all right? Tell Nirmalabehn that I have not forgotten her. Her innocent face often swims in my ken. What is Indu doing?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G. N. 11553

[1] Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram calendar fell on September 19.

89. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

September 18, 1930

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS (DHULIA),

Your letter. As you have survived the snake-bite, God will certainly exact more service from you. What treatment did you have? Was the snake poisonous? God will give you peace. Be certain that Ramanama is the *kalpadruma*[1] for us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 175

90. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

September 20, 1930

CHI. SHARDA (BABU),

You seem to have grown really wise. From now on, so long as I receive your letters, you will receive my letters too. So, you have now become a store-keeperess[2]. You must become very strong in body. Punjabhai is older than I am but he considers me his elder. Even if a nephew is older than his uncle, it is the custom, is it not, that only the uncle can bless the nephew. Do you understand me now?

If Anandi is missing me, all of you must keep her in good cheer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9890. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] A mythical tree which grants all wishes

[2] Gandhiji uses an arbitrary feminine form in Gujarati.

91. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

September 20, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I got your long letter.

Since your health is good, I need make no suggestion.

Do you cultivate contacts with those two European ladies? If you have not been doing so, do so now.

At present it seems that God has given over your whole life to me. This will remain true till the end.[1]

To which part of the country does Sushila belong who sends me her good wishes in English? The name is Gujarati or Marathi. It is certainly not Tamil. If she is a Tamil, she may be excused. If not, she should send her good wishes in her mother tongue.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10235; also C.W. 6683. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

92. LETTER TO LAKSHMIBEHN KHARE

YERAVDA MANDIR,

September 20, 1930

CHI. LAKSHMIBEHN (KHARE),

Your joining the picketing will prove a shield for the other women. As these are all novel experiences some are likely to get hurt. Still we should not retrace our steps. You have inexhaustible strength. Put it to good use and bring credit to yourself as well as to the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati: C.W. 276. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn Khare

[1] On the occasion of Gandhiji's birthday the addressee had offered to dedicate her life to him.

93. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
September 21, 1930

DEAR MAJOR MARTIN,

I must now unburden myself of my second difficulty. I do not doubt a word of what you have told me about the charges of alleged ill-treatment in this prison. Yet I cannot dispel from my mind all the reports that have appeared in the Press. The writers could not have deliberately lied about everything. I am sure that some of the statements are gross exaggerations. I hope that most are, and I should like to believe that all are false. But my mind is disturbed. There may be things you do not know; there must be things which you look at from one angle and the prisoners concerned from another.

My duty in the circumstances seems to be plain. I must ask to be allowed to see them occasionally, if I may not be permitted to live with them. I have told you I desire no privileges. What comforts are allowed to me may be taken away from me. If I am isolated for the sake of the comforts, they mean little to me, whereas isolation means everything to me. I desire no comforts that may not be allowed to the other prisoners suffering from the same physical disabilities as I. I do not believe in classification which, in my opinion, is degrading. If I permit myself comforts which the other prisoners like me do not enjoy, I do so because of my physical needs[1]. But I would fain sacrifice health if it has to be purchased by the sacrifice of the privilege of serving my companions, many of whom I know and none of whom I consider to be in any way inferior to me.

I was able to bear the separation so long as I was under the impression that all was well. But the knowledge that young Ratilal is no more, that Pyarelal who is like a son to me has been suffering, that the elderly Narsinhabhai was near death's door and the persistent complaints in the Press have awakened me to a sense of my duty, viz., that I should strive to the utmost of my ability to establish touch with them.

[1] From the draft available in S.N. 19980. In the source the word is obli-terated.

I know that it is not in your or the I. G. P.'s power to grant me the permission requested. I would therefore ask you please to place this letter before the Government and secure an early reply. I am aware as prisoner I have no rights and no choice as to the disposal of my body. But I know also that the upkeep of my body requires my co-operation. I should no longer be interested [in] the preservation of a body that cannot be used for the service that the dweller within yearns after. I am human. Even as a prisoner I cannot divest myself of the human in me.

I need not give the assurance, perhaps you will be able to give it, if any be required, that my presence among my companions will not be used to subvert discipline but on the contrary, it is highly likely to promote it. The moral code of a civil resister requires him willingly to submit to all prison discipline that is not in conflict with self-respect.

Lastly I would like to draw the Government's attention to the fact that when a somewhat similar incident occurred in 1923 in this very prison, I was allowed to see two prisoners with the result that what promised to be a grave tragedy was averted.[1] The present Inspector General of Police is aware of the facts of the case.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3852; also Bombay Secret Abstract, 750(5)/A, p. 207

94. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

September 21, 1930

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your letter. If you do not become impatient, you are bound to get the strength to put your ideals into practice. As we get indigestion if we start eating all at once, so also we fail in our attempt if we try to put anything in practice without first judging our capacity and this gives rise to despair. If we ourselves cannot judge our capacity we should follow the advice of some person in whose judgment we have faith and who has given the advice after considering our capacity. It will be enough if, after pouring out your heart before Gangabehn, you do what she asks you to do.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9566

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravada", 12-2-1923.

95. LETTER TO AMINA QURESHI

September 21, 1930

CHI. AMINA,

I got your letter. Many kisses to Mian Abdul Majid. As for Sultana, she would not even let me touch her. How is your health now? Take proper care about food.

Have you kept up your study of Urdu?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6658

96. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 21, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your letter. God has given us wings, no doubt, but we don't use them. If we forget the body, can't we fly as if we had wings? We are where our mind is. Don't we sometimes feel that while our body is in one place, our mind is in another? Where is the mind of a person who is dead? I know it is easy to say this, but difficult to live in that spirit. But, as you had mentioned wings, I have poured out this wisdom. You may follow it only to the extent that you can.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9288

97. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 21, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

It is rather strange that you don't get my letters. I am writing to Narandas about this. I have not let a single week pass without writing to you. I keep good health. The weight is 103. Instead of raisins, I eat gourd or some other vegetable. Milk and curds remain of course. Kakasaheb, too, is in good health. He gains one pound every week. Don't worry about us at all. How is Mrityunjaya?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Do you go out for a daily walk there?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3371

98. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

September 21, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (DESAI),

I got your letter. I hear that you yourself are ill. How is that? If there are mosquitoes, you should ignore what others say and use a mosquito-net. If you cannot fix one, you may rub kerosene [on your body]. I cannot straightway request the authorities to keep Pyarelal with me. I had not made such a request even for Kaka. It is the authorities who transferred him. I am, however, trying to see Pyarelal. I made a request to be permitted to see him as soon as I heard that he was suffering from diarrhoea. He is better now. You should remember that I do not know who are lodged in this jail. You should assume that I am confined in a cage. You should have written to me as soon as you knew.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1804

99. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI PANDYA

September 21, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I read your letter. Overcome your resentment of Manibehn. Forget that she is your wife. Regard her as one of the countless women. Also forget the children that are with her. Regard them as not yours. Since you are susceptible to carnal urge, you should understand that you have no right to [accept] service from Manibehn even as a sister. You should not call to mind whom you have to forget; leave, therefore, all worry on her account and shake the burden off your mind. Show this letter to Gangabehn who will help you to act on this. Give up jaggery. I would recommend milk even if you could take only half a seer of it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 324. Courtesy: Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

100. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

September 21, 1930

CHI. MANU,

Both of us feel easy in mind now that you have calmed down. When a student has grown up and can think for himself, only that which he is persuaded to do willingly will bear fruit. How much time did you take to spin 1,000 rounds? What was the count of the yarn? What was its strength and degree of evenness? Write to me and give me these details.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7764

101. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

September 21, 1930

CHI. JANAKIBEHN,

You seem to be very clever. You try to evade writing to me under one pretext or another. And if from making speeches you become a dictator; a person like me would have to live in constant fear of you. Jamnalal seems to have established his business well in Nasik. I had thought he would. No one can escape him. Formerly Madu used to write to me, but now she has become lethargic like you. If she remains as lethargic as she is, I shall have to issue an order to separate her from you. How is her health now? Is Om as mischievous as ever?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 72

102. LETTER TO SATYADEVI GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 21, 1930

CHI. SATYADEVI,

I have your letter. You must get your Gujarati corrected by someone. Are you keeping up the drawing? Don't you find any improvement now and then? Is Dharmakumar[1] naughty?[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Virat Vatsalata, p. 34

[1] Younger brother of the addressee
[2] The original was in Gujarati.

103. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

September 21, 1930

CHI. MRIDU,

I was happy to read your letter containing your account of the events. I have not reproached you at all. What right have I to reproach you from here? I have only warned you. A volunteer, man or woman, who is not cautious, gets defeated. Knowing your nature, I merely warned you. Those whose means are truth and non-violence, have as their guide God who is known as Truth. That is the gist of the last stanza of the last chapter of the *Gita.* Adhering to it as if clinging to a tree, leap as far as you can. god will protect you.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11177. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

104. LETTER TO BHARATI SARABHAI

September 21, 1930

CHI. BHARATI[1],

I was very happy to have your letter written in such a beautiful hand. You have a perfect right to write to me. I should like it very much if you wrote to all your brothers and sisters. My circle of young friends is vast and I am constantly adding to it. Some jealous young men in order to denigrate the old, have made fun of them, treating them as children. If the old really become as innocent as children, the denigration will be turned into praise. I cherish the hope of getting such a certificate and so continue to enlarge my circle of young friends. All you brothers and sisters should join that circle and keep writing to me.

Your handwriting is good. You must devote a little more attention to **l] .k** and **r**.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11274. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

[1] Daughter of Ambalal Sarabhai

105. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

September 21, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

I have your letter. It is well that you have sought our Kamalabehn's[1] company. Try to understand her. Do learn from her the art of nursing. You may if you wish add salt to the curd, but do not forget that adding salt only changes the sour taste of curd, it does not neutralize the acidity. I therefore suggest that when the curd tastes sour you should add soda to it. Soda neutralizes the acid in the curd. The acid combines with the soda and evaporatesin the form of carbolic acid gas, leaving the curd sweet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta papers. courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

106. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

September 22, 1930

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

Let me point out a flaw in your calculation. If you "return the compliment", you should find out the love notes I send every week. So if love may be measured arithmetically your notes must be as many times long as all my notes put together. But thank God! Love ignores and falsifies both arithmetic and geometry. Yes, Kamalabehn is doing very well indeed.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10091

[1] Kamalabehn Lundy

107. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 22, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

I have your Calcutta letter. You are having a variety of experiences[1]. Seekers after Truth turn every one of these to good account. I hope the little illness you had was but a passing thing and that you were yourself again quickly. I hope you had the rest you wanted. I am daily making slight improvements in the travelling wheel and it gives me less and less trouble. It is wonderful what a number ofdetails you have to attend to when you have not a perfected machine but a contrivance to help the cunning of your hands. But the greater the mastery over the wheel, the greater is the pleasure of spinning and the less the fatigue. Kaka is still struggling with your wheel. He has much past neglect to make up for. He says, he has becomea spinner only here. Before, he was spinning but he was no spinner. You know what I mean. A man can make a table without being a cabinet-maker. The change to vegetables persists. There is no setback nor is there visible further progress. I want to give this experiment a full trial. Dr. Mehta sent word that perhaps sweet potatoes might induce constipation. I have therefore dropped them today. Tomatoes are a daily adjunct and a green vegetable.

You will give my love to friends wherever you are.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5412. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9646

[1] On her arrival at Howrah Mirabehn was forbidden from joining a women's procession which was to take her round the city. Nevertheless she proceeded to join the procession which was lathi-charged. She was taken to a police station and later allowed to leave. Some university students who shouted at the police for being rough with the women were mercilessly beaten. The incidents which led to a hartal the next day are described, in some detail by Mirabehn in her autobiography *The Spirit's Pilgrimage*, pp. 115-7.

108. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

September 22, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

When I don't get a letter from you, I cannot help feeling that something is wrong. Why should you feel depressed? Whenever you feel so, you should immediately pass on your depression to me. Whatever your age, from the very first day that I met you I have regarded you as a dear daughter. I can be both a father and a mother. You should, therefore, immediately let me share your depression and then be at peace.

If you feel like coming to see Kaka, take the plunge some time.

. . . behn[1] is certainly guilty of one mistake, that she went to test Bhagwanji. Nevertheless, as long as she is eager to remain in the Ashram and struggle for self-improvement, we should let her remain. Our experiments are certainly dangerous. God will see us through them all, if we have but faith in Him.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G. S. Gangabehnne, pp. 41-2; also C.W. 8758. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

109. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 22, 1930

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

I have your letter. You should write a clear hand. Your letters are well formed but not clear. They will not improve later if you do not take the trouble now. By all means go to Ajmer. Do write regularly from there too. Do not neglect your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirwad, p. 277

[1] The name has been omitted.

110. LETTER TO NARAYAN MORESHWAR KHARE

September 22, 1930

CHI. PANDITJI,

It is with a little effort that I can bring myself to put 'Chi.' before your name. I do feel for you the love which 'Chi.' would suggest, but I may not have always shown it outwardly. I got your letter. Learn carding quickly. As for spinning, set apart, if possible, a fixed time for it. The absence of love of khadi which you notice around you is but a reflection of some deficiency in us. We are the centre of the khadi movement. Just as if the sun shines with less heat the temperature around is bound to go down, so also if we "shine with less heat", that is, if we are lukewarm ourselves about khadi, what wonder that there should be a lack of warmth outside? But love is not acquired from outside; it must spring from within. If we strive for such love to spring from within us, good results are bound to follow. It was very good indeed that Rambhau[1] went to Almora.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 213. Courtesy: Lakshmibai Khare

111. LETTER TO ABBAS

YERAVDA MANDIR,

September 22, 1930

CHI. ABBAS,

I got your letter. What you have said about the *mal* is clear enough, but I think I shall understand it fully only when I read the letter a second time. I have preserved the letter. Describe to me your experiences in jail. What did you read, how much did you spin and card and in what spirit did you observe the prison rules? How was your health? If you have any views to express about the method of carding which Mathuradasbhai is persuading people to adopt, please do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6303

[1] Addressee's son

112. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Silence Day [*September*][1] *22, 1930*

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

I got your letter. Your son-in-law is released from earthly bonds. We have taught ourselves to regard Death as a friend. What would we have done if there were no Death?

You can bring into the Ashram as many children as you wish.

I understand what you say about Kaku. Everyone will get an opportunity.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 38; also C.W. 8750. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

113. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

September 22, 1930

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

On the 18th I had a letter ready for Behn. On the 19th I got a wire signed by you three. These days I am taken up by the idea of a book on spinning. Many problems come up which a book should help us to solve. I shall write more about this if you feel that my suggestion can be carried out.

Do keep writing to me. I do not know how long the present arrangement of writing and receiving letters will last. how is your health?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G. N. 11554

[1] The source gives the date as "22nd Monday '30". In 1930 Monday fell on 22nd in September and December. This letter, however, appears to belong to September; *vide* letters to Gangabehn Vaidya, 22-9-1930.

114. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 21/23, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

Where is Kamala Gandhi at present? I feel worried about her because I have had no letter from her for a long time. Where is Haridas? What is he doing? Prabhavati complains, in her letters of the last two weeks, that she gets no letters from me. I have been writing to her regularly. Has she given her correct address to you? The name of the place is Sitaldiara. As regards Harilal Desai, read the letter I have written to him. He is likely to be an asset to us. Pay him between Rs. 60 and Rs. 65 for his family and Rs. 40 for his own expenses. In all, the amount may come to Rs. 100 a month. As for the training, it will be best to adopt the method I have suggested. During the time that he is in the Ashram, I think his expenses will be less. They will, I believe, go up to Rs. 40 when he goes outside the Ashram for studying. Explain further details and make the position clear as you may think fit. Is my suggestion all right? I suppose Valjibhai knows all this.

If Giriraj does not recover his calm there, I think it would be best to let him go to Wardha. However, do what you think proper.

Read the letter to Nanibehn (Budhabhai's). Read the letter to Budhabhai, too, and, if Nanibehn agrees, make the arrangements suggested by him. If, however, she feels hurt, do not interfere. Read the letter to Manibehn before you give it to her to read. Let Gangabehn, too, read it. And also read the letter to Zainu. If he does not understand the position even after this explanation, remember that he is a guest and tolerate his absence. Read the letter to Bhagwanji, too. I think the only medicine for him is the one I have suggested. You have done quite right in sending Balkrishna to Vinoba. You also did well in offering to send others.

It fills me with great joy to know that the boys and girls have taken charge of the prayers. And, moreover, no light is required! My effort to memorize [the *Gita* verses] is in abeyance for the time being. I simply do not get the necessary time. What work can a prisoner have to keep him so busy? But that is how it is. I have to be careful about every minute. I read a little by snatching a few minutes from other work. I agree with your opinion about mixed picketing. Read the letter to Joshi. I got the cotton and the leather, and Kakasaheb his

sandals. I got mine repaired and they should now last me for at least two or three months. I accept your *namaskars* on your birthday. May God strengthen your soul and grant you a long life.

Tuesday morning, September 23, 1930

EQUALITY OF RELIGIONS. This is the new name we have given to the Ashram observance which we know as 'Tolerance'. '*Sahishnuta*' is a translation of the English word 'Tolerance'. I did not like that word, but could not think of a better one. Kakasaheb, too, did not like that word. He suggested 'Respect for all religions'. I didn't like that phrase either. Tolerance may imply a gratuitous assumption of the inferiority of other faiths to one's own and respect suggests a sense of patronizing whereas ahimsa teaches us to entertain the same respect for the religious faiths of others as we accord to our own, thus admitting the imperfection of the latter. This admission will be readily made by a seeker of Truth, who follows the law of Love. If we had attained the full vision of Truth, we would no longer be mere seekers, but would have become one with God, for Truth is God. But being only seekers, we prosecute our quest, and are conscious of our imperfection. And if we are imperfect ourselves, religion as conceived by us must also be imperfect. We have not realized religion in its perfection, even as we have not realized God. Religion of our conception, being thus imperfect, is always subject to a process of evolution and re-interpretation. Progress towards Truth, towards God, is possible only because of such evolution. And if all faiths outlined by men are imperfect, the question of comparative merit does not arise. All faiths constitute a revelation of Truth, but all are imperfect and liable to error. Reverence for other faiths need not blind us to their faults. We must be keenly alive to the defects of our own faith also, yet not leave it on that account, but try to overcome those defects. Looking at all religions with an equal eye, we would not only not hesitate, but would think it our duty, to blend into our faith every acceptable feature of other faiths.

The question then arises: why should there be so many different faiths? The soul is one, but the bodies which she animates are many. We cannot reduce the number of bodies; yet we recognize the unity of the soul. Even as a tree has a single trunk, but many branches and leaves, so is there one true and perfect Religion, but it becomes many as it passes through the human medium.

All religions are divinely inspired, but they are imperfect because they are products of the human mind and taught by human beings. The one Religion is beyond all speech. Imperfect men put it into such language as they can command and their words are interpreted by other men equally imperfect. Whose interpretation is to be held to be the right one? Everybody is right from his own standpoint, but it is not impossible that everybody may be wrong. Hence the necessity for tolerance, which does not mean indifference towards one's own faith, but a more intelligent and purer love for it. Tolerance gives us spiritual insight, which is as far from fanaticism as the north pole is from the south. True knowledge of religion breaks down the barriers between faith and faith. Cultivation of tolerance for other faiths will impart to us a truer understanding of our own.

Tolerance obviously does not disturb the distinction between right and wrong, or good and evil. The reference here throughout is naturally to the principal faiths of the world. They are all based on common fundamentals. They have all produced great saints. There is some difference between tolerance towards other religions and tolerance towards their followers. We should have equal regard for all human beings—for the wicked as for the saintly, for the impious as for the pious—but we should never tolerate irreligion.

This idea may need elaboration. If you do not follow it easily, ask me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

If you have not followed the discourse fully, it would be best not to translate it. I will certainly try myself to translate it.

There are 86 letters today.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

115. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

September 23, 1930

BHAISHRI VALJI,

You must be aware that formerly I used to write dates according to our calendar. Later I realized that this insistence was wrong. Everywhere outside India they use dates [according to the Gregorian

calendar]. We must recognize this fact. Besides there is no single calendar accepted throughout India. Different regions follow different calendars. Surely we are not going to reject everything foreign. There are other arguments too. But this would do for the present. Let me know what you think is the right thing to do. What are your activities just now?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7407. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

116. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Tuesday [*September 23, 1930*][1]

CHI. MOTIBEHN,

Here's a short reply to your long letter. Instead of brooding over the past, we should think of what lies ahead of us. Look upon all the inmates of the Ashram as Meghji and shower sweet love on them.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3741

117. LETTER TO VINOD KUMAR

Y. M.,
September 24, 1930

CHI. VINOD KUMAR,

I got your letter. congratulations to the Sena. How old are you? You have done well in adopting Madalasa as your sister. She is a very good and simple-hearted girl. I like your decision to observe *brahmcharya*. Simple food is very essential for that. But it is equally important to cultivate simplicity in everything else. You should never let impure thoughts enter your mind. For that you must always think good thoughts and try to live according to them. He whose mind and

[1] The original letter has a remark in a hand other than Gandhiji's, "About 25-9-1930". The nearest Tuesday was on this date.

body are engaged in good thoughts and useful work will never have impure thoughts. To achieve this it is necessary constantly to think of God.

Your must improve your handwriting.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10618. Courtesy: Madalasa Shrimannarayan

118. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

September 26, 1930

MY DEAR MATHEW,

The things you write about are ultimately decided by faith. Reason can take us only a little distance. Man is a person, God is not in the same sense. Man sins because he has the sense of right and wrong. Our difficulty arises through our effort to measure God by our little selves. And He eludes all measure.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1553

119. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

September 26, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (DESAI),

I got your letter. I wrote to you about Pyarelal in my last letter. I have not yet been able to see him, but I can get news about him now. I shall of course be able to see him. Whether he will be kept with me rests on God's will. In any case, we shall meet when I am released and he will live with me then. But who knows what the future holds? Kakasaheb will be released at the end of November. I suppose Pyarelal's term will also have expired by then. At last, he now finds support in the *Gita* and the *Ramayana* and I feel greatly relieved. I could not understand why they did not help him till now. You

yourself admit that you can be safe only if you write to me. Well, then, give me full details whenever you write.

I did not ask for my old pair of sandals. There was a new pair about which you seem to have forgotten. But at present I carry on with the one I have.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1805

120. LETTER TO PANNALAL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 27, 1930

CHI. PANNALAL,

I have your letter. I hope you know that some persons in Wardha can spin on the *takli* 200 rounds an hour. I was amazed to read this. Write to someone in Wardha and find out how one may acquire such speed. Chhotelal did give me the details.

Don't let despair come near you. It means lack of faith in God. Faith in God means hope. How is your health?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3105

121. LETTER TO YUKTI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 27, 1930

CHI. YUKTI,

Why did you write in pencil? As far as possible, children should not use a pencil. Write to me regularly now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

122. LETTER TO VINODBALA

September 27, 1930

CHI. VINODBALA,

Why do you suppose that, because you do not write to me, I don't think about you? Nor should you believe that I don't think about those to whom I do not write. I think about many such persons every day. Your letter was very good. I had sent to the Ashram a translation of a poem by Ramdas Swami about handwriting. If you have not read it get it from there and read it. Write to me regularly now. And be a very good girl.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Give my blessings to Mother. Has she now recovered peace of mind?

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

123. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,

September 27, 1930

CHI. MANI (PATEL),

You ask me to write to you every week. But will the prison authorities allow you so many letters? I also doubt whether you will be able to write to me. Preserve your health. Make good use of every minute and keep a record of your work.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 74

124. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

YERVADA MANDIR,
September 27, 1930

CHI. LILAVATI (ASAR),

I have your letter. I think it best for you that till you have sufficiently recovered you should remain in the Ashram and serve there. If Khurshedbehn calls you, Narandas will not stop you from going. A volunteer should be happy to work anywhere, doing any work she is asked to do. Surely, you have not remained behind in the Ashram because you wanted it or because you were lazy? Moreover, what is the Ashram if not a place of service?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9567

125. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PARIKH

September 27, 1930

CHI. MANIBEHN,

Narahari and Ramniklal seem to be flourishing in jail. How did Mohan get the fever? Do you keep a proper check on what he eats?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5961

126. LETTER TO NARAYAN MORESHWAR KHARE

September 27, 1930

CHI. PANDITJI,

It would be wise for me to climb step by step; otherwise I shall fall. Moreover, if I start writing "Narayan" and also address you as "Narayan" when speaking to you, I may attain my *moksha*. What then?

If you have to address public meetings, that also is a good experience. All the workers are having various useful experiences. If you get any news about Rambhau, write to me and let me know. I have not heard from any of the three after they left the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 211. Courtesy: Lakshmibai Khare

127. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

YERAVDA MANDIR,

September 27, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your letter. If we smile and remain happy even when we are alone or no one speaks or listens to us and instead people abuse us, then that is true happiness. We should never let the praise or the censure of the world affect our soul. That is what is meant by the *Gita* verses describing the character of the *sthita-prajna*, which we daily recite. If we go on reciting them every day, with sincere devotion in our hearts, some day we shall be able to live in that spirit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9289

128. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI AND NANIBEHN JHAVERI

September 27, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN AND NANIBEHN,

I have letters from you both. I do remember you once every week, but afterwards give up the thought of writing to you. In a sense I look upon you as an ideal pair. You don't seem to be mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, but are more than sisters to each other. It is true

that Pannalal has had a share in bringing this about; but what could he have done if you two did not have such a quality in your nature? We have to rise much higher still. You three do have the capacity so to rise. Tell Bhai Panachand that I got his wire.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3104

129. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 27, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

The responsibility on you is great. God will give you the strength to shoulder the burden.

Ambalal[1] wrote to Kakasaheb. The latter is in excellent health. He spins and cards. He walks at regular hours and eats normal food.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Ramibai has got what she wanted.[2] It becomes her well indeed.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G.S. Gangabehnne, p. 42; also C.W. 8759. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

130. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

September 27, 1930

CHI. RAIHANA,

I have your letter. I am glad to learn that your health has improved a little. Tell Kamaladevi when you write to her that I often think of her. Tell Father that a translation of the whole of the *Sirat* would not be fully appreciated, but it would be a valuable book if he translates its most important portions. Maulana Shibli wrote the *Sirat*

[1] Ambalal Chaturbhai Patel, then Kalelkar's student
[2] She had been arrested.

with Muslims in view and the book is all right for them, but the general public would not read the translation of so big a book. We already have the works of Amir Ali, Maulvi Mohammed Ali Kadiyani, Washington Irving and Carlyle. It would be a good addition to them to get a small book giving a translation of some portions of Maulana Shibli's volume. Ramdas writes and tells me that Father is becoming younger day by day, for he puts in six hours' labour of writing and his memory has improved. If so, what does it matter that his beard has turned grey? And, moreover, he teaches Mahadev French! Who would not envy him? You daughter and mother have done fine work indeed in the Kheda district, and Hamida there has been rousing the Surat district.

Khuda Hafiz.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Do you find it difficult to read my handwriting?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9621

131. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 27, 1930

CHI. MANGALA,

Are you a walking-stick or a spoilt girl or both? You have tried to improve your handwriting. Your must try harder. Learn the second chapter by heart and pull Pushpa's[1] nose for me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11089. Courtesy: Pushpa Naik

[1] Addressee's sister

132. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 27, 1930

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

Prabhavati writes that you are not keeping well. After acquiring so much learning, why can't you keep your body perfectly healthy? It is essential to make an effort in this direction. What are you doing now?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3374

133. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 27, 1930

CHI. KALAVATI,

I was glad to get your letter. Be firm as you are in observing the rules. Ignore those who criticize. Do not even be angry with them, but love them.

There is much scope for improvement in your handwriting. With some effort you can improve it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5252

134. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 27, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

I have both your letters. Kalavati is showing very good progress.

You have done well in deciding to keep to the policy of self-sufficiency in khaddar. Spare diet, physical and mental labour are the remedies for nocturnal emissions. Benefits of concentration while

doing physical work are twofold: the performance improves and passions automatically remain under control.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5253

135. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 27, 1930

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

It is well that your letter came. I think of you a good deal. Mirabehn had written; it is good that your letter has also come.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6538

136. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 28, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter.

You did not get or take even the full four days' rest at Muzaffarpur. Next time I should stick to such promises. Why should rest not be taken in the spirit of service? Of course, it can be easily abused and often is. But that is no reason why honest people may not honestly give themselves rest so as to enable them to keep fit for further service. I regard it as self-delusion if not worse when a person says he is wearing himself away in service. Is such service preferred by God to service steadily and detachedly performed? Body is like a machine requiring to be well kept for full service. Enough however of sermonizing from a safe retreat. Only I do feel that I have not felt ashamed to take the required rest. That people about me have thought otherwise is because of their ignorance of the laws of rest. Rest properly and in due time taken is like the proverbial timely stitch.

Kaka has had to give up your wheel. He could not pull more than 70 rounds on it per hour. He uses the box wheel. Yesterday was the third day and he pulled 119 in one hour. He expects to do much better. I am making daily progress and do not know what fatigue is on that wheel. It runs with perfect smoothness. It will do still better when I have myself made the *mal* of the required thickness. The carding gives real music. Vithal wrote saying that we should use a candle for dressing the gut instead of leaves. This change has made the gut give much better results. I wish those who have new experiences will pass them on to me. Whatever are feasible *here*, I shall certainly try. I want to reach a high standard both in spinning and carding. There is no reason why I should stop at 160 rounds per hour. I have now confidence that I should do better. For me it is God's work. If He wills it, He will give me the strength and the ability.

Narandas tells me you are not hitting it off with Kumarappa. Charity is our talisman. I should let him do as he pleases. But of course I know nothing of the differences. N. gives only one ortwo lines in his letter. My weight is between 103 and 104, the food about the same.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5413. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9647

137. LETTER TO KASUMBA GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 28, 1930

CHI. KASUMBA,

You did a very good thing in going over to Chalala. You should live as you agreed to do during our talk. Give up the idea of being polluted by anyone's touch. I trust Umiya is happy. Take interest in all the activities of Jaisukhlal. I was pleased by the virtue of firmness which I observed in you. I should like you to use it in serving others.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

138. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

September 28, 1930

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I got your detailed letter. I was glad that you wrote. It was only from your letter that I learnt that Umiya is expecting a baby. Now I understand the cause of the pain which she suffers. Is she as happy still as she was at first?

While strictly adhering to your principles, see that you do not hurt Kasumba. She has the same freedom of conduct which we claim for ourselves. If you get angry with her, she will only suppress her real feelings. I have made that mistake myself and I tell you this from experience. I have observed some fine qualities in Kasumba. But why should it matter even if she does not have any? She should not obstruct you in your way of life and you should not obstruct her in hers. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

What you write about capitalists is true. Them too we will win over with love.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

139. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 28, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. How am I likely to forget that, when covering me with rugs, you often made mistakes about their order? What an excellent father he must be who tolerated the same mistake being made day after day?

In the 84th *bhajan* in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*,[1] the third line runs thus: "*Kamal myane mot bandhi.*" If you know the meaning of

[1] This was translated on September 27, 1930.

this line, tell me what it is. If you do not know it, learn it from Valjibhai or Totaramji or somebody else who knows it and write to me, or ask any person who knows it to write to me and let me know.

You have done well in making friends with Kamala. See that she does not feel uncomfortable there. Have you become a friend of Zaulinger too? If you have not, try now. She has some doubts regarding the Ashram rules and if she wants to discuss them with you let her and do satisfy her.

How are you now?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10236; also C.W. 6684. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

140. LETTER TO RADHABEHN GANDHI

September 28, 1930

CHI. RADHIKA,

I have separate letters from you all. Since you post your letters separately they do give them to me. But the understanding is that ordinarily all letters should be included in one packet.

Your leg seems to be taking a long time to improve. Probably the general weakness of your body is partly responsible for the slow recovery. Narandas complains that none of you join in prayers, etc. Is this true? Tell me clearly what the position is.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8686. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

141. LETTER TO VENILAL GANDHI

September 28, 1930

CHI. VENILAL GANDHI,

I have your letter. For your two-year-old illness the proper remedy is not a vaid's medicine but change of air and diet or, if necessary, a long fast. Hundreds recover their health in this manner.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 916. Courtesy: Venilal Gandhi

142. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

September 28, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

Do not worry about letters from me. I will continue to write to you every week so long as I am able to write letters. How are you now? What are you reading in English? How much are you able to read every day? Have you learnt to starch the yarn? Do you weave on the flying-shuttle loom or on the small loom?

Blessings to brother.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta papers. Courtesy: Gandhi national Museum and Library

143. LETTER TO BALBHADRA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 29, 1930

CHI. BALBHADRA,

I got your letter. It was a good one. You can write one still better. What is the cause of your losing weight? Do you chew your food properly? Are you suffering from any disease? How much milk do you drink? Your weight must improve. Show this letter to Narandas and follow his advice. Let me know what you do.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9211

144. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI MADHAVJI THAKKAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 29, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

Was there any letter of yours which remained unanswered? Of course I do remember all of you women every day. I too would have been glad if you could have spent a few months with me. But both of you have made such progress, even while you were away from me, that I cannot imagine what you could have achieved if you had been all the time with me. It is good that the children still live on fruit and so on and that you have come back to it. Why has Dahibehn not written? Blessings to all the women.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6797

145. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI

September 29, 1930

CHI. PUNJABHAI (JUNIOR, BARODA),

I got your letter. Your illness has lasted too long. That is always the way of the body. It is more brittle even than a glass bangle. We should, therefore, take care of it only in order that we may be able to serve others. Get well soon. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4016

146. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

September 29, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I have your two letters to answer. First, Satis Babu's question. The literal interpretation of the battle in Chapter II of the *Gita* may certainly be physical conflict. But I have not a shadow of doubt that the spirit of the *Gita* inclines us to interpret it as mental conflict. The moment this is doubted, the *Gita* will cease to be sacred scripture for me.

I hope you are well. After consulting Vinoba, do send the boys desirous of learning Sanskrit to Wardha. Chhotelal is now in jail. I am very glad to note even the slight improvement in Tarini. Give my blessings to Tarini, Charu, Arun and others. The *tapovanas*[1] like those of ancient India can exist even now, it all depends upon our *tapashcharya*. Certainly their form may be different. Our duty lies in going a step ahead of the achievements of our ancestors.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1671

[1] Sylvan hermitages

147. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
September 30, 1930

DEAR MAJOR MARTIN,

It was on 21st instant that I sent you my letter requesting that I should be permitted to establish touch with the civil resistance prisoners in this jail. I made the request about seeing my secretary and co-worker Pyarelal even earlier. I must now press for an early answer. I know the Government's preoccupations and, as a prisoner, I should like to spare them all the trouble l can on my behalf. But the request I have made is a peremptory call of my fundamental being. I can no longer restrain myself now. The deprivation of touch with these fellow-prisoners is unbearable for me. Unless, therefore, I get satisfaction by Saturday noon next, I must begin to withdraw my co-operation as to the upkeep of my body. To what extent I shall carry the non-co-operation, I am unable to say at present. It will be determined, as the days proceed, by the inner urge and my courage and strength. The commencement will be made with my refusing all food except the ordinary convict diet, i.e., such of it as I can religiously take. I can take only five natural ingredients in addition to salt. Therefore so far as I can see, I can take only *kanji* and *bajari* and *juwari* chapati. I may not take dal or vegetables as they contain more than five ingredients. The *kanji* and chapati I shall take on the responsibility of and at the desire of the authorities. I am not sure that after years of abstention from them, my system can cope with either. I have arrived at this compromise to start with, because I am anxious to cause as little embarrassment as I can. I would like the Government not to regard this letter as a threat but consider it as an act of courtesy and consideration. My desire is not to take the Government unawares in any serious steps I may take in order to vindicate what is to me a human right.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3853; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, 750(5)/A, p. 207

148. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 25/30, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

This time I start with your letter. Last week I ran short of time and had to be very brief about some points. Write and tell me, if you know, all about the persons who live in Rajagopalachari's Ashram, where Subbiah and his wife are and so on.

Punjabhai must now endure his suffering and pass his days in peace. If you can, have a further discussion with Mrs. Zaulinger. She seems to be a wise and good lady, but she takes time to understand our point of view in everything. I don't see anything wrong in letting her join the night-watch, if she feels so inclined. Her argument is correct. Indian sisters may not be ready to move as freely as she is ready to do; if, however, anyone wishes to join her, she may. I have merely expressed a view from here without knowing all the circumstances there. Do what you yourself think proper.

What shall I say about Keshu and others? Read the letter which I shall write to them this time and give it to them. Keshu is an upright young man. He will probably understand his dharma in the course of time, and so I don't feel like writing anything to him. You, for your part, should be bold and tell him what you think right. This time, of course, I will write to him.

My diet consists of three pounds of milk turned into curds and taken at two meals, and milk once. Then nine tomatoes, small or big as supplied and the required quantity of boiled vegetables such as cabbage, pumpkin, etc. I add salt afterwards if I require. I gave up sweet potatoes four days ago. Dr. Jivraj visited Kakasaheb and he thought that it would cause constipation. I had again found it necessary to take enemas. I, therefore, decided to see the effect of giving up sweet potatoes. I observe no change. If I keep up my strength, I will not resume sweet potatoes. I didn't think they were doing me any harm. It is the water of this place which seems to cause constipation to a person of my constitution. There is, however, no cause for worry at all. I shall be weighed this evening and will mention the weight in this letter. Enemas are nothing new to me, but I should certainly like to do without them if possible. I wish to carry on without fresh fruit as long as I can. If by eating vegetables I do not

succeed in getting rid of enemas and if I feel weak in the slightest degree, I will resume dates and raisins. No one should worry on my account.

My spinning is improving. The speed seems to be increasing. At any rate, I don't feel tired now. I will not be too eager for the present to increase the output. I feel a little unhappy that I have had to abandon the effort to memorize the *Gita* verses. But I am waiting for an opportunity to resume it. In the beginning, I used to try to memorize them while spinning. But I saw that that interfered with the spinning. I realize every day the necessity for ever more concentration for good spinning. I see that there is a great difference between mere spinning and the art of spinning. I wish to learn the art. Maybe I shall not succeed in acquiring it during this life. I will be satisfied if I am not slack in my effort. I realized that my eagerness to learn the *Gita* verses by heart while spinning was a sign of my slackness. That was against the teaching of the *Gita*. I wish to memorize the *Gita* verses if I can do that and at the same time acquire proficiency in spinning, but I would be false to the teaching of the *Gita* as I understand it if I tried to learn its verses by heart at the cost of my spinning. Plead with Amidas. I am writing to him. How can we ask a person like him to leave the Ashram?

I shall not be able to send two discourses. Perhaps I will continue the discourse on equality of religions. I feel inclined to omit the subject of swadeshi. I feel that by writing on it I may violate to some extent my resolution to make no reference to political subjects. Even if I write about swadeshi from a spiritual standpoint, I am bound to include in the discourse something which would have an indirect connection with politics. If I feel that I can write on the subject without touching on politics, I will try. Let me see if I can do so.

There is no point in forcing Giriraj to stay there against his wishes. If Balkrishna invites him to go to Wardha, what harm do you see in his going? He is a good man, but he cannot think clearly. Balkrishna's company is likely to benefit him. Since you have written to Vinoba offering to send more persons, why not Giriraj? If he feels happy, he will certainly work. It does not seem right to me to abandon him. But, I again seem to be meddling with what I should leave alone. Don't, therefore, attach much weight to what I have said. Treat this merely as a suggestion intended to help you to come to a decision. It is possible that I may have formed my opinion without knowing all

the facts of the case. I have so much confidence in your decisions that, when my reason does not accept any of them, I feel that that must be so because of my ignorance of some facts. And now I reply to your questions:

1. There is no question of asking him to leave the Ashram, but I would not ask him to stay on either if he decided to leave.

2. He should not go to Wardha without the consent of the Ashram authorities.

3. If he does anything against the wishes of the Ashram authorities and forfeits their confidence, the Ashram cannot support his children.

4. If the Ashram is not in a position to look after Katu and Vimu, I cannot think where we can send them. If at present Giriraj has no share in looking after them, the Ashram may, if it can, look after them in case he goes to some other place with the consent of the Ashram authorities. If, however, the children have become unmanageable, Giriraj should be told so.

5. I think the Ashram should give Giriraj the necessary financial help to enable him to make some other arran- gement. The amount of such help should be fixed by the Ashram. I think I have now replied to all your questions.

Read my letter to Giriraj.

I do not have the necessary data to enable me to decide about Manibehn. But from what I have understood I feel that she should be permitted to go to her place if she is very keen on doing so. It is a question not of what Bhagwanji wishes, but of what Manibehn wishes. If she wants to stay on, she should be welcome to do so, on this condition, however, that she should forget Bhagwanji. She should not wish or hope to see him. She should submit to the Ashram rules as the other women do. If she is not willing to do this, she should leave.

I understand what you say about Mirabehn and Kumarappa. Your decision seems right. I am writing to Mirabehn.

Where is Jethalal at present? The names of the fruits which you said would be on display in our exhibition gave me a pleasant surprise. I didn't even know that you had planted grapes.

You need not send my worn sandals. There was a new pair. If Kanti does not know about it, that is the end of the matter. As I told

you in my letter, I have been able to manage for the present. We shall see later what we should do if you do not succeed in finding the new pair. Why shouldn't a pair from the stock of sandals in the Ashram do for me? A pair like the one you sent for Kakasaheb will be all right for me. I would like the sandals better without the *dalia* such as Kakasaheb's pair has. Do send the money for Pyarelal's living expenses. You can adopt no other course in his case. He ought to have drawn money even earlier, which he did not do. The Ashram is all that he has in the world, call it his friend or anything you will. What you have done about Gokibehn is worthy of you. Of course, nothing could have been sent to her from the Ashram. You could have approached Dr. Mehta, but I liked it very much that you gave the sum from your own resources. I am sure she needed it. I went through the figures of spinning on *Rentia Barash*[1]. They are very good indeed. I think Khurshedbehn wants some more women. Find out exactly what she wants and send someone if you can. If you cannot, give her convincing reasons why you cannot. As far as I can see, no mature woman worker is now left there who can go and join her.

September 26, 1930

I was weighed today. The weight is a little above 103, which means that there has been some improvement. Kakasaheb weighed a little below 115. That means that there has been no improvement during the past week. It may not be unusual for him to lose half a pound or a quarter of a pound occasionally.

You did the right thing in not sending me B. J.'s leaflet. You cannot send it.

September 27, 1930

Lilavati has again become impatient to go and join Khurshedbehn. If the latter knows her condition and still calls her, I think it may be best to let her go. Rather than that she should remain in the Ashram and feel restless, it is better that she should go and return wiser from experience. Do what you think best. Satis Babu had made a balance costing 3 annas for weighing slivers, etc.; if you can find that or any other similar balance, send it with someone who may

[1] The twelfth day of the dark half of *Bhadrapad*, which was Gandhiji's birthday according to Vikram Calendar

be coming here. Do you have any news about Anna who was spreading Hindi in Madras?

September 28, 1930

Did you get the yarn which Kakasaheb had sent through Bal for the Goseva Sangh? He had sent, through Shankar, 8,500 yardsfor the Charkha Sangh. Will it be delivered to you there or will it be delivered at Ahmedabad? Read what I have written about Miss A. in my letter to Mirabehn.

Tuesday morning, September 30, 1930

As I told you in my letter last week, I have translated into English the discourse on Equality of Religions and send the translation herewith. If Valjibhai has translated it and if his translation has already been printed, he should read the translation which I am sending. Anybody else who wishes to read it may do so and the last person should hand it over to Mirabehn. If Valjibhai's translation has not been printed, he should carefully go through my translation and then publish whichever he likes. Do you intend to publish the discourses in Gujarati only or their English translations also?

This subject is so important that I dwell a little further on it. My meaning will perhaps become clearer if I describe here some of my experiences. In Phoenix we had our daily prayers in the same way as in Sabarmati, and Mussalmans as well as Christians attended them along with Hindus. The late Sheth Rustomji and his children too attended the prayer meetings. Rustomji Sheth very much liked the Gujarati *bhajan*. "Dear, dear to me is the name of Rama." If my memory serves me right, Maganlal or Kashi was once leading us in singing this hymn, when Rustomji Sheth exclaimed joyously "Say the name of Hormazd instead of the name of Rama". His suggestion was readily taken up, and after that whenever the Sheth was present, and sometimes even when he was not, we put in the name of Hormazd in place of Rama. The late Husain, son of Daud Sheth, often stayed at the Phoenix Ashram, and enthusiastically joined our prayers. To the accompaniment of an organ, he used to sing in a very sweet voice the song "*Hai bahare bagh*", "The garden of this world has only a momentary bloom". He taught us all this song, which we also sang at prayers. Its inclusion in our *Bhajanavali* is a tribute to truth-loving Husain's memory. I have never met a young man who practised Truth more devotedly than Husain. Joseph Royeppen often came to Phoenix. He was a Christian, and his favourite hymn was "*Vaishnava*

jana". He loved music and once sang this hymn saying "Christian" in place of "vaishnava". The others accepted his reading with alacrity, and I observed that this filled Joseph's heart with joy.

When I was turning over the pages of the sacred books of different faiths for my own satisfaction, I became sufficiently familiar for my purpose with Christianity, Islam, Zoroastrianism, Judaismand Hinduism. In reading these texts, I can say that I felt the same regard for all these faiths although, perhaps, I was not then conscious of it. Reviving my memory of those days, I do not find I ever had the slightest desire to criticize any of those religions merely because they were not my own, but read each sacred book in a spirit of reverence and found the same fundamental morality in each. Some things I did not understand then, as I did not in Hindu scriptures. I do not understand those things even now, but experience has taught me that it is a mistake hastily to imagine that anything that we cannot understand is necessarily wrong. Some things which I did not understand first have since become as clear as daylight. Equimindedness helps us to solve many difficulties and even when we criticize anything, we express ourselves with a humility and courtesy which leave no sting behind them.

One difficulty still remains. As I stated last time, the acceptance of the doctrine of Equality of Religions does not abolish the distinction between religion and irreligion. We do not propose to cultivate tolerance for irreligion. That being so, some people might object that there would be no room left for equimindedness, if everyone took his own decision as to what was religion and what was irreligion. Such a question may be raised and one may even make a mistake in deciding what is religion and what is irreligion. If, however, we follow the law of love, we shall not bear any hatred towards the irreligious brother. On the contrary, though we see that he follows irreligion, we shall love him and, therefore, either we shall bring him to see the error of his ways or he will convince us of our error, or each will tolerate the other's difference of opinion. If the other party does not observe the law of love, he may be violent to us. If, however, we cherish real love for him, it will overcome his bitterness in the end. All obstacles in our path will vanish, if only we observe the golden rule that we must not be impatient with those whom we may consider to be in error, but must be prepared, if need be, to suffer in our own person.

As I have stated earlier in this letter, I think I will omit the subject of swadeshi. I have yet to think on what subject I shall write next.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

There are 70 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

149. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

October 2, 1930

DEAR MAJOR MARTIN,

Mr. Quinn has been having a chat with me about my letter of 30th ultimo. If you are authorized to let me see periodically in the yard where I am kept, those of my friends whom I may find it necessary to see for the sake of service, I should be quite satisfied. Of course, I would not discuss politics with them nor send any political message, nor say or suggest anything calculated to subvert prison discipline. As I told you this morning, my object in wanting to see these friends is to serve them and, if you would believe it, assist the jail authorities wherever it may be possible even as I did in 1923.

From a photostat: S.N. 19982

150. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 2, 1930

CHI. SHARDA (BABU),

Your letter. The beauty of trees and plants surpasses that of electric lights as the beauty of real tomatoes surpasses that of clay ones. Have you ever heard any one's hunger being satisfied by clay tomatoes?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9891. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

151. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 2, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

If you wish, you may certainly keep the wooden sandals. But what will you do with those bits of wood? Keep them if you think that they will add an inch or two to your stature. I would condemn your action as smacking of idolatry. I used to keep with me a photograph of my father. I had hung his photographs in the drawing-room and the bedroom when I was in South Africa. When I used to wear a chain, it had a locket which contained small photographs of my father and elder brother. I have now put them away. That does not mean that I feel less reverence for them now. In fact they are more deeply engraved in my heart today. I think of their virtues and try to cultivate them. I can worship countless gods in this manner. If I tried to keep with me photographs of them all, I would have no room to put them in. And if I tried to keep their wooden sandals, I should have to acquire a piece of land for the purpose. As a man of experience, I advise you, therefore, to follow me when I am walking on the right path. That will be a thousand times better than keeping my wooden sandals, and if anybody follows your example, I would welcome that. On the contrary, if anybody saw the sandals with you and followed your example blindly, would he not fall into a pit? Think on this and then do what you wish.

He who understands and does his duty, his cravings have already left him. A person whose cravings have not left him has no sense of duty. Our cravings are like a huge mountain which no man can cross over by climbing. The only course for us is to raze the mountain to the ground. To give up our cravings is to become conscious of our duty. Suppose that I wish to go to Kashi. I even know the path which I should follow to reach it. What other craving, then, will force me to stray from that path? I have no other craving but to reach Kashi, and that is satisfied. What more do I want then? You have an opportunity for service which has come to you unsought. You should get fullest satisfaction in doing that service with single-minded devotion. Whatever opportunitiesfor human company and for reading you get while doing that duty, may

be availed of. Apart from that, you should desire nothing. This, according to me is yoga, "skill in works", "equimindedness" and *samadhi*.

If, however, all this seems idle preaching to you and you thirst for reading, by all means satisfy your craving. Reduce the burden of work on you and take rest. How you may do this, you can decide only in consultation with Narandas. He is a man of profound understanding, patience and goodness. He will certainly help you. What more can I say to cheer you? A person like me can only suggest the direction which you should follow. It is on oneself, however, that you and everyone else should depend for peace of mind.

I understand what you say about Sushila. In future, let her send her good wishes in Marathi. My blessings to her.

I understand that after having enjoyed Panditji's music, a person like you will not enjoy music by anybody else. But why should you not, yourself, lead the *bhajans*? If you have the courage to do so, ask them to let you do it. If you wish, I will write. You certainly know how to sing. I have not forgotten that you used to sing *bhajans* almost every night. How are your tonsils? Did you get them examined by Dr. Haribhai?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10237; also C.W. 6685. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

152. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI M. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 2, 1930

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

As advised by the doctor, do take a full month's rest. The work of service will never end. If you become stronger, you will be able to work better. Moreover, our programme is such that wherever we are, we can do some work. Write to me regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8989

153. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 2, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

I have your letter.

If you think you are not worthy of being a daughter, how much more fit should I become to be a worthy mother and father to you? If I who claim to be both, am slack in my effort to be so, I shall have no place anywhere in the three worlds. Let us, therefore, not argue who is worthy and who is not. If a son or daughter is unworthy, the parents bear no small responsibility for that.

I understand the reason for your depression. Instead of thinking that you have to do this, that or the other thing, you should think that God does all that and uses you as His instrument. If you think thus, you will feel no burden at all. It is God who carries the burden, and His shoulders are so broad that however heavy the burden we place on them He does not feel it even as much as we would a speck of dust on our hand. We should, therefore, forget 'I' and 'Mine'. "It is I who do this— that is our ignorance, like that of the dog who thinks he draws the cart": this line by Narasinh Mehta expresses his own experience. '*Shakat'* in this line means a cart. If we believe that the dog who walks under a moving cart draws it, then we may believe that the burden of our tasks is on us; but anyone who works for the love of God will never find his task a heavier burden than he can carry. He does not have to take upon himself anything. Tasks come to him unsought. He goes on working cheerfully, with God's name upon his lips. You sing with sincere emotion: "Make me your servant." Think over the meaning of that *bhajan*. Also think over the meaning of the two verses which we have added to the prayers for women. It is the Lord's assurance to those who surrender themselves to Him that He will carry the burden of their happiness and welfare. Why, then, should we worry? This is looking at the matter philosophically.

But even if you and I feel agitated, what escape is there for us? Our relationship with the Ashram is like the Hindu marriage bond. The tie can never be loosened. Instead of thinking whetherothers are half-hearted or firm in their attitude, you should ask

yourself whether you are half-hearted or firm, and that is all that is necessary. Certainly seek what comfort Nath can give you. Talk with Narandas and pour out your heart every week to me. If you can free yourself for a few days and pay a visit to Kakasaheb, that, too, will give you some comfort.

Do not work so hard that you get exhausted. One should always preserve a sense of proportion in undertaking work in the spirit of service. We can do that only if we have cultivated the attitude of non-attachment. Non-attachment means freedom from the sense of 'I' and 'Mine'. The saying that while sleeping one should stretch out one's limbs according to the length of the covering has great wisdom behind it.

Read this letter again and again, think over it and overcome your depression and put your heart in the *bhajan* when you sing "Make me your servant".

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G. S. Gangabehnne, pp. 42-4; also C.W. 8760. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

154. LETTER TO BALVIR SINGH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 2/3[1]*, 1930*

BHAI BALVIR SINGH,

Your letter. The work at Khadi Bhandar constitutes not only proper work but also excellent work. Performance of *yajna* implies spinning for half an hour at least. These jobs cannot be evaluated on a comparative basis as both are part of your duty. Hence you have to find time for spinning just as you have to find time for meals. It takes only one day to prepare enough slivers to last for a month. Fewer slivers will be required if you spin to the fineness of 20 or 30 instead of 10. Talk it over with Mahavirprasadji. Kakasaheb sends you his blessings.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10538

[1] Not quite legible

155. LETTER TO MAJOR MART1N

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
October 3, 1930

DEAR MAJOR MARTIN,

With reference to our conversations, by 'friends' I mean those civil resistance prisoners whom I know. I should want to meet only those who may be reported to be suffering from illness or ill-treatment or might have been reported to have so suffered. This right too, I should exercise with as much restraint as possible. If it is necessary to explain my meaning further, you will please let me know. I want to have no mental reservations.

As for postponing the enforcement of my resolution, I am sorry I must not do it, if satisfaction cannot be had in time. But it need cause no immediate worry as in the initial stages, I should be eating such ordinary convict food as I can religiously take.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3854; also S.N. 19983

156. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

October 3, 1930

DEAR MOTI BAPU,

I have replied to your wire. I must not exert myself to give you a long reply to your loving letter of 15th instant. I appreciate your deep love and know that the Sangh is with me in all acts of love.

Sardar and Mahadev join me in sending you love.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 11037

157. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 3, 1930

CHI. PARASRAM,

Your letter. Do as Shankerlalji says. You must go on with your task despite the world's ridicule. Do not picket the dealers in mill-made slivers, but persuade them with love. On no account give up truth and non-violence. You will then automatically acquire mental strength.

Continue to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 4965. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

158. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

October 4, 1930

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. What you write about weavers is true. There is a special class of workers in Ahmedabad who starch yarn. We see such workers elsewhere too. Cannot we supply starched warp to weavers? If you ask Ramjibhai and the others, they also will come and help. They will have to do the work entrusted to them by Chhaganbhai or Surendra. If, however, you feel that I should write to them, write to me again. I have had no letter yet from Motibehn.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3745

159. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

October 4, 1930

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS (DHULIA),

Your letter. Do not take it so much to heart. Recite Ramanama and be cheerful. Bear whatever pain there is after taking the necessary treatment and do whatever service you can. No reason to worry if you cannot get up [early] in the morning.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 177

160. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 5, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

I am writing this after taking silence. Have just seen your portrait in a group published in the *Times Illustrated Weekly*. You are spinning on the *takli* and looking fit. Then I saw in the columns of *The Bombay Chronicle* that you were in the women's procession and spoke at their meeting. So you are again near my lodgings and probably this will be in your hands at the Ashram.

Yes, S. Aiengar's daughter is a very good woman but she was hysterical even when we were travelling from Mysore. When you write to her please give my love to her and tell her I often think of her. It is a sad thing—her father's case. It is the same thing with him as with the daughter. He can be hardly considered responsible for many of his strange acts. Did you see him at all? Where did you stay whilst in Madras?

Last week, Kaka having been given my wheel, I thought I would finish my quota on yours. I tried hard but I could not make it work. The spindle won't turn. Whether the resin was ineffective or what the cause was, I could not divine. But there it was refusing to turn. Then I thought of the Gandiv of Surat. I found it to be an extraordinarily effective thing. For the last two days I have been finishing the whole

of my quota on it and that in very good time and without the slighest fatigue. It has captivated me and I want you to try it. It is essentially a poor man's wheel. The inventor is no mechanic. How it has come to him, I do not know. But every part of it, in my opinion, shows solicitude for the starving. It costs Rs. 1½ but it can be made for only 8 annas, I am sure. It is the lightest wheel going in India. It requires the least attention. It occupies the smallest space of all the wheels I know. A little child can work at it. Thousands of these wheels can be manufactured in a day if the discs and spindles are kept in stock. Its mechanism is simplicity personified. You naturally draw a fine thread. The very first I drew was over 30 counts. And I fancy that it can compete with any in giving speed. It admits of certain improvements, which can be made without adding a pice to the cost. I have made two and this reduces the cost. The original has noisy wooden holders. I have discarded them and put on coir rope picked up from rubbish. I have broken up the jingling glass bars on the spindle and wound a few turns of yarn to hold the spindle in position. This has made it absolutely noiseless. Such is the opinion of a new convert, who has tried it only for the last four days. It may, therefore, need modification. But it is undoubtedly a case for believers to give it a fair trial. I am writing to the inventor suggesting certain improvements and am writing to Keshu too to examine, try and if my preliminary observation is at all sound, to improve it. There are other merits I must not describe, as I have many more letters yet to write. If you can think of the reason that has prevented the spindle on your wheel from turning, please tell me.

How did you find Brajkishore Babu? Is he better? Did you see Prabhavati? She is much reduced and her latest letter says she had high fever.

And your health? You must not break down at the Ashram. You will have met Kamalabehn Lundy. Of course you will befriend her. She appears to be a very good woman.

Both of us are keeping excellent health. My weight, if anything, shows a slight increase. The vegetable experiment seems to have proved a success and it gives me joy to know that the disappearance of even dried fruit reduces the cost very materially. In vegetables, for the last two days, I have been taking spinach which has moved the bowels automatically. I take sweet potatoes off and on. I hope you have by now got all my letters. I have missed no week.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5414. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9648

161 LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

Y. M.,
October 5, 1930

MY DEAR ANAND,

I have your letters. Of course you are in your place being there. If you are uniformly gentle, you will win Father over completely.

You must not damage your health by denying yourself the food you may need. You may not accept furniture that you do not need from Father but you should ask him to send you something that it will please him to send you and that you may need. you should have no hesitation in asking Father for gifts and should not take it ill if he refuses to give them.

Love to you and Vidya.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

162. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

October 5, 1930

CHI. MANU,

How did you get fever? Ordinarily you would deserve a prize for the way you take care of your health. You have succeeded, by your own efforts, in building up a strong body. It is for you now to preserve your improved health. When Kakasaheb is released, let him find you a trained worker in a fit condition.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7765

163. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 5, 1930

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

I have your letter. I am very glad that you teach in the class. Give your whole-hearted devotion to the work and cultivate the utmost interest in it. Love all children as you do Manu. A letter from you will not increase my burden in any way. Write to me from time to time and ask me any question you wish to. How is your health now? What do you think has been the effect of the fast on the whole?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7454. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

164. LETTER TO GOVIND PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 6, 1930

CHI. GOVIND,

I have your letter written in a beautiful hand. Write to me from time to time about your activities. Do you read anything? What is your weight now?.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3945

165. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 6, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

You must have received my letter posted directly to you. I am expecting a wire from you. Why should you become ill? See that you do not harm your health. If you cannot improve your health there, go

and live in the Ashram. No one will oppose your going there for the sake of your health. Since you are in Patna, you can give me news about everyone there. I am quite all right. Kakasaheb's health keeps improving.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3375

166. LETTER TO SHANTA SHANKARBHAI PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 6, 1930

CHI. SHANTA (PATEL),

I have your letter. You have given much information, but the handwriting has not yet improved. If you make an effort to improve it, you will certainly succeed. If you don't improve it at this age, it will for ever remain bad, as mine has remained. I hope you do understand that we commit violence in writing to anyone in a bad hand.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4054

167. LETTER TO BALBHADRA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 6, 1930

CHI. BALBHADRA,

I have your letter. If Mathuradasbhai is really ready to take you with him and if Narandasbhai permits you to go, I see no harm in your going. Improve your handwriting. And increase your weight.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9212

168. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI PANDYA

October 6, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I have gone through your letters. Your opinion is not likely to be free from faults because it is in your nature to suspect rather too much. Your duty just the same is to guard your own self. Your duty is to keep quiet after having promptly informed Narandas about whatever evil you happen to notice. Only in this way will you be able to make some progress. Do not regard the Ashram as forsaken so long as there is even a single votary of the vows of truth, etc.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 325. Courtesy: Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

169. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 2/7, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got the Ashram packet yesterday. Mostly the packets are handed over to me on the very day on which they arrive.

Read the letter which I am writing to Harilal Desai. I have nothing to write about Giriraj this time. Do what you think best. I was glad to read about Zainu. I am writing to Bhagwanji. His letter will have no effect on me. I know his nature. I felt after reading Madhu's letter that she was a very innocent girl. I am sure Navin and others will learn simplicity by and by. I am happy that you trust others. No one who does so has ever lost anything in the world. The suspicious gain nothing; on the contrary, they often lose something and exchange worry for peace of mind. Take care about three things in regard to all who have got malaria. They should see to it that they clear their bowels. If they do not do that in the natural course, they should take either a purgative or an enema. Even after the fever has come down, they should take 5 grains of quinine daily for a week, dissolvingthe quinine in lime juice and adding 10 to 15 grains of soda bicarb to the mixture, drinking it as they would soda water. There will be, and

ought to be, effervescence, when the mixture is prepared. Further, for at least one week after the fever has gone they should live on milk and black dried grapes or boiled vegetables. Those who have had no attack of malaria should, if they sleep where there are mosquitoes, rub kerosene over the exposed parts of the body before going to bed. In any case everyone should keep his stomach light. Amidas does cause me worry. I should be happy if my letter has had any effect and he has started taking milk.

Punjabhai may follow his inclinations and live as he wishes. If Jamna is treated by the Udasi Vaid who treats Chandrashankar, she may also benefit. Chandrashankar is all praise for him. Go and see him once. Read my letter to Gangabehn. Give her some time and console her. If she comes to Poona even on the excuse of visiting Kakasaheb, she will have change of air for three days. Keep urging Nathji. His presence, too, may give peace to Gangabehn. Tell Mahadev's mother that you are glad she has come, and that she should not think of returning to Dihen in the immediate future. If possible, she should stay on permanently in the Ashram. Read my letter to Chhaganlal. You will see from it what restraints should be observed by those who write to me. If in any letter they are not observed, it should be kept back and not forwarded to me. I think Khadag Bahadur's letter did not observe them. Premabehn, too, seems worried. Read the letter to her and console her. Read my letter to Kamalabehn Lundi. Some of her suggestions deserve to be welcomed.

October 4, 1930

Read my letter to Chhaganlal Joshi. Everyone who writes to me should observe the restraints which I have mentioned in it. Any letters which violate them should be kept back. Khadag Bahadur's letter was of that type.[1] I don't want to burden you with the responsibility of reading all letters. But you may glance through a letter by anyone who is writing for the first time. Letters by the women never contain anything objectionable. You will, therefore, need to read only a few of them. I certainly feel sometimes that I should put in a separate packet the letters which I write to people there. Perhaps the task of redirecting the other letters is much too heavy a burden on you. I cannot think what I should do to reduce it. Since those letters are not such as I

[1] Repetition of the four preceding sentences seems to be inadvertent.

need not write, I continue to burden you with the task of redirecting them.

Read my letter to Harilal Desai, so that you may bear in mind the suggestion I have made in it. I have recently started spinning on the Gandiv spinning-wheel. I like it. I can spin on it with almost the same speed as on the portable spinning-wheel. I hope to increase the speed. With a few improvements, this wheel can perhaps be made a perfect model. Read what I have written about it in my letter to Ishwarlal Vimawala. Read what I propose to write about it in my letter to Mirabehn too. I should like someone in the Ashram to try it. You, too, may examine it. I have suggested to Ishwarlal that he should send two or three wheels. I have seen quite a number of models, but at the moment I think that among them all this is the only one worth trial and examination. I will write further about it after I have had more experience of it.

Tuesday morning, October 7, 1930

I got the cotton and the yarn belt. The cotton was particularly welcome, as Vallabhbhai is being supplied with slivers from here. I am awaiting the scale, but there is no urgency about it.

Humility cannot be an observance by itself. For it does not lend itself to being deliberately practised. It is, however, an indispensable test of ahimsa. In one who has ahimsa in him it becomes part of his very nature. A preliminary draft of the rules and regulations of the Satyagraha Ashram was circulated among friends, including the late Sir Gurudas Banerji. He suggested that humility should be accorded a place among the observances. This suggestion could not then be accepted for the reason that I have just mentioned. But although humility is not one of the observances, it is certainly as essential as, and perhaps even more essential than any of them. Only it has never come to anyone by practice. Truth can be cultivated as well as Love. But to cultivate humility is tantamount to cultivating hypocrisy. Humility must not be here confounded with mere manners or etiquette. One man will sometimes prostrate himself before another although his heart is full of bitterness against him. This is not humility, but cunning. A man may chant Ramanama or tell his beads all day long, and move in society like a sage; but if he is selfish at heart, he is not meek but only hypocritical. A humble person is not himself conscious of his humility. Truth and the like perhaps admit of

measurement, but not humility. Inborn humility can never remain hidden, and yet the possessor is unaware of itsexistence. The story of Vashishtha and Vishwamitra furnishes a very good case in point. Humility should make the possessor realize that he is as nothing. Directly we imagine ourselves to be something, there is egotism. If a man who keeps observances is proud of keeping them, they will lose much, if not all, of their value. And a man who is proud of his virtue often becomes a curse to society. Society will not appreciate it, and he himself will fail to reap any benefit from it. Even a little thought will suffice to convince us that all creatures are nothing more than a mere atom in this universe. Our existence as embodied beings is purely momentary. What are a hundred years in eternity? But if we shatter the chains of egotism and melt into the ocean of humanity, we share its dignity. To feel that we are something is to set up a barrier between God and ourselves; to cease feeling that we are something is to become one with God. A drop in the ocean partakes of the greatness of its parent, although it is unconscious of it. But it is dried up as soon as it enters upon an existence independent of the ocean. We do not exaggerate when we say that life on earth is a mere bubble. How is it possible to cultivate such utter humility? It develops of itself if we understand the spirit of our observances. Can one who aspires to follow truth ever be a proud man? A life of service must be one of humility. He who would sacrifice his life for others has hardly time to reserve for himself a place in the sun. Inertia must not be mistaken for humility, as it has been in Hinduism. Because it has been so mistaken, lethargy and hypocrisy have often flourished in its name. True humility means most strenuous and constant endeavour entirely directed towards the service of humanity. God is continuously in action without resting a single moment. If we would serve Him or become one with Him, our activity must be as unwearied as His. There may be momentary rest in store for the drop which is separated from the ocean, but not for the drop in the ocean, which knows no rest. The same is the case with ourselves. As soon as we become one with the ocean, in the shape of God, there is no more rest for us, nor indeed do we need rest any longer. Our very sleep is action. For we sleep with the thought of God in our hearts. This restlessness constitutes true rest. This never-ceasing agitation holds the key to peace ineffable. True humility, therefore, requires us to dedicate ourselves to the service of all living creatures. When we have surrendered our all in this manner, no day in the week is a day of rest for us. This supreme state of total

surrender is difficult to describe, but not beyond the bounds ofhuman experience. It has been attained by many dedicated souls, and may be attained by ourselves as well. This is the goal which we of the Satyagraha Ashram have set before ourselves; all our observances and activities are calculated to assist us in reaching it. We shall reach it some day all unawares if we have truth in us. It is unattainable if we consciously strive for it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

There are 61 letters today.

Some women from the Ashram should go and see Khurshedbehn. If you have some news about Manibehn, let me have it.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

170. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 7, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (DESAI),

I was able to see Pyarelal last week. They had permitted very little time for the meeting. He had certainly become weaker, but is better now. He gets milk, etc. He is well looked after. I hope that I shall be able to see him several times again.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1806

171. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 10, 1930

CHI. SHARDA (BABU),

I have Your letter. One reason why you do not like to spin is that you are not fully aware of the fact that through spinning you can serve millions, or, maybe you are not as much interested in serving them. If that is the case you should correct your attitude.

Another reason may be that you have still not mastered the art of spinning. Interest is bound to develop if you could spin fine yarn, the thread does not snap and the spinning-wheel hums along without a jarring sound. Have you ever seen the Andhra women spinning at an exhibition? Who would not be interested in spinning if he could spin like them. The same applies in the case of the *Gita*. You will like it if you realize its worth.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10023. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

172. LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 10, 1930

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA,

I have your letter. My congratulations to Chandan. You also should give your name for the competition. If you get the prize, you may use the money for helping somebody. Those who do not require any incentive such as a competition provides, should none the less join one for the sake of other people. My blessings to Chandan, Tara and Vasant.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7466

173. LETTER TO KAPILRAI MEHTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 10, 1930

CHI. KAPIL,

They got your letter at Vile Parle. Although one's home may be near, one should not go there for the sake of the comforts one may get there or for the love of one's relations. But there can be no objection to a worker going to his home to get proper nursing during illness, with the willing consent of his co-workers and in order to lessen the burden on them. It depends on one's attitude. You should

take care of your health and improve it. How can you let it become delicate at this young age? Sun-bath, *pranayam*[1], *shavasan*[2] and eating less help considerably in asthma.

Kakasaheb is quite well. He sends his blessings.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3975

174. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Y. M.,
October 10, 1930

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I have your letter. I got the tomatoes, lemons and papayas sent by you and Nirmalabehn. It irks me that you should spend the least bit of time or money on such things. You have surely gone beyond the stage where you needed to give outward expression to your love. One may incur such expense if it is necessary—here it is not. We both keep good health. The exhibition seems to have gone off very well. I have also received the booklet[3] contaning quotations about swadeshi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G. N. 11555

[1] Deep breathing
[2] Lying still on one's back
[3] By Nandlal; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 9/14-10-1930.

175. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 10, 1930

CHI. MANGALA,

Your handwriting is gradually improving. I can see from your letters that you are trying. Learn well by heart the chapters of the *Gita.* Be particular about the pronunciation. Is Pushpa learning anything by heart?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11090. Courtesy: Pushpa Naik

176. LETTER TO NARAYAN MORESHWAR KHARE

October 11, 1930

CHI. PANDITJI,

I have your letter. I hope your fever has completely left you. I approve of your idea of reading the *Ramayana* among the village people and cultivating contacts with them by that means. But do not let the opportunity for contacts with them be your motive for reading the *Ramayana*. If you read the *Ramayana* among them, it should be only in order that they may learn wisdom. If you incidentally get an opportunity of coming into contact with the villagers, that should of course be welcome. That is, you should start reading the *Ramayana* with the intention of keeping up the practice. Or you may read it occasionally as a means of cultivating contact with the people, as you do many other things for the same purpose; that would, then, be a different thing. Understand the distinction between the two points of view. I don't think I shall be able to write the reminiscences of Gokhale. My preoccupation with spinning will let me do nothing else.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 240. Courtesy: Lakshmibai Khare

177. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 11, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. The postcard addressed to you at Patna does not seem to have reached you, for I had asked you in it to send me a wire but I did not get any. I now learn from the letter that your mother-in-law has passed away and that both Jayaprakash and you have been a good deal shaken. Why should we ever grieve over death, which no one can escape? Moreover, the lady was quite ill. She hasbeen released from her suffering. Hence, those whom she has left behind suffer because of their selfishness. Your duty now is to see that you get strong quickly. I don't think your disease has yet left you. For some time, you may also write directly to me. This in addition to the letters which you should continue to send through the Ashram. May God grant patience in suffering to you all. I keep good health. The weight is 104. I think that is quite good.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3372

178. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 11, 1930

CHI. MOTIBEHN,

At last you have written to me, after having kept me without a letter for a long time. Treat all children who are put under your care as your own. If you learn by heart some chapters of the *Gita*, you will find that you feel more peaceful in mind. If not more, learn only one verse at a time. Try to memorize a verse after you have understood its meaning and learn to pronounce each word in it correctly. Vithal, Mahavir and some others can do it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3746

179. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 11, 1930

CHI. MAHAVIR,

I got your letter. Who else is there with you in Siddhapur? Wherever you go, write to me regularly and give me all news, whether important or unimportant.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6219

180. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 11, 1930

BHAI VITHALDAS,

I have received your letter, along with the figures sent by you. I know that stocks of khadi are again accumulating. Do not lose heart. According to me, the flood has not reached full tide yet. If we have faith, it is bound to do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9774

181. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,
October 11, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

I have your letter. You are greedy. It is of course good to be greedy when you are young. But while being greedy one should also exercise restraint. Hence, of all the things you may wish to learn you should first learn what will be more useful for service. Another restraint is that whatever you learn you must do thoroughly and not leave half way. Do learn sewing. But do not be hasty. One reason why

you do not enjoy weaving is that you do not yet know it well. In the beginning all efforts at learning seem uninteresting. Many people do not like arithmetic because they find it difficult to learn. But those who know it can enjoy it as much as they would a novel. Another reason is that you do not still have enough love for the poor. How can a person who realizes that every yard of khadi that he produces will help to cover the back of a poor man fail to take pleasure in producing it? A mother does with joy for her child and God for his *bhakta* what other people would find a boring task. The truth is that we do not as yet feel real love of service. A servant should find equal pleasure in all forms of service. All service given sincerely is of equal worth. Ponder over the verse "He who offers me with devotion a leaf, a flower, or fruit or water. . ."[1] Ask me if you still do not understand.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Write to Brother and give him my blessings and tell him that the books sent by him have been received. Of course you both have Kakasaheb's blessings.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

182. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 12, 1930

CHI. RAMABEHN,

I have your letter. I received it after a long interval. But it is a perfect one. I believe that the strength which women possess is given them by God. Hence they are bound to succeed in whatever they undertake. It is very good indeed that Hamidabehn is with you. Though a girl, she strikes me as a mature and saintly woman. Ba, it seems, is doing some good running about. I see that all the women

[1] *Bhagavad Gita,* IX, 26

will have to shoulder a still heavier responsibility than they are doing. But let us bear constantly in mind those three verses from Chapters IX and X[1] which we have recently learnt to recite, and remain unconcerned.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5325

183. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI PANDYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 12, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

The Ashram is for the men of ordinary category. It cannot be said that the Ashram is curt towards Girirajji if he has reached the height you regard him to have reached, but that his great soul can no more be accommodated there. The decision taken by Narandas is spiritual. The spiritual point of view is to act as guided by whatever ideals we have accepted for the Ashram. Personally I think Giriraj has fallen into delusion. I would not engage myself or involve another in the regimen undertaken by us if it is not going to help us realize the *atman*. It is possible that God might live in the house of a scavenger and He may not be found in that of a Vedantin. Our action should accord with our lofty sentiments. Giriraj is a noble person, he is humble too; he will therefore come round after his ramblings. The credit will go to the Ashram even if we were to learn from him in case he proves our way to be wrong. Please remain calm.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 326. Courtesy: Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

[1] Of *Bhagavad Gita*

184. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 12, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

I have your letter. There is not the slightest reason to be grieved by the death of friends. None ever dies before his time. The notion of untimely death is a delusion. Even the death of a day-old baby is not an untimely one. It only means that the actions to be performed through that body had been performed. We feel pained by death only because of our ignorance and selfishness. We feel agitated over thedeath of friends or others because of our ignorance of the soul's attributes and because we do not wish ourselves to die. Yes, we owe a duty to the widows. If they come and can observe the rules, in my view at any rate there should be no objection to admitting them. However, as the responsibility lies on Narandas and Gangabehn, you should discuss the matter with them. Show this letter to them.

Though Kalavati is indeed in a hard plight, she will be fully tried and the strength of her mind tested. I am writing to her. I have received the Hindi translation of Kumarappa's speech. Mahavir Prasad's zeal is beyond praise. He has already started working for the third edition of the *Gita.*

You ought to get over your depression now. If any depressing thoughts or impure desires arise in your mind, note them every time and drive them out. Do not let your mind dwell on them; do not even debate within your mind how they occurred, but keep the mind engaged in good thoughts. The golden means of doing which is that the mind, too, should be kept fully occupied in some external activity, so that it may have no time at all to wander.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 5254

185. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI MADHAVJI THAKKAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 12, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I have your letter. We can easily get rid of any habit when we begin to dislike it. And a woman with your strong resolve should experience no difficulty at all in doing so. You are doing well in clinging to the diet which you have adopted. As we observe others becoming more indifferent towards or losing faith in the programme of picketing liquor-booths, etc., we should become more vigilant ourselves and let our faith shine more brightly. That is bound to produce an effect.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6800

186. LETTER TO ROHINI KANAIYALAL DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR
October 12, 1930

CHI. ROHINI,

I have your beautiful letter. If Hamida learns Gujarati well, surely the credit will go to you. It is because picketing of liquor-booths is a difficult job that it has been entrusted to women. It requires the utmost purity of character and the deepest faith. Women possess both in greater measure than men.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2653

187. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 12, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

You need not spare me the trouble of reading a letter. A father is always eager to get a letter from his son or daughter. For about ten or fifteen days, I lived only on, vegetables, milk and curds; that is, I had stopped eating even raisins and dates. I have started taking these again from today. After some time, I will go back to vegetables. In that way I shall discover what suits me best. If I can do with vegetables, that will save money too. But I will not persist [too long in the experiment]. The present weight of 104 Ib. is quite good. How is your health?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9290

188. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 12, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. You should certainly write to me and let me know your thoughts on Manibehn's departure, as also all that you think about other matters. Your last letter was all right. Let the world see us as we are. We should especially show ourselves as we are to those whom we love. No one can immediately put into practice his or her ideals. But everyone can strive to do so. This you do everyday. Hence the end is bound to be good.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G. S. Gangabehne, p. 44; also C.W. 8761. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

189. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 12, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

Both the interpretations are good. The one suggested by Nathji, however, is likely to be more authoritative.

It is our good fortune that you have recovered your peace of mind.

Enter Sarojinidevi's heart. She needs the warmth of human sympathy. Try to find some free time for such tasks. You will have to undertake much more responsible tasks in future.

Are you now free from worry about your health? Do you feel all right? What do you eat?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10238; also C.W. 6686. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

190. LETTER TO DURGA GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 12, 1930

CHI. DURGA,

Got your letter. I am never late in replying. In fact, you don't write and therefore feel that my letter reaches you late. If the postscript to your letter is in Satyadevi's hand, her handwriting is as good as yours. Therefore she should surpass you in a short while.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Virat Vatsalata, p. 31

[1] The original was in Gujarati.

191. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*October 13, 1930*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

I hope you have got the straying letters. I am sure they have not been intercepted, but have been delayed in transit from place to place.

It is evident, my 'scolding' as you call it, was well deserved, for you have returned in a dilapidated condition. On the top of that, you had a bad accident. Now you would be as good as your word and take full rest. I was much relieved to understand that you had been visiting the Sardar. That showed that you were well enough to travel.

I am still at the Gandiv wheel, and my rapture continues, if anything it has increased. I am spinning scientifically now, i.e., with a yard measure underneath the track of the yarn as it is drawn. I can draw 8 threads in one minute and I pull at least two feet to each draw. This means 240 rounds or 300 yards per hour. But of course, I do nothingof the sort in an hour but that is not because of any defect in the Gandiv. The less output is due to breakages and consequent waste of time. But since adopting the method of concentration, breakages have very considerably reduced. I therefore often reach 200 yards per hour which for me is very good. You will publish nothing just yet of my views about the Gandiv. I want the report of those who may try at the Ashram. Most of all I want your report, if you have the leisure and the inclination to give it a trial. I know that you all have not the time that I have for these experiments. You will therefore do whatever is possible and if you think it necessary. I, having nothing else to do, may easily exaggerate the merits of a thing which I may have disregarded before as I did and which now gives comparative satisfaction.

[1] The 100th hymn, referred to in the postscript, was translated on this date; *Vide* "*Ashram Bhajanavali*", 15-12-1930. The letter however bears the date "12-10-1930" in Mirabehn's handwriting.

For the past two days I have gone back to raisins and dates just to see if the cold I have had anything to do with the vegetables. Whether it is a coincidence or what, it is as good as gone today. In any event health is quite good. Weight 104.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Today I have finished the 100th hymn. Only two remain to be translated of the Hindustani hymns. This means I am nearly half through with this work.

From the original: C.W. 5415. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9649

192. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 13, 1930

CHI. RAMDAS,

As long as you are free, I must get a letter from you every week. How is your health? Do you digest food properly? Do you still take medicine? What work have you taken up? How is Nimu? And Sumitra? What happened about the khadi implements centre? The real test will be now. But there is nothing which we did not expect.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6860

193. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 13, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. Inspire Dhiru and Rambhau to write to me. Walk slowly. Do not take upon yourself much work. I liked your having gone away from Almora. Do not take upon yourself any big responsibility. Teach those who come. Remain satisfied with what the

three of you can do. Who are the persons now in Almora whom I know?

Is Mrs. Cook there? Where is Mohan Joshi? Has Shantilal recovered completely? What do you do about milk there? What is the expense incurred? Write to me regularly. For the time being, Kakasaheb has suggested *Savyasachi* as the name for your spinning-wheel and it seems to be good. The only fault perhaps may be that it is a Sanskrit word. There is no harm if you stop thinking about yourself. 'Enjoy today, who has seen tomorrow'.

There is food for Abha, too, in this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32938

194. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 9/14, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

Your packet was given to me late last evening. I will certainly inquire why you got the post late. But that will often happen and you should not, therefore, worry if you do not get the post on the day expected. You should, however, be regular in posting the letters at your end.

Both of us were weighed today. We are weighed every Thursday. Kakasaheb's weight is between 115 and 116, which means that there is some improvement. My weight came to 104. I have discontinued taking enema since four days ago. I eat *tandalja* and that has had a beneficial effect. I have not given up *ratalu* altogether. I intend to take it twice or thrice in a week. On the other days I will eat *patakalu* or some other vegetable. I still continue tomatoes. So far, I have not felt the need for fruits. If the weight remains steady, I intend to continue as I am doing. My promise that I will take care of my health in whatever experiments I make should reassure all of you.

I do not feel that your letters are too long. I should certainly like to see that the burden on you does not increase. Your work is to see the letters which I write, to distribute them to the addressees and to write to me. I think your having to send letters written by others is an extra duty. It is so because really speaking it is not right for me to

express opinions from here. It is a mere accident that we are able to send and receive letters.

I got Radha's long reply. She writes in it about . . .[1] having stolen something and other such matters. She says that Keshu was upset when he knew about the thing. What are the facts? Read the letter I shall write to . . .[2].

I have nothing to say about your decision regarding Giriraj. I think it is perfectly correct. You alone know all the facts. I hope to know by and by what has been done about the children. What can one say about Amidas? His courage inspires nothing but respect. I feel unhappy in so far as I was responsible for his vow of not taking milk.

Now that his father is there, I don't worry any more about him. We should do all we can to look after him. It is God who will protect him.

I suppose Bhagwanji will accept responsibility for Manibehn's expenses. I saw Pyarelal. No harm has been done to his health. It is weak, though. I believe I shall now be able to see him frequently. He gets bread and milk at present.

I didn't see any letter from Chitalia. I don't remember at the moment the sum which he requires as help. I think I did ask someone to note it. His letter is likely to be in one of the files. Shivabhai and Chhaganlal will probably know about it. Perhaps Raojibhai, too, may know. Chitalia himself will be able to tell you. Has he asked for

Rs. 1,500 for the building? Ascertain the position and do what you think best. If necessary, you may write to me again about the matter. Read the letter I have written to him.

October 13, 1930

I read the new ordinance. You, too, will have to think about the matter. I myself wish to say nothing from here. Discuss the matter with the person who is the leader there and go on doing what you think right. I am not surprised by the ordinance. I did expect some such measure.

[1] The names have been omitted.
[2] *ibid*

Tuesday morning, October 14, 1930

In this series, I have dealt cursorily with the importance of vows, but it is perhaps necessary to consider at some length their bearing on a godly life. Now that I have discussed all our vows except that of swadeshi, let us consider the necessity of vows. There is a powerful school of thinkers who concede the propriety of observing certain rules but do not acknowledge the necessity of vows. They go even so far as to suggest that vows are a sign of weakness and may even be harmful. Again they say that, if a rule is subsequently discovered to be inconvenient or sinful, to adhere to it after such discovery would be positively wrong. They say: "It is a good thing to abstain from liquor, but what harm is there in taking it occasionally, say on medical grounds? A pledge of total abstinence would be a needless handicap; and as with liquor, so with other things. Why may we not even speak an untruth for a good end?" This argument does not convince me. A vow means unflinching determination, and helps us against temptations. Determination is worth nothing if it bends before discomfort. The universal experience of humanity supports the view that progress isimpossible without inflexible determination. There cannot be a vow to commit a sin. Such a vow represents a wicked nature. In the case of a vow first thought to be meritorious but later found to be sinful, there arises a clear necessity to give it up. But no one takes, or ought to take, vows about dubious matters. Vows can be taken only on points of universally recognized principles, which, however, we do not habitually act upon. The possibility of sin in such a case is more or less imaginary. A devotee of Truth cannot stop to consider if someone will not be injured by his telling the truth, for he believes that truth can never do harm. So also about total abstinence. The abstainer will either make an exception as regards medicine, or will be prepared to risk his life in fulfilment of his full vow. What does it matter if we happen to lose our lives through a pledge of total abstinence? There can be no guarantee that our lives will be prolonged by liquor, and even if life is thus prolonged for a moment, it may be ended the very next through some other agency. On the other hand, the example of a man who gives up his life rather than his pledge is likely to wean drunkards from liquor and thus become a great power for good in the world. Only they can hope some time to

see God who have nobly determined to bear witness to the faith that is in them even at the cost of life itself.

Taking vows is not a sign of weakness but of strength. To do at any cost what one ought to do constitutes a vow. It becomes a bulwark of strength. It makes no difference whether such a resolve is called a vow or known by some other name. A man, who says that he will do something "as far as possible" betrays either his pride or his weakness, though he himself may attribute it to his humility. There is, in fact, not a trace of humility in such an attitude of mind. I have noticed in my own case, as well as in that of others, that the limitation "as far as possible" provides a fatal loophole. To do something "as far as possible" is to succumb to the very first temptation. There is no sense in saying that we will observe truth "as far as possible". Even as no businessman will look at a note in which a man promises to pay a certain amount on a certain date "as far as possible", so will God refuse to accept a promissory note drawn by a man who will observe truth "as far as possible".

God is the very image of the vow. God would cease to be God if He swerved from His own laws even by a hair's breadth. The sun is a great keeper of observances; hence the possibility of measuring timeand publishing almanacs. He has created in us the faith that he always rises and will for ever continue to rise, and thereby given us a sense of security. All business depends upon men fulfilling their promises. There could be no commerce if merchants did not regard themselves as bound by their word to one another. We thus see that keeping a vow is a universal practice. Are such promises less necessary in character building or self-realization? We should, therefore, never doubt the necessity of vows for the purpose of self-purification and self-realization.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

About the Gandiv spinning-wheel and about my diet you will get some news in my letter to Mirabehn.

There are 63 letters today.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

195. LETTER TO FENNER BROCKWAY

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
October 15, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

I see your name among the senders of the telegram of birthday greetings from London. I send my thanks to you and the other friends through you, as I do not know the Secretary's address.

I hope there is no after effect left of the wretched accident[1] you had near Madras.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 750 (34), Pt. I, p. 279

196. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 15, 1930

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. Mirabehn too had made some reference.

No one is perfect in this world. Our duty is to rid ourselves of the imperfections and that is what human effort is for. Despair has no place as long as we put in our own efforts. In spiritual matters we need infinitely greater courage than what we need in worldly matters. One should never give up self-confidence. Faith can make everything possible.

I too hold that Pujya Malaviyaji will not fall ill. In fact, I believe that he will have true rest and peace in the jail.[2] He very much needed both for many years. God has thus granted him both.

[1] Fenner Brockway had met with a car accident in late 1927. *Vide* "Letter to A. Fenner Brockway", 11-2-1928.

[2] Madan Mohan Malaviya was arrested a second time on August 27 while attending the meeting of the Congress Working Committee. He was sentenced to six months' simple imprisonment.

Give an account of your health in the next letter.

I hope you will have no apprehension if khadi accumulates. Are you making an experiment in regard to the dairy?

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6187. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

197. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

Y. M.,

October 16, 1930

MY DEAR ANAND,

The authorities have given me your greetings wire. it shows that Vidya is now with you. I am glad. I hope she is keeping well.

Love to you both.

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope you got my previous letter.

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

198. LETTER TO LILAVATI

October 16, 1930

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. I was glad to know that you have remained calm. What was the cause of your fasting for three days? Don't forget that you are only a child. A child should not take upon itself the burden of the whole world. Really speaking, all of us are children. There is only one grown up being, God. He shoulders the burden of all. Why, then, need we worry? All that we should do is to serve Him as His slaves.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9317

199. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI PANDYA

October 16, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. Your intentions are no doubt pure but one should never be content with one's purity of motive[alone]. The necessity of knowledge has been accepted for the reason that one may not commit an error in spite of a pure motive. This also you should know for certain that as you achieve purity the Ashram too becomes pure to that extent. The purity of the Ashram is not different from that of any Ashramite. As far as the Ashram goes, there is no one who can surpass Narandas in the matter of rendering help in spiritual difficulties. Totaramji can also help.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 327. Courtesy: Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

200. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Thursday evening [*October 16, 1930*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got the letters sent by you. I write this letter specially regarding Amidas. It will, therefore, be immediately cleared. Will Amidas agree to take raw eggs? There are two kinds of eggs, one to which exception may be taken and the other unexceptionable. The former are those which ultimately produce chicken, and the unexceptionable are those which produce no life. Hens lay such eggs without their having been inseminated by cocks. This is a well known fact. Parnerkar will probably know about it. Such eggs are available in the market. Mostly Europeans look after the production of such eggs. There is a farm for this purpose near Miraj. You will find some correspondence on this subject in my file. You need not, however, search for it. Many Parsis in Ahmedabad will be able to give you information about where such eggs are available. Personally I believe that eggs of this kind are less

[1] As in the printed source

objectionable than milk. In eating them, we do not deprive any creature of its food, as we do by taking milk.

If Amidas agrees, obtain such eggs immediately. They are to be used in this manner. Break an unfertilised egg, mix its contents with eight ounces of water and keep the mixture in a bottle. Give him an ounce of this mixture every hour. He will soon gain strength. The mixture will completely serve the purpose of milk. I can say that Manu's life was saved by this mixture. Such eggs are a hundred times better than cod-liver oil. Tell Amidas that if there is any sin in acting upon this advice, I take it upon myself. I have not publicly advocated the use of such eggs because, when self-indulgence is on the increase and all kinds of medicines are being consumed without hesitation, I did not think it proper to add one more to the list. Amidas's case is quite different. I hope Parnerkar has recovered.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Please reply to this soon.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I; also *Bapuna Patro—9: Narandas Gandhine*, Pt. I, pp. 144-5.

201. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

[Before *October 17, 1930*][1]

CHI. SUSHILA,

This time your letter gave detailed information. If Sita is given enough fruit to eat, she need have no vegetables at all. For the present, I think fresh milk, fruit and curds, which should not be sour, will be all right for her. If her teeth are strong enough, she may be allowed to chew a few hard biscuits or pieces of *khakhara* during the day. She should learn to chew properly what she eats. Madhavjibhai's two children are being brought up on this diet, and they have radiant health. Have you consulted a doctor for your ears? I think Manilal informed me that you intended to consult somebody. If you once get them examined by a doctor whom you know and understand the

[1] From the reference to the forgotten friend, it appears this was written before the letter to the addressee dated October 17, 1930.

nature of the trouble, you will stop worrying. Go on writing to me regularly. I have forgotten the name of that friend of mine—the lady who had become very friendly with me at the time of your wedding.

Give my blessings to all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4781

202. LETTER TO PATRICK QUINN

October 17, 1930

DEAR MR. QUINN,

The accompanying is a letter about a friend who is on his death-bed at the Ashram. If necessary will you please refer to Major Martin and post the letter immediately. It may then reach even tomorrow morning and who knows may be instrumental in saving a life!

Have you sent the *Social Reformer* to Sardar Vallabhbhai? Here is a letter for him to see regarding a common sick friend. And have you referred his daughter's letter to him?

If you ordered the dates yesterday, they have not yet been delivered to me.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

N.B.

The Ashram people have been complaining for the past two weeks that they get the post two or three days late.

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Pt. III, p. 288

203. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 17, 1930

CHI. SHARDA,

Your letter. But how did you fall ill? Was there any mistake about your diet? As far as your asthma is concerned you must treat it so ruthlessly that it does not visit you again. You will succeed if you are firm. Do you take sun-bath? Do you massage your chest? Do you keep your bowels clean? After the morning prayers you must do deep-breathing on an empty stomach. This would clear the lungs. We must take deep breaths so that the oxygen may clear our lungs. You must understand this point from Chimanlal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9892. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

204. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 17, 1930

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I have your two letters. It is not likely now that you will get this. Don't take your worries with you to the jail. We have learnt from the *Gita* that God takes upon Himself our cares. Remember, moreover, that when our thoughts are waiting for an opportunity to show themselves in action, they become more powerful than action. Those, therefore, who are ever ready for work, their thoughts, too, bear fruit. You should not mind if you get rest and the others outside are tested.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5495

205. LETTER TO GOKIBEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 17, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I was very glad to have your letter. Death is a highway which all of us must tread, whether we wish or no. And though countless travellers tread it, it ever seems deserted. Hence this is also the path of supreme peace. He who is afraid to take it, feels agitated; he who remains fearless enjoys the bliss of peace.

Jai Shrikrishna from
MOHANDAS

SMT. GOKIBEHN

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9811

206. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 17, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. I have never believed anything against Dahibehn. I have seen no sign of impurity in her conduct or in her eyes. I think she has done well in refusing to leave the place. I had a letter from Raojibhai.

The time seems to have come now for the women to shoulder a heavy responsibility. God will help them to do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9291

207. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 17, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (DESAI),

I have your letter. I shall expect letters from you from time to time. For the present, you should write regularly. Do not get disheartened. I saw Pyarelal again. I shall see him once more. He has no complaint now. I read in the papers about the Government having taken possession of the Sevashram hospitals too.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1807

208. LETTER TO RATILAL SHETH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 17, 1930

BHAI RATILAL,

I have your letter. You may send me the *valkal*[1]. In the past also someone had sent a garment like that from Africa. I think it was given away to some person at his request.

I hope all your difficulties in your business are over. *Vandemataram* to Narbheram and other friends.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7165

[1] Garment made from tree bark

209. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 17, 1930

CHI. PUNJABHAI,

I have your letter. I am sure you will not be left free for many days. When you are back in jail, try not to fall ill. If you have discovered the cause of your illness, remove it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4017

210. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 17, 1930

CHI. SUSHILA,

I got your letter. I must apologize to Bharati. She can certainly ask what sort of a friend I must be if, after having been such a friend, I forget even her name! But won't she show regard for the infirmities of old age and forgive me? If she doesn't mind, ask her to write to me. Personally I believe that the only remedy for your ear complaint is better general health. Since you also believe so, you should take Kuhne-baths and sun-baths as I have advised you to do. You should also do sufficient exercise. You should go out for a walk in the early morning. What is the condition of Tara's head? I was pleased to see Nanabhai's handwriting. Tara should send my blessings to them both.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Did Manilal lose 40 Ib.? It could not be. Inquire again.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4773

211. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 17, 1930

CHI. RAMDAS,

I got your letter. Why pine over what you do not get? Formerly, prisoners were not allowed to receive any visitors. Now they have relaxed the rule somewhat. For the present, therefore, I receive visitors. Is it not our principle that once we are in prison, we must not mind if we are not permitted to receive visitors? Rather, that is a matter of honour for a prisoner. If we think this way, we would not feel hurt. Does Sumitra still suffer from constipation? She must get over it. I have already asked you concerning Nimu. Now that you have fallen in love with reading, do not leave it off. Read a little of whatever you like, even if you get only ten minutes for it. When you go again, try to improve your arithmetic.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarat; original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

212. LETTER TO DURGA GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 17, 1930

CHI. DURGA,

I am not satisfied with your letter so far. Tell me your daily routine. When you start writing regularly, you may merit a different adjective. Your handwriting is good this time. I was glad to see Maitri's handwriting at the end of your letter. I shall await her full letter.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Virat Vatsalata, p. 32

[1] The original was in Gujarati.

213. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 17, 1930

CHI. KALAVATI,

I have your letter after a long time. We should form the habit of being indifferent to what pleases or does not. Wherever we may have to stay by way of duty should be agreeable to us. What is like or dislike to one desirous of serving! Do not fear people's talk. Stick to your decision. That woman alone who does not waver from her resolve even at the gallows truly observes dharma.

Write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5256

214. LETTER TO RADHABEHN GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 18, 1930

CHI. RADHIKA,

I have your letter. In your previous letter I saw no impropriety. You had only poured out in it the thoughts which agitated your mind and you had a right to do so.

Humility cannot be learnt through formal training, but it grows of itself as one cultivates the spirit of non-violence. Outward humility of behaviour, which we find in royal families, can be learnt in a formal manner. It is, however, not true humility, but is only a part of cultured manners. In the humility which I advise, one has to forget the sense of 'I' and become a mere cipher. Can that be learnt through any lessons? But one who has realized the body's transitoriness and has in some measure become aware of the self soon becomes humble. What fine humility would it be on your part if, even though I should speak in anger to you, you merely listened with lowered eyes like those of a poor cow and did not even feel angry with me? Such humility comes

only when you have learnt true self-respect. If you have not understood my meaning, ask me again and again. I shall not get tiredof explaining it. Have you completely recovered now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8687. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

215. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 18, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. Describe to me your experience in Bombay. You are not well advised in refusing to get your throat examined by a doctor. A disease must be nipped in the bud. A stitch in time saves nine. This saying is completely true.

I interpret image-worship in two senses. In one form of image-worship, the person who contemplates the image becomes absorbed in the contemplation of the qualities for which it stands. This is image-worship in its wholesome form. In the other form of it, the person who contemplates the image does not think about the qualities but looks upon the image itself as the primary thing. This is idolatry and is an evil.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10239; also C.W. 6687. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

216. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 18, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your wire, but very late. Did you get my letter afterwards? Both of you must have recovered your peace of mind now. I see from your wire that now your health at any rate is all right. The weakness must disappear. Do you go out for a walk daily? What does Jayaprakash intend to do?

My health is good. I have again started eating dates and raisins.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3373

217. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI MADHAVJI THAKKAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 18, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I got your letter. From others' letters I see that you had fever. How is that? I hope no one there will fall ill. The time for real work seems to be approaching now. Even when working the hardest, we should never feel worried within. It is God who does everything and we are only instruments in His hands. If this truth sinks into our heart, we shall never feel worried.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6801

218. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 18, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

God is testing you in every way and so far you have emerged successful. Why should we grieve when Tarini died discharging his duty? Because Tarini was performing much service we may grieve out of selfishness, but from an unselfish point of view Tarini's death was preferable. Such a frail body caused his soul much pain. We may believe for certain that a dutiful soul like his is bound to be reincarnated and serve even more.

I have received Satis Babu's translation[1]. I am tempted to brush up my Bengali in order to understand it well but the thought of charkha deters me. See the annotation on the tenth[2] shloka for "Better is knowledge than practice."[3] The meaning will then be clear.But if you have doubts still, write to me. How are Charu and Arun? Give my love to all brothers and sisters.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1672

[1] Presumably of *Anasaktiyoga*; *vide* "Letter to Hemprabha Das Gupta", 14-12-1930.

[2] Of *Bhagavad Gita*, Chapter XII, which reads: "If thou art also unequal to this method of constant practice, concentrate on service for Me; even thus serving Me thou shalt attain perfection."

[3] *Bhagavad Gita*, XII. 12

219. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 19, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter from Bombay.

I was glad to learn that you were feeling better. You must not let the mind get into the state described by you. If you work with detachment, you will refuse to be rushed and you will refuse to let anything get on your nerves. Having put one's whole heart into a thing entrusted or undertaken, one can leave the result to God. *Then* there can be no rush and no worry. You know the story of King Janak. He was Duty personified. His capital was in flames. He knew it. But some busybody reported it to him. His answer was, "What care I whether my capital is reduced to ashes or remains intact!" He had done all he could to save it. His going to the scene of operations and fussing would have distracted the attention of the fire-brigade and others and made matters worse. He was but an agent of providence. As such he had done his part and was therefore 'quits' and at ease. So may, must, we be, if we have done our best, whether our work flourishes or perishes.

The Gandiv still gives me joy and satisfaction. Nothing has yet broken down. Whereas I took five hours before, I now finish well within 3 hours. The afternoon is now free for other work except for the *takli*. So on your travels you may take the Gandiv if it gives you as much satisfaction as it gives to me. The cost of the pattern that I have is one rupee including the spindle and a box scooped in the platform and an incredibly simple device for keeping the spindle on one side of the platform. For price and simplicity this wheel has no match. I have discarded the bamboo holders and the wretched glass cylinders. I think I told you this. And it works without any foreign sound at all.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5416. Courtesy: Mirabehn

220. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 19, 1930

CHI. RAMABEHN,

I hope you have not been overcome with fear. Chhaganlal will have some peace now and the people will be tested. For the women, too, the time of testing is approaching. My faith is becoming stronger. We should become all the more resolute and vigilant, and be ever filled with joy in our hearts.

You should write to me more regularly now. God will assuredly bless us.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Whenever there is further news about Dhiru and Vimu, let me have it. Where is Kevalram? And Nirmala? Ask them to write to me.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5326

221. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 19, 1930

CHI. RAIHANA,

You seem to be a very clever girl. After writing two or three letters in Gujarati, the poor girl now writes to me in Urdu! But how is it love which asks for a return? All the same, I will do my duty and make the return. I found no difficulty in reading the letter since you have written it in such a clear and legible hand and the words you have chosen are so simple. Now onwards you may write half your letter in Urdu. It will help me since it will brush up my Urdu, and I may even write to you in Urdu provided all of you do not laugh at me among yourselves. If I do that, will you not then consider it a full return?

And you are as jealous as you are cunning, and jealous of no other than Father. But no matter; now that he is becoming youngerday after day, he will ask you to give him an account of your work. I could not decipher one or two words in your letter. I have kept the letter with me, and I will read it again and decipher those words; at any rate I will try to do so. The letter paper is full now, and there is no space to apply a third adjective to you. About that some other time.

Khuda Hafiz.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9622

222. LETTER TO KASUMBA GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 19, 1930

CHI. KASUMBA,

I see that there is still no harmony between Jaisukhlal and you. Having come to know you better, I don't feel inclined to lay the blame on you. It is only that you two have different natures and, therefore, cannot live in harmony with each other. In these circumstances, it is best that you should now live apart from each other. God has blessed you with a large family. You ought not to feel unhappy that you have no son. We make no difference between a son and a daughter. A daughter is the same to us as a son. Moreover, all the girls are wise. You should, therefore, live perfectly contented. Jaisukhlal will meet your expenses. Be devoted to each other, though living apart. Don't feel unhappy in any way. Neither of you is following an improper path. When you can forget yourself and feel one with Jaisukhlal, you may certainly go back and live with him. If you encourage the girls to go and live in the Ashram, they will be happier in life.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Write to me a full letter.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U /III

223. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

Y. M.,
October 19, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

I have your letter. I had also received the previous one. I have already written separately to Kalavati.[1] I am now writing to Benarsidas.[2] You did well to inform me. Behn Shanta[3] must have fully recovered now. She requires hip-baths and frictionbaths. Consults Kuhne's[4] book for a description of both. It is the experience of women that friction-bath brings quick and significant benefit. You seem to have had a fair measure of success in stopping funeral feasts. If pure-minded people make a sustained effort they are bound to succeed sooner or later. The difficulties experienced in sending Kalavati home should have been anticipated. That is what the world has come to. When the times are changing people of older generation are bound tofeel some of the things of the new age irksome. If the new age bears with their displeasure while firmly going its way, it will prevail without much noise.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5290\

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Kalavati Trivedi", 17-10-1930.
[2] Benarsidas Chaturvedi, who had lost his wife
[3] Addressee's younger sister, residing in the Ashram at this time
[4] Dr. Louis Kuhne

224. LETTER TO BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 19, 1930

BHAI BANARASIDAS,

Bhai Kashinath has given me the news of your wife's death. A great calamity has befallen you. We have given up the fear of death, but we grieve out of selfishness. I understand you have children of tender age. But why grieve over that too? Such things do happen in the world. All such events are moments of trial to us. Only such an occasion can prove if all our assiduously acquired knowledge is truly assimilated. May God grant you peace.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2525

225. LETTER TO AJITENDU DE

October 20, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

I have carefully gone through your letter. It is difficult to advise you without coming in personal contact with you. But generally I can say that if you hear the clean voice of conscience you should follow it at any cost. If you have the slightest doubt, you should obey your parents' wishes.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. AJITENDU DE
8 HARI PAL'S LANE
BEADEN STR. P. O.
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G. N. 10515

226. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

October 20, 1930

MY DEAR HENRY,

I had your and Millie's loving message. You are never absent from my mind. How is Leon?

My love to you all,

BHAI

PROPERTY OF H.S.L. POLAK
265 STRAND
LONDON, W.C.R.

From the original : Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy : National Archives of India

227. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 20, 1930

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I felt happy on reading your letter. I keep good health. How is your health? I have no doubt at all that you two will always use your gifts in the service of noble causes. Do you intend to stay in Poona for the present?

To you both,

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6596

228. LETTER TO TEHMINA P. JOSHI[1]

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 20, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I was very glad to read your letter. I very well remember all that we talked about. I am pleased to see your name in the papers occasionally.[2] I would have been surprised [only] if you did not work as much as you do. I had observed your capacity in our very first meeting.

Please write to me regularly.

How is Bhai Godrej's health? How is his farm work getting along? Please convey my *Vandemataram* to him.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 114

229. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON, POONA,
[On or before *October 21, 1930*][3]

PANDITJI NEHRU
MUSSOORIE

PRESS REPORTS HEALTH DISTURBING. PLEASE WIRE FULLY. SUGGEST ISSUING DAILY BULLETIN. LOVE.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, (34) 750, Pt. I, p. 269

[1] Younger sister of Ardeshir Godrej who had donated Rs. 100,000 for the cause of temperance and untouchability, and had in consequence lost his Government contracts.

[2] As a speaker at meetings on temperance and untouchability

[3] This was forwarded by Major R. V. Martin to G. F. S. Collins, Secretary to the Government of Bombay, with the following note on October 21, 1930:

"Gandhi wishes to send the attached telegram to Motilal Nehru. Will you please let me know if there is any objection to its dispatch?"

230. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 16/21, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. The occasional delay in your getting my letters can't be helped. "Make the best of today, for who knows what tomorrow will bring?" This is true of our present circumstances too. If the men in charge of the factory at Bardoli have not been arrested, what about the goods in factory? I read in newspapers that they, too, were confiscated.

It was a matter of surprise that the Ashram had remained free from malaria. At last it could remain so no longer. I think it can be kept free from it. In the malarial season, one should take care and see that one's stomach is light. Starchy and other indigestible foods, like pulses, should be avoided. If those who have escaped malaria so far take care, they will be able to preserve their health. The water in the well should be disinfected with potassium permanganate or chlorine. I think these can also be added in the water fetched from the river. If a few drops of the solution are poured into the river water where it is stored, it will acquire a light rose colour. After a while, the colour will settle at the bottom. You should consult a doctor for more information about this. I will write a separate letter about Amidas,[1] which is likely to be posted only tomorrow. Inform me on what day you get it.

Inform Jamnalalji that I do not request the authorities to bring anyone here. I did not do that even for Kakasaheb. Jamnalalji or anybody else who wishes to come may do so by trying on their own or through Government's kindness. I have been able to arrange that Pyarelal should see me from time to time. There is an element of selfishness in requesting to be provided with a companion and, therefore, I do not make such a request. What I should like is to be kept with all the others. But how can I expect such good fortune? Somebody who came to visit Kaka told him that Mathuradas, too, had made a similar request. I have already written to you about Giriraj. I don't feel that your decision is wrong.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 16-10-1930.

Write to Rajaji and tell him that generally I do not write to eminent leaders and, therefore, I will not write to him either. But I remember him every day.

Ask him to give me news about Lakshmi and Subbiah's wife. What state of health has he brought with him?

October 19, 1930

I see Prabhavati's name in your list of letters, but I don't find her letter. I don't think they have kept it back here. Either it must have been left out there or her name came to be included this time just because she writes every week. Anyway I had a wire from her giving me news about her health. She seems to be all right.

In Wardha they have been spinning on the *takli* very regularly. You must have read a description of their work in Balkrishna's letter. Bhau's speed is 132 rounds for half an hour. This is wonderful. You should find out how such speed can be acquired and publish a detailed description. My satisfaction in regard to the Gandiv spinning-wheel remains what it was; if anything, it has increased. Read my letters to Mirabehn and Ishwarlal Vimawala on the subject. The latter has written to me saying that he will send one more wheel to me too. Pay him for it and for the wheels which may be received in the Ashram. Send me your conclusions after you have tested the model. Also send me the figures of the count, strength and evenness of Kakasaheb's yarn received there.

Read what I have written in my letter to Maganbhai about the spindle-bearer in use in Bardoli. My own experience is that it is superior to the type fitted to the spinning-wheel in use in the Ashram and in all other models. If this is true, we should fit our spinning-wheels with the same type of spindle-bearer as they use in Bardoli. If my judgment is wrong, I should be corrected. If anyone prefers the type being used in the Ashram and if he has had experience of that being used in Bardoli, he may write to me about this matter. It is my belief that even from the point of view of speed the Bardoli spindle-bearer would ultimately be found superior to the others. If I get the necessary facility, I will try to fit even the Gandiv spinning-wheel with that type.

I wrote to you last Friday about Amidas. You must have received the letter. I may even get your reply before this letter is posted. Send me a wire if you have not received that letter. I will then discuss the matter again.

October 20, 1930

Read my letter about Kanta. It seems she wants to go out for a few days at least. Think about the matter. From here, what

I feel is that she may go for a few days wherever she likes. She is both truthful and brave. She will be able to look after herself. She will also keep any promise she makes. This is my own experience, however. You should do what you think best. Find out what she wishes.

Tuesday morning, Diwali,

October 21, 1930

My blessings to all the friends there. My *Vandemataram* and due regards to everyone. May we be filled with greater spirit of service during the next year, and become fitter instruments and more awake to our duty in that regard.

We make frequent use of the word '*yajna*'. We have raised spinning to the rank of a daily *mahayajna*. It is therefore necessary to think out the various implications of the term '*yajna*'. '*Yajna*' means an act directed to the welfare of others, done without desiring any return for it, whether of a temporal or spiritual nature. 'Act' here must be taken in its widest sense, and includes thought and word, as well as deed. 'Others' embraces not only humanity, but all life. Therefore, and also from the standpoint of ahimsa, it is not a *yajna* to sacrifice lower animals even with a view to serving humanity. It does not matter that animal sacrifice is supposed to find a place in the Vedas. It is enough for us that such sacrifice cannot stand the fundamental tests of Truth and Non-violence. I readily admit my incompetence in Vedic scholarship. But the incompetence, so far as this subject is concerned, does not worry me because, even if the practice of animal sacrifice be proved to have been a feature of Vedic society, it can form no precedent for a votary of ahimsa.

From this definition of *yajna* it follows that a primary sacrifice must be an act which conduces the most to the welfare of the greatest number in the widest area, and which can be performed by the largest number of men and women with the least trouble. It will not, therefore, be a *yajna*, much less a *mahayajna*, to wish or to do ill to

anyone else even in order to serve a so-called higher interest. And the *Gita* teaches, and experience testifies, that all action that cannot come under the category of *yajna* promotes bondage.

The world cannot subsist for a single moment without *yajna* in this sense and, therefore, the *Gita*, after having dealt with true wisdom in the second chapter, takes up in the third the means of attaining it and declares in so many words that *yajna* came with Creation itself. This body, therefore, has been given us only inorder that we may serve all Creation with it. And therefore, says the *Gita*, he who eats without offering *yajna* eats stolen food. Every single act of one who would lead a life of purity should be in the nature of *yajna*. *Yajna* having come to us with our birth, we are debtors all our lives and thus for ever bound to serve the universe. And even as a bondslave receives food, clothing and so on from the master whom he serves, so should we gratefully accept such gifts as may be assigned to us by the Lord of the universe. What we receive must be called a gift; for as debtors we are entitled to no consideration for the discharge of our obligations. Therefore we may not blame the Master if we fail to get it. Our body is His to be cherished or cast away according to His will. This is not a matter for complaint or even pity; on the contrary, it is a natural and even a pleasant and desirable state, if only we realize our proper place in God's scheme. We do indeed need strong faith, if we would experience this supreme bliss. "Do not worry in the least about yourself, leave all worry to God,"—this appears to be the commandment in all religions. This need not frighten anyone. He who devotes himself to service with a clear conscience will day by day grasp the necessity for it in greater measure and will continually grow richer in faith. The path of service can hardly be trodden by one who is not prepared to renounce self-interest and to recognize the conditions of his birth. Any service rendered by such a person will be tainted by selfishness. But, then, men of such utter selfishness are rare in this world. Consciously or unconsciously, every one of us does render some service or other. If we cultivate the habit of doing this service deliberately, our desire for service will steadily grow stronger and will make not only for our own happiness but also for that of the world at large.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

There are 58 letters today.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

231. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 23, 1930

CHI. SHARDA,

There is no question of jealousy when it comes to learning from somebody. Who says it is jealousy? Don't again let asthma come anywhere near you. Your handwriting is not bad at all. It will no doubt improve gradually. Where is Shakaribehn? Tell her or write to her that she should write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9893. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

232. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM D. SARAIYA

October 23, 1930

CHI. KAKU,

You wrote in a really beautiful handwriting. But your letter was a blank sheet of paper, so to say. You didn't even tell me what work you had in Bombay. Where do you live? Kakasaheb sends his blessings.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Do you pray? Do you understand the *Gita* correctly?

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2806. Courtesy: Purushottam D. Saraiya

233. LETTER TO PADMA

October 23, 1930

CHI. PADMA[1],

So you blame me! You yourself never write, but expect letters from me. What is the nature of the tumour in the throat? You should get that ascertained immediately. Did you show it to Gangabehn? Do you spin daily on Prabhubhai's spinning-wheel? I should be happy if you do. How fine it would be if you spin that number of rounds every day! How is Sharda's health? What do you read? What food do you take? Do you go to bed daily exactly at nine? What work did you do in the U.P.? Whom did you meet while there?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6113

234. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 23, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

I have your letter. It is the opinion of an experienced doctor that to guard against rheumatism in old age one must regularly take soda bicarb. You probably know that I must be taking nearly 20 grains of soda every day in one form or another. Plaster may help a little. The cause of the disease is inside the system. This pain is a warning to you not to mind expense on fruit. You should live mainly on milk and fruit. If you let the rays of the sun fall on the knees, that will help you. Eight in the morning is excellent time for doing that.

Kaku does not tell me in his letter what work he has taken up.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8762. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya; also *Bapuna Patro-*6: *G. S. Gangabehnne*, p. 44

[1] Daughter of Sitala Sahai

235. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 23, 1930

CHI. MANGALA,

I have your letter. Does your mind wander while you are reading the *Gita*? Do you follow the meaning of the verses? Tell Pushpa that if she insists on not learning anything, I shall have to pull her long nose and make it longer.

Your hand must be all right now. Does Kamala write to you occasionally? Ask her to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11091. Courtesy: Pushpa Naik

236. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

October 23, 1930

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have had no letter from you. I have asked you to write to me at least once a week so long as you are free. Reply to my questions.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

237. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 23, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

Your letter. Why should Satis Babu mourn the loss of Tarini? We all have to reach the same destination to which Tarini has gone. We must not grieve even out of selfishness. Tarini did not run the Pratishthan nor do you. God does it, we are merely the instruments. If we accept this, what does it matter if God transfers us from one assignment to another?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1673

238. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

Y. M.,
October 24, 1930

MY DEAR ANAND,

Your letter. The best way you can return Mother's love is to deny yourself the joy of her company and personal service to her. Till Father wants you under his roof, you are better away from home. I am sure mother will feel happy in the thought that you are doing well in body and mind. At the same time you should shed all irritation against Father. Do not count against him every remark he may make about you. You must cultivate a big heart. And then you will find that Father will be reconciled to you the sooner for your broad-mindedness.

My love to you and Vidya.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

239. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 24, 1930

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

It was a very happy coincidence that you went to Mussoorie and were able to meet everyone. I have found Nandlal's booklet about spinning quite satisfactory. There are of course mistakes in it. I have pointed out some of them. I am still corresponding with him. He may be able to write if he makes more effort. I do not think Prabhudas can write. Krishna would be able to write better than him. Prabhudas has not worked much with his hands. Kaka (Kalelkar) would be arriving there within a month.[1] It is being arranged that he should make a major contribution to it. The book must be made perfect.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32733

240. LETTER TO BALBHADRA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 24, 1930

CHI. BALBHADRA,

This time your letter was good. There is no reason why your weight should not increase now. If you take exercise, keep your mind cheerful and masticate your food properly, it is bound to increase. Never despair. When you go out for a walk, run for some time. While you do so, keep your mouth shut and breathe through nostrils.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9213

[1] D. B. Kalelkar was released on November 29, 1930.

241. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI PANDYA

October 24, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

You ought to understand that one whose [own] mind is not integrated cannot weigh the merit or demerit of others. I for one know Giriraj well. He has lofty ideas but his strength to live up to them is very inadequate. Yet I have hopes for him because he is always striving. The aim of the Ashram is to insist on truth and on conduct conforming to truth. Everything is organized with Truth as the focal point. There are not many ideals in the world and there ought not to be. The apparent manifold is only a golden lid hiding the Truth.[1] When it is removed we will see the One alone.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 328. Courtesy: Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

242. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

October 24, 1930

CHI. MATHURADAS,

In fact I had intended to write to you last week, but I just forgot to do so. I have gone through the whole of the manuscript of your proposed book. I liked it very much indeed. I felt in it your overflowing love for the carding-bow. I was spell-bound by the work and could not read it critically. Now I shall get only a printed copy. I will then read it critically and make suggestions, if I have any. You advise rubbing [the string] with leaves even after it has been rubbed with candle-wax. Vithal says in his letter that if it has been rubbed with candle-wax, nothing more is necessary. Please clarify who is right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3747

[1] *Ishopanishad*, v. 15

243. LETTER TO RADHABEHN GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 24, 1930

CHI. RADHIKA,

I have your letter. Write to Rukhi and ask her to write to me. What will Benarsi do in Kashi? As the climate there is said to be very good, Rukhi is bound to keep good health there. I have a letter from Navin, in which he declares his innocence. See him and speak to him gently; tell him firmly what you know and of the truth of which you are convinced. If Navin proves himself innocent and you find that you or Keshu had mistakenly thought him guilty, we should feel happy. Investigate the matter in a perfectly detached spirit. The matter is not light and should not be dropped. Nor should you let your mind be exclusively occupied with it. Your handwriting seems to me like a beautiful picture to look at. This time your margin is not quite straight, and draws attention to itself, in contrast to the beauty of your handwriting, as a black particle of dust floating in milk does.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8688. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

244. LETTER TO DURGA GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 24, 1930

CHI. DURGA,

Why do you say: "What more can I write?" So many things happen within the span of one week! You must be capable of describing them. A multitude of thoughts arise in the mind of a girl of your age. The thoughts can be written down, but on one condition—one must have the zeal and the concentration of mind for it. If you maintain diary and note down everything, you can find from it the topics to write upon.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Virat Vatsalata, p. 32

[1] The original was in Gujarati.

245. LETTER TO NARAYAN DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 25, 1930

SHRI NARAYANRAO,

Or should I address you as Bablo[1]? You have drawn beautiful lines[2] and curves indeed. But, instead of scribbling such marks, learn to make every letter in a word as beautiful as a picture. I believe you must be full of fun now because Mahadev has returned. Don't send him back immediately.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9474

246. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 26, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter as also your detailed directions about the working of the Bihar wheel. I attended to all the matters as you have put except the point where the *mal* should cross. I do not know whether it crossed nearest the platform or away from it. However I shall make another effort to see whether it works at all or not. It ought at least to work. Meanwhile the Gandiv continues to give much satisfaction. It has not yet caused any trouble and did I tell you that it did not require the removal of the spindle after each day's work. After the work, it is hung up on the wall. It thus requires no attention every morning as all the other wheels do. And the more I work it, the greater becomes the conviction that it is capable of giving as much output as any single wheel. I have got the scales now. I seem to spin 24 counts and over and my highest speed is 200 rounds, very considerable improvement on the box wheel. Only once do I remember having attained that

[1] A baby boy
[2] The word is illegible here.

speed on it. However I know that my opinion is worth nothing unless more efficient spinners confirm it from their own.

I am glad you are not going to tour just now. You should build up your body anew. We are both keeping good health. I weighed last Thursday 105 and Kaka 117. I have considerably reduced the vegetables and gone back to dates. There will be still variations.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5417. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9651

247. LETTER TO MAHENDRA V. DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 26, 1930

SHRI MANSINH[1],

Decide whether I should address you as 'Desai' or 'Chi. Manu' and let me know in a letter written in beautiful handwriting. Do your President and Secretary still play childish pranks, or, now that they are office-bearers, have they become serious-minded?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7408. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

248. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 26, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter written from Nasik. Do you remember that I wrote to you about Dhurandhar's translation? It is all right if he has translated the book, but, now that Limaye has also translated it, we shall have to consider whether we should publish Dhurandhar's

[1] Son of Valji G. Desai; Gandhiji lovingly called Mahendra "Mansinh"

translation. The fact that with rest you feel better shows that you always carry the burden of work on your head. The virtue of non-attachment consists in doing the work but not feeling its burden.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10240; also C.W. 6688. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

249. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 26, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN (JHAVERI),

After many weeks I have a letter from you. It seems Nanibehn is not with you. How did you fall ill? Whenever you have no appetite, you should fast. It does not matter if you feel weaker. That weakness will not be real. If you cannot fast completely, you may eat fresh fruits like grapes, oranges, etc., but nothing else, and take an enema every day to clear the bowels. You should take care and preserve your health. It would be advisable to drink only boiled water. Write to me regularly. There is still much work to be done by women. Who is the other woman worker with you? My blessings to Bhai Panachand.

Blessings from

BAPU

PS.

Both of us are in good health.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3106

250. LETTER TO KUNVERJI MEHTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 26, 1930

BHAI KUNVERJI,

I have your letter. If you have not yet become a beloved guest of the Government, you will get this letter. Lakshmidas having gone, let me know what new arrangement is made. When you meet the inmates of the temple[1], give my blessings to them. After all these years of work, people should be able to devise means on their own.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2687

251. LETTER TO LAKSHMIBEHN KHARE

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 26, 1930

CHI. LAKSHMIBEHN,

Though the letter is from Panditji I am writing to you. I always wish to write to anyone who is unwell. Why should you fall ill while serving? But illness always comes like a thief, however watchful one may be. I hope you have driven out the intruder. Do not neglect your health. Does Mathuri still feel weak? Some children become sturdier after an attack of smallpox. This happened in Manilal's case. Write to me in detail.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 277. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn Khare

[1] Prison

252. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

October 26, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

Tell brother that he should now leave only after improving his health. It is possible to serve even while remaining in the Ashram. Blessings to him from us both. Doing a thing intelligently is bound to give joy. Such work becomes artistic. And true art always gives joy. One may even say that art means joy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

253. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI

October 26, 1930

CHI. KALAVATI,

Kashinath sends some extracts from your letters. I see from them that you are extremely disturbed. There is nothing like perturbation for those who are devoted to duty in a detached manner. One who has consecrated all to God has no occasion for agitation. There is no possibility of any harm resulting from Jiji's[1] exertions due to grinding.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5255

[1] Presumably the addressee's mother-in-law

254. LETTER TO SHANTA[1]

October 26, 1930

CHI. SHANTA,

Kashinath writes that you are expecting a letter from me. I had no idea that any letter was still unanswered. I am glad to learn that you are keeping well and devoting your time to various tasks. All are conscious of the gains directly derived from the Ashram, but the devotees of Truth know that their unseen gain is immensely greater than what is obvious. I wish you could realize this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5257

255. TELEGRAM TO JAISHANKAR TRIVEDI

POONA,
[*October 27, 1930*][2]

PROFESSOR TRIVEDI
VIDYAPITH
AHMEDABAD

BOTH GRIEVED LEARN MANU'S ILLNESS. WIRE CONDITION. WE PRAY FOR RECOVERY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1000

[1] Younger sister of Kashinath Trivedi, residing in the Ashram at this time
[2] From the postmark

256. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 27, 1930

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

I am glad you are giving yourself rest. Hope Savitri[1] and children are well. Please thank Prof. Radhakrishnan[2] for the book and the paper.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3186

257. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

October 27, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

You have become very nervous. But you have no reason for it. If now the burden of running the home has fallen on you, you are strong enough for that. If the responsibility is yours, you ought to have the corresponding rights too. You can manage your home as it seems best to you. Jayaprakash will certainly help you in that. You may talk about everything with your father-in-law with the freedom of a daughter. At first he will feel embarrassed but by and by you will see that he, too, will talk freely with you and remove the difficulties from your path. Moreover, you have servants to help you. You should take due care of your health while looking after the affairs of the home. Do not work beyond your strength. Save some time for reading, for going out for a walk and resting, and make yours a model home. It will be a problem for you only if you do not have full authority to do what you wish to do. But I simply cannot believe at the moment that you will not get such authority. Have confidence in yourself. Learn to be firm. God will save you and lead you. In any

[1] Addressee's wife
[2] Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

case,donot be cast down by grief. You may write to me more often if you wish to. You can write to me even directly, without thinking whether or not I shall get your letters. May God protect you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3376

258. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI ANUPCHAND MEHTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 27, 1930

BHAISHRI BHAGWANJI,

I got your letter. I felt unhappy on reading the news about Bhai Revashanker. His simplicity was indeed as you describe it to be. I have no doubt that his soul rests in peace.

I send with this a letter to Devchandbhai in regard to Sudarshan, but what more can I do from here in this matter?

I am very much pained to know what you say about Bhai Narbheram. It would give me a great shock to believe that he could be dishonest. My advice regarding him is that you should suggest to him to let an arbitrator examine the claim against him and give his decision. If he does not agree, you should put up with the loss. I would not advise you to take the matter to a court of law. The prestige which the Bank of England enjoys in London, or rather in the whole world, is enjoyed by Kars [anji] Moolchand in our small world of Rajkot. In their respective spheres, they enjoy equal prestige. I should very much like that prestige to be re-established. You should certainly not fight [in a court]. Money is not the only important thing in life.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5813

259. LETTER TO JAISHANKAR TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 27, 1930

BHAI TRIVEDI,

You two, husband and wife, your relations and your friends have again cause for worry about Manu. I shall know tomorrow whether you got the wire which I have sent today on behalf of us both. I know that you have a strong mind and I need not, therefore, try to give you courage. Such illnesses also test us. We should not think that we shall always be happy because we believe in God. However, both Kakasaheb and I feel sure that Manu is safe. It is God's will that he should serve Him in this very body. As long as the illness remains serious, send me news daily. I believe it will be possible to arrange so that I get your message every day.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 999

260. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 27, 1930

CHI. MANU,

So you are ill again! But you enjoy God's grace. Since you possess great strength of mind, both of us believe that by the time you get this letter you will be out of danger. You have surely learnt to remain calm and patient in all circumstances. Take complete rest and fully recover your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7766

261. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

October 27, [*1930*][1]

I got your letter. I felt very happy to read it. Dilip must be looking big now. I have never seen him after I met him in Deolali. If you go and mix with friends from time to time, your mind will remain peaceful. Pyarelal is in this prison, but he is not kept with me. I do see him occasionally, however. If you have cultivated no love for reading, I would advise you to do so. There are many books published by the Navajivan Karyalaya which are worth reading and which you can easily understand.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 102

262. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 27, 1930

CHI. LILAVATI,

I liked your letter because I found it to be sincere. Read over and over again what I have written about *yajna*.[2] It is possible you will find in it the key to understanding the spirit of service. This time too I am going to elaborate on the same theme. Think seriously about it. Be patient. God will protect you. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] According to the source the addressee started writing to Gandhiji in 1930 when her husband fell ill in the prison.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 21-10-1930

263. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 27, 1930

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

I have received your letter; also Anasuyabehn's. We do not know when our real New Year starts. Or shall we say that it has started on the 12th March? For the time being, I am spinning on a *takli*. But I do not like such a slow speed. In Wardha they spin 132 rounds in half an hour. 80 rounds are quite common. if you have people who are experts in spinning on the *takli*, let them write to me about that art of spinning. I have of course asked for the instructions from Wardha. Instructions from two or three places would be more than sufficient. I have acquired good speed in spinning on the charkha. I think I can still improve.

This is the second urgent letter to you. Harjivandas writes from Amreli that he is not getting certificate for [his] khadi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32729

264. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 23/28, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

Your packet was given to me on Wednesday (yesterday) in two parts. It was divided into two parts by the authorities here. Let me know when and in what condition you received the packet which was dispatched from here on the 21st. It is enough for me that you do not feel it as a burden to have to handle my correspondence. So long as they let me, I shall continue to write as I have been doing. Give me whatever news you get about Amidas. If you have any comments to make about my views concerning eggs, please do. I know definitely that Pyarelal has not been transferred to Nasik. We shall meet again in a day or two. Ascertain the position about Chitalia and pay him any sum you think proper. We should not refuse to help him to face his difficulties. Did you ask Chhaganlal Joshi? He may, perhaps, have

kept a note somewhere. Does he not live next to you? Also let me know how he is. I am glad that Mirabehn has for the present dropped her idea of going out of the Ashram. I have had no letter from Devdas, whether long or short. Did he send it directly from jail, or in some other manner? I will inquire about it here after I hear from you. Ask Jivarambhai to write to me.

There was a note by Chandrakanta to the effect that a letter by Kumarappa was included, but there was no such letter. Instead, there was a letter from the Rev. Holmes. It is addressed C/o Kumarappa. Kakasaheb thinks that that made Kanta say that there was a letter from Kumarappa. Manilal has asked me for suggestions for reading. I must have gone to sleep with this thought in my mind, and so I had the following dream. My advice for reading is as in the dream which I am narrating. I dreamt that Manilal was standing by my side and that Devdas, a child, had climbed on to my lap and had fallen asleep. Manilal told me that he had wasted many years of his life without reading anything and that the desire for reading had now awakened in him. He, therefore, asked me to guide him. I expressed my regret that I had not been able to do much for my children's education. I then wrote down as follows for Manilal: "Study the whole of Gokhale's book on arithmetic. Study his books on algebra and geometry too, if you get time. You should learn the history and geography of India in some detail, and of the world in outline. You should read Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God Is within You*, for Sanskrit Bhandarkar's books and the *Gita*, in Gujarati *Navajivanmala* and K's[1] *Jivanshodhan*, and finally Tulsidas's *Ramayana* and a text on. arithmetic, both in Gujarati. You should get the books through Maganbhai." At this point I woke up from the dream. There was something more still, but I do not recollect it. That is, I had forgotten it even when I woke up at 3.30 a.m. I like the advice I gave in my dream. Manilal may read what he can, and what he finds interesting, from the above. Or, rather, it is Mahadev who has awakened Manilal's interest in reading. He should, therefore, be guided by Mahadev. I should not hold on to an opinion expressed in a dream; and, moreover, I cannot at present think out a reading list for Manilal. I would give the same advice to Ramdas. I attach no importance at all to the dream. Manilal's problem was in my mind. I had also been thinking about Devdas's letter. It is not, therefore, surprising that, owing to some disturbance in the stomach, I

[1] K. G. Mashruwala's

got such a happy dream. Write to Brijkrishna and tell him that the understanding is that, as far as possible, I should not write to prisoners and hence I do not write to him. I think about him every day, all the same. Tell him that he should take the utmost care of his health. He should make the best use of every minute and keep note of how hespends his time. Let him take this as a letter to him. And he should continue to write to me.

Tuesday morning, October 28, 1930

I wrote about *yajna* last week, but feel like writing more about it. It will perhaps be worthwhile further to consider a principle which has been created along with mankind. *Yajna* is duty to be performed, or service to be rendered, all the twenty-four hours of the day, and hence a maxim like "The powers of the good are always exercised for a benevolent purpose" is inappropriate, if benevolence has any taste of favour about it. To serve without desire is to favour not others, but ourselves even as in discharging a debt we serve only ourselves, lighten our burden and fulfil our duty. Again, not only the good, but all of us are bound to place our resources at the disposal of humanity. And if such is the law, as evidently it is, indulgence ceases to hold a place in life and gives way to renunciation. For human beings renunciation itself is enjoyment. This is what differentiates man from the beast. Some object that life thus understood becomes dull and devoid of art, and leaves no room for the householder. But I think in saying this they misinterpret the word 'renunciation'. Renunciation here does not mean abandoning the world and retiring into the forest. The spirit of renunciation, should rule all the activities of life. A householder does not cease to be one if he regards life as a duty rather than as an indulgence. A cobbler, a cultivator, a tradesman or a barber may be inspired in their work or activities either by the spirit of renunciation or merely by the desire for self-indulgence. A merchant who carries on his business in a spirit of sacrifice will have crores passing through his hands, but he will, if he follows the law, use his abilities for service. He will, therefore, not cheat or speculate, will lead a simple life, will not injure a living soul and will lose millions rather than harm anybody. Let no one run away with the idea that this type of merchant exists only in my imagination. Fortunately for the world, he does exist in the West as well as in the East. It is true such merchants may be counted on one's fingers but the type ceases to be

imaginary as soon as even one living specimen can be found to answer to it. All of us know of a philanthropic tailor in Wadhwan. I know of one such barber. Everyone of us knows of such a weaver.[1] And if we go deeply into the matter, we shall come across men in every walk of life who lead dedicated lives.

No doubt these sacrificers obtain their livelihood by their work. But livelihood is not their objective, but only a by-product of their vocation. Motilal was a tailor at first, and continued as a tailor afterwards. But his spirit was changed and his work was transmuted into worship. He began to think about the welfare of others and his life became artistic in the real sense of the term.

A life of sacrifice is the pinnacle of art and is full of true joy. Such life is the source of ever fresh springs of joy which never dry up and never satiate. *Yajna* is not *yajna* if one feels it to be burdensome or annoying. Self-indulgence leads to destruction and renunciation to immortality. Joy has no independent existence. It depends upon our attitude to life. One man will enjoy theatrical scenery, another the ever new scenes which unfold themselves in the sky. Joy, therefore, is a matter of education. We shall delight in things which we have been taught to delight in as children. And illustrations can be easily cited of different national tastes.

Again, many sacrificers imagine that they are free to receive from the people everything they need and many things they do not need, because they are rendering disinterested service. Directly this idea sways a man, he ceases to be a servant and becomes a tyrant over the people. One who would serve others will not waste a thought upon his own comforts, which he leaves to be attended to or neglected by his Master on high. He will not, therefore, encumber himself with everything that comes his way; he will take only what he strictly needs and leave the rest. He will be calm, free from anger and unruffled in mind even if he finds himself inconvenienced. His service, like virtue, is its own reward, and he will rest content with it.

Again, one dare not be negligent in service or be behindhand with it. He who thinks that he must be diligent only in his personal business and unpaid public business may be done in any way and at

[1] The allusion probably is to Kabir.

any time he chooses, has still to learn the very rudiments of the science of sacrifice. Voluntary service of others demands the best of which one is capable, and must take precedence over service of self. In fact, the pure devotee consecrates himself to the service of humanity without any reservation whatever.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The person in the Ashram who spins best on the *takli* should write to me and explain how he spins, how he imparts spinning motion to the *takli*, what is the length of the thread which he draws out at one time, etc. I feel unhappy that I cannot go beyond 44 rounds per hour. Prof. Trivedi has sent me a pair of scales, and, therefore, you need not send one from there.

There are 72 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

265. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 28, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

The stock of uncarded cotton with me is about to be exhausted. Till now, I used to get it from the Ashram. This time may I trouble you? My hope in making this request is that, if you do not keep a stock of such cotton, you will start doing so. The cotton should have been ginned by hand. It is difficult to card with hand the cotton from the bales prepared in a ginning press, and the yarn spun from such cotton is not of good quality. If you do not keep a stock of such cotton ginned by hand, you may obtain some from the Ashram or from Vithaldas Jerajani. It may also be available in the Khadi Karyalaya. I make this request so that you may take all this trouble.

Kakasaheb and I have been making the fullest use of your sewing-machine.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4814. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

266. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

October 28, 1930

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your spiritual restlessness is in a way to my liking. True peace will emerge out of it. Bhai Mahavir Prasad may continue to do the khadi work and you need not worry about it. But I am confident that you will gain some peace by putting not only money but your heart too in some noble work. I can understand that you have to devote a great deal of your time to your business, but being engrossed in it all the time will neither profit the business nor bring you peace of mind. Read carefully what I have written during this week about *yajna*. Be that as it may, I believe that your efforts are so determined and your heart so pure that you will surely gain peace and discover your true way.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Where is the lady I met in Mussoorie and how is she? My blessings to her.

From Hindi: C.W. 6188. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

267. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 30, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

You sent me the cotton by return of post! It is of very good quality indeed. I had forgotten to mention the quantity required. You guessed it correctly. When it is exhausted, I will certainly trouble you again. I hope you did suppose that my motive in persuading you to stock hand-ginned cotton could not be merely that you may have a stock of such cotton with you. I take it that spinning is being done in your. "cottage"[1]. But in case you secure the slivers from elsewhere or have been using the cotton of pressed bales, I thought that you

[1] Punning on the word "Parnakuti"

alsomight, if required to send me hand-ginned cotton, start stocking and using such cotton for your own spinning. I did get, on the 12th of *Bhadrapada*, a tin jar and three glass bottles containing dried grapes and other fruit, but I was told that they were sent by Sundaram. It is only from your letter that I learn that you also had sent fruit, whether it was the same that I have mentioned above or different from that. Otherwise I would have certainly written to you to acknowledge receipt of the gift. If you give me more details about it, I will make inquiries here.

Blessings from

BAPU

LADY VITHALDAS THACKERSEY
"PARNAKUTI"
YERAVDA HILL

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4815. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

268. LETTER TO UPTON SINCLAIR

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
October 30, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

I read your *Mammonart*[1] with absorbing interest and *Mental Radio*[2] with curiosity. The former has given me much to think, the latter did not interest me. Nobody in India would, I think, doubt the possibility of telepathy but most would doubt the wisdom of its material use.

I will now avail myself of your kind offer and ask you to send me your other volumes or such as you think I should read.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

UPTON SINCLAIR, ESQ.
STATIONA P., PASADENA
CALIFORNIA

From a photostat: G.N. 2552

[1] Books by the author, published in 1925 and 1930, respectively
[2] *ibid*

269. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES[1]

YERAVDA,
October 30, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your warm letter of 9th Sept. last. I may not say anything beyond thanking you for the letter.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

REV. J. H. HOLMES

From a photostat of the original : C. W. 113520. Courtesy : Robert D. Berman. New York

270. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

October 31, 1930

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

I am glad you have expressed yourself freely on the question of 'vows'.

You seem to me to misunderstand my meaning. No fault of yours. You have not the original before you. I have not seen the translation. The word 'vow' is also an unsuitable equivalent for the original 'ozr'. But the best thing for me is to explain what I mean and then leave you to find the exact word if you endorse my position. If you contest it, you should continue the correspondence till we have thrashed the subject out.

You seem to think of vows publicly administered to audiences. This may or may not be good. The 'vow' I am thinking of is a promise made by one to oneself. We have to deal with two dwellers within: Rama and Ravana, God and Satan, Ormuzd[2] and Ahriman[3] . The one binds us to make us really free, the other only appears to free us so as to bind us tight within his grip. A 'vow' is a promise made to Rama to do or not to do a certain thing which, if good, we want to do,

[1] The letter was written while Gandhiji was in custody and not able to speak his mind.

[2] The holy and the evil spirits according to Zoroastrian scriptures

[3] *ibid*

but have not the strength unless we are tied down, and which, if bad, we would avoid, but have not the strength to avoid unless similarly tied down. This I hold to be a condition indispensable [to][1] growth. I grant that we are higher than the sun, how much more necessary for us to be at least as true and faithful as the sun if not truer and more faithful? If in matters of commerce, a man who vacillates is useless, why should he fare otherwise in matters spiritual which carry with them infinitely greater consequences? If you hold that I must speak and do the right thing at any cost, you grant my whole position and so you also do if you grant that, at the peril of my life, I should be faithful to my wife or friend. You can easily multiply such instances. For me Jesus was pre-eminently a man of unshakable resolution, i.e., vows. His yea was yea for ever. A life of vow is like marriage, a sacrament. It is marriage with God indissoluble for all time. Come let us marry Him. *Verb Sap*.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10081

271. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 31, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have been wondering why there is no letter from you. I hope you have not come away from Sarbhon defeated or tired. It does not matter even if that is so. Can anybody rise above his or her nature? Our duty lies in trying to go as far as our nature will permit us to do. The rest is in God's hands. We should be satisfied if our conscience tells us that we have spared no effort. I suppose I shall know by and by what you intend to do now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9292

[1] The original has "of ".

272. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 1, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have both your letters, the one which you wrote directly and the one which you sent through the Ashram. All this nervousness doesn't become you. Learn to endure the misfortune which has befallen you. If your health does not recover there you must go to the Ashram. After your health has improved, you may again assume the responsibility of running the home. With weak health, what can you do even if you remain there? I simply cannot understand why you should get fainting fits. It seems you fret too much. Stop doing so. Have faith in God. Let His will be done. We are mere puppets in His hands. For some time, you should drop me a postcard every day. I shall always get it. I have written to Jayaprakash. If he shows the letterto you and and wishes to discuss the matter with you, advise him as you think proper. Give up all worries. You may freely write to me anything you wish to. I don't know why you did not get my postcard. I hope you will get these letters without delay.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3377

273. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 1, 1930

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

This letter concerns Bhai Jayaprakash Narayan. He belongs to a respectable family of Bihar and he is also the son-in-law of Brijkishore Babu, the noble worker of Bihar. Till now he was with Jawaharlal in the Congress office. He has studied in America for seven years. Now, after his mother's death, he feels the necessity of earning some money. He needs Rs. 300 per mensem. In my opinion, Bhai Jayaprakash is a worthy young man. If possible, absorb him

somewhere and pay him his requirements. Bhai Jayaprakash will himself give you further details about his antecedents.[1] I know Babu Brijkishore's daughter[2] very well. She has lived in the Ashram for a considerable time. I have rarely seen a girl like her, resolute and utterly devoted to duty.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6189. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

274. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 1, 1930

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

I have your letter. I am glad. You are entitled to write as you do. Your grief moves me. Your love for your mother[3] is commendable and becomes you. I enclose a letter to G.D. Birla.[4] Take it to him and see him. However, I must caution you. I myself have drunk deep from the fountain of motherly love. I was devoted to my parents; I worshipped them. And yet in your love for your mother I see attachment. Your love should be informed with knowledge.Your mother has died in the body. Her spirit has not perished. The body had to perish one day. Your love should now undergo a transformation. Our true mother is the motherland. Your filial love should be transformed into love of the motherland and to make it endure you should dedicate yourself to the service of the motherland. You must not distress yourself that an expert doctor was not called. Millions of mothers get no medical assistance. And I cannot admit that they are thereby necessarily the losers. Even the best of doctors cannot confer immortality on anyone. Therefore, in my view you and everyone else should give expression to your filial love by dwelling on the virtues of the departed and emulating them and you should devote all your energies for the cause of the motherland. Please

[1] The letter from Jayaprakash Narayan was enclosed with this letter.

[2] Prabhavati, wife of Jayaprakash Narayan

[3] Who had passed away in early October; *vide* "Letter to Narayan Moreshwar Khare", 11-10-1930.

[4] *ibid*

discuss this With your father. If what I say appeals to you show this to your father and seek his consent for dedicating yourself to the work of service. Of course you had already made such a dedication. But the death of your mother has created a new situation and reconsideration may be the duty. However, if my advice does not appeal to you, you may use the letter to Ghanshyamdasji and earnestly try to earn a livelihood. I shall not be distressed thereby. Consult Prabhavati also. Keep writing to me and if at any time you need my help let me know. If it is not beyond my power I will help you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Jayaprakash Narayan Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

275. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 2, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

I got your letter. If Shanta has been trying the bath cure, let me know the effect it has. We had two copies of Kuhne's book. I think there is a Gujarati translation also. Kalavati had good experience of life at home and it is also to the good that she is now returning of her own accord.

Rukmini's suicide excites deep pity. I think that there must have been some other cause also behind this suicide. Has anybody investigated the matter further? Has not the women's group discussed it? As the place is near Godhra, Mama is likely to know something. If the report is correct, there should be widespread public agitation about the case. If you get time, inquire further and let me know the result. Who is the writer of the original letter? You cannot send me the Kashi newspaper. But is it not clear enough, what he must have stated?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5258

276. LETTER TO RADHABEHN GANDHI

November 2, 1930

CHI. RADHIKA,

I have your letter. Read mine over and over and go on asking me about what you do not understand in it. I preserve both my self-respect and humility if, when someone kicks me and tries to force me to salute him, I suffer the kicks but do not get angry and wish well of the person kicking me, do not utter even one word in reply and still refuse to salute him. Once a person kicked me and tried to force me to sit at his feet, but I said nothing to him, never wished him ill even in a dream, and yet refused to sit at his feet. I believe I had preserved both self-respect and humility. When the incident took place, I was notat all conscious that I was being humble or anything of the sort. I narrate it now only in order to explain my meaning. You can think of many similar situations. You may even recall some from your own life, and it would be very good indeed if one formed the habit, and learnt the art, of reflecting on such incidents in one's own life rather than in another's. In doing so, one should not search for incidents in one's life which show one's own virtues. Our virtues are for others to see. We should try to discover our shortcomings.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

It is also humility to see one's own shortcomings.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8689. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

277. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI MADHAVJI THAKKAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 2, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

You are doing fine work indeed and winning credit for yourself and for the cause. You at any rate should keep illness at arm's length. Ramabehn must have arrived there now. If the children have arrived, and if they can write, let them write to me. Ramabehn should write and tell me what she saw in Bombay. Have the children returned with improved health? My blessings to all the brothers and sisters.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6802

278. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

November 2, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I am very glad to receive your letter. Those who regard even death as God's favour ultimately stand to gain. You too are benefiting thus. There is no end to your progress. Today you are doing more than a man could do. And I expect this from all women. Woman's capacity is in no way inferior to man's for God's work, but, in ahimsa and the like, it is definitely superior. The description of Tarini's *shraddha* is enlightening. When is Satis Babu to be released? I hope Arun and Charu are well. My blessings to all the Ashram inmates.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1674

279. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 2, 1930

CHI. RAMACHANDRA[1],

I was glad to have your letter. Boys of your age spin with proficiency, recite the *Gita* and understand the *Ramayana*. What do you study? How much do you spin in an hour and what is the count?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5259

280. LETTER TO JAISHANKAR TRIVEDI

November 3, 1930

BHAI TRIVEDI,

We have received the letter you sent us. The telegram also reached me. I am relieved. Manu has survived a real danger to his life. From this we should believe that he is destined for some great achievement. At any rate such are the qualities of character we observe in him at present. After consulting a doctor . . .[2] I do feel that it would be good if he becomes fit enough to be taken . . .[3] to Almora or some other place like that. Revashankerbhai's Dhiru benefited much by such a visit. His bone disease was even more serious than Manu's. Prabhudas also improved by staying there. Some defect seems to have been left still in the ribs, etc. If it disappears completely, we may perhaps rest somewhat free from fear.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7767

[1] Seven-year old brother of Kashinath Trivedi who was then residing in the Ashram

[2] Here a line is missing in the source.

[3] *ibid*

281. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 3, 1930

CHI. MANU,

Both of us were very happy to read Father's wire about you. Do not be in a hurry to resume work. It would help you very much if, after you have regained strength, you were to go to Almora or some other place like that and stay there for some time. When you have recovered your normal strength, write and tell me how you got such a serious illness.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I got your letter after I had finished the letter. We were very happy. Kakasaheb had written to you and advised you to go to Poona after discussing the matter with me. Do go there. But you see that I am looking beyond the immediate present. May God protect you.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7768

282. LETTER TO PANNALAL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 3, 1930

CHI. PANNALAL,

It is a good question you have raised. Exactly the same question was raised formerly regarding Andhra. The decision arrived at in the end was that we at any rate should try to produce in Gujarat the khadi required for Gujarat. The same thing applies in the case of the Punjab. The principle of local production is the very basis of the khadi movement. Every province, every district and in fact every village should produce the khadi which it needs. In the final analysis, the difference in price between khadi and other cloth does not count. Khadi will be dearer than mill cloth if people, though they understand the principles of economics, do not spin to meet their own requirements; if, none the less, they wear it for the sake of the poor,

they would find khadi cheaper in the long run than other cloth. Think over my definition of swadeshi. We have only one way open to us to meet the difficulties which we now experience, and that is, to decide the principle and then cling to it. For all that, private dealers are sure to order khadi from the Punjab or other places. We will not obstruct them. If you do not understand why this is the right course, you may ask me again.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3107

283. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 3, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (DESAI),

Write to Sushila and tell her that I had seen Pyarelal on Saturday. He has now completely recovered. He has got back his original weight. He drinks three pounds of milk and eats one pound of bread. When he wants, he eats vegetables too.

What shall I say about your irregularity?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1808

284. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 3, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

If you have symptoms of jaundice and get acid eructations, I am sure what you should do is to fast for at least seven days. While you are fasting, you should drink every day at least four pounds of water, mixing soda bicarb and/or salt with it. You should break the fast with fruit juice and then start whey and rice in required quantities. During

the fast, see that you take an enema and Kuhne bath daily. I am sure that you will not become bed-ridden with a seven-day fast. You may even be able to do a little work every day. In any case the fast will do you no harm.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 6689. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

285. LETTER TO JAMNA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 3, 1930

CHI. JAMNA,

You did very well in going to Bombay. If you keep good health there, don't be in a hurry to return. My blessings to Kalyandas, Dharamdas, Premkunvar and other men and women whom I met but whose names Iforget. What occupations do Kalyandas and Dharamdas follow at present?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 545. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

286. LETTER TO SHANTA SHANKARBHAI PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 3, 1930

CHI. SHANTA (SHANKARBHAI),

You were restless when you wrote your letter. You have said thrice in your short letter, "I can't think what to write." If you write slowly, as if you were practising in a copy-book, you would certainly be able to write a good hand. You who have some work or other to do during the whole day, why can't you think of anything to write about? It is natural that you wish to meet me. We shall meet when God wills, and till then should keep patience.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4055

287. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,
November 3, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

I have your letter. Since you have not said anything about your health recently I conclude that it is all right. Do you go for walks? Blessings to Brother from both of us.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

288. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 3 1930

CHI. NIMU,

I had a letter from you after so many days. It seems nowadays you have become Ba's secretary. How is your health? Is Sumitra all right? Does she still suffer from constipation? So long as one can get ink, one must never write with a pencil.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

289. LETTER TO DURGA GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 3, 1930

CHI. DURGA,

This letter of yours is good. Some errors in expression there are, but they do not matter. You must cultivate the habit of revising the letter. Some errors can thus be corrected. It is preferable to brush the teeth before prayers. What are you learning in sewing? Tell me how

much can you spin on the *takli* and the charkha in an hour and of what count? If you have not noted the speed, please do and inform me. Do you know how to ascertain the count? It is a very good habit to recite Ramanama while going to bed.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Virat Vatsalata, pp. 32-3

290. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 30/ November 4, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your packet today. The piece of leather which you sent for the sandals was not good enough for repairing the soles. It is hardly a month since the repair was done but the soles have again worn out. The hard leather required for soles and heels is made from hide of a particular part of the body, generally of a buffalo. If you get such a piece, send it to me. In the alternative, you may send another pair of the same number as, or of a number higher than, the one you sent for Kakasaheb.

I think I wrote to you that you need not send the pair of scales. If I did not, please understand from this that I don't need it. Trivedi came and gave me one.

I know your attitude. So long as Mahadev is outside, you will not take upon yourself the burden of making a final decision, and you are right in that. I had a long letter from Keshu. He seems to have been deeply hurt. He has bitterly complained against you, but his letter has had no effect on me. You should, however, take him into confidence and ask him to tell you all that he feels. I know that he is impulsive by nature. But he is a sincere youth and very eager to do service. He is, however, impatient to increase his knowledge and do original work. I may be wrong in my judgment about him. You should, however, call him and hear all that he has to say. Afterwards write to me and give me the impression you form. I know that he

[1] The original was in Gujarati.

spends money rather freely. But I have observed that, in spite of that, he is simple in habits. He adheres to his charge against . . .[1] and it is a serious one.

We need have no fears about Kanta and Sumangal. They are close relations. They are first cousins and have grown up together. Despite this, I, too, had a suspicion and expressed it to them. But I felt that they were innocent. Sumangal was Kanta's teacher once and she has great faith in him. And, moreover, if we suspect brothers and sisters, where would we end? We have adopted an attitude of full trust in the women. If we burn our fingers as a result of that, we will endure our misfortune. Unless we are prepared to take some risks, we shall fail to do our duty towards women. The Hindu man is under a heavy debt to the Hindu woman.

October 31, 1930

The clock struck nine when I wrote the last sentence and I laid down the pen. We have resolved not to work after nine, as far as possible.

I got your letter about Amidas. I am satisfied now. His firmness will be rewarded. I felt that it was my duty to tell him what I knew. If you want me to decide about Chitalia, I suggest that you should send him Rs. 1,500. I think my speech referred to the past but made no reference to the future. He cannot claim any money on the basis of that speech. But I do not have sufficient data to come to a decision on the point. I trust Karsandas and, since he has asked for the sum, I think it is our duty to pay it. In future, however, he may draw what he needs with Jamnalalji's or Kishorelal's consent; that seems all right to me. Copy out this part of the letter and send it to Karsandaswhen you remit the money to him. He should give his opinion whether or not he agrees with me.

November 1, 1930

Along with this you will find letters to Prabhavati and Jayaprakash and one to Ghanshyamdas about them. Put all the three in the same envelope and dispatch them immediately. The couple is passing through extremely difficult circumstances just now owing to the death of Jayaprakash's mother. Do the persons in the Ashram who spin weigh the quantity of waste yarn? If they do not, they should start

[1] The name has been omitted.

weighing it every day. If anyone has been doing this, let me know the quantity of yarn he or she wastes. What is the highest average speed per hour attained by anyone in spinning? A person may, after careful preparation, attain excellent speed on one occasion; but that does not give the same value as the average speed maintained by someone who has kept a record for a year. In calculating this, the time spent in replacing a broken belt or in cleaning a belt should also be taken into account. Don't you agree that the figures given by a person would be correct only if he has included in them the time spent thus?

Tuesday morning, November 4, 1930

We have discussed the Ashram observances, their necessity and the meaning of *yajna*. I propose now to discuss the meaning of the book, as I have understood it, on which we meditate daily and from which we recite some portion every day so as to complete all the chapters in a week, the book which we have accepted as our spiritual lighthouse. A letter which I had once received had suggested this to me, but Govindji's letter received last week made me decide to take up the subject. He says that he tries to read the *Anasaktiyoga* but finds it very difficult to understand. Though I have tried to explain the meaning of the verses in a language which everyone can understand, a literal rendering is bound to present difficulties to the reader. If the subject itself is difficult, how much can simplicity of language help? I, therefore, intend here to present the subject itself in a manner easy to follow. A book which we want to consult in every activity of our life and with whose help we try to solve all our spiritual problems—if we try again and again to understand the meaning of this book from all possible points of view and meditate over it constantly, we shall ultimately come to be filled with its spirit. In all my spiritual difficulties I run to mother *Gita* and to this day she has never failed to comfort me. It is, therefore, not impossible that otherswho seek similar comfort from her may, if they know what new light I get from it every day, receive further help or see some altogether new meaning in the work.

I propose today to give the substance of Chapter XII which deals with *bhakti*. Whenever there is a wedding in the Ashram, we ask the couple to learn by heart and ponder over this Chapter as one of

the five sacrifices they have to offer. Knowledge and action in the absence of devotion are dry as dust and are likely to make us confirmed bondslaves. Let us therefore commence this study of the *Gita* with a heart full of devotion.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

There are 62 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

291. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 4, 1930

BHAI KHAMBHATTA,

I got both your letters and the Jivan spinning-wheel. It is not clear from either of your letters whether you got the letter I wrote to you at your Poona address. I will take care of the Jivan spinning-wheel and ultimately return it to you. I will also let you know my experience of it after I have tried it. Both of you should take care of your health. Your minds, of course, are pure. Kakasaheb is quite well. He will be released on the 28th at the latest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6597

[1] The discourses, like those on the Ashram vows which preceded them, were intended to be read out at the Ashram prayer meetings; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 22-7-1930. They were later published under the title *Gitabodh* and an English translation appeared under the title *Discourses on the Gita*. For the text of these discourses, *vide*"Letters on the *Gita*", 21-2-1932.

292. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 6, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter. I do not think there is anything special about the Gandiv I got. It gave all the trouble, you had, to Kaka. I found out the cause of the trouble, removed it and it has never once given trouble. The second *mal* must be as thin as possible. I am using what Narandas sent from the Ashram. I think 6 threads. For the moving wheel the *mal* knot should be from the outside. Neither need be too tight. The wheel must move without any jerk. It may be that the metal rings are not rigidly fixed in the wheels or the axles are not straight or in a straight line. To me its beauty lies in its smooth working and less liability to go out of order. But as I have said in my last letter, you need not divert your attention for the sake of the wheel. I suppose it is true about wheels as it is true about most things that what suits one does not therefore suit all others. Experts have to adjust values of different types. We workers must be satisfied with that which will give the maximum of work with the minimum of trouble. If I had the requisite mechanical training or was a genius in the art, I should love to become an expert in carding and spinning and judging bows, wheels and *taklis*. But I must treat it as a forbidden ambition, though I do not leave off the search. The search for me here is duty Lo/keZ-

Long or short, I hope to do at least one *bhajan* daily. The Marathi I finished with Kaka's assistance. The Bengali too I began but on learning from K. that they were all translated by the Poet himself or under his supervision, I left off, thinking it a profanation even to attempt. I have now, therefore, only 42 *bhajans* to do. Marathi being very short, I was able to do sometimes even three per night. I hope to finish before 42 days are out .

One question in your letter just now stares me about the Gandiv. I mount the wheel end on a beam of wood nearly 3 inches high and I fix it on to the beam with 2 movable pins. It thus lies slanting from top downward. It can be even mounted on a box to lie flat. K. tied it to the cane bottom of a chair and worked seated in a chair. I am glad you saw Alexander. He wrote to me directly. The letter was given

to me about 10 days after its receipt. I knew from him that he was able quite by accident to see you. When you write to him please give him my love and tell him I had his letter. I must not attempt to write separately to him. Sufficient unto the day is the good thereof.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5418. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9653

293. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 7, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter. I am glad you are feeling yourself again. Please do not feel bound to try the Gandiv wheel. I know you have many things to attend to and with a regularly going wheel, you might be able to finish your sacrificial spinning without any bother.

Give Andrews my love. I can write a formal letter to him. But I do not want to write a mere formal letter to him. I would far rather let my silence speak to him. The pen is often a superfluity, if not a hindrance, to heart's flow.

Mahadeo must not overstrain himself. I have written to him strongly about him, but you should pull him up whenever he is reckless about his health. My cold had disappeared altogether and, therefore, I did not even think of it when I wrote to you last week. Yes, just now it is a combination of dates and vegetables, the latter sparingly. But for the cold, I was getting on all right with the vegetables. I may not give you more time this week.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope to finish the hymns earlier than I had expected.

From the original: C.W. 5419. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9652

294. LETTER TO PADMA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 7, 1930

CHI. PADMA,

I got your letter. The tumour must be cured. Do not neglect it. If Gangabehn were not with you, I would have certainly felt worried because of your having gone out of the Ashram. But since she is with you, I feel easy in my mind. Write to me regularly. You should write your letters in a bold and clear hand.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6114

295. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 7, 1930

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. Though Manilal has lost 40 Ib., he seems to have preserved his strength, for he has asked my advice about what to read. Pragji's request regarding the Phoenix Ashram seems reasonable to me. However, it is for Manilal and you to decide about the matter. Moreover, I do not have even enough facts to arrive at a decision. Secondly, it is the common experience that, in such matters, only the person who held charge last can give the right decision. Even if Bharati's handwriting is bad, she should write. Why should one feel ashamed to write to a friend? I must ask Krishnakant to forgive me. I don't even remember his face. I have of course heard his name from you and read it in your letters. Won't he forgive me if I send him heaps of blessings? Ask him. If he does not forgive me, plead on my behalf. Can you say that Sita has now become as strong as she was in South Africa? Do you give her fruit to eat? Convey my blessings to Pragji and write to him and tell him that service lies in doing the dutywhich comes to us unsought. Who are now with Gomati? What food do they get? Give me all the news you have about her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4774

296. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI PANDYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 7, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. You will realize truth more and more as you will stop observing what others do and concentrate on your work. Nor should you plunge too much into thinking. Of course one has to think up to a point. After that one should depend only on faith. The mind too like the body suffers from indigestion when overstuffed. Like the body the mind too needs to be put at rest. That is why there has been enjoined constant repetition of Ramanama and other *mantras*. They instantly put the mind to rest. Now the meaning: The higher and the lower [*para* and *apara*] means, so to say, the unmanifest and the manifest. The *Gita* often discusses them. Let us understand it briefly as the Lord (Ishwar) or Brahman or even Truth. Self-evident truth is the higher and the other realized by an individual is therefore finite: [i.e.,] lower. A person who has a glimpse of (this aspect of) the Lord in His higher form is relieved from the good or bad fruit of his actions and all his problems and misgivings disappear. The *Gita* II. 59, *viz.*, 'the yearning too departs when he beholds the Supreme' also conveys the same sense. A person who becomes engrossed in discharging whatever duty naturally comes to his lot, has as good as realized the *para*[1] and this ought to put an end to his problems. He who cannot experience it has not [yet] identified himself with his duty. I have here tried to put it across so that you may understand it fully, but do ask me if you cannot, in spite of this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 329. Courtesy: Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

[1] The source has *apara* which is obviously a slip.

297. LETTER TO BALIBEHN VORA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 7, 1930

CHI. BALI,

I got a letter from you after many days. You may keep Manu with you and let her live as you wish and as may please Ba. I don't wish at all to hurt you and your sister, and at any rate I would not do so from here. I know the great love that you two have for the children. Do not worry about Kanti. He is a brave boy and God, the Lord of us all, protects everyone. You may see him whenever you get an opportunity and you should afterwards write to me and give me news about him. I do occasionally have news about him, of course, from other sources.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5058. Courtesy: Surendra Mashruwala

298. LETTER TO KRISHNAMAIYADEVI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 7, 1930

CHI. KRISHNAMAIYA,

I don't remember any letter of yours to which I did not reply. If I have omitted to reply to any question, ask it again.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6220

299. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

November 7, 1930

I got your letter. I was happy to read it. Besides *rotla*, what else does Mathuradas eat? Does he take milk, fruit, etc.? Does he get any food from outside or does he eat only what he gets in jail? Is there space where he can walk a little? Does he have the strength to do it? Does he have any companion with him? Get all this information and write to me. Pyarelal is quite well. I also had a letter from Shankaran. When he comes to see you next, tell him that I had replied to his letter. Does Dilip get sufficient exercise? Do you take regular walks, too? If you do not, you should. If you have started reading anything, let me know what it is.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi: p. 103

300. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 8, 1930

CHI. MANU,

I got Father's last letter. I do not write a separate letter to him. You will now rapidly recover your normal health. It may also have happened that, during this illness, you got rid of the toxins in your body. I suppose all of you are in Poona now. This letter, therefore, will have wandered about a bit before you get it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7769

301. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN VALJI DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 8, 1930

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

I have had no letter from you recently. I am writing this because Valji has gone back to the temple. Do you feel nervous? We shall win true swaraj only through the sacrifices of men of his sincerity and purity. We should, therefore, rejoice at his self-sacrifice, and not at all feel unhappy. God protects everyone. Write to me about all your circumstances.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7409. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

302. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 8, 1930

BHAI NANABHAI,

I read your remarks below Tara's letter. What you have been doing is enough. If a person three feet in height feels unhappy because he cannot reach with his hand as high as a man six-foot tall can do, he condemns the Creator of the world. He who does his duty with love and devotion for God and to the best of his ability, discharges his debt fully. I believe that you do this. Why, then, should you feel discontented or unhappy? You should, of course, try and find out why your body is so weak. But it seems that all of you brothers have weak constitutions from your birth. You should discover the cause and if, in your own case, there is no remedy, you should remove it in respect of persons under your care.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. G.N. 4776

303. LETTER TO TARA MASHRUWALA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 8, 1930

CHI. TARA (OF AKOLA),

I have your letter. (After how many months did I get one?) You say nothing about the headache from which you suffered after the injury to your head. Give me one day's sample from your diary. You can teach Sita a little Sanskrit even as she plays with you. She should of course sing *Jhanda Uncha Rahe Hamara*[1], but likewise she should also keep murmuring some easy verse from the *Gita.*

Give my blessings to Mother.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4775

304. LETTER TO ROHINI KANAIYALAL DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 8, 1930

CHI. ROHINI,

I wrote to you even before I got your letter, after reading in the papers about Kanjibhai's arrest. How fortunate all of you are? To what term has your father been sentenced? How old is he? And you cannot say that only you have been left out. It was no ordinary courage you displayed when you held the horse a prisoner. God inspired you with such strength at that moment. Win many similar triumphs in future.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2654

[1] "May Our flag fly high"

305. LETTER TO LALITA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 8, 1930

CHI. LALITA,

I have your letter. You have done all right in going with Gangabehn. Work sincerely now and be brave. For your age, the handwriting is bad and the language also is not quite correct. Make an effort and improve both. You can do that even while you stay there. What you will require for the effort is not time but perseverance. Progressing slowly, you can improve quite a lot.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9218

306. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,
November 8, 1930

CHI. KANTA

I have your letter. It is well that you have gone with Gangabehn. Serve her with care and be brave. You have the capacity. You have the desire. You now have an opportunity. May God give you good health. Promise me that you will never do anything shameful. Gangabehn also has great faith in you.

May God bless you. Do write to me in detail from time to time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

307. LETTER TO GOVIND PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 9, 1930

CHI. GOVIND,

I have your letter. If your eyes are weak, it is right that you should not read much. How many chapters of the *Gita* have you learnt by heart? If you learn the whole of the *Gita* by heart, you will have plenty of material for reflection when your mind is not occupied otherwise. Then it will not be necessary for you to read anything else. You should, of course, fully understand what you learn by heart.

Is the yarn which you spin sufficiently strong? Is it even? Who makes the slivers?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3943

308. LETTER TO JUGATRAM DAVE

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 9, 1930

BHAI JUGATRAM,

Your letter is full of information. So far, everything seems to be going as it should. We are being tested well in every respect. As long as you are free, write to me regularly. The fact that all the activities are going on normally is a sign of great efficiency.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2686

309. LETTER TO RAMCHANDRA KHARE

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 9, 1930

CHI. RAMBHAU,

I have your nice letter. Your handwriting too is good. It is all right that you draw lines. I do not remember having not replied to any of your letters.

It is good that with the advance of winter you are also gaining weight. If you take enough exercise you will beat the cold instead of the cold beating you.

Do you write to Lakshmibehn from time to time? It is good that you are learning *bhajans* by heart. You have to preserve and enhance the prestige of Panditji's position. That will happen only when you outshine him. Panditji never had the opportunity that you have at your age.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 286. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn Khare

310. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 9, 1930

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

I have your letter. It would be nice if Prabhudas wrote about the science of weaving. I cannot suggest anything right now about spinning, etc. Discuss it with Kaka when he is released. I have talked to him mainly about these subjects. He has become quite familiar with the difficulties faced by the spinners.

Have you come across any spinning-wheels that deserve to be given a prize at first sight ? If so, we must appoint an examiner and finish that work. Amubhai and Mathuradas are qualified for it. You have to be connected with it of course. I suggest that Purushottam and Kesu of *Jeevan-chakra* should be taken as advisers. If Annada Babu has studied the science of the spinning-wheel, he too should be taken as an examiner. I cannot think of other names at the moment.

Prabha Devi[1] wrote to me about Tarini[2]. Satis Babu has been rendered helpless without him.

I had also read in the newspapers about Brailsford's[3] visit. I also read his commendation of the work. What are Manhar and Prabodh doing?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32731

311. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

November 9, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. Go and see Devakinandan's spinning-wheel. The name *Savyasachi*[4] is of course too high-sounding for your spinning-wheel. 'Bharat' will not do either. Since, however, you reminded[5] me of Maganlal, I have suggested his name for your spinning-wheel. It was he who transformed spinning-work into a science. That name, therefore, is not improper for your spinning-wheel. 'Magan' means 'roominess' and also 'pleasure'. It is your claim that your spinning-wheel gives people pleasure . And finally, Maganlal had the virtues of Bharat[6] and Bharat was his ideal. Your purpose[7] also will therefore be served. After this, you may adopt whatever name you like. If Bhavanidutta is a fit person, you should take him in. You should not say 'such a one' with reference to any person. If Bhavanidutta does come, you should provide him food and drink at least.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 33009

[1] Hemprabha Das Gupta

[2] Who passed away in Octobers, 1930; *vide*, "Letter to Lilavati", 16-10-1930.

[3] H. N. Brailsford, English journalist, author of *Rebel India* (1932)

[4] 'Savyasachi' was one of the names of Arjuna, who could shoot arrows with both the right and the left hand. Here, it would mean a spinning-wheel which could be turned with either hand.

[5] Presumably, by his inventive skill

[6] Rama's devoted brother in the *Ramayana*

[7] Prabhudas's desire to name his spinning-wheel 'Bharati'

312. LETTER TO BUDHABHAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 9, 1930

BHAI BUDHABHAI,

I received your letter. Practice writing with ink. Writing with a pencil is a form of violence to the reader. Of course, when writing with a pencil cannot be avoided, one is helpless.

A fast is not a substitute for eating less. A fast by itself sometimes involves eating too much. The right way of ensuring that you eat less is that at every meal, you should ask them to serve you only once, and that too, only in a small quantity. Never eat so much that your hunger may be fully satisfied. Stop eating as soon as you feel that you have eaten so much as would permit you to eat the same quantity again. As long as you have not accustomed yourself to eating sparingly, it would be desirable not to insist on eating only five articles of food at one meal. Eating sparingly will by itself mean that you eat only a few articles of food at a time. You may take salt in reasonable quantity. If you settle down at one place, why should you not grow in the yard some vegetables which would take only a short time to grow? For instance, you could grow fenugreek leaves.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Firmly cling to your resolution not to be alone with Parvati.

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 33122

313. LETTER TO KUNVARJI MEHTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 10, 1930

BHAI KUNVARJI,

I got your cheerful letter. I am very happy to know that you have regained health. I have often observed that people who enthusiastically respond to a call for service and plunge into the work improve in health.

Write to Pragji and tell him that his living in exile is also a form of service. When the Ruler of our destinies requires him in India, He will certainly bring him here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2688

314. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 10, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. You must have received my detailed letters. I will arrange that you get a Gujarati newspaper. I remember that you had written to me about it some time ago, but I forgot the matter altogether. What a careless fellow I am! I want you soon to recover your calm. I hope my letter to Jayaprakash comforted him. You may also write a separate letter and post it directly to me, whenever you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3378

315. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI MADHAVJI THAKKAR[1]

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 10, 1930

. . . will not remain backward. Both the positions are acceptable to us. Having shed fear, why should we worry about anything? My blessings to all the women.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6803

316. LETTER TO BULAKHIDAS

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 10, 1930

BHAI BULAKHIDAS,

I have your letter. It is only through sacrifices such as yours and your wife's that the drink evil will end. I hope that your wife has now fully recovered. Give my compliments and blessings to her.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3138

317. LETTER TO ABBAS

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 10, 1930

CHI. ABBAS,

I got your letter. I have hit upon a simple method of ascertaining the count of yarn, and it is this: the number of rounds in the quantity of yarn equal to the weight of one anna should be taken

[1] The addressee cannot be identified. However, the letter is listed in the G.N. Register among those addressed to Mahalakshmi Madhavji Thakkar.

as its count. I understand what you say about the rest.

I hope you keep good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6304

318. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

November 10, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your long letter. But it was not too long for me. You should not worry about your spellings when writing to me. Your aim should be to explain your meaning, and I follow what you say.

You have undertaken a heavy responsibility. But the Lord protects you. He has rewarded your work with success in the past and will do so in future as well.

I am writing to Lilabehn. How can we help her if she herself does not keep up courage? We have resolved to solve the problem of women. In fact it is being solved. They have submitted themselves to a fine test. The whole world has its eyes on the women of India. Write in detail to me from time to time. If you don't get time to write, ask somebody else to do so. You should make someone your secretary.

I have received no letter for Kakasaheb yet.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G.S. Gangabehnne, p. 45; also C.W. 8761. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

319. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

November 10, 1930

CHI. MANUDI,

Your letter was very good. And the handwriting was fine, too. You should make further progress. I see that your rate of spinning per hour is greater than mine. Do you spin 306 rounds or yards? I hope you know that there is a difference between the two. A round=4 ft., and a yard=3 ft. On which type of wheel do you spin, and what is the

count of the yarn? Nobody, including myself, knows when I shall be released. Even the Government doesn't know. But why should we think about the matter? What difference does it make whether or not I am released? You ask me to send you a picture. But how can I get one in jail? We can't get such things in a jail. If, however, I come across any, I will preserve it for you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1505. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

320. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

November 10, 1930

Khuda Hafiz

DEAR DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

I have your letter. I was very glad.[1]

Shouldn't you regard this much Urdu enough for the day? If, even after your second lesson I do not write a few lines in Urdu, you might give me up as an unteachable pupil. What should I do then? If you don't have to spend too much time and take too much trouble in writing Urdu so neatly, continue to write to me in Urdu. That would help me to keep up some Urdu without special effort. You are all free to laugh as much as you wish at my bad handwriting and at spellingthat is still worse. But please don't give me up as unteachable.

But I must say that there is no limit to your cunning. I don't know where you learnt it. I certainly do not remember to have taught that. The poor girl! As soon as I permit her to write in Urdu, she goes further and asks me to write in Urdu. But, having adopted you, how can I get away from the fact? *Vandemataram* to Mother. Embrace Father on my behalf, and pull his beard hard.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. RAIHANABEHN

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9623

[1] The letter so far is in Urdu. The rest is in Gujarati.

321. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 10, 1930

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I have your letter. If you keep good health without milk, I don't wish to press you to drink it. Don't wait till your health has completely gone down before you start drinking it.

For some time, write to me regularly. About Chalala, do what is possible after discussing the matter with Shankerlal. How are Ramjibhai and Jivanlal? Convey my blessings to both.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

322. LETTER TO SHANTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 10, 1930

CHI. SHANTA,

Your letter. Kashinath writes that you have fever again. How is it? You must be careful in everything. It is well you have gone with Gangabehn. You can come back if the climate there does not suit you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5260

323. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[*November 11, 1930*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

This time, too, I got your packet in two parts, first the English letters and then on the next day the others. There was also a previous occasion when this happened. They open the packet and look into the letters, hurriedly or carefully as they feel inclined before they hand them over to me. They are of course required to read the letters. The

[1] The letter was evidently begun earlier and completed on this date.

letters are given to me in two parts so that I may get some of them at any rate as early as possible.

I had again a long letter from Keshu. I find much substance in what he says. He has gone deep into the matter. I have formed the impression that . . .[1] is hiding something. Read my letter to Keshu and to . . .[2] before you pass them on. I have asked him what he thinks about Keshu. I think his unpunctuality and other shortcomings are such as we can tolerate. Being sincere, he does not want to make a false show. He refuses to do anything which is beyond his capacity or which does not appeal to him. But he has certainly the spirit of service in him. Since he is pure at heart, I think it is our duty to bear his minor faults. But Mahadev is there now and he says that he will abide by Mahadev's decision. If Mahadev cannot settle the matter, in the last resort I will do so.

What you say about Hari-ichchha is correct. If you cannot stop the marriage from taking place in the Ashram, put up with the event. I had indeed guessed about it and that is why I put that question to Harilal in my letter to him.

Did you read the further details about speed in spinning on the *takli* which Balkrishna gave in his letter this time? It is increasing there. I count the attainment of this speed a very important achievement. I remember that four years ago a speed of hundred rounds per hour was considered excellent. Now 160 rounds is the standard for passing, according to Vinoba. Gangabehn has undertaken a big task. But God has always blessed her undertakings with success. Don't mind if Kusum has gone. Who will now help you personally? I am sure you will feel hard pressed for want of enough workers to help you. Owing to so many hands having left, the burden of work is likely to increase rather than diminish. Who will take Kanta's place? Send me a final list of all the women who leave.

I approve of your diet. If it suits you, it is almost an ideal combination. Do not increase the quantity of ground-nuts and do not eat ground-nuts and copra on the same day. The quantity of milk must not decrease now. Half a pound is the minimum you should take. It is Dr. Muthu's view that that quantity supplies the necessary vitamins. If you feel weak, increase the quantity of milk or curds.

[1] The names have been omitted.
[2] *ibid*

Read my letter to Bhansali. If he still wishes to be admitted, do what you think best. If you are firm with him, you will have fewer difficulties with him. Also read my letters to Lilabehn.

I don't see any substance in Mathew's suspicion. Read my reply to him. Parnerkar should take rest. Perhaps change of air may also be necessary. He ought to improve his health.

I must get now a strong piece of leather for the soles or a new pair of utility shoes. There are people who deserve "shoes", but, when they get them, they do not accept them very cheerfully. I, on the other hand, became fit for "shoes" long ago and am now impatient to get them!

Send with anyone who may come on a visit here Krishnadas's books in Kashi's possession. I am in no hurry about them.[1]

Tuesday morning, November 11, 1930

Tell Devdas that I have still not received his letter. Where and when was it posted? What did he say in it? Let him write again. If he can give me the date of that letter, I can make further inquiries.

Does anyone go and visit Somabhai and others who are in jail? I know that it is difficult to visit such a large number. But you should select those who are likely to be visited by nobody else. It would be good if you could make some arrangement for visiting such prisoners.

Prabhavati gets no Gujarati papers at all. We regularly receive *Mumbai Samachar* and other papers, and out of these you should send one or two to her. She wrote to me about this once or twice but I forgot to mention it in my letters. I had a separate letter from . . .[2] yesterday. Before I could write to him the letter which I wished to do, I had this letter of repentance from him and so the reply which I have given to him is altogether different from what it would otherwise have been. The impression I have formed from his letter is that he is still hiding much. You will understand this if you read my

[1] For the text of the discourse which followed, *vide*, "Letters on the *Gita*"—Ch. I.

[2] The name has been omitted.

letter. It has been a painful story.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Read my letter to Surendra Mashruwala. Call him and tell him that, if he wishes to come and stay in the Ashram, he is welcome to do so.

There are 82 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

324. LETTER TO SURENDRA MASHRUWALA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 11, 1930

CHI. SURENDRA (OF VIDYAPITH),

I got your letter. You need not feel worried. The disease from which you suffer is quite common these days. If you take nutmeg, take only a pinch of it daily. But the real remedy is mental. You should always keep your body and mind fully occupied. Never remain in a place where you are alone. You should eat simple food, and at fixed hours. If you stand it, you should bathe in cold water. You may live in the Ashram, if you feel happy there, or go to Wardha. I think you will probably feel uncomfortable at Wardha. If you prefer to go to the Ashram, Narandas will call you up there. Don't worry at all. I will certainly write to you frequently. You should write freely to me. More in the next letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

After Kakasaheb is released, take his advice and then do what you wish.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1506. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

325. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 11, 1930

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I have your letter. I have tried the Jivan spinning-wheel. It works quite well but at present I am experimenting on the Gandiv wheel. The Jivan wheel is used by Kakasaheb. He finds it quite convenient to spin on it, whereas he did not on the Gandiv wheel. Personally, I have fallen in love with the latter for its simplicity and low cost. However, I can give no final opinion yet. Why cannot you experiment with a milk diet in Bombay? There is no risk at all in doing so. Probably curds will agree better than milk. If the palate is no problem with you, I would advise you to try the experiment of a milk diet immediately. It will certainly do you no harm; it provides sufficient nourishment.

To you both,

Blessings from
BAPU

BHAI BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA
275 HORNBY ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6598

326. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 11, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

Are the *Gita* recitations at Pratishthan conducted on the same lines as at Sabarmati? In that case, you may note that we have decided now to complete the recitation within seven days instead of fourteen. Write what you and Satis Babu think about it. If the period in which you complete the recitation is different, you need take no notice of this letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1675.

327. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
November 12, 1930

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

Though I wrote to Mira only the other day sending you my love and telling her I must not write to you as I could not write all I wanted to, I cannot restrain myself from writing to tell you how delighted I have felt to get a letter from you directly. I think of you every day and that often. You will give a good account of yourself wherever you are and you do so because you will always be where you are led.

I have not got any of your two books as yet. I read the *Times* review copied in a local newspaper.

I was sorry to hear that Gurudev had not kept well in America and that he was returning. The marvel is that he can stand the strain at all at his age. Please give my love to him and the Greggs.

Love.

MOHAN

[PS.]

Kaka is with me given as companion. He sends you his love. Both of us have kept well.

C. F. ANDREWS, ESQ.
C/O PHELPS STOKES FUND
101 PARK AVENUE
NEW YORK CITY
U.S.A.

From a photostat of the original: C.W. 9318. Courtesy: Africana Museum

328. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 13, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter. The arrangement about translating my remarks on the *Gita* chapters is quite good. I shall look forward to the joint handiwork. I want to pour myself out into those chapters. This

means additional work for you and will take up a great deal of your time. However, I know you won't feel the strain of it, as you love that work.

Here is a letter from Andrews, this time, for me to send you. He could not restrain himself from writing to me directly. I have at last given him a few lines. Don't give any time to the Gandiv till Keshu has obtained mastery over it and gives you a machine in working order. For me it continues to provide further delights. The original *mal* for the motor wheel at last had to be discarded, as I could not cut it any further for tightening it. It has to be fairly stout and thick. I had nothing with me in the hand-spun *mals* of the required thickness. As you know, I criminally neglected to learn how to make these little odds and ends. And I was bent on having only the hand-spun stuff. I had to give full two hours to the first attempt. It was successful and was possible only because only a short length was required. My second attempt took me barely half an hour. I had to make another for emergency, which occurred at once, for the original threads from which I made the *mal* were weak. I have now thought of a device of quickly twisting to the required strength practically any number of threads. My third attempt will therefore mean still less time. And meantime I am having now an accumulation of little bits of stout hand-spun chords which I can use for watchguards and the like. All this gives me delight and comfort, for it means greater mastery over the wheel. And this has become so easily possible because of the incredible simplicity of the Gandiv. But I am not going to regard my opinion as final or authoritative till I have corroboration from someone who knows much more than I do of the mechanism of the charkha. But I warn you against regarding this detailed description as any incentive for you to tackle the Gandiv. I know if I was outside, I could not have given all this time, thought and attention to the thing. It might not have even been desirable if it was to exclude other urgent matters. I have given you the details merely to share my joy with you. The charkha, the *takli* and the bow have become a fascination with me. I do not seem to get tired of them. Daily I wish I had more time to give to these things. I want to secure greater output on all the three. But I am so clumsy and so stupid and slow. Somehow or other I feel that it is not the rigidity of old age that prevents from gaining a greater output. I have not the proper knack I fear. However I find satisfaction from the knowledge that God will accept this little offering

as the best possible for me in the circumstances. If you can stand the cold bath in winter, nothing can be more bracing. You will not strive against nature. If there is no instantaneous warm reaction, you must revert to the warm bath. The condition of reaction is vigorous rubbing with the bare hands. I had sorrowfully to give up cold baths only after that wretched attack of pleurisy in London in 1914. Your food is quite good. It may be necessary to take more ghee. Experience has shown that you need a fair measure to keep strength, heat and weight.

Gangadevi may walk a little. She must take measured steps and begin with a few minutes only at a time. All risk of a setback should be avoided. She will get rid of the urinary trouble by taking a hip-bath. If the water is chilly a little hot water may be added to take the chill off. This hip-bath is almost an infallible remedy.

Is not this uncle, who has married, somewhat elderly and who vies with you in indifferent spellings, though very learned?

So according to your birthdate, you are only a babe a few months old!! You have therefore many a summer to look forward to.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5420. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9654

329. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 13, 1930

CHI. SHARDA,

Your letter. Continue to have sun-bath and oil-massage. While spinning on the *takli*, the thread should never snap. I could not understand your saying that there is little waste on the spinning-wheel. If you tell me the amount of waste in a given number of rounds of a particular count I would understand it. Calculate it this way. There is another way also. Find out how often you pulled out the yarn and how often it snapped in the course of half an hour. Is it clear to you that there is a difference between calculating the waste and [the frequency of snapping]? If you have understood this, write to me what this difference is.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9894. Courtesy: Sharda behn G. Chokhawala

330. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

November 13, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your insipid letter. How is it that, though participating in such a great revolution, you could not think of anything to write about? It is possible, of course, that the mind may be stunned by the great changes taking place and reason may stop working; if so, one cannot think of anything to write about. At such a time, one's mind may be wholly absorbed in work and can think about nothing else. If you are in such a sublime state of mind, I have nothing to say. I would then be satisfied even with a letter to this effect: "Bapu, everything is going well. Vasumati."

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9293

331. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI[1]

November 13, 1930

I also see an error of principle in what you say regarding spinning and French. Having dedicated yourself completely to spinning, you cannot do anything else for your personal benefit while spinning. If somebody comes for a chat with you, you may talk with him for the sake of good manners. But you cannot argue that, instead of his taking up your time in talking, he may as well teach you French. You may, if you so wish, escape from the necessity of having to talk to him, and he also will not go on talking just in order that he may stay longer. But once he has agreed to be your teacher, he is bound to sit with you sufficiently long. All this has reference to the time when we are spinning for *yajna*. I have been realizing the force of this argument in my own experience. If, while I am spinning, I start thinking about other things, the speed of spinning and the count and

[1] The source does not mention the addressee. But in "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 13/17-11-1930 where Gandhiji discusses spinning as *yajna* he asks Narandas to "understand" what he has said on the subject in his letter to Mahadev Desai. Presumably this is the letter.

evenness of spinning are adversely affected. Imagine Romain Rolland or Beethoven playing on the piano. They would be so absorbed in the music that they would neither be able to talk with anyone nor think about anything else. An artist is not apart from his art. If this is true in regard to the music of the piano, how much more so must it be regarding the spinning-*yajna*? It may be true that, as we are today, we cannot act in this spirit but that is another matter. If we keep our ideal pure, we are bound to succeed one day in putting it into practice. Let me repeat that I am not criticizing what has happened. Pitifully imperfect myself, what right have I to criticize anybody? Do I put into practice all that I know to be true? If I had done that, the seven lakh villages would have been filled with the sweet music of the spinning-wheel long before now. If even now I could live perfectly in conformity with what I know to be right, the cult of the spinning-wheel would spread fast all over the country though I am here in jail. "Though the aspiration is beyond my strength at present, the mind is set firmly on it. If God so decrees, I shall become the essence of light." (Plagiarizedfrom Raychandbhai, with apologies to him) I shall tire of praising the 33music of the spinning-wheel when Malaviyaji does of praising the *Bhagavata* Purana. We cannot, of course, speak of a spinning-wheel Purana. It will be for those who come after us to compose a Purana and they will do so if we have achieved anything which can be a worthy theme. Just now, we are composing a few tunes of the spinning-wheel music. How great the music will be which ultimately results from them, will depend on our *tapascharya* and the measure of our self-dedication. . . .[1]

. . . I shall now dwell further on the argument of the previous letter.

I think the ideal is that we should observe complete silence when engaged in the spinning-*yajna*, and think exclusively about spinning, that is, khadi or go on repeating Ramanama. We should, of course, understand Ramanama in a wide sense. Really speaking, we should go on repeating Ramanama silently to ourselves all the time, whether or not we consciously utter it with our lips. It should be the unvarying accompaniment to all our thoughts and activities, like the tune on the *tamboora* in a musical recital. When, however, our attention is not

[1] Omission as in the source. What follows seems to have been taken from a subsequent letter.

wholly absorbed in the work which we are doing, we should consciously go on repeating Ramanama. While spinning, we generally talk with somebody or listen to what people tell us or do some other work. This kind of spinning is certainly not *yajna*. If the *yajna* of spinning is a sacred obligation, the time which we give to it should be wholly dedicated to it. He who lives his life in the spirit of *yajna* and works without attachment will always be engaged in one task at a time. Though I know this well enough, I was the first to sin (be it more or less) in this respect, for it can be said that I never sat down in a secluded spot to spin quietly, that is, in complete silence. On my silence days, while spinning I either used to hear the mail being read out to me or listened to what people wanted to tell me. Even here I have not given up that bad habit. Is it any wonder, then, that though I spin regularly I have made no progress at all in the field and have barely acquired the speed of 200 rounds an hour? I see in myself many other deficiencies, besides this; for instance, while I am spinning the thread snaps, I do not know how to make a belt, know very little about spindle-holders, cannot tell the quality of cotton, cannot as certain with precision the evenness of the thread and cannot judge the quality of the fibre. Does this befit one who claims to do spinning as *yajna*? Is it then surprising that the progress of khadi should be slow? If God is in truth God of the poor, and certainly He is that, and if khadi is the symbol of His grace, then I am the oracle, or what you will, who proclaimed this truth, and yet how slack have I been in putting into practice my own teaching! I, therefore, never feel tempted to criticize anybody else in this matter. I am only trying to describe to you my own deficiency in this regard and my pain, and the self-understanding and knowledge which result from that pain. Though I have occasionally expressed such sentiments while talking with Kaka, you are the first person to whom I have expressed them so clearly, and I got the opportunity to do this because you combined the study of French with spinning. Let me repeat that I see no fault on your part in having done that. On the contrary, I see what an imperfect preacher of the *mantra* of spinning I have been. I knew the *mantra* but did not observe its ritual perfectly, and, therefore, it failed to reveal its full power. Apply to all activities in life the argument which I have applied here to spinning. You will then be able to feel in

your imagination the wonderful peace and sense of fulfilment which we can experience in our life. This is the meaning of the verse, "Yoga is skill in work".[1] If we cultivate this attitude, we shall attempt only what is within our capacity to do and shall rest content with it. I am convinced that by working in this spirit we shall have contributed most to our own development and that of society. But all this will be mere philosophizing if I myself do not follow it in practice in everything I do. I am certainly making progress day by day in my effort to do so. What will happen when I am released, God alone knows. If possible, observe this at least in practice. Spin in this systematic manner the number of rounds which you regard as your daily contribution to the spinning-*yajna*. You may spin the rest in any manner that you can, for the purpose of increasing the country's wealth. I feel tempted to go on writing still further. But I think I should stop here.

[From Gujarati]

Gitabodh, pp. 29-32

332. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI PATEL

November 13, 1930

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I came to know only from your postcard that you had been released. Pyarelal had completely forgotten to tell me about it. How did you get scabies? It is a disease which is in fact quite easy to cure. I hope you observe proper restrictions in your diet. Write to me and tell me how long you were in the temple, and describe your experience in it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9501

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 50

333. LETTER TO GANGADEVI SANADHYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 13, 1930

CHI. GANGADEVI,

I have not written for a long time and you seem to have taken a vow of not writing to me unless I do. I have written to Mirabehn fully regarding walking and the pain you have. She will explain to you. Do not hesitate to write to me anything you feel like. How is Totaramji?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2543

334. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 14, 1930

BHURRR TO WHITE-BEARDED YOUNG MAN, THREE WEEKS' GUEST,

If I write in Gujarati to the daughter, who, though a mere girl, tries to look old, why should I not write in the mother tongue to the father who, though old, is getting younger day by day? In the West people communicate by means of wires, and transmit images too. I have the gift of the East. I see before me a youthful face, white-bearded but bursting with hearty laughter, and I hear the man telling the reporter: "I shall be back in the guest-house within three weeks." I have in my pocket the likeness of his face notwithstanding that I don't have a pocket. The old man has played his part marvellously well. The whole family is like him! May God protect him. *Khuda Hafiz*.

Bhurrr from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9573

335. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 14, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

What shall I write to you? Once you sat down to write to me, you could give me plenty of news. Now adhere to the resolution you have made. You can, if you wish, complain about your lot to me. We must find our happiness in suffering. One may say that that is the teaching of the *Gita*. I don't however wish to give a sermon.

I had at last to ask them to send me a pair of sandals. I require no clothes. I use the rug supplied from here. And I also have with me the one which I had taken with me when starting for the march. I have received plenty of khadi. I hope you are all right now. Kakasaheb will be released by the 28th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1809

336. LETTER TO TEHMINA P. JOSHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 14, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I *have*[1] your letter. I am not and will not be bored. Please do not hesitate to write to me whenever you wish. It was good that you mentioned Dadabhai [Naoroji] in your letter. He was like a father to me. When I first reached England he was the only senior person to whom I had a letter [of introduction]. He took me under his care then and never left me afterwards.

It was he who led us during our early days in South Africa. Every fortnight (almost) I used to have a letter from him. Today I am enjoying the fruit of his paternal blessings.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 115

[1] Underlined in the source

337. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI PANDYA

November 14, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. Real progress appears to be slow but in fact it is the short cut to our destination. As man engages more and more in the service that has fallen to his lot, without attachment to the results, he attains freedom from desire without effort. Control over the sense-organs, too, then becomes an absolutely easy thing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 330. Courtesy: Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

338. LETTER TO PADMA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 14, 1930

CHI. PADMA,

What a careless girl you are! Why do you write what looks like the marks left by a fly crawling across the sheet, and spoil your handwriting right from this age? Can you not get ink there? And you don't write anything about your health. You are quite right when you say that our sacrifices are nothing as compared to the sacrifices made by the women on that side. Well, then, learn to make similar sacrifices while you live there and devote yourself wholly to service.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6115

339. LETTER TO ABDUL KADIR BAWAZEER

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 14, 1930

BHAI IMAM SAHEB,

When you get this letter, you will have been released. I heard that you had had fever recenty, but I hope you have completely recovered now. Let us wait and see when you return as the Government's guest. I have heard from others about your activities in jail, but I should like to have a first-hand account from you. Has Amina calmed down now? Did Qureshi see you?

Blessings and Vandemataram from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6646

340. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

November 14, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Your letter to Kakasaheb was received late. I understood the situation better from it. People certainly give you credit. But exercise the utmost patience. You have taken upon yourself a great responsibility. But you should meditate over those three verses which we have recently included in the prayers. Those who work for God with His name ever on their lips, He makes them His special concern and ensures the success of their undertakings, and it is He who guides them; why, then, should we worry?

Padma seems to have got fever. She has a swelling too. If you cannot judge what to do to cure her, get her examined by Haribhai. If you can judge what to do, don't be afraid to apply any treatment you think best. Even when doing that, you should feel that you are guided by God and take measures which seem best at the moment; having done that, you should rest completely free from worry. Do not take upon yourself a burden beyond your strength to carry.

Man has ill-treated woman and is still doing so. But the remedy for this ultimately lies in woman's own hand. If she stops thinking

that she is weak, she can be free this very day. The really strong are not those who are strong in body. Ravana, who was a demon, that is, had physical strength, was helpless before the seemingly weak Sita. I am sure you remember the story. Sita was under the protection of a boon to the effect that anyone who cast an evil glance at her would be instantly burnt to ashes. Ravana knew this and that is why, though he carried her away, he could not touch her person with impure thoughts. He had to entreat Sita to let him embrace her. He threatened her time and again in the hope that she might yield; but unless she yielded of her own free will he was, in spite of his strength, as helpless as a goat. Though physically Sita was utterly helpless, in spirit she was a lioness.

We know the meaning of a boon. It is only a symbol. Every woman who has inviolable purity of character enjoys the same boon as Sita did. Any man who casts an evil glance at such a woman would be instantly burnt to ashes. If man hasill-treated woman, the reason is that she, too, has yielded to lust. Being enslaved by passion, both forgot their higher nature, forgot that they were souls and remained mere bodies. So far as the body is concerned, man is undoubtedly the stronger of the two. Hence woman was enslaved by man and the impression came to prevail that she was helpless before man, that she was weak and always needed man's protection.

As souls man and woman are equal. If a man does not recognize his spiritual nature but a woman does, the latter is the stronger of the two, as Sita was stronger than Ravana, and the other remains weaker, as was Ravana. Don't believe, moreover, that this was possible only in the time of Rama. Even today there are countless Sitas in the world who require no man's help and are yet safe against all danger. One such is Janakimaiya. You must have seen her. Whenever I went to Bombay, she came and saw me. She had not much intellectual capacity to speak of, but had boundless strength of spirit. She must have been good-looking in her youth. She embraced a hard path of service in the prime of her youth. I have known other Indian women like her, and also Englishwomen. They are examples of but a small measure of spiritual strength. A woman who has fully grown in soul deserves to be revered as the world's mother.

For those who wish to cultivate such strength, *satyayuga* exists today. Your task, therefore, is to make women strong. That is the right method of securing justice from men. A man like me may guide you

and awaken other men to a consciousness of their duty. But my capacity for serving women is limited.

Women alone can serve women perfectly. It is my ambition, through the Ashram, to prepare not one such worker but many. An opportunity to do so has presented itself to us just now.

If you have not followed this, ask me to explain again.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G.S. Gangabehnne, pp. 45-7; also C.W. 8764. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

341. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 14, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

You must have got my letter acknowledging receipt of the cotton, and also the one I wrote in reply to yours. Please send again three pounds of cotton. I hope all you sisters are well.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4816. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

342. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 15, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN (JHAVERI),

I got your letter. I see that you are really ill. It will be enough if you can get fruits like oranges, sweet lemons, fresh grapes, etc. It will also help you if you take dried black grapes or raisins soaked in water. As long as there are symptoms of dysentery, you should very

carefully remove the skin, or drink the juice. Whenever the stomach is out of order, you can certainly fast for a few days no matter how weak you are and you will always find that fasting benefits you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3108

343. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 15, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. You certainly did well in consulting a doctor. But I cling to the cure I have suggested. You may, if you wish, carry out the doctor's treatment afterwards. Fast for at least seven days before you do anything else. We should never be afraid of fasting. During a seven-day fast, you will be able to attend to almost all your work. When I first undertook a long fast, I did not rest for a single day and experienced no difficulty on that account. It was a seven-day fast. At that time, I did have some fat on my body. Only a person who has no reserve of fat is forced to lie down during a fast. After two days of fasting, you will actually feel stronger. For two days, you may get a feeling of being hungry, but it will disappear after that and real hunger will return when the blood has been purified. Till that time, you should take an enema every day and keep the bowels clean. If, after taking the enema, you remain in the *ardha sarvangasan* posture, the water may even reach the large intestine. You may omit this, however, if you do not know how to do it. During the fast, you should drink plenty of water with soda bicarb and salt mixed in it. You may mix five grains of salt and ten grains of soda in every eight ounces of water and may safely drink up to eight cups of such water. You should also take sun-bath. I should like you to do this without any fear in your mind. You may tell the doctor about it, if you wish. Probably he, too, will approve of this cure. Many doctors now know about the miraculous effects of fasts.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N, 10241; also C.W. 6690. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

344. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,
November 15, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

I have both your letter and your report. The report is very good. As far as possible do not use pencil for letters to be sent by post. Let me know especially about your mental state there. Serve Gangabehn well.

Where is Brother? A letter from him was expected but I see none.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

345. LETTER TO KAMALA NEHRU

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 15, 1930

CHI. KAMALA,

I have your letter. The letter addressed to Ba has also been sent to me. I do not know what was decided in the end. Ba writes that she had fallen ill and people told her that her presence was needed more in areas around Bardoli. Yes, I have seen the prize given to Jawahar.[1] He deserves even more. But for the present this should satisfy us. It will be a real test for the people when no leaders are out and only then will the women too get the real chance. I find that Krishna[2] and now Shyam Kumari too have been released. How sad! There is no need for you to be unhappy over the situation in U. P. Those who are not awake now will awaken later. Who is going to

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru who had been arrested on April 14, 1930, was released on October 11 and rearrested on October 19, and sentenced to 23 months' imprisonment.

[2] Krishna Nehru

remain untouched during this final moment of trial? Let us love everyone and deal with them patiently. Everything will be well if we remain firm in our duty. Give me all the news about Father.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C. W. 10869. Courtesy: Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

346. LETTER TO KRISHNA NEHRU

Y. M.,
November 15, 1930

CHI. KRISHNA,

What a clever girl you are? You came out so easily. Let us see what you do now. Did you have any information about that crazy man who paid the fine? The same thing happened to Shyam Kumari. All of you will be having enough chances. You need not feel sad.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C. W. 10868. Courtesy: Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

347. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 15, 1930

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

All right, I drop 'Dear Sister'. However I may have addressed you, I tried to be like a father. Daily I pray to God to make me worthy of your love and confidence. The thought of women like you makes me feel the hand of God in the *yajna* of self-purification. Your Hindi is so lucid that I don't find any trouble in understanding it. The truth is that language is inadequate for heartfelt emotions. They just

manifest themselves. Krishnadas is now released. Welcome him as one of your own. I have a letter from him. Anyway I have written to him to see you.

My letter about the *Gita* must have reached you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1676

348. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 16, 1930

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

If a man makes an unalterable decision to do or not to do a particular thing, it is for me a vow. The strongest men have been known at times to have become weak. God has a way of confounding us in our strength. Hence the necessity of vows, i.e., invoking God's assistance to give us strength at the crucial moment. But I must not strive with you. It seems to me that we mean the same thing but express it differently—you in Spanish and I in Italian, shall we say?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10082

349. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 16, 1930

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have just got a letter for the first time from Manilal. He informs me that he keeps very good health. He has lost not 40 Ib. but 22 lb. Even that is a lot. But he seems to be very cheerful, and has also been reading a great deal. God has given him the strength to live in all circumstances. Moreover, he is simple at heart and so God always

protects him. Probably you know all this, but the more often you hear the same thing the happier you will feel. Write to me regularly. Coax Bharati to scribble letters of the alphabet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4777

350. LETTER TO SHANTA SHANKARBHAI PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 16, 1930

CHI. SHANTA (SHANKARBHAI),

I have your letter. It is true indeed that you make a great many plans in your mind. But, then, you are not too old to carry out many of them at the proper time. Just now, however, in devoting oneself whole-heartedly to the work one has taken up lies the pursuit of painting or music or Sanskrit; it is marriage for those who want to marry and the vow of virginity for the unmarried. Write to me from time to time letters as long as the last one and fearlessly put before me all your thoughts, whether they are wise or foolish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4056

351. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 16, 1930

CHI. MANU,

I have your letter. As long as you continue to get fever and the doctor forbids you to leave the bed, you need not yourself write to me. It will be enough if you ask the person attending on you to write a few lines. Of course we were happy to read your letter. There is no

hurry about Almora at all. I certainly would not insist that you should go. I had only made a suggestion. It is for the doctors to consider it

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7770

352. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

November 16, 1930

CHI. MAHAVIR,

I got a letter from you after many days. Kakasaheb does read your letters. When you write a letter to me, it is as good as writing to him. You cannot write anything specially for him in a letter to me. But now it will not be even two weeks before he is released. Your experiences have been useful. You are right when you say that whether a person learns or not depends mostly on how hard he works. All that a teacher can do is to point out his error when he goes wrong.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6221

353. LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI

November 16, 1930

CHI. RADHIKA,

I got your letter. A good book too can be a revered guru. But God is the only true guru. When we learn to feel His presence in our heart, we shall have met the revered guru whom we seek.

I had heard about Hari-ichchha's betrothal. But it is from you that I hear about her wedding. To whom was she married, and how many persons attended the wedding? If Hari-ichchha is there, ask her to write to me. What is there to be shy about? What is the age of the husband? What is he? If you don't know all this, inquire and tell me. Rukhi is being tried well. Are you all right now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati: C.W. 9315. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

354. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

November 16, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your painful letter. I feel extremely unhappy that you get fainting fits every day. You must get away from there and go and live in the Ashram and cure your fits. This disease cannot be cured with medicine. Only change of air and congenial company will cure it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3379

355. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI MADHAVJI THAKKAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 16, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

Your letters are very precise. I learn many things from them. Don't be disheartened, or get angry, if some women do not keep their word. The wrong habits of many years will not change in a day. But a rope leaves a mark even on granite, if it rubs against it day after day. We should have faith that in the same way even hearts as hard as stone cannot but feel the effect of the rope of love continually rubbing against them. I have written to Chandra. If Chandra wrote the letter without help from anyone, it was a very good letter indeed. MY blessings to all the women.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6804

356. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 16, 1930

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got a letter from you after many days. I was glad to learn that you had completely recovered your health. I hope the others also have recovered. What does Benarsilal intend to do there? How do you find the air at Kashi? I suppose you know that Nagardas Gandhi of Limdi lives there. His wife came and lived in the Ashram for some time. And Anandshankarbhai[1] also is there. If you have not met all these persons, meet them when you get an opportunity to do so. Ask Benarsilal to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9054

357. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 16, 1930

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

You must have got my letter. That Prabhavati is daily suffering from gastric trouble is intolerable. A change of climate and congenial company can cure it. I would request you either to escort or arrange to send Prabhavati to the Ashram. She can return when cured.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3380

[1] Bapubhai Dhruva

358. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

4.30 a.m. November 13/17, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

They sent me your packet at 4.30 p.m. on Wednesday, that is, yesterday.

The devotee "renounces all undertakings".[1] This means the devotee will not draw up schemes of future expansion. For example, if a merchant who deals in cloth now has any plans of selling firewood as well in the future, or if he, having one shop only, thinks of opening five more shops, that would be *arambha* (undertaking) on his part, and the devotee will have none of it. This principle is applicable to service of the nation as well. For instance, a worker in the khadi department today will not take up cow-keeping tomorrow, agriculture the day after and medical aid on the fourth day. He will do his best in whatever has come to him. When I am free from egoism, nothing remains for me to do.

'The Lord has bound me with a cotton thread; I am His, no matter where He leads me. I have been stabbed with the dagger of love.' A devotee's every activity is planned by God. It comes to him as in the natural course of things. He therefore rests content with,'this, that or anything else' (येन केनचित् |) This is the meaning of 'reonouncing all undertakings'. The devotee does not cease to work; indeed he is nothing if not a worker. He only ceases to think needless thoughts about his work. It is these that he hat to renounce.

'This has been acquired by me today; that purpose I shall gain tomorrow'[2] —this is the opposite of 'renouncing undertakings'.

I think this answers your question fully. Ask me if anything is left out. Keep this portion with the discussion which is proceeding.

If, along with the new pair of sandals, you have not sent a piece of leather for repairing the soles, and if you can get such a piece and send it, with someone who may be coming on a visit here, please do send it, or send it by sample post provided it does not cost much, so that I can use when necessary even the worn-out sandals.

Write to Jamnalal and tell him that I wish him success in his holy

[1] *Vide* "Letters on the *Gita*", 21-2-1932.

[2] *Bhagavad Gita,* XVI. 13

resolves. A time will come when he will not haw to plan undertakings in this fashion. God will load him with tasks of service one after another. He will not have to plan for them or seek them. Just now, his planning for them is all right. From this he will come to taste the joy of *bhakti*. So long as there are no rains, we have no choice but to exert ourselves and draw water from wells, rivers, streams, etc. But, when the clouds burst in the sky and we have the Ganga flowing at our doorstep, what else need we do then? I think the work he could do in Nasik would have been beyond the capacity of anyone else. All the same, it would be good if others, too, tried. In my own case, I have to content myself with a sincere effort, and I apply to others the same yardstick as I do to me. I can say or write much more about this, but all that can wait till we meet. As for what the heart feels and wishes to convey, I have set it down above. This for Jamnalal.

I have written to you about . . . [1]. It is but right that none of us is satisfied with his confession. The evil in his heart is deep. I have of course written strongly to him. I suppose all of you must have expressed your dissatisfaction to him. So long as we are not satisfied about his purity, we cannot ask him to do any public service. He himself may do it on his own in the spirit of sacrifice. You may act in this matter as you think best.We need not be angry with him. We should act as love may prompt us to do. It is only the person on the spot who can realize what love requires him to do in certain circumstances. From a distance one can send no instructions about that.

4.45, November 15, 1930

Tell Manilal that the letter I received this time is the only one I have had from him. I did not receive his earlier letters. If he did write any, how did he send them, that is, with whom? I will inquire if I get definite information. If he is eager to have letters from me, I too wish to write to him. But I have a general understanding with the officials that I would not write to prisoners, and I abide by it. I enjoy sufficiently good freedom in other respects in the matter of writing letters and so I do not quarrel with them unnecessarily for further concessions. When our attitude is that we should be content in jail even if they do not permit us to write any letter at all, we ought not to quarrel on such grounds. Even so, we do send messages. Manilal,

[1] The name has been omitted.

however, should write as often as he is permitted to do. I have already written to you about his studies and he must have got the message. His present programme of reading is good enough. But the plan which I have suggested seems to me methodical and complete. If, therefore, he can take interest in those books, he should follow that plan. Sushila wrote to me saying that he had lost 40 Ib. in weight. I suppose that was an error. Or did he really lose as much as that at any time? Has he now been recovering it or has the reduction come to stay? How about his strength? He is right in his view about Phoenix. If the paper is running at a loss, they should close it. Ask Manilal to write to that effect. I, too, will write, when I am permitted to do so. I had a letter from Pragji. The Headman has just gone out and will decide what reply to give after he returns. Meanwhile you can write to him and tell him that I think Pragji ought to get all the powers which he asks for.

I am awaiting your reply regarding the letter which Devdas wrote to me.

You will find something about spinning in the letter to Mirabehn. I will write to her tomorrow. You will find something more important still in the letter to Mahadev,[1] which I want all of you to understand. To spin by way of *yajna* and to take up spinning as labour in order merely to add that much to one's earning are twodifferent things. In *yajna*, the actual work, though extremely important, is of secondary value. In spinning undertaken as labour, the actual work is all that matters. Irrespective of whether it is anything more than that, even as work it bears fruit. In doing anything as *yajna* one is not concerned with the fruit of one's labour and, therefore, the fruit is immeasurable. That is, *yajna* completely fulfils one's cherished desires. In performing such a *yajna*, one must lose oneself in one's work. By doing that one learns the science and art of working. Anyone, therefore, who would work in the spirit of *yajna* should have such qualities as purity of heart, etc., and should do his sacrificial work with single-minded devotion. He would not even think about anything else when working. A worker inspired with such spirit of sacrifice should have mastered all that is known about the science of spinning and should be daily adding to the existing knowledge. If a peson who has voluntarily embraced the path of sacrifice has made mistakes through negligence or want of means or for any other reason, he should have the strength to rectify them as and when he

[1] *Vide"Fragment of Letter to Mahadev Desai"*, 3-11-1930.

detects them. I use the word ‘spinning’ here in a symbolical sense. It stands for proficiency in all the processes relating to cotton. You will think this a big task, which it is and is not. It is not a big or difficult task for those who have recognized its necessity, for they will be making some progress every day towards mastery of these processes and will grow in purity of heart day by day. A person who works in the spirit of sacrifice will be a lover of truth and will, therefore, after he has realized the necessity of working in this spirit, go on voluntarily increasing his knowledge and proficiency without having to make a strenuous effort. Even if he has to do so, he will look upon that as God’s grace and not a hardship. I feel, therefore, that all of us should adopt the method which. I have explained in a previous letter and understand this deeper and truer meaning of *yajna*. I have explained sufficiently clearly in my letter to Mahadev how much I myself am to blame for our failure to understand this and put it into practice.

5 o’clock, November 16, 1930

I forgot to tell you in my last letter about Kakasaheb’s suggestion to reduce exactly by half the time for completing once the devotional reading of the *Gita*. You must have read about it if you saw the letter to Vinoba. I forgot to tell you that you should read that letter. His suggestion is that we shall be conforming better to the tradition if we complete one reading in a week. Anyone who wants tojoin in the middle of a week will not then have to think how far the reading must have progressed. Every week you will be reciting the same verses on a particular day. If we complete the reading in a fortnight, the verses read on a particular day of the week change from week to week. It is true that completing it in a week means twice as much time every day. If we read through the whole of the *Gita* at one time, we would take an hour and a quarter or an hour and a half. At the rate of an hour and a half for the whole *Gita*, it will require six and a half minutes per day to complete the reading in fourteen days and l3 minutes per day to complete it in seven days. Those who are interested in the reading will not grudge the extra 6_ minutes. To those who are not interested, even the 6_ minutes being given to the reading at present are a burden. This is Kakasaheb’s argument in support of his suggestion. Both the suggestion and the argument appeal to me. Think about them independently and, if they appeal to you, put them before the other members of the group and discuss

them. Discuss them with Mahadev if he is there. Those who join in the reading voluntarily and with true understanding of its meaning should be consulted first. If their view is against the suggestion, the matter need not be pursued further. It should be put before the rest of the group only if they welcome it. I have even prepared a time-table for completing the reading in seven days. I do not give it here just now. I will send it if the suggestion is favourably received. But no, there will be no need to write about it, for Kakasaheb will be there in two weeks' time and he will personally explain the scheme. I will add this, however. I think it would be right to permit those who are not even today interested in the reading to leave the prayer-meeting when the reading begins. The reading always comes last, so that everyone will be present during the main part of the prayer, guests and visitors excepted of course. In Wardha, and most probably in the Pratishthan too, they do the reading of the *Gita* in the same manner as we do at Sabarmati. We should, therefore, find out whether the suggestion suits them too, and so I wrote last week to Vinoba and Hemprabhadevi. As we understand better the importance of the devotional reading of the *Gita* and come to look upon the work as the lighthouse which guides our actions in life, we shall be less inclined to grudge the practice of completing the reading in one week. Much will depend, of course, on the person who leads the reading. If he puts his whole heart in it, he cannot but make it interesting. If we meditate during the whole day on the chapter which was read at the prayer-meeting, we shall discovernew meanings in it and understand better those which we know.

A *mahavakya* lends itself to ever new interpretations, and the Gita is a *mahavakya*.

Afternoon

I got the sandals today. However, send a strong piece of leather for the soles when you find it, so that I can wear the old pair for a few months more.

Monday morning, November 17, 1930

On Tuesdays the letters are posted, if at all, only if I hand them over by 11 a.m. Hence I feel pressed for time for writing the discourses on that day. If, therefore, I write out the discourse on

Monday morning, I can finish everything in time and Kakasaheb will have sufficient time to read it slowly.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

Monday afternoon, November 17[2]*, 1930*

[PS.]

I have tried the sandals on for a day. They fit me very well. Since Lady Vithaldas sends me cotton, I don't want you to send any. If, therefore, she writes to you and asks you to send some, do so.

Do observe the distinction between letters which may and those which cannot be forwarded. It is a good rule that news about public developments which cannot be given to newspapers cannot be given to me either.

There are 60 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

359. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI

November 17, 1930

CHI. KASHI,

I see from Chhaganlal's letter that you suffer from constipation. I think that if it does not respond to change of diet, enema is the best remedy. That is the experience of the present-day doctors. I may say that it is only with the help of enema that I am able to keep well. The enema water should be lukewarm and should be inserted slowly. Soda-bi-carb and salt should be added to the water. At least two pounds of water should be inserted into the intestines and retained for about five minutes, if possible. Take sun baths. The abdomen should be massaged daily. Do this patiently. The enema should be taken in the morning on an empty stomach.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33091

[1] For the text of the discourse which followed, *vide* "Letters on the *Gita*"—Ch. II.

[2] The source has "November 18", but Monday was on November 17.

360. LETTER TO BABALBHAI MEHTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 18, 1930

BHAI BABALBHAI,

I have your letter. When Kakasaheb is released, he will guide you. Write to me from time to time. If you have not acquired mastery over the *takli*, do so. What is your speed on the spinning-wheel and on the *takli*? How much cotton can you card in an hour? What count of yarn do you spin? Give me all this information.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Kakasaheb has read your letter. He sends you his blessings.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9454

361. LETTER TO B. J. B. GALVIN

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
November 18, 1930

DEAR MAJOR GALVIN,

(1) Here is the usual post I send on Tuesdays. Will you please order its despatch today?

(2) There should be a spinning-wheel for me there. Could I have it please?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 4504. Courtesy: Prof. B. J. B. Galvin

362. LETTER TO PYARE LAL GOVIL[1]

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
November 19, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

Your touching letter of 28th ultimo has been given to me. My sympathy goes out to you in your affliction and I should be glad indeed if this letter brings you any comfort.

In my opinion you are in no way to blame. Having got the lady doctor you were quite right in trusting her. I do not believe in constant change of doctors and hakims. We must trust those whom we get to tell us when they need assistance or are in doubt as to their diagnosis. Sometimes it may be found that the trust was misplaced. But these are risks and chances of life which we must take always. I hope therefore that you will not worry yourself over what you consider was your negligence. This much you know yourself that you did not wilfully neglect anything. More no man can do.

[1] This was in reply to a letter dated October 28, 1930 from Pyare Lal Govil, Sub-Judge, Muzaffarnagar, U.P. He had lost his parents some 15 to 20 years ago and his only sister 16 years before writing. Narrating the circumstances of the death of his only child, a 24-year old daughter, following a delivery, he wrote that the sepsis from which she was suffering could not be diagnosed in time. He blamed himself for "culpable mistakes" resulting in her death. He further wrote: "If God has made destinies and every thing happens as has been fixed beforehand then there is no use in praying for mercy. If He is powerless then He need not be approached.

The following *shankas* [doubts] arise:

1. What *prayashchitta* should I perform to wash off this sin of utter carelessness?

2. How to give rest to her soul?

3. Could she have not been saved if correct and timely help had been given?

4. Is God powerless in changing the course of destinies? If so then there is no use in prayer, nor in taking medicines nor in asking for medical help, or in making any efforts that way.

5. Does a soul wander here and there for any length of time after departing from this body?

6. How should and can I know that she has taken birth anywhere else?

7. The idea that I have been very careless haunts me every moment, although I can swear that I did not know that I was making any mistake when I made them, else I would have never made them. I do not know what had become of my discretion and sense. Now I want nothing but I wish to know if I can in any way help her soul to get rest and stay in Heaven. If so what should I do?

Very kindly give your *ashirvad* for the departed soul."

Now for the answers to your questions:

(1) No *prayashchitta* is needed because in my opinion there was no carelessness on your part.

(2) No one can *give* rest to another soul. Her rest will come from herself.

(3) It is impossible to say what would have happened if other assistance had been procured. In spite of the ablest expert help kings have to die.

(4) There ought not to be much sorrow or fuss over an inevitable event. Death is the lot of every created thing, nor need it be considered as a calamity. Death is in reality a deliverance.

(5) What the soul does after discarding a body is in each case surmise but it is a certainty that the soul does not perish with the body. Let us trust the laws of God or nature for the rest.

(6) States before birth and after death are invisible as the *Gita* affirms and experience confirms. But we can infer from our present state that the condition after death is at least likely to be a second, though modified, edition of the present.

(7) We the survivors can certainly help the departed dear ones by wearing into our own lives all that was good in them. For if they know anything of what happens here they must be consoled by the knowledge that we are treasuring their memories by adopting what was best in them.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

One question has been omitted by oversight. God is never powerless. But His laws are immutable. We do not know them. Nor do we know His will at a given moment. Therefore we adopt within bounds such remedies as may commend themselves to us. Prayer is to the God within. It does not provoke God to change His will but it enables us to know His will which is everything.

M.K.G.

From a copy: C.W. 9305. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar; also *Harijan*, 15-2-1948

363. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

YERAVDA JAIL,
November 21, 1930

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

Today I have sent you a telegram about Prabhavati which you will have received. I await your reply.[1] I hope you have sent her to the Ashram. The best thing of course would be for you to go with her and have her fixed up there. Any programme about her future work can be decided after she gets well. I understand your sorrow. I have thought over it. You should not say anything to Prabhavati. If she is moved by desire there will be no problem. But if she has no stirrings of desire, it becomes your duty to protect her. I need hardly remind you that women have as much right to freedom as men. It is my firm opinion that if one partner in marriage has sexual urge it is by no means the duty of the other partner also to have such urge, though it is the right of the partner with the sexual urge to satisfy that urge. This is perhaps one of the causes of polygamy. Just as it will be considered immoral for a man to cohabit with a wife who is ill it should also be considered immoral to cohabit with a wife who has no sexual desire. It is therefore my earnest advice that if Prabhavati has no craving for sex you should give her freedom and find yourself another wife. I see no immorality in that. After all what is to be done? How can your craving be forcibly stifled? You consider sex necessary and beneficial for the spirit. In such a situation I would not consider a second marriage immoral from any point of view. In fact I feel that your doing so may well set an example to others. Many young men use force with their wives. Others visit prostitutes. Still others indulge in even worse practices. Prabhavati has chosen to live the life of a virgin. You do not wish to practise *brahmacharya*. Therefore I see nothing wrong in your respecting the wishes of Prabhavati and finding yourself another wife. If you cannot think of another woman, you should, for the sake of Prabhavati, observe *brahmacharya*. If your love for prabhavati isreally true you will find that as soon as you go near her your sexual craving will subside. I have placed my views before you. Do as your duty bids you. May God grant you the strength to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Jayaprakash Narayan Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Prabhavati" 24-11-1930.

364. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

November 22, 1930

MY DEAR ANAND,

Do not mind the length of your letters. You won't tire me at all. Jairamdas says you still do not feel that you are supporting yourself. You should throw off this tenderness. What you are getting is not a donation; it is what you earn. He who gives his best to the work he takes up and gets what he needs for living, earns it. If you were leading a luxurious life and getting paid for it, I would myself say that you were not living correctly. You must therefore get rid of this sensitiveness. I am glad you had all those precious hours with Jairamdas. The way to cultivate faith in God is to recognize our nothingness and thus be humble as a particle of dust. You know the prayer to Mother Earth in our morning verses. The best of us at his very best is a tiny thing and utterly helpless. And yet we are not so helpless the moment we know that we are sparks `from the Divine which is in us. Faith does not come from reason. Faith is believing. Believe in God because those whose names we hold sacred have believed and testified.

You will keep up a respectful correspondence with Father even though you may scent coldness on his part at times.

Yours

BAPU

[PS.]

If you see Acharya . . . .[1] well. And remember me to Dr. Choithram[2] and Malkani[3]. Where is Jairamdas kept?

About Vidya in my letter to her. Does she or do you understand that letter?

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] Mutilated in the source
[2] Dr. Choithram Gidwani's
[3] N. R. Malkani

365. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

November 22, 1930

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

You should write to me in order that the burden of giving me the news about everyone's health and about the activities there may not rest on Narandas. When you write, you should give me news about Jamnadas too. Convey my respectful greetings to Grandfather and Grandmother. I think about both of them every day and pray for their blessings. Have you completely recovered now? Give me a sample account of your activities on any one day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 900. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

366. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 22, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

I have your letter. If you will only realize that the verses[1] are a part of our prayers and that, therefore, we should learn them by heart, you will be able with some effort to get absorbed in them. You should not lose heart if you do not succeed in the effort. All those who recite them do not become absorbed in them. If, however, you continue to have faith and recite them, one day you will find that you can become absorbed in them. Moreover, the verses have a deep meaning. If you meditate over it, that, too, will help you to concentrate on them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N. 1810

[1] Of *Bhagavad Gita*

367. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 22, 1930

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I have your letter. I think my memory is as weak as yours, but this is the method I followed, and still follow, for memorizing whatever I did, or do when I get any time for that, and I have no doubt that it is the best one. We should first try and understand the meaning of what we wish to memorize and the relations of the different parts to each other. After we have done this, all that remains to do is to commit to memory the poet's words expressing that meaning and those relations. This is easy to do. Try this method and memorize Chapter XII. Arjuna asks: "As between one who worships in this manner and another who worships the Unmanifest, who is superior?" Reflect over the reply to this question and then try to memorize the verses. This is interesting, involves no waste of energy and, because we have faith, the meaning sinks in our heart while we try to memorize the verses.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9502

368. LETTER TO BALBHADRA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 22, 1930

CHI. BALBHADRA,

You have written a very good letter indeed this time. For your age, your handwriting is still poor and ill-formed. Make a patient effort and improve it. You like Narandasbhai's spinning-wheel because it is respectable and is maintained in good condition. You are doing right in mixing milk with *raab*. It is also good that you eat *khakhras* and not rice. If you do as much physical work as you can, your body will certainly become strong and your weight will

increase.You will be doing . . .[1] service in a spirit of non-attachment if you adopt the attitude that you will go with Raojibhai and stay with him if he takes you. A true servant does service wherever he lives.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9214

369. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 22, 1930

CHI. MANU,

I have your letter. Kakasaheb will meet you now in a few days. Get rid of your fever and your pain by a strong effort of will. I can understand your being proud of the fact that Kakasaheb's birthday and yours fall on the same date. We should try to cultivate in ourselves the virtues of the person of whom we feel proud. You are doing that. May God give you a long life.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7771

370. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 22, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

If Mother lives near the Ashram, you will feel easy in mind and will also be able to go on with the work of service.

It is not obligatory on anyone to marry a particular person and nobody else. If, however, a Hindu woman wishes to marry a Muslim for good and sufficient reasons, we should not believe that she would be committing a sin if she did so. How, then, can we object to a woman marrying a so-called untouchable? Such a person is not a

[1] One word is illegible in the source.

non-Hindu. There is no necessary connection between marriage and the varna system. We should remember that marriage is a universallyaccepted religious institution intended to put a restraint on gratification of lust, and limit the field of choice for individuals. I think I have fully answered your question.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5261

371. LETTER TO MATHURI KHARE

November 22, 1930

CHI. MATHURI,

There are two reasons why you do not like to spin. One, you do not realize that it is for the sake of the poor nor do you know the poverty of the hunger-stricken. Two, you are not good at spinning. Therefore, know the poor and if you understand our duty to have compassion for the poor you will be interested without any effort. Then you will feel that you should spin as much as you can and as well as you can because you will be spinning for them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati: C.W. 257. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn Khare

372. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

November 23, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

It was bad to have got fever again. But I suppose it is no use fretting over it. There is undoubtedly poison in your system. It upsets it on the slightest pretext. Whenever possible trace the cause and avoid it in future. If it is rest that is needed and if you cannot take it at the Ashram take it where you think you can get it. You may even go to Vijapur where Chhaganlal is or some such quiet place. Even a week's change may set you up.

You will be pleased to hear that I have set the Bihar wheel going. I followed your instructions and it went. The holders required attention. I opened out the holes. I am not working at it because I am

making experiments with the Gandiv which still gives promise of possibilities. I am describing the changes in my letter to Keshu. Iwould speak to you about the Bihar wheel. The alteration you have made doesn't seem to me to have added to the utility of the wheel. The original length of the platform is the ideal length. The length in the "improved" machine is too much for drawing the thread away from you and too little for drawing it towards you. The original holders may admit of a change. I am trying the coir holders in the Gandiv and they have worked exceedingly well. In the coir holders the spindle moves in the rough and smooth convex surface of the coir twine. Hence it moves with the minimum of friction. In the Bihar holders the spindle moves lazily on 1/8th inch flat surface. Hence there is avoidable friction. The coir holders undoubtedly last long, take no time to make and hold oil better. Coir twine is available anywhere. It can be picked from waste. These hints are for you to note and follow out where you have leisure. Another good piece of news. For the last three days I have been trying one of the *taklis* you left here. It is giving me more satisfaction than the one I have made and on which I was working. The mouth of mine is wretchedly made. Yours is much better. I read today the translation of my summary of the first chapter of the *Gita*. I can trace your hand in it. The sense has been fairly preserved.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5421. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9655

373. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

November 23, 1930

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. The remedy for your ill health is hipbath and sun-bath. Ramanama is prescribed for peace of mind. If sexual desire disturbs you, you should suppress it. There is only one way of staying near the Divine Light, namely, to serve the children of God. That Light cannot point any other way. Can you read my handwriting and understand my argument??

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

374. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

November 23, 1930

CHI. NIMU,

It will be good if you keep writing to me as you are doing now. It is as well that Sumitra knows me only by my photograph. In a way, it is a pleasant game. If one gets annoyed with a photograph, one can tear it up. one can even beat it up and, if one feels so inclined, one can bow to it. Moreover, a photograph will have only as many virtues as we imagine it to have. Who knows what the original is like? We cannot even have an idea of his bad qualities. And if one gives vent to one's irritation with him, he may even . . .[1] And so, on the whole, the name has more worth than the person bearing the name.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

375. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

November 24, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have been getting your letters. You must have got the letter which I wrote you. I sent it to the Patna address, since that is the address you had given in your letter. I had sent a wire to Jayaprakash asking him to send you to the Ashram. His reply was that, if your health did not improve, he would. I am eager to know what you intend to do now. May God give you peace of mind and health. In any case, do write to me regularly. Don't give up courage.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3381

[1] A word here is illegible in the source.

376. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

November 24, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

You had forgotten to sign your letter. I understand what you say about Sarbhon. You did right in leaving the place only after consulting Nath, Narandas and Mahadev. It was not then necessary to explain things to me in detail.

I am afraid the constipation may persist. Don't neglect to write to me regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9278

377. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

November 24, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. When we do not set out to reach a place out of our pride but are led by God, we feel on arriving at the destination that we have arrived not a moment too soon. Our task is a difficult one. We trust in God for success in it.

Think over the verses in the women's prayers. Every one of those verses would seem to have been composed for circumstances like the present. We should realize today the value of Draupadi's prayer.

I hope no one shows antipathy to, . .[1] Does everyone know about her?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G.S. Gangabehnne, pp. 47-8; also C.W. 8765. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] The name has been omitted.

378. LETTER TO HARILAL DESAI

November 24, 1930

CHI. HARILAL (DESAI),

I have your frank letter. I understand what you say regarding the marriage. Has the man any children? Is his mother alive? Has Hari-ichchha gone to her husband's house? It was certainly wrong of you to have given up the tannery work. I see in your action a weakness common in our society. The reasons to which you yielded while leaving the work were before you when you took it up. Only yesterday, while I was translating Prayer No. 127, I read the following verse in it;

Revolve the thing in your mind carefully before you act,

Never go to fight in a battle in blind rivalry of others,

If you go, fight till you are hewn to pieces.

If you break your vow once, you will not know where to end.

You have also not properly understood your duty to your mother. Suppose a mother belongs to a society in which drinking is common. Her son gives it up as an evil, but the mother tries to dissuade him from doing so, and threatens to commit suicide if the son gives up drinking. In these circumstances, is it the duty of the son to give up what he regards as his duty? To honour the word given by Dasharatha, Rama left for the forest and let Dasharatha die. Though Kaikeyi entreated Bharata with piteous tears, Bharata clung to his decision not to accept the throne. Judging by common standards, had Kaikeyi done anything wrong? She was one of the many queens, and in any case she had her husband's word. What sin had she committed in demanding the throne for her son? But Bharata saw sin in her action and disregarded her entreaties.

I have not written this to reproach you. I cannot feel angry with you. I have written what I have done because I thought it my duty to explain to you what your duty was.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6625

379. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 24, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter giving me all details. I was glad. I don't always remember the reasons behind my decisions. You have proved yourself a true soldier. It is a mistake if you believe that, by remaining there, you are not doing a soldier's duty. All persons are not sent to the front. Many recruits are kept in reserve. Moreover, very responsible persons are required at the head-quarters. One must of course give up fear of danger and face it whenever it comes. But anyone who needlessly rushes into danger is not a soldier but a fool. I look upon Narandas as a true soldier. Who knows what dangers are in store for you? True soldiership lies in abiding by God's will. That is non-attachment. If we express that idea in common language, it means that we should act as ordered by the general to whose discipline we have voluntarily submitted ourselves.

The Ashram children have complained in their letter against Dharmakumar, that he is dirty. Dhiru seems to know about it. Inquire about this.

I understand your view about the ceremonial recitation of the *Gita*. On this issue you may quarrel with Kakasaheb to your heart's content. Personally, I think that at the back of your opposition to the proposal is your aversion to or lack of faith in the prayers themselves. If you had your way, I think you would have nothing besides the *dhun*. I would advise you to have faith in all the items of the prayers. If possible, concentrate your attention on the meaning of each item. If you cannot do that, have faith that the words you hear are noble and that even the fact of listening to them will do you good, and attend to them respectfully. Please do not understand from this that I wish to convert you to the proposal for completing the recitation in seven days. I have written this to convince you that there is some meaning inthe prayers behind which lies fifteen years' *tapascharya*, with unswerving faith, on the part of some of us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10243; also C.W. 6691. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

380. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI MADHAVJI THAKKAR

November 24, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

Madhavji writes and tells me that you keep worrying about the children. Why? Reflect over the verses which we recite daily and burn up all worries. God will look after the children. I have written a letter to Calcutta. We may request the elders as earnestly as with propriety we can and then, trusting them, rely on God.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6805

381. LETTER TO VANAMALA PARIKH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 24, 1930

CHI. VANAMALA,

I got your letter. I had sent a translation of a poem by Swami Ramdas about the art of writing. Did you hear it read out? If you don't know about it, request Premabehn to explain it to you and then try to write in that manner. Kakasaheb himself will go there now and give his blessings to you all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5755

382. LETTER TO AMINA QURESHI

November 24, 1930

CHI. AMINA,

I have a letter from you after many days. I have heard about Qureshi having gone to jail again. He has done the right thing. Have all of you been able to keep yourselves well in Dhandhuka? Is it colder there or less cold [than in Ahmedabad]. Do you ever go out for a walk?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Convey my salaams to your father-in-law.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6668

383. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

November 24, 1930

CHI. MATHURADAS,

The question is this: Vithal says that it is not necessary to rub [the string] with leaves if it has been rubbed with candle-wax. You say it is necessary. If it is, why is it? Vithal should correct his error. We find that rubbing with candle-wax is enough. The cotton does not stick [to the string].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3748

384. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,
November 24, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

I have your letter. As far as possible avoid things containing chillies. If there are chillies in *dal* and vegetables, you must not of course eat the *dal*, indeed you should also avoid the vegetables. If

milk or buttermilk is available, you can have either with the *rotis.* Or you can have the *roti* just with salt. You will be able to carry on like this for some time at least. Do you get buttermilk and milk? Live very carefully. Write to me about all that you observe. Write to Father and Mother from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

385. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

November 24, 1930

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your letter[1]. Satis Babu's discourse is excellent. It expresses well his mental state. Those desirous of living as inmates of Sodepur Ashram should scrupulously observe the Ashram regulations. If you cannot have such people, you may run it with paid workers or close it down. Herein lies our test. To what extent it is right to run it through paid workers is a different matter. Let us hope such an occasion never arises. The running or the closure of the Ashram rests with God.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1677

[1] The addressee in her letter had expressed disillusionment about the sincerity of the Ashram workers. In the absence of Satis Chandra Das Gupta, she was attempting to run the Ashram on her own. She had expressed the possibility of employing paid workers if the efforts of the Ashram inmates were inadequate, and had enclosed extracts from a letter from Satis Chandra Das Gupta which was more in the nature of a discourse upon Tarini's death. (S.N. 16758-m)

386. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

At night, November 21/25, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter on Thursday (20th) morning. You should not forward any letters unopened. Open every letter before forwarding it. You may not read the letter, if the correspondent so desires, but even that on the understanding that the correspondent should write about no subject which is forbidden. Confidential letters, therefore, should be about personal matters only. Adhere to the method which you have been following.

It is certainly a painful matter that undesirable freedom was taken in several respects at the time of Hari-ichchha's marriage,but you did right in tolerating everything patiently and giving all possible help.

Sometimes dharma lies in setting aside such rules. The attitude which you adopted was inspired by the spirit of non-violence. A principle has no exception. When, however, the rules and regulations framed to embody a principle are felt to kill its spirit, they may be set aside. The occasion of Hari-ichchha's marriage was of this kind.

At the present time I have dedicated myself heart and soul to spinning and other related processes, and I find myself constantly thinking about the subject. Since we do spinning as a form of *yajna*, we should be very exact and regular in doing it, display the utmost perseverance and sincerity in our work and become very proficient in it. Most of us have no knowledge of even some elementary things about spinning. We should acquire it now. That is, everyone should be able to ascertain the count, strength and evenness of his or her yarn and keep a record of these. One should also keep a record of the time spent every day. If we do these things habitually, they will take very little time. Everyone should pay attention to increasing his or her speed, but without wasting yarn. People should also learn to keep the spinning-wheel in repair. That is, they should know how to make the belt, *jotar* and spindle-holder. They should know about the different models of spinning-wheels. But you should not be burdened with the task of thinking about all these matters and getting people to carry out my suggestions. I have nothing else to engage my attention, but you

have to face new responsibilities and problems every day. These suggestions, therefore, should not impose a burden on you. You may carry out, and persuade others to carry out, only those suggestions which people can easily take up and act upon. Other people, too, should concern themselves with these things and think about them. Everyone should do what his interest and capacity incline him or permit him to do. You will find in the letter to Lakshmidas a description of my experience in this regard too; please read it.

Saturday morning

You have given a pleasing description of the service you are doing. Take care that you do not fall ill through all this labour. You have the spirit of non-attachment in you in good measure. There is little likelihood, therefore, of your falling ill. Krishna is bound to protect those who dedicate their work of service to Him. Your losing weight is a good sign indeed. You have had a good crop of fruit in theAshram.Mathew has not described what freedom he takes. He has merely stated that he takes freedom. If you know in what respect, let me know. We keep him in the Ashram because he is a good man. I, too, believe that he will come round some day.

When you have no time because of pressure of work, it will suffice if you write only a few lines. You will find it easier if you write down from time to time what you think you must tell me. Don't you see that that is what I do here, though I am not as busy as you are? I don't depart from my daily routine in order to write these letters. That routine, of course, concerns the hours of meals, sleeping, answering the call of nature and spinning. The hours which are not taken up by these activities are practically all spent in writing letters, except on Tuesday. I know that you can arrange properly all your work, but even then I feel tempted to write this. It is also a test of non-attachment to work, that a person who has cultivated it will not feel that he is working under pressure even when he is busy with a variety of tasks. There is an excellent thought in an English saying. It is that a busy man can always spare time for others. The point is that such a person, even though working hard, is always found as fresh as if he had no work and no one is disappointed by him.

I was very happy that you could take in Dhiru and Vimu. It was also good that those two children felt drawn to the Ashram of their own accord. Let me know how Dhiru behaves now.

Amidas's experiment is worth watching. From here, I see an error in it. If he does no work and rests all the time, he can certainly live on fruit, but his experiment will not have succeeded. That is right food for the body which gives it the necessary strength for the ordinary duties of service. To get such strength, he should be able to digest almonds and such other tissue-building foods. My experience so far tells me that a weak stomach cannot digest foods like almond, whereas it can digest the same nutrients from milk. However, I don't wish to write about this to Amidas or suggest it indirectly to him. His sincere faith will probably give him the required light. Let us hope that he will correct his mistake, if he is making any, and that he will learn from his experience the value of milk or discover some vegetarian substances similar in value to foods of animal origin.

. . .'s[1] case is a sad one. I did feel something unattractive on his face, but I believed that he was a good man and used to dismissthe other thought from my mind. And I was right in doing that. Even when he fell at times, he continued to struggle and it is possible that he has succeeded in his struggle by now. If so, the expression on his face may also have changed. It was said about Socrates that till the last his face did not seem like a good man's. There is, therefore, only one path for creatures like us who are always liable to error. We should always assume a man to be good till we come to know something against him.

Give me the names of Chandrakanta's father and mother. I will then write slips for them. What you have written to them is right. They ought to give up worrying about her. It would be best if Kanta's mother does not come to the Ashram. She will probably be a burden on Gangabehn. Punjabhai's becoming unconscious occasionally is God's grace. That seems to give him some rest. It would be best if Champa's delivery takes place in the hospital to which Amina was admitted. She will get all facilities there and will be well looked after, and nobody else will be put to trouble. Some woman or other who can be spared from the Ashram may visit her from time to time and stay with her. If this is possible, suggest it to Champa. If she agrees, she will find the arrangement convenient.

Monday morning, November 24, 1930

Most probably I wrote to you that I had received the bark-sheet sent by Ratubhai. I used it till this day as a covering when sleeping,

[1] The name has been omitted.

but it has not become soft. I do not know whether or not it can be washed. As it remains stiff, I thought it would be more useful for spreading on the floor and that is what I have started doing from today. I am sitting on it just now.

Vinoba tells me in his letter that he has sent two *taklis*. I have made inquiries. They do not seem to have been received here so far. I wonder if they have been received there. If you have received them, send them here.[1]

I call this chapter the key to an understanding of the *Gita*, and the gist of it is that life is given us for service and not for enjoyment. We have therefore to impart a sacrificial character to our lives. Intellectual assent to this proposition is only the first step, but such assent and conduct in terms of that assent are bound to rid our heart of its impurities in course of time. But what is real service? In order to obtain the right answer to this question, restraint of the sensesis essential, as it gives us a clearer and clearer vision of the God of truth. Service rendered with selfish motives ceases to be sacrifice. Hence the urgent need for the spirit of detachment. When this is understood, all manner of controversies lose their meaning for us. 'Did Krishna really ask Arjuna to kill his relatives? Could such killing ever be a part of one's duty?' Questions like these are set at rest for ever. When detachment governs our actions, even the weapon raised in order to strike an enemy down falls out of our hand. But a mere pretence of detachment serves no useful purpose. If only we persevere in our effort, detachment may come to us perhaps the very first day, or maybe only after a thousand years. We must not worry over the time this takes, for the effort carries within itself the seeds of success. We must however be on our guard and make sure that it is a genuine effort, and that there is no self-deception. And this is certainly possible for us all.

I have thus been able to complete Chapter III in two parts. I have now fifteen minutes left to me in which to finish this letter. The title you have suggested for these discourses is rather long. It seems you propose to publish them one by one. Kaka suggests a short title *Gitabodh*[2]. I like it. The intention behind the present attempt is that it may help those who read the discourses to understand the meaning of

[1] For the text of the discourse which followed, *vide* "Letters on the *Gita*" —Ch. III.

[2] Light on the *Gita*'

the *Gita* as I have understood it. I don't know whether I shall succeed in my aim. But that is the intention behind my attempt and, therefore, the title *Gitabodh* suits the discourses very well. I doubt the necessity of an English translation of these discourses. But the final decision can only be made there. As for the suggestion to complete the devotional reading of the *Gita* in a week, Kakasaheb will now discuss it personally. If no one likes the idea, we certainly don't wish to act upon it.

Blessings from

BAPU

After 8 a.m., Tuesday

[PS.]

Dudhabhai is in jail. Ascertain in which jail. If he is in Sabarmati Jail, someone should go and visit him. Where hasSomabhai taken up work? I wrote to Jairamdas and told him that I was not eating fresh fruits. My reason for doing so was that there was a statement by the 'lathi' Department[1] of the Government that it was not true that I had given up eating fresh fruits in protest against lathi charges and that I still ate them. I have already told you what I eat. However, I give here the history so far, so that, if an occasion arises, you may issue an authoritative rejoinder. I had given up fresh fruit for the most part during the salt-march. I had resumed it after I was brought here. But I gave it up after I heard about lathi-charges. I must have accepted it for three or four days when I heard about the lathi-charges. That was the position when Jairamdas met me. After that, with a view to overcoming constipation and saving expenditure, I gave up the dry fruits which I had been eating, namely, dates, currants and raisins and started eating vegetables only. For some days I ate both fruit and vegetables and then went over exclusively to vegetables, but realized that I could not keep fit on them alone. So I again went back to dates and raisins. Among the vegetables, I used to be supplied unripe *papaiya*. Sometimes the *papaiya* would be ripe and I would eat that too. This did not happen while Jairamdas was here. I must have accepted about ten times ripe *papaiya* supplied from the garden here. Lemon, I of course take every day, and Jairamdas has mentioned the fact. His statement, therefore, is quite correct and the Government's on the whole incorrect. It is only recently that I have been receiving *papaiya*

[1] Probably the Home Department

and no one can say, because I eat it, that I live on fresh fruit. Probably no official knows about this fact at all, for the *papaiya* is supplied to me along with raw vegetables. It is never bought from the market. This is the position. Kakasaheb will be released on the 29th and he will of course state the correct position more clearly. My belief is that the Government official [responsible for the statement] has made no distinction between fresh and dry fruits or that he has assumed, from my having accepted a basket of fruit which may have been brought by a visitor and which I may have passed on to Kakasaheb, that I myself had eaten the fruit. God alone knows how the statement came to be issued. If no controversy follows, you need not go out of your way to issue any statement.

BAPU

[PPS.]

There are 64 letters today.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

387. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 25, 1930

CHI. RAMABEHN,

I have a letter from you this time after many week. I hope Chhaganlal will make good use of his enforced rest. Though late, the cutting off of Vimala's hair is to be welcomed. Everything has its own appointed time. You need not feel sorry that you did not get her hair cut off earlier. The idea was so completely new that it is not surprising that a mother should not accept it readily. It is best that you should accept anything I may suggest only if you are convinced about it; you will then cling to it. It is my duty to have patience till I succeed in convincing you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5327

388. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

November 25, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

I have your letter. If Mother definitely refuses to come and if Kalavati does not live with her to look after her, I can see only one alternative. Either you yourself should go and live with her or engage a servant who would look after her. Which of the two courses it is your dharma to adopt, your heart alone can tell you. It is not a matter on which you may consult somebody else. It would be improper for any person to tell you what your dharma is in this matter. The problem is so delicate that nobody else can suggest a solution

Did you come to know anything more about that woman who committed suicide?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5262

389. LETTER TO MATHURI KHARE

November 27, 1930

CHI. MATHURI,

I have your letter. Premabehn does not spare the rod; have you then complained to her about this? I shall certainly plead on behalf of you and Chandan.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 258. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn Khare

390. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

November 27, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter and report. The report is excellent. You say that you saw no cow in the places which you visited; the position is the same in almost the whole of Kheda district. People are selfish and are simply not interested in keeping cows. That is why we have taken up cow-protection work.

Who cooks your meals?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G.S. Gangabehnne, p. 48; also C.W. 8766. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

391. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

November 27, 1930

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

When I think of Prabhavati I feel that the sooner she goes to the Ashram the better it will be. That she will go to the Ashram if she does not recover will mean that she will go when her illness has become worse. You who have been educated in the West should understand that illness should be tackled at its inception. I have known cases of hysteria where recovery was effected by the transfer of the patient to a different place. In Prabhavati's case it is doubly necessary that she should have a change of weather. She is ailing and she is also faced with a moral crisis. In a freer atmosphere she will be better able to know her heart and she will also discover her duty. The difficult question before you is that of freedom of women. If Prabhavati has as much freedom as you, you must concede to her the right to think for herself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Jayaprakash Narayan Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

392. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

November 28, 1930

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your letter. Many children suffer when they cut teeth. Hence it is nothing strange that she does too. But her cold should go. Somebody should carry her and walk in the sunshine. The head should be kept covered. This will warm up the skin and make it less sensitive. I believe the cold will then disappear.

Once you have formed the habit of keeping accounts, you don't find it a burden to do so and discover through experience the very great value of the practice. Whether or not one's life is peaceful should make no difference in this matter. There are some things which we should try hard and learn to do with a peaceful mind even in the midst of highly distracting circumstances. Write to me regularly once a week.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6859

393. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

November 28, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter written from Arrah. I posted a letter to you yesterday to Sitabadiyara. This too I hope you will get. If your health improves there, I have nothing more to say about it. It will not, however, be good sense to go to the Ashram after your health is nearly ruined. While improvement is still possible, you will recover if you go and stay there for some time. Then you will also have some peace of mind to think about your problems and be able to judge what your duty is. You should know that you are not subject to anyone's authority. It is we who make ourselves free or subject to someone's authority. If you understand this, you will be able to face the whole world.

I am more or less all right. Kakasaheb will be released tomorrow—to put it more correctly, he will be imprisoned, for he is free here.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. PRABHAVATIDEVI
C/O BABU HARSOO DAYALJI
REVENUE OFFICER
ARRAH, BIHAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3382

394. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

November 28, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. I cannot stop wondering whether you will be able to preserve your health in the midst of all the wanderings there. I know I should not worry. In all things God's will prevails. You can write to me everything which you can send to newspapers for publication. What you cannot send to the papers, you cannot write to me. You should follow this rule in giving me news about the present activities. About yourself, you may write anything. I keep all right, more or less.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9294

395. LETTER TO ABDUL KADIR BAWAZEER

November 28, 1930

BHAI IMAM SAHEB,

I have your letter. It was a beautiful one. The more I think about religion, the more convinced I feel that its essence lies in truth and non-violence. In the very beginning occurs the name Rahim. Does it not stand for non-violence? We look down with contempt on the thing because we do not know how to employ it. Once we have learnt how to employ it, we will never forsake it.

That you still pass sugar in urine is a bad sign. If you can exercise sufficient control over yourself, that is, master the body, you should live exclusively on unboiled milk. You should mix nothing with it. Such milk is perfect food. If you live on it only, sugar is bound to disappear. Even fruit is not good for you. Nor is there anything else which will agree with you. You may certainly eat curds. If you can, do this for the sake of the country at least;

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6647

396. LETTER TO AMINA QURESHI

November 28, 1930

CHI. AMINA,

I have your letter. I hear from Imam Saheb that you have become impatient to go to jail. That is not proper, however. When God wills that you should go to jail, you will get an opportunity without seeking it. It is enough that you yourself are ready. Till that time comes, look after the children. Preserve good health and do whatever service you can from home. It is possible in this struggle to serve even from home. It is enough that you have shed fear.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

How far have you progressed in your study of Urdu?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6659

397. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 28, 1930

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

Your letter. The deduction that violence prevails in Bengal due to insufficient propagation of my ideas seems to be wrong. The atmosphere in Bengal has always been surcharged with violence which is the reason for the lesser dissemination of my ideas there. But if we

remain true, the atmosphere in Bengal is bound to change. This does not mean that you may give up your resolve. Do your best to propagate it but do not expect appreciable results too soon.

Blessings to the Ashram inmates.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1678

398. DUTY OF SATYAGRAHI PRISONERS[1]

[Before *November 29, 1930*]

Our civil disobedience is fulfilled when we seek imprisonment. Disobedience would cease to be civil if we defied legitimate jail discipline. We may not therefore shout or create a row in the jails. We may not refuse work when it is demanded of us according to rules. We should rather be anxious to do as much work as we can and that too as efficiently as we are capable of. It would be nice if even 'simple prisoners' volunteered to do some useful work not necessarily with a view to getting any remission. Prisoners undergoing simple

[1] This was quoted by D. B. Kalelkar in an interview to *The Bombay Chronicle*. On the basis of the discussions he had with Gandhiji before his release on November 29, 1930, he observed: "He does not think himself competent enough to guide the political struggle today because he is removed from the field of action. To a satyagrahi, imprisonment is a civil death. But as a prisoner he can give authoritative instructions for prospective satyagrahi prisoners. Daring my stay with him in the Yeravda jail I discussed with him various aspects of the jail life and elicited from him some useful instructions. He had no objections to my sharing them with workers in the cause of swaraj. I give them below as they occur to me.

A satyagrahi should realize that his antagonism or disobedience ceases as soon as he is convicted by the court. He is not out to paralyse jail discipline. In war, a prisoner lays down his arms and capitulates when he is caught. The enemy can always rely on the words of a true 'soldier-prisoner'. A prisoner of war would not try to escape, would not try to deceive when he is allowed an amount of liberty on the strength of his word of honour. We, as satyagrahis, should try to be ideal prisoners in jails. We must always be prepared to abide by the rules of jail discipline so long as they do not go against the ordinary canons of humanity and self-respect. I have sometimes heard some young satyagrahis arguing against submitting to jail discipline. They say: 'We came to jail because we wanted to disobey the laws of Government. How do you ask us to obey the rules inside the jail? We are pledged only to non-violence but we will certainly defy the Government even in jails.' "

imprisonment have helped a great deal in easing tense situations by merely offering to do hard labour. Whatever work we turn out is so much addition to the National Wealth.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-1-1931

399. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

[Before *November 11, 1930*][1]

CHI. KANTA,

I have your letter. You can go as Premabehn did, after obtaining permission, If there is a reason you also may go with permission as Premabehn has done, so arranging the time that the work does not suffer when you have a reason or feel an irresistible wish to go. You may tell Narandas. You will not be able forcibly to restrain your mind. Restraint should be exercised with understanding.

Brother should improve his health. The cure rests in his own hands. If one pays attention to the right amount of exercise, regularity in all work, hip-baths and moderation in eating, the health does improve in a large measure. There can be no question of giving the sewing-machine to a person who does not know how to use it. Of course if there is somebody to teach, it may be lent. You cannot be expected to teach sewing since all your time belongs to the Ashram. Gangabehn or Narandas may arrange for a teacher. Have I answered all your questions ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

[1] From the reference to the addressee's desire to leave the Ashram; which she did before November 11, 1938; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 11-11-1930.

400. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Night, November 30, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I was very happy to read your letter. It is two days now since you broke your fast. By the time you get this letter, you will have forgotten all about the fast and will be enjoying new youth. If you do not have that experience, I would not regard the fast as a complete success. I expect that you will describe the result of your fast in detail. Your experience should be a guide to others. You know, of course, how to return to normal diet gradually after the fast is over. You will feel very hungry immediately after a fast, but you should certainly not eat as much as the stomach demands. You should gradually increase the quantity of milk and curds, and eat nothing between the meals. You may of course eat juicy fruits. I hope you do not count expense in that regard. Your body should become completely healthy. I am not surprised to hear that you could work normally during the fast. I have observed many people doing so. And that is my own experience, too. Those who have been harbouring many diseases in their bodies feel stronger during a fast. At any rate there is a brighter light on their faces.

I am satisfied with the children's account sent by you. Krishnavijay seems to stand first in every item. Is there no one who can take Dudhibehn's classes in her absence? I know that in the present circumstances you cannot ask anyone about this. What can you do when so many women are outside the Ashram? All the same, if there is any person to whom you can entrust the work, do not hesitate to ask him or her.

Dhurandhar must have been released. Tell him that I remember the discussions I had with him. I also remember his diary. Ask him to write to me. Let him describe his experience, too. He should also write about his future plans.

Mathuri has a complaint against you, that you beat children. Sometimes you even use a rod. If this is true, give up the practice. One should never beat children. Crosby has written a book called *Tolstoy as Teacher*. Probably it is in our collection. Read it. It has now been proved that physical punishment does not reform children.

Iknow that anyone who is accustomed to use the rod while teaching will find it difficult to give up the practice. But that is also true of an armed soldier. He thinks that without his gun he can get nothing done in this world. Our Ashram exists to prove that we can do without a gun. This is true in regard to children. I will not write more than this just now. If necessary, I will go into further argument after I get your reply.

I hope that you had plenty of sleep during the fast, and that now you regularly go to bed early. One ought to have sufficient sleep. Man needs sleep more than he does food. Fasting in regard to food benefits one, but fasting in regard to sleep wastes away one's body. It dulls the brain and makes one restless. Do not, therefore, be careless about sleep. I would not complain if you sleep soundly between 9 p.m. and 4 a.m.

You will read about my experiment in the letter to Mira.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10244; also C.W. 6691. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

401. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

November 30, 1930

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

Your letter to hand. You must resolutely get up at 4 a.m. It does not matter if you do not have any motions. Cleanse your mouth and say the prayers; drink a bowlful of cold water after cleansing the mouth. Go out for a walk after the prayers. Walk briskly. This will induce motions. You will feel warm instead of cold. Don't worry if your bowels do not move. After the walk, you can occupy yourself in whatever task you choose. Go to the lavatory when you feel the urge. You will be cured by doing so for some days.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

RINGAS (RAJ.)

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 768

402. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

November 29/December 1, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

This is time after the morning prayer 29-11-1930. It is fairly cold. But I do a little writing after the prayer and before walking out on the bugle of 5.30.

I am glad you were better when you wrote your letter. We can only learn really in everything as in the matter of health-keeping by making repeated mistakes and profiting by them. This is an introduction to my confession rather than a warning to you. Last Thursday I suddenly developed a bad stomachache. I could have avoided it but stupidly did not. As you know I have been lately living on curds. They agreed very well though the bowels could be moved only by the enema. But as you saw the weight was going up and I was otherwise fit. So I continued the curds and then too the thick part. That induced further constipation despite the enema. That was sufficient warning to stop at least curds or better still all food for a day. I would not and suffered for the day. I voluntarily brought out what I had eaten and in a few hours the pain subsided. Nothing but raisin water the next day and I was quite fit though at once I lost 3 lb. in weight. It is ever thus with me. My weight beyond 95 is evidently an uncertain quantity probably made up of poisonous matter. I determined too to get rid of the constipation if it was at all possible, so I have continued the stopping of curds. (Here is the bugle and I stop for the time being). To resume at 8 p.m. And I am now taking cooked leaves and tomatoes and dates or raisins. The bowels have moved naturally, strength has been maintained and the weight has suffered no further reduction. Yesterday I added sweet potatoes and today 12 almonds. No one need be alarmed at this change. If I feel weak or lose weight steadily, I shall at once revert to milk and shall feel all the better for the milk fast. If on the other hand the change agrees it will be a source of additional joy. Therefore you should all rejoice over the change. If it works, it is well. It is well also if it does not. I shall take no risks.

So Kaka left and he wept as he left. We had come so close to each other. Within two hours of his departure they sent mePyarelal and of course he has taken possession of me. I put him on your wheel. He spun 83 rounds. It went practically as I had set it up. We have now concocted some improvements on the holder. He is at one such whilst I am writing this. Somehow or other I can only think of

the wheel and all it connotes. The Gandiv too is undergoing considerable improvement. I hope to try the improved wheel tomorrow. I will have a movable wheel and will have a spring for tension. If it works well, the output must increase. I am gradually getting control over the *takli*. My speed on your *takli* went up to 87 rounds per hour. But Vinoba says I must first try the steel *takli* and he has sent me two and I am trying to work at it. I haven't yet got the result expected. But I am daily gaining confidence and hope soon to be able to pull 100 rounds per hour on the *takli*. (As it was 9 p.m. I had to stop here. I resume at 4.30 a.m. after prayer Sunday.) I understand about the Kumarappa differences. If Mahadev is gone Kaka has now come. He may be of help in adjusting differences. The golden rule is not to fret if things go contrary to one's wishes and to yield where resistance is useless or likely to be misunderstood, where there is no principle at stake and where in an organization responsibility is not solely one's own. The virtue of charity comes into play only when one comes in contact with a variety of opinion and conduct. Strict and even harsh with ourselves, charitable and even lax with regard to others. In the end, we find that we are neither strict regarding ourselves nor lax regarding others. The fact is we do not as readily observe our own blemishes as we are to detect those of others. Hence the terrible truth "Pluck the *beam* out of thine own eyes before you remove the *mote* from thy neighbour's" or Burns's (Is it not?) "O that we could see ourselves as others see us." In practice I have found that it is best to search about ourselves and to assume the truth of friends' criticism of ourselves and to take them in the first instance at their word when they disown guilt or defect. But enough of this morning sermonizing. You will act as the spirit guides you.

Love.

BAPU

8.45 p.m. 1-12-30

[PS.]

Pyarelal began well on the Bihar wheel. But it proved a failure. I fitted up the other Gandiv and it worked splendidly without a hitch. Through the favour of the Superintendent I have got theGandiv with my improvements incorporated. It promises to work well. I have just tried it. The food experiment continues.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5422. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9656

403. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

November 29/December 1, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (DESAI),

Though you had resolved to write every week, there has been no letter from you this week. I look upon this as a serious lapse. One may say that there is nothing as grave as violating a solemn resolution. This is such a common weakness that we don't realize its gravity. But you should know that it is a grave weakness indeed and guard yourself against it. When you have nothing to write, you may sign on a blank sheet, as Chhotelal does. But it is not likely that a child will have nothing to say to its father or mother.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

December 1, 1930

Pyarelal took Kakasaheb's place on the 29th.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1811

404. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

December 1, 1930

CHI. MANU (TRIVEDI),

From what Payrelal reports after having seen you I gather that you have recovered your strength. You must have talked with Kakasaheb to your heart's content. Take care and do not fall ill again. Don't be impatient to resume work. He whose aspiration is noble and who is always eager to serve works even when physically not working.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7772

405. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 27/ December 3, 1930
Thursday morning

CHI. NARANDAS,

This time your packet was handed over to me as soon as it came yesterday evening. I have received the copies of *Vratavichar*.

If Chi. Kusum is firm in her decision, I like it. Since in any case she will not marry before swaraj is won, why should she bind herself just now? The right thing would be to act upon her inclination at that time. Convey this view of mine to both Devchandbhai and Jamnalalji. Ascertain Kusum's real wishes. She should not advance this as an excuse if in the depth of her heart the real reason is different. She is completely free to do what she wishes. I would tell this same thing to the two young men too; if they are ready to wait till we get swaraj, why should they wish to bind themselves or bind any girl now? A brave man or *bhakta* would not do that, and if Kusum is a brave girl and if she has decided to marry, she should marry a brave youth. I will write to Ghanshyamdas.

Why does Manilal refuse to take milk? If he keeps up his strength, however, I don't insist that he should take it. Only, he should not be obstinate in refusing to take it. If he is losing weight, he should take it. Why doesn't Devdas write?

Friday morning

Ever since I had heard about Amidas, I was filled with admiration for him. He has achieved perfect victory. He was like one of the ancient sages in keeping his pledge. I believe the Ashram to have been sanctified by his having stayed there. Let all of us learn from Amidas how to die cheerfully for the sake of our pledge. If he had been inspired by my example in taking the vow of refraining from milk, etc., he had acted hastily. I think that no one should copy my example in this respect till I myself succeed in keeping such a vow. It is, however, clear to me as daylight that, having taken the vow, Amidas could not break it. A vow taken with open eyes, even if it means a risk to the body, ought not to be broken. A vow which would do harm to the soul ought not to be taken and, if sucha vow has been taken, it is one's moral duty to break it. For instance, no one can take

a vow that he will always speak untruth, for such a vow harms the soul. A vow always to speak the truth may mean a risk to theto the body and may cost us our life, it may even seem to harm the interests of the country, but it must be kept. I will write a letter to his father. Read it and send it on to him.

Saturday morning

As regards Sorabji's insurance, inform him that it is beyond our means to pay the premiums. He should manage somehow to pay them and should send the receipt. Write to Jalbhai too about this. Make a note of Budhabhai's decision concerning Nanibehn and inform her about it, and go on recovering the money till the amount is paid up. I was not satisfied by . . . 's[1] letter. Read the reply which I have written to him. So long as we entertain a suspicion about him, he cannot join the struggle. Only those inmates of the Ashram who are pure in our eyes may Join it.

Take the utmost care about the [spinning] *yajna*. Endeavour to remove the deficiencies in such work. Everyone should learn to test the strength and count of yarn, and should actually do so every day. A rough and ready method of testing the strength can be easily invented. It should be invented and everyone should test the strength of his or her yarn with its help. If the yarn spun by each is woven separately, we would know its strength better.

It was very good indeed that Sitala Sahay came. But how did he escape the attention of the U.P. Government? Show Shivabhai's letter to Kakasaheb before you send it to me. If the facts he mentions are such as can be given publicity, there is no objection to his writing to me about them. On the contrary, there may be some advantage in informing me about them. But leave the responsibility in this regard to Kakasaheb.

. . . 's[2] case is a moving one. I cannot understand how . . .[3] came to form such a connection. I will write to him. Read the letter and pass it on to him.

Sunday night

I have written the letter I mentioned above. It has turned out to be a very important one. I should like it to reach him.

[1] The names have been omitted.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*

I got the *taklis* sent by Vinoba. Read the letter to Mirabehn for information about my health. They sent Pyarelal here immediately after Kaka had left. Read the back of page 1 for the discourse.

December 2, 1930

Inform Mahadev that he should write even from the jail, if he can get time and is permitted to write. More next week.

Blessings from

BAPU[1]

[PS.]

The third, the fourth and the following fifth chapter should be read together, as they explain to us what the yoga of selfless action (*anasakti*) is and what are the means of practising it. If these three chapters are properly understood, the reader will have less difficulty in tackling what follows. The remaining chapters deal in detail with the ways and means of achieving *anasakti*. We should study the *Gita* from this point of view, and if we pursue this study we shall find without much trouble a solution of the problems which confront us from day to day. This calls for daily practice. Let everybody try it. If for instance he is angry, let him remember the verse dealing with anger and subdue that enemy. Supposing we heartily dislike somebody, or are impatient or gluttonous or in doubt as to whether we should do or should not do something or other, all these difficulties can be solved with the help of mother *Gita* if we have faith in it and give it constant study. Our daily recitation of the *Gita* as well as this series of letters is a means to this end.

The bugle for 5.30 a.m. has sounded.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PPS.]

There are 52 letter.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

[1] For the text of the discourse which followed, *vide* "Letters on the *Gita*"—Ch. IV.

406. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

December 3, 1930

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I heard from Jamnalalji that a friend or a partner of yours had lost heavily in speculation. The message also says that this has caused you sorrow. Speculation itself implies loss. Then why take it to heart? A direct lesson drawn from this loss can even be a source of happiness. Why don't you and your friends take a vow not to indulge in speculation any more? Earnings from speculation can never be truly ethical.

Write about *Pujya* Malaviyaji's health.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6190. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

407. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

December 4, 1930

CHI, MIRA,

The Ashram post received last evening brings your disturbing letter. It does not cause anxiety but it furnishes food for reflection. What is the cause of this breakdown in health? In any case you *must* give yourself complete rest. You must relax both mind and body. Therefore please go gently. Read the 6th chapter [of the] *Gita*. Yoga should be undertaken gently. What work we are doing is yoga. Please drop me a card daily.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5423. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9657

408. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 4, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

I got both your letters. I was glad to learn that your mother and others had arrived. If you take your meals with your mother with Narandas's consent, I should not object. However, there is certainly a moral flaw in what you are doing. You ought to make it clear to Mother that the life which you two live is different from normal family life. Of course the financial aspect of the matter creates some difficulty. But I have stated here only the ideal. Do not take my words to mean that you ought to take your meals in the common kitchen, as we cannot always live up to an ideal and sometimes in actual practice we have to compromise it in order that we may not be forced to give it up altogether. As for your relations with Father, strictness is necessary. You should tell him in the plainest language that he should give up hopes of your taking up a job or a profession and earning money. By telling him this, you will serve him, for, as long as there is the slightest hope, he will continue complaining to you, but will cease doing so or rather the complaining will cease of itself, when he has given up the hope. This is human nature. When hope is entirely gone, despair itself turns into a sort of consolation. There are here several prisoners serving life sentences, who have no hope of being released and, therefore, live cheerfully. Those whose position is uncertain, like mine, suffer. They keep on hoping from day to day that they would soon be released. In other words, the cause of the pain in your relationship with Father is in your own mind. If you have understood your dharma clearly you should not so much as give a thought to Father's complaining. To borrow money from friends to help Father to pay his debts and relieve his burden to that extent is not a good policy. It would be better not to receive such private benefits from one's friends. Here again, I have merely stated the ideal. It may be advisable, in case of necessity, to borrow money from Mahavir Prasad and others if your relationswith them are intimate. Solve all these problems with the master key of non-attachment.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5263

409. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

December 4, 1930

CHI. RAMABEHN,

I have your letter. It was a beautiful one. Dhiru's firmness is wonderful. His inclination towards mischief reflects this firmness of his. Let us hope that some of these Ashram children will excel us all in service when they grow up. If we are pure in our hearts and become daily purer, that is bound to be so.

I am not surprised by your description of the conditions in Kathiawar. That lethargy shows that we have still a long way to go. Indeed such effort is the essence of our spiritual striving. We need not, therefore, worry.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 281-2

410. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

December 4, 1930

I got all the information I wanted. I am not surprised to know that Mathuradas has been making very good use of his time. This experience will do him good. The separation is a test of your strength. I was happy to learn that Dilip and Jyotsna keep good health. Pyarelal is with me now. Both of us are well. Write to me from time to time.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 103

411. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

December 4, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

There is no letter from you this time. I think you must have written the letter but it may not have reached the Ashram in time. I am used to having your letter every week and so when it does not come I wonder.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

412. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 4, 1930

CHI. KALAVATI,

I had your letters. You must improve your handwriting. It can be accomplished by writing with care. Good that Mother[1] and others have come. If you go to Kheda, be very careful and immerse yourself in service. Follow Gangabehn's instructions.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I understand about the mill-made slivers. No need to say anything just now.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5264

[1] Addressee's mother-in-law

413. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

Y. M.,
December 5, 1930

MY DEAR ANAND,

Depression overtakes you because you think too much about things other than the task before you. This is a sign of unfaithfulness; You will cease to worry about any other thing the moment you realizethat you are to devote yourself body, mind and soul to the duty undertaken by you. Truth demands this.

Love.

BAPU

From a microfilm, Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

414. LETTER TO ROHINI KANAIYALAL DESAI

December 5, 1930

CHI. ROHINI,

What you say is true. Let the Government seize all the goods they wish and auction them for nothing. The truth is that, under an oppressive Government, those who follow the path of right can own no property. If any is left with them, they should know that the Government can seize it whenever it wishes to do so. Our struggle does not at all depend on wealth and property.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2655

415. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 5, 1930

CHI. MANUDI,

I got your letter. Since you are learning lathi exercises, I shall have to learn them from you. A letter in a word should not be split from the rest of the word. If there is not sufficient space at the end of a line to complete a word, you should leave the available space blank. The correct word is not *nabadai* but *nabalai*. When the 'u' sound is short, it should be indicated by the sign **q** and not by **w**. For the present, pay attention to correctness in handwriting and not to flourishes. If it is correct, flourishes will follow without any effort on your part.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1507. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

416. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 5, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

Do you want compliments for your fast and the cheerful spirit you kept up during the period? I have already written to you about what to eat. Avoid uncooked vegetables for the present, and certainly do not eat pulses. You should take milk and curds and eat *khakhra* and boiled vegetables; if you can get fruits, like *papaiya* and *mosambi*, you will not require vegetables. I, personally, see no need for medicines. Apart from any other consideration, I am generally averse to taking any medicine of which the ingredients are not known to us. The fast must have completely served the purpose of medicine. I think it is necessary to continue sun-bath. See that you have enough sleep.

Do make some arrangements about children's education.

I liked Dhurandhar's letter very much. I have observed that everything he does is neat and clean.

Convey my blessings to Sushila on the occasion of her birthday.

When you went to Rajkot, you must have called on Jamnadas. Did you meet Manu? How is Purushottam's health?

Is any work being done in Jamnadas's school? Did you see any activity in Rajkot in connection with the movement? I hope to have news from you about all such matters.

Keep a watch on Dharmakumar's bad habits. Explain the position to Durga. If she pays attention to the matter, she can do much.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

In line two of the 139th *bhajan* in the *Bhajanavali*, occurs an expression, *nijanamagrahi*[1]. If Narandas or some other Gujarati knows its meaning, understand it from them and explain it to me. If you yourself know it, so much the better.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10245; also C.W. 6693. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

417. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI

December 5, 1930

BHAI TYAGIJI,

I was very pleased to have your letter. Take milk if the weakness does not go despite a regular diet. Try cooked cereals before you do that. Don't be obstinate. I was sorry to learn of the conditions in Gurukul. Is Abhayji aware of them? What was Ramdevji's reply? Baldev may well learn carpentry. Write to him, he should learn to construct charkha, loom, *takli*, etc. Who is the principal in Vri[ndavan]

[1] One who clings to the Name, which is his very self

Gu[rukul]? Tell Premrajji to write to me how all things are. What is going on there?

BHARATIYA PATHSHALA

FARRUKHABAD BAPU

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I never knew that your Urdu letters were like print, they are very good.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3266

418. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,

December 6, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (DESAI),

Your letter consisted of three sheets, but they seemed to have lost the middle sheet. I did not get it. If you remember its contents, write to me again. Pyarelal's health has become very good. His weight is 122 pounds. He gets three pounds of milk, one pound of bread and vegetables.

At present, both of us have become crazy about spinning.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1812

419. LETTER TO BULAKHIDAS

December 6, 1930

BHAI BULAKHIDAS,

God will indeed test us in a thousand ways. But that will not make us lose heart. Both of you should devotedly go on doing your work till the last.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3139

420. LETTER TO MAHENDRA DESAI

December 6, 1930

CHI. MANU (MANSINH),

I got your letter. You should take care and write a more legible hand. How much do you spin daily?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7411. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

421. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI PANDYA

December 6, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. Your interpretation of the term *abhyasa* is correct, as also of *chittavrittinirodha. Dhyana=Upasana,* i.e., ultimately it could mean faithfully observing one's own dharma. In my view here the word *dhyana* is used in a narrower sense. *Dhyana* refers to our silent sittings at the time of our worship and prayers. This brings about a [sense of] dedication to the Lord, which in its turn gives rise to a disinterested attitude. No social service is possible without self-purification, which again develops in the course of social service. It is all right therefore that doubts arise in your mind but you should not fall into their currents. If they are resolved so much the better; if not you should have faith that they would be solved as you go on serving.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 334. Courtesy: Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

422. LETTER TO SHANTA SHANKARBHAI PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 6, 1930

CHI. SHANTA,

You did well to pay a visit to Shankarbhai. I was happy to learn about Kamala's self-control. If you display the virtue which your name suggests and write your letters with a calm mind, your handwriting will improve. If a person cannot fast by dropping even one meal, he or she should learn to do so by patient effort, especially one who wishes to observe *brahmacharya*. Do you know that only recently Premabehn fasted for seven days? During the period of the fast, moreover, she continued the daily chores, including washing clothes and fetching water. And you say that, after you had missedone meal, your hands were shaking. The cause was the condition of your mind, and not of the body. Do you see?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3990

423. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI MADHAVJI THAKKAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 7, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I have your letter. What you say is true. No one ought to give up his or her work for any reason whatever. This is the ideal. We should not feel unhappy if everybody cannot act up to it. We should not criticize such a person even in our thoughts. We should be strict in judging our own weaknesses, but generous in judging others. This is not goodness but the correct principle to follow. We have no knowledge of the struggle which the person whose weakness we observe may be making. It is the effort which matters. It may be that we are free from a particular weakness, but that may not be the result of any effort on our part. There is no merit in our refraining from

flesh-eating, since we are accustomed from birth to do without it. But there may be great merit in the self-denial of a person who was a habitual meateater but has given up eating it now, though he may repeatedly break his vow. Hence the right thing is that we ourselves should do the best we can to follow a rule perfectly, and be satisfied with what others can do. You have been getting good experience. I am sure that you will come out successful from the test. The diet which you follow is the right one.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6806

424. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 7, 1930

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Hitherto I had been an admiring reader of your articles. That admiration remains, but now there is added to it the viewpoint of a student and a critic. I see that your book is not a self-teacher on the subject. By reading it one cannot learn carding. Even those who know it a little would not be able to carry out the reforms you suggest. The book is excellent in itself, but as a self-teacher it seems to me incomplete. As far as I have understood your book I think you have rejected the method you had explained to me and have followed a new one. I thought I had already adopted it. But on reading your book again, I find that I had done nothing new at all. Now my suggestion is that you should send me a draft lesson as if you were teaching me the method. It is not necessary to rewrite the whole of your book. How much cotton should I hold out to the string at a time and in how many pulls should it get carded? With how much cotton should I begin the carding? Should the pad be arranged anew every day and why should it be of half-carded cotton? And should that in its turn be carded the same day? Should all the cotton put on the mat in the beginning be carded the same day? As we pull at the string, the bow also swings, doesn't it? The left hand should be used only for raising and lowering the carding-bow and it is moved forwards and backwards by the action of the rod; isn't that what you mean? If you

cannot find time to explain all this, don't pay any attention to this letter. Your main work is to examine those who are learning there and improve their proficiency. I am like a by-stander who is looking on. I know that I have no right to engage your attention on such matters just now. This letter has two aims, one to point out the deficiencies in the book and the other to seek help for myself. Treat the second as of less importance. I have put briefly to Vithal the questions I have asked above. Let him give me his time. He will learn something while doing so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3749

425. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

December 7, 1930

DEAR DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

Now there are two teachers in place of one, a girl and a grey beard. So the pupil is now done away with. Let us see what happens. This exercise is enough, isn't it.[1] Anyway, am I not making progress? Moreover, I have Pyarelal for companion now, and he is well-versed in Urdu. However, I would not take up much of his time for this, as he devotes all his time to spinning. You should, therefore, point out mistakes in my spelling. You should not, in your present state of health, spend much time for me. As I have plenty of leisure, I will read your letters slowly and carefully. Mother is partial to Father. His handwriting is an old man's and yours that of a youngster. But let that be. Though a person may own a white beard, he may be young in mind and may play a thousand games—teach French to someone, translate from other languages and revolve all manner of plans in his mind. Others may be young in years, but old in mind. Of course I would not say that you are quite that, but you will cease being so if your septum trouble is cured. The news of that operation did not frighten me. In fact, I am never frightened by an operation. But I am

[1] These four sentences are in Urdu.

certainly eager to have news about your health. Convey to Dahyabhai my blessings or *Vandemataram*—whichever he desires. I was glad to have that news about him.

Khuda Hafiz[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9624

426. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

December 7, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got both your letters. You have not been arrested so far, though of course it would be good if you were. You should remain unconcerned whether or not you are arrested. Go on patiently doing all your work. I see that you have been having very useful experiences there. I have Pyarelal with me now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9295

427. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 7, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

I got your letter. By not attending prayers in order that they might help in putting out the fire, the women offered real prayers. This is an example of non-action in action. You fulfilled the real purpose of prayers. Moreover, one can go on repeating Ramanama to oneself even while running to the place where fire has started in order to help put it out.

Finally, the person whose life is dedicated to service and who has burnt his or her egotism lives his life in the spirit of prayer. We pray morning and evening in order that we may be able to live thus, and,

[1] This is in Urdu.

therefore, when a fire breaks out, or in similar circumstances, one may even drop prayers. But such occasions are rare.

Pour out *amrita* against the poison which you describe. Violence is conquered by non-violence, untruth by truth, lust by self-control, anger by forbearance and avarice by generosity.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G.S. Gangabehnne, p. 48; also C.W. 8767. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

428. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 7, 1930

CHI. SUSHILA,

I knew two or three persons of the name 'Stuart'. One was a magistrate and afterwards became an officer in the army at the time of the Zulu rebellion. Another was a lawyer. I had become fairly intimate with the former. Is it that same Stuart who is there? Do you also wish to follow Manilal? Will you carry with you or leave behind Sita *alias* Dhairyabala *alias* whatever other names you have given her?

How many women work there?

To all of you,

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4778

429. LETTER TO PADMA

December 7, 1930

CHI. PADMA,

I got your letter. Because Gujarati is not your mother tongue, why should your handwriting be bad? What connection has one's handwriting with the language in which one is writing? You may write in the Devnagari script and show me that you can write neatly. A letter

in a word is like a drawing. A person who knows drawing can write a beautiful handwriting in any language.

If anyone presses us to eat food which we never eat, we should politely but firmly refuse—in the end that will please the other person.

We should not be rude to any British officer whom we may meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6116

430. LETTER TO TOTARAM SANADHYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 7, 1930

BHAI TOTARAMJI,

Clay may be applied on the head. A mud-cap can be placed on the head while working in the sun. I used it on many occasions during the march.[1] A towel spread over with clay and tied on the head forms a cap and provides protection. How is Gangadevi's health? Does Dhiru behave well? Is he very boisterous?

Blessings from

BAPU

PANDIT TOTARAMJI
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI JN.
B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2540

[1] The reference is to the Dandi March.

431. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

December 7, 1930

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

Though I do not write to you frequently, you are always in my thoughts. How is Mridula? Did you meet her? How is her health ? Khurshedbehn will be well. Did you meet Mani? Do they all stay together or separately?

God is kind. Is Bharati getting along all right?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G. N. 11556

432. LETTER TO BABALBHAI MEHTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,

December 8, 1930

BHAI BABALBHAI,

I got your letter. There is no need to do *prayashchitta* for having eaten in the company of all classes of persons in jail. *Prayashchitta* has no reference to cleanliness or lack of it. It is enjoined for eating food served by a person belonging to a community other than one's own. One who does not believe in this restriction should never perform *prayashchitta* on that account. About other matters, Kakasaheb will guide you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9455

433. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

December 8, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

I have reserved your letter to the last deliberately in the hope of hearing from you before or on Monday in reply to my postcard which I wrote to you on Thursday and which I hope you duly received. It contained an inquiry about your health. This obstinate

constipation is disturbing. I hope when this reaches you all the effect of the attack would have worn out. I have got rid of mine by simply dropping proteid food for a while. I am now taking proteid through almonds. I should love not to go back to milk. Save now for a visible weakness, the result has been excellent. Almonds I am taking very cautiously and I cannot sustain the strength on green vegetables merely and about an ounce of almonds. I have gone to the ounce only for the last two days. I must take a cereal. I have not decided what to take. I want to try *bajri* or *juwari*—whatever the jail chapati for the day. If it agrees, the problem may be solved to my entire satisfaction. But there will be no haste, certainly no obstinacy. Immediately I feel the need, I shall go back to milk.

In another ten days I shall have finished the translation of the *Bhajanavali*. It has given me such a joy. I am not satisfied with the performance. Save for the fact that it is an act of love, it has no othermerit—certainly no literary merit. But it will help you to know the meaning of the *bhajans* and that was all I aimed at. And when this is finished I hope to begin the other, viz., translation of preface to the Gujarati *Gita*. I do not think I shall translate the verses, but I shall go through one of the existing translations and where it is different from mine, I shall note it and translate all the marginal notes. This will simplify my work and save a great deal of labour. Please share this with Kaka. He will feel interested in the proposal.

The improvements in the Gandiv have exceeded all expectations. It now runs smoothly. It has the tension which was absent. But I am not going to weary you with a description of the improvements. I am describing them in a letter to Keshu. I am sure that for speed it cannot now be excelled by any other wheel. But that has still to be tested. My assurance won't create more yarn, I know.

You *must* give yourself ample rest and must not work under tension. It is good for the wheel but not for human beings.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5424. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9658

434. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Thursday morning, December 4/9, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter yesterday evening. They pass on the packets to me and post them to you with great care. It seems that the packets are delayed in posting by a day.

The doctor wishes to come during Diwali. Does that mean after nine months? Or does he mean the Christian Diwali? If he means the Hindu Diwali, a great many things will have happened by then.

Mahalakshmi and Madhavji are very conscious of the deep significance of a pledge. Hence both of them should be pained by a violation of even the letter of a pledge. But we should be satisfied if everyone keeps a pledge as he or she understands it and to the best of his or her ability, and it seems that most people do so. You should keep them vigilant.

Do what you think best about Giriraj. Since you will have to bear the burden, I will accept your decision as the only proper one. I know that Krishna will always have his own way. If he keeps good health, I think he is likely to do great service in future.

I believe the same about Purushottam. Let him write to me from time to time.

Pyarelal is improving quite well in health. I hope it will not go down while he is with me. His being with me is like a goat being near a wolf. A goat tied in front of a wolf will grow thinner every day even if you feed it on the finest grass. Something of that sort used to happen to Pyarelal. I hope that is not so now. I blame myself a good deal for what used to be. Let us see what God wills. He will get what he wants by way of food. At present, he takes milk and curds and eats bread, vegetables and *papaiya*.

I had not imagined that Parnerkar would mismanage things as badly as he has done. He is a worker with pure motives, but it seems that he cannot cope with work. You did very well in being strict with him and getting the accounts in order. I hope he will take rest now and improve his health. Should we assume that the business at Bidaj is running at a loss? If you think it necessary to reduce the scale or wind up any of our activities, do so. Anyone who works in the spirit of

non-attachment soon discovers the measure of his ability. He will never be too eager to do things and never undertake anything beyond his capacity. Really speaking, he does not have to seek work. Work comes to him unsought, and he does his best to do full justice to it. To the world he seems a man who has no work, for his face betrays no anxiety and he never complains about the burden of work. In fact he carries no burden. He entrusts his burdens to Lord Krishna and dances as He wills.

Jethalal had written to me saying that he would send a report of the work done. I have not received the report. I understand what you say about Kamalabehn Lundi. That is what marriage is. The desire for it has its source in lust and attachment. Marriage is called a sacrament because it is a means of controlling lust. That is how it was conceived, at any rate. But this intention is now forgotten, and so for most people marriage has become a means of self-indulgence. I will write to Gangabehn and Nanibehn.

I have been watching your experiment in diet. Give me detailed information from time to time. It will certainly benefit you if you eat only a small quantity of groundnuts. You may not even need them when you have milk and curds. There is certainly some truth in the advice which research-workers now give against eating many articles at a time. All the foods are not simultaneously digested in the same manner and to the same degree and, therefore, a mixture of too many of them disturbs the stomach. The description of compassion was very good indeed. You say that you have sent the printed copies of the discourses; that may also mean that they are being dispatched now. I have not received them.

Friday morning

I have given all details about my health and my diet in the letter to Kakasaheb, and so I do not repeat them here. I had assumed that you would send for Keshu and hear his complaint, and that was why I did not write about it in my letter. But I give a summary now as far as I remember what it was.

1. You get angry with him without any reason.
2. Once he tried to explain matters to you, but you did not listen to him and shouted at him so loudly that all could hear you and you said many improper things.
3. You are very partial to Kusum, Navin and Dhiru and do not even listen to any complaints against them.

4. You have taken away from him the management of the factory without any reason.
5. Damodardas left the Ashram out of disgust at your partiality.

I have written to Keshu and told him that just as I used to be under Maganlal's spell and saw no faults in him, so am I under yours and see no fault in you, and will not, therefore, be ready to believe anything about you which I have not myself observed. I, however, advised him to open his heart to you and tell you everything. He merely said in reply that he was not satisfied by my letter. After that I have kept quiet since he was to have a talk with Mahadev. Now you should, yourself, call him and show to him his complaints which I have described. If I have misunderstood him, he will correct my mistake. If I have left out anything, he should add that. You may then try to satisfy him if you can. I have written to him and advised him to take up some work, no matter what it is. I have told Kakasaheb about him. I have advised him, too, that he should see Kakasaheb. I have no doubt that it will do him no good whatever to remain without work.

If Harilal Desai wants to take up service in the Ashram and if you think there will be no harm in giving him a job do give him one. He is unmethodical in work but he is a young man of transparent sincerity of purpose. I think it will be worth while having him as one of our workers. Did you read the long letter which . . .[1] wrote to me? He will produce no effect on me unless he tells me something concrete observed by himself. I believe . . .[2] to be a pure-hearted girl. . . .[3] has also produced on me the impression of being pure in heart and one who would speak the truth. I had a happy experience of him also during the march. He had spread the fragrance of his character in the Kashi Vidyapith too. It is true that he has been guiding . . .[4] and trying to raise her level, but I have seen in him nothing but the attitude of a brother and teacher.

Silence Day afternoon

Try to find soon a piece of leather to repair the soles of the sandals. I find that the soles of the new pair, too, are none too strong. Signs of its wearing out could be seen today. About my health and

[1] The names have been omitted.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*
[4] *ibid*

diet, you will find something in the letter to Mirabehn and a little in the letter to Kakasaheb too. Hence I say nothing here.

These days I seem to be able to observe small things with greater attention, and so I cannot help noticing the character of the handwriting in the different letters received in the packets sent by you. I am trying to improve my bad handwriting. You must have observed this in every letter of mine. Bad handwriting is of course a form of discourtesy. Discourtesy in every form is violence, but bad handwriting is direct violence too. Anything which causes unnecessary pain to our neighbour or to any living creature is nothing but violence. I have twice as much experience as others of what pain and inconvenience are caused to the reader by bad handwriting. I have, in the first place, the experience of having to read letters written in bad writing by others and also the experience of the pain caused to others by my handwriting. My aim in saying this is to advise all inmates of the Ashram, men and women, boys and girls, to take great care to write a good hand. This requires no time but only some thought. One must have love for the other party. Let all of them observe the following rules:

1. They should leave enough space between the words.
2. They should avoid flourishes in the letters.
3. They should never leave a letter half-written.
4. They should not let the letters flow into one another.
5. As far as possible, they should write to no one in pencil.

If they follow these rules, they will certainly be able to make their handwriting legible. Haste signifies attachment. Let no one write in haste. Everyone should be content with what he or she can write slowly and patiently.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

There are 83 letters today, but No. 36 seems to have been omitted and so, really speaking, there are 80 only. The 81st is for the brother of the late Mangaldas Sheth. Have it delivered to him immediately.

The separate sheets of the discourses are included in the total number.[1]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

[1] For the text of the discourse which followed, *vide* "Letters on the *Gita*"—Ch. IV.

435. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 9, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have had no letters from you for some time. I do feel worried. But I believe that everything must be all right. God will look after you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3383

436. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

December 11, 1930

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

I note what you say about Kamalabehn. May she prosper in the right sense!! 'This correspondence' need not cease. I would gladly continue it if you will further cross-question me. Many things I have noticed become clear through sheer lapse of time and consequent, unconscious observation.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10083

437. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

December 11, 1930

MY DEAR ANAND,

I have left not one single letter of yours unanswered. I hardly think they have been intercepted. I have answered all your questions. I do hope you will get them all.

For avoiding constipation try green leafy vegetables and tomatoes only without any protein food for two or three days. This plan has worked well with me. Alternatively try stewed French plums without anything else.

Love to you both.

BAPU

[PS.]

I am well but am not taking fresh fruit.

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

438. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

December 11, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR) ,

I got your letter. I observe no harmful effect on my health. I see that the changes have done me nothing but good. Do not worry on my account at all.

Pyarelal's time is taken up as under: 375 rounds on the spinning-wheel, 100 rounds on the *takli* and making the required number of slivers. This work leaves him very little free time. The *takli* takes up two hours of his time. I, too, do almost the same work. I spin 100 rounds on the *takli*, but am satisfied with 275 on the wheel. The total comes to 375.

What you say about the girls is correct. Write to me more plainly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1813

439 LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

December 11, 1930

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

I have your beautiful letter. What you have thought about Father is only right. I shall say nothing more about it. I hope you were successful with Ghanshyamdas.

As regards the motherland being considered as your mother there is a flaw in your thought. Just as loving one's mother does not mean that one should not love another's mother, so also loving one's motherland does not mean hating other countries. Where there is no love for the motherland love of the world is an illusion. And since the motherland has a greater right over us, being proud of the motherland without any ill will for other countries is only proper. I cannot directly care for the children of the whole world. But if I care lovingly for the children who are in my keeping I shall to that extent be doing service to the children of the world. The case of the motherland is exactly similar. After all it does matter in which land and in which atmosphere we are born. Ahimsa has its origin in this thought. In so far as ahimsa means universal love it can have direct application in our serving the creatures who are nearest us.

I hope you will now take Prabhavati to the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Jayaprakash Narayan Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

440. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

December 12, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

If one does not like a particular name, he should himself suggest a better one. If Dhiru suggests a better one, we will keep it. As far as I am concerned, I like the name 'Magan' for your spinning-wheel. The three reasons given by you are even more appropriate.

Do not at all think about how long you will have to stay in Almora. You know of my desire of setting up an ashram there. Just take it that you are running an ashram on a rented place. A person

who runs an ashram is not different from others. Any place where the rules of an ashram are followed, is like an ashram. You are a society of eight persons. You have with you there *the Gita, the Ramayana* and the spinning-wheel. What more do you want? For running the ashram, it is necessary to have some persons. Just take it that you three are the ones sent there for the purpose.

Devotion of Tulsidas was the devotion of the future generation. Rama in a human form did not exist in Tulsidas's time. His utterances are imaginary . . .[1] even if Rama in a human form did exist in his time, his origin as God in human form took place in a later period. Compare the seventh chapter of the *Gita,* to the grief of Rama. "I am the Creator of all the three qualities." Wherever we find deceit and fault in God, we need not accept Tulsidas's saying that God has no faults and that we should not do as He does. We have to observe the rules of proper conduct. We cannot abide by the text of the inimitable book of Tulsidas, but have to abide by its inner meaning. What does not appeal to us should be set aside. One experiences the mind's quality of forgetfulness every minute. Think over it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32944

441. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 12, 1930

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Your letter. I gave up fresh fruit on learning of the sufferings outside. Now Pyarelal is with me. Eating, drinking, [spinning] *yajna* are all karma or actions. An action that does not deserve to be undertaken is *vikarma* or perverse action. *Akarma* is absence of action, i.e., action undertaken by man without attachment or desire for the fruit. A perverse action cannot be undertaken without attachment. Do write if you have any doubts. Your health must be good when you come out [of jail].

We both are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2385

442. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

December 13, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

Your p.c. was duly received. The absence of any further news from you, I take to mean perfect restoration. After each illness you are soon well, because the treatment followed is natural, but every sickness leaves behind it a legacy of weakness unless the system is allowed full rest and the mind relieved of tension. I suppose the mental control is the most difficult. For this the sovereign remedy is the application of the *Gita*. Each time mind suffers a shock, there is failure in application. Let good news as well as bad pass over you like water over a duck's back. When we hear any, our duty is merely to find out whether any action is necessary and if it is, to do it as an instrument in the hands of Nature without being affected by or attached to the result. This detachment appears a scientific necessity when we remember that in bringing about a result more than one instrument is employed. Who shall dare say 'I have done it'[?] I know you know all this. Nevertheless, I drive the truth home, so that from the brain it may percolate to the heart. So long as it remains in the brain only, it is a dead weight on it. Any truth received by the brain must immediately be sent down to the heart. When it is not, it suffers abortion and then it lies on the brain as so much poisonous matter. What poisons the brain poisons the whole system. Hence the necessity of using the brain as it should be merely as a transmitting station. Whatever is there received is either transmitted to the heart for immediate action or it is rejected there and then as being unfit for transmission. Failure of the brain to perform this function properly is the cause of almost all the ills that flesh is heir to as also for mental exhaustion. If the brain simply performed its function, there need never be any brain-fag. So whenever we suffer from illness generally there is not only a dietetic error but there is also failure on the part of the brain to function properly. The author of the *Gita* evidently saw this and gave the world the sovereign remedy in the clearest possible language. Whenever therefore anything preys upon your mind, you should meditate on the central teaching of the *Gita* and throw off the burden. Let us hope there never will be a recurrence of the terrible constipation.

As to Kumarappa if you have enough charity and goodwill forward to him all the criticism you receive leaving the result to take care of itself. It is a duty you owe to him to let him have the criticisms. You may now use Kaka too for the purpose of sending your messages.

For me the milkless experiment continues as yet without any bad result. The weight has suffered a further decrease of 3 Ib. but the vitality remains. One cause of the decrease in weight is that I am most cautious about increasing the quantity of cereals and almonds I take. Almonds remain at 3 *tolas* and *bajri* and *juwari bhakhari* a quarter, i.e., about 2 *tolas* each time, i.e., at 11 and 5. I may soon increase the weight. Anyway the condition of the bowels is extraordinarily good. I quite agree with you that the enema as a habit is a bad thing and should be got rid of, if at all possible. It has been possible with the dropping of milk as it had become when, on going to Wardha, you will recall, I had dropped milk. Indeed but for my folly in hastily following Gopalrao I might still have been flourishing on the diet I had then adopted. The present diet is a slight modification of the Wardha one.

Whenever you are ill, you will not hesitate to write to me at once without waiting for the weekly letter day.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 9283. Courtesy: Mirabehn

443. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

December 13, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got all your letters together. It is good that the women have been arrested. I give all the news about myself in the common letter and, therefore, say nothing in letters to individual persons. My health is all right. I have given up milk at present and eat a *rotla* of *jowar* or *bajra*, vegetables and three *tolas* of almonds. And in addition, lemons of course, and sometimes dates. This diet has helped me to get rid of the need for enemas. But I must wait and see whether I can keep it up. The weight has gone down, but I do not worry about that at all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9296

444. LETTER TO NIRMALA DESAI

December 13, 1930

CHI. NIRMALA,

I got your letter. I do not remember any letter of yours to which I did not reply. Why did Mother go back? Did she not feel happy there? Or had she come only for a few days? How is your leg now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9457

445. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA TRIVEDI

December 13, 1930

CHI. RAMACHANDRA,

I have your letter. Write in ink and shape the letters well. Good that all have arrived at the Ashram. Tell Jiji[1] to give up the practice of untouchability and live in peace. There is no dharma in untouchability.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5265

446. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 14, 1930

CHI. SHARDA,

I am not aware that I have not replied to your letter. It would not be surprising if I had forgotten in my hurry. You are constantly harassed by asthma. Why don't you drive it out? There must be something wrong with your diet or you may be getting excited. One does get asthma when one's feelings are excited.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9895. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawa1a

[1] Literally, 'elder sister', here addressee's mother who was then at the Ashram.

447. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

December 14, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. I understand what you say about punishing children. Your argument is an old one. It is a vicious circle. Punishment did you good and so you think you should punish the children. When the children grow up, they will do the same. This is exactly the argument by which people justify their faith in violence. It is our aim to rise above this misleading experience. I admit that that requires patience. We have come together in the Ashram to cultivate that patience. Our aim is not just to impart education to children or teach them discipline, but to build character in them. Education, discipline, etc., are means to that end. If the result of building character in them is that education and discipline .are neglected, let that be so. I understand your argument, though. I also see that there is no ill will behind your use of the rod. But there are certainly anger and impatience behind them. May I make a suggestion? Call a meeting of the children. If any of them say, 'You may punish us, and in this manner, if we play mischief or disobey you', you may punish them in the manner which they suggest. You should not punish those who do not want youto punish them. If you try this method, you will see that you do not need to punish them. You should keep up this discussion. Do not give up arguing out of impatience or despair. Till your reason is convinced of what I say, you should follow your own path. I know that you are dedicated to truth and, therefore, I am sure that you will realize the truth ultimately.

Your diet seems to be all right.

You did not describe your visit to Rajkot.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10246; also C.W. 6694. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

448. LETTER TO PADMA

December 14, 1930

CHI. PADMA,

I have your letter. This time the handwriting was better. Improve it still further. I was happy to learn that there was nothing serious about the tumour. All the same, take care of your health. I am glad that you write every detail in the diary. To what term has Sarojinidevi been sentenced?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6117

449. LETTER TO VANAMALA PARIKH

December 14, 1930

CHI. VANAMALA,

As you used quite a big slip of paper for me, I have preserved it. If Dhiru uses bad language, you should lovingly persuade him not to do so. You should also inform Premabehn.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5756

450. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 14, 1930

BHAI NANABHAI (AKOLA),

I have your letter. You have got a worthy son-in-law indeed. He has gone away to live in a rest-house. And now Sushila will follow. And then Tara. Surendra also has been pressing his name as a candidate. I feel happy. This is true dharma. Till now, we used to enjoy pleasures in the name of religion. If Tara can stand it, let her

take sun-baths. You also will benefit considerably from them. Along with them, you should take hip-baths in the prescribed manner. And the food should be simple.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4779

451. LETTER TO KUNVARJI MEHTA

December 14, 1930

BHAI KUNVARJI,

I got your letter full of information. Ask Jugatram too to write. I am all right wherever I am, whether in or out of jail. God holds the string and I dance as He pulls it.

Kanjibhai's self-sacrifice is great, and his courage greater still. Convey my compliments to him.

I have written to Napoleon.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2689

452. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 14, 1930

CHI. MANI (SARDARIJI),

Now that you are out of prison, I expect to get from you a letter filled with details of your experience. How do you do?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 75

[1] Chhotabhai Kalyanji Mehta

453. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 14, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

I got your letter. I have already replied to Kalavati. The treatment being given to Mother seems to be all right. There is no doubt that constipation is the root cause of many diseases. I will describe for your information the experiment I am making at present, which has succeeded in curing my constipation at least. For two or three days I took boiled leafy vegetables, together with which I had also boiled unripe tomatoes. That by itself cured the constipation. Then I started adding crushed almonds, gradually increasing the quantity to three *tolas* and now I have been taking a few *bhakharis* made of *jowar* and *bajra* flour. This seems to keep up my strength. Of course I can say nothing definitely. I can do that if I can go on like this for two or three months. Anyone who wishes to follow my example should do so with great care. Both Santok and Radha know about the two types of bath described in Kuhne's book. They should prove very beneficial for Kalavati. We do not have a copy of the book[1] on mouth hygiene.

Convey my compliments to Dr. Sarjuprasadji. I wish him success in his work.

How do I deserve any blessing for the low prices of grain? Wouldn't the cultivators, for their part, curse me? There are several reasons for the prevailing low prices. As far as I am concerned, I see no objection to making extracts from my letters provided they are taken with Narandas's consent.

Pyarelal is happy and cheerful. He has two editions of the *Ramayana* with him, and he is not therefore, anxious to have other books now. After coming here, he had perforce to stop his reading.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5266

[1] Entitled *Mukhacharyavijnana*

454. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 14, 1930

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

Your letter. That 1,000 copies of the Bengali edition of *Anasaktiyoga* have been sold augurs well. In winter mornings it is good to expose as much of the body as possible to the sun rays between 9 and 10. It is also beneficial to take some raw onion with *roti* by way of medicine during winter. Onion has many qualities, though some drawbacks too. The main drawback is that of smell, but that can be avoided by taking a small quantity.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1679

455. LETTER TO SHANTA

December 14, 1930

CHI. SHANTA,

Your letter. Looking after Jiji is also a kind of national service. It should be performed without attachment. Jiji needs to be served and there is nobody else who can do it. We have no self-interest in this service.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5268

456. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA TRIVEDI

Sunday [On or after *December 14, 1930*][1]

CHI. RAMACHANDRA,

The letter bears no signature, but it is certainly from you. Your effort in improving your writing is good. Keep it up. Tell Jiji that, in regard to observance of dharma the question of Father's pleasure or displeasure does not arise. Ultimately everyone is reconciled if we observe dharma. We have the example of Mirabai before us. Jiji should not practise untouchability if she regards it a sin, as she ought to.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5291

457. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

December 15, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

From Jayaprakash's letter, it seems you must be in the Ashram now. It has been arranged now that letters from you should be handed over to me as soon as they are received. But I got no postcard or letter either today or yesterday. If you have still not gone over to the Ashram, do so immediately. Even after you have gone there, you should write to me daily for some time. Your fainting fits must stop, and I think they will in the Ashram. If you require fruit, etc., don't hesitate to ask for it. And don't plunge into work immediately. You have done enough work in the Ashram in the past, and hence you should take complete rest now. Don't burden your mind with worries. Everything will happen as God wills it. Meditate over the hymn *Premal Jyoti*[2].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3384

[1] From the contents it appears this letter was written after the letter to the addressee dated December 13, 1930. The Sunday following it was December 14.

[2] A Gujarati rendering, by Narasinhrao Divetia, of Newman's *Lead, Kindly Light*

458. "ASHRAM BHAJANAVALI" [1]

1

प्रातः स्मरामि हृदि संस्फुरदात्मतत्त्वम्

Early in the morning I call to mind that Being which is felt in the heart, which is *sat* (the eternal), *chit* (knowledge) and *sukham* (bliss), which is the state reached by perfect men and which is the super-state. I am that immaculate Brahma which ever notes the states of dream, wakefulness and deep sleep, not this body, the compound made of the elements—earth, water, space, light and air.

20-12-1930[2]

2

प्रातर्भजामि मनसोवचसामगम्यम्

In the early morning I worship Him who is beyond the reach of thought and speech and yet by whose grace all speech is possible. I worship Him whom the Vedas describe as *neti neti* (not this, not this). Him they, the sages, have called God of gods, the unborn, the unfallen, the source of all.

7-5-1930

[1] *Ashram Bhajanavali* is a collection of devotional songs which formed part of the morning and evening prayers at Gandhiji's ashrams. They were in various languages and taken from various sources, some of them obscure, but all fairly popular in Hindu religious tradition. Gandhiji rendered these into English for Mirabehn's benefit, in the first place, during his imprisonment in Yeravda Central Prison. The work of translation was begun on May 6, 1930 and the last hymn was translated on December 15.

In 1934 George Allen & Unwin Ltd. brought out an adaptation of the work by John S. Hoyland. (For Gandhiji's permission for its publication, *vide* "Letter to J. S. Hoyland", 15-12-1933.) But in order to make the poems acceptable to English readers, Hoyland omitted a great deal, "chiefly Indian names and symbolism" but also much else so that at places it is difficult to recognize the original in the adaptation. See for instance Gandhiji's translation of verse 8 and Hoyland's adaptation of it (p. 388).

The version reproduced here is taken from a photostat of the original work in Gandhiji's hand (C. W. 4903).

[2] Note by Gandhiji: "1st verse rewritten on 20-12-1930." Gandhiji first wrote it on May 6, again on November 20 and then finally on this date.

3

प्रातर्नमामि तमसः परमर्कवर्णम्

In the early morning I bow to Him who is beyond darkness, who is like the sun, who is perfect, ancient, called Purushottama, (the best among men) and in whom (through the veil of darkness) we fancy the whole universe as appearing even as (in darkness) we imagine a rope to be a snake.

8-5-1930

4

समुद्रवसने देवि पर्वतस्तनमडिले ।

O! Goddess Earth with the ocean for thy garment, mountains for thy breasts, thou consort of Vishnu (the Preserver), I bow to thee; forgive the touch of my feet.

NOTE. Bowing to the earth, we learn to be humble as the earth which supports the beings that tread upon it. Earth therefore is rightly the consort of the Preserver.

9-5-1930

5

या कन्देन्दुतुषरहारधवला या शुभ्रवस्त्रावृता

May the Goddess Saraswati (of learning), the destroyer completely of black ignorance, protect me. She who is white as the *mogra* flower or the moon and a garland of snow, who has worn white robes, whose hands are adorned with the beautiful bamboo of her *veena* (a kind of violin), who is seated on a white lotus and who is always adored by Brahma, Vishnu, Siva and the other gods.

10-5-1930

6

वक्रतुण्ड महाकाय सूर्यकोटिसमप्रभ ।

O God with a curved mouth, big body, refulgent like ten million suns, keep me ever free from harm whilst doing beneficent acts.

NOTE. This is addressed to God represented by the mystic letter 'ॐ' pronounced 'Om'. Mark its curved mouth and big body. Its mystic splendour has been sung by the Upanishads.

11-5-1930

7

गुरु र्ब्रह्मा गुरु विष्णुर्गुरु र्देवो महेश्वरः

Guru (teacher) is Brahma, he is Vishnu, he is Mahadev, he is the geat *Brahman* itself. I bow to that guru.

NOTE. This refers of course to the spiritual teacher. This is not a mechanical or artificial relationship. The teacher is not all these in reality but he is all that to the disciple who finds his full satisfaction in him and imputes perfection to him who gave him a living faith in a living God. Such a guru is a rarity, at least nowadays. The best thing is to think of God Himself as one's Guru or await the Light in faith.

12-5-1930

8

[शान्ताकारं भुजगशयनं पद्मनाभं सुरेशम्]

I bow to Vishnu, who is peace incarnate, who lies on a snaky bed, from whose navel grows the lotus, who is the supreme lord of the gods, who sustains the universe, who is like unto the sky, who has the colour of clouds, whose body is blissful, who is the lord of Lakshmi (goddess of good fortune), who has lotus-like eyes, who is knowable by the yogis through meditation, who dispels the fear of the wheel of birth and death and who is the sole Ruler of all the worlds.[1]

13-5-1930

9

[करचरणकृतं वाक्कायजं कर्मजं वा]

Forgive, O merciful and blessed Mahadev, all those sins of mine, of commission or omission, mental or actual and whether done

[1] Hoyland's adaptation of this reads:
I bow to Thee, O Saviour-God:
The universe is stayed in place by Thee;
To those who seek Thee Thou dost show Thyself;
Known in the heart's most secret meditation:
Thou drivest far the fear of death, the fear of life:
And Thou, Thou only,
Commandest by Thy sovereign sway all worlds;
To Thee I bow, O Saviour-God.

through the hands or the feet, the speech, the ears or the eyes. Let Thy will be done.

14-5-1930

10

[नत्वहं कामये राज्यं न स्वर्गं नापुनर्भवम्]

I desire neither earthly kingdom nor paradise, no, not even release from birth and death. I desire only the release of afflicted life from misery.

15-5-1930

11

[स्वस्ति प्रजानः परिपालनतताम्]

Blessed be the people; may the rulers protect their kingdoms by just means, may it be always well with the cow[1] and the Brahmin[2]; may all the peoples be happy.

16-5-1930

12

[नमस्ते सते ते जगत्कारणाय]

I bow to Thee the *sat* (*see* first verse), the cause of the universe, I bow to Thee the *chit* (1st verse), the refuge of the world, I bow to Thee the one without a second, the giver of salvation, I bow to Thee the Brahman, the all-pervading, the eternal.

17-5-1935

13

[त्वमेकं शरण्यं त्वमेकं वरेण्यम्]

Thou art the only refuge, Thou art the only one to be desired, Thou art the sole protector of the universe, Thou art self-revealed, Thou art the sole creator, preserver and destroyer of the universe, Thou alone art supreme, immovable, unchangeable.

18-5-1930

[1] Note by Gandhiji: "Cow=agriculture"

[2] Note by Gandhiji: "Brahmin=education"

14

[भयानां भयं भीषणं भीषणानाम्]

Of all the fears, Thou art the chief, of all that is terrible Thou art the most terrible, Thou art the motion of all life, Thou art the holy of holies, Thou art the sole regulator of the mightiest places, Thou art the greatest among the great. Thou art the chief among all protections.

19-5-1930

15

[वयं त्वां स्मरामो वयं त्वां भजामो]

We think of Thee, we worship Thee, we bow to Thee as the witness of this universe, we seek refuge in Thee the *sat*, our only support, yet Thyself needing none, the ruler, the barque in the midst of this ocean of endless birth and death.

20-5-1930

16

[विपदो नैव विपदः संपदो नैव संपदः]

That which goes by the name of adversity is not such; nor is that prosperity which goes by that name. To forget God is adversity; ever to think of Him is prosperity.

21-5-1930

17

[विष्णुर्वा त्रिपुरान्तको भवतु वा ब्रह्मा सुरेन्द्रोऽथवा]

Let him be whosoever he may be whether Vishnu or Mahadev, Brahma or Indra, Sun or Moon, Lord Buddha or Mahavir, obeisance be ever only to him who is free from the poisonous effect of desire and anger, who is filled with compassion for all life and who is purified by a perfectly virtuous life.

22-5-1930

18

[हिरण्मयेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखम्][1]

The face of truth is overlaid with a golden lid, O God, remove it so that I may see the true light.

23-5-1930

19

[अग्ने नय सुपथा राये अस्मान्][2]

O God, the Knower of all the ways, lead us along the right path so as to enable us to reach the goal; wrestle with our dark sins; we make obeisance to Thee again and again.

24-5-1930

20

[श्रेयश्च प्रेयश्च मनुष्यमेतः][3]

Both that which is good and that which is pleasing face man. A wise man will discriminate and will certainly prefer the good to the pleasing whereas the foolish one will prefer the pleasing thinking it to be profitable.

25-5-1930

21

[सर्वे वेदा यत्पदं आमनन्ति][4]

I shall tell thee in one word that state which all the Vedas establish, to which all the austerities are dedicated and desiring which devotees observe *brahmacharya*. It is Om.[5]

26-5-1930

[1] Ishopanishad, 15
[2] Ishopanishad, 18
[3] Kathopanishad, I. ii. 2
[4] *Ibid*
[5] Note by Gandhiji: "4, page 24, 6th ed."

22

[न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चन्द्रतारकम्][1]

The sun does not carry its light there, nor the moon, nor the stars, not even lightning can penetrate there, how then can this fire? All of them derive their light from It and all this (universe) is lighted by Its splendour.[2]

27-5-1930

23

[तपःश्रद्धे ये ह्युपवसन्त्यरण्ये][3]

Those knowing ones who with austerities and faith live the forest life in peace begging for their food becoming sinless enter through the sunny gate that abode where dwells that well-known immortal changeless Being.[4]

28-5-1930

24

[आत्मानं रथिनं विद्धि शरीरं रथमेव तु][5]

Regard the soul as the warrior, body as his chariot, reason as the charioteer, mind as the reins; they call senses horses, sense-objects meadows; wise men have said that the soul acts through the mind and the senses.[6]

29-5-1930

[1] Kathopanishadm II. ii. 15

[2] Note by Gandhiji: "This should have been later. It is the translation of verse 14, p. 28, 6th edition."

[3] *Mundakopanishad*, I. ii. 11

[4] Note by Gandhiji: "Verse 15, p. 28, 6th ed."

[5] *Kathopanishad*, I. iii. 3-4

[6] Note by Gandhiji: "5-6, p. 24"

25

[विज्ञानसारथिर्यस्तु मनःप्रग्रहवान्नरः][1]

He whose reason is like an experienced charioteer and whose mind is under control like the reins crosses over safely and safely comes to the journey's end, the excellent abode of Vishnu.

30-5-1930

26

[उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत][2]

Awake, arise, and learn wisdom from the wise. The sages say to traverse this way (through life) is as difficult as it is to walk along the edge of a razor.

31-5-1930

27

[अग्निर्यथैको भुवनं प्रविष्टो][3]

Even as fire though always the same assumes different forms as it passes through different media, so does the indwelling spritt, though essentially always the same, appear different passing through different media

1-5-1930

28

[वायुर्यथैको भुवनं प्रविष्टो][4]

Even as the air though always the same assumes different forms as it passes through different media so does the indwelling spirit, though essentially always the same, appear different passing through different media.

2-6-1930

[1] *Kathopanishad*, I. iii. 9
[2] *Ibid*.
[3] Kathopanishad, II. ii. 9
[4] *Ibid*.

29

[सूर्यो यथा सर्वलोकस्य चक्षुर्][1]

Even as the sun which gives light to all the eyes remains unaffected by the external defects of these eyes so is the oversoul dwelling in all that lives not affected by the, external woes of mankind.

3-6-1930

30

[एको वशी सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा][2]

Those wise men alone, not others, attain eternal happiness who feel dwelling in themselves that one all-controlling power which[3] pervades all life and though one appears as many.

4-6-1930

31

[नित्योऽनित्यानां चेतनश्चेतनानाम्][4]

Those wise men alone, not others, attain eternal peace who feel dwelling in themselves that God who is the permanent essence among the impermanent, who is the life in all that lives and who though one fulfils the desires of many.[5]

5-6-1930

32

[परीक्ष्य लोकान् कर्मचितान्][6]

Having realized (the impermanence of) the status to be obtained by works, a Brahmin should cultivate detachment. Stability cannot come from activity. To know that he should reverently approach a teacher who knows the Vedas and is intent on God.

6-6-1930

[1] Kathopanishad, II. ii. 9.
[2] *Ibid*.
[3] The source has "who".
[4] *Kathopanishad*, II. ii. 13
[5] Note by Gandhiji: "For 14 & 15 verses *see* leaf 8."
[6] *Mundakopanishad*, I. ii. 12

33

[तस्मै स विद्वान् उपसन्नाय सम्यक्][1]

To him thus come with due reverence, calm of mind brought under control, the wise teacher imparts divine knowledge whereby one really knows that permanent Being who is truth incarnate.

7-6-1930

34

[प्रणवो धनुः शरोह्यात्मा ब्रह्मतल्लक्ष्यमुच्यते][2]

Pranav (Om) is the bow, the spirit is the arrow and Brahm[an] is the target; therefore one must shoot unerringly so that the spirit becomes one with Brahm[an] like the arrow (with the target).

8-6-1930

35

[भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थि छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः][3]

When one realizes Godhead one's[4] heart is rid of difficulties, doubts vanish and works do not bind.

9-6-1930

36

[ब्रह्मैवेदं अमृतं पुरस्तात्][5]

This eternal Brahm[an] is before and behind, is in the right and the left, is below and above, pervades everywhere, is the universe, is above all.

10-6-1930

[1]*Mundakopanishad*, I. ii. 12
[2] *Ibid*
[3] *Ibid*
[4]The source has ''his".
[5] *Mundakopanishad*, II. ii. II

37

[सत्येन लभ्यस्तपसा ह्येष आत्मा][1]

Self-realization comes always through truth, *tapas* (austerity), true knowledge and *brahmacharya*. Seekers who have become free from sins realize the immaculate refulgent spirit within themselves.

11-6-1930

38

[सत्यमेव जयते नानृतम्][2]

Truth alone triumphs, never untruth. That way which the sages whose purpose is fulfilled traverse, which is the way of the gods and where is the great abode of truth opens (for us) through truth.

12-6-1930

39

[नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो][3]

This spirit is not attainable by the Vedic study or by feats of intellect or by attending discourses. It is attainable only by him who woos it. It reveals itself to such a one.

13-6-1930

40

[नायमात्मा वलहीनेन लभ्यो][4]

This realization is not possible for the weak or the indolent or those who resort to unmeaning austerities. But the soul of the wise man who remedies these defects enters the abode of Brahm[an].

13-6-1930

[1] *Mundakopanishad*, II. ii. II
[2] *Ibid*
[3] *Ibid*
[4] *lbid*

41

[सम्प्राप्यैनं ऋषयो ज्ञानतृप्ताः][1]

All those who have well understood the meaning of life through Vedant and science, whose hearts are purified through sannyasa, being intent on the immortal, on death enter *Brahmaloka* and become free.

15-6-1930

42

[वेदान्तविज्ञानसुनिश्चितार्थाः][2]

All those who have well understood the meaning of life through Vedant and science, whose hearts are purified through sannyasa, being intent on the immortal, on death enter *Brahmaloka* and become free.

15-6-1930

43

[यथा नद्यः स्यन्दमानाः समुद्रे][3]

Just as rivers rushing towards the sea leave their names and forms and merge in the sea, even so do wise men leave their names and forms and merge in the paramount divine Being.

16-6-1930

44

[स यो ह वै तत्. परमं ब्रह्म वेद, ब्रह्मैव भवति][4]

He who knows that great Brahm[an] I becomes It. In his family no one ignorant of Brahm[an] is possible. He passes grief and sin. He becomes free from the bonds of the heart and becomes immortal.

17-6-1930

[1] *Mundakopanishad*, III. ii. 5
[2] *Ibid*
[3] *Ibid*.
[4] *Ibid*.

45

[यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते अप्राप्य मानसा सह][1]

He who knows that Brahm[an] which not reaching both speech and mind return, fears nothing. He does not burn thinking, 'Why have I not done this good thing? Why have I committed that sin?

18-6-1930

46

[युवा स्यात् साधु युवाध्यायकः आशिष्ठो द्रढिष्ठो बलिष्ठः][2]

A young man should have character, should be studious, full of hope, determination and strength. For him all this earth should be full of riches.

19-6-1930

47

He may not witness dances, he may not attend meetings, gatherings and revel, he may not gossip, he should cultivate a love for solitude, he may not resent incorrect conduct by the teacher and his family, he may not engage in talks with women except as may be necessary, he should be gentle, calm, modest and determined, he should shun idleness, anger, envy; he should fetch a pitcherful of water for the teacher both morning and evening and fetch wood from the forest.

20-6-1930

48

[बलं वाव विज्ञानाद्भयोऽपि ह][3]

Soul-force is superior even to science, for one man having soul-force will shake one hundred learned men. When one has that force he is ready to go to a teacher, he serves him, then he becomes fit to sit near him, he ponders over what he has heard; he becomes wise, he does his duty, he has experience. The earth keeps its place through

[1] *Taittiriyopanishad*, II. 9.
[2] *Taittiriyopanishad*, VIII. 2
[3] *Chhandogyopanishad*, VII. viii. 1

that force, the heavens retain their place through it, the mountains, the gods, mankind, the brute creation, birds, grass, plants, game, insects, moths, ants, etc., all life are sustained by that force. Therefore cultivate that force.

21-6-1930

49

[मधुवाता ऋतायते][1]

May the winds, the waters, the plant life, the evening and the dawn, the dust of the earth, the heavenly vault which is like father, the trees, the sun and the cows be a blessing to us.

22-6-1930

50

[ज जातु कामात् न भयात् न लोभात्]

One may not abandon one's faith for the satisfaction of a desire, or from fear or ambition, not even for saving one's life. Faith is permanent, happiness and unhappiness are fleeting things. The spirit is immortal, the result of its actions—the body—is evanescent.

23-6-1930

51

[यदेव विद्यया करोति श्रद्धयोपरिषदा तदेद वीर्यवत्तर भवति][2]

Work done with knowledge and faith and in a prayerful spirit becomes most effective strength.

24-6-1930

52

[यं ब्रह्मारुद्रमरुत: स्तुन्वन्ति दिव्यै: स्तवै :]

I bow to that God whom Brahma, Varuna, Indra and the Maruts adore with divine hymns, of whom the Vedic singers sing in the Vedas with the *angas*, the *padas*, the *kramas* and the Upanishads, whom the yogis see in their meditations with minds fixed on Him and whose end the *devas* and the *asuras* do not see.

25-6-1930

[1] *Brihadaranyakopanishad*, VI. iii. 6
[2] *Chhandogyopanishad*, I. i. 10

53

KUMAR MANDIR PRAYER

[ॐ सह नाववतु । सह नौ भुनक्तु][1]

Om! may God protect us, may He support us, may we make joint progress, may our studies be fruitful, may we never harbour ill will against one another. Om *shanti, shanti, shanti*.

26-6-1930

54

[ॐ असतो मा सद्गमय । समसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय।][2]

Om! From untruth lead me unto truth, from darkness lead me unto light, from death lead me unto life everlasting.

27-6-1930

55

[योऽन्त: प्रविश्य मम वाचमिमां प्रसुप्ताम्]

I bow to thee, O God, who being almighty and having entered my heart, gives by His power life to the silent tongue, the hands, feet, ears, skin and other members of the body.

28-6-1930

56

WOMEN'S PRAYER

[गोविन्द द्वारिकावासिन् . . . कुरुमध्येऽवसीदतीम्]

O Govind, dweller of Dwarika, Krishna, Thou beloved of the Gopis, O Keshav, dost Thou not know that the Kauravas have surrounded me?

O Lord, Thou Lord of Lakshmi, protector of Vraja, deliverer from affliction, O Janardana, save me [from] the ocean of misery in the shape of the Kauravas.

O Krishna, Thou great Yogi, soul and protector of the universe, O Govind, deliver me lying hopeless in the midst of the Kauravas and seeking thy support.

29-6-1930

[1] *Taittiriyopanishad*, II (*Shantipath*)

[2] *Brihadaranyakopanishad*, III. 28

57

[धर्म चरत माऽधर्मम् 1 सत्यं वदत नानृतम्]

Act righteously, never unrighteously; speak truth, never untruth; look far ahead, never shortsightedly; look above; never below.

30-6-1930

58

[अहिंसासत्यमस्तेयं शौचमिन्द्रियनिग्रहः]

Ahimsa, truth, non-stealing, purity and self-control, these, said Manu, are the common duty of all the four divisions.

1-7-1930

59

[अहिंसा सत्यमस्तेयं अकामकोधलोभता]

Ahimsa, truth, non-stealing, freedom from passion, anger and greed, wishing the well-being and good of all that lives is the duty common to all the divisions.

2-7-1930

60

[विद्वाद्भिः सेवितः सद्भिनित्यमद्वेषरगिभिः]

Understand that to be religion which the wise, the good and those that are free from likes and dislikes follow and which is I felt in the heart.

3-7-1930

61

[श्रूयतां धर्मसर्वस्व . . . पापाय परपीडनम्]

Listen to the essence of religion and assimilate it through the heart: one should never do to others which one would not wish done to oneself.

That which has been said in countless books I shall say in half a verse: service of others is virtue, injury to others is sin.

4-7-1930

62

[आदित्यचन्द्रावनिलोऽनलश्च]

The sun, the moon, the wind, the fire, the sky, the earth, the waters, the heart, the god of judgment, the day, the night, the evening,

the morning and dharma itself are witnesses to man's actions, i.e., he can conceal nothing.

5-7-1930

63

FROM "DWADASHAPANJARIKA [-STOTRA"]

[मूढ जहीहि धनागमतृष्णाम्]

O foolish one, give up the desire for amassing wealth, make thy mind pure and free from desire, .satisfy thy mind with what thou may'st obtain through thy own labour.

6-7-1930

64

[अर्थमनर्थं भवय नित्यम्]

Always believe that wealth is illth. It is simple truth to say that there is no happiness coming from its possession. It is known to all that rich people fear even their own children.

7-7-1930

65

[कामं क्रोधं लोभं मोहम्]

Shun desire, anger, greed, possession and ask thyself 'who am I'. Those foolish ones who don't strive for self-realization go to perdition.

8-7-1930

66

[त्वयि मयि चान्यत्रैको विष्णुः]

In thee, me and others there is but one God who suffers us all; thou art angered for nothing. See thyself in all and everywhere, give up thy ignorance in the shape of differentiation.

9-7-1930

67

[नलिनीदलगतसलिलं तरलम्]

Like the precarious drops on a lotus leaf this life is fleeting. Know this world to be full of disease, egotism and affliction.

10-7-1930

68

FROM "PANDAVAGITA"

[प्रह्लादनारदराशरपुण्डरीक]

PANDAV: I think reverently of the holy ones: Prahlad, Narad, Parashar Pundarika, Vyasa, Ambarisha, Shuka, Shaunaka, Bhima, Dalbhya, Rukmangada, Arjuna, Vasishtha, Bibhishana and other great saints.

11-7-1930

69

[स्वकर्मफलनिर्दिष्टां यां यां योनिं ब्रजाभ्यहम्]

KUNTI: O Krishna, no matter in what species I am born due o my actions, may my devotion to you grow in strength.

12-7-1930

70

[ये ये हताश्चत्रधरेण राजन्]

DRONA: O King, those who were killed by the Wielder of the Discus, the Lord of the three worlds, Janardana, have gone to the abode of Vishnu. For even the wrath of God is like his boon.

13-7-1930

71

[त्वमेव माता च पिता त्वमेव]

GANDHARI: O Thou God of gods, Thou alone art my all, mother, father, brother, friend, knowledge, wealth.

14-7-1930

72

[नमो ब्रह्मण्यदेवाय . . . केशवं प्रतिगच्ड्छति]

VIRATA: Ten thousand ten obeisances to the great God Krishna, Govind the benefactor of the cow, the Brahmin, the whole universe.

PRAHLAD: O Lord ! O Changeless One ! may my devotion unto Thee remain for ever constant, no matter where among the thousands

of species I may take birth. May my love for Thee be pure and even as intense as the love of the worldly man for his sensepursuits and may it never fade from my heart ever intent upon Thee.

BHARADWAJA: Good fortune and victory, never defeat, attend upon those whose hearts are ruled by lotus-like Janardana.

MARKANDEYA: That moment or occasion when one does not think of Vasudeva means as much waste, loss, ignorance, folly, stupidity.

SHAUNAKA: Devotees of Vishnu needlessly worry over food and clothing. Surely He who sustains the whole universe is not going to neglect His devotees.

SANATKUMAR: Even as the waters dropping from the heavens are received into the ocean, so is the worship of the different gods received unto Keshav.

15-7-1930

73

SELECTIONS FROM "MUKUNDAMALA"

[श्रीवल्लभेति वरदेति दयापरेति]

O Mukunda, grant that I may always say: O Vallabh, O Giver of boons, O Fount of Mercy, O Lover of devotees, O Destroyerof the wheel of birth and death, O Lord, O Thou with a serpentine bed, O Thou Refuge of the Universe.

15-7-1930

74

[मुकुन्द मूर्ध्ना . . . मरणेऽपि चिन्तयामि]

O Mukunda! With head bowed down I ask of Thee only this that by Thy grace I may never from birth to birth lose sight of Thy lotus feet.

O God! I have no relish for dharma, nor for wealth nor yet for worldly enjoyments; let whatever is to happen happen as a result of my past actions; only this prayer I regard as of utmost importance: may my attachment to Thy lotus feet be unshakable.

O Thou Destroyer of hell! I do not care where my lot is to be cast, whether in heaven or on earth or in hell; only grant that I may ever think of Thy feet more beautiful than the lotus during the rains.

[भवजलधिगतानां द्वल्द्ववाताहतानाम्]

Vishnu becomes like a ship protecting men sailing on the ocean of birth and death, tossed to and fro as by the wind, by the pairs of opposites such as happiness and misery, borne down by the weight of guarding sons, daughters, wives and the like and sinking in the storms of violent passions.

16-7-1930

75

[भवजलधिमगाधं . . . कृष्णरसायनं पिब]

O, my heart, you need not be afraid that you cannot cross this unfathomable and difficult ocean of birth and death; thy single-minded devotion to the lotus-eyed, hell-destroying God will surely save thee.

O Lotus-eyed One! with hands folded, head bowed, body moved, throat choked, eyes bathed in hot tears, may our life close ever drinking in the nectar in the form of the meditation of Thy lotus-like feet. O Cupid! Get thee gone from my heart which is the seat of the lotus-like feet of Mukunda; thou art already scorched by the fire from Siva's eyes; why will you not remember the might of Vishnu's discus?

O thou wrong-headed fool ! Why dost thou afflict with drugs this body which has hundreds of weak joints, which is liable to certain decay and which is subject to constant change? Drink in the one life-giving potion—the name of Krishna.

17-7-1930

76

[नमामि नारायणपादपङ्कजम् . . . जनानां व्यसनाभिमुख्यम्]

I touch the lotus feet of Narayana, I worship Narayana always; I take the holy name of Narayana, I remember the changeless essence called Narayana.

O how passion deadens man's senses; for though he can take, he never does take any of the many names of God such as Ananta, Vaikuntha, Mukunda, Krishna, Govind, Damodar, Madhav.

18-7-1930

77

BHAJANS

[जेहि सुमिरत सिधि होइ, गणनायक करिवरवदन]

O elephant-mouthed one, the chief of *ganas* by thinking on whom one attains salvation and who is a storehouse of knowledge and virtues, may Thy grace descend upon me; O merciful one by whose mercy the dumb speak, the lame ascend steep hills and who washes off all the scorching dirt of Kali—shower thy blessings upon me.

19-7-1930

78

[दीन को दयालु दानि, दूसरो न कोऊ]

For those in want there is no other than Thou so merciful, so generous! What is the use of my carrying my wants to others? They appear to me as much in want as myself. Gods, men, sages, demons, serpents and others exercise sway only during Thy pleasure. The world, eternity, the four Vedas proclaim that Rama is the beginning, the end and the middle; Thine is the Kingdom. To ask of Thee is not begging. Thy devotee comes to Thee for Thy well-known nature; for hast Thou not taken under Thy protection stone, beast, trees, bird? O Thou, son of Lord Dasharatha, Thou hast turned beggars into kings, Thou art the refuge of the distressed. I am Thy slave. O merciful God, say if only once: "Tulsidas is Mine."

20-7-1930

79

[तू दयालु, दीन हौं, तू दानि, हौं भिखारी]

Thou art merciful, I am in distress; Thou art the giver, I am a beggar; I am a known sinner, Thou art the forgiver of mountains of sins; Thou art the help of the helpless and who can be so helpless as I? There is none so afflicted like me, there is no deliverer like unto Thee; Thou art the creator, I am a little creature; Thou art the lord, I am a slave; Thou art father, brother, teacher, friend, all in all to me; if I have only faith, I know that there is much between Thee and me; may Tulsi somehow feel the protecting power of Thy holy feet.

21-7-1930

80

कबहुक हौं

When shall I conduct myself thus by the grace of the merciful Rama that I shall cultivate the nature of good and true men; that I shall be satisfied with whatever accrues to me in the ordinary course and shall expect nothing from anybody; that I shall carry out the resolution to serve others in thought, deed and word; that I shall not burn with the scorching fire of the unbearably harsh language of others when I chance to hear it; that I shall be free from pride and have a mind equipoised and not delight in narrating the defects of others and that I shall give up all anxiety about the body and will not be elated by happiness and downcast by misery?

Tulsidas declares: being steadfast along the foregoing path I shall attain the boon of unchangeable devotion.

22- 7-1930

81

ऐसी मूढता या मनकी

O my soul! How foolish art thou, thou leavest the celestial waters of Ramabhakti and runnest after the mirage even as the *chatak* bird being thirsty mistakes a volume of smoke for a cloud but finds neither coolness nor water and damages its eyes into the bargain; or even as the hungry hawk seeing its own reflection through a glass floor falls upoh it forgetting the injury done to its own face. O merciful God, how long need I relate my misdeeds? Thou knowest the minds of Thy devotees. Tulsidas says: Lord, think of Thy promise and deliver Thy servant from the insufferable misery.

23-7-1930

82

यह विनती रघुवीर गुसाई

O Lord! Hear this my prayer. Remove my ignorance which makes [me] cherish expectations of and faith in others rather than Thee. I want neither heaven nor good intellect, nor riches nor possessions nor greatness. I want an ever-growing devotion to Thee without expectation of reward. May Thy grace save me even as the tortoise its eggs from succumbing to the weakness of my irresistible

evil nature; Tulsidas prays for deliverance from all egotism and attachments of the body.

24-7-1930

83

माधव मोह-पास क्यों टूटै ?

O Madhav, how can this bondage of infatuation be broken? Not even a million external remedies will remove the internal malady. No amount of fire underneath a cauldron will destroy the moon reflected in a cauldron filled with ghee. The bird living in the hollow of a tree will not be killed by cutting the tree (from above). Even so a mind devoid of disciplined thinking will never be purified by any external means. When the heart within is impure and full of evil passions, no amount of external cleansing of the body will purify it. Can the snake inside its mound be killed by destroying the mound? Tulsidas says that without the grace of God there is no clear discrimination and without it no one may hope to cross the deep ocean named the universe.

25-7-1930

84

मैं कहि कहौं विपति अति भारी ।

O Raghuvir, help of the distressed, to whom shall I take the tale of my great misery? My heart, O my God, is Thy abode, but many thieves have entered therein and although I am beseeching and imploring them to leave it, they are using unbearable force; ignorance, delusion, greed, pride, arrogance, anger, passion—all enemies of free knowledge are causing much trouble, O Lord, and thinking me to be helpless are crushing me, I am alone, the thievesare many, no one hears my cries; Lord, there is no escape from this either; O Lord of the Raghus, protect me. Tulsidas says: Listen, O Rama, thieves are looting Thy house; my great anxiety is lest they should bring discredit on Thee !

26-7-1930

85

ऐसी को उदार जग माहीं

None is so generous in this world as Rama who is merciful to the distressed without requiring any service in return. There is no one like him. That state which even sages fail to attain after devotion and self-denial he bestowed upon the Vulture and Sabari and then thought he had not given much. The kingdom that Ravana got from Sivji after

having offered his head Rama gave to Bibhishana as if it was nothing. Tulsidas says: O my mind, if thou wouldst have the real good then worship Rama who out of the abundance of his grace will answer thy prayer.

27-7-1930

86

जाके प्रिय न राम वैदेही

Shun those people as enemies who are not devoted to Rama and Sita, be they ever so good friends. (For Him), Prahlad left his father, Bibhishana his brother, Bharata his mother, Bali his teacher, the women of Vraj their husbands and they all rejoiced (in their sacrifice). A friend is desirable only so long as he is attached and devoted to Rama. What more need I say, what is the use of the eye-powder that destroys the eyes? Tulsi says: In my opinion, he who is devoted to the feet of Rama is in every respect my friend worthy of love and dear as life itself.

28-7-1930

87

कौन जतन विनती करिये

What should I do to be able to pray? I am afraid, for looking at my conduct I realize my defeat; I obstinately refrain from doing the things which make God merciful towards His devotees and I follow the path that leads me into the trap of misfortune and daily misery. I know that I should be safe if I gave myself in thought, word and deed to the service of fellow creatures but on the contraryI am vainly jealous when I see others happy. The Vedas, the Puranas and other scriptures proclaim the necessity of cultivating firmly the companionship of the good but my pride, passion and jealousy turn me away from them. I always delight in that which will lead me unto misery. Now tell me, O Lord! how may I be delivered from this misery? I can only be saved if Thou according to Thy nature will have mercy on me; Tulsidas has no other hope; how long shall he remain in this mire?

29-7-1930

88

जानत प्रीतरीत रघुराई

Raghunath knows what love is. He sets aside all other bonds and accepts only real love. Dasharatha expressed paternal affection by giving up life and made his fame immortal. But look at the greatness of Rama—he held the Vulture as superior to such a father. He even

forgot his beloved Sita when he saw his friend Sugriva grief-stricken over the separation of his wife. Here was his brother lying senseless in the battle-field but he was thinking, at the time, of Bibhishana. Whether at home, or the teacher's house, or the home of friends or the father-in-law's, wherever he was treated, he never experienced the richness of those feasts as that of the wild berries provided by Sabari. When the sages begin to narrate His original nature they humbly acknowledge their inability to do justice to the theme and are happy to call themselves friends of the Bhil or take pride in calling themselves companions of monkeys. Tulsidas says: If thou, having known this nature and this love of Rama, hast not devotion in thine heart, then, O fool, thy mother in giving thee birth uselessly threw away her youth.

89

रघुवर ! तुमको मेरी लाज ।

O Raghuvir, my shame is Thy shame. I am ever seeking Thy protection and Thou art noted as protector of the weak. I have heard it said of Thee that it is Thy promise that Thou wouldst save sinners. And I am an old sinner; take my ship ashore. To destroy the sin of Thy devotees and to remove their distress is Thy only task. Be merciful, O Lord, to Tulsidas, and give him the boon of Thy worship.

90

जागिये रधुनाथ कुँवर

O Prince of the Raghus, wake up; the birds are singing in the grove. The moon will disappear presently, the chakravaka bird is off to meet her lord. The threefold breeze is gently blowing, the leaves are rustling. The morning sun is on the horizon, darkness of the night is gone. The bees are humming, the lotus has opened its leaf. Brahma and others are in meditation; the gods, common people and sages are singing hymns of praise. Thus when it was rising time Rama opened his eyes. Tulsidas is overjoyed to see the lotus face of Rama who gives valuables as gifts to the poor.

30-7-1930

91

मेरी मन हरिजू हठ न तजै

O Lord, my mind will not give up its waywardness. I try every day to control it but it will not change its nature. As a woman, although she recognizes the pains of labour, foolishly forgets them and goes to her foolish husband or as a greedy dog, even though it gets knocks on the head, meanly continues to visit the same haunts and is not ashamed, even so is this mind of mine wilful and unconquerable, I own defeat in spite of various efforts. Tulsidas says: It will come under subjection only when God the inspirer of all takes it up in hand.

31-7-1930

92

कुटुंब तजि शरण राम ! तेरी आयो

O Rama, he (Bibhishana) left family, fort Lanka, palaces and temples and hearing Thy name rushed to Thee for protection. Seated in his full court Ravana kicked him and the foolish one would not listen though he was warned again and again. Thou embracedst this Bibhishana as soon as he came to Thee and crowned him King of Lanka. As soon as he met Thee the insults of ages were wiped out. O Raghunath, friend of the friendless, Thou owned him knowing him to be helpless. Tulsidas says: He received the boon of the protection from and devotion to the Lord of the Raghus.

1-8-1930

93

भज मन रामचरन सुखदाई

O my mind, worship the beneficent feet of Rama. From these feet issued forth the Ganga and was caught by Siva in his ample lock of hair. It was therefore named Jatashankari; it came for the good of the three worlds. Bharata treasured as a token of love the sandals bearing the imprints of these feet. The Bhil chief would not steer Rama's boat without being allowed to wash those feet. Saintly persons always worship these beneficent feet. The wife of the sage Gautama obtained salvation by the touch of those feet. Rama hallowed (with his feet) the Dandak forest and removed the distress of the *rishis.* (Yet strange to relate) this very Rama the lord of the three worlds ran after the golden deer. He gave the palm of victory to the monkey Sugriva,

who was afflicted by the fear of his brother. Bibhishana, the brother of the enemy (Ravana), got the crown of Lanka through the touch of those feet. Siva, Sanak, Brahma, etc., also the thousand-mouthed serpent sing his praises but, says Tulsidas, his lips utter the praise of Hanuman the monkey.

2-8-1930

94

अब लौं नसानी अब न नसैहौं

I have spoiled everything hitherto but will do so no longer. By the grace of God the night is past, I am awake and shall no more go to sleep. I have the talisman in the shape of God's name; it shall not vanish from my heart. The beautiful and holy face of God is the testing stone. The gold of my heart shall be tested on it. My sense organs finding me without control have mocked me. I have now acquired self-control, they shall no more deride me. Tulsi says: My mind like the bee on the lotus shall lean on the lotus feet of Rama.

3-8-1930

95

मन पछितै है अवसर बीते ।

O my mind, what is the use of repentance after the occasion is gone? Having attained the difficult human status, devote thyself body, speech and heart to the feet of Hari. Sahasrarjuna, Ravana and others could not save themselves from the claws of all-powerful death.Thou triest to protect wealth and possessions saying this is mine, this is mine, but at last thou hast to go empty-handed. Know that wife, children, etc., constitute bonds of the flesh; do not be entrapped by them. O miser, they will all leave thee when thou diest, why not then be detached now? Be devoted to the Lord, O foolish one, and give up all false hope with all thy heart. Tulsi says: The fire of passion will never be quenched by the oil of indulgence.

4-8-1930

96

माधव ! मो समान जग माही ।

O Madhav! there is none on this earth in every way so low, corrupt, beggarly and steeped in vice like me and I am in distress having left Thee, God, so merciful without cause, so friendly to the afflicted; why dost Thou not show mercy to me? It is not Thy fault, I know it is all of my doing. O Lord, thou gavest me a body through which I could know Thee but notwithstanding that I did not know

Thee, The bamboo and the *karil* vainly blame the sandal and the spring (the one for want of scent and the other for want of leaves), being unworthy and unfortunate how could the one have scent and the other leaves? I am convinced that I am hard of heart in every way and Thou, O Lord, art tender. Tulsidas says: God! my bondage can be broken only by Thy mercy.

97

कलि नाम कामतरु राम को

In the Kaliyuga Ramanama is the all-yielding tree. It is the destroyer of scorching miseries caused by bad times, pauperism, etc. Repeating the name purifies the mind and banishes misfortune. Valmiki and Shanker sing the virtues of taking the name whether correctly or with the letters transposed. It is well here and hereafter with those who are armed with the beautiful power (of the name). Tulsi says: I am able to live in the world peacefully by the power of the name, I have no anxiety whether I live or die.

5-8-1930

98

जय राम रमारमणं समनम्

Hail to Thee, O Rama, the Lord of Sita and deliverer from the feverish wheel of birth and death, protect Thy servant who is strickenwith fear. O Ruler of Avadh, God of gods, Lord of Sita, O God, Thy ward seeks Thy protection; Thou destroyer of Ravana with his ten heads and twenty arms, hast ridden this big earth of its great maladies. The crowd of devils who stalk abroad during the night are like so many fire-flies. The scorching splendour of the fire of Thy arrows has burnt them to ashes. Thou art the excellent ornament of this earthly system. Thou art the shining sun to dispel the deep darkness of the night of arrogance, infatuation and immense egotism. Cupid is hunting down the helpless people who will not give up greed and lust and who have lost the true path in the midst of self-gratification. O Lord, save them. People are afflicted with diseases and bereavement. This is the result of want of devotion to Thy blessed feet. Those who are not attached to Thy lotus feet have to go through the eternal wheel of life and death. Those who are not so devoted are ever helpless, sorrowful and miserable. Those who delight in Thy praise and who always like the company of wise and holy men have neither passion nor greed nor pride nor arrogance; prosperity or adversity are the same to them. It is for this reason that sages leaving aside dependence on yoga rejoice in becoming Thy servants. The

holy people take vows, offer eternal devotion to Thee, with true hearts serve Thy lotus feet, regard alike insults or honours and thus contented roam about the earth. Thou art like the bee to the lotus hearts of the sages. O Thou steadfast and unconquerable warrior, I take Thy name, I bow to Thee Lord. Thou art the enemy of the misery of death and life cycle, infatuation and arrogance. Thou art the treasure house of virtues, Thou art the great seat of mercy; I always bow to Thee O Lord of Sita. O Son of Raghu remove this darkness of the pairs of opposites. O Lord of the earth, look at Thy helpless servants. O Lord of Lakshmi, I repeatedly ask of thee this boon: grant me everlasting devotion to Thy lotus feet and the company of holy men always.

6-8-1930

99

तुलसी बोध–मौक्तिक

There is no religion like the service of others, and O brother, there is no sin like doing evil to others. Since the Puranas and the Vedas proclaim that good and evil are to be found in our hearts, there is happiness where there is good and misery for certain where there is evil. Blessed is the king who walks along the right path, blessed is the Brahmin who will not swerve from the faith, blessed is the moment when one is in the company of the holy ones, blessed is the life that is devoted to the unbroken worship of God.

Lives of holy men are beautiful like cotton; though tasteless the fruit is white and durable. Those who bear the hardships of others and relieve them attain fame on this earth and are adorable.

There is no doubt that one gets what one's heart is truly set upon. Nothing on this earth is difficult for him whose mind is saturated with the thought of serving others.

It is the tradition of the Raghu clan handed down from time immemorial that they would stake their life rather than break the plighted word. Sins mountain-high cannot be heavier than untruth, can crores of चणोठी[1] outweigh a mountain?

The sages proclaim and the Vedas and the Puranas witness that all good deeds depend for their merit on truth.

[1] Coral bead

There is no one so helpless as I and there is none so merciful to them as Thou; therefore Thou jewel of the Raghu race, deliver me from this intolerable cycle of birth and death.

7-8- 1930

100

चरन-कमल बन्दौ हरि राई ।

I bow to the lotus feet of the great Hari. Surdas says: I bow again and again to the feet of that merciful God whose mercy enables the lame to ascend mountains, the blind to see everything, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak and the pauper to have people holding umbrella over him.

8-8-1930

101

जैसे राखहु वैसे हि रहौं

O Lord, keep me as Thou wilt. Thou knowest the happiness and the sorrows of the people; what need can there be for me to relate them. O God of mercy, sometimes I get enough to eat, other times I have to suffer pangs of hunger; sometimes I ride horses or stately elephants, other times I myself carry loads; Surdas says: O Lotus-eyed one, Ghanashyam, lovable God, may I be ever Thy servant, devoted to Thy feet.

9-8-1930

102

दीनन दुख-हरन देव संतन हितकारी ।

O God, Thou removest the woes of the afflicted and comforteth the holy ones. Take Ajamil, the Vulture, the Hunter, which of them was a sadhu? Simply because the Prostitute taught a parrot Thy name Thou savedst her. Thou gavest a kingdom to Dhruva, Thou savedst Prahlad, for the sake of Thy devotees Thou built a bridge and reduced Lanka to ashes. A handful of raw rice pleased Thee, Thou wast satisfied with mere vegetable leaves. Thou thoughtst nothing of berries if they were half bitten or unripe or sour. When the alligator seized the elephant and Dushasana began to strip Draupadi naked and [she] called out Krishna, Krishna, Thou respondedst and (savedst the elephant) and multiplied Draupadi's clothing. Surdas the blind beggar knocks at the door, O Lord.

10-8-1930

103

सुने री मैंने निर्बल के बल राम ।

I have heard that Rama is the help of the helpless. I can produce the evidence of those saintly people who were helped by him in their adversity. So long as the elephant relied upon his own strength, his case was hopeless, but when in his helplessness he invoked the assistance of Rama, he responded when hardly his name was half pronounced. When Draupadi felt helpless, He felt the call in his seat and God having multiplied her clothing Dushasana grew tired of hopelessly trying to strip her naked. Man relies on his own strength or his austerities or the strength of his arms or fourthly his wealth. Surdas says that when a man has exhausted all his resources and invokes the name of God, His grace descends upon him.

11-8-1930

104

हम भक्तन के भक्त हमारे

I belong to my devotees—and they to me. O Arjuna, hear my promise, it can never be recalled; taking heed of my devotees' necessities, I rush to their assistance barefoot. I deliver my devotees whenever they are in difflculty. He who is against my devotees is against me. Having well considered your welfare, I am driving your chariot. My devotees' victory is my victory, their defeat ismy defeat. Surdas says: God destroys with his Sudarshana those who come in the way of devotees.

105

अबकी टेक हमारी । लाज राखे गिरिधारी ।

Now it is my fixed resolve; keep Thou my honour, O Lord! Even as during the Bharat war Thou keptst Arjuna's honour by wearing Thy Sudarshana Chakra and driving Arjuna's chariot, Thou didst not let Thy devotee's honour be sullied or even as Thou keptst Draupadi's honour and didst not let her be stripped naked though Dushasana made repeated attempts till he was tired out, Thou didst multiply her saris; keep Thou Surdas's honour, he has no other protector; O Thou Lord of Lakshmi and Radha the daughter [of] Brikhbhan, he seeks Thy protection.

106

मो सम कौन कुठिटल खल कामी ।

Who can be so crooked, bad or dissolute as I? I am so faithless that I have forgotten the very God who gave me this body. Even like the village dog I have been fattening myself and running after pleasures. I have given up the company of God's people and day and night slave for those who revile Him. Who can be a greater sinner than I, I am the chief among them. Surdas says: O God, listen, where is the resting place for a sinner like me?

12-8-1930

107

प्रभु मोरे अवगुन चित न धरो ।

O God, do not lay to heart my faults. Thou art called equi-minded towards all. Thou canst save me if Thou wilt. One volume of water is called a river, another which contains dirt is called a drain but when they meet and become one they are called the Ganga. One piece of iron is used for worship, another in the hands of a thief for stealing, the *paras*[1] makes no distinction and turns by its touch either to gold. Surdas says: this is all called the *maya* of Brahm[an]. Now,

O Lord, save me and let not Thy promise go in vain.

13-8-1930

108

अखियाँ हरिदरसनकी प्यासी

I am pining to see God as the divine child (Krishna). I would love to see the lotus-eyed One and not being able to do so I feel miserable day and night. O Uddhav ! This child of Brindaban with the

[1] Philosopher's stone

saffron mark on his forehead and a pearl necklace round his neck—he conquered our love and then forsook us. What do the people understand of the pangs of the forsaken ones, they will only laugh. Surdas says: O God, without seeing Thy face there is nothing left for me but to go to Kashi and seek deliverance by death.

14-8-1930

109

सबसे ऊँची प्रेम सगाई ।

The best tie is the tie of love. God partook of Vidura's leaves and left Duryodhana's dainties. He ate with relish the berries tasted by Sabari. His love prompted [Him] to serve the king for when Yudhishthira performed the royal sacrifice He served as a menial. Not minding His high status, He drove Arjuna's chariot. His love was so great for Brindaban that He danced with the Gopis. Surdas says: I am a wretch unworthy of such love; how much shall I praise Thee, O Lord?

15-8-1930

110

सब मैं नाच्यो बहुत गोपाल

O Gopal, I have danced away my life in self-indulgence. Desire and anger were my garment, passions were my garland, infatuation was my ankle-bells, backbiting was the sweet sounding tune, poisoned mind was the tabor, evil company was the step, insatiableness was[1] the accompanying measure of various kind, *maya* was the waist-band, ambition was the mark on my forehead and I showed much cunning. So much so that I forgot all about time or place. Surdas says: O Nandalal, remove all this ignorance of mine.

16-8-1930

[1] The source has "is".

111

अब तरे प्रगट भई जग जानी ।

Now is the thing known all over. Eternal devotion to God cannot be kept secret from anyone. That beautiful face is ever before my eyes. Try what I will that face is unforgettable. I am filled with that love. It is inseparable even as milk and water are. Surdas says: God who knows the hearts of us all knew those of the gopis.

17-8-1930

112

लज्जा मोरी राखो श्याम हरी ।

O God, guard me against insult. Dushasana has held me by my hair and is molesting me and in the presence of the assembly wicked Duryodhana is intent upon stripping me naked. The five Pandavas are powerless to help me. Bhishma, Drona and Vidura are dumbfounded and silent. Now I have neither mother nor father nor son nor brother, Thou art my all. Merciful God then made her sari endless and the whole host of Duryodhana was defeated. Surdas says: When God appears as protector what need for his lambs to fear?

18-8-1930

113

दे पूतना विष र अम्त पायो

Although Putna administered poison (to Krishna) she attained salvation; the Vedas have sung in vain that man reaps as he sows. King Bali performed a hundred sacrifices and yet was tied up and sent to the nether world. King Nriga donated one lac cows and yet he was turned into a serpent. Friend Sudama was born a pauper and suddenly found himself in a golden palace. Surdas says: O God, strange are Thy ways, well have the Vedas said, 'not this, not this'.

19-8-1930

114

अबके नाथ मोहि उधारि ।

O Lord, save me now. O Fount of mercy, there is no pathway in this ocean of the universe. *Maya* is its deep waters, ambition are the waves. Passion like the alligator is dragging me in deeper waters. The senses bite like fishes and there is a load of sin on the head. In my

infatuation the feet are unsteady and get entangled in the seaweed. Animal passion, anger, desire like the winds toss me to and fro. Wife and children do not let me think of Thy name as my sheet-anchor. O Thou seat of Mercy, I am fatigued, powerless and distressed in this mid-ocean. O Lord, take me by the arm and pull me up to the shore.

20-8-1930

115

रे मन ! मूरख जनम गँवायो ।

O my foolish soul, thy life has been wasted; in thy pride thou hast dissipated thy life and forgotten the Giver of life. Having thought this earthly life beautiful like the *semar* flower thou hast forgotten thy true self. But as thou wast about to taste it, it was not, thou foundest nothing. What is the use now of thinking of the lost past? Thou didst not do thy duty whilst there was time. Surdas says: Thou didst not serve God and hadst to repent.

21-8-1930

116

नाथ मोहिं अबकी बेर उबारो

O Lord, save me this once; Thou art Lord of lords, Thou art named the Giver, and I am without luck, blind from birth, who can be more unworthy than I? Thou art the protector of the three worlds, I am Thy slave; Thou hast saved people both worthy and unworthy; be Thou gracious unto me. I am the chief among the fallen, *sardar* among the sinners, thousands of sinners put together hardly equal me, Ajamil is nothing compared to me. God Yama, having heard of me had the gates of hell even locked. There is now no room for me anywhere; remember Thou Thy promise (to such like me). O Lord of Lakshmi, Thou hast saved many a sinner, do not withhold Thy grace. Surdas will count Thee true when Thou hast saved him.

22-8-1930

117

घूँघटका पट खोल रे तोको पीव मिलेंगे ।

Open thy face, thou wilt see thy beloved. He is in everyone; therefore say nothing bitter of anyone. Do not brag about thy riches or youth; this case made of five elements will play false to thee (one

day). Light up thy dark heart and do not move from thy purpose. Wake up in this temple for thou hast got the priceless treasure thy Lord. Kabir says: Let there be rejoicing for the Lord's voice is heard within.

23-8-1930

118

सादो सजह समाधि भली ।

O good man, natural meditation (lekf/k) is best. Ever since its hanifestation by the grace of God, it has waxed. Wherever I rander, it is a circuit (round a temple), whatever I do is for service, whenever I lie down, it is my prostration (before God). I worship to other god but God. Whatever I utter, it is God's name, whatever I hear is a remembrance of God. My eating and drinking re *puja* (worship), whether a home is established or it is destroyed is the same thing to me; I do not allow any other feeling to possess me. I do not shut my eyes nor stuff my ears, I do not porture the body. I open my eyes and delight to see God and contemplate His beauty. My mind is ever intent on Him; all corupt thought has left me. I am so much engrossed in the thought of Him that I think of Him whatever I am doing. Kabir says: This is the excellent life and I have sung of it; there is a state beyond misery and happiness, my mind is fixed on it.

24-8-1930

119

मन मस्त हुआ तब क्यों बोले ।

When the soul is saturated with the Holy Spirit there is no need for speech. When a man finds a diamond he puts it in a safe and does not open it now and again to look at it. When here is doubt about the weight of a thing it is weighed but how should a thing in itself weighty need weighing? One who is intoxicated with love drinks it not in drops weighed in scales. When the swan reaches the divine lake, he does not wander about in search of lakelets. Thy Lord is within thee, why strain thy eyes to see Him outside? Kabir says: Hear O good people, I have found the Lord for the search.

25-8-1930

120

रहना नहिं देस बिराना है ।

We are not to stay here long, it is a foreign land (for us). The world is like a paper parcel which is reduced to pulp on a little water being poured on it or it is like a hedge of thorns in which we get entangled and die or it is like a meadow full of shrubs and grass which a fire destroys (in no time). Kabir says: Listen all ye good people, the only safety lies in seeking the protection of God.

26-8-1930

121

मन लागो मेरी यार फकीरी में ।

O friend, my mind is fixed on a fakir's life. The happiness which one derives from meditation on God is not to be found in indulgence. Bear whatever befalls thee—good and evil; live in poverty. Let us live a life of loving service. It will be well to cultivate patience. When one goes about with a mere begging bowl and a staff, one has the whole world as one's kingdom. What is the use of pride when one realizes that the body is soon to be reduced to ashes? Kabir says: Listen O ye all good men, contentment is the pathway to self-realization.

122

सूमझ देख मन मीत पियारे आशिक होकर सोना क्या रे ।

O my soul, my dear friend, knowest thou not that one who is in love has no sleep; when thy bread of sorrow is butterless and dry, what need to judge whether it is tasty or tasteless? If thou hast tasted love, give it, O friend, having received thou canst not lose it. He for whom sleep has become irresistible does not think of a pillow or a mattress. Kabir says: Listen O good men, there is no wailing after complete self-surrender.

27-8-1930

123

तू तो राम सुमर जग लड़वा दे

Be thou absorbed in God, let the world go its way. There is paper and there is black ink, let those who wish write or read. The elephant does not abandon its gait despite the barkings of dogs. Kabir says: Listen O ye good men, those who are intent upon evil will go their way.

28-8-1930

124

मत कर मोह तू हरि-भजन को मान रे ।

Do not give way to self-deception but sing the praises of God; for eyes are given to see God, ears to hear words of wisdom, the mouth to sing His praises, hands to give in His name. Kabir says: Hear O ye good one, gold is (also) produced in mines (not merely dust and pebble)

28-8-1930

125

गुरु बिन कौन बतावे बाट?

Without the master, who can show the path? The way is terribly difficult. Doubt crosses the path like rivers gliding through mountainous regions and there is egotism like big boulders in the rivers. There are too passion and anger like two huge mountains on either side; ambition dogs the footsteps like a thief. And pride and vanity descend like rain from overhanging clouds; self-deception violently tosses one like the winds. Kabir says: Listen O ye good men, how can one traverse the path (without a master as guide)?

29-8-1930

126

नहिं छोडूँ रे बाबा [राम] नाम

O Father, I will not give up Ramanama. I have nothing to do with the other lessons. The King sent Prahlad to school and he had many companions. He said: "Why do you teach me nonsense? Write on my slate Shri Gopal." This Shandamara duly reported and the King immediately sent for Prahlad to whom he said, "Leave thou the name of Rama. If thou wilt do what I tell thee I will set thee free." Prahlad replied, "Why vex me again and again. God made the ocean, the earth, the sky and the mountain. I swear by my guru that I will not give up Ramanama, you may burn me, you may bury me alive, you may kill me anyway you choose." On this the King was enraged, drew his sword and challenged Prahlad to show his deliverer. God in His might rose from the pillar of fire and with His paws killed the King. O Great One, God of gods, Thou becamest Narasinha for the sake of Thy devotee. Kabir says: I can fill pages with the stories of how He delivered Prahlad from many a danger.

30-8-1930

127

झीनी झीनी बिनी चदरिया ।

This sheet (called body) is finely woven. What is its warp and woof? Of what is the thread made? *Ida* and *Pingala* (nerves invisible recognized by Hinduism) are respectively warp and woof. The sheet is woven with the *Sushumna* thread (one of the invisible nerves)—The eight-petaled lotus (at the navel) is the wheel. The sheet contains the five elements (earth, etc.,) and the three qualities (*sattva, rajas, tamas*). The Maker takes ten months to weave this sheet and the thread is well packed. Gods, men, even sages have to wear this sheet and it becomes dirty as soon as it is worn. The servant Kabir says: Although we wear this sheet with ever so much care, it has to be given up even as it is.[1]

31-8-1930

128

इस तन धनकी कौन बड़ाई

What is the use of taking pride either in this body or wealth? They vanish in the twinkling of an eye. A man builds a palace for himself and is often obliged to take refuge in the woods. On death, the bones will burn like faggots and hair like grass. Kabir says: O virtuous people, listen, when man dies, all his airy castles crumble to pieces.

1-9-1930

129

भजो रे भैया राम गोविन्द हरी।

O Brother, sing the praises of Rama, Govind, Hari. The effort requires no *jap, tap* or the like, nor does it involve any expense. Children, wealth, etc., promoting as they do a feeling of satiety, often lead one astray. Kabir says: He on whose lips is not the name of God has lived in vain.

2-9-1930

[1] Note by Gandhiji: Kaka says the only possible meaning is: "Kabir says that he on the other hand wore it with such care that he was able to discard it without defiling it."

130

मन! तोहे केहि विध कर समझाऊँ ।

O my soul, how shall I reason with thee? If thou wert gold I would melt thee to a liquid. If thou wert a horse I would bridle thee, put a saddle on thy back, ride thee and whip thee to action. If thou wert an elephant I would chain thy feet, ride thee and goad thee with the hook. If thou wert iron, I should secure an anvil and hammer thee and turn thee into wire. Kabir says: If thou wert wise I should give thee wisdom and lead thee onto the straight path and send thee to the abode of the immortals.

3-9-1930

131

पायो सतनाम गरेके हरवा

I have obtained the name of God as garland for my neck. My abode is in a little cot and there are five weak cot-bearers. The guru has given me the lock and key so as to enable me to open the door when I choose. Love is the garment which I wear and dance when I like in the city Kabir says: Listen O good men, there will be no return to this city again.

4-9-1930

132

शूर संग्राम को देख भागै नहीं

With fight in front a brave person will never flee and he will not be considered brave who flees in the face of danger. In the field of battle the fight has begun in right earnest and passion, anger, pride and ambition are the foes to be fought. Restraint, piety and contentment are one's companions and the sword in the shape of Ramanama is flourishing freely. Kabir says: True warriors will fight bravely, cowards will be conspicuous by their absence.

5-9-1930

133

ठाकुर तुम शरणाई आया।

O God, I seek refuge in Thee. On seeing Thee, all my doubts have disappeared. Without my mentioning it Thou hast known my trouble. Thou hast made me remember Thee. My misery is gone and I am all happiness. Joyfully do I sing Thy praise. Thou hast taken me by the arm and pulled me safe out of the dark well of*maya*. Nanak says: The Lord has removed my bondage and brought me back though I had strayed away.

6-9-1930

134

साधो मनका मान त्यागो।

O good man, give up thy pride. Flee away from passion, anger, evil company. He to whom happiness and unhappiness, praise and blame are the same thing, who is neither elated nor depressed, knows the secret of life. Nanak says: O man, it is a difficult thing to be unaffected by praise or blame and to be intent only upon the true path; a few only know this through a true teacher.

7-9-1930

135

बिसर गई सब तात पराई ।

O God, ever since I have had the companionship of the good, the distinction between mine and thine has disappeared. I deem no one as enemy or stranger. I am on friendly terms with everyone. From the good I have learnt to consider as good whatever comes from God. Nanak takes delight in finding that one God resides in all.

8-9-1930

136

रे मना राम सों कर प्रीत

O my soul, dedicate thyself to God. Listen to His praises and sing them. Cultivate the company of the good and ever think of God; thus wilt thou be purified of sin. Remember, O friend, that time is biding its opportunity like a serpent with its mouth wide open to swallow thee. Nanak says: Time is fleeting, remember therefore thy God.

9-9-1930

137

काहे रे बन खोजन जाई ।

Why dost thou search for Him in the jungle? He is in thee always though unaffected by thee. Even as the fragrance abides in the flower or the likeness in the mirror so is God everywhere, always.O brother, look for Him within thyself. The guru teaches us that He is both within and without. Nanak says: O man, without knowing thyself the darkness of illusion cannot be dispelled.

10-9-1930

138

सुमरन कर ले मेरे मना ।

O my soul, remember thy God, thy years are rolling by without His sacred name—man without Harinama is even like a well without water or a cow without milk or a temple without light or a fruit tree without fruit or body without eyes or night without the moon, or the earth without rain or a pundit without a knowledge of the Vedas. O good man watch thy desire, anger, pride and ambition and give them up. Nanakshah says: O God there is no one to befriend save Thee.

11-9-1930

139

नाम जपन क्यों छोड़ दिया ?

Why hast thou given up Ramanama? Thou hast not given up anger nor falsehood, why hast thou given up truthful speech? Being immersed in this false show why hast thou abandoned the original home? Thou hast treasured a cowrie, why hast thou neglected the ruby? Why hast thou given up remembering that which is the source of all happiness? Khalus says: Why wilt thou not trust God and leave body, mind and wealth?

12-9-1930

140

All intentions came to naught. Neither was God worshipped nor more holy places visited. Time has thee in his grip. Wife, friends, children, chariot, wealth, kingdom of earth filled with riches and ryots and the like are useless; the one thing needful is the worship of God. Thou wanderedst much and wast defeated although thou reachedst man's estate. Nanak says: Why wilt thou not remember thy Maker even though it is time to appear in His presence?

13-9-1930

141

पायो जी मैंने रामरतन धन पायो ।

I have obtained a jewel in the shape of Ramanama. The true guru gave me this priceless jewel and showed his great favour to me. I have obtained wealth for eternity, what though I have lost everything of this earth? This jewel cannot be used up by use nor can it be stolen by thieves. It increases greatly from day to day. In the vessel called truth with the true guru as the captain I have been able to cross the ocean of birth and death. Mira says: I have sung the praise of the Lord in great glee.

14-9-1930

142

नहिं ऐसो जन्म बारंबार ।

Such a birth does not come often. What do I know of the merit that has given me the human state ! This body appears to be growing moment by moment but it is also at the same time waning, and it takes no time to perish altogether even as the leaves of a tree do which once they are torn from their branch cannot be reattached. This ocean of birth and death is mighty and has strong terrible currents. But if a man would take meditation on God for a raft he can cross the ocean. The sages and great men have loudly proclaimed as they have gone, says Mira the servant of God, that man has but a few days on earth.

15-9-1930

143

मन रे परस हरिके चरन

O my soul, touch the feet of Hari; they bring fortune, they are cool to the touch, soft as lotus and the touch removes the threefold affliction. The touch of these feet enabled Prahlad to attain Indra's status, gave Dhruva permanent stability, enabled Vishnu to rule the whole universe, gave the wife of Gautama her salvation, enabled Krishna to show his powers among the shepherd lads and to capture the Kali snake and to lift the mount Govardhana and thus humble the pride of Indra. The servant Mira says that the touch of those feet enables a man to cross the great ocean.

16-9-1930

144

मेरे तो गिरधर गोपाल

For me there is none else but Giridhar Gopal, let the whole world be witness. I have given up brothers, friends, and other relatives. In disregard of popular talk I sit in the midst of sadhus. I rejoice to see God's devotees and weep to see worldly people. I have reared the creeper of love with my tears. I have churned the curds, extracted from them the butter and thrown away the rest. The King sent me a poison cup which I drank with pleasure. Now does everybody know the story about me. Mira says: Come what may, I am intent upon God and God alone.

17-9-1930

145

माई मैंने गोविंद लीनो मोल ।

O mother, I have bought Govind. Some say He is cheap, some say He is dear. I have weighed Him. Some say He is to be found in the house, some say in the jungle, and some others say He is sporting with Radha. Mira's Lord is to be found in the cradle of love.

146

मेरे राणाजी, मैं गोविंद गुण गाना ।

O my Ranaji, I must sing the praises of Govind. If the King is angry he is welcome to his capital but if God is angry where is one to flee? Rana sent a poison cup, I drank it as if it was nectar ; he sent a black snake in a box, I took it for God Saligram. Mirabai the love-stricken says: I want Krishna as my Lord and Master.

147

मोरी लागी लटक गुरु चरननकी

My mind is fixed on the guru's feet. I am ill at ease without those feet. Everything else is like a mirage, a dream. The ocean of birth and death has dried down and I have no anxiety about crossing it. Mira says: O my God, now is my inner sight opened.

148

हरि! तुम हरौ जनकी भीर ।

O God, Thou deliverest. Thay servants from difficulties. Thou savedst. Draupadi's honour by extending her garment infinitely For They devotee Thou becamest man. Thou destroyedst Hiranyakashipu; didst not tolerate him. Thou savedst the sinking elephant and pulled him out of the water. Says Mira the servant and beloved of Giridhar: Where there is grief there is the cry of distress (sent to heaven).

149

म्हाँने चाकर राखो जी

O God, make me Thy slave. I shall be Thy gardener and every day feast my eyes with the sight of Thee, I shall sing about the deeds of Govind in the groves and lanes of Brindaban. For service I shall have daily *darshan* and shall have as pocket money the memory of Thee; I shall get as estate intense devotion to Thee; thus will I have the three excellent things. My Lord has worn a peacock feather crown and a yellow dhoti; He has worn a garland of *vaijanti* flowers. He grazes cows in Brindaban and plays upon his pipe. I shall build me a lofty palace and have windows in it; through them I shall look at my Lord with my *kusumbi* (red) sari on. Among the inhabitants of Brindaban are to be found yogis doing yoga, sannyasis doing *tapas*, sadhus singing *bhajans*. Mira's Lord is deep and mysterious; keep thou thy patience—He appears to His devotees even at midnight on the banks of the Jamuna.

17-9-1930

150

निन्दक बाबा वीर हमारा

One who speaks ill of me is a hero for me. He works without pay. He is instrumental in enabling me to wash off my old sins. He renders me service without reward. He sinks and saves others. He is such a beloved fellow. O Rama, I pray for his long life. Dadu says: The vilifier is a benefactor in disguise.

18-9-1930

151

अजहुँ न निकसै प्राण कठोर ।

Still does cruel life cling obstinately to the body. O my beloved God, I have been long separated from Thee. Four periods are like four cycles, the night is gone, the day has broken. O Thou Thief of my heart, where art Thou, though the promised time is past?

O Thief I am looking out for Thee on the way but do not see Thee. Dadu says: Pangs of separation from one's beloved are like the pangs of the fabled *chakor* bird separated from the moon.

19-9-1930

152

प्रभुजी! तुम चंदन, हम पानी ।

O God, Thou art sandal, I am as water, Thy sweet scent pervades everything; Thou art the cloud, I am the peacock of the forest looking for rain like the chakor bird for the moon; Thou art the lamp burning day and night, I am the wick; Thou art the pearl, I am the string, and we unite as does gold with सुरोरवार[1].

Raidas the devotee says: Thou art the Lord, I am the slave.

20-9-1930

153

नरहरि, चंचल है मति मेरी, कैसे भगति करूँ मैं तेरी ?

O God, my mind is distracted, how shall I worship Thee? Thou seest me, I should see Thee, that were a sign of mutual love. Thou seest me but I do not see Thee, this is a state of a lost mind. Though Thou art in all always, yet have I not learnt to know Thee ! Thou art full of virtue, I am full of vice, I have not even acknowledged the debt owing to Thee. I am floundering between I and Thou, Thine and mine, how can I be saved? Raidas says: O God of mercy, hail to Thee, the only stay of the universe.

21-9-1930

154

क्नों सोना गफलतका मारा, जाग रे न जाग रे ।

O dullard, why dost thou carelessly sleep away thy time, awake O man, awake. The yogis or voluptuaries or thieves keep vigil; likewise do beloved saints who are intent upon God. O brother, keep vigil like Prahlad and Dhruva and Dhruva got a permanent seat of honour, Prahlad got a kingdom. The soul is the traveller, the body is the hotel. How long shalt thou be attached to it? Thou hast but a night's stay in the hotel, on the day breaking thou hast to go, seek the company of the good, serve thy Master and thou shalt be

[1] The original Hindi *bhajan* has "*suhaga*" meaning 'borax', a substance used to purify gold. Gandhiji has used the Gujarati word '*surokhar*'.

happy.Nitanand says: O proud man, worship Rama; only those who are fortunate know how to keep vigil.

22-9-1930

155

अकल कला खेलत नर ज्ञानी !

A knowing man uses his knowledge at will. Just as a vessel moving in all directions is always guided by the polar star, even so does the knowing one although moving about on earth has his gaze fixed on the heavens; and just as the ice melts in water so does he attain his independence by merging himself in the divine. The condition is indescribable of him whose abode is where the beginning is unknown and the end never is and where neither the mind nor the speech can reach. This divine play is wonderful and incomparable. He who has known it from ancient times speaks as it were from the heavens. Akha says: Only a rare knowing one recognizes it.

23-9-1930

156

जग जीव सुमरण कर हरिको

O brother, the morning has broken. Wake up and remember thy Maker. What the true guru says comes after full deliberation; therefore beware, O brother. There is no one to befriend thee. There is no sister, no brother; for who will deliver thee when the god of death pronounces thy doom? Father, mother and others are relatives only for self. Apart from the remembrance of God there will be no company, thou wilt be alone. I seek refuge in the feet of Murari the cleanser from sin and deliverer from bondage. Sahajram says: Worship Rama, he will remove evil and grant happiness.

24-9-1930

157

नंद भवनको भूखन माई

That ornament of Nanda's home, Yashoda's darling, Haladhar's brother, Radha's beloved is the giver of supreme happiness. He is all in all to the good people, He is the wealth of Siva and the Vedas and Puranas have sung of His greatness, He is greater than Indra, He is God of gods, He is Brahm[an] to Brahma, greaterthan the greatest. He is death to death, Lord among lords. He is beyond measure. Giridhari is the life of Nandadas and the darling prince to the villagers of Gokul.

25-9-1930

158

अब हौं कासौं बैर करौं ?

To whom shall I bear ill will? God himself proclaims: "I am in everything and everyone and regard all equally, only I fear most my devotees". Shri Haridas says: By the grace of God I wander about daily fearlessly.

26-9-1930

159

कोई बन्दो कोई निन्दो कोई कैसे कहो रे

Let those who will, praise and those who will, blame, let them say what they like; I love Rama, come what may.

. . .[1] had a bundle and the water was deep. But Ramachandra became a tortoise and carried her on his shell. Even as He endows the sun and the moon with light, sustains the sky without pillars, makes stones to float on the sea, why will He not save His servants? Siva, Sanak, sages like Narad and others worship Him. Jasvant is the servant of Rama—his Lord from birth to birth.

27-9-1930

160

संत परम हितकारी, जगत माँहीं ।

In the world the saints do the greatest good. They lead us manifestly towards God and dispel our ignorance. They are kind to all and like God Himself assist us in our troubles. They are above the three moods and have no thought of physical comforts. They are different from the worldly men. Brahmanand says: The company of saintly people enables us to know God.

28-9-1930

[1] Gandhiji has left the words "कमल म्याने मोट बाँधी" untranslated. *Vide* also"Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 28-9-1930.

161

प्राणि! तू हरिसों हर रें । तू कयों रहा निडर रे ?

O man, fear God, how canst thou be indifferent? Do not be careless, be on thy guard whilst there is yet time and have the fear of God in thee—Do thy allotted task quickly, know that death is hovering about thee, do not pride thyself on thy beauty, for thy body will be reduced to ashes. Messengers of Yama will catch thee by the throat and make thee smart there. O man, worship thy Maker. Braj Kishore says: Cling to the feet of Hari and save thyself.

29-9-1930

162

हे जगत्राता, विश्व-विधाता

O Thou Protector of the universe, Ruler of its destiny, Abode of happiness and peace, Ocean of mercy, Friend of the poor, Destroyer of the pangs of pauperism, Everlasting, Whole, Unending, Beginningless, Perfect Brahma, Ancient of days, Refuge of the people, their Lord, Adored of then, Matchless, Indescribable, Beloved of the heart, Guardian of the three worlds, Mainstay of life.

30-9-1930

163

वर्णमणि मीन मर्यादमणि रामचन्द्र

Among fishes the Fish incarnation is the best; among self-restrained persons Ramachandra is the best; among lovers Krishna is the best; among the powerful Narahari; in hardness the Tortoise incarnation; in strength Varaha, the Boar; in elusiveness Vamana who put on a big body; among mountains the Golden Mount (Meru); among waters the Ocean; among lakes the Mansarovar; among rivers the Ganges; among birds the *Garuda;* among trees the Tree of fulfilment of desires; among monkeys Hanuman; among cities Ayodhya; among warriors Parashurama; among instruments the discus Sudarshana; among feminine strength Parvati the beloved of Shankara; among devotees prahlad; in love Radhika is the best. Thus has Kanhar made a garland of jewels for his neck.

1-10-1930

164

बिसर न जाओ मेरे मीत, यह वर माँगूँ मैं नीत

O God, my friend, I ask of Thee this boon: do not forget me. I am dull-witted, know nothing, nor do I show any love for Thee. Thou never forsakest those whom Thou hast taken under Thy shelter; Thou wilt give me victory over Thee. I know that I have no merit to commend itself to Thee, on the contrary, I have terrifying shortcomings and O my Life, if Thou, knowing my shortcomings, wouldst give me up, I shall be undone. But I have a certain faith in me that Thou wouldst not forsake me. It is Thy habit of old that Thou ignorest Thy devotee's blemishes. Thou art the friend of the poor, Thou art gentle of nature. I adore Thee. Premsakhi says: I do not know Thy mysteries, only I believe in Thee.

2-10-1930

165

हो रसिया मैं तो शरण तिहारी

O Beloved, I seek refuge in Thee. I have neither means nor strength, nor wisdom. My sole faith is in the touch of Thy feet, O Lord. I am like the bitter fruit of low-lying ground, but Thou, Ocean of mercy, hast raised me high. I am but a poor child seeking Thy protection. O Lord do not forget me who am so helpless. O Beloved, keep Thou me believing me to be Thy slave. Premsakhi says: I ever stake my all on Thee.

3-10-1930

166

दरसन देना प्रान्त पियारे

O Star of my eyes, darling of Nanda, show Thy dear self to me. O Thou Friend of the distressed, Fount of mercy, Representative of all virtue, full of youth and of handsome appearance, I can no longer restrain myself. I am intent on seeing Thee face to face. Rasik says: In the hope of that happy meeting day and night I meditate on Thee alone.

4-10-1930

167

चेतन! अब मोहिं दर्शन दीजे।

O Divine Spirit, let me have a sight of Thee. By it I shall attain supreme bliss; by it shall the endless chain of birth and deathbe broken. For Thee I have resorted to austerities, penance and many ceremonies; how long am I to continue? Without Thee all these are useless, for the heart does not melt; some foolish ones hug action, others knowledge. The joy and the value of union with Thee neither of them knows. Thou art above them. Thou art and art not in all. In Thy perfection Thou art unique. Thy action is a mystery; Thou art both master and disciple. Though formless and indescribable, yet Thou art all forms. Thou alone knowest Thyself. The Vedas declare Thee to be unknowable. Thy servants sing Thy praises.

5-10-1930

168

अब हम अमर भये न मरेंगे

I have now become immortal, I shall not die. Why should I have to put on a new body when I have given up self-deception which is its cause. Desire and anger bind one in the world. These I shall destroy. From time immemorial, man has died, now I shall destroy time itself. Body is mortal; soul is immortal, it would revert to its original state. I shall do away with the mortal and become an inmate of the abode of the immortal. I shall cleanse myself and be pure. I have died many times because of my ignorance; now I shall be [free] from the pair of happiness and unhappiness. Anandghan says: Those who will not take shelter under the two-lettered name that is so near everyone will surely die.

6-10-1930

169

राम कहो रहमान कहो कोऊ, कान्ह कहो महादेव री ।

All is Brahm[an]. Call it Rama or Rahman, Kanha or Mahadev, Parasnath or Brahma; pots are different but as earth they are one. Even so do we make imaginary differentiations; in essence Truth is one and indivisible. He who is restraint incarnate is Rama, he who is mercy incarnate is Rahim, he who puts an end to all work (by renouncing fruits) is Kanha, he who attains Nirvana is Mahadev, he

who touches reality is Parasnath, he who knows himself is Brahm[an]. Thus, says Anandghan, I am spirit (not body) and am still.

7-10-1930

170

बंधन काट मुरारी हमरे बंधन काट मुरारी

O God, break my bondage. The alligator and the elephant fought in the lake, the latter was dragged deep down and when the elephant's cry of distress reached Thee, Thou left Thy pleasures to help him. For the sake of Draupadi Thou madest haste to reach her Thy help when the tyrant was pulling her garment in the midst of the assembly. The wife of Gautama Rishi attained salvation by the touch of Thy feet. The prostitute and Sabari too reached the same state (by the same devotion to Thee). O people, listen to the acts of the saints and praise God. Vidhuband who is pining for the sight of Thee says: O God accept me.

8-10-1930

171

मैं तो बिरद भरोसे बहुनामा

My reliance is on the celebrated promise of God. O God, my Master, I know nothing of service or Ramanama. Thou hast saved the elephant, the [vulture][1], the prostitute and the sinner Ajamil. I have sought Thy protection on the strength of this evidence of Thy mercy. Premanand says: O all-powerful and all-knowing Lord, save me or kill me.

9-10-1930

172

अगर है शौक मिलनेका, तो हरदम लौ लगाता जा ।

If Thou wouldst see Him with each breath think of Him. Burn thy pride and smear thy body with its ashes; take up the broom of love and with it wipe out the distinctions of me and thee; reduce the notion of duality to dust and sprinkle it on thy prayer carpet; leave the carpet, break up the rosary, throw the sacred books in the river, seek the help of angels and be their servant; do not fast nor keep *ramzan*, do not go to the mosque nor make obeisances; break to pieces the water jar for prayer cleansing and drink the wine of the joy of union; eat and drink but never be off thy guard; enjoy thy intoxication

[1] The source here is indistinct.

continuously; burn thy egotism. Be neither Mulla nor Brahmin; leave duality and worship Him alone. Shah Kalandar has proclaimed: say, 'I am He'. Mad Mansur says: My heart has known truth, that is the wine shop of the intoxicated, make that the object of thy visit.

10-10-1930

173

है बहारे बाग दुनिया चंद रोज !

Life in this world called beautiful garden is only for a short while; you will enjoy the spectacle for a few days only. O traveller, prepare for the march; residence on earth is short. When the great hakim Lukman was asked, "How long will you live?"—rubbing his hands in despair he replied: "Only a few days.,' After burial the angel of death said in the grave: you will sleep here only for a few days. O friends, you and I will have to separate in a few days. O tyrants, why do you oppress innocent people, your days are numbered. Nazir says: Remember the day of death; you cannot rely upon life but for a short while.

11-10-1930

174

बस अब मेरे दिलमें बसा एक तू है

Yes, now Thou art the only King of my heart, Thou art my only Beloved. O Creator, now my meditation is solely upon Thy sacred feet day and night. My heart receives consolation only from Thee, Thy love possesses me. People generally consider me to be mad; everywhere Thy name is on my tongue. I have nothing to do with the pleasures of the world, Thy love is the only thing to please me, my heart's case I shall paint with Thy love; knowledge has united me to Thee; the prayer of Thy servant is that I may have nothing to do with Satan.

12-10-1930

175

अजब तेरा कानून देखा, खुदा या!

O God, Thy law is mysterious. Wherever the heart is set, there Thou art to be seen; with Thee there is neither temple nor mosque. Thou lookest only for a true heart in Thy seeker. Thou exhibitest the splendour of Thy love to him who has surrendered himself heart and soul to Thee. He who becomes

enamoured of Thy divine qualities, takes all his colouring from Thee. He in whom there is still egotism left is like one who has lost his way and he is united to Thee who has lost his egotism. He who believes in Thee sees Thee face to face. It is like a beggar finiding a priceless pearl.

13-10-1930

176

नैया मेरी तनकसी बोझी पाथर भार

My boat is tiny and is laden with stones; eddies are tossing it from all sides and the helmsman is drunk and the boat is in midstream; there is whirlwind and on the top of it all rain is pouring in torrents. Giridhar poet says: O Lord be Thou the helmsman; let Thy mercy be the oar and let the boat reach the shore safe.

14-10-1930

177

कर ले सिंगार चतुर अलबेली

O good woman, put on thy best garments. Thou art to go to thy Lord. There the shroud will be of earth, the bed will be of earth and thou wilt be united to earth. . . . Wash, bathe, dress thy hair; there is no returning from there.

14-10-1930

178

वैष्णव जन तो तेने कहीए जे पीड पराई जाणे रे

He is a Vaishnava who identifies himself with others' sorrows and in so doing has no pride about him. Such a one respects every one and speaks ill of none. He controls his speech, his passions and his thoughts. May his mother be blessed. He is equidisposed towards all, has no desires, regards another's wife as his mother, always speaks the truth and does not touch other people's property. He labours neither under infatuation nor delusion and withdraws his mind from worldly things; he is intent on Ramanama; his body is his sacred shrine for pilgrimage; he is no miser and is free from cunning and he has conquered passions and anger. Narasaiyo says: His presence purifies his surroundings.

15-10-1930

179

MARATHI

जे का रंजले गांजले, ल्नांसि हाीं जो आपुले ।

Know him to be a true man who takes to his bosom those who are in distress. Know that God resides in the heart of such a one. His heart is saturated with gentleness through and through. He receives as his only those who are forsaken. He bestows on his man servants and maid servants the same affection he shows to his children. Tukaram says: What need is there to describe him further? He is the very incarnation of divinity.

180

देव जवळी अंतरी, भेटी नाहीं जन्म वेरा ।

God is near indeed. He is within us. Yet we did not see Him in our lifetime. He pervades the three worlds, yet the world knew Him not. Fortunately saintly men appeared and we saw God. Ramdas says: Through that happy event we began to see God within ourselves.

181

तें मन निष्ठुर कां केलें

O God, Thou Who art known to be an ocean of mercy, why hast Thou hardened Thy heart? For on the elephant's scream of prayer Thou ranst to his assistance; for the devotion of Prahlad Thou roaredst in the fiery pillar; for the piteous appeal of Draupadi Thy heart melted. Eknath says: By the grace of guru Janardana my mind is intent upon the feet of God.

15-10-1930

182

पापाची वासना नको दावूं डोळां

O God, let me not be witness to desire for sin, better make me blind; let me not hear ill of anyone, better make me deaf; let not a sinful word escape my lips, better make me dumb; let me not lust after another's wife, better that I disappear from this earth. Tuka says: I am tired of everything worldly, Thee alone I like, O Gopal.

16-10-1930

183

स्मरतां नित्य हरि, मग ती माया काय करी ?

What can *maya* do to one who always remembers God? By listening to God's word, by laying it to heart and by meditating on man's oneness with God, death ceases to frighten one. The great God Who is a fount of mercy and giver of boons blesses such a one. Amrit says: I therefore drink in nectar by always contemplating Oddhav's[1] feet.

17-10-1930

184

संतपदाची जोड, दे रे हरि ।

O God, grant me love of companionship of the good. It brings forth lovely sprouts of internal bliss. O God by fully granting man's lawful desires Thou satisfiest his heart's craving. Amrit says: O God, Thou sweetenst the end of Thy devotees.

17-10-1930

185

भाव धरा रे, अपुलासा देव करा रे ।

Give thyself to devotion and merge thyself in God. Let people say what they like for this, thou shouldst store up overwhelming love. Be indifferent to praise or blame, leave off 'me and thee' give up all desire and devote thyself to desireless worship, abandon all vain imaginings and doubts; old age has crept over thee. Man's estate is difficult to reach, it will not come again for ages. Having understood this, seek out a teacher. Shivdini has no other determination; he has given himself body and soul to his teacher Kesarinath; for him the world has ceased to exist. Worship now God the friend of his devotees.

18-10-1930

[1] Note by Gandhiji:" Oddhav was Amrit's teacher"

186

अशाश्वत संग्रह कोण करी?

Who will lay by stores that are bound to perish? Why should one build houses, verandahs and storeys? The humble cottage is good enough; covering made of tattered rags is also good enough. I should eat with relish whatever it pleases God to give me from day to day. Amrit says: What is filled in the beggar's bowl gives all the relish one wants; it is such a joy.

19-10-1930

187

हरिभजनावीण काळ धालवूं नको रे ।

Do not let thy time pass without the praise of God. Thou fearest the wheel of life as one fears a rope for a snake and thus preventest union between soul and the Maker. Do not put out the lamp of knowledge within. Weigh thy word so that it will be evidence of steady balanced judgment. Do not plough the sand and waste time by parading thy opinion. Having informed thy mind properly know the reality through the companionship of the good. Never commit thyself to anything till thou hast had experience. Sohira says: There is no alternation of night and day where there is the lamp of knowledge; without it thou maystn't even move the eyelid.

20-10-1930

188

पवित्र तें कुल पावन तो देश

Blessed is that family and that country where servants of God take birth. God becomes their work and their religion. The three worlds become holy through them. Tell me who have become purified through pride of birth? The Puranas have testified like bards without reserve that those called untouchables have attained salvation through devotion to God. Tuladhar, the Vaishya, Gora, the potter, Rohidas, a tanner, Kabir, a Momin, Latif, a Muslim, Sena, a barber, and Vishnudas, Kanhopatra, Dadu, a carder, all become one at the feet of God in the company of hymn singers. Chokhamela and Banka, both Mahars by birth, became one with God. Oh, how great was the devotion of Jani the servant girl of Namdev! Pandharinath (God) dined with her. Meral Janak's family no one knows, yet who can do justice to his greatness? For the servant of God there is no caste, no varna, so say the Vedic sages. Tuka says: I cannot count the degraded

and the forsaken saved through God's grace. You may consult the sacred books if you would know them all.

21-10-1930

189

नियम पाळावे, जरि म्हणशिल योगी व्हावें ।

If thou wouldst be a yogi, thou must attend to the necessary observances. Know that he who is slave to his tongue and sold himself to the goddess of sleep will never practise yoga. The candidate for yoga should be moderate in sleep and food and must not indulge in vain disputations. Make up thy mind thus to regulate thy food and all thy movements; practise internal concentration and then thou wouldst have internal peace. When thy mind is taken off external objects it will easily turn inward and be fixed even as a light protected from winds becomes steady and fixed.

190

जेथें जातो तेंथें तूं माझा सांगाती

Wherever I go, Thou art my companion. Having taken me by the hand Thou movest me. I go alone depending solely on Thee. Thou bearest too my burdens. If I am likely to say anything foolish, Thou makest it right. Thou hast removed my bashfulness and madest me self-confident, O Lord. All the people have become my guards, relatives and bosom friends. Tuka says: I now conduct myself without any care. I have attained divine peace within and without.

22-10-1930

191

न कळतां काय करावा उपाय

When one does not know, what is one to do so as to have devotion to Thy sacred feet? When will it so happen that Thou wilt come and settle in my heart? O God, when wilt Thou so ordain that I may meditate on Thee with a true heart? Remove Thou my untruth and, O Truth, come and dwell Thou in my heart. Tuka says: O Panduranga, do Thou protect by Thy power sinners like me.

192

मुक्ति–पांग नाहीं विष्णूचिया दासां

To the servants of Vishnu there is no yearning even for salvation; they do not want to know what the wheel of birth and death is like.; Govind sits steadily settled in their hearts; for them the beginning and the end are the same. They make over happiness and misery to God and themselves remain untouched by them, the auspicious songs sing of them; their strength and their intellect are dedicated to benevolent uses; their hearts contain gentleness; they are full of mercy even like God; they know no distinction between theirs and others'. Tuka says: They are even like unto God and Vaikuntha is where they live.

23-10-1930

193

काय वाणूँ आतां न पुरे हे वाणी

How now shall I describe (the praises of the good); my speech is not enough (for the purpose). I therefore put my head at their feet. The magnet leaves its greatness and does not know that it may not touch iron. Even so good men's powers are for the benefit of the world. They afflict the body for the service of others. Mercy towards all is the stock-in-trade of the good. They have no attachment for their own bodies. Tuka says: Others' happiness is their happiness; nectar drops from their lips.

194

नाहीं संतपण मिळत तें हाटीं

Saintliness is not to be purchased in shops nor is it to be had for wandering nor in cupboards nor in deserts nor in forests. It is not obtainable for a heap of riches. It is not in the heavens above nor in the entrails of the earth below. Tuka says: It is a life's bargain and if you will not give your life to possess it better be silent.

24-10-1930

195

भक्त ऐसे जाण जे देहीं उदास

He is a devotee who is indifferent about body, who has killed all desire, whose one object in life is (to find) Narayana, whom wealth or company or even parents will not distract, for whom whether in front or behind there is only God in difficulty, who will not allow any

difficulty to cross his purpose. Tuka says: Truth guides such men in all their doings.

196

वेद अनंत बोलिला

The essence of the endless Vedas is this: Seek the shelter of God and repeat His name with all thy heart. The result of the cogitations of all the Shastras is also the same; Tuka says: The burden of the eighteen Puranas is also identical.

25-10-1930

197

आणीक दुसरें मज नाहीं आतां

This heart of mine is determined that for me now there is nothing else; I meditate on Panduranga, I think of Panduranga, I see Panduranga whether awake or dreaming. All the organs are so attuned that I have no other desire left. Tuka says: My eyes have recognized that image standing on that brick transfixed in meditation unmoved by anything.

198

न मिळो खावया, न वाढो संतान

What though I get nothing to eat and have no progeny? It is enough for me that Narayana's grace descends upon me. My speech gives me that advice and says likewise to the other people —Let the body suffer, let adversity befall one, enough that Narayana is enthroned in my heart. Tuka says: All the above things are fleeting; my welfare consists in always remembering Gopal.

26-10-1930

199

महारासी शिवे, कोपे ब्राह्मण तो नव्हे ।

He who becomes enraged at the touch of a Mahar is no Brahmin. There is no penance for him even by giving his life. There is the taint of untouchability in him who will not touch a Chandal. Tuka says: A man becomes what he is continually thinking of.

200

देह जावो अथवा राहो

Let the body persist or perish, my heart must be fixed on Panduranga. I swear by Thee O Pandharinath that I shall never let go the hold of Thy feet. On my lips must be Thy name, in my heart everlasting devotion to Thee. Namdev says: O Keshav such is my vow but it is for Thee to make it good.

27-10-1930

201

पुण्य पर–उपकार पाप ते परपीड़ा

Merit consists in doing good to others, sin in doing harm to others. There is no other pair comparable to this. Truth is the only religion (or freedom); untruth is bondage, there is no secret like this. God's name on one's lips is itself salvation, disregard (of the name) know to be perdition. Companionship of the good is the only heaven, studious indifference is hell. Tuka says: It is thus clear what is good and what is injurious, let people choose what they will.

202

शेवटींची विनवणी

This is my last prayer, O saintly people listen to it: O God, do not forget me; now what more need I say, Your holy feet know everything. Tuka says: I prostrate myself before Your feet, let the shadow of Your grace descend upon me.

203

हेंचि दान दे गा देवा

O God, grant only this boon. I may never forget Thee; and I shall prize it dearly. I desire neither salvation nor riches nor prosperity; give me always company of the good. Tuka says: On that condition Thou mayest send me to the earth again and again.

28-10-1930

204

BENGALI

अंतर मम विकसित करो अन्तरतर हे !

O Thou Dweller in my heart, open it out, purify it, make it bright and beautiful, awaken it, prepare it, make it fearless, make it a blessing to others, rid it of laziness, free it from doubt, unite it with all, destroy its bondage, let Thy peaceful music pervade all its works;

make my heart fixed on Thy holy lotus feet and make it full of joy, full of joy, full of joy.

205

वहे निरन्तर अनन्त आनन्दधारा ।

Endless stream of joy flows eternally, ancient music sounds in the boundless sky, innumerable suns, moons and stars rise. That matchless King of kings shines in all his glory in the whole universe. A crore hearts of devotees astonished, motionless, speechless bow their heads before the feet of the Almighty.

29-10-1930

206

तुमि बंधु, तुमि नाथ

Thou art Brother, Thou art Lord, day and night Thou art mine, Thou art my happiness, Thou my peace, Thou the way immortal, Thou art the Abode of joy, unite me to Thee, remove sorrow, the touch of Thy feet quenches all agony, O Thou boundless shelter of the distressed!

[*30-10-1930*][1]

207

एकटि नमस्कारे प्रभु एकटि नमस्कारे

In one prostration O Lord, Thou givest rest to all Thy creatures in Thy world.[2]

[*30-10-1930*]

208

GUJARATI CONTINUED

भूतळ भक्ति पदारथ मोटुं, ब्रह्मलोकमां नाहि रे

On this globe worship of God is the greatest thing, there is nothing like it even in the heavenly world. By acquiring merit one reaches only paradise from there to come again to earth in the end. But men of God ask not for salvation; they desire to be born again for everlasting service, praise and singing and to meet God face to face. Blessed are the parents of him who being born on India's earth has

[1] The source does not bear any date, but presumably this and the following *bhajan* belong to this date.

[2] Note by Gandhiji: "These Bengali verses of the Poet have been authoritatively translated and so the renderings so far made here should be corrected and replaced by the authoritative versions."

praised God for he has fulfilled the purpose of his birth. Blessed be Brindaban and the deeds performed therein, blessed be the inhabitants of Vraj for all the eight great *siddhis* are at their disposal and they can have salvation for the asking. The relish of that joy isknown to Shankar or to the Yogi Shukadevji as also somewhat to the maids of Vraj, says Narsaiyo, who enjoys himself in the sunshine of His presence.

31-10-1930

209

नारायणनुं नाम ज लेतां, वारे तेने तजीए रे

We should forsake him who dissuades us from taking God's name; we should worship God with all our mind, speech and deed. For doing this we should (if necessary) leave caste, family, mother, father, sister, son, wife, even as the snake discards his skin. Prahlad left his father but would not give up God's name, Bharata and Shatrughna gave up their mother but never Rama. *Rishis'* wives gave up their husbands for the sake of God. Thereby they not only lost nothing but gained all the four ends. Narsaiyo says: The women of Vraj gave up their all for the sake of Vitthal and sported with the Lord.

1-11-1930

210

समरने श्रीहरि, मेल ममता परी

O Good man, remember God and give up thy egotism, think of the source from which thou hast come. What art thou and what dost thou cling to? Without understanding (the root of things) thou sayst 'this is mine, that is mine' but if thou wilt use thy judgment thou wilt observe that the body is not thine for try what thou wilt, thou canst not keep it (for ever), it is bound to perish. When this body perishes there will be many more new ones and thy wife, children and others will deceive thee. Thou thinkest always of wealth and that is the greatest stumbling block in thy way. Thy lord is near thee and thou dost not know Him, thou hast lost thy chance and wasted thy time. Thou art in deep sleep and suffocated; why wilt thou not listen to the words of the sages and wake up? Narsaiyo says: It is a matter of shame thou wilt not wake up, if thou only wilt, thy age-long desires will abate.

2-11-1930

211

अखिल ब्रह्मांडमां एक तुं श्रीहरि

Throughout the whole universe Thou alone art; Thou appearest

as many, taking diverse forms. Thou art the informing Beingin the material body. Thou art the essence of light, Thou art the word of the Vedas in the void, Thou art the air, water, earth. O Lord, Thou spreadest out high up in the trees, similarly having created a multitude of forms and a variety of tastes from One Being Thou hast become many. The Vedas declare and the other Shastras bear witness that there is no distinction between a nugget of gold and a gold earring; when it undergoes shapes, it wears different appearances and different names but in reality it is all gold. Thou art the seed in the tree and Thou art the tree from the seed and from this phenomenon one sees change in form. Narsaiyo says: This is all a matter of the mind but if I worship Thee in true faith Thou wilt appear as Thou art.

3-11-1930

212

ज्यां लगी आतमा-तत्त्व चीन्यो नहि

As long as the secret of the soul is not known, all practices are useless; thy life as a human being has passed away uselessly like the rains out of season. What though thou bathest daily and performest worship and dost service in the temples, what though thou givest alms staying in thy own house, what though thou adoptest long hair, smearest thy body with the sacred ashes. What though thou hast removed thy hair, performest austerities and visitest holy places, what though thou takest the rosary and takest His name; what though thou markest the sacred mark on the forehead and keepest the *tulsi*[1] leaf, what though thou drinkest the Ganges water; what though thou canst recite the Vedas and knowest the grammar and pronouncest correctly; what though thou knowest the tunes and their effect; what though thou knowest the six systems and the permutations and combinations of letters. All these are devices for finding the wherewithal for one's support if thou hast not known the soul of souls. Narsaiyo says: Thou hast wasted the priceless human heritage if thou hast not known the secret of the universe.

4-11-1930

[1] Basil

213

जे गमे जगतगुरु देव जगदीशने

It is useless to sorrow over what God ordains. Without His will we cannot move a blade of grass. If we do fuss about things, what is left over is a legacy of sorrows. It is ignorance that prompts one to say 'I have done this', even as a dog under a cart fancies himself shouldering the weight of the cart. A few yogis only know that the whole universe depends upon Him. If a man could dispose things, he would root out all enemies and have only friends, he would have no kings and no beggars, he would plant on every house flags betokening (limitless possession of wealth). Even as a creeper gives in its season leaves, fruit and flowers so does man receive what is his due in due time; a foolish man only will therefore resort to vain cogitations. Often does man write much and fails to say the right thing. People worship what they like and they seem to believe whole-heartedly that theirs is the only true belief. But Narsaiyo says with folded hands: Consider wordly happiness to be vain; everything is nothing without Krishna; I want my God from birth to birth.

5-11-1930

214

जागीने जोऊं तो जगत दीसे नहि

As I awake I see no world, the world was a conglomeration of enjoyments perceived in the dream-land. The joys are all transformations of mind and its sports are identical. Life is but the sport of Brahm[an]. The five elements spring from Parabrahm[an] and they cohere (through His will). The flowers and the fruit are of and from the tree, the branch is not separate from the stem. The Vedas declare and the other Shastras bear witness that[1] . . . Life springs from Siva's will. He has devised the fourteen worlds. Narsaiyo says: Many a saint has found salvation through realizing 'Thou art That'.

6-11-1930

215

ध्यान धर हरि तणुं अल्पमति आळसु

O lazy man of poor wit, contemplate God so that the miseries of life may be alleviated. By engaging in any other pursuit, thou wilt gain nothing. God of Death will fool thee by leading thee into snares.

[1] Note by Gandhiji: "For this verse see 107 of which this is an exact repetition."

All the good flows from dedication to the feet of Shrikrishna; there is immeasurable bliss in seeking that shelter. Regard all other things as useless and treasure Krishna's name in thy heart. Put away infatuation at a safe distance and rest before the feet of Hari. Do not turn away when the real thing is brought to thy notice. O fool, thou hast built castles in the air; know that they are without anyfoundation. The world praises those who weave into their acts the qualities of the Deity. Poor Narsaiyo dedicated himself to God; he considers nothing comparable to the praise of God.

7-11-1930

216

जूनुं तो थयुं रे देवळ जूनुं तो थयुं

This temple is worn out and the dweller is yet young. This body, O dweller, is tottering, the teeth are gone, only the gums are left. Thou art attached to the body but thou hast flown and the body remains. Mira says: O God (this being the condition), may I love Thee and drink in Thy love.

8-11-1930

217

नहीं रे विसारुं हरि अंतरमांथी नहीं रे विसारुं हरि

I will not forget Hari who is in my heart. I had gone to the Jamuna to fetch water and on the way I found that priceless Lord. In passing through Brindaban I fell at Thy feet. Thou hadst worn saffron-colour dhoti and embroidered frock, Thou hadst saffron mark painted on the forehead; Thou hadst a peacock-feathered crown and rings in Thy ears; Thou wast playing on the flute. Mira says: What need is there to describe Him further? I have surrendered my all to Him who is my Lord and Master.

9-11-1930

218

बोल मा बोल मा बोल मा रे राधाकृष्ण बिना बीजुं बोल मा ।

Do not utter anything else than Radhakrishna. Do not take the bitter leaf when thou hast sugar-cane in front of thee; do not take shelter under the light of the firefly when thou hast the sun and the moon before thee; do not take lead in the place of jewels like diamonds and rubies. Mira says: I have given my all against Giridhar (God).

10-11-1930

219

मुखडानी माया लागी रे ।

O dear Lord, I love Thy face; as soon as I saw Thy face, the world became useless to me and my mind became detached from it. The happiness that the world gives is like a mirage, one should move about deeming it of no account. Mirabai says: Blessed Lord, my only hope is in Thee and I consider myself fortunate (in that I have seen thee face to face).

11-11-1930

220

वैष्णव नथी थयो तुं रे, शीद गुमानमां घूमे

Thou hast not yet become a devotee of God; what is thy pride based on? Thy heart does not swell with joy to see men of God, it does not melt to sing God's praises. Thy desires have not abated, thy eyes are red with anger, thou wilt be a true Vaishnava if thou canst draw another towards thee, thou art nothing so long as thy contact does not influence one for the better, thou art not pained to see others in pain, thou dost not hesitate to speak ill of others, thou hast no true love for Vitthal (God) , thou art not ashamed of repeating 'I, I'. Thou hast no liking for serving others, thou canst not give up selfishness, thy acts don't accord with thy speech, when challenged thou deniest thy speech(?); thou hast no relish for prayer, thou hast no faith in Hari (God), so long as thou hankerest after the world, the world is thy master and thou its slave; if thou wilt master thyself thou wilt find, the true thing Daya says: Whether thou likest it or not, I must say what is true.

12-11-1930

221

हरि, जेवो तेवो हुं दास तमारो

O God, such as I am, I am Thy servant. O Ocean of Mercy, take me by the hand, Thou art companion in distress, Thou art protector of the fallen, Thou dost not dismiss from thy presence the wretch who seeks Thy protection no matter how much sunk he may be in sin. O Thou deliverer, Thou shieldest Thy devotees who may be tempted to do wrong, Thou givest fortune to the unfortunate and O Giver of boons, Thou givest capacity and satisfaction, O good Lord, Thou makest crooked straight even when human endeavour has failed. O God who deliverest from misery, Thou washest the sins of

the undeserving sinner, Thou protectest Thy devotees without their asking, Thou reckonest their faults as merit, Thou removest the difficulties of those who invoke Thy aid, Thou dost not distinguish between the great and the small, Thou art the help of the helpless, Thou knowest the aches of men's hearts, Thou art the friend of the afflicted, Thou sufferest, Thou takest away fear from men and Thou overlookest blemishes, Thou art the Lord of all, the Soul of souls, Thou alone art independent, Thou art the beloved of Pritam, Thou art the guardian of Thy servants, Thou art my Rock.

13-11-1930

222

महाकष्ट पाम्या विना कृष्ण कोने मळ्या

You may call to mind the sages of all the four *yugas* and you will find that no one saw God without much pain and tribulation. Brave men have great regard therefore for the devotees of Vishnu, only the cruel-hearted are against devotion. Dhruva, Prahlad, Bhishma, Bali, Bibhishana, Vidura, Kunti's sons, Vasudeva, Devaki, Nand, Siva, the devotees of Vraj, all these pillars of devotion had to suffer tribulation. Again Nala, Damayanti, Harishchandra, Taramati, Rukmangada, Ambarish, Narasinha Mehta, Jayadeva, Mira, all these seekers had to go through purgatory before they tasted real happiness, Vyasa had his troubles both mental and physical, so had Tulsi and Madhav. The world carps at the asceticism of Siva; Sita, who was like mother of the universe had to undergo the fiery ordeal. The world bows to her for she suffered though sinless. Even those saints who have burnt all the past, present and future acts have the fear of suffering. It is God's mystery inexplicable. One can only say such is His will. After all virtue and vice are products of man's imagination; the world dances to the tune of Krishna. Dayaram says: Without the will of the Beloved not a blade moves but the weak mind is under hallucination of 'I did it'.

14-11-1930

223

भटकतां भवमां रे गया काळ कोटी वही

Returning again and again to the world, aeons have passed away. O God, now the limit is reached, take Thou me by the hand, scorched by the three agonies I have flown to Thee for protection, cool down the fevers. I entreat Thee, O Thou Fount of Mercy, let Thy blessed feet be my abode of refuge, let Thy merciful glance burn up my sins. If Thou wilt look at my sins, Thou wilt cease to be paramount Lord.

How [can] a ruby be compared to चणोटी, I am a slave, Thou art Master, Thou wilt therefore be generousto me Thy slave? Full of hope I have come before Thee, eternal God, knowing Thee to be all-powerful. O Thou upholder of dharma how can I leave Thy door in disappointment? Make me Thine own, don't say nay to me. O Thou Deliverer, listen the prayer of one so helpless as I am. Look at me but once and fulfil my yearning, speak to me with Thy divine smile and say 'Daya, thou art mine'.

15-11-1930

224

हरिनो मारग छे शूरानो, नहि कायरनुं काम जोने

Godward way is for the brave not for the cowardly. Before one can treasure the sacred name in the heart, it is necessary to be ready to lay down one's life. He only gets that divine joy who surrenders children, wife, wealth and his own head. Those who would find pearls risk their lives in going in deep waters. Such people face death bravely and have no doubts lurking in their minds. But those who watch these brave deeds from a safe distance shiver even to think of the risks. The way of love is a fiery ordeal, cowards flee before it. Those who are in it enjoy rare happiness, the spectators are scorched. Love is a bargain of life not to be easily had. Those who have attained the heights have passed through the fire of self-purification. Those who have drunk deep of the nectar of Ramanama are an object of envy. But those only who know what divine love is recognize them when they see them. They witness the divine sport of Pritam's Lord.

16-11-1930

225

जननी जीवो रे गोपीचन्दनी

Blessed be Gopichand's mother who planted in her own son the seed of *vairag*[1]. Her preaching resulted in the world appearing like a furnace to Gopichand. Blessed be Dhruva's mother who said bitter things to her son Dhruva so that he left a kingdom to seek the shelter of the forest. Sage Bajand when he saw his camel in a prostrate condition was shocked and learnt from the event the lesson that the world was a fleeting show and left it. Great was the self-denial of Bhartrihari who left 1,600 queens, left his palaces and went into the wilderness.I dote on all these who forsook this vain show. There have

[1] Note by Gandhiji: " 'Asceticism' is an approach to the meaning."

been others, worldly men good and bad too numerous to count. Where is Ravana with his brood? Where are the eight thousand children of Sagar king? Where is the fortune of Nand? All has passed away like a dream. Dwellers in palaces have gone and so have kings from their kingdoms. The Gods, the demons, the *munis* and ordinary folk all have vanished like dreams. O men, it were good then if you would deliberately leave this empty show; for the God of Death will surely compel you to do so one day. Nishkulanand says: I take my oath upon it that that fate awaits every one of us.

17-11-1930

226

त्याग न टके रे वैराग विना

No matter what one does, self-denial will not last unless it is based on dislike for the thing given up. If there is deep down the desire for it, it will not be relinquished. A man may wear the garb of a sannyasi but that will bring him no nearer the goal if the garb only hides the desire that has its full possession of the wearer. So long as desire, anger, greed and passion are not rooted out, the thing will come to the surface the moment there is an opportunity; the very sannyasa may become an additional source of self-indulgence. Just as the seed does not sprout during the dry hot season but does so as soon as the rains come, so is it with man's desires; they await the due season. Just as iron moves in front of a magnet so do the senses move when they are face to face with their objects. They are still for want of opportunity but they run riot as soon as the opportunity comes. Therefore mere external renunciation will not answer if there is no corresponding response within. Such external renunciation will mean licence even from the restraints of Varnashrama (the four divisions) and is likely to result in harm. Such a man becomes useless like milk gone bad. It won't yield ghee or butter and is unfit to drink. Nishkulanand says: A man's renunciation is wrong when he hovers between self-denial and self-indulgence, household affairs and their relinquishment.

18-11-1930

227

जंगल वसाव्युं रे जोगीए

The yogi has migrated to the forest. He has given up all love of the body. He cares not to talk about the world, he has becomeindifferent about its comforts. He who had richly upholstered cots and lived in palaces has not even straw to lie on, lives in the shade of trees. He who had rich shawls and embroidered robes now sports a ragged blanket and bears heat and cold. He who had a variety of tasty foods now lives upon pieces of chapati thrown in the begging bowl. He at whose call thousands answered and who was followed by large armies is now wandering alone and unshod. O king, if you would stop I would prepare food for you; I would prepare rice puddings in no time and it will be put in your begging bowl. (The king answers:) He who waits for food, expects to have a dish, is no yogi, he is a householder desirous of enjoyment. He is doomed. He who gives up his kingdom and adopts sannyasa may not fix his mind on wealth and family, he considers all indulgence as a malady. Nishkulanand says: Blessed be he who gives up all desire for physical comforts and adopts sannyasa, he has left his family, it is true, but he has gained an imperishable family.

19-11-1930

228

जडभरतनी जातना जोगी

Those yogis who are like Jada Bharata have full control like a powerful foe over the senses including the mind. They remain immovable like a rock in the face of temptations. They will perish rather than be weak in faith or patience. During the whole day they never allow themselves with the body. He is the true man who will not indulge the body. They move about in obedience to God's will and serve mankind. He who comes across such yogis is on the way to obtaining salvation. Such a man when he comes in contact with such yogis whether by design or accident is, Nishkulanand says, surely purified.

20-11-1930

229

धीर धुरंधरा शूर साचा खरा

They are patient and brave and true warriors who have shed all fear of death. Even if there are crores against one they will regard them as straw. They have to face the determined enemy called temptation, but they will not flinch even though they should die. Poets, noted pundits, are very intellectual but they would not [*sic*] such an enemy—for in that army desire, anger, vanity, ambition are chief warriors, for them (the learned) there is no standing against thisarmy. Wandering yogis, ascetics and the like fight under the shelter of God. Against such an army true warriors alone fight. Yogis know through the mouths of their teachers the art of fighting. Muktanand says: After having defeated this army of temptations they enjoy immortal bliss.

21-11-1930

230

टेक न मेले रे ते मरद खरा जगमांही

Those [who] will not break their plighted word are real heroes. They will not be moved from their purpose by any of the three fevers. They will act with decision and patience. They would never harbour doubt about their action or its timeliness. We have to die some day without fail, some sooner, some later, let us not flinch for the sake of worldly enjoyment. He who understands things clearly through the heart and then acts in the teeth of all danger is a hero. He will not entertain suspicions about others. He will never forget Brahmanand's God.

22-11-1930

231

रे शिर साटे नटवरने वरीए

We must risk life itself but realize God, we may never recede from the attempt. I looked within, did not chip [*sic*] wisdom and placed my head at the feet of Hari. One may not move without knowing the wisdom of the step but having moved forward there should be no looking back; in the field of strife we must fight unto death. With what face can one return who bravely goes forward and then at the critical moment beats a hasty retreat? It is wise to make calculations beforehand; it is no use going out to battle in bravado.

But having once gone, there should be no retiral even though one may be cut to pieces. We must sing of Hari with zest and may not step back when the call comes. Brahmanand says: We should rather die than accept defeat.

23-11-1930

232

सद्‌गुरु शरण विना अज्ञानतिमिर टळशे नहि रे

Without the help of a true guru this dark ignorance cannot be dispelled nor can the seed that generates life and death be burnt. Not without listening to the nectar-like speech of a loving teacher, nor without acquiring the capacity for distinguishing between truth and untruth, nor without knowledge based on experience will the knots of the heart be undone. Even though one may read the Shastras daily and keep the mind and the ears under control, true happiness will be unattainable without true thought. There is no gain in harping on 'mine and thine'. A wise man distinguishes between right and wrong. Nothing is to be gained from concentration on wife, children and domestics. Keshav says: We will never meet good men who can show us the way to perfect bliss without serving God and without diligent search.

24-11-1930

233

मारी नाड तमारे हाथ हरि संभाळजो रे

My pulse is in Thy hands, O God. Take care of me, regarding me as Thine keep Thy prestige. I do not know what is good for me and what is not, misery always stares me in the face. O God, look at me, what is happening to me? Thou art the true physician from time immemorial; Thou knowest all the remedies, my time is near, do Thou be punctual. O God, why art Thou waiting? Why dost Thou give me up whilst there is yet hope? O God, do Thou remove my great misery. Keshav says: What will happen to me? I am undone if the whole battle is lost, be Thou warned. O my Protector, Thy prestige will be lost (if anything happens to Thy servant).

25-11-1930

234

दीनानाथ दयाळ नटवर, हाथ मारो मूकशो मा

O Lord of the afflicted, do not desert me. In this great ocean of birth and death I am tossed about, do not let the occasion of saving me slip by. Thou art my only refuge, I do not know the means, O Keeper of my life, do not give me up because I am so worthless. Thou art Mother, Father, Family, all in all. O Ocean of Mercy, do not dry up for Thy slave's sake. Keshavlal has Thy protection, O Lord of the Universe, desert me not on any account.

26-11-1930

235

भक्ति वड़े वश थाय रमापति भक्ति वड़े

God comes to us through devotion. If He did not come, we should not be free from the bondage of birth and death. Devotion is a means of attaining true bliss and makes birth on this earth worthwhile. Even the Vedas testify that God comes to His devotees. He who is prowess personified allows Himself to be tied up as if He was helpless. He appears wherever His servants are in distress. He, the Lord of the Universe, Fountain of Mercy is unattainable without devotion. Meditations, austerities, vows and the like are useless without devotion. Without it, wealth, youth, strength, intellect, cunning all these put together are useless (if there is no devotion). Colour, beauty, family, caste cannot help (where devotion is absent). Ajamil, Narad, Sabari, the prostitute, the elephant—these declare the virtue of devotion. Keshav says: No one person is able to recite all the power of devotion.

27-11-1930

236

कोई सहाय नथी, बिना हरि सहाय नथी

There is no help for thee but God. Thou art the least in strength and yet in thy egotism owing to possession of house, land and riches thou sleepest in peace; instead thou shouldst worship God with devotion and with due observance of self-restraint. Why wilt thou needlessly slave for others? Think deeply and realize that terrible time is fleeting. Keshav says: Thou canst do what thou wishest with this priceless body.

28-11-1930

237

रामबाण वाग्यां होय ते जाणे

He only knows what it is who is smitten by love of Rama. Dhruva had that experience and so had Prahlad and they found their goal. The Shastras say that Shukadevji was smitten even while he was in the embryo. God came to King Mordhwaj and dominated his mind. He went to Kashi and submitted to being sawn by his wife and son. Rana came upon Mirabai in anger with a drawn sword in his hand and presented her with a poison cup. God turned it to nectar. He accepted Narasinha Mehta's draft and helped him in the nick of time. Devotee Dhano says: He has thus saved thousands of His servants.

29-11-1930

238

जेने राम राखे रे, तेने कुण मारी शके

Who can destroy him whom God would keep? I see no one else besides God. At His pleasure he makes a rich man poor and a poor man king; He makes a lake of a desert and a desert of a lake. He reduces a mountain to a straw and a straw He converts into a mountain. He saved manjari's[1] young ones from a furnace. He saved the eggs of a lizard[2]. Such is His power. O God, Thou helpest Thy servants in the nick of time. The hunter has his bow strung, [a falcon][3] is about to dart but a snake bites the hunter and [the falcon] has a wound in his head. The eagle has fallen and the happy birds have flown. He the mighty Tailor sits with his yardstick and scissors, adjusts everything and takes care of all. The Lord of Dhiro is the sole personification of Truth.

[*1-12-1930*][4]

[1] Cat's

[2] The Gujarati text of the *bhajan* has "ટોટોડી",which means a sandpiper.

[3] The source has "શ્ર્ચન્ક્રછડશ્ડડ્ડ _".Gandhiji has left the word untranslated.

[4] Note by Gandhiji: "This is marked as on 30-11-1930 but done in the early morning of 1st December,"

239

तरणा ओथे डुंगर रे डुंगर कोई देखे नहीं

The mountain is in the straw but no one sees it in it even as none would notice a lion hidden among a flock of sheep. But he can discover himself by his roar, as the musk deer among the ordinary flock. The Absolute is hidden in the phenomenal as oil in the seed, fire in the wood, ghee in milk. Who will listen and to whom shall I talk of the Illimitable and the Unknowable? Speech does not reach it. There is an abode which is beyond the intellect. Though the mind is swift like the wind it cannot overtake it. This Immortal, Indivisible essence pervades everything movable and immovable. It has made this universe, there is not an atom where It is not. But by the grace of a true guru It is attainable. Why go in search of It here and there when It is in you? Servant Dhiro says: Thou art wherever I look.

1-12-1930

240

खबरदार मन सुबाती

Beware O my mind, you have to walk on the edge of a sword; with courage you have to fight for truth; time is theenemy, the year is the lord, the twelve months are the generals, each month has thirty days which are the under-officers and then there is the day and the night and so in the year seven hundred and twenty. The hundred years of a lifetime are the besiegers of the body fort; these have to be defeated. There are five senses after you and then there are anger, desire, greed, infatuation, illusion, egotism—these are all first-class warriors tyrannical. You have to fight a very powerful foe. You have love, knowledge, true teacher, purity, contentment, forgiveness, hymns, faith. With these on your side you have to give battle. Meditation and yoga practices and the like will, Dhiro says, enable you to stand the heat of the battle.

2-12-1930

241

दुनिया तो दीवानी रे ब्रह्मांड पाखंड पूजे

The world is mad, it respects humbug. The fool does not know the Maker though He is nearest him. He worships lifeless stocks and stones as Siva. How dark are people who ignore life? Under the sun's blaze one does not see the philosophers' stone. Put a stone vessel in the sea and try ever so hard, it is bound to sink. How can you press oil from sand or milk a metal cow? What avails a daily clean bath to a man who is unclean within? What is the use of destroying the snake-hole after the snake has bitten you? Knowers alone know how love is wounded. God is not far, He is near; only look within, clean thy heart and see the Lord within—the powerful Lord of Dhiro is everywhere in the world.

3-12-1930

242

निश्चे करो रामनुं नाम नथी जोगी थईने जावुं

Resolve upon enthroning Ramanama in thy heart. Yoga is no use, nor is the saffron-coloured robe nor mixing up all thy food. Whether thou wearest *bhagava* or white garments is of little consequence, the thing to do is not to hurt any creature and to wish it well. Put the worldly men on one side, the yogis on the other and then show me the yogi who has seen God face to face. Because they served God, Narasinha Mehta, Mira, Prahlad, Sena barber, Dhano, Peepo, Rohidas, Koobo, Potter Goro, Rajput Bodano, Gangabai sawGod face to face. Poor good people, good-hearted butchers, worshipped God and found peace; show me the yogi who did likewise. Rama is not to be attained by smearing oneself with ashes or by hanging head downward nor by leaving wife and retiring to the forest. God can be attained only by diligent search. Rama is for him who can be happy in the jungle and who regards palaces as jungle, who regards bitter as sweet and sweet like bitter. Even as oil is hid in the seed, ghee in milk, so is God hid everywhere, says Narbho.

4-12-1930

243

हरिजन होय तेणे हेत घणुं राखवुं ।

Men of God should have abundant love for all; they should shed all egotism. Through God's name they should banish the threefold afflictions, leave off sinning and take Ramanama. They should consider all to be good and themselves to be unworthy. They should in perfect humility distribute alms. They should devote themselves to their faith body, mind and speech and regard God as the giver and the enjoyer. They should not weaken in their decisions; they should speak sparingly. They should entrust secrets only to the trustworthy and their speech should be humble and [they should] be serious in giving opinions; they must not talk big before those who know how to discriminate, they should take the name of the limitless God and attain salvation and help others to do likewise, their devotion should be as of poor people. Bhojo a humble servant says: By the grace of God the three afflictions do not go near such people.

5-12-1930

244

भक्ति शूरवीरनी साची रे

Devotion is for the brave, they do not turn back after having once begun. Having made up their minds, they go forward in full faith. They have killed desire, anger, arrogance and greed. When the temptations swelled and when the heat commenced, the cowards trembled and fled. The true men stood their ground and fought with God as their Help and Guide. They outdistanced many and then began to have a glimpse of Brahm[an]. They destroyed the effect of past action and met God face to face. They would not wish for the various gifts. To such salvation is easy. Bhojo Bhakta says: Thosewho have given up themselves body and mind and all and are ever equi-minded are the true devotees and they have heaven as their abode.

6-12-1930

245

गुरुजी तमे कहो छो रे ब्रह्म तारी पासे वस्यो

O teacher, you say Brahm[an] is in me but I see Him not; tell me what distinguishes Him. Is the head He or is the head in Him, is He in the eyes or are the eyes themselves Brahm[an] ? Is He in the nose or in the mouth ? I am puzzled. Pray help me out of my doubt and delusion. Is He in the feet or in the hands, in the heart or the chest? If He is in the feet—where is He? O teacher, teach me. When the pupil was rested, the teacher spoke: O pupil, listen, today the ignorance must be dispelled. He the loved one is not in any particular limb, let me warn you betimes; He eludes one unless one enquires within. He is as near as you are intent upon Him. Therefore when one is absorbed in Him, one sees Him though He has neither form nor colour. Bapu says: Yet you will see Him in many forms.

7-12-1930

246

जीभलडी रे तने हरिगुण गातां आवडुं आळस क्यांथी रे

O tongue, why dost thou tire of singing God's praises? Thou hast not enough time for gossip which is ever on thy lips. Thou art expert in talking ill of others. Thou art ever ready for tasty things; thou art ready also for quarrelling but when it comes to the matter of praising the Lord, thou art too busy. At the time of death no one is of any use, the dear ones are like so many foes. . . .[1] You will then rub your eyes. When the time approaches sesame is sent for and so is *tulsi* leaf, Ramanama is also taken but when you were young you carried yourself with a high head. What is the use of Ramanama on death-bed? Is it any use digging a well after a house has caught fire? Of what use is a light brought after the thieves have stolen things? You are intoxicated with your own infatuation; wake up and look around. What is the use of weeping when time knocks at the door? It costs nothing to sing Hari's praises, not a hair is touched. The weary way will not be passed without effort but the whole can be easily covered by reliance upon God.

8-12-1930

[1] Here Gandhiji has left untranslated the words: "વજન ધરીને સર્વસ્વિ લેશે"

247

भगवत भजजो रामनाम रणुंकार

Worship God, take Ramanama which is the talisman. This body is a vessel, have true faith in thy heart; the world ocean contains unfathomable waters in the shape of endless desires. The earthly body chains thee; thou art filled with egotism. By the aid of a true guru thou canst cross the ocean. This human body is unattainable even by the gods. Being in it cultivate the companionship of the good and gain the inestimable end. If thou wilt not, thou wouldst repent. Time is fleeting. From the little insect to Brahma all embodied ones have the fear of death hovering over their heads. This body is a momentary thing, a mere morsel for the God of Death. Why all this arrogance about so momentary a thing? Thou hast been born again and again and carried the load of egotism, delusion and infatuation, thou hast not known God and hast therefore suffered. Gavaribai says: Have faith in the true guru, sing the Lord's praise and attain bliss; accept this advice of mine; if thou wilt not thou art doomed.

9-12-1930

248

संतकृपाथी छूटे माया काया निर्मळ थाय जोने

By the grace of the good, delusion disappears and the body becomes pure. By thinking of God at every breath the five sins are washed away. Even as a herd of elephants flees on hearing the roar of a lion even so does a man attain freedom if he has the courage (of a lion) ; white ants do not affect fire, the fabled gem is not affected by dirt; so does a knowing man remain unaffected in the midst of this limitless ocean of turmoil. The son of a magician knows all his tricks; even so do men of God know the tricks of God and remain untouched thereby; one acquires merit by cultivating the companionship of the good and he reaches his goal. Pritam says by worshipping the Lord the worshipper attains the eternal kingdom.

10-12-1930

249

हरिने भजतां हजी कोईनी लाज जंती नथी जाणी रे

Those who trust in God have never yet been known to have suffered discredit. The Vedas testify that it is ever well with those who are intent upon God. He saved (His devotee) Prahlad and destroyed Hiranyaksha. He gave the kingdom to Bibhishana and destroyed Ravana. He gave a necklace to Narasinha Mehta. He gave an eternal kingdom toDhruva and made him His own. He turned in to nectar the poison given to Mirabai. He clothed Draupadi and stood by the side of the Pandavas. Premaldas says: God will remove the misery of those devotees who would thus worship Him.

11-12-1930

250

अनुभव एवो रे अंतर जेने उदे थयो

The works of him who has an inner experience do not bind him for he has known God. He is the knowing one who has broken all ties. He is beyond everything and is a mere witness of everything; he is independent of all the six worlds. Being above these he stands alone. Of millions the fewest only realize this. One who has the inner experience knows the Nameless One. He has attained salvation for he is past the dual state, without striving for the One indivisible, he perceives It as if naturally. The truth is that all created things have to perish and so this endless ocean of life and death continues to roll on. The last stage is beyond the waking, dreaming, sleeping and the state beyond these three. It is beyond the physical and ethereal. That which is above even the first cause is described by the Vedas as 'not this, not this'. I dote on the mother of him who has dedicated himself to common good, who is goodness personified and who is like the true guru. Nirant says: He who is eternal though nameless has many names.

12-12-1930

251

दिलमां दीवो करो रे दीवो करो

Light thy heart and sweep out from there evil thoughts and anger. Let mercy be oil and love the oil tray, let meditation on God be the wick and let knowledge of Brahm[an] be the light. When the heart is thus truly lighted all darkness will vanish and then thou shalt recognize *Brahmaloka* (God's abode). O men, recognize this light that dispels darkness. Ranchhod says: I have entered the home, have found the key and opened the lock and there is light on earth.

13-12-1930

252

अपूर्व अवसर एवो क्यारे आवशे

When will the matchless time come so that I would be rid of all knots external and internal? When will I give up all the subtlest ties and go the way the great sages have gone? Would that I was indifferent to all the moods and that the body was used merely for self-restraint, that there was nothing to bind me for any cause imaginable and that I had no illusions about the body. Would that I should gain knowledge that comes from removal of obstruction in the path of perception, that I regarded body as separate from the soul and that I had recognition only of the soul. Would that obstruction to right conduct too was removed and there was concentration on pure self. Would that there was steadfastness of the three *yugas* (?) running practically to the time of death and that steadfastness was incapable of being shaken by sufferings however great. Would that even the yoga was only for attaining greater restraint over self and that there was implicit obedience to the precepts of the Jina for the sake of the soul. Would that even that activity also perceptibly decreased and I was absorbed in self-realization. Would that there were neither likes nor dislikes in matters received through the senses and that I was unaffected by their play. Would that I engaged in activities that came to me in due course and was not enslaved by time, place or circumstance. Would that I was angered against anger and that against respect paid to me I had humility enough not to be affected by it.

Would that in respect of *maya* I was but a witness to its blandishments and against ambition I had ambition to thwart it, I had no anger against even the extreme wrongdoer and had no pride if an emperor paid respects to me, that I was unmoved even if the body perished and had no desire even for the greatest gifts. That I was the same to friend and foe alike as towards praise or insult, that there was [in-]difference in me whether I lived or died, that even regarding the cycles of birth and death or salvation I had only the simple natural state that I had crossed the alluring ocean of different temptations and was intent upon the state where all the passions are[1] quenched, that at the time [of] death I would shed all desire and had perfect knowledge, that all the four kinds of activities were to me like a burnt hope— mere ashes, that I was living out only this life and that after that there was no more birth. That I had no desire for even an atom, that I was sinless, immovable and intent upon self-realization, that I was absorbed in the spotless, eternal everloving, neither small nor big, formless self-acting Being, that owing to past actions I was fit for the abode of the released—where [there is] eternal bliss, perfect perception and perfect experience. This is the state which the all-knowing Jina realized but could not describe. How can any other person describe it? It is capable only of being experienced. I have set my heart upon that state though it may be at present beyond my capacity. Nevertheless Rajchand is determined that God willing he will attain that state.

14-12-1930

253

मारां नयणांनी आळस रे न नीरख्या हरिने जरी

How neglect[ful] must my eyes be that they never saw Hari. They never set their gaze upon Him, they would not be calm enough even to have a glimpse of Him. They have been immersed in sorrows or enjoyments, have burnt themselves with their heat. They have not devoted themselves to having God's *darshan* (sight) and yet God is everywhere, He fills His creation. Among the movable and the immovable objects there is not an atom but has His presence in it. He is like the heavens pervading all. He is like the air inhabiting my heart. If I would but look at Him, He is there staring me in the face. Brahma

[1] The source has "were".

and His creation cannot be separated even for a moment. But we of the earth earthy have no inkling of that vital principle. An owl may live for a hundred years and still will not know what the day is like. The Lord is like the ocean—too big for the eyes to scan. The tongue gets fatigued to tell of Him and so simply says He is vast. O God, when will the spiritual sight be opened? When will this deep darkness be dispelled? O God, listen to my petition and lift this dead curtain. O my eyes, look deep and there is Hari. O eyes, get rid of the laziness and calmly see Him. Just set the gaze upon Him and look at Him to heart's content.

15-12-1930

END

From a photostat: C.W. 4903. Courtesy: Mirabehn

459. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SATURDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 13/16, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

This time I got your packet at 12 noon on Wednesday. I got a copy of the booklet Gitabodh[1]. I take it that those who make notes about the work they do as yajna do so in their dairy. If you remind people often enough about this, they will be careful. See that everyone is soon able to use the instruments for weighing yarn and testing its strength. I have replied to Mahadev's questions in my letter to Durga, and to questions about my health in my letter to Kakasaheb. Therefore read both the letters.

Afternoon

There was a letter from Jayaprakash saying that Prabhavati would go over there. She may have even arrived there before you get this letter. If she comes, look after her very carefully. She gets fainting fits and these should stop immediately in the Ashram. You may buy any fruits which may be necessary for her. Consult a doctor if necessary. You may write to me about her whenever you wish to.

[1] Gandhiji's discourses on the *Bhagavad Gita*, given in letters to Narandas Gandhi; *vide*, 1st footnote of "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", October 30/November, 4, 1930. For the text of these discourses, *vide* "Letters on the *Gita*", 21-2-1932.

Night, December 15, 1930

I got Manilal's letter. I felt relieved. Let him observe as many restriction as he chooses, but not at the cost of his health. 110-115 lb. is certainly low weight. Manilal should maintain his weight between 120 and 125; if, however, he has kept up his strength, he will regain that level after he is released. He should guard against any disease insidiously attacking him. The reading which he has done is quite good, but in order to derive the fullest benefit from his work he should carry out my suggestions as far as possible. Really speaking, however, when he has the benefit of the company of a person like Nanabhai[1], and will now have the benefit of Mahadev's company, there should hardly be any need for me to guide him. The reading he is doing at present is good indeed. There is little in it, however, to be remembered and digested. The reading which I have suggested will, while developing his memory and power of thinking, also beinteresting to him. *Jivanshodhan*[2] can be understood only if it is read carefully twice or thrice. He is doing right in reading it once again. One reason why my writings are easy to follow is that these days I write with the sole aim of making myself easily understood by all the inmates of the Ashram. Formerly too I wrote with the general public in view, and not for men of learning. It is natural, therefore, that my writings should be easy to understand. Let him write to me again. He should write as often as he gets time and is permitted to do so.

I have had no reply to my inquiry about Devdas's letter. I have even suggested that he should write again. If the Bombay air suits Jamna, do not insist on her returning to the Ashram. Do you still make bread there? If you do, of what quality are you able to make it, and who actua-lly makes it? If it is of good quality and if anyone is coming on a visit here, send a sample. You had described the process of making it, but it did not succeed here. I have not been able to discover where the error lay.

I can say that, up to this evening, the *bhakhari* of *jowar* and *bajra* seems to have done me no harm. I eat very little in bulk but can keep up my strength all right. No one should worry on my account. I will not be obstinate and cling to the experiment.

[1] Nrisimhaprasad Kalidas Bhatt 1

[2] By Kishorelal Mashruwala, a Navajivan publication

I did not find Hariyomalji's and Gijubhai's letters. I wonder if Gijubhai was written in place of Haribhai. I did not find the latter's name in Radha's note.

Blessings from

BAPU[1]

Tuesday Morning, December 16, 1930

Pranayama (control of breath) and *asanas* (yogic postures) are referred to appreciatively in this chapter, but we should remember that at the same time the Lord has stressed the need for *brahmacharya*, i.e., keeping the observances calculated to take us nearer and nearer to God. It should be clearly understood that the mere practice of *asanas* and the like can never take us to the goal of even-mindedness. *Asanas* and *pranayama* may be of some slight help in steadying the mind and making it single-purposed, provided that they are practised to that end. Otherwise they are no better than other methods of physical training. They are very useful indeed as physical exercise and I believe that this type of exercise is good for the soul, and may be performed from a bodily standpoint. But I have observed that these practices do only harm when indulged in for the acquisition of supernormal powers (*siddhi*) and the performance of miracles. This chapter should be studied as a summary of the teaching in the preceding three chapters. It cheers us up in our spiritual struggle. We should never be down-hearted and give up the endeavour to reach evenness of temper.

BAPU

[PS.]

There are 71 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I

[1] For the text of the *Gita* discourse (Ch. VI) which followed, *vide* "Letters on the *Gita*", 21-2-1932

460. LETTER TO SANKERJI [1]

YERAVDA,
December 16, 1930

MY DEAR SANKERJI,

I was glad to hear from you of your progress. Can you give me the figures of khadi production in Malabar, or at least in Cochin? Do you know where Ramachandran is? Do please write to me from time to time.

Yours,
BAPU

The Hindu, 29-12-1930

461. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 16, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

Please send me four pounds of cotton. Kakasaheb's place is now taken by Pyarelal. He spins faster and, therefore, a greater quantity of cotton will be consumed than formerly. Kindly inform the people you buy the cotton from, that it is full of particles and seeds. As a result, we have to spend much time in cleaning it and some of the cotton is wasted.

I hope I do not give you too much trouble. I do believe that, if you store cotton for my sake, you will also be able to use it for other purposes.

I hope all your sisters are quite well.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 4817. Courtesy : Premlila Thackersey

[1] Of "Swaraj Bhawan", Ernakulam (Cochin State), Kerala

462. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

December 16, 1930

CHI. MANU,

I got your letter. Though you are so near the Ashram, I do not send this letter along with the other post for the Ashram, and delay its reaching you by some days. Instead, I am taking the risk and writing it directly to you. I believe you will get it. Why do you give way to despair? One who believes in God can never feel despair. Since you are very eager to work, you earn merit as if you had been actually working. Why, then, do you feel impatient? Who knows for what service God has destined you? Or how can we say that your aspirations in themselves are not sufficient for His work? You do perform the daily *yajna* of spinning; what else is it, if not service? Start repeating Ramanama and rouse yourself. Shake off despair. Banish the very thoughts of weakness and disease. If you take interest in the *Gita* and the *Ramayana*, go on repeating to yourself verses from them. Write to me direct. And write often.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MANU
C/O PROF. TRIVEDI
TILAK ROAD, POONA CITY

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 7773

463. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 16, 1930

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. Even if I agree to see you I am afraid the permission will not be granted. Therefore for the time being, we must be content with letters alone. By speculation I did not mean that no forward transactions should be entered into. Speculation means gambling. With the expectation that market prices will go up I buy 1,000 bales of cotton. I do not need any cotton, I do not even store it in any warehouse. Only a book transaction is made. Now I await a rise in price. I sell the cotton when it rises; this I consider gambling. The nation or, rather, the world has lost a great deal through such

transactions. This was what I meant in my letter[1]. Yes, I expect much more than this, but, at present, you will not be up to that. Without at all depending upon future market prices, to sell the commodities at a little more than the cost price is what I consider unsullied trade. Today it might be difficult to conduct such business, but ultimately, it might bear fruit. You might remember this is what I visualize for khadi. But I know this is a tall order. I shall be very happy and content if you brothers can give up speculation. However, do only what is intelligently acceptable and within your power. I would not at all wish that you should act upon the suggestion simply because it happens to be mine and that, too, sent from jail. Faith should not have a place where reasoning is applicable.

Jayaprakash informs me that, although you are not recruiting any new people just now, he will be absorbed somewhere because of my recommendation[2]. I certainly hold that Jayaprakash is a worthy young man but I do not wish that a post be created where none exists today.

I was a little worried to read of Malaviyaji's fever in the news-papers. I am relieved now. I hope he will emerge from the jail in good health. I am glad about your health too. I am again experi- menting with a milkless diet. This time constipation was res- ponsible for it. Now I am taking chapatis prepared from millet for the prisoners, vegetables, three *tolas* of almonds and dates. I am trying to give up dates. Constipation has disappeared. I shall revert to milk if I lose strength. It is nearly a month since I gave up milk.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi : C.W. 6191. Courtesy : G.D. Birla

464. LETTER TO UDIT MISHRA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 17, 1930

BHAI UDIT MISHRAJI,

Your letter. I have in general given the literal translation of *Bhajanavali*[3]. Now it is up to Mirabehn. I do not consider the translation worth publishing. It cannot even be published while I am

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G.d. Birla", 3-12-1930.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *Ashram Bhajanavali*.

in jail. How can I choose from the *bhajans*? Different *bhajans* appeal on different occasions. We might say that all are well liked. But I do wish to drop a few in the new edition. In "Who is not devoted to Rama and Vaidehi"[1] I take Rama to mean *Daridranarayana* and it is our duty to forsake the company of one who does not serve *Daridranarayana*. Non-co-operation emanates from that.

Thanks for making a start in Gujarati. Considering all this connection with Gujarat, it is good to learn the language too. As a matter of fact, the more Indian languages one knows the better.

I do not use the enema regularly. I regard it efficacious to use only when the need arises. To use it daily is not good. It can also prove harmful.

My blessings to the children. I hope the ear-trinkets taken off have not been replaced. My hope is that now the children would have become simpler than ever before.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 4218

465. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 18, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

A person without art is like a beast. But how will you define art? Art is "skill in work". The yoga of the third chapter of the *Gita* is perfect art. And this is also true about the activities generally known as art. Any activity in which the masses cannot participate is not art, but a kind of self-indulgence, whether it concerns the voice or clothes or stone. Large numbers singing *Ramdhun* in unison is art, which ought to be cultivated. Many temples have art, and their art is something which can be appreciated by the masses. The daily worship and readings from holy books which take place in temples, if kept within measure and done with genuine faith, are the best form of art. Thus, there is art wherever harmony prevails as regards the time, the place and the occasion. I do not like films. I have never gone to a cinema.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5267

[1] A verse from *Vinaya Patrika* by Tulsidas

466. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI MADHAVJI THAKKAR

December 18, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I got your letter. I understand what you say about the children. They ought to gain strength. If their present diet is kept up and they get regular exercise, they certainly will. You may write and make whatever suggestions you think necessary regarding them to the people at Calcutta and then stop worring about the matter. For you cannot do more than that at present.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6807

467. LETTER TO BHAWANIDUTT JOSHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 18, 1930

BHAI BHAWANIDUTT,

I was glad to have your letter. God grants an opportunity to those devoted to service. Much work can be accomplished through Prabhudas's charkha when you have gained mastery over it.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 104.

468. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 18, 1930

CHI. SUMANGAL,

I had fully and promptly answered the letter you wrote me from your home. Have you not received it yet ? I am happy to learn that you have improved health. I know you see the letters I write to Kanta, so there is little need to write to you. Yes, I have great hopes of Kanta. Let us see what happens. Her health causes some worry.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

469. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

Y. M.,
December 19, 1930

MY DEAR ANAND,

Before you can throw off tenderness you will have to realize that it is bad. I am quite clear that you should not take Rs. 25 for clearing the debt to Father-in-law. There is no hurry about paying it off. It is good for you to nurse the feeling that you should pay. As you become hardy, you might save something out of Rs. 75. But you may not deny yourself necessaries. You will have an opportunity later of being able to repay the debt.

Love.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

470. LETTER TO RADHABAI OAK

December 19, 1930

DEAR, SISTER,

You must have got my message. I was happy to learn that you are working hard in the field of public service. But it seems you fight shy of khadi saris. How can you serve the poor if you feel averse to the sacred products of their labour? Think over this.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

SMT. RADHABAI OAK
C/O SUSHILA

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6726

471. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

December 19, 1930

CHI. SUSHILA,

The letter to Radhabai is enclosed. Why do you write *vancha vish*[1]*?* Why did you split the word? And why *vish*? It should be *veesh*. The dictionary[2] published by the Gujarat Vidyapith contains rules for spelling; acquaint yourself with them. Tara is bound to know about this. Is not language also included in our love for things Indian? We ought not to murder a language.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat the Gujarati : G.N. 4780.

472. LETTER TO BALBHADRA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 19, 1930

CHI. BALBHADRA,

I have your letter. You seem to be rendering good service. And simultaneously you have been improving your weight. That is indeed creditable. Explain what you mean when you say that you eat everything. Do not overstep the limits of propriety. Do not beg from anyone. Be content with what you get.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9215

473. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 19, 1930

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

Since you have been doing your duty with sincere devotion, you should feel no other desires. What path should I suggest to you? We daily recite the verse *Prajahati yada kaman*[3]. You should burn up

[1] Meaning 'I shall give to read'
[2] *Jodanikosh*; *vide*"Jodanikosh", 7-4-1929.
[3] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 55

every personal desire. You will then yourself discover the path. Reflect over the verses describing the qualities of the *sthitaprajna*[1] and know that they are for persons of your character. Think which of those verses you are not able to follow in conduct, and why. If you do this, all your mental problems will disappear. Write to me from time to time. My respectful greetings to the elders, and blessings to Jamnadas.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 901. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

474. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

December 19, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

I got your letter. Is Kripalani all right? Kanti and others will meet me in a few days. Pyarelal tells me that his books about the rules governing *sandhi* and *samas* in Sanskrit are with you, or that you know where they are. Send them here. He requires them for a systematic study of the *Gita*. Both of us keep good health. So far, *rotlas* of *jowar* and *bajra* seem to have agreed with me.

I give detailed news about my health in the letter meant for all, and so I do not write about it separately in each letter.

You can send letters to Pyarelal through Trivedi[2].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 1814

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 55

[2] Jayashankar Trivedi of Poona

475. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

Y. M.,
December 19, 1930

MY DEAR VIDYA,

I am sorry you have not got my letter. I have forgotten your question. You must repeat it, if you want the answer. I trust you are keeping well. Are you taking enough daily exercise? You should set apart at least a few minutes daily for Hindi.

Love.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

476. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
4.30 p.m., December 20, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter betrays about my health an anxiety which is wholly unnecessary. The weight which was taken on Thursday showed an increase of 1½ 1b., a very good increase in seven days. Nor do I feel any weakness. I do my two hours' spinning on the *takli* standing as a rule without feeling any appreciable fatigue. I have just now sat down to write this after finishing the *takli*. All the mistakes made last time are being avoided. Stools are well formed. Pyarelal tells me there is no smell worth noticing. The food is all well cooked, i.e., vegetables and chapati. The letter is rebaked when I receive it. Last time, you should remember, it was all raw food including cereals and pulses.[1] As a matter of fact, I am now taking practically what I was taking before starting the raw cereals. The only difference is taking *bajri* or *jwari* in the place of wheat. Perhaps it is a change for the better. I am taking once boiling water, lemon and salt. In spite of all this apparent improve [ment] if I find any irregularity about the stools or weakness (persistent) or a continuing decrease in weight, in any one of the three things happening, I shall go back to milk. But just now with the good feel about the health I must not deprive myself of the joy of avoiding milk and taking the *bajri* or *jwari* chapati. And what is more, I like the

[1] In *Bapu's Letter to Mira,* Mirabehn explains; "I had reminded Bapu in a letter of the severe attack of dysentery he had had at the end of a previous food experiment he had carried out in Sabarmati Ashram.

taste of these chapatis. This detailed explanation and description ought to give you and other friends full satisfaction and free you from all worry as to the future.

In my opinion, while it is necessary, so far as you are concerned, to keep a watch on your menu, your chief trouble is mental. Any pressure on the mind reacts immediately on your body. This anxiety complex, you should try to throw off. "Be careful for no- thing." "Look at the lilies of the field, they toil not, neither do they spin and yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." I do not know whether I have quoted correctly. Anyhow the lilies only seem neither to toil nor to spin. They do both but so naturally that we do not notice their toilsome spin. If they did not toil, they would wither. Only they have not the egotism and hence attachments, likes and dislikes that we have. But when we toil like them detachedly, our toil will not be noticed and therefore will not adversely affect the body.

7.30 p.m.

You and I and all of us have to make a conscious and deliberate effort to realize this blessed state. Or else, our reading of the *Gita* is vain.

You will take care not to burn yourself with the primus. You know how Gujarati women have burnt themselves over the use of the primus. The loose saris lend themselves to the wick especially at the time of lighting it. As it is kept on the floor, they have to bend and the rising flame easily catches a fold or a loose end of the sari. It may be wise for you, therefore, to keep it on a metalmounted stool. Then too there is precious little room in your little dormitory. Anyway, you have my warning. You will now take what precautions you may think right.

In my seclusion, the idea of your bringing out a paper does not at all commend itself to me. That ties you down and I should like you to remain free for what comes to your lot. And then the paper will absorb the labour of several others. I dread the idea. But my opinion has no value. You and the other workers are the best judges.

Yes, I have jut finished the first part of the introduction to my translation of the *Gita*[1]. I hope to do at least a paragraph every day. If I succeed, the introduction cannot take long.

The new Gandiv[2] has almost all the improvements I had contemplated. It has two springs for the two *mals*. It is working like a

[1] *Anasaktiyoga*

[2] A new type of spinning-wheel

musical instrument and requires very little attention. For the execution of these improvement I am thankful to the Superintendent and an English co-prisoner, who is a clever mechanic and who takes a serious interest in the work. He has applied the spring to the holder in an original way. The idea is incredibly simple and equally effective. But I must not keep you over this any longer.

I am glad you have taken Surendra in hand. It is criminal how he neglects his body. Even St. Francis, though he called his body an ass, took some care of it. And after all the ass is a most useful and patient animal. The brother ass can be equally useful if properly treated and neither pampered nor neglected.

And now here is the first verse of the morning prayer :

"Early in the morning, I call to mind that Being which is felt in the heart, which is *sat* (the eternal), *chit* (knowledge), *sukham* (blis), which is the state reached by perfect men and which is the super-state. I am that immaculate Brahman which ever notes the states of dream, wakefulness and deep sleep, not this body, the compound made of the elements (earth, water, space, light and air)." You will be interested to know that the first verse was commended on 6th May last.[1]

I am sorry that the very first verse needed correcting. The more I think, the more clearly I see the meaning. And then I don't mind how often I cut about the translation. Formerly I used to shudder to utter this verse thinking that the claim made therein was arrogant. But when I saw the meaning more clearly, I perceived at once that it was the very best thought with which to commence the day. It is a solemn declaration that we are not the changeful bodies which require sleep, etc., but deep down, we are the Being, the witness pervading the countless bodies. The first part is the recalling to mind the presence of the vital principle and the second part is the affirmation that we are that vital principle. The description of the Being, the Brahman, is also quite apposite. It *is*, nothing else *is* (*sat*), it is all knowledge or light (*chit*), and naturally, therefore, it is all bliss (*sukham*) or the word generally used is *anand*. The rest is simple. You will compare this translation with what you have already, translated by Valjibhai. If there is a material difference, let me have his translation. In scholarship I should yield the palm to him. So now God willing, you may expect a present of this character every week. And here goes the

[1] *Vide "Ashram Bhajanavali"*, 15-12-1930.

bugle telling me it will presently be 9 p.m.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : C.W. 9284. Courtesy : Mirabehn

477. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI MADHAVJI THAKKAR

December 20, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I got your detailed letter, which was fully worthy of your name. Its enthusiasm pleased me. But, according to our principle, I cannot give any decision about the work being done there. Nor should you rely upon the opinion of a prisoner. I have already explained the proper relations between a leader and the volunteers working under him or her. You should discuss with Mithubehn herself your differences with her. This is the attitude I have adopted from the beginning and I do not wish to go further than this. You are free to follow what seems to you your dharma. We observe the rules and regulations in order that we may know this dharma. The inner voice does not speak in every person. It speaks only in one in whom it is awake.

May God bless you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6808

478. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

December 21, 1930

CHI. MAHAVIR,

You may ask me any question that may arise in your mind. I have plenty of time here to reply to people's questions. If we cannot overcome all our shortcomings at a time, we may first overcome those which we can easily remove. If we proceed thus, we shall gradually be able to overcome all of them. Your handwriting cannot be described as bad, but you can improve it and make it better still.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6222

479. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 21, 1930

CHI. MANI (PATEL),

Is it possible that I should go on writing to you even if you never drop me so much as a line? Have you forgotten your promise that you would be writing to me? But better late than never. Realize the importance of keeping promises. Give me an account of your jail experiences. Did you keep good health? What food did you take?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 75

480. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,
December 21, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

There is again no letter from you.[1] How is that? You should not put off writing till the last day. You should write early. From Narandas's letter I thought that your letter would be enclosed but it was not. This is your third lapse. Do not commit it a fourth time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

[1]This sentence is in Hindi.

481. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

December 21, 1930

CHI. MRIDULA,

So you came away before time, did you? How was your health? Write to me your experiences. Tell Khurshedbehn to write. What was your diet while you were in the nursing home? How did you spend your time?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11110. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

482. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

December 21, 1930

CHI. NIMU,

I got your letter. Are you not pleased that Ramdas has once again been honoured?[1] Or, do you repent having married him? If not, you too, should be ready. How many teeth has Sumitra got now? What all has she started eating now? Does she suffer from constipation?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

483. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO SHANTILAL J. MEHTA

[*December 22, 1930*][2]

CHI. SHANTI,

You did well in writing to me. I hope you are quite well. I will do nothing on my own responsibility. Manilal himself will do what seems best to him. I am afraid he will not be able to leave India just now. At a time like this . . .[3]

19 FIRST AVENUE, DURBAN

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./XXII

[1] Presumably by courting imprisonment
[2] From the Gandhi Sangrahalaya Records
[3] The rest of the letter is not available.

484. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

December 22, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

It no doubt puts a very heavy responsibility on us when parents of grown-up girls entrust them to us. God will help us to bear it. When, however, you feel in a particular case that the responsibility will be beyond your strength, plainly refuse to accept it. Sent away any girl who refuses to submit to your discipline. Explain the position clearly to the parents and the girl before you accept her. If we do not take such steps of practical wisdom, God will not help us. He never helps the timid, the lethargic and those who are not vigilant.

Have any facilities you require, but safeguard your health. If you think that tea and coffee are essential for it, take either without the slightest hesitation or without feeling ashamed about doing so. Giving up tea or coffee is not at present the purpose of your *sadhana*; that purpose is the service of those among the inmates of the Ashram who suffer.

I cannot think of one single remedy which will help Madhu and all others in the Ashram who suffer from constipation. I will tell you how I overcame it in my case. For three or four days, I ate only cooked greens like *tanka*. That completely restored my bowel movement. Then I added almonds to the diet. You do not need them for the people there. Perhaps you will not get even greens. But you can certainly get onions. If those who suffer from constipation eat boiled onions, that, too, will probably help them. If you can get tomatoes, you may mix them with onions. If simple boiled onions do not taste well, even with the addition of salt, and if tomatoes are not available, they may use *kokum*.

The persons may try *shirshasan*. It has helped people to overcome constipation from which they had suffered many years. The *asana* should be done only on an empty stomach. It is quite easy to do. The skirt should be tucked up behind and one should stand on one's head, supporting the body against a wall. After some practice the support of the wall will not be necessary. The head should be supported by the palms joined together.

I suppose you know that these days I eat the *rotlas* of *jowar* and *bajra*, and vegetables, served to prisoners in jail. The vegetables for me have to be cooked separately, because those cooked

for other prisoners contain spices. I continue to eat dates. In place of milk I take four *tolas* of almonds. I keep fairly good health. If I do not keep it up, I will resume milk.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8768. Courtesy : Gangabehn Vaidya

485. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 22, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter full of information. Both the meanings of *nij-anamagrahi*[1] are good. The meaning suggested by Narandas may suit Gujarati better, but the one suggested by you is not altogether in-appropriate. I imagine that you yourself are a little girl and reply to your question about prayer. Just as we have parents who gave birth to us, so they had their parents who brought them into the world. If we go further and further back like this, He whom we can conceive as the Father of all is God. It is because He is that that we also call Him the Creator. As our parents often come to know what we want without our telling them, so does God know our wishes. If our human parents have this power to know what we want, the Creator of all must have infinitely greater power to know our heart. That is why we also think of God as *Antaryami*, the Dweller within. It is not necessary that we should be able to see Him. We have never seen a good many of our relations. Somebody's parents may have gone away to a foreign country or died while he or she was a child, but such a man or woman trusts other people and believes that the parents live or lived. Similarly, we should trust the testimony of saints about the existence of God and believe that the *Antaryami* does exist. If that is so, it is easy to understand why we should sing *bhajans* to Him and pray to Him. If we are good children, we bow to our parents, prostrating ourselves before them, the first thing in the morning after leaving bed and the last thing at night when going to bed. We should do the same to God. And as we tell our parents what we desire, so we should tell God. This should be enough for today. If you do not understand anything in this, do not hesitate to question me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10247

[1] One who clings to the Name, which is his very self

486. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

December 22, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I got the two boxes of dates and the cotton send by you. Need I thank you for them? Write to Vithaldas and tell him that the dates were excellent. This does not mean, of course, that he should send me such dates more often. My request was that he should communicate the price to the Superintendent here and supply the dates as and when required, provided his brother orders enough quantity to spare some and sell it. I got your letter too. I will write to you when I require more cotton.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 4818. Courtesy : Premlila Thackersey

487. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 22, 1930

CHI. LILAVATI,

You are being really tested. See that you do not fail in the test. One preserves one's self-respect better by giving up the very desire for being respected. You will not get another Gangabehn who will look after you like a mother as she does. She has an overbearing temper. Endure it. Understand and appreciate her zeal for service and her sympathy for all. Anyone who wishes to serve must learn to act as a member of an organization. To do this means to obey somebody's authority. One's superior has his or her superior too. Think over the verses of Chapter XII of the *Gita*. One of them says that a devotee and lover of God is equally indifferent to respect and disrespect, to praise and censure, and holds friend and foe in equal regard. Let this be true about you. Do not feel it a burden to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9318

488. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 22, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. From your postcard received yesterday, I thought I would receive a letter today, but I did not get one. From Jayaprakash's letter it would seem you have now gone to the Ashram. But it is not clear from your letters whether you have. I should like you to go to the Ashram as soon as possible. I do not like your continuing to get the fainting fits. I must now get a report of your talks with Father. Incidentally, that will give me news about his health too. I am quite well. So far, I have been able to digest *jowar* and *bajra*.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3385

489. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Thursday Morning, December 18/23, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your packet yesterday evening. The letters to the Ashram which I handed in this time, that is, on Tuesday last, should reach you on Thursday, that is, today. I suggested to the official here to post them immediately, if possible, and he told me afterwards that this week's letters were posted on Tuesday itself.

I welcome your long letters, but I shall not be happy if you take special trouble to make them long. I can understand what a burden you are carrying. I did not want an explanation in regard to Keshu. But I can understand your having given it so that you could your pour out your heart and satisfy yourself.

I had a postcard from Surajbhan, in which he says that he would be happy if Yashodadevi was called to the Ashram. She lives with the family of Lala Dunichand, a lawyer, in Ambala. Write to him.

The Ratilal episode is both happy and painful. His foolishness is painful, but the display of humanity by the merchant, who returned the diamond, and by Gopi, who returned the money, makes one

happy. In my eyes, their subsequent conduct wipes out their initial guilt. Champa, of course, has always been foolish. She listens to no persuasion and re-mains fond of diamonds and other jewels, and loses money in conse-quence. Ratilal must have returned. Even if he has not returned, that will not worry me. God always saves him. But this is what life is. We pass our time in undoing the consequences of one another's error. For those who can remain unattached while doing this, their labour is not wasted. To them it is a spiritual striving and they realize God through it. I had an experience of this yesterday when I saw God in a worm and a weevil. You are wrong if you think that you know Pyarelal fully. Being a poet, he is bound to be dreaming always. I asked him to remove a worm from the dates. He should have put it in a safe corner, but, instead of thinking about his duty, he was thinking of something else, God knows what, and he put the worm in the wash-basin. The weevil, too, was dropped into the same. If now I washed my hands or face in the basin, I would be the cause of the death of both. I therefore, decided not to wash in it. But when, after I had finished my work, I got ready to wash my hands, I did not see the worm and the weevil in the basin. They had slowly moved away. I look upon this experience as seeing God in the two worms. An atheist or a rationalist would describe the incident as mere accident. It was an accident, no doubt, but seeing God is also an accident. If we but understand the truth, we would see Him every day; otherwise our whole life would pass without our seeing Him. But I will not dwell further on this. I wanted to note this incident in the diary yes-terday, but, in my preoccupation with other work I wrote in it only about the daily sacrificial work and forgot to note this. While writing about the merchant and Gopi, I remembered this holy experience and have shared it with you. I learnt much else, too, from it yesterday. God alone knows whether I shall be able to digest all that. I will now answer your question here. As we reflect deeper and remain peaceful, the meaning of ahimsa and truth becomes clearer. I even realize the supreme utility of these two. I believe we realize God in the degree to which we practise them. I am gett-ing more convinced than ever in my view that seeing God except through truth and ahimsa is an impossibility. How can members of a group practise ahimsa towards one another? They can do so by displaying generosity towards co-workers and their faults and everyone regarding his own faults with strictness. Anyone who observes the faults of others believes, whether he is conscious of the fact or not, that he does not have the same

faults. This gives rise to pride. The true rule is that one should oneself observe all rules strictly and tolerate others who seem slack in observing them. This is not kindness but strict justice. Do we really know what effort is made by a person in observing a rule even as slackly as he does? If our seeming strictness in observing rules comes naturally to us, what is the value of that strictness? Is it any cause for wonder if a man like Bhima can lift a weight of four pounds with the utmost ease? A girl, however, might slip down while trying to lift one pound; what would we think of that Bhima if he laughed at her then? Really speaking, the effort of that girl to lift one pound is of much greater value than Bhima's lifting the weight of four pounds. If Bhima had not lifted that weight, somebody else as strong would have lifted it; but by her effort to lift one pound that girl taught the world a lesson in doing one's duty and earned God's grace. Our dharma therefore does not lie in criticizing others and thereby commiting violence; it lies in becoming more vigilant ourselves. If a strong bullock is yoked with one seemingly or really weak, the former's duty is to do more work and make up for the deficiency of the latter. The driver goads it to labour harder. If the strong bullock does not do the work expected of it, it is looked upon as a shirker; it is selfish and has no pity on the other one. Let us never be shirkers. Let us always do our duty. God will judge us and our co-workers. He can see into the hearts of all. We scarcely can see into our own. We easily learn this if we strive sincerely to cultivate ahimsa.

Through the pursuit of truth, we know the measure of purity in our motives. It increases our vigilance in regard to the smallest social duties and to our daily work. If we strive for truth, we would not be content merely to attend prayers but would try to concentrate our attention on them. We would try to follow the songs and the discourses, be punctual in attending the prayers and respond to them as to a fresh experience every day. The freshness does not consist in the variety of *bhajans* or other recitations, but should result from the increasing purity of our heart. We should grow daily more contented and feel greater peace of mind. If we do not have this experience, the fault will lie not with the quality of the prayers but with the element of untruth-fulness in us. If we attend the prayers with sincere devotion to truth, we would experience nothing but peace. The faithful who visit temples do not observe the lack of cleanliness in them, or pay attention to the hypocrisy of the priest. They do not see the image as a stone. They experience peace in the midst of noise and return from

the temples purified in heart. A person like me who feels suffocated by the noise there and sees the image only as a piece of stone should never visit a temple. God appears to us in the form in which we worship Him. For He is not outside of us. He is in the hearts of us all. If we understand this truth, our simplest and smallest actions would shed lustre on us and help us to see God. In order that we may learn this, prayers, spinning, and other daily duties are like a spiritual lighthouse to us or a right angle which is the standard of measurement.

Saturday Morning

If Giriraj remains quiet, that problem will then be over. I see that it will not be possible now to get the children to the Ashram. He has entrusted them [to somebody else]. Trust them to their fate now. I am going on quite well at present. I have gained a pound or a pound and a half in weight this week. I cannot say that I have at last succeeded in giving up dates and raisins. Only a few days ago, Jamnabehn and Vithaldas sent some dates and I ate them for two or three days. And now again I have stopped eating them. I am thus observing the effect of eating them and not eating them. I do want to give them up if I can. At present, therefore, my diet includes a little quantity of greens or cabbage or beetroot or turnip or pumpkin, *bhakhari* of *bajra* or *jowar*, four *tolas* of almonds, and lemon. If God keeps me fit with these, so far so good; otherwise I will humbly resume milk or curds. I cannot say yet that I am able to live on this diet. I will not say, either, that I shall not be able to do so. I had never expected that I would be able to digest *jowar* and *bajra*. At present, however, I seem to have no difficulty in doing so.

I have noted what you say about yourself. Your selection of the items and their quantities is correct. I see that you have given up ground-nuts; there is nothing wrong in that. The fact that you are losing weight will do you no harm at all. You should not lose strength, however. If you find it necessary, increase the quantity of milk or curds. It will per-haps help you if you add just one *tola* of almonds to your diet. Solve the problem of Parnerkar firmly. It seems to have turned out a painful chapter. I got the chapters of *Gitabodh*. So far I have not received the piece of leather.

You may extract from any of my letters what I say about the *yajna* of spinning and publish it. There is no harm in publising similar other material of public interest. The more the people do *yajna* for self-purification, the better. A mass *yajna* has an altogether

miraculous effect. If you can, keep up with what you have started. The spinning-wheels and all other things must be in perfect condition. These things produce an effect on our minds and make a difference to the speed. Your speed has increased well enough. I have not been able to go beyond 200 on the spinning-wheel and 60 on the *talki*. But I do hope to do so. I do not know if there is something wrong with my fingers. If the nerves running through them are weak, it is possible that they may not be active enough. Just as you go to bed early, it will also be good if you make it a rule not to rise earlier than a fixed hour. You should do what you can between 4 and 9 and then stop. If you have more things to do than you can finish during that time, you may omit those which you safely can. You should entrust to others the things which they can attend to. It is really not necessary to give you advice in this matter, but I have said something all the same in order that you may be more careful. One test of non-attachment is that a person who is non-attached always feels as if he had no work, though he is never inactive even for a single moment. At present, however, that state of mind "is a wish beyond our reach". All the same, we should grasp with our intellect the meaning of that verse and, having done so, strive to reach that state. The condition of a non-attached person should never seem pitiable. He should never have an expression on his face which might make anybody feel sorry for him and think that he was carrying an excessive burden of work. Think what "burden" of work God has to carry. Nevertheless He is the king of those who do not work. He is an object of pity to no one. On the contrary, we hunger for His mercy. We should never be satisfied with a state a whit inferior to His, though He may carry the burden of the entire universe and we that of something smaller than even a particle of dust. Just as He ever feels light, though carrying the burden of the universe, so should we do though carrying the burden of a mere fraction of a particle of dust. We can easily attain such a state of mind if we reduce ourselves to a cipher. Mirabehn finds it impossible to become non-attached, but she is a good woman and, therefore, will one day approach that state. From here I think she would do well not to undertake the responsibility of a new paper. I had understood about Sitla Sahay even without a letter from him, and that is why I wished to get one from him.

I do not like to give to anyone the impression of my palm. Apart from that, it would be against jail rules to do so. I have, therefore, no choice in the matter. Kakasaheb could not even give his signature on his photograph. And I think that it is a good rule too. I

have written a letter[1] to Purushottam; read it. Kanu, too, seems to have been upset a bit.

Sunday Morning

It was not at all satisfied by . . . 's[2] letter. I take it that you will see him personally, or probably you have already seen him. Discuss the matter with him and convey to me the impression you form. This case, too seems like . . . 's[3]. The latter would not admit anything more than what had come out and produced an impression on Surendra, Chhaganlal and others that nothing wrong had happened. He did not succeed in producing that impression on me, and ultimately confessed having been guilty of a serious lapse. I would not be surprised if a similar thing should happen in . . . 's[4] case. His language gives the impression of a guilty person attacking an innocent. Look into this.

Kusum has referred in her letter to the problem that has arisen about the offer of a job to her in Porbandar. Read my reply to her and guide her as you think best. My compliments to Jaya for having gone to the rest-house[5]. Has she any relation there to whom I can write? If Kakasaheb has not been able to win over the others, I think it would be best to let the *Gita* recitation go on as at present. The suggestion to complete the whole recitation in seven days by reciting some verses in the morning and some in the evening has not appealed to me. I will congratulate ourselves if we can improve upon the present practice. I have noted that you took two and three-quarter hours to write your letter to me. The time taken in dispatching the letters must have been in addition to this. It is fine indeed if you can get all this time. If you can reduce it a little, however, you should certainly do so.

I see that I made an amusing mistake about Vidyabehn[6]. I will be more careful in future when several persons claim the same name.

I think you did right in detaining Bhagwanjibhai's[7] Manibehn. She will be welcome to the Ashram when the two reach a level so that they feel as brother and sister to each other. At present it is best that they remain away from each other.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Purushottam Gandhi", 19-12-1930.

[2] The names have been omitted.

[3] *ibid*

[4] *ibid*

[5] Prison

[6] There were two women of this name : one, the wife of Anand Hingorani, and another, the daughter of Raojibhai Manibhai.

[7] Bhagwanji P. Pandya

Bhansali has been testing you a good deal. I got two Godrej boxes. I have written to the dealers to inquire for more. You may use the donation by Soniramji for any cause that you think good. Inform him to what account you credit the sum. Take Nayan to a doctor, if necessary. She must be helped to get rid of her fever. Your solution concerning Kashinath seems all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The responsibility for Amina's Urdu education rests on us. Giriraj used to teach her. He should start doing so again, or some other arrangement should be made.

December 21, 1930

If you have kept a copy of my letter to Hari-ichchha, show it to Radha. Read my letters to Kaka and to Mirabehn. Did you show Shanti's letter to Manilal? If you did not and if you remember its contents, acquaint Manilal with them. Read my letter to Shanti. I have gone through *Gitabodh* again. I have not been able to read your letter, though. If you do not follow any point or if my explanation is incomplete, write to me about it.

BAPU[1]

[PS.]

There are 72 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I

490. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
December 23, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

I was glad to hear from you. If the R.T.C. results in doing something worthy of the great sacrifice of the nation and therefore of acceptance, I should be delighted. But as I have told you, having been filled with distrust nothing but an accomplished result will reassure me.

[1] For the text of the *Gita* discourse (Ch. VII) dated December 23 which followed, *vide* "Letters on the *Gita*", 21-2-1932.

The question of debts is incredibly simple. The Lahore resolution has an explicit condition about reference to an impartial tribunal.[1] But you have my assurance that no Congressman has ever enunciated the doctrine of total repudiation. What Congressmen, including myself, demand is that the nation's representatives should have the right of having any portion of the so-called national debt, concessions and the like, being referred to an independent tribunal whose decision should be final and binding on both the parties. I feel I am quite safe in saying this even for Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Not to adopt the course above indicated would be disloyal to the nation as total repudiation without just cause would undoubtedly be dishonourable.

Whatever Maulana Mohamed Ali may think of me, I have nothing but kindly feelings about him. And I feel sure that time will remove misunderstandings. Having no feeling either against Islam or Mussalmans, I feel absolutely at ease.

My love to Reginald. I know Charlie Andrews is not now with you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

HORACE ALEXANDER
144 OAKTREE LANE
SEELY OAK
BIRMINGHAM

From a photostat: G.N. 1409

491. LETTER TO MANMOHANDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 24, 1930

BHAISHRI MANMOHANDAS,

I have your letter. I have not however received the proofs of the book. I am making inquiries. I will go through them when I get them.

Your being my namesake has at least this advantage for me, that I am saved from a good deal of correspondence.[2]

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 7

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Subjects Committee, A.I.C.C. —II", 1-1-1930.
[2] Part of Gandhiji mail used to be misdelivered to the addressee.

492. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 27, 1930

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have heard from you after a long time. I did not get your detailed letter which you mention. It will be better, therefore, if you write again. I have not been able to read the book sent by you. The better part of the day is spent in spinning and carding, and the remaining time is taken up by correspondence. I can, therefore, do very little reading.

I am very glad indeed that you have gone to live at Juhu. Grandmother will enjoy peace of mind there.

Does Sumati keep well?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 4720. Courtesy : Shantikumar Morarjee

493. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 27, 1930

CHI. MANI (PATEL),

At last I have a letter from you. You have somewhat made up for previous neglect. Do build up your health at any rate. You had a great deal of work[1] on your hands, so there was no need to read any books. You did well to put up a fight[2].

I am now all right. Due to constipation I had stomachache one day; therefore I had my bowels flushed and took only vegetable soup the next day; this cured my constipation. Since that day I have not taken milk. I take one *roti* made of local *jowar* or *bajra* and vegetable with a few almonds. There is no reason for anxiety on my score.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4 : Manibehn Patelne, pp. 75-6

[1] That of looking after numerous fellow-prisoners
[2] On the question of women prisoners' right to wear bangles

494. LETTER TO VANAMALA PARIKH

December 27, 1930

CHI. VANAMALA,

You have written your letter in a beautiful handwriting. It is not enough that your speed on the *takli* is the same as mine. Can an old man and a child have equal capacity? Have you heard with what speed they spin in Wardha? Even a girl of your age spins 80-85 rounds in half an hour.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5757

495. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA KHARE

December 27, 1930

CHI. RAMBHAU,

A resolution is as good as a vow if we regard it as such. You are in the sacred land of the Himalayas. Shake off your laziness, etc., to which you confess. Remember that you have gone there to serve Prabhubhai[1] and to become a good boy. Therefore, spin regularly on the Magan spinning-wheel. Follow Prabhubhai's advice and get rid of the last trace of laziness.

Your handwriting is not too bad nor the mistakes too many.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 287. Courtesy : Lakshmibehn Khare

496. LETTER TO MATHURI KHARE

December 27, 1930

CHI. MATHURI,

Is not this coloured paper lovely? It is a very good thing that you no more doze off during prayers. With effort handwriting can become as beautiful as pearls.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 258-a. Courtesy : Lakshmibehn Khare

[1] Presumably Prabhudas Gandhi who was in Almora

497. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

December 28, 1930

CHI. SHARDA,

I have your letter. I invariably write to you. But if I fail to do so, you too do not write to me. I agree to this condition, though children should not insist on this. You have each to write one letter to me and I have to write one letter to each; but I have thousands or lakhs of children. So I write as many as I can. But everyone who writes to me expects me to write to them myself. What is to happen then?

You should get rid of your cough.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 9896. Courtesy : Shardabehn Chokhawala

498. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI

December 28, 1930

CHI. KALAVATI,

Your letter. The handwriting is better than before. It shall certainly improve through effort. You must regularly write something in a clear hand, be it only for ten minutes. Keep a model before you. Be engrossed in service.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi G.N. 5269

499. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

December 28, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

Does the doctor say that your ear-drum has been damaged, and that, if it cannot be cured, it would be advisable to remove it? If that is so, you should get it removed even at the risk of certain deafness which might result from its removal, and save yourself from the present pain. Is there a continual discharge from the ear? You should not ignore this disease. I am still able to carry on without milk.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9297

500. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

December 28, 1930

CHI. MADHAVJI,

It is not unlikely that you will get this letter. It is the same to us whether we are in jail or outside. Even self-purification is a form of service, and we must strive for it wherever we are whether in jail or outside. Even if we devote ourselves to service, we must make our hearts pure.

Surendra himself is responsible for his bad health.

I am acting with proper caution. If, none the less, I do make mistakes, how can that be helped? I would rather that I made mistakes in dealing with the body than in matters concerning the soul.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6809

501. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

December 28, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I do not want you to bind yourself with a promise. I am satisfied with your assurance. Do not shout so loudly as to harm your throat. Did the fast have any beneficial effect on it? I should like somebody to go through the letters which the children write to me from the point of view of both language and handwriting.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10248

502. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

December 28, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

You have not wasted your time in shortening your long letter. This practice will ultimately make your thinking clear. And as our thinking becomes clearer we are able to express in a few words whatever we have to say. Quest for exploring the soul is nothing but our detecting, in the process, attachment, hatred, etc., lurking in our

heart. This is similar to the exploring of the Himalayas which involves facing a number of difficulties and cliffs.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 332. Courtesy : Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

503. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

December 28, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

I got both your letters together. You have done well to return to the Ashram. Go back only when you have fully recovered. If you drink hot water with salt, it will relieve the cough. Take deep breaths. You must breathe only through the nose. Though you do not likeonions, can you not eat them as medicine? Onions boiled in water should not smell. Do not eat oily foods. *Rotlo* and salt will be enough. Drink plenty of boiled water with it. You may take milk and ghee whenever offered. You should keep soda handy and use it when you are offered buttermilk.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

504. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

December 29, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

It would be very good if Shanta spends some time with you. If I know what you wish in regard to punishment, I can consider and suggest something. A fast may contain an element of violence in it. If it is likely to take the form of blackmail, it should be avoided. I do not remember if you had asked this question before.

Has not Shankarbhai's passing away increased your responsibility? Has the widow any children? Is she educated? Apart from that, was there any other responsibility on Shankarbhai? If the

widow desires to remarry, I assume that you will help her to do so. Give me all the facts.

My weight has again reached 101.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 1815

505. LETTER TO N. M. KHARE

December 29, 1930

CHI. PANDITJI,

Cannot we lead children playing in streets in"singing processions"? They will acquire, in the process, some education in letters too. But I need not write about this, since you are already discussing the matter with Kaka. It is very necessary to keep the people and children occupied in useful activities.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 214. Courtesy : Lakshmibehn Khare

506. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

December 29, 1930

MADAM TEACHER,

You say that everything is all right. Excellent! To say that all is well after finishing me![1] I hope you will be satisfied with this lesson for today. I will not follow the frog in the stroy simply because you praise me much. I am quite aware how fine my Urdu is, but I am not ashamed of it. Words of love need no more ornament than love itself does, no matter how foolish they are or how like the mere prattle of a child. You are quite right in comparing with music an operation by skilled doctors. Let us be thankful that the gentlemen spared your nose although they made away with all the bones. We must now think of some punishment for Father. All of you should help me in that. How could youths with white beard go to a hospital? What sort of a

[1] These sentences are in Urdu.

make-believe is that? I hope he is now as strong as an Arab horse.

To Mother, *vandemataram*; to Father, *bhur-r-r-r*; to you,

Blessings and many good wishes from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9625

507. LETTER TO JUGATRAM DAVE

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 29, 1930

BHAI JUGATRAM,

I have been expecting a letter from you every day. You have piled up a fairly big heap of facts before me. It requires a special art to deal with Mithubehn[1]. Use all the art you have. I have received complaints against her from the women too. In any case, Time is the friend of all. He sets everything right. Probably that is why in English they call Him Father Time. We believe Him to be God Himself. If He destroys the worlds, He does that too for their good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 2690

508. LETTER TO KUNVARJI MEHTA

December 29, 1930

BHAI KUNVARJI,

Your letters contain useful information. If we do not forsake truth and non-violence, even our misfortunes will help us. Hence follow them scrupulously and persuade other also to do the same. Write to Pragji and tell him that he should not become impatient.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am still able to carry on without milk.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 2691

[1] Mithubehn Petit

509. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI AND NANIBEHN JHAVERI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 29, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN AND NANIBEHN,

I got your full letter. I cannot guide you from here in detail. Is it not our principle that a prisoner should not take interest in problems outside nor guide anyone? I have merely drawn your attention to the principle which we have accepted. Think over it and then unhesitatingly follow what seems to you your dharma. If you cannot decide where your dharma lies, you may consult Pannalal or Narandas. Now Kakasaheb also is there. Discuss the matter with him and then do what you conscience tells you. Write to me from time to time. Both of you, take care of your health. Has Pannalal completely recovered now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3109

510. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

December 29, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

I got your letter. I fully approve of what you did about Shanta's husband. It is enough if Shanta keeps up her courage. Whatever happens, Shanta should refuse to go to him. Let him, if he wishes, come again to attack her. She should resist if he comes to carry her away by force. She should not be alone at any time. You need not take the trouble to find out where the man has gone. It is enough that you have written about it to his people at home. Be vigilant lest he come stealthily and attack her again. If Mother is of the same mind as you in this matter, you will meet with no difficulty in following the course which you have adopted.

I have already replied to the question regarding marriage. I see that it is not enough, and also that it is. I have only pointed out the Vedic ideal modified to suit modern times. If one is unable to follow it, one may modify it further as much as necessary. It is not for me to take measure of anyone's inability in this regard.

I don't mind your having written about Gangabehn. She is not intentionally partial to anyone. She may act in that manner through haste and lack of understanding. However, she is the fittest to be the women's leader. For Kalavati and others, therefore, service lies in doing as she says, and they ought to be satisfied with that. They should not lose heart if people give no co-operation in the work regarding cleanliness, khadi, etc. In the long run people are bound to yield to love and their daily experience of other people's conduct. Their presence by itself is enough in such places, provided they spend the whole day in work. And they must carry the *takli* and the spinning-wheel with them. They should also clean people's latrines, etc.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5289

511. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

December 29, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. If you regarded the world as unreal, i.e., transitory, does it in any way go contrary to reason? Whatever is transitory is unreal because it does not endure for ever. And there is no question of being attached to what is transient. After all you will seldom find reason being exercised in matters of faith. If it could be grasped by reason it ceases to be a matter of faith. Faith might indeed one day lead to experience.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 333. Courtesy : Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

512. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Saturday Morning, December 27/30, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

This time I got your packet only yesterday (Friday) after 2 o'clock. Because of Christmas there seems to have been some confusion in the post office. Here the officials seem quite careful

about my post. That is why you got my packet on Thursday.

I got the piece of leather for sandals. I see Mahadev's name in your list, but I did not find his letter. Perhaps there was a letter by Durga, but I do not find even that. I did feel that Ratilal would return. Where had he gone on his pleasure trip? Send with a visitor some time a sample of the bread which you make there. We do not know when Giriraj will see reason. Go on doing your best. His heart is pure and he is filled with the spirit of self-sacrifice. One day, therefore, he is bound to see reason. "No one seeking to do good ever comes to harm."[1]

I understand everyone being nervous about my experience in diet, for I have not fully succeeded in it. But perhaps you may tell people that you know that I wake up in time and make necessary changes, and that my body responds to them. How can I give up a dharma which has come to me unsought? I was weighed yesterday and again seemed to have gained a pound and a half. I advisedly say "seemed" because on the previous occasion I was weighed after I had passed stool and this time before I had done so. The weight of the stool is not real gain in weight, but an unnecessary load. We may therefore count half a pound less; even then there has been a gain of one pound. But more important than the weight is the energy which I feel in my body. I feel no sign of weakness yet. I eat without difficulty one *bhakhari* of the size which they make here, half a piece at one meal. The quantity of almonds which I eat comes to nearly two ounces. At present at any rate I feel that, if I can continue to digest this amount of food, I shall be able to keep up my strength.There is, therefore, no reason at all for worry. I am taking the utmost care, and, after all, even in this matter one needs to practise non-attachment. Who can say when that thing, more fragile than glass, will slip from one's hand and break?

I suppose you remember that you sent to Kantu[2] a diary made of handmade paper. He has now sent it for my autograph. The binding is very bad. Not only that there is no neatness about it, but he has so bound it that one cannot turn the pages at all. The art of binding books is easy to learn. It can be learnt in a very short time. Someone from among us should learn it. Or we should get our binding done outside. I intend to get the diary re-bound in the press here. This is just by the way. I have mentioned the matter for future

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, VI. 40

[2] Kantilal Gajiwala; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 5/9-9-1930.

guidance. "Yoga is skill in work."[1] This should be illustrated even in our least important activities. "Skill in work" lies also in not attempting what we cannot do. That is a case of action in inaction. Even refraining from something is a form of action. There is a saying in English borrowed from Persian. "He who knows that he knows not is wise." I am prompted to say all this form my own unhappy experience. I observe that my spinning displays too much evidence of lack of skill and slackness despite all the care that I take. There may be a knot in the thread which I observe, but I let it go. At times the yarn is much too loose, but I let it remain. I have acquired no proficiency at all in joining broken thread. But I go on, all the same. What kind of *yajna* is this? Whether you call it carelessness, laxity or indifference, I observe every day this weakness in me in regard to this great *yajna* of spinning. I try every day to improve myself, and fail. But I keep hoping that one day I shall do well in my *yajna*. Even if I do not, I derive consolation from the verse : "After man lives, the enlightened one attains Me"[2]. It is a dangerous verse. One may use it to remain content with one's lethargy. If a person pays attention to the meaning of every word in it, he will not fall, otherwise the verse can be the cause of much harm to one. I hear the bugle sounded every day at 5.30. It is now time for me to pace up and down.

7.30, Tuesday

If you send your packet by unregistered parcel, it may per- haps be delayed. Make inquiries, however, and do what you think best. This time I have been hard pressed for time to cope with the work. Ordinarily, I should be spinning at this hour. I get letters from Prabhavati from time to time. She should arrive in the Ashram any day now. Drop me a postcard as soon as she arrives. Most probably I shall get it. Read my letters to Kaka and Mirabehn. Today I stop here.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Did you read the account about Amidas? If you have not read it, get a copy from Harivallabhdas. He seems to have preserved one.[3]

[PPS.]

There are 82 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 50

[2] *ibid*

[3] For the text of the *Gita* discourse (Ch. VIII) which followed, *vide* "Letters on the *Gita*", 21-2-1932.

513. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

December 29/30, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter. This time I must be very brief as the post came two days late. I start therefore with the translation of the 2nd verse[1]: "In the early morning I worship Him who is beyond the reach of thought and speech yet by whose grace all speech is possible. I worship Him whom the Vedas describe as *neti*, *neti* (not this). Him they (the sages) have called God of gods, the unborn, the unfallen, the source of all."

I do not think that this calls for any explanation. The translation of the preface[2] is proceeding apace. And as there was no Ashram post till Friday, I devoted the spare time to translating more paras. The result is that now there are only 10 more left. It will be time then to consider whether I can translate the *Gita* notes I am writing for the Ashram inmates. Just now the 100 rounds on the *takli* take up much time. But I am now showing an increase in speed. The speed on the Gandiv today was for me quite a record, i.e., 169 rounds in 40 minutes. This means 255 in 60 minutes. The improvements are primarily responsible for this speed. If I continue to show improvement, I may have some more time for writing work. For I do not want to be greedy just now in the way of increase in the output. I shall stick to 300 on the wheel and 100 on the *takli* till I show a permanently marked increase in speed.

I was quite sure you would get your foreign mail.

Of my health which is excellent more in the general letter.

Of your journalistic venture my opinion remains unaltered and is reinforced by the recent ordinance. But, as I have said, my opinion ought not to count one way or the other.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 5425. Courtesy : Mirabehn; also G.N. 9659

[1] Of *Ashram Bhajanvali*; *vide* "Ashram Bhajanavali", 15-12-1930.

[2] To *Anasaktiyoga*; *vide* "Anasaktiyoga", 27-6-1929

514. LETTER TO SHANTA S. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 30, 1930

CHI. SHANTA (SHANKARBHAI),

I have your letter. Let me give my blessings just now for the new year. If you take a vow, do so after full deliberation and, having taken one be firm in keeping it. There is no need at all to undertake a seven days' fast. It is likely to prove too much for you. It is enough if you fast on the birthday. Write to Shankarbhai and to me and tell us what vow you take. Take the vow in the presence of the girl friends living there. If possible, spend that day with Kusumbehn. It would be good before taking your vow to consult her. The difficulty which you point out about eating food without spices is only an excuse. One who is determined to eat unspiced food will certainly find out what to eat. Surely, there are no chillies in *rotla*, rice and buttermilk. [Is it not so?] One should be satisfied with a *rotla*, buttermilk and salt. Just as we eat and drink every day, we should also write the diary every day. Everything can be done if one has the will. Kamu has not acknowledge my letter. Ask her whether she got it. What will her husband do at Ahmedabad?

How can anyone say that there is no sin in killing bugs and fleas? Even in cutting up vegetables there is sin. However, we do commit some sins which we regard as unavoidable. When we smoke a place to protect ourselves against fleas, countless fleas are killed, but we feel helpless and do that all the same. However, we realize through such necessities that it is everyone's duty to seek deliverance from bodily life.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4057

515. LETTER TO HARILAL DESAI

December 30, 1930

CHI. HARILAL (DESAI),

I am hard pressed for time just now and will not, therefore, write a long letter. You did well in giving me all the details. I do not wish

Valji to know my opinion for the present. He may be told about it after he is released. I am confirmed in my opinion after reading Hari-ichchha's letter. But what happened has happened. I have written to Hari-ichchha and explained to her how she can now make the best of an unfortunate event.[1] She will probably show you that letter if you have not seen it already. Ask her to show it to you.

Your duty now is to cling to the job which you have accepted. You may think of something else to do only when circumstances arise in which you on your own leave it—for I have already observed your unsettled state of mind. I have faith in you despite that, for you belong to Valji's family and are sincere at heart. Such persons often become steady all at once. What has Dudhibehn[2] decided to do?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6626

516. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

December 30, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got four letters from you together. You should not forget that after all I am a prisoner. I get the letters when the Superin- tendent visits [me]. However, I continue my efforts to see that I get my letters immediately. When will you now go to the Ashram? I should like you to do so without delay. Your weakness must disappear. Don't be eager to start wroking as soon as you reach the Ashram. Take milk, curds and furits in sufficient quantities. And you of course know the benefits of open air. May God protect you in every way. Don't worry about me. I had given up eating fresh fruits during the [Dandi] march itself. Nor do I feel any need for them. I seem to be able to digest four or five *tolas* of almonds and that keeps up my strength.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3386

[1] She was married to a widower.
[2] Valji Govindji Desai's wife

517. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 30, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

For want of time, only this much now. I have understood your problem with the *takli*. Do you have that problem with the bamboo one or the iron *takli*? Your faith will produce the right means even in material things for you. Hence, be patient. For the present, keep a watch on how much yarn the Magan spinning-wheel, in its existing form, gives. You should not have any problem when a devotee of the Magan spinning-wheel, i.e. Dhiru, is with you. If the *takli* has started giving 330 rounds of yarn per hour, why cannot the Magan-wheel give 3330 rounds per hour? Do not be alarmed by it. Initially, the *takli* gave only 30 rounds, now it easily gives ten times more. It is not impossible to produce on Magan wheel ten times more than the *takli*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original S.N. 32964

518. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

December 31, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I get your letters. But I put off writing to you thinking that you will soon be in the Ashram. The more you stay on there, the more I feel worried. Why don't you go away immediately and leave matters to take care of themselves? If Jayaprakash cannot go immediately, cannot he ask Harasubabu? I see that the longer you delay in going to the Ashram, the weaker you are becoming. What further can I now write even to Jayaprakash?

What is your diet in your present condition of health? Who watches over you when you are in a swoon? What did Father tell you when you met him? I feel afraid even to ask you questions, for it may be a burden on your mind to think and reply to them. I dismiss my worries in the faith that God has been protecting you and will continue to do so. I am quite well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3387

519. A LETTER

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 31, 1930

CHI.,

It is possible that, from an academic standpoint, my interpretation of the phrase "मृत्युं जन्म मृतस्य च' is of no value. But I think it is possible to interpret it to refer both to the self and the body. The self unclouded by ignorance knows neither birth nor death. However, one who believes that it dies must believe also that it is born again. For, nothing in this world suffers total destruction, not even physical body. It ceases to exist in one form and takes another. It goes on ever changing its form. After the body has been reduced to ashes it will not remain unchanged for ever in the form of atoms, for the atoms will change too. "When turned into ornaments, gold acquires different names and forms but it, ever remains gold." Does this appeal to your reason in any way? As Vinoba's style is very lively, he wins our interest. However, I have come to the conclusion that it is possible to put more than one interpretation on the words of the *Gita* and that all of them may be right. The central meaning would remain the same, and consistent with it there may be as many interpretations as one may wish, which together, like the numerous instruments in an orchestra, produce a beautiful symphony. As regards "is seated," "sits" and "walks," it is possible to draw out three distinct meaning. But the *Gita* is not a technical or scientific work composed with such precision. It abounds in repetitions, and there is looseness of expression too. This is not a defect, but it is there.

These days I have been spinning on the *takli* at least 100 rounds a day. I have given up the iron *takli*, after having tried very hard to spin well on it, and now I am back to the bamboo *takli*. I feel a little better with it. The speed has risen to 75 per hour. It will go up still. After I have mastered the bamboo *takli* fully, I will return to the iron one.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati : C.W. 9317. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

520. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

[*December 1930*][1]

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

You have construed the answers to your questions all right. Even then I will add a little here.

There is no end to conflicts of loyalties and to miseries. True desire for knowledge arises from this.

The body can be said to be an abode of *punya*[2] in spite of its origin in *papa*[3] in so far as it is a means to realization of the *atman*.

Knowledge means the realization of the self. One who has fully realized truth and non-violence is a perfect *jnani* in spite of being unlettered. This includes the answer to the question why we should obtain, etc.

Non-attachment means absence of attachment. Attachment means the desire for a certain fruit. Attachment is implicit in wanting to climb the Himalayas. Climbing the Himalayas when it falls to one's lot is doing it free of attachment.

Yoga : Action performed without attachment. You write books but you do not crave for honour on that account, nor money nor praise from anyone. And since it has been your lot to render service through writing what you do is yoga.

Generally I do not forbid asking questions. But the better and correct way is to solve such problems by oneself and to consult others in case of doubt. Unless we did it our discrimination will not develop.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 331. Courtesy : Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

521. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

[*1930*][4]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Neither you nor Nanibehn[5] should worry. For now I will not part with those of you who have remained behind. I shall see the result

[1] As supplied by the addressee
[2] Merit
[3] Sin
[4] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 26-4-1930.
[5] Wife of the addressee's stepson, Pannalal Jhaveri.

of the step I have taken. You and Nanibehn should try to teach Mahalakshmi what she finds difficult. Tell Ba that I shall most probably reach there tonight.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 3129

522. LETTER TO DURGA GIRI[1]

[*1930*]

CHI. DURGA[2]

I have your beautiful letter, Go ahead. Work well. Never forget to get up early. Be fully awake during the morning prayers.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Virat Vatsalta, p. 30

523. LETTER TO SATYADEVI GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Silence Day [*1930*]

CHI. SATYADEVI3,

There will be no end to my troubles if you girls or other people start thinking that I have forgotten those to whom do not write. Can anyone write to each member of such a large family? But you all can certainly write.

Your handwriting is good, and the sketch of a flower-pot with flowers standing upright is so good that the flowers seem to emit fragrance. Are you doing everything carefully? Is Dharma[3] still naughty?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Virat Vatsalta, p. 33

[1] According to the source, this was written from Yeravda Central Prison; also, this and the two following items were originally written in Gujarati.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Addressee's brother.

524. LETTER TO DHARMAKUMAR GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR
Silence Day [*1930*]

CHI. DHARMAKUMAR,

Your letter. You must form the habit of writing in ink and produce print-like alphabet. You indulge in mischief, don't you?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Virat Vatsalta, p. 35

525. LETTER TO SHANTA

January 1[1]*, 1931*

CHI. SHANTA,

Your letter. Be brave and remain firm. You are facing an intricate problem.[2] Ponder well over the verses recited during the prayers in the women's section. Understand their meaning.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5274

526. LETTER TO MANMOHANDAS GANDHI

January 1, 1931

BHAISHRI MANMOHANDAS,

I got the pages of your booklet. I have gone through them. You have collected some useful statistics. But the title of the booklet is certainly not appropriate. It gives more and more reliable information about mill-cloth than about handloom cloth. After reading it, I felt that its title "How to Compete with Foreign Cloth" was too ambitious for the contents. You have not attempted a careful and detailed examination of hand-spinning. If you have realized that the master-key for the solution of the problem is hand-spinning, you should put

[1] In the source '1' appears to have been corrected to '7', presumably the date on which the letter was posted.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Kashinath Trivedi". 29-12-1930.

the truth in your own manner. If you are not convinced that it is so, you should not give it a place in your scheme yielding to the present atmosphere. I am becoming more and more convinced that, without hand-spinning, permanent boycott of foreign cloth will be impossible and that even hand-weaving cannot survive without it. If you share this view, you should explain it convincingly.

Despite my partiality for hand-spinning, I don't think that Talchekar's contention is supported by facts. I have even had correspondence with him on the matter. His claim that handspun yarn is superior is not borne out by experience. By carefully co-ordinating a variety of factors, it may be possible to produce hand-spun yarn which would be stronger than mill-yarn, but the ordinary hand-spun yarn will always be weaker than mill-yarn. But what does it matter? As compared to hand-made *bhakhari*, the biscuit produced in a factory with the help of dies will always be perfectly round in shape, smooth and attractive in appearance, and still the former will continue to be preferred to it. You have tried to convince the readers that mill-cloth and handloom cloth can supplement each other. It may be possible for some time to regulate things in that manner, but not permanently. The division of the booklet into sections is not accurate. Go through it again. I have nothing more to add.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8

527. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

January 1, 1931

CHI. PREMA,

This week's post, too, seems to have been delayed. Meanwhile I have started writing my letters.

When the mind is occupied with nothing else, it starts thinking about the boys and girls. Probably the children don't know why the 23rd of December is the shortest day. In trying to explain this, you will automatically explain to them some facts of geography and astronomy. Will you not try this? While explaining the reason for the 23rd being the shortest day, speak about the longest day and about the dates on which the day and the night are equal. Simultaneously, you may explain the change of seasons. While doing so tell them what Christmas means. In such discussions, both the parties should feel interested. This is also true about the indigenous tables and methods

of oral calculation. These things, too, can be taught to children in an entertaining way. From this, I am generally led to think about botany. I can a complete ignoramus in this field. You, perhaps, know something of the subject. If you do not, you can pick up some general knowledge without much trouble and impart it to children, and to me through letters. You can teach as you learn. But you should not feel this as a burden on your mind. It will be a boon to the children and to me if you make some such effort.

I constantly feel that we don't give to children all that we ought to. We should, therefore, give that at any rate which we can without much trouble to ourselves. Discuss this matter with Narandas.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10249

528. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

[Before *January 2, 1931*]

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS,

Your letter of 16th instant does not acknowledge my letter in reply to your previous letter. Did you not receive it? In it I expressed my joy at hearing from you and asked you to tell me about Guruji, etc.

I have now received the pieces of khadi which, of course, I shall use with great pleasure and share with Pyarelal if and when he needs any clothing. Please thank all the co-workers for these beautiful pieces.[1] There need be no apology for coarseness or unevenness. Beauty lies in the gentleness and evenness of the heart behind the work. I am using only coarse and uneven khadi, and by reason of this habit, thin and glossy stuff will feel probably unpleasant.

Do write to me all about you. How are your parents? Where is Guruji now? Do you ever go to see Hemprabha Devi? If not, do go now. How are you keeping? Tell me also all about Panditji. We are both keeping fit and well.

Love.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 2-1-1931

[1] Six pieces of khadi, woven from yarn spun by political prisoners in Dum-Dum jail on October 2, were sent to Gandhiji..

529. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

January 2, 1931

DEAR ANAND,

I am glad you got all my letters. The problem you present is incredibly simple. With all your faults and limitations, you should unreservedly offer your and Vidya's services to Father whenever he can accept them. only you must not interpose yourself between Father and Mother. If he wishes to retire for a while or longer you need not grieve. It is a natural and proper thing. It would be better ifhe took some social or humanitarian service. There need be no question of his approaching you or you him. Let him know that you are his for ever. The rest will be easy.

As for your distraction the greater your faith in God and your losing yourself in your task, the greater will be the inner peace.

Love to you both.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

530. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 2, 1931

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I have your letter. I had also got your letter describing your difficulties at Pij, and replied to it. I hope you received my reply.

You have done well in confessing everything. In my opinion, you should certainly not have physical relations with your wife. You should make some arrangement for her education so that her intellect may develop. If you are firm in your decision to have no physical relations with her, you should plainly tell her about that so that she may not remain discontented and may not go on hoping. You should also let her marry again if she wishes to do so. You should not do that if deep in your heart you crave for physical gratification. In any case, you should make it clear to her that you cannot satisfy her as long as the present movement lasts. Since she is poor, you should bear the burden of maintaining her. You should ask her to go and live in the Ashram. The remedy against attacks of lustful thoughts is to devote

oneself to work. How can a person who is always absorbed in work ever get time for such thoughts?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9503

531. LETTER TO MAITRI GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 2, 1931

CHI. MAITRI,

You certainly are careless in writing to me. I should be happy if you change. Why do not all of you who are there immediately give water to Dheds and Bhangis? And you can also plead with the people who give their left-overs to the latter to eat. Do you tell Gangabehn about all this? I don't mind your growing fat, but you should take care to make your body firm and as strong as steel. The only way to do this is hard physical work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6223

532. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 2, 1931

CHI. RAMABEHN,

I understand your enthusiasm. But the *Gita* tells us that, even if *paradharma* looks more attractive, *swadharma* is better for us.[1] We may die while doing *swadharma*. Somebody else's work is fraught with danger. *Swadharma* means one's own work. Your work is what Mithubehn may assign to you. You and others who support you should reason with Mithubehn. Till she is won over, you should keep patience. You yourself say that you get something to learn every day. Why then should you be impatient? In any case, a prisoner has no right to say what work she will do and what work she will not do. My

[1] III. 35

blessings to all who have returned from jails. I should know why Joshi has returned with ten pounds less.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5329

533. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

January 3, 1931

CHI. MIRA,

I have read the two renderings you have sent me of the first verse of the morning prayer. For use and perhaps conveying the meaning, I prefer my rendering. If you find any obscurity anywhere, please tell me. The second I sent you by the last mail.[1] Here is the third.

"In the early morning I bow to Him who is beyond darkness, who is like the sun, who is perfect, ancient, called Purushottam (the best among men) and in whom (through the veil of darkness) we fancy the whole universe as appearing even as (in darkness) we imagine a rope to be a snake."[2]

The idea is that the universe is not real in the sense of being permanent, it is neither a thing to be hankered after nor feared because it is supposed to be God's creation. As a matter of fact, it is a creation of our imagination even as the snake in the rope is. The real universe like the real rope is there. We perceive either when the veil is lifted and darkness is gone—compare. "And with the morn, those angel faces smile which I have loved long since and lost awhile." The three verses go together and I think are Shankar's composition. You do know of Shankar, do you not? Five more days and I shall have finished the translation of the preface. My suggestion is that I continue to send you the verses and the *bhajans* with such comments as then occur to me. You should for your own satisfaction, with the help of whoever comes your way, translate the weekly notes on the *Gita*. The plan I am now following is well thought out, i.e., that of looking through the translation of the whole *Gita* in the light of my rendering and translating the notes. The attempt may lead to

[1] *Vide*"Letter to Mirabehn", 29/30-12-1930

[2] *Vide Ashram Bhajanavali,*15-12-1930.

something good of which we have no knowledge today. If I begin the translation of the weekly notes, the above plan may fall through altogether. It would not be right. Of my food experiment, you will learn everything from Narandas. The assurance, that the moment I find it necessary I shall revart to milk, should remove all cause for anxiety.

By the travelling wheel I suppose, you mean the box wheel of the Pratishthan type. Whatever it is, your speed is certainly quite good. Let the Gandiv disappear from your mind unless Kaka has something to show. . . .[1]

I was sorry to learn about Romain Rolland's health. Do please send him my love and tell him I often think of him and pray that he may be long spared in the service of humanity. . . .[2]

Love.

BAPU

Bapu's Letters to Mira, pp. 146-7

534. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI

January 3, 1931

BHAI TYAGIJI,

I have your letter. Why does not Balbir write to me? He should let me know his wishes. He could certainly go to the Ashram if he really wants to. Who is now the Principal of Prem Mahavidyalaya? Why has Devasharmaji[3] been transferred to Kanpur [jail]? Write out your ideas on fasting and other subjects. We shall see about their publication later on.

Give in detail your daily routine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3267

[1] Omissions as in the source

[2] *ibid*

[3] Also known as Acharya Abhaydev

535. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN MATHURADAS

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 3, 1931

CHI. MOTI,

If you wish to continue to be Moti[1] of Vijayanagar and not Motibehn in Vijayanagar, you must learn to make your hand-writing as beautiful as pearls. The handwriting in your letter was quite good, but you should improve it a little every day. It is one of the virtues of a person devoted to dharma that he or she is exact in every matter, small or big. Will no one in Cochin agree to keep Shantu exclusively on fruit? Write to them and see. One should not be lazy in such matters. If pus continues to issue from a child's gums, we ought not to remain indifferent. If we do, the child will not live long. It is easy to cure such diseases in childhood. The alternative is for you to keep Shantu with you and bring him up yourself. I am glad that you have taken up the task of keeping children clean.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3750

536. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 3, 1931

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I just read the news of your having been released. Is it true that you lost ten pounds of weight in jail? How did that happen? Describe to me your experiences in jail.

I will certainly expect your weekly letter now. What a pleasant surprise it was to learn that Dhiru had stuck to the Ashram, though left alone! But there have been no end of such pleasant surprises. You are bound to hear everything about me and Pyarelal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5497

[1] Literally, 'pearl'.

537. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 3, 1931

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter.

If you meet Father, tell him that I envy his lot, for he is both in and out of the house of rest and is able to visit the doctor every day.[1] He never received such delicate attention so long as he was a free man. And I hope that in this way he will get rid for good of the trouble in the teeth and in the nose.

Will he be my neighbour this time too?

If you meet Rajendrababu, ask him to write to me. Did he get my reply to his letter?

Keep on giving me all the news as long as you are not arrested.

Dahyabhai seems to have taken a vow never to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 47-8

538. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

January 4, 1931

I was very happy that all of you got an opportunity to visit the Ashram. I would have been happier still it you could have spent a few days there. I get news about Mathuradas from time to time. I am sure his days will pass peacefully. This is a good experience he is getting. Pyarelal is quite well. My love to children.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 103

[1] The source explains: "The Sardar was then in Arthur Road Prison and was taken every day for a month under police escort to Dr. D.M. Desai's dental clinic in Whiteaway Laidlaw Building, Fort, Bombay."

539. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

January 4, 1931

CHI. MAHAVIR,

I got your letter. It seems you are getting daily new experiences. Wherever you go, live with the utmost self-restraint. If the experiment of starching yarn succeeds, that will undoubtedly help us very much.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6224

540. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Sunday Morning, January 4, 1931

CHI. VASUMATI,

I am writing this immediately after morning prayers. Taste ultimately is a matter of the palate and the mind. Our vow is that we will not gratify the craving of the palate. The latter will always feel and recognize the taste of every food. But to gratify the craving of the palate means to eat food which it likes and avoid food which it dislikes. We may certainly eat whatever food the body requires, but only at the time when and in the quantity which the body requires, and it does not matter then if it gives us pleasure. When Mahavir has conquered the palate, he will gladly accept what is for his good. Ordinarily, a man does not care for his spiritual good and does what will give him pleasure for the time being even if that is likely to harm him spiritually. Hence the attitude, that one should accept whatever is offered to one at any time, is not the right one for a spiritual seeker. We do not know from experience how a person who has attained perfection acts, and need not concern ourselves with the question. Let us wait till we have attained perfection. The question then will not arise at all. It this does not answer all your question, ask me again.

It is a good sign that we notice even our small defects. We ought to know whether we are striving to overcome them. If I see that I have pride in me and if I am a spiritual seeker, I am bound to make an effort to get rid of it. I shall not feel easy in mind till I have got rid of it. If there is a snake in the house, we shall not feel easy in mind till we have caught and removed it. If asked, we can certainly say whether

we are trying to remove it. This is also true about snakes and other such poisonous creatures in our hearts. I am glad that your ear is now all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N.9316.

541. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

January 4, 1931

MAD. RAIHANA,

A girl whose brother is mad is hardly likely to be wise ! I have written a letter to Dahyabhai.[1]

I am glad that you are improving, but do you think you will improve so much that you can shoulder the burden of leadership of the Kadi division? If you do indeed, we shall have to present an address to the doctor sister. A person with a grey beard, I am afraid, cannot escape suffering. A white beard is bound to have some effect at any rate. But all's well that ends well. I am not surprised to hear about Father's exploits. Isn't he also a branch of the same tree?

Khuda Hafiz.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9626

542. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

January 4, 1931

CHI. KASHINATH,

Your long letters are no trouble to me to read. Narandas has also written to me about you. He says that you refused to show him your diary. If this is true, your action was not right. Narandas is an extremely straightforward man and always does what he thinks right. You can tell him everything. Have a quiet talk with him and, if there has been any misunderstanding, remove it. If you wish to live in the Ashram and are not opposed to any of its rules, Narandas on his part will certainly take you back. He has even written to me to say so.

Whether or not you live in the Ashram, you can keep up

[1] These two sentences are in Urdu.

[2] A farewell greeting, meaning: 'May God protect you.'

connection with it for other purposes. You can ask for papers relating to your work. Difference of opinion should not mean personal enmity.

If you think it necessary to engage a lawyer to defend your brother-in-law, you may do so. If you have sufficient courage, however, do without a lawyer. Your actions seem all right. I did not understand your reason for refusing to sign the summons. But that is a minor matter. I have written to Shanta, Kalavati, Raghavdas and Banarsidas. Read those letters. You had asked the same, or a similar, question about art in your previous letter. I have already replied to it.[1] Did you get that letter? I got the booklet on vows. I did not see any letter from Ramnarayan. There was one from Haribhau[2] , and I have replied to him. Convey my blessings to all.

Mother should take only so much of milk as leaves her hungry. If, however, she cannot remain hungry and begs repeatedly for something to eat, you may give her a *khakhara*[3]. If she can continue milk and light diet for some time longer still, she will become all right. You should do everything with the utmost patience. Don't feel unhappy about anything. "What God, World Teacher and Master has willed for the day, it is futile to grieve over. Without His will we cannot move a blade of grass. If we do fuss about things, what is left over is a legacy of sorrows."[4]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5270

543. LETTER TO DURGA DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 4, 1931

CHI. DURGA,

It is 7 o'clock on Sunday morning just now. It is extre- mely cold. The hands shake, but I cannot give myself a holiday from writing. After I have finished this letter. I will start the spinning *yajna*. You have done well in starting the experiment of eating oranges. While it continues, write to me regularly. Tell me in detail the effect

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Kashinath Trivedi", 18-12-1930.
[2] Haribhau Upadhyaya
[3] Crisp chapati
[4] From a poem by Narasinh Mehta

which it has. Weigh yourself from time to time. Enemas will also have to be continued. I suppose you take sun-baths too. If you have enough strength, you should slowly walk about a little.

Now for Mahadev :

I don't hope at all to leave this place with any new discovery about the spinning-wheel. Along with enthusiasm, one must have knowledge of the craft, too, which I don't possess. I shall be satisfied if I can make sufficient changes which will enable me to increase my speed. I do feel that one can acquire good speed despite one's age. If, however, the nerves of my hands have become weak, the speed will not increase. But I do make changes from time to time to see if they help me to increase my speed. I see that I displayed great wisdom in not going to England despite Sastri's view that I should go. Really speaking, it required no wisdom to come to that decision. My heart simply did not consent, however much I tried to persuade myself. The reins are held by that Master of the Play. Why, then, need we worry at all? On the contrary, we should daily leave the reins more and more in His hands and strengthen His hands.

If any trace of fissure is noticed, [he] should immediately take steps to cure it. And [he] should not give up milk or ghee. It is our duty to obtain whatever facilities we can get and which are essential for our health. If we clearly see that we hold the body as a trust, that it is not our own, we shall think no more about the problem. It is good that Devdas has been working at Sanskrit to increase his proficiency in it. Mahadev will be able to help him in that. My blessings to all prisoners. Pyarelal spins daily 375 rounds on the spinning-wheel and 100 on the *takli*, and the work takes up the whole of the morning and an hour and a half in the afternoon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 16900

544. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,

January 4, 1931

CHI. KANTA,

Your Gujarati letter is excellent. There are only minor errors. Your handwriting is good. Write to me anything you want to, important or unimportant. You need feel no embarrassment.

It is good that Mother has come. Shower her with love. While remaining firm in your resolve, do not forget patience and courtesy. Go to Bochasan only after you have fully recovered. I see no harm if you have occasionally taken tea as medicine. I do not even remember Brother's questions. He had written a fairly long letter. If the questions are repeated, I can reply again

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

545. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

January 4, 1931

CHI. RAMDAS,

While your case is pending, should not I write to you? What is Surendra's diet? I have heard that he has gone down in health. Give me particulars of your daily routine. What is your diet there? Do they let you spin?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

546. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 4, 1931

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

It is surprising that there is no letter from you for the last two weeks. This must not happen. Even if there is nothing worth writing it will do if you send a few words about your welfare. How are Charu and Arun? When are Satisbabu and Kshitishbabu to be released?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N.1680

547. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 4, [*1931*][1]

BHAI BENARSIDAS,

There is no reason to be so despondent. One who recognizes his weakness and desires to remove it is already half-way to success. The resolve to devote the rest of your life to service is all to the good. Derive greater strength from the calamity that has befallen you.[2] So much in the line of service lies before you. It is gratifying to learn that the baby is doing well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2523

548. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 4, 1931

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

Keep on sending me letters. They contain the news I look forward to. When Janakibehn arrives, tell her to write to me. They may certainly arrest Vinoba if they wish. Is there any news of Chhotelal? How is his health?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3036

[1] Gandhiji had written '1930', which is obviously a slip. The letter (G. N. 2524) under reply was dated December 24, 1930.

[2] The addressee's wife had died in September 1930 leaving behind a newborn child.

549. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVALEKAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 5, 1931

BHAI SATAVALEKARJI,

I am grateful for your promptitude in sending me *Gitashlokardhasoochi* and other books. Are handmade slives strong enough to yield 19,000 yards of yarn in eight hours ? What is the count? Will this charkha be entered in the prize-winning charkha competition? If possible, send me the pocket-size charkha.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 4761. Courtesy: S. D. Satavalekar

550. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

January 5, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I get your letters. Generally they are quite regular now. But I have not been very regular n writing to you thinking that you will now be leaving for the Ashram any day. Of course I think of you every day. I don't at all like your remaining there. If Jayaprakash cannot leave just now, and if he wishes, someone from the Ashram will come to fetch you. Since Kamala[1] has gone to the rest-house, will you have to go to Prayag now? I have not received the letter which Jayaprakash was to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3402

[1] Kamala Nehru

551. LETTER TO VANAMALA PARIKH

January 5, 1931

CHI. VANAMALA,

I get your letters. Your speed on the spinning-wheel can be described as good, but you should increases it still further. Can a mistake committed through carelessness be forgiven? After writing a letter, you should go through it once.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I saw your slip after writing this letter.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5758

552. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

January 5, 1931

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I will now find some time and read about the carding-bow. This time I got the post two days late. You have got a good band of workers with you. You should only think about the work and not feel worried about it. Never doubt that you are doing God's work, provided, of course, you do it in the spirit of *yajna*. I have read what you have written about carding. It is good. When you gain further experience, you will be able to make more definite statements.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3751

553. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

January 5, 1931

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. In my opinion, the view of Vivekananda and Dhurandhar is one-sided. One should feel in the heart what one says. Surdas, Tulsidas and other *bhaktas* have described themselves as cunnings, lustful, etc. In doing so, they were not merely using the

language of modesty, but speaking from the heart. The truth is that we feel both ways. In an enlightened state, we know ourselves to be Brahman, but in the ignorant state we feel meek and humble before that Merciful One. He who does not feel so but knows himself as the perfect Brahman may not sing *bhajans* praying for God's mercy. You will not come across one such person in millions. To realize one's smallness is the beginning of being great. The drop of sea-water which has become separated from the sea would dry up if it thought that it was still the sea. If it admitted to itself that it was no more than a drop, it would flow towards the sea, merge in it and become one with it.

"Culture" means refinement of feelings and "education" means knowledge of literature. Education is a means and culture is the end. The latter is possible even without education. For instance, if a child is brought up in a truly cultured family, it will unconsciously imbibe culture from its environment. In our country at any rate, present-day education and culture have no connection with each other. If the educated still retain some culture, that is in spite of their education. This fact shows that the roots of our culture are deep.

My blessings and compliments to Prasannabehn. I should like her to draw her husband also to the Ashram.

You seem to be running a competition in the opposite direction with Narandas with regard to weight. It is good. You can afford to put on some more weight, and Narandas to lose some.

I like the translation of *Gitabodh* which Dhurandhar is making.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10250

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

VICEROY'S LETTER TO SIR T. B. SAPRU[1]

VICEREGAL LODGE,
SIMLA,
August 28, 1930

DEAR SIR TEJ BAHADUR,

I have to thank you for informing me of the results of the conversations held by Mr. Jayakar and yourself with the Congress leaders now in prison and for sending me copies of their joint letter of the 15th August and of your reply thereto. I should wish you and Mr. Jayakar both to know how great has been my appreciation of the spirit in which you have pursued your self-imposed public-spirited task of endeavouring to assist in the restoration of normal conditions in India. It is worth recalling the conditions under which you entered upon your undertaking. In my letter of 16th July I assured you that it was the earnest desire of myself, my Government and I had no doubt also of His Majesty's Government, to do everything we could to assist the people of India to obtain as large degree of management of their own affairs as could be shown to be consistent with the making of provision for those matters in regard to which they were not at present in a position to assumeresponsibility. It would be among the functions of the Conference to examine in the light of all the material available what those matters might be and what provision might be made for them. I had previously made two other points plain in my speech to the Legislature on the 9th July. The first is that those attending the Conference would have the unfettered right of examining the whole constitutional problem in all its bearing. Secondly, that any agreement at which the Conference was able to arrive would form the basis of the proposals which His Majesty's Government would later submit to Parliament. I fear as you will no doubt recognize that the task you had voluntarily undertaken has not been assisted by the letter you have received from the Congress leaders. In view both of the general tone by which that letter is inspired and of its contents, as also of its blank refusal to recognize the grave injury to which the country has been subjected by the Congress policy, not the least in the economic field, I do not think any useful purpose would be served by my attempting to deal in detail with the suggestions there made and I must frankly say I regard discussion on the basis of the proposals contained in the letter as impossible. I hope if you desire to see the Congress leaders again you will make this plain.

There is one further comment I must make upon the last paragraph of your reply to them dated 16th August. When we discussed these matters, I said if the Civil

[1] *Vide* "Statement to T. B. Sapru and M. R. Jayakar", 5-9-1930

Disobedience Movement was in fact abandoned, I should not desire to continue the Ordinances (apart from those connected with the Lahore Conspiracy Case and Chittagong) necessitated by the situation which EX-HYPOTHESI would no longer exist. But I was careful to make it plain that I was unable to give any assurance, if and when the Civil Disobedience Movement ceases, that local Governments would find it possible to release all persons convicted or under trial for offences in connection with the movement not involving violence, and that while I should wish to see a generous policy pursued in the matter, the utmost that I could promise would be to [ask] all the local Governments to consider with sympathy all the cases individually on their merits.

Upon the point of your reference to the representation of the Congress at the Conference in the event of their abandoning the Civil Disobedience Movement and desiring to attend, my recollection is you explained that the demand of the Congress was not for predominant, in the sense of majority, representation at the Conference and that I expressed the view that I should anticipate little difficulty in recommending to His Majesty's Government to secure that the Congress should be adequately represented. I added that if events so developed, I should be ready to receive a panel of names from the leaders of the Congress Party of those whom they would regard as suitable representatives. I feel that you and Mr. Jayakar would desire to be clearly informed of the position of myself and my Government as it may be desirable that the letters should be published at an early date in order that the public may be fullyinformed of the circumstances,in which your efforts have failed to produce the result you hoped and they so certain]y deserved.

Yours sincerely,
IRWIN

The Hindu, 5-9-1930

APPENDIX II

NOTES OF CONVERSATIONS WITH VICEROY[1]

(a) On the constitutional question, the position would be as stated in the four fundamental points in para 2 of the Viceroy's letter to us of 28th August.

(b) With reference to the question whether Mr. Gandhi would be allowed to raise at the Round Table Conference the question of India's right to secede from the Empire at will, the position was as follows: "As the Viceroy has stated in his said letter to us, the Conference was a free conference. Therefore, anyone could raise any points he liked, but the Viceroy thought it would be very unwise for Mr. Gandhi to raise this question now. If, however, he faced the Government of India with such a question, the Viceroy would say the Government were not prepared to treat it as an

[1] Held at Simla with Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and M. R. Jayakar between August 21 and 28. *Vide* also 1st footnote of "Statement to T. B. Sapru and M. R. Jayakar", 5-9-1930

open question. If, in spite of this, Mr. Gandhi desired to raise the question, the Government would inform the Secretary of State of his intention to do so at the Round Table Conference."

(c) As regards the right to raise the question at the Round Table Conference of India's liability to certain financial burdens and to get them examined by an independent Tribunal, the position was that the Viceroy could not entertain any proposition amounting to total repudiation of all debts, but it would be open to anyone to raise, at the Round Table Conference, any question as to any financial liability of India and to call for its examination.

(d) As regards the granting of relief against the Salt Act, the position of the Viceroy was that (1) the Salt Tax was going to be provincialized if the recommendation of the Simon Commission in that behalf was accepted, and (2) there has been already great loss of revenue and therefore the Government would not like to forgo this source, but if the Legislature was persuaded to repeal the Salt Act and if any proposal was put forward to make good the loss of revenue occasioned by such repeal, the Viceroy and his Government would consider the question on its merits. It was not, however, possible for the Viceroy to condone open breaches of the Salt Act so long as it was law. When goodwill and peace were restored and, if Indian leaders desired to discuss with H. E. the Viceroy and his Government how best economic relief couldbe given to the poorer classes on his behalf, the Viceroy would be glad to call a small conference of Indian leaders.

(e) With reference to picketing, the position was that if picketing amounted to nuisance to any class of people or was coupled with molestation or intimidation or the use of force, the Viceroy reserved to the Government the right of taking such action as the law allowed or taking of such legal powers as might be necessary to meet any emergency that might arise. Subject to the above when peace was established the Ordinance against picketing would be withdrawn.

(f) With regard to the re-employment of the officers who resigned or had been dismissed during the Civil Disobedience campaign, the position was that this matter was primarily a question for the discretion of local Governments. Subject however to there being vacancies and as long as it did not involve dismissing men who had proved loyal, the local Government would be expected to re-employ men who had thrown up their appointments in a fit of excitement or who had been swept off their feet.

(g) As for the restoration of printing presses confiscated under the Press Ordinance, there would be no difficulty.

(h) As regards the restoration of fines and properties confiscated under the Revenue Law, that required closer definition. As to the properties confiscated or sold

under such law, there might be the rights of third parties involved. As to refunding fines, there were difficulties. In short, all that the Viceroy could say was that the local Government would exercise their discretion with justice and take all the circumstances into consideration and try to be as accommodating as they could.

(i) As to the release of prisoners, the Viceroy had already explained his views in his letter to us dated July 28th.

The Hindu, 5-9-1930

APPENDIX III

NOTE FROM NEHRUS[1]

NAINI CENTRAL PRISON,
August 31, 1930

We have had further interviews with Mr. M. R. Jayakar and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru yesterday and today, and have had the advantage of long talks with them. They have given us a copy of the letter, dated August 23, addressed to them by His Excellency Lord Irwin. In this letter, it is stated clearly that Lord Irwin regards discussion on the basis of the proposals contained in our joint letter of August 15 to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar as impossible, andunder the circumstances, he rightly concludes their efforts have failed to produce any result. This joint letter, as you know, was written after a full consideration by the signatories to it, and represented the utmost they were prepared to go in their individual capacities. We stated there that no solution would be satisfactory unless it fulfilled certain vital conditions, and that a satisfactory declaration to that effect was made by the British Government. If such a declaration was made, we would be prepared to recommend to the Working Committee the advisability of calling off Civil Disobedience, provided simultaneously certain steps indicated in our letter were taken by the British Government in India.

It was only after a satisfactory settlement of all these preliminaries, that the question of the composition of the proposed London Conference and of the Congress being represented at it could be decided. Lord Irwin, in his letter, considers even a discussion on the basis of these proposals as impossible. Under the circumstances, there is or can be no common ground between us. Quite apart from the contents, the tone of the letter and the recent activities of the British Government in India clearly indicate that the Government has no desire for peace. The proclamation of the Working Committee as an illegal body in the Delhi Province soon after a meeting of it was announced to be held there, and the subsequent arrest of most of its members can have that meaning and no other. We have no complaint against these or other arrests or other activities of the Government, 'uncivilized' and 'barbarous' as we

[1] *Vide* 1st footnote of “Statement to T. B. Sapru and M. R. Jayakar”, 5-9-1930

consider some of these to be. We welcome them. But, we feel, we are justified in pointing out that a desire for peace and an aggressive attack on the very body, which is capable of giving peace and with which it is sought to treat, do not go well together. The proscription of the Working Committee all over India and the attempt to prevent its meetings must necessarily mean that the national struggle must go on, whatever the consequences, and that there will be no possibility of peace, for those who may have some authority to represent the people of India will be spread out in British prisons all over India.

Lord Irwin's letter and the action taken by the British Government make it plain that the efforts of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar have been in vain. Indeed, the letter and some of the explanations that had been given to us take us back, in some respects, even from the position that was previously taken. In view of the great HIATUS that exists between our position and Lord Irwin's, it is hardly necessary to go into details, but we should like to point out to you certain aspects of his letter. The first part of the letter is practically a repetition of his speech to the Legislative Assembly and of the phrases used in his letter dated July 16, addressed to Mr. Jayakar and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. As we pointed out in our joint letter, this phraseology is too vague for us to assess its value. It may be made to mean anything or nothing. In our joint letter, we have made it clear that a complete National Government responsible to the people of India, including control over the DefenceForces and economic control, must be recognized as India's immediate demand. There is no question of what are usually called safeguards or any delay. Adjustments there necessarily must be for the transference of power and in regard to these we stated that they were to be determined by India's chosen representatives.

As regards India's right of secession at will from the British Empire and her right to refer British claims and concessions to an independent tribunal all that we are told is that the Conference will be a free conference and any point can be raised there. This is no advance on the previous statement made. We are further told, however, that if the British Government in India were definitely faced with the possibility of the former question being raised, Lord Irwin would say they were not to treat it as an open question. All they could do was to inform the Secretary of State of our intention to raise the question at the Conference.

As regards the other proposition, we are told that Lord Irwin could only entertain the idea of a few individual financial transactions being subjected for scrutiny. While such scrutiny may take place in individual cases, its scope will have to extend to the whole field of British claims including, as we have stated, the so-called Public Debt of India. We consider both these questions as of vital importance and previous agreement in our joint letter seems to us essential.

Lord Irwin's reference to the release of prisoners is very restricted and unsatisfactory. He is unable to give an assurance that all of the non-violent civil disobedience prisoners even will be discharged. All he proposes to do is to leave the matter in the hands of the Local Governments. We are not prepared to trust in such a

matter to the generosity or sympathy of Local Governments or local officials but, apart from this, there is no reference in Lord Irwin's letter to other non-violent prisoners. There are a large number of Congressmen and others who were sent to prison for political offences prior to the Civil Disobedience Movement. We might mention in this connection the Meerut Case prisoners who have already spent a year and a half as under-trials. We have made it clear in our joint letter that all these persons should be released.

Regarding the Bengal and the Lahore Case Ordinances we feel no exception should be made in their favour as suggested by Lord Irwin. We have not claimed release for those political prisoners who may have been guilty of violence not because we would not welcome their release but because we felt that as our movement was strictly non-violent, we would not confuse the issue. But, the least we can do is to press for ordinary trial for these fellow-countrymen of ours and not by an extraordinary court constituted by an Ordinance which denies them the right of appeal and the ordinary privilege of accused.

Amazing events including the brutal assaults that have occurred even in open court during the so-called trial make it imperative that the ordinary procedureshould be followed. We understand that some of the accused in protest against the treatment accorded to them have been on hunger-strike for a long period and are now at death's door. The Bengal Ordinance, we understand, has been replaced by an Act of the Bengal Council. We consider this Ordinance and any Act passed on it most objectionable, and the fact that an unrepresentative body like the present Bengal Council has passed it does not make it any the better.

As regards the further picketing of foreign cloth and liquor shops, we are told, Lord Irwin is agreeable to the withdrawal of the Picketing Ordinance, but he states that if he thinks it necessary, he will take fresh legal powers to combat picketing. Thus, he informs us that he might re-enact the Ordinance or do something in Simla to it whenever he considers it necessary. The reply regarding the Salt Act and certain other matters referred to in our joint letter is also wholly unsatisfactory. We need not deal with it at any length here as you are an acknowledged expert on salt. We would only say we see no reason to modify our previous position as regards these matters.

Thus Lord Irwin has declined to agree to all the major propositions and many of the minor ones laid down in our joint letter. The difference in his outlook and ours is very great, indeed fundamental. We hope you will show this note to Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel, Mr. Jairamdas Doulatram and in consultation with them give your reply to Mr. Jayakar and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. We feel that the publication of the correspondence must no longer be delayed, and we are not justified in keeping

the public in the dark. Even apart from the question of publication, we are requesting Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar to send copies of all correspondence and relevant papers to Chaudhri Khaliq Usman, the Acting President of the Indian National Congress. We feel we ought to take no steps without immediate information being sent to the Working Committee, which happens to be functioning.

MOTILAL
SYED MAHMUD
JAWAHARLAL

The Hindu, 5-9-1930

1. *LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI*

8 p.m., January 1/6, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

This week, too, I have not received your packet so far. It must have been posted as unregistered parcel and, if so, I shall probably get it tomorrow. But I started writing the Ashram letters today, or rather yes-terday.

I had a letter last time from Danibehn from Bombay. My reply to her is enclosed. She is from Marwar, it seems. If you know, inform me whether that is so. I have given her address in the letter itself, thinking that you may not have it with you. Last week there were a few remarks in pencil by way of criticism of *Anasakatiyoga* by a Maratha friend; the remarks were unsigned. If you remember the name, let me know it.

We were both weighed today. My weight came to 100 and Pyare-lal's to 122. I have lost a pound; it is not worth taking note of. The wei-ght may increase or decrease by a pound or two even if the time of weigh-ing changes or according as one is weighed before or after passing stool. If a person gets himself weighed immediately after drinking water, his weight will be found to have increased. If he gets himself weighed after passing urine, there will be corresponding decrease in his weight. So long as I myself feel quite fit, pass stool without difficulty, have an appetite and eat well, there is no reason at all for concern. If I can carry on like this for six months, the experiment will have succeeded. I have made an inportant change, which I describe here for those of you who may be interested to know about it.

Almonds are soaked in hot water and the peel is removed. They are then crushed into a paste. This is mixed with four ounces of water and the mixture is boiled till the water evaporates and a butter-like jelly is left behind. I eat it with vegetables. It not only tastes good but seems to be more easily digested than almond paste not boiled in water. It is possible that, even if the almonds are crushed into very fine paste but the latter is not boiled in water, the stuff remains undigested and passes out with stool. But I have no doubt that the jelly which I eat is digested. Even a person with very delicate stomach may be able to digest almonds cooked in this manner. The jelly may again be mixed with water and turned into milk. It will, of course, have no

taste. One can add a little jaggery or sugar, or even lime juice and salt, to the liquid. I don't advise anyone just now to make this experiment. But the information which I have given may perhaps be useful to anyone who is interested in making such experiments or cannot digest milk. Apart from this change, my diet remains what it was. The quantity, too, remains unchanged.

I hope to reach very high speed on the Gandiv spinning-wheel. I had never been able to reach 200, let alone 255, per hour before now. On the *takli* I have not been able to go beyond 75-80 rounds. I cannot spin even 75 comfortable. I spin about 60 comfortably. But I can say that my hand has now set well on a bamboo *takli*. It still seems a hard task for me to spin 100 rounds.

2 o'clock, Saturday

I got your packet yesterday. Since it was a parcel and they do not carry packets during holidays, two days were wasted. But I see that it cost you only three annas to send the packet as a parcel, whereas, if it had been sent as a letter, the postage would possibly come to as much as a rupee. You may, therefore, follow whichever method you think right. I have mentally reconciled myself to getting the packet on Fridays and adjusted my programme accordingly. Here they are very careful in handing over the packet immediately to me after examining its contents. They are equally careful in dispatching the packets from here.

Who is Palibehn? Her question is the same as Premabehn's. I need not, therefore, write separately to her. Send her a copy of my letter to Premabehn, or show it to her if she is in the Ashram.

As regards printing extracts from my letter, what I have written about *yajna* can certainly be given below Chapter II. Any other portions which seem useful can also be printed. But where and in what manner is for you to decide. You can include such material in the *Gitabodh* in footnotes at relevant places or as independent extracts.

Keep the Doctor informed about Ratilal and deal with the latter tactfully so that he may keep to the right path. Look upon him as an animal, uncultured and enslaved by passion. When he is overcome by passion, he goes mad. There are many kinds of passion; Ratilal is enslaved by three: for sex, for eating and for spending money extravagantly. He becomes when these passions are not satisfied. Running away from the Ashram has a beneficial effect on him in some measure. He calms down after a few days. God alone knows how he will end up. Sometimes such persons even attain *jnana*. He is certainly not wholly wicked.

The quantity of spinning which you are able to do seems much indeed to me. One can do with the left hand any work which the right hand does. Bhau can spin on the *takli* equally well with either hand.

It will not be bad if Kanu goes to Wardha and learns Bhau's skill, and also gets some experience of the place. If there is any other boy, besides Kanu, who can and wishes to go, I see no harm in sending him.

Your body seems to have changed altogether. Personally, I am confident that ultimately it will become purer in its functioning.

Will not Parnekar leave the Ashram for a while and go somewhere else to improve his health?

The fact that the bull was brought back and the manner of its being found were a miracle indeed.

Do you follow our method or some other method in preparing *mava* from milk? Do you experience any difficulty in selling it? If that is so, you may write to Ghanshyamdas, Mahavirprasad, Jivanlal and others and they will probably buy it up. If you can supply it regularly, even an advertisement in a newspaper will help.

Do not give up walking. It is a practice worth clinging to at any cost. If you follow fixed rules in your work, you can include many things in the day's programme.

Devdas had written a letter to me; what has been done in regard to it? I have requested that he should recall the contents of the letter and write again to me. I have received no reply to this.

6.45 p.m., Monday, January 5, 1931

I have acknowledged having received the leather for sandals. The address of the lady to whom letter No. 82 is addressed is known to Ramnarayan[1] (of Ajmer). If you send the letter to Martand of somebody else, he will post it.

Read my letter to Kashinath. I need not add to what I have written in it.

Jivandas is in Sabarmati Jail. Does anyone visit him? If not, some-body should go and visit him. Tell him that I often remember him.

Blessings from

BAPU

January 6, 1931

[1] Ramnarayan Chaudhary

[PS.]

I started this letter on the first and I described the position with regard to my experiment in diet as it was on that day. I had a feeling of indigestion on Saturday night and on Sunday diarrhoea started. But this time I suffered no pain at all. There was no griping even. There were frequent motions. They continued even yesterday, but the number was less. I am writing this at 5 a.m., after prayer. I think the motions will be much fewer today. My work was not interrupted in any way. Yesterday I sat up for exactly ten and a half hours and finished all the work. This time there were a good number of other letters too. Of course eating has been stopped. The cause of diarrhoea seems to be *jowar* and *bajra*. I shall know it by and by. I have not decided how to resume eating. There is no cause at all for worry. I have informed you because I thought I must. At present I take lime juice with jaggery and soda bicarb. I will write again tomorrow.

BAPU

[PPS.]

There are 83 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

2. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

12 Noon, Wednesday, January [*7*][1] *1931*

CHI. NARANDAS,

You must have received the packet dispatched yesterday. Today I feel better. I started with diluted curds yesterday. Today I ate raisins and a little quantity, twice, of crushed, cooked almonds. These is no complaint about stools. That is, after 4 in the morning, I have felt no call. Don't worry at all. Ba and Mirabehn must not worry. I will drop a postcard again tomorrow. I am able to do all my work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

[1] The source has "6", but Wednesday was 7th.

3. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 7, 1931

CHI. KASHINATH,

I have your letter. What you say about Shanta is correct. Kuhne baths cannot but benefit her.

I have written about Mother in my previous letters. Has she really given up the traditional notions of pollution? I have had no letter from Mama.

I have read Babu Bhagwandas's article. He has suggested the first two remedies ironically to show their impossibility. He believes in the third one. I have thought much about the problem and written about it and suggested every remedy I could. I don't think unity will be brought about through artificial means. If either we or they display pure love, the problem would be solved immediately. It is difficult to say definitely in what form such love will express itself. What you say about the Maulana Saheb is correct. There is no doubt about his patriotism. He said what he believed. Even if we think someone's views to be erroneous, how can we blame him for holding those views? It is on such occasions that tolerance is required. Leva Patidars in Gujarat do observe the *purdah*. It is observed among other communities, too, in Kathiawar.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5271

4. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI

January 7, 1931

CHI. KALAVATI,

Yes, *purdah* is observed here and there in Gu[jarat] too. After all Gu[jarat] is a part of India! Hirabehn is in a pitiable plight. Teach the people of Ras to spin on the *takli* and make bamboo *takli* locally. I don't understand about Samalbhai. Do write again. I shall enquire into the dispute. Keep yourself fit. Learn *shirshasana* or *sarvangasana* for your feet. Learn the method. Kashinath can read from the book available at the Ashram and write to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5272

5. LETTER TO SHANTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 7, 1931

CHI. SHANTA,

I have already sent you a letter.[1] What more can I say? You are being tested. Be brave.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5273

6. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Thursday, January 8, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

The news about my having had diarrhoea must not be published. I passed a little stool yesterday at four in the morning. After that, I passed stool again today at 10 o'clock. I have therefore, taken half a spoon of castor oil, and, after I have had a motion, I will take milk or curds, whichever I think will suit me. Or I may take something else which may be equally harmless. The body is quite fit.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Shanta", 1-1-1931.

The tongue is perfectly clean. There is no cause at all for anyone to worry. As I thought I ought to inform you about the attack, I wrote about it on Monday and will continue to write every day till I am completely all right so that you may all feel relieved.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

7. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 8, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. It is a good sign that there are some days in between when you don't suffer from your usual complaint. You must have received my previous letter. I am very eager indeed that you should go over to the Ashram without delay. Why doesn't Jayaprakash write to me? And what is the position about him now? Is it now fixed that he is joining that college? Is he waiting for any letter from Ghanshyamdasji?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3393

8. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

Y. M.,
January 9, 1931

MY DEAR ANAND,

Your letter. Your reply to Jairamdas is correct. But now that Vidya's people will not take back the money, the immediate problem is solved. Your idea to treat it as a gift to the nation is quite good. The right course now is so to shape and simplify your life that you will not henceforth have to fall back upon either father for pecuniary help. For the past you need not think of returning debt to the nation in coin but return it in kind, i. e., through your joint labour. And when you dedicate yourselves wholly to the nation you have repaid the debt. Is this clear?

There is no question of being physically near me whilst you are out. If you become a prisoner again, even then there is only a remote possibility. Your satisfaction must be derived from serving not me personally but what I stand for.

Love to both of you.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

9. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 9, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I think I am very well today. I am writing this after the midday meal. I had a normal motion. In the morning I took almond paste mixed with water and dates. Just now, I had fenugreek leaves, liquid curds and dates. The diet tomorrow, God will decide. There is no cause for worry. The weight is bound to go down after four days of fasting. It came to 96. If things go well tomorrow, I shall recover some of the lost weight during the next week. Tell Mirabehn that I got yesterday the card she posted on Tuesday. I got your packet only today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

10. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

January 9, 1931

CHI. VIDYA (HYDERABAD),

I have your letter, You have to improve your handwriting. You should practise with a printed book before you or you should learn from someone who can write Devanagari well. Do not be lazy in taking hip-baths.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

11. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

January 10, 1931

CHI. SHARDA,

If you get my letters late, is that my fault alone? Are you so busy that you have to write in the night and spoil your hand-writing? Why should you not stay there if it suits you?

Blessings form

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 9897. Courtesy: Shardabehn Chokhawala

12. LETTER TO ROHINI K. DESAI

January 10, 1931

CHI. ROHINI,

I got your letter.The handwriting was beautiful, but the letter was written in pencil. As far as possible, you should not write a letter in pencil. I have also understood that Kanajibhai will be released. When he is released, ask him whether the people outside have done him any harm that, having up chewing pan during his stay in the rest-house, he should resume the practice outside and deprive the poor of the money spent on it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2656

13. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

January 10, 1931

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

It pains me every time you fail to keep your resolution.

The books you have sent are not the ones which I meant. Pyarelal thought that you knew his books and that probably they were with you. Now don't worry about the matter. The grammar which you have sent will be useful to him. The *Gita* is not required. We have a good many editions here. You will know about my health from the general letter. Pyarelal's is good. You must have noted that I have had to give up eating *jowar* and *bajra* for the present.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1816

14. LETTER TO GOVIND PATEL

January 10, 1931

CHI. GOVIND,

I got your beautiful letter. The word is not *dandvrat* but *dandavat* and the phrase means respectful greetings offered by prostrating oneself straight like a stick on the ground. In the original phrase, *dandavat* is an adjective and the noun, *pranam*[1], is understood. But we have been using the word *dandavat* as a noun too.

Blessing from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3496

[1] Salutation

15. LETTER TO VANAMALA PARIKH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 10, 1931

CHI. VANAMALA,

If you do not know how to do oral sums in arithmetic, you should learn it. Can you tell me orally how much $2\frac{1}{2}$ 1b. of ghee would cost if one maund costs Rs. 30?

Your handwriting is good, but you can make it better still.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5759

16. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 10, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

This is the last postcard about health. Today I feel very good. I am writing this after the midday meal. The diet today has been the same as it was yesterday. For the evening meal yesterday I had almonds and dates, stirred in water. Today, too, I had curds for mid-day meal. I had a normal motion.

Durga should add potassium permanganate to enema water, enough to turn it into pink. Two or three crystals make the water pink. She should also swallow every day 30 grains of soda bicarb with water. If gas continues even after this, she should give up oranges for a day or two. If it becomes necessary to write to me about her health, you may write whenever you wish to.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I

17. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

January 10, 1931

CHI. GANGABEHN,

You should have no objection to drinking tea as a medicine. Bear the harmful effect which it may have. After all, one must learn to live with a delicate body. There would be pride or obstinacy in not taking tea even if it is necessary for one's health. One must be humble and take it, as I take dates.

Shirshasana can certainly be done in the presence of others. Why should a woman mind doing so, since she will have tucked up her skirt!

Do not worry about me at all. It had become a religious duty to give up papaya. Giving it up has done me no harm. Friends can help each other best by practising self-denial in their own person.

Are there any quarrels among the women inmates of the Ashram? There was a hint about them in Kalavati's letter. I would not be surprised if that is so. We have not become perfect. As we strive to become so, we shall stumble and fall and rise again.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 8769. Courtesy : Gangabehn Vaidya

18. LETTER TO ISHWARLAL JOSHI

January 10, 1931

CHI. ISHWARLAL,

I was eagerly awaiting a letter from you. I have met Jagannath. I was glad to learn that Premshankar is all right now. I hope you exer-cise the utmost care in all that you do.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 9288. Courtesy : Ishwarlal Joshi

19. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 10, 1931

CHI. MANI (SARDARIJI),

I had guessed what you wrote about Harilal.[1] I think there was no harm if the facts had been published. For then perhaps Harilal would have come to his senses. Whether he does, or does not, the path we have to tread is straight. Everyone in the world is our kith and kin, or else everyone is a stranger.

There is a good improvement in your handwriting. Where will you stay now?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4 : Manibehn Patelne, p. 48

20. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

January 10, 1931

CHI. NIMU,

You just cannot leave Sumitra alone. It will suffice it you do whatever work of public service you can, keeping her with you. It should be enough for you that Ramdas has gone back to jail. I think all the requirements will be satisfied if you stay on in Vijapur. The atmosphere there is good for Sumitra and also you can do a lot of service from there.

If Sumitra's nose continues to run, it probably means that she

[1] The source explains : "Harilal asked for an interview with the Sardar in Arthur Road Prison, but the Sardar refused to see him, as he was drunk and as the interview asked for appeared to have been arranged by the British Government of India for propaganda purposes. All the same, an account of the interview—that never took place—appeared in the *Evening News of India* and words were placed in the Sardar's mouth which he had never uttered. The Sardar strongly resented this and his contradiction appeared in the papers the next day."

is troubled by cold. I understand what you mean by saying that a baby girl having been born is nothing but Hari-ichcha. She seems to be keeping well. As for my giving blessings to Sumitra, I will have to think. For the present . . .[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

21. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

January 10, 1931

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your two letters together. So far I have received no letter from Birla about khadi. What is the harm in his taking over charge of all the khadi stock at the Pratishthan? Let him sell at any price. I want to understand all this. Do everything with patience. It is for us to perform our duty, the result lies in God's hands. I have no anxiety as you are already blessed with patience.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 1681

22. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 11, 1931

CHI. GANGABEHN (JHAVERI),

Your handwriting has improved considerably. See that you keep up the improvement. Regarding your work, follow your conscience. But first you should examine yourself and decide whether it is your conscience or your ego that speaks. Do not neglect your health and let it suffer again. You should feel no hesitation in eating what your health demands. No one will grudge your eating what is necessary for your

[1] A few words here are illegible in the source.

health, and if anyone does you should not mind. Why should we care if we get no reward for doing our duty?

No one at present can fully appreciate the value of the work which the women all over the country are doing. But the whole world is watching it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3110.

23. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

January 11, 1931

CHI. VASUMATI,

Whether a person should be particular about spinning even if he has not taken a vow to do so, should be left to his own inclination. No one rule applicable to all persons can be laid down.

You must have heard that the dream castle of *jowar-bajra* which I had built lies shattered. I do not, therefore, write more about it here. If an opportunity occurs, I will try the experiment once again. But perhaps my stomach is no longer strong enough for such experi-ments. There is, however, no cause at all for worry. I have lost a little in weight, too. It is now 96. But I have resumed milk and curds and, therefore, I shall probably regain the weight lost.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9317

24. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

January 11, 1931

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. You did well in going round and meeting everyone. Surendra was not keeping good health; has it improved now? Since you don't write anything about Sita, I believe that she is improving satisfactorily. Don't be parsimonious in supplying her fruit. She must not become ill.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4782

25. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 11, 1931

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. I could once say which verse in the *Gita* I liked most. It was the one beginning, "The impressions of senses, O son of Kunti." Today I cannot be positive about it. Different verses appeal at different times according to the state of mind at the moment. I feel no interest now in deciding which I like most. The entire *Gita* is dear to me. She is the mother. If anyone asks a child which limb of its mother is dear to it, the question would be meaningless. That is how I feel in regard to the *Gita*.

It was quite cold here for two or three days. It is no longer so now. Probably that is because of the wall on the four sides. Of course both of us sleep in the open.

Cannot Kashinath teach Hindi because he has left the Ashram?

Dharmakumar should be treated for his cough without delay. And Nayan too. I remember Kamalabehn. Send my blessings to her. I understand what you say about Dhiru.

I was glad that prayers were offered for Rolland. Even apart from his relation with me, his sincerity draws one towards him.

Try and cure the defect in your throat which persists. How are things with Sarojinidevi? Has Sheela got over her illness?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10251

26. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI M. THAKKAR

January 11, 1931

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I got your letter. Patience and single-minded devotion to the service one has undertaken cannot but yield good results. If you cultivate close contacts with drink addicts and share their joys and sorrows, their lives will be transformed. They themselves will then start working, each in his own circle.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6810

27. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI N. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 11, 1931

CHI;. RAOJIBHAI,

I hope your asthma has completely left you now. Whenever it is possible, you should take a sun-bath. We should not feel concerned at the arrests of Dahibehn and Sharinabehn. I do feel a little worried about Dahibehn's health, but I ask myself why we should worry when there is God to worry for us all and then I straight get back my peace of mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8990

28. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 11, 1931

CHI. MAHAVIR,

Your inference, from your experience of carding on a carding-bow without the usual leather-strip at the end of the string, about the capacity of the string to bear the blows of the rod is correct. If we have overcome the fear of death, we shall have progressed very far. Write to me and tell me what facilities of boarding and lodging you have in Palanpur, who your companions are, and so on.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6225

29. LETTER TO TEHMINA P. JOSHI

January 11, 1931

DEAR SISTER,

You seem to be very greedy. Where is the need to write long letters from here? You can write long ones. I can write long ones if I write about my speeches to the birds and the talks in silence with the stars. But how can I expose to the human race my lectures delivered to the birds? And my talks with the stars are after all secret. Hence I can write only short letters but must receive long ones from you. Perhaps they may not pass on to me the cutting carrying your speech. But don't I know what you would say? I am glad you went to see the Ashram.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 116

30. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

January 11, 1931

CHI. SUMANGAL PRAKASH,

I have your letter. It is difficult for me to remember what I wrote. Was the letter long? I do remember having said that you had done no wrong in going back home. I had answered all your questions. I hope you have now fully regained your health, What work are you doing there?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

31. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

January 11, 1931

CHI. CHANDRAKANTA,

It is now 5 o'clock in the morning. It is all right that you wrote a long letter. I think it is your duty to go to your parents once for a fixed period. It will be better if you go there to improve your health or after you have recovered. It is necessary to take Ganga-behn's permission. If there is much pending work there, it would be better to go after finishing it. That will also be the way to save Brother from further reproaches. Your going will appease your parents' anger. After all, are they not Sumangal's elders too? We should put up with our elders' anger and even their hostility. As your manner and behaviour towards them increase in humility, they will gradually calm down.

As for your expenses, you should accept the money from them as long as they are willing and in a position to send it. But you should assure them and yourself that you can earn your expenses. You should now consider yourself a daughter of the Ashram. You may rest assured that you will be able to earn your livelihood even outside should such a necessity arise.

I know that you still have a craving for literary knowledge. You may increase it as and when you get opportunities for it. But do not think that those who have more of literary knowledge serve better. The

capacity for service depends solely on selflessness and character. How much service Gangabehn renders! And what is her store of literary knowledge—or Mithubehn's, or Laxmidas's, or Imam Saheb's? If you go over such examples from present and ancient times, you will at once see the truth of what I am saying. On the other hand, there are hundreds of highly educated persons in the country. They lack either the ability or the will to make sacrifices, and therefore they live useless lives, if they are not actually a burden on others. All this argument certainly does not mean that I am against that type of knowledge, or that there is nothing more for you to acquire. Do increase your fund of knowledge when you get an oppor-tunity. But consider the present as a time to gain experience, to serve, and therefore, while cherishing the desire to increase your knowledge, restrain it just now and cheerfully devote yourself to service.

It was natural that Mother's grief made you feel unhappy and you cried. But we do wish to train ourselves to control such crying too. Mother's grief sprang from ignorant attachment.

About your having been tempted to eat chillies it is not so much that you did something wrong, but that you weakened in your resolve and were therefore guilty of a lapse. We should never depart from our resolutions in matters big or small. But don't worry. Forget the lapse and start again. No point now remains unanswered.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have destroyed your letter to respect your wish. Pyarelal has not read it. But you must give up being so sensitive. Let the world know all about us, good or bad. I have no secrets from Pyarelal. How can I have any ?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

32. LETTER TO BUDHABHAI

January 11, 1931

CHI. BUDHABHAI,

I received your letter. Your diet is all right. Be very careful how you behave towards Parvati. Never be alone with her and never allow impure feelings to come anywhere near you. Such feelings towards one whom you have accepted as a sister should be unthinkable. Be content with whatever she accepts of what you tell her with a detached mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33126

33. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

January 7/12, 1931

CHI. MIRA,

Though the Ashram post has not yet been received as it gene-rally is, in order to avoid pressure on my time I commence the letters now. Here is the fourth verse[1] :

"O Goddess Earth, with the ocean for thy garment, mountains for thy breasts, thou consort of Vishnu (Preserver), I bow to thee; for-give the touch of my feet."

Bowing to the earth we learn or ought to learn t o be humble even as the earth is humble. She supports the beings that tread upon her. She is therefore rightly the consort of Vishnu. This conception in my opinion does no violence to truth. On the contrary it is beautiful and is wholly consistent with the idea that God is everywhere. There is nothing inanimate for Him. We are of the earth earthy. If earth is not, we are not. I feel nearer God by feeling Him through the earth. In bowing to the earth, I at once realize my indebtedness to Him and if I am a worthy child of that Mother, I shall at once reduce myself to dust and rejoice in establishing kinship with not only the lowliest of human beings, but also with lowest forms of creation whose

[1] Of *Ashram Bhajanavali; vide* Vol. "Let us repent", 2-4-1931.

fate—reduction to dust—I have to share with them. And if considered as mere life without the earthy tabernacle, I regard myself as imperishable, the lowest form of creation is just as imperishable as my soul is.

This attack of diarrhoea is a positive blessing for me. It has caused no pain, meant no interruption of my work. And it has taught me lessons. I feel a greedy eater. The *bajari* and *juwari* are new foods for me. I should have taken them sparingly and omitted them occasionally. Even one *bhakhari* per day was evidently too much for me. But I did not do it. I thought I would make up for lost weight quickly. I know no such thing as full satisfaction of hunger no matter how much I eat, i.e., within my limitations. I always rise with an empty stomach. I therefore learn my mistake after the event. And then everything practically is tasty for me. I went to *bajari* and *juwari* for feeling tangibly akin to the fellow- prisoners. But for me these *bhakharis* had a definitely pleasant taste. In these mixed circums-tances to practise not only moderation but spare eating is a difficult performance. An occasional fast and at least once per month is a good thing it seems even for light weight people. But I seem to have will control over this crisis, if it can be so called. I am not interrupting the experiment altogether but shall modify it from time to time as may be found necessary. I took curds, as you know, yesterday. Feeling quite well at 11 o'clock I took finely powdered twice cooked almonds and soaked raisins. This is how matters stand today (Wednesday). This will be posted six days after. You will have further developments either through this letter or through the general letter. I give you these details to put you and others at ease. The knowledge that the slightest derangement in my health upsets you all causes me more anxiety than the derangement itself. Complete abandonment of dietetic experiment will be for me the worst evil. It is part of my search. But the evil is not in the experiment, the evil is in me. I have not learnt the art of taking food as medicine pure and simple. That means complete mastery over the palate. I am far from it still. I believe that if I acquire it, the giving up of milk will be an easy job. That it is not a healthy human being's food I have not a shadow of a doubt. In health, I have lived without it for six years. Through my folly that health was under-mined. To undo the effect of that folly, instead of paying with my life for it, I went to milk always hoping to struggle out of it again. The struggle must continue. Every defeat humbles me, chastens me and opens up newer outlooks. The urge for struggle becomes intenser with defeat. The

continuance gives one peace. Col. Steele the Civil Surgeon who comes to see me every fortnight and Major Martin came today. Their first remark was that I was looking exceptionally well. And this after practically three days' fast! And they were right. I am not feeling any the worse for the 'crisis'. Then and in any case be careful for nothing.

January 12, 1931

I take up the letter where I left it on 7th. I seem to feel quite all right. The bowels are again quite regular. My food is almond paste dissolved in water and dates in the morning, curds and dates at noon, dissolved almond paste and dates in the evening. Hot water lemon and salt 7.30 a.m. Cold water lemon and soda 1.30 p.m. If all goes well and the bowels become constipated, I may take vegetables. So again there is nothing further to report. I would warn you against publishing anything about these interrup tions in health, as they will be magnified by the public and there will be unnecessary alarm and unwarranted reflections against the Government. In this case, at any rate, no blame of any kind can be cast on them.

I have your letter and the postcard. Let us thank God that Rolland is quite out of the wood. The world needs him for many years yet. His work, so far as we can see, is not finished. Please send him my loving regards and say he must hold on for a while. Premabehn has described to me the prayer you had for his recovery. I do not know that these prayers add a single second to the life prayed for. But they elevate those who pray and comfort those for whom the prayers are offered. The comfort has the appearance of prolongation of life.

I finished the translation of the preface two days ago and have taken up nothing further. But I feel like taking up the original plan. I am likely to come to a decision tomorrow, after the Ashram post is finished.

Having taken up the news-sheet, you will give up the formal editor ship if it can be without any disturbance. Not to take up a service is wisdom, but it is folly to give it up afterwards unless it is found to be demonstrably immoral. Such is the general principle of ethics. Of the particular application you and those who are outside are the only judges. As to secrecy, there seems to be some confusion of thought as expressed by you. If a butcher asks me in which direction a cow is gone, I am in no way bound to disclose the

information to him. I may not mislead him but nor may I lead him to where the cow is. Not only that, I may even hide away the cow. Indeed, it would be my duty to do so. From this instance one may shape one's conduct in given circumstances.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Your description of Totaramji's love of gardening is enchan-ting. I wish some youngsters will learn the art from him. You should discuss this with Narandas.

From a copy : C.W. 5428. Courtesy : Mirabehn; also G. N. 9662

34. LETTER TO JAMNA N. GANDHI

January 12, 1931

CHI. JAMNA,

You are welcome to the Ashram, but see that you do not lose there what you have gained in Bombay. If you think that your health suffers in the Ashram, you should see no harm in staying in Bombay for education. Really speaking, we should know the art of adjusting our mode of living to any climate. If we do not know it, however, and if we can easily go and live where we can keep good health, it is best that we do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati : C.W. 846. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

35. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,

January 12, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your last letter, but not the one which you wrote before that. I am making inquiries. If you think it necessary to live in the U.P., by all means do so. How was Brijkishorebabu's health? What arrangements have been made about his meals? Give me a detailed report. Tell Swarupraniji that she should keep up courage. My blessings to Swarup and Krishna. Where is Jayaprakash at present?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3394

36. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 12, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I am writing this letter though I have nothing special to write about. Probably you will get this letter at the Ashram. You must have received my previous postcards. I keep very good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3410

37. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
[*January*][1] *12, 1931*

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your postcard. I did not get your earlier letter. When were you released? Who else were released with you? How is your health? How is Dr. Ansari? What are you doing at present?

We are both well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 2387

38. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Monday Morning, January 12, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

This time I take up your letter last for replying. I have started writing after the evening prayer. You must have received the postcards I wrote including Saturday's. After that, my health has remained all

[1] The source has "12-12-1931" which appears to be a slip, for on that date Gandhiji was in Rome. From the reference to the addressee's release from Gujarat Jail which, according to the addressee, took place some time during the last week of December 1930, it is clear that the letter was written in January.

right. You will find details in my letter [1] to Mirabehn. It contains something else, too, which will interest you. It is desirable that the news about my health should not spread outside.

Though Mahadev's name was in your list, I believe that you carry the impression that there was a letter by Mahadev because Chandrashankar's handwriting is very much like Mahadev's. Was there really a letter by Mahadev in his own handwriting? If there was, what were its contents? Durga would certainly know. There has been no special letter about her health, so I believe that she is all right. You must have got the letter in which I made a suggestion about her. Champa recovered even the lost ring! All this seems a miracle. Perhaps this is how God protects the fools. Champa had said in her letter that they might all go to Rajkot for some time. She said that that was the advice she was given by Nanalal's wife. If she wishes to go, I certainly like the idea. You must have thought about the matter independently and done what you thought proper, or you will do what you think proper. I don't remember to have encouraged Parasram to hope that we might give him some help. If, however, his work is efficient and clean, I would certainly be tempted to help him. Before you do anything, consult Shankerlal and follow his advice. You can send to me the small box received from Polak. If it is of a kind which you think should be preserved carefully, keep it there or put it in the Gujarat Vidyapith museum. If you don't think that necessary, you can send it to me through Trivedi. A lady from as far away as Canada had sent to me a bag containing about two pounds of salt. The authorities passed it on to me.

Take careful measures and help Kusum to get rid of her fever. Consult a doctor, if necessary. Chandrashankar has discovered a Punjabi vaid. He will probably give you some ordinary medicine. If you think it worth while, inquire about him.

Have a quiet talk with Bhagwanji and draw his attention to his shortcomings.

I let you off with this today.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 7/12-1-1931.

[PS.]

Two conclusions can be drawn from my experiment. Perhaps three. One of them is as good as proved. Two require to be tested further. Those who suffer from constipation should live for some days only on fenugreek leaves, *tandalja*, *tanko* and spinach. That is how I overcame my constipation. Pyarelal, too, seems to have overcome his. For the past four days he has been eating only fenugreek leaves. The jelly of almonds which I have described, besides being nourishing, is free from the defects of milk and so does not cause constipation. The *rotlas* of *jowar* and *bajra* seem to have a laxative effect on those who are not used to them. Ghee should not be taken during this experiment. All the vegetables should be merely boiled. But I cannot say that the experiment of *jowar* and *bajra* has proved successful. I do not think, either, that it has failed. If I have had to suspend it just now, it is in order that people there may not feel worried.[1]

BAPU

[PPS.]

There are 83 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I

39. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

January 13, 1931

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

I have your letters and the books. I did devote five to ten minutes. How shall I find more time? I remember our meeting.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 1079

40. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

January 14, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your long letter. Since you have stayed on there of your own free will, what can I say? Personally, I don't like your decision at

[1] For the text of the *Gita* discourse (Ch. X) which followed, *vide* "Letters on the *Gita*", 21-2-1932.

all. There will always be something or the other in a home requiring one's presence to attend to. I fear the longer you stay on there the greater will be the delay in your recovery. From what source did you arrange to get the money to pay your rent? Whenever you happen to be in such difficulties about money, you may write to the Ashram. My daughter is a daughter of the Ashram. You have, therefore, every right to request and get money from there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3395

41. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 14, 1931

DEAR SISTER,

I got the loving gift of dates sent by you. I have now a larger stock of them than I require. The quantity sent by Shri Jerajani is still not exhausted. May I request you to maintain an account of the dates which you send to me, as you do of the cotton? You may send them whenever I request you to do so. I shall require some more cotton in four days' time. Kindly, therefore, send four pounds at your convenience.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 4819. Courtesy : Premlila Thackersey

42. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

After Morning Prayers, January 15, 1931

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

It is good that you sent me . . . 's[1] letter. He also may write to me direct. I agree with you that he should discuss the whole matter with Kakasaheb.

As far as I have been able to understand the situation, it seems to

[1] The names have been omitted.

me that he should make . . .[1] free. It is unlikely that she will marry again, but in her heart of hearts she will welcome her freedom. If even now she is leading an immoral life, . . . will not be able to reform her, just as he cannot reform any other woman like her. He should not mind what effect his action, right in itself, produces on society. He should get rid of the idea that she belongs to him. And if he sincerely repents having married a second time, he should regard . . .[2] purely as a friend and live with her accordingly. But one cannot force oneself to act in such a manner. If he cannot live thus, he should humbly live with . . . as her husband, exercising as much self-control as he can. There are many other issues which arise from this, but I do not wish to discuss them here.

The criticism about camps in your letter is a painful story. Truth and non-violence have not yet found a place in the hearts of people. They are accepted only as policy. Hence, even public workers have not realized that truth and non-violence in social life depend upon their practice by individuals, that is, upon self-purification by them. The Ashram was established to demonstrate the truth of this idea through actual practice. Our duty is to go on serving, unaffected by the atmosphere round us no matter how polluted it is. This is true about women workers too. All of them should be as strong as Khurshedbehn, who will never fall in any atmosphere however evil it may be. It is true that we have not yet reached this level. We have got this golden opportu-nity of testing our strength. Maybe some of us, both men and women, will receive burns in this ordeal. Let that be so, if it cannot be helped. If on the whole our effort in the Ashram is sincere, God will protect us. The prayer-song of the turtle and his wife is worth meditating over in this connection.

The second part of your letter also is interesting. What can I say in reply? Work as hard as you can but not at the cost of your health. We ought to preserve good health, and not merely refrain from sacrificing the body unnecessarily.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5498

[1] The names have been omitted.
[2] *ibid.*

43. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI N. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 15, 1931

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

I have your letter. You should try to check a disease as soon as it makes its appearance. I hope you have consulted a nose specialist and taken proper treatment. I had read Father Elwin's articles. I was glad to learn that Dahibehn and Sharinabehn had been arrested. I used to complain, too, against the . . .[1] khadi in the Kheda district. I would be happy if the cause is removed now. I am sure the people of Kheda at any rate will continue their sacrifices.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8991

44. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 15, 1931

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter containing news about the Sardar. We know about Harilal. How long is Father likely to stay on for dental treatment? Even if it[2] is infested with mosquitoes, it is desirable that this course of treatment should be completed. I believe that you too will stay on there[3] during that period. We are both all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

PS.

How is Sumitra[4] ? Can Yashoda move about? Is Vithalbhai staying on there?

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4 : Manibehn Patelne, p. 78

[1] A word here is not legible in the source.
[2] Arthur Road Prison
[3] Bombay
[4] Dr. Kanuga's daughter

45. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 15, 1931

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

Tell Chhotelalji to write to me if he is permitted to write letters. Has he also been released under [Section] 160? Essential silk means that which is required for the borders in khadi or without which khadi itself cannot be sold. If the question of principle is settled, the rest can be done as suits the occasion.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 3037

46. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
January 16, 1931

DEAR MAJOR MARTIN[1],

With reference to your talk about interviews, I regret that I am unable to depart from the position I took up at the outset. It is the only position that I can take up. For years I have erased the distinc-tion between blood relations and others. There are friends and inmates of the Ashram who are, if possible, more to me than blood relations, But I have endeavoured to appreciate theGovernment's position and therefore submitted a list[2] of possible friends who should be per-mitted to visit me on the same terms as relations by blood and marriage. I have excluded from the list all noted political leaders. I offered too that if there was any specific name to which the Govern-ment had objection I should be informed. Further than that I could not go then and cannot now.

Yours etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 19985

[1] Jail Superintendent, Yeravda Central Prison, Poona
[2] *Vide* "Letter to R.V.Martin", 8-7-1930.

47. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
January 16, 1931

DEAR MAJOR MARTIN,

Babu Ramananda Chatterjee of *The Modern Review* has, as you know, written to me asking me to sign an appeal for a *Golden Book*[1] of appreciations to be presented to the Poet Rabindranath Tagore on his forthcoming 71st birthday. The appeal is signed by Sir J. C. Bose, R. Rolland, and Einstein among others. I would like, if I may, to respond to the invitation. If you feel that you have no authority to give me the permission, will you please ascertain the Government's wishes in the matter? I should like an early reply.[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 19986

48. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

January 16, 1931

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

I have already written to you about the books. Don't worry about my health on any account. It is certainly good. How old is Tara? I hope you write the diary regularly. It is my experience and of many others that doing so helps us to keep a watch over our truthfulness.

[1] *The Golden Book of Tagore, 1931*

[2] The permission was given on January 26, the day Gandhiji was released. The following notings, reproduced from Bombay Secret Abstracts, were recorded on this letter :

"I see no reason why he should not be allowed to sign this appeal. There is nothing political about it. He and Tagore have been friends for many years. HOTSON/22.1.

"May go U.O. to I.G. of Prison to issue the necessary orders. G.C/22.

"The prisoner may be permitted to sign the appeal. E.E. DOYLE. 25-1-31.

"The appeal has been handed over to the prisoner. R. V. MARTIN. 26-1-31."

For Gandhiji's tribute, *vide* "Letter to Jaishankar Trivedi", 27-1-1931.

What is the position about Chandubhai's hospital now? For what purpose is the rest of the building being used? Pyarelal is in fine health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 1817

49. LETTER TO MATHURI KHARE

January 16, 1931

CHI. MATHURI,

I got your letter. So you did not like staying in a hut in Bochasan? Before the Ashram was built, we also lived in such huts.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 259. Courtesy : Lakshmibehn Khare

50. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

After the morning prayer, January 16, 1931

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

You are fortunate to have Vallabhdas's company. Without being impatient, do what you can with readily available means. Cultivate, the attitude of detachment even while doing such good work. It was a wise statement of Raychandbhai based on his own experience that one should cultivate equimindedness even in one's striving for *moksha*. To say that I have been trying to invent a new model of spinning-wheel is an exaggeration, if not an untruth. I know my limitations fully well. I have no skill at all for inventing a new model of the spinning-wheel. What I am trying to do is to effect some improvements in the *Gandiva* model. But even in that, there is some element of imitation of the *Jivanchakra* model. Even so, the information you give me will help me in effecting even the modest improvement I am trying to bring about. I see some difficulty in adopting the 'V' shape pulley. The one I have, has a shape between that of 'V' and 'U'. I have felt no neces-sity at all for a ball bearing. I therefore like its design. The *takli* will be a child's play for you if you wish to try the experiment. But you may forget about it. The one object of your devoted effort is your spinning-wheel.

Rambhau's foot must have got all right. Do not get tired of him. Be content with what he does. Keep reminding him of his duty and that too by mero hints. What 'You' or 'I' cannot do, 'He' will do. Who is this 'He' ? 'He' means 'Time' which has arisen to destroy the peoples[1]. Their destruction includes destruction of their bad habits, too. Good habits even Time cannot destroy, for they are *sat*[2]. That which is *sat,* can never cease to exist. But let us leave alone such learned talk. In Rambhau's case, forbearance is the only remedy. These forces are operative in everyone's life—the tendencies acquired in one's previous existence, the present environment and one's own effort. The answer to your question why two persons of opposite characters are found born in the same family, is that we do not know all the good and bad qualities in the characters of Panditji and Lakshmibehn and their forbears, and therefore do not have sufficient material to base our decision on. We should not even wish to have such knowledge. We will have sufficient explanation if we accept the law of karma.

You are unnecessarily making yourself unhappy regarding Chandradutta. It is not incumbent on you to give up anything. If an ant aspires to kill an elephant, it is a form of pride. You were impelled by your nature to do some service to Chandradutta. He accepted from you what he could. You may write to him if you can do so gently but at the same time intelligently. Otherwise give up the thought of even writing to him. "What you have written to me is not proper. If it is proper God will make me see my error. It is not right for you to do what an unhealthy man like me does. But since you no longer have the loving faith in me, I cannot guide you. God will make somebody else the instrument of guiding you. Meanwhile you do what you think proper. God is looking after you and me. We are but perishable creatures." Write to Chandradutta this or something to this effect and then stop thinking about him. If you have not followed what I have written, ask me to explain. Devdas's interpretation of the verse 'Tena Tyakten Bhunjithah'[3] can by analogy be applied to this case. 'Renounce it and then enjoy it'. So, we can enjoy all this that belongs to God, can we? From the point of view of grammar, the meaning I have given to the verse will appeal to those whose knowledge is

[1] The reference is to verse 32, Chapter XI of the *Bhagavad Gita*.

[2] 'That which is'; the reference is to verse 16, Chapter 11 of the *Bhagavad Gita*.

[3] Part of the first verse of the *Ishopanishad*

imperfect. After all we are concerned with the spirit of the verse, and that is observed by both readings of the verse.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32999

51. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,
January 16, 1931

CHI. KANTA,

There is no cause for you to be scared. Man is shaped by difficulties. One need not therefore be scared of them. And if we do feel scared we should remember what the *Gita* says. It teaches us to be equi-minded in happiness and suffering, We should not get elated by happiness and depressed by suffering. And what reason do you have to feel unhappy ? It is all a matter of the mind. If a person who gets food to eat and water to drink and a place to live and sleep in feels unhappy it may be said that he does so only because he wishes to be unhappy. It is surprising that your cough still persists. Take only milk and papaya. Drink warm water with soda bicarb. Take deep breaths. Consult a doctor if necessary. You can engage yourself in service even there. He who spins and cards in the spirit of *yajna* does serve.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

52. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 17, 1931

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI (CARE KASHIRAMJI),

I have an impression that I have answered your letter. Your question is not such as to warrant a reply from me. Rising early can become effortless by practice. In order to rise early one must go to bed early. Even the habit of evacuating the bowels immediately upon rising can be acquired by and by. During winter you can begin

studies after taking some exercises. The primary thing is to acquire the habit of rising early. If we cannot be firm even in such a small matter, the capacity to carry an important job to its conclusion will be difficult, if not impossible, to achieve.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 835

53. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI

January 17, 1931

CHI. KALAVATI,

Your letter. Pay no heed to anyone's criticism. Pay attention to what the chief says. Shamalbhai and Gangabehn do not wish to save you. Resolve this problem by talking it over with them. No father has the right to forcibly send away his daughter to her husband's house.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 5275

54. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 17, 1931

CHI. RAMACHANDRA,

You are making great effort to write a good hand I like it. Similarly continue your effort to be good too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 5276

55. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

January 17, 1931

CHI. VASUMATI,

It would be cowardice to run away to the Himalayas. Every page of the *Gita* teaches us to regard equally respect and disrespect. We should not feel hurt by anything that somebody may say about us. We should pay attention only to what our conscience tells us. But I know that you have merely poured out your heart.Since you continue to do your best, everything will be all right. Surendra's help was certainly very valuable.

The work of educating children is of very great value. While giving them a knowledge of letters, we should also try to mould their ideas and behaviour. We should pay proper attention to their general habits too. We should examine their nails, ears, eyes, teeth, etc., and, if they are not clean, make the children wash them in the school itself. They should be quick in oral sums. We should also pay attention to children's habit of using foul words among themselves.

I keep good health. Pyarelal is fine, too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9318

56. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,

January 17, 1931

CHI. PREMA,

What courage I must have! Or love for Indian languages! How-soever incorrect, was it not Marathi? But the time for writing to you in Marathi is not yet.

You have taken upon yourself a fairly difficult responsibility. Do not lose hope about Durga. If you continue to coax her, that very Durga will begin to take interest in reading.

You can get some general knowledge about plants from Totaramji. Shouldn't the children be able to recognize the trees and plants growing in the Ashram, and should they not know how they grow and when they bear fruit and be able to tell their age? I of course cannot do this.

I would not have remembered the *Sankranti* Day, were it not a

half-holiday here. I got the *tilgul*[1] sent by you. They again reminded me of it. For us, one may say, every day is a *Sankranti* Day.

With Narandas's permission, you can send to people any extracts from my letters which you wish to.

"Hero" means one worthy of reverence, a god, so to say. In the political field, Gokhale holds that place for me. The persons who have influenced my life as a whole in a general way are Tolstoy, Ruskin, Thoreau and Raychandbhai. Perhaps I should drop Thoreau from this list.

Great men *seem* to be the cause of revolutions in the world. In truth the people themselves are the cause. Revolutions do not take place by accident but obey laws as rigid as the law governing the motions of the planets. Only we do not know those laws and causes and, therefore, regard revolutions as accidents.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10252; also *Bapuna Patro—5 : Ku. Premabehn Kantakne*, pp. 40-1

57. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

January 17, 1931

CHI. KASHINATH,

I think the more important reasons for your decision to live outside the Ashram were your own wish to do so and the facilities which you would enjoy thereby. I too do not believe Narandas to be a perfect man. But I believe that his mistakes are unintentional, and that he makes fewer mistakes than others would. I, therefore, think that we should put up with his method of running the Ashram. You may take your own time to return to the Ashram, but if you really had no objection to showing your diary, you should show it even now, and ask to be admitted to the Ashram when you wish and are ready to go there. I have not been able to understand why the teaching of Hindi at the Ashram was discontinued. Did Narandas forbid it, or did you yourself stop teaching?

I am glad that your father has joined you. But you should continue to maintain a firm attitude. I have no doubt that, no matter

[1] An offering prepared from sesame and jaggery

how much he insists, you should prevent her from going. I, however, hope that in the present circumstances she will not wish to go. If that man decides to marry again, we need not object.

It seems that Mother's health is improving. It will get even better if she observes the restrictions on diet, remains in the open air and takes other precautions.

I was satisfied with Kalavati's answer. Just now at any rate she seems to be progressing.

I know Gadreji. I have carefully gone through the extract quo-ted by you. I felt that it showed more emotion than calm reflection. It attributes to me something that I have never held or said. I have never asserted that the Pandavas, Krishna and other characters are not historical persons. My view is that, though all of them might be historical persons, the *Mahabharata* is not a work of history in the modern sense of the term. Caesar, John, Henry, etc., were historical kings, but we know that Shakespeare's plays named after them are not works of history. He used historical events and characters for his dramatic purpose in the plays. Further, I never thought or said that the *Gita* was composed for expound-ing non-violence. On the contrary, I have believed and have said, that at the time of the *Gita*, war was accepted as normal, though they believed in the dharma of non-violence. Nevertheless, I believe that the teaching of the *Gita* does not justify war, even if the author of the *Gita* had intended otherwise. I hold that physical warfare, armed warfare can never be non-violent. Those who perform animal sacrifice may, and do, say that belief in non-violence does not forbid such sacrifice. But whatever they say, animal sacrifice is a violence. And this also is true about armed warfare. To regard it as a necessity and not subject to the general rule, and then to regard it as sanctioned by religion is one thing, but it is quite another to say that it is non-violent. I feel that Gadreji's article suffers from looseness and confusion of thought. Being a prisoner, I cannot make a public reply, but it is open to you to send my reply to Gadreji for his information.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5283

58. LETTER TO VANAMALA PARIKH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Saturday [*January 17, 1931*][1]

CHI. VANAMALA,

What an intelligent girl you are! A sum which would seem difficult to other children, you found quite easy. Here is another, a little more difficult, sum. If a girl spins 252 rounds in an hour, how many would she spin in twenty minutes?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5760

59. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

January 14/18, 1931

CHI. MIRA,

Again I commence the Ashram letters with yours and that just after the morning prayer.

The 5th verse[2] is : "May the Goddess Saraswati (of learning) the Destroyer completely of black ignorance, protect me, she who is white as the *mogra* flower, the moon and a garland of snow, who has worn white robes, whose hands are adorned with the beautiful bamboo of her *veena* (a kind of violin), who is seated on a white lotus and who is always adored by Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva and the other gods."

January 18, 1931

To me the thought here is very beautiful. Learning of course means wisdom. The emphasis on threefold whiteness-that of snow, moon, f lower-and the white dress and white seat is intended to show that uttermost purity is an indispensable part of wisdom or learning. As you explore the deeper meaning of these and kindred verses, you will find every virtue personified and made a living reality instead of a dead diction ary word. These imaginary gods are more real than the socalled real things we perceive with our five senses. When I recite this verse, for instance, I never think that I am addressing an imaginary

[1] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Vanamala Parikh", 10-1-1931. This letter was presumably written on Saturday week.

[2] Of *Ashram Bhajanavali; vide "Ashram Bhajanavali".*

picture. The recitation is a mystical act. That when I analyse the act intellectually, I know that the goddess is an imaginary being, does not in any way affect the value of the recitation at prayer time. If all this is not clear to you, you must unhesitatingly tax me.

So you are to be travelling again. I can only say 'do not over-do it, do not strain yourself endurance.'

I telegraphed about Surendra[1]. He must have given up his fast. For me, I am quite right. I have not yet gone back to vegetables or bread. Almonds, dates and a little milk or curds and lemons seem to keep me perfectly fit. To be able to keep standing at the *takli* for nearly two hours is not a bad feat for me and I sit at the wheel for nearly two hours without any support to the back. Add to that nearly 45 minutes for carding and sliver making.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 5429. Courtesy : Mirabehn; also G.N. 9663

60. LETTER TO DURGA DESAI

5 a.m., January 18, 1931

CHI. DURGA,

I hope that your experiment of eating oranges is going on. I also suppose that you are taking enemas regularly. The belching must stop. If you suffer from headaches, you may apply mud packs to the head.

Tell Mahadev that I have not seen Hill's translation of the *Gita*. I have written to Kaka and asked him to suggest any changes that he may wish to in *Anasaktiyoga* and ask me any question he may want in regard to it. I shall be glad if he does. I send to Mirabehn the transl-ation of one *bhajan* every week. If it is decided in future to publish them, Mahadev will certainly see them. Even otherwise, you may get the translations from Mirabehn. I have got with me translations of all *bhajans* except the Bengali ones. It would be a fine thing if Devdas turns out a Sanskrit scholar. It would be good if he improves his Urdu too. If Mahadev has not read what Mathuradas has written on the carding-bow, he should do so. It is necessary to make this science as exact, and introduce as much art in it, as possible. My love for the spinning-wheel increases as I take more and more interest in it. The

[1] Who taught Hindi to Mirabehn

spinning-wheel means all the processes through which cotton passes. God is no doubt the sole help of the poor, but the spinning-wheel is His hands and feet, and, the poor man or woman who holds it holds God. We may not be able to live on simple fare as the poor do, but we ought to ply the spinning-wheel for their sake. And to ply the spinning-wheel means to examine its infinite capacity and reveal it to the world. This is a study of no ordinary value. And to pursue it means to live the teaching of the *Gita*. I need not say all this to Mahadev, but, at this hour of prayer, these deeper sentiments of my heart come out spontaneously as I think of him. Perhaps I would not be able to express them before others in the same manner.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 16901

61. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI PATEL

January 18, 1931

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I have your letter. I understand the situation in which you are placed. If you only remain firm in your vow about the struggle, many of your problems will be solved. I don't remember having written anything special to you in reply to your letter about jail life.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9504

62. LETTER TO JAMNA N. GANDHI

January 18, 1931

CHI. JAMNA,

I don't at all remember having received a letter from you about Dharmadas and Kalyandas. If I had received any, I would have replied to it.

If you don't keep good health in the Ashram, I should certainly like you to go to Bombay and adopt the diet I have suggested.

Tell Kusum that she should not be impatient to start eating solid food. One can live on fruits and milk for the whole of one's life. She must fully regain her health. There is nothing wrong with my health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati : C.W. 847. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

63. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 18, 1931

BHAI FULCHAND,

I was eagerly waiting for a letter from you. I know your enthusiasm. I need not say anything from here whether or not picketing would be proper. It will be enough, so far as I am concerned,

if people do not swerve from the path of truth and non-violence even for the sovereignty of the three worlds.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 2865. Courtesy : Shardabehn Shah

64. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

January 18, 1931

CHI. GANGABEHN,

When children grow up, they become our friends. One can only advise a friend. He may then do what he thinks best, and one should not mind if he does so. Moreover, we hold all human beings in equal regard; how, then, can we be pleased with some and offended with some others? You should not, therefore, feel hurt about Kaku in any way.

Take care of your feet. You should keep them in warm water for a long time and then apply *kokum* oil. That will be enough.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 8770. Courtesy : Gangabehn Vaidya

65. LETTER TO JANAKIBEHN BAJAJ

January 18, 1931

CHI. JANAKIBEHN,

Shouldn't I say that you have done me a favour by writing to me after many days? The task in Calcutta is a difficult one, but not so for you. Ghanshyamdasji is making a good contribution through his work.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchve Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 73

66. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

January 18, 1931

CHI. SHARDA,

If your health remains good in Ras, I would like you to stay there for the present.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 9898. Courtesy : Shardabehn Chokhawala

67. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

January 18, 1931

CHI. VIDYAVATI (LUCKNOW JAIL),

I was very happy to have your letter and more so to learn that Laxmi Devi is also there. When next you have the opportunity to write, let me know your routine there. Jang Bahadur is also showing courage. What food do you get? Blessings to all sisters. I am well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

68. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

8 p.m., January 14/19, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got the post today at 8 in the morning. I found on the cover stamps worth eleven annas. On the packet, the stamps used to be three annas worth. I don't feel, however, that paying the extra eight annas every time will be an extravagance. This time at any rate I didn't feel that it was so, for your letter contained news of Surendra's fast and I could send a wire to you to persuade him to give it up. These days the officials here are careful about the post received from and addressed to the Ashram. At both ends, therefore, we are likely to receive it regularly.

Inform Surendra. Show this to Nathji or write to him. I see ignorance and impatience in Surendra's step. The ignorance is on two counts. There is ignorance in the belief that, when imprisoned, one is prevented from doing work of service and, secondly, in the belief that one does service by giving up one's life in this manner. The duty of everyone in Surendra's circumstances is to preserve his body carefully and use it for service. In jail one can spin and weave and do many other kinds of productive work. Upright conduct will have its effect on the masses. That is also part of service. I see cowardice and lack of understanding in ending one's life by fasting. Surendra's motive is noble, but the good-ness of the motive does not by itself condone the intrinsic badness of an action. Considered from every point of view, therefore, Surendra's action 102 in embarking on a fast was blameworthy. Obtain Nathji's opinion and let me know what he thinks. If Surendra has anything to say in defence of his action, let him. I don't wish to suggest that one may not give up one's life in any circumstances. All that I mean is that Surendra's circumstances are not such as will justify his doing so.

Madhavji has decided to follow my example in experimenting with *jowar* and *bajra*. Dissuade him from doing so. For one thing, my experiment, cannot be considered to have succeeded. Even if it is so considered, an experiment of this kind should not be imitated too hastily. Milk and dates have agreed with him, and let him cling to them. I may say that I have earned the right to make experiments and play with my body after many years' practice till it has become

accustomed to such experiments. This can be said about few others. Moreover, this is not the time for such experiments.

Let us not shed tears over your not having received my postcards regularly. After all, am I not a prisoner? What facilities are given should be accepted as a kindness. I have no complaint to make about my health now. At present my diet consists of dates, almonds, curds and lime juice. I am watching the effects of these. I do not take more than ten *tolas* of curds, whether in liquid or semi-liquid form. I take them only once. I don't think I can digest more just now. The total number of almonds at two meals comes to forty, and that of dates, at three meals, to seventy. I will not increase the number for some time. Perhaps I may reduce it. I am proceeding cautiously. This quantity of food contains plenty of ener-gy. It is yet six days before this letter will be posted. If I make any changes during this period, I will write about them. There is not the slightest cause for worry. The almonds are first soaked in water and peeled, they are then roasted and crushed into a jelly. I follow this method in order to save time. The other method of crushing the almonds without roasting them and then boiling the paste in water is of course an excellent one.

We should realize that we can never do our *yajna* work too methodically. The vigilance which we exercise in such work will keep us vigilant in all other matters, provided of course we are sincere at heart.

If even now Keshu calms down and devotes himself to work, I will not believe that he has wasted his time so far. You took a very good step indeed.

Tell Devdas that I agree with what he says. I would be ashamed to be released on the ground of illness. I would rather prefer to take milk and curds and preserve my health.That is actually what I am doing. The primary aim of my experiment is to keep up my health here by exercising self-restraint. The experiment was started entirely for the sake of health, but, since it also satisfied my cons-cience, a spiritual motive has entered it.

Do what is necessary to settle the affair of Nanibehn and Budha-bhai. When you think it necessary that I should write to anyone in the matter, let me know.

Tell Sarja that I regard her as very fortunate. She should now pick up great courage and go forth and make good use of every moment of her time.

Mathew should not be permitted to use the name of the Ashram

for working outside. In any case he cannot be paid money for doing so. If he can, he may do some teaching work in the Ashram or the Vidyapith. But shouldn't he first acquire sufficient proficiency in spinning, carding, etc., and obtain a certificate? And in Hindi, too? Till he has done this, he cannot be entrusted with responsibility for outside work. I will write to him also to this effect.

I suppose Mirabehn's paper has closed down completely. Did she issue any statement or let the public merely guess as much? What about the money received from people? Who was, or is, in charge of the financial affairs?

Be firm in dealing with Sarojinidevi. If Padma herself wants to leave, I think it would be best to let her go. You should tell her plainly that if, after leaving once, she wants to return, you will have to consider then whether to re-admit her. If the mother or the daughter or both leave, they should understand just now that they will be leaving for ever.

Ask Devdas to send my compliments to Lala Hansraj and tell him that every thread which he spins brings swaraj nearer. I hope that he will excel me in speed.

Night, January 18, 1931

Read my letter to Sarojinidevi. If she has calmed down and if you fear that she will be upset again by my letter, do not give it to her. There was a complaint in one of the letters (I forget whose) that the children have again started playing mischief among themselves and making noise at prayer meetings. Please look into the matter if there is any substance in this complaint.

Night, January 19, 1931

Prabhavati's husband has gone to Delhi and may, therefore, send for some inmate of the Ashram. If he does so, send someone immediately to bring her to the Ashram. If she recovers, we shall have earned the merit of saving a cow from the slaughter-house. My health has remained very good. I continue the same diet and in the same quantity.

Blessings from

BAPU[1]

[1] For the text of the *Gita* discourse (Ch. XI) which followed, *vide* "Letters on the *Gita*", 21-2-1932.

[PS.]

There are 78 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I

69. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

January 19, 1931

DEAR MAJOR DOYLE,

Sjt. A. Patwardhan is an old associate of mine in political, educational, social and religious work. He is at present in R. prison. I read in the papers that he is fasting because he is not permitted to spin during leisure hours. I hope the report is not true. The prohibition is unthinkable when A and B class prisoners are permitted. I may say that with many of us the duty of spinning comes before the pleasure of eating. Will you be so good as to let me know whether there is any truth in the report? I am sure you will appreciate my anxiety.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 19987

70. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

January 19, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have all your letters. I get them fairly regularly. I understand that I should wait for a wire from you. But I don't understand now the reasons about home affairs which you give. What help can a person who is almost bed-ridden give? And even if she can give any help, others should not let her give it. But I understand your argument. Since I have not lived in a home of mine for many years, I

[1] The Inspector-General of Prisons replied the same day :

"The report is perfectly true. The privilege of spinning has not been extended to C class prisoners—as it would be impossible, for administrative reasons, to have charkhas, *taklis* and cotton all over the prison."

"If any C class prisoner can show special reasons why this privilege should be extended in his case, I am sure his request will receive sympathetic consideration.

"The case of the prisoner in point is now before Government for orders."

S. P. Patwardhan, popularly known as Appasaheb Patwardhan, was later allowed to spin; *vide* "Letter to E. E. Doyle", 20-1-1931.

have lost the faculty of understanding the problems of a home. I very much hope there will be no unexpected difficulty on the 24th. My health is very good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3404

71. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Tuesday [On or before *January 20, 1931*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

I do not know where you are. I am sure your agitation must have subsided now. The central teaching of the *Gita* is that we should preserve peace of mind and be happy in all conditions of life. The first verse of the morning prayer, too, speaks of *sat-chit-sukh*.[2] Till we have attained that state, all else in us is imperfect. We should be indifferent to honour and insult. We should, therefore, do, to the best of our ability, the task that has fallen to our lot.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 8772. Courtesy : Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] Gandhiji was released from Yeravda Prison on January 26, 1931.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 20-12-1930.

72. COMMENTS ON GALLEY-PROOFS OF "HOW TO COMPETE WITH FOREIGN CLOTH" [1]

YERAVDA MANDIR,
POONA,
January 20, 1931

I have gone through the pages of your book in the form of proofs. You have presented some good statistics in the book. The information given about mills is more than that of handlooms.

After reading it, I feel that "How to compete with Foreign Cloth" will be more appropriate as its name.

You have not referred very minutely to the importance of hand-spinning in the achievement of boycott of foreign cloth. If you are convinced that hand-spinning is the master key, you ought to present that fact clearly. It is my growing conviction that a permanent boycott of foreign cloth is impossible without hand-spinning, and without hand-spinning, it is difficult for hand-weaving to exist. If you agree with this opinion, you must make this very clear. In spite of my partiality for hand-spinning I do not agree with the contention of Mr. Talcherkar that machine-spun yarn is weaker than hand-spun yarn. I consider this claim of superiority of hand-spun yarn unfounded and it is unproved by experience. But what does it matter? The machine-made bread, in spite of its being more round, smooth and attractive than hand-made bread, will always be considered unacceptable when compared to the hand-made bread.

I visualise some difficulty in sending back your letter. You are at one with me in regard to hand-spinning. Therefore, what more can I wish? Make this point as clear as you can.

Mills and handlooms are mutually antagonistic. Mills do have a place the national economy of India will surely continue for many

[1] A note written by someone on top of the item reads: "Comments of Mahatma Gandhi on the Draft galley-proofs of Mr. M.P. Gandhi's forthcoming book titled *How to Compete with Foreign Cloth* received in his handwritten letters in Gujarati dated 1.1.1931 and 20.1.1931 from Yeravda Mandir, Poona, and translated into English". The first part of the comments sent with Gandhiji's letter dated 1.1.1931 is already reproduced in Vol. XLV, p. 47. Hence, only the latter part, presumably sent with the letter dated 20.1.1931, is being reproduced here. For Gandhiji's final preface to the book, *vide* "Preface to *Pardeshi Kapadni same harifai kem karavi*", 25-2-1931.

years to come, perhaps they may live for ever. My contention is that those who understand should not argue that they are mutually helpful. Mills are independent. They do get help from Swadeshi movement, and they should get it, but in saying that both handlooms and mills deserve help, the handlooms get less help.

The import of artificial silk deserve to be objected to at all times.

I personally believe that we can take necessary raw cotton from other countries, but at the moment, I would not bother about elaborating on this matter.

What you have suggested for protection to hand-weaving is quite proper. Regarding the name of the book, I still feel that what I have suggested will be better. But you may keep whatever name you like.[1]

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a copy: S.N. 33159

73. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

January 20, 1931

DEAR MAJOR DOYLE,

I thank you for your prompt reply. *The Times of India's* latest report says that Sjt. Appasaheb Patwardhan commenced his fast on 10th instant. I know that he has not superfluous flesh on him and it is a matter of great anxiety to me to feel that he may be still fasting. Could you please ascertain how he is doing and let me know also whether permission has been granted him to spin.

Your reply raises what is to me a very big question. You call the labour of spinning a privilege. But to all who spin for sacrifice it is a sacred And why is it impossible for administrative reasons to have instruments of this labour all over the prison if it is not impossible to have instruments of labour? In 1922 all the prisoners who wished were allowed to spin in this prison and their work was used for the prison as may be done again. The wheels too were made in the prison. I am not idly raising this question of spinning. It is, as you as well as the Government are aware, a matter of vital importance for me and some of my associates. It goes politics and economics. With some of

[1] A note by M.P. Gandhi, the writer, reads: "The necessary alterations were made in the book in the light of Bapu's comments and certain paragraphs were elaborated as suggested by Bapu."

us life would not worth living if we could not serve God through this little labour. Evidently C class prisoners who have been spinning in Sabarmati, Nasik and perhaps other prisons have been doing so without authority and with the unwarranted connivance of the local officials. But such a sacred duty cannot be performed in a precarious manner under connivance.Either the Government should recognize the right of prisoners to spin even as they recognize their right to pray and eat and perform the other necessary functions although their performance may, as it does, cause inconvenience or they should say they are not prepared to recognize this right in which case in justice it should be withdrawn from all classes of prisoners. In reality the discrimination in such a matter between A class and B class prisoners on the one hand and C class on the other shows clearly the absurdity and the injustice of the classification of prisoners. And I feel myself with all the conveniences given to me regarding spinning to be a much pampered and privileged prisoner. I have no desire to enjoy a single privilege that any other prisoner may not for similar reasons enjoy. I would ask youplease therefore to treat this matter of sacrificial spinning as one of urgency. I am sorry again to put you and the Government to trouble but you and they will appreciate my position.[1]

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat S.N. 19988

74. LETTER TO MANMOHANDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 20, 1931

BHAISHRI MANMOHANDAS,

I foresee a difficulty in returning your letter.

1. Since you agree with me about the importance of hand-spinning, please make it as clear as you can what more you expect from me.

2. The interests of the mill and handloom industries are mutually opposed. There is certainly a place for the mill industry. It will have a place for many more years to come, perhaps for ever. My

[1] To this Doyle replied the next day: "Provisional sanction has already been accorded to S. P. Patwardhan to spin, pending receipt of Government orders. To enable me to understand your point of view on the subject of spinning—I shall be glad if you will explain what exactly you mean by the term 'sacrificial spinning'. *Vide* also "Letter to E. E. Doyle", 22-1-1931.

position is that those who understand the problem should not argue that the two industries are complementary to each other. The mills require no support. The swadeshi movement itself helps them, cannot but help them. If we plead, however, that both require help, the handloom industry will receive less help. Perhaps I am not able to explain my meaning clearly. Even if we do not plead for the mill industry, it does receive help. If we plead for it, we may possible harm it and will certainly harm the other.

3. The manufacture of artificial silk should always be opposed.

4. Personally, I believe that we can import the required cotton. But I would not bother to explain this just now.

5. The measures which you suggest for protecting the handloom industry seem quite all right.

The title which you have suggested does not appeal to me. I prefer the title which I have suggested. You may, however, give whichever you like.

I keep good health. I don't eat fresh fruits these days.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9

75. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

January 20, 1931

DEAR SISTER,

You must have received my last postcard in which I had acknowledged receipt of the dates and requested you to send cotton. I got the tin box of cotton on Sunday. It contained 1 3/4 pounds. That will last ten days. At present I require exactly four pounds every month. Please, therefore, send the balance before the end of this week. You need not put the cotton in a tin box. It will be enough if you pack it in paper which has not been used. Here I store the cotton in a bag.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4820. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

76. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
January 22, 1931

DEAR MAJOR DOYLE,

I thank you for your prompt reply.[1] Will you please tell me how my friend is doing?

With reference to your inquiry, sacrificial spinning means spinning in the name of God for the sake of the poor without any expectation of personal gain. I suggest that all those who wish to do sacrificial spinning should have permission to do so. Two more cases of fasting have occurred for prohibition to spin. Both the men are connected with the Ashram. They have observed the rule of spinning for some years. I would therefore ask you, if you can, to issue provisional instructions in such cases.

Yours,

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 19989

77. LETTER TO SHARDA G. SHAH

January 22, 1931

CHI. SHARDA,

Since you like to stay there rather than at your home, do stay there and get rid of your ailment.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9899. Courtesy: Shardabehn Chokhawala

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. E. Doyle", 20-1-1931 footnote1.

78. LETTER TO NIRMALA DESAI

January 22, 1931

CHI. NIRMALA,

The correct word is *anasakti* and not *anashakti*. *Shakti* means strength. *Asakti* means desire, ignorant attachment. *Anasakti* means. . .[1] absence of such attachment. . . .[2] Do you understand the *Anasaktiyoga?*

You should keep a diary and write your thoughts in it. If we do so, we are able to keep a watch over our minds. That makes us good. Today. . .[3] after many years . . .[4] can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9458

79. LETTER TO KUNVARJI MEHTA

January 22, 1931

BHAI KUNVARJI,

It seems doctors have let you off quite soon. Before you get this letter, you will probably be on your feet. But see that you are not overhasty and, in consequence, become bed-ridden again. My blessings to Shivlal.

Tell Abbas Saheb that the hospital seems to have done him much good, and that, having come out of it a young man again, he is bound to do something striking. I keep good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2692

[1] The original appears to have been damaged at these places.
[2] *ibid.*
[3] *ibid.*
[4] *ibid.*

80. LETTER TO JAMNA N. GANDHI

January 22, 1931

CHI. JAMNA,

I advise you to put yourself under the treatment of the Punjabi vaid who had treated Chandrashankar. Chandrashankar says that he practises in a spirit of service. You and Kusum ought to get strong.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 848. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

81. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 22, 1931

CHI. MANI,

I have your beautiful long letter. Do I have to send back an equally long reply? My travels are from one end to the other of the compound. There is no guard or anybody else here to quarrel with. The sky is the ceiling of my train. If I were to attempt a description of its innumerable stars, I would fail. And the stars I see, you too see them. So I have nothing to write about. I too understand that you will remain outside prison for only a few days. For at present jail is our real home.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 78-9

82. LETTER TO KRISHNAMAIYA GIRI[1]

January 22, 1931

CHI. KRISHNAMAIYADEVI,

What has happened to you? How did you fall from the terrace? Give me full details. Get well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6232

83. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI

January 23, 1931

CHI. KALAVATI,

Be patient with people. The lethargic will become industrious by observing your scrupulous diligence. We become forgetful by thinking about too many things. Therefore we must concentrate only on the task on hand and nothing else. The memory is thus sharpened.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You are now entering the seventeenth year. Keep growing in character as well as in age.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5278

84. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 23, 1931

CHI. KASHINATH,

I got your letter. You should lovingly bear Father's anger. If Shanta herself cannot show firmness, I don't think it will be possible to protect her. The self is its own friend or enemy. About that matter of child-marriage, you may try to do what you can and should then stop worrying about it. We cannot fight every wrong. Solving the

[1] Widow of Dal Bahadur Giri

then stop worrying about it. We cannot fight every wrong. Solving the problems of family and social life is not unconnected with the struggle for swaraj. A reform effected in any field takes us a step nearer to swaraj.

As regards the oppression in the Badvani State, you may make due representation to the Kathiawar Political Agent and try to rouse public opinion against it, and then leave the matter. You may carry on such public agitation about it as you can. The remedy for every evil is self-purification. If there is but one self in all, you sould have faith that self-purification contributes to the welfare of the entire world. And through it we, too, immediately know our duty in particular circumstances. Self-purification is *tapas*. Think over what Tulsidasji says in "Bal Kand" in praise of *tapas* and its power.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5277

85. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

5 a.m., January 24, 1931

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I heard about your request for permission to leave the Ashram. If you have made the request so that you may cultivate greater purity outside, what you have done is all right. But if you have asked for permission to leave the Ashram in despair, thinking that, since you have committed an error once, you are certain to commit more errors in future, then your action is wrong. No one in the world is totally free from shortcomings. We have come together in the Ashram not because we are perfect, but in order that we may know our shortcomings and overcome them. We should not feel unhappy if on some occasion we commit an error. We should feel unhappy only if in committing it we had willingly yielded to a weakness in us or had not been vigilant enough, if we had not struggled, or not sincerely enough, to overcome it. You should never lose heart.

Think over this letter and do what you think proper.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3752

86. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

January 24, 1931

CHI. KANTA,

It would be proper to go to Kashi only when Gangabehn and Narandas permit. Has your cough stopped ? Have I not advised you to take deep breaths in open air on an empty stomach? You should drink warm water with five grains of salt and five grains of soda bicarb. The salt must be clean. The water should be quite warm. You and other women should be able to go to Kashi or anywhere else as freely as men. If you feel confident, I see no objection to your going. But do as Narandas says. I for one would not like the expense of a special escort. It is another matter that you may find a fellow-traveller. Does not Mani-behn go alone wherever she wants?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

87. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

January 24, 1931

CHI. SUMANGAL PRAKASH,

I see nothing wrong in your having had to go home because of illness.

I have not read Kropotkin's[1] book. My views concerning India are well known. In a general way on economics I liked Ruskin's *Unto This Last*. Write to me and tell me about your present activities and whether you have fully recovered.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Prince Kropotkin (1842-1921), Russian anarchist; presumably the reference is to the book *The Conquest of Bread*

88. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 24, 1931

CHI. MANGALA,

Had you gone to Baroda to while away the time? What did you do there? Let me know what time you got up in the morning, etc. Your handwriting is passable. You must still further improve it. Kamala is now at Ahmedabad. When you meet her, ask her if she has received your letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

This slip is torn from your letter. If you tear a sheet, you must tear it straight.

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11092. Courtesy,: Pushpa Naik

89. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

January 21/25, 1931

CHI. MIRA,

It is again Wednesday morning after prayer. If I am fortunate like last week, I may get the post about 8 a.m. today. But it gives me pleasure to copy out the verses (this time they will be two) for you before I commence the weekly batch of letters. Here then are 6th and 7th verses[1] with the notes made at the time:

6. "O God with a curved mouth and big body, refulgent like ten million suns, keep me ever free from harm whilst doing beneficent acts."

NOTE. This is addressed to God represented by the mystic letter pronounced 'Om'; mark its curved mouth and big body. Its mystic splendour has been sung by the Upanishads.

7. "Guru (teacher) is Brahma, he is Vishnu, he is Mahadev, he is the great Brahman itself. I bow to that guru."

[1] Of *Ashram Bhajanavali,*

NOTE. This refers of course to the spiritual teacher. This is not a mechanical or artificial relationship. The teacher is not all this in reality, but he is all that to the disciple who finds his full satisfaction in him and imputes perfection to him who gave him a living faith in a living God. Such a guru is a rarity at least nowadays. The best thing therefore is to think of God Himself as one's Guru or await the Light in faith.

No further comment beyond the notes seems necessary.

The decision as to further translation is made. For my own satisfaction, must embark upon the translation. Any short cut will be longer in the end. There will be no stopping after making the commencement. I seem, therefore, to be dreading the commencement whilst the present pressure continues. The dread is more mental than real. But mind supersedes reality.

I see you are already in Sind. I hope the Sind cold has not worried you. It can be as cold as the Punjab in Sind. You must have met Jamshed Mehta—a noble type of man. He is by himself an institution. And Iexpect to hear from you about Kikibehn, Gangabehn and Mrs. Malkani and Mrs. Jeramdas, and of course Anand and Vidya.

January 25, 1931

I have your letter from Sind. The rendering of the 2nd chapter is excellent. There are two correction I would suggest. Instead of 'notion', I should have 'weakness' at page 1 and at page 7 instead of 'followers of Vedas' I should have 'the Vedic literalists'. The second correction is vital, not so the first. The followers of the *Gita* are also followers of the Vedas. But these follow the spirit. The literalists, as the very name implies, follow the letter. I do not know whether I was to return the notes you have sent. I shall not re-read your letter, but am preserving the notes till I hear further from you. They are no longer required for immediate publication, though this one is good enough any day for publication subject to the vital correction.

What you say about rebirth is sound. It is nature's kindness that we do not remember past births. Where is the good, either, of knowing in detail the numberless births we have gone through? Life would be a burden if we carried such a tremendous load of memories. A wise man deliberately forgets many things even as a lawyer forgets the cases and their details as soon as they are disposed of. Yes, 'Death is but a sleep and a forgetting.'

My health is quite good. Energy sometimes astonishes me. I fancy that could not negotiate two hours' continuous standing at the

takli whilst I was at the Ashram. I was weighed on Thursday and I was 98 lb., a gain of $2\frac{1}{2}$ lb. in one week. It is an achievement. I am, have been for the past five days on vegetables, brown bread, almonds (paste), dates and sour limes. Dates I take principally in the morning. Brown bread is well toasted. I have not felt the need of milk or curds; if I did, I should take either. You will thus see that there is no cause what-soever for anxiety. It may be that I may need a does of milk or curds periodically. If I do, I shall take it as I may take medicine.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5430. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9664

90. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

January 25, 1931

MY DEAR ANAND,

Why did you fall ill ? You should make your mind and body disease-proof. I am glad you came in such close touch with Mirabehn. I expect to hear all about your experiences. I hope the illness has now entirely left you.

Love to you both.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

91. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

January 25, 1931

CHI. VASUMATI,

What has happened is for the best. It is only thus that we shall be really tested. Even if somebody assaults us, we should wish well of him and serve him. I am perfectly all right. I have hardly taken two pounds of milk and curds after I had resumed them. For the last four days, I have not taken them at all. I eat some toast of brown bread, vegetables and almonds crushed into paste. For breakfast I eat dates almonds, soaked in water.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9319

92. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

January 25, 1931

CHI. LILAVATI,

What may I write to you from here? May God bless you and give you the courage of a lioness. Take care of your health. Give up all idle thoughts and live happily.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9568

93. LETTER TO BALBHADRA

January 25, 1931

CHI. BALBHADRA,

Your letter was very good. If you can get ink and a pen, write in ink. If you otherwise keep good health, you need not weigh yourself. How many children attend?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9216

94. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Sunday Night, January 25, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got the wire you sent from Mugalsarai and it has relieved me. You should now wind up your affairs as soon as possible. Let there be no weight on your mind. After reading about Harasbabu's illness in your letter received yesterday, I had given up all hope and had thought that you would not be able to come in the immediate future now. But God wills your welfare. I shall know by and by how it became possible for you to leave. After reading your letter yesterday, I sent a wire to Jaya-prakash to inquire about Harasbabu's health. I expect a reply tomorrow (Monday). Since it has become possible for you to leave, Jayaprakash, too, must have gone to Delhi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3405

95. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

January 25, 1931

RAIHANA THE CRAZY,

What a strange girl you are! You fall ill, return home, go out again to work and again fall What wonderful enthusiasm the cause![1]

Is that enough for an Urdu lesson? Why do you say Father may have to be operated upon again? How much longer will he be in hospital? He seems to have fallen in love with it. I did not know that you had to undertake a three-day fast. What is the cause of your illness? Did you get the co-operation of women in Patan? How many had joined in the fast? Have you become stronger after the operation?

Khuda Hafiz.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9627

96. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

January 25, 1931

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I got your letter which you finished in Vaso. It is full of informa-tion. What shall I write in reply? Strange and yet charming are His ways—thus has He been described.

In this running about from place to place, see that you do not neglect your health. The secret of preserving good health is in our own hands:

1. We should not worry.
2. Even in the midst of ceaseless running about, one should inwardly cherish the feeling of rest.
3. We should drop a meal when we get food which may not agree with our system, rather than load the stomach with such food.
4. We should lie down for rest and snatch a nap at any time and at any place.

[1] These sentences are in Urdu.

All these are beads which would form a good rosary, with the string of Ramanama to join them; without it, they would remain loose and not hold together.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5499

97. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI M. THAKKAR

January 25, 1931

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

Conditions are the same in every home. Since all of us try, consciously or unconsciously, to seem better than others, it is necessary for us to be vigilant. You of course are. I have started eating cereals because I had always wanted to give up milk. If I could have lived, like the other prisoners here, on *jowar* and *bajra*, that would have made me happy, and served other purposes too. But *jowar-bajra* did not agree with me. Now I eat only wheat. Nobody else should copy me. As for you, the diet which you have adopted is the right one. If I succeed in my experiment, I shall advise others. Till then, milk and fruits remain the best diet. I keep well. At present, I eat dates once, bread and boiled vegetable twice, and twice or thrice almonds crushed into paste.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N.6813

98. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 25, 1931

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter only now. Do not allow your good health to be impaired. I have not so far received the *Conversations*[1] by Aurobindo. Even the copy sent by you has not reached me yet. Where is Krishnan Nair? We are both well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2386

99. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 25, 1931

CHI. MAHAVIR,

What you heard in Palanpur is true. A Muslim weaver from a village named Kanodar, near Palanpur, had come to the Ashram to teach weaving. He was sent by the late Nawab Saheb. A good carder always cards in such a manner that his strokes fall rhythmically. Mirabehn cards in that manner. I also keep time in my strokes, but imperfectly. If we card in this way, we feel less tired and are able to card more cotton during the same period of time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6226

100. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

January 25, 1931

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

I got your letter. This time, too, I cannot think of anything to write about" this is how you begin practically every one of your letters. Should I laugh at this or weep over it? Answer the question

[1] The reference is to *Conversations* (Special Edition 500) by Mother. Copies of the book with the Mother's autograph were distributed in the Ashram.

for yourself.

What reason is there now for you to worry about my health? Every time there was a set-back, however slight, I informed people about it, took immediate measures and recovered. My strength has remained unchanged. Why, then, should you worry?

Shanta must have arrived there by now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1818

101. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

January 25, 1931

CHI. RUKMINI,

If one wishes to write, one will certainly get the time to do so. If not every week, remember me once in a while. It seems you are being really tested. That is the experience of the whole world. You do not say anything about your own health. How is Benarsi employed there? There are many other relations and friends in that place, but it seems your household duties leave you no free time at all. Can you go out for a walk occasionally? Do you get time to read?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I read Benarsi's letter after I had written the letter above. It gives me news about your being ill—that you get fainting fits? How is that?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9056

102. LETTER TO BENARSILAL BAZAJ

January 25, 1931

CHI. BENARSI,

I was eagerly waiting for a letter from you. I was sorry to learn that Rukmini gets fainting fits. If she wishes to go to the Ashram and her circumstances permit her to do so, you may send her there. She may possibly improve in the Ashram. She had a fit only once or twice in all the years that she lived here. What you say about her is quite correct. She is of a brooding temperament. Medicine is not very

likely to help. How are you employed at present? It seems outsiders fall ill in your home.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9055

103. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

January 25, 1931

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I see that Satisbabu is utilizing his time very well. How nice it would be if he improves his health too? Do send the Hindi translation of the primer. I wish I could read it in Bengali itself but it seems difficult to attain proficiency in Bengali to that extent.

Your desires, being pure, will gradually be transformed into tranq-uility. There is no harm in a desire provided it is accompanied by detachment. For example we may desire an increase in the sale of khadi but no harm will come from so desiring if there is no dejection in case the sales do not increase.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1682

104. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Night, January 20/26, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I handed over the post this morning and am writing again at night. I am doing this in order to write about something which I have been forgetting to mention in the letters for the past several weeks.

Ba had glasses. There were three pairs. Please inquire who has them now. Perhaps Premabehn may have them. If you find them send all the three pairs. I cannot explain from here which pair I require. The one which I have with me gives me a little trouble when I spin on the *takli*. It is intended to serve two purposes, and, therefore, I have to strain the eyes when spinning on the *takli*. Send them with any intending visitor or by parcel.

Thursday, January 22[1]*, 1931*

I got your packet yesterday evening at seven. I had done my best to see that you got my postcards regularly. But after all a prisoner is a prisoner. That you got them is *ganimat*. Do you know this word? It is a very good one. It is much in use in Urdu. It means "enough", "thank God".

Surendra's problem seems to have been solved for the present. His power of thinking has become weak. That has happened with many others who, instead of working, get caught in idle thinking. But Surendra's heart is pure and so I believe that he will ultimately come out safe from this. His faith in Nathji will also help to save him. Meet Khurshedbehn. If she requires anything, send it to her.

Inquire about Madhavji's diet and inform me about it. I think he should stick to milk and dates.

When you find a serial number omitted in my letters, you should certainly inform me. I leave it to Pyarelal to check the numbers and trust that he does so. Last time, however, I myself had checked the letters and put them into the envelope. I had corrected two errors. The numbers on Kaka's and Maganlal's letters were repeated. As I did the checking in a hurry, I may have overlooked some other error. I will be more careful in future. Do what you think best about Keshu. Ask yourself what your duty is, rather than what I would wish, and take the reply to that question as my own wish and act accordingly. If I permit myself at this distance to have my own wish in the matter, I would be guilty on two counts. In the fiirst place, having handed over the reins to you, I should have no wish of my own. Secondly, at this distance I would not have sufficient data to decide what would be desirable. Hence, from either point of view, it would be attachment or ignorance of blind desire on my part to have any inclination in such matters. Yes, I can come to certain tentative conclusions from this distance. These should be intended merely to guide you. You may act on them only if they find an echo in your heart.

This rule should be applied to the business of theland in Vijapur. I have written to the same effect to Chhaganlal too. If you deal firmly with Sarojinidevi, everything will be all right. this manner once. I have already written to you what I felt in regard to Padma.

In a general way I approve of your reading my letter to all and the letters addressed by others to me. It will be good if you now tell

[1] The source as "21".

everyone this: 'I read, with Bapu's consent and at my leisure, all letters received from and addressed to him, except those which Bapu himself of the individual concerned may ask me not to read. Everyone, therefore, may rest assured that, if he does not wish me to read letters by or to him, I will not read them. If anyone feels embarrassed to tell me this personally, he may write to me and that will suffice. I see again and again that such secrecy does much harm. But we cannot get rid of the evil through compulsion. Hence we have no choice but to endure it.

Mathuradas's affair is a painful one. You must have read the letter which I wrote to him last week. If his having got himself released is the result of greater self-knowledge and self-examination, it is all right. I am doing something from here about Appa.[1]

I was happy that Lilavati had to suffer. That is, it is always better that, instead of some other woman, a woman of the Ashram should have to suffer. An inmate of the Ashram should have more endurance and the spirit of ahimsa in her

Did Shankarbhai finally get a *takli*?

I have written to Hariyomal. He must have got the letter with the last mail.

Evening, January 22, 1931

I had raised here the issue of Appa and others. I am informed today that they will be permitted to spin. The general problem, too, will be solved. This news, that is, the information about my intervention, should not be published.

I told Kashinath in my last letter to him about my opinion regar-ding him to which you refer. You may now do what you think best.

Write to Swami and inform him that I have not received *The Prophets of New India.*

By the time you get this, Prabhavati will have been there for quite some days.

I suppose I wrote to you, didn't I, suggesting that you should try the treatment of one Punjabi vaid for Prabhavati.

What you say about Mathew is correct.

Night, January 25, 1931

As I have given the information about my health in the letter to Mirabehn, I do not repeat it here. There is no cause for alarm; on the

[1] *Vide* letters to E. E. Doyle, 19-1-1931, 20-1-1931 & 22-1-1931.

contrary, I think my health is excellent. I don't require enemas at all. I had a wire from Prabhavati today saying that she had started. The wire was dispatched from Mugalsarai and was dated yesterday. Hence, by the time you get this letter, she will have settled down there. If necessary, get her examined by Dr. Haribhai. If you prefer Dr. Talwalkar, consult him. My own hope is that it will not now be necessary to consult any doctor and that she will recover by herself.

Afternoon, Monday [*January 26, 1931*]

We were informed this morning that Pyarelal and I are to be released. When, therefore, you get this letter, we shall have been released, but I don't know where I shall be. My present feeling is that I shall be leaving peace and quiet and going into the midst of turmoil.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

There are 80 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I; also C.W. 8149. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

105. TRIBUTE TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

[*January 26, 1931*][1]

In common with thousands of his countrymen I owe much to one who by his poetic genius and singular purity of life has raised India in the estimation of the world. But I owe also more. Did he not harbour in Santiniketan the inmates of my Ashram who had preceded me from South Africa? The other ties and memories are too sacred to bear mention in a public tribute.

The Golden Book of Tagore, 1931

106. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

January 26, 1931

While waiting on the platform of the Chinchwad station to board the train for Bombay, Mr. Gandhi gave the following message to the Indian people:

I have come out of jail[2] with an absolutely open mind,

[1] *Vide*, "Letter to R. V. Martin", 16-1-1931.

unfettered by enmity, unbiased in argument and prepared to study the whole situation from every point of view and discuss the Premier's statement[1] with Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and other delegates on their return. I make this statement in deference to the urgent wish expressed in a cable sent to me from London by some of the delegates.

When asked whether he had any statement to make regarding Mr. Ramsay Mac Donald's speech, he said he had studied it carefully, but was not yet prepared at that stage to make any comment whatsoever especially owing to the appeal of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru.

Questioned as regards his movements in the near future, he said:

I have no plan and no policy mapped out. I am proceeding to Bombay to talk over things wigh some friends but I do not know just where I shall go from there or how long I shall stay in Bombay.

Q. What is your opinion regarding the immediate release of all political prisoners?

A. I most sincerely believe that every political prisoner now in jail for being connected with my civil disobedience movement should be liberated immediately, and none of us as leaders should be happy as long as any of our brethren or sisters are in jail.

Q. What will you do if the Government do not see eye to eye with you in this matter?

A. I cannot say at this juncture as I have made no plans.

Asked if he was happy at being free once again, he replied:

I really do not know.

Mr. Gandhi expressed great appreciation of the treatment he received in jail, and when . . . asked . . . if he expected to go back again in the near future, Mr. Gandhi . . . replied:

Possibly, you never know.

The Hindu, 28-1-1931

[2] Gandhiji was detained in Yeravda Central Prison, Poona, from May 5, 1930.

[1] Of January 19, 1931; *vide* "Prime minister's declaration at R.T.C.", 19-1-1931.

107. LETTER TO JAISHANKAR TRIVEDI

January 27, 1931

BHAI TRIVEDI,

I was not happy that I had to come away without meeting you or seeing Manu, but I was not free to decide my own plans. I did receive your gift. I gave the vegetables to co-workers and I am taking with me the tomatoes, dates and almonds. I write this letter in the train. I am writing it for the sake of an English prisoner named Wheeler. He served me in many ways while I was in jail. He is an intelligent man and has great love for animals. I liked him. He has no teeth, though he is only middle-aged. I wish to help him to get a denture. I have obtained Major Martin's permission for this. If you know any person in Poona who makes good dentures, persuade him to do this act of service. Or you yourself may bear the expense and get a denture made for him. Perhaps Major Martin will not send him there. In that case, take the doctor in your car to Yeravda. Meet Quinn or the Major and do what is needed. Let me know afterwards what you did. Ask Manu to write to me.

I got the books which you gave to Pyarelal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 1002

108. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

BOMBAY,

January 27, 1931

I personally feel that the mere release of the Working Committee members makes a difficult situation infinitely more difficult and makes any action on the part of the members, if not altogether impossible, almost impossible.

The authorities evidently have not yet perceived that the movement has so much affected the mass mind that the leaders, however eminent they may be, will be utterly unable to dictate to the masses a particular course of action.

This, in my opinion, is a very healthy condition, because independent thinking is the very essence of the spirit of democracy. The thousands therefore who are in different prisons of India are

better able to deliver the goods than all the released leaders combined.

In my opinion, therefore, if the release of leaders is to be effective, the release of all the satyagrahi prisoners is a necessary condition and this release will, in its turn, be ineffective if repression is not stopped altogether.

I would like to draw the distinction which is very vital between civil disobedience and the action of those thousands who are now in prison. Civil disobedience is deliberate disobedience of non-moral laws by way of protest not necessarily against the laws covered by disobedience but any general grievance. In the present case, however, the men and women have not in the vast majority of case resorted to civil disobedience, but a wholly artificial condition has been produced by the Viceregal ordinances. The satyagrahis have not resisted any natural or moral laws, nor have they resisted the common law of the country, nor yet the statute law of the country; but they have been forced to resist autocratic ordinances which were designed to interfere with common law rights such as the right of persuading addicts to the drink or drug habit to give it up, of persuanding the drink and drug dealers to give up that calling or the dealers in, or purchasers of, foreign cloth to give up the sale and purchase of such cloth.

It may be said that a breach of the salt law is undoubtedly civil disobedience. I hold, however, that even in connection with the salt law the people have merely exercised a natural right that millions posses of manufacturing salt out of the waters in their neighbourhood. The only instance, therefore, of civil resistance that I can just now recall is in connection with the salt raids and possibly the forest laws. The raids have a history into which I do not wish to go at the present moment.

What I am anxious to clear is that, even if, after conference with the friends who are coming from the Round Table Conference, it is found that the Premier's statement affords sufficient ground for the Congress to tender co-operation, the right of picketing cannot be given up, nor the right of the starving millions to manufacture salt; and, if these elementary rights are recognized, most of the ordinances will naturally have to be withdrawn.

It is, therefore, highly necessary for the public, as also the Govern-ment, to understand the fundamental Congress position.

Manufacture of salt and boycott of foreign cloth and of liquor are not intended to register the resistance of the nation to the existing

misrule, but they are intended to achieve these three things for all time. No amount of goodwill established between Great Britain and India, so far as I can see, will reconcile the public to the drink evil, the foreign cloth evil or the prohibition to manufacture salt. Speaking for myself, I am hankering for peace, if it can be had with honour; but, even if I stood alone, I could be no party to any peace which does not satisfactorily solve the three questions that I have mentioned.

I should, therefore, judge the Round Table Conference tree by its fruit. I have given the three tests that are in operation, but, as the public knows, there are eight more.[1] I want the substance of independence—no shadow—and, even as a doctor names the disease of his patient after a proper diagnosis so will I name the tree of the Round Table Conference after I have examined the fruit in the light of the eleven points which are conceived in terms of the man in the street.

Replying to a further question as regards his treatment in the Yeravda Jail, Mr. Gandhi said :

I was a pampered prisoner, in one sense. So far as physical comforts were concerned, the prison authorities left no stone unturned to supply them. I have, therefore, so far as I am concerned, nothing but good to say of the authorities regarding my food. Of course, I was strictly isolated from the fellow-satyagrahis and conditions were imposed which made it impossible for me to see those who were near and dear to me.

But the general treatment of the C class prisoners leaves much to be desired. The Superintendent of the Yeravda Prison, Major Martin, I think, is a good man. He is anxious to make the prisoners in his charge happy; but he is hidebound by rules and regulations which make it impossible for him to make the prisoners comfortable even so far as their daily meals are concerned.

To give one instance, there is a rigid rule to the effect that the ordinary prisoner can have only *jowar* or *bajra roti*, and of these he must have that grain which is the cheapest at the time.

Here there is no consideration whatsoever of the bodily wants of the prisoner.

To quote another instance, these prisoners cannot have even a grain of salt extra. They must be content with what is put in their dal or vegetable. I can multiply such instances. In a sentence, I can sum

[1] For the eleven points, *vide* "Clearing the issue", 30-1-1930.

up my impression by saying that there is no human touch generally between the officials and the prisoners.

I have appreciated *The Times of India's* efforts to better the lot of the numberous C class prisoners. If there was any human touch, the very simple suggestion made by Mr. David would have been acted upon long ago. Up to the time of leaving the jail, I saw no such sign. I am convin-ced that C class prisoners have to undergo much avoidable suffering. The classification into A, B and C, I regard to be highly irritating and wholly unjustified. What is wanted is real relief for the vast majority of prisoners and that cannot come through classification but through humane considerations.

Answering a question as to what he meant by the statement that he was a "pampered prisoner", Mr. Gandhi explained that, while all his physical wants, by way of food, etc., were provided, he was mentally and spiritually tortured by being kept in splendid isolation and by way of compensating him for such isolation he was provided with all the food that he wanted.

Mr. Gandhi was reminded of the passage in the Viceroy's recent statement that there was little difference between the goal which the Government had before them and that of the Congress and that the difference was only with reference to the method of reaching that goal. Speaking on this point Mr. Gandhi said:

In the first instance, I am not at all satisfied that a common term has been used to mean the same thing. Secondly, the Congress has pursued nothing that the situation did not render absolutely necessary. In my opinion when the history of the last decade comes to be written the palm will be given to the women of India. They have brought swaraj nearer. They have added several inches to their own height and that of the nation.

Mr. Gandhi was next referred to the report from Yeravda to the effect that he had handed some mysterious document in sealed envelope to the Superintendent of the jail before his departure. He denied having given any such document to the Superintendent. . . .[1]

In the course of further conversation Mr. Gandhi said he was unable to say anything about his future plans at present. He was proceeding to Allahabad to see Pandit Motilal and his programme would depend upon Pandit's state of health. He had suspended his judgment on the Premier's speech in response to the Rt. Hon. Mr. Sastri's cable pending consultation with Mr. Sastri and his fellow-delegates.

The Times of India, 28-1-1931

[1] Here the interview was interrupted when Gandhiji was given a message to which he dictated a reply; *vide* the following item.

109. A TELEGRAM

January 27, 1931

OWING TO THE PANDIT'S SERIOUS ILLNESS PROCEEDING ALLAHABAD. AWAIT FURTHER WIRE.

The Times of India, 28-1-1931

110. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

Y. M.,
January 29, 1931

MY DEAR ANAND,

I have your letter. I understand your craving. Some day let us hope you will have that satisfaction. Meanwhile write when you can.

I will translate the speech for you some day. But not just now as you cannot publish it. A prisoner cannot write such things for publication.

Love.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

111. CABLE TO "DAILY HERALD", LONDON[1]

January 30, 1931

EXAMINING PREMIER'S STATEMENT IN TERMS CONGRESS DECLARATION AND ASPIRATION. STATEMENT ON FACE OF IT WOULD APPEAR WHOLLY INADEQUATE BUT IN COMMON WITH MAJORITY CONGRESSMEN HAVE ABSOLUTELY OPEN MIND AND HAVE SUSPENDED JUDG MENT IN VIEW URGENT REQUEST OF RIGHT HONOU-RABLE SASTRI DOCTOR SAPRU AND MR. JAYAKAR. PERSONALLY AM EAGERLY SEARCHING FOR AVENUES LEADING HONOURABLE PEACE THAT WOULD GIVE INDIA FREEDOM SHE DESIRES AND IS ENTITLED TO. BUT MERE RELEASE OF MEMBERS CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE AND THEIR WIVES WILL BE OF LITTLE HELP. EVEN FOR CREATING ATMOSPHERE SUITABLE FOR CALM DISCUSSION RELEASE OF ALL SATYA- GRAHI PRISONERS WITHDRAWAL OF REPRESSIVE ORDINANCES AND RESTORATION CONFISCATED PROPERTY ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL. ON TWENTYFIRST INSTANT WELLKNOWN LADIES OCCUPIED IN NO UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES BUT FORMING PROCESSION LEADING TO MEETING OF PROTEST AGAINST RECENT ILLTREATMENT OF FELLOW WORKER WERE INDECENTLY ABUSED AND MERCILESSLY BEATEN RESULTING IN INJURIES TO OVER HUNDRED AND FIFTY. ON INDEPENDENCE DAY THE TWENTYSIXTH INSTANT MEETINGS IN CALCUTTA WERE PROHIBITED CONTRARY EXPECTATION AND FORCIBLY DISPERSED. MAYOR CALCUTTA SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE BELABOURED THEN ARRESTED AND SEN-TENCED SIX MONTHS RIGOROUS IMPRISONMENT. SAME DAY IN BIHAR FIVE MEN KILLED AND DOZEN WOUNDED IN DISPERSING SIMILAR MEETING. CONGRESS AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDING WOMEN'S ARE STILL BEING DECLARED UNLAWFUL. THIS CONTINUING REPRESSION ROBS

[1] In reply to a cable dated January 25 which read: "Following your release would welcome two hundred words statement your views Premier MacDonlad Indian declaration. Cable. Company will accept message gratis."

SAID RELEASE OF ALL GRACE AND MAKES IT VALUELESS FOR PURPOSE INTENDED.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 16904

112. TELEGRAM TO M.S. ANEY[1]

ALLAHABAD,
January 31, 1931

I TREASURE YOUR WIRE. I KNOW THAT YOU MEAN BERAR AND MUCH MORE. YOU KNOW MY REGARD FOR YOU. IT GIVES ME ADDITIONAL STRENGTH TO KNOW THAT I HAVE YOUR HEARTY CO-OPERATION IN ANYTHING. WILL YOU, WHEN YOU HAVE THE TIME, GIVE ME YOUR VIEW OF THE GENERAL SITUATION AND OF THE STATE OF THING LOCALLY ?

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

113. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

January 31, 1931

CHI. RUKMINI,

I have just heard about your illness. I read your letter to Jamnalalji. What should I write to you ? Get all right quickly. I had hoped to be able to see you both. But this time that could not be.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9057

114. SPEECH TO CONGRESS LEADERS, ALLAHABAD

January 31, 1931

I would never give up my demand even if I stood alone and the whole of India were against me. Still, I seek your advice also in the matter. After receiving the telegram from Sapru and Sastri, I decided that we should not consider MacDonald's statement. Even so, I have

[1] In reply to his telegram which read: "Assure you that Berar will stand like one man to uphold any decision on future policy and programme you may arrive at as result of deliberations with leading Congressmen and other friends."

explained on what terms we might consider the statement of enter into negotiations on the basis of it. They are truce terms. For myself I am bound by my declaration in Bombay that I continued to adhere to the condition which I had laid down in Yeravda. I have now added one more condition. Why should we not demand an inquiry into the incident the memory of which brought tears to the eyes of a person like Sardar Sardul Singh? What we have suffered so far is nothing in comparison with what we shall be made to suffer in future. We are, therefore, justified in demanding that a tribunal should be set up for an independent inquiry into such incidents, that a report of the inquiry be published and the officers found guilty be removed. Though we do speak of forgetting and forgiving the misdeeds of others, it would be a sin to forget certain things. We may forgive Dyer and O'Dwyer for the Jallianwala massacre, but we cannot afford to forget it. We may also forgive the authors of the atrocities here, though some of the incidents here have been more cruel than the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh. History offers no parallel to the atrocities committed on women in the Kaira District. The papers could not even report what cruelty was inflicted on women—mere women—who were never guilty and could never be guilty of any violence. Under the present conditions, how could any such reports appear in the papers? An independent court should go into all these incidents, and in future also there should always be an inquiry into incidents such as the arrest and beating up of advocates, of a person like Sunnab.

Mention was made of the prisoners. Those under a death sentence should not be hanged. My personal religion tells me not only that they should not be hanged but also that they should not even be kept in prison. However, that is my personal opinion, and we cannot make their release a condition. The death sentence on the Sholapur men was executed in spite of the doubt expressed by the judge and in spite of so many earnest appeals from the public. Shall we say that, if such death sentences continue to be executed, we shall not enter into negotiations with t he Government? There is a risk in making any such condition. We can with justice demand only the release of those who had joined the present struggle. We should not, therefore, include in the truce terms the release of others. Hence I adhere to my statement. Yes, those who have not been regularly tried in a court should of course be released. We can decide even today to enter into talks with the British Government, but only on the condition that I have laid down. That condition holds good also for a truce.

Who would describe the breaking of the salt law as civil disobedience? Breaking of a law would be civil disobedience only if we intended to obey it after peace was concluded.

We cannot give up even one of the demands put forward in the negotiations carried on from Yeravda. Ido not believe that Mac Donald'sstatement grants us anything.However, even a consideration of it can be undertaken only if the Government concedes our demands. As for myself, I felt even when I started on the Dandi march that I had done my part, and I left it to the Congress to act as it wished or to stop the movement. If you tell me that my work is over and that I should return to the Ashram, I would immediately do so. How shall I describe to you the shock that I feel on coming out of jail? You have played your part so well that I was lost in admiration and felt no need to make any suggestion. I have no shadow of doubt in my mind that I could lead the people better. They have taken up the fight. It is God who conducts it. I do not know who will lead it to success, but I do know that God will take us across.

You may say what you wish about your Province, and say it frankly. What do we have to hide from the Government? It gets all the information somehow, I do not know whether through radio messages or in some other way. But there can be no question of the people yielding. After all these sacrifices, are they likely to yield? I have no doubt that we can carry on this fight for any length of time. But the Government's capacity for brutality is so great that we must gird up our loins to face more of it. We have still to free the oppressed millions in the world, to free the entire world. It waits for a miracle from India. For my part, I should like you to go from here with the firm determination that you will give up your life, to do whatever is yet necessary for winning swaraj. I fear that yet more beastliness will be let loose on us—I say "fear" because we can never wish that man may become still more beastly; but if he does, how can we help it?

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

115. TO THE READER

ALLAHABAD,
February 1, 1931

In renewing your acquaintance after so many months, I feel within me a glow of pleasure that under the greatest difficulty the paper has con-tinued publication.[1] I had told my co-workers that, in the event of suppre-ssion by the authorities, the paper were to continue publication even though it was a hand-written sheet multiplied to the extent of volunteers coming up to make copies. Where there is perfect coordina-tion and will-ingness, copies can be thus multiplied without end and no printing press in the world an compete with such an effort. But I know that this is true in theory. In practice, one does not find that willing ness.But nothing is impossible for ahimsa or active, unadulterated love. It surmounts all diffi-culties. My companions have chosen an effective though in my opinion a method less in keeping with the spirit of ahimsa and truth which know no secrecy. But I do not judge them. On the contrary, their organizing ability has commanded my admiration and respect. I do not yet know how over seven thousand copies are being issued with such regularity. I must content myself with thanking the invisible helpers and the numerous readers who have continued their association with *Young India*. In renewing contact with the readers through these sheets, let me redeclare my faith.

Over eight months' contemplation in solitude has, if possible, increased my faith in truth and ahimsa. At the risk of incurring ridicule, I repeat what I have said so often that voluntary universal adoption of khaddar with all its vast implications means *purna* swaraj and that civil disobedience becomes a necessary duty only because khaddar has not yet obtained the hold it should. But of all this hereafter.

Young India (Supplement), 5-2-1931

[1] The reference is to its cyclostyled publication during Gandhiji's incarceration.

116. WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION[1]

ALLAHABAD,
February 1, 1931

The Working Committee having, out of regard for the wishes of Srijuts Sastri Sapru and Jayakar, suspended the publication of its resolution passed on January 21, 1931, an impression got abroad that the movement of civil disobedience has been suspended. It is, therefore, necessary to reiterate the decision of the Committee that the movement is to continue unabated until explicit instructions are issued to the contrary. This meeting reminds the public that picketing of foreign cloth and drink and drug shops, in itself is no part of the civil disobedience campaign, but that it is the exercise of ordinary right of a citizen, so long as it remains strictly peaceful and causes no obstruction to the public.

This meeting further reminds the sellers of foreign cloth, including foreign yarn, and Congress workers that the boycott of foreign cloth, being a vital necessity in the interest of the masses, is a permanent feature of national activity and will remain so till the nation has acquired the power to exclude foreign cloth and foreign yarn from India, whether by total prohibition or prohibitive tariff.

Whilst appreciating the response made by dealers in foreign cloth and foreign yarn to the appeal of the Congress to bring about a boycott of foreign cloth, this meeting reminds them that it is not open to any Congress organization to hold out hopes of their being able to dispose of their existing stock in India.

The History of the Indian National Congress, Vol. I, p. 430

[1] Presumably drafted by Gandhiji

117. LETTER TO VICEROY

ANAND BHAWAN, ALLAHABAD,
February 1, 1931

H.E. THE VICEROY, DELHI

DEAR FRIEND,

You have made a public appeal[1] to me for co-operation in connec-tion with the further work of the recently held Conference in London and ascribed to me a belief in the sincerity of British promises and declara-tions. I wish that I could endorse your ascription. I told you on the 23rd December 1929, that subject to honourable exceptions I had found to my great sorrow that British declarations and promises were insincere. Had I not found them so, the active voluntary co-operation that I had tendered to British officials in India and outside would never have been with drawn.

But I assure you that I am simply waiting for a sign in order to enable me to respond to your appeal. I confess, however, that some of the signs are highly ominous. In Borsad, in the district of Kaira, on the 21st January, a cruel, uncalled for and unchivalrous lathi-charge was made upon wholly innocent women and girls who were forming a procession which was marching to a women's meeting that was to be held in order to protest against the brutal treatment a of girl[2] 17 years old by a police official. Neither the procession nor the meeting was prohibited. The injuries were severe in several cases. Some of those who were assaulted belong to the Satyagraha Ashram at Sabarmati. One of them, an old widow[3], a member of the Managing Board of the Ashram, was drenched in blood. To give you some idea of the nature of the police barbarity, I give you a free translation of her letter[4] to me. The facts stated in that letter are capable of easy proof. The Collector himself was in Borsad on this date. At the time of writing this, I cannot recall anything in modern history to parallel this official inhumanity against wholly defenceless and innocent women. I may complete the outline of this picture by stating that there were no men

[1] *Vide* "Viceroy's statement", 26-1-1931.
[2] Lilavati
[3] Gangabehn Vaidya
[4] *Vide* "Letter from Gangabehn vaidya".

in this meeting or proce-ssion except a few volunteer guides.

On the 26th at Calcutta, as you may be aware, the meetings advertised to be held for the purpose of re-declaring the Independence Day Resolution were put under the ban and the procession marching to the principal meeting and headed by the Mayor of Calcutta, Syt. Subhas Chandra Bose, was dispersed by a cruel lathi-charge.

In Begusarai (Bihar) on the same date a party of men returning from a similar meeting was fired upon by the police resulting in six killed and several wounded. The police are reported to have fired even into a school. You have probably read the official defence of the police proceeding. My informants deny the main part of the official defence, and if their version is correct, the firing was wholly uncalled for.

On the top of these three events comes the news that Sjt. Bhashyam, a member of the Madras Bar Council, and Sjt. V. A. Sundaram, a well-known worker, were, whilst they were picketing foreign-cloth shops, with the concurrence of their owners, assaulted and treated in a manner unworthy of a civilized State. They were taken, after the assault, to an out of the way place and out of reach of medical or other assistance. Had it not been for the chance passing of a car, it is difficult to say what would have happened to these gentlemen.

I do not ask you to accept the versions given here, but I do ask you to fell with me that it is not possible for those like me who believe in them to tender co-operation with any confidence, much less enthusiasm. Whether, however, such co-operation, for which many other things are necessary, comes forth in the end or not, it is, I hope you will agree, highly necessary to have an unbiased judgment over happenings like those I have narrated. Such an enquiry is necessary because I assume that the Government of India do not want to countenance methods such as I have described. The four cases I have cited are but recent examples. I invite you, therefore, to appoint an impartial and representative committee of enquiry acceptable to the Congress to investigate the allegations of excesses against officials in different parts of India since the inauguration of the civil disobedience campaign. If such a committee is appointed I am sure that the Congress will lead evidence before it to show that in very many cases the conduct of officials has been contrary to the expectations raised in the preambles to your ordinances and in your repeated declarations.

Till I hear from you and know your wish in the matter[1] I am not sending this letter to the Press. I am in Allahabad till Tuesday. I expect to leave Allahabad on Tuesday evening for Bombay where I expect to be till the 6th instant.

I remain,

Your faithful friend,

Enclosure : Translation of a letter

Bombay Secret Abstracts 750(14)0 Pt-A, pp. 159-63

118. INTERVIEW TO REUTER

ALLAHABAD,
February 1, 1931

Interviewed by Reuter's special correspondent, Gandhiji said :

All speculation regarding split among the members of the Working Committee is pure myth. On the contrary the proceedings yesterday and today were perfectly unanimous, and the behaviour of the members cordial. All were of one mind that the movement cannot be withdrawn or suspended unless truce is declared. It should be obvious to everybody that a mass movement like the one now going on cannot be suddenly and without a reasonable hope of a final settlement stopped, nor can it be called off unless the hope of a settlement is shared by the vast mass of the people; and this can never happen so long as repression in its virulent form continues, as witness, the latest example in the shape of wanton assaults upon Srijuts Bhashyam and Sundaram. I have been daily receiving reports from men and women of unimpeachable character giving me details of repression not confined to any particular part of India. A friend has handed me a letter containing harrowing details of atrocities said to have been committed by the police in the district of Midnapore (Bengal).

[1] In his letter dated February 4, addressed to Gandhiji, G. Cunningham wrote : "His Excellency regrets that he is unable to accept the suggestion. He would equally decline to entertain any similar proposal to initiate any general enquiry into the responsibility for excesses committed by adherents to the civil disobedience movement . . . His Excellency therefore sees no profit in the general exploration of charges and counter-charges that would be made. Nor can he feel that it would assist the discharge of what he considers at the present time the most important task of affording opportunity to all, who are willing to do so, to join in the constructive work of bringing to fulfilment the purpose clearly stated by the Prime Minister."

In my opinion nothing short of an absolutely impartial and thorough going enquiry into these charges can satisfy either the public mind or the requirements of justice. I do not see how it is possible to conduct negotiations for peace with repression fouling the atmosphere hour after hour.

The Hindu, 2-2-1931

119. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, ALLAHABAD

February 1, 1931

Speaking in Hindi while seated on the dais, Mahatma Gandhi said that it afforded him great pleasure in seeing an assembly of such a large crowd as had gathered at the meeting and he offered his thanks to God and congratulations to the people for the great deeds of bravery and sacrifices done by the people during the period of eight months. He said that whenever he thought of those brave deeds and sacrifices he was at once reminded of his sisters. The whole world was surprised, said Mahatma Gandhi, at the considerable sacrifices made by people in the national struggle, especially at the share taken by the women of India.

The women who were considered absolutely ignorant and always lived in *purdah* gave up their *purdah* forthwith at the nation's call, they sacrificed their children, offered for the struggle even their little girls and did not put any obstacles in the way of their husbands participating in the fight. And, he said, the women's sacrifices were not confined to that alone but they themselves discarded the *purdah* and went out to participate in the fight.

Proceeding, Mahatma Gandhi said that any number of families would be found in the country, which would have given every one of its members for the national struggle. In a fight with guns, old men, women, boys and girls were exempted, but India's fight for freedom was such that everybody could participate in it.

Resuming the speech, which Mr. Shiva Prasad Gupta repeated[1], Mahatma Gandhi, while busy at his *takli*, said that the women of the country had been lifted high on account of their sacrifices, by three or four inches and consequently the height of the whole country was also raised by three or four inches which naturally provided an occasion for the Indians to feel proud.

Young children had also given proofs of their bravery, said Mahatma Gandhi. When he heard in the jail the name of *vanarasena* he could not think that that *sena* would include children aged six and eight also. And when he heard, Mahatma Gandhi added, an account of their brave deeds and sacrifices, it at once struck him that in this

[1] As the loud-speakers failed

national struggle God was also with them. It was a heavenly precept that victory was bound to come if they remained on the path of truth and non-violence, and in such a victory there would be the share of not one individual but of all people and all the communities. There could be no considerations of superiority and inferiority in the case of people participating in such a struggle and it was Mahatma Gandhi's conviction that if they really remained on the path of righteousness and peace the danger of communal quarrels with which they were faced frequently, would altogether disappear.

Mahatma Gandhi, therefore, appealed to the people that whether there be war against the Government or disputes among themselves, they should never leave the path of peace and righteousness, the result of which would be that they would never suffer defeat.

He realized that sufficient observance of the principle of non-violence had been made but at the same time he wished to warn the public that the least mistake on their part in that matter would ruin them as they had taken a pledge before God and the whole world that they would carry on the fight peacefully and with firm devotion to the motherland. So long as that pledge stood, if they deliberately made a departure from it they would be regarded, said Mahatma Gandhi, as cheats before God and the world.[1]

Resuming, Mahatma Gandhi said that he would reiterate what he had been saying all along, namely, that every man, woman, boy, and girl should start spinning at the charkha and use khaddar made of the yarn spun by him or her and throw away foreign clothes. They should also give up drinking and gambling and everything that was bad, for Indians wanted to govern the country themselves and if the government went into hands polluted with misdeeds, the country would be ruined.

As the noise continued on account of the inability of the audience to hear, in spite of Mr. Gupta's repeating the speech at the top of his voice, Mahatma Gandhi said that he did not want to take much of the time of the people on account of the noise, and with blessing to the people he concluded his speech abruptly to the utter disappointment of those who expected some pronouncement from Mahatma Gandhi with regard to the situation arising out of the declaration of the British policy, it being the first public speech delivered by him after his release from the Yeravda Jail.

The Leader, 4-2-1931

[1] At this stage the speech was interrupted by two C.I.D. inspectors forcing their way into the meeting. They were, however, asked by Jawaharlal Nehru to quit the place.

120. MESSAGE TO PEOPLE OF MIDNAPORE

ALLAHABAD,
February 2, 1931

I have made myself acquainted with your condition to the extent it was possible without a local visit. I tender my congratulations for your courage and patience with which you have borne your sufferings. Out of such sufferings will be born a new nation pulsating with life. Earthly possessions are no compensation for loss of liberty. It is a matter of joy that you have preferred deprivations of these to that of your liberty. I hope you will not neglect the duty of manufac-turing free salt.

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

121. NOTE TO URMILA DEVI

ALLAHABAD,
Silence Day, February 2, 1931

Hunger-strike can be resorted to in matters of self-respect. It is a weapon to be most sparingly used.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

122. LETTER TO K. SANTANAM

February 2, 1931

MY DEAR SANTANAM,

I have just heard from Rajaji the awful news of your wife's death. But I know that you are god-fearing and brave—for those who believe in Him nothing is awful. He gives and has the right to take away. If you are permitted let me have a line that you are at peace with yourself.

Yours,

BAPU

SJT. K. SANTANAM
B. BLOCK
CENTRAL PRISON
VELLORE
S. INDIA

From the original: Courtesy: K. S. Ramanujan

123. LETTER TO N. P. RAGHAVAN

February 2, 1931

MY DEAR RAGHAVAN,

I have your letter. Since you do not get the time, the prayer hours you mention are quite good. I hope you are keeping well.

Yours,

BAPU

SJT. N.P. RAGHAVAN
KHADI DEPOT
PAYYANUR
MALABAR

From a photostat: C. W. 10864. Courtesy: N. P. Raghavan

124. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

February 2, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letters. Do you get fewer fainting fits there than you used to do in Bihar? Do you eat well? Have you recovered strength? What do you do about baths, etc.? Give me all these details.

Jayaprakash saw me here. He has joined Ghanshyamdas. Rajendrababu is here. Mrityunjaya, too, has come here today. I shall reach Bombay on the 4th or the 5th. Write to me there. If you recover strength enough to be able to travel, we shall meet earlier. Let there be no weight on your mind at all. Where have you been accommodated? I am all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3403

125. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

February 2, 1931

CHI. VASUMATI,

How fortunate you are. You got beaten and were also awarded a jail sentence. All of you have upheld the honour of the Ashram and brought glory to your sex. All people do not yet see the full significance of this incident[1]. Its real value will be appreciated after some time. I hope you did not even feel angry with the person who beat you. All of them are like our brothers. If we do not feel angry, they are bound to change some day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9320

[1] At Borsad; *vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 1-2-1931.

126. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

February 2, 1931

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got all your letters. But I have had no rest after leaving the rest-house. Today is my silence day and so I have got some time, though the stream of visitors continues.

I simply cannot forget the Borsad incident. The people have not yet realized its significance. I am taking up the matter.

The Ashram women have immortalized themselves and the Ashram. Our prayers and the vows of self-discipline have borne fruit. Other women also have shown such courage. There were some in this procession too. But I have formed the impression that the special merit of the sacrifice made by the Ashram women lies in the religious spirit which inspired it.

My future movements are uncertain. Probably I shall reach Bombay on the 4th. Panditji's ship is in mid-ocean, so that even for his sake I may have to stay on here. I keep good health. About other developments, you will read in the papers. I am trying for the release of the other prisoners, but only within limits proper for us. Those who are released by the Government on the expiry of their sentences try to return to the jails immediately. Write to me wherever I am. For the ensuing official year of the Congress, Sardar has been elected President. This increases the responsibility of Gujarat. It may have been necessary for women from outside Kaira District to go there. Who took the lead in showing this discourtesy?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5500

127. LETTER TO SHAKARIBEHN

February 2, 1931

CHI. SHAKARIBEHN,

All of you behaved wonderfully well. Send me an accurate description of Mir.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 24388

128. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

February 2, 1931

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

I got your letter. I see that it is still very necessary to be careful. You should not exert yourself too much. Naturally, therefore, your food also should be light. Let us see—I think we shall now be able to meet somewhere.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 7412. Courtesy : Valji G. Desai

129. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

February 2, 1931

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your letter. Make full use of the opportunities there. But do not be impatient while doing that. Follow Khurshedbehn's advice. If the food does not agree with you, tell them so. Write to me whenever permitted to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9319

130. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

February 2, 1931

CHI. PREMA,

This is just to drop a line to you. I have before me only one sheet of your letter. The rest seem to have got mixed up with other papers. I shall get them by and by.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10253

131. LETTER TO MAITRI GIRI

February 2, 1931

CHI. MAITRI,

You have acted as befits the brave daughter of a brave father and brought honour to the Ashram. Do not nurse the slightest ill will against the person who beat you. I hope you don't feel any pain now. Write to me. Most probably I shall soon arrive there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6227

132. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

February 2, 1931

CHI. GANGABEHN,

How shall I compliment you? You have shown that you are what I had always thought you were. How I would have smiled with pleasure to see your sari made beautiful with stains of blood. I got excited when I knew about this atrocity, but was not pained in the least. On the contrary, I felt happy.

I would have certainly felt unhappy if none of you were among the victims of that assault. I know that there is ignorant attachment even in feeling thus, but I cannot conceal my attachment to the Ashram even if I tried to do so. The shortcomings of the inmates of the Ashram are intolerable to me. Likewise, I feel happier when I see their

virtues than when I see the virtues of others. Is it a great thing that you did not feel angry with those who hurt you? Would you be angry with Kaku if he beat you? These others who beat you were also your sons, who had become blind through ignorance.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 8771. Courtesy : Gangabehn Vaidya

133. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI M. THAKKAR

February 2, 1931

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

The kindness which Gangabehn and others have tasted, all of you will taste by and by. You should be patient and keep yourselves ready for it. It is not enough that we should suffer beating. When beaten, we should not get angry with the person who beat us but, on the contrary, should pray for his welfare. I think we shall now be able to meet somewhere.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6814

134. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

February 2, 1931

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

Everything is possible with patience and effort.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 178

135. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

February 2, 1931

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have no idea when I shall reach Calcutta. If at all I go there, I cannot ignore Khadi Pratishthan. But it may not be possible to stay there all the time. Tell me about Arun's health. I shall leave for Bombay tomorrow or the day after.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 1683

136. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI

February 2, 1931

CHI. KALAVATI,

You have shown great courage. Give me a full account.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 5279

137. LETTER TO SHANTA S. PATEL

February 2, 1931

CHI. SHANTA (SHANKARBHAI),

You have taken a good vow. May God give you the strength to keep it. You have given me no news about Shankarbhai. On hearing about his fast in connection with his demand for a *takli*, I had taken steps while in jail and had heard that orders had been issued that a *takli* should be supplied to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4058

[1] The addressee had taken part in the women's procession at Borsad and was one of those who received injuries when the police lathi-charged the processionists.

138. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

February 2, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I am writing this at about 10 p.m. on silence day. I started observing silence at 11.30 p.m. yesterday and so a little more time must pass before I can give it up. After my release it is only today that I may say I had some time for rest, though of course even today I had to listen to many people and hear their stories. All the same, I have certainly been able to write, for the first time after my release, the letters enclosed with this and some others. See if you can pass on their letters to Surendra[1], Gangabehn[2] and Vasumati[3], or inform them of their substance. How is Durgabehn's health? I have not asked Mahadev about it. I don't know where he is at present. What is the position about Madhavji's diet? Tell him that he cannot insist on being supplied milk and dates and that he should be satisfied if they agree to provide them at his own cost. Though I have been released, I feel as if I had not been released. If others are not released and if the situation does not improve, I shall have no choice but to court imprisonment. My programme in general is as follows :

I intend to start from here tomorrow evening so as to reach Bombay on Wednesday evening. I shall be there up to Friday at any rate. If, however, Panditji's health deteriorates, I may not be able to leave even tomorrow. Or it may also happen that, after meeting Sastriji and others, I may have to leave on Friday to return here. Address the post accordingly. That is, address it to me at Bombay till I inform you otherwise. I am yearning to visit Kaira district. I intend to go there if I am free on Friday.

God alone knows when and where we shall meet. Unless some reason connected with the struggle brings me to the Ashram. I wish to visit neither the Ashram nor Ahmedabad.For permanent headquarters, I should naturally choose Karadi, but I see no possibility at present of my wish being fulfilled. I feel unhappy at the thought that I shall no

[1] They were in jail.
[2] *ibid.*
[3] *ibid.*

longer be able to send discourses for *Gitabodh*. If you come to know more about Kaira, let me know.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I

139. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

February 2, 1931

CHI. KANTA,

Your question is all right You can find the answer only in my letters. Happiness and unhappiness are states of mind. But how can we perceive that they are so? Certainly not by reading. We can do so only by experience. That is why suffering is necessary. Here by suffering I mean what is regarded as such by the world. Illness of the body, physical assault, hunger, getting robbed, being insulted, etc.,—it is the mind which experiences all these forms of suffering. A devotee of God, a yogi, one who has merged in the Brahman, has become a *sthitaprajna*, —these are not affected by such sufferings but remain content even in their presence as they do in so called happiness. When one becomes equi-minded in this way one will attain self-knowledge. Is this clear?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You too may have occasion to be assaulted[1]. Remain unconcerned whether such occasion arises or not.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

[1] Gangabehn Vaidya had been assaulted on January 21, when she took part in a procession of women. in Borsad in protest against the brutal treatment of a 17-year-old girl; *vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 1-2-1931.

140. CABLE TO "DAILY NEWS", LONDON

February 3, 1931

CABLE JUST RECEIVED. UNABLE PRONOUNCE FINAL OPINION ON CONFERENCE BUT WHAT WORRIES ME IS THE LOOK OF THINGS HERE. IF CONFE- RENCE HAS REALLY OFFERED FREEDOM TO INDIA THE REACTION SHOULD HAVE BEEN FELT HERE. ON CONTRARY WHAT I FIND IS BLACK REPRESSION CONTINUES UNABATED. UNPROVOKED ASSAULTS ON INNOCENT CITIZENS STILL CONTINUE. RESPEC- TABLE PEOPLE BEING SUMMARILY AND WITHOUT APPARENT REASON DEPRIVED OF THEIR IMMOVABLE AND MOVABLE PROPERTY BY MERE EXECUTIVE ACTION. PROCESSION OF WOMEN FORCIBLY DISPERSE[D] AND THEY WERE SEIZED BY THEIR HAIR AND KICKED WITH BOOTS. CONTINUANCE SUCH REPRESSION WOULD MAKE CONGRESS COOPERATION IMPOSSIBLE EVEN IF OTHER DIFFICULTIES WERE GOT OVER.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 16920-1

141. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

February 3, 1931

CHI. RAIHANA,

I got your letter. Now in a few days we shall meet somewhere.[1]

I got your letter. If the climate of Kadi suits you and if the burden of work does not impose an excessive strain on you, the present arrangement will certainly do you good.

I had met Father and Mother in Bombay. The operation has given them good rest. Panditji's condition is still critical. The doctors are trying hard. But after all, the thread of our life is in God's hands. He may draw it back whenever He wills.

Khuda Hafiz.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9628

142. LETTER TO UMA BAJAJ

February 3, 1931

CHI. OM,

You knew enough Gujarati, have you forgotten it all? For you, Hindi, Gujarati, Marathi, Marwari, all should be the same. Write your next letter in Gujarati or Marathi and tell me how much you spin and card and what is your speed with the *takli*. Do you take a large helping of food and waste some or do you take only as much as the poor should and clean your plate? Do you read the *Gita*?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 335

[1] These two sentences are in Urdu.

143. SPEECH TO BOATMEN'S ASSOCIATION, ALLAHABAD

February 3, 1931

Gandhiji received an address today from the representatives of the Allahabad Boatmen's Association in the "Swaraj Bhawan".

Speaking to the boatmen's representative and some Congressmen, Gandhiji referred to the no-rent campaign, and advised the people not to use force against cultivators who were not disposed to stop payment of their rents. He also referred to Sunday's incident of the villagers travelling without tickets,[1] and deprecated their action as the Congress had not launched a campaign of travelling without tickets. He added that even when they attained swaraj, some fare would have to be charged for railway service.

A purse containing Rs. 101 was presented to Gandhiji on behalf of the boatmen.

The Hindu, 4-2-1931

144. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

Sunday [Before *February 5, 1931*][2]

CHI. MANUDI,

You remember you had asked me or a photograph? Since then I have been keeping all the pictures that come to me. One of these days they shall be sent to you. Write to me what you do the whole day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C W. 1508

[1] To attend the public meeting at Allahabad; Jawaharlal Nehru paid the money to the Railway authorities in order to get all those who were arrested released.

[2] From the contents; *ibid*., p. 150.

145. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

February 5 [*1931*][1]

MY DEAR ANAND,

The description of your sister's wedding was interesting. I hope that her husband has nothing of the spirit of the Sindhi youth who are reported to be cruelly exacting in their demands upon the parents of their wives. You will be naturally anxious to come to me. But I hope you will restrain yourself as you are wanted there. So long as you are wanted, you must not think of coming to me. If I am able to settle down anywhere for a time, Vidya may come and be under observation for her health and complete her Hindi besides imbibing what there might be from the surrounding atmosphere.

Love to you both.

BAPU

[PS.]

I am keeping excellent health.

SJT. ANAND T. HINGORANI, B. A.
C/O SJT. JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
MARKET ROAD
HYDERABAD
SINDH

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

146. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

LUCKNOW,
February 5, 1931

CHI. MANUDI,

I can now send the pictures which I collected for you. Preserve them all carefully and ask someone who can understand their

[1] The original has "1930", obviously a slip, for the postmark bears the date February 5, 1931.

meaning to explain it to you. We shall now meet some time. Write to me. Where is Ramibehn? Ask Balibehn and Kamubehn to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 1509. Courtesy : Manubehn Mashruwala

147. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

February 5, 1931

For anything to be achieved five factors have to co-operate. Among them, fate has been placed the last, but it is in effect the first. What can we do when fate itself is against us? Panditji suffered no inconvenience during the journey. It is like the kettle calling the pot black. Last night I sat down to spin after ten o'clock and could go to bed only at half past one. A lady has just left a papaw from her own garden. But I wish to eat papaw only when you offer it some day. I do not feel like eating it today.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. XIV, p. 26

148. LETTER TO SOONABAI SIRWAI

ALLAHABAD,
February 5, 1931

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I thank you for it. I am sorry that you were harassed. You suggest my fasting in expiation. It certainly calls for a fast. However, I feel that I should not resort to such a strong measure so soon after being released from prison. For the present, therefore, I am making enquiries with regard to this sad affair. After the enquiries are over, I will do what is necessary. I would request you to regard those who harassed you as your brothers and harbour no grudge against them. Their exercising coercion is bad, but considering that boycott of foreign cloth is a worthy cause I expect help from women like you.

Yours sincerely,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. XIV, pp. 25-6

149. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

February 5, 1931

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your letter. I have come to Lucknow on account of Panditji's illness and I shall stay here for the time being. It will do no harm if Satisbabu fasts once every month. Those who join the Ashram on condition that they will observe its rules must observe them. But old inmates should not be turned out if they do not follow new rules. But the rules formulated for the sake of good management must be followed at all cost. The point is that rules should be such that no one can say that they are something new, that is, they should be in keeping with local conditions.

Write to me at Lucknow, care of Kalakankar House.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 1684

150. INTERVIEW TO "THE PIONEER"

ALLAHABAD,
February 5, 1931

I am a man of peace, but circumstances have made my life one of struggle. I shall, however, leave no stone unturned to attain peace. It is no joy to me to submit thousands who have a childlike faith in me to suffering.

In answer to a question whether he found the Prime Minister's declaration[1] satisfactory, he said that he had resolutely refrained from coming to definite conclusions on the subject.

Mr. Sastri, Mr. Jayakar, and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru have cabled to me to suspend judgment and I have the highest esteem for these patriots who love their country as intensely as I claim to do.They may be able to explain to me satisfactorily that Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's declaration conveys something beyond what I have been able to make out on a cursory reading, and, if in the light of my eleven points, I see that a settlement is possible, I shall readily advise

[1] *Vide* "Prime minister's declaration at R.T.C", 19-1-1931.

the calling off of the civil disobedience movement.

Mr. Gandhi proceeded to discuss the allegations made against the police and said he had a large file on the subject containing evidence from men upon whose word he relied. When reminded that his version was one-sided, he added :

I do not ask you to accept my allegations against the police. Let us have an impartial investigation and I am quite prepared to lead evidence and abide by the verdict of the tribunal.

On its being pointed out that the police had generally conducted themselves with the utmost forbearance under the most difficult conditions, he replied :

I do not complain about ordinary repression. If I violate the law, I expect to be arrested. The Government may want to maintain order but there must be some relation between offence and punishment. Departure from this rule has been much more general than you suppose.

Responding to a question whether it was not inevitable that there should, in extraordinary times, be a certain amount of severity as it must be impossible exactly to measure action, Mr. Gandhi interjected :

Why should it be inevitable? It was not so in South Africa and the reason for that was that they had a national Government there.

Explaining himself further, Mr. Gandhi made a specific grievance of confiscations said to have taken place in Gujarat and Bengal.

Many have lost their homes. The sufferers may have been guilty of non-payment of taxes or not, but if property worth, say, Rs. 50 lakhs has been appropriated for dues, say, of about a lakh, it must be restored. The Government have nothing to gain by refusing to restore the property and my suggestion is not without precedent.

He insisted that the matter should not be left to Local Governments, but should go before an entirely impartial tribunal.

The presentation of an inventory does not, however, establish a claim, and I quite see that confiscations must be satisfactorily proved by the complainants.

Mr. Gandhi referred also to the release of political prisoners. On attention being drawn to the promise of the Government to release prisoners on the termination of the civil disobedience movement, he remarked :

I know that they will be released. But I have difficulties, though not insuperable, facing me. Some of our people are already perturbed

at my conciliatory statements. But when I am convinced that I should call off the movement, I hope also to convince them. When I called off the last non-co-operation movement at Bardoli, I had only to act on my own and not wait for any indication from the Government. The circumstances today are different.

Dealing with the proposed Constitution, Mr. Gandhi said that with 80 per cent of the budget placed beyond the purview of the legislature and only 20 per cent left which would be inadequate for "nation-building" purposes, there was not much satisfaction to be gained.

If our co-operation is wanted, it will not do to tell us simply to adhere to a consideration of the unsettled questions. We must have the freedom to reopen the discussions on the so-called safeguards.

Mr. Gandhi also said that, in regard to the Indian States, there seemed to be no protection for the people of the States.

The Congress would be untrue to itself if it did not seek it, and I cannot bring myself to believe that Mr. Ramsay Mac-Donald would deny in his dealings in the matter all the teachings of a lifetime.

Mr. Gandhi, however, felt hopeful that the States and communal questions could be adjusted. But he was clearly of opinion that the Congress participation depended on two things: first, satisfactory adjustment of the preliminaries of suspension of the civil disobedience movement; and secondly, satisfaction regarding the Conference. He concluded :

I am doing everything to terminate civil disobedience which will be done if I am sure that full restoration will be made, prisoners are released, an impartial inquiry is held into the alleged police excesses led to, in many cases, by action taken for offences created by the proclamation of new regulations, and generally certain other necessary adjustments are made.

The Pioneer, 6-2-1931

151. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

LUCKNOW,
February 5, 1931

Asked by the Free Press representative at Lucknow about some message for the country, Mahatma Gandhi said :

I have no message to give. I can only emphasize what I have been saying, that continuous repression about which evidences are daily accumulating makes it well nigh impossible to contemplate

peace. From all over the country I am getting reports that the authorities are ruthless and sometimes even devoid of all decency. And that, on the top of this, they do not hesitate to deny the truth of the allegations made on behalf of the suffering public.

The most painful part of the whole affair is that the Political Departments at the top defend the conduct of the police and wilfully—that is the only expression I can use—shut their eyes to everything said on behalf of the public, no matter how well supported the allegations might be. I have not a shadow of doubt in my mind that the allegations about the unchivalrous and cruel conduct of the police in respect of women's processions in Borsad are true, and yet the Director of Public Information has made what reads like an oracular statement incapable of being contradicted. I am sure that if a really impartial enquiry is made, it would be found that the Director of Public Information had become a tool in the hands of unscrupulous officials who have not hesitated to add falsehood to their barbarity.

I know that I am using strong language, but anything less strong will be untruthful on my part. I would like to be proved wrong in having believed the reports I have received, in which case I should tender my apology to the officials concerned.

When asked by another Press representative about his future programme, he said that it depended upon the health of Pandit Motilal Nehru.

The Hindustan Times, 7-2-1931

152. MESSAGE TO "DARIDRANARAYANA"

LUCKNOW,
February 6, 1931

As *Daridranarayana* is the name given, I trust the performance too will match the name. In the present times if a raja brings out a paper for his subjects he has to be doubly careful. If he considers himself the master, the subjects are brought to ruin, but by regarding himself as their servant he uplifts both himself and the subjects.[1]

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 8695; also C.W. 2891. Courtesy : Kumar Suresh Singh

[1] This appeared in the first issue of the weekly published on October 26, 1931, from Kalakankar.

153. LETTER TO MANMOHANDAS GANDHI

LUCKNOW,
February 6, 1931

BHAISHRI MANMOHANDAS,

I got your letters. I could not reply to them owing to Pandit Motilalji's illness. He passed away today and I am now disposing of the correspondence which has accumulated. It is not in the least necessary to translate my comments into English and give them in the booklet. A translation does not read well. It may also be improper to publish comments which I made from jail.[1] If your booklet is translated into Gujarati and if I can write anything on that occasion, I may say there whatever I wish to. My criticism was for your benefit only.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I had read the figures of imports of foreign cloth, etc. They were excellent.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10

154. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

February 6, 1931

CHI. KUSUM,

You know well enough what time I can spare when out of jail. I shall not, therefore, be able to write as often as I used to do from jail. Panditji passed away today. And so it has become uncertain where I shall be going from here and where I shall stay. If you wish to write, you may do so at Allahabad.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 1819

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Manmohandas Gandhi", 1-1-1931 & "Letter to Manmohandas Gandhi", 20-1-1931

155. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

February 6, 1931

CHI. GANGABEHN JHAVERI,

I got your letter. You should remain firm. You should tell the people very clearly that we are not fighting at present for redress of individual hardships. This matter must be fully clarified. We shall then know the weak from the strong. And that is necessary.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3111

156. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

LUCKNOW,

February 6, 1931

CHI. NIRMALA,

I have your letter. If children do not like milk, the fault lies with the mother. If milk is good and is kept in a clean vessel children will readily drink it. Flavouring must not be added. Do not be put out if the infant does not accept milk for a day or two. If we show the firmness to give only milk when she is hungry, she will come to accept it. It is only a matter of habit. Tea of course must not be given. Start teaching Sumitra from today to breathe properly. If she learns to do it her nose will not run.

I should no doubt be happy if you could stay at the Ashram At suggested Bijapur because I felt that with Kashi there it might suit you better and you would also not suffer from constipation there. At present I eat only wheat *rotis.* I feel all right. Jaggery and sugar are certainly harmful. If the infant asks and if you feel that you must give her something, you may give larged ried red raisins after washing and removing the seeds and teach her to suck them. Juice of black grapes may certainly be given. It can be given warm or cold. But it will be better if she forms the habit of sucking the grapes. Do not let her swallow them whole. Give one grape at a time.

There is no harm in applying kohl to the eyes. On the contrary, it is beneficial. The grease in it is useful. I do not know if the soot itself has any beneficial property. Possibly it helps the grease to stick

well to the eyelids. The eyes should be swabbed daily with warm water. The pad should be of clean cotton. Letting the infant's hair grow, up to a certain age, protects it. It does become necessary to cut the hair after the age of, say, three. oil should be rubbed daily to the roots of the hair. Never apply so much of it that it drips from the hair. After massaging the oil should be wiped off with a dry cloth.

Blessing from

BAPU

[PS.]

For the present I have to be in Lucknow. Where afterwards is uncertain.

From the Gujarati original : Nirmala Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

157. LETTER TO NANIBEHN JHAVERI

February 6, 1931

CHI. NANIBEHN JHAVERI[1],

I have your letter.

You have to stay far away. The struggle at present is not for relieving personal distress. This point has to be clearly conveyed to the people. Matters should be made clear. The weak will stand apart from the strong. And that alone will be right.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari—Pannalal Jhaveri, p. 25

[1] Wife of Pannalal Jhaveri

158. SPEECH AT MOTILAL NEHRU'S FUNERAL, ALLAHABAD

February 6, 1931

Though a great leader of India has passed away today, I see on your faces not grief but elation. That should be so. When leaders leave us, it does not behove us to shed tears. For, what is happening here is not consigning to the flames the lifeless flesh of a devotee, but our witnessing great sacrifice that the nation has made. This is not the first such occasion in my life. At the time of the Lokamanya's death also we had such a vast crowd. I see before me a scene similar to the one I had seen then. The people had been praying and singing songs. They were filled with a certain kind of exaltation. At first I could not realize that, but as soon as I recovered from the grief which had momentarily clouded my reason, I understood how the people had felt that the Lokamanya's death was the crowning glory of his life-long sacrifices. I witnessed similar scenes at the time of Deshbandhu's death and of Lalaji's, Hakimji's, Mahomed Ali's. What a great effect on the world and on Londoners had Mahomed Ali's death made! The reason was that he had gone to England to serve the country's cause and that he sacrificed his life in it. I am happy that today also the people have displayed the same feeling. If you have fully understood the significance of this, it is well that you have thus observed the occasion. Otherwise, the world would call us fools and say that a crowd of unfeeling people had collected at a fair. What we see before us is a national sacrifice. On this occasion, I ask of you that you disperse only after taking some definite vow to do whatever little you can for the country. You will indeed deserve praise if you do this.

Now, on this occasion, I will narrate to you an interesting story. Panditji was a huge lion and he had fought big battles in his life. And similarly he fought the god of death. You may say that he was defeated, but I do not believe that it is true. During this last illness of his, I visited him daily and occasionally he sent for me too. He did that yesterday. I joked with him. I have no words to praise the doctors. They had done their very best, and would have given their lives if that would have saved his life. It is because they had such faith that they had taken him to Lucknow for treatment. Their faith was the result not of Panditji's physical condition, but of his courage. I told Panditji

that, if he recovered, I would believe that swaraj was won. He smiled and said that it had been won already. Though he could not speak distinctly, he had enough peace of mind to be able to say this. Why did he believe that swaraj had already been won? Could anyone say that swaraj was not won when sixty thousand people had gone to jail, when people had faced numerous lathi-charges and made so many sacrifices? I did not visit him last night, but I tell you what Panditji's wife told me. During his life he had not followed the practice of praying with Ramanama, and used to make fun of religion, because he abhorred hypocrisy and false show and was angered by men practising irreligion in the name of religion. But I know his heart and knew that he believed in God. Last night he had been uttering Rama's name aloud. Panditji's tongue had never uttered a word of grief or despair—only a weak man like me would do that. But he never uttered Rama's name either. However, yesterday he remembered that name. He also used to say that he had forgotten *gayatri*—he had given up the practice of reciting it because of the irreligion he saw around him. But, as he told his wife, he had recollected the *gayatri* verse that day. This means that Panditji departed a pure man. May his pure self-sacrifice result in making us purer too. Before leaving here, resolve what you will do for the cause for which this great man sacrificed his son, daughter and son-in-law.

The pledge which has stirred you is to win swaraj with the twin means of non-violence and truth. Keeping these two means in your mind, take whatever vow you wish to before you leave. In your enthusiasm today, you forgot yourselves and used thoughtless words. We are here today to serve the cause of peace, and it behoves us to be peaceful. Even soldiers, the men who work with weapons of steel, remain disciplined and peaceful, though of course outwardly. Leave this place with that peace in your mind and that discipline in your outward behaviour. Take, with this fire as witness, whatever sincere pledge you can fulfil. May God inspire you to take that pledge.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

159. A NOTE

[After *February 6, 1931*][1]

The ashes may certainly be preserved and something erected over them—memorial subscriptions cannot be collected just now. If we close the struggle with success, much can and will be done.

Jawaharlal has to go tomorrow. The ashes will be consigned to the Ganges. But he should reserve some for the Swaraj Bhavan and bring them in an urn.

From a photostat : G. N. 5084

160. STATEMENT TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF AMERICA[2]

February 7, 1931

Panditji's death cannot affect the Congress position at all. Whether it may stiffen Congress attitude I do not know, but that it will not weaken it I am quite sure.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

161. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

February 7, 1931

GHANSHYAMDAS

CARE "LUCKY", BOMBAY

NO INSTRUCTIONS FAST NOW CONTINUE. DO WHAT IS BEST. AM HERE TILL 14TH.

From a microfilm : S.N. 16924

162. MESSAGE ON MOTILAL NEHRU'S DEATH

ALLAHABAD,

February 7, 1931

Motilal's death should be the envy of every patriot. He died after having surrendered his all for the country and up to the very last thinking only for the country. Let us deserve this hero's sacrifice by

[1] From the contents. Motilal Nehru died at Allahabad on February 6, 1931; *vide* also "My Notebook", 19-2-1931.

[2] To its special representative James Mills

each sacrificing, if not all, at least enough to attain freedom, which he was yearning after and which is within easy grasp now.

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-2-1931

163. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

ANAND BHAWAN, ALLAHABAD,
February 7, 1931

DEAR BROTHER,

Jawaharlal was much touched by your wire[1]. Thank you for it. I would love to see you and hear all you have to say to me,[2] for I am not at all sanguine of fruitful result. The atmosphere in India does not seem to me to support your and other friends' jubilation. I would like however to feel that there was no foundation for my fears. You may come whenever you are free. The Working Committee meets here on the 13th instant. If it is at all possible, we should meet on or before 11th instant.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, p. 207; also the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

164. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI PATEL

February 7, 1931

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I got your letter. Kaira is foremost in my thoughts. It is because I am helpless that I have not run down there. But I shall take the first opportunity to do so. Write to me from time to time and keep me informed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9505

[1] Of condolence on Motilal Nehru's death

[2] Regarding the first Round Table Conference which the addressee had attended

165. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

February 7, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Only today I got your letter of the 3rd. Why do you go on worrying even there? If by the time I reach Bombay you have recovered sufficient strength, do come there. I hope you got the letter in which I had asked you some questions. What do you eat? And how much? Do you sleep well? Have you gained any strength there? Can you sit up or leave the bed? Let me have as many details about the state of your health as you can give. Till the 14th at any rate, I shall be in Prayag. Write to me every day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3406

166. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

February 7, 1931

CHI. KANTA,

I got your letter. I understand your impatience to meet me. I am going to Kheda in any case. It would be good if you could meet me there. But if you cannot restrain yourself till then, you may certainly come to Bombay. But it is not certain, either, whether or not I shall now be going to Bombay. I will be at Prayag till the 14th at least. Has your cough stopped? Write everything.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy : Gandhi National Museum and Library

167. TELEGRAM TO BOWMAN[1]

[On or after *February 7, 1931*]

EFFECT OF GREAT PANDIT'S DEATH WILL DEPEND UPON HOW PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENT REACT TO IT. IF PEOPLE RESPOND TO HIS NOBLE SACRIFICE AND GOVERNMENT APPRECIATE MODERATION OF ONE WHO WAS SATURATED WITH COUNTRY'S LOVE WE CAN HAVE HONOURABLE PEACE. BUT WHILST I HAVE HOPE OF PEOPLE'S RESPONSE I HAVE NOT MUCH HOPE OF GOVERNMENT RESPONSE.[2] WHATEVER MAY BE TRUE OF ATMOSPHERE IN BRITAIN I SEE NO CORRESPONDING CHANGE IN INDIA.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 16923; also microfilm S.N. 16924

168. MESSAGE TO "LIBERTY"[3]

Press Message *February 8, 1931*

My position is worse than widow's. By faithful life she can appropriate the merits of her husband. I can appropriate nothing. What I have lost through Motilalji's death is a loss for ever.

"Rock of ages cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee."

GANDHI

BAKSHI
"LIBERTY"
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm : S.N. 16924

[1] Editor, *Englishman*. This was in reply to his telegram dated February 7, which read : "Please send short telegram on effect passing Motilal political situation. Convey deepest sympathy Jawaharlal."

[2] Up to this is in Gandhiji's hand.

[3] *The Bombay Chronicle*, 10-2-1931, published this as Gandhiji's "exclusive statement to *Liberty*".

169. NOTE ON MOTILAL NEHRU

February 8, 1931

Pandit Motilalji adored his children, but his adoration was divine, because instead of interfering with his and their growth it promoted that of both. For the sake of them he gave himself and them to the country.

M. K. GANDHI

From the original : C.W. 9331. Courtesy : Municipal Museum, Allahabad

170. LETTER TO T. RANGACHARI[1]

February 8, 1931

I thank you for your letter. I am at one with you in desiring peace. But I confess to you that I see no sign on the Indian horizon of an honourable peace coming. The deliberate screening of the police, high and low, shows that they are to rule as they have done, no matter what happens to the constitution. The man in the street and now the woman also must, if the authorities can help it, for ever lie under the police heels, a situation that I for one cannot tolerate for a moment longer than I can help.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

171. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

February 8, 1931

CHI. SUSHILA,

Now that I am out of jail, I no longer get the time which I had there for writing letters. I shall have to stay in Prayag for one week still. After that, as God wills. My own wish is first to go to Ahmedabad and thence to Kaira. I am all right. Write to me regularly. If you write in time so that the letter should reach me here, address it to : Anand Bhawan, Allahabad. Otherwise, post it to the Ashram. They will redirect the letter to me wherever I am. My blessings to all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6695

[1] In reply to his letter which read : ". . . What a supreme occasion has arisen for entering into an honourable peace and settlement with Britishers. . . ."

172. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

ALLAHABAD,
February 9, 1931

Mahatma Gandhi has issued a statement to the Press today at 11 a.m., asking that the fifteenth of February, the *Shraddha* Day, should be observed all over India as "Motilal Day". The following is the full text of the statement :

Next Sunday (15th instant) is the first day of the *shraddha* ceremony for the soul of the late Panditji Motilal Nehru. I suggest that as a mark of respect for his memory and to commemorate his unexampled sacrifice for the country, all work should be suspended and the day observed by the nation as one of greater dedication to the cause he loved and for which he lived. Those who believe in purificatory fast will fast for the day breaking it in the evening.

I suggest the following programme :

1. Meetings all over the country at 3 p.m. so far as possible and so as to enable the peasantry to return to their homes in due time.

2. People should march in silent procession to the meetings with national flags.

3. Perfect silence should be observed at the meetings.

4. The following declaration may be made by the assembly speaking word for word after the chairman: "We assembled in this meeting for commemorating the great and noble sacrifice of the late revered Pandit Motilal Nehru hereby solemnly resolve to dedicate ourselves more fully than hitherto to the cause of the country so as to hasten the advent of *purna* swaraj."

Dedication may be in any of the following ways, for instance :

(a) giving up intoxicating drink or drugs and persuading others to do so,

(b) undertaking to picket peacefully and without obstruction such drink and drug shops till such time as total prohibition becomes the law of the land or for a period,

(c) treatment similar to (a) and (b) regarding foreign cloth,

(d) resolution to spin a minimum quantity of yarn per day,

N.B. Spinning includes a knowledge of carding and so far as possible preparing one's own slivers.

(e) resolution to wear nothing but hand-spun and hand-woven khadi,

(f) buying or selling such khadi on the memorial day,

(g) giving to the national cause whatever is within one's capacity or at least the day's earnings,

(h) doing any service or any act of self-denial not covered by the preceding clauses.

He further says :

1. It is of the utmost importance that all suspension of work and every other act should be absolutely voluntary. There should be no compulsion of any kind whatsoever.

2. To make the demonstration impressive perfect discipline is essential.

3. Men, women and children belonging to all classes and communities are expected, in their tens of thousands, to take part in the demonstration.

4. If the people at large will it, complete boycott of foreign cloth can be accomplished on the memorial day. It would be the noblest monument that is within the power of the nation to raise in one day to a patriot who himself at one time was given to all sorts of foreign luxuries and who when he realized his duty discarded and burnt his costliest clothes as we generally discard worn out clothings.

5. So far as possible people should declare their individual act of self-denial or resolution at the meeting and in every case to the Congress sub-committee of his or her taluk or *firka*. An abstract of results should be sent to headquarters.

The Hindustan Times, 9-2-1931

173. TELEGRAM TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS[1]

February 9, 1931

PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS
PADAMDHAM
NEW DELHI

YOUR LETTER. THANKS. EARLIER YOU COME BETTER.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 16924

[1] In reply to his Gujarati letter dated February 8, 1931, in which he had sought an interview with Gandhiji before the latter took a final decision, presumably, about the Round Table Conference after his talks with T. B. Sapru. (S.N. 16925)

174. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

ALLAHABAD,
February 9, 1931

CHI. KUSUM,

You must have received the postcard which I wrote directly from here. I understand your shrinking. But the fear that it implies does not seem proper to me. We shall now meet somewhere and, if I have time then, I will explain this to you. What is there to explain though?

I will not give up the hope I have built on you.

There was a letter from Shanta. She says that she will go to you in a few days.

My health is very good indeed. It seems I shall be here up to the 15th. I don't know where I shall be after that. Your handwriting in English is good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 1820

175. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

PRAYAG,
February 9, 1931

CHI. KASHINATH,

Your letter of the 25th reached me only today after a long, round about journey.

For showing your diary [to Narandas], do not wait till you have gone back to live in the Ashram.

When the path of dharma is clear, you should not be deterred from following it by Father's or Mother's threat to commit suicide or the former's threat to leave the home and become a mendicant. Such threats are rarely carried out but even when they are carried out we may rest assured that that is for our good. In my view, Mother's health has improved considerably.

'Non-violent violence' is certainly a meaningless phrase.

Do not enlarge the field of your work beyond your capacity.

We should never seek work and, when new work comes to us unsought, we should think about our capacity before accepting it. It

should be enough if we improve what we are doing and put it on firmer foundation. If we do that, we shall be able to produce all the results we aim at.

I am here up to the 14th or 15th at any rate. After that, I shall have to consider where I should go.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5280

176. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL

PRAYAG,
February 9, 1931

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

If you are ready to take in Annapurna for six months or more, you may as well accept her without any such definite limit. If she is found to be of pure character, she will not prove a burden. If she is found to be unworthy, she cannot stay even for one day. I see no harm in taking her in after making this clear to her. However, Narandas and you should think and decide for yourselves what to do.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 24370

177. LETTER TO MANAGER, "YOUNG INDIA"

February 9, 1931

BHAISHRI,

After reading in the papers about the attack on you, I stopped sending articles to you for the journal. The loss of the cyclo-styling equipment is, from our point of view, certainly a sort of defeat for us. It has had no effect on me. For we have no right at all to own property. In a tyrannous state, the tyrant claims every pie as his property and, through that claim, he is able to oppress the subjects. If, in such a state, an individual or group of individuals becomes indifferent to property, the tyrant's power of oppression ends.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 22-2-1931

178. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[Before *February 10, 1931*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your third letter today. I am here up to the 14th at any rate. I do not know at present where I shall go after that. I will inform you when it is decided. I should certainly like you to come and see me somewhere. Others, too, may be eager to see me. But I certainly do not wish to come to the Ashram. I can go only if there is a settlement. Instead, I intend to go to Kaira District *via* Ahmedabad so that all can see me at little expense and with little trouble. But I cannot say what I may be obliged to do.

Give me detailed information about Prabhavati's health. If she continues to get fainting fits, ask the doctor to come and examine her. If he makes any suggestion, follow it.

I get no time at all to attend to correspondence, etc. I hope I shall get some now. I shall be getting letters from you regularly now.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Have Gangabehn and Vasumati been tried and sentenced? If yes, to what term of imprisonment? Sitla Sahay informs me that you get fever and that Kusum has become very thin? How is this?

From a copy of Gujarati : C.W. 8152. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

179. STATEMENT ON INDIA'S PUBLIC DEBTS

[*February 10, 1931*][2]

Mr. Gandhi was shown Reuter's telegram about the *Daily Mail's* comments on the demand for the repudiation of public debts. Mr. Gandhi made it quite clear that it was no question of repudiation, but what he wanted was the matter should be placed before an impartial tribunal, who would judge whether the loan was raised in the interests of India or not; and if not, the loan should be charged to the British revenues.

The Hindu, 11-2-1931

[1] From the reference to the addressee getting fever; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 10-2-1931.

[2] Released on this date from Allahabad, by the Associated Special Service

180. LETTER TO GANGADHARRAO DESHPANDE

ALLAHABAD,
February 10, 1931

MY DEAR GANGADHARRAO,

Your letter. Confusion is worse confounded. Motilalji's death has upset my apple cart. What cruel fate has in store for me I do not know."One step enough for me." I am here till 15th perhaps. Everything uncertain then. If ever a truce is declared, restoration of property like yours is a certainty. Meanwhile it is well that we become houseless, landless and luckless. Under organized despotism lucklessness is luck, poverty a blessing, riches a curse, evil is enthroned, goodness nowhere, in one clause all values are transposed. We have only felt from afar the heat of the fire we must pass through. Let us be ready for the plunge. That is my reading just now. And it fills me with joy. A halting peace will be dangerous and I can see no sign of real peace coming.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 5214

181. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Tuesday Morning, February 10, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

It seems you have started forwarding my post. I suppose I shall know by and by how you came to have an attack of fever.

Kanta has asked me about the land revenue dues payable by the Ashram.

I am still not in a position to give a considered opinion from here. We should carefully read the notice, etc. We should ascertain the law in regard to gift-lands. I have, however, just asked Mahadev and he tells me that a decision has already been taken not to pay the land revenue. It is, therefore, not necessary for me to express any opinion. I suppose the decision is, not to pay the land revenue, let the Government do what it will. Yes, I think that is the only proper course. It will test us. Or, rather, how do we know what will test us?

Though Prabhavati does not wish to be examined by a doctor, for our satisfaction it is necessary that Haribhai should examine her.

I suppose Mahadev keeps you informed about my programme. It is, however, likely to go on changing for some time. The only certain thing in a war is that nothing is certain. I shall know only on the 15th where I shall have to proceed on or after that date. We cannot, therefore, know for certain where and when we shall meet. If you have anything to ask me, write to me about it. If we meet, we shall discuss the matter further. I say "if we meet" deliberately. I see no signs of a settlement, and, if there is none, I think they are bound to arrest me. In these circumstances, I think it would be advisable to proceed in every matter as if I were in prison. If the Lord of Janaki did not know what was to happen the next morning, how can we possibly know what the future holds in store for us?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

There are 40 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U/I

182. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

PRAYAG,
February 10, 1931

CHI. RAMA,

I have your letter. You should not get tired so soon. If we are imprisoned, we should welcome that. If they beat us, we should suffer the beating with Ramanama on our lips. A person who is out to serve, what choice can he or she have? How do we know that we shall escape with beating? We may even have to face bullets. We should show patience and be ready to pass through any test God may ordain for us.

If, while doing service, we go to bed late and get up late, we need not feel unhappy about that. However, there should be no self-deception in this matter.

Write to Vimu and ask her how, after hearing that in Borsad women were dragged by their hair, she still wants to have long hair. After this incident, the right course for all women engaged in service

is to get their hair cut short. But how can I convince women about this?

I am here up to the 15th. Where I shall be after that, God alone knows. But it seems to me that we shall meet now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5330

183. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Tuesday morning, February 10, 1931

CHI. KANTA,

I got your three letters together. I have answered your question about the Ashram in the letter to Narandas.[1] Even if you have the slightest cough, get rid of it. Prabhavati's company is company of the good. Though young, she is wise. You can learn a lot from her. Her spirit of service is extraordinary. Serve her well and make her forget her sorrow. If I do not go to Ahmedabad you may come with Prabhavati to Bombay and meet me. In the meantime get well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

184. SPEECH TO STUDENTS, ALLAHABAD

February 10, 1931

Hundreds of students and Congress volunteers, mostly from the villages, assembled at Anand Bhawan, on Tuesday afternoon to have a *darshan* of Mahatma Gandhi. Mahatmaji addressed the gathering for nearly ten minutes urging that the students should learn carding and spinning and should wear nothing but pure, hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar. He emphasized that by so doing, they would best perpetuate the memory of the late Pandit Motilal Nehru and at the same time strengthen the efforts of the Congress to win *purna* swaraj for India.

Gandhiji spoke in Hindi and in an extremely low tone. A Mysore student made a request that Gandhiji should address the gathering in English for the benefit of those

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 10-2-1931.

who could not understand Hindi quite well, and added that, despite his stay for two years and a half at Allahabad, he could not follow Gandhiji's Hindi speech.

If I remain in Mysore for two and a half years and if I cannot learn Canarese quite well, I should really feel ashamed of myself,

remarked Gandhiji and smilingly asked the student :

Are you not ashamed to confess that you do not know Hindi?

The Hindu, 12-2-1931

185. MESSAGE TO BENGAL[1]

[On or after *February 10, 1931*]

I h[ave] always enter[tained] high hopes of B[engal] and have had no cause for disappointment but I know that B[engal] has the capacity to do much more if only youth of B[engal] uniformly turn to non-vio[lence] not merely as a policy but even as the creed and I h[ave] never despaired of B[engal] doing this notwithstanding warning of some B[engal] friends to contrary.

From a photostat : S.N. 16926

186. TELEGRAM TO "TEJ"

February 11, 1931

EDITOR

"TEJ"

DELHI

RATHER THAN TALK SING OR WRITE ABOUT MOTILALJI'S MANY QUALITIES IT WOULD DELIGHT HIS SOUL AND PROFIT US IF WE WOULD EMULATE HIS NOBLE SACRIFICES AND THUS HASTEN THE ADVENT OF SWARAJ.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 16924

[1] In reply to Har Dayal Nag's letter dated February 10, 1931, in which after expressing his condolences on the death of Motilal Nehru, he had requested Gandhiji to send a message for Bengal.

187. LETTER TO PACHA PATEL

February 11, 1931

Received your wire. Is was not necessary to send a telegram. My heart is roaming about in Bardoli and Borsad. It seems I shall be again arrested there.

But everything depends on Go d. Man may strive to achieve a thing. Only when God wills it, I shall be there.

My blessings to all men and women. Particularly let everyone carry out his or her pledge.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-2-1931

188. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

After Prayers, February 11, 1931

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I do not know whether you will get this letter. This time, be satisfied with a postcard. I do wish to go to Kaira District at the earliest opportunity. Whatever settlement is reached,—I have little hope that any will be reached—I will certainly try to safe-guard fully the interests of the cultivators who had joined the struggle. I have not received the note sent by you.

Write to me from time to time and ask others to write too. I shall be here up to the 15th at any rate. After that, wherever God takes me. If I can carry out my plan, I wish to go to Kaira *via* Ahmedabad. I need not write anything in this letter about the events here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5501.

189. LETTER TO TARA MODI

February 13, 1931

CHI. TARA,

I got your letter. I do not understand the complaint against Mithubehn. Whatever the truth in it, our only aim is to serve. We neither desire nor ask for any reward. The reward of service is greater zeal for service. You need not get frightened by any false charge. I

take it you got the clothes, etc. You should continue to write to me. Take care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4171

190. CABLE TO "DAILY HERALD"[1]

February 14, 1931

"NEWS CHRONICLE" INTERVIEW IS A FAIR SUMMARY [OF] MY MENTALITY. I CAN ONLY ASSURE YOU THAT I AM MAKING A DESPERATE EFFORT IN SPITE OF MYSELF TO SECURE PEACE, IF OBTAIN-ABLE WITHOUT SURRENDER FUNDAMENTAL POSITION. POSITION TAKE N AT YERAVDA INTERVIEWS BY LATE PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU MYSELF AND OTHER COWORKERS TOUCHED VERY EXISTENCE OF NATION. IF INDIA IS TO FEEL GLOW OF FREEDOM SURELY SHE MUST HAVE CONTROL OF HER OWN DEFENCE RECEIVING SUCH ASSISTANCE AS MAY BE NECESSARY FROM BRITISH EXPERIENCE. IF IN CERTAIN MATTERS WE ARE UNABLE TO GIVE GOOD ACCOUNT OF OURSELVES FAULT IS NOT OURS BUT INCAPACITY DUE TO WHAT I HOLD WAS DELIBERATE SUPPRESSION OF A WHOLE NATION IN MATTERS OF SELF-DEFENCE. NOR AM I ABLE TO RECONCILS MYSELF TO ANY EXTERNAL CONTROL IN FINANCIAL MATTERS. ENGLISHMEN CAN HAVE NO CONCEPTION OF THE GROWING PAUPERISM OF THE MASSES WHO

[1] In reply to a cable (S.N. 16927) dated February 13, 1931, from its Editor, which read : "*News Chronicle* interviewer today records you saying, 'I want substance of independence. Round Table Conference proposals do not give me that substance. I content with nothing less. Civil disobedience movement must go on. I am looking for every opportunity of peace. At present I see none,' Is this correct statement? Your definite final conclusion."

IN LATE LORD SALISBURY'S WORDS HAVE BEEN SYSTEMATICALLY BLED TO PROVIDE A REVENUE OUT OF ALL PROPORTION TO THE CAPACITY OF THE INHABITANTS OF THIS UNHAPPY LAND. I HAVE SINGLED OUT BUT TWO MATTERS OUT OF SEVERAL OTHERS I CAN MENTION BUT I AM AN OPTIMIST AND BY NATURE LOVER OF PEACE. EFFORTS ARE THEREFORE NOW BEING MADE TO FIND IF THERE IS ANY WAY WHEREBY COOPERATION CAN BE TENDERED. I PLEAD FOR AN ACCURATE STUDY OF WHAT THE CONGRESS STANDS FOR AND OF THE SITUATION AS IT IS DEVELOPING FROM DAY TO DAY. IT IS HARDLY REALIZED BY EVEN SINCERE WELL-WISHERS IGNORANT OF THE CONDITION OF THE MASSES THAT THEY ARE NOT ONLY UNABLE TO BEAR FURTHER TAXATION BUT THAT THEY ARE UNABLE EVEN TO BEAR THE WEIGHT OF THE EXISTING DEMAND MADE UPON THEM IN A VARIETY OF WAYS. SUCH A COUNTRY CANNOT BEAR THE EXPENDITURE OF A FOREIGN ADMINISTRATION RELATIVELY TO THE AVERAGE INCOME THE MOST EXPENSIVE IN THE WORLD OVER AND ABOVE COST OF FOREIGN ARMY OF OCCUPATION.

From a photostat : S.N. 16928

191. LETTER TO VICEROY

ANAND BHAWAN, ALLAHABAD,
February 14, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

As a rule I neither wait for outward prompting nor stand on ceremony, but straightway seek personal contact with officials whenever I feel such contact is needed in the interest of a cause. But somehow or other, in the present case, I have missed the guidance of the inner voice. But I have received suggestions from friends whose advice I value that I should seek an interview with you before coming to any decision. I can no longer resist this advice. I am aware of the responsibility resting on my shoulders. It is heightened by the death of Pandit Motilal Nehru. I feel that without personal contact and heart to heart talk with you, the advice I may give my co-workers may not be right. The friends I have referred to read into the proceedings of the London Conference a meaning and a hope I would like to share. There are other difficulties to be overcome before I can advise suspension of civil disobedience and co-operation in the remaining work of the Conference. It was felt that, before the Working Com-mittee took any final decision, it might be better for me to meet you and discuss our difficulties with you. I therefore ask you, if you are willing, to send me an appointment as early as may be possible.[1] I would like to meet not so much the Viceroy of India as the man in you.

Could I expect a reply by Monday next ? In the absence of a reply I propose to leave Allahabad on Tuesday for Bombay, where I am expected to pass four days. My address in Bombay is Laburnum Road.

I am,

Your faithful friend,

From a photostat : C.W. 9332. Courtesy : India Office Library

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Viceroy", 15-2-1931.

192. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

February 15, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter. I don't require any more details about your health now. If you give up all worries, your health will improve very rapidly. Let there be no weight on your mind. It is I who have to worry for you; why, then, do you worry? As you give up worrying, the body will become free from tensions and the fainting fits will gradually disappear. For your headaches, you should bandage your head with a mud pack be-fore going to bed, as I used to do. Twice or thrice every day, you should lie down flat on a bed, and rest. Even if you don't get sleep, you should lie down. And see that you don't suffer from constipation. Your diet is all right. I certainly cannot wish that you should eat beyond your appetite.

Father came and stayed here for four days. On the whole, I found his health good just now. Rajendrababu was of course there, and with them was Anugrahababu.

I cannot say when I shall be able to go to Bombay. Come and see me wherever I settle down for a few days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3407

193. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

February 15, 1931

BHAI VALJI,

I got your letter. Do stay there as long as necessary. Do [not] forget mother khadi and mother cow. The Government is acting like one who is doomed to destruction and whose reason, therefore, is perverted, for it has been issuing all sorts of arbitrary ordinances. I am hanging in mid-air. It seems likely that I shall have to go to Delhi. How long it will be necessary for me to stay there will depend on the Viceroy's attitude. From Delhi, it seems I shall have to go to Bombay. I very much wish that you would learn the art of preserving your health. As for your questions, you must wait till we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 7413. Courtesy : Valji Desai

194. SPEECH ON MOTILAL DAY[1], ALLAHABAD

February 15, 1931

At 3 p.m. Mr. Gandhi arrived at the meeting with, among others, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and took his seat on the rostrum . . .

After the . . . flag song by a few ladies, Mr. Purushottam Das Tandon requested, at the suggestion of Mahatma Gandhi, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to preside at the meeting.[2]

Mr. Gandhi, who sat on the rostrum spinning on the *takli*, then addressed the audience. It was a belief, he said, entertained in all religions that a person's soul never dies and the *shraddha* ceremony was performed with a view to giving peace to the deceased soul. A person generally does not leave his body without a single desire. Some desire is always left in him unfulfilled. Pandit Motilal Nehru, said Mr. Gandhi, died with a longing for swaraj. It was his constant wish that the entire country should be free and the reins of her government should be in the hands of her own representatives, and that justice should be done to the poorest in this land, be they Hindus, Moslems, Christians, Parsis, or Sikhs. It, therefore, struck him, said Mr.Gandhi, that some such things should be done that day as would real *shraddha* for giving peace to the soul of Pandit Motilal Nehru. He, therefore, issued an appeal for the celebration of the memorial day.

Proceeding, Mr. Gandhi said that a bath in the Ganges was no *shraddha*. It certainly cleansed the body but purification of the inner selves could only be done by inward act. Such act was the pledge which they had just then taken. But it was useless if they did not act up to it. They had to do something that would hasten the advent of swaraj and that they knew would give peace to the soul of Pandit Motilal Nehru. He knew of thousands of people giving their lives simply because of their anxiety not to break their pledges. Mr. Gandhi hoped that the people who had taken the vow to work for the attainment of complete swaraj would abide by their pledges.

In the course of his observations Mr. Gandhi also appealed to the people to continue their efforts for bringing about Hindu-Muslim unity of which he was reminded by the recent disturbances in sacred Kashi. He added that the attainment of Hindu-Muslim unity was also the mission of Pandit Motilal Nehru's life and it was Mr. Gandhi's conviction that if the people combined to bring about that unity and attained it, other work for the attainment of swaraj would become very easy. He had learned, said Mr. Gandhi, that Hindus and Muslims in Kashi were cutting each other's

[1] The tenth-day *shraddha* ceremony of Motilal Nehru; *vide* also "Statement to the press", 9-2-1931.

[2] Then Purushottam Das Tandon, President of the provincial Congress Committee, moved the resolution embodying the vow prescribed by Gandhiji. The pledge was repeated word for word by the audience.

throats. He did not want swaraj at the expense of a single party. Neither he nor Pandit Motilal Nehru cared for swaraj exclusively for Hindus or Muslims. Swaraj under which Hindus and Muslims and others could live together was the aim of his life. It was, therefore, a matter for great shame if either community committed excesses against the other. It would be appropriate if everyone in the audience took the pledge to promote communal unity.

He added that in the course of the struggle they had lost Lokamanya Tilak, Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan, Lala Lajpat Rai and Deshbandhu Das; and now Pandit Motilal Nehru was gone. It was time, therefore, that they did their duty and attained the good for which their leaders had died.

The Pioneer, 18-2-1931

195. TELEGRAM TO VICEROY[1]

[On or after *February 15, 1931*]

THANKS WIRE HOPE WAIT ON YOU TUESDAY TWO O'CLOCK. IF HOUR INCONVENIENT PRAY APPOINT ANOTHER. IN DELHI STAYING WITH DR. ANSARI.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

196. TELEGRAM TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

ALLAHABAD,
February 16, 1931

SIR PRABHASHANKAR
BHAVNAGAR

THANKS WIRE[2]. LETTER RECEIVED. DEPEND UPON MY DOING BEST. HOPE YOU ARE WELL.

GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 5912

[1] In reply to his telegram received on the night of February 15 which read : "Your letter. Ready see you any time Tuesday, Wednesday. Please wire."

[2] Which read : "Hope you have received my letter. When in 1919 you not without difficulty persuaded Amritsar Congress to accept and try Montagu's reforms, eyes of India were on you for guidance. On the present occasion expectant eyes of the whole world are turned to you for peace. Everything points to an honourable settlement if Congress would help." (Manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary)

197. MESSAGE TO PEOPLE OF UTKAL[1]

February 16, 1931

I hope that you all will make sacrifices in the *yajna* for swarajya according to your mite.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From Hindi : C.W. 9756. Courtesy : Government of Orissa

198. LETTER TO GUNAVATI KUNWAR MAHARAJ SINGH

ALLAHABAD,
February 16, 1931

DEAR SISTER,

Under the impulse of pure affection and contrary to my wont, I ate your bread without inquiring how it was prepared. In order to be able to copy it, I asked for the recipe. Now that I know it I must tell you that it is forbidden food for me. I do not eat eggs nor cow's or buffalo's milk and at present no milk at all. Nor do I take sugar as a rule. I may not therefore take the loaf you have so kindly sent again. Let this discovery cause you no distress. That the loaf was forbidden food for me causes me none. The remembrance I have of your affection for me, I shall treasure. If I have given you the information, I have done so to tell you why I may not eat the second loaf and also to appear before you as I am with my limitations.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

199. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

ALLAHABAD,
February 16, 1931

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I got your letter and wire. I sent a wire in reply to your wire. One need not advise the teeth to take care not to hurt the tongue. I feel like that real mother in the story. Was she not ready to let go her claim to her son so that he may remain alive? Surely, women being dgged by their hair and boys being whipped for no crime cannot

[1] Exhibited at the Orissa pavilion of the Gandhi Darshan Exhibition held in Delhi during 1969-70.

make me happy. I am, therefore, eager to go to any length to secure peace. If, however, that peace would be like the peace between the wolf and the lamb, rather than accept it I would let women be dishonoured, backs of innocent boys stained with blood, people's homes looted and innocent people hanged. I always pray to God that I, who am standing at Death's door, may not put my signature to anything which might

prove a trap for the country. I am going to Delhi today with this prayer in my heart. I do not feel presumptuous like the dog in the story who was walking under the cart. I know the limits of my strength. I am but a particle of dust. Even such particle has a place in God's creation, provided it submits to being trodden on. Everything is done by that Supreme Potter. He may use me as He wills. Whether it is victory or defeat, it will be His. There is, therefore, no question of defeat, or, say, rather, that it is ever defeat for us. I think I have written enough. I have been able to write even as much as I have done because today is my silence day. But all this is by way of preface. My intention in writing this letter was to request you to persuade the princes to acknowledge the rights of their subjects. They wish to be partners; will they not, then, agree to give an account of their actions to the other partners?

How much did Lady Pattani spin and how much khadi did she sell? What have you done for cow-protection?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Give me news of your health. Address : C/o Dr. Ansari.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5917

200. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

February16, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

If you have not received from Swami the yarn which I spun in jail, write to him and obtain it from him; after giving to the All India Spinners' Association and the Cow-protection Society such quantity from it as may have to be given to them, I should like you to use the rest to get a sari woven for Ba. Whether this can or should be done,

you may think over.

A good many people seem to be ill there. Since you are there I don't worry on this account. It is surprising how we invite illness the moment bread and other starchy foods are included in our diet. I have been able to keep away illness from me for many years by living only on fruits and nuts. If possible, exclude bread from your diet unless you find it necessary for your health. *Ratalu*[1] and other vegetables are as good as bread. I wish that you should take whatever measure may be necessary so as not to fall ill. Have Krishna and Kanu returned from Wardha? We are proceeding to Delhi today. I shall be meeting the Viceroy tomorrow. I let the events take their own course, and the Chief Potter alone knows whether the outcome will be a pot or a jar. My address in Delhi will be C/o Dr. Ansari, Daryaganj.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

An article for *Navajivan* is enclosed with this; pass it on to Jivanji.

An old co-worker in the Champaran Campaign has a widowed sister and he wants her to be admitted in the Ashram. She may arrive there towards the end of March. Her name is Girinandini and she is aged 36. I have told her to write to you when she decides to join. She has agreed to observe the Ashram rules. As for her expenses, the brother will give what he can. He was a lawyer but gave up practice.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I

201. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[*February 16, 1931*][2]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I am sending this letter along with the Ashram post to ensure that it reaches you without fail. I do not get enough time these days to write long letters to you from here. I am now going to Delhi, so I suppose I shall be able to come to some decision very soon. However, we should learn to feel certitude even in the midst of doubt.

[1] Sweet potatoes

[2] From the contents of this and the following two items, it is clear that they were written on February 16, 1931, before Gandhiji left for Delhi.

What can be more uncertain in its time of coming than death? A person lying on his death-bed may survive and live to a ripe old age, and a robust young man may die suddenly in a moment. Still, we go on doing our work as if we shall never die. What right, then, do we have to expect certainty in any other matter.

It will be enough if we resolve about one thing :

Abandon all duties and come to Me, the only Refuge.

If we can do this, what more do we require?

Whatever thou dost, whatever thou eatest,

Whatever thou offerest as sacrifice or gift,

Whatever austerity thou dost perform, O Kaunteya,

Dedicate all to Me.2

Put all this before co-workers and tell them to be vigilant. Our work will end only with our death; or, rather, we may say that our work will remain even after our death.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

My address is Delhi : C/o Dr. Ansari, Daryaganj.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro –7 : Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 211-2

202. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

[*February 16, 1931*]

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your letter. I am leaving for Delhi this very evening. I cannot say when I shall come to this side again. It is also uncertain how long I shall be in Delhi. Probably I shall have to go from there to Bombay. I shall be happy if you write to me regularly in Delhi, C/o Dr. Ansari, Daryaganj. I hope you are much better now. I suppose you know that quite a number of people in the Ashram are ill at present.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 9292. Courtesy : Benarsilal Bazaj

203. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Silence Day [*February 16, 1931*]

CHI. MANI,

I did get your letters, but I have not the time to send you a reply. Please therefore go on writing to me, whether or not I am able to write to you. We start for Delhi today. Address: C/o Dr. Ansari, Daryaganj. The Sardar is going to Bombay.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–4 : Manibehn Patelne, p. 49

204. LETTER TO DIKSHIT

[*February 16, 1931*][1]

I see that the boycott of the census cannot be given up. It will be another matter if a settlement is arrived at and it becomes possible to give it up. There is no cause to entertain the fear you do in regard to the boycott. If the boycott is even reasonably successful, it will not be possible to use the figures for any purpose. And, moreover, nobody's progress is going to depend on statistics. It will depend only on moral strength. I would therefore advise you fully to support the boycott if you can.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. XIV, pp. 47-8

205. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

PRAYGA,
February 16, 1931

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I am leaving for Delhi today. My headquarters there will be Dr. Ansari's place, in Daryaganj. I do not know how long I shall stay

[1]From the Diary

there but it will be for two or three days at least. How is Arun and what is the news about Charu?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 1685

206. SPEECH AT DELHI

February 17, 1931

At about 9 a.m., as Mahatmaji came out into the park, he was received with vociferous cheers by the crowd.

Addressing the people gathered there, Mahatma Gandhi said he was sorry that he saw no *takli* in Delhi, everywhere else he had seen *taklis* being plied by men and women.

Continuing, he said, because he was going to see the Viceroy today, it did not mean that they should go to sleep. They must continue to do something for winning swaraj.

Gandhiji laid great stress on the need of using pure khaddar.

The Hindustan Times, 19-2-1931

207. INTERVIEW WITH VICEROY (VICEROY'S VERSION)

February 17, 1931

There was no one present except Gandhi and myself. We began with general talk, in the course of which I dwelt upon the change in British opinion, which I hoped India would not make of no avail.

1.Future procedure. I sketched the ideas as they at present stand.

2.Scope of further discussions. I said there were three main principles in the Conference structure : Federation; Indian responsibility; reservations and safeguards. These were fundamental, but the detailed application of these principles was open to further examination and discussion. It would be as unprofitable for his friends to try to pull out the linchpins of federation and safeguards as it would be, say, for my Conservative friends to go back on the principle of responsibility.

3.He said that Congress could not give an undertaking in no circumstances to resume civil disobedience. I said that I could not bind them to any such pledge; but that the whole point was whether he and his friends had in mind a temporary and grudging truce or a genuine attempt to make a permanent peace. He said : "Certainly the latter", but that he only wished to guard himself against imputations of bad faith if, as he trusted would not be, they found themselves wholly mistaken in the spirit of

the later discussions.

4.He asked about the right of raising "dissolution of partnership". I said that I regarded the question as academic, but presumed he could discuss it if he so desired. But I added that it would have a very damaging effect on British opinion if he made any public statement to this effect. He agreed, and said that he desired to be able to say that he was not precluded, if he should so desire, from raising the question, and to protect himself from the charge that he had taken His Majesty's Government unawares if he did.

5.He then referred to the question of debts. I said there could be no discussion on repudiation (which he said was not intended), but that if it was a question of the examination of particular apportionment of liability between Great Britain and India, or India and Burma (in the event of separation), I did not suppose that objection would be taken on principle, however unprofitable such discussions might seem to me likely to be.

6.He raised the question of the States' subject. I said that I presumed he could raise the matter in discussion, but he would be up against the Princes. He acknowledged this and left me with the impression that Congress felt they had to raise the question, but did not attach undue importance to it.

7.Proportion of representation in the later Conference discussions. He did not anticipate much difficulty. He attached no importance to proportions, provided they could get enough to have their various elements represented and to enable them to pull their due weight on Committees, etc. If necessary, other sections of opinion could be increased too. He said he thought it might be necessary to ask the Working Committee for a few more key men. I told him that I had contemplated a Congress representation of about 12, and 15 or 20 were larger figures than I could think necessary. He agreed to keep the numbers as low as he could; and said he would consider a suggestion I made about working on the plan of "substitute" delegates, to bring others in without swelling the official numbers.

8.We then got on the practical points, if, as he said civil disobedience was suspended. I at once took him upon the word 'suspended' and said that what I had in mind was effective abandonment. He said he did not attach importance to the word, but wished to protect the position defined in paragraph 3 above.

Practical points were :

(1) Release of satyagrahis, including some sentenced under martial law in Sholapur. I said that my distinction of principle was violence and inciters to violence on the one side, about whom I could do nothing, and non-violent satyagrahis on the other.

(2) Meerut prisoners. He argued for their discharge, but not, as I understood, as a condition. I said that they had nothing to do with civil disobedience, but I was as much disturbed as he was at the protracted proceedings, and would examine the case with a view to seeing whether

anything could be done to accelerate the conclusion of the trial. More than that I could not say, as I could recognize no association between Communists and non-violent satyagrahis.

(3) He raised the question of the Bengal detenus, not, as I understood, as a condition, but in order to inform me that a great many people had been locked up who in no way deserved it. I omitted to make the obvious point that each case was submitted to two Judges, but told him that, if he wished to submit any evidence of a case in which the police had dropped on the wrong man, I would pass it on to the Governor of Bengal who would look into it personally. He did not seem to attach great importance to the question.

(4) Land and property. I said that third parties who had bought could not be disturbed. Any adjustment that was requisite for settlement would have to be through unofficial agency. He brought forward a good many technical points, on which I said little beyond adhering to the main principle that Government could be generous with what was still in its own possession, but not with what third parties had acquired. He promised to submit a note.

(5) Remission of fines. Those that were uncollected I said could probably be remitted. But I could not press local Governments to entertain the suggestion of restoring fines already collected. This was a matter on which local Governments would exercise their own discretion. He did not press this very hard.

(6) Restoration of presses and securities. I said the same principle must apply, i.e., what was in Government's possession could be restored, but securities that had been forefeited fell into same category as fines paid.

(7) Reinstatement of officials resigned or dismissed. I said that I could not press any local Government to reinstate any officials whose places had been filled; and that the utmost I could do would be to invite local Governments to examine all cases on their merits with the object of acting as generously as circumstances permitted towards those who had resigned, whether out of pressure or because they had been swept off their feet by the civil disobedience movement. Dismissals stood in a somewhat different category, and I anticipated Governments would feel greater difficulty about this class of case inasmuch as officials had presumably not been dismissed without cause; but I was ready to invite local Governments to examine these cases also on their merits.

(8) Repressive ordinances. I said these could go, except the Burma Terro-

rist Ordinance, adding that, if the Press reverted to encouragement of violence, it would be necessary for Government to take action against it.

(9) Punitive Police, he asked, should be withdrawn. I said it was a new point to me, but would if necessary invite local Governments to consider it.

9.Enquiries into police excesses. He dropped the idea of a general enquiry, but pressed very hard for special enquiries, if necessary *in camera*. I put the counter-arguments, and said that I could not go further than promise investigation by local Governments and if desired by myself of specific complaints. This he said was not much, as the truth could only be ascertained by cross-examination of evidence on both sides. I told him that there was so much on the other side that I did not think he was entitled to press for enquiries that could only have the purpose of placing the police in a position of defendants, and to this I was not able to agree. I would see any matter he chose to submit and he must trust to my assurance that local Governments would examine it fairly. I had also no objection to publicly exonerating those who had brought charges from any imputation of bad faith. He was not satisfied with this.

10. He read over to me other points on which he proposes to speak tomorrow. Salt; Peaceful picketing and there may have been something else.

11. I told him that I thought it was of great importance, if we were to succeed in our peace efforts, that the temperature should be lowered, and asked him to get Bombay to go slow in picketing, etc. He promised to do so.

12. We agreed to meet again alone tomorrow with possibly a larger meeting with others in to follow.

13. Although I made the point in Paragraphs 3 and 8 that I drew a clear distinction between action by Congress on the basis of a temporary truce with the intention of resuming the campaign, and a genuine desire to co-operate in constructive work, it is important to leave him in no doubt when we meet again (though I don't think there is any) that the various items of action by Government are dependent on effective abandonment of the movement.[1]

(SD.) IRWIN

From a photostat : G.N. 8946

[1] For Gandhiji's report of interview, *vide* the following item.

208. INTERVIEW WITH VICEROY (GANDHIJI'S REPORT)

[*February 17, 1931*][1]

The Viceroy had impressed me very well. He had impressed me as much as Lord Reading had done, except that Lord Reading was clever and he took undue advantage of my discussions with him. Lord Irwin talked to me in a friendly way and frankly admitted that it was his mistake that we had not met so far. The second thing he admitted was that the British public had been aroused the most by my movement. This attitude of his shows that he wants to make peace. He desires peace because he has been touched by the struggle. He is wondering how long he can allow the struggle to continue and feels that now he would be obliged to rely on the gun alone.

I took out the resolution at the very outset.

MAHADEV DESAI. Was there no talk about your letter ?

GANDHIJI. No, there was no specific mention of that but I felt that he liked the letter. I certainly told him that I was ready for a settlement and in the mean time Shuaib had come and asked me whether I would not write a letter in this manner, that I had placed that matter before the Working Committee and they approved of it, and so I had written. I went on reading the resolution. About the initial portion regarding the constitution, he said: "There is no difficulty about discussing anything, but I can't say how much you will gain out of it. But you can certainly open the discussion." I did not make any attempt to know what his views were. But he said if we wanted to discuss the clause regarding secession we should do that only in the Conference. But no one was going to listen to it and if I pressed the point too much, persons like him who wanted to help me would be put in an awkward position.

Then immediately he came to the truce terms. We discussed which of the conditions could be dropped. And the discussion on the inquiry itself took up half the time. The greatest difficulty is about the issue of the inquiry. He is not against it but he said that it made his position very delicate."Will you be satisfied if I conduct the inquiry?" Thus by asking this question he had given up his case. I

[1] In the source the report by Gandhiji of the interview is given under February 18, 1931.

asked him: "How will you conduct the inquiry? Have you ever heard of a person having dis-pensed justice without hearing both the sides? You have our unsifted account and a similar account given by the police. What will you make out of it?" He agreed that nothing could be achieved. "The position today is that you have declared us liars before the whole world. How will it behove you to negotiate with liars like us? Have a look at the whole communique. Should we swallow the allegations that everything we said was fabricated?" He had no reply to give to all this (At this point Ansari came, so some things had to be repeated.) One thing was clear from his talk that those people are also tired just as some of us are. "I shall certa-inly send a cable that you want the clause regarding secession to be inclu-ded but the position of people like me who want to help you will become very awkward." I can understand that. He apologized about the matter of the public debt. He said, "So far I thought you wanted repudiation of the debts, but you have certainly every right to demand distribution of the war expenses. We shall see how we can examine the question of fair distribution. I also desire the same thing as you do regarding the Native States, but you have to persuade the States themselves. We shall not prevent you from doing so. I wish to give you as much help as I can."

He admits that all our demands are just. He did not say that even one of them was unjust but only put forward his difficulties. At the very beginning I explained to him whatever I had to say about our conditions. He said it would be difficult to release the Meerut prisoners and he wondered how much pressure he could bring to bear upon the Governor of Bengal regarding the release of detenus there. Moreover, all these things might be done but he asked, "How can we do them if you want to make that a condition precedent? We have collected fines from many; how can we refund them all? How can we pay compensation for property burnt down or destroyed? The proceeds of property sold, however, can be refunded." I said : "Can you say this even in those cases where the market value has not been taken into acount and you have got rupees ten for a property worth rupees one thousand? Is there equity in this?" He saw the point and asked us to give him a list of the losses incurred. He saw the point regarding taxes also. "How can you exact taxes from people who have been ruined?"

About the fairness of taxation, I told him the story of Mahmood. Once a woman went to him to seek justice. Mahmood told her

: “You live so far away that I cannot carry justice there.” She said : “Stop ruling over us.” Mahmood said, “Yes, that region should be excluded from the empire.” Irwin laughed and said that justice should be done.

(While speaking of my keenness for peace, I casually told him : “I wrote to you a letter even from Yeravda but you did not reply to it.

I do not complain but I want to show you how keen I am on a settlement.”)

He asked me, “How can we throw the police to the wolves?” I said, “We do not want that. We want the enquiry only to establish whether the police have committed any atrocities.”

The discussion about the inquiry alone took half the time. That means they consider the condition to be very difficult. Only for that reason will it be an acid test for us.

The Governor of Bombay was sitting outside. I was introduced to him. I could not talk to him because I was in a hurry for my meal and the A.D.C. came and told me that my car had arrived. The Viceroy had also asked me whether it would do if the Governor conducted an independent enquiry. I asked him “In what way is the Governor in a better position than you to do so? Why should we submit to the excesses of the police? Why shouldn’t they, over whom we are going to rule one day, consider themselves our servants right from today itself ?”

The gist of the whole talk is that he very much wants a settlement and the other thing is that if we give up a single point of ours, our whole case will be ruined. I on my part told the Viceroy that if he granted that the Congress was something to reckon with, he must accede to our reasonable demands.

The reference to Mirabehn came up in the beginning and in the end. At the end, I said, “She must have cooked my meal and must be waiting for me.” In the beginning I had said, “How can I sever my connection with you? I have so many English friends. Take for instance Mirabehn. I don’t know her family and her father and yet she has completely lost herself in me. Andrews keeps sending me cables from Cape Town asking me to arrive at a settlement. How can I give up this Andrews? Horace Alexander also writes to me and he advises me not to arrive at a settlement. Having written that he apologizes! Is it possible for me to sever all these relations? And yet if co-operation is not possible, I shall have to do so.

"If both of us desire not to quarrel, we shall not quarrel. I have come with a determination not to fight as far as possible." I had assured him that "I do not want to tell you anything except the truth. I do not want to conceal anything from you, I do not want to have a single mental reservation. Hence you can tell me whatever you wish to. You can say whatver you have heard about my associates and tell me whatever you want, can question me about them."

Talking about the release of the Meerut prisoners, he expressed his difficulty but he described the sentence passed on the Sholapur Martial Law prisoners as preposterous.[1]

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

209. TELEGRAM TO PERIN CAPTAIN

[*February 17, 1931*][2]

PERINBEHN CAPTAIN
NEAR ISLAM CLUB
CHOWPATI, BOMBAY

HEAR VIOLENCE BEING USED PICKETING FOREIGN CLOTH. PLEASE PLACE MATTER CONGRESS AUTHORITIES TELL THEM SCRUPULOUSLY AVOID ALL VIOLENCE DIRECT INDIRECT PASSIVE OR ACTIVE.[3]

From a microfilm : S.N. 16924

[1] For the Viceroy's version of the interview, *vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* "Interview with Viceroy (Viceroy's Version)", 18-2-1931.

[3] Addressee's telegram (S.N. 16936) dated February 20, 1931 read : "Wire received. Instructions will be carried out."

210. MESSAGE TO VISITORS

DELHI,
February 18, 1931

Mahatmaji came out[1] at 1.40 p.m. and was cheered by hundreds of visitors, including a large number of ladies, who were anxious to have his *darshan*.

Mahatmaji put two questions to the crowd assembled. He first asked :

How many of you are dressed in khaddar?

Everybody raised his hand. Then Mahatmaji asked :

I want only those to raise hands who are dressed in hand-spun and hand-made khaddar.

Nearly thirty per cent of the assembled raised their hands. Then he asked them how many were dressed in foreign clothes. Only three hands were raised. He told them :

Use khaddar. This is my message. Now go home, all of you.

Then with a smile he hurried to his car which drove him to the Viceregal Lodge. The crowd raised shouts of "*Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai*" and melted away.

The Hindustan Times, 20-2-1931

211. INTERVIEW WITH VICEROY (VICEROY'S VERSION)

February 18, 1931

I had a further talk with Mr. Gandhi this afternoon. He began by telling me that he had, as requested by me yesterday, sent a telegram[2] to Bombay saying that he had been informed that picketing was taking a serious form and was in danger of leading to violence, and that that kind of thing must be stopped. He promised to let me know the result.

He then proceeded to develop the points left over from yesterday beginning with :

(1) Punitive Police. I told him that, as I had said yesterday, it was a new point to me and that I imagined the action of local Governments would be dictated by the circumstances of each case. I could imagine cases in which local Governments might be willing to withdraw them as also others in which such withdrawal would have to be postponed. We left it at the point that I said in the event of a settlement being

[1] Of Dr. Ansari's house
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Perin Captain", 17-2-1931.

reached I would draw local Governments' attention to the matter.

(2) He developed an argument of which this was the gist. In districts where resort has been had to coercive processes for collection of taxes due, such further collection shall be suspended pending examination of cases by an officer through an enquiry, in which the people will be afforded an opportunity of stating their case. His point was that many of the coercive processes have been extra legal, and have imposed far greater material damage on the people than the value of the tax due to be collected. He was only asking for the right of proving such a case as would lead Government to redress real injustice.

I said that without fuller knowledge of the facts and the issues involved I could express no opinion beyond telling him that it seemed the kind of thing in which serious difficulty would be likely to arise. I told him that in my view, as in the case we were discussing yesterday of enquiries into police excesses, I regarded the whole state in which we now found ourselves as that of something very like a state of war. Under such conditions no doubt great hardship was unavoidable, but it had by no means been confined to one side. His presentment of the case seemed to me to suggest that we were dealing with unjustifiable departures from a state of affairs which had in other respects been normal, and appeared to rest on the assumption that Government was in the dock and under the necessity of justifying its action to people who had themselves been wholly free from blame. He would not expect me to accept that kind of interpretation of the present position.

He answered this by reverting to his original arugment that he was pleading for no more than redress of what he believed he could show to be a manifest excess of administrative action leading to real injustice.

(3) Salt. Here he developed the romantic side of the salt campaign, dwelling much on the inhumanity of depriving families who had natural opportunities of doing so, of taking advantage of them to manufacture salt. (I am not sure whether it confined to salt for their own use or not.) What he desired was that Government should either alter the law or acquiesce in its breach, by way of not prohibiting such private action. He instanced the Sarda Act and the Age of Consent Act as examples of Government looking the other way in matters of administration.

I told him that there was a wide distinction in my view between Government administering a particular law with discretion, through instructions communicated to its own officers, and Government advertising to the world that it was prepared to condone such breaches. The latter really amounted to an invitation to all and sundry to commit them. If, as he said, such informal breaches of the Salt Law had been in the habit of taking place before, I had no reason to suppose that Government would wish to administer the Salt Law any more or any less strictly than had been the case hitherto.

He said that he was not asking for any public declaration, but for a private assurance that Government would not interfere with private breaches of the law; he had not in mind raids on salt depots or anything on that scale.

I told him that I felt considerable difficulty about his propositon having regard to the fact that the circumstances surrounding private breaches of the law had greatly altered since his salt campaign.

(4) Peaceful picketing. He asked me whether I took any objection to its continuance. I told him that peaceful picketing appeared to me a misnomer. I had a long list of cases on my table showing the violent results that had flowed from so-called peaceful picketing, and I found it impossible to believe that peaceful picketing could fail to produce similar results in future. I quoted Benares, Amritsar, etc. I further said that I could not tolerate interference with legitimate trade, as evinced by Congress intimidation in the matter by way of sealing foreign cloth, mock funerals and all the rest. Lastly, I said that picketing as a political weapon was objectionable and its continuance was quite incompatible with Congress coming into Conference discussions. He was really setting about his principal purposes of swadeshi and temperance in the wrong way by pursuing a policy at once negative and belligerent; why could he not apply himself to the positive and pacific programme of preaching swadeshi and temperance without interference with personal liberty?

To all this he said he had no wish to do more than peacefully persuade; he only attached importance to it as a social and economic business, not primarily political. He and the Congress would prohibit violence, mock funerals

and all such forms of pressure; but he could not see why people might not stand near a grog-shop in the endeavour to reform the drunkard; if violence or molestation occurred, it could be dealt with under the ordinary law I told him that experience was against him in this matter, and that I feared it would not be easily possible for him to get the subtle distinction present to his own mind observed in practical action by many different people in different parts of the country.

2.I then took up a few general matters. First of all I explained to him that in everything I had said I was only speaking personally for myself, and that on many matters it would be necessary to consult local Governments or the Secretary of State, and on all matters it would be necessary for me to consult my own council. This he recognized. I then told him that I had heard of the probability of himself and Vallabhbhai Patel visiting Gujarat. I could have little doubt that, if they went there, they would stimulate the civil disobedience movement, in which the Government of Bombay could evidently not acquiesce. I asked him therefore to keep himself and Vallabhbhai away for the present at all events. He told me that he had just summoned Vallabhbhai to come here and went on to say that, if our negotiations succeeded, no difficulty would arise; if they failed, I understood him to say that he and his friends

had decided, or might decide, to offer themselves for re-arrest. It would then be for Government to do what they wished, but he would certainly when his work was finished here wish to go to Gujarat and could not do otherwise.

3.I finally told him that everything I had said about possibilities of reciprocal action by Government was dependent upon the effective abandonment of the civil disobedience campaign. He asked me what this meant; it would be impossible for him to agree to a period of ten days or fifteen days before reciprocal action was taken by Government. I said I had not that in mind; what I was rather concerned with was that before Government [took] reciprocal action they should be satisfied that the Working Committee's instructions had in fact reached local organizations and that they were being loyally carried out. There was no question of impugning the trustworthiness of the Working Committee, who might reach an agreement with Government here; on the other hand, it was not unreasonable that Government should be satisfied that the agreement honourably reached by the Working Committee was in fact being honourably given effect to by the local organizations.

He appeared to accept this.

4.I then recurred to the question we had discussed yesterday as to the contingent resumption by Congress of civil disobedience. I said that it would be an impossible position for me to recommend to His Majesty's Government to take all the steps we had been discussing if they were at any moment in the course of subsequent discussions liable to be told by Congress that the provisional conclusions arrived at, at any stage, were unpalatable and they therefore broke up and went back to their campaign. Could he give me any assurance on the point?

He said that, as he had explained yesterday and as I had accepted, Congress could not pledge themselves, either for all time or in this particular matter, not again to have resort to civil disobedience; but if they went into the Conference he would be prepared to say that they went in meaning to strain every nerve to make it a success. He did not however wish to conceal from me that, if, when the discussions had concluded, the scheme was still unsatisfactory to them, they must reserve their liberty to return to civil disobedience. He could not anticipate what their decision might be; circumstances might alter, they might desire to wait and see what happened in Parliament; but in no case would he anticipate recurrence to civil disobedience while the discussions were proceeding; and he hoped that it would never be necessary at all.

5.I asked him whether he thought, in spite of the attitude I had felt necessary to adopt as regards salt, peaceful picketing, enquiries into excesses and other matters on which I had been unable to meet him, it would be desirable to have a somewhat more formal discussion? In such event I should contemplate that we might have invited Sastri, Sapru, Jayakar, Shafi, Chhatari, possibly a non-official European from the Assembly, another non-official Moslem, Malaviya, Ansari, Bikaner and Bhopal. He appeared to welcome the idea rather warmly, saying that he thought Malaviya was

indispensable, but added that he might like to bring one or two of his own and instanced Jawaharlal, Vallabhbhai and Sen Gupta. He might have liked, he added, to have had Subhas Bose, but he was at present in prison. I said that in such case I should propose to reinforce myself by representatives of my Government.

I told him that I would consider this and let him know, if I could, tomorrow, adding that I thought, if such further talks were held, a formal communique should be issued after each meeting to avoid public misunderstanding. He agreed and said that he would hold himself at my disposal.

6.The general impression I gathered was that, though there are a good many snags still in the road, he is disposed to co-operate. The principal snags evidently are the question of the scope of further discussions and of contingent resumption of the campaign. On the latter however I believed it to be impracticable to get any greater measure of assurance than he was willing to give me in our final interview this evening.

In conclusion and not connected with the above, he mentioned the case of Bhagat Singh. He did not plead for commutation, although he would, being opposed to all taking of life, take that course himself. He also thought it would have an influence for peace. But he did ask for postponement in present circumstances. I contented myself with saying that, whatever might be the decision as to exact dates, I could not think there was any case for commutation which might not be made with equal force in the case of any other violent crime. The Viceroy's powers of commutation were designed for use on well-known grounds of clemency, and I could not feel that they ought to be invoked on grounds that were admittedly political.[1]

(SD.) IRWIN

From a photostat : G.N. 8947

[1] For Gandhiji's report of the interview, *vide* item "Letter to Viceroy", 7-3-1931.

212. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

DELHI,
February 18, 1931

Mahatma Gandhi unlike yesterday had taken leave of the Viceroy inside the room and went straight to his car. He was met by the Associated Press correspondent who asked him whether the talks were over. He looked thoughtful and with his usual smile said :

All I can say is I am not coming tomorrow.

Will you consult the Working Committee before coming back ?

I cannot say yet but am not coming tomorrow.

Replying to another question, he said humorously :

You can say, it is all hanging up in the clouds.

Are you issuing an official statement?

No.

The Hindustan Times, 20-2-1931

213. INTERVIEW WITH VICEROY (GANDHIJI'S REPORT)

February 18, 1931

Today we were with the Viceroy for slightly less time than yesterday, and so reached home at 5.30 p.m. Today's talk was more concentrated and the man was more cautious than yesterday. It was a most strenuous fight today, but it left no unpleasantness in the mouth at the end. Once or twice we felt that the hope of a settlement was dwindling but thereafter did not feel like that. Today the salt tax, suspension of collection of land revenue and picketing alone were discussed. When I explained to him the whole position about salt, the Viceroy said : "You think any Government in the world can tolerate disobedience of its laws?"

GANDHIJI. I may enunciate a counter-proposition to it: No Government in the world can enforce all its laws.

I then cited the example of the Sarda Act and mentioned Act III of 1885 of South Africa and the Gold Law, and told him that the Government was supporting the demand for the protection of those who were guilty of their breach. I talked about the Age of Consent Act and asked him why the Government tolerated the breach of all those laws. "I know that you have issued a circular that no action should he taken under the Sarda Act."

VICEROY. That is a confidential circular.

G. I do not want you to issue a public circular. We shall tell our people quietly that they can make and collect salt without any fear.

V. I am seized of your position.

He used these words repeatedly. About the Salt Act, he even said that when we would have our own Government, we could repeal it.

G. How can I betray the thousands of people whom I advised to break this law?

About the land tax also, the Viceroy had administrative difficulties.

G. Our case is that the Government has taken more coercive steps than were necessary and the officers have exceeded the instructions given to them. In such cases the tax ought not to be collected.

V. Who is to decide that?

G. You may appoint an officer for the purpose, but he should have our approval. He should only inquire whether there have or have not been excesses as alleged by us.

The Viceroy opposed picketing strongly. I explained to him that it had been going on all the time. "It is being done for many years now and there is nothing against it in the Common Law. You can take action under the Common Law if there is breach of peace or violence."

V. But you have made picketing a political weapon.

G. It may have a political result, but essentially, it is an economic, social and moral weapon. Even if Lancashire stops itstextile business, we would still have to declare boycott of foreign cloth and also continue picketing. Even if you forgo the revenue from the sale of liquor, we would still have to take steps against those who drink.

In short, the Viceroy was convinced of the justice of all our demands, but he talked of administrative difficulties. I reminded him : "There is no just grievance in law without a remedy." After this he asked me many questions.

V. If you attend the Round Table Conference and the results are not to your satisfaction, must you resume civil disobedience?

G. I will have to unless we feel that we shall get something from the changes proposed. Otherwise I shall have no choice but to resume the movement.

V. On further thought, I find this position dangerous for the Government. How can we stultify ourselves like that? In that case, would it not be better that you do not attend the Round Table Conference?

Then there was again some discussion about safeguards. Regarding defence,

the Viceroy said : Suppose a committee of military experts proves to your satisfaction that India cannot defend herself without British troops, even then would you wish that that safegurd should be removed?

G. What do you mean by "proving to my satisfaction"? I would invite German, American and other experts and confront your military experts with them. If, after their discussions, I feel that we must retain the British army for some time, I would definitely agree to do so.

The Viceroy found this whole discussion embarrassing.

V. Now I am fully seized of your position. I shall discuss the whole thing with my advisers and we shall then resume our discussions if necessary. Meanwhile those three friends[1] desire an informal committee to be set up, consisting of my advisers, the Maharaja of Bikaner, Malaviya and the Nawab of Chhatari. You also may ask some members of the Working Committee to join it.

G. All right, we are prepared to place all our cards on the table.

During the evening walk, Bapu made some more remarks about these discussions.

G. The suggestion regarding informal talks came from those three friends. They had it in their mind right from Allahabad. I believe that their intention is honourable, but the thing may also be the Viceroy's diplomacy. But that does not matter. He may invite as many persons as he likes. I did not suggest any name. It will serve as a means of propaganda for us.

BIRLA. Did today's discussions give any cause for disappointment?

G. No, he was as sweet as before. We had a few sharp exchanges, but they were of little moment. There were one or two small but rich titbits which cannot be made public, but which will give you an idea of how cordial the talks had been. Once he told me that it was his dream to take me to England and introduce me to members of all the parties there. He appealed to me to forget about civil disobedience and to have faith in their sincerity and proceed accordingly. Then as I was going to his bathroom, he accompanied me and said : "Now tell me whether I did not do well in not arresting you in your Ashram?" I said : "How do we know it? A crowd of thousands had assembled in the Ashram, and I heard that a special was waiting for me and that I would be arrested at 12 o'clock. So I peacefully went to sleep." At this, the Viceroy had a hearty laugh. I continued: "Many friends had

[1] Sapru, Jayakar and Srinivasa Sastri

thought that this salt movement would fizzle out, and said that Mahatma Gandhi would get tired in 20 days or so and that the Government would not take any notice of the movement. But who knew what was going to happen?" The Viceroy said : "You planned a fine strategy round the issue of salt."

These two titbits are not worth narrating anywhere. Now the third one. I talked about Bhagat Singh. I told him : "This has no connection with our discussion, and it may even be inappropriate on my part to mention it. But if you want to make the present atmosphere more favourable, you should suspend Bhagat Singh's execution." The Viceroy liked this very much. He said : "I am very greateful to you that you have put this thing before me in this manner. Commutation of sentence is a difficult thing, but suspension is certainly word considering."

I said about Bhagat Singh: "He is undoubtedly a brave man but I would certainly say that he is not in his right mind. However, this is the evil of capital punishment, that it gives no opportunity to such a man to reform himself. I am putting this matter before you as a humanitarian issue and desire suspension of sentence in order that there may not be unnecessary turmoil in the country. I myself would release him, but I cannot expect any Government to do so. I would not take it ill even if you do not give any reply on this issue."

When they were talking about members of the Working Committee, Bapu mentioned Subhas Bose too.

V. Subhas is not a member of the Working Committee.

G. No, he is not. And he is my opponent and will denounce me; still, if he wants to attend, we must give him a chance to do so.

The Viceroy said that he would think about this suggestion too.

Last evening[1] we walked for about 1 1/2 hours. During that time we discussed the proposal to hold informal talks and talked about those pleasant titbits. The question was why we should join these informal talks.

G. It behoves satyagrahis to do so. The suggestion for informal talks was not the Viceroy's, but of those three friends. If we join the talks afterwards and break them, that would be deceiving them. Instead, we should discuss the matter right now and state our demands. We would then be able to decide whether we should join the talks or not. I did not demand that all of us should join the talks, but merely said that anyone who wanted to attend might do so. I even said that probably no one would like to join. For me, it would provide an

[1] February 18

excellent opportunity for propaganda.

JAWAHARLAL. The Viceroy has the virtues and weaknesses of the average Englishman.

G. Yes.

PATTABHI. He has got the weaknesses of an Englishman.

G. No. These two days' talks have not given me the impression that he is a weak man. He is a strong man and a thoroughly capable man. He is also a democrat. I know, he says, "I can do the thing but I will not do the thing myself." I have read some of his speeches wherein I have observed his firmness with admiration and despair. I remember his reply to a deputation of the Ahmediya community. They wanted him to do according to the Muslims' wishes in the matter of Palestine. He said the British Government had always adhered to certain fundamental principles of justice and they would never swerve from them. They would not do so in this instance as they have not done up to now. He did not give them any empty promises, he did not use any vague phrases, but was as firm as he could be. That is his strength.

In the titbits I mentioned yesterday, I forgot one. The Viceroy had received a telegram about picketing. He asked me : "Do you approve of such picketing?" I said that I had already sent a telegram that I did not approve of it. He also mentioned another telegram. He said that there was a telegram from Gujarat saying that Gandhiji and Vallabhbhai would now visit Gujarat and that their presence was likely to prove very dangerous. He wanted me to call away Vallabhbhai here! Gandhiji laughed and said : "I have called him here." So the Viceroy said : "That's capital."

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

214. LETTER TO SOONABAI SERWAI[1]

[Before *February 19, 1931*][2]

I do not see how strikes and hartals, brought about by force, are in any way useful to national interests.

Mr. Gandhi has desired his correspondent to draw his attention in future to cases in which violence or force was used by Congress workers. He has again implored Mrs. Serwai to take to swadeshi.

The Pioneer, 21-2-1931

[1] In reply to her letter describing "a couple of incidents in which the so-called non-violent Congress volunteers had used violence to bring about a complete hartal"

[2] Published under the date-line "Allahabad, February 19"

215. MY NOTEBOOK

MOTILALJI'S DEATH

Pandit Motilalji's death means to me more even than to the brave widow whose sorrow it is my privilege during these days to share. I take the blow as an additional test of my faith in God's greatness and goodness. Panditji has died a true warrior's death. It is therefore well with him. He lives more amply and more truly by dying. I pray to God that he may endow me with greater consecration to the service of the cause for which alone life is worth living in these days of purification through sacrifice and suffering.

MEMORIAL

Friends have asked me to advise a memorial subscription such as was raised to the memory of the late Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan, Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das and Lala Lajpat Rai. I have resisted the temptation because (1) I personally cannot shoulder the burden; (2) I may any day be summoned to Yeravda or some such place of recreation; and (3) the only true memorial that can just now be raised to the memory of the deceased patriot is by intenser dedication to hasten the advent of swaraj.

MAULANA MAHOMED ALI

I was privileged to offer my tribute to the memory of Maulana Mahomed Ali by sending from Yeravda a cable message to Maulana Shaukat Ali. But I cannot resume the Editorship of *Young India* without publicly declaring that in him I have lost one whom I rejoiced to call brother and friend and the nation has lost a fearless patriot. We had differences of opinion between us, but love that cannot stand the strain of differences is like "a sounding brass and tinkling cymbal".

PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

It is not for the soldier to worry about peace. For him both struggle and peace are alike. He has to do with the utmost joy the task that comes to him without counting the costs or the consequence. The consequence he knows. The cost is never too high for him.

PICKETING

Picketing is a dharma only when it is absolutely non-violent. Those who have no faith in non-violence had better give it up altogether. I can find out ways and means of combating the inroads

of foreign cloth even though there be no picketing, but I know for certain that boycott brought about by violent picketing is bound to fail in the end. It was this knowledge that induced me last March to entrust picketing of foreign-cloth shops and drink and drug shops to women who are instinctively non-violent.

Violence in picketing can be both active and passive. The passive type can be more dangerous than the active. Both must be shunned.

KHADI

Without khadi there is no boycott. Therefore we must concentrate on khadi.

Young India, 19-2-1931

216. TELEGRAM TO BALWANTRAI MEHTA

February 19, 1931

GENERAL SECRETARY

INDIAN STATES' PEOPLES' CONFERENCE

CARE NIMBPURI

BOMBAY

CAN SEE SATURDAY MORNING EIGHT O'CLOCK.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 16924

217. TELEGRAM TO JADHAV[1]

February 19, 1931

JADHAV

DEOLALI CANTT.

CAN SEE YOU SATURDAY MORNING NINE O'CLOCK.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 16924; also photostat : S.N. 16932

[1] In reply to his telegram dated February 17, which read : "Nasik District depressed class leaders desirous of waiting upon your holiness this week. Request date, time, place convenient for same. Matters urgent. Wire reply."

218. TELEGRAM TO JAMSHED MEHTA[1]

February 19, 1931

JAMSHED MEHTA

KARACHI

THANKS. TELL KIKIBEHN DAILY PRAYING. SHE MUST GET RID FEVER.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 16924; also photostat : S.N. 16931

219. INTERVIEW WITH VICEROY (VICEROY'S VERSION)

February 19, 1931

Mr. Gandhi came to see me at 2.45 p.m. this afternoon.

I explained to him that, before any further conference of a more extended character was possible, I felt it would be necessary to make a reference[2] to the Secretary of State as to the scope of the discussions and also to local Governments on the specific matters raised. I said that I supposed His Majesty's Government would want a few days for consideration, and that in the mean time I was exploring with my Council the idea of a wider conference. I said I thought it was unlikely that this could take place before next Thursday or Friday.

Mr. Gandhi replied that he was in general agreement with what I had said, though he was disposed to regret the delay suggested. He said he would naturally have desired to go to Gujarat, but would defer to my representations that for himself and Vallabhbhai to go there at this juncture would create new difficulties, and would accordingly not do so. I understood this to apply to Vallabhbhai also.

I said I would do my best to expedite matters and would warn Shafi and Sapru that it might be necessary to call them earlier than Thursday next week.

I pressed him again on the question of resuming civil disobedience if they came in, and he said firmly that he would certainly not resume in any circumstances till the conference discussions were concluded. He hoped it would never be necessary to resume at all, but at the present stage could not give me an undertaking beyond the

[1] In reply to his telegram dated February 16, which read : "Kikibehn fever continues but progressing. Takes regular diet."

[2] *Vide* "Viceroy's cable to secretary of state".

end of the conference discussions.

He said in everything he had said he had expressed his personal view only, but that I could rely upon him to do his best to get the Working Committee's concurrence in any arrangements he made.

I told him I would communicate with him as soon as I could as to whether I thought a further conference would be profitable, and in the light of what I might be able to tell him as to the scope of discussions and the particular matters on which I might be unable to meet him, he could then consider whether from his point of view a further conference as suggested yesterday would be useful. He agreed.

He concurred in the issue of a brief communique in the following terms :

"His Excellency the Viceroy granted a further interview to Mr. Gandhi today. It is understood that various matters emerging from the discussions are now under examination, and it is possible that some days may elapse before further stage of discussions is reached."[1]

(SD). IRWIN

From a photostat : G.N. 8948

220. INTERVIEW WITH VICEROY (GANDHIJI'S REPORT)

[*February 19, 1931*]

In the afternoon an invitation was received from Cunningham to meet the Viceroy. Bapu replied that he would meet him at 2.45 p.m. The interview lasted half an hour and thereafter, to use Bapu's words, he met the sub-Viceroys, i.e., Sapru and Jayakar. The interview with the Viceroy was very satisfactory. The Viceroy recounted for him the gist of the previous interviews.

VICEROY : I shall repeat this in your presence so that you can correct me if I make a mistake anywhere : You have promised that even though the conference were to break up as a result of your being dissatisfied with the progress, you would not resume civil disobedience until after the conclusion of the conference.

GANDHIJI : Yes, I have.

V. I am very glad; now could I have a further promise from you that you would not resume civil disobedience until after the conclusion of the proceedings in the Parliament?

G. I am afraid I cannot promise that.

V. What you have promised is enough for me. I will cable all this to the

[1] For Gandhiji's report of the interview, *vide* the following item.

Secretary of State.[1] I must request you to stay here till I receive the reply to it. Sir Tej and Jayakar have got engagements, so they cannot come until next Saturday.

G. I cannot do that. Both of us, Sardar and I, are here and the people are expecting us. I have to go to Bardoli as also to Borsad. Even today we have asked our associates to go slow and so the pace of the struggle has somewhat slowed down and if this continues it will harm the movement.

Along with Rajaji, I asked the Viceroy : "Can't you ask those friends to stay back?" He promised to me that he would try to persuade them to do so.

V. Just as you have given instructions to your co-workers, I have also asked the Governors to send orders everywhere to go slow. I have spoken to the two Governors who are here and have also intimated the other Governors.

Bapu talked also about the Pratapgarh firing.

G. Our position in this respect is the same as in regard to Borsad. How can we rest without an inquiry? I have already sent a telegram regarding the picketing excesses in Bombay.

The Viceroy was pleased at this and said that a cable had been sent to the Secretary of State. On receipt of his reply, an informal conference would be held by Tuesday.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

221. TELEGRAM TO ANAND

February 20, 1931

ANAND
HYDERABAD (SIND)
WISH ENTERPRISE EVERY SUCCESS.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 16924

222. TELEGRAM TO JADHAV

February 20, 1931

JADHAV
DEOLALI CANTT.
ONLY OTHER TIME AVAILABLE SUNDAY MORNING DELHI.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 16924

[1] *Vide* "Viceroy's cable to secretary of state".

223. TELEGRAM TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

February 20, 1931

DESHBHAKTA VENKATAPPAYYA
GUNTUR

DELIGHTED. HOPE YOUR FAMILY WELL. SEND SUCH PARTICULARS YOU THINK NECESSARY.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 16924

224. TELEGRAM TO GANGADHARRAO DESHPANDE

February 20, 1931

GANGADHARRAO DESHPANDE
BELGAUM

YOUR WIRE. HAVE EVERYTHING IN MIND. HAVE NOT WORRIED YOU COME BUT IF YOU THINK NECESSARY YOU MAY. ANY CASE WRITE FULLY.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 16924

225. REMARKS ABOUT VICEROY[1]

February 20, 1931

I cannot yet say that he is sincere, but he was friendly and frank, both of which go a great way to make a man sincere. But I may say that I find much less to justify my prejudice against him. To a certain extent I may say I have found him sincere, but that was because he had to reciprocate my sincerity. And you know people can be sincere with certain people and not sincere with all. My letter was received by him in the spirit in which it should have been received. He did not accept the terms, but he admitted the justice of it and urged administrative difficulties.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

[1] In the course of a conversation with J. M. Sen Gupta, Mayor of Calcutta

226. SPEECH AT DELHI

February 20, 1931

Mahatma Gandhi began by offering Id felicitation to his Muslim brothers and sisters. He said on such an occasion and in the presence of such an unprecedented gathering, his thoughts went to Maulana Mahomed Ali whose death had pained him a great deal. Ever since he had returned to India from South Africa he had thought of Delhi as the Delhi of Maulana Mahomed Ali, Swami Shraddhanand and Hakim Ajmal Khan so much so that even now, though their physical presence was to be missed their unseen presence could still be felt. He was equally pained to miss at such a critical juncture as the present Pandit Motilal Nehru whose death was so recent that their eyes were yet wet with tears. Mahatmaji, continuing, said :

I know you are all anxious to hear something from me of the talks I am having with His Excellency the Viceroy. I am afraid I may not take the public into confidence about what happened between His Excellency and me. For one thing I am pledged not to do so and secondly it is not going to help us. But I may say this much, that these talks have been conducted in a most friendly manner and with much sweetness. What will be the result I cannot say. The result is in the hands of God. It is His will that will prevail. Your duty is that you must continue to do what India expects of you.

Dr. Ansari belonging as he does to Delhi has naturally spoken highly of the part played by Delhi; but I am a witness to the great sacrifices that have been made throughout India and I can say how Delhi stands in comparison with any other province. For that you deserve my congratulation.[1]

Resuming his speech, Mahatmaji said :

Here as elsewhere the part played by women is indescribable. When the history of this movement comes to be written, the sacrifices made by the women of India will occupy the foremost place and just as with women so also with children. Their wonderful awakening has fortified me in my faith that God is with us in this struggle. These young folk had never been organized for such work, never been trained for it. How they came to achieve all this I have not been able

[1] At this stage the speech was interrupted on account of disorder among a section of the people who could not hear Gandhiji.

to divine nor has anyone else whom I have consulted been able to enlighten [me] as to who guided them; only God could have done so. But remember that, in the sacred battle, whatever sacrifices you have made are trifling. Let them not puff you up with pride, what we want for India is *purna* swaraj. And who can calculate what further sacrifices India will have to make to achieve that goal? I assure you that I am doing as much as is humanly possible to bring about peace so that the people may not have to go through further suffering and sacrifices but everything is in God's hands and if it be not His will that any understanding be arrived at, then I will have to tell the people that they must be ready for much further suffering.

The sacrifices that we have made are as nothing before the sacrifices other nations have made for the sake of freedom. But there is a reason why we have not had to suffer as much as other nations. It is as clear to me as daylight. The reason is that when we pledged ourselves to achieve *purna* swaraj we also took the vow that whatever we do in furtherance of the goal would be in consonance with truth and non-violence. And when I think of the part played by the whole of India, especially by the rural population, I think we have substantially fulfilled the pledge of truth and non-violence. But I cannot deceive myself nor will I permit you to deceive yourselves. We have followed truth and non-violence, but we have not made them an article of faith. They have been to some a matter of policy, but even if you have accepted it as a policy, you may not act or think in terms of violence so long as you adhere to the policy. The very thought of untruth or violence is a breach of the pledge. You will remember that at the Ahmedabad Congress[1] this matter was thoroughly thrashed out in the presence of leaders like Hakim Ajmal Khan and Dr. Ansari and, after full deliberation, it was decided that so long as we bound ourselves to adhere to our policy of truth and non-violence in thought, word and deed, the slightest breach of that pledge meant a breach of faith.

I may tolerate the allegation that Indians are not fit for swaraj, but I cannot for a moment tolerate the allegation, if it were true, that my countrymen were untrue or dishonest. There can be no greater tragedy than this, that Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians who believe in God were ungodly and guilty of a breach of faith. Such people are not fit for freedom. They are fit for slavery and worse.

[1] In December 1921.

For this reason, I have always laid the greatest stress on the point that it was open to you to abandon the policy and adopt a different one but so long as you pin your faith to truth and non-violence, do not deceive yourself or the world. Therefore when I heard that there has been some excesses on the part of our people in the picketing of foreign cloth, I was deeply pained. I have not been able to investigate into the allegations but you know that in 1921-22 I expiated for the excesses by suspending the movement. That sort of expiation is today out of the question but I must say that wherever these excesses are going on, they must stop.

It is better that dealers in foreign cloth continue to sell it and those addicted to drink continue to do so, than that we resort to excesses in picketing. But there is another danger I wish to warn you against. If we take to these excesses, we shall be opening the door for self-destruction, when we have swaraj, for there will then be no third power with machine-guns to intervene and restore peace. We shall be fighting one another and fratricidal war will spell destruction. If, there-fore, you have the slightest apprehension in your mind that picketing cannot be done without resorting to excesses, you had better give it up. I want you to remember that I am an expert in these matters. I am sure we have in the past done considerable picketing without the slightest resort to violence. Do not be afraid that the moment we eschew the excesses our work will fall through. I would ask you not to worry. Rest assured that the man who is asking you today to keep to your moorings must have some alternatives to suggest but I shall not dwell on it today.

I have received letters of complaint and I am making enquiries. It is possible that we have committed mistakes. I will ask all Congress workers to consider these carefully and correct whatever mistakes we may have been guilty of. I appeal to you to eschew all excesses. You may like to know what I mean by 'excesses'. I invite the curious to come to me for the explanation.

And now a word to the foreign-cloth dealers. Do not deceive your-selves or the country by thinking that you have done your duty by refra-ining from selling foreign cloth for a few months. This foreign-cloth trade must stop for ever, because it is only by this means that we can promote the well-being of millions of our countrymen. I will respectfully submit to the foreign-cloth dealers that a complete boycott of foreign clo-th is their dharma. Sacrifices they will have to

make but what are those sacrifices compared to the greater sacrifices that are being made by other sections of the public? I believe that through the charkha and khaddar, the boycott can be made a success and I am working according to my belief.

Cloth merchants are arriving here the day after tomorrow. I want the pressmen to convey my message to them. Thus they will be able to realize their duty.

Citizens of Delhi, I do not flatter myself that you have gathered here in your thousands to do honour to me; you have come to proclaim to the world that you are all determined to achieve *purna* swaraj. Let not my talks with the Viceroy worry you for a moment. Do not think of them. But go on with your work. Only remember that the result is not in my hands, not in the hands of Dr. Ansari of Pandit Malaviya, but in your hands. I am but an instrument, and I am acting only as your humble ambassador. Everything will depend upon what you do and what you will fail to do. May God give you strength to keep the pledge of truth and non-violence.

Gandhiji delivered his speech in Hindi and it was not wholly audible to large sections of the vast throng and Gandhiji made a special request to newspaper correspondents to publish only authorized text or summary of the speech and announced that the Press report of the speech would be looked through by him.

The Hindustan Times, 22-2-1931

227. TELEGRAM TO POLITICAL PRISONERS[1]

DELHI,
February 21, 1931

HEARTY ID GREETINGS TO ALL OUR COMPANIONS MUSLIMS HINDUS SIKHS AND CHRISTIANS.

The Hindustan Times, 23-2-1931

228. INTERVIEW TO "NEWS CHRONICLE"

[*February 21, 1931*][2]

Mahatama Gandhi in an interview to a representative of the *News Chronicle* of London, described the prospects of a settlement negatively as less hopeful than

[1] This appeared as message from Gandhiji and M. A. Ansari "to all the political prisoners in various jails in India.

[2] From *The Hindu*, 22-2-1931

before but declined to make any statement at the present stage.

Questioned as to whether he would still retain his first impression created by the Viceroy which Gandhiji had described in his previous interview, he replied that he must revise that opinion now. Personally, in the course of the conversations he had found Lord Irwin to be frank, cordial and friendly.

Replying to the last question as to whether he would expiate by calling off the movement if there was a recrudescence of violence by Congressmen, as in 1922, Gandhiji said :

Last time when I did expiate, the method of non-violence in politics was a new one and people were unused to what I call absolute, downright plain-speaking on the part of leaders. Therefore I said with regard to myself that people very often thought as if I spoke with mental reservations and even said what I did not mean. And that only hurt me but I at once realized that it would injure the cause itself and so I felt it necessary, in order to drive home the truth to the masses, that they must take me literally in all I spoke and that there was no conscious mental reservation. This I could only do by some definite drastic action which even millions could understand in a moment and hence I deliberately adopted the method of public expiation by open fasting and I saw that the very first experiment along this line had produced effective and startling results and I continued that till the Chauri Chaura culmination in 1922.

That having been brought home and I having declared myself only responsible for the initiative of the campaign and not for the further conduct of it or its stoppage, it would be improper on my part now to interfere through the method of fasting. It is the Working Committee which is responsible for the campaign now and it alone can interfere with or shape is conduct. This, however, should not be taken to mean that I disown my moral responsibility for the violence done by a single Congressman, and if some violence is done by Congressmen it produces such a sore on my system that I cannot bear it. I cannot say what I shall then do, for in all such things I am not guided by reason, but by instinct or in other words by the inner voice and one never knows where that voice would lead you to.

The Hindustan Times, 25-2-1931

229. TO READERS

You should not be misled or confused if I approach the Viceroy or if the Congress Working Committee holds talks regarding a

settlement. Your dharma is to carry on the task which lies before you, viz., that of serving the nation.

If you do so, there will be an honourable settlement, if one is at all possible. But if as soon as you hear of negotiations for a settlement, you either fall asleep or start enjoying yourselves or become even slightly slack, the settlement will fall through. You should know that the Con-gress would never accept a dishonourable settlement. A satyagrahi can neither add to nor subtract from [his demands]. Just as an honest business man maintains fixed prices, similar is the case with the satyagrahi. A soldier's demands are not reduced just because he becomes slack; similarly, soldiers cannot add to their demands when they deep advancing and getting more daring. Hence, neither I nor any other Congressman can accept anything which is even slightly less than our demand. Therefore if the nation becomes lax, there will be no settlement and the struggle will drag on. The settlement will be reached early if the people keep up their fervour.

You should realize that at present the most important task is the boycott of foreign cloth. This boycott can be made to succeed only by convincing the people through reason and not through force. This requires intelligence and organization and constitutes the test of our sacrifice.

MILL-OWNERS

If these mill-owners so desire, they can make a success of the boycott. The following is the plan of action :

1. They should prepare a list of those who trade in foreign goods.

2. They should give their own goods in exchange for foreign cloth with traders who are prepared for this exchange. Dealers in foreign cloth should let go a certain percentage in valuing their stocks of foreign cloth. Mills should put the minimum prices of their goods.

3. The mill-owners can sell the above-mentioned foreign cloth outside the country or they may set fire to it, or they may seal it up and set it aside for being dealt with after swaraj has been won or, in other words, they can ask for some compensation from the new Government in case they have to suffer a heavy loss.

This requires the following—some intelligence, some sacrifice, some order, some self-confidence, some foresight, some faith in the people and whole-hearted determination to boycott foreign cloth. Just

as this is something that can be readily suggested, it can also be readily put into practice.

No one should look for guidance to anyone else; instead, those who are convinced should begin to act and plead with other mill-owners to follow suit. A good beginning can be made even if a few mill-owners get together and act jointly.

CONGRESS

The contribution which the Congress can make in this regard depends upon the beginning which the mill-owners make. The contribution of the former can be secured through picketing.

DEALERS IN FOREIGN CLOTH

1. You must give up the temptation of trading in foreign cloth; it is poison.

2. Do not entertain the false notion that this trade can be resumed under swaraj or within a short time. There is no swaraj for the poor, at any rate, if this trade is not stopped in India.

3. No one asks you to lay down your lives, no one asks you even to sacrifice all you have. However, everyone asks you to rid yourselves of the filth which you have gathered. You must realize that it is not as if you cannot trade in anything except foreign cloth. People cannot do without cloth; hence there is no alternative for them but to buy cloth which is made in India.

4. If only you can see it, your true interest lies in this boycott.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan (Supplement), 22-2-1931

230. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

February 22, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter. I am happy to know that you are improving. If for some time I cannot write to you, you should not worry. I get no free time. I cannot say with certainty how long I shall have to stay on here. I shall be here for at least three or four days. You should go on writing to me. I hope you also write to Father. Jayaprakash is here. He seems to be giving satisfaction to Birlaji.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3411

231. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

February 22, 1931

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I got your letter.

It seems to me that we shall be able to meet only if there is a settlement. If the negotiations break down, we shall not be allowed to remain free, and that would be the only right course for the Government to adopt. Only God knows whether or not there will be a settlement. A satyagrahi should remain unconcerned whether there will be any. He will strive for peace, but will always keep himself ready for a fight.

I do not wish to advise you just now with regard to the work there. You should go on doing it to the best of your ability and judgment, and, as you do so, you will learn from experience. Even if I cannot write to you, you should go on writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5502

232. SPEECH AT COUNCIL OF ALL-INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE, DELHI

February 22, 1931

MR. PRESIDENT AND BROTHERS OF MY COUNTRY,

You all know, I am physically so weak that I am unable to make a speech while standing; when I try to do so, every part of my body trembles.

Maulvi Mohammad Yaqub has said that my coming here meant the coming of 21 crores of Indian brethren.

I am a Bania, and there is no limit to my greed.

It has always been my heart's desire to speak, not only for 21 crores but for 30 crores of Indians.

Today you may not accept that position of mine but my early upbringing, my childhood and youth, has been to strive for Hindu-Muslim unity. No one may dismiss it today as merely a craze of my old age. My heart is confident that God will grant me that position to speak for the whole of India one day, and even if I die striving for it, I

shall achieve peace of mind.

I do not know what the result of my talks with the Viceroy would be, nor can I say when the talks will result in something, but if God wishes that Congress should participate in the Conference and if there is a settlement between the Government and the Congress, the question of Hindu-Muslim unity will be one which will engage our first attention. And I give you all the assurance at my command that what I can do to achieve that end we will be always willing to do.

Hindu-Muslim unity is not a question of bargain—that we should continue fighting for one, two or five seats. Unity can be achieved by giving up mutual fears and mistrust. Unless our hearts are purified and we regard Hindus and Muslims as one, unity cannot be established.

Rest assured that it is not a matter of loaves and fishes, but of trust and love. If Hindus and Muslims are two eyes of the country, as Sir Syed Ahmed said, there should be no occasion for quarrel or distrust—no one can say that one eye is better than the other. It is quite conceivable that two brothers may have different faith and yet both may live in harmony and peace. I wonder why the people fight in the name of religion and for the sake of religion.

I am ready to serve you in the matter of establishing Hindu-Muslim unity and now since you have made a way for me into your heart, I shall try to enter it. It is a question of lover and beloved. I am in search of it; I was anxiously waiting for it. If Hindu-Muslim unity is achieved, the mission of my life would be fulfilled.

Thanking the League for the invitation, Mahatmaji said :

I wish you may continue to invite me as you have invited me today and you shall have no occasion to repent. (Laughter and cheers)

The Hindustan Times, 25-2-1931

233. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

February 22/23, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

My daily programme has become most uncertain these days. I have to keep awake till late at night. All the same I get up at four, and so the body is put to considerable strain. However, I manage to take some rest during the day and keep fit.

I have suggested to Sitla Sahay that he should call Sarojinidevi to Allahabad. She should forget the attraction of the Ashram for some time. Rukmini is with me at present and keeps cheerful. Her health, too, is good on the whole. No one can say what will happen here. I spare no effort. But, at the same time, I will not give in on any matter of principle. Nothing that I say in my letters should appear in newspapers.

Blessings from

BAPU

Morning, February 23, 1931

For some days I shall have to be satisfied with what I can write in the morning every day. As the forefinger of my right hand had an accidental cut by a knife, I am writing with the left hand. The wound is not deep. I have sent two wires to Surat about Shankarbhai. The news in the *Chronicle* seems to me to be baseless, for I had a letter about him even while I was in jail, informing me that he had been permitted.[1]

How does Purushottam keep in jail? How is Jamnadas? Who lives with the elders[2] these days? Rukmini is quite happy here. Keshu must have returned by now.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I

234. TELEGRAM TO DISTRICT MAGISTRATE, SURAT

February 23, 1931

HEAR SHANKARBHAI PATEL PRISONER SUBJAIL SURAT FASTING FOR NOT BEING ALLOWED SPIN ON TAKLI. I POSSESS INSPECTOR GENERAL'S LETTER SAYING HE WAS PERMITTED USE TAKLI. KINDLY MAKE INQUIRIES AND WIRE RESULT DARYA- GANJ DELHI.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 16924

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] Addressee's father and mother

235. TELEGRAM TO KALYANJI MEHTA

February 23, 1931

INQUIRE SHANKARBHAI SURAT SUBJAIL FASTING FOR TAKLI. WIRE INFORMATION.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 16924

236. TELEGRAM TO E. E. DOYLE

1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI,
February 23, 1931

MAJOR DOYLE
INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF PRISONS
POONA

SHANKARBHAI PATEL OF WHOM I WROTE YOU FROM YERAVDA PRISON AND WHO YOU HAD INFORMED ME BEING UNDER VOW WAS PERMITTED USE TAKLI SPINNING WAS I UNDER- STAND PREVENTED FROM SO DOING SURAT SUBJAIL. HEAR NOW TRANSFERRED SABARMATI JAIL. AM PAINFULLY SURPRISED WHY HE WAS PREVENTED SURAT SUBJAIL. PLEASE ISSUE INSTRUC- TIONS SABARMATI SO AS SAVE INNOCENT MEN FROM FURTHER PRIVATIONS IF NOT WORSE.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 16946

237. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

1 DARYAGANJ,
February 23, 1931

NARANDAS
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
AHMEDABAD

SHANKARBHAI TRANSFERRED SABARMATI. FAST MUST CONTINUE IF TAKLI NOT ALLOWED.

BAPU

From a microfilm : S.N. 16947

238. LETTER TO SURESH CHANDRA BANERJI

CAMP DELHI,
February 23, 1931

MY DEAR SURESHBABU,

For the present I will not write anything about the business part of your letter[1]. Let me ask you just now to follow the treatment as a doctor should [advise] and restore your body to its original healthy condition. Annada Babu may come any day he likes and take his chance. I say this because my movement is so uncertain. I have already opened discussion with Mr. Banker.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI SURESH CHANDRA BANERJI
P-39 FERN ROAD, BALLYGUNJ
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm : S.N. 16935

239. LETTER TO R. R. BAKHALE

CAMP 1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI
February 23, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter enclosing six copies of your report[2]. Having had some minutes at my disposal, I have gone through the report as carefully as was necessary and I have no hesitation in saying that it is well written and it is free from exaggeration and declamation. It is a

[1] Dated February 20, 1931. Among other things, writing about the financial commitments of Abhoy Ashram, S. C. Banerji had suggested : "Instead of making us responsible for the payment of all our debts both to banks as well as private creditors, the A.I.S.A. should also bear a burden of loss. . . . The amount of loss sustained by the Ashram during the last three or four years has been too much for the Ashram to resume khaddar work any more unless substantially backed by the A.I.S.A. . . . . I request you to devote some time for the matter and, if convenient, give Annada an opportunity of talking over the whole matter to find out a practical solution to save the Ashram. . . . Mr. Banker knows everything in detail and I trust he will be able to explain the whole situation." (S.N. 16934)

[2] On the lathi-charge on women's procession at Borsad

report such as I would expect from anyone connected with the Society.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI R. R. BAKHALE
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
BOMBAY-4

From a microfilm : S.N. 16945

240. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

CAMP DELHI,
February 23, 1931

MY DEAR HENRY,

I wish I could write to you at length but for the present I must content myself with the line that you want, namely, that I was glad to receive the little box of salt. I have not seen it yet. Please thank Mr. . . .[1] for the thoughtful gift. My love to you all. Of the happenings in Delhi, I need not write anything because you are having everything by cable.

Yours sincerely,

HENRY S. L. POLAK, ESQ.
FIFTH FLOOR, DANES INN HOUSE
265 STRAND, LONDON, W.C. 2

From a photostat : S.N. 16941

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

241. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS[1]

CAMP DELHI,
February 23, 1931

MY DEAR REGINALD,

I honour you for your long, frank and emphatic letter. It will help me to remain firm where firmness is required. Having said this, let me tell you that I do not at all agree with you that I was wrong in suspending judgment or action pending the arrival of the three friends. Satyagraha can afford to wait. It can be gentle, and should be gentle, where gentleness is a duty. However mistaken their judgment may be found to be, I regard these friends as equal lovers of their country with me. I have no business to judge them as I would not have them judge me and by waiting I assure you that the cause has not suffered a bit. It may be that the friends there who are whole-hoggers may feel embarrassed to find me acting contrary to their expectation. But, as time goes by, you and they may discover many such shocks. I regard myself as a seasoned soldier in satyagraha. I have acted before, as I have acted now, at similar critical junctures and I cannot recall a single occasion when the cause espoused had lost by waiting. On the contrary I can recall many an occa-sion when the waiting had proved fruitful. Let my assurance there-fore be sufficient for you that so far as I am concerned there will be absolutely no surrender on principle, i.e., on the substantial part of the demand and I doubt not that there will be none on the part of the Congress. Remember too that satyagraha is a method of carrying convic-tion and of converting by an appeal to reason and to the sympathetic chord in human beings. It relies upon the ultimate good in every

[1] In his book *To Live in Mankind*, Reginald Reynolds writes : "As soon as negotiations were re-opened with the Government, I wrote. It was not, as it might appear, impertinent interference. I had a perfectly legitimate motive, which was that—as one of the few exponents of the Congress case in Britain—I ought to know just where they stood. It was of vital importance to me that I should understand the reasons for this change of front if I was to continue writing and speaking in defence of India and her leaders. Gandhiji's reply to this first letter was written from Delhi on February 23rd, 1931 . . ."

human being, no matter how debased he may be for the time being. If this does not satisfy you, do by all means strive with me. You are entitled to do so and demand satisfaction from me. I need not say a word about the brave manner in which you are fighting there. May God bless you and give you strength. Of the doings in Delhi I need say nothing because the talks are still going on and I have no doubt that the cablegrams are keeping you informed of the doings from day to day. Anything, therefore, that I can say today would be out of date when this letter reaches you.

What about your marriage?

With love.

BAPU

REGINALD REYNOLDS, ESQ.
8 FAIRDENE ROAD
BOULSDON, SURREY

From a photostat : C.W. 4539. Courtesy : Swarthmore College; also S.N. 16948

242. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

CAMP 1 DARYAGANJ,
DELHI,
February 3, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

As I am now at least temporarily out of jail, I have an opportunity of writing to you more fully than I could from Yeravda. I have followed with gratefulness all the efforts that you have been good enough to make on behalf of India. I feel more and more convinced that if India comes to her own, it will be perhaps the largest contribution to the world peace which we are all praying for. It is too early to give you any idea of the negotiations that are now going on. All I can say is that I am leaving no stone unturned to attain peace with honour. But in the last resort peace or war is the same thing for the satyagrahi He strives always for peace and has to hold himself in readiness for war. In either case he follows the path that truth dictates to him.

I hope you got over all your illness in quick time and that this

letter will find you fully restored to health.[1]

Yours sincerely,

J. H. HOLMES, ESQ.

THE COMMUNITY CHURCH OF NEW YORK

12 PARK AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY (U.S.A.)

From a photostat : S.N. 16943

243. NOTE TO DR. THORNTON[2]

Silence Day, February 23, 1931

If the missionary friends will forget their mission, viz., of proselytizing Indians and of bringing Christ to them, they will do wonderfully good work. Your duty is done with the ulterior motive of proselytizing. I was one of the first to raise a note of warning in this matter. To realize what harm the missions are doing you have to see a man like Mr. Andrews. He could tell you how his soul rebelled against the missionaries' presumption to give the Indians new religion. He belonged to the Cambridge Mission, but he left it in as much as seeing God everywhere he realized that every religion taught devotion to God, however defective it may be. You may certainly point out and help to correct the defects in my religion, but insist on my finding my salvation through my own religion. I am reminded of a simile. What is the use of my going to a higher altitude when I am born on the plains and must find what nourishment and health the plains can give? The fact is there are no irreconcilable differences between different religions. If you were to probe the surface, you will find one and the same thing at the bottom, forget your missionary spirit and simply live your life in the midst of people. Help certainly you have [broght], viz., what comes through contact with you and in spite of you, i.e., the spirit of inquiry about the short- comings of our own religion. You did not want us to pursue the inquiry because you saw immorality where we saw spirituality. When I go to your

[1] In his reply Holmes had cabled : "Hastily approved of your message. American friends of India sustain you in the struggle for the independence of your country, through peace if possible, through war if necessary." (*The Hindu*, 3-3-1931)

[2] A Christian missionary

institutions I do not feel I am going to an Indian institution. That is what worries me.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

244. TELEGRAM TO TIRATH SINGH

February 24, 1931

TIRATH SINGH
SECRETARY
SWADESHI EXHIBITION COMMITTEE
KARACHI

SWADESHI IS DECEPTIVE WORD. UNABLE JUDGE WITHOUT KNOWING MORE. ANY CASE YOU MUST SECURE APPROVAL RECEPTION COMMITTEE.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 16924

245. MESSAGE TO KHADDAR PRACHARINI SABHA, DELHI[1]

February 24, 1931

I notice that people are getting disappointed for want of khaddar. But we must remember that to put on khaddar is a religion to Congressmen, and once we forget this, it would be difficult to boycott foreign cloth. Mill-made cloth is only for those who have not understood the message of khaddar.

The Hindu, 24-2-1931

246. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

DELHI,
February 24, 1931

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

I got your letter. It certainly does credit to a lawyer. In sending the wire which I did to Perinbehn, my own satisfaction was the chief consideration. A satyagrahi never hides his shortcomings from the world; if he does, his vow of truth would be compromised. Hence his words, written or spoken, are always unambiguous. I do not see this in your letter. If coercion is being used in Bombay, how can we say that

[1] This was read out by Jamnalal Bajaj at a public meeting organized by the Sabha.

it is used without the approval of Congressmen? Every volunteer is a Congressman. I could see even from Yeravda Jail that coercion was being used. If you believe that coercion will not help our cause, you should do your utmost to see that not even a trace of it is left in our movement.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 7514. Courtesy : K. M. Munshi

247. PREFACE TO "PARDESHI KAPADNI SAME HARIFAI KEM KARAVI"

DELHI,
February 25, 193[1][1]

This is Bhai Manmohandas's translation of his own English book[2]. I have not been able to go through the translation; I however read the original while in the Yeravda Mandir. This is a timely publication. It proves that boycott of foreign cloth cannot be achieved without the spinning-wheel and khadi. The write has made a commendable effort to show how to achieve complete boycott. The book contains much useful statistical infor-mation and it is obvious that those who are anxious to understand the dharma of boycott can get considerable help from it.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 11; also *Pardeshi Kapadni same Harifai Kem Karavi*

248. LETTER TO MANMOHANDAS GANDHI

DELHI,
February 25, 1931

BHAI MANMOHAN,

You are like the man who, with one leg in the stirrup, would have instruction regarding the nature of the Brahman. But one connot manage it always. As my eyes chanced to fall on your letter

[1] The book has "1932", which is obviously an error as Gandhiji was in jail then. The preface was sent to Manmohandas Gandhi; *vide* the following item.

[2] *How to Compete with Foreign Cloth*

among the many lying before me, I am able to reply to it. But just as that man who wanted instruction about the nature of the Brahman while he was getting astride a horse could have only one or two sentences, so my preface will have no more. Here they are : . . .[1]

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 11

249. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI PATEL

DELHI,
February 25, 1931

BHAI SHIVABHAI,

I have just enough time, or can spare it, to answer your questions. I had got your long letter. Coercion should have no room at all in the picketing of foreign cloth. It does not matter if without coercion picketing does not succeed. I certainly do not believe that fasting is always a form of coercion. I have written on this subject for the next issue of *Navajivan*.[2] Read that article and, if you have any questions to ask me, ask them. If we have resolved not to tolerate coercion in any circumstances, we shall con-tinually discover new methods of picketing and new means of bring- ing about complete boycott. In consequence of the picketing of liquor booths, drink addicts will make illicit liquor in their homes and some of them will even sell it. This evil may be tolerated if we have taken the necessary measures to make it bearable. Most of the addicts, however, will have stopped drinking. My impression is that, in picketing liquor booths, our main, or only, aim, has been to deprive the Government of the revenue which it receives from the sale of liquor, whereas our real duty is to stop drink addicts from drinking. If we realize this clearly and if we get workers, we can visit each addict in his home and persuade him to give up his habit, and we can also teach him to enjoy harmless drinks in place of liquor. Wherever the workers act in a manner contrary to truth, persons like you should stop them from doing so and, if they fail, break off relations with them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : S.N. 9506

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] *Vide* "What Should One Not Do?", 1-3-1931.

250. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

DELHI,
February 25, 1931

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

Your letter and a portion of the translated *Gita-praveshika* have arrived. I shall read the translation when I have time. I have had some news from Shankerlal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 1686

251. SPEECH AT HINDU COLLEGE, DELHI[1]

February 25, 1931

Mahatmaji next unveiled a beautiful portrait of the late Lala Lajpat Rai amid loud shouts of "*Jai*" and then proceeded to deliver his speech.

He said he felt very grateful to them for having asked him to unveil the portrait of Lala Lajpat Rai. It was in the fitness of things, that at a time when India's fight for freedom was on, the portrait of a great patriot should be unveiled. But mere unveiling of his portrait was not sufficient, they must resolve in their minds that they shall install in their hearts the noble qualities of Lala Lajpat Rai. He was also grateful to them for the purses they had presented then. He said he always felt great pleasure in sitting among students, chatting with them, playing with them, flattering them, and snubbing them, because he had a self-interest and that was "complete independence" and that could not be achieved unless he had attracted every student's heart and won over his power of sacrifice for *balidan* (sacrifice) in the *yajna* (fight) which was going on in the country.

The whole world was looking towards the students and he would feel much pain and sorrow, if they did not come out successful in their trial. He was sorry that the students had not taken their legitimate share in the fight for freedom. No doubt they did shout "*inquilab*" loudly, but he wanted them to cultivate three things : (1) *maryada* (discipline), (2) *sanyam* (self-control) and (3) *charitrabal* (power of character). Where else could we find these three things? The fight for swaraj was a *yajna* of self-purification and he expected the students to contribute the largest share in that *yajna*.

But, he was sorry that they had not fulfilled his expectations in the matter.

[1] After welcome address by S. K. Sen, Principal, three purses were presented to Gandhiji on behalf of the Hindu, St. Stephen's and Law Colleges.

They had lagged in making the sacrifice that was expected of them. Mother India expected much more sacrifice from them and he was sorry that they had not offered that. The Mahatma said :

I am an optimist and will not give up. I still fell hopeful that you would fulfil the expectations of the country.

It was with these hopes that he had come to address them.

Mahatmaji said, there were three tasks before them. (1) Hindu-Muslim unity. Let the old men (Hindus and Muslims) fight, because they had in them mistrust arising out of cowardice, which was inevitable for men nearing death. But youth should not entertain mistrust and should work whole-heartedly for Hindu-Muslim unity because they were the best messengers of the cause. What, if they had different religions? Like the five fingers of one hand, they should protect and help each other. It was a pity that we people were doing unreligious things in the name of religion. He wanted students to promise to live like brothers in perfect harmony and establish goodwill and cordiality between Hindus and Muslims. The second task before them, said Mahatmaji, was doing away with the curse of untouchability which did not mean simply touching the so-called untouchables, but it meant regarding the humblest and the poorest in the land as our equal. Thirdly, they must use khaddar and promote the use of charkha, which in itself was a great science. Sir C. W. Raman and Sir J. C. Bose deserved praise for their scientific discoveries but the charkha too was a powerful science, which would bring salvation to crores of our countrymen.

Concluding, he said if crores of people were his followers today and called him a Mahatma, it was not because he had given up practice at the Bar, but because he regarded the poorest among the poor as his brother and he believed that the salvation of the country lay in charkha and Hindu-Muslim unity. He was devoting every minute for the achievement of these ideals.

Mahatmaji smilingly added :

If you follow me you can all become Mahatmas (Laughter) and then I will have many companions to help me in the attainment of our object. (Laughter)

Mahatmaji concluded with a prayer to God to inspire the students with the will and power to sacrifice.

The Hindustan Times, 27-2-1931

252. PICKETING

It is an unshakable faith with me that a cause suffers exactly to the extent that it is supported by violence. I say this in spite of appearances to the contrary. If I kill a man who obstructs me, I may experience a sense of false security. But the security will be short-

lived. For I shall not have dealt with the root cause. In due course other men will surely rise to obstruct me. My business therefore is not to kill the man or men who obstruct me but to discover the cause that impels them to obstruct me and deal with it. Even so must one deal with the cause of people selling foreign cloth and not lay violent hands on those who happened to be the dealers for the time being. The cause lies on the surface. So long as there are buyers of foreign cloth, there will be sellers. I must, therefore, gain the ear of the buying public. If we would but recognize this cardinal fact we would lay the greatest stress upon work in the villages which send their millions to the foreign-cloth market. But I must not be understood to mean that we may neglect the cities and the merchants. Only under the plan suggested by me need there be neither despair, nor the slightest trace of violence. Moreover my plan if fully executed contains within itself the surest chances of success and need never degenerate into rowdyism. Let us not forget that we are wedded to non-violence and truth. The strictest and closest striving towards these two beacon-lights would certainly bring us ashore; and whilst reaching us there in the quickest possible time it would enable us in difficult circumstances to discover effective ways out. Those who have faith would not be disheartened if they found that some dealers have defied Congress instructions and demands. Such disappointments should be used for perfecting our own internal organization and discovering our defects, never for losing faith.

Young India, 26-2-1931

253. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

1 DARYAGANJ,
DELHI,
February 26, 1931

MY DEAR REHANA,

I have your letter. I wrote only two days ago for *Navajivan* on picketing[1] and there pointed out that your fasting was ideal and appropriate picketing. The reasoning is simple. There must be a bond of affection between the parties. In your case there was that bond. They knew you as a member of the family which the people of Patan knew had served them in common with the people of the whole State. That bond had never snapped. You had therefore a perfect right to

[1] *Vide* "What Should One Not Do?", 1-3-1931.

entreat them and, if your entreaty was lost upon them, to fast even as you would be entitled to fast against father and mother if, in your opinion, they were going wrong and they did not listen to your entreaty. That the Patan dealers in sealing their stock were actuated not so much by their regard for you as by the fear of an enraged populace may be quite true and is highly probable. But that need not be considered in weighing the merits of a particular action. In the language of the *Gita* ours is but to do and not to mind the result. If the motive and the action are pure, the doer is not responsible for the manifold consequences that may arise from it. I hope this is clear. Write again if necessary.

Things here are still indefinite, but for a satyagrahi is not one step enough? We must not seek "to see the distant scene".

Love.

BAPU

MISS REHANA TYABJI
C/O SHRI DAHYALAL HIRALAL DESAI
NEAR THE BANK OF BARODA
MEHSANA

From a photostat : S.N. 9629

254. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

DELHI,
February 26, 1931

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Vallabhbhai told me that this time you could not accompany him because of Dilip's illness. Except for satisfying of political curiosity and facing Delhi's biting cold, I do not think you have missed much. And if by remaining there, you have been able to comfort Taramati and solve difficulty, at least something will have been accomplished.

Here the negotiations are still in mid-air. The talks have been warmer and more friendly than I had expected, but it is not possible to come to any conclusion from them.[1]

It has already been explained to some extent which are the mills whose products are to be boycotted. But which of the goods of

[1] The reference is to the Gandhi-Irwin talks begun on February 17.

the mills thus listed should be boycotted is difficult to say. But if a resolution can be drafted in consultation with Shankerlal, I shall get it passed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

255. SPEECH AT SISGUNJ GURDWARA, DELHI[1]

February 26, 1931

I have followed with painful interest the details of police firing[2] into the sacred precincts of this Gurdwara that have been narrated by the previous figure[3] and I assure you that my grief and resentment at the outrage are not les than yours. But as I told my Sikh brethren at the time of Nankana Sahib tragedy when I visited Nankana Sahib in company with Abul Kalam Azad in 1921, we are today fighting not for one Gurdwara but for the bigger Gurdwara, which is the common sacred possession of all of us, viz., *purna* swaraj. *Purna*—complete—because it is as much for the prince as for the peasant, as much for the rich landowner as for the landless tiller of the soil, as much for the Hindus as for the Mussalmans, as much for the Parsis and Christians as for the Jains, Jews and Sikhs, irrespective of any distinction of caste or creed or status in life. The very connotation of the word and the means of its attainment to which we are pledged—truth and non-violence—preclude all possibility of that swaraj being more for someone than for the other, being partial to someone and prejudicial to the other. Truth and non-violence leave no room for fraud or falsehood. The Congress has attracted the attention of the world for the simple reason that it is pledged to win freedom by means un-employed by nations heretofore. The world has so far been familiar with only one method of achieving freedom and that by the use of physical force. But luckily for itself and the world, India has launched on the method of non-violence and truth for the attainment of its

[1] This appeared under the caption : "God and Our Bond" as "a condensed translation" of Gandhiji's speech.

[2] On May 6, 1930

[3] Balwant Singh

independence. It is a unique thing in history and the world which began by regarding it with scepticism is today watching India's great non-violent experi- ment with bated breath. In physical warfare even chicanery and fraud have a place but non-violence precludes the use of all other weapons except that of truth and justice. Swaraj under this method, therefore, can never be achieved by usurping the rights of any community big or small but by ensuring even-handed justice and fair treatment to all—even the poorest and the weakest in the land. That being so how can the Congress want to keep even a child out of its own.

The beauty of non-violence is that it carries within it its own security.

I venture to suggest that the non-violence creed of the Congress is the surest guarantee of its good faith and our Sikh friends have no reason to fear betrayal at its hands. For the moment it did so, the Congress would not only thereby seal its own doom but that of the country too. Moreover the Sikhs are a brave people. They will know how to safeguard their rights by the exercise of arms if it should ever come to that.

Sardar Madhusudan Singh in his speech has asked for an assurance that the Congress would do nothing that might alienate the sympathies of the Sikhs from the Congress. Well, the Congress in its Lahore Session a resolution that it would not endorse any settlement with regard to the minority question that failed to satisfy any of the minorities concerned. What further assurance can the Congress give you to set you at ease I really fail to understand.

Then there is the controversy about the inclusion of the Sikh colour in the national flag. No blame can possibly attach to the Congress in this respect. The present design was suggested by me. The Congress has not even formally adopted it. I had offered to the Sikh friends to place before the A.I.C.C. their viewpoint if they could apprise me of it. But as it turned out, the A.I.C.C. could not meet after that and no one knows as to when it would be able to meet at all. Even the Working Committee is out today on sufferance. To raise this controversy at this time—a time when the Congress is fighting for its very existence—would be, to say the least, unseemly act. You may not obstruct if you cannot help.

The Sikhs have given their loyal and unstinted co-operation to the Congress in many parts in India like Bombay and Delhi, etc. But these brave people have never bothered themselves about the flag

question. The flag controversy is being conducted mostly by those who have held aloof from the present movement. A brave man always gives credit to the other party for its *bona fides*. Why can you have not faith? If the Congress should play false afterwards you can well settle surely with it, for you hold the sword. I would ask you therefore to cast out suspicion and distrust from you and to plunge into this sacred *yajna* of freedom whole-heartedly. You will find that when you are ready to make the extre-me sacrifice you will disdain to ask for guarantees. It will be for others who will look up to you as the champions of their rights as it will be for you to fulfil their expectations. I hold Granth Sahib in high reverence. Several parts of it have passed into our daily speech. So far as my reading of it goes it inculcates faith, valour and an invincible belief in the ultimate triumph of right and justice. I would like you to derive your inspiration and guidance from it.

I ask you to accept my word and the resolution of the Congress that it will not betray a single individual much less a community. If it ever thinks of doing so, it will only hasten its own doom. No nation determined to immolate itself at the altar of freedom can be guilty of breach of faith. My life has been an open book. I have no secrets and I encourage no secrets. I pray you therefore to unbosom yourselves of all your doubts and apprehensions and I shall try to meet you as best I can. What more shall I say? What more can I say then this that let God be witness of the bond that binds me and the Congress with you.

Young India, 5-3-1931

256. INTERVIEW WITH VICEROY

February 27, 1931

I saw Mr. Gandhi again today. I began by reference to the scope of the further constitutional discussions—in regard to which I said—"The object of future discussions is to consider further the scheme for the constitutional government of India discussed at the Round Table Conference. Of the scheme there outlined, Federation is an essential part; so also are Indian responsibility, and safeguards, explained by the Prime Minister, as being needed to secure such matters as Crown control of defence and external affairs; the position of minorities; the financial credit of India, and the discharge of obligations. The character and form of the arrangements, by which effect should be given to these fundamental principles of Federation,

responsibility and safeguards, are matters for discussion."

To this he assented.

I then referred to the question he had raised as to an examination into debt charges. I told him that the position of His Majesty's Government was that, for reasons of Indian credit, it was impossible for them to assent to an investigation into the Indian debt, and as to any particular charges it was impossible for His Majesty's Government to express an opinion without knowing more precisely to what these might relate.

In reply to this he said that he would wish to raise particular subjects, though these he was not willing or able precisely to define. He instanced however the £ 100 million gift in the war. I told him that I could only make His Majesty's Government acquainted with what he had said, and that in any event I had no doubt that His Majesty's Government must reserve to themselves complete liberty of decision as to how they dealt with particular subjects if raised. To this he replied that, while appreciating the position of His Majesty's Government, he must make it clear that, in the event of the attitude of His Majesty's Government on questions raised being such as Congress could not accept, he must reserve to Congress the right to withdraw from participation in the Conference proceedings.

He said that he did not contemplate or desire any public pronouncement on this subject.

The next matter to which I referred was secession, on which I told him that, as I had made plain at our first interview, I regarded the question in present circumstances as academic, and that, though I presumed he could raise it if he so desired, public expression of any intention to do so would have the worst possible effect and could hardly fail to damage his own cause. To this he assented.

We then turned to the practical questions arising in the event of peace restored. I made it plain to him that any reciprocal action by Government depended on the effective discontinuance of the civil disobedience movement, of which I detailed the various activities set out in the memorandum I had before me, and of which I promised to send him a copy.

He raised a variety of points on particular issues, which were not of great importance, and, after much discussion, the position emerged that apart from these, three matters appeared to present great—and in his phrase, insurmountable—difficulty. These were picketing; enquiries into police excesses; and salt.

On each of these I developed the attitude of Government as defined in the memorandum, and said that I could not hold out any hope of Government going further.

He argued all three points on lines which after several hours' discussion have

now become familiar, and promised to send me a note[1] tomorrow, showing precisely what he had in mind as regards picketing. I told him that I would consider this when I received it, but that I scarcely thought it could affect my view. This was that whatever might be the logical arguments in favour of peaceful persuasion, by way of picketing, the whole experience of the last month showed that it was a conception that had no relation to practical facts, and that it inevitably led to abuses and violence, of which we had had examples in plenty. As regards the points of police enquiry and salt, he was frankly dissatisfied.

I promised to send him a note on all the points discussed, in which I would state clearly the position of Government. He could then consider whether any further meeting would be useful. He said he would leave this to me. I concluded by again urging him to exert his influence on the side of peaceto which he replied by saying that he desired peace, but that when in doubt he fell back on "Lead Kindly Light" and "One step enough for me". . . .[2]

SD. IRWIN

From a photostat : G.N. 8949

257. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

February 27, 1931

The Gandhi-Irwin talks[3] concluded at six in the evening. Mr. Gandhi, interviewed by the Associated Press, said :

I have no statement to make. The Viceroy's House may issue one.

Are you satisfied with the conversations?

It all depends.—

Will the discussions be resumed?

These may be resumed.

The Hindu, 28-2-1931

[1] *Vide* "Note on Picketing", 28-2-1931.

[2] The note concluded with the remark : "He was in very obstinate mood throughout the conversation and left a pretty clear impression on my mind that, beneath the guise of reasonableness, he was either bluffing or had made up his mind that he did not mean to settle except on his full terms."

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

258. NOTE ON PICKETING

February 28, 1931

In the event of peace being established picketing of foreign cloth and drink and drug shops will be unaggressive and though, to the extent that it is successful, it must produce political consequences, it will be predominantly for social and moral ends as it was before the political consequence was thought of, or intended. It will, therefore, be largely confined to villages, and even in cities attention will be directed not so much to the sellers as to the buyers. It will thus be predominantly educative. There will be no cordons, and no crowds, such as now are the special feature of picketing. There will be no hostile demonstrations against those who in- sist on selling foreign cloth in defiance of public opinion. Naturally it will be absolutely peaceful and conducted so as to cause no public obstruction, and will not be in defiance of the common law.

From a photostat : C.W. 9334. Courtesy : India Office Library; also G.N. 8950

259. LETTER TO VICEROY

DELHI,
February 28, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I understood that you would send your note on the points you expounded yesterday and that, thereafter, I was to send you my note on picketing. But, as it is getting late in the day, without further waiting I enclose my note[1] on picketing.

I would like to know early, if I may, whether I shall be wanted tomorrow. I am anxious to know early, as I have an important public engagement tomorrow which I must postpone, if I am to be at the Viceregal House tomorrow.

I am, etc.,

From a photostat : C.W. 9333. Courtesy : India Office Library; also G.N. 8950

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

260. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

DELHI,
February 28, 1931

CHI. KANTA,

I have not been able to write to you at all. It has troubled me but I was helpless. Your health must now fully improve. I can understand your being impatient to meet me. But I am afraid we shall not be able to meet. Let us see what happens. I have no time just now to dictate more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat to the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

261. WHAT SHOULD ONE NOT DO?

Let me note down what, in my opinion, are the things one ought not to do while picketing liquor shops and foreign-cloth shops.

1. We should not abuse either the seller or the buyer and should never be discourteous in our behaviour.
2. We should not lie down before a shop or a vehicle.
3. We should not cry out "shame! shame!"
4. We should not take out effigies for burning or burying.
5. Even while ostracizing people, we should not obstruct their obtaining food or any other service. But we should not take meals in their homes or accept any service from them. How far service should be rendered, however, requires careful consideration.
6. We should not fast in protest against them in any-circumstances. The commonly accepted rule regarding fasting is as follows : Where there is a bond between two parties, one of them may fast if the other violates a condition or a moral law, just as Raihana fasted in Patan.

Some may say that the boycott of liquor shops or foreign-cloth shops cannot succeed through such limited picketing; I would then say that the boycott had better fail in that case. Those who raise such doubts, it may be said, do not have full faith in the unfailing success

of non-violence. Observance of non-violence was the object behind entrusting both these tasks to women. I am convinced that we can achieve both these boycotts within a short period of time if a non-violent atmosphere is maintained. On the contrary, if we transgress our limits, however welcome the immediate results may appear to be, bitterness will spread among us in the end and the atmosphere of internecine strife will prevail. And if we become victims of family feuds, the boycott will end and, swaraj itself will remain a mere dream. Hence my advice and hope is that everyone will accept this prescription as that of an experienced vaid and put it into practice.

If despite people following my advice—regarding what should be done and what should not be done—the boycott does not succeed, I am aware that the burden of the failure will rest on me. I am prepared to shoulder it.

KHADI AND BOYCOTT OF FOREIGN CLOTH

As I continue to examine the activities of the past six months, I find that, to some extent, we have deviated from our path. Of late, I have been hearing from many quarters voices of swadeshi which are opposed to khadi. Some regard themselves as having fulfilled their objective by claiming that they wear swadeshi, i.e., mill-made cloth. But, from the long-range point of view, it will be seen that those who wear Indian mill-made cloth and disdain khadi are in the long run harming both khadi and the Indian mills. The reason is that without khadi boycott is impossible. Here is the proof. About 50 per cent of India's requirements of cloth are imported from abroad. Our Indian mills cannot meet this requirement within a short period. This task can be accomplished by khadi alone, since our capacity to produce it depends solely on our keenness. Just as we insist on making *bhakharis* (or cooking rice) ourselves and do not get them made or cooked in Indian or foreign factories, like-wise, if we desire it, we can produce as much khadi as we need. If this much is understood, it is easy to show why a disregard for khadi harms the cause of Indian (textile) mills. The latter by themselves cannot make a success of the boycott. Hence foreign cloth would enter into such fierce competition with Indian mills, that the latter could not but suffer a set-back. We have had this experience on many occasions be-fore now. Hence those who rest satisfied with thoughtlessly wearing Indian mill-made cloth deceive themselves and harm the boycott move-ment. I hope, therefore, that

those who respond to the message of the Congress will use nothing but khadi. Swadeshi for them means pure khadi.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-3-1931

262. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

DELHI,

February 28/March 1, 1931

CHI. GANGABEHN,

By the time you get this letter you will have been out of jail for many days. If it again becomes necessary to let your clothes be stained with blood, let them be. This colour is more pleasant than that of *kumkum* or *sindoor*. I expect a letter from you describing your experience in jail.

I cannot say yet whether we shall be able to meet.

Sunday Morning

I dictated the lines above yesterday. I saw today the wire expressing your wish. In fact I am impatient to see you all. I do hope to be able to start before Wednesday. But who can say what will happen? It will be the same to me whether I am able to leave this place or whether I am arrested. If I am arrested and we cannot meet, do not worry at all. It is not very necessary that you should consult me on any matter. If God has willed it so, we are bound to meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 8773. Courtesy : Gangabehn Vaidya

263. INTERVIEW WITH VICEROY

March 1, 1931

Mr. Gandhi came to see me this afternoon, and before he came I had, after very careful examination of the various points raised, come to the conclusion that, apart from minor and technical points, there were three main matters of principle on which, so far as I could judge, accommodation was impossible. These were : Picketing and boycott; enquiries into police excesses; and salt. I accordingly began the interview with a firm determination on one point, which was that on no account must I allow the break which I anticipated to come, as I felt certain Mr. Gandhi would try to engineer it, on Police alone. I accordingly began by taking Mr. Gandhi through the memorandum I had sent him the previous day inviting him to let me know on what points he was unable to agree with the Government attitude. We soon came to a stoppage over the question of boycott, and on this matter I, with his concurrence, brought in the Home Secretary, Emerson, to deal more fully than I could with some technical points. After rather a wandering discussion the position emerged that Mr. Gandhi was apparently willing to concentrate his claim and his energy upon the business of substitution of Indian cloth and goods for foreign, giving up boycott of British goods, and giving up boycott as a political weapon. Merchants would be at liberty to abrogate restrictive agreements, and no element of coercion would be applied to them.

On picketing we had also a long talk in which we respectively re-stated our position, he saying that all he meant to do was perfectly peaceful picketing, which was entirely permissible under the common law, I maintaining the view that, whatever his common-law rights and the persuasiveness of his logic, peaceful picketing was a thing that in present circumstances just would not happen. People were in too excitable a temper for so simple and speedy a transition as he contemplated from one sort of picketing to another to be possible. He was very frank and said that he had been discussing with the Congress Committee, and they were going to stop picketing where it was not working smoothly, and was very emphatic that they could get their orders obeyed in these matters. We left the point at this stage for further discussion in order to see how we got on on other things.

We then came to Police, in regard to which he said the formula in the memorandum was quite unsatisfactory, and he could not possibly accept it. I said that I appreciated that because, as I presumed, he would feel that however good the evidence he might have to bring about particular cases, my formula left it open for local

Governments to refuse to enquire any further on the ground that they already had the facts. On the other hand, were I to admit his very justifiable point, it would mean that I must either open the floodgates to enquiry, or something like it, in innumerable cases all over India, wherever anybody wished to get back on the Police, or must adopt the line of saying that he could select, say, three cases, which would inevitably have the effect of suggesting to the world that these were three selected instances typical of a generally prevailing state of police savagery. I therefore told him that, inasmuch as I could do neither of these things and inasmuch as we really wanted peace, would not it be better to drop it altogether? No formula that the wit of man could devise would really be much good, or was indeed possible. I should in fact be pretending to give him something that I knew local Governments did not intend. He seemed a good deal impressed with this kind of line and, after some talk, said that he had himself been thinking of dropping it. We accordingly, after some further talk, drafted a formula to the effect that he had had brought certain allegations to the notice of Government, but that Government were unwilling to institute specific enquiries because they didn't think that this would help peace, and that, having regard to those considerations, Mr. Gandhi did not press his demand. He took the formula away, but I am not without hope that we shall eventually get settled in that fashion.

We then passed to Salt, on which we covered ground over which we had been before. He attached far greater importance to it than I had expected, and I imagine it is mainly vanity. I told him that we could not condone publicly the breaches of law; that would be to give too great encouragement to evil influences; nor could we in present finanical circumstances sacrifice revenue by repealing it. I was quite willing to consider the question of making some alteration in the executive administration of the law, if this could be done by regular order, with the object of extending privileges already enjoyed by the inhabitants of some areas to others, but the matter demanded fuller knowledge than I possessed and I suggested he should see Schuster. This he said he would be very glad to do, and is to see him on Tuesday. One of the possible ways of dealing with it that I put to him was that the terms of reference of the existing Salt Committee should be enlarged so as to bring in the points in which he is particularly interested and on which he might give evidence to the Committee. If this were done, I assured him that the Government would be willing to give sympathetic consideration to recommendations that the Committee might make. I think it may be necessary to do something to meet him on Salt. I fully recognize the psychological objection to doing anything on a matter so publicly identified with his inauguration of the civil disobedience campaign. A good deal will turn on how it can be done, but I do not

believe that we ought to allow settlement to wreck on the abstract principle that Salt is the inviolable ark on which no hand must be laid.

The discussion up to this point therefore left us with :

Police—very promising; picketing and salt—unsettled, but with a good deal of manoeuvre-room if desired.

I accordingly suggested that he should come again after dinner and discuss the actual details of any proposals he might wish to make about picketing with Emerson. I would join them if I could.

Second Interview : 9·30 p.m., March 1, 1931

I joined Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Emerson at 9.30 p.m. and found that by that time Emerson had got Mr. Gandhi hitched to the point of abandonment of the boycott as a political weapon and an assurance of complete freedom for cloth merchants to do what they liked. These seem pretty substantial gains. We discussed Picketing for a long time, and I eventually said to him, in pursuance of what we had said earlier in the day, that I would press him to accept this sort of solution, i.e., that the statement should record the common-law right as it stood of peaceful picketing; that Government did not challenge this common-law right, but that Mr. Gandhi and Congress, realizing the circumstances of the country, did not intend to make any use of their common-law rights for a period of two months, or six weeks, in order definitely to dissociate the peaceful picketing they want liberty to employ, from peaceful picketing as it has been employed during the last 12 months. Mr. Gandhi made it plain that, if Congress did not succeed in maintaining the peaceful character of the picketing he desired, he could have no objection to Government taking any steps they wished to deal with it, that we should be entitled to tell him he must call it off. This he would almost certainly himself desire to do. He promised to think over my suggestion and said that he did not think it would be difficult to find a formula on which we could both meet. I am inclined to agree with him and, although I should like to get rid of picketing for ever, I have very little doubt that, if you can get rid of the political-weapon drive of it and have it purely as an economic and social thing, it will be dead in three weeks. This is the very strong view of all the Indians who come and talk to me about it.

After saying that I would put him in touch with Schuster about Salt tomorrow, he ran over various points of smaller importance that some of his people had put to him on the other matters in the note. He produced difficulties on the subject of Additional Police, which I think may be obstinate, but we shall not break on this.

Vallabhbhai Patel had produced a few particular difficulties from Gujarat, but these too I think can be surmounted. The position therefore left is that :

(1) we have got to find the right settlement of picketing, which I believe can be done;

(2) we have got to persuade him to be satisfied with including his salt points in the reference to the existing Committee, or see whether we can satisfy him about this in some other way;

(3) he has got to make up his mind to accept our wash-out on police in some form that fits with our position. I think it is permissible to hope that we shall succeed in resolving these points and, if we do so, we will be pretty clear for the question of his attitude about debts on which I must telegraph to the Secretary of State. I believe this question will prove, when it comes to the point, not to be at all impracticable. Sapru is very emphatic that, when they actually get round the table discussing it, they will be able to knock it out, or at least knock out any objectionable developments of it. There remain "the scope of the discussion", on which he has accepted His Majesty's Government's formula, and the question of secession, on which he also accepted the formula that I read to him and which has already been reported to the Secretary of State. On both these points of debts and secession he does not want any public statement to be made.

(SD.) IRWIN

From a photostat : G.N. 8952

264. A NOTE

[*March 2, 1931*][1]

I want you to take me literally in what I said yesterday. You seem to be feeling lonely and almost uninterested. That must not be, my strength depends upon you. I want your active support in what I am doing. And that I cannot get unless you criticise, alter, amend, reject and do many other things. You have a whole day at your disposal. Make the fullest use of it for considering these notes. I have not hitherto minded the language. But after prayer I carefully examined the language. Consider the notes with the linguistic changes and make suggestions as to wording even where you approve of the substance. Consider also the Viceroy's draft regarding the inquiry question. I have made some alterations[2]. Personally, I am reconciled to the substance of the suggestion which was, in the first instance, mine, given as a possible solution of the difficulty.

A.I.C.C. File No. 329, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

265. NOTE TO V. S. S. SASTRI, T. B. SAPRU AND M. R. JAYAKAR[3]

NEW DELHI,
March 3, 1931

You must not leave. Your presence here is indispensable. There are many difficulties yet to be smoothed over.

The Tribune, 5-3-1931

[1] This appears to be a Silence Day note addressed to Jawaharlal Nehru after the Working Committtee meeting held on March 1, 1931 had discussed the provisional settlement which was finally approved at the meeting held on March 4, 1931. For Jawaharlal Nehru's note on the provisional settlement, *vide* "Jawaharlal nehru's note on provisional settlement". For the text of the provisional settlement, *vide* "Provisional settlement", 12-3-1931.

[2] In Clause 8 of the provisional settlement

[3] In reply to a note expressing their desire to leave Delhi

266. INTERVIEW WITH VICEROY

[*March 3, 1931*][1]

I saw Mr. Gandhi again yesterday. Emerson was present at our discussions at Mr. Gandhi's request.

We began with a few of the less important points, working up to the question of return of the land that had been sold to third parties. He accepted the position of Government that if this was to be recovered for the original owners it must be a question of third parties doing it. At the same time he said that it would be difficult in fact for this to get done unless Government officials were sympathetic. I adhered to the position that the Government of India was debarred from putting pressure of any kind on the Government of Bombay, that the Government of Bombay would be very sticky about doing anything, but that they would be neutral in the matter, leaving third parties to do what they could. He wasn't at all happy about this, and said that Vallabhbhai Patel was frankly doubtful whether he could carry the settlement in Gujarat unless they got some accommodation of this question. I told him however that it was not in my power to vary my position.

After clearing up the question of Additional Police in which we eventually agreed to treat the money question on the same logical basis as remission of fines (i.e., that moneys collected should not be refunded unless they were in excess of the amount required, but that moneys not collected should be washed out), we came on to boycott and picketing. I pressed him very hard either (a) to give up picketing altogether on his own on the ground of disturbance and communal feeling; or (b) to accept an agreement with Government that there would be no picketing for a specified period. He would not hear of either, assuring me with the utmost conviction that, if I would only trust his honour in this matter and the honour of Congress, there would be no picketing to which anybody could take objection. All he desired to do was to return to the *status quo* before the civil disobedience movement was started. There might be a little more picketing than was done before that movement began, because people had begun to think more constructively about swadeshi, but he could guarantee that there would be no interference or intimidation or the rest. After much wrangling we came down to the boycott and picketing formula of the agreement. I think it is not too bad. It ties it up pretty tight, and pledges Congress at once to suspend it if there is any abuse.

We had no trouble about the Police formula. He had made one or two verbal alterations that on the whole improved it from my point of view. In the course of a short discussion we had about this, he revealed what I have by now discovered as the right method of dealing with him. He said : "When you or Mr. Emerson use your best arguments it does not always have much effect on me, but, when you tell me that

[1] The report was prepared on March 4.

Government is in a difficulty and cannot do what I want, then I am inclined to capitulate to you"! This was exactly the history of the Police discussion.

The last subject we tackled was Salt, on which he had had a discussion with Schuster in the morning and on which they had arrived at a working formula. While our talks were proceeding the afternoon had been getting on, and it looked as if he was again going to have a race for his evening meal, which he cannot take after the sun has set. I accordingly asked him what he would wish done about it. It was eventually decided that Mirabai (Miss Slade) should bring it up here, which was done. I was greatly interested in meeting her, of whom I had heard much. She evidently venerates him very profoundly, and one felt one had suddenly been switched into a rather different world.

We could not finish all the matters for discussion, and I accordingly asked Gandhi to come back at 9 o'clock to get on with them as far as he could with Emerson, and I promised to look in and see how matters were progressing after finishing a dinner-party.

Later Interview : 9 p.m.

I joined them again at 10.30 and found they had pretty well agreed to the statement in the form in which it now stands. A good deal of verbal redrafting had to be done which took time, but the back of it was broken when we got the Police enquiry off and got agreement about withdrawal of the boycott of British goods.

We have given more than I like about Salt, but I don't think we could have got away with much less. We concluded, with the old man telling me that he was going to throw his whole heart and soul into trying to co-operate in cons-titution-building, and that, while he felt greatly oppressed with the responsibility of decision, he prayed with all his heart that it might be successful. I was impressed, as I have been throughout, with his sincerity. He told me, in reply to a question, that he was quite firm about not re-starting civil disobedience till the end of the conference discussions anyhow, and hoped never.[1]

(SD.) IRWIN, 4-3-31

From a photostat : G.N. 8953

267. LETTER TO VICEROY

1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI,
March 4, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I write this letter in connection with the lands of civil resisters sold in Gujarat in respect of revenue dues. Overworked as you are, it

[1] For Viceroy's report to the Secretary of State on the outcome of the talks, *vide* "Viceroy's cable to secretary of state",4-3-1931.

is distressful to me to have to write to you on a matter which may appear to be trivial. But I fear that on it hangs the successful working of the settlement just made. With all the desire to give the fullest effect to the settlement, Sardar Vallabhbhai tells me that he will find it utterly impossible to implement the Congress obligation of the settlement unless the lands can be restored to the rightful holders. I am well aware that as head of the Government of India you cannot by reason of a previous undertaking intervene in the matter, but as an Englishman interested in the successful working of a settlement built up by your patient and unwearied toil you can perhaps exercise your influence to see justice done and thereby assist its smooth working. Shrimati Gangabehn, whose name I have already introduced to you in a previous communication and who has been working in the taluk of Borsad in Kaira District, tells me that the land in Ras, where or near which her social work was being done, was sold to the Dharalas for a song, and that it was bought by them at the instigation of the previous Mamlatdar and in collusion with him. If there was proper enquiry I should undertake to prove the alleged collusion. But I know that at the present moment I must not, so far as possible, whisper a word about the past. That all the lands sold were sold for a song will, I think, be readily admitted. To say the least it will be conceded that it was the height of unwisdom, on the part of local authorities, thus practically to give away the lands.

I therefore ask your assistance so far as it can be given in surmounting the difficulty. It is in the confidence that you will do all that is possible to obtain the co-operation of the Bombay Government in finding a solution which will restore peace that Sardar Vallabhbhai and I can allow the settlement to go through.[1]

I am,

Yours, etc.,

From a photostat : C.W. 9335. Courtesy : India Office Library

268. INTERVIEW WITH VICEROY

March 4, 1931

Mr. Gandhi came up and had two or three hours' talk with Emerson at 12 o'clock mainly about the detailed draft of the agreement we had reached and about the methods to be employed for its implementation. I did not participate in these

[1] For Irwin's views on this letter, *vide* the following item.

discussions, but saw him for a short time in the afternoon about a letter[1] he had written to me concerning the land in Gujarat.

The point of the letter was that unless I could give him an assurance that the land sold would at some time unspecified be returned to their original owners he could not go on with the settlement. It had unhappily in his mind attained the importance of a moral scruple which outweighed everything else. His trouble was that according to his information some land at Ras had been sold by a dishonest Mamlatdar improperly and unjustly to Dharalas. This had been deliberately done according to his information in order to have revenge upon the Patidars, of whom the Dharalas are the natural enemies. I told him, as I had repeatedly told him before, that I was under the most strict obligation to the Bombay Government to accept the position, as stated in our note that these transactions must, so far as the Government were concerned, be regarded as final. It was impossible for me, in justice to these undertakings, to put pressure on the Bombay Government in a matter on which I had assured them my support. He recognized the force of this, but said that his difficulty must in some way be met. I told him that I could not vary the position as stated above, nor could I agree, as he suggested, to omit any reference to land that had been sold from the statement of settlement. To do this would inevitably carry the implication that the question was left open, and that Government had no fixed attitude in regard to it. The utmost that I could do would be to write to Sir Frederick Sykes drawing his attention to any statement on the matter that Mr. Gandhi cared to make to me, and ask him to give his personal attention to the task of finding an equitable solution. This I was willing to do, though I was not sanguine of Sir Frederick Sykes being able to find a solution that would meet the case. In any event it was highly unlikely that anything could be done at once. What might be possible under different conditions when things had quieted down, might be another matter. Mr. Gandhi said that he did not care about the time that elapsed before the question could be settled, but he felt so strongly that, without some settlement, the thing would remain an open sore in the Kaira District that he could never reconcile himself to it.

At this point we left it and I went to a Garden Party where I met Sapru, Jayakar, Sastri, Purshotamdas and Rahimtullah. I told them of the difficulty and exhorted them to put their full pressure on Gandhi to save the settlement from being wrecked.

Sapru, Sastri and Jayakar came to see me at 10.30 p.m. with alternative suggestions :

(1) that we should omit the paragraph from the statement;

(2) that we should insert the words "justly and lawfully sold" as a conditional limitation on non-return of land sold.

I told them both these things were impossible, and finally after much discussion we came to the suggestion of the addition of a note[2] in the form it appears

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* "Note", following paragraph 17(C) in "Provisional settlement", 12-3-1931.

in the statement as published. This seemed comparatively innocuous and they went off at 12.30 a.m. to get Gandhi to accept it. This he later did.

The impressions left on my mind by this incident were

(1) that it is essential to give no more time for moral scruples to develop. Clearly, though imponderable, they are very weighty;

(2) that there may be a real grievance in the methods adopted for the sale of some land and, whether this is so or not, the position of the Dharalas owning coveted land in the midst of Patidar villages is not going to be a very happy one. I should have supposed it might after two or three months have been possible for friendly arrangements to be made by which the Dharalas might be either bought out at satisfactory profit, or possibly assisted to buy land somewhere else, where it would not give rise to these acute difficulties.[1]

From a photostat : G.N. 8954

269. LETTER TO G. CUNNINGHAM

I DARYAGANJ, DELHI,
March 4, 1931

DEAR MR. CUNNINGHAM,

I have had a full discussion with the Working Committee on the moral issue raised by me at the interview with His Excellency the Viceroy this afternoon. The responsibility for the final decision rests upon my shoulders. I must apologize to His Excellency for my obvious limitations.

As to the issue, I repeat the alternative I suggested to Mr. Emerson, viz., that words "justly and lawfully" be added after "sold". I am sure the Government of India do not seek to protect unjust or unlawful transactions.

If, however, this amendment does not commend itself to His Excellency, I would be prepared to consider any alternative amendment along the same lines.

I understand that Sjts. Sastri, Sapru and Jayakar are to see His Excellency on this matter. Pending settlement of the issue raised, I am not sending the letter[2] I handed to His Excellency this morning and which has to be somewhat reshaped.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : C.W. 9336. Courtesy : India Office Library

[1] For Viceroy's version of the interview of March 5 which follows, *vide* "Interview with Viceroy", 5-3-1931.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 4-3-1931.

270. NOTES

SWARAJ IS SELF-PURIFICATION

It is a matter of great joy to me as it is I hope to the readers of *Young India* that numerous men and women took on the Motilal Shraddha Day[1] vows leading to self-purification for the purpose of swaraj. My faith in self-purification tells me that these vows if carried out to the full will bring us many steps nearer our goal. From the letters and information otherwise received I know that those who have taken vows include men and women, boys and girls drawn from all classes and all religious groups. Of these Hindu, Mahomedan and Christian names have already come under my observa-tions. The vows are varied. Some have vowed to observe *brahmacharya*, some to abstain from smoking, some to refrain from using any cloth but khadi. The reader will not ask me or himself how these vows can possibly advance swaraj. It is not a matter for demonstration through reason. The experience of the world shows that wherever people have taken to purity of life there has been self-rule, in other words swaraj. And self-rule by millions is swaraj of millions. Any other is not swaraj but mirage. The history of past twelve months is a progressive realiza-tion of the fact that purification undertaken not merely for the purpose of individual peace but for the purpose of national happiness does result in promoting such happiness. Happiness here means an enlightened realiza-tion of human dignity and a craving for human liberty which prizes itself above mere selfish satisfaction of personal comforts and material wants and would readily and joyfully sacrifice these for self-preservation.

AM I SELF-DELUDED?

A friend writes saying that I delude myself in believing that the boycott of foreign cloth has been attained largely through non-violence. I must deny the charge. For I am not unaware of the violent spirit that has crept into our picketing. In my opinion any contribution made by violent picketing will be found to be not only transitory but is likely to lead to reactions which we will all deplore. There shall be no compulsion in matters of trade and the like' is a sound maxim of conduct. Picketing is valuable, even indispensable, aid to

[1] February 15, 1931; *vide* "Statement to the press", 9-2-1931& "Speech on Motilal Day, Allahbad", 15-2-1931.

conviction and conversion. But a man who yields to threat or physical coercion resents it and simply awaits a suitable opportunity to revert to his original ways and resorts to reprisals when he is able to exact them. I wish therefore that I could induce the reader to share my belief that every form of violence is harmful in the end and that we shall be able to assimilate only that much result of the past sufferings which was obtained without violence, i.e., through the voluntary sufferings of the people.

KUMARAPPA

The reader I know will feel proud of the statement made by J. C. Kumarappa before the court. Who that has read it can say that he did not deserve the punishment he received? His was a pure and full sacrifice in more ways than one.

Young India, 5-3-1931

271. WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION ON PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT[1]

March 5, 1931

The Working Committee having considered the terms of the provisional settlement[2] arrived at between the Government of India and Mahatma Gandhi on behalf of the Congress endorses them and directs all Congress Committees to take immediate action in accordance with them. The Committee hopes that the country will carry out the terms agreed to in so far as they relate to the various Congress activities, and is of opinion that on a strict fulfilment of the obligations undertaken on behalf of the Congress will depend the advance of India towards *purna* swaraj.

A.I.C.C. File No. 329, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The resolution was presumably drafted by Gandhiji.
[2] *Vide* "Provisional settlement", 12-3-1931.

272. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

DELHI,
March 5, 1931

In the first place, I would like to state that this settlement, such as it is, would have been impossible without the Viceroy's inexhaustible patience and equally inexhaustible industry and unfailing courtesy. I am aware that I must have, though quite unconsciously, given him causes for irritation. I must have also tried his patience but I cannot recall an occasion when he allowed himself to be betrayed into irritation or impatience. I must add that he was frank throughout these very delicate negotiations and I believe he was determined, if it was at all possible, to have a settlement. I must confess that I approached the negotiations in fear and trembling. I was also filled with distrust but at the very outset he disarmed my suspicions and put me at ease. For myself, I can say without fear of contradiction that when I wrote my letter inviting the invitation to see him, I was determined not to be outdone in the race for reaching a settlement, if it could be reached at all honourably. I am, therefore, thankful to the Almighty that the settlement was reached and the country has been spared, at least for the time being, and I hope for all time, the suffer-ings which in the event of a breakdown would have been intensified a hundred fold.

For a settlement of this character, it is not possible nor wise to say which is the victorious party. If there is any victory, I should say it belongs to both. The Congress has never made any bid for victory.

In the very nature of things the Congress has a definite goal to reach and there can be no question of victory without reaching the goal. I would, therefore, urge all my countrymen and all my sisters instead of feeling elated, if they find in the terms any cause for elation, to humble themselves before God and ask Him to give them strength and wisdom to pursue the course that their mission demands for the time being, whether it is by way of suffering or by way of patient negotiation, consultation and conference.

I hope, therefore, that the millions who have taken part in this struggle of suffering during the past twelve months will now, during

[1] This appeared as "Press Statement" on "the terms of truce to a gathering of American and Indian journalists and Pressmen".

the period of conference and construction, show the same willingness, the same cohesion, the same effort and the same wisdom that they have in an eminent degree shown during what I would describe as a heroic period in the modern history of India.

But I know that, if there would be men and women who will feel elated by the settlement, there are, also those who will be, and are, keenly disappointed.

Heroic suffering is like the breath of their nostrils. They rejoice in it as in nothing else. They will endure unendurable sufferings, be they ever so prolonged, but when suffering ceases they feel their occupation gone and feel also that the goal has receded from the view. To them I would only say, 'Wait, watch, pray and hope.'

Suffering has its well-defined limits. Suffering can be both wise and unwise, and when the limit is reached, to prolong it would be not unwise but the height of folly.

It would be folly to go on suffering when the opponent makes it easy for you to enter into a discussion with him upon your longings. If a real opening is made, it is one's duty to take advantage of it and, in my humble opinion, the settlement has made a real opening. Such a settlement has necessarily to be provisional as this is. The peace arrived at is conditional upon many other things happening. The largest part of the written word is taken up with what may be called 'Terms of Truce'. This had to be naturally so. Many things had to happen before the Congress could participate in the deliberations of the Conference. A recital of these was absolutely necessary. But the goal of the Congress is not to get a redress of past wrongs important though they are: its goal is *purna* swaraj which, indifferently rendered in English, has been described as complete independence.

It is India's birthright, as it is of any other nation worthy of that name, and India cannot be satisfied with anything less and throughout the settlement one misses that enchanting word. The clause which carefully hides that word is capable, and intentionally capable, of a double meaning.

Federation may be a mirage or it may mean a vital organic state in which the two limbs might work so as to strengthen the whole. Responsibility, which is the second girder, may be a mere shadow or it may be tall, majestic, unbending and unbendable oak. Safeguards in the interests of India may be purely illusory and so many ropes tying

the country hand and foot and strangling her by the neck, or they may be like so many fences protecting a tender plant requiring delicate care and attention.

One party may give one meaning and another may give the three girders the other meaning. It is open under that clause to either party to work along its own lines and the Congress if it has shown readiness to take part in the deliberation of the Conference, it is because it seeks to make Federation, Responsibility, Safeguards, reservations, or whatever other names they may be known by, such as would promote the real growth of the country along political, social, economic and moral lines.

If the Congress succeeds in making its position acceptable to the Conference, then, I claim that the fruit of that effort will be complete independence. But I know that the way to it is weary. There are many rocks, many pitfalls, to be found across the way. But if Congressmen will approach the new task to which they are called, with confidence and courage, I have no misgivings about the result. It is, therefore, in their hands either to make something noble and worth looking at out of the new opportunity that has come to them or, by lack of self-confidence and want of courage, to fritter away the opportunity.

But I know that in this task Congressmen will require the aid of the other parties, the aid of the great Princes of India, and last but by no means the least the aid of Englishmen. I need not make any appeal at the present juncture to the different parties. I have little doubt that they are no less eager than Congressmen for the real freedom of their country.

But the Princes are a different proposition. Their acceptance of the idea of Federation was certainly for me a surprise, but if they will become equal partners in Federated India, I venture to suggest that of their own free will they should advance towards the position that what is called British India has been all these long years seeking to occupy.

An undiluted autocracy, however benevolent it may be, and an undiluted democracy are an incompatible mixture bound to result in an explosion. It is, therefore, I think, necessary for them not to take up an uncompromising attitude and impatiently refuse to listen to an appeal from or on behalf of the would-be partner. If they refused any such appeal they would make the position of the Congress untenable and, indeed, most awkward. The Congress represents, or endeavours to represent, the whole of the people of India. It recognizes no dis-

tinction between those who reside in British India or in Indian States.

The Congress has, with great wisdom and equally great restraint, refrained from interfering with the doings and affairs of the States and it has done so in order, not to unnecessarily wound the susceptibilities of the States, but, also, by reason of the self-imposed restraint, to make its voice heard by the States on a suitable occasion. I think that, that occasion has now arrived. May I then hope that the great Princes will not shut their ears to the Congress appeal on behalf of the people of the States?

I would like to make a similar appeal to the English. If India is to come to her own through conference and consultation, the goodwill and active help of Englishmen are absolutely necessary. I must con - fess, that what seems to have been yielded by them at the Conference in London is not even half enough—no approach to the goal that India has in view. If they will render real help, they must be prepared to let India feel the same glow of freedom which they themselves would die in order to possess. These[1] English statesmen would have to dare to let India wander away into the woods through errors. Freedom is not worth having if it does not connote freedom to err and even to sin. If God Almighty has given the humblest of His creatures the freedom to err, it passes my comprehension how human beings, be they ever so experienced and able, can delight in depriving other human beings of that precious right.

Anyway, the implication of inviting the Congress to join the Conference is most decidedly that the Congress may not be deterred from any consideration, save that of incapacity, from pressing for the fullest freedom. And the Congress does not consider India to be a sickly child requiring nursing, outside help, and other props.

I would like also to register my appeal to the people of the great American Republic and the other nations of earth. I know that this strug-gle based as it is on truth and non-violence from which, alas, we the votaries have on occasion undoubtedly strayed, has fired their imagination and excited their curiosity. From curiosity they, and specially America, has progressed to tangible help in the way of sympathy. And I can say on behalf of the Congress and myself that we are all truly grateful for all that sympathy. I hope that in the difficult mission in which the Congress is now about to embark, we shall not only retain their sympathy but that it will grow from day to day. I

[1] The source has “There”.

venture to suggest, in all humility, that if India reaches her destiny through truth and non-violence, she will have made no small contribution to the world peace for which all the nations of the earth are thirsting and she would also have, in that case, made some slight return for the help that those nations have been freely giving to her.

My last appeal is to the Police and the Civil Service departments. The settlement contains a clause which indicates that I had asked for an inquiry into some of the police excesses which are alleged to have taken place. The reason for waiving that inquiry is stated in the settlement it-self. The Civil Service is an integral part of the machinery which is kept going by the police department. If they really feel that India is soon to become mistress in her own household and they are to serve her loyally and faithfully as her servants, it behoves them, even now, to make the people feel that when they have to deal with the members of the Civil Service and the police department, they are really dealing with their servants, honoured and wise undoubtedly, but nevertheless servants and not masters.

I owe a word to hundreds, if not thousands, of my erstwhile fellow-prisoners on whose behalf I have been receiving wires and who will still be languishing in jails when satyagrahi prisoners who were jailed during the past 12 months will have been discharged. Personally, I do not believe in imprisoning, by way of punish- ment, even those who commit violence. I know that those who have done violence through political motives are entitled to claim, if not the same wisdom, certainly the same spirit of love and self-sacrifice that I would claim for myself. And, therefore, if I could have justly secured their liberty in preference to my own or that of fellow-satyagrahis I should truthfully have secured it.

But I trust they will realize that I could not in justice ask for their discharge. But that does not mean that I or the members of the Working Committee have not them in mind.

The Congress has embarked deliberately, though provisionally, on a career of co-operation. If congressmen honourably and fully implement the conditions applicable to them of the settlement, the Congress will obtain an irresistible prestige and would have inspired Government with confidence in its ability to ensure peace, as I think it has proved its ability to conduct disobedience.

And if the people in general will clothe the Congress with that power and prestige, I promise that it will not be long before every one of these political prisoners is discharged including the detenus, the Meerut prisoners and all the rest.

There is, no doubt, a small but active organization in India which would secure India's liberty through violent action. I appeal to that organization, as I have done before, to desist from its activities, if not yet out of conviction, then out of expedience. They have perhaps somewhat realized what great power non-violence has. They will not deny that the almost miraculous mass awakening was possible only because of the mysterious and yet unfailing effect of non-violence. I want them to be patient, and give the Congress, or if they will, me, a chance to work out the plan of truth and non-violence. After all it is hardly yet a full year since the Dandi march. One year in the life of an experiment affecting 300 millions of human beings is but a second in the cycle of time. Let them wait yet awhile. Let them preserve their precious lives for the service of the Motherland to which all will be presently called and let them give to the Congress an opportunity of securing the release of all the other political prisoners and maybe even rescuing from the gallows those who are condemned to them as being guilty of murder.

But I want to raise no false hopes. I can only state publicly what is my own and the Congress aspiration. It is for us to make the effort. The result is always in God's hands.

One personal note and I have done. I believe that I put my whole soul into the effort to secure an honourable settlement. I have pledged my word to Lord Irwin that in making good the terms of the settlement in so far as they bind the Congress, I should devote myself heart and soul to the task. I worked for the settlement, not in order to break it to pieces at the very first opportunity, but in order to strain every nerve to make absolutely final what today is provisional and to make it a precursor of the goal to attain which the Congress exists.

Lastly, I tender my thanks to all those who have been unceasing in their efforts in making the settlement possible.

Young India, 12-3-1931

273. TELEGRAM TO PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEES[1]

1 DARYAGANJ,
March 5, 1931

IN VIEW PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT ARRIVED AT BETWEEN WORKING COMMITTEE ON BEHALF CONGRESS AND GOVERNMENT OF INDIA REQUEST YOU TAKE IMMEDIATE STEPS INFORM ALL CONGRESS COMMITTEES YOUR PROVINCE TO ACT IN ACCORDANCE WITH IT. CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE AND NO TAX CAMPAIGNS TO BE DISCONTINUED AND NO FURTHER DEFIANCE OF LAWS OR REGULATIONS. BOYCOTT OF BRITISH GOODS AS SUCH TO BE DISCONTINUED AND COMPLETE FREEDOM REGARDING THEM GIVEN BUT BOYCOTT OF INTOXICATING DRINK AND DRUGS AND OF ALL FOREIGN CLOTH AND LIQUOR SHOPS IS PER- MITTED AND SHOULD BE CONTINUED WHEREVER NECESSARY. SUCH PICKETING SHOULD BE UNAGGRESSIVE AND SHOULD NOT INVOLVE COERCION INTIMIDATION RESTRAINT HOSTILE DEMON- STRATION OBSTRUCTION TO PUBLIC OR ANY OFFENCE UNDER ORDINARY LAW. IF THESE CONDITIONS NOT SATISFIED IN ANY AREA PICKETING TO BE SUSPENDED THERE. INSISTENCE ON SWADESHI GOODS IN PREFERENCE TO ALL FOREIGN GOODS ALSO TO BE CONTINUED. NO ORGANIZED DISOBEDIENCE OF SALT LAWS AND NO RAIDS BUT VILLAGERS RESIDING IN AREAS WH ERE SALT COLLECTED OR MADE ARE PERMITTED TO CON- TINUE TO COLLECT OR MAKE SALT FOR DOMESTIC CONSUMP- TION OR SALE IN NEIGHBOURHOOD BUT NO SALE OR TRADING OUTSIDE. UNAUTHORIZED NEWS SHEETS SHOULD BE STOPPED. TAXPAYERS SHOULD PREPARE PAYMENT LAND REVENUE AND RETURN VILLAGES WHERE VACATED. IN CASES ECONOMIC DISTRESS OR INABILITY PAYMENT OTHER METHODS FOR REMISSION OR SUSPENSION SHOULD BE ADOPTED. IN VIEW PENDING RELEASE PRISONERS SPECIAL DIRECTIONS FOR ELECTION DELEGATES KARACHI CONGRESS BEING ISSUED PRESS.

SAYED MAHMUD
GENERAL SECRETARY

A.I.C.C. File No. 329, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] This was presumably drafted by Gandhiji.

274. TELEGRAM TO SWAMI ANAND

March 5, 1931

SWAMI ANAND
CARE SHREE
BOMBAY

DATE UNCERTAIN. WILL TRY COME BOMBAY. CAN GIVE VILEPARLE ONE DAY.

BAPU

From a microfilm : S.N. 16924

275. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 5, 1931

NARANDAS
ASHRAM
SABARMATI

TELL PRABHAVATI VASUMATI OTHERS TRYING REACH EARLY.

BAPU

From a microfilm : S.N. 16924

276. TELEGRAM TO MOHAMMAD SHAFFEE

March 5, 1931

SIR MOHAMMAD SHAFFEE
LAHORE

THANKS YOUR WIRE. WITH HELP FROM FRIENDS LIKE YOU DO NOT DESPAIR OF UNITY WHICH IS SO ESSENTIAL JUST NOW FOR FREEDOM MOTHERLAND.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 16924

277. INTERVIEW WITH VICEROY

March 5, 1931

I heard from Mr. Gandhi this morning saying that he was willing to accept the addition of the note as I had drafted it last night, and saying that, while he understood my commitments in the matter to the Bombay Government, he relied on me to use my

influence to secure a solution of the difficulty.[1] I replied to him repeating the facts of my earlier undertaking on this particular subject given to the Bombay Government, but saying that, within the limits imposed on me by that undertaking I would certainly convey to the Governor what he said on the subject, and do everything that I properly might in the direction of asking him to address himself to the task of finding an equitable solution of the difficulty.

(SD.) IRWIN

From a photostat : G.N. 8954

278. LETTER TO G. CUNNINGHAM

1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI,
March 6, 1931

DEAR MR. CUNNINGHAM,

I thank you for your two letters. Pray convey my thanks to His Excellency for the prompt action he has taken on my letter[2] of the 4th instant regarding the sold lands.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : C.W. 9337. Courtesy : India Office Library; also A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931

279. LETTER TO G. CUNNINGHAM

1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI,
March 6, 1931

DEAR MR. CUNNINGHAM,

In the course of the conversations, I had occasion to refer to the difficulties that are said to be experienced by the people in the North-West Frontier Province. His Excellency jokingly remarked that, if I went there, perhaps things might settle down. What I understood to have been said in joke has now been said in all seriousness by three friends from the Province. They tell me that accompanied by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Dr. Syed Mahmud and Mrs. Naidu, I should proceed to the Province and they promised that, with the willing help of the authorities, things can return to the normal, not only in the Province, but among the frontier

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 4-3-1931 & "Letter to G. Cunningham", 4-3-1931.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 4-3-1931.

tribes living on the border. As my purpose now can only be to see peace restored everywhere and to assist in the process wherever possible, I do not want to go anywhere, for the time being, without His Excellency's approval. It may not be possible for him to give me the reply without consulting local authorities, and therefore, it may not be possible for him to send me the answer today. But I would appreciate an early reply, and I shall hope that the local authorities will not reject my advance.

I am in Delhi up to Sunday next and hope to leave for Ahmedabad Sunday night. If His Excellency favours the idea of my going to the Frontier Province, it is my intention to do so immediately after the Karachi Congress.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : C.W. 9338. Courtesy : India Office Library; also A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931

280. LETTER TO WALCHAND HIRACHAND[1]

March 6, 1931

DEAR WALCHAND,

I thank you for your letter. In my opinion the meaning of the clause relating to boycott is absolutely clear. The word boycott may be omitted for its origin, when it was first coined, or for its recent memories. Let me then say that the exclusion of British in favour of Indian goods, Indian companies, shipping, insurance, etc., is not only permitted but favoured by the clause. What is however a taboo under the clause is preference to non-Indian foreign goods and foreign services over the British even irrespective of merits, a weapon the country used as a political lever with terrible effect during the civil

[1] In reply to his letter which read : "In today's Government communique about the terms of settlement reference to boycott is made which requires, to my mind, to be cleared. I understand it to mean that wherever an indigenous industry, commodity or service is available we are still justified in boycotting all non-Indian items of such commodities or services even if they happened to be only British.

"To make my point clear, I will cite shipping and insurance on the coast. There is only British shipping against Indian shipping. I take it that the Indian shippers can not only boycott British shipping interests but you will expect them to boycott these in order to encourage Indian shipping. The same can be said about Indian insurance companies and Indian cloth.

"I should be grateful if you will kindly let me have your views in detail and permit me to publish them."

disobedience campaign. If a permanent settlement is the aim of the provisional settlement, as it undoubtedly is, boycott or exclusion, by whatever name we call it, should cease whilst an attempt at perpetual friendship continues. But preference for swadeshi over non-swadeshi is, apart from political consequence which it may not have, a permanent obligation which no nation can ignore without hurting its interests.

M. K. GANDHI

The Tribune, 8-3-1931

281. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

DARYAGANJ, DELHI,
March 6, 1931

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your letter. Do not be impatient now. We shall meet on Monday. I intend to leave Delhi on Sunday. My health is fairly good.

MAHADEV
FOR BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9321

282. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

DARYAGANJ, DELHI,
March 6, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter. I can understand your eagerness to meet me. I hope to leave this place on Sunday and arrive there on Monday. We shall thus be meeting on Monday evening.

MAHADEV
FOR BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3408

283. INTERVIEW TO S. HASAN ALI KHAN[1]

March 6, 1931

In the course of the interview Mr. S. Hasan Ali Khan put a number of questions to which Mr. Gandhi gave prompt and satisfactory replies.

The first question naturally related to the settlement just arrived at between the Viceroy and Congress, and Mr. Gandhi expressed himself perfectly satisfied with the compact as it stands.

Q. What would be the position of zamindars in the coming Constitution?

A. They will have the same privileges and the same rights as at present. Every justice will be extended both to the zamindars and the tenants, provided they go hand in hand with us.

You know the welfare of the country depends on agriculture and the agriculturists form the great bulk of the country. In the course of the recent movement some of the young Congress workers have attempted to set the tenants against the landlords. Further, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, in his presidential address at Lahore, explicitly expressed his views against the landlords of the country. May I know what the significance of that statement is? May I also know how Congress views the question concerning this important class of people?

Yes, I know that the country entirely depends on agriculture, which in turn depends on zamindars and tenants, the two chief factors of the country. No such instruction was sent by the Working Committee. We do not want that the tenants should stand against the zamindars. I was present at the Lahore Congress session. The late Pandit Motilal, myself and Pandit Jawaharlal drafted the resolution concerning the zamindars and ruling chiefs, which was only meant to establish democracy. We never meant that there would be no room for the zamindars or for the so-termed relics of the past. As a matter of fact, we have every sympathy for the zamindars if they show a fair attitude towards the peasantry. We assure the zamindars that their rights will be given due consideration in a swaraj constitution. I appeal to them to be generous to the Congress.

The Pioneer, 16-3-1931

[1] Of the U. P. Zamindars' Association

284. INTERVIEW TO "KAISER-I-HIND"[1]

DELHI,
March 6, 1931

Mahatmaji gave me special interview yesterday in the course of which he paid a glowing tribute to the great services which the *Kaiser-i-Hind* and its proprietor, Mr. Hirjibehedin, rendered to the national cause and expressed great admiration for the noble part which the Parsi community had played in effectively advancing the country's fight for freedom. Mahatmaji said :

Kaiser-i-Hind *khub seva bajavi*. [*Kaiser-i-Hind* had rendered great services.]

Gandhiji added that he was sure the services of Parsi ladies and gentlemen will be written with gold in the history of India, and he asked me to assure the community through the medium of your paper that he will not forget these services.

I told Mahatmaji that minority communities were clamouring for special rights and protection and that although there were three Parsis on the Round Table Conference none had pleaded the rights of Parsis; and I asked Mahatmaji whether he would advocate their rights as the Congress had decided to give all consideration to the rights of minorities. Mahatmaji said that Parsis were so strong that they could take care of themselves, that if he said that he would champion their cause it would look like egotism. Their case did not require special pleading and there was no necessity to remind him of not neglecting their interests. He cannot ignore their claims and their services.

After reflecting carefully Gandhiji said :

If it was shown to me that the Parsis had suffered any loss I will repay it with compound interest.

He gave me permission to convey this message to our beloved community.

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-3-1931

[1] Of Bombay; this was reported by the special representative on March 7.

285. INTERVIEW TO JOURNALISTS[1]

[*March 6, 1931*][2]

At exactly 11.30 this morning Mahatma Gandhi invited the various journalists, Indian as well as foreign, who have . . . been . . . reporting the peace negotiations, to interview him for approximately an hour . . .

Q. You say that complete independence is an indifferent rendering for *purna* swaraj. What then is the real meaning of *purna* swaraj?

A. Proper translation I cannot give you. I do not know any word or phrase to answer it in the English language—I can, therefore, only give an explanation. The root meaning of swaraj is self-rule.'Swaraj' may, therefore, be rendered as disciplined rule from within and *purna* means 'complete'.'Independence' has no such limitation. Independence may mean licence to do as you like. Swaraj is positive. Independence is negative. *Purna* swaraj does not exclude association with any nation, much less with England. But it can only mean association for mutual benefit and at will. Thus, there are countries which are said to be independent but which have no *purna* swaraj, e.g., Nepal. The word swaraj is a sacred word, a Vedic word, meaning self-rule and self-restraint, and not freedom from all restraint which 'independence' often means.

Is the settlement consistent with the Lahore resolution?

It is, most decidedly. There is nothing to prevent the Congress at Karachi from reaffirming the Lahore resolution, and there is nothing to prevent Congressmen from taking up that position at the forthcoming Round Table Conference. In fact, I do not think I am betraying any confidence, when I say that I took good care to ascertain that point and make the Congress position clear before approaching the question of settlement. I should feel bound to press for *purna* swaraj at the Conference and we should deny our very existence if we did not press for it.

What did you mean by 'swaraj without the Empire if necessary', as you used to say?

[1] This appeared under the title "The Settlement and Its Meaning" with an introductory note by Mahadev Desai given under the sub-heading, "A Catechism". It read : "Questions are asked everywhere about the meaning and implications of the settlement, and it may be useful to present to the reader a catechism which is likely to satisfy many doubts and queries. The answers are as nearly in Gandhiji's language as possible."

[2] From *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 10-3-1931

The Empire no longer remains, it having turned into a Commonwealth, and swaraj within the Commonwealth is perfectly possible. We may be an independent state and yet form part of a Commonwealth, as the U.S.A.

Do you think the coming Federation will be like the U.S.A.? Have you received any guarantee as regards the composition of the Federation?

No guarantees. But it can in no case be less than Dominion Status.

But how can you say that, having agreed to the safeguards?

I have agreed to no safeguards that are not in the interest of India. The word has a bad odour, I know; it is a dangerous word. But I can quite conceive of safeguards essentially in the interests of India. The principle of safeguards in the Indian interest has undoubtedly been accepted but no specific safeguard has been accepted. The safeguards of my conception are of a totally different character. You will, therefore, see no mention even of transition in the clause. They can never be burdens imposed from without. They should be protective, that is, in the real interest of the country. I cannot endorse safeguards which compromise the interests of India.

But you had the same thing presented to you in December 1929. Why should we have gone in for this terrible suffering to get no further than the position of 1929?

You are making a great mistake. It is not the same position. Lord Irwin could or would then promise nothing. He simply reiterated the goal of Dominion Status. Today Dominion Status is in words a certainty and it is within our power to make it as comprehensive as possible so as to mean complete independence. In 1929 we had no knowledge of the attitude of the Indian members. Today we know.

There seems to be a gulf of difference between the position at Lahore affirming complete independence and the present parleys leading on to a settlement.

Even when I moved the Lahore resolution, I made it quite clear that independence need not mean complete dissociation from British connection. If we had been fighting a violent war there might have been ruin for one or the other party. But ours has been a non-violent war presupposing compromise. We have all the while assumed it, desired it. My letter to Lord Irwin was conceived in that spirit. The provisional compromise now makes an opening for us to go and ask for what we want. As a satyagrahi it was my duty to seek for such an

opening.

You have said that you can conceive of safeguards which may be in the interest of India. Are the present safeguards such?

They are not. They are an intolerable burden. Englishmen may say they are in India's interest. But they have yet to convince me.

Would you be prepared to admit any safeguards in the future constitution?

Yes, those that may be reasonable and wise. Take, for example, the question of minorities. I can understand that we cannot achieve our purpose as a great nation if we do not regard the right of minorities as a sacred trust. I should regard it as a legitimate safeguard. Then, as regards Finance, if we have a public debt, it may need to be safeguarded. The nature of such safeguard, I have not yet thought the thing out for myself. As regards the army and the services, I admit that we should guarantee the pay and fulfilment of any other condition that we may have undertaken, in connection with British officers and soldiers. But we must determine whose services are necessary for the welfare of India and under what conditions as to pay, etc.

Will you repudiate India's debts?

I will not repudiate one single farthing that can be legitimately debited to us. But, unfortunately, there has been a great deal of confusion about this talk of repudiation. The Congress has never sought to repudiate a single rupee of the national obligation. But what the Congress has asked for, and will insist upon, is proof of the justness of the obligation that might be sought to be imposed on the incoming Government, even as a buyer would like to know what obligation he has to undertake when entering on a new purchase. The Congress has suggested that in case there can be no agreed adjustments, an independent tribunal should be appointed.

Do you think the League of Nations a proper tribunal?

So far as I can say off-hand, the League of Nations may be a proper tribunal, but, I do not know whether England would agree to get the question examined by the League, and I can well understand that hesitation. Besides, the League of Nations may not undertake such a responsibility. There should be no difficulty in securing an acceptable tribunal.

Will you press this question at the Round Table Conference?

It will be necessary to do so when the question of examination and acceptance of national obligations comes up. We would express our views as to the items that should be borne by us. But if England holds another view then the question of arbitration would arise and would be necessary. What, therefore, we want is a proper audit.

Does this provisional settlement represent the practical application of the Sermon on the Mount as suggested by the *Hindustan Times* this morning?

I do not think I can judge. It is for the critics to judge which principles have been applied by either party to the settlement.

What is your idea of '*purna* swaraj?' Would it be possible within the British Empire?

It would be possible but on terms of absolute equality. Complete independence may mean separation and popular imagination does understand it in that light. But, if we remain part of the Commonwealth, on terms of absolute equality, instead of Downing Street being the centre of the Empire Delhi should be the centre. India has a population of 300 millions and that is a factor that cannot be ignored. Friends suggest that England will never be able to reconcile itself to that position. But I do not despair.

The British are a practical people and as they love liberty for themselves, it is only a step further to desire the same liberty for others.

I know if the time comes to concede equality to India, they will say that that was what they had all along meant. The British people have a faculty of self-delusion as no other people have. Yes, to my mind equality means the right to secede.

Would you like to have *purna* swaraj under the British flag?

There may be common flag or each party may have its own.

Young India, 19-3-1931

286. TELEGRAM TO HIRALAL A. SHAH

March 7, 1931

HIRALAL AMRITLAL[1]

BOMBAY

SARDAR THERE INTERPRET [TERMS OF SETTLEMENT] GIVE INSTRUCTIONS.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 16924

287. TELEGRAM TO KRISHNADAS

March 7, 1931

KRISHNADAS

KHADI BHANDAR

CALCUTTA

PICKETING TERMS SETTLEMENT PERMISSIBLE BUT SUSPEND IF ANY TROUBLE EXPECTED TRYING DEVISE MEANS WEANING DEALERS.

From a microfilm : S.N. 16924

288. TELEGRAM TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

DELHI,
March 7, 1931

SIR PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

BHAVNAGAR

LEAVING FOR AHMEDABAD SUNDAY EVENING BY METRE GAUGE.

GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 5914; also microfilm : S.N. 16924

[1] Khadi worker of Bombay

289. LETTER TO VICEROY[1]

1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI,
March 7, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

Your very affectionate letter has touched me very deeply. It will always be a joy to me to renew the heart-to-heart talks, only now, let us hope, under less trying circumstances. Your kindly nature made the trial itself a pleasing work to which I had learnt to look forward. I heartily join in your prayer—may God answer it.

I am,

Your sincere friend,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : C.W. 9339. Courtesy : India Office Library

290. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

DELHI,
March 7, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

An urgent message from Ambala draws my attention to cantonment orders issued against persons suspected of sympathy with or assisting the Congress to leave cantonment limits and residents outside to enter those limits, and asks whether such persons are not protected by the settlement. The telegram reminds me that there are such orders in many cantonments. If it is clear to you, as it is to me, that such persons are protected by the settlement, will you please issue the necessary instructions?

Yours,

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] In reply to his "private" letter (C.W. 9340) dated March 6 which read : "I want to write you a personal note of my own. Very great thanks to you for all you have done, while we have been working together during these last difficult days. It has been a great privilege to me to be given this opportunity of meeting and knowing you; and I hope that, either before I leave India or in England, you will give me the pleasure of seeing you again. I do pray—as I believe—that history may say you and I were permitted to be instruments in doing something big for India and for humanity. Believe me, with again much thanks, and with deep understanding, . . ."

291. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, DELHI[1]

March 7, 1931

Before I begin, I must tell you how much I miss Maulana Shaukat Ali here. He arrived this morning and it is a matter of inexpressible sorrow to me that he should not be here, and I have no doubt you also will share my sorrow. But I may assure you that I shall miss no opportunity, leave no stone unturned, to persuade the Maulana and other Mussalmans to work with us on the same platform. It is a matter for shame that the 'Big Brother' with whom I travelled through the country for over two years and whom I took particular pleasure in describing as capable of carrying me in his pocket should not be here with me today. But if it is a matter for shame, I do not know how far I am responsible for it. I have spared no effort to remove that shame, but I have not succeeded. In this there is nothing surprising, inasmuch as we find even blood-brothers divided by sharp differences of opinion. But our differences have not in the least affected our friendship. I regard him, even today, as my friend and brother, and I have no doubt that he also has the same regard for me. But that affords me little consolation, for I want him to work shoulder to shoulder with me for the welfare of India, and I want his co-operation on my terms, as indeed he once used to give me. But that work ceased to appeal to him at a certain stage and he left the Congress platform.

That preamble will give you an inkling of what I am about to say today. The settlement that has been just arrived at will fail of effect without a real heart-unity between Hindus and Mussalmans. Without that unity our going to the Conference will be of no avail. No one will pretend that the Conference can help us to achieve that unity. A heart-unity can be achieved between pure hearts purged of distrust and that can be achieved only outside the Conference. In this I seek your co-operation and ask you to count on my doing my utmost.

In a letter I received yesterday the correspondent asks me why I should not make the same advances to the Mussalmans as I did to the Viceroy. Why, he asks, should I not wait on esteemed Mussalman friends who are desirous of unity and beg on bended knees for their

[1] This appeared under the title "Delhi Speech" with an introductory note by Mahadev Desai which read : "Addressing a mass meeting attended by over 50,000 people at Delhi on the 7th of March, Gandhiji delivered a speech in Hindi of which the following is a condensed rendering."

co-operation? I like the suggestion and the correspondent may be sure that I shall leave nothing undone to plead with my Mussalman friends. But you must understand that there are limits to the capacity of an individual, and the moment he flatters himself that he can undertake all tasks, God is there to humble his pride. For myself, I am gifted with enough humility to look even to babes and sucklings for help. And that reminds me that in this mission of mine I can count on the hearty and active co-operation of my sisters who beat all previous records of suffering and sacrifice during the last heroic campaign. To them I say : If you are convinced that Hindu-Muslim unity is a *sine qua non* I ask you to use against your own countrymen the same weapon of satyagraha that you used so effectively against Government. Tell your men that you will non-co-operate with them, you will not cook for them, you will starve yourselves and them so long as they do not wash their hands of these dirty communal squabbles. Assure me of your co-operation, and you will add tremendously to my strength and to my power of pleading.

We Hindus are described, to a certain extent rightly, as the majority community. Well, to them I would say the same thing as I used to do in 1921, viz., that voluntary surrender on the part of either community—preferably by the majority community—of all rights and privileges would immediately effect this unity. It would be a great thing, a brave thing, for the Hindus to achieve this act of self-denial. Let them say to the Mussalmans: 'Have as big a share of the spoils as you want; we will be content to serve you.' What after all are the things you are quarrelling for? Not indeed for air and water. It is for seats on legislatures and local bodies. What has the vast majority of you got to do with them? How many of you can go there? And what can you do there? Outside the legislatures you did wonderful things; you defied the ordinances, you defied lathi-charges and 'firing' orders, because you were conscious of your strength. If you retain the same consciousness, what would it matter to you if your Parliament had all Mussalmans in it and no Hindu? I am sick of these squabbles for seats, this scramble for the shadow of power. How I wish I could bring home to all Congressmen that they should have nothing to do with these legislatures? The very act of voluntary surrender will clothe you with a power undreamt of before.

And you my sisters, what would you do by going to the Parliament? Do you aspire after collectorships, commissionerships or even the Viceroyalty? And what would you do if one of you were to

be the Viceroy of India? I know you would not care to, for the Viceroy has got to order executions and hangings—a thing you would heartily detest. Supposing we, the 'leaders', were to run a race for getting the Viceroyalty, we would simply strangle ourselves. That is not the prize we have set our hearts on. We crave to be humble servants of the country. It is this spirit of service which I want to permeate the atmosphere. I want you to join me and share this aspira-- tion. But if it does not appeal to you, you had better give me up, for that is the condition on which I tender my service. I have no other secret but that of voluntary surrender.[1]

'Where is peace?' asks the nameless writer of this leaflet.'The late Pandit Motilal thought of the Garhwalis on his death-bed. what have you done for them?' that is another question that has been put to me. Well, I may tell you that when on the last day of his presence on earth he referred to the Garhwalis only I was by his side, no one else, not even Jawaharlal. I consider that as his last will and testament to me, as those were the last words I heard from him. But I know, much better than you, what he was thinking of. The writer subscribes himself 'Young India', but I may tell him that I am still the editor of *Young India*. Let him who would oust me from the editorship come to me and I will tell him what Pandit Motilal was referring to. You must remember that there were no 'peace talks' at that time, the peace ambassadors had not even arrived then, and the question of the freedom of Garhwalis could not be in the late Panditji's mind. He was asking whether the relations and dependants of the Garhwalis were being properly looked after.

The next question is about Bhagat Singh and others who are under sentence to death. How can there be peace, I am asked, when a sentence of death is hanging over the heads of these patriots? It is unfortunate that the young men distributing these pamphlets should not understand such a simple thing. They ought to understand that we have entered into no peace treaty. It is a provisional, temporary settlement we have arrived at. I beseech the young men not to bid good-bye to common sense, to cool courage, to patience, to reason. I have claimed to be a young man of 62. But even if I were to be labelled as a dilapidated old fogey, I have a right to appeal to your good sense. I do not want you to take for granted all that old men say to you, but I

[1] At this stage a 'red' leaflet full of posers addressed to Gandhiji was handed to him.

want you to consider it and weigh it, and if you find that we 'old' men have bungled, that we have been guilty of weakness get us to abdicate, and assume the reins yourselves. But that presupposes cool courage and solid common sense.

But let me tell you why Bhagat Singh and the rest have not been released. Maybe, if you had been negotiating you might have secured better terms from the Viceroy, but we the Working Committee would secure no more than what we have. I may tell you that throughout the negotiations I was not acting on my own, I was backed by the whole Working Committee. We brought all the presssure we could to bear on our negotiations and satisfied ourselves with what in justice we could have under the provisional settlement. We could not as negotiators of the provisional truce forget our pledge of truth and non-violence, forget the bounds of justice.

But it is still open to us to secure the release of all you have named—and that can be done if you will implement the settlement. Let 'Young India' stand by the settlement and fulfil all its conditions, and if, God willing, Bhagat Singh and others are alive when we have arrived at the proper stage, they would not only be saved from the gallows but released.

But I will address to 'Young India' a word of warning. These things are sooner asked for than obtained. You want to secure the freedom of those condemned of violence. There is nothing wrong about it. My creed of non-violence does not favour the punishment of thieves and dacoits and even murderers. I cannot in all conscience agree to anyone being sent to the gallows, much less a brave man like Bhagat Singh. But I tell you, even you could not save them unless you fulfil the condi-tions of the settlement. You cannot do so by violent means. If you pin your faith to violence, take it from me that you will not only not secure Bhagat Singh's release but will have to sacrifice thousands of Bhagat Singhs. I was not prepared to do so, and hence I preferred the way of peace, of non-violence. The way that you have adopted has been on trial for centuries and history records numerous instances of the truth that those who use the sword shall perish by the sword. You will not stop at using the violent weapon against your rulers, you will use it against your brothers and sisters too, and others of your way of thinking will use it against you.

I beseech you then, if you want the release of the prisoners, to change your methods, to accept the settlement, and then come and ask

me about the Garhwalis and Bhagat Singh. Come to me six months hence, after you have implemented the settlement and gained in strength, and ask me the question you are asking today and I promise to satisfy you.

Having suspended civil disobedience we now enter a period of disciplined obedience. We are now pledged to eschew all passive and active violence, direct and indirect violence in picketing foreign-cloth and liquor shops, but we are further pledged to relax our boycott of British goods minus British cloth. The settlement is an attempt at re-establishing friendly relations and it therefore means that we must lay down all weapons of punishment. Boycott of British goods was conceived, essentially, as a weapon of punishment and has, therefore, to be suspended. But we have to go ahead, even more energetically with the constructive programme, i.e., boycott of foreign cloth and liquor, the programme which means the economic and moral salvation of our poor starving millions.

I must also explain that the relaxation of the boycott of British goods does not mean that we should prefer British goods to Indian goods. Indian goods you will prefer to *all* foreign goods for all time. Under the settlement you are pledged not to direct the weapon of punishment against the Britisher and accord a favoured treatment to other foreigners. And even that condition does not bind you to prefer British goods to other foreign goods; it binds you not to pursue the policy of aggressive boycott that you did heretofore.

The boycott of foreign cloth and liquor, as I have said before, should not be relaxed, cannot be relaxed. It is our permanent programme; but it should be purged of all its aggressive forms, e.g., social boycott, and persecution of the seller and the consumer. If you say boycott without these elements will lose all its edge, I will tell you that it argues want of faith in the efficacy of non-violence. Work achieved through aggressive picketing will be of doubtful worth, work achieved through loving persuasive pressure will be lasting. I ask you therefore to plead with the foreign-cloth seller and liquor seller to give up dealing in foreign cloth and liquor and take to some more honourable and cleaner calling. As to the constructive part of foreign-cloth boycott I want you to understand that it is impossible to achieve it without khadi. Mill-cloth is for those whom the Congress has not been able to reach; for Congressmen there can be no cloth other than khadi. It is a pity that where a few months ago there were thousands

of *taklis* working, they should now be conspicuous by their absence. The period that follows should be one entirely devoted to constructive efforts.

In conclusion, I would beseech you to realize the supreme importance of discipline. It is open to you to press for a different policy and different programme at Karachi. But let it not be said that we are a people incapable of maintaining discipline. Indiscipline wil mean disaster, and make one like me who is pining to see swaraj in his lifetime perish in sorrow and grief.

It is my earnest prayer that God may give you the power to appreciate what I have said and to attain swaraj by pursuing the path of truth, justice and non-violence.

Young India, 12-3-1931

292. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

March 8, 1931

VALLABHBHAI PATEL
BOMBAY

FINLAY[1] WIRES THEIR GODOWN UNDER PICKETING. THINK GODOWN PICKETS SHOULD BE WITHDRAWN WITHOUT AFFECTING BAN THEIR CLOTH.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 16924

[1] The Finlay Mills, Bombay

293. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

DARYAGANJ, DELHI,
March 8, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

Here is a telegram from Nellore (copy telegram). I suppose the lathi-charge was due to the fact of the settlement not having been received there. Anyway I feel that I should bring all such matters to your notice unless you want me to do otherwise.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

294. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

DELHI,
March 8, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I thank you for your prompt reply. I quite agree with you that the instructions must take some time to reach all the different places. I thought it my duty to pass on the wire for such action as you might think necessary. And I feel grateful that you have taken action on the wire.

Yours sincerely,

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

295. CABLE TO "SPECTATOR"[2]

[Before *March 9, 1931*][3]

THANKS. INDIA'S STAYING WITHIN THE COMMONWEALTH DEPENDS ON PROPER BRITISH BEHAVIOUR. THIS CAN

[1] Replying to this on the same date, Emerson wrote : ". . . it is the desire of the Government to give the earliest and fullest effect to the settlement and we have addressed local Governments. . . . We shall request the Madras Government for a report."

[2] In reply to a cable from the Editor which read : "Hearty congratulations for compromise. I shall do my utmost to strive for the good of India within the British Commonwealth."

[3] Published under the date-line "New Delhi, March 9, 1931"

NEVER BE A CONDITION FOR SWARAJ AND WILL DEPEND ENTIRELY ON THE SINCERE WISHES OF BOTH PARTIES ALONE.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 12-3-1931

296. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

AHMEDABAD,
March 10, 1931

Q. If the Karachi Congress should reject the terms of the provisional settlement, what do you propose to do?

A. In that case I will not be asked to be present at the Round Table Conference. I did not meet the Viceroy in my individual capacity but in the capacity of a Congress member.

Will you go to your Ashram?

I cannot go to the Ashram; if I went to the Ashram, the inmates of the Ashram would drive me out, I shall stay where I shall be able to get charity. If at the Round Table Conference the form of Government acceptable to the Congress could be decided upon, then I shall be able to return to the Ashram.

Could you advise the farmers to pay the land revenue?

The farmers have promised to pay the land revenue when Shri Vallabhbhai Patel asks them to do so. They will not do what I ask them to do.

Will the details of the talks between yourself and the Viceroy be released to the Press?

It is possible that the Viceroy may do so; I cannot do this.

Aaj, 12-3-1931

297. TELEGRAM TO PRAFUL SEN[1]

[On or after *March 10, 1931*]

YOUR WIRE. DEEPLY GRIEVED. AM MOVING.[2] SEND FURTHER PARTICULARS. WIRE OCCASION[3] FOR PROCESSION ARAMBAGH.

BAPU

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

298. TELEGRAM TO H. W. EMERSON

March 11, 1931

BENGAL TELEGRAM SAYS ELEVEN LADIES ASSAULTED BY POLICE WITH[4] LATHIS AND RIFLEBUTTS IN PROCESSION AT ARAMBAGH NINTH INSTANT. IF TRUE NEWS IS MOST DISCONCERTING.[5]

GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

299. TELEGRAM TO KRISHNADAS

March 11, 1931

KRISHNADAS

134-B MECHHUA BAZAR STREET

CALCUTTA

AM MOVING.[6] BUT SUGGEST PATIENCE. KEEP ME INFORMED.

BAPU

From a microfilm : S.N. 16924

[1] In reply to his telegram dated March 10, 1931, which read : "Eleven ladies assaulted by police with lathis and rifles and riflebutts yesterday's procession at Arambagh."

[2] *Vide* the following item.

[3] Sengupta's wire to Gandhiji read : "Ninth Arambagh truce celebrations procession dispersed."

[4] The source has "by".

[5] In his letter, dated March 13, to Gandhiji Emerson wrote : "The Government of India have asked the Government of Bengal for the facts of the incident."

[6] *Vide* the preceding item.

300. TELEGRAM TO SARDUL SINGH CAVEESHAR

March 11, 1931

SARDUL SINGH

LAHORE

NOTE DATE MEETING SIKH FRIENDS. IF LEAGUE[1] MEETING AT DELHI ATTENDANCE POSSIBLE OTHERWISE NOT.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 16924

301. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

March 11, 1931

Interviewed on Mr. Baldwin's decision about the non-participation of the Conservative Party in the Indian sessions of the Round Table Conference, Mr. Gandhi said :

Mr. Baldwin's statement does not come upon me as a surprise. I must say that the Congress position is unequivocal and quite simple. The Congress is out to win *purna* swaraj at the earliest possible moment. It will, therefore, look with grave suspicion upon any dilatory tactics The Conservative fears about the so-called safeguards are justified. The Congress would accept no safeguard which is not clearly proved to be in the interest of India, and those that were discussed in London were certainly not in India's interest.

On questions of vital importance to India equivocation would be a dangerous pastime.

If the Congress is represented at the Round Table Conference it will do so with the clearest conscience and with all cards laid on the table I therefore welcome Mr. Baldwin's statement of Conservative policy. It will lead the Congress to understand the forces that will be arrayed against it.

The Times of India, 12-3-1931

[1] Sikh League, which met at Amritsar on April 8, 1931

302. SPEECH TO VOLUNTEERS, AHMEDABAD[1]

March 11, 1931

Addressing a small gathering of men and women volunteers this morning, Gandhiji explained the principles of the new programme. At the outset, he congratulated the volunteers on their work and said that though the lady volunteers were less in number, their share was greater. Very few believed and the outside world did not at all believe that so many lady volunteers would come forward to go to jail cheerfully and undergo beating. The world was greatly impressed. It was not to be supposed that they (volun-teers) made no mistakes. No man was perfect, but on the whole Gandhiji felt that their virtues outnumbered their defects.

Speaking about the future programme, Gandhiji said it involved greater responsi-bility and had to be prosecuted in a calmer atmosphere. Those who needed external enthusiasm would find it dry. Peaceful picketing meant that even a harsh word could not be used. Such great work could not be expected to yield fruit instantaneously like the magician's mango tree. They should not lose interest in the future work of picketing. They should decide how far that work should be done by men and women together. Mahatma Gandhi desired that women alone should do that work. The atmosphere would thereby be elevated. Women might take the help of men in the work of organization, etc., but picketing should be their special work. The rest of the men should take to production of khaddar without which the boycott of foreign cloth was impossible. Concluding, Gandhiji said that volunteers might be paid a subsistence allowance, but their dignity should be greater than that of the Indian Civil Service.

Searching questions were then put to Gandhiji regarding the boycott of British goods. Gandhiji said they could not whip a man for all time. They should lay aside the whip, when they were carrying on negotiations for settlement. Boycott of British goods was a form of punishing the British people, but if the British befriended them and gave them complete swaraj, they might prefer British goods. One should buy goods from a friend.

Asked what those who had taken pledges of boycott of British goods should do, Gandhiji replied that they could not take a pledge to give two stripes to an individual every day.

Questioned if they could enter Government colleges, Gandhiji replied in the negative and said they could do so after the final settlement.

In reply to a question regarding the discipline that volunteers should follow in camps, Gandhiji said they should not tell lies, abuse, smoke or eat sweets. When asked if they could drink tea Gandhiji humorously replied that they could drink tea from the river Sabarmati.

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-3-1931

[1] At Sheth Ranchhodlal's bungalow

303. SPEECH TO LABOUR UNION, AHMEDABAD[1]

March 11, 1931

As I think of you may heart goes out for you and I pray to God that the bond of affection between us may be stronger and that you may realize that there is no difference of any kind between you and me. I go about among mill-owners, I accept their hospitality, but my heart is always with you. It is my fervent prayer to God that He may never separate me from you, and that I may lay down my life in the service of the poor.

You have in your statement rightly said that the swaraj of my dream is the poor man's swaraj. The necessaries of life should be enjoyed by you in common with those enjoyed by the princes and moneyed men. But that does not mean that you should have palaces like theirs. They are not necessary for happiness, you or I would be lost in them. But, you ought to get all the ordinary amenities of life that a rich man enjoys. I have not the slightest doubt that swaraj is not *purna* swaraj until these amenities are guaranteed to you under it. I do not know when we will win it but we have all to strive for it. . . .

Your work is making you known throughout the world. Students from the West marvel at the beauty of your organization and try to make a study of it. Your Union strikes them as unique. The members of your Union are jealous of their rights, and are prepared to lay down their lives for them, but their leaders, who guide them, have no ill will against the capitalists. In their welfare and their power you see your own welfare and power. That is the secret of your strength. Outside people cannot understand your position. They have thought of capitalists and working men as exploiters and exploited. All capitalists, according to some, are born ogres. But there need be no such inherent antipathy between the two. It is an erroneous notion. If the capitalists are apt to be proud of their wealth, the working men are apt to be proud of their numerical strength. We are liable to be swayed and intoxicated by the same passion as the capitalists, and it must be our prayer that both may be free from that passion. I feel that no class war poisons the relations between the mill-owners and the working men in Ahmedabad. I hope and pray, that the present cordial relations may be maintained between them.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

But the secret of your success is that the men and women, who guide you, have no axes to grind. They have no base interest to serve.

It is the beauty of this organization, moreover, that made it possi-ble for the Union to take an active part in the civil disobedience move-ment.165 members of the Union took part as volunteers in the Dharasana Raid, and 191 went to jail as volunteers or pickets. It is a record of which any union may be proud.

Young India, 26-3-1931

304. HOW TO DO IT

The reader will find in this week's issue the text of the provisional settlement[1], my Press statement[2], the reprint of my cross-examination by the Press correspondents[3] and some of my speeches[4] which I hold to be important for the sake of understanding the settlement. I am sure, the reader will appreciate the reprint, if only, for the sake of ready reference. My statement,cross-examination and speeches have been carefully revised by Mahadev Desai.

Those who will read the reprints with attention will not fail to discover that, if the last twelve months' heroic and hurricane campaign has brought us the hope of early attainment of swaraj, the cent per cent observance of the conditions of the settlement to be fulfilled by the nation will make the Congress an irresistible power for vindicating the national position. By our future conduct shall our immediate past be judged. Even if we have understood non-violence as the best policy, we shall now realize that whilst the truce lasts, it is obligatory on us meti-culously to respect the laws and orders thereunder. I dare say, we shall find it sometimes difficult to carry out orders which to us may appear capricious. We need not expect a change of heart in the official world all of a sudden. If, therefore, we are conscious of our strength and our ability to resume civil disobedience, whenever it becomes necessary, we should find no difficulty in obeying even irksome orders.

The greatest difficulty, however, consists in duly observing the limits of picketing. I would like all Congress organizations to bear in mind that it is profitable for foreign cloth or liquor and drugs to be sold, now that picketing has to be unaggressive, rather then that there

[1] *Vide* "provisional settlement", 12-3-1931.
[2] *Vide* "Statement to th press", 5-3-1931.
[3] *Vide* "Interview to journalists", 6-3-1931.
[4] *Vide* "Speech at public meeting, Delhi", 7-3-1931.

should be any aggressive picketing smelling of violence in any shape or form. Picketing under the settlement has to confine itself to pure educative effort. Every conversion brought about by educative effort must lead to permanent result. I have no doubt that in the long run unaggressive picketing will be found to be far more effective and the shorter method. Such picketing should not mean any undue restraint upon the seller or the consumer. After the picketer's appeal, the seller or the consumer must be free to sell or buy, as the case may be. There should be no social boycott, such as, stopping barber's services, cutting off the water or food supply. But we are not obliged to deal with or receive services from those whose conduct we may disapprove. Thus, we may refuse to attend the social functions of one who has turned a deaf ear to public opinion or to have dealings with him even in matters other than his business of a seller of foreign cloth or drink and drugs. The golden rule is to err on the safe side, i.e., not to do the thing about which there is the slightest doubt. It should be borne in mind that whenever there is a clash between the dealer and the pickets, picketing has to be suspended. This clash can be avoided if we are gentle in our dealings with the sellers or consumers.

It will be found on experience that unaggressive picketing will have to be done more in respect of the consumer than the seller. In other words, it means Congress penetration into villages. After all real service has to be rendered there than in the cities.

The other most important thing is communal unity. It demands urgent attention. Without it, it would be vain at least for the Congress to attend the Conference and expect great results. How this unity is to be achieved I have shown in the Delhi speech printed elsewhere. The tangle can be loosened only by Hindus daring to trust and being content with the remainder left over after the minority have satisfied themselves.

Young India, 12-3-1931

305. "YOUNG INDIA"

It is possible again to resume publication of *Young India* under the law. The typed sheets were issued t show that possible to distribute several thousand copies among the readers even in spite of the prohibitive law called Ordinances.The moment however was decl aredthese sheets were discontinued.Fortunately discontinuance only meant a delay of a couple of days in bringing out the printed issue. The reader did not know how it was possible to distribute seven thousand copies of *Young India* sheets and ten thousand of *Navajivan*

week after week. But he will be proud to know that this was possible only because of the willing, brave and self-sacrificing help of the old *Young India* and *Navajivan* staff who worked for less pay and numerous other volunteers. Both the publications cost over two thousand rupees monthly. The sheets were sent free of charge as owing to the Ordinance the subs-criptions might be confiscated. This was done in the hope that when the papers resumed normal publication the generous subscribers would make it a point of honour to pay their arrears of subscriptions. This hope, I doubt not, will be realized and from now the arrears will pour in. For a few weeks the paper will continue to be sent to the subscribers after which the despatch will discontinue in respect of those who may be in arrears.

Here I take thankful note of the fact that many subscribers, whom it was impossible to serve, never, in spite of the offer made by the management,asked for a refund of the balance of their paid subscrip-tions. These will now receive their paper without further payment till the balance is exhausted.

Last, but not least, to be thanked is J. C. Kumarappa, who, after my imprisonment, added to his ordinary duty the onerous one of editing the paper. To him and all the staff and volunteers my thanks are due. I hope that the public will join me in the tangible manner they can, namely, by patronizing *Young India* and what is more fulfilling the mission for which *Young India* stands. The readers know that *Young India* and *Navajivan* do not exist for a commercial purpose. They are published for the sole purpose of educating the nation to win *purna* swaraj through truthful and non-violent means.

Young India, 12-3-1931

306. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

BORSAD,
Phalgun Vad 9 [*March 12, 1931*][1]

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I learnt about your pain only at night. I have been in panic since then. I cannot perform for you the functions of a father or an elder. You do not regard me as your fellow-worker. This is not the right situation. It was your duty to inform me about your pain. You hid it from me so that I should not be disturbed. You must have with you an

[1] From the contents this letter appears to belong to the year 1931.

attendant and a cook. And if you cannot exercise control in the matter of food, you should take non-vegetarian food. In vegetarian food you will stumble unless you exercise great restraint. You will find non-vegetarian food satisfying. Then you will not desire to have different types of vegetarian dishes. So long as you are not convinced about the spiritual reason for giving up non-vegetarian food, there is no need to give it up at the cost of your health.

I insist that you should not leave Bombay till you have regained your health. You can continue to serve the country even from there.

Write letters to me regularly. Get the statistics about the mill workers. And explain to everyone the significance of the struggle in Kheda. Do not worry that you will miss the experience here.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati . S. N. 32715

307. SPEECH AT BORSAD

March 12, 1931

Instead of killing and getting killed, we have accepted the principle of seeking justice by laying down our lives and you, it may be said, have observed that principle to a large extent. It is not that there was no anger in you. But you Patidars of Kheda and others who are well known for their fiery tempers, who are given to drawing their swords at the slightest provocation and who are a fervent, vigorous people, deserve to be congratulated on having courageously put up with everything. The fact that you young men sat quiet while in the by-lanes of Borsad women were being beaten with sticks, kicked and subjected to indignities is something that is incredible. But you allowed the women to be beaten and did not raise your little finger even in their defence. If this had happened in other circumstances, those who had allowed women to be beaten would have been called cowards. However, who would use this word with reference to the young men of Borsad? The reason was that all of you were bound by your pledge. It was your pledge not to use violence on the Government's men who had harassed you in various ways. You were pledge-bound like Bhima and Arjuna. At the time when Draupadi's hair was b eing pulled, Bhima was boiling with rage, his eyes were red, but he did not raise his club; the other brothers too were passive spectators the entire scene. Would anyone, however, refer to

those five husbands as cowards? On the contrary, we congratulate them, regard them as having attained spiritual merit; history sings their praises. History will sing your praises also, my heart is doing so now and I am expressing it here. If I have been guilty of exaggeration in saying that there was a Thermopylae at various places in Kheda, you yourselves should correct that mistake. My task is not that of a professional pane-gyrist, I wish to make you worthy of that fame. Hence, accept praise to the extent you deserve it.

I was merely an instrument used for the settlement which has been reached. That settlement has taken place between the Congress and the Government despite the fact that it may have been called the Gandhi-Irwin Settlement. It is the dharma of the Sardar and myself to explain this settlement. Some persons have been disappointed by it and ask whether this is to be called a settlement or a disgrace? It seems that some persons have a doubt that a person like me has become tired of carrying on a struggle, has become despondent and hence has thrown away his self-respect. It is said that this taluk has suffered a loss of Rs. 13 lakhs. People must be wondering what kind of a settlement this is in which there is no mention whatsoever of making good this loss. I ask you to point out to me if I had at any time promised to make good this loss. If I had ever done so, it would be tantamount to breach of a pledge. I am also not aware of the Sardar having given any such promise. Your servants, your leaders, can be called traitors if they do not keep their promise after having given it. And, if that happens, how will you have faith in us in future? You would come to the conclusion that since these people betray you in this manner, why should you support them any longer? In this case, however, no pledge given to you has been broken.

This settlement is not the end of the struggle. That will come only after securing swaraj. And perhaps it may not come even after swaraj has been secured, because an occasion may arise when satyagraha may have to be offered against the swaraj Government. The settlement which has been made now is a step forward in our journey towards swaraj. The settlement has been made in the hope that what has now to be secured will be done through talks, discussions and negotiations. I do not recall having said anything, or the Sardar having said anything, about compen-sating you for your losses. If any volunteer had given you such hopes, I must admit that he had done so thoughtlessly. You must not hold the [Congress] Committee the Sardar or me responsible for it. After the Dandi pilgrimage, I have all along been saying that this is a do-or-die struggle, you may be ruined in it and how can those who are prepared

to be ruined ask for compensation for loss? You have been told by beat of drum that your homes will be robbed, you along with your family will become destitute—you were told that you should join the struggle if you were prepared to suffer this, otherwise, not. Hence you and I will have to differ if you hold that a settlement has not been reach-ed so long as you have not been compensated for your losses amounting to Rs. 13 lakhs. If this amount is to be forthcoming, where is it going to come from? It will be taken out of your own money—that loss will be compensated with the tax of which the greater amount comes from the pockets of the poor rather than the rich. Even if we had the power to empty out the entire treasury, I would still not agree to do so and would ask you to choose another trustee. This is not the occasion to calculate the amount which we have borrowed or lent out. Whether this settlement should have been concluded or not is another question, but did it involve any lowering of our self-respect? I say to you that it did not involve that in the least. How can you ask for any compensation? Even if we lose our life and property, the compensation indeed will be there—compensation in the form of swaraj. If you are not prepared to suffer even this loss, it will be said that the people of Kheda were misers, they were not prepared to be robbed. Even when we have won swaraj, even if we have the capacity to make good this loss, you will be undoing swaraj if you ask for compensation.

Of course, there is one thing that the Sardar and I would regard as a slap in our faces. The land which belongs to you and which has been given away to someone else is surely something which you cannot afford to lose. We cannot ask for compensation for any loss which has been incurred because we do not ask for the dead to be restored to life or ask for compensation for a period of imprisonment undergone. But this land must be recovered. If Durbar Gopaldas was a fool, he would believe that he had lost Dhasa, but he is no fool. He believes that if he is alive, he will regain many Dhasas. If we were to be satisfied with recovering Dhasa alone, we would have included it even in this settlement. But where was the need to do so? Whoever had heard of the Durbar when he lived at Dhasa? Kalyanji did not write his biography when the Durbar was staying there. By leaving Dhasa and coming over here, the latter gained fifty Dhasas. Even if he gets back that Dhasa today, what would he do with it without swaraj?

Likewise, this land is yours, and will continue to remain yours—unless water submerges the land and the latter becomes an island, that

is, if God swallows it up, then that is a different matter. Although the Sardar had agreed to have your land restored to you, I had not. But there is no doubt that that land will be restored to you; it cannot be said when and how this will be done, but you will certainly get it back. Just this one thing is sufficient to test the Sardar and me, viz., the land which has been lost must be restored. And until this is done, you must believe that swaraj has not been won, that we are not your true servants. In order to do so, we shall ruin ourselves and not spare you either.

How can we say that we shall take that land back from the Baraias by fighting? How can I speak of fighting in this manner? The responsibility of getting that land back rests with me and the Sardar.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-3-1931

308. SPEECH AT RAS

[*March 12, 1931*][1]

Not only have the Dharalas not joined you, but they have taken up your land as well. In appropriating your ancestral land, they have defiled our tradition and dishonoured our country. You apprehend a quarrel with the Dharalas while entering the village. If you want to win swaraj, how can you bypass the Dharalas? You cannot put up with it if the village headmanship which was held by Patidars for ages passes to the Dharalas. But that should not be so. A Mukhi is not your leader, he is your servant. How then can you fear a servant? If you have thoroughly grasped the idea that right from the Mukhis and the Ravanias up to the Collector and the Governor all are servants of the people, there is nothing to be afraid of. You do such a lot for us because the Sardar and I are your servants. If we were to act as your masters, you would not have cared for us. At the moment let a Dharala be the Mukhi. As long as he conducts himself properly, you may carry out his orders. At the appropriate moment, he will resign of his own accord. If my words reach the Thakore of Dahevan, I request him not to take your land, because he will not be able to hold it for long. For one thing, he has not paid its full price, and for another, even if he had done so, the land could not become his own. He will have merely taken advantage of the plight of the people who are fighting the Government. I urge all those who have appropriated the land to return it to those from whom it was taken. A time is coming

[1] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 13-3-1931

when even the most backward community will not remain out of the scope of swaraj. Under swaraj, there will be no such divisions as Dharalas, Patidars and others but all alike will be Indians. Despite 30 crores of names, they will all be one. Under *Ramarajya*, even a dog should receive a fair deal; why then talk of men? Since we want to establish such a rule, I have asked you not to fear the Dharalas and the Headmen. Have self-confidence and go and live in your homes from the morning of the 16th. If everyone who stole anything goes back and quietly replaces it in those houses, we shall be having *Ramarajya*. When you start for your homes, I shall inform the Government too. A satyagrahi entertains neither ill will nor fear. When the women have faced lathi-charges, what can the men fear?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-3-1931

309. SPEECH AT SUNAV[1]

[*March 12, 1931*][2]

This last paragraph[3] seems to wash out all the heroic suffering that you have gone through. The proportion of losses to the revenue that you have worked out is unfair to you and to your suffering. Revenue amounting to Rs. 69,000 was in question here, but supposing it was a single rupee even then I would have called upon you to go through the same suffering and the same losses. The amount of the revenue was not the issue. The issue was the refusal to pay and to take the consequences. You say you have suffered so much that now you will have to borrow if you are to pay the revenue dues. If you cannot pay, as I know many of you cannot, there is provision for suspension. But do not give the impression that you are unwilling to pay. Ask for suspension wherever necessary and promise to pay up as soon as you are on your legs, and let your word be your bond.

Young India, 19-3-1931

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 14-3-1931

[3] Mahadev Desai had reported that a worker who read out a statement had mentioned that "the village had incurred a loss of something like Rs. 3,00,000 in order to avoid payment of revenue amounting to Rs. 69,000."

310. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KARADI

March 14, 1931

Addressing a large public meeting, Mr. Gandhi said he was glad they continued their work, and made Gujarat known to the world after his arrest. Now they should apply themselves to the work that was to be prosecuted.

Proceeding, Mr. Gandhi said now they had not to practise civil disobedience of laws, but to do constructive work. He emphasized what he had said in 1922 that if they prosecuted constructive work for six months, swaraj would be won. But constructive work, which they had to prosecute now, was of a different type. Those who could pay should pay up land revenue. If there was occasion to renew the fight, they could stop payment of land revenue, which was paid every year.

Mr. Gandhi added that they had also not to manufacture salt with a view to court jail. Those people living near the seashore might manufacture salt for their own consum-ption. They might even sell among themselves such salt but they could not sell it in distant towns and cities. Salt was being manufactured for consumption by the poor and not for trade. They could manufacture salt for trade when they had secured political power.

Continuing, Mr. Gandhi said they had to carry on peaceful picketing of liquor and foreign-cloth shops. They had to approach drunkards in their homes and persuade them to give up drink. They might similarly picket foreign-cloth shops if there were still any in their villages, but they must take to production of khadi. The speaker felt satisfied that they had established a *panch* in their village and urged the *panch* to manage all their affairs from settlement of disputes to sanitation and policing. If such *panches* were established in all villages it was easy to win swaraj.

The Hindu, 15-3-1931

311. SPEECH TO CLOTH MERCHANTS, NAVASARI[1]

[*March 14, 1931*][2]

This function appears to me to be to a great extent out of place and uncalled for. The association of merchants, dealers as they are in foreign cloth, ought not to have thought of presenting the address to me or the Sardar. The presentation, if it must be made, ought to be accompanied by a pledge that they would never in future have anything to do with foreign cloth and also the intimation that they have either burnt their present stock or sealed it. How can we, whose

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"
[2] From *The Hindu*, 15-3-1931

daily prayer is for the entire extinction of this trade, accept an address and a purse from dealers in it? I would, therefore, plead with the friends to take back their purse and their address. The address affords no information about the associa-tion and reads as though it was a citizens' address. That smacks some-what of a bogus translation, as I said to the Sardar. Satyagraha eschews all make-believe. I have no relish for the title of the Mahatma given me by the people, if only because I am unworthy of it, but I have given myself a title of which I am proud. I call myself a satyagrahi, and as I must live up to it. I cannot but utter the bitter truth, whenever there is an occasion for it. The acceptance of the purse and the address would be a bitter dose for me, as its presentation should be for you too. But, if I cannot convince you, I must ask you to take both of them back. I have had occasions in my life when I have practised satyagraha against my brother and my wife, and today's occasion can be no exception. I would have to return the address and the purse, as I would return a title from a government with which I non-co-operate or a gift from a liquor seller. I want you to understand that I would compromise myself to the cause if I agreed to accept your address. I would, however, spare you a sudden shock, hold the address and the purse in trust for you. You can ponder over what I have said and decide whether you will present them on my terms or take them back because you will not give up foreign-cloth trade.

Young India, 19-3-1931

312. MY NOTES

TO WORKERS

You may be tempted to go to Karachi for the Congress session. Resist the temptation. A Congress session is not a show, not a picnic. It is intended for drawing up the next year's programme; hence the rule is that only that worker goes there who has to go in order to serve. One should not delude oneself that one can learn a lot there. He who goes there at the call of duty would surely learn something. Ordinary people who can spare time, who have no work to do at their places, have a right, and some may even have the duty to attend the Congress. The duty of the worker who serves is the opposite of this. If his leader sends him there, it is incumbent on him to stick to his duty. This duty at the present time particularly holds good for Gujarat. When the refugees go back to their villages, it is the duty of every worker to stay with them.

SOME PICKETING RULES[1]

In picketing foreign cloth or intoxicating drinks and drugs, let it be remembered, that the aim is to convert the addict or the buyer. Our object is moral and economic reform. The political consequence is but a by-product. If Lancashire ceased to send us its cloth and the Government ceased to use the *abkari* revenue for any purpose save that of weaning the drunkard or opium eater from his vice, we should still be engaged in picketing work and allied propaganda. The following rules therefore must be read in that light :

1. In picketing shops your attention must be riveted on the buyer.
2. You should never be rude to the buyer or the seller.
3. You may not attract crowds or form cordons.
4. Yours must be a silent effort.
5. You must seek to win over the buyer or the seller by your gentleness, not by the awe of numbers.
6. You may not obstruct traffic.
7. You may not cry *hai hai* or use other expressions of shame.
8. You should know every buyer and his address and occupation and penetrate his or her home and heart. This presupposes continuity of same picketers.
9. You should try to understand the difficulties of buyers and sellers, and where you cannot remove them you should report them to your superiors.
10. If you are picketing foreign cloth, you should have some khadi or at least sample book with prices and should know the nearest khadi shop to which you could take the buyer. If the buyer does not wish to buy khadi and insists on mill-cloth, you should direct the buyer to an indigenous mill-cloth seller.
11. You should have relevant literature upon your person for distribution among the buyers.
12. You should join or organize processions, lectures with or without magic lantern, *bhajan* parties, etc.
13. You should keep an accurate diary of your day's work.
14. If you find your effort failing do not be disheartened but rely upon the universal law of cause and effect and be assured that no good thought, word or deed goes fruitless. To think well, to speak

[1] The translation of these Rules is reproduced from *Young India*, 19-3-1931.

well is ours, reward is in the hands of God.

NOTE. If you think of any other rule please forward it to me.

APPEAL TO FOREIGN-CLOTH MERCHANTS

1. Remember that you hold in your hands the economic independence of India.

2. Remember that a potent cause of India's slavery is your involvement in the dirty foreign-cloth trade.

3. If you get ruined for the purpose of atoning for this sin committed by you knowingly or unknowingly, that atonement will be regarded as none too great.

4. Remember that you are responsible for the impoverishment of India, the destruction of its extensive industry and the continuing loss.

5. Remember that it is the people's dharma always to boycott foreign cloth.

6. Remember that even under swaraj, there will be no trade in foreign cloth.

7. If you sell the goods you have with you clandestinely, that is a different thing, however regrettable and shameful. But the Congress can never give you permission to sell those goods in India.

8. If you decide not to engage in this trade, you can certainly export at a loss the goods lying with you.

9. You know that efforts are afoot to extend to you such help as can be given.

10. You cannot certainly say that you had not received an adequate warning. The Congress has made great efforts since 1920 to wake you up.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-3-1931

313. TRAGEDY OF THE ELEVENTH

We can see that the present awakening among the people has goneday byday out of our control.We got its sad proo on the eleventh at the massive women's meeting in Ahmedabad. After I left, there was such a stampede that seven sisters got crushed in it and received injuries. Among them was the wife of shri Moolchand Asharam. She survived for a few hours and then died. Another sister whose name I

do not know was injured seriously and, until I left Ahmedabad, her life was in danger. The remaining five sisters received some injuries. Who is to console and how can anyone console all these and the husband of the departed sister? How can one condole such deaths? Who can be blamed for this? Even such tragedies are like offerings at the altar of the swaraj *yajna*. Until we culti-vate the ability to regulate, until we learn to organize such mam-moth gatherings, accidents will certainly occur. Only through them shall we learn discipline and order. None can block awakening; meet-ings cannot be abandoned and police men cannot be engaged to maintain order. No-where are they engaged for this purpose. Only volunteers maintain order at such meetings and many have already acquired the ability to keep order.

At the present moment we have been maintaining such order as there is in meetings through a corps of volunteers. But the sad and shameful thing is that no rules as to how to maintain order at meetings have been framed for the benefit of the volunteer corps. The latter should draw up such rules and train volunteers, and should make these rules widely known among the people too. I give herewith some by way of suggestion.[1]

1. The meeting should be always held in the open when thousands are expected to attend. It should be circular in shape, the centre containing the dais to be reached by ways protected by strong wooden fences, running radius-like to the centre.

2. The dais should be made up of planks, and strong enough to support several people.

3. The ways to the dais should be clear of spectators and guarded at each end by volunteers.

4. The fence should be so constructed as to leave no room for ingress through the fencing.

5. The leaders when they enter should not be surrounded by cordons of volunteers.

6. The volunteers should stick to their posts firm as a rock.

7. The way should be absolutely clear before leaders are taken to the dais.

8. Volunteers should be posted at fixed places in the meeting. They should not stand, but their presence should be indicated by flags held in their hands.

[1] The translation of the paragraphs 1-15 is reproduced from *Young India*, 19-3-1931.

9. Volunteers ought to know flag signalling.

10. If the meeting is held in an enclosed space, it should have a sufficient number of exits, and the attendance should be strictly limited to the capacity of the space.

11. Leaflets of instructions should be distributed at every meeting.

12. The organizer should read aloud to the meeting these instructions before the proceedings begin.

13. Water and other emergency accessories ought to be available whenever needed.

14. If there is a large attendance and people arrive long before the hour of the meeting, there should be arrangement for *Ramdhun* (repeti-tion *en masse* by the meeting of God's name) and for preliminary lectures.

15. Proper care should be taken to prevent people from rushing to the dais. They should not be allowed to push in to get a nearer seat, but should be asked to stay where they are.

These rules are given merely by way of sample. I have jotted down those that struck me while writing. I know that many important rules many have been left out, that some may even be useless. It is the task of the volunteer corps to study them and to modify them.

Lady volunteers ought to be very vigilant. They ought to prepare themselves to tackle the sudden awakening among women. Even if at the moment they need to take the help of men volunteers, they should do that. Let none say that accidents took place on account of want of possible care on our part.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-3-1931

314. TO "NAVAJIVAN" SUBSCRIBERS

I congratulate the subscribers to *Navajivan* on the help given by them and those co-workers who by self-effacement very cleverly ensured that the journal reached about ten thousand subscribers, when it was being published illegally. We had been able to supply it to almost all subscribers at that time. Despite the fact that those who did not want *Navajivan* during that period were requested to ask for a refund of the balance of their subscription, hardly anyone must have done so. *Navaj-ivan* will continue to be sent every week to those whose subscriptions are still running. Those who were receiving the issues that were being publi-shed illegally are requested to send in

their outstanding subscriptions. If they do not send in their subscriptions within about a month, the management will assume that they wish no longer to remain subscribers to *Navajivan*. Nevertheless, as they used to receive the illegal issues of *Navajivan*, I hope they will send in their subscription to cover those issues.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-3-1931

315. TO PROUD GUJARAT

Gujarat has immortalized its name and at the same time added to India's glory.The whole world has come to know Bardoli and Borsad. Europe celebrated one Thermopylae, but Tod has recorded that a Thermo pylae was staged in every street in Rajputana. Those Thermo pylaes were sanguinary. It is no exaggeration to say that in Gujarat, nay in India, non-violent Thermopylaes have been enacted almost every-where. Only men took part in those other Thermopylaes. In these non-violent Thermopylaes women have played an important role.

But that is not enough.

We have to do more yet and what is more difficult. What is required for this is quiet strength, not fiery force. What a man can do when excited, he cannot do when he quietens down.We like excitement, not industry and constructive work. Now industry and constructive work are implicit in action. However, if we wish to develop our capacity for swaraj, we must build up both our desructive and constructive capa-cities. We must clear our field of weeds; but he who lets his field lie fallow after weeding it wastes his effort and unwanted grass grows in it again. However, he who sows his field after weeding it is a wise farmer and becomes prosperous. In exactly the same way, if we do not sow seeds in the form of constructive activity, the weeding in the form of the past twelve months' non-violent movement will go waste.

Some people hold that this settlement is no settlement but that we have committed a serious mistake and have lost everythings. I hope that no Gujarati will entertain such a doubt. But I do know that just as there are doubting Thomases elsewhere, Gujarat too has its share of them. It is *Navajivan's* duty to allay their fears.

Here is a doubt :

Has any great change occurred in the circumstances to warrant my attending the Round Table Conference without those guarantees

which we had demanded in December 1929 and again from Yeravda Jail?

Let us consider this question. We did not know in 1929 or while I was in Yeravda what stand the British parties and our people would take at the Round Table Conference. Today we have to decide the matter after knowing that the Conference has made some headway. That makes a lot of difference. On those two occasions, we knew nothing of the set-up of the Round Table Conference. Today we know it somewhat. Today we know that the leaders of India have asked for a fully responsible government. The British parties have accepted the demand. It is true that all those who attended the Round Table Conference have agreed to retain the Empire link. We of course are asking for the right to snap that link at our discretion. We have complete freedom to demand this right at the Round Table Conference. We shall be guilty if we do not attend the Conference, despite getting the right to demand complete independence.

Moreover, on those two occasions, we did not have a complete measure of our strength. Today we have some idea of it. If a weak person undertakes negotiations, he is a beggar. A strong man is always ready for parleys. If a strong party declines to negotiate, it is regarded as arrogant and blameworthy.

Therefore, by effecting a settlement, the Congress has shown its wisdom and has enhanced its prestige.

There are other criticisms too. The answers to them are covered by my statement[1] after the settlement and by my interview[2] to Press reporters thereafter. And since they will certainly appear in *Navajivan*, I do not refer to them here.

Readers whose doubts have been laid at rest can easily understand that if we observe in full the conditions of the settlement which we have to honour, the prestige of the Congress will rise high. And if we do not observe them or observe them half-heartedly, we shall forfeit the prestige already gained.

In addition to observing these conditions, we must do three things : boycott of foreign cloth, prohibition of intoxicants and khadi production and propaganda. I have already explained these matters thoroughly. Hence I content myself only with mentioning them here. These topics will be discussed occasionally in *Navajivan*. At the present moment through its first issue to be legally published again, I should like merely to request Gujaratis to make their full contribution to this programme.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-3-1931

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the press", 5-3-1931.

[2] *Vide* "Interview to journalists", 6-3-1931.

316. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

BOMBAY,
March 16, 1931

WITH REFERENCE YOUR LETTER ABOUT CONGRESS REPRESENTATION IT SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE GIVE NAMES BEFORE WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING KARACHI 24TH AND MATTER MAY HAVE TO GO TO OPEN SESSION CONGRESS. MEANWHILE MR. BENN'S[1] STATEMENT THAT BRITISH GOVERNMENT POLICY ABOUT FINANCIAL SAFEGUARDS IS FIXED AND THAT CONFERENCE MAY NOT MEET INDIA AT ALL RENDERS POSITION DIFFICULT. IF POLICY OF HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT ABOUT SAFEGUARDS IS IRREVOKABLE WILL IT BE WORTHWHILE CONGRESS BEING REPRESENTED AT CONFERENCE? MUCH AS I WOULD LIKE NOT TAKE UP HIS EXCELLENCY'S TIME I WOULD DRAW ATTENTION THAT REPORTS POURING IN SAYING MANY CIVIL RESISTANCE PRISONERS BEING STILL DETAINED INCLUDING SHOLAPUR PRISONERS AND THOSE CHARGED UNDER SECTION 124-A ALSO THAT PUNITIVE POLICE TAX CONTAI[2] BEING STILL COLLECTED. AM BOMBAY TILL NOON 19TH[3] LEAVING FOR DELHI BY FRONTIER MAIL.[4]

From a photostat : C.W. 9341. Courtesy : India Office Library; also G.N. 8956

[1] Wedgwood Benn, Secretary of State for India

[2] A district in Bengal

[3] Gandhiji left Bombay on February 18.

[4] The Private Secretary's telegram (C.W. 9342; G.N. 8957) dated March 17, in reply to this, read : "Thank you for your telegram. His Excellency appreciates position regarding selection of names of Congress representatives and will be ready to see you any time after your return on twentieth to Delhi. As to particular matters mentioned in your telegram he thinks it would probably be most convenient if you could have a talk to Emerson. His Excellency proposes call an informal meeting on Saturday morning of such Conference delegates as may be in Delhi for private exchange of views and he would be glad if you and two or three of your colleagues who might be here were able to attend."

317. SPEECH AT LABOUR MEETING, PAREL[1]

March 16, 1931

I knew that there were Communists in India, but I had not met them outside the Meerut Jail, nor even heard their speeches. I made a point of interviewing the Meerut prisoners two years ago during my tour in the U.P. and thus managed to know them somewhat. I have heard one of them this evening, and I may tell them that such as they claim to win swaraj for the working men, I have my doubts about their ability to do so. I had made the working men's cause my own long before any of the young Communists here were born. I spent the best part of my time in South Africa working for them, I used to live with them, and shared their joys and sorrows. You must therefore understand why I claim to speak for labour. I expect at least courtesy from you if nothing else. I invite you to come to me and discuss things with me as frankly as you can.

You claim to be Communists, but you do not seem to live the life of communism. I may tell you that I am trying my best to live up to the ideal of communism in the best sense of the term. And communism does not, I fancy, exclude courtesy. I am amongst you today, within a few minutes I will leave you. But if you want to carry the country with you, you ought to be able to react on it by reasoning with it. You cannot do so by coercion. You may deal destruction to bring the country round to your view. But how many will you destroy? Not tens of millions. You may kill a few thousands if you had millions with you. But today you are no more than a handful. I ask you to convert the Congress if you can and to take charge of it. But you cannot do so by bidding goodbye to the elementary rules of courtesy. And there is no reason why you should be lacking in ordinary courtesy, when it is open to you to give the fullest vent to your views, when India is tolerant enough to listen patiently to anyone who can talk coherently.

The truce has done no harm to the labourers. I claim that none of my activities has ever harmed the workers, can ever harm them. If the Congress sends its representatives to the Conference, they will

[1] This appeared under the title, "A Word to the Communists", with an introductory note by Mahadev Desai which read : "Addressing a labour meeting in Bombay which was disturbed by some young Communists, Gandhiji made a Hindi speech of which the following is a condensed translation."

press for no swaraj other than the swaraj for workers and peasants. Long before the Communist Party came into existence the Congress had decided that that swaraj would have no meaning which was not the swaraj for workers and peasants. Perhaps, none of you workers here gets less than a monthly wage of Rs. 20, but, I am working for winning swaraj not only for you but for those toiling and unemployed millions who do not get even a square meal a day and have to scratch along with a piece of stale *roti* and a pinch of salt. But I do not want to deceive you, I must warn you that I do not bear any ill [will] to the capitalists, I can think of doing them no harm. But I want[1], by means of suffering, to awaken them to their sense of duty, I want to melt their hearts and get them to render justice to their less fortunate brethren. They are human beings, and my appeal to them will not go in vain. The history of Japan reveals many an instance of self-sacrificing capitalists. During the last satyagraha, quite a number of capitalists went in for considerable sacrifice, went to jail and suffered. Do you want to estrange them? Don't you want them to work with you for the common end?

You have asked me about the Meerut prisoners. I want you to know that I would release every convict from our prisons, if I had the power. But I could not in justice make their release a condition precedent for the settlement. I may tell you that I am striving my utmost to get them released, and if only you will decide to cooperate with me by creating a calm atmosphere we may be able to get all of them released, including even the Garhwalis.Youare talkingof independence. Do not I want it as much as you? (Cries of "substance of independence".) Yes, I want substance and not shadow. For the present, I want you to cultivate a little patience and see what the Congress puts forward as its minimum when the time comes. I assure you we will repeat the Lahore resolution at Karachi and if we chance to go to the Round Table Conference we will either return with what we want or with nothing at all.

'What about the eleven points?' you have asked me. They contain the substance of independence to my mind. Peasants and working men are well protected under them. But I could not repeat the points at the time of the settlement for the simple reason that they were submitted as an alternative to the launching of civil disobedience. We have now been through civil disobedience and if we are invited we have to go to the Round Table Conference to press our national

[1] The source has "warn".

demand. If we succeed there all the eleven points are secured. You may be sure that no swaraj which does not satisfy the eleven points can be acceptable to me.

God has given you intellect and talent. Turn them to proper account. I beseech you not to lay an embargo on your reason. God help you.

Young India, 26-3-1931

318. SPEECH AT LABOUR MEETING, DADAR

March 16, 1931

I am returning from a meeting[1] of workers at Parel. I have very little time to spare, but I am confident that the workers do not need any lengthy speeches. I have just received a letter asking me several ques-tions. I shall not deal with them here. If the writer is here he should note that replies to his questions will appear in *Young India* and *Navajivan*.

To me and to the Congress, swaraj means freedom to the masses. It means that Congress will never agree to any scheme which does not protect the rights of the workers and peasants. Rest assured that the truce has not in any way affected adversely the rights of the workers. It has not given us swaraj.

We have not called off the movement because we are cowards. I have been receiving letters not to go ahead. Such letters did not influence me in the least. I do not think there is anything in the truce for which we need be ashamed. Unwittingly, I must have erred, but it is only human to err. In my opinion there is nothing in this truce which I can call a mistake. It might be that I was in a position to ask a few things more which I did not. But that was because I did not want to be unfair. The question of Meerut and Bengal prisoners was in my mind but I could not press for it to the extent of breaking off the negotiations.

The workers have not yet sufficiently realized their strength. They are not properly organized. If they do it they can rule India. But they must improve themselves before they are able to do it. They must clean themselves of the many vices that are a curse to them. They must give up drinking and gambling. If they do so and understand the message of peace and non-violence we can attain swaraj even with the strength of the workers. If you read the history

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

of the South African struggle you will see that the success was due to the workers. When 60,000 workers out of the total population of 1,00,000 organized themselves for satya-graha they could attain in six months what they had not been able to do in several years.

Do not be misled that the movement is finally stopped. It is only a temporary suspension. We are pledged to the Lahore resolution of independence and if that demand is not satisfied there will be no other way for us but to continue the fight and next time I feel we will have to do it much more intensively. May God give you the strength to continue the fight.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-3-1931

319. INTERVIEW TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

BOMBAY,
March 16/17, 1931

At 10 p.m. Gandhiji received Mr. Subhas Bose who kept him engaged till 2.30 a.m. I understand Mr. Subhas presented his case for the release of all Bengal political prisoners and the right to carry on propaganda in favour of independence.

Gandhiji explained to him that the Delhi Truce Pact had only suspended hostile activities and the civil disobedience programme, and did not prevent anybody from carrying on propaganda for independence for India. As a matter of fact, the Congress could present its case for independence at the R.T.C. As regards the release of political prisoners convicted of violence and Bengal Ordinance detenus, Gandhiji is reported to have said he could not place it as a condition precedent to truce, as he was not in a position to give an undertaking to the Government that prisoners convicted of violence would not again resort to it during the truce period if released. He was sure their detention was only a question of six months at the most, and at the time of concluding peace finally the Congress would be justified in making release of all political prisoners a condition precedent.

The Hindu, 17-3-1931

320. SPEECH TO VOLUNTEERS, BOMBAY

[*March 17, 1931*][1]

I would surely see to it that the Government observes the truce terms just as the Congress does. It is natural that the Government would take more time as it has to function officially according to all the rules. But if we ultimately come to know that the truce terms have been violated, we too are not bound to observe them. Volunteers should spin regularly. If I were your captain I would strictly enforce

[1] From *The Hindu*, 17-3-1931

that rule on you. I would not enrol you as volunteers as long as you do not agree to spin regularly. If our demand for complete independence is not accepted, then you will have to join the struggle again and that fight would be fiercer than the present one.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 22-3-1931

321. INTERVIEW TO "SCRUTATOR"

BOMBAY,
March 17, 1931

I have said nothing publicly yet and I have not yet complained but I am daily receiving evidence that in certain parts things are not going on as well as they might. I am certain Lord Irwin and the Central Government are playing the game, and doing their utmost to fulfil the letter and spirit of the settlement. But it appears to be very different with some of the provincial Governments. It is the old question of the district officer, who is really powerful enough to set Viceroys and Governors at nought. Again and again it has been my experience that the district officer has the power of making or marring the policy of the Govern-ment. In some places there was reason and common sense, in some others there was unreason, fierceness and brutality; and in between, there was mere caution and hesitancy. Lord Irwin's spirit has not yet perco-lated down to the districts.

I do not think there should be any difficulty about people who are said to be guilty of a violent speech under Section 124. No one was more violently seditious in this sense than I was, and yet I am out and others are still in jail. I am hoping that, within the next few days, most of these people will be released. But at the present moment I am receiving far too many complaints to be entirely happy about the situation. I am afraid in far too many cases the line between sedition and violence was not drawn in the proper spirit.

The Hindu, 18-3-1931

322. INTERVIEW TO MERCHANTS' DEPUTATION

BOMBAY,
March 17, 1931

The members of the Indian Merchants' Chamber, Bombay, headed by the President, Sir Chunilal Mehta, waited in a deputation[1] on Gandhiji last evening at his residence.

The question of trading rights was discussed. It is understood Sir Chunilal Mehta and Mr. Walchand Hirachand drew Gandhiji's attention that, from the last London Conference report, it was clear that there would be no discrimination between Indian and British industries and trades. They argued that, in the present unorganized and undeveloped state of indigenous industries, absence of discrimination would militate very strongly against the development of the latter in competition with British and foreign interests. They urged on Gandhiji the necessity of demanding protection for Indian industries at the next Conference quoting the Nehru Report in support of their argument.

Gandhiji told the deputationists that they ought to have approached Sir Tej Bahadur in the first instance, and asked him how he proposed protection to Indian industries without discrimination. The Congress had to overcome other difficulties affecting more vital issues, but he assured them that the Congress for its part would see what could be done to support them. In the mean while, he asked the deputationists to carry on an agitation for what they were demanding.[2]

I am not in a position to say at this stage whether the Congress representatives will attend the Round Table Conference or not but you can rest assured that the Congress is with you in your protest against this demand for so-called equality of rights made at the Round Table Conference.

[1] Which consisted of Walchand Hirachand, Husseinbhoy Laljee, Rattansi Morarji, J. K. Mehta and Jamnalal Bajaj

[2] What follows is from *Young India*. This gist of Gandhiji's advice formed part of a letter dated March 19, 1931 from Walchand Hirachand to Gandhiji requesting his permission for the publication of the letter so that "the correct version be placed before the public". For Gandhiji's remarks, *vide* "The Giant and the Dwarf", 26-3-1931.

Whatever other countries might have done or not done, India should take such steps to protect and develop her industries as it might suit best her own interests.

That the right of the future Indian Parliament to discriminate between Nationals and non-Nationals, whenever Indian interests require it, shall remain intact and unimpaired.

The claim of Europeans to be treated as minority community needing protection is untenable.

No one has any right to pick up a paragraph from Nehru Report and fling it in our face when other parts of the Report are discarded.

I would advise you to carry on propaganda in connection with this important matter.

As regards the report of the statement said to have been made by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru about the paragraph appearing in Nehru Report of the definition of citizenship, it should be read together with the inter-pretation given by Pandit Motilal Nehru on the floor of the Assembly and the decision taken by the All-Parties Convention at Calcutta on the subject of the definition of a 'citizen'.

The Hindu, 18-3-1931; also *Young India*, 26-3-1931

323. SPEECH AT AZAD MAIDAN, BOMBAY[1]

March 17, 1931

An age has passed since I appeared before you on my release and the impossible size of the meeting prevented me from delivering my message to you. A new age has begun and I appear before you this evening to deliver again my message which however is far different from the one on the previous occasion. That day's message was simple, today's is comparatively complex. For full twelve months we have developed a war mentality, we thought of war, we talked of war and nothing but war. Now we have to sing a completely different tune. We are in the midst of truce. With some of us, I know the very mention of the word 'truce' sends a shiver through their body. That is because we had thought of nothing but war and had believed that there could be no compromise. But that was not a position becoming a true satyagrahi. The satyagrahi whilst he is ever ready for fight must be equally eager for peace. He must welcome any honourable opportunity for peace. The Working Committee of the Congress saw such an opportunity and availed itself of it. The essential condition of a compromise is that there should be nothing humiliating, nothing panicky about it. You may be sure that whilst I was being inundated with telegrams to make peace at any price, I was absolutely unmoved by them. I am inured to such things and I was absolutely firm that I must not allow any of these telegrams to make me flinch from whatever decision my inner voice gave me. Whilst however a satyagrahi never yields to panic or hesitancy, neither does he think of humiliating the other party, of reducing it to an abject surrender. He may not swerve from the path of justice and may not dictate impossible terms. He may not pitch his demands too high, neither may he pitch them too low. The present settlement, I submit, satisfies all these conditions. One of the terms of the settlement seems to have caused some disappointment in certain quarters and some have rushed in to condemn the settlement on that account. They complain that we ought not to have entered into the settlement until we had secured the release of *all* political prisoners. I may tell you that we could not in justice make this demand. Not that there was any lack of will on our

[1] This appeared under the title "More about the Settlement" as a condensed rendering by Mahadev Desai. Jawaharlal Nehru presided over the meeting.

part, but the power to make the demand irresistible was lacking. That power will come as soon as we fulfil in letter and in spirit all the terms of the settlement that apply to us.

I may inform you that local Governments have been remiss in ful-filling their part of the contract. Some prisoners who ought to have been released are still in jail, some prosecutions—like the Chirner firing case—that ought to have been withdrawn are still going on. It is a matter for sorrow. If the remissness or failure is deliberate it would be culpable. But it would add to *our* power and make our case for swaraj more irresisti-ble than ever. One would like to think however that such remissness would not be deliberate in view of the stupendous machinery of Govern-ment. There is likely to be unintentional delay and inadvertence. But if there is deliberate breach of faith, we have our sovereign remedy. If you look at the settlement the last clause empowers Government to set its machinery of law and order in motion in the event of failure on the part of the Congress to fulfil its part of the settlement. Need I tell you that the clause necessarily includes its converse? Even as it would be open to Government to set its machinery in motion, it is open to us also to resort to our infallible weapon as soon as we find that there is a deliberate breach.

But the present delays need not agitate or irritate you. For there is no occasion for it. A satyagrahi has infinite patience, abundant faith in others, ample hope.

And now a word of warning. The settlement is obviously provisional. But it necessitates a change in our method of work. Whilst civil disobedience and jail-going, or direct action was the method to be followed before the settlement, the way of argument and negotiation takes its place. But let no one forget that the settlement is provisional and the negotiations may break down at any stage. Let us therefore keep our powder ever dry and our armour ever bright. Failure should not find us napping, but ready to mobilize at the first command. In the mean while let us carry on the process of self-purification with greater vigour and greater faith, so that we may grow in strength day by day.

And now a word of explanation. The settlement does in no way commit us to a position less than the Lahore resolution. It is of course open to us to revise the position taken at Lahore but nothing in the settlement would oblige us to do so. And you may be sure that we are going to ask for nothing less than independence. Whether we will get it is another matter. It depends upon what power

we can exert on the delegates belonging to the other parties in India, on what conviction we carry with them. But the fact is there that we may go the whole hog and there is nothing in the settlement to prevent us. There is the matter of the much-talked-of safeguards. Now my position is this, that it is open to us to ask for a revision *in toto* of the safeguards as suggested by Mr. Mac-Donald. How far we shall be able to achieve what we want will depend on the extent to which we fulfil the constructive programme which has its own three girders—communal heart-unity, complete boycott of foreign cloth and prohibition of drink and drugs. Let us strain every nerve to fulfil our programme and thus make our demand irresistible.

Young India, 19-3-1931

324. TELEGRAM TO H. W. EMERSON

BOMBAY
[*March 18, 1931*][1]

YOUR MESSAGE HAS JUST BEEN DELIVERED TO ME. IT SEEMS TO BETRAY GRAVE MISUNDERSTANDING. BOYCOTT OF FOREIGN GOODS ESPECIALLY CLOTH PROTECTED UNDER SETTLEMENT. WHAT IS UNDOUBTEDLY EXCLUDED IS BOYCOTT OF BRITISH GOODS AS DISTINGUISHED FROM OTHER FOREIGN GOODS. MY SPEECH AND WRITINGS IMMEDIATELY AFTER DATE OF SETTLEMENT MAKE THE POSITION CLEAR. IN OUR DISCUSSIONS TOO I ENDEAVOURED TO BRING OUT POSITION TO WHICH NO EXCEPTION WAS MADE. EXCLUSION BY SWADESHI OF FOREIGN GOODS AND FOREIGN ENTERPRISE BY LAWFUL METHODS VITAL NECESSITY. INVITE YOU RE-READ CLAUSES SIX AND SEVEN.

Home Department, Political, File No. 33/6, 1931. Courtesy : National Archives of India

[1] Forwarded on this date by the Bombay Government to the Home Department in reply to the latter's telegram of March 15, 1931; *vide* "Telegram from home department to BombayGovernment", 15-3-1931.

325. SPEECH AT VILE PARLE, BOMBAY [1]

[*March 18, 1931*][2]

I am grateful to you for the purse and the address, which are rendered more welcome by the fact that the president today is my friend Sjt. Natarajan, that the welcome address was read by Mrs. Lukamani, a well-known member of the Tyabji family with whom I am bound by unaccountable ties of affection, that the purse was presented to me by Kamalabehn, a prominent lady who has not only helped the movement by most liberal contributions, but also by going to jail. I am happy to think that I am going to Delhi loaded with all this wealth of affection.

I thank you for the reference in the address to the sacred memory of the late Pandit Motilal Nehru. His death meant to me a personal loss of an irreparable character. I was not at all exaggerating, when on the day of his death, in a message to a newspaper,[3] I said that I felt more widowed than Mrs. Motilal Nehru. For her the sacred memory of her husband, coupled with a pious life, would be some compensation, but all my piety and self-restraint cannot give me the warmth of his wise counsel that I need so much today. I missed it so sorely during my conversations with the Viceroy and my conference with the members of the Working Committee. His presence would have meant a heavy load off my head and your touching reference to him recalls sacred memories of my friend and counsel.

It is needless to congratulate you on the great record of work that has been briefly described in your statement. My joy knows no bounds when I recollect that the work here was inaugurated by some of my nearest and most faithful co-workers. But now, we are entering on a stage which will try our patience and our skill to the untmost. Civil disobedience was difficult enough, but once it is understood, it is easy. A number of women practised it success-

[1] This appeared under the title "The Vile Parle Speech" with an introductory note by Mahadev Desai which read : "Here is a condensed translation of Gandhiji speech at Vile Parle."

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 19-3-1931

[3] The message was sent on the 8th, two days after Motilal Nehru's death; *vide* "Message to *Liberty*", 8-2-1931.

fully and the *vanaras* also covered themselves with glory.[1] The spirit of revolution makes the difficult easy. But scrupulous obedience to irksome rules and constant work are a much more difficult process. There will be occasions of irritation and grave annoyance, but, even on those occasions, the tendering of obedience may be duty. For that obedience will in itself be a preparation for a future struggle, if it becomes necessary.

I am being blamed for having surrendered too much. We might have won much more, it is said, if we had kept on fighting. This is easier said than done. Certain things could be done in a fit of enthusiasm, but the constructive work in front of us will necessitate patient, ceaseless toil. That will be a preparation of swaraj. Governing a sub-continent like India is no easy task. It will need not only patient toil, but cool-headed statesmanship.

Complaints pour in about the dilatory methods of local Governments in implementing the settlement.

Some delay is unavoidable. I would plead for patience. If we find that there is a deliberate, continuing breach of the settlement, we have our remedy, as the Government have theirs if we break it. The last clause in the agreement implies its obvious converse. But we cannot at any and every moment unsheathe our sword. We cannot make our unfailing instrument so cheap. It is, therefore, my obvious duty to urge my co-workers to be patient. One has to consider the difficulties of a stupendous machinery like Government. It is not possible for them to reach their local Government as quickly as it is for us. It is because the system is so rotten and so top-heavy that we had to make war against it. It takes some time for an order to reach Bombay from Delhi; then it has to be sent to the district officer who in turn passes it on to his subordinates. The vicious process is hardly complete, when some local official takes it into his head not to respect the order. We have to take all these factors into consideration, and then, if we find that the breach or the dilatoriness is deliberate or inten-tional, we resume hostilities. But the present interlude necessitates a good deal of precaution and patience.

You have told me about the liquor-shop picketing done in your suburbs. When you have put out 150 women in the field the work is half done. Both, foreign-cloth picketing and liquor-shop picketing, are things for which women are particularly suited. And unless you

[1] *Vide* also "Speech at public meeting, Allahabad", 1-2-1931.

put forth your best effort, the work of those who go to the Conference will be of no avail. Argument and negotiation may go on there, but it will be meaningless without constructive effort here to back it.

Let there be, therefore, no slackening of effort, no fatigue or weariness in our ranks. Foreign-cloth boycott is a stupendous business requiring the harnessing of all our resources and sacrifice of the purest type. Swaraj is close at hand, if only we exert all our powers to the utmost to grasp it. May God give you the strength and will for the task.

Young India, 26-3-1931

326. THE CONGRESS

The Congress will be upon us in a few days from now. The broken-up organizations will hardly have been put together by that time. The delegates, half of whom will be ex-prisoners, will hardly have had time to collect themselves. And yet, it will meet with a greater prestige than ever before, and with a consciousness of its new strength born of a knowledge of sufferings undergone by tens of thousands of men, women and children, and perhaps unparalleled in history in the sense that the sufferers suffered without retaliation.

But it would be wrong to brood over the sufferings, to exaggerate them, or to be puffed up with pride. True suffering does not know itself and never calculates. It brings its own joy which surpasses all other joys. We shall, therefore, be guilty of suicide if we live upon the capital amassed during the past twelve months. Whilst we must try always to avoid occasions for needless suffering, we must ever be ready for them. Somehow or other, those who will walk along the right path cannot avoid suffering notwithstanding the attempt to avoid it. It is the privilege of the patriot, the reformer and, still greater, of the satyagrahi.

The settlement, provisional though it is, has come through God's grace. During the negotiations there were times when breakdown seemed a certainty. Beyond doubt, the suffering would have been ten times multiplied if a breakdown had taken place. And yet, I would have been obliged to ask the nation to go through it, had an honourable peace proved impossible. But I am not sure that it will be possible to reach the goal without further wider and deeper suffering. The measure of our purification seems hardly equal to the prize to be won. We have not yet consciously, and on a national scale, got rid of

the curse of untouchability, we have not shed distrust of one another. Great though the awakening has been among the rich, they have not yet made common cause with the poor; their life bears no resemblance to that of the poor. Though much progress has been made in the case of drink and drugs, much more yet remains to be done; the progress made is still uncertain. The drunkard has yielded to pressure of public opinion. He has not yet definitely given up the habit. He knows the evil but has not been taught to shun it as poison. The word 'taught' has been used advisedly. The workers have confined their attention to the drink and drug shops, they have not made a serious attempt to touch the heart of the addict. We have not shed the desire for foreign cloth and fineries, nor have the cloth merchants fully realized magnitude of the wrong they have done to the nation by their trade. Many of them still parade the doctrine of individual freedom. These and several other evils that can be easily recalled show how much still remains to be done in the matter of self-purification. And so, it is little wonder if we do not find the atmosphere of *purna* swaraj pervading us. How far, therefore, the method of consultation and conference will succeed, it is difficult to forecast. This much is certain that argument is not what will carry conviction. The British conviction will be in exact proportion to the strength we have developed. And since the nation has decided that we will acquire strength only through self-purification, if we have not attained the wisdom during these good months of grace to rid ourselves of the evils I have enumerated, then we must go through a fiercer fire of suffering than ever before. Let us, therefore, approach the Congress with a humbled spirit and with a will bent on removing every form of weakness from our midst. We must not give undue weight to conferences and the like.The past twelve months have made it clear for us that swaraj will come when it does, from within, by internal effort, not as a free gift from above or by simple argument.

Young India, 19-3-1931

327. NOTES

THEIR PART OF THE OBLIGATION

Reports continue to pour in upon me from Tamil Nad, Andhra, Bihar, the Punjab, Bengal and other places to the effect that the local authorities are not carrying out the terms of the settlement or are illiberal in giving effect to it. Even prisoners convicted under Section

124A of the I.P.C. have not yet been discharged. The fact is, that civil resisters were convicted under many sections, even those dealing with violence, although they had never done or meant any violence. The Sholapur prisoners, numbering about 150, are also not yet discharged. The majority, if not all of them, are no more guilty of violence than I am. They were to be discharged. I cannot understand why they are being still detained. In Contai, things are reported to be still worse. There the punitive tax is said still to be realized. A procession too is reported to have been broken up. I have drawn attention to these cases in proper quarters and I hope that the settlement will be given effect to by the local authorities. Some delay on the part of the local Governments in giving effect to the settlement was inevitable. But there must be a limit to it. And the continuing exaction of the tax, if the report be true, is an unpardonable and manifest breach of the settlement. So much for the cases covered by the settlement.

There are also the Bengal detenus and other political prisoners. It was not possible to press for their discharge as condition of the settlement. But I can assure the public that they were not forgotten. And I am not without hope that they will be discharged in due course. I can only urge patience and in spite of reported laxity on the part of the local authorities a due discharge by us of our part of the obligation. That will enable us more effectively to secure the discharge of those not covered in name by the settlement. In any case, let the public understand that for the Congress it is only a question of months when either the power must pass into the hands of the nation or it must, God forbid, reembark, if no other course is left open, upon the well-trodden course of suffering. Those, therefore, who have faith in the national awakening will not be over-hasty or anxious about many things that need to be set right.

FOREIGN-CLOTH DEALERS

Foreign-cloth dealers seem to think that the settlement gives them the licence to carry on their business just as they please. It is true that picketing is to be robbed of every element of compulsion and that those who feel they have sealed their stock through coercion, are free without the slightest molestation to unseal their packages. But they must realize that neither will picketing stop altogether nor will public opinion against foreign cloth wane. Complete banishment of foreign cloth is a vital necessity for the nation for all time, so far as we

can foresee the future. If these merchants have any faith in the country they must know that swaraj is not far off. But, whether it is far or near, the agitation against the foreign cloth as against intoxicating drink and drugs will continue. And when swaraj is attained, among the first measures of such government must be prohibition of foreign cloth and drugs. One impoverishes the nation, the other destroys the very soul.

Young India, 19-3-1931

328. INTERVIEW WITH VICEROY

March 19, 1931

Mr. Gandhi came to see me today on his return from Bombay. The first point to which he drew my attention was the statement of the Secretary of State during the debate in the House of Commons, in which he had emphasized that in the considered view of His Majesty's Government there could be no abatement of the financial safeguards proposed in the Federal Structure Committee. He put the point, as I had expected, that if the attitude of the Government was unalterable on the particular proposals in this field, as distinct from the broad necessity of ensuring the general purpose of safeguarding India's credit, he was very doubtful whether it would be useful for Congress to participate.

I told him that I did not see the need for any complaint on the ground that the Secretary of State had explicitly stated the position of His Majesty's Government. His own friends and he himself were constantly stating in terms no less explicit the position of Congress. I had, for example, seen only this morning a speech of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in which he had said that Congress could agree to nothing, unless the last British soldier was withdrawn from India. It might no doubt be that Mr. Gandhi and his friends would find difficulty in accepting the statement of the considered position of His Majesty's Government, just as His Majesty's Government would find great difficulty in accepting the position laid down by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, but surely it was unnecessary to despair of reconciliation of views by full discussion, in which it would be the duty of all those participating to bring forward arguments and reasons in defence of their position. I had no hesitation in saying that the fundamental purpose of His Majesty's Government in this matter was simply to make India's financial credit and stability as sure as it could be made. In the view of the Secretary of State and of His Majesty's Government the particular methods suggested were the best for achieving this result; but I should not suppose that if anybody could bring forward better methods, not less effective, on which greater agreement might be reached, there would be any reluctance on the part of His Majesty's Government to give them careful consideration. He said he would consider the position with his friends; and his attitude on this point, as well as his subsequent conversation, led me to feel that he would not run out over it.

I then referred briefly to the matters that he was going to discuss with Mr. Emerson.[1] These were, first of all, the complaints that I understood him to have made on the subject of particular failures on the part of Government to implement the agreement in individual cases of release. As to this, I told him that I had naturally not been able to inform myself of individual cases, but that from communications I had from Governors I was quite satisfied that local Governments were playing the game very fairly, and that it was a remarkable achievement to have got rid of something like fourteen thousand prisoners in a few days. There were no doubt a number of cases in which the element of doubt arose. These were now being examined as expeditiously as possible, but it must be recognized this examination took more time than the treatment of cases in regard to which there was no doubt, and that the discretion in doubtful cases was vested with local Governments. I told him that I thought his people were very impatient and with this view he seemed not to disagree.

We then had a good deal of discussion about the methods being employed by Congress for the encouragement of swadeshi production, and I told him that the method of blacklisting particular mills, which did not conform to terms laid down by Congress, seemed to me wholly outside the spirit of our agreement, in that it seemed to impose severe economic coercion of individual liberty. His line of defence in reply was to say that no objection could be taken to exhortation to buyers to purchase only Indian cloth; that in pursuance of this Congress were clearly entitled to make information available as to what were the mills which made Indian cloth; and that this automatically led to other mills wishing to ascertain the conditions that had to be fulfilled by them in order to qualify for inclusion in the approved list. He strenuously denied that this was either outside the letter or the spirit of an agreement that gave full latitude for the encouragement of Indian industry. He added that their action was purely economic, and that they had expressly withdrawn by circular any injunction against the purchase of British goods as compared with foreign in branches of goods which India could not supply; and also added that many of his people had told him that without effective picketing, which in their view was impossible under the agreement, his plans could not succeed. I left this subject saying that I would have all the facts examined, and asked him to discuss the matter in greater detail with Mr. Emerson.

The last subject we discussed was the future procedure of the Round Table Conference. On this he said that it would make it very difficult for Congress to participate if no British delegation came to India before the resumption of the full Round Table Conference in England. Already there was suspicion, consequent upon the abandonment of the original idea of a British delegation visiting India. It would not be expected that a delegation coming to India would be in a position to take

[1] *Vide* "Emerson's note on interview with Gandhiji", 19-3-1931.

decisions, and the final stages could well be taken in London. But he did attach very great importance to a British delegation coming out to India in june or July for the purpose of making contact, getting into touch with Indian feeling and thought and, if this were done, he saw no great difficulties about the subsequent assembly of the full Conference in London.

I told him that Jawaharlal's attitude, as reported in the Press, seemed to me impossible. Frankly, he appeared to have no spirit of peace and all his utterances left a clear impression on my mind that he certainly regarded the present arrangement merely as an uneasy truce, which had to be used only for the purpose of strengthening Congress for the next encounter. He said that Jawaharlal was very mercurial, but was already beginning to come down. Of this, however, I told him I saw no sign.

In conclusion, he told me that he anticipated no great difficulty at Karachi and said that he proposed to attend my informal meeting[1] on Saturday and hoped to accept my invitation to bring two or three others with him.

His general attitude was friendly and he seemed not less anxious than he was last week to tread the path of peace.

As he was leaving, he asked if he might mention the case of Bhagat Singh, saying that he had seen in the Press the intimation of his execution for March 24th. This was an unfortunate day, as it coincided with the arrival of the new President of the Congress at Karachi and there would be much popular excitement.

I told him I had considered the case with most anxious care, but could find no grounds on which I could justify to my conscience commuting the sentence. As to the date, I had considered the possibility of postponement till after the Congress, but had deliberately rejected it on various grounds :

(i) that postponement of execution, merely on political grounds, when orders had been passed seemed to me improper;

(ii) that postponement was inhuman in that it would suggest to the friends and relatives that I was considering commutation; and

(iii) that Congress would have been able legitimately to complain that they had been tricked by Government.

He appeared to appreciate the force of these arguments, and said no more.

(SD.) IRWIN

From a photostat : G.N. 8958

[1] *Vide* "Discussion at meeting of R.T.C delegates, Delhi", 21-3-1931.

329. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

DELHI,
March 20, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

As promised, I send you translations of a circular and a notice issued by the Mamlatdar of Borsad. They speak for themselves. They are, in my opinion, clearly contrary to the terms of the settlement.

Yours sincerely,

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

330. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI,
March 20, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I thank you for your letter[1] just received. I knew about the meeting you refer to. I have already taken every precaution possible and hope that nothing untoward will happen. I suggest that there should be no display of police force and no interference at the meeting. Irritation is undoubtedly there. It would be better to allow it to find vent through meetings, etc.

Yours sincerely,

H. W. EMERSON, ESQ.
CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* "Letter from H.W.Emerson", 20-3-1931.

331. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI,
March 20, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I send you two telegrams one[1] from Ranpur regarding salt and the other from Patna regarding satyagrahi prisoners. The latter is from one of the best and the most cultured of co-workers who is most careful in making statements. The wire about salt is from one who has been a member of the Legislative Council, Bombay, and is the Editor of an influential, widely-read weekly newspaper. The arbitrary limit of one mile practically nullifies the relief clause[2] of the settlement and has been evidently fixed without knowledge of the actual condition of the villages in relation to the salt areas. In my opinion there cannot be a mileage limit. The limit, as I suggested at our conversations, can be easily and justly fixed by issuing instructions that the villagers, so long as they walk from their villages to the salt areas, should not be interfered with. The relief clause was intended to give substantial help to the poor, which it can never do under the one-mile formula. I hope that both the matters will receive prompt attention. I shall thank you to return the telegrams after use.[3]

Yours sincerely,

H. W. EMERSON, ESQ.
CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Dated March 20, from Amritlal Sheth, which read : "Government orders are received fixing only those villages as salt area villages which are one mile distant from creek. Out of about sixty villages reasonably entitled to benefit under truce terms only five will be benefited. This situation totally nullifies truce terms. Volunteers and villagers greatly perturbed pressing for fight. Please give guidance. I learn authorities think impossible to cope truce terms salt situation with present staff."

[2] Clause 20; *vide* "Provisional settlement", 12-3-1931.

[3] For Emerson's reply, *vide* "Letter from H.W.Emerson", 21-3-1931 and "Letter from H.W.Emerson", 28-3-1931.

332. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

DELHI,
March 21, 1931

If Lord Sankey and Mr. Wedgwood Benn regard the safeguards evolved by the Round Table Conference as final in substance and form, then there is no use of our going to London and the Second Round Table Conference, as far as the Indian masses are concerned, must fail.

Gandhiji pointed out that, under the terms of the recent truce with Lord Irwin scope is allowed not only for a full and free discussion of the whole question of safeguards, but it is expressly stipulated that safeguards are to be considered in the interests of India.

I feel therefore that the statements in Parliament made by Mr. Wedgwood Benn and Lord Sankey that the safeguards must be in the interests of England as well as of India are not strictly in conformity with the spirit of the truce.

Concerning the Hindu-Muslim question, Gandhiji expressed grave doubts as to whether unity could be achieved before the National Congress at Karachi. He hoped however that some measure of accord would be reached which might save the way for an eventual agreement between these two groups, whose dissensions had torn India for centuries.

Asked if he would favour Geneva for the Second Round Table Conference, Gandhiji, replied :

Geneva would be desirable if the British delegation were sitting as an impartial judge over India's future status, but it is not. The British are, in a sense, our opponents. Therefore the procedure must be by direct negotiation. In such negotiations the atmosphere, surroundings, and local influences play a vital part. I am sure England would never agree to Geneva. If I had my way I would hold two conferences, the first in India and the second in England. That would make for fairness all around. But wherever the Conference is held, it is of the utmost importance that it should be convened without loss of time.

Q. Do you expect to hold the National Congress to the terms of the truce with Lord Irwin?

A. Yes, but if Bhagat Singh is hanged, as it now seems almost certain, it may have highly unfavourable repercussions upon the

younger element in the Congress who may attempt to split the Congress.

Q. Do you entertain any hope that Bhagat Singh may be saved at the last minute?

A. Yes, but it is a very distant hope.

Gandhiji laughed over the speculation in the London Press as to whether he would bring Mirabai to London.

If I go to the Second Round Table Conference why should not I bring her? She is a most useful assistant and besides she is anxious to see her mother who lives in England.

Turning from politics to general subjects, Gandhiji answered a number of questions.

Q. Do you think the League of Nations will succeed in exterminating war?

A. War will never be exterminated by any agency until men and the nations become more spiritual, and adopt the principle of brother- hood and concord rather than antagonism, competition, and brute force. Those in the West do not recognize the power of spiritual things, but some day they will and then they will be free from war, crimes of violence and things that go with these evils. The West is too materialistic, selfish and narrowly nationalistic. What we want is an international mind, embracing the welfare and spiritual advancement of all mankind.

Q. How would you cure the evil of armaments?

A. By non-violence, which will eventually be the weapon of all nations. I say 'eventually' deliberately, because we shall have wars and armaments for a very long time. It is two thousand years since Christ preached His Sermon on the Mount and the world has adopted only a fragment of the imperishable lofty precepts therein enunciated for the conduct of man toward man. Until we take all Christ's principles to our hearts, war, hatred and violence will continue.

Q. What is your remedy for the prevailing crimes of violence, divorce, and drink in the United States?

A. I would cure them all by self-purification and non-violence.

Q. Why did you refuse to allow the Ahmedabad Municipality to erect a monument to you?

A. Because man's best monument is not a thing of stone, but consists in living deeds and in memory which survives in the minds of those he served. Such funds should be used for the uplift of the poor

and not to glorify or immortalize in marble a man who merely served his brother man.

Q. How long do you expect to live?

A. Until eternity.

Q. Do you believe in immortality?

A. Yes, reincarnation and transmigration of souls are fundamentals of the Hindu religion.

Q. If all men adopted your simple mode of living, fasting and exercising, do you think they should live to be hundred?

A. Yes, but that can he determind better after I die.

Q. Which Government most nearly approaches your idea of an ideal Govern-ment?

A. None. It should be government wherein man reaches his full stature in every phase of life, and where his interests are paramount over all others.

Q. Will socialism accomplish that?

A. Not socialism, as it is practised politically today.

Asked if he would favour the retention of American and other foreign missionaries when India secured self-government, Gandhiji replied :

If instead of confining themselves purely to humanitarian work and material service to the poor, they do proselytizing by means of medical aid, education, etc., then I would certainly ask them to withdraw. Every nation's religion is as good as any other. Certainly India's religions are adequate for her people. We need no converting spiritually.[1]

The Hindu, 22-3-1931

333. DISCUSSION AT MEETING OF R.T.C. DELEGATED, DELHI[2]

March 21, 1931

His Excellency met this morning (21st March, 1931) at 11 a.m. the Ruling Princes and the delegates to the Round Table Conference who are at present in Delhi. Mr. Gandhi, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Sir Hugh Cooke also attended.

[1] For Gandhiji's clarification of this paragraph, *vide* "Foreign missionaries", 23-4-1931.

[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

His Excellency opened the proceedings by welcoming the gentlemen who were present and by describing the rough heads to which, it seemed to him, discussion might profitably be directed.

These heads were five in number, namely :

(i) The statement made by the Secretary of State in Parliament "about the practical programme which we hope to pursue".

(ii) Special investigations recommended by the Round Table Conference.

(iii) What may we suppose is happening in India itself, for instance as regards communal settlement and the discussions in States regarding Federation?

(iv) How do people see the work of the Federal Structure Committee developing and when will the time be ready for its further discussions?

(v) Would it be useful for the Indian side of the Round Table Conference with additions to meet in India during the summer?

HEAD I. Under the first head His Excellency enquired what people thought of the general plan described by the Secretary of State so far as it related, in particular, to no British delegation coming to India. . . . His Excellency put to the Conference the direct question whether it was the general view that it is desirable to get out a British delegation to India. Many of the delegates answered 'Yes'. . . .

Mr. Gandhi expressed the view that, at this stage, nothing useful could be done by bringing out a delegation (though from what he said later, it might be inferred that he merely meant to convey that it was useless at present, i.e., until the communal position was more clear.) . . .

His Excellency closed the discussion on this head by remarking that the problem was whether a delegation of whatever kind to India could do useful work in clearing ground so that the Round Table Conference in autumn could get to work more quickly in London.

HEAD II. His Excellency then turned to the special enquiries recommended by the Round Table Conference. The first of these was the Franchise Enquiry. The Government of India favoured the appointment of a Commission by the Secretary of State and thought that it might tour and be employed, say, for six months. But the problem which immediately arose was whether an enquiry into the franchise must not await a settlement of the communal problem. . . . Mr. Gandhi, being asked if there were prospects of a communal settlement being reached at an early date, stated that every endeavour was being made to reach a solution from the Congress standpoint and apart from everything else that was happening here and outside. The Congress, he said, will be hard put to it to take a share in the deliberations of the Round Table Conference in India or in England unless the communal question is settled. The Congress is driven more and more to these

conclusions. So he will leave no stone unturned to reach a settlement. They had found help in making their explorations in the assurances first given by Begum Shah Nawaz and then by Sir Muhammad Shafi and by others who are not here. The main position, he said, was that the Congress will entertain no solution of the communal question which does not satisfy the parties concerned. Mr. Gandhi mentioned this point in order to show that it is the bounden duty of Congress to find a settlement. If Congress unhappily should fail in that duty, it will inform His Excellency and the country. Mr. Gandhi could not say if he had a hope of immediate solution but he found no grounds for despair as things were now proceeding. If Congress succeeded, it would make an announcement in the near future. If Congress failed, its failure would be a discredit to it, and others must take up the task. Congress will approach everyone. Difficulties are very great but not insurmountable. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya agreed with the expression of opinion made by Mr. Gandhi. Sir Muhammad Shafi approved of the admirable summary made by Mr. Gandhi and had nothing to add to it. His Excellency remarked that, as one standing outside, he could only lend all his prayers and good wishes to those slaving in the cause of peace.

It was concluded unanimously that it is no use setting up the Franchise Commission while the communal question is still pending.

His Excellency then propounded the question, "If this question is not settled, what would this conference advise His Majesty's Government to do? In these circumstances, should His Majesty's Government itself make an award?" Sir Muhammad Shafi, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Sir. A. P. Patro and Sir B. N. Mitra said that in these circumstances Government must make a decision. Mr. Gandhi, however, remarked :

If we have in our helplessness to say to His Majesty's Government that we had failed, I should not like to live to make that announcement. On the domestic solution of this problem lies the future happiness of this much distressed country. I would not like to say off-hand that His Majesty's Government should arbitrate between us, for that is what it comes to; but as we proceed in our talks with Muslims and Sikhs we are fast approaching the conclusion that it will be an indispensable condition of any solution that there should be adult franchise. In the peculiar conditions of India adult franchise may appear a hard task, but it would be harder still not to have an adequate solution of our communal problems. Muslims and Sikhs feel the same. Muslims may not be unanimous, but there is a large body of Muslim opinion which feels that adult suffrage is the real solution. Let no one be frightened by the strength with which I put

this proposition. Adult suffrage will not be so unwieldy as it may appear at first sight. We must consider fully the scheme which is now being evolved. At the proper time I shall be prepared to discuss this scheme. Meanwhile I have wished to let people know in what way Congress mind is working. Adult suffrage may prove to be an indispensable condition of the communal solution.

Sir Akbar Hydari pointed out that a Franchise Committee cannot get to work on the franchise and the constituencies for the Federal Legislature until we know what the strength of the two Houses will be. His Excellency remarked that this shows how closely all questions are joined up, but you must begin somewhere, either with the fowl or with the egg. People charged with particular tasks must draw alternative pictures.

HEAD II (b). His Excellency then referred to the two enquiries in the North West Frontier Provinces which the Round Table Conference had recommended. He explained the action which the Government of India had in contemplation. The conference approved. His Excellency made a similar explanation in regard to Sind with a like result. The conference also approved of departmental examination of the classification of subjects but expressed no opinion about the enquiries regarding separate railway authority.

Mr. Gandhi was understood to remark that the idea of separating Orissa had the support of Congress. . . .

HEAD V. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru asked the question "if a British delegation comes out, what then?" His Excellency expressed the opinion that the whole Conference must then meet. . . . Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru wanted to know what Mr. Gandhi's views were.

Mr. Gandhi said that when he and his friends were considering this question they had built on three things that the Secretary of State had repeatedly said. The Secretary of State held out a prospect of a delegation to India, which Mr. Gandhi and his friends had thought was a good idea, because it afforded them an opportunity of discussing matters with the degree of freedom, which they could not take in full Conference in London. They had also welcomed the idea of a preliminary conference being held in India, and of the Round Table Conference then assembling in London, to wind up the business and to declare its considered opinion. He and his friends still adhered to that opinion. Accordingly, Mr. Gandhi was glad to hear today expressions of opinion that the idea of a delegation to India which had been abandoned by His Majesty's Government should be revived and that a delegation should come out. But the Congress did not yet fully know its own mind because of internal difficulties, such as the possibility of a failure to find a solution of the communal problem. Just as Congress would welcome the coming of a delegation to India and might indeed

consider it almost indispensable, in order that Congress might have its mind informed, so it was true of British Parties or so many as might elect to come to India that their minds should be informed in this way. The third consideration leading Congress to welcome, or indeed consider indispensable, the holding of a Conference in India did not overlook the disadvantages of which Mr. Gandhi was aware. Some persons thought that it was a handicap to meet and conduct negotiations in an Indian atmosphere. But Mr. Gandhi felt that distrust still persists. There is distrust between Indians and Europeans. There is still greater distrust of the bureaucracy, that is, of officials. He and his friends thought that impediments were being placed in the way of reaching an honourable settlement. He himself did not dread these things. He felt that if India is to take over its own Government, it will have to deal with this very bureaucracy under altered conditions. He asked himself the question if officials did not help, what will India have to face if it embarked on the serious responsibility of self-government. So far as Congress was concerned, it seemed desirable, and even necessary, to have a Conference in India. Such a Conference would not act as judges or arbitrators. If it did that, he felt that logically it should do so in a neutral place and deliver its verdict. He did not feel that these were precisely the conditions. By its sittings the Conference will both affect its surrounding atmosphere and be affected by it. It seemed to him to follow that the Conference must meet in India. If there are disadvantages of sitting in India, there are also disadvantages in sitting in London. The Conference would be incomplete if it did not face the full consequences and sit in India as well as in London. So far as time goes, Congress was impatient to reach a decision. He felt three things. First, the earlier the British delegation comes out the better; second, the earlier the Round Table Conference meets the better; third, the earlier the Round Table Conference winds up its proceedings in London the better. Referring to the various Sub-Committees which had been mentioned, Mr. Gandhi expressed himself as ignorant of their probable internal working and proceedings. But he felt that it will be necessary that all should hear the Congress view before the Committees proceed to their discussions. If these committees went on with their work now, it would be a handicap to Congress. The tentative conclusions reached in London were conclusions to which the Congress cannot at present subscribe. Congress must submit its considered view on the problems on which provisional views had been reached there. Mr. Gandhi, therefore, urged that no further steps should be taken before the Congress was fully heard. The Maharaja of Alwar asked whether Mr. Gandhi would be satisfied with a weak British delegation, Mr. Gandhi said 'Yes'. He could well understand the inability of His Majesty's Government to send the very best representatives to a Conference in India. He said he did not mind that. He felt that we should break the ground and arrive at some unanimous conclusions. We need not be always thinking of producing an effect on first-class politicians in England. That is desirable, but we are equally concerned

in converting ourselves to unanimous conclusions and in concentrating upon ourselves. There are officials and communal communities here. They will remain here. They will not be transported to London. So, all things considered, it appeared to him to be necessary that a Conference should be held in India. Indians themselves have to come together and they could not come together under better auspices than those of Congress. Indians should find themselves and find where they are before going to London. Addressing Their Highnesses, he said that, *if to his horror he found that they were divided among themselves, he would say let us not go to London*. But if they agreed and were of one mind, he would proceed to London in the greatest hope and confidence and absolutely certain of making their own position felt and appreciated by Englishmen. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya endorsed all that Mr. Gandhi had said. He said that England had never been faced with a greater problem and that it was necessary that the work already undertaken should be carried on with the least delay possible. English statesmen owed it to India that they should find or make time to come out to India. All parties should be represented. Let English statesmen so arrange their work in England that the best men could come to India. His Excellency should, he thought, make an appeal to English statesmen to that effect. The ultimate work of the Round Table Conference would, he thought, become easier if discussions first took place with the British delegation in India. An Indian delegation to London would be necessary only to give the thing its final shape. . . .

His Excellency referred to two arguments—one used by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and one by Mr. Gandhi. As regards the former, he pointed out that the formulation of the united wish of India and its presentation to His Majesty's Government did not necessitate the presence of British delegation in India and that such an idea was inconsistent with the general Conference idea of reaching agree- ments through discussion between British and Indian representatives. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya explained that that had not been the intention of his remarks. As regards the point taken by Mr. Gandhi that until Congress had been fully heard no further steps should be taken, His Excellency enquired whether that referred to those special and expert investigations recommended by the Round Table Conference of which His Excellency had given a detailed account earlier. Mr. Gandhi explained that he did not object to these separate enquiries being carried on at once, but his objection was to the Federal Structure Committee meeting and continuing its explorations, until Congress had explored and declared its mind upon the general recommendations already made.

His Excellency thanked the gentlemen present for coming to the conference and for expressing their views. In the light of the statement recently made by the Secretary of State on behalf of His Majesty's Government, he himself at this stage expressed no opinion about the coming of a British delegation from England, or on the situation which might arise if that did or did not happen. There might

indeed be insurmountable difficulties in the way of such a procedure. But His Excellency hoped that if the best could not be attained, everyone would feel that we must be content with the next best method if we really meant to proceed by way of searching for agreement.

From a photostat : C.W. 9347. Courtesy : India Office Library

334. MY NOTES

A TERRIBLE ACCIDENT

Shri Chhaganlal Joshi writes :[1]

Such accidents awaken us for a moment and later we fall into stupor again. As nature alone is responsible for this accident, we do not even get the satisfaction of blaming anyone for it.

In the event of such accidents, whom should we condole with? It is not one family alone but the entire nation that has been bereaved.

Such accidents will continue to occur. In a great struggle they are like drops in the ocean. Both the migrants and the neighbours seem to have made good use of this accident. The neighbours have rendered all possible help, the migrants have not given way to the least despair. In this manner, they have transformed a calamity into an occasion for purification and given us a reminder that death should be neither feared nor grieved over.

The Sardar and I salute the migrants and their neighbours.

"What God, World Teacher and Master has willed for the day, it is futile to grieve over."

We have to march on towards our objective with our eyes shut tight.

UNTOUCHABILITY IN THE SUBURBS

In the meeting at Vile Parle,[2] Swami Anand had included a sentence in his review especially in order to draw my attention to it. In the so-called national schools there, untouchables do not yet find a place. What a sad and shameful thing it is that even at the end of a twelve-month struggle this failing will persists. It may be said that the higher classes in the suburbs, after having done much, have washed it all off. Despite their contributing funds, going

[1] The letter is not translated here. A fire had broken out in Isnav town which destroyed 19 marriage pandals. The afflicted farmers would not accept charity and showed great courage in facing the calamity.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Vile Parle, Bombay", 18-3-1931.

to prison and running other risks, if they do not wash off the dirt in the form of untouchability, all else that they have accom-plished may perhaps become barren. Under swaraj, public tem-ples, public schools and public wells will be used equally by Brahmins and Bhangis. If this does not happen, it cannot be regarded as swaraj. Rather than win swaraj in name only, let us not get swaraj so long as untouchability persists. The victory of one who fights battle in the way of satyagraha consists in fighting itself, so that such a person will never compromise the rights of the untouchable in his impatience to grasp the fruit of swaraj.

TO THE MAHATMA GOING TO THE CONGRESS SESSION AT KARACHI

Where Gandhi is the guide, and Vallabhbhai the fighter there will always be victory, wisdom and prosperity.[1]

For the Sardar and me, this couplet is not something by way of praise, but is a form of blessing. We are setting out at a difficult time. May these blessings bear fruit at such a time. They have been given by the aged Shri Narsinhraobhai. The programme at Vile Parle had commenced with these symbolic blessings. I pointed out to Narsinh - raobhai that there was something comic too in it. He rejected this and said that the poem was the sincere outpouring of his heart, that there was no room in it for humour. God alone knows what we are. But in this country we should certainly wish for victory and prosperity, through whatever instrument it may come.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-3-1931

335. OF PRINCES AND PAUPERS

The following question[2] was asked at the meeting of the Congress workers which took place in Vile Parle.

I have slightly enlarged the question, but I have not altered its sense. It is a good question and must occur to many minds. Let us consider it now.

If there was anything like *Ramarajya* in the world once, it

[1] *Vide* "Gandhi' has been substituted for "Krishna" and "Vallabhbhai" for "Arjuna".

[2] "Swaraj of your dreams, as you say, will protect the rights of the haves as well as of the have-nots which in itself sounds contradictory. Their conflict is eternal. This may be the order of nature which you are seemingly opposing in vain."

should be established again. I believe that *Ramarajya* did exist. Rama means the *Panch*; the *Panch* implies God, implies public opinion. When public opinion is not artificially created, it is pure. A government founded on public opinion is *Ramarajya* for that particular place. We find such a government in some places even today. Nowadays some landlords are competing with their tenants in the matter of simpli-city, and are trying to become one with them. It is not as if all rulers are robbers. In my tours I have come across good ones as well as wicked ones. All owners are not heartless. It is true that I have not come across many instances of the wealthy acting as friends and protectors of the poor. It is also true that even in the instances that I have noticed, there is room for improvement. I have had these experiences under a government which I regard as demoniac. But is it surprising that even in Lanka there was an exception in the person of Vibhishana? Where there is one such person, we can certainly hope for many more. When an exception is multiplied, it becomes the general rule. I have spoken here of what is possible, but the person who has posed the question would not be satisfied with this.

Satyagraha is an attempt to make the possible real. Truth implies justice. A just administration implies an era of truth or swaraj, dharmaraj, *Ramarajya* or the people's raj (democracy). Under such a government the ruler would be the protector and friend of his subjects. Between his way of life and that of the poorest of his subjects, there would not be such a gulf as there is today. There would be an appropriate similarity between the King's palace and the hut of his subject. The difference between the needs of the two would be slight. Both would enjoy pure air and water. The subjects would get sufficient food. The ruler would give up eating fifty-six different kinds of delicacies and be satisfied with only six. If the poor use utensils made of wood or mud, the ruler may well use utensils made of such metals as brass. For the ruler who wants to use utensils of gold or silver must be robbing his subjects. The poor should be able to obtain sufficient clothing. Let the king have more clothes, but let not the difference be such as to cause envy. The children of both should be studying in the same primary school. The ruler should become a senior member of the family of the poor. If he does anything for the good of the poor, he should not regard it as a favour that he has conferred upon them. Benevolence has no place in dharma. It is the dharma of the ruler to serve the subjects. What has been said in regard to the ruler applies to all wealthy persons; likewise, it is the dharma of

the poor not to bear malice towards the rich. That their poverty is largely due to their own fault, their own failings, is something that the poor should realize. Even while making an effort to improve their lot, the poor should bear no ill will towards the king, should not wish his ruin, but rather hope for his improvement. The poor should not cherish the desire to replace the monarch; but should be content with fulfilling their own needs. In the swaraj which I visualize, the two would help each other in this manner.

In my opinion, in order to win this swaraj, important changes have to be made in the education of both the ruler and the subjects. Both the robber and those who are being robbed are groping in darkness. They have lost their way. Neither should tolerate this situation. But this is some-thing of which the ruling class or the wealty class will not be easily con-vinced. I have chosen to serve the poor on the principle that if one party is convinced, the other will automatically be convinced. Everyone can- not become a ruler, but everyone can be subsumed under the heading "all". And, swaraj would be here today if the poor become aware of their rights and at the same time of their duties. This awareness can be brought about by no other means as quickly as through satyagraha. We have had actual experience of this during the past twelve months. Our attainment of swaraj has been obstructed to the extent that corruption has crept into our satyagraha.

Satyagraha is the most important tool for the people's education and awakening. Self-purification is another name for satyagraha. To the ruling class one may only speak of self-purification; it takes time for any impression to be made on it. The poorer classes constantly look for some comfort, they are already aware of their sufferings, but not of the remedy. Hence they try out remedies when someone suggests these to them. In such circumstances, if they can get a devoted worker, they cling to him and accept his remedies to the best of their abilities. Hence, from a particular standpoint this class may be regarded as being eager to learn. Swaraj can also be secured through it. It should become aware of its strength and yet make only a limited use of it. When this happens, the swaraj which I visualize may be regarded as having dawned. Having attained such strength, the people can successfully withstand any force—whether foreign or native—which stands in their way.

Hence the only dharma of workers is to serve the people. Public service can be rendered only through the path of truth and non-violence. The progress of the nation will be hindered to the extent to

which corruption creeps in.

Meanwhile, if the ruling class and the rich recognize the demands of the age, they would cease to become owners of the wealth they own and their capacity to earn it and rather become its trustees and establish the right of the trustee to earn his living too. If they do not do so, ultimately a bitter struggle between the ruler and the subjects, between the rich and the poor is bound to ensue. In the hope that the force of satyagraha will check the poison, persons like me have sacrificed their all for that instrument.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-3-1931

336. A DICTIONARY

Readers must be aware that the second edition of the dictionary published by the Vidyapith has come out. The novel feature of this new edition is that an attempt has been made in it to give in brief current meanings also. In order to compile a scientific and comprehensive dictionary, a Herculean effort and many lovers of the language are needed. This attempt of the Vidyapith is a preliminary step towards such a comprehensive dictionary. The price, which is Rs. 4, has been kept at the lowest. Copies can be had from the Principal of the Vidyapith by sending him a money order.

That errata had to be included in the dictionary is one of its drawbacks. But such shortcomings are inevitable at the present moment in our country. We are a poor nation, there is little love of language, compositors are only half-educated—errors persist because of many such reasons. I would suggest to those who use the dictionary to correct the errors before using it.

Despite its errors, I regard the dictionary as very useful. Those who love the language must write it with correct spellings. Not to do so is to show disrespect towards the language and it is also a sign of indolence. Where there is love, there is no room for indolence. However, despite this, if the tool is not there, how can even an enthusiast write correct spellings? Moreover, somewhat chaotic situation has prevailed in Gujarat, regarding spellings. The Vidyapith has ended such anarchy and, after having received the concurrence of as many learned men as possible, has adopted a uniform style of spelling. It is increasingly gaining acceptance day by day. I hope that libraries and

such other institutions as also those States which accept the spellings of the Vidyapith will carry on propaganda for the dictionary. A copy of the dictionary should be found on the desk of every clerk and in every office.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-3-1931

337. INTERVIEW TO "CHICAGO TRIBUNE"

DELHI,

[Before *March 23, 1931*][1]

The Mahatma is pledged not to say anything publicly which might prejudice the present negotiation, but he consented to discuss general questions.

My method is love and truth, and no force can avail against them. Ask me any question you like. I will answer if I can.

Q. Have you still faith in the British and in British promises?

A. I had faith in them until 1919. But the Amritsar massacre and other Punjab atrocities changed my heart, and nothing has happened since to make me regain my faith. Certainly, not in the past ten months. But my faith in my own people has increased, especially in the past ten months. Consider the part played by women and children in the present movement. The world has never seen such a magnificent spectacle before, especially the awakening amongst children.

Q. How do you account for the children?

It can only be the work of God. Certainly, God is with us in this struggle.

He spun away and talked on. He still stands, he said, for his eleven points which last year formed the minimum national demand, upon the granting of which by the Viceroy he offered to refrain from launching civil disobedience. They included the total prohibition of alcoholic drinks, the abolition of the salt tax, the reduction of land revenue and military expenditure by 50 per cent., the discharge of political prisoners and a prohibitive tariff on foreign cloth.

I still stand by them as the vital needs of India, and any constitution will be judged by its capacity to satisfy these demands. The situation, however, is changed and the method whereby I hope to

[1] The interview took place at Dr. Ansari's house before Gandhiji left for Karachi.

attain them is accordingly subject to change.

Q. If you obtain swaraj would you consider your labours finished and retire, or would you take an active part in the reconstruction of India by the Indians?

I should like to take an active part in the reconstruction of my country provided I retain my health and vigour and my people's confidence in me and my methods. That, indeed, would be a labour of love.

Do you think most of India's ills will be solved with the coming of self-government?

Naturally not without trouble and difficulty. I have ever been optimistic.

Q. But the great social and economic questions, such as the relations of capital and labour, landlord and tenant, your own special communal problems and those of the depressed classes—do you think mere self-government will solve those so easily?

Yes, all those problems will be fairly easy to settle when we are our own masters. I know there are difficulties, but I have faith in our ultimate capacity to solve them, not by following your Western models, but by evolving along lines of non-violence and truth, whereon our movement is based and which must constitute the bedrock of our future constitution.

Q. How could a capitalist under those conditions stand for inequalities and injustices?

No, I think these problems will be solved quickly and successfully.

Q. And your languages? What about English under the nationalist government?

English would still be retained as a cultural language. It would be as useful to us as French to Europe. Hindustani would become the national language used in courts and universities. Native vernaculars, many of which possess rich literatures, and are spoken by 2,00,00,000 to 4,00,00,000 are to be encouraged.

It is not true that I would abolish schools. I am as anxious as any to maintain our great culture by education. But in our schools today we learn only what our foreign masters want us to learn. We do not get the training we most need.

Twenty-three years ago Gandhiji wrote a book, *Indian Home Rule*, which stunned India and the rest of the world with its terrible on slaught on modern Western civilization. "It is Satanic, and the Hindus call it the dark age," he wrote, and

envisaged the ideal State with no factories, railways, armies or navies and as few hospitals, doctors, and lawyers as are possible.

Q. Have you changed your mind about these things?

Not a bit. My ideas about the evils of Western civilization still stand. If I republish the book tomorrow, I would scarcely change a word, except perhaps a few changes in the setting.

The Bombay Chronicle, 28-3-1931

338. LETTER TO VICEROY

1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI,
March 23, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

It seems cruel to inflict this letter on you, but the interest of peace demands a final appeal. Though you were frank enough to tell me that there was little hope of your commuting the sentence of death on Bhagat Singh and two others, you said you would consider my submission of Saturday. Dr. Sapru met me yesterday and said that you were troubled over the matter and taxing your brain as to the proper course to adopt. If there is any room left for reconsideration, I invite you attention to the following.

Popular opinion rightly or wrongly demands commutation. When there is no principle at stake, it is often a duty to respect it.

In the present case the chances are that, if commutation is granted, internal peace is most likely to be promoted. In the event of execution, peace is undoubtedly in danger.

Seeing that I am able to inform you that the revolutionary party has assured me that, in the event of these lives being spared, that party will stay its hands, suspension of sentence pending cessation of revolutionary murders becomes in my opinion a peremptory duty.

Political murders have been condoned before now. It is worth while saving these lives, if thereby many other innocent lives are likely to be saved and maybe even revolutionary crime almost stamped out.

Since you seem to value my influence such as it is in favour of peace, do not please unnecessarily make my position, difficult as it is, almost too difficult for future work.

Execution is an irretrievable act. If you think there is the slightest chance of error of judgment, I would urge you to suspend for

further review an act that is beyond recall.

If my presence is necessary, I can come. Though I may not speak[1] I may hear and write what I want to say.

"Charity never faileth."

I am,

Your sincere friend,

From a photostat : C.W. 9343. Courtesy : India Office Library

339. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

DELHI,

March 23, 1931

I have to thank you for your letter[2] of 21st instant regarding non-payment of land revenue in the United Provinces. At my request Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has prepared a note[3] on the ques-

[1] Being Monday, a silence day. On the very day in his letter superscribed "confidential" the Viceroy wrote : "I have again thought very carefully over everything that you have said—and the last thing I should wish to do would be to make your task, especially at this juncture, more difficult. But I am afraid, for the reasons I sought to explain fully to you in conversation, I cannot see my way to feel that it would be right to take the action you request. . . ." (C.W. 9344)

[2] In which, alluding to the talks (*vide* "Emerson's note on interview with Gandhiji", 19-3-1931) which he had on March 19 with Gandhiji, Emerson had quoted a telegram received from the U. P. Government and written : "You will, I am sure, agree that if the facts are as stated, the spirit of the settlement is not being observed in this respect, and I feel confident that you will take the necessary steps to remove any cause for misunderstanding."

[3] Referring to this in his letter dated March 31, Emerson wrote : "It appears from the first paragraph of this note that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is under the impression that, during the course of the conversations betwen His Excellency and yourself, it was understood that, while the Congress would abandon the movement in the United Provinces against the payment of land revenue and rent as part of the civil disobedience movement, they would take an organized and active part in matters relating to the payment of land revenue and rent. I am to say that His Excellency's recollection of the conversations is that, while you rightly pointed out that the abandonment of the movement against the payment of land revenue and rent would not affect the difficulties arising out of economic distress experienced by the zamindars and tenants in the payment of land revenue, respectively [and rent], there was no suggestion that the Congress intended to use their organization for the purposes indicated in the first paragraph of the Pandit's note.

"In the conversations that you and I had on the matter I certainly did not gain the impression that this was the intention. I recollect observing that the question of economic distress was a matter of revenue administration to which the

tion which I enclose herewith for your information. The action taken by the local Congress Committee as reflected in the note appears to me to be free from reproach. Naturally the propriety or otherwise of the action will depend upon the manner in which the whole thing is done. In my opinion all will be well if the local authorities do not repel the advances made by the Congress Committees and do not look upon their activities with suspicion. As you will observe from the note the whole scope of the movement is changed. It is no longer for non-payment of rent. It is a movement purely for seeking economic relief.

Young India, 20-8-1931

340. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

DELHI,
March 23, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I thank you for your letter[1] of 22nd instant regarding Congress action about foreign cloth. The draft questions and answers suggested by you seem to me to be in order.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Home Department, Political, File No. 33/6, 1931. Courtesy : National Archives of India

341. STATEMENT ON EXECUTION OF BHAGAT SINGH AND COMRADES

NEW DELHI,
March 23, 1931

Bhagat Singh and his companions have been executed and have become martyrs. Their death seems to have been a personal loss to many. I join in the tributes paid to the memory of these young men. And yet I must warn the Youth of the country against following their

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Government of India and the local Government attached the greatest importance and that local Governments were alive to the necessity of giving such relief as the circumstances required."

[1] *Vide* "Letter from H.W.Emerson", 22-3-1931.

example. We should not utilize our energy, our spirit of sacrifice, our labours and our indomitable courage in the way they have utilized theirs. This country must not be liberated through bloodshed.

About the Government I cannot help feeling that it has missed a golden opportunity, to win over the rebels to its side. At least from the point of view of the settlement, it was its duty to postpone indefinitely the carrying out of the death sentence. The Government has by its own act dealt a severe blow to the settlement and has shown its capacity to disregard public opinion once again and to exhibit the great brute strength it possesses.

The reliance on violence is perhaps ominous and it suggests that in spite of high-sounding and pious proclamations, it does not want to part with power. But the people's duty is clear.

The Congress must not swerve from the path it has chalked out for itself. According to my view, notwithstanding the gravest provocation the Congress should endorse the settlement and test its capacity to secure the result hoped for.

We must not put ourselves in the wrong by getting angry. We must realize that commutation of the sentences was not a part of the truce. We may accuse the Government of violence but we cannot accuse it of breach of the settlement. It is my conviction that the grave blunder committed by the Government has increased our power to win freedom and Bhagat Singh and his comrades have embraced death therefor. Let us not throw away this opportunity by doing anything in anger. It is beyond dispute that there will be a general strike and we cannot honour the deceased patriots better than by taking out absolutely peaceful and dignified processions.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 29-3-1931

342. INTERVIEW TO "MANCHESTER GUARDIAN"

[Before *March 24, 1931*][1]

Mahatma Gandhi has given an important interview to the special correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* in India. According to the special correspondent Mahatma Gandhi declared in the interview that he was certain in mind that the Congress attendance at the Round Table Conference would serve no useful purpose unless the question of safeguards was re-opened on the basis of providing India with an efficient and stable form of self-government. Mahatma Gandhi says :

[1] The interview appeared under the date-line "London, March 24, 1931".

I have been very much disturbed by the tone of Mr. Benn's statement with reference to safeguards. I must emphasize that the Round Table Conference cannot succeed if it is prejudiced by declarations which imply that certain demands made by Britain are final.

Referring to the debated question of equality of trade rights to Britishers in India, Mahatma Gandhi said :

The rights of the existing business interests must be a matter for negotiations in which India does not desire to act unfairly or ungenerously. India must retain freedom the future economic development of her resources along lines which commend themselves to Indians.

Discussing the question of Federation, Mahatma Gandhi declared that the princes must give their subjects a certain minimum of rights as it is impossible to combine complete autocracy and democracy.

The Tribune, 27-3-1931

343. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI M. THAKKAR

BORSAD,
March 24, 1931

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I had got your letter, but I could not reply to it earlier. You have given a good description of the work being done by you both sisters. What did you have in mind when saying that the atmos-phere had become impure? I have been hearing many stories. That is why I ask you so that I may have more information. Visiting a drink addict daily and talking to him about the same thing over and over again does not help. Remember what I said in my speech at Maroli. You should take personal interest in the life of an addict and persuade him to take up some work. If he does not wish to spin, he may do some other work. You should encourage him to talk about his joys and sorrows and listen to him with sympathy. You should meet his wife and children, take the latter in hand and make them look more pleasant. If you serve him in this manner, he will probably give up drinking. Also you should not say that, if one of you gave all her time to one person, we cannot influence all the hundreds of thousands like him in the country in that manner. This is the only way to influence such a large number. If one person sincerely reforms himself, many others follow his example. By serving one person selflessly, we serve all.

I understand what you say about the children.

I don't think Madhavji has committed any error. He has not informed me again about the court case against him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6812

344. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

WHAT SHOULD THEY DO?

"What are those scholars who left their schools during the struggle to do now?" was one of the questions asked at the workers' meeting in Bombay, but which for want of time I was unable to answer.

My answer now is :

1. The struggle is not yet over, it has assumed a different, i.e., constructive form.

2. Scholars can penetrate the homes and the hearts of the drunkard, the opium-eater and the user of foreign cloth.

3. Scholars can assist those sisters who are engaged in peaceful picketing.

4. Scholars can settle down in villages and there organize khadi work.

5. Scholars can hawk khadi in city.

6. All scholars should work at the wheel or the *takli* at least for half an hour daily.

7. For further reference they should write to the registrars of the national universities.

FOREIGN-CLOTH DEALERS

Another question asked was, now that picketing has become mild, new orders for foreign cloth are being given and the sales of existing stock are also brisk. What are you going to do to prevent this?

This questionpresupposes that picketing has hitherto amounted to coercion. If such was the case, it is better that freedom of action is restored than that any single person is coerced into acting against his will. My conviction is that if the workers will carryon sustained propaganda, the buying public will be converted.We have concentrated too much upon the dealers and too little on the buyers. Sustained public education in this matter is what is wanted. Conversion is our motto, not coercion.

Coercion is an offspring of violence. Conversion is a fruit of non-violence and love.

CAN YOU AVOID CLASS WAR?

The third question, I find, is, if you will benefit the workers, the peasant and the factory hand, can you avoid class war?

I can, most decidedly, if only the people will follow the non-violent method. The past twelve months have abundantly shown the possibilities of non-violence adopted even as a policy. When the people adopt it as a principle of conduct, class war becomes an impossibility. The experiment in that direction is being tried in Ahmedabad. It has yielded most satisfactory results and there is every likelihood of its proving conclusive. By the non-violent method we seek not to destroy the capitalist, we seek to destroy capitalism. We invite the capitalist to regard himself as trustee for those on whom he depends for the making, the retention and the increase of his capital. Nor need the worker wait for his conversion. If capital is power, so is work. Either power can be used destructively or creatively. Either is dependent on the other. Immediately the worker realizes his strength, he is in a position to become a co-sharer with the capitalist instead of remaining his slave. If he aims at becoming the sole owner, he will most likely be killing the hen that lays golden eggs. Inequalities in intelligence and even opportunity will last till the end of time. A man living on the banks of a river has any day more opportunity of growing crops than one living in an arid desert. But if inequalities stare us in the face the essential equality too is not to be missed. Every man has an equal right to the necessaries of life even as birds and beasts have. And since very right carries with it a corresponding duty and the corresponding remedy for resisting any attack upon it, it is merely a matter of finding out the corresponding duties and remedies to vindicate the elementary fundamental equality. The corresponding duty is to labour with my limbs and the corresponding remedy is to non-co-operate with him who deprives me of the fruit of my labour. And if I would recognize the fundamental equality, as I must, of the capitalist and the labourer, I must not aim at his destruction. I must strive for his conver-sion. My non-co-operation with him will open his eyes to the wrong he may be doing. Nor need I be afraid of someone else taking my place when I have non-co-operated. For I expect to influence my co-workers so as not to help the wrongdoing of employer. This kind of education of the mass of workers is no doubt a slow process, but as it is also the surest, it is

necessarily the quickest. It can be easily demonstrated that destruction of the capitalist must mean destruction in the end of the worker and as no human being is so bad as to be beyond redemption, no human being is so perfect as to warrant his destroying him whom he wrongly considers to be wholly evil.

WHAT OF THE UNEMPLOYED

The fourth question was, what of the civil-resistance prisoners who are discharged and are out of employment?

If they are willing to work and are honest they can, I doubt not, be employed in some Congress organization. Nor need everyone look to the Congress and the allied organizations to give them employment. A labourer is worthy of his hire. And those who are honest and do not mind labouring, no matter what they were previous to imprisonment, can always rely upon being suited.

SACRIFICING COUNTRY FOR TRUTH

Here is the fifth question :

> How can you explain away your inconsistency involved in your making fond and easy advances to the R.T.C. after the Congress deciding not to participate in it, and Jawaharlal ironically calling them only a few months ago 'old women'?
>
> Are you always going to sacrifice your country for Truth and treat us like test-tubes in your experiment of non-violence and Truth? Do you realize that you are staking the whole nation for your individual self-evolution?
>
> Many of us feel that you have become a National Habit which is useful for the capitalist but tragic for the exploited.

Manners change with the times. Foolish consistency is the hob goblin of little minds." If I am inconsistent I am wisely so. But I see no inconsistency between my present conduct and the past. There never was any question of permanent boycott of the Round Table Conference. The Congress refused when it could not go there on its terms, it may go now because in its opinion the way is open. And I hope that those who go will deliver the nation's message in no uncertain tones. Here there is no question of my 'sacrificing the country for Truth'. In the first place the decision is that of the Working Committee and in the second place there is no sacrifice of the country. But writing parentheti-cally I have no hesitation in saying that I should, if there could be such a choice, most decidedly sacrifice the country for Truth which t o me is God. I further hold that no individual or nation has ever gained by the sacrifice of Truth, there therefore, no such thing as sacrifice of country for Truth.

Those who join me in my experiments in Truth-seeking are not my 'test-tubes', they are my valued fellow-workers, sharing with me the joy that the search for Truth brings as no other search does.

I do not realize that I am 'staking a whole nation for self-evolution'.For self-evolution is wholly consistent witha nation's evolution. A nation cannot advance without the units of which it is composed advancing and, conversely, no individual can advance without the nation of which he is a part also advancing.

The last charge is thoughtlessly made. My experiments began in South Africa and they were made on behalf of the exploited. The latter gained. They gained again in Champaran, Kheda and Ahmedabad. If I may share the merit of the first Borsad campaign, brilliantly fought by Sardar Vallabhbhai during my absence but in strict accord with my prescription, and then again in Bardoli, I may say that the peasants had the benefit of the two fights. What may be the last experiment on a nation-wide scale is still being tried. It is yet too soon to forecast the result. But he who runs may see that the phenomenal mass awakening cannot have taken place without the masses having added considerably to their stature. This recital has not been made here to claim credit for myself. I am but an humble instrument in the hands of God. Credit belongs to Truth and non-violence. The writer's question seems to doubt the efficacy of Truth and more perhaps of non-violence. The series of examples I have given ought to set at rest all doubt. If we were offering civil disobedience, it was for gaining *purna* swaraj and if now we have suspended it and are ready to join the Round Table Conference, other conditions being fulfilled, we shall be going to it also for the same noble end. That we may fail to achieve the end is quite possible. Even so we shall be putting ourselves in the wrong if we rejected the advance made by the Government. If we make the right use of suspension, if we carry out the terms of the settlement to the fullest extent possible, if we complete the two boycotts, if we intensify the khadi spirit, at the end of the period of grace we shall find ourselves stronger for battle, if we have not by then already gained our end. We must work away with faith in the settlement leading us to our goal.

Young India, 26-3-1931

345. THE GIANT AND THE DWARF

The reader's attention is invited to Sjt. Walchand Hirachand's letter published elsewhere. It has undergone some corrections in order

to represent my views[1] correctly. The discussion to which the letter refers arose out of the formula that "there should be no discrimination between the rights of the British mercantile community, firms and companies trading in India and the rights of Indian born subjects." The formula reads innocent enough but it covers the most dangerous position.

The situation today is this. The Britisher is the top-dog and the Indian the under-dog in his own country. In the administration of the country, the Indian generally is a mere clerk. In business he is at best a commission agent getting hardly five per cent against his English principal's 95 per cent. In almost every walk of life the Englishman by reason of his belonging to the ruling class occupies a privileged position. It can be said without fear of contradiction and without any exaggeration that he has risen upon the ruin of India's commerce and industries. The cottage industry of India had to perish in order that Lancashire might flourish. The Indian shipping had to perish so that British shipping might flourish. In a word we were suppressed in order to enable the British to live on the heights of Simla. It was not a mere picturesque expression of Gokhale's when he said that our growth was stunted. To talk then of no discrimination between Indian interests and English or European is to perpetuate Indian helotage. What is equality of rights between a giant and a dwarf? Before one can think of equality between unequals, the dwarf must be raised to the height of the giant. And since millions living on the plains cannot be translated to the heights of Simla, it follows that those entrenched in those heights must descend to the plains. The process may seem harsh but it is inevitable if the millions of the plains are to be equals of the privileged few.

It is to be feared therefore that before we reach the state of equality, the levelling process will have to be gone through. Justice demands this. It will be a misnomer to call the process one of racial discrimination. There is no such question. There is room enough in our country for every British man, woman and child, if they will shed their privileged position and share our lot. They must then exchange the British army and the force of the cities for the goodwill of a whole nation, which is at their disposal for the asking. Our goodwill is the truest safeguard that we can offer to them and I make bold to say that will be infinitely better and more dignified both of us.In the process there will be apparent discrimination felt everywhere. It need not be felt by those who realize that the present is a wrong and unnatural

[1] *Vide* "Interview to merchants' deputation", 17-3-1931.

position. To show that no racial discrimination is involved in this demand one has only to state that Indians who occupy entrenched positions behind their British patrons will also be expected to come to the level of their brethren of the plains. The true formula therefore should be this. In order to remove the existing unnatural inequalities the privileges of the ruling class and those others who have shared them shall be reduced so as to reach a state of equality between all classes and communities.

On the Indian side it must be a point of honour with us to hold British lives and honour as sacred as our own. This does not, need not, mean the ruin of British trade or interest. Those who are resident can rely on their disciplined habits, trained intellect, great industry and powers of organization to carve out for themselves careers of distinction all the while serving the country of their adoption with the loyalty they have tendered to their own motherland.

British trade where it is not hurtful to India's interest can be placed, when we reach a state of honourable association, on a favoured basis. And an India free from exploitation from within and without must prosper with astonishing rapidity. With growing prosperity, her wants must grow. With her growing wants, must grow also her imports. If at that time Britain is a partner or ally, she may well become India's chief supplier.

That is a dream I should love to realize. I have been party to the settlement for the realization of that dream. I seek every Englishman's help to enable India to gain that end. My notion of *purna* swaraj is not isolated independence but healthy and dignified independence. My nationa-lism, fierce though it is, is not exclusive, is not devised to harm any nation or individual. Legal maxims are not so legal as they are moral. I believe in the eternal truth of *sic utere tuo ut alienum non laedas*[1].

Young India, 26-3-1931

[1] "Use thy own property so as not to injure thy neighbour's."

346. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS [1]

KARACHI,
March 26, 1931

I failed in my efforts to bring about the commutation of the death sentences on Bhagat Singh and his friends, and that is why the young men vented their wrath against me.[2] I was quite prepared for it. Although they were incensed against me, they gave vent to their wrath in what I would call a most dignified manner. It was open to them to do physical injury but they refrained from doing so. It was open to them to insult me in many other ways, but they confined their resentment and insult to handing me black cloth flowers representing, I imagine, the ashes of the three patriots. These also they could have showered on me or thrown at me instead of which they gave me the option of receiving the flowers from their hands which I did gratefully. Of course, they shouted, "Down with Gandhism", "Go back Gandhi". This I consider to be a legitimate expression of their anger. Having been used to such an exhibition and that in a much worse and in more serious form, I was unruffled and took these insults as only a mild expression of their deep grief and consequent anger. I am only hoping that they will exercise the restraint that they did yesterday throughout the Congress session for they know I am trying to reach the same goal with them. Only I am following a method wholly different from theirs. I have not a shadow of a doubt that as time goes they will discover the error of their ways. Whatever may be true of other countries, in this country which is teeming with famished millions the cult of violence can have no meaning. In this country of self-suppression and timidity almost bordering on cowardice we cannot have too much bravery, too much self-sacrifice. One's head bends before Bhagat Singh's bravery and sacrifice. But I want the greater bravery, if I might say so without offending my young friends, of the meek, the gentle and the non-violent, the bravery that will mount the gallows without injuring, or harbouring any thought of injury to a single soul.

Does the execution of Bhagat Singh and his friends alter your position in any way with regard to the settlement?

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] Gandhiji refers to the demonstration by members (wearing red shirts)of Naujawan Bharat Sabha, on his arrival at Malir station near Karachi; *vide* also "Speech at Karachi congress", 26-3-1931.

My own personal position remains absolutely the same, though the provocation has been of the most intense character. I must confess that the staying of these executions was no part of the truce, and so far as I am concerned, no provocation offered outside the terms will deflect me from the path I had mapped out when I agreed to the settlement.

Do you not think it impolitic to forgive a government which has been guilty of a thousand murders?

I do not know a single instance where forgiveness has been found so wanting as to be impolitic.

But no country has ever shown such forgiveness as India is showing to Britain?

That does not affect my reply. What is true of individuals is true of nations. One cannot forgive too much. The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.

Young India, 2-4-1931

347. STATEMENT ON KANPUR RIOTS

KARACHI,
March 26, 1931

Gandhiji who was at the Working Committee meeting was informed of the state of affairs in Cawnpore by the representative of the Associated Press and he made the following statement :

The Working Committee which is sitting at the time of giving this message having read the report of the awful communal strife going on in Cawnpore has felt troubled and grieved over the events there. I cannot too strongly condemn this strife. A committee will certainly investigate the causes, but indications have been coming in from other sources also to show that the slightest thing disturbs the mental balance. I can only hope that the poison will not be allowed to stay and that people will remain calm and not allow the harmonious relations to be disturbed. I hope also that the local leaders in Cawnpore will put their heads together and quickly restore peace. Let it be remembered by those who are in a hurry to achieve India's freedom that every such strife makes progress towards the goal more and more difficult.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-3-1931

348. REPLY TO INDIAN MERCHANTS' ASSOCIATIONS, KARACHI

March 26, 1931

A deputation of Indian merchants of Karachi representing Buyers' and Shippers' Chambers and Indian Merchants' Association led by Mr. Jamshed Mehta waited on the Congress Working Committee this morning, in connection with the demand of British commercial interests for equality of trading rights with Indians. . . .

Gandhiji who replied on behalf of the Working Committee stated that the Congress needed no urging in that connection and would take all possible steps to get the clause about the equality of trading rights totally rescinded. The Congress, he added, felt even more strongly on the question than the merchants themselves and would certainly go further than the demand put forward by the deputationists in safeguarding Indian interests.

Gandhiji compared the demand for equality of the powerful British commercial community with Indians, as a demand on behalf of an elephant to be on equal plane with an ant. Gandhiji said he had dealt with the question in *Young India* in connection with a letter addressed by Mr. Walchand Hirachand regarding the interview a Bombay merchant had with him. Gandhiji said it however was not possible nor politic to exaggerate the power of Congress as was seen in the case of Bhagat Singh and his comrades whose execution the Congress has been helpless to prevent, despite their best efforts.

But on behalf of the Congress he wanted to assure the deputationists that whether it was Dominion Status, or anything else, any constitution which impaired in any way the right of the future Indian Parliament to discriminate against non-national, whenever necessary, as in the national, interest, was worthless and would not be acceptable to the Congress. Gandhiji added that the assurance was a pledge. On his part he urged the Indian mercantile community to play a greater part in national struggle than what they had hitherto done and suggested them to treat the poorer sections of the people, including labourers and untouchables, as their own kith and kin.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-3-1931

349. SPEECH AT KARACHI CONGRESS[1]

March 26, 1931

The first speech in the Congress pandal, or the inauguration address if I may so call it, was delivered by Gandhiji on the 26th, when a vast audience listened to him

[1] As reported by Mahadev Desai, under the title "Under the Canopy of Heaven"

spellbound. The canopy of heaven, under which the Congress is meeting for the first time in its history, lent not only special charm and colour to the address, but also a rare inspiration, to which the great silence around him also contributed. This is how he began :

We are accustomed to think of heaven as the Kingdom of God. We imagine that He sends us His messages and commands from above and we thus establish communion with Him. Until now we had a screen between God and us. I am thankful that the Reception Committee has rent it asunder and put us into direct communion with God. Let us not now by allowing impurities to creep in create a fresh screen and let us commence our business with this communion as our valuable asset. We have chosen for our march towards freedom the ancient path of truth and non-violence, and we must let God's covenant that those who tread on the strait and narrow path shall never come to grief inspire us with faith and hope.

By the executions the Government have given the nation grave cause for provocation. It has shocked me too inasmuch as my negotiations and talks had made me entertain a distant hope that Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev might be saved. I am not surprised that young men are angry with me for not having been able to save them. But I have no reason to be angry with them. For one thing, this is not the first occasion of its kind in my life. It is the duty of him who claims to serve humanity not to be angry with those whom he is serving. As for myself non-violence being my creed, I cannot afford to be angry with anybody. But even if it is not his creed, it is the duty of a genuine servant not to be angry with his masters. Anger ought to be taboo with him. But if he cannot help being angry, he must abdicate his function as servant of humanity. I for one do not want to do so and therefore I said they had a right to be angry, not I. But I must tell them I had been serving the peasants and workers long before the young men were born. I have lived amongst them, cast my lot with them. Ever since I took the pledge of service, I have dedicated my head to humanity. It is the easiest thing in the world to chop off my head, it does not take the slightest preparation or organization. And outside protection I have never sought. In fact it is futile to think of protecting me for I know that God Almighty is the only Protector. Having said this, let me declare that the demonstrations[1] of the young menyesterday far from making me angry delighted me, inasmuch as there was no discourtesy about them.

[1] On Gandhiji's arrival at Malir station

They might have laid hands on me; instead, they formed my bodyguard and escorted me to my car. I must confess that when I saw them, I felt that my experiences in South Africa, where I was mobbed and assaulted, were going to be repeated.

But there was no cause for apprehension. The young men were simply shouting, "Gandhi go back", "Down with Gandhism". They had a right to do so inasmuch as they thought that I had not done everything in my power to save Bhagat Singh, or that being a believer in ahimsa, I had simply neglected Bhagat Singh and his comrades. But they had no intention to molest me or for the matter of that anyone else. They allowed everyone to pass, and then a young man handed to me flowers made of black cloth. They might have thrown them on me and insulted me, but they had no such intention. Flowers are given me everywhere, I am usually indifferent about them, even when they are received from dear sisters and sometimes even chide them for wasting the flowers on me. But these I seized and have treasured them. I shall also tell you what I want to do with them. If the young men come and tell me that they should not have been angry and that their suspicions about me were groundless and that therefore they want the flowers returned to them, I shall gladly give them back. But if they do not do so, they will be sent to the Ashram to be preserved as heirlooms.

Those young men wanted to proclaim to the world that however great the Mahatma may be, they were sure that he was doing harm to India. I think they had a right to expose me, if they felt that I was betraying the country. I want you to understand my attitude. I cannot behave otherwise with these young men inasmuch as I want to win them over by love. Having flung aside the sword, there is nothing except the cup of love which I can offer to those who oppose me. It is by offering that cup that I expect to draw them close to me. I cannot think of perma-nent enmity between man and man, and believing as I do in the theory of rebirth, I live in the hope that if not in this birth, in some other birth I shall be able to hug all humanity in friendly embrace.

I have dwelt at length on this little episode, in order that you may not think ill of the young men. Do not seek to protect me. The Most High is always there to protect us all. You may be sure that when my time is up, no one, not even the most renowned physician in the world, can stand between Him and me.

And now a message for the young men. If you want my service, do not disown me come and understand everything from me. You

must know that it is against my creed to punish even a murderer, a thief or a dacoit. There can be therefore no excuse for suspicion that I did not want to save Bhagat Singh. But I want you also to realize Bhagat Singh's error. If I had had an opportunity of speaking to Bhagat Singh and his comrades, I should have told them that the way they pursued was wrong and futile. I declare that we cannot win swaraj for our famishing millions, for our deaf and dumb, for our lame and crippled, by the way of the sword. With the Most High as witness I want to proclaim this truth that the way of violence cannot bring swaraj, it can only lead to disaster. I wish to tell these young men with all the authority with which a father can speak to his children that the way of violence can only lead to perdition. I shall explain to you why. Do you think that all the women and the children who covered themselves with glory during the last campaign would have done so if we had pursued the path of violence? Would they have been here today? Would our women known as the meekest on earth, would women like Gangabehn, who stood the lathi-blows until her white sari was drenched in blood, have done the unique service they did if we had violence in us? With God's name on their lips she and her sisters hurled defiance at their oppressors, without anger in their hearts. And our children—our *vanarasena* (monkey-army). How could you have had these innocent ones, who renounced their toys, their kites and their crackers, and joined as soldiers of swaraj—how could you have enlisted them in a violent struggle? We were able to enlist as soldiers millions of men, women and children because we were pledged to non-violence. I beseech the young men to have patience and self-control. Anger cannot take us forward. We need not consider the English-men as our enemies. I have used satyagraha against them but have never thought of them as enemies. I want to convert them and the only way is the way of love. Rowdy demonstrations cannot help us. Could they call Bhagat Singh back to life? They can only retard the advent of swaraj. I agree that the Government has given sufficient cause for provocation, but I want the impatient youth in the name of God, in the name of our dear Motherland, to throw themselves heart and soul in the non-violent struggle. I ask them to trust my unbroken experience of forty years of the practice of non-violence.

But if they will not, they might kill me but they cannot kill Gandhism. If Truth can be killed Gandhism can be killed. If non-violence can be killed Gandhism can be killed. For what is Gandhism but winning swaraj by means of truth and non-violence? Will they

refuse swaraj attained through truth and non-violence? I ask them therefore not to mar the wonderful work done by the workers of Sind. The workers have in the course of three weeks created this Congressnagar, so that swaraj for the peasant, the labourer, the scavenger—all of whom have worked cheek by jowl in creating this city of huts—the lame and the blind, the starving and the well-fed, the wretch and the poor, may soon be a living reality. I beseech you not to mar the beautiful work they have done.

This leads me to the events in Cawnpore which has been a scene of carnage. This is due largely to the violence we had harboured against one another. It is the handwriting on the wall. Though we have shown ourselves capable of limited non-violence, we have harboured violence in our hearts, we have been guilty of using coercion. The papers allege that Cawnpore Hindus went mad over Bhagat Singh's martyrdom and started with intimidating the Mussalmans who would not close their shops in Bhagat Singh's honour. You know the sequel. I am quite sure that if the spirit of Bhagat Singh is watching what is happening in Cawnpore today, he would feel deeply humiliated and ashamed. I say this for I have heard him described as a man of honour. And what havoc we have done! Women insulted! Children done to death! Let no Hindu comfort himself with the thought that they were Mussalman children; let no Mussalman feel happy in the knowledge that it is Hindu children who have been killed. I do not know their religion.Let it be recognized that both Hindus and Mussalmans had lost their senses. They were all children of the soil, children of our common Motherland.

I have felt deeply ashamed of these deeds of blood, and to who-ever my voice may reach I wish to declare that such things may any day prove more than I can bear. How can we, with Hindus and Mussalmans slaughtering one another, continue to assert that we have been non-violent? How can I, a votary of truth, hug the belief that we as a nation are non-violent if the mischief spreads? If I did so, I would be untrue to myself and to my Maker. With carnage going on about me I cannot bear to live unconcerned. Let me declare, that as soon as I feel that life is unbearable, I should hope to have the courage to fast myself to death rather than witness these blood feuds. You know by this time that I cannot bear denial of pledges solemnly and voluntarily undertaken.I would sooner be dead than see merchants and others break their pledged word, than see those calling themselves Congressmen and swearing by the creed of the Congress break it in their hearts or openly. If I can witness this contradiction with

equanimity, with what face can I stand before the world and my Maker? He will tell me I have been living a life of falsehood, a life of sham and fraud. I may not deceive myself and the world. Every moment of my existence is dedicated to the winning of swaraj by means of truth and non-violence.

I know you will say that that sort of thing has been going on all these years, and I have done nothing to stop it. Penances with me are no mechanical acts. They are done in obedience to the inner voice. I am telling you what has been going on within me all these days. The crisis may never come, either because I am unnecessarily agitated, or because I have lost courage to face reality. I must be true to my Maker, and the moment I feel that life is insupportable for me, I hope not to be found wanting. What better reparation can I do than willing surrender of the body that has ceased to evoke response and may be a hindrance to the discovery of the true way?

As he was about to close, the question[1] mentioned above was asked him not by one who wanted to be cantankerous but by one who wanted everything to be known to the public. He replied :

Well, I was not on my defence, and so I did not bother you with the details of what I did to save Bhagat Singh and his comrades. I plea-ded with the Viceroy as best I could. I brought all the persuasion at my command to bear on him. On the day fixed for the final interview with Bhagat Singh's relations I wrote a personal letter[2] to the Viceroy on the morning of 23rd. I poured my whole soul into it, but to no avail. I might have done one thing more, you say. I might have made the commutation a term of the settlement. It could not be so made. And to threaten withdrawal would be a breach of faith. The Working Committee had agreed with me in not making commutation a condition precedent to truce. I could therefore only mention it apart from the settlement. I had hoped for magnanimity. My hope was not to materialize. But that can be no ground for breaking the settlement.

And it was not I alone who did what was humanly possible. The revered friend Panditji and Dr. Sapru tried their best. But why should that failure worry us? Success is in God's hands. Our failure should spur us to greater effort. That effort lies in being true to ourselves, in Hindus and Mussalmans determining to live as brothers in heart unity, merchants and others keeping their voluntary pledges, in workers eschewing violence in thought, word and deed. May God help us to

[1] Given as sub-title in the source, which read : "What Did You Do to Save Bhagat Singh?"

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 23-3-1931.

mend our ways. May He help us to be strong enough to be true to ourselves and to Him.

Young India, 2-4-1931

350. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

KARACHI,
March 27, 1931

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your letter. You should not expect a reply from me every time. You yourself, however, should write regularly. As for my programme, I intend to reach Delhi on the 4th. My health is fairly good. Everyone is all right. Radha keeps well on the whole. Keshu has come here.

PRABHAVATI FOR BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 9293. Courtesy : Benarsilal Bazaj

351. INTERVIEW TO CONGRESS WORKERS

KARACHI,
March 27, 1931

On the question of Federation, Gandhiji, in the course of his conference with workers who interviewed him, is reported to have expressed his view that the Congress should not put express conditions because the Princes were shy and were likely to be frightened. He was not prepared to allow the Princes to break away by the Congress insisting on too many conditions precedent. But he was going to use his influence with the Princes, if necessity arises, to make them recognize the need for satisfying the States people's claims to a reasonable extent.

Gandhiji continues to feel that he is not able yet to see light in respect of the communal settlement and appears to think that the Congress would be well advised not to say anything definitely about it.

Among the earliest interviewers today were Mr. Subhas Bose and Mr. Satyamurti, both of whom pressed for insisting on the release of all prisoners sentenced in connection with the civil disobedience movement, the former going further and urging release of all Bengal detenus.

Gandhiji is reported to have assured them that there was no need to make any express conditions in these matters, because he had always insisted upon these things in his conversations with the Viceroy and he was satisfied that, after some time, all prisoners would be released. Delay might be due to the administrative difficulties or

even dilatory tactics on the part of local officialdom. If the Congress found, after a reasonable time, that all prisoners who came within the pact were not released, it would certainly be justified in breaking the pact.

The Hindu, 28-3-1931

352. SPEECH ON KANPUR RIOTS, SUBJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING, KARACHI[1]

March 27, 1931

Let us not try to apportion the blame. Let us forget the fact that we are Hindus and Mussalmans. Let us remember that we are Indians, and the shame of Cawnpore is the shame of India. As for the Hindus, however, newspapers say that it was likely that Hindus were more to blame. And what for was all this carnage? How could we go so mad? I am grieved to have to inform you that Sjt. Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi is reported to be missing or killed. Who would not be grieved over the death of such a genuine and earnest selfless comrade? But there is another view of the case. Rather than that a number of insignificant poor Hindus be killed, is it not well that a leader like Ganesh Shankar should have been killed? Rather than the death of a number of hapless poor Mussalmans, would not the death of Dr. Ansari in the cause of peace or unity be more welcomed? For the knife in Dr. Ansari's body would act as the knife in the bodies of us all. It was therefore fortunate that Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, who was so eminently free from communal bias, who was an institution in himself, and who was the foremost worker of the place, should have laid down his life in the cause of peace. Let his great example be an inspiration to us all, let it awaken us to our sense of duty. I ask you to give your anxious consideration to the matter and help in the solution of the vexed question. Let the shame of Cawnpore teach us a lesson so that we may feel that even the loss of 300 men and women was not too high a price to be paid for permanent peace.

Young India, 2-4-1931

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

353. DISCUSSION WITH RED SHIRTS OF NAUJAWAN BHARAT SABHA[1]

[*March 27, 1931*] [2]

A few representatives of the Red Shirts waited in deputation on Gandhiji and he had a long heart-to-heart talk with them. They explained that it was never their intention to do any physical harm to him, that his life and his health were as dear to them as to anyone else, and that individual terrorism was not their creed. They were adamant in their quarrel with the truce which, they believed, can never lead them to their goal of Workers' and Peasants' Free Republic in India. Gandhiji said :

But my dear young men, go and see Bihar and you will find a workers' and peasants' republic working there. Where there was fear and slavery ten years ago, there is courage and bravery and resistance to wrong. If you want capital to be extinct or you want to abolish moneyed men or the capitalists, you will never succeed. What you must do is to demonstrate to the capitalists the power of labour and they will consent to be the trustees of those who toil for them. I do not want anything more for workers and peasants than enough to eat and house and clothe themselves and live in ordinary comfort as self-respecting human beings. After that condition of things is brought about the brainiest among them will certainly manage to acquire more wealth than the rest. But I have told you what I want. I want the rich to hold their riches in trust for the poor or to give them up for them. Do you know that I gave up all my property when I founded Tolstoy Farm? Ruskin's*Unto This Last* inspired me and I built my farm on those lines. You will now recognize that I am, so to say, a "foundation member" of your peasants' and workers' republic. And what do you prize more, wealth or work? Supposing you were to be stranded in the desert of Sahara with cart-loads of money, how would it help you? But if you can work you may not have to go hungry. How then is wealth to be preferred to work? Go and see for yourselves the Labour Union of Ahmedabad at work and see how they are trying to establish a republic of their own.

Q. Punjab is goonda-raj, Mahatmaji. Where do find the change of heart?

A. But I never said that there had been a change of heart on the part of the Government.

Q. Why then did you give such a certificate to Lord Irwin?

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"
[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 28-3-1931

A. Just as I have given a certificate to you, young men! I have admired your self-restraint, though I disapprove of your action against me. In the same way I was struck with Lord Irwin's frankness, sincerity and friendliness and I paid a tribute to it. That was nothing unusual for me. There was no question of a change of heart. The settlement I had never regarded as an indication of change of heart, and so the executions did not alter the position. But I should certainly have given Government credit for some change of heart if they had commuted the sentences.

Young India, 2-4-1931

354. SPEECH ON PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT, SUBJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING, KARACHI[1]

[*March 28, 1931*][2]

Gandhiji spoke both in the Subjects Committee and the open Congress[3] on the resolution[4] on provisional settlement. Here is a report of the English speech in the Subjects Committee :

Though the resolution before you is very brief, I venture to suggest to you that it is very comprehensive and capable of passing the most rigorous test that a man who believes in complete independence can exact. The resolution makes it incumbent upon any delegation that may take part in the Conference deliberations to bear in mind the Congress goal, or as it is called the Congress objective of *purna* swaraj as stated in the Lahore resolution, and not in the Madras resolution which was a pious wish. *Purna* swaraj is not a pious wish today. *Purna* swaraj is the incessant yearning of the soul of the nation which is impatient to get it, and its impatience was demonstrated during the past twelve months. And so it is the immediate objective that the delegation has got to keep in view in agreeing to any single thing that may happen in the Conference. But that is not enough. Some idea or some inkling of *purna* swaraj or complete independence has also been given here as essential, and so it is incumbent upon your delegation to obtain control over the defence forces, etc.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's report under the title, "Gandhiji on the Main Resolutions"

[2] From *The Hindu*, 29-3-1931

[3] *Vide* "Speech on provisional settlement, Karachi congress", 30-3-1931.

[4] For the text of the resolution, *vide* "Resolution on provisional settlement", 29-3-1931.

But the trap—or sting as you would call it—is in the tail of the resolution : "Provided, however, the Congress delegation would be free to accept such adjustments as may be necessary in the interests of India." Now in this there is a trap and there is no trap. There is no trap if you will choose your delegation well and trust it. There is a trap because 'adjustments' is really synonymous with 'safeguards'. The principle of safeguards is accepted in the terms of the settlement, but the safeguards that might be accepted have to be in the interests of India, and they must be *demonstrably* necessary, not merely *absolutely* necessary as it has been suggested in one of the many amendments. *Demonstrably* for our purpose is a superior word to *absolutely*. I have given my meaning of the 'safeguards' very fully elsewhere[1] and I will not dilate upon it.

Having said this, I want to say something about another amendment that has been suggested, that whatever action the delegates may take should be subject to ratification by a special session of the Congress or by the All-India Congress Committee.I venture to suggest to you with all the force at my command, that this is not only unnecessary but unbecoming of a Congress thathas lived progressively for the past 45 years and has acquired a prestige unrivalled by any other organi-zation in India and a prestige now acquired by it throughout the world. Surely this Congress is not so poor as not to be able to produce representatives who can fully represent the Congress at any conference or any assembly. Therefore if you send your delegation, that delegation should have the same powers as if the whole Congress was being transported to the Conference. Without that matters such as those that confront us really cannot be adjusted. We will be one among many parties. Those who go to the Conference are expected to have full credentials and full authority to bind their principals. But if they go there and have to say, 'We have come here, we will discuss; but we cannot bind our principals, we shall have to refer to our principals', the procedure becomes interminable, cumbrous and wholly ineffective for the purpose in view. Hence it is absolutely necessary not to put any such proviso as has been suggested.

What is the position of the Congress, *inter se*? What is the position of the Congress with reference to the intermediate bodies, the All-India Congress Committee and the Working Committee? Although the committees are given a general power of attorney to act on behalf of the Congress, still the right of repudiation is a right of

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Journalists", 6-3-1931.

which the Congress can never divest itself. No organization or no principal can really divest himself of this right. The power of attorney to be given to your delegation is to act within the four corners of this resolution. So long as your delegation acts within the four corners of this power of attorney, it would be improper for you to repudiate them. If they go beyond this resolution, you have every right to repudiate them. That is one thing. But the more effective repudiation comes into play when they have turned traitors and have sold your cause, or when they have become so idiotic, so unintelligent as not to be able to see the many traps that might have been laid for them and thus fall into one of these traps. Even then they would have gone outside the four corners of their power of attorney. In that case, you have absolute right to repudiate all that they may have done, and that power is good against the whole world. The power of repudiation is absolute if your agents act outside the power that you give them. You may take it from me that this is the legal position, if I may so call it. Hence I suggest to you that it is not only superfluous, not only unnecessary, for you to attach the condition of ratification to this resolution, it is unbecoming of you to do so. It will really hamper the progress of the very thing you want them to do. Therefore I hope you will, without entering upon any further discussion, withdraw this particular amendment.

I would next suggest to you, if you will follow the warning I have uttered from this platform so often, that having brought into being your Working Committee, you should not thoughtlessly or hastily interfere with the build of the resolution that the Working Committee may place before you, because you should give the credit to the Working Committee for having examined all the pros and cons and all the objections that might possibly be raised against the several parts of the resolution. It will really be like inter-fering with the creation of your own architects. But you can do one thing, and that is to exercise the precious right which you possess, viz., the right of total rejection of this resolution. Although the thing itself is a completed whole, and you may not therefore interfere with it in detail, still you have the right of totally rejecting it. I would therefore urge you, that if you really feel that the resolution does not satisfy you as a whole, you will marshal all your forces, intellect, and resourcefulness in a full-dress debate and reject the resolution. The choice before you is either to reject or accept the resolution as it stands, because it is a resolution framed by your trusted representatives after many and

anxious hours of thought which you could never give to this resolution; for one thing, you have not the leisure for it, nor can such a large body of people give one mind to a resolution of this character. So far, therefore, as the body of this resolution is concerned, tear it to pieces if you like, examine it as mercilessly as you please, and then if you come to the conclusion that after all it is not in the interest of the nation, then destroy the resolution. But if you feel that the nation cannot lose but will gain by endorsing the settlement, you must say so boldly and act up to it. Endorsement means an honest endeavour to act up to it cent per cent. I do not want you to accept this resolution in a niggardly or half-hearted spirit, or because it is a Mahatma who is behind it, or because the Working Committee is behind it. You, as represen-tatives of the nation, will not lose in dignity or in the estimation of the world, if you, after the fullest deliberation, come to the conclusion that it should be rejected, because this settlement is, in your opinion, not worth considering and that it is really a trap laid for the people. It will then be your bounden duty to reject it.

But do not for heaven's sake let the recent executions be an obsession in your way. We shall have provocations in our march towards the goal, in our march towards the Conference. Let no provocation deflect you from the right course. Let no provocation blind your judgment. Use your intellect in an absolutely unbiased manner. Examine the settlement on its own merits. Do not be carried away also by the fact that all the prisoners covered by the truce or the provisional settlement have not yet been discharged. Let not that worry you. It is up to the Working Committee to see that all those who are covered by the truce are discharged. If a single prisoner covered by the truce remains in prison, it must be a point of honour with the Working Com-mittee to repudiate the truce. Therefore you must not be turned away from your course by any side issues. What you should concentrate upon is this. What does the settlement amount to? What scope does the settlement give the Congress to assert its claim? What scope is there in this resolution for the delegation, even unconsciously, to go beyond the authority it confers on them? If you find it is not sufficiently comprehensive to tie down the hands of the delegation, no matter how clever it may be, you have every right summarily to reject the resolution.

I warn the English-speaking people that next year they would not call upon a single speaker to speak in English. I hope that by next year they will have learned sufficient Hindustani to be able to follow the proceedings and really be able to speak in Hindustani also.

Day after day and year after year we ourselves have accustomed the people to consider Hindustani as the common language for inter-provincial intercourse. Now it is too late to retrace our steps and habituate vast audiences to English.[1]

I have expressed my views in this matter[2] in my statement to the Press immediately after the settlement. The princes are naturally touchy, and we should do nothing to touch them on the raw, if we can help it. We may only make it clear to them that a Federation of the people and princes will have meaning only when the princes will stoop to conquer, will stoop to the level of their people, just as we ask the Englishmen to descend from the heights of Simla to the plains. But we do not want to give them any notice of this. We will trust them to conform to the spirit of the times, and I am sure that if we succeed in getting everything else the princes will offer no difficulty.

Young India, 9-4-1931

355. BHAGAT SINGH

Brave Bhagat Singh and his two associates have been hanged. Many attempts were made to save their lives and even some hopes were entertained, but all was in vain.

Bhagat Singh did not wish to live. He refused to apologize; declined to file an appeal. If at all he would agree to live, he would do so for the sake of others; if at all he would agree to it, it would be in order that his death might not provoke anyone to indiscriminate murder. Bhagat Singh was not a devotee of non-violence, but he did not subscribe to the religion of violence; he was prepared to commit murder out of a sense of helplessness. His last letter was as follows: "I have been arrested while waging a war. For me there can be no gallows. Put me into the mouth of a cannon and blow me off." These heroes had conquered the fear of death. Let us bow to them a thousand times for their heroism.

But we should not imitate their act. I am not prepared to believe that the country has benefited by their action. I can see only the harm that has been done. We could have won swaraj long ago if that line of action had not been pursued and we could have waged a purely non-violent struggle. There may well by two opinions on this conjecture of mine. However, no one can deny the fact that if the practice of

[1] This paragraph is reproduced from the *Report of the 45th Indian National Congress*, pp. 104-5. In the source, what follows was translated from Gandhiji's speech in Hindi.

[2] Regarding Federation; *vide* "Statement to the press", 5-3-1931.

seeking justice through murders is established amongst us, we shall start murdering one another for what we believe to be justice. In a land of crores of destitutes and crippled persons, this will be a terrifying situa-tion. These poor people are bound to become victims of our atrocities. It is desirable that everyone should consider the consequences of this. Further, we want a swaraj which is theirs and for them. By making a dharma of violence, we shall be reaping the fruit of our own actions.

Hence, though we praise the courage of these brave men, we should never countenance their activities.

By hanging these men, the Government has demonstrated its own brute nature, it has provided fresh proof of its arrogance resulting from its power by ignoring public opinion. From this hanging it may be conclu-ded that it is not the intention of the Government to part with any real power to the people. The Government certainly had the right to hang these men. However, there are some rights which do credit to those who possess them only if they are enjoyed in name only. If a person exercises all his rights on all occasions, in the end they are destroyed. On this occasion, the Government would have brought credit to itself if it had not exercised its rights and this would have been highly useful in maintaining peace.

However, it is obvious that the Government has not to date develo-ped such discretion. It has given a clear reason for the public to get enraged. If the latter shows anger, it will lose the game which it is about to win. Some officials may even hope that the public will give vent to its anger. Whether they do so or not, ours is a straightforward path. While negotiating the settlement, Bhagat Singh's hanging was weighing upon us. We had hoped that the Government would be cautious enough to pardon Bhagat Singh and his associates to the extent of remitting the sentence of hanging. We should not break the pledge we have taken just because our hopes have not been fulfilled, but should bear this blow which has fallen upon us and honour our pledge. By doing so under even such trying circumstances, our strength to get what we desire will increase rather than decrease, while, if we break our pledge or violate the truce, we shall suffer loss of vigour, loss of strength and it will add to our present difficulties in reaching our objective. Hence our dharma is to swallow our anger, abide by the settlement and carry out our duty.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-3-1931

356. THE ANSARI DHARMASALA

I had had plenty of experience of Dr. Ansari's generosity, but during my recent trip to Delhi I had more of it at his house. He insisted that all the members of the Working Committee should put up with him. Besides these, there were other guests also. His large bungalow having proved incommodious, tents had to be put up in his compound. There must have been some hundred guests having their meals at his home every day. On the one hand, there was his large practice and the time which had to be devoted to it and, on the other, there was a stream of people from the native States coming and going and then again there was his hospitality to be offered to so many guests and the talks to be held in connection with the work of the Congress. Despite all this, I have never found Dr. Ansari overcome by worry, become impatient or lose his temper. An ordinary man would have got tired if he had to accommodate such a large number of guests. I never found any trace of fatigue in Dr. Ansari.

What must be the explanation for such good organization? It was Begum Ansari. One day I asked Dr. Ansari in the presence of Begum Ansari, "How is it that you can cope with so many persons having their meals and so on, with you?' He replied, "The credit for all this goes to the Begum Saheba. I make over to her whatever I earn. She is very well-versed in Urdu and maintains an account of every single pie spent. She orders whatever she wishes and spends whatever she likes. Hence I have never borne the worries of running a household." Hearing this, I bowed my head to Begum Ansari. It is not that there is only one such woman among Hindus and Muslims, there must be countless numbers of them in every nook and corner. We do not know of them.

Readers will be happy to learn that there are two kitchens running in Dr. Ansari's home. Brahmin cooks prepare separate meals for those who are vegetarians.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-3-1931

357. TELEGRAM TO CHHOTUBHAI

March 29, 1931

CHHOTUBHAI
JAMBUSAR (BROACH DISTRICT)

YOUR WIRE. SEND FULL PARTICULARS SIR PURUSHOTTAMDAS. TRY PREVENT RESALE.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 16924

358. TELEGRAM TO CHHOTELAL

March 29, 1931

CHHOTELALJI
SATYAGRAHASHRAM
WARDHA (C.P.)

YOUR LETTER. REPORT BALKRISHNA'S CONDITION. HERE TILL SECOND.

BAPU

From a microfilm : S.N. 16924

359. RESOLUTION ON BHAGAT SINGH AND COMRADES[1]

March 29, 1931

This Congress, while dissociating tself from and disapproving of political violence in any shape or form, places on record its admiration of the bravery and sacrifice of the late Sardar Bhagat Singh and his comrades Syts. Sukhdev and Rajguru, and mourns with the bereaved families the loss of these lives. The Congress is of opinion that this triple execution is an act of wanton vengeance and is a deliberate flouting of the unanimous demand of the nation for commutation. This Congress is further of opinion that Government have lost the golden opportunity of promoting goodwill between the

[1] The resolution was drafted by Gandhiji.

two nations, admittedly held to be essential at this juncture, and of winning over to the method of peace the party which, being driven to despair, resorts to political violence.

Report of the 45th Indian National Congress, p. 32

360. RESOLUTION ON PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT[1]

[*March 29, 1931*][2]

This Congress, having considered the Provisional Settlement between the Working Committee and the Government of India, endorses it, and desires to make it clear that the Congress goal of *purna* swaraj (complete independence) remains intact. In the event of the way being otherwise open to the Congress to be represented at any conference with the representatives of the British Government, the Congress delegation will work for this goal and, in particular, so as to give the nation control over the army, external affairs, finance and fiscal and economic policy, and to have a scrutiny, by an impartial tribunal, of the financial transactions of the British Government in India and to examine and assess the obligations to be undertaken by India or England, and the right to either party to end the partnership at will; provided, however, that the Congress delegation will be free to accept such adjustments as may be demonstrably necessary in the interest of India.

The Congress appoints and authorizes Mahatma Gandhi to represent it at the Conference with the addition of such other delegates as the Working Committee may appoint to act under his leadership.[3]

From a photostat : C.W. 9345. Courtesy : India Office Library

361. SPEECH ON PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT, KARACHI CONGRESS

March 30, 1931

Our young brothers and sisters are unhappy about the settlement. I have nothing but love in my heart for them. I can

[1] Presumably drafted by Gandhiji

[2] *Vide* "Letter to G. Cunningham", 4-4-1931.

[3] The Congress Working Committee resolution No. 3 of April 2 read : "With reference to the Congress resolution No. 5 [on Provisional Settlement] appointing the delegation to the Round Table Conference, the Working Committee is of opinion that Mahatma Gandhi should be the sole delegate on behalf of the Congress."

understand their sorrow. They have every right to doubt the wisdom of this settlement. Their opposition does not irritate me. I am not even angry. We opposed the Round Table Conference; we were also saying that we would get nothing from this Conference. What has happened now to justify our hopes of gaining something by attending the Conference? There is no magic in me, nor is there any in the Congress that will change the attitude of the Round Table Conference, and that we will attain everything. Therefore, please understand clearly that I make no promise that by attending the Round Table Conference we shall secure complete independence. My mind is full of misgivings and again and again I ask myself the question : "What shall we gain by attending this Conference?" Between what we demand today, and the demands that have been put forward at the Round Table Conference up to date, there is such an ocean of difference that the usefulness of going there may well be doubted.

But it is a sin not to do what circumstances have made it a duty to do. It is a principle of satyagraha that if there is an opportunity for talks with the party against whom satyagraha is being offered, then talks should be tried. We should strive to win over by love the person whom we consider our enemy. To conquer him in this manner should be the satyagrahi's resolve. If he does not possess this attribute but harbours enmity, jealousy and hatred in his heart, then he cannot be called a satyagrahi but a *duragrahi*. In the oft-repeated goal of the Congress there is no place for wilfulness. There is only place for truth and non-violence. Therefore, if we admit that there can be no compromise with those with whom we have tried the method of satyagraha, then that will be a great mistake. This error must be dispelled. Truly, I myself am doubtful of the outcome. Still, when we have been invited, when we have been asked to say what we want, to state our position rather than fight, then what other duty can we have but to do that? This is what the Prime Minister has said. The Viceroy also has uttered similar words. When I was in prison, even then he sent word to say that I could meet him whenever I wished to do so. Then he delivered a speech; and after that we were released. On my release, I wrote him a letter and as a result we decided to meet. Our meetings and talks ended in the present settlement. There is nothing in the settlement for us to be ashamed of. I do not want to explain here why certain things are not in the settlement and why certain matters were left untouched. But I shall explain to you how it became the duty of the Working Committee to make this compromise.

When the Government set free the Working Committee, it became the duty of the latter either to break the law by offering civil disobedience and go back to prison, or do something other than that. Had we not exercised our discretion in choosing this second course, the world would not have cheered us, it would have censured us.

This is one question. Another thing is that we have not ended this struggle because we had grown weary. I did not like what Swami Govin-danand[1] said. He said, "We were prepared to continue the struggle for another year." I agree. I may even go further and add that we could have continued this fight not for one but for another twenty years to come. We are thirty crores in number out of which one crore would fight. And a satyagrahi fights on even when all have wearied and given up the struggle. So, it is not right to say that the Working Committee has accepted the settlement because we had become tired. He who suspen-ds satyagraha because he is tired, deceives God, deceives the nation, decei-ves his country. But this settlement was not concluded in this manner. It was concluded because it had to be. We cannot argue that we should continue to fight because we have the strength to fight. Even if we had continued the fight for another year more, in the end this very same question would have come up. Would you even then say, "No, we shall continue to fight"? That soldier who says, "I shall keep on fighting", has false pride, and is guilty in the eyes of God. Therefore, the settlement ought to have been concluded.

Then, another thing. We do not yet quite know whether we shall reach the stage of the Round Table Conference or not. Even if we do, there is no reason to assume that we shall bring back something from there. Even if we return empty-handed you have no right to abuse us, nor can you laugh at us. Because I do not promise that, if I go, I shall necessarily bring back something or other. This is certain however : we shall not return with slavery. We shall not bring anything that is not contained in this resolution. But if we do not bring anything, how does it follow that we should hand over the work of the Congress to others? Even today the work of the Congress is in your hands. It is you that made Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel your President today. If you choose you can remove him from office tomorrow. If you wish to change the Working Committee you can do so. Therefore please do

[1] A Sind Congress leader, who along with Subhas Chandra Bose had opposed the Gandhi-Irwin Pact

not say that it is the Mahatma who is behind this resolution. The Working Committee is behind it; so you have to let go the Mahatma. It is far better that you do not vote for the resolution. It should not be that simply because some of us have done something we should be kept on. If we have proved ungrateful or if we have acted foolishly, then certainly remove us from office. And instead of removing us on our return from the Round Table Conference, you can do so now. We are your servants; we shall resign and get away. Even if there is the slightest self-respect in us, we shall resign, and you will not be blamed for this. The world will say we did the right thing.

But if you feel that because I am a Mahatma this cannot be done, then it is weakness on your part. If swaraj cannot be had without the Mahatma, then, believe me, you will never be able to rule yourselves. When I left for Dandi, I said that even if all the leaders were jailed the fight would not stop. Those outside would continue it. You have shown it in action. Not only all the leaders, but all the workers were jailed, yet our work did not stop. The women took it up and were in turn imprisoned; even then the work did not stop.

Was Kikibehn Lalwani, who was dictator of Karachi, fit to be made dictator? The poor lady was suffering from phthisis. But she plunged into the battle, became dictator, and entered jail. The sick woman was cured, and she became a brave fighter. So, you can see that the Mahatma is not indispensable. I may add further that to the extent I deserve the title Mahatma, it was given to me for my spirit of service. Once I give up serving others I shall cease to be Mahatma from that very moment. Therefore do not feel that because this resolution was drawn up by the Mahatma, or by the Working Committee, therefore it cannot be opposed. If after deep consideration you reject this resolution then I shall defend you before the world.

But if you accept that you must do exactly as you are told by those who have started the fight, then I tell you to be with me and put up a sincere fight. That is, do not worry if your spokesman returns empty-handed. If he brings back something so much the better; but if he does not bring anything we shall fight again. So many have gone to jail, so many have faced lathi-charges, and undergone hardships that we do not wish unnecessarily to repeat all this. But, having done our duty, if we do not get what we asked for, then our resolve to fight stands. And, when we are there those who remain

here—supporters and opponents—must finish the work that remains.

I do not agree with Dr. Kitchlew that when we are away attending the Round Table Conference, the work that remains to be done should be done by the youth. Who else can picket like the women who picketed the foreign-cloth shops and the liquor shops? They shall abide by the rules of picketing that we have laid down and do the work of picketing. Men like Jamshed Mehta, who is known here by the name of Bhagat had to complain strongly—bitterly—against us. Let all read his article, and avoid the mistakes that he has pointed out and do picketing according to the rules laid down. Khadi work should be taken up in order to complete the boycott of foreign cloth. All this work is not only for the youth to do but for all.

I shall say a few words about the simple and candid speech of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan—a speech that so well becomes a Pathan. I was very glad to hear what he said. It is good that we invited him and gave oursel-ves that opportunity of hearing him. I have lived among the Pathans. I have had Pathans as my clients. I know the Pathans' nature. If the Pathans believe that they have benefited by the Congress—and I believe that they have—then I wish to assure them further that we shall do noth-ing that will curtail their freedom. We shall do our best to see that the Frontier Province attains the same kind of independence as the other States will receive. I had intended to visit that province, but I regret that I shall not get the opportunity to do so. I was told that the Afghans on the other side of the Frontier Province also wished for my release. Why should the Afghans have wanted my freedom? I have worked for the Pathans of the Frontier, but I have done nothing for the Afghans. Yes, I shall certainly say that in our freedom lies theirs too. Today, however, beyond showing this much of fellowship, we are not able to render them any special assistance. On attaining freedom India has no designs to fight any other country. I can give this assurance to the Pathans and the Afghans. It is a great thing for the Pathans to join us in our fight, because we shall have a whole army of fighters.[1]

I will say one or two words with reference to what has been left out in the resolution before you. One thing that has been left out is the Federation. What is the meaning of the word 'Federation'? Is it a Fede-ration between the princes or the States on the one hand and the pro-vinces put together on the other? What are the conditions under which that Federation is to take place we do not know at all. But the princes have taken up one position, viz., that there shall be no

[1] What follows is extracted from *Young India*, 9-4-1931. It appeared under the title, "Gandhiji on the main Resolutions".

intervention on the part of the Federal Government in their internal affairs. All I have suggested in connection with the Federation is that they should acknowledge that the fundamental rights of the people of the States should be the same as those of the citizens in what is called British India. If those rights are guaranteed under the federal constitution, then there should be naturally some federal institution to protect those rights, i.e., a federal supreme court or whatever you might like to call it, to which an appeal would lie. I hope the princes will of their own accord recognize these two things and also allow representation for the subjects of the States. To do this would possibly be somewhat of a derogation from the sovereignty which the princes enjoy. But if they would be part of the Federation in which the larger part is to be governed by a spirit of absolute democracy, it is up to them to part with some of their power and that of their own accord and free will. I am hoping that some such thing would happen and that is why you find no mention made of Federation in this resolution.

He also said a word about an important reservation in the resolution viz., "in the event of the way being otherwise open".

Supposing that we do not arrrive at any settlement whatever over this delicate question of Hindi-Muslim unity, what is to be the position of the Congress? So far as I can see at the present moment, it will be useless for the Congress delegation to take part in the Conference if we cannot possibly arrive at a proper communal solution. But I am not able just now to give you my final decision or final opinion. I do not know. Many things may happen, which may make it necessary or highly desirable that the delegation should take part in the Conferene. But that is for the future really to decide.

Towards the conclusion, he addressed the following warning both to those who would reject it or accept it and gave a solemn promise of loyalty.

If the Congress rejects the settlement summarily, nothing can possibly be said against the Congress. The Congress is a paramount authority. The Working Committee is its creature. The action taken by the Working Committee, or taken by myself, may not commend itself to you. There should be, therefore, no question of toleration or patronage. It is open to every one of you to reject the resolution and to repudiate the settlement if you wish to. But if you endorse the settlement, then it is also your duty actively to support it, carry out all its items faithfully and honourably and do the various things which are set out before you in the resolution, so that you daily increase the

power of the Congress andmake it possible for the Congress delegation to vindicate the position of the Congress and possibly to bring the very thing for which you have suffered for the last twelve months.

One thing more. If this delegation goes as far as the Conference, it does not mean that the delegation will bring in its pocket *purna* swaraj. If it does not bring *purna* swaraj, it does not mean that it returns humiliated. Nothing of the kind. All that we expect to be able to do is to go and tell the British people and the British Minister what we want, and if we do not get what the Congress expects the delegation to accept within the terms of the resolution, we are bound to return empty-handed and receive your compliments, not curse. But you will be entitled to give us curses if we return having sold the interests of the country. That is what you have a perfect right to do. But it will not be proper for you to say, 'you were not able to fulfil your promises.' No promise has ever been made. No promise is being made now that if the deputation goes to the Conference, whether here or in England, or enters upon further negotiations, that deputation is going to bring *purna* swaraj. *Purna* swaraj will come when the full authority of the Congress has been manifested and not a minute before. It will be the greatest achievement of the Congress to bring swaraj if it does. All that I promise faithfully to you on my own behalf and on behalf of any delegation that you might wish to send with me is that we shall not be disloyal to the Congress in any shape or form.

The appeal did not fall on deaf ears, practically all the amendments were withdrawn, and the resolution was passed without the change of a comma or colon.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 6-4-1931

362. RESOLUTION ON FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND ECONOMIC CHANGES[1]

March 31, 1931

This Congress is of opinion that to enable the masses to appreciate what swaraj, as conceived by the Congress, will mean to them, it is desirable to state the position of the Congress in a manner easily understood by them. In order to end the exploitation of the masses, political freedom must include real economic freedom of the starving millions. The Congress, therefore, declare that any constitution which may be agreed to on its behalf should provide, or enable the Swaraj Government to provide, for the following :

1. Fundamental rights of the people, including :

(a) freedom of association and combination;

(b) freedom of speech and of the Press;

(c) freedom of conscience and the free profession and practice of religion, subject to public order and morality;

(d) protection of the culture, language and scripts of the minorities;

(e) equal rights and obligations of all citizens, without any bar on account of sex;

(f) no disability to attach to any citizen by reason of his or her religions, caste or creed or sex in regard to public employment, office of power or honour and in the exercise of any trade or calling;

(g) equal rights to all citizens in regard to public roads, wells, schools and other places of public resort;

(h) right to keep and bear arms in accordance with regulations and reservations made in that behalf;

(i) no person shall be deprived of his liberty nor shall his dwelling or property be entered, sequestered or confiscated, save in accordane with law.

2. Religious neutrality on the part of the State.
3. Adult suffrage.
4. Free primary education.

[1] Presumably drafted by Gandhiji

5. A living wage for industrial workers, limited hours of labour, healthy conditions of work, protection against the economic consequences of old age, sickness and unemployment.

6. Labour to be freed from serfdom or conditions bordering on serfdom.

7. Protection of women workers, and specially adequate provisions for leave during maternity period.

8. Prohibition against employment of children of school going age in factories.

9. Rights of labour to form unions to protect their interests with suitable machinery for settlement of disputes by arbitration.

10. Substantial reduction in agricultural rent or revenue paid by the peasantry, and in case of uneconomic holdings exemption from rent for such period as may be necessary, relief being given to small zamindars wherever necessary by reason of such reduction.

11. Imposition of a progressive income tax on agricultral incomes above a fixed minimum.

12. A graduated inheritance tax.

13. Military expenditure to be reduced by at least one half of the present scale.

14. Expenditure and salaries in civil departments to be largely reduced. No servant of the State, other than specially employed experts and the like, to be paid above a certain fixed figure which should not ordinarily exceed Rs. 500 per month.

15. Protection of indigenous cloth by exclusion of foreign cloth and foreign yarn from the country.

16. Total prohibition of intoxicating drinks and drugs.

17. No duty on salt manufactured in India.

18. Control over exchange and currency policy so as to help Indian industries and bring relief to the masses.

19. Control by the State of key industries and ownership of mineral resources.

20. Control of usury—direct or indirect.

It shall be open to the A.I.C.C. to revise, amend or add to the foregoing so far as such revision, amendment or addition is not inconsistent with the policy and principles thereof.

A.I.C.C. File No. 199, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

363. SPEECH ON FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, KARACHI CONGRESS[1]

March 31, 1931

In moving the resolution[2] on fundamental rights in the open Congress Gandhiji, speaking in Hindi, said :

This resolution is meant for those who are no legislators, who are not interested in intricate questions of constitution, who will not take an active part in the administration of the country. It is meant to indicate to the poor, inarticulate Indian the broad features of swaraj or *Ramarajya*. Before my march to Dandi I had included some of these features in my eleven points. These have been made more comprehensive. They are now presented to you in a separate resolution. They were advisedly omitted from the main resolution because that would have made the mandate for the delegation burdensome. But by passing this resolution we make it clear to the world and to our own people what we propose to do as soon as we come into power. Let Government also take note of it. Let those who may have to deal with us at the Round Table Conference also take note of the fact that the Viceroy, under swaraj, should not get more than Rs. 500 per month. The position has been made as clear as possible, in order that we may not be accused of having sprung sudden surprises on those who have to deal with us. They are also meant to forewarn all concerned. Let them prepare themselves for the coming legislation by modelling their lives in the light of coming changes.

I shall take a few instances. Clause I (d) of the fundamental rights protects the culture, language and scripts of the minority. Now though I am sure that Islamic and Aryan cultures are not mutually exclusive and fundamentally different, I must recognize that Mussalmans look upon Islamic culture as distinctive from Aryan. Let us therefore cultivate tolerance. Let us try to learn the Urdu language and Urdu script and understand the Mussalmans' insistence on it.

Then there is the abolition of all disabilities attaching to women, in regard to public employment, office of power or honour, etc. The moment this is done many of the disabilities to which the women are

[1] This appeared under the title "Gandhiji on the Main Resolutions" with a sub-heading "The Twenty Points".

[2] For the text of the resolution, *vide* the preceding item.

subjected will cease. So far as the Congress is concerned, we have admitted no such disability. We have had Dr.Besant and Shrimati Sarojini Devi as our presidents and in the future free State it will be open to us to have women presidents.

Religious neutrality is another important provision. Swaraj will favour Hinduism no more than Islam, nor Islam more than Hinduism. But in order that we may have a State based on religious neutrality, let us from now adopt the principle in our daily affairs. Let not a Hindu merchant hesitate to have deserving Muslims as his employees, and let every Congressman make religious neutrality his creed in every walk of life.

Item number five deserves the immediate attention of all mill and factory owners who should anticipate humane legislation foreshadowed in the clause.

The last item relates to the control of usury. Islam strictly prohibits the charging of interest but there is no reason why usury should not be regarded as criminal in a Hindu. The Pathans have forgotten the Islamic injunction, have followed our bad example and are known to charge from 200 to 300 per cent interest. I wish I could persuade Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan to go to our parts to wean his co-religionists from usury. Let also our bankers and money-lenders betimes make drastic reductions in their rates of interest, lest drastic legislation should find them unprepared. The peasants are being crushed to extinction. So let the money-lenders adopt 8 per cent as the maximum rate to afford them some relief.

Let the zamindars and the Maharajas be assured that the Congress does not seek to destroy them, but is determined to destroy all wrong and injustice. Let them make an earnest endeavour to understand the grievances of their tenants and introduce adequate measures of relief before legislation overtakes them. It is open to them to join the Congress as Raja Saheb of Kalakankar and Chowdhary Raghuvirnarayan Sinha have done.

Let it be understood that this resolution by no means has any finality. It is open to the A.I.C.C. to revise, amend or add to the twenty points and so let no one oppose the resolution for mere difference on matters of detail. Those however who are opposed to the policy and principle must reject it, but they must bear in mind that

the poor man's swaraj is soon coming and let them not be found unprepared when it actually comes.[1]

Young India, 9-4-1931

364. TELEGRAM TO BALKRISHNA SHARMA[2]

KARACHI,
[*April 1, 1931*][3]

I HAVE BEEN TOO BUSY TO WIRE OR TO WRITE. THOUGH HEART BLEEDS I REFUSE TO SEND CONDOLENCES OVER A DEATH SO MAGNIFICENT AS GANESH SHANKAR'S. IT MAY NOT DO SO TODAY BUT HIS INNOCENT BLOOD IS BOUND SOME DAY TO CEMENT HINDUS AND MUSSALMANS. HIS FAMILY THEREFORE DESERVES NO CONDOLENCES BUT CONGRATULATIONS. MAY HIS EXAMPLE PROVE INFECTIOUS.[4]

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-4-1931

365. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

CONGRESS CAMP, KARACHI,
April 1, 1931

CHI. KANTA,

I have your letter. Do not expect letters from me at present. I have no time at all. But you keep writing regularly. You have decided correctly about yourself. Do whatever Sumangal Prakash considers right. I shall be reaching Delhi on the 4th. I have to reach Ahmedabad on the 10th. I have to be there till the 13th and then at Broach till the 15th. I do not know the programme after that. Everything else is fine.

PRABHAVATI
FOR BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

[1] The resolution was passed.

[2] Editor, *Pratap*, Kanpur

[3] The telegram appeared as "wired by the correspondent on April 2, 1931". However, an identical telegram addressed to Harishankar Vidyarthi, brother of Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, was published under this date in the "Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi Memorial Number" of the *Narmada*.

[4] *Vide* also "Speech at Kanpur riots, subjects committee meeting, Karachi", 27-3-1931.

366. INTERVIEW TO "THE STATESMAN"

KARACHI,
April 1, 1931

In an hour's conversation with me early this morning, Mr. Gandhi indicated in some measure the manner in which he would put his case at the Round Table Conference, his attitude on the question of safeguards, his fears and hopes for the communal problem and last, but not least, his faith in the honesty of Great Britain's present policy towards India, however mistaken that policy may be.

He said that on the whole he was very well content with the week's work in Congress.

I asked Mr. Gandhi if he felt secure in the freedom of the mandate that Congress had given him for his work at the Round Table Conference. He replied :

The mandate is not an absolutely free mandate, for I am bound by the terms of the main resolution[1] passed by the Congress this week. I do not think you could say that those terms are exactly ambiguous, but rather that they are fairly comprehensive.

Yet they do allow me some latitude, for obviously there must be latitude in a discussion such as we shall have at the Conference. For instance, the words"such adjustments as may be demonstrably necessary in the interest of India" mean what they say, but they give us an opportunity to modify as well as to constrict our present ideas about safeguards and other things if we find that must be done for the sake of freedom.

We are prepared to surrender what can be surrendered with honour, but there can be no dishonourable surrender.

Q. What exactly do you mean by this new term 'equality of partnerships'? Does it mean a national status like Australia's within the British Commonwealth of Nations?

A. No, it does not mean that. Until a short time ago I thought that such a status would be suitable for India, but now I have come to see that certain things stand in the way.

You see, the nations in the British Commonwealth are essentially British or, as in the case of South Africa, are closely identified with British ideas and culture. Their people are racially British and their institutions are British. We cannot say that of India. We do not aspire

[1] *Vide* "Resolution on provisional settlement", 29-3-1931.

to identify our culture with British and the West. We are content and passionately want to retain and develop our own culture and order of society. So there is no real analogy at all between, say, Australia's status and India's future status within the British Commonwealth.

There can, however, be a partnership between Britain and India which will mean a *bandobast*[1] between the two countries for assistance, one to the other, in many things and for reciprocal obligations.

You mean, a kind of semi-contractual alliance. Just as England has an alliance with France for certain purposes of war, so you want an alliance between Britain and India, only this alliance will cover several other things besides war and will be a more fruitful and, let us say, a happier partnership than an alliance merely for war?

Yes, yes, that's it exactly.

And you do not want any more Viceroys, any more Lord Irwins?

No, I do not want any more Lord Irwins, any more Viceroys.

But when you get to the Round Table Conference, will you keep your mind open to conviction that Dominion Status will be suitable to India? If you come to see there that membership of the British Commonwealth would be in India's honourable interests, would you accept Dominion Status?

I am open to conviction about that, but I cannot conceive of its possibility. If I were persuaded of what you say, then I should frankly confess it and I should do my utmost to bring Congress round to the same point of view.

Acceptance of Dominion Status is outside the mandate. There must therefore be previous reference to the All-India Congress Committee and may be even to the Congress. But there will not be any quarrel about words. If there has to be a quarrel, it will be about the substance.

And what about these safeguards, Mr. Gandhi? The Working Committee admits the necessity for certain safeguards. Is one of them the retention of British troops in India?

I myself do not believe that any Army, Indian or British, is necessary at all, but there the Working Committee disagrees with me. That being so, I am prepared to agree that for a transitional period the Indian Army will need some British officers, because you have never allowed our own officers to learn all that must be learned about modern warfare. Perhaps some British regiments would be necessary

[1] Arrangement

also, partly for the same reasons. But they must be subject to the control of the Indian Government.

But how and why do you expect that they will be willing to serve here under an alien Government?

Well, we have known of mercenary armies in Europe in the past and though the inspiration of patriotism has supplanted pure mercenarism, the soldier asks for and receives monetary wages for his services. Why should he not be willing to lend his services on similar terms for the common good of humanity? But if your officers and men will not serve here under our own Government—well, we shall have to do without them.

Will you not admit that English troops are necessary in communal disturbances?

I do not. If our own troops are found wanting, the most that can happen is that we might have to put up with civil war for a time. But it is better that we should have communal strife and fight our own battles against it than that we should have to appeal to another country to set our house in order with troops over which our people have no control.

Very possibly there will be some serious communal strife when we have got swaraj, but only for a little while. If you will not help us to stop it in the way I suggest, then it may perhaps end itself in the exhaustion or destruction of one community or the other. There may be jealousies and disputes between factions, interests (if you insist on the point), even whole provinces.

It is not consistent with the self-respect of a country or a race that it should give *carte blanche* to the power of another nation or another race or individual members of it to say, 'These people cannot manage their own affairs, so they gave us a free hand to do it for them.'

Whatever the differences between us here, we are all Indians and our land is India. But I am not so pessimistic as to think that the lesson will be learned too late.

And what other safeguards have you in mind? There is finance, for instance. You have slightly alarmed some people in India who cannot afford a depreciation of the rupee's purchasing power. There are other people, Indians who have sent much capital out of the country with the intention of bringing it back to their own great profit when, as they hope, self-governing India will have sunk the rupee's value to very little.

Yes, I know that is being done and it is very bad. It must be stopped. And I know that there are people in some parts of India who do not want the rupee ratio reduced. But, I do not see why the rupee should not return to its old value of 1s. 4d.

As to the financial safeguards to be discussed at the Round Table Conference, well, we should of course, be under an obligation to pay for whatever assistance we seek from you.

The British came here first simply for the sake of trade. Now they say that they have a trust. Their rule has been disastrous for India, but nevertheless I will agree that the man in the street is honest in his belief that he has a trust to fulfil for India. The mischief is due to ignorance—the ignorance of insularity.

I have said that I cannot conceive of my accepting Dominion Status when I go to the Round Table Conference. I should welcome a closer association in equal fellowship that can make an outstanding contribution to spiritual greatness in international and inter-racial affairs.

The Statesman, 2-4-1931

367. SPEECH PROPOSING WORKING COMMITTEE, A.I.C.C. MEETING, KARACHI

April 1, 1931

Mahatmaji, in consultation with the President and Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, had prepared a list overnight, which he placed before the Committee and explained the inclusion of new names and the exclusion of other names to find accommodation. . . .

Mahatmaji walked into the A.I.C.C. meeting and moved, besides the office-bearers, the following for the new Working Committee : Gandhiji, Dr. Ansari, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Messrs Rajendra Prasad, Sen Gupta, Aney, Nariman, Dr. Alam, Mrs. Naidu and Sardar Sardul Singh. He said that Messrs Rajagopalachari, Pattabhi, Satyapal and Shiva Prasad Gupta had to be left to find places for Dr. Alam, Mr. Nariman, Mrs. Naidu, and Mr. Aney. Speaking in Hindi, he referred to the convention established in the matter and desired that the A.I.C.C. should accept this Congress Cabinet for the current year.

Mr. Punniah Sastri (Andhra) questioned why Bombay was given eight seats while Andhra, Tamilnad, Karnatak, and Utkal went without any.

Gandhiji replied that in these matters they ought not to think provincially. They must consider the work ahead and see if the names he had suggested were not necessary. . . .

A number of members rose and proposed names which they considered were left out. . . .

Gandhiji then replied :

It is most unfortunate that my friends from the South are not able to follow Hindustani. Otherwise most of the remarks that Mr. Satyamurti had made just now would probably have not been made. I said that the South was deliberately omitted and I said also that it was an omission purposely made by me. I made that omission deliberately in order to find accommodation that I personally thought was necessary. When I made the omission I had hoped that if I coupled the omission with the information that the omission was not the joint act of the Work-ing Committee but it was my own suggestion it would not be misunder-stood. People of the South know that some of my staunchest co-workers are from the South. They also know that I owe all that I am today to the South. I became known to India because of my identification with the South in South Africa and that identification was through an indentured Indian, by name Somasundram[1]. Probably the Indian world and much less the whole world would not have heard of Gandhi but for the accident of Somasundram being severely hurt and receiving my assistance. Since then my connection with the South not only with Hindus but with Mussalmans and Christians ripened. What more explanation do you want from me as to why then the South was omitted in my list of members to the Working Committee? Do you suppose that because I have omitted Dr. Pattabhi I shall not get any assistance from him? After all he was a party to the contract. The relations between members at meetings of the Working Committee are not at all of a strained character. Everything was discussed in the Working Committee. All persons affected were there except Mr. Satyapal. It was an accident that he was not there. Mr. Rajagopalachari was there and do you think I am capable of omitting his name purposely. Do you think I am not going to take from him such work as he is capable of? You are mistaken if you think that is going to happen. To my friends I would say that the

[1] Obviously a slip for Balasundaram; *vide* "The grievances of the British Indians in South Africa: An appeal to the Indian Public", 14-8-1896 and "An Autobiography".

name of Mr. Gopabandhu Choudhri was first put in because at Utkal is to be held the next Congress. But we found that we could not take out any one of the other names we had. Therefore it was I had to withdraw that name taking the responsibility on me. Mr. Venkatappayya's name had been suggested by somebody. I tell you I cannot do without him. But I know I can get his service whenever I want.

A MEMBER. Also Mr. Rajendra Prasad.

MAHATMAJI. He was deliberately omitted last year. You do not know him as well as I do. I know him. So I summarily rejected his name at Lahore. If you want to know why Rajendrababu is put in this time, it is because the Working Committee wants his assistance.

A MEMBER : Do you not want Mr. Rajagopalachari's assistance?

MAHATMAJI : Yes, I do. I want his assistance also. But he has been removed in order to make room for others. These are the names. The whole of India knows my connection with some of them. Therefore it was no question of North or South. I was not present when the debate on the deletion of the sentence in the General Secretaries' report took place. I have not read the report of it in the newspapers. I have no time to read newspapers. Whatever I must read, I read. Other things are given to me. I know one sentence was deleted from the report. I overheard a conversation between Mr. Rajagopalachari and Pandit Jawaharlal on the matter. Beyond that I do not know anything. This motion has absolutely no connection whatsoever with whatever reflection you think had been cast by the report on the South. It is wholly an independent thing, and it comes out of my guilelessness, simplicity of nature and my abundant trust in them. . . .

A VOICE. Was Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya's name considered?

GANDHIJI. It is deliberately not there.

DR. SASTRI. What about Mr. Rajagopalachari?

THE PRESIDENT. I withdrew it on his behalf. I know Mr. Rajagopalachari more than you do.

DR. SASTRI. The future Congress work in the South requires that Mr. Rajagopalachari should be in the Working Committee.

GANDHIJI. An endeavour will be made by the Working Committee whenever it needs to invite people from the provinces not represented here. That is all right, I suppose.

The Hindu, 2-4-1931

368. SPEECH AT JAMIAT-UL-ULEMA CONFERENCE, KARACHI[1]

April 1, 1931

There are many gentlemen belonging to the Jamiat-ul-Ulema with whom I am acquinted. Many of them are persons who have made great sacrifices during satyagraha and have helped us in many ways. I am grateful to them for this. Everyone feels that at present the atmosphere in India has become noxious. Hindus and Muslims lost their sanity in Kanpur, Banars and Mirzapur. I have heard that the Hindus started the riots in Kanpur. I admit that it was a grave error. Ever since the time of the non-co-operation movement, I have been shouting from the house-tops that if we wish to accomplish our task peacefully, we should try to reason with all people and make an impression upon their minds. If we carry out our task through the use of force, we shall be held guilty in the court of God. Even while picketing foreign cloth and liquor shops, the people overstepped the limits. It is possible that this may have had immediate good results, but we have seen, in Kanpur, how it is fraught with danger. When reports of the atrocities committed by Hindus reached me, my head bent low in shame, I was ashamed of myself. I should feel ashamed whenever either of the two communities commits atrocities, but those committed by the Hindus naturally put me to greater shame. It is a matter of regret that till today neither of the two communities—Hindus or Muslims—has
regained its sanity. Nowadays we have established the practice of returning a blow for a word of abuse and a bullet for a blow. This is an uncivilized practice. I say that not even a blow should be returned for a blow. In this matter, I humbly beg the Ulema to assist me. Please use whatever influence you have with the Muslims.

In political matters also, we quarrel with one another. Here, too, I wish to take as much help from you as possible. If we do not succeed in this, it will be practically futile to attend the Round Table Conference. I do not desire that this Government should become an arbitrator between the two of us and give an award. I shall humbly tell the Jamiat-ul-Ulema that it can be of great help in this matter. As a Congressman and as a Hindu, I say that I wish to give the Muslims

[1] At the Idgah Maidan

what they want. I do not wish to act like a Bania. I wish to leave everything to the honour of the Muslims. I would like you to put down whatever you want on a blank sheet of paper and I shall agree to it. Jawaharlal too had said the very same thing in prison. The Pathans of the Frontier Province carry rifles and swords, but in this war they did not make use of either, like brave men they received the bullets upon their chests, they bore in silence whatever suffering fell to their lot. Jawaharlal said: "I would put a pen into the hands of such people and ask them to write down what they wanted and I would affix my signature to it." It has become the duty of the Congress to settle matters now with minority communities in this way alone. Those who belong to the Congress cannot make any distinctions between Hindus and Muslims. From here we shall be proceeding to Delhi. We have received a telegram from Maulana Shaukat Ali asking us to send a delegation on behalf of the Congress to a conference of Muslims which is being held there. Sardar Patel has already sent in the names of the members of this delegation. That conference is being held on the 4th and the 5th, where every effort will be made [for a settlement]. A mountain of difficulties faces us, but if you too try, the problem will be solved within two or three days. I too shall do likewise. I am aware that the Muslims are greatly enraged by the incidents which took place in Kanpur and other places but, at this juncture, it is our duty to resolve this issue somehow.

The Congress has, by passing a long resolution, set its own standards, from which it can be seen that the swaraj which will be established will be for benefit of the poor. The Congress belongs to the poor, it belongs to the peasants.[1]

It is not right to say that the Congress is a Hindu organization. What is the Congress to do if Muslims would not care to go into it? The Congress is based on adult franchise, and any adult Hindu or Mussalman can join the Congress. No community is excluded. Ask the Muslim friends who are members of the Congress, and they will tell you that they have not come to grief by having joined the Congress. I ask you therefore not to suspect that the Congress is a Hindu organization. I ask every one of you to join the Congress and to take charge of it. But one cannot take charge of it by force. It can be done only by willing service. Ever since the Congress was started,

[1] The paragraph that follows is from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter" in *Young India*, 16-4-1931.

those who have served it have had charge of it. And yet the Congress does not belong only to them, does not stand only for them, it belongs to and stands for all. It is the swaraj Government in embryo. Its prestige is ever so much superior to that of the British Government, and the Congress President is greater than the Viceroy. Only moneyed people and men in high places know the Viceroy. One needs a motor-car to reach the Viceregal House. But the poorest man knows the Congress President (at present Sardar Vallabhbhai) and can walk up to him. The Sardar has dedicated himself to the service of the country, and he who serves the poor is great in the eyes of God. If you want to be in power under swaraj, I invite you to assume the reins of the Congress now by joining it in large numbers. It is the most powerful organization in the country, join it. We will welcome you.

At this juncture, I am reminded of the simplicity and determination of Hazrat Umer. He could not permit for himself or for his wealthy associates any luxuries or adornments. He made those who wore muslin or velvet discard those garments and made them wear khadi. He made those who were fond of finely ground flour give it up. Will not the Muslims today make such sacrifice for the sake of the poor?

The Spinners' Association, which is an organization under Congress, has to date spent Rs. 30 lakhs for this purpose. Who received this money? I would like to inform you that the larger portion of this amount has gone to poor Muslim women, as they form the majority among the spinners. The larger quantity of fine khadi is woven from yarn spun by sacred Muslim hands. Many of the weavers of khadi are Muslims. Is khadi made in this manner prohibited to you under a religious injunction, whereas cloth made in Manchester is something permissible? But forget the Muslims, for that matter. It is merely an accident that the major portion of that amount goes to the Muslims, but are not Hindu weavers your brothers? Cannot articles made by them be fit enough for your use? You refer to God as Rahim, you recite *kalamas*[1]. I am an insignificant individual, but I too have read the Koran Sharif. But there is not a single *kalama* in it which gives you the right to wear foreign cloth. Although thus the Koran permits you to do nothing else, only a handful of Muslims are wearing khadi. At the most, some wear mill-made cloth, but the majority wear only foreign cloth. If the Jamiat-ul-Ulema has any love for the poor, it is

[1] From Koran, embodying the central faith of a Muslim

its duty to take up khadi work. I know of an old woman of sixty who earns her living by spinning yarn. How much must she be earning in this way? And yet she breaks into tears if no one buys her yarn. Whether a cowrie has any value for you or not, that poor woman values it. From the money she gets from yarn every week, she does not buy tobacco or cigarettes, but lentils, vegetables, ghee and milk for her child. I have merely cited an instance to you. Do you feel no compassion for thousands of such poor people? If you do feel no compassion towards them, I tell you that you cannot attain heaven even by performing the *namaz* five times. A Hindu, with great humility, wishes to tell this to you learned Ulema. Moreover, I would humbly tell you that you may as well not recite *namaz*, but fear God and fear no man. If I am mistaken in saying this, forgive me, but understand the feeling in my heart.

Now I wish to address a few words to the Muslim zamindars of Sind. I am of opinion that Sind should be made a separate province. However, nowadays I receive hundreds of telegrams and letters from the Hindus of Sind. Today too a deputation of Hindus met me. I replied to them in accordance with my understanding of the situation, but I also asked them to go and meet Muslims first as came and met me. Now I ask you why are they afraid of meeting you? Why do you not go to them to see their privations? Why is it that the Hindus of Sind distrust you so much? They are afarid of you. Why are they afraid of you? Is it not your duty to rid them of their fear? If they are afraid of you, is it not a matter of shame to you? With a great deal of humility, I appeal to you, the Ulema, to persuade the Muslims of Sind to win the confidence of the Hindus there. I wish that the Hindus and the Muslims would jointly send me telegrams that both are agreeable to having Sind made into a separate province. Sind does not belong to the Muslims only but to both the communities. It is in your hands to make it into the best province. There are fakir-devotees like Jamshed Mehta in Sind. The Sind Muslims are a wealthy people. There are intelligent, rich Amils residing in Sind. Sindhis have gone forth to all the corners of the world. By combining all your abilities, you can turn Sind into the most advanced province. If the Hindus stop sending me telegrams, the country will save money, I can spin more yarn and devote my time to more important work. If you can do this, your achievement will

produce a good impression on other provinces. This is my humble request. It is my prayer to God that my words may touch your hearts and that He cleanse the hearts of all of us.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-4-1931

369. SPEECH AT PARSI RAJAKIYA MANDAL[1]*, KARACHI*

[*April 1, 1931*][2]

I did not suspect that my Parsi friends were so timid, but Sjt. Sidhwa has disillusioned me. Let me therefore reassure you that the Parsi community's interests do not need to be safeguarded in any scheme of swaraj, in as much as the handful of men and women belonging to that adventurous and resourceful community have never found any difficulty in any corner of the globe wherever they may have chanced to go. There were for instance only a few Parsi families in Porbandar in the days of my childhood when my father was Prime Minister there. But those families had carved out a status for themselves in the State. Why? Was it because their interests had been specially safeguarded by the State? Parsi Rustomji of happy memory enjoyed a unique position in the public life of the Indian community in South Africa not because the enjoyed any special privileges but because he had that resourcefulness and tact and public spirit with which Parsis are specially endowed.

And who am I to safeguard your interests under swaraj? Proportio-nately, perhaps, out of a population of a hundred thousand your commu-nity had more jail going satyagrahis and khadi wearers than any other community, or at any rate the Hindus. I have never met with a Parsi anywhere in the world content with the lot of an under-dog and wherever you have gone you have made your way in the world. What need have you for any special guarantees or safeguards? Supposing you were given proportional representation on the legislatures and on the Cabinet, how many of you would be elected? But by your qualities of head and heart your men hold the foremost positions everywhere. I would therefore ask you to cast off

[1] An organization of Parsis, which owed its existence to Jamshed Mehta, R. K. Sidhwa and Barjorji Bharucha. The speech appeared in Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter" under sub-title "Parsi Rajakiya Sabha, Karachi".

[2] From Bombay Secret Abstracts

such fears. You are called fire-worshippers keeping the fires eternally blazing. I assure you that your sun is never going to set.[1]

But having praised you let me now criticize you a little. How can you talk of your habit of wearing silk saris? You may as well say that you have been habituated to slavery. Sidhwa told me that 50 persons among you wore khadi, but that will not satisfy me. All of you should take a pledge to boycott foreign cloth. I congratulate you on not permitting a person who consumes liquor to be a member of the Congress. There are many among you who talk of giving up liquor, but how can they give up toddy, that tasty drink? Your mouth waters when its name is mentioned. On a sad occasion, it is toddy; and on a happy occasion, it is toddy; if it is cold, it is toddy; and if it is hot, it is toddy; this is all wrong. For one merit it may have, it has many defects. Hence the rule you have made is a good one. In accordance with it, all of you should join the Congress and do prohibition propaganda among the Parsis. Despite many threats, Mithubehn fights against the keepers of liquor-booths. A self-sacrificing Parsi like Durbari Sadhu has taken up his abode in Karadi and is doing this very work as his profession and, as a result has gone to jail. Even in remembrance of these servants, give up those poisonous drinks that dry up your blood. There are few communities which make charities to equal yours. But remember, you will not be able to maintain your ascendancy if you keep up your habit of taking liquor. The author of the *Bhagavata* has said that the Yadavas perished because of drinking. Remember another thing, that under swaraj the Head of State will not draw a salary of over Rs. 500; hence give up comforts and pleasures, else it will be difficult for Parsis to participate in the swaraj government.

When I arrived here, the Sardar told me to rest and said that he would go and meet the Parsis. I replied that elsewhere I would ask him to deputize for me but here that would not do. Here I must place my statement of account before you, and ask for yours. Mine is of course an open book. On scrutiny, yours shows large debits against khadi and prohibition. Clear both of them and join the Congress in large numbers, so that you will always win victory, victory, victory.

Young India, 16-4-1931

[1] What follows is from *Navajivan*, 12-4-1931.

370. AFTER THE CONGRESS

The Congress is finished. It was an object-lesson in quick organization.Without the willing co-operation of nearly three thousand volunteers, men, women and childern, and the public, a city accommodating twenty thousand persons with all the conveniences could not have been brought into being in twentyfive days. A band of merchants undertook the kitchen work, ensuring efficiency, economy and good service. The women volunteers vied with the men in hard work often involving prolonged vigils. But the real credit belongs to the Lord Mayor of Karachi, the great Parsi humanitarian and philanthropist, Jamshed Mehta. There are seasoned Congress workers who strove to make the organization so perfect. These I need not mention. The chief architectural feature of the Congress was its vast pandal which had no canopy but that of the blue sky. It became thus possible to ensure freedom from suffocating air and to provide ample accommodation. It saved enormous expenses. Instead of building the dais and galleries they were obtained by excavation as at the time of the Ahmedabad Congress. Another feature was the great khadi exhibition which beat all the previous ones in scientific arrangement. Although it was not part of a big show, it attracted vast crowds and was thoroughly successful from the financial standpoint.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's address was perhaps the briefest of all presidential addresses. He was able to finish the proceedings in two days—not a bad record. A day saved means much saving of expense and more of the fagged out exertion of the over-worked volunteers.

The Congress has endorsed the provisional settlement and issued in the clearest possible terms its delegation.

Much has yet to happen before the delegation can take part in any conference that may be held. The duty of Congressmen is now clear. They must faithfully observe the terms of the provisional settlement. They must clear the atmosphere of every trace of violence and therefore first examine and purify themselves. The nation must achieve the boycott of foreign cloth and see that the gospel of the wheel spreads through every village of India. Before this can be accomplished, we must develop much greater love of the famishing millions than we have. The drunkard and the drug addict must be induced, not forced to give up their vice. These things require greater

organization, greater co-operation among ourselves and a living faith in non-violence in thought, word and deed. Whether it is taken up as a policy or a creed, mind and body must act together while the policy or the creed is in operation.

While the truce lasts we must not boycott British goods as such. Last but not least, one must achieve Hindu-Muslim unity. How this is to be done I know. The Hindus have to dare to trust them and let the Mussalmans and the Sikhs take what they want. This rids the nation of all communal taint. But of this hereafter.

Young India, 2-4-1931

371. LET US REPENT

But the hatred which was created and which has been shown in words and actions has been so intolerable that it must set one to think whether release of such mighty forces of hatred all round the country is advisable. From morning till late night one heard through talks, songs, through slogans and felt such mighty torrents of hatred that it was sickening to find such a degradation in large mass of people. I use the word 'degradation' with full responsibility. It appeared that speaking lies was a matter of full licence and liberty. To attack Government officers, police officers, men who disagreed, for something which was entirely untrue, for something which never happened, was a daily common event seen on the roads and everywhere. More than words can express the cruelties and the injustice inflicted on the traders of British goods especially, and some other foreign goods were wide, intolerable and unbearable. To request a man not to deal in one article and to request another not to purchase an article is one thing, but to *force* a man by all possible means, by abusing him, by obstructing him, by making his life miserable in every way is another thing, and there, I must admit, non-violence has miserably failed. I am certain in my mind that the hatred created and the cruelties inflicted were far from non-violence and against all principles and teachings of Mahatmaji. It was a common practice to obstruct and inflict with all kinds of tactics to make persons' lives miserable whenever one disagreed with the general movement. In every province there were different types of activities and it appears that either one had to accept such dictation of somebody or one had to go through whatever was inflicted upon him by any small or large band of children, ladies or full grownup men. According to them, to differ in any way was pro-British, pro-Government or unfaithfulness to the country, and today one can see clearly mental victims of these forces of hatred in several houses.

But the danger is still greater. The taste of the blood—breaking laws—has been so attractive that one finds today this blessed satyagraha on the lips of everyone. As soon as you differ anywhere, be it in a school, in a house, in a group, in a circle of friends, in business, in an office, you find immediately threat of satyagraha pointed out to you at every time. Between employer and employee, landlord and tenant, parents and children, teachers and pupils, brothers and friends, everywhere this pointed bayonet of satyagraha seems to be ready for use. To break laws and rules of society or of the State seems to be so easy and handy. If a college professor suggests discipline, if a municipal officer recommends extra tax, if children are requested not to make noise, if hawkers are told to remove obstructions on roads, if changes or transfers are being arranged, if anything is done which does not suit anybody else, there is this dagger of satyagraha pointed at you. Discrimination where to use and how to use seems to have been entirely lost in the whole nation, and this is a danger signal for any nation or country. It is exactly like an aeroplane, which is being used generally to fly from one country to another speedily and is also used for throwing bombs. It is exactly like matches, which give light, and are also used for burning a house. One can clearly see this danger signal in the satyagraha weapon also. Satyagraha can be used to advantage but it can also be misused to entire destruction. I feel that unless those who proclaim satyagraha as the best weapon to the wide world did feel their responsibility in this matter, they would soon find the tables turned not only against themselves but on the whole country. If I can humbly suggest, I feel that some of the rigidly trained leaders, free from hated, should now do nothing else but pass some years of their lives in each province and each city and village to make people understand what real satyagraha or true non-violence means, how it can be brought into operation and when it ought to be brought into operation. I would humbly suggest a regular school of non-violence in every province, where high-minded souls who thoroughly understand this subject scientifically and religiously ought to be teachers to the students of policies who in return should be kept as all-time workers to go round the country, give this message and teach what it is in reality. This can be the only safeguard for saving the country in my opinion.

Jamshed Mehta, the Lord Mayor of Karachi, is a patriot of the purest type. But for his identification with the Congress to the extent he was capable of and but for his having placed at the disposal of the Reception Committee all the resources of his Municipality, the wonderful Congress city would not have been brought into being in the incredibly short space of twenty-five days. His sympathy for the satyagrahis when the campaign was going on is well known. Any

criticism from one like him must therefore arrest attention. The quotation given above is an extract from Sjt. Jamshed Mehta's article in a Karachi Anglo-Gujarati weekly called *Parsi Sansar* and *Lokasevak*. The criticism I have copied follows a glowing tribute paid by him to the satyagrahis who bore suffering without retaliation. But we have no reason to be puffed up with pride over certificates of merit. In so far as we observed non-violence we only did our duty.

It is then the warning of this true friend of humanity and his country that we must treasure and profit by. What he has said of Karachi is likely to be true more or less of other places.

Non-violence to be a potent force must begin with the mind. Non-violence of the mere body without the co-operation of the mind is non-violence of the weak or the cowardly and has therefore no potency. It is, as Jamshedji says truly, a degrading performance. If we bear malice and hatred in our bosoms and pretend not to retaliate, it must recoil upon us and lead to our destruction. For abstention from mere bodily non-violence not to be injurious, it is at least necessary not to entertain hatred if we cannot generate active love. All the songs and speeches betokening hatred must be taboo.

It is equally true to say that indiscriminate resistance to authority must lead to lawlessness, unbridled licence and consequent self-destruction.

If Jamshedji's criticism was not more than balanced by his appreciation, that is to say, if the sum total of real non-violence had not overbalanced the unreal, India would not have gone forward as it has done. But better even than the Karachi Lord Mayor's appreciation is the undoubted fact that the villagers have instinctively observed non-violence in a manner never before thought of. It is their non-violence that has conduced to the growth of nationl consciousness.

The mysterious effect of non-violence is not be measured by its visible effect. But we dare not rest content so long as the poison of hatred is allowed to permeate society. This struggle is a stupendous effort at conversion. We aim at nothing less than the conversion of the English. It can never be done by harbouring ill will and will pretending to follow non-violence. Let those therefore who want to follow the path of non-violence and yet harbour ill will retrace their steps and repent of the wrong they have done to themselves and country.

Young India, 2-4-1931

372. SPEECH TO SIND DESH SEVA MANDAL[1]*, KARACHI*

[*April 2, 1931*][2]

Institutions like yours ought to be governed by strict rules and restrictions. The question put to me is whether workers who join the institution should take something for their livelihood or not. There are some who consider it below their dignity to take something and prefer to work in an honorary capacity. Some others say that even the nation's servants must get a subsistence allowance or else we shall have to seek millionaires as servants. I must say that there is false pride in holding that one would serve without taking money; there is no shame in taking just a subsistence allowance; it is one's duty. Mr. Gokhale began with Rs. 40 and never took more than Rs. 75. He lived all his life Rs. 75. He used to be a member of commissions, etc., and whatever he got by way of allowances, etc., he made over to the Servants of India Society. He used to consider it a part of his religion to take just enough for subsistence; how can we regard that as an error? It is desirable that even a millionaire's son should not rely on his millions but should donate his property to such an institution and then like other workers draw as much as is required for his livlihood.

The other point is whether such institutions ought to be bound by rules. A man without a pledge is like a ship without a rudder. I am not convinced by the argument that here one cannot manage without a hundred rupees. The Sindhis may well believe that they cannot manage with less, but my experience tells me that one can manage without difficulty on a much smaller amount. The institutions of Lalaji and Gokhaleji are well because of their names, but there are may other institutions which function in face of difficulties and restrictions and which have people who draw barely Rs. 25 to Rs. 30. Not more than Rs. 15 to Rs. 20 are ever drawn in Orissa. Hence we should lay down our requirements taking into consideration our country's condition.

[1] Sind National Service League, an institution "whose object is to organize public activities through the agency of whole-time workers, either in the capacity of permanent member or temporary workers". The speech was made on its second anniversary.

[2] From Bombay Secret Abstracts

Till today we worked in a wrong way—we did all our work in cities and formulated all our schemes keeping cities in view. We stayed away from village folk, hence they have so far regarded their privations as the result of divine wrath and could think of no other causes. Institutions of public service should be located among the people, be partners of their joys and sorrows and render service by spreading knowledge among them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-4-1931

373. LETTER TO G CUNNINGHAM

1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI,
April 4, 1931

DEAR MR. CUNNINGHAM,

With reference to your letter of the 9th March, I am now in a position to inform you that in virtue of the Congress resolution, of which copy is herewith enclosed, I was appointed by the Working Committee sole delegate to represent the Congress at any Conference at which Congress delegation is considered desirable by the Government of India, the way being open at the time for the Congress to be represented. I shall be obliged if you will kindly place this letter before His Excellency the Viceroy.

Yours sincerely,

[Enclosure :]

1. Congress resolution No. 5 of March 29th—the Provisional Settlement. . . .[1]

2. Congress Working Committee resolution No. 3 of 2nd April. . . .[2]

From a photostat : C.W. 9345. Courtesy : India Office Library

[1] For the texts of the resolutions No. 5 and No. 3 which followed, *vide* "Resolution on provisional settlement", 29-3-1931.

[2] *ibid.*

374. UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY

A well-known merchant of Bombay writes :[1]

If there is any truth in this, the traders referred to should think over it. This much is certain :

1. The import of foreign cloth into India will certainly cease.

2. Permission will never be granted to sell the stock still lying with them.

3. This boycott will succeed eventually through khadi alone. Even if it can be achieved without khadi, it will not serve the cause of crores of people. The special value of this boycott lies in its being beneficial to the latter.

4. Although the boycott of foreign cloth is bound to have political consequences, it was not conceived with a view to these consequences. When it is complete, the economic condition of crores of poor people will immediately improve and an unemployed nation will be busy at work. For crores of people living in villages, this is swaraj. They cannot derive any greater benefit than this from swaraj.

The role of picketing will become clearer once this is understood. The above letter indicates that the majority of traders are not convinced even after a struggle of twelve months. They are eager at any cost to carry on the trade in foreign cloth. Farmers have been ruined, but despite this, these traders are not prepared to carry on an innocuous business in place of their sinful one. As this is the prevailing situation, picketing should be taken up. But it should be pure, i.e., non-violent. The traders may laugh today, may abuse women, may sell their goods at places where there is no picketing; despite all this, women have got a unique opportu-nity. I have already shown elsewhere while discussing Shri Jamshed Mehta's article that our picketing was not free from blame.[2] Boycott which is forcibly imposed can never succeed. Hence when we have got this opportunity those women who have realized the necessity of boycott and, in addition, have also realized that picketing should be wholly peace-ful, should try and evolve a technique of peaceful picketing. If they do not see results, they should not accept defeat. As excitement

[1] The letter is not translated here. It described how several traders had attempted to circumvent the boycott of foreign cloth.

[2] *Vide* "Let us repent", 2-4-1931.

subsides, they should not be disappointed if some women who love excitement leave the ranks. They should carry on their work with steadfast faith and determination.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-4-1931

375. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 6, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

Mahtabbabu is a rich gentleman of Orissa, but he has given up that life now. He has come into colse contact with Bhai Jivaram. He wants to spend some days in the Ashram and then open an Ashram of his own in Orissa. See that he is comfortable in the Ashram. Show him the Ashram rules, and give him every type of work to do. He is of a straightforward nature.

As you know, I have no time to write about other things. I hope to return there on the 10th. I will stay with Ambalalbhai.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./1; also C.W. 8155. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

376. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

NEW DELHI,

April 6, 1931

Mr. Gandhi was shown the speech delivered by Mr. Zahur Ahmed at the All-India Muslim Conference today in which Mr. Zahur Ahmed had stated : "Mr. Gandhi had stated that there would be civil war in the country which would continue till one community was completely exhausted. I say why not test our mettle today and take decision on it?"

Mr. Gandhi told a Press representative :

There can be no more mischievous distortion of what I have said regarding internecine war than what you show me as having been said by Mr. Zahur Ahmed.

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-4-1931

377. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS ON COMMUNAL PROBLEM

[*April 6, 1931*][1]

I see that much misrepresentation is going on with reference to my attitude on the Hindu-Muslim question. My own personal view is quite clear. It is that of full surrender to any unanimously expressed wish of the Mussalmans and the Sikhs. I would like the Hindus to see the beauty of the solution. It can come only out of consciousness of moral strength. It follows that before I can cultivate Hindu opinion on a particular formula, I must have that formula. That is not forthcoming. That which was given to the Congress deputation at the Muslim Parties'meeting on the 4th instant was not a unanimous minimum. For one thing I had the warning of the Nationalist Muslims not to accept anything that did not proceed on the principle of joint electorates based on adult suffrage. Some of the Nationalists are my oldest co-workers to whom Maulana Shaukat Ali gave certificates for honesty, bravery and true love of Islam and who have proved the truth of the Maulana's certificates. When they tell me that separate electorates are bad for Mussalmans, I must listen to them. They further claim that the Mussalman masses do not want separate electorates. Be that as it may, I cannot identify myself with any solution which is frankly based on communalism and yet has not what may be called unanimous support of the community concerned. A solution that is admittedly defective and antinational must, to be acceptable, have the merit at least of almost unanimous support from those affected by it.

I am unable to understand the anger that is being shown against those who do not at once subscribe to the separate electorate idea. There is no doubt that it is possible for any large body of opinion to stop the country's march towards swaraj. Swaraj based on non-violence cannot be obtained if it is resisted by even a respectable minority. It is wrong to say suggest that under swaraj there will be majority rule. In true swaraj there can only be the rule of justice. In spite of the great awakening that has taken place, I for one would be content to wait if the accredited leaders of the Mussalmans or the Sikhs would oppose the attainment of a swaraj constitution. The fight

[1] From *The Hindu*, 7-4-1931

for swaraj once begun can only end when the constitution which is its visible symbol is framed and passed. The next phase of the struggle in the absence of a communal solution may, therefore, assume a different form, the goal still remaining the same.

Members of the All-India Muslim Conference have made angry references to the occurrences at Cawnpore, Benares, Mirzapur, Agra and other places. But will anger solve the question? I find highly exaggerated statements being made. Some of them are without foundation. If the goal of these friends is freedom for Hindus, Mussalmans and all others for whom India is their home, they will not allow themselves to be deflected such events from the path of justice. I join them in detesting the horrors perpetrated in these places. I am ashamed of them, whether perpetrated by Hindus or Mussalmans. Greater shame overtakes me when I find Hindus perpetrating butchery. But we have no data as yet for distributing blame. I do not believe in retaliation. For me as a Hindu, therefore, whether as aggressors or defenders, those who resorted to murders, arson and unnamable cruelties are undoubtedly to blame and call for the greatest condemnation. But I would implore everyone to avoid the language of anger and hatred for, without doing any good to anybody, it can only add fuel to the fire that has hardly yet died out.

A.I.C.C. File No. 332, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

378. SPEECH TO FEDERATION OF INDIAN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, DELHI[1]

April 7, 1931

I hope the English friends here will forgive me for addressing you in the national language. I recall on this occasion the War Conference in Delhi which was held in this very hall in 1918 and in which after some discussion with the Viceroy I consented to participate. But when I con-sented to do so I requested the Viceroy to permit me to address the Confe-rence in Hindi or Hindustani.[2] I knew there was no need to ask for this permission, but courtesy required that I should do so, lest my speaking in Hindi should shock the Viceroy. In this very same hall today I propose to follow the same practice. And I would

[1] This appeared as a condensed translation under the caption, "Question of Safeguards". Among those present were Sir George Schuster, Vallabhbhai Patel, Jawaharlal Nehru and Madan Mohan Malaviya.

[2] For Gandhiji's speech, *vide* "Speech on Swadeshi , Bombay", 17-6-1919.

suggest to you, members of the Federation, that it is your duty to carry on your proceedings in the national language, looking to the fact that the members of the Federation are all Indians and that you are allowing yourselves to be influenced by the present national spirit. Whilst I was listening to the President's[1] add-ress with attention, I wondered whether in speaking in a foreign language he would succeed in making on you and on me the impression that he desired. In no other country, dependent or independent, was such an anomaly to be met with. In South Africa, which is a thinly populated country, there has been a long struggle for precedence between English and Taal (a dialect of Dutch) with the result that the English colonists had to yield to the brave Dutch in recognizing Taal as the official language on the same footing as English.

Your President has dwelt at length on the insistence of the Englishmen that in any constitution which may be granted to India the rights of Englishmen, especially of the English commercial and mercantile firms in India, should be safeguarded. The Congress has considered this question carefully, and I should like to state its position. It has been said that Indian swaraj will be the rule of the majority community, i.e., the Hindus. There could not be a greater mistake than that. If it were to be true, I for one would refuse to call it swaraj and would fight it with all the strength at my command, for to me Hind Swaraj is the rule of all the people, is the rule of justice. Whether under that rule the ministers were Hindus or Mussalmans or Sikhs, and whether the legislatured were exclusively filled by the Hindus or Mussalmans or any other community, they would have to do even-handed justice. And just as no community in India need have any fear of swaraj being monopolize by any other, even so the English should have no fear. The question of safeguards should not arise at all. Swaraj would be real swaraj only when there would be no occasion for safeguarding any such rights.

How is it that the insistence on equal rights by Europeans comes to us with a shock of surprise? How is it that it does not strike us as natural and legitimate? The answer puts me in mind of an incident in South Africa. You know that I fought General Smuts in South Africa for a number of years. With reference to the question of race prejudice and colour prejudice there he once told me a story which impressed me very much. He said :

[1] Shri Ram

> When I was about the same time as you studying in England, I had no race prejudice or colour prejudice against your people. In fact if we had known each other we should have lived as friends or brothers. Why is it then that now we have become rivals, that we have conflicting interests? It is not colour preju-dice or race prejudice, though some of our people do ignorantly talk in those terms, but there is one thing which I want you to recognize. It is this. I may have no racial legislation, but how will you solve the difficulty about the fundamental difference between our cultures? Let alone the question of superiority, there is no doubt but that your civilization is different from ours. Ours must not be overwhelmed by yours. That is why we have to go in for legislation which must in effect put disabilities on you.

I understood what he said and recognized that we could not have any other standard there. I also appreciated the fear of being swamped in these days of swift communications. If, therefore, we wanted to live in South Africa, I said to myself, we must adopt their standard of life, so long as it was not against morality.

Let us try to understand the genesis of this talk of equal rights in the light of what I have said. With all deference I would tell the Englishmen that at the back of their insistence is their insistence on living their standard and civilization. There is a wide gulf between our way of life and that of the Viceroy however good he may be. Our people, when they go abroad, adopt the manners and customs of those countries, but shed them as soon as they come back home, and if they retain them, they become strangers. It is a mercy that the Western way of life has not yet taken deep root in our country. But the fear at the back of the Indian's mind is lest he should be swamped by the onrush of Western civilization. In this problem I invite the help of all Englishmen who, if they choose to stay here, must live in conformity with our way of life and as the servants of our country. The same cause has been at the root of the clash between the Chinese and the Europeans and the Chinese and the Americans. I want our English friends to understand what I am saying. The whole trouble arises out of the Englishman's insistence on living according to his Western way of life and according to Western standards. I am quite aware that our civilization has its blemishes,—untouchability is an indelible stain on Hinduism and I have called it Satanic,—but I do not want to give Hinduism up, for the simple reason that I was born and bred in it. I

would purge it of its blemishes. If then we contemplate examining so-called vested rights in the light of India's interest, it is not because of racial prejudice but because of vital neces-sity. Their vested rights may not smother nascent indigenous enterprise.

Your President has paid a tribute to the Congress, and suggested, that the Congress should confer with commercial experts in economic matters. I welcome the suggestion. The Congress would always be glad of your advice and help. I may tell you that the Congress does not belong to any particular group of men; it belongs to all, but the protection of the poor peasantry, which forms the bulk of the population, must be its primary interest. The Congress must, therefore, truly represent the poor. But that does not mean that all other classes—the middle classes, the capitalist or zamindar—must go under. All that it aims at is that all other classes must subserve the interest of the poor. The Congress stands for the industrial prosperity and progress of India. The industrial classes are slowly coming within the Congress fold. During the past year they rendered it help for which we cannot be too grateful. In fact your invitation to me to address you is not due to my name, but because I am humble servant of the Congress and representative of *Daridranarayana*. I cannot forget the services rendered by the commercial classes, but I want you to go a step further. I want you to make the Congress your own and we would willingly surrender the reins to you. The work can be better done by you. But if you decide to assume the reins, you can do so only on one condition. You should regard yourselves as trustees and servants of the poor. Your commerce must be regulated for the benefit of the toiling millions, or as Pandit Malaviya would put it, you must be satisfied with earning the 'pure cowrie', i.e., an honest penny. I do not for a moment believe that commercial prosperity is incompatible with strict honesty. I know business men who are absolutely honest and scrupulous in their dealings. It is thus easily open to you to take charge of the Congress. You know that there is no constitution more democratic than the Congress constitution, it has worked for ten years without a hitch. It is based practically on adult suffrage.

If we want your co-operation in our task, I want that of the Englishmen too. I want to remind them of the services rendered to the Congress in the past by distinguished Englishmen and Englishwomen like Hume, Yule, Wedderburn and Dr. Besant In fact the Congress owes its birth to the genius of a large-hearted Englishmen. Ant I want

English-man now to join us in our work of serving the poor. It is entirely a matter of good-will, a matter of the heart. Give your heart to the poor of India.

In conclusion, I repeat the Congress seeks to represent all. Our nationalism can be no peril to other nations, in as much as we will exploit none just as we will allow none to exploit us. Through swaraj we should serve the whole world. In this task I invite your greater co-operation so that civil disobedience may not have to be resumed. With your material and intellectul co-operation heartily rendered, our demand for swaraj would be absolutely irresistible.

Young India, 16-4-1931

379. DISCUSSION WITH SIKHS, AMRITSAR[1]

[*April 8, 1931*][2]

GANDHIJI. But I am prepared to meet and discuss things with as many of you as you like. . . . Here you find me prisoner of my own people. . . . But tell me now what you want me to do. Have you anything new to tell me?

SIKHS. No.

Then why should you have said my presence was indispensable?

S. We wanted you at the Sikh League.

Master Tara Singh summed up the Sikhs' attitude as he had done in his own speech : 'We are pledged to fight communalism tooth and nail. You suggest a national solution and we will submit to it. The total surrender that you suggest is not a national solution, we will not allow ourselves to be bullied by a community.'

But if you insist on the national point of veiw, the way you have adopted is hardly the way.

S. The only way to fight communalism is by counter-demands of the same

[1] From the "Weekly Letter"; Mahadev Desai reports : "At the place where Gandhiji was put up on an upper storey it was a bedlam let loose. From the moment of his arrival—or several hours before it—until late at night, the house was closely besieged by crowds which all hours of the day yelled and yelled until they compelled Gandhiji to go every now and then to the balcony to 'give his *darshan*'. It was most tiresome, but inevitable. Going out of this besieged house was out of the question and headache and temperature made conditions worse. The Sikh friends, who had now realized everything, were genuinely sorry for having called Gandhiji and themselves suggested that he should not go to the Sikh League."

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 9-4-1931

nature.

You cannot fight communalism by communalism. But mine is the only solution, communal or national. The moment you realize that we do not want a third power to arbitrate for us, we will for the moment agree to surrender everything—not because it is the ideal solution or a just solution but because it is the only expedient. And why do you fear willing surrender to a community as such? Take my attitude on the National Flag question. The flag is my own personal creation. It has been before the country for ten years, a lot of sentiment has gathered round it, much sacrifice and suffering has been gone through to keep it flying. Do you think it is a pleasure to me to agree to its being altered? But I know that you are dissatisfied and if only to please your community I agreed to have a Committee about the flag. In the same way we might be called upon to do many things to satisfy a particular community.

But this did not seem to carry conviction.

Well, then I suggest that you should meet the nationalist Muslims, discuss the situation with them and arrive at a solution which satisfies them and you and place it before the country.

Young India, 23-4-1931

380. SPEECH AT AMRITSAR

April 8, 1931

In a joint reply[1] in Hindi Mahatmaji, though ill, in a clear and low voice said that the piece of cloth tied round his head showed that he was not keeping well. A few months ago he was a prisoner of the Government but today he was a prisoner of the people. Since he had arrived in the morning the crowd had so besieged the bungalow that he had not been able to go out once and, therefore, begged the forgiveness of the Municipality for not being able to receive their address at Town Hall. The address had referred to communal question. They were all faced with the question of this communal settlement. He was trying his best to find a solution that would satisfy all parties. It was not the work of one man or of the Mahatma alone. If they could all make up their minds that they would not be afraid of each other and would not quarrel with each other, if they really wanted to live together at peace with each other, the matter could be settled without much difficulty. It was for them to give the lead. What Amritsar would do today, the rest of Punjab would do tomorrow and subsequently the whole of India would do the

[1] To addresses, presented at the place where Gandhiji was staying, by Amritsar Municipal Committee and the City Congress Committee

same. If what they had said in their address fully proceeded from their hearts he hoped they would prove their sincerity by living up to their professions.

Replying to the address of the Congress Committee, Mahatmaji said the name of the Congress had become great in the country. The eyes of the whole world had been fixed towards the Congress. By the Gandhi-Irwin agreement they had not as yet attained swaraj. He did not know how far or near it was. But let there be no mistake. The Congress had declared *purna* swaraj, i.e., complete independence as its immediate goal, and they dared not rest till it was reached. Its early attainment depended on the nation's capacity to live up to the ideal of absolute non-violence. In proportion they had failed to do so, their progress towards it had been hindered. He did not want the nation to adopt the path of non-violence out of weakness. The non-violence which he wanted the nation to follow was really the weapon of the strong. The Congress was pledged to the creed of non-violence.

Concluding, Mahatmaji said he was feeling weak and therefore couldn't say more. He thanked both the Committees for their addresses. Whatever work they were doing in India, said Mahatmaji, if they all did with united strength, they would surely win swaraj. To him swaraj meant *insaf* raj or rule of justice.

Mahatma Gandhi then once more stood on the balcony and gave *darshan* to the crowd below. They again lustily cheered. him.

The Tribune, 10-4-1931

381. OTHER POLITICAL PRISONERS

There has been much heart-burning over the fact that the release of all political prisoners whether convicted of violence or otherwise should not have been made a condition of the settlement. This was clearly impossible in the sense that the demand would not have been just or wise. It could not be made as a condition for suspending civil disobedience. It could be made as a condition in a final settlement. Some people have thoughtlessly argued that I would not demand the release of prisoners convicted of violence because of my non-violence. The fact is that my non-violence to be worth anything would have made the demand obligatory on me, had it been otherwise just in my estimation. But what was not possible for me to do in

connection with the settlement, I had no hesitation in recommending the Congress to do. The Congress resolution in the matter is publi shed elsewhere. It is, I admit, sweeping in character and includes all possbile prisoners or persons under restraint. It includes those who being out of India are prohibited from re-entering, and it in cludes the Punjab Martial Law prisoners who have been rotting in the jails since 1915[1] and are all old men by this time. It includes also over 400 detenus of Bengal and Punjab against whom no crime has been proved. They were arbitraily arrested and are as arbitrarily detained. It includes also the Meerut undertrial prisoners whose long-drawn-out trial is a perfect scandal. Sjt. Nariman has been appointed to make an exhaustive list of all these prisoners. It will be possible to take some step under the resolution as soon as the list is made. I hope, therefore, that all concerned will help Sjt. Nariman so as to enable him to prepare the list at the earliest possible time.

Of course the Government need not even wait for the list. I admit that from their standpoint all the prisoners will not stand on the same footing. Let them begin by releasing without being asked those at least whose case, I shall hope to show through these pages, is un-answerable. A strong Government never errs when it releases prisoners before the expiry of their sentences, for it ever possesses the power to rearrest them should they commit crimes. And political crime becomes rare when there is no political injustice.

Young India, 9-4-1931

[1] When the Defence of India Act was passed as an “essential war measure”

382. NOTES

GANESH SHANKAR VIDYARTHI

The death of Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi was one to be envied by us all. His blood is the cement that will ultimately bind the two communities. No pact will bind our hearts. But heroism such as Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi showed is bound in the end to melt the stoniest hearts, melt them into one. The poison has however gone so deep that the blood even of a man so great, so self-sacrificing and so utterly brave as Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi may today not be enough to wash us of it. Let this noble example stimulate us all to similar effort should the occasion arise again. I tender to the bereaved widow and her children not my condolences but my congratulations for having deserved Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi. He is not dead. He lives today far more truly than when we saw him in the body and knew him not.

HINDI OR HINDUSTANI

It is becoming increasingly difficult year afrer year to conduct the Congress proceedings or the A.I.C.C. proceedings in English. The majority in the A.I.C.C. do not follow English as well as they can Hindustani. And of those that do, the vast majority demand Hindi. At the open session Sardar Vallabhbhai had difficulty in obtaining a hearing for English speakers. For the next year the people from the South have promised to learn Hindi enough to be able to talk and follow the proceedings in Hindustani. If they will give three hours per day for three months most of them will have no difficulty in gaining a passable knowledge of the language. I hope the friends from the South and Bengal will make the necessary effort and save the nation's time. At any rate I propose to keep the members to their promise and not heed the demand for English if it is made in spite of the promise not to make it.

Young India, 9-4-1931

383. SOLE DELEGATE

The appointment by the Working Committee of me as the sole delegate to any conference to which the Congress delegation is desired by the Government was made after over two hours' exhaustive discussion. The idea behind it was that what was to be presented was not several points of view but only the Congress view. The Congress view was set forth in the mandate. What was not in the mandate was to be covered either by a letter of instructions from the Working Committee or instructions received from time to time. Either therefore the whole Working Committee should be appointed or only one member holding its power of attorney. The latter arrangement thus easily became the best, most efficacious and most economical in every sense of the word. For not only would money be saved but energy. What is more, Congress could not afford to keep away from the country without sufficient cause its best workers for any length of time. It is the implicit belief of Congressmen that in the end it will not be work at the Conference that will bring swaraj; it can only be work in India that can do it. Not the ability of the delegation will tell at the Conference but the power behind it. It was further thought that the Congress delegation was not designed to enter into or examine details but to discuss and examine principle and their application. And whether at the end of the Conference it was to be peace or war, every available hand was needed in the country. We want all our men and women in the country to avoid war. For the best way to ensure peace is to push up the constructive programme and to implement the conditions of the provisional settlement. Moreover the reader should know that the people directly affected by the settlement are not at all satisfied with the way in which the agents of the Government are carrying out its conditions. Constant vigilance on the spot is therefore necessary. From every point of view, therefore, the appointement of sole delegation was not only desirable but almost necessary.

But this appointment enchances my responsibility a thousand fold. My task, however, becomes light with the thought that I have but to carry out the instructions of my principals. For the rest I have to seek God's infalliable guidance and 'be careful for nothing'. And

then who knows that if and when the time comes, the way will be open for me to attend the Conference?

Young India, 9-4-1931

384. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

ON WAY TO AHMEDABAD,
April 9, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I thank you for your letter of 2nd instant, which shall receive immediate attention.

Though I am still feverish and travelling, I dare not delay writing to you on the matter mentioned in your letter of 31st March[1] and discussed[2] betwen us on 6th instant, when we met at your house. The only way I can account for the impression left on H. E. the Viceroy and later on you, is that we have been thinking at cross purposes. I could never surrender the primary function of the Congress, viz., to speak for and represent the peasantry. The Congress, as I told you, is predominantly a peasants' and workers' organization. The Congress could not possibly implement the terms of the settlement if the local authorities refused to recognize and treat with sympathy the advances of the Congress when speaking for the peasantry. The difficulties you mentioned about U.P., I am con-vinced, could all have been solved if the local authorities had sent for the Congress officials in their respective districts. Many of the Congress officials are well known to them. I suggest that any other attitude would be contrary to the spirit of the settlement, and must defeat the very purpose we both have in view. It would be wrong to accuse the Congress of breach of the settlement if the local autho-rities by ignoring local Congressmen render it impossible for them to implement it. After all the terms have to be carried out through the people and the Congressmen must fail if they could not interpret the people's wishes and woes to the authorities.

It is possible that the Congress officials may err as the Government officials may. These errors can be easily rectified. But the Con-

[1] *Vide* footnote 3, p. 334.
[2] For the note on the inerview, *vide* Appendix XIV.

gress may not, even on that account, be looked upon with suspicion or distust whilst the settlement lasts.

After my investigation of the complaints received by you about Gujarat and after my interviews with Mr. Garrett[1] and then His Excellency the Governor of Bombay I shall be able to give the illustrations of the application of the principle I have endeavoured to set forth.

Lastly I hardly need to give you my assurance that I shall strain every nerve to see that the terms of the settlement are carried out by the Congress so far as it is humanly possible.

My movement is. . . .[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. W. EMERSON, ESQ,

A.I.C.C. file No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library; also Young India, 20-8-1931

385. INTERVIEW TO "TEJ"

DELHI,

April 9, 1931

While Gandhiji was passing through Delhi on his way to Broach, he was interviewed by a representative of the *Tej* who drew Mahatmaji's attention to the news regarding the murder of the Midnapore Magistrate[3]. Gandhiji said :

I am deeply grieved. The young men who resort to such murders do no good to the country. I make an appeal to them. They must recognize that the country has gained immeasurably by the non-violent campaign. I contend that the progress would have been still greater, if there had been no violence done or preached. I still urge those who believe in the utility of political violence to stay their hands, whilst the Congress retains the creed of non-violence. If they are impatient, let them fix their own time-limit. But having done so, they must religiously abide by it and do propaganda work in that behalf.

The Tribune, 11-4-1931

[1] J. H. Garrett, Commissioner, Northern Division

[2] The source is blank here.

[3] Peddie

386. LETTER TO NARSINHRAO B. DIVETIA

April 11, 1931

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I did not know that you had gone to live in another house. I got your gift. Many thanks for it. The *Bhajanavali* contains one more English hymn. Take up that, too, for translation, when you have free time.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Narasinhraoni Rojnishi, p. 513

387. SPEECH AT CONVOCATION, GUJARAT VIDYAPITH, AHMEDABAD[1]

April 11, 1931

My blessings were already bestowed on you, that is, on the *snatakas*[2], and the *gramdikshits*[3] when I read out the address. But my inward blessings are to be given now. I hope you will take pride in the certificates you have received and will not underrate yourselves. I also hope that you will adhere to the pledge that you have just taken. It is easy to repeat a vow that is either written or printed. To grasp it fully and make up one's mind to act upon it is difficult. I also expect that you will not utter a single thought less or inadvertent word about the Vidyapith or other current national activities. I consider that to be the foundation of progress. The students must have this foundation; otherwise I have no doubt the superstructure will remain weak. Here a distinction has been made between the *snatakas* and the *gramdikshits* and that is right. If you want to preserve truth, you cannot do without distinguishing between the two. The curriculum for the *snatakas* is different and they have to put in more years. Because of that I hope the village *dikshits* will not think less of themselves than the *snatakas*. Theirs is no small task. I should not be surprised if they beat the latter

[1] This appeared under the title "A Proud Record"; the first and the last paragraphs are translated from *Navajivan*, 3-5-1931.

[2] Graduates

[3] Village workers

by their record of work. I for one would say that there is more need for these *dikshits* than these *snatakas* for since the inception of the Vidyapith I have been repeating that through it we must reach the village. The *snatakas'* ambition should also be to qualify themselves for service in the villages. We have not yet fully realized how the Vidyapith has served the nation.

I am delighted beyond measure to know of the part you have played in the great struggle. The Bihar Vidyapith and Kashi Vidyapith also distinguished themselves in a like manner. When the history of the fight comes to be written, the contribution of our Vidyapiths to the struggle will occupy a large space in it. Even the world will be proud of your glorious record. When in jail I read something about the students and teachers of the Vidyapith, I naturally drew a comparison between Govern-ment educational institutions and the national ones, and I felt that our programme for boycott of Government educational institutions had more than justified itself. When I say this, I do not lose sight of the fact that Government schools and colleges are still full of students. There is also the more painful fact that students are so eager to go to those institutions that they do not hesitate to sign the most abject apologies and to pay fines to get admission to them. I have known circulars by heads or directors of the educational department that those who may have directy or indirectly taken part in the struggle or who may have gone to jail may not be readmitted until after the previous sanction of these heads. What is one to say of those students and of those directors of education? I wonder if you know anything about the Government's attitude with regard to the Hindu University. It would have lost its grant, but for the fearlessness and the readiness for sacrifice of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji. But even if the grant had been forfeited, Malaviyaji would not have shed a single tear. He was determined that the University should rather go without the grant than that any teacher or student who served the country be penalized for his service.

Let the proud record of the Vidyapith fill the *snatakas* and *dikshits* with pride that they are the alumni of no less an institution than the Gujarat Vidyapith. Let them not feel that they had joind the institution through sheer helplessness. Let them not be depressed by the thought that they are a handful. Though a handful they are like the ocean, and though the students of Government institutions resemble by their numbers the ocean, they are as unreal as mirage. For the education that they receive and the life they are taught to live cannot

give them the vital energy to win swaraj, whereas an institution like the Vidyapith can do so in a large measure as one can see from the last year's record. Let those who have helped to maintain the Vidyapith realize that their money has been spent to noble purpose and that it has come back to them with compound interest. Let them study the Registrar's report and see if any institution in India can boast of a prouder record. I invite their attention to Kakasaheb's appeal for funds and trust that the money needed will be paid up automatically.

But that led him to the question of economy in national expenditure and the duty of those who would have to run the swaraj Government in future.

I want you to study the Vidyapith accounts. You will see that strict economy has been maintained. I do not think anyone can beat me in my passion for guarding and expending public money like a miser. The reason is obvious. Public money belongs to the poor public of India than whom there is none poorer on earth. That is why I asked the Sardar to make drastic cuts in the next year's budget for Gujarat. I am hoping that the provisional settlement may lead on to permanent peace, and I shall leave no stone unturned to achieve it. But man is often powerless before Nature. I at any rate cannot strive with Nature, and Nature seems for the time being to be against us. And if God wills that there should be no peace, you may be sure that the next struggle will be fiercer than the last and will engulf us all. And it may have to be fought without any resources. Gujarat may be always ready to contribute funds, but even the resources of Gujarat are not inexhaustible. Let us therefore think twice before we expend a pie and curtail our expenditure in all directions. I have often wondered where we get all our cars from, and whether we need them really. I know I often use motor-car but let no one follow my bad example. Let the *snataka* and the *dikshit* of the Vidyapith make a point of going out to the villages on foot whenever possible. Let us be worthy of swaraj when it comes. Let us remember that we have 20 points now instead of 11 which contain the quintessence of swaraj, and let me tell you that it was not I who fixed the maximum salary of the Swaraj Viceroy at Rs. 500 but Pandit Jawaharlal. He has given his thought to the problem and he has deliberately fixed that amount. And if that is to be salary of the Viceroy, what is to be the remuneration of an ordinary worker? Let us keep that ideal in the mind and cut our coat according to our cloth. The Government of today collects taxes by force and recovers revenue at the point of the bayonet. In swaraj we shall not be able to do so, we will have numerous Garhwalis

to refuse to use arms against their brethren. Let us therefore order our affairs in the terms of the poor of the land. Let us not go to sleep, now that there is a provisional settlement. We have to be more wakeful, more cautious, more careful and let us be ready to account for every pie that we receive from the public.

It is my duty to ask you to make real sacrifices. May the *snatakas* and *gramdikshits* fare well and may God grant them the strength to observe the pledge they have taken.

Young India, 16-4-1931

388. THE NATIONAL WEEK

It may be said that I had forgotten the National Week this time, or you may say that ever since I came out of Yeravda Prison, it has been one unbroken National Week for me. Under pressure of continu-ous work which keeps coming up, I become oblivious of the day of the week, the date, whether according to the Engligh calendar or the Indian one. I was not even aware of the single meal that I was to take on the 6th. Luckily, of late owing to travelling and lack of sleep, I eat practically only one meal a day, hence it may be said that I unknowingly observed the 6th.

I know that what happened to me also happended to others, as I am not aware of anyone in the camp having recalled this fact. If even a single person had thought of it. I would have known it. The truth of the matter is that the awakening of the past twelve months has made us forget such special days like the National Week. Prior to this, we pretended to be active during the National Week, thus making some amends for our year-long idleness. That idleness is no longer there and the impatience to win swaraj has kept many of us busy in the final bid for it.

This is as it should be. But it may be said that our effort is, to a small or large extent, blind. We would have reached our destination long ago if our effort were equally matched by knowledge and discretion. Although there is enthusiasm, it tosses us hither and thither for want of a lighthouse in the form of discretion. If that were not so, the unfortunate incidents which took place in Kanpur, Benares, Agra, Mirzapur and other places would not have occurred. Both Hindus and Muslims lost their sanity. Both descended to a level lower than even that of beasts. These are no signs of eagerness on our part to win swaraj.Those Hindus who used to blame the Muslims started indulging

in the very acts which they had condemned.Our peacefulness truned out to be merely verbal. Those who have learnt the lesson of peace know that a peaceful attitude has to be maintained not only towards the British, but also amongst oursevles. However, I hope to write more on this subject when I find time to do so.

What applies to peace also applies to khadi. I have regarded khadi as the very embodiment of peace, that is, non-violene. For, khadi implies pure love towards the poor, it implies unalloyed co-operation with them. Although those who give alms to the starving may be said to be compassionate, their co-operation with the poor is not untained; they put the latter under an obligation and so regard them as inferior to themselves. Those who wear khadi made by the hallowed hands of the poor—whether it be fine or coarse, expensive or otherwise—become their comrades and always help them to become industrious as also preserve their self-respect. The propaganda for khadi becomes an important activity druing the National Week.

And so too with untouchability. At the Jallianwala Bagh, the blood of all was shed together. There was no distinction there between the "touchables" and untouchables, between the Hindus, the Muslims and the Sikhs. A further attempt is also made during the National Week to make people forget these differences. In other words, this Week is celebrated for the purpose of self-purification. This article should be in the hands of the reader on the 12th instant, so that two days of the Week would still remain. Every reader who has not undergone these three kinds of purification should wake up and make his contribution to the best of his ability.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-4-1931

389. VIDYAPITH'S APPEAL FOR FUNDS

I draw the attention of readers to the Vidyapith's annual appeal for funds. The contribution made by the national Vidyapiths in the last struggle cannot be regarded as negligible. If the part played by the professors and students—both men and women—is taken into account, it is not an exaggeration to say that the Vidyapiths have justified their existence and have given adequate return for the money spent on them. I have had personal experience of the services rendered by the professors—both men and women—of the Gujarat Vidyapith. It is my hope that the Rs. 40,000 appealed for will soon be forthcoming. It should not at all be necessary for the Principal or the professors to go from door to door. It would do credit to both the Vidyapith and the people and a double purpose would be served if the Vidyapith gives an annual account of its services and the public, witout any effort, meet its demands for the coming year.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-4-1931

390. MY NOTES

THOUGHTLESS ARGUMENTS

The following extract[1] is from a letter written by a resident of Ahmedabad who has given his name and address.

There is a good deal of thoughtlessness in this argument. I do not harm the cause of the spinning-wheel when I stay at a mill-owner's place. Though I love the spinning-wheel, I bear no ill will towards mill-owners. I started propaganda for the spinning-wheel twelve years ago and my association with the mill-owners also dates back to the same time. This is not the first time that I have stayed with these people.

A satyagrahi bears no ill will towards anyone. He accom plishes his task through love. Even while staying with the mill- owners, I make them render some service to the cause of khadi. I take funds also from them for khadi. I have such friends among the mill-owners

[1] Not translated here

who, along with their families, habitually wear khadi. This is no outward show on their part, but it indicates their faith in khadi.

At present, the textile mills are doing no harm to khadi as the entire country has not become khadi-minded. The mill-owners would readily given up the textile mills if the entire country took to khadi and the spinning-wheel plied in every home. I believe they would not be against khadi even for a moment. I also believe that, if they are depraved enough to oppose it, their attempt to do so would prove futile. It is almost impossible to prevent the setting up of new textile mills so long as there are innumerable people who wear mill-made cloth. The mills should be prevented from competing with khadi. This has been done to some extent and attempts are being made to stop the mills' competition altogether. Hence the duty of the citizens of Ahmedabad and others is to carry on propaganda for khadi and to spread spinning far and wide. This task cannot be accomplished by bearing ill will towards the mill-owners or by severing my connection with them.

FOREIGN-CLOTH DEALERS

It is a matter of sorrow that foreign-cloth dealers do not still seem to be able to resist temptation. They should realize that foreign cloth—whether English, Japanese or any other—will no more be consumed in India. The opposition to it is increasing and not decreasing and it will keep on gaining in tempo. The golden remedy for the hunger of crores of people lies hidden in giving up foreign cloth. In order to make a success of this renunciation, some have laid down their lives, thousands have suffered lathi-blows, thousands have courted imprisonment. Do not the foreign-cloth merchants regard this as an adequate sacrifice? As compared to he loss suffered by the country, these people will find that they have no right to bemoan their own loss. The latter means their giving up a portion of the income which they have gained by carrying on an immoral trade for many years, and their being satisfied with perhaps a smaller income in future. Why do they not exchange their business for that of khadi? The art, interest and purity in the khadi trade are not there in the trade in foreign cloth. As the former is something new, there is scope in it for the full use of one's intelligence and courage. Both self-interest and benevolence are subsumed in it. Hence if it is carried on with integrity, it will be regarded as an untainted form of business.

But the subject-matter of this article is not trade in khadi, but the abandonment of trade in foreign cloth. After giving up the latter, merchants may trade in anything else they like. They should, however, shun foreign cloth looking upon it is sinful.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-4-1931

391. LETTER TO J. H. GARRETT

[*April 12, 1931*][1]

DEAR MR. GARRETT,

Perhaps you have heard from the Government of India that I would seek an interview with you regarding the Gujarat affairs arising out of the settlement. If you are agreeable and can spare the time, I would like to wait on you today at any time convenient to you.

Yours sincerely,

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

392. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[Before *April 13, 1931*][2]

CHI. MIRA,

I get your love-letters regularly. I note that you will meet me at Bombay on 16th instant for certain. The Broach appointment is cancelled. I therefore leave Ahmedabad on 15th instant. Therefore it is likely that you will travel by the same train as I shall. I leave by the first mail.

This should reach you just the day you would be leaving Karachi. Romain Rolland cabled to Ambalalbhai inquiring about your and my health. Evidently the reporters had done the mischief. He had wired back saying both of us were doing well. I wonder if you had anything from your mother. In any case she must

[1] The meeting with the addressee requested by Gandhiji in the letter took place on this date; *vide* footnote on "Letter to J.H. Garrett", 13-4-1931. as also the postscript to "Letter to J.H. Garrett", 13-4-1931.

[2] From the reference to the addressee "leaving Karachi". She reached Ahmedabad on April 13. *Vide* "Letter to Prabhavati", 14-4-1931.

have had anxious days for nothing. Your system will be all the purer for the measles[1].

I did not tell you that my blood pressure was found to be lower than 160 which was better than the last and the nervous system was quite good. Dr. Ansari had expected deterioration in both. Of course, I am still weak and disinclined to work. But that is natural. The terrible strain of Karachi has not still worn out.

Prabhavati has gone to Patna, her father-in-law being bad. Krishnadas and Balkoba are dangerously ill. Krishnadas is in Brijkrishan's house. Balkoba has pleurisy and high fever. Krishnadas has pneumonia and is now having gas treatment.

Imam Saheb too is faring none too well. I have not yet seen him. I must go and see him. I have prohibited his being brought to me.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 5431. Courtesy : Mirabehn; also G.N. 9665

393. MESSAGE TO CONFERENCE OF GUJARAT VIDYAPITH GRADUATES

AHMEDABAD,
April 13, 1931

I congratulate the graduates on the sacrifice they made in the fight but behind that congratulation is entertained a great hope. Graduates might be experiencing perhaps better than I do that the atmosphere is at present full of violence. Without entering into the reasons why it is not widely prevailing, I remined the graduates that they are the special representatives of non-violence and truth. If these two powers are dominant in their minds they might be able to rid the atmosphere of violence to a great extent.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-4-1931

[1] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, Mirabehn explains : "I fell ill with chickenpox in the Congress camp at Karachi and had to be removed to the fever hospital."

394. LETTER TO J. H. GARRETT

AHMEDABAD
April 13, 1931

DEAR MR. GARRETT,

Here is the promised statement about the new Mukhis or Patels whom we regard as undesirable with a summary of the evidence that can be led against them.

Babar Chatur Patel, Saijpur, Borsad Taluk :

He armed the outlaw Babar Deva with a rifle and was convicted and sentenced to two years' imprisonment but was later released by the Sessions Court. He has about 60 to 70 decrees against him. After his appointment, four houses belonging to the old Mukhi and two to other neighbours were burnt.

Lahri Mangabhai, Vasna, Borsad Taluk :

He was sentenced to six months' imprisonment three years ago. This Mukhi got Jhaver Gaba appointed as Rakha[1], although he knew that the latter was five times convicted. In his own street, three houses of Hijratis were burnt. He would not move to help put out the fire.

Mahomedkhan Nachhekhan, Porda, Borsad Taluk :

He has no stake in the village. He abducted a potter's wife and ultimately 'sold' her elsewhere. He similarly abducted a Dhed's wife. He is heavily in debt and there are warrants of arrest against him in the Gaekwad's territory.

Mirsab Majmudin, Davalpura, Borsad Taluk :

He was dismissed by the Baroda State for bribery. He does not belong to the village.

Jama Gaga, Palaj, Borsad Taluk :

He has been thrice convicted.

Jhaver Vaja, Ras, Borsad Taluk :

He has been imprisoned for two months for receiving stolen property. During his incumbency the crops of Ras were looted. His is a temporary appointment. He applied on the 11th instant for perma-nency.

[1] Watchman or guardian

Sandasar :

The Mukhi is a drunkard.

Anand and Boriavi :

These Mukhis had distress warrants against them, but these were stopped at the instance of the Collector.

Jehangirji Cawasji, Varad Bardoli :

The affidavits in any possession show that he has a force of 100 Dublas whom he uses for terrorizing the people, he has been taking bribes, he has a canteen, he severely assaulted a teacher who was a temperance preacher, and was found guilty by a Board of Arbitrators before whom he publicly apologized.

Abumia, Buhari, Bardoli :

He was convicted for theft and sentenced to three months' imprisonment.

Umarmia, (1) Shaku, (2) Ambada, Jalalpur Taluk :

He was convicted for one and a half years.

Dayalji Bhaga, Dandesar, Tarsadi and Quabi, Jalalpur Taluk :

Drunkard.

Prema Gopal, Tighra, Jalalpur Taluk :

Drunkard.

Govan Rama Akoti, Bardoli :

Several statements. He was guilty of keeping people under duress and recovering without permission for his use private carts and bullocks. He has no stake in the village. Also that he refuses to pass receipt for revenue recovered.

This list is not exhaustive, nor are all the complaints against the respective parties summarized. I have given a sample list from the papers before me. There should be a full impartial enquiry into these cases and similar cases unless the general suggestion made by me is adopted. Apart from the point of view of peace and expediency, I have suggested that the appointments which are admittedly temporary and "until further orders" can in no sense be regarded as permanent in terms of the settlement. However, the consideration that generally applies to the appointment of a Mukhi, viz., that he should be of the people and more or less a representative enjoying among them a status and influence is lacking in every case. In any event there seems to have been much dilatoriness in the reappointment of Mukhis and

Talatis. As to the latter, I also drew your attention to the fact that in Bardoli several Talatis have not been reappointed on grounds of retrenchment. As I told you yesterday, there are men acting for these old Talatis. It is ominously strange that not one of the Talatis in Bardoli has been reinstated.[1]

CONFISCATED AND OCCUPIED PROPERTY

Property in Bardoli confiscated under the Criminal Law Amendment Act has been restored practically intact, but in Kaira District, there are serious allegations of misappropriations. A number of articles belonging to the Kaira District Congress Committee are missing (fountain-pens, watch-chain, currency notes worth Rs. 10/-, etc.). 250 maunds of fuel in possession of the Ras Chhawni seems to have been appropriated by the Police. In Tranja in Mater, 20 maunds of cotton and five maunds of tobacco in Devataj were attached. Both are undisposed of, but lying in the *chora*, instead of being restored to the rightful owners. There has been vexatious delay in restoring confiscated property. There can be no question of contumacy as the revenue is being steadily paid wherever possible. Confiscated property should therefore be returned automatically under the settlement whereas in some [cases] Mamlatdars have asked for applications from those who want their lands back. As the sowing season is fast approaching, it is essential that people should be put in possession of confiscated property as soon as possible.

ASSESSMENT

As to assessment I have suggested that there should be no coercive processes and no fines or payments on account of Rakhas should be demanded. I have suggested that in every case the Collectors should confer with our local workers and come to an understanding as to the assessment. A place like Ras where movables are taken away, locks of houses broken, houses burnt, crops destroyed can hardly be expected to pay anything. I brought to your notice a case in which for Rs. 10/- revenue, Rs. 50/- worth of grain was removed and Rs. 10/- had been kept for annas 10/-. Here is another case.

In Ober (Jambusar Taluka, Broach District), lands belonging to some of the satyagrahis were forfeited and third parties who offered to pay up the revenue dues in respect of them were put in

[1] In his letter dated April 15, Garrett wrote : "Referring to our conversation of 12th, I am glad to inform you that 16 resigned Patels have already been reinstated in the Surat District.

possession of the land. They paid the revenue and took the whole crop. They think that the lands have been transferred to them for good and refuse to give up possessin. On the other hand, the Talati has passed no receipt to the original owner for dues recovered out of the crops thus made over to third parties and the original owners are asked to pay up the dues before they can be put in possession.

One Pragji Vasanji of Ugat (Jalalpur) had migrated during satyagraha and had not been able to reap his crop. He approached the Mamlatdar with an application for suspension. The latter admitted the application, but four days later issued orders for attachment of applicant's buffaloes which were returned only on his promising to pay half the assessment within a month.

I bring some of these instances to your notice to show how the spirit of the settlement is being broken probably unintentionally.

It is possible to bring counter complaints against the people, I repeat the assurance I gave you yesterday that it is Sardar Vallabhbhai's any my desire that the settlement should be observed fully by the people. Any case of breach on the part of the people brought to our notice shall receive prompt attention.

PENDING PROSECUTIONS

There are no less than 82 prosecutions in Borsad pending since long before the truce. There are several in Bardoli and Anand and Jalalpur. I append a detailed list[1]. Several cases have arisen, since the truce, as a result of the lack of information regarding confiscated lands. They are separately mentioned.

There is the case of one Ratanji Dayaram of Bajipura who with two others was prosecuted under Section 435 I.P.C. and sentenced to six months' imprisonment and fine. His companions have been released under the settlement but he is still in jail.

I gave you the name of Babalbhai, a Vidyapith student who is still in prison for disobeying the deportation order under the Foreigners' Act. His full name is Balkrishna Pranjivan Mehta. He has not only not been released, but has been asked, before he can be released on the expiry of his term, to sign an undertaking to the effect that he must inform the Dhrangadhra State of his movements whenever he moved out.

[1] Not traceable

There is a similar case of Fakirbhai Dhanjibhai. He disobeyed the order before the truce.

SOLD LANDS

I refrain for the time being from saying anything about sold lands beyond repeating that the least that I am entitled to is the list of sold lands, their acreage, and names of the buyers, the dates when they were sold and how.

Yours sincerely,

2 enclosures.[1]

[PS.]

I was thankful for the conversation of yesterday and hope that all the matters will be amicably and satisfactorily settled.[2]

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

395. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

BARDOLI,
April 13, 1931

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I had your long letter. It was not possible to reply to that. Today I have received your second letter.

Let Dhiru stay there as long as he can. It would be better to send back Rambhau if he is not doing any work there and wishes to return. You alone can take this decision.

The *takli* has great potential, there is not a trace of doubt about it. How does the Magan spinning-wheel fare ? Is your mind at rest now?

I may have to go to Nainital in the beginning of the next month. If that happens, I take it for granted that you will see me. Do not make this information public as it is not yet decided.

Can you not write a familiarisation note on stars and planets in such a way that a person like me understands. Do not write if it would take up days. I want it only if you can write it within one or two hours. I would certainly want the pictures of the stars. Why is the Orion

[1] Not given here; these were copies of two Notices dated April 14, 1931, issued by the Mamlatdar of Borsad to the defaulting Khatedars.

[2] Garrett replied on the same day : "I will take steps to inquire into the matters referred to by you."

called a hunter? Why is Sirius called a dog, etc.? Kakasaheb was to do this work, but now he is supposed to be as busy as I am. So, how can I give him the trouble? Are you still continuing with your writing about the *Ramayana*, etc. I will be in Bardoli till the end of the month.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

It is better to write to the Ashram address.

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 32963

396. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

April 14, 1931

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

I was glad that you wrote to me. I have indeed received innumerable complaints against you. I had even decided to discuss them with you some time. I don't take any action on the basis of a complaint till I have discussed it with the person against whom it is made. I have followed this rule in your case too. But as you yourself have now written to me in the matter, I will avail myself of the earliest opportunity to discuss the complaints personally with you. I am arriving there[1] on the 16th.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 7515. Courtesy : K.M. Munshi

[1] In Bombay; *vide* the following item.

397. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

April 14, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter and your wire. I shall be in Bombay on the 16th, the 17th and the 18th. I will be staying at 7 Laburnum Road. On the 20th and the 21st, I shall be in the Ashram, when it is proposed to perform the betrothal of Senior Lakshmi. My health is fairly good. Perhaps I get a little temperature in the afternoon. Mirabehn arrived here yesterday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3396

398. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

April 14, 1931

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I got your letter. You will find with this a letter from Shri Goradia. Read it and think over it.

I don't see any serious cause for a dispute.

I think that it should be possible to settle the matter peacefully with courtesy and politeness.

Do what is necessary. You who are on the spot can judge better than I. Satyagraha means the utmost humility.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9192

399. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

April 14, 1931

CHI. BRIJKISHAN

How much I extract from you ! And what service ! God will bless you; only He can reward you for this whole-hearted devotion.

My blessings to other workers.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 2385

400. LETTER TO RALPH BORSODI[1]

[After *April 14, 1931*]

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I have not yet received your book *This Ugly Civilization*. When I do, I shall try to look into it.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 17005

[1] In reply to his letter dated April 14, which read : "Dear Sir : Since you made the revival of homespinning and weaving a part of your work for India, I have followed with special interest the gallant struggle you have been making against some of the follies of industrialism. I am writing you because I believe that there are some ideas in my latest book—which is a criticism of this industrialized civilization of ours—which may be interest and perhaps of help to you. For this reason I am sending you today through my publisher, Simon & Schuster, New York City, a copy of my book *This Ugly Civilization.* 'It would make me very happy to have you read it. In any event, I wish you would look over the several references made to you, which you will find paged in the index. I am very confident my analysis of the diseases from which industrialism suffers is unusal, and that the remedy I propose would utilize in a totally new way the very machines which have destroyed India's prosperity for the purpose of restoring her to economic independence and self-sufficiency. With cordial good wishes, I am, very truly yours," . . .

401. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD,
April 15, 1931

Mahatma Gandhi again visited his Ashram this morning. Asked by a representative of the Associated Press if his visits to the Ashram were a breach of the vow[1] taken by him last year, Mahatma Gandhi said :

I have been going to the Ashram recently every day to see Imam Saheb, who is very seriously ill and other patients. It is quite untrue to suggest that this is in any shape or form a breach of my vow about not going to the Ashram. The vow has reference to settling down in the Ashram and leading there the ordinary settled Ashram life but it does not in any way preclude me from visiting the ashram for seeing the patients or in furtherance of the very thing for which the vow was taken.

Indeed, nothing in the vow prevents we from staying at the Ashram whenever I come to Ahmedabad but I deliverately refrain from doing so in order not to create any confusion in the minds of the large body of people who would not and have no time to understand the full significance of the vow. I consider it to be an improtant pledge having been taken by many of my companions. I wanted, therefore, to be extra cautious and hence did not stay in the Ashram even temporarily, but I should be defeating the very and of the vow if I heartlessly refuse to go there and see and console patients, or attend to some such matter.

Asked if he had permitted some of the volunteers with whom he had marched to Dandi last year, [and who were bound by the] pledge to stay at the Ashram, Gandhiji said :

If I found that it was necessary to keep any of my fellow-pilgrims for the furtherance of the cause, I should not hesitate to keep them at the Ashram without laying them open to the charge of a breach of the vow.

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-4-1931

[1] Gandhiji, at the time of Dandi march, had taken a vow not to return to the Ashram before India attained swaraj. *Vide* "Speech at prayer meeting, Sabarmati ashram", 12-3-1930 and "Violation of pledge", 26-4-1931.

402. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI[1]

[*April 15, 1931*][2]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL JOSHI,

Why do you worry ? If you have no work to do in Kheda, you need not stay there. If it is necessary to let the Ashram workers remain at the places where they have been working, their expenses should be provided by the residents of those places, Or you should decide for yourself whether they should be kept there and their expenses met by the Ashram. You may treat your decision in this regard as mine.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—7 : Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 214

403. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[*April 15, 1931*]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter.

You should come and see me and discuss in detail what the duty of the Ashram workers is. A rule that applies to me does not necessarily apply to all of you. Since I suggest the rules, I ought to be strict in observing them, even outwardly, though this may not be necessary in the case of some rules. You will be able to think of numerous instances of both types of rules and understand the reasons why they ought to be or need not be observed literally.

[1] In reply to his letter asking Gandhiji as to how to meet the expenses of the Ashram workers in Kheda District.

[2] According to the source, this and the following letter were written about or after the Gandhi-Irwin settlement. *Vide* also the preceding item.

If, when your work in Kheda is over, you have of other work before you, you also should go and live in the Ashram. You should so plan your work that, as soon as one task is completed, you have another waiting. It is certainly true that no one ought to return to the Ashram for the sake of an easy life. Does not our vow not to return to the Ashram before we have won complete swaraj mean the same thing? In other words, the Ashram is a place of ease and comfort and one goes to it for rest. But the volunteers who had joined the march are not free to enjoy such rest. But what should one do if it become necessary to return to the Ashram so that one may be able to work for *purna* swaraj? Or if life outside the Ashram is found easier? Be that as it may, I am not impatient, nor do I insist that my own view should be accepted. Think over all this and follow whatever rule you think proper for yourself and for others.

"The practice of yoga is to learn self-control."[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–7 : Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 213

[1] From a poem by Rajchandra

Mr. Peddie's[1] murder and the making of the murderer of Mrs. Curtis[2] a hero at the Sikh League meeting bring out in clear light the tragic fact that the cult of violence has still many votaries. The extolling of murderers is being overdone. If we are to sing the praises of every murderer because the murder has a political motive behind it, we should proceed from praising the deed to the deed itself. The praising of Sajjan Singh as a hero raises a doubt in my mind about the wisdom of my having been the authour of the Congress resolution[3] about Bhagat Singh. My motive was plain enough. The deed was condemned. The spirit of bravery and sacrifice was praised. The hope behind was that we would thereby be able to distinguish between the deed and the motive, and ultimately learn to detest deeds such as political murders, no matter how high the motive might be. But the effect of the Congress resolution has been perhaps quite the contrary. It seems to have given a passport for extolling murder itself. I repeat my deliberate opinion that whatever may be true of other countries, in India at least political murder can only harm the country. This is much more true whilst an experiment on the largest scale yet known to the world is being made to win liberty through strictly peaceful methods. He who runs can see that the experiment has proved its merit beyond all expectation, and is almost on the point of succeeding. I make bold to say that had the experiment not been interrupted by political murders and the violence in thought and less often in speech and still less often in action of civil resisters, India would by this time have been free.

Non-violence is the weapon not of the weak but of the strong. Non-violence means forgiving an injury and not retaliat-ing.'For-giveness is an ornament of the strong,'[4] says a Sanskrit proverb. Yudhishthira gave an exhibition of this quality when he even though

[1] The District Magistrate of Midnapore. He was shot dead by the terrorists on April 7.

[2] Wife of a British officer, she was murdered at Lahore on January 13.

[3] *Vide* "Resolution on Bhagat Singh and comrades", 29-3-1931.

[4] क्षमा वीरस्थ भूषणम्

provoked beyond measure by Virata not only for-gave him but took extraordinary measures to protect him against the wrath of his brother Arjuna who would but for those precautions have killed him for insulting and injuring the great king Yudhishthira.

Non-violence is not a mechanical performance. It is the finest quality of the heart and comes by training. When it comes, it seems, because it is, natural, and the posessor wonders that it should have cost any trouble at all in its attainment. What can be more natural than to return blow for blow, says the beast in us. What can be more natural or more human than that we should return a blow with forgiveness, says the man in us. He who gave the blow was ignorant and forgot himself. Why should the injured person betray ignorance and forget himself? Are the many wives who suffer the brutalities of their brutal husbands more than human because they forgive their husbands? They would of course do better if they would not add pampering to their forgiveness and would withdraw co-operation from their husbands for the the latter's own sakes.

But let me not go into deeper waters. Those who profess nonviolence should realize their strength and be non-violent in thought, word and deed. Let those who still doubt the efficacy of the non-violent method and are not sure of that of the violent method, ponder over the following :

1. India's millions have no tradition of the violent method.

2. They, the villagers, have never been known to have combined on any large scale to use the violent method.

3. They have no definite ideas as yet of political freedom in terms of India as one country.

4. Where, as in Europe, the people have gained their freedom by the violent method, the people were more or less trained in the use of arms.

5. They, the peoples of Europe, gained their freedom by being able to use greater violence than the enthroned authority.

6. It is at least doubtful if they, not excluding the English, have got real freedom. The masses there still feel that they are being ground down by the moneyed classes who have the reins of government in their hands. Look at their varied problems ever

increasing in perplexity.

7. In India on the other hand we know that it is through the non-violent method alone that the phenomenal massconsciousn ess, including the awakening of women, has come into being.

8. We know as a proved fact that where the people erred and became violent, they lost ground, became demoralized and were cowed down.

If I were to give more thought to the past twelve months I could elaborate the list. But as it is, it is perhaps enough for my purpose.

To those who have settled convictions in favour of the violent method, I say: You will give me the same credit that you claim for yourselves for love of the country. If so, you should accept my testimony that by mixing your method with mine you protract the agony. The belief which, I know, some of you hold that an occasional murder of an official helps the cause is wholly unfounded. On the contrary I know that every murder has hampered me in my pursuit. I know that you are as anxious as I am—you will probably say you are more anxious than I am—for the release of all political prisoners. You must admit that the terrorist method can only retard their discharge. Constituted as this Government is, all governments are, they will not discharge political offenders convicted of violence when political violence takes place. All things considered, therefore, you will do well to listen to my advice and request, and suspend your activities whilst the nation is giving a trial to my experiment.

Young India, 16-4-1931

405. AN ENGLISHMAN'S DILEMMA

India knows the Englishman who carried my letter containing the eleven points to the Viceroy and who waged a ceaseless struggle in the face of heavy odds in England whilst the Civil Disobedience was going on. Mr. Reginald Reynolds now writes the following plaintive letter :

I was very glad to hear from you in reply to my letter. Before this reply came the newspapers had already informed me, of course, of all that happened at Delhi, which from my point of view so badly needed explanation.

I must frankly confess that your letter leaves me entirely unconvinced. No one who knows you would doubt your sincerity, and so long as you can still speak for India, it is hardly the business of any Englishman to criticize your actions. Nevertheless, you will be the first to recognize my complete right to disagree with you, which I do emphatically on the following points :

1. The Government is not pledged to grant *purna* swaraj, and it would be thrown out if it attempted to do so. MacDonald only remains in office because he has not the courage to deal justly with your country, and justice would cost him that office. If you accept less than *purna* Swaraj —less than your birthright, that is to say,—where does the Independence Resolution at Lahore[1] come in, and how does it differ from "Dominion Status"? What advance was made, and what did the pledge really mean?

2. Oppressin still continues. How do you hope for freedom from the hands of those who defy Indian public opinion and use their armed forces to drive bargains with you on your own soil for a 'truce'? Where is the 'change of heart'?

3. From time to time you have put forward terms—the Delhi Manifesto of November 1929[2], your own Eleven Points[3], the terms you gave to Slocombe[4], the 'Gandhi-Nehru Terms'[5]. What has become of these? The Government meets them in graceful 'concessions' whereby a few are to be fulfilled in some measure *at its own 'discretion'*. But :

They have not pledged themselves to *anything* in the way of self-government.

[1] *Vide* "Draft resolutions for A.I.C.C., Lahore", 26-12-1929.
[2] *Vide* "All-parties leaders' joint statement", 2-11-1929.
[3] *Vide* "Clearing the issue", 30-1-1930.
[4] *Vide* "Interview to *Daily Herald*", 20-5-1930.
[5] *Vide* "Letter to T.B. Sapru and M.R. Jayakar", 15-8-1930.

Nothing secures the proper and adequate representation of Congress in the forthcoming Conference (where you may easily be swamped by reactionaries appointed by the Government as supplied or the previous Conference) [sic].

There is no promise of the conditional release of *all* political prisoners (including those in jail before the present campaign).

And so on—you know the points infinitely better than I do.

I wish you Indian leaders could realize how extraordinarily difficult this makes things for those who want to help and look to you for leadership. If you do not stand by your terms, what surety is there in our case? We believed your terms to be *minimum* terms, from which you would never depart. Instead, we find you bargaining and whittling these terms down. How can we even speak with certainty again, and who would believe us if we did?

4. From the purely tactical point of view I cannot see what you have gained. Civil disobedience was commenced, I take it, because the Government would not accept the Delhi Manifesto. They have not accepted it today—not one of your four points. The arguments you use now for conciliatory methods are they very arguments which were then used by many to dissuade you from your course and bring you to the Round Table Conference. Those arguments you then rejected; why do you now advance them? The country has suffered terribly, but what for? Many are still in prison, much confiscated property is unrestored, so are the dead, and the work of the lathi cannot be expiated—what have you to show for this? What offer has Lord Irwin made that he was not ready to make before Civil Disobedience began? With the exception of the small concession in the matter of salt, I can see no single right or principle that has been established. The truce does not even represent the *status quo ante bellum* : it is a partial and patronizing restoration on the part of the Government of some of its spoils acquired *during* the struggle, but not of any of those rights *for which the struggle itself was fought.*

You will, I know, forgive my bluntness. I have neither age nor experience, but I have, I believe, enough common sense to appreciate such a situation as this. You will see that I attack your position from two sides, as it were. Firstly, because it is too moderate and secondly because (having regard to the moderation of your find position) your methods seem to me now needlessly drastic. Had you been moderate throughout I shold have disagreed but understood. But to adopt the method of a non-violent revolution with all its suffering in order to gain nothing at all—that is a policy I do not understand. Will India understand it?

I would like to venture one more final criticism. You live for the Indian masses—for the peasant and the labourer. Everywhere in this country I have

made that clear, and done my best to dispel the common idea that swaraj means the rule of the Brahmin and the Bania and the oppression of the poor. How then can the reactionary proposals of St. James' Palace in any way satisfy you? There has always been one point on which I have agreed with our worst English reactionaries such as Churchill—though I doubt whether they seriously care about it. They say that the so-called "reforms" are only designed to benefit and conciliate the propertied classes of India and increase their power over the illiterate millions. *I agree with this,* and I have always said, swaraj is not that : it is the opposite of that : it is the overthrow of the present conspiracy between British Imperialism and Indian Capitalism, and its replacement by a living and conscious democracy, which alone can protect the classes now socially or economically depressed. If this is true—and nothing less would have led me to the service of swaraj—what do you hope from conferences of princes, zamindars, industrialists and the like? I know there are men among them who are above the interests of class; but what do these as a body represent that is not more bound up with British Imperialism than with Indian democracy?

I have removed nothing from the letter except domestic and personal references. I publish the letter at Mr. Reynolds's wish. And I do so with pleasure as I know that though by reason of amazing faith in me the Congress endorsed the Pact[1], there are Indians who share this brave Englishmen's views. There must be also some Englishmen, be they ever so few, who are puzzled like Rey-nolds over my moderation and so-called inconsistency. I must, therefore, attempt to answer Reynolds's complaints for his and their sakes. India will want their active help and sympathy for many a year to come.

The charge of moderation I must admit. Friends who know me have certified that I am as much a moderate as I am an extremist and as much a conservative as I am a radical. Hence perhaps my good fortune to have friends among these extreme types of men. The mixture is due, I believe, to my view of ahimsa.

Inconsistency is only apparent. It appears so to many friends because of my responsivencess to varying circumstances. Seeming consistency may really be sheer obstinacy.

The real point is this. Charges of moderation or extremism or inconsistency ought not to matter. What must count with a public servant is the approbation of his own conscience. He must be like a rudderless vessel who, leaving the infallible solace of his own cons-

[1] Gandhi-Irwin Pact, *vide* "Provisional settlement", 12-3-1931.

cience, ever seeks to please and gain the approbation of the public. Service must be its own and sole reward. Whether therefore the argument and facts I am about to set forth serve their purpose or not, it must be sufficient for the reader as it is, I am aware, for Reynolds to know that in entering upon and advising the acceptance of the Settlement, I have done what in my opinion was not only right but obligatory.

Now for the facts and the arguments. Reynolds and those who think like him have been led into confusion because he and they have missed the historical perspective. A single new factor may change a whole situation. Reynolds mentions four events: (1) The Delhi Manifesto of November 1929, (2) The Eleven points, (3) The terms given to Mr. Slocombe, (4) The Gandhi-Nehru terms.

The Delhi Manifesto was an answer to Lord Irwin's famous declaration and was therefore just confined to that declaration.

The Eleven-point letter was written as a precursor to Civil Disobedience and set forth the conditions on which Civil Disobedience could be averted. It had therefore to be different from the November Manifesto.

The terms to Mr. Slocombe were given just after the commencement of civil disobedience. There was therefore a slight variation from the Eleven-point letter but no reduction of it.

The Gandhi-Nehru terms were given during the height of the movement and whilst we were all in custody and thus by being shut out of the world at a disadvantage. In all the four stages the Round Table Conference had not been held, the Government policy was not declared.

The Settlement is the natural evolution from the first stage. Whatever the variations between the stages, they are due to the varying situations. Unlike as in the four stages, the Round Table Conference had been held and the Government policy declared before the fifth stage, i.e., the Settlement, was reached.

At no other time was it possible to offer co-operation at the Round Table Conference because the British Government would not declare its policy and the intention of the delegates to the Conference was not known. But at Delhi last March the demand of the Conference delegates was known as was also known the British policy. The demand was Dominion Status. The British policy was a declaration tantamount to the acceptance of the demand.

Not that either the Indian demand for Dominion Status or the British declaration satisfy the Congress requirement, especially as they are hedged in by the so-called safeguards which, according to the Congress notion, certainly are not designed in the interest of India.

Nevertheless this is an unmistakable advance upon the past uncertainty. And when it was ascertained that it was possible for the Congress to press forward its view to the fullest extent, it was felt that the Congress would put itself in the wrong if it had declined to put forth its demand and press for its acceptance at a Round Table. The Congress would have been bound at any stage to enter upon a discussion of its claims after such declaration as has been made by the British Government. A satyagrahi never misses, can never miss, a chance of compromise on honourable terms, it being always assumed that in the event of failure he is ever ready to offer battle. He needs no previous preparation, his cards are always on the table. Suspension or continuation of battle is one and the same thing to him. He fights or refrains to gain precisely the same end. He dare not always distrust his opponents. On the contrary he must grasp the hand of friendship whenever there is the slightest pretext. The pretext here was the unexpectedly unanimous Indian demand, the British response, inadequate though it was, and the utter sincerity running through Lord Irwin's conversations.

I have never claimed any change of heart on the part of the powers that be. That has still to come. When it comes, there will be a settlement not merely provisional but absolutely permanent. Then there will be full surrender on the part of the satyagrahi; for change of heart means surrender to the Indian demand *in toto* and without any mental reservation.

Lastly, throughout all the stages there never has been a lowering of the flag. Dominion Status was given up on 23rd December 1929. It is now Complete Independence, i.e., association if possible with the British on equal terms and with the right to either party to dissolve it at will. That this may not be attained through conference as yet is quite possible; that the so-called safeguards may remain the halters that they are is also highly possible. If so the Congress will not be responsible for failure, but it will come out with enhanced moral prestige and its demand more fully known and equally fully justified. It is true that all the political prisoners are not discharged. Their discharge could not be demanded as part of the *Provisional* Settlement. They will be discharged if full settlement is reached. If it is not reached, those who

are temporarily out will then be in and increase the army of political prisoners. For a satyagrahi a prisoner's life is no disability, no unhappiness. Prison for him is the gateway to freedom.

Lastly, let there be no mistake as to what *purna* swaraj means to the Congress. It is full economic freedom for the toiling millions. It is no unholy alliance with any interest for their exploitation. Any alliance must mean their deliverance.

Young India, 16-4-1931

406. NOTES

MALAVIYAJI AND WORKING COMMITTEE

A reader asks :

> You explained to the Subjects Committee at Karachi why you kept out the members from the South; you never explained why you kept out Pandit Malaviyaji.[1]

The explanation was so obvious that nobody called for it. There could be no question of offending Malaviyaji. He is above being offended. No organization can add to his status or impor- tance by enrolling him as a member. His membership can add to its prestige. The Working Committee deliberately kept him out in order to preserve his independence and freedom of action at a given moment. Without being a memebr, since the release of leaders, he has always been attending the Working Committee meetings and taking an active part in its deliberations. Valuable as his work on the Committee has been, the members thought that his being subjected to the Committee's discipline might prove embarrassing to him. Indeed Dr. Ansari was so eager for Malaviyaji to be on the Committee that he preferred to be dropped out in favour of Malaviyaji. But the consi- deration I have just mentioned was so effectively urged by Jamnalalji that Dr. Ansari too became reconciled to Malaviyaji being kept out. This arrangement permits the Committee to avail itself of Malaviyaji's advice at its deliberations and at the same time leaves intact his freedom of action. Indeed even the Government has recognized his unique position in society by separately inviting him to the Round Table Conference.

[1] *Vide* "Speech proposing working committee, A.I.C.C. meeting, Karachi", 1-4-1931.

BOYCOTT THROUGH KHADI

Last year saw a striking increase in the production and sale of khadi all over the country. This was in the main due to the phenomenal demand stimulated by the struggle of which khadi at once became the symbol. Sales so far outran the demand that workers were hard put to it to organize new fields of production to meet the sudden rise in demand.

The ground thus gained during the year of national awakening should not be lost, but on the contrary, should be made the basis of still further expansion. The devotion of war time must continue during the period of peace, if the fruits of the work are not to be lost. The Congress attitude in favour of khadi remains the same in spite of the recognition of indigenous mills as a part of the boycott programme. It must not mean supersession of khadi. Mill manufacture is to supplement khadi where the latter is absolutely unobtainable. But at the present moment kahdi can overtake all the demand that can be made upon it. Khadi holds the key position in the foreign-cloth boycott programme. Not merely is no effective boycott of foreign cloth possible without working up the vast possibilities of khadi production, but if the fruits of the national boycott are to benefit the millions of our village population and not merely the moneyed few, it can be done only by the widest possible spread of the life-giving wheel. That is why the Congress at Karachi has again emphasized the unique position of khadi in the boycott programme, and has appealed to all "Congress organization and allied bodies to intensify foreign-cloth boycott by increasing khadi propaganda." The experience of the last year has shown the capacity of khadi production to respond promptly to any increase in demand; and we have to maintain not merely the existing work, but extend the spinning activities still further. The least that we must do is to reach the level of last year if we cannot show a substantial increase upon it.

Young India, 16-4-1931

407. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

April 18, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letters. You seem to have made a mistake in going there. However, don't feel unhappy and spoil your health. I feel that, now that you have gone, you will have to stay there for at least some days for the sake of form. If Harasbabu recovers, you should come away. Today I am in Bombay, and will return to Ahmedabad tomorrow. It seems I may have to remain there for some days. Let that not give you a fright. I am all right.

Mirabehn is here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3398

408. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

BOMBAY,
April 18, 1931

Answering questions put to him by a group of pressmen, regarding the recent complaint in a section of the Press, to which the retiring Viceroy also had alluded in his reply to the Mill-owners' Association address, Mahatma Gandhi declared :

I have no war mentality. I have peace mentality at the present moment and I should strain every nerve to retain that mentality and establish permanent peace in the country for which my companions also are striving.

Proceeding, he reiterated his view that the would not go to the Round Table Conference until the communal problem was solved. He added that for the present he had dismissed the idea of going to the Round Table Congerence until a communal solution was found.

Asked what his next programme was, he said he didn't know it and would not be able to evolve one until he felt that no solution to the communal problem was in sight.

Q. Can you make any statement regarding the communal problem?

A. I am unable to make any statement except that I shall leave no stone unturned and pray for success because I know prayer can move even mountains.

Q. Are you against separate electorates ?

A. I am against nothing that will end the communal trouble.

Q. Will not separate electorates widen the gulf between communities?

A. These are not things for me to consider.

Q. Do you expect to satisfy every section of Muslims?

A. I hope to satisfy all sections.

Q. What do you say about Mr. Shaukat Ali's recent statement about you being a danger in Indian politics?

A. Seeing that he is an old friend of mine, he was perfectly right to say that thing about me.

Q. What do you say to the complaint made in the Anglo-Indian Press that the Congress is not keeping the terms of the Truce?

a. I say emphatically "No", except there have been isolated cases and I am surprised to read Mr. Benn's reply. In Gujarat, there was satisfactory response. In Bardoli, for instance, peasants have been paying up dues as quickly as possible. Up to the 16th instant, Bardoli and Valod have paid Rs. 1,16,658 while Jalalpur paid Rs. 1,96,453, after the announcement of Provisional Settlement. I regard these as handsome figures and I cannot help saying they have been grossly misinformed. Regarding lands already sold to third parties, he said he would ask on bended knees these purchasers to return them and felt sure that every inch of land would be returned.

Asked if he was not keeping the country in suspense, he said that the country knew that every effort was being made to achieve lasting peace and if it be not available, the country should be prepared to suffer.

Asked if he thought that by negotiations he could achieve permanent peace, he declared that in negotiations backed by real strength, he most deci- dedly believed real peace could be had. Referring to the re-export of foreign cloth, he said that the scheme[1] was being put into execution and also con- tradicted the report that he had any talk with Mr. Geoffrey Corbett about the same.

The Hindu, 19-4-1931

[1] At a meeting which Gandhiji had with the mill-owners, it was decided to appoint an executive committee "to proceed with the scheme of speeding up re-export" *(The Bombay Chronicle,* 17-4-1931)

409. SPEECH IN REPLY TO CORPORATION ADDRESS, BOMBAY[1]

[*April 18, 1931*][2]

I had thought that the one address you had given me six years ago[3] was quite enough, but love knows no bounds and your love has prompted you to present to me another address. But you may be sure that I am not so unthinking as to appropriate all that love for myself, for I know that as in 1924 so now it has been given to me as a representative of the toilers of the land. I claim to live for the semi-starved paupers of India and swaraj means the emancipation of these millions of skeletons. *Purna* swaraj denotes a condition of things when the dumb and the lame millions will speak and walk. That swaraj cannot be achieved by force, but by organization and unity. Your address I take it is a token of your sympathy for *Daridranarayana*.

You have in your address referred to my endeavour for the uplift of the so-called untouchables. Their rights should be our sacred trust, but one of the indispensable conditions of swaraj is that Hindus wipe out that stain on Hinduism.

India does not live in its towns but in its villages. But if the cities want to demonstrate that their populations will live for the villagers of India the bulk of their resouces should be spent in ameliorating the condition of and befriending the poor. We must not lord it over them, we must learn to be their servants. When the cities realize that they must live for the welfare of the poor, they will make their palaces and institutions and the life of their inhabitants correspond somewhaat to our villages. Whilst therefore I am accepting an address from you for a second time you will permit me to hope that you will more and more make the cause of the poor your own and as an earnest of you desire to do so I want you to identify yourselves with the thousands of workers in the city. I want you to make them feel that the Corporation is theirs as it is of the well-to-do. Handsome is that handsome does, and Bombay the beautiful must do beautiful things for the poor. If Bombay is the premier city in India it is chiefly because of the Parsis whom the world recognizes as the most generous in their charities.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"; Gndhiji spoke in Gujarati.
[2] The date is from *The Hindu,* 19-4-1931.
[3] *Vide* "Speech in reply to corporation address, Bombay", 29-8-1924.

Does not this Corporation owe its influence to the singnal services of Sir Pherozeshah Mehta who was justly called the father of this Corporation? You may not then lag behind in the service of the poor.

You have referred to the question of communal unity. Let all of us Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis, Sikhs, Christians, live amicably as Indians, pledged to live and die for our motherland. Let it be our ambition to live as the children of the same mother, retaining our individual faiths and yet being one, like the countless leaves of one tree. You have blessed my endeavour to achieve communal unity. But it cannot be achieved by the efforts of a single individual.

One word more. If the appeal I have made in the cause of the poor has gone home and if you will identify yourselves more with the villages, a beginning can be made by introducing handspinning in your schools and making your 80,000 boys and girls spin on the *takli*. This can be done at the least expense and without any difficulty, and in the wake of the *takli* khadi will follow as a matter of course. What can be better education for our boys and girls than that they should learn through spinning to identify themselves with the poor. May God give you the strength and the will to serve the inarticulate millions of India.

Young India, 23-4-1931

410. TO THE SATYAGRAHI FARMER

Many satyagrahi farmers in the Kheda, Surat and Broach districts forfeited their lands, lost their crops, had their homes robbed; they were rendered homeless, the homes of some were burnt down and a settlement was made without getting anything in return for this and, going even further, those who could pay have been asked to pay up their revenue dues and, as if this was not enough, so many Patels and Talatis have not been restored to their offices—those who think along these lines can never be satisfied.

But another line of thought can be as follows. The farmer has no grounds whatsoever to complain. This is so because when he joined the struggle, he had decided to risk the loss of his fields, his home, his livestock and his life and property. He was prepared to lose his all in order to win swaraj. Hence, if he gets something back now, it should be regarded as a windfall. If he reasons on these lines, he would have no cause for complaint at all. Some may argue in their impatience : How can we be reconciled to the losses as long as swaraj has not been won? The reply to this is that this Truce has been signed in the midst of the struggle; it is not the end of it. While suffering a total loss, whatever has been spared should be gladly accepted. We should welcome any opportunity of sacrificing our all, till such time as swaraj is won. Hence no one should have any reason for despondency because of losses incurred. This Settlement has not been made in order to make good our losses; rather, it is a step towards swaraj. Underlying it is indeed the idea that we should spare ourselves any avoidable loss. This is already being realized. Whatever has been made good from the loss already incurred should be regarded as a fresh gain. Those who realize this should not become impatient; let those who are being tried be released at a later date, let there be delay in returning lands which have been attached, let some time elapse before Patels and others who had resigned and relinquished their offices can take up their posts again. This may involve a violation of the Pact in some respects on the part of the Government. We should put up with it and continue to observe the conditions which bind us. If we do so, we shall add to our strength in every way.

As we are not at present practising non-co-operation with the Government, we can meet its officials and put before them whatever complaints we wish to.

One of the biggest complaints is in respect of the lands which have been sold. It is necessary to be patient in regard to this. Owners of lands should be convinced at heart that in the end they will certainly be restored to them. But we wish to do so only in a straightforward way and not through force. We have a right to reason and plead with those who have bought these lands. I believe that we shall succeed in persuading them. But even if we fail, what does it matter? That should not make anyone conclude that we shall never recover the lands. We should have the self-confidence that we shall secure swaraj within a short time. The first task of the government under swaraj should be to redress such acts of injustice. Here I am speaking not of the distant future but of the immediate future. Suppose we do not win swaraj in the near future, then the time will again come for us to abandon our lands and our homes, and the Sardar, I and others will be enjoying ourselves in the prison-palace. Hence those whose lands have been sold, should have patience.

However, I myself have nost lost hope of persuading those who have bought the lands. These are our own brethren. It is reported that there are Parsis, Muslims and Dharala Thakores amongst them. All of them have a heart. They all know that they have bought the land cheap. They too would be ashamed of this fact. I believe that they will certainly return the land if they realize the fact that the land had been owned by those who had come forward to suffer for the sake of swaraj. The Patidars have a special duty towards the Dharala Thakores. They should remove whatever injustices the latter have suffered in the past; they should be made to feel one with the rest of us. It does no credit to a swarajist to give up hope of ever persuading the purchasers. Whatever happens, we should not start a struggle of any kind against them. We should avoid all such situations which would lead to a clash with them. The land will remain untilled this monsoon. It is our dharma to put up with this loss and those who have self-confidence will do so.

A few words now regarding the payment of revenue dues. It is the dharma of those who can to pay up their dues. Let no one believe in the topsyturvy justice that if one person pays up, others must necessarily do so; likewise, it is contrary to law to believe that no one

should pay up because someone does not do so. The right course is the one which I have suggested. Those who can should certainly pay up. There is no question here of paying up by contracting debts. It is solely a questions of one's own capacity. Our goodness and our strength lie in abiding by the conditions of the Settlement even at the cost of some hardship to ourselves.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-4-1931

411. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

SABARMATI,

April 19, 1931

MY DEAR ANGADA[1],

You will see I have dealt with your letter in *Young India*[2] as you had wished. Tell me if it gives you any satisfaction. If you are not convinced of the correctness of the step now, you will in course of time. It is either war or the attainment of the goal. Do not therefore desert the cause of give me up.

But I am concerned more with your personal references than with your spirited attack on the Settlement. Why has the engagement been again broken? What are you doing now? If you are not at peace with yourself there, will you not come here? You know that the Ashram is your second home.

For the first time after my discharge,[3] I feel I have a little time today.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : C. W. 4540. Courtesy : Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

[1] The messenger sent by Rama to negotiate the return of Sita by Ravana, in the *Ramayana; vide* also "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 6-4-1930, footnote 2. Reginald Reynolds had carried Gandhiji's letter of March 2, 1930 to Lord Irwin; *ibid*

[2] *Vide* "An Englishman's Dilemma", 16-4-1931.

[3] On January 26, 1931, from Yeravda Central Prison

412. LETTER TO SAHABJI MAHARAJ

AHMEDABAD,
April 19, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

It is only today that I find a little quiet to attend to the arrears of my correspondence. I thank you for your letter.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SAHABJI MAHARAJ
DAYAL BAGH
AGRA

From a photostat : G.N. 2158

413. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

April 19, 1931

DEAR DR. MAHMUD,

Twice I took up the pen to write to Syed Hassan Imam and twice I lacked the courage to write. I felt and still feel that it is best for me not to write to any Muslim friend so as to influence him in favour of the Nationalist Muslim view. But I shall redeem my promise to you if you still want me to write to Syed Hassan Imam.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. SYED MAHMUD
SWARAJ BHAVAN
ALLAHABAD

From a photostat : G.N. 5077

414. LETTER TO GOKIBEHN

VIDYAPITH,
April 19, 1931

DEAR SISTER,

Lakshmidas has already written to you and informed you that it has been decided to marry Chi. Lakshmi to Chi. Jivandas immediately. I am dictating this letter in case Lakshmidas has not communicated the *tithi*[1] to you. The ceremony will commence at 7.15 p.m. next Tuesday. I know that we should not expect your presence on that occasion. But the bride and the bridegroom must get your blessings. You should get this letter tomorrow, that is, Monday. If you do, you may send your blessings even by a letter and the couple will receive them in time. If, however, you get this letter on Tuesday, send your blessings by wire. All of us doubted whether it would be proper to celebrate this wedding so soon. We all share your grief. If any impropriety has been committed in fixing this wedding, the blame and the responsibility for it rest on me. As usual, Lakshmidas has taken no responsibility upon himself. He has not even arrived here till now—he will arrive tomorrow. I had only one reason for deciding to fix the wedding immediately. I don't look upon marriage as an occasion for enjoyment. I look upon it as a purely religious ceremony. We cannot postpone a religious ceremony, whatever the circumstances. Both Lakshmi and Jivandas desired that the wedding should take place early, and the former was keen that the ceremony should be performed in my presence. Since it was quite uncertain where I would stay now and how long, I selected the earliest *muhurt*[2]. I thought that it was necessary to tell you all this, and I satisfy my wish to do so while begging you to send your blessings. Send the letter or the wire c/o the Ashram. The marriage ceremony will take place in Dr. Mehta's bungalow near the Ashram. Give my blessings to Mani. I am sure she fulfils all your expectations. Also ask her to write to me.

Jai Shri Krishna from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9812

[1] Date
[2] Auspicious day and hour

415. LETTER TO J. H. GARRETT[1]

April 20, 1931

I enclose herewith a translation of what purports to be a notice from the Borsad Mamlatdar. You had left me under the impression that you would investigate the matters I had discussed with you and that I would know from you what was intended to be done. The notice seems to ignore these conversations and the Congress as the intermediery between the Government and the people. If this is to the position to be finally taken up by the Government it will, in my opinion, be a distinct breach of the Settlement.

After the conference with the local workers Sardar Vallabhbhai and I have come to the following conclusions :

1. Ras has been so hard hit that it can hardly pay anything.

2. The remaining villages will endeavour to pay one year's dues to the utmost extent possible. I am having an exhaustive note prepared on this matter.

3. Taqavi and the balance of arrears shold be suspended. If the Government notice of 11th March last re-suspends suspended arrears in all cases, how much more are the villages affected by the movement in need of such relief? That in the opinion of the Government their misfortunes may be considered to be due to their own fault is an irrelevant consideration after the Settlement.

4. The Settlement clearly contemplates waiver of Rakha, attachment, and notice-fee charges. These therefore should not be demanded.

On receipt of a reply from you I shall arrange with the people for payment in accordance with the foregoing offer.

I leave Ahmedabad for Bardoli on 21st by the 10.55 p.m. passenger train.

Young India, 20-8-1931

[1] Garrett was then Commissioner, Northern Division.

416. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
April 20, 1931

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I kept thinking about you the whole of yesterday and today. I can-not spare time to write a long letter. I pray that in East Africa all three of you may make great progess in every direction. Do all work without attachment. Read the preface to *Anasaktiyoga* frequently, if it does not tire you. The more you study it, the more clearly will you understand how to act, and in consequence you will experience spiritual contentment.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4783

417. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO HARI GANESH PHATAK[1]

[After *April 20, 1931*][2]

The Congress cannot permit any seals to be broken. By British cloth I suppose you mean foreign cloth. Under the terms, the

[1] President, Swadeshi Sabha, Poona

[2] The letter was written in reply to addressee's letter dated April 20, 1931, which read : "We are putting the following urgent matter before you for your advice. In last December the cloth merchants of Poona entered into an agreement with the Swadeshi Sabha that they would put seals on the British cloth in their stock, that they would not import foreign cloth and would not order cloth from mills boycotted by the Congress. They took assurance from the Sabha that it would not picket their shops. These terms were entered into under pressing circumstances. All merchants without exception entered into this agreement. Some 80 shops have their British cloth sealed till the Gandhi-Irwin Settlement and 50 shops are yet remaining. We stopped to seal the cloth as we thought it would run counter to the terms of settlement. But as the agreement was made before the Settlement of Truce terms and only its execution was left we do not think it would affect the Truce. We know that in Delhi the agreement prior to the Gandhi-Irwin Settlement has been allowed to stand as it was. If our agreement stands the vigilance committee would see that not an inch of foreign cloth comes to Poona hereafter. However, we would like to know from you whether we should proceed with our work or should give it up and allow the merchants to break their seals. The matter is very urgent and we hope it will claim your early attention."

Cong[ress] cannot distinguish between British cloth and other foreign cloth and give preference to the latter.

From a microfilm : S.N. 17006

418. LETTER TO J. H. GARRETT

GUJARAT VIDYAPITH,
AHMEDABAD,
April 21, 1931

DEAR MR. GARRETT,

I have to thank you for your exhaustive reply.[1]

The chief point of the moment is with reference to the status of the Congress in the Settlement. If you agree that the Settlement is between the Congress and the Government, and if it is the Congress that has to implement its terms so far as they are applicable to the people, it follows that the Congress must be recognized as the intermediary between the Government and the people whom the Congress represents. If such was not the case, I suppose that I should have no right to see you or to correspond with you or to receive your replies in the several matters arising out of the Settlement. Your letter raises a question of the first magnitude, and on your reply to it will depend the action to be taken by me in connection with the Settlement. Meanwhile, I refrain from dealing with the details covered by your letter.

Yours sincerely,

J. H. GARRETT, ESQUIRE
AHMEDABAD

A.I.C.C., File NO. 16-C. 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* "Letter from J. H. Garrett", 21-4-1931.

419. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

April 21, 1931

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

All these days I had no free time at all when I could write to you. But you were constantly in my thoughts and I used to inquire after you daily. I should advise you to remain peaceful in mind now and let things happen as they will. The best remedy is to do as follows :

1. Drink every fifteen minutes as much warm water as you can.

2. Take an enema daily.

3. If you feel hungry, drink the juice of oranges, pomegranates, pineapples or fresh grapes.

4. I put Ramanama last, but I believe it to be the best remedy. The other three to with this *japa*[1].

If you are destined to live longer, these measures will suffice. If not, I have no doubt at all that other remedies will fail, too.

I am sure that your mind is at peace.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 804. Courtesy : Balkrishna Bhave

420. SPEECH AT SABARMATI ASHRAM, AHMEDABAD

April 21, 1931

Mahatma Gandhi was present this evening on the occasion of the marriage ceremony of Lakshmi, daughter of Lakshmidas Gandhi, a khadi worker, in Dr. Pranjivandas's Bungalow near Sabarmati Ashram. The marriage ceremony was very simple and brief. Mahatma Gandhi administered the marriage oath.

Before the marriage ceremony, Gandhiji entered his Ashram and attended the evening prayer for the first time after his Dandi March. Addressing a small congregation consisting of the inmates of the Ashram, Mahatma Gandhi said that he did not expect to be back in the Ashram at so short a time. He had, however, not returned to the Ashram after the conclusion of peace. He had come for a special occasion, viz., the marriage of a girl who was brought up in the Ashram. The marriage of one connected with the Ashram during the time of war would cause surprise, but this

[1] Recitation

marriage was not to serve as an example. Those who could not do without marriage were at liberty to marry. Celibacy was enjoined in the Ashram, but it was not compulsory. Those who could not remain celibate, might leave the Ashram.

It was not known, when the fight would be resumed. But it would be a fierce fight, if it was resumed. The inmates of the Ashram should therefore be alert and augment their strenght. Courage and purity of the people had been fully awakened, and if the fight was resumed, crores would take part. But if all of them lost heart and remained aloof they (inmates of the Ashram) were to set example and give the lead.

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-4-1931

421. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

April 22, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letters. Why is it that you fell ill as soon as you got back there? Cannot you again run away from there and go to the Ashram? If there is nothing particular you have to do there, you should come away. I am writing this from Surat on my way to Bardoli. I think I shall have to stay in Bardoli for at least eight days. I am more or less all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3399

422. LETTER TO R. M. MAXWELL[1]

BARDOLI,
April 22, 1931

I enclose herewith copies of the latest correspondence between the Commissioner, Northern Division, and myself. If His Ex- cellency too takes the same view that Mr. Garrett does about the Congress mediation, I feel that it nullifies the whole Settlement. It was only when the Government of India and the British Govern- ment recognized that the Congress truly represented the people that there was the Settlement between it and the Government. To repudiate the Congress as the intermediary between the people and the Government means repudiation of the Settlement.

[1] Private Secretary to Acting Governor of Bombay

In the light of this extraordinary development, the other matters about which I complained on the 17th instant pale into insignificance. But I recapitulate the main points here to show how far Government have till now failed to implement the Settlement.

1. Some of the Sholapur prisoners and several other prisoners who the Congress claims are covered by the Settlement still remain undischarged.

2. Several such prosecutions are still continued.

3. Civil resisters coming under the Foreigners' Act have not yet had the ban removed.

4. Vatan and Inam cases against civil resisters have not yet been withdrawn.

5. Officials such as Patels, etc. who resigned during the Civil Disobedience period still remain unreinstated though the appointments held by the new incumbents are all, so far as I am aware, temporary or "until further orders", and although several new Patels are undesirable.

6. Confiscated movables and immovables have not yet under some pretext or other been returned.

7. Liquor vendors still continue their unlicensed business in spite of the knowledge of the authorities.

8. Names and prices of the forfeited lands with the dates of sales and the way in which they were sold have not yet been supplied.

9. On the ground of 'non-co-operation' during the Civil Disobedience period, the Government still withhold grants from the Ahmedabad municipality for education, dispensation from revenue dues for lands used for purposes of sanitation and for a hospital and maternity home. This matter though not specifically mentioned in the Settelment clearly falls within its scope.

I would like to have Government's final decision on all these points. I promised to furnish Mr. Collins with details of the cases under clauses 1 and 4. These are being collected. But I think a general order will cover these cases. But if the Congress is not recognized as the proper intermediary, everything else recedes in the background.[1]

Young India, 20-8-1931

[1] For addressee's reply, *vide* "Letter from R. M. Maxwell", 24-4-1931.

423. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON[1]

BARDOLI,
April 22, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

It grieves me to hae to bother you again. But the Settlement, so far as Gujarat is concerned, is in imminent danger of a breakdown. I enclose copies of the correspondence between the Bombay Government and myself . I am straining every nerve to prevent a breakdown. I am trying all the powers of persuasion I can command. But the strain is proving unbearable.[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Home Department, Political, File No. 33/XI & KWs/1931. Courtesy : National Archives of India

424. LETTER TO T. B. SAPRU

BARDOLI,
April 22, 1931

DEAR SIR TEJ,

Many thanks for your letter. I am getting better.

I am trying in my own way to reach a solution of the communal tangle. If there is no success I would not have the heart to go to London. I said as much to Lord Irwin. I did not meet the new Viceroy[3] in Bombay. I shall await the volumes on the Round Table Conference I thought something was already printed.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU
19 ALBERT ROAD, ALLAHABAD

From a photostat : G.N. 7591

[1] Home Secretary to the Government of India
[2] For the addressee's reply, *vide* "Letter from H.W. Emerson", 2-5-1931.
[3] Lord Willingdon

425. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

April 22, 1931

CHI. RAMDAS,

I am guilty in regard to all you brothers. I get letters from you but do not write. I could hardly talk with Manilal and Sushila. What sort of a father am I? I am writing this while waiting for the train for Bardoli. Ba and Devdas are at Bombay. The marriage of Lakshmi[1] and Jivandas was celebrated yesterday. I shall be at Bardoli for some eight days. Write to me there. My health can be considered good. Let me know your programme too.

Blessings from

BAPU

RAMDAS GANDHI
MUMBAIKAR'S BUNGALOW
P.O. BORDI
VIA GHOLWAD
B.B. & C.I. RLY.

From the Gujarati original: Ramdas Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru

426. TELEGRAM TO LAXMIDUTT[2]

[On or after *April 22, 1931*]

EXPOSE THEM.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 17014

[1] Daughter of Lakshmidas Asar

[2] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram dated April 22, 1931, from Indore, which read : "Foreign cloth dealers have broken promise. Please advise what to do. Laxmidutt Swadeshi Pracharak Mandal."

427. FOREIGN CLOTH AND OTHER BRITISH GOODS

It is devoutly to be wished that Englishmen in general and Lancashire mill-owners in particular will realize that India to be free from chronic starvation must for ever banish foreign cloth whether English, Japanese or any other. This is an economic necessity which will not be removed even when India acquires the most complete independence. Among the very first acts of a popular government would certainly be complete prohibition of foreign cloth.

And foreign cloth will be replaced not by indigenous millcloth but by khaddar spun and woven in 7,00,000 villages of India. Though the indigenous mills undoubtedly and automatically benefit by the foreign-cloth boycott, the Congress concentrates its main energy in this boycott, on behalf of khaddar, i.e., the toiling millions. Let all the foreigners understand that this boycott mevement is a mass movement, it is a humanitarian movement. Foreign manufacturers will in the end advance their own and their operatives' interest by realizing and recognizing the intensity and the purity of the movement. It has political consequences, but being a purely economic and humanitarian movement it should command the support of the whole world.

And yet needlessly bitter and unwarranted agitation has been launched out against foreign-cloth boycott in England. The tremendous advantage gained by England owing to the removal of the boycott of British goods is hardly ever noticed. This is not fair play. This suppression of a fact of very great importance makes much more difficult the solution of the Indian question which is already difficult enough. Do the English public know that the British goods boycottt movement is over thirty years old? Do they realize that it gained the greatest impetus during the last struggle and that it attained success almost as great as the movement against foreign cloth? India will for a long time to come, if not always, need certain things from foreign countries. Today the Settlement is provisional. Suppose there is a lasting settlement and an honourable partnership between England and India, will not the trade with England in other articles that India may need to import more than compensate for the loss of the piece-goods and yarn custom which England must forgo in every case?

The things to realize is that India can no longer be the dumping ground for every thing English or foreign whether she wants it or not. The days of exploitation are over. We may or may not achieve

communal unity. If we fail, we may not have immediate independence. But the world will find that all Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis, Jews, for whom India is their home, will fight unitedly to resist the exploitation of India's resources for the benefit of the foreigner. They will resist the ceaseless annual drain which starves all the communities with ruthless impartiality.

Young India, 23-4-1931

428. FOREIGN MISSIONARIES

Correspondents angry or curious have sent me clippings from the Press or their comments on what has been ascribed to me by interviewers on the subjects of foreign missionaries.[1] Only one correspondent has been cautious enough to ask me whether I am correctly reported. Even George Joseph, my erstwhile co-worker and gracious host in Madura, has gone into hysterics without condescending to verity the report. That is the unkindest cut of all.

This is what a reporter has put into my mouth :

> It instead of confining themselves to humanitarian work and material service to the poor, they do proselytization by means of medical aid, education, etc., then I would certainly ask them to withdraw. Every nation's religion is as good as any other. Certainly India's religions are adequate for her people. We need no converting spiritually.

I have given so many interviews that I cannot recall the time or the occasion or the context for the statement. All I can say is that it is a travesty of what I have always said and held. My views on foreign missions are no secret. I have more than once expounded them before missionary audiences. I am therefore unable to understand the fury over the distorted version of my views.

Let me retouch the statement as I should make it :

'If instead of confining themselves purely to humanitarian work such as education, medical services to the poor and the like, they would use these activities of theirs for the purpose of proselytizing, I would certainly like them to withdraw. Every nation considers its own faith to be as good as that of any other. Certainly the great faiths held

[1] *Vide* "Interview to the press", 21-3-1931.

by the people of India are adepuate for her people. India stands in no need of conversion from one faith to another'.

Let me now amplify the bald statement. I hold that proselytizing under the cloak of humanitarian work is, to say the least, unhealthy. It is most certainly resented by the people here. Religion after all is a deeply personal matter, it touches the heart. Why should I change my religion because a doctor who professes Christianity as his religion has cured me of some disease or why should the doctor expect or suggest such a change whilst I am under his influence? Is not medical relief its own reward and satisfaction? Or why should I whilst I am in a missionary educational institution have Christian teaching thrust upon me? In my opinion these practices are not uplifting and give rise to suspicion if not even secret hostility. The methods of conversion must be like Caesar's wife above suspicion. Faith is not imparted like secular subjects. It is given through the language of the heart. If a man has a living faith in him, it spreads its aroma like the rose its scent. Because of its invisibility, the extent of its influence is far wider than that of the visible beauty of the colour of the petals.

I am, them, not against conversion. But I am against the modern methods of it. Conversion nowadays has become a matter of business, like any other. I remember having read a missionary report saying how much it cost per head to convert and then presenting a budget for 'the next harvest'.

Yes, I do maintain that India's great faiths are all-sufficing for her. Apart from Christianity and Judaism, Hinduism and its offshoots, Islam and Zoroastrianism are living faiths. No one faith is perfect. All faiths are equally dear to their respective votaries. What is wanted therefore is living friendly contactamong the followers of the great religions of the world and not a clash among them in the fruitless attempt on the part of each community to show the superiority of its faith over the rest. Through such friendly contact it will be possible for us all to rid our respective faiths of shortcomings and excrescences.

It follows from what I have said above that India is in no need of conversion of the kind I have in mind. Conversion in the sense of self-purification, self-realization is the crying need of the times. That however is not what is ever meant by proselytizing. To those who would convert India, might it not be said, 'Physician heal thyself'?

Young India, 23-4-1931

429. 'ONE OF THE MANY' (?)

The open letter written by "One of the Many" is the late Sukhdev's letter. Sjt. Sukhdev was Sardar Bhagat Singh's comrade. The latter was delivered to me after his death. Want of time prevented me from giving the letter earlier publication. It is printed without any alteration.[1]

The writer is not "one of the many". Many do not seek the gallows for political freedom. However condemnable political murder may be, it is not possible to withhold recognition of the love of the country and the courage which inspire such awful deeds. And let us hope that the cult of political assassination is not growing. If the Indian experiment succeeds, as it is bound to, the occupation of the political assassin will be gone for ever. At any rate I am working in that faith.

The writer does me less than justice when he says that I have made no more than sentimental appeals to the revolutionaries to call off their movement, and I claim on the contrary that I have given them hard facts which, though they have been often repeated in these columns, will bear recapitulation :

1. The revolutionary activity has not brought us near our goal.

2. It has added to the military expenditure in the country.

3. It has given rise to reprisals on the part of the Government without doing any good.

4. Whenever revolutionary murder has taken place, it has for a time and in that place demoralized the people.

5. It has in no way contributed to mass awakening.

6. Its effect on the masses has been doubly bad in that they had to bear the burden ultimately of additional expense and the indirect effect of Government wrath.

7. Revolutionary murder cannot thrive in the Indian soil, Indian tradition, as history teaches us, being unfavourable to the growth of political violence.

8. If the revolutionaries seek to convert the masses to their method, we would have to wait for an indefinitely long time for it to permeate the masses and then to gain freedom.

[1] *Vide* "Letter from Sukhdev", 23-4-1931.

9. If the method of violence ever becomes popular, it is bound to recoil, as it has done in other countries, on our own heads.

10. The revolutionaries have an ocular demonstration of the efficacy of the opposite method, i.e., non-violence, which has gone on in spite of sporadic cases of violence on their part and in spite even of violence occasionally done by the so-called votaries of non-violence.

11. Revolutionaries should accept my testimony when I tell them that their activity has not only not done any good to the movement of non-violence, but it has on the contrary harmed the cause. In other words, if I had a completely peaceful atmosphere we would have gained our end already.

These, I claim, are hard facts and no appeal to sentiment. But the writer further objects to my making public appeals to the party and suggests that thereby I help the bureaucracy to crush the movement. Surely the bureaucracy is in no need of my help to deal with the movement. It fights for life both against the revolutionary and me. It scents more danger from the non-violent movement than from the violent. It knows how to deal with the latter. It is baffled by the former which has already shaken it to its foundations.

Moreover, authors of political murder count the cost before they enter upon their awful career. No action of mine can possibly worsen their fate.

And seeing that the revolutionary party must work in secret, I have no other way open to me but thay of making public appeals to its unknown members. I may say parenthetically that my public appeals have not altogether fallen on deaf ears. I count many past revolutionaries among my co-workers.

The open letter complains that prisoners other than satya- grahis have not been released. I have explained in these pages the reasons why it was impossible to insist on the release of the other prisoners. Personally, I want the release of all of them. I would make every effort to secure their release. I am aware that some of them ought to have been discharged long ago. The Congress has a resolution in that behalf. Sjt. Nariman has been appointed by the Working Committee to collect all names. As soon as he has got the list, steps will be taken to secure there release. But those who are out must help by preventing revolutionary murder. We may not have the cake and also eat it. Of course there are political prisoners who should be discharged in any case. I can only give the assurance to all concerned that the delay is

due not to want of will but to want of ability. Let it be also remembered that when the final settlement comes, if it does, in the course of a few months, all political prisoners must be discharged. If it does not come, those who are trying to secure the release of the other political prisoners will find themselves in prison.

Young India, 23-4-1931

430. VADAPALLI SHOOTING

The following report[1] deserves public attention and action. Since my discharge from prison, I have had many stories of police high-handedness in the South. The impression left on my mind was that in no other part of India was it worse than in the South and in the South nowhere worse than in Andhra. This verified instance perhaps bears out the previous evidence.

Young India, 23-4-1931

431. AGAINST PICKETING

A retired Government officer from the South writes:[2]

> I gather from the *Hindu* of Madras that you have published in *Young India*[3] a new code of picketing liquor and foreign-cloth shops, and have invited your readers to send you any other rules for picketing they might think of. May I venture to suggest Punch's famous advice : "Don't" in this connection? In your most excellent address[4] to the journalists explaining the terms of the Peace Pact you said among other things that freedom was not worth having if it did not include freedom to err and even to sin, and you pointed out that when Almighty God Himself had given the humblest of His creatures full freedom even to sin it was unthinkable that any man should dare to deny the same complete freedom to his fellow-creatures. May I most respectfully ask you then why you are toiling night and day to prevent people from drinking liquor or wearing foreign cloth if they liked to do so ? . . . with results that would be totally embarrassing. I hope you will not fail to bestow your best thought on

[1] Not reproduced here. It had stated that the police firing on March 30 during the car festival at Vadapalli, 15 miles from Rajahmundry, was unjustified.

[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

[3] *Vide* "My Notes", 15-3-1931.

[4] *Vide* "Statement to the press", 5-3-1931.

the matter and be quite sure that in encouraging picketing in any form you are not helping to 'sow the wind'.

The writer is plausible but not convincing. He forgets that picketing is as old as time. It does not need legalizing. The Settlement does not legalize that which was illegal before it. Picketing is the right of a reformer which he may not give up without giving up his cause.

The writer has been betrayed into the common error of thinking that because a man has the freedom to err or to sin, any warning against sin would be an unpardonable interference with the freedom. The fact is that individual freedom to sin carried with it the freedom on the part of the public to wean the sinner from his sin and even to legislate against it. 'The wages of sin is death.' No one can sin or err with impunity. What I have protested against and what the world has always resented is the arrogant and unctuous assumption by authority to force people against their will to be 'good' and to claim infallibility about its standard of what is good and what is bad. Peaceful picketing on the other hand is a friendly warning against a practice that a reformer thinks to be bad. When it goes beyond that point, and becomes violent, the law steps in and prevents the person from interfering with the human liberty. The writer has pictured the dangers of picketing in certain conditions. He is not even original in his illustrations. Temples have been picketed before now. Only the attempt proved futile and was given up. And there is nothing to prevent any person from renewing such picketing so long as he observes the rule of the game and does not mind public opprobrium. Picketing of drink and drug shops and foreigncloth shops has been possible and largely successful because there is a public feeling against these shops. There is therefore no danger of the Congress having 'sown the wind and reaping the whirlwind'. Picketing of the educative type has come to stay, for it has proved its usefulness.

Young India, 23-4-1931

432. AN INGENIOUS SUGGESTION

A correspondent sends the following ingenious suggestion for solving the communal puzzle :

> The Hindu and Muslim communities should have equality of votes in every province. As an adjustment of communal voting, this is obviously unjust to the majority community. The idea, however, is not to adjust but to nullify communal voting. The result of adopting my suggestions will be that every question on which the two communities find themselves ranged on opposite sides at the polls will in effect be decided by the votes of the other (minority) communities. It is understood that these other communities will have proportional representation.

I make no comment on it for the simple reason that everything will commend itself to me if it commends itself to the communities concerned. Will the Mussalmans be satisfied, and how would the Sikhs fare?

Young India, 23-4-1931

433. LETTER TO RAMBHAU KHARE

April 23, 1931

CHI. RAMBHAU,

You seem to have become so lazy that you never write to me. Why is that so? You should now shake off your lethargy and do some work. Otherwise your having gone there will have served no purpose.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 288. Courtesy : Lakshmibehn Khare

434. CABLE TO "DAILY HERALD"

[After *April 23, 1931*][1]

EDITOR
"DAILY HERALD"
LONDON

YOUR WIRE. REPORT ABOUT FOREIGN MISSIONARIES WAS DISTORTION OF MY VIEWS. HAVE PUBLISHED "YOUNG INDIA" FULL ARTICLE SETTING FORTH VIEW. AM CERTAINLY AGAINST USE OF HOSPITALWS SCHOOLS AND LIKE FOR PURPOSES CONVERSION. IT IS HARDLY HEALTHY METHOD AND CERTAINLY GIVES RISE BITTER RESENTMENT. CONVERSION MATTER OF HEART AND MUST DEPEND UPON SILENT INFLUENCE OF PURE CHARACTER AND CONDUCT OF MISSIONARIES. TRUE CONVERSION COMES IMPERCEPTIBLY LIKE AROMA OF A ROSE. THUS AM NOT AGAINST CONVERSION AS SUCH BUT AM CERTAINLY AGAINST PRESENT METHODS. CONVERSION MUST NOT BE REDUCED TO BUSINESS DEPENDING FOR INCREASE UPON POUNDS SHILLINGS PENCE. I ALSO HOLD THAT ALL GREAT RELIGIONS ARE OF EQUAL MERIT TO RESPECTIVE NATIONS OR INDIVIDUALS PROFESSING THEM. INDIA IS IN NO NEED OF CONVERSION OF TYPE DESCRIBED. WHILST UNDER SWARAJ ALL WOULD BE FREE EXERCISE THEIR OWN FAITHS. PERONALLY I WOULD WISH PRESENT METHODS ADOPTED BY MISSIONARIES WERE ABANDONED EVEN NOW AND THAT UNDER CONVICTION NOT COMPULSION.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 17027

[1] The article "Foreign Missionaries" referred to in the text was published on April 23.

435. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

BARDOLI,
April 24, 1931

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your letter. Take proper case of your health while working. Be patient in everything you do. Let service be its own reward, no matter what the results of your work. Who are the others with you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9322

436. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BARDOLI,
April 24, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. Ranchhodbhai should take Santok to Robinson for treatment of her molar.

Lilabehn may leve if she wishes, but she should be told that she should not hope to be permitted to return.

Can I take it that Jamna is responding to treatment? If Kusum, too, responds, you may call Radha there. She has still not recovered.

I will write about the vow[1] if I get the time. I spend the little time I have got in overtaking the correspondence which has accumulated. I keep fairly fit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I.

[1] The swadeshi vow; *vide* "The Law of Swadeshi", 31-5-1931. Gandhiji had written earlier on the other Ashram vows but had omitted the swadeshi vow since in writing about it he might have had to touch upon political matters.

437. LETTER TO DHIRAJLAL R. MEHTA

April 24, 1931

CHI. DHIRAJLAL,

I have your letter.

May you have a happy married life free from all impurities, and may you both be ever engrossed in service. Do come to meet me sometime.

I remember Jivanlalbhai quite well.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

CHI. DHIRAJLAL RATILAL MEHTA
BHAGA'S TANK
BHAVNAGAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10849

438. ADVICE TO PEASANTS, BARDOLI

April 24, 1931

Mahatma Gandhi had an informal discussion for an hour this afternoon with those peasants of Bardoli taluka whose confiscated lands have been sold by Government to third parties.

It is understood Gandhiji advised them not to obstruct the purchasers of their lands if they came to take possession and to work on the lands. Mahatma Gandhi added that they should have faith that they would get back their lands at no distant date. For the present they might consider them lost in the struggle for freedom.

The Bombay Chronicle, 25-4-1931

439. VIOLATION OF PLEDGE

A friend writes:[1]

It is my confirmed belief thay my pledge not to visit the Ashram is still intact and that it has not been violated in the least. To abstain from going to the Ashram implies not staying there for any length of time. This never implied, and should not imply, that in case of need I cannot visit the sick there. Moreover, it did not and does not mean that I cannot go there if it becomes necessary to do so for the sake of the struggle itself. I cannot go there for my convenience or other selfish end.

The Ashram is everything to me. I feel an attachment to it, as it is my creation. For me it is the place where my ideals can be realized. It is a source of inspiration to me. Ever since my return to India, it is there that I derived the inspiration for many, if not all, of the fresh steps which I have taken. By beginning this latest struggle through the Ashram inmates, I hope that even in the unhappy event of everyone being defeated someone from the Ashram will come forward to continue the fight to the very end. Regarding the Ashram I cherish the hope and the delusion that at a time when violence prevails, a witness for non-violence will come forth from the Ashram. It may be that there are no grounds for this hope. It may well be that the person of whom we may entertain expectations may disappoint us, whereas one from whom we expect nothing at all may surpass our hopes. This may well happen. I am publicly giving expression to my fond hopes. I am pointing out where my expectations lie. My prayer is that many non-violent, truthful persons may arise in the country who will fight unto death. For me who has the illusion that even if this prayer is not granted, some fruit will at least be reaped from the Ashram—it is too much to give up the Ashram. My renunciation holds good only so far as my self-interest is concerned; it cannot imply the giving up of any occasion for rendering service. Such renunciation cannot involve doing harm to its very object.

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had referred to Gandhiji's vow not to return to the Ashram before India attained swaraj. *Vide* also "Speech at prayer meeting, Sabarmati ashram", 12-3-1930 and "Interview to associated press of India", 15-4-1931.

I find no substance in the opposition to the red bungalow. The only offence which it has committed is that it is in the neighbourhood of the Ashram. It is absolutely detached from the Ashram. Why should I not stay in the red bung a low if I have some work pertaining to the Ashram but do not wish to live in it? If there is no harm in staying at the Vidyapith, if there is no harm in staying at Ambalalbhai's house, why cannot I stay at the red bungalow?

As a matter of fact, I would not regard it as a violation of my pledge even if during my visits to Ahmedabad I put up at the Ashram. But I gave up the idea of doing so as that would have been misunderstood by people and from experience I find that it was all to the good.

It is not right that we should interpret a pledge literally. Rather than stick to the letter, we should consider its spirit. This is the golden rule of interpreting a pledge. If more than one interpretation is possible, we should give up that which is favourable to us and suffer any inconvenience which results from an unfavourable interpretation and stick to it. Hence I cannot go to the Ashram or stay there for accepting some service there. If I am hungry and the Ashram is nearby, I cannot go there to get food but should suffer my hunger until I find food elsewhere.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-4-1931

440. THE SARDA ACT[1]

A correspondent asks the following questions:[2]

In my opinion, the following are the replies, in the order of the questions:

1. One can go and register complaints.

2. A true priest would not yield to threats or pressure.

3. Risks have to be taken in trying to do a good deed. Hence when a certain course of action clearly seems to be our dharma, it should be followed even at the risk of one's life and property. Every individual should decide for himself on every occasion whether his duty demands risking his life and property.

4. The Congress does not stop with mere political activity. It takes up all tasks which help in the uplift of the people. All servants of the nation—whether men or women—should bear this in mind while making their own decisions. Making a decision is not always an easy task. There are many reforms which have to be abandoned in the larger interests of the country. Hence the question that arises is always as follows : "By taking up the cause of this reform, do I increase or diminish my overall usefulness?" If the reply tends towards the latter, we should think twice before taking up the cause of that reform.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-4-1931

441. WOMEN VOLUNTEERS AND KHADI

There is an association of women volunteers in Nadiad and this question has come up there. Some people claim that a woman volunteer can carry on picketing while clad in a mill-made sari, etc; that it is no longer necessary now for those working for the Congress to wear khadi. This reasoning is erroneous and the use of mill-made saris and other clothes is not permitted. The rule passed by the Congress is almost eight years old now. It was attacked by many and was fully discussed at the annual session. Despite this, Congress representatives have refused to alter the clause relating to khadi and hence khadi has

[1] This required that at the time of marriage a boy should be at least 18 and a girl of 14 years of age.

[2] These are not translated here.

now taken deep roots. No member of the Congress has the right to violate that rule or break that tradition. In my opinion, therefore, the above question should not have arisen at all.

But I have been told that if the condition in regard to khadi is not relaxed, there will be a sharp fall in the number of women volunteers and perhaps not a single woman volunteer will be forthcoming locally in the Kheda district who would be prepared to wear khadi. If this is a fact, it is a sad thing. Nevertheless, as the person who has laid down the Shastra of khadi, I am prepared to put up with this set-back. If there is real strength in khadi and if there is any *tapascharya* behind it, it will overcome this new difficulty which it is facing.

In the world, wherever people have swerved from the path of truth they have done so to evade such difficulties. There is no other motive for swerving from the path of truth. Human nature tries to avoid difficulties. It seeks an easy way out. The easy way takes one downhill, the difficult way leads one upwards. The rule of physics applies also to spiritual matters. An object drops heavily to the ground due to gravitation, whereas trying to lift it up makes one breathless. Hence neglecting khadi in our impatience to boycott foreign cloth is like abandoning the path of truth. Every volunteer—man or woman—should bear in mind that the boycott cannot succeed by deviating from that path, and even if succeeded, it would not be worth while. We regard the boycott of foreign cloth as our dharma because in it we see the means of satisfying, more or less, the hunger of crores of persons and the spinning-wheel is the means and this implies khadi. Hence no Congress volunteer, whether a man or a woman, can use anything but khadi.

What, then, of mill-made cloth?—some people thoughtlessly ask. The movement for boycott was not started for the sake of the Indian textile mills. However, mills too grow under the shade of the great tree of khadi. Khadi spreads at a snail's pace. Its use has not yet become widespread. It is not available in every town and every locality. In such circumstances, the Indian mills can readily sell their stocks. But if these compete with khadi, both would be faced with ruin. Whereas khadi needs the assistance of advertising and exhibitions, the Indian textile mills stand in no need of these. The latter get protection through the khadi movement.

A woman volunteer who is aware of this situation, while pleading for boycott will insist upon the use of khadi and never ask the people

to use mill-made cloth. She would not recommend the use of mill-made cloth even to those who refuse to use khadi. Patiently and lovingly, she will refute the arguments against kahdi and to the very end she will recommend its use. Fearlessly, yet with determination, she will say, "Indian mill-made cloth is not meant for you, it is only for those who have not heard the message of the Congress."

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-4-1931

442. WORTH WHILE QUESTIONS

A co-worker has sent me the following questions[1] which were put to him:

I do not know of any freedom to import foreign cotton.[2] I personally believe that if foreign cotton is required to produce fine cloth, there is no harm in importing it. I see no harm in importing raw material from abroad if we can make use of it. We have seen that much harm is done by exporting raw material which we can utilize, but just as it is advantageous to export that which we cannot utilize, even so it is good to import any necessary raw material.

Like raw cotton, raw silk may be imported from abroad, if that is necessary.[3] Silk in its raw from means cocoons. If these can be imported from abroad and anyone orders them, there is no harm in doing so from the economic stand-point. However, from the stand-point of non-violence I would not approve of this trade.

I have not heard of woollen "tops".[4] But just as in accordance with the rule mentioned above, we cannot import foreign cotton or silk yarn, likewise we cannot import woollen "tops". However, I do not know if an exception has been made in regard to this.

How is it possible that no one would have to undergo any suffering while a country, steeped in slavery and reduced to dust, is attempting to recover from this plight?[5] This has not happened

[1] Not translated here

[2] The question was why import of foreign cotton was permitted while boycott of foreign yarn and cloth was being advocated.

[3] The question was whether import of forign raw silk was permitted like that of foreign cotton.

[4] Indian mills were importing woollen tops for the manufacture of high quality woollens. Would the Congress policy permit such import?

[5] The question was: "Since the Congress advocated boycott of foreign yarn

anywhere in history. A much larger number of weavers than those engaged in weaving foreign yarn at present were once engaged in weaving exclusively Indian yarn. If I had my way, I would make these weavers who are unemployed at present weave Indian yarn alone. With regard to such hardships, it is sufficient to realize that if those who have used foreign yarn or traded in it suffer losses or hardships now, it is their atonement for the sins they have committed so far.

The answer to this[1] is contained in the above. In great struggles we cannot like Banias make petty calculations. Such calculations go ill with noble sentiments.

The success which was achieved was due to the sentiment for khadi and the knowledge that the poor were being helped thereby.[2] However much the Indian mills step up their production, boycott cannot be achieved if this sentiment is absent. The suggestion not to buy new cloth will not find acceptance without such sentiment. The shortage of khadi was experienced for one or two months only. At the end of that period, large quantities of khadi began to be produced. If there is a demand, the requisite amount of khadi can be produced within a short time. This is because the means which are at hand for the production of khadi are not available for the production of cloth in Indian mills. Nature is favourable to khadi. Indian mills have to take risks by opposing nature. I do not cite this as a drawback. Man goes in for many adventures by opposing nature and some of these are even desirable. At this juncture,by bringing in nature and showing that khadi is in keeping with it, I am only describing an existing situation. Experience has shown us that it is only after the advent of khadi era that we began to believe in the possibility of the boycott of

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which was largely used to feed handloom, there might be unemployment among handloom weavers and as the yarn produced by the mills and on the handloom did not come up to 40 counts, was it not prudent to postpone the boycott of such yarn, until the same could be produced in the country?"

[1] That foreign silk yarn and woollen yarn were being used hitherto because they could not be produced indigenously. The stoppage of their import would lead to large-scale unemployment. Moreover, 60 to 75 per cent of the value of the cloth so produced remained in the country. Why then prohibit this import?

[2] It was stated that Gandhiji had said that boycott of foreign cloth was possible only through khadi, that when the boycott proceeded well the previous year and the stocks of khadi ran out, there were two factors responsible for its success, viz., cutting down cloth requirements to a minimum and increasing indigenous mill-made cloth. Was it then not wise to make the boycott easy by resorting to these means rather than insisting on the use of khadi only?

foreign cloth, it is only after that that there was an awakening among the people. It is only through the presence of khadi that we can, to some extent, save the mill-owners from the clutches of self-interest.

[From Gujarati]

Nanajivan, 26-4-1931

443. LETTER TO J. H. GARRETT

BORSAD,
April 26, 1931

I have your letter of 24th instant.

It is hardly fair to tear from its context a sentence[1] from my letter so as to give it a meaning wider than what it would bear if the sentence was read in its context. If you accept the representative character of the Congress, the party to the Settlement, is it right to issue over the heads of the representatives the notice that the Mamlatdars have issued in the place of the one about which I complained?

I must confess that I miss the friendly response which I had hoped our interview would evoke. I still ask you to approach the Settlement in the spirit that actuated Lord Irwin. The way you are going is the way of war. I assure you that I want to work the Settelment in the friendliest spirit possible. Will you not reciprocate?

Young India, 20-8-1931

444. LETTER TO R. M. MAXWELL

AS AT BORSAD,
April 26, 1931

DEAR MR. MAXWELL,

I thank you for your letter[2] of the 24th instant. I must apologize for the omission to send you a copy of my letter of the 20th instant to Mr. Garrett. I repair the omission now and send you a copy herewith as also translation of the circular now recalled. From the copy you will observe that I never claimed that the Government and the people can have no dealings with one another except through the Congress. My

[1] *Vide* the following item.
[2] *Vide* "Letter from R.M. Maxwell", 24-4-1931.

objection was to the Mamlatdar's notice issued over my head whilst negotiation was going on between Mr. Garrett and myself. Mr. Garrett, you will note, gave the following categorical reply:

> You refer to the Congress as an intermediary between the Government and the people. This is not one of the matters agreed upon in the Settlement and I am unable to agree to the suggestion.

The position taken up in your letter under reply is surely different from this as also different from what Mr. Garrett has taken up in his latest letter of which I attach copy herewith. He writes under date 24th instant.

> You write that 'the Congress must be recognized as the intermediary between the Government and the people whom the Congress represents'. I am unable to see anything in the terms of the Settlement which bears on this point. There is nothing to prevent the Congress advising people as to what they should do, nor can any restriction be placed on the duty of the Government officers to perform their functions directly with those concerned.

It will be observed that the quotation from my letter is torn from its context and is thus made to bear a meaning which is wider than the one it bears when read in its context. Mr. Garrett wrote the letter after having ordered the issue of a revised notice by Mamlatdars not very different from the notice which is substitutes.

My contention is that even the new notice is premature and that in any case it should not have been issued without consultation with the local workers. Such notices become necessary only when it has become clear that the people affected are deliberately withholding payment. That this is not the case at present is manifest from the fact that the people have been paying as fast as it is possible in spite of the non-fulfilment in several respects by the Government of the terms of the Settlement. This is hardly consistent with the terms of the Settlement which contemplates amicable relations and mutual trust. I confess that here, in Gujarat, see not only no trust but a secretiveness and distrust which one see when the relations are strained. I hope that the matter will receive His Excellency's immediate attention. Notwithstanding the serious grievance, I want to gove my assurance that I am anxious that the people should carry out their part of the Settlement to the fullest extent possible.

If His Excellency the Acting Governor thinks that any useful purpose can be served by mutual discussion let him consider me to be at his disposal.

Yours sincerely,

A.I.C.C.. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *Young India,* 20-8-1931.

445. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

BARDOLI,
April 26, 1931

DEAR SATIS BABU,,

I have not been able to overtake the immense arrears of correspondence, but now that I have got shorthand assistance, I hope to overtake them, if I get a few more quiet days that I have been getting just now. Your letters make instructrive reading. I wholly agree with you that it would be better for you to suspend your picketing activity till the atmosphere is clearer and you are not liable to be misunderstood. I like also the idea of your steering clear of all parties. Please give my love to Dr. Roy. I hope he is now fully restored. He has yet plenty of service to see through. In launching out on *Rashtravani*[1], you will follow the golden prescription that it must be self-supporting.

What is your food now and how many pounds of weight have you regained? It is probable that for some days to come I may be in Gujarat.

Did you see Mr. Mujibar Rehman and if you did, what happened?

Yours sincerely,

SHRI SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
15 COLLEGE SQUARE, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm : S.N. 17017

[1] A Bengali Weekly

446. LETTER TO E. STANLEY JONES

BARDOLI,
April 26, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

Your open letter has come upon me as a shock, the more so as you yourself distrusted the report and have suffered yourself from misreporting. If you had just dropped a line before writing your long open letter how much precious time, that for you and me belongs to God, would have been saved. As it is, in the language of the *Gita*, you have been guilty of theft and, in the bargain, have done a wrong to a friend.

It will please you to know that three unknown friends have been more cautious. They have written to me to enquire whether the report correctly sets forth my view. Next time you see something about me which may appear to you to misrepresent me as you have known me, may I ask you to refer to me before you pen another open or private letter. Lastly, If you have loved me berore, as I know you have, I hope that after reading my article[1] in *Young India* on the subject matter of your open letter, you will feel that you have no cause to change your attitude. And why will you not love me even though I may err in your estimation? Or must love require a consideration?

Yours sincerely,

REV. E. STANLEY JONES
SAT TAL ASHRAM
SAT TAL (DT. NAINI TAL)

From a photostat : S.N. 17015

[1] *Vide* "Foreign Missionaries", 23-4-1931.

447. LETTER TO SURENDRA SINGH[1]

BARDOLI,
April 26, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter as also a copy of the speech you would have made at the Sikh League[2]. With some parts of your letter I can heartily agree and I wish that we were rid of the slightest communal taint. But it seems that, if there is any settlement in the immediate future, there would be at least some communalism about it.

I have never been able to understand the nationalism which remains nationalistic only if all the rest do so and otherwise become uncompromisingly communalistic.

I have not the dread that you have of adult suffrage. Every form of suffrage will be liable to abuse, adult suffrage perhaps the least so. And I have an effective antidote that might, to a certain extent, obviate the mischief. But I need not dilate upon it at the present moment.

I am also in agreement with you that we should have education on the widest scale possible of the masses, not so much of children as of grown-up men and women who will presently be armed with great powers for good or evil. That education, I think, the Congress has given not always successfully, not always well, but on the whole undoubtedly successfully and well.

I do think that the association of high salaries with efficiency and public honesty is an hypnotic effect produced by the rulers. The sooner we get out of it the better it will be for us. The present civil service is open to influences which are far more subtle and deadly than open bribery. Nor do I consider the administration to be efficient except in so far as it guarantees at the point of the bayonet safety for the lives of the European population but certainly not of the masses. I think that we have patriotic men and women enough in the country who, when we come to our own, will gladly give their services for maintenance money that will easily bear comparison with the average imcome of the toiling but starving millions. Poverty, if it is due to ignorance, is no less due to heartless unparalleled exploitation.

[1] Of the Ministry of Agriculture
[2] The meeting of the Sikh League was held at Amritsar on April 8.

Thus though we have differences of opinion I have valued your letter and the enclosure, both of which I have read with a great deal of interest. Do please therefore favour me again whenever you have anything of importance to tell me.

Yours sincerely,

SARDAR SURENDRA SINGH
PUNJAB CIVIL SECRETARIAT
LAHORE

From a photostat : S.N. 17016

448. SPEECH TO VILLAGERS, AKOTI

April 26, 1931

When Mr. Gandhi arrived the villagers told him that all their rice crop worth about Rs. 50,000 which was the main crop of the village, had been attached and sold to a parsi for Rs. 1,400. They had no means of support and depended on the relief given by the Congress, but still the Mamlatdar called upon them to pay land revenue.

Mr. Gandhi said that in view of their condition they were entitled under the terms of the Truce to get time for the payment of land revenue. He advised them as well as all peasants in Gujarat to pay land revenue if they could, but if they could not pay they should not be afraid to refuse to pay land revenue and patiently bear all the consequences. . . .

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-4-1931

449. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

AS AT BORSAD,
April 27, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

When I wrote to you last copy of an important letter[1] was not sent to you for which I apologize and which I now send. More correspondence has grown since. I send you copies of these also. There are other ominous things which I need not mention now.

You will recall that the Government of India authorized coercive measures on the strength of the Bombay Government report of which you gave me a copy. I have already shown to you how misleading that report was and how nobly, in my opinion, the people have paid in spite of the fact that even now the terms of the Settlement in several matters remain unfulfilled by the local officials. I attach hereto a list which will enforce what I have said. These people deserve better treatment than notices of coercive processes. If the matters brought to your notice are not clear to you, and if you think it necessary, you may drag me to Simla. And if you do, it will be necessary for you to stop all coercive processes at least pending our conversations.

I want your help in preventing a breakdown of the Settlement. I have pledged my honour to Lord Irwin that I shall do nothing that I could honourably refrain from doing to prevent a breakdown. But it takes two to play a game. I feel safe in the confidence that you on your part will not, if it is at all possible, allow a breakdown in regard to what you have rightly said is a gentleman's agreement.

Yours sincerely,

H. W. EMERSON, ESQ.
HOME SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SIMLA

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *Young India*, 20-8-1931

[1] To J. H. Garrett"; *vide* "Letter to J.H.Garrett", 20-4-1931.

450. LETTER TO R. M. MAXWELL

BORSAD,
April 28, 1931

DEAR MR. MAXWELL,

A friend has given me a copy of Government instructions about relaxation of salt laws in terms of the Settlement but I have seen nothing in the papers about the Government resolution. I have purposely refrained from giving any guidance to my co-workers or the public as I was given to understand by Mr. Emerson that instructions regarding salt administration would be publicly issued. Will you please tell me whether the Bombay Government propose to issue definite public instruction so that the parties interested may know exactly how they stand? I have already enquiries from many quarters.

Yours sincerely,

R. M. MAXWELL, ESQ.
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO H. E. THE GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY
MAHABALESHWAR

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

PRIME MINISTER'S DECLARATION AT R.T.C .[1]

January 19, 1931

The view of His Mejesty's Government is that responsibility for the Government of India should be placed upon Legislatures, Central and Provincial, with such provisions as may be necessary to guarantee, during a period of transition, the observance of certain obligations and to meet other special circumstances, and also with such guarantees as are required by minorities to protect their political liberties and rights.

In such statutory safeguards as may be made for meeting the needs of the transitional period, it will be a primary concern of His Majesty's Government to see that the reserved powers are so framed and excercised as not to prejudice the advance of India through the new constitution to full responsibility for her own government.

His Majesty's Government, whilst making this declaration, is aware that some of the conditions which are essential to the working of such a constitution as is contemplated, have not been finally settled, but it believes that as the result of the work done here, they have been brought to a point which encourages the hope that further negotiations, after this declaration, will be successful.

His Majesty's Government has taken note of the fact that the deliberations of the Conference have proceeded on the basis, accepted by all parties, that the Central Government should be a Federation of all-India, embracing both the Indian States and British India in a bi-cameral legislature. The precise form and structure of the new Federal Government must be determined after further discussion with the Princes and representatives of British India. The range of subjects to be committed to it will also require further discussion, because the Federal Government will have authority only in such matters concerning the States as will be ceded by their Rulers in agreements made by them to entering into Federation. The connection of the States with the Federation will remain subject to the basic principle that in regard to all matters not

[1] *Vide* "Interview to associated press of India", 26-1-1931 & "Interview to *The Pioneer*", 5-2-1931.

ceded by them to the Federation their relations will be with the Crown acting through the agency of the Viceroy.

With a Legislature constituted on a federal basis. His Majesty's Government will be prepared to recognize the principle of the responsibility of the Executive to the Legislature.

Under existing condition the subjects of Defence and External Affairs will be reserved to the Governor-General, and arrangements will be made to place in his hands the powers necessary for the administration of those subjects. Moreover, as the Governor-General must, as a last resort, be able in an emergency to mintain the tranquillity of the State, and must similarly be responsible for the observance of the constitutional rights of minorities, he must be granted the necessary powers for these purposes.

As regards finance, the transfer of financial responsibility must necessarily be subject to such conditions as will ensure the fulfilment of the obligations incurred under the authority of the Secretary of State and the maintenance unimpaired of the financial stability and credit of India. The Report of the Federal Structure sub-Committee indicates some ways of dealing with this subject including a Reserve Bank, the service of loans, and Exchange policy, which in the view of His Majesty's Government will have to be provided for somehow in the new constitution. It is of vital interest to all parties in India to accept these provisions to maintain financial confidence. Subject to these provisions the Indian Government would have full financial responsibility for the methods or raising revenue and for the control of expenditure on non-reserved services.

This will mean that under existing conditions the Central Legislature and Executive will have some features of dualism which will have to be fitted into the constitutional structure.

The provision of reserved powers is necessary in the circumstanced and some such reservation has indeed been incidental to the development of most free constitutions. But every care must be taken to prevent conditions arising which will necessitate their use. It is, for instance, undesirable that Ministers should trust to the special powers of the Governor-General as a means of avoiding responsibilities which are properly their own, thus defeating the development of responsible Government by bringing into use powers meant to lie in reserve and in the background. Let there be no mistake about that.

The Governor's Provinces will be constituted on a basis of full responsibility. Their Ministries will be taken from the Legislature and will be jointly responsible to it. The range of Provincial subjects will be so defined as to give them the greatest possible measure of self-government. The authority of the Federal Government will be limited to provision required to secure its administration of Federal subjects, and

so discharge its responsibility for subjects defined in the constitution as of all-India concern.

There will be reserved to the Government only that minimum of special powers which is required in order to secure, in exceptional circumstances, the preservation of tranquillity, and to guarantee the maintenance of rights provided by Statute for the Public Services and minorities.

Finally, His Majesty's Government considers that the institution in the Provinces of responsible government requires both that the legislatures should be enlarged, and that they should be based on a more liberal franchis.

In framing the Constitution His Majesty's Government considers that it will be its duty to insert provisions guaranteeing to the various minorities, in addition to political representation, that differences of religion, race, sect or cast shall not themselves constitute civic disabilities.

In the opinion of His Majesty's Government it is the duty of the communities to come to an agreement amongst themselves on the points raised by the Minorities sub-Committee but not settled there. During the continuing negotiations such an agreement ought to be reached and the Government will continue to render what good offices it can to help to secure that end, as it is anxious not only that no delay should take place in putting the new Constitution into operation, but that it should start with the goodwill and confidence of all the communities concerned.

The various sub-committee which have been studying the more important principles of a Constitution which would meet Indian condition have surveyed a considerable part of the structure in detail and the still unsettled points have been advanced a good way to an agreement. His Majesty's Government, however, in view of the character of the Conference and of the limited time at its disposal in London, has deemed it advisable to suspend its work at this point, so that Indian opinion may be consulted upon the work done, and expedients considered for overcoming the difficulties which have been raised. His Majesty's Government will consider, without delay, a plan by which our co-operation may be continued so that the result of our completed work may be seen in a new Indian Constitution. If, in the mean time, there is a response to the Viceroy's appeal to those engaged at present in civil disobedience, and others wish to co-operate on the general lines of this declaration, steps will be taken to enlist their services.

I must convey to you all on behalf of the Government its hearty appreciation of the services you have rendered not only to India but to this country, by coming here and engaging in these personal negotiations. Personal contact is the best way of removing those unfortunate differences and misunderstandings which too many people on both sides have been engendering between us in recent years. A mutual understanding of intention and difficulty, gained under such conditions as have

prevailed here, is by far the best way for discovering ways and means of settling differences and satisfying claims. His Majesty's Government will strive to secure such an amount of agreement as will enable the new Constitution to be passed through the British Parliament and to be put into operation with the active goodwill of the people of both countries.

India in 1930-31, pp. 652-4

APPENDIX II

VICEROY'S STATEMENT [1]

NEW DELHI,
January 26, 1931

The following statement has been issued by His Excellency the Governor-General this afternoon :

"In order to provide opportunity for the consideration of the statement made by the Prime Minister on the 19th January, my Government, in consultation with local Governments, have thought it right that the members of the Working Committee of the All-India Congress should enjoy full liberty of discussion between themselves and with those who have acted as members of the Committee since Ist January, 1930.

"In accordance with this decision and with this object, and in order that there may be no legal bar to any meeting they may wish to hold, the notification declaring the Committee to be an unlawful Association under the Criminal Law Amendment Act will be withdrawn by all local Governments and action will be taken for the release of Mr. Gandhi and others who are now members of the Gommittee, or who have acted as such, since Ist January 1930.

"My Government will impose no conditions on these releases, because we feel that the best hope of the restoration of peaceful condition lies in discussions being conducted by those concerned under term of unconditional liberty. Our action has been taken in pursuance of a sincere desire to assist the creation of such peaceful condition as would enable the Government to implement the undertaking given by the Prime Minister that if civil quiet were proclaimed and assured, the Government would not be backward in response.

"I am content to trust those who will be affected by our decision to act in the same spirit as inspires it. And I am confident that they will recognize the importance of securing for those grave issues calm and dispassionate examination."

The Hindustan Times, 28-1-1931

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 1-2-1931.

APPENDIX III

LETTER FROM GANGABEHN VAIDYA[1]

You know that there was to be a procession in honour of Lilavati and as a protest against the ourtrageous assault on her by the police. It was not possible for me to keep out of the procession. In fact I took it upon myself to organize the procession by placing the Ashram girls at the head of small batches of women coming from various parts of the town. Whilst I was leading my batch I was informed that Shakariben and Kalavatiben who were at the head of the Ras batch were being belaboured by the police with lathis. I immediately ran to the spot. I found that a girl was profusely bleeding. I went and cheered her up and asked the rest of the sisters to march forward reciting *Raghupati Raghava Raja Ram.* I was also asking the passers-by to keep on one side of the road so as not to obstruct the procession, when all of a sudden the policy came down upon us with a shower of lathi-blow. I came in for a big share of them, receiving several on the head, the arms, the back, the face and the ears. Blood streamed out from a wound caused on my head but I did not budge an inch and asked the other sisters to sit down. Seeing that I would not be deterred the Foujdar came and arrested me and handed me over to the police. I was taken, bleeding, to the police choki where I found Shakariben, Kalavati, Padma, Lakshmi and Madhu who had all had their share of the blows. My head was still bleeding and I sat down allowing the sun's rays to fall on the bleeding part. I was perfectly peaceful. Some time after the police came and asked every one of us if we had been injured. "Can't you see with your own eyes ?" I told them. To which he replied: "You would like to be taken to the hospital ?" "No", said I, "suppose we can get well without medical aid." At this moment another police official arrived on the scene and sternly said to the man who was gloting over our agonies : "Don't you see that she is still bleedin? Take them quickly to the hospital. How could you allow them to remain here unattended so long?" Thereupon we were taken to the hospital where we found Maitri, Lalita, Lakshmi and other girls who had all been hammered and already admitted as in-patients. My wound was then dressed. It was, the doctor told me, three quarters of an inch to one inch. The others were treated, but were later turned out, evidently because they had chosen to arrest only Vasumati and me.

We are in the lock-up. My wound is being dressed daily and I am quite happy and peaceful. I have my prayers regularly, but have not yet been given my *takli*. It was on this occasion that I understood somewhat the meaning of ahimsa. I was quite fearless when the blows were coming down upon me and I assure you that I had no hatred or anger in me. Even now I feel no resentment towards the police, and it

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 1-2-1931.

is growing upon me that we shall achieve success only to the extent we cultivate the spirit of ahimsa. The other sisters bore the blows with exemplary brabery. In some cases the assaults were outrageous, many being kicked on their chests with the hells of the policemen's boots. Not one budged an inch, everyone stood unflinching at her post. Wherefrom came this sudden access of courage and strength, I wonder. God was with us I am sure. He gave us the strength.

I will not trouble you with more details. The girls will write themselves.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 750(14)-0-PTA

APPENDIX IV

VICEROY'S CABLE TO SECRETARY OF STATE[1]

Immediate, Private and Personal

I HAVE HAD TWO LONG TALKS WITH GANDHI. APART FROM THE VARIETY OF IMPORTANT POINTS RELATING TO ACTUAL TERMS ON WHICH CONGRESS WOULD CALL OFF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE TO WHICH I WILL REFER LATER, THE MAIN MATTERS OF SUBSTANCE WE DISCUSSED WERE:

(A) THE SCOPE OF FUTURE CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSIONS;

(B) THE INTENTIO OF THE CONGRESS, IF THEY CAME INTO THE DISCUSSION, REGARDING POTENTIAL RESUMPTION OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE.

2. AS TO THE FIRST I TOLD HIM THAT THREE MAIN PRINCIPLES OF THE CONFERENCE WERE FEDERATION, SAFEGUARDS AND INDIAN RESPONSIBILITY, THAT THESE WERE FUNDAMENTAL, BUT DETAILED APPLICATION OF THESE PRINCIPLES WAS OPEN TO FURTHER DISCUSSION.

3. HE ASKED ABOUT THE RIGHT TO RAISE IN DISCUSSION THE QUESTION OF DISSOLUTION OF PARTNERSHIP BY WHICH HE PRESUMABLY MEANT THE RIGHT OF SE-CESSION FROM THE EMPIRE. I SAID THAT I PRESUMED HE COULD RAISE IT, IF HE SO DESIRED, BUT THAT IT WOULD BE VERY DAMAGING IF HE MADE ANY PUBLIC STATEMENT TO THIS EFFECT. I GATHER HE DID NOT ATTACH MUCH IMPORTANCE TO THE POINT AND THIS IMPRESSION HAS BEEN CONFIRMED BY SAPRU AND OTHERS.

4. HE ALSO MENTIONED QUESTION OF STATE SUBJECTS. I SAID I PRESUMED HE COULD RAISE THE MATTER IN DISCUSSION, BUT THAT HE WOULD FIND HIMSELF UP AGAINST THE PRINCES. HERE AGAIN, MY IMPRESSION IS THAT HE DOES NOT WISH TO PRESS THE MATTER.

[1] *Vide* "Interview with Viceroy (Viceoy's version), 19-2-1931 & "Interview with Viceroy (Gandhiji's version), 19-2-1931.

5. I FEEL WE MUST BE VERY CAREFUL NOT TO GET INTO A POSITION OF CON FUSION AND MISUNDERSTANDING ABOUT THE CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION. I HAVE, I HOPE, KEPT IT CLEAR UP TO DATE; BUT I AM SURE IT WOULD BE DANGEROUS TO PERMIT CONGRESS TO SAY TO THE WORLD THAT EVERYTHING WAS OPEN FOR DISCUSSION, AND THAT THEY HAD MADE IT CLEAR AS A CONDITION OF PARTICIIPATON THAT IF THEY WERE NOT SATISFIED THEY WOULD RESUME CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE. IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES IT WOULD PROBABLY BE BETTER NOT TO HAVE THEM IN AT ALL. MUCH DEPENDS UPON A CLEAR STATEMENT OF THE SCOPE OF DISCUSSION. IF THIS IS CONFUSED, WE MAY LATER GET A BIG LANDSLIDE IN ALL PARTIES BOTH HERE AND AT HOME AND SO LOSE ALL THE ADVANTAGE GAINED BY THE CONFERENCE. PRIME MINISTER IN HIS ANNOUNCEMENT PROMISED THAT STEPS WOULD BE TAKEN TO ENLIST SERVICE OF THOSE WHO WISH TO CO-OPERATE ON GENERAL LINES OF HIS DECLARATION, BUT I FEEL THAT IN DEALING WITH THE CONGRESS IT IS NECESSARY TO HAVE CLEARER DEFINITION, AND I AM INCLINED TO A STATEMENT IN THE FOLLOWING SENSE. FEDERATION IS AN ESSENTIAL OF THE SCHEME, SO ALSO ARE SAFEGUARDS SECURING CROWN CONTROL OF DEFENCE AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, THE FINANCIAL CREDIT OF INDIA AND THE DISCHARGE OF OBLIGATIONS. THE EXACT METHOD BY WHICH EFFECT MAY BE GIVEN TO PRINCIPAL OF FEDERATION AND TO SUCH SAFEGUARDS IS MATTER FOR DISCUSSION. IF CONGRESS CANNOT ACCEPT THIS POSITION THEN DISCUSSION WITH THEM WOULD BE UNPROFITABLE. I SHOULD BE GRATEFUL IF YOU COULD CONSIDER AND BE PREPARED TO LET ME HAVE AS PRECISE A STATEMENT AS POSSIBLE SHOWING THE POSITION OF HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT IN THESE MATTERS. I DISCUSSED THIS WITH SAPRU, SASTRI, JAYAKAR AND SAFI TODAY AND THEY AGREED TO ABOVE DEFINITION OF SCOPE OF DISCUSSIONS. THEY WERE AVERSE TO ANY MORE NARROW DEFINITION.

6. IN REGARD TO POTENTIAL RESUMPTION OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT AFTER ITS ABANDONMENT, GANDHI TOLD ME THAT HE COULD NOT GIVE ASSURANCE THAT CONGRESS WOULD IN NO CIRCUMSTANCES RESUME CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT, BUT THAT IF THEY CAME INTO THESE DISCUSSIONS THEY WOULD DO SO WITH THE GENUINE DESIRE TO MAKE THEM A SUCCESS AND WOULD NOT, IN ANY CASE, RESUME CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE BEFORE THEIR CONCLUSION. I UNDERSTOOD HIS MEANING TO BE THAT THERE WOULD BE NO QUESTION OF RESUMPTION WHILE THE CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSIONS CONTINUED IN INDIA, BUT THAT HE COULD NOT BIND HIMSELF FURTHER THAN THIS. SAPRU AND THE OTHERS REGARDED IT AS ESSENTIAL THAT THERE SHOULD BE DEFINITE UNDERSTANDING THAT PEACEFUL ATMOSPHERE SHOULD PREVAIL DURING DISCUSSION IN INDIA, AND THEY CONSIDERED THAT IF THIS WAS NOT FORTHCOMING IT WAS USELESS FOR THE CONGRESS TO COME IN. I AGREE WITH THIS VIEW, BUT DOUBT WHETHER WE CAN TIE HIM DOWN MORE CLOSELY.

7. MATTERS RELATING TO GOVERNMENT ACTION, SUCH AS AMNESTY, SALT, ETC., WILL ONLY ARISE IF CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION IS SATISFACTORILY CLEARED UP. I ANTICIPATE CONSIDERABLE TROUBLE IN REGARD TO THEM, BUT WE SHALL OF COURSE CONSULT YOU BEFORE WE COME TO ANY CONCLUSION, IF WE GET TO FAR.

8. GENERAL ATMOSPHERE OF OUR DISCUSSION WAS QUITE FRIENDLY AND I HAVE LEARNT THAT GANDHI IS PLEASED AND WANTS PEACE, BUT I AM VERY APPREHENSIVE OF HIS MANOEUVRING YOU AND US INTO A POSITION WHERE CONGRESS COULD PLAUSIBLY REPRESENT THAT THEY GOT BEHIND THE WORK OF THE CONFERENCE AND HAD SECURED THE RIGHT TO REOPEN THE WHOLE SUBJECT. THE PROBLEM THEREFORE IS HOW TO SECURE OURSELVES AGAINST THIS, WITHOUT REFUSING TOO FULL A LATITUDE OF DISCUSSION WITHIN THE WIDEST LIMITS THAT CONFERENCE AGREEMENTS LEAVE POSSIBLE.

9. IF DISCUSSIONS ARE TO PROCEED FURTHER I FEEL THAT THEY MUST RESUME WIDER SCOPE. ON RECEIPT OF YOUR REPLY I PROPOSE TO SEE GANDHI MYSELF AND STATE TO HIM PRECISE LIMITS OF CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSIONS. IF HE ACCEPTS THESE OR IF AFTER HEARING THESE HE IS PREPARED TO PURSUE THE MATTER FURTHER, I PROPOSE THAT OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS SHOULD BE EXAMINED AT A COFNERENCE OVER WHICH I WOULD PRESIDE AND CONSISTING OF SENIOR EUROPEAN INDIAN MEMBERS OF MY COUNCIL—HOME SECRETARY, SAPRU, SASTRI, JAYAKAR, SAFI, CHHATTARI, PROBABLY ANOTHER MUHAMMADAN, A EUROPEAN NON-OFFICIAL MEMBER OF THE ASSEMBLY WTH GANDHI AND TWO OR THREE CONGRESS REPRESENTATIVES NAMED BY HIM. I ANTICIPATE THAT, IF EVERYTHING WENT WELL, THIS CONFERENCE MIGHT MEET ABOUT THE 27TH AND WOULD ASK FOR YOUR APPROVAL TO IT.

From a photostat: G.N. 8951

APPENDIX V

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S NOTE ON PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT[1]

In consequence of the provisional settlement between the Working Committee and the Government of India a period of truce has been proclaimed. It is with regret that, on the morrow of this agreement, I have to strike a note of discord. I recognize that, in many respects, the terms of settlement are honourable and give evidence of the strength that the nation has gained by the sacrifice and suffering of the past year. I recognize also that the settlement is provisional, leaving all the vital questions open, and the final settlement is yet to come. But I feel that there is a certain commitment in it regarding the scope of discussions and a certain limitation of our ideal as laid down at Lahore. Safeguards and reservations are referred to and, although these are said to be in the interests of India, they may be, and I fear will be, interpreted to mean a limitation of our freedom in regard to defence, external affairs, finances and the public debt. The Congress and the Working Committee are pledged to the full control by the people of India of the defence services, the financial and economic policy, and the . . .[2] many of my colleagues of the W.C. are of opinion that the reference to safeguards and reservation does not limit their freedom in any way to work for the independence of India. I hope they are right and will prove their contention by their achievements in the coming Conference. But, as I cannot get over my doubts in regard to this phraseology, I am unable to accept or reconcile myself to any reference to safeguards and reservations. I do not desire however that any impediment should be placed in the way of those who interpret the words differently from me and who propose to extract independence out of them. Truce having been proclaimed by the Working Committee, I trust all of us will honour it and carry out the directions of the W.C. in regard to it.

A.I.C.C. File No. 329, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* "Note", 2-3-1931.

[2] The source is blank here.

APPENDIX VI

PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT

The following statement[1] by the Governor General in Council published in the *Gazette of India Extraordinary* of 5th March 1931 gives the conditions on which the civil disobedience movement is to be suspended pending final terms of settlement.

1. Consequent on the conversations that have taken place between His Excellency the Viceroy and Mr. Gandhi, it has been arranged that the civil disobedience movement, be discontinued, and that, with the approval of His Majesty's Government certain action be taken by the Government of India and local Governments.

2. As regards constitutional questions, the scope of future discussion is stated, with the assent of His Majesty's Government, to be with the object of considering further the scheme for the constitutional Government of India discussed at the Round Table Conference. Of the scheme there outlined, Federation is an essential part; so also are Indian responsibility and reservation; or safeguards in the interest of India, for such matters as, for instance, defence; external affairs; the position of minorities; the financial credit of India, and the discharge of obligations.

3. In pursuance of the statement made by the Prime Minister in his announcement of the 19th of January 1931, steps will be taken for the participation of the representative of the Congress in the further discussion that are to take place on the scheme of constitutional reform.

4. The settlement relates to activities directly connected with the civil disobedience movement.

5. Civil disobedience will be effectively discontinued and reciprocal action will be taken by Government. The effective discontinuance of the civil disobedience movement means the effective discontinunace of all activities in furtherance thereof, by whatever methods pursued and, in particular, the following:

(i) The organized defiance of the provisions of any law.

(ii) The movement for the non-payment of land revenue and other legal dues.

(iii) The publication of news-sheets in support of the civil disobedience movement.

(iv) Attempts to influence civil and military servants of village officials against Government or to persuade them to resign their posts.

[1] Of the Gandhi-Irwin agreement

6. As regards the boycott of foreign goods, there are two issues involved: firstly, the character of the boycott and secondly, the methods employed in giving effect to it. The position of Government is as follows. They approve of the encouragement of Indian industries as part of the economic and industrial movement designed to improve the material condition of India, and they have no desire to discourage methods of propaganda, persuasion or advertisement pursued with this object in view, which do not interfere with the freedom of action of individuals, or are not prejudicial to the maintenance of law and order. But the boycott of non-Indian goods (except of cloth which has been applied to all foreign cloth) has been directed during the civil disobedience movement cheifly, if not exclusively, against British goods, and in regard to these it has been admittedly employed in order to exert pressure for political ends.

It is accepted that a boycott of this character, and organized for this purpose, will not be consistent with the participation of representatives of the Congress in a frank and friendly discussion of constitutional questions between representatives of British India, of the Indian States, and of His Majesty's Government and political parties in England, which the settlement is intended to secure. It is, therefore, agreed that the discontinuance of the civil disobedience movement connotes the definite discontinuance of the employment of the boycott of British commodities as a political weapon and that, in consequence, those who have given up, during a time of political excitement, the sale or purchase of British goods must be left free without any form of restraint to change their attitude if they so desire.

7. In regard to the methods employed in furtherance of the replacement of non-Indian by Indian goods, or against the consumption of intoxicating liquor and drugs, resort will not be had to methods coming within the category of picketing, except within the limits permitted by the ordinary law. Such picketing, shall be unaggressive and it shall not involve coercion, intimidation, restraint, hostile demonstration, obstruction to the public, or any offence under the ordinary law. If and when any of these methods is employed in any place, the practice of picketing in that place will be suspended.

8. Mr. Gandhi has drawn the attention of Government to specific allegation against the conduct of the police, and represented the desirability of a public enquiry into them. In present circumstances Government see great difficulty in this course and feel that it must inevitably lead to charges and counter-charges, and so militate against the re-establishment of peace. Having regard to these considerations, Mr. Gandhi agreed not to press the matter.

9. The action that Government will take on the discontinuance of the civil disobedience movement is stated in the following paragraphs.

10. Ordinances promulgated in connection with the civil disobedience movement will be withdrawn. Ordinance No. 1 of 1931 relating to the terrorist movement does not come within the scope of the provision.

11. Notifications declaring association unlawful under the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908 will be withdrawn, provided that the notifications were made in connection with the civil disobedience movement.

The notifications recently issued by the Burma Government under the Criminal Law Amendment Act do not come within the scope of this provision.

12 (i) Pending prosecutions will be withdrawn if they have been filed in connection with the civil disobedience movement and relate to offences which do not involve violence other than technical violence, or incitement to such violence.

(ii) The same principles will apply to proceedings under the security provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code.

(iii) Where a local Government has moved any High Court or has initiated proceedings under the Legal Practitioners's Act in regard to the conduct of legal practitioners in connection with the civil disobedience movement, it will make application to the Court concerned for permission to withdraw such proceedings, provided that the alleged conduct of the persons concerned does not relate to violence of incitement to violence.

(iv) Prosecutions, if any, against soldiers and police involving disobedience of orders will not come within the scope of this provision.

13 (i) Those prisoners will be released who are undergoing imprisonment in connection with the civil disobedience movement for offences which did not involve violence, other than technical violence, or incitement to such violence.

(ii) If any prisoner who comes within the scope of (i) above has been also sentenced for a jail offence, not involving violence, other than technical violence, or incitement to such violence, the latter sentence also will be remitted, or if a prosecution relating to an offence of this character is pending against such a prisoner, it will be withdrawn.

(iii) Soldiers and police convicted of offences involving disobedience of orders—in the very few cases that have occurred—will not come within the scope of the amnesty.

14. Fines which have not been realized will be remitted. Where an order for the forfeiture of security has been made under the security provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code, and the security has not been realized, it will be similarly remitted.

Fines which have been realized and securities forfeited and realized under any law will not be returned.

15. Additional police imposed in connection with the civil disobedience movement at the expense of the inhabitants of a particular area will be withdrawn at

the discretion of local Governments. Local Governments will not refund any money, not in excess of the actual cost, that has been realized, but they will remit any sum that has not been realized.

16 (a) Movble property, which is not an illegal possession and which has been seized in connection with the civil disobedience movement, under the Ordinances or the provisions of the Criminal Law, will be returned, if it is still in the possession of Government.

(b) Movable property, forfeited or attached in connection with the realization of land revenue of other dues, will be returned, unless the Collector of the District has reason to believe that the defaulter will contumaciously refuse to pay the dues recoverable from him within a reasonable period. In deciding what is a reasonable period, special regard will be paid to cases in which the defaulters, while willing to pay, genuinely require time for the purpose, and if necessary, the revenue will be suspended in accordance with the ordinary principles of land revenue administration.

(c) Compensation will not be given for deterioration.

(d) Where movable property has been sold or otherwise finally disposed of by Government, compensation will not be given and the sale proceeds will not be returned, except in so far as they are in excess of the legal dues for which the property may have been sold.

(e) It will be open to any person to seed any legal remedy he may have on the ground that the attachment or seizure of property was not in accordance with the law.

17 (a) Immovable property of which possession has been taken under Ordinance IX of 1930 will be returned in accordance with the provisions of the Ordinance.

(b) Land and other immovable property in the possession of Government, which has been forfeited or attached in connection with the realization of land revenue or other dues, will be returned unless the Collector of the district has reason to believe that the defaulter will contumaciously refuse to pay the dues recoverable from him within a reasonable period. In deciding what is a reasonable period special regard will be paid to cases in which the defaulter, while willing to pay, genuinely, requires time for the purpose, and if necessary the revenues will be suspended in accordance with the ordinary principles of land revenue administration.

(c) Where immovale property has been sold to third parties, the transaction must be regarded as final, so far as Government are concerned.

NOTE. Mr. Gandhi has represented[1] to Government that according to his information and belief some, at least, of these sales have been unlawful and unjust. Government on the information before them cannot accept this contention.

(d) It will be open to any person to see any legal remedy he may have on the ground that the seizure or attachment of property was not in accordance with the law.

18. Government believe that there have been very few cases in which the realization of dues has not been made in accordance with the provisions of the law. In order to meet such cases, if any, local Governments will issue instructions to District Officers to have prompt enquiry made into any specific complaint of this nature, and to give redress without delay if illegality is established.

19. Where the posts rendered vacant by the resignations have been permanently filled, Government will not be able to reinstate the late incumbents. Other cases of resignation will be considered on their merits by local Governments who will pursue a liberal policy in regard to the reappointment or Government servants and village official who apply for reinstatement.

20. Government are unable to condone breaches of the existing law relating to the salt administration, nor are they able, in the present financial conditions of the country, to make substantial modifications in the Salt Acts.

For the sake however of giving relief to certain of the poorer classes, they are prepared to extend their administrative provisions, on lines already prevailing in certain places, in order to permit local residents in villages, immediately adjoining areas where salt can be collected or made, to collect or make salt for domestic consumption or sale within such villages, but not for sale to, or trading with, individuals living outside them.

21. In the event of Congress failing to give full effect to the obligations of this settlement, Government will take such action as may, in consequence, become necessary for the protection of the public and individuals and the due observance of law and order.

H. W. EMERSON

SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Young India, 12-3-1931

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 4-3-1931.

APPENDIX VII

VICEROY'S CABLE TO SECRETARY OF STATE[1]

Private and Personal *March 4* [*1931*]

CONVERSATION WITH GANDHI CONCLUDED SATISFACTORILY LAST NIGHT. WE ARE TELEGRAPHING TO YOU OFFICIALLY GIVING TEXT OF STATEMENT THAT WE SHALL ISSUE AS SOON AS YOU HAVE FINALLY APPROVED, AND AS SOON AS WE ARE ASSURED, WHICH I HOPE WE SHALL BE TODAY, THAT THE WORKING COMMITTEE ACCEPTS. IF THEY HAVE ANY MINOR VERBAL AMENDMENTS TO SUGGEST, WE WILL TELEGRAPH THEM FOR SIMULTANEOUS ANNOUNCEMENT AS YOU DESIRE. WE ARE TELEGRAPHING OFFICIALLY ABOUT TIME OF RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION. TEXT OF STATEMENT IS I THINK SELF-EXPLANATORY. IMPORTANT SECTIONS ARE BOYCOTT, PICKETING, POLICE AND SALT. SCOPE OF DISCUSSIONS. THE FIRST TWO ARE AS SATISFACTORY AS I COULD SECURE, AND WE ARE PRETTY WELL ASSURED THAT WE HAVE GOT IT IN A FORM THAT MAKES IT CERTAIN THAT PICKETING IN ITS OFFENSIVE FORMS WILL QUICKLY DISAPPEAR AND PROBABLE THAT ANY FORM OF PICKETING WOULD ONLY BE PRACTISED ON VERY SMALL SCALE. THE POLICE FORMULA IS GOOD. SALT IS A CONCESSION I DO NOT LIKE ON POLITICAL GROUNDS, THOUGH ON REVENUE GROUNDS IT IS UNIMPORTANT. BUT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO SECURE SETTLEMENT WITHOUT IT. YOU WILL OBSERVE THAT WE HAVE VARIED THE FORMULA ABOUT CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSIONS AND ON THIS I WAS DISAPPOINTED THAT OWING TO MISUNDERSTANDING HE WAS UNABLE TO APPROVE AS I HAD THOUGHT ORIGINAL WORDING. BUT I THINK THIS FORMULA GIVES US ESSENTIALS WE WANT. ON QUESTION OF DEBTS AND SECESSION WHICH ARE NOT MENTIONED, GANDHI'S POSITION REMAINS AS STATED IN MY TELEGRAM OF FEBRUARY 28TH, EXCEPT THAT HE ASSURES ME HE DOES NOT THINK THERE WILL BE ANY DIFFICULTY ABOUT HIS NOT WALKING OUT OF CONFERENCE ON ANY DEBT QUESTION BEFORE CONCLUSION OF CONFERENCE DISCUSSIONS. HE HAS GIVEN ME ASSURANCE THAT IN NO CASE WILL HE RESTART CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE TILL CONCLUSION OF CONFERENCE DISCUSSIONS, AND THAT AFTER THAT HE WOULD HOPE NOT TO RESTART AT ALL THOUGH HE CANNOT GIVE DEFINITE UNDERTAKING BEYOND CONFERENCE STAGE.

I MUCH HOPE YOU WILL FEEL ABLE TO APPROVE STATEMENT AS IT STANDS.

From a photostat : G.N. 8955

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 4-3-1931.

APPENDIX VIII

TELEGRAM FROM HOME DEPARTMENT TO BOMBAY GOVERNMENT[1]

NEW DELHI,
March 15, 1931

KINDLY ARRANGE TO COMMUNICATE FOLLOWING TO GANDHI FROM EMERSON. BEGINS. GOVERNMENT OF INDIA HAVE RECEIVED COMPLAINTS THAT CONGRESS ARE CONTINUING SYSTEM BY WHICH MILLS ARE PLACED ON A BOYCOTT LIST IF THEY DO NOT SIGN AN AGREEMENT OR DECLARATION. I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT IF FACTS ARE AS STATED YOU WILL RECOGINZE THAT USE OF A BLACK LIST IN CONNECTION WITH MILLS UNWILLING TO SIGN AGREEMENT PLACES THIS SYSTEM OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF METHODS OF PERSUASION AND INTERFERES WITH THE FREEDOM OF ACTION OF INDIVIDUALS. THIS WOULD ALSO BE THE CASE IN REGARD TO ANY SIMILAR METHOD BY WHICH CONGRESS ORGANIZED THE BOYCOTT OF MILLS COMPANIES, ETC. WHICH DID NOT SIGN AGREEMENTS. IT THEREFORE SEEMS CLEARLY CONTRARY TO LETTER AND SPIRIT OF SETTLEMENT AND I ACCORDINGLY BRING MATTER TO YOUR NOTICE IN CONFIDENCE THAT YOU WILL PUT IT RIGHT. ENDS.

2. THIS IS RELEVANT TO TELEGRAM FROM SECRETARY OF STATE REGARDING FINLAYS WHO SHOULD BE ADVISED THAT GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ARE TAKING UP THE MATTER.

Home Department, Political, File No. 33/6, 1931. Courtesy : National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to H.W. Emerson", 18-3-1931.

APPENDIX IX

EMERSON'S NOTE ON INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI[1]

March 19, 1931

I had a talk for about three hours with Mr. Gandhi this evening relating to difficulties arising out of the settlement. I made it clear throughout that any opinions which I expressed were my own and not those of Government. Mr. Gandhi first mentioned the points he desired to bring to the notice of Government which were as follows :

(a) He mentioned the case of the Raja of Kalakankar in which according to the A.P.I. message, elephants, motors, etc., had been attached for arrears of land revenue. He stated that he did not himself know the facts of the case, but did know that the Raja was a Congress sympathizer. He had, he said, written to ascertain the facts. I said that Government had no information, but that I personally thought it probable that the attachment had been made in the ordinary course of land revenue administration and that, if this was so, the settlement did not of course affect cases of this kind, since the revenue administration must pursue its normal course. I promised to ascertain the facts.

(b) He next mentioned a case that occurred some months ago in the district of Colaba in connection with forest satyagraha, when in the course of a riot a Mamlatdar was accidentally shot by the police. The case, he said, was now under trial in the Sessions Court, to which it had been committed. According to his information no provocation had been given by the accused and some of them certainly had not committed actual violence. He suggested that the case against those accused, at any rate, should be withdrawn. I told him that I had not seen the papers for some months; but my recollection was that the case was one of serious violence in which the police had had considerable difficulty in escaping and that, so far as I remembered, one or two forest guards had been killed. I explained that this was not a case which we could possibly represent to the local Government and that, in so far as the Government and Congress versions differed, the Court would decide.

(c) He then got on to the question of whether offences under Section 124-A, Indian Penal Code, and 108, Criminal Procedure Code came within the terms of the amnesty. His contention was that all such cases did come within it and that offences involving incitement to violence should only be regarded as exceptions, if the result of the incitement had been actual violence. He also urged that where the incitement has not resulted in violence it should be regarded as technical. I explained to him that, so far as I was concerned, there was no room for misunderstanding, since

[1] *Vide* "Interview with Viceroy", 19-3-1931.

when technical violence was included in the amnesty the intention was made quite clear, and I mentioned the illustration that had been given when the settlement was being discussed, namely, that convictions for rioting would have to be examined on their merits and that, while a trivial fracas might properly be regarded as coming within the term "technical violence", a serious riot could not be so regarded and that all persons who were concerned in it whether they had been guilty of actual violence or not would be excluded from the amnesty. He admitted that this was so, but said that he had not realized that Section 124-A, Indian Penal Code, and Section 108, Criminal Procedure Code, would come within the exceptions. I explained that, under both the sections, there were cases in which persons had been prosecuted for speeches which included incitement to serious violence and that, while it could not always, or indeed ordinarily be said that the direct result was violence, there was no doubt that speeches of this sort had gained recruits to the terrorist movement and so had been indirectly responsible for violence. In any case the criterion of actual violence had not been adopted. I said that the matter was not one merely of interpretation but of great practical importance, and I took the opportunity of stating to him the position in the Punjab and in Delhi. I mentioned the meetings in Lahore and in Amritsar, the general campaign there had been in favour of Bhagat Singh and violence generally, and the apprehensions of the local Government that a serious situation would arise. I told him that I had just received a letter from the Punjab Government giving accounts for sppeeches made by Dr. Satyapal and Sardul Singh Kaveeshar, both of whom were members of the Working Committee. I said that the local Government had held its hands in the desire to avoid action which was likely to prejudice the settlement, that we had told them that, while the Government of India naturally hope that the necessity of action would not arise, we did not desire to fetter their discretion if circumstances so required, and that it was no part of the settlement that action should not be taken under the ordinary law against persons who violated it. Mr. Gandhi agreed that this was so. I then mentioned the case of Delhi, told him of the meeting in honour of Chandra Shekhar Azad and the concern of the Chief Commissioner, Delhi, and of the Deputy Commissioner that the situation might deteriorate, and that it might be necessary to prohibit meetings. I said that we were anxious if possible to avoid resort to the Seditious Meetings Act, but that we could not allow a situation of danger to arise, and that, if excitement grew, we might have no alternative; but in that case we would, so far as possible, restrict the use of the Act to meetings in support of violence. I then asked him if he had seen in the papers that the Governor-General in Council had rejected the petition for mercy on behalf of Bhagat Singh. He said that he had and that he was apprehensive regarding the consequences. I did not mention the date on which the execution would be carried out, but I did explain to him that the question as to whether it should take place before or after the Karachi Congress had been very seriously considered by Government who realized the difficulties of either

course, but thought it would have been unfair to the condemned persons to postpone execution and also not fair to Gandhi to allow the impression to gain ground that commutation was under consideration when this was not the case. He agreed that of the two alternatives it is better not to wait, but he suggested, though not seriously, that the third course of commutation of the sentence would have been better still. He did not seem to me to be particularly concerned about the matter. I told him that we should be lucky if we got through without disorder, and I asked him to do all that he could to prevent meetings being held in Delhi during the next few days and to restrain violent speeches. He promised to do what he could.

I then applied these facts to the matter under discussion, namely, inclusion of all cases under Section 124-A, Indian Penal Code, and Section 108, Criminal Procedure Code, in the amnesty. I explained that we could not possibly approach local Governments with a suggestion of this kind in present conditions. The violence [*sic*] movement was serious menace with which we could not afford to trifle, and that, before we could even think of making a suggestion of this kind, there must be a cessation of the campaign of violence and of incitement thereto. He argued that to keep persons convicted of such offences in jail increased rather than lessened the danger by embittering feeling and he said that he would himself like an understanding by which all persons convicted before the amnesty under Section 124-A, Indian Penal Code, and 108, Criminal Procedure Code, were released while no quarter was given, in regard to prosecutions, to persons who preached violence in future. He said that Government's interpretation of the settlement on this point placed him in a difficult position and he would like to consider it further. The matter was left in this position, but I said that I did not think the Government could possibly alter its position in this respect.

(d) He mentioned two specific cases under Section 124-A and Section 108, namely, that of the two Delhi women and of a Professor Kripalani in the United Provinces. I said that the former had been carefully examined and that it had been definitely considered that it did not come within the amnesty. In regard to Professor Kripalani, he said that he was sure that he had said nothing in his speeches which incited to violence. I said that I would ascertain the facts from the United Provinces Government. At the same time, however, I was able to give him facts and figures of the action taken by the United Provinces Government which, he admitted, showed that that Government had acted in a very liberal spirit.

(e) He then mentioned Sholapur cases and said that, so far as he knew, no prisoners of Sholapur had been released. I said that the position in regard to Sholapur was the same as in all other cases, namely, that the test was violence or incitement to violence not being technical violence and that subject to this test there was no distinction, whether convictions were in the civil or military courts. I said that the matter was necessarily one for the discretion of the local Government and that, while

I imagined they would naturally take a serious view of offences connected with the outbreaks of violence, they would not exclude from the amnesty persons convicted of breaches of Martial Law regulations, etc., where no question of violence or incitement thereto arises. I promised to ascertain the position from the local Government.

(f) He then raised the question of additional police. He said that he had received complaints regarding realization of cost after the 5th of March. I said I thought it very improbable that any such cases had occurred, but would ascertain the facts if he mentioned specific cases. He asked that, where realization had been made after the 5th owing to non-receipt of orders by District Authorities, the sums collected should be refunded. I said that I thought this was reasonable. I again made it clear to him that it has always been con-templated that some delay is likely to occur in the withdrawal of additional police, and that local Governments would wait until satisfied that conditions had become normal. He agreed that this was the understanding.

2. I then mentioned various matters which from the Government point of view were causing difficulty and misunderstanding.

(a) I first mentioned the question of the boycott of Indian mills by a system under which Congress placed on a black list those mills whose agents did not sign an agreement. I said that the principle on which Government stood was that the encouragement of Indian industries shoud not involve interference with the freedom of action of the individual and that my own view was that a system which involved placing a mill on a black list which did not take a certain course necessarily involved coercion amounting almost to blackmail, and further that any pressure on the consumer (which went beyond persuasion) to induce him to boycott the products of a mill was a breach of the settlement. I also expressed the opinion that a mill, which was placed on a black list, would have civil action for damages. Mr. Gandhi said that it was not the intention to use methods other than persuasion either with the manufacturer or consumer, but he regarded it as justifiable propaganda to let customers know that particular mills did not observe the swadeshi creed. I explained that the Directors and Agents of mills definitely objected to a boycott list as amounting to coercion and that, while, so far as I knew, they did not object to persuasion, they did most strongly object to the methods employed in the past. I said that, while I did not know the view of Government on the subject, they might not object to certificates to be used for purposes of advertisement to mills, which adopted swadeshi creed, and to the replacement of the black list by a list of swadeshi mills—such a list being used for propaganda purposes only. He said that there would be no difficulty in this.

(d) We then discussed the new scheme for the export of foreign cloth. I said that the principle in this case was that dealers should be free from any interference with their liberty of action and that no one who did not wish to join in the scheme should be forced to do so. Also that sellers and buyers who had refrained from dealing

in foreign cloth should be left free without any form of restraint to change their attitude if they so wished. He said quite definitely that this was the intention. I said I could conceive that there might be dealers who were honestly convinced that the sale of their stocks of foreign cloth in India was contrary to the good of the country and who, therefore, had real scruples against selling it and that, in cases of this kind, I myself saw no ground on which objection could be taken. I then quoted to him a reported speech of Babu Rajendra Prasad of Patna, made on the 10th of March, in which the following passage occurred :

> A word to the merchants. They should not suppose that the effect of the truce was to give them perfect liberty to sell and import British cloth. The speaker was aware that they had suffered and he was grateful for the help that they had given. But what was the suffering of the rich merchants compared to that of poor people who had lost their all, whose houses had been looted and everything found either taken away or destroyed. The merchants had at least ten years' notice not to deal in foreign cloth, and if they suffered no one else was to blame, but the Congress was anxious to see that some way was found to save them from ruin or heavy loss. The way, however, could not be to permit them to sell their stocks in India. Mahatmaji was in consultation with business magnates of Calcutta, Bombay, Ahmedabad and Delhi and other places to devise a scheme which would enable the existing stock to be disposed of outside India. It was a very big scheme as it involved ten or twelve crores worth of foreign cloth, and there was a likelihood of loss even when the scheme was put through. This will have to be borne by dealers and possibly a way would be found to give some relief. They had to wait and see how the thing developed.

I said that the sentence underlined seemed to me to be quite inconsistent with Mr. Gandhi's position. He said that this was in fact not so and that he himself had taken the same line with merchants who asked him for permission to deal in foreign cloth. He explained that it was contrary to the Congress creed specifically to give such permission, since this would amount to repudiation of the doctrine to which they attach great importance, that it was one thing for Congress to recognize that merchants were free to do as they liked and another thing for the Congress specifically to accord this permission. I then asked him how merchants were to know how they stood, and said that Government regarded it as essential that they should be in no doubt on this point. He said he had no objection whatever to Government making the position clear. He added that, so far as he knew, there was not any doubt on the matter and that the hesitation of merchants to deal freely in foreign cloth was due to uncertainty as to what might happen in the future. I pointed out that, in accordance with what had been said in (b) above, the description of the scheme which relates to the "certification of handloom cloth made for such Indian mills as may not

be under the Congress ban" would have to be expressed in different terms since no question of a Congress ban now arises. Mr. Gandhi agreed.

(c) On the general question of the boycott of foreign cloth he was quite candid and said that he had no doubt himself that the movement would gain great momentum without resort to coercion or pressure, that Indian and English mill-owners were convinced of the benefit to themselves of the swadeshi movement and that before long those who had so far stood out would voluntarily come in. He appears to be firmly convinced that the propaganda he intended to pursue would have very big results, and he pointed out quite truly that the boycott on an extensive scale of a particular class of goods must, however unobjec-tionable the methods might be, influence the dealers in their future course of business and so indirectly affect their freedom of action. He was very vague about the export scheme and admitted that details had not been worked out. His chief argument in support of it was that men like Sir Ness Wadia and accepted it as workable.

(d)[1] I then got on to the more difficult question of what seemed to me failure on the part of the Congress to observe the general spirit of the settlement. I repeated what I had told Gandhi when I first met him that, if a settlement was to be a merely paper one without any intention on the part of Congress honestly to try to find a solution of constitutional problems, then it was better not to have one at all and that it was not possible for Government to stand by and watch Congress definitely organizing for a fight with no real wish to obtain peace. I mentioned in this connection various points that I myself regarded with uneasiness, e.g., Pandit Jawaharlal's circular No. 12; the message to the peasants of Rae Bareilly; what appeared to be a movement in the United Provinces to replace a no-tax campaign as part of the civil disobedience movement by similar campaign on economic grounds; various speeches of Pandit Jawaharlal; reference to a "truce" with a preconceived idea that no final settlement would be attained; talks of a future war and reference to Government as opponents and enemies. I also mentioned the way in which Congress had attempted to exploit the settlement as a victory. Gandhi saw nothing objection-able in circular No. 12 and said that he could not dismiss the possibility that peace would not ultimately be reached. At the same time, he fully accepted the position that it was wrong to refer to the settlement as a truce, to talk about a future war, to prejudge the issues and refer to Government as enemies and opponents. He also expressed disapproval of the exploitation of the settlement by Congress as a victory.

I told him that I was particularly disquieted by the indication of a campaign of the Congress in the United Provinces to stir revenue payers against Government and tenants against landlords, that it was very easy to raise a rural agitation on these lines and that the consequence could not fail to be serious. That, in so far as there was

[1] The source has "(e)".

economic distress, local Governments were fully alive to the gravity of the situation and would deal with it as liberally as circumstances permitted and that any attempt by Congress as an organization to intervene would merely make the situation more difficult. I mentioned to him the report I had seen that the Congress Committee or Council in the United Provinces had made a recommendation that 50 per cent of land revenue and rents should be remitted and had advised revenue payers and tenants to withhold payments pending decision by the local Government. Unfortunately I did not have the reference with me and so could not verify it. Mr. Gandhi agreed that if the facts were as stated it was wrong to advise tenants to withhold rents. I promised to look out the reference and to let him have it.

(e)1 I next mentioned definite disquieting reports from Gujarat saying that land revenue was not being paid, and I told him that I had seen a speech by Vallabhbhai Patel suggesting that Government would be quite content to wait a year or even two years for revenue where there was difficulty in paying it. I suggested to him that statements of this kind would naturally be taken advantage of by revenue payers who could easily pay and that, while I had no doubt that the local Government would consider any genuine cases of distress, our information was that there should be no difficulty at all in paying up by far the greater part of the revenue at once. I said that the inevitable result of unwarranted delay on the part of revenue payers would be the recommencement of coercive processes and the creation of an unfavourable atmosphere. He expressed surprise that land revenue was not coming in and said that, so far as he was concerned, there was no intention to discourage people, who could pay, not to do so.

3. He then himself mentioned certain correspondence he had with the Collector of Kaira regarding forfeited lands and other matters. He regarded the correspondence as unsatisfactory, but did not say what it was about and dropped the subject. He mentioned, however, a circular issued by a Mamlatdar of Kaira to the effect that village servants who had resigned had not only to apply for reinstatement, but had to express regret for their conduct and also to pay a penalty before reinstatement. He regarded this as contrary to the spirit of the settlement. I said that I could express no opinion on the matter in ignorance of the policy of the local Government. He said he would let me have a copy of the circular.

4. I then read to him a letter received today from the United Provinces Government mentioning a case of forcible picketing in Agra. He agreed that, if the facts were correct, it was a clear case for suspension of all picketing. I promised to let him have a copy. I also mentioned cases which had been brought to my notice by non-officials of picketing in Amritsar and Cawnpore where the transport of goods

from one place to another had been prevented; but, as I had no official confirmation of these facts, I could not press for effective action.

5. The general impression left was that Mr. Gandhi is anxious to implement the settlement and to obtain a genuine solution. He seemed to be confident about the Karachi Congress; but he expected opposition from the left and said that the execution of Bhagat Singh might seriously complicate matters. He was very loyal to Pandit Jawaharlal, but, I gathered, did not regard it as altogether improbable that he would take his own line sooner or later. He recognized the difficulties that would be created by an undiluted resolution in favour of complete independence at the Karachi Congress and by a declaration that the Congress would go on fighting until they achieved this. It seemed to me that he himself had made up this mind to see that a course of this kind was not taken and that the actual resolutions of this nature would be qualified by speeches which would avoid banging the door in the way of peace.

From a photostat : C.W. 9363. Courtesy : India Office Library; also Bombay Secret Abstracts : H.D. Sp.Br. File No. 750(57)

APPENDIX X

LETTER FROM H. W. EMERSON[1]

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,
HOME DEPARTMENT, NEW DELHI,
March 20, 1931

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I write to thank you for your letter of today enclosing translations of a circular and of notice issued by the Mamlatdar of Borsad. I will bring the matter to the notice of the local Government.

2. With reference to our conversation[2] last night regarding the danger of excitement being worked up in connection with the execution of the sentences passed on Bhagat Singh, etc., the Chief Commissioner informs me that notice has been given in the city that Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose will address a meeting of protest tonight at 5.30. I fully realize your difficulties in the matter and I think that you realize the difficulties of Government and also their desire at the present time to avoid, if possible, preventive action, which may, however, be unavoidable if excitement grows. If a meeting is held tonight, it is almost certain to increase feeling, especially if speeches of an inflammatory character are made. Government

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H.W.Emerson", 20-3-1931.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

will much appreciate any assistance you feel able to give to prevent this and to check the creation of conditions which, if uncontrolled, may have serious consequences.

Yours sincerely,

H. W. EMERSON

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX XI

LETTER FROM H. W. EMERSON[1]

HOME DEPARTMENT, NEW DELHI,
March 21, 1931

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I write to thank you for your letter of March 20th, and return the telegrams enclosed with it after taking copies. I am ascertaining from the Finance Department the exact orders which have issued regarding salt, and I will let you know further what the position is.[2]

2. I have also requested the Government of Bihar and Orissa to report the facts regarding the release of prisoners.

Yours sincerely,

H. W. EMERSON

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX XII

LETTER FROM H. W. EMERSON[3]

D.O.No.D. 2246/31-Poll.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,
HOME DEPARTMENT, NEW DELHI,
March 28, 1931

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

In my letter of the 21st of March I promised[4] to let you know what the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H.W.Emerson", 20-3-1931.
[2] *Vide* the following item.
[3] *Vide* "Letter to H.W.Emerson", 20-3-1931.
[4] *Vide* the preceding item.

position was regarding the salt concession. I now learn that general orders were issued on the 9th of March by the Central Board of Revenue to the various local authorities asking them that :

1. Orders might be issued immediately directing all officers concerned to act forthwith in accordance with the spirit of the arrangement, and to refer any difficulty or doubtful point that might arise to superior a authority before taking punitive action in cases where there appeared to be any abuse of the concession; and

2. draft standing orders governing the operation of the concession might be worked out, with the least possible dealy, and submitted for the approval of the Government of India.

The telegram, a copy of which you sent to me, presumably referred to the draft instructions by the local authority. These have not yet received the approval of the Government of India, and the latter have no intention of imposing a limit of distance within which people must reside in order to be eligible for the concession. As you yourself recognize, it is difficult to translate the formula used in the Statement[1] of the Governor General in Council into an exact definition, but I understand that the Central Board of Revenue will prescribe as a rough working test that villagers should neither come to the salt sources nor take their salt away otherwise than on foot. From the administrative point of view the main check against the abuse of the concession will be its withdrawal from any area, after such warning as may be reasonable, where it is clearly abused. But Government hope that the people themselves will avoid the necessity of action of this kind by refraining from any abuse of the concession.

Yours sincerely,

H. W. EMERSON

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.

CONGRESS CAMP, KARACHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX XIII

LETTER FROM H. W. EMERSON[2]

NEW DELHI,

March 22, 1931

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

In accordance with our conversation yesterday, I enclose the drafts of two questions, which by arrangement could be asked in the Legislative Assembly,

[1] Of Gandhi-Irwin Agreement, as announced by the Governor-General in Council, *vide* "Provisional settlement", 12-3-1931.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to H.W.Emerson", 23-3-1931.

and of the replies thereto. I have not been able to take orders of Government thereon in time for this letter to reach you before you leave Delhi, and they may therefore be regarded as provisional. I will, of course, let you know if any changes are made in them. Will you kindly inform me whether you regard them as suitable?

2. I do not know the particular forms of agreement or declaration which are now signed by the agents or managers of mills, and, in any case, you will understand that Government could not place themselves in a position where they appeared to approve of any particular form of agreement. The questions and replies are, therefore confined to the general principles included in the statement of the 5th of March and are not to be taken as connoting acceptance by Government of specific provisions of any agreement or declaration.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
1 DARYAGANJ
DELHI

[ENCLOSURE]

QUESTION

(a) Have Government seen the following notice issued by the General Secretary[1] of the Indian National Congress, which appeared in *The Times of India* of the 9th[2] of March 1931 :

> "Mills on the boycott list, mills with whom negotiations were pending and therefore were not placed on the boycott list and also Bombay mills which were temporarily placed on the approved list pending negotiations regarding some clauses of the Congress declaration, for instance, the use of artificial silk, ect., are hereby informed that my office will issue the final list of all mills by the 20th March, 1931, for the Karachi Congress, and if such mills are at all anxious not to be placed on the boycott list, they will kindly settle the matter with Mr. Shankerlal Banker (Mirzapur, Ahmedabad) and sign the declaration form on or before the 15th instant. Mr. Banker will be in Bombay on the 16th March. I hope and trust that the mills concerned will please expedite the matter. The Congress is taking up this matter earnestly and seriously."

(b) Will Government say that the position is in regard to this notice?

[1] Syed Mahmud
[2] The source has "10th".

(a) Yes.

(b) They understand that while methods of persuasion will be used with manufacturers, dealers or consumers, these methods will not, in accordance with the terms of the settlement, interfere with the liberty of action of individuals. They understand, further, that no boycott list of manufacturers, who are unwilling to enter the scheme, will be issued, and that any action taken will be confined to the purposes of propaganda or advertisement, e.g., the issue of a list for propaganda purposes of manufacturers or dealers who voluntarily enter the scheme, and the issue to them of certificates for purposes of advertisement.

Home Department, Political, File No. 33/6, 1931, p. 18. Courtesy : National Archives of India

APPENDIX XIV

EMERSON'S NOTE ON INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI[1]

April 7, 1931

1. I had five hours' talk last night with Mr. Gandhi regarding various matters arising out of the settlement. We talked first about the communal situation, which he recognized as very serious. He obviously had little hope of an early settlement with the Muhammadans and he expressed himself as very grieved that not only was the feeling extremely bitter, but that non-Congress Muhammadans were challenging the honesty of proposals he made. I took the opportunity of rubbing in that in the present state of feeling throughout Northern India any trivial incident would suffice to start serious trouble and that it was, therefore, the more necessary that the Congress should avoid interference with the liberty of individuals, which was an important cause of the keen resentment felt by Muslims. I also emphasized the great danger of trouble spreading into the villages, especially in the United Provinces, and the difficulties that would arise in stamping it out, if it once began in rural areas. He was obviously fully aware of the danger, and the impression I gained was that he will use his influence with Congress to avoid causes of offence to Muslims. I gathered that the Congress were already using much more discretion in picketing the shops of Muhammadans and that Gandhi's own desire was that picketing of their shops should cease.

2. We then got on to the subject of Gujarat, about which he said he was recei-ving very distressing accounts. Some of the new Patels were men of bad character, etc., and were making the lives of the villagers unbearable; there was no real spirit of co-operation between Government and the Congress; the latter had, for instance, asked for a list of the lands which had been sold and the persons to whom

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H.W.Emerson", 9-4-1931.

they were sold, but this had been refused, although in fact, according to his account, previous owners of land had not, in some cases, correct information on this point. It was understood that Government would remain neutral regarding the recovery of lands sold to third parties, but they were not doing so. For instance, they were using the Police to put purchasers in possession of lands they had bought, although according to law the purchasers ought to have obtained possession by a regular suit in cases where they had not obtained more than formal possession from Government. Again there were some temporary Patels who had not yet been replaced by previous incumbents who had resigned. Generally, the burden of his complaint was that he had made a mistake in agreeing about the non-restoration of lands sold to third parties and the non-reinstatement of Patels whose places have not been permanently filled, and, although he had no intention of going back on the settlement, he now realized what difficulties were involved.

I then gave him the other side of the case. I told him that for every complaint he had made I had seen several from the other side, that the position, as reported to the Government of India, is that in particular taluks land revenue collections are at a standstill, continuous pressure is being brought to bear on loyalists, on purchasers of land and movable property and on new Patels, and that generally from the Government point of view the situation is very unsatisfactory. So far as Patels are concenred, I imagined that the actual position is that villagers are trying to obtain the reinstatement of the old Patels by securing the dismissal of the new ones, that the District Officers are, therefore, naturally sceptical in regard to complaints about the latter, but that I did not think that they would desire to keep any Patel in office if his conduct was such as to render him liable to dismissal under the rules. On the other hand, the District Officers would naturally defend the Patels against frivolous complaints. He admitted that the complaints were not against all the new Patels, but against some of them. I said that, as regards the neutrality of Government, this could not be interpreted as meaning that Government should not give purchasers of land the legal rights to which they were entitled, and that, if they were, in fact, entitled under the ordinary revenue law to summary possession, it was obviously right to give it.

I then read out to him extracts from the demi-official letters of the Bombay Government, dated the 2nd and 4th April, which showed clearly that in certain taluks, e.g., Borsad and Bardoli, collections of land revenue had practically stopped since the settlement. He seemed to be surprised at these figures and asked for a copy of the extracts, which I promised to give him. I said that it was absurd to suppose that this general suspension of payment was due to economic distress, that our information was that crops were very good and that cases in which persons would find any difficulty in paying were extremely few, that Government regarded the delay in payment as a serious breach of the settlement and that, even if it were true, as he said, that people in one or two villages were having trouble from the new Patels, that was

no reason why land revenue should not be paid, that the Bombay Government had recently informed the Government of India that they proposed to resume coercive processes within the next ten days and on the information before them the Government of India could not possibly take exception to this proposal, although naturally both they and the local Government hoped that it would not be necessary to resort to them, since it was clear that, once the use of coercive processes began on a considerable scale, the atmosphere in Gujarat would again become seriously disturbed and more ill-feeling would be engendered. Mr. Gandhi admitted the great desirability of avoiding resort to coercive processes, but recognized that the local Government could not reasonably be expected to wait beyond the period stated. He expressed his desire that the settlement should be scrupulously observed and said that he would be in Ahmedabad on the 12th, when he would very much like to have a heart-to-heart talk with the Commissioner of the Northern Division. I said that I thought it was an excellent idea and would pass on his wish to the Bombay Government. He said that he hoped that later His Excellency the Governor of Bombay would be able to grant him an interview.

The impression left on my mind by the talk about Gujarat was that Vallabhbhai Patel and his friends are making it as difficult as possible for Gandhi to honour the settlement; that they are holding up the payment of land revenue on one pretext or another in the hope that all Patels will be reinstated and all lands restored; that they are communicating to Gandhi all sorts of complaints, few of which have any foundation, and that Gandhi himself would like to find a way out, but cannot. I am inclined to think that when he returns to Gujarat he will play the game regarding the payment of land revenue, but that he will meet with considerable opposition and that there will be attempts to exploit any pretext for non-payment. I think it would be a good thing if the Commissioner, Northern Division, were able to hear what Mr. Gandhi has to say to give him the other side of the picture with specific examples. Gandhi himself recognizes that the settlement must stand regarding lands and Patels, and I think it might be possible to satisfy some of his doubts and misgivings, if he were assured that

(a) the policy of reinstating Patels, whose places have not been filled, wll be liberally pursued,

(b) Government, while protecting new Patels against frivolous complaints, will be prepared to deal under the ordinary revenue rules with Patels, if any, who abuse their position,

(c) local officers will give such information as might reasonably be expected regarding the slae of lands.

I venture to make these suggestions, because I am quite clear that Gandhi does not want to break the settlement and that he is fully alive to the undesirability of

collection by coercive processes.

In the mean time I made it quite clear to him that the Government of India do not intend to raise any objection to the proposal of the local Government to start coercive process in the near future.

3. I mentioned the cases of delay in the payment of land revenue in the Kanara and Dharwar Districts. He said that this delay was entirely due to bad harvests and economic distress, and that when he saw His Excellency the Governor, he would mention the matter to him. I did not pursue the subject.

4. Mr. Gandhi then raised the question of the United Provinces which he discussed for about two hours. I read out to him the gist of letters of the Collectors of Allahabad and Muttra, last week's report of the special branch of United Provinces and the instructions sent by the Provincial Congress Committee to the District Committee of Fatehpur. I told him that Sir Frank Noyce and I had recently discussed the situation with His Excellency the Governor of the United Provinces, and that the Government of India and the local Government regarded the situation in several districts with great concern. There was no doubt that the situation had deteriorated very rapidly and that in one or two districts there was imminent danger of serious disorder at any time. If disorder began, it might easily spread and there was very grave danger that, although it might begin as agrarian, it would end as communal. Mr. Gandhi was very obviously surprised at the facts placed before him and he at once admitted that the following Congress activities were wrong :

(a) Advocating tenants to withhold payment of rent and land revenue in whole or part,

(b) the establishment of a Congress Tahsildar in the Muttra District,

(c) dissemination of the idea that swaraj had been attained and that revenue and rent need no longer be paid,

(d) attacks by tenants on zamindars,

(e) interference with Muslims.

He was particularly concerned about the last item and I laid stress on the fact that, if Muslims generally had reason to believe that the Congress were attempting to come between Muslim landlords and their tenants, communal bitterness would be increased and there would be grave danger of trouble. I said that Government regarded the activities of the Congress in the United Provinces in regard to rent and revenue as a very serious breach of the settlement, that it had never been contemplated that anything of the sort would be done and that Government were satisfied that, under cover of economic distress, the Congress were in fact carrying on the campaign for political purposes. I had been instructed by Government to tell him that the local Government propose to take what measures were possible under the ordinary law to deal with the situation and that the Government of India approved of this course; further it was anticipated that,

if this action did not suffice, the local Government would come forward with proposals for special measures, e.g., the renewal of powers conferred by the Unlawful Instigation Ordinance or action under the Criminal Law Amendment Act; and that the Government of India directed me to let him know that, if such proposals were made, they would receive the serious consideration of Government. I added, as my own opinion, that, if Congress activities continued, action under the ordinary law would almost certainly prove inadequate and that an irresistible case would be made out for special measures. I said that this would almost certainly break the settlement, a result which Government were very anxious to avoid, if this were possible.

I then briefly explained to him the statement of land revenue policy made by His Excellency the Governor a few days ago in the Provincial Legislative Council and said that the local Government considered that it would meet the requirements of the economic situation; at any rate, it was essential that it should be given a trial; and that, if the consequences above outlined were to be avoided, Congress should cease to interfere. Mr. Gandhi asked me whether Government considered it as part of the duty of the Congress to secure the payment of land revenue. I said that, so far as the United Provinces were concerned, I thought that Government would be satified if Congress abstained completely from any sort of interference, and that they would not wish to impose on Congress any obligation in this respect. I explained that the position in Gujarat was different.

Mr. Gandhi said that he had heard complaints from the other side, as, for instance, brutal treatment of tenants by landlords, and that the real problem was how the Congress could co-operate with Government in regard to the situation. He said that the methods so far pursued were on the facts given by me undoubtedly open to objection, but that was no reason why the matter should not be put on the right lines which he proceeded to develop. The proposals as they eventually emerged were that in each tahsil there should be a Congress Committee which would co-operate with the local officers in land revenue matters. In ordinary times, the Congress Committee would have nothing to do, since the full demand would be accepted as a matter of course; but in times of distress the Congress would collect facts and figures themselves, would ascertain the views of the zamindars and the tenants and would make representations to the Collector which the Collector would examine. He asked me whether Government would object to this scheme. I said that I thought that the Government of India and the local Government would object very strongly to it. He suggested that this showed distrust of Congress which was not warranted, that the reasonable course was for the Government and Congress to work together, that in fact Government were now at peace with the Congress; they had entered into a settlement with it, and that there could be no reason why this principle should not be extended. I pointed out to him that the settlement reached related to the

abandonment of the civil disobedience movement in which Government and the Congress were solely, or at any rate mainly, concerned, that it was a different matter for Governmet to use the Congress as an intermediary in matters in which other parties were concerned, that, while it was regrettable that there was distrust, he could hardly expect Collectors of districts, in veiw of the facts that had been placed before him, to welcome the scheme. Moreover, however unobjectionable it might appear in theory, it was open to grave practical objections and would certainly lead to a continuous agitation on the part of tenants, at any rate, in regard to their rents. No Government could abrogate its functions in the manner suggested and provincial autonomous governments of the future would have grave cause of complaint against the present Government, if they allowed any political party to intervene in the way suggested. Mr. Gandhi asked whether I objected to a combination of tenants, for common purposes. I said that I could not take legal objection to it, but I thought that such combinations almost inevitably led to trouble and disturbed the relations between landlords and tenants. He then said that, if there and were no objections to a combination of tenants, what objection could there be to Congress representing the interests of the tenants, Congress assisting the cause of tenants by appeals to zamindars on the grounds of humanity. He suggested that zamindars themselves would find such an arrangement advantageous. I pointed out that Congresss did not command the universal support he seemed to think. Muslims, for instance, were intensely hostile to it, and there were many zamindars who regarded its activities with the greatest apprehension and suspicion. In fact the general tendency of the Congress to interfere in other people's affairs was the cause of a good deal of existing unrest. I then explained that the objections would apply equally whatever political party was concerned. I asked him whether, for instance, he considered that it would conduce to harmony if the Muslim League interfered in the Punjab between a Hindu landlord and a Muhammadan tenant.

Mr. Gandhi then said that Congress had always supported the cause of tenants and that it would be impossible for him to stand by and see tenants ill-treated by landlords without trying to help them. I said that I was quite sure that the local Government would do everything to discourage ill-treatment of tenants in order to enforce payment of rent and that they would be only too glad if tenants filed criminal complaints. In any case, whatever might be the theoretical position, organized interference by Congress at the present time in matters affecting land revenue and rent would inevitably lead to serious trouble and had to be ruled out. He then asked what he was to do about it. He had previously said that he was very concerned about affairs in the United Provinces and felt that he himself would have to try to put matters right there. He had also mentioned his desire to discuss matters with the Governor. I suggested that the proper course for the Congress was to leave things alone so that the scheme of the local Government might be put into operation, that it might be

presumed that, if incidental adjustments in the scheme were necessary, these would be made and that the local Government would pursue a policy in accordance with the requirements of the situation. I said that I could not say anything about his interview with the Governor, but, if one were granted, I felt that the Governor would be able to satisfy him that there was no intention of demanding land revenue in excess of the capacity of the land revenue payers to pay, that it was the desire of the local Government that landlords should not demand excessive rent, and that they would actively discourage ill-treatment by landlords for the purpose of exacting rent. I gathered that Mr. Gandhi would not, in any case, be able to see the Governor before the return of Sir Malcolm Hailey.

The final understanding was that Mr. Gandhi would do what he could to stop the present activities in the United Provinces relating to land revenue and rent and that he would seek an interview with Sir Malcolm Hailey on his return. My impressions regarding this part of the conversation were that Mr. Gandhi was ignorant of a great deal that had been going on and that he generally disapproved of it. He was also evidently apprehensive regarding the possible consequences of agrarian and communal trouble combined. At the same time, the scheme of Tahsil Committees (which I take to be Jawaharlal's) had certain attractions for him and it no doubt represents one side of the Congress programme to get hold of the rural classes by acting as an intermediary between Government and the people and exercise functions which belong properly to Government. I doubt whether Jawaharlal and other leaders of the United Provinces will readily give up their programme, and I should not be surprised if Gnadhi had considerable difficulties in dealing with them. In the mean time he is in no doubt regarding the action which the local Government will at once find it necessary to take and the further measures that may be necessary if the activities continue. This knowledge should operate in making him exercise greater control over Jawaharlal, for he does not want a breach of the settlement and it appeared that even before our conversation he was uneasy regarding the United Provinces.

5. I next brought up the subject of the issue by the All-India Congress Committee of a directory which includes a list of mills that had not given a certain undertaking. Mr. Gandhi said that the directory had been issued before the arrangement had been finally reached by which the Congress were not to issue any such list or to make any reference to the Congress ban. He said that he had already given instructions that no such list would issue in future. I again emphasized what Government regarded as essentials in connection with the movement in favour of Indian goods, namely, that the methods should be confined to persuasion, propaganda and advertisements and that the object should be economic and not political. I said that, if Government found that other methods were being pursued, they would take what action they considered to be necessary. Mr. Gandhi agreed.

I then mentioned the question of racial discrimination which appeared to be involved in some of the undertakings which the agents of mills had given, e.g., provisions regarding share capital and *personnel* of the management. I said that, although the matter had not been raised during the course of the conversations which led to the settlement, it should be understood that Government regarded as objectionable activities which involved discrimination between British and Indian firms engaged in business in India; that the views of the Government of India were contained in their Reforms Despatch and that these held good. Further, although we had not received specific complaints on this matter, it was not improbable that we might receive them, and that there was no doubt that attempts to get undertakings from English firms in India involving provisions of this kind would create much feeling in India and would emphasize the necessity of making provision against discrimination in the new constitution. I suggested to him the folly of the Congress in pursuing a course which was likely to alienate English feeling and so prejudice the friendly atmosphere created at the Round Table Conference. Mr. Gandhi was non-committal on this subject, but said that he had given the question of discrimination much thought, that he recognized the advisability of going slow in matters on which British opinion was strong, that the question of discrimination mainly arose in matters such as shipping, and he gave expression to sentiments about the preservation of Indian civilization (which I see he mentioned in his address today to the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry).

6. I mentioned a report just received from the Punjab Government to the effect that "a dealer in foreign cloth in Amritsar had been 'persuaded' by Dr. Kitchlew to pay fine of Rs. 3,000 to Congress funds". He had refused to make a public apology in the Jallianwala Bagh. I said that, while the dealer in question would probably say if questioned that the so-called fine was a free gift, it was very difficult to believe that this was so, and incidents of this kind which were coming to the notice of Government left little doubt that the principle of individual freedom of action was not being observed. He promised himself to make enquiries during his forthcoming visit to Amritsar. Incidentally he observed that picketing had been much reduced and that the sale of foreign cloth was on the increase, but I do not know what basis there is for these statements. I told him that we were still receiving a number of complaints from Bihar and Orissa about picketing which seemed to be worse there than in any other province. I said that I would send him another batch of complaints just received and that it was his duty to see that matters were put right.

7. I told him that local Governments had, since the settlement, deliberately abstained from prosecutions on account of political activity, so that the settlement might not be prejudiced, that there was, however, no reason why they should further abstain and that the Government of India intended to inform local Governments that

they did not wish them to hold their hand in cases where they considered prosecutions to be necessary. Mr. Gandhi merely observed that it was right that those who brought themselves within the mischief of the law should suffer the consequences.

8. Amongst the complaints which Mr. Gandhi himself made were the following :

(a) The case of a few persons expelled under the Foreigners Act. I said that I would try to discuss with the Bombay Government next week.

(b) A few cases of persons expelled from Cantonment areas. I explained the position and asked Mr. Gandhi to give me information of specific cases.

(c) The general question of civil disobedience prisoners still in jail. His complaint, which was not seriously pressed, was that some prisoners coming within the amnesty had not been released. He mentioned, in particular, a case in Muttra and again referred to Sholapur prisoners. He said that this question of prisoners was causing him difficulty. I said that there could be very few, if any, cases of non-release of prisoners coming within the amnesty, and that local Governments had acted very liberally; the question was really one of leniency towards persons not coming within the amnesty, and that we could not approach local Governments even informally in this direction so long as conditions of peace were not very definitely established and Congress were not implementing the spirit of the settlement. I promised to go through a long memorandum which had been prepared for Mr. Gandhi and which he confessed he had not had time himself to digest.

(d) To my surprise he did not raise the question of political prisoners in general—in regard to whom a resolution was passed at the Karachi Congress. He apparently does not wish to ask for anything outside the settlement.

9. I found Mr. Gandhi very friendly and reasonable. He was pleased with his success at Karachi, but depressed regarding the communal situation. He did not conceal his keenness to go to the Round Table Conference or to reach a final settlement of constitutional problems. His demands will, I fancy, be far less extravagant than some of his earlier speeches indicated, and, if he goes to London, he is likely to pay more regard to the spirit in which problems are approached and the attitude of British parties towards Indian aspirations than to the actual terms of the settlement, although he will require to be convinced that, if certain demands are not met, there are adequate reasons for not meeting them. Financial safeguards will give the most trouble and after them possibly discrimination. I believe that his present intention is to go to London not with the object of wrecking the Conference by excessive demands, but to obtain a settlement which, according to his lights, he can honourably accept. I do not think he will lightly return to India and confess failure. On the other hand, he does not profess to be over-confident of success, and he is quite candid in saying that, in the mean time, Congress will attempt to consolidate their

position in case there is another fight. This is the big danger involved in the present position and the practical question that will almost certainly arise sooner or later is how far Government will be able to remain inactive. Gandhi, however, realizes the disadvantage, from his point of view, of forcing Government to take action and it is to be hoped that this knowledge will act as a brake on Congress activites. I made it quite clear to him that the so-called consolidation of the Congress position might easily produce a situation which Government could not tolerate.

From a photostat : C.W. 9363. Courtesy : India Office Library

APPENDIX XV

LETTER FROM J. H. GARRETT[1]

AHMEDABAD,

April 21, 1931

I have received your letter of 20th instant regarding land revenue matters in the Kaira District.

2. I have already informed you in my letter of 13th April 1931 that I am inquiring into the matters referred to in our discussion and supplied to me with your letter of the same date.

3. The translation of the notice from the Mamlatdar of Borsad has already received my attention and necessary instructions have been issued to modify it where it conflicts with the terms of the Settlement.

The recovery or collection or charges for watchmen has already been waived although this goes beyond the terms of the Settlement.

As regards future action, you are aware that in case of default in payment Government has clearly reserved the right to use coercive measures where necessary. This of course includes the right to charge notice-fees and to impose one-fourth fine as well as to adopt the more severe measures of distraint and sale of movable property and forfeiture and sale of immovable property.

4. In the first paragraph of your letter you refer to Congress as the intermediary between the Government and the people. This is not one of the matters agreed upon in the Settlement and I am unable to agree to the suggestion. The people are perfectly free and able to approach Government officers direct in any matter that affects them.

5. As regards the points mentioned in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of your letter my reply is as follows :

(i) Payment of land revenue by Ras and other villages.

The present position is that they are required to pay the current year's land

[1] *Vide* "Letter to J.H.Garrett", 21-4-1931.

revenue and all unauthorized arrears except those arrears which became unauthorized owing to the operation of A.O. XXIX. All fines, penalties and charges for watchmen are remitted.

The terms of the Settlement further lay down in paragraph 16(b) the conditions under which recovery will be suspended in cases where defaulters while willing to pay genuinely require time for the purpose. All officers will strictly conform to this clause.

(ii) Tagavi and balance of arrears (unauthorized arrears of land revenue).

These are matters which are receiving the attention of Collectors. It is not possible to make any general order on these points. All cases of hardship which are brought to the notice of the Collector by the persons affected will be duly considered.

(iii) Orders have already been issued not to recover charges for rakhas (watchmen) and notice fees.

As regards charges for attachment of movable property, the matter is under consideration.

Young India, 20-8-1931

APPENDIX XVI

LETTER FROM R. M. MAXWELL[1]

BOMBAY,
April 24, 1931

I am to acknowledge your letter of the 22nd April, enclosing copies of Mr. Garrett's letter of the 21st April to you and of your reply of the same date to him. As you have not enclosed a copy of your letter of the 20th to Mr. Garrett, to which his was a reply, it is difficult for His Excellency to appreciate the exact point of the misunderstanding which appears to have arisen. His Excellency does not imagine that you have ever claimed that the Congress is the intermediary between the Government and the people in the sense that the Government and the people can have no dealings with one another except through the Congress; and unless such a claim is asserted, he does not see that exception can be taken to the terms of Mr. Garrett's reply. In your letter of the 21st to him you appear to acnowledge the extent to which the Government have been prepared to recognize your own representative position, and His Excellency had hoped that the full discussion which he had with you on various problems affecting the observance of the Settlement would have enabled you to realize the sincerity of the Government in its dealings with yourself and those whom you represent. As you know His Excellency, on his part, recognizes the great

[1] *Vide* "Letter to R.M.Maxwell", 22-4-1931 and "Letter to R.M.Maxwell", 26-4-1931.

influence for good which you are in a position to exercise in securing faithful observance of the Settlement among your supporters and encouraging general acceptance of the terms to which you agreed and he feels sure that you, as he, will continue to exert yourself in the interests of that peaceful atmosphere which is so essential to the future work with which you will be associated.

If, however, you wish to claim for the Congress any status which is not implied in the treatment which you as its representative have already received from this Government and the Government of India, His Excellency feels that the question raised is one which fundamentally affects the interpretation of the agreement which you entered into directly with the Governemtn of India, and he regrets that he is unable to express any opinion on it. He can only say that neither Mr. Garrett nor the Bombay Government itself would have been justified in accepting any interpretation of the agreement which has not hitherto been understood, and he feels that your correct course would be to approach the Government of India yourself on the subject if you have not already done so.

With regard to the matters of detail mentioned in your letter, I am to say that his Excellency has recently discussed many of these points with you and that he will be very glad to go into them further. In the meanwhile it is only necessary to assure you once more that the Bombay Government have every intention of taking all action which can be shown to be in accordance with the terms of the Settlement, and that they will be ready to investigate any cases which you may specifically bring to their notice in which there is reason to suppose that any further action would be appropriate.

Young India, 20-8-1931

APPENDIX XVII

LETTER FROM H. W. EMERSON[1]

SIMLA,
May 2, 1931

I write to thank you for your letter of April 22nd and its enclosures and for the confidence you expressed that no effort will be spared to avoid a breakdown of the Settlement. I do not think there is imminent danger of this, but apart from any difficulties that may have occurred in Gujarat—about which we are consulting the Bombay Government—there are several matters in regard to which Government think a personal discussion with you will be of value. For instance, there are several features in the general situation, which call for improvement. Then there is the case of the North-West Frontier Province, about which you wired to me yesterday. So far

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H.W.Emerson", 22-4-1931.

as I know, you are mistaken in thinking that the agitation against Abdul Ghaffar Khan is inspired, for Government have been, and are, very anxious to avoid affairs in the North-West Frontier Province coming to a crisis, and the last thing they desire is to make out situation to be worse than it is. The position, however, is far from satisfactory. You have also mentioned in your telegram the speech of His Excellency the Governor of the Punjab. The events and tendencies, of which he gave illustrations, are not peculiar to his province. Incidentally I am trying to obtain details of the instances he mentioned. There is, therefore, plenty for us to talk about, and reluctant as I am to drag you up to Simla at this time of the year, I am sure that, if we have a heart to heart talk, we shall find the difficulties much less than they seem to be at a distance. I have not yet heard from Sir Malcolm Hailey, but I hope that it will be possible to make the two visits fit in. Subject to this, it would be convenient if you could come here about the 11th of May. I am not suggesting an earlier date, because you have probably made your plans for the next few days, we have to obtain certain material, and also by that date the question of procedure regarding the Round Table Conference will, I hope, reach a stage where it can be usefully discussed.

Young India, 20-8-1931

APPENDIX XVIII

LETTER FROM SUKHDEV[1]

MOST GRACIOUS MAHATMAJI,

Recent reports show that since the successful termination of your peace negotiations you have made several public appeals to the revolutionary workers to call off their movement at least for the present and to give you a last chance to try your non-violent cult. As a matter of fact, the calling off of any movement is neither an ideological nor a sentimental act. It is the consideration of the peculiar needs of different times that force the leaders to change their tactics.

Let us presume that at the time of peace parley, you did not overlook the fact even for a single moment, and did not make a secret of it, that this was not going to be the final settlement. I think all intelligent people would have understood quite easily that after the introduction of all the reforms you acquire it would not be thought that the final stage was reached. The Congress is bound by its Lahore Resolution to carry on the Struggle relentlessly till the complete independence is achieved. In face of that Resolution, the peace and compromise is but a temporary truce which only means a little rest to organize better forces on a larger scale for the next struggle. The

[1] *Vide "One of the many* (?)". 23-4-1931.

possibility of compromise and a truce can be imagined and justified in the light of the above consideration alone.

As regards the proper opportunity and the conditions on which any truce can be effected, it rests with the leaders of the movement to decide. In face of the Lahore Resolution you have thought it expedient to call off the active movement for the present, but nevertheless that Resolution stands. Similarly, as is evident from the very name—the Hindustan Socialist Republican Party
the revolutionaries stand for the establishment of the Socialist Republic which is not a half-way house. They are bound to carry on the struggle till their goal is achieved and their ideal is consummated. But they would be quite apt to change their tactics according to the changing circumstances and environments. Revolutionary struggle assumes different shapes at different times. It becomes sometimes open, sometimes hidden, sometimes purely agitational and sometimes a fierce life-and-death struggle. In the circumstances, there must be special factors, the consideration of which may prepare the revolutionaries to call off their movement. But no such definite idea has been advanced by you. Mere sentimental appeals do not and cannot count much in the revolutionary struggles.

Since your compromise you have called off your movement and consequently all of your prisoners have been released. But what about the revolutionary prisoners? Dozens of Ghadar party prisoners imprisoned since 1915 are still rotting in jails, in spite of having undergone the full terms of their imprisonments. Scores of martial law prisoners are still buried in these living tombs. And so are dozens of Babar Akali prisoners. Deogharh, Kakori, Machhua Bazaar and Lahore Conspiracy case prisoners are amongst those numerous still locked behind bars. More than half a dozen conspiracy trials are going on at Lahore, Delhi, Chittagong, Bombay, Calcutta and elsewhere. Dozens of revolutionaries are absconding and amongst them are many females. More than half a dozen prisoners are actually waiting for their executions. What about all of these people? The three Lahore conspiracy case condemned prisoners,who have luckily come into prominence and who have acquired enormous public sympathy, do not form the bulk of the revolutionary party. Their fate is not the only consideration before the party. As a matter of fact their executions are expected to do greater good than the commutation of their sentences.

But in spite of all this, you are making public appeals asking them to call off their movement. Why should they do so? You have not mentioned any very definite thing. In these circumstances your appeals mean you are joining hands with the bureaucracy to crush that movement, and your appeals amount to preaching treachery, desertion and betrayal amongst them. If that were not the case, then the best thing for you would have been to approach some of the prominent revolutionaries and to talk over the whole thing with them. You ought to have tried to convince them to call off their movement. I do not think you also share the general conservative

notion that the revolu-tionaries are devoid of reason, rejoicing in destruction and devastation. Let us inform you that in reality the case is quite the contrary. They always consider the pros and cons of every step they take and they fully realize the responsibility which they thus incur and they attach greater importance to the constructive phase of the revolutionary programme than to any other, though in the present circumstances they cannot but occupy themselves with the destructive part of their programme.

The present policy of the Government towards them is to deprive them of the sympathy and support of the masses which they have won in their movement, and then crush them. In isolation they can be easily hunted down. In face of that fact any sentimental appeal to cause demoralization amongst their ranks would be utterly unwise and counter-revolutionary. It would be rendering direct assistance to the Government to crush them.

Therefore we request you either to talk to some revolutionary leaders—they are so many in jails—and come to terms with them or to stop these appeals. Please for goodness sake pursue one of these two alternative courses and pursue it whole-heartedly. If you cannot help them, then please have mercy on them. Let them alone. They can better take care of themselves. They know that the hegemony of the revolutionary party in the future political struggle is assured. Masses are rellying round them and the day is not far off when they will be leading the masses under their banner towards their noble and lofty ideal—the Socialist Republic.

Or if you seriously mean to help them, then have a talk with them to understand their point of view, and discuss the problem in detail.

Hope you will kindly consider the above request and let your view be known publicly.

Yours,

ONE OF THE MANY

Young India, 23-4-1931

1. TELEGRAM TO THAKURDAS KHUSHALDAS[1]

[After *April 28, 1931]*

WHEN PEOPLE WON'T LISTEN TO REASON YOU MAY FOR THE TIME BEING LET THEM DO WHAT THEY LIKE.

A. I. C. C. File No. 3-A, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

2. TO THE CULTIVATORS OF KHEDA

[*April 29, 1931]* [2]

I had written in *Navajivan*[3] That no cultivator[4] is obliged to pay revenue by incurring debt. I write the following further to clarify the matter.

1. Whether the cultivator has gone on 'Hijarat' or not if he has suffered substantially by reason of satyagraha movement such a satya-grahi Cultivator is not obliged to pay revenue by incurring debt.

2. The duty of all other cultivators—those who have not taken part in the satyagraha movement and those who have not suffered substantially—is to pay the revenue even if it becomes necessary to incur debt for such purpose.

3. The cultivators covered by item I should realize that in my opinion their interest lies in keeping the Truce. I shall make every endeavour to get suspension of their land revenue up to next year but if I fail the peasants will have to undergo considerable suffering and this suggestion does not apply to those who are not prepared to undergo such suffering.

[From Gujarati]

Navijivan, 3-5-1931

[1] Secretary, District Congress Committee, Mirpurkhas (Sind), who in his letter dated April 28, had sought Gandhiji's veiws on Mirpurkhas cloth merchants' decision to sell sealed foreign cloth against the Congress directive and the counter-decision of satyagrahis to resort to picketing and hunger strike.

[2] From *The Hindu,* 30-4-1931

[3] Dated 19-4-1931; *vide* "To The Satyagrahi Farmer", 19-4-1931

[4] In a translation of the item found in Home Department Political file the word "Khatedar" has been used.

3. LETTER TO CHARU PROBHA DEVI

BORSAD,
April 29, 1931

DEAR CHARU PROBHA,

I was delighted to have your letter. You would certainly not reject the company of the young men who may not hold the same view on non-violence that you and I do but you will expect to convert them by your affection and still more by proving the efficacy of your own method in daily conduct. You will not expect me to give you long letters. No apology is needed for faulty English. Why should we be ashamed of making errors in a foreign tongue? What, however, I would like you to do is to pick up Hindi and begin to write in Hindi. Hindi you can learn in a very short time.

BAPU

CHARU PROBHA DEVI
RAJBARI [BENGAL]

From a photostat: G. N. 8701

4. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

[AS AT] SABARMATI,[1]
April 29, 1931

I have had so many letters[2] from you but I have seemingly neglected you. The fact is I have had no time. Karachi washed me out completely. The fatigue has not yet left me entirely. I am obliged to sleep two or three times during the day so as to keep me fresh for work that I must do.

I hope your sister is better if not completely restored. Anyway I am glad you are by her side. Please give my love to her.

You have taken it for granted that I am going to London. I am not at all sure and I am certainly not going if there , is no Hindu-Muslim solution. There is no immediate prospect. And then the Settlement itself runs the risk of being broken to pieces in Gujarat. Of course I am making every endeavour to see that it is honoured by the officials here. But it is an uphill fight and you know how tender the

[1] Gandhiji was at Borsad up to May 11 when he left for Simla. This address was given in this and in other letters for convenience of reply.

[2] Written from the United States and England

officials are over revenue matters. If I do come and if I have the choice, I would like to accept Muriel Lester's invitation. If however you think that it would be better not to do so and to occupy Ghanshyam Das's hostel you will please see her.

And now for the Transvaal question. It is becoming more and more difficult day after day. Unless India comes to her own in the near future, I see no prospect of improvement in the situation. Of course the resident Indian population will somehow drag on its existence there. They have sufficient resourcefulness but it would be living from hand to mouth. However we must do all we can. Yours I know is just now the largest share. I have become almost incapacitated for that work. But when we meet we must discuss the situation and I might be able to find out some effective method of dealing with it.

I hope yor are getting your copy of *Young India*. This letter is merely a supplement to that weekly letter.

C. F. ANDREWS, ESQ.

From a photostat: S. N. 17024

5. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

BORSAD,
April 29, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

Ghanshyam Das Birla asks me to write to you if it is only a few lines. I have failed because up to last week I had practically ceased to deal with voluminous correspondence that comes daily. Pyarelal and Mahadev dealt with it as they liked and I knew that in that pressure you did not expect anything from me. And now that I have a few moments to dictate some letters what shall I say to you? Why do you think that because you had no acknowledgments, your wires and letters were not considered? They were. But the unfortunate fact is that your suggestion could not be accepted. The legality of the convictions[1] was discussed threadbare by jurists like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru with the Viceroy and you know what great influence he had with him. But it was all of no avail. The Congress therefore had to take up the only attitude that was open to it. I would ask you please therefore not to be sensitive. Remember that we have a new generation of men and women dominating the Congress. They brush aside legal forms. They

[1] Of Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru

have found by experience how powerless these forms have proved for advancing freedom and they have by bitter experience realized how powerful they have been for curbing freedom. Why will you not therefore be satisfied with blessing these young men and women knowing that they are, on the whole, on the right track[?] This of course does not mean that you should not continue to give the Congress and especially me the benefit of your advice. But that you should do without expectation of its being always followed. I hope, in spite of old age creeping on you, you are well and able to follow the vast changes that are taking place in the country.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR
THE ARAMA, SALEM

Copy to Sjt. Ghanshyam Das Birla

From a photostat: S. N. 17022

6. LETTER TO R. B. GREGG

[AS AT] SABARMATI,
April 29, 1931

MY DEAR GOVIND,

I have your letter and I read your letter to Mira. I quite understand and appreciate all the anxiety shown by you in your letter to her. I do not know that I shall be going to London at all and I shall certainly not go if the way is not clear for me to deliver my message. That it is not likely to be accepted just now I have realized all along. But had the Congress not accepted the offer to discuss terms, the Congress would have put itself in the wrong. As it is we are safe either way. It will be great, good and grand if peace can be made permanent through negotiation. I shall therefore leave no stone unturned to reach that state but it will be equally good and grand if the negotiations proved fruitless. Then India will be put upon her mettle and will have to show her capacity for further suffering. There is no question of my being invited to parties, feted and lionized. I can eat nothing and thank God my Ioin-cloth will protect me from being exhibited as a specimen in Barnum's show. If therefore I go to London I go for solid business and to drink in the deep affection of chosen friends there. I refuse to speculate. I would go where the light leads me in the fullest faith that all will be well if I follow it.

Do not believe the rumours about my intended visit to America. Much as I should like to visit that great country I know that my time is not yet and I do not want to come as a nine day's wonder.

Love to you and Radha.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

R. B. GREGG, ESQ.
543 BOYLSTON ST.
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETS

From a photostat: G. N. 4663; also S. N. 17023

7. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

BORSAD,
April 29, 1931

CHI. JAMNADAS,

How is it that you do not write to me at all? I cannot write to you, but I do think about you. What is your present state of mind? How are Father and Mother? 'How is the school? Write to me and describe some of your experiences in jail. What kind of person is the new ruler? Ask Purshottam to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 9291. Courtesy: Jamnadas Gandhi

8. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

BORSAD,
April 29, 1931

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have gone through your letter of 19th February 1931, the budget of the Magan spinning-wheel and the khadi scheme. My desire of setting up an ashram in Almora still persists. I believe we can pay upto Rs. 15,000/- if we get a good house. Write to me if you come across a good place at a reasonable price. I may like to buy it.

I would certainly need a person to run this ashram. At present, I have only you in mind. You must decide to stay there. Finding fault

with others is a great sin and leads to self-deception. One should not vie with others. You should utilize whatever you have received as your share and derive pleasure out of it.

I have not received your.... [1]If it is in the Ashram, I will have it sent to me. Many improvements have been made in "my" spinning-wheel. Let there be more and call for the sample then. Two persons are behind it—Laskshmidas and Keshu.

I find your budget for the Magan spinning-wheel all right. Draw that much money if Chhaganlal and Narandas sanction it. Even if they do not, send me your spinning-wheel if you want to. I will try to learn from Padma or anyone who knows how to ply it.

Your khadi scheme is no doubt impracticable. Its conditions are very difficult. Give it up for the time being. Do whatever you can by raising men and money there. These are my views. I am sending this letter to Chhaganlal. He will send it to you after reading it. Let me know if he has made any changes.

Today 1 am in Borsad. Who knows about tomorrow?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original S.N. 32974

9. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

April 29, 1931

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Now for the last eight days or so, I am able to write a few letters. That is to say, I have that much time, mainly after the morning prayers. That is true of today also. I can say that my health on the whole is good. I do not have any after-effects of fever now. Whatever after-effect I had, was from exhaustion. Even now I need rest. I can take that while working and I am doing that.

I have your letter. I have your earlier one also. It is good news that both of you are keeping well. I am happy that you have got the work of your liking. I do not at all like . . .[2] Vijapur. He has not even thought about it. I feel like writing to Diwan directly. Do you think it

[1] A word here is illegible in the source.

[2] A few words here are illegible in the source.

is necessary? The owner of the neighbouring land died but his heirs would be there. Find out.

I have come to Borsad as there is a danger of Government reprisal here. With me are Ba, Mirabehn, Mahadev, Pyarelal and a young man from Utkal. We will have to stay here for a few days. I will decide after that. I will have to go either to Mahabaleshwar or Simla or Nainital.[1] I do not foresee my going to Europe.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 32868

10. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

BORSAD,
April 29, 1931

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your two letters. I send you a copy of the letter[2] I have written to Vijayaraghavachariji.

What shall I write about the Hindu-Muslim problem? The Nawab of Bhopal is doing something. Whenever you have an opportunity of rendering service to a Muslim you should do so. It does not mean financial assistance. Financial assistance of course has to be rendered in the case of a deserving but poor Mussalman. And it is also our duty to try and remove the rowdyism among Hindus. The atrocities committed by Hindus in Cawnpore and Kashi do not help the Hindu religion, but undoubtedly harm it.

I have as yet no idea whether I am to go to England or not. The situation here is rather serious.

Do go to America. It will certainly do some good.

Do whatever is possible for the boycott of foreign cloth.

I am well.

BAPU

From Hindi: C. W. 7885. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Gandhiji went to Simla on May 13 and thereafter to Nainital on May 18, 1931.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to C. Vijayaraghavachariar", 29-4-1931

11. THE LOIN-CLOTH

A critic has fallen foul of my remark made before the meeting of the Federation of Chambers of Commerce at Delhi that the Indian civilization must not be allowed to be wiped out by the inroads from the West. The critic has confused Indian civilization with the loin-cloth and then condemned it.

Mr. Churchill has been kind enough gratuitously to advertise my loin-cloth to the whole world. It has therefore become the fashion to laugh at it as the said critic has done. Let me then explain what it means.

In 1921 Maulana Mahomed Ali was arrested at Waltair whilst he and I were going on a tour to the South.[1] He was torn from Begum Mahomed Ali who was travelling with us. I was deeply moved, she bore the separation bravely and attended meetings in Madras. I left her at Madras and went as far as Madura. On the way I saw in our compart-ment crowds that were wholly unconcerned with what had happened. Almost without exception they were bedecked in foreign fineries. I entered into conversation with some of them and pleaded for khadi. For I had no other way open to me to secure the release of the Ali Brothers save through khadi. They shook their heads as they said, "We are too poor to buy khadi and it is so dear." I realized the substratum of truth behind the remark. I had my vest, cap, and full dhoti on. When these uttered only partial truth, the millions of compulsory naked men, save for their *langoti* four inches wide and nearly as many feet long, gave through their bare limbs the naked truth. What effective answer could I give them, if it was not to divest myself of every inch of clothing I decently could and thus to a still greater extent bring myself in a line with the ill-clad masses? And this I did the very next morning after the Madura meeting?[2]

Here then there is no question of loin-cloth civilization. The adoption of the loin-cloth was for me a sheer necessity. But in so far as the loin-cloth also spells simplicity let it represent Indian civilization. It is a mingling of the cultures represented by the different faiths and influenced by the geographic and other environment in which the cultures have met. Thus Islamic culture is not the same in Arabia, Turkey, Egypt and India but it is itself influenced by the conditions of

[1] *Vide* "Message to Bomba Citizens", 14-9-1921

[2] Held on September 22, 1921; *vide*

the respective countries. Indian cult-ure is therefore Indian. It is neither Hindu, Islamic nor any other, wh-olly. It is a fusion of all and essentially Eastern. I had in mind that cu-lture. And every one who called himself or herself an Indian is bound to treasure that culture, be its trustee and resist any attack upon it.

European civilization is no doubt suited for the Europeans but it will mean ruin for India, if we endeavour to copy it. This is not to say that we may not adopt and assimilate whatever may be good and capable of assimilation by us as it does not also mean that even the Europeans will not have to part with whatever evil might have crept into it. The incessant search for material comforts and their multiplication is such an evil, and I make bold to say that the Europeans themselves will have to remodel their outlook, if they are not to perish under the weight of the comforts to which they are becoming slaves. It may be that my reading is wrong, but I know that for India to run after the Golden Fleece is to court certain death. Let us engrave on our hearts the motto of a Western philosopher, "Plain living and high thinking". Today it is certain that the millions cannot have high living and we the few who profess to do the thinking for the masses run the risk, in a vain search after high living, of missing high thinking.

Young India, 30-4-1931

12. HE LIVES BY DYING

Sjt. G. V. Ketkar writes of an example of great bravery which is worthy of record:

> Sjt. Purushottam, who was popularly known as Bapu Gayadhani, was a young worker of Nasik. For the past few years he was working as assistant Secretary of the Gulalwadi public gymnasium of Nasik. He was also occasionally taking part in Congress and swadeshi propaganda. On the 4th of April a house in Nasik caught fire. Bapu Gayadhani took leading part in the work of quenching the fire. On learning that there were children in the house he rushed in without caring for consequences and rescued all the children. He re-entered the house to save the cattle also. Unfortunately the fire had spread all over the house and burning beam crashed over his head. He was badly burnt and bruised all over his body and was taken to the civil hospital where he succumbed to his injuries on the 11th instant."

His parents, if they are alive, should be proud of their brave son. Bapu Gayadhani lives through his glorious death.

Young India, 30-4-1931

13. THE GUJARAT FARMER

"Give a dog a bad name and hang him." Say that the Gujarat farmer is contumacious and sell him out. In a Press interview[1] I said some days ago that it was unfortunate that Mr. Benn was misled into saying that the Gujarat farmer was not playing the game; in other words, he was not paying up. When the suggestion was first made I was startled, for I had faith that the Gujarat farmer though hit hard would carry out the terms of the Settlement to the full extent of his ability. The Settlement expects nothing more.

The complaint made to me in Delhi was that whereas large sums were collected in Bardoli and Valod before 28th February, only Rs. 3,212 were collected during the fortnight ending 15th March. The implication was that since the Settlement very little was paid.

Now, the Settlement was announced on 7th March. Sardar Vallabhbhai and I reached Bardoli on 14th March. It is clear that nothing could be expected before we arrived in Bardoli and explained the position to the farmers and they could return to their homes. Here, however, are the figures of payment:

Revenue Collections in Bardoli and Valod

DATE	BARDOLI	VALOD
Collections before		
15-3-31	Rs. 2,500-0-0	Rs. 20,000—0-0
On 16th March	. .	
17th,,	200-0-0	. .
18th,,	400-0-0	. .
19th,,	200-0-0	136—0-0
20th,,	. .	228—0-0
23rd,,	500-0-0	379—0-0
24th,,	1,700-0-0	1,114—0-0
25th,,	800-0-0	364—0-0
26th,,	1,000-0-0	. .
27th,,	1,000-0-0	117—0-0

[1] *Vide* "Interview to the Press", 18-4-1931

30th ,,	2,000-0-0	2,229—0-0
31st ,,	1,500-0-0	1,949—0-0
1st April	4,000-0-0	1,361—0-0

DATE	BARDOLI	VALOD
2nd April	Rs. 2,000-0-0	Rs. 1,208—0-0
7th ,,	10,000-0-0	1,829—0-0
8th ,,	900-0-0	2,246—0-0
9th ,,	2,200-0-0	2,429—0-0
10th ,,	5,500-0-0	1,379—0-0
11th ,,	6,800-0-0	1,700—2-3
13th ,,	20,000-0-0	6,932–11-9
14th ,,	6,500-0-0	1,455–15-9
15th ,,	10,028-0-0	1,011–12-7
16th ,,	11,446-0-0	2,791—5-4
17th ,,	7,622-0-0	3,736—0-0
18th ,,	9,981-0-0	5,545–14-0
20th ,,	11,518-0-0	6,349–11-0
21st ,,	7,365-0-0	1,856–11-0
22nd ,,	6,162-0-0	3,421—6-6
23rd ,,	4,456-0-0	1,090—4-0
24th ,,	9,000-0-0	4,006–10-7
25th ,,	7,129-0-0	1,162—3-5
26th ,,	. .	5,500—0-0
	1,54,407-0-0	83,528-12-2

I claim that the Bardoli farmers have done exceedingly well and this in spite of the fact that the forfeited lands had not yet been returned, that some of these had even been sold, that the old Patels and Talatis had not been reinstated, that all the prisoners had not been released and that prosecutions against them were still pending.

But here I must draw the curtain. I may say that great difficulty is being experienced in establishing friendly touch with the local officials. The result is that many things that should have long ago been done on behalf of the Government are still not done and though there is no unwil-lingness to pay, threats of coercive measures are kept hanging like Damo-cles's word over the heads of the people. The process has begun with Kaira. They do not seem to realize that there is peace now, provisial though it is, between the people and the Government and that efforts are being made to make enduring what is

today only temporary and provisional.

The difficulties in the way are enormous. But I have pledged my word to Lord Irwin that so far as it is humanly possible, I shall prevent the Truce from breaking. The Settlement has been called a gentleman's agreement. I know that Lord Irwin was sincerely anxious to see that it was fully carried out by the Government's agents as he testified more than once that I was to see it being as fully carried out by Congressmen.

It has hurt me to take the public into confidence even to the extent I have done. But I feel that I can no longer suppress the fact that there are ominous signs on the horizon. A satyagrahi has no weapon at his disposal but that of public opinion and suffering. Let the public read no more into this article than the natural meaning the written word conveys. I shall hope and pray that next week I may be able to report that the threatenig cloud has lifted.

Young India, 30-4-1931

14. OUR DUTY TO THE VILLAGERS

The intensive political struggle of last year brought out prominently the importance of foreign-cloth boycott in the fight for national freedom. That the boycott programme has been in a measure effective, is evidenced by the fall in the import of foreign cloth. We have reason for satisfaction in the results achieved, but let us not in our satisfaction at the measure of success gained, forget the true purpose and implications of the boycott programme. Let us remember that our nation lives in the millions of village homes and the true and primary aim of the boycott programme will be missed if the boycott is not worked in such a way that the benefits accrue pre-eminently to the villagers. If it is to benefit them it can only be by the nation according to khadi a position above all other indigenous cloth.

In order to do this it is necessary for us to revise our taste. We must take to coarse, thick khadi. The cotton grown in India is mostly short stapled and can yield only low count yarn. The spinners who have been spinning generally only for themselves or the neighbourhood are accustomed in most of the areas only to the spinning of coarse yarn and it is difficult therefore at once to raise the count of yarn spun. This is the case with practically the whole of North India. In the Punjab, Rajasthan, U. P., Bihar, and Bengal, where lakhs of

unemployed or partlaily employed charkhas exist, only thich khadi is being woven. A limited quantity of fine and medium khadi is available in the South, but even there the largest quantity is only made of low count yarn. The activities under the auspices of the All-India Spinners' Association, much as they have grown, have not touched even a tenth of the known and definitely ascertained facilities for production in these provinces. There are practicially no limits to the possibilities of thick khadi production and if only the nation can give its reasoned preference to thick khadi, it can to a very large extent take the place till now occupied by foreign cloth and the fruits of the national programme will go to benefit the vast majority of the population of the country and not merely the moneyed few.

This general plea for khadi from the point of view of the boycott is further strengthened by one peculiar feature of the economic situation of the country in the current year and the year that is past. The abnormally low prices of cotton and indeed of all agricultural produce, have caused great distress in the villages. The prices prevailing do not, in many cases, fully meet even the cultivation and other expenses. The smaller cultivators of cotton, therefore, have sought to earn something more on their cotton by plying one or two spinning wheels in their homes. The cultivators of other agricultural produce have also similarly sought to add to their scanty income by spinning. The result is that in many parts of the country spinners from surrounding villages in great numbers flock to the nearest khadi depots offering the yarn for sale. The output of hand-spun yarn even before last year was very much more than what the existing depots could manage. But now the position has become more difficult still. With their very limited capital resources the depots are unable to take in all the yarn and have therefore to turn away many of the spinners. If the demand for khadi can be increased the consequent increased turn-over may enable the depots to afford a greater amount of relief to the spinners. More private capital may also flow into khadi, as to some extent it did last year. Both from the general viewpoint of the boycott, therefore, as well as the affording of immediate relief for present distress the duty of the country to give preference to khadi is obvious.

If large numbers of people. even if they feel it difficult to wear a khadi dhoti or sari because of its heaviness, choose only khadi for their other requirements—towels, shirting, coating, and bed sheets, carpets, and the like—it will become possible not merely to absorb all

the hand-spun yarn that is produced today but also many times the present output. It requires only a proper exercise of imagination to realize all the possibilities. And if we would adapt our dress to the climatic requirements and the resources of villagers, we would discard the many articles, reduce the size of the dhoti or sari, change the turban for the cap and in the bargain secure greater comfort and greater cleanliness, not to speak of the great reduction in the cost of clothes.

Young India, 30-4-1931

15. WHAT IS THE TRUTH?

Sjt. S. D. Nadkarni of Karwar writes a letter from which I take the following:

> I have just noticed that in a letter addressed to you and already published in the Press Mr. Mushir Hussain Kidwai, one of the leaders of the 'All-Parties Muslim Conference', referring to the minority problem in Egypt, says: 'In my opinion, the attitude of the Hindus here should be what Zaglul's was in Egypt, i.e., they should sign blindfolded the demands of the minority. . . .'
>
> Without concerning myself here with any other statement made by Mr. Kidwai in his letter to you, I should like to draw your attention to the true fact about the one above, where a parallel is sought to be drawn from Egyptian politics. The enclosed excerpt from a leading article in the *Servant of India* of August 15, 1929, whose writer had to deal with a similar statement made about that time by Sir Ibrahim Rahimatoola, will show you how the truth about affairs in Egypt (where the Muslims are the majority, and the native Christians called Copts are the minority) is just the opposite of what your correspondent Mr. Kidwai would have you believe.
>
> Every single statement in the excerpt, I am sure, can be vouched for by reference to any work on contemporary history or any standard work of reference.

From the excerpt referred to by Sjt. Nadkarni, the following relevent parts are taken:

> Indeed Sir Ibrahim seems to have misread history. Look, for instance, at what he says about Egypt. In pleading for a generous treatment to be meted out by the majority community to minority communities, he cites the example of what Saad Pasha Zaglul did to the Christians in Egypt. He appears to think that Zaglul's sensitive regard for the rights and interests of the Copts persuaded the latter to accept the rule of the Moslems. The facts, however, are just the

contrary. It is the throwing in by the Copts of their lot unreservedly with the nationalists in Egypt that has persuaded the Muslims to treat them so liberally as they have done. The Copts were not entirely free from persecution before. The improvement was solely due to the fact that they were not only not hostile or indifferent to the national campaign for freedom, but took a very prominent part in the Wafd. This was a very wise policy for the Coptic community ot follow, to which they owe the inclusion of Copts in the Ministry.

I give the extract for what it is worth. I have verified neither the statement made in the extract nor the one to which it purports to be an answer. Nor am I interested in it except for the sake of truth.

As a satyagrahi I believe in the absolute efficacy of full surrender. Numerically Hindus happen to be the major community. Withour reference therefore to what the Egyptian majority did they may give to the minorities what they may want. But even if the Hindus were in a minority, as a satyagrahi and Hindu I should say that the Hindus would lose nothing in the long run by full surrender.

To this argument a retort has thoughtlessly been made, 'Why then do you not advise India to surrender to the English? Give them the domination they want and be happy.' The hasty retort ignores the vital fact that I have not advised surrender to the baynet. In the code of the satyagrahi there is no such thing as surrender to brute force. Or the surrender then is the surrender of suffering and not to the will of the wielder of the bayonet. A satyagrahi's surrender has to come out of his strength, not out of weakness. The surrender advised by me is not of honour but of earthly goods. There is no loss of honour in surrendering seats and positions of emoluments. There is loss of honour in haggling about them. Let the Englishmen give up the bayonet and live in our midst as simple friends and I should plead for them. The law of surrender and suffering is a universal law admitting of no exceptions.

Young India, 30-4-1931

16. LETTER TO PADMA

BORSAD,
April 30, 1931

CHI. PADMA,

I got your letter. I had certainly not forgtten you. But I was helpless. I am glad that you are trying to learn verses from the *Gita* by

heart. How many rounds do you spin in an hour on the Magan spinning-wheel? For how many hours at a stretch can you spin?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original : G.N. 6118

17. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

BORSAD,
April 30, 1931

CHI. MANGALA,

I have your letter. I would certainly like to write to everyone if I had even a moment's leisure. True, I get a little time here. I wrote to Durga because Anandi had written that she wanted a letter from me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11093. courtesy: Pushpa Naik

18. INTERVIEW TO "FOX MOVIETONE NEWS"

BORSAD,
[*April 30, 1931*][1]

The following is the full text of the interview intended for the Talkie that the *Fox Movietone News* and the Associated Press of America had with Mahatma Gandhi at Borsad. The copy has been corrected by Gandhiji before releasing for publication, says *The Bombay Chronicle.*

Mr. Gandhi prefixed the interview with the following remarks:

I do not like this kind of thing, but I shall reconcile myself to it, if not more than a few minutes have to be given: Although I know this sort of enterprise will advertise you, which is your primary object, I know also that it will serve to advertise the cause which I represent—India's independence. I do not discount the value of propaganda. I have been described as the greatest propagandist in the world. I may deserve the compliment. But my propaganda is unlike the ordinary. It is that of truth which is self-propagating. Truth abhors artificiality.

You will therefore excuse me for declining to pose for you from which, apart from the reason I have given above, I am debarred by a solemn vow I made in 1905.

[1] From *The Hindu,* 1-5-1931

He therefore declined to give a sitting in a suitable courtyard. The interview took place in his room.

Q. Mr. Gandhi, *Fox Movietone News* and the Associated Press of America, which combined, reach an audience of several hundred million people throughour the world, have sent us their representatives across the Seven Seas from New York to India to see if you wil be good enough to give the American people, through the medium of *Fox Movietone News*, a message of greeting and friendship. As you probably know, there is a great deal of interest and sympathy in the United States for India's struggle for independence, because America itself had a similar struggle for liberation 150 years ago.

A. I appreciate all the interest and sympathy America has shown in our struggle, and I hope we shall be able to retain the friendship and goodwill of the American people to the end of our struggle.

Q. When do you expect to visit America?

A. Much as I should like to visit your country, I have absolutely no notion about it except that I should not like to visit America until the present struggle for India's freedom has proved demonstrably successful.

When do you expect to leave for London for the second Round Table Conference?

About this also, I have no idea, except that I don't expect to go to London unless the Hindu-Muslim communal question is satisfactorily solved. Of course, if there should be a break in the present Truce, I will not go to London at all.

Have you given Lord Irwin any written message for the British Prime Minister?

It is wholly wrong to say I gave Lord Irwin any such message for Mr. MacDonald.

Do you expect England will grant all your demands at the second Round Table Conference?

It is more than I can say.

But you are really hopeful England will this time grant your demands?

All I can say is I am an optimist.

If England does not give you what you want, what course of action will you follow?

Of course, Civil Disobedience and all other phases of satyagraha, (obedience to the principles of truth) are always at our dispo-

sal. But Whether we shall resort to these weapons immediately, or what other steps we shall take, it is not possible to say offhand at present.

Are you prepared to go back to jail if England refuses to grant your demands?

I am always ready to go to jail in the cause of India's freedom.

Are you willing to die in such a cause?

That is a bad question.

If England should accede to your demands, do you intend to have complete prohibition in the new Indian State?

Yes, I expect to see absolute prohibition enforced in the new Indian State.

Do you intend to abolish child-marriages when the new Indian State is established?

I should very much like to see child-marriages abolished even before that time.

Do you expect in the new Indian State to exterminate the present caste system which makes social outcastes of India's so-called sixty million "untouchables"?

Most decidedly.

Do you intend to abolish the present system of Indian widows living lives of strict seclusion and celibacy?

There is nothing now to prevent widows from remarrying if they so wish. It is likewise wholly wrong to say, or to suggest, that Indian widows in general live in seclusion.

I refer to the system of widows living in *purdah*.

The system of *purdah* is in fact confined to a very small number of the middle-class people, and that too not over the whole of India.

In the new Indian State, do you expect there will be complete communal social unity and harmony between Hindus and Muslims?

I certainly look forward to seeing complete social harmony and unity established between these two great branches of the Indian family in the new State.

If the King of England invites you to dinner at Buckingham Palace when you attend the second Round Table Conference, will you dress in native Indian attire or will you appear in European dress?

It would be a discourtesy to the King for me to appear in any dress other than my customary Indian apparel. If the weather permits, I shall dress in England exactly as I do in India, that is, in loin-cloth.

Mr. Gandhi, you have frequently said that you number among the British people some of your best friends and partisans. Will you be kind enough to give a brief message of greeting to those friends and other members of the great British public, through *British Movietone News*, which reaches a vast audience throughout the British Empire?

I am glad to be able to say that the circle of my British friends is increasing. It could not be otherwise, as the present satyagraha movement, however much it may be mixed with dress, is nothing but a movement for promoting the establishment of goodwill with those against whom we seem to be fighting. Therefore, I have no misgivings as to the ultimate result.

Will you give to the world a new Decalogue, or a new Ten Commandments in the light of present-day needs?

That is too big an order.

The Hindu, 5-5-1931

19. TELEGRAM TO H. W. EMERSON

BORSAD,
May 1, 1931

MR. EMERSON
HOME SECRETARY
SIMLA

I OBSERVE THERE IS INSPIRED AGITATION AGAINST ABDUL GAFFAR KHAN OF CHARSADDA. HE LEFT ON ME AT KARACHI IMPRESSION FOR BEING QUITE SINCERE IN HIS PROFESSIONS OF NON-VIOLENCE. IF THERE ARE COMPLAINTS AGAINST HIM WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THEM SO AS TO ENABLE ME APPRO-ACH HIM. BELIEVE HIM AMENABLE REASON. IT WOULD BE EMBARRASSING IF HE WAS ARRESTED WITHOUT GIVING ME OPPORTUNITY GETTING EXPLANATION FROM HIM. LORD IRWIN'S WISH THAT I SHOULD NOT GO TO FRONTIER PROVINCE IS ADDITIONAL CAUSE ANXIETY FOR ME. FEEL SURE MY PRESENCE THERE MUST HAVE SOBERING EFFECT. AS TO PUNJAB GOVER-NOR'S SPEECH[1] COULD YOU SEND SPEECHES WRITINGS OR PARTICULARS OF ACTIVITIES HE HAD IN MIND WHEN HE GAVE PUBLIC WARNING.

GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Following the agitation over the execution of Bhagat Singh the Governor of the Punjab, on April 25, 1931, had issued a warning that the ordinary law about incitement to violence would in future be vigorously enforced against Congressmen as well as others.

20. LETTER TO G. N. COLLINS

[*May 1, 1931*][1]

DEAR MR. COLLINS,

I had hoped to be able to write to you about the various cases I had in mind. But I am sorry I am not yet ready. I write this therefore purely about Mr. Rajwade's case.

You told me he was not discharged because he had incited to violence. I have now got the certified record of the case and the writing on which the case was based. The charge-sheet has 'committing an act which is to the prejudice of good order and of public safety and evading arrest'. There is no violence here.

I have read the writing in the original Marathi. It is an unvarnished report of the events. So far as I can see, there is not a trace of incitement to violence in the report. In my opinion, therefore, the case clearly falls within the Settlement.

If there is any other writing placed before the court you will please let me have it. If there is nothing more, I hope Mr. Rajwade will be discharged without delay.

Yours sincerely,

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

21. LETTER TO LAKSHMINARAYAN GADODIA

BORSAD,
May 1, 1931

BHAI LAKSHMINARAYANJI[2],

I have your letter. I am grateful to you for the help you extended to Ramanandji. Have you seen his work?

Give me the news about the foreign-cloth trade.

What is the dispute in the Congress Committee about?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 5617

[1] From the addressee's reply of May 9 on behalf of Home Department Government of Bombay

[2] A noted business man of Delhi

22. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

BORSAD,
May 2, 1931

There was no Patel who had not expressed the desire to resume service and there was no question of giving an assurance of working faithfully. That assurance was implied in the resumption of service. Such terms were, at the beginning stages of the settlement, issued to Patels, and on complaint being made by me, they were withdrawn.

If 25 per cent of forfeited lands has not been returned, because owners had not paid land revenue, it is a distinct breach of clause 17 B of the Settlement, because forfeited lands have to be returned unless there is reasonable ground for supposing that there is any contumacy on the part of the holder. It is common ground that there is no question of contumacy in Bardoli or any of the effected districts.

It is wholly wrong to suggest that there is lack of discipline in any of the Congress camps and whilst I have pressed every one of the Congress workers to implement the terms of peace as zealously as they fought during the struggle I have had no occasion to admonish any of the workers.

On the contrary, it gives me great joy to find complete response to every one of the instructions given to the workers. I have no knowledge of any worker in Congress organizations, especially in the districts of Surat and Kaira on which Vallabhbhai Patel and I are concentrating attention, having been dismissed for embezzlement of Congress funds except one unfortunate case.

The Bombay Chronicle, 4-5-1931

23. TELEGRAM TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

BORSAD,
May 2, 1931

HARIBHAU
"TYAGBHUMI"
AJMER

YOUR TELEGRAM. HAVE NO CONFIDENCE ABOUT MY TELEGRAM UDAIPUR.[2] LET JAMNALALJI OR MALAVIYAJI INTERVENE.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 17049

[1] This was issued to contradict certain reports which had appeared in a Bombay newspaper.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Haribhau Upadhyaya", 6-5-1931.

24. LETTER TO MANAGER, OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, BOMBAY

BORSAD,
May 2, 1931

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your letter. I do not know how far Mr. Andrews's volumes[1] would be affected by your suggestion. Personally I have no objection to your publishing a selection. of extracts. You perhaps know more than I do about the first difficulty. So far as the proposed book is concerned I would like you to expand your suggestion so as to enable me to give it fuller consideration.

Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

THE MANAGER
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
BOMBAY

From a photostat : G.N. 5685

25. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

BORSAD,
May 2, 1931

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

I quite agree with you that Mr. Wadia[2] should have some work given to him. Here is another letter also for your consideration. I hope your work is making steady progress. I would like your report to be a text book on the subject.[3]

BAPU

Encl. 1
SYT. J. C. KUMARAPPA
CONVENER, CONGRESS SELECT COMMITTEE
ON INDO-BRITISH FINANCIAL SETTLEMENT
65 ESPLANADE ROAD, BOMBAY

From a photostat : G.N. 10093

[1] *Mahatma Gandhi's Ideas* (1929) and *Mahatma Gandhi : His Own Story* (1930)
[2] Prof. P. A. Wadia
[3] *Vide* also "Bahadurji Committee's Report", 23-7-1931.

26. LETTER TO SAILENDRA NATH GHOSE[1]

[AS AT] SABARMATI,
May 2, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I do indeed know what a life of exile means both from my own experience and that of others. I admit that my own experience has not the same value as yours for the simple reason that mine was a self-imposed exile but I can easily make it a rule of three and imagine that if my self-imposed exile meant much to me how much more must enforced exile be to friends like you. If things shape themsel-ves properly, exiles won't have to remain away at the outside beyond a year. As for my rumoured visit, there is nothing in it and therefore we need not discuss it any further. I must not visit America till the experiment here has become a proved success.

Yours sincerely,

SAILENDRA NATH GHOSE, ESQ.
31 UNION SQUARE, NEW YORK CITY

From a photostat : S.N. 17046

27. LETTER TO MARTIN C. MILLER

[AS AT] SABARMATI,
May 2, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. In reply to your question I can say that I have profited much by a prayerful reading of the Sermon on the Mount. I regard Jesus to have been one of the greatest teachers of the world. I do not believe in his exclusive divinity.

Yours sincerely,

MARTIN C. MILLER, ESQ.
THE CLEVELAND GRAPHITE BRONZE CO.
CLEVELAND (U.S.A.)

From a photostat : S.N. 17047

[1] Ghose was President of the Indian National Congress of America, New York city

28. LETTER TO UPTON CLOSE

[AS AT] SABARMATI,
May 2, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your two letters, the last one dated 8th April. My visit to America must still remain a rumour and your anticipation of what is likely to happen if I come to America makes me still more nervous. At the present moment therefore I must not think of even tentatively discussing arrangements about an event which is not likely to happen in the near future.

Yours sincerely,

UPTON CLOSE, ESQ.
NEW YORK CITY (U.S.A.)

From a photostat : S.N. 17048

29. LETTER TO KARAMCHANDANI

BORSAD,
May 2, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. I share your feelings about the Garhwali prisoners and if I can get them discharged today I should do so. I need not therefore argue about our views. But I can say broadly that any one whose conscience tells him to disobey certain instructions or orders is certainly at liberty to do so, but is also expected to suffer the consequence. You will excuse the delay in replying to your letter.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. KARAMCHANDANI
KARACHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 17050

[1] In this the addressee had pleaded the case of the Garhwali soldiers who had disobeyed orders and had been sentenced to various terms of imprisonment.

30. LETTER TO LALJI PARMAR

May 2, 1931

CHI. LALJI,

I got your letter. Be patient. I am inquiring into the matter. If you wish, you may come over here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3291

31. LETTER TO GULAM RASUL QURESHI

BORSAD,
May 2, 1931

CHI. QURESHI,

I had both your letters. I wanted detailed news about Imam Saheb's health. It is good you have given it. Follow Dr. Rajabali's instructions. It will certainly be good if Imam Saheb goes to Mussoorie or some such place. If he does, accommodation will be no problem. But any arrangement Dr. Rajabali makes is bound to be the best. Our relations with him are such that we may accept any services from him. Please do keep me informed about Imam Saheb's health.

Is Amina going on with her Urdu?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10805. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

32. LETTER TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

May 2, 1931

CHI. KISHORELAL,

How can you be released so soon? If all of us applied what Tolstoy said the way you want to apply it, we should all be the plight of the man in the ghee-and-water story. Should a drink addict not make a resolve to give up drinking? Should one given to pleasures of the flesh go on with his ways? It only means that one should not vainly attempt to scale the mountain of one's cravings. But the resolve was hardly yours. If at all, it was mine—and Jamnalalji's. But while

the resolve was made by us, the blood had to be supplied by you. But hasn't the pain now subsided? I must now have a letter from you every day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 10719. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

33. A TWENTIETH CENTURY SATI (?)[1]

I

I hope that the incident as reported in the Press is not true and that the lady in question died through illness or through accident, not by suicide. A sati has been described by our ancients, and the description holds good today, as one who ever fixed in her love and devotion to her husband signalizes herself by her selfless service during her husband's lifetime as well as after, and remains absolutely chaste in thought, word and deed. Self-immolation at the death of the husband is not a sign of enlightenment but of gross ignorance as to the nature of the soul. The soul is immortal, unchangeable and immanent. It does not perish with the physical body but journeys on from one mortal frame to another till it completely emancipated itself from earthly bondage. The truth of it has been attested to by the experience of countless sages and seers and can be realized by anyone who may wish to even today. How can suicide be then justified in the light of these facts?

Again true marriage means not merely union of bodies. It connotes the union of the sould too. If marriage meant no more than a physical relationship the bereaved wife shouls be satisfied with a portrait or a waxen image of her husband. But self-destruction is worse than futile. It cannot help to restore the dead to life, on the contrary it only takes away one more from the world of the living.

The ideal that marriage aims at is that of spiritual union through the physical. The human love that it incarnates in intended to serve as

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan* 3-5-1931. This is a translation by Pyarelal, with the following introductory note : "A lady correspondent from Ghatkopar having invited Gandhiji to express his opinion on an alleged case of sati that was recently reported in a Bombay vernacular paper Gandhiji has delivered himself on the subject in an article in the *Navajivan* as follows." *Vide* also "Opinion Unchanged", 17-5-1931.

a stepping-stone to the divine or universal love. That is why immortal Mira sang : "God alone is my husband—none else."

It follows from this that a sati would regard marriage not as a means of satisfying the animal appetite but as a means of realizing the ideal of selfless and self-effacing service by completely merging her individuality in her husband's. She would prove her satihood not by mounting the funeral pyre at her husband's death but she would prove it with every breath that she breathes from the moment that she plighted her troth to him at the *saptapadi*[1] ceremony, by her renunciation, sacrifice, self-abnegation and dedication to the service of her husband, his family and the country. She would shun creature comforts and delights of the senses. She would refuse to be enslaved by the narrow domestic cares and interests of the family, but would utilize every opportunity to add to her stock of knowledge and increase her capacity for service by more and more cultivating renunciation and self-discipline, and by completely identifying herself with her husband, learn to indentify herself with the whole world.

Such a sati would refuse to give way to wild grief at the death of her husband but would ever strive to make her late husband's ideals and virtues live again in her actions and thereby win for him the crown [of] immortality. Knowing that the soul of him whom she married is not dead but still lives she will never think of remarrying.

The reader will here be perhaps tempted to ask, "The sati that you have pictured is a being untouched by passion or animal appetite. She can have no desire for offspring. Why should she marry at all?" The reply is that in our present-day Hindu society, marriage, in a vast majority of cases, is not a matter of choice. Again, there are some who believe that in our ramshackle age marriage is necessary as a shield to virtue and as an aid to selfrestraint. And as a matter of fact, I personally know several instances of persons who, though at the time of the marriage, were not free from animal passion later on became imbued with the ideal of obsolute chastity and found in their married life a powerful means for realizing their ideal. I have cited these instances to show that the ideal of sati that I have depicted is not merely a counsel of perfection that has no place outside the world of

[1] Seven steps

theory but something that has to be lived up to and realized in this very matter of fact world of ours.

But I readily concede that the average wife who strives to attain the ideal of sati will be a mother too. She must therefore add to her various other qualities mentioned above a knowledge of rearing and bringing up children so that they might live to be true servants of their country.

All that I have said about the wife applies equally to the husband. If the wife has to prove her loyalty and undivided devotion to her husband so has the husband to prove his allegiance and devotion to his wife. You cannot have one set of weights and measures for the one and a different one for the other. Yet we have never heard of a husband mounting the funeral pyre of his deceased wife. It may therefore be taken for granted that the practice of the widow immolating herself at the death of her husband had its origin in superstitious ignorance and the blind egotism of man. Even if it could be proved that at one time the practice had a meaning, it can only be regarded as barbarous in the present age. The wife is not the slave of the husband but his comrade, otherwise known as his better half, his colleague and friend. She is a co-sharer with him of equal rights and of equal duties. Their obligations towards each other and towards the world must, therefore, be the same and reciprocal.

I therefore regard the alleged self-immolation of this sister as vain. It certainly cannot be set up as an example to be copied. Don't I appreciate at least her courage to die?— I may perhaps be asked. My reply is 'no' in all conscience. Have we not seen even evil-doers display this sort of courage? Yet no one has ever thought of complimenting them on it. Why should I take upon me the sin of even unconsciously leading astray some ignorant sister by my injudicious praise of suicide? Satihood is the acme of purity. This purity cannot be attained or realized by dying. It can be attained only through constant striving, constant immolation of the spirit from day to day.

Young India, 21-5-1931

34. NOTES

TO CORRESPONDENTS[1]

Letters rain down on me. Even if I am in absolutely good

[1] A similar item "To Private and Personal Correspondents," under "Notes", also appeared in *Young India*, 7-5-1931.

health, I can neither read all those letters immediately nor can I reply to them. In my present delicate state of health, it is impossible to cope with those letters, to attend to the Settlement, to write for *Navajivan* and *Young India* and do other jobs. Hence only a select unmber of letters are put up to me and from among these I reply immediately to as many as I can and deal later with the rest. I am not happy about this situation. I know that my correspondents expect timely replies. But my helplessness is my defence. My correspondents can help me and my co-workers. They should oblige me by abiding by the following conditions :

1. They should not write letters unless absolutely necessary.
2. They should not use lead pencils for writing.
3. They should not write long letters.
4. They should not repeat the same arguments again and again.
5. As far as possible, they should not argue at all.
6. They should write in a beautiful hand.

These rules are simple and all stem from non-violence. My handwriting is very poor. I have full experience of what difficulties readers find in deciphering it. To do anything which causes hardship to others implies violence. Hence everyone can see that bad hand writing constitutes violence. The same can be said in regard to the other conditions. The above rules have permanent application and, in my present state of health, they are doubly relevant. Be that as it may, if my correspondents receive no replies, they should not conclude that this is due to lack of civility.

'THERE IS NO BASIS FOR UNITY'

The second question[1] posed by the same correspondent is as follows:

There is imperfect reasoning underlying this question. Distinctions such as those which have been described are there for other reasons even in countries like England and the United States of America; despite this there is political unity in those countries. Moreover, it is only in cities that some of the distinctions mentioned above are to be found. There are no distinctions in villages. What is

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had pointed out the artificial separation of Hindus and Muslims in various fields and suggested that these barriers be broken. For the first question, *vide* "Power of Ahimsa", 7-5-1931

required is not the so-called unity achieved through schools, gymkhanas or through games and sports. Unity of hearts is all that is necessary. If this cannot be had, all else is futile; if this is accomplished, nothing else is necessary.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 3-5-1931

35. LETTER TO COLLECTOR[1], KHEDA DISTRICT

May 3, 1931

It is a common cause between us that the people should pay revenue to the utmost of their capacity. I know that in defining the word "capacity" there may be a difference, or there is a difference as I now see from your letter. During our talk I thought that you agreed that no one need borrow money in order to pay the revenue dues. I am carrying out that healthy formula. I know that is has not been carried out before, and may not be carried out in future. In any case, for this exceptional year, I think that there is no way our of it, as I hope to show conclusively in due course. This of course, does not mean that those who wish to pay by borrowing should be prevented by me from doing so. Only I could not take it upon me to press them to do so.[2]

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-10-1931

36. LETTER TO JAMES T. RUTNAM

BORSAD

May 3, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I am publishing your letter and a brief reply to it in the forth coming issue of *Young India*[3]. I hope that the reply will satisfy you and those friends who had any misgivings about my attitude.

Yours sincerely,

JAMES T. RUTNAM, ESQ.
ST. XAVIER'S
NUWARA ELIYA (CEYLON)

From a microfilm : S.N. 17028

[1] Mr. Perry

[2] In reply, the addressee wrote : "I agree with you about borrowing on interest. We do not exclude arrangements amongst friends or the like."

[3] *Vide* "Foreign Missionaries Again", 7-5-1931

37. LETTER TO HARIDAS T. MUZUMDAR

[AS AT] SABARMATI,
May 3, 1931

MY DEAR HARIDAS[1],

Your letter of 26th March[2] and the snatch from your diary have come upon me as a surprise. Your certificate could not be worth much if a cablegram containing a garbled report of my doings or even an act of mine truthfully reported which you could not understand should create such a revulsion in you as to undo your previous certificate. Do you see the terrible implication, namely, that your first certificate was based upon just as hasty calculation as your recantation? But more surprising still is your protestation that your personal loyalty remained as deep, intense, whole-hearted and unquestioning as it was a year ago. Do you not see the flat contradiction between this statement and your latest opinion of me? Surely your loyalty had no other foundation than your estimate of me and when your estimate had to be revised your loyalty became baseless. If you have kept copies of your letters you will understand more fully than I can convey the implications of your letters. However there is this consolation for me that I have survived ruder shocks than you have given.

Yours sincerely,

HARIDAS T. MUZUMDAR, ESQ.
EDITOR, "INDIA TODAY AND TOMORROW"
20 VESEY STREET, NEW YORK (U.S.A.)

From a photostat : S.N. 17053

[1] Dr. Haridas T. Muzumdar, author of *Gandhi the Apostle* (1923); *Gandhi versus the Empire* (1932); *Gandhi Triumphant* (1939), *Mahatma Gandhi : Peaceful Revolutionary* (1952), *Mahatma Gandhi : A Prophetic Voice* (1963) and *The Grammar of Sociology : Man in society* (1966). He visited India during the Lahore Congress, 1929, stayed with Gandhiji at the Sabarmati Ashram during January-March 1930 and accompanied him on the Dandi March. He was also with Gandhiji during the Round Table Conference.

[2] Not available; the addressee, it would appear, had written a strong letter accusing Gandhiji of letting down the people by agreeing to attend the Round Table Conference without securing an imparital inquiry into police brutality.

38. LETTER TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

Sunday, May 3, 1931

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I have your letter. Doctors have divided their work into so many branches that sometimes they make great mistakes which we never know about. A specialist in ear diseases does not understand diseases of the chest, and a throat specialist does not understand inflammation of the stomach. As a result a number of doctors lay siege to the same body and make a mess of the patient's condition. But on the whole they are honest and so it is better to die at their hands.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10720. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

39. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

BORSAD,
May 3, 1931

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I continue to get your letters. My health is all right, but the programme is uncertain. I have no knowledge as to when and where I may have to go. The diet consists of milk, dates and any fruit available locally. I am unable to take more than $1\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of milk. My weight is 103 lb.

How are you and how is your brother-in-law?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 2389

40. TELEGRAM TO FRAMROZE B. GARDA

BORSAD,
May 4, 1931

SARDAR FRAMROZE GARDA[1]

NAVSARI

HEAR POSSESSION NOT YET GIVEN OWNERS OF LAND YOU KINDLY RESTORED. PREPARATION FOR CULTIVATION MUST SOON BEGIN. WOULD LIKEYOU THEREFORE GIVE IMMEDIATE POSSESSION. CASES TOO NOT YET WITHDRAWN. HOPE DELAY NOT DUE NONPAYMENT AGREED AMOUNT. YOU KNOW THAT PAYMENT IS ASSURED. IF YOU HAVE ANY COMPLAINTS WOULD GLADLY INVESTIGATE. PLEASE WIRE REPLY.

GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

41. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

BORSAD,
May 4, 1931

DEAR DR. MAHMUD,

I was anxiously awaiting your letter. I am thankful you have absolved me from having to write to Mr. Hasan Imam.[2] Of course I have been following your movements. I am not going to shower congratulations till I see some definite shape being given to the work. If it is to be lasting it must touch the masses. And you will not touch the masses until you fulfil two conditions :

1. Your programme must appeal to the Mussalman mass mind. It must therefore be in their interest.

2. You must have an army of workers to give effect to it.

Why do you say I have broken the contract? Have I spoken or written about the question anything in contravention of the contract? I could not very well reject Bhopal's well intentioned advances. And after all he was to hae sent for you all to discuss the possibilities. Since our meeting in Bombay, I have heard nothing from him. Nor have I

[1] *Vide* "Notes" sub-title Sold Lands", 7-5-1931
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Syed Mahmud", 19-4-1931

seen the Big Brother[1] save for half an hour in Bombay. Mrs. Naidu brought him and I greeted him as warmly as before. Beyond this I have done nothing save liberal praying even as I said to a newspaper reporter. Of course I saw the Mullaji too at his repuest. Did I do wrong?

Yes, the old widow's[2] condition must be pathetic in spite of her bravery. I suppose you see her daily. Please give her my loving regards. Is Sarup[3] there?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I may have to go to Simla about 11th instant.

From a photostat : G.N. 5080

42. LETTER TO TAN YUN-SHAN[4]

[AS AT] SABARMATI,
May 4, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

You must come again whenever you like.

My message to the Chinese students is : "Know that the deliverance of China is through ahimsa pure and unadulterated."

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 9673; also *The Sino-Indian Journal—Gandhi Memorial Number,* Vol. I, Part II, p. 37

[1] Shaukat Ali
[2] Motilal Nehru's widow
[3] Vijayalakshmi Pandit
[4] The addressee had met Gandhiji at Bardoli and requested him to bless the Chinese students with a message. The message "was widely published in almost all the important Chinese Journals and was appreciated, not only by the students, but by the whole people".

43. LETTER TO DALAI LAMA[1]

[AS AT] SABARMATI,

May 4, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your gift. I am sorry I cannot understand your language. My desire and hope is that Tibetans should understand and follow the secret of the message of ahimsa given by Lord Buddha.

Your friend,

M. K. GANDHI

HIS HIGHNESS THE LAMA
TIBET

From a photostat : G.N. 9674. Also C.W. 6208. Courtesy : Mirabehn

44. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 4, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

There will be one more burden on you. Jamnadas will tell you about Ratilal[2]. When he arrives there, lodge him in the bungalow. If he gets out of control, there will be no option but to put him in chains. Call in Dr. Kanuga and Dr. Haribhai. Pay them their fees and do as they advise. Dr. Haribhai may keep Ratilal in his own hospital or may get him admitted to the asylum, as he thinks best. It is possible that he will come round. All the same, it will be necessary to be careful about

[1] Tan Yun-Shan had brought a letter from the 13th Dalai Lama of Tibet. It was written in Tibetan and no one could read it. Gandhiji said that he would acknowledge the message in Gujarati so that the Dalai Lama might enjoy it without understanding it. According to Mirabehn's note this is an English rendering of the Gujarati original which is not available.

[2] Son of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta, who had become demented

him. See that no knife or other sharp instrument is within his reach at any time. If necessary, appoint some person to keep watch over him. It does not matter if you have to engage a person especially for that and pay him. I don't wish that you should have to spend much of your time over this, but you have to accept the responsibility. Perhaps Ratilal may respond to love. If Champa[1] accompanies him, I don't think she will be able to stay with him. If she comes, let her stay in the Ashram. But she may certainly stay with him if she herself has the courage to do so.

The second problem is about Lakshmi[2]. She has been so brought up that she will not be happy if she is married to an *Antyaja*. Fortunately Maruti wishes to marry her. Read Lakshmidas's letter and let me have your opinion. From a moral stand-point, the proposed step seems to me justified and even necessary. Even then I wish to have your independent opinion.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I.

[1] Ratilal's wife

[2] Dudhabhai's daughter adopted by Gandhiji

45. LETTER TO KISANSINH CHAVDA

BORSAD,
May 4, 1931

BHAI KISANSINH,

I got your letter. I read no new argument in it. All the objections which you urge have been answered several times in *Young India* and *Navajivan*. All that I can do now is to discuss the question briefly with you if you come and see me some time. I cannot spare the time for this before the month of June. I would advise you meanwhile to think again over what I have been writing.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 9295. Courtesy : Kisansinh Chavda

46. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

May 4, 1931

CHI. JAMNADAS,

Arrange to deliver the accompanying two letters to the addressees. I have sent a long telegram to the Doctor and also written to him. Write to me regularly. It would be good if you write to the Doctor. I have mentioned you in my letter and telegram to him.

Write to me about Manu after ascertaining the facts. If you have seen Kelly, write to me about him too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati : C.W. 9320. Courtesy : Jamnadas Gandhi

47 LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

BORSAD,
May 4, 1931

CHI. SHARDA,

Can you expect my letter without writing me one yourself? Right now, all of you can write to me even if I do not write.

Anandi is not here. What are your five classes and who teaches you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9900. Courtesy : Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

48. LETTER TO GULAM RASUL QURESHI

BORSAD,
May 4, 1931

CHI. QURESHI,

I have your letter. How did Imam Saheb's health deteriorate so suddenly? Was there any change in food? At his age he should eat only a measured quantity of food however good his deception may be. Write to me daily.

Is Amina going on with her Urdu?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10822. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

49. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

Silence Day, May 4, 1931

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. You are too sensitive. You should not be angry over what Gangabehn[1] wrote. It is better she expresses herself instead of keeping her feelings bottled up. Understand her love and her service. You should continue to work patiently and remain quiet. Do not get into argument with anyone. Do not brood too much.

[1] Gangabehn Vaidya

Reflect over what you read and remain cheerful. Do keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

50. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

BORSAD,
May 4, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I have taken some time in getting a reply to the various charges about Bihar of which you were good enough to send me copies. I now send you Babu Rajendra Prasad's summary of the enquiry that he caused to be made into all the allegations. I am not burdening you with the report itself. I would be pleased to send it to you if you would care to follow up the summary.

I send you also a copy of the complaints made by Babu Rajendra Prasad with reference to the implementing by the local government of the various clauses of the Settlement. Technically, about the lawyers, I know that the Government cannot be held responsible. But there are ways.

Yours sincerely,

H. W. EMERSON, ESQ.
HOME SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SIMLA

[*May 5, 1931*]

[PS.]

This was dictated yesterday. Today is my silence day. I have your kind letter of 2nd instant. By mistake the first Bihar statement was not given to my typist. I am therefore sending the original. Please return.

You have said 'about 11th' for my coming to Simla. 11th is a Monday. Will it be enough if I reach Simla on 13th instant? Please wire the latest date. I want to finish the Kaira affair so far as I am concerned, if it is at all possible. But, of course, I will interrupt the work if my early presence is necessary.

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

51. LETTER TO FLORENCE ROSENBLATT

[AS AT] SABARMATI,
May 5, 1931

DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,

I have your good letter. You should possess your soul in patience. Whatever good you might have seen in my life you can adopt even being there and it would be as good as seeing me, indeed much better. What you can do effectively for India is to put in a good word whenever anybody talks uncharitably about India and her people and in order to be able to put in that good word with confidence, you have to find time to study the Indian struggle. You can then speak with authority.

Yours sincerely,

FLORENCE ROSENBLATT
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK (U.S.A.)

From a photostat : S.N. 17029

52. LETTER TO V. T. KRISHNAMACHARYA

BORSAD,
May 5, 1931

DEAR DIWAN SAHEB,

In Vijapur there is an industrial institution called Udyogalaya. I procured through the good office of your predecessor a plot of ground for founding a centre for spinning and weaving especially through women and it was registered in the name of a lady co-worker. She has now retired from that work and so far as she is concerned the legal right has been transferred to the trustees of the Satyagraha Ashram. One of the trustees is working in the Udyogalaya. He has tried to get the land transferred in the name of the trustees of the Satyagraha Ashram. After waiting a long time the officer concerned has rejected the application. He has given, so far as I am aware, no reasons for it. At one time it seemed that by giving an undertaking that the institution will have nothing to do with politics there would be no difficulty about the transfer. Then, I believe, there was a change of officer. Of course, from its very conception according to my own method of work like my activities in other Indian States, this institution has been kept out of politics altogether. It remained so during the last struggle. As you may be aware, the

Baroda State has been receiving the help of the All-India Spinners' Association for village reorganization through the spinning-wheel. The Vijapur activity is also a kindred activity. Could I trouble you to interest yourself in this matter and if you are satisfied about the facts presented by me, could you please order transfer of the land in the name of the above-mentioned trustees? At the present moment this land is given by the State for a nominal sum for benevolent purposes. But I would like to buy it right out if the State has no objection. It was offered before. I may add that we have buildings on this land which have cost over Rs. 12,000. Through the institution we are supporting several poor women of Vijapur by giving them spinning work and we are supporting a colony of weavers and carders. The institution engages in no other activity. I am sorry to have to trouble you over a matter which may appear to be trifling. But it is not so to me as a guardian of the several interests entrusted to my care.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

V. T. KRISHNAMACHARYA, ESQ.
DIWAN OF BARODA
BARODA

From a photostat : S.N. 17030

53. LETTER TO BOYD TUCKER

BORSAD,
May 5, 1931

MY DEAR BOYD,

I was delighted to have your letter and to find that you were having a little respite from the heat of India's plains. Of course there is no truth in the rumoured visit to America. But as soon as the rumour went abroad, I got a peremptory cablegram signed by Mr. Page, Dr. Sherwood Eddy, Rev. Holmes, Dr. Ward and others warning me against going to America.[1] They say emphatically that I would be exploited if I went there and that I would serve the cause better from a distance than by appearing in the midst of the people of America. All this, mind you, in the cablegram. And by this mail I have received a letter from an unknown American friend who, whilst appreciating my work and message, pleads with me not go to America. I do feel

[1] *Vide* also "Notes" sub-title A Cry in The Wilderness", 14-5-1931

exactly like these friends. Therefore even if I went to London and could spare a few weeks I should not care to go in the teeth of these warnings from friends whose opinion I respect. Would not yours coincide[1] with theirs after further reflection?

Now about London. There is no probability of my going there so long as the Hindu-Muslim problem remains unsolved. Even if I went there, whilst I should value your society, I do not know of the use I could make of your services. Andrews is already there and as you know he will take possession of me body and soul. I have a letter from him in which he takes my London visit for granted, has appointed himself as my chap-rasi, tells me where I should stay. There is again Henry Polak who was in my office in South Africa for years. Then there is Muriel Lester. Therefore if you went with me to London you would not go as Secretary. Then I must not forget Mira. She will of course be with me. But of course everything is premature. I felt that you should now all about the appointments should the visit come forth. I was glad you were with me in Karachi. I was only sorry that I was not able to have long chats with you. That you continually lost your things was certainly bad but that would be no disqualification for taking you with me. I could have much better use for you than to make you keeper of my belongings.

BOYD TUCKER, ESQ.
C/O POSTMASTER
SRINAGAR (KASHMIR)

From a photostat : S.N. 17031

54. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

BORSAD,
May 5, 1931

DEAR RAJENDRABABU,

In order to save time I am dictating this letter. I have sent copy of your letter addressed to the Secretary, All-India Congress Committee, as also your two statements to the Government, and I expect to go to Simla next week where I shall discuss the Bihar affairs

[1] The source has “Would you not coincide”.

together with the others. I shall therefore write to you after a visit to Simla. I hope you are keeping good health. How is Brijkishore Babu?

SYT. RAJENDRA PRASAD

SADAQUAT ASHRAM

DT. PATNA

From a photostat : S.N. 17032

55. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

[AS AT] SABARMATI,
May 5, 1931

This is to write to you about Reginald Reynolds. His address is Turner's Court, Benson, Near Oxford. He is disconsolate towards the Set-tlement. The engagement with the girl whom he was to marry is broken. His pecuniary condition is bad. My whole heart goes out to him. I do not think that my reply to his letter in *Young India*[1] has given him any satisfaction. I would like him to know that all is well and that the Settle-ment is not a surrender of principle. I would like you to go to him, argue out the matter with him and otherwise help him and draw him out of his seclusion. He is as good as gold and is very brave. Perhaps all that I have written to you is superfluous and that you have met him and had already known more about him than I have told you. But I could not restrain myself and you can sympathize with me having done such things much more often than I do. Gujarat still absorbs my attention to the exclusion of everything else. Implementing the Settlement in the teeth of official sullenness, unwillingness and even opposition is a very difficult business. It tries even my patience but I hope not to be baffled. The atmosphere is already somewhat clearer. I expect next week to go to Simla over this and other matters arising out of the Settlement as also over the Round Table Conference. We are no nearer Hindu-Muslim solution and till that barrier is removed there is no question of my going to London.

C. F. ANDREWS, ESQ.

From a photostat : S.N. 17033

[1] *Vide* "An Englishman's Dilemma", 16-4-1931

56. LETTER TO NANIBEHN JHAVERI

BORSAD,
May 5, 1931

CHI. NANIBEHN[1],

I got your letter. We should be satisfied if you somehow recover your health. Where is Gangabehn now? How is she?

You have selected a good number of books. Amritlal Maniar's books are worth reading.

Pannalal may write to me again and again if his questions have not been satisfactorily answered.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3112

57. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

May 5, 1931

CHI. MAHAVIR,

I got your letter. In writing, the case terminations should not be separated from the stem. The constituent parts of a compound phrase also should not be written separately. Hence, one should write, not *charan kamal man*[2], but *charankamalman*. Do you write your daily diary? Are you learning the *Gita* by heart?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6228

58. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

BORSAD,
May 5, 1931

CHI. RAMDAS,

I got your letter. You may by all means go to Almora. But you will get three hundred rupees only. Ask Manibhai to give the amount to you and debit it to my account. Show this letter to him. If, afterwards, you find the amount not enough, write to me. Do not

[1] Wife of Pannalal Jhaveri, manager of the dairy in the Ashram
[2] Literally, 'at the lotus feet'

spend much on warm clothes. There also, it is not so cold in this season. Moreover, you will get some warm clothing even there. Some warm thing to cover yourself with will suffice. I may have to go to Simla next week.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

59. MESSAGE TO PEOPLE OF BHUTAN[1]

BORSAD,
May 5, 1931

I am glad to meet you. I hope the people of Bhutan will fully understand the message of truth and non-violence and act according to it.

The Bombay Chronicle, 6-5-1931

60. MESSAGE ON KHADI[2]

BORSAD,
May 5, 1931

People ask me why I am khaddar-mad. There are seven lakhs of villages. A large number of these villages are living in a condition of semi-starvation. There is no employment for them for nearly six months in the year. It is necessary to find for them some supplementary occupation. We must give them an occupation they are used to. Such an occupation is hand-spinning. If hand-spinning is to be introduced in the villages, it is but natural that we should be expected to wear khaddar. Hence it is that I have become khaddar-mad.

The Bombay Chronicle, 6-5-1931

[1] It was given in Hindi when the brother of the Kind of Bhutan presented Gandhiji with two small boxes of gold and silver and a few pieces of hand-woven cloth.

[2] Given to an Indian film company first in Hindi and then in English

61. TELEGRAM TO FRAMROZE B. GARDA[1]

BORSAD,
May 6, 1931

SARDAR FRAMROZE GARDA
NAVSARI

RECEIVED SURPRISING WIRE. DO I UNDERSTAND YOU REPUDIATE AGREEMENT. HAVE ASKED YOU NATURE HARASSMENT CONCRETE CASES.

GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

62. TELEGRAM TO SIR COWASJI JEHANGIR

[*May 6, 1931*][2]

SIR COWASJI JEHANGIR
NEPEAN SEA ROAD
BOMBAY

SARDAR GARDA WIRES PRACTICALLY REPUDIATING AGREEMENT ON VAGUE CHARGES CONTINUING HARASSMENT. HAVE ASKED HIM GIVE SPECIFIC INSTANCES. PLOUGHING SEASON APPROACHING.

GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

63. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

BORSAD,
May 6, 1931

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I get your letters. But I have not yet got your acknowledgement of the telegram I sent you.[3] You should have sent one. The telegram only stated that I would not be able to wire to someone in Udaipur as I knew no one there, and suggested that Malaviyaji or Jamnalal might do so. You have written to Ram at any rate. That was good. I do not even know where Manilal is. I had addressed a telegram to him, to which there has been no reply.

[1] In reply to the addressee's telegram which read : "Sorry nothing can be done in the matter. Behaviour of people even after negotiations most harassing."

[2] *Vide* the preceding item

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Haribhau Upadhyaya", 2-5-1931

You are put in a difficult situation. It is possible that the State may pay no attention to your complaint. Though Trench[1] will not be able to appreciate the letter which you have written to him, you did well in writing it. It will do no harm. If the people's grievance has not been redressed you should, since you have accepted their leader-ship, cross the border and court imprisonment. If the peasants remain truly non-violent, they are bound to win. Of course the question will remain how far non-violence can be observed in taking possession of land.What will the people do when the State police come to dispossess them of the land? Will they oppose them? Will they remain there squatting? Several questions arise here. I have found that the non-violence observed in such cases is merely physical. Do what you think right in the light of the circumstances prevailing there, no matter if what you believe to be non-violence appears to me violence. We can do nothing more than act sincerely according to our lights. If everything was as clear to me as daylight I would not have thrown on you the responsibility for deciding. From what is happening in the States, for similar things are happening in the other Indian States too and in British India, it seems to me that the effect of all that happened during the last struggle was only temporary and not enduring. That experiment in non-violence was on a mass scale, but it was not, or did not remain uniformly pure in quality. Our non-violence was the non-violence of the helpless. I do not feel unhappy about this. Nothing more than that was possible. The foregoing criticism has no other aim but to help us to understand the real facts about the nature of the struggle.

I understand what you say about *Tyagbhumi* and also about advertisements. Do what is possible.

Ramnarayan ought to go somewhere and take complete rest. See that he gives up work. Perhaps he will have fewer difficulties if he goes to Almora. Wherever he goes he may be sure that he will get some opportunity for service.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Immediately after the morning prayer.

From Gujarati : C.W. 6073. Curtesy : Haribhau Upadhyaya

[1] Revenue Commissioner of Udaipur State

64. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

BORSAD,
May 6, 1931

MY DEAR BHRRR[1],

I have not received your letter sent to the Vidyapith. I suppose it will come to me in due course. I am delighted that you have had a successful operation. I hope this will be the last. How long will they keep you in the hospital? I am in BORSAD up to Monday at least. I might then have to go to Simla.

I have now got your Vidyapith letter. I am writing to the Gaikwar. I wonder if it will be too late. I must not go to Baroda just yet.

Yours,
BAPU

SJT. ABBAS TYABJI
K.E.M. HOSPITAL
BOMBAY

From a photostat : S.N. 9575

65. LETTER TO YOUSUF HUSSAIN

[AS AT] SABARMATI,
May 6, 1931

DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter of 10th March. You will forgive me for not having acknowledged it earlier. I have been so busy and constantly on the move. Young students can certainly do a great deal for the country. First of all they can wear khadi and thus support the poor people who spin and weave in their own homes. They can also do hand-spinning and carding themselves. They will thus add to national wealth and, when they have finished their studies, become competent village workers. Young students can also promote goodwill between the two communities by making friends with one another and doing all kinds of mutual service and, at times of tension,

[1] A form of greeting used between Gandhiji and the addressee whenever they met or wrote to each other

risking even their lives in serving and saving those who may be in danger.

Yours sincerely,

YOUSUF HUSSAIN, ESQ.

MUSLIM UNIVERSITY

ALIGARH

From a microfilm. S.N. 17035

66. LETTER TO H. HARCOURT

[AS AT] SABARMATI,
May 6, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. You will forgive me for sending you a belated reply but I was helpless. I am not able to say that the Round Table Conference has established lasting goodwill between the two nations. But it can do a great deal of good if the representatives of both the nations are determined to come to an agreement. I am quite aware and I am thankful that I have a very large circle of unknown friends in the British Isles.

Yours sincerely,

H. HARCOURT, ESQ.
LONDON S.E. 19

From a photostat : S.N. 17036

67. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

[AS AT] SABARMATI,
May 6, 1931

Here is a letter from Chinnapavu of Coimbatore. He refers to you in his letter. Please tell me all about him and his activity. I would like you to deal with this letter by writing to him. Can it be true what he says about the treatment of *Adi-Dravidas* in Singanallur?

Encl. 1

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

TIRUCHENGODU (S. INDIA)

From a photostat : S.N. 17037

68. LETTER TO H. RUNHAM BROWN

[AS AT] SABARMATI,
May 6, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 4th February. You will excuse me for not acknowledging it earlier. It was practically impossible to do so. I think that Prof. Einstein's suggestion is sound. And if it is right for those who do not believe in war to refuse war service, it follows that they are entitled at least to the sympathy of war resisters even if the latter are too weak to follow the example of those who suffer for their conscience's sake.

Yours sincerely,

H. RUNHAM BROWN, ESQ.
11 ABBEY ROAD, ENFIELD
MIDDLESEX, (ENGLAND)

From a photostat : S.N. 17038

69. LETTER TO KHAN CHAND DEV

[AS AT] SABARMATI,
May 6, 1931

DEAR LALA KHAN CHAND,

I have your letter. I am in correspondence with the Government in all these matters and I am likely to go to Simla to discuss every one of them. At the present moment, therefore, I can only advise you to keep me informed of what is going on there. I would advise you also not to start picketing and even stop picketing if absolute peacefulness cannot be ensured. There should be no rowdyism. I do not now what truth there is in the Punjab Governor's charge that there has been wild speaking. Are you able to control the Punjab Press? I know that there is often violent writing. I would not like anybody connected with the Congress to speak or write violently. Our case is weakened by such writing or speaking.

Yours sincerely,

LALA KHAN CHAND DEV
PUNJAB PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE
BRADLAUGH HALL, LAHORE

From a microfilm : S.N. 17039

70. LETTER TO GULZARI LAL NANDA

BORSAD,
May 6, 1931

MY DEAR GULZARI LAL,

You should firmly tell Mr. Gidney that there is absolutely no coercion used. But you have the right of fixing conditions of membership. What the Settlement requires is that picketing shall be absolutely peaceful, which it admittedly is. And in no case can the Government connive at direct breaches of liquor laws. I am likely to have to go to Simla next week in connection with the breaches of the Settlement alleged to have taken place on the part of the Government as well as of the people. Please therefore give me all the particulars. I have got the sections you have sent me.

SJT. GULZARI LAL NANDA
TEXTILE LABOUR ASSOCIATION
LABOUR OFFICE
LAL DARWAZA, AHMEDABAD

From a microfilm : S.N. 17040

71. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

[AS AT] SABARMATI,
May 6, 1931

MY DEAR VENKATAPPAYYA,

Plesase read the enclosed. Tell me all you know about Needu[1] or enquire and let me know. Is he responsible for all this misfortune himself? I am anxious to help him if only for the memory of Annapurna[2]. But you have to guide me.
Encls. 2

SJT. KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA
GUNTUR (MADRAS PRESIDENCY)

From a microfilm : S.N. 17041

[1] Maganti Bapi Needu; *vide* the following item.
[2] Needu's wife who had died in 1927; *vide* "A Good Servant Fone", 27-10-1927

72. LETTER TO MAGANTI BAPI NEEDU

[AS AT] SABARMATI,
May 6, 1931

MY DEAR NEEDU,

My whole heart goes out to you in your trouble though, if you will take it calmly and correctly it will be your making. It is not prosperity but adversity that makes a man. Prosperity spoils him. And after all, if you belong to the starving group, you are one of the many millions. But I know that this philosophy, however correct it is, will bring you no solace. Before therefore I can make a concrete suggestion, you must let me know what your minimum requirements are, and in fixing this, do not think of what you have been materially but think of what you should be.

In fact in doing this you will have to be courageous and even apparently heartless. You are telling me you have to support your own people and Annapurna's. This is absurd. You have to support those who may be physically maimed and therefore incapable of doing anything for themselves. You have no such in either family. Nor must they be pampered. They must all, men and women, work for their living and if they will do so, you will find that the problem is satisfactorily and honourably solved. Now you know what I want from you. Give me a letter full of particulars and it shall receive prompt attention.

Yours,

BAPU

SJT. MAGANTI BAPI NEEDU
ELLORE (WEST GODAVARY DT.)
MADRAS PRESIDENCY

From a photostat : G.N. 8826; also S.N. 17042

73. LETTER TO K. KELAPPAN NAIR

[AS AT] SABARMATI,
May 6, 1931

MY DEAR KELAPPAN,

I have your letter. Please continue to send me full report of whatever irregularities you may notice. I might have to go to Simla to discuss all these things. Meanwhile you must use all the tact you are capable of using.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. KELAPPAN NAIR
KERALA PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE
MATHRUBHUMI BUILDINGS
CALICUT

From a microfilm : S.N. 17043

74. SPEECH AT BOCHASAN

May 6, 1931

I thank you all for giving me the honour of laying the foundation of this Vidyalaya. This institution has been named "Vallabh Vidyalaya" and hence it has become the duty of all—the present and future managers of the Vidyalaya and those who will receive education here—to imbibe Vallabhbhai's virtues and to teach others to do the same. Vallabhbhai is an embodiment of sacrifice; Vallabhbhai is synonymous with courage; Vallabhbhai stands for heroism, for removal of distinctions between high and low. Vallab-hbhai does not regard Patidars as high and the others as low because they are Bhangis, Baraias and Patanwadias.[1] To disprove these distinctions, the laying of the foundation has been entrusted to me.

Bhai Narahari has stated in his speech that for the most part the children of Dharala Thakores, and Patanwadias will receive education in this Vallabh Vidyalaya. I put aside my work and came here only to meet the Dharala Thakores. Ever since I made your acquaintance, I have recognized you as Thakores [leaders]. Those brothers among you who attended the mammoth meeting at Vadtal[2] will remember

[1] Names of certain beckward communities in Gujarat
[2] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Vadtal", 19-1-1921

that I had described you all as Dharala Thakores. Just as Kaliparaj[1] became Raniparaj, the Dharalas became known as Thakores. You have only benefited from the great struggle, even though some of you purchased the lands of others, proved faithless to the people, and vacillated. But, can one forget the fact that in Bochasan the Baraia brethren are with the people? That way, no one can claim that the Patidars are a hundred per cent on the side of the people. If all Muslim brothers here did not stand by the people, they have done so in other parts of the country.

There is element of compulsion or force in our struggle, it is a voluntary fight. Hereafter whenever we have to fight, all will join in. I wish the temporary Truce with the Government to become permanent. Let the Truce end in our winning complete swaraj. Complete swaraj means a government in which we can run our own administration. If the dream entertained by Sardar Vallabhbhai, my many comrades and myself comes true, then that government will belong to the Patidars, the Dharala Thakores and the Bhangis also. It will belong to the Muslim brethren too. That government will not belong to any one community, but to all the men and women, boys and girls, of India. That alone is to be called complete swaraj. A government other than this is no government. None should hope that the government should be his and not of the Muslims and the Bhangis. That will indeed be the government of the thirty crores of people of India. If all of them do not receive a fair deal, that will not constitute swaraj at all. Therefore the Vidyapith thought that the job would be only half done if they did not serve the backward classes. Dharala Thakore brethren come to see me. They cannot even sign their names. But I do not care if they do not know how to sign their names, they should know what is swaraj. You ought to know what our duty to the people is, why we should spin, why we should wear only khadi and why we should not wear cloth made even by mills in our country. What a sad and shameful thing it is if you do not know all this! If you do not know this, how can our administration run? The Dharala Thakores, the Bhangis and all other communities can participate in our administration. It is for this that Shamalbhai is here. You may say that the Patidars have exploited you to the uttermost limit. Perhaps there may

[1] A Scheduled Tribe in Gujarat

be some truth in it. There may not be unity between the Patidars and the Dharala Thakores in all matters. But an organization of youths has arisen from among the Patidars themselves which has deemed it its duty to serve you. They believe in serving others first and themselves afterwards.

You few Dharala Thakore brothers who have come here, please carry my message to everyone in his home. The Patidars and we are not adversaries. If you have considered them as your enemies, forget it. The Patidars and the Dharalas are both brothers. Only just now I was introduced to a brother who had presented yarn to me. He used to drink liquor and even offer it to others—but he has given it up and is making others follow suit. Everyone ought at any rate to give up liquor and also thiev-ing and looting. Have you ever seen a thief becoming a million-aire? None has become a rich man through theft. And even if anyone has done so, ultimately he has remained a beggar only. One cannot, like the merchant, become a millionaire through theft. Nothing is to be gained through theft, l ooting, violence, etc. But if we want to live in t his world cleanly and thus present ourselves at God's court, take it for certain that our hands, legs, eyes, ears and hearts ought to be pure. Else we would not be fit to remain in His court. In order to make all this possible, the Vallabh Vidyalaya has been established. It is my hope that Shamalbhai will complain to me that there are so many children of the Patanwadias and Dharala Thakores that the school is too small to accommodate them. In this Vidyalaya, those who have no money are going to be fed and clothed. But none should take wrong advantage of it. It is my desire that those who have money should study even by paying fees and there will come a time when I shall have to say that I shall set up as many schools as you require. You may know that we have a plentiful supply of teachers and we shall get them from anywhere. We shall teach boys and by and by even girls. But all that depends on the extent to which you give encouragement to the Vallabh Vidyalaya.

You have asked for my blessings. Them you certainly have. But you have them on the condition that you impart lustre to this Vidyalaya and its name. The Patidars also should benefit by it and should disgrace neither the Vallabh Vidyalaya nor my name. I do not care for the sort of Vidyalaya which may prove a millstone round my neck and be a burden to me. Education liberates us, frees us from bondage, helps us to shine, adds to the country's wealth, enriches character; our boys and girls become smart and intelligent thereby. This Vidyalaya has been established with this end in view. May this end be realized. I express gratitude to all those who have given

donations for this Vidyalaya and have offered lime, labour and other types of help. What we build with our own money will shine forth better than what we do with money got from the rich men of Bombay.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-5-1931

75. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

BORSAD,
May 6, 1931

Interviewed by the Associated Press correspondent regarding the resolution passed by the Manchester Royal Exchange, Mahatma Gandhi said :

The resolution of the Manchester Royal Exchange is partly based on misapprehension. There is no hostility towards Britain in the present movement but, on the countrary, the Congressmen are trying against heavy odds to promote goodwill as far as it is possible under the present circumstances. It is not sufficiently realized what trem-endous step the Congress had taken in lifting boycott of British goods.

The boycott of foreign cloth should not be mixed up with British goods. It is a misnomer to call boycott of foreign cloth as boycott. That name therefore has been intentionally omitted from the Delhi Settlement. I use the word boycott even for the exclusion of foreign cloth because it has become a current popular expression. Nobody, however, mistakes its purpose. The exclusion of foreign cloth does produce political conse-quences but it is a predominantly economic and social proposition and an economic necessity for the semi-starved millions. Instead therefore of agitating against the permanent movement of economic uplift, if the leading men in Lancashire will find out ways and means of disposing of their manufactures in other countries where they are wanted, they will save much time and really promote goodwill between the two countries.

I regard the attempt to suppress peaceful picketing as fruitless. Surely Lord Irwin did not accept peaceful picketing of foreign cloth and liquor shops without sound reasons and anyone who studies this question as patiently as he did cannot but come to the same conclusion as Lord Irwin.

The Hindustan Times, 8-5-1931

76. NOTES

SOLD LANDS[1]

To sell a farmer's land and that for a song is vivisection. The sale of forfeited lands in Gujarat was such an operation. The clause in the Settlement about these lands was for Sardar Vallabhbhai the biggest bite to swallow. But he swallowed it because ultimately he shared my faith that the lands could not long be withheld by the buyers from the original owners and in any case they were bound to be restored when the full settlement was attained. It must be said to the credit of the buyers that they are one by one realizing the necessity of restoring the lands they made the mistake of buying. The reader already knows how through the kind intervention of Sir Cowasji Jehangir, Syts. Nariman, Vimadalal and Modi, Sardar Garda has agreed to restore to the original holders the lands bought by him in Bardoli Taluka and how Syt. Cowasji of Kukadbeda and Thakur Khumansing of BORSAD have returned lands bought by them without asking for a refund of money paid by them. The latest instances are those of Sheth Virchand in Bardoli and Thakore of Dehvan in BORSAD. The Thakore would not think of having even the price paid by him returned to him. He had paid Rs. 1,200 for nearly 120 acres of good land. Three poor Dharalas too returned eleven acres which they had bought for Rs. 48 stating in their letter addressed to me that they were sorry that being poor they had to ask for the refund of the actual amount paid by them although they recognized that they should not ask for it. It reflects credit on all these buyers for their having patriotically returned the lands. I say patriotically for there was no pressure save that of silent public opinion brought to bear upon these buyers. Their friends certainly approached them but there was no threat or coercion employed by anybody. Healthy public opinion has an influence of which we have not realized the full significance. But we are not yet out of the wood. There are yet tough buyers who have not come forward. But I have little doubt that if the workers don't lose patience and the Settlement does not otherwise break down, they will also respond to the influence of that opinion. Public opinion becomes intolerable when it becomes violent and aggressive.

I am happy to be able to inform the reader that otherwise too the things in Gujarat seem to be moving, though very slowly, towards a settlement. How we are implementing the Truce in Gujarat

[1] A similar note also appeared in *Navajivan*, 3-5-1931

on behalf of the Congress is partly told by Mahadev Desai in his weekly letter.[1]

At this juncture, it is necessary for me to add that it is not dharma for a satyagrahi to harass anyone. He should wish well even to those who hate him. Sardar Garda is afraid that the farmers may harass him. He was even complaining of harassment. I have told him that I would look into the matter if he sent me the details of any specific complaint, and I have also assured him that no satyagrahi will harass him. I have no doubt that the farmers will fully honour this assurance which I have given on their behalf. If we wish to win swaraj without delay, it is our dharma to live amicably with everyone and win everyone's heart. It should not be forgotten that this includes the official class as well.

POLICE TYRANNY

A correspondent asks: "Do you advise taking legal proceedings against the police or other officials for their lawlessness during the struggle?"

Whilst this is provided for in the Settlement, I cannot advise such proceedings except where the lawlessness persists in some shape or other and where it is possible to produce conclusive evidence of the past lawlessness. But generally speaking, we must, in view of the Settlement try to bury the dead past and hope and work for a lasting settlement.

IN THE NAME OF 'CASHMERE'

Sjt. Kotak of the A. I. S. A., Kashmir, writes:[2]

> People have by now begun to know real khadi from the base imitation. Fine woollen things come only from Kashmir, and so it has become the fashion nowadays to palm off foreign woollens as cashmere, i.e., fabrics hand-spun and hand-woven in Kashmir.
>
> Can you not do anything to stop this fraud?

Let those who go in for fine wollens and silks take note of the warning. One moral is to trace every article to its source. This can only be done by confining one's sales to things manufactured in one's own neighbourhood. But this is not always possible. The next thing therefore is to buy from certified stores or from those whose managers are personally known to us. Swadeshi dharma like every

[1] The paragraph that follows is from *Navajivan*.

[2] Only extracts are reproduced here.

other dharma is difficult to observe. Lovers of swadeshi must never therefore mind the trouble of knowing the history of every piece of cloth and for that matter every article they use. While khadi is both the centre and the circumstance of swadeshi, there is much else to fill in the intervening spaces. A person who, using khadi, gives himself or herself the license to buy everything else foreign does not know the spirit behind khadi and discredits it.

Young India, 7-5-1931, and *Navajivan,* 3-5-1931

77. POWER OF AHIMSA [1]

A correspondent writes a Gujarati letter of which the following is a translations[2]:

If I have anywhere referred to India haivng received the fullest support from world opinion, it should be set down as an unconscious exaggeration. I should like to be shown such a statement of mine if I have made one. For myself I have absolutely no idea of having made any such statement.

The correspondent, by comparing the condition of unarmed India pitted against the British military power to that of a defenceless woman thrown at the tender mercy of a ruffian, has done an injustice to the strength as well of non-violence as of woman. Had not man in his blind selfishness crushed woman's soul as he has done or had she not succumbed to 'the enjoyments' she would have given the world an exhibition of the infinite strength that is latent in her. What she showed in the last fight was but a broken and imperfect glimpse of it. The world shall see it in all its wonder and glory when woman has secured a equal opportunity for herself with man and fully developed her powers of mutual aid and combination.

And it is wrong to say that a person is unarmed in the sense of being weak who has ahimsa as his weapon. The correspondent is evidently a stranger to the real use or the immeasurable power of ahimsa. He has used it, if at all, only mechanically and as an expedience for want of a better. Had he been saturated with the spirit of ahimsa, he would have known that it can tame the wildest beast, certainly the wildest man.

If, therefore, the world's blood did not boil over the brutalities

[1] A similar article also appeared in *Navajivan,* 3-5-1931 under the heading "Why Did Not Their Blood Boil?"

[2] Not reproduced here

of the past year, it was not because the world was brutal or heartless but because our non-violence, widespread through it was, good enough though it was for the purpose intended, was not the non-violence of the strong and the knowing. It did not spring from a living faith. It was but a policy, a temporary expedient. Though we did not retaliate, we had harboured anger, our speech was not free from violence, our thoughts still less so. We generally refrained from violent action, because we were under discipline. The world marvelled even at this limited exhibition of non-violence and gave us, without any propaganda, the support and sympathy that we deserved and needed. The rest is a matter of the rule of three. If we had the support that we received for the limited and mechanical non-violence we were able to practise during the recent struggle, how much more support should we command when we have risen to the full height of ahimsa? Then the world's blood will certainly boil. I know we are still far away from that divine event. We realized our weakness at Cawnpore, Benares, Mirzapur. When we are saturated with ahimsa we shall not be non-violent in our fight with the bureaucracy and violent among ourselves. When we have a living faith in non-violence, it will grow from day to day till it fills the whole world. It will be the mightiest propaganda that the world will have witnessed. I live in the belief that we will realize that vital ahimsa.

Young India, 7-5-1931

78. DANGERS OF DEMOCRACY[1]

There is no human institution but has its dangers. The greater the institution the greater the chances of abuse. Democracy is a great institution and therefore it is liable to be greatly abused. The remedy therefore is not avoidance of democracy but reduction of possibility of abuse to a minimum.

The Congress has become a vast democratic body. It reached a high water-mark during the past twelve months. Without being technically on the register millions took possession of it and added lustre to it. But goondaism also entered the Congress to a much larger extent than hitherto. It was inevitable. The ordinary rules prescribed for the selection of volunteers were practically set aside during the last

[1] *Navajivan*, 3-5-1931; also published an article on the same subject, under the title "A House Divided Cannot Stand".

stage of the struggle. The result has been that in some places goondaism has made itself felt. Some Congressmen have even been threatened with disaster if they will not give the money demanded of them. Of course, professional goondas may also take advantage of the atmosphere and ply their trade.

The wonder is that the cases I have in mind are so very few compared to what they might have been, regard being had to the great mass awakening. My conviction is that t his happy state is due to the Congress creed of non-violence, even though we have but crudely followed it. But there has been sufficient expression of goondaism to warn us to take time by the forelock and adopt preventive and precautionary measures.

The measures that suggest themselves to me are naturally and certainly a scientific and more intelligent and disciplined application of non-violence. In the first place if we had a firmer faith in non-violence than we have shown not one man or woman who did not strictly conform to the rules regarding the admission of volunteers would have been taken. It would be no answer to say that in that case there would have been no volunteers during the final stage and therefore there would have been a perfect failure. My experience teaches me to the contrary. It is possible to fight a non-violent battle even with one satyagrahi. But it, i.e., a non-violent battle, cannot be fought with a million non-satyagrahis. And I would welcome even an utter failure with non-violence unimpaired rather than depart from it by a hair's breadth to achieve a doubtful success. Without adopting a non-compromising attitude so far as non-violence is concerened, I can see nothing but disaster in the end. For, at the critical moment we may be found wanting, weighed in the scales of non-violence, and may be found hopelessly unprepared to meet the forces of disorder that might suddenly be arrayed against us.

But having made the mistake of indiscriminate recruiting how are we to repair the mischief in a non-violent way? Non-violence means courage of the highest order and therefore readiness to suffer. There should therefore be no yielding to bullying, bluff or worse, even though it may mean the loss of a few precious lives. Writers of threatening letters should be made to realize that their threats will not be listened to. But at the same time their disease must be diagnosed and properly treated. Even the goondas are part of us and therefore they must be handled gently and sympathetically. People generally do not take to goondaism for the love of it. It is a symptom of a deeper-

seated disease in the body politic. The same law should govern our relations with internal goondaism that we apply in our relations with the goondaism in the system of government. And if we have felt that we have the ability to deal with that highly organized goodaism in a non-violent manner, how much more should we feel the ability to deal with internal goondaism by the same method?

It follows that we may not seek police assistance to deal with the disease although it is open, during the Truce, to any Congressman to seek it precisely in the same manner as any other citizen.

The way I have suggested is the way of reform, conversion, love. Seeking police assistance is the way of punishment, fear, want of affection if not actual disaffection. The two methods therefore cannot run together. The way of reform appears at some stage or other to be difficult but it is in reality the easiest.

Young India, 7-5-1931

79. FOR 'FOLLOWERS'

A friend sends me the following:

> It will be very helpful if you will kindly guide your followers about their conduct when they to engage in a political controversy. Your guidance on the following points is particularly needed:
>
> (a) Vilification so as to lower the opponent in public estimation.
>
> (b) Kind of criticism of the opponent permissible.
>
> (c) Limit to which hostility should be carried.
>
> (d) Whether effort should be made to gain office and power.

I have said before in these pages that I claim no followers. It is enough for me to be my own follower. It is by itself a sufficiently taxing performance. But I know that many claim to be my followers. I must therefore answer the questions for their sakes. If they will follow what I endeavour to stand for rather than me they will see that the following answers are derived from truth and ahimsa.

(a) Vilification of an opponent there can never be. But this does not exclude a truthful characterization of his acts. An opponent is not always a bad man because he opposes. He may be as honourable as we may claim to be and yet there may be vital differences between him and us.

(b) Our criticism will therefore be if we *believe* him to be guilty of untruth to meet it with truth, of discourtesy with courtesy, of bullying with calm courage, of violence with suffering, of arrogance with

humility, of evil with good. 'My follower' would see not to condemn but to convert.

(c) There is no question of any limit to which hostility may be carried. For there should be no hostility to persons. Hostility there must be to acts when they are subversive of morals or the good of society.

(d) Office and power must be avoided. Either may be accepted when it is clearly for greater service.

Young India, 7-5-1931

80. FOREIGN MISSIONARIES AGAIN

DEAR MAHATMA,

> . . . A friend of mine gave me a copy of the *Madras Catholic Leader* of the 26th March, and it is there that you are reported to have given expression to the . . . remarks. . . . "*Every nation's religion is as good as any other. Certainly India's religions are adepuate for her people. We need no converting spiritually*."
>
> I am a Christian, but I certainly am against Christianity being brought as an instrument of Imperialism. But as a message of love and fellowship, who will deny it a place in Indian life? In this great struggle for swaraj, are we not fighting for liberty, liberty to worship our God as we please, liberty to convince our fellows who are willing to be convinced by us, liberty to be convinced by our fellows who can convince us? . . . Is India so bigoted as to think that within her are confined all the riches of the world, all the treasures of knowledge and human experience? . . .
>
> Religion, I deem, is a matter between an individual and his own conception of right conduct. Religion belongs to the great realm of thought and personal experience which knows neither boundaries nor nations. . . . But I would like to know, if you made those remarks, what you meant by them, or I confess they are a mystery to me.
>
> ST. XAVIER'S — *I remain,*
>
> NUWARA ELIYA, CEYLON — *Yours respectfully,*
>
> *11th April, 1931* — JAMES P. RUTNAM

I do not know that in reply to this letter[1] I need do more than refer the writer to my article in *Young India*.[2] It might be as well to add that in mentioning Hinduism, Islam, Zoroastrianism, etc., as India's religi-ons, I had no desire to claim them as India's exclusively

[1] Of which only excerpts have been reproduced here.
[2] *Vide* "Foreign Missionaries", 23-4-1931

or to exclude Christianity. The issue was Christianity on the one hand claimed as the one true religion and other religions on the other being regarded as false. In joining issue I contended that the great world religions other than Christianity professed in India were no less true than Christianity. It was thus neither relevant nor necessary for me to assert before Christian missionaries and their protagonists that Christianity was true. Moreover, with my known partiality for the Sermon on the Mount and my repeated declarations that its author was one of the greatest among the teachers of mankind I could not suspect that there would be any charge against me of underrating Christianity. As for Christian, Indians, I count among them many warm friends and I have had no difficulty whatsoever in establishing friendly touch with the Christian masses wherever I have gone. Nor is there any fear of my estranging even the foreign missionaries among whom I claim many personal friends. The attack against me has therefore surprised me not a little especially because the views I have now enunciated have been held by me since 1916, and were deliberately expressed in a carefully written address read before a purely missionary audience in Madras and since repeated on many a Christian platform. The recent criticism has but confirmed the view, for the criticism has betrayed intolerance even of friendly criticism. The missionaries know that in spite of my outspoken criticism of their methods, they have in India and among non-christians no warmer friend than I. And I suggest to my critics that there must be something wrong about their method or, if they prefer, themselves when they will not brook sincere expression of an opinion different from theirs. In India under swaraj I have no doubt that foreign missionaries will be at liberty to do their proselytizing, as I would say, in the wrong way; but they would be expected to bear with those who, like me, may point out that in their opinion the way is wrong.

Young India, 7-5-1931

81. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

[AS AT] SABARMATI,
May 7, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I thank you for your letter of the 30th.[1] I can fully understand what Sir Malcolm Hailey says and nothing would please me better than to find that my visit to him is rendered unnecessary by the cultivators getting the relief which they need.

I thank you too for your enquiry about my health. There is now nothing wrong with it. I still need some rest which I am taking as far as possible in the circumstances.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. W. EMERSON, ESQ.
HOME SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SIMLA

Home Department, Political, File No. 33/XI & K.Ws 1931 p. 170. Courtesy : National Archives of India

82. LETTER TO R. M. MAXWELL

[AS AT] SABARMATI,
May 7, 1931

DEAR MR. MAXWELL,

I thank you for your letter of the 4th instant. I shall await your further letter. May I however remind you that your receipt of a copy of the revised notice referred to in your letter will only enable His Excellency to deal with one matter whereas my original letter[2] covers several matters out of which unlicensed liquor selling is becoming more and more urgent daily because it seems to be increasing. His Excellency will perhaps agree that this is a manifest breach of the Settlement.

There is one other matter which I wish to add. There is the

[1] *Vide* "Letter from H. W. Emerson", 30-4-1931
[2] *Vide* "Letter to R. M. Maxwell", 22-4-1931

Young India press[1] still undelivered. The district officer suggests that the Manager should himself remove the press from where it is lying, I believe, in Bombay and a portion in Ahmedabad. The district officer in Kaira suggests a like procedure for a motor and a bicycle lying somewhere in Kaira. Cl. 16(a) of the Settlement clearly contemplates the return of movable property seized in connection with the movement. It does not say that the seized property is to be taken on application by the person but it is to be returned, and if it is not irrelevant to mention it here, I may inform you that the word 'returned' was chosen after discussion. I may also add that, whilst I do not know anything about the condition of the *Young India* press and other seized property, I do know that the motor-car, and the bicycle seized in Kaira are admittedly in a broken-up condition. It is also common ground that, when they were seized, they were in good order and condition. The district officer in Kaira in reply to my letter in connection with these articles says as follows in his letter :

> Reference the delivery of a motor-car and cycle. Government have issued orders that ordinarily the owner of property attached under the ordinance should be asked to remove the property from the place where it is and that Government cannot undertake to undergo expenditure in restoring it. I have no funds to which I could debit the cost of towing the car—I understand it is not in running order—to Nadiad. I shall be in Kaira tomorrow morning and suggest that the owner should have it removed from my office there. If he thinks he has a right to recover from Government the cost of removal and reconditioning, he should send in his bill to Government and no doubt Government will call for a full report on the whole circumstances, and the matter can be thrashed out, but at present there is a which statemate results in the car still suffering depreciatin.

I venture to suggest that these articles should be returned in the same condition in which they were at the time of seizure. I do not know that the officials of the Government had any authority or right to use these articles. But even if they had and if they broke them, at the time of return they should be in good order and condition. I would like the Government to give these two matters prompt attention. Unlicensed liquor is causing daily havoc amongst those who are gradually being weaned from the drink habit and the detention of the

[1] Which had been forfeited during the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930 for non-payment of security under an ordinance of 27th April, reviving the powers of the Press Act of 1910. *Vide* also "Letter to H. W. Emerson", 2-6-1931.

seized articles which are of daily use is causing a loss and inconvenience to the owners.[1]

Yours sincerely,

R. M. MAXWELL, ESQ.

PRIVATE SECRETARY TO H.E. THE GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY

MAHABALESHWAR

A.I.C.C. File No. 4, 1931 Part I, pp. 27-8. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

83. LETTER TO G. V. KETKAR [2]

[AS AT] SABARMATI,
May 7, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. In order to enable me to give a decisive opinion I should certainly like to have Shankar Rao's version also. But subject to that reservation I have no hesitation in agreeing with you that all parties should be represented on Congress Committees by agreement or there should be an open honest election without any

[1] In his reply dated May 13, Maxwell stated : "You have suggested that the word "returned" in clause 16(a) of the Agreement should be interpreted to mean "taken back to the place where the property was seized". In the absence, however, of any such explana-tion in the terms of the Settlement itself, the Government are unable to attach to the word in question any but its ordinary meaning, viz., "given back", and, while they are ready at any time to carry out the agreement in this sense, they do not feel justified in throwing On the taxpayers the expense of transporting the articles from the places where they now are. I am to say that your further contention that the Government are responsible for delivering such articles in the same condition in which they were seized, does not appear to be warranted by anything in the terms of the Settlement. On the contrary clause 16(c) of the Settlement expressly says that "compensation will not be given for deterioration". I am to add that under section 4(3) of Ordinance IX of 1930 even property seized but not forfeited may be used in such manner as the Magistrate may direct. The motor-car and cycle now in question were, however, actually forfeited and had they been sold or destroyed, the original owners would have had no further claim to them, since clause 16(a) of the Settlement agrees to the return of seized moveable property only if it is still in the possession of Government. I am therefore to express the hope that you will now make arrangements to take delivery of these forfeited articles without more delay, since it will not be possible for Government to be responsible for their custody indefinitely if those interested do not choose to avail themselves of clause 16(a) of the Settlement.

[2] Grandson (daughter's son) of Lokamanya Tilak

wire-pulling. You should show your letter and my reply to Shankar Rao and let him say whatever he likes in opposition to my opinion if he wants to oppose it. I would like to see the happy relation established in Maharashtra between the two parties[1] not only to continue unbroken but to grow in strength.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SRI G. V. KETKAR

THE KESARI AND THE MAHRATTA OFFICE

568 NARAYAN PETH

POONA CITY

From a photostat : G.N. 7962. Also C.W. 981. Courtesy : G.V. Ketkar

84. LETTER TO KHAN CHAND DEV

[AS AT] SABARMATI,
May 7, 1931

DEAR LALA KHAN CHAND,

Here is copy of a complaint received by me from the Central Government. Will you please make a detailed enquiry and let me know the result as early as you can?

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

LALA KHAN CHAND DEV

BRADLAUGH HALL, LAHORE

From a microfilm : S.N. 17058

85. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRAN

[AS AT] SABARMATI,
May 7, 1931

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRAN,

It was a perfect pleasure to receive a letter from you after such a long time. I did indeed enquire about you from so many persons by

[1] Responsivists and Non-co-operationists

word of mouth as also through letters. I did know that you were resting in some prison. Do come and see me whenever you wish and can.

SJT. G. RAMACHANDRAN
NARAYANATH HOUSE
TAIKAD
TRIVANDRUM

From a microfilm : S.N. 17059

86. LETTER TO H. W. B. MORENO

[AS AT] SABARMATI,
May 7, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I shall certainly deal with the subject in the pages of *Young India*[1] as you desire and therefore need not give you a detailed reply. The original of which you have enclosed a copy was never received.

Yours sincerely,

H. W. B. MORENO, ESQ.
GENERAL PRESIDENT
THE ANGLO-INDIAN LEAGUE
9 MARSDEN STREET, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm : S.N. 17060

87. LETTER TO K. S. NAGARAJAN

[AS AT] SABARMATI,
May 7, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter of the 11th March has been on my file all these long weeks but the delay was inevitable.

If you are really free from any animal passion, you have a right to retain that freedom. You should share your opinion and your condition with your wife. If she on her part cannot restrain her animal appetites, seeing that there has been no consummation of marriage, she should be free to rgard the present marriage as no marriage at all

[1] *Vide* "Anglo-Indians", 14-5-1931

and to marry where she likes. If she is afraid of public opinion you should offer to help her to defy public opinion and in every way make her way smooth and easy. I am satisfied that in no case are you called upon to share the bed with your wife if you have really no desire.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. S. NAGARAJAN
233 LOYOLA HOSTEL
CATHEDRAL P.O., MADRAS

From a photostat : S.N. 17062

88. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

BORSAD,
May 7, 1931

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

This letter[1] is for your information. If you have anything to say you will please guide me.

Yours sincerely,

GANDHI

Encl. 1

SJT. JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI

A.I.C.C. File No. 273, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

89. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

BORSAD,
May 8, 1931

It is astonishing how ignorant responsible Englishmen, like Mr. Grey[2], are as to the real condition. I have to impute ignorance to Mr. Grey as I could not bring myself to believe that he was wilfully distorting the real condition. The Delhi Agreement tabooed threats, intimidation and coercion of every form in connection with picketing

[1] From Vatan G. Gidwani, President, District Congress Committee, Mirpurkhas (Sind). He had mentioned that one Thakurdas, who had styled himself as Secretary of the Congress Committee, was inciting cloth merchants to revolt against the Congress decision to boycott foreign cloth.

[2] Acting Chairman, Master Cotton Spinners and Manufacturers' Association

which has to be absolutely peaceful. I insisted that this condition was carried out and it is being carried out in a vast majority of cases. If a *bona-fide* case of intimidation, coercion or threat is made out I will have no hesitation in every such case in advising and insisting on suspension of picketing. I know how important it is from our own stand-point to carry out the Agreement in the strictest manner possible.

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-5-1931

90. TELEGRAM TO COWASJI JEHANGIR (JUNIOR)

BORSAD,
May 8, 1931

SIR COWASJI JEHANGIR (JUNIOR)
NAPEAN SEA ROAD
BOMBAY

THANK YOU FOR EXHAUSTIVE TELEGRAM[1]. MAKING IMMEDIATE INVESTIGATION. CAN GIVE YOU DEFINITE ASSURANCE NO [HARM] WILL BE DONE TO SARDAR GARDA OR HIS MEN.

GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

91. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

After Morning Prayers, Friday, [*May 8, 1931*][2]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I got you letter.

Do not grieve over the death of Kaku's[3] brother. Such tragedies will always occur in this world. The body is rightlycompared to a glass bangle. It takes less time for the body to perish than for a glass

[1] This read : "Garda complains harassment since Agreement. On twenty-seventh his men abused while taking cotton vakharias gin. On tweny-eighth Babla people scared away labourers threatened to burn huts and inmates. On twenty-ninth stones thrown from back of his bungalow Navsari same time lorry full of men threw stones from front proving concerted action. His son jeered hooted at Sabsorn showing militant attitude. Wiring Garda to send further specific instances. Earnestly request that if allegations true such harassment should immediately stop. Letter follows."

[2] From the reference in the last paragraph to his forthcoming visit to Simla

[3] Purushottam D. Saraiya, addressee's grandson

bangle to break. If we preserve such a bangle with care, it will remain intact for thousands of years, but the body never lasts for more than a hundred years. And it is rarely that one lives even that long. Kaku's brother may have passed away, but the soul which dwelt in his body has not perished. It had no brother, or rather all were its brothers. When, therefore, there are deaths among relations, instead of letting ourselves be swayed by ignorance we should cultivate greater capacity for endurance, greater disinterestedness towards the world and greater knowledge . . .[1] (This death has no connection whatever with the fact of Kaku having strayed from the path of dharma. Do not remind Kaku of what he did). Let Kaku remain there now and work and earn. He may take up voluntary work if and when he feels inclined to do so.

I shall leave for Simla on Monday. Come and see me before that. I see no need for you to go to Bombay, but you may certainly go if you cannot restrain yourself.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6 : G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 53. Also C.W. 8774. Courtesy : Gangabehn Vaidya

92. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

CAMP BORSAD,
May 8, 1931

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I had your telegram and now I have your letter of 30th ultimo but not the previous letter. There is certainly no urgent need about your returning. From your telegram I have gathered that you were all A1 in spite of the chill of which you write to me in your letter. What you read in the papers about a break-down was not without foundation but just now in Gujarat there is no immediate danger of a breakdown. I am going to Simla next week to confer with Mr. Emerson about several outstanding matters and he says in his letter that incidentally there would be meeting with the Government about the Round Table Conference. He expects me also to go to Nainital on or about the 18th. I do not know how things are progressing in the U.P. just now. But it will be as well for me to go to Nainital. Of course you were quite right in writing to me on the Hindu-Muslim question as

[1] Omission as in the source

frankly as you have done. I should have felt hurt if you had done less. You have a perfect right to unburden yourself without the least fear of being misunderstood by me. Of course I do not plead guilty to your charge. I have always taken good care to say that I was speaking for myself. So long as we have not evolved a concrete policy how could I help expressing my own personal views? But the occasions have not been many when I have let myself go. I quite agree with you that Dr. Ansari's proposal about arbitration consisting of the many names he suggests is highly unpractical. Nothing of course has come out of it. Dr. Mahmud's fear is absolutely baseless. I did see Bhopal at the latter's instance and when he discussed the Hindu-Muslim question I naturally said that he might call in Shaukat Ali and his other friends and then summon me to Bhopal if he thought that there was anything to be done. I could not say to him that he was not to move at all. That same day Mrs. Naidu brought Shaukat Ali to Mani Bhuvan and I related the conversation I had with Bhopal. Nothing more has happened. I have made no movement and have written not one single line beyond saying that I was praying, which I am literally doing. I wrote last week as much to Dr. Mahmud[1] when he complained that I had broken the pact that I was to be dumb. When you return completely restored, we must have a meeting of the Working Committee and if we can evolve a formula for the guidance of all Congressmen, nothing will please me more. Personally I think that we shall not be able to evolve any formula just now and I am more and more driven to the idea I adumbrated before you on the day of your departure or the day previous. When you reach Bombay of course you will first of all seek me out wherever I am. It is highly likely that I shall be by that time in BORSAD or Bardoli.

No going to London without Hindu-Muslim unity.

Love to you all.

BAPU

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

NUWERA ELIYA

CEYLON

From Gandhi-Nehru papers, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Syed Mahmud", 4-5-1931

93. LETTER TO DARCY LINDSAY

SABARMATI,
[AS AT] *May 8, 1931*

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 24th April. The matter you refer to is very delicate. There is a romance around the life of Bhagat Singh. He was no coward. From all enquiries made by me I find that he was a man of spotless character and of great daring. He exercised also great influence on some young men. Somehow or other he had developed a belief that political assassination had its use. It was impossible not to notice the execution, I believe quite unwise, of Bhagat Singh and his comrades, whom the execution made martyrs. I have no doubt whatsoever that the execution has surrounded these lives with a halo which they would not otherwise have had. The only thing therefore that was possible and that the Congress was bound to do was to pass a resolution[1] condemning murderous deeds as also the execution and at the same time appreciating the bravery and sacrifice underlying such deeds. I however quite agree with you that there is undoubtedly a great deal of thoughtless approval of political murder. But many of us are doing everything we can to counteract the growth of the violent revolutionary movement. Whilst it is being held under check, I fear that the spirit that is at times breaking out in violence will not altogether die till India comes to her own. I am not publishing your letter because the end both you and I have in view is not likely to be served thereby.

Yours sincerely,

SIR DARCY LINDSAY
MANDELIEU CANNES, A.M.
[FRANCE]

From a microfilm : S. N. 17064

[1] *Vide* "Resolution on Bhagat Singh and Comrades", 29-3-1931

94. LETTER TO LIVINGSTON & DOULL

[AS AT] SABARMATI,
May 8, 1931

DEAR SIR,

With reference to your letter of the 3rd March last, I enclose herewith power of attorney from duly signed by me in favour of Mr. Doull.

Yours faithfully,

Encl. 1

MESSRS LIVINGSTON & DOULL
SOLICITORS & NOTARIES
DURBAN, NATAL

From a microfilm : S. N. 17065.

95. LETTER TO ABDUR RAZZAQ MALIHABADI

[AS AT] SABARMATI,
May 8, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter. Of course I wish the Egyptians full independence and all the prosperity that their ancient and fertile land deserves. I do not know the precise nature of the boycott movement in Egypt and therefore you will excuse me for my inability to express any opinion on it.

Yours sincerely,

ABDUR RAZZAQ MALIHABADI, ESQ.

304 NEW CIRCULAR ROAD, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm : S. N. 17066

96. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

May 8, 1931

CHI. KUSUM,

I got your two letters. If you were not satisfied with those letters, neither was I. I did not understand what you wished to say. But I will not harp on the subject. I understood something and I will content myself with that.

See that your picketing does not become mechanical. If you are convinced of what I said, act upon it. Through your picketing, enter the homes of addicts. How long will you go on working like an automaton?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall be leaving this place on Monday.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 1821

97. LETTER TO PANNALAL JHAVERI

May 8, 1931

CHI. PANNALAL,

My letter to Nanibehn must have been given to you to read. I don't think that the Vidyapith course is for persons like Nanibehn and Gangabehn, though I see nothing wrong in their desire and would let them satisfy it without raising any objection. They lack self-confidence and long to acquire something more, but do not know what. If they go on trying like this they will discover one day what it is, for their hearts are pure. On Monday I shall leave this place for Simla.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PANNALAL
THEOSOPHICAL COLONY
JUHU, SANTA CRUZ, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 3113

98. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

BORSAD,
Friday, May 8, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter. I feel like writing to Jayaprakash about you. It will be good if you have a frank talk with him once. As long as you have not completely recovered, you ought to stay with me. The state of your health from time to time is closely connected with that of your mind. If you stay with me, probably both your body and mind

will grow strong and then you may be fit enough to live with self-confidence anywhere. Do what seems best to you.

I will leave this place on Monday and proceed to Simla. You don't require my address while I am there. If you write only my name on the letter, it will reach me the soonest. If you address it C/o the Congress Committee, the letter may be delayed a little. I am likely to stay in Simla for five days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 3409

99. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BORSAD,
May 8, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your two letters.

I felt a weight off my mind to know that you approved of my suggestion regarding Lakshmi. Kaka and Vallabhbhai are also of the same opinion as yours. I have yet to hear from Vinoba and Kishorelal. I was not at all pleased by Dwarkanath's bill. I have kept it back and written to him strongly about it. I will let you know after I hear from him. You need, therefore do nothing about it for the present. The general suggestion you have made concerning such bills does not require to be acted upon immediately.

I understand what you say about Shankarbhai. I wholly agree with your decision. Don't mind what Bhagwanji thinks about it. You will have to pay Rs. 35 to that Punjabi vaid[1]. All of them charge their fees in this way. If all the patients improve, the fee charged by him will not seem excessive. All the same, we should know on what basis he charges his fee.You, therefore, did right in writing to Chandrashankar about it. Don't put too many persons under his treatment at a time. Watch how he treats each case and then proceed further. I shall be leaving for Simla on Monday. No address is necessary for writing to me there. I have replied to Pragji. Rukhi[2] and Benarsi[3] have arrived.

[1] Physician practising the Ayurvedic system of medicine
[2] Rukmini, Maganlal Gandhi's daughter
[3] Benarsilal Bazaj, Rukmini's husband

The latter is returning today. Rukhi will stay on today at any rate. I may send her by some train tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I

100. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

BORSAD,

May 8, 1931

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I have the Doctor's telegram : "Since Jamnadas and Nanalal are looking after Ratilal, he should stay at Rajkot till he gets well and may then go to Sabarmati. I am sorry that Champa was beaten." I wonder how the Doctor came to think that you and Nanalal look after Ratilal. Tell this to Nanalalbhai too. It is likely he sent a telegram to Nanalal. Tell me in detail in what circumstances Champa was beaten.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am leaving this place on Monday evening for Simla.

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 9321. Courtesy : Jamnadas Gandhi

101. LETTER TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

May 8, 1931

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Do not be in a hurry to get up and walk so long as the wound is not healed. The diet should be such as would give you clear motions. I intend to marry Dudabhai's[1] Lakshmi to Maruti who has been brought up by Lakshmidas[2]. I consider it my duty to do so. A girl brought up in the Ashram from her childhood must not be married to an *antyaja*.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] Dudabhai M. Dafda

[2] Lakshmidas P. Asar. The marriage of Lakshmi and Marutidas, a South Indian orphan boy, took place on March 14, 1933; *vide* also "Message on Wedding of Lakshmi And Maruti", 8-3-1933

[PS.]

Gangabehn gave the news of Manu's[1] sudden death.

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10718. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

102. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

BORSAD,
May 8, 1931

CHI. MRIDULA,

I do hope that you will find time to go to Simla for a few days. Both Papa and Mummy were of course anxious and hoping that you would go and be with them at least for a week.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11180. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

103. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

BORSAD,
May 8, 1931

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Tell the people of Karnatak[2] that they have already contributed much to the struggle; they must also now take part in the constructive work. Much still remains to be done for khadi; the boycott of foreign cloth is for the sake of khadi. Had the boycott not had the purpose of serving the poor, at least I would not have been as absorbed in it as I am now.

Some friends from Karnatak are possessed with the idea that Karnatak should form a separate province. Why do they worry ? The Congress has already formed a province of Kannada-speaking people, it will come into being when we have *purna* swaraj.

[1] Manu Damodar Saraiya, Gangabehn Vaidya's grandson; *vide* also "Statement to T. B. Sapru and M. R. Jayakar", 5-9-1930.

[2] The sixth Karnatak Provincial Conference commenced on May 26, 1931 at Hukeri, District Belgaum, under the presidentship of Jamnalal Bajaj; for the text of the message, *vide* "Message to Karnatak Provincial Conference", 18-5-1931

I am happy that Lingayats and others have come together. It is as it should be.

MOHANDAS

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 73-4

104. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

BORSAD,
May 8, 1931

Regarding the report published in a Bombay paper about the refusal by Sardar Garda to return the confiscated lands purchased by him in Bardoli Taluk, Mr. Gandhi, interviewed, said that the report was correct, but added that so far as he knew there was no obstruction deliberate or otherwise on the part of men who had strict instructions not to interfere with those who might be removing crops from the fields in question. He had undertaken to enquire into every complaint that might be made by Sardar Garda. He had asked for specific instances and not one was supplied to him. He was therefore pain- ed and surprised at Sardar Garda's attempt to evade or repudiate the agreement which after full deliberation he had entered into. Mr. Gandhi had at ready brought the matter to the notice of Sir Cowasji Jehangir[1] who was the principal negotiator.

Asked whether Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel had asked the people of Bardoli Taluk not to pay unauthorized arrears, Mr. Gandhi said it was not a question of Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel asking people not to pay arrears. It was a question of inability on the part of people to pay. The fact was it was really difficult to pay even the current year's dues in many cases. In affected areas of both Surat and Kaira districts, they were obliged to ask for suspension even in some cases in respect of current year's dues. The chief thing to aim at was not insisting on pound of flesh but to see that the political movement for non-payment of taxes was discontinued in a *bona-fide* manner and people paid whatever they could under the circumstances.

The Hindu, 9-5-1931

105. MESSAGE TO HINDUSTANI SEVA DAL

[Before *May 9, 1931*][2]

Camping for Congress volunteers should mean greater dedication, greater self-purification, greater service of the poor, greater

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Sir Cowasji Jehangir", 6-5-1931

[2] The report was published on this date.

skill in hand-spinning and carding, greater skill in dealing with repairs to various machines required for spinning, ginning, carding, etc.; and above all, greater regard for truth and ahimsa. A Congress volunteer in camp should mean cleaning up of surrounding villages.

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-5-1931

106. MESSAGE TO LABOURERS, KARACHI

BORSAD,
May 9, 1931

I am clear that the movement initiated by Mr. Gajadhar is mischievous and unpractical and therefore must not be encouraged.[1]

The Hindustan Times, 11-5-1931

107. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL SHAH

BORSAD,
May 9, 1931

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Can you say positively that cod-liver oil has benefited Sharda visibly ? You can ascertain by nothing her weight, etc. I have heard doctors praise cod-liver oil with great enthusiasm, though I have not come across much evidence of its value.

You should send for Annapurna when you can summon courage to do so. Remain in contact with her through letters. The only fear can be lest she should turn out to be a bad type. Even if you have such fear, you should not be guided by it provided you can get proof that at present she is all right. That way, there is risk in all things. According to Bhartrihari, the only state in which one can live free from fear is that of non-attachment. True non-attachment is that taught in the *Gita*, and it is cultivated by giving up interest in the fruits of action. In the present case too, if your duty lies in letting her come and in discarding all fear about the result of such a course, you should shed that fear and do the duty.

[1] *Vide* also "Danger Looming", 14-5-1931

If Shakribehn remains absorbed in work, she will be able to recover peace of mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 24371

108. THE PROBLEM OF FOUR LAKH DHARALAS

With this heading, someone has written the following letter[1] under the pseudonym, "A Dharala" :

This letter certainly is full of bitterness, even after I have cut out certain sentences which were very venomous. The handwriting is very well formed and the language is very sophisticated. Hence I guess that it has not been written by a Dharala Thakore but by a person who has an animus against Patidars. Be that as it may, the letter calls for some clarification.

DHARALA THAKORES[2]

Although the letter has a good deal of venom towards the Patidars, nevertheless there is some truth in the complaints listed in it. The failing which is found all over India is also there among the Patidars, viz., those who are more knowledgeable and richer enjoy a superior status and misuse it vis-a-vis those who are ignorant and poor. The feeling of superiority and inferiority is certainly involved in this. The greatest barrier to our progress, to our attainment of swaraj, is the fact that those who are better off do not become the protectors of those who are not so well placed. However, having admitted this with regard to the Patidars, I must say that there is much exaggeration in this letter. Some years ago, about fifty thousand Dharalas had assembled in Vadtal and the Patidars had helped this effort. It was these who since then made the Dharalas known as Thakores. Today at all places in Gujarat the Patidar youths are destroying the idea of superiority and inferiority and many aged Patidars are helping them in it. Young Patidars are engaged in many kinds of service. They do not recognize any distinctions between Patidars and others. Their field of action is as wide as India.

[1] Not translated here

[2] The source consistently has "Thakars", which is evidently a misprint.

SHRI RAVISHANKAR'S SERVICES

The correspondent had to admit that Shri Vithalbhai, Durbarsaheb Gopaldas, Shri Dadubhai and others looked upon the Dharala Thakores with a feeling of equality. Even a little child knows that to the Sardar all are equal. He wishes to serve all who are poor, whether they happen to be Brahmins or Bhangis, Gujaratis or Madrasis, and it is because the people have recognized this virtue in him that he has been made the Congress President. This correspondent regards Shri Ravishankar's services as nominal. I do not know who renders true service if this very incarnation of sacrifice renders merely nominal service!

VALLABH VIDYALAYA

Although the above has been founded, I admit that much still remains to be done for the Dharala Thakores and such other communities. However, as the spirit of service grows, the unity among the various communities will become greater day by day. The school whose foundation stone was only recently laid in Bochasan[1] and which has been named as Vallabh Vidyalaya—this too is for the sake of the Dharala Thakores.

Hence I would request the above correspondent not to add to mutual bitterness but rather seek and suggest ways which would promote friendliness among all. From the manner in which he wields his pen, it seems that he has the ability to do so. I invite him to put it to good use.

PATIDARS

A few words to the Patidars. They should look deep within themselves and rid themselves of any impurity which may be there. They have shown great courage and sacrificed much. They should find out any failings which they may still have and get rid of them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-5-1931

109. NOTES

HYPOCRISY DURING ELECTIONS

Only a handful voted at the elections to the Provincial Committee held in Bulsar. The elections had to be held because there

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Bochasan", 6-5-1931

were factions. Voters have to be habitual wearers of khadi. Now a friend writes thus about the kind of khadi-wearers these voters were :[1]

How great is the disrespect towards the Congress if after a year's fierce struggle and after knowing how important a place khadi occupies in the boycott of foreign cloth, and ordinary rule of the Congress is violated in this manner! How will these members of the Congress fare during a crisis? Such hypocrisy sullies the fair name of the Congress. How are the elections so important that voters have to pretend that they abide by this rule? And however important they may be, how can work of any value be done throught the practice of untruth?

It is likely that at other places in Gujarat also and in the whole country, wherever there are many candidates and keen rivalry, similar practices may have been resorted to. If there are such laxity and such hypocrisy in regard to the reputation of the Congress, it can be guessed with the help of the three how much this will increase on attainment of swaraj. In the elections following swaraj, there will be greater temptations because money will be involved then. I believe that such conduct is shameful and harmful for us. It will benefit neither us nor the country.

If we are averse to wearing khadi, if we do not believe in the necessity of khadi, why should we not start a movement for getting the clause regarding khadi deleted from the Congress regulations ? If the khadi clause remains, we should abide by it. It that clause meets with disapproval or if many members of the Congress are not willing to respect it, they should try to get it removed through an agitation.

KHADI AND THE DESH SEVIKA SANGH OF NADIAD

Shrimati Kashibehn and Shrimati Gangabehn have written the following to the Taluka Committee on behalf of the Nadiad Desh Sevika Sangh.[2]

Whatever injustice has been done to the women of Nadiad through my article should be removed. Along with it, let me draw their attention to one matter. The correspondents say in their letter that fifteen women have been using pure khadi in the past and still continue to do so while working for the Congress. If this is the case,

[1] The letter is not translated here. It had described how voters wore borrowed khadi clothes at the time of elections.

[2] The letter is not translated here. It denied the accusation in Gandhiji's note on "Women Volunteers and Khadi", 26-4-1931

how many women wear khadi regularly? For those who believe in khadi, it is not a dress to be worn only on certain occasions—not a uniform, but something which should be habitually worn. Swaraj cannot be secured or the poverty of the starving masses cannot be removed by a few persons wearing khadi on certain occasions. That can be achieved only when khadi takes root in every home. Hence I hope that not only Nadiad but also all other towns will take to wearing khadi exclusively.

TWENTY-FOUR CAPS AND THREE SHIRTS

What would we say of a man who believes that crores of Indians are starving and half-naked and who at the same time somehow puts on twenty-four caps on his head and three shirts, one on top of the other? Should we not say that, although he is compassionate, his kindness is misguided?

Despite this, we come across many such persons. On reading this sentence, hasty persons will burst out laughing and some will think me a fool. However, there is no reason either to laugh or to think me stupid.

Let us consider the Kathiawari dress. It consists of a dhoti, a long shirt, a short shirt and a turban. In view of the climate there, so many clothes are not at all needed.Two short shirts can easily be made out of a single long shirt. Twenty-four caps can easily be made out of a twelve yard turban. Hence it cannot be regarded as an exaggeration but is rather the bare truth to say that such a person is wearing twenty-four caps and three shirts. Those reasonable Kathiawaris who understand this straightforward matter and who are kind-hearted will suggest a remedy for my perplexity.

This question is not directed towards politicians. They will defeat me with many arguments, namely, that they have to attend at the ruler's court, etc. Neither is this question meant for employees of the agencies. Like Drona and Bhishma, they will point to their stomachs and may even go so far as to sing the lines of Shamal[1] :

Stomach it is that makes us slaves

Who dance to the tune the piper plays.

This question is addressed to those who are free of such bondage. They should either give me a satisfactory answer or spare those twenty-three caps and two shirts for the poor.

[1] A seventeenth-eighteenth-century Gujarati poet

MARRIAGE CONDITIONS

The common custom in regard to marriage in the Anavil community is that the bride's father has to pay a handsome sum to the birdegroom's father. In the Bardoli swaraj Ashram, there is a gentleman named Shri Dayalji Gulabbhai who lives under the care of Shri Lakshmidas. He had married once and had lost his wife. That was some time ago and he has no children. He thought of marrying again. He felt, however, that he should not marry during struggle. When the Settlement came about, he was inclined to yield to desire. A father was prepared to marry his daughter to Shri Dayalji by paying him a sum of Rs. 800. He may have been momentarily tempted, but was later able to overcome the temptation. He will now marry a seventeen-year old girl named Shantabehn. As the conditions on which this marriage is to take place are both worth knowing and worth copying, I give them below :

> The dowry will be accepted in the form of yarn instead of cash. And that yarn weighing eight and a quarter pounds should be spun exclusively by members of the family.
>
> Not more than twenty-five persons in all consisting of fifteen persons from the bride's side and ten from the bridegroom's side (including men, women and children) should be invited and all of them must be clad in khadi.
>
> Everyone should eat food cooked in a common kitchen and the meal should consist only of dal, rice and vegetables. As it is summer, there would be no harm in taking buttermilk. They would stop the custom of offering ghee to Brahmins.
>
> Whereas no gifts in the form of cash from relations or as dowry will be accepted, giving of religious books will be permitted.
>
> After the marriage takes place, those present will be allowed to take fruits or sherbet instead of betel-leaves and areca-nuts. Tea will not be served at all.
>
> By way of dowry, only such things as a spinning-wheel, carding-bow, *takli*, or carpet or something to sit upon should be given.
>
> Such edible items as sweet balls and *puris* or any such articles of food should not be accepted in any form.
>
> At the wedding ceremony, the bride and the bridegroom will wear garments made of yarn spun with their own hands. No clothes will be bought for this purpose. Likewise, if anyone wishes to make a present, he would be permitted to give only yarn spun by him.
>
> At the time of the wedding, the bride will wear no ornament other than a single piece of each item symbolizing her state of married happiness. Later, she may accept anything, which anyone wishes to give.

The interval between arrival and departure for the wedding will be three days during which the ceremony will be performed.

Bangles made of hand-spun yarn should replace those made of gold.

The marriage ceremony will be in accordance with Ashram practice. Gandhiji's articles on the shastrik rites regarding marriage vows and his speeches will be read out. The officiating priest too will be clad in pure khadi and will accept no fee.

No band will be played and, while devotional songs may be sung, no vulgar wedding songs will be allowed.

Shri Dayalji and the bride's father are signatories to this. The wedding will take place on the 13th. Even ordinary marriages in the Anavil community involve large expenses, hence it is no small matter that in this marriage only the religious ceremony has found a place and khadi is compulsory for the bride and the groom as well as for the guests present to bless the couple and the priest. *Dhardhaman* implies dowry. The bride's father provides all household articles by way of dowry; whereas in this marriage only the implements needed for spinning may be given, if so desired. Let us hope that this example will be copied and such marriages will become a common practice among all communities and that the couples, united under such auspicious circumstances, will turn out to be true servants of the country.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-5-1931

110. KHADI IN KAIRA

Shri Gopaldas Purushottam Desai sends the following account of khadi activity in Patlad—Nadiad:[1]

Some corrections are required in the above note and figures. Where information has to be given regarding the actual state of affairs and where the figures are not beyond our capacity to get, no conjectures should be made. No meaning can be deduced from the sentence, "about 50 to 75 spinning-wheels are being plied". The number may be below 50 or it may exceed 75. It is likely that the figure is actually below 50. Hence where the number can be easily counted, the exact figure should be given and neither one more nor

[1] The letters are not translated here.

one less. Moreover, the various qualities of khadi produced in Patlad—Nadiad should be mentioned as also the count of the yarn. Mention should also be made of how much khadi has been received from other places. There should be a comparative statement of figures showing yarn spun for a living and that spun for becoming self-sufficient. Amongst the latter kind of spinners, there should be a break-up of the number of men and women. How much yarn thay spin on an average should be indicated. Do they spin only for themselves or for others as well? Alongside the statement that the workers numbered 151, how much they had earned should also have been mentioned. There should be sub-divisions even amongst them. All this accounting without details cannot be regarded as scientific and no conclusions can be drawn therefrom.

With regard to the above figures, it may be noted that the figures for Petlad and Nadiad are given separately. It may be said in general that the figures for Nadiad are about half of those for petlad. It is for Nadiad to say why this is so.

Let me now turn to Limbasi. Shri Vithaldas writes from there as follows:[1]

Along with this, the names of those in whose homes the spinning-wheel is being plied have been mentioned. In regard to this report also, the above criticism should be regarded as applicable to the extent it is relevant. The reference to a dearth of spinning-wheels should put us to shame. At every place, we should develop the capacity to make spinning wheels. One or two samples should be obtained from Bardoli and spinning-wheels should be made everywhere. Moreover, this recommendation is far more applicable to places where inmates of the Ashram happen to be living. What kind of wood should be used for making spinning-wheels and other information should be obtained from Bardoli. All should remember that the workshop there is not meant for earning money but is a training centre. Hence everyone can get the necessary information from there. A time will come when people will demand spinning-wheels and *taklis* in every home. If even then we continue to depend on Bardoli, Satyagraha Ashram and such other places, our work will certainly come to a stand-still. Even the largest single factory cannot provide crors of spinning-wheels. This is neither necessary nor desirable. The meaning of the khadi movement and its special feature is that every process

[1] The letters are not translated here.

involved in its production can be carried out in every village. Khadi is not an enterprise that supports a single activity, but it feeds many activities. Hence every one of its limbs should blossom forth in every village.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 10-5-1931

111. LETTER TO SHANTA PATEL

May 10, 1931

CHI. SHANTA,

I got your letter. The fact that you find the rules and the work there too much for you shows that, when you were living outside, you did not lead a disciplined life. Your desire to remain like a child is certainly good, but being like a child does not mean remaining lazy, it means being innocent and pure in mind. You are certainly not pure in mind. Are you innocent? If you are not, you should strive to be. It is a dangerous thing that you like very much to mix with boys, and not with girls. This will some day bring about your fall. Have a look at the world around. If all the girls wished to live as you wish no girl would have the company of another girl. Do you think you can jump about and play with boys as freely as you can with girls? It is dangerous for you to wish to cross the bar which God has created. Think over this and try to understand it. Show this letter to Premabehn and discuss it with her, and then reply to me. Obey her and help her in her work.

Your letters will not be read by anyone by whom you do not wish them to be read. Anandi will not accompany me. She is still at Bardoli.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4059

112. LETTER TO GANGASHARAN SINGH

BORSAD,
May 10, 1931

BHAI GANGASHARAN SINGHJI,

I have your letter. Success must come where Rajendrababu is the leader. Boycott of foreign cloth, propagation of khadi and the boycott of liquor and other intoxicants are of the utmost importance for us today.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI GANGASHARAN SINGH
CONGRESS COMMITTEE, AMAHRA
P.O. NIHATTA, DIST. PATNA, BIHAR

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 11008

113. LETTER TO LAKSHMINARAYAN GADODIA

May 10, 1931

BHAI LAKSHMINARAYANJI,

I have your letter.

I saw the letter from Alexander Drew. Your reply is pertinent. I regard this loss as gain. The condition of the Congress committees is everywhere poor.

There is much risk in picketing the ships bringing foreign cloth. We shall see what is possible and proper if the struggle is renewed. The best work is to work among the masses.

I am proceeding to Simla tomorrow (Monday). The halt at Delhi will be for about three hours. Jamnalalji will be accompanying me.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 5621

114. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 11, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I am writing this letter at midnight at Bardoa station. Champa came and saw me here. I think Ratilal will not come at present. I shall be in Simla for about five days; and then in Nainital for five days. I expect to return to Borsad round about the 25th.

Buy the land at Bidaj. I was sorry to hear about Hanumansingh. Can you tell me how his condition became what it is? Keep him mostly on fruit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U/I

115. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

May 11, 1931

CHI. MRIDU,

I am writing this at the Baroda station after midnight. So do not expect a full reply.

I shall try to follow your suggestion with regard to the mills.

Nobody has prompted me regarding your going to Simla. When I was at Ahmedabad the matter was discussed. He had told me that you would not accompany him but might go subsequently. You have been constantly in my eyes. So I felt like writing to you and am writing. I do hope you will go. We may meet there if you come early.

Khurshedbehn should also go there if she can make it. Nargisbehn has already advocated her case to me. Perinbehn came later on and she also mentioned the matter. Pass on this message on my behalf.

If there is need to write more I shall write later provided I find the time. I do not have your letter with me right now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11111. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

116. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[On or after *May 11, 1931*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

Since you are not likely to feel the burden, I have no worries on that account. I see that you will continue to have guests and visitors. See that those who come are well looked after. Try to dissuade people who may wish to accompany me.

Shri Malik is the Municipal Engineer there. He will visit the Ashram in a day or two and advise you how to pump more water. Take him to see chandrabhaga too. I have talked to him about Parner-kar. Cultivate Shri Malik's acquaintance and introduce Parner-kar also to him.

How is Purushottam? Has he agreed to go for a change of air? If he had been in better health, I would have certainly, taken him with me. You may write to me for my opinion on any matter if you think it necessary to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—9 : Shri Narandas Gandhine, Pt. I, p. 273. Also C.W. 8189. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

117. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

May 13, 1931

Asked by the Associated press representative for any 'story', Mr. Gandhi remarked:

You can write about the flowers and garlands that you see in the car.

At the octroi post, the car stopped for a minute when a letter from Mr. Emerson, Home Secretary, was handed to Gandhiji.

Gandhiji, interviewed by a representative of the Associated Press of India who stood on the running board of his car, stated that he had received no invitation from the Viceroy but from the Home Secretary. He would stay in Simla for two or three days, possibly longer, and then proceed probably to Nainital.

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji taking Purushottam with him, most probably to Simla

Q. Will you be going to London?

A. I cannot say yet.

Q. What about the prospect of communal settlement?

A. I have been far too absorbed in affairs in Borsad and therefore could not tell you.

Q. You might have known of the proceedings of the Conference at Bhopal?[1]

A. No.

Q. Do you expect to attend the informal meeting in Simla of Indian members of the Federal Structure Committee?

A. I have no notion.

The Hindu, 14-5-1931

118. NOTES

'A CRY IN THE WILDERNESS'

I take the following passage with slight changes from a communication in my file :

> Protection of indigenous cloth by exclusion of foreign cloth and foreign yarn from the country—this is vague and gives room for suspicion. The starving millions living in the villages cannot be fed by the Indian mills. For the last four months the demand for khadi has been going down steadily and that for mill-cloth is increasing. The reason is that Congress organizations are supporting the Indian mill-manufacture. Gandhiji's cry of boycott through khadi is a cry in the wilderness. Therefore the real position of the Congress with regard to khadi must be made clear.

I have had a similar complaint from other sources too. There is no doubt that the Congressmen think that because the Congress is having help from and dealings with mill-owners, Congressmen are free to use mill-manufactures in the place of khadi or at least to use either optionally. Such however is certainly not the case. The Congress policy in this matter remains unchanged. The Congress expects everyone under its influence to use hand-spun and hand-woven khadi to the exclusion of all other cloth. Any laxity in this observance is not only bound to harm khadi and therefore the villages but it is also bound to harm boycott of foreign cloth. It will be found that in the end the boycott will be possible only through khadi. The success

[1] On May 10 and 11. The Nawab of Bhopal had invited the leaders of the All-India Nationalist Muslim Party and the All-India Muslim Conference to work out an agreed formula on the question of electorates.

hitherto obtained is due to khadi. This is not to say that the indigenous mills have played no part in the campaign against foreign cloth. But it is contended that the mills came in when the owners realized that khadi was doing it, that khadi had shown the way, that khadi had brought about the psychological change. What is however the most important to remember is that boycott of foreign cloth will not be worth the tremendous energy that has been put into it if it was designed merely to stimulate the dividends of a few hundred thousand shareholders. It is a national necessity only because through khadi the crores of money saved through boycott of foreign cloth will be distributed among the millions of villagers. It is therefore necessary for men and women belonging to the Congress not to slacken their effort for khadi.

RUMOURED AMERICAN VISIT

An American friend says in the course of a letter[1] dated 6th April that

> . . . This evening an Associated Press despatch from New Delhi, as given in the *Boston Transcript*, reports that 'Mahatma Gandhi is considering a visit to the United States, etc,. . . .
>
> The soul of India has greater tasks than can be performed through physical presence in the United States at this time. . . .

Whether I represent the soul of India or not is a debatable point. But with reference to the American visit I have felt exactly like my correspondent. The work in India, if it has any spiritual value, will affect America and every other country outside India far more than the physical presence. Indeed when the spirit is free the physical case often becomes a hindrance rather than a help. The invisible effect of the spirit free must be a million times greater than that of the spirit limited by the earthly tabernacle. Much therefore as I should love to visit America, the voice within warns me against feeding the wish. Happily other friends like Rev. Holmes, Mr. Kerby page, Dr. Sherwood Eddy, Dr. Ward sent me a cable[2] about the same time the above letter was posted warning me against the visit. They thought that I would be exploited without serving the cause at the present juncture. I feel sure that these friends are right. Those friends therefore who have been pressing me to go to America would please excuse me till the time is ripe, if it ever is for me to go to their great country.

[1] Of which only extracts are reproduced here

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Boyd Tucker", 5-5-1931.

Meantime let them dispel, if they will, the ignorance and the misrepresentations that prevail in abundance about Indian affairs in their land.

Young India, 14-5-1931

119. DANGER LOOMING[1]

The public know little of what took place in Karachi the other day. A half-cracked man like me by name Gajadhar Shau from Central Provinces but as little known there as in Karachi took it into his head that he could establish swaraj in a few days. He collected all the unemployed and other labourers, promising them two them two rupees per day and delivered an ultimatum to the merchants and moneyed men that they should stop export and import business, stop the manufacture of mill-cloth, collect one crore rupees in a fortnight and utilize it for giving employment to all who were in need at a level wage of two rupees per day through the spinning-wheel and the like. Meetings were held and fierce resolutions were passed. Keys of safes of were demanded. The indefatigable Mayor of Karachi met the men and in a lucid moment Sjt. Gajadhar said he would stop his activity if I disapproved of it. This was good enough for Sjt. Jamshed Mehta and his friends and Sjt. Gajadhar who by this time had become a Mahatma came to me as also later Sjts. Sidhwa and Isherdas. I recognized in Sjt. Gajadhar an old correspondent who always tried my and my co-workers' patience by sending long letters and even wires. We became friends on sight. I had to give him nearly two hours I could scarcely spare. The upshot of it all was that he promised to stop his activity though I did not carry conviction to him. Whether he will carry out his promise remains to be seen. Even if he does not, the workers of Karachi will be able to deal effectively with any crisis that may arise.

But the incident of Karachi is a portent. If the acts of Congressmen are not firm and absolutely correct, there is every danger of the Congress and all other healthy activities being swallo-wed up by the onrushing floods for want of the necessary embank-ment of discipline. Storms and floods there always will be. But discip-line is to disorder what bulwarks and embankments are to storms and floods.

The awakening of the masses hitherto drugged into sleep by ignorance and despotism can easily prove their own undoing together with a wreckage of the social structure. The attempt of the Congress is

[1] *Vide* also "Messagge to Hindustani Seva Dal", 9-5-1931

to reform the social structure, remove abuses and at the same time help the masses to occupy the position of which they have been long deprived.

Behind the crazy demand of Sjt. Gajadhar Shau there was a substratum of truth. Unemployment there undoubtedly was and still is in Karachi as elsewhere, as throughout the 7,00,000 villages of India. No society can long endure that harbours or creates an army of unemployed. There is something wrong in such society. There must therefore be some occupation always available for those who will work. The Karachi scheme asked for employment through the charkha. Unfortunately the author knew no more perhaps about the charkha than the name. But I do believe that in its extensive meaning so as to include all the cotton processes from picking to weaving and washing, colouring and tailoring, it does provide permanent and unlimited occupation for the city-dwellers as well as the villagers. This does not exclude other occupations. But this one thing may be adopted anywhere and everywhere.

One thing we must rigidly guard against and that is free kitchens. Free kitchens are a dangerous institution designed to manufacture paupers. Public kitchens may be run wherever they are a felt want. Everyone can work for a meal and be sure of getting a cheap clean meal in healthy surroundings. It is necessary for us to learn that it is a sin to give a free meal to one who is fit to do any remunerative work at all.

Young India, 14-5-1931

120. 'NO CHANGE OF HEART'

This heading has no reference to change of heart among the rulers. It refers to absence of change of heart among ourselves according to the following impeachment[1] of a Sindhi correspondent.

I believe that the complaint about foreign cloth is substantially correct. There is not in the cities at least that real change of taste such that the people will not touch foreign cloth whether it comes from England, Japan, France or elsewhere. Though the intellect admits the desirability of abjuring foreign cloth, the heart yearns after the

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had complained that the old love for foreign cloth was still alive and blamed Gandhiji for having a soft corner for the mill-owners. *Vide* also "Foreign Cloth and Other British Goods", 23-4-1931

fineries which only come from foreign countries. Love of self predominates over love of the country or rather love of the semi-starved millions.

Picketing of foreign-cloth shops has but a limited use. The real thing is the education of the masses in these matters. Better even than education is the example of workers and better still is teaching the people how to produce cheap khadi through self-spinning. In practice all the three methods will go together.There must be therefore imparting to the people a knowledge of the economics of boycott through khadi. People should know from well-chosen illustrations how khadi can bring and has brought prosperity to the villages. People should come in touch with sincere workers who are habitual wearers of khadi and should be enabled to know how to prepare their own khadi in their own villages. Congress workers should therefore have a competent knowledge of the boycott and khadi literature, they must be honest wearers of khadi and they must know the cotton processes sufficiently so as to be able to instruct those who would know how to gin, card, spin or even weave.

Those therefore who realize that boycott of foreign cloth and manufacture and use of khadi are permanent institutions of the highest economic value will welcome the Settlement which enables them to know how far the people have been converted to the national ideal. Our real strength must lie in the people doing in normal times the things they did in abnormal times under the severe pressure of public opinion or worse.

One word as to the mills. I have no tender spot in me for our mills. They are well able to take care of themselves. They have still many limitations to overcome. They have not yet put the national interest before that of the agents, owners and share-holders. But after having said all this I would like the correspondent to test the trut of the fact thath they have striven this time to respond to the national call be it to ever so small an extent. And this apart from the financial aid they might have given to the movement. I should count that help of no import, if they did not regulate prices and production. I believe that they made an honest attempt in that direction.

Much however has yet to be done by them. They have not yet frankly recognized the premier place khadi has in national economy. They have not net organized the foreign cloth merchants for change

of their trade to swadeshi, they have not yet learnt the inestimable value of regarding themselves as trustees for the whole nation including the mill-hands. But this change will come if the Congressmen will play the game. conversion, not coercion, must be the aim.

Young India, 14-5-1931

121. ANGLO-INDIANS

Dr. H. W. B. Moreno writes :[1]

I can noly say that every community would be on a par with every other under the swaraj Constitution. I invite the attention of all the minorities concerned to the Fundamental Rights Resolution[2] of the Congress. So far as the Working Committee could, it took care to see that the rights of minorities were fully secured under that Resolution. That Resolution is now before the Congress Committee with a view to strengthening it. All those who have useful suggestions should send them to the Committee for consideration.

But I know that this is not what Dr. Moreno wants. He wants to know where the Anglo-Indians will come in specifically. My answer is they would come in where their merit would take them. There would most decidedly be nothing to prevent them from occupying the highest position that any other Indian may be capable of occupying. The fact however is that the AngloIndians as a class have occupied or attempted to occupy the position of rulers. They have not as a class taken part in the national movement. They have isolated themselves in their favoured position. Under swaraj there will be no favoured position for anybody. Hence like the Englishmen whose cry for equality means retention of favoured position the Anglo-Indians may feel aggrieved that they would be at a disadvantage under swaraj if they did not have the present favoured position guaranteed.

I hope however that Dr. Moreno has no such favouritism in view. If I know him correctly, I expect he seeks information about the sub-merged Anglo-Indians. Of them I can say with confidence that I should be surprised if they did not in common with the submerged of the other communities find themselves in a better position than they

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent wanted to know what the position of the Anglo-Indian community would be under the new constitution for India.

[2] *Vide* "Resolution on Fundamental Rights and Economic Changes", 31-3-1931

are in today. Anyway, there are enough Congressmen who are pledged to the abolition of all unjust privileges, all unnatural inequalities. If the condition of the masses is found to undergo rapid improvement under swaraj, the Anglo-Indian poor must share it to the fullest extent possible. The Congress aims at swaraj for the whole nation and not a section. And it will fight on till that end is achieved. I therefore invite all the minorities to join the national movement and to hasten the advent of the happy day. Let it not also be said of any of them that in the hour of the nation's trial, they stood aside and came in to enjoy their share of the happiness. They will get the share but they will not relish it even as a man who has not toiled for his meal cannot enjoy it though it is placed before him.

Young India, 14-5-1931

122. THE ALLAHABAD CONGRESS HOSPITAL : AN APPEAL

In June last year Pandit Motilal Nehru visited Bombay and saw the good work that the Congress hospital was doing there. He was impressed by this and, on his return to Allahabad, he expressed a desire that a similar hospital be started in Allahabad also. . . . Largely owing to the generosity of friends in Bombay, some funds and material were collected for the proposed hospital. On pandit Motilalji's discharge from prison, the hospital was formally started in a wing of Swaraj Bhawan. . . .

The limited funds collected have now been exhausted and the committee had to consider whether it should continue the hospital or not. . . .

This appeal for financial assistance is therefore being issued in the hope that there will be a generous response to it. The question of having a permanent hospital in Swaraj Bhawan has not been decided yet. But the committee would like to have sufficient funds for the carrying on of the hospital for at least three years. The estimated expenditure on the hospital, if it is run on its present limited scale, is rupees one thousand a month. . . .

KAMALA NEHRU

MOHANLAL NEHRU

RAMAKANT MALAVIYA

May 11, 1931

I hope that the foregoing appeal[1] will receive a quick response from the public. It has been purposely not signed by any except those who are connected with the management of the hospital, because it is not to be in any way considered as a national

[1] Of which only extracts are reproduced above

memorial. But the appeal is not the less important on that account. Thirty-six thousand rupees to carry out a wish of Pandit Motilal Nehru is a paltry sum. I hope, therefore, that there will be no delay and no hesitation in responding to the appeal made by Shrimati Kamala Nehru and her co-signatories. The reader should know that from the commencement of the hospital she has been its soul. The public may wonder why the appeal treats the hospital as a temporary thing. The idea is to watch how the institution works and by actual experience to know what will be the real need. Moreover, whilst everything is in the melting pot, it was thought that the wisest course would be for the time being to be satisfied with meeting the daily need.

Young India, 14-5-1931

123. FOR THE DANDI PILGRIMS

All the fellow pilgrims who undertook the march to Dandi on 12th March 1930[1] being scattered all over and not being in constant touch with me, it is necessary to remind them through these columns that they are still under the same discipline and vows that they took before beginning the march and after. They are therefore expected to keep an accurate diary of the day's work from day to day, to attend to the two prayers, to keep their wants as low as possible and therefore to keep their diet as simple as possible and to dothe daily sacrificial spinning. Those who are living in villages can conduct village schools, teaching the children in addition to a knowledge of the three R's, hand-spinning and other processes of cotton,insisting on their attending to personal hygiene and village games and athletics, doing village cleaning themselves, seeking at the same time the assistance of the villagers and their children and collecting and tabulating all the necessary information about the villagers. The workers would also find out those using foreign cloth and intoxicating drinks and drugs and try to wean them from both by paying them friendly visits and otherwise creating public opinion in the villages in these matters. They will wherever possible and necessary organize peaceful picketing. Of course they would seek to remove untouchability. The workers should send to Sjt. Chhaganlal Joshi a report every month of their work including an abstract from their diary. Needless to say they are

[1] *Vide* "Persons who Accompanied Gandhiji on the Dandi March", 12-3-1930"Letter to Malcolm Hailey", 23-5-1931

expected to keep an accurate account of every pice they may spend and receive.

While these instructions are meant for and binding on the original pilgrims, they may serve as a guide for all the national workers as well in cities as in villages. There will be naturally some changes in the cities. There is no Hindu-Muslim quarrel in the villages but national workers in cities have to add this essential service to the others.

Young India, 14-5-1931

124. HOW THEY ARE TAUGHT

A correspondent who gives his name and address writes from Wilmington, North Carolina.[1]

> The newspapers tell of your efforts together with many others of your nation for momplete independence, which is good in itself, but they also give accounts of Indian life and that show that you lack understanding what freedom really is and upon what it rests in the beginning. . . .
>
> India is trying for independence by her very endeavour from God's Rule as well as from a Christian nation, whereas the greatest enemy of India are the majority of Indians, who neither thoroughly understand God's Holy Will or even her Christian neighbour, England.
>
> Just as it was an act of charity and goodness on the part of God to prvide more ample clothing for the fallen and erring parents of ours, mine as well as yours, so is the endeavour of England and others to provide for India more cloth only as an act of Christian charity and goodness. . . .
>
> India should first of all seek ample clothing and education on the Holy Will of God as narrated in Holy Scripture as a base to obtain independence. . . .
>
> The greatest enemy of India causing the most oppression and suffering is ignorance on your own part and that of the people, not England. . . .

I have made hardly two alterations in the text for easier reading. The correspondent addresses me "Dear friend in Jesus Christ". His sincerity is as clear as his ignorance. The reason why I publish the letter is to show how even in the enlightened West people can be mistaught. In this letter there is ignorance of history and, if I may venture to say so, ignorance even of the Bible. This letter represents teaching of one type.

A correspondent from New York the other day sent me cuttings

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

showing how events in India were misreported and misrepresented. The correspondent warned me against being deceived by the attention paid to me by American Pressmen here into believing that the whole of America was bubbling with enthusiasm for us. He implied that for one sympathetic message or article there were ninety-nine prejudiced articles or reports belittling everything Indian.

Reginald Reynolds cites a third variety. He thinks that the English people from their infancy have no chance of knowing the truth about India. False history is dinned into the ears of boys and girls. The table talk too about India is no better. Of this type of teaching we here have also some experience. We know what history we learn in schools and what we have to unlearn by bitter experience. We are taught to imagine the blessings and virtues of British rule; we learn, as we grow, to know the contrary. Our greatest enemy is therefore ignorance spread often wilfully to prejudice us. It is true that we have also to clean our own stables but not in the sense and the manner suggested by the Wilmington correspondent.

Young India, 14-5-1931

125. 'JUDGE LYNCH DECIDES'

A correspondent writes :

> I am taking the liberty of enclosing herewith a small cutting from the *Literary Digest* which will speak for itself. I wonder what you think of the whole shameful affair? I dare say you meet many an American visitor or interviewer who often demand of you a message to their country or invite you to their continent. Would it be too much to ask of you to give them a message to see that such atrocities as lynching of a hapless and coloured race are put a stop to?

The cutting he referred to has the above heading and reads as follows:[1]

This does make sad reading. If we had no faith in the ultimate Good, we would lose all hope. I have faith and therefore hope that this lynching will yield place to proper justice. I do not pretend to the influence over American opinion that the correspondent credits me with. But I have no doubt that the people of that continent are fully alive to the evil and are trying their best to remove this blot on American humanity.

Young India, 14-5-1931

[1] The report is not reproduced here. It described how a Negro was lynched.

126. LETTER TO SYED AZMATULLAH

May 14, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter[1]. I can only give you my assurance that I shall do my best to promote Hindu-Muslim unity. What I am striving for is a heart unity. The solution of the constitutional question rests in many other hands than mine.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 17034

127. LETTER TO HENRY NEIL[2]

May 14, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your characteristic letter[3]. Only I am not going to America in the near future.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 17072

128. LETTER TO S. RANGOO RAM

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 14, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is not at all certain that I am going to London. The odds are that I am not. But if I do, personally I would like to accept the offer of Miss Muriel Lester who has an institution of hers somewhere in the East End. But as I do not know the ins and outs I have simply left it with Mr. C. F. Andrews who is fortunately now there and who knows all about me. Naturally I would love to accept your offer also but I have already told Miss Lester that if the political

[1] The addressee had written : "If only you make it known to the Muslims that you would accept the other thirteen points of Mr. Jinnah, if separate electorates are given up, I assure you the Muslims would adopt a more accommodating attitude and agree to joint electorates. . . ."

[2] Judge Henry Neil, founder of the Centenarian Club

[3] The addressee had written : "I would like to be of service to your campaign for freedom. Especially if you should come here."

exigencies do not come in the way and if any reception committee that might be formed also does not come in the way and the choice rests with me, it shall be to live in her institution. Now you know my inclination. You will do what you like in consultation with Mr. C. F. Andrews or the committee that may be formed.

Please do not ask me to send anything for your magazine if only because I do not know what it is to be like. But you must forgive me also because I hardly get time to cope with the regular correspondence. I do not therefore like to take up even small things that may occupy only a few minutes because it is an aggregate of few minutes that makes a cycle.

Yours sincerely,

S. RANGOO RAM, ESQ.
INDIAN STUDENTS CENTRAL ASSOCIATION
LONDON S.W. 3

From a photostat : S.N. 17073

129. LETTER TO SURESH CHANDRA BANERJI

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 14, 1931

MY DEAR SURESH,

I have your letter. I do not see anything on the horizon to warrant the hope that peace will be established as a result of the Round Table Conference. On the contrary, as I have said openly, nature seems to be against us. I hold it to be impossible practically to get the constitution we want without a heart unity amongst the different communities. That unity is not likely to be forthcoming in the near future. There are many other things too that are against us. But as God confounds man's hopes and out of his disappointments brings forth hope, it is difficult to say precisely what is going to happen. My business-like answer to you therefore is you should hope for the best, prepare for the worst, but a satyagrahi's preparation for the worst and the best is always the same. You would still be spreading the gospel of the wheel. You would still be nursing the needy sick. You would still be looking after the pauper children and things of this kind are the best preparation for civil disobedience and the like when they come. Have I made myself quite clear to you? If not, tackle me again. Your

own particular business is to become well. I have the extra Rs. 1,000 in mind. About the rest you will discuss with Jamnalalji when he comes to Calcutta which he will do some time or other. I am likely to be back in Borsad at the end of the month.

DR. SURESH CHANDRA BANERJI
ABHOY ASHRAM
COMILLA (BENGAL)

From a photostat : S.N. 17074

130. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

FIRGROVE, SIMLA
May 14, 1931

DEAR HARIBHAU,

Bapuji has received your letter of the 10th. He has already expressed his opinion about writing to Bhopal. As far as I remember the letter he wrote you was posted on 6-5-31 from Borsad[1]. But your letter does not contain even an acknowledgement. I too had written to you a separate letter. In that letter I had suggested that you should inform Bapu of the latest and up-to-date position in regard to repression in princely states. That too you have disregarded. What does all this mean?

Your letter of the 10th was shown to Jamnalalji as per Bapu's instructions. On persuing it he remarked that Bapuji had already written regarding Bhopal, that he does not consider it proper for him to write to Nawabs and Rajas about such matters in the present circumstances. But Jamnalalji himself had written to Bikaner and he will do whatever else is necessary.

About satyagraha, he does think that it was launched in haste but now it cannot be remedied. He wishes to repeat the warning that we should guard against any kind of mistake or violence on our part.

Yours,

PYARELAL

From the Hindi original: Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Haribhau Upadhyaya", 6-5-1931.

131. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, SIMLA

May 14, 1931

You will like to hear why I have come to Simla and what talk I am having with the Government. I cannot tell you everything, but I can tell you that I came to hold consultation with regard to the complaints on our side as well as on the Government side with regard to the Settlement arrived at between Lord Irwin and the Congress. These consultations still continue. What I have to emphasize is that if you are Congress sewak[1] and want to serve Hindustan, then it is your duty to observe that Agreement irrespective of whether the Government observes it or not.

After we have fulfilled our obligation, and if after that we find the Government has not fulfilled it we can take whatever step we like. We know that whatever settlement has been arrived at is conditional, but if we can use the settlement for some work, we should do it.

As a satyagrahi, if we get an opportunity for service as a fesult of understanding, we should welcome it. That opportunity came your way through the Settlement.

The Karachi Congress practically unanimously adopted it. Now our duty is what I have described. Do not think that after this Settlement we have to go to war. We should, on the other hand, do everything to see that we are not led to war and that the Settlement should become permanent, so that we may get *purna* swaraj.

You know the conditions that have been imposed by Congress on such of your delegates as will go to London to attend the Round Table Conference. But if, as the result of settlement, we cannot get complete swaraj, it is our ill-luck, and if our efforts towards a permanent settlement fail, we should be ready for a fresh struggle.

But there are two points more which I wish to emphasize besides the Settlement. If we wish to achieve what we want at the Round Table Conference, we must be properly equipped :and that equipment is that all the people of India—people who are born here and have made India their home, whether Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis and others—should unite in the demand for swaraj. Unless we bring about such an understanding among ourselves my going to London is useless. Therefore we should all make such efforts as would make for unity among all communities in this country.

[1] Volunteer

But I do not want unity on paper. If we write out a pact on paper, unity is not thereby achieved. The unity I want is the unity of heart and for that unity I always pray. And when that unity is achieved you will gain such strength as will give us success.

I am afraid my voice is not reaching you all and that you are feeling upset by rain. Let me pray to God that we may be saved a second struggle and that this Settlement may lead to final success.

As regards work, you have the Congress resolution before you and you have every scope for work in respect of the spread of khaddar and boycott of liquor. I thank you all.

The Hindustan Times, 16-5-1931

132. HOMAGE TO K. T. PAUL

SIMLA,
May 15, 1931

I had the privilege of knowing Mr. K. T. Paul. The nearer I came to him the more I respected him. His Christianity appeared to me to be broad and tolrant. It not only did not interfere with his being a thorough nationalist, on the contrary, in his case it seemed to have deepened his nationalism. And in nationalist circles it will always be remembered, to the credit of the deceased, that he stoutly opposed the demand for any special concessions for Christian Indians in the forthcoming constitution, believing as he did that character and merit would always command not only proper treatment but respectful attention. His death especially at this time in the life of the nation is a distinct loss to the country.

From a photostat : S.N. 17075

133. CABLE TO "EVENING STANDARD"

[*May 15, 1931*][1]

Replying to *The Evening Standard's* question whether he is coming to London, Mr. Gandhi has cabled that it is contingent on certain circumstances, two of which are a satisfactory working of the Settlement and the solution of the communal question.

Young India, 21-5-1931, and *The Hindu*, 16-5-1931

[1] Reported from London on this date

134. LETTER TO S. SATYAMURTI

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 15, 1931

MY DEAR SATYAMURTI,

I have your letter. So far as I know there is no chance of my going to London. Several things have to happen before I could consent to go.

Yours sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: S. Satyamurti Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

135. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

SIMLA,
May 15, 1931

Mahatma Gandhi said his conversation was healthy and good and he was not seeing the Viceroy again in Simla. He would be seeing Mr. Emerson, the Home Secretary, again tomorrow and leaving Simla for Nainital positively on the 17th, Sunday.[1]

Mahatma Gandhi refused the answer the question if he was more optimistic regarding his going to London and the general political situation, and added :

Fro any further information you must go to the Viceregal Lodge.

While walking towards Sir Fazl Hussain's residence, he was asked whether he would favour Simla as the seat of the Swaraj Government. He replied:

We must go down five thousand storeys to the plains, for government should be among the people and for the people.

The Hindustan Times, 17-5-1931

[1] For the report of the interview with H. W. Emerson, *vide* "Note by H. W. Emberson on Interview Between Himeself and Gandhiji", 18-5-1931

136. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SIMLA,
May 16, 1931

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI

BARDOLI

IF YOU HAVE HEARD FROM JAWAHARLAL SUGGEST YOUR HOLDING MEETING NINTH BARDOLI OR ANY OTHER PLACE YOU MAY THINK FIT. PROCEEDING NAINITAL TOMORROW.

BAPU

A.I.C.C. File No. 273, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

137. LETTER TO KHAN CHAND DEV

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 16, 1931

DEAR DR. KHAN CHAND,

I was glad to receive your exhaustive note and it came just in time. There will be difficulty about the release of the ramaining prisoners. I must now ask you to give me copy of judgment and evidence in each case if it is at all possible or have a note prepared there on each case showing why you consider that the prisoners concerned fall within the Settlement. You must give me also a full description about the cases still pending.

Yours sincerely,

DR. KHAN CHAND DEV

BRADLAUGH HALL

LAHORE

From a microfilm : S.N. 17082

138. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 16, 1931

DEAR SATISBABU,

I have your two letters. Hemprabha Devi's condition makes me feel anxious. Please keep me informed.

Your description of the squabbles[1] there makes one sad and your reading of Subhasbabu sadder still. I am glad you are entirely keeping out of party affairs. The *Mussalman* cutting has not given me satisfaction. The translations of *Rashtravani* are good. I think you ought to add salt to your food. I had long chats here with the authorities on matters arising out of the Settlement. They are fairly satisfactory. I am now going to Nainital and then reach Borsad about the end of this month.

SYT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
SODEPUR (BENGAL)

From a photostat : S.N. 17083

139. LETTER TO A. FENNER BROCKWAY

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 16, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your cablegram which has been redirected to me here. I am not replying by cable as my opinion remains the same as I explained to you in a previous letter. I gave you only one reason preventing me from going to London. But I should have mentioned another also namely the work of the Settlement. Though I am receiving help at the centre, local authorities are giving great deal of trouble in implementing the Settlement and they are accusing local Congressmen of breach on their part. I have ample evidence and I am investigating every case of breach on the part of individuals, but in the vast majority of cases Congressmen have fully implemented the Settlement. I am making no mention whatsoever of breach on the part of the authorities whilst I am still negotiating with them and in the hope that things will be put right in the near future. But this thing practically takes away all my time and keeps me in India.

Yours sincerely,

FENNER BROCKWAY, ESQ.
RICKMANSWORTH
HERTS. (ENGLAND)

From a photostat : S.N. 17084

[1] Between Subhas Chandra Bose and J. M. Sen Gupta over the affairs of Bengal Provincial Congress Committee; *vide* footnote to "Telegram to J. M. Sen Gupta", 4-6-1931.

140. LETTER TO RAMLAL SINGH

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 16, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Perhaps you do not know that I am under a vow[1] not to live at the Ashram until a full settlement is made and India has got what she wants. If you would stay at the Ashram notwithstanding this fact, I would like you please to write to the Manager of the Ashram and I have no doubt that he will admit you for the few weeks' stay.

Syt. Vithalbhai Patel's address is: C/o Thomas Cook & Son, London.

Yours sincerely,

THAKUR RAMLAL SINGH
KANTIT ESTATE
P.O. BIJAIPUR (MIRZAPUR)

From a microfilm : S.N. 17085

141. LETTER TO K. NATARAJAN

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 16, 1931

DEAR MR. NATARAJAN,

You will please excuse me for the delay in acknowledging your letter. You know the reason why. The statement imputed to me is a pure invention. The conclusion that the British regime is an evil was arrived at after laborious studies fortified by painful experiences. I have set forth the whole process in *Hind Swaraj* as also in *My Experiments with Truth*. It was good of Mr. Bittman that he refused to believe the report without verification. I may add that I do not even remember the meeting with Bishop Azariah. I return Mr. Bittman's letter.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

SYT. K. NATARAJAN
"INDIAN SOCIAL REFORMER" OFFICE,
BOMBAY

From a microfilm : S.N. 17086

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting, Sabarmati Ashram", 11-3-1930

142. NOTES

HOW TO END DARKNESS?

A graduate asks:[1]

This is partly true. In a letter which is lying along with the above, I find the following: "Amongst us, the expenses incurred on the death of a person have been completely stopped, there is less of weeping and wailing, marriages are becoming simpler, and less expensive."This is not surprising. Such reforms ought to come about at the end of a great sacrifice. What, however, is surprising is that despite the sacrifice, despite correct understanding of the situation, untouchability has not been totally uprooted. At many places the untouchables are still prohibited from drawing water from the village well, their children cannot freely attend all public schools, caste distinctions and considerations of high and low still persist, mutual quarrels still take place, girls continue to be sold, young men continue to expect to receive cash from a girl's father.

What is the reason for this?

Our attention is directed outwards, we do not look within oursleves. We find it exciting to fight the Government. We adopt those reforms which are absolutely necessary for carrying on that struggle and continuing it. But we find no excitement in fighting against ourselves, in carrying on a peaceful war against society, or we find it less exciting to do so.

Who will end this laxity?

Volunteers, graduates of the Vidyapith, women volunteers and *vanarsena* [2] "But if the salt hath lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted?" The volunteers—both men and women—find this work uninteresting. They do not realize that swaraj cannot be won if these tasks are not done, or even if it is won, it cannot be preserved. It is clear as daylight that swaraj is nothing but the development of all sections of the people. Hence if the rural workers now come forward in large numbers and carry out these tasks silently and with determination and diligence, darkness will disappear and dawn will break.

[1] The letter is not translated here. It had complained that the people continued to be ignorant in spite of a year of struggle.

[2] Literally, "monkey-army"—name given to volunteer bands of children during the Civil Disobedience Movement.

Shri Karsandas Chitalia and Shrimati Surajbehn Manilal have jointly decided to set up an organization under this name. Thanks to the efforts of Shri Karsandas, the Bhagini Seva Mandir was built and opened in Vile Parle. He has now issued a pamphlet for the establishment of the Sangh. Whoever wishes to read the whole of it should obtain a copy from Shri Karsandas. It gives the following information about the Sangh:[1]

Women who have the following qualifications can join it:[2]

The pamphlet concludes as follows:[3]

I wish Shri Karsandas success in this enterprise.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-5-1931

143. OPINION UNCHANGED

Commenting on the article entitled "A Twentieth-Century Sati (?)[4]", Shri Mathuradas Devram writes as follows :[5]

I have published this letter for the sake of fairness. My opinion re-mains unaltered even after having known all these facts. The facts as they were published have been corroborated and so my grief is all the greater and my opinion has been strengthened. This is an example not of love but of strong emotion. What does man not do when overcome by emo-tion? If that very woman had survived, she could have perpetuated her husband's memory by her dedicated life. Having died, she did not accom-pany her husband. It is an error to believe that the relationship ends as soon as the body perishes. But even if that were at all true, she could not preserve that relationship. Just as her husband's body was reduced to ashes, hers too was reduced to ashes; hence along with the departure of the one, the other too followed suit. In this pathetic incident, I find noth-ing at all praise-worthy. I hope that even this woman's relatives do not consider this suicide as the act of a sati. Rather than teach women to love their

[1] These excerpts are not translated here.

[2] *Ibid*

[3] *Ibid*

[4] *Vide* "A Twentieth Century Sati (?)", 21-5-1931.

[5] The letter is not translated here. It had described and justified the action of the woman who had burnt herself on the pyre of her husband.

husbands blindly, we should liberate them and show them through our conduct that the soul in a woman has equal rights with the soul in a man.

Now about Shri Mathuradas's last question. In the sentence "A woman who is a sati will participate in the function of procreation within limits," the phrase 'a woman who is a sati' has been used to denote a woman of good character whose husband is alive. My ideal is to make husbands and wives practise total celibacy. If that is not possible, my purpose was to say that both should, within limits, participate in the function of procreation. That is to say, sexual union between the two should be permitted only for the sake of this function and that too for the limited number of children that both desire. This, in my opinion, is limited self-restraint.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 17-5-1931

144. PUBLIC EXPENSE[1]

No province in India has enjoyed such privileges in the matter of public funds as Gujarat. The Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee has never found its exchequer empty. Nor have its district or taluk branches ever been left to want the funds that they needed. It has been my conviction for years that such affluence cannot be good for any public institution. There comes a point in the life of every institution that has a prestige in public, when it experiences this plethora of funds and all the risks and dangers attendant on it. At that time, if it does not take care and does not spend like a miser, it is bound to come to grief. Because an institution happens to have plenty of funds it does not mean that it should anyhow spend away every pie that it possesses. The golden rule is not to hesitate to ask for or spend even a crore when it is absolutely necessary and when it is not, to hoard up every pie though one may have a crore of rupees at one's disposal.

I am afraid that this golden rule has not been always followed by the Gujarat Committees. In fact I should not be surprised if I discovered the existence even of a certain laxity in this respect. I would therefore suggest to every Taluka and District Congress

[1] The original Gujarati of this was published in *Navajivan* on May 17. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

committee in Gujarat to hold a close scrutiny into its accounts and to relentlessly apply the axe wherever it is found to be necessary. We may not build a pucca building when a thatched cottage would do. We may not use a motor-car when a bullock-cart would serve the purpose and we must avoid the bullock-cart when the journey can be made on foot. Similarly the rigidest economy should be exercised in regulating the expenses of feeding the workers. The best course would be for all Congress organizations to get their account books inspected by some experienced person who knows how to economize public expenditure and to invite criticisms and suggestions from him for future guidance. Ten years ago there used to be a golden rule in Gujarat that every District, Village or Taluka Congress Committee was expected to raise sufficient funds at least for its needs and to deposit them with the Provincial Congress Committee. The practice remained in force for some years and then fell into abeyance. Now all district organizations draw upon the Provincial Committee for funds. This is a dangerous situation. What guarantee is there that the exchequer of the Provincial Congress Committee will always remain brimful? Nor is it right for the Provincial Congress Committee to entertain such an ambition. It is therefore high time that the good old rule were revived. We may rest assured that funds will automatically come when there is good work done and there is need for them. Only we shall have to cultivate sufficient self-confidence and faith in our mission. It would be worth while to draw attention here to the rule laid down by the Congress in this connection. The All-India National Congress does not supply funds to the provinces; it is the latter that are required to contribute ten per cent of their income to the central organization. Why should not this rule apply to the provincial organizations as well? And why should not the districts be made to contribute ten per cent or a fair proportion of their income to provincial organizations? It is simply ridiculous for the provinces to be required to finance district organizations. In fact it is almost like a person trying to walk on his head instead of naturally on his feet. Such topsyturvydom cannot last for long.

"But what about times of emergency?" some doubting reader will perhaps, here, ask. "Do these rules of economy prescribed by you apply even when the country is in a state of war?" My reply is : "Certainly they do, even more when war is going on than when all is safe and well." God forbid, but should fighting have to be resumed, we shall need to have the capacity to carry on with the minimum of

funds or even without funds. It is a fundamental principle of satyagraha that the tyrant whom the satyagrahi seeks to resist has power over his body and material possessions but he can have no power over the soul. The soul can remain unconquered and unconquerable even when the body is imprisoned. The whole science of satyagraha was born from a knowledge of this fundamental truth. In the purest form of satyagraha there should be no need for conveyances, carriage fare or even of doing *Hijrat*[1]. And in case *Hijrat* has to be performed it will be done by journeying on foot. The *Hijratis* would have to be satisfied with whatever hard fare falls to their lot and keep smiling when even that fails. When we have developed this 'be careful for nothing' attitude, we shall be saved from many a botheration and trouble and freedom will dance attendance upon us. Nor should one suppose that a 'careful for nothing' person shall have always to be starving. God that provides the little ant its speck of food and to the elephant his daily one maund bolus will not neglect to provide man with his daily meal. Nature's creatures do not worry or fret about tomorrow but simply wait on tomorrow for the daily sustenance. Only man in his overweaning pride and egotism imagines himself to be the lord and master of the earth and goes on piling up for himself goods that perish. Nature tries every day by its rude shocks to wean him from his pride but he refuses to shed it. Satyagraha is a specific for bringing home to one the lesson of humility. We have travelled so much distance during the last year, we have gone through so much suffering and had so many rich experiences that we ought to have sufficient faith in us to be able to feel that if we throw ourselves upon God's mercy untroubled by doubt or fear, it would be well with us.

Young India, 21-5-1931

145. LETTER TO BHUPENDRA NARAYAN SEN

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 17, 1931

MY DEAR BHUPEN,

I have your letter. You will see the use I have made of your reference to Habu's mother[2]. Why have you not got her name? You should have known her age also and had a snapshot. Just now my

[1] Emigration enjoined on Muslims when faced with religious persecution
[2] *Vide* "A Woman's Sacrifice", 21-5-1931

movement has again become uncertain. I do not know when I shall go to Bardoli. But as soon as I am fixed up somewhere for some time, both of you may certainly come and stay with me.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. BHUPENDRA NARAYAN SEN
KHADI MANDAL
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm : S. N. 17087

146. LETTER TO A. SUBBIAH

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 17, 1931

MY DEAR SUBBIAH,

I got your letter just as I was moving from Borsad. Since then there has been no time before now. I understand your difficulties. I am therefore sending your letter to Rajaji and asking him to relieve you as soon as he can. This is unfortunate but it is inevitable. I agree with you that you must be with Seshan and you owe a duty to Lalita also. Your indifferent health is an additional reason for relieving you. I shall be in Borsad about the end of this month. We are leaving Simla this afternoon to go to Nainital which we reach tomorrow, Monday. If your health permits, you will not leave Rajaji till he is otherwise suited and you should leave him with the intention of returning to him whenever you are free and he needs you.

SYT. A. SUBBIAH
GANDHI ASHRAM
TIRUCHENGODU (S. INDIA)

From a microfilm : S. N. 17089

147. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 17, 1931

Here is a letter from Subbiah. I think you should relieve him at the earliest opportunity. The question is what you will do.

Somebody had sent Mr. Emerson your printed circular of instructions. He was most enthusiastic about it and asked me specially to congratulate you on his behalf. I had a very busy time here, also

profitable but exasperating. Local Governments have responded only up to a point. Evidently they have not liked the Settlement. To get them to implement the Settlement is therefore like drawing the lion's teeth. All the grace is therefore lost.

With Lord Willingdon we exchanged courtesies, renewed the old acquaintance and the work being finished I am now off to Nainital to meet Sir Malcolm Hailey over the U. P. troubles. More from Mahadev if he has been writing to you. Do write if you have the time, but not otherwise.

Encl. 1

SYT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR
GANDHI ASHRAM
TIRUCHENGODU (S. INDIA)

From a microfilm : S.N. 17090

148. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

May 17, 1931

Mahatma Gandhi stated that he was on the whole satisfied with his visit and he was able to understand that so far as the Central Government was concerned they were trying to give effect to the terms of the Delhi Pact. He reiterated his attitude that he would go to the London Conference if the communal question was solved and if there was a satisfactory working of the Pact throughout India.

As for the communal problem itself he recognized there was a good deal of mistrust but after Bhopal discussion; he was more optimistic.

QUESTION. Supposing you or the Congress do not attend the Round Table Conference and the Conference produces a constitution which is approved by Parliament. What would be the attitude of the Congress?

ANSWER. I may speak on behalf of the Congress that it will examine the scheme and if good, will certainly work it.

Q. Do you believe in self-determination?

A. Yes.

Q. Would you allow any province to exercise self-determination and separate herself from India?

A. I shall fight through reason but shall not impose my will by force of arms.

Pressed regarding his views on the communal problem, he reiterated his position that if the Sikhs and Mohammedans presented agreed demands, he would accept them unhesitatingly[1].

[1] What follows is from *The Statesman.*

When asked whether he did not think it a pity that nation-wide progress should wait for local settlements, he said:

Well, if we can look after the pennies, we can look after the pounds too. Why do I insist on this? These local settlements are like the straws which show the way the wind is blowing, and that wind may turn the weather-vane even of the Round Table Conference—even perhaps veer it right round.

Q. *The Bombay Chronicle* says: "Need we repeat that the most effective method speeding up the work of the Round Table Conference and making it completely successful, is to intensify the boycott of foreign cloth?' That obviously means that *The Bombay Chronicle* regards the boycott as a political weapon and as a discriminatory weapon, because a boycott of Japanese cloth could hardly speed up the work of the Round Table Conference. Don't you think that that sort of talk is inconsistent with both the spirit and the letter of the Delhi Agreement?

A. I have not seen the article from which you have quoted. But I can say broadly that it would be inconsistent both with the spirit and the letter of the Pact to think of the foreign-cloth boycott as a political weapon. Foreign cloth includes Japanese cloth just as much as British cloth, if not much more at present, for the simple reason that it ousts khadi and Indian mill cloth far more effectively than British cloth. The economic and social reasons for the boycott are all-sufficing.

Q. How far are you prepared to go to conciliate the British Conservatives' anxiety about safeguards?

A. To the utmost extent, consistent with the interests and honour of India.

In answer to the question whether he thought the local difficulties in respect of the Agreement would be removed, say by July, Gandhiji replied:

That I can't say. But of course, I hope so, and I have hopes that they will.

Q. And the Hindu-Muslim question? What do you think of the steps taken at the Bhopal meetings of Muslims?

A. They are encouraging, and both the Muslim parties are evidently doing their best to arrive at unity among themselves. But, of course, when I speak of the Hindu-Muslim question I mean the entire communal question. When the Hindu-Muslim side of the matter is brought up, the Sikhs, for instance, will have their say. There will be difficulties. I hope that they will not prove insurmountable.

Q. So you will really go to Round Table Conference, whether early or late, when those two problems are out of the way?

A. Yes, certainly. And I shall be very pleased to go, because I hope that when I get to England I shall find the British people not uninterested in what I have to say and open to conviction by what I tell them. Or, at the worst, I hope I shall persuade them that I am only a harmless lunatic.

Q. And Lord Rothermere?

A. Oh yes. . . . even Lord Rothermere.

The Hindustan Times, 20-5-1951, and *The Statesman*, 19-5-1931

149. MESSAGE TO KARNATAK PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE [1]

[*May 18, 1931*][2]

The resolution on fundamental rights is the most important resolution of the Congress. It shows what kind of swaraj the Congress wants to achieve. That swaraj is the poor man's swaraj or *Ramarajya*. Rama symbolized justice and equity, Rama symbolized truth and charity.

The resolution insists on religious toleration, which means, that no one will be prevented from discharging his religious obligations, and the State shall favour no religion.

Justice and equity mean the establishment of just and equitable relation between capital and labour, between the landlord and the tenant. The landlord and the capitalist will cease to exploit the tenant and the labourer but will studiously protect his interests.

Not that these things will be there as a matter of course as soon as we get the powers. I only mean that they will follow as the natural consequence of truth and non-violence if swaraj is achieved by those means. The question is whether we are following truth and non-violence. *Ramarajya* cannot be the result of truth and non-violence followed as a mere temporary expedient or policy. *Ramarajya* can only come out of truth and non-violence pursued as a creed. Could a son ever fulfil his filial duties as a policy? Policy is essentially a temporary expedient which one might alter as circums-tances altered.

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 8-5-1931

[2] According to Mahadev Desai, Gandhiji wrote this message "last Monday". May 18 was a Monday.

It is easy enough to follow truth and non-violence so long as no sacrifice or suffering is involved, but he who adheres to them in all circumstances even at the cost of life follows them as a creed. It is time truth and non-violence were a creed and not policy with us Congressmen.

Let us therefore find out what parts of the resolution we can enforce even now. If we do not enforce the things that can be enforced today, swaraj will be meaningless, for we will not suddenly do after swaraj things which we can do but will not do today.

The resolution states that there shall be no untouchability under the swaraj constitution. Have we cast out the canker of untouchability? The resolution says under the swaraj constitution there shall be no facilities for the licensing of liquor and drug shops. Have we cast out the drug and drink evil from our midst? The resolution goes on to say that under swaraj all foreign cloth would be banned from India. But have we given up our infatuation for foreign cloth and become khaddar clad? Similarly under swaraj, according to this resolution, Hindus and Mussalmans and Christians will live together like true blood brothers. Have we cleansed our hearts of distrust and suspicion of one another? Under swaraj, which the resolution pictures, there shall be no hatred or ill-will between the rich and the poor. Have the rich identified themselves with the poor, and have the poor ceased to have ill-will toward the rich? Under the swaraj constitution we want the maximum monthly emoluments of officials not to exceed Rs. 500. But do those who are getting more today devote the balance to philanthropic purposes? Have our millionaires adjusted their standard of living to this scale of payment?

It is difficult to give a decisive reply to these questions today. We are today slowly groping our way towards our ideal of *Ramarajya* or the Kindgom of Righteousness. This resolution is intended to keep this goal constantly before our eyes and to stimulate our endeavours to attain it.

Young India, 28-5-1931

150. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

May 18, 1931

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I got your letter. Your complaint is entirely justified. I have written to Bhai Fulchand. Need I give you a time to see me? If fact you do not come at all. You have a right to come and see me wherever I may be and whenever you may wish to. I am going today from here to Nainital, and from there I shall go to Borsad, where I shall reach by the 27th instant. You may come here. The air and water of the place are good and the accommodation also may be said to be fairly good.

Vandematram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5916. Also C.W. 3231. Courtesy : Mahesh Pattani

151. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

May 18, 1931

CHI. SHARDA,

I have your letter. Do not spoil your handwriting. Read the translation of a poem on handwriting by Ramdas Swami which I had sent. Send me a copy of it. I shall publish it in *Navajivan* some time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati : C. W. 9901. Courtesy : Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

152. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL[1]

NAINITAL,
May 18, 1931

TO
SARDAR VALLABHBHAI
BARDOLI

SUGGEST YOUR SEEING COLLECTOR ALSO COMMISSIONER. AM WIRING SIMLA. HOPE REACHING BORSAD ABOUT TWENTYFIFTH

BAPU

A.I.C.C. File No. 273, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

153. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

NAINITAL,
May 18, 1931

CHI. JAMNADAS,

We have just arrived here. Prabhudas and Dhiru have come with me. I got your telegram. If Prabhashankar agrees to take Ratilal under his care and Ratilal is willing, where is the need to consult me in the matter? We have of course to think how to meet his expenses. Discuss the matter with Nanalal and then write to me. I understand from Champa that at present she obtains the money she requires for her expenses from Nanalal. Did you write a detailed letter to the Doctor? The problem is becoming more and more complicated. Have a talk with both Ratilal and Prabhashankar and then write to me. I expect to reach Borsad about the 25th inst.

Blessigns from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 9322. Courtesy : Jamnadas Gandhi

[1] In reply to the addressee's telegram which read : "Harassment peasants Valod Mahal continues. Pending cases not withdrawn still. Confiscated lands not returned in spite offer current year revenue. Yesterday police posted several places prevent peasants entering their fields. Wire programme."

154. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

NAINITAL,
May 18, 1931

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

I had no time to give you a letter for the Austrian friends. Here is the letter now as also a *hundi*[1] for Rs. 1000 on Jamnalalji's firm in Bombay. If you do not go to Bombay you can cash it anywhere. You need not pay any discount. If it is demanded you should return the *hundi* to me and tell me where you whould have the money.

When will you be going? The money is earmarked for the European visit and no other purpose.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 3203

155. LETTER TO DUDABHAI

NAINITAL,
May 18, 1931

BHAI DUDABHAI,

I have decided to give Lakshmi in marriage to a non-Antyaja. It seems necessary to me to do that. Let me know what you think in the matter. It will do if you send your reply to the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3243

156. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

May 18, 1931

CHI. MAHAVIR,

I got your letter. I am glad that you have changed your mind. You should remain where you are and learn to study. Take the help of Shivabhai and others whenever it is available. Write to me from time to time. Tell me how you have planned your study. One should learn to study by one's own effort. If a person has sufficient zeal to incre-ase his knowledge he finds out for himself what and how to study.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6229

[1] A bill of exchange or draft

157. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

NAINITAL,
May 18, 1931

CHI. PREMA,

I liked your letter very much indeed. I see that during the journey you had observed things intelligently. I should like Kisan also to send me a description of her experiences. She may write either in English or Marathi.

Take great care of Lakshmi. My idea is to marry her to a non-*Antyaja*. She should be able to take her place in such a family. She should know cooking and also how to run a home. She should know how to keep accounts. It would be excellent if she knew a little Sanskrit. Even if she does not know Sanskrit she should be able to recite the prayer verses and verses from the *Gita* with correct pronunciation.

All girls should know this. We ought not to neglect their education. Write to me in detail. Let me know your experience regarding Lakshmi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10254. Also C. W. 6702. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

158. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

May 18, 1931

CHI. VASUMATI,

Though there is no letter from you, I am writing this letter as today is my silence day. Have you started working among the people of Nagarwada and other places? I suppose you are now required to report yourself only once to the police station. I hope to reach Borsad about the 25th instant.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9323. Also C. W. 539. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

159. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

NAINITAL,
May 18, 1931

BHAI FULCHAND,

Pattani Saheb writes to tell me that at the Bhavnagar session you had resolutions passed on the policy of the Jamnagar State, and also indulged in criticism of that State. This is against our policy. If you agree with this view, you should write in the matter to Pattanji. Bhavnagar gives us many facilities and I do not wish that they should be misused.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 2843. Courtesy: Shardabehn Shah

160. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

NAINITAL,
May 18, 1931

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. Khurshedbehn will certainly want to have you, but I think it is better that you remain at the Ashram for the present and get trained. Your mind will become steady only when you find some quiet atmosphere at the Ashram. Take care of your health Profit from Premabehn's company. Abide by the instructions of Narandas. Be sure that it will be to your benefit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

161. TELEGRAM TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM[1]

NAINITAL,
May 19, 1931

JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
HYDERABAD (SIND)

ABSOLUTELY PEACEFUL PICKETING ORIGINAL SHOPS MAY CONTINUE BUT NOT FOR FINES.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S. N. 17103

162. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 19, 1931

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. I know nothing about the proposal to appoint you Secretary of the Sind branch of the A. I. S. A. Shankerlal does not worry me over the working of the Association. When he needs any opinion from me he writes. I am glad you have overhauled the Hyderabad Khadi Bhandar. I do not understand the opening of a central bhandar at Karachi. Are there not two or three going even at present including the one on behalf of the Meerut Ashram by Kikibehn? If there are these bhandars going on, would it not be an interference with the existing bhandars? You will do what Shankerlal suggests. If the Karachi project falls through or even if it does not, I would certainly like your settling down in a village. I attach far greater importance to it than to city work. But you can settle down in a village only if Syt. Choithram and Jairamdas agree. I have always felt that house to house propaganda is far more effective than picketing if the former is done systematically and persistently. I wish I could read and understand your translation.

BAPU

SYT. NARAINDAS R. MALKANI
C/O THE SIND PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat: G. N. 898

[1] In reply to the addressee's telegram in which he had described how in Mirpurkhas seals had been broken and fresh foreign cloth had been surreptitiously introduced and had asked for telegraphic instructions whether "under above circumstances original shops may be picketed also if picketing permissible for recovery fines". *Vide* also "Letter to Jairamdas Doulatram", 7-5-1931

163. LETTER TO QUMER AHMED[1]

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 19, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I would welcome anything that will remove the present deadlock. But what I notice is that the heart is lacking.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 5119

164. LETTER TO DENNIS C. TROTH[2]

NAINITAL,
May 19, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I am very sorry to inform you that I have no time to write the article you want.

Yours Sincerely,

From a microfilm: S. N. 17003

165. LETTER TO SAILENDRA NATH GHOSE

NAINITAL,
May 19 [1931][3]

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I appreciate your anxiety for me to visit America but I cannot summon enough courage for the visit as yet and you will have observed that many friends dissuade me from sucha visit. You must have seen even my going to London is an uncertainty.

Yours Sincerely,

From a photostat : S. N. 17013

[1] The name of the addressee is supplied from the G. N. register.

[2] Professor of Education and Psychology, State College, Pennsylvannia, U. S. A.

[3] The year is inferred from the contents of the addressee's letter in which he had written: "What America may mean to the coming negotiations between you and the British Premier will be understood by you only when you will come to this country. The importance of America can be judged from the fact that all the biggest guns of the British—Churchill, Baldwin and a host of lesser figures will be coming to this country next fall to speak on India. . . . For the success of your negotiations—for the interests of India—it is absolutely desirable that you make up your mind to come to this country after the London Conference. . . . "

166. LETTER TO DURGA PRASANNA CHATTERJEE

NAINITAL,
May 19, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1] . I have no power to help you in the matter referred to by you. But let me point out to you that to gain representation is surely not the way to deal with the undoubtedly critical economic situation in Bengal.

Yours Sincerely,

From a microfilm: S. N. 17071

167. LETTER TO GULSHAN RAI

NAINITAL,
May 19, [*1931*][2]

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter[3] and the cuttings which I shall read with attention.

Yours Sincerely,

From a photostat: S. N. 17076

[1] The addressee had written to Gandhiji for "directions as to the best course the poor Bengali merechants should adopt in their utter helplessness so far as their position is concerned in relation to the ensuring Indian Constitutional Reform measures, Franchise Committee and the Second Round Table Conference. . . ." He felt that "the absence of a competent representative from Bengal. . . has put the Bengali mercantile community in a sad plight. . . ."

[2] The year is inferred from the addressee's letter which is dated 15-5-1931.

[3] The addressee had enclosed for Gandhiji's perusal his articles published in *The Tribune* on the separation of Burma, Dismemberment of the Punjab, and the Minority or Communal Problem. He had written. "It is my conviction that the communal problem in the Punjab and Bengal will never be solved unless effective majority is assured to the Muslims in these two provinces. It would be better under the circumstances to constitute Chittagong, Dacca, and Rajshahi Divisions of Bengal in to a separate province. In that ase Muslims will be about 70% in East Bengal, and Hindus will predominate in West Bengal. Similarly if Ambala Division is separated from the Punjab, the Muslims population in the rest of the Punjab would be raised from 56% to 65%. If the Muslims got effective majority in the newly constituted provinces of Punjab and East Bengal, I am sure they will have no difficulty in accepting joint electrorates."

168. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

NAINITAL,
May 19, 1931

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

I have your letter[1] of 16th instant. I had to discuss a similar question with Mr. Emerson. I found that under ordinance 9, there was no question of compensation. I am afraid therefore that there is no prospect of getting any compensation.

Yours Sincerely,

From a microfilm: S. N. 17078

169. LETTER TO BODHRAJ

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 19, 1931

DEAR LALA BODHRAJ[2],

I have your letter[3] about Lala Lok Nath. Could you send me a copy of the full record of his case. I shall then see what can be done.

Yours Sincerely,

From a microfilm: S. N. 17079

[1] The addressee had passed on to Gandhiji the information received from the manager of Peshawar Khadi Bhandar that in 1930 the Government had confiscated all the goods, cash registers and cash box containing Rs. 198 and personal effects of the manager and that even after the Settlement only onefourth of the goods and the broken cash box had been returned. He had requested Gandhiji to take up this matter with Emerson.

[2] President, Congress Committee, Multan city

[3] The addressee had informed Gandhiji about the continued in carceration of Lok Nath of Multan who had refused to give a bond of good behaviour while Sham Dass convicted in an identical case had been released after the Settlement.

170. LETTER TO M. I. DAVID

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 19, 1931

DEAR MR. DAVID,

I have your letter of the 14th. I see that you are pushing forward your programme of goodwill. You know that you have my sympathy in your laudable endeavour and just now I feel that I can best serve the common purpose by saying nothing in *Young India* that might in any way hamper you. The letter to Lord Irwin of young Europeans, I am ashamed to have to confess, I had not seen. I am therefore thankful for the copy you have considerately sent me. It is undoubtedly a good letter. Lord Irwin"s reply is worthy of him.

The proposed manifesto is still, I suppose, a private document. The reference to fair trade and living conditions requires a closer examination. I suppose you are aware that Indians in great Britain do not enjoy the rights 'the manifesto assumes they do enjoy. There can be no comparison between the Indian demands in South Africa and the European demand in India. The Indian in South Africa suffers from social, commercial and legal disabilities and is treated as an inferior being. The Indian demand therefore is to rise to a status of equality. The European in India enjoys in every walk of life a position of privilege and his demand for equality is tantamount to the retention of the privileged position. When, therefore, India comes [in] to her own, Europeans are bound to feel the pinch if they are not satisfied, that to be just, the position of privilege must be surrendered. Apart from this the European in Free India has not only nothing to fear but his resourcefulness and his ability will always make him a desirable citizen.

Yours Sincerely,

M. I. DAVID, ESQ.
FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S. N. 17095

171. LETTER TO SUKHENDUBIKAS CHAUDHURI

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 19, 1931

Can I make public use of your letter? Can you prove the facts related?

SYT. SUKHENDUBIKAS CHAUDHURI

PATIYA, DT. CHITTAGONG

From a microfilm: S. N. 17096

172. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 19, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

Though your postscript tells me that you expect no acknowledgment to your letest letter, as I have a few moments I want to say that you ought not to be distressed by what you think is want of regard for you on the part of either myself or the other members of the Working Committee. What really is the case is that they do not see eye to eye with you on the things that are today agitating the country. And how shall you blame those who cannot see eye to eye with you even though they may wish to do so?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SYT. C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR
FAIRYFALLS VIEW
KODAIKANAL OBSERVATORY P.O.

From a photostat : S. N. 17098

173. LETTER TO KIRBY PAGE

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 19, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I deeply appreciated the cable sent by you and other friends. Without the cable too I had no intention of going to America just yet[1]. But of course your cable and the letters since received have shown that my disinclination was well-grounded.

Yours sincerely,

KIRBY PAGE, ESQ.
NEW YORK (U.S.A.)

From a photostat : S. N. 17099

174. LETTER TO BOYD TUCKER

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 19, 1931

MY DEAR BOYD,

I have your letter. I understand more fully the reason for your wanting to accompany me to London should I go there. At the present moment however there is neither any prospect of going to London nor to America, to America much less. I shall certainly publish your letter[2] regarding missionary enterprise.

BOYD TUCKER, ESQ.
C/O POSTMASTER
SRINAGAR (KASHMIR)

From a photostat : S. N. 17100

175. LETTER TO K. T. MATHEW

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 19, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I do remember having received the letters and documents mentioned by you. I made no original sugges-

[1] *Vide* also "Notes", sub-title A Cry in the Wilderness", 14-5-1931
[2] *Vide* "Christian Missions", 28-5-1931

tion. Members of the rival organizations saw me and I certainly approved of the idea of amalgamation of the two. Whether it was to be under the auspices of the Congress or not was a matter for the Amalgamation Committee to decide. There seems to me to be nothing in your letter to warrant a different opinion.

Yours sincerely,

K. T. MATHEW, ESQ.
GENERAL SECRETARY
ALL INDIA STATES SUBJECTS' CONFERENCE
KUNNAMKULAM (COCHIN STATE)

From a microfilm : S. N. 17101

176 . LETTER TO NIRANJAN PATNAIK

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 19, 1931

MY DEAR NIRANJAN,

I have your letter. I hope you will soon be free from your pecuniary troubles.

There is just now not even a prospect of my going to London, still less the idea of building up a secretariat. Nor have I pictured to myself the number of secretaries to be taken with me. I do not recall the remark imputed to me by you and if I did, it must have been more by way of a joke than anything else. What could an Utkal Secretary do in London? The real redistribution will take place here and not in London.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. NIRANJAN PATNAIK
C/O UDYOGA MANDIR
BERHAMPUR, B.N.RLY.

From a microfilm : S. N. 17102

177. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

NAINITAL,
May 19, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I have received the enclosed account of a lathi charge in Ludhiana[1] from a member of the Ludhiana Congress Committee. Of course it has been given to me for publication. Although it has no direct connection with the Settlement I feel that its spirit should prevent such occurrences. If you agree with me, you will please enquire. I shall await your reply before publishing the details. An eye-witness came all the way from Ludhiana to Kalka to describe the whole scene.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

H. W. EMERSON, ESQ.
SIMLA

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

178. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

NAINITAL,
May 18/19, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

We have just arrived at Nainital. But, today being my silence day, I have some peace. I am, therefore, trying to attend to part of the correspondence which has accumulated. I read Purushottam's letter. I should know who the lawyers are. Are you sure that connections with them have not been broken off in haste? I cannot judge from here. I suppose whatever is necessary has been done about Purushottam's demands.

Keep me informed about the success or failure of the Punjabi vaid.

I think we shall return to Borsad some time about the 25th. I shall know more definitely on Wednesday.

Prabhudas and Dhiru have arrived. Rambhau is yet to arrive.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] On May 16, 1931; *vide*, "Is It Crumbling ?", 9-7-1931.

[PS.][1]

Rambhau arrived yesterday evening.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—9 : Shri Narandas Gandhine, Pt. I, pp. 252-3. Also C.W. 8161. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

179. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

May 20, 1931

CHI. MADHAVJI,

I got your letter, and also Surendra's. The news is painful, but cases like this are bound to occur at a time of awakening such as the present. We cannot inform the authorities, as that might lead to the punishing of innocent people. Informing the authorities would have been a breach of trust, and I cannot, at the moment at any rate, think of any case or example in which breach of trust becomes a duty. It is one thing when a man puts confidence in us and confesses a crime, another when we come to have indirect information regarding anybody's crime. In certain circumstances it may be our duty to make use of the information indirectly received, but no such duty arises in this case at all. Hence your job at present is to bring about a reformation, by whatever means, among those now engaged in terrorism.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I will leave for Gujarat in two or three days, or it may be even tomorrow.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 6815

180. SPEECH AT NAINITAL

May 20, 1931

Replying to the address Mahatmaji referred to his interview with the Governor[2] and said that at such a time as this a man in his position could not say as much as the public might be expecting from him. He further said that non-violence was their duty so long as the Congress did not decide otherwise. He further asked the citizens what they had done towards the propagation of khaddar which they had

[1] This was added on May 19.

[2] *Vide* "Sir Malcolm Hailey's Note on discussions with Gandhiji", 20-5-1931

promised to do two years before. He urged upon them the importance of khaddar towards helping the attainment of swaraj, without which, he said, India could not be free. He impressed upon them that by merely going to the Round Table Conference he could not achieve all that the Congress was fighting for unless the people stuck to their duties which is the precedent condition for the attainment of swaraj.

The Hindustan Times, 22-5-1931

181. CONGRESS VOTERS

A correspondent asks :

At the time of elections to Congress Committees

1. Can a Congress candidate register original Congress members and himself pay the four-anna fee ?

2. In order to obtain votes can a candidate send conveyances at his own expense to the voters ?

3. In order to influence voters can a candidate give feasts to voters?

4. Can a voter take part in voting although he is not a habitual wearer of khadi?

These are very relevant questions. My answer to the first three questions is that although the practice would be very reprehensible, I very much fear that there is nothing in the consti- tution and there are no bye-laws preventing it. My answer regarding the fourth is an emphatic 'no'. Thus therefore though a candidate can, if he wishes, pay the registration fee on behalf of the members and send them conveyances and give them feasts in order to induce them to vote for him I do hope that for their own sakes and for the sake of the Congress and the country candidates will refrain from resorting to any practice that might amount to bribery or an improper inducement. I have never been able to understand this craze for membership of Congress Committees, and Congress Committees formed in such a manner instead of being instruments of service can easily become those of mischief and disservice. So far as the habitual wearing of khadi is concerned there is no doubt that the rule is more often broken than observed. It is a remarkable phenomenon that habitual wearers of khadi, and they are thousands, do not care to appear on the Congress register and those who are on the Congress register do not, in many cases, take the trouble of wearing khadi. One reason for the laxity is that partisans are brought in at the eleventh hour nominally to become members and to disappear from view as soon as the elections are over. New lists are made at new elections or even bye-elections. In

spite of this tragic fact, the Congress is daily growing in power. It is becoming more and more popular. It attracts more and more crowds. Its mandates find ready acceptance from the vast mass of people. This phenomenon can only be explained on the supposition that though the Congress has indifferent representatives, somehow or other it represents and voices the wants and aspirations of the people who remain unaffected by the improprieties of the representatives and support the Congress merely for what it stands for without looking into or caring for the quality of its representatives. If my analysis is correct, the moral is obvious. The Congress will cease to be the power it is if the reprehensible practices referred to by the correspondent do not cease. Congress workers will not always be indifferent.

Young India, 21-5-1931

182. NOTES

PICKETING

Congressmen should know that the Government of India have been receiving complaints from the provincial Governments that picketing is not always peaceful. I do not know how far these complaints are justified. But we cannot be too strict in the observance of our part of the Settlement irrespective of how the authorities implement their part of it. Let us realize that the stricter we are, the greater will be our prestige and strength. I therefore repeat what I have said before:[1]

1. There should be no coercion direct or indirect.
2. There should be no show of intimidation, hence not more than say five pickets should work at one and the same place at a time.
3. There should be no more than courteous entreaty and distribution of literature.
4. There should be no fine levied by Congress Committees for breach of promises by foreign-cloth dealers.
5. There should be no hooting of purchasers of foreign cloth.
6. There should be no cordons formed to surround the would-be purchasers.
7. There should be no lying down to block the passage of customers or trolleys carrying foreign cloth.

If there are those who think that picketing under such restrictions will be of no avail, they may give it up and run the risk of

[1] *Vide* "My Notes", sub-title To Workers

foreign cloth being sold under their noses. It is better that foreign cloth is sold than that, in order to prevent its sale, we should break the letter or the spirit of the Settlement.

Boycott of foreign cloth will ultimately succeed only when the Congress message has penetrated the masses and the khadi spirit permeates them. The real work of propaganda and production lies in the villages.

We should remember too that boycott of foreign cloth is pursued for its great economic and social consequence. And it is just as necessary to boycott Japanese or Italian cloth or yarn as it is to boycott British cloth or yarn. Indeed it is more necessary to boycott Japanese cloth because it offers greater competition both tokhadi and indigenous mill cloth. We have no ill-will against Japan. We pursue foreign-cloth boycott because it is an economic necessity for the nation.

What I have said about the method of picketing applies equally to liquor picketing. That too depends for its ultimate success in penetration into the home of the drinkers.

SETTLEMENT PRISONERS

I have been receiving complaints from many provinces saying that there are still unreleased prisoners covered by the IrwinGandhi Settlement. These are claimed by the Governments concerned as not covered by the Settlement. The only way relief can be obtained in such cases is to study the records of each case. I would therefore ask all Committees who have sent me lists to examine the cases themselves and where they are satisfied that the record shows violence (not merely technical, or incitement thereto), they should for the time being omit their names. Where the local examination shows that there is no violence or incitement proved, they should send the record to me and I shall go through such records myself and wherever necessary obtain the opinion of some philanthropic counsel and press for their release. Let it be remembered that according to the strict interpretation of the relevant clause of the Settlement we shall have to go simply by the record although those who know may be certain of the innocence of any particular prisoner. Of those against whom the record gives no proof of violence, we can demand release. Such was Sjt. Rajwade's case.

The other prisoners and their friends may derive satisfaction

from the assurance that in the event of a final Settlement their release is a certainty and in the event of a breakdown in spite of all efforts, they will find their old companions returning to them. For the result they will not have to wait long.

POORMAN'S SALT

I regret that as yet the public do not know how the salt law relief clause of the Irwin-Gandhi Settlement is being worked. I have suggested to the authorities that they should issue definite instructions so that the people concerned may know where they stand. My suggestion has been accepted by the authorities. The public therefore may expect publication of the instructions in the near future.[1]

THAT AMERICAN VISIT[2]

Dr. Harry Ward writes

> May I add a word to the cable which, with others, I sent you today. First let me emphasize the fact that the reason I previously gave against your coming to this country still holds now, and with increased force. Our papers have become increasingly sensational and you would be misrepre- sented by them, as well as exploited by the sensation-hunting section of our population. Thus your power to help us toward a better way of life would be seriously diminished, if not defeated. But the other reason against your coming is more important. I am sure that it would injure and not help the cause of India in your negotiation at London. There is under the surface a deep English resentment against the United States. This is due to her economic decline and our position of financial dominance. This feeling quickly seizes upon any utterances about British policy as a means for its expression. Thus a perfectly harmless appeal that some of use signed to MacDonald last year to meet with you face to face and seek an adjustment, was the occasion of much criticism of those who signed it, and of America in general, from British ministers of religion. Also there has been much complaint in British papers concerning our sympathy with the nationalist cause. Because British propaganda no longer dominated the situation here we have been told that we were only the victims of clever propaganda from nationalist sources. You can see at once, therefore, that any manifestation of sympathy with India which your presence here might evoke, would work strongly against you at London.

[1] *Vide* "Salt", 28-5-1931
[2] *Vide* also "Notes" sub-title Remoured American Visit", 14-5-1931

Father Elwin writing to Mirabehn says :

> I thought I might tell you how I spent my three hours on Good Friday. I did not go to Church but spent the time in my cell spinning. I am sending a little of the yarn—very poor I am afraid—but it is a token. While spinning I meditated on the crucifixion. It seemed to fit in very well—the cry of desolation of God's poor stretched on the cross of exploitation, the age-long "I thirst" of those to whom the charkha with its message of love can bring relief, the wonderful patience of the poor—"Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." The charkha then seemed to be the dual symbol of our union with the poor and our union with God. It would be very good if people would generally keep Good Friday in this way. It was a real experience of purification.

I have examined the yarn sent by Father Elwin. It is by no means poor in quality as he thinks. It is quite weavable. The count is somewhere near 20. Nevertheless, I agree that it is poor for the sprit of love and dedication that lay behind the sacrificial act. But no amount of love or dedication can make up for the want of regular and long practice. If therefore I have agreed with the self-abasing verdict of Father Elwin I have done so not by way of criticism but to tell those who might be induced to turn to the spinning-wheel that they will not be satisfied with merely drawing the thread, for the thread thus drawn will not be yarn, even as any angle drawn will not be a right angle. Just as all right angles must be 90 degrees so must all yarn be even and strong enough to be easily weavable. The count does not matter. A spinner who draws an even and strong thread will automatically draw at least a six count and if his wheel is good and his spindle straight and fine, he will draw without difficulty anything between 10 and 20 counts. I commend Father Elwin's experience to all who love and would identify themselves with the semi-starved millions of India.

Young India, 21-5-1931

183. A NOTE

NANITAL,
May 21, 1931

It is my firm view that Rani Vidyavati should not involve herself with the editorship of any paper.

From the Hindi Original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

184. IN 1828

Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta of the Khadi Pratishthan is editing a Bengali newspaper called *Rastravani*. He recently unearthed a letter addressed to the Editor of *Samachar Darpan* which was published in Bengali in the twenties of the 19th century. As the letter was of great importance showing how the charkha was being slowly destroyed and how it was valued by women in those days, he has published it in his paper and sent me its translation. I am sure, it will be read with interest by all who are at all interested in the khadi movement. Here is the letter :[1]

The representation of a spinner

To the Editor, *Samachar*

I am a spinner. After having suffered a great deal, I am writing this letter. Please publish this in your paper. . . .

When my age was five and a half *gandas* (22) I became a widow with three daughters. My husband left nothing at the time of his death. . . . I sold my jewellery for his *shraddha* ceremony. At last as we were on the verge of starvation God showed me a way by which we could save ourselves. I began to spin on *takli* and charkha. . . .

The weavers used to visit our houses and buy the charkha yarn at three *tolas* per rupee. Whatever amount I wanted as advance from the weavers, I could get for the asking. This saved us from cares about food and cloth.

In a few years' time I got together seven *ganda* rupees (Rs. 28). With this I married one daughter. And in the same way all three daughters. . . .

Now for 3 years, we two women, mother-in-law and me are in want of food. The weavers do not call at the house for buying yarn. Not only this, if the yarn is sent to market still it is not sold even at one-fourth the old prices. I do not know how it happened. I asked many about it. They say that *Bilati*[2] yarn is being largely imported. The weavers buy that yarn and weave. I had a sense of pride that *Bilati* yarn could not be equal to my yarn, but when I got *Bilati* yarn I saw that it was better than my yarn. I heard that its price is Rs. 3 or Rs. 4 per seer. I beat my brow and said, "Oh God, there are sisters more distressed even than me." I know that all men of *Bilat* are rich but now I see that there are women there who are poorer than me. I fully realized the poverty which induced those poor women to spin. They have sent the product of so much toil out here because they could not sell it there. It would have been

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here. Concerning a doubt raised as to the authenticity of the letter, *vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 2-6-1931

[2] Foreign

> something if they were sold here at good prices. But it has brought our ruin only. Man cannot use the cloth out of this yarn even for two months; it rots away. I therefore entreat the spinners over there, that, if they will consider this representation, they will be able to judge whether it is fair to send yarn here or not.
>
> SHANTIPUR
>
> A representation from a
>
> suffering spinner
>
> *Samachar Darpan*

The reader will not fail to observe the nobility of the writer who in her blissful ignorance felt that yarn was spun by the hands of her *Bilati* sisters poorer than herself and therefore felt for them. Alas, her belief was baseless. She could have stood her own if the foreign yarn had been hand-spun. She could have stood her own even against the foreign yarn, if behind it there had been no policy of determination to capture the Indian trade and kill the national village industry.

Young India, 21-5-1931

185. A WOMAN'S SACRIFICE

During the great awakening that took place last year amongst women there were heroines whose mute work the nation will never know. Now and then however one gets information of such village work. Here is one such sample sent by a friend:[1]

> When our Congress camp was declared illegal and locked up by the police we shifted to the hut of a poor Mahishya woman—Habu's mother of Baradongal. We have read of Gorki's mother. We saw her incarnate in Habu's mother. Night and day she used to cook for us workers. She nursed the sick amongst us. She consoled those that were troubled in heart and thus became real mother to us who would other- wise have felt motherless. We had graduates and M.A.s amongst us proud of their educational gifts but all of us were compelled to call Habu's mother our own. Her sacrifice and great devotion to duty commanded that homage from us.

Young India, 21-5-1931

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Bhupendra Narayan Sen", 17-5-1931.

186. TELEGRAM TO CHAMPABEHN

NAINITAL,
May 21, 1931

CHAMPABEHN
CARE RASHTRIYASHALA
RAJKOT

VERY SORRY ABOUT RATILAL. AM ARRANGING ABOUT SPECIALIST GOING RAJKOT SEE RATILAL.

BAPU

From a microfilm : S. N. 17108

187. TELEGRAM TO DR. MEHTA

NAINITAL,
May 21, 1931

DOCTOR MEHTA
CARE SIR MANUBHAI
SIMLA

RATILAL SON DOCTOR MEHTA OF RANGOON COMPLETELY DEMENTED BOISTEROUS UNRULY. HAS TO BE KEPT IN CHAINS. HE IS IN RAJKOT. IF YOU KNOW ANY SPECIALIST AND THINK WORTHWHILE PLEASE ASK HIM PROCEED RAJKOT EXAMINE RATILAL. HIS FEES WILL BE PAID. WIRE REPLY NAINITAL.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S. N. 17115

188. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, CONGRESS COMMITTEE CHITTAGONG

NAINITAL,
May 21, 1931

SECRETARY
CONGRESS COMMITTEE

IMPOSSIBLE GIVE OPINION WITHOUT KNOWING FULL FACTS.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S. N. 17116

189. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

CAMP NAINITAL,
AS AT SABARMATI,
May 21, 1931

DEAR DR. MAHMUD,

I know you are doing most valuable work. I am not going to discuss with you how mass work can be most effectively done if only because I hardly scrape together a few minutes to attend to correspondence. I shall therefore reserve it for discussion when we meet.

As you see, I am writing this from Nainital where I saw the Governor yesterday. No final conclusion was reached about the revenue matters.

I leave for Gujarat in two or three days if not earlier. The earliest we shall meet, I suppose, will be when the Working Committee meeting takes place early next month. But of course you can anticipate that date and meet me whenever you like. You need no appointment. Do you?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. SYED MAHMUD
BAR-AT-LAW
CHANRA (DT. SARAN)

From a photostat : G. N. 5109

190. LETTER TO MOHAMMED ISMAIL KHAN

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 21, 1931

DEAR NAWAB SAHEB,

I thank you for your letter of 19th instant. I have not seen the report you refer to in your letter. But I may state my position thus:

So far as I am concerned I should endorse without hesitation any solution that Mussalman friends as a whole may present but that by itself would not solve our difficulties. Our difficulties could only be solved by either Hindus and Mussalmans settling with the Sikhs or Hindus settling both with Mussalmans and Sikhs. But so far as I am personally concerned I should endorse any solution presented by

Sikh friends as a whole as I would the Mussalman claim. But if there is a conflict between the Sikh and the Mussalman claim, then my endorsement of the claim of each would be of little value. I have therefore assumed that whatever Mussalman friends or Sikh friends present as a final claim would take note of the other party. If you find any flaw in this, you will not hesitate to let me know. All I want is an honourable settlement wholly satisfactory to the Mussalmans, to the Sikhs as also to all other communities who may wish a communal solution.

As to your other question supposing that I survive the future constitution and am allowed to have any hand in its working I would have no solution on any but strictly national lines and I would so work the constitution that I should disarm all suspicion.

So far as the Europeans are concerned, the question is not what privileges they should get by reason of their being in a minority but what privilges they will surrender so as to be on a par with us. Am I clear?

I would ask you to believe me to be the same man whom you were good enough to have as your guest in Meerut in those days when for the moment we had begun to think that we were but children of the same mother having the same aspirations and having full trust in one another.

Yours sincerely,

NAWAB MOHAMMED ISMAIL KHAN SAHEB
MUSTAPHA CASTLE, MEERUT

From a photostat : S. N. 17107

191. LETTER TO MAHARAJ KUMAR OF VIZIANAGRAM

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 21, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. As I expect to deal with the subject discussed by you in the pages of *Young India* I need not send you a detailed reply.

Yours sincerely,

MAHARAJ KUMAR SAHIB OF VIZIANAGRAM
VIZIANAGRAM PALACE, BENARES

From a microfilm : S. N. 17108-a

192. LETTER TO SECRETARY, CONGRESS COMMITTEE, CHITTAGONG

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 21, 1931

THE SECRETARY
CONGRESS COMMITTEE
CHITTAGONG

DEAR SIR,

In reply to your telegram I have sent you the following:

Impossible give opinion without knowing full facts.

Subject to any change that might have to be made after knowing further facts I can say that punitive tax imposed for anything done since Settlement would be no violation thereof. Nor refusal to pay such tax will necessarily be violation of Settlement. But those who will embark upon no-tax campaign will do so after fullest consideration and on their own sole responsibility.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S. N. 17109

193. LETTER TO S. G. VAZE

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 21, 1931

MY DEAR VAZE,

You never failed to send me the usual anniversary notice and I have ever failed to attend the function. The fact however that I have never been able to attend the function, I am sure, will not be interpreted by any of the members to mean that I have ceased to be one of you. Though our views may be as poles asunder, though we may not seem to be working together on the same platform, I have always felt that we are at heart one, being disciples of the same guru.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. S. G. VAZE
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
POONA

From a photostat : S. N. 17111

194. LETTER TO KRISHNA DAS

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 21, 1931

MY DEAR KRISHNA DAS,

Your old familiar handwriting shows that you have made remarkable progress. You will not be in a hurry to regain original strength. You must have no temperature at all. At the end of this dreadful sickness you should be stronger than you were before. Continue to write to me regularly. We all leave here for Borsad at the latest on Sunday.

SYT. KRISHNA DAS
SHAKTI ASHRAM
P.O. RAJPUR
(DT. DEHRA DUN),

From a microfilm : S. N. 17112

195. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

AS AT BORSAD,
May 21, 1931

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

You will see the enclosed. Do the needful and tell me who the writer is. Can the allegations be true?

SYT. JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
SWARAJ ASHRAM
BARDOLI

From a microfilm : S. N. 17113

196. LETTER TO A. FENNER BROCKWAY

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 21, 1931

DEAR MR. BROCKWAY,

Evidently you have made up your mind that I am coming to London. But as yet I see no sign on the horizon warranting even the hope that I shall be with you soon. But if I am, of course I should love

to be with the members of your society and to engage in an informal heart to heart conversation.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

A. FENNER BROCKWAY, ESQ.
126 SHEPHERD'S BUSH ROAD
LONDON W. 6

From a photostat : S. N. 17114

197. SPEECH AT POLITICAL SUFFERERS' CONFERENCE

KUMAON,
[*May 21, 1931*][1]

You must have seen the resolution regarding the declaration of fundamental rights passed by the Congress. There are a few items in it such as the reduction of military expenditure to one half, which cannot be achieved before swaraj, but there are other items such as compulsory primary education, ban on foreign cloth, equality of rights and opportunities, for which we should not wait till the establishment of swaraj. We should establish these conditions just now and this will bring us nearer swaraj. We can open schools in every village, manufacture and encourage khaddar and make wars on untouchability.

(Here Mahatmaji referred to each item in the declaration of rights as published in an old issue of *Young India* seriatim.)

Referring to the maximum pay of the public servants, Mahatmaji said as follows :—

You should not think that this proposal is meant to remain on paper. This will be enforced when swaraj is obtained. This was added to the declaration of rights after full and careful consideration. I am old and even if I die, Jawaharlal is certain to enforce it. But it is unjust to suppose that old people die before young men, because it is not God's law. Let me assure you that this proposal will be enforced. In Japan, which is an independent country, the maximum pay of public servants is Rs. 500.

Ours is a country where the average income per individual is about Rs. 40 and this includes crores of millionaires. So anyone who

[1] From the *Hindu*, 21-5-1931

lives on more than Rs. 500 lives on loot. We regard this amount as insufficient because seeing the exploitation of the foreigners and the life they lead, we want to copy them.

It is said that lawyers and industrialists will earn more than Rs. 500 per month. I say they should not earn more than Rs. 500 per month. If they do so in a country like ours they will be living on loot. They should pay the surplus back to the country.

The Hindustan Times, 31-5-1931

198. TELEGRAM TO VICEROY

Important [On or before *May 22, 1931*][1]

I am grateful for your telegram of 21st received through His Excellency the Governor of the United Provinces then directly. I should be . . .[2] to visit London even upon this subject and explain to responsible statesmen that whilst insisting upon making India free, Congress wishes to live on friendliest terms with the English people. But for reasons given to Your Excellency I am unable to take part in the Round Table Conference. Though open to conviction, I still retain the opinion that I could not usefully serve on the Conference unless communal settlement is reached. Moreover, being directly responsible for the settlement between Government and Congress I could not leave India whilst anxious difficulties are exprienced regarding its working. I still remain the sole representative on behalf of Congress.

GANDHI

From a photostat : C.W. 9367. Courtesy : India Office Library

199. TELEGRAM TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

TAKULA, NAINITAL,
May 22, 1931

JAMNADAS GANDHI

RAJKOT

DOCTOR KADAM OF THANA WILL REACH RAJKOT EXAMINE RATILAL DO NEEDFUL. ESTABLISH COMMUNICATION WITH HIM.

BAPU

From a microfilm : S. N. 17122

[1] The telegram was quoted by the addressee in his telegram of May 22, 1931 to the Secretary of State for India.

[2] Omission as in the source

200. TELEGRAM TO RAMBHOROSELAL

TAKULA, NAINITAL,
May 22, 1931

RAMBHOROSELAL
CARE ARATHDHAR
BURDWAN

SEND FULL PARTICULARS PANDIT GOVINDBALLABH PANT.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S. N. 17123

201. TELEGRAM TO MOHANLAL SAKSENA

TAKULA, NAINITAL,
May 22, 1931

MOHANLAL SAKSENA
CARE CONGRESS
LUCKNOW

HUNGERSTRIKE SEEMS WHOLLY UNNECESSARY. RIGHT OR WRONG EVERYBODY SHOULD SUBMIT DECISION SUPERIOR COMMITTEES.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S. N. 17125

202. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

NAINITAL,
May 22, 1931

In the course of an interview to the Associated Press today, Mahatma Gandhi declared that he was unable to make any statement yet regarding his plans for going to London.[1] His views in respect of the Federal Structure Committee meeting in London on the 29th June were in the hands of the Government of India and there the matters stand.

The Hindustan Times, 24-5-1931

[1] The other delegates, including the princes, had agreed to sail on 13-6-1931.

203. CABLE TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI[1]

TAKULA, NAINITAL,
May 23, 1931

SASTRI
CARE KALOPH[2]
LONDON

YOUR KIND JOINT CABLE. IN ABSENCE SOLUTION COMMUNAL QUESTION HERE HAVE NO CONFIDENCE ATTENDING ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE. MOREOVER SOME LOCAL GOVERNMENTS' ATTITUDE SETTLEMENT MAKES MY LEAVING INDIA DIFFICULT IF NOT IMPOSSIBLE BUT IF SATISFACTORY WORKING SETTLEMENT CAN BE ATTAINED AND IF I AM INVITED FOR DISCUSSION AND EXPLAINING CONGRESS POSITION WILL GLADLY SAIL ON SHORT NOTICE.

GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 273, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

204. LETTER TO MALCOLM HAILEY

TAKULA, NAINITAL,
May 23, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have now completed my summary investigation. I have had the benefit of the advice of those taluqdars who were able to come to Nainital. I feel and perhaps you will agree that I must give some guidance to the *kisans*[3]. I could not tell them to accept as sufficient the relief proposed to be given by the Government. Everything I have examined goes to show that it is wholly inade-quate to meet the exceptional situation that faces the *kisans.* I propose therefore to do the next best thing possible. In the absence of response by the Government to any of the proposals made by me, I propose to tell the *kisans* what in my opinion is the least that they should pay, throwing

[1] This was in reply to a joint cable from V.S.S. Sastri, C.F. Andrews and H.S.L. Polak saying : ". . . If communal minorities problem insoluble immediately India we urge it be brought here where atmosphere better. Failing everything else in last resort impartial arbitration still possible. We therefore convinced prompt announcement affirmative decision your earliest arrival urgently desirable. . . "

[2] Telegraphic address of H.S.L. Polak

[3] Peasants

the responsibility upon them of paying more wherever it is possible for them to do so. I have accordingly drafted a manifesto[1] which I enclose herewith. If you think that its publication will in any way embarrass the Government and if Your Excellency will show me a better way I shall gladly adopt it if it is at all possible for me to do so. And if you will have me to wait upon you in this connection I would gladly do so.

I have arranged, unless you have me to do otherwise, to leave Nainital this afternoon at 3 p.m.[2]

I remain,
Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

HIS EXCELLENCY SIR MALCOLM HAILEY
GOVERNOR OF U.P., NAINITAL

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-E, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

205. TO THE KISANS OF THE U.P.

NAINITAL,
May 23, 1931

During the late struggle, in some districts, the non-payment of taxes was being organized as part of Civil Disobedience for the attainment of *purna* swaraj. But by reason of the Settlement between the Congress and the Government Civil Disobedience was discontinued and therefore also the non-payment of taxes.

But there was then deep economic distress among you. Bad as your condition was even in normal times, the unprecedented fall this year in the prices of the crops usually grown by you made it infinitely worse. And Congress workers reported that many of you were utterly unable to pay in full the rents due by you. In several districts inquiries were made in a few hundred villages disclosing a serious state of affairs. It was found that the price of your gross produce had fallen to such an extent that the sales were not enough to pay the rents. It was in this connection that I came to Nainital to see H. E. the Governor. His Excellency gave me a patient hearing and we fully discussed the situation. He was sympathetic. I told him that some Congress

[1] *Vide* the following item.
[2] For the addressee's reply, *vide* "Letter from Sir Malcolm Hailey", 23-5-1931

workers had assured me that the relief hitherto announced by the Government of the U.P. was hardly equal to the actual distress. And I submitted certain proposals which he kindly promised to consider.

I was bound meanwhile to tender you such advice as it was in my power to do. I have passed many an anxious hour discussing the situation with many co-workers. I have had the benefit of a frank and free discussion with important talukdars who were good enough to respond to my invitation to see me. I am gald to be able to say that they were in general agreement with the proposals suggested here under.

Concentrated work was done in the following among other districts: Agra, Muttra, Allahabad, Rai Bareily, Gorakhpore, Cawnpore, Lucknow, Pratapgarh, and Etawah. And for these it has been found that there should be a remission for the year 1338 Fasli of eight annas in the rupee in the case of statutory and non-occupancy tenants and four annas in the case of occupancy tenants. This general formula should be subject to variation as may be required by local conditions.

I have been told that in some districts the tenants are in a position to do with less reduction. Some districts again were hard hit by local calamities. The suggested reduction would naturally therefore not apply to the districts that might be able to pay more than what is suggested here, nor to those whose condition may be under the level found in the foregoing districts. Indeed even in the districts mentioned those of you who are able to pay more ought to do so. The Congress expects every tenant to pay as early as possible all the rent he can, and in no case as a general rule less than eight annas or four[1] annas as the case may be. But just as even in the same district there may be cases in which a larger payment is possible, it is equally possible that there may be cases in which less than eight annas or four[2] annas can only be paid. In such cases I hope the tenants will be treated liberally by the zamindars.

In every case you will see that you get against payment a full discharge from your obligation for the current year's rent.

I understand that several tenants were ejected during the struggle and others have been ejected since. Not to restore these to their holdings would be clearly against the atmosphere sought to be created by the Settlement. I have every hope, therefore, that against payment on

[1] A slip for 'twelve'; *vide* "A Correction",11-6-1931
[2] *ibid*

the scale suggested here the ejected tenants will be fully restored without any penalty.

I am hoping that payment will begin at once. It may be that you are not able to pay the full eight annas at once. In that case I trust you will get suspension, and that no coercive processes will be issued whether for the unpaid balance or for arrears if any, till the next harvest.

I would like to suggest to the Government, in view of the loss that your inability to pay the rents in full will cause to the zamindars, that they get a proportionate reduction in the revenue payable by them to the Government.

Lastly let me warn you against listening to the advice, if it has reached you, that you have no need to pay the zamindars any rent at all. I hope that you will not listen to such advice, no matter who gives it. Congressmen cannot, we do not seek to injure the zamindars. We aim not at destruction of property. We aim only at its lawful use.

It has been suggested that you will listen to the Congress when Congressmen tell you not to pay anything at all, but you will not listen to the Congress when it asks you to pay according to your ability. The opportunity has now come for you to falsify the calumny.

You have complained of very harsh treatment by or on behalf of some landlords. The Congress is trying and will try to investigate all your complaints, plead with the landlords and even addvise legal relief where such becomes imperative. But let it be also owned that sometimes some *kisans* too have gone astray and committed murderous assaults. These acts spoil the fair name of *kisans*, harm their cause and impair the usefulness of the Congress for service. For in the ultimate end you are the Congress. The Congress is incomplete in so far as it represents you insufficiently.

Please remember that the Congress aims at reaching *purna* swaraj through Truth and Non-violence. And it will fail in so far as the *kisans* fail to observe these two cardinal principles. You are milli-ons. When millions become untruthful and violent, it will mean self-destruction. You will therefore suffer injury without retaliation. You have now perhaps learnt that the best way of resisting injury is never to injure the injurer, but ever to refuse, no matter how much suffering the refusal costs us, to do his will when we know it to be wrong.

I am,

Your friend and servant,

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 28-5-1931

206. LETTER TO MALCOLM HAILEY

May 23, 1931

DEAR MR. HAILEY,

With reference to the Etawah case wherein the Congress Secretary was supposed to have circulated after the date of the Settlement notice amongst tenants advising them not to pay any rent at all I have made full inquiry and find that such notice was circulated in February last, but none after the Settlement. On the contrary a general notice withdrawing the notax agitation was circulated throughout the province on behalf of the Provincial Congress Committee. This matter was brought to the notice of Pt. Govind Ballabh Pant by the Chief Secretary and on the day that he received the intimation he made inquiries. The Secretary, Babu Gaya Prasad, immediately wrote in reply giving the information above mentioned. Moreover he is no longer occupying position of General Secretary of the Local Committee in Etawah. It would be perhaps interesting to know how the police came by the notice and came to the conclusion that it was being circulated after the date of the Settlement.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File NO. 16-E, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

207. SPEECH AT ZAMINDARS'MEETING, NAINITAL[2]

[*May 23, 1931*][3]

The Congress will stand by you certainly. But you will have to make your life correspond to your surroundings. In Bengal some years ago I was the guest of a zamindar who served me my milk and fruit in gold bowls and plates. The good host naturally thought that he was doing me the greatest honour by placing before me his costliest plate He could not know what was passing through my mind. 'Where did he get these golden plates from?' I was asking to myself, and the answer I got was:'From the substance of the ryots'. How then could I

[1] In his reply dated 29-5-1931, Hailey confirmed these facts and regretted the inconvenience caused by his wrong report.

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[3] From the *Hindustan Times,* 25-5-1931

reconcile myself to those costly luxuries? I would not mind your using gold plates provided your tenants were comfortable enough to afford silver plates, but where their life is one long-drawn-out agony, how dare you have those luxuries? You will remember, how, fifteen years ago, on the occasion of the opening of the Hindu University, I shocked the Rajas and Maharajas by a refere-nce to their glittering pomp and glory, and raised quite an uproar.[1] My views are the same today; only experience and life among the humble folk have confirmed them all the more.

Young India, 28-5-1931

208. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

[After *May 23, 1931*][2]

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I had your touching cable. I have sent you a reply to soothe you. I am not shirking the R.T.C. But it is not possible through a letter togive you an idea of the difficulties that face me. Provincial governments are trampling the Settlement under foot. Repression is raising its spiked head. If you have the patience to follow the pages of *Young India* you can learn something of what I mean. I have published as yet not one tenth of what is happening. The question then may be: Can I leave India when trouble is brewing here? But I am in touch with Simla.

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, p. 215

209. NOTES

REGARDING PICKETING

I extract the following questions from two letters :

1. Can fasting be resorted to while picketing those who break the seals of cloth which has been sealed?

2. Does fasting have a place in peaceful picketing?

3. If those against whom peaceful picketing is being carried on do not listen to reason, can social boycott be practised against them?

4. Can picketing be called off if a person promises not to import fresh foreign cloth and his old stock has already been sold out?

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Benares Hindu University", 6-2-1916
[2] *Vide* "Cable to v. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 23-5-1931

5. Should there be picketing against those who sell both foreign and Indian cloth?

6. Should we boycott those who have sealed up their stock of foreign cloth and promised to pay a certain fine if they break the seal? Shold we sit a *dharna*[1] before them?

The answers to these questions would be as follows :

1. Fasting can be resorted to only in regard to those who are closely associated with the person picketing, who have given a pledge out of the love resulting from that relationship and then broken it.

2. The reply to this is contained in the rule mentioned above.

3. Social boycott, which would imply denying the individual the services of the dhobi, the barber, the vaid, etc., should not be practised. But one is permitted to cut off relationship with such individuals by way of going to their homes for feasts on occasions such as marriages, and indeed one should do so. In short, they should not be harassed. The pain which they feel when we do not go to their homes for meals cannot be regarded as harassment.

4. It is our dharma to withdraw picketing if we are sure about the pledge.

5. Certainly.

6. We cannot resort to picketing if someone does not pay the fine, but we can do so if he sells foreign goods.With regard toboycott, refer to reply No. 4[2]. *Dharna* does not mean self-torture to press one's point.

ONE ADVANTAGE OF BOYCOTT

I take the follwing extract[3] from letters received by me:

I hope that these women have given up foreign cloth and started wearing khadi. Whether they have started doing so or not, the basic fact is that they have learnt simplicity along with the boycott of foreign goods. Everyone has got the experience that our craving for enjoyment increases with the acceptance of foreign goods and the idea gains ground that clothes are meant for adornment rather than for the purpose of covering our body. Our newspapers are not yet full of items on fashion but if we glance at English newspapers, we shall

[1] Squatting and fasting for the redress of a grievance

[2] This should perhaps be 3.

[3] Not translated here. It described the simplicity of women in a particular household.

see every day under the heading "fashion" pictures of new types of dresses together with alluring descriptions of them.

Hence, along with the giving up of foreign cloth we also rid ourselves of the glamour for false fashion and for this very reason khadi though expensive becomes inexpensive. A woman who used to wear separate saris while she is at home, while going out, while paying social calls, while visiting the temple, or who thus has four or five saris for daily wear now makes do with a single khadi sari and, therefore, easily saves a lot of money. When a person wearing a turban made of twelve yards of *mulmul*[1] starts wearing a khadi cap made of half a yard, however expensive khadi may be, he would easily save some money.

DISHONESTY OF BUSINESS MEN

An experienced gentleman makes the following compliant:[2]

There is nothing in this that is not well known. If business men had thought only of the good of the country, they would never have imported foreign cloth at all. To a large extent, dishonesty is implicit in all business. Merchants dealing in foreign cloth catch the eye because their business it widespread and, like a huge serpent, it has coiled itself around India and is gradually crushing her. No one can escape from that grip. We have now become conscious of how we are being crushed and hence we have started criticizing merchants dealing in foreign cloth and that is only proper.This awakening provides a remedy for the abovementioned and many other similar dishonest practices. Picketing is the ready remedy. The true remedy lies in reaching the villages. All such question as, for in-stance, whether a particular cloth is Indian or foreign, whether it is made in a mill which is boycotted or not, whether this khadi contains warp which is mill-made or hand-made, etc., will automatically disappear when the villagers spin yarn in their own homes, get it woven by their own weavers and start using such khadi. And hence I tell you for the thousandth time that the remedy for all deceit lies in khadi that is woven from yarn spun by yourselves. Just as adding jaggery makes a thing sweet, likewise, if we spin fine yarn, we get finer and cheaper khadi.

[1] Thin variety of plain muslim

[2] The letter is not translated here. It reported various ways in which foreign cloth was passed off as Indian cloth.

There can be no other cloth which is as cheap or cheaper and, if there is such cloth, it deserves to be discarded as it is stained with the blood of the poor.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-5-1931

210. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 24, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I have just arrived at Muttra and have to wait for the Frontier Mail for a about five hours. Local People have given me a version of what happened in a village called Bijhari near Muttra on 20th instant. I en-close herewith a copy of the statement they have given me. 18 men were arrested under warrant. The gravamen of the complaint however is that the police acted far in excess of their authority. There is no complaint against the warrant itself. It was perfectly right for the authorities to arrest the men if in their opinion they had done anything wrong.

I am going to Bardoli and I am likely to be there for at least two or three days.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Encl. 1

H. W. EMERSON, ESQ.
HOME SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SIMLA

Home Depatment, Political, File No. 33/9, 1931. Courtesy : National Archives of India

211. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON [1]

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 24, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I enclose herewith a copy of the report[2] received from Lala Duni Chand of Ambala, who is a prominent pleader in that part of the world. I would esteem a line from you even by wire as to whether you propose to take any action in the matter. Duty perhaps demands that I should take public notice of this action on the part of the Magistrate unless it is possible for you to get some relief. If the facts are as stated by Lala Duni Chand, the action on the part of the Magistrate denoted by these facts is surely against the spirit of peace which it was the prime object of the Settlement to establish.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

H. W. EMERSON, ESQ.
SIMLA

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

212. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 24, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I have your three letters forwarding me extracts from reports received by you from Surat, Assam and the U. P. They are having attention.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. W. EMERSON, ESQ.

Home Department, Political, File No. 33/9, 1931. Courtesy : National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to H. W. Emerson", 19-5-1931

[2] In which Duni Chand had stated ". . . I proceeded to Ludhiana on the afternoon of 18th May, 1931, to enquire into the happenings of the 16th May which had been reported to you at Kalka, . . . I am sorry to say that most of the officials at Ludhiana probably consider the Irwin-Gandhi Settlement as a scrap of paper. . . In my opinion there should be an independent enquiry by the representatives of the Government and the public not only into the happenings at Ludhiana but also into the general policy of the local authorities that has been hitherto pursued. . ."

213. LETTER TO GOSIBEHN CAPTAIN

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 24, 1931

I am waiting at Muttra Junction for the Frontier Mail to take me to Surat and thence to Bardoli. I have received your letter here. Did I say that even sewn pieces will be taken up? I do remember having said so about cut pieces. But let me have the number of people who want to get rid of cut pieces or sewn pieces together with the quantity and the market price.

I am glad the two sisters have at last gone to Panchgani for a little bit of rest and pure air. What about yours?

I reach Bardoli tomorrow noon.

MRS. GOSIBEHN CAPTAIN
78 NAPEAN SEA ROAD
MALABAR HILL, BOMBAY

From a microfilm : S.N. 17138

214. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 24, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. Of course I passed on your cable to Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan as soon as I received it. Now that I know more about what you meant you may depend upon my doing all I can. One thing I am going to do is to put myself in correspondence with Capt. Barnes.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

PROF. HORACE G. ALEXANDER
144 OAKTREE LANE
BIRMINGHAM

From a photostat : G.N. 1410

215. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 24, 1931

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your sad letter about Bholanath Sen[1] I have read all about the murder. I knew that both the picture and the writing were wholly inoffensive. But the complaint was that there was any portrait of the Prophet printed at all. Or course it is a silly complaint but anything is good enough to inflame the simple minded Pathan. In the face of such tragedies I know nothing so efficacious as prayer and utter silence when we can present no visible remedy. If the Hindu heart can be melted, the thing becomes easy. But before it can melt, you and I and perhaps thousands like us will have to give our lives and in order that they may become a pure sacrifice, we have to endeavour to become purer day by day, or better put, less impure day by day. Your description of the Bengal state of affairs is also sad. I am today in Muttra waiting for the Frontier Mail taking me to Surat. Most probably Subhasbabu will travel as far as Surat. I have not yet seen him. This is being dictated at the station. I am going to Bardoli on the Sardar's orders. My destination is Borsad but when I shall be able to go there I do not know.

Subhasbabu is with me on the train.[2]

Love.

BAPU

SYT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
SODEPUR (NEAR CALCUTTA)

From a photostat : G.N. 8033

216. LETTER TO CAPTAIN BARNES

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 24, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

Prof Horace Alexander writes to me a long letter with reference to the troubles, he says, you are having in your work in Peshawar.

[1] A book-seller who was murdered in Calcutta on 7-5-1931 for selling the book *Prachin Kahani*.

[2] This line is in Gandhiji's hand.

Prof. Alexander tells me that you and Mrs. Barnes are real friends of India, but that things take place in your district which are not all as they should be. I would like you, if you could, to tell me all you know personally, not for publication, but for my private use and guidence. You will take my word when I tell you that the whole of my effort is directed towards establishing real peace in the land and in making people see that the way to progress lies not through bluster and violence but through quiet work and non-violence.[1]

Yours sincerely,

CAPT. BARNES
PESHAWAR

A.I.C.C. File NO. 16-C, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

217. LETTER TO NIRANJAN PATNAIK[2]

May 24, 1931

MY DEAR NIRANJAN,

I have your telegram about Syt. Narasinha Sahu. You must give me full particulars about him including record of trial.

From a microfilm : S.N. 17105

218. LETTER TO PERCY LACEY

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 24, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your message received on my arrival at Muttra. I have purposely refrained form sending you a wire for there was no hurry about dealing with your message. Should I go to London I would certainly make it a point to visit Lancashire and demonstrate to the people of Lancashire that I personally and the Congress have no ill-will against Lancashire and that the Congress would do all in its power to help Lancashire. I would therefore naturally avail myself of and esteem the powerful help Of the *Manchester Guardian* in facilitating my work in Lancashire. You will please keep the contents

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Captain Barnes", 19-6-1931.

[2] In reply to the addressee's telegram which read : "Of Vizagapatam Agency State prisoners in Rajahmundry jail Narasinha Sahu released rearrested interned Bimlipatam Agency Regulation."

of this letter from the Press but you are at liberty to show it to friends and undoubtedly pass it on to the *Manchester Guardian.*

Yours sincerely,

PERCY LACEY, ESQ.
HOTEL CECIL
SIMLA

From a photostat : S.N. 17128

219. LETTER TO PREMNATH BAZAZ

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 24, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. What young men can do is to make up their minds to marry only widows and if they cannot secure widows in the Pandit caste, they should travel outside if only by way of satyagraha. But if they are desirous of restricting themselves to their caste they should reason with the caste elders and give them notice that they would go outside the caste if they did not merely permit but encourage widows to remarry.

Yours sincerely,

PT. PREM NATH BAZAZ
CHONDHPORA
SRINAGAR (KASHMIR)

From a photostat : S.N. 17129

220. LETTER TO WALTER B. FOLEY

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 24, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and the two articles.

I would indeed be delighted to meet you if it is at all convenient for you to go to Surat or Anand. Generally I am to be found between Borsad near Anand and Bardoli. I received your letter while waiting for the Surat train at Muttra Junction. I am not likely to be anywhere between Lahore and Calcutta in the course of next month.

Yours sincerely,

WALTER B. FOLEY[1], ESQ.
3. MIDDLETON STREET
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm : S.N. 17130

221. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 24, 1931

Here is another letter for you to read and deal with. I would like you to answer it directly. I have not acknowledged it. Please let me know whether there is any truth in the statement made.

Encl. 1

SYT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR
GANDHI ASHRAM
TIRUCHENGODU (S. INDIA)

From a microfilm : S.N. 17131

222. LETTER TO JOHN BITTMANN

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 24, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. If I visit London I would love to visit Denmark and other places, but I am not sure when I shall be able to do so. I am sorry to hear about Menon's misfortunes. But Esther

[1] Editorial Secretary, the Methodist Episcopal Church, Calcutta

ought not to worry about his failure. Please tell her with my love that I expect greater faith and therefore greater pluck from her and please ask her to write to me.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN BITTMANN, ESQ.
PT. 55, GRONDALSVEJ
COPENHAGEN

From a photostat : S.N. 17132

223. LETTER TO ATUL PRATAP SINHA

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 24, 1931

MY DEAR SINHA,

I thank you for your letter offering your service should I come to London. At the present moment I see no chance of my coming but if I do, you will seek me out. I am sorry I cannot recall the incident narrated by you in your letter.

Yours sincerely,

ATUL PRATAP SINHA, ESQ.
VICE-PRESIDENT, INDIAN STUDENTS CENTRAL ASSOCIATION
BROMPTON ROAD, LONDON S.W. 3

From a photostat : S.N. 17133

224. LETTER TO CARL J. BRUNSKOG

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 24, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

My answer to your question is:

One way to promote world peace is to help India to attain her own through truth and non-violence.

Yours sincerely,

CARL J. BRUNSKOG
LILLA NYGATAN 4
STOCKHOLM

From a photostat : S.N. 17134

225. LETTER TO J. N. SAHNI

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 24, 1931

MY DEAR SAHNI,

I have heard that you had published a report of that interview. I must confess that I was grieved. Of course the proper thing for you was not to assume or receive consent either from Malaviyaji or Anasuyabehn because it was a matter in which I alone could have judged. I do not think that any very great harm has been done. But these little mistakes repeated by so many newspapers make up a heavy indictment and betray bad taste. These domestic conversa-tions do not admit of reporting. They lose their weight and influence by reporting. Anasuyabehn has also written to me about it. She is deeply grieved and she tells me that there are many mistakes. But I do not think that anything is to be gained by publishing corrections. The best thing therefore is to forget all about it and the amends you can make is not to repeat such a mistake not only in connection with myself but in every case. I think the mistake will have been well made if the point I have made is quite clear to you.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. J. N. SAHNI
"HINDUSTAN TIMES", DELHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 17136

226. LETTER TO ISHWAR DAS NAYYAR

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 24, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. As I am continuously travelling I cannot encourage you to see me. Staying with me is out of the question. But you can certainly stay at the Ashram for some time and feel your way there. If you accept my suggestion, You should write to the Manager and receive his permission before going there.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. ISHWAR DAS NAYYAR
HOUSE PROPRIETOR
PURANA BAZAR
GUJARAT[1]

From a microfilm : S.N. 17137

[1] A town in West Punjab (Pakistan)

227. LETTER TO SHANTA PATEL

BARDOLI,
May 25, 1931

CHI. SHANTA,

I got your letter. I had the same thing in mind that you now explain to me. But I still advise you to try to mix with girls and be satisfied with playing with them. Be as much as possible with Prema-behn and secure a good certificate from her. Help younger girls, teach them, for instance. Pay attention to Pushpa's diet. She should eat less rice than she does.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4060

228. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BARDOLI,
May 25, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I arrived in Bardoli this morning. I had intended to go to Borsad, but came here. How can a mere servant have this way ? You may not perhaps have read the accompanying letter from Bhagwanji. What is Hariyomal's complaint? It seems that we have not, after all, been able to cultivate contact with the thieves. How could we do that since we have not gone into villages? Whenever thieves trouble us, I feel sorry about our failure to do so It seems the Punjabi vaid's treatment has not benefited Kusum and others.

I have sent a wire to Rajkot advising that Ratilal should be removed to Thana. I shall be here for a few days at any rate.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Is Valji still in Bombay? And in a hospital?

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I

229. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

BARDOLI,
May 25, 1931

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I had got your long and beautifully descriptive letter at Nainital and the one about Sahni[1] in Mathura. Now matters cannot be remedied, but norms of discretion were violated in publishing the report. Our newspapermen have still not learnt that such things ought not to be reported. I have written to Sahni.[2] But it will be better if you write the following:

"DEAR LADY WILLINGDON,

"Perhaps you have not seen the enclosed garbled report of the pleasant meeting between you and Mrs. Gandhi. I hasten to assure you that I had no hand in the publication. I know the writer. He is now sorry for the bad taste shown in publishing a private conversation of a domestic nature. Without my knowledge that he was a newspaperman, he overheard the conversation I was having with Pandit Malaviyaji about our meeting of which I shall always have pleasant recollections.

"The sari you want is being made and will be sent to you early.

I am,
yours sincerely,"[3]

She would like it if you wrote along these lines. If you want to make any changes in the draft, then do so. I am returning the clipping.

It was a good thing that you were able to accompany Ba yourself. That is how it was in Nanital. Lady Chinubhai[4] (Junior) had escorted Ba.

I have reached Bardoli. From here I shall go wherever the Sardar or Fate takes me. Has Mridula arrived?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32796

[1] J. N. Sahni of *The Hindustan Times*
[2] *Vide* "Letter to J. N. Sahni", 24-5-1931
[3] The draft of letter to Lady Willingdon is in English.
[4] Wife of Sir Girijaprasad Chinubhai

230. LETTER TO MANAGER, OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, BOMBAY

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 26, 1931

R. E. HAWKINS, ESQ.
MANAGER, OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
NICOL ROAD, BOMBAY

DEAR SIR,

Owing to my journeys and preoccupations I have not been able to reply to your letter of the 7th May earlier. The suggestions made in your letter, I like. I have personally never copyrighted any of my publications. I left Mr. Andrews free to do what he liked with his condensation.But if there is any permission to be had from Mr. Andrews or his publishers you will please get it from them. I note what you say about the royalty. When you have actually decided to publish the proposed book in accordance with your letter, I would expect the manuscript for inspection and revision where necessary.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : G. N. 5686

231. LETTER TO COWASJI JEHANGIR[1]

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 26, 1931

DEAR SIR COWASJI,

You will please forgive me for not having sent you an earlier reply. I returned to Bardoli only yesterday from Nainital where and at Simla I was so overwhelmed with local work that I had no time to frame my reply to you or to Sardar Garda. I am now sending you a copy of my reply to Sardar Garda[2] which will speak for itself. I am sending you also a copy of his letter to me. At best his allegations are vague and even these are really denied by the people. But the complaint he could legitimately make could only be about matters happening after his promise to restore the land. That should be after

[1] In reply to the addressee's letter in which he had mentioned certain specific complaints of Sardar Garda and pleaded with Gandhiji that "all kind of harassment shall immediately stop . . . "

[2] *Vide* the following item.

the receipt of Rao Bahadur Bhimbhai's letter or so after the 25th April when we had the first conversation. If we were to take the 25th April as the date you will see that there is only one paragraph devoted to the happenings thereafter. It says : "On 28th April Babla people again scared away our labourers and cartmen that came from my *bet*. So also a Rajput family on the 3rd instant. With other threats they were told that their abodes would be burnt down together with the inmates."

These allegations I have carefully enquired into and I have statements on oath made by the people concerned repudiating them. If, however, this investigation does not satisfy you, I am quite willing that you should nominate someone on your behalf who would investigate these two complaints.

As to Bhikhabhai who is said to have refused to take up his bungalow, I understand that he denies having made the statement ascribed to him. But even if he did not, how could we interfere in such matters?

With reference to the other complaint in your letter I was painfully surprised to find this sentence: "I desire to draw your attention to other cases of harassment of Parsis which have been brought to my notice." This presupposes that you have taken the harassment of Sardar Garda for granted and you have generalized from two incidents yet unproved an indictment, I do not know against whom, for harassment of Parsis as a class. As a matter of fact throughout the last 12 years of intense political work the relations between the Congress and the Parsis have been of the happiest character. How can there be then any question of harassment of Parsis? And even if it can be proved, should the harassment of the lady[1] whose case you have mentioned affect Sardar Garda's promise of restoration of land which on his own showing he bought for a song. I am however anxious to give you all the satisfaction I can that there is no desire whatsoever on the part of Congress organizations to harass Parsis. In the lady's case there is an impeachment of Syt. Bharucha who has investigated the matter. In view of the fact that there are two contrary allegations by two Parsis of position, I can only ask you to name some person who would make the investigation and report to you. Pending

[1] Miss. Contractor who had foreign and country liquor shops at Thana and Ghatkopar.

receipt of your letter on this point, I am staying any further investigation into the lady's complaint.

Yours sincerely,

Encls. 2

SIR COWASJI JEHANGIR
READYMONEY MANSION
CHURCHGATE STREET
FORT, BOMBAY

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

232. LETTER TO FRAMROZE B. GARDA[1]

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 26, 1931

DEAR SARDAR GARDA,

I am sorry that owing to my absence from Gujarat and other preoccupations I was not able to reply to your letter earlier. You will notice from your complaint that except two, the other complaints refer to times prior to your decision to restore the land to the original owners. With reference to the two incidents which you mention as having happened on the 28th April and 3rd instant. I have enquired into your allegations and the people point blank repudiate them. You have again mentioned some other cases before the 25th April which are before the courts. The rest I have enquired into. Although they are alleged to have happened before the 25th April, the allegations are denied by the people concerned. Of course you do not hold Congressmen responsible for things that may happen to your land in the Baroda territories through your tenants with whom Congressmen have no dealings of concern.

As a matter of fact it was up to you to have withdrawn the cases which are before the courts after the settlement with you. I cannot help therefore saying that you have shown absolutely no reason for going back upon your plighted word. In any case I suggest that your proper course was to seek redress for any wrong done to you after your promise of restoration by means of arbitration or other-wise but not to repudiate the promise made after the fullest deliberation.

Yours sincerely,

SARDAR FRAMROZE GARDA
NAVSARI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Framroze B. Garda", 6-5-1931

233. LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 26, 1931

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

I have your letter. I know all about the case of M.P. Narayana Menon. I had a letter addressed to Lord Irwin by some missionary friend given to me to be delivered to Lord Irwin which I gladly did and asked him to endeavour to secure Narayana Menon's release. I have no doubt about the justice of the case. Unfortunately the talk with Lord Irwin took place only two days before he left Delhi. It is highly likely therefore that he was able to do nothing. Now as you say Sir. C. P. Ramaswami Iyer knows the case well you have to knock at his door continually.

I cannot give you any definite opinion upon the proposed Temple Entry Satyagraha unless I know what the other side has to say. The objection you have raised is certainly worthy of consideration. Beyond this I do not feel able to go.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. U. GOPALA MENON, B.A., B.L.
CALICUT

From a microfilm : S. N. 17143

234. LETTER TO JUGAL KISHORE

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 26, 1931

MY DEAR JUGAL KISHORE,

I have your letter of the 14th instant. On my way back to Bardoli I had to pass nearly five hours in Muttra and I saw the friend who was with you. What is his name Both he and I after discussion agreed that I should take no public notice of your appeal till you were ready with the programme for making the Mahavidy-alaya self-reliant by a definite date not distant. But I gave him a letter addressed to the Trustees in accordance with the terms we had discussed before.

I missed you at Muttra.

PROF. JUGAL KISHORE
PREM MAHAVIDYALAYA
BRINDABAN

From a microfilm: S. N. 17144

235. LETTER TO MAGANTI BAPI NEEDU

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 26, 1931

MY DEAR NEEDU,

I have your touching letter. You are unnecessarily despondent. There is no occasion for despondency. I could see that you will have to support your father, mother and child. I therefore suggest your going to Sabarmati Ashram. Rs. 33 per month will be paid for these dependents. You won't have to pay anything for your boarding and lodging at the Ashram. If you take to teh Ashram life your problem is easily solved, and of course you serve the country by the mere fact of your living at the Ashram for the simple reason that the whole of the Ashram activity is national activity. If you do not know what Ashram life is in detail you should ask Narayana Razu who lived there, I think, for over a year. So many other men also from Andhra Desh have off and on lived in the Ashram.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. MAGANTI BAPI NEEDU
ELLORE (WEST GODAVARI DT.)

From a microfilm : S. N. 17145

236. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 26, 1931

Here is a letter from Patiya, Chittagong District. I telegraphed[1] to the writer to ascertain whether I could make use of his name and whether he could vouch for the facts. The telegram was not delivered for want of sufficient address. I wrote[2] to him also, but there is no reply as yet. If the facts mentioned in the letter are true, the matter is serious. But you can inquire and take such action as it is necessary. I hope you had a nice time in Ahmedabad.

SYT. SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE
C/O BENGAL PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE
CALCUTTA

From a photostat : S. N. 17146

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Secretary, Congress Committee Chittagong", 21-5-1931
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary, Congress Committee Chittagong", 21-5-1931

237. LETTER TO L. R. GURUSWAMY NAIDU

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 26, 1931

MY DEAR GURUSWAMY,

I have your letter describing the difficulties of picketing. If you have correctly described your picketing there seems to me to be nothing wrong about it and that the action of the authorities was not only contrary to the terms of the Settlement but in my opinion also illegal Please continue to give me information about any further development I would like you also to keep in touch with Syt. Rajagopalachari to whom I have sent your letter.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. L. R. GURUSWAMY NAIDU
PRESIDENT, TALUQ CONGRESS COMMITTEE
KOILPATTI (Madras PRESIDENCY)

From a microfilm : S. N. 17147

238. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 26, 1931

Here is a letter from L. R. Guruswamy Naidu of Koilpatti Taluq Congress Committee. I enclose also a copy of my letter[1] to him. You should vigorously move in the matter if the facts are correctly set forth in Guruswamy's letter.

I expect to see you in Bombay on the 9th.

SYT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR
GANDHI ASHRAM
TIRUCHENGODU (S. INDIA)

From a microfilm : S. N. 17148

239. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 26, 1931

MY DEAR SHANKERLAL,

With reference to the suggestion of Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya advising purchase of the site and building at Masulipatam I agree to

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

the proposal if the purchase price is anywhere between five and six thousand rupees.

SYT. SHANKERLAL BANKER

MIRZAPUR, AHMEDABAD

From a microfilm : S. N. 17149

240. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 26, 1931

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

I have your telegram. I thought that you had agreed that if the communal question was not solved the Congress should not be represented at the Round Table Conference. Why do you now agree with the suggestion made by Sastri, Andrews and Polak?[1] But whether you do or not, you have to consider my own want of confidence in myself if I went without the solution. What can I ask and what strength can I put forth in the national demand if we are a house divided against itself? But I have in my reply to the cable said that if I was invited to go to London to discuss things apart from the Round Table Conference I would gladly go if the Settlement was being properly worked.

Have you seen the announcement made by Maulvi Mohammad Yakub? I do not know what the papers have reported about my statement about the necessity of the Sikhs joining any solution that might be arrived at. Do you see any escape from it?

There was much left over to talk about at Simla. I am looking forward to the 9th June when we should be able to resume the conversations.

Dr. M. A. Ansari
1 Daryaganj
Delhi

From a photostat : S. N. 17150

[1] *Vide* "Cable to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 23-5-1931

241. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 26, 1931

I have your cheerful letter. I returned to Bardoli yesterday on Sardar's orders and under those orders I am here at least for a few days. About the 3rd or 4th June I may be still here or in Borsad unless I am suddenly called away somewhere else. You see I am not my own master. There is the Sardar as also the Sarkar and between the two I am having a fine time.

I never received even an acknowledgement of my letter to the Maharaja.Do you suggest my writing to him again? If you do, please let me know his address. Why don't you see the Dewan yourself? I am glad Rehana has gone to Matheran. She must benefit by the rest.

SYT. ABBAS TYABJI
CAMP BARODA

From a photostat : S. N. 17151

242. LETTER TO SECRETARY, INDIAN ASSOCIATION, IRAQ

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 26, 1931

THE SECRETARY
INDIAN ASSOCIATION IN IRAQ
P. BOX NO. 71, RESIDENCY ROAD
BAGHDAD

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your printed letter of 28th April last. I do not know anything of the previous ones. They were probably received whilst I was in jail. I wish your Association every success. Will you give me some idea of the number and the profession of Indians resident in Iraq and will you also tell me whether the relations between you and the Arabs are perfectly cordial?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S. N. 17152

243. LETTER TO HARDAYAL NAG

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 26, 1931

DEAR BABU HARDAYAL NAG,

Although you are perhaps the oldest member of the Congress you are proving your youthfulness now and again by favouring me with letters. Your latest I do not propose to publish. The communal question is there whether we like it or not. And if we cannot settle it I cannot put forth the national demand with the strength that a solution of the communal question would give me. Do you not see this fundamental objection to participation by the Congress in the Round Table Conference? If there is to be a Swaraj Constitution there has to be a solution of the communal trouble.

I hope you are retaining the same vigour as before.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. HARDAYAL NAG
CHANDPUR (BENGAL)

From a photostat : S. N. 17154

244. LETTER TO L. J. BURGESS

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 26, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. Though I should perhaps word the third proposition differently I have no hesitation in endorsing the general tenor of all the three propositions. I have never said that other nations' religion is as good as any other. I am trying to send you the two numbers of *Young India* which contain my views on the question. There never was any question of legal interference on my part with religious liberty.

Yours sincerely,

L. J. BURGESS, ESQ.
SALT HILL
DARJEELING

From a photostat : S.N. 17155

245. LETTER TO RAGHUBIR SINGH

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 26, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. My answer to your first question is that if your mind really hankers after the degree or the knowledge that the college course gives you in physics you should rejoin the college.

As to the help to your friends I think that you are entitled to and even bound to help them if they are starving but not to further their aims. In no case [may] even you disclose their names to the police.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. RAGHUBIR SINGH
C/O BENGALI SAREM
COLLECTOR'S OFFICE
MEERUT

From a microfilm : S. N. 17156

246. LETTER TO M. G. DATAR

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 26, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. If I omitted the Tilak Vidyalaya in my speech in Ahmedabad the omission was certainly not intentional.[1] I simply took the names as they came to me. I do know the contri-bution of the Nagpur Tilak Vidyalaya. My purpose was not to single out a particular national organization but to emphasize the fact that national educational organizations were the real thing.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. M. G. DATAR
HEADMASTER, TILAK VIDYALAYA
NAGPUR

From a microfilm : S. N. 17157

[1] *Vide* "National Universities", 18-6-1931.

247. LETTER TO SURENDRA SINGH

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 26, 1931

DEAR SARDAR SURENDRA SINGH,

You will pardon me for not having acknowledged your letter of the 30th April earlier. It will be difficult for you to convince me that the present administration really guarantees protection at critical times. I am at one with you in deploring the decline of spirituality in the national life. And I am quite at one with you that we cannot have too much of selflessness or discipline. I am trying all I can to secure these.

Yours sincerely,

SARDAR SURENDRA SINGH
LAHORE

From a photostat : S. N. 17158

248. LETTER TO MANMOHANDAS P. GANDHI

May 26, 1931

BHAI MANMOHANDAS,

I am helpless. I have not been able so much as to glance at your book[1], thanks to constant travelling and pressure of other work.

1. How much cotton is imported from foreign countries for fine-count cloth?
2. Is it necessary to import that cotton?
3. Does the import harm the interests of indigenous cotton?
4. Does the growing of cotton harm or benefit the soil?
5. Would it be better to grow food crops instead of cotton?
6. Would it improve the soil?

Think over these questions and let me have your replies.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 13

[1] *Pardeshi Kapadni Same Harifai Kem Karvi,* a Gujarati translation by the author of his English work; *vide* "Preface to "Pardeshi Kapadni Same Harifai Kem Karavi" ", 25-2-1931

249. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

BARDOLI,
May 26, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I could not write to you from Nainital, but I did get your letter. I understand your difficulty. In what manner do you serve father-in-law? It would be very good indeed if he lets you serve all the time. That will keep your mind engaged and if, in consequence, the fainting fits stop, your health will improve. I completely forgot to write to Narandas about sending money to you, though of course he knows about it. Has there been any difficulty about the matter? Write to Narandas and request him to send you any sum you require. For some time I shall be staying in Bardoli.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 3413

250. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

BARDOLI,
May 26, 1931

CHI. VASUMATI,

I had your letter. Let me know about the effect of the vaid's medicine. What does he give you by way of medicine? For what is Maitri being treated? Tell Mahavir and Maitri to write to me. When is Gangabehn expected to come? For the present I shall have to stay here. Ramdas and Nimu have reached Almora. Rambhau has returned to the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 9324. Also C.W. 570. Courtesy : Vasumati Pandit

251. LETTER TO LAKSHMIBEHN KHARE

BARDOLI,
May 26, 1931

CHI. LAKSHMIBEHN,

I suppose Rambhau has returned there. Don't get angry with him or beat him. Let him follow his own inclinations. If he does not like to study, he may do some manual work or learn some craft. There will be no harm either if he concentrates on cultivating his gift for music. Try to discover the bent of his mind and let him do what he chooses. No one else will be able to look after him or reform him better than you can. Be patient with him. Let me know what he decides to do.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 278. Courtesy : Lakshmibehn Khare

252. LETTER TO FIROZABEHN TALEYARKHAN

BARDOLI,
May 26, 1931

DEAR SISTER,

It was only yesterday I came here. I have your letter. You may come over whenever you wish. I shall spare some time [for you].

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

PS.

The train to Bardoli starts from Surat.

SMT. FIROZABEHN TALEYARKHAN
CUMBALLA HILL
BOMBAY

From Gujarati : C.W. 9774

253. TELEGRAM TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

BARDOLI,
May 27, 1931

SIR PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI
BHAVNAGAR

THANKS WIRE. COME BARDOLI WHENEVER YOU CAN.

GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 5915. Also C.W. 3230. Courtesy : Mahesh Pattani

254. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BOMBAY,
Silence Day [Before *May 28*][1], *1931*

CHI. NARANDAS,

I remember your asking me to write to you on silence day and that is why I am writing this letter. Otherwise I really have no time.

Tell the inmates of the Ashram that they should not be very eager to receive letters from me. I have talked and reasoned much and what I taught I have practised as well as I could; let them assimilate as much as they can. We have with us those three shields to protect us, the *Anasaktiyoga*, the *Bhajanavali* and the *Ramayana*. I believe, and I want you all to believe, that the constant reading of these with faith will be a greater source of strength than letters from me or than living with me.

If the Punjabi vaid succeeds in his treatment of Jamna and Kusum, we shall have made a discovery. If he does indeed, we should put Radha and Anandi, too, under his treatment.

How does Santok keep now ?

I have still not been able to find time for writing about the swadeshi vow.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] From the reference to the discourse on the swadeshi vow, despatched on May 28; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi",29-5-1931

[PS.]

I have received a request from Rajkot that I should arrange for a companion for Ratilal who would look after him. Can you think of anyone? The person will of course be well paid.

I am leaving for Borsad today. For the present, therefore, write to me there.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro— 9 : Shri Narandas Gandhine, Pt. I, p. 250

255. TO THE U.P. ZAMINDARS

In another column will be found my manifesto to the U.P. *Kisans*.[1] I know that H. E. the Governor does not quite like it inasmuch as it goes beyond the relief given by the U.P. Government. But the advice given to the *kisans* in the manifesto is an honest attempt to express their capacity for payment. I am hoping, therefore, that if the *kisans* pay according to the suggestion made in the manifesto, the zamindars and the local Government will accept the payments in full discharge of the *kisans*' liability. But under the land revenue system prevalent in the U.P. the brunt will in the first instance fall upon the zamindars. I am hoping that the Government will grant proportionate relief to the zamindars who accept the tenants' terms.

To the zamindars I can give my assurance that I endeavoured to study the rural condition as much as it was possible for me to do. With the authoritative figures before me, it was impossible to offer better terms. Here are the two tables of prices :

Index Nos. of the prices of the Principal Food-grains (Wheat, Barley, Gram, Rice and Bajra) on the basis of 1873=100

Year	Prices	Year	Prices
1880	118	1906-10	195
1881-85	100	1911-15	194
1886-90	119	1916-20	272
1891-95	128	1921-25	294
1896-1900	166	1926 300	
1901-05	136	1931 (May, U.P.)	132

[1] *Vide* "To the Kisans of the U. P. 23-5-1931

TABLE II

Year	Price per maund in Rupees	Year	Priceper maund in Rupees
1880	1.5	1906-10	3.56
1881-85	1. 68	1911-15	3.31
1886-90	2. 08	1916-20	4.63
1891-95	2. 22	1921-25	4.73
1896-1900	2. 75	1926-28	4.9
1901-05	2. 34	1931 May	2.3

They show that from 1915 there is 50% drop in the prices of staples. These prices go back to 1886. That means that within living memory they have never been so low as now. And if one were to go to the level of rents in those days, the tenants would have to pay much less than 8 as. or 12 as. as under the manifesto. It is admitted that the condition of the tenants has at no time been prosperous during recent years. Indeed an inquiry made in over three hundred U.P. villages in the eastern province shows that the price of the produce at the present rate does not even cover the rents payable. This makes no allowance for the cost of cultivation. I am prepared to admit that the inquiry was not made by experts. It therefore lacks scientific precision. But such as it is, it is revealing enough to make one pause and think.

Mr. Hooper, once a Settlement Officer, is said to have given the following landlords' definition of the U.P. tenant :

> One who is ready to live on one meal a day, and in native phrase to sell his wife and children to pay the highest possible rent for his holding, who submits to any cesses it may please his landlord to demand, and who is always willing to work for him without payment, to give evidence for him in court and speaking generally, to do any conceivable thing he is told.

The description is not flattering to the zamindars. But since Mr. Hooper's time the zamindars' ideas have undergone revolution. Many of them are sympathetic to their tenants.They try to make common cause with them. But the process has to be much faster than it has been. With the great awakening among the *kisans* there must be growing dissatisfaction with their lot, and a growing assertion of their rights.

I would like the zamindars to recognize the correctness of the *kisans'* positio and make a corresponding change in their own outlook. The present crisis will be somehow tided over. But it would be wrong to go to sleep after it is over.

The zamindars would do well to take the time by the forelock. Let them cease to be mere rent collectors. They should become trustees and trusted friends of their tenants. They should limit their privy purse. Let them forgo the questionable perquisites they take from the tenants in the shape of forced gifts on marriage and other occasions, or *nazarana* on transfer of holdings from one *kisan* to another or on restoration to the same *kisan* after eviction for non-payment of rent. They should give them fixity of tenure, take a lively interest in their welfare, provide well-managed schools for their children, night schools for adults, hospitals and dispensaries for the sick, look after the sanitation of villages and in a variety of ways make them feel that they, the zamindars, are their true friends taking only a fixed commission for their manifold services In short they must justify their position. They should trust Congressmen.They may themselves become Congressmen and know that the Congress is a bridge between the people and the Government. All who have the true welfare of the people at heart can harness the services of the Congress. Congressmen will on their part see to it that *kisans* scrupul-ously fulfil their obligations to the zamindars. I mean not necessarily the statu-tory, but the obligations which they have themselves admitted to be just. They must reject the doctrine that their holdings are absolu-tely theirs to the exclusion of the zamindars. They are or should be members of a joint family in which the zamindar is the head guarding their rights against encroachment. Whatever the law may be, the zamindari to be defensible must approach the conditions of a joint family.

I like the ideal of Rama and Janaka.They owned nothing against the people. Everything including themselves belonged to the people. They lived in their midst a life not above theirs but in correspondence with theirs. But these may not be regarded as historical personages. Then let us take the example of the great Caliph Omar. Though he was monarch of a vast realm created by his great genius and amazing industry, he lived the life of a pauper and never considered himself owner of the vast treasures that lay at his feet. He was a terror to those officials who squandered people's money in luxuries.

Young India, 28-5-1931

256. NOTES

MAHARAJA SAHEB OF MAHMUDABAD[1]

The untimely death of the Maharaja Saheb of Mahmudabad removes one whose wisdom was needed at the present juncture in the life of the nation. He was genuinely anxious to promote Hindu-Muslim unity, and could be relied upon to give sound advice on national matters. I tender my respectful condolences to the deceased's family.

POISONOUS JOURNALISM

I have before me extracts from journals containing some gruesome things There is communal incitement, gross misrepresentation and incitement to political violence bordering on murder. It is of course easy enough for the Government to launch out prosecutions or to pass repressive ordinances. These fail to serve the purpose intended except very temporarily, and in no case do they convert the writers, who often take to secret propaganda, when the open forum of the Press is denied to them.

The real remedy is healthy public opinion that will refuse to patronize poisonous journals. We have our journalists' Association. Why should it not create a department whose business it would be to study the various journals and find objectionable articles and bring them to the notice of the respective editors? The function of the department will be confined to the establishment of contact with the offending journals and public criticism of offending articles where the contact fails to bring about the desired reform. Freedom of the Press is a precious privilege that no country can forgo. But if there is, as there should be, no legislative check save that of the mildest character, an internal check such as I have suggested should not be impossible and ought not to be resented.

NAVAJUVAN BHARAT SABHA

A member of this Sabha asked me at Muttra Junction whether I had suggested that no Congress member should be a member of that body or *vice versa* I told him that so far as I knew I had never expressed any such opinion. He immediately announced the purport of my reply to the young men on the platform, and said that some Congress member had ascribed such opinion to me, that it was wrong and that now every Congressman was free to join the Sabha as every

[1] A leading nationalist Muslim who died on May 23

member of the Sabha was free to join the Congress. That I had expressed no such opinion as was ascribed to me did not certainly imply that all Congressmen should or were free to join the Sabha. Every Sabha has its own rules. And I should be sorry to find Congressmen joining any of these Sabhas or for that matter any other institution without first ascertaining the condition of membership, the men composing it and the methods of its working. Certainly no one can be bullied into joining an institution. The Navajuvan Bharat Sabha will flourish if it shows a record of constructive service of the nation, never otherwise.

RIVAL CONGRESS COMMITTEES

Whilst at Nainital I heard of rival Congress Committees in the U.P. and elsewhere. I heard too of election disputes in several places. This is a bad sign. There must be something wrong in a place where such unhealthy rivalries take place. The hunt for office in Congress Committees is also a very ugly sign. A Congress office is or should be an opportunity for service. And where service is the motive, there can be no unhealthy rivalry. A man or a woman can easily do service without needing, or hunting for office. Wise servants of the nation will find it more profitable to stand out than to enter into unhealthy competition. Nor need one form a separate organization for the sake of service. Why do I, for instance, need an organization, if I want to teach the children of my village or street, or to sweep it, or to nurse my neighbours, to carry on khadi propaganda or to do kindred acts, all of which promote national well-being and keep me going the whole time?

CONGRESS AND COMMUNALISM

A correspondent asks whether a Congressman who openly identifies himself with communal conferences, and other communal propaganda can hold any office under the Congress organization.

I do not think there is any rule prohibiting the election of any Congressman to any office because of his communalism. But if the Congress is to remain a purely national organization, and is to be absolutely just to all and guardian of weak minorities, Congressmen will never elect those who are known for their communal bias or tendency.

Young India, 28-5-1931

257. CHRISTIAN MISSIONS

I gladly publish the following from Rev. B. W. Tucker:[1]

I am in full agreement with you in your protest against the methods employed by Christian missions in their efforts to gain proselytes through education, medical services and the like. Education when used for such purposes is really no education at all, but merely the perpetuation of the present substitute for education initiated by the Government, which no honest missionary, familiar with educational experimentation in the lands from which he comes would tolerate for a minute if his primary interest was education rather than proselytizing. While not denying the right of the sick to relief from their sufferings, it might not be altogether unfair to presume, that it has been proselytizing zeal rather than lack of intelligence that has caused missionary doctors to specialize in hospitals of healing to the neglect of preventive medicine and health work. All humanitarian work must necessarily suffer if men are not dealt with with a single eye to their welfare and development as personalities, and this cannot be the case when they are looked upon merely as candidates for conversion into another social ro religious grouping.

. . . It is the spirit of the age, that one's devotion to religion and God should find an immediate return in increased material prosperity, which is the negation of all spiritual religion. . . . In fact the whole Christian community have had their character vitiated by this sort of thing, . . . In no walk of life can the principle be justified that the end justifies the means, but least of all in religion where sincerity must reign supreme.

. . . Jesus had the same passion for social solidarity that has ever characterized Hindu religion at its best. While he was a devout Jew, he was never a communalist, and set his face sternly against everything, which hindered men from realizing their universal brotherhood. For this reason he was opposed to the nationalism of his day, even as you have been opposed to the current tendency towards a divisive nationalism in India. I believe that if modern Christian missions are to be true to their Lord and Master, they will eschew all efforts to proselytize and thus tear men away from their social order with the consequent lack of the sense of responsibility for the advancement of that social order.

. . . This Government has demanded that the non-British missionary not only remain neutral in such vital matters as the economic and political evils of this country, but has compelled him to give a pledge, which the Government has interpreted to mean that the missionary shall actively support the Government. . . In my

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

own case they objected even to my attending political meetings as a visitor, frankly admitting that they had no charge of moral obloquy to make against me, but that the Government interpretation of the pledge I had given would not allow me even this privilege. It is a standing indictment of the alliance of Christian missions in India with the world's greatest collective evil, imperialism, that they have acquiesced in this arrangement.

It is for this reason that I am pleased that you have signified that you would not perpetuate this evil in a swaraj government by creating any legal enactment compelling missionaries to withdraw if they failed to give up their proselytizing activities. No government can afford to abridge freedom of religion in this way. . . .

While I am sympathetic with your criticism of the exclusive claim of Christianity as the superior religion, I must protest against the implications of your statement that the religions of India are adequate for her. . . .

I can have nothing to add to this letter. But I must adhere to the statement to which Rev. Tucker takes exception and which is, "Religions of India are adequate for her." This surely means nothing more than that she does not need to change them. But as the context of the article in which the statement occurs shows, it does not mean that the professors of the respective faiths have nothing to learn. If there is sympathetic contact established between the various faiths and no evil designs suspected, each can gain a great deal from the rest. What is resisted is the idea of gaining converts and that too not always by fair and open means.

Young India, 28-5-1931

258. PANCHAYATS

Panchayat has an ancient flavour; it is a good word. It literally means an assembly of five elected by villagers. It represents the system, by which the innumerable village republics of India were governed. But the British Government, by its ruthlessly through method of revenue collection, almost destroyed these ancient republics, which could not stand the shock of this revenue collection. Congressmen are now making a crude attempt to revive the system by giving village elders civil and criminal jurisdiction.The attempt was first made in 1921. It failed. It is being made again, and it will fail if

it is not systematically and decently, I will not say, scientifically, tried.

It was reported to me in Nainital, that in certain places in the U.P. even criminal cases like rape were tried by the so-called Panchayats. I heard of some fantastic judgments pronounced by ignorant or interested Panchayats. This is what comes to me from far off Assam:

> It has been ascertained that the Congress Committee at Chaparmukh has set up a sort of rival administrative machinery there for the trial and disposal of civil and criminal cases. There are a few branch offices in the neighbourhood of Chaparmukh which dispose of similar business. At Chaparmukh office regis-ters are being maintained for civil and criminal cases. It is understood that fines are imposed in criminal cases, and decrees are passed in civil suits, and that in a few cases attachments of property have been made or attempted in execution of decrees.

This is all bad if it is true. Irregular Panchayats are bound to fall to pieces under their own unsupportable weight. I suggest therefore the following rules for the guidance of village workers:

1. No Panchayat should be set up without the written sanction of a Povincial Congress Committee;

2. A Panchayat should in the first instance be elected by a public meeting called for the purpose by beat of drum;

3. It should be recommended by the Tehsil Committee;

4. Such Panchayat should have no criminal jurisdiction;

5. It may try civil suits if the parties to them refer their disputes to the Panchayat;

6. No one should be compelled to refer any matter to the Panchayat;

7. No Panchayat should have any authority to impose fines, the only sanction behind its civil decrees being its moral authority, strict impartiality and the willing obedience of the parties concerned;

8. There should be no social or other boycott for the time being;

9. Every Panchayat will be expected to attend to;

(a) The education of boys and girls in its village;

(b) Its sanitation;

(c) Its medical needs;

(d) The upkeep and cleanliness of village wells or ponds;

(e) The uplift of and the daily wants of the so-called untouchables;

10. A Panchayat, that fails without just cause to attend to the requirements mentioned in clause 9 within six months of its election, or fails otherwise to retain the goodwill of the villagers, or stands self-condemned for any other cause, appearing sufficient to the Provincial Congress Committee, may be disbanded and another elected in its place.

The disability to impose fines or social boycott is a necessity of the case in the initial stages. Social boycott in villages has been found to be a dangerous weapon in the hands of ignorant or unscrupulous men. Imposition of fines too may lead to mischief and defeat the very end in view. Where a Panchayat is really popular and increases its popularity by the constructive work of the kind suggested in clause 9, it will find its judgments and authority respected by reason of its moral prestige. And that surely is the greatest sanction any one can possess and of which one cannot be deprived.

Young India, 28-5-1931

259. SALT

Simla has issued the following welcome communique:

Since the conclusion of the Settlement between Lord Irwin and Mr. Gandhi, the Government of India have been engaged in settling the details of arrangements and regulations in various districts to give effect to clause 20 of the Settlement, which related to the collection and manufacture of salt by local residents in villages immediately adjoining the areas where salt could be collected or made. These deatails in all cases are now practically completed, and the general manner in which effect is to be given to the arrangement may be stated as follows:

1. Clause 20 is intended to benefit the poor classes. It will be open, therefore, to those in villages adjoining the salt areas to make or collect salt for domestic use and sale in their respective villages.

NOTE: Domestic use shall include use for manure, cattle or fishcuring by individual fishermen.

2. For this purpose villagers may make salt pans or beds.

3. There should be no sale of salt for purpose of trade outside the villages. It follows, therefore, that such salt an be carried only on foot and not in carts or such other conveyances.

4. Wherever manufacture of salt under the foregoing clauses is permitted, salt pans will not be directed or otherwise interfered with by Government officers, and regular watches will be withdrawn.

5. The concession will be withdrawn from the villages where it is found that it is abused. Wherever it is discovered that salt is manufactured or collected in quantities above the requirements of a particular village, the abuse of the concession will be presumed.

I hope that workers will understand and carefully explain these instructions to the villagers, so that the limits are not overstepped.

Young India, 28-5-1931

260. TO DESHSEVIKAS

May 28, 1931

When I was in Bombay, I wished to meet the *deshsevikas.* I tried to find time to do so, but I could not meet all of them. Finally, the women contented themselves with writing a letter signed by all. Till today, I have not been able to write even a few lines to express my

gratitude to them. It is true that I was unnable to find time to write while travelling, but the fact is that I also forgot to write when I could have done so. I hope these women will forgive me. Some account of the work done by the *deshsevikas* did appear in the newspapers and, as I received two or three newspapers while in prison, I could get some idea of their work. My heart used to dance with joy on reading about their ceaseless service and their fearlessness. It is my hope that, with the very same enthusiasm, these women will do hereafter the more difficult constructive work and bring credit to themselves and to the country. The world has certainly been astonished at what Indian women have achieved in the past twelve months. But their task does not end there. This is merely the beginning.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 31-5-1931

261. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

May 28, 1931

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. If the marriage cannot be celebrated before the end of June, you should come away just now and return afterwards for a week for the marriage. According to me, every day should be treated as an auspicious day on which a marriage can be celebrated. If, however, the marriage cannot be celebrated soon and if Father and Mother willingly permit you to come away, you shold do so immediately. But you may stay on for the whole of June if they are likely to feel hurt. You may go to Sitabadiyara, too, and stay there for some time and do your duty to the family. If you have to stay on, you should write to uncle[1], Babaji and Vinoba about it and get their permission. I, on my part, will also speak to them. You alone know all the relevant circumstances for deciding whether you should stay on there; you should, there-fore, do what seems best to you in the light of the circumstancs there.

Write a strong letter to Jayaprakash in regard to the pain from which he suffers. If you stay on there, take an opportunity to meet him.

Keep up some study.

Gangabehn gave birth to a daughter. The child lived for a day

[1] Jamnalal Bajaj, according to *Bapuna Patro—10: Shri Prabhavatibehnne*

and died.

Amtulsalaam feels rather unhappy. I cannot say whether she will continue to stay here till you return.

Why have you asked for slivers to be sent to you from here? Of course I will send them, but you yourself ought to card cotton. If the effort gives you pain in your hand, you should teach some others to card. Is there no one even in Chhapra who spins? And if a person spins, cannot he card? Wherever we stay, we should do our best to obtain slivers locally.

What is your weight?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I will leave on the 29th and return on June 3.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3412

262. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BARDOLI,
May 28, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. Write to Hanuman Singh's relations and tell them that his death has both grieved me and made me happy. His body had wasted away and it is good that it has perished. The soul which dwelt in that body is immortal. Since I knew him personally, I was bound to feel grieved at his passing away, but such grief ought to be suppressed. I, therefore, felt the pain only for a moment. Let the relations, too, feel in the same way. Translate this into Hindi and send it to them along with a copy of the Gujarati. Who is the Shankarrao who was bitten by a snake? How is he now? How did he come to be bitten by a snake? Did it get under his foot in the river or did it bite him unprovoked?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I

263. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

BARDOLI,
May 28, 1931

BHAISHRI VALJI,

Did you in any way benefit from your stay in the hospital? Or, are things just as they were? Don't let your constipation remain. If you come over here as soon as you get this letter, we will banish your constipation altogether.

I have written to Bhai Mohanlal about your article.

It seems that the Foreword did not reach you after all. Here is another :

"These eleven points have been explained so clearly that everybody may understand them. If every reader, having understood these points, immediately starts acting upon as many of them as he finds practicable, how very near would swaraj be?

MOHANDAS GANDHI"

Though I send you this Foreword, I wonder whether the eleven points have not become twenty now. Why won't you write about all of them? But in this matter you know better.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 7414. Courtesy : V. G. Desai

264. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

BARDOLI,
May 28, 1931

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I have your letter of the 22nd; but the earlier one has not yet reached me. I fail to see why you are reluctant to write to the Doctor. Why should you feel any hesitation in explaining the facts as they are? I see nothing odd in your wish to ask Lallubhai to accompany you when you take Ratilal to Thana. He must be a strange man who, though he has enough money, refuses to spend it at such a time. For whose sake should he hoard and save? I did get the telegram about Anna, and I replied to say that he would not be able to go. It is possible, however, that he want on his own.

How is the State being ruled? What happened to that petition in regard to drinking?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

At present I am here only.

From Gujarati : C. W. 9323. Courtesy : Jamnadas Gandhi

265. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

BARDOLI,
May 28, 1931

CHI. LILAVATI,

Received your letter. Do come if you can get leave, I am going to be at Bardoli for the time being. You have to find peace by your own efforts. Do not mistake for real the peace you get through hectic activity.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

266. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

BARDOLI,
May 28, 1931

Interviewed in connection with the report appearing in a Bombay paper saying that an ugly situation was again developing in and around Bardoli, Gandhiji declared :

I urge upon the public to disbelieve all sensational statements and be unruffled by them. It is news to me that the peasants have no intention to pay the land revenue. I do know that the peasants have been paying to the utmost of their ability all the time and are still paying. I hope to be able shortly to make a public statement to show how punctiliously correct Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and other workers in the Civil Disobedience Movement have been in implementing the Delhi Settlement.

The Hindustan Times, 30-5-1931

267. LETTER TO R. M. MAXWELL

BARDOLI,
May 29, 1931

DEAR MR. MAXWELL,

I thank you for your several letters which I hope to deal with as fast as time permits me. But I must make time to reply to your latest, i.e., of the 25th instant and the previous one, i.e., of the 24th instant.

I do not know what there can be in the *prabhat pheris* to object to. Though they took from during the Civil Disobedience campaign they were in themselves quite innocent. I do not know how far they dis-turb the peace of citizens. During my recent travels, I found them more or less in vogue in the other cities too. I can understand prohibition of inflammatory songs. But I do not know that the Government will be right in interfering with this innocent and beautiful institution which reminds citizens of their duty towards their Creator in early morning.

With reference to the Seva Dals the practices they go through are not new. They have for years been going through them without any interference. If there is anything specific that is objected to, I would like it to be specified. I am unable without further information to endorse the suggestion that 'these camps do not wholly reflect the spirit of the Settlement and that they are calculated in some degree to delay the restoration of normal conditions and feelings'.

As to the other letter, i.e., about liquor sales it comes upon me with painful surprise.

If whilst liquor picketing is recognized as legitimate, the Government counteract it through several practices even considered illegal, and contend that such practices are not in contravention of the Settlement, I venture to suggest that nothing that the Government may do or may not do need be deemed to be in contravention of it.

But your letter tells me that the present practice of sale out of ordinary hours and outside ordinary places of sale is perfectly legal. This I must confess is a revelation for which I was wholly unprepared. It means that the Collectors are guided by no legal restrictions or regulations that the public need know. Indeed if such is the condition of liquor law or rather if the sale of liquor is governed by no law save the will of Collectors, the sooner the public is informed of the fact the

better for it. And it will be a serious matter for the Congress Working Committee to consider.

His Excellency will permit me to say that he is evidently unaware of the fact that picketing in Ahmedabad has been accepted by the previous District Officer and the Superintendent of Police as the most peaceful and inoffensive. His Excellency is also evidently unaware of the fact that the picketing was started by the Labour Union in the interest of labour long before the Civil Disobedience campaign was inaugurated. It has been admired by strangers from the West who have visited Ahmedabad.

His Excellency will pardon me for saying that the opening of the last paragraph of your letter betrays amazing ignorance of the working of picketing in Ahmedabad. I state here for his information that the Labour Union including the drinkers are thankful for this watch and it is the Union that has borne the expenses. It was surely His Excellency's duty to be sure of his facts on which undeserved reflections upon the conduct of an honourable body of men and women are based.

The suggestion contained in the last sentence that such picketing cannot be peaceful implies a reflection on Lord Irwin who negotiated the Settlement which reflection I am sure His Excellency could never have intended.

In conclusion I repeat my humble opinion that if the practice of liquor sales now going on in Ahmedabad continues, the continuation will be in breach of the spirit if not the letter of the Settlement.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 4, 1931, part II. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

268. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

May 29, 1931

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Chhaganlal informs me that you have come to Nadiad. I also hear that you wish to see me. You may come whenever you wish. I shall not be required to go to Borsad for some time. Send the accompanying letter to Navin wherever he is.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3114

269. LETTER TO PADMA

BARDOLI,
May 29, 1931

CHI. PADMA,

I met your father in Nainital. Do you write to him? How is your health now? Write to me and give me all the news about yourself.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6119. Also C.W. 3471. Courtesy : Prabhudas Gandhi

270. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

BARDOLI,
May 29, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

You must have received my letter. For some days, I could get no time to wirte to you. I did write to Narandas, however, about sending you money. I shall most probably be in Bardoli up to 7th June. Writte to me here and give all details. My health is good. The diet remains the same, milk and fruits.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—10 : Shri Prabhavatibehnne, p. 48.

271. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BARDOLI,
May 29, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I sent yesterday an article[1] for *Navajivan* on the swadeshi vow. It will be one of the discourses on the Ashram vows, that is, the discourses included in the series *Mangalprabhat.* With this is a letter for Dahibehn Sonabhai. She was a member of the Stri Swaraj Sangh,

[1] *Vide* "The Law of Swadeshi", 18-6-1931

Udwada Bazaar, but had asked for permission to resign from it. She may not, therefore, be in Udwada. Send the letter to her, wherever she is.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I had sent from jail a translation of Ramdas Swami's couplet[1] about handwriting. If you can find it, send it to me. I am not enclosing Dahibehn's letter. She is at Udwada.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I.

272. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

BARDOLI,
May 29, 1931

CHI. MANGALA,

I had your letter. But I can write only when I find time, is that not so? I shall search for the poem of Ramdas Swami[2] and publish it in the *Navajivan.* You must then write as instructed in it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11094. Courtesy: Pushpa Naik

273. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

BARDOLI,
May 29, 1931

CHI. SUMANGAL,

I had your letter, but have so far never had time to answer it. I came to know afterwards that the two of you had come to the station at Moradabad to see me. But I was then asleep.

It will be good if Kanta can be admitted to Dakshinamurti. It will also be good if she studies at home and sits for the examination of the Karve Institute.

[1] *Das Bodha,* XIX. 1
[2] Maharashtrian saint-poet

It was difficult to have the ban lifted from the proscribed books. . .[1] It seemed to be going beyond propriety to mix with the matter things which were to be decided in a matter of months.

I do hope you are now getting *Young India* and *Navajivan.*

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Are you now fully recovered in health?

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru memorial Museum and Library

274. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

BARDOLI,
May 29, 1931

CHI. KANTA,

I have your letter. I have written about you to Brother and so I will not repeat it here. You should never worry about my health. It isall right. Keep to me. How is your health?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

275. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

Silence Day, [After *May 29, 1931*][2]

CHI. MANGALA,

I have your letter. Your handwriting is passably good. But there are too many blotches. Do you remember Ramdas Swami's song I sent you in this connection?[3]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C. W. 11103. Courtesy : Pushpa Naik

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Mangala S. Patel", 29-5-1931.

[3] For Gandhiji's references to Ramdas Swami's stanzas on the importance of good handwriting, *vide* "Letter to Hari-Ichchha Desai", 10-8-1930 and "Letter to Vinodbala", 27-9-1930

276. LETTER TO K. F. NARIMAN

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 30, 1931

MY DEAR NARIMAN,

I enclose herewith a copy of the latest from Sardar Garda and my reply. Unless you still think there is any use negotiating please follow up the suggestion made by you in your letter to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel about legal procedure. If there is no cause of action and if there is to be no further negotiation, let us forget the matter at least for the time being.

Yours sincerely,

Encls. 2

SYT. K. F. NARIMAN
C/O BOMBAY PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE
CONGRESS HOUSE, GIRGAUM BACK ROAD
BOMBAY

From a pbotostat : S.N. 17165

277. LETTER TO F. KOTHAWALA

BARDOLI,
May 30, 1931

DEAR MR. KOTHAWALA,

I now send herewith a note on allegations against Patel Jehangir of Varad. If an impartial open inquiry is held, full evidence will be led before the tribunal in support of all the allegations. There is no objection on the part of the people to the inquiry being entirely open.

Moreover, according to my information, Patel Jehangir holds a liquor license which, in my opinion, should be an effective bar against the holding of a Patelship. As the allegations made against this Patel are serious and as complaints about his high-handed treatment of the villagers continue to come in I request an early public investigation or an early removal from the office he holds. I must add that the question of undesirability is raised without prejudice to the general question, namely, that the temporary appointments, no matter of what duration, are, in my opinion, only temporary in terms of the Settlement and in no sense permanent,

especially when it is known that these appointments are for so many years or until further orders.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

F. KOTHAWALA, ESQ.
COLLECTOR OF SURAT DT.
BARDOLI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16C-1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

278. LETTER TO FRAMROZE B. GARDA

BARDOLI,
May 30, 1931

DEAR SARDAR GARDA,

I have your letter. If you will not accept arbitration in the matter of your complaints, I do not know how to give you satisfaction. The matter must now pass into lawyers' hands and if they advise that the letter written by you undertaking to restore the lands in question to the original holders against the consideration named by you gives sufficient cause of action, law must take its course.

Yours sincerely,

SARDAR FRAMROZE GARDA
NAVSARI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

279. LETTER TO RATILAL

BARDOLI,
May 30, 1931

BHAI RATILAL,

I got your letter. Work patiently and overcome your difficulties. Do have a discussion with Narandas about weavers.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 7166

280. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

BARDOLI,
May 30, 1931

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I have learnt about the Dhrol[1] incident. My own view is that you should now forget all about the demand for the national flag. If you like, two or three of you may come to see me. It seems to me that many things are being done in haste. On your side, the right course at present is to apply yourselves exclusively to the boycott of foreign cloth through propagation of khadi, and to the campaign against drinking. Besides, there is no dearth of social reforms which need to be brought about.

Take every step after careful thought.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9193. Also C.W. 2844. Courtesy : Shardabehn Shah

281. LETTER TO NARAYAN MORESHWAR KHARE

May 30, 1931

CHI. PANDITJI,

I got your letter.

As for the boys and girls living in the Ashram who have joined the Vidyapith, I have already communicated my views to Kaka. Briefly, they are as follows : Though there is not much to justify the view that the students who had joined the movement should not return to the Ashram I would not oppose it either. The question is, what can they do if they cannot work elsewhere? Ordinarily, the Vidyapith would be the only choice. But we got alarmed when others, too, began to give up manual work and go away. It may also have happened that, under the pretext of excercising self-control and not returning to the Ashram, the students satisfied their desire for joining the Vidyapith. But we cannot hold back a flood. So I let the students do what they liked. There is a long history behind all this. It is difficult to say how far the students' action is inspired by their desire to join the Vidyapith and how far by a clear sense of duty. Ask me if

[1] A town in Saurashtra

you fail to follow anything in this. Show this leter to those who had doubts in the matter.

Write to me from time to time and inform me how Rambhau is faring.

I have followed what you say about Chi. Gajanan. There is no harm in letting him satisfy his love of painting. It is very good indeed that, at the same time, he also does spinning, etc.

I was eager to revise the draft of *Mananvishi* while I was in jail. But I was released before I could do so, and found myself again in the thick of affairs. Now print the thing off as it is. I have already given you one "meditaion' to be added.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 215. Courtesy : Lakshmibehn Khare

282. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

BARDOLI,
May 30, 1931

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Why do you feel so unhappy? After all, no great tragedy has struck you down. There is no law that no one shall die young. Moreover, you and I have not one child, but countless children. Some of them will die and others will be born to take their place. Why, then, keep count of who dies and who lives? We should do our best to serve those who happen to be near us. It will then be the same to us that someone lives and another dies.

If the secretary has made the necessary arrangements, we need not think about the matter any further.

Cultivate non-attachment.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro – 6 : G. S. Gangabehnne, pp. 53-4. Also C.W. 8775. Courtesy : Gangabehn Vaidya

283. LETTER TO KASTURBHAI LALBHAI

BARDOLI,
May 30, 1931

BHAISHRI KASTURBHAI,

The delay in implementing the resolution of the Swadeshi Sabha to take over the foreign goods lying with the merchants of Ahmedabad seems to me dangerous. Cannot the matter be settled soon? I am writing a letter to somewhat the same effect to Chimanlal also.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 33145

284. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

BARDOLI,
May 30, 1931

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I saw your letter to Mahadev. You have sent the correct reply to Polak. I had sent an almost similar reply[1] to the cable from those gentlemen. Even now I hold that my going would be pointless until the Hindu-Muslim problem is resolved. But, to go to meet the members of the Cabinet and other people is another thing.

Subhasbabu met me again and we had a long talk. But it is difficult to say anything; I saw Sen Gupta's letter in the newspapers yesterday. Let us see what happens on the 9th. I have asked Subhasbabu too to come over.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a copy of Hindi : C.W. 7886. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

[1] *Vide* "Cable to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 23-5-1931

285. TELEGRAM TO WILLIAM SHIRER [1]

[On or after *May 30, 1931*][2]

WILLIAM SHIRER
CECIL HOTEL
SIMLA

YOUR WIRE. ALL REPORTS UNAUTHORIZED BEING UNIN-TELLEGENT ANTICIPATION. SO FAR AS I CAN SEE ABSENCE COMMUNAL QUESTION BLOCKS MY WAY PARTICIPATION ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE. DELICATE SITUATION AND IRWIN-GANDHI SETTLEMENT MAKES MY IMMEDIATE LEAVING INDIA DIFFICULT. APART FROM THESE DIFFICULTIES I AM ANXIOUS ATTEND ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE AND TAKE FULL SHARE DELIBERATIONS AND PRESS CONGRESS DEMAND. AM THEREFORE SEEKING WAY OUT OF DIFFICULTY. BUT IF COMMUNAL QUESTION IS NOT SOLVED HERE AND SETTLEMENT DIFFI-CULTY IS OVER AND IF I AM REQUIRED TO PROCEED TO LONDON TO EXPLAIN CONGRESS POSITION TO RESPONSIBLE STA-TESMEN AND PUBLIC IN GREAT BRITAIN I HAVE TOLD FRIENDS I SHOULD HOLD MYSELF READINESS PROCEED LONDON. IN SHORT I AM ANXIOUS SECURE PERMANENT PEACE BY NEGOTIATION CONSISTENTLY WITH FUNDAMENTAL POSITION CONGRESS.

From a photostat : S.N. 17167

286. THE LAW OF SWADESHI[3]

Swadeshi is the law of laws enjoined by the present age. Spiritual laws, like Nature's laws need no enacting; they are selfacting. But through ignorance or other causes man often neglects or disobeys them. It is then vows are needed to steady one's course. A man who is by temperament a vegetarian needs no vow to strengthen his vegetarianism. For, the sight of animal food, instead of tempting him would only excite his disgust. The law of swadeshi is ingained in the basic nature of man but it has today sunk into oblivion. Hence the necessity for the vow of swadeshi. In its ultimate and spiritual sence swadeshi stands for the final emancipation of the human soul from its

[1] Correspondent of Chicago Tribune
[2] The addressee's telegram, to which this is a reply is dated May 30.
[3] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan,* 31-5-1931. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

earthly bondage. For, this earthly tabernacle is not its natural or permanent abode, it is a hindrance in its onward journey, it stands in the way of its realizing its oneness with other lives. A votary of swadeshi therefore, in his striving to identify himself with the entire creation seeks to be emancipated from the bondage of the physical body.

If this interpretation of swadeshi be correct then if follows that its votary will as a first duty dedicate himself to the service of his immediate neighbours. This involves exclusion or even sacrifice of the interests of the rest but the exclusion or the sacrifice would be apparent only. Pure service of one's neighbours can never, from its very nature result in disservice to those who are remotely situated, rather the contrary. 'As with the individual so with the universe' is an unfailing principle which we would do well to lay to heart. On the other hand a man who allows himself to be lured by 'the distant scene' and runs to the ends of the earth for service, is not only foiled in his ambition but fails in his duty towards his neighbours also. Take a concrete instance. In the particular place where I live I have certain persons as my neighbours, some relations and dependents. Naturally, they all feel, as they have a right to, that they have a claim on me and look to me for help and support. Suppose now I leave them all at once and set out to serve people in a distant place. My decision would throw my little world of neighbours and dependents out of gear while my gratuitous knight-errantry would more likely than not disturb the atmosphere in the new place.Thus a culpable neglect of my immediate neighbours and an unintended disservice to the people whom I wish to serve would be the first fruits of my violation of the principles of swadeshi.

It is not difficult to multiply such instances. That is why the *Gita* says: "It is better to die performing one's duty or *swadharma*, but *para-dharma*, or another's duty, is fraught with danger."[1] Interpreted in terms of one's physical environment this gives us the law of swadeshi. What the *Gita* says with regard to *swadharma* equally applies to swadeshi also, for swadeshi is *swadharma* applied to one's immediate environment.

It is only when the doctrine of swadeshi is wrongly understood that mischief results, e.g., it would be a travesty of the doctrine of swadeshi, it to coddle my family I set about grabbing money by all

[1] III. 35

means fair or foul. The law of swadeshi requires me no more than to discharge my legitimate obligations towards my family by just means, and the attempt to do so will reveal to me the Universal Code of Conduct. The practice of swadeshi can never do harm to anyone and if it does it is not *swadharma* but egotism that moves me.

There may come occasions when a votary of swadeshi may be called upon to sacrifice his family at the altar of universal service. Such an act of willing immolation will then constitute the highest service rendered to the family. "Whosoever wants to save his life will lose it, and whosoever loses his life for the Lord's sake will find it," holds good for the family group no less than the individual. Take another instance . Supposing there is an outbreak of the plague in my village and in trying to serve the victims of the epidemic I, my wife and children and all the rest of my family are wiped out of existence, then in inducing those dearest and nearest to join me I will not have acted as the destroyer of my family but on the contrary as its truest friend. In swadeshi there is no room for selfishness, or if there is selfishness in it, it is of the highest type which is not different from the highest altruism. Swadeshi in its purest form is the acme of universal service.

It was by following this line of argument that I hit upon khadi as a necessary and the most important corollary of the principle of swadeshi in its application to society.'What is the kind of service,' I asked myself, 'that the teeming millions of India most need at the present time, that can be easily understood and appreciated by all, that is easy to perform and will at the same time enable the crores of our semi-starved countrymen to live, and the reply came that it is the universalization of khadi or the spinning wheel alone that can fulfil these conditions.

Let no one suppose that the practice of swadeshi through khadi would harm the foreign mill-owners. A thief who is weaned from his vice or is made to return the property that he has stolen is not harmed thereby, on the contrary he is the gainer consciously in the one case, un-consciously in the other. Similarly if all the opium addicts or the drunkards in the world were to shake themselves free from their vice, the canteen keepers or the opium vendors who would be deprived of their customers could not be said to be losers. They would be the gainers in the truest sense of the word. The elimination of the 'wages of sin' is never a loss either to the individual concerned or to society;

it is pure gain.

It is the greatest delusion to suppose that the duty of swadeshi begins and ends with merely spinning so much yarn anyhow and wearing khadi made from it. Khadi is the first indispensable step towards the discharge of swadeshi dharma twoards society. One often meets men who wear khadi but in all other things indulge their taste for foreign manufactures with a vengeance. Such men cannot be said to be practising swadeshi. They are simply following the fashion. A votary of swadeshi will carefully study his environment and try to help his neighbours wherever possible by giving preference to local manufactures even if they are of an inferior grade or dearer in price than things manufactured else-where. He will try to remedy their defects but will not give them up because of their defects and take to foreign manufactures.

But even swadeshi like any other good thing can be ridden to death if it is made a fetish. That is a danger that must be guarded against. To reject foreign manufactures merely because they are foreign and to go on wasting notional time and money to promote manufactures in one's country for which it is not suited wuld be criminal folly and a negation of the swadeshi spirit. A true votary of swadeshi will never harbour ill-will towards the oreigner, he will not be moved by antagonism towards anybody on earth. Swadeshism is not a cult of hatred. It is a doctrine of selfless service that has its roots in the purest ahimsa, i.e., love.

Young India, 18-6-1931

287. LIMITS TO FREEDOM

Some Digambar[1] Jains have asked the Sardar how, in the face of the Congress resolution passed at Karachi regarding fundamental rights and duties, assuring religious freedom under swaraj, anyone can object to Digambar Jain sadhus roaming about naked in accordance with their religion. The Sardar had replied that religious freedom could not imply that an act which appeared indecent to many or hurts their feelings was permissible. And he had said it was his opinion that despite being sadhus, if they went about naked, it was bound to hurt people's feelings.

I feel that the Sardar could have possibly given no other reply. I myself believe that the ideal state for all human beings is nakedness.

[1] Literally, those who regard the sky as their garment

But an ideal human being would always be innocent and free of passions or desires. Without such innocence, anyone roaming about naked would be regarded as a sinful man.

There is no reason to conclude that because Digambar sadhus are known as sadhus they would necessarily be free of all passions. Even if they are so, it is their dharma to keep within the bounds of social decency. A few Jains may understand the state of these sadhus. But society by and large will fail to comprehend it and its feelings will be hurt. These naked sadhus have no need to visit cities. It they have, they should observe the minimum bounds of decency prescribed for citizens. Instead of doing that if they insist upon entering cities in a naked state, or if the *shravakas*[1] insist upon this, in my opinion it would be regarded as *adharma*[2]. I myself am fond of the state of nakedness. If I were living in a lonely forest I would remain in that state, but in this world full of passions, there is little likelihood of this becoming the commonly accepted practice. For the preservation of morality even great men of every persuasion have to cover their private parts; it is their dharma to do so. Freedom, both individual and religious, has always had and will always have many limits. Religion does not hanker after rights, it hungers for restraints and restrictions. Anyone who knows religion and practises it does not think in terms of his rights. Nudity cannot be one's duty. It is one's duty to abandon all possessions. That is a dharma of the mind. If anyone puts any burden on me, that is not possession. But is becomes so if I start enjoying that burden. The sadhu who bears the burden of the loincloth for the preservation of the social order does not violate the principle of non-possession but rather exercises selfcontrol.The sadhu who insists upon going about naked without worrying about the feelings of society is self-willed. The following dictum of the *Gita* is pertinent in this context: "For me there is naught to do in the three worlds, yet I am ever in action. If I were not to perform my task, these worlds would be ruined; I should be the cause of chaos and of the end of all mankind."[3] Sadhus should not do anything which would harm the people. Let society never encourage them to do so.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 31-5-1931

[1] Lay followers of Jainism

[2] Violation of dharma

[3] III. 22-24

288. NOTES

DISTINGUISHING SWADESHI FROM FOREIGN GOODS

The following question[1] has been received regarding this subject:

No royal road has been found for distinguishing foreign from swadeshi cloth. A picketer should acquaint himself well with this distinction. And hence the general advice is that no one should purchase from uncertified shops. These certificates are of two kinds: Those issued by the All-India Spinners' Association in regard to khadi and those issued by the Swadeshi Sabha in respect of cloth manufactured by Indian textile mills. I do not know if this second type of certificate has yet been issued. But khadi exclusively is the simpler way out. Where falsehood has become almost universal, the sentiment for khadi alone will stand the people in good stead. Untruth has entered even the domain of khadi, or, in other words, deceit is being practised with regard to it also; yet there is minimum room for deceit in it. Moreover, those who spin at home have nothing to fear.

Then the question will arise as to what a picketing *sevika*[2] should do. If she shares my faith in khadi, she would regard picketing as a means for carrying on propaganda for khadi and, while turning the customers away from shops selling foreign cloth, she would direct them towards those selling khadi. If the latter do not take this course, she will remain patient and have faith that there is no other way to boycott foreign cloth. And even if there is one, it is futile; moreover, it is also well worth remembering that there is no special merit in boycotting foreign cloth. Such boycott is both useful and necessary for khadi propaganda. The woman picket who realizes this basic truth will not be insulted—because she will not feel insulted—or perplexed. She has somehow to carry on khadi propaganda for the sake of the poor. Other activities involve fear, insult, dishonesty and result in no benefit to the poor.

BUYER'S OBSTINACY[3]

The answer to this question should be regarded as having been

[1] Not translated here

[2] A woman volunteer

[3] This was in reply to a question how to satisfy a customer who insisted on a particular kind of khadi only.

included in the above. If the customer is obstinate, we should be a hundredfold so. The customer's obstinacy has no ground, ours has a strong one. "The khadi that he wants" cannot mean that he should get khadi as soft as satin made in Paris at the very same price. Anyone who wears khadi has no other alternative but to wear khadi whether coarse of fine. We should remember that we cannot satisfy all people. It is not our job to satisfy everyone; rather, everybody should suit himself to the needs of the poor, that is, be satisfied. Khadi alone is the refuge of the affcted. We should be patient even with those who disregard it.

SUCH PICKETS ARE TOO FEW[1]

If the number of women pickets is five and there are five hundred shops, let them deal with only five shops or even with only one. Propaganda for khadi is a matter of dharma and not policy. Hence regardless of whether there is only one picket or many, that dharma must be performed. It will be good even if only one shopkeeper relents. It is not as if in this matter an individual shopkeeper did not have to act till all shopkeepers acted and gave up selling foreign cloth. Even if only one gives up, the five women should continue picketing, thinking that the work has progressed to that extent. Seeing them picketing, other women will come forward. If their picketing produces an effect on one merchant, there is a likelihood of its having an effect on the others also. If this does not hap-pen, the merchant who relented will have no cause for regret. If trading in foreign cloth is a sin, although others may continue to be sinful he who has realized that this practice is sinful will give it up. It has always been thus. If I had waited for everyone, propaganda for khadi could never have been done. A Herculean task calls for Herculean courage.

"It is because of his courage that Columbus discovered a new world," says a poet. But Columbus's courage was exhibited for his own pleasure. It was not intended to serve anyone. Underlying it was his desire to discover a new world and to amass the wealth to be found in it. In order to do so, he navigated the seas; then how much more courage shold we show in order to cloth the crores of naked people of

[1] This was written in reply to a correspondent who had observed that picketing was going to prove infructuous from the practical point of view.

India? The *sevika* who shares Columbus's faith and has his patience will continue her work even if she is alone. Day by day she will gain new strength and new faith, and will think of new ways of doing her work or, the "Kindly Light" will point out new paths to her. Meanwhile, she would sing:

"One step enough for me."

POOR MAN[1]

This question implies disparagement of khadi or one may say it implies ignorance of the importance of khadi. Has it been raised because it is supposed that producing khadi is an easy job or one for which only a few persons are needed? Khadi work is a great science which has so far been imperfectly studied. Let as many people, young and old, as may wish, take up this work; there cannot be too many of them. How many men will be required in order to meet the needs of seven hundred thousand villages? Khadi work is so vast that even if a hundred thousand men give eight hours a day to it, some work will still remain undone. In this very issue, there is a brief account of the production and sale of khadi in Gujarat alone. A glance at this should give everyone an idea of how many men are required for khadi work.

But I am aware that there is another question behind the above questio, viz, khadi work is all very well, but if a man finds it uninteresting, what should he do? Such men should remove the filth in villages; they should insted of making speeches for that purpose, take up a broom and clean up roads and latrines, stop garbage heaps from forming and spread rules of sanitation among the people. Although the women will do picketing, they will need much help in doing so; that help should be given by men; if the men are competent enough, they should sit under trees in villages and without any books run schools for children as also start night schools for adults. For anyone who is bent on serving, the field is limitless. And everyone should realize that, when the time for launching the struggle comes again, the strength for it will be generated only through such activities.

[1] This was in reply to a question whether, during the Truce period, since women were assigned the work of boycott of foreign cloth and prohibition of liquor, men were expected to do any other work besides producing khadi.

Even the violent soldiers of the world have acted in this manner and continue to do so. It is only the mercenary soldier who, when not engaged in fighting, becomes a drain because he eats bread which he has not rightfully earned. He is therefore a nuisance as he is busy seeking pleasures and is a burden to the earth. We have seen from history that Garibaldi and his soldiers tilled the land when they were not fighting. The Boers were farmers by profession and when the time for fighting came, right from General Botha down to the poorest Boer, they gave up their plough shares and showed such courage on the battlefield that it astonished the world—this I have seen with my own eyes. If soldiers who believe in violence preserve their fighting strength by doing such constructive work, I cannot understand why the non-violent soldiers of India in this age should find it difficult to do constructive work. Every reader should remember that a great deal of penance and constructive work lay behind the enthusiasm which was generated last year.

IF POISON IS MIXED WITH MILK?[1]

Just as milk in which even a drop of poison has fallen is fit to be shunned, so, in my opinion, should we have nothing to do with a shop selling foreign cloth along with Indian cloth. Just as a person who drinks pure milk at a brewer's shop will be regarded as a drunkard, so too a customer who buys swadeshi cloth at a shop selling foreign cloth will be misunderstood. Is there any dearth of shops dealing only in swadeshi cloth? Even if there are only a few such shops and those are not in our neighbourhood, we should go to these wherever they are located. For those who are picketing, the way is straightforward: they should warn people who approach shops selling foreign cloth and turn them away, if possible. I have recently received even this question whether swadeshi goods can be bought at a liquor shop if they are being sold there. I didn't hesitate to reply immediately that the answer was in the negative.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 31-5-1931

[1] This was in reply to the question whether customers could be asked to abstain totally from buying cloth from shops which sold both foreign and Indian cloth.

289. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 31, 1931

MY DEAR AMTUL,

If you are not keeping well, you should live on only milk and fruit. I can understand your delicacy of feeling about money matters. I am writing to Narandas about this. Do continue to write to me and pour out your heart to me. I want you to grow mentally, morally and physically in the Ashram.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 239

290. LETTER TO M. REBELLO & SONS

May 31, 1931

GENTLEMEN,

I have your letter of 22nd instant[1]. I have no copyright in my portraits but I am unable to give the consent you require.

Yours faithfully,

From a microfilm : S.N. 17120

291. LETTER TO ALLEN W. SAYLER

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 31, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

Mirabai has shown me your letter to her. I see several difficulties in your coming to the Ashram. A passport is necessry and it is highly likely that conditions will be attached to your passport. Therefore my advice to you is for the present to suspend the idea of coming to India to settle down with me but to follow the rules of the Ashram there and live the life as close to the Ashram life as possible in the circumstances. It is highly likely that then the way will be open for you to come to India without restrictions of any kind whatsoever.

If you are not getting *Young India* there you can look up the file in the University office.

Yours sincerely,

ALLEN W. SAYLER, ESQ.
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

From a photostat : S.N. 17168

[1] The addressee had asked Gandhiji's permission to use his photo as their trade mark for roofing tiles.

292. LETTER TO KIRAN SANKAR ROY

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 31, 1931

DEAR KIRAN BABU,

I have your letter. The Working Committee will go into the whole of the affair as Subhasbabu has lodged a formal complaint. You may depend upon my taking my full share in the investigation and assisting the conclusions of the Committee. I am not writing separately to Sisir Babu who has sent me a separate letter.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. KIRAN SANKAR ROY
44 EUROPEAN ASYLUN LANE, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm : S.N. 17169

293. LETTER TO ANAND KISHORE MEHTA

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 31, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 27th instant which you have marked "*Reminder*". I am not aware of the receipt of a previous letter. I am sorry to have to tell you that I cannot sympathize with the object of your memorial, much less give my name to he Committee. If I had any influence over the Committee I should advise its disbandment.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. ANAND KISHORE MEHTA
GENERAL SECRETARY, THE ALL-INDIA
BHAGAT SINGH, RAJGURU, SUKHADEV
MEMORIAL COMMITTEE
ANARKALI, LAHORE

From a microfilm : S.N. 17170

294. LETTER TO SHRIRAM SHARMA

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 31, 1931

DEAR SIR,

I have your letter. You do not tell me why the Congress workers were arrested. In any case there is nothing in the Settlement to prevent Government from undertaking prosecutions for offences, fancied or

real. If the offence alleged was not committed, it is open to the arrested workers to be defended by pleaders.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. SHRIRAM SHARMA
GENERAL SECRETARY
DISTRICT CONGRESS COMMITTEE
ROHTAK (PUNJAB)

From a microfilm : S.N. 17171

295. LETTER TO R. S. RAJWADE

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 31, 1931

Not for Publication

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I learnt about your release when I was in Simla. It did cause a great trouble before the authrities could be moved but it was a pleasure because your case seemed to me to be so clear.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. R. S. RAJWADE
KARMAYOGI OFFICE
574 SOUTH KASABA
SHOLAPUR

From a photostat : S.N. 17172

296. LETTER TO KRISHAN GOPAL DUTT

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 31, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have not answered your telegram because I did not know how to. Now that I have got your letter I am able to answer your questions.

(1) Since picketing is to be peaceful free of all coercion, there is no question of insistence on sealing up the present stock.

(2) But if a cloth merchant declines to sign your pledge it is open to you to picket his shop even though it may contain swadeshi cloth.

(3) Naturally you would picket the shop of a merchant who breaks his pledge, but you may not impose any fine.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. KRISHNA GOPAL DUTT
CITY ROAD, SIALKOT CITY

From a microfilm : S.N. 17173

297. LETTER TO V. B. HAROLIKAR

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 31, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

Here are the answers to your questions:

(1) Yes, if the purchase is made from certified producers. But in every case it would be advisable to make large purchases throuh the all-India agency.

(2) I should consider A.I.S.A. certificate as necessary in every case.

(3) Congress Committee would relentlessly enforce the khaddar condition whilst it is part of the constitution.

(4) The relevancy of the fourth question, I do not understand,because it is open to the Congress, if it isnot obligatory, to picket foreign-cloth shops provided of course that picketing is absolutely peaceful and free of all coercion direct or indirect.

I hope I have answered your question clearly.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. V. B. HAROLIKAR
CITY CONGRESS COMMITTEE
28 SUKRAVAR PETH
POONA

From a microfilm : S.N. 17174

298. LETTER TO C. Y. CHINTAMANI

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 31, 1931

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You are fishing for a compliment but I am not going to give it to you if only because it would be a repetition of what I have told you before. But you are quite right in thinking that I do not read newspapers. Even the local ones I read for a few minutes and that too grudgingly. Leading articles, as a rule, escape me. You did well therefore in sending me the *Leader* cutting. Aninoffensive paragraph in *Navajivan* by Mahadev Desai has been made much of. I can only give you my assurance that I am not going lightly to declare war. I know what it would mean to Lord Irwin. The relations between us so developed during the negotiations that the very consideration that a declaration of war would hurt Irwin to the quick would alone make me wait a thousand times before embarking on any such step. But I can tell you in confidence that many occasions have arisen when, if I was so minded,[1] I might have broken up negotiaions with local authorities. But I have exercised and am still exercising immense patience. In any case I am not going to take any step without giving an ample opportunity to the Viceroy to review the situation and taking the public into confidence. It goes without saying that I would do nothing without first getting the sanction of the Working Committee.

So far for the peace or war part of your fears. The communal question is a horse of another colour. My position was made clear to Lord Irwin times without number and I made it clearer still at the farewell interview in Bombay. He greatly sympathized with my position. As you know, the Congress demand is far above what the Round Table Conference has higherto discussed. If we do not reach a communal settlement, I could not make the demand with any confidence in myself. But my non-participation in the Conference need not mean war. Failure to arrive at a settlement cannot be debited to the British Government though the question at all arises because of the present system of administraion. But I need not carry the matter any further. In this matter too I am feeling my way and if I at all can, I would certainly attend the Conference. I have come to no irrevocable decision. If the way at all opens up before me I will go to

[1] The source has "easy minded".

London without the slightest hesitation. Do pleases write to me whenever you feel inclined.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. C. Y. CHINTAMANI
C/O THE "LEADER"
ALLAHABAD

From a photostat : S.N. 17175

299. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

AS AT SABARMATI,
May 31, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I enclose herewith copies of the correspondence that has taken place between the Bombay Government and myself.

Yours sincerely,

Encls.

H. W. EMERSON, ESQ.
SIMLA

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

300. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

BARDOLI,
May 31, 1931

BHAISHRI VALJI,

Do bring Dudhibehn with you. According to your plan, you will reach here on Wednesday, that is, on the 3rd. I am scheduled to leave here on the 7th.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 6415. Courtesy : V. G. Desai

301. LETTER TO DUDABHAI

BARDOLI,
May 31, 1931

BHAI DUDABHAI,

I got your letter. "A non-*Antyaja* Hindu" does not mean a Bhangi, it means a Hindu who is not an *antyaja.* The man I have in view is a Brahmin brought up in Gujarat. As the Ashram does not recognize distinctions of caste and community and as it is necessary to abolish the class of *Antyajas* from Hindu society, I realty think that it would be good if Lakshmi could be married to a non-*Antyaja.* I a certainly very glad to know that Laksmi is not eager to get married just now. I hope I told you bout a house near Amreli.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The visit to Amreli was prompted by this hope.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3244

302. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

BARDOLI,
May 31, 1931

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your letter. How am I to give you courage? We do not always get in this world what would satisfy us. We have to live in the world, but without attachment to anything. In no case should you think that your troubles are the result of your having married in a non-Gujarati family. If you have patience, everyghing will surely adjust itself. You should spend some time with me. I will look for such an opportunity. Remain calm meanwhile. I shall meet Radha on the 8th in Bombay, when I shall be able to decide where she should stay and what she should do. One cause of worry was over with the news that Santok had recovered her health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9058

303. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

May 31, 1931

CHI. PREMA,

Why do Lakshmi and Padma keep falling ill? Do you think that they are careless about taking mediciness, ect.? If Padma continues to get fever, she will lose her health. Who is specially responsible for looking after her? No child in the Ashram should feel the absence of his or her parents. How is Krishnakumari? Write to me about the others too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10255. Also C.W. 6703. Courtesy : Premabehn Kantak

304. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

BARDOLI,
May 31, 1931

BHAI VITHALDAS,

Of course you are always in my thoughts. I have been inquiring after your health too. How did you get this disease? Don't insist on returning to work immediately. First get all right. If necessary, go for a change to a place like Deolali.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9777

305. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BARDOLI,
May 31, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

Some effective measures should be taken about Lakshmi and Padma. Request Dr. Kanuga to examine them both. If they do not recover even under his treatment, we shall have to think further what to do.

The vaid's treatment does not seem to have helped Ba much. She seems to benefit rather by the water and the soda bicarb which she

takes. She believes that the medicine merely suppresses the cough.

Both the Gangabehns and Vasumati are here for a few days.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I wrote to Mathew yesterday to tell him that if he wished to come and if he could be spared the Ashram, he might come. Read my letter to Amtulbehn and explain to her the position regarding her money.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I

306. LETTER TO SHARADA G. CHOKHAWALA

SIMLA,
[*May-August 1931*][1]

CHI. SHARADA,

Have you stopped writing letters to me because I have stopped writing? I have stopped writing because I am not in prison. I must be in prison to write letters regularly. Should I go to prison, or will you write even otherwise ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 9960. Courtesy: Sharadabehn G. Chokhawala

307. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

SWARAJ ASHRAM,
BARDOLI,
June 1, 1931

SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE
WOODBURN PARK
CALCUTTA

ADVISE YOU SEE SEN GUPTA AND OFFER SUBMIT MATTERS ARBITRATION IF MUTUAL ADJUSTMENT IMPOSSIBLE. CANNOT ADVISE COUNTER PUBLIC MEETING OR PROPAGANDA. AM WIRING SEN GUPTA SUBMIT ARBITRATION.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 17178

[1] From the contents. Gandhiji was in Simla in May, July and August in 1931; *vide* also letters to the addressee in

308. TELEGRAM TO J. M. SEN GUPTA

SWARAJ ASHRAM,
BARDOLI,
June 1, 1931

SEN GUPTA
ELGIN ROAD
CALCUTTA

INTERNAL DIFFERENCE MUST BE COMPOSED. PLEASE AGREE SUBMIT MATTERS ARBITRATION IF MUTUAL ADJUSTMENT IMPOSSIBLE.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 17176

309. TELEGRAM TO MURARILAL

SWARAJ ASHRAM,
BARDOLI,
June 1, 1931

DOCTOR MURARILAL
CIVIL LINES
CAWNPORE

YOUR WIRE[1]. DEEPLY GRIEVED BUT CAN ONLY SUGGEST PARTIES SUBMITTING MATER ARBITRATION. CAN GIVE NO OTHER OPINION OFFHAND.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 17180

310. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

June 1, 1931

Interviewed by the Associated Press regarding the statement recently made by Sir Chimanlal Setalvad in connection with Mahatma Gandhi's attitude towards the Round Table Conference, Mahatma Gandhi said :

You embarrass me by asking question on anything that Sir Chimanlal Setalvad says about me. His age and his greatness entitle him to make statements on insufficient data and yet absolve him from criticism from one like myself.

[1] Which read : "Quarrel between Hindus Muslims over Gandhi Seva Samiti signboard. Muslims refuse taking procession under it although board too high for interference with procession. . . Hindus refuse removing it even for few hours. . . panic all city . . ."

Moreover, whilst I am carrying on delicate negotiations, I may not be over-communicative, but I can make a general statement that I am not conscious of having done anything to endanger the Settlement or in contravention of it.

Though under given circumstances, I am anxious and willing to attend the Round Table Conference, there is nothing in the Settlement, so far as I can read it, to make it compulsory for the Congress to take part in the Round Table Conference, but that discussion is purely academic, for the question of non-attendance has not arisen at all.

Asked if it was true that his attitude was undergoing constant change, Mahatma Gandhi said :

I am not aware of having done such a thing.

Replying to a question whether he would take part in the Round Table Conference, he said:

If I succeed in attending the Round Table Conference, I should put forth the Congress demands with all zeal and power I may have and fully participate in the proceeding and not be a mere spectator at the Round Table Conference.

Questioned whether there was an impasse in Bardoli, Mahatma Gandhi said :

I have had a happy interview with the Collector along with Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel and I am hoping that everything would be fixed up satisfactorily.

Replying to a further question if there was any breach of the Truce terms in Bardoli or Borsad, he stated:

I would prefer not to answer that question, because negotiations are still going on for the settlement of outstanding questions both in Bardoli and Borsad.

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-6-1931

311. TELEGRAM TO TAMIL NADU CONFERENCE, MADURA

SWARAJ ASHRAM,
BARDOLI,
June 2, 1931

TAMIL NADU CONFERENCE
MADURA

WISH CONFERENCE SUCCESS. CONVINCED BOYCOTT FOREIGN CLOTH DEPENDENT MORE ON KHADDAR THAN PICKETING.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 17182

312. TELEGRAM TO KOMBRABAIL

SWARAJ ASHRAM,
BARDOLI,
June 2, 1931

KOMBRABAIL
BALMATTI
MANGALORE

MY OPINION PERMISSION CANNOT BE GRANTED.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 17183

313. TELEGRAM TO J. M. SEN GUPTA

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 2, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

You will recal our conversation about the *Navajivan* and *Young India* press[1]. I wonder if you have got legal opinion.[2] Al l the opinion that I can gather is that the clause certainly means delivery at the place from where the property was removed. But I shall be interested to know what your legal advisers have got to say. Meanwhile *Young India* and *Navjivan* are still labouring under a

[1] For Gandhiji's earlier letter on the subject, *vide* "Letter to R. M. Maxwell", 7-5-1931

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Salvation Army, Bombay 14-6-1931

handicap in spite of the fact that the management own suitable machinery and other material.

Yours sincerely,

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

314. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 2, 1931

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your two precious letters. I see you are in a hury to have me in England through the air mail if I would fly. But I can hardly hop. I see no light before me as yet. My desire is certainly to go there but the inner voice says 'no' and the external atmosphere confirms the guidence of the inner voice. As you know, the Congress demands are strung in a high pitch. They could not be otherwise. If we cannot set our house in order here so far even as the communal question is concerned I could not speak in London as with one voice. It therefore does seem to me that if the communal trouble is not finished and a workable formula is not arrived at by agreement I should not have the requisite self-confidence to deliver the Congress message. That is so far as the Round Table Conference is concerned. But of course if the British Minister require my presence in order to discuss the Congress position and understand it and if they would want me to do a little lobbying also I could come whenever required. But then there is the Delhi Settlement. I am bound to see, as far as is possible for a single human being, that there is no breakdown. The Bombay Government has given me cause enough to re-declare hostilities but if you knew everything you would yourself be amazed at my patience. In every little thing it is like drawing a live tooth. But I must not weary you with these troubles of mine. I am taking them cheerfully and breaking down opposition. Thank God, I do receive help from the Central Government. I believe Mr. Emerson knows me and he will play the game. But local governments may produce situations which neither he nor I can control. I can tell you that so far as the Congress is concerned, Congressmen are implementing the Settlement in a manner not even expected by me. Of course there is overzeal now and again in picketing but it is immediately brought

under control. You can give this assurance to all who may need it that I am anxious to attend the Conference and try my utmost to secure lasting peace and an honourable settlement of the constitutional question by negotiation. It is only external circumstances which really detain me. But in any case for reasons unconnected with my hesitation the Round Table Conference and its Committees stand postponed. There need be therefore no hurry just now over my coming unless of course I am required there independently of the Conference. I have now told you all that you should know.

I am just now in Bardoli fixing up things.

Gurudev seems to be ailing.

Love.

MOHAN

From a photostat : S.N. 968

315. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 2, 1931

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. Subhasbabu was here and he had a formidable list of countercharges. I have now telegraphed to both asking them to submit to arbitration by mutual consent, and if they will appoint some local men as arbitrators and abide by their decision, this unseemly squabble might end. In any case I am going to try whatever is possible on the 9th.

You are having success with the *Gita* and the *Autobiography*. I did not expect you would have any sale for these books.

I am glad you have gained in weight but you have to gain much more. And I am certain that you should not stint yourself about food that your system may require. It is quite enough that you deny yourself flesh and fish. You ought to take milk and curds liberally and take such fresh fruit as is easily available. I have written similarly to Hemprabha also. She is wrong in denying herself food that her body requires because Nikhil[1] is no more. I feel more and more that this kind of self-denial not only carries no merit but is a violation of nature's laws. Denial of food has merit when it is undertaken for control of the palate or as a medical necessity.

[1] Addressee's son; he had died in 1928.

Kishorelal Mashruwala raises a doubt as to the authenticity of the spinner's letter of 1828 whose translation you sent me the other day and which I published in *Young India*.[1] He thinks that the language is much too modern, as also the conception. If I understood your letter rightly, you had mentioned that the copy of the newspaper in which the letter appears is in your possession.

Love.

BAPU

SYT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
SODEPUR (CALCUTTA)

From a photostat : G.N. 8034

316. LETTER TO A. G. BUTT

June 2, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[2] You can realize the truth of the statement made by me by prayer, purification, meditation, fasting and diligent study.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 17164

317. LETTER TO DR. W. J. WANLESS

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 2, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. Whilst I have a very vivid recollection of your personal services[3] to me I have long ceased even to think of rewarding such services materially. I have rendered myself practically incapable of rendering such services. The only service therefore I have for years rendered for them has been heartfelt thanks, and heartfelt thanks of a poor man like me take the shape of blessings. I must confess that I have been the recipient of personal kindnesses

[1] *Vide* "In 1828", 21-5-1931

[2] The addressee, writting from Simla on 29-5-1931, had referred to Gandhiji's article "A Twentieth Century Sati (?)", 3-5-1931 and said that his assertion about the soul's immortality was unconvincing.

[3] The reference apparently is to his sudden illness in 1927 during a tour, during which Dr. Wanless looked after him; *vide*

from many quarters. Just imagine what would be my state and the state of rich men whom I only know in public life if I were to ask them for donations for the enterprise of my benefactors. You will therefore please excuse me for my inability to respond to your desire.

Yours sincerely,

DR. SIR W. J. WANLESS
1016 MATILIJA ROAD
GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA (U.S.A.)

From a photostat : S.N. 17188

318. LETTER TO N. G. JOSHI

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 2, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter giving me facts of [the] criminal case of Nipani. Where there is any allegation of violence the matter rests with the local government. I am not likely to succeed in any representation I may make. I wold therefore advise that a proper systematic defence is put up.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. N. G. JOSHI
PRESIDENT, DISTRICT CONGRESS COMMITTEE
BELGAUM

From a photostat : S.N. 17189

319. LETTER TO COWASJI JEHANGIR

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 2, 1931

DEAR SIR COWASJI,

I thank you for your prompt acknowledgement of my letter[1] and the trouble you are still taking with reference to the land in Sardar Garda's possesion. It seems to me that he is legally bound to transfer the property having written the letter concluding the bargin. I have written to him to that effect[2] in reply to his letter. I have been making

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Cowasji Jehangir", 26-5-1931
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Framroze B. Garda", 26-5-1931

further enquiries and I am able to give you my assurance that there is nothing in the charges made by him. On the contrary he is becoming a terror to the people. Youngsters under 12 years of age were arrested for having helped themselves to mangoes from his land. You do not know the taluqa. Mango trees are not protected and urchins all over the land help themselves often to mangoes during the mango season and nobody worries about them. I am not sure that the urchins whom he had arrested had touched his mangoes. But even if they had, they would be under nobody's control. And yet he would press incidents like this into service to make up his indictment although these incidents have nothing to do with alleged harassment.

I shall await your letter regading Miss V. Contractor's complaint.

Yours sincerely,

SIR COWASJI JEHANGIR
TEMPLE HILL
MAHABALESHWAR

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and library

320. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

June 2, 1931

CHI. SHARDA,

I have your letter. You seem to be keeping good health these days. All of you have become lethargic in writing to me, even as I am.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 9902. Courtesy : Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

321. LETTER TO NANIBEHN JHAVERI

BARDOLI,
June 2, 1931

CHI. NANIBEHN,

I got your letter. In staying in the Vidyapith you have done nothing for which you need apologize. It is not a crime to live there. You will certainly learn there, and should, therefore, live there

contented. Improve your health and cultivate the mind. Write to me from time to time. Most probably, Gangabehn also will go and live there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3115

322. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

BARDOLI,
June 2, 1931

CHI. MANILAL AND SHUSHILA,

I had the letter you both wrote on board the ship. I also got news of your having reached there. I will now expect your regular letter by the next mail. Ba is with me at Bardoli. She was with me at Simla too. Nothing is certain as yet about my going to England. The solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem seems to be far away yet.

As for the rest, everything is all right.

I have no time to write more.

Sita—I have forgotten her other name—must have now put on weight again. The climate there is such that one simply cannot fall ill. I should be equally happy if Sushila too puts on weight.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4784.

323. LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA DESAI

BARDOLI,
June 2, 1931

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA,

I got a letter from you after a long time. You should take care and improve your eyes soon. The remedy is this: Wash the eyes daily with bearable, warm water after putting a little salt in the water. The salt should be quite clean and very little in quantity. Sprinkle the solution on the eyes. If this remedy is likely to benefit you, you will know it in a day. That is, you will find that the lustre of your eyes has encreased. At night, bandage the eyes with cotton pads soaked in milk before going to bed. I am leaving for Bombay on the 9th and shall return on the 11th.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Do bring the children with you.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 7467. Also C.W. 4913. Courtesy : Hari-ichchha Kamdar

324. LETTER TO BABALBHAI MEHTA

BARDOLI,
June 2, 1931

CHI. BABALBHAI,

I got your letter.

1. Disobey any order issued under the Foreigners' Act.

2. If they deport one to one's native place, one should not submit to improper restrictions.

3. While in jail, pay no attention to any news about a settlement which you may hear. The men outside may do whatever they choose

4. There is no objection to passing a receipt for any order served on you.

It is a good thing that you observed the rules while in jail and are doing so outside.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The views which I have expressed may change as may be required by the conditions prevailing at any time. Likewise, you are free to act as you think fit in given circumstances despite these views.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 9453

325. LETTER TO NARAYAN MORESHWAR KHARE

June 2, 1931

CHI. PANDITJI,

Thakkar Bapa says in his letter that, though they had invited you to the gathering o f Bhangis at Dakor, you could not attend it. Is this true?

How is Rambhau progressing?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 216. Courtesy : Lakshmibehn Khare

326. LETTER TO RAMBHAU KHARE

June 2, 1931

CHI. RAMBHAU,

You wrote very few letters from Almora. Will you remain lazy there too? Don't you think you should now overcome your laziness?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 289. Courtesy : Lakshmibehn Khare

327. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 2, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

Can you think of anyone in the Ashram who would come forward for *Antyaja* work?

How does Lalji work? Does he work well enough to repay what is spent on him?

Does anyone live in the red bungalow or sleep in it at night? Is it true that Giriraj's mind has become disturbed?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I

328. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

June 2, 1931

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Surendra's letter seems to have confused you. He has mixed up several issues, with the result that you could not understand my real meaning. The idea that Surendra should return to the Ashram is independent of other considerations, and these are the reasons for my view:

1. It did not seem necessary to me to keep him at Karadi.

2. It is not proper for us, who have taken the vow of *aparigraha*, to make a special effort to find out another place and stay there.

3. In the present circumstances, it would not at all be wrong if persons like him return to the Ashram.

4. Sardar would certainly prefer that Surendra and other work ers like him who cannot easily adjust themselves to circumstances should stay in the Ashram.

The following is the substance of the other po9ints discussed along with these :

1. Those Ashram workers who were slack in observing the Ashram rules of discipline and who were unwilling to return to the Ashram on the pretext that they should work outside should return to it.

2. It was the duty of those Ashram, workers who were required outside the Ashram and who could observe the Ashram rules to stay outside it and do the required work.

3. It was preferable to have only one public worker in every village.

4. When there are more workers than one in a village, it is likely that they will not have enough work to do and that even small differences of opinion which may arise among them will confuse the minds of the residents.

5. It is probable that Darbari left the place because he felt, when he saw three or four Ashram workers there, that he no longer enjoyed the position which he did.

6. One should run away from a place where the necessity of one's services is not self-evident. Before accepting anybody's version of what I may have said, you should ask me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro—7 : Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 214-5

329. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

BARDOLI,
June 2, 1931

TO MY BROTHER, WITH DUE RESPECTS,

I was pained to read your postcard addressed to Narandas. It was evident from the writing that your hand was shaking while you wrote it. That is a sign of weakness. I hope you feel peace of mind now that Narandas is with you. We should be indifferent whether the body lasts of perishes. Write to me, dictating the letter to someone.

To both of you,

Humble greetings from
MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 9220. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

330. LETTER TO RASIK DESAI

BARDOLI,
June 2, 1931

CHI. RASIK,

I got your letter. Blisters are caused by impure blood and can be cured by living on milk and fruit.

Whether you wish to join the Vidyapith or any other institution, you should be fit to do so. Anyone who leaves his own tution, you should be fit to do so. Anyone who leaves his own work to join the Vidyapith is not fit for it. Nor is one who wishes to join it for satisfying his desire for study under the excuse that the Ashram does not provide proper education But one who is required in the Vidyapith for serving the cause of swaraj and who joins it with that end in view is fit to join it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Jayant that I have not written to him as there is nothing in his letter which calls for a reply.

From a copy of the Gujarati : C. W. 4350. Courtesy : Rasik Desai

331. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

BARDOLI,
June 2, 1931

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your letter. You must have received my last letter.

To reduce food or to abstain from it because a son or a dear one has died is ignorance. I see no merit in it.Dharma and true *shraddha* consist in increasing work of service in the name of the departed one, recognizing the unity of all souls, and in realizing the transitoriness of the body. We should reduce food or give up some item of food only for the purpose of controlling the palate or removing a physical disorder. The loss of a dear one should have no connection with the giving up of food. So wake up; forget Nikhil's death and try to

improve your body for the cause of service. You need to take milk, curds and fruit. Tell me if you have any financial difficulty.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 1687

332. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 3, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

There is still the fire-arms question to be decided. I do not know whether you obtained legal advice in the matter. Whatever the legal advice, I am quite certain of the conversation about this very matter at the time I suggested the expression "illegal possession". If you will look up the original draft, you will perhaps recall the conversation because the original draft excluded fire-arms.

May I remind you about Mathura and Ludhiana incidents. These are both matters deserving close scrutiny.

Yours sincerely,

H. W. EMERSON, ESQ.
SIMLA

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

333. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 3, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

You will remember we discussed the question of students who had suspended their studies. From everywhere complaints continue to pour in. I think that it is highly necessary to take back these students unconditionally. It is terrible to think that they alone should be singled out for punishment.[1]

Yours sincerely,

H. W. EMERSON, ESQ.
SIMLA

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

334. LETTER TO G. V. KETKAR

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 3, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

Yes, Syt. Rajawade's case caused me great deal of trouble and worry.

I have just got the complete file of Syt. Rajah's[2] case. I am studying it.

[1] Emerson replied on July 2 thatt ". . . the student cannot be regarded solely as an individual. He is a member of a corporate institution, and in the interests of the institution, and not with the object of imposing any indignity on the individual, it is often necessary to make conditions which will secure discipline. These are considerations to which local Governments undoubtedly attach great weight, and it may be assumed that had the question been raised twhen the Settlement was under discussion, they would have taken strong exception to the re-admission of students without any guarantee for the future and irrespective of the reasons for which they had left, or been expelled from, educational institutions. In these circumstances the Government of India do not consider it fair to local Governments to impose on them a course of action outside the Settlement. . ."

[2] H. D. Raja

Nothing can be done in the Chirner case just at present.

Deo did write to me recently.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SYT. G. V. KETKAR
THE KESARI AND THE MAHARATTA OFFICE
568 NARAYAN PETH, POONA CITY

From a photostat : G. N. 7965. Also C.W. 980. Courtesy : G. V. Ketkar

335. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA[2]

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 3, 1931

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

I have Dr. T. Das's letter which you have sent. I do not know that we can do anything in the matter.

I expect to see you on the 9th in Bombay.

BAPU

SYT. J. C. KUMARAPPA[3]
BOMBAY

From a photostat : G. N. 10094

336. LETTER TO S. N. BATLIWALA[4]

June 3, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 20th ultimo. You will see my article in *Young India* entitled 'Is Boycott an Economic Necessity?'[5]

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S. N. 17106

[1] Gandhiji's Secretary wrote the following postscript to the letter : "I hope you will succeed in finding out working formula—Gandhiji's reply to Shankarrao Deo." Shakarrao Deo had written to Gandhiji on the elections of Congress Committees in Maharashtra.

[2] In reply to the addressee's letter of May 27 (S. N. 17162)

[3] The source has "H. Kumarappa."

[4] The addressee had enclosed a copy of his article in the *Times of India* dated 19-5-1931, on the Indian Economic Crisis Wherein he had argued that masses of India suffered and only the Indian mills benefited by the boycott of foreign cloth.

[5] *Vide* "Is it An Economic Necessity", 4-6-1931

337. LETTER TO WILHELM HEYDORN

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 3, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. If I succeed in going to London I would indeed like to go to various places. But whether such a thing will be possible, I do not know. If however I do visit places on the continent I would be delighted to make your acquaintance.

Yours sincerely,

WILHELM HEYDORN, ESQ.
HAMBURG 24 (GERMANY)

From a photostat : S. N. 17192

338. LETTER TO CHARLES S. FIELD

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 3, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I appreciate your letter and I would have made your acquaintance had I gone to America. But as you must have observed, it was a baseless rumour which created the hope and in some minds possibly also the fear that I might visit America.

Yours sincerely,

CHARLES S. FIELD, ESQ.
DALLAS, TEXAS (U.S.A.)

From a photostat : S. N. 17193

339. LETTER TO MAHARAJA OF DARBHANGA

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 3, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your telegram redirected from Borsad. I have not seen the landholders' manifesto referred to by you. If you will kindly send it to me I shall see what can be done.

Yours sincerely,

MAHARAJA OF DARBHANGA

From a photostat : S. N. 17194

340. LETTER TO GERTRUDE EMERSON

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 3, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

You are quite right in thinking that if I did not get the quiet to read your book[1] in Yeravda it was not likely that I should have any, outside that abode of peace. The book was taken away on his discharge by the prisoner friend who had borrowed it from me and he returned it on my discharge when I was in the midst of interminable work. Since my discharge, I have not been able to rest. The work before me exhausts such energy as I have still left in me.

You will be welcome to the Ashram whenever you come.

Yours sincerely,

MISS GERTRUDE EMERSON
C/O "ASIA"
468 FOURTH AVENUE
NEW YORK (U.S.A.)

From a photostat : S. N. 17195

341. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 3, 1931

DEAR VENKATAPPIAH,

I am glad you have given me an exhaustive letter about Bapi Needu. I have offered to take him in the Ashram and pay the sum mentioned by him, i.e., Rs. 33 per month, for his dependents.[2] But if you can guide him there and he will accept your guidance do please give it to him. How is your wife? I was sorry to hear about your daughter, but really she ought to go to the hills every summer.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. KONDA VENKATAPPIAH
GUNTUR

From a microfilm: S. N. 17696

[1] Presumably *Voiceless India*, published in 1930
[2] *Vide* "Leter to Subhas Chandra Bose", 26-5-1931

342. LETTER TO K. PANDAR CHETTY

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 3, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

With reference to your letter it does not appear that your gun licence was confiscated because of civil disobedience. Cases not arising out of civil disobedience are not covered by the Settlement.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. K. PANDAR CHETTY
CARDAMOM PLANTER
BODINAYAKANUR (S. INDIA)

From a photostat : S. N. 17197

343. LETTER TO MRS. C. A. HATE

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 3, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

Whatever energy I possess is due to regular habits and such self-restraint as I am capable of exercising. It is quite true that friends around me too notice my peace of mind. It is an object of envy. It comes from absolute faith in God and His goodness. That faith enables me humbly to do the task allotted to me without being anxious for the result.

I believe that indigestion is one thing which everybody can control and remove. Before I can advise you on your food, it is really necessary for me to know much more about you than you have told me in your letter. I should like to know what you feel when you say you are suffering from indigestion. Are your bowels acting regularly? How long have you suffered from indigestion? What food are you taking now and in what quantity and how many times? What exercises are you taking? How do you pass your days?

Yours sincerely,

MRS. C. A. HATE
INDU BHUVAN
343 THAKURDWAR, BOMBAY

From a photostat : S. N. 17198

344. LETTER TO S. SWAMINATHAN CHETTIAR

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 3, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 25th May last[1]. If a chairman deliberately defies any rule of the Congress constitution it is certainly open to any member present to challenge the decision and to move a vote of no-confidence or to take such other steps that are open to members.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. S. SWAMINATHAN
POTTAMARAI NORTH
KUMBAKONAM

From a photostat : S. N. 17200

345. LETTER TO THE SECRETARY, INDIAN MERCHANTS' CHAMBER

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 3, 1931

THE SECRETARY
INDIAN MERCHANTS' CHAMBER
BOMBAY

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your letter of the 19th ultimo advising me that I was unanimously elected an honorary member of your Chamber. Please convey my thanks to the Chamber for conferring on me this honour.

Yours faithfully,

From a photostat : S. N. 17201

[1] Stating that the President, Kumbakonam Taluk Congress Committee, had allowed a lawyer member to participate in its deliberations over ruling the objection from other members that he was not a habitual wearer of khadi

346. LETTER TO A. G. SHEOREY

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 3, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. If you contend that the D.S.P.'s order is illegal, you should challenge it in a court of law. If there is any doubt about it, the procedure you have adopted is the proper procedure, namely, approaching the Home Member and ventilating the matter in public.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. A. G. SHEOREY
PUBLICITY OFFICER, PROVINCIAL POLITICAL CONFERENCE
SAUGOR (C.P.)

From a microfilm : S. N. 17202

347. LETTER TO DARCY LINDSAY

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 3, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 30th April last. I thought that the proposition that the Indian is a mere clerk[1] in the administration of the country was not seriously disputed by anybody. Wish that you could read the minds even of the Indian members of the I.C.S. I know from personal experience of them that the vast majority of them do not feel anything more than mere clerks, somewhat glorified if you like. But when I wrote the passage I had not the few of these highly-paid Indians in mind but I had the army of actual clerks who, no matter what their ability may be, can never rise beyond the status of clerks.

When I said that the Indian at best was a commission agent I again thought that I was stating what was literally the truth. Take the largest item of foreign trade. Is not the Indian merely the agent of his foreign principals? If he makes five rupees for himself, he makes Rs. 95 for his principal. So long as the conditions of trade remain what they are it cannot be otherwise. If India remains principally a country exporting raw produce and importing manufactured articles, Indian merchants must be largely commission agents whether of England,

[1] *Vide* "The Giant and the Dwarf", 26-3-1931

Japan, America or any other foreign country.

How shall I prove to you the daily humiliating experience of the Indian who, no matter how wealthy he is, gets no facility whereas his English rival gets many things done for the asking. Take the case of the British navigation companies, the concessions enjoyed by Europeans all over India whether in mining, banking or other commercial pursuits too numerous to mention.

When I say that the English trade is founded upon the ruin of Indian trade, I have simply written what historians have stated. If it was merely enterprise and grit that had brought about the state of things I should not grumble. But I would like you to study the rise of the East India Co. from the records of the India Office collected, be it said to their honour, by English historians.

In writing of the levelling process I certainly had not in mind the Soviet rule of Bolshevism. It is perhaps somewhat shameful that I have to confess to you that I do not yet know exactly what Bolshevism is for the simple reason that I have not had time to study the inner working of the Russian revolution. The levelling process to me simply means that the system of favouritism on which, as I believe, English commerce has been built should cease and for that purpose a double process has to begin. Favouritism should go and young Indian enterprises should receive State help and patronage.

I know that I must not expect to convert you by argument. What I would like Englishmen in India to do is to see them [selves] as the average Indian sees them and ask themselves why it is that the vast majority of Indians feel as I often write in the pages of *Young India*. Can it be that what some English economists have written and what most Indian economists, historians and administrators have written is all untrue? The case that I have presented is based upon their testimony and supported by personal experience.

Lastly, however much I may differ from your views, let me assure you that I appreciate your persistence in trying to convince me of my error. And if you will not give up the attempt I dare say that if I am not converted it is possible that in the process of friendly interchange of communications you might be able to see theother side of the shield.

Yours sincerely,

SIR DARCY LINDSAY
THE SPORTS CLUB
ST. JAMES SQUARE
LONDON, S.W.

From a photostat : S. N. 17203

348. LETTER TO VIDYANATH SAHAI

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 3, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

I certainly think that it is everyone's duty and especially an educationist's to speak the truth at all cost.

Discussion of politics in colleges should carry no stigma.

It was impossible to cover in the Delhi Agreement cases in Indian States.

I can understand the distinction between those who resigned on their own free will and those who were dismissed. A dismissal may take place on valid grounds apart from civil disobedience.

I should be astonished if it was true, that because you were dismissed from Kashmir State service for the reasons you state, other educational institutions will not take you up.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. VIDYANATH SAHAI
THE EMPIRE HINDU HOTEL
SIMLA

From a microfilm : S.N. 17204

349. LETTER TO CHARLES F. WELLER

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 3, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your warm letter of 17th April. 1933 is a far cry for me and I could not even make tentative arrangements for that year. You will therefore have to write to me, if all goes well, towards the middle of 1932 when I might be able to give a decisive answer. I am sure you will appreciate my difficulty.

Yours sincerely,

CHARLES F. WELLER, ESQ.
CHICAGO'S FELLOWSHIP OF FAITHS
CHICAGO (U.S.A.)

From a photostat : S. N. 17205

350. LETTER TO K. ROY CHATTI

AS AT ASHRAM,
June 3, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

Your enquiry need not be answered through the columns of *Young India*. The answer is so obvious. No Congress member can bid for opium shops.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. K. ROY CHATTI
SEETHANAGARAM,
Via KOVVOOR, EAST GODAVARI DT.

From a microfilm : S. N. 17206

351. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 3, 1931

I have your letter. I do not think you should worry the Sadhu. That he is known to be mad rather appeals to me because of the fellow feeling between us. Even without his warning, I know that if I have to go to Europe I put my health in danger. But it does not matter; if I am destined to do some service there, somehow or other my health will keep.

SYT. SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE
1 WOODBURN PARK
CALCUTTA

From a photostat : S. N. 17207

352. LETTER TO MRS. V. BANERJEE

AS AT ASHRAM,
June 3, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and I feel that you have had to undergo many a trial. I do not know that I need guide you in the choice of service. There are so many ways open to you. I would therefore advise you to

follow your own bent in making your choice. I would like to meet you if I happen to come in your direction.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. V. BANERJEE
LADY HEALTH VISITOR, BABY CLINIC COMMITTEE
RAJSHAHI (BENGAL)

From a microfilm : S. N. 17208

353. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 3, 1931

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS,

Your firm hand in your letter of 25th May showed the rapid recovery you have made. I hope that there has been much more progress since then. You must not stir out till you are strong and are able to take fairly long walks without being fatigued. Whilst you are at it, it is much better not only to regain your original strength but to build up practically a new body. And all this should be possible after the terrible crisis which had reduced you to a shadow.

Subhasbabu travelled with me from Mathura and we were together as far as Baroda. We had long chats. He came again to Bardoli. I have advised him to submit the Bengal disputes to local arbitration.

I go to Bombay on the 9th returning here on the 12th.

SYT. KRISHNADAS
SHAKTI ASHRAM, P.O. RAJPUR (DT. DEHRA DUN)

From a microfilm : S. N. 17209

354. LETTER TO MOHAN LAL VIDYARTHI

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 3, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. There is no occasion for you to lose heart. You should take gentle exercise, increasing in quantity as you gain in strength. It should consist in a daily walk in the fresh air twice, in the morning and in the evening. You should eat as much milk as you can easily digest and fresh fruit. Omit every other food for the time being.

And you should take a hip-bath at about noon every day sitting in the tub about 10 minutes going upto 30 minutes if you feel comfortable. If you do not know what hip-baths are you will find them described in my *Guide to Health*[1].

Yours sincerely,

SYT. MOHAN LAL VIDYARTHI
CAWNPORE CITY

From a photostat : S. N. 17211

355. LETTER TO ANANTA C. PATNAIK

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 3, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

My attending your conference is out of the question. But in wishing it every success I wish to draw the attention of every member that a great responsibility rests upon your shoulders in regard to the Congress session next year. One thing you have to prepare for from now. Khadi does not grow like the magician's mango. You have to make preparations from now for an intensive programme so that you can show what Orissa is capable of doing in this most constructive Congress work.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. ANANTA CH. PATNAIK
PROVISIONAL SECRETARY, PURI DISTRICT CONFERENCE
PURI, P.O. BALIPATNA, (Vil. ATHANTAR)

From a microfilm : S. N. 17212

356. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI M. THAKKAR

June 3, 1931

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

Have you taken a vow not to write to me? Madhavji remains somewhat worried about the children, particularly about Chandra. There is a proposal to send Chandra to the Ashram. Let me know

[1] An English translation of a series of Gujarati articles on general know-ledge about health published in *Indian Opinion* from January 4, 1913 to August 16, 1913; *Vide*

your view in the matter. Tell me about your daily programme of work there. I should like you and your sister to come if possible and see me here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 6816

357. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

BARDOLI,
June 3, 1931

BHAI VITHALDAS,

I was glad to read your letter. The handwriting is as steady as ever. I would advise you to try mud packs on the head during noon. Do you lie down in the open during the day? Do you get plenty of fresh air in the room at night? In a disease like this, proper nursing is in fact the only medicine. Be in no hurry to get back to work. You need not worry about the disposal of the khadi stocks.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 9776

358. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BARDOLI,
June 3, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

You must have returned from Rajkot. Only yesterday I wrote to respected Shri Khushalbhai[1]. I have also written to Bhagwanji and told him that, if he feels nothing but an atmosphere of untruth in the Ashram, he may certainly leave it. Surendra will go to Karadi and Untadi and then return there. He should start by the 15th. Apte and Sarja must have arrived there.

Shri Chhotalal Gandhi of Ankleswar writes to inform me that he had sent to you a sum of Rs. 543-4-0 during the Dandi March. Do

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Khushalchand Gandhi", 2-6-1931

you have the money there? If you have and if the sum is credited in the khadi account, return it to him. Tell him that it is to be used for khadi work only.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Have a talk with Kakasaheb about *Vratvichar*. If you have a large number of copies on hand, there is no need to reprint it.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I

359. LETTER TO KISANSINH CHAVDA

BARDOLI,

June 3, 1931

BHAI KISANSINH,

If you wish to come now, you should come not later than Sunday.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 9294

360. LETTER TO PADAMLAL

June 3, 1931

BHAI PADALAJI,

I have your letter. The subjects of States have the right to take any steps including satyagraha in respect of the hardships they have to face. But the name of the Congress should not be associated with this because it will not be able to help them in their struggle; the States' people should rely on their own strength.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From a facsimile of the Hindi]

Madhya Pradesh aur Gandhiji, p. 136

361. CASTE AND COMMUNAL QUESTION

A student who sends his name writes:[1]

It is not quite correct to say that Hindus and Mussalmans do not greet one another on their respective sacred days. But one would certainly like much more frequent and extensive interchange of such greetings.

As for caste I have frequently said that I do not believe in caste in the modern sense. It is an excrescence and a handicap on progress. Nor do I believe in enequalities between human beings. We are all absolutely equal. But equality is of souls and not bodies. Hence it is a mental state. We need to think of and to assert equality because we see great inequalities in the physical world. We have to realize equlity in the midst of this apparent external inequality. Assumption of superiority by any person over any other is a sin against God and man. Thus caste, in so far as it c onnotes distinctions in status, in an evil.

I do however believe in varna which is based on hereditary occupations. Varnas are four to mark four universal occupations, — imparting knowledge, defending the defenceless, carrying on agriculture and commerce and performing service through physical labour. These occupations are common to all mankind, but Hinduism, having recognized them as the law of our being, has made use of it in regulating social relations and conduct. Gravitation affects us all whether one knows its existence or not. But scientists who knew the law have made it yield results that have startled the world. Even so has Hinduism startled the world by its discovery and application of the law of varna.When Hindus were seized with inertia, abuse of varna resulted in innumerable castes with unnecessary and harmful restrictions as to intermarriage and interdining. The law of varna has nothing to do with these restrictions. People of different varnas may intermarry and interdine.These restrictions may be necessary in the interest of chastity and hygiene. But a Brahmin who marries a Sudra girl or *vice versa* commits no offence against the law of varna.

Marriage outside one's religion stands on a different footing. Even here, so long as each is free to observe his or her religion, I can see no moral objection to such unions. But I do not believe that these unions can bring peace. They may follow peace. I can see nothing

[1] The letter is not reproduced here.

but disaster following any attempt to advocate Hindu-Muslim unions so long as the relations between the two remain strained. That such unions may be happy in exceptional circumstances can be no reason for their general advocacy. Interdining between Hindus and Mussl-mans does take place even now on a large scale. But that again has not resulted in promoting peace. It is my settled conviction that intermarriage and interdining have no bearing on communal unity. The causes of discord are economic and political, and it is these that have to be removed. There is intermarriage and interdining in Europe, but the Europeans have fought amongst themselves as we Hindus and Mussalmans have never fought in all history. Our masses have stood aside.

The untouchables are a class apart—a standing reproach to Hindu-ism. The castes are a handicap, they are no sin. Untouchability is a sin, a grievous crime, and will eat up Hinduism, if the latter does not kill the snake in time. Untouchables' should no longer be the outcastes of Hin-duism. They should be regarded as honoured members of Hindu society, and should belong to the varna for which their occupation fits them.

According to my definition of varna there is no varna in operation at present in Hinduism. The so-called Brahmins have ceased to impart knowledge. They take to various other occupations. This is more or less true of theother varnas. In reality, being under foreign domination we are all slaves, and hence less than Sudras—untouch-ables of the West.

The correspondent being a vegetarian finds it difficult to reconcile himself to dining with meat-eating Mussalmans. But he should re-member that there are many more meat-eating Hindus than Mussalmans. A vegetarian may with impunity dine with meat-eaters, Hindu and others, so long as he has eatable food cleanly prepared and placed before him. He will always have fruit and milk whereever he goes.

Young India, 4-6-1931

362. NOTES

SAVE ME FROM MY ADMIRERS

A correspondent writes from far off Cape Comorin:[1]

> . . . In the car festivals here the Image is placed in the car and taken in procession. One set of people want that your photo should be placed side by side with the Image and taken in procession. Another set of riper men say that you would not like to be treated as God . . .

Another from Mathura sends me a horrible portrait representing me as lying stretched on the coil of the thousand-mouthed serpent with the roll of non-co-operation in one hand and the spinning-wheel suspended on the other arm. My poor wife is massaging my legs. The other celebrities have also been pressed into service. I must not violate the reader's feelings by describing the other features. Suffice it to say that the picture is a caricature of the Vaishnavite legend representing Vishnu resting on the coil of Sheshanag.The correspondent who sends the picture asks me to plead with the publishers for its withdrawal. He rightly adds that though they may not publicly express their resentment, the picture must hurt the feelings of orthodox Vaishnavas. I whole-heartedly endorse the sentiments of both these correspondents. The motive in each case may be quite good.But this excessive heroworship borders on questionable idolatry, and is calculated to wound susceptibilities of the orthodox people without there being any excuse for giving such offence. Such excesses will defeat the purpose of the blind worshippers. If they have any regard for my feelings, let the organizers of the car festival who would put my portrait in the car and the publishers of the offending picture desist from their activity. There are many other healthy ways of giving expression to and promoting patriotic sentiment.

REPATRIATES FROM SOUTH AFRICA

Pandit Benarsidas Chaturvedi and Swami Bhavani Dayal Sannyasi have prepared a well-reasoned report of an independent enquiry they held into the condition of emigrants repatriated to India under the assisted emigration scheme from South Africa. This report and the Swami's telegram dated 16th ultimo, asking me to comment on it, telling me, "Condition worst, many starving, women half naked, children begging", have lain with me ever since. I am sorry that I have not been able to deal with the report earlier. The telegram from

[1] Only an extract is reproduced here.

which I have quoted is an epitome of the report. The condition of our people, who find themselves strangers in their own land, is a disgrace alike to us and to the Government, but more to us than to the Government. No Government in the world can cope fully with such cases. Governments can only support to a limited extent voluntary public effort in such cases. It is really up to the merchant princes and other employers of labour in Calcutta to take a real interest in the welfare of such people, and find suitable employment for them.

But the condition of these people is a small consideration, compared with the cause that has reduced those repatriates to the condition in which theyfind themselves. There should have been no agreed repatriation at all, and if there was to be any, there should have been ample provision previously made to ensure proper occupation for them, and in any case there should never have been any consent to the repatriation of colonial-born Indians, of whom there are fully thirty-three per cent in the Calcutta depot. But it is no use crying over spilt milk. The labours of the framers of the report will not have been in vain if at the time of the revision of the Cape Agreement, the rights of the poor labouring Indian population are not bartered away for doubtful concessions to the other Indian settlers. The position taken up by the latter is unassailable, and should depend on its own merits. The settlers themselves should therefore refuse to be party to any bargain, which would compromise the rights of their less favourably situated brethren. South Africa can easily absorb and accommodate the existing Indian population.

GANDHI ASHRAM, MEERUT

This Ashram, a creation of Acharya Kripalani, has issued a neat little pamphlet describing its activities. From a tiny thing which it was when it began life at Benares in 1920, it has now grown into a big thing with branches and its own premises in Meerut, the headquarters. It is now a registered charitable association. Its chief activity is production and distribution of khadi, but it runs free dispensaries and night schools wherever it is possible. Its production of khadi in 1921 was Rs. 48 and sale Rs. 3,100. The production in 1930 was Rs. 4,21,490 and sales Rs. 5,32,361. The price of its khadi 45" in width was Re. 1 per yard in 1921, and Rs. 0-5-6 per yard in 1930. It has departments of washing, calendering, and dyeing besides the cotton processes up to weaving. It takes and teaches apprentices in these departments, and finds work for the poor women of Meerut by giving them knitting, bordering of bedsheets,

etc. Who can say that khadi has no future, or that it is not the help of the poorest in the land?

Young India, 4-6-1931

363. IS IT AN ECONOMIC NECESSITY?

A contribution in the *Times of India* (26-5-'31) has the following:

> Mahtma Gandhi, in his latest pronouncement[1] concerning the purpose and procedure of picketig, has reiterated his belief that the exclusion of foreign cloth is an 'economic necessity to India'. Perhaps he will explain, in the next issue of *Young India*, in what sense he uses that term. The information required can be supplied by answering certain questions prompted by the piecegoods situation as it is now developing.
>
> 1. To what extent has the decline of 1,000 million yeards in the imports of cotton piecegoods in 1930-31 been balanced by the increased production of indigenous cloth based upon the processes of hand-spinning and weaving?
>
> 2. To what extent has it been balanced by increase in mill production?
>
> 3. Will the boycott be persisted in, regardless of the extent to which imported goods are displaced by hand-made and mill-made goods respectively?
>
> 4. If so, to what extent is the boycott in the interests of Bombay as distinct from other provinces?
>
> Clearly, if the endeavour to revive the village industry has definitely failed, as appears to be the case, however reluctant Mahatma Gandhi may be to acknowledge defeat in a campaign so close to his heart, then the time has arrived, in the interests of public honesty, to transfer the formal control of the boycott campaign to the Cotton Millowners' Associations, acting as principals, instead of continuing the camouflage of control by Congress, acting as agents.

The answers to the specific questions are:

1. It is impossible to answer the question in terms of yards because khadi is not all commercially produced. Home manufacture of khadi for use by manufacturers themselves is proceeding on an ever increasing scale, which it is impossible for the poor All-India Spinners' Association to measure.

[1] *Vide* "Notes" sub-title Pciketing

2. The indigenous mills are undoubtedly playing an important part in making good the deficit.

3. It will be, subject to what follows.

4. The interest of Bombay is the interest of India. The writer perhaps includes Ahmedabad in Bombay, and evidently ignores the other important mills scattered all over India.

I have answered the specific questionsfor the satisfaction of the writer of the article than of myself or the public. The public should know that I should lose all interest in boycott of foreign cloth, if I really discovered that khadi was a failure, as the writer is sure it has proved to be already. I do not know the source of his assurance. But as the party chiefly concerned in khadi production and propaganda, I make bold to say that it is not only not a failure but is making sure though slow headway all over India. I therefore do reiterate the claim that boycott is an econo-mic necessity for the masses. It may sound strange, but it is true that it is not in the same sense and to the same extent an economic necessity for the mills as for khadi. Mills have undoubtedly flourished beyond their expectations by reason of the boycott, but they could have, as they were doing, eked out an existence without the boycott. They could always share with Britain and Japan the exploitation of starving millions by dumping their manufactures among the ignorant, famishing millions, who, forgetting that by using their leisure hours they could manufacture their own cloth, would buy the flimsy mill calico and thus doubly injure themselves. Boycott cannot therefore be wholly transferred to the mills even if they wanted it. And If they undertook it, it would fail. The fact cannot be concealed tht the mills are interested in the boycott chiefly for their agents' and their share-holders' profits. The Congress is concerned with the boycott wholly in the interest of the masses.

The writer and, for that matter, many others do not know that the khadi method is a new method in economics as non-violence is a new method in politics. The khadi method is bound to confound the orthodox economic theories, as non-violence has almost already confounded the orthodox political methods. The new method lends itself ot the orthodox statistical demonstration only to a certain extent. It is the khadi spirit that is responsible for the phenomenal success of the boycott. Boycott itself is no new cry. It is as old as, if not older than, the Bengal partition period. But he hope

of success was born with the rebirth of khadi in 1919, and the hope was partly realized last year when khadi spirit was at its highest. The real manifestation of the khadi spirit has still to come. And when it does, as it is bound to come, and that too sooner than most people expect, there will be neither picketing nor statistical demonstration required.

The Times of India writer suggests tat the boycott is designed or calculated merely to benefit the mills to the injury of the masses. The suggestion would have foundation if there was no khadi behind the boycott. Let the writer and critics like him remember that the Congress formula in so many words is 'Boycott through Khadi'. The India mills come in to supplement khadi. But the boycott would stand in spite of the Indian mills if they opposed khadi. Many did oppose it at one time. Their indiference to khadi was still more marked. But be it said to their credit that they have somewhat recognized the time spirit, and even though yet half-heartedly in the majority of cases, they have made terms with khadi. Some have become thorough converts to it, and will not even mind losing, if they must, for its sake. The Indian mills are therefore in no sense of the term principals in the boycott campaign. they benefit no doubt, and they will, at least for the time being, increasingly benefit, but the ratio of increse will be in direct proportion to the correctness of their conduct in their dealings with khadi.

The writer, as well as the reader, will now understand why India, that is to say, the masses must benefit in the long run even by the recent legislative protection given to the mills. The prices of mill cloth must of course go up. It is for the Congress to carry on ceaseless propaganda, so as to keep the mills from the profiteering temptation, and to teach the masses that their economic welfare lies in the manufacture of khadi in their own cottages through hand-spinning. When once foreign cloth is out of the way, indigenous mills will radily suit their prices and production to khadi, or will themselves face a boycott even like foreign mills.

Young India, 4-6-1931

364. R. T. C. AND CONGRESS

Had it not been for the necessity of observing reticence for the sake of the lasting peace, which it is the common object of all parties to reach, I should have long ago taken the public into confidence about my proposed visit to London to take part in the R. T. C. I am now in a position to say the following:

I have made no secret of my opnion, not new but held and expressed even while negotiations were going on in Delhi, that I should feel most reluctant to go to London to take part in the Conference, if we failed to solve the communal problem among ourselves. I have seen nothing as yet to make me alter the view.

There is another obstacle in the way of my leaving India, whilst delicate situations continue to arise regarding the Delhi Pact. I should sacrifice life itself to prevent a breakdown. And I flatter myself with the belief that my presence is necessary to prevent it.

Let us however hope that both the difficulties will be over by the time it becomes necessary to leave India for the September meeting.

I can but give my assurance that having entered upon the Settlement, I am eager for the sake of the good name of the Gongess to proceed to London and deliver its message to the R. T. C. and the British statesmen, not excluding even Mr. Churchill. I know that he and his party do not realize that the Congress is no enemy of Great Britain. The Congress merely wants for India what he and his ancestors have fought to secure for Great Britain. I therefore need no persuasion to take me to London. I have even said to friends that if the communal tangle was not undone, and I was therefore unable to take part in the R. T. C. but the working of the Settlement left me free, I should, if so required, proceed to London for the sake of presenting the Congress position to the responsible statesmen. My supreme desire is to attain lasting peace, if it can be had with honour and without inviting the nation to engage in another fight involving untold suffering.

Young India, 4-6-1931

365. PRABHATPHERIS

It was in the Yeravda prison that I read of the inauguration of *prabhatpheris*[1]. I thought that whoever originated the idea deserved thanks for it. I felt that apart from their propaganda value, they were spiritually beautiful. They summoned the sleeping to the call of duty. They reminded them that it was time to rise to the call of duty. They reminded them that it was time to rise from their beds and give thanks to God the first thing in the morning.For I had read that the memmers of the *prabhatpheris* sang songs of worship as also of topical public events. If wisely guided, this institutution can become a great means of purification as also political education of the right type. But I hear that songs generating bad passion are also some times sung. I should be sorry if my information proved true. I would strongly advise the organizers of these parties to restrict their choice of songs not only during this time of peace but for all time to those of worship and those dealing purely with constructive activities such as khadi, liquor prohibition, communal unity, untouchability and other social reform. The parties must be trained to sing well and in tune and should keep to one hour throughout India. I remember the parties in Bombay not always keeping the same time and in Allahabad keeping a different time from Bombay. The institution has sprung up anyhow, but it will be well now for the prime movers, if there are any, to evolve a proper plan and publish a selection of songs which all, no matter belonging to what faith or party, can sing. This should be a non-party national institution. If parties spring up anyhow and begin singing anyhow and any time, they would disturb the people by their jargon. But good singing in the morning will be appreciated.

Young India, 4-6-1931

366. 'AN HONEST DOUBT' (?)

The now famous Gandhi-Irwin truce terms received an almost unanimous approbation, though not from the entire section of Congressmen in India, at least from a majority of them. The people and the Press, both in this country as well as on the continent of Europe, expressed their sincere appreciation of the succes of the peace negotiations, and there was a consensus of opinion expressed, that honesty of purpose and sincerity in action on both

[1] Literally, morning processions

sides lent sufficient weight to the success of the negotiations. In spite of this, there was and is still a very strong minority comprising especially the younger generation, which is totally against the truce terms, and emphatically declines to put its seal of approval upon them. They are of the opinion, and we think not without sufficient justification, that the flag of complete independence as the immediate goal of India, hoisted at the Lahore Congress, has been lowered by the truce terms, thereby committing the Congress and its followers to a less severe and entirely different programme of a activities.

No one for a moment seems to doubt the sincerity of purpose with which Gandhiji, as the one voice on behalf of the Congress, and Lord Irwin, as the spokesman of the British Government, carried out the peace negotiations to such a successful conclusion. The left-wingers, under the leadership of Sjt. Subhas Chandra Bose, had almost planned to oppose the Resolution at Karachi Congress ratifying the Delhi Pact, but better counsels prevailed with them, and we are thankful to them for having averted a very serious defection in the Congress, at a time like the present, when complete unanimity and co-operation mean much. With great reluctance they let Gandhiji have his own way and try once more his faith in the British Government.

Let us for one moment examine how far the terms of the truce have been observed since the Settlement. Government on their part have released the Civil Disobedience prisoners, withdrawn the various ordinances, and declared the Congress organization a lawful body. The Congress on their part have called off Civil Disobedience, aggressive picketing, boycott of British goods, etc., and have also acceded to the cancellation of the enquiry into police excesses. So much the better for all. But what passes our comprehension is whether or not the Government have strictly adhered to the princeples uderlying the terms. Reports of non-release of prisoners in various parts of the country, promulgation of Section 144 on political meetings, arrests and convictions for political reasons, and various other happenings, which are considered a total violation of the Agreement, are pouring into our ears morning. On the other hand, we are told that the local Governments contend that the people have not always observed the terms of the truce. Whether or not both parties are justified in their charges it is not for us to say.

In the light of the above, we honestly doubt if Gandhiji, behalf of the Congress, was sufficiently justified in having lowered the flag of independence hoisted at Lahore by agreeing to the truce. We honestly doubt again if he fully satisfied that there was a real change of heart on the part of the British Government, so as to commit the Congress to a truce of this sort. We honestly doubt thirdly, if Gandhiji really thought that the British Government

would take up seriously the question of Indian independence at the next Round Table Conference, even if the Congress under his leadership participated. Fourthly, we entertain an honest doubt if Gandhji thought for one moment that the British Government would totally abdicate in favour of the Congress after 150 years of continued exploitation of a land which is almost their entire subsistence and mainstay. Fifthly, we doubt whether he believed that they would surrender "the brightest jewel in the Crown of the British Empire" to those from whom no exploitation is possible in future, and thus pave the way for their own decline. And last but one, we honestly doubt whether Gandhiji remembered how he has been betrayed on more than one occasion in the past in his trust in the Government, and considered whether *Young India* would allow him to practise his political jugglery on the toiling millions once more and for ever.

Last but not the least is the honest doubt we entertain whether there is any ray of hope of success through Congress participation in the coming Conference. Who knows that once Gandhiji with his team has left India for London they will be allowed to return to the scene of their activities, in case the London conversations break down? Who can guarantee to the Indian delegation a hospitable reception in London during its stay there?

We honestly wonder whether it is not high time for us to present a united front, and if necessary, to wade through a pool of blood, of course pursing the creed of non-violence, to attain our one goal and that for now and for ever.

The foregoing has been sent me by "The Youth of India" with a duly signed covering letter. I have removed certain unnecessary passages and made some alterations without changing the substance of the charge. There is truth in the statement that there are charges and countercharges about breach of the Settlement by the parties concerned. But I am able to assure the public that so far the difficulties have been removed. The Central Government is anxious to implement the Settlement as I know the Congess is. And so long as that condition persists, there is no danger of a breakdown. Beyond this the public will not expect me to go, whilst the very delicate instrument is being worked and kept in tune.

As to the Settlement itself, I have no doubt whatsoever that the Congress would have put itself in the wrong if it had not entered upon it. And it was certainly patriotic on the part of Sjt. Subhas Chandra Bose and the young men who were behind him to have withdrawn their opposition and given their support to the Settlement Resolution at Karachi. The Karachi Congress did not

lower the independence flag. The Congress mandate is clear on the point.

Whether the Congress will be able to make good its position at the Round Table Conference I do not know. But I do know that it would be wrong for the Congress to avoid the Conference for fear of rejection of its demands. The Conference is one way of showing the absolute justice of the national demand. It would have been foolish for the Congrss to refuse participation when it was open to it to press its full demand without reservation.The Congress would have betrayed lack of courge if it had declined to avail itself of the opportunity, when it came, of presenting its case at the Round Table Conference.

Therefore I should not hesitate to go to London and attend the Congerence if I found that I could safely go. My difficulty is fundamental and well known. I should not have the self-confidence to present the Congress case, if we could not set our own house in order by attaining a solution of the communal problem. But I am waiting, watching and praying. As soon as the way is open, I should not hesitate to go wherever wanted. The other difficulty is less serious, but none the less important. As the principal party on behalf of the Congress to the Pact, I should feel most uneasy leaving India, when serious questions arising out of the Settlement demand attention. I have pledged my honour to Lord Irwin that I shall leave no stone unturned to see that the Settlement does not break down. As I have already hinted, I am having some difficulty with local Governments, but I am hoping that with patience all will be well. In any case I believe in all humility that my presence in India is necessary to avoid a crisis.

As for the other doubts of the wrter or writers of the letter, I can only repeat what I have said so often. I will not lose hope till I know that nothing is to be gained from negotiation.Since I believe in human nature, in spite of previous disappointments, I must trust. I regard it as practical wisdom. I rely for success upon the inherent justice of the national cause and the equally just means adopted for its vindication. I do not believe that the Congress delegation will be insulted in London. And if it is, the Congress will not lose its prestige. The loss will accrue to those who will insult. I therefore ask the youthful writers of the letter not to lose hope, but work with all their might to make the Settlement a success, and by working the constructive programme enhance the power of the Congress to vindicate the national position.

For the measure of success at the Conference, if the Congress is represented thereat, will be in strict proportion to the measure of the power of the Congress.

Young India, 4-6-1931

367. MISSIONARY METHODS IN INDIA

> Gandhiji has given great umbrage to missionaries by his declaration against the prevailing methods of evangelization, and by challenging the claim to superiority put forward by them on behalf of Christianity. They strongly resent his assertion that their *modus operandi* is open to suspicion . . . . It was stated in the Indian Census Report for 1911 that the aboriginal tribes accept Christianity, "in the hope of obtaining assistance from the missionaries in their difficulties and protection the coercion of landlords." . . . In 1821, Raja Rammohan Roy urged in the *Brahmanical Magazine* that the superiority of Christianity should not be advocated "by means of abuse and insult or by affording the hope of worldly gain."
>
> . . . Mrs. Charles Howard, Secretary, Society for the Education of the Women of India, Chicago, in a letter to Sr. Virchand R. Gandhi of Bombay, wrote in 1896: "But I am more concerned for poor India. Why should Christianity, which is a failure here, be thrust upon India?"[1]

This comes from a retired Deputy Collector. The collection of quotations from named sources should, instead of offending missionaries, cause an inward search. I have several other similar articles, some from Christian Indians. The writers will excuse mefor with holding them. The controversy ought not to be prolonged. The incautious zeal of reporters, who trusted too much to memory, led to a discussion[2], which I would fain have avoided.

Young India, 4-6-1931

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

[2] *Vide* "Foreign Missionaries", 23-4-1931 & "Foreign Missionaries Again", 7-5-1931

368. TELEGRAM TO JAMES MILLS

SWARAJ ASHRAM,
BARDOLI,
June 4, 1931

JAMES MILLS
CECIL HOTEL
SIMLA

YOUR WIRE. PLEASE CABLE INDIA NEEDS ALL HELP AMERICA CAN RENDER IN HER NONVIOLENT EFFORT FOR FREEDOM.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 17213

369. TELEGRAM TO J. M. SEN GUPTA

SWARAJ ASHRAM,
BARDOLI,
June 4, 1931

SEN GUPTA
ELGIN ROAD
CALCUTTA

THANKS WIRE[1]. THINK YOU SHOULD REFER ALL MATTERS ARBITRATION UNCONDITIONALLY. ELECTIONS CAN BE SET ASIDE IF FOUND IRREGULAR.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 17214

[1] Which stated : ". . . Having regard to Subhasbabu's wire to you and the attitude disclosed therein I agree to arbitration. Beg point out that arbitraion may not be reduced to compromise but should be a decision on matters of principle and fact arrived at after detailed enquiry. Arbitrator or arbitrators will be expected to give decision as regards following question of principle. Whether District Congress Committees shall have the right of printing membership forms as they had formerly enabling wide enrolment without hindrance whether district Congress Presidents should not be ex-officio returning officers and when the President is not available rule number five of the rules for election

370. TELEGRAM TO VENKATESHNARAIN TIWARI

SWARAJ ASHRAM,
BARDOLI,
June 4, 1931

VENKATESHNARAIN TIWARI
KYDGANJ
ALLAHABAD

YOUR WIRE. LINE FIFTYTHREE[1] OBVIOUS MISTAKE. CORRECTING NEXT ISSUE.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 17215

371. TELEGRAM TO MAQBOOL HUSAIN

SWARAJ ASHRAM,
BARDOLI,
June 4, 1931

HAKIM MAQBOOL HUSAIN
CARE CONGRESS
CAWNPORE

YOUR WIRE. RERER MATTER[2] ARBITRATION.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 17216

372. TELEGRAM TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

BARDOLI,
June 4, 1931

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. I, too, shall start on Monday. So both of us will reach Bombay on Tuesday. But I shall be reaching there a little earlier than you. Drop in on the same day when you get time. I will then decide if I can spare time for a talk with you.

Your letter was quite full of information. Gangabehn has indeed many aspirations. You should have long talks with her and should

[1] *Vide* "Virus of Untouchability", 11-6-1931
[2] Presumably the Hindu-Muslim tension in Cawnpore.

also help her. Her capacity for love is boundless and her desire for service intense.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10256. Also C.W. 6704. Courtesy : Premabehn Kantak

373. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

June 4, 1931

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your letter. I have carefully read Nanalal's letter. If you are required to stay at Visnagar in connection with that work, my advice is against it. The work is full of difficulties. If Nanalal wishes to speak to me, he is welcome. In this matter I wil trust Krishnadas's judgment. Before coming to a decision, you should also know the views of Budhabhai, Mathuradas and Narandas. If you have to choose a place outside the Ashram for work, you should choose either Nadiad or Bochasan. I am inclined in favour of Bochasan, since the work there has been put on a firm foundation. However, if you are under a moral obligation to work for that school at Nadiad, you should certainly do your duty. If you have held out any hope, you ought to fulfil it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9326. Also C.W. 571. Courtesy : Vasumati Pandit

374. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

BARDOLI,
June 4, 1931

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I got your letter. The Ashram is the right place for you. You cannot leave the girls. You should even take in others who may wish to join. You can, therefore, serve best in the Ashram.

Vasumati may live in Nadiad if she wishes to do so.

Santa Cruz khadi is very good.

Let me know when you are leaving. Write to me always and tell me how you think or feel about any matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–6 : G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 54. Also C.W. 8776. Courtesy : Gangabehn Vaidya

375. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

BARDOLI,
June 4, 1931

CHI. MRIDU,

It is quite all right that you wrote a long letter. You will surely have benefited from your month-long stay at Simla. You will have walked a lot. The suggestion that a boycott committee be formed seems a good one. I am hoping to get something done at the meeting. Most of our difficulties are due to the fact that we want to achieve the boycott through khadi. The mills do have a place in the boycott campaign. That place is secondary to khadi and is automatically assured through our carrying on khadi work. Giving a special place to the mills will make the mills lose, khadi lose and the boycott will fail. Have you understood this key to boycott? If you have not understood, I wish you would ask me again and again and understand. Read carefully the article about boycott in the current issue of *Young India*.[1]

You should never hesitate to write to me whenever you want to.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11181. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

[1] *Vide* "Is it An Economic Necessity", 4-6-1931

376. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

BARDOLI,
June 4, 1931

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

I have your letter.

(1) Village sanitation is the duty of the State.

(2) If the State neglects it, the villagers may take it up.

(3) Municipality means the village service society. Villagers can themselves form such a society.

(4) Scavenging will cost nothing if performed by volunteers.

(5) In a small village even a few dedicated youths can do the scavenging.

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 758

377. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

BARDOLI,
June 4, 1931

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Here is a copy of the letter from Sir Darcy Lindsay. Send a reply with facts and figures. I have already sent one[1], but a more informed reply is called for.

I got the wire about the dispute in Bengal. I have wired to Sen Gupta[2] unconditionally to accept arbitration.

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall be in Bombay from 9th to 11th.

From a copy of the Hindi : C.W. 7887. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Darcy Lindsay", 3-6-1931
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to J. M. Sen Gupta", 1-6-1931

378. TELGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

SWARAJ ASHRAM,
BARDOLI,
June 5, 1931

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
CARE LUCKY
CULCUTTA

IF AT ALL POSSIBLE TRY SETTLE BENGAL DIS-PUTE THROUGH LOCAL ARBITRATION.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 17228

379. TELGERAM TO PRESIDENT, HINDI SAMMELAN, MADURA

SWARAJ ASHRAM,
BARDOLI,
June 5, 1931

PRESIDENT
HINDI SAMMELAN
MADURA

HOPE YOUR LABOURS WILL RESULT ALL DELE-GATES NEXT CONGRESS SPEAKING UNDERSTANDING HINDI.[1]

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 17232

[1] This was read out at the conference on June 7.

380. TELEGRAM TO KRISHNADAS

SWARAJ ASHRAM,
BARDOLI,
June 5, 1931

KRISHNADAS
SHAKTI ASHRAM
RAJPUR (DEHRA DUN)

YOUR WIRE. YOU NEED NOT COME HERE OR WORRY. AM DOING EVERYTHING POSSIBLE SETTLE MATTER[1].

BAPU

From a microfilm : S.N. 17229

381. TELEGRAM TO SADAGOPACHARI

SWARAJ ASHRAM,
BARDOLI,
June 4, 1931

SADAGOPACHARI
PRESIDENT, TALUQ CONGRESS
TIRUTANI

YOUR TELEGRAM. SEE CHAKRAVARTI RAJAGOPALACHARI. POST PARTICULARS.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 17230

[1] Presumably the Benal Congress dispute; *vide* "Letter to Mrs. V. Banerjee", 3-6-1931

382. TELEGRAM TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

SWARAJ ASHRAM,
BARDOLI,
June 5, 1931

FULCHAND SHAH
NATIONAL SCHOOL
WADHWAN CITY

YOUR LETTER. YOU CAN COME SUNDAY OR AFTER RETURN BOMBAY.

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 17231

383. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 5, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

This liquor business is causing a great deal of trouble. The following extracts from a letter[1] from Calicut will show you what is to be said on the Congress side. I have given you already facts about picketing in Ahmedabad. It is high time that this matter is settled finally.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

H. W. EMERSON, ESQ.
SIMLA

A.I.C.C. File No. 16–B, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The letter stated that ". . . with the help of the police and excise officials . . . liquor which has no sale at the shops on account of picketing is diverted into the homes of the vendors or their friends, where it is being regularly sold".

384. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

June 5, 1931

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I hope you did not lose in S. India what you gained in Ceylon. If you are fresh and do not mind the journey do come to Bardoli for Sunday to that we might have a quiet chat here before beginning operations on Tuesday. I hope Kamala and Indu have profited by the rest.

Yours,

BAPU

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
C/O SJT. JALBHAI NAOROJI
NAPEAN SEA RD.
BOMBAY

From Gandhi-Nehru papers, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

385. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 5, 1931

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

Please go through the enclosed and if you have access to the necessary literature and leisure also let me have your reply to it.

BAPU

Encl. 1

SYT. J. C. KUMARAPPA
65 ESPLANADE ROAD
BOMBAY

From a photostat : G.N. 10095

386. LETTER TO P. A. WADIA

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 5, 1931

DEAR PROF. WADIA,

I enclose herewith a copy of a letter from an English friend. I have sent him a reply but I know that my reply cannot carry the same weight that a trained economist['s] can. Will you kindly therefore send me your considered reply supported by facts and figures?

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

PROF. P. A. WADIA
WILSON COLLEGE
BOMBAY

From a microfilm : S.N. 17233

387. LETTER TO EMMA HARKER

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 5, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. How can I remove the ban on foreign cloth and why? And what is the meaning of the ban? It is merely a method of persuasion. If people want to wear foreign cloth, there is nothing to prevent them from doing so. But if there was national government, the entry of foreign cloth would be surely prohibited as it was in the time of Elizabeth in England. It is true that the Lancashire workmen may have to suffer during the transition stage. But can it be any reason for India's cottage industry. If in trying to undo the wrong, Indians cease to use foreign cloth which it is their duty to do Lancashire has to turn to a less injurious industry. Where is the harm and where is the wrong? I would like you to work out this problem in its details and you will find that ban on foreign cloth is a necessary condition of the life of the millions of villagers of India.

You have evidently not studied the prohibition question in America. I talked to both who are for prohibition and against prohibition. Whilst it is true that prohibition has given rise to fashionable crime it has saved tens of thousands of the labouring population of

America, who, having the temptation put away from them, are now bringing up sober families. But the conditions in India are infinitely superior to those in America. In America drink was the fashion and yet its great men rose against it. We are too near the time to measure the greatness of America in having undertaken prohibition. In India drink is considered to be a vice and is confined to only a particular class of people. Prohibition will be therefore an unmixed good in this land.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MRS. EMMA HARKER
6 BELGRAVE TERRACE
KARACHI

From a photostat : S.N. 17235

388. LETTER TO MADHAVANAR

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 5, 1931

MY DEAR MADHAVANAR,

I have your letter about picketing. At the present moment I cannot give you better advice than to ask you to discuss the whole thing with Syt. Rajagopalachari and act in consultation with him. I am sure that if orders under 144 are passed, for the time being at any rate you should obey them.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. MADHAVANAR
MATHRUBHUMI BUILDINGS
CALICUT (MALABAR)

From a microfilm : S.N. 17236

389. LETTER TO DR. JOSIAH OLDFIELD

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 5, 1931

MY DEAR OLDFIELD,

You have revived sweet memories of old. I am not going to England this summer. Whether I shall have to go in September I do not know. If I do and if I get ill, I might have to seek shelter in your hospital. Anyway it was good of you to think of me.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. JOSIAH OLDFIELD
LADY MARGARET HOSPITAL
DODDINGTON, KENT (ENGLAND)

From a photostat : C.W. 4517. Courtesy : Dr. Josiah Oldfield

390. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

June 5, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter. It is intolerable that, despite such illnes, you should compulsorily have to stay there. You should show courage and find some way. I have written to you a long and detailed letter. I hope you got it. I need not, therefore, write much in this. I shall be in Bombay only during 9-11. The address there will be: Laburnum Road, Bombay. I shall have to stay there for three days only.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3401

391. LETTER TO LALJI PARMAR

June 5, 1931

CHI. LALJI,

Is Mamasaheb displeased with you? Do you write to him? Have you been looking for a wife? Are you in a hurry to get married? Write to me and tell me frankly what your wish is.

I hope you are working hard there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of Gujarati : G.N. 3292

392. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

June 5, 1931

CHI. NAJUKLAL,

I have your letter. If an operation offers the only cure for Moti have it done quickly. You have done well to take up the job at a library. What is your salary there?

I have looked into the article about Champaran. That sugar can certainly be regarded as indigenous. How pitiable is our condition that if anybody wished to give up eating such sugar, he must stop eating such sugar, he must stop eating sugar altogether.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 12148

393. LETTER TO NARAYAN MORESHWAR KHARE

June 5, 1931

CHI. PANDITJI,

I did not require such a detailed explanation about the gathering of Bhangis. You may arrange Rambhau's programme if he lets you do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 217. Courtesy : Lakshmibehn Khare

394. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BARDOLI,
June 5, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. You did right in having paid a visit to Rajkot.

If you go on pleading with the elders through letters, they will probably listen to your advice regarding khadi.

Some days ago, I had a letter from Mukundrai, which I am sending on to you. It will help you to a better understanding of the facts about Mahalakshmi. I did not know that she was related to Gaurishankar. I should be happy if you can take her into the Ashram. Chhaganlal is also one of her relatives.

If the other lady is what she seems to you, you can admit her. You should try to know her husband. If she had such intense aversion against worldly happiness, why did she marry? How old is she? What has been her education? To which community does she belong? What are her husband and father-in-law? What is her father? In principle, we should admit such women.

If Ratubhai has gone to Bombay, we shall meet. I had indeed realized, when I went to Rangoon, that the Doctor was unhappy about Lilavati. But I will have a talk with Ratubhai when he meets me in Bombay.

The suggestion that Madanmohan should stay with Jamnalalji seems all right to me. Haribhau was here and I had a talk with him too. If he stays with Jamnalalji, there will be no need to pay him anything.

We should let Amtulbehn stay in the Ashram if she is ready to live in it till the end of her life. She may be permitted to receive money from outside. If no one sends her any money, we should bear the expenditure on her account. I think she will recover if she does very little physical work. You must have got the bill of exchange in Ba's name which was received here.

If an inmate of the Ashram lives elsewhere, his expenses should be borne by the people there. If, however, Chhaganlal desires another arrangement in regard to any person, do as he suggests. I have written to Chhaganlal also to this effect.

I have advised Dwarkanath that he should live outside Gujarat till my suspicion against him regarding arms is removed. He will

leave in a few days. We have get to decide what to do about his bill. Chhaganlal thinks that he is innocent. I have written to him and told him that, if he feels inclined to pay the bill, he may do so. If, therefore, he writes to you requesting you to pay the bill, please do.

I shall leave this place on Monday and return on the 12th, leaving Bombay on the 11th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I

395. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

June 5, 1931

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Read the enclosed letter[1]. I have an idea that I have already written to you in this matter. Whatever the case, I think this institution deserves to be helped if something can be given from the Raghumal Trust.

I have today telegraphed that if a settlement by arbitration in the Bengal dispute is possible, they should try for it. The matter should not come up before the Working Committee.

I shall be in Bombay from 9th to 11th.

MOHANDAS

From Hindi : C.W. 7888. Courtesy : G.D. Birla

[1] From Ramanand Sannyasi, of the institution for the welfare of backward classes in Delhi, about the meeting of the Raghumal Trust fixed for June 16 or 17.

396. TELEGRAM TO J. M. SEN GUPTA

SWARAJ ASHRAM,
BARDOLI,
June 6, 1931

SEN GUPTA
ELGIN ROAD
CALCUTTA

YOUR WIRE. YOU PUT YOURSELF WRONG BY RESIGNING OR ABSTAINING. HAVE NEITHER APPROVED NOR DISAPPROVED YOUR CONDUCT IF ONLY BECAUSE I DO NOT KNOW FACTS. DO NOT EVEN NOW KNOW WHAT SEPARATE ELECTIONS MEAN. HAVE NO DESIRE HUSH FRAUD WHEREVER PROVED. ONLY SUGGESTED DECIDING ALL ISSUES THERE BY LOCAL ARBITRATION INSTEAD WORKING COMMITTEE HAVING TO DECIDE AND THIS FOR SAKE BENGAL'S NAME AND EXPEDITION. SARDAR AGREES.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 17243

397. LETTER TO R. M. MAXWELL

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 6, 1931

DEAR MR. MAXWELL,

Reverting to your letter of the 13th May,[1] at practically the same time that I received your letter in Simla I received the news that Syt. Rajawade was discharged although the letter under reply left me no such hope. I was thankful to receive the telegraphic news which was conveyed to me by Mr. Emerson. I have now received the papers about Syt. H. D. Rajah and on a persual of the papers I can find no incitement to violence. The speeches themselves are not before me because I am told that they are not to be found in the record of the case, but the evidence of the Crown witnesses and the Judge's summing up bring out the most relevant parts of the speeches, which though highly discourteous and equally seditious, contain no incitement to violence. On the contrary, the judge himself refers to the profession of non-violence by the accused but dismisses it as lip

[1] *Vide* "Letter from R. M. Maxwell", 13-5-1931

service. In the absence of any direct incitement to violence I cannot see how it is possible for a judge to infer mere lip service when there is a direct assertion of non-violence. But I have not relied upon my own opinion. I put the thing before three legal friends, one of whom has kindly reduced his opinion to writing, copy of which I enclose herewith. In the circumstances I request His Excellency to reconsider his decision and beg to point out that under Cl. 13 of the Settlement there is no option but to discharge the civil disobedience prisoners who might not be guilty of offences involving violence other than technical violence or incitement to such violence. I venture to suggest that where there is no incitement on the fact of the evidence it is not open to the Government to deduce such incitement.

Then there is the case of Ratanji Dayaram of Bardoli Taluka. I have now studied the judgment and evidence in this case. There is certainly no violence as contemplated in Cl. 13 of the Settlement. It is also moreover incorrect to say that the accused burnt his tenant's crop. The accused burnt his own crop which he owned jointly with the complainant Devalia Jagla. If the complainant suffered any damage it was open to him, as it is even now, to bring a civil suit against the accused. But where, on the evidence itself and the finding of the judge admitted by the Government, the crop was burnt in order to prevent the Government officials from collecting revenue from selling the crop, there was no question of intending to damage the partner. And may I point out the inconsistency of the Government in releasing the co-accused, Ranchhod, who had no ownership in the crop and keeping Ratanji Dayaram who was admittedly joint owner of the crop. I must, therefore, for the same reason as in the case of Syt. H. D. Rajah, ask for Ratanji Dayaram's discharge in terms of the Settlement.

With reference to your second letter of 30th May last, I can only say that the position taken up by His Excellency causes me deep pain. The reasoning given for refusing to return the press seems to me to be extraordinary. It is giving back and not taking back. Cl. 16 throws the burden on the Government of returning and not on the party dispossessed of going to take back. The reasoning given in the third paragraph of your letter causes still greater pain. I was unprepared for the interpretation that is sought to be put upon the Ordinance. I cannot question the inter-pretation but I

do question the propriety of putting an irritating interpretation in connection with a document of peace. What the Government seek to do is to justify wanton destruction of property by Government officials. But in order to bring within the smallest compass possible points of dispute between the Government and myself as representing the Congress, I have advised the owners of the motor-car and bicycle to remove them, if they chose to do so. So far as the press is concerned I am sorry to say that I must ask for due fulfilment of the terms of the Settlement. If the Government seriously question my interpretation I am quite willing to submit the question for decision to the Chief Justice of the High Court of Bombay or any other impartial authority.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

R. M. MAXWELL, ESQ.

PRIVATE SECRETARY TO H. E. THE GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY

MAHABALESHWAR

A.I.C.C. File No. 4, 1931 Part I Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

398. LETTER TO DUNICHAND[1]

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 6, 1931

DEAR LALA DUNICHAND,

I thank you for your letter. I shall await your analysis of all the cases.

Why was the meeting dispersed by the Magistrate? What was the ostensible cause and how was it dispersed?

Please let me know as soon as the Government publish their opinion about the Ludhiana outrage.

Yours sincerely,

LALA DUNICHAND

ADVOCATE

AMBALA

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to H. W. Emerson", 19-5-1931

399. LETTER TO K. V. VEL

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 6, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 30th April last. My message is :

Let Japan study the non-violent movement of India and help her.

Yours sincerely,

K. V. VEL, ESQ.
POST BOX 9
AKASAKA, TOKYO (JAPAN)

From a photostat : S.N. 17238

400. LETTER TO JUGAL KISHORE

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 6, 1931

MY DEAR JUGAL KISHORE,

I have your letter. Happily, Acharya Kripalani is in Bardoli at the present moment. I have consulted consulted him and if you personally approve of the suggestion, he is willing to be nominated by me in terms of the resolutions. The other name also he has suggested and I have accepted. It is Acharya Narendra Deva of Kashi Vidyapith. Both these are seasoned soldiers and have considerable experience in those matters. In view of these two names it is unnecessary for me just now to suggest names of experts at least at the present moment.

In the resolution, I suggest for better reading the following alterations : In the place of "on self-supporting basis" say "in order to make the institution self-supporting" and after the words "to collect", add "and disburse".

Yours sincerely,

PROF. JUGAL KISHORE
PREM MAHAVIDYALAYA
BRINDABAN

From a photostat : S.N. 17239

401. LETTER TO URMILA DEVI

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 6, 1931

DEAR SISTER,

I had your telegram and I have now your letter.Things in Bengal are certainly most deplorable but I do not know what can be done from here. I thought that arbitration was the only thing that can relieve the tension. What else could be done either by the Working Committee or me personally? Subhasbabu came here and gave Sardar Vallabhbhai a long indictment against Syt. Sen Gupta. Vallabhbhai has filed it hoping to be able to investigate the complaints when both the parties were present. Can you suggest any other way out of the difficulty?

SM. URMILA DEVI
40/1 RUP CHAND MUKHERJEE'S LANE
BHOWANIPUR, CALCUTTA

From a photostat : S.N. 17240

402. LETTER TO NILKANTA DAS

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 6, 1931

DEAR NILKANTA BABU,

I have your letter. I can well understand the position but in cases like the one you mentioned very little can be done just now. I can only say that if in spite of these provocations, peaceful picketing cannot be continued it should be suspended for a while. But propaganda of an intensive type should be taken by going to the people in their own homes.

CH. NILKANTA DAS
BHUBANESHWAR

From a microfilm : S.N. 17241

403. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 6, 1931

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter and cutting from the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. What can be done beyond suggesting arbitration in the place of the cumbersome procedure that will have to be adopted by the Working Committee if the matter has to be decided by it. Subhasbabu was here and gave Sardar Vallabhbhai a long list of complaints against Sen Gupta. Vallabhbhai could do nothing but said that when the matter came formally before the Working Committee, he will deal with the complaint. But when he and I began to receive wires from Bengal, I suggested local arbitration. Is there any other way besides such arbitration or decision by the Working Committee when the matter formally comes before it?

If you are well enough, you should come to Bombay and discuss the position at the All-India Spinners' Association Comittee meeting. I cannot advise Dr. Roy to come to Ahmedabad especially when several mill-owners are outside Ahmedabad.

If you have not seen the file of the *Samachar* of 1828 I think you ought to see it and verify the spinner's letter[1] yourself.

From a photostat : S.N. 17242

404 LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

BARDOLI,
June 6, 1931

BHAI NANABHAI,

I have your letter. How can I ever come there? Ba is no longer fit to travel and visit any place. She gets inflammation of the mouth repeatedly. But it may be possible to send Swami and Devdas.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6681. Also C.W. 4326. Courtesy : Kanubhai Mashruwala

[1] *Vide* "In 1828", 21-5-1931; also "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 2-6-1931

405. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

NAINTAL, U. P.
June 6, 1931

CHI. RAMDAS,

I am not able to write to you at all. Do not give whole milk to Sumitra. Add a measure of water to it. After adding water warm it and instead of sugar add honey to it. Her stomach should be very lightly massaged with oil every day. Mothers in these parts vigorously exercise their children. If Nimu or you do not know it, you should learn it. It is very useful. Laying the child flat on the back, raise and bend the legs so that the toes touch the forehead. The knees should not bend. Do you understand what I mean? The baby should be held tightly by the feet upside down for a minute or a half. The exercise should be given while putting the child to sleep or in the morning, on an empty stomach.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Motana Man, p. 60

406. WORKER-VILLAGE RATIO

How many workers would be needed to cover seven lakh villages? This question requires serious consideration. The British flag flies in each and every village, that is to say, all of them use the Government's currency, and pay revenue in that currency. But the Congress has not been able to cover all the villages. Even its name has not reached every village, let alone its message. The Congress can reach every village through khadi, but we do not have enough interest in khadi for that purpose.

The reader will be surprised to know that, though the Government's authority is recognized in every village, every one of them does not have a Patel, a *talati* or a constable. All that it has been able to do is to put a few villages under each *talati* and Patel. A *talati* should be an educated person, for he is supposed to keep accounts. He has, therefore, more villages under him than a Patel. If the Government does not have a *talati* and a Patel for every village, how can the Congress have a worker for every one of them. I know that the ratio of workers and villages should be exactly the opposite of that

of *talatis* and Patels and villages. The Congress should have the capacity which the Government does not possess. But we must admit with shame that it is not so. The Government cannot afford to spend enough money to keep a *talati* and a Patel in each village. The Congress does not need to spend money. It can get volunteers but its name has not reached every corner so that it can have a volunteer in each village.

In these circumstances, it would be extravagance on the part of the Congress to have more than one worker per village. We should group the villages into blocks, each with a radius of ten miles. As our resources and the number of volunteers increase, we can increase the number of blocks but at present one volunteer should be able to cover ten miles from a central point. So the diameter of his working area would be twenty miles. But the volunteer will never have to walk twenty miles at a time. There is no rule that he must always sleep in the central village. Not only may he spend a night in any village within the limit of ten miles, but it would be actually his duty to spend a night in each of them by turn. There would be at least ten villages in such a block with a radius of ten miles. So, according to me, there would be one worker for every ten villages. Hence we require seventy thousand men and women volunteers to cover all the villages in the country. I said women volunteers. But really speaking we should count their numbers on a different basis. If, in early stages, two of them stay together then we would require more than seventy thousand volunteers, or the volunteers would have to be posted in different manner according to the number of women volunteers included in the total. It should be obvious that to post more than one worker per village would be a crime.

Let us now think each worker can do. He can easily :

1. collect children and teach them how to spin on the *takli*, card cotton, make *taklis*, and also teach them the three R's; for this he can draw up a modest scheme and plan a curriculum;
2. look after the cleanlines of the villages and himself work to keep them clean;
3. give medicine to sick persons;
4. if there are quarrels among different groups and parties in a village, bring them together;
5. relieve the hardships of the untouchables, provide facilities for drinking water for them if they do not have any;
6. try to make the village self-reliant in regard to khadi;

7. prepare a census of each village in his block, count the number of cattle in each under the heads of cows, she-buffaloes, bullocks, he-buffaloes and male and female calves, calculate average yield of buffalo's milk and cow's milk, prepare a census of the *Antyajas* and write a general description of their conditions, find out the area of each village, its crops, the amount of land revenue paid by it, its crafts and industries, the number of wells in it and note whether any fruits and babul trees grow in the villages or in the fields within its limits. Though I have mentioned this activity last, the volunteers should take it up first. This work does not require much time. But the volunteer who has gathered all this informationn would find his work much easier. He should record all this information in a small exercise book.

No volunteer should say that he cannot do all this work unaided in ten villages. Just as a school works only for a few hours daily, similarly we should not mind if it works only for one day in the week. It will not matter if the school in each village works on every tenth day. I have stated a extreme possibility. I actual practice, a newly-posted volunteer will immediately collect the statistics about the villages in his block and then train men and women volunteers in every village and assign them work according to their capacity. In this way he will become a supervisor-worker. On the days on which he is not present in a particular village, the local volunteers will carry on the work.

One quality is essential in such a worker and that is purity of character. If he is a slave of his eleven senses he will be able to do no work. These eleven senses are the five of perception, the five of action and the mind. If the mind is pure, then the ten senses automtically remain pure. If the mind is impure, then everything else will be impure. The senses of action are the arms, the legs, the mouth, and two private organs. The senses of knowledge are the skin, the sense of touch, the palate, the ear for hearing, the nose for smelling and the eyes for sight. Anyone who cannot control these should humbly refuse to become a volunteer. If he has become one and then later on finds that he is unable to control his senses, he should humbly resign. This is the right way if we want work to be done.

Some might say that this programme cannot be completed in a hundred years and we want swaraj just now. This objection has no force. We shall not have an abundance of workers when we get swaraj. Those who are workers now will run the country under swaraj. It is

true that those who run the administration at present will be there when its control is handed over to the people. If, however, the Congress does not have the type of volunteers that I have suggested, then we shall lose control of the administration or it will become corrupt and there will be anarchy in the country. There is no reason to suppose that those who are hated now will become godlike overnight as soon as the control of the administration changes hands. Hence, as we sow now, so shall we reap. If we get sincere workers, the programme that I have chalked out can begin today. "Let us first have seventy thousand volunteers and map out the country into blocks of ten miles each and then we shall see what work to take up." This is not the right way to start work. If we approach the task thus, we shall succeed in doing nothing.

The right method is this : Gujarat should start immediately. If work cannot be started in the whole of Gujarat, it should be started in one or two districts, or even talukas, and if even that is not possible, then the few workers in the different parts in Gujarat should begin as I have suggested and leave whatever is not essential or cannot be done well. They should start whatever they can do. If there are more workers than one at one place, they should disperse themselves. If they decide to stay together where they are, they should do so after considering whether that is necessary. They should not deceive themselves or the people through mental or physical lethargy.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-6-1931

407. NOTES

HINDUS' SHAME

In Dakor on 22nd May, 1931, there was a meeting of Bhangis of which Thakkar Bapa has sent me a report. I give below its substance :

> About 1,500 Bhangis from 150 villages had gathered. They had crected a *mandap*[1] of canvas with the ground also covered with canvas in which they could hold their meetings and sleep at night. The meetings were held in this *mandap* during the day and at night they slept in it. But no one would give them utensils for cooking and they could not get drinking water. The water of the Gomati pond is so dirty that there are municipal signboards at numerous spots warning people not to use it for drinking. But Bhangis can drink it! How could they drink such dirty water at a gathering like this? One Muslim gentleman took pity on them. He gave them utensils, helped them in cooking and gave them water too.
>
> No Hindu of Dakor, which is a centre of pilgrimage, felt ashamed at this or took pity on the Bangis. The guests had come from distant places, but could get no water, no utensils and no food though there was an abundance of everything in the town. the women volunteers of Dakor could have cooked for them. It was the duty of the Mahajan[2] in Dakor to supply water to these people. They failed in this duty and dimmed the lestre of Hinduism.

"But this sort of thing happens everywhere and no one cares for Bhangis. Was it the duty of Hindus of Dakor specially on this occasion to do all that?" Yes, it was. The fact that one's for efathers have been committing a particular sin gives one no right to go on committing it. As the days pass, the awakening among the *Antyajas* increases, this e vil in Hinduism is being recognized and more and more caste Hindus feel ashamed of the practice. The person who drafted the report is a Hindu and the person who sent it is also a Hindu. All of us want to implement the resolution on rights passed by the Congress. Whatever may have

[1] Covered enclosure

[2] Traditional representative body looking after the affairs of a community or a professional or business group

happened before now, even caste Hindus will not tolerate now the kind of inustice that was shown in Dakor. There will be no distinction between *Antyajas* and others under swaraj. Let us, therefore, wake up.

THINK CAREFULLY OVER THIS

There is a village named Bharthari in Thasara taluka. There a person named Dhanjibhai, an *Antyaja*, is trying hard to reform other *Antyajas*. From the report that I have received about his work I see that he silently bears the hardship which he has to suffer because of his activities. One of the reform which he is trying to persuade the *Antyajas* to adopt is to give up eating carrion and to this end to give up the work of disposal of dead cattle. To persuade them to stop eating carrion is of course good, but to persuade them to give up the occupation of disposing of dead cattle seems to me a very harmful move. I think myself the occupation is sacred, and certainly most useful. It is sacred because it helps in preserving sanitation. If dead animals were left unattended, the air whould be polluted,diseases would spread and the country's wealth would be wasted. Cattle serve the people after they die as much a they do while alive. We use their skin, bones, flesh and guts for many purposes. If we use living cattle properly and use the hide, etc., of dead cattle scientifically, their value would increase so much that it would not be profitable to slaughter them.

I would, therefore, suggest to reformers that they should not persuade Bhangis and Chamars to leave their occupation but they should, on the contrary, give them proper knowledge about their work. This requires training. It is only in our country that this occupation is considered low. In the West we find even millionaires engaged in it. If instead of becoming clerks, after graduation, young men learn the Chamar's work, learn how to skin dead cattle and how to make use of the other parts, then the present drain of crores of rupees to foreign countries because of our ignorance in this matter would stop and Chamars would no longer look upon their occupation as low. We shall be able to eradicate untouchability not when the Chamars give up their work but only when the Hindus realize their sin and when the *Antyajas* rid themselves of some evils which have entered their lives.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-6-1931

408. POOR MAN'S HUNDI

Vithaldashbai complains from his sick-bed that khadi stocks are accumulating. The workers of Gujarat write to inform me that because of this they are forced to give less work to spinners. This complaint regarding khadi is a matter of shame for us. Those who wear khadi know that by doing so they help women who are among the poorest in the country. If all of us understand this fact, the demand for khadi will never go down. As we always get the cash value of a currency note printed on, it, so we should always be able to get money for khadi at the price fixed by us. Khadi is a sort of *hundi* drawn by the poor. There should be men and women in cities who whould always accept such *hundis*. And so long as this *hundi* is available, no one should touch any other *hundi*.

If I can have my way and if people co-operate, khadi will always be sold at a fixed price. The price of cotton may vary, but if the women who spin and the weavers are paid at uniform rates in their respective provinces and the rates of payment for the other proceses are also uniform, there should be no difficulty in having a fixed price for every variety of khadi. Since we do not possess the requisite honesty, efficiency of organization and sympathy for the poor, the prices of khadi hav been changing. However, anyone who takes the slightest interest in khadi knows that in every province the prices have declained from what they were ten years ago. I have already pointed out in these columns[1] that, of the khadi produced in the Meerut Ashram, where it is manufactured in large quantities, those varieties which previously cost one rupee now generally cost less than six annas. This does not mean that the women spinners are paid less. It only means that the workers have acquired greater skill in all the processes of khadi manufacture.The quality of spinning has improved and, in consequence, the weavers' work has become easier. This has made it possible to reduce the rate of pay-ment to weavers without reducing their total earnings. It has been possi-ble to bring about this happy result of reduction in prices because a philanthropic body is organizing khadi work. Thanks to this fact, the quality of khadi has progressively improved and the prices have come down.There is

[1] *Vide* "Notes" sub-title Gandhi Ashram, Meerut, 4-6-1931

considerable scope for still further improvement in quality and reduction in prices and this will happen as more and more people patronize khadi. It is evident that, as the demand for khadi increases, a larger number of people and more skilled people will take interest in it and the quality will improve and the prices decrease. The shareholders in the poor man's company are not limited to a small number, but are the thirty crores in the country. Then why should there be any difficulty in selling khadi? But the difficulty is a fact and it is, therefore, fruitless to ask that question. It would be wiser to dicover ways of selling it. The following means suggest themselves :

1. To go round hawking khadi. At all places women should do this only on fixed days, so that they will not have to go round every day. It would be enough if they give some hours on some days in the week. As in the West the wives of millionaires visit hospitals, etc., on certain days in the week, so the women here should go round hawking khadi.

2. Leaflets giving a list of the varities of khadi and their prices should be distributed to every household.

3. Talks about khadi should be arranged in all residential streets.

I have only given a few suggesions for guidance. But those who love khadi and have resourceful brains will be able to think out many other ways of selling the accumulated stocks of khadi.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-6-1931

409. USE ANOTHER NAME

An *Antyaja* friend writes :[1]

Such a feeling is natural in this age of awakening. A person does not like the name which is applied to him in contempt, though its origin may have been quite innocent. Formerly the name *Antyaja* was not felt as expressing contempt. The names Dhed and Bhangi were disliked. I think the term '*Dalit*' was first used by the late Swami Shraddhanand. Now it seems that name also is not liked. This real explanation is that as long as the poison of untouchability exists in our society, any name that may be given will probably come to be disliked after some time. Hence the right thing to do is to get rid of that poison and for this we need the co-operation of the *Antyajas* men and women. It is of course the duty of the Hindus to get rid of this poison unconditionally. Atonement for one's sin need not depend on any condition being fulfilled. But however sincere the efforts of Hindus to atone for their sin, the evils which have crept into the lives of the untouchables because of the sin of Hindus can be eradicated only by their own efforts. They will require the help of caste Hindus in their efforts. They are getting it slowly and its tempo is likely to increase. But even after taking all this into account, ultimately the *Antyajas* will have to rely on their own efforts. Though it is thus necessary to attack the root cause, if a better word than *Antyaja* or *Dalit* occurs to anyone he may send it to me.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-6-1931

410. A SUPERSTITION

I give below the substance of what one cultured and very pious mother writes : "After my son's death I have left off milk and ghee. I live on rice, dal, *roti*, and buttermilk. I have lost interest in life but I pass my time by devoting myself to service in one way or another. I read *Ramayana* and other books, but deep inside the memory of my dear son continues to pain me."

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had expressed his sense of humiliation at the word '*Antyaja*' and requested Gandhiji to coin some new word to denote his community. For the choice of the word 'Harijan', *vide* "Notes", 2-8-1931, sub-title, "Harijan".

This mother's health was already weak and now it has become weaker. It is not certain even whether she will survive or not. As I have summarized the mother's letter, I also give the substance of my reply to her.[1]

To mourn the death of either son or husband is meaningless and shows our ignorance. This should not be dismissed as merely wise talk; it is a truth to be pondered over till it sinks into our heart and to be acted upon. Since death is certain for all, the only question is whether it comes today or tomorrow. Why, then, should we grieve over anyone's death? It is only the body which dies. That is its nature and therefore there is no cause for wonder when it dies. It is certain that the soul which dwells in the body never dies, it is immortal. When we know this as certain truth, why should we grieve over death?

Even if we assume that we are bound to be pained by death, is fasting or restriction of food a remedy for our grief? Whom does it help? The one who is dead? And if so, does it help the body which has perished, or the immortal soul? The body that used to eat is now ashes or is being eaten up by worms. The soul neither eats nor drinks. Why then should the mother or the wife restrict her food?

In other words, the mother or wife restricting her food has no effect on the body or the soul of the dead person. If we desire the welfare of the departed soul or wish to keep his memory alive for ever, we shall not be able to fulfil our wish by fasting but shall fulfil both aims by retaining his virtues in ourselves. We can also contribute to perpetuating his memory by making donations to worthy causes.

Does fasting or control over food then serve no purpose? In this case at any rate they serve none. They can be undertaken within certain limits, either for the purpose of self-purification or for curing a disease. We shall not discuss the second possibility. Control of the palate, then, aims at self-purification. Restriction of food or fasting, therefore, has this limit. Fasting is not the right way of atoning for a lie. The right way of doing so is to take a vow always to speak the truth in future, to renounce whatever serves as a temptation to us to tell a lie. If, however, a person cannot control his palate, the remedy is fasting or restriction of diet. Anyone who has overcome all cravings of the palate eats only for keeping his body alive. His diet is restricted to a few items and the quantity also is measured. Such men and

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Hemprabha Das Gupta", 2-6-1931

women take food as medicine. If they practise further self-denial, they commit a sin because, if they do not eat, their bodies would become weak. The body is an instrument of service. Anyone who weakens that instrument is a thief. Such persons number hardly a few among crores. I have used this illustration only to explain my meaning.

We ordinary human beings daily indulge our palate. It is, therefore, necessary that we should occasionally fast and restrict our diet. But this should be done only to kill the cravings of the palate. To do it because of someone's death or for some similar reason is a form of self-deception and may even be sinful.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-6-1931

411. A LETTER

BARDOLI,

June 7, 1931

Sardar Garda met me at Swaraj Ashram, Bardoli, on April 25th in the company of Sir Cowasji Jehangir, Syt. K. F. Nariman, Sjt. Vimadalal, Rao Bahadur Bhim Bhai and another Parsi friend. He was brought by Sir Cowasji Jehagir and other friends in connection with the forfeited land belonging to Bardoli peasants which he had purchased during the Civil Disobedience Movement. He complained about the treatment he had received at the hands of the people. I told him that whatever complaints he might make I would undertake to invetigate and give him satisfaction. All the friends persuaded him to return the said land. He insisted not only on the price he had paid for the land being returned to him, namely, Rs. 6000 in addition which he said he had spent on the land. Sir Cowasji assured him that sum also would be forthcoming. He then said that he would most probably decide to restore the land for the purchase price plus the said sum of Rs. 6000, but that he would have to consult his people and the give a final reply which he would do inside of two days. In the course of the conversation Sardar Garda said that the land he had bought was fully worth four lakhs of rupees and that he would not have bought it but for the pressure that was brought to bear upon him on the part of the authorities. This, of course, he said in confidence. I asked him then whether I could announce to the people that most probably he would

agree to restore the land, and he said "certainly". Two days after, Sardar Vallabhbhai received a letter from Rao Bahadur Bhim Bhai saying that Sardar Garda had passed a note to him to the effect that he had decided to restore the land for the above sum. The enclosed is a copy of the letter passed by Sardar Garda to Rao Bahadur Bhim Bhai. The letter was also published in the papers and the agreement was duly announced to the people concerned. On May 7th I received a letter from Sardar Garda as per copy to which I sent a reply hereto attached. I also attach the further correspondence since passed between Sardar Garda and myself.

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

412. LETTER TO K. B. BHADRAPUR

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 7, 1931

DEAR MR. BHADRAPUR,

I write this letter in connection with the present Mukhi[1] of Ras. I discussed the question of his removal and the appointment of the old Mukhi with Mr. Perry more than once and I had hoped that by this time at least the Ras Mukhi would have been removed. The this time at least the Ras Mukhi would been removed. The matter is now becoming urgent as a deputation on behalf of the non-Dharala inhabitants of Ras waited on me yesterday and complained that life was becoming unbearable for them there. I enclose herewith particulars of destruction that is alleged to have gone on in Ras during the past fortnights. They mentioned also that personal assaults were added to the injury to property. It is not suggested that the Mukhi himself has personally done these things but it is suggested that they have been done with his connivance, if not instigation. It will be readily admitted that if the statements made in the memorandum hereto attached are at all true, it won't be possible for the non-Dharala population to proceed with the cultivation of their fields as soon as rains commence. Suggestion has already been made that the Mukhiship should be divided into three parts, each part being held by a different person. I need hardly say this will not do. Either the present Mukhi is an undesirable person or he is not. If he is an

[1] Village headman

undesirable person, in accordance with the terms of the Settlement and the admission made by the Commissioner, undesirable Mukhis should be removed. And in view of the fact that there is a conviction for theft against the present Mukhi of Ras, his removal is surely overdue. This I ask irrespective of and without prejudice to my contention that appointments of Mukhis for definite terms are not permanent according to the meaning of the Settlement. I shall therefore be obliged if you will kindly let me know as early as possible whether it is the intention of the Government to remove this Mukhi and protect the life and property of the inhabitants of Ras.

Yours sincerely,

K. B. BHADRAPUR, ESQ.
COLLECTOR OF KAIRA DT.
KAIRA

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

413. LETTER TO THOMAS B. LEE

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 7, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. As a matter of fact I have got ample Christian Science literature with me. You will not mind my saying that somehow or other the message of Christian Science does not appeal to me. I met so many Christian scientists in South Africa. Their conversations also failed to convince me. And why do you say that the discovery that there is really no life or sensation in the body is the most important discovery of any kind that has ever been made? As a matter of fact the statement is not a complete proposition. By the body is evidently meant body without life is without sensation and every Hindu child is taught that from childhood. But I must not enter into a discussion. I felt that your long letter was entitled to a reasoned reply from me.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

THOMAS B. LEE, ESQ.
STERLING RADIO CO.
KANSAS CITY, MO.

From a photostat : S.N. 17248

414. LETTER TO MADHAV R. JOSHI

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 7, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. A man of God makes no distinction between individual and individual. He will bestow his affection impartially upon all, whether wife or sister or mother, brother or stranger, friend of foe and he will put himself last. After serving everybody he will serve himself. And this can only be done by having faith in God and following the light that He may give one in answer to prayer.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. MADHAV RAMKRISHNA JOSHI
C/O DISTRICT CONGRESS COMMITTEE'S OFFICE
AGRA ROAD, DHULIA (W. KHANDESH)

From a photostat : S.N. 17249

415. LETTER TO THAPPAN NAIR

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 7, 1931

MY DEAR THAPPAN,

I have your letter. You should diligently follow the columns of *Young India*. They might help you. So far as your immediate question is concerned, if you feel that there is no work for you there you are at liberty to return to the Ashram. Many have done so.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. THAPPAN NAIR
CONGRESS CAMP
PALGHAT (MALABAR)

From a microfilm : S.N. 17250

416. LETTER TO H. V. HODSON

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 7, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. If I do come to London I hope we shall meet and if I do not succeed in coming, you will please believe me when I tell you that the failure will be due not to any want of will or effort on my part but to circumstances wholly beyond my control.

Yours sincerely,

H. V. HODSON, ESQ.
10 WOOD LANE
HIGHGATE, LONDON, N. 6

From a photostat : S.N. 17251

417. LETTER TO M. I. DAVID

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 7, 1931

DEAR MR. DAVID,

I thank you for your letter of 9th May. I am most closely watching your activity not in terms of the newspapers but its reaction upon the commual spirit. Solution of the communal question may be beyond the powers of Conciliation Committees, but if they tend to promote peace it would be a very big step forward. You are also interesting me in another activity of yours, bee-keeping and honey-making. I would love to see the industry of bee-keeping becoming universal in India. The only question is whether it is possible to make bee-keeping profitable. I tried to make some experiments but I have failed hitherto. You will deserve the gratitude of people if you can devise method whereby poor people can take to this industry.

Yours sincerely,

M. I. DAVID, ESQ.
4 QUEENS ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat : S.N. 17252

418. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 7, 1931

After having kept me waiting for many long months you have at last written to me. What a bad things that Menon has not yet got his diploma. I had a letter from a mutual friend saying that you were disheartened over this failure. This is unworthy of you as I have known you. No failure, no adversity should dishearten you who have a living faith in God and his goodness. We do not know that every failure is a matter for sorrow nor do we know that every adversity is an infliction. Do we not often find that prosperity and success mean the undoing of people whereas failure and adversity chasten them?

I do not know that I am going to London. If I do, I will of course love to go to Denmark and if I went there I should not like to miss you. But it is no speculating on a highly problematical thing.

I do hear from Maria, now and again.

After dictating this I came upon another letter which mentionns you more intimately. This letter is from Dr. Henning Dalsgaard. In that letter he says you are cheerful but he asks me concrete proposition. Have you any such in view? If you have, thing, you know also you can rely upon my doing it.

MRS. ESTHER MENON

M, QUEST HOUSE
SELLY OAK
N. BIRMINGHAM (ENGLAND)

From photostat : S.N. 17254

419. LETTER TO DR. HENNING DALSGAARD

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 7, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have read with great deal of interest your note at the back of the formal letter from the International People's College. You will see from my reply to Prof. Manniche that my going to London itself is problematical and going to Denmark still more so.

I would like you to be more explicit about Menon. But now that you have mentioned him I am writing to Esther about his requirements.

Yours sincerely,

DR. HENNING DALSGAARD
LECTURER IN POLITICAL SCIENCE
ELSINORE, DENMARK

From a photostat : S.N. 17253

420. LETTER TO RAMSEVAK SHUKLA

June 7, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You may send the particulars of your discovery[1] with full explanation.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 17255

421. LETTER TO SHRI RAM SHARMA

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 7, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The matters discussed in your letter, you should really discuss with the Provincial Congress Committee officials in the first instance so that a uniform policy can be adopted. I can only discuss general principles in the pages of *Young India*,

[1] Of a new kind of spindle

and take concrete cases of injustice to the Government. Beyond that, you will admit, it is not possible for me to go.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. SHRI RAM SHARMA
GENERAL SECRETARY, DISTRICT CONGRESS COMMITTEE
ROHTAK (PUNJAB)

From a microfilm : S.N. 17256

422. LETTER TO N. P. RAGHAVAN

June 7, 1931

MY DEAR RAGHAVAN,

I was delighted to hear from you after so long. I hope Titus is better. Thappan[1] says you are all weary there and not wanted. If such is the case you may return to the Ashram.

Yours

BAPU

SJT. N.P. RAGHAVAN
KHADI VASTRALAYA
PAYYANUR
N. MALABAR

From a photostat: C. W. 10865. Courtesy: N. P. Raghavan

[1] Thappan Nair

423. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

June 8, 1931

MY DEAR AMTUL,

Never mind your incorrect English. But you must soon write Hindi. If you write a clear Urdu hand I can read it. You must cultivate a brief style.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 240

424. LETTER TO PADMA

June 8, 1931

CHI. PADMA,

I have your letter. It is good news indeed to hear that your health is improving steadily. Have you now given up the idea of going to U.P.P.? Take plenty of rest and get well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6120. Also C.W. 3472. Courtesy : Prabhudas Gandhi

425. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

Silence Day, June 8, 1931

CHI. SHARDA,

Your handwriting may be said to be good this time. You can still improve it. How can you not think of what to write? Can you not write about what you did and what you said during the week?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 9903. Courtesy : Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

426. LETTER TO KANTI PAREKH

Silence Day, June 8, 1931

CHI. KANTI,

Here is the reply to your letter. The word 'love' has two meanings : one, ignorant attachment, and, two, non-violence. Love between man and woman mostly takes the form of ignorant attachment and, therefore, it is undesirable. It cannot become all-embracing love. If a man marries many woman or a woman many men, the world would be destroyed. Only that love which takes the form of non-violence can become all-embracing, and anybody who wishes to cultivate such love must renounce the other love, born of ignorant attachment, which a man and a woman feel for each other. The wheel of worldly life is kept moving, and will be kept moving, by a love which is a mixture of the two kinds. It helps human beings to satisfy their own needs and also to serve the race. What I have written pertains to love in its purest form. If we are clear in our minds about the ideal, it will be possible on its basis to formulate proper norms for practical life. If we base the ideal on the prevailing practice, we would lower both the ideal and the practice. If you do not follow anything in this, ask me again. I am returning your letter herewith.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6269

427. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[BARDOLI,
June 8, 1931][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got three of your letters together. I shall start this evening for Bombay. Pandit Jawaharlal has come here today to see me. He will return with me. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan is still here. Devdas has written a fine article about him for *Young India*[2]. Read it. What happened to Liladhar? If we can help him in any way, we should. As for Vithal, I will write to him.

Bhagwanji's problem, we may take it, has been solved for the present. He is not at peace with himself and remains much excited. Yes, I have written to Chhaganlal and told him that those who do not do proper work outside should return to the Ashram. Surendra will explain to you my letter to him. You may even get a copy.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I will leave Bombay on the 11th and reach Borsad on the evening of the 12th. If, therefore, you address the 11th post to Surat, I shall get it there.

Chi. Indu was there, and is now returning. He will arrive there on the 10th. Take care of him. He is Kanti Parekh's brother. He is of an affectionate nature, and also loves fun. He is a straightforward boy. Exact hard work from him. In any case, see that he studies.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—9 : Shri Narandas Gandhine, Pt. I, p. 272

[1] The year and month are inferred from the reference in the letter to Devdas Gandhi's article on Abdul Ghaffar Khan. Gandhiji left Bardoli on June 8 for Bombay.

[2] Of June 11

428. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

ON WAY TO BOMBAY,
June 8, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

Credit to the khadi account the sum of Rs. 543-4-0 received from Ankleshwar on 1-4-1930 and send the amount to Shri Chhotubhai Gandhi at Ankleshwar to be spent on khadi work. Request him to send an account of how the money is spent.

Chhotubhai's address : Taluka Samiti.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I

429. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

Silence Day, June 8, 1931

CHI. MANGALA,

You must always write as neatly as you have written this time. If all of you improve your handwriting, mine will automatically improve. And how nice it would be if my handwriting improved!

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11095. Courtesy: Pushpa Naik

430. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

June 8, 1931

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter, as also the letter to Schuster[1]. I shall go through it. The situation is already delicate and it will grow more delicate still. Some good result can come out of it if we work for the larger good.

Sen Gupta has agreed to arbitration. He has given up the idea of postponing the election. Anyway, I am reaching Bombay tomorrow and trust that both of them[2] will come.

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : C.W. 7889. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

431. SPEECH AT BOMBAY

June 10, 1931

Prabhat Pheris were resumed this morning. About fifty members assembled at Choupatty at 5.30 a.m. today and led by Mr. K. F. Nariman, President, Bombay Congress Committee, went first to Mani Bhavan, Gandhiji's residence, to receive his blessings.

Gandhiji addressed the processionists from a balcony. He said that they should finish their daily rounds before sunrise, singing selected songs of prayer and devotion to God and the Motherland. He said no objectionable songs, inconsistent with the Congress creed, should be sung.

The Hindu, 10-6-1931

[1] Sir George Schuster, then Finance Member of the Viceroy's Council
[2] J. M. Sen Gupta and Subhas Chandra Bose

432. NOTES

WHO CAN BE CONGRESS OFFICE HOLDER?

A Sindhi correspondent asks :

1. Whether a man dealing in foreign cigarettes and tobacco can be a president of the Congress Committee?
2. Whether persons dealing in foreign cloth can be vice-president and treasurer of the Congress Committee?
3. Whether a person connected with foreign-cloth dealers can be secretary of the Congress Committee?

These are bad questions. If the correspondent had said whether such and such a person *should* be, I could have given my opinion for what it might be worth. But when he asks whether a particular type of person can be officer it betrays ignorance of the democratic character of the constitution of the Congress. Even a drunkard and a rake can become president of Congress Committee or a secretary if his constituents elect him to that office. But one may assume that so long as the constituents are sober and pure, they will not elect a drunkard or a rake. Similarly if they are believers in out-and-out swadeshi only, they will not elect anyone who deals in foreign cloth or such foreign goods as are now manufactured in India. And so far as things injurious to the nation are concerned, as for instance intoxicating drinks and drugs, Congressmen will make no distinction between foreign and swadeshi goods. All injurious things must be regarded as taboo whether they are foreign or home-made.

COARSE MILL CLOTH AS KHADI

Complaints are being received from several quarters, Madras, Bengal and Bombay Presidencies and elsewhere that coarse mill-cloth is being sold as khadi and that though since the understanding with the Congress, khadi labels are not used by mill-owners, in their invoices and otherwise, coarse cloth is shown as khadi. If the information is correct, it is clearly a breach of the agreement with the Congress. Mills ought to be satisfied with the profits they are making by reason of the Congress campaign, but if they will greedily and unlawfully appropriate the name ‘khadi’ somehow or other and at some stage or other for their wares, they will be following the example of the miser who, in the attempt to get a cocoanut free of charge, lost his life.

Sjt. Mohanlal Nehru writes :[1]

This is apart from the collections in Nainital which will appear in this column in due course.

Young India, 11-6-1931

433. MY FAITH

A Bangali correspondent who gives his name and address even for publication if necessary has written a long letter which I condense as follows :

> Much has been said about Bhagat Singh and his comrades, yet even now I find great difficulty in appreciating the wisdom of passing the resolution at the Karachi Congress.
>
> I am afraid it will not be possible for me to explain to you properly the different peculiar and surreptitious ways in which your remarks about Bhagat Singh and the Karachi Resolution extolling him are being exploited here by some interested politicians to serve their own purpose and under-mine your influence.
>
> 1. They accuse you for the niggardly way in which the resolution had been worded by you. These people are trying to impress upon the minds of the young men that you really had no sincere sympathy for those unfortunate men and that you gave your support to the resolution and expressed your admiration for Bhagat Singh and his comrades only being prevailed upon by the Navajuvanwallas, whose strong agitation you could not resist, and you wanted to placate Pandit Jawah-arlal.
>
> 2. They question your integrity and sincerity and try to belittle you (and your cause) by surreptitiously propagating an idea in Bengal that while you gave your active support to the resolution about Bhagat Singh at Karachi you severely criticized the late Deshbandhu Das for his responsibility in carrying out an exactly similar resolution at Faridpur Conference praising

[1] The letter, containing a list of donors, is not reproduced here. For the appeal, *vide* "The Allahabad Congress Hospital an Appeal", 14-5-1931

Gopinath Saha[1] who lost his life on the gallows under exactly similar circumstances; and in this they say you are not immune from provincial bias. They are taking every opportunity to undermine your influence in Bengal by appealing to the sentiment of local patriotism. They say that many Bengal youths sacrificed their lives even within this very year for the same cause for which Bhagat Singh and his comrades died. Among those who thus died in Bengal there were Benoy Bose and his comrade, there were the Chittagong raiders—the twenty-one lads, who died fighting bravely against the British troops on the Jalallabad Hills whose deeds were much more courageous and romantic than you would imagine, but how strange—you did not find romance there : not a word of sympathy passed from your lips! The insidious appeal made to their sentiment of local patriotism easily estranges them from you and your path of non-violence.

I have already expressed my doubts as to the propriety of my having drafted and sponsored the Bhagat Singh resolution not because it was wrong in principle but for the misinterpretation it has lent itself to. But the reader must know that it was neither the fear of the Navajuvans nor my love for Pandit Jawaharlal that prompted me to initiate the resolution. Not that I should be ashamed of yielding to Navajuvans or placating Jawaharlal. I should be foolish if I did not yield to Navajuvans, if yielding advanced the interest of the country and involved no sacrifice of principle. And I should go a very long way to please Jawaharlal and retain his affection which I have the privilege of posses-sing in abundance. But there was no prompting required in this case. I had interested myself in the movement for the commutation of the death sentence on Bhagat Singh and his comrades. I had put my whole being into the task. I had therefore to study the life of the principal actor in the tragedy. I had to come in contact with his devoted father and those who were attached to Bhagat Singh not for his deed but for his character. I was thus drawn to the resolution in the natural course. I am too sensitive not to be moved by circumstances demanding sympathy.

Therefore had I found myself impelled to interest myself in any of the Bengali youths and had fancied myself in possession of

[1] *Vide* "Notes", sub-title Rabbi May.

influence which I could exercise in their behalf, I should have with equal zest plunged myself into their case. I regard myself as incapable of having any provincial bias. Bengal is as dear to me as the Punjab. And I owe a special debt to Bengal for the inspiration it gave me in my youth. It is true that Deshbandhu and I differed as to the emphasis in the matter of Gopinath Saha resolution.

I do not know that my resolution[1] on Gopinath Saha differed in substance from the Karachi Resolution. But the reader should know that whatever our differences, Deshbandhu and I always remained friends. Indeed towards the end of his all too short life, we came much nearer each other even in our ideals and methods of working towards them.

I should therefore be sorry to discover that there was any secret propaganda against me in Bengal. I have many precious co-workers in Bengal. I want the number to grow. I know the value of the co-operation of the youth of Bengal. I need it for their sakes, for the sake of the country they love so well, but sometimes, alas, blindly. They must not by their unwarranted prejudice deny themselves the service of a true friend. If I have any influence over the youth of the country, it is a treasure I want to use for gaining the freedom of the motherland. I am therefore glad that my correspondent has given me the opportunity of stating my position. But whether I retain my hold on the youth of Bengal or any other province or I do not, I must proclaim my creed from the house-top. Freedom of India's starving millions is attainable only through Truth and Ahimsa.

Young India, 11-6-1931

[1] *Vide* "The Acid Test", 19-6-1924

434. A CORRECTION

My attention has been drawn to an unfortunate error that crept into my advice to the *kisans* of U.P.[1] in *Young India* 28th May last, p. 127, line 53. The line reads "as a general rule less than 8 annas or 4 annas as the case may be". It should read "12 annas" instead of "4 annas". I am sorry for the slip. I hope however no one was misled by the slip. The preceding lines left no room for dubt.

Young India, 11-6-1931

435. VIRUS OF UNTOUCHABILITY

All lovers of Hinduism will read the following with painful interest :[2]

Sjt. Subanagounder deserves warm congratulations for his bravery and pertinacity. The only advice I can give him is that he should take all risks in protecting the untouchables of his village and yet bear no ill-will to the villagers. He will find in the end that the villagers will cease to worry him. They will at first mistake his goodness for weakness and then perceive the strength lying behind his goodness. For they will soon find their mistake when they see that whilst he is gentle and forbearing towards them he is firm like a rock in his action in protecting the untouchables. As time passes, the villagers will forfeit all sympathy and Sjt. Subanagounder will gain the active sympathy and help of the public. The only condition is that he must be prepared to sacrifice everything, suffer even his fields to lie fallow if the sinful boycott by the villagers succeeds in scaring labour away from him. It is some consolation that he has four friends who stand by him. But he should be prepared to carry out his resolution, even if he loses these friends. For I am sure that he will lose only to gain. God loses these friends. For I am sure that he will lose only to gain. God sometimes does try to the uttermost those whom He wishes to bless.

Young India, 11-6-1931

[1] *Vide* "To the Kisans of the U. P.", 23-5-1931

[2] This letter is not reproduced here. It described how K. K. Subanagounder of Coimbatore District was excommunicated and harassed for having allowed two untouchabled to take water from his well.

436. MEANING OF GRINDING POVERTY

The Deshseva Mandal of Sind has published a little pamphlet on the economic condition of the Bhils of Sind. It consists of two articles written by Sjt. Jairamdas Doulatram after a careful study on the spot of the condition of the Bhils living in Tharparker district of Sind. The tract is a desert. "The profession of agriculture in the desert", writes Sjt. Jairamdas,"is nothing but a stupenduous struggle against nature." "The average net yield of cultivation in that tract is not more than Rs. 5 per acre. It is not every year that he (the cultivator) cultivates the whole area." "With a sandy soil, low rainfall, locust pest, and cheaply priced crops, the *khatedar*[1] can rarely keep his head above water." "I have come across all types of Bhils, those, very few ones, who are for the time being out of debt, those who are in permanent debt and live a semi-starved life and lastly those who are living in hopeless pauperism. I cannot do better than give to the reader a few hard facts about specific villages."[2]

These men should for years have revenue-free land. It is for people such as these that I pleaded for free salt and I know that at the end of our discussions, it became a matter of pleasure for Lord Irwin to make the concession regarding salt. And I hope that the workers throughout the land will bring the message of free salt to the semi-starved villagers and discover all the salt areas which though not good enough for mass production are good enough for village use. It is to these people that the charkha brings hope and happiness. Village economics is different from industrial economics. Human economics is not the same as that of exploitation of mere dead matter.

Young India, 11-6-1931

[1] Land-holder

[2] The extract in question is not reproduced here.

437. AGRARIAN SITUATION IN ASSAM

Assam is in the grip of dire economic distress. From everywhere, from North Lakhimpur and Sibsagar, from Darrang and Nowgong, from Goalpara and Kamrup, come the tales of misery and woe of the ryots for this scarcity. Hundreds of people, generally immigrants from Mymensingh, . . . have been flocking to the towns of Goalpara and Dhubri for begging, with nothing to cover their loins excepting half-tattered pieces. . . .

In Goalpara and Sibsagar, Nowgong and North Lakhimpur there has been repeated failure of crops owing to the annual visitation of floods for some years past. An earthquake also came in as another visitation in July last. . . .

Affected by this economic depression, from everywhere comes the cry for remission of land revenue. . . .

It seems that the Government has not yet been able to shake off the Civil Disobedience complex from their minds. . . . They have taken their inability to pay land revenue to mean their unwillingness to do it and are seeking to test it till the last day of *kist* by all sorts of indirect pressure. . . .

The foregoing report[1] has been received from the Assam Provincial Congress Committee. If the report is accurate, and there is no reason to doubt its accuracy, it is a clear case for remission.

Young India, 11-6-1931

438. UNDER SWARAJ

A Brahmin correspondent from Madras writes[2] :

During his tour Sjt. Sen Gupta said that Swaraj Government would pass legislation to crush Brahmins and also referred to resolutions of the Karachi Congress. On account of that the Brahmin minority has begun to be highly restless and it has also created a sense of fear in the inds of the orthodox Hindus. Therefore please let me know what exactly you and the Congress mean by

1. The words of the resolution dealing with untouchability.

2. What exactly you and the Congress mean by saying therein that under the Swaraj Government the Government will observe religious neutra-lity. . . .

I do not believe Sjt. Sen Gupta said that Swaraj Government would “crush the Brahmins”. The congress resolution is clear. The

[1] Of which only excerpts are reproduced above

[2] Only extracts are reproduced here.

correspondent is unnecessarily nervous about the future which lies as much in his hands as in Sjt. Sen Gupta's or mine. Let it also be remembered that the Congress resolution is not yet a part of the constitution. When it is, its interpretation will not rest with me or any single individual. It will rest with the courts duly established by law.

But I gladly give my opinion as to what is likely to be the interpretation of the Congress resolution on religious neutrality and untouchability. It is bound to be a part of any future constitution as there is no difference of opinion on it. Indeed, even the correspondent seems to concede as much as the Congress wants. Religious neutrality means that the State will have no State religion nor a system of favouritism. There will be no untouchability. The 'untouchables' will have the same rights as any other. But a Brahmin will not be *made* to touch anybody. He will be free to make himself untouchable and have his own well, his own temple, his own school and whatever else he can afford, so long as he uses these things without being a nuisance to his neighbours. But he will not be able, as some do now, to punish untouchables for daring to walk on public streets or using wells. There will be under swaraj no such scandal as that of the use of public temples being denied to untouchables when it is allowed to all other Hindus. The authority of the Vedas and the other Shastras will not be denied but their interpretation will not rest with individuals but will depend upon the courts of law in so far as these religious books will be used to regulate public conduct. Conscientious scruples will be respected, but not at the expense of public morals or the rights of others. Those who will have extraordinary scruples will have themselves to suffer inconvenience and pay for the luxury. The law will not tolerate any arrogation of superiority by any person or class whether in the name of custom or religion. But all this is my dream. I am not the Congress. Those who would have the Congress to do otherwise had better make haste to join it and make others of their opinion join it. The Congress represents, or it has a constitution wide enough to represent popular will.

Young India, 11-6-1931

439. SPEECH AT DESHA SEVIKAS' MEETING,BOMBAY

June 11, 1931

Gandhiji, early this morning, addressed the Desh Sevikas for a few minutes, asking them to carry on picketing peacefully. Only habitual wearers of khaddar should have the privilege of picketing. If the audience had any stock of foreign cloth, they must consign them to the flames. If they had mill-cloth, they must give them to the poor and the needy. The object of khaddar was to help the starving peasants and workers who would obtain the full benefit of their labour if khadi was encouraged, while in the case of mill-cloth, they would receive only anna in the rupee. To help the humanitarian cause, they must wear khaddar.

The Hindu, 11-6-1931

440. SPEECH AT BOMBAY[1]

June 11, 1931

I must first apologize to you for having called you at this early time. The Hindustani Seva Dal stands for the service of India. Till now whenever I heard the term 'Servant of India' it used to rouse great fear in my heart, because the rulers of India style themselves as 'Servants of India'. These so-called'Servants of India' can never in reality be what they call themselves.They are the servants of the British Empire and it is an impossibility to serve the British Empire and at the same time serve India. I can assure you, you can do no service to India if you try to follow the workings of these so-called 'Servants of India'. You have to develop a desire for real service which these people totally lack. If on acquiring power you begin to cruelly enforce your authority on the people how is it possible to serve the people?

It is because we lack this feeling of real service that a great deal of rivalry and dissatisfaction has spread among ourselves. It has pained me very much to hear that out of a desire to attain high positions in the various Congress bodies people have been spending money, thus creating an atmosphere of unhealthy competition. The real worker is he who carries on the work with a steady mind in spite of his being in the furthermost rank. The perfection of real service does not solely depend on the magnitude of the task done but rests a

[1] To the campers of the Officer's Training Camp of the Hindustani Seva Dal who met Gandhiji at Mani Bhavan where Gandhiji used to stay while in Bombay.

great deal on the humble spirit in which it is undertaken.Those misguided people to whom I have referred desire by force, it seems, to serve their country. But it assuredly shows a most undesirable state of mind. One can never prosper or be capable of doing any good to anybody if one adopts questionable means to attain that end.

It is decidedly wrong on my part to think that I shall be able to serve India better if I become King of India. This was exactly the state of affairs at one time in the political life of France and people used to employ the most cruel and drastic means to remove their opponents from the political field. But the workers of the Hindustani Seva Dal should work with Peace and Truth as their foundation.

They must also cultivate to the greatest extent a sense of humility nor must they ever relax their efforts or let the quality of the work be in the least affected by feeling that there is not proper appreciation. They should deal with their fellow beings in a spirit of fair tolerance and maintain a respectful reverence for their mothers and sisters. I know this perfect combination of humility—Truth, Love and Peace—is very rare in this world, but you must all strive to attain to it. Remember there will be no soldiers left to fight if everybody becomes a commander to give orders. I sincerely hope that you will try and live up to this ideal that I have portrayed for you at this most precious time of the day and I can confidently say that if you sincerely make an effort and keep the memory of this morning always in your mind you will be doing the best service both to yourself and to your motherland.

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-6-1931

441. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

BORSAD,
June 12, 1931

CHI. JAMNADAS,

You are a strange man. After having spent days with me here, you go back and write from there a letter about an important matter. It raises several questions. Should I answer them by post, or call you back here? When I wanted to know why you thought of coming as far as Bombay, you could give no answer and hurriedly went back, and now you write to me a letter from there asking for Rs. 5,000. This is now my advice to you. Write to Kakasaheb and convince him about the propriety of your request. If you do this, my task will be easier. Have Manu and Babi reached there?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 9324. Courtesy : Jamnadas Gandhi

442. INTERVIEW TO EUROPEAN DEPUTATION

June 12, 1931

Gandhiji received a deputation of young Europeans, about 30 in number including four ladies. Gandhiji, at the request of the deputation, explained the attitude of the Congress towards Englishmen and other Europeans in India.

Gandhiji said that the Congress attitude was not one of hostility to them, but of active friendship. He recalled to them how the Congress was started by an Englishman, Mr. Hume, and was presided over by even members of Parliament. He wanted them to study the object and history of the Congress, which never meant any harm to any community or interests. If they sympathized with the Congress it was their duty to join it. In India it was but natural that Indians should have full rights to rule as Englishmen had in their own country. It was not reasonable for Englishmen to ask for safeguards and trading rights of a special character on which they were insisting. Perpetuation of these privileges, which they had carved in their 150 years of rule in India, would amount to friendship on unequal terms. The Congress was not merely not hostile to Englishmen, but welcome their association, assistance and co-operation and their organizing capacity. Co-operation of such a kind did not mean co-operation on unequal terms. The deputation waited on Gandhiji for about 15 minutes.

The Hindu, 12-6-1931

443. SPEECH AT MAROLI[1]

June 12, 1931

Mahatma Gandhi laid the foundation of the building of a Weaving School, started by Miss Mithubehn Petit. Addressing a big public meeting, he said that if he had been told ten years ago that Miss Mithubehn Petit, who belonged to a celebrated Parsi family of Bombay, would roam day and night in the villages barefooted and dressed in coarse khaddar, regardless of the heat and cold, to work among the poor people and teach their children spinning, weaving and other industries, he (Mr. Gandhi) would not have believed it. Althought he had appreciated the work of Parsis, even when the campaign of prohibition was launched, he had thought that prohibition alone would not succeed without propagation of khaddar. The closing of liquor shops was not the principal thing. If drunkards did not give up the habit of drink, they would prepare illicit liquor and there would be illicit sale of liquor as at present. Drunkards would not give up drink till they were taught some industry. Workers working in big factories required something to be relieved of the fatigue. The speaker, who had never tasted liquor, had affectionately given liquor to the exhausted in South Africa. The Kolis, who were with him, demanded liquor, and the speaker brought liquor from a canteen-keeper and gave it to them. Men who were made to work like beasts would require liquor, but those working in a peaceful atmosphere in their homes could easily give up drink.

If rural industries like spinning, weaving, dairying, shoe-making, etc., were revived, rural areas would become richer. They did not want to be rich like the millionaires of the Bombay Stock Exchange but they should get rid of their debts. There would be a few silver coins in their cash boxes. Instead of borrowing money from *sowcars*, they should deposit their savings with *sowcars*. They would have then houses of their own, and the number of their cattle would increase. Such a process was going on in the area, and it should go on in the seven lakhs of villages in India. This was the work of swaraj. Last year, they had done the work of cleansing the field. Now they had to do the work of sowing. That was constructive work. The sowing work was of greater importance and had to be done for a longer time.

The Hindu, 12-6-1931

[1] A small village about 12 miles from Surat in Gujarat

444. TELEGRAM TO MAHENDRA PRASAD

BORSAD,
June 13, 1931

MAHENDRA PRASAD[1]
CHAPRA

RAJENDRA BABU WAS MUCH BETTER WHEN I LEFT HIM.[2] HE WILL BE JOINING ME IN FEW DAYS TIME. RECEIVING BEST ATTENTION. WILL NOT LET HIM MOVE TILL HE IS STRONG AND HAD REST. WEATHER HERE QUITE GOOD AT THIS TIME YEAR.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 17271

445. LETTER TO DUNICHAND

June 13, 1931

DEAR LALA DUNICHAND,

Suraj Bhanji writes to say that you are not paying even the money they have expended. I hope this is not correct. I think that the expenses incurred should be paid. If you have suggestions for the future please let me know.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : G.N. 5581

[1] Elder brother of Rajendra Prasad

[2] Rajendra Prasad was ill and could not participate in the meeting of the Working Committee held at Bombay on 9th and 10th June.

446. LETTER TO EMELIA MACBEAN

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 13, 1931

DEAR MADAM,

I have your letter for which I thank you. You are giving me credit of which I am wholly undeserving. You are thinking of another Mr. Gandhi[1] my name-sake but in no way related to me. He and I were however friends and lived together for some time. You will be sorry to hear that he died many years ago, leaving an only son. It was he who visited America and made many friends. I have never had the privilege of visiting your continent.

Yours sincerely,

Miss EMELIA MACBEAN
C/O MRS. MACBEAN
PRAIRIE AVENUE
CHICAGO (U.S.A.)

From a photostat : S.N. 17272

447. LETTER TO SURENDRA SINGH

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 13, 1931

DEAR SARDAR SURENDRA SINGH,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I am doing all I can and in the manner I know to spread the gospel of love all round but it makes very slow progress in the midst of growing hate and distrust between Hindus and Mussalmans. As to your solution of the communal question my observation is that the parties concerned want a solution for all the provinces or none at all. I agree with you that it would be a great advance if some provinces at least found out their own solution.

Yours sincerely,

SARDAR SURENDRA SINGH
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
PUNJAB GOVERNMENT
SIMLA EAST

From a photostat : S.N. 17273

[1] Virchand Gandhi

448. LETTER TO SECRETARY, CENTRAL SIKH LEAGUE, AMRITSAR

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 13, 1931

THE SECRETARY
CENTRAL SIKH LEAGUE
AMRITSAR

DEAR SIR,

I have your letter forwarded to me in my capacity as editor of *Young India*. So far as the recommendations about the flag are concerned I would advise you to send them to the Secretary of the Flag Committee appointed by the Working Committee of the Congress. The convener and the Secretary of the Flag Committee is Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Masulipatam, S. India.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm : S.N. 17274

449. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

BORSAD,
June 13, 1931

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

I forgot and I had not the time to talk to you about the local quarrels in Delhi. A letter from Mrs. Asaf Ali reminds me that the quarrels are not yet over and that they have extended to the ladies also.[1] Can you not put these quarrels down?

I hope you found your brother better. I wonder what Dr. Rehman was able to do.

DR. M. A. ANSARI
1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI

From a photostat : S.N. 17275

[1] Mrs. Asaf Ali had written : "Members of the Delhi Mahila Seva Dal are being vilified by Congressmen. I resign and retire as the atmosphere is too dirty for any self-respecting woman to continue to work."

450. LETTER TO SHAMLAL

BORSAD,
June 13, 1931

DEAR LALA SHAMLAL,

I have your letter.[1] I am glad you have written to me, and I want you to keep me informed of the doings in Rohtak. But I shall not be able to help you at this stage. The persecution will have to be too glaring to enable me to bring it under the Truce terms but where it is subtle as it appears to be in Rohtak, you must be resourceful enough to combat it. Of course you are entitled to take the fullest advantage of ability to put up a defence in lawcourts.

Yours sincerely,

LALA SHAMLAL
ADVOCATE
9 DAYAL SINGH BUILDINGS
UPPER MALL, LAHORE

From a microfilm : S.N. 17276

451. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

BORSAD,
June 13, 1931

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I have your letter[2] for which I thank you.Your poetic description of Shillong makes me envy you.

You must have seen from the papers what has been done about the unfortunate quarrels in Bengal. You may depend upon my doing everything possible to assist in ridding the Bengal atmosphere of

[1] It stated : ". . . In each police station there is one Congress worker. We have enrolled about 2,500 members and established 125 Congress Committees in the district. This has upset the authorities and repression has been started in the district. Our treasurer, who . . . comparatively harmless, . . . was not even imprisoned in Civil Disobedience days, is now being prosecuted. . . . Two other workers have been arrested. . . . Authorities want to stop the normal activities of the Congress. In the Rohtak District the section takes special care that violent speeches are not made, but Rohtak alone has been selected for repression because there is organized Congress work in the district."

[2] Which endorsed Gandhiji's proposal to refer the Bengal quarrels to arbitration

poison.

When you see them please remember me to Basanti Devi, Mona, Baby and Sujata. Tell them I often think of them though I never write to them.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY
SHILLONG

From a microfilm : S.N. 17277

452. LETTER TO DR. B. S. MOONJE

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 13, 1931

DEAR DR. MOONJE,

I thank you for your letter of 6th June. Even if I succeed in going to London, at present I have no intention of taking experts with me. The scope of my work will be so limited as not to require much expert advice.

Yours sincerely,

DR. B. S. MOONJE
FIRGROVE
SIMLA

From a photostat : S.N. 17278

453. LETTER TO BHUPENDRA NARAYAN SEN

BORSAD,
June 13, 1931

MY DEAR BHUPEN,

I have your letter. I am glad you have written to me so frankly and freely. It is difficult for me to find the assistance that you need. I thought you had attached yourself to the Abhoy Ashram. In any case I would advice you to see Jamnalalji when he comes there which he expects to do next month.

You must make up for the lost weight. 30 lb. is a big drop.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. BHUPENDRA NARAYAN SEN
P.O. BARADOUGOLE
DT. HOOGHLY (BENGAL)

From a microfilm : S.N. 17279

454. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

BORSAD,
June 13, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

You must have seen from the papers that Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan has been with me for some time. During the few moments that I could spare for him from day to day, I carried on my conversations with him and he has left on me the impression that he is a truthful and out and out believer in non-violence. He has no connection with the Amanullah movement. His work is solely concentrated upon the Khudai Khidmatgar movement. This movement consists in enlisting men for service. The following pledge is administered to them: "I shall be truthful, I shall be chaste, I shall be non-violent and not quarrel with my neighbours. I shall not covet my neighbours' property. I shall be prepared to suffer even unto death for the freedom of the country." Those who take the pledge and enlist themselves as Khudai Khidmatgars are expected to attend a weekly roll call in their respective villages. He is most emphatic in his declar-ation that there has been on the part of himself and his followers no breach of the Settlement and he says that he has everywhere preached to the people the necessity for carrying out its terms in so far as they are applicable

to the people. But he says there are several breaches of the Settlement on the part of the officials and he relates the following :

(a) Many civil disobedience prisoners are not yet discharged in the Frontier Province including the Agency areas.

(b) He says that the people are being molested on the slightest pretext. The soldiers as they pass the villagers' houses cry "Islam Murdabad", "Gandhi Murdabad", "Ghaffar Khan Murdabad", and he adds that he has prohibited among his followers all objectionable cries.

Khan Saheb admits that he did not visit the Commissioner and he says he refrained because he saw no change in the attitude of local officials and if he went, he was afraid of his being misrepresented. He is quite prepared to see you or His Excellency the Viceroy provided I accompany him. I do feel that you should make his acquaintance, and if you think it worth while I shall gladly visit Simla solely for the purpose of introducing him to you. I think that the Settlement presumes mutual trust and it will therefore perhaps be wise on the part of the Government to know Khan Saheb personally and then test his assurances. Pending reply to this letter I have detained Khan Saheb. As he has been long enough with me and as I do not want to detain him longer than is absolutely necessary, I would ask you please to send me a telegraphic reply. I should add that Khan Saheb is most insistent on my visiting the Frontier Province and seeing things for myself, making the acquaintance of the numerous Khudai Khidmatgars and studying his activity. I do feel that there should be no objection now to my visiting the Frontier Province.[1]

Yours sincerely,

H. W. EMERSON, ESQ.
SIMLA

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Emerson replied on July 6 that such a "visit would be likely to cause considerable excitement and to add to the difficulties of the local administration . . ." *Vide* also footnote to "Letter to H. W. Emerson", 17-6-1931.

455. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

BORSAD,
June 14, 1931

DEAR AMTUL,

Your letter. You must not brood over your weakness or the fact that you have to receive service from the Ashram. Everyone knows that you are eager to serve. If you will have patience God will give you the necessary strength for service. You must not worry.

Yours,
BAPU

[PS.]

Let Gangabehn treat you.

From a photostat : G.N. 241

456. LETTER TO M. I. DAVID

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 14, 1931

DEAR MR. DAVID,

I have now thought out a formula and here it is :

To provide a common platform for those Europeans and Indians who stand for the speedy creation of a system of Government which will enable India to take her rightful place among the free nations of the world.

The phrase "among the free nations of the world" takes the place of "as a fellow member of the British Commonwealth of free nations" in the original. You will see that this formula does not exclude British connection in the shape of equal partnership at will. Nor does it necessarily include it. I do not say much of the other two formulae.

Yours sincerely,

M. I. DAVID, ESQ.
4 QUEENS ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat : S.N. 17280

457. LETTER TO HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 14, 1931

MY DEAR MAHTAB BABU,

I have your letter[1] for which there was no occasion for apology. You have an ambitious programme. But with faith and application there is no reason why you should not go through it.

I am glad that Matibas and Pur Bai are with you. It is a good thing to start an institution with little or nothing. Faith is the greatest asset. I need not worry about reading your budget as Jamnalalji fully represents my views and his judgment in such matters is correct and helpful.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB
GANDHI KARMA MANDIR
BALASORE (ORISSA)

From a microfilm : S.N. 17281

458. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

BORSAD,
June 14, 1931

MY DEAR MATHEW,

How is it you funked it again. I had fully expected you at Bardoli. You could have passed a clear week with me. I do not mind your not coming if you are in love with your work. Give me an idea of your day's work.

SYT. MATHEW
THE ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a microfilm : S.N. 17282

[1] The addressee had said that the rules of the Gandhi Karma Mandir of Balasore were rather hard, and had submitted simplified rules.

459. LETTER TO M. I. DAVID

BORSAD,
June 14, 1931

DEAR MR. DAVID,

I dictated a letter last night. Mahadev had handed me another letter from you of 11th instant in which you ask me whether I approve of the suggestion contained in the letter in connection with the proposed non-official conciliation committee to be formed under the auspices of the Mayor of Bombay. I would like to make one suggestion. It would be bet-ter not to have a rigid rule fixing a proportion between the numbers of Indians and Europeans.[1] It would be better to adopt the natural method. It may be you will have more earnest Europeans than Indians to work on the Committee. In that event I should not hesitate to take more and *vice versa*.

Yours sincerely,

M. I. DAVID, ESQ.
4 QUEENS ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat : S.N. 17283

[1] The addressee had suggested that the conciliation committee "should consist of an equal number of Indians and Europeans".

460. LETTER TO JOHN KYTE COLLETT

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 14, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter enclosing some Children's League cards and medals. I am not in touch with the Salvation Army nor do I know anything of the Army's work amongst children. My work lies in a wholly different direction. You were therefore evidently misinformed if you thought that I was working in connection with the Salvation Army. I am therefore asking the Salvation Army people whether they would take these medals and cards from me. If they do not, you will please tell me what to do with the medals.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN KYTE COLLETT, ESQ.
PRESIDENT
THE CHILDREN'S LEAGUE OF PEACE AND GOODWILL
"SUNRISE", PENARTH

From a photostat : S.N. 17284

461. LETTER TO SALVATION ARMY, BOMBAY

BORSAD,
June 14, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have a letter from Mr. John Collett which I enclose herewith. I send you also a copy of my letter to Mr. Collett.[1] Will you please tell me whether you will care to receive the cards and the medals for the use mentioned in the letter?

Yours sincerely,

Encls. 2

THE OFFICER COMMANDING
THE BOMBAY BRANCH
SALVATION ARMY, BOMBAY

From a photostat : S.N. 17285

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

462. LETTER TO MRS. C. A. HATE

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 14, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Some time when I am in Bombay you should try to see me. It is difficult to advise you in the matter of food just now. It is necessary to see you and cross-question you. Will you not see some naturopath in Bombay? Mr. Khambhatta of Hornby Road knows one and he has benefited by his treatment. His full address is Bairam Khambhatta, 275 Hornby Road, Fort Bombay.

It is difficult to say how many hours' sleep a particular individual requires, but I can safely say for you that you should take as much sleep as you comfortably can. And you should take daily walks in the morning and in the evening. Once only is not enough. If you have the strength, you should take really three or four hours' walk. You may divide it, if you like, in two or three periods.

You ask me what should be one's ideal in life. All the sages in the world have said—self-realization.

The rumour about the burning of my foot was quite wrong. It would have been more correct if the report had said I had very narrowly[1] escaped burning my foot.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. C. A. HATE
INDU BHUVAN
343 THAKURDWAR, BOMBAY

From a photostat : S.N. 17286

[1] The source has "nearly".

463. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

BORSAD,
June 14, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

Your letter enclosing an unsigned opinion of the Legislative Department on the meaning of the word "return" in the Settlement came upon me as a bomb shell.[1] I was wholly unprepared for such an opinion. I had flattered myself with the belief that my knowledge of law had not become absolutely rusty. But the opinion of your legal department shook what little confidence I had yet in my legal knowledge. I therefore hastened to refer the matter to the best counsel available in Bombay at the present moment. I am sending you a copy of their opinion.[2] The first two signatories are ex-Advocates-General of Bombay and they are both today, as is also the third, distinguished practising lawyers. For the moment therefore my confidence is restored, but that can be of no avail to you. I can quite understand your not accepting the opinion of Bombay lawyers however eminent they may be, in the teeth of opinion from your legal department however contrary to common sense. I, therefore, suggest what I have suggested of the Government of Bombay. As the matter involved is one of principle for the Management of the Navajivan Press, I would repeat the suggestion I have made to the Government of Bombay that the Chief Justice of Bombay should be appointed sole arbitrator in the matter. The Managing Board is naturally anxious to end this controversy and also to avoid a continuing loss that the deprivation of the press causes to them. I hope therefore that the matter will be finished one way or the other without delay.

This impasse brings to me a matter of general importance. I am having, as I imagine, more trouble than I have told you from the Bombay Government in connection with the matters arising out of the Settlement. And there is trouble growing in the Madras Presidency over liquor picketing. Here is an extract from Syt. Rajagopalachari whose instructions on this very point you had seen and which you so admired that you asked me to congratulate him :

[1] The opinion was that the phrase "will be returned" would mean "possession will be restored" and that the Gandhi-Irwin Pact was silent on the question of the place of delivery.

[2] *Vide* "Opinion", 13-6-1931

I had hitherto refrained from worrying you. The Government here are beginning to feel that peaceful picketing is not so harmless as they had imagined. They have discovered that it does stop drinking most effectively and as a result the revenue is threatened. They may hold renters to their contracts this year, but what about the next auction? They see that without any physical obstruction or coercion of any kind, picketing does keep people away from the shops.

The renters too espected that like last year the congress activities would soon be interfered with by the police and so they did not themselves do anything at first to interfere with the volunteers. But now they realize that the Truce has put an end to the old order to things. They are consequently in a fright. They have begun to make strong representations to Government demanding either police interference or writing off of dues. Both Government officials and renters are thus opening their eyes to the reality of the moral power of picketing and the implications of the Truce. Both Government officials and renters have, therefore, it seems, resolved on new tactics. There is almost by concerted action a number of cases cropping up everywhere of rowdyism to intimidate volunteers. Besides rowdyism, which might be expected, the renters whether instigated or encouraged by officials or not, I cannot yet say, are bringing up false charges through private complaints in order to get fines and imprisonments imposed on the workers and sympathizers and worry and tire out the Congress organizations. And magistrates, too, imagine that they should support the liquor-shop men. Further, even where they know the cases are false, they dare not expose themselves to the suspicion that they favour the Congress and do not support the revenue.

Local police authorities have begun to harass and interfere with the picketing. Finding that there is no sort of coercion or disturbance of the peace, and that they cannot legitimately object to the picketing, they are trying other ways. They are making demonstrations of police force, pushing the volunteers away to impossible distances from the shops and from each other and demanding the observance of conditions that reduce picketing to an ineffectual farce. Local police authorities are permitted to terrorize town and village folk and proclaim that any assistance or harbouring of Congress volunteers would amount to abetment of offenders. In fact, the 1930 atmosphere is being sought to be brought about.

I have conscientiously tried to put the best construction on all that Government officials are doing. But I am afraid I must confess failure. If you have time, please go through the enclosures.

You might be unable to interfere with the working or not working of the Settlement by local governments. Or your interference may not go far enough according to my view of the Settlement. Time has therefore perhaps arrived for the appointment of a permanent Board of Arbitration to decide question of interpretation of the Settlement and as to the full carrying out of the terms by the one party or the other. I would therefore like you to consider this suggestion.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

H. W. EMERSON, ESQ.

SIMLA

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

464. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

June 14, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. I understand your difficulties. God will protect you. Don't worry, and stay on there. You may come when you can. I have had to come to Borsad for some days. But you should write to me at the Bardoli address, since I shall probably have returned there by the time I get your reply.

It is not at all certain whether I shall be going to England. Even if it is decided that I should go, I shall not have to leave before August 15.

What is your present diet?

How is Father's health now?

Rajendra Babu was ill for some time. He is better now. He will be here in a few days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3414

465. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

BORSAD,
June 14, 1931

Interviewed by a representative of the Associated Press, Mahatma Gandhi said he aarrived at Borsad principally to console the people of Ras who were perturbed over the continuous destruction of their hedges and stray assaults committed by Dharalas. They suspected that Dharalas had been emboldened by the continuance as the village headman of a Dharala who is an exconvict. Gandhiji had already asked for the cancellation of his appointment on two grounds in terms of the Delhi Settlement : one was that he was undesirable and the other was that his appointment was not permanent in the terms of the Delhi Settlement. He had also asked for protection of the non-Dharala population of Ras village. Both matters were engaging the attention of the Collector of Kaira District. There were other matters, too, which required his personal attention. He thought he need not go into these matters at present. Asked how long he would stay at Borsad, Gandhiji said as soon as he had finished his work he had instructions from Sardar Vallabhbhai to go to Bardoli which he would do.

In reply to a question whether it was true, as stated by his son Mr. Devdas at last night's public meeting, that he intended shortly to visit the Frontier Province, Gandhiji said it was perfectly true that Abdul Ghaffar Khan was pressing him to visit that province. He was equally anxious to go there and see for himself how far the spirit of non-violence had prevailed among tribes inhabiting that province, but whilst the Truce lasted he did not want to do anything, as far as possible, that might embarrass Government. He was therefore in correspondence with Government on the matter. Asked how long Abdul Ghaffar Khan would stay with him, Gandhiji said he would stay pending the results of the correspondence between him and Government.

The Bombay Chronicle, 15-6-1931

466. CABLE TO H. S. L. POLAK

BORSAD,
June 15, 1931

KALOPH
LONDON

WILL GLADLY SEE LANCASHIRE FRIENDS IMMEDIATELY ON ARRIVAL IF I COME AT ALL. MALAVIYAJI WILL COME IF INVITED.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 17291

467. TELEGRAM TO "THE STATESMAN", DELHI

BORSAD,
June 15, 1931

STATESMAN
DELHI

YOUR WIRE. INDIAN AMBULANCE CORPS REACHED AFTER DUSK AND JUST AFTER BATTLE COLENSO IN WHICH LIEUTENANT ROBERTS WAS KILLED. BEFORE WE HAD PITCHED TENTS I RECEIVED ORDERS FROM COL. GALLWEY REMOVE CORPSE DECEASED SOLDIER AND I SENT SEVEN MEN. I RECEIVED PERSONAL THANKS FOR PROMPT ATTENTION ORDERS. THOUGH CORPS WAS TOLD THAT IT COULD ONLY SERVE OUT-SIDE ZONE OF FIRE AFTER REVERSE AT SPION KOP GENERAL BULLER NEEDED OUR ASSISTANCE WITHIN ZONE OF FIRE. LED BY MAJOR BAPTY WE REMOVED SIXTY WOUNDED ON STRE-TCHERS FROM DANGER ZONE. THESE INCLUDED GENERAL WOOD-GATE AND MAJOR SCOTT MONCRIEF AND OTHER OFFICERS. NEXT TIME WE WERE WITHIN FIRE ZONE WAS AT VAAL KRANTZ. FOR THIS AND OTHER WORK I WAS MENTIONED IN GENERAL BULLER'S DISPATCH. CLEARLY COL. GALLWEY'S MEMORY BETRAYS HIM.[1]

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 17292

[1]*Vide* "Interview to Associated Press", 15-6-1931. Also "Speech at Calcutta Meeting", 27-1-1902; and "An Autobiography"

468. LETTER TO MOHANLAL SAKSENA

BORSAD,
June 15, 1931

MY DEAR MOHANLAL,

I got your letter only today. I could not therefore discuss it with Jawaharlal.

In spite of what the D.C. says, I hold that my message[1] to the *kisans* is no breach of the Settlement.

It was never the intention that each *kisan's* money should be separately deposited. If such was the suggestion, I have forgotten all about it. The object is that the *kisans* should not use up the money that might have been saved for payment of rent.

I did receive Balkrishna's wire. You will have noticed the correction[2]. It was a silly slip.

Just at present it is difficult for me to leave Gujarat. The things are looking none too bright here. On your side itis all well, so long as you hold the *kisans* in check. But Jawaharlal's presence must now ease the situation. He has no difficulty in dealing with the *kisans* and restraining them.

In any event please keep me informed of the happenings there.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SYT. MOHANLAL SAKSENA
34 AMINUDDAULA PARK
LUCKNOW

From a photostat : S.N. 17289

[1] *Vide* "To the Kisans of the U. P.", 23-5-1931
[2] *Vide* "A correction", 11-6-1931

469. LETTER TO W. E. LUCAS

BORSAD,
Via ANAND,
June 15, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter and would gladly meet you all on 24th instant unless I am summoned to Simla.[1] I shall bring with me Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and one or two other friends. As I take no food at night I would like you to excuse me from joining you at the dinner table but the other friends may join you if you like. I would follow at the time to be named by you.

I appreciate your frankness. Of course I don't expect you to surrender your independence or coincide with my views. These contacts are desirable and valuable for understanding one another and removing misunderstandings.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

W. E. LUCAS, ESQ.
AGENT'S OFFICE, B.B. & C.I. RY. CO.
BOMBAY

From a photostat : S.N. 17290

[1] For Gandhiji's note on the meeting of the "Dinner Club", *vide* "Young Europeans", 2-7-1931.

470. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BORSAD,
Silence Day, June 15, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. Shankarbhai has gone to Bombay. I have written to him and told him to bring Kamala[1] to me.

If the building in which I used to occupy a room is not being used, use it now, including Ba's room. The number of inmates has gone up very much, and will further increase a little. If you use the building, it will remain in good condition. I have discussed this with Ba. She has no objection. In fact she liked the suggestion. We are not likely in the immediate future to come and stay there. Why, then, should we let such a big building remain unoccupied?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I

471. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

BORSAD,
June 15, 1931

Interviewed by a representative of the Associated Press regarding the controversy in respect of his services in the Boer War, Mahatma Gandhi said :

The Indian Ambulance Corps numbering over 1,100 reached Chieveley camp near Colenso after dusk just after the battle in which Lieutenant Roberts was killed. I received orders from Col. Gallwey that the deceased Lieutenant's body had to be immediately removed. We had then hardly pitched the tents.

I sent seven men, not "coolies", but educated men, who returned late at night and I received special thanks from Col. Gallwey for the prompt attention and was next day invited through Dr. Booth to meet him in his tent.

It is quite true that on this occasion there was no question of firing line, hostilities having been suspended for the collection of the wounded. It is also true that despite our desire to work under fire, we were told that we would not be allowed to do so but after the reversea at Spion Kop, the situation became grave.

[1] Shankarlal's daughter

General Buller came to my tent and said we would enter the firing zone in order to remove nearly 60 wounded from the foot of Spion Kop. My companions and I were delighted to have this privilege and led by Major Bapty, we crossed the pontoon, entered firing zone and removed the wounded including General Woodgate, Major Scott Moncrief and other officers and carried them on stretchers 25 miles.

We were again within the firing zone at Vaal Kantz soon after Kop. For these and general services I was mentioned in General Buller's dispatch and with over 20 leaders was recipient of a War Medal.

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-6-1931

472. LETTER TO C. RAJGOPALACHARI

BORSAD,
June 16, 1931

I have your long letter. You will see the use I have made of it from the copy herewith enclosed.[1]

I feel that all the questions now outstanding have got to be referred to some board of arbitration and, if the Central Government want to play the game, as I think they do, they would accept my suggestion for the appointment of such a board. There may be some modification as to the board, but the principle, I think, they will accept. Do you suggest anything more to be done in this direction? Till the final answer is received, you should not embark upon any heroic measure. But I agree with you that if we do not get anything whatsoever, we have a perfect right to take such measures as we like including local and specific civil disobedience in so far as it may be necessary to resist lawlessness on the part of unscrupulous officials.

I want you to study carefully the article[2] I have written for the forthcoming issue of *Young India* on the Working Committee resolution. I do not like it. At the same time from its own stand-point the Working Committee's position could be justified. The alternativ I had suggested was much better. Some of those who voted with the majority, I think, even saw the point. But you will critically read the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H. W. Emerson", 14-6-1931
[2] *Vide* "substance not Shadow", 18-6-1931.

article and tell me what you think of my alternative, because that alternative has to be enforced in the event of failure of our demand at the Conference.

Why do you not see the Governor yourself and at any rate discuss the liquor picketing?

SYT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

GANDHI ASHRAM

TIRUCHENGODU (S. INDIA)

From a photostat : S.N. 17293

473. TELEGRAM TO SITLA SAHAY

BORSAD,

June 17, 1931

SITLA SAHAY[1]

CARE CONGRESS

RAE BARELI

YOUR LETTER. WIRED YOU FROM BARDOLI.[2] CONSULT JAWAHAR

GANDHI

From a microfilm : S.N. 17306

474. LETTER TO DUNI CHAND

BORSAD,

June 17, 1931

DEAR LALA DUNI CHAND,

I now have your letter about Suraj Bhan. At Simla I understood that Lala Suraj Bhan had collected the money himself and that for doing village work. But if he is of unsound mind, naturally you will not give him any assistance. But I do feel that all the expenses incurred up to now should be paid and then he should be clearly told that he cannot get the money as this is not his property as it was

[1] A khadi worker of U.P.

[2] The wire is not traceable. But in his letter of even date to the addressee Gandhiji's personal secretary said it was as follows : "where cultivators accept our conditions and are prepared to pay the rent but the zamindars are not prepared to accept it, the amount should be received by us and deposited into the bank." (S. N. 17307)

neither collected by him alone nor for the purpose he claims. The whole of this is a sad business. Lala Suraj Bhan is your trusted man. I therefore feel the greatest hesitation in writing to you about him.

I am glad you have sent his wife to Jullundur. I do hope she will be happy there.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

LALA DUNI CHAND
ADVOCATE, AMBALA

From a photostat : G.N. 5589

475. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

BORSAD,
June 17, 1931

MY DEAR ANAND,

I hear all about you regularly through Mirabehn and occasionally through Jairamdas. I know that you are refraining from writing to me purely out of pity for me.

I should not consider father's letter disappointing. I think that he took up the correct position. But Jairamdas tells me that later he modified his view. I think that it is a sound rule for people who are well-to-do not to go to their friends living in public institutions except when they are ready to make a grant to those institutions at least equal to what their visit to such institutions might have cost them. It need not be done offensively and can be done gracefully. If father had simply come or sent your mother or your sister and asked them quietly to slip into your pocket a hundred-rupee note, it would have been still more correct.

You must not be or feel feeble either in body or in mind. Nothing has to be done beyond your resolute to feel weak. There was no foot-burn to the healed. The whole thing was a creation of the reporters' imagination.

It is good for Vidya[1] to continue the diet of milk and fruit and even fruit alone if milk disagrees, till she has a real hunger and appetite for other food. But if she can go to Bombay for treatment under a nature-cure expert, it would, of course, be better.

[1] Addressee's wife

You must not consider yourself ill-starred. Think of the many millions who have not the opportunities that God has provided for you. It is the height of ingratitude to the Maker for anyone to consider himself ill-starred. You must shake yourself free of this pessimism that overtakes you so often.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. ANAND T. HINGORANI
C/O THE "HINDOO"
HYDERABAD SIND

From a photostat : S.N. 17300

476. LETTER TO A. Y. C. WULFSE

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 17, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

I return the ring herewith.

I hope that you will succeed in your desire to create a work of art that will benefit mankind.

I hope also that you have regained your health.

I got the two portraits for which too I thank you.

Yours sincerely,

A. Y. C. WULFSE, ESQ.
AMSTERDAM, HOLLAND

From a photostat : S.N. 17301

477. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

BORSAD,
June 17, 1931

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Sitla Sahay writes to me about impending repression in Raw Bareli through the taluqdars.

You must have seen the enclosed notice about the flag on the University building. I am receiving complaints from other places also. As soon as you have the time I would like you to go into all these things and then tell me what you think about it all. If he matters can wait till we meet at Surat for the Working Committee we must discuss them then or you should write to me earlier.

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
ANAND BHAWAN, ALLAHABAD

From a photostat : S.N. 17303

478. LETTER TO HARDEVI SHARMA

BORSAD,
June 17, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 15th instant. As to your first question I think you are entitled to and it is your duty to help the *kisans* in all legitimate ways open to men pledged to non-violence. What those particular ways should be can only be determined from time to time as circumstances arise. The general instructions you can glean from the pages of *Navajivan* and *Young India*. But I would advise you to confer with the Provincial Congress Committee members and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who is now in Allahabad.

With reference to your second question if Thakur Malkhan Singh was prosecuted he can be and should be defended.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. HARDEVI SHARMA
HATHRAS (U.P.)

From a microfilm : S.N. 17304

479. LETTER TO K. F. NARIMAN

BORSAD,
June 17, 1931

MY DEAR NARIMAN,

I have your letters about the Pathan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his son. I shall begin working on them as soon as possible.

With reference to the National Flag Film I would like you to go into the regulations governing the censorship of films and enter first into correspondence with the Board of Censors and find their reason. Don't you think that this is the first step to take?

Yours sincerely,

SYT. K. F. NARIMAN
CONGRESS HOUSE, BOMBAY

From a photostat : S.N. 17305

480. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

BORSAD,
June 17, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I thank you for your telegram[1] about Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan. I have shown it to him.

I expect to hear from you in due course with reference to my desire to visit the Frontier Province.

Yours sincerely,

H. W. EMERSON, ESQ.
SIMLA

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] This read : "Your letter of June thirteenth. Government of India appreciate the value of personal contact but consider suitable course is for Abdul Ghaffar Khan to get in touch with the Chief Commissioner of North West Frontier Province rather than to visit Simla."

481. SUBSTANCE NOT SHADOW

The public are entitled to know why after having made repeated declarations to the contrary the Working Committee had passed the resolution[1] requiring me (other conditions being favourable) to attend the Round Table Conference, if thereto required, for the presentation of the Congress position.

Ordinarily a member of the Working Committee could not tell the public of discussions behind its resolutions, their defeated amendments or counter resolutions. But in the present case the Working Committee has made an exception and authorized me to take the public into confidence in order that I might clear my position and also explain that of the Working Committee.

It was my essentially democratic nature which, in spite of my very strong objection, impelled me to submit to the resolution. One may not make a principle of every objection and, if not carried, block the way by threatening to retire from an institution or by refusing submission to the opinion of the majority. I therefore fought the Working Committee, reminded it of my repeated public and private declarations and moved informally a resolution myself which I thought was far more consistent and desirable in the national interest. But I could not carry with me the majority who thought that not to attend the Conference by reason of the failure of a communal settlement would be to play into the hands of the enemy and expose the Committee to unnecessary misrepresentation.

Though there is much to be said for the majority view, I regard mine to be safer and more truly in consonance with the Lahore resolution on the communal question.[2] There was, in my opinion, sound reasoning behind my declaration that I should not attend the Round Table Conference if there was no agreed settlement of the communal question. Absence of it would mean

[1] On June 9. It read: "The Working Committee hope that the efforts that are now being made to secure honourable and satisfactory settlement of the communal problem will meet with success. The Committee is of opinion that, even should these efforts unfortunately fail, in order to avoid any possibility of the Congress attitude being misunderstood in any shape or form, other conditions being favourable, Mahatma Gandhi should represent the Congress at the R.T.C., if thereto required, for the presentation of the Congress position."

[2] *Vide* "Speech at subjects Committee, A.I.C.C.- III", 1-1-1930

absence of unity and absence of unity would deprive the national demand of the strength required to secure its acceptance.

My proposition therefore before the Working Committee was that agreed settlement failing, the Congress should give up the hope of winning a swaraj constitution by the way of the present Round Table Conference and should wait till all the communities were satisfied to adopt a purely national solution. The Congress could meanwhile further consolidate its position and work with greater concentration for the masses including all the communities and thus make the toilers of all the other communities regard the Congress as theirs as the Hindus do.

This does not mean giving up the struggle for freedom.

It all depends upon what we mean by and want through *purna* swaraj. If we mean an awakening among the masses, a knowledge among them of their true interest and ability to serve that interest against the whole world and if through *purna* swaraj we want harmony, freedom from aggression from within or without and a progressive improvement in the economic condition of the masses, we can gain our end without political power and by directly acting upon the powers that be. One form of direct action is adult suffrage. The second and more potent form is satyagraha. It can easily be shown that whatever is needful and can be gained by political power can perhaps be more quickly and more certainly gained by satyagraha. If such is the case and if, in spite of all, [the] attempt to secure an honourable settlement of the communal question fails it is obvious that we should give up the attempt to secure a swaraj constitution at the present moment. It is better and quicker to wait till the Congress has become equally popular with the other communities than to attempt to force swaraj through highly artificial surroundings. If the Congress means what it says, it cannot be long gaining the adherence of all the other communities. Meanwhile the Congress must fulfil its mission of representing the starving millions by fighting for their relief, if it cannot do so by gaining power then by gaining that relief through the government existing at the moment. Whilst discussing this probability with English friends, I was reminded that this position was hardly fair, not to take the power to make the reforms and to force the hands of those who cannot carry on the administration if they grant the reforms, in their opinion only so called. I pointed out the fallacy underlying the rebuke. The Congress is ever ready to take the power

if it is given to it but the Congress is too weak to seize power from unwilling hands in the artificial surroundings of the Round Table Conference and that in the absence of real unity between the chief actors, the communities.

The Congress wants the substance not the shadow. It can therefore wait for the shadow of power, it cannot wait for the substance of freedom which the dumb millions so badly need and can understand.

I have placed before the public the main part of the argument I placed before the Working Committee. It failed to convince its majority. It may fail therefore to convince too the majority of the public. Nevertheless my position will probably be the same as now if and when the Conference fails to meet the Congress position.

But having accepted the resolution of the Working Com-mittee, I shall faithfully carry it out and work at the Conference with all possible zeal, if I am destined to attend it. I should not reject real power if it is real. I should put my whole soul into working for it. But I have wisdom and patience enough to wait for it if necessary and know that such waiting may be a process of hastening.

Young India, 18-6-1931

482. NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES

The head master of Tilak Vidyalaya thus rebukes me:[1]

I gladly publish the letter if only to advertise the very good work of the national school of Nagpur. As for the Tilak University, I am not sure that I omitted to mention it on the occasion referred to. My speech was not previously prepared. It had to be delivered extempore. Whatever names I took were merely illustrative and not exhaustive. I can certainly recall many national institutions which rendered great service during the struggle. My object was to show the very marked contrast between the Government institutions and the national ones and to show that every anna spent in the latter was an anna spent for swaraj. I showed too that in the nature of things it

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. It complained of Gandhiji's failure, in his speech at Gujarat Vidyapith *(vide* "Speech at Convocation, gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad", 11-4-1931), to mention the Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapith of Poona and the Tilak Vidyalaya of Nagpur and their contribution to civil disobedience movement; *vide* also, "Letter to M. G. Datar", 26-5-1931

could not be otherwise. However badly managed the Congress may be, it is still that and that alone which can usher in swaraj and not a Government department. It is once more a question of swadeshi *v. videshi*[1]. The English paraphrase is: 'a good Government is no substitute for self-Government'.

Young India, 18-6-1931

483. COLOUR BAR IN EDINBURGH

The Honorary Secretary, Edinburgh Indian Association, writes:

> It will be recalled that in 1927 all the cafes, restaurants and dance halls, imposed the colour ban, but after representations being made to various authorities a compromise was reached and soon after the ban was raised, again this year two cafes in Edinburgh have renewed the colour ban. These two cafes (Strand Cafe and Cafeteria) refuse to admit coloured students as a whole without any reasons. Edinburgh Indian Association approached the Lord Provost of Edinburgh and the Students' Representative Council of Edinburgh University, but so far no action has been taken by them and the colour ban still continues.

The Hon. Secretary does not say why the two Cafes have restored the ban or why it was originally introduced. Denial of the use of refreshment rooms in the West is an inconvenience of which we in India can have no adequate conception. Intense public agitation is the only way to deal with this prejudice. The Edinburgh Indian Association will do well to supply the public with full facts.

Young India, 18-6-1931

[1] Foreign

484. HINDI IN THE SOUTH

It was a good sign that at the same time as the Tamil Nadu Conference a Hindi Prachar Conference too was held. The people of the Southern Presidency are under promise to send for the next year Congress delegates who would speak and understand Hindi. If we were not living in artificial conditions, the people living in the South will not consider the learning of Hindi as a strain on them, much less a superfluity. It is surely more necessary for them to learn Hindi than for the Hindi-speaking population to learn the Southern languages. There are two speaking and understanding Hindi against one speaking the Southern languages in all India. There must be for all India a common language of inter-provincial contact in *addition to, not* in the *place of*, the provincial language or languages. It can only be Hindi-Hindustani. Some who altogether dismiss the masses from their minds would regard English not merely as an alternative but the only possible medium. This proposition would be unthinkable but for the hypnotic influence of foreign domination. For the masses of the South who must take an ever-growing part in national affairs, what can be easier—learning Hindi which has many words in common with their languages and which at once gives them access practically to the whole of the North or learn English a wholly foreign tongue spoken only by a select few? The choice really depends upon one's conception of swaraj. If it is to be of and for only the English-knowing Indians, English is undoubtedly the common medium. If it is to be for and of the starving millions, of the illiterate millions, of the illiterate women, of the suppressed untouchables, Hindi is the only possible common language. Those who think like me will therefore welcome the report of the great progress made by Hindi during the past twelve years of the existence of organized propaganda. Here is the record of work during the period:

Number of those who have taken to the study of Hindi	4,00,000
,, ,, ,, acquired a working knowledge of it	2,50,000
,, ,, ,, appeared for our examinations	11,000
,, ,, ,, passed the examinations	10,000
,, readers published by the Sabha in its own press	3,00,000

.,	,,		sold		2,50,000
	Varieties of books published				35
	(All of them have gone through numerous editions, one through 12.)				
	Number of centres at which Hindi has been taught so far				400
,,	,,		working now (total		150
,,	,,	,,	under direct control		25
,,	,,	where examinations were held in Feb. '31			113
,,		teachers trained so far			250
Total funds raised and spent so far				Rs.	2,50,000
,,	,,	,,	from North India	Rs.	1,55,000
,,	,,	,,	from South India	Rs.	95,000

Let us hope that during this year of grace the progress will be still more rapid and that the finance will be found wholly by the South. It will be a test of the desire of the South to learn the national language and to make India one indivisible whole.

Young India, 18-6-1931

485. NOTES

SWARAJ FOR CEYLON

A Ceylon correspondent asks the following strange questions[1]:

I do not know that Ceylon is a bankrupt island or that it is necessarily bankrupt because it does not manufacture all its own cloth or grow all the grains it eats. But assuming that Ceylon is as the correspondent describes, it has[2] all the greater reason for being free. Possibly Ceylon's economic condition is bad, if it is bad, because of its dependence. I cannot conceive of a single occasion when slavery or dependence can be preferable to swaraj or freedom.

So far as India's help is concerned, when India is free, whether she will or no, her freedom will automatically spur Ceylon to

[1] Not reproduced here. The first question was whether an economically dependent country should seek swaraj; and secondly, whether India would help Ceylon in attaining freedom.

[2] The source has "is".

deliverance, if it does not actually bring it. India's freedom must mean more freedom to her neighbours and even other countries in the East as her slavery or dependence means a hindrance to their growth. Disease among neighbours can never be an advantage. And a diseased continent like India must be a perpetual menace to her neighbours. Dependence is perhaps the greatest disease. Mere physical illness is any day preferable to the illness of the soul. The latter brings in its train all kinds of physical afflictions and worse.

Young India, 18-6-1931

486. JAPANESE OR BRITISH?

That from the economic standpoint (and that is the only standpoint important for the millions) boycott of Japanese cloth is much the most important is clear from the following letter[1] from Sjt. H. P. Modi, President, Bombay Mill-owners' Association.

If therefore there is any laxity on the part of boycott workers, they will remember that emphasis on boycott of British cloth would be of no avail whatsoever from the economic viewpoint. Incidentally one can see how British cloth has been hit by Japanese cloth.

Young India, 18-6-1931

487. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

BORSAD,
Before Morning Prayers, June 18, 1931

CHI. KUSUM,

I had not understood your message, but I did understand your letter and felt unhappy. The very fact that there was no letter from you suggested that you were running away from me. Whether or not you should do that depends on you. Be wise and wake up. You can come here any day you wish to.

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had pointed out that the most serious competitor of the Indian textile industry was Japan rather than Great Britain and that competition from Japan was as serious a menace to the Indian industry as it was to Lancashire trade.

We shall be leaving this place on the 23rd. I shall have to go to Bombay for two days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1822

488. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

BORSAD,
June 18, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I thank you for your letter of the 10th inst. enclosing copy of a letter from Messrs Ramjilal & Bros[1]. If the facts stated by them are correct, I quite agree with you that picketing should be suspended. I am therefore writing[2] to the local Congress Committee to investigate the matter, telling them that unless they can satisfactorily prove the relevant allegations made in Messrs Ramjilal's letter are incorrect, picketing should be suspended. I enclose copy of my letter for your information.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. I

H. W. EMERSON, ESQ.
HOME SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SIMLA

A.I.C.C. File No. 387, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Importers and dealers of foreign piece-goods, who had complained of harassment and coercion by Congress pickets

[2] *Vide* the following item.

489. LETTER TO SECRETARY, CONGRESS COMMITTEE, CAWNPORE

BORSAD,
June 18, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I enclose herewith copy of a letter received by the Central Government from Messrs Ramjilal & Bros. If the allegations about picketing are correct, it is a clear case for immediate suspension of picketing. Unless, therefore, you can satisfactorily disprove the allegations made in the 2nd and subsequent paragraphs of the letter, you will, I hope, suspend picketing at once. I would like you to wire[1] to me what action you propose to take.

Yours sincerely

THE SECRETARY
LOCAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE
CAWNPORE
COPY TO MR. EMERSON.

A.I.C.C. File No. 387, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

490. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

June 18, 1931

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

I trust your truthful nature too well to be shocked by anything you say. But your thoughts are cloudy and confused. But we cannot discuss the thing today. There is no hurry. Perhaps the things will be clear because of your search and because of your promise to do what I have advised for the sake of discipline though not from conviction. Often an honest acceptance of discipline has brought conviction. And so may it be with you. You did well in writing to me so frankly.

Let me correct one belief of yours about me. You say, "I know that you are too pure for sex-consciousness yourself." I wish this was a true certificate. I am sorry to have to disillusion you. I am trying to lose that consciousness. But I have not lost it. Loss of that

[1] *Vide* footnote 2, "Letter to R. M. Maxwell", 26-4-1931

consciousness cannot be relative; it must be absolute. I do not know any historical instance. It is difficult, I know, for history to record such instances.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 9631

491. LETTER TO V. K. SADAGOPACHARIAR

BORSAD,
June 18, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I hope that you will vigorously defend the case in the court and take all the legal steps that will be necessary in order to vindicate your position. I am doing all I can at this end but when the allegation is that there is a breach of the Criminal Law, I am helpless. My function comes into operation only when a breach of any part of the Settlement can be proved. In this case therefore, unless picketing, admitted to be peaceful, is prohibited, the Settlement cannot be utilized to obtain relief.[1]

Yours sincerely,

SYT. V. K. SADAGOPACHARIAR
PRESIDENT, TALUK CONGRESS
COMMITTEE
TIRUTTANI (CHITTOOR DT.), S. INDIA

From a microfilm: S.N. 17308

[1] In a letter to C. Rajagopalachari which is not available, Gandhiji advised him about the details of the action to be taken. The latter had placed these before the Governor and hoped that favourable orders would be issued.

492. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

BORSAD,
June 18, 1931

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Shah Mangaldas Harilal Gandhi, Fanaswadi, 2nd Lane, Dadisheth Agiari Lane, Harilal Maneklal Gandhi's Flats. This gentleman is Shah Harilal Maneklal Gandhi's son. One Surajbehn regarded Shri Harilal as her father. He has all her money. His present condition cannot be described as good. Surajbehn tells me that at one time it was very good. I have written to Shri Harilal and told him that it was not at all proper to keep a widow's money in a private firm, and that he should deposit it in the Bank of India and send Surajbehn a receipt in her name. I enclose his reply. It is possible that there is no risk about the money. But I feel worried. Request Shri Mangaldas to see you, or you yourself should call on him, and ask him what the position is. Get all the facts and see if you can persuade him to deposit the money in the Bank. It is to be deposited in Surajbehn's name. Her jewellery is also in their custody. If possible, get that, too, in your possession, or secure the Safe Deposit receipts for it, which are in their possession. You will not immediately require a letter of authority from Surajbehn. But wire to me if you require one and I will send it. In any case arrange to see Mangaldas immediately.

I am going there on the 24th to see those English friends.[1] I shall be accompanied by Vallabhbhai.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2889

[1] *Vide* Vol. "Letter to W. E. Lucas", 15-6-1931; also "Young Europeans", 2-7-1931.

493. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

June 18, 1931

CHI. JAMNADAS,

What I had in mind was that you should get the money from the Vidyapith, but you should get your demand examined and approved by Kakasaheb. Draw up a report and state the case as you understand it, and send it to Kakasaheb saying that you are sending it to him for his serutiny. Are you sure you cannot postpone the plan now that everything is uncertain?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9325. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

494. LETTER TO PRESIDENT, CONGRESS COMMITTEE, TIRUTTANI [1]

[Before *June 19, 1931*][2]

Gandhiji has asked picketers not to disobey the order as that would amount to a breach of the Truce terms on the part of Congress, but he promises to correspond with the Home Secretary, Government of India.

Meanwhile Gandhiji has asked Tiruttani Congressmen to send him a copy of the order and details regarding picketing movement in Tiruttani.

The Bombay Chronicle, 20-6-1931

[1] In reply to his question whether the local Magistrate's order prohibiting picketing of liquor shops should be disobeyed

[2] The report appeared under the date-line "Madras, June 19".

495. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

BORSAD,
June 19, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

Here are copies of letters received by Syts. Morarji Desai and Durlabhji Desai, ex-Deputy Collectors for both of whom the Central Government had advised the Bombay Government to give pension or gratuity in lieu of pension. You will remember that this was arranged because you had suggested to Lord Irwin that it would be embarrassing for Provincial Governments to restore officials of high rank to their original position. I remember your having told me during our conversations in Simla[1] that the Bombay Government had difficulty about giving anything to the two officials concerned. But I was unprepared for the letter according to the enclosed copy. Both these gentlemen had applied not for grace but in terms of the Settlement. May I therefore ask you to advise the Bombay Government to carry out the Settlement in respect of these two officials?

Yours sincerely,

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

496. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

BORSAD,
June 19, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I do not know whether you obtained legal opinion regarding confiscated guns. Complaints are being received from many places that these guns are not being restored. In most of these cases, so far as I can see, the guns were possessed for defending owners and their property against wild beasts. I have several such cases from Karnatak.

Yours sincerely,

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] On May 13, 1931

497. LETTER TO CAPTAIN BARNES

BORSAD,
June 19, 1931

DEAR CAPTAIN BARNES[1],

I thank you for your very full letter. I was sorry to learn that your health had broken down, I hope however that you will be completely restored very soon. Your letter was redirected to me from Sabarmati and so I got it just after Khan Saheb had left me. He was with me quite a few days and for the first time I came in intimate contact with him. My experience of him is that he is a very sober and truthful man believing implicitly in non-violence. Your letter however gives a different picture of him. As he is still within reach I am sending a friend with a copy of your letter for explanation and if there is anything further to tell you I shall write again. Could you please send me a copy of the drama referred to by you with translation or without, if you cannot easily send me a translation.

Yours sincerely,

CAPTAIN BARNES
HAMALA COTTAGE
NATHIAGALI, N.W.F.P.

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

498. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

Private AS AT
SABARMATI,
June 19, 1931

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your two letters, both of them quite like you. Here is my answer to the moral questions you have placed. It is perfectly true that I would have prohibition of foreign cloth by one blow if I could manage it and would not feel that there was the slightest trace of violence in it. At this conclusion I arrived in 1889 and '90 when I was studying in London and keenly following the controversy between

[1] Sub-Divisional Officer for the Charsadda sub-division of Peshawar District in 1930; he wrote to Gandhiji on June 14, 1931 describing Abdul Ghaffar Khan's speeches as "inflammatory".

total prohibitionists and temperance reformers. The former were led by Sir Wilfred Lawson who contended that all public houses could be closed without any compensation being paid to the keepers. The temperance party which was really the party financed by the public-house keepers put up a strong and successful fight for compensation and graduation. If a man is making a living out of wrongdoing he gains no prescriptive right and therefore is entitled to no compensation or consideration when his business is stopped whether by the 'State or by his customers refusing to deal with him. It is irrelevant to consider what would happen to the many labourers who might be engaged unconsciously in helping the wrongdoer. The assumption at the back of this argument is that wrong must be righted at any cost and that the harm that may temporarily seem to result to the wrongdoer and his dependents is only apparent and that in the end he and they are all the better for it. If such was not the case, many a reform would become impossible. Of course it is open to you to say that you will not put foreign-cloth trade on a level with liquor or opium trade. But this is a matter of opinion.

If I was bolstering up the Bombay mills in any shape or form it would undoubtedly be violence. But my conscience is quite clear on that point. I am not only not bolstering up the Indian mills but I am fighting them in many matters. My intervention has resulted in steady improvement of the conditions of labour. If these mills interfered with khaddar I should desire their boycott just as strongly as that of foreign mills.

The remedy for unemployment in England is not thoughtless generosity of India but a complete realization by England of the awfulness of exploitation of people, violently brought under subjection by her, and consequent radical changes in her conception of the standard of life and a return to simplicity. Has generosity, in respect of a man more fortunate than himself, any meaning for the man who is living in a state of chronic starvation?

The South African analogy you have quoted is improper. What you regard as generous action was really necessary action in terms of non-violence. In order to show that my fight was not intended to embarrass the Government or to seize power I was bound in pursuance of non-violence to suspend the struggle[1] in order to show

[1] In 1914, during the European railway workers' strike; *vide* "Interview to "Pretoria News" ", 9-1-1914

that I had no sympathy with the Europeans who were bent on embarrassing the Government to the point of making it so powerless as to enable them to seize the reins themselves. Occasions here for what you would call generosity occurred at the time of the Delhi Settlement[1] and are occurring whilst the Settlement is being worked and it would delight your heart if you knew how every such occasion has been fully availed of. And even with reference to the present unemployment in England, many a generous gesture is possible but none is possible if it means continuance of injury to India or fresh injury. If England ceased to think imperially, if India came to her own and instead of being a dependency of England became a real partner or ally, England could get preferential treatment in hundreds of things, which an awakened India on her road to prosperity would require from the West. If therefore Lancashire cannot keep all its labour going through spinning and weaving mills working for other markets, it should find out some other use for it. Lastly, remember that even if there was no boycott of foreign cloth and open competition Japan would outdistance Lancashire as it is already doing.

I have your cable. Of course if I came to London my movement will be in your hands and I would gladly go to Lancashire as early as you would want me to.

I quite agree with you that your name should remain in the background as much as possible.

What undignified controversy over my part in the Boer War. I had to give the facts to Reuter & *The Statesman*[2].

Love.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 969

[1] Gandhi-Irwin Pact; *vide* "Provisional Settlement", 12-3-1931.

[2] *Vide*, "Telegram to the Statesman, Delhi': 15-6-1931 and "Interview to Associated Press", 15-6-1931

499. LETTER TO COWASJI JEHANGIR

BORSAD,
June 19, 1931

DEAR SIR COWASJI,

I thank you for your letter[1] of the 18th instant.

You may publish any of my correspondence. I am glad that the lady[2] says that there is no ground now for complaint. But I cannot help repeating in fairness to the parties complained against that they have never admitted the charges made against them and they have courted the fullest inquiry. My own position has always been never to bolster up such charges because I have found by experience that large movements like ours can only be kept pure by exposing every weakness among workers.

Yours sincerely

SIR COWASJI JEHANGIR
FORT, BOMBAY

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

500. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BORSAD,
June 19, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I don't have time to write much today. The information about Manjula causes me anxiety. She has got over so many illnesses before now that she will probably get over this one, too. We should do our best for her treatment. If Mahavir wants to join the Vidyapith, let him. Read my letter to him. Sitla Sahay asked me to send my letter to him through you, and I am doing so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

[1] Regarding alleged harassment by pickets at Ghatkopar
[2] Mrs. contractor

501. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BORSAD,
June 19, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letters. I understand what you say about Dwarkanath. I am in correspondence with him.

We should not pay the premiums on Sorabji's policy. I see little possibility of our getting back the original sum. I can think of no remedy against this.

Has Jamna completely recovered now? Was it that she took too large a dose of the medicine through mistake, or was it the fault of the vaid?

Panditji wanted to talk to me about the students. He believes that the arrangement by which Premabehn teaches Gujarati is not right. It is not sufficient either. He, therefore, requested that Shivabhai should be employed. You acceded to the request but put him in the office. He had also much to say against Premabehn's temper. The reading-room remains closed while she is in it, so much so that it is not opened even for Maganbhai. After hearing all this, I merely said that, if I inter-vened in the Ashram affairs just now, it would amount to my living in it, but that, when necessary, I might give some guidance. I, therefore, advised him to discuss the whole matter with you and solve the problem. I think you should have a frank talk with him. He is a straight forward man. If he has not talked to you about all this, you should use this letter and discuss the matter with him and reassure him. You may consult me if necessary.

Champa must have arrived there today. I have advised her to stay in the Ashram. If she does not do that, let her stay in the red bungalow or anywhere else. Some special arrangement will have to be made about Shashi's education. It would be best if you could secure the services of a good lady teacher. Consult Kakasaheb. Savitabehn, too, may be able to guide you. Balvant, Champa's brother, wants to be permitted to live in the Ashram. I have told him that he may do so if he agrees to obey the rules. He is also eager to stay with Krishnan Nair. I have written to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I will leave this place on the 23rd and spend the 24th and the 25th in Bombay. I then return to Bardoli on the 26th. This last is not definite.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

502. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

BORSAD,
June 19, 1931

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I had your letter. Take Indu under your loving care. That boy is pining away without his mother. The thing is that you should, like a mother, keep a watchful eye on all boys and girls. To any woman who wishes to serve as a mother, they are her children. Many women may act as mothers to the same children. If, therefore, any other woman feels such love in her heart, we should be happy about it. It is but right that she should feel such love. At any rate you should try to awaken it in other women.

Whenever you feel upset and worried, let me know. Never lose heart. Try and get to know personally the men and women who have recently joined. Remember that you are also a member of the Managing Committee.

You have taken a rather difficult vow in regard to your food. Since you take milk, no harm will follow. Keep me informed about the effects on your health.

Cultivate the acquaintance of Amtulbehn. She seems to have a very pure heart.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: G. S. Gangabehn, pp. 54-5; also C.W. 8777. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

503. LETTER TO RATANLAL MALAVIYA

BORSAD,
June 19, 1931

DEAR RATANLAL,

I have your letter. I saw the Government notice. It is no doubt improper. If the students have courage and the spirit of sacrifice they should not attend college till the flag goes up again.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI RATANLAL MALAVIYA
LAW STUDNET
NEW HOSTEL
COLONELGANJ
ALLAHABAD-U.P.

From the Hindi original. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

504. LETTER TO VICEROY

BORSAD,
June 20, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your kind letter of the 17th instant. So far as I am personally concerned I am concentrating on implementing the Settlement by the Congress, practically to the exclusion of every other activity.

I am,
Yours sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY
SIMLA

Home Department, Political File No. 33/9/1931. Courtesy: National Archives of India

505. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

BORSAD,
June 20, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I have your letter of 16th June enclosing extract from an account received from the Madras Government regarding picketing. It does make bad reading if the report is true. But what I am receiving almost daily from Madras from workers who are thoroughly reliable eye-witnesses makes me distrust the reports that you are receiving. But I know that this takes us no further. So far as the Congress is concerned I want it to implement the Settlement to the fullest extent. I therefore make an offer. Will you advise local governments to appoint a Board of Enquiry consisting of a nominee on their behalf and a nominee on behalf of the Congress to conduct a summary enquiry into the allegations on either side, and wherever it is found that the rule of peaceful picketing has been at all violated picketing would be entirely suspended, the Government undertaking on its part to stop prosecutions wherever it is found that they have been undertaken in spite of peaceful picketing. And if my suggestion does not commend itself to you, you will perhaps suggest something better and more acceptable. Meanwhile I am enquiring into the specific charge mentioned in your letter.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9369. Courtesy: India Office Library

[1] For the addressee's reply, *vide* "Letter from H. W. Emerson", 4-7-1931

506. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

BORSAD,
June 20, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

With reference to your letter enclosing extract from a report dated 19th May from the District Magistrate, Surat, I now send you a translation of the statement that Naran Dulabh[1], the party named in the extract, has made.

Yours sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

Encl. 1.

Home Department, Political, File No. 33/9/1931. Courtesy: National Archives of India

507. LETTER TO BHUJANGILAL K. CHHAYA

BORSAD,
June 20, 1931

CHI. BHUJANGILAL,

I have your letter. I know that there has been a long-standing bond between your family and me. My letter to Jamnadas asking him to go and see you was in answer to your previous letter. You may see me here at Borsad on Tuesday. A bus for Borsad is always available at the Anand railway station.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2602

[1] Who had agreed to lease his land to Dhanjishaw Erachshaw, liquor seller, but, finding that village opinion was adverse, had decided not to lease the land

508. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

BORSAD,
June 20, 1931

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have read the resolution about Bhagat Singh which you sent. Dev, too, had sent a copy at your suggestion. I did not like it at all. The word "today" has affected the value of the resolution. The addition of "today" may suggest that even today the meeting has no faith in non-violence. Even those who do not look upon non-violence as an unalterable article of faith need not feel it necessary to add "today".

I shall arrive there not on the 24th but on Thursday, the 25th. I at any rate will travel by Gujarat Mail. If you wish, you may discuss this matter further with me then.

Read the accompanying letter about Chaunde Maharaj and inquire into the matter if necessary.

Rajendrababu should give up the idea of going to Bihar at present. Has Radhika come there?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N, 2890

509. LETTER TO PADMA

BORSAD,
June 20, 1931

CHI. PADMA,

I have your letter. I cannot understand why Vasumatibehn should try to get your private notebook. Nobody is entitled to take anything belonging to somebody else without the latter's knowledge. I am inquiring about the matter. Do not, however, take it very much to heart. You should be generous. Your chief aim should be to improve your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6121

510. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

BORSAD,
June 20, 1931

BHAI NANABHAI,

If people, despite gentle persuasion, persist in disregarding the khadi rule persons like Deshpande should resign and give all their time to the propagation of khadi. In such circumstances, one can serve the Congress even from outside.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6682

511. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

BORSAD,
June 20, 1931

CHI. KANTA,

I have your letter. You must have forgotten Gujarati now. I am writing this letter in Gujarati so that you may not forget it completely. I have no interest in examinations at all. True examination is that to which your teacher himself submits you. A certificate from the place of study should be sufficient. The best certificate is one's own. What is the point of my having a certificate for proficiency in arithmetic if I cannot do addition and substraction? If I do not know who Ashoka was and what he did, what is the use of my having a similar certificate in history? This contains the reply to your letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* "Notes", , sub-title, "Duty of Disciplinarians".

512. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

BORSAD,
June 20, 1931

CHI. PARASRAM,

I had your letter. Why do you ask whether or no I have confidence in you? If I had none, could I have exhorted you to make big sacrifices? Yet, I may tell you that I cannot pronounce you free from restlessness. Can you spin 250 yds. in an hour on the *takli*? The pictures you have sent are highly objectionable.[1] All of them deserve to be burnt up.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I will look into members' spinning.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7489; also C.W. 4966. Courtesy: Parasuram Mehrotra

513. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

BORSAD,
June 20, 1931

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter and the reply to Lindsay's letter. I shall go through the reply and suggest if anything yet remains to be said.

It is good that khadi is being hawked. Here is my message:

"If swaraj means food for the poor, can any aspirant for swaraj, man or woman, use any cloth other than khadi? Khadi, though costly, costs less because we have to make do with less of it than the quantity of other cloth that we would otherwise consume."

You have mentioned "hawking of khadi and propagation of swadeshi". What do you mean by the latter phrase?

It will be fine if the Bose and Sen Gupta affair is settled.

[1] In the pictures Gandhiji had been represented as Lord Krishna and the other leaders as five Pandavas.

That the Working Committee has passed a resolution[1] does not mean that my going has been finally decided. For one thing I have received no invitation and even if I do receive one, many obstacles lie in the way. The Provincial Governments have grown very slack in the implementation of the Delhi Pact. I have no enthusiasm left for going to England. Read carefully my article in *Young India*[2] and also the one to be published tomorrow in *Navajivan*. I have come exactly to that view now. That way alone lies the well-being of the people, not otherwise. I have some slight doubt regarding the last two words, but even that is growing fainter now.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 7890. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

514. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

BORSAD,
June 20, 1931

CHI. SUMANGAL,

I have your letter. If you are on the way to recovery what need is there to get yourself involved in any hocus-pocus? Please write to Ramdasji that witchcraft should be shunned even if it is effective in curing illness because it weakens one's faith in God.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru memorial Museum and Library

[1] On June 9 at Bombay; *vide* footnote 1, "Substance Not Shadow", 18-6-1931

[2] "Substance Not Shadow", 18-6-1931, which was reproduced in *Hindi Navajivan* of the same date. For the Gujarati article, *vide* the Addendum.

515. MY NOTES

NUDITY AND SOCIETY

An article on this subject has appeared in *Jain Mitra*. Its author, Jain-Nyaya Tirtha Paramesthidas, has asked me to reply to the article; I wished to express my view in this issue, but in spite of best effort I could not find the necessary time. I hope to reply to it at the earliest opportunity.[1] As the problem is not of immediate importance, I have had naturally to give priority to other more urgent matters.

STUDENTS[2]

A student writes:[3]

I hear that such undertakings are demanded in other provinces also. I will not discuss here the question whether this involves a violation of the Settlement but this raises another question which requires discussion. Why should parents give such an undertaking; and if they do, what would be its value? It is likely that the authorities will act wrongly in many things which lie outside the terms of the Settlement. When that happens, one's duty lies not in acquiescing in such action or co-operating with the authorities but in not co-operating with them. No one should interpret the Agreement to mean that the people should now give up resistance to authority and sit back with folded hands. An agreement may clarify certain things, but may not clarify some others. The people should certainly not sacrifice their self-respect in matters not so clarified. Hence I would certainly advise parents or students not to give such undertakings if they are demanded from them and if for that reason the latter cannot attend Government schools, they should stay away from them. All persons thus concerned should remember that the present uncertain state will not last long. Before the beginning of the next year at the latest, we shall have known whether the Congress demand is going to be accepted. There is no need to say what should be done in case it is rejected.

[1] *Vide* "Digambar Sadhus", 5-7-1931.

[2] *Vide* "Notes", sub-title, "Self-respect above All".

[3] The letter is not translated here. It enclosed a guarantee form to be filled in by guardians that their wards would not participate in political activities.

Can we carry salt from a village where it may be manufactured and sell it in surrounding villages where it cannot be?

If the villages are so near that one can reach them on foot one can certainly sell there the salt manufactured by oneself.

Does the Simla Notification make any difference to the law hitherto in force that, within 10 miles of the coastline, no one could stock more than one Bengal maund of salt?

There can be no such law though I had heard of a notification to that effect having been issued. The latest notification issued should be understood to cancel all previous notifications that may be inconsistent with it. The correct position is this: According to the Agreement one may stock the salt needed for one's consumption or manufactured by oneself within the limits of one's village and intended for sale in places which one can reach on foot.

Can one stock salt for sale? Fishermen need more salt in the month of Bhadrapad. Can one stock enough salt for them and sell it to them at that time?

The answer to this is included in the reply above.

Can we make in Government land the pits and beds for manufacturing salt? Or should we make them in our own?

Such pits can be made wherever salt can be manufactured. As for private land the owner's permission would be required, and hence the Agreement implies that pits may be made in Government land or one's own.

IRRELIGION IN THE NAME OF RELIGION

There is a village, named Raghvanaj in Matar Taluka. It is well known that under Thakkar Bapa's supervision, wells for *Antyajas* are being dug at many places in Gujarat, and one such well is being dug at Raghvanaj. The person supervising the work there had sent to Thakkar Bapa a report, the following extract from which deserves to be pondered over by all Hindus.[1]

This is the height of tyranny. I do not blame the Dharalas much for the incident. The blame lies with the so-called highcaste Hindus. The Dharalas are merely acting under the influence of the atmosphere which the former have created. In wielding this whip of my pen, I

[1] The passage is not translated here. It described how Dharala masons were punished for working alongside Dhed volunteers.

have little hope of waking up the Dharala men and women, but I do certainly hope to be able to wake up Congress workers and the readers of *Navajivan*. In such a situation, the Congress workers who come to know of it should themselves take up the spade and start working, explain the meaning of dharma to Dharalas and others who may be oppressing the *Antyajas* and teach the latter to shed fear and to be self-reliant. All this can be easily done as soon as we get ready to work with our own hands. But we would do so only if we feel revolted by such oppression.

MILLIONS SMOKED AWAY

A correspondent from Calcutta writes as follows:[1]

It is not very likely that my writing on the subject would end the present waste of millions on smoking. But, apropos of this letter, I may remark here on a phenomenon which I have been observing. We seem to have become indifferent in keeping up the reforms which had spontaneously spread during the satyagraha movement. The inference to be drawn from this is alarming. If we behave well only while we are fighting and lapse into slackness as soon as the intoxication of battle is over, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to preserve swaraj after it is won. In that case, would it not be desirable that the struggle be prolonged? Perhaps such a conclusion is not altogether justified, but I certainly fear that it may be in the interest of the country that the struggle should continue sufficiently long so that the people may acquire the capacity to preserve swaraj. The fight ended before we had acquired strength enough to assimilate the reforms brought about while it was going on. May I hope that readers who have become indifferent in this matter will draw the appropriate lesson from this, shake off their indifference and wake up others as well? To those who realize that the satyagraha fight is a fight for self-purification, every day is a day of battle or, if you like, of peace, for the effort for self-purification should not be relaxed even for a moment.

[From Gujarati]

Javajivan, 21-6-1931

[1] The letter is not translated here. It said that cigarettes, boycotted during the struggle, were coming back into use.

516. WHEAT OR CHAFF[1]

Everyone must have read the resolution of the Congress Working Committee. It says in substance that if other conditions are favourable and if I am invited, I should attend the Round Table Conference to put before it the Congress demand even if the communal question remains unsolved. I did not like the resolution. I opposed it. I even placed before the Committee for discussion a draft resolution along the lines I desired. But I was defeated and the resolution to the above effect was passed by a majority.

Though I am often described as an autocrat, I consider myself a man who accepts the supremacy of the people's voice; it is in my nature to give in to a *panch. Panch* means the voice of the people. I, therefore, accepted the resolution passed by the majority. There is an exception to this rule. We cannot give in to anyone on a question of principle. But there are not many principles in life. one who at every step refuses, in the name of principle, to listen to others is autocratic and selfish. Questions of principle arise only rarely. Here there was no such question, and so I gave in. I had often declared my determination not to attend the Round Table Conference if the Hindu-Muslim, i.e., the communal question was not solved. But I could not convince the Working Committee of the correctness of my position. Ordinarily it would not be proper for me to put before the public my argument. No member has a right to publish anything that is discussed in the Working Committee. But in this case, the Committee has given me permission to do so. The Committee felt that in order to enable me to explain my position as also its own policy it was necessary to give me such permission.

The reasoning behind my reluctance to go to the Round Table Conference without solving the communal question was as follows: Even if the question was solved, the acceptance of the Congress demand in England was unlikely, but if it was not solved the sanction behind the demands would be lost. 'You cannot put your own house in order and cannot unite yourselves, and still you ask for independence!' Even if the members do not say this openly out of politeness, they would think thus and we would read their thought in their eyes. And they would, on the whole, be justified in taunting us thus.

[1] *Vide* footnote 2, "My Notes"

It would be better to accept our weakness rather than invite ridicule by going in such a pitiable condition. A satyagrahi never hides his weakness. According to the law of satyagraha, from the admission of weakness new strength is born. The first step in conquering weakness is its admission.

No one should conclude from my argument that the Working Committee's resolution is an attempt to hide our weakness. It reflects the consequence of weakness and hence amounts to unconscious hiding of it. The logical consequence of the admission of the weakness would be not to go to the Round Table Conference. That alone would be true admission of the weakness. One who does not have the strength to walk and admits that in words but actually tries to walk, has not truly admitted his weakness and by walking weakens himself all the more. He may even faint and collapse.

Now if we admit our incapacity to solve the problem and do not send a representative of the Congress to the Round Table Conference, what should we do instead? That would not mean that we give up our fight for *purna* swaraj. The Round Table Conference is only one means of securing it. We may have to let go that means. Everyone will understand this much at once. But we should even give up the desire and the hope to secure *purna* swaraj through the Round Table Conference. We have then to swallow one bitter dose, and that is that whatever fight we start will not be for *purna* swaraj in name, though the result would be the same.

If the communal question cannot be solved satisfactorily now, then it means that the methods which we have tried so far to solve it were wrong or inadequate. The attempts so far made aimed at bringing about understanding among the Hindu and Muslim politicians. They were of the nature of a fight for power among them. From such fighting no unity can come, none has come at least. If, therefore, the Congress desires unity of the heart, it should get out of that field and try to gain power over the hearts of Muslims and the other communities as it has gained over those of the Hindus. Such an attempt is bound to result in a unity of hearts. There is no scope for failure in it. The power of the Congress has its source in service of the people. If the Congress programme is so organized that the Muslims and the others continue to get equal benefit, then they also will come to know the Congress.

It is not that today nothing is done for their service. Nevertheless we must acknowledge the fact that Muslims, Sikhs and others do not respond to the Congress as much as the Hindus do. Instead of finding fault with these communities for this state of affairs, it would be better and more graceful for the Congress to admit its deficiency.

When the Congress will be overflowing with Indians other than Hindus, then there will be no difference between a communal solution and a national solution, the Muslims or other communities will not be afraid, because they are fewer in number, of the far more numerous Hindus, and the Hindus, physically weaker though in a majority, will not be afraid of the physically stronger Mussalmans or Sikhs. Each community's strength will benefit the other communities. Unless such conditions are created, paper swaraj will fly off with a puff like the sheet of paper on which it is written.

What is paper swaraj, and what is the other swaraj? Let us see. The swaraj got through the Round Table Conference means the swaraj constitution accepted by us and passed by British Parliament into law. This is the swaraj on the statute book, i.e., paper swaraj. Behind it, there would not be the signatures of the millions; in fact the millions would not be trusting one another. If Hindus and Muslims in Kanpur and Kashi are fighting one another, then such swaraj would be no better than chaff.

True swaraj is that which will have signatures of the millions behind it, whose cool shelter the millions would enjoy, and in which the incidents at Kanpur and Kashi would be past history to us and we would laugh heartily at our past follies. Whether or not such swaraj has become statutory, it would be true swaraj and would be like wheat, for it would be nourishing.

I am of the view that if we cannot solve the communal question satisfactorily and if we decide to fight for the swaraj of my conception, then our boycott of the Round Table Conference will be a sign of our strength and will uphold our self-respect.

This is the fight of my conception. Even if the communal question is not solved and the representative of the Congress does not attend the Round Table Conference, something is bound to be done. Let the communal-minded Hindus and Muslims and others share a little power with the British under that Constitution and think that they are participating in ruling the country. The Congress instead of asking for power from that Government will demand the things for which

they want power and, if they are refused, it will fight through satyagraha. We do not want political power for its own sake, we want it for a certain end. That end is service of the millions. If we cannot get today the reins of power in our hands to improve their economic, moral and social conditions, we need not on that account stop that work.

By giving such a turn to the fight for swaraj, we can bypass the communal tangle and invite all the people to join the fight. Nobody will be able to keep out of it. Those who refuse to join will lose their face. All those who have the spirit of self-sacrifice and courage cannot but join in the demand for what is necessary for the uplift of the millions.

For example, a fight for revision of the land revenue laws to make them more equitable and to reduce the burden of land revenue would be for the benefit of all communities and in time everybody would join it. Such a fight would result either in the desired reforms being effected or in those holding power handing over the power to the rebellious people. Either result would mean the same to us. As a result of such a fight communal discords would disappear and the people would know who their servants were and who their masters. The people's strength would increase day by day, they would get true political education and know where their interests lay. This, according to me, would be true swaraj. If we adopt such a course in time we would find *purna* swaraj in our lap.

But I could not convince the Working Committee of the soundness of this scheme. The majority of the members felt that as the Settlement had been signed, if other circumstances were favourable I must attend the Round Table Conference despite the absence of a solution of the communal question. I will go out of respect for the collective decision of the Committee. And if I go, I will use all my ability to present the Congress demand and to get it accepted. But if the communal question is not solved, I believe it highly improbable that our demand will be accepted, and if it is not accepted and if it is decided to resume the fight, I would try to give the fight the turn I have explained above.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-6-1931

517. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

BORSAD,
June 21, 1931

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

Here is another letter from Syt. Chatur Behari Lal Andley. You know best whether it is of any importance.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

Encl. I

SYT. J. C. KUMARAPPA
65 ESPLANADE ROAD
BOMBAY

From a photostats G.N. 10096

518. LETTER TO NATHAM MUSLIM ASSOCIATION, ABIRAMA

[AS AT] SABARMATI,
June 21, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your telegram[1]. I know that Indian life is in danger in Burma, but what can be done from here? You have to make such effort as you can on your side and wherever safety is threatened you should migrate to safer places. And in order that some action can be taken at this end, you should send full particulars of loss of life and how the loss occurred. Are the Burmans in the villages hostile to Indian trade and Indian residence? Are our people well-behaved towards them? If you will give me all these particulars it might be possible to create public opinion here.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 2-7-1931

[1] It read: "Lives, properties of innumerable innocent Indians in Burma still in great danger. Massacre reported daily. Pray persuade authorities take immediate necessary steps to restore peace and harmony."

519. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

BORSAD,
June 21, 1931

BHAI KASHINATH,

I got your letter.

I certainly intend to write something about the Digambar Jain Sadhus.[1] I am thinking what I can write.

I had a talk with Haribhau, too, about your decision to leave. I understand your reasons. You two cannot save yourselves from falling. The fact is that you have already fallen.

He who curbs the organs of action but allows the mind to dwell on sense-objects,—such a one, wholly deluded, is called a hypocrite.[2]

Here we should understand *vimudhatma* to mean merely that the person lacks true knowledge and that, therefore, his outward self-control is of no value. The man who lets his mind dwell on lustful thoughts cannot be regarded a *brahmachari* simply because he refrains from physical gratification. In other words, one must banish from one's mind all evil thoughts which may arise in it. Anyone who wants to succeed in this effort would take the necessary steps, which you never did. Now you should recognize the lack of self-control in you both, live humbly as an ordinary married couple and practise only such self-control outwardly as you can do mentally as well. Think over the meaning of the bhajan: "Unless the mind is free from desire, renunciation cannot endure." Do not feel that I am reproaching you. Rest assured that I have only tried to open your eyes to the truth so that you may wake up.

I am enclosing a note[3] saying that the sums which you owe to *Navajivan* and the Ashram

should be written off. You may use it. I think that this was a

[1] *Vide* "Digambar Sadhus", 5-7-1931.
[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 6
[3] *Vide* the following item.

mistake on your part. You should not have incurred debts in that way. Instead of borrowing money and then seeking exemption from repaying the loan, at the very time of drawing the money you should have asked for so much more by way of honorarium. We ought not to value in terms of money the work done for a public cause. I write this for the sake of purity in our dealings. Only if we maintain the highest standards of purity in our practical affairs can we come out of our abject condition of mind. He who never feels inwardly poor is richer than even the richest millionaire.

I am going to Bombay from here on Wednesday. Both of you may come before that if you wish to. You may, however, save your time and money, if you can be satisfied with my blessings conveyed to you through a letter from here. We haven't yet learnt the lesson of simplicity. This charge applies to nearly everyone. The fault lies with the circumstances. I have always had plenty of money at my disposal, so that I have not succeeded in exercising strict control in its use. I have therefore often wished how good it would be if people stopped giving us money and we did not even know how we would get our next meal. Read again my article[1] in *Navajivan* on this subject.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5281

[1] *Vide* "Public Expense", 21-5-1931

520. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BORSAD,
June 21, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

Write off the sums which the account books show as due from Bhai Kashinath. He has not the means to pay them.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

521. LETTER TO LAKSHMINARAYAN GADODIA

BORSAD,
June 21, 1931

BHAI LAKSHMINARAYANJI,

I read your humorous but painful letter, containing the account of all that happened in Kashmir in connection with the flag. The sketch is very interesting and reveals the deplorable conditions in the Indian States. It was your insistence on a written order that saved you. It is evident an ordinary man, had he carried the flag, would have been arrested. Let us see what this Round Table Conference accomplishes.

Yes, Kotak is doing good work in Kashmir.

Door to door propaganda is required for the boycott of foreign cloth. That is more effective than picketing and the result is more or less permanent.

Should not Dr. Ansari do something about the quarrels in Delhi? You may suggest this to him.

Yours

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5622

522. LETTER TO PADMA

June 21, 1931

CHI. PADMA,

I am writing this reply on the blank portion of your letter, but I will not use the whole sheet. You must take careful measures and

improve your health completely. If you wish, you may go and live with Sarojinidevi[1], after obtaining the permission of Sitla Sahay[2] and also of Narandas. But you must get all right before leaving the Ashram. You are bound to get well if you take regularly the medicine prescribed for you. Your handwriting has improved a lot. With a little more effort, it will be still better.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6122

523. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI N. PATEL

BORSAD,
June 21, 1931

BHAI RAOJIBHAI,

I have your letter. If the superior officer does not listen to you and redress the injustice, I would advise you to put up with it for some time. Perhaps after a few days I may be able to advise you to take further steps in the matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8992

524. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BORSAD,
June 21, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. It was Panditji who told me about Maganbhai. I certainly thought that there must have been some misunderstanding on his part over other matters as there was over this. But Panditji speaks out what he has in mind and then thinks no more about it. That is a great virtue in him.

Mahadev told me that Manju was perfectly all right now.

The Punjabi vaid seems to charge rather high fee. If, however, his medicines are effective, why should we not let ourselves be treated

[1] Addressee's mother
[2] Addressee's father

by him and pay him his fees? Do not allopathic doctors sometimes charge Rs. 1,000 for a day? Some of them give free service to us. This vaid thought that, if he could charge others, he could certainly charge us too. If he is an honest vaid, we should not mind his fee. He does not charge for a visit separately, but charges for visits and medicines together. Allopathic doctors charge for them separately.

Shivabhai had a talk with me about his wife. Even if he cannot come, I see that we have no choice but to admit his wife. If she becomes too much of a problem, inform Shivabhai. It would be better if she stays with Gangabehn or with some other woman of equal standing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U.II

525. LETTER TO LALJI PARMAR

BORSAD,
June 22, 1931

CHI. LALJI,

So I have a letter from you at last. Do not be so lazy again. Write to your father and tell him plainly that you do not wish even your engagement to take place just now. Improve your handwriting. Write to me regularly every week. How much do you weave daily now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3293

526. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

BORSAD,
June 22, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter. You are doing right in giving your address in every letter. You should not feel worried but do your duty in the given circumstances. If you can come away early, you can stay with me for many days. Nothing is yet certain about my going to England, but, even if I go, I shall not be able to take you with me, however much I may wish to do so. The work which I have to do there will not permit me to do that. Moreover, the expense of taking you with me will be far too much. That would not become people like us who are trying to live simple lives. If, however, you come away from there to stay with me, why need you return? While I am away, you will live in the Ashram. You are bound to keep good health there. All that is necessary is that you should come away soon.

For some time, Rajendrababu will stay hereabouts. Afterwards, he will certainly return to Patna. But that will be after some time yet.

The Committee will meet on July 7.

I am in Borsad, but you should write to me to the Bardoli address.

[*Blessings*] *from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3415

527. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

BORSAD,
June 22, 1931

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. You have given enough details. I think it would have been good if you had come and seen me. I could follow Kisan's[1] letter. Write to her and tell her that I liked it.

Gangabehn's eagerness to teach the girls all she can is quite sincere and is also admirable. I should like to give her all possible help in strengthening it. You, too, should help her.

Panditji has much to complain against you.[2] Go to him and listen to all that he has to say, and reply to his complaints courteously. It will be difficult to find an inmate of the Ashram as sincere as Panditji. Win him over. Why should he have reason to complain against you ? You are by nature harsh, curt, reserved. This much is true. I don't think that these are serious defects, but they are bound to create difficulties. You should, therefore, try to overcome them. Straighten out matters with Panditji immediately.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Up to the 24th, letters should be directed here. On the 25th and the 26th, I shall be in Bombay. On the 27th, most probably I shall be in Bardoli. But it is not certain.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10257; also C.W. 6705. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] A friend of the addressee; she had worked hard in Bombay durlng the civil disobedience movement.

[2] The addressee in her book, Bapuna Patro, explains that her insistence on discipline and her intolerance and discourteous behaviour towards elderly inmates of the Ashram had caused much resentment.

528. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BORSAD,
June 22, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

This letter will be brought to you by one Mahadev Mailar and his wife, Sidhudevi. Mahadev was an inmate of the Ashram. He was married at an early age. He observes complete *brahmacharya* and tells me that his wife, too, understands the importance of the vow. Mahadev works in an Ashram which is being run in a place called Hosari. He and his wife will ultimately settle in that Ashram. Just now, they wish to learn Hindi. They will learn other things, too, but they are especially eager to master Hindi. See what arrangements you can make for them. Personally, I think you can enlist the services of that crazy fellow Parasram. Though crazy, he has clung to us. I don't feel like shifting him from Kanpur, but we may do that if necessary. It is certainly desirable that the Ashram should have perfect arrangements for teaching Hindi.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have told Mahadev that, if his wife is found to be of no use to the Ashram, she will have to leave. We shall have to bear the expenditure on them. They, on their part, are of course willing to work so that the Ashram is not out of pocket on their account.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

529. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[*June 22, 1931*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

There is only one point in your letter which calls for a reply. In what context did I tell Soman that he might take his meals separately from others? I don't remember having told him this, but I will carry out whatever he remembers that I told him. The general rule is what you

[1] From the contents, the letter seems to have been written a day before the letter to the addressee dated June 23, 1931; *vide* "Worth While Questions", 26-4-1931

state it to be. Janakibai is a pious woman. We should keep her in the Ashram as long as she feels happy in it. If you think it proper, show this to Bhai Soman. What does he do these days?

Mahavir's fever must have left him.

Mirabehn and Gaur Gopaldas intend to go to the Ashram. Mirabehn now realizes that her place is in the Ashram or wherever there is some work to do. She is convinced of this and wishes to live accordingly. That is why she is going there. Assign her any work you think proper. Make whatever arrangements you do on the understanding that, if I have to go to England, she will accompany me. If I have to go, it will be in the middle of August.

I am intentionally sending Gaur Gopal there. He is a youth of a very straightforward nature. You must have come to know that he belongs to a zamindar family. Make him as comfortable as you can and assign to him any work you think proper. See that he acquires proficiency in Hindi and learns to card and spin well. I should like him to complete the whole course in weaving. Arrange his work in such a way that he gets some time for reading.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Mirabehn will leave by the Kathiawar Mail tomorrow. It arrives there at 7.30 or 8 a.m. She will hire a tonga from the station to take her to the Ashram. If Ranchhodbhai or somebody else agrees to go to the station and take her in a car to the Ashram, that will save her time. Get Mirabehn's room vacated for her. Balvant and Gaur Gopal will probably be travelling with her.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, Pt. I, pp. 263-4; also C.W. 8176. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

530. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

BORSAD,
June 22, 1931

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I expect much from you at this time. If you wish to cultivate oneness with all the women and see that the girls make great progress, you should, instead of undertaking too many tasks, be content with a few and give more time to general supervision. If you try to do every small thing yourself, you will not be able to exercise general supervision. You should also give up thinking about new plans of work and the ambition to jump high. At present you have quite a large number of grown-up women and girls under your charge. If this field of the Ashram activities is perfectly organized, the Ashram will overflow with women and girls. Think that your family is of unlimited size.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: G.S. Gangabehnne, p. 55; also C.W. 8778. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

531. ADVICE TO FARMERS, BORSAD

BORSAD,
June 22, 1931

Answering various questions put to him, Mahatma Gandhi said that everyone who could afford should pay all dues, including past dues and taqavi. By affording, he meant ability to pay without borrowing and without selling their belongings. He had, from the moment he entered Borsad, made it clear to the authorities and in his personal conversation with the Collector, that it was on that basis that he proposed to work and offer help and it was on that basis that the lists were prepared and payments made.

He was happy to see that all but Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 3,000 had been paid and he had been given an assurance that this sum also would be paid up in two or three days. There was now, therefore, no question of further calls upon them during the present year. He had, however, written to the Collector, asking him to furnish the names of

those whom he might suspect of having withheld their correct position from him. He would be severely disappointed if he had been misled by any of the landholders.

He warned them and told them that if there were any whom they knew, they should bring their names to his notice and induce them to pay land revenue. Regarding village officers who were still awaiting reinstatement, he said that he was in correspondence with the authorities and hoped to have a satisfactory decision about them.

Concluding, Mahatma Gandhi exhorted Patidars[1], who had taken prominent part in the struggle, to get rid of untouchability and treat other backward communities, such as Dharalas and Barias, as themselves.

Asked what they should do regarding their confiscated lands sold to third parties, Mahatma Gandhi said that he hoped still to secure all such lands, but if the so-called purchasers came to take possession no opposition should be offered them. If they were still in possession, they could till the land but they should realize that they ran the risk of having to lose labour and seed if they were called upon to give up possession, which they would have to do. Whilst no one should work on such land on behalf of purchasers, no molestation should be offered against those who wished to work.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-6-1931

532. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

Monday [On or after *June 22, 1931*][2]

CHI. KUSUM,

I got your letter. Since you are so far away, I am helpless. I am decidedly of the opinion that you should give up your intention of joining the Congress and should cling to your work. Many others besides you have taken up similar work at my instance. It would surprise and pain me if you cannot observe even this measure of self-restraint. However, follow your own inclination.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1823

[1] A community in Gujarat, consisting chiefly of peasant farmers

[2] *Bapuna Patro-3: Kusum Desaine* places this letter after the one dated June 18, 1931; June 22 was Monday.

533. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

BORSAD,
June 23, 1931

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

I forgot to get Sardar to wire though we talked for one minute. You did well to send a reminder. I have now written. You may expect a wire from Bardoli tomorrow or the day after.

BAPU

ADHYAPAK J. C. KUMARAPPA
GUJARAT VIDYAPITH
AHMEDABAD

From a photostat: G.N. 10097

534. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

June 23, 1931

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your joint letter (only three lines from Sushila). Corruption you will find everywhere. The reformer and public worker should do what he can to remove it, himself remain untouched by it, and cease worrying. However, personally I do believe that persons like you would get better support in India and so be able to do some work. But now that you have gone back there, you should stay on for some time and, if you wish to wind up the work, do so properly before you come away. It would certainly be good if *Indian Opinion* continues. But rather than that it should pass into the hands of persons who may not run it well, it had better stop. Everything that exists is bound to perish sooner or later. Let *Indian Opinion*, then, meet its end at your hands. Meet Kallenbach, Omar Sheth and others, and do what you think proper after discussing the matter with them.

You should plan to return here when the struggle is resumed. It seems certain that it will be resumed next year, though I will make every effort to see that it does not become necessary. Don't decide anything in haste or excitement.

It is a painful thing that Sorabji should refuse to pay even the policy premiums. The Ashram cannot pay them. Do not mind if the

premiums already paid are lost. Now that Jalbhai also is there, see if you can persuade the two brothers and make them pay the premiums. Is any surrender value of the policy payable, or nothing at all? What is Sorabji's financial condition?

Nothing is yet certain about my going to England. Ramdas and Nimu have gone to Almora to enjoy the climate for a few days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4785

535. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

BORSAD,
June 23, 1931

CHI. RAMA,

I got your letter.

The Sisodara programme is all right. Vimu must have returned there now. Has she grown? What did she do all these months? Ask her and write to me what she dictates.

I am going to Bombay today for two days. I have asked Mirabehn to go to the Ashram. She has stayed quite long with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5331

536. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI N. PATEL

June 23, 1931

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

If influential workers in Limbasi[1] take the lead and permit *Antyajas*, opposition from the few would subside of itself. But they must be real workers, and not merely workers in name. Why not call the people of the village together and tell them that you would disband the Ashram? If the people don't let you, there is no need to hurry; if they agree, then too there is no hurry. But it would be good if they say yes. Our work would get publicity.

[1] A village in Matar taluka, Kaira

My statement that looking for another place of work would mean *parigraha* was intended to apply to all. Are not all Ashram residents under the vow of *aparigraha*? I mentioned only the ideal. If a person who is disinclined for some reason to return to the Ashram finds himself without work at a given place, he may certainly look for it elsewhere.

I read your letter to Mahadev about the headman. What can we do in the case? It should be proved that he cannot pay. I cannot do that from here and so a letter from here can have no effect. If you write to me from there, giving evidence regarding his condition, or if I get such a letter from somebody else, I may possibly be able to do something in the matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8993

537. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BORSAD,
June 23, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I sent some letters today with Mahadev Mailar. This will be brought by Mirabehn.

Did Kaka see Mathew? If the latter gives some time to the Vidyapith, he will earn respect there. If, however, he does not like the idea, it may be dropped. When I return from Bombay, I will send for him and know from him what he wants.

Mahavir's fever seems to have continued for quite some time. If Mahadev's wife can get trained, both seem ready to work. We should have, but don't have, a good full-time teacher of Hindi. I will try again to make some arrangement.

Write to Ratubhai and tell him that Chhaganlal and Lilavati cause much pain to the Doctor. If he has still any control over them, he should try to do something in the matter. I have written a strong letter to Chhaganlal and Lilavati. I don't know what effect it will have.

Keep a watch over Balvant. Exact hard work from him. Make some arrangement for his education, too. I know that it is easy to make such suggestions, but that it is difficult to carry them out. I want

you to do only as much as you can. It is not out of my mind that you have very few workers.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I suppose I informed you that the Ashram will have to bear the boarding expenses for Balvant. Gaur Gopaldas will arrive there tomorrow morning. He will leave this place with me in the evening. He will spend the night at Anand and arrive there in the morning.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

538. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

BORSAD,
June 23, 1931

CHI. JAMNADAS,

When I asked whether the construction could not be postponed, I meant the proposed extension. I suggest that it may be postponed till the end of this year, if possible.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9326. Courtesy: Jamnadas Gandhi

539. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BORSAD,
June 20/[*23*], *1931*

CHI. NARANDAS,

You must have got the message which I sent with Mahadev concerning Narahari's request. I have come to the conclusion that we need not send anyone at present for picketing.

Manju seems to be safe now. Read my letter to Hariyomal. Persuade him to take milk.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am starting from here on the 24th and not on the 23rd. [PPS.]

Tuesday [*June 23, 1931*]

CHI. NARANDAS,

Why did Shankarbhai leave? With whom does Shanta live? How is Kusum?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati M.M.U./I

540. LETTER TO CHIEF SECRETARY, CENTRAL PROVINCES

BORSAD,
June 24, 1931

DEAR SIR,

I write this letter regarding the case of Syt. Gopal Anant Ogale[1] who was sentenced on the 2nd of April 1931 to one year's rigorous imprisonment under Sec. 124 I.P.C. I have gone through the article and the translation put in as Exhibit in the case and I venture to submit that in terms of Cl. 13 Sub-section 1 of the Settlement Syt. Ogale is entitled to discharge because in that article there is no incitement to violence. That there may be sedition in the article, it will be admitted, is irrelevant so far as the Settlement is concerned. For the sake of protection I understand that the case is under appeal but I suggest that the clause referred to of the Settlement is unequivocal. As there is no incitement to violence and as he was arrested during the civil disobedience movement he is entitled to discharge.[2] Indeed, it seems to me that as soon as the Settlement was published, the prosecution should have been withdrawn under Cl. 12 Sub-section 1

[1] Then Editor of *Maharashtra*, Nagpur

[2] The reply to this letter, *inter alia*, states: "The Governor in Council has no doubt that the case in question is not covered by the Agreement. . . . None the less before your letter was received the Governor in Council, as an act of grace, had instructed the Government Advocate, . . . and Mr. Ogale was released on the 29th June last."

of the Settlement. As the matter relates to a citizen's liberty I request prompt attention and early reply.

Yours sincerely

THE CHIEF SECRETARY
CENTRAL PROVINCES GOVERNMENT
NAGPUR (C.P.)

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

541. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

BORSAD,
June 24, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

You will remember the complaint[1] you sent me about Cawnpore and about which I agreed that if the particular allegations were true, it is a distinct breach of the Settlement. I had therefore written to the Secretary. Here is his wire[2] in reply. I shall send you his letter also when it arrives.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

A.I.C.C. File No. 387, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

542. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

BORSAD,
June 24, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

Here is a copy of a precis of an important case in Meerut. The precis is so admirably prepared that it makes easy reading. I do suggest that it is a terrible thing that a cultured man like Syt. Shital Prasad Tayal[3] should not be reinstated. I do hope that you will intervene in the matter. You will observe that the incumbent alleged to be permanent did not take up the post and the temporary man was

[1] *Vide* "Notes", sub-title Malaviyaji and Working Committee

[2] It read: "Your letter eighteenth. Allegations entirely baseless. Picketing perfectly peaceful Letter follows."

[3] A teacher in Meerut Cantonment who had been dismissed for taking part in the Congress session at Lahore and collecting funds for khadi. The addressee in his reply dated July 10 declined to reopen the case.

made permanent two months after the Settlement.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Encl. 1

Home Department, Political, File No. 33/21/1931. Courtesy: National Archives of India

543. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

BORSAD,
June 24, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I thank you for your letter[1] of the 19th inst. with reference to the question of fire-arms. I will not, for the time being, trouble you with any further argument though I dissent from the view taken by you. I shall watch the working of the instructions issued to the local governments. I take it that I am free to make use of the contents of the Memorandum in my correspondence with local governments on this question. I shall not make use of it till I hear from you.[2]

Yours sincerely,

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Which stated: " . . . You refer to the modification in the original draft of clause 16 of the Settlement of March 5th. My recollection is that, so far as arms are concerned, the change was made not to cover the case of arms of which the licenses had been cancelled, for these were clearly illegal possessions, but in regard to the seizure of licensed arms taken in the course of searches and in regard to which no offence had been committed under the Arms Act or otherwise. I am quite clear that in this connection the present issue was not raised, since I have always realized that the basic question was that of a re-grant of cancelled licenses. . . ."

[2] The addressee wrote back on July 4, 1931: "You are certainly free to quote the Memorandum. . . ."

544. LETTER TO H.W. EMERSON

BORSAD,
June 24, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

Your personal letter will be destroyed as soon as I have finished this.

I believe in the English saying, "Take care of your pennies and the pounds will take care of themselves". If we act on the square over the comparatively little settlement[1], the big issue in London will take care of itself. I do therefore want (p. 69) you please to straighten out things on your side. There is a tendency in the Provinces to crush the Congress and the Congress spirit. It is like distrusting or belittling one's partner.

On my side, I do not want you to spare me. Your indictments I shall appreciate. I do not want to hide or overlook a single breach on our part. I want us to make (p. 70) full reparation for every wrong act we may do. For I desire with all my heart a permanent settlement, an honourable partnership. This is impossible if we conceal our weaknesses or condone breaches on the part of workers. If you only saw the letters I daily write, the discussions I daily hold on the necessity of a faithful (p. 71) performance of what you have called gentlemen's agreement.

Khansaheb's speeches have not all been correctly reported. I wish it had been possible for you to have met him.

I shall write to you about Pandit Jawaharlal later.

You must not get ill.

The newspaper (72) cutting with your comment came as a tonic relieving the depression of exhausting correspondence dealing with all kinds of complaints.

Hope you are feeling better.

From a photostat: India Office Library and Records. Courtesy: The British Library, London

[1] The Provisional Settlement of March 5, 1931. For the text of the Settlement, *Vide* "Provisional Settlement", 12-3-1931

545. LETTER TO R. M. MAXWELL

BORSAD,
June 24, 1931

DEAR MR. MAXWELL,

May I remind you about several letters regarding the Settlement to which answers are long overdue? They cover important matters and I would be grateful if you could let me have early replies. Meanwhile I have to draw your attention to the fact that with reference to the restoration of forfeited *watans*[1], undertakings are required before restoration. I send you a copy in connection with one such *watan*. The other parties are:

Messrs Hanamant Ramchandra Deshpande of Bilgi,

G. C. Joshi of Guledgud,

Hanumantrao Desai of Andamurnal, Taluk Bagalkot.

These undertakings in my opinion are in breach of the Settlement and they should be waived as they were in Gujarat in connection with Mukhis[2].

Whilst I am dictating this letter, I have a letter from Barsi town from Mr. D. V. Sulakhe. His is a case of confiscation pure and simple. He has sent a petition to His Excellency, but he has not been given any reply. The petition of which I have a copy sent to me bears date 16th March.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

R. M. MAXWELL, ESQ.
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY
MAHABALESHWAR

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Hereditary land grants or cash allowances for performance of service
[2] Village headmen

546. LETTER TO K. B. BHADRAPUR

BORSAD,
June 24, 1931

DEAR MR. BHADRAPUR,

In your letter the other day you said that the non-Dharala population of Ras was fully entitled to protection at the hands of the Government and that you were enquiring into the complaints made by me to you. You will agree with me that no assurance on paper can possibly bring relief to those who are actually being injured. The only relief they can see and feel is when the injury ceases. Unfortunately the same injury that I complained of seems to be continuing. This time in order to verify so far as it was possible the complaints made by the residents of Ras I sent Syt. Mahadev Desai to make a local investigation. The enclosed is his report. You will see therefrom that the hedges of the poor cultivators are still being destroyed. Valuable babul trees are being cut down and wood taken away. I understand from Mr. Perry that, for fear lest the Dharalas might be molested by the Patidars, additional police still continued to be posted. I wonder if the police is able to afford any protection to the Patidars and others. But whether the function of this additional police is or is not to protect the non-Dharala population of Ras, will you please let me know whether the Government intend to protect the Patidars of Ras from continuous molestation or whether they are to look after themselves in the best manner they can. I shall be away from Borsad for two days, possibly three. May I ask for immediate attention to the complaints and may I know when I may expect reply to my letter about the Mukhi?

Yours sincerely,

K. B. BHADRAPUR, ESQ.
COLLECTOR OF KAIRA DT.
KAIRA

A.I.C.C. File No. 3,1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

547. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 24, 1931

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letter. I shall look forward to Mrs. Polak's book[1]. I know it will revive old and pleasant memories and it will tell me of things I have perhaps altogether forgotten.

It is a good thing that your two books[2] are reaching the proper people.

As is your wont you are distressed over what your eyes see and ears hear. This time it is the terrible unemployment in Lancashire and what you see and hear acts as an effective barrier against perceiving the truth. I have seen from extensive experience the truth of a legal maxim which says: "Hard cases make bad law." Many legal maxims are also sound moral maxims as this one is. I can say with perfect detachment although I am immersed in the Indian turmoil that the way you suggest is not the way to help Lancashire. If it was wrong any time for Lancashire to impose its cloth upon India by hook or by crook it is wrong also today and more so because India has become conscious of the wrong. And if India now refuses to be party to the wrong, surely she won't be adding wrong to wrong but she would be assisting the process of undoing the wrong done by Lancashire. That the labourers were not conscious of the wrong that was being done is no justification for the wrong itself being sustained by the party wronged, that is, India or anybody else. The proper course is to show the labourers how they have been unconsciously assisting the wrong done by Lancashire to India and therefore how necessary it is to retrace the step. The first thing to do therefore is, if Lancashire cloth cannot be sold outside India, to find some other employment. What that can be it is difficult for me to say. I do not know how England itself is clothed. Why should not the same machinery be used for preparing the clothing of the kind required by England or better still, why should not the machinery be scrapped and the unemployed take

[1] *Mr. Gandhi: The Man* (1931) with a foreword by C. F. Andrews

[2] *Mahatma Gandhi's Ideas* (1929) and *Mahatma Gandhi: His Own Story* (1930)

to handicrafts? I know these are vague ideas without any basis for them but I have given them to show which way my mind is working.

Let me help you by putting before you another fact. Foreign cloth boycott has created a kind of atmosphere. Its effect upon Lancashire is nothing so serious as it is made out. In the first place do you know that before the boycott became a live thing Lancashire sent to India only 12% of her output of piecegoods? Have you studied the illuminating figures[1] published in a recent issue of *Young India* showing conclusively that Lancashire had to fear not so much Indian boycott as the ever-growing Japanese competition? My heart goes out to the unemployed. It goes out to you in your terrific moral struggle. But I cannot be helpful in the way you suggest. Of that I am quite clear. That there is a way out I have no doubt and probably if I came to London, after a study of the situation on the spot I should be able to suggest some practical solution. And if I came at all I would certainly do as you want me to, first of all proceed to Lancashire and see the unemployed face to face.

But I am not at all sure that I shall be able to go. As yet of course there is no invitation. The Settlement is causing me much anxiety. The local governments are not playing the game. Lathi charges too are now and then resorted to. Jawaharlal sends me bitter complaints from Allahabad. But I shall see what is possible when the time for sailing comes. Jawaharlal cannot accompany me unless he forms part of the deputation. 1 do not think it would be advisable though of course if he was in London his presence would relieve me of a great deal of responsibility. Malaviyaji and Ansari are a certainty. They are most likely to be invited apart from the Working Committee and so is Mrs. Naidu. I note you will house me with Muriel.

Love.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 970

[1] *Vide* "Japanese or British?",

548. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 24, 1931

CHI. MIRA,

You are on the brain. I look about me and miss you. I open the charkha and miss you. So on and so forth. But what is the use? You have done the right thing.[1] You have left your home, your people and all that people prize most, not to serve me personally but to serve the cause I stand for. All the time you were squandering your love on me personally, I felt guilty of misappropriation. And I exploded on the slightest pretext. Now that you are not with me, my anger turns itself upon me for having given you all those terrible scoldings. But I was on a bed of hot ashes all the while I was accepting your service.[2] You will truly serve me by joyously serving the cause. "Cheer boys cheer, no more of idle sorrow."

Love.

BAPU

Bapu's Letters to Mira, p. 156

549. LETTER TO G. FINDLAY SHIRRAS

BORSAD,
June 24, 1931

DEAR PRINCIPAL SHIRRAS,

Some students from your college have come to me for advice regarding your refusal to admit to the college certain students who had taken part in the civil disobedience movement. Without entering into a discussion of the Delhi Settlement, may I suggest that at the present moment it would be hardly proper to refuse admission to the students who took part in the movement? Is it not a fact that the whole of the student world was stirred to the very depths by the national awakening, and whether they took any direct part in the movement or not there is no doubt that they were all filled with the spirit of the

[1] The addressee had gone to the Ashram.

[2] Concerning this, Mirabehn says: "The struggle was terrible. I too was on a bed of hot ashes because I could feel that Bapu was. This was one of the occasions when, somehow or other, I managed to tear myself away."

time. For the sake of peace therefore I would urge you to withdraw your orders and admit all the students without imposing any conditions. I have given my opinion[1] to the students which I have published in *Navajivan* that any undertaking given by the students as to non-participation in any future struggle or regret about participa-tion in the past would be wholly inconsistent with self-respect. I would also go further and say, what I have not said in my opinion referred to above, that it would also be inconsistent with the students' inmost belief. I hope you would not consider this letter a presumption.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

PRINCIPAL SHIRRAS
GUJARAT COLLEGE
AHMEDABAD

From a photostat: G.N. 817

550. LETTER TO N. D. KOWALI

BORSAD,
June 24, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[2] The persecuted men can certainly go to court. In any case they must not submit to any tyranny and be content to remain outside the caste. After all we want to break down false and injurious caste barriers.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SYT. N. D. KOWALI
DADAR, BOMBAY

From a photostat: G.N. 3273

[1] *Vide* "My Notes", , sub-title, "Students".

[2] The addressee had written to Gandhiji about the excommunication of two Kshatriya families.

551. LETTER TO J. J. SINGH

BORSAD,
June 24, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your lucidly written letter of June 5th.[1] I agree in the main with all you say. The rumour about my wearing European costume if I went to London is as ill-founded as my rumoured visit to America. All the same I appreciate the motive lying behind your letter.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindustan Times, 27-4-1969

552. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

BORSAD,
June 24, 1931

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I have your letter. Your explanation does not absolve you from blame. My point is that it is wrong to criticize one State in the territory of another. Such criticism involves violence. You should think over all that I have said to you from the point of view of non-violence. If you think that the principle of non-violence itself is an error, my argument loses all force.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2845. Courtesy: Shardabehn Shah

[1] *Vide* "A Countryman's Advice", 9-7-1931.

553. SLAVE COMMUNITIES

We have the untouchables, the shame and curse of the Hindu society. But we have also other communities whom we—the so-called higher classes—treat almost as slaves and keep in quarters designed for our cattle. Representatives of one such community have addressed a letter which I condense as follows:[1]

> We are representatives of the Rajwar community living in the districts of Gaya, Patna, Monghyr and Palamau, in the Province of Bihar and Orissa. . . .
>
> On refusal to give *begar*[2] the zamindar forthwith begins a suit for arrears of rent, gets decree, puts the *jot*[3] to auction and evicts the tenant from the land in his possession.
>
> A Rajwar child, no sooner he reaches his 6th or 7th year, becomes almost the property of his parents' landlord; he is made to tend the landlord's cattle and do all sorts of odd jobs. . . . In fact he leads the life of a slave, a mere chattel of the landlord.
>
> For working from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Rajwars are paid at the rate of 3 seers of unhusked rice per diem and no wages in cash are ever paid to them. . . .
>
> The Rajwar children are not allowed to be sent to the primary schools and the teachers too are not allowed to teach the boys by the landlord.
>
> Whenever there is any theft or larceny or dacoity or any crime whatever in the locality where this community is living, the first suspicion and the first brunt of the police enquiry must be borne by it, although there may not be the slightest evidence for the same. . . .
>
> We have already submitted these memorials to the District Magistrates of Gaya and Patna, and to the Chief Secretary, Bihar and Orissa Government but we have not as yet learnt what steps the respective authorities have taken. We hope that you will do something to ameliorate our condition.

The letter is written for the representatives and probably

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.
[2] Forced labour
[3] Holding

also prompted by some unknown reformer among them. It is signed by about twenty-five representatives. What however matters is not who wrote it but the statements made therein, if they are true.

They are highly likely to be true in the main. For such treatment is not an isolated phenomenon of Bihar. Almost all the provinces have these backward, suppressed, slave communities. They are no heritage from the British. We have had them for ages and all the greater shame on us for that.

We may plead a thousand excuses for their existence in the days gone by. But in these days of enlightenment, awakening and insistence on swaraj, we have no excuse for tolerating the atrocity. Congress workers have to take up the cause of these communities wherever they are found. They should try to enlist the sympathy and co-operation of those who 'own' these men and women. Swaraj is the sum total of all the activities that go to build up a free and vigorous nation concious of the strength that comes from right doing. The existence of slave communities is aterrible wrong and must therefore be a hindrance in our march towards the goal.

Young India, 25-6-1931

554. A GENTLE REBUKE

C. Rajagopalachari's eagle eye sees everything that appears in print about the drink evil. He saw a report of my very innocent speech at the village of Maroli[1] where the other day I laid the foundation of a weaving institute. I had there attempted to show the connection that exists between factory labour and drink and said how mithubehn Petit had, whilst doing prohibition work, discovered that if the people who ceased to visit the liquor shops she picketed were to be permanently weaned from drink, they should have some ambition provided in life, some work found for them during their idle hours. I then showed how she found such occupation in hand-spinning and weaving. I further went on to show that if people had to do excessive labour, they would want some stimulant and illustrated it by an experience from my own life when during the Boer War I had to issue from the commissariat rations of rum for those bearers who were used to drink and who pleaded with me for rum which, they said, would enable them to bear the fatigue and resume next day's march. Of course, this was a

[1] *Vide*, "Speech at Maroli", 12-6-1931

superstition. But superstitions die hard.

Rajagopalachari feared that the report that he had read would be distorted to yield all kinds of meanings favourable to the opponents of prohibition. His fear has been justified. I have received embarrassing congratulations on my conversion to sanity. They embarrass me because I am not conscious of the conversion imputed to me. I feel like a man who falsely reported to have died reads his obituary notices and blushes to have the virtues he never knew he had possessed.

Let me therefore re-declare my faith in undiluted prohibition before I land myself in deeper water. If I was appointed dictator for one hour for all India, the first thing I would do would be to close without compensation all the liquor shops, destroy all the toddy palms such as I know them in Gujarat, compel factory owners to produce humane conditions for their workmen and open refreshment and recreation rooms where these workmen would get innocent drinks and equally innocent amusements. I would close down the factories if the owners pleaded want of funds. Being a teetotaller, I would retain my sobriety in spite of the possession of one hour's dictatorship and therefore arrange for the examination of my European friends and diseased persons who may be in medical need of brandy and the like at State expense by medical experts and where necessary they would receive certificate which would entitle them to obtain the prescribed quantity of the fiery waters from certified chemists. The rule will apply *mutatis mutandis* to intoxicating drugs.

For the loss of revenue from drinks, I would straightway cut down the military expenditure and expect the Commander-in-Chief to accommodate himself to the new condition in the best way he can. The workmen left idle by the closing of factories, I would remove to model farms to be immediately opened as far as possible in the neighbourhood of the factories unless I was advised during that brief hour that the State could profitably run the factories under the required conditions and could therefore take over from the owners.

Young India, 25-6-1931

555. TERRIBLE IF TRUE

I take the following from a complaint about picketing:

> In rural areas there is definite evidence that everything short of physical violence has been resorted to by volunteers. Would-be customers are obstructed, abused and generally harassed, and toddy shop renters have been put to considerable loss and in some instances have been so discouraged that they have ceased to get trees marked for tapping and closed their shops rather than suffer further indignities. The Congress office in Tellichery issued summonses to the principal renters to appear before them and few had the courage to disobey. Those who appeared were summarily told to close their shops, and when they asked for compensation they were told that Congress would do nothing for them.

If these complaints are true this picketing should be suspended immediately. Though as soon as I had this complaint I wrote inquiring about the allegations, I thought it was better for the sake of workers in general to publish the complaint. It may be mentioned that somewhat similar complaints have been received regarding cloth-picketing too. I can but repeat the warning[1] I have issued in these pages that it would be better for the Congress, better for the cause of prohibition, whether of intoxicating drinks and drugs or foreign cloth, that we ceased picketing altogether than that there was the slightest departure from the terms of the Delhi Settlement. If picketing cannot remain peaceful, it should be abandoned altogether.

It is being discovered that the more effective method is to pay house-to-house visit and meet the drunkards, opium-eaters or foreign-cloth users in their own homes and explain to them the evil of the use of any of the three things. There may be also addresses at street corners and distribution of leaflets. *Prabhat pheries*[2] too can do this propaganda through swadeshi and anti-drink and drug songs. Foreign-cloth boycott may also be assisted by door to door hawking of khadi, registering orders and organizing the weaving of self-spun yarn. Such levelling up [of] the atmosphere cannot but affect the use of drinks and drugs and foreign cloth.

[1] *Vide* "Notes",, sub-title, "Picketing", 21-5-1931

[2] Early morning processions

But how if these charges are in the main or wholly untrue. I know that in Gujarat there is a tendency growing up to molest peaceful picketers and, what is more mischievious still, there is going on an unrestrained sale of liquor at odd hours and in odd places under cover of the law. Sjt. C. Rajagopalachari who is the General Secretary of the Temperance League in the place vacated by Mr. Anderson and who is a politician only because he is a social reformer is convinced that in the South a deliberate policy of repression of strictly peaceful picketing has been launched in the shape of faked prosecutions and physical interference. From Ludhiana, Ambala, Muttra and elsewhere come authentic reports of lathi charges and the like. I have deliberately refrained from publishing these statements of which the various organizations have furnished me with a full record. Besides this, there are complaints pouring in about other matters. I can only give the assurance to the public that not one of these has escaped my attention. But I cannot carry on a public propaganda at the same time that I am carrying on delicate negotiations with the Central Government from and through which I expect to gain relief in most of, if not all of these cases.

Meanwhile I must ask all Congress workers to be patient. They must not allow themselves to be provoked into civil disobedience. It is never the first, it is always the last resort. We must exhaust all the intermediate processes before we can take up that last sovereign remedy. Whilst the Settlement lasts, we have the law-courts too, open to us. I know that at best they bring us poor comfort. But, such as they are, they may not be passed by, even as we may not pass by, the respective departments of the executive Government for seeking relief. Happily nowadays we have all over India lawyers who give their services to the Congress organizations free of charge. Wherever therefore these facilities exist, Congress organizations should avail themselves of them and try to obtain such relief as is locally possible. They must not embark on civil disobedience without first obtaining the permission of the Working Committee. It is to meet very shortly[1] and I promise to place it in full possession of all the complaints and take directions from it. Our safety and honour today demand a meticulous performance by us of all the conditions of the Settlement.

[1] It met in Bombay from July 7 to 12.

But I would appeal to the provincial governments and the members of the Civil Service to come to the rescue. I must not conceal from them and the public the suspicion based on the evidences before me that they are in many cases hindering the working of the Settlement where they are not wilfully breaking it. Let it not be proved what is being said of them that some of them want the Settlement to break to pieces. Let it not be said of them that they destroyed the edifice that Lord Irwin gave anxious days and anxious nights to build up. Let them realize that the Settlement is a solemn contract not between two individuals but between two organizations, hitherto fighting, now seeking to cooperate. They may not distrust the Congress workers and treat them as if they were enemies even as the Congressmen may not, whilst the contract persists, distrust every official act.

Young India, 25-6-1931

556. A MARTYR

Whilst the Working Committee was deliberating in Bombay during the early part of the month, there was a public meeting in Dongri at which there was an uproar and at which a youth was fatally stabbed. The news of the death was brought to the Working Committee. It created a sensation but at the time it was thought that some unknown unidentifiable person had died. On returning to Borsad I had a letter from Sjt. Kishorelal Mashruwala who deploring the tragedy gave me some details about the deceased. I thereupon asked him to procure fuller details which I now have.

Brave and good Pannalal was only 22 years old when he received the fatal stab on that fateful night from one of the excited Mussalman crowd. Accompanied by his father and younger brother, Pannalal had gone to the Dongri meeting specially to hear Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan who was among others advertised to speak at the meeting. After they had heard the Khan Saheb the father hailed a victoria and they got in. Being khaddar-clad they were taken for nationalist leaders. A howling crowd surrounded them. Stones were rained on them. All of them were hurt. Pannalal's left eyebrow was bleeding. Nothing minding, in order to lighten his father's sorrow, he made light of his wound. Suddenly there came into his left ribs a deep stab. Blood gushed from the wounded side. Out came the entrails.

Pannalal bore it all bravely and asked to be taken to the hospital where he said his wound would be dressed and all would be well. Alas ! all was not well. In spite of all the attention given to him the brave young man died the next day.

He was born of wealthy parents. His father Maganlal Zaveri is a flourishing jeweller, much trusted and respected for his honesty. His uncle is the Chief Judge of the Jodhpur High Court. The deceased leaves a young widow to whom he was married only eighteen months ago. The parents, having come under the influence of the national movement, simplified the life of the family and sent Pannalal to the national school. After having studied up to the sixth standard he left studies to help his father in business. But Pannalal never left national work. He was one of the party that raided the Wadala Salt Works and came in for lathi blows. He always joined the dangerous processions which were the feature of those days. Pannalal has lived by dying. My congratulations to the parents for having had such a worthy son. Let death and especially a death such as this leave no sting behind. The body has been reduced to ashes but out of the ashes will rise true unity among us. If we do not resent this death and would give many more lives if need be, I know that true unity will not be long in coming.

As for the widow let me hope that their love for their son will prompt the parents to give her the education the girl widow may desire or be fitted for and that they will give her every encouragement to remarry when she grows to maturity. Let them, if they have drunk in the spirit of the age, shed the superstition that a widow is the property of the husband's family to remain as their slave. A widow must have the same right as a widower and must be taught to know that she has the same free choice as men.

And of the Mussalmans who approve of such murders ? Surely, the cause of Islam or the cause of peace which the word 'Islam' means, has not been advanced by the murder. It cannot be right to take innocent life; Pannalal had given no provocation. How I wish Pannalal's murder would open the eyes of those whose heart approves such murders and who make them possible. Is it not possible to arrange a joint meeting on the very spot where the murder took place and to declare that whether we could evolve a common formulae regarding the political issue or not, such murders would be made impossible. Such a meeting is not impossible as, so far as I am aware,

Pannalal's people have forgiven the wrong and the Congress Committee purposely avoided a public funeral in order that passion might not be in flamed. We ought to be able to hold public meetings anywhere and fearlessly express views even though they may be unpalatable in [a] particular neighbourhood.

Young India, 25-6-1931

557. SERIOUS ALLEGATIONS

THE EDITOR, "YOUNG INDIA"

SIR,

In the village Pipri, Tehsil Purwa, District Unao, a raid is said to have been made on the tenants by the zamindars of the village along with the Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Pt. Chandra Mohan Nath and an armed guard on 30th May, 1931. . . .

It may however be said to the credit of the tenants, however illiterate they may be, . . . they are perfectly non-violent, and not a single example can be cited in which the tenants might have resorted to the methods of violence even for self-defence.

VISHWAMBHAR DAYAL TRIPATHI

M.A., LL.B.

UNAO President, District Congress Committee

I publish this very serious letter[1] with only inconsequential alterations. It is undoubtedly libellous, if the allegations are not true. I shall gladly publish any explanations that the zamindars or the Sub-Divisional Magistrate may wish to give. The matter demands immediate inquiry, if the allegations are substantially correct, the Zamindars' Association should take up the matter and deal with the zamindars. I may add that I wired to the writer if he could support the allegations and he promptly wired back in the affirmative.

Young India, 25-6-1931

[1] rom which only extracts are reproduced here.

558. NOTES

SELF-RESPECT ABOVE ALL

I have letters[1] from several provinces saying that the education authorities are imposing conditions on the return of students who had left their schools or colleges during the struggle. A circular of which a copy has been sent by one of the correspondents requires parents to give guarantees that their children will not take part in politics. These correspondents ask me whether these conditions are consistent with the Settlement.

Without entering into that question for the time being, I have no hesitation in saying that neither students nor parents if they have any self-respect left in them should accept such conditions. What will it profit the students or the parents if they have to lose their souls to gain the questionable advantage of a public education and a certificate? There are the national institutions open to the students. If they do not like these, they can study at home. It is a gross superstition to suppose that knowledge can be obtained only by going to schools and colleges. The world produced brilliant students before schools and colleges came into being. There is nothing so ennobling or lasting as self-study. Schools and colleges make most of us mere receptacles for holding the superfluities of knowledge. Wheat is left out and mere husk is taken in. I do not wish to decry schools and colleges as such. They have their use. But we are making altogether too much of them. They are but one of the many means of gaining knowledge.

OH, THOSE ADDRESSES

Manibehn, Sardar Vallabhbhai's daughter who does secretarial work, wardrobe keeping and nursing for her father and therefore always travels with him plaintively asks:

> Why do the people give Father so many addresses, when he wants money? You know better than I do that he has nowhere to lay his head on. He has no house or chests to keep the many addresses he receives. He has no safes in which he can keep costly caskets and gifts. For me it becomes positively a burden to take charge of these addresses and gifts. I would like people not to give addresses and gifts to any Congressmen. Their service must be its own

[1] *Vide* "My Notes", sub-title, "Students".

reward. But in any case, will you not ask them to spare Father. Let them refrain from giving him the addresses he does not need, let them give him the money he needs for the very work they expect him to do and so much admire.

I need add nothing to these sentiments beyond heartily endorsing them and commending them to those who would invite the Sardar to their places.

DUTY OF DISCIPLINARIANS

An Akola correspondent asks:[1]

> If even elected officials in a Congress organization do not carry out the rule of khadi laid down in the constitution, what is one to do who believes in strict adherence to the rules?

The question is more easily asked than answered. The decision would depend upon so many surrounding circumstances. Therefore it is possible only to give a general guidance which it may be necessary to depart from as new and varying circumstances arise.

Assuming that the member believing in khaddar out and out finds that the majority do not observe the rule, that he has drawn their attention to the breach, that he has drawn the attention of the chief officials also and fails to find any satisfaction, he should by way of protest retire from the elected body to which he belongs. He will simply remain a four-anna member without exercising his right of voting. But outside the organization he will preach discipline without being bitter towards those who are lax in observing it. He will also do such Congress work as commends itself to him if he can do so without incurring the displeasure of the powers that be in the Congress organization. A vast amount of constructive work can be done without one being a member.

WHY DON'T THEY SPIN

A correspondent bitingly writes:

> When you address meetings you ask people to spin for the sake of your *Daridranarayana*[2]. If anyone asks for your autograph, Bania-like, you impose the condition that he or she should spin! Then what prevents you from asking Congress members on so many committees to spin? Why do they not all spin by way of encouragement to others ? Or is spinning to be reserved for

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Nanabhai I. Mashruwala", 20-6-1931

[2] God in the form of the poor

non-Congressmen or at best for four-anna members but not for the chosen ones of committees?

I apologize to the writer. Only let him remember that whereas I cannot always give spinning demonstrations before big audiences, I give actual demonstrations before members of committees. And is not an ounce of practice more than tons of preaching? But the writer is perhaps right in his sarcasm. There are hundreds of Congress committees if not thousands. I do not speak to all of them through my spinning. It would certainly be a good example and would add imperceptibly but materially to the wealth of the country if the thousands of members of these committees would spin regularly for at least half an hour. If these figures were tabulated and published from week to week, it will fill the atmosphere with the spirit of industry, sacrifice and khadi, the emblem of *Daridranarayana*. Boycott of foreign cloth through khadi will then be accomplished much earlier than the most sanguine among us dare expect. But will they? "They spin not, neither do they toil."[1]

Young India, 25-6-1931

559. LETTER TO K. B. BHADRAPUR

AS AT BORSAD,
June 25, 1931

DEAR MR. BHADRAPUR,

I have your astonishing letter of 23rd inst. I had written to you that the complainants had no evidence whereby they could fix the blame on the Dharalas. Nor had I asked for any prosecutions. What I had asked for was a preventive measure and if you tell me that where complainants cannot trace the guilty parties the Government will leave them to their fate I shall take the answer. But I was unprepared for the gratuitous statement that it is not beyond suspicion that the damages might have been selfinflicted to fasten the crime on the Dharalas. You will permit me to say that sentiments like this amount to putting a premium on crime. Does it not strike you as unthinkable that the Patidars should engage in self-destruction for the doubtful purpose of proving the Dharalas guilty? Nor am I able to see what earthly purpose they can serve by cutting all their hedges in order to fasten

[1] *St. Matthew*, VI. 28.

any crime on the Dharalas. If you have at the back of your mind the Dharala Mukhi of Ras I must tell you that it was not the Patidars who made the suggestion that the presence of a Dharala Mukhi was probably responsible for the cutting of these hedges. In any case the case against the Dharala Mukhi stands on an independent footing. It is as I hold part of the Settlement whereas it would be open to you to say that the granting of protection to the Patidars is no part of the Settlement and I would not be able to challenge a position of that description.

Yours sincerely,

A.I.C.C. File No. 3, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

560. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

BOMBAY,
June 25, 1931

To a question put about his participation in the Federal Structure Committee [Gandhiji replied:]

If I attend the Round Table Conference, I shall possibly attend the Federal Structure Committee also.

Asked whether he had finally decided to go to the London Conference and when he was likely to start, Gandhiji said that the Working Committee would decide all those questions for him. His theory and views had been exploded and he would willingly obey whatever the Committee asked him to do.

Asked whether the situation in Gujarat was satisfactory, after hesitating for a while, Gandhiji replied that the situation was not satisfactory. But he had been corresponding with the Government of India. Incidentally, he mentioned that he had been receiving reports from all over India forwarded by reliable trusted workers like Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, that a deliberate policy of repression of strictly peaceful picketing, in the shape of faked prosecutions, physical interference and lathi charges was hindering the working of the Settlement. None of these complaints had escaped his attention, and he could not publish them as he was carrying on delicate negotiations with the Central Government from and through which he expected to gain relief. He hoped that things would not assume serious proportions as to endanger the Truce. He had one word to say to Congressmen, that the safety and honour of the Congress demanded meticulous performance by the Congressmen of all the conditions of the Truce.

Gandhiji proposed to place the Working Committee in full possession of all the complaints.

Gandhiji profoundly regretted the failure of the efforts in Bhopal to effect a settlement between the two sections of the Muslim group. It was a very unfortunate incident. The Working Committee would discuss what next should be done in view of the failure.

Gandhiji was confident that the Foreign-cloth Export Scheme would prove a success and the scheme did not amount to a breach of the Truce as alleged by certain interested parties.

Is the contention made by a new political school of thought to the effect that the Congress, by accepting the Truce, accepted the principle of Federation as enunciated in the last R.T.C. true? If so where does the Congress resolution of Indepcndence passed at the Lahore Congress and reiterated at Karachi stand?

A. This question need not be answered.

The Hindu, 25-6-1931

561. DISCUSSION ON FOREIGN-CLOTH BOYCOTT[1]

BOMBAY,
June 25, 1931

Mr. Gandhi said he was aware of the position, but it was an article of faith with him that the use of any foreign manufactured articles in the composition of cloth turned out by Indian mills was detrimental to the interests of the masses. He explained his view at some length and regretted his inability to deflect from the course [in spite] of any disadvantage, which might accrue to the industry, which he thought would only be of a temporary character.

Gandhiji however realized very fully the menace of Japanese competition, and said he would leave no stone unturned to deal with it effectively. The Congress policy was certainly not intended to merely restrict imports from Lancashire, but all imports of foreign cloth, and he would direct particular attention to the growing menace from Japan. If and when a satisfactory settlement was reached, Japanese competition might be dealt with by means of a special tariff. The whole position was one which would have to be seriously considered in the nearest future.

The Hindu, 26-6-1931

[1] With H. P. Mody, Chairman of the Mill-owners' Association, S. D. Saklatwala, and Lalji Naranji. The discussion turned on the increasing imports of Japanese piece-goods, particularly artificial silk goods. It was pointed out that while the industry was being asked to give up the use of artificial silk yarn, Japanese imports of this class of goods were increasing at an alarming rate, disorganizing trade not merely in artificial silk goods, but also in other varieties.

562. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, BOMBAY

June 26, 1931

Mahatma Gandhi first congratulated the women of India and particularly the women of Bombay for the great and heroic part they had taken in the last fight. They had shown unparalleled courage and their capacity to suffer and make supreme sacrifices in the cause of the country was fully tested. When Gandhiji started on his pilgrimage to Dandi[1] he had entrusted to the women of India a twofold mission. Firstly the women of India must help the nation to exterminate all foreign cloth and secondly they must help to enforce total prohibition. Gandhiji entrusted this task to the women, having full faith that it would be carried out. What the women had achieved by selfless work and during such a short time was far beyond his most sanguine hopes.

The women of India, proceeded Gandhiji, had enhanced the prestige of the whole nation. They were the cynosure of all eyes. The whole world looked up to them with admiration for their patriotism. But that was not enough. The praise that was showered on them by the world must encourage them to look forward to their future work with greater faith and zeal.

They should with more vigour carry out the work entrusted to them during the fight. They should persuade dealers in foreign cloth as well as consumers to shun foreign cloth. They should beg of those who are addicted to drink to give up the vice and they should induce the dealers in liquor to stop the evil traffic. During the last fight men and women volunteered their services for this work but now this task had become more onerous and difficult. There was both laxity in work and lack of workers.

The need for a regular and disciplined army of workers was therefore all the greater. They should not be disappointed by the results of their efforts. If they had complete faith in their mission and believed that they were going to succeed, it would not only be possible to exterminate foreign cloth from India but also root out the drink evil in a short time. But this kind of work required discipline and united efforts. He noticed among the audience a few women wearing the orange colour saris but a majority of them did not wear this emblem. This colour was symbolic of the dedication of their services in the cause of the country. It also indicated that they were members of the local organization of women which carried out the mission of boycott and prohibition.

[1] On March 12, 1930; ads Vol. XLIII.

My appeal to you women, therefore, is to come out and adopt this symbol of the orange colour sari and join the band of those brave and selfless women whose services are pledged to the country.

He then sounded a note of warning to such of the women who took to khaddar during the last struggle but were now tempted to go in for foreign fineries. It had been brought to his notice that a few Khoja[1] women who had taken part in the movement and had become converts to the gospel of khaddar were now showing an inclination to buy foreign cloth. This was not the case with Khoja women alone but Hindu women also. If they had the slightest regard and pity for the millions of their countrymen who were facing starvation and worse they should cease patronizing foreign cloth.

They should prefer either khaddar or India-made cloth to the exclusion of all foreign cloth. But he would point out that Indian mill-cloth was meant for those to whom the message of the starving millions had not reached and for such persons who were not of Congress persuasion. But every Congressman and woman and everyone who believed in the Congress creed must adopt khaddar and khaddar alone even to the exclusion of mill-cloth.

No doubt the use of mill-cloth would benefit a few lakhs of workers living in industrial towns, a few thousands of shareholders and a smaller number of agents and directors. But there were seven lakhs of villages in India and 30 crores of poverty-stricken peasants in them. Should one place the interest of 30 crores of peasants first or a few lakhs of industrial workers ? Their duty should be to relieve the poverty of the 30 crores of peasants by patronizing khaddar and khaddar alone.

Mahatmaji thought that the best education for girls and women was not the kind of university education that they were getting in schools but that they should be taught thoroughly to master the art of spinning and carding. The message of the charkha must be popularized throughout the length and breadth of the country and women were best fitted for the propagation of this message. If every woman learnt to spin and cultivated the habit of wearing only selfmade khaddar clothes they would go a long way in winning their freedom. [Concluding, Gandhiji said:]

In khaddar alone lies your salvation and in your salvation lies the salvation of your country.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-6-1931

[1] A Muslim community

563. SPEECH TO 'DEPRESSED' CLASSES DEPUTATION[1]

BOMBAY,
June 26, 1931

Gandhiji said in reply to the address:

Don't call me a Mahatma, but call me a Bhangi.

He said that he appreciated the title "Pioneer of Scavengers", once given to him by a European friend rather than the title "Mahatma". He promised the deputationists that everything that he would urge at the Round Table Conference would be in the interest of their community and the country in general. He would not promise that the very same formula suggested by the deputation will be placed before the Conference but if a better one suggested itself to him he would give it preference. As regards providing educational facilities to the 'depressed' classes, Mahatmaji would like to do much more than was suggested to him.

But Gandhiji was himself not sure whether the present Settlement with the Government was a temporary settlement or permanent one. If it was a permanent one and swaraj was achieved, then many of the problems concerning the 'depressed' classes could be at once tackled. Of this much he was sure, that owing to the great awakening of the people the stigma of untouchability would soon disappear altogether from the country.

Mahatmaji wanted to say how much the Congress had been doing for the uplift and general advancement of the 'depressed' classes. After the question of untouchability was taken up by the Congress, it had spent more than 20 lakhs of rupees for starting ashrams and schools for 'depressed' classes and untouchable classes where free education was imparted. There was a network of ashrams in Gujarat where 'depressed' class boys were taught free.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-6-1931

[1] Which met Gandhiji at Mani Bhavan, Bombay. It consisted of 30 delegates led by P. Baloo who whole-heartedly supported joint electorates with reservation of seats, and advocated division of the community into three groups, namely, Mahars, Chamars and thc rest of the 'depressed' classes.

564. TELEGRAM TO DESAI [1]

[On or after *June 26, 1931*][2]

DESAI
CARE CONGRESS
BHIWANI

YOU MAY ACCEPT UNDERTAKING MAKING IT CLEAR THAT NO SALE FOREIGN CLOTH WOULD BE ALLOWED EVEN AFTER R.T.C. UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.

GANDHI

From a microfilm; S.N. 17323

565. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[After *June 26, 1931*][3]

CHI. NARANDAS,

How could I, while in Bombay, attend to your letters?

Do whatever you think proper now as regards Soman.

Try to comfort Gangabehn as much as you can.

I understand about Bhagwanji. I think in the long run he will see his dharma.

It is stuffy everywhere.

There is no time to write more. It is 10.15 p.m.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The other letters I hope to write tomorrow. Now it is 10.30.

[From Gujarati]

BapunaPatro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, Part I, p. 273; also C.W. 8188.

Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Two telegrams were received from the addressee, one in Bombay and the other at Bulsar. The telegram dated June 26, 1931 read: "Can we accept undertaking stoppage sales foreign clothes till result Round Table Conference."

[3] In the printed source this has been placed among the letters of 1931. From the reference to Soman, it seems this letter was written some time after the letter to the addressee dated June 22, 1931. Gandhiji was in Bombay on June 25-26.

[2] *ibid*

566. TELEGRAM TO DESAI[1]

VAPI,
June 27, 1931

YOU CAN AGREE BUT GIVE CLEAR INTIMATION NO LIKELIHOOD AFTER CONFERENCE BOYCOTT BEING L1FTED.

GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 273, 1931. Courtesy: Nehra Memorial Museum and Library

567. SPEECH AT UDVADA[2]

[*June 27, 1931*][3]

You are known all the world over for your large-hearted charity; you are renowned for your enterprise; you have distinguished yourselves by the great patriots you have given to the country—Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozeshah Mehta, Dinshaw Wacha. How ugly it sounds when one mentions in the same breath that you have distinguished yourselves by being dealers of toddy and liquor? Don't say the shopkeepers would be ruined if they gave up the shops. You have magnificent trusts and charities and the handful of Parsi liquour-sellers in Gujarat can easily be turned to other occupations. But you must take the courage in both your hands and wipe out the stain.

Young India, 2-7-1931

[1] The addressee's telegram read: "Merchants ready sealing stocks till result Round Table Conference and abiding by Congress mandate even after that period. Can we agree this language? If this solution accepted many unpleasant issues averted. Reply."

[2] Holy place of the Parsis in Pardi Taluka

[3] Gandhiji spent a day in Pardi Taluka while returning from Bombay to Borsad.

568. LETTER TO H. T. SORLEY

BORSAD,
June 28, 1931

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your exhaustive letter of 23rd inst. No. 43-14/30[1]. It will be impossible for me to get hold of the purchaser of the *muchwa* and induce him to part with the thing he has got admittedly so cheap. The sale of the *muchwa* being after the Settlement, was clearly in breach of it and was due to the negligence of the official at Surat. The only proper course in my opinion is to pay the owner the market price of the *muchwa*, which, I understand, is Rs. 200. But I have no evidence in support of my statement beyond the one made by the owner. There should be no difficulty in ascertaining the market price. I hope that the course suggested by me would be adopted without delay. The poor owner naturally has to suffer loss whilst he remains without a *muchwa*.

Yours sincerely,

H. T. SORLEY, ESQ., M.M.I.C.S.
COLLECTOR OF SALT REVENUE, BOMBAY

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

569. LETEER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

BORSAD,
June 28, 1931

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter and your postcard. I am glad the notice under Sec. 144 in Rae Bareli has been withdrawn. It was undoubtedly due to

[1] I n which the addressee had proposed that his department "will consider the question of refunding the amount of Rs. 50 realized in the auction sale to the present owner of the *muchwa* [a small boat] if the latter is willing to return the *muchwa* to its original owner, and provided the Central Board of Revenue agree to this compromise suggested by me. . . ."

your clear letter to the Chief Secretary. By the time you reach Bombay for the Working Committee, the Committee should be ready to give definite guidance.

I am quite convinced that in order to complete our case it is necessary for you to ask the Governor to see you. In seeking the interview you will tell him that you want to leave no stone unturned to see that the clear position is placed before the highest authority in the province. You may bring nothing from the Governor but our position will surely be the stronger for your having made the attempt to see him and to secure fulfilment of the Settlement. We shall lose nothing by your offering to see him and seeing him if he accepts the offer.

You might have seen in *Young India* what I wrote about the happenings in Unao District.[1] I am going to write again on the material supplied by you and others.

It was unfortunate that the Working Committee had to be postponed. Vallabhbhai was strongly against going to Allahabad in the present circumstances there. I think too that what with Cawnpore and the other excitement in U.P. it was better that Allahabad was avoided for the time being.

BAPU

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
ALLAHABAD

A Bunch of Old Letters, pp. 97-8

[1] *Vide* "Serious Allegations", 25-6-1931

570. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

BORSAD,
June 28, 1931

CHI. MAHAVIR,

Probably the cause of your not keeping well at the Ashram lies in yourself. I believe that we can train the body to adjust itself to any place. The main factor is food. Through experiments one can find out what food suits one in a particular season. There is no doubt, moreover, that much depends on one's mind. Hence, if you are very eager to go and live in the Vidyapith, you may go there after obtaining the permission of Narandasbhai and Chhaganbhai. You may stay wherever you think you will keep good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6230

571. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

BORSAD,
June 29, 1931

CHI. VASUMATI,

This time you have written after a pretty long interval. I expected you to say in the letter what you saw at Visnagar and what inquiries you made, and give similar other information about the place. You may still do so. How do you keep?

What is Padma's complaint regarding her diary? She seems to have been very much offended. Let me know what the facts are.

Ba tells me that Dahibehn has gone to Broach and from there will go to Udvada.

I will agree with anything you decide. I only wish to see you peaceful and steady in mind and healthy in body. You are bound to attain that state sooner or later. I am indeed happy that you are ceaselessly striving towards that end.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Giarati: S.N. 9325; also C.W. 572. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

572. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

June 29, 1931

CHI. GANGABHEN,

I got both your letters. You seem to feel worried and upset. If you are very much worked, come over for a day.

"Never lose heart"[1] means that, if we get unhappy experiences in society or do not succeed immediately in our undertakings, we should not give way to despair but should remain cheerful and go on doing our work. This is what is meant by never losing heart.

By saying you are a member of the Managing Committee, I tried to remind you of your responsibility and your powers You can say in the Committee what you wish to and persuade it to accept your proposal.

What I expect from you is this. Even if others lose heart, you should not. Swallow all bitter draughts, go ahead and do the work expected of you. This is what I want from you. All my expectations of you concern strength of heart and not intellectual ability. The intellect has less value, the heart has more. And the heart is something which everyone has.

"Do not try to jump too high"[2] means that, instead of planning big things, you should try to improve what we are already doing. If you are impatient to take up new things, the task on hand will suffer. In my thoughts, I am always there. But how can I come away? I must finish the task that has come to me unsought.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 56; also C.W. 8779. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Gangabehn Vaidhya", 19-6-1931

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Gangabehn Vaidya", 22-6-1931

573. STATEMENT ON BAN BY SACHIN STATE[1]

BORSAD,
June 29, 1931

Let the public know that the change of venue[2] has nothing to do with the order. Neither Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel nor I knew anything about it when the change of venue was decided upon. The date and venue had to be changed for the convenience of, and at the request of Dr. Ansari, Maulana Abul Kalam and Mr. Mohamed Alam. Nevertheless, I am sorry for the order.

Some States do not seem to realize that at present there is agreement between the Government and the Congress. Such an order might therefore easily embarrass the Government which to the State is the paramount power. Indeed, Dumas was thought of merely for its being a seaside resort. Nobody dreamt that the Working Committee meeting in the cool air of the sea near Dumas would harm Sachin. However, I am thankful that the accident of the change of venue has prevented an awkward situation arising. I hope, however, that order means no more than overzeal on the part of the District Magistrate of Sachin.

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-6-1931

574. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

BORSAD,
June 29, 1931

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter. It is now nearing 10.30 p.m. But I must give you a line. I am glad you are settling down. You have gone there just in time. Do come nearer Gangabehn. She is troubled at heart. You will be also helpful to Father Elwin.

[1] Gandhiji issued this statement following an order of the District Magistrate, Sachin State, prohibiting the meeting of the Congress Working Committee.

[2] From Dumas in Sachin State to Bombay

You will be pleased to know that Surajbehn has adopted the 1/2 sari. At first I did not notice the change. Write to her a brief note.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 9666; also C.W. 5432. Courtesy: Mirabehn

575. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEWS

BORSAD,
10.30 p.m., June 29, 1931

MY DEAR MATHEW,

Do now come and pass a few days with me.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1549

576. LETTER TO GANGABEHN AND NANIBEHN JHAVERI

BORSAD,
June 29, 1931

CHI. GANGABEHN AND NANIBEHN,

As it is 10.30 p.m., I will not write much. In the circumstances supposed in Nanibehn's question, our duty is to be quiet. The responsibility of what happens after we have advised others, does not rest on us. The lesson that the *Gita* teaches is that we should leave the result to God. We are only His servants carrying out His orders. Sing the song: "Let me be your servant."

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3116

577. LETTER TO PADMA

BORSAD,
June 30, 1931

CHI. PADMA,

I got your letter. It is 5 o'clock in the morning. My complaint against you is that you do not take proper rest and so get fever. You ought to take perfect rest, lying in bed all the time. lf you do so, you will soon get well. Why don't you listen to me and do this?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6123; also C.W. 3475. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

578. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

BORSAD,
June 30, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I have your lettcr of 23rd inst. setting forth objections raised against the recent resolution of the Working Committee on boycott of foreign cloth. I have re-read the resolution in the light of the objections raised and I have come to the conclusion that the objections are based on an insufficient reading of the resolution and ignorance of the previous history of the Congress policy in the matter. Long before the civil disobedience campaign and ever since the Bengal Partition days, boycott of foreign cloth and especially British cloth and general British goods became the policy of the Congress. In 1920 boycott of British goods was dropped at my instance and replaced by boycott of foreign cloth on predominantly economic grounds and ever since it has so remained. Whilst I was in Yeravda jail between 1922 and '24 a resolution adopting boycott of British goods was passed at one of the sessions of the Congress and since then, boycott of foreign cloth and boycott of British goods have run on parallel lines. During the last struggle these assumed an aggressive political character and became practically merged. As a result of the Delhi Settlement, boycott of British goods was discontinued and the effect of discontinuance was so immediate that within a week of the Settlement orders for British

machinery and other goods were freely sent. Boycott of foreign cloth however remained not as a political weapon but as an economic necessity. Thus complete prohibition of the sale of foreign cloth as an economic necessity has been the settled Congress policy since 1920. It was torn from its original anti-British setting. A mere pursuit of this policy can in no sense be interpreted to mean interference with the liberty of action of the individual unless the policy was enforced through violent measures. But the history of the methods adopted by the Congress since the Settlement, I think, furnishes sufficient evidence to show that both the letter and the spirit of the Settlement have been adhered to in the vast majority of cases by Congress organizations and prompt measures have been taken wherever any departure from peaceful methods has been detected.

Objection has been taken to the use of the word 'permit' in the resolution in question. Of course the word has reference only to those who put themselves under Congress discipline and so long as the Congress retains the influence it has over the people, the use of the word 'permit' is not only legitimate but necessary if the Congress resolutions are to convey the intention of the authors. So long as the Congress policy remains what it is, it is not open to Congress organizations to permit all those under their influence importation of foreign cloth even if individuals desired it.

As to disciplinary action the words of the resolution are surely quite clear. Disciplinary action contemplated is "against the Committee or the individual as the case may be" and Committee or the individual means only a Congress Committee or its individual members. That all the obligation that is imposed by the Congress is purely moral and devoid of any violence is abundantly clear from the fact that breaches of pledges given to the Congress continue to be reported, the Congress remaining helpless. At the same time it is to be confessed that in a majority of cases the moral authority of the Congress is felt and accepted by the people.

Lastly, I entirely endorse your remark that "it is most undesirable that there should be any ground for misunderstanding as to the attitude of the Congress in this matter." And I assure you that members of the Working Committee are most anxious to avoid any misunderstanding, their desire being, for the good name of the Congress

if for nothing else, to be meticulous in the performance of all the obligations undertaken on behalf of the Congress in the Delhi Settlement.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Home Department, Political, File No. 33/6,1931. Courtesy: National Archives of India.

579. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

BORSAD,
June 30, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I thank you for your letter of 24th inst. intimating the withdrawal of the salt concession in two areas of the salt range, namely, Nurpur Gorge and Kalabagh.[1] I confess that I am taken aback by the news. I think the local officials could have warned the people and waited for the warning to take effect. The withdrawal seems to have been so abrupt and peremptory. I am however myself making enquiries in the matter and shall let you know the result. Of course I entirely agree with you that the use of any transport other than human is not to be countenanced.

Yours sincerely,

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and I.library

[1] The addressee had stated in his letter that the people had abused the concession granted to them and removed enormous quantities of salt on camels and donkeys.

580. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

BORSAD,
June 30, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

In the enclosure to my letter of the 24th inst.[1] regarding the picketing in Cawnpore the Secretary now writes correcting the date on which the photograph was taken as 5th of May instead of middle of March.

Yours sincerely,

A.I.C.C. File No. 387, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

581. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

BORSAD,
June 30, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

This letter is an appeal to you as a Punjabi. There is a prisoner who has served over 19 years' imprisonment whose name is Pandit Jagat Ram[2]. My youngest son who was arrested in Delhi as a civil resister and sentenced to two years' imprisonment was in the Gujarat jail in common with several other civil resisters. He tells me that Pandit Jagat Ram is a most inoffensive man, has no anarchical tendencies. His father died on the 22nd inst. His mother and brother died before his father. There is only the widow left. Several representations, I hear, have been made to the Punjab Government. No one knows why Pandit Jagat Ram has not yet been discharged. This case has no connection with the Settlement. I simply bring it to your notice so as to make an appeal to your humanity and to ask you to use your good offices with your friends in the Punjab Government if you think that you could,

[1] *Vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to H. W. Emerson", 18-6-1931

[2] Chief lieutenant of Lala Hardayal in America; *vide* "An Old Political Prisoner",9-7-1931

without difficulty, use them. I am not worrying you with the details of the case which are well known to the Punjab Secretariat.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 8679; also A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

582. LETTER TO R. M. MAXWELL

BORSAD,
June 30, 1931

DEAR MR. MAXWELL,

Syt. S. B. Joshi of Poona sends me a copy of a petition sent by him to His Excellency on 21st ultimo. On the 23rd April 1930 owing to thc civil disobedience campaign he tendered his resignation as temporary supervisor in the Rohri Canal, No. IV division. As a result, his name was put under a general ban which it appears was declared against all such people. I enclose herewith a copy of the ban. In my opinion this ban should have been removed long ago in terms of the Settlement. Will you kindly let me know the intention of the Government in the matter?[2]

Yours sincerely

R. M. MAXWELL, ESQ.
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
H. E. THE GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY
MAHABALESHWAR

A.I.C.C. File No. 4, 1931, Part II. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The addressee's reply, *inter alia*, stated: "The Government of India feel that this is not a case in which they are justified in interfering with the discretion of the local Government, and particularly, having regard to the present state of the terrorist movement in India."

[2] The addressee replied on July 21 that the Government were cancelling the order which barred S. B. Joshi permanently from Government service.

583. LETTER TO G. FINDLAY SHIRRAS

BORSAD,
June 30, 1931

DEAR PRINCIPAL SHIRRAS,

I thank you for your letter of 25th instant, in reply to mine. I understand that you have admitted all students but seven. There is therefore, I presume, no question of want of accommodation. So far as the internal discipline is concerned I suppose that what you regard as indiscipline was more or less common to the majority of students. But what perhaps you have in mind is that the seven students were ring-leaders. I suggest that, if it was right to take the other students, it would be wrong to keep out the ring-leaders. The Delhi Settlement makes no such distinction between the leaders and the rank and file. I would urge you, therefore, to take the remaining students and avoid a possible crisis.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

G. FINDLAY SHIRRAS, ESQ.
PRINCIPAL, GUJARAT COLLEGE
AHMEDABAD

From a photostat: G.N. 819

584. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

AS AT SABARMATI,
June 30, 1931

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letter.

If I come there I shall tackle all the several matters which you mention about Lancashire mills compared to Bombay mills. I may deal with portions of your letter in *Young India*.

The difficulty about my going to London is still there. To get anything done by the Government just now is like drawing a live tooth. But bit by bit difficulties are being removed. I believe that the Viceroy is sincerely anxious that I should go but I do not think he is able to give much relief.

Yes, the limit of five articles of food and the taking of meals before sundown applies to India alone. In London, therefore, if the system needs it, I shall be able to take more varied food. But so far as milk is concerned cow's milk and buffalo's milk are taboo, and naturally therefore products of these two milks.

Love.

MOHAN

C. F. ANDREWS, ESQ.
112 GOWER STREET
LONDON W.C. 1

From a photostat: G.N. 973

585. LETTER TO S. SATYAMURTI[1]

BORSAD,
June 30, 1931

MY DEAR SATYAMURTI,

Your letter on my recent article[2] on the Working Committee resolution gave me much pleasure. I thought that it was important enough for a public reply through the pages of *Young India*. You will therefore find it in *Young India*.[3]

You have referred to a previous letter. It has not yet reached me. It may be that owing to constant shifting it is following me from post office to post office. If it is of any importance please send me a copy.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SYT. S. SATYAMURTI
2/18 CAR STREET
TRIPLICANE, MADRAS

From a photostat: C.W. 9721. Courtesy: Governrnent of Tamilnadu

[1] A photostat of the original of this letter was exhibited at the Gandhi Darshan Exhibition held at New Delhi in 1969-70.

[2] *Vide* "Substance Not Shadow",18-6-1931

[3] *Vide* "Power Not an End", 2-7-1931

586. LETTER TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

BORSAD,
June 30, 1931

DEAR KHAN SAHEB,

I understand from the Government of India that people in Nurpur Gorge and Kalabagh have been removing salt on a scale not warranted by the Settlement, i.e., on camels and donkeys. No such transport is permissible. People may carry for their own use or sale to the poor people in the neighbourhood on their own backs and walk the distance. No riding for sale is permissible. As a result the Government inform me that the concession has been withdrawn from these two areas. Please enquire and let me know at once, if necessary by wire, what has actually happened.

Yours sincerely,

KHAN ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN SAHEB
UTMANZAI, CHARSADDA (DT. PESHAWAR)

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

587. LETTER TO KRISHNA GOPAL

BORSAD,
June 30, 1931

DEAR LALA KRISHNA GOPAL,

I have your telegram. I have moved in the matter.[1] I do not know what success will attend my effort. Please say nothing in public about this. I may deal with the case[2] in *Young India* next week unless Pandit Jagat Ram is sooner discharged.

Yours sincerely,

LALA KRISHNA GOPAL
SIALKOT (PUNJAB)

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H. W. Emerson", 30-6-1931
[2] *Vide* "An Old Political Prisoner", 9-7-1931.

588. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

BORSAD,
June 30, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter. You should oppose the idea of your going to Calcutta. Tell them frankly that you improve in health when you come to the Ashram. It shows that the only cure for your disease is congenial atmosphere. If you can firmly explain this, all your problems will be solved.

Vidyavati keeps ill. I do not understand the reason.

I keep good health. The diet continues to be the same. Rajendrababu is with me. He is all right now. All of us will go to Bombay on the 7th, and will be there for three days. The address is: Laburnum Road, Gamdevi, Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3416

589. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

BORSAD,
June 30, 1931

If I succeed in reaching London, and if I am invited to visit Lancashire, I would certainly put aside all other work and visit Lancashire and there place before the leading men the Congress position and remove the terrible misunderstanding that has gathered round the policy of the Congress in connection with the exclusion of foreign cloth. Assuming that the Congress position is otherwise accepted, I anticipate no difficulty in making porposals that would be beneficial in their operation both to England and India.

The Hindu, 1-7-1931

590. TELEGRAM TO M. G. DATAR[1]

[On or after *June 30, 1931*]

HEADMASTER
T. V.[2] NAGPUR

DHARMADHIKARI SHOULD DEFEND. SEND FULL PARTICULARS.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 17329

591. TELEGRAM TO CHATURBHUJ MOTIRAM[3]

[On or after *June 30, 1931]*

CONFLICTING WIRES CONFOUND ME. YOU MUST COMPOSE DIFFERENCES OR APPROACH CONGRESS.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 17330

592. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

BORSAD,

Unrevised July 1, 1931

DEAR SATISBABU,

I have your letter. Don't expect any donation from Ahmedabad. What I would like you to do is to discuss the whole thing with Mr. Birla. You should also find out ways and means of interesting the middle class Bengalee and the zamindar class in the khadi work as also in the amelioration of all the poor people. Why should there be

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram of June 30, which read: ''Dharmadhikari teacher our Vidyalaya and Secretary C.P. Marathi Provincial Congress Committee arrested yesterday for sedition for speech at Kisan Conference in C.P. Hindi. Dharmadhikari says he did not in any way break Truce terms by his speech. Your article "Terrible if True" in *Young India* 25th June. Requires your definite advice whether Dharmadhikari should defend in court. Kindly wire immediately. . . ."

[2] Tilak Vidyalaya

[3] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram of June 30 from Bhiwani,which read: "Signed pledge according your orders. Sealed cloth. Nekiram prohibiting sales millcloth placing four volunteers opposite each shop. Suffering losses. Breach peace likely"

no response from the Bengalees either for khadi or for famine relief? There is something wrong about the method of work here. You should do this work through *Rashtrabani*[1]. The poison that you see about you will be neutralized only by the most correct conduct on our part. It needs utter selfeffacement. I wanted to talk about all these things to you when we met, but it was no good. Bombay is about the worst place for me to hope to have any quiet chat with anybody. There is an endless stream of visiting friends whom I must not repel. But if you are in any way dejected or despondent you must come to me without fixing the time-limit and hang on till we have, in leisurely fashion, thrashed out every conceivable problem that we could think of.

It is good that the *Atma Katha*[2] is in demand. Do you understand Gujarati so well as to be able to translate directly from it? If anyhody else asks for permission to translate the *Atma Katha*, I don't need to refer him to you. I will flatly refuse permission. I have a vague recollection that Anil Babu of Shantiniketan did get from me the permission years ago.

I am glad that your weight and strength are increasing. Remember the verse[3] about fasting in the verses of the second chapter of the *Gita* that we sing every evening. Fasting is good enough up to a point. But if we are nervous about our perception of Truth and Ahimsa, the moment we begin to satisfy real hunger, we have reached the danger point, and our ascribing a bettcr perception of Truth and Ahimsa to fasting or semi-fasting may be pure hallucination. Hard work must be consistent with hard and clear thinking. Conversely, hard and clear thinking I hold to be impossible if a person has become physically a perfect wreck. A healthy mind in a healthy body is a correct maxim.

Love.

BAPU

SYT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

15 COLLEGE SQUARE

CALCUTTA

From the original: C.W. 7891. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Bengali weekly edited by the addressee

[2] *An Autobiography*; *vide* "An Autobiography"

[3] "When a man starves his senses, the objects of those senses disappear from him, but not the yearning for them; the yearning too departs when he beholds the Supreme"—II. 59.

593. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

BORSAD,
July 1, 1931

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter of 27th June, redirected from Bardoli. Possibly you did not know that from Bombay I had come back to Borsad because it has been necessary for Vallabhbhai and me to divide our work. Danger is being averted by constant presence and vigilance. But any day there might be a burst-up in Borsad. I have had difficult experiences of working settlements in South Africa and even getting the poor head broken[1] in rendering a cent per cent account from our side, and then had to get myself arrested in making the Government render a tolerably good account of themselves. But I thought that I had forgotten all about working settlements. Now, however, I am reviving old memories and many of the experiences are being repeated. My great satisfaction however is that whether war or settlement, the nation must go forward if we remain faithful servers.

I like all your letters to the Chief Secretary. I do hope that the Governor will consent to see you.

Here is a complaint against you. Please keep the typewritten sheet and return it to me if you write about it or bring it with you and you will tell me all about it when we meet.

BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, pp. 98-9

[1] On February 10, 1908 Gandhiji was beaten up by Mir Alam and his companions; *vide* "Letter to Friends", 10-2-1908

594. A LETTER

BORSAD,
July 1, 1931

BHAI . . .[1]

Narandas must have written to you about . . .'s [2]misconduct. I know the news must have pained you. I had built castles in the air about . . .[3] but all my hopes have come to nothing. I completely failed to understand her character. I now advise you to call her back home immediately and marry her to whomsoever she wishes to marry. I had three or four excellent candidates for her hand, but now we cannot give her to any of them. The girl is so untruthful that it is impossible to say whether she will make any man happy. Please don't be angry with her. Treat her with love. Ultimately, that alone will happen which has been ordained for her and us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3242

595. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

July 1, 1931

CHI. GANGABEHN,

You did right in writing the letter which you did. Others will also do what . . .[4] and . . .[5] did. Do not get frightened. The times are such and our experiment is full of risks. However, no big task is ever achieved unless one is ready to take risks. We wish neither to condemn our experiment nor denounce *Antyajas*[3]. We should rather believe that our *tapascharya*[4] is insufficient and our purity imperfect. We will try to become purer, to become worthier servants and shall go forward.

Yes, it was almost decided to give . . . in marriage to . . ., but it

[1] The names have been omitted.
[2] *Ibid*
[3] *Ibid*
[4] The names in this and the following paragraph are omitted in the source.
[3] Literally, 'last born', the untouchables
[4] Self-suffering as moral discipline
[5] *Ibid*

was good that the evil was discovered in time. I had expressed the opinion that both . . . and . . . should leave.

Face such situations with patience. We wish to, ought to, behave like a vaid who, after ministering medicine to a patient, forgets both and takes up another patient.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: G. 5. Gangabehnne, pp. 56-7; also C.W. 8780. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

596. LETTER TO YUDHVIR SINGH

BORSAD,
July 1, 1931

BHAI YUDHVIRJI,

I like your intention of publishing Urdu translation of *Young India* and *Navajivan*. And I understand that no advertisements or other articles will be accepted for your journal and only translations of articles in the above mentioned journals will appear. This letter must not mean that I am accepting any responsibility for your paper or the authenticity of its translations[1].

I wish success to your enterprise.

Do forgive me for the delay in replying.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From Hindi: C.W. 9310. Courtesy: Dr. Yudhvir Singh

[1] A block print of this appeared in the first issue of *Urdu Navajivan*, 25-7-1931; *vide* also "*Urdu Navajivan*", Before 11-9-1931.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM H. W. EMERSON [1]

SIMLA,
April 30, 1931

MY DEAR MR. GANDHI,

You will remember that, when I last saw you in Bombay, I promised to write to His Excellency Sir Malcolm Hailey with the object of arranging for you to have an interview with him. I wrote to him the next day and have just received a letter from him. He has been unable to reply before, because he has been busy in studying the revenue and rent position. He feels that is is no use discussing the matter with you until he is fully informed of the facts and is clear in his own mind what relief is necessary. In other words, he wants to be quite sure that any assurance he may give you will cover the case. At present, reports from all districts have not come in; but Sir Malcolm Hailey hopes to be fully acquainted with the situation within a week and in a position to discuss it. I will let you know when I hear further from him.

2. I am sorry to see in the papers that you have not been fit, and I hope the reports were not true, or, if they were true, that you are now alright again.

Yours sincerely,
H. W. EMERSON

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
AHMEDABAD

Home Department, Political, File No. 33/XI & K.Ws 1931. Courtesy : National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H. W. Emerson", 7-5-1931

APPENDIX II

NOTE BY H. W. EMERSON ON INTERVIEW BETWEEN HIMSELF AND GANDHIJI[1]

Confidential

I had prolonged discussions with Mr. Gandhi on the 13th, 14th, 15th and 16th of May on matters arising out of the Settlement, also incidentally on general questions.

2. The first subject of importance discussed was the situation in Gujarat. Particular matters raised were the followings :

(a) Mr. Gandhi said that in the Kaira District, and particularly in the Borsad Taluka, matters were on the whole proceeding very satisfactorily owing to the system of co-operation between himself and Mr. Perry, the Collector. He said that the people were paying land revenue as quickly as they could and that he was satisfying himself by personal enquiry into cases that they were paying as much as their circumstances would permit. He was worried about the question of unauthorized arrears. He said that it was common ground that those who could pay the current demand and arrears should pay; but there would be undoubtedly numerous cases in which revenue payers were able to pay the current ones, but would not be able to pay arrears; that what he would like was a declaration of announcement from the local Government of a general character that in such cases the arrears would be automatically suspended. He argued that when the arrears of those who had not joined the Civil Disobedience Movement had been suspended and so had become authorized arrears, there was a stronger reason for suspending the arrears of those who had suffered a great deal from the Civil Disobedience Movement and were, therefore, *prima facie* in a worse position to pay. I said that, so far as I understood the case, there had been no general suspension of the demand in cases of those who had not joined the Civil Disobedience Movement, but that in accordance with the ordinary system of land revenue administration certain arrears had been suspended where there was sufficient reason. It could not be assumed that because people had joined in the civil disobedience movement, they were, therefore, less able to pay than people who had not joined in it. Of those who had joined many had not suffered serious loss, a good number had suffered no loss at all, and in any case the test was not the losses they had suffered, but their present capacity to pay. I did not, therefore, see how a general order could be issued. He then said that many revenue-payers were paying money representing the current demand and, in some cases, also part of the arrears, on the understanding that this represented all that they could pay at present, and that the balance of the arrears would be suspended, that Government officers were taking these sums, knowing what the intentions of the

[1] *Vide* "Interview to the Press", 15-5-1931

people were and that a very difficult situation would arise if later coercive processes were issued for the balance. I said that it would clearly not be possible for Government to accept the position that the tax-payers should determine what amount of Government dues should be paid. He admitted this as a general proposition, but said that where, as at present in Kaira, he himself and other Congress workers in pursuance of the Settlement were satisfying themselves that people were paying as much as they could pay, the position was different, and that they became more or less involved in the transaction. I suggested to him that all Congress workers in Gujarat were inspired by the same honesty of purpose as he himself, and that for this reason also the Collector had to satisfy himself that there was a case for suspension, that my information was that in some parts of Gujarat revenue payers were being encouraged not to pay unauthorized arrears, although many of them were able to do so. I assumed generally that neither the local Government nor the local officers desire to squeeze money out of persons who could not pay and that it really resolved itself into a question of good faith. If the Congress and the people genuinely played up and paid all they could pay, then I imagined nobody would wish to resort to coercive processes. If, on the other hand, they did not play up, I did not see how coercive processes would be avoided. At any rate it was not necessary to take this particular fence at the present time, and it would be sufficient to consider any difficulty, if and when it arises.

My general impression about this part of the conversation was that Mr. Gandhi foresees trouble in regard to the collection of unauthorized arrears, and that while he is playing the game in Borsad, attempts are being made elsewhere to defer the payment of unauthorized arrears on a large scale under the cover of inability to pay. The nature of the difficulty that is likely to arise will depend on the extent to which this movement succeeds, but if complications are to be avoided, it will probably be necessary for the local officers not to press collection of unauthorized arrears in cases where there will be real difficulty in paying.

(b) We had a long talk about the reinstatement of village officials. Mr. Gandhi made the point that no new Patels had been appointed permanently in the sense that they had been appointed for life and that the appointments were for a term of years, e.g., 3, 5, or 10 years, and that even these were subject to further notice. He contended that such appointments could not be treated as permanent and that they were not, therefore, completely protected under para 19 of the Statement of the 5th of March. I told him that I understood that this particular system of appointment was usual and that it was not the practice in Gujarat even if normal times to appoint Patels permanently in the sense in which he used the word. The local Government take the view that “permanently” means substantively and that this was at least a reasonable interpretation. Personally I did not press this, because I knew that when this clause was under discussion in New Delhi, neither Lord Irwin nor Mr. Gandhi was aware of

the fact that the appointments made had been of this character, and the impression was that they were either of a permanent or purely temporary character. The actual wording of the clause did not, however, affect the broad principle which underlay this and similar provisions. That principle was that where third party rights had been created, the local Government were under an obligation to protect the rights and this principle obviously applied to appointments for a term of years. It might be contended that when the third party rights so created had been satisfied, then effect should be given to the Settlement and return should be made to the *status quo ante*; instance at the end of an appointment of three years the claims of the original holder, if in the meantime there was no cause of disqualification against him, might be given preferential treatment. This seemed to be a view of the case which the local Government might be inclined to take, but I could not commit them in any way. Mr. Gandhi was not very satisfied with this, but felt, I think, that he was not in a strong position.

He then pursued another line, namely, that it was generally recognized that the new men who had been put in were unable to carry on the work, that in many cases they were criminals or of bad character, that in fact they were unable to collect the land revenue and it was the resigned Patel who had been doing this work; that there could be no peace in a village where a new Patel had been appointed until he was removed from it; and that in the interest of good administration a remedy should be found either by compensating the new Patels or by finding them jobs elsewhere. I said that, so far as I knew, the local officers were quite prepared to enquire into *bonafide* complaints against particular Patels, but they of course had to protect them against frivolous complaints; that the third party right in such cases was the right to a particular appointment; and that com- pensation would not be regarded by the Patels themselves as a satisfaction of those rights. Something might perhaps be done to ease what was admittedly a difficult problem by putting in Patels who had resigned in vacancies elsewhere as they occur; but I did not know whether this was, in fact, practicable. This question evidently is also causing him a good deal of concern.

(c) In regard to the repurchase of lands that had been sold, he appeared to be fairly happy. He was very critical of the difficulties experienced in ascertaining what lands had been sold and at what price; but he admitted that the present arrangement under which the entries relating to all such transactions have been or will shortly be entered up in the village registers, to which the public have access, would meet the requirements of the case. He said that he was having more success in getting back lands from Dharalas than he had anticipated, and in fact he was getting on better with them than with others in regard to whom he had not expected so much difficulty. I asked him why Garda had repudiated his transaction. He would not admit that Garda had any reasonable cause for complaint against the Congress for any deviation from their side of the bargain and said he was in correspondence with Sir Cowasjee

Jehangir.

He said that in some cases in the Kaira District land had been forfeited for arrears of land revenue, had then been declared to be Government property and had been sold, that none of the sale price had been credited to the account of the defaulter, and that, in fact, the amount in regard to which the land had been forfeited was still being demanded. I expressed doubts about this, although I did understand that where land had been forfeited the whole of the sale price had been credited to Government, even although this exceeded the amount of the demand. I gathered that the Collector of Kaira had referred this question to the local Government and they will doubtless consider, if cases, such as stated by mr. Gandhi, have actually occurred, whether the collection of the demand in addition to forfeiture of the land is not unduly severe.

On the whole Mr. Gandhi was more happy about Gujarat than he was when I last saw him, and the situation there has undoubtedly improved. He himself appears to have worked very hard to get things cleared up, but there appear to be several troublesome matters ahead and these may create difficulties, especially where Gandhi has not tried his hand and Vallabhbhai's influence has been at work.

I may observe that during the course of the discussion about Gujarat and also on one or two other occasions Mr. Gandhi dropped the claim, if he ever seriously entertained it, that Congress should be recognized as an intermediary between Government and the people, although he did claim, and not without reason, that where, as in the case of Kaira, the local officers are co-operating with himself and other workers, action should be avoided which will embarrass him and his helpers, unless it is clear that they are not playing the game. I tackled him about the statements attributed to him in the Press that he had advised revenue payers not to pay land revenue if they had to borrow to do so on interest. I told him that this was a principle that Govern- ment could not accept, that it was a well-known fact that revenue payers had often to borrow money in order to meet their revenue demands, and that if I had credit at the Bank, my creditors would not let me off, because I had no ready cash. He admitted that in ordinary circumstances his advice was not justifiable, but on the merits of this particular case he eliminated further argument by saying that in Kaira, where the advice was given, the Collector had accepted the principle as a working basis.

3. We then had some discussion about salt, which was resumed later in connection with a reference from the Central Board of Revenue. The main points, which were raised, were the following :

(a) Mr. Gandhi is anxious that Government should issue some communication amplifying the relevant clause of the Statement of March 5th, so that persons entitled to the concession will know more about its character. I showed him the lengthy and detailed circulars issued by the Central Board of Revenue for various

areas, and explained to him, what I understand to be the view of the Central Board of Revenue, namely, that while these were necessary for departmental guidance, they were too complicated to be of real assistance to the public, that in fact specific difficulties were still continually cropping up, that these were being dealt with ad hoc in a liberal and practical spirit, and that until the various points had been settled the publication of a detailed statement would in any case be premature. Moreover, anything in the nature of a lengthy statement would probably give rise to questions of hypothetical character, which it was better not to raise. Mr. Gandhi accepted all this and said that he had not intended anything in the nature of a long statement, but that he felt it very desirable that the main principles should be published. I suggested that he should try his hand on a draft and Government would then see whether it could be accepted by them with such modifications as might be necessary. He promised to let me have one.

(b) He then got on to the question of the fish-curing industry. I told him that I understood that this matter was already under consideration by the Central Board of Revenue, who had addressed the Madras Government. Briefly the points which he made were the followings :—

(i) Fishermen along the East and West Coast already enjoy the concession of duty free salt.

(ii) On the West Coast, where fish curing is carried on by contractors in special yards, salt has to be purchased from Government. Mr. Gandhi agreed that this was quite right and that the salt concession should not be extended to the fish-curing industry when the curing is done on a big scale by contractors.

(iii) He said, however, that even on the West Coast there was a certain amount of curing done by fishermen in their own homes, that it was carried on as a domestic and not as a big scale industry, and that it was reasonable to allow the concession in such cases.

I declined to express any opinion in ignorance of the facts, but promised to let the C.B.R. know the gist of the Conversation.

(c) I then mentioned to him the case reported by the Collector of Salt Revenue, Bombay, in which it was said that Congress workers were making salt in works situated on privately owned land at Shiroda, that there was a fairly large force of labour employed, and that a stock of salt of 500 to 600 maunds was being collected. We were agreed that the salt concession did not anticipate that Congress would come in as an organization engaged in the manufacture of salt, and he admitted that an impossible situation would arise if local Congress organizations as such took up the manufacture of salt even for the purpose included in the Settlement. He also admitted that if salt is being manufactured at Shiroda by paid labour, then this is not covered by the Settlement, but he claimed that if the villagers entitled to the

concession had combined for the manufacture of salt and were making it themselves and not through paid labour, then the case was covered by the Settlement provided the relevant provisions of the Settlement were observed. He also claimed that the mere manufacture of a stock of 500 or 600 maunds did not necessarily constitute a breach, since it was natural that the people concerned should manufacture a sufficient quantity of salt to see them over the close period. He claimed to be acquainted with the facts of the manufacture at Shiroda, and the C.B.R. may find it necessary to collect further information in regard to them before they can reach a decision. If it is decided that the facts do not preclude this system of manufacture, then a practical solution may be to limit the quantity of salt to be manufactured in accordance with an estimate of local requirements.

(d) Mr. Gandhi agreed that the practical test of removal on foot should not include the removal of manufactured salt by gangs of coolies.

4. Mr. Gandhi then mentioned the matter of releases of prisoners, about which we had a general and somewhat infructuous talk. He still seems to think that there are cases which come within the amnesty in which releases have not been granted, and he promised to let me have lists of these. I told him that we had sent the previous lists to local Governments, and the replies we had so far received definitely indicated that local Governments had very scrupulously honoured the Settlement in this respect. I mentioned the case of the Punjab list in which, for lack of accurate information, the local Government had been unable to identify a number of prisoners mentioned, and of the 75 who had been identified 47 had been released before the list was sent. This went to show that the information supplied to Mr. Gandhi was inaccurate. I also reminded him that local Governments generally have interpreted the Settlement very liberally in cases of technical violence and that while they have been more strict in cases of incitement to violence, there are good reasons for this. I took the opportunity of reminding him that within the last three weeks there have been three incidents connected with the terrorist movement in the Punjab alone, namely, the Shalimar affair, the Sialkot incident and the very recent bomb explosion in the Jullundur District. He had not heard of the last and was shocked to hear that the two persons concerned were connected with the Congress. He agreed that local Governments were justified in taking a serious view of incitement to violence, and he did not attempt to raise the question of cases under section 124 A., I.P.C., and section 108, Criminal Procedure Code, which at one time threatened to be a matter of controversy. Two cases appeared to be worrying him. One was the case of an editor[1] convicted in Sholapur, in regard to which he urges that there was neither violence nor incitement to violence, and the second case was one from the Surat District, where a youth had been convicted for arson. His crop had been attached, and he then set fire to

[1] Emerson has made a note here : "He has since been released."

it. Mr. Gandhi then attempted to argue that violence within the terms of the Settlement had reference only to violence to person and that, therefore, this particular incident was not violence. This of course could not be accepted. I understood that he was in correspondence in regard to both cases with the local Government.

He wanted to know what was to happen if there were a deadlock between Congress and the local Government in regard to particular cases. I said that the intention was that the local Government should be the final authority, that so far no such case has arisen, and we might wait and see. The Government of India had in the case of several representations made to them requested local Governments to inform them of the facts, and since neither the Government of India nor any local Government has any desire to evade the obligations of the Settlement, there is no reason to suppose that a solution will not be found if there is any particular case in which there has been a genuine mistake. I informed him that local Governments had attached very great importance to this part of the Settlement and that in some province the Governor had himself scrutinized all doubtful cases. I imagine that Mr. Gandhi is being given a good deal of trouble by provincial Congressmen in this matter.

5. We then had a humorous discussion about bicycles and a motor-car which led up to the case of the *Young India* Press.

Under clause 16 of the Statement Government have agreed to return movable property, not being an illegal possession, which was seized during the civil disobedience movement and which at the time of the Settlement was still in the possession of Government. A motor-car was seized in the Kaira District and was quite properly used for official purposes. It is now, I gathered, in a somewhat dilapidated condition and is out of action at some distance from its original home. Mr. Gandhi claims that it should be returned at the place where it was seized. The local officers will not admit this, and I gather that they cannot, in any case, return it there, either by putting it into running condition or transporting it as scrap iron. This led us on to what was the real purport of the matter, namely, the Press of *Young India*. This was seized in Ahmedabad under the Press Ordinance and is of considerable value. Part of it is still in Ahmedabad, while part of it was sent to Bombay for sale. Mr. Gandhi claims as a right that he is entitled to its delivery at Ahmedabad, and he has recently addressed the Bombay Government on the subject. He made it clear that he did not want the Bombay portion of the press returned to him at Ahmedabad as a matter of grace, if he was not entitled to this under the Settlement. I promised that we would look into the legal aspect of the case, and if necessary, address the local Government.[1] He on his part promised that if the decision is in his favour he will not use it for vexatious purposes, e.g., the return of a useless motor-car.

[1] Gandhiji subsequently received a letter turning down the claim.

6. Under the same clause of the Settlement he raised the question of the return of arms, the licences of which had been cancelled in connection with the Civil Disobedience Movement. He had mentioned this before at previous talks, but I had not appreciated the fact that the claim was under the clause, and had imagined that what he desired was a more liberal policy within the spirit of the Settlement in re-granting licences when previous ones had been cancelled. I told him that, so far as the clause was concerned it seemed to me that as soon as an arms' licence was cancelled, the arm became an illegal possession and that, therefore, the case was not covered. In any case, even if the clause did technically apply, local Governments would obviously be unwilling to return arms where there was reason to suppose that these arms might be used for terrorist purposes, and this applied particularly to the Punjab and Bangal. Mr. Gandhi accepted this as reasonable and said that a way out of the difficulty might be found by formally returning the arms, cancelling the new licences and recovering them. I suggested that this would lead to a good deal of friction. I promised to have the legal aspect examined.

I explained that if the matter did not come within the scope of the Settlement, there were difficulties in addressing local Governments in regard to the re-grant of licences, that the Arms Rules gave wide discretionary powers to District Magistrates in regard to the grant and cancellation of licences, and that while it did not seem improvable that they would take a reasonable view in the case of licences cancelled during the civil disobedience movement when the licensees were responsible persons, they would be sticky before giving licences to persons about whom they were not satisfied.

7. He then mentioned the case of restoration of pensions forfeited during the Civil Disobdience Movement. I said that this had not been discussed with local Governments; previous to the Settlement and that they and the Army Department in the case of military pensions would certainly take strong exception to the restoration of military and police pensions, and that, this being so, it would be difficult for them to discriminate in favour of other civil pensions. Local Governments would, however, doubtless consider in the ordinary course of business any applications made to them, but I did not see how the Government of India could make any general suggestion to them on this matter. Mr. Gandhi recognized the difficulty of restoring military and police pensions and did not press the matter.

8. Mr. Gandhi mentioned the case of boys and students who had been expelled from educational institutions on account of participation in the Civil Disobedience Movement. He said that in several provinces they were being allowed to return only on condition that they gave a declaration that they would take no part in politics. He seemed to think this was wrong. I explained to him that in some Government's institutions in the Pubjab (and probably else-where) such declarations were taken from students on first entry—let alone from students who were allowed re-

admission after expulsion; that the latter were fortunate to be allowed to return and knowing the importance that local Government rightly attached to discipline in schools and colleges. I saw no point in raising this matter with them, even if the Government of India were prepared to take a more lenient view which I did not think they would.

9. We next got on to the important question of the North-West Frontier Province. I had a preliminary talk with hin on one matter, giving him the main facts as known to us, and Mr. Howell later joined us and explained the peculiar difficulties of the Frontier situation. The points on which I laid emphasis in the preliminary discussion were :

(1) Abdul Ghaffar's activities and speeches since the amnesty.

(2) His continued insistence on the Settlement being a truce and therefore a period of preparation.

(3) The continuous recruitment of Red Shirts, their organization, drilling, etc.

(4) Abdul Ghaffar's attempt to spread agitation across the border.

(5) His deliberate and discourteous refusal to see the Chief Commissioner or local officials.

(6) The encouragement he has given to the non-payment of land revenue and the consequent effects on the land revenue administration of the Peshawar District.

(7) The increase in crime that has occurred there.

I suggested to Mr. Gandhi that even in other provinces where we might tolerate and had, in fact, tolerated in the past the recruitment of Congress volunteers up to a certain point, we could not even in those provinces tolerate either the unlimited recruitment of volunteers or the establishment of bodies of trained volunteers. The fact that their immediate activities were comparatively harmless was not a decisive test. We had to look to the use to which they might be put, and if at any time we came to the conclusion that they constituted a serious menace to future peace, we might have to take action. At any rate, we obviously could not accept the argument that because we do not think it necessary at present to take action against Congress volunteers in a particular province, therefore our hands are tied either in regard to volunteers generally or in regard to volunteers in places where they do constitute a menace; nor, having regard to the peculiar conditions in the North-West Frontier Province the obvious danger of the Red Shirt Movement being misunderstood in tribal territory and its possible effects in Afghanistan, could we regard its extension with equanimity. Mr. Gandhi appreciated these peculiar difficulties, but was inclined to attach weight to Abdul Ghaffar's own statement of the case, which appeared in the Press a few days ago and in which he naturally attempted

to place the odium on the local administration.

The further discussion of the matter is given in Mr. Howell's note below :

"By arrangement with Mr. Emerson I went yesterday afternoon to interview Mr. Gandhi. Before I arrived Mr. Emerson had already dissuaded Mr. Gandhi from his intention of visiting the North-West Frontier Province and had secured from him a promise to get into touch either personally or by letter with Abdul Ghaffar Khan and induce the latter at least to examine and reconsider his methods if not to abandon, at any rate temporarily, his campaign. There was therefore very little for me to do except to go over the ground again, and this I did with the special idea of impressing upon Mr. Gandhi the dangers of Abdul Ghaffar Khan's programme in the Frontier Province. The gist of what Mr. Emerson and I said to him in the course of the interview was as follows :

We had no intention of questioning Abdul Ghaffar Khan's sincerity, but we did think the wisdom of his procedure open to question. Why for instance had he steadily refused to have an interview with the Chief Commissioner who had shown exemplary patience and had done his best to get into contact with him? If they were bound to fall out at a later stage, was that any reason for not walking together so far as their ways lay together? Again was it wise to stage an exciting drama in the presence of an exceedingly excitable audience, such as the frontier tribes, all of them well armed, and many of them only waiting for a favourable opportunity to go and loot the box office? If Mr. Gandhi thought this was prudent, let him listen to what Bhai Parmanand and other Frontier Hindus, who had reason to know what they were talking about, had recently been saying at Lahore. The basic fact of the situation was that, as these frontier Hindus realize, security for life and property on the Frontier, especially Hindu life and property, and the whole stability of society depended on the maintenance of respect for the existing Government. And if the Frontier tribes, who were never tired of proclaiming themselves to be as good as or better than anybody else, saw Abdul Ghaffar Khan here, or X there, or Y in another place successfully defying Government, they too might be tempted to take a hand in the same game. Hence the paramount importance of preventing the Red Shirts Movement from being spread across the border. Once there it could not fail to take on a militant form and, as last summer in Waziristan, might assume the appearance of a pro-Amanullah campaign which would cause anxiety to King Nadir.

Throughout stress was laid not on the contention that tribal territory was beyond the scope of the Civil Disobedience Movement, since that is dead or at any rate dormant, or of the Irwin-Gandhi Pact, since that might give Mr. Gandhi a clue that in the event of a further struggle he would do well to make a point of extending activities into tribal territory, that being a weak spot on our side, but on the danger, especially the danger to Hindu life and property, to which opposition to Government

in the Frontier region was likely to lead. He was asked whether in his opinion it was wise for anyone conducting a difficult and an unprecedented experiment, such as is now in progress throughout India, to begin by tampering with the breakwater which keeps the flood waters out. Mr. Gandhi seemed to grasp the point of this question.

We also put Sir Steuart Pears' remaining points to Mr. Gandhi, and asked him to consider whether there really could be any use for such a body of men as 13,000, the latest figure we had had—admittedly only an estimate— of the number of Red Shirts. Finally the revenue situation, with special reference to Peshawar District, was discussed at some length, and Mr. Gandhi was informed of the startling rise in the figures of crime. He wished to know how land and water rates compared in Peshawar with the adjoining districts in the Punjab and seemed surprised to learn that, while agricultural conditions in the irrigated area of the Peshawar District generally compared favourably with anything in northern India, rates of land revenue and water rates were distinctly lower than in the adjoining districts of the Punjab. This Mr. Gandhi's interlocutors thought might be taken as fair evidence of the constant Pathan tendency to have things both ways at which the Pathan is an adept and frequently successful. Mr. Gandhi took note of this and also of the fact that liberal remissions had been, were being and would be granted according to the necessities of the case. He seemed disposed to agree that whatever the land revenue policy of the future Government might be, it was perhaps bad tactics to interfere too much with revenue collection under the existing regime. On Mr. Gandhi's side a promise was given that he would send for Abdul Ghaffar Khan as soon as possible, and in the meantime would both telegraph and write to him."

10. We had some talk about the boycott and the attitude of Lancashire. Mr. Gandhi was more sorrowful than resentful about the latter. He claimed that the Settlement had produced a great change in the position regarding the boycott of foreign cloth, that there had been a very large reduction in picketing, that discrimination against British cloth had ceased and that while there were still causes of complaint these should be regarded in the light of the situation as a whole and not advanced as though they represented the general position. He claimed (and I believe rightly) that he was doing his utmost to secure the strict observance of the Settlement and he asked that any breaches of it should be at once brought to his notice.

I admitted the truth of a great deal of what he said; but gave him a number of illustrations of the sort of thing that was going on, and in particular, dwelt on the prevalence of social pressure. I said that the general impression was that freedom of action of the individual has not been secured and that it was this belief that was responsible for reactions in Lancashire, which were of first-class political importance in England. I emphasized the harm that was being done by every instance of violation of the Settlement that was communicated to the British Press and I dwelt

at length on a particular case that had come to the notice of Government. This case is briefly as follows :

"The British Goods Boycott Committee of Ahmedabad sent a letter, dated the 7th of April 1931, to the Cawnpore Chemical Works, Cawnpore, asking them various questions, among which were the following :

(a) Do you use any British materials in the process of manufacture?

(b) Has any Englishman or foreigner any interest whatever, either direct or indirect, in your concern? If so, what is the extent of such interest?

Mr. Gavin Jones is very closely interested in this concern and sent the letter on to us. We had enquiries made about it and were informed that the active workers on the Committee were members of the Congress. After the Settlement the Committee changed its name, but apparently sent out notices on the note paper with the old heading and also included in their questions matters which directly offended against the Settlement."

I told Mr. Gandhi that in this particular case the attack was on the concern of an Englishman, who was a member of the Round Table Conference Delegation and who had strongly supported the Indian case in London. It would hardly be a matter of surprise if activities of this kind were to make Europpeans doubtful of their previous attitude and that if this particular instance were communicated to the British Press or raised in Parliament, it could not fail to have very unfortunate results. Mr. Gandhi admitted all this and expressed regret that the matter had not been brought to his notice even once. I said that we could not do this until we knew that Congress were concerned in it and we had just received this information. I promised to let him have a copy of the relevant correspondence, and he said he would have the matter put right at once and let me know the results in a letter which Government could, if they thought it desirable, communicate to Mr. Gavin Jones.

Mr. Gandhi is, I think, uneasy about the fulfilment of the boycott provisions of the Settlement, and while he is as keen as ever on the replacement of Indian for foreign cloth and is convinced that the movement has come to stay, he realizes that methods of coercion and pressure will not succeed in the long run and that any abuse of the Settlement has adverse effects in India and in England out of proportion to the benefit to the movement itself. He has, however, still to get his own principles across to Congress organizations and workers as a whole and although he has done a good deal in this direction, there is still much more to do. It will help if local Government either directly tackle provincial Congress organizations in regard to violation of the Settlement in this respect or communicate at once specific instances to the Home Department to pass them on to Mr. Gandhi.

11. During the course of our talk with Mr. Gandhi a number of general questions were incidentally discussed, and one sitting was almost entirely devoted to big issues. An attempt is made below to summarize the points which arose.

Mr. Gandhi appears to have little hope at present of an early communal settlement and realizes the bitterness of feeling. He expressed himself as reluctant to go to England unless a solution is reached, for he would then feel that he could not either with decency or consistency press for self-government when Indians themselves were at sixes and sevens. He is also sensitive as to taunts being made in this respect. I took the following line with him :

(a) If there were no communal settlement in India, then the logical conclusion of Mr. Gandhi to this would be that unless and until there were a settlement, there could be no further advance in the constitutional field. Even if Mr. Gandhi himself felt this, it was not possible for Government to accept it. Government had often been accused of Machiavellian methods, and if it adopted the line taken by Mr. Gandhi himself, there would be an immediate outcry accompanied by political agitation on an intense scale. This must, therefore, be ruled out, and Government must assume constitutional advance, even if no agreed communal settlement were reached. Why should Mr. Gandhi take in this matter a more reactionary attitude than Government were prepared to take? Moreover, even if a settlement were not reached in India, this did not necessarily mean that one would not be reached in England. Conditions were in some respects more favourable there than here : representations of various interests would be in constant touch with each other; atmosphere would be better; British leaders were prepared to give the greatest assistance possible and in fact an agreement had almost been reached in London on the last occasion. Moreover, Lord Irwin would be certainly ready to help. (Here at this point Mr. Gandhi made the suggestion that Lord Irwin might even act as an arbitrator—an admission entirely contrary to some of his previous declarations that Indians should settle among themselves.) A settlement in London was more likely to be secured if Congress were represented and Mr. Gandhi himself might be expected to play a considerable part in it. In any case, he would not help by staying in India and, so far as the communal question was concerned, his clear duty was to go to England.

I asked him what his friends thought about this matter, and I understood that while two or three Congressites doubted, the mjority considered that he ought to go. Mr. Gandhi did not commit himself to any clear decision as to whether he would go or not, but my own very definite impression is that the failure of a communal settlement will not in itself prevent his attendance.

(b) I asked him what he was going to do about Congress representatives at the Conference and suggested that even if he went as the sole representative it would be convenient to have available Congress representatives who could be appointed to Sub-Committees, since even a Mahatma could not be in three places at once. He was very vague about this part of the business and confessed that he had been so occupied in local affairs in Gujarat that he had not had time to give consideration to the Round

Table Conference arrangements. The impression he gave was that he was very reluctant to have anyone else as representing Congress in the picture and that he has an idea that he can carry on alone coming in with his views at the final stage. He obviously does not realize the amount of detailed discussion involved and the nature and extent of the difficulties. On the other hand, he has no objection to Congressmen being invited in their individual capacity to the Round Table Conference. I specifically asked him this on a point raised by His Excellency when I last saw him. In fact, he says that Lord Irwin had accepted this position and accordingly had invited Malaviya, and he had indicated his intentions of also asking Mrs.Naidu and Dr. Ansari. There would thus be, from Mr. Gandhi's point of view, no objection in inviting Congress Muslims as such, or indeed in inviting any Congress member in any capacity other than as representative of Congress. This may assist in removing difficulties which will almost certainly arise if Mr. Gandhi insists on being the sole representative of the Congress.

(c) Another constitutional matter that Congress are now taking up is as to whether—

(a) they should serve on Sub-Committee formed previous to the Round Table Conference, and

(b) whether they should give evidence before such Committee.

I fancy this question was brought to a head by the resignation of AhmadShah from the North-West Frontier Provinces Subjects Committee. Mr. Gandhi knew nothing about his appointment or his resignation, and the latter was not, I think, given under the orders of the Congress. It was probably given under the orders of Abdul Ghaffar, and I gathered that Mr. Gandhi thought that Ahmad Shah should have referred both his acceptance of the appointment and his resignation to the Congress. He agreed that the case had not been in any way prejudged and that Ahmed Shah was wrong in making this the ground for his resignation, but he did not think that anything could now be done to put this right, although I gave him the opportunity of suggesting a successor. In these circumstances he agreed that the best thing was to leave the place vacant.

On the general question the Working Committee are to hold a meeting shortly. I very strongly urged that the decision should be in favour of co-opera- tion both as regards accepting places and giving evidence, and I said on my own authority that I thought there would be no difficulty, if the principle were accepted, in asking Congress to nominate members to Committees where the principle of Congress representation was accepted by Government. Mr. Gandhi's doubt seemed to be as to whether it was right to take part in Committees previous to the Round Table Conference when he had not made up his mind about attendance at the Conference himself. I pointed out that whatever might be his final decision in regard to London,

one important and main object of the Settlement would be defeated if Congress did not co-operate in constitutional matters, and that, even if for any reason the Settlement broke down, their present participation would not commit them. I am rather afraid that the Working Committee will come to a wrong decision in this matter.

(d) The question of land revenue cropped up in several connection, e.g., Gujarat, U.P. and North-West Frontier Province. Mr. Gandhi did not attempt to press the idea formerly favoured by him that Congress should act generally as an intermediary between Government and the revenue payer, but he still seems to think that it is possible for Congress to act as the friend of the landlord or tenant and advise him on revenue and rent matters without coming into conflict with Government or without causing serious embarrassment. He was impressed by the attitude I took on the matter. I told him that there was no Government in the world that would allow a political organization to come between them and the tax-payer, when their intervention took the form of advice to the latter as to what taxes they should pay; that if this was tried in Afghanistan, the agitator would be quickly put against the wall and blown from the cannon; that in the Indian States he would be deported or imprisoned; and that in the most advanced European countries the whole resources of the Government would be used against an organized movement of this kind carried out by a powerful political party. In India it was particularly necessary that agitation of this kind should be avoided and the more so in existing economic conditions and immediately after a direct campaign against rent and revenue. I made it quite clear that personally I regarded activities, such as those in the U.P. as a very grave breach of the whole spirit of the Settlement. I explained that local Governments were fully alive to the gravity of the economic situation and the necessity of being lenient in land revenue policy. Even so they had a very difficult task in deciding what the people could pay and could not pay, and this task could only be complicated by the interference of Congress, one result of which was to introduce the doubt as to whether a person was refusing to pay land revenue because he genuinely could not pay or because Congress advice had induced him to try and get off without payment. Mr. Gandhi was not able to accept the idea of Congress standing aside from helping persons in distress; but he did, I think, realize some of the difficulties in the way of intervention, and so far as he himself is concerned, he is worried less by the thought that inaction will remove the great opportunity of getting at the rural masses than by the failure to do something for the oppressed. We have here a definite potential source of trouble. On the other hand, he had no hesitation in condemning pressure being brought on landlords, direct appeals not to pay, creating false expectations on the Congress creed of a 50 per cent reduction in revenue and generally of any refusal to pay less than a person's capacity to pay. The results of his forthcoming discussion with Sir Malcolm Hailey ought to clear up the position in this respect.

(e) I attempted to give Mr. Gandhi an appreciation of the present situation

in the various provinces and made special reference to the North-West Frontier Provinces, Punjab, United Provinces, Bihar and Orissa and Bengal. I emphasized the fact that some of the local Governments who had been satisfied with the early results of the Settlement were getting apprehensive because of Congress activities. I pointed out that difficulties were almost unprecedented—Constitutional, political, Communal, financial, agrarian and terrorist—that we had a good chance of surmounting them if everyone pulled together, but that otherwise the prospects were gloomy. I said it was the deliberate and definite policy of the Government of India to implement the Settlement and to make every effort within reason to prevent a break-down. There were no reactionary forces at work in this respect. At the same time, they had necessarily to exercise constant vigilance and they could not allow a situation of danger to develop either generally or locally, even if action meant the disappearance of the Settlement. In this respect the outstanding danger was the mentality of the Congress and the constant advocacy, on the contrary, of preparation for a further struggle. This mentality was inevitably having effects elsewhere. It was partly because of the reaction in England and unless we could check the reaction there, the atmosphere would become entirely unfavourable. In regard to constitutional discussion at the Conference, I suggested that his own position would be very unpleasant if, when he was in London, a state of affairs existed in India which irritated and even outraged public opinion in England. I gave him many instances from different provinces of Congress subversive action. Mr. Gandhi was, I think, generally impressed by the above factor. He had already realized the significance of the reaction in England and he did not, as I rather expected he might do, criticize the reactionary forces at work. Similarly he made no protest whatever against the line taken by His Excellency the Governor of the Punjab in his recent speech, and he seemed to accept the view I took that the speech was the natural consequence of hard facts for which Congress were largely responsible, but his only complaint was that I had suggested a widespread suspicion of the objects and activities of the Congress, that these in fact were good and that they did want a peaceful solution. He admitted that particular activities were bad and had his complete disapproval. He also appreciated the necessity of getting the situation on to a more peaceful plane, and he will, I hope, definitely use his influence to this end. I showed him a circular issued by the Provincial Congress Committee of Madras, a copy of which is attached to this note, and said that while there were one or two things in it which might be better expressed, Government would have little cause for complaint if Congress as a whole acted on the principles stated in it. I also told him that the line he had taken in his own speech at Simla would definitely help, and begged him to carry on in the same spirit and get his leaders to do likewise. I have personally no doubt that he will do his best.

12. I may close this note (which is already of inordinate length) with some

personal impressions.

Mr. Gandhi is, I think, more sincere than ever in his desire to see the Settlement through, and he will do his utmost in this respect. It is probably less likely to break down from the Congress side on a big issue than on some irritating and comparatively unimportant matter of detail. This danger would be lessened if Congress activities, especially in rural areas, were materially to moderate, for it might then be possible and even desirable for local Government to stretch a point here and there in response to Congress action. If and when this becomes feasible, the atmosphere will improve.

Mr. Gandhi himself has definitely mellowed during the past few months. He has been up against concrete difficulties and has had to face constructive work. This has made him less confident in regard to preconceived ideas and more ready to see the other side of the case, although I have always found him very fair in this respect. Personal contact with various officers of Government has increased his desire to co-operate and while I realize only too well the difficulties and dangers in the way of closer co-operation with Congress leaders so long as Congress are out to increase their prestige and influence at the expense of Government and other parties, I feel that, where it is possible to avoid these difficulties and dangers, personal contact will definitely help to relieve the situation. This will be particularly the case if, as I hope, Mr. Gandhi tries with success to tone down the war mentality. If there is no response by Government, we shall get back into the same vicious circle.

Mr. Gandhi himself is at present too involved in detail to give the attention he should be giving to big questions. He receives many complaints of failure on the part of Government to carry out their part of the agreement, and although the great majority of these are untrue, they doubts and suspicions. The sooner the matters immediately arising out of the Settlement are would up the better.

Mr. Gandhi is under no illusion as to the consequences of the break-down of the Settlement. He realizes the renewal of the Civil Disobedience Movement will compel Government to hit hard and hit at once and I have made this perfectly clear to him on many occasions. He accepts this as quite fair and will, if necessary, face the consequences. But if it can be avoided, he does not want another fight and this fact and his sense of obligation to honour promises given to Lord Irwin are factors of very great importance in the situation.

The 18th May, 1931 H. W. EMERSON

From a photostat : India Office Records

APPENDIX III (A)

SIR MALCOLM HAILEY'S NOTE ON DISCUSSIONS WITH GANDHIJI1[1]

May 20, 1931

My discussion with Mr. Gandhi today turned mainly on the agrarian situation, but there were also some subsidiary points mentioned.

1. As regards releases, he had little to say; he had not at all events come prepared with a list of cases in which there were any complaints that we had not observed the Agreement. I told him that if there were any cases which he wished to refer to us, I should be glad if he would send them to Chief Secretary; and he agreed.

2. He mentioned the cases of students who had been rusticated, etc., for taking part in Civil Disobedience. I have not the full facts, but the D.P.I. has informed me that before being re-admitted they were required to undertake that they were to observe the disciplinary rules of the institution. This does not seem to be a very onerous obligation, and failing any more definite complaint from Congress, I would let the matter rest there. Mr. Gandhi did not seem to attach any great importance to it at the time.

3. He attached some importance to the question of arms for which licenses had been confiscated owing to their owners taking part in Civil Disobedience. There were I believe some such cases, though I do not now if we have anything about them at headquarters. He told me that the Commissioner in Gujarat had recognized that this fell within the terms of the Agreement, that Mr. Emerson had said he thought it did so, but that he would consult legal opinion before issuing anything to local Governments. Chief Secretary might ascertain any facts that he can on the subject, and at the same time write demi-officially to Mr. Emerson, asking if the Government of India think that arms licenses should be restored, where they have been confiscated strictly on the ground that owners have taken part in Civil Disobediences.

4. As I have said, the main point was the agrarian situation. We discussed this at great length, and I for my part avoided any point of principle, such as whethere the Congress was really entitled under the Agreement to be recognized as the ,representative of the people, etc., and too him at once to the facts of the situation in the districts in which Congress had been most active. I pointed out that however the situation had been arrived at, the danger was that tenants would now refuse to pay rents at all and resort to acts of violence if they were pressed by l andlords. I naturally quoted Chauri Chaura to him. He at once dis- claimed any idea of a no-

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Nainital", 20-5-1931

rent campaign, and was somewhat aghast when I gave him a copy of the resolution of the Etawah Congress Committee which he said he would look into at once. He admitted that where compromises had been made by landlords with Congress, the latter had not been able to persuade tenants to pay up. He said it was no part of Congress plans to establish an organization of tahsils and thanas; they were quite opposed to the idea of actually starting a parallel government or anything of the kind. Having got thus far, I then again but to him the actual difficulty arising from the situation in these districts. He said that it could only be solved by enlisting the effective co-operation of Congress in persuading tenants to pay their rents. But he could not promise this, nor could he engage to use his own active efforts of persuasion direct to tenants unless Congress had something better to put forward than the mere announcement of remissions by Government. His workers had narrowly examined the conditions of numerous districts and were confident that tenants could not pay even the reduced rentals in present circumstances. He indeed suggested that the enquiry showed that rents were so high as practically to be unpayable even in ordinary years, though he admitted that this conclusion might need some modifying in the light of the fact that many of these rentals were old and spread over a long series of years. He suggested the adoption of one of the three following courses :

First, (though he did not press this) he suggested that we might accept the figures arrived at by Congress workers, which he assured me were not a mere rough shot but the result of actual inquiries. I pointed out to him that it was quite impossible to assume that these general figures were equally correct for all classes of tenants and for all parts of the province.

Secondly, he suggested that our officers might hold a kind of summary inquiry with selected Congressmen in each district or division with a view of getting better figures.

Thirdly, if neither course was acceptable to Government, he asked that Government itself should hold a public inquiry at which Congressmen could give evidence as to the capacity of tenants to pay rentals. I pointed out to him that either of the latter courses would mean delay with every prospect that no money would be available at all for payment of rentals. If tenants get over the payment of any rental at all this harvest, it is pretty certain that they would pay nothing for kharif. It was quite impossible to make summary inquiries in three or four days as he thought, and a general inquiry on the lines of that which he had in mind, namely, the Commission on Champaran in 1916 would take many months. Anything that we did now would not only very gravely affect the landlords, but also might have an abiding effect on our own finances for many years to come; it was not, therefore, reasonable to ask

Government to adopt a summary p rocedure which might have such far-reaching effects. I told him that I would consider his proposals, but it seemed to me that the result of delaying collections would be so dangerous that it would be difficult to accept them. I pointed out that there were many districts in which our officers thought that collections might now proceed without great difficulty, and that in my opinion the best course was to set to work on collections wherever possible in the hope that if these proceeded smoothly it will have its effect on the attitude of the tenants generally. We left the matter at that, and it may be that it is not a very satisfactory conclusion, for I did not get his definite engagement to do nothing except to discountenance anything like a no-rent campaign or an attempt to set up Congress tribunals. As Mr. Emerson had warned me, Mr. Gandhi feels deeply that Congress cannot entirely retire from its position of championship of tenants and small landowners.

5. We discussed the question of picketing though at no great length. I pointed out to him the danger that it was becoming communal owing to the unwillingness of volunteers to tackle Mohammedan shopkeepers, and I also pointed out that the snatching away of liquor or the infliction of fines is quite beyond the spirit of the Agreement. Here is agreed and said that he would do his best to discountenance it and had indeed already issued orders against the taking of fines.

M. HAILEY

Home Department, Political, File No. 33/XI & K.Ws., 1931. Courtesy : National Archives of India

APPENDIX IV (B)

LETTER FROM SIR MALCOLM HAILEY TO H. W. EMERSON[1]

UNITED PROVINCES,

May 21, 1931

MY DEAR EMERSON,

Many thanks for your letter of the 16th May; I have found it very useful indeed in my discussion with Mr. Gandhi. I send you a note as to the results which, I fear, were not very conspicuous. But the discussion was very friendly throughout, and I was particularly struck with the fact that he did not seem to have come prepared to open up a battery of objections against our method of dealing with releases, ect. As you will see, his general attitude on the object of the agrarian trouble was very much the same as that which he took with you.

Yours sincerely,

M. HAILEY

H. W. EMERSON, ESQ.,
SECY. TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME DEPARTMENT

PS.

I have sent a copy of my note to the Viceroy.

Home Department, Political, File No. 33/XI & K.Ws., 1931. Courtesy : National Archives of India

APPENDIX V (A)

LETTER FROM SIR MALCOLM HAILEY[2]

May 23, 1931

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I have just received your letter of today, and as you ask for a very early, I have given it urgent but very anxious consideration and write at once to give you my views on the subject.

Thought I welcome much that is contained in your proposed manifesto, such as the advice to tenants to begin making payments at once, your condemnation of the use of violence by *kisans*, and your strongly expressed desire that they should not injure their own cause by undersirable action, yet I much regret that I could not associate myself in any way with the manifesto as a whole. It practically embodies a decision that it is necessary to make for a large number of districts in the province a rental remission for the whole year 1338 Fasli of eight annas in the rupee in the case

[1] *Vide*"Speech at Nainital", 20-5-1931
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Malcolm Hailey", 23-5-1931

of statutory and non-occupancy tenants and four annas in the case of occupancy tenants. Though I admit that it is stated that in some cases a larger payment is possible, yet tenants generally could not understand it as anything but a direction to confine their payments to this level as a whole. I am myself far from convinced by anything that I have seen or heard that a reduction on this scale is required by the circumstances, and I am certainly clear that no one formula, whether it embraces reductions of this amount or otherwise, could with equity be applied to the very different conditions pevailing throughout the province.

I am advised that collections of rentals are already proceeding in many of our districts on the basis of the reductions made by Government, and though it is not possible at the moment to say whether these collections can everywhere be made absolutely in full, yet to my mind the right policy is to allow collections to proceed on this basis and to watch the results carefully. I have in conversation with you pointed out the danger of doing anything which would encourage tenants to withhold rentals at this stage, for if collections are not made at once, there will be little chance of securing any payment at all at a subsequent stage. It is for this latter reason in particular that I have deprecated proposals for general inquiries into the present pitch of rentals throughout the province, for no summary inquiry of this nature can do justice to a very complicated and involved case, a decision on which will not only affect vitally the finances of Government, but will involve far-reaching effects on the relations of tenants and landlords.

With best wishes,

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. HAILEY

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.

TAKULA, NAINITAL

Home Department, Political, File No. 33/XI & K. Ws., 1931. Courtesy : National Archives of India

APPENDIX VI (B)

LETTER FROM SIR MALCOLM HAILEY TO H. W. EMERSON[1]

UNITED PROVINCES,

May 23, 1931

MY DEAR EMERSON,

I think that you ought to see at once the enclosed correspondence I have just had with Mr. Gandhi. I had to reply at somewhat short notice, as I did not wish to do anything that might delay him leaving us at 3 o'clock this afternoon! But it was clearly impossible for me to agree to anything that would look like a joint manifesto from myself and him, particularly as his draft could only have been understood by the majority of people to embody a decision that the remissions granted by us were altogether wrong and that something far more extensive was required. I do not know if he will return to the charge or will want to come and see me again; but his lieutenant, Govind Vallabh Pant, was told on the telephone that I should be unlikely to vary the attitude I had taken up. After a good deal of consideration I think this is only one possible for me.

Yours sincerely,

M. HAILEY

PS.

If Sir George Lambert is still in Simla would you kindly show this to him?

H. W. EMERSON, ESQ.

Home Department, Political, File No. 33/XI & K.Ws., 1931. Courtesy : National Archives of India

APPENDIX VII

LETTER FROM R. M. MAXWELL [2]

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,

MAHABALESHWAR,

May 13, 1931

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

At your interview with His Excellency Sir Frederick Sykes on the 17th April His Excellency promised that certain cases which you mentiioned, pertaining to the Home Department, would be reconsidered by the Government. I am now to inform you of the results of that review.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Malcolm Hailey", 23-5-1931

[2] *Vide* "Letter to R. M. Maxwell", 6-6-1931

2. I am to deal firstly with your suggestions for the release of certain prisoners.

(i) You represented that the Sholapur Martial Law prisoners who had not been released should have been released according to the Settlement, and you were informed at the time that there were three such persons.

In the case of Mr. Rajwade you are right in your supposition, to which you have referred in your letter of the 1st instant to Mr. Collins, that no other writing was placed before the Court except the issue of the *Karmayogi* in question. Many of the allegations in that document were either false or so grossly exaggerated (or, when he referred to the incidents of the riots, minimized) as to be untrue to the facts. The chief consideration, however, is that their publication at that time and in the conditions then prevailing in Sholapur inevitably tended to inflame the population against the authorities and thus amounted to a direct and real incitement to further violence. Their actual effect was to make more difficult the restoration of peace, and it is impossible to doubt that this result was foreseen by Mr. Rajwade when he published the article. The Government, therefore, on reconsideration adhere to their view that this is not a case which can properly claim the benefit of the amnesty.

The other two persons were convicted of tampering with justice by bribing witnesses in the case which arose from the murder of two policemen, and on reconsideration Government are unable to see that the Settlement can apply to a case of this description or that the persons concerned deserve any clemency.

(ii) The Government have reconsidered the cases of persons convicted under Section 124-A of the I.P.C. You expressed the opinion that the writing of articles and the making of speeches were not contemplated when it was decided that the Settlement should not apply to cases of violence and incitement to violence. The Government are unable to accept this view, for it is clear that such writings and speeches can, and often did, contain incitement to violence which is real and not technical, and that such incitement is often more dangerous and far-reaching than other forms of incitement to violence. The Government find that the cases of the individuals detained in jail satisfied this test, and they are therefore in no doubt that those persons were rightly excluded from the benefits of the amnesty. I am to add that Government are always ready to show leniency, as in many cases in the past, to any person convicted under Section 124-A of the I.P.C., who makes adequate apologies and gives an undertaking not to repeat the offence but this is a point unconnected with the Settlement, which makes no provision for conditional release.

(iii) You referred to the case of Ratanji Dayaram of Bardoli taluka, who you said was convicted of burning his own crop and should therefore have been released.

On examining his case Government find that he was convicted of deliberately burning *his tenant's* crop in order that the revenue due to Government should not be

paid on the land in question. He has not made any reparation to the sufferer which might have entitled his case to consideration on grounds of clemency as distinct from the terms of the Settlement, which, as I have pointed out, make no provision for conditional release. Apart from this circumstance, Government consider that violent mischief of this description does not come within the terms of the amnesty.

(iv) His Excellency understood you to say that there were certain prisoners convicted of offences in connection with the salt campaign who had not been released. The Home Department are however unable to trace any such cases.

(v) You stated that there were certain prosecutions which were still being carried on for offences which took place during the civil disobedience campaign contrary to the terms of the Settlement, and you referred in particular to a case in Belgaum.

It was pointed out to you at the time that the particular case to which you referred was a case of Nipani in that district. The facts of this case are that, following the conviction of two local leaders in April 1930, a mob collected with the intention of enforcing hartal, and after damaging public and private property and destroying the royal portraits in the school, came into conflict with the police whom they proceeded to stone, with the result that three policemen and some village servants were injured. There was thus real violence and Government feel that the decision to proceed with the case cannot be altered.

The other prosecutions which were still pending at the time of your conversation with His Excellency were those of (a) Mahadev Kuverji and Hira Vallabh (b) Vishnu Sali, (c) Shiva Mattur, all of S urat district, who were accused respectively of setting fire to attached crops, severely assaulting a police constable, and setting fire to an attached crop after beating the village servant in charge. These are clear cases of violence which cannot be reviewed.

3. As regards the orders of deportation passed under the Foreigners' Act, the Government have already, on reconsideration, withdrawn these orders in all cases, six in number, and the persons who were in prison for failing to observe the orders have been released. In this connection you stated that there were 30 such cases in the Karnatak and you were informed that Government were not aware of them, on which you agreed to furnish particulars of them to the Secretary, Home Department. As you have not done so, His Excellency assumes that you were misinformed on the point.

4. You stated that certain movable and immovable property forfeited had not been returned. His Excellency finds that all the buildings seized under Ordinance IX have been restored. The delay in some cases was due to the time which necessarily elapsed in finding, and making the necessary arrangements with, the persons entitled and authorized to take delivery.

As regards the return of movable property, the position has been discussed in

my separate letter of today, in reply to yours of the 7th May.

5. As regards the Chirner case, which you represented should be withdrawn, you were informed at the time that as the persons concerned were accused of rioting, being armed with deadly weapons, dacoity, conspiracy to commit dacoity and causing grievous hurt to public servants in the performance of their duty, while six of them are directly charged with murder, the case was obviously one shich must be allowed to take its course.

Yours sincerely,

R. M. MAXWELL

M. K. GANDHI, ESQUIRE

A.I.C.C. File No. 4/1931 Part I. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX VIII

OPINION[1]

June 13, 1931

1. (1) The question which has arisen between the Government and the Navajivan Press is :

"What are the obligations of the Government as regards returning the press which was seized at Ahmedabad from the premises of the Navajivan Press?" The question depends primarily on the language of the Instrument which says "movable property . . . will be returned". The meaning of the word "return" as given by Webster is "to bring, carry, put, or send back; to restore". According to Murray's Oxford Dictionary the word "return" has, among others, the following meaning :

"to bring or convey to a place or person; to send bac again; to give or render back". From this it is plain that where a party in possession (in this case the Government) has agreed to return a movable property, the obligation undertaken can only be said to have been performed when the party in possession brings or conveys back to the place from where the thing was taken and hands it over to the person from whom it was taken. We are, therefore, of opinion that the terms of the Agreement are not only not silent as to the place of delivery, but are clear as to the place of delivery, viz., the place from where it was taken or where it was seized.

2. In an Indian Statute, the word "return" has also been used in the sense of taking a thing back to the place from which it was brought. Section 43 of the Indian Sale of Goods Act runs as follows :

"Unless otherwise agreed, where goods are delivered to the buyer and he refuses

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H.W. Emerson", 14-6-1931

to accept them, having the right so to do, he is not to return them to the seller, but it is sufficient if he intimates to the seller that he refuses to accept them".

It is obvious that the word "return" must mean taking bac to the place from which it was taken, and it is used in contradistinction to "offer to return" or "holding it at the disposal of the party from whom it was taken". The action of the Government in this case merely amounts to "offer to return" or to "hold it at the disposal of the previous owner", but does not amount to the performance of the obligation to return. As is pointed out above, the obligation to return requires that the thing should be restored to the place and the person from which and from whom it was taken.

3. We are of opinion that the section dealing with the subject of delivery of goods as between the seller and the buyer, has got nothing to do with the present question as no question of return arises in such a case.

4. While clearly disagreeing with the view that the agreement in question is silent as to the place of "return", we are of opinion that even in that view, the place of performance of the obligation, in an agreement like the present, is the place from or at which the thing was taken or seized. The place in such a case has to be determined by a reference to the object of the agreement. It is clear that in this case, the object is to restore *status quo ante*.

5. Even on the assumption, which is denied, that the agreement in this present case is silent as to the place of "return", by reason of the provisions of Section 49 of the Indian Contract Act, if no place of performance was agreed upon, the promisee has the right to appoint the place of performance and the promisor is bound to perform the promise (in this case, the promise to return the press) at such place, provided it is reasonable. In this case, the promisee is entitled to name a reasonable place for performance and the reasonable and proper place is *prima facie* the place from where it was taken or where it was seized; for it is conceivable that after the seizure, the thing may be removed, for a variety of reasons, to a distant place and it would be clearly reasonable for the promisee to claim that it should be returned to the place from where it was taken or where it was seized.

6. In every view of the matter, therefore, the position taken up by the Government in the matter of the Navajivan Press cannot be sustained. They can be said to have fulfilled the agreement only when they have taken it to Ahmedabad (from where it was seized) and offer to return it to the person from whom it was taken.

BHULABHAI DESAI

D. N. BAHADURJI

K. M. MUNSHI

A.I.C.C. File No., 2/1931. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX IX

LETTER FROM H. W. EMERSON[1]

SIMLA,
July 4, 1931

In your letter of June 14, you suggested that the time had perhaps arrived for the appointment of a permanent Board of Arbitration to decide questions of the interpretation of the Settlement and as to the full carrying out of the terms by the one party or the other. Again in your letter of June 20, you made the farther suggestion that in regard to picketing, the Government of India should advise local Governments to appoint a Board of Inquiry, consisting of a nominee on their behalf and a nominee on behalf of the Congress, to conduct a summary inquiry into the allegations on either side and wherever it is found that the rule of peaceful picketing has been violated picketing should be entirely suspended, the Government undertaking on its part to stop prosecutions wherever it is found that they have been undertaken in spite of peaceful picketing.

I much appreciate your object of removing the possible causes of dispute arising out of the Settlement, but there are, I am afraid, serious difficulties in the way of accepting either proposal. To take the lesser one first. Its scope, as I understand it, is mainly limited to cases in which it is alleged that the methods of picketing have contravened the ordinary law and that the police have, therefore, prosecuted or propose to prosecute the picketer. One effect of your proposal would be that before bringing the law into operation there should be a summary inquiry carried out by a nominee of Government and a nominee of Congress and that further proceedings would depend on their decision.

In other words, the duty of maintaining the law in this particular respect would be transferred from the police, who have statutory duties, to a Board of Inquiry, the members of which might well arrive at different conclusions.

While the police, of course, must act only in accordance with the law, it is not practicable nor was it intended by the Settlement that their duty in this respect should in any way be abrogated.

In cases of this kind a practical test as to whether the law has or has not been contravened is the decision of the Court, which tries the case, and unless its decision is reversed on appeal the finding of the Court that picketing has contravened the law and consequently the terms of the Settlement should *prima facie* be followed automatically by a suspension of picketing. The above illustrates one of the difficulties, that would also arise in the case of Standing Boards of Arbitration.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to J. H. Garrett", 20-4-1931

The obligations imposed on Congress by the Settlement relate largely to matters affecting Law and Order, the freedom of action of the individual and the carrying on of the administration, that is to say, any serious breach of it has important reactions on one or other of these matters. So far as individual breaches contravened the ordinary law, the position would be the same as for picketing. If general breaches of it raised questions of policy affecting Law and Order or the effective working of the administration, it would be clearly impossible for Government to restrict their freedom of action by reference to a Board of Arbitration. This was not contemplated when the Settlement was made and in particular when the last clause of it was drafted. Nor would it be consonant with the discharge by Government of fundamental responsibilities.

It seems to me that the working of the Settlement must depend primarily on the good faith of the parties to it. So far as Government are concerned they desire to adhere strictly to its terms and our information shows that the local Governments have been scrupulous in carrying out the obligations imposed on them. Doubtful cases are of course inevitable, but local Governments are prepared to give them most careful examination and the Government of India will continue to bring to the notice of local Governments any cases that are reported to them and if necessary satisfy themselves in regard to the facts.

Young India, 20-8-1931

1. SUPERSTITIONS DIE HARD

Mr. Henry Eaton writes from California:[1]

This letter betrays two superstitions. One of them is that India is unfit to govern herself because she cannot defend herself and is torn with internal dissensions. The writer gratuitously assumes that if Britain withdraws Russia is ready to pounce upon India. This is an insult to Russia. Is Russia's one business to rule over those peoples who are not ruled by Britain? And if Russia has such nefarious designs upon India, does not the writer see that the same power that will oust the British from domination is bound to prevent any other domination? If the control is handed to India's representatives by agreement, there must be some condition whereby Britain will guarantee protection from foreign aggression as a penance for her conscious or unconscious neglect during all these past years to fit India for defending herself.

Personally, even under agreement, I should rely more upon the capacity of the nation to offer civil resistance to any aggressor as it did last year with partial success in the case of the British occupier. Complete success awaits complete assimilation of non-violence in thought, word and deed by the nation. An ocular demonstration of the success of nationwide satyagraha must be a prelude to its worldwide acceptance and hence as a natural corollary to the admission of the futility of armament. The only antidote to armament which is the visible symbol of violence is satyagraha the visible symbol of non-violence. But the writer is oppressed also by the fear of our dissensions. In the first place they are grossly exaggerated in transmission to the West. In the second place, they are hardened during foreign control. Imperial rule means *divide et impera*. They must therefore melt with the withdrawal of the frigid foreign rule and the introduction of the warmth giving sunshine of real freedom.

The second superstition is harder still. I mean that about the spinning wheel. This is shared by some even in India. The writer begs the question when he calls the method of machinery enlightened and that of the hand ignorant. It has still to be proved that displacement of the hand by the machine is a blessing in every case. Nor is it true that

[1] The letter is not reproduced here.

that which is easy is better than that which is hard. It is still less proved that every change is a blessing or that everything old is fit only to be discarded.

I hold that the machinery method is harmful when the same thing can be done easily by millions of hands not otherwise occupied. It is any day better and safer for the millions spread in the seven hundred thousand villages of India scattered over an area nineteen hundred miles long and fifteen hundred broad that they manufacture their clothing in their own villages even as they prepare their own food. These villages cannot retain the freedom they have enjoyed from time immemorial, if they do not control the production of prime necessaries of life. Western observers hastily argue from Western conditions that what may be true of them must be true of India where conditions are different in so many material respects. Applications of the laws of economics must vary with varying conditions.

The machinery method is no doubt easy. But it is not necessarily a blessing on that account. The descent to a certain place is easy but dangerous. The method of the hand is a blessing, in the present case at any rate, because it is hard. If the craze for the machinery method continues, it is highly likely that a time will come when we shall be so incapacitated and weak that we shall begin to curse ourselves for having forgotten the use of the living machines given to us by God. Millions cannot keep themselves fit by games and athletics. And why should they exchange the useful, productive, hardy occupations for the useless, unproductive and expensive games and exercises? They are all right today for a change and recreation. They will jar upon us when they become a necessary occupation in order that we may have the appetite for eating the food in the production of which we had no hand or part.

Lastly, I do not subscribe to the belief that everything old is bad. Truth is old and difficult. Untruth has many attractions. But I would gladly go back to the very old Golden Age of Truth. Good old brown bread is any day superior to the pasty white bread which has lost much of its nutritive value in going through the various processes of refinement. The list of old and yet good things can be endlessly multiplied. The spinning-wheel is one such thing, at any rate, for India.

When India becomes self-supporting, self-reliant and proof against temptations and exploitation, she will cease to be the object of

greedy attraction for any power in the West or the East and will then feel secure without having to carry the burden of expensive armament. Her internal economy will be India's strongest bulwark against aggression.

Young India, 2-7-1931

2. POWER NOT AN END

Sjt. Satyamurti writes:[1]

> I write to you about the article "Substance Not Shadow" by you, in the *Young India*, of the 18th June. The first sentence which causes me some doubt and anxiety is, "My proposition therefore before the Working Committee was that agreed settlement failing, the Congress should give up the hope of winning a swaraj constitution by the way of the present Round Table Conference and should wait till all the communities were satisfied to adopt a purely national solution." Does this not mean a charter for extreme communalists to go on obstructing? . . .
>
> But the sentence which causes me grave anxiety is that which ends as follows: "We can gain our end without political power and by directly acting upon the powers that be." I would add the following sentences also from your article in order to make my doubts clear to you. "One form of direct action is adult suffrage. The second and more potent form is satyagraha. It can easily be shown that whatever is needful and can be gained by political power can perhaps be more quickly and more certainly gained by satyagraha." I venture to join issue with you. I was always and am today under the impression that what the Congress wants is political power more than anything else. And, concretely speaking, prohibition can be more easily brought about by State action than by peaceful picketing. Khaddar and swadeshi cloth can be spread better and more quickly by State action than by peaceful picketing, and the necessary reforms embodied in the Karachi resolution on Fundamental Rights can be enforced only by a swaraj Government.
>
> In any case, I do not see why the nation should not concentrate all its energies today, upon the gaining of political power.
>
> To me, politieal power is the substance, and all other reforms can and ought to wait. . . .

I am thankful for this letter. It enables me more clearly than I have been able to explain my position.

My implicit faith in non-violence does mean yielding to minorities when they are really weak. The best way to weaken

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

communalists is to yield to them. Resistance will only rouse their suspicion and strengthen their opposition. A satyagrahi resists when there is threat of force behind obstruction. I know that I do not carry the Congressmen in general with me in this what to me appears as very sensible and practical point of view. But if we are to come to swaraj through non-violent means, I know that this point of view will be accepted.

Now for Sjt. Satyamurti's second difficulty. To me political power is not an end but one of the means of enabling people to better their condition in every department of life. Political power means capacity to regulate national life through national representatives. If national life becomes so perfect as to become self-regulated, no representation is necessary. There is then a state of enlightened anarchy. In such a state everyone is his own ruler. He rules himself in such a manner that he is never a hindrance to his neighbour. In the ideal state therefore there is no political power because there is no State. But the ideal is never fully realized in life. Hence the classical statement of Thoreau that that Government is best which governs the least.

If then I want political power, it is for the sake of the reforms for which the Congress stands. Therefore when the energy to be spent in gaining that power means so much loss of energy required for the reforms, as threatens to be the case if the country is to engage in a duel with the Mussalmans or Sikhs, I would most decidedly advise the country to let the Mussalmans and Sikhs take all the power and I would go on with developing the reforms.

If we were to analyse the activities of the Congress during the past twelve years, we would discover that the capacity of the Congress to take political power has increased in exact proportion to its ability to achieve success in the constructive effort. That is to me the substance of political power. Actual taking over of the Government machinery is but a shadow, an emblem. And it could easily be a burden if it came as a gift from without, the people having made no effort to deserve it.

It is now perhaps easy to realize the truth of my statement that the needful can be 'gained more quickly and more certainly by satyagraha than by political power.' Legislation in advance of public opinion has often been demonstrated to be futile. Legal prohibition of theft in a country in which the vast majority are thieves would be futile. Picketing and the other popular activities are therefore the real

thing. If political power was a thing apart from these reforms, we would have to suspend latter and concentrate on the former. But we have followed the contrary course. We have everywhere emphasized the necessity of carrying on the constructive activities as being the means of.attaining swaraj. I am convinced that whenever legal prohibition of drinks, drugs and foreign cloth comes, it will come because public opinion had demanded it. It may be said that public opinion demands it today but the foreign Government does not respond. This is only partly right. Public opinion in this country is only now becoming a vital force and developing the real sanction which is satyagraha.

Young India, 2-7-1931

3. *KISAN'S TROUBLES IN THE U.P.*

The reader will recall the allegations published last week[1] against a zamindar of a village in Unao. This time I have more serious news involving Government officials in the instigation of zamindars and taluqdars. Here are copies of two authentic confidential circulars[2] to zamindars signed by the Deputy Commissioner of Rae-Bareli.

Confidential DEPUTY COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE,
D.O. 12/6 RAE BARELI,
June 19, 1931

MY DEAR . . .[3]

It is proposed to prosecute certain agitators of the . . [4]. police circle. I shall be obliged if you will kindly give all possible help to . . .[5] police.

Will you please issue instructions accordingly to your agents, i.e., managers, ziledars, etc. ?

Any objectionable activities of the Congress or Kisan Sabha or Panchayats directed either against Landlords or Government, should be likewise reported at the . . [6] thana.

[1] *Vide* "Serious Allegations", 25-6-1931
[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.
[3] Blank as in the source
[4] *ibid*
[5] *ibid*
[6] *ibid*

You should direct your employees to act promptly and energetically and fearlessly in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

D.O. No.11

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE,
RAE BARELI,
June 19, 1931

MY DEAR . . . .[1]

> I find that the balance outstanding against you on account of *kharif* arrears and *rabi* demand excluding Remissions granted by Government is Rs. . .[2] This is a very large amount. In view of the special difficulties of the year, I have already allowed you sufficient time. I shall be grateful, if you will kindly pay up at least half of this balance by the end of this month—the rest thereafter as soon as possible. . . .

These circulars clearly betray hostility towards the Congress and Kisan Sabhas and invite the taluqdars to strong action against the kisans, promising Government help to them in their measures. We all know what such circulars mean. They imply much more than the words mean. They imply freedom to the addressees to do as they choose.

And why are these circulars confidential? Is there anything for the U.P. Government or the Deputy Commissioner to be ashamed of? Or are they confidential because the circulars are a veiled incitement to violence? In my opinion the circulars constitute a clear breach of the Settlement. These circulars explain why the following extraordinary notice[3] was served on Congress workers in that district.

At the time of writing I have information that this notice has been withdrawn. This notice would have meant complete stoppage of all Congress activities, as if the Government was at war with the Congress. It was a gross and glaring breach of the Settlement. For better or for worse there is at present peace between the Government and the Congress. And the Provincial Governments and district officials are bound to respect it. If they do not like it, or if they think that the Congress is not playing the game, they should ask the Central Government to denounce the Settlement. I may inform the reader that even with reference to this order so manifestly contrary to the Settlement, I had advised that, till I had the opportunity of approaching the Central Government and the Working Committee had

[1] Blank as in the source

[2] *ibid*

[3] Not reproduced here. The District Magistrate, Rae Bareli, had ordered the Congress workers to abstain from speaking or writing anything on the agrarian or political situation of the district.

decided, no one should disobey the order. I am glad therefore that the U.P. Government have withdrawn the order. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had drawn in forcible terms the attention of the U.P. Government to the order.

This withdrawal should be followed by the withdrawals of the confidential circulars and the policy they adumbrate. When I was in Nainital, I was reliably informed that the U.P. Government's policy was not to take sides. They had instructed district officers to observe perfect neutrality between the zamindars and the *kisans*. But this policy has evidently been revised as will appear from the following condensed summary[1] of a report before me.

I have omitted some painful details of this painful story of a broken pact.

To complete the picture I may mention that I have seen copies of notices served perhaps by the thousand on kisans warning them that they will incur the liability to prosecution if they had dealings with particular Congressmen.

And all this after the descent of the Deputy Commissioner from Nainital whereto he had been summoned to see H.E. the Governor! I hope that there is no connection between the studied terrorism which the foregoing narrative proves and the Nainital visit. Be that as it may, there should be no haste on the part of Congressmen, there should be no breaches of orders till the Working Committee has considered the situation. It meets on the 7th instant and will consider the extraordinary situation that is developing in several provinces.

Young India, 2-7-1931

4. YOUNG EUROPEANS

It was a matter of pleasure to me as I know it was to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel to meet the young Europeans in Bombay the other day. Several young Europeans have formed themselves into a group for the purpose of studying the Indian situation and then forming their own conclusions and taking their due share in moulding public opinion. As behoves earnest students, these gentlemen have eschewed all publicity for their proceedings. They invite to their social dinner representatives of all parties and hear their views and ask questions where further elucidation is necessary. They pass no resolutions, have framed no policy. They approach questions with an open mind. These friends deserve congratulations and encouragement in their

[1] Not reproduced here. It described how the Settlement was being violated and the villagers oppressed and terrorized in the Rae Bareli District.

praiseworthy endeavour. I venture to suggest to them that if they will come to a decision early, if they intend to affect the present political situation, it is necessary for them to classify the subjects for study and appoint from among themselves certain members who would specially study those particular questions and in that connection interview those who represent different parties which bring their influence to bear on them. All this undoubtedly means strenuous work. But it is necessary if the studies are to bear fruit in the near future.

Young India, 2-7-1931

5. TELEGRAM TO ROHIT MEHTA

BORSAD,
July 2, 1931

ROHIT MEHTA
VALLABHBHAI ROAD
AHMEDABAD

YOUR PRESENCE HERE NECESSARY TOMORROW FOR REPLYING PRINCIPAL'S LETTER[1] JUST RECEIVED.

GANDHI

A I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

6. LETTER TO K. B. BHADRAPUR

BORSAD,
July 2, 1931

DEAR MR. BHADRAPUR,

Here is a statement about further destruction of property in Ras. In spite of repeated assurance from you no impression seems to have been produced upon the miscreants whoever they may be. If the police are doing their duty, I cannot see how the mischief-makers can

[1] Principal Shirras had said in it that the presence of the five students which had "in the past been disturbing to the work of the college would result in similar disturbance in the future. . . . I am confirmed in my impression from the notices recently spread in the college under the signatures of two of them, and from the similar notices in the vernacular Press. . . ." For Gandhiji's reply to this letter, *vide* "Letter to G. Findlay Shirras", 3-7-1931.

escape detection in a small place like Ras. The Patidars feel helpless because of the restraint put upon them by the Congress authorities. Left to themselves I have no doubt that they are capable of protecting themselves and their property but that means internecine quarrelling which I want to avoid if it is at all possible. I take your assurances at their face value and expect that there would be no further mischief. But repeated disappointments will shake all faith in those assurances.

Yours sincerely,

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

7. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BORSAD,
July 2, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

Your letter is such as would shock a man. But can anything disturb one whose skin has become thick? . . .[1] should take . . .[2] away. We cannot look after her. I also feel that . . .[3] should leave the Ashram.

If you think of any other course, let me know. The conduct of both has been intolerable. . . .[4] is more to blame. Let the two marry, if they wish to. The marriage cannot, of course, take place in the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

[1] The names have been omitted.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*
[4] ibid

8. TELEGRAM TO CONGRESS OFFICE, VELLORE

[On or after *July 2, 1931*][1]

YOUR WIRE. SEE RAJAGOPALAGHARI.

From a microfilm: S.N. 17335

9. TELEGRAM TO SWADESHI SABHA, AHMEDABAD

[On or after *July 2, 1931*][2]

NINTH WILL SUIT BUT HOUR CAN BE FIXED ONLY ON REACHING BOMBAY.

From a microfilm: S.N. 17336

10. TELEGRAM TO RAMJASMAL JOHARMAL AND OTHERS

[On or after *July 2, 1931*][3]

SENT FULL WIRE[4] YESTERDAY PT. NEKIRAM.

From a microfilm: S.N. 17338

[1] The telegram was sent in reply to one from the Congress office, received on July 2, 1931, which read: "Picketing liquor shops. Government objecting more than five voluntccrs per shop though ten entrances. Pray order."

[2] The telegram was sent in reply to the Sabha's of July 2, which read: "Regret compelled put off meeting tomorrow due to Kasturbhai's unexpected absence from Ahmedabad. Kindly wire if Thursday 9th morning will suit you meeting in Bombay."

[3] The telegram was in reply to the addressee's received on July 2, 1931, which read: "In spite your clear telegram picketing not withdrawn by Pandit Nekiram. No sales allowed. Suffering heavily. All have signed pledge your instructions. Sealed stocks."

[4] Not available

11. LETTER TO SIR ERNEST HOTSON[1]

BORSAD,
July 3, 1931

I thank you for your letter[2] of the 30th ultimo, which was redirected to me at Borsad. I would gladly serve on the Federal Structure Committee of the Round Table Conference, if the way is open for me to sail for England in time. Will you please inform His Excellency the Viceroy that the working of the Delhi Settlement is causing me great anxiety and is taking up practically the whole of my time to the exclusion of many other important things I would gladly attend to if I was free? I am inundated with complaints from fellow-workers, which go to show that the Settlement is not being satisfactorily implemented by local officials. I shall treat this correspondence as confidential.

Young India, 27-8-1931

12. LETTER TO G. FINDLAY SHIRRAS

BORSAD,
Ju1y 3, 1931

DEAR PRINCIPAL SHIRRAS,

I thank you for your prompt reply to my letter of 30th ultimo as also for the correction about non-admission of students. I have now seen two of them and they tell me that they are not aware of their having created any disturbance in the work of the college unless you have in mind the strike[3] that took place in the college and in which practically the whole college was involved. They tell me that if they have been guilty of any conduct which would be considered dishonourable or which would amount to insubordination they are prepared to make proper amends. They assure me that they have never desired or promoted any indiscipline in the college. They have undoubtedly held strong nationalistic views as they do even now. They took an energetic part in the national movement. What they tell me is that so far as their conduct in the college is concerned it was free

[1] Acting Governor of Bombay
[2] *Vide* "Letter from Sir Ernest Hotson", 30-6-1931
[3] Which commenced on January 3, 1929.

from any reproach. I understand too that there is nothing to be said against their private character, which I personally, as one having had a great deal to do with students during the past nearly 40 years of public life, attach the greatest importance to. They tell me too that they have issued no notice to which any exception can be taken. I would therefore thank you to let me know the definite charges which you have in mind and which impelled you to refuse them admission. I would also thank you to furnish me with copies of the notices you hold to be objectionable.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat G. N. 821

13. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

Private AS AT SABARMATI

July 3, 1931

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your long letter of 17th June.

First about the Gallway incident. I have not the autobiography with me. But there is no conflict between the two statements. The healthy rivalry between Europeans and Indians took place during the day on our way to Chieveley camp which we reached at night and immediately received orders from Col. Gallway to remove Lieut. Roberts's remains.[1] So you see, there is no contradiction between the reference to the sultry day and the removal of the remains at night. Lady Roberts[2] is certainly not the Field Marshal's wife, but the wife of Charles Roberts. There undoubtedly you have got mixed up. The late Field Marshal's wife never corresponded with me.

I have not seen the *Times* report of my article on the Working Committee resolution[3]. I hope that long before this reaches you, you will have seen the full article and found your doubts answered. My position is this: The general mass of the population will never be members of legislatures but they will affect the legislatures when they feel their power. They can do so if there is adult suffrage. Exercise of the suffrage in favour of those who will carry out their will will be one

[1] *Vide* "An Autobiography" and "Interview to Associated Press", 15-6-1931

[2] Lady Cecilia Roberts

[3] For Gandhiji's article entitled "Substance Not Shadow", 18-6-1931

form of direct action. But they may not have adult suffrage. They may not be exercising any influence over the legislatures so far as the constitutional position may be concerned, but if they have imbibed the spirit of non-violence and suffering, i. e., satyagrah, their influence on the legislatures will be more direct and more effective than that exerted through adult suffrage, by simply refusing to assist the Government in the shape of payment of taxes or in various other ways. They can bring the existing Government to book and either get their demands fulfilled or bring it to a standstill. Is this not clear?

Now for the boycott. It is being constantly dinned into the ears of the public that the boycott has ceased to be used as a political weapon, i. e., for exerting political pressure but that it is being now used as an effective economic weapon. There is a statement reported to have been made by Jawaharlal appearing in today's papers. I send you herewith a cutting from the daily press. But even as an economic weapon it certainly requires intensification. Just after the Settlement there was a lull, that is to say, we were all purposely not doing anything to egg the people on to picketing. All the Congress committees were left alone even when we, members of the Working Committee, knew that the provincial committees were not keeping picketing up to the mark. When the aggressive form ceased all the zest seemed to have disappeared and several committees left off picketing in sullen discontent. This state of things could not be permitted to continue, for if this laxity was long overlooked the organization would become inefficient. What is more, the Committee could not afford, through it own negligence to see foreign cloth coming in and competing both with khadi and indigenous mill cloth. A resolution therefore was absolutely necessary to warn the people that because of the Settlement they were not to neglect their duty of warning the people against buying foreign cloth. I see nothing inconsistent with ahimsa in this or with the terms of the Settlement. Even an economic boycott requires strict vigilance, if the people are to be weaned from a habit of practically a century. They have to be repeatedly reminded that it is a bad habit. The test that the boycott now is purely economic lies in this, that there is not boycott of British cloth or British goods as such. That boycott was most effectively used during the campaign frankly as a political weapon and stopped as if by magic immediately

the Settlement was announced. This can be proved by producing conclusive evidence that almost the day after the Settlement orders for British machinery, British drugs and the like were despatched. Have I made the position clear? I can assure you that there is no desire on the part of any member of the Working Committee to use the economic boycott as a political weapon. That it has political consequences is not to be denied. The fact was before both Lord Irwin and myself during our talks and he recognized that it was inevitable. But you can examine the position in this way also. Supposing that Lancashire withdrew its trade in piece-goods from India which is after all 12%, boycott of foreign cloth will still continue although the competitor will be chiefly Japan. To complete the case I am sending you the correspondence bearing on the question between the Central Government and myself.

Much as I should like to have you by my side here, I would not think of dragging you here from England. You are doing great work there and I think you are in the right place. If I do not come to England at all it might then be necessary for you to come here if only for a short time. But the contingency we need not discuss just now.

Love.

MOHAN

From a copy: Horace Alexander Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

14. LETTER TO PADMA

BORSAD,
Silence Day [*July 3, 1931*][1]

CHI. PADMA,

I got both your letters. In one you ask for coloured paper and in the other a little piece from your letter paper. Why do you fall ill repeatedly? Can you not discover the cause?

Are there any irregularities in your diet? Let me know when you get a reply from the U.P.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6126

15. LETTER TO G. FINDLAY SHIRRAS

BORSAD,
July 4, 1931

DEAR PRINCIPAL SHIRRAS,

I thank you for your further letter of 3rd instant. It was good of you to have taken in Syt. C. H. Desai and I would like you to extend the same liberal treatment to the other students.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 824

[1] Gandhiji was in Borsad between June 28 and July 5, 1931. Silence Day fell on July 3.

16. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

BORSAD,
July 4, 1931

DEAR ANAND,

If I am to write, for the time being you must be satisfied with dictated letters.

I have yours of 23rd June. I met Jairamdas yesterday and he told me that Vidya was worse and that milk was not agreeing with her. That was quite likely and I had, I think, in Karachi suggested that she might live on fruit alone for some time. But the very best thing is for her to put herself under the treatment of the nature-cure physician of Poona about whom I talked to Jairamdas and about whom Jairamdas has already written to you. I do not know him personally but I have great faith in Dr. Khambatta[1], whom the Poona physician treated for suspected cancer. You must not lose time over Vidya's treatment.

Love to you both.

BAPU

SJT. ANAND HINGORANI
C/O "HINDU" OFFICE
HYDERABAD SIND

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

17. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

BORSAD,
July 4, 1931

DEAR MOTI BABU,

I was delighted to receive your letter. Let not that editorial in *Young India*[2] disturb you. It is, I have no doubt, the correct position and if you have not come to it already I have no doubt that you will do so in course of time.

[1] Dr. Behramji Khambatta
[2] *Vide* "Substance Not Shadow", 18-6-1931

Your other question in far more important. I have implicit faith that Hindus and Mussalmans will one day come together and that faith is derived from my faith in Hinduism and ultimately in human nature. If Hinduism deserves to live it must disarm all opposition. Going a step further, I believe that all mankind will never possess one faith but all the faiths that deserve to live will tolerate one another and they will be like flowers of the same plant all beautifully scented, all looking similar and yet each having a distinct individuality. Nature abhors lifeless unity. She conceals unity behind sympathetic diversity.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. MOTILAL ROY
PRABARTAK SANGHA
CHANDERNAGORE

From a photostat: G. N. 11038

18. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

BORSAD,
July 4, 1931

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

It is good you wrote the letter. I am writing to Sir Cowasji.

I believe in the saying, "Take care of the pence and the pounds will take care of themselves." However, what preparations need I make? As a servant, I have only to deliver the Master's message. If those to whom the message will be addressed listen to it, all will be well in the end. But shall we ever see such a fortunate day? How can there be rains without thunder and lightning? There is yet neither thunder nor lightning, nor even a cloud. Tell me, now, what I should study. Just now I cannot give my mind to problems of the constitution. Tell Lilavati that it is fixed on the lace of the Madura sari. Rajagopalachari has now become her advocate. After writing a long essay to him on the subject of the lace, I am writing this to you. Lilavati should show me the lace when I come there. Rajaji has raised a nice question and asked for my verdict in the matter.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 7516. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

19. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

[Before *July 5, 1931*][1]

I would rather stay at your settlement[2] than anywhere else, for there I will be living among the same sort of people as those for whom I have spent my life.

The Hindu, 6-7-1931

20. KATHIAWAR POLITICAL CONFERENCE

At its Bhavnagar session this Conference imposed on itself a restriction not to criticize the affairs of one State in the territory of another State.[3] Some had not quite liked this self-restraint, but all had willingly or unwillingly accepted it. There are now rumours of a move for the removal of the restriction.

The argument in favour of the removal is this: When we accepted the restriction, we did so because of the people's weakness; but the time has now changed and hence the restriction should go.

If the Kathiawar Political Conference wishes to remove the restriction, it has a full right to do so. I think either the Conference should be convened to lift it or the Executive Committee should run the risk of exceeding its constitutional authority and rescind the Resolution passed at the Conference. It would become the duty of the Executive Committee to act in that manner when its members definitely feel that public opinion demands such a step and that it must be taken immediately.

Here, however, I wish to discuss only the necessity or otherwise of that self-restraint. I think that the restraint was not a sign of weakness, but was, and even today is, a mark of civility. It was certainly inspired by a recognition of the condition of the Princes. It is the duty of the Conference to take account of their condition and the fact that it did so was a sign of its practical wisdom. It stands to lose nothing through that restraint and much to gain.

[1] The letter was released by Reuter from London on July 5.

[2] Kingsley Hall, a welfare workers' settlement in the East End, London

[3] It was at the fourth Conference at Porbandar on January 22, 1928 that Gandhiji moved from the chair a resolution adopting the restriction; *vide* "Speech at Kathiawar Political Conference, Porbandar", 22-1-1928

Anyone following the path of non-violence and truth would willingly observe the restriction. I would, therefore, go so far as to say that a satyagrahi would observe it not merely because such is the Resolution of the Kathiawar Political Conference but also because it is necessary in itself.

It is malicious propaganda to criticize the evils of State A in the territory of State B. It is cowardice to do so. Bravery lies in going to State A and exposing its evils there. As A and B are on friendly terms, B would be in a difficult position if A is criticized in B's territory. Without sufficient reason, a satyagrahi would not put any person into an embarrassing position. It may, however, be argued that when it is not possible to go to A's State to criticize him, there should be some place where it could be done. The reply to this is simple. As the Indian States are subject to the authority of the British Government, all such subject States can be criticized, and are criticized, in British Indian territory.

Hence, even after the experience of so many years, I cling to my view: The self-restraint imposed at Bhavnagar is just as necessary now as it was then. To a satyagrahi it is binding whether or not he belongs to the Conference. If the time has truly changed, we ought to be strong enough to go to the State concerned and compel it to remedy the evils. What courage do we show by criticizing the evils of a State outside its borders?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-7-1931

21. INDIA STATES AND SATYAGRAHA

I have two letters lying with me. One is addressed to me and the other is addressed to Kishorelalbhai who has sent it to me for reply.

The following is the substance of the letter addressed to me:

> You stop the satyagraha which has been going on in A, in B you blame those who started it, in C you advise them to slacken its pace and in D you permit an inexperienced leader to start it. Instead of putting yourself in such a false position, why don't you advise people to stop satyagraha altogether for the present and take up khadi work only and through it acquire fitness for satyagraha?

The long letter addressed to Kishorelalbhai is full of anger:

> The Congress seems to think that it can treat us, workers in

the Indian States, as it likes. During the struggle, we suffered beatings and went to jail. Now that there is a Settlement, we are treated as mere dirt. Our letters are thrown into the dustbin by the secretary. If we wish to show our spirit, it will adversely affect the Settlement between the Congress and the Government! It does not matter if the authorities of the States crush us. When a brave person like Fulchandbhai shows his courage, such orders are issued as would kill his spirit. What sort of principle is there behind all this? What sort of a Settlement is this? Shall we ever be able to win swaraj in this manner?

I have summarized this long letter from memory. The correspondent's anger seems pardonable. He has suffered and in the heat of excitement has made no effort to understand the position carefully.

I take the first letter first. It is true that I gave four seemingly contradictory opinions in regard to four different sets of circumstances. But really speaking they are not contradictory. Life's experiments are like chemical experiments. In a chemical experiment, if the quantity of one ingredient is increased or decreased different results follow. If even a drop of one more substance is added an altogether new compound results. In the same way in life owing to differences in the characters of workers and local conditions, the situation changes and different opinions are given. If this were not so, life would cease to be life and be reduced to a mechanical process. What matters is whether the different opinions are based on the same principle.

In the cases in which the satyagrahis were subject to my control and in which my name was being used, I had to bear in mind the different situations and give opinions accordingly, and they were right. In the fourth case the person had taken a pledge to offer satyagraha. He did not belong to any organization. He relied on his own strength. The only drawback in his action was that he had been hasty in taking the pledge. If at all, he alone would suffer because of that. In these circumstances, how could I, when my opinion was asked, commit the sin of persuading him to violate his pledge? How could I discourage him? The only right I had was to examine his pledge and say whether it violated any moral principle. I therefore expressed the view that there was no moral flaw in the pledge itself and that it was his duty to carry it out.

The principle is this: A pledge of satyagraha, which is not

against non-violence and the consequences of carrying out which are likely to be suffered only by the person taking it, must be kept at any cost, even if that person had not thought about the consequences and had not consulted anybody and had relied on his own strength. There have been countless such brave, unknown satyagrahis in the world. No one builds monuments in their honour, their names are not recorded in history, nor are their actions reported in newspapers. Their names are recorded in God's book and we may be sure that it is because of their strength that the world endures. Anyone who obstructs them in their work is not a wise man. He is sunk in the pit of ignorance and, trying to be overwise, obstructs manly effort.

The principle looks admirable when thus explained, but I have to face difficult moral issues every hour in my life in trying to follow it in practice and guiding my co-workers according to it. Following the rule that where there are no other trees a castor oil plant is as good as a tree, for want of a leader with greater wisdom, I act as a judge and go on issuing orders to my co-workers. My experience is that my views have not harmed either my co-workers or the public. Both have advanced. My co-workers have often felt unhappy while following my opinions but many of them have also realized that their suffering was ultimately for their good.

The Settlement between the Congress and the Government has no connection with the Indian States. There was no struggle in the States, and so none of the conditions of the Settlement apply to them. Even if the Government wanted to do so, it had no right to bind them. So, in principle, neither the Rulers nor the subjects are bound by the Settlement in any way. It puts no check on either. The subjects can offer satyagraha or resort to civil disobedience.

But to have such a right is one thing and to exercise it is quite another matter. Whether in a given case satyagraha is justified and those who wish to offer it are qualified to do so can be decided only after considering the circumstances of the case. When my co-workers ask for my advice, I have to guide them, and I tell them that though they had a right to offer satyagraha, the time or the occasion was not suitable. Generally speaking my opinion today is the same that I have expressed before. If the subjects of Indian States are satisfied with such reform as can be secured peacefully and engage themselves in constructive work, they will get all the sooner the status which they desire. I am convinced that when British India has won swaraj, most

problems of the Indian States will be automatically solved.

It is very sad that there are very few constructive workers in the Indian States. I feel no hesitation at all in saying that one who has not done some constructive work has not learnt the first lesson of satyagraha. According to me constructive work means the spinning-wheel and khadi, eradication of untouchability, propaganda against the drink-evil and Hindu-Muslim unity. One whose heart is not filled with the spirit of service and with love, how can he offer satyagraha? Even in British India, the number of such workers is small. It is smaller still in the Indian States. That is why I feel reluctant to advise satyagraha in those States.

This article is not meant for those who do not feel bound to ask or follow my advice. He who by his very nature is non-violent, who is a born satyagrahi, who loves truth with all his being and is the very image of service, such a person deserves to be revered by the whole world. I need not say that he does not require my advice and is qualified to offer sataygraha whenever he wishes to do so.

But to those who are full of anger and pride and whose ego is very strong, who cannot think clearly because of excitement, I will definitely say—"Please wait". If they take a hasty step even unintentionally, its result is bound to be bitter. Whatever self-restraint is observed now will also disappear and the future generations which will suffer from the tyranny of false satyagraha will curse us and blame satyagraha itself. Hence every thoughtful person should know the limits of satyagraha. Those who do not do so should stop using the name of satyagraha and then act as they wish. The world will know where they stand. But the things which are done in the name of satyagraha and which are unworthy of it will confuse and perplex the people and they will not know what path to follow.

Now the second letter. Most of the answer to it is contained in what I have stated above. The Congress has never come in the way of movements in the Indian States. It has not stopped anyone from offering satyagraha in them. If anyone has stopped any such movement, it is I. But in every case there was a reason for my doing so. Those who took part in the last satyagraha movement have not obliged the Congress or any individual. If at all, they have obliged themselves. It was the duty of every Indian to take part in it. Political rule has divided India into four parts, British India, Indian States, Portuguese India and French India. But Nature has made it one. The

rulers may distinguish between one part of the country and another but in fact we are one country. If the most important part becomes independent, wins swaraj, the other parts will automatically become strong. If, therefore, all of us, whether we live in the Indian States or outside, use all our strength in the British part and win swaraj, a good many reforms will come about automatically in the Indian States. On the contrary, if we offer untimely satyagraha in the Indian States and waste people's strength on them, swaraj will recede farther from us.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-7-1931

22. 'DIGAMBAR' SADHUS

I have received many letters of criticism for the views which I have expressed about nakedness. Some of the correspondents have written in anger too. I have also been advised to withdraw my remarks, as the feelings of Digambar Jains have been hurt.

I had written my article[1] with a purely religious motive. Such articles should not be withdrawn even to soothe the feelings of friends. If they are withdrawn, it will not be possible to discuss religious issues in a friendly manner. I have stated that Sardar's words are not law. When we have won swaraj, everything will be done according to peoples views. Laws which hurt religious sentiments will not be permitted. It will, of course, be necessary to consider what is religious sentiment. That also will be decided by the courts. People like me can only discuss such questions and create public opinion. I, therefore, request the Digambar Jains to discuss this subject in an objective manner and permit others also to discuss it in that manner.

I am so partial to Jainism that many people think that I am a Jain. When, in a meeting of Jains whom I did not know, I had to explain that I was not a Jain in order to refuse an honour which I did not deserve, the Jain friends in my circle were surprised and shocked. I have regard for the Digambar sect. I have read some of their religious books. As an ideal, I like the naked state. I have deliberately let my children move about naked. Hence everyone should take it for granted that my views on the subject have been expressed in a friendly spirit and for the protection of dharma. I may be wrong in holding

[1] *Vide* "Limits ato Freedom",31-5-1931

these views. Those whose reason does not approve of them may, therefore, certainly reject them. But they should not get angry with me. Anger hinders a proper understanding of religious or other ideas and should, therefore, be eschewed. I now come to the main issue. The criticism[1] in the issue of *Jain Mitra* of *Ashadh Vad* 4 is inspired by a sincere motive. It includes the substance of what others have said and so I will content myself with a reply to it. Those who have not read that article may find it difficult to understand my answer, and I therefore request them to get that article and read it.

Digambar sadhus may be pure minded. But I cannot accept the claim that all of them are so. I believe that no one should claim to be a sadhu. The fact that a person is a sadhu should be self-evident to others. A person is not a sadhu if it is necessary to prove or claim that he is one. A true sadhu requires no protection. Digambar sadhus should represent the highest state which a sadhu can attain. Why should they require anyone's help to uphold their status? Such an ideal Digambar sadhu needs no protection from the law or from a court. It is surprising that such natural innocence should even attract the attention of others. But in the present age, it need not be surprising that such a person does draw the attention of others and if he has to appear in a court or is sent to jail, he should regard that as a God-sent opportunity to demonstrate the greatness of the Digambar ideal.

There are real sadhus and fake ones too. There is no limit to the number of the latter. Who will differentiate between the two? Should we not stop anyone moving around naked? Will no harm result if we do not? It is not true to say that a person with an impure mind cannot remain naked. Once you disregard social restraints, why should an impure-minded person not abandon decency? Why should anyone feel ashamed of remaining naked even when he may be impure? The advocates of nudity as a normal state think that there is no harm if men and women remain naked even though they may have impure thoughts. They also hold that the attraction of sex is the normal condition for human beings and that, if nudity increases such attraction, there is nothing wrong in it. If the sex urge is a normal condition, then its gratification should also be accepted as normal. So there is nothing wrong in remaining naked. That is the view of these lovers of sense-pleasures, who believe in the religion of enjoyment. Are those Digambar Jains who have regard for decency and believe in self-control ready to support this view? Are they ready to see society

[1] By Paramesthidas; *vide* "Notes", p. *24*, sub-title, "Nudity and Society".

turned into a scene of sensuality? Would they like to be responsible for such a state of affairs? I am sure they feel disgusted even as they read this. Thus, if they go deep into the matter, they will see that it is our duty in this age to observe the custom of covering the private parts. The Digambar sadhus, therefore, should wear a codpiece for a little while out of regard for society, or, if they move naked, they should be ready to suffer for doing so and not raise an outcry about it. If we believe in the necessity of social restraints. then. irrespective of whether or not we are Jains, we cannot follow the ideal of nudity in practice. If we try to make exceptions, we invite difficulties and therefore we should make no exception.

"Why do we let children move naked? Does anyone force a child not to remain naked." There is a fallacy in this comparison. A child is by, nature innocent. Out of crores of sadhus, hardly one attains such a state after a long discipline. Everywhere in the world children remain naked, but even among sadhus the naked state is exceptional. In a child, impure thoughts are impossible but all the sadhus are not free from them. A blind person can make out a child, but even those who can see can hardly distinguish a true sadhu from a false one. So the example of a child remaining naked does not help us in coming to a decision in this matter. On the contrary, it shows that nakedness, which befits a child, does not only seem improper when we have grown out of childhood but is positively shameful.

For these reasons, though I worship the ideal of nakedness for a pure sadhu, I do believe that the leaders of Digambar sadhus should think more deeply on this matter and find out a way for those sadhus who move about in public to cover themselves. By doing so, they will safeguard dharma and win greater respect for sadhus. Even if they cannot find such a way, an outcry over the issue will certainly do harm.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-7-1931

23. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

BORSAD,
July 5, 1931

Assuming that you are getting *Young India,* I am not sending you copies containing special reference to acts of provincial Governments in breach of the Settlement. It gave me joy to read in the

newspapers today, that the two confidential letters[1] addressed to taluqdars by the Deputy Commissioner Rai Barelihad been withdrawn. But that, good as it is, is surely not enough. Wholesale gagging of Congressmen, their arrests, hundreds of notices on *kisans* bode ill, and make me extremely nervous as to the situation. These ill omens are enforced by bad news from the provinces. Some of these matters I have brought to your notice. I am not feeling much better here either, though I am putting off the agony by exercising the greatest patience, and continually seeing local officials. I do not know whether you can help to improve the situation. The only remedy I can think of is the appointment of the Arbitration Board I have proposed. There is such an accumulation of matters to be decided.

Young India, 27-8-1931

24. LETTER TO R. M. MAXWELL

AS AT SABARMATI,
July 5, 1931

DEAR MR. MAXWELL,

Mr. Bhadrapur, the Collector of Kaira, writes to me with reference to my application for the reappointment of the old Mukhi of Ras that the Matadars will not be reappointed. I take this to mean that not only will not the old Mukhi be reappointed but also that no Mukhi will be appointed out of the old Matadars. Mr. Bhadrapur is not clear whether Government orders also mean that the present acting Mukhi will not be removed. My reading of the Settlement is that wherever the present acting Mukhi is not a desirable man or is not permanently appointed, the old Mukhi if he resigned owing to civil disobedience should be reappointed. The Collector Mr. Perry even offered to reappoint the old Mukhi if I would consent to the retention of the present Dharala Mukhi as a co-Mukhi. I could not consent to any such arrangement as it would mean sowing discord between Patidars and Dharalas. If these orders are not revised an impossible situation wholly inconsistent with the spirit of the Settlement will arise, and the Patidars will be penalized for having dared to offer civil disobedience. I hope, however, that the Government has no desire to penalize the Patidars. In virtue of the Settlement, therefore, I ask for a reconsideration of the orders and removal of the present Mukhi who, I have already shown to the Collector, is undesirable and who is not

[1] *Vide* "Kisan's Troubles in the U.P"., 19-6-1931

permanently appointed within the meaning of the Settlement, and for reappointment of the old Mukhi.

Yours sincerely,

R. M MAXWELL, ESQ.
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO H. E. THE GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY
GANESHKHIND, POONA

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

25. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised

BORSAD,
July 6, 1931

CHI. MIRA,

I have all your letters. Mother is slowly going. It will be well if the end comes soon. It is better to leave a body one has outgrown. To wish to see the dearest ones as long as possible in the flesh is a selfish desire and it comes out of weakness or want of faith in the survival of the soul after the dissolution of the body. The form ever changes, ever perishes, the informing spirit neither changes nor perishes. True love consists in transferring itself from the body to the dweller within and then necessarily realizing the oneness of all life inhabiting numberless bodies. You will now see why I do not tempt you to go to London now. But you know that you are at liberty to do so, if your love impels you thither. There would be nothing wrong if you felt the urge to go.

I am writing to Father Elwin today not to hesitate to tell you what he wants. I am at ease, you being there. It lessens Narandas's strain also.

Yes, Gangabehn has the 'blues' on. You should distract her attention from herself by occupying her in useful service.

I was forgetting all about Shankerlal's proposal. I do not want you to be unsettled just now. And the Ashram needs you as much as you need the Ashram. You will later on certainly entertain proposals for pure khadi tours. I shall talk to Shankerlal about it.

How is Keshu doing? Did you talk to him about the wheel?

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Bombay: 7-10[1]
We return most probably to Borsad on 11th.

From the original: C.W. 5433. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9667

[1] According to his original tour programme Gandhiji was to be in Bombay from July 7 to 10. However he left Bombay for Simla on July 13.

26. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

BORSAD,
July 6, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter. I will have a talk with Jayaprakash when he comes here and do what is necessary. I should like you to come early. I am not at all happy that your health is deteriorating.

Rajendrababu is in Ahmedabad today. We shall meet at Anand station in the train for Bombay. He will stay in Bombay for about four days and then leave for that side. You should stop worrying unnecessarily. God does the worrying for us; why then should we worry? Even if we worry what can we do? We realize every moment in our lives that we cannot move a single leaf unless He wills. Why, then, should we feel proud, or worry

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3417

27. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

BORSAD,
July 6, 1931

CHI. PREMA,

I got your two letters. Who else, if not I, will make you swallow bitter draughts? It is such draughts which will preserve your health. Mental health is much more important than physical health. The rule regarding women which Narandas suggests is a very old one. If it has not been observed all these years, the reason is our, or rather my, laxity. Even now I doubt whether, after it is properly understood, it will be fully observed. I intend to write more about this. Today if I get time, or later whenever I get time.

I intended to write a note for Kisan much earlier, but could write one only today. If she gets it in time, she will perhaps come and see me in Bombay. I liked what you wrote about guests.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10258; also C.W. 6706. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

28. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 6, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letters.

I had from the beginning intended to introduce a rule for men and women such as you mention. I will write at length about it, if I can. Surendra must be insisting that there should be at least three women together. That seems unnecessary to me.

I see no need to mention the matter concerning . . .[1] in the *Ashram Samachar*.

There is a woman named Mrs. Edith Heney. Her address is: 353 Lilloet St. West Moose Jaw Saskatchewan, Canada.

She writes to me to say that she has sent 15 dollars. If you have received the sum, or when you receive it, credit it to her name. Preserve her address. Note it in the account book itself. Her condition for the donation is that we should convert boys to Christianity, give them Christian names and use the money to help them. I have replied to her that we can never do what she suggests. If she sends a cheque, it would be much better to return it. Think about this. I will tell her that her gift will be credited to her name but that, if she does not withdraw her condition, the sum will be returned to her. As I write this, I feel that we should return the sum no matter with what conditions it is offered. You should, therefore, return it. I will write and tell her that the sum will be returned.

I am sorry I have filled up the letter with idle and incomplete thoughts.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I think we shall be in Bombay between 7 and 10.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

[1] The name has been omitted.

29. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

BOMBAY,
July 7, 1931

Referring to Sir Samuel Hoare's recent speech that the Conservatives would make the acceptance of the safeguards and the non-raising of the issue of Independence as conditions for their participation in the next Round Table Conference, Gandhiji said:

I know nothing about this. The Settlement leaves the Congress free to press for any claim it chooses. The mandate given to me by the Congress is unequivocal. The principle of safeguards is undoubtedlyaccepted. The contents are a matter for discussion, and there also the Settlement is quite clear. Safeguards must be demonstrably in the interests of India.

Asked about the report current that he proposed to ask the Government to agree to refer all the outstanding disputes regarding the implementing of the Truce terms to an arbitration board, Gandhiji said:

1 don't want to make any statement on this matter at this stage.[1]

The talk then turned on the foreign cloth re-export scheme. Gandhiji said he had no doubts whatsoever that the scheme would be a success. The problem could be solved in no time if the merchants were favourably inclined. It was wrong to say that the Ahmedabad millowners were not contributing their share. There had been some delay, and he had no doubt that the Ahmedabad millowners would contribute their share. The whole scheme was a *bona-fide* one, and intended to give as much relief as possible to those merchants who were prepared to give up trade in foreign cloth and take to swadeshi.

The Hindu, 7-7-1931

[1] *The Bombay Chronicle* dated July 8 adds here: "The Working Committee is the competent party to deal with that."

30. LETTER TO COMMONWEALTH OF INDIA LEAGUE

[Before *July 8, 1931*][1]

Mr. Gandhi has communicated to the Commonwealth of India League his acceptance of an invitation to speak at conferences which the League is arranging in London and Manchester in September, "if I reach London, but difficulties here regarding a settlement may render my departure impossible."

The Statesman, 9-7-1931

31. IS IT CRUMBLING?

Complaints are pouring in from many parts that the local officials are breaking the Delhi Pact to pieces and that it almost looks as if the Government was at war with the Congress and therefore every Congressman almost was a suspect. From the dates I shall give of the events about to be described the reader will see that for long I suppressed publication in the hope that the cases brought to my notice were isolated instances and that the complainants would receive relief on application to their respective Provincial Governments. My hope however was disappointed.

IN SULTANPUR, U.P.

The Secretary, local Congress Committee, writes:[2]

IN MUTTRA, U. P.

The Secretary, local Congress Committee, writes:[3]

In the face of these allegations and a Press message from Lucknow that nearly 700 prosecutions are taking place, the news that the confidential circulars referred to in these columns last week[4] have been withdrawn does not restore confidence. The withdrawal is a mere technical mending of discovered breach, if it is not followed by a

[1] The report appeared under the date-line "London, July 8".

[2] The letter is not reproduced here. It described the coercive measures adopted by the Government for the realization of rents and the suppression of Congress activities by officials.

[3] The letter is not reproduced here. It narrated how a public meeting was forcefully dispersed and lathi-charged by the police.

[4] *Vide* "Kisan's Troubles in the U. P.", 19-6-1931

corresponding improvement all round and a cessation of prosecutions. In the U.P. there was contact established between the Government and the Congress through Pandit Govind Vallabh Pant. They could not complain that he was unwilling to assist or that the Congress had ceased to exercise authority over its workers. In no case could the forcible dispersal of a meeting be justified in these times of peace. On 24th May last when I was passing through Muttra the local people told me of a police raid on Bijari, a village few miles from Muttra. I had advised the people to lodge complaints with the higher authority. So far as I am aware they got no redress. I purposely suppressed the news of the details of which I was in full possession.

IN THE PUNJAB

I take the following from the letter[1] dated 24th June from the Secretary, District Congress Committee, Amritsar.

From the letter of Lala Dunichand of Ambala dated 23rd June, I take the following paragraphs[2]:

The Ludhiana outrage referred to in the quotation is said to have taken place on 16th May last. On receipt of a telegram from Ludhiana at Simla and reinforced by a personal visit by the Congress Secretary at Ludhiana, I asked Lala Dunichand to inquire into the allegations.[3] He kindly and promptly went to Ludhiana and reported. This was followed by more elaborate inquiry instituted by the Bar Association of Ludhiana. The Secretary of the Association, too, kindly sent me a copy of the report. Both the reports were suppressed by me from the readers of *Young India* for reasons already stated. Both agree in finding that a peaceful meeting held for an absolutely innocent purpose was mercilessly broken up in the presence of the City Magistrate. The Naushahra Panuan punitive police is a manifest breach of the Pact, if the facts are as recited by Lala Dunichand in his letter to the Punjab Government which I have read. In no case could the expenses of the police be recovered from the people unless it could be clearly proved that the police was imposed for reasons wholly unconnected with civil disobedience.

[1] Not reproduced here. It described how the local authority lathi-charged processions and arrested Congress workers.

[2] Not reproduced here. The letter stated that political meetings were not allowed and the Congress movement was being crushed in the Punjab.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Dunichand", 6-6-1931

From Rohtak comes the complaint that peaceful Congressmen are being arrested without any cause that the Congress authorities can divine. The authorities know Lala Shamlal of Rohtak personally. He is a well-known advocate of the place and president of the local Congress Committee. They do not seem to have troubled to bring to his notice the conduct or speeches of the offending Congressmen.

IN BENGAL

From the Contai Congress Committee was received the following wire about 20th June last.

> Contai Government officials breaking Truce terms, arrested local Congress workers engaged in peaceful constructive work. Local Government alarmed at success of Congress arbitration. Trying to destroy it by these arrests. Viceroy has been wired. Pray your intervention. Letter follows.

From the letter referred to in the foregoing I take the following interesting paragraphs[1]:

I must forbear to say anything about Gujarat. I am too near the scene to want to say anything just now. But the fact that the Sardar is hooked to Bardoli and I to Borsad has a meaning. But I must take the public into confidence about what is going on in some parts of the Bombay Presidency about liquor.

Let the following[2] from the letter from Vengurla (Ratnagiri District) tell its own tale.

Much the same is going on in Ahmedabad where there never has been a departure from the peacefullest picketing. My untutored mind tells me that these liquor sales are illicit and should be suppressed by the Government as being in breach of the Pact. If, however, they are claimed to be legal it is so much the worse and a double breach.

The foregoing is enough for this week. I have other complaints and from other parts of Provinces. I must deal with them in a future issue.

The impatient Congressmen who read this catalogue of complaints may well ask then: ‘How long are we to wait and bear this?’: My

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] Not reproduced here. The letter described how liquor dealers were trying to out-manoeuvre the picketing by keeping odd hours and selling the liquor at places other than the shops.

answer is the same as last week. 'You must wait as long as the Working Committee thinks it necessary.'[1] Two wrongs will not make one right. If some local Governments are going wrong as they seem to me to be, there is no reason for the Congress to do likewise. We must continue to fulfil our part of the agreement. If it must break, let it break in spite of the whole of the Congress effort to the contrary. The greater our patience another word for suffering the greater will be our strength.

Young India, 9-7-1931

32. A COUNTRYMAN'S ADVICE

Many American friends write to me on the American visit which reporters had planned for me. Those Americans who are in close touch with me have earnestly dissuaded me from it. Others, also friendly, have with equal earnestness asked me to go. Now comes an extremely well reasoned appeal from a countryman residing in America[2]. It deals with three matters of importance. But I must let the letter speak for itself of which the relevant portion is given below:[3]

> I venture to make an humble suggestion and that is to request you to give up your idea of visiting the United States of America. . . .
>
> . . . I will venture to put in a couple of reasons as to why I think your visit to the United States will serve no useful purpose where our national affairs are concerned.
>
> This country is a very peculiar country in many respects and the Americans as a rule are so materialistically inclined, and this fact is more or less conceded by all, that they can hardly see anything in terms other than dollars and cents.
>
> Of course this is a broad statement to make and I fully realize that there are exceptions here and there. . . .
>
> Your visit to this country, in my opinion, will be absolutely misunderstood and if I am not mistaken the wonderful hold that you have today on some of the imaginative Americans, will be lost in a way. And I am further of the opinion that your visit to America instead of enlisting greater sympathy for our national cause may work quite the other way.
>
> Hardly anyone could come to this country and travel about and give a

[1] *Vide* "Kisan's Troubles in the U. P. ", 19-6-1931
[2] *Vide* "Letter to J. J. Singh",24-6-1931
[3] Only extracts are reproduced here.

few lectures here and there without having a "business manager". That will make your visit a business one and there will be scores of sections of people and Press who will criticize your visit and suggest that you came here to make money.

Probably you are aware of the fact that such a noble soul and true philosopher like Tagore has been openly criticized in American papers and

insinuations have been made that he visits America to make money out of the Americans and yet has the cheek to criticize the so-called civilization or lack of it in this country.

In other words I feel that not on account of anything that you may say or do, but on account of the mentality of an average American, you are bound to be misunderstood in this country and thus your visit is likely to prove more a failure than a success. . . .

Therefore my conclusions are based upon the information that I have gathered from time to time from an average well-to-do American family, whose interest is casual in what is happening in India, and as I have said before, such Americans are in greater numbers than anti or proIndian Americans.

Your visit to London is entirely a different thing. In my humble opinion it will serve a great purpose, because if there is any nation on this world who is truly sportsmanlike and will give the devil his due, it is the English nation. . . .

I have also a word to add regarding this much-talked-of question of your attire when visiting England or America. . . .

It will be simply ironical if you could not find some form of Indian dress which may be quite suitable and desirable. . . .

None of the three things worry me. The proposal to visit America has been with me for the past five years or longer. But I have lacked the inner urge or courage to go. The very allurements some of the writers have held out have but confirmed the original decision based on nothing better than intuition. The same is true of the English visit more or less. There, too, if I am to go the way will be clear and open for me. At the present moment the subtle and growing resistance to the Delhi Pact by the officials leaves me no room for thinking of anything else. My contribution to the movement of India's freedom just now consists in making every effort humanly possible to prevent the Settlement from being wrecked.

As to the dress I have had many advisers. But here too my position is simple. If I go to England I shall go as a representative and

nothing more, nothing less. I must, therefore, appear not as the English would have me but as my representative character demands. I represent the Congress because and in so far as it represents *Daridranarayana*, the semi-starved almost naked villager. And if I represent the landed or monied or educated Indians, I do so to the extent that they identify themselves with *Daridranarayana* and desire to promote his interest. I can therefore appear neither in English costume nor in that of the polished Nehrus. In spite of the closest bond between us it would have been just as ludicrous for me to dress as Pandit Motilalji did as it would have been for him to appear in loin cloth. My loin cloth is an organic evolution in my life. It came naturally, without effort, without premeditation. My duty, as I conceive it, will then be, if I succeed in reaching London, to add nothing more to the loin-cloth than the climate peremptorily demands. I should be guilty of discourtesy to the English if I deceived them by appearing not as I am but as I may think or friends may think they would have me to be. I should fail at the very beginning of my mission, if I commenced by deception. It may please for the time being, it must offend in the end. If I am to win their hearts as I want to, I can do so only by being cent per cent truthful. Truth is like the sun. It will melt the icy mountain of suspicion and distrust.

Young India, 9-7-1931

33. AN OLD POLITICAL PRISONER[1]

A correspondent writes:[2]

I have known of this case for a long time. It does appear to be an extremely hard and deserving case. Generally a life-sentence means fourteen years. Why in this case that period has not sufficed the public are entitled to know. If it is true as stated by the correspondent that Pandit Jagat Ram bears an exemplary character and is ailing, it is surely an additional reason for his discharge. The recent death of his father makes the case for discharge complete from a humanitarian

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to H. W. Emerson"

[2] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had written about Pandit Jagat Ram, a political prisoner of the Punjab whose life-sentence was being repeatedly extended despite his exemplary conduct in jail and his failing health.

standpoint. It is to be hoped that either the Punjab Government will immediately discharge him or satisfy the public why he cannot be discharged.

Young India, 9-7-1931

34. SELF-APPOINTED

A Nankin correspondent writes:[1]

I can say categorically that I have sent no representative to China nor has the Congress to my knowledge. Non-violence is with me an everlasting principle. And after twelve years' progressively happy experience of non-violence the Congress is not likely easily to give up non-violence.

Young India, 9-7-1931

35. TELEGRAM TO VICEROY

BOMBAY,
July 9, 1931

MY MESSAGE[2] CONVEYED THROUGH HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY HAS TOLD YOU OF MY DIFFICULTY ABOUT ATTENDING FEDERAL STRUCTURE COMMITTEE OWING CONTINUING BREACHES OF SETTLEMENT BY SEVERAL PROVINCIAL AUTHORITIES. WORKING COMMITTEE IS CONSIDERING RESOLUTION TO THE EFFECT THAT, IF RELIEF CANNOT BE OBTAINED, CONGRESS SHOULD GIVE UP HOPE OF BEING REPRESENTED AT ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE. WHEN WE MET, YOU WERE GOOD ENOUGH TO TELL ME THAT I SHOULD APPROACH YOU WHEN I WAS IN DIFFICULTY. COULD YOU PLEASE GUIDE ME ?

Young India, 27-8-1931

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. It stated that an Indian visitor to China, claiming to be a representative of Gandhiji and the Congress, had been saying that India had changed her policy towards England and had adopted the use of force.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Ernest Hotson", 3-7-1931

36. CABLE TO " THE NEWS CHRONICLE"

[On or before *July 10, 1931*][1]

THE CONTINUANCE OF THE BREACHES OF THE SETTLEMENT MAKES MY DEPARTURE UNCERTAIN. I AM TRYING TO AVOID AN OPEN RUPTURE, BUT IF I FAIL TO SECURE SATISFACTION THERE WILL BE NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO ABANDON MY DEPARTURE .

The Hindu, 11-7-1931

37. TELEGRAM TO VICEROY

BOMBAY,
July 10, 1931

RECEIVED THIS MORNING YOUR LETTER[2] SIXTH INSTANT FOR WHICH I THANK YOU. YOUR OFFER OF HELP GIVES HOPE AND ENCOURAGEMENT. I DID NOT KNOW, THAT I WOULD HAVE TO SEEK IT SO SOON AS I HAD TO, AS PER MY TELEGRAM OF LAST NIGHT. MAY I EXPECT REPLY TOMORROW SATURDAY?

Young India, 27-8-1931

38. LETTER TO R. M. MAXWELL

BOMBAY,
July 10, 1931

DEAR MR. MAXWELL,

You will recall the Chirner Case. According to the judgment of the Sessions Judge, 20 accused were held not guilty of any violence. I enclose herewith the relevant extract from the judgment. These accused were fined according to the sums marked against their names with varying terms of imprisonment in default of payment of fine. As you will observe from the footnote to the list of the names, the judge

[1] This cable was reported from London on this date.

[2] It read: ". . . . I quite understand your difficulties, but am sure they must be got over, for as I have often told you, I think it really essential that you should go. If I can help in any way, please let me know."

has allowed 30 days' time to pay up the fines on proper security being furnished. These men have given security. As you will observe, judgment was given on the 2nd inst. As these cases clearly come under the Settlement, I ask for the remission of their fines. I hope that the matter will receive early attention.

Yours sincerely,

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

39. LETTER TO MANAGER, OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, BOMBAY

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
July 10, 1931

DEAR SIR,

With reference to your letter of 8th inst., what I would like you to tell me is the price you would charge without the royalty, the price with the royalty and the proportion of profits to the cost price. I am certainly anxious that the booklet[1] should be available at the cheapest price. Sjt. Mahadev Desai would attend to the rest of your letter to whom you would write in future.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5687

40. SPEECH AT BOMBAY[2]

July 10, 1931

I learn that all these members have come all the way from Dadar on foot. I regret I could not spare some time to go to Dadar to address you. I am helpless, I am so busy. When one is bed-ridden, people do not expect him to pay them visits, they flock round his bed. Somewhat the same is my position.

I give my blessings to this Mandal. It gives me great pleasure to

[1] Containing selections from Gandhiji's speeches and writings
[2] On the inauguration of the Gandhi Seva Mandal; Gandhiji spoke in Hindi.

see that the Mandal has taken up khaddar work and other items of the constructive programme. I hope you will push on with it in right earnest.

Now a word of warning. You have started an independent organization. It is up to you to see that you do not embark on any activity in the name of the Congress without first obtaining the permission of the Congress. Similarly particular care would have to be taken to see that there is no conflict or overlapping of activities. Khaddar work is dear to me and that is why while giving my blessings to the Mandal that has attached itself to this work, I have thought fit to utter a necessary note of warning.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-7-1931

41. LETTER TO G. FINDLAY SHIRRAS

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
July 11, 1931

DEAR PRINCIPAL SHIRRAS,

You will please forgive me for my inability to acknowledge your letter[1] earlier. I have been so engrossed in work here as to be unable to keep pace with my correspondence.

I had no notion that my last letter was delivered to you with the envelope unclosed. I quite recognize the force of your argument that my letter should not have been delivered through the very students whose cases were under consideration.

I thank you for your exhaustive reply. Having regard to the detailed information you have given to me, I have advised the students, who have not been admitted, to cease agitating for admission, and I have every hope that they will accept my advice.

I return the papers you were kind enough to send me.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Encl. 5

From a photostat: G.N. 825

[1] Of July 4, 1931, stating his inability to readmit the students "in the interests of the College"

42. CULTIVATOR'S ACCOUNT BOOK

There is no limit to the cultivators' carelessness or ignorance. Not only do they themselves have to suffer for their ignorance, but it results in a loss of crores of rupees as the cultivators constitute more than 80% of India's population. The most serious aspect of their carelessness is perhaps their indifference to keeping accounts. If a merchant kept no books of account, he would soon become bankrupt. A house-holder would become poor if he went on spending without keeping an account of his expenditure. Even Lord Kubera's[1] treasure would soon be exhausted if he went on spending from it without keeping an account. How, then, can the cultivator escape?

But it is a fact universally known that the Indian cultivator carries his account in his memory and never enters it in a book. As a result, he is always in debt, and, though no one has been able to gather the full statistics, it is estimated that his debt runs into crores or hundreds of crores of rupees. This means that the cultivator has been carrying on his occupation at a loss.

To remedy this deficiency, a proforma book of accounts has been advised by the Vidyapith and made available. The book is based on the experiences of Mahadev and Narahari during the Bardoli Satyagraha. The type of information which they often required at that time can be gathered from this book whenever one wants it. The book has been so designed that the farmer also should be able to know his position from day to day.

This book is not intended for free distribution. Only a cultivator who wishes to keep accounts should buy it. It will be sold at cost price, and volunteers trained for the purpose will explain how to use it to persons who may not know how to keep accounts. As for those cultivators who do not know how to read or write, wherever possible a volunteer will write their accounts for them. I would advise every cultivator to acquire enough knowledge of Gujarati language to be able to keep his accounts. The volunteer will help him in that too. Though a cultivator may not just now be able to realize the benefit of keeping accounts in this manner, he will discover at the end of the

[1] God of wealth

year how much money he has saved with a little labour and an expense of two annas.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-7-1931

43. TELEGRAM TO VICEROY

BOMBAY,
July 12, 1931

DEEPLY GRATEFUL FOR WIRE[2] RECEIVED LAST NIGHT. I PROPOSE LEAVE FOR SIMLA MONDAY FRONTIER MAIL UNLESS I HEAR TO THE CONTRARY. REACHING SURAT MONDAY MORNING.

Young India, 27-8-1931

44. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

July 12, 1931

Q. Are you going to see the Viceroy and if so when?

A. I hope so, but cannot say when.

Q. What are the important questions for discussion with the Viceroy?

A. I have no notion.

Q. What are the steps you propose to take to redress breaches of the Delhi Agreement ?

A. Entreaty.

Q. Is your visit to London still dependent on a satisfactory settlement of the breaches of the Truce terms?

[1] The source has a footnote which reads: "This book will be available at Navajivan Karyalaya or Gujarat Vidyapith after July 16, 1931."

[2] Of July 11, 1931, conveyed through the Bombay Government, which read: "Many thanks for your telegram of the 9th. You will understand that, in the absence of specific information regarding the alleged breaches of the Settlement by Government, it is not possible for me to propose particular remedies I suggest that, as on previous occasions when difficulties have arisen, the best course is a personal discussion of mutual complaints. I should be very glad to see you if you could visit Simla, and to arrange for detailed discussion between you and Emerson. In the mean time you will no doubt agree with me that it is undesirable that anything should be published by either side which might make it more difficult to obtain a solution of the existing difficulties."

A. My visit to London is dependent on many things.

Asked if the formula[1] suggested by the Working Committee for a settlement of the communal question was unacceptable to Maulana Shaukat Ali's party and if an alternative formulae acceptable to all parties was not forthcoming, whether the Congress would press its own formulae at the Round Table Conference or would agree to arbitration, Mr. Gandhi remarked:

This is more than I can answer at the present moment.

The Hindu, 13-7-1931

45. TELEGRAM TO ROHIT MEHTA

SWARAJ ASHRAM, SURAT,
July 13, 1931

ROHIT MEHTA
CARE CONGRESS AHMEDABAD

SORRY. GOING SIMLA TONIGHT. GLADLY SEE YOU ON RETURN. MEANWHILE WRITE SIMLA.

GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

46. TELEGRAM TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

SWARAJ ASHRAM, SURAT,
July 13, 1931

ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN
UTMANZAI

YOUR WIRE. KHURSHEDBEHN REACHING MEERUT TWENTIETH.

GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* "Proposed Communal Solution", 16-7-1931.

47. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*July 13, 1931*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

As ever, in Bombay I get no time for correspondence, The thing commenced this time also at 4.30 a.m. and went on till 11 p.m. I never retired before then—nevertheless the health remained quite good.

Today we reached Surat early morning. I had over an hour's sleep and feel rested. I have been left alone. The weather is cool. The sky overcast. Fresh breeze blowing all the time. Of course it was the same in Bombay. I wonder how it is faring with you and how Father Elwin is standing the Ashram life and climate.

We are off to Simla tonight. Ba goes with me. I don't expect to have to give more than three days to Simla. I should know there definitely whether we are to go to London or not.

Here comes Mahadev to give me news about you all and interrupt this letter.

So Mother is gone. I read your suppressed grief in every line of your letter. After all we are very human. The ability to suppress is the preliminary to eradication. God give you the strength. So far as Mother herself was concerned, it is as you say welcome news. Let this death of one whom you loved so, be a means of enriching your faith in the future and in the oneness of all life. If this oneness was not a fact, we would not have been blessed with the capacity to forget the death of dearest ones. Let this death also spur you to greater dedication to service.

I wonder if you get the dates you wanted. But let them not grow on you. I find that raisins are not a bad change.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5434; also G.N. 9668. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] Gandhiji reached Surat on this date.

48. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

July 13, 1931

CHI. MADHAVJI,

I have been getting your postcards. These days I get no time at all for writing letters. But you should go on writing regularly. I am glad that Darbari has come over there. Tell him that he should now stay on.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am in Surat today and will entrain for Simla at night.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6817

49. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

SURAT,
July 13, 1931

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have not been able to write to you, but I do think about you every day. I have even talked about you to Kaka. I am very eager indeed to meet you. Why should he ever worry in whose heart is inscribed the name of God? Those three verses, which I have taught the women to recite daily as part of their prayers, what do they teach? "I take upon myself the burden of the welfare of that man or woman who is filled with devotion to me"[1] Why, then, should we worry?

The hymns in our *Bhajanavali* are such as will give peace to us. Anyone who meditates over them constantly will never feel upset. You should give up all worries. Write to me from time to time. I feel more worried if I get no letter from you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G.S. Gangabehnne; p. 57; also C.W. 8781. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, IX. 22

50. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SURAT,
July 13, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

It was not to be expected that I would be able to write to you from Bombay.

Mahadev tells me that Mahavir has still not recovered. How if you send him to Vijapur? Or we may keep him in some hospital in Bombay. His illness has persisted far too long. Who is treating him?

I shall reach Simla on Wednesday. I think I shall be there for three days at least.

Ba is accompanying me. From Simla I am keen on going to Ahmedabad. But it is only there that I shall know what I should do. My address in Simla is: Firgrove, Simla.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

51. TELEGRAM TO MOHANLAL

[On or before *July 14, 1931*][1]

WE ARE EIGHT REACHING SIMLA ON WEDNESDAY MORNING.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 15-7-1931

52. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

July 14, 1931

CHI. RAMA,

I am writing this in a fast-running train, and cannot write in ink. I got your letter.

From whence this blind attachment? You feel concerned if Dhiru is beaten, but don't care if other children are beaten. Why should you not feel for Dharmakumar as you feel for Dhiru? However, I don't mind your writing to me about this. Surely, both of

[1] The telegram was received by the addressee on July 14.

us need not worry about the same matter, need we? You have sent your worry to me through post; with whom does it rest now? With you or with me? I am keeping it with me, and am not sending it back to you. But think: Just as we cannot act up to our ideal of regarding all as equals, so Prema cannot act up to the ideal of never beating children. As we endeavour to regard all children as our own, so Prema endeavours to refrain from beating them. I remember how Dhiru was put off. I had a letter from all the children telling me that they loved Premabehn very much. I have written a strong letter to her. We shall not easily get a worker like her. I will be more careful henceforth. Will that suffice?

Does Vimu live in the Ashram?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N.

53. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI M. THAKKAR

July 14, 1931

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I got your letter. I didn't mind its length. As I am writing in the moving train I cannot write in ink. I hope you will be able to read my handwriting. What I have said is that those who do not have enough work outside should go to the Ashram. The purpose of the vow to work outside the Ashram is that we should make greater self-sacrifices and do more work. If living outside the Ashram makes workers lazy and self-indulgent, the vow will be kept by returning to the Ashram. One ought not to return to the Ashram for selfish reasons. That is, you cannot return for Chandra's sake, just as Rama cannot do so for Vimu's sake. I would like it if Chandra stays without you in the Ashram. Or, if practicable, you may keep Chandra there with you. But you should not keep him with you if his presence hinders you in your work. Do you now understand what I mean? If you don't, write again and ask me. You should understand the reasons for whatever you do.

I shall be in Simla for three or four days. I expect to return to Borsad or Bardoli on the 21st. What effect did the fast have?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6818

54. LETTER TO LILAVATI

ON THE TRAIN,
July 14, 1931

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your letters.

What should I write to you? How may I soothe you? What Narandas says is not because of distrust, but out of regard for propriety. Even I should not be alone with any person. I do many things for propriety's sake, though I would not consider it wrong, either, to do them of my own free will. The whole world acts in that manner. If you examine your own actions, you will discover that you do a great many thingsfor the sake of propriety. Give up all thought of going to Bombay. Instead of acting on all our impulses, we ought to suppress those that are bad. I am going to Simla. I intend to visit Ahmedabad after I return from there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9320

55. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

[Before *July 15, 1931*][1]

I cannot say even now if I am going to England. I should know it in Simla.

Mahatmaji said that he had not booked his passage for London so far. It was true that someone else had booked for him but he had sent a letter to the P. & O. Company asking that the same be cancelled. The Company had informed him that in case booking was delayed, space in the s.s. *Mooltan,* may become overcrowded. Mahatmaji had, however, said that he would take his chance.

The correspondent then showed Gandhiji a copy of *The Statesman* in which the special representative of that paper had expressed the view that Mahatma Gandhi had asked the Government to increase the Congress delegation to the Round Table Conference and was insisting on having some members of the Nationalist Muslim group included in that delegation.

[1] From the reference in the first paragraph to Simla which Gandhiji reached on the 15th

Mahatma Gandhi said that the report in question was a tissue of falsehoods. He said:

It does not injure my reputation, but my heart is injured to find that responsible journalists utter such palpable falsehoods.

Gandhiji further said that there are persons who are determined to wreck the Truce and were carrying on such propaganda but he did not mind this, as it did not hurt him. He said smilingly:

In fact I flourish on this propaganda. This news is absurd and I know how these lies are manufactured. These things, however, diminish the estimation in which journalism should be held. If my intention were to ask the Viceroy for additional nominations, I would have proclaimed this from the housetops.

He said he was very sorry that English journalists were not playing the game, and were indulging in a vicious type of propaganda.

Asked if he will be taking some advisers, Mahatmaji said:

My adviser is God. I am going to take no advisers. If I had any idea to take advisers, I would have taken them as dele-gates.

Mahatmaji said the position with regard to Congress representation at the Round Table Conference was exactly the same as at Karachi, and Mahatmaji thought it was a most proper decision. In conclusion, he said:

I would take with me my son Devdas Gandhi, Mahadev Desai, Pyarelal, Miss Slade and none else.

The Hindu, 20-7-1931

56. INTERVIEW TO "AMRITA BAZAR PATRIKA"

SIMLA,
July 15, 1931

I think I would be seeing the Viceroy on Friday.

Gandhiji said to me when I accosted him on his return from Mr. Emerson's residence this afternoon after three hours' conversations:[1]

He added:

I am afraid my stay may have to be prolonged till Sunday.

He could not say whether Pandit Jawaharlal and Mr. Patel would visit Simla. He was also unable to say if a communal agreement would be reached before he sailed for England but added:

[1] *Vide* "H. W. Emerson's Note on Discussion with Gandhiji", 15/16-7-1831

We are trying.

Asked if he was taking any advisers to London, he replied:

God is my adviser-general.

His conversations with Mr. Emerson this afternoon solely related to the alleged breaches of Delhi Pact committed by officials in various provinces particularly in Gujarat, the United Provinces, the Punjab and Kerala.

Gandhiji also emphatically denied the report, published in some papers, that among the subjects he would discuss with the Viceroy would be one relating to further representation at the Round Table Conference.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 16-7-1931

57. NOTES

LIQUOR DEALERS BEWARE

Auctions for liquor licences are now in season. In the face of what I have already published it is too much to expect local authorities to stop auctions or restrict them. But is it too much to expect liqour dealers to foresee the future? They ought to know that prohibition of liquor and foreign cloth is the permanent policy of the nation? The one is a moral necessity, the other is an economic necessity. Both produce political results. But they are a by-product. Picketing no doubt of the most peaceful character will continue without remission till the State is converted to the policy of prohibition. It is an effective method of education.

SALT CONCESSION

I hear that in Mirpur and Kalabagh in the salt range the people having abused the salt concession under the Delhi Pact, it has been withdrawn by the Government. The people are reported to have carried maunds of salt on camel-back. If such was the case, it was a distinct breach of the Settlement. Whether the action taken by the Government is not too drastic for the breach, it is difficult to judge without a fuller knowledge of facts. News comes from Madras that people in a salt area were found to be carrying salt on carts. They were prosecuted. The carrying on carts was undoubtedly wrong. Here again the question whether a warning would not have sufficed cannot be decided without knowing all the facts. Responsible Congressmen can help me by sending me accurate information. Let me repeat that the concession applies only to villagers making salt for domestic

consumption and selling among themselves, walking distance being the limit of the area. Naturally no other than human transport can be permitted under this concession. Not even a handcart may be used. Salt must be carried on one's back or head. On the Government side one would expect a reasonable warning of breaches before action is taken. Where crores of poor ignorant villagers are concerned, it is not to be expected that they would have an accurate idea of regulations that may be made from time to time. I should be surprised, if it was found that either in the North or in the South the villagers had wilfully broken the understanding. Anyway let Congressmen beware. They should give exact instructions to the villagers within their respective areas.

UNWARRANTED USE

A correspondent draws my attention to the fact that in the South the local authorities have made an illegitimate use of the suggestion I made some weeks ago[1] that not more than five picketers may be posted at one place. The authorities in some places in the South have promptly notified that not more than five picketers may be employed under any circumstance. Thus in many places nowadays at liquor shops that have more than one entrance, no more than five picketers are permitted. According to my formula there would be not more than five for every entrance. Even for one entrance I can conceive the necessity of having more than five picketers. The number would depend upon the situation of the shop.

CONGRESS VOLUNTEERS

The Working Committee has never before sat as long as it did last week[2] except when the Delhi negotiations were going on. A glance at all the resolutions passed at the meeting will show that the time was not wasted. Add to these the fruitful and very necessary long hours it gave to the many complaints about the Settlement.

Next in importance to the communal resolution was the one regarding volunteers. Hindustani Seva Dal becomes a Congress organization. Its function is defined. Volunteer organizations will now not grow up anyhow. Indiscipline will not be tolerated if the Provincial Congress Committees will do their duty. The Working

[1] *Vide* "Notes", sub-title "Picketing".
[2] From July 7 to 13

Committee will no longer be satisfied with merely making a yearly grant to an organization it did not know. It will through its last year's President overhaul the organization and through it supply trained officers and instructions to the Provincial organizations who will in all other respects be absolutely autonomous and free from restrictions. But no constitution will ensure discipline and efficiency, if the will is lacking. Here is the resolution as passed by the Working Committee:

In view of misapprehensions that have arisen in regard to the relation of the Hindustani Seva Dal with the Congress and in view of the fact that unauthorized volunteer organizations are working in various parts of the country in the name of the Congress, the Working Committee resolves that1.

The Hindustani Seva Dal is hereby recognized as the Central Volunteer Organization of the Congress, working directly under the authority of the Working Committee or such person or persons as it may appoint in this behalf, and with the following functions:

(a) It shall act as a duly authorized institution for the training of officers and instructors.

(b) It shall enrol and train recruits in Karnatak, or such other place as may be determined by the Working Committee from time to time and these will form a permanent Central Corps for officers' training and will be liable to serve wherever necessary. It may also have training centres and camps for officers and instructors in other suitable places.

(c) It shall lend the services of officers and instructors for provinces at the latter's expense.

(d) It shall have power to form volunteer corps in provinces wherever so required by Provincial Congress Committees.

2. All Provincial Congress Committees are hereby authorized and required to form duly recognized volunteer corps.

3. No such corps shall be recognized unless all the members are members of the Congress and conform to the Congress creed and whose officers are holders of certificates from the Hindustani Seva Dal.

4. No volunteer board or corps not previously recognized by the Working Committee shall work in any Congress province in the name of or on behalf of the Congress.

5. Jawaharlal Nehru is appointed the member in charge on behalf of the Working Committee of the said central volunteer organization of the Congress and N. S. Hardikar, the organizing secretary thereof and they will serve during the pleasure of the Working Committee. The member in charge

shall frame rules of the said organization so as to bring it in conformity with this resolution of the Working Committee, and hall define the duties and qualifications of officers and members of volunteer corps provided that such rules shall take efffect after being first sanctioned by the Working Committee and on the acceptance by the All-India Board of the Hindustani Seva Dal of this resolution.

TAMIL NADU S. A. AND NON-BRAHMINS

Complaints have come to me to the effect that the Spinners' Association in Tamil Nadu has been monopolized by Brahmin employees. The unprejudiced sceptic may know that recruitment is never being made on grounds of caste but workers are employed purely on grounds of fitness. As things stand, there are 53 sale and production centres in Tamil Nadu. Of these the managers of 28 are non-Brahmins, as against 25 wherein the managers are Brahmins. Excluding servants drawing a monthly salary of less than Rs. 15 who are almost all non-Brahmins, the salaries paid by the A.I.S.A. in Tamil Nadu are shown below:

Rs., 50 and above	:	10	Brahmins;	5	non-Brahmins.
Below Rs. 50	:	53	Brahmins;	121	non-Brahmins.
Total	:	63	Brahmins;	126	non-Brahmins.

The total amount of the salaries distributed per month among Brahmins is Rs. 2,576; non-Brahmins: Rs. 3,102. The total amount disbursed to hands drawing less than Rs. 15 per month is Brahmins:Rs.31; non-Brahmins: Rs. 725. Of the ten Brahmin hands drawing salaries over Rs. 50, two have put in a service of over seven years and six have put in a service of five years and over. The other two have served three years. Of the five non-Brahmins drawing salaries over Rs. 50, three have put in five years' service and two have put in three years' service.

But for the fact that there is the Brahmin-non-Brahmin question in the South, I should have declined to publish these statistics. The readers in the South should know, if it is of any consequence, that the Association is manned chiefly by non-Brahmins, for the chief workers it is a labour of love. What is more, it exists purely and simply to serve the dumb and starving millions who are overwhelmingl non Brahmins and include Mussalmans and Christians also.

Young India, 16-7-1931

58. PICKETING 1N MALABAR

Sjt. K. Kelappan, President, Kerala Provincial Congress Committee, writes:[1]

Congressmen should not take it amiss when I publish allegations against them. It would matter if the allegations are found to be true or if I supported them without first giving Congressmen concerned a chance of refuting them.

Young India, 16-7-1931

59. JAPANESE MENACE

A correspondent writes:[2]

However shocking it may be for our pride, the quotation given by my correspondent has a double lesson. It is not our boycott so much as the Japanese efficiency that has ousted British piece-goods, and if our mills do not keep pace with the times, notwithstanding all the effort of the Congress to infuse the swadeshi spirit among the people, Japan will win the race. A prohibitive duty will not be permitted to protect inefficiency. I know that in Japan the people and the State are one. But even when we arrive at that state, efficiency will be necessary, perhaps more than now.

Young India, 16-7-1931

60. PROPOSED COMMUNAL SOLUTION

The scheme prepared by the Working Committee and suggested for adoption by the whole country is the result first of the incessant labours of Dr. Ansari and then of the subcommittee consisting of Pandit Malaviyaji, Dr. Ansari and Sardar Sardul Singh. I have never

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. Referring to Gandhiji's article "Terrible If True", 25-6-1931 the correspondent had refuted the allegation that picketing in Kerala was not peaceful.

[2] The letter is not reproduced here. It quoted figures from the report of the British Cotton Mission to the Far East and described how Japanese enterprise had ousted British goods from the Chinese and Indian markets. The correspondent thought that this could be furnished as an effective answer to the cry that connected the depression in Lancashire with the Indian boycott movement.

known Dr. Ansari so identified with and absorbed in anything as he has been about the communal question. He loves his profession and is content to live for it. If one finds him in politics or even as President of the Congress, he is there because friends have dragged him to the position. He is too noble and too patriotic to resist them. But the solution of the communal question he has made his first love. May these efforts be crowned with success! Even the noblest of virtues need to incarnate in human flesh before they can act.

Intrinsically considered, the scheme appears to me to be sound, if the necessity for a communal solution be admitted. If we were pure nationalists, no scheme would be required. By religion we may be different, as a nation we should be one and indivisible. We will choose our legislators and appoint servants for their merits irrespective of their religion or race. Judged by that standard, the scheme is a fall. But we are fallen. We suspect and fear one another and yet we want swaraj, for it is our birth-right. And so the Congress has offered a compromise. Maulana Shaukat Ali when he was with the Working Committee angrily said: 'Why do you continually ask me what I want? I have told you what I want. Why don't you tell me what you would give!' The sting went home. The Congress formulae of pure nationalism was useless. His claim to represent Mussalmans as a whole was rejected. He was therefore entitled to know what the Congress could offer. The Congress could offer nothing that nationalistically inclined Sikhs, Mussalmans and Hindus were not prepared to agree to. Hence the subcommittee and then the scheme as hammered into shape by the Working Committee.

The Working Committee can have no desire to force it down unwilling throats. But nationalists belonging to the three communities have now something to work by and upon. Let them unobtrusively cultivate opinion in their respective communities.

I begin with the Hindus. We are an overwhelming majority. If we feel physically dwarfs before the Mussalman and the Sikh giants, we shall never grow through the legislatures. We shall grow by shedding fear, not by straining our limbs. Courage has never been known to be a matter of muscle, it is a matter of the heart. The toughest muscle has been known to tremble before an imaginary fear. It was the heart that set the muscle atrembling. Let us take heart and endorse what the Mussalmans and the Sikhs ask. This is just, weighed in the scales of ahimsa otherwise spelt love. If this scheme results in

opening the eyes of us Hindus, it would be well even though non-nationalist Sikhs and Mussalmans may reject it.

If we accept this scheme without demur, we should be ready to accept any other that may be acceptable to all Sikhs and all Mussalmans. But let me not frighten us away from this scheme by pledging ourselves to any other in advance. My mind as an individual is made up and has been often expressed. But I do dare to ask the Hindus to accept this scheme because it is charged with the blessings of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji and Sjt. Madhavrao Aney, not to speak of the other Hindu members of the Working Committee.

CONGRESS SCHEME

However much it may have failed in the realisation, the Congress has, from its very inception, set up pure nationalism as its ideal. It has endeavoured to break down communal barriers. The following Lahore resolution[1] was the culminating point in its advance towards nationalism:

Hence the Congress is precluded from setting forth any communal solution of the communal problem. But at this critical juncture in the history of the nation, it is felt that the Working Committee should suggest for adoption by the country a solution though communal in appearance, yet as nearly national as possible and generally acceptable to the communities concerned. The Working Committee therefore after full and free discussion unanimously passed the following scheme:

I (a) The article in the constitution relating to Fundamental Rights shall include a guarantee to the communities concerned of the protection of their cultures, languages, scripts, education, profession and practice of religion, and religious endowments.

(b) Personal Laws shall be protected by specific provisions to be embodied in the constitutions.

(c) Protection of political and other rights of minority communities in the various provinces shall be the concern and be within the jurisdiction of the Federal Government.

2. The franchise shall be extended to all adult men and women.

(note. The Working Committee is committed to adult franchise by the Karachi resolution of the Congress[2] and cannot entertain any alter- native

[1] Not reproduced here. *Vide* "Speech at Subjects Committee, A. I. C. C.- III", 1-1-1930

[2] Held in March 1931.

franchise. In view, however, of misapprehensions in some quarters the Committee wishes to make it clear that in any event the franchise shall be uniform and so extensive as to reflect in the electoral roll the proportion in the population of every community).

3. (a) Joint electorates shall form the basis of representation in the future constitution of India.

(b) That for the Hindus in Sind, the Muslims in Assam and the Sikhs in the Punjab and N.W.F.P., and for Hindus and Muslims in any province where they are less than 25% of the population, seats shall be reserved in the Federal and Provincial Legislatures on the basis of population with the right to contest additional seats.

4. Appointments shall be made by non-party Public Service Commissions which shall prescribe the minimum qualification, and which shall have due regard to the efficiency of the Public Service as well as to the principle of equal opportunity to all communities for a fair share in the public services of the country.

5. In the formation of Federal and Provincial Cabinets interests of minority communities should be recognized by convention.

6. The N.W.F. Province and Baluchistan shall have the same form of government and administration as other provinces.

7. Sind shall be constituted into a separate province provided that the people of Sind are prepared to bear the financial burden of the separated province.

8. The future constitution of the country shall be federal. The residuary powers shall vest in the federating units, unless, on further examination, it is found to be against the best interests of India.

The Working Committee has adopted the foregoing scheme as a compromise between the proposals based on undiluted communalism and undiluted nationalism. Whilst on the one hand the Working Committee hopes that the whole nation will endorse the scheme, on the other, it assures those who take extreme views and cannot adopt it that the Committee will gladly, as it is bound to by the Lahore resolution, accept without reservation any other scheme if it commands the acceptance of all the parties concerned.

Young India, 16-7-1931

61. FOREIGN-CLOTH PLEDGE

The Working Committee adopted the following pledge for the guidance of foreign-cloth merchants and Congress workers:

> Resolved that any pledge in connection with exclusion of foreign cloth and yarn inconsistent with the following pledge shall be held to be invalid:
>
> We pledge ourselves that we shall observe the following conditions so long as the Working Committee of the Congress does not give express permission by resolution to do otherwise:
>
> 1. We undertake not to purchase or sell any foreign yarn made from cotton, wool or silk or cloth manufactured from such yarn.
>
> 2. We undertake not to purchase or sell any yarn or cloth manufactured by mills that have not accepted the Congress conditions.
>
> 3. We undertake not to sell in this country any foreign yarn or silk or wool or cloth manufactured from such yarn or silk or wool that may be lying with us.

All concerned will note that this pledge supersedes all the pledges that have been accepted haphazard by Congress workers or organizations. Merchants should make up their minds that this exclusion of foreign cloth is not a temporary affair. They must either take to swadeshi-cloth trade, better still khadi or find some other occupation consistent with the national interest.

Young India, 16-7-1931

62. SOME POSERS

Here are some posers for lovers of khaddar:

> Will you kindly explain to me how the resolution passed at Karachi Congress in connection with khadi propaganda is going to help that object? The indigenous mill-owners have been appealed to give their moral support to the supplementary village industry of hand-spinning by themselves using hand-spun. Now if the mill-owners enjoy the unrestricted privilege of carrying on their present mills with a view to develop them, will the mere use of hand-spun be construed into moral support to khaddar? In my humble opinion there is no moral support unless mill-owners discover the antagonism between mill and charkha and honestly try graduallyto restrict their activity. Then it passes one's comprehension how khaddar can hold its own if mills go on

producing finer and cheaper stuff to be used in place of khaddar. Then again, asking the mill-owners to keep down the prices of cloths will be a sure means of killing khaddar.

These are all good questions. There is no doubt that if the personal use by mill-owners of khaddar is not a token of their inner conviction it is of no use and may well be a token of hypocrisy. If there is inner conviction they will conduct their mills so as never to harm khaddar even as a gardener so disposes his hardy plants as not to harm saplings. The Congress toleration of mills is based on the belief that the mills can serve a useful purpose during the transition stage. Immediate exclusion of foreign cloth becomes easier through the indigenous mills if they work in sympathy with the movement. It is easier for khaddar to deal and compete with the indigenous mills alone than to do so with them plus English, Japanese, Italian and other mills. The increase in the number of indigenous mills need not frighten khaddarites. The increase is no doubt proof that the economic influence of khaddar is not yet fully felt. When khaddar becomes universal, many mills may find their occupation gone. It is needless to speculate whether khaddar will obtain such a hold on the people. It will depend upon the faithfulness of the workers. There is no flaw in the reasoning applied to khaddar. It is merely a question of giving a true education to the millions of villagers, of changing national taste, of realizing the tremendous power of the wheel to banish pauperism from the land. It is no small thing to be able to show a way the adoption of which will be an insurance against starvation and its attendant results.

As to the second poser, the necessity of the mills producing finer cloths cannot be questioned. In the khaddar age the people had fine khaddar. It is produced even now but not in such quantity, not so cheap as to be available to all who desire it. Again therefore during the transition stage the mills may be encouraged to manufacture fine cloths. And it is easy enough to see that restriction of mill-production to finer counts is wholly beneficial to khaddar. The pity of it is that the mills do not respond sufficiently to the national demand.

Lastly as to the prices. Surely the writer does not suggest that mills should charge high prices in order to let khaddar live. As the author of the revival of khaddar I must confess that it never entered my head that I should wish for high prices of mill-manufactures for the protection of khaddar. It is one thing to seek protection against

killing competition, wholly another to wish for higher prices of commodities produced by a few for many even for the protection of an analogous industry. Khaddar economics is wholly different from the ordinary. The latter takes no note of the human factor. The former wholly concerns itself with the human. The latter is frankly selfish, the former necessarily unselfish. Competition and therefore prices are eliminated from the conception of khaddar. There is no competition between hotels and domestic kitchens. It never enters into the head of the queen of the house to calculate the cost of her labour, the floor space, etc. She simply knows that to conduct the domestic kitchen is as much her duty as it is to bring up children. If she were to count the cost, the logic of facts will irresistibly drive her to the destruction of her kitchen as well as her children. Some have done both. But thank God the cult makes no promise of appreciable increase. It is our innate laziness which prevents us from seeing that we sinned against Indian humanity when we destroyed the domestic wheel. Let us repent of our sin and return to the peace-giving wheel.

Young India, 16-7-1931

63. THE DARK SIDE

Miss Blanche Watson writes:[1]

I have your letter; and thank you. Miss Mayo, . . . to me. . . is our national disgrace in the field of literature. But, many Americans uphold her; many quote her; . . . That will give you one line on our brand of the "satanic" civilization, which to Katherine Mayo is the best of all civilizations.

Here is another light, . . . and line. I went to the News Reel Theatre to see and hear you in the 'Talkies'. . . .

Immediately following was the Air Parade of last Saturday,—that dreadful gesture to the world, which says We are ready (and doubtless, willing) to fight you by the most approved methods. . . .

There were manoeuvres of our West Point Cadets—the leaders of our future murderers of the battle-field; field practice of the cavalry of some European country; and—last but not least in sordidness and sensationalism—a representation of a leg show featuring some pretty (?) girls, . . . —this phase being also featured in this programme which began with your conversation in far off Sabarmati. When you again refer toWestern "civilization" as satanic,

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

please add sordid, sensational, sexy and silly; and then you will not have all the bad side. Thanks be, there is a better and finer side; there is idealism and humanity and a love of peace and goodwill, but it is so small a side of the entity that is our country. . . .

. . . In great measure our civilization such as it is—is due to the capitalist system, the exploitation of humanity for the benefit of the few — the privileged—the system of the haves that labour not, and the havenots that labour unceasingly. . . .

. . . And I hope that India may profit by our errors—our sins of omission and commission—I think she will.

This must be read with care. There is no doubt that Miss Watson's picture is predominantly true. But as she admits, there is the bright side too.

Young India, 16-7-1931

64. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SIMLA,
July 16, 1931

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

Last week I asked Pyarelal to give you a few lines. I am today in Simla trying to tide over the difficulties that have arisen about the Settlement. My coming to London now depends upon what is done here. If matters are not satisfactorily settled, naturally there is no question of my going. You must have seen from *Young India* what is happening here. If it was small matters, I should not worry.

I write this however regarding my stay in London if I reach as far. The Indian Chamber of Commerce and Congress Indians have sent me long cables insisting on my staying with them. The Congress members have suggested Arya Bhavan. I have cabled to the Indian Chamber saying that the Reception Committee should decide and I have asked them to see you. You will now do whatever you think is necessary. Personally I think that it would be better for me to be with Muriel Lester. There I should come in touch with the poor of the East End, know something of life in the East End and probably serve the cause better, being in those surroundings. But I have no clear notion as to what is best. Since dictating this I got your cable. I do not know that it will be possible to leave on 8th August. I shall confer with

Malaviyaji. About my stay in London you will please see the Indian friends. You know that Mira lost her mother last week.

Love.

MOHAN

C. F. ANDREWS, ESQ.
112 GOWER STREET LONDON

From a photostat: G.N. 972

65. LETTER TO G. FINDLAY SHIRRAS

SIMLA,
July 17, 1931

DEAR PRINCIPAL SHIRRAS,

I thank you for your letter received by me in Simla. You may make what use you like of my letter of the 11th inst.

With reference to your inquiry about Rev. Joseph Doke I regret to inform you that the Rev. Gentleman died many years ago. I think in 1909[1]. He died a martyr to his cause.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 827

66. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

SIMLA,
July 17, 1931

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

If Manilal thinks that *Indian Opinion* cannot be managed, he may close the Press down. But the trustees must decide.

Do write to me now and then.

Love,

Yours sincerely,
UPPER HOUSE

From the original : Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy : National Archives of India

[1] In fact, in August 1913; *vide* "The Late Mr. Doke", 23-8-1913

67. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

SIMLA,
July 17, 1931

Interviewed by the Associated Press special representative, Gandhiji declared:

My conversation with Sir James Crerar[1] was perfectly cordial. It was in continuation of my talks with Mr. Emerson, Home Secretary. In both the cases it was all about the Delhi Pact. The third and last of the series of my talks at Simla will be with the Viceroy tomorrow, after which I may be in a position to communicate something to you.

Asked as regards the *spirit* of the talk at Ava Lodge[2] as compared with that at Mr. Emerson's residence, Mahatma Gandhi replied:

Just some variations with the variations of the weather.

Is there any proposal to set up a committee to watch the working of the Pact in the event of your going to London?

There is no need for it. From the Congress point of view there is the Working Committee. In fact, regarding this Pact I have always consulted the Working Committee.

Showing a message from Allahabad that Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya would accompany Gandhiji to England by the s.s. *Mooltan* which would sail from Bombay on 15th August, the Associated Press representative asked whether, as a result of his conversations so far with Mr. Emerson and Sir James Crerar, he could say that this report would come true. Mahatma Gandhi replied:

It is both likely as well as unlikely. Perhaps, I might put it, in military language, as "as you were".

The Tribune, 19-7-1931

[1] Home Member, Viceroy's Executive Council; for his report of the conversation, *vide* "Sir James Crerar's Note on Discussion with Gandhiji",17-7-1931

[2] James Crerar's residence at Simla

68. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

[SIMLA,
On or after *July 17, 1931*][1]

HERE TILL SUNDAY THEN BORSAD.

From a photostat: S.N. 17371

69. LETTER TO N. D. KOWALI

SIMLA,
July 18, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

At one time I thought that I would publish your letter[2] in *Young India* and deal with it. But on a second reading of your letter I have come to the conclusion that the cases, such as you mention, not being of common occurrence, I should give you a private reply.

The two families excommunicated should boldly face excommunication and suffer the consequences. As reformers they will form new ties and having broken the caste barrier, they will have ample compensation in kindred reformers helping them on occasions of marriage or mourning. And if side by side with this indifference, they would remain courteous towards the persecutors it would be found that the edge of persecution will lose its sharpness.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3274

[1] The telegram was sent in reply to one from the addressee received only 17, 1931.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to N. D. Kowali", 24-6-1931

70. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

July 18, 1931

My attention has been drawn to a leaderette in *The Times of India* dated the 15th instant, in which Mr. S. W. Powell, writing in *The Daily Telegraph* (London) of 13th June is reported to have said that "Gandhi himself was not quite the ascetic he is now, for when I met the pair (Mr. Gandhi and his partner a Hindu) in Durban afterwards, we had at least two whiskies in the nearest bar". I am sorry *The Times of India*, in view of the many misrepresentations current about me, has printed what is a palpable falsehood without referring the quotation to me for verification. I remember Mr. Powell, as a member of the European Ambulance Corps and I regret to have to say about his statement that it contains a double falsehood. My companion was not a Hindu but Mussalman. I never entered any bar in South Africa, and I have never entered any bar anywhere throughout my life. What is more, Indians are not allowed to enter European bars in Natal and a European would consider it beneath his dignity to enter an Indian bar no matter how thirsty he might feel.

The Hindu, 18-7-1931

71. INTERVIEW TO " THE HINDUSTAN TIMES"

SIMLA,
July 18, 1931

Mahatma Gandhi said at the gate of the Viceregal Lodge as he emerged after his 3 hours' interview with the Viceroy:

The temperature remains the same unless it goes down or goes up. What can I say? The situation is just as it was before.

He further stated that he was likely to see the Viceroy again since their conversations had not yet concluded. Gandhiji said that his stay consequently was likely to be prolonged up to Wednesday.

Asked as to what was discussed betweeen him and the Viceroy, Gandhiji said:

Naturally the Pact.

Asked about the next interview, the Mahatma said it could not be held before Tuesday since the Viceroy will be out and on Monday Mahatmaji will observe his day of silence.

Mahatmaji was asked who was the patient he had in mind when he spoke of temperature. He said:

I am the patient.

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-7-1931

72. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

SIMLA,
July 18, 1931

Asked on his return from Viceregal Lodge by the Associated Press representative as to how he would sum up the position emerging from his talks in Simla up till this afternoon, Mahatma Gandhi replied:

The position is as it was when I arrived in Simla on the 15th.

Q. How would you compare the spirit that you noticed at the Viceregal Lodge and at Mr. Emerson's and Sir James Crerar's residences?

A. It will not be right to make any comparison. I can say that everywhere I received the utmost cordiality. Lord Willingdon was as usual very affable and kind.

Q. Was the talk today only about the Delhi Pact or anything else?

A. Today it was all about the Pact.

Q. Are the questions connected with the Round Table Conference likely to be raised when you meet Lord Willingdon next? Mahatma Gandhi after hesitation replied:

I suppose they will come up.

Q. Is there any likelihood of S. Vallabhbhai Patel coming up to Simla ?

A. I do not expect.

The Tribune, 21-7-1931

73. ATTACK ON AN ANT

The following complaint[1] received from Bombay deserves attention:

I do not share the correspondent's hope that my advice will be followed. If my advice was universally followed, all of us, grown-up or young, women or men, the rich or the poor, would be spinning and wearing khadi, there would be no distinctions of high and low, and no

[1] Not translated here

untouchables; Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and others would be living as blood brothers and employers and workers as fathers and sons or as elder brothers and younger brothers. In brief we would be enjoying complete swaraj by now. But I know that neither my voice nor my pen can reach very far. In spite of this fact, as I have been trying to follow the teaching of the *Gita* in life, I strive to remain free from attachment and, whenever circumstances require that I should write, I do write or speak. The complaint quoted above provides such an occasion.

There is nothing uncommon in the complainant's experience. Which of us living in big cities has had no such experience at some or other time? Being weak men ourselves, we fall upon a pickpocket like an army attacking an ant. This is not a question of non-violence at all. A brave man, however violent his inclinations, would not beat up anyone in this manner. The ordinary citizens have no right to punish a thief or murderer caught red-handed. Not even the police has that right. It belongs to the judge alone. The public may arrest such a culprit and, if they do, they should make him over to the police. To beat up any person in this manner is a crime and, if the pickpocket lodges a complaint, it would be the duty of the police to arrest those who beat him and, if the complaint is found true by the judge, it would be his duty to punish the culprits. Moreover, if the pickpocket was beaten as described by the correspondent, the offence was one of causing grievous hurt so that the culprit would get sentence of imprisonment. However, everyone beating up a thief believes himself safe as it has become customary to do that. Who would listen to the appeals of the thief?

It is true that most of those who beat up a thief are themselves white thugs. That is why when in old times some people started stoning a prostitute, Jesus said gently: "He that is pure among you, let him cast the first stone." The narrator says that none had the courage to cast a stone at her. How can a sieve [with a hundred holes] laugh at the jug [with only one]? That pickpocket was perhaps starving without a loaf to eat, but the white thug steals to gratify the cravings of the flesh. The idea of non-violence came into being as an extension of the thought that a sinner had no right to sit in judgment over another. It does not matter if we cannot reach the waters of the lake of non-violence; it is enough for us to touch the shore of common justice.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-7-1931

74. MORVI'S LESSON TO SATYAGRAHIS

The Morvi Satyagraha is over and it is a matter of joy for all and of credit for both the State and the satyagrahis that all the satyagrahis have left the State. Both displayed moderation, the State in unconditionally releasing the satyagrahis and the satyagrahis in not persisting in satyagraha and leaving the State territory. When things have ended happily in this manner, it would be improper to enter into the rights and wrongs of the matter or rake up the past.

But I should like to say this: There was some haste in undertaking the satyagraha. The improper criticism of the Morvi ruler after the satyagraha had started has brought discredit on us and the fair name of satyagraha has been tarnished. The unworthy criticism and the exaggeration which were indulged in afterwards to justify the satyagraha were a cause for shame for the satyagrahis. They cannot disown responsibility for them on the ground that all this was done by others. When non-satyagrahis thus run to the help of satyagrahis, sometimes it becomes necessary to stop the satyagraha. When a large number of non-satyagrahis join a hand of satyagrahis, the latter should leave the crowd. We may have occasions to act thus in our movement too. Whether and when such an occasion may be said to have arisen should be determined by examining each case on its merits. I did feel that such a stage had been reached in this case, but fortunately the satyagraha ended before it became necessary to take such a decision. I would now advise the satyagrahis to make amends by publicly acknowledging the errors which may have been made. The confession of an error constitutes sincere atonement for it, and by such confession the satyagrahi increases his strength. Satyagraha means purity. The higher the degree of purity, the greater the satyagrahi's strength.

I have offered my compliments to the Maharaja Saheb, for he readily consented to release the satyagrahis. However, I must say that his offi-cials have not been altogether above reproach. The police constables failed to observe moderation. Though there was exaggeration in the accounts of man-handling and use of force, there was also an element of truth in them. All this was not quite unavoidable. I know that the police are never a body of pure men. They regard the use of force as a religious duty. They believe that a

criminal will understand only the language of force and that all who fall into their hands are criminals. It simply passes their understanding that in this age large numbers of innocent men willingly and knowingly put themselves in their hands. Hence, in their view at any rate, all such persons deserve nothing but the lathi and abuse. This being the state of things, if those in authority wish to act with justice, they should warn the police to behave them-selves. I think I should stop here. For, in Tulsidas's immortal words:

> God's whole creation, living and non-living, contains both good and evil. The wise accept the good and leave the evil, (like the swan) which drinks the milk and leaves water behind.

Let us pay attention only to the goodness displayed by the Ruler and the satyagrahis and bring about harmony between them.

A word of personal advice to the Saurashtra satyagrahis. You are only a handful, but you have raised high hopes in me. Any error on your part, though as tiny as a speck of dust, must appear in my eyes as big as a pikestaff. Only then can we work together.

You should not entertain even the thought of satyagraha as long as you have in you any trace of passion, ill will, violence or untruth. Your first duty is to train yourselves and become fit for satyagraha. You should not assume that it is your duty to attack immorality or injustice wherever you find them in Kathiawar. Instead, silently go on doing constructive work and make yourselves fit for satyagraha. Do not launch an invasion. When you are attacked, by all means welcome the opportunity for a fight.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 19-7-1931

75. A SATYAGRAHI'S COMPLAINT

Shri Virchand of Vanod writes:[1]

I am inviting fresh trouble on myself by publishing this letter, but there is no escape. Though the letter concerns only an individual, the issues raised in it are of public importance, and I have been asked to give my opinion on them; I think it is my duty to give it. If a

[1] The letter is not translated here. It narrated at length how the Durbar (Chief) of Vanod persecuted the correspondent and his relations for their nationalist activities.

satyagrahi is patient enough, he will be faced with no case of injustice in which he would be completely helpless. One should, however, bear in mind that, if the person who is the victim of injustice has no strength in himself, there is no means of helping him. This is a limitation inherent in the nature of satyagraha. Satyagraha aims at providing an object-lesson to victims of oppression so that they may be roused to struggle and deliver themselves from the oppression. The satyagrahi has to keep patience till the victim is so roused. If this is a limitation of satyagraha, it is also its special excellence. A satyagrahi presumes to be nobody's guardian. He suffers with the victim of oppression and thereby becomes his equal and shares his suffering.

Now let us turn to the issues raised.

1. If the subjects of an Indian State are not ready to co-operate in carrying out the constructive programme of the Congress in that State, no one from outside going there can carry it out successfully in the present circumstances. It would not be right for anyone to argue that in that case the subjects of Indian States would never be roused. It is a law of life that some good work being done at any point in an environment is bound to have its effect on the rest of it. It was after this experience that the sages of the world gave it the dictum: "As in oneself, so in the universe." If outsiders go and try to wake up asuppressed people, the latter are likely to fall into deeper slumber. Moreover, one should bear in mind that the subjects of every Indian State frequently go to neutral territory, that is, British India, and imbibe from there the new ideals according to their capacity.

2. The subjects of Indian States who go to British territory and join the swaraj *yajna* being carried on there run the risk of banishment from their own State and also of having to suffer separation from their parents. Further, if the parents have sympathy for their son's activities, they also should be ready to suffer banishment and lose their goods and property. As the poet says, the path of love is enveloped in flames of fire. Those who are not ready to be burnt to death in them should not tread that path. Those parents who are not ready to be banished from the land of their birth and lose their property ought to be ready to disown their satyagrahi son. Everyone should have the faith that any goods and property that will have remained safe when we win swaraj will return to the possession of the original owner or his heirs. Durbar Gopaldas is certain that Dhasa will be returned to him when swaraj comes, and he has meanwhile chosen

not to be the Durbar of a handful of men so that he might be the servant of millions, in other words, to be a true Durbar. A true satyagrahi renounces a little only to get something far greater.

3. What should we do when the authorities in an Indian State challenge us to a fight? This question does not at all arise where the restrictions laid down above are observed. If, however, such a contingency does arise, one should submit to the hardship as inevitable.

4. Cannot the British Agency intervene in case of oppression by an Indian State? It certainly can. In my view, it ought to. That is to say, if the Agency functions as a real agency, it can certainly do much. Hence, the subjects of an Indian State have the right to approach it for redress of grievances, and it is desirable that they should. That will test the Agency's worth.

5. While, in British territory, the Congress stands up in defence of a petty watchman, is it to do nothing at all no matter how wilfully authority is exercised in an Indian State? Yes, the position is somewhat like that. Everyone has first to take the measure of his own strength. He who speaks without the strength to follow up his words with action merely prattles. The Congress may indeed be eager to do a number of things, but where it lacks the necessary strength for action it chooses to keep quiet. And by doing that, it sometimes becomes stronger. It is improbable that the Provincial [Congress] Committee should have given no reply. If it has deliberately acted in that manner, I must admit that it should be considered to have been guilty of discourtesy. I must admit that it must have had compelling reasons for that.

Now about Vanod in particular. I have no information regarding any of the allegations made by Shri Virchand. I do not know what the Vanod Durbar has to say about them. It would indeed be painful if the allegations are true. If the Vanod Durbar sends a reply to the allegations, I will certainly publish it. I shall be glad if the reply is satisfactory. It will do honour to the Durbar to acknowledge any mistake that may have been made by him or his men. Every man is liable to err. Princes are no exception to this rule. I have already stated my opinion as to what Shri Virchand, his parents and the State subjects should do if his complaint is true. If the subjects show their displeasure and migrate in a body, the ruler would become helpless and would have no choice but to come to terms with them. An individual or a group, that is, the people as a whole, always have the right

to migrate, and such migration, if undertaken deliberately and carried out peacefully and firmly, is never known to have failed its aim.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-7-1931

76. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SIMLA,
July 19, 1931

CHI. MIRA,

As usual outside Gujarat I can get no time for writing letters and I have been only a trifle better in Simla than Bombay. Here though there is not such a rush of visitors, constant attendance upon Emerson and interviews with the Home Member and the Viceroy separately and prolonged beyond all calculation have left me no time for anything else, and twice I had to finish the evening meal hurriedly.

I followed your advice and read the introduction[1] in the "library"[2]. The original must be very good. I marvel at the immense industry that Romain Rolland gives to all he writes. The introduction is another sketch like the one he wrote before, bringing his opinion up to date. Your translation is quite readable. It does require retouching in several places but I have no difficulty in making out what the original must be like. The merit of your translation is that it is faithful to the original.

For the reasons you have stated you are naturally anxious to know definitely whether we are going to London or not. But I fear that I might not be able to come to a decision even at the end of the Simla visit. There are many difficulties and many hitches. I think I have been able to make it clear to the authorities that I cannot go if the present unsatisfactory state of things continues. But the authorities may find it difficult or may be unwilling to give satisfaction. I had hoped to be able to leave today but may not be able to get away before Tuesday or Wednesday. These delays do not worry me because it has been the lot of my life. "Take no thought for the morrow" has got to be literally followed by one who will enforce his own life to he teaching of the *Gita*. You should therefore tell both Romain Rolland

[1] By Romain Rolland *to* the abridged French edition of *An Autobiography*

[2] Gandhiji means "lavatory".

and your sister how uncertain everything is here and how difficult it is to give definite news about the proposed departure for London long in advance. The proper thing is not to expect us till we have actually embarked.

I hope you are now quite at peace with yourself and realized that the loved one lives more truly for the dissolution of the body and renders the love also truer because unselfish and also because it is transferred to all that lives. Every death of a friend or a relative should enrich universal love.

Love.

BAPU

From the original. C.W. 5435. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9669

77. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

SIMLA,
July 19, 1931

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

I had discussed your case with Kakasaheb. You seem to be considerably unsettled in mind. The idea of a private tutor for you does not appeal to any of us. If you do not find an academic atmosphere at the Vidyapith, there is a school at Poona to which you may be sent. If you agree, I may try to get you admitted to it. Discuss this with Kakasaheb. My own experience is that anyone who is sincerely eager to study can satisfy his desire at any place. However, we certainly do not wish to stand in your way. On the contrary, we are anxious to satisfy your wish as far as we can

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3047

78. LETTER TO GORADIA

SIMLA
July 19, 1931[1]

BHAISHRI GORADIA,

I had been thinking of writing to you and was trying to find the time needed, when I got your letter. I did what I did as a matter of duty, and therefore, deserve no praise. Let us consider what should be done now.

I asked Mahadev to write down what he observed and what he gathered as a result of his inquiries. His note is attached with this. Go through it carefully, and, if you think proper, show it to the Maharaja Saheb too. It is certainly good that all is now quiet, but why should the subjects of Morvi be so timid? The satyagrahis had, in their enthusiasm, overstepped the limits, and for that they were treated worse than even murderers; how can that be tolerated? Think by what means a recurrence of such incidents can be prevented and adopt them. The prohibitory order against the holding of meetings, etc., should now be withdrawn. Lakshmiprasad should be reinstated. Whatever his shortcomings, he is a very old and loyal official.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2848. Courtesy: Fulchand K. Shah

79. TELEGRAM TO LORD IRWIN

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL [On or before *July 20, 1931*]

LEARN AUTHORITATIVELY THAT YOU HAVE NO RECOLLECTION OUR DISCUSSING SELECTION DR. ANSARI FOR ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE. I HAVE POSITIVE RECOLLECTION THAT TOGETHER WITH MALAVIYAJI AND MRS. NAIDU DR. ANSARI'S NAME WAS DISCUSSED AS PROMINENT NATIONALIST MUSLIM ENTITLED TO BE INVITED APART FROM CONGRESS DELEGATION. AS WAS THEN USUAL I USED GIVE PURPORT OUR CONVERSATIONS MEMBERS WORKING COMMITTEE. THEY CONFIRM MY RECOLLECTION. I

[1] The source has "July 29", which appears to be a slip.

SEND THIS REFRESH YOUR MEMORY AS I HOLD IT IMPORTANT THAT DR. ANSARI SHOULD BE INVITED APART FROM CONGRESS DELEGATION.[1]

From a photostat: C.W. 9376. Courtesy: India Office Library

80. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*July 20, 1931*][2]

CHI. MIRA,

You must have got my typed letter [of] yesterday. I have some doubt as it was sent at the eleventh hour. I had hopes of hearing from you today. Father Elwin's ill-health causes me anxiety. I trust he is now fully restored. He must not overwork himself. It is unusual to have sultry weather in Ahmedabad in July. I hope you have had rains by now. I see no chance of being able to leave before Wednesday if then.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5436. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9670

81. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SIMLA,
July 20, 1931

MY DEAR AMTUL,

I hope you are getting on well. Are you still teaching Amina? You should write to me regularly.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 242

[1] A copy of this telegram was sent by the Secretary of State to the Viceroy (Lord Willingdon) telegraphically on July 20, 1931.

[2] In the first sentence of this letter 'typed letter yesterday' seems to be a slip for 'typed letter of yesterday'; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 19-7.1931.

82. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

SIMLA,
July 20, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I have a letter from Mian Ahmad Shah enclosing copy of a letter addressed to the Deputy Commissioner, Peshawar and enclosures thereto. I send you herewith copies of these papers. And below is an extract from a letter just received from Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan.

> The Government seems to be bent on repression. Two of the Khudai Khidmatgars were shot dead and it is generally believed that the officials had a hand in it. We inquired and discovered that those Khudai Khidmatgars had no enemies, nor had they any quarrel with anyone. A young man had informed me that a police sub-inspector had asked him to take any kind of revenge he wants to take from his uncle, he could even kill him if he liked. The sub-inspector assured the young man that no action will be taken against him. The young man, my informant, and his uncle were not on good terms and the latter is the President of the local Jirga. The Government is arresting and punishing people under Sec. 40 F.R. Act and they have promulgated Sec. 144 Cr. P.C. in many places without any reason. The police generally threaten and assault Khudai Khidmatgars. It is generally believed by the people that the Government is purposely provoking people to create disturbance.
>
> The police severely assault small boys for crying Inqilab Zindabad. On the 13th of June some Europeans were driving in car at Sudoom, Tehsil Mardan, when a small boy cried Inqilab Zindabad. The Europeans stopped the car and got down and caught hold of the boy and threw him in the central canal. Then again, on the 13th of July at Nevakali, Tahsil Savabi some Europeans severely assaulted a boy for raising the same cry.
>
> For realizing rent, they put the people to all kinds of torture. They are made to sit the whole day under the hot sun and then they are put in small dungeons which have no ventilation.
>
> I hope you will be good enough to take notice of these facts. While our fight was going on there was not so much repression as it is now. I have done my best to keep people quiet and once a Government official paid me this compliment, but how long it will be possible for me to make them remain quiet? In Kohat, village people were allowed to take away salt free of cost before the fight but now after the Truce even this has been stopped and they are

no longer allowed to take away salt free of cost.

These statements make confusion worse confounded. On the one hand you give me information that the Khudai Khidmatgars nicknamed "Red Shirts" are causing endless trouble. On the other there are complaints on behalf of them, as now, that their liberty is unduly being interfered with. There ought to be a way out of knowing the real truth.

Could you please tell me what Malkhand Agency is? Is it or is it not within the zone of the Settlement?

Yours sincerely,

Encl.

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

83. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

SIMLA,
July 20, 1931

MY DEAR MATHEW,

How are you getting on? Are you any the better for the two days with me? What are you doing at the Vidyapith?

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1540

84. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SIMLA,
July 20, 1931

CHI. PREMA,

Kisan met me. She must have written to you about that. I felt that she ought to devote herself more to service.

I got your letter.

Do you still beat children? Ramabehn was complaining that you did. Did you satisfy Panditji? Have you cultivated close relations with Gangabehn? She seems to be unhappy.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10259. Also C.W. 6707. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

85. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

SIMLA,
July 20, 1931

CHI. VASUMATI,

How is it that there is no letter from you at all? Is that out of pity for me? I don't want such pity.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9327. Also C.W. 573. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

86. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SIMLA,
July 20, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I get your letters regularly. I may still have to stay here for two days more. Gangabehn does not seem to have recovered peace of mind. Has Panditji done so? How does Lakshmi behave? Father Elwin must be all right now. Has Lilavati calmed down? How does Jamna keep? What speed on the *takli* have they reached in the Ashram now? You were to send me the resolutions which were passed when the Udyog Mandir was established, but I have not received them so far. If I get them, I may go through the rules in English when I have some free time.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I send with this Lalji's letter to Dudhabhai. Read it and pass it on to him. I also send his letters to me for you to read. Preserve them afterwards. If after reading them, you wish to write to me anything about Lalji, do so.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

87. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

SIMLA,
July 20, 1931

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I got your letter. You have some subtle pride in you. That is what is hurting you. We bow to Mother Earth every morning and pray for her forgiveness for touching her with our feet. I have explained the significance of this verse. The Earth bears our burden but does not hurt us; she bears the burden uncomplainingly. According to modern discoveries, she is hanging in space without support. If she were to get angry with us and stray ever so slightly from her path, we would instantly perish. For crores of years, however, the Earth has been rotating in her orbit and has sustained our life. This is the utmost limit of humility. We have sprung from this earth and to that shall we return. After knowing this, what pride can we feel? We are but a particle of dust and should remain so.

Those who wish to kick us or insult us should be welcome to do so; such is the humility which non-violence implies. Cultivate it and you will be able to dance with joy. You can cultivate it only in the Ashram, for, willingly or unwillingly, you have to regard every inmate of the Ashram as a member of your family. You have to spend your whole life with them. You will have to swallow bitter draughts there. Do so and roar like a lioness. "Never to give up, even though we may die." We used to sing this *bhajan* formerly.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapura Patro-6: G.S. Gangabehnne, p. 58. Also C.W. 8782. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

88. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

SIMLA,
July 20, 1931

CHI. MAHAVIR,

I think about you every day. What a healthy lad you were, and what a skeleton you have become! Now get well quickly. How do you keep at Borivli?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6215

89. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SIMLA,
July 20, 1931

CHI. MRIDULA,

I have not forgotten at all what the Mahajan of Panch Kuian said. But I am helpless. This prolonged visit to Simla was unexpected. But there was an unexpected delay at Bombay. The situation took such a turn that it could not be solved by letter. By the time I come to Gujarat, maybe the matter will no longer be of any interest. Do not feel disheartened by all this. You should regard this as jettisoning of cargo from a ship caught in a storm.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11182. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

90. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

SIMLA,
July 20, 1931

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

Lady Willingdon has reminded me of the saree she has been promised. I have told her that it is being got ready. If it is ready, send it on to her directly. Write to her as follows:

"I am sending you the saree promised by Mrs. Gandhi. I hope you will like it. Please excuse delay."[1]

My stay here has been extended. I may have to stay over till Wednesday. The situation is certainly serious. Even if it improves it will remain a patchwork effort. Everywhere we see weakness. But then that is the way of the world. The present situation is the result of his[2] and our actions and intentions.

Shankerlal should keep himself in readiness in case I have to go.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32791

91. LETTER TO DINKAR MEHTA

July 20, 1931

I believe that there is not good reason for the antipathy some people have towards the Congress. There will always be private property. So long as there are persons some personal property is bound to remain. I do not wish to see the destruction of capitalists and Indian States. I wish to see them reformed. In this struggle for purification anything that cannot be purified will automatically be destroyed. As imperfect human beings, we can only hope and pray that everything may be purified and all impurity may be wiped out. We do not know what is absolutely impure. As a sentiment, everyone should accept the principle of economic equality. But in practice there will never be such equality. There will always be some people who have more wealth and some who have less. It will be sufficient if those who have more consider themselves trustees, not owners of their wealth. We should spread and foster such a sentiment. The Congress means its collective membership. It is self-evident that the Congress cannot go further than the collective sentiment of its members. Complete observance of truth and non-violence means economic, political and moral equality.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. XIV, pp. 458-9

[1] The draft of letter to Lady Willingdon is in English.

[2] Lord Irwin, the Viceroy

92. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SIMLA,
July 20, 1931

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have had many letters from you, but I had no time to reply. I had instructed Mahadev and Devdas to write something in acknowledgment.

No news from this end. Even if a compromise is reached, it will not make me happy. They no longer trust the Congress. Everywhere Congress workers are being prosecuted. How long can they hold out [empty] promises to me here? I ought to go to England but I do not feel like going. It is well that I do not worry over this thing. I find the fulfilment of life in simply doing the tasks that arise naturally from moment to moment.

Considering the atmosphere here I would not be surprised if no invitation was extended to you. Even if you don't get one, are you proceeding to America on August 15?

Regarding the cable from Walchand, I hope you received the reply I had asked Mahadev to send.

How are you keeping these days? I have been unable to read so far the essay sent by you on currency.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 7892. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

93. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

SIMLA,
July 20, 1931

On Mahatma Gandhi's attention being drawn by the Associated Press representative to the sentence that "the Prime Minister has nominated members to attend the Federal Structure Subcommittee" and on his being asked whether his consent was implied in the nomination, Mahatma Gandhi said:

I have certainly consented to go and attend the Federal Structure Subcommittee subject to the weather conditions (political) being favourable. You may depend on it that I shall make a dart for London

as soon as the weather makes it possible.

Q. How do you find the weather conditions now?

A. I am not an expert in reading the weather. Therefore you must approach the meteorological observatory.

Q. If you are going to London, can you indicate as to when you would be sailing ?

A. On the 15th August. Maybe even earlier.

Q. There is an impression in the public mind that you have been shifting your position regarding the conditions of your attending the Round Table Conference. For example it is said that at one time you stated that you would not attend the Conference unless the Hindu-Muslim question was solved. Now you say that you will proceed to London only if the weather conditions, as you put it, are favourable. Can you explain yourself ?

A. I have not shifted my ground. My position has all along been absolutely uniform and he who runs may read it. It is plain in the resolution[1] of the Congress Working Committee. The Committee decided to send me to London, even though the Hindu-Muslim question might not be solved, but provided other favourable conditions existed; and I am simply waiting for those favourable conditions to appear.

Q. Do these conditions apply only to the Pact?

A. Yes, only to the Pact.

Q. When do you expect these conditions to appear?

A. Any more probing will touch the patient to the quick.

The Tribune, 22-7-1931

94. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[SIMLA,
On or after *July 20, 1931*][2]

SHETH JAMNALALJI
UDAIPUR

PROBABLY LEAVING HERE WEDNESDAY FOR BARDOLI.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 17372

[1] Passed on June 10, 1931 at Bombay; *vide* also "Substance Not Shadow", 18-6-1931

[2] The addressee's telegram dated July 20 read "Reaching: Udaipur tonight inform programme."

95. TELEGRAM TO K. KELAPPAN

[On or before *July 21, 1931*][1]

MY EMPHATIC OPINION IS AUCTION SALES[2] CAN BE PICKETE\ GANDHI

The Hindu, 22-7-1931

96. A MEMORANDUM[3]

July 21, 1931

A. INSTANCES OF BREACHES OF TRUCE

1. CLAUSE 7 RE. PICKETING OF LIQUOR SHOPS

MADRAS. (a) Press communique published 13th July and officers circularized categorically stating peaceful picketing liquor shops does not include picketing *abkari* sales[4].

(b) Section 144 applied against members of the Tanjore bar picketing liquor shop sales.

(c) Peaceful picketing of toddy shops at Tirukattupalli by volunteers standing at a distance of 65 yards from shops, which had been going on for the last 50 days, has been prohibited by police insisting on volunteers standing at a distance of 100 yards. Picketing thus made futile as shops are not within sight from that distance.

(d) Prosecution of peaceful picketers on faked charges and physical interference with picketing.

(e) Assault on volunteers and seizure of their movables at Koilpatti; picketers ordered not to hold umbrellas or flags and public warned against supplying them with water.

(f) Restriction of number of picketers.

BIHAR. Molestation and prosecution of peaceful picketers of liqour shops.

[1] The telegram was reported on this date.

[2] Of liquor shops

[3] Also known as the "Charge-Sheet", was given to H. W. Emerson by Gandhiji on July 21. The Government's reply to the "Charge-Sheet", and "The Congress Rejoinder" appeared in *Young India*, 24-9-1931,1-10-1931 and 8-10-1931.

[4] Auctions for liquor shops

BOMBAY [PRESIDENCY][1]. Defeating peaceful picketing by permitting sale of liquor at unlicensed places and unlicensed hours. Numerous instances in Ahmedabad and Ankleshwar (Broach) and Ratnagiri District. Bombay Government have defended these acts in a letter which adds insult to the injury. Assaults on picketers by liquor sellers connived at.

BENGAL. Peaceful picketers were severely assaulted at Paglarhat near Calcutta.

2. CLAUSE 12 (i) RE. PENDING PROSECUTIONS

Several prosecutions going on in Surat District. Where private parties have voluntarily withdrawn complaints, they have been egged on by the Superintendent of Police to press the complaints.

CLAUSE (iii). Though the clause deals strictly with cases where a local Government has moved a High Court, undertakings demanded from legal practitioners by the Bihar High Court on its own initiative would seem to come under it.

3. CLAUSE 13 (i) RE. UNRELEASED PRISONERS

Leaders in different provinces have been asked to approach local governments in respect of several prisoners not yet released. But two cases—those of H. D. Rajah and Ratanji Dayaram—were specifically referred to the Bombay Government. The Bombay Government in reply sent copies of speeches made by Rajah which in no way can be said to incite to violence. Ratanji Dayaram's burning of crop held in partnership is described as violence.

4. CLAUSE 14 RE. FINES NOT REALIZED BEFORE TRUCE

In Bulsar in Surat Dt., in five cases people are being asked to pay fine for having used land for non-agricultural purposes (viz., having volunteers' camps during the campaign, camps which were destroyed by Government). They have been told that possession would not be given unless the fines are paid. Full Assessment has been offered.

5. CLAUSE 15 RE. ADDITIONAL POLICE

Punitive Police posted at Chaltala (Dt. Hissar) still not removed. Rs. 8,000 levied.

Punitive Police at Naushara Panuan (Amritsar Dt.) not yet withdrawn.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to K. F. Nariman", 21-8-1931.

6. CLAUSE 16 (a)

(1) A boat at Kaira seized by the salt authorities and sold by mistake of the Salt Collector long after the Truce not yet restored, nor owner being compensated. Owner however being asked to approach the purchaser and offered paltry sum realized.

(2) Navajivan Press not yet returned.[1]

(3) Guns and gun licences forfeited for participation in civil disobedience not being returned in several cases.

7. CLAUSE 17(a) RE. RESTORATION OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

An Ashram in Bihar seized under Ordinanace IX not yet restored. *Watan* and *Inam* lands in Karnatak are not restored except on an undertaking not to take part in any future movement.[2]

17 (b) RE. SOLD LANDS

Certain purchasers of lands intending to reconvey them to the original owners being dissuaded from doing so by the police authorities in the Surat District.

8. CLAUSE 19 RE. POSTS RENDERED VACANT

BOMBAY PRESIDENCY. (1) Patels and Mukhis who have been appointed for five years or "until further orders" are being treated as permanently appointed.

(2) Among these several have been shown to be undesirables, the two notorious cases being those of the Mukhi of Ras and Patel Jehangir of Varad. The Ras Mukhi has a conviction for possession of stolen property against him. During his regime, since the Truce destruction of hedges and scores of trees and burning of cottages belonging to non-Dharalas has gone on. Jehangir Patel has been charged with numerous acts of bribery, misappropriation, extortion and hooliganism. He is reported to have a share in lands purchased by Sardar Garda in Bardoli and has enticed away servants of Patidars of his village to serve on Garda's land. He took part recently in a police raid on the people of Varad for recovery of arrears.

(3) Several Talatis in Jalalpur and Kaira not reinstated whilst all but one in Bardoli have been reinstated, one not being reinstated for having taken part in Civil Disobedience movement.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to R. M. Maxwell", 7-5-1931; also "Letter to H. W. Emerson", 2-6-1931

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to R. M. Maxwell", 24-6-1931

(4) Two Deputy Collectors about whom there was an understanding between Lord Irwin on the one hand and Mr. Gandhi on the other that they should not ask to be reinstated but should apply for and be given pension have applied unsuccessfully.[1]

(5) Two men in subordinate medical department applied to be reinstated. The Surgeon-General has rejected their application without showing any reason. (Dr. Sinha who published a letter about prisoners in jail, who was asked to apologize but did not and was therefore dismissed. Dr. Chandulal who resigned his post in pursuance of the campaign.)

(6) Pension of 70-year old schoolmaster in Dholka (Ahmedabad District) forfeited. (Name—Mohanlal Mulshanker Bhatt)

(7) S. B. Joshi (P.W.D.), temporary supervisor Rohari Canal, resigned in April 1930. He has been disqualified from getting Government service.

MADRAS. (1) Dr. Chelapatti Rao, M.B.B.S., Hon. Asst. Ophthalmic Surgeon (Guntur), who resigned his post in May 1930, was asked by Personal Asst. to Surgeon-General to resume charge in May 1931. He did so, but on 10th June was asked by Hospital Superintendent to express regret for anti-Government propaganda during 1930. He asked for the order in writing and the matter was dropped. At the end of June he was told that Government would not like to reinstate him.

PUNJAB. (1) Bhai Pakahar Singh, Retired Military Sepoy No.639, of Gujarwal (Ludhiana Dt.), took part in a hartal on the Gandhi Day. His pension has been forfeited.

U.P. Sjt. Sitalprasad Tayyal (M.A., B.Sc.), teacher Cantt. A. V. School, Meerut, suspended from service for political propaganda. Applied for reinstatement but without success as there happened to be a permanent appointment. But the permanent incumbent refused to take charge on 7th April 1931, and a fresh temporary man was made permanent on 20th May 1931. Sjt. Tayyal ought to have been appointed as soon as the permanent man refused to take charge.

Sjt. Kashi Prasad Dikshit (Clerk, Government Press, Allahabad) who applied for reinstatement has failed, no reason being given for rejection of his application.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H. W. Emerson," 19-6-1931

Though not actually coming under the Truce, in so many words, but following from the Truce, would be unconditional admission of boys and girls who took part in C. D. campaign. But in several parts of the country all sorts of undertakings are demanded.[1]

ASSAM. Cotton College students (Gauhati), who had passed matriculation as private candidates without signing any undertaking under the Cunningham circular, are being asked to furnish security of Rs. 50 required from those convicted of political offences and undertakings are required from the rest.

AHMEDABAD. Eight girls and eleven boys of Ahmedabad rusticated from all government and aided schools for all time for having taken part in the civil disobedience movement.

ANKOLA (KARWAR DT.). Four students who were rusticated are still not being admitted. A boy's scholarship forfeited.

AJMER-MERWARA. Sjt. Chandra Gupta, a teacher in D.A.V. School, Ajmer, Chhatanlal, teacher, Government School, Ajmer, Damodar Das, formerly student, Government College, Ajmer, and Banwarilal, M.A., Headmaster, Commercial School, Nazirabad, have been debarred from any service under government or aided school. This has been done for their participation in anti-government activities.

U.P. AND DELHI. Undertakings not to take part in any future campaign are being demanded from students intending admission.

GENERAL

BOMBAY

In Bardoli Rs. 21,00,000 out of Rs. 22,00,000 have been paid out of the current dues.[2] It is claimed that Congress workers are responsible for these payments. When they began collections it is common knowledge that they told the peasants that they were to pay all they could both of the current dues and arrears. The majority declared themselves to be hardly able to pay even the current dues. The authorities after hesitation and even flat refusal for some time in some cases accepted payments and gave receipts on account of

[1] *Vide* "My Notes"sub-title "Student"

[2] *Young India,* 20-8-1931, has: "In Surat Rs. 19,00,000 of Rs. 20,00,000 have been paid out of the current dues."

current dues. Now to demand arrears or current dues from those who plead inability is a breach of faith with the workers and the people. So far as the arrears are concerned, it is contended that if the authorized arrears are suspended because of the fall in prices, as they are, the unauthorized arrears deserve the same treatment with greater force, because the men having been civil resisters have in addition to the losses due to low prices suffered severe losses through migration. These losses have been estimated and presented to the authorities. Nevertheless Congress workers have offered to re-examine cases suspected by the authorities. What they resent is coercive processes, fines and display of the police who surround people's houses.

In Borsad and Anand too the question of balance is not yet quite disposed of, though there may be no difficulties if the understanding arrived at by the Collector with Mr. Gandhi is carried out.

In Sirsi and Siddhapur (Karnatak) the peasants asked for relief owing to distress. There was no no-tax campaign. The authorities were approached through Mr. Chikodi, a member of the Legislative Council. Relief was promised. Some was given. But now instead of being satisfied with using the services of the Congress workers, coercive processes have been started. Articles of daily use, including cooking utensils, have been taken away.

UNITED PROVINCES

Congress work as such is being attacked at various places, peaceful meetings being dispersed and Congress workers persecuted, and people treated to a general policy of terrorism.

INSTANCES. (1) Bijhari (Mathura): on May 20th, 1931, three lorry loads of policemen raided the houses of practically all Congress workers, insulted the women and snatched away national flags, tore them and burnt them, children were prohibited from taking part in *prabhat pheris.* 18 persons from the village challaned under Section 107, four charged also under the Dacoity Section. Refused bail, without the identification parade being held. Entirely false evidence is being cooked up against them.

(2) At Naujhil (Mathura), a peaceful meeting was forcibly dispersed on the 26th June 1931. Those who refused to disperse were physically dragged away. Syt. Ghurelal fainted as a result of lathi blows. Many other workers assaulted.

(3) At Rayah, Rahimatulla, a Congress volunteer was beaten with shoes by the local police on 10th July, 1931, and ordered to leave the village under various threats.

About 53 prosecutions of Congress workers including almost all office-bearers of the Dt. Mathura[1] are going on under Security Section.

(4) All prominent workers of the Dt. Committee, Sultanpur are being proceeded against under Section 144.

(5) Numerous arrests in Karnal Dt. on pretexts held to be false.

(6) In Bara Banki a general order under Section 144 applied to whole areas. Blank orders under Section 144 signed by Dt. Magistrate are said to have been given to police inspectors. 300 cases under Section 107 pending in court and 135 such cases are reported from Rae Bareli. This section is specially utilized to rope in as many panches and Surpanches and village Congress workers as well. In the summons it is specifically mentioned that the prosecution is for carrying on various Congress activities and would be withdrawn if the accused offer to pay full rent, apologize, to the zamindars and remove the national flag from his house or village and cease to enrol Congress volunteers.

(7) In Barabanki the Deputy Commissioner went to Dadra on 7th June 1931, asked people to leave the Congress, got Gandhi caps removed, warned tenants against wearing Gandhi caps of khaddar and got people to sign a declaration that they had no connection with the Congress.

(8) At Bhudari on 22nd June 1931 Sub-Inspector of Ramnagar Police Station pulled down national flags, took away Congress papers, arrested three men from the village and threatened others if they did not resign from the Congress.

(9) In Basti District the Magistrate openly asks people not to put on Gandhi caps. A worker was thrashed for objecting to such an order.

(10) In Gonda District when Kunwar Raghavendra Pratap Singh saw the Deputy Commissioner, the latter threatened harassment if the Kunwar did not stop Congress work. In this district also action under Section 144 has been taken against leading Congress workers.

[1] *Young India* has "Dt. Committee, Mathura".

(11) In Bahraich District, under the pretext of private complaints of Chaukidars, zamindars and their agents, Congress workers are arrested and convicted.

We have thus far talked of the doings of the officials themselves. But what are ostensibly the doings of the zamindars or taluqdars are occasioned by the connivance, if not at the instance, of the Government officials who do not seem disposed to take note of their excesses. The Rae Bareli circulars are well-known.[1]

The taluqdars assured of Government support have begun their old barbarous methods of recovering rent. To give a recent case, a tenant has been admitted to the Civil Hospital, Rae Bareli, who has lost his eye and broken his nasal bone as the result of an organised attack by the taluqdar's party. A pregnant woman was beaten until she was unconscious.

BAHRAICH DISTRICT. In the District of Bahraich at Nanpara on several occasions the police and the zamindars have combined to bea the Congress volunteers and tenants, and have arrested chief Congress workers. It has been reported that houses of several volunteers have been burnt by the police. A report from Barabanki says, "since the advent of the new Deputy Commissioner armed police has been terrorizing the villagers and revenue and police officers have been helping the landlords in crushing the *Kisans* and the Congress workers." We have received similar reports from Rae Bareli and other districts. It is the general policy of the Government in Oudh.

GONDA DISTRICT. Two incidents at Balrampur (Gonda) which is a taluqdari, but under court of wards.

Baraipur Village:

"On the complaint of Thekadaran the police and the estate people. surrounded the village in the first week of May. They asked the village people to pay up the rents immediately, but they wanted two days' grace. They were beaten and 23 of them were afterwards arrested under Section 323, 325 and 147 I.P.C. On the third day there was another raid on the village by the estate authorities who surrounded it with a force of about 250 men. Women were roughly handled, stripped naked and dishonoured.

"Grain was taken away and auctioned for a mere song. The case is still pending." A man has died as a result of beating administered

[1] *Vide* "Honesty",23-7-1931

by the estate zilladar and his men. The zilladar has been arrested.

Simaria Village:

"The Thekadar ill-treated the women of this village. For three days no one was allowed to draw water from any well until part payment was made. Nineteen men were prosecuted for having used force against the Thekadar's men. Here too women were stripped naked and sticks thrust into their private parts."

ALLAHABAD DISTRICT. Reports show that several zamindars have realized by force the full rent and have not passed on the remission to the tenants. In this district in almost all Tehsils it has been a common practice with the zamindars to beat the tenant, thrash him with sticks, shoes, use his spears and other weapons, harass him and humiliate him in all possible ways.

We have reports from Gorakhpore District showing that the Government has been conniving at the excesses of the zamindars and the zamindars have been doing whatever comes into their head. To give one example from amongst many: "Zamindars Paramhans Singh and Newal Kishore Singh of Siswa Bazar, on the 31st April raided the village Khesradi, Gidvapal Mansachhapara, Ahrauli with 150 badamshes[1] looted the property belonging to Rajabali, Naboo Lunia, Bhimal and Chaukar." The Government took no note of the incident. In Rajwara village Ramnarain zamindar with the help of the police fired upon the *kisans.* One man died as the result of the firing. The Government is silent over the whole affair.

The practice of making a tenant *murga* (making him stand like a cock) in the sun is common. So also beating with shoes. Seizing of property (cattle, etc.), without reference to a court of law is also common.

RAE BARELI. In the Rae Bareli District there are several hundred cases where the *Amin*, supported by the police has terrorized the *kisans.*

Notice distributed among *kisans* warning them that they would be liable to be prosecuted if they associated with particular Congressmen.

UNAO DISTRICT. Syt. Vishambhar Dayal Tripathi has published the allegations of tenants made before an enquiry held by the sub-divisional magistrate into the happenings in Pipri, (Unao District)

[1] Bad characters

which, if they are not true, would make them libellous.[1] The allegations mentioned promiscuous beatings with lathis and dandas, breaking open of houses, removal of doors and locks, insult of women, a case of rape, looting of ornaments, all done by zamindar proprietors of the village under the protection of the sub-divisional magistrate.

In Agra remissions are allowed only to those tenants who declare themselves against the Congress. Hundreds of villages, therefore, have not yet received any remission from the Government. The officials clearly speak out that remission will not be given to those tenants who are with the Congress.

We have received similar reports from the Districts of Fyzabad, Kheri, Fatehpur, Badaun, etc. All of them tell the same woeful tale.

IN BENGAL. Workers doing peaceful constructive work have been arrested at Contai.

IN THE PUNJAB. Inoffensive processions at Taren Taran have been charged with lathis. Opposite the Sarhali police station (Amritsar District) the Police Inspector abused Congress leaders and severely beat a Congress doctor. Several workers at Taren Taran arrested under Section 108. Lala Dunichand told by the Deputy Commissioner, Ambala, that no political meetings can be held in Ambala Cantonment or for that matter any other cantonment. At Ludhiana a peaceful Mushaira meeting of almost a private nature was mercilessly broken up in the presence of the City Magistrate on the 16th May.[2] After the people had begun to disperse one Fez[3] threw an iron chair on the platform. Dr. Kishorelal who brought the fact to the notice of the Magistrate and Police Inspector received two cuts with a hunter from the said Fez and a lathi blow on the head. The Magistrate instead of preventing the miscreant treated the doctor to choicest abuse. On the doctor protesting, a severe lathi charge on the dispersing crowd followed. Fifty people were badly injured. The reason for this attack was to terrorize the people in Katra Nawriyan into opposing the inauguration of the Swadeshi Bazar.

IN ASSAM. *Prabhat pheri* boys were assaulted at Jorhat on 19th June, under orders of Police Superintendent, Bartley. Dr. H. K. Das

[1] *Vide* "Serious Allegations", 25-6-1931
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Duni Chand", 6-6-1931
[3] *Young India*, 24-9-1931, has "Faiz".

was asked to show cause why his pension should not be forefeited for having supported a Congress resolution at Karachi.

N.W.F. PROVINCE

REPRESSION AGAINST KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS

1. MALKAND AGENCY[1]. The Tahsildars of Malkand Agency told certain people who were undergoing confinement in the Malkand Agency lock up that they would be released if they would consent to shoot Khudai Khidmatgars. They were further told that they could obtain their release if they would catch hold of as many Khudai Khidmatgars as possible and release them after excacting Rs. 200 from each of them. A Khudai Khidmatgar in Sadrum was stabbed and another in Rostam was assassinated on the night of 4th July 1931 under suspicious circumstances.

2. DAULATPURA, TAHSIL CHARSADDA. Abdullajan, Zaildar of Batagram, assisted by the Frontier Constabulary, collected all the volunteers who had not paid up their revenue dues and shut up six of them in a room full of hornets and set the hornets on them by making smoke in the room. When they were let out with their faces awfully swollen owing to the hornets' stings, they were told by the son of Abdullajan to go and sell their wives to pay up their revenue.

3. GHORAMLEAK. On 27th June 1931 Abdullajan and his party caught hold of such Khudai Khidmatgars as had been unable to pay up the land revenue and made them sit in the hot sun with their hands tied together behind their back. Anyone who uttered even a word was beaten with the butt-ends of rifles as a result of which one old man collapsed. The same thing was repeated in Jamto and Bakayana.

4. SHABQADAR. At Shabqadar Almir and Hamidkhan, both holders of Jagirs from the Government caught hold of two Khudai Khidmatgars and took them before the political officer and ordered them to give up Congress work. On their refusal to do so, they were stripped naked and severely beaten. One of them was made to lie down on the ground in the hot sun; secured in that position by tight strings and fingers and pieces of wood were thrust into his rectum to humiliate him, this sort of insult being regarded by Pathans as only short of death.

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to H. W. Emerson", 20-7-1931

5. SARBAND. On 21st June 1931 a large force of police went to Sarband to arrest Maqarrabkhan on a false charge of wrongful confinement and extortion, Gulsaran, son of Harisingh, being put up as the complainant. The police broke into the house of Maqarrabkhan without any *Lambardar*[1] being present on the scene, ransacked it, and took away Rs. 200 from it. Another Khudai Khidmatgar, Fazlurahman, was arrested and taken to Sarai the same evening. A peaceful crowd collected near Sarai and shouted *Narai Takbir*[2]. At this the police set upon the people and assaulted them with butt-ends of rifles, bayonets, etc. On 22nd June Maqarrabkhan voluntarily surrendered himself to the police. On the same day Sayed Ashfaqkhan and Arab Abdul Gaffurkhan recorded a statement of Gulsaran in the presence of the D.S.P. and Sub-Inspector of Police in which he exonerated Maqarrabkhan from the charges levelled against him by the police. On 24th June Sayed Ashfaqkhan and Arab Abdul Gaffurkhan were arrested,[3] under Section 143/225 I.P.C., on a charge of 'inten-tionally offering resistance to the lawful apprehension of any other person for an offence', this in spite of the fact that there never was anything like resistance to the arrest of Maqarrabkhan.

6. KOHAT. The President of the Congress Committee of Kohat while touring on the Hangu side with his volunteers was stopped near Shinvaris by the Levy Police and fired at. The shot missed him. While returning, the party were hooted and stoned and finally subjected to a lathi charge.

PERIODICAL HELD UP BY THE POSTAL AUTHORITIES

Copies of the May issue of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's Pashto Magazine, *Pakhtoon*, which is purely devoted to the cause of social reform has been held up by the postal authorities and no reason for it has been given to Khan Sahib.

SECTION 144. All meetings and processions have been prohibited in the *ilaqa* of Khalil and Mohamand and in the tahsil of Peshawar.

From a photostat: G. W. 9373. Courtesy: India Office Library. Also Young India, 20-8-1931.

[1] Big landlord in villages who helps Government in collecting land revenue.

[2] The Islamic call to which the response is '*Allah-o-Akbar*' ('Great is God').

[3] What follows is reproduced from *Young India*, the photostat being *incomplete*.

97. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

SIMLA,
July 21, 1931

Interviewed by the Associated Press special representative, as he emerged from the Viceregal Lodge, Mahatma Gandhi said that the conversations were inconclusive.

But I am not staying for any further interviews. I am leaving tomorrow for Bardoli whence I proceed to Borsad.

Pressed to say whether there would be any further negotiations, Mahatma Gandhi said there might be negotiations possibly through correspondence, by which light might be seen later. For the present the position is, in Gandhiji's hackneyed expression:

As you were. The temperature of the patient is the same.

Asked about his going to England, Mahatma *Gandhi* said it was still doubtful and there would be no certainty until he was *on* board he steamer.

The Tribune, 22-7-1931

98. LETTER TO VICEROY

SIMLA,
July 21, 1931

I have your kind letter of 20th inst. inviting me on behalf of the Prime Minister to be a member of the Federal Structure Committee as also a member of the full conference. Whilst I appreciate the invitation and would like to respond, as I have already conveyed to you, I have serious difficulties in the way of my proceeding to London. I came to Simla in the hope that the difficulties would be removed. But our protracted conversations have not advanced matters so as to enable me to come to a positive decision. I feel that the way things are moving in India at the present moment, unless they improve, make it impossible for me to leave India. Reports pour in upon me from every part showing that Congressmen are being harassed without any justifiable cause. In some places they say that they are being harassed much more than during the civil disobedience campaign. I know your difficulty especially when things are being done under cover of law. I have suggested several ways out. But I am sorry that they have not

commended themselves to you. In the circumstances the most I can say is that I must watch events and if I find that things have not taken a better turn I must reluctantly come to the conclusion that I must not go. I need hardly say that I seek no protection for any Congressman from prosecution for manifest breach of the common or the statutory law of the country. My complaint is about acts manifestly outside the law and processes which are demonstrably vexatious. It grieves me that I am not able to send you a better letter. But I am helpless.

After much cogitation I have come to the conclusion that I should send my son Devdas Gandhi to the Frontier Province. I would feel ill at ease if I could not send anybody at all especially after the information that Mr. Emerson gave me. As I said to you during our conversation he will be asked to refrain from making any speeches or accepting any addresses. My sole object in sending him is to promote peace and to avoid a catastrophe if it is at all possible. His presence would also insure Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan responding to the Commissioner's invitation.[1]

Young India, 20-8-1931

99. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

SIMLA,
July 21, 1931

In accordance with my promise made at the Viceregal Lodge this evening I reduce to writing my request for an impartial tribunal to decide upon matters of interpretation of the Settlement between the Government and the Congress that might be submitted to it from time to time whether on behalf of the Government or the Congress. The following are the matters that require immediate adjudication unless there is agreement between the Government and the Congress as to the interpretation:

(1) Whether picketing includes picketing of liquor-shop auction sales?

[1] In reply the Viceroy said: "Thank you very much for your letter of July 21st, and let me say that while I cannot accept as justified in fact the reasons you give for your present inability to intimate your acceptance of the invitations, I do hope that after our talks the apprehensions you now feel will disappear, and that you will be able to go to England as a member of the Federal Structure Committee and of the full Conference."

(2) Whether it is competent for provincial Governments to prescribe the distance at which picketing can be done so as to render it impossible for picketers to be within sight of the shop picketed?

(3) Whether it is competent for a Government to limit the number of picketers so as to make it impossible to picket all the entrances of a particular shop?

(4) Whether it is competent for a Government to defeat peaceful picketing by permitting sale of liquor by the picketed shopkeeper at places other than licensed and during odd hours?

(5) Interpretation of clauses 13 and 14 in the application of particular cases which provincial Governments have regarded as not coming under those clauses and the Congress has held otherwise.

(6) Interpretation of the word 'return' in clause 16(a).

(7) Whether a return of guns forfeited after cancellation of licenses for participation in civil disobedience is covered by the Settlement?

(8) Whether restoration of certain property seized under Ordinance IX and of *Watan* lands in Karnatak is covered by the Settlement and if it is, is it competent for a Government to impose any conditions upon such restoration?

(9) The meaning of the word 'permanent' in Clause 19.

(10) Whether it is competent for the Education Department to impose conditions upon students who took part in the civil disobedience campaign before admitting them or in virtue of perpetual rustication imposed during the civil disobedience campaign to debar the admission of students under the ban?

(11) Whether it is competent for a Government to punish a person or corporation, by reason of his or its having taken part in the civil disobedience campaign, e.g., forfeiture of pension, or grants and the like to municipalities ?

These are not to be treated as the only matters to be submitted to the tribunal. It is possible that unforeseen cases may arise in future which may be claimed to come under the Settlement. The procedure

to be adopted would be that written statements would be submitted both on behalf of the Government and the Congress and the points would be argued by counsel on behalf of the Government as on behalf of the Congress. The decision of the tribunal would be binding on both the parties.

As I told you in the course of our conversation whilst I say nothing at the present moment as to a tribunal for the examination of questions of facts in the event of differences between the Government and the Congress I have not waived the demand. Occasions may arise when the differences may be so vital as to make it obligatory on any party to press for a tribunal for the examination of such cases also. I should, however, hope that we might be able to settle all points of difference without reference to any tribunal.[1]

Home Department, Political File No. 33/VII/31-Poll/1931. Courtesy: National Archives of India

100. INTERVIEW TO "THE PIONEER"

SIMLA,
July 21, 1931

I want to go to London. I hope to go to London. I would go to Lord Willingdon now and say that I would have accepted the invitation were it not for my mistrust of the activities of the district authorities in certain areas during my absence.

In these words, Mr. Gandhi summed up his present position at the conclusion of an hour's conversation tonight. . . .

Mr. Gandhi will not see the Viceroy again in Simla and he told me that certain communications would be exchanged before he would be in a position to say 'yes' or 'no'. Of his anxiety to go, there is no doubt whatever and when I suggested that the general opinion was that he would make a great mistake if he did not go to London he said he saw no reason to disagree with such opinion, but that he had to consider also the people in India.

"But are you not devoting too much time to details instead of concentrating your attention on the broad issues?" I asked. Mr. Gandhi started to talk of South Africa and particularly his experiences at Spion Kopwhen his three officers were incapacitated. He explained that he had to assume responsibility for 60 stretcher bearers working over a stretch of more than a score of miles and that he was amazed at the number of details he had attended to personally in order to secure efficient

[1] For the addressee's reply, *vide* "Letter from H. W. Emerson", 30-7-1931

working and a successful outcome.

Are you trying to draw a parallel for my benefit between such experiences and your present policy?

Mr. Gandhi agreed that he was and that only disaster could follow neglect of details. Nor did he attempt to hide that the situation in the United Provinces was causing him the most concern.

He agreed that Sir Malcolm Hailey's promise of agrarian legislation is an excellent thing for the future but emphasized that what is wanted is immediate relief, and Sir Malcolm Hailey has not indicated that though his speech is conciliatory. He gave the instance of Gujarat where he had personally collected nineteen out of the twenty lakhs due and said that though the situation in the United Provinces was somewhat different he had offered during the recent negotiations to go there and do the same thing.

It is interesting to note that in the brief conversation I had with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru yesterday afternoon he said he agreed with Sir Malcolm Hailey that the system in the United Provinces had collapsed and that the situation was very bad. With this in mind I asked Mr. Gandhi whether he agreed that there was a danger that if the agricultural situation throughout India got very much worse chaos would supervene of a nature with which neither Mr. Gandhi nor the Government of India could successfully cope. He emphatically agreed but added that there was no reason why it should reach such a stage.

I don't want to humiliate the Government of India and I don't want to set up a parallel Government but I do want the district authorities to allow responsible Congressmen to assist in chip [*sic*] assessing the ability of the peasants to pay.

There would seem to lie the crux of the present trouble, the barrier between Mr. Gandhi and London for he feels that the peasants will not get a square deal from Government and particularly from the landlords.

If I decide to go to England 1 shall endeavour to sail a week earlier than the remainder of the delegates. I have had pressing innovations to visit Lancashire and I want to go straight there and explain the Congress attitude regarding foreign cloth for I don't wish to do anyone harm in Lancashire, or, indeed, anywhere else.

Picketing is now only an economic measure though it was, of course, used as a political weapon during the civil disobedience movement. But now I take an immediate step if cases are reported to me which savour of more than verbal persuasion.

Mr. Gandhi made this statement while answering certain questions I put to him regarding the economic and financial problems, particularly as to the publication at this juncture of the Congress report on the National Debt of India.[1] He agreed that its

[1] *Vide* "Bahadurji Committee's Report", 23-7-1931

publication might not be particularly opportune but said it was ready and saw no real reason for withholding it from the Press.

He denied that it amounted to a repudiation of debts and said that there must be a stock-taking. The Congress report was not intended to be the last word on the subject and all they wanted was that the British Government should treat India in the matter of the National Debt as the Irish Free State had been treated. Mr. Gandhi did not think there was any connection between the Congress report and the fact that Sir Victor Sassoon's statement[1] was made a fortnight earlier than was expected and he thought Sir Victor Sassoon was typical of many who prefer to see trouble ahead, particularly of Europeans who resent the fact that in future they could not possibly enjoy the same privileges as in the past.

. . . Mr. Gandhi said there is a future for all Englishmen in India provided they are willing to work in the country's interests and not selfishly or from a privileged plane. . . . Mr. Gandhi indeed admitted that he had received a letter from a prominent English banker suggesting that he should make a considered declaration on the subject and that he was considering it.

He added that nothing was farther from his mind than expropriating existing trading interests for there was room for all, but he did feel particularly about industrial developments which had destroyed the old village industries and thereby impoverished the peasantry. Of rural uplift he thoroughly approved but said that he had Mr. F. L. Brayne's experiments at Gurgaon thoroughly investigated and considered them a complete failure.

The Gurgaon uplift was the result of a dominant and forceful personality, Mr. Brayne, assisted by his wife. I appreciate the sentiment but not the methods which have left the district bankrupt. I am producing far better results in Gujarat and the cost is practically nil.

He strongly repudiated the suggestion that he would like to put India back three hundred or four hundred years but said that something must be done to mitigate the appalling poverty of the peasantry adding that if the whole of the Government taxation was remitted it would not solve the problem.

Taking my leave of Mr. Gandhi, I remarked, "I think I shall say that you will ultimately decide to go to London", and he replied:

I hope you are right.

The Pioneer , 23-7-1931 and 24-7-1931

[1] Announcing his intention to leave India in October because of the political situation and settle permanently in China

101. INTERVIEW TO "THE TRIBUNE"

SIMLA,
July 21, 1931

Asked whether he was going away disappointed. . . . quick as a shot Gandhiji replied:

I am going away neither disappointed nor hopeful. It is all merely indecisive.

Q. Was there any talk about the Round Table Conference?

A. Nothing directly, it was all general.

Q. What was the hitch to an understanding?

A. It was all the old hitch about the Pact, which is still not working as well as it ought to.

Asked as to the possibility of the Government conceding the Congress demand for an arbitration board and an economic enquiry in the United Provinces, Gandhiji was particularly slow in answering here, but he gave the impression that it was a matter for farther negotiations and therefore some more time should elapse before a definite statement could be made.

Q. So you won't regard the negotiations as having broken down?

A. Not in the least.

Q. Was Sir Malcolm Hailey's speech before the United Provinces Council on the land revenue position helpful in the discussions on the need for an economic enquiry?

A. I did not discuss this point with Lord Willingdon today.

Q. Is your going to London more certain as a result of your conversation in Simla ?

A. Not until I am seen boarding a steamer.

Q. How long more do you think you will take to decide on boarding a steamer?

A. A few more days and possibly soon after the forthcoming meeting of the All India Congress Committee in Bombay.

Q. So you don't anticipate the resumption of the civil disobedience movement or non-payment of taxes in the near future?

A. You are very true to your profession. You seem to look far ahead. Lord Curzon's description of journalists that they anticipate events and therefore know much more than even the Government

appears to fit you well. But I am looking at things around me and solving immediate problems.

Q. Where will your residence in London be?

A. At Kingsley Hall as the guest of Miss Muriel Lester.

The Tribune, 24-7-1931

102. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

SIMLA,
July 22, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

As promised I enclose herewith the speeches of Mr. H. D. Rajah for which he was convicted. Whilst they may be called hysterical, I can read no violence or incitement thereto in the speeches. The copies are authentic because they have been supplied to me by the Govt. of Bombay. Will you kindly return the copies as I have not kept a duplicate?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 1931

103. LETTER TO PANNALAL

July 22, 1931

CHI. PANNALAL,

All the information you want about me you will be able to get from the Ashram. Experiments in diet are only a part of my quest for truth; I carry them out with due care for my health. I had wanted to try and see if I could eat the *bhakhari*[1] of *jowar* or *bajri,* without leaving off dates and currants, and at the same time to give up milk. When I got the opportunity, I undertook the experiment but had to abandon it. However, I now do not take even as much as a pound of milk a week. For the past three days, my food has been chiefly wheat chapati, vegetables, crushed almonds and, in addition, dates once in the morning. Previous to this, I ate only dates and almonds, and of course lemons. The body remains fit and the strength is properly

[1] A thick flat cake

maintained, so that you need not worry at all. The weight has again gone up to 98 lbs; it had fallen to 95 Ibs.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3117

104. "HONESTLY"

I heard a story about me of the Rae Bareli secret circulars reproduced in *Young India* of 2nd July that the adverbial clause "and at the same time honestly" was omitted from it. I saw then an insidious paragraph in a newspaper which but for the previous information in possession, I would not have understood at all. Here is the circular[1] itself as it is printed in *Young India*.

I was perturbed when I first heard about the omission. Upon examining my file I found that "and at the same time honestly" did occur in copies received from Pandit Jawaharlal. These were received by me subsequently to the publication of the circulars. How then could the omission in *Young India* arise? I had Mahadev Desai to write to the Manager to send me the manuscript (which is always preserved for some time), or to wire if it was possible the condition in which it was received at the press. Here is the wire which has made this writing possible:

> Your letter. Words in question added marginally in ink in typed original but scored out by you in ink.

I now do recall the incident. The original was sent to the press. I have a recollection that the adverb appeared apart from the text and without any indication that it was part of it. I have no recollection that I scored it. How the manager knows that I scored it, I do not know. My duty is to take the reader into confidence about what has happened.

(Here comes Mahadev Desai to whom as I am writing this I have shown the telegram. He has a vivid recollection of what happened. He must finish the story as he remembers it.[2]

[1] Not reproduced here. For the Confidential Circular (D.O. 12/6), *vide* "Kisan's Troubles in the U. P. ", 19-6-1931

[2] Mahadev Desai's note read: Gandhiji usually hands me the 'copy' for *Young India* some time before the final hour for posting. Now that I see the telegram from the manager I vividly recollect that the words "and at the same time honestly", were

I see in this no wilful omission by anybody. I shall pursue the inquiry further and find out what the sender of the notes in which the circular was incorporated has to say and if it is relevant, I shall share it with the reader.

In my opinion the adverb 'honestly' is an irrelevant addition and if anything makes the circular worse reading than otherwise. It reminds one of the famous advice 'do it honestly if you can but do it'.

But whether the addition improves the circular or taints it still further, I tender my unreserved apologies to the author and to all concerned for the omission of the adverb from the circular which undoubtedly contains it. Having seen the adverb Mahadev Desai, I admit, should not have crossed it out. Had he referred it to me, I should have let the adverb stand or referred to the sender before giving the circular to the public. But as responsible editor, I must take upon me the moral blame as the legal would be, if there was any legal liability for the omission. The moral for me is 'hasten slowly'. Those who will serve Truth absolutely cannot afford to be hasty even for a good cause.

Young India, 23-7-1931

105. BAHADURJI COMMITTEES REPORT

The report of the committee appointed by the Congress to report on the obligations between Great Britain and India is a document of very great importance especially at the present moment. No Congress worker should be without a copy. Sjts. Bahadurji, Bhulabhai J. Desai, K. T. Shah and J. C. Kumarappa deserve the warm congratulations of the nation for their labour of love. The foreign readers of *Young India* should know that Sjt. D. N. Bahadurji was at one time Advocate General and so was Sjt. Bhulabhai J. Desai. Both of

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there on the margin, perhaps with a query, and giving no indication that they were part of the text, but every indication that the friend who had sent the copy of the circular had passed a sarcastic remark about the particular instructions in the circular on the margin. I therefore scored it out. I have also a recollection that there were what I thought such sarcastic remarks in one or two more places and upon my own responsibility I scored out the words, without referring the matter to Gandhiji. Perhaps there was no time either. But there it is. It is a plain unvarnished account of what now appears to be a regrettable omission.

them are busy practitioners and well-known lawyers apart from their having held the office of Advocate General. Indeed that office gives no added importance to the holders. It is a recognition of their importance and status in their profession. Prof. K. T. Shah is an economist of all-India reputation, is an author of several valuable works and was for many years and only up to the other day Professor of Economics in the University of Bombay. These three gentlemen are always busy and it was no little sacrifice on their part to give their time to the responsible work entrusted to them by the Congress.

Sjt. J. C. Kumarappa, the convenor, is a professor in the Gujarat Vidyapith and therefore it was no additional sacrifice on his part. He may be considered a registered national servant and therefore his time and labour were already at the disposal of the Congress. He was chosen for this particular task for his accurate knowledge of economics and his aptitude for research work. These four members were ably assisted at their invitation by Sjt. G. N. Joshi, also an economist of considerable experience. I have given this introduction about the authors of the report so that foreign readers may know that the report is not a document prepared by superficial politicians but it is the creation of men who have a reputation to lose; who are no demagogues but men who write about things they know and weigh the words that they write.

The report is a critical examination of the financial transactions of the British Government in India. The first volume is divided into five parts with a note on annual military expenditure and interest on claims by Prof. Kumarappa. The second volume which will be shortly published contains voluminous notes prepared by Prof. K. T. Shah which could not be included in the body of the report. The two volumes should give the student of Indian Public Debts all he can possibly need.

The first part of the first volume has short but interesting paragraphs on repudiation *v.* ratification and sanctity of contracts. The Congress has been charged with the desire for repudiating "National Debt". The authors of the report show that the question of repudiation does not arise at all, nor is there any question of sanctity of contracts because there is no contract. The authors say: "The Congress has often been accused of attempting to repudiate public debts. Far from being a repudiation the offer of the Congress is to ratify burdens which have been undertaken in the country's interest.

The present public debts cannot be truly called national debts for they have been incurred really by Great Britain and imposed upon India." They add: "It has been suggested in some quarters that all these obligations have some degree of sanctity and should not be disputed. We are unable to see any basis of sanctity in this matter. These burdens were involuntarily imposed upon the revenues of India and if they are not shown to have been incurred for the benefit of the Indian people it is difficult to understand the use of the word 'sanctity' in this connection." In fact it is difficult to understand this charge of repudiation. If and when India takes over charge from the present administration the transaction would be like any ordinary transfer whether it is from seller to buyer or from trustee to his ward or from the wrong-doer to the wronged. In each one of these transfers there would be a proper stock-taking, balance-sheet and a taking over subject to audit and adjustment.

Burdens are never forced upon the transferee except in the case of the vanquished who have no choice. The state contemplated for India is that of freedom from bondage complete or partial. The taking over of such liabilities as India approves or is adjudged to pay will not mean a repudiation of the rest but would mean the taking over of the balance by the British. If therefore any of the numerous bond-holders or holders of promissory notes and the like have to lose, they will lose not because of repudiation by India but because of repudiation by the British.

And let no one regard the report as the final Congress demand. The report is a valuable document for the guidance of the Congress and those who would study the history of the financial transactions of the British Government in India. It is open to the Congress either to waive any of the items of the demand framed by the authors or to add to them if need be. Then too, it has never been the Congress position that whatever demand the Congress makes must be accepted. The Congress position has always been and today is that if the British Government do not accept the Congress claim, the items in dispute should be referred to an impartial tribunal. Surely nothing more reasonable can be expected from the Congress. Anything less will be a betrayal of the trust on the part of the Congress. Nor is this an unusual demand. The learned authors of the report have cited the Irish parallel. "On the creation of the Irish Free State," they say, "the question naturally arose as to the apportionment of her liabilities for

the national debts which at the time stood at £ 7,721 millions. By clause 5 of the Ireland (Confirmation of Agreement) Act it is provided as follows:

> The Irish Free State should assume liability to the service of the public debt of the United Kingdom as existing at the date hereof and towards the payment of War Pensions as existing at that date in such a proportion as may be fair and equitable having regard to the fair and just claim on the part of Ireland by way of set-off or counter-claim, the amount of such sums being determined in default of agreement by the arbitration of one or more independent persons being citizens of the British Empire.

So much for the position taken up by the Congress. The claim summarized by the Committee is as follows:

Year	Subject of Claims	Crores	Amount
Prior to			
1857	External Wars of the Company	35.000	
	Interest on Company's Capital Stock		
	paid 1833-57	15.120	50.120
1857	Cost of 'Mutiny'		40.000
1874	Interest on Company's Capital Stock		
	paid 1857-74	10.080	
	Redemption of the Capital Stock of		
	East India Company	12.000	22.080
1857-1900	External Wars	37.500	
1914-1920	European War-gift	189.000	
	Cost	170.700	397.200
1857-1931	Miscellaneous Charges in respect		
	of Burma	20.000	
		82.000	102.000
1916-1921	Reverse Councils Losses		35.000
	Premium paid to Railway Companies on		
	acquisition by the State		50.000
	Cost of Strategic Railways		33.000
	Total Claim	(Crores) Rs.	729.400

The authors have also carefully examined the so-called productive debt of India and the following summary of their

observations will be both instructive and interesting:

(a) That of the five or six items of productive character only two, viz., Railways and Irrigation works can, strictly speaking, be classed as such;

(b) That the productivity of the Railways and their contribution to the economic development of India is wholly different from that of the Irrigation Works;

(c) That the aggregate capital at charge on account of the Railways must admit a counter-claim of eighty-three crores at least as detailed above; before liability on that account can be accepted by the Indian people; though in strict commercial accounting and rigorous justice the counter-claim would be at least doubled;

(d) That the debt on account of the Irrigation Works and other Commercial Department may be admitted as covered by sufficient earning assets transferred automatically to the new Government of India;

(e) That the "productive" character of the debt due from the Provincial Government, local self-governing bodies or Indian States is extremely doubtful, the only support for the maintenance of this burden being found in the taxable capacity of the people within the respective jurisdiction.

(f) That even if full liability is assumed in regard to these an exception must be made in respect of the Bombay Development Debts (fifteen crores), which was incurred in the teeth of the protests of the people concerned, and against which therefore very little of valuable assets of a productive or earning character are available.

Their examination of Unproductive Debts includes external wars such as the Abyssinian War, Perak Expedition, War 'gifts', etc. Comparing India's contribution to the contribution by the Dominions they observe:

India's contribution, as compared with that of the other Dominions of Britain, and her gains in results of the War show a very disproportionate balance. While on the outbreak of the War, the other Dominions only offered to protect their own frontiers, or protect the Overseas Commerce within their regions, India alone, in addition to protecting her own territory, made large contributions to the Empire's fighting forces in the European War. The defence of the local frontier meant a considerable obligation only in the case of South Africa where there were German interests which might conceivably involve that territory in danger. But the contribution of Australia in Gallipoli and in policing the seas does not at all compare favourably with that of India. India received no particular advantage as a result of the success in the great

struggle. The Dominions shared along with Great Britain, in the reparations, such as they are, that have been received from Germany so far; but even this share, comparatively speaking, does not advantage India at all proportionately to her contributions and sufferings. India has hardly any say in the mutations of these reparation payments.

Part II of the first volume is headed "India under the East India Company's Rule". But I must resist the temptation to quote from this survey. I have given, I hope, enough to whet the appetite of the reader. I have seen some adverse comments on the report. No uninformed criticism, however hostile, can diminish the value of a document which fortifies every statement with facts and figures. If these critics mean business and are sincere in their criticism, let them offer constructive criticism and let them support it with facts and figures. A discussion of this character cannot fail to be helpful. I have no doubt that the authors do not claim infallibility for their conclusions. If therefore any flaw is shown to them, they will be the first to acknowledge their error, and so far as the members of the Working Committee and those members of the general public who would care to study this authoritative report are concerned, they would be able to put such enlightened criticism side by side with and formulate their judgment.

Let me say in conclusion that when the Congress at Gaya[1] and then at Lahore passed a resolution about financial obligations[2] it was seriously meant. The appointment of the Committee and its report were the natural corrollary. The Congress will seriously follow the matter to the end. If the Congress can help, India will not take a leap in the dark. She cannot afford to be generous at the expense of the dumb millions who after all have to make the largest contribution towards the payment of any liabilities that may be undertaken.

Young India, 23-7-1931

[1] In 1922

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Subjects Committee, A.I.C.C.-II, 1-1-1930 and "The Congress" sub-title " Our Financial Obligations", 9-1-1930

106. WHAT THE MILL-OWNERS CAN DO

The correspondent whose letter about Japanese enterprise I gave last week[1] sends also the following:[2]

> Nothing perhaps emerges so clearly from the perusal of the report of the British Cotton Commission to the Far East as the tremendous energy with which Japan has not only excluded practically all imports of foreign piece-goods into her territories, but has also captured a number of markets abroad for the products of her own people. . . . Japan feels her destiny is bound up with the necessity to build up an ever-growing export trade. . . .
>
> With such sentiments it is no wonder that the Government, no less than the industrialists, count no loss too great in finding fresh markets for the nation's products. One of the most remarkable measures that the Government passed during the last year was a Bill under which the Government on the advice of the responsible Minister will reimburse exporters to the amount of 70% of losses incurred on shipments to certain specified and undeveloped markets. But the Government's active encouragement and support are matched by the readiness of the industrialists of Japan to take risk. . . .
>
> . . . Here in India we do not wish to capture new markets, we want only to preserve the domestic market for ourselves. If the Japanese industrialist can cheerfully write off large sums out of his capital in the effort to find out new markets, cannot the Indian capitalist be persuaded at least to refrain from making profits for a certain period in the interest of India's more restricted and therefore more laudable effort?. . .

It is true as the correspondent says that we do not want to capture new markets. But we must dare to suffer to exclude foreign cloth from ours. Will the mill-owners do it?

Young India, 23-7-1931

[1] *Vide* "Japanese Menace", 16-7-1931

[2] Only extracts are reproduced here.

107. UNBRIDLED LICENCE

A correspondent from Trichinopoly writes:[1]

What the correspondent describes is, I am sorry to have to say, a common occurrence nowadays. I am trying to do what is possible in terms of the Settlement and am still hoping that what appears to me to be a manifest breach of the Settlement will stop. For I have heard it said that these sales are, so far as the law is concerned, legal. It is thus a case of unbridled licence. Meanwhile I can only advise a continuance of picketing and reliance upon gentle persuasion producing its effect upon those who, in their ignorant selfishness, are corrupting the manners of simple rustics, not excluding even babies.

Young India, 23-7-1931

108. WOES OF 'UNTOUCHABLES'

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I venture to bring to your notice some principles which, I think, must be kept in view in the conduct of the campaign on behalf of the untouchable Hindus.

Among the numerous disabilities from which they suffer, a clear distinction must be made between those which are prima facie civic in their nature and those which are Prima facie non-civil or religious or communal in their character. . . .

The advice you gave to the leaders of a temple-entry satyagraha last year, that such satyagraha should be offered by touchable Hindus alone, would be meaningless, unless by such satyagraha you meant a campaign on the part of the touchable sympathizers of the untouchables for a boycott by all worshippers of such temples as do not admit the untouchables, till such time as their managers accept the reform. . . .

In these days of the incessant talk of protection of minorities who dare deny that if any minority in India needs to have special provisions in the future constitution for itself, it is the untouchables?

Their want of self-assertion, their apathy towards their wrongs, their

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. It stated that liquor-shop owners were selling toddy outside their shops and in public places.

'pathetic contentment' with their lot—these, of course, are the greatest obstacles in the way of their emancipation from the bonds of diabolic custom. . .[1]

I remain,

KARWAR, 17-6-1931 *Yours sincerely,*

S. D. NADKARNI

The distinction made by Sjt. Nadkarni between civil and religious disabilities is unnecessary because useless. They are all religious because imposed in the name of religion by co-religionists. A useful distinction will be between those disabilities which require legislative treatment and those that do not. In my opinion the confining at Vaikom of satyagraha to merely Hindus was perfectly sound and absolutely necessary. The writer perhaps confounds satyagraha a special remedy with general agitation. Whilst all can take part in a general agitation, only the actual victims can adopt the remedy of satyagraha. The Hindus have to do penance. How can Hinduism be purged by non-Hindus doing penance? It may easily lead to serious consequences if Mussalmans were to offer satyagraha in a dispute between Hindus and Hindus especially in a matter the latter consider to be religious. Nor do I see any reason to alter the opinion that it is the business of touchable Hindus to lead the agitation side by side with the untouchables if only because the latter are today too powerless and too apathetic to their own sufferings. It is not so much the inability on the part of untouchables to enter temples that matters as the sinful insolence of the touchables who impose the atrocious disability which matters. Hinduism will not be purified by untouchables taking by storm the possession of a temple; it will be purified by the trustees and the worshippers recognizing the sin of prohibition and flinging open the gates to the untouchables. It is for the Hindu reformers to multiply and offer satyagraha against blind orthodoxy.

Young India, 23-7-1931

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

109. GANESH SHANKAR MEMORIAL

This appeal for subscriptions to a Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi Memorial has been before the public now for a long time. It is signed by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and others, being personal friends and co-workers of the martyr.

Sjt. Sri Prakasa, Sevashrama, Benares Cantt., is the Secretary as also Treasurer and all subscriptions should be sent to him.

The objects of the Memorial are:

1. To erect a fountain or pillar or some similar memorial near the place where Ganesh Shankar gave up his body while offering protection to Hindus and Muslims.

2. To assist the "Pratap Trust". Ganesh Shankar formed this Trust to which he entrusted the management of his famous Hindi paper *Pratap*. The chief services of his lifetime were rendered through this paper. The Trust is to be helped so that the foundations of *Pratap* may be strengthened.

3. To help the Ashram established by him in the village of Narwal in the Cawnpore District. Nearly 200 villages have been organized through this Ashram. Spinning and khadi propaganda are the chief factors of Ashram work.

4. To hand over the balance to the U.P. Provincial Congress Committee on the condition that Ganesh Shankar National Service shall be established with it. This service should be on the same lines as the U.P. National Service, namely, to help whole-time national workers in the province.

The sum asked for by the Memorial Committee is only one lakh of rupees. In my opinion it is quite an insignificant amount for the objects of the Memorial as also the memory of the martyr. I hope therefore that there would be a quick response so that the Committee may be able to close the list and go on with the work.

Young India, 23-7-1931

110. QUESTION OF BAIL

Owing to the renewed activity of local authorities against Congressmen, I receive many inquiries as to the attitude they should adopt as to defence and bail. I appreciate the general reluctance on the part of Congressmen to enter upon defence or being bailed out. They have been used now for a long time to no-defence-and-no-bail formulae. In virtue and in view of the Settlement, it is open to Congressmen both to be bailed out and be defended. No one is bound to do either. But I can imagine circumstances when it would be, whilst the Settlement lasts, a duty to be bailed out and be defended.

But it has been discovered that bails are often granted conditionally upon the parties undertaking not to make speeches, etc. Generally speaking, I would say that such conditional bails should not be accepted. The same opinion applies and with greater force to security under Section 108. But there may be extraordinary circumstances when it may be deemed in the national interests to give bail. The safest course in such cases would be to take the written opinion of one's immediate superior.

But I would commend to Congress workers the golden rule followed by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in Gujarat. He has generally proscribed speech altogether by Congress workers, speeches being confined to him and me. As a matter of fact, even he speaks only on such occasions when it becomes absolutely necessary. I do not think that Gujarat has suffered for this rule of silence. Whether at war or peaces what we need is silent work. And work leaves little room for speeches. Speeches play the least important part in political education. Having been now accustomed for past fifteen years to less speaking we do not notice that the race of orators has almost died out. It had its use but when the age of action commenced eloquence naturally took a back seat. I have no doubt that if we imposed a self-denying ordinance on ourselves we should be the stronger for action and the nation's response will be wider and more substantial. What is wanted is intimate personal contact between the villagers and workers. The villagers should know their servants and feel that they, the servants are there not to serve their own ends but the interests of the villagers whom they endeavour to represent.

Though my advice just now arises out of the present situation,

let the reader know that I have fixed views about silent work and that the Gujarat prohibition had no reference to any legal proceedings. The prohibition was due to the conviction that it was good as a general rule for all times.

Young India, 23-7-1931

111. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

SURAT,
July 24, 1931

MY DEAR MATHEW,

Your letter. You will stay with me to your heart's content when the real time comes. It is no use forcing the pace. But the real staying with me is the working out of the ideal I stand for. The other the physical contact may easily produce false satisfaction. But this is not to wean you from the desire. This is to give you patience during separation. What are you teaching at Vidyapith and whom? Does it give you some satisfaction?

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1547

112. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

SURAT,
July 24, 1931

CHI. KUSUM,

I got all your letters. Since you said in all of them that you would soon come and see me, I did not write even to acknowledge them. I am writing this because your last letter shows that you are not sure in your mind. I shall be going to Borsad in a day or two. From there, I intend to go to Ahmedabad. I don't know, though, whether I shall be able to do so.

My going to England is completely uncertain. Come and see me when you can. Ask Dahiben to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1824

113. LETTER TO T. T. KOTHAWALA

Strictly Confidential BARDOLI,
July 24, 1931

DEAR MR. KOTHAWALA,

Though after our talk at Surat on 13th inst. I had expected some action, I was unprepared for the terrible events of the past ten days. You or your subordinates have used not only coercive but repressive measures against the poor villagers and practically forced payments from them. In my opinion this is a breach of faith, if not of the Settlement. The Government knew that Congressmen were telling the people to pay all they could whether on account of current dues or arrears. We found also that it was all the people could do to pay the current dues without having to borrow. We made an enquiry into the losses they had sustained. I sent you too a note showing the losses suffered by the people.

Our workers threw themselves heart and soul into the work of collection. As you know I was in Bardoli myself for some time doing the work and then it was that Sardar Vallabhbhai took the sole charge here and I went to Borsad. Your subordinates knew what we were telling the people. For some time payment from Siadla was not accepted until arrears were also paid. We could not collect the arrears and ultimately payment was accepted against receipt for current dues without any reservation.

During all this time it was assumed that there would be no coercive processes and certainly no show of force or police raids to threaten poor people. The payment made under these circumstances I regard as payments made under duress and forced in violation of the implied understanding that no processes would be issued except in cases where the Congress workers had no influence and where the people had not taken part in the civil disobedience campaign. I do not bring herein the conversations I had with the Commissioner and with you and the impression left on my mind, but I do suggest that it was within your knowledge that we were telling the people that no coercion would be used against them if they paid at least the current dues or unless they could not conclusively show that they were unable to pay even these.

But in precipitating the crisis and using the extraordinary

measures of the past ten days, without the Congressmen having been even given the opportunity of re-examining the cases of the villagers concerned there is a distinct breach of faith.

In the circumstances I must ask you to refund the monies thus collected and withdraw all attachment notices and stop further coercion and repression.

I must mention herein the case of the present Patel of Varad whose removal has been demanded for a long time and in whose case no open enquiry has still been held.

There is also the matter of confiscated lands in five villages in Bulsar taluqa, in respect of which fines are being demanded for non-agricultural use before they are restored. This is in breach of the Settlement.

There are other matters which I don't propose to mention just now. Unless satisfaction is given in the matters herein mentioned or an impartial open tribunal is appointed by the Government to examine the complaints herein made and all processes stopped meanwhile, I must regard the Settlement and the implied faith having been broken by the Government and regard myself as free to take such action as may be necessary to protect the interests of the people whom the Congress represents. I would ask you please to let me have a reply by Sunday next noon.

Copies of this letter are being sent to Mr. Garrett, the Government of Bombay and purport telegraphed to H. E. the Viceroy.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

T. T. KOTHAWALA, ESQ.
COLLECTOR OF SURAT DT.
SURAT

Gandhi-Sapru Correspondence. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta. *Also Young India,* 20-8-1931

[1] *Vide* the following item.

114. TELEGRAM TO H. W. EMERSON

BARDOLI,
July 24, 1931

INQUIRY HERE REVEALS STATE OF THINGS UNBEARABLE FOR ME. IT INVOLVES PERSONAL HONOUR. I OPENLY TOLD PEOPLE PUBLIC MEETING[1] THAT IF THEY PAID ACCORDING THEIR ABILITY NO COERCION WOULD BE USED AGAINST THEM. FOR LAST TEN DAYS MONIES HAVE BEEN FORCED FROM POOR TERROR STRUCK VILLAGERS. HAVE THEREFORE JUST SENT LETTER[2] COLLECTOR ASKING FOR REFUND COLLECTION AND STOPPING REPRESSION OR FOR GOVERNMENT APPOINT IMPARTIAL OPEN TRIBUNAL ENQUIRY MY COMPLAINTS. HAVE ASKED FOR ANSWER BEFORE SUNDAY NOON. HAVE ALSO SAID THAT FAILING RELIEF I MUST REGARD SETTLEMENT AND FAITH BROKEN FREEING ME FOR SUCH ACTION AS MAY BE NECESSARY FOR PROTECTION PEOPLE. IT IS MATTER DEEPEST GRIEF TO SEE INCESSANT LABOURS FOUR MONTHS ON BEHALF GOVERNMENT THUS REDUCED TO NAUGHT. COULD HIS EXCELLENCY SAVE SITUATION. ANYWAY I TAKE IT I MAY PUBLISH ALL CORRES PONDENCE IF PRIVATE ENTREATY FAILS.

Young India, 20-8-1931

115. LETTER TO R. M. MAXWELL

BARDOLI,
July 24, 1931

It is a matter of deep grief to me to have to send you a copy of my letter to the Collector of Surat, just despatched to him through a messenger. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel had kept me informed by telegram of the painful happenings in Bardoli. I had no idea whatsoever, when I met the Collector at Surat on the 13th instant, that the proceedings I have briefly described in the enclosed copy were contemplated. I have sent a copy to Mr. Garrett also. I send you a copy of the covering letter to Mr. Garrett so as to avoid repetition. I

[1] *Vide* "Advice to Farmers, Borsad", 22-6-1931
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

cannot ima-gine that the Collector has acted on his own responsibility. But, whe-ther he has acted on his own responsibility or under instructions from a superior authority, I seek His Excellency's intervention if he can enter into my feelings.

The Hindu, 15-8-1931

116. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SURAT,
July 24, 1931

CHI. MIRA,

We are in Surat. It is now nearly 5.30 a.m. After prayer I tried to sleep but the mosquitoes will not allow it. Gentle showers continue every five or ten minutes. We take the train for Bardoli at about 8 a.m. I might have to be there about two days and then to Borsad. Everything was indecisive at Simla. The prospect of going to London seems to me to be more remote than before. I could get no real satisfaction from the Government. It could easily have been broken but I do not want to break if it is at all avoidable. The next few days will decide. Things are very bad in Bardoli.

My weight was taken at Delhi yesterday. I went to Dr. Ansari during the few hours' stay. I was found to be 95_ lb. on an empty stomach in the morning. I must try to increase the quantity of milk if I can. The health is excellent in every other respect.

You must not fret over the separation. Hope Father Elwin is all right.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

On reaching Bardoli I got your letter. Your description of Mother is graphic and touching. I am afraid there is hardly any chance of going to London. I have sent an ultimatum today to the Government[1]. All this is private.

Bapu's Letters to Mira, pp. 160-l

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to H. W. Emerson", 24-7-1931

117. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SURAT,
July 24, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

Read my letter to Mirabehn. It will tell you about my movements. Give the information to Jamnalalji too.

How does Balvant behave? Has Mahavir been examined by a doctor? He should rest in bed. What does he eat? I see that Padma has gone to the U.P.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

118. TELEGRAM TO H. W. EMERSON

July 25, 1931

THANKS YOUR TELEGRAM[1] JUST RECEIVED. LETTER 23RD NOT YET RECEIVED. PRAY ASSURE HIS EXCELLENCY NO PRECIPITATE ACTION WILL BE TAKEN AND NONE WITHOUT FIRST INFORMING HIM. YESTERDAY'S LETTER[2] TO THE COLLECTOR WAS WRITTEN WHEN I SAW NO ESCAPE FROM UNBEARABLE SITUATION.

Young India, 27-8-1931

119. LETTER TO SHAMLAL

BARDOLI,
July 25, 1931

DEAR LALA SHAMLAL,

I am glad you have written to me about the *lambardars.* I shall move in the matter in any case. But is not a *lambardar* a government

[1] Which said, " . . . His Excellency desires me to say that he earnestly hopes that no precipitate action will be taken."

[2] *Vide* "Letter to T. T. Kothawala", 24-7-1931

official and if he is, do you contend that a Government official can join the Congress?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

LALA SHAMLAL
ADVOCATE
LAHORE

From a photostat: G.N. 1281

120. LETTER TO T. B. SAPRU

Strictly Confidential

BARDOLI,
July 25, 1931

DEAR SIR TEJ BAHADUR,

I have not worried you till now about the interminable difficulties I have experienced about the Settlement. But now that almost the breaking point has been reached it would be ungrateful on my part not to let you know what is happening. I enclose therefore herewith a copy of the letter I have addressed to the Collector of Surat. I may add that there are numerous other breaches which I have already brought to the notice of the Government of India. I will not worry you with the catalogue at the present moment unless you want to study the whole thing from the beginning. I have sent copies of the letter to the Commissioner of Gujarat as also to the Government of Bombay and I have telegraphed the gist of it to the Government of India. The Government of India have just acknowledged my telegram and ask me not to take any precipitate action. This is the reply I have wired to Simla:[1]

The object of my sending this is not necessarily that you should take action. You will do whatever you deem proper. I have sent the papers at the present moment so as to make you acquainted with the critical situation. I am sending a copy to Mr. Jayakar also.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Encl. 1

Gandhi-Sapru Correspondence. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta

[1] Not reproduced here; for the text, *vide* "Telegram to H. W. Emerson", 25-7-1931

121. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 25, 1931

CHI. MIRA,

I could not write to you much yesterday for want of time. I must dictate the balance whilst I have a few minutes to spare. There is no reason for suppressing from me your grief if it is there. These things are not remedied immediately there is intellectual conviction. The heart responds very slowly to intellectual conviction. Hence the necessity for practice enjoined in the 12th chapter of the *Gita* and in many other cases in that Book of Life. It is enough that you do not give way to that grief and become unsettled again. But I have told you that whenever it becomes unbearable you are at liberty to run to me. I shall feel it but I am prepared for it. It will not come upon me as a shock, nor will I accuse you of breach of promise. You must, therefore, carry your practice with an easy mind and not allow it to gnaw into you. It is enough that you are striving your best to overcome the weakness and realizing more and more that it is a weakness and not a definite want for your growth.

I have sent a peremptory letter to the Collector[1] with reference to the unbearable things that have happened in Bardoli. If there is a satisfactory reply there may be some chance of going to London. If the reply is unsatisfactory, as it is most likely to be, you may dismiss the London visit altogether out of your mind. If we have to go at the last moment what does it matter? Sufficient khadi can be procured and whatever has to be prepared can be prepared for you both by Pyarelal and me. We can easily borrow a Singer machine. A few hours' work should prepare the necessary dresses for you and the rest can be done in London if we have sufficient cloth. What may be necessary is sandals of acceptable leather which can be worn with stockings and also slippers or shoes. We have somewhere in the Ashram specimen of sandals I used to wear in South Africa. They are easily made and you can wear socks without any difficulty. These may be made now and if they are not required, they can be sold. The measurements are there.

As I have given the Collector up to noon tomorrow for reply I

[1] *Vide* "Letter to T. T. Kothawala", 24-7-1931

should know something definite by Monday. I want to reach Borsad on Tuesday to finish the Borsad work if I can. Provisionally therefore you may take it that I shall be in Borsad on Tuesday morning.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5437. Courtesy: Mirabehn

122. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

BARDOLI,
July 25, 1931

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I enclose a letter[1] received from C. M. S. Parsonage, Kaviyoor. Will you please get from Congressmen in Khatauli the facts about the case?

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

Encl. 2

[PS.]

I have a wire from Simla saying they are in correspondence with Bombay Government and that I should not take precipitate action.

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
ANAND BHAWAN, ALLAHABAD

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

123. LETTER TO N. P. RAGHAVAN

BARDOLI,
July 25, 1931

MY DEAR RAGHAVAN,

I have your post card.

There is hardly any chance of my going to London[2]. If I do, you will see from the papers. But I would advise you strongly not to

[1] In which the Rev. K. M. Mathan had complained that those who changed their religion and became Christians were being persecuted by Congressmen.

[2] To attend the second Round Table Conference

waste money or time in coming to Bombay to see me off, for you would be able to do nothing more as I would be very busy.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

SJT. N. P. RAGHAVAN
KHADI VASTRALAYA
PAYYANUR
(N. MALABAR)

From a photostat: C .W. 10866. Courtesy: N. P. Rahavan

124. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

BARDOLI,
July 25, 1931

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I have your letter. You had every right to write what you did. Much of what you say is indeed true. I will do what I can in the matter. Your letter is so carefully written that I am sending it, like the earlier one, to Shri Fulchand. Though I find him at present in an angry mood, I believe that he is a good man at heart.

I am not quite convinced about the Jamnagar matter. Perhaps I have not understood all the implications.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

On Tuesday at Borsad.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5918. Also C.W. 3233. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

125. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

BARDOLI,
July 25, 1931

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter. I have already sent through Kaka a reply to some of your points.

Even if Mithubehn resigns, work will go on wherever women workers stay on. It will not, therefore, be necessary for Rama and

Mahalakshmi to leave Sisodara. They have certainly been doing excellent work. I hope the night school there will not be closed.

Kaka must have acquainted you with the position about my going to England. At present, the chances are 99 per cent against and 1 per cent in favour.

I shall go to Borsad on Tuesday. Come and see me there. Your judgment about Premabehn does not seem correct to me. How many women workers do we have, who are, like her, honest, hard- working and pure in heart? She has boundless love for children. It is true that she has defects. But is there anyone among us who has none?

There is a great saying of Jesus: "He that is pure among you, let him cast the first stone at her." All those present hung their heads in shame and none dared to cast a stone at the woman. In old times it was a common custom to punish an immoral woman by stoning her. One such woman was caught and the orthodox people of that day got ready to stone her. Jesus admonished them as above. Let us not act as they did.

We try to win over Premabehn and keep her in the Ashram because of her virtues. In my eyes, her defects seem insignificant, while her virtues are many. I came to know when I was in jail about her habit of beating children. She knows that it is a bad habit and I believe that she is even anxious to overcome it. If any defects which people may see in her are reported to me, I can write to her about them.

When I am there, I should certainly like to discuss with people the general management of the Ashram, but I do not wish to interfere with it just now. I am not living in the Ashram, either physically or mentally, and therefore, think very little about it. Whenever I happen to think about it, I feel that I have done wrong. All of you should feel in the same manner.

If any of the volunteers who had joined the march go to live in the Ashram, they should do so only in order to serve and should remain content with whatever work is assigned to them. This will serve two purposes. The workers will be able to strengthen their self-control and when the bugle sounds again, they will be able to come out instantly and join the struggle without throwing the affairs of the Ashram into disorder.

You say that Premabehn is full of spite. Can you recollect any instances of spiteful behaviour on her part?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5504

126. MADNESS

By attacking the Acting Governor of Bombay[1] what good could the Fergusson College student have intended to achieve? The news papers have reported that the act was inspired purely by a desire for revenge either for the imposition of martial law in Sholapur or something else. Even if the attack had resulted in the Governor's death, it could not have undone what has happened. By this attempt to take revenge, the student has only increased the prevailing bitterness. He has put education to shame by such misuse of his learning.

Considering the circumstances in which the assault took place, it was also a form of treachery. The student violated his duty to the Governor. The latter was a guest of the Fergusson College, and a guest's person is always held sacred. They say that an Arab would not kill even an enemy while the latter was his guest. As the student belonged to the Fergusson College, he was one of the Governor's hosts. And what can be more treacherous than the host killing his own guest? Are we to believe that the terrorists respect no limits? And what right to protest against the Sholapur martial law or other acts of injustice has anyone who himself respects no limits of decency?

If someone committed such treachery against us, we would certainly feel indignant. How can we do to others what we would not like to be done to us? I am convinced that such acts bring no glory to India, but give it a bad name. They do not increase but diminish our fitness for swaraj and in consequence, swaraj recedes farther from us. A great and ancient country like ours will not win swaraj through treacherous murders. We ought to remember that the departure of the British from India will not by itself mean swaraj. Swaraj means the capacity to run the Government of the country on behalf of the people and for the people. That capacity will not come simply if the British leave or are killed. We shall acquire it by going to the millions of dumb peasants, acquainting ourselves with their hardships, serving them and winning their love. Suppose that one or two thousand terrorists, or even more, succeed in killing every Englishman in India. Will that enable them to run the Government of the country? On the contrary, intoxicated by the success of their terrorist methods and in their arrogance, they will go on killing everyone whom they do not

[1] Sir Ernest Hotson, on July 22, 1931; *vide* also "Foul Play",30-7-1931

like. How will the peasants be benefited thereby? Such methods will never reform the many evil practices and customs in India which have made her a subject country.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-7-1931

127. THREE QUESTIONS

A student writes:[1]

The complaint against pure khadi is a very old one. The inconvenience caused by the coarseness of khadi deserves to be tolerated for the sake of swaraj, or, rather, for the sake of our starving brethren. From coarse khadi one may make and wear shorts reaching up to the knee or trousers reaching up to the ankle. The resulting advantage will be saving of cloth and convenience in washing. If dhoti is worn in South Indian style, that is, without being tucked up, that would save half the length of cloth. No one should think, through ignorance or contempt or pride that it does not behove a Gujarati to imitate a South Indian. Moreover, if any student feels that he is forced to do with shorts of coarse khadi, he has nobody but himself to blame. Why should he not spin fine yarn for his own use? By doing so, he would get a fine dhoti for the cost of the cotton and the labour charges for weaving, and would also have the satisfaction resulting from the knowledge that he had helped himself. He cannot argue, either, that he cannot spare from his studies enough time for spinning His experience will tell him that he wastes many minutes of his time every day in doing nothing or doing useless things. It would be enough if he saved some of them and spent them in spinning.

There is an English saying similar in meaning to the Gujarati saying that a girl not wishing to dance finds fault with the dancing ground. One can find a hundred excuses for not using pure khadi. If one has faith in khadi, one would find no difficulty insuperable.

2. It is possible for the Bombay Provincial [Congress] Committee to publish a list of swadeshi goods available, but that is unnecessary. The Swadeshi Sabha in Bombay has published such a list and

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had described the difficulties in wearing khadi dhotis, asked for a list of swadeshi articles and sought guidance in education.

that organization may undertake more ventures in the field.

3. A person studies not for earning a living, but for developing intelligence—for self-development. For earning a living, there are now several national activities such as khadi work. There are also several industries which can advance the nation's prosperity. One may learn them in a short time and support oneself.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-7-1931

128. MY NOTES

COMMITTEE FOR REMOVAL OF UNTOUCHABILITY

The work of the Committee for the Removal of Untouchability had merged in the struggle for swaraj, as hadhappened with several other committees when the struggle was on. Untouchability had been quite forgotten at many places there. However, now that partial peace reigns the custom seems to be reviving. The Congress Working Committee has alerted the Committee for the Removal of Untouchability to deal with the situation. Shri Jamnalalji has been its President. We all know how, through his efforts and those of Swami Anand, the doors of several temples had been thrown open to the so-called untouchables. There is still much scope for effort in this direction and the effort should be made. A practice which has struck deep roots through the centuries is not likely to disappear all at once. It is difficult to open the eyes of a person who clings to irreligion taking it to be true religion. Such is the difficulty we experience regarding untouch-ability. All the same the progress achieved in this matter and the awakening noticed among Hindus raise our hopes. We do not now find many persons supporting untouchability or believing that the practice is so deeply rooted that it can never be eradicated. However, we should not allow ourselves to be deceived by that progress. The Untouchability Removal Committee will not let us rest in false hope.

SALARIES UNDER SWARAJ

A young correspondent writes:[1]

This correspondent seems to have taken it for granted that, as

[1] The letter is not translated here. It expressed apprehension regarding the consequences of ceilings on salaries recommended at the Karachi Congress.

high salaries will be reduced, the small ones also will go down. The existing position is that while the big salaries are excessively high, the small ones are too low for the employees' livelihood. Under swaraj the low salaries will probably be raised, instead of being reduced. In one way at any rate they will seem to have increased. As a result of the reduction in salaries, there will be simplicity in people's way of living. The effect of this will be felt universally and the earners of small salaries will feel a sense of contentment. The fear of increase in corruption expressed by the correspondent will not be shared by those who know the salary scales in Japan and other countries. There is very little connection between corruption and the size of salaries. When the consciousness of dharma spreads and people are inspired by a sense of public service, they do not demand or accept bribes. Giving high salaries for fear of spread of corruption would be, as the saying goes, like killing the buffalo for its skin. In other words, it means that for preventing a man from taking a bribe occasionally, he should be paid a permanent bribe in the form of a big salary!

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-7-1931

129. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

BARDOLI,
July 26, 1931

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI[1],

Please thank the Italian Consul for the very kind offer made in connection with the probable visit by Malaviyaji and myself to Rome. Nothing is certain with reference to my visit to London and even if I succeed in going there I do not know that I shall be able to visit Italy on my return. On going to London there is no possibility of my visiting Rome. I believe the same thing applies to Malaviyaji.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
8 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLACE
CALCUTTA

From the original: C.W. 7894. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] This is in Devnagari script.

130. LETTER TO ADI-DRAVIDAS[1]

BARDOLI,
July 26, 1931

DEAR FRIENDS,

I have your letter. You may depend upon it that the Congress is doing and will do everything possible to remove the taint of untouchability around Hinduism.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-8-1931

131. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE

July 26, 1931

BHAI MAMA,

I understand what you say about Lalji. I take this view, that we should not lose sight of the fact that he is an *Antyaja* and that, therefore, we should help him to earn his living. An elephant should not judge an ant by the same standard which he applies to himself.

How many spinning-wheels do you require? In Bardoli they have been spinning on the new Gandiva wheel, which gives complete satisfaction. Will that type do for you? It is very cheap, and one can spin on it with as much speed as on the ordinary type. Anyone who can operate it can certainly operate a wheel of any other type.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Write to me at Borsad, though today I am at Bardoli.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3825

[1] Of Madras

132. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

BARDOLI,
July 26 1931

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I got your letter. I sent a prompt acknowledgement through Kishorelal yesterday. As the complaint made against you at Bulsar had produced no effect on me, I had nothing to say to you. However, I asked Godse and got from him whatever explanation I wanted.

I have nothing to say about your new activity also. I know that, wherever you are, you will work honestly and carefully. Moreover, at that place you have co-workers who co-operate with you and the other circumstances also are favourable. I am sure, therefore, that you will do your work very well. That is enough for me.

As for other news, you must have learnt it from Kishorelal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4172. Also C.W. 1671. Courtesy: Ramniklal Modi

133. LETTER TO TARABEHN MODI

BARDOLI,
July 26, 1931

CHI. TARA,

I got your letter. I approve your idea of doing some service there whenever occasion offers itself, and improving your health as much as you can. Anyhow learn the art of living with all types of women. Remember that one who seeks to serve does not always get the place or work of one's own liking. Our duty is to embrace with joy whatever opportunity for service may arise at any place. This is not meant as criticism, but is an expression of hope for the future.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4173. Also C.W. 1672. Courtesy: Ramniklal Modi

134. LETTER TO INDU PAREKH

BARDOLI,
July 26, 1931

CHI. INDU,

I got your brief letter. You will get no boils if, while bathing, you rub the body properly and then clean it thoroughly with a dry towel. If the water is not very clean, heat it before using. What progress have you made in your studies?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6253

135. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

BARDOLI,
July 26, 1931

BHAI FULCHAND,

Read the accompanying letter[1] and think over it. The sentence in your appeal, that atrocities were committed in some villages of Bhavnagar State as also in Bhavnagar proper, is not consistent with the rest of the appeal. What were these atrocities? What connection do they have with constructive work? I think that there is much substance in Pattanisaheb's complaint, and that the satyagrahis or their supporters indulge in a lot of exaggeration.

I should like you to save yourself from this.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

At Borsad on Tuesday.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9195; also C.W. 2846. Courtesy: Shardabehn Shah

[1] The reference is to Prabhashankar Pattani's letter to Gandhiji; *vide* "Letter to Prabhashankar Pattani", 25-7-1931

136. LETTER TO LILAVATI

BARDOLI,
July 6, 1931

CHI. LILAVATI,

What a careless girl you are! You don't even mention your address! There is nothing wrong in your having gone to Bombay. No one is forced to remain in the Ashram. Those only will stay on who voluntarily regard themselves as bound to it. If a person's body shakes with cold even in sunshine, he must be covered with a blanket. By all means do help your brother. Only remember that the help should be in a good cause. Boldly ask your father for as much money as you may require for helping him. Have no hesitation in accepting jewellery which your brother may pledge with you. You may even get things in writing from him. You should not mind if he gives you no interest. Even if he is in a position to give any, do not accept more than 6 per cent. Take care of your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I shall be in Borsad on Tuesday.[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9321

137. LETTER TO SHANTA S. PATEL

BARDOLI,
July 26, 1931

CHI. SHANTA,

I hear your thunder after many days. All these days you had no time even to write to me. But at last you have written, no matter what kind of a letter it is. I must thank you for your kindness.

I will inquire into your complaint. I have written to Narandas

[1] At the top of the letter Gandhiji wrote: "Send this letter to Lilavati; I do not have her address."

and will write to Premabehn too. How can I form any judgment unless I know what Premabehn has to say? Much of what you write is news to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 4061

138. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

BARDOLI,
July 26, 1931

CHI. VASUMATI,

I think you know one Krishnadevi who used to live in the Ashram. She now lives in Solan, which is on the way to Simla. I am thinking of sending you either there or to the place to which Padma is going. I think she will go to some place near Almora. Would you like to go there? As Sarojinidevi will be with Padma, at either place you will have the company of a mature woman.

I shall reach Borsad on Tuesday. If you like you may come to see me there and stay on as long as I am there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9328. Also C.W. 574. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

139. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

BARDOLI,
July 26, 1931

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. You did not say how many years you had completed. I admit that I ought to know. But I am stupid in such matters. Instead of saying, 'May you live long', I will say, 'May you soon become free from the sway of passion, become pure in heart and an ideal worker. May you succeed in your striving.'

You have made your letter rich in both colours. It breathes frankness. I like it. But it is also full of anger and pride. I will not, however, comment on it in detail. I beg this of you. If you have not

been writing up your diary, start doing so. With whom did you get angry during the day, whether it was a child or a grown up personwhom did you beat, whom did you abuse? I will be satisfied if you note down these details for my information. As for the rest, you and Narandas may do what you think best. I don't wish to interfere with what you do. It lies outside my sphere. For one thing, I would not be able to judge about it; I would not be able to do justice to the parties concerned, nor have I the means of doing so. I have assumed the role of your father and mother and, therefore, I can give you but one-sided advice. A satyagrahi, moreover, never demands justice. Justice means "measure for measure". Satyagraha means truth evenagainst cunning, non-violence against violence, forbearance against anger and love against hatred. Where, in such satyagraha, is room for dealing out justice?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I reach Borsad on Tuesday.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—5: Ku. Premabehn Kantakne, p. 52. Also C.W. 6708. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

140. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

BARDOLI,
July 26, 1931

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I got your letter. In reply, I have sent a brief message with Kaka. I shall expect to see you in Borsad on Tuesday. I will not, therefore, write much in this letter. You feel defeated, but there is no such word as 'defeat' in a satyagrahi's dictionary. Even when someone insults you, you should go on singing cheerfully.

If you feel that Premabehn is your own daughter and not someone unrelated to you, everything will soon be all right. You should not mind if, though your daughter, she acts as the leader of you all.

Though Prabhudas is like a son to you, wouldn't you admit that he can teach you?

What is Surendra's age? He, too, is like a son to you. Nevertheless, does he not counsel you? But more when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro- 6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 59. Also C.W. 8783. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

141. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BARDOLI,
July 26, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

With this is a letter from Shanta. Read it and note what she writes.

I had sent through Kaka a message about Mahavir. You will probably get a wire tomorrow from Mathuradas. Mahavir should not start till the latter arrives there. I don't think it necessary for anyone to stay with him in Bombay. You will, however, read more about this in my letter to Mahavir. Apte came and saw me. Pay the money to Thakkar Bapa. No, I don't have the courage to permit . . .[1] to live in the Ashram. . . [2] is bound to be upset. Keep an eye on . . .[3] however. If he wants a job and if you can give him some work, do so.

If he has picked up weaving, no one who accepts him should expect him to do any other work. I, too, believe that he cannot be provided with a *tamboora*[4]. If any money has become due to him as pay, give it to him.

The problem between Gangabehn and Premabehn is becoming more difficult. Do what you think best. I have asked Gangabehn to come to Borsad on Tuesday.[5]

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

If I can finish my work in Borsad in three or four days and if I

[1] The names have been omitted.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*
[4] *ibid*
[5] *Vide* the preceding item.

don't have to go to Bardoli, I do feel like going there [to Ahmedabad] for three days.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

142. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

BARDOLI,
July 26, 1931

CHI. PANDITJI,

You have set my fears completely at rest by your assurance. Anyone who has learnt to regard himself as a cipher will never feel discontented. Does Rambhau obey any rules? Does Indu give any time to study? If Mathuri's weight does not increase, do not put any burden on her. Let her learn what she likes and do what she pleases. Her weight cannot but improve if she starts playing games with zest. How much milk does she drink? Gajanan's problem seems to have been solved.

I am certainly very pleased to know that Lakshmibehn[1] has been learning weaving. It would be good if she becomes proficient in it.

I see that the printing of the *Ashram Bhajanavali* is over. Send me a copy. I am trying my best to go there as early as possible.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 218. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn Khare

143. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

BARDOLI,
July 26, 1931

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

You must have got my letter written from Simla.[2] What happened to the sari? Lady Willingdon has reminded me thrice. I shall be in Borsad on Tuesday. My going to England is still uncertain.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32779

[1] Addressee's wife
[2] *Vide* "Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting, Bombay", 8-8-1931

144. LETTER TO BHULABHAI DESAI

BARDOLI,
July 26, 1931

BHAISHRI BHULABHAI,

I had been arguing with myself whether or not it would be correct to thank you for the trouble you took over the report of the committee on financial transactions between India and Britain. And today I came to the decision that I must write to you. I have anyway ventured to write to Bhai Bahadurji. You will yourself say that there was nothing much about what you have done. But since we do not come across many who take such pains we needs must thank those who do. Kumarappa said that you all took great pains. And we are going to be obliged to give you still more trouble. The time is bound to come. I thank you now and hope I can take work from you then.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: Bhulabhai Desai Papers, (File No. G-1). Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

145. LETTER TO KASTURBHAI LALBHAI

BARDOLI,
July 26, 1931

BHAI KASTURBHAI,

Very few persons have offered their names to be enrolled as members of the Company set up to send away foreign goods to foreign countries. We are losing our good name by this delay. I have written a letter to this effect to Chimanbhai. I do not consider it sufficient that you have subscribed for the number of its shares falling to your lot. Reply at Borsad.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 33147

146. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

BARDOLI,
July 26, 1931

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Your letter. I know it will be good if I can go to England. But then the atmosphere here too should be conducive. At present it is extremely adverse. I have written a letter[1] in the nature of an ultimatum to the Government and am awaiting the reply. I cannot write much due to lack of time. But if you possibly can, do come to Bombay soon. I shall reach there on August 4. We shall see later whether or not you should stay in England in case I go.

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall be in Borsad on Tuesday.

From Hindi: C.W. 7893. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

147. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

ON THE TRAIN,
July 27. 1931

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. As many may be coming to Borsad I am sending this letter to your own address. This prolongation of drought is a serious affair apart from the personal discomfort it causes. I do hope one [day] the clouds you see daily will burst. I had meant both free sandals and regular shoes with broad toes. I have meant them for both of us. I do not want both slippers and shoes.

I see that your winged companions are multiplying. Perhaps they are the best company. They can spread your mute message far more quickly and faithfully than any other agency. 1 do hope to come to Ahmedabad even before I go to Bombay for the W.C. meeting. But this Bardoli business is a hard job. I see no light out of the darkness as yet.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5438. Courtesy : Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9672

[1] *Vide* "Letter to T. T. Kothawala", 24-7-1931

148. LETTER TO KISANSINH CHAVDA

ON THE TRAIN,
July 27, 1931

BHAI KISANSINH,

I have your letter. Come to Borsad on wednesday. stay on it I have had to leave the place, though I don't expect to have to do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 9328. Courtesy : Kisansinh Chavda

149. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

BORSAD,
Silence Day [*July 27, 1931*][1]

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. If you cannot see me for the present give up the desire. You may freely write to me. If I get a chance I will myself come that way. I shall consider myself a little free when the matter of Bardoli and Borsad is settled. You should not feel upset. Do not think too much.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

150. TELEGRAMS TO R. M. MAXWELL

BORSAD,
July 28, 1931

PRIVATE SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR
GANESHKHIND (POONA)

CHIRNER PRISONERS' PERIOD OF GRACE FOR PAYING FINES EXPIRES THIRTIETH. PRISONERS INFORM ME THEY WOULD PREFER IMPRISONMENT TO PAYMENT OF FINE. PLEASE WIRE

[1] From the contents this letter appears to have been written on this date, a silence day, though Gandhiji reached Borsad on the 28th; *vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Lilavati", 26-7-1931

BORSAD WHETHER GOVERNMENT PROPOSE REMIT FINES TERMS SETTLEMENT BEFORE EXPIRE PERIOD GRACE.

GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

151. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

BORSAD,
July 28, 1931

MY DEAR BHRR,

Your letter rejoices me. I was worried over the hanging up of your pension though I knew that it was bound to be paid in the end. The receipt of the pension is more potent than any written word. Do you not remember the story of a prisoner who, on having his fine paid for him, was set at liberty and yet asked for a receipt? 'Your liberty is your receipt', said the Judge.

With reference to Simla we can say the mountain was in labour and did not bring forth even a ridiculous mouse. What you have read in the papers this time happens to be largely true and my Mecca and Medina are at present Bardoli and Borsad and not

St. James' and Kingsley Hall. My letter to the Collector is still being considered. What is the use of my going to London if the things arising out of the Settlement are not put right? A debtor who cannot pay interest is never going to pay the capital. Do you not agree?

I am glad Hamida is settling down to her studies. But you are not going to feel that I have waived all my claims and demands upon her. I am likely to be in Borsad for 3 or 4 days. The Sardar is also with me. He will be probably going to Bardoli tonight.

Love to all.

Yours,

BHRR

SYT. ABBAS TYABJI
SLATER ROAD, GRANT ROAD
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 9576

152. TELEGRAM TO KARNAD SADASHIVA RAO[1]

BORSAD,
July 29, 1931

IT IS MY OPINION THAT AUCTION SALES CAN BE PICKETED BUT PROHIBITORY ORDERS MAY NOT BE DEFIED.

GANDHI

The Hindu, 30-7-19 31

153. LETTER TO VICEROY

BORSAD,
July 29, 1931

I thank you for your letter[2] of 23rd inst. received at Borsad today.

I am holding myself in readiness to start if the atmosphere clears. As days pass by, I dread to leave the post of duty in a state ofuncertainty. The Bardoli business has come upon me as a shock. Otherwise too, things in Gujarat are not yet quite cleared up. I am working for all I am worth towards securing a just solution of the difficulties that come in my way. I am daily expecting a reply from Mr. Emerson to the statement I sent to him in Simla at your instance about the legal points for interpretation of the Settlement, and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is straining every nerve in the U.P. to clear the atmosphere there. My son is already in the Frontier Province. The moment I feel that the hanging clouds have passed, your assurance for the future will, I am sure, carry me through.

I need hardly tell you how deeply and personally I feel over the attempted assassination of the Acting Governor of Bombay and the

[1] President, Karnatak Provincial Congress Committee, who had sought advice on picketing of *abkari* sales.

[2] Which, *inter alia*, said: "I do hope, that after our talks the apprehensions you now feel will disappear, and that you will be able to go to England as a member of the Federal Structure Committee and of the full Conference."

completed assassination[1] in Bengal? I am trying in all humility to overtake the mischief as far as it is humanly possible.[2]

Young India, 20-8-1931

154. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

BORSAD,
July 29, 1931

MY DEAR AMTUL,

I have your letter.

You are very impatient. God willing, I expect to be in Ahmedabad on the 1st of next month.

You must not mind your illness after having taken all the precautions. It will come all right if you won't be in a hurry. You should be satisfied with whatever little God enables you to do. If we all have the readiness of mind for any service that comes to us it is enough.

BAPU

AMTUSSALAAM
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a photostat: G.N. 243

155. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT[3]

BORSAD,
July 29, 1931

Any person may keep the accounts. In future, however, there will not be much accounts work and as for the final postings, any trustworthy gentleman at the place where you stay may do it.

I think Rs. 25 for postage and telegrams, etc., is too much. The expenditure of the *bhajanik*[4] should not be met from the funds for this work. I understand from Mr. Sarkar that he was intended for the district work, and I feel that he should still continue to work in that

[1] Of Judge Garlick, District and Sessions Judge, Calcutta, on July 27

[2] For the Viceroy's reply to this letter, *vide* "Letter from Lord Willingdon", 31-7-1931

[3] The first part of this letter is not available.

[4] Singer of *bhajans*, devotional songs

capacity. You may take his help whenever you require it. According to my idea of the work, we should change our method a little. Send me the total figures of expenditure already incurred. If anything still remains to be explained, let me know. I have no copy of the pledge to be taken by women. Send me one.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2693

156. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

BORSAD,
July 29, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I was feeling worried, when I got your letter today. I had even wired to Jayaprakash on Monday. I have had no reply from him. I did not send you to Allahabad on my own. But Jayaprakash had asked me where he and you should go. If you can come away, I should like you to stay with me as long as I am in India and then live in the Ashram for five or six months. If I go, I shall be leaving on the 15th. It is not yet certain that I shall go. If you can get permission to come before that date, do so. I shall reach Bombay on the 4th. The address: Laburnum Road, Gamdevi, Bombay.

I may have to go to Ahmedabad on the 1st. But it is not certain. Write to me at Borsad or Sabarmati.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3418

157. LETTER TO AMRITLAL SHETH

BORSAD,
July 29, 1931

BHAISHRI AMRITLAL,

I had promised Shri Balwantrai to send my reply yesterday. Pyarelal did not remind me of it, and when I remembered, it was 9 p.m. Being busy during the whole day, I forgot about the matter altogether.

My going is still very uncertain. From what you and Balwantrai told me, I have come to the conclusion that nobody is as well informed about the Indian States as you two are. And certainly not Mr. Abhyankar. Believing this, I think that both of you should get ready. It should be made clear that you two would be going independently, and not because I wanted you or advised you to go. My own stand is this. Even if there is no one with me, I think I shall be able to discharge my responsibility. I shall not require the help of legal experts or of masters of facts, since my demand is very simple. However, if persons like you happen to be there by chance or have purposely gone to England so as to be present there at that time, I might avail myself of their help. If you decide to come, I assume that you will not make any speeches there, but will only do the work that I might ask you to do. The chances of my going are 1 against 99.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 17400

158. ROOT OF EVILS

Mr. Rishabhdas from Fatehpur, East Khandesh, writes:[1]

The description of the evils in this letter is true. There is no reason to be frightened or disheartened on reading it. We are neither omniscient nor omnipotent. Let us discharge our part of the duty; God has placed only this much in our hands. By acting thus we shall succeed the better in our work and shall get contentment. We should not be sorry even if other workers refuse to join us. If we are determined to do our duty even in seclusion, perhaps others may join us there.

Hindi Navajivan, 30-7-1931

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had described the ill effects of the universal habit of idleness in the villages.

159. FEAST IN HONOUR OF DEAD

Mr. Vasantlal Murarka writes:[1]

Congratulations to these reformers!

Peacefulness and courtesy have a salutary effect. Feasts in memory of the dead subserve neither religion nor reason. The only ground for such feasting can be delusion and pride of wealth. Why do the wealthy not make donations to public causes in honour of the dead? If they do that they will acquire fame and the soul of the dead will certainly get peace. Such charity is in itself an offering in honour of the manes, a memorial.

Hindi Navajivan, 30-7-1931

160. FIVE-HUNDRED-RUPEE LIMIT

No item of the Fundamental Rights resolution[2] passed by the Congress at Karachi has come in for so much notice as the resolution limiting the salary of Government servants to not more than Rs. 500 per month or Rs. 6,000 per year. Had we not been accustomed by this foreign Government to high salaries for servants in the Public Department, the limit of Rs. 500 would not have produced any shock. There is no sanctity about the high-ruling salaries. All the 46 Congress Presidents and the 46 Congresses have mourned over the ever-growing public expenditure both military and civil. Many Presidents have laid special emphasis on the high salaries. The Karachi Congress gave concrete shape to the half-century old complaint. The way to examine the justness of the Congress conclusion is to find the proportion between the salaries and the average income of India's millions, and secondly to compare both with the salaries and the average income of other countries. I have been trying to secure the figures for the principal countries of the world. The readers of *Young India* have had the average income of the principal countries but not the salaries. I have now before me some figures about the Japanese Public Service, both superior and subordinate. Its Governor-General

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had described how Young men of the Marwari community were succeeding in resisting a wasteful custom.

[2] *Vide* "Resolaution on Fuandamental a Raights and Economic Changes", 31-3-1931

gets less than Rs. 1,000 per month, that is to say, anything between Rs. 10,000 and 10,700 per year, a Governor less than Rs. 600 or Rs. 800 per month, the Secretariat staff anything between Rs. 150 and Rs. 500 per month, President of the Supreme Court less than Rs. 1,000 per month, other judges anything between Rs. 150 to Rs. 700 per month, Chief of Police slightly over Rs. 700 per month, subordinate services Rs. 250 to slightly over Rs. 300 per month, a Police Constable from Rs. 60 to Rs. 80 per month, a Police Sergeant from Rs. 70 to Rs. 80. The average daily income of the Japanese per head is about four annas. Compared then with the Japan figures, the Rs. 500 limit put by the Congress is over-generous.

But we have been told that the Japanese service is neither so incorruptible nor so efficient as the Indian. I came across, the other day, a speech of Mr. Arno Pearse on the working of Japanese mills. These mills are gigantic public corporations. What is therefore true of them is likely to be true of the other Japanese departments. Here is what Mr. Pearse has to say about Japanese business morality:

> Do not believe the old saying that the word of the Chinese is his bond, but not so that of the Japanese. The modern Japanese will drive a bargain but he will stick to it much more than the modern Chinese.

As to the excellence of Japanese organization, inventiveness, technical skill and industry Mr. Arno Pearse is most enthusiastic, and he claims to speak from personal experience. The suggestion therefore that there is a necessary connection between efficiency or morality and high salaries is pure superstition. What is true is, that neither morality nor efficiency can be sustained, if less than a living wage is paid to employees. And no doubt the scale of living wage will differ to a certain extent with the mode of life of the class to which a person belongs. But the mode of life is not an abstract term. It is relative, and a man, who has surrounded himself with artificial wants and created conditions out of all proportion to the natural surroundings in which the people of his country live, can claim no exceptional cosideration because of his artificial mode of life. Such people unfortunately we have in our midst. They will naturally feel the pinch during the transition stage, but they will soon accommodate themselves to the new and natural condition when the maximum of Rs. 500 per month will cease to appear ludicrous as it does today. Among the many disservices of the foreign rule will be counted the great disservice the foreign rulers have done by reason of their having

imported for this country wholly unnatural mode of life, and more or less imposed it on their immediate surroundings. This importation and imposition have rendered the task of solvent administration most difficult, and we are finding it difficult today to adopt ourselves to the extreme depression that has overtaken the world. Had we not had a top-heavy administration, we would have been, owing to our geographical position, a country least affected by the universal depression, as today we are perhaps the most affected.

And it was because I felt in Nainital the seriousness of the artificial condition created for us, that I made an appeal[1] to the business men and professional classes that they should anticipate the future and remodel their lives so as to make it easy for all, when the burden of administration is taken over by the people, to take to the new life. It would be wrong to entertain the idea, that whilst the public services would be paid in accordance with the natural condition of the country, professional and business men would continue a mode of life out of all correspondence with their surroundings. They must voluntarily lead the way and set the example.

Young India, 30-7-1931

161. NOTES

MUSHROOM COMPANIES

With the wave of swadeshi, bogus or mushroom companies and societies were bound to come into being. Of these some were even fraudulent. Some of the managers or agents of these societies were 'wanted' men. Sardar Vallabhbhai spotted these and their transactions. He saw that simple folk were being duped by these unscrupulous agents. The plague was spreading in Gujarat. He therefore issued instruction that Congress Committees should inquire into these mushroom organizations and warn the people against them. He told them also not to hesitate to summon police aid if it became necessary. Eventually through the Sardar's effort a Vigilance Committee was formed with Sjt. Thakorlal P. Thakor as president and Sjt. Nandlal Shah as secretary with headquarters at Dhana Suthar's Poal, Ahmedabad. This committee has submitted a report showing how disastrous the consequences are likely to be, if energetic steps are

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Zaminadars Meeting, Naintal", 23-5-1931

not taken in due time to expose the transactions of these organizations. Sjt. Jamshed Mehta is of opinion, that it is highly likely that poor people will be robbed of nearly one crore of rupees if these transactions are not stopped in time. The Committee deplores that prominent Congressmen have unwittingly lent their names as directors to these companies. People have, therefore, seeing Congressmen as directors, believed in the companies and run into the traps. It does not follow that all these companies are fraudulent, but the Committee believes the majority of them to be unsound business propositions. They cite in support of their conclusions eminent authorities to show that the promises made by these companies or societies could never be carried out for any length of time. Twenty-five years ago, this financial plague it was nothing less had broken out. It died but not without leaving many a desolated home behind. Public memory is short. Nearly a generation has gone by. And the plague has broken out again in virulent form. There are nearly 100 such societies in India of which nearly 40 are to be found in Gujarat. It is too much to expect these societies to wind up their affairs, but it is not too much to expect the numerous Congress Committees to acquaint themselves with the existing situation and instruct the public accordirgly. The Committee will gladly furnish information to all inquirers. That is its special function.

SALT CONCESSION IN THE PUNJAB

With reference to the withdrawal of the salt concession in the Punjab a correspondent from Mianwali writes:[1]

> I have read your note[2] regarding the collection of salt near Kalabagh mines in the Mianwali district, and find, that the information upon which the note is based is not the whole truth, and presents an exaggerated picture of what really happened at Kalabagh. The real facts are as follows:
>
> The permission to the people to collect salt in terms of the Delhi Pact was kept secret from the public residing in the vicinity of the Kalabagh mines for sufficiently long time and it was not without some stir in the people, that the order was made known to them, and they were allowed to collect salt. This permission remained in force for only 5 or 6 days, and during that period the people residing in the vicinity collected some salt, and I would frankly admit that certain people through sheer ignorance collected more than they required

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.
[2] *Vide* "Notes", 16-7-1931 , sub-title, "Salt Concession".

> or were allowed to do under the terms of the Pact; but the number of such cases was very small, and this could be remedied by giving simple warnings to the people, or making it known to them by beat of drum, etc., that they could not collect more salt than what was allowed to them under the Pact. But I regret to bring it to your notice, that the authorities did not do anything of the sort, and at once issued a proclamation by beat of drum, that the people collecting salt would be prosecuted, with the result that the people at once stopped collecting any more salt. . . .
>
> In the circumstances, I would ask you on behalf of the people of the *ilaqa* to help them.

If the facts are as set forth by the correspondent, it is a clear case for relief. I shall gladly bring the matter to the notice of the Government of India.

THE REAL SAFEGUARD

The Spectator of 4th instant has a reasoned editorial headed "India and the British Commonwealth". Its sub-heading is "The Real Safeguard". This is its last paragraph:

> We shall end on the note on which we began. Win the goodwill and friendship of the peoples of India, and think only how we can help India to achieve the splendid destiny which we think could be hers, and we shall have created a safeguard which all the friction-mongers will be powerless to disturb. It is a bold policy and requires men of vision to pull it through. Are there enough of them in Great Britain today?

I should vary the question and ask: Are there enough civilians in India today who have vision enough to win the goodwill and the friendship of the people of India? The Editor has 'peoples', I know. But though we may quarrel and murder one another, though we have numerous languages and still more numerous dialects, India is geographically one, and we are and have been only one people. Those speaking the same language have been known before now to belong to different nationalities, and those that have fought among themselves like dogs have been known to belong to one nation. The fact is that oneness of speech and absence of internal feuds are no indispensable test of nationality.

Young India, 30-7-1931

162. FOUL PLAY[1]

The worst feature of the attempted assassination of Sir Ernest Hotson the Acting Governor of the Bombay Presidency was, that the act was done by a student of the College which had invited His Excellency when as its honoured guest he was being shown round the College premises. It was as though a host was injuring his guest under his own roof. The canon recognized throughout the world is that the deadliest enemy, when he is under one's roof as guest, is entitled to protection from all harm. The act of the student was therefore essentially foul play without a single redeeming feature.

For the Acting Governor it was a providential escape, and it was fortunate for India and more so for the student world. I tender my congratulations to Sir Ernest Hotson as also to the nation.

It would be well if the believers in violence will take a lesson from this happy tragedy—happy because no one has suffered but the assailant.

Has he suffered, is he suffering, or is he deluding himself with the belief that he is a hero? Let this event be a warning for the students. After all a school or a college is a sanctuary where there should be nothing that is base or unholy. Schools and colleges are factories for the making of character. Parents send their boys and girls to them so that they may become good men and women It would. be an evil day for the nation, if every student is suspected as a would be assassin capable of any treachery.

The Bhagat Singh worship has done and is doing incalculable harm to the country. Bhagat Singh's character about which I had heard so much from reliable sources, the intimate connection I had with the attempts that were being made to secure commutation of the death sentence carried me away and identified me with the cautious and balanced resolution passed at Karachi.[2] I regret to observe that the caution has been thrown to the winds. The deed itself is being worshipped as if it was worthy of emulation. The result is goondaism and degradation wherever this mad worship is being performed.

The Congress is a power in the land, but I warn Congressmen

[1] *Vide* also "Madness", 26-7-1931

[2] *Vide* "Resolution on Bhagat Singh and Comrades"

that it will soon lose all its charm if they betray their trust and encourage the Bhagat Singh cult whether in thought, word or deed. If the majority do not believe in the Congress policy of non-violence and truth, let them have the first article altered. Let us understand the distinction between policy and creed. A policy may be changed, a creed cannot. But either is as good as the other whilst it is held. Those therefore who hold non-violence only as a policy may not, without exposing themselves to the charge of dishonourable conduct, use the Congress membership as a cover for violence. I cannot. get rid of the conviction, that the greatest obstacle to our progress towards swaraj is our want of faith in our policy. Let this fortunate failure of attempted assassination open our eyes.

'But look at the Governor's black record. Does not the doer himself say he shot because of the Sholapur deeds, because he superseded an Indian and became Acting Governor?'—some hasty youths or even grown-up people will argue. My answer is: We knew all this when in 1920 we settled the Congress policy of non-violence and truth. There were, within our knowledge at the time, deeds much blacker than his worst enemies have imputed to Sir Ernest Hotson. The Congress deliberately and after full debate came to the conclusion in 1920, that the answer to the vile and violent deeds of the Government was not greater violence on our part, but that it was profitable for us to answer violence with non-violence and vileness with truth. The Congress saw further, that the worst administrators were not bad inherently, but that they were a fruit of the system of which they were willing or unwilling victims. We saw too that the system corrupted even the best from among ourselves. And so we evolved a policy of non-violent action that should destroy the system. Ten years' experience has shown that the policy of non-violence and truth though followed half-heartedly has answered phenomenally well, and that we are very near the harbour. The record of Sir Ernest Hotson, however bad it may be, is wholly irrelevant and can in no way extenuate, much less excuse the double crime of attempted assassination and treachery. The reported hostile demonstration by some students has made the ugly affair uglier still. I hope that the students and the teachers throughout India will seriously bestir themselves and put the educational house in order. And in my opinion it is the peremptory duty of the forthcoming meeting of the All-India Congress Committee to condemn the treacherous outrage and reiterate its policy in unequivocal terms.

One word to the Government and the administrators. Retribution and repression will not do. These violent outbreaks are portents. They may judge those who are immediately guilty. But they can deal with the disease only by dealing with the cause. If they have neither the will nor the courage to do so, let them leave the rest to the nation. It has progressed past repression and retribution. It will deal with violence in its own ranks in its own way. Any Government action in excess of the demands of the common law will simply intensify the madness, and make the task of believers in non-violence more difficult than it already is.

Young India, 30-7-1931

163. CLOTH MERCHANTS AND KHADI

Whilst millowners have, to a certain extent, ceased to compete unfairly with khadi, cloth merchants seem to pay no heed to the Congress appeal not to injure genuine khadi by selling spurious khadi as if it was genuine. A firm in Surat had the hardihood the other day to send its samples of spurious khadi to a khadi depot in Bombay. I have the sample before me. It is clearly mill khadi, but it is sold to the public as genuine article. I have the name too of the firm that has been guilty of such dishonest and unpatriotic practice. But I do not propose just yet to give the name to the public. The remedy however lies in the hands of the purchasers of khadi—not to buy khadi that does not bear the A.I.S.A. stamp and to buy from a shop certified by the A.I.S.A. wherever such a shop is to be found. Intelligent buyers should really find no difficulty in distinguishing genuine from spurious khadi.

Young India, 30-7-1931

164. LANCASHIRE V. JAPAN

Sjt. H. P. Mody writes:[1]

> I have read with great interest the brief announcement you have made in connection with the rumour that you might visit Lancashire when you go to England for the Round Table Conference. I hope you will do so, and will give British manufacturers an opportunity of understanding your position and that

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

of the Congress. My view of the matter is that while it is of national importance that the requirements of the people of India should be met by cloth manufactured or made in the country, foreign cloth cannot be kept out unless and until the manufacturing capacity of India is considerably increased. . . . The problem then resolves itself into one of ways and means of promoting the indigenous industry. One of the greatest obstacles in the way of such expansion is the organized competition which the industry is experiencing from Japan. . . . It may be that . . . the competitive capacity of India may develop to an extent which would do away with the necessity of special measures of protection; but until that stage is reached, India must pursue a vigorous tariff policy. . . .

. . . And if I understand the purport of your recent announcement correctly, your attitude might be, that while you would not have a yard of Lancashire or any other foreign cloth in this country, if you could help it, you would not in certain circumstances mind Lancashire deriving some advantage over Japan owing to the special measures which it might be necessary to take to meet Japanese competition. Will you kindly let me know if I have understood your position correctly?

My position is clear.

1. If I had my way, India would be clothed in khadi to the exclusion of all other cloth even made in indigenous mills.

2. Whilst India is unwilling (there is no question of inability) to manufacture all the khadi she needs, I should allow indigenous mill-cloth to supplement it.

3. There is picketing of foreign cloth because foreign cloth competes with both khadi and Indian mill-cloth. It is irrelevant, whether the competition is fair or unfair in the sense whether the cloth manufactured in the respective countries is fairly produced and brought here or not.

4. If there was no competition, and if it became clear that some foreign cloth had to come to India, and if England was in partnership with India freed, I would give preference to England over all other countries. But my belief is, that when India becomes free, she will manufacture within a short time enough khadi for her wants, supplementing it during the transition with indigenous mill-cloth.

Young India, 30-7-1931

165. WHAT WE CAN DO TODAY

The much criticized Fundamental Rights Resolution of the Karachi Congress has twenty items. Item one has nine sub-clauses. I have just glanced through the innocent resolution, and I have made what is for me an amazing discovery which I am impatient to share with the reader. I find that fifteen out of twenty we can enforce today more or less fully and five sub-clauses of item one can be similarly treated. Here they are for the convenience of the reader:[1]

Those[2] omitted have reference to the things that can only be done by the legislature. They are:

Freedom of association and combination;

Freedom of speech and Press;

Right to bear arms;

Right of personal liberty and possession of property without executive interference.

Religious neutrality by the State;

Removal of salt duty;

Control of currency for the benefit of the people;

Control of key industries etc.

The reader will see that these last are really less vital than those we can do now without State assistance. It will be seen further, that if we succeed in doing the things mentioned in the first list, those mentioned in the second will follow as a matter of course. In other words national control of the Government is mostly dependent upon ourselves. Conversely if we do not do the things we ought to today, when the power comes to us we shall be found unready for them. Thus if we do not respect one another's religions, do not treat women as absolute equals, do not remove untouchability, do not dot villages with free primary schools, do not honestly manage the Congress suffrage which is practically adult suffrage, do not treat labour decently, do not spare children factory labour, do not encourage labour unions, do not reduce agricultural rents, do not pay for

[1] Not reproduced here; the Clauses cited were: I (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), 3 to 12, 14 to 16 and 20; *vide* also "Resolution on Fuandamental Rights and Economic Changes", 31-3-1931

[2] Sub-clauses (a), (b), (h) and (i) of Clause I and Clauses 2,13,17,18 and 19

national purposes a fixed percentage of our incomes, do not voluntarily reduce our salaries or set apart for a national purpose more than the minimum required, do not abjure foreign cloth and drink and do not reduce the heavy rates of interest which even respectable people charge, I prophecy that the State will be powerless to impose these reforms on an unwilling people. A popular State can never act in advance of public opinion. If it goes against it, it will be destroyed. Democracy disciplined and enlightened is the finest thing in the world. A democracy prejudiced, ignorant, superstitious will land itself in chaos and may be self-destroyed. The Fundamental Rights Resolution is not premature. It is not so formidable as it reads, if the nation is prepared, as I hold it is prepared, for orderly self-government. Let every Congressman therefore think out a programme of work for himself or herself in terms of the items first mentioned. We need not be overpowered by the list. Each one may take up the item and the area of work for which he or she is best fitted. Needless to say the full working of the items requires the co-operation of capitalists, landowners and the like. They will all fall in line if a good beginning is made.

Young India, 30-7-1931

166. TELEGRAM TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

BORSAD,
July 30, 1931

SIR PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI
BHAVNAGAR

NOT GOING EIGHTH. GOING "MOOLTAN"[1] IF AT ALL.

GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 3234. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani. Also G.N. 5919

[1] The liner s.s. *Mooltan*

167. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

AS AT SABARMATI,
July 30, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and your article. I hope to make use of your article in *Young India*.

There is no certainty about my going to London as yet. There are difficulties which may prove insuperable. I feel that I must not leave India unless some glaring breaches of the Settlement[1] are repaired. I am staining every nerve to avoid a conflict, but the result is in God's hands. But if I do succeed in going to London we must meet.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Since signing this I have seen your article printed in the *Chronicle*. I have read it too. It will be unnecessary for me to reproduce it in *Young India*. And in any case it is too personal for reproduction.

REV. DR. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES
CHRISTAL, HOSPIZ
MITTELSTRASSE 5-6
BERLIN N. W. 7 (GERMANY)

From a photostat: C. W. 10962. Courtesy: Roger W. Holmes and Mrs. Frances L. Brown

[1] The Gandhi-Irwin Pact

[2] Gandhiji arrived in London on September 12, 1931 to attend the Round Table Conference. The addressee called on him on September 13.

168. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

July 30, 1931

CHI. MRIDULA,

I have your letter. I shall certainly write to the Mandal. I shall be reaching there only tomorrow morning. So it will be better if you ask me for time in the morning. I shall arrive by the Kathiawar Mail.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11112. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

169. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

BORSAD,
July 30, 1931

CHI. KUSUM,

I got your letter. How distracted I must be! That postcard was in reply to your last letter but I did not answer your question. I don't remember what I told that gentleman. I may have told him, perhaps, that, if he had got any of my letters and felt that some of them should be published, he could do so. If you wish to give any letters to him and if you know him, you may give them. I will go to Ahmedabad tomorrow morning, and will leave it for Bombay on the 3rd. If you wish to come and see me, you may do so. I shall be staying in the Vidyapith. If you wish to come and see me in Bombay, you may do that. Tell Dahibehn that I got her letter. She should keep her promise after her teeth have become clean. Nothing has been decided about my going to England.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1825

170. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 31, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I will go there as soon as I can and bring away Amtul with me. I have become impatient to see Mahavir. But I have yet to finish articles for *Navajivan.*

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

171. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

July 31, 1931

Asked about the situation in Borsad and Bardoli, Mr. Gandhi said:

So far as Borsad is concerned, the Collector and I have exchanged communications after a prolonged conversation, but I am unable to give them to the public. I am, however, hoping that most, if not all, the outstanding questions will be adjusted fairly and satisfactorily. So far as Bardoli is concerned, communications are still going on with the Collector, but I am not without hope as to the final result.

Asked whether it was true, as reported in the Press, that the situation in U.P. was unlikely to interfere with his participation in the Round Table Conference, Mr. Gandhi said:

I hope the newspaper report about the U.P. situation is well warranted. I have not yet heard directly from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Asked whether he could now say if his going to the R.T.C. was in any way certain, Mr. Gandhi said:

It is more than I can say, but I can say that I am trying my very best.

Asked his opinion about the article in *The Manchester Guardian*, a summary of which was published in the papers, Mr. Gandhi said:

I have seen the Press summary of the *Manchester Guardian* article. I can reciprocate much of what is said there. Past experience however shows that one ought not to treat summaries as if they were the whole. Subject to this caution, I can say that, if I do go to London, I shall not disappoint the hope entertained by *Manchester Guardian.*

So far as I am concerned, the embargo on foreign cloth is not and cannot be by way of reparation. I dislike this repeated emphasis on British cloth. British cloth is not objected to because it is British. It is foreign cloth that is being attacked and in this attack if it becomes more successful, Japan would be the heaviest loser and not Lancashire.

Asked why he himself did not go to the North-West Frontier Province, as desired, but sent his son Devdas Gandhi, Gandhiji said:

I did not go to the North-West Frontier Province in order to avoid any possible embarrassment to the Government.

Asked whether he would make any statement on the recent assassination of Mr. Garlick, District and Sessions Judge in Calcutta, Mr. Gandhi said:

Coming as it does so soon after the attempted assassination of the Acting Governor of Bombay, it has very naturally caused stir and public resentment. I have no doubt the coming All India Congress Committee meeting will deal with the situation. I am more than ever convinced that every such murder does infinite injury to the cause of the country's freedom. I wish young men who are resorting to the mad methods of violence would realize the serious and mischievous consequences of their mad deeds.

The Hindu, 31-7-1931

172. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

[*July*][1], *1931*

CHI. RAMA,

I got your letter. No one should say to anybody, "Go to Palanpur or Porbandar." Prema's saying that, however, is of no significance. She has an irritable temper and you should not take seriously what she may say in anger. In the Ashram, all of us are equals, and no one can ask anybody to leave it. To say such things to children sets them a wrong example. But we should not feel hurt by these things; instead, we should try to solve the problem through love. Have a talk with Prema. I will certainly write to her in my weekly letter. I am writing this to you to lessen your pain. Give me news about Joshi.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5329; also *Bapuna Patro—7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*, p. 282

[1] From the printed source

173. LETTER TO R. M. MAXWELL

AHMEDABAD,
August 1, 1931

DEAR MR. MAXWELL,

I thank you for your letter of 28th ult. regarding the cases of Pathan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his son. Though the information that you give me about them is instructive, the suspicion haunts me that their black record came to the surface and became relevant only when and because they took an active part in the civil disobedience movement. Whether they received money for the part they played I am not aware. You will be also interested to know that men with blacker records are at the present moment in the Government service and district officials have been good enough and frank enough to tell me that though they knew that these men had such a record, the Government could not afford to ignore the services that they had rendered to them at a critical time. Nor am I able to understand the reasoning behind the decision. If these men are such dangerous characters, will they cease to be so outside Bombay? After all they are in British-governed territories. They have not been put outside the British limits.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 17416

174. LETTER TO K. B. BHADRAPUR

AHMEDABAD,
August 1, 1931

DEAR MR. BHADRAPUR,

I now enclose herewith a report prepared by Sjt. Mahadev Desai on the expert report prepared for you about the condition of Ras Khatedars. This is how this report was prepared. I sent Sjt. Chhaganlal Joshi with Sjt. Ravishanker to Ras to meet the Khatedars. They were there practically a whole day. They brought the results to Sjt. Mahadev Desai who had previously conducted an exhaustive inquiry into the Ras cases and prepared an account of which an abstract was supplied to Mr. Perry. A second exhaustive report was

prepared as a result of discussion with Mr. Perry which it became unnecessary to give to him as there was a sporting settlement. This report deals with the crops of Khatedars and will be found annexed to the report sent herewith. The present one is prepared in the light of these reports.

You will see that Schedule F of your report is the most important of all because it contains an examination of 126 Khatedars. The annexure to the enclosed report is a complete answer to Schedule F. The other schedules relate to only 66 Khatedars. The enclosed report deals with these and it appears to me a conclusive answer. In the circumstances I have not the heart to ask any of the Khatedars to pay anything more. As I told you, even the Rs. 500 was not exacted by me without some effort. The reason is that the Ras Khatedars have been universally admitted to have been the heaviest losers. But as I have told you already this does not mean that the Khatedars have no credit. On the contrary their credit stands perhaps higher than before. But it is common cause between the Government and the Congress that these civil resisters are not to be expected to borrow money in order to pay the revenue dues, whether current or arrears.

I enclose herewith the schedules you very kindly entrusted to my care.

Yours sincerely

K. B. BHADRAPUR, ESQ.

From a microfilm: S.N. 17420

175. LETTER TO H. P. MODY

AHMEDABAD,
August 1, 1931

DEAR MR. MODY,

I thank you for your prompt reply[1] to mine of 28th ult.

I shall fall back upon you for any further information that I may need.

Yours sincerely

H. P. MODY, ESQ.
MILL-OWNERS' ASSOCIATION
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 17417

[1] In which the addressee had refuted the allegations forwarded to him by Gandhiji, that mill-owners were "exploiting labour and making large profits".

176. LETTER TO GIRIRAJ KISHORE

AHMEDABAD,
August 1, 1931

MY DEAR GIRIRAJ,

I did have your first letter but I did not know where you would be and so I simply took a mental note of what you were doing. I am glad you were able to see the children and that they were well. You will keep me informed of your own progress.

Nothing is decided about my going to London.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. GIRIRAJ
C/O DR. SHRI RAM
SCOUT ORGANIZER
SRINAGAR (KASHMIR)

From a microfilm: S.N. 17418

177. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

AHMEDABAD,
August 1, 1931

I have your telegram from Rangoon.

You are cruel. You say nothing about what happened to your daughter, whether you were leaving her in Rangoon or taking her. But that is just like you, and I may not grumble.

Nothing is certain as yet about my going, but I might have to decide upon going even at the last moment. I would therefore like you to come and see me wherever I am even after the All India Congress Committee meeting. You can leave me after the 15th whether I stay or whether I go. If you accept my proposal, I would then discuss with you your suggestion before adopting it. I refer to the suggestion about giving an intimation to the Central Government that wherever picketing is unjustly interfered with, we might have to resist this interference with civil disobedience.

SYT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
GANDHI ASHRAM
TIRUCHENGODU (S. INDIA)

From a photostat: S.N. 17419

178. MY NOTES

THE BENGAL MURDER[1]

The murder of Judge Garlick coming, as it did, so close upon the assault on the Bombay Governor has naturally caused a great sensation. Such assassinations make us hang our heads in shame. They bring swaraj no nearer. Nor do they help us to get better justice or reduce the prevailing hatred and bitterness. The British have never run away for fear and are not likely to do so. Such acts do not increase our capacity for constructive work or infuse greater fearlessness in the people. The immediate consequences, as we see, are the very opposite. For what can one blame Judge Garlick? No matter how many persons he sentenced to death, he acted through no malicein doing so. Whatever he did he did through a sense of duty. Why should he be punished for that? The assassin has lost his own life, but he has left behind him a legacy of suffering for others. It will not help us in any way to cite the example of assassinations in other countries. The evidence before our eyes should be enough to turn us away from the policy of violence. That policy will spell our destruction. In India we wish to bring about an awakening among the millions of our poor countrymen, for which thousands of us will have to labour ceaselessly and organize constructive work. Can assassinations make any contribution to that end? They not only cannot, but on the contrary they positively obstruct such efforts. Will not the terrorists see this and desist from their activities?

SATYAGRAHA AND MORVI

Men from Kathiawar have been showering criticism on my article[2] regarding Morvi. Some of the critics are sincere public servants. Their enthusiasm is sincere but, I think, ignorant. I have given no certificate to Morvi, and in any case who am I to give one? Of course, I praised the ruler for what I thought his graceful action. That does not, of course, condone the misdeeds of the State authorities, some of which I know and some I may not. But that article was not intended to apportion blame, and hence it did not discuss the

[1] *Vide* also "The Garlick Murder", 6-8-1931

[2] *Vide* "Morbi's Lesson to Satyagrahis", 19-7-1931.

question whether or not any atrocities on satyagrahis were committed and, if so, how cruel they were. Even now I hold the opinion that the satyagrahi march on Morvi was hasty, to say the least. That opinion was not based on any one-sided evidence; if it was based on any evidence, then it was based on the admissions made by the satyagrahis themselves. If the first step was wrong, then, not only should there be no objection to admitting as much, but it should be regarded one's duty to do so.

Moreover, it is a satyagrahi's duty to regard his own errors as big as a mountain though they might be as small as a mole, and another's as small as a mole though they might be as big as a mountain. Such an attitude comes naturally to a satyagrahi and is not the result of a conscious effort.

'HARIJANA'

I asked serious readers of *Navajivan* to suggest to me a substitute for the word 'Antyaja'. One of the three or four suggestions received has appealed to me. Shri Jagannath Desai writes from Rajkot:[1]

Thus the word is not new, but a beautiful one already used by the father of Gujarati poetry. Moreover, as used by him, the word '*Harijana*' can also mean men of God who are abandoned by society. The third advantage of that word is that, probably, *Antyaja* brethren would lovingly accept that name and try to cultivate the virtues which it connotes. Following the example of Kaliparaj becoming Raniparaj, may the *Antyajas* become *Harijana* both in name and nature.

FOREIGN TOYS AND CRACKERS

The leader of the Surat Children's Army writes:[2]

Personally, I approve of the boycott of both these. Let the children carry out truly peaceful picketing. If they secure the consent of the parents, that will be an education for the latter too.

[1] The letter is not translated here. It said that the word 'Harijana' was in use in many villages and Narasinh Mehta had used it to refer to Antyaja devotees.

[2] The letter is not translated here.

A correspondent writes:[1]

Nature has not revealed to us any method of immediately solving all our problems. But that does not mean that [in an instance like this] there is no remedy. The remedy is patience and right conduct. One's sister or brother-in-law or friend, whoever the person concerned, is sure ultimately to yield to our faith.

A SILENT WORKER

A large number of Indians live in Burma and make a living there. Some of them also devote themselves to public service. One such man was Vrajlal Mehta, whose death occurred a few days ago. He carried on Congress work there, though we here have little knowledge of it. He was a well-to-do man and contributed something to every fund and persuaded others to do the same. But he sought no credit for doing this. He was devoted to the poor, had full faith in the propagation of khadi and represented there the All India Spinners' Association. Those who seek no honour or reward but do service for its own sake deserve the highest honour. Shri Vrajlal Mehta was a man of this kind. We offer our compliments to his family for having produced such a person.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-8-1931

179. SPEECH AT AHMEDABAD[2]

August 2, 1931

I must say that the service of the so-called untouchables does not rank with me as in any way subordinate to any kind of political work.[3] Just a moment ago I met two missionary friends who drew the same distinction and therefore came in for some gentle rebuke from

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had found it impossible to convert his relations and friends to swadeshi.

[2] At the opening of Sir Chinubhai's family temple to the untouchables. This is a condensed summary by Mahadev Desai which appeared under the caption "Essentially a Reformer".

[3] Sir Chinubhai had remarked that 'whilst Gandhiji was preoccupied with things of great political importance, he should not have been asked to find time for a comparatively small thing'.

me. I suggested to them that my work of social reform was in no way less than or subordinate to political work. The fact is, that when I saw that to a certain extent my social work would be impossible without the help of political work, I took to the latter and only to the extent that it helped the former. I must therefore confess that work of social reform or self-purification of this nature is a hundred times dearer to me than what is called purely political work.

For what does service of the 'untouchables or rendering justice to them mean? It means nothing less than redeeming a debt which is centuries overdue, and to expiate in some measure the sin we have been guilty of for ages, viz., that of oppressing and insulting our own kith and kin. We have behaved towards these unfortunate brethren of ours nothing better than a man turned monster behaves towards brother man. And the programme of removal of untouchability that we have set before us is just some little expiation for a monstrous wrong. And as it is essentially by way of expiation or self-purification, it cannot be prompted by any fear or favour. If we take up this work, fearing that the so-called untouchables would go over to another faith, or that they would wreak vengeance on us, or as a sort of political trump card, we shall have betrayed our ignorance of Hinduism and our ungratefulness to those who have served us for ages. I admit that it was I who pushed the item to the forefront of the Congress programme, and anyone bent on cavilling at me might say that it was a clever bait held out by me to the untouchables. Let me say at once that that charge is idle. It grew on me very early in life that those who believed themselves to be Hindus must perform the penance in the shape of wiping out this stain before they could be proud of Hinduism, and as the majority of Congressmen were Hindus, and as the programme then put before the nation was not one of self-purification, I put it in the forefront of the Congress programme, in the conviction that unless the Hindus were prepared to wipe out this stain they could not regard themselves as fit for swaraj. That conviction has come upon me as a self-evident proposition. If we came into power, with the stain of untouchability uneffaced, 'I am positive that the untouchables would be far worse under that 'swaraj' than they are now, for the simple reason that our weaknesses and our failings would then be buttressed up by the accession of power. That in brief is my position, and I have always held that self-purification is an indispensable condition of swaraj. It is not a position that I have arrived at today. It is as old as when I began to think of swaraj. That is

why I thank God for enabling me to participate in this function today. I have always prized opportunities for doing this kind of work, and have often put aside so-called political work for work of this nature. I know that those to whom only the exciting thing called "politics" has an exclusive appeal will laugh at this kind of thing. But for me it is nearest and dearest to my heart.

As for you, Lady Chinubhai, you need no congratulations from me for having done what was an obvious duty and an act of self-purification. But the occasion for my congratulations may, for aught we can say, soon arise. The Brahmin priests in this temple have reconciled themselves today to the position. But it is possible that they may one day turn against you and say that they would have nothing to do with worship in your temple. Indeed the whole Brahmin community, the whole of the orthodox Nagar community may conspire against you. Even then I hope and pray that you will hold fast to your conviction and rejoice in the belief that that day the stone image of Siva in the temple is invested with the living presence of God. That will be the acme of your penance, and the day you are excommunicated by your community for having dared to do this necessary act of self-purification, I shall congratulate you most heartily.

Let those who are present here today understand that we have not been able yet to win swaraj because of the load of sin that we are still carrying on our backs. If all the so-called 'touchable' Hindus did real penance for having wronged their 'untouchable' brethren, swaraj would be automatically in our hands. And pray understand mere removal of physical untouchability does not mean expiation. The removal of untouchability means the removal of all distinctions of superiority and inferiority attaching to birth. Varnashramadharma[1] is a beautiful institution, but if it is used to buttress up social superiority of one section over another, it will be a monstrosity. Let removal of untouchability result from a living conviction that all are one in the eyes of God, that the Father in Heaven will deal with us all with even-handed justice.

This is a private temple, but if the doors of this private temple are thrown open to the 'untouchables' how long will the doors of public temples here remain closed? Let today's function be an eye-opener to all the Hindus of Ahmedabad. Let this be the

[1] The four castes and the four Stages of life

auspicious beginning of a process which will end in throwing open all the Hindu temples of Ahmedabad to the 'untouchables'. But even there as in every other thing I should ask you to avoid compulsion. Untouchability cannot long endure. Some years ago we obstinately clung to it, today we are indifferent. It will be a thing of the past only when the indifference is translated into a conscious deliberate awakening to a sense of the duty of self-purification. Even the indifference or sufferance would have been impossible fifteen years ago. The willing act of self-purification will, let us hope and pray, be the next step.

Only the other day a friend suggested to me that the word '*Harijana*' (man of God) be substituted for the word '*Antyaja*' (the 'last born') that is being used for 'untouchables'. It was a word used by the great saint Narasinha Mehta, who by the bye belonged to the Nagar Brahmin community and who defied the whole community by claiming the 'untouchables' as his own. I am delighted to adopt that word which is sanctified by having been used by such a great saint, but it has for me a deeper meaning than you may imagine. The 'untouchable', to me, is, compared to us, really a '*Harijana*'—a man of God, and we are '*Durjana*' (men of evil). For whilst the 'untouchable' has toiled and moiled and dirtied his hands so that we may live in comfort and cleanliness; we have delighted in suppressing him. We are solely responsible for all the shortcomings and faults that we lay at the door of these untouchables. It is still open to us to be *Harijana* ourselves, but we can only do so by heartily repenting of our sin against them.

Young India, 6-8-1931

180. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

[*August 3, 1931*][1]

9.10 p.m. Then I have to see Mr. Jinnah and then go to the station to take the Poona train. But if you want to say anything you can do so whilst I am taking my meal at 5 p.m. Jawahar is also coming then. I am working just now against time. I have to supply 16 columns of matter for *Young India* and post today. That is the message. He won't come here. But I must go somewhere where he would come.

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's scheduled meeting with Jinnah in Bombay, which took place on 3-1-1931, and his leaving for Poona on the same day

The place must be on the way to Victoria Terminus. If you are not in a hurry let me finish this *Y. I.* business which has drained me dry today.

From the original: Dr. Syed Mahmud Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also G. N. 5063

181. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

August 4, 1931

Asked by the Associated Press after the interview[1], whether he would now proceed to London for the Round Table Conference, Mr. Gandhi said that he had not yet decided. When asked if the situation was hopeful, he smilingly said that he could not say.

Interviewed [in Bombay], he did not throw any light on the result of his conversations with the Governor of Bombay at Poona. He thought, on the other hand, it was really for the Government to say whatever they considered was convenient and proper. For himself, he felt neither relieved nor unrelieved after the conversations.

The Times of India 5-8-1931

182. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

August 4, 1931

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

Your men delivered the letter just as I returned from Poona a little while ago. I am afraid I have not been able to give much thought to the matter. I will reply briefly as there are some people waiting in front of me.

My going cannot still be regarded as certain. I should like you to come if you can. If, however, you have some work which requires your attention, I attach more importance to it than to your going to London. It would be all right even if you come later. I would naturally be happier if you are with me.

How should even I come in the way of your taking any counter-measures that you think proper against the agitation going on

[1] At Poona with the Governor of Bombay regarding the Bardoli situation. For the Governor's reply to the points raised by Gandhiji at the interview, *vide* "Letter from R. M. Maxwell", 10-8-1931

in the Bhavnagar State? If you must take any, the right thing would be to act always in your official capacity. I trust of course that you will exercise moderation in all that you do. I do not even know what *Saurashtra* has written on the subject. You may ask me whatever else you wish to.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5921. Also C.W. 3236. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

183. TELEGRAM TO SIR MALCOLM HAILEY

BOMBAY,
August 5, 1931

HOPE YOU HAVE COMPLETELY RECOVERED. FROM DESCRIPTION GIVEN BY PANDITS MALAVIYAJI AND JAWAHARLAL OF THEIR CONVERSATIONS WITH CHIEF SECRETARY THERE SEEMS TO BE UNCERTAINTY ABOUT GOVERNMENT POLICY REGARDING TENANTS. CONTINUATION OF COERCIVE MEASURES AND PRECARIOUS POSITION OF EVICTED TENANTS CAUSE ME GREAT ANXIETY. COULD YOU PLEASE GIVE ME CLEAR INDICATION GOVERNMENT POLICY ON THESE VITAL OUESTIONS.[1]

Young India, 20-8-1931

184. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

MANI BHAVAN, BOMBAY
August 5, 1931

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
CALCUTTA

CAN YOU SEND SOMEONE ASSAM INVESTIGATE FLOOD CONDITIONS?

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 17428

[1] For the Governor's reply, *Vide* "Telegram from Sir Malcolm Hailey", 20-8-1931

185. FURTHER CLEARANCE

Having read my reply to him in *Young India*,[1] Sjt. Satyamurti thus returns to the charge:

> Your insistence on the statement that political power is not an end in itself disturbs me seriously. Even if tomorrow we get all the reforms we want, I would still resist British rule in this country. I am also convinced that very few of the reforms we want can be fully or effectively achieved, unless we get political power.
>
> You must recognize that the ideal of political anarchy, with which I entirely agree, is not practical politics in the world today. If the Mussalmans and the Sikhs, therefore, get all the power, the majority community in the country will have to be perpetual civil resisters, leading to civil war.
>
> I agree that political power can easily become a burden if it came as a gift from without, the people having made no effort to deserve it. But I claim that the nation has already shown, and will show increasingly in the next few years, that it fully deserves political power.
>
> Public opinion, I agree, should support legislation. Legislation in advance of public opinion is often futile. But public opinion, without legislative sanction, is often very largely impotent. I feel that political power is the thing, and that these reforms must follow. After all, the freedom of a nation and the liberty of the individual are priceless political privileges; and each nation must be free to decide what is good for itself. Once, therefore, we get political power, we can and ought to decide what is good for us. And if I understand my countrymen aright, the largest public opinion in India today is in favour of getting political power.
>
> If you think this letter deserves a further answer from you, I shall be glad to have it. But may I again express the hope that you may reconsider your position in the light of what I have stated above?
>
> As regards my previous letter, I am sorry it has not reached you. I have no copy of it. I wanted to know in that letter from you what the phrase 'for presenting the demands of the Congress', in the resolution[2] of the Working Committee, deputing you to attend the Round Table Conference, meant. I take it, it does not mean that you will merely state the Congress case, in the attitude of 'take it or leave it'. But I presume that you will (I) state the

[1] *Vide* "Power Not An End", 2-7-1931

[2] Of June 9, *vide* footnote 1, "Substance Not Shadow",18-6-1931

Congress case and support it with arguments, (2) meet counter-arguments, and answer questions and try to solve difficulties and doubts raised by the other side, and (3) exercise the freedom, given by the Karachi Congress to the Congress Delegation to the Round Table Conference, to accept such adjustments as may be demonstrably necessary in the interests of India.

There seems to me to be a question of emphasis between Sjt. Satyamurti and myself. His emphasis is on political power in itself, mine on political power as a weapon for enabling the reformer to achieve his reforms in the quickest manner possible. To me therefore all depends upon the way political power is attained. If it cannot be attained without the combined exertion of all the communities, I would wait. After all a strenuous exertion itself is a getting. In that sense political power is daily coming to the nation. A constitution will merely be a symbol of the full achievement. But it may also be a mirage, if it is not consciously a fruition of a nation's endeavour. Thus supposing by some accident England collapsed all of a sudden and therefore India imagined that she had all she wanted, she would be wholly wrong. Virtue therefore lies in our getting political power as a result of our strength, not as a result of the foreign ruler's weakness. But I must not labour the point any further. It is enough that just at present, though I may have a different outlook from that of many others, we are all striving for the same thing in the same way.

I do not share the fear, that if Mussalmans and Sikhs got all the power, the 'majority community', i.e., Hindus would have to be 'perpetual civil resisters'. In the first instance this deduction ignores the assumption that Hindus *willingly* surrendered their right to power, and in the second it ignores the law of civil resistance that it is never needed to be applied perpetually to a cause. Its sovereign efficacy lies in the fact that it secures redress within a measurable though previously unascertainable period.

I can give Sjt. Satyamurti a more consoling answer regarding his doubts as to the meaning of the 'presentation' of Congress demands. Subject of course to permission being granted,—and this, in my opinion, is implicit in the Delhi Settlement,—I am going to present and "support the Congress case with arguments, meet counter-arguments and answer questions and try to solve difficulties and doubts raised by the other side and exercise the freedom given by the Karachi Congress to the Congress Delegation to the Round Table Conference to accept such adjustments as may be demonstrably

necessary in the interests of India". If I reach London, I can make this promise to all concerned, that whilst on the one hand I will not be guilty of selling the national cause, on the other the most reactionary Englishman need have no cause to fear my reputed obstinacy, or worse still, anti-British feelings. I am not conscious of being obstinate. Those who know me, have always credited me with an ample faculty for compromise though they have found me unyielding on matters of principle. Nor am I conscious of any anti-British feeling in me. On the contrary, I can assert with confidence that I have nothing but goodwill for the British. If therefore I attend the Conference, I shall leave no stone unturned to make the deliberations of the Conference a success. More I dare not promise.

Young India, 6-8-1931

186. CONGRESSMEN'S NEGLIGENCE?

A correspondent from Abiramam writes:

Mudukulattur is a fairly big village in the district of Ramnand in the Madras Presidency. By[1] a short cut route, 8 miles in distance from the town lies the blue sea. After the Settlement the villagers began to carry salt from the sea bed. No conveyance was used at first. Each man took as much salt as he could conveniently carry. Men were not molested by the salt officers. Emboldened by the apparent inactivity of salt officers, people used to join in the common purpose of carrying salt in groups consisting of four or five persons. From the beginning of last month country bullock-carts were requisitioned and used for carrying salt, and the commodity was divided into equal lots by those who brought them to be used for each man's family consumption.

At this stage of their activities only did the emissaries of the department think it their duty to interfere. After a full consultation, as to the nature of the action to be taken with regard to the people who carried away salt in carts, it was thought fit to arrest certain persons and fine them for the offence of breaking the provisions of the salt law. It should be stated that the officers did not at all interfere at the very beginning. They wished to check them at a very late hour, and this they did without giving them any notice or even a casual warning.

[1] The source has "From", evidently a misprint.

The total number of persons thus arrested is 21. The punishment meted out to them varied. Those who admitted the guilt were let off with small fines, while those who refused to admit it were fined heavier than the others. The total amount of fines amounted to Rs. 295 which was paid.

I am quite sure that these prosecutions could have been avoided if the local Congress authorities had done propaganda work and informed the villagers of the limits of the salt concession. Can you not wake them up from their lethargy? I assure you that the villagers are quite amenable to reason.

I have condensed the original letter. I do not know how far the complaint against the local Congress Committees is justified. But one is inclined to agree with the writer that there has been some negligence. The salt concession is the most valuable clause of the Delhi Settlement. I know that Lord Irwin was moved by the appeal on behalf of the poor. I am betraying no confidence when I state that he realized that at least for the poor villagers salt must be free as air and water. The argument that it was not so much the amount of tax that positively hurt the people as the deprivation of the right of making it themselves made a forcible appeal to him. If it makes the same appeal to Congressmen, they will lose no time in instructing the villagers as to the exact nature of the concession. There is no complication about it.

The villagers within a walking distance of a salt area whether sea-bound or inland can make and sell salt for domestic consumption.

Domestic use includes use for manure, cattle and fish-curing as a village industry. Therefore salt cannot be carried to towns or bazars outside the walking area. It can on no account be carted or carried on camelback. Only human agency is permissible. Not even hand-carts may be used. These limitations may look formidable to town dwellers. They are no hardships for the villagers who want to work the concession honestly. The motive behind the limitation is to prevent trade among the wealthy people and competition with the monopoly salt in areas where people use the monopoly salt without noticing the effect of the tax. Whilst the latter lasts, the restriction is perfectly intelligible and reasonable.

Let us realize, that for tens of thousands who live within walking distance of salt areas salt is free. From all I have seen of the working of this concession, I believe that the provincial Governments are

desirous of giving the villagers the full benefit of the concession. Having made this admission, I would like to suggest that the fines imposed were heavy. A few pice each should surely have sufficed by way of warning. Nor can I help feeling that the reported distinction between those who pleaded guilty and those who did not was wholly unnecessary.

Young India, 6-8-1931

187. WHAT IS LIBERTY ?

In the course of a letter eulogizing the non-violent character of our struggle, a country clerk writing from Vernon, Texas, says:

> Usually men think of liberty as the absence of restraint. That may be liberty, but usually it is licence. The absence of negation to personal desire is never liberty. Liberty is that which makes a man free in the face of great obstacles. It is one of life's virtues least understood and not often practised. Liberty is not a varying quality, but a fixed life principle.
>
> True liberty often does strange things. In fact the actors are frequently called fools. At any rate they do not seem to work for their own interest, but when rightly understood, liberty is seen to be an exhibition of service, if not of sacrifice. Conscious liberty lifts a man above the sordid and selfish to a view of the common good. It puts a premium on larger benefits and teaches her devotee to consider himself part of a great principle working for human uplift. His reward lies not in material gains, but in a larger truer self-conscious strength.

Young India, 6-8-1931

188. THE GARLICK MURDER

This murder in Bengal of a judge who was performing his duty according to his lights is a disgrace to the perpetrators. We may not wonder at the agitation that has troubled the European community in Calcutta and elsewhere. The young men who delight in murdering those whom they dislike, no matter from how patriotic motive, do not advance the cause they claim to espouse. And murders planned by secret societies make everyone in their immediate neighbourhood a suspect. Indeed one murder of a European official affects the atmosphere in the whole of India.

It is the duty of every person who sincerely dislikes these

murders to express his strong disapproval of such acts, and wherever he can find the followers of the cult of murder, reason with its members and non-co-operate with them if they do not listen. Satyagraha is no respecter of persons. Given a correct atmosphere satyagraha can be far more effectively used against our own friends than against those who regard us as their enemies. The nearer the relation, the more effective does satyagraha become.

We must realize that any toleration or indifference shown towards these activities will not only postpone swaraj, but will make swaraj government difficult, if not impossible. For, whilst it may be possible for an overarmed alien Government to carry on administration in spite of the activities of murderous secret societies, an administration based purely on popular will cannot be efficiently conducted in the midst of murderous activities. There is no warrant to suppose, that if the idea that it is right to murder officials or persons whom we dislike becomes popular, it will subside the moment we gain swaraj. From even the most selfish considerations, therefore, it is necessary for lovers of real freedom to put forth their best endeavour to check this evil before it becomes too late.

I have had it whispered to me, that violence going on side by side with non-violence must help the latter. As the author of the non-violent programme and as an expert in the line, let me proclaim with all the strength of conviction that it is a serious delusion to think that violence can help non-violence. On this matter my evidence based on long experience should be regarded as conclusive. I can assert that every act of political violence injures the non-violent movement. Everyone knows how it unnerves me. What has been called the Bardoli blunder and what I claim as an act of first-class wisdom was due to an ugly outbreak of violence on the part of professing Congressmen at Chauri Chaura[1]. But for the postponement of civil disobedience at the time, the country would not have made the phenomenal progress it has made. Let everyone concerned understand that if this contagion of murder spreads, without my wishing it or doing it, the active non-violent movement may automatically suffer a check. Like everything in nature it has its own law to govern it.

It may not be amiss here to examine the resentment caused in European circles over my article[2] on the attempted assassination of His

[1] In February 1922

[2] "Foul Play", 30-7-1931

Excellency the Acting Governor of Bombay. The resentment was caused by my making a distinction between the murder of a guest by a host and any other murder. I thought that I had made my meaning quite clear. I heightened the sinfulness of the act because of the additional fact that Sir Earnest Hotson was a guest of the College. Of course every murder is sinful and deserving of condemnation. But there are surely degrees of guilt even about these acts. And it has often happened before now that some special ugliness about such acts has stirred the conscience of those concerned and arrested the growth of the disease. It was with that object in view that I drew the distinction and pointed out the gravity of murderous acts. I know as a matter of fact that the article has affected some of those whom it was intended to influence. I ask my European critics to be patient with me. I understand their irritation. But they will not improve the situation by losing their balance and suspecting where there is no ground for suspicion.

Young India, 6-8-1931

189. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

MANI BHAVAN, GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
August 6, 1931

SATISBABU
KHADIPRATISHTHAN
SODEPUR

YOUR LETTER COME AND STAY WITH ME SOME DAYS. GOING STILL UNCERTAIN.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 17431

190. TELEGRAM TO M. P. GANDHI

MANI BHAVAN, GAMDEVI,
BOMBAY,
August 6, 1931

GANDHI
INDCHAMB
CALCUTTA

YOUR WIRE. YOU CAN REPRINT ARTICLES.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 17432

191. LETTER TO A YOUNG WOMAN[1]

August 6, 1931

MY DEAR . . .,

I have your letter. I must not write at length. You will see my letter to . . . and perhaps my letter to . . . . You must not be ruffled over this incident. Neither you nor . . . will feel upset if you will appreciate a parent's affection and anxiety. I have held . . . [your] family a model family in which the children enjoy the fullest liberty tempered only by the peremptory demands of parental affection. The present is an incident of that type. But you will tell me frankly and fully how you two have felt.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Laburnum Rd. Bombay, till 8th at least.

From a photostat: S.N. 9632

[1] The names in this letter have been omitted.

192. LETTER TO A MOTHER[1]

Confidential *August 6, 1931*

MY DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I am writing to . . . telling her that in my opinion her correspondence should be open to you for inspection. But I would urge you not to think that a parent has any necessary authority over his or her grown-up children. We as parents are likely to lose our influence over our children, if we claim authority over them. It is only a silken cord that binds us to our grown-up children. I simply throw out these thoughts for your peace of mind. I do not fear . . . taking any false step. . . . I am telling you all this because from the long letter I have received from . . . I observe that the girls are feeling the pressure somewhat. I am anxious that the harmony of your ideal home should in no way be disturbed by a single jar.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9689

193. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

August 6, 1931

CHI. PREMA,

Is it right that you should not write to me at all?[2] I had expected a long letter from you. Write one now. I was forced to talk about you today for nearly one hour with Dhurandhar and Kisan. What a shame! I was glad to read the news that you embraced Maitri.[3] But I shall not be satisfied till I get a full description.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10260; also C.W. 6709. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] The names and some passages in this letter have been omitted.

[2] During a post-prayer speech at the Ashram, Gandhiji had referred to some rumours about the addressee, which had hurt her.

[3] The addressee had threatened to beat Maitri with a sandal if she teased a younger girl.

194. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING, BOMBAY

August 6, 1931

Mahatma Gandhi proposed the following resolution:

The A.I.C.C. deplores the attempted assassination of H.E the Acting Governor of Bombay and the assassination of Judge Garlick in Bengal. While condemning all political murders,[1] the A.I.C.C. regards the attempted assassination of the acting Governor of Bombay as the more condemnable inasmuch as it was an act done by a student of a college that had invited the Acting Governor as its honoured guest. The A.I.C.C. warns those who secretly or openly approve of or encourage such murders that they retard the progress of the country. The A.I.C.C. calls upon Congress organizations to carry on special propaganda against all acts of public violence even where provocation is given for such deeds. Further the A.I.C.C. appeals to the nationalist Press to use all its influence in this behalf.

Speaking on the resolution Gandhiji said:

I hope you all have understood the meaning of this resolution and therefore I do not want to burden you with a Hindustani translation of it. I want to tell you that there is much more in my heart than what I have stated here. I tell you this because I have framed the resolution myself and because I know how far I can carry you with me. I have also to inform you that there was no difference among the members of the Working Committee on this resolution and I hope that in this House also there will be no difference of opinion on it. But still I do not want you to accept it without argument or discussion. I want you to express your views on it and if you do not agree with it throw it out.

This resolution has not been brought forward to deceive ourselves or Englishmen or the world at large. It has been moved todeclare what is the creed of the Congress. The creed of the Congress is to strive for the attainment of *'purna swaraj'* by non-violent and peaceful means. We have decided to follow the path of peace, truth and righteousness. And so long as we believe in it andwant the world also to believe that that is our way, then it becomes obligatory upon us

[1] A verbal amendment by Bhaisaheb Kotwal to add here the words "and attempts to murder" was later accepted.

to stick to it scrupulously in thought, word and deed. It also becomes our duty to prevent those who want to follow the opposite way. We must try to win them over. In 1920 when the Congress first adopted non-violence as its creed the argument was brought forward why the Congress should take any notice of what those who were not members of the Congress did. It was said that while Congress should follow its own way it should allow others to do what they liked. It was said that if Congress wanted it should stick to non-violence and even submit patiently to violence used against it by its opponents, but it has no business to advise others or come in their way.

Since the time this controversy started my reply to it has been that the Congress claims to represent and speak in the name of India and the fight it has been carrying on is for the good of every Indian whether he is a Hindu, a Muslim, a Christian or a Parsi. We claim to exert influence on them and we represent them and speak in their name. Our fight is not for Congressmen alone. If it were so our task would have been very simple. Last year when we carried on the struggle for freedom against the Government, the whole country was at our back. All those who participated in the struggle were not Congress members. But our strength is immensely increased by working for them and accepting their help. The Government admits the strength of the Congress not because there are some thousand members on the roll of the Congress or there are a few lawyers, doctors or other learned men in the Congress who can very well argue and discuss things. The Government recognizes the strength of the Congress because it feels that the voice of the Congress has reached the villages. Do you believe that if you declared that you have nothing to do with the masses and your fight was only for the members of the Congress your word will carry the same weight as it does today?

Our strength has now increased to the extent that even in the remote corners of the country where our voice has not so far reached, where the people have not yet seen the Congress flag, our influence is felt. It is true that all the seven hundred thousand villages of India have not Congress organizations but we are confident that when we go there our voice is heard and the people follow our advice.

Those who commit murders are also our brethren. We must exert influence on them. When we claim to represent them we also must accept the responsibility for what they do. In 1921 we had made it clear that we shall be responsible for the actions of the non-Con-

gressmen also. You know that I had suspended my work once or twice on former occasions for this reason. I will only cite the instance of the Rowlatt Act.[1] I am prepared to say that we did not suffer any loss because we suspended our fight on previous occasions. On the contrary I believe that we have distinctly gained thereby.

There is still a large number of people who say that I committed a blunder when I stopped the fight in Bardoli in 1922. They say that if we had continued our fight then by this time we could have been free. I believe it is a mistake to think so. It is even now my firm belief that what I did in Bardoli in 1922 was right and India has immensely gained by that action. The present awakening in the country is due to that action. If you do not believe in it, if your opinion differs then say so. You must have the courage to say so. But if you believe that what we have been doing since 1922 up till now is right then it becomes your duty to adopt this resolution and to work for it.

On former occasions when we condemned such actions we also praised the spirit of sacrifice among the young men. But we praised it so much that I think we reached the limit when we passed the resolution at Karachi about Bhagat Singh and his comrades. At that time I felt that for one whose sacrifice was so great and whose character was represented to me to have been spotless we should do all that we can to save him from the gallows and even if we did not succeed in it we should pass the resolution we passed. I did so in the belief that it would have sobering effect on the youths but I failed in that attempt. I am not unaware of the increased strength of the youths but it is being misused. I did not get the least success in that attempt. On the contrary it was exploited very badly and I am sorry for it.

There are those who accuse me of agreeing to that proposition at Karachi dishonestly because I wanted to placate the youths as I had to carry the Congress with me in ratifying the Delhi Pact and attend the R.T.C. My reply to these critics is that you cannot claim to know what is in my mind. It is God alone who knows that. But I can say this much that I shall never commit such blunder. If I do I shall not be true to the Congress. For others it may be a question of mere policy but for me it is my dharma. How is it possible for me to commit such a grave blunder for a small matter? I have never done it in my life. I

[1] In 1919 the Rowlatt Act Satyagraha was suspended because of the outbreak of violence.

do not attach so much value to the R.T.C. as to sacrifice that great principle of my life for it.

I certainly attach more value to the Delhi Pact. We have been benefited by it and I do not even now feel that we were mistaken in agreeing to it. I felt that we would profit by its acceptance and I see that we have gained much thereby and will gain more in future. You may think that it is worth consigning to the waste paper basket. But nothing could convince me that it was a mistake.

I am also aware of the objection raised, namely, why the crimes of our young men are magnified, while the Government whose faults drive our young men to commit such actions is not criticized. I do not know if there is any need on the part of the Congress to do that work. Those who demand such condemnation of the Government by the Congress do not understand the Congress. The very existence of the Congress is to destroy the present system of Government. The Congress wants to put a stop to what has been going on for years in this country. The Congress decided it when it first launched the non-co-operation movement. The vices of this Government have not since decreased, on the contrary they have increased. The youths who commit such acts do so as a result of their being driven to desperation but that does not mean that we should not say that they are mistaken.[1]

To recite the wrongs of the Government at the time of condemning political murders is to confuse the issue, and to mislead the hot-blooded youth. We must tell them in the clearest possible language, that they must cease to murder, no matter how great may be the provocation.

But how, it is further asked, can you end the present system by the way of non-violence? Surely the progress made by the country since 1920 is sufficient tangible proof of the success. But whether we shall succeed or not is not the question. There is the Congress creed, and we have to work it out faithfully. Hence we must not in any shape or form identify ourselves with the murderous activities that we witness about us. It would be perfectly legitimate for those who do not believe in the Congress creed to agitate for its removal, and there will be no need for such a resolution as the one before you. We must not deceive ourselves or the world.

And now a word to the nationalist newspapers. They can help a

[1] What follows is from *Young India* as reported by Mahadev Desai.

great deal if they will. One often sees glaring headlines in them suggestive of approval of political murder. Let them therefore beware of the slightest suggestion of encouragement to violence.

I am told by young men, that if I cannot help them I should keep quiet, but not hinder them. My answer to them is: if you must kill English officials, why not kill me instead? I plead guilty to the charge of putting an obstacle in your way in my own way. It is my creed. Have no mercy on me and despatch me straightway. But so long as there is breath in me, I must resist you in the manner I know. If you will spare me, do not lay hands on Government servants, be they big or small.[1]

Concluding, Mahatma Gandhi referred to the conduct of some nationalist papers which he did not find quite in keeping with the principle of non-violence. He wanted them to be careful in that respect. He felt it was needed that they should admit in fairness that they had erred and try to improve their conduct. He added that as he could praise their achievements he could also look to things as a critic and if their virtues could be compared to Himalayas their mistakes also would be as great as Vindhyas. He again repeated his appeal to the A.l.C.C. members to accept the resolution or to reject it.[2]

Replying to the debate Gandhiji said that when Sjt. Abhyankar levelled charges against him of not listening to the amendments or the speeches on them he readily pleaded guilty. They al! knew that he had certain habits whether good or bad and to them he wanted to stick. He had therefore to leave the meeting with the permission of the President. As he had not listened to the speeches of those who moved the amendments and therefore in fact he had no right to reply but if they permitted he would speak. He knew they were very indulgent to him. He thanked them for it. He was now growing old and therefore they should not expect him to work with the same energy as he was doing formerly. He was trying to reserve his energy but wanted them to rest assured that it would be utilized for national service.[3]

Some of the speakers have appealed to me to add words containing a reference to Government. Sjt. Abhyankar has credited me with the courage of confessing Himalayan blunders and with being supremely reasonable. Well, then, I may tell him, that it is because of my reasonableness that I cannot accept the suggestions for all that he wants is contained in the words “even where provocation is

[1] What follows is from The *Bombay Chronicle*.
[2] A debate on the resolution followed.
[3] What follows is from *Young India.*

given". If you go on harping on the violence of Government and applauding the sacrifice and courage of our youths, I tell you you will only help to send many more of them to the gallows. I do not so much mind Government hanging them as your driving them to the gallows, and I warn you that that is what you are actually doing by condemning violence[1] in one breath and applauding the courage behind it in the other.

Sjt. Abhyankar warns me that our resolutions of condemnation have no effect on the youths. He is mistaken. Every word that we say here reaches their ears. It sometimes angers them, but it often makes them think, and I humbly suggest that we can react on them only to the extent that we are in earnest. Let us therefore tell them plainly and unequivocally that their action does not help us but hinders us. I was responsible for suggesting the appointment of the Nariman Committee.[2] It has got yet to complete some facts for me, but I cannot proceed even on the facts already collected, because the action of these young men greatly handicaps me. Those who give them the slightest encouragement make it difficult to secure the liberty of those who are already suffering incarceration. I could not get those political prisoners released under the Settlement, but I had hopes that I would do so by entreaty. If you have elected to trust me, you must also trust my methods. But if you don't, the honest course is to disown me and to change the creed.[3]

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-8-1931, *and Young India*, 13-8-1931

[1] The source has "non-violence".

[2] It was appointed to collect from all the Provinces details regarding the political prisoners and others who were to be released under resolution No. III of the Congress.

[3] Gandhiji's resolution was carried almost unanimously, only four or five hands being raised against it.

195. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[On or after *August 6, 1931*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I am writing this while a meeting is proceeding. You must have now recovered your composure. I cannot even imagine your being agitated. If you examine yourself to see why you were agitated, you will discover that there was no cause at all for your agitation. Why should we be upset if someone entertains a groundless suspicion against us? But I don't have to argue with you. It is not as if you don't understand, but at present you have been disturbed in your heart and the effect on one's heart dies away only in the course of time through Ramanama.

Mahavir is being looked after with great care. He feels very much better now. The doctor says that he will have to remain under treatment for a few days. His system is filled with poisonous germs. Ba goes every day to inquire after him. He is being looked after very carefully. Tell Krishnamaiyadevi this.

I certainly wish to go there. I may have to stay here up to the 9th. It is still not certain whether I shall go to England. Prabhavati has arrived here.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, Part I. p. 270

196. LETTER TO S. B. BHADRAPUR

BOMBAY,
August 7, 1931

DEAR MR. BHADRAPUR,

With reference to the Panch fines in certain villages of Kheda, I send you herewith the original papers signed by those who had paid the fines. You are the best judge of whether the papers contain the

[1] From the opening sentence and the reference in the last paragraph to the uncertainty about Gandhiji's going to England, this was presumably written during the meeting of the. A.I.C.C. which commenced in Bombay on August 6, 1931.

signatures of those who had complained and whether you regard the document as satisfactory. I suggest too your personally seeing those who you may suspect of having been under any undue influence.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 17436

197. LETTER TO BOLTON

BOMBAY,
August 7, 1931

DEAR MR. BOLTON,

I assure you that I am leaving no stone unturned to facilitate my decision. My difficulty is this: I do not believe in the public opinion in England being vastly different from the opinion of the civilians here. The things in Bardoli or U.P. may not be of much importance in themselves. But they are portents and as such have a significance all their own. I am waiting for a sign from Ganeshkhind[1].

The misunderstanding about my reference to guest and host[2] has grieved me deeply. What was meant to be a powerful argument for combating the mischief has been interpreted as a kind of encouragement.

You have perhaps seen my article in *Young India* about what I expect to do in London if I reach there.

Yours sincerely,
M.K.G.

From a photostat: S.N. 17442

198. SPEECH AT MEETING OF PARSIS, BOMBAY

August 7, 1931

Mahatma Gandhi . . . said that he had not even a spare minute to deliver a lecture, because the time of delivering lectures had already gone. Some time ago when he was released from jail[3], Mr. Bharucha took a promise from him to find time to address at least once to the Parsi community. After that he came to Bombay many a

[1] The Governor's summer residence, near Poona
[2] In his article "Foul Play", 30-7-1931
[3] On January 26

time, but somehow or other, Mr. Bharucha did not press him for the fulfilment of the promise. Now, perhaps Mr. Bharucha thought that he would be going away to England, and, therefore, he was compelled to fulfil his promise that day. Mahatma Gandhi then said that he had to go for his prayer at 7.30 and after prayer he would be busy till 11 p.m. and, therefore, he had to be very brief in his speech.

Coming to his address, he said that there was no doubt that the Parsi community had done much for the country, but he thought that they had not come up to his expectation. There were seven lakhs[1] of villages in India and if the Parsi community were to exercise their charity towards these poor starving millions, they should use the clothes made by these poor villagers. Then the Parsi community should also try to spin for themselves. There was a time in India when every household had a charkha; but they could not make any improvement in it while Lancashire continued to keep its pace with progress and made improvements in their spinning machinery with the result that Indian people who used hand-spun cloth discontinued doing so and began to use the Lancashire fine cloth. The Parsi community should remember that if they put on khadi, they would support millions of poor people. Parsis were well known for their charity. But which charity was better, the charity of service or the charity of giving money, asked Mahatmaji. If the Parsis put on khadi they would demonstrate to the world two things. Firstly, that they suffered for the sake of the poor and secondly, that they served the poor. He thought, therefore, that suffering and service were better kind of charities than any other charity.

The other thing that he wanted to tell the Parsis was in regard to the liquor trade. Many Parsis kept liquor shops which was the cause of the suffering of the poor. He did not think that it was a very great thing for the Parsis to do away with the liquor traffic. The Parsis came from Persia and had adapted themselves in such a way that they could very easily do away with the liquor shops and successfully prosper in any other business. The charity which the Parsi community would do by doing away with the liquor trade would be immense to the country and when history is written of this country it would be stated of the Parsis that they made great sacrifices for the country. In this regard Mithubehn had served Gujarat for which the Parsi community should be proud. What Mithubehn had done for Gujarat every Parsi should do for his country. It is for the Parsi community to create an atmosphere that the baneful liquor traffic might be done away with. Some might ask what business then the Parsi liquor shopkeepers should get into. Mahatma Gandhi said that the Parsi community was so much enterprising that they would be successful in any other business if they stopped the liquor traffic. Take the case of Parsi Rustomji in South Africa, he said. Rustomji had liquor business first which he closed down and got into other business and amassed great wealth and gave lakhs of rupees in charity. He hoped, therefore, the Parsi community would seriously consider that point.

[1] The source has “60 lakhs”.

The third point was in regard to simplicity of life. He did not know whether he would go to England or not. People say he was going to England on the 15th, but he was not sure himself. Whether he went to England or not he would say one thing to the Parsi community that they need not be afraid of their right and privileges. The Parsi community was the smallest community in the whole of India, as it had hardly a population of a lakh. They had no reason to fear for the future, because they had been backed up by their self-reliance and strength. The Parsi community has done no wrong to any other community in India and they should rest assured that no community would harm them. But he would appeal to them to exercise simplicity of life. The Parsis were accustomed to a standard of life, namely, they wanted costly furniture and other paraphernalia, which other communities did not have. In future, they would have to try to exercise simplicity and self-control. When the National Congress demands that the highest official in India would be paid only Rs. 500, he felt assured that by that time the economic conditions in India would be so changed that everything would be had cheaply. For instance, doctors charge one guinea for consultation and lawyers charge thousands of rupees for their fees. That also would have to go to a minimum, and it was bound to go because everyone would have a simple life.

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-8-1931

199. SPEECH AT SWADESHI MARKET, BOMBAY

August 7, 1931

Gandhiji . . . addressed a few remarks to those who sat round him on the dais. He said that he was under the impression that he would discuss things with a few selected persons who were interested in the cause of swadeshi and who were invited to the Conference by the organizers. But instead he found a large concourse of people. He knew it was rather impossible to avoid such a crowd if they invited him to a place like the one where he had come. He regretted that he could not say to them what he wanted to say on the subject. He suggested that those who wanted to do the work should give their names and addresses to the organizers and become willing agents of swadeshi. If the idea of establishing a contact with workers in the cause of swadeshi which the organizers had in view succeeded in Bombay then it could be copied at other places also. Gandhiji added that the object was laudable, but again regretted that he could not express his views on the subject.

Some of those present asked Gandhiji a few questions to which he made replies and then left the place amidst shouts of *"Gandhijiki Jai"* and *"Inquilab Zindabad"*.

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-8-1931

200. TELEGRAM TO R. M. MAXWELL

GAMDEVI, BOMBAY,
August 8, 1931

P. S. BOMBAY
GANESHKHIND

SINCE MY DECISION ABOUT GOING LONDON DEPENDS ON HIS EXCELLENCY'S LETTER I WOULD THANK YOU WIRE ME WHEN I MAY EXPECT IT.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 17446

201. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

August 8, 1931

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your letter. I am glad that you wrote, but there was no need for you to write. I don't require a certificate from you either for Narandas or Premabehn. However, I am happy that you hold them both in high respect. You will certainly benefit if you obey Narandas and spend your time often in the good company of Premabehn.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: G.N. 9569

202. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

August 8, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter. I didn't get a single minute during the last week for writing letters. You need not at all worry about me. There is no actual pain in my right hand, but I feel pain when writing. Hence I write all the time with the left hand. That need not worry you in the least. It seems I shall be here for a few days more yet. You may read more about it in the newspapers.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3419

203. LETTER TO PADMA

August 8, 1931

CHI. PADMA,

I have got your letter. You should stay where you are and improve your health. We shall see what to do when Valjibhai and others go that side. You should always remain contented wherever you are.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6124; also C.W. 3476. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

204. SPEECH AT OPHTHALMIC HOSPITAL, BOMBAY[1]

August 8, 1931

Mahatma Gandhi in reply made a very short speech. He thanked the Parsi donor for his generous support to the eye hospital and was very glad to learn that Mr. Rata-nsha, son of Mr. Merwanji, and other members of the family cherished the same feeling of goodwill towards this institution and said the institution deserved every kind of consideration and would not be wanting in help from the family members of Mr. Merwanji and the public. He was pleased to find one more example of philanthropy in the Parsi community, which was known for its cosmopolitan charity.

The Bombay Chronicle, 10-8-1931

205. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING, BOMBAY

August 8, 1931

I may tell you, that I am doing all that is humanly possible to enable me to go to London. The Settlement commits the Congress to participate in the R.T.C. to place the Congress point of view before it. But without the necessary atmosphere my going there would be futile. I therefore declared that I could not go unless there was solution of the Hindu-Muslim-Sikh problem. The Working Committee discussed my declaration, my reasoning did not appeal to it, and I had to bow to

[1] Before laying the corner stone of the new building of the Aimail Merwanji Chamarbagwala Free Ophthalmic Hospital.

its decision that I must go even though a solution could not be attained before my going. But that did not mean that I should go there as a mere Hindu. If I went there as a mere Hindu, I should cease to be a representative of the Congress. The Congress belongs to all communities, and the Working Committee decided that I had no reason to absent myself from the R.T.C. even though I might have to go there with less strength and less self-confidence. That meant a step forward in the direction of London.

But there were other difficulties, one of them being the implementing of the Truce by Government. In this connection I made up my mind, that I must not make much of minor breaches of the Truce. For instance there are still many in jail who should have been released under the Settlement, there are still prosecutions going on, and still arrests being made. But as we, the workers, have voluntarily chosen the path of suffering, a few months' imprisonment is of small account. But it is quite a different matter where the peasants are concerned. How can I ask them to put up with more suffering? The Congress is essentially and pre-eminently a *kisan* organization. It also endeavours to represent the zamindars and the propertied classes, but only to the extent that the interests of the *kisans* are not prejudiced thereby. The Congress is nothing if it does not represent the *kisans.* And I was faced with the *kisan* problem in the U.P. and in Gujarat. Mr. Emerson, the Home Secretary, helped to the extent that he could. The Viceroy also assured me that I need not worry and that he would do everything needful. Cordial as this assurance was, I wanted to see if there were any signs of the assurance being carried out. I am still carrying on negotiations, and you may be sure that I shall not put too great a strain on those from whom I expect the assurance. I am not conceited enough to feel that everything here would be at sixes and sevens in my absence. But having been the sole Congress representative to carry on negotiations with Lord Irwin, and being so intimately connected with the *kisans,* I cannot leave for London if there is no relief or hope of it even for the existing state of things. That is why I ran up to Poona as soon as I was summoned by the Governor of Bombay,[1] and now am waiting for a reply from him. I sent him a telegram this morning,[2] and I am hourly expecting a reply. I am waiting for a sign and as soon as I get it, I shall decide.

[1] On August 4

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Swadeshi Market, Bombay", 7-8-1931

But do not be sure that I am sailing until I have actually boarded the ship. For who knows what happens between today and the fifteenth? Ours is a vast country, there are all sorts of rumours in the air and anything may lead to a conflagration. You know what happened in the Jinnah Memorial Hall.[1] Those are things that make me tremble, and may even unnerve me. Would you send a nervous wreck to the Conference? My decision would shock Lord Irwin who might well doubt whether I was in my senses, but even at the risk of annoying him I would prefer to stay here, if something that may happen between now and fifteenth shook me to the marrow. I have the same love for the Mussalman as for the Hindu. My heart feels for the Mussalman as much as for the Hindu. If I could tear it open, you would discover that there are no compartments in it, one reserved for the Hindus, another for the Mussalmans and so on. And therefore I hold myself responsible, when I find a Mussalman running at a Hindu's throat and vice versa. I have endured these things up to now, but there is a limit to human endurance. I am laying bare my heart to you as a man pledged to truth. I do not think any man can present a full record of what he feels, but I do know that I am keeping nothing from you. I hear rumbling of the storm, and I want you not to be surprised if you find me quail before it. That moment my strength may entirely fail me and render me completely impotent. Having elected me your sole representative, I want you to accept me with all my limitations and weaknesses. I have revealed to you my true self in all my weakness and impotence. Maybe I may conquer that weakness; maybe a single Mussalman may be able to disabuse me of my fears and my impotence.

At this stage, he was so overwhelmed with emotion that he broke down,[2] and could not proceed for a minute or two. But he soon composed himself, and proceeded to give in English a gist of what he had said in Hindi.

I did not really come here to pour out my feelings before you,

[1] On August 3, 1931 some Muslim hooligans had attacked prominent Nationalist Muslim leaders and Congressmen. Fifteen persons were injured.

[2] Mahadev Desai, in his introduction to the report of this speech, gave the following information: "When Sardar Vallabhbhai and Pandit Jawaharlal saw Gandhiji in the afternoon of the 8th and asked him whether he would be available for the evening sitting, as he was expected to make a statement on the question of his going to London, Gandhiji was reading an inflammatory leaflet issued by some of the rowdy agencies in Bombay. It was so full of grossly false statements and deliberate incitement to violence that it made even Gandhiji's blood boil. In deep sorrow he

but as I was proceeding, it was impossible for me to choke the rising emotions. I have gone through a heart-training which enables me to keep outwardly smiling while a storm may be raging in my breast. That storm has reached a crisis and I am feeling unnerved and seem to have lost all power. And therefore I say that, although the atmosphere may be clear so far as Government are concerned, I may not be able to go because there is a doubt lurking in my breast, that when the moment comes, it may find me unprepared. Think of the disgraceful scenes in the Jinnah Memorial Hall the other day. People who had done no wrong to anybody were pounced upon and belaboured without any provocation. I saw a man who, if he chose to use his strength, would be a match for ten, profusely bleeding because of the brutal blows he had received that evening. It was a pitiable sight for me. Then I had a graphic account of the incident. It shot into me like an arrow. But that is not all. I am studying and trying to understand what is lying concealed under the surface, and I must to a certain extent hold myself responsible for what is happening. God used me as an instrument for creating that great awakening in the country in 1919. Naturally passions were aroused, but as all regarded themselves Indians fighting for a common cause, there was no internecine conflict. But that was only a momentary dream soon to vanish like smoke, and now we find that we are all at war against one another. That makes me unfit for the work for swaraj. And so I say that, although the atmosphere may otherwise be clear, something might happen which might make me mad and absolutely powerless. Surely you would not then want to send to London a man who was so unnerved. You must send someone with faith, and I find myself fast losing faith. That produced the collapse that you saw a moment ago.[1]

Gandhiji added if Mr. Satyamurti[2] thought they were going to get their demands by argument, he was mistaken as most things at the Round Table Conference would be done behind the curtains and the whole thing would be stage-managed.

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said: 'I do not feel like going anywhere. How I wish I could shut myself up here and cry out my grief. There is so much violence in the air, so much falsehood, that I often wonder if it is worth while my going, even if other circumstances made it possible'. . . . I am giving these details here in order that what appeared to be a sudden breakdown on that momentous evening may be presented in its true setting."

[1] What follows is from *The Hindu.*

[2] Who had asked for an explanation from the Working Committee for its decision to send a sole delegate to the Round Table Conference contrary to the Karachi resolution.

Referring to Mr. Satyamurti's argument that various other interests were over-represented and therefore the Congress should have adequate representation, Gandhiji said that that was the very reason why they had decided upon a sole representative Gandhiji added they could not settle such delicate questions by argument as days of argument had gone long ago, but things could be settled only by negotiations. For such delicate negotiations, Gandhiji maintained, a single representative was much better suited than a delegation and asked Mr. Satyamurti to have faith in their representative, and added if he had no faith in the capacity of one representative, he could not have better faith in a delegation consisting of more than one.

Young India, 13-8-1931, and *The Hindu*, 9-8-1931

206. TALK WITH SEVA DAL WORKERS, BOMBAY[1]

August 9, 1931

You ask me what you will do now. I want your province to become a storehouse of men and women workers to be drawn upon by other provinces whenever they want. These will be specially pledged to non-violence, accepting non-violence not as a policy but as a creed, not as a stray brick in the edifice of swaraj, but as the corner-stone of which the removal would bring down the whole edifice. I want them to be trustees of non-violence, guarding it as a valuable treasure which may never be despoiled but ever increase. As such their task will not be mere regulation of meetings, but to offer themselves up as sacrifices when there are disturbances such as we had in the Jinnah Memorial Hall.

Let the Seva Dal men be the salt of the Congress earth. That army will be more powerful than any violent army. The violent army cannot prevent the poison of untruth and communal strife from spreading, but you as a non-violent army should be able to check it. In a vigorous healthy independent India everyone must be ready to fight and die for the liberty and sacredness of the life of the individual. I am not a pessimist. I have abundant faith, that the time may come in my lifetime when this non-violent army may be a fact and a living reality, and eclipse the record of brilliant soldiers. It is not an idle dream, for whilst a violent army has its obvious limitations, a

[1] On the merger of Hindustani Seva Dal with the Congress. Dr. Hardikar and his friends had met Gandhiji for a message just after the morning prayer.

non-violent army has none of the same type. Once it takes fire, it does not require any other training or discipline. It should be the function of the Central Board to present an object-lesson by the concentration on one spot which may be the headquarters of an ideal army. If the movement catches fire in Karnatak, it will overrun the whole of India, but if it does not catch in Karnatak, it will produce mighty little effect in the province itself, much less in India. If it becomes a live force, I should, if God wants me again to tour through Karnatak, see a different atmosphere there. The whole province would then be a depot of non-violent soldiers streaming out from day to day, just as every port town is a huge sailors' quarters. The Central Board has been deliberately intended to supply only officers. There can be no provincial organization without an officer certified by the Seva Dal Office. And if this your officer is a staunch man, if he has drunk in the tradition,—you have through him moral control of the whole organization. That is my ideal, and I am sure that it can be a living reality. I have that amazing faith in Jawahar. Fired with ample zeal he will do it. There may be self-deception in this belief of mine, but that self-deception will help the country. As for Dr. Hardikar, I have not come in close touch with him, but I have hope and faith in him because I have faith in the destiny of India. That faith would be shattered if non-violence does not become a live force. Today there is blind following on the part of the masses, and the classes follow with the almost stupid calculation of a Bania. Attempt has been made to wean the Congressmen of this stupid calculation, but it can succeed only if the Congress volunteers will be true to their salt. Once non-violence has found a lodgement in their hearts there is no limit to its expansion. The awakening that we witnessed last year would have been impossible without this. Read history with my eyes. Take the history of the Mutiny. It was a war of independence fought with violent weapons. Col. Malleson has narrated a fairly faithful account. You will see that though the greased cartridges may have been an immediate cause, it was just a spark in a magazine that was ready. But look at the result. The U.P., the storm centre of 1857, has for generations since remained under a paralysis as perhaps no other province. For people have retained vivid memories of man turned beast, and masses who simply watched were mown down like corn stalks in a field. Take now this 12 years' experiment. It is a short time in the history of the nation. The experiment and its mighty results would have been impossible without the great force of non-violence.

But it has not yet permeated us through and through; otherwise we should not see the disgraceful scenes we are witnessing nowadays. Bengal I know intimately. I know to what heights it can rise. It has given us not only a Rabindranath Tagore, but a whole army of great men. But it is paralysed today, unable to come up to its natural height. I say this in spite of its brilliant record of the past year. But for the spirit of violence that has overtaken it, the record would have been still more brilliant.

I have drawn a distinction between a violent and a non violent army. There will be difference in the nature of discipline. The Tommy yields obedience whilst at war, but will yield to wild licence when free from it. But a non-violent soldier carries discipline in his heart and will carry an atmosphere of restraint in every walk of life. Non-violence is a trust which has to be zealously guarded by the Seva Dal. Your soldiers will not only keep discipline in meetings but in homes and domestic affairs. A non-violent soldier is non-violent in all places and at all times.

Young India, 13-8-1931

207. GUJARAT VIDYAPITH

Kakasaheb writes:[1]

It is a matter of regret that a small demand made by this national university four months ago has yet not been fully met. As Ahmedabad has been naturally deriving the greatest benefit from it, Kakasaheb's expectations of Ahmedabad in this matter should not be considered too high. It is not beyond the capacity of the city to raise and donate that amount. There can be no two opinions about the fitness of the Vidyapith or its usefulness. It should also not be necessary for Kakasaheb's teachers to go begging from house to house. What is required is willingness on the part of the rich or the middle class or both in Ahmedabad to collect Rs. 25,000. If one or two citizens take the matter in their hands, they can raise the sum in a week or a fortnight. May I hope that Ahmedabad will do this? Those who can afford to pay only small sums through *Navajivan,* may do so at its office or send the money directly to Kakasaheb.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-8-1931

[1] The letter is not translated here. It contained an appeal for funds.

208. LETTER TO LILAVATI SAVARDEKAR[1]

BOMBAY,
August 9, 1931

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. My advice is, you must stick to your resolve, no matter what happens.

You may not know that I tried to do all I could for the *Devdasis* of the South.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-8-193l

209. SPEECH AT HINDUSTANI SEVA DAL CONFERENCE, BOMBAY

August 9, 1931

At a special session of the Hindustani Seva Dal Conference held. . . in the Jinnah Hall a resolution was adopted confirming the decision of the Central Board of Volunteers to dissolve all the organizations of the Dal and handing it over to the Working Committee of the Congress.

Mahatma Gandhi opened the Conference and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the Congress President, presided. . . .

Mahatma Gandhi . . . said that the Conference was meant not to write the epitaph of the Seva Dal as Mrs. Naidu who was asked to preside but could not do so owing to her departure to Hyderabad had said in her letter. On the contrary, it was meant to make the Seva Dal stronger. The Congress now wanted to bring the Dal under its direct control because it felt that the time had come when it should organize all the volunteers in the country and bring them under its own control. Proceeding, he said:

The fight we carried on last year impressed upon me the need for training and discipline among the volunteers. The volunteers that we got as the struggle proceeded had not the required training. Although we gained much by that struggle we also suffered I certain

[1] This letter and "Letter to Lilavati Savardekar", 16-8-1931, were published in *The Bombay Chronicle* as having been addressed to the same person. The addressee *was* a fallen woman who wanted to lead an honourable life.

respects. You might not be knowing it. But I know it better. Although I was behind the bars of Yeravda I was getting newspapers and I could see what was going on in the country from day to day. It is but natural, when there is mass awakening. But if there is no discipline many evils are sure to creep in. It did happen like that in the last struggle.

The volunteer organizations are in fact the very soul of the Congress. The very existence of the Congress depends on them, because they are the army of the Congress. Of course our army is to be non-violent. We have adopted a new way. Our army is not to bear arms. Nor have we to make use of ammunitions. The Congress has decided to save India by that new weapon. We have already achieved considerable success by following that way. And we mean to achieve more. But our success depends on our non-violent army of volunteers. If they do not save India, if instead of saving they themselves destroy it, if instead of being the apostles of non-violence they themselves become the votaries of violence, how can we expect to succeed in our struggle?

Although I was behind the bars of Yeravda I was getting newspapers regularly and I could see what was going on. I felt that if we want to use the Seva Dal for our purpose we must effect certain changes and make it more useful for our work. It is to bring about that change that we have met here. That is the object of this Conference.

Those who have been serving the Seva Dal or helping it in other ways need not be sorry for this change because this change is for thegood of the Seva Dal. It is for the good of the country. It is to conserve all that was good in the Seva Dal and to put new life into it. We expect that the changes will strengthen the Dal and make it more useful for the service of the country.

The Working Committee had decided to entrust the work to Dr. Hardikar and Pandit Jawaharlal. The Committee expects very good results from this new arrangement. We require the services of the Seva Dal in every case. At present we are living in peace time. Whether the Truce is followed by a permanent peace or whether we have to start the struggle again we require the services of the Dal. As I said it is our army and we have to maintain it. I must admit that so far I did not take any great interest in the work of the Seva Dal although I consider myself always a good soldier and am keenly interested in such

matters. I hope that this new arrangement will immensely enhance your strength. I wish it is so. That is my blessing to you on this occasion if I can give any blessing.

The Bombay Chronicle, 10-8-1931

210. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

August 10, 1931

Q. 1. Will you be ready to give shelter in the Ashram to the three women or to any of them who may wish to join it?

A. Yes, I shall be very happy to do so. But before joining the Ashram, the women should know and understand my views fully.

Q. 2. What are those views?

A. My first duty will be to inform the Government as soon as the women arrive and communicate their names and other particulars.

Q. 3. If you inform the Government, it will immediately arrest them and prosecute them.

A. Yes, that is possible. The women should be ready for this risk when joining the Ashram.

Q. 4 What, then, will be the advantage to the women of joining the ashram?

A. It is also possible that, in response to my request, the Government may not prosecute them just now or as long as they live in the Ashram and try to live henceforth in accordance with the Ashram ideals of life.

Q. 5. Will not the Government try to obtain from them information about all that they have done?

A. It will certainly want to obtain such information, but I will tell it, and tell the women, too, that they should confess only their own crimes and errors without involving any other person.

Q. 6. In sum, you desire that the women should join the Ashram ready to face all risks.

A. Yes, I should like them to join the Ashram ready to face all

[1] The questions and Gandhiji's answers were set out by Jamnalal Bajaj in a letter, with a request to Gandhiji to revise the answers if they had not been reproduced correctly. The questions related to three women wanted by the Government.

risks.

This is correct.[1]

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2892

211. TELEGRAM TO VICEROY

BOMBAY,
August 11, 1931

EXCEEDINGLY REGRET INFORM YOU THAT LETTER[2] BOMBAY GOVERNMENT JUST RECEIVED RENDERS IMPOSSIBLE MY DEPARTURE FOR LONDON. LETTER RAISES ISSUES OF FIRST MAGNITUDE AS WELL OF FACTS AS OF LAW AND CONTENDS THAT GOVERNMENT MUST BE FINAL JUDGES ON BOTH. IN NAKED TERMS THIS MEANS THAT GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE BOTH PROSECUTOR AND JUDGE WITH REFERENCE TO MATTERS ARISING OUT OF A CONTRACT TO WHICH THEY AND COMPLAINANTS ARE PARTIES. THIS IS AN IMPOSSIBLE POSITION FOR CONGRESS TO ACCEPT. WHEN I READ BOMBAY GOVERNMENT'S LETTER TOGETHER WITH SIR MALCOLM HAILEY'S TELEGRAM RECEIVED IN ANSWER TO MY ENQUIRY AND REPORTS OF CONTINUING HARASSMENT IN U.P., FRONTIER PROVINCE AND OTHER PROVINCES THEY SEEM TO ME COMPLETE INDICATION THAT I MUST NOT SAIL. AS I PROMISED TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOU BEFORE COMING TO A FINAL DECISION I HAVE BROUGHT FOREGOING FACTS TO YOUR NOTICE. I SHALL AWAIT REPLY BEFORE MAKING ANNOUNCEMENT.

Young India, 20-8-1931

[1] This sentence is in Gandhiji's hand.
[2] *Vide* "Letter from R. M. Maxwell", 10-8-1931

212. TELEGRAM TO R. M. MAXWELL

BOMBAY,
August 11, 1931

THANKS LETTER[1] RECEIVED THIS MORNING. AFTER CORDIAL CONVERSATION WITH HIS EXCELLENCY I WAS UNPREPARED FOR WHAT I MUST REGARD AS THOROUGHLY DISAPPOINTING REPLY. AS GOVERNOR KNOWS BARDOLI MATTER WAS ONE OF FIRST MAGNITUDE WITH ME FOR CONGRESS HONOUR WAS PLIGHTED TO PEASANTS. I HAVE NOT ASKED FOR CONGRESS BEING FINAL JUDGE. WHAT I URGED WAS THAT CONGRESS WORD WAS GIVEN TO PEASANTS THAT IF THEY PAID ACCORDING TO THEIR ABILITY WITHOUT HAVING TO BORROW NO COERCION WOULD BE USED. I TOLD GOVERNOR THAT MONEY OF WHICH REFUND IS ASKED WAS PAID NOT BECAUSE OF ABILITY BUT BECAUSE OF COERCION. IN SUCH A MATTER OF HONOUR WHEN WE HAVE EVIDENCE SUPPORTING OUR POSITION WE CANNOT ACCEPT COLLECTOR'S WORD AS FINAL. UNLESS THEREFORE HIS EXCELLENCY IS PREPARED REVISE DECISION IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME PROCEED LONDON. BUT AS I PROMISED VICEROY NOT MAKE PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT UNTIL I HAD COMMUNICATED WITH HIM HAVE WIRED TO HIM AND NOW AWAIT REPLY BEFORE MAKING ANNOUNCEMENT.

Young India, 20-8-1931

213. TELEGRAM TO DR. B. C. ROY[2]

[On or after *August 11, 1931*][3]

YOUR WIRE. NOT IF HE OBJECTS CONDITIONS.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 17454

[1] *Vide* "Letter from R. M. Maxwell", 10-8-1931

[2] In reply to the addressee's telegram received on August 11 1931, which read: "Regarding item five of draft Subhas says that present dispute is with regard to B.P.C.C, election for 1931-32 and no fresh election due in October. He considers no conditions regarding supervision need be laid down now for elections to be held next year. Wire whether Subhas should start tomorrow Wednesday."

[3] *ibid*

214. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

August 12, 1931

MY DEAR AMTUL,

I have your letter. Do as Narandas says and have full faith in what he says. I cannot give you greater guidance from here.

I saw your mother and brother and was delighted to see them.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 244

215. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

August 12, 1931

CHI. PREMA,

Have you made up your mind not to write to me? You do not know my love at all. I have treated you with greater indulgence than if you had been my daughter. If I have to leave on Saturday, would you like it that I should leave without a letter from you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10261; also C.W. 6710. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

216. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

August 12, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I see from it that my public reference to the matter has hurt both . . .[1] and you and also that you think that what I said was improper. I realized only today that you felt or might feel hurt. I had not connected your agitation with my statement. I had believed that you must have been agitated by the very thought that someone had entertained even a suspicion against you. I have not

[1] The names are omitted in the source.

been able to understand why . . [1]. must have felt hurt either. She had in fact laughed away the whole thing and that had reassured me. If I referred to the matter in public, it was, as is my wont, with the intention of clearing the air. Since people had started talking about it, I thought it advisable to express my view so that the whispering might stop. I see nothing improper in this. At any rate there is no cause in it at all for anyone to feel hurt. How amusing it is that we remain unconcerned if anyone talks about us in private but feel hurt if somebody mentions the same thing in public. Moreover, why should we feel hurt by any suspicion for which there is no ground at all? Think over all this. Show this letter to . . .[2] and banish the pain from your heart. If you see any error in my reasoning, let me know.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, Part I, pp. 270-l

217. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[After *August 12, 1931*][3]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have no time to write a long letter today. Mahavir is very well now. I feel tired in my right thumb and so I am writing this letter with the left hand.

Have you overcome your agitation? Has . . .[4] calmed down? Has the air cleared? Write to me in detail.

Have you taken away cow protection work from Santok?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Despite my great eagerness to go there, I have not been able to do so. My going to England is still uncertain. I forgot to tell you that

[1] The names are omitted in the source.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*
[4] The name has been omitted.

you should pay Chhaganlal Joshi[1] Rs. 200 just now from the Satyagraha Fund for expenses, and continue to pay even in future whatever he may require.

If he requires anyone from among those who were in the march, the person should certainly be relieved. We shall have to think afterwards what arrangements to make for the Ashram.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, Part I; pp. 271-2. Also C.W. 8186. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

218. NEED FOR FEELING HELPLESS

God is great, and we are but dust. But thanks to our pride, whilst we say with our lips 'God is great', our actions belie the profession and show that we think nothing of God and a 'mighty lot' of ourselves. But it is time to realize our helplessness. The growing *goondaism* of which Bombay had a bitter experience must furnish all with food for reflection. It cannot, it must not be answered with counter-goondaism than which nothing is easier. What can be easier than to swear harder than one's opponent or to give two blows against one or to organize ten men against five? But this can serve no earthly purpose. And if it can serve any celestial purpose, that abode must be worse than the fabled hell.

Is there then no remedy for the growing evil? The time honoured and well tried method is that of prayer and fasting. But both have to come from the heart. A parrot like repetition of the choicest sentiment and mere starvation of the body would be worse than useless. Prayer and fasting avail where there is a definite consciousness of the presence of God in us, even as we have of friends living under the same roof. Self-deception will not do.

Jawaharlal uttered the feeling of co-workers, when in anguish he said, 'This will stop political life and may even influence social life.' The way out is not to give any handle to *goondaism*. The best way would be for peaceful men to withdraw from meetings when the *goondas* have invaded it. Truth will not be suppressed by violence. And if those who represent it will suffer without retaliation, they will find that it will spread without effort. Difficulty however lies in

[1] At this time Chhaganlal Joshi was working around Navsari.

knowing where truth lies. It is easy enough to accuse one's opponent of representing untruth. But this inherent inability to demonstrate the absolute truthfulness of one's position makes toleration an imperative necessity for the progress of ordered life. Without the freedom to everyone to express his opinion unfettered by interference from those who hold the contrary, ordered life becomes an impossibility.

Is refusal even to defend oneself the logical outcome of this argument? For the moment I do not need to go so far, though for those who believe in non-violence through and through, self-defence is an impossibility. For them not to defend is the best self-defence. This however is not an artificial or mechanical state that can be imposed from without. It does not admit of being argued out. One has to grow to it. The need of the moment is to realize our helplessness. A Tamil proverb truly has it: God is the Help of the helpless. This realization will show us a way out of the present impenetrable darkness, without our having to work out the logical outcome of non-violence. This is the work of philosophers. For us helpless men and women who have to serve from day to day and often in the face of gloomy despair, it is enough if we can sing with the Seer: "One step enough for me."

Young India, 13-8-1931

219. TELEGRAM TO VICEROY

BOMBAY,
August 13, 1931

THANK YOU FOR FULL WIRE[1]. YOUR ASSURANCE I

[1] Of August 13 which read: "I should regret extremely if for the reasons you have given Congress were to be unwilling to carry out arrangement which provided for their representation at the Conference. I am unable to accept these reasons as valid and I cannot but feel that your misgivings arise from a misunderstanding of policy of Government and grounds on which it rests. . . . In particular I should have thought any misgivings as regards the United Provinces would have been removed by Sir Malcolm Hailey's telegram to you of 6th August, and as regards Gujarat by paragraph four of the letter of the Private Secretary to Sir Ernest Hotson to you of August 10th. I would remind you of my personal letter to you of July 31st in which I gave you the fullest assurances of my personal interest in everything to do with the Settlement and could therefore have hoped that you would not allow disputes over present details to prevent your serving India by participating in the momentous discussion of the future constitution which may determine the destiny of the country beyond your time or

MUST READ IN LIGHT OF PRESENT HAPPENINGS AND IF YOU CAN SEE IN THEM NOTHING INCONSISTENT WITH SETTLEMENT IT SHOWS FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE IN OUR RESPECTIVE OUTLOOKS UPON SETTLEMENT. IN CIRCUMSTANCES I REGRET TO SAY THAT THERE IS NO WAY LEFT OPEN TO ME BUT TO CONFIRM DECISION ALREADY CONVEYED. I CAN ONLY ADD THAT I TRIED MY UTMOST BEST TO GO TO LONDON BUT FAILED. PLEASE INFORM PREMIER ACCORDINGLY. I PRESUME I MAY RELEASE CORRESPONDENCE AND WIRES FOR PUBLICATION.[1]

Young India, 20-8-1931

220. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

August 13, 1931

After the announcement of the decision of the Congress Working Committee, Mahatma Gandhi spoke to a group of Press representatives. Mahatmaji said:

It is needless to say I am very unhappy that I shall not go to London. I know what effect this will have on Lord Irwin, and I also know how disappointed my numerous friends in England will be. But this decision against my going there was inevitable. I was hoping against hope and expected to the last moment that justice would be done.

I think I made a very modest request. If, there was a Settlement between the Government and the Congress, and if there is a dispute in the interpretation of this Settlement or if either of the parties contravenes the terms of the Settlement, then the same rules that are followed regarding other pacts should be applied to this Settlement too. This, in my opinion, is all the more necessary because the present Settlement is between a powerful Government and a mighty Congress, claiming to represent the entire nation. The observance of the terms of the present Settlement cannot be enforced by law. The Government is

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mine. If however your telegram represents the final word I will at once inform the Prime Minister of your inability to attend the Conference."

[1] In reply the Viceroy wired on August 14: "I have informed the Prime Minister of your decision. I am releasing relevant correspondence to the Press. . . . You are of course free to do the same."

therefore doubly bound to place before an impartial tribunal all these points of dispute between itself and the Congress. The Government however refused to accept this very modest proposal of the Congress.

Under these circumstances it would have been very wrong for the Congress to join the Round Table Conference. I cannot say anything more than this at this time.

I hope it would be possible for the Working Committee to publish the relevant correspondence as and when necessary. The public will, then, be able to form its own opinion.

After this, a Press representative asked Mahatma Gandhi: "What is your programme for the future?" Mahatmaji replied:

At this moment I am unable to say off-hand what the future programme will be. It will depend on the steps which the Government will take.

Q. Will civil disobedience movement be launched and if so when?

A. As far as I know, there is no idea of starting the satyagraha struggle immediately.

Q. When will you leave Bombay and what is your destination ?

A. I intend to leave Bombay tomorrow evening for Ahmedabad.

Q. Is there any hope of resumption of talks between yourself and the Viceroy about the Settlement?

A. If you are referring to resumption of talks on the question of representation of the Congress at the Round Table Conference, as far as I know, and as far as the Congress Working Committee is concerned, there is no question of resumption of the talks.

After this the representative asked whether the Delhi Settlement endured or was abrogated. Mahatmaji replied:

The breakdown of the present talks does not necessarily mean annulment of the Delhi Pact. Refusal to send a representative to the Round Table Conference for breach of the Settlement is one thing; and abrogation of the Settlement itself is another thing.

I can say this much, namely, Congress is not prepared to do anything drastic in the near future. Congress will endeavour its utmost to fulfil the terms of the Settlement. But the Government can create intolerable conditions. In that case Congress will necessarily act in self-defence.

A representative asked: "Have wholly unbearable conditions been created now?" Mahatma Gandhi replied:

Perhaps wholly unbearable conditions have not been created.

Q. What did the Viceroy write to you?

A. I am not in a position to disclose the Viceroy's reply. I am awaiting permission to publish the correspondence.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 15-8-1931

221. CABLE TO R. H. BERNAYS[1]

MANIBHAVAN,
August 14, 1931

BERNAYS
"NEWS CHRONICLE"
LONDON

FOR ONCE LET BRITISH PUBLIC BELIEVE THAT EVERY EFFORT HUMANLY POSSIBLE WAS MADE BY ME TO PROCEED LONDON BUT BELIEF IS GROWING ON ME THAT GREAT CIVILIANS HERE DO NOT WANT ME TO ATTEND CONFERENCE OR IF THEY DO THEY DO SO UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH A NATIONAL ORGANIZATION LIKE CONGRESS CAN NEVER TOLERATE. IF THERE IS TO BE LASTING PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN TWO NATIONS THESE CIVILIANS WILL PROBABLY REMAIN AS TRUE SERVANTS OF INDIA. I HAVE THEREFORE NO DESIRE TO ATTEND CONFERENCE IF I CANNOT DO SO WITH THEIR WHOLEHEARTED GOODWILL AND BLESSINGS. WHEN FULL FACTS ARE PUBLISHED I WILL BE ABLE TO PRODUCE A CATALOGUE OF BREACHES BY PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS WHICH WILL SHOW HOW PATIENT CONGRESS HAS BEEN AND HOPING AGAINST HOPE. DEMAND FOR AN IMPARTIAL TRIBUNAL BEFORE WHOM CONGRESS CAN PROVE THESE BREACHES I HOLD TO BE PERFECTLY NATURAL AND SIMPLE. I CLAIM FOR DELHI SETTLEMENT AT LEAST AS MUCH SANCTITY AND PROTECTION AS IS CLAIMABLE FOR ANY ORDINARY CONTRACT BUT IF FOR THIS SOLEMN

[1] In reply to the addressee's cable which stated: "Decision of Working Committee causes deep disappointment and bewilderment here. Your friends still strongly hope you will come London. Is this still possible? Personally regard it as important you make position clear for benefit of British public".

SETTLEMENT ONE CONTRACTING PARTY CAN BE BOTH PROSECUTOR AND JUDGE IT IS NOT WORTH PAPER ON WHICH IT IS WRITTEN AND IF LONDON CANNOT GUARANTEE PROTECTION TO THAT PARTY TO THE CONTRACT WHICH HAS NO ARMS TO BACK IT LONDON IS NOT LIKELY TO PRODUCE A SCHEME THAT WILLGIVE INDIA WHAT SHE HAS LONG DESIRED AND TO WHICH SHE IS ENTITLED BY RIGHT OF SUFFERINGS IF NOTHING MORE. POSITION IS ANY DAY RETRIEVABLE BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES IMPLEMENTING TERMS OF SETTLEMENT. I CLAIM FOR CONGRESS THAT IT HAS DONE ITS PART TO BEST OF ITS ABILITY. IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN READY TO SET RIGHT EVERYTHING BROUGHT AGAINST IT AND HAS BEEN ALWAYS READY TO COURT PUBLIC ENQUIRY INTO EVERY ONE OF ITS DOINGS. PERSONALLY I WOULD GIVE MY ALL FOR THE SAKE OF LORD IRWIN WHO I KNOW WILL FEEL DEEPLY CUT UP TO SEE THE SETTLEMENT TO WHICH HE GAVE MANY ANXIOUS DAYS AND NIGHTS FAILING AT LAST MOMENT. I CLAIM TO FEEL THIS NO LESS KEENLY THAN HE. YOU MAY THEREFORE DEPEND UPON IT THAT I WOULD MAKE A DASH FOR LONDON THE MOMENT THE WAY IS CLEARED FOR ME BY THOSE WHO ARE IN A POSITION TO DO SO.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 17464

222. LETTER TO VICEROY[1]

August 14, 1931

Events have moved so fast that I have not had the time to acknowledge your very kind personal letter[2] of 31st July. I recognize the sincerity running through that communication but the latest developments have made that letter past history, and as I have said in my wire of 13th inst., the sum total of all the circumstances betrays a fundamental difference of outlook between us. I can only give you my assurance that it was not without the greatest and most anxious deliberation that I came to the conclusion that in view of your decision I could not, consistently with my obligations here, attend the

[1] Published under the caption, "Will the Settlement Abide ?"

[2] *Vide* "Letter from Lord Willingdon", 31-7-1931

Round Table Conference. But I was grieved when I heard that your decision was affected by the opinion ascribed to you that I had insisted upon a board of arbitration and that I was trying to set myself up as a head of parallel government. As for the board of arbitration it is true that I have claimed it as a matter of right but if you recall our conversation I never insisted upon it. On the contrary, I told you that so long as I got the justice to which I was entitled I would be quite satisfied. You will agree that this is wholly different from insisting on a board of arbitration. As to the alleged parallel government, I thought I had dispelled the illusion when, in reply to a jocular remark by you, I had told you that I did not claim to be a district officer but that my co-workers and I had acted as voluntary Patels or village Headmen and that too with the consent and knowledge of district officials. I should therefore be sorry if these two opinions which I submit were erroneous had affected your decision.

The purpose however of writing this letter is to inquire whether you regard the Settlement as now at an end or whether it is to be still continued. in spite of the abstention of the Congress from participation in the Round Table Conference. The Working Committee arrived at the following decision this morning:

> In view of the resolution relating to the Congress non-participation in the Round Table Conference passed by the Working Committee on August 13, the Committee desires to make it clear that this resolution should not be construed as ending the Delhi Settlement. The Committee therefore advises Congress organizations and all Congressmen to continue to comply, until further instructions, with the terms of the Settlement in so far as they are applicable to the Congress.

From this you will observe that the Working Committee of the Congress has no desire to embarrass the Government at the present juncture and that therefore it is prepared to continue honourably to work the Settlement. But such working must depend upon a reciprocal attitude on the part of Provincial governments. As I have told you so often through correspondence and our conversations, this reciprocity has been found to be progressively missing. Information continues to be received at the office of the Working Committee of Government activity which can only be interpreted to be token of a design to crush the Congress workers and the normal Congress activities. If therefore the Settlement is to abide I venture to think that an early relief in the matter of complaints already filed is necessary. More, as I have already said, are coming and co-workers are insistent that if relief is

not had in time they should at least get the permission to adopt defensive measures. May I request an early reply?

Young India, 20-8-1931

223. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

August 14, 1931

Q. If negotiations are not reopened, will you withhold renewal of the civil disobedience movement until the second Round Table Conference finishes its labour?

A. It is difficult to give a conclusive answer, but the Congress will make every effort not to renew the civil disobedience movement. Much will depend upon the attitude of Government.

Q. If the second R.T.C. fails to grant your principal demands or substance thereof will you consider the Delhi Pact a dead letter, and will you then renew the struggle?

A. The renewal of the struggle is a certainty if the Congress demands are not granted.

Q. If the struggle is resumed, will it be more intensive and upon a wider scale ?

A. I should hope so. Certainly no stone will be left unturned to make the struggle more intensive and extensive.

Q. In making your decision yesterday, did you pray for divine guidance ?

A. In all my recent activities and decision[1] yesterday of the Working Committee, the hand of God can be distinctly traced. I can assure you that throughout these anxious days, I have searched my heart eagerly for divine guidance.

Q. If Lord Irwin had been Viceroy, do you think you would have come to terms with him about going to London?

A. Comparisons are invidious.

Q. Do you attribute responsibility for the failure of the negotiations to the Provincial authorities, to Earl Willingdon, to the London Government, or to all three?

A. I attribute responsibility for the failure to the obstinacy of the Provincial authorities, but still more to the force of circum-stances.

Q. Do you believe the Working Committee's resolution of yesterday leaves the way clear for Government to reopen negotiations, leading to your presence in

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

London?

A. The Working Committee's resolution undoubtedly leaves the door open for all kinds of negotiations, so long as they are designed to lead the Congress to its destined goal.

Q. What in brief are you minimum terms for you going to London?

A. Satisfactory assurances that the conditions of the Delhi Settlement will be observed by the Provincial governments so far as they are applicable to them. Satisfaction must be to the party claiming to be injured, which in this case is the Congress.

Q. Was failure to settle the Hindu-Muslim communal problem or any other recent development a contributing factor to your decision not to go to London?

A. No other happening contributed to my decision except the breakdown of the Delhi Settlement at a most critical period, when, if the Provincial governments had really intended that I should go to London, they would and should have made my way clear.

Q. Do you think there is any danger of the peasants spontaneously suspending the payment of land revenue when they see that you are not going to London?

A. I hope not, and certainly not if we have acquired any control over them.

The Times of India, 15-8-1931

224. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

GURARAT VIDYAPITH,
AHMEDABAD,
August 15, 1931

RAJAGOPALACHARI
CARE A. V. RAMAN, LLOYD CORNER
ROYAPETTAH (MADRAS)

DISTRESSED OVER PAPA'S[1] HEALTH. UNDER ALTERED CIRCUMSTANCES YOU NEED NOT WORRY TO COME EARLY. AM HERE SOME TIME. WRITING.

BAPU

Froma photostat: S.N. 17466

[1] Addressee's daughter

225. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

AHMEDABAD,
August 15, 1931

MY DEAR MURIEL,

I know what a terrible shock it must have been to you to learn that after all I was not coming. If it is any consolation please know that it was no less a shock to me. I know with what affection you were making preparations to receive me in your home. I was looking forward to making the acquaintance of the neighbours of Kingsley Hall and come in intimate contact with their lives. But God has willed otherwise. I hardly think you need my assurance that I have neither been wilful nor obstinate. On the contrary I exercised the greatest patience. But you will soon learn the tragic story. Whilst therefore I have been grieved to arrive at the decision not to go, deep down I have the feeling that it was the best thing and that the time was not ripe for me to go to London.

Love.

BAPU

MISS MURIEL LESTER

From a photostat: G.N. 6641

226. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

AHMEDABAD,
August 15, 1931

I know how deeply grieved you must have been to learn that after all I could not sail by the *Mooltan.* I can see as clear as daylight that it was God's will that I should not go. I made Herculean efforts to be able to go, but it was no use. I do not write anything more because the cables will have told you all. This is merely to tell you that in coming to the decision I had Sastri, Polak and above all Muriel in my mind. But duty knows no personal ties. Has it not been my lot often to disappoint dearest friends? The thought too of what it must have meant to Lord Irwin was almost too much for me to bear. But the voice within was peremptory, and so when the Viceroy's wire[1] came, a

[1] *Vide* footnote to "Telegram to Viceroy", 13-8-1931

great weight was lifted off my back.

I am not writing separately to the other friends except Muriel. Will you please share this with them?

C. F. ANDREWS, ESQ.

From a photostat: S.N. 17470

227. LETTER TO MATHEW KOHOSOFF

AHMEDABAD,
August 15, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for the gift of *Midstream* by Helen Keller. Though I have not been able to go through the whole of the volume a glance through its pages shows that it is a remarkable story.

Yours sincerely,

MATHEW KOHOSOFF, ESQ.
574 WEST 192D STREET
NEW YORK (U.S.A.)

From a photostat: S.N. 17471

228. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

AHMEDABAD,
August 15, 1931

DEAR SUBHAS,

I had your wire. As there was no hurry I did not wire back. In view of it we all came to the conclusion that it would be better for Mr. Aney to go on with his investigations so that at least a proper finding on the facts would be available.[1]

I hope that Dinesh's resolution was rescinded.[2]

Yours sincerely,

SYT. SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

From a photostat: S.N. 17472

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] On July 7 Dinesh Gupta had been hanged in Alipur Central Jail for the murder of Col. Simpson, Inspector-General of Prisons, Bengal.

229. LETTER TO M. S. ANEY

AHMEDABAD,
August 15, 1931

DEAR MR. ANEY,

I forgot to tell you that you had to go on with the Bengal dispute because your suggestion was unacceptable, so far as I could gather, to Subhas Babu,[1] and those members of the Committee to whom I was able to talk came to the conclusion that on the whole it would be better to thrash the whole matter out and for you to find out who is in the wrong. Though therefore it may take you a little time, please give the Committee your full decision.

If you find time, I would like you to give me an exhaustive note on the Forest Laws and their administration and your considered judgment on the necessity of offering jungle satyagraha.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. M. S. ANEY
YEOTMAL (BERAR)

From a photostat: S.N. 17473

230. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

AHMEDABAD,
August 15, 1931

I had your letter.

You are going through a terrible trial. But I know that in the midst of it all you can remain cheerful and unruffled. I would not think of tearing you away from Papa. So long therefore as she needs your personal nursing, I have no doubt that your duty is to be by her.

What shall I write to you about the dramatic developments? I hope your reasoning fully endorses the decision. I have personally not a shadow of a doubt about it. I wish you would be able to attend the next meeting of the Working Committee[2], if I am free till then. I expect still greater dramatic developments now. But I feel that all will

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Dr. B. C. Roy", 11-8-1931
[2] Scheduled to be held from September 8

be well and as satyagrahis we have no business to want to peep into the future. We must simply take care of the present and be sure of the future.

SYT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
C/O SYT. A. V. RAMAN
LLOYD CORNER
ROYAPETTAH (MADRAS)

From a photostat: S.N. 17474

231. LETTER TO ROMAIN ROLLAND

AHMEDABAD,
August 15, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your most affectionate letter. How I would have loved to see you if I had gone to England, but it was not to be. I feel that it was God's will that I should not go. But I am not yet without hope that some day, somehow we shall meet in the flesh.

Yours sincerely,

M. ROMAIN ROLLAND

From a photostat: S.N. 17475

232. TELEGRAM TO SHERWANI

[On or after *August 15, 1931*][1]

SHERWANI
ELGIN ROAD
ALLAHABAD

MY OPINION IS GOVIND BALLABH PANT SHOULD JOIN AGRARIAN COMMITTEE,

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 17430

[1] *Vide* the following item.

233. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

[On or after *August 15, 1931*]

PT. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

YOUR WIRE. THINK GOVIND BALLABH SHOULD JOIN COMMITTEE. HAVE WIRED SHERWANI ACCORDINGLY.

From a photostat: S.N. 17430

234. DIVINE WILL

All had thought it certain that I would have left on the 15th for England. Many persons here, in England and in other parts of the world were eager that I should go. However, if a person like Ramachandra had no foreknowledge that at the hour fixed for his coronation he would have to leave for the forest, how can a common man like me or an ordinary organization like the Indian National Congress say with certainty that a certain thing will happen at a certain time? God's will prevails in all matters, and it is always for the best. I see nothing but God's will in the Viceroy's reply. I can certainly state that I sincerely did all that a human being could do to enable me to go to England and take part in the Round Table Conference. If, in spite of this I have not been able to go, I am sure that India's good lies in my not going.

For myself I see no difference between the officials here and the political leaders in England. If we have to struggle hard to secure justice from these officials even in the most trivial matters, and if sometimes we fail to get it despite all our efforts, it is an idle hope that we shall get justice in England in much more important matters. The logic of this is quite simple. A big sum in arithmetic is the total of small sums. What is true of the smallest is true of the biggest. If, therefore, it is impossible to secure justice in very small matters, it will also be impossible to get it in a big matter. According to this logic, what has happened here is only a warning of what is going to happen in England. If this line of reasoning is correct it was best, even from a

[1] In reply to the addressee's telegram dated August 15, 1931 which read: "U.P. Government invited Govind Ballabh Pant sit on agrarian committee which considering future revenue policy. I consider under present circumstances his joining inadvisable. Please wire your opinion to Sherwani Elgin Road Allahabad."

practical standpoint, that I should not go to England as a representative of the Congress.

However, the fact of my not going has increased the burden of duty on the people. I shall now have to ask the nation to work harder and I hope that it will respond. Let the people wake up. We shall however discuss this further at some other time.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-8-1931

235. TELEGRAM TO K. F. NARIMAN[1]

VIDYAPITH, AHMEDABAD,
August 16, 1931

NARIMAN
CONGRESS
BOMBAY

NO OBJECTION MEETING GIVING INFORMATION.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 17487

236. TELEGRAM TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

GUJARAT VIDYAPITH,
AHMEDABAD,
August 16, 1931

ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN
UTMANZAI (CHARSADDA)

YOUR WIRE. PLEASE SEE COMMISSIONER ABOUT ADBARPURA PLACING ALL FACTS BEFORE HIM. ALSO

[1] This was in answer to the addressee's letter to Mahadev Desai which read: "Sir Cowasji (Jr.) sent for me today and had a long talk on the subject. He wanted me to accompany him to Poona. I said that I could not without instructions from headquarters. He is proceeding tonight to Poona to have a talk with H[otson] I presume on the lines of Sapru's wire to W[illingdon]. He has asked me to see him immediately on his return tomorrow evening and then if necessary he may ask me to proceed to Ahmedabad same night and himself may accompany; in that event may arrive Monday morning. Please wire after consulting if there is any objection to the Course suggested". (S.N. 17479)

IF NOT ALREADY GONE GO DERAISMAILKHAN AND SMOOTH TROUBLE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 17488

237. LETTER TO J. B. KRIPALANI

AHMEDABAD,
August 16, 1931

DEAR PROFESSOR,

Someone has to be sent to the Frontier Province for doing khaddar work there that is to say, teaching spinning, carding, weaving etc., Have you anybody in view whom you could send? Khurshedbehn would like you to handle this work.

How do you like the latest developments?

ACHARYA KRIPLANI
GANDHI ASHRAM
MEERUT

From a photostat: S.N. 17480

238. LETTER TO KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI

AHMEDABAD,
August 16, 1931

I had your long letter handed to me by Devdas and it gave me great delight as it was full of news and this was supplemented by what Khan Saheb and Devdas had to say. Now that I am not going to London I would like you to give me a weekly budget of news.

I am trying to send someone for khadi work and I am also thinking of sending one or two more sisters. Of course I shall send no one without first getting your approval. Hamida I have not forgotten at all and the other I have in mind is Kusumbehn whom you know so well and who was with us during the Almora tour. She has not yet given me her final answer but I have told her that even if she made up her mind I would have to consult you before sending her. You will therefore now guide me and if you can think of other names you will not hesitate to tell me. Nanibehn I have in mind. I had a talk with her today. I have not mentioned the frontier work to her as yet. But I understood from her that she was attending to one liquor shop and

she seems to me to be irreplaceable at the present moment. But I will not take any further steps till I hear from you.

I saw your telegram from Dera Ismail Khan. I have telegraphed to Khan Saheb.[1] I am expecting full information from you. I take that you have a full supply of newspapers. I need not therefore tell you anything about the trying events that are taking place here. If you want any newspaper that is not being sent to you otherwise please do not hesitate to ask for it.

SM. . KHURSHEDBEHN
C/O DR. KHAN SAHEB
PESHAWAR

From a photostat: S.N. 1748.

239. LETTER TO LILAVATI SAVARDEKAR[2]

AHMEDABAD,
August 16, 1931

DEAR SISTER,

This is my message:

Whilst it is true that man must shed his vice for the sake of his fallen sisters I am quite certain that the evil will be eradicated only when some sister from amongst them rises in revolt against the evil and with the fire of her own purity burns the evil in the others.

Yours sincerely,

SM. LILAVATI SAVARDEKAR

From a photostat: S.N. 17482; also *Bombay Chronicle*, 29-8-1931

240. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

AHMEDABAD,
August 16, 1931

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I was able to see your letter only yesterday after reaching Ahmedabad. I am only now able to overtake the arrears of correspondence. As Sardar Vallabhbhai told me that the Corporation

[1] *Vide* "ATelegram to Abdul Ghaffar Khan", 16-8-1931
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Lilavati Savardekar", 9-8-1931

had already declined to interfere with the Dinesh resolution, I did not wire my opinion yesterday. If the information given by the Sardar was correct, I am sorry. I do believe that the resolution should have been rescinded for the sake of the young men and for the sake of truth. But I suppose you were utterly helpless.

As for the party disputes in Bengal, after the receipt of Subhas's letter, I had an informal discussion with as many members as I could get hold of at the time and we all came to the conclusion that, in the circumstances, it would be better to let things take their own course and let Mr. Aney give his finding.

I send you herewith two letters. I like Phanindra Nath Seth's letter. Apart from the charges, his suggestions seem to me to be sound. I can make neither head nor tail of the other letter.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 2

DR. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY
36 WELLINGTON STREET, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 17483

241. LETTER TO ANNE MARIE PETERSEN

AHMEDABAD,
August 16, 1931

I was delighted to hear from you after a long time.

My collapse[1] had nothing to do with my health. It was purely the welling up of emotion in me that overpowered me for the moment. This has happened to me more than once. I am keeping quite fit and there is no cause for anxiety. Do not stop writing for fear of taking up my time. Only don't expect me always to reply. Had I gone to Europe I should certainly have sought out Esther and Menon. But God is great and merciful. At the right moment, he lifted the weight off my shoulders.

MISS PETERSEN
PORTO NOVO (S. INDIA)

From a photostat: S.N. 17484

[1] During the A.I.C.C. Meeting in Bombay on August 8, 1931; *vide* "Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting, Bombay", 8-8-1931

242. LETTER TO SHRI RAM SHARMA

AHMEDABAD,
August 16, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter about repression in Rohtak. If relief is not forthcoming, you will presently have the needed permission to adopt defensive measures. As I am not going out of India you will please continue to keep me informed of the situation there.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI RAM SHARMA
GENERAL SECRETARY, DT. CONGRESS COMMITTEE
ROHTAK (PUNJAB)

From a microfilm: S.N. 17485

243. LETTER TO A. SUBBIAH

P. O. BOX 26,
AHMEDABAD,
August 16, 1931

MY DEAR SUBBIAH,

I have your letter. Your telegram was attended to as soon as it was received. Now that I am not going to London I expect to be relieved of some pressure. But it is also likely that the pressure may increase.

Lalita[1] has no excuse for not completing her Hindi. She can't plead want of time nor want of tuition. You can give it to her for a few minutes daily, but what she needs is not so much tuition as application. I cannot help the feeling that if those from the South who are nearest me will not take the trouble of learning Hindi, there is something wrong, and then I have no right to expect the others to learn it. Either a knowledge of Hindi is a necessity for the service of the masses and therefore should be at once learnt by all true servants or it is not necessary, in which case the Hindi Prachar Office should be

[1] Addressee's wife

wound up. There is something untrue in the present vagueness. Let Lalita therefore beware.

I hope to be here for three weeks. . .[1]

From a microfilm: S.N. 17486

244. LETTER TO K. B. BHADRAPUR

AHMEDABAD,
August 16, 1931

DEAR MR. BHADRAPUR,

I thank you for your two letters about the fines imposed in 21 villages by the *Panch* and the rents in Ras. Please excuse me for the delay in acknowledging them. I shall be for some time in Ahmedabad now. I hope to write to you more fully as soon as I have finished my enquiries.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 17489

245. TELEGRAM TO K. F. NARIMAN

August 17, 1931

NARIMAN
CARE CONGRESS
BOMBAY

YOUR LETTER.[2] ANY INQUIRY INTO BARDOLI COLLECTIONS WOULD SATISFY ME IF IT IS REALLY IMPARTIAL AND PUBLIC. WHILST THAT WOULD BE ENOUGH TO SEND ME LONDON IT SHOULD NOT MEAN THAT WORKING COMMITTEE WILL NOT PRESS FOR RELIEF ON OTHER MATTERS OR FAILING SATISFACTION FOR PUBLIC IMPARTIAL INQUIRY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 17492

[1] The letter is incomplete in the source.

[2] Of August 16. Nariman had said that he had met Cowasji Jehangir after the latter's return from Poona, and that the position as he could understand from him as well as from the telegram sent by Sapru and Jayakar to the Viceroy was that Gandhiji would be prepared to go to London on the Government agreeing to appoint an impartial officer to enquire into the forcible revenue collection in Bardoli. He had asked if this was correct.

246. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

VIDYAPITH, AHMEDABAD,
August 18, 1931

MALAVIYAJI
HINDU UNIVERSITY
BENARES

DOUBT THE WISDOM BUT YIELD TO YOUR ADVICE. AM HANDING IT[1] TO THE PRESS.

From a photostat: S.N. 17511

247. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

AHMEDABAD,
August 18, 1931

MY DEAR BHRR,

Your letter. Yes, you have to be on the shelf well dusted and ready when the emergency arises. You are still the successor.[2] Love to you all, specially to the new arrival. Smother him or her with kisses. Mind that the flowing beard does not prick the tender skin.

Yours,
BHRR

From a photostat: S.N. 9577

248. LETTER TO HARDIT SINGH DHILLON

AHMEDABAD,
August 18, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter.

Though we may differ as to the methods we seem to have common goal. Believer as I am in non-violence I seek to convert

[1] Presumably the reference is to the correspondence which *inter alia* included the charge-sheet. It was published in *Young India,* 20-8-1931.

[2] It seems Abbas Tyabji was nominated to succeed Gandhiji as leader of satyagrahis after his arrest; *vide* , "Letter to Mahadev Desai"

people to particular positions and not compel them. Hence there is difficulty in my being able to endorse your plan.

Yours sincerely,

HARDIT SINGH DHILLON, ESQ.
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
BERKELEY, CALIF. (U.S.A.)

From a photostat: S.N. 17499

249. A LETTER[1]

AHMEDABAD,
August 18, 1931

DEAR SISTER,

There is no breakdown in my health. My right thumb needs rest from constant writing. Hence the use of the left hand. The collapse at the meeting was an expression of grief I could not control. My health has been never better than now during the past few years.

Yours, etc.,

From a photostat: S.N. 17500

250. LETTER TO SONJA SCHLESIN

AHMEDABAD,
August 18, 1931

DEAR MISS SCHLESIN,

Well, I can't go to S. Africa since I am not even going to London.

Believe me there is nothing spectacular in the loin-cloth. It is a vital necessity. Was there anything spectacular in the change made in S. Africa? Is the dress, i.e., the loin-cloth of the coolie in Natal spectacular? And how if I do not feel anything better than he? Do you know that millions in India do not wear anything more than a loin-cloth? But I forget you are a superior woman. You cannot judge people by the ordinary standard.

My book is true, because it is a faithful reproduction of my recollections. It is open to all those who were associated with me to

[1] The addressee's name is not known.

correct mistakes. And since it is not an advertising medium, what does it matter if some dear friends escaped my memory at the time? But send me a list of all inaccuracies and omissions. And endeavour will be made to make the necessary corrections and additions when the second edition is called for.

My right hand is out of use. Hence the effort with the left hand.

Yours, etc.,

From a photostat: S.N. 17501

251. LETTER TO WINCENTY LUTOSLAWSKI

AHMEDABAD,
August 18, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter.

As you must have seen I am not going to London. If I had gone I would certainly have set apart an hour for you. I understand your warning but in spite of it I hold that if we have real satyagraha in us we should hold our own. That it would be difficult I admit. But nothing is impossible in that line for a satyagrahi.

Yours sincerely,

PROF. WINCENTY LUTOSLAWSKI
ETABLES, COTES DU NORD
(FRANCE)

From a photostat: S.N. 17502

252. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

AHMEDABAD,
August 18, 1931

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I send you the enclosed for your information. You will destroy it after use.

Encl. 1

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
ANAND BHAWAN
ALLAHABAD

From a photostat: S.N. 17503

253. LETTER TO MAZHAR ALI ALAVI

AHMEDABAD,
August 18, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter.

I have no objection to your dedicating your book to me.

Please remember me to your father. I hope he is now well.

Yours sincerely,

PROF. MAZHAR ALI ALAVI
KOTHI NO. 131
AMINABAD, LUCKNOW

From a photostat: S.N. 17504

254. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

AHMEDABAD,
August 18, 1931

DEAR DR. ROY,

The Manager, *Navajivan*, has sent me your appeal for funds on behalf of the flood-stricken. I am simply dazed. I have appeals from Assam, Bihar, Ratnagiri, and now from you. I do not know that I can get anything from the readers. I have therefore not made any appeal in the pages of *Navajivan* or *Young India*. I am debating in my mind what to do. I make one suggestion. Write personally to some of the monied men whom you know. I am deeply hurt that I can do nothing.

Yours sincerely,

DR. B. C. ROY
COLLEGE OF SCIENCE
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 17505

255. LETTER TO MOHOMMAD MUFTI KIFAYATULLAH

AHMEDABAD,
August 18, 1931

DEAR MAULANA SAHEB,

I must thank you for your letter of 13th inst.

The Working Committee has certainly not discussed the question. I do not know what Pandit Malaviyaji and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad have been saying. In any event my own promise stands, and now that I am not going to London do you not think that the whole discussion has now become profitless?

Yours sincerely,

MAULANA MOHOMMAD MUFTI KIFAYATULLAH
PRESIDENT, JAMAITULAMA-I-HIND
BAZAR BILLIMARAN, DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 17506

256. LETTER TO R. G. PRADHAN

AHMEDABAD,
August 18, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter enclosing your appeal to the Hindu members of the R.T.C. It does not any longer affect me but I may say that the appeal is not likely to be of much use because in my opinion the Government want to keep the question for themselves to arbitrate upon. I hope I am wrong. But the conviction is not baseless.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. R. G. PRADHAN
NASIK

From a photostat: S.N. 17507

257. LETTER TO S. THURAI RAJA SINGAM

AHMEDABAD,
August 18, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and the golden studs. They will be used for khadi fund.

You may make what use you like of my writings about Dinbandhu Andrews.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. S. THURAI RAJA SINGAM
THE SCHOOL
PEKAN
[MALAYA]

From a microfilm: S.N. 17508

258. LETTER TO PADMA

August 18, 1931

CHI. PADMA,

I was glad to read your letter. I did not find the temperature chart which should have been enclosed. You should not walk so much that you get completely exhausted. How do you spend your time there? How is Sarojinidevi occupied? What is your diet? Write to me and give me all this information. Your having lost weight is not a good sign.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6125

259. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

AHMEDABAD,
August 18, 1931

CHI. KUSUM,

I got your postcard. I don't want any doctor's opinion. I want your own opinion.

Go and see Mahavir.

According to me, you require no medicine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1826

260. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

AHMEDABAD,
P.B. 26,
[*August 18, 1931*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I am both happy and unhappy because you have stayed on in Bombay. I am happy that you will now put the Congress Committee into shape. But I do not like the idea of your plunging into work so soon after your recovery and postponing going to Deolali. I have got the point about the visit to Kekobad. The interpretation of the resolution about emergency can be really called original. It had never occurred to any of us.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
53 MINT ROAD
FORT-BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the postmark

261. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

AHMEDABAD,
August 18, 1931

Interviewed . . . in connection with the latest statement made by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya[1] Mahatma Gandhi said:

I have read Pandit Malaviya's message. Whilst what he says about the immediate demand is substantially true, I am unable to share his opitimism. It is perfectly correct for Pandit Malaviya to say that the issue has been narrowed down to one single matter.

It is so narrowed only for the purpose of enabling me to sail for England, but there is no doubt that underlying the issue there is a big principle which the Government has to face. In my opinion, that principle is an integral part of the Settlement, namely, that between the people and the Government the Congress is an intermediary.

If that fact is not recognized, the Settlement is a nullity, and I fear that it is because the Government do not wish to recognize this natural consequence of the Settlement that Government has broken on the Bardoli matter. Whether relief is granted through a board of arbitration or an impartial acceptable inquiry I do not mind. There is not the slightest desire to humiliate or embarrass the Government or anybody. The only desire is to get justice, somehow or other. Let it be after the Government's manner but it must be justice that would be acknowledged as such by those who are striving for it.

Asked about the Press report that the Congress was fast preparing for war, that instructions had been sent out to various Congress officials not to obey the orders of the Government calculated to prevent them from enjoying or exercising their lawful rights as regards picketing of foreign cloth and liquor shops, that word had been sent round to the peasants of Kaira and Surat Districts asking them not to pay land revenue more than they could afford and to face the consequences and that the Congress Secretary at Allahabad had been empowered to issue instructions to *kisan* leaders of the U.P. to resist all measures of repression by zamindars or Government servants,

[1] In which he had said: "I cannot persuade myself to believe that, where the differences between the Government and the Congress have been reduced to such a small, though important, issue and where the justice of the demand is so clear, the Premier and his colleagues will allow the earnest and arduous labours of the last many months to be defeated, the whole object of which was to secure the representation of the Congress at the Round Table Conference."

Gandhiji said:

This is a deliberate lie. No such instructions have been issued to anybody. Not only that, instructions have been issued all over the country that the Delhi Pact should be carried out and that nobody should disobey any Government order without the permission of the headquarters. I know that the Congress Working Committee is anxious to carry out the Delhi Pact honourably, but if Provincial Governments goad us we shall have to take the defensive. I have gathered ample evidence to prove that goading has already begun.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-8-1931

262. TELEGRAM TO PRANJIVAN MEHTA

GUJARAT VIDYAPITH,
AHMEDABAD,
August 19, 1931

DR. MEHTA
PAGODA ROAD
RANGOON

RATILAL NOW HERE WELL LOOKING BUT STILL EXCITABLE. PROPOSE LEAVING HIM FREE.

GANDHI

From microfilm: R. N. 17521

263. LETTER TO K. B. BHADRAPUR

AHMEDABAD,
August 19, 1931

DEAR MR. BHADRAPUR,

I thank you for your letter of 17th inst. enclosing a note containing information about Patels, Talatis, etc. I may have to write further on it.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 17510

264. LETTER TO E. I. BUNBURY

AHMEDABAD,
August 19, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I know you will forgive me for this late acknowledgement of your kind letter of 4th inst. I have been working against time and I knew that there was no hurry about answering your question.

If a person or a firm dealing in Indian cloth also imports foreign cloth, that person or firm whether Indian or European would certainly be liable to boycott. And this, in my opinion, is in no way contrary to the Pact. On no other condition can boycott of foreign cloth be effective. If you once recognize the propriety and necessity of boycott of foreign cloth, the other follows as a matter of course.

Yours sincerely,

E. I. BUNBURY, ESQ.
HOME STREET
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 17510

265. LETTER TO BOYD TUCKER

AHMEDABAD,
August 19, 1931

MY DEAR BOYD,

I purposely refrained from writing to you in answer to your letter. I was waiting to know what was to happen. Now of course you know the result but supposing all the negotiations that are going on materialize and that ultimately I am obliged to go, I should still feel that you should not go as one of the companions. But several would be travelling on their own and you may also do likewise. What I feel that I should be going just as I am. I do not know whether you appreciate the force of my going in that absolutely detached condition This may either come from arrogance or from utter trustfulness in God. I am certain that it is the latter with me. The more I think of the tremendous difficulties ahead and my own very limited powers, the clearer my helplessness becomes to me. I therefore say to

myself "I will rely only upon God and no one else, nothing else." But He chooses many instuments for His purpose and if He wants to use them He will also see that they are there ready to be used.

Yours sincerely,

REV. BOYD TUCKER
SHANTINIKETAN
BIRBHUM

From a photostat: S.N. 17514

266. LETTER TO HENRY NEIL

AHMEDABAD,
August 19, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

You evidently seem to imagine that I have an unlimited purse. The fact is that I have not even a farthing I can call my own. I have certainly control over some funds but they are all earmarked. It therefore, I undertook to do anything in connection with your proposal I should have to beg, but you would not expect me to add to the number of begging bowls I carry with me. They are already far too many and perhaps embarrassing for the donors.

Yours sincerely,

HENRY NEIL, ESQ.
EAST AURORA, NEW YORK (U.S.A.)

From a photostat: S.N. 17515

267. LETTER TO B. K. BHATTACHARYA

AHMEDABAD,
August 19, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your letter of 5th inst[1]. Peremptory preoccupations prevented an early acknowledgment.

I made some little attempt at the time of the meeting of the

[1] Seeking Gandhiji's intervention in bringing about reapprochement between Subhas Chandra Bose and J. M. Sen Gupta.

A.I.C.C. to bring about concord between the two parties, but I failed hopelessly. It really means my personally going to Bengal but that is not possible at the present moment. Mr. Aney is able, fearless and impartial. Let him deliver his judgment as quickly as he can. I might then be able to see daylight out of darkness. Where both the parties vehemently assert that they are in the right, reconciliation becomes almost an impossibility.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. B. K. BHATTACHARYA
81 SIBPUR ROAD SIBPUR, HOWRAH

From a photostat: S.N. 17516

268. LETTER TO C. E. NEWHAM

AHMEDABAD,
August 19, 1931

DEAR MR. NEWHAM,

I have your very kind letter.[1] I call it very kind purposely. It is evidence of your trust in me and I appreciate it. I wish it was possible for me to fulfil your expectation. I must now make a confession. You can have no knowledge of my amazing dullness and ignorance. You will be surprised to know that I do not know what really the game of hockey is. I did not know that the masses were interested in it. I have never, to my recollection, watched any game either in England, South Africa or in India. I have never attended cricket matches and only once took a bat and a cricket ball in my hands and that was under compulsion from the head master of the High School where I was studying, and this was over 45 years ago. This confession does not in any shape or form mean that I am opposed to games, only I have never been able to interest myself in them. In the circumstances it would simply mystify the people if I now came out with a new card even though it might be for the laudable purpose of winning more English friendships and more English sympathy and support for the cause which makes life worth living. I hope you will appreciate my difficulty and therefore inability to help you.

Yours sincerely,

C. E. NEWHAM, ESQ.
CECIL HOTEL, SIMLA

From a photostat: S.N. 17517

[1] In which the addressee had asked Gandhiji on behalf of the Indian Hockey Federation to subscribe to the Olympic Hockey Fund.

269. LETTER TO V. S. NARAYANA RAO

AHMEDABAD,
August 19, 1931

DEAR NARAYANA RAO,

I have your letter of 15th instant.

I had long correspondence with the Dewan Saheb but there was nothing conclusive to report to you. I cannot therefore give you any definite advice either. You must really therefore recall all the arguments that you had with me, that is to say, so much of them as you could assimilate, and then examine the circumstances there existing at the present moment and do as the inner voice bids you. I cannot take the responsibility of giving a final decision from this distance.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. V. S. NARAYANA RAO
SECRETARY, BANGALORE DT. CONGRESS COMMITTEE
BANGALORE CITY

From a microfilm, S.N. 17519

270. LETTER TO SIR DARCY LINDSAY

AHMEDABAD,
August 19, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 25th July last for which I thank you as also for your cablegram. I promptly sent you a reply which I hope you received in good time. You would have seen the energetic measures taken by the All India Congress Committee. The result has been very encouraging. You may have also seen my articles on the attempt on the life of Sir Earnest Hotson and the tragic assassination of Judge Garlick. I assure you nothing that can be done will be left undone to prevent this insane course of assassinations.

Yours sincerely,

SIR DARCY LINDSAY
MAYFAIR, LONDOND W.

From a photostat: S.N. 17520

271. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

AHMEDABAD,
August 19, 1931

Gandhiji's attention was drawn this morning to an interview given by Sir Prabhashankar Pattani to a Bombay paper and I tried to elicit his views on the proposal enunciated in it, namely, the appointment of a tribunal of three officials with one High Court Judge.

Although Gandhiji was reluctant to express his opinion on the proposal, I had a long conversation with him from which it could be gathered that Gandhiji does not mind whether it be an enquiry or a tribunal, but what he really wants is the grant of the substance of his demand. He said:

What is in a name? I would be satisfied with anything that gives me the substance.

Gandhiji said that he would be satisfied if an enquiry on the lines indicated by Sir P. Pattani was given by the Government.

The Hindu, 19-8-1931

272. REPLIES TO QUESTIONS[1]

Wednesday [*August 19, 1931*]

Q. Isn't it tantamount to feeding milk to a serpent if at present an order is placed for British machinery for about half a dozen mills in Ahmedabad ?

A. Our struggle will gain some strength if an order for British machinery is placed during the Settlement. We have no enmity with the British. If the struggle is resumed while the order for British machinery is being executed, you should not take exception to goods which have already been ordered. We cannot win swaraj by creating enmity in this way. You should refuse to accept British goods if the struggle is resumed and they treat you as their enemies. One can buy foreign goods so long as Congress has not declared a boycott of foreign goods.

Q. Will not an increase in the number of mills hinder the progress of khadi ?

A. The progress of khadi will be hindered not by an increase in the number of mills, but by a decrease in our love for khadi. You can

[1] At a prayer meeting in the evening

explain to the people the usefulness of khadi but you cannot stop new mills from being erected.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 23-8-1931

273. THE REAL ISSUE

Though apparently very little difference between the Government and the Congress led to the decision[1] of the Working Committee not to send me to London, really the difference was fundamental. This will be clear to everyone who would patiently go through the correspondence published in this issue of *Young India*. In the very first days of the working of the Settlement Mr. Emerson raised the question. He contended that the Congress could not act as the intermediary between the Government and the people whom it represented. I joined issue on it. The legal point was never finally settled. I had no desire to embarrass or humiliate the Government. I was therefore content so long as in practice the Congress mediation was accepted. The reader will see with what reluctance Mr. Garrett reconciled himself to the position.[2] But he never pardoned the Congress for presuming to represent the peasantry. Had he had his way, it is likely that he would rather have collected what he could through coercion than received all but a few thousand of the current dues in Bardoli and Borsad through the Congress agency. The reader will not fail to observe that notices threatening coercion were already issued. They were not withdrawn without energetic protest lodged by me on behalf of the Congress. It could be shown from documentary proof that occasions were not wanting, as they are not wanting now, to warrant the Congress declaring the Truce to be at an end by reason of the Provincial Governments having failed to carry out its terms. I make bold to say that exemplary patience has been shown by the Congress in not terminating the Truce. The charge-sheet[3] will give a glimpse of breaches alleged by the Congress to have been made by respective Provincial Governments. Nor need the reader think that the charge-sheet is an exhaustive catalogue of breaches. For instance,

[1] At its meeting on August 13

[2] *Vide* "Letter to J. H. Garrett' 21-4-1931 & "Letter to J. H. Garrett", 26-4-1931

[3] *Vide* "A Memorandum", 21-7-1931

there are several hundred civil resistance prisoners who are still rotting in jail but who according to the opinion of Congress workers are entitled to discharge. Strange as it may appear to the reader, these cases are still pending before the Provincial Governments. Hence they do not appear on the charge-sheet presented at Simla. It contains cases about which adverse decisions have already been given by Provincial Governments. In fairness to the Central Government I must add that in some few cases mentioned in the charge-sheet relief has since been given and it is possible that it may be given in some more. But I know that there is little chance of getting relief in the vast majority of the cases. Surely it was never contemplated that in cases in which the Congress was not satisfied there should not be an open enquiry. If the Settlement was a legalized document the Government would be suable in a court of law. The fact however that it is not legalized throws a double responsibility upon the Government of giving the Congress a tribunal where it can prove those breaches or where it can get an authoritative ruling on the interpretation of the several clauses of the Settlement or of its implications. The refusal of the Government to concede the very natural implication of the Settlement shows how far the authorities in India are from recognizing the fact that the power is passing to the people, nor are they willing to acknowledge that the Congress represents the people and that its voluntary co-operation should be thankfully accepted. In their opinion, co-operation should mean acceptance of their orders and authority and not mutual trust and accommodation between parties to a contract. Everywhere Provincial Governments are looking upon Congressmen with suspicion and in some cases openly treating the Congress as an enemy. As I write, I have before me the Bombay Government organ The Gujarat Patrika. It contains vilification of Congress and Congressmen, reckless charges against them and in some instances even false allegations. If it is said in answer that the Congress has done no better and that it has also committed breaches of the Settlement it will be an unfair charge to make for the simple reason that wherever breaches have been brought to my notice immediate satisfaction or explanation has been given. The Congress would welcome an impartial investigation any day of all the charges that can be laid at its door and the Provincial Governments have not hesitated to take proceedings against Congressmen wherever they have thought it necessary. My countercharge is that in many cases prosecutions have been persecutions, as for instance in the cases falling under section

124-A of the Indian Penal Code. This is the section dealing with disaffection. Now, disaffection has been taken to mean absence of active affection or loyalty. Hence anyone who is neutral is guilty of disaffection. I must confess that every Congressman is even by reason of his creed guilty of sedition and he did not become less so by reason of the Settlement. The Settlement never contemplated that the Congress should alter its goal and its goal is to destroy the existing system of government and to replace it by a wholly national government. But I must not prolong this discussion of the Congress position. If the Congress was unworthy of confidence, or if its demand was distasteful or unacceptable to the British Government, the Settlement should not have been entered into. Further, if the Congress by any action on its part proved itself unworthy of confidence the Settlement should have been repudiated. Either would have been an honest course. But to have commenced with distrust when the ink had hardly dried on the paper on which the Settlement was written was, and still is, difficult for me to understand. In spite, however, of my belief that Provincial Governments had committed serious breaches of the Settlement I was prepared, so far as my departure for London was concerned, to be satisfied merely with securing relief in the matter of the Bardoli collections under coercion, and there too, my submission was either to grant a refund of the collections so made or to have an impartial open enquiry so as to enable me to show that payments were in the vast majority of cases forced from the people, although they were unable to pay and therefore under the Settlement entitled to refund. The matter would certainly not have ended there because the Working Committee would have been bound to press for redress in all the other cases. This evidently was too much for the Government and therefore they decided to break on Bardoli.

The inference I have drawn from the conduct of Provincial Governments is that the members of the Civil Service who have the running of the provinces in their hands were really unwilling that I should proceed to London. Had they desired otherwise it was open to them, as it is open to them even now, to make the way clear for me by treating the Congress as worthy of their trust and respect and therefore giving it satisfaction through an impartial enquiry where their decisions could not be accepted by the Congress.

It has been said that in concentrating upon matters of detail I have missed the opportunity of helping decisions on matters of higher

interest. I do not look at the two things separately. The Government of India is but part of a whole imperial scheme. It reflects the position at the centre. The centre is therefore very like the Government of India and if the latter is not ready to recognize the right of India to govern herself unfettered by any control from outside, the centre is not likely to think or do otherwise and the closest association with the Government of India during the past four months has left on me the impression that the Civil Service is not ready to recognize the right of India to full freedom. I have got too great a regard for their ability, powers of organization, and their influence on British public opinion to think that without their whole-hearted co-operation and blessing a humble person like me could possibly get anything from London. Therefore till the members of that Service are converted there is no scope for the Congress to enter upon negotiations for full freedom. It must go through further suffering however costly the process may be. Bardoli therefore was for me the acid test. It was designed to gauge the Civilian temper. Looked at in that light it was not a small thing even as the magnetic needle on an indicator is not a small thing.

Young India, 20-8-1931

274. SWADESHI GOODS

The Working Committee has now given us a workable definition of swadeshi goods. It is as follows:

> Swadeshi goods, not being cloth or yarn, are those goods which are wholly made in India out of raw material whether indigenous or imported by a manufacturer with not less than 75% Indian-owned share capital, provided that no goods will be considered swadeshi the manufacture of which is controlled by foreigners.
>
> Note. For the purposes of this definition the word 'controlled' refers to Boards of Directors and/or Managing Agents.
>
> It shall be open to the Working Committee to publish a list from time to time of goods classed as swadeshi though they may not fully comply with the foregoing definition.

The definition is open to the objection that it allows of raw materials being imported. This latitude was deliberately kept. There is no harm in importing raw material when it cannot be found in India. It is the skill that has been banished from the land or left undeveloped owing to the absence of the swadeshi spirit. A country remains poor in

wealth, both material and intellectual, if it does not develop its handicrafts and its industries and lives a lazy parasitic life by importing all the manufactured articles from outside. There was a time when we manufactured almost all we wanted. The process is now reversed and we are dependent upon the outside world for most manufactured goods. The past year brought forth a remarkable awakening of the swadeshi spirit. It has therefore become necessary to define swadeshi goods. But in giving a definition care had to be taken not to make the definition so narrow as to make manufacture all but impossible or so wide as to become farcical and swadeshi only in name. We do not want to follow the frog-in-the-well policy nor, in seeming to be international, lose our roots. We cannot be international, if we lose our individuality, i.e., nationality.

The reader will also note that cloth or yarn whether cotton, woollen or silken is excluded from the definition. One reason is that it is sufficiently known what is swadeshi cloth. But the second and for me the most important is that swadeshi cloth for Congressmen means only and exclusively hand-spun and hand-woven khadi. Indigenous mill-cloth is meant for those whom the Congress message cannot or does not reach.

It will also be noticed that since, at the present stage of our evolution, we have to be satisfied about many things being not wholly swadeshi the Working Committee has reserved the right to issue a list from time to time of such articles as may not wholly satisfy the definition and yet to exclude them would be injurious to the best interest of the country.

Young India, 20-8-1931

275. LETTER TO S. R. BOMANJI

AHMEDABAD,
August 20, 1931

DEAR MR. BOMANJI,

I have your two letters for which I thank you.

I know that our country is steadily getting world sympathy and if we continue to follow the method of non-violence our position will become absolutely irresistible. My faith in the remedy is daily growing.

If we ever reach the stage of arbitration I shall remember your

valued advice.

Please thank your wife for her sympathy and her message to Mirabehn.

I trust you are getting *Young India* which, as you know, is my weekly letter to friends.

Yours sincerely,

S. R. BOMANJI, ESQ.
THE PLAZA
NEW YORK (U.S.A.)

From a photostat: S.N. 17528

276. LETTER TO BAPASOLA

AHMEDABAD,
August 20, 1931

MY DEAR BAPASOLA,

I remember Mrs. Naidu having given a letter from you saying that Syt. Baban Gokhalay had approved of the Swaraj Sabha money being given to the girls' school, claimed to be national. Syt. Baban Gokhalay now gives me particulars of the school showing that there is very little of nationalism about the school, and he adds that he never consented to the money being given to the school until it returned to the full nationalist position. In the light of his letter I do not understand how you came to believe that Syt. Gokhalay was willing to vote for the money being given to the girls' school. As you know, my endorsement was conditional upon Syt. Baban Gokhalay being satisfied. Now that he is definitely of opinion that the school is not national and that the money therefore should not be given to it you will please regard me also as opposed to the use of the Swaraj Sabha funds for the school.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. BAPASOLA
C/O SYT. BABAN GOKHALAY
GIRGAUM
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 17529

277. LETTER TO MOHAMMAD ALI

AHMEDABAD,
August 20, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

You will pardon me for not having written to you before now. I have been working against time but I have been attending to your matter. I have not yet attained any success. If the Settlement is continued I shall certainly make further effort. If it is broken off, then, of course, I shall be of no service in cases such as yours. There was a friend enquiring about your matter. I sent you a message through him which I hope you duly received.

Yours sincerely,

MAULVI MOHAMMAD ALI
DHARAVI, BOMBAY 17

From a microfilm: S.N. 17530

278. LETTER TO C. R. SANGAMESWARAN

AHMEDABAD,
August 20, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

I can give you no help if you have no faith in God, and if you have faith in God you need no help from me. Therefore I would advise you to have faith in God and therefore also in prayer. You will then find that all the evil thoughts will leave you and that you will find peace of mind gradually growing on you, and you will become a fit instrument for service.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. C. R. SANGAMESWARAN
93 THOMAS STREET
COIMBATORE (S. INDIA)

From a microfilm: S.N. 17531

279. LETTER TO G. SITARAMA SASTRY

AHMEDABAD,
August 20, 1931

DEAR SITARAMA SASTRY,

I know you will excuse me for unconscionable delay in acknowledging your letter of 28th ultimo. I had really no time.

Your questions are simply answered. I think that after a dhobi or any of these workers has taken foreign cloth or foreign yarn for treatment he must not be interfered with. But there is no objection in going to their homes and telling them of the harm they do to the country by handling foreign yarn and foreign cloth. Nor can I see any objection to having night watches when we know that the merchants will do their work even at night. But where there is all thi obstinacy, reliance should be put more upon persuasion in the merchant's own home than upon watching him. After all we want to use picketing purely as a moral force working as a heaven in the community but not in order to harass people or to exercise any undue influence over them.

Persuasion after purchase is reprehensible and savours of undue influence. What is the use of worrying a man after he has made the purchase?

I think this answers all your questions. I do not know that my answer is of any use at this late hour.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. G. SITARAMA SASTRY
ROPALLI (S. INDIA)

From a microfilm: S.N. 17532

280. LETTER TO K. G. RANADE

AHMEDABAD,
August 20, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 9th August.

Your case is truly deplorable and from what you state the case was one of pure murder of your son. But I am unable to render you any help in the matter. The case will not come under the Settlement. I

can therefore only hope that you will succeed in the civil suit filed against the Secretary of State.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. K. G. RANADE
JAIN BOARDING HOUSE
SHOLAPUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 17572

281. LETTER TO TEHMINA KHAMBHATTA

AHMEDABAD, POST BOX 26,
August 20, 1931

DEAR SISTER,

Though you of course have asked me not to take the trouble, I must acknowledge your letter. You have bound me well enough. However, one has got to see even the terrible form in which God sometimes shows Himself. There are bound to be attacks on our faith. It is necessary that it should be tested. Though I am filled with the spirit of non-violence, there must of course be a little violence lurking in me somewhere. Hence, there are hours when I lose faith in myself. But I hope and pray that I shall not lose it permanently. I should like you to join me in that hope and that prayer!

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7546

282. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

AHMEDABAD,
August 20, 1931

Interviewed by the *Chronicle* correspondent this noon, with regard to Mr. Brelvi's telegram, Mahatmaji gave this following statement:

The message you have shown me causes me no surprise. There were no negotiations being carried on. Therefore, there was no question of closing them. My going to London became remote on the 13th instant, when the Viceregal wire was received. It is no more remote now than it became then.

I do not understand what is meant by "Government is prepared

to accept my challenge". I have issued no challenge. Whatever I have said has been published in the correspondence. If my letter to the Collector of Surat be regarded as a challenge, then that letter undoubtedly stands. The material result has been already achieved, that is to say, I could not go to London. The honour of the Congress pledge to Bardoli peasants was thereby vindicated. The rest is in the lap of the Government.

Whatever the final decision of the Government may be, I decline to believe that it can possibly be affected by the publication of the charge-sheet which was part of the relevant correspondence. This publication was authorized by the telegram of 14th from Simla and already published.

So far as countercharges are concerned, I should welcome them as also the impartial tribunal to investigate these charges. Indeed, I will be prepared to advise the Working Committee to accept even a one-sided tribunal, that is, a tribunal that may confine its attention only to investigate the countercharges. The Congress has nothing to lose by a public enquiry into the allegations made against it.

Concluding, he stated that he had no hope of going to London in the present circumstances.

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-8-1931

283. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

AHMEDABAD,
August 20, 1931

Interviewed by a representative of the Associated Press in connection with the Press report that the publication of the charge-sheet has removed whatever little chances there were of Government negotiating successfully with him in order to facilitate his proceeding to London, Mahatma Gandhi said:

As I stated the other day, I do not share Pandit Malaviya's optimism,[1] but if there was any chance of the Government of India conceding the just claim for an impartial enquiry, I am unable to understand why that chance is in any way diminished or affected by the publication of the charge-sheet.

Indeed, the reference to it in the Viceroy's letter to me, which was published at Simla, made it imperative for me to publish the

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Associated Press", 18-8-1931

charge-sheet.

There was an insistent demand for it by many people and I think that demand was reasonable and just. Moreover, without publishing the charge-sheet, I could not present the Congress case in its completeness.

Lastly, I published the papers only after getting the permission of the Viceroy. I am, therefore, wholly unrepentant regarding the publication of the charge-sheet.

So far as countercharges against the Congress are concerned, I will welcome them and I would like them to be sifted and investigated by an impartial tribunal.

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-8-1931

284. CABLE TO T. B. SAPRU[1]

VIDYAPITH, AHMEDABAD,
August 21, 1931

DR. SAPRU
S.S. "MOOLTAN "

HAD NO IDEA PUBLICATION CHARGE-SHEET COULD AFFECT DECISION. SHOULD BE PERFECTLY PREPARED PROCEED LONDON IF PROPER INQUIRY GRANTED.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 17551. Also A.I.C.C. File No. 295, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

285. TELEGRAM TO VICEROY

AHMEDABAD,
August 21, 1931

I SEE SO MANY RUMOURS SUPPOSED TO BE AUTHORITATIVE. THE LAST ONE COMPELS AN EXPLANATION. IT SAYS THAT PUBLICATION OF CHARGE-SHEET HAS UPSET GOVERNMENT AND IS LIKELY TO PREVENT GRANT OF ENQUIRY REPORTED

[1] This was in reply to a cable from Sapru and Jayakar which read: "Pursuing your message through Jamnadas Dwarkadas we pressed Viceroy grant enquiry independent officer and later sought London intervention. Consequently Press message your charge-sheet published before result our efforts caused painful surprise. Request statement your present position by wireless *Mooltan*". (S.N. 17539)

TO BE UNDER CONTEMPLATION. THIS PRESUPPOSES SOME INDISCRETION OR DISCOURTESY ON MY PART. I HAVE ENDEAVOURED SCRUPULOUSLY TO AVOID BOTH. CHARGE-SHEET WAS PART OF RELEVANT CORRESPONDENCE AND WAS REFERRED TO IN YOUR LETTER 31ST JULY AND MR. EMERSON'S LETTER 30TH JULY PUBLISHED FROM SIMLA. HENCE I CONSIDERED IT NECESSARY PUBLISH IT. MESSRS SAPRU AND JAYAKAR AND OTHER FRIENDS ARE ASKING ME TO STATE MY POSITION. I HAVE DONE SO TO THEM.[1] BUT I FEEL THAT IN JUSTICE TO YOU AND TO THE CAUSE I REPRESENT I MUST MAKE MY POSITION AS CLEAR AS I CAN TO YOU PERSONALLY. I CONTEND THAT THE APPOINTMENT OF AN IMPARTIAL TRIBUNAL IS IMPLICIT IN THE SETTLEMENT IN THE EVENT OF DIFFERENCES ARISING BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE CONGRESS REGARDING THE INTERPRETATION OF THE SETTLEMENT OR ITS WORKING IN PRACTICE. I HAVE BEEN PREPARED AS I AM NOW TO WAIVE SUCH AN ENQUIRY IF BY QUIET PERSONAL DISCUSSION OR SOME SUCH INFORMAL MEANS REASONABLE SATISFACTION IS GIVEN TO CONGRESS. I AM MOST ANXIOUS TO AVOID A BREACH IN SIDE ISSUES OR MIS UNDERSTANDINGS AND AM THEREFORE PREPARED EVEN TO PROCEED TO SIMLA IF YOU THINK DISCUSSION NECESSARY. AM WITHHOLDING PUBLICATION OF THIS PENDING YOUR REPLY.

GANDHI

HIS EXCELLENCY VICEROY
CAMP

From a photostat: S.N. 17550. Also A.I.C.C. File No. 295, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

286. LETTER TO URMILADEVI

AHMEDABAD,
August 21, 1931

I have your doleful letter.

You are quite right in going for me. You need someone with whom you could speak anything you like without incurring any risk of giving offence. I can enter fully into your feelings. But of course your charge is baseless. Do not for one moment imagine that because

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

I say nothing I also feel nothing about Bengal. Some of my deepest feelings remain unexpressed and perhaps such strength as I possess is due to my ability to suppress my feelings. You are wholly wrong in thinking that either Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel or I have any partiality. The fact is that we have been helpless to do anything. But I know that I do not need to defend myself before you and I know too that you have written without meaning it.

Well, after all I am not going. But if you are tired of life and things there, why don't you come to the Ashram and stay there? I know that the dry climate does not suit the ordinary Bengali constitution, but with your strong will, if you find the mental atmosphere to be agreeable, you will adapt yourself to the physical. I am in Ahmedabad, I hope, at least till the 10th September. As you know, the Working Committee meets on the 8th. I am myself not living at the Ashram, but at the Vidyapith. I go to the Ashram every evening after prayer time. For prayer time I am at the Vidyapith.

SHRIMATI URMILADEVI
42 ASHUTOSH MUKHERJI ROAD
BHOWANIPUR, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 17544

287. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

AHMEDABAD,
August 21, 1931

DEAR SATISBABU,

I have your letter.

I am suffering from writer's cramp and so the right hand is resting.

There was a telegraphic appeal by Dr. Roy regarding Bengal floods in reply to which I wrote to him day before yesterday.[1] I do not repeat what I have written as I have no doubt you will see this letter. If I could possibly have done it I would have made an appeal to the generosity of Bombay. But knowing the condition of Bombay as I do and knowing also that there have been several calls upon Bombay's purse regarding local matters, I have not had the courage to make any

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. B. C. Roy", 18-8-1931

appeal and if I did, I would have to make a fourfold appeal, that is, on behalf of Ratnagiri, Bihar, Assam and Bengal because there are equally piteous appeals from the other three places as from Bengal. The Bihar appeal came whilst the Working Committee was sitting. I sent Jamnalalji to a friend who could not pay a single pie, and so out of an earmarked fund I asked Jamnalalji to send Rs. 2,000 to Champaran. Of course they want much more and they have no Roy or Satis Babu to organize relief. I would, therefore, say that you should concentrate upon Calcutta, and I do not think you will be disappointed. All the same, if you think that I can do anything, you will please tell me.

Your description of Bengal politics makes very sad reading. I do not know what is to be done except that we must live correctly and not bend before the storm.

Is your paper becoming popular? And is it producing any effect on the people?

Whilst I like the idea of your doing relief work, the fact that you have just risen from sick-bed makes me anxious. I suppose you will have to tour the distressed areas. I do not know how you will fare there. You will remember that you have not today the same robust constitution that you had during the last period of distress when you built that great embankment. You must now recognize your limitation. You will therefore please go slowly.

Charu sent me yesterday some black and coloured blocks. He has given me no description. I could see from letterpress that they were meant in connection with the *Autobiography*. In the three or four lines that he sent he referred to the different inks. Probably these blocks were sent to me to show what inks were produced by Satis Babu.

Are the *Autobiography* and the *Gita* translation still in demand?

Please keep me fully informed of all your movements. I am here at least up to the 8th September, i.e., barring accidents. That is the time when the Working Committee meets.

You need not attach any importance to the talks of the possibility of my still going to London. I know that some friends are trying, but I expect no result from their attempt, for as I have said in my article[1] in *Young India* the issue is far more important and wider than the giving of satisfaction to Bardoli. Bardoli was the last straw. If

[1] *Vide* "The Real Issue", 20-8-1931

the unexpected happens and they give real relief, it would be certainly a sign to me of a great change. Let us see what happens.

SYT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
SODEPUR (BENGAL)

From a photostat: S.N. 17545

288. LETTER TO K. F. NARIMAN

AHMEDABAD,
August 21, 1931

MY DEAR NARIMAN,

I have seen your letter to Mahadev. When I mentioned picketing in the charge-sheet I certainly did not have Bombay in my mind, whether regarding the molestation of the picketers or regarding laxity of excise administration. Bombay therefore is a slip. I do not know now how the slip occurred. In any event I had the Presidency in my mind and then too I had Ahmedabad, Surat District and Ratnagiri District in mind. I am sorry therefore for any inadvertent reflection upon the Bombay police. I am glad that so far as the police conduct is concerned you have nothing to complain against them in Bombay. You can make what use you like of this letter.

With reference to Mr. Joshi I had advice from the Bombay Government saying that the orders regarding him had already been withdrawn. You will see in the introduction to the correspondence in *Young India*[1] that acknowledgment has been made that in some cases relief had already been granted.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. K. F. NARIMAN
C/O BOMBAY PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE
CONGRESS HOUSE
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 17547

[1] Of August 20, 1931

289. LETTER TO J. B. KRIPALANI

AHMEDABAD,
August 21, 1931

MY DEAR PROFESSOR,

I have your letter.

I hope you came out well in Calcutta. It was certainly a brave act on your part to go to Calcutta.

I am writing to Gidwani and, if I fail to draw a satisfactory answer, I am afraid it will be your duty to the Trust to take such steps as may be necessary for its protection.

What about Girdhari?

ACHARYA J. B. KRIPALANI
GANDHI ASHRAM
MEERUT

From a photostat: S.N. 17548

290. LETTER TO A. T. GIDWANI

AHMEDABAD,
August 21, 1931

MY DEAR GIDWANI,

What is this about the debt due by you to the Gandhi Ashram at Meerut for khadi work? Kripalani complains that you have ignored all his letters and asks me whether it is not his duty as Trustee to take legal steps, especially because you are a close associate. I have asked him to do nothing till I have had a reply from you to a letter which I told him I was writing. Please let me know all about this debt.

I hope you are keeping well and so is Gangabehn[1].

Yours sincerely,

ACHARYA GIDWANI
MUNICIPALITY
KARACHI

From a photostat: S.N. 17549

[1] Addressee's wife

291. LETTER TO TIMMAPPA NAYAK

AHMEDABAD,
August 21, 1931

MY DEAR TIMMAPPA,

Kakasaheb has handed your letter to me for reply.

I never suggested that any of the Seva Dal people had actually taken a perpetual vow of ahimsa. What I said[1] at the morning meeting you refer to was an expression of my own longing as also expectation, and those who were there seemed to assent to the proposition that with the Seva Dal people non-violence must not merely be a policy but it should be a creed. I quite agree with you that there cannot be a sudden transformation in a minute because I desire something or because the Seva Dal becomes a full-fledged Congress organization. For me it is enough that you say that the volunteers acquitted themselves creditably during the last struggle and strove to live up to non-violence. I may however add that Dr. Hardikar had more than one conversation with me and he told me that with him non-violence was fast becoming a creed if it had not already become so.

With reference to boycott I hope to find some time to make my position clear, if it is at all possible, in the pages of *Young India*. You have stated it correctly.

The information that you received that in emergency volunteers may adopt foreign dress to escape detection is wholly wrong. I have never held such a view, much less expressed it.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. TIMMAPPA NAYAK
SIRSI CONGRESS OFFICE
POST SIRSI, NORTH KANARA

From a microfilm: S.N. 17552

[1] *Vide* "Talk with Seva Dal Workers, Bombay", 9-8-1931

292. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

AHMEDABAD,
August 21, 1931

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

This will be given to you by Srinivasa Sharma of Meerut. He has found his way to the Ashram and as he seemed to be very importunate, he was admitted. He did not then say that he had really deserted his wife and run away from his place because he was heavily in debt. He felt penitent three or four days ago and confessed that he had left his wife and that he had creditors for nearly Rs. 1,000. He is therefore afraid to return to Meerut. I have advised him to seek some work in U.P. He seems to have been a volunteer also in Allahabad. I had only one chat with him and he impressed me as a sincere man wishing to do the right thing. He is now going to Allahabad and will see you. I would suggest your putting him somewhere, insisting on his sending for his wife and finding out something about his creditors. If he proves a reliable worker he might be of great use. If, however, you cannot accommodate him anywhere and consider it too much of a bother in the midst of your work you may dismiss him from your mind.

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
ANAND BHAWAN
ALLAHABAD

From a photostat: S.N. 17553

293. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

AHMEDABAD,
August 21, 1931

DEAR MOTI BABU,

I was delighted to receive your letters

You have no doubt seen that I am not going to London and perhaps it is as well.

I know that you are preparing yourself quietly for constructive service.

I note what you say about Swami Bodhanand. I hope that his conduct will disarm all suspicion. I take it you do not expect me to do anything in the matter nor could I if you did expect.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. MOTILAL ROY
PRABARTAK SANGHA
CHANDERNAGORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 17554

294. LETTER TO KANHIALAL

AHMEDABAD,
August 21, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

The only thing I can suggest for your daughter is that you should put her in a widows' home. As you know, the late Sir Ganga Ram ran one in Lahore.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. KANHIALAL
RETIRED RECORD KEEPER OF E. I. RY.
ASHRAFABAD, LUCKNOW

From a microfilm: S.N. 17555

295. LETTER TO GILBERT KERLIN

AHMEDABAD,
August 21, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 16th July.

The only ability that a people, in my opinion, requires to govern itself is to resist alien encroachment. This does not necessarily mean good or pure government.

I cannot think just now of any book to recommend to you.

Yours sincerely,

GILBERT KERLIN, ESQ.
CAMBRIDGE, MASS., U.S.A.

From a Photostat: S.N. 17556

296. LETTER TO R. S. HUKERIKAR

AHMEDABAD,
August 21, 1931

MY DEAR HUKERIKAR,

I have your letter enclosing copy of a confidential circular. It is very valuable information. It is better for you to leave the time of publication to me. You need not therefore say anything about it just now.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. R. S. HUKERIKAR
KARNATAK PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE
DHARWAR

From a microfilm: S.N. 17557

297. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

AHMEDABAD,
August 21, 1931

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Here is a copy of a telegram[1] I have sent to the Viceroy. There are so many rumours and so many misrepresentations going on that I thought I would clear the position by letting the Viceroy know exactly where we stand. Dr. Sapru also sent me a wire of which I send you a copy herewith and a copy of my reply.[2] I hope you found Indu cheerful.

BAPU

Encl. 3

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
ANAND BHAWAN
ALLAHABAD

A.I.C.C. File No. 295, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also S.N. 17558

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Viceroy", 21-8-1931
[2] *Vide* "Cable to T. B. Sapru", 21-8-1931

298. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

GUJARAT VIDYAPITH,
POST BOX 26,
AHMEDABAD,
August 21, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I don't remember about Jayantiprasad, but let him write to me and tell me when and in what circumstances he had talked to me. He had bought some goods in Bardoli. Pyarelal had paid a part of the bill and, for the rest, he had asked him to write to you and ask you to debit the sum to him. If this money has been received, inform me accordingly when I arrive there today.

2. It was agreed to pay a scholarship to Gajanan, Panditji's nephew, and the decision is right.

3. Send money to the works which are being financed from the Galiara Trust Fund according to the budget for them. I send the budget with this.

4. Ask me personally when I arrive there about paying Sitala Sahay's expenses. He did write to me but I have not been able to give him any reply.

5. I do remember about the rules, but I will attend to the matter if I get time.

6. I don't seem to have received any letter from Mama concerning Lalji.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

299. LETTER TO L. M. SATOOR

AHMEDABAD,
August 21, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you.

I did not say to Dr. Ambedkar that Congress had spent 20 lacs of rupees on behalf of the depressed classes. But I did say that about that sum was spent on behalf of the Congress or by Congressmen.[1] He

[1] *Vide* "Letter to K. D. Umrigar", 22-8-1931

challenged this statement and I then promised that I would have the figures collected and published, which I propose to do as soon as I have collected them. As monies were distributed by different agencies it may take a little time. The public will be astonished when they see the figures. I was never in doubt as to the amount of work done through the congress agencies in this matter and so I never troubled to collect statistics. But Dr. Ambedkar's disbelief naturally set me thinking. Your letter enforces the necessity of publishing them. I enclose herewith a pamphlet issued by the Anti-Untouchability Committee of its activity.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. L. M. SATOOR
99 MAIN STREET, CAMP POONA
Copy to Seth Jamnalal Bajaj

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashrivad, pp. 365-6

300. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

AHMEDABAD,
August 21, 1931

Asked what Gandhiji meant by his statement to the *Bombay Chronicle* representative,[1] viz., "Indeed I will be prepared to advise the Working Committee to accept even a one-sided tribunal, that is, a tribunal that may confine its attention only to investigate the countercharges" Gandhiji replied:

I am not prepared to give up my demand for an impartial enquiry into the charges brought by the Congress, but what I said to the *Chronicle* representative was that I would be prepared to advise the Working Committee to face an enquiry that would only investigate charges against the Congress.

In other words, I would not make it a condition precedent that the tribunal that goes into the charges against the Congress should also investigate the charges by the Congress against the Provincial Governments. The Congress wishes to hide nothing, nor does the Con-

[1] *Vide* "Interview to "The Bombay Chronicle", 20-8-1931

gress wish to shirk its representation at the Round Table Conference, but the condition of going to the Round Table Conference should be fulfilled, namely, satisfactory fulfilment of the terms of the Settlement by the Government. That satisfaction can only be given by the Government either conceding the Congress demands or failing that by appointing a tribunal of enquiry. I can conceive nothing more just, nothing more simple and nothing more honourable.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-8-1931

301. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA[1]

VIDYAPITH,
AHMEDABAD,
August 22, 1931

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
BIRLA HOUSE, NAPEAN SEA ROAD
BOMBAY

NOTHING ABOUT SIMLA YET. CERTAINLY COME.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 17564

302. TELEGRAM TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

[*August 22, 1931*][2]

SIR PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

YOUR WIRE. GLAD YOU ARE COMING TOMORROW. WILL DISCUSS EVERYTHING WHEN WE MEET.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 17560

[1] This was in reply to the following telegram from the addressee: "Intend starting tomorrow unless you proceeding to Simla. Please wire,"

[2] This was in reply to Pattani's telegram of August 22 which read: "Just arrived from Calcutta and reaching Ahmedabad Gujarat Mail tomorrow morning. Glad you have asked for interview with Viceroy and hope it will be granted. I suggested it myself personally at Calcutta and by telegram. If no objection would like to accompany you Simla. Meanwhile may I request that President Congress may telegraphically inform all members of Working Committee including Malaviyaji if he is not a member not to make speeches or give Press interviews . . . you alone should retain, sole responsibility. Please wire Taj Mahal."

303. LETTER TO M. S. ANEY

AHMEDABAD,
August 22, 1931

DEAR MR. ANEY,

I have your letter.

I do not envy your work in Bengal. But *I* know you have shoulders broad enough to hear much greater burdens, and it is a matter of great joy to me that you enjoy the full confidence of both the parties. Your decision will clear the air and let the public know where truth lies.

I do not know what is going to happen about the negotiations that so many friends are carrying on with the Central Government. I see a lot of misunderstanding growing up in the newspapers. I sent a simple telegram to the Viceroy yesterday restating our position and offering to discuss with him personally, if he thought it necessary, any matter that might require clearing up. I thought that I would not publish that telegram in order to avoid any embarrassment to him. But just at present nothing that I can say even in whispers escapes Pressmen and so you see a garbled report in the Press. I have had no reply to my telegram as yet.

I expect to see you here on the 8th September.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. M. S. ANEY
YEOTMAL

From a photostat: S.N. 17562

304. LETTER TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

AHMEDABAD,
August 22, 1931

DEAR KHAN SAHEB,

I enclose herewith a letter received about Dera Ismail Khan. I hope a telegram[1] sent to you by me regarding this matter was duly delivered to you as also about the Akbarpura incident. I await your

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Abdul Ghaffar Khan", 16-8-1931

letter about these matters as also about developments there. Just at present I would like a weekly budget.

You know from the papers all about the Round Table Conference representation. Though there is a spectacular talk about revival of negotiations there has been no direct contact with me. Though therefore we may dismiss the London visit out of our minds it does not necessarily mean the termination of the Settlement. Therefore we must for the time being continue to honour the Settlement. Therefore also I would like you to finish conversations with the Chief Commis-sioner if he so desires.

How is Khurshedbehn going on? I have not forgotten about an expert spinner being sent there for developing khadi work. I am waiting to hear further from Khurshedbehn. She made a suggestion to me. I would therefore like to discuss that matter also with her.

Yours sincerely,

KHAN SAHEB ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN
UTMANZAI (CHARSADDA)
DT. PESHAWAR

From a photostat: S.N. 17565

305. LETTER TO EMMA HARKER

AHMEDABAD,
August 22, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

There is no occasion for you to become unnerved. God does not do as we will, but on the contrary, He bends us to His will. Let us therefore bend ourselves voluntarily to the will of that Imperial Taskmaster.

Yours sincerely,

MISS EMMA HARKER
2 BELGRAVE TERRACE
KARACHI

From a photostat: S.N. 17566

306. LETTER TO KRISHNA DAS

AHMEDABAD,
August 22, 1931

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS,

I was wondering why you had not written before now. I was getting somewhat impatient and angry with you. I was thinking of you intently only yesterday and there is a letter from you. If you are again ill why wait till there is a collapse? Why not go to Camilla or perhaps better still to the Ashram? It is your old home.

There is nothing certain about me though I feel that I shall be able to be here till the 8th September when the Working Committee meets.

I take it you are getting *Young India* regularly.

SYT. KRISHNADAS
P. O. SINHERGAON, BENGAL

From a microfilm: S.N. 17567

307. LETTER TO M. I. DAVID

AHMEDABAD,
August 22, 1931

DEAR MR. DAVID,

If matters shape themselves as you expect I shall try to accommodate you. But it is better not to build on that hope.

Yours sincerely,

M. I. DAVID, ESQ.
4 QUEEN'S ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 17568

308. LETTER TO J. B. KRIPALANI

AHMEDABAD,
August 22, 1931

MY DEAR PROSFESSOR,

I forgot to write to you about one matter arising out of your letter of yesterday, i.e., the egregious speech reported to have been made by Pandit Sunderlal. I have never said to anybody or at the All India Congress Committee meeting that, even though the Government carried out the terms of the Truce, I would not go because of the Hindu-Muslim dissensions. But let us hope that Pandit Sunderlal never said what is imputed to him. All the same I am writing to him.

Yours sincerely,

PROF. KRIPALANI
GANDHI ASHRAM
MEERUT

From a photostat: S.N. 17568-a

309. LETTER TO RACHEL M. RUTTER

AHMEDABAD,
August 22, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and the pains you have been taking. I can't make use of the letter you have sent me. But why should you worry? Your personal contacts would be your substantial work.

I am sorry you were suffering from phlebitis at the time you wrote. I hope this will find you in good health and condition.

Yours sincerely,

MISS RACHEL M. RUTTER
WINCANTON
SOMERSET (ENGLAND)

From a photostat: S.N. 17569

310. LETTER TO DAVID POLLOCK

AHMEDABAD,
August 22, 1931

DEAR MR. POLLOCK,

I was delighted to see your letter.

There is no prospect whatsoever of my going to London at the present moment. But if I did go I would of course be delighted to renew our old acquaintance and old relations. How far I shall be able to give you satisfaction I do not know.

Yours sincerely,

DAVID POLLOCK, ESQ.
29 ONSLOW GARDENS
LONDON, S.W. 7

From a photostat: S.N. 17570

311. LETTER TO K. D. UMRIGAR

AHMEDABAD,
August 22, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 17th August enclosing *Nineteenth Century Review* article. I shall see what can be done with it after I have read it.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. K. D. UMRIGAR
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 17571

312. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

AHMEDABAD, P.B. 26,
August 22, 1931

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I get no time to write to you. I still do not use the right hand, and so I cannot write much. I write only as much as I can with the left hand. You must have received the letters I sent you yesterday. It is

very necessary to calculate the total money spent on the cause of the removal of untouchability, by the Congress, by Congressmen or through them or through their inspiration. Some figures I already know. Probably you, too, know some. I wish to entrust this responsibility to you. Collect the figures from all sources. If any items are left out, I will try and remember them. I estimate the figure at 20 lakhs. I think this is a conservative rather than a liberal estimate. Some contributions to the Tilak Fund were actually earmarked for this cause. You will get them from the list of contributions to that Fund which you have with you.

Has anything been done about the plot of land in Almora? If nothing has been done, and if immediate action can be taken, I think it very necessary that it should be taken.

How are Janakibehn and Balkrishna? As there was a great deal of misunderstanding in newspapers and I began to get all kindsof reports, I sent a telegram to the Viceroy yesterday. I have not received a reply so far. I enclose a copy of my telegram. Shri Pattani is coming here tomorrow. I will let you know if he brings any news.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4893

313. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

AHMEDABAD,
August 22, 1931

CHI. JANAKIBEHN,

Is it out of pity for me that you have not written to me for some time and have not permitted Madu and Om to write either? I don't want pity; I want a letter. Has your health improved? What do you eat?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2893

314. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

August 22, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter. I am still giving rest to my right hand. Write to me all the time at the following address: P.B. 26, Ahmedabad. I am here till September 8. It is being discussed whether I should go to England. But I don't think it probable that anything will come of it.

I had written to Jayaprakash the very next day. I hope he got my letter. What did you do?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3397

315. STATEMENT TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

AHMEDABAD,
August 22, 1931

I do not consider the Viceroy's reply[1] to be at all bad or disappointing. In fact I was prepared for some such reply.

I am glad too that, so far as I can understand the letter, the Government do not intend to terminate the Settlement and as the public is well aware, the Working Committee of the Congress has already passed a resolution to that effect. I am therefore hoping that all Congressmen will meticulously observe the Settlement.

So far as the charges against the Congress are concerned and so far as the denial of the charges by the Congress against the Provincial authorities is concerned, that is a matter of opinion. When the expected countercharge-sheet against the Congress is published, I shall be able to deal with it. For the moment, I can only say that the Working Committee of the Congress has been most anxious that the Congress should present an absolutely clean slate.

[1] Presumably, to Gandhiji's letter of August 14, 1931; *vide"* Letter to Viceroy", 14-8-1931 According to Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, the Viceroy had stated that "Government would continue to avoid resort to special measures so far as possible restricting action to the requirements of the specific situation", describing Gandhiji's not attending the Round Table Conference as "failure of one of the main objects of the settlement".

I know the belief of the Government regarding the Frontier Province and the U.P. I have always combated that belief, but it has been a tug of war between two beliefs. All I can say is that I have done everything I could to ascertain the facts for myself, and I have not been able except in isolated cases to detect any breach on the part of Congressmen. Wherever it has been detected I have made admission and amends where possible to the Government. So far as charges against Provincial authorities are concerned, I have offered on behalf of the Working Committee to establish them before an impartial tribunal. I could not do anything more and it would be a breach of duty to the Congress if I was satisfied with anything less.

I fully acknowledge and am aware that the refusal of the Congress to be represented at the R.T.C. involves the failure of one of the main objects of the Settlement. I regret it as much as the Government, but the Working Committee was helpless.

Attendance at the Conference was conditional upon the fulfilment of the Settlement by the Government. Rightly or wrongly the Working Committee came to the conclusion, and I associate myself with the conclusion, that the Provincial Governments have in more instances than one failed to implement the Settlement. With that belief it is not possible for the Congress to be represented at Round Table Conference unless a way is found, namely, the appointment of a tribunal or reasonable satisfaction to the Congress in some other manner.[1]

In the midst therefore of conflict of opinion there should be a referee. My suggestion for a tribunal is, therefore, the most natural corollary. What shape that tribunal should take is undoubtedly a matter for mutual discussion and accommodation. Personally, I should be satisfied so long as there is reasonable assurance of impartiality from the tribunal. The appointment of such a tribunal can in no way diminish the dignity, prestige or authority of the Government. I hold that such an appointment is an ordinary function of a well-ordered Government and if this very Government has appointed committees of enquiry for matters outside contractual relations, how much greater there must be the need for such a tribunal when parties to the contract are dissatisfied as to the conduct of each towards the other and arising out of the contract itself ?

The Hindu, 23-8-1931, and *The Times of India*, 24-8-1931

[1] In *The Times of India* report this and the preceding paragraphs are placed at the end.

316. ANSWER TO QUESTION

AHMEDABAD,
August 22, 1931

If instead of replying whether the Truce terminates or continues, the Government arrests leaders, will the Congress renew the fight automatically, or will permission be required? This was one of the questions put to Mr. Gandhi this evening at prayer time. Mr. Gandhi replied that the fight could not be renewed till the Working Committee gave permission. He had, however, received the Viceroy's reply in which it was stated that the Government did not desire to terminate the Truce. The fight could not, therefore, be renewed automatically.

The Times of India, 24-8-1931

317. BURNT ROPE RETAINS TWIST

Ordinarily, when we burn wood, cloth and such other things, they are reduced to a small heap of ashes. About the coir rope, however, people believe and the belief is correct, that when it is burnt its twisted shape remains. It will disappear only when we crush the ashes with our hands. Something similar may be said about this Government. If this were not true, why should it be reluctant to agree to set up an impartial tribunal to resolve the difference that has arisen regarding the implementation of the Settlement signed by the Government and the Congress? This Settlement is a kind of contract. Any dispute that may arise about a contract is decided by a court, no matter whether we call it a board of arbitrators or a court of law. The basic point is that only a disinterested party should decide the issue. Is there anything special about the Settlement between the Government and the Congress that the Settlement cannot be submitted to a tribunal? If the Government alone could decide in case of difference of opinion between it and the Congress, where was the utility of such a Settlement at all? And why should the Congress have accepted such a Settlement? The necessity for obtaining the decision of an impartial court or tribunal would arise only when the Congress did not agree with the Government's interpretation of any of its clauses. If, in such an event, the Government itself assumes the role of a judge, what attitude should the Congress adopt? What will the world think? If the Congress keeps quiet, the only possible interpretation would be that

the Congress had become altogether powerless. How can the Congress, an organization acting in the name of and on behalf of millions, tolerate remaining in such a helpless condition? It exercised patience and endured the situation. It was only when it had no alternative left and saw that injustice was being done to the poor cultivators, that it decided to tolerate the situation no longer and not to send its representative to the Round Table Conference. It may be said that by taking that decision it has proved that it truly represents the country. The Government's attitude, revealed at the end of the negotiations, suggests that if we are to get swaraj only through its favour, swaraj is still a long way off. To me at least it seems dangerous simple-mindedness to believe that the Governmentofficials, who are unwilling today to allow a court of law, set up as part of its own machinery, to inquire into their actions, will tomorrow relinquish power and hand it over to the people.

Fortunately no nation's freedom depends on the will of a foreign government or a foreign power. It depends only on the people's own will and their ability to enforce it. If the Congress lacks the strength to secure justice in a very simple matter in India, it will be able to secure nothing from England. Looking at the matter from this standpoint, it would make no difference whether or not the Congress representative went to England. When it becomes necessary for a representative to go there to carry on negotiations for swaraj, his path will be clear. The refusal to meet the demands made on behalf of the Bardoli cultivators is in my opinion the plainest and clearest hint to the Congress not to send its representative to England. Those who were eager that I should go need not at all be disappointed. My view has always been that the nation ought not to look to England or Simla or Delhi for swaraj. The right course for the people is to rely on themselves. As we advance through our strength we may occasionally have to visit Delhi or Simla or England or any other place, but the people should understand that if we win anything it will be through our own strength and in the measure of our strength.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan 23-8-1931

318. TELEGRAM TO VICEROY

GUJARAT VIDYAPITH,
AHMEDABAD,
August 23, 1931

HIS EXCELLENCY VICEROY
SIMLA

THANKS YOUR WIRE[1]. AS I WANT LEAVE NOTHING UNDONE THEREFORE THOUGH I HAVE NO DIFFICULTIES NOT KNOWN TO YOU AND THOUGH MY WIRE LEFT WITH YOU DECISION REGARDING DESIRABILITY OF PERSONAL DISCUSSION I GLADLY TAKE THE BURDEN UPON MY SHOULDERS AND AM LEAVING FOR SIMLA TONIGHT REACHING THERE TUESDAY. AM INVITING PRESIDENT WORKING COMMITTEE[2] PANDIT JAWAHARLAL AND ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN TO BE WITH ME DURING MY STAY SIMLA. AS MATTERS SOMEHOW OR OTHER LEAK OUT ALMOST INVARIABLY IN GARBLED FORM CREATING MISUNDERSTANDINGS IT SEEMS TO ME NECESSARY IN PUBLIC INTEREST TO PUBLISH WIRES RECENTLY EXCHANGED. AM THEREFORE HANDING THEM PRESS.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 17582

[1] Of August 22, which read: "Your telegram of twenty-first August. If you consider that a further discussion will help to remove your difficulties I shall be glad to hear from you informing me what day you will arrive in Simla". (S.N. 17575)

[2] Vallabhbhai Patel

319. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

GUJARAT VIDYAPITH,
AHMEDABAD,
August 23, 1931

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
ANANDBHAWAN
ALLAHABAD

AM PROCEEDING SIMLA TONIGHT VALLABHBHAI ACCOMPANYING. WE BOTH CONSIDER YOUR PRESENCE AND ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN'S NECESSARY. PLEASE START.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 17578

320. TELEGRAM TO DR. KHAN SAHEB

GUJARAT VIDYAPITH,
AHMEDABAD,
August 23,1931

DOCTOR KHAN SAHEB[1]
PESHAWAR

REACHING SIMLA TUESDAY. PLEASE REQUEST KHANSAHEB COME SIMLA. WIRE CARE DOCTOR ANSARI.

GANDHI

From a copy: S.N. 17579

321. TELEGRAM TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

GUJARAT VIDYAPITH, AHMEDABAD,
August 23, 1931

DOCTOR ANSARI
DARYAGANJ
DELHI

LEAVING FOR SIMLA TONIGHT WITH SARDAR. PLEASE MEET STATION.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 17580

[1] Brother of Abdul Ghaffar Khan

322. TELEGRAM TO R. S. HUKERIKAR

VIDYAPITH, AHMEDABAD,
August 23, 1931

R. S. HUKERIKAR
DHARWAR

DON'T PUBLISH. LEAVE THE THING ENTIRELY TO ME.[1]

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 17581

323. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

ASHRAM,
August 23, 1931

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

Jamna believes that you now wish to get married or are willing to consider a proposal. If this is true, let me know and also tell me whether you have already chosen the girl. If I am to choose for you, tell me whether you wish to respect the restrictions of caste or Province. You know my own views in the matter. We wish to do away with such restrictions but in a matter like marriage I would certainly not insist on my own ideas being followed. The inclination of the person who wishes to marry should prevail. Write to me frankly and tell me what you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 902. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

324. A NOTE

VIDYAPITH,
August 23, 1931

Supply to Lalji the goods connected with weaving mentioned in Shri Narandasbhai's letter. The sum of Rs. 20-12-O [lying with us] from the time that he was in Udyog Mandir should be adjusted against

[1] *Vide* "Letter to R. S. Hukerikar", 21-8-1931

the cost of these goods. That sum is with Mama at present. See that he does not get more than Rs. 50. Mama will take a receipt from him. The goods are to be sent when Mama writes again about them.

2. Send immediately three Yeravda wheels to Mama. If he asks for more, send up to nine wheels. Write from there to Bardoli for three wheels.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

325. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

NEW DELHI,
August 24, 1931

A Press representative asked Gandhiji:

Considering that the Government agrees to appoint a tribunal mutually acceptable to enquire into the allegations and counter-allegations made by the Congress and the Government, and considering further that the Government disputes the intermediary status of the Congress being implied in the Settlement, will you agree to place this issue also before the tribunal for its decision? Mr. Gandhi replied:

If the Government appoints such a tribunal and disputes even this elementary question which I consider a part of the Pact, I will have no objection to placing even this before the tribunal and abiding by its decision.

The Hindu, 25-8-1931

326. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

Silence Day [On or after *August 24, 1931*][1]

CHI. PREMA,

Even if you stop finally writing to me, I must write to you. But you are not doing right in not writing to me. Will you write if I order you to write?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10262; also C.W. 6711. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] According to *Bapuna Patro-5: Ku. Pramabehn Kantakne*, this letter was written between August 12 and September 6, 1931. The first Silence Day after August 12 fell on August 17, but both Gandhiji and the addressee were in Ahmedabad on that day. The letter, therefore, was probably written on or after the next Silence Day.

327. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

AHMEDABAD,
August 25, 1931

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

I have your letter. I had already decided that Prabhavati should go. I like your decision. If Prabhavati is not deceiving herself it would appear that she is free from desire. Even when she is with you she has no sexual urge and only becomes ill. I therefore think that you should free her. Doctor Jivraj also examined her. He too advises that if she finds it difficult to keep up marital relations she should be allowed to abstain. If you do this it will not be necessary for you to pay her monthly expenses. I would like you to send her to me as soon as possible.

I have had a talk with Ghanshyamdasji about you. This is not the occasion to go to him. It will be good if you can come and see me once.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Jayaprakash Narayan Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

328. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

SIMLA,
August 25, 1931

Interviewed by the Associated Press representative, . . . Mr. Gandhi declined to offer any opinion on the fall of the Labour Cabinet remarking:

It is too high politics for me.

Asked whether the formation of the new Cabinet might in any way tend to alter his programme, Mr. Gandhi said:

I don't think so.

Gandhiji added that his going to England depended on Government giving satisfaction to the Congress in respect of his demands. Pressed to explain the ways in which satisfaction might be given to the Congress, especially in view of his having waived the demand for an enquiry, Mr. Gandhi stated:

I don't want an enquiry for enquiry's sake, and there is no

intention to humiliate the Government But there are three ways of satisfying the Congress. First, by conceding the Congress demand in full, secondly. by satisfying that the demand is wrong and unjust and thirdly, by giving satisfactory assurance that satisfaction would be given.

The Hindu, 25-8-1931

329. INTERVIEW TO "THE STATESMAN"

August 25, 1931

He [Gandhiji] was uncommonly cheerful and optimistic, and though he said that the Government's answer to his charge-sheet was perhaps not the last word (he did not say from whom) he appeared to be reasonably impressed by it.

He stoutly denied that it was Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel who was standing in the way of his co-operation in London. He said:

I am capable of forming my own judgments.

The Statesman, 26-8-1931

330. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

SIMLA,
August 26, 1931

Mr. Gandhi had three hours' satisfactory talk[1] with the Viceroy at the end of which he informed the Associated Press that he would be sailing from Bombay for London on 29th instant.

Interviewed, Mr. Gandhi declined to disclose the result of his interview on the question of enquiry into breaches of the Pact, but said his interview was fairly satisfactory.

On his way back to "Firegrove" Gandhiji refused to stand beyond a minute before a group of photographers at Cecil Hotel remarking:

I have no time and I cannot stand your tyranny any longer.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-8-1931

[1] *Vide* "The Second Settlement", 28-8-1931

331. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

SIMLA,
August 26, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

Through the telephone you have asked me to send you the amendments that I passed over the telephone to the draft communique given me by you this afternoon. Those amendments were suggested by my colleagues who are here. With slight alterations I give them below:

Here is the first amendment:

"Mr. Gandhi, while stating that the Congress were desirous that nothing should be done to the prejudice of peaceful conditions, wished to make it clear that this did not imply any undertaking *restricting the future action of the Congress in the matter of continuing grievances or in respect of unforeseen developments.*"

The portion underlined[1] represents the amendment suggested in the first sentence of paragraph 5 by my colleagues. I need hardly say that I entirely endorse the suggestion.

You will observe that with the exception of the portion underlined, we have accepted the amendment telephoned by you. I may say that there is no desire to insist upon the wording suggested here. All that is sought to be made perfectly clear is that paragraph 3 of the draft communique does not in any way fetter the future action of the Congress. Nor does it mean that for every grievance large or small there is to be insistence upon an enquiry by the Congress. But the Congress should not be expected to waive the right to seek redress, and failing redress to adopt such measures as may seem to it to be necessary. As a matter of fact, this is an elementary principle which does not need any enunciation. It is brought in here to avoid any possibility of a charge of breach of faith on the part of the Congress. This clearance has become all the more necessary because of the inferences you draw from our conversations at Richmond.

The Council's suggestion that the sentence, viz., "To this the Government of India take no exception" be dropped is accepted.

It is further suggested on behalf of the Congress that the rest of

[1] Here italicized

paragraph 5 should be dropped. You will recognize that the sentence beginning "so long as the Settlement. . . provisions" is a repetition, with slight changes, of para 2 of the communique. The remainder of the paragraph giving a long quotation from the letter from H. E. the Viceroy addressed to me and dated the 19th inst. torn from its context bears an altogether different meaning. My colleagues have pointed out that the bare quotation would seem to carry an interpretation which commits me and the Congress to an endorsement of the claim that the Government of India have hitherto followed the policy of restricting action to the requirements of the specific situation. You will agree that neither the Congress nor I have ever endorsed the claim. On the contrary we have had the misfortune often to point out to Government that their action has in numerous cases gone beyond the requirements of specific situation. I venture to suggest that the reminder, in a communique designed to secure peace and facilitate my departure to London on an errand of peace, that the Government possess certain powers which the Congress may not question is hardly opportune or advisable. I do not know that the powers of the Government become any the more emphatic or operative by reason of the recital. It had a meaning in a letter which was addressed to me to serve a purpose wholly different from the purpose that we all, I hope, have in view.

You have, in the course of the last conversation that we had over the phone, told me, on behalf of the Council, something very startling and distressing. I can only hope that I have misunderstood your message. It sounded very much like a breaking up of the negotiations which His Excellency, you and I had believed, had almost reached their fruition. Surely there is nothing extraordinary in the amendments suggested herein as to lead to such a tragic end. I can therefore only hope that having come so near, it will not be said of us, no matter whose fault it was, we had come near only in order to separate. In-my opinion there is ample room for discussion and accommodation if we mean the same thing. If we do not, the sooner the agony of suspense ends the better.

I note your warning that the draft communique is provisional and confidential, Confidence will be respected.

Yours sincerely,

H. W. EMERSON, ESQ.
HOME SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SIMLA

From a Photostat: S. N. 17601

332. MILLS AND LABOUR

The Congress lives for the labourer, and for the capitalist in so far as the latter subserves the former's purpose. Therefore the Congress is in alliance with the mill-owners in the matter of boycott of foreign cloth, only because boycott is calculated to benefit the labourer and the vast mass of consumers in the very near future. The alliance is voluntary and capable of being broken up at the option of either party. It can be and will be broken up when the mills find it profitless. It may and must be broken up by the Congress if it injures khadi, or if it injures or exploits the labourer, or if it exploits the consumer. Khadi may suffer temporary check as perhaps it has. The consumer may, for a year or two but no longer, pay a protection duty by way of higher prices, not for the higher profit of the shareholders but for the economic working of mills. But the Congress can never allow the labourer to be exploited. In other words, his position must not be worse than before the boycott. On the contrary, the alliance imposes a greater duty upon the Congress of seeing that the labourer's position is all the better for it. The Congress has to ascertain the condition of the labourers of a particular mill before it enters into any contract with it. It was because the Working Committee realized this special obligation, that it passed the following resolution at its last meeting:[1]

> The Working Committee draws the attention of owners and managers of mills, especially those recognized by the Congress, to the resolution[2] of the Working Committee dated July 10th, 1931, and draws further attention to the fact, that the Working Committee has received complaints about the treatment of textile labourers and the growing discontent amongst them, as also of proposed reduction of wages in some mills.
>
> The Committee hopes, that the owners and managers will remove all causes of discontent. The Working Committee believes, that representing, as the Congress does predominantly, the interests of millions of agricultural and

[1] Held in Bombay from August 9 to 14

[2] This read: "The Working Committee is of opinion, that the Textile Mills Exemption Committee should endeavour, wherever possible and necessary, to prevent by amicable arrangement any penalization or victimization of labour in the mills which have signed the Congress declaration, and to help in the bettering of labour conditions in these mills."

industrial workers, any recognition by the Congress of the mills will be inconsistent with the claim, wherever there is previous justification for such complaints.

Among the private resolutions referred to the Committee by the A.I.C.C. at its last session was one referring to mill workers. It was a drastic resolution. I have before me a list of mills that are said to have threatened a cut in the wages. The Working Committee therefore passed the foregoing mild resolution. It enunciates its policy and duty in the matter. It constitutes an assurance to the labourers, that the Congress will never be party to any injury to labour and it is a notice to the mill-owners of the Congress policy regarding labour. It must not on any account be treated as a threat of any kind whatsoever. It should be as much the mill-owners' interest as that of the Congress to guard the well-being of labour. The peaceful road to swaraj lies through a co-ordination, not antagonism, of all national effort. And this co-ordination must move towards one grand consummation—Freedom of Labour, whether on the field or in the factory.

Young India, 27-8-1931

333. NOTES

THE CONGRESS FLAG

It was but meet that the All India Congress Committee adopted[1] a flag by the following resolution almost unanimously passed:

> The National Flag shall be three-coloured, horizontally arranged as before, but the colours shall be saffron, white and green, in the order stated here, from top to bottom, with the spinning-wheel in dark blue in the centre of the white stripe; it being understood that the colours have no communal significance, but that saffron shall represent courage and sacrifice, white peace and truth, and green shall represent faith and chivalry, and the spinning-wheel the hope of the masses. The proportions of the flag should be fly to hoist as three to two.

It should be remembered, that the white, green, and red tricolour flag was never authoritatively adopted by the Congress. It was conceived by me, and I had certainly given it a communal meaning. It was intended to represent communal unity. The Sikhs protested and demanded their colour. Consequently a Committee was appointed. It

[1] At its session from August 6 to 8, 1931

collected valuable evidence and made useful recommendations. And now we have a flag, which has been authoritatively robbed of any communal meaning, and has a definite meaning assigned to each colour. The red has been replaced by saffron colour, and is put first purely from the artistic standpoint. White has been put between saffron and green in order to heighten the effect, and to show off the whole flag to advantage. The wheel is to be shown on the white strip in blue black. There can be no doubt that this is an improvement. It is a matter of great joy that the wheel has been retained as 'the hope of the masses'. It has proved itself as such. Wherever it has gone, it has brought happiness, and banished pauperism. It is now the duty of Congress workers to explain the meaning of the national flag, and let me hope that we shall translate the full meaning into our own lives. No doubt it will be defended with our lives, but the true defence will consist in assimilating the qualities represented by the colours and giving the spinning-wheel a place in every home. Then we shall need no picketing of foreign cloth. If we will die for the flag, let us first learn to live for it.

TO THE PARSIS

Brave Abid Ali, being mistaken for equally brave Nariman, got nearly killed by seven injuries inflicted by some unknown Parsi's infuriated projectiles,—what they were I do not know. This happened, while Davar Bar was being picketed, and S. Abid Ali was trying to disperse a crowd of do nothings. My appeal then is to the interested Parsis and to the great Parsi philanthropists and reformers. To the interested liquor dealers and their friends I say: My sympathy is with you as with foreign-cloth dealers. My sympathy compels me to warn both against your trade. Both the trades must go for the sake of the poor. And you cannot keep up either by hooliganism. Parsis are surely shrewd enough to recognize this fact, and are resourceful to find out some other calling. To the philanthropists I say: You have a brilliant record of philanthropy before you. Will you not add to your record by taking in hand the Parsi dealers in liquor and put them on to some honourable occupation? No philanthropy can possibly be compared to the one I am suggesting. What can be nobler than that your riches are utilized for ridding the nation of the soul-destroying curse of drink?

TRIALS BY JURY

A correspondent reminds me that the A.I.C.C. has omitted from its recital of fundamental rights that of trial by jury. I do not know the mind of the other members. Personally I would have resisted the inclusion. I am unconvinced of the advantages of jury trials over those by judges. In coming to a correct decision, we must not be obsessed by our unfortunate experience of the judiciary here, which in political trials has been found to be notoriously partial to the Government. At the right moment juries have been found to fail even in England. When passions are roused, juries are affected by them and give perverse verdicts. Nor need we assume that they are always on the side of leniency. I have known juries finding prisoners guilty in the face of evidence and even judge's summing up to the contrary. We must not slavishly copy all that is English. In matters where absolute impartiality, calmness and ability to sift evidence and understand human nature are required, we may not replace trained judges by untrained men brought together by chance. What we must aim at is an incorruptible, impartial and able judiciary right from the bottom. I regard village *panchayats* as an institution by itself. But thanks to the degradation of the caste system and the evil influence of the present system of government and the growing illiteracy of the masses, this ancient and noble institution has fallen into desuetude, and where it has not, it has lost its former purity and hold. It must, however, be revived at any cost, if the villages are not to be ruined.

BOGUS PROVIDENT COMPANIES

Complaints about these companies still continue, which shows that the warning issued by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel has not had its full effect upon these companies. And some of them have even the audacity to threaten proceedings against the officials of the Vigilance Society established in Ahmedabad. Some of them offer most extravagant and tempting terms, that could never be fulfilled, and yet those who are in a hurry to be rich do not mind running into these traps. Unfortunately these companies trade upon the gullibility of poor peasants, whom they see only once, namely at the time of collecting the fee. A correspondent asks how he is to distinguish between a sound company from a bogus one. I would say: 'Shun them all. Do not run after these tempting offers. But if you cannot help subscribing to one of these companies, refer to the Vigilance

Society and abide by its advice.' The society has only honorary members. It has come into being purely from philanthropic motives, and for the purpose of saving poor people from avoidable losses.

A SWADESHI PHILANTHROPIC COMPANY

The Swadeshi Electric Clock Manufacturing Company has its workshop in Sastri Hall, Grant Road. Some days ago I had the pleasure of visiting this workshop in Jamnalalji's company. Satishbabu of Khadi Pratishthan was also with me at the time. But as he is an expert in these matters, I asked him to visit the works again, and give me his own impressions, which he has done. He speaks highly of the possibilities of this enterprise. It owes its origin to the educational activities of the Tilak Rashtriya Pathshala of Nipani, a national school in Karnatak. The school was established during the Non-co-operation days of 1921. Industrial education was part of its syllabus. In Shri M. D. Joshi, a life-member, the school had a technical expert of great ability. The management therefore wanted him to take regular training, and he took the engineering course and stood first in the final examination. Then he served as an apprentice in the B.B.&C.I. Railway Parel Workshop, and then in the Royal Indian Marine Dockyards. During all this time he devoted his spare time to experiments in the manufacture of electric clocks. The upshot of all these labours was the present concern which became possible through the voluntary support of Sardar Dajisaheb Patwardhan of Poona. He lent Rs. 20,000 as capital to the company without any interest, and without even requiring any security. Its directors are Principal Limaye of the Tilak Mahavidyalaya, Poona, Dr. R. N. Datar, Sr. Joshi and Sr.Naravane. These directors get no remuneration. The whole concern is based on the principle of self-sacrifice. It gives technical education to students from national schools. If there are any profits, they are to be devoted to the advancement of education. The company sold clocks for nearly Rs. 15,000 last year, and they are said to have given perfect satisfaction. The mechanism of these clocks is original and patented. "Every part of the machine is manufactured and other processes completed in the workshop." These clocks are designed not for the use of individuals but for offices, factories and public institutions, which require a number of clocks fitted in the same building. They require no winding, and all the clocks in one circuit show exactly the same time. There are six students already working in the workshop from the Nipani school. But I must not give any more

space to a description of this enterprise. I invite those who are interested in genuine swadeshi enterprises to visit the institution and study its working.

Young India, 27-8-1931

334. CATTLE IN ANCIENT INDIA[1]

The reader must not run away with the idea that here there is any desire to revive the alleged ancient cruel form of racing. And since this article is intended to apply to all Princes, the word '*go*'[2] must mean all cattle wealth, and 'Brahmin' must mean the wealth of true knowledge.[3]

Young India, 27-8-1931

335. LETTER TO VICEROY

Personal SIMLA,
August 27, 1931

DEAR FRIENDS,

One stage in the journey is reached. I know that I have caused you endless worry. But the only consolation I can derive for myself and give to you lies in the fact that I have given myself no less worry and anxiety. It never is a matter of pleasure to me to continuously differ from friends or opponents. You will therefore believe me when I give you my assurance that if I have seemed to be obstinate or exacting all this has been in spite of myself and in response to the imperative call of duty. Though the colleagues that have been with me have given me their heartiest co-operation I know that the ultimate responsibility rests upon my shoulders. I have not come to the decision to go to London without fear, trembling and serious misgivings. Things from the Congress standpoint do not appear to be at all happy but I am relying upon your repeated assurances that you will give personal attention to everything that is brought to your

[1] The article by V. G. Desai is not reproduced here. In order to show how strong and swift the cattle were in ancient India the author had quoted from Pliny's account of races in which oxen competed with horses.

[2] Cow

[3] The author had desired the Princes of India to do something to justify the title of sustainers of *'go-brahman'*.

notice. Do please trust Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and the other members of the Working Committee. I assure you that your trust will not be misplaced. I would like you also to trust Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. The more I see him the more I love him. He is extremely frank, has no mental reservations and tells me that non-violence with him is not a policy but an article of faith.

Remember me please to Lady Willingdon and tender to her on my behalf a thousand apologies for being the cause of anxiety and worry to her husband. I know that I carry with me your joint blessings.[1]

HIS EXCELLENCY LORD WILLINGDON
SIMLA

From a photostat: S.N. 17601

336. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

SIMLA,
August 27, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I have to acknowledge with thanks your letter of even date enclosing the new draft. Sir Cowasji has kindly also communicated to me the amendments suggested by you. My colleagues and I have very carefully considered the amended draft which we are prepared to accept subject to the following remarks: In paragraph 4 it is not possible for me on behalf of the Congress to subscribe to the position taken up by the Government. For we feel that, where in the opinion of the Congress a grievance arising out of the working of the Settlement is not redressed, an enquiry is a necessity of the case, because of the fact that civil disobedience remains under suspension during the pendency of the Delhi Pact.

But if the Government of India and local Governments are not prepared to grant an enquiry, my colleagues and I have no objection to the clause remaining. The result will be that, whilst the Congress will not press for an enquiry in regard to 'the other matter hitherto raised'

[1] The Viceroy's reply to this read: "Delighted to receive your letter last night and to learn your decision. Am sure you are right. Send you my blessings and all good wishes. you can entirely rely upon my assurance to you" (S.N. 17601).

on its behalf, if unfortunately any grievance is so acutely felt that it becomes a paramount duty of the Congress to seek some method of relief, in the absence of an enquiry, in the shape of defensive direct action, the Congress should be held free to adopt such remedy notwithstanding the suspension of civil disobedience.

I need hardly assure the Government, that it would be the constant endeavour of the Congress to avoid direct action and to gain relief by discussion, persuasion and the like. The statement of Congress position given here has become necessary in order to avoid any possible misunderstanding in the future or a charge of breach of faith on the part of the Congress.

In the event of a successful issue to the present discussions, I assume that the communique[1], this letter and your reply would be simultaneously published.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 3-9-1931

337. ALONE, YET NOT ALONE

[*August 28, 1931*][2]

Reynolds as well as other friends have wanted me to take Jawaharlal with me to London at least. He is fearless, yet gentle, being a stranger to weakness and weakening diffidence, detects weakness in a flash, having no diplomacy about him, hates diplomatic language and insists upon going straight to the point. And as I consider myself to be in advance of him in idealism, he returns the compliment by dismissing my claim. I honour him, and therefore share the wish, energetically expressed by so many friends, that Jawaharlal should be with me to keep me on the straight path and to serve as my dictionary of reference in case of doubt. Other friends have wanted others to be by my side, even though they may not be delegates. They are so thankful that Malaviyaji and Sarojini Devi will be with me as persons entitled to nomination by reason of their distinguished status apart

[1] For the text of the communique as finally published, *vide* "The Second Settlement", 28-8-1931

[2] Gandhiji mentions dictating this in the train while on his way to Bombay. He left Simla late in the evening on August 27, so August 28 would seem to be the most likely date.

from their being members of the Congress and their being past presidents. There is weight in every one of the suggestions made by these friends. All the considerations were with the Working Committee, when, after a full and prolonged debate[1], it came to the conclusion that there should be sole delegation on behalf of the Congress. I fully share the unanimous view expressed by the members of the Working Committee. But just before the way became clear for me to go to London, and more when the way was opened at 7 p.m. on the 27th, my weakness burst upon me as never before, and I have not got over it even as I dictate these lines on the train taking me to Bombay.

Something within me told me that I must not bear the burden of the Simla visits single-handed, but that as the Frontier Province and the United Provinces were storm centres and as Gujarat was the special care of Sardar Vallabhbhai, he, Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru should be by my side, and that I should take no decision without their full consent and approval, and so in my telegram to the Viceroy,[2] I told him that these three would accompany me to Simla. As I had to pass through Delhi, I telegraphed to Dr. Ansari also, so that I could have half an hour with him. He was not in Delhi but in Mussoorie attending to a patient. My wire was repeated to him there, and he went down post-haste to Kalka to meet me since he could not catch me at Delhi, and so he too came along to Simla. And I can thankfully confess that the presence of each one of them was most valuable to me, and I can give out the secret, that but for their presence and especially of Jawaharlal's frank and insistent criticism, the Second Settlement[3], though identical in substance, would have taken a form very different from that in which it finally emerged, and I must own that the form in which it has emerged is far superior to the one to which I alone, in my trustfulness even in official nature, would have subscribed. With that very useful experience in front of me, the reader would be entitled to say that I must either be too conceited or too dull to see that I must take these very colleagues with me to London even though they may not be with me as co-delegates.

But I am not aware of any conceit in me nor of special dullness that would conceal the reality from me. These colleagues too still feel

[1] At its sitting from June 9 to 11, 1931

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Viceroy", 23-8-1931

[3] *Vide* "The Second Settlement", 28-8-1931

that sole delegation is the proper thing, and that their own place is not in London either as delegates or as counsellors, but at their respective posts of duty in India. Their presence in India would be a much greater help than what is to be gained by their being available for discussions in London.

I must go to London feeling my weakness in its fulness. I must go to London with God as my only guide. He is a jealous Lord. He will allow no one to share His authority. One has therefore to appear before Him in all one's weakness, empty handed and in a spirit of full surrender, and then He enables you to stand before a whole world and protects you from all harm. When I think of the prospects in London, when I know that all is not well in India, that the second Settlement is bereft of all grace and is charged with no pleasant memories, there is nothing wanting to fill me with utter despair. The horizon is as black as it possibly could be. There is every chance of my returning empty handed. That is just the state which realization of weakness finds one in. But believing as I do that God has made the way to London clear for me through the Second Settlement, I approach the visit with hope, and feel that any result that comes out of it would be good for the nation, if I do not prove faithless to the mandate given to me by the Congress.

THE CHARGE-SHEET AND THE REPLY[1]

I am sorry that the Government have published the replies of Provincial Governments to the charges mentioned against them in the charge-sheet. In my opinion the categorical denials, if they prove anything, prove the necessity for an enquiry. An accused person does not quash a complaint by a denial of the charge against him, however emphatic his denial may be. He has to prove his innocence before a judge. So far as Congressmen are concerned, the denials from the Provincial Governments simply confirm them in their suspicions. The public therefore will hear more of the charge-sheet. Mahadev Desai has given his stray impressions. But a rejoinder is in course of preparation,[2] and I have no doubt, that when it is published, it will be found that the Congress has a good case. If the Provincial Governments are as innocent as they claim to be, why should they shirk an impartial investigation? But according to the Second

[1] *Vide* "A Memorandum", 21-7-1931

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 28-8-1931

Settlement they refuse to face an enquiry. The Congress has submitted to the refusal. But it has also made it clear, that submission to the refusal need not mean submission to the injustice involved, and if there is a wrong to which, in the opinion of the Congress, it would be against the interest of the nation to submit, the Congress has reserved the right, in spite of the Settlement which contemplates suspension of civil disobedience, to take it up as a measure of self-defence. It is the only alternative to an enquiry when discussion, negotiation and petition fail. Let me hope however that even defensive civil disobedience will be found to be unnecessary. I know that Sardar Vallabhbhai and the Working Committee will not lightly permit any such resumption. So far as it is humanly possible, pending the result of the London visit civil disobedience should be avoided. But it cannot be and must not be avoided at the cost of national self-respect or well-being. Let Congress Committees and individuals know that it is not open to them to take up civil disobedience on their own responsibility. Permission of the Working Committee or the President is absolutely necessary.

Young India, 3-9-1931

338. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

ON THE FRONTIER DOWN MAIL,
August 28, 1931

MY DEAR AMTUL,

So we shall not meet for some time now. You will go away for change if you are weak and ailing and return when you have recouped yourself and the malarial season at Sabarmati is over. In every case you must keep yourself perfectly at peace and cheerful. Don't worry about anything. But do such service as you can. Let there be not a single idle moment. You can do *takli* spinning, grain cleaning, sewing, cotton cleaning and many other such items of light labour. They are just as useful as heavy labour. All these things come naturally to those who will concentrate not upon themselves but upon the good of all and the contribution that they can make towards the promotion of that good. You must write to me. My address you will learn from Narayandas.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 245

339. LETTER TO SIR MALCOLM HAILEY

ON THE FRONTIER DOWN MAIL,
August 28, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I know you will not consider me to be discourteous because I did not acknowledge your wire in reply to mine[1] from Bombay. The reason was simple. I did not know what reply to send at the time. It is only now that I can send a reply, and this I am doing during the few moments I can get on the train that is taking me to Bombay. You will not mind my saying that your telegram was capable of being read as a promise of hope or of none. I propose now to read in your telegram a promise of hope. I am not aware of the legal position but I do know that you have a reputation of being able to find a way out of every difficulty, that is, if you are convinced that a way should be found out of it. The chief difficulty in U.P. as it seems to me is the evictions already obtained and the evictions that are still continuing. They may all be lawful but there is something wrong in a system which allows of so many evictions. You have said in your telegram that the evictions this year do not show any excess over last year. That may be so. But I hardly think you will justify them on the score of a bad precedent. With the tremendous awakening that has taken place all over India there is a sensitiveness to wrongs which was not felt 12 months ago. I would ask you therefore to recognize this sensitiveness and deal with the wrong. And I venture to suggest that you cannot make a better beginning than by sending for Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and establishing a direct touch with him. Seeing that the Settlement continues I venture to suggest that Congress may be trusted and all necessary help requisitioned from it. I am certain that the trust will not be misplaced if the cause is common as I take it is the case between us.

I have written freely because there is no other way of strengthening bonds of public friendship as of private. I hope therefore that you will not resent my letter as a presumption.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

HIS EXCELLENCY SIR MALCOLM HAILEY
NAINI TAL

From a photostat: G.N. 8811; also S.N. 17608

[1] Dated August 5; *vide* "Telegram to G. D. Birla", 5-8-1931

340. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

ON THE FRONTIER DOWN MAIL,
August 28, 1931

DEAR C.R.,

What shall I write to you? Do you know that not a day has passed but I have thought of you and also felt the need of your presence? But I was not to have it and as ill luck will have it, I cannot have even a few words with you before sailing. There are two men whom I would like by my side in London, you and Jawaharlal. But I feel that even if both of you were available I must not have you by me. Somehow or other I do feel that you will both be helping me like the others by being here. Only your presence with me will have lightened my burden. But I must bear the Cross alone and to the fullest extent. When I think of myself with all my limitations and ignorance I sink in utter despair but I rise out of it immediately, as I think and feel that it is God within Who is moving me and using me as His instrument. He will give me the right word at the right moment. That does not mean that I shall make no mistakes. But I have come to believe that God as it were purposely makes us commit mistakes if only to humble us. I know that this is a dangerous belief which can be utilized to justify any error. But I have no doubt about its correctness in respect of all unconscious errors. But this is not a letter to air my philosophy. This is written to ask you to give me through weekly letters, sent even by air mail, what I cannot get through your presence. I would like you also to write for *Young India* every week. I do not think there is any legal necessity for advertising a new editor during my temporary absence. If there is a legal necessity I would like you to wear the editorial mantle.

I would like you to prepare a rejoinder to the Madras Government's reply to the Madras charge-sheet and bring the latter to date and send your rejoinder to the Sardar.

By way of preliminary send me by air mail your detailed reflections on what you expect me to do in London. Copies of whatever you send by air mail should be sent through the usual weekly service.

How is Papa? I do hope she is better.

From a photostat: S.N. 17609

341. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

Unrevised ON THE FRONTIER DOWN MAIL,
August 28, 1931

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

Will you please look after the columns of *Young India?* The idea is that there should be no change of name as editor. I do not think the law requires such change during the temporary absence of the editor-in-charge. But if such a change is required C. Rajagopalachari should appear as the editor, and in any case whenever you are in doubt or opinion among our own coterie differs, C. Rajagopalachari's should be the final voice when a reference is at all possible. When such is not possible Jairamdas's should be the final voice and when even that is not possible yours should be the final voice unless Kaka Saheb chooses to decide. I do not want him to bear this burden. But he has a right whenever he considers intervention necessary. I have already written to Rajagopalachari to send something regularly and I am asking Jairamdas too to give you a weekly contribution or contributions. I have asked Jawaharlal also to do likewise and he is likely to send you a weekly budget of U.P. news as also anything else he may wish to write. This therefore should not prove too great a strain on you. But if all these fail as they may you will fill in the columns somehow or other. Of course I expect to be able to send something every week. In all your writings I would like you to make as little criticism as possible but give as many facts and figures as possible.

If you find time you can study the economics of drink and show by facts and figures what a tremendous waste the drink habit means apart from the actual money value of the drink consumed. You may also take up the whole subject of economic waste that goes on in our midst through preventable disease, through wrong feeding, through the criminal waste of human excreta as manure. This waste has been worked out by Poord. I believe his works we have in the Ashram. The double waste through wrong feeding has been very partially worked out by Col. Macanister—or some such name—the medico who has written on vitamins. I have simply thrown together a few hints that should be sufficient for you to make explorations and discoveries, Economics treated in this manner can really become fascinating, interesting and instructive for the masses. Nor do these

explorations require very deep or prolonged study for one like you who has studied the science of economics. If you find that these are hints thrown out by a man who knows nothing about economics you are at liberty to brush aside the whole of this paragraph. Please share this letter with Kaka Saheb. I expect to be away not longer than 3 months at the outside and not less than six weeks in any event.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10098

342. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

Personal

ON THE WAY,
August 28, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

Perhaps H. E. will show you my personal letter[1] to him. This is to tell you how grieved I felt in Simla over what appeared to me to be your obstructive tactics. I hope I am wrong in my fears and that you were not responsible for the exasperating situation that led to the waste of precious three days. The securing of a constitution is nothing to me compared to the joy of discovering human contacts by which one could swear.

I shall soon forget the sad memories of the past three days and I know you will forgive me if I have unwittingly misjudged you. But the future fills me with fear and misgivings. If you will distrust Sardar Patel, Pandit Jawaharlal and Abdul Ghaffar Khan an explosion is almost unavoidable. You will most certainly avoid it by trusting them. I think I know the influence you have. May I assume your promise to use it aright?

I have written thus freely in the exercise of a privilege of friendship and therefore hope not to be misunderstood.

My right hand needing rest, I have to write with the left hand. I could not dictate a personal letter like this.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 17601

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 27-8-1931

343. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

ON THE FRONTIER DOWN MAIL,
August 28, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I had no time to take a statement from Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan about Akbarpura and the treatment of prisoners whom, for want of a better distinguishing term, I describe as political. The Khan Saheb gave me a harrowing description of the prisoners in the Peshawar jail who were convicted in connection with a drama about which you would remember we had a discussion. Khan Saheb tells me that the prisoners are kept in irons and given the heavy work of turning the *kharas.* I do not mind heavy work being given to able-bodied men, but the ablest-bodied men have also limits to their capacity for exertion and it is no joke to work a *kharas* with irons on one's legs. I enclose herewith a statement made by Shrimati Khurshedbehn regarding what she saw of injured men and women in Akbarpura. I would like you not to brush aside all these statements as false or exaggerated. Her statement about Dara Ismail Khan which also I enclose herewith is worthy of attention.

Yours sincerely,

H. W. EMERSON, ESQ.
SIMLA

From a photostat: S.N. 17607

344. LETTER TO D. N. BAHADURJI

ON THE FRONTIER DOWN MAIL,
August 28, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

In the Frontier Province, as it appears to me from accounts received, a great deal of repression is going on. Only recently in Akbarpura apparently without any justification several hundred men and women were charged by the military and received more or less serious injury. In Dara Ismail Khan there was a Hindu Muslim riot and it is said that there was connivance on the part of the police. Political prisoners are undergoing harsh treatment. Khurshedbehn who will give you this letter knows something about all these things. If you could go to the Frontier Province and quietly inquire into these

events and report upon them, your report might be of inestimable value and might ease the situation. Whether you should be authoritatively appointed by the Working Committee or not I do not know. Such an appointment might conceivably defeat the end in view. The Frontier Province is a non-regulation province. Many things are done there which in our part of India we would believe to be impossible. The Government may even prohibit the inquiry and if an appointment made by the Working Committee is thwarted by the Government there might arise an undesirable situation. But the first thing is whether you could spare the time to go to the Frontier Province, and if you could, whether you would like to take up this responsibility. If you can, you will please confer with Sardar Vallabhbhai and then decide whether a quiet informal enquiry would be preferable to an enquiry authorized by the Working Committee. You will not hesitate to say "no" if for any reason whatsoever you find that you cannot shoulder this burden.

Yours sincerely,

SYT. D. N. BAHADURJI
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 17610

345. LETTER TO DR. MRS. COMMISARIAT

ON THE FRONTIER DOWN MAIL,
August 28, 1931

DEAR DR. COMMISARIAT

You will remember your having told me when we met at Naini Tal that you were ready to take up some national service for which you might consider yourself fitted. I want to take you at your word. You know Khurshedbehn Naoroji. She has just taken up work amongst the women of the Frontier Province. She tells me that if there was a lady doctor working amongst the women of this province, it would be a good thing which the Frontier people would appreciate. If you have the time and the inclination, I think you are the person for this work. If you are at all free and inclined to give your time for this work, please correspond with Miss Naoroji, whose address for the next ten days will be 78 Napean Sea Road, Bombay. She expects to leave for the Frontier Province inside of a fortnight.

Yours sincerely,

DR. (MRS.) COMMISARIAT

From a microfilm: S.N. 17611

346. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

ON THE FRONTIER DOWN MAIL,
August 28, 1931

MY DEAR MATHEW,

I was glad to have had even that brief chat. You must keep perfectly cheerful and calm. You must shed your shyness and begin to speak Hindi freely, no matter how bad or ungrammatical it may be. By the time I return I expect you to be able to talk fluently in Hindi and you must write also as often as you can. This want of self-confidence in you, an educationist, is a terrible drawback and you must get out of it. An educationist is always a student. Nothing is beyond him and he is never too old to learn a new thing if the learning of it is necessary for the task before him, and you have realized that a competent knowledge of Hindi is indispensable if you are to serve through the Ashram. You should write to me. If Ratilal is there try to befriend him. A good educationist would delight in handling semi-lunatics like Ratilal and by his moral force weaning them from their lunacy. I do believe that Ratilal is not past praying for. He is very responsive to any kind attention that might be given to him. Being brainless he has no friends. Nobody has taken a loving interest in him. Hence he has felt neglected and the feeling of being neglected made him sour, angry and, in the end, mad.

From a microfilm S.N. 17614

347. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

August 28, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your two letters. They give no news about Ratilal.

Send *Mumbai Samachar* to Prabhavati.

I have already sent a note to you about Lalji. Send him goods worth up to Rs. 50 when Mama writes about them. Deduct from that amount the sum of Rs. 20 which you have already sent. That is, you have now to send Rs. 30. Three Yeravda wheels being manufactured in Bardoli are to be sent to Mama just now. Nine more may be supplied later when he writes for them.

Now that I am going, I am leaving a heavy burden on you. But you are capable of shouldering it. Mahadev must have sent you my address. Write to me from time to time. I believe I shall return in six weeks at the shortest and twelve weeks at the longest. It is nearly ten now. I feel sleepy and, therefore, don't write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

To the others I will write in the morning or from the ship.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

348. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

ON THE FRONTIER DOWN MAIL,
August 29, 1931

The very first question . . . was as to whether his recent conversations with the Viceroy had been such as to convince him that there has been a "change of heart" on the part of the Government, Mahatma's decisive reply was:

I am afraid not.

Q. What is your reply to your critics who suggest that you have not been consistent in your demand? According to this section you started with a demand for an impartial inquiry into the breaches of the Truce by the Government, then you modified it to an inquiry by a High Court Judge, then you said you would be satisfied with a one-sided inquiry, and, finally, you have agreed to no inquiry at all in places other than Bardoli.

A. The public are justified in thinking that I am inconsistent. But I must be allowed to have the same right and to say that I am not inconsistent. My insistence was on an inquiry. I had suggested many things. But the indispensable minimum was an open impartial inquiry into the Bardoli charge. And that open inquiry has been granted. Whether it will be also impartial or not I do not know.

Though I had put forth a claim to an inquiry into all the charges that claim is not withdrawn but if the Government do not grant or face an inquiry into other charges that could be no ground for refusing to proceed to London. An enquiry is a substitute for civil disobedience. That right has been specially reserved as you will see from the correspondence published.

In my opinion nothing of an essential character has been given up.

Q. In the Charge-sheet published by you, you have given a "catalogue" of breaches of the Truce by the Government. These have occurred in spite of your presence in the country and your strenuous efforts not to precipitate a crisis. Do you expect the same Government to observe the terms of the Delhi Pact while you are away in London?

A. The fear underlying your question is not groundless. Nevertheless as a man of trust I do expect the same Government to observe the terms of the Delhi Pact. You will see in the communique[1] an unequivocal declaration on the part of the Central Government that they will secure observance of the Pact. I have also the solemn assurance of the Viceroy himself but to what extent this declaration in the communique and the solemn assurance will be carried out into practice the future alone will show.

But in any event for a big national organization like the Congress no man's presence is indispensable however efficient he may be for service. An organization that has weathered storms for an unbroken period of nearly fifty years is well able to take care of itself in spite of my absence and I really feel that the Government having sent me to London will make it a point of honour to see that the terms of the Truce are better observed now than before.

Q. Will you advise Congress organizations to resort to direct action if the Government continues the same policy and does not make amends for the injustice already done?

A. In the first place you should understand that the Congress has not abandoned any of the charges because the Congress will not get an inquiry into them. Negotiations will still proceed and I have not a shadow of doubt that where any grievance is so felt as to make some action absolutely necessary the Congress will adopt it.

Q. The agrarian situation in the U.P. is becoming more and more acute. It is reported that peasants are giving up cultivation of lands and migrating to the cities in search of employment. The movement is spreading. What remedy do you suggest to ease the situation and what part should the Congress play to secure a better atmosphere ?

A. I am painfully conscious of the ever-worsening situation in the U.P. I had a very long chat with Pandit Jawaharlal over this situation on the train. We have together mapped out a course of action and I have ventured to address a communication to Sir Malcolm

[1] *Vide* "Athe Second Settlement", 28-8-1931

Hailey.[1] He is one of the strongest Governors we have in India at the present moment. And I know he could be strong in action for securing justice. I do not despair of his coming to the help of the Congress to avert a crisis.

Q. Are you optimistic about the results of the Round Table Conference ?

A. No, if I am to judge the future from the present appearance. But being a born optimist I have never lost hope even in the midst of impenetrable darkness. But let us take care of the present. Let every Congressman do his duty, observe non-violence and truth in thought, word and deed and I promise that all will be well.

Q. What will be your minimum demand at the R.T.C.?

A. My minimum demand is happily chalked out by the Congress in the mandate given to me. To be worthy of the confidence reposed in me I may be expected not to move away from the terms of the mandate by a hair's breadth.

Q. Will you reiterate your eleven points?[2]

A. My eleven points are as dead as Queen Anne. But they have revived in an invigorated form in the so-called Fundamental Rights resolution[3] of the Congress. Whatever of these is to be part of the Constitution will be part of any constitution acceptable to the Congress.

Q. Will you accept a Constitution which may fall short of the Karachi resolution for Independence, or as you put it "Substance of Independence"?

A. Nothing short of Substance of Independence will be acceptable to me personally, let alone Congress resolution.

Asked to state his attitude regarding the National Debt question, Gandhiji said that as ever his attitude was to demand an impartial tribunal to examine it.

The conversation then turned to the Congress formula for communal solution,[4] which was not acceptable to a section of Muslims. Would Gandhiji accept a compromise for the sake of presenting a united front at the Conference?

A. The Congress resolution has left me no room for accepting any compromise not acceptable to the parties concerned. The unanimous consent was, therefore, necessary for any compromise.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Malcolm Hailey", 28-8-1931
[2] *Vide* "Clearing the Issue"
[3] *Vide* "Resolution on Fubdaental Rights and Economic Changes", 31-3-1931
[4] *Vide* "Proposed Communal Solution", 16-7-1931.

Gandhiji deplored that this had been rendered foolishly impossible by excluding the official representation of the Nationalist Muslim opinion.

It may be hopeless minority or it may represent the largest section of enlightened Muslim opinion. But whatever the extent of its influence it is not an opinion that can be summarily rejected not at least by me when I know that the Nationalist Muslim Party contains some of my oldest Mussalman comrades and noblest Muslims in all India.

Q. Have you agreed to visit Lancashire and to explain the character of the boycott movement?

A. Yes. I have promised a visit if it is desired by Lancashire men.

Questioned whether he proposed to visit any other European country besides England, Gandhiji said:

If I can possibly do so I would certainly respond to the invitations I have received from all over Europe. But that will depend upon the movement of the political barometer.

The Mahatma informed that his London hostess was Miss Muriel Lester, who, like him, was a representative of paupers.

Q. If the R.T.C. concedes the national demand, do you propose to remain in political life? Gandhiji smilingly said:

If the R.T.C. concedes the National demand I shall only just enter political life.

Gandhiji was urged to give an "exclusive" message to the country through the *Chronicle* when he exclaimed.

I belong to the Chronicle. Belonging as I do to the Chronicle, there can be no exclusive message to it from me.

Gandhiji could not be induced to say anything more and to a valley of questions put to him, he said:

You have pumped everything out of me by your 17 points. Now you must thank me and run away.

The Bombay Chronicle, 31-8-1931

349. LETTER TO VICEROY

BOMBAY,
August 29, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

At the end of our conversation at Simla, I opened the question of Dr. Ansari's delegation at the Round Table Conference and I wanted to mention the delegation on behalf of the Federated Chambers of Commerce. As to Dr. Ansari, as you know, Lord Irwin believed that I should have carried the impression that his delegation would be a certainty. As to the delegation on behalf of the Federated Chambers I have the correspondence between Lord Irwin's Private Secretary and the Chairman of the Federation. From this correspondence it is clear that there were to be three representatives and the correspondence closed with the names being finally submitted by the Federation. These were Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas, Seth Jamal Mohammed and Seth Ghanshyam Das Birla. Of these, only Sir Purushottamdas received the invitation and as you are aware, the Federation would not think of sending him without the other two also receiving the invitations. Here I think the plighted word of an ex-Viceroy is concerned and should, in my opinion, be respected. But this is not the point that I wanted to urge. The point that I wish to urge is that my usefulness would be largely curtailed if the interests represented by these three gentlemen and the interests represented by Dr. Ansari are not to be represented at the Round Table Conference. The Federation is to a certain extent working in conjunction with the Congress and so is the Nationalist Muslim Party of which Dr. Ansari is the head. If there were any negotiations in connection with Hindu-Muslim question or in connection with Indian Commerce I should be perfectly helpless without the assistance and co-operation of these gentlemen and the very purpose for which I am being sent to London is in danger of being defeated. I would therefore ask you, if you have authority, to consider the advisability of these nominations from the standpoint I have suggested. If you have not, I would like you to telegraph the purport of this to the Prime Minister and if it is at all possible repair what seems to me to be a glaring omission. I may add that Pandit Malaviya and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu also are associating themselves with the contents of this letter.

HIS EXCELLENCY LORD WILLINGDON
SIMLA

From a photostat: S.N. 17601

350. LETTER TO NATIONAL CHRISTIAN PARTY

MANI BHUVAN,
GAMDEVI, BOMBAY,
August 29, 1931

DEAR FRIENDS,

I thank you for your address which I must confess I have not been able to read. I shall certainly carefully read it, but I can give you this assurance in anticipation that as a representative of the Congress, the interests of the Christian community will be just as dear to me as those of every other community. I hope that all the Christian friends, men and women, will carry out the Congress programme personally as you know there are many things that both men and women can easily do. For instance, spin in the name of the poor every day, adopt khadi to the exclusion of every other cloth, and those who are given to the drink habit can abstain from drink.

Yours, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-9-1931

351. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BOMBAY

August 29, 1931

Speaking from the balcony of a private house Mr. Gandhi addressed a huge enthusiastic crowd (who stood in drenching rain) for quarter of an hour.

Mr. Gandhi said he had signed the Second Agreement with the Government. They could read it. Some of them could ask what this man had gone and done again. But Mr. Gandhi himself was aware that the nation had shown enormous trust in him by electing him as the sole delegate to the Round Table Conference. In ordinary circumstances, but for their trust he would have refused to go to London, but their trust would support him. He knew full well his own shortcomings and weaknesses, but truth and non-violence would be his guiding principles and he hoped they would come out in their fullness in his work in London.

I am a cripple, but it is only natural that a crippled nation should have a crippled delegate who alone can understand the difficulties and miseries of the millions.

Mr. Gandhi assured his bearers that he would abide by the Congress mandate.

He would deceive nobody, neither Englishmen nor anybody else, much less India's teeming millions.

If I deceive you, even to kill me would not be violence. I have no enmity with Englishmen, nor with Mohammedans, nor for the matter of that with anyone else.

The Hindu, 29-8-1931

352. STATEMENT TO ASSOCIATED PRESS[1]

S.S. "RAJPUTANA",
August 29, 1931

Though I see nothing on the horizon to warrant hope, being a born optimist, I am hoping against hope. My faith is in God and He seems to have made my way clear for me to go to London. Therefore I expect He will use me as His instrument for the service of humanity. For me service of India is identical with the service of humanity.

Though Congress may be repudiated by sections of the people of India, it aims at representing the whole of India and, therefore, to deserve the trust that had been reposed in me and imposed upon me, I shall endeavour to represent every interest that does not conflict with the interests of the dumb millions for whom the Congress predominantly exists.

I hope that Provincial Governments, the Civil Service and English mercantile houses will help the Congress to realize the mission it has set before itself. Representing, as the Congress does, the message of non-violence and truth, it can only succeed by the goodwill of all component parts of the nation and I am therefore hoping that goodwill will be extended to the humble representative that is going upon his errand.

The Hindu, 30-8-1931

[1] Gandhiji gave the statement just before sailing.

353. STATEMENT ON BARDOLI INQUIRY

[After *August 29, 1931*][1]

With reference to the revenue collections in Bardoli and Borsad it was from the very beginning a clear understanding that the Khatedars affected by the civil disobedience were to pay only as much as they could without borrowing. This was repeatedly brought out in the conversations between the Collector Mr. Perry of Kaira and his successor Mr. Bhadrapur and Mr. Kothawalla, Collector of Surat. The correspondence carried on with them confirms this statement. So far as the terms of reference to the Inquiry Officer are concerned I have distinctly understood that the standard referred to therein means ability to pay without borrowing.

Home Department, Political, File No. 33/39-Poll, 1931. Courtesy: National Archives of India

354. TELEGRAM TO ROMAIN ROLLAND[2]

MARSEILLES ELEVENTH MORNING. WILL HEALTH PERMIT YOU MEET AND TRAVEL CALAIS?

GANDHI

Romain Rolland and Gandhi: Correspondence, p. 145

355. LETTER TO JUNGBAHADUR SINGH

NEARING ADEN,
Silence Day [*August 31, 1931*][3]

BHAI JUNGBAHADUR SINGH

I have your letter, I don't see the necessity of marrying Krishnakumari's sister to a Kshatriya from U.P. only. Why may she not be married outside U.P.? Why particularly to a Kshatriya? What

[1] This statement "relating to the basis of the agreement" on the Bardoli inquiry was sent by Gandhiji after he had sailed for England on August 29, 1931.

[2] This telegram was forwarded from Villeneuve to Lugano, where Romain Rolland was staying at the time

[3] Gandhiji reached Aden on the morning of September 3; the Silence Day before that fell on August 31.

can [Raja of] Kalakankar do in the matter? I also feel that a fourteen-year-old girl is not ready for marriage. I shall return in a short while. Write to me then. Krishnakumari is happy these days.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1338

356. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

ON BOARD THE S.S. "RAJPUTANA",
Silence Day [*August 31, 1931*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. About Lakshmi I have sent a message with Joshi. If Maruti is ready, they may marry at any time. We should put no pressure on him.

Krishnakumari's eczema must have been cured by now.

Why don't you try and cultivate a perfect understanding of heart with Narandas? Formerly you used to like him so much. Has he changed now? I have not felt that he has.

The Ashram is yours, whatever it is, and it is there that you must seek your happiness and peace of mind, if you can get any. If you resolve thus, you will get everything there.

You should, however, continue to pour out your grievances to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 61. Also C.W. 8787. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] *Vide* footnote to the preceding item.

357. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

S. S. "RAJPUTANA",
Silence Day [*August 31, 1931*][1]

CHI. VIDYAVATI,

I have been able to read your letter only today, the day of silence. No matter how much people denigrate us we must continue to do our duty. In our future swaraj women should have the same property rights as men. What will actually happen neither I nor anyone else can say. It will depend on the devotion to truth among men and the strength and unity of women. I hope you and Lakshmi will contribute much in this. You have rightly said that everything will depend upon our character. I cannot write with the right hand, so I have written this with the left hand.

I hope to return before long.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

My address is : Kingsley Hall, Bow, London

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

358. LETTER TO JAMNA GANDHI

ON THE BOAT,
Silence Day [*August 31, 1931*][2]

CHI. JAMNA,

I have your letter. I did not get Purshottam's letter. Now it will have to be after my return, would it not? I think three months will be the maximum.

[1] Gandhiji left for London on August 29, 1931 to attend the Round Table Conference Monday following which was August 31.

[2] Gandhiji left Bombay for London on August 29, 1931, by the *S.S. Rajputana* to attend the Round Table Conference. August 29 was a Saturday. Presumably Gandhiji wrote this letter on Monday, August 31, which would be his Silence Day.

You must have fully regained your health. If the Vaidya has permitted you, make it a rule to go out for a walk every day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 33780

359. MESSAGE TO INDIAN PEOPLE

S.S. "RAJPUTANA",
September 2, 1931

Now that I am drawing away from India's shores, let me appeal to the Indian people to preserve absolutely a non-violent atmosphere during my absence, and let them follow out the constructive programme of Congress—namely, remove the fourfold curse of drink, drugs, foreign cloth and untouchability. Let them revive the village industry of hand-spinning and promote unity among all classes, which is indispensable for India's freedom. I should like, also, to appeal to Englishmen, including officials, to trust the Congress and Congressmen, if they really believe that power must pass from them to India.

The Times, 3-9-1931

360. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

ON BOARD THE S.S. "RAJPUTANA",
September 2, 1931

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I have your letter. I expect to go through the translation of the article on the vow of *aparigraha* and despatch it along with this letter. Sardar Vallabhbhai wanted to meet you again. If he has not detained you, I think you must have gone to Almora by now. There was no reason to change any of our arrangements because of my leaving for England, and that is why I did not leave the burden of *Young India* or *Navajivan* on you. It is very necessary that you should get back your strength as early as possible.

Blessings from

BAPU

I have not revised this letter after dictating it.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.W. 7416. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

361. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

ON BOARD THE S.S. "RAJPUTANA",
Wednesday, September 2, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

It is about 8.30 p.m. just now. It must be about 11 by your watch. Where has Surajbhan gone away? Has he left Yashodadevi behind? How is she? Read my letter to Qureshi. Ascertain Imam Saheb's view. There is no urgency about sending Qureshi. Do keep me informed about Ratilal. I shall return within three months at the latest. It should not, however, be surprising if I return within a month and a half. After Saturday, Mirabehn has left her bed only today.

I felt sleepy while writing this letter and slept for a while. It is 9.45 now and so I will stop here. I will write later the letters which I intended to write to others.

Tell Premabehn that her not writing to me pains me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, part I, p. 276. Also C.W. 8193. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

362. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

ON BOARD THE S.S. "RAJPUTANA",
September 2, 1931

CHI. VASUMATI,

I could read your letter only on the ship. As you have been keeping good health, you should spend some more time there and take rest. You must have now got a more comfortable place. Climb as many hills as your health will permit you to and see all the scenery. It is no mean education to see it, to contemplate nature and through it to know God. You need not undergo more strain than the body can stand. You give no news about Premavati in your letter. We shall

return at the most after three months, and at the least it will be a month and a half.

I have not revised this after dictating it.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N' 9330

363. STATEMENT TO REUTER[2]

ADEN,
September 3, 1931

I shall strive for a constitution which will release India from all thraldom and patronage, and give her, if need be, the right to sin. I shall work for an India in which the poorest shall feel that it is their country in whose making they have an effective voice; an India in which there shall be no high class and low class of people; an India in which all communities shall live in perfect harmony.

There can be no room in such an India for the curse of untouchability or the curse of intoxicating drinks and drugs. Women will enjoy the same rights as men. Since we shall be at peace with all the rest of the world, neither exploiting nor being exploited, we should have the smallest army imaginable.

All interests not in conflict with the interests of the dumb millions will be scrupulously respected, whether foreign or indigenous. Personally, I hate distinction between foreign and indigenous.

This is the India of my dreams for which I shall struggle at the next Round Table Conference. I may fail, but if I am to deserve the confidence of the Congress, I shall be satisfied with nothing less.

The Hindustan Times, 5-9-1931

[1] This sentence is in Gandhiji's hand.

[2] A Reuter correspondent had asked Gandhiji what his programme in England would be.

364. SPEECH AT RECEPTION, ADEN[1]

September 3, 1931

I thank you for the honour you have done me. I know that the honour is not meant for me personally or for my friends. It is an honour done to the Congress whom I hope to be able to represent at the Round Table Conference. I came to know that there was a hitch in your proceedings on account of the national flag. Now it is inconceivable for me to find a meeting of Indians, especially where national leaders are invited, without the national flag flying there. You know that many people sustained lathi blows and some have lost their lives in defending the honour of the flag, and you cannot honour an Indian leader without honouring the Indian national flag. Again there is a Settlement between the Government and the Congress, which is no loger a hostile party but a friendly party. It is not enough therefore to tolerate or permit the Congress flag, but it must be given the place of honour where Congress representatives are invited.

On behalf of the Congress, I give you the assurance that the Congress does not stand merely for isolated independence, which may easily become a menace to the world. But the Congress, with its creed of truth and non-violence, cannot possibly be a menace to the world. It is my conviction that India numbering one-fifth of the human race, becoming free through non-violence and truth, can be a great force of service to the whole of mankind. On the contrary India having no voice in her affairs is today a menace. It is a helpless India exciting the jealousy and greed of other countries which must live by exploiting her. But when India refuses to be exploited and is well able to take care of herself, and achieves that freedom through non-violence and truth, she will be a force for peace and make for peaceful atmosphere in this troubled globe of ours.

It was therefore natural that the Arabs and others joined the Indians in organizing this function. All who desire peace must join together to perpetuate peace. This great peninsula, the birth-place of

[1] A reception was held immediately after Gandhiji's boat reached Aden at 4.50 a.m. A purse of 328 guineas was presented to Gandhiji an the occasion. Before delivering the speech reproduced here he spoke in Gujarati. The text of that speech, however, is not available. This report is reproduced from Mahadev Desai's account of the meeting.

Mahomed and of Islam, can help to solve the Hindu-Muslim problem. It is a matter of shame to me to confess that we are a house divided against itself. We fly at each other's throats in cowardice and fear. The Hindu distrusts the Mussalman through cowardice and fear, and the Mussalman distrusts the Hindu through equal cowardice and imaginary fears. Islam throughout history has stood for matchless bravery and peace. It can therefore be no matter for pride to the Mussalmans that they should fear the Hindus. Similarly it can be no matter for pride to the Hindus that they should fear Mussalmans, even if they are aided by the Mussalmans of the world. Are we so fallen that we should be afraid of our own shadows? You will be surprised to hear that the Pathans are living in peace with us. They stood side by side with us in the last struggle, and sacrified their young men on the altar of liberty. I want you, who belong to the country of the Prophet's birth, to make your contribution to the restoration of peace between Hindus and Muslims in India. I cannot tell you how you are to do it, but I may remind you that where there is a will there is a way. I want the Arabs of Arabia to come to our rescue and help to bring about a condition of things when the Mussalman will consider it a point of honour to help the Hindu and *vice versa.*

For the rest, I would also give you the message of spinning and weaving in your homes. Some of the Caliphs led lives which were models of simplicity, and if you help yourself by making your own cloth, there is in it nothing derogatory to Islam. There is also the problem of drink which for you should be twice cursed. There should be not a drop here, but as there are other communities too, I think the Arabs will have to persuade them to make Aden dry. I do hope our relations with one another will now grow richer and closer.

Young India, 24-9-1931

365. TELEGRAM TO EDITOR, ALLINEWSPA HOLD, LONDON

[On or after *September 3, 1931*][1]

THANKS MARCONIGRAM. HAVE YET ACCEPTED NO FIXTURES BUT TIME PERMITTING AND SUBJECT APPROVAL BY FRIENDS LIKE ANDREWS WOULD GLADLY VISIT PROVINCIAL TOWNS INCLUDING BRISTOL. PLEASE ESTABLISH TOUCH WITH ANDREWS.

From a photostat: S.N. 17638

366. INTERVIEW TO REUTER

S.S. "RAJPUTANA",
September 4, 1931

I shall prepare nothing in advance. Everything will come to me spontaneously when I face Mr. MacDonald and other delegates to the Round Table Conference in London.

Provided the Conference does not break down at the start over fundamentals, Mahatma Gandhi expects the session to last until the 1st November. His first duty upon arriving in London, Mahatma Gandhi said, would be to confer informally with Mr. MacDonald, Mr. Baldwin, Lord Sankey, Viscount Peel, Lord Reading and others and tell them frankly what the Congress demands are.

When Reuter's correspondent . . . asked him if dancing did not disturb him, Mahatma Gandhi replied with a twinkle:

I don't listen to the muse of dancing. I heed only to the promptings of Goddess Sleep.

The Hindustan Times, 6-9-1931

[1] This was in reply to a radio message of September 3, 1931, Asking if Gandhiji would be able to address a meeting at Bristol.

367. APPEAL TO PEOPLE OF BOMBAY

S.S. "RAJPUTANA",
[Before *September 5, 1931*]

I appeal to the generous public of Bombay to come to the rescue of the flooded Bengal. Donation may be sent to Dr. P. C. Ray, College of Science, Calcutta.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-9-1931

368. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE[1]

September 5, 1931

SUBHAS BOSE
CALCUTTA

NO PARTIALITY. HAD FERVENT APPEAL FROM DR. RAY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 17647

369. TELEGRAM TO ROMAIN ROLLAND

September 5, 1931

SPECIAL REACHES DIJON AFTER MIDNIGHT, COULD YOU NOT COME MARSEILLES WHERE WE REACH EARLY MORNING STOPPING SEVEN HOURS. TRUST HEALTH WILL PERMIT YOU TRAVEL.[2] BUT NO CASE WILL I LEAVE EUROPE WITHOUT SEEING YOU THEREFORE WOULD NOT LIKE YOU ENDANGER YOUR HEALTH. SHALL BE DELIGHTED ANY CASE SEE YOUR SISTER MARSEILLES IF POSSIBLE.[3]

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 17647

[1] *Vide* the preceding item; also "Letter to Dr. B. C. Roy"

[2] Romain Rolland was prevented by ill health from meeting Ganthiji at Marseilles.

[3] Madeleine Rolland met Gandhiji with a message from her brother.

370. LETTER TO GANGABEHN AND NANIBEHN JHAVERI

September 5, 1931

CHI. GANGABEHN AND NANIBEHN,

I got the letters of you both. I could not see either of you, but that does not matter. After all, I am not going away for a long time. I shall be in England maybe two weeks, or at the most two months. That time will pass quickly.

As for the work to be done by you, you may do what you choose after consulting Kakasaheb. If Pannalal has gone to Peshawar and Khurshedbehn wants you, I should like you to go and join her.

I was very happy to learn that Nanibehn's health is steadily improving. By the time this letter reaches you, I hope she will have completely recovered.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3118

371. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

S.S. "RAJPUTANA",
[*September 5, 1931*][2]

Prayer has been the saving of my life. Without it I should have been a lunatic long ago. My autobiography will tell you that I have had my fair share of the bitterest public and private experiences. They threw me into temporary despair, but if I was able to get rid of it, it was because of prayer. Now I may tell you that prayer has not been part of my life in the sense that truth has been. It came out of sheer

[1] This is extracted from Mahadev Desai's account in which he reports: "The morning prayers are too early to attract these friends, but practically all Indians (who number over 40),—Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis, Sikhs,—and a sprinkling of Europeans attend the evening prayers. At the request of some of these friends a fifteen minutes' talk after prayer and before dinner has become a daily feature. . . . A question is asked each evening, and Gandhiji replies to it the next. One of the Indian passengers—a Mussalman youth —asked Gandhiji to give his personal testimony on prayer, not a theoretical discourse but a narration of what he had felt and experienced as a result of prayer."

[2] From *Diayke Panne* by G. D. Birla

necessity, as I found myself in a plight when I could not possibly be happy without it. And the more my faith in God increased, the more irresistible became the yearning for prayer. Life seemed to be dull and vacant without it. I had attended the Christian service in South Africa, but it had failed to grip me. I could not join them in prayer. They supplicated God, but I could not do so, I failed egregiously. I started with disbelief in God and prayer, and until at a late stage in life I did not feel anything like a void in life. But at that stage I felt that as food was indispensable for the body, so was prayer indispensable for the soul. In fact food for the body is not so necessary as prayer for the soul. For starvation is often necessary in order to keep the body in health, but there is no such thing as prayer-starvation. You cannot possibly have a surfeit of prayer. Three of the greatest teachers of the world—Buddha, Jesus, Mahomed—have left unimpeachable testimony that they found illumination through prayer and could not possibly live without it. But to come nearer home. Millions of Hindus and Mussalmans and Christians find their only solace in life in prayer. Either you vote them down as liars or self-deluded people. Well, then, I will say, that this lying has a charm for me, a truth-seeker, if it is 'lying' that has given me that mainstay or staff of life, without which I could not bear to live for a moment. In spite of despair staring me in the face on the political horizon, I have never lost my peace. In fact I have found people who envy my peace. That peace, I tell you, comes from prayer. I am not a man of learning but I humbly claim to be a man of prayer. I am indifferent as to the form. Everyone is a law unto himself in that respect. But there are some well-marked roads, and it is safe to walk along the beaten tracks, trod by the ancient teachers. Well, I have given my practical testimony. Let everyone try and find that as a result of daily prayer he adds something new to his life, something with which nothing can be compared.

Young India, 24-9-1931

372. TELEGRAM TO A. FENNER BROCKWAY

[On or after *September 5, 1931*][1]

BROCKWAY
33 BUSHWOOD ROAD
KEW GARDENS

THANKS. AM OFF ALL SOCIAL FUNCTIONS BUT CONSULT ANDREWS.

From a photostat: S.N. 17652

373. TELEGRAM TO C. F. ANDREWS

[On or after *September 5, 1931*][2]

ANDREWS

TAKING BOAT SPECIAL DO WHATEVER PROPER.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 17653

374. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 6, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I wrote a letter[3] to you from Aden. This will be posted in Suez.

As Mirabehn and others write to you from time to time, you will get all the news. Tell all the inmates of the Ashram that I do not have time to write to everyone. I rest, see people, read the literature about the Round Table Conference, write for *Young India* and *Navajivan* and write letters. Moreover the right hand does not give service I cannot, therefore, write to as many people as I would like to. Let me

[1] The telegram was in reply to the addressee's telegram of September 5, saying "May we arrange friendly meal with members of Gandhi Society on October 2. . . ."

[2] Gandhiji scribbled this on the same sheet of paper on which he drafted the telegram to A. Fenner Brockway, the preceding item.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to C. Rajgopalachari", 16-6-1931

see how I fare in England. It is certainly a matter of shame that small thefts still occur in the Ashram.

Parasram must have arrived by now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

375. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

September 6, 1931

CHI. PREMA,

You have still not written to me. I shall now get your letter when I reach England only if you have posted one by air mail. Or I may get one on the 19th.

You are causing me worry.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10263

376. APPEAL TO EGYPTIAN MUSLIMS

September 6, 1931

Mahomed was an apostle of peace. As his followers you can do nothing less than establish unity. Upon India's unity and independence, the peace of the rest of the world indirectly depends, but there can be no real international peace so long as India remains fettered by a foreign power.

The Hindustan Times, 9-9-1931

377. STATEMENT TO "AL AHRAM"[1]

[S.S. "RAJPUTANA",
September 6, 1931]

Conditions in India are good so far as the strength of civil disobedience is concerned, but they are truly deplorable so far as Hindu-Muslim unity is concerned. Hitherto all effort at reconciliation has failed and we sorely need the goodwill of the whole world and especially of Mussalmans. They can by sheer strength of friendliness shame both the communities into coming to agreement.

My expectations of the Conference are zero if I am to base them on a survey of the horizon. But being an optimist I am hoping that something will turn up to make the conference a success from the national Indian standpoint. In the event of failure there can be only one consequence—revival of civil disobedience and suffering for the people of a much bitterer type than last year. The Congress is prepared to pay the cost whatever it may be for gaining freedom.

My message to the Nationalists of Egypt is: Like us you are an ancient people. I hope you will not slavishly copy all that is Western. If I have understood the events of your country correctly real freedom for Egypt has still to come and I feel sure that if you can appreciate and assimilate the method of non-violence and truth in matters political, you will surely reach your goal much quicker than by any other method I know. And if I may humbly put it I would like to say that Egypt will come to her own much more quickly if India gains true deliverance in the course of the next twelve months. It is my firm belief that if India gains her freedom through non-violence and truth it will mean a great deal to the whole world certainly to all the Eastern nations.

From a photostat: S.N. 17643

[1] This was issued in writing to a representative of *Al Ahram* in response to five questions sent to Gandhiji by the Editor in advance. These were: (1) the situation in India; (2) the communal question between Hindus and Muslims; (3) what he expects from the Round Table Conference; (4) what would be the consequences if the Round Table Conference failed; (5) his message to the Egyptian nationalists.

378. INTERVIEW TO "THE DAILY TELEGRAPH"

S.S. "RAJPUTANA",
Sunday, September 6, 1931

Working his spinning-wheel all the time, Mr. Gandhi said he had enjoyed the voyage. He did not appear to be sanguine as to the success of the Round Table Conference. He said:

On the horizon I see nothing but impenetrable darkness. God's ways are inscrutable. I am an optimist. There is nothing to warrant hope, but still I do not lose hope.

He was most indignant at Shaukat Ali's statement that he was compelled to part from Gandhi, because he only aimed at communal objects, the subjugation of the Moslems to the Hindus. He declared:

My whole life is a steady testimony against such an accusation. There is no trace of communalism in me. I would be a party to no settlement subjugating any community to another in India.

The Mahatma, who is still clothed only in a loin cloth, said he did not fear the alteration in temperature awaiting him in England. He would make additions to his apparel if necessary, in the shape of a woollen cloth twisted round his body, and a jacket, but he would not change his diet.

The co-operation of East and West, he remarked, would be a strong means to establish world peace, provided it was not based on brute force.

. . . Mr. Gandhi was also assailed by Egyptian journalists who endeavoured to draw him out on various questions of general interest to the Orient but directly affecting Egypt. To the question: "What is your advice to the peoples of the Near and Middle East in their struggle for independence?" he earnestly replied:

They should conduct the struggle on absolutely non-violent lines. If they so do, they gain their end far quicker than in any other way.

The Daily Telegraph, 7-9-1931

379. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

S.S. "RAJPUTANA,
[*September 6, 1931*][1]

Well, it is beyond my power to induce in you a belief in God.[2] There are certain things which are self-proved, and certain which are not proved at all. The existence of God is like a geometrical axiom. It may be beyond our heart-grasp. I shall not talk of an intellectual grasp. Intellectual attempts are more or less failures, as a rational explanation cannot give you the faith in a living God. For it is a thing beyond the grasp of reason. It transcends reason. There are numerous phenomena from which you can reason out the existence of God, but I shall not insult your intelligence by offering you a rational explanation of that type. I would have you brush aside all rational explanations and begin with a simple childlike faith in God. If I exist, God exists. With me it is a necessity of my being as it is with millions. They may not be able to talk about it, but from their life you can see that it is part of their life. I am only asking you to restore the belief that has been undermined. In order to do so, you have to unlearn a lot of literature that dazzles your intelligence and throws you off your feet. Start with the faith which is also a token of humility and an admission that we know nothing, that we are less than atoms in this universe. We are less than atoms, I say, because the atom obeys the law of its being, whereas we in the insolence of our ignorance deny the law of nature. But I have no argument to address to those who have no faith.

Once you accept the existence of God, the necessity for prayer is inescapable. Let us not make the astounding claim that our whole life is a prayer, and therefore we need not sit down at a particular hour to pray. Even men who were all their time in tune with the Infinite did not make such a claim. Their lives were a continuous prayer, and yet for our sake, let us say they offered prayer at set hours, and renewed each day the oath of loyalty to God. God of course never

[1] According to Mahadev Desai this was the second discourse and was delivered the "next evening"; *vide* footnote 1, "Speech at Public Meeting", 5-12-1931

[2] The question asked by the youth was: "But, Sir, whilst you start with belief in God, we start with unbelief. How are we to pray?"

insists on the oath, but we must renew our pledge every day, and I assure you we shall then be free from every imaginable misery in life.

Young India, 24-9-1931

380. TELEGRAM TO MUSTAFA NAHAS PASHA

[On or after *September 6, 1931*][1]

HIS EXCELLENCY MUSTAFA[2]

SINCERELY THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND MESSAGE. I RECIPROCATE THE KIND WISHES. SHALL BE DELIGHTED TO VISIT YOUR GREAT COUNTRY IF IT IS AT ALL POSSIBLE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 17667

381. TELEGRAM TO MOHAMED MAHMOUD PASHA[3]

[On or after *September 6, 1931*][4]

THANKS WIRE. RECIPROCATE GOOD WISHES. WOULD LOVE VISIT YOUR GREAT COUNTRY IF POSSIBLE ON RETURN.

From a photostat: S.N. 17662

[1] The telegram was in reply to the addressee's message, dated September 6, which read: "In the name of Egypt who is now fighting for its liberties and its independence I welcome in you the foremost leader of that India who is also struggling to attain the same end and I convey to you my hearty wishes for a safe journey and a happy return. I also ask God to grant to you success in your quest a success equal to the greatness of your determination. I hope to have the pleasure of meeting you on your homeward journey and trust that the land of the Pharaohs will then be favoured by your visit thus enabling the Wafd and the Egyptian nation at large to express to you whatever be the result of your journey both their appreciation of your noble achievements to promote the welfare of your country and their reverence for the greatness of the sacrifice made by you in support of your principles. May God prolong your life and crown your endeavours with a victory far-reaching and abiding. Our representatives both at Suez and at Port Said will have the honour of conveying to you by word of mouth our welcome and our best wishes" (S.N. 17659).

[2] President of the Wafd Party

[3] Leader of the Constitutional Liberal Party of Egypt

[4] The addressee's message was dated September 6.

382. TELEGRAM TO SAFIA ZAGHLOUL PASHA

[On or after *September 6, 1931*][1]

MADAME ZAGHLOUL PASHA[2]
CAIRO

MY RESPECTFUL THANKS FOR YOUR KIND AFFECTIONATE MESSAGE. PRAY ACCEPT MY BEST WISHES FOR YOUR GREAT COUNTRY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 17667

383. SPEECH TO INDIAN RESIDENTS IN EGYPT

[On or after *September 6, 1931*][3]

I thank my countrymen for their address and costly gifts. I hope that in their foreign land they are representing the best traditions of the motherland and so conducting themselves as to be of service to the country where they are earning their livelihood. I hope too that they will ever bear in mind the starving millions of India.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-9-1931

384. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

September 7, 1931

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

We have just left Port Said. The Big Brother joined us here. Today is my day of silence. We meet tomorrow for a talk. Here are interesting cuttings from the *Daily Mail* and *Daily Telegraph* some friends from shore brought us. They are meant for your amusement and recreation. You may pass them on to Vallabhbhai after you have done with them.

Devdas has given me your further letters to Indira. I have not yet had the time to look at them. My time has been fully taken up

[1] This was in reply to a message of greetings, dated September 6, 1931.

[2] Widow of Zaghloul Pasha, founder of the Wafd

[3] The source gives no indication as to date or place. Gandhiji reached Suez on September 6.

with preparing for *Young India* and *Navajivan,* writing letters and keeping some appointments with sleep thrown in.

I hope the situation in U.P. has improved. I am anxious for news from you. I know you will not hesitate to use the cable when necessary.

Are you keeping touch with A. Ghaffar Khan?

How is Jayaprakash doing?

You will know from *Y.I.*[1] all about affectionate messages from Egypt.

Malaviyaji has been keeping very good health. The sea did not trouble him except for one day. Mirabehn had the largest share of seasickness. Pyarelal and Devdas had a fair share. Mahadev has been quite free. And he has worked the most.

Yours,

BAPU

Encl. 3 cuttings

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

385. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

September 7, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

You must have received my letter written from Aden. I hope you are keeping good health. I had replied to all your questions while I was in India. I have given you my address. I keep excellent health. My diet is still what it was there. I didn't drink any milk for four days. I didn't need it either. I carry it with me. It is kept in a refrigerator, so it does not turn sour. There is plenty of fruit, too. Actually we have to give away some. Mirabehn had seasickness. Mahadev did not suffer at all. I, too, never suffer from it. We still dress in the same manner as when we left India. We have not felt the cold at all. I can't say, though, what will happen after a few days. Today is my Silence Day. We shall reach England on Saturday. I expect you to write to me while I am there. You should write to the Ashram and ask them to send you anything you require.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3420

[1] Dated September 24, 1931

386. TRIBUTE TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA[1]

EN ROUTE TO ENGLAND,
September 7, 1931

I have always been a hero-worshipper of Malaviyaji Maharaj and how can such a worshipper express his homage? Whatever words he may write would seem inadequate to him. My first sight of him was through a photograph in 1890. It appeared in the journal *India* brought out in England by Mr. Digby. Believe me, the same image is before my eyes even today. As in his dress so in his thoughts, a continuity has been preserved and this is based on his charm and devotion. Who today can match Malaviyaji's patriotism which has had an uninterrupted flow from his youth down to this day? The Banaras Hindu University is his life-breath and he in turn is the life of the Banaras Hindu University. May this hero among men live long for our sake.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a fascimile of the Hindi in *Malaviya Commemoration Volume*

387. TELEGRAM TO CHERIFA RIAZ PASHA[2]

ALEXANDRIA,
[After *September 7, 1931*][3]

THANKS FOR GOOD WISHES.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 17661

[1] This was included in the Volume which was presented to Malaviyaji on February 11, 1932. His 70th birthday fell on December 25, 1931.

[2] President of Women's Saadist Committee

[3] Gandhiji reached Port Said on September 7 and Marseilles on September 11. He must have been at Alexandria on some day after September 7.

388. STATEMENT ON DEATH OF K. C. ROY[1]

S.S. "RAJPUTANA",
September 8, 1931

Mr. Roy's death[2] is a painful shock to me. Indian journalism has suffered a grievous loss. I preserve very pleasant recollections of Mr. Roy's high character and happy manners.

The Times of India, 9-9-1931

389. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

S.S. "RAJPUTANA",
September 8, 1931

If the meeting[3] is held on Monday I shall be placed in a most embarrassing position. Monday is my day of silence, and when I took my vow of silence I made three exceptions. Whether a meeting of this character is covered by one of them is debatable; I am, however, hoping and praying that I shall not be obliged to reach a final decision, but that a way out of the difficulty will be found.

Asked to specify the exceptions Gandhiji said:

The first is if I am in distress and can only be assisted by speaking; the second if somebody else is in distress who can be helped by my speaking, and the third if exceptional circumstances prevail, such as an unexpected call from the Viceroy or other high official who must be seen in the interest of the cause.

Thus my appearance at the committee on Monday can only come under the third exception, but only by a considerable stretch of meaning, seeing that it is not a sudden unexpected call. In such circumstances people have generously accommodated me. What can happen in London I don't know.

Gandhiji pointed out that since he must hold himself in readiness for private conferences with two of the highest Government officials on Sunday, he could not anticipate the period of silence, nor postpone it until Tuesday, because the Committee would be sitting all the week.

The Morning Post, 9-9-1931

[1] Founder of the Associated Press of India

[2] On September 7

[3] Of the Federal Structure Committee which was adjourned till Monday, September 14.

390. TELEGRAM TO SAILENDRA NATH GHOSE

[On or after *September 8, 1931*][1]

SORRY. HAVE PROVISIONALLY CONSENTED ALREADY WORLD-WIDE BROADCAST THROUGH ASSOCIATED PRESS NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY.

From a photostat: S.N. 17670

391. TELEGRAM TO T. B. SAPRU

[On or after *September 8, 1931*][2]

AGREED.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 17676

392. TELEGRAM TO INDIAN STUDENTS' CENTRAL ASSOCIATION, LONDON

[On or after *September 9, 1931*][3]

SEE RECEPTION COMMITTEE.

From a photostat: S.N. 17675

[1] The telegram was in reply to the addressee's telegram dated September 7, received on September 8, 1931, which read: "Prominent Americans insistent you address millions here on arrival London over Transatlantic Telephone and United States Broadcasting Stations. Arrangements completed for your talk on thirteenth. Wireless immediately your consent".

[2] The telegram was in reply to the addressee's telegram received on September 8, 1931, which read: "Request you Malaviyaji keep absolutely free Sunday night for most essential discussions before Monday with two British friends. Reply—Sapru Dorchotel."

[3] The telegram was in reply to a telegram received on September 9, 1931, which read: "Masses desiring opportunity showing sympathy. Procession essential. Formal reception at station not enough. Procession helpful creating favourable popular feeling for Indian freedom. Reply urgently awaited— Indisca London. . . ."

393. TELEGRAM TO INDIAN MERCHANTS' ASSOCIATION, PARIS

[On or after *September 9, 1931*][1]

DELIGHTED MEET MERCHANTS 6.40 SATURDAY MORNING.

From a photostat: S.N. 17674

394. A FICKLE FRIEND

[Before *September 11, 1931*][2]

Thus writes an English friend who has known me for years:

> No one has for some time told you quite bluntly, and in good English, that you are making an unmitigated fool of yourself, and out of personal vanity and the desire to act the dictator, are descending to lies and subterfuges which even ordinary men, who lay no claim to special sanctity, do not indulge in.
>
> You know full well, that the main reason for your not attending the Round Table Conference is due to your inability to solve the Hindu-Muslim question, and that you have used petty matters as an excuse. Your Congress Committee man at Allahabad, Mr. Sundarlal, has publicly made this statement, and you know full well the text of your motion, moved at the Working Committee meeting, when you were turned down by your Committee. You admitted in that resolution the failure of Hindu-Muslim negotiations and your inability to put forward any political proposals at the Round Table Conference, and that you would confine yourself solely to work for the amelioration of the condition of the masses.
>
> You, who prate of worshipping at the altar of truth, the same altar that I worship at, are by half-truths, cunning words and deliberate deception trying to force the blame of your deliberate pre-arranged determination not to go to the Round Table Conference on the Government.
>
> When, as you now boldly declare, sedition is the creed of Congress and the overthrow of this Government its objectives, are you not, with calculated

[1] The telegram was in reply to the following message received on September 9, 1931: "Indian Merchants Association anxious meet yourself and party while passing through Paris and respectfully request wire time of arrival."

[2] This and the following three articles were written on board the ship. Gandhiji reached Marseilles on September 11.

deliberation, forcing the Government to take action? You may throw dust successfully in the eyes of your followers, but at least you do know that you cannot deceive His eyes. Go and introspect. Call on that inner voice honestly, not as Gandhi the politician, who, without the political guidance of Pandit Motilal Nehru, is making a fool of himself, and forcing events towards an upheaval which will benefit nobody but goondas, but to the other Gandhi, whom millions, and I include myself in that list, respect for his creed of love and the splendid work he is doing for the depressed classes. That Gandhi is overpowered. Your personal pride and autocratic spirit has vanquished the other Gandhi.

I want, every European wants, to see India politically free, and the Round Table Conference is the constitutional means for that purpose. You, however, deliberately seek her freedom through blood, because your pride received an enormous shock when you found that the Conference would go on without you, though you will call it 'passive resistance' and other names. You cannot evade these facts.

Go, I beg of you, and introspect, and after purification come to the altar of truth.

In order that I may not miss his wrath through any mishap, he registered the letter. The letter could be handed to me only on board. The best answer to the letter is that I am writing this on the steamer that is taking me to London. Indeed I might have suppressed the letter. But I did not, as it is typical of many I have received in the course of my life. When I do something that pleases them, my English friends issue embarrassing certificates. And when I do something that displeases them, forgetful of what they said in the past, they swear at me. They will not stop to inquire of me why they see an inconsistency between my past conduct and the present. They will not have the patience to discover the perfect harmony between two seemingly inconsistent acts. When I find such friends, I distrust their praise and its disinterestedness, and hence remain unaffected by their censure. Take the writer of the foregoing elegant censure. Only a few months ago, I was a good man. Now suddenly I have become all that is bad, even a liar, because he suspects that I would not go to London because of my failure to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity. He will not even condescend to ask me for an explanation, and believes a garbled report of my speech at the last A.I.C.C. meeting. Let him and the public know, that I hold in my bag a wire from Pandit Sundarlal, saying that he never made the remark attributed to him. But I suggest

that even if Pandit Sundarlal did make the remark attributed to him, that would be no basis for a friend to found an accusation against me. A friendship, that cannot bear the slightest strain and would believe any rumour or report against a friend is not worth much, if anything. Let those English friends who have sent me wires or letters of congratulations, be warned against rushing to unjust judgments, the moment they hear reports about my doings which may displease them. The reports need not always be false, as was the case in the present instance. If the common purpose is well understood, friendships formed to advance that purpose should weather all storms of misunderstandings, misreportings and the like.

I will therefore state the purpose. It is complete freedom from the alien yoke in every sense of the term, and this for the sake of the dumb millions. Every interest therefore, that is hostile to their interest, must be revised, or must subside if it is not capable of revision. This freedom does not, need not, exclude partnership with the English on terms of absolute equality and terminable at the will of either party. Those Englishmen, who sincerely desire the immediate consummation of such an event, will never need to repent of their having issued to me a certificate of merit. The others will see nothing but evil in my most innocent acts.

Young India, 17-9-1931

395. "URDU NAVAJIVAN"

[Before *September 11, 1931*]

Dr. Yudhvirsinh has been, on his own responsibility, issuing at Delhi a weekly Urdu edition of *Navajivan* containing his selections from both *Navajivan* and *Young India*. He assures me, that the Urdu edition will be conducted strictly along the lines of *Young India* and *Navajivan.* It will accordingly take no advertisements, and will publish only such material as appears in the two weeklies. The annual subscription is only three rupees. I am glad of this enterprise. I have always felt that Urdu-knowing people should know the message of these weeklies. I congratulate Dr. Yudhvirsinh on his patriotic effort. I hope he will be encouraged by the Urdu-knowing public. The address is *Urdu Navajivan,* Chandni Chawk, Delhi.

Young India, 17-9-1931

396. 'THE OTHER SIDE'

[Before *September 11, 1931*]

Under the above mentioned heading a correspondent has written a long letter, protesting against my condemnation, of the attempt made by a student of the Fergusson College on the life of the Acting Governor of Bombay. I give below a very much condensed summary of the letter:

> I was extremely pained to read your note in the last issue of *Navajivan* under the heading 'madness' (*gandpan*). I must at the very outset make it clear, that I have been a non-violent non-co-operator since 1921, and accept the Congress creed of non-violence by faith as farthest as possible, and as a policy in exceptional circumstances alone, such as the molestation of the honour of women or of the National Flag. True non-violence is possible even in the most provoking circumstances as long as these two are not in actual danger. But whenever women are molested or the National Flag is dishonoured, I fear my non-violence will melt away, and if it does not, it would be so not out of any merit in me, but on most occasions owing to the weakness of the flesh, and on exceptional occasions only, on account of studious self-restraint. I was, if I can say so with modesty, the first to start the idea of offering civil disobedience to the Martial Law at Sholapur and suffer imprisonment after actual disobedience. This much by way of personal explanation.
>
> It is, in my opinion, no use denouncing one who is almost in the jaws of death. He deserves pity if anything. Violence in action is a merit or demerit, which can neither prosper by mere public praise however great, as it is a question of life and death; nor can it be wiped out by the strongest public denunciation or by Government repression, or by both, as it is the outcome of rebelling emotions. Those who fear not the gallows will not be daunted by public opinion. Virtue or vice, it is exceptional, bursting out only after severest repression or molestation of women; it can be wiped out permanently, only if the rulers mend their ways or end themselves.
>
> We may justly wish to remain safe and unhurt till doomsday, only if we are virtuous and sin-fearing; but what right have we, after committing the most heinous of sins, to feel pain for treachery practised against us? And especially when we have blocked all open, honest, honourable, untreacherous ways of revenge? The glory of no country however great, not even of India, lies in meekly suffering injustice, zulum and beastly atrocities. 'Nothing is unfair in love and war' is a general maxim, and it is the truer, in the case of unequal

parties, for the weaker.

Now the philosophy of hosts and guests. Whose guest was Mr. Hot-son? Of the Fergusson College? Surely of the Principal, and professors' too; but never of the unwilling students. Were the students consulted before inviting such a worthy guest? Was not the Prince of Wales too a guest of the Indian Government and consequently, by the same argument, of India? But how was he welcomed? Sri Gogate in this case therefore is the last to be blamed for not having extraordinary self-restraint; the real responsibility or irresponsibility is of Sri Mahajani, and the real offender or rather the real instigator of the offence is the Acting Governor, who ought to be advised to behave better.

I appreciate the courageous presence of mind shown by the Acting Governor, as well as the extraordinary coolness with which just after the unsuccessful outrage he told Sri Gogate, 'That was a foolish thing to do, my boy', and inquired, 'What made you do a thing like that?' But this generous and seemingly affectionate mood of the Acting Governor was very short-lived. Had it been courageously preserved by him a little longer, leaving Sri Gogate to himself as if nothing unusual had happened, what a dramatic effect it would have produced on the revolutionary mentality in the country! The Acting Governor, always under the protection of his A.D.C. and the military guards, need not fear foolish things done by stray Gogates. The time is not yet gone. Trust begets trust. Forgiveness melts bitterest enmity. But the forgiveness must be of the strong, never of the weak. The Acting Governor is the right man to make a beginning in this direction. But the signs of the times clearly show there is very little chance that good sense will prevail.

As this note is being written on board the s.s. *Rajputana,* it will therefore be printed three weeks after it is written. The subject-matter being unfortunately an evergreen, the note need not be considered stale. It is very much to be feared, that the correspondent represents a mentality prevailing amongst many students. But the attitude is all the more poisonous and harmful, because it is honestly held. It is contrary to experience to say, as the correspondent says, that emotional youth will act on the spur of the moment irrespective of the atmosphere surrounding them. There is no doubt about their reckless bearing, but I refuse to believe that they are so devoid of pride as to be wholly indifferent to praise or blame. I am quite certain that if they knew that their acts would be universally condemned, they would never throw away their precious lives. I have no doubt therefore in my mind that it is the duty of everyone who realizes the immense wrong done to the

cause by such deeds to condemn them unequivocally. It is altogether misleading to hold the Acting Governor responsible either for the Sholapur Martial Law or the acts done under it. It is the system that is at fault. The Congress therefore having realized the central fact is trying to assassinate the system, and not the helpless administrators. Even if an angel was put to administer the system based upon the exploitation of a vast country like India by a powerful corporation, that angel would plead helplessness, and on due occasions do exactly what the Acting Governor did. The ten-headed Ravana was no human monster, but it was the system personified in Ravana, who had new heads popping up as soon as the old ones were cut off. It was only when Rama's attention was drawn to the root from which the heads sprang up, that he was able effectively to deal with Ravana.

We have had many assassinations, and in the place of each official assassinated another has been posted, and the system has gone on as merrily as ever. But if we once succeed in dealing with the root of the mischief, we shall have no more repetitions of Sholapur and the distasteful hangings. So far therefore as the condemnation of the many wrongs which rankle in the youthful breasts is concerned, I would be just as strong as they are in condemning them. Let them leave aside all specious reasoning, and join hands with the Congress in destroying the system. The way of assassination of persons gives it a new lease of life. The war of non-violence shortens its life and if it can be completely assimilated, it ensures complete eradication of the system. Let those who argue like the correspondent remember that the cult of assassination, if it is not checked in its progress, will recoil on our own heads, and our last state may be worse than the first. Let us not run the very grave danger of reviving the system under a new garb. The same system administered by brown men instead of white men will work the same havoc as now, if not infinitely greater.

Young India, 24-9-1931

397. LEST WE DELUDE OURSELVES

[Before *September 11, 1931*]

As I get nearer England I find my hopes of meeting with any success there receding. I cannot point to any particular reason for this. I place before readers the thoughts that arise in my mind. I feel ashamed when I think on the one hand, of what the world expects of

India and on the other compare our resources with those expectations. I met an educated Arab at Aden. He it was who had read out the welcome address in Arabic. He said: "Our hopes are pinned upon you—on your non-violent struggle." These are his very words, "We have been watching you. May you triumph." Similar cables have been sent from Egypt by the Muslim journalists there. I believe that as we proceed, we shall hear such utterances from the people of Europe also. Perhaps the world would not have looked to India the way it is looking now, if we had been waging our war of independence by means of physical force. It means that the world is weary of hypocrisy and of rivers of blood. Wherever it casts its eyes, it finds falsehood and, though it participates in it, it has come to abhor it. And it is for this reason that it accepts India's claim to truth and non-violence and derives consolation from this and desires that India may triumph, that is, become independent with the help of these two weapons. How can this expectation be fulfilled?

While closing this mail, I think of Gujarat, ignoring the other parts of India. Gujarat has a leader like Vallabhbhai; Gujarat is the headquarters of satyagraha; nowhere also are as many volunteers working as in Gujarat; everyone, even the Government, agrees that Gujarat has made a sizable contribution to the struggle. However, can Gujarat be regarded as having passed the test of truth and non-violence one hundred per cent? Are the volunteers of Gujarat, both men and women, totally free from greed, malice, anger, fear, fraud, and so on? Khadi is a mighty external symbol of non-violence. Are Congressmen in Gujarat always clad in khadi from head to foot? Do they do sacrificial spinning every day for the sake of the poor? Has Gujarat succeeded in boycotting untouchability, liquor and foreign cloth? These too are external symbols of collective non-violence. These and similar questions keep coming up in my mind and I feel agitated. On the one hand, I make the claim that the country has accepted truth and non-violence—there are strong grounds for the claim—on the other, while reflecting on it I also find that this claim does not contain the whole truth. I cannot claim that we have properly accepted all that I now regard as the characteristics of truth and non-violence. Being an optimist, I keep on piloting my boat in the hope that we shall somehow make up for our feelings. But I must proclaim that underlying all my expectations is my faith in Gujarat. If Gujarat fulfils my expectations, the rest of India will then follow suit and, if India does so, despite the despondency that may

well be found in all quarters in England, the sun of hope will shine through that darkness of despair.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-9-1931

398. TELEGRAM TO ROMAIN ROLLAND[1]

MARSEILLES,
September 11, 1931

ROMAIN ROLLAND
VILLENEUVE, SUISSE

SORRY TO MISS BUT GLAD YOU DID NOT TAKE ANY RISK. DELIGHTED SEE YOUR SISTER AND FRIENDS PRIVATS[2]. LOVE FROM WHOLE PARTY. HOPE SEE YOU EARLY.

GANDHI

Romain Rolland and Gandhi: Correspondence, p. 148

399. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

S.S. "RAJPUTANA",
September 11, 1931

Unless the Government changes the day for the meeting of the Federal Structure Committee next week, Mr. Gandhi will sit throughout the discussion on Monday listening but saying nothing, Monday being his day of silence, but on Tuesday he will be prepared to present his views. During the sittings of the Committee of the Round Table Conference he will speak extemporaneously, relying on the circumstances of the moment for inspiration. In an interview today he said:

I have prepared no plans, no speeches, no arguments and no programme for my stay in England. I shall do everything on the spur of the moment, depending upon my inner voice. If England realizes the strength of the nationalist movement I expect she will heed our demands, but if unhappily she thinks we are in a minority, then I must be prepared to return to India to renew the fight.

The Yorkshire Post, 11-9-1931

[1] In reply to the addressee's message conveying his inability on account of illness to go to Marseilles to meet Gandhiji

[2] Edmond Privat, a Swiss professor, and his wife

400. INTERVIEW TO " THE DAILY HERALD"

MARSEILLES,
September 11, 1931

We were talking, just the two of us, in his little second-class cabin in the *Rajputana* soon after she docked this morning.

I am pessimistic. But I am also optimistic. The facts, as I saw them when I left India, made me pessimistic. Nor do I know of anything that has happened since to change my judgment. But, in spite of appearances, my faith makes me optimistic, as I have always been an optimist!

"How far", I asked him, "have you a free hand to negotiate?"

I am bound—absolutely—by the Karachi Congress resolution. But within that boundary I am free.

The Karachi resolutions demand control by India of finance, the army and foreign relations subject to safeguards "demonstrably in the interests of India" but also gave the delegation rather loose power to make adjustments necessary in the interests of India.

If I am satisfied in principles, if we are agreed in principle— that is the bedrock—then adjustments can be made.

I shall, at first opportunity, make my position—the conditions of my mandate—plain to the conference. Then it will become clear whether on that basis we can hopefully discuss details. If it seems that we can—good. If not, I shall have failed in my mission and I must return to India.

"And then?" I asked. The face grew grave. The calm eyes looked into the distance.

Then probably civil disobedience must come again. But that is not a threat that if I fail in London civil disobedience will at once be proclaimed in India. I do not want to embarrass the Government. People in England do not believe that. That is because they do not understand. It is not we that embarrass the Government. It is the situation that has been created, the wrong that has been done in the past that causes the embarrassment It is inevitable. It is always so when a wrong that has been done has to be righted. But we want to

reduce that embarrassment to a minimum. We want to help. The wrong must be righted. That is the bedrock of principle.

I wish to make the righting of it as easy as possible both for England and for India. For I am—let me say again what I have said so often—a friend of the English people as well as my own people.

The Daily Herald, 12-9-1931

401. REPLIES TO CUSTOMS INSPECTOR

MARSEILLES,
September 11, 1931

Asked by the Customs Inspector whether he had anything to declare, Gandhiji replied:

I am a poor mendicant. All my earthly possessions consist of: six spinning-wheels; prison dishes; a can of goat's milk; six homespun loin-cloths; one towel; and my reputation, which cannot be worth much.

The Inspector pursued, "Have you any cigarettes, cigars, alcohol, firearms or narcotics ?"

Oh, no, I never smoke, never drink, nor indulge in drugs. Besides, being an advocate of non-violence, I never carry fire-arms.

The Daily Mail, 12-9-1931

402. INTERVIEW TO "THE NEW YORK TIMES"

MARSEILLES,
September 11, 1931

Mahatma Gandhi has no intention of visiting the United States because he believes he is "not wanted" there, he said in an interview with *The New York Times* when he landed here. . . .

He explained that he refused to contemplate such a visit unless and until he could feel certain that Americans would receive him as the spokesman for India's cause and not as a social curiosity. His American friends had told him, he added that this was not now possible.

[In reply to another question he said:]

To climatic conditions I am indifferent. If the political weather is favourable, I will go anywhere where I am needed.

I am afraid there is no hope for India at the Round Table

Conference as far as external appearances are concerned. But, as an irrepressible optimist, I hope against hope that something will turn up which will alter the aspect of the horizon. But since such a hope is only based on faith, not on reason, it may prove illusory.

I have come to London with neither a programme nor proposals. I have simply accepted the invitation of the British Government, and I am ready to place myself at their disposal, to answer questions and to give them all the information within my power. I have come expecting to remain in London only two weeks, but I am ready, if necessary, to remain two months.

The only engagement I have made is in the nature of a pilgrimage. I have promised to visit my friend, Romain Rolland, the celebrated French writer, who is lying sick at his home near Territet, Switzerland, and whose sister, Madeleine Rolland, was among the old friends who greeted me on my arrival at Marseilles.

Asked if he believed the recent change in the Government of Great Britain would change the British policy toward India, Mr. Gandhi said unhesitatingly:

No. Besides, the new Government has already given me assurances it will carry out the policy of its predecessor, as far as the India Conference is concerned.

With regard to the critical Hindu-Muslim differences, however . . . the Mahatma admitted:

I fear the Hindu-Muslim question has now become almost insoluble for reasons on which I don't wish to enlarge. But I am still not without hope that a solution may be found. It is open to the Muslims to block the way to a settlement of the future of India as it is equally open to the British Government to make their opposition an excuse for not granting India self-government. But if the British Government is in earnest in its desire to make a friendly settlement with India it should not take shelter behind the Muslims.

I asked Mr. Gandhi if he was fully satisfied that Muslims and other racial or religious minorities would receive justice under a swaraj home-rule government, mainly Hindu, as it would be if appointed on a population basis.

He replied that the claims of the minorities must receive the fullest satisfaction in any future settlement. He himself, he recalled, had frequently urged his fellow-Hindus to accept all the Muslim claims, partly on sentimental grounds and partly because he was convinced some of them were unrealizable in practice. But he said emphatically that Muslim opinion must be conciliated and satisfied before swaraj

was possible. He confessed, however, that he did not know in the present state of confusion and unrest how this was to be effected.

I then challenged Mr. Gandhi to explain apparent inconsistencies in his attitude regarding the 60,000,000 out cast Hindu 'untouchables', certain of his statements concerning this grave problem having provoked much criticism from his friends, both in India and in America.

Mr. Gandhi said with the greatest earnestness:

Believe me, my attitude on the question of untouchability has never wavered in the slightest degree. My position regarding the untouchables is unanswerable. Before my critics were born I defended the rights of the untouchables. The misunderstanding which arose regarding my attitude was apparently due to the fact that I rebuked the leaders of untouchables' deputation which interviewed me early last year. But I am always rebuking someone, and usually my dearest friends.

What I told this deputation was that I refused to declare publicly that the untouchable classes must be made a 'reserved' subject in any home-rule settlement. I refused because I did not believe it possible. Nor do I today.

But I believe sincerely that no swaraj government could exist for twenty-four hours which continued to uphold the principle of untouchability. No untouchable need fear that his interests under swaraj will be neglected, as they are neglected now. At the present moment the untouchables cannot be protected by the British Government, since the British cannot afford to offend the various interests interested in maintaining untouchability. But a real Indian government would not be forced to surrender to these interests, for it would have a much greater interest to serve—that of national unity.

I reaffirm my statement that India's national existence will stand or fall on the question of the untouchables.

The New York Times, 12-9-1931

403. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

MARSEILLES,
September 11, 1931

Mahatma Gandhi confessed that he felt "nervous" on approaching England after an absence of seventeen years. He said that he had had a happy voyage due "to the unfailing kindness of the Captain and the entire crew".

Gandhiji has confided to friends that he expects much more to be accomplished in private conference between the leaders in London than at the actual sittings of the Federal Structure Subcommittee or the Round Table Conference.

I am going to England to realize the dream of my life—freedom of my country.

He added that the thought of the change of Government in England would not influence his policy.

Sir Samuel seems to me to be a typical British gentleman. I think his sympathies would be rather with than against me.

Questioned whether he would visit Buckingham Palace Gandhiji said:

I am a prisoner of the English Government—a willing prisoner if you will.

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-9-1931

404. INTERVIEW TO "THE DAILY MAIL"

September 11, 1931

I asked him if he would go to Lancashire. He replied:

I will go even if they lunch me, but I will not go without an invitation. I am irresistibly optimistic. I think Sir Samuel Hoare is a real English gentleman, though I have never met him, and I hope to secure freedom for India at this Conference.

I want, above all, to meet my enemies. I want to meet all those who speak and write against me, including Mr. Winston Churchill and Lord Rothermere.

The Daily Mail, 12-9-1931

405. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

MARSEILLES,
September 11, 1931

Mr. Gandhi told the Associated Press today that he believed the British Government was faced with such staggering domestic problems that it was not likely to refuse India's demands for self-government.

Refusal would mean the renewal of the civil disobedience campaign, he said, and the boycott of British goods on a scale greater than ever before. He promised that he would not take such a step until every possibility for arbitration had been exhausted. He said:

If the fight should be renewed, which God forbid, the consequences will be infinitely more terrible than the last struggle. It will mean, I fear, that not only Indians would be shot down but Britishers would be killed. You cannot hold 360,000,000 people without liberty in the leashes of non-violence forever.[1]

If England is wise, she will weigh carefully the present strength and potentiality of the Nationalist movement and hearken to the appeal of that vast sub-continent for independence. She should not deny others the gift which she cherishes most herself.

He emphasized that any safeguard proposed by England must be demonstrably in the interests of India as well, saying:

We must have complete financial and fiscal autonomy. We must have an effective dominion status, but that does not exclude India's partnership in or alliance with the Empire.

The New York Times, 12-9-1931

406. INTERVIEW TO "THE NEWS CHRONICLE"

MARSEILLES,
September 11, 1931

I want to proclaim from the housetops that I am a man of peace. Of course, I am a soldier as well and, as such, must be prepared for war, but from my heart I desire peace.

On the communal problem he was hopeful.

I have had long talks on board ship with Shaukat Ali and found him friendly and reasonable. The communal problem is the most vital of all internal problems.

On external problems I can express no opinion till I meet your politicians. Remember, I am an agent, not a free lance. I must stand by the Karachi mandate.

Don't worry about dissentient Princes. When other problems are settled, Federation, in my view, will offer no real difficulty.

I hope the Government will respect my days of silence. I cannot break my rule. On Silence Days, I shall attend Conference meetings but shall not speak.

[1] In a letter to Juliet E. Blume, dated September 29, 1931, Gandhiji denied having made this statement; *vide* "Letter to Juliet E. Blume", 29-9-1931

I am anxious to meet the King and as many of your public men as possible. If I am invited to meet the King, I shall certainly go. I am no enemy of the King.

I shall wear these clothes in England. I have too many warm friends to feel cold there.

The News Chronicle, 12-9-1931

407. INTERVIEW TO REUTER MARSEILLES,

September 11, 1931

In conversation with Reuter's correspondent who had accompanied him from India, the Mahatma predicted that if the Round Table Conference did not break down for the first fortnight over the differences of opinion on fundamentals, the conclave might last until November 15th.

In answer to a question whether he intended to press England to bear a share of the huge debt incurred by the British Government in India . . . Mr. Gandhi replied:

There is no question of pressing England to admit anything, but whatever cannot be agreed to in the matter of taking over debts should be referred to arbitration.

Mr. Gandhi stated that a swaraj government would more than make up for a loss in revenue from alcohol and from the land by reducing the present ruinous expenditure for the army, the Civil Service salaries, etc.

Asked what his programme was, he replied:

How should I know? You have seen the Congress mandate. That is my programme.

Asked to look up for the photographers, the Mahatma said:

I never look at photographs. I am not at your disposal and am now going to my cabin.

The Manchester Guardian, 12-9-1931

408. SPEECH AT MEETING OF STUDENTS, MARSEILLES[1]

September 11, 1931

Since I visited France as a student to see the Exhibition at Paris in 1890[2], some greater and more permanent links between you and me have been formed. The forger of those links is your own distinguished countryman Romain Rolland who constituted himself an interpreter of the humble message that I have been trying to deliver to my countrymen for the last 30 years or more. I have learnt something of the traditions of your country and of the teachings of Rousseau and Victor Hugo and on my entering upon my mission—very difficult mission in London—it heartens me to find a welcome from you fellow-students.

And as he expounded the message of non-violence to the youths belonging to a martial race, as he explained that non-violence is no weapon of the weak but of the strongest and that strength does not mean mere strength of muscle, "and that to a non-violent man possession of the muscle is not a necessity but possession of a strong heart is an absolute necessity", they cheered him most enthusiastically He explained by taking the example of the muscular Zulu quaking before a European child holding *a* revolver in his hand and contrasting him with the women of India who stood lathi blows and lathi charges without quaking. To kill and to be killed in fighting an enemy is, comparatively speaking, an act of bravery but to stand the blows of your adversaries and not to retaliate is a greater form of bravery, and that is precisely what India has been training herself for. He concluded by touching on another aspect of the same question.

This struggle through non-violence has been otherwise described as a process of purification, the underlying idea being that a nation loses its liberty owing to some of its own weaknesses and we find that immediately we shed our weaknesses, we regain our liberty. No people on earth can be finally subjected without their co-operation

[1] The meeting was organized by the Association of the present and past students of Marseilles to honour the "spiritual ambassador of India". The report has been extracted from Mahadev Desai's "London Letter".

[2] *Vide* "An Autoabiography"

voluntary or involuntary. It is involuntary co-operation when for fear of some physical hurt you submit yourself to a tyrant or a despot. . . . In my wanderings among the students I made the discovery at an early stage of the movement that in order to conduct a movement of this kind character must be the foundation. We also found that real education consists not in packing the brain with so many facts and figures, not in passing examinations by reading numerous books but in developing character. I do not know to what extent you students of France lay stress upon character rather than upon intellectual studies, but I can say this that if you explore the possibilities of non-violence you will find that without character it will prove a profitless study. I hope that the meeting will not be the beginning and end of our acquaintance. I hope that this acquaintance will be the beginning of a living contact between you and my countrymen. In a movement, such as we are conducting in India, we need the intellectual sympathy of the whole world, and if after a careful study of the movement and means employed by us to attain our freedom you feel that we deserve your sympathy and support I hope you will not fail to extend that sympathy.

Young India, 1-10-1931

409. INTERVIEW TO "THE EVENING STANDARD"[1]

September 12, 1931

It was raining heavily, Gandhi shrugged his shoulders under the rough- spun cloth, and said:

I do not like rain. I have just heard that you have had no summer here this year. I can put up with that if I can bring peace to India.

I want to give a message to the world through the *Evening Standard*:[2]

> If India gains her freedom through truth and non-violence, I feel convinced it will be the largest contribution of the age to the peace of the world.
>
> M. K. GANDHI

What I want is peace for India. I want the people of Britain to help me. I do not want to embarrass the Government, I want to help them. Why do I come here? Because I have given my word of honour to Lord Irwin. No man ever lost anything by keeping his word of honour. I have kept mine. What do I mean by peace? The dictionary will tell you it is the opposite of war. We have had enough turbulence and strife in India. Now we want peace. I have been described as a messenger without a mandate. That is sheer inaccuracy. I have the mandate of the Indian people.

Gandhi then handed me a typewritten sheet and pointed to the last paragraph which reads: "The Congress appoints and authorizes Mahatma Gandhi to represent it."

Is that a mandate? I say it is. Why do I spin, you ask? It is a great exercise in patience. When your wife gets angry, just spin. You ask me if I shall break my vow of silence on Monday.[3] I shall do so if necessary. I am anxious to keep my vow, but if they insist I shall speak.

Gandhi told me that he would wear his loin-cloth in London, but would protect

[1] The interview was given on the boat while Gandhiji was crossing the Channel.

[2] This was a written message.

[3] The Federal Structure Committee of the Round Table Conference was to meet on the 14th, which was a Monday.

himself from the weather with shawls and rugs. He would not attend any theatres.

At one time I used to attend the Lyceum. I liked Shakespeare's plays—I adored the incomparable Ellen Terry—I worshipped her, but that was before the advent of melodrama. The only reason I will not attend theatres in London is because I shall not have time.

I am not the dreadful old man I am represented to be. Actually I am a very jolly fellow. I could almost be described as Scotch. I am very careful of my sixpences.

I last stood on the shores of England on August 6, 1914, just after the outbreak of War. Today I return to seek peace.

The Evening Standard, 12-9-1931

410. SPEECH AT FRIENDS' HOUSE, LONDON[1]

September 12, 1931

You will not this evening expect me to take up much of your time, or to say much with reference to my mission , but I wish to say one thing in a general way. I am here with my friends on a mission of peace. I am, and my friends are, guests of the great English nation. I hope that by the time we have finished our work, you will not consider that we have in any way abused your hospitality. I hope that, as the days go by, you will understand the scope of the mission on which the Congress has sent me. You will also please know that, as an agent holding a power of attorney from the Congress, I shall have my limitations. I have to conduct myself within the four corners of the mandate that I have received from the Congress. There are some words in that mandate which give to me a little measure of freedom of action, but in all respects, in all fundamental respects, I am hidebound[2]. I may not, if I am to be loyal to the trust reposed in me walk outside the four corners of that mandate.

[1] According to Reuter, Gandhiji arrived in London from Folkstone at 4.10 in the afternoon and though it was raining , the rush of people was so great that police precautions became necessary. He was driven straight to Friends' House at Euston Road . Lawrence Housman, welcoming him on behalf of the reception committee, said: ". . . Mahatma Gandhi, if I may say so, you are a strange man—to the people of your own country and more so to my people . You are so sincere that you make some of us suspicious. You are so simple that you bewilder some of us. . . ."

[2] Reuter's report, published in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 14-9-1931, *The Tribune*, 15-9-1931, and *The Hindustan Times*, 16-9-1931, has here instead: "Gandhiji emphasized that he must conduct himself within the Congress mandate, some words of which left him little freedom, but in all other respects and in all fundamental respects, he was unbound."

I venture to feel that Congress stands for a good cause, of which any nation would be proud. The Congress wants freedom unadulterated for the dumb and starving millions. In order that Congress may represent them, the Congress has chosen, as its means of vindicating this freedom, truth and non-violence.

I am fully aware that not all Congressmen have lived up to the means, and I know that we of the Congress shall deserve the curses of the whole world if, in the name of truth and non-violence, we do the contrary. But I derive the greatest consolation from the knowledge that I possess that the best workers of the Congress today represent truth and non-violence in their essence. . . .

We have in our midst, I know, a school of violence also. I know many of these young men—I have lived with them, I have mixed with them, I have talked to them also. I have endeavoured, as several others of my co-workers have endeavoured, to win them from what we hold is an error; but, at the same time, I know that there is a common cause, even between them and ourselves. They are burning to attain the freedom to which India is entitled, which is India's birthright. I repeat what I have told them in public and in private—that their activities embarrass Congress, their activities set back the hands of the clock of progress. The Congressmen who are wedded to this creed realize fully that these young men, who resort to violence for the sake of gaining freedom, do harm not only to themselves but to the country, and most of all to the dumb millions to whom I have referred.

We may be nationalists, we may be ardent patriots, but immediately we apply these means of truth and non-violence, our patriotism be-comes internationalism. Our patriotism is so conceived that we want our freedom not to injure the freedom of any other country or of any single individual. We believe not in the law that might is right, or the greatest good of the greatest number, but we believe in the greatest good of all, including the meanest of creatures amongst all God's creation. And if India could vindicate her freedom, attain it through these means, do you not think that it would be well, not only with India, but with the whole world?[1]

But there is something more. There is the Settlement between the Government of India and the Congress. That is a sacred thing arrived at through the strivings of that noble Englishman, Lord Irwin.

[1] The foregoing is taken from *The Indian News*. The paragraphs that follow are from *The Tribune*.

I had repeatedly promised him, if it was humanly possible, that I would come to London and, as soon as I felt the way was open, I have dashed to London .

Recommending the study of the Indian question, Mr. Gandhi realized the difficulty, because the British were rightly preoccupied with home affairs but, [he said:]

I wish it were possible for Englishmen and women to realize that the budget will not be honestly balanced, unless the balance between Britain and India is set right .

Concluding Mr.Gandhi asked the audience to work for the fulfilment of his mission , for it would be for the good not only of India but of the world.

The Indian News, 22-9-1931, and *The Tribune,* 15-9-1931

411. TELEGRAM TO LORD IRWIN

KINGSLEY HALL, BOW,
LONDON EAST,
[*September 12, 1931*][1]

LORD IRWIN
GARROWBY BUCKTHORPE (YORKS)

GLAD ABLE AFTER ALL TO REPORT ARRIVAL. WOULD LIKE MEET YOU WHENEVER CONVENIENT.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N.17906

412. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

LONDON,
September 12, 1931

Mr. Gandhi, in an interview, gave me the essence of the Congress mandate which he will present. It lays down:

1. The Congress goal is complete independence.

2. This means control over the army, external affairs, finance, and economic policy.

3. Scrutiny by an impartial tribunal of the financial transactions of the British Government.

[1] Gandhiji must have sent this telegram shortly after he arrived in London.

There were words, he said, which gave him a small measure of freedom of action, but otherwise he was bound to the four corners of the mandate.

Mr Gandhi also said that, baffling though it was, he would never despair of arriving at some workable solution of the Hindu- Muslim question.[1]

Mr. Gandhi said that he would never despair of arriving at a workable solution. He was always optimistic. He was prepared to go the "whole hog" with the Muslims without the slightest reservation. He would sign a blank paper and leave the Muslims to write in what they considered the truth, and he would then fight for it.

Mr. Gandhi stipulated that any demand by Mohammedans must be on behalf of the whole of them, adding:

I say this purposely because there is a small body how large I do not know—which is called the Nationalist Muslim Party. I cannot be false to that party.

His business was to bring the two parties of Muslims together.

The Sunday Times, 13-9-1931, and *The Tribune*, 15-9-1931

413. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

LONDON,
September 12, 1931

Mr. Gandhi in an interview at Kingsley Hall[2] today said:

I am willing and anxious to go to Lancashire. I want to visit the North, and most decidedly I want to go to Manchester. I have received letters and cables advising me to go there, and saying that it would be worth while coming to England for that, even if I did not go to the Round Table Conference. It all depends upon the people . If they want me, they simply have to say 'Come'.

I can see there is so much misunderstanding about what we have done with foreign cloth. If I went up there and talked with them I should be cross-examined, and would speak to them without reserve.

Mr. Gandhi said he did not know to what extent the propaganda that had been carried on had found lodgment in the minds of the people of Lancashire, but he would hope to remove any misunderstanding and would leave no stone unturned to do it. If he went, he would be largely guided by Mr. C.F.Andrews, who knows so many

[1] The foregoing forms part of an interview given to *The Sunday Times*. What follows is part of an interview of Reuter taken from *The Tribune*.

[2] An establishment devoted to social service, founded by Muriel Lester in the East End of London and named in memory of her brother. Gandhiji stayed there while in London.

working men and women of Lancashire and has been in touch with many mill-owners.

When he was asked for a message for the people of India, he replied:

Tell them they will best help me by observing complete non-violence in thought, word and deed and by following out completely the constructive programme of the Congress.

He spoke tolerantly of the English climate which has been behaving badly today, said that he knew it well in previous years and added that he did not know how it would affect him this time, when his life had to be differently arranged. As compensation for the weather, he had the warmth of his friends here.

Someone asked him if he would go on Monday, his day of silence, to the meeting of the Federal Structure Committee. He said:

I shall place myself in the hands of the Prime Minister and of the Secretary of State for India and will do whatever they say. If they do not think it inconvenient that I should be there and remain silent, I will gladly go and follow the proceedings.

The people living near Kingsley Hall are looking forward to meeting Mr. Gandhi, and he says that he certainly hopes to meet them . He said :

Otherwise, why should I be here? I hope they will come here, and I will go to visit some of them in their homes if Miss Lester can arrange for me to go without being seen.

Mr. Shaukat Ali, one of the Muslim delegates to the Round Table Conference, said in an interview yesterday that he had a four-hour interview with Mr. Gandhi on the communal question, and thought as a result the prospects were better. Mr.Gandhi, when asked if he endorsed this, said :

Yes; progress is always made when two people come together for discussion, especially when theirs is a friendship which has existed for as long as ten years. There is always hope, but everything depends upon what happens here. So far as I am concerned there is no difficulty, because I personally would endorse the Muslim claim.

I am going to write to Lord Rothermere and Mr. Winston Churchill asking if they will kindly give me an interview. That is not a joke. I have always asked to see those who opposed me so that I could explain my position. I propose to find out what friends Mr. Churchill and I have in common and I shall try to approach him through his friends.

I have come here bent on peace. God alone can give it, but I do not want to leave anything undone that can bring it about.

“Is there any chance of your going home by way of America?” a representative

of a famous American agency hopefully inquired. The visitor said :

No. America does not want me. America is not ready to receive me. By that, of course, I mean my message. My friends warn me, and a voice inside tells that this is so. They might make a fuss of me and invite me to many meetings, but nothing would be done in the end. I speak my message best to America by doing my work in India. At the same time there are many manifestations of great interest from America. I receive hundreds of letters; they may, of course, be merely pretexts to get my autograph, but the interest is certainly there.

The Manchester Guardian, 14-9-1931 and *Boroughs of Poplar & Stepney East London Advertiser,* 19-9-1931

414. BROADCAST TO AMERICA[1]

September 13, 1931

In my opinion, the Indian Conference bears in its consequences not only upon India but upon the whole world. India is by itself almost a continent. It contains one-fifth of the human race. It represents one of the most ancient civilizations. It has traditions handed down from tens of thousands of years, some of which, to the astonishment of the world, remain intact. No doubt the ravages of time have affected the purity of that civilization, as they have that of many other cultures and many institutions.

If India is to perpetuate the glory of her ancient past, it can do so only when it attains freedom. The reason for the struggle having drawn the attention of the world, I know, does not lie in the fact that we Indians are fighting for our liberty, but in the fact that the means adopted by us for attaining that liberty are unique and, as far as history shows us, have not been adopted by any other people of whom we have any record.

The means adopted are not violence, not bloodshed, not diplomacy as one understands it nowadays, but they are purely and simply truth and non-violence. No wonder that the attention of the world is directed towards this attempt to lead a successful, bloodless revolution. Hitherto, nations have fought in the manner of the brute.

[1] The broadcast was made on the Columbia Broadcasting Service network from Kingsley Hall. According to Louis Fischer's *Life of Mahatma Gandhi,* before beginning his unprepared address, Gandhiji said : "Do I have to speak into that?" After the address was over, he remarked: "Well that's over." These words also were heard by the listeners.

They have wreaked vengeance upon those whom they have considered to be their enemies.

We find in searching national anthems adopted by great nations that they contain imprecations upon the so-called enemy. They have vowed destruction and have not hesitated to take the name of God and seek Divine assistance for the destruction of the enemy. We in India have reversed the process. We feel that the law that governs brute creation is not the law that should guide the human race. That law is inconsistent with human dignity.

I, personally, would wait, if need be, for ages rather than seek to attain the freedom of my country through bloody means. I feel in the innermost recesses of my heart, after a political experience extending over an unbroken period of close upon thirty-five years, that the world is sick unto death of blood-spilling. The world is seeking a way out, and I flatter myself with the belief that perhaps it will be the privilege of the ancient land of India to show that way out to the hungering world.

I have, therefore, no hesitation whatsoever in inviting all the great nations of the earth to give their hearty co-operation to India in her migh-ty struggle. It must be a sight worth contemplating and treasuring that millions of people have given themselves to suffering without retaliation in order that they might vindicate the dignity and honour of the nation.

I have called that suffering a process of self-purification. It is my certain conviction that no man loses his freedom except through his own weakness.I am painfully conscious of our own weaknesses. We represent in India all the principal religions of the earth, and it is a matter of deep humiliation to confess that we are a house divided against itself; that we Hindus and Mussalmans are flying at one another. It is a matter of still deeper humiliation to me that we Hindus regard several millions of our own kith and kin as too degraded even for our touch. I refer to the so-called “untouchables”.

These are no small weaknesses in a nation struggling to be free. You will find that, in this struggle through self-purification, we have assigned a foremost [part of our][1] creed to the removal of this curse of untouchability and the attainment of unity amongst all the different classes and communities of India representing the different creeds.

It is along the same lines that we seek to rid our land of the

[1] These words are found in *Entertaining Gandhi* by Muriel Lester.

curse of drink. Happily for us, intoxicating drinks and drugs are confined to comparatively a very small number of people, largely, factory hands and the like.

Fortunately for us, the drink and drug curse is accepted as a curse. It is not considered to be the fashion for men or women to drink or to take intoxicating drugs. All the same, it is an uphill fight that we are fighting in trying to remove this evil from our midst.

It is a matter of regret, deep regret, for me to have to say that the existing Government has made of this evil a source of very large revenue, amounting to nearly twenty-five crores of rupees. But I am thankful to be able to say that the women of India have risen to the occasion in combating it by peaceful means, that is, by a fervent appeal to those who are given to the drink habit to give it up, and by an equally fervent appeal to the liquor-dealers. A great impression has been created upon those who are addicted to these two evil habits.

I wish that it were possible for me to say that in this, at least, we were receiving hearty co-operation of the rulers. If we could only have received the co-operation without any legislation, I dare say that we would have achieved this reform and banished intoxicating drink and drugs from our afflicted land.

There is a force which has a constructive effect and which has been put forth by the nation during this struggle. That is the great care for the semi-starved millions scattered throughout the 700,000 villages dotted over a surface 1,900 miles long and 1,500 miles broad. It is a painful phenomenon that these simple villagers, through no fault of their own, have nearly six months of the year idle upon their hands.

The time was not very long ago when every village was self-sufficient in regard to the two primary human wants: food and clothing. Unfortunately for us, the East India Company, by means I would prefer not to describe, destroyed that supplementary village industry, and the millions of spinners who had become famous through the cunning of their deft fingers for drawing the finest thread, such as has never yet been drawn by any modern machinery. These village spinners found themselves one fine morning with their noble occupation gone. From that day forward India has become progressively poor.

No matter what may be said to the contrary, it is a historical fact that, before the advent of the East India Company, these villagers were

not idle, and he who wants may see today that these villagers are idle. It, therefore, required no great effort or learning to know that these villagers must starve if they cannot work for six months in the year.

May I not, then, on behalf of these semi-starved millions, appeal to the conscience of the world to come to the rescue of a people dying for regaining its liberty ?

The New York Times, 14-9-1931

415. SERMON AT KINGSLEY HALL

September 13, 1931

If we believed in God, he said, it followed that we must pray to Him. Though prayer, it was said, was to the soul what food was to the body, yet prayer was far more important for the soul than food was for the body, because we could at times go without food and the body would feel the better for the fast, but there was no such thing as prayer-fast. He said :

We can over-indulge in food. But we can never over-indulge in prayer.

The News Chronicle, 14-9-1931

416. MESSAGE TO "THE TIMES"

[Before *September 14, 1931*]

I want the goodwill of every Englishman and every English woman in the mission of peace that has brought me to England.

The Times, 14-9-1931

417. LETTER TO LORD IRWIN

September 14, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I plunge into work tomorrow. In all I am and shall be doing, you and our talks[1] are and will ever be with me.

Halifax, pp. 316-7

418. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

LONDON,
September 14, 1931

In an exclusive interview to the *Chronicle*, Mahatmaji answered a number of questions today. Asked whether, at the meeting of the Federal Structure Com-mittee on Monday, Lord Sankey announced Government's new scheme for consideration and whether Mahatmaji felt the Congress would be prepared to accept any scheme which fell short of what it had accepted by ratifying the Delhi Pact, Gandhiji answered :

I must not anticipate any scheme that Lord Sankey wishes to bring forward.

Q. Do you believe that, in a scheme of federation composed of divergent systems of government obtainable in British India and in Indian States, it is possible to find a fusion between democracy and absolute autocracy ?

A. By mutual give and take I see no difficulty.

Q. Since the subjects of the Indian States are not represented at the R.T. Conference, do you think the Congress can force the Princes to accept a democratic form of government for their States ?

A. The Princes are capable of doing many things, but what they will do actually I do not know.

Q. In the absence of the representative of Nationalist Muslims, do you believe it is possible to deliberate upon the Hindu-Muslim question with any measure of success ?

A. It will be certainly a difficult task if not almost an impossible one. I cannot, however, help thinking that whoever committed the

[1] For Gandhi-Irwin talks, held in February-March 1931

blunder of preventing Dr. Ansari from being selected as a delegate was responsible for committing a fatal blunder.

Q. In the light of the recent declaration of the National Government, representing the three British Parties, that there shall be no change in the policy on the Indian issue, do you still believe that the external circumstances are such as to warrant a feeling of optimism regarding India attaining Dominion Status on the lines of the Karachi resolution ?

A. The question betrays two errors. You think that my hop- ing against hope depends upon external circumstances, whereas what I said in Bombay and what I have no reason to alter was that, although there was nothing on the horizon to warrant hope, being a born optimist. I hoped against hope. For a hope there can be no reasons. It is a matter of faith in one's cause and means.

The Bomaby Chronicle, 15-9-1931

419. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS [1]

LONDON,
September 15, 1931

I consider it reactionary. A Bill of this character cannot but be disturbing to those who hope and believe that the Round Table must result in the devolution of power to the people of India.

Therefore I trust the Government on second thoughts will withdraw the Bill and that, in an case, members of the Assembly will resist it.[2]

The Hindu, 16-9-1931

[1] Gandhiji gave this statement on reading the provisions of the Press Bill. Ostensibly designed to suppress the publication of matter inciting to or encouraging murder of violence, it, in effect, muzzled the Press.

[2] The Bill was passed by the Assembly on October 3, 1931, by 55 votes to24

420. SPEECH AT FEDERAL STRUCTURE COMMITTEE[1]

LONDON,
September 15, 1931

LORD CHANCELLOR, YOUR HIGHNESSES AND FRIENDS,

I must confess at the outset that I am not a little embarrassed in having to state before you the position of the Indian National Congress. I would like to say that I have come to London to attend this Committee, as also the Round Table Conference when the proper time comes, absolutely in the spirit of co-operation, and to strive to my utmost to find points of agreement. I would like also to give this assurance to His Majesty's Government that at no stage is it, or will it be, my desire to embarrass authority and I would like to give the same assurance to my colleagues here, that, however much we may differ about our view-points, I shall not obstruct them in any shape or form. My position, therefore, here depends entirely upon your goodwill, as also the goodwill of His Majesty's Government. If at any time I found that I could not be of any useful service to the Conference, I would not hesitate to withdraw myself from it. I can also say to those who are responsible for the management of this Committee and the Conference that they have only to give a sign and I should have no hesitation in withdrawing.

I am obliged to make these remarks because I know that there are fundamental differences of opinion between the Government and the Congress, and it is possible that there are vital differences between my colleagues and myself. There is also a limitation under which I

[1] The second session of the Round Table Conference was held between September 7 and December 1, 1931. There were altogether 112 delegates 20 representing the British Government, 23 Indian States and 69 British India. Gandhiji attended the second session as the sole representative of the Congress. Ramsay MacDonald, Prime Minister, was the Chairman of the Conference. The second session did not open with a meeting of the full Conference. The Federal Structure Committee reassembled on September 7, and the Minorities Committee on September 28, followed by a Plenary Session beginning on November 28, 1931. The other Committees of the Conference did not reassemble.

The Federal Structure Committee, over whose deliberations Lord Sankey presided, had the following Heads for discussion :

1 Strength and Composition of the Federal Legislature.

shall be working. I am but a poor humble agent acting on behalf of the Indian National Congress. And it might be as well to remind ourselves of what the Congress stands for and what it is. You will then extend your sympathy to me, because I know that the burden that rests upon my shoulders is really very great. The Congress is, if I am not mistaken, the oldest political organizaton we have in India. It has had nearly 50 years of life, during which period it has, without any interruption, held its annual ses-sion. It is what it means—national. It represents no particular community, no particular class, no particular interest. It claims to represent all Indian interests and all classes. It is a matter of the greatest pleasure to me to state that it was first conceived in an English brain: Allan Octavius Hume we knew as the father of the Congress. It was nursed by two great Parsis, pherozeshah Mehta and Dadabhai Naoroji, whom all India delighted to recognize as its Grand Old Man. From the very commencement the Congress had Mussalmans, Christians, Anglo-Indians—I might say all the religions, sects, creeds—represented upon it more or less fully. The late Badruddin Tyabji identified himself with the Congress. We have had Mussalmans as Presidents of the Congress, and Parsis undoubtedly. I can recall at least one Indian Christian at the present moment, W.C. Bonnerji, Kalicharen Bannerji, than whom I have not had the privilege of knowing a purer Indian, was also thoroughly identiied with the Congress. I miss, as I have no doubt all of you miss, the presence in our midst of Mr. K.T. Paul. Although—I do not know, but so far as I know—he never officially belonged to the Congress, he was a nationalist to the full. As you know, the late Maulana Mohammed Ali, whose presence also we miss today, was a President of the Congress, and at present we have four Mussalmans as members of the Working Committee, which consists of 15 members. We have had women as our Presidents : Dr. Annie Besant was the first, and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu

2 Questions connected with the Election of Members of the Federal Legislature.

3 Relations between the two Chambers of the Federal Ligislature.

4 Distribution of Financial Resources between the Federation and its Units.

5 The Ministry and its Relations with the Legislature.

6 Distribution of Legislative powers between the federal and provincial Legislatures, and effect in the States of Legislation relating to Federal Subjects.

7 Administrative Relations between the Federal Government, the States and the Provinces.

8 The Federal Court.

followed; we have her as a member of the Working Committee also. And so, if we have no distinctions of class or creed, we have no distinctions of sex either.

The Congress has, from its very commencement, taken up the cause of the so-called untouchables. There was a time when the Congress had at every annual session as its adjunct the Social Conference, to which the late Ranade dedicated his energies, among his many other activities. Headed by him you will find, in the programme of the Social Confe- rence, reform in connection with the untouchables taking a prominent place. But in 1920, the Congress took a large step and brought in the question of the removal of untouchability as a plank on the political platform, making it an important item of the political programme. Just as the Congress considered HIndu-Muslim unity thereby meaning unity amongst all the classes to be indispensable for the attainment of swaraj, so also did the Congress consider the removal of the curse of untouchability as an indispensable condition for the attainment of full freedom. The position the Congress took up in 1920 remains the same today; and so you will see the Congress has attempted from its very beginning to be what it described itself to be, namely, national in every sense of the term. If Your Highnesses will permit me to say so, in the very early stages the Congress took up your cause also. Let me remind this Committee that it was the Grand Old Man of India who sponsored the cause of Kashmir and Mysore; and these two great Houses, I venture in all humility to submit, owe not a little to the efforts of Dadabhai Naoroji and the Congress. Even up to now the Congress has endeavoured to serve the Princes of India by refraining from any interference in their domestic and internal affairs.

I hope, therefore, that this brief introduction that I thought fit to give will serve to enable the Committee, and those who are at all interested in the claims of the Congress, to understand that it has endeavoured to deserve the claim that it has made. It has failed, I know, often to live up to the claim but I venture to submit that, if you were to examine the history of the Congress, you would find that it has more often succeeded, and progressively succeeded than failed. Above all , the Congress represents, in its essence, the dumb, semi-starved millions scattered over the length and breadth of the land in its 700,000 villages, no matter whether they come from what is called

British India or what is called Indian India. Every interest which, in the opinion of the Congress, is worthy of protection, has to subserve the interests of these dumb millions; and so you do find now and again apparently a clash between several interests. But, if there is a genuine real clash, I have no hesitation in saying on behalf of the Congress that the Congress will sacrifice every interest for the sake of the interests of these dumb millions. It is, therefore, essentially a peasant organization, and it is becoming so progressively. You will even the Indian members of the Committee perhaps be astonished to find that today the Congress, through its organization, the All India Spinners' Association, is finding work for nearly 50,000 women in nearly 2,000 villages, and these women are possibly 50 per cent Mussalman women. Thousands of them belong to the so-called untouchable class. We have thus, in this constructive manner, penetrated these villages, and effort is being mde to cover every one of the 700,000 villages. It is a super human task; but if human effort can do so, you will presently find the Congress covering all of these villages and bringing to them the message of the spinning-wheel.

That being the representative character of the Congress, you will not be astonished when I read to you the Congress mandate. I hope that it may not jar upon you. You may consider that the Congress is making a claim which is wholly untenable. Such as it is, I am here to put forth that claim on behalf of the Congress in the gentlest manner possible, but also in the firmest manner possible. I have come here to prosecute that claim with all the faith and energy that I can command. If you can convince me to the contrary and show that the claim is inimical to the interests of these dumb millions, I shall revise my opinion. I am open to conviction, but even so I should have to ask my principals to consent to that revision before I could usefully act as the agent of the Congress.

At this stage I propose to read to you this mandate so that you can understand clearly the limitations imposed upon me. This was a resolution passed at the Karachi Congress:

> This Congress, having considered the Provisional Settlement between the Working Committee and the Government of India, endorses it, and desires to make it clear that the Congress goal of *purna* swaraj, meaning complete independence, remains intact. In the event of a way remaining otherwise open to the Congress to be represented at any Conference with the representatives of the British Government, the Congress Delegation will work for this goal; and in particular, so as to give the nation control over the army, external

> affairs, finance, fiscal and economic policy, and to have scrutiny by an impartial tribunal of the financial transactions of the British Government in India, and to examine and assess the obligations to be undertaken by India or England and the right to either party to end the partnership at will: provided, however, that the Congress Delegation will be free to accept such adjustments as may be demonstrably necessary in the interests of India.

Then follows the appointment.

I have in the light of this mandate endeavoured, as carefully as I was capable, to study the provisional conclusions arrived at by the seve- ral Sub-committees appointed by the Round Table Conference. I have also carefully studied the Prime Minister's statement giving the consi- dered policy of His Majesty's Government. I speak as subject to correction; but, so far as I have been able to understand this document, it falls far short of what is aimed at and claimed by the Congress. True, I have the liberty to accept such adjustments as may be demonstrably necessary in the intrests of India, but they have all to be consistent with the fundamentals stated in this mandate.

I remind myself at this stage of the terms of what is to me a sacred settlement the settlement arrived at Delhi between the Government of India and the Congress. In that Settlement the Congress has accepted the principle of federation, the principle that there should be responsibility at the Centre, and has accepted also the principle that there should be safeguards in so far as they may be necessary in the interests of India.

There was one phrase used yesterday. I forget by which Delegate, but it struck me very forcibly. He said, "We do not want a mere political constitution". I do not know that he gave that expression the same meaning that it immediately bore to me; but I immediately said to myself, this phrase has given me a good expression. It is true the Congress will not be and, personally speaking. I myself would never be satisfied with a mere political constitution, which to read would seem to give India all it can possibly politically desire, but in reality would give her nothing. If we are intent upon complete independence, it is not from any sense of arrogance; it is not because we want to parade before the universe that we have now severed all connection with the British people. Nothing of the kind. On the contrary, you find in this mandate itself that the Congress contemplates a partnership the Congress contemplates a connection with the British people but that connection to be such as

can exist between two absolute equals. Time was when I prided myself on being, and being called, a British subject. I have ceased for many years to call myself a British subject; I would far rather be called a rebel than a subject. But I have aspired I still aspire to be a citizen, not of the Empire, but in a Commonwealth; in a partnership if possibleif God wills it, an indissoluble partnership but not a partnership superimposed upon one nation by another. Hence you find here that the Congress claims that either party should have the right to sever the connection, to dissolve the partnership. It has got to be necessarily, therefore, of mutual benefit.

May I say it may be irrelevant to the consideration, but not irrelevant to me—that, as I have said elsewhere, I can quite understand the responsible British statesmen today being wholly engrossed in domestic affairs, in trying to make two ends meet. We could not expect them to do anything less; and I wondered, even as I was sailing towards London, whether we in the Committee at the present moment would not be a drag upon the British Ministers whether we would not be interlopers. And yet I said to myself: It is possible that we might not be interlopers; it is possible that the British Ministers themselves might consider the proceedings of the Round Table Conference to be of primary importance even in terms of their domestic affairs.

India, yes, can be held by the sword! I do not for one moment doubt the ability of Britain to hold India under subjection through the sword. But what will conduce to the prosperity of Great Britain, the economic freedom of Great Britain an enslaved but rebellious India, or an India an esteemed partner with Britain to share her sorrows to take part side by side with Britain in her misfortunes? Yes! if need be, but at her own will, to fight side by side with Britain not for the exploitation of a single race or a single human being on earth, but it may be conceivably for the good of the whole world! If I want freedom for my country, believe me, if I can possibly help it, I do not want that freedom in order that I, belonging to a nation which counts one-fifth of the human race, may exploit any other race upon earth or any single individual. If I want that freedom for my country, I would not be deserving of that freedom if I did not cherish and treasure the equal right of every other race, weak or strong, to the same freedom.

And so I said to myself whilst I was nearing the shores of your beautiful island, per chance it might be possible for me to convince the British Ministers that India as a valuable partner, not held by force but by the silken cord of love an India of that character might

conceivably be of real assistance to you in balancing your Budget, not for one occasion but for many years. What cannot two nations do one a handful, but brave, with a record for bravery perhaps unequalled, a nation noted for having fought slavery, a nation that has at least claimed times without number to protect the weak and another a very ancient nation, counted in millions, with a glorious and ancient past, representing at the present moment two great cultures, the Islamic and Hindu cultures; if you will, also containing not a small but a very large number of Christian popu-lation; and certainly absorbing the whole of the splendid Zoroastrian stock, in numbers almost beneath contempt, but in philanthropy and enterprise almost unequalled and certainly unsurpassed. We have got all these cultures concentrated in India. And supposing that God fires both Hindus and Musslmans represented here with a proper spirit, so that they close ranks and come to an honourable understanding take that nation and this nation together, and I again ask myself and ask you whether, with an India free, completely independent as Great Britain is, whether an honourable partnership between these two cannot be mutualy beneficial, even in terms of the domestic affairs of this great nation. And so, in that dreamy hope, I have approached the British Isles, and I shall still cherish that dream.

And when I have said this perhaps I have said all; and you will be able to dot the i's and to cross the t's, not execting me to fill in all the details, and tell you what I mean by control over the Army, what I mean by control over external affairs, finance, fiscal and economic policy, or even the financial transactions which a friend yesterday considered to be sacrosanct. I do not take that view. If there is a stock-taking between incoming and outgoing partners, their transactions are subject to audit and adjustment; and the Congress will not be guilty of any dishonourable conduct or crime in saying that the nation should understand what it is to take over and what it should not take over. This audit, this scrutiny, is asked for not merely in the interests of India; it is asked for in the interests of both. I am positive that the British people do not want to saddle upon India a single burden which it should not legitimately bear; and I am here to declare, on behalf of the Congress, that the Congress will never think of repudiating a single claim or a burden that it should justly discharge. If we are to live as an honourable nation worthy of commanding credit from the whole world, we will pay every farthing of legitimate debt with our blood.

I do not think that I should take you any further through the clauses of this mandate an analyse for you the meaning of these clauses as Congressmen give them. If it is God's will that I should continue to take part in these deliberations, as the deliberations proceed, I shall be able to explain the implications of these clauses. As the deliberations proceed, I would have my say in connection with the safeguards also. But I think I have said quite enough in having, with some elaboration and with your generous indulgence, Lord Chancellor, taken the time of this meeting. I had not intended really to take that time, but I felt that I could not possibly do justice to the cause that I have come to expound to you, the Committee, and to the British nation of which we, the Indian Delegates, are at present the guests, if I did not give you out of the whole of my heart my cherished wish even at this time. I would love to go away from the shores of the British Isles with the conviction that there was to be an honourable and equal partnership between Great Britain and India. I cannot do anything more than say that it will be my fervent prayer, during all the days that I live in your midst, that this consummation may be reached.

I thank you, Lord Chancellor, for courtesy that you have extended to me in not stopping me, although I have taken close upon forty-five minutes. I was not entitled to all that indulgence, and I thank you once more.

Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session) : Proceedings of Federal Structure Committee and Minorities Committee, Vol. I , pp. 41-7

421. SPEECH AT MEETING OF LABOUR M.P.S[1]

LONDON,
September 16, 1931

Mr. Gandhi addressed the Labour members of the House of Commons this evening. . . .

In his address he stated that he had been sent to this country to adhere to the pledge he had given, that was, to get complete independence as far as India was concerned. This was in the interests of India's villagers, who were being starved as the result of the administration and the taxes they had to pay.

[1] This was held in the Grand Committee Room in the House of Commons. Mr. Lansbury, M.P., Miss Muriel Lester and J.F. Horaabin, M.P., were among those present.

An observation of his struck his trade union hearers as being remarkable. That was when he advocated the doing away machinery and letting the villagers work with their hands. If anyone asked the villagers why he led them, they would find that it was because they could not express themselves, but that he was expressing their aspirations for them.

Mr. Gandhi said he had come to this country in pursuance of the promise he had made to Lord Irwin to attend the Round Table Conference. He would as soon adopt any other words as "complete independence", if their contents were identical. It was the substance he wanted, not the shadow. He proposed to disregard the ordinary canons of caution he had imposed on himself, and to try to make them understand his feelings, shared by many millions of his countrymen.

He repeated his demands for complete independence, control of the army, and external affairs. In other words, he wanted the identical freedom for India that was enjoyed in Great Britain. Nothing less would satisfy India. He had no authority to enter into any compromise, though, if that one thing were assured them, they would find him entering into many compromises, while, if it was not assured, he would enter into none. He did not want complete independence as a menace to any single race in the world. If he could, he wanted to promote real friendship between Great Britain and India.

He was an open rebel against British rule and power, but thousands of his countrymen were secret rebels because they did not want to suffer the in- convenience of open rebellion. He warned his hearers to disabuse their minds of any delusion to the contrary. If the people wanted to throw off the British yoke and become completely independent, it was because they did not want to starve. Tremendous military power in India was not required for defence from external aggression. He had been told that, if unfortunately, there was another battle to be fought, it would be different and more intense. He did not need that reminder. They were walking with their backs to the wall, and he wanted those present to save India from those fiery days if they could possibly do so.

Mr. Shinwell said that thousands of Indian labourers working the coal-mines were employed by Indian coal-owners and not British, and he found that the Indian coal-owners were much more reactionary and brutal to their employees than British coal-owners. How did Mr. Gandhi reconcile what he said about British rule with the reactionary outlook of the Indian industrialists?

Mr. Gandhi said that, when he spoke, he was not thinking about these few thousand labourers in the coal-mines or in the factories of Bombay and Calcutta. He held no brief for the land-owners or mill-owners.

It was not his case whether or not Indian industrialists were more heartless than British. His case was in connection with the Indians living in villages and not with that kind of oppression. His complaint was about the system by which the last

drop of blood was drained from the villagers. The labourers in the coal-mines were oppressed but were not starving, and he was speaking about the people who were actually starving. Eighty-four per cent of the population of India lived in villages which were bled white through the present system, and were compulsorily idle for six months in the year. If British labourers were idle six months without pay, would they not starve, especially if they had also to pay a revenue to the Government ?

A Lancashire member then asked Mr. Gandhi on what lines he justified the boycott of Lancashire goods.

Mr. Gandhi said that India ought to be free to use her own cotton-wear to the exclusion entirely of cotton-wear from Lancashire, Japan or Italy, or any part of the world. It was not directed against the British people. Did they think it was any part of the duty of India to buy cotton piece-goods? His case was restricted to the villages, and the whole scheme of the exclusion of foreign-cloth had been conceived in the interests of the villagers.

Were they committing any moral breach if they produced their own cloth in their villages or mills, and used only that cloth? The result was that they were putting sixty crores of rupees directly into the pockets of the poor man. Was there any canon of morality which compelled him to prefer Lancashire cloth in order to sustain Lancashire labourers, who through all these years had been impoverishing them? Lancashire rose on the ruins of the Indian Village industry.

Sir Norman Angell asked if the effect of the present Indian protection was not to have Lancashire goods replaced by Bombay and Calcutta, and that the same problem of the six months of idleness in the villages would remain if one developed the industries of Bombay and created an industrialization of India. That point would remain if British power was withdrawn.

Mr. Gandhi replied that his energies were concentrated on the villagers, and that the boycott campaign was being carried on in the interests of the villagers. If they had only their own mills to deal with, they would be able to do so without the slightest difficulty. The mill-owners had come to terms with them not to compete with the village industry. This village industry was a vast industry covering 2,000 villages and supporting 100,000 spinners in those villages. One-third of the piece-goods used were today produced on the handlooms, though they were working with mill-spun yarn. He wanted hand-spun yarn. He wanted the English to give him British skill to perfect the hand-spinning machine, and they would be glad to know that a British engineer had left with him a simpler pattern of handloom which would give better results, for which he was charging no patent rights, but was making a gift of his invention. This boycott movement was not for the benefit of the mills and, if they tried to crush it they would be crushed.

Mr. Tout, M.P., said that from Mr. Gandhi's reply there was no truth then in the often repeated statement that the boycott was subsidized by the Bombay mill-

owners.

Mr. Gandhi said that Bombay mill-owners had given, and given with some generosity, but all the accounts of the movement were open. The boycott movement had also received assistance from the villagers. If they wished to proclaim a boycott of Indian mills, they could do so. He spoke as an expert of the village industry and declared if the mills of Bombay and Calcutta were destroyed by an earthquake, and every foreign country refused to supply cotton, the village industry would within a month be able to supply all their requirements in cotton cloth.

Another Labour member then asked what India would do if other countries refused to buy her jute and her tea. How could we buy tea from India if India did not buy cloth from Lancashire?

Mr. Gandhi replied it was a matter of free will. They did not want to force their goods on an unwilling world. They produced them because there was a demand for them, and if other countries would not buy them, they would have to take up some other industry.

Miss Wilkinson asked if it was not a reactionary policy to refuse to use the inventions of science, and if, by refusing to use the inventions of the human mind, the result would not be to keep India poor.

Mr. Gandhi said he was trying to wean India from all machinery. They had millions of people who could do this work by their hands, and it would be suicidal to have machines that would produce all this cloth with a few thousand workers. He considered it would be immoral for him to do that when he could give these people no other occupation.[1]

The Manchester Guardian, 17-9-1931

422. INTERVIEW TO "TEXTILE MERCURY"

LONDON,
September 17, 1931

Mr Gandhi, before replying to the questions which had been submitted to him beforehand by the Editor of *Textile Mercury*, said he would like to send out a message which he hoped would be sympathetically received and understood by everyone engaged in the Lancashire cotton industry. He declared :

I know that the question is extremely difficult, but with the creation of goodwill between the two countries, I can see no reason for despair. The one indispensable condition is to set one's face resolutely against the vicious propaganda going on today in England to prejudice the Indian cause and to spread all kinds of rumours

[1] After the meeting Gandhiji held his prayers and left for Kingsley Hall.

against the Indian National Congress, which can be demonstrated to the full.

While I am in England, I will consider it a privilege if I can remove all cause for misunderstanding, and with that end in view I am going to Lancashire next week. I go there with the friendliest motives; I would invite all to cross-examine me, and I promise to speak without the slightest mental reservation.

Q. What is the real cause of the decline in Lancashire's cloth trade in India ?

A. In my opinion, not one but several causes. The boycott was and is, undoubtedly, one of the causes. The chief cause is the defeat of Lancashire by Japan. It should be remembered that the Indian boycott is not against Lancashire piece-goods, but against all foreign piece-goods, and yet Japan has made tremendous headway as compared to Lancashire. The third cause is universal, namely the declining capacity of the people to buy even the necessaries of life. The fourth is the ever-increasing production of Indian mills, and the fifth and last, is the growing desire of the villagers of India to manufacture cloth in their own homes.

Q. Is there an active campaign to oust Lancashire?

A. Since the Delhi Settlement there is absolutely no campaign, active or otherwise, to oust Lancashire in preferece to any other foreign competitor. Preference for indigenous cloth—whether mill-manufactured or homespun—certainly continues.

Q. Are Japanese goods preferred? If so, why?

A. At the present moment there is certainly no preference given to Japanese goods.

Q. Is India's cloth consumption unchanged? If showing a decline, what percentage?

A. I think there is a decline, but imperceptible.

Q. How can Lancashire increase her trade with India? What are the prospects? Is it a question of price, quality, or anti-British compaign?

A. The only way Lancashire can possibly increase her trade with India I pointed out some months ago.[1] Supposing there were a full-hearted settlement with India and supposing India had to buy foreign cloth to suppplement indigenous homespun and millspun, preference would be given to Lancashire over all other foreign-cloth. Of course, the question of quality and price would still have to be

[1] *Vide* "Lancashire *v.* Japan", 30-7-1931

considered, but it would have to be a matter of friendly adjustment.

Q. What percentage of her own needs, in textiles, can India supply? How much of this is factory-made, and how much is produced on handlooms?

A. In my opinion India is able, with certain facilities, to manufacture sufficient textiles in her village supplemented by indigenous mills without any difficulty. At the present moment, onethird of India's cloth supply is manufactured on handlooms, one-third in mills, and one-third is imported.

My message to *Textiles Mercury* and through it to Lancashire is not to prejudge the whole issue through prejudices, but to study it in all its bearings.

Textiles Mercury, 18-9-1931

423. INTERVIEW TO "THE NEWS CHRONICLE"

LONDON,
[*September 17, 1931*][1]

I love the East End, particularly the little urchins in the streets. They give me such friendly greetings. I have seen a tre- mendous change in social conditions since I was in London forty years ago. The poverty in London is nothing to what it is in India. I go down the streets here and I see outside each house a bottle of milk, and inside the door there is a strip of carpet, perhaps a piano in the sitting room.

In India several millions wear only a loin-cloth. That is why I wear a loin-cloth myself. They call me half-naked. I do it deliberately in order to identify myself with the poorest of the poor in India. What impresses me about London is that there is not the same glaring difference between rich and poor. As I drive down in my car to Bow every night, I have been noticing how gradual is the change from the riches of the West End to the poverty of the East End. It is perhaps not an exaggeration to say that the poor in London have as high a standard of living as the rich in India.

Speaking of the Round Table Conference, Mr. Gandhi said:

I am disturbed about the position. We are making such very slow progress. We have been here five days, and so far what we have

[1] The source does not mention the date. But the correspondent said Gandhiji gave him the interview "Yesterday". If he was writing on the 18th, the interview probably took place on the 17th.

accomplished might have been done in four or five hours. The Government is like a Sphinx. It is so cautious in its utterances that it is impossible to know where it stands. We cannot get on until it states its views. We must know how far it is prepared to go. I have spoken gently this week, but I do not know how long I shall be able to bear this hopeless uncertainty, for which I see no just reason. The Government cannot for ever sit on the fence.

The News Chronicle, 19-9-1931

424. SPEECH AT FEDERAL STRUCTURE COMMITTEE

LONDON,
September 17, 1931

LORD CHANCELLOR,

It is not without very great hesitation that I take part in this debate on Head 2[1]; and, before I proceed to deal with the several points that are noted down here for discussion, I should like, with your per-mission, to disburden myself of an oppressive feeling that has been grow-ing on me ever since Monday. I have watched with the greatest attention the discussions that have taken place in this Committee. I have endea-voured to study, as I have not done before, the list of the Delegates; and the first feeling of oppression that has been coming upon me is that we are not the chosen ones of the nation which we should be representing, but we are the chosen ones of the Government. I see, as I study the list and as I know the different parties and groups in India from experience, some very noticeable gaps also; and so I am oppressed with a sense of unreality in connection with our composition. My second reason for feeling a sense of unreality is that these proceedings seem to me to be interminable and to be leading us practically nowhere. If we go on at this rate I do not know that we shall proceed beyond having discussed the various points raised before this Committee threadbare.

I would therefore, first of all, Lord Chancellor, tender my deepest sympathies to you for the very great patience and, may I add, the unfailing courtesy with which you are handling us; and I really congratulate you upon the great pains that you are taking over the proceedings of this Committee. I hope that, at the end of your task and of our task, it will be possible for me to tender my congratulations

[1] Questions connected with the election of members of the Federal Legislature

on having enabled us, or even compelled us, to show some tangible result.

May I here lodge a gentle, humble complaints against His Majesty's advisers? Having brought us together from over the seas, and knowing, as I take it they do know, that we are all of us, without exception busy people, as they themselves are, and that we have left our respective posts of duty having brought us together, is it not possible for them to give us a lead? Can I not, through you, appeal to them to let us know their mind? I should be delighted and I feel that that would be the proper procedure, if I may venture to say so in your presence if they would bring forward concrete proposals for taking our opinion. If some such thing was done, I have no doubt that we should be able to come to some conclusions, good or bad, satisfactory or unsatisfactory; but if we simply resolve ourselves into a debating society, each member of which gives an eloquent discourse upon the points severally raised, I do not think that we shall be serveing or advancing the purpose for which we have been brought together. It seems to me that it might be profitable, if it is open for you, to appoint a Subcommittee to give you some points for conclusion so that our proceedings may be terminated in fair time.

I have simply ventured to throw out these suggestions for your consideration, and for the consideration of the members. Perhaps you will kindly bring them to the notice of His Majesty's advisers for their consideration. I do want them to guide us and to give us a lead, and to place their own cards on the table. I want them to say what they would do supposing that we appointed them as the arbiters of our destiny. If they would be good enough to seek our advice and opinion, then we give them our advice and opinion. That would be, in my opinion, really a better thing than this state of hopeless uncertainty and endless delay.

Having said that, I shall venture to offer a few remarks upon Head 2. There I share the difficulty that faced Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. If I understood him rightly, he said that he was embarrassed in that he was called upon to deal with several sub-heads when he did not know what the franchise actually would be. There is that difficulty that stares me in the face in common with him ; but there is an additional difficulty that stares me in the face. I placed before the Committee the mandate of the Congress, and I have to discuss every one of the sub-heads in terms of that mandate. Therefore, on certain of these

sub-heads, I would have to offer suggestions or my opinion in terms of that mandate; and if the Committee does not know what it is sailing for, naturally the opinion that I may offer would be of really no value to it. The opinion would be of value only in terms of that mandate. My meaning will be clear when I come to examine these sub-heads.

With reference to sub-head (i), whilst my sympathies, broadly speaking, are with Dr. Ambedkar, my reason is wholly with Mr. Gavin Jones and Sir Sultan Ahmed. If we were a homogeneous Committee whose member were entitled to vote and come to a conclusion, I should then sail a very large distance with Dr. Ambedkar; but such is not our position. We are an ill-assorted group, each member of which is independent of the other and therefore, entitled to give his or her views unfettered by any common rule. Hence, we have no right, in my humble opinion , to say to the States what they shall do and what they shall not do. Those states have very generously come to our assistance and said that they would federate with us, and perhaps part with some of their rights which they might otherwise have held exclusively. That being so, I could not but endorse the opinion given by Sir Sultan Ahmed, which was perhaps emphasized by Mr. Gavin Jones, that the utmost that we can do is to plead with the States, and show them our own difficulties. At the same time I feel that we have to recognize their special difficulties also. Therefore, I can only venture a suggestion or two to the great Princes for their sympathetic consideration; and I would urge this, being a man of the people, from the people, and endeavouring to represent the lowest classes of society I would urge upon them the advisability of finding a place for these also in any scheme that they may evolve and present for the acceptance of this Committee. I feel, and I know, that they have the interests of their ryots at heart. I know that they claim jealously to guard their interests; but they will, if all goes well, more and more come in contact with popular India, if I may so call British India; and they will want to make common cause with the inhabitants of that India, as the inhabitants of that India would want to make common cause with the Princes' India. After all, there is no vital, real division between these two Indias. If one can divide a living body into two parts, you may divide India into two parts. It has lived as one country from time immemorial, and no artificial boundary can possibly divide it. The Princes, be it said to their credit, when they declared themselves frankly and courageously in favour of federation, claimed also to be of the the same blood with us claimed to be our own kith and kin.

How could they do otherwise? There is no difference between them and us except that we are common people and they are God has made them noblemen, Princes. I wish them well, I wish them all prosperity; and I also pray that their prosperity and their welfare may be utilized for the advancement of their own dear people, their own subjects. Beyond this I will not go; I cannot go. I can only make an appeal to them. It is open to them, as we know, either to come into the Federation or not to come into it. It is up to us to make it easy for them to come into the Federation. It is up to them to make it easy for us to welcome them with open arms. Without that spirit of giveandtake, I know that we shall not be able to come to any definite scheme of Federation; or, if we do, we shall ultimately quarrel and break up. Therefore, I would rather that we did not embark upon any federal scheme, then that we should do so without our full hearts in the thing. If we do so, we should do so whole-heartedly.

Then, with reference to the second head, I see that the second head has really been considered in connection with disqualifications whether there should be any disqualifications or not. Although I claim to be a full-fledged democrat, I have no hesitation in saying that it is en- tirely consistent with the rights of the voter to have some disqualifications attaching to candidature as also some disqualif-ications which would unseat a member. What they should be I do not wish to go into at the present moment; I simply say that I would endorse whole-heartedly the idea and the principle of disqualification. The words "moral turpi- tude" do not frighten me; on the countrary I think it is a good expression. Of course, any words that we may choose with the greatest deliberation will still cause difficulties; but what are judges for if they are not there to surmount them? In case of difficulty, judges will come to our assistance and will say what comes under the term "moral turpitude" and what does not; and if, perchance, a person like myself offering civil resistance, was considered guilty of "moral turpitude", I should not mind. It may be that some people may have to suffer hardship, but on that account I am not disposed to say that there shall be no dis-qualifications what soever, and that, if there were any, it would be an encroachment upon the right of the voter. If we are to have some test or some age limit, I think we should have some character limit as well.

Then the third point is as to indirect and direct election. I wish Lord Peel were here to find me in substantial agreement with him so far as the principle of indirect election is concerned. I do not know I

am talking simply as a layman but the words "indirect election" do not frighten me. I do not know if they have any technical meaning; if they have, I am wholly unaware of it. I am presently going to say what I mean. Whether it is called "direct election" or "indirect election", I would certainly go round and plead for it, and probably get a large body of public opinion in favour of that method of election. The method I am about to suggest is necessary because I am wedded to adult suffrage. Somehow or other, Congressmen swear by it. Adult suffrage is necessary for more reasons that one; and one of the decisive reasons to me is that it enables me to satisfy all the reasonable aspirations, not only of the Musslmans, but also of the so-called untouchables, of Christians, of labourers and all classes. I cannot possibly bear the idea that a man who has got wealth should have the vote, but that a man who has got character, but no wealth or literacy, should have no vote; or that a man who works honestly by the sweat of his brow day in and day out should not have the vote for the crime of being a poor man. It is an unbearable thing; and having lived and mixed with the poorest of the villagers, and having prided myself on being considered an untouchable, I know that some of the finest specimens of humanity are to be found amongst the very untouchables themselves. I would far rather forgo the right of voting myself than that this untouchable brother should not have the vote. I am not enamoured of the doctrine of literacy that a voter must at least have a knowledge of the three R's . I want for my people a knowledge of the three R's; but I know also that, if I have to wait until they have got knowledge of the three R's before they can be qualified for voting, I shall have to wait until the Greek Kalneds, and I am not prepared to wait all that time. I know millions of these men are quite capable of voting; but if we are going to give them all the vote, it will become very difficult, if not absolutely impossible, to bring them all on the voter' list and have manageable constituencies.

I do share Lord Peel's fear that, if we have unwieldy constituencies, it is not possible for the candidate to come in personal touch with all this multitude of people or to keep touch with them from time to time and to take their opinion and so on. Although I have never aspired to legislative honours, I have had something to do with these electorates and I know how difficult it has been. I also know the experiences of those who have been members of these legislative bodies. We in the Congress, therefore, have evolved a scheme, and though the Government of the day have accused us of insolently

setting up a parallel government, I would like to subscribe to that charge in my own fashion. Though we have not set up any parallel government, we certainly aspire some day or other to displace the existing Government and, in due course, in the course of evolution, to take charge also of that Government.

Having been for the last fourteen years a draftsman of the Indian National Congress, and having been for nearly twenty years draftsman for a similar body[1] in South Africa, you will allow me to share my experience with you. In the Congress constitution we have practically adult suffrage. We impose a nominal fee of four annas a year. I would not mind imposing that fee even now. I again share Lord Peel's fear that, in our poor country, we run the risk of having to spend a lot of money merely upon managing our elections. I would avoid that , and therefore I would even collect this money. I am open to conviction that even four annas would be a grave burden, in which case I would waive it; but in any case in the Congress organization we have that.

We have also another distinguishing feature. So far as I know the working of voting stems, the registration officer has to put on the voters' list all those who, he considers are entitled to the vote; and hence, whether a man wishes to vote or not whether he wants his name to come on the list or not he finds his name there. One fine morning I found my name on the voters' list in Durban in Natal. I had no intention of affecting the legislative position there and I never cared to place my name on the roll of voters; but when some candidate wanted my vote for himself, he drew my attention to the fact that I was on the voters' list; and since then, I have known that is how voters' lists are prepared. We have this alternative that he who wants the vote can have it. It is therefore open to those who want the vote, subject to the condition regarding age and any other condition which all can fulfil, to have their names, without distinction of sex, on the voters' list. I think a scheme of that character would keep the voters' list within a manageable compass.

Even so we would have millions, and something is needed to link the village with the Central Legislature. We have something analogous to the Central Legislature in the Indian Congress

[1] The Natal Indian Congress, and later the Transvaal British Indian Association

Committee. We have also provincial bodies analogous to the Provincial Legislatures, and we have also our own tin-pot legislation and we have also our administration. We have got our own executive. It is perfectly true we have no bayonets to back it, but we have something infinitely superior to back our decisions and to get our people to conform to those decisions, and we have hitherto not found insurmountable difficulties. I do not say that we have been able always to exact obedience fully in all circumstances; but we have been able to scrape through all these forty-seven years, and year after year this Congress has grown from height to height. Let me tell you that our provincial councils have got full authority to frame bye-laws in order to govern their elections. The corner-stone, name the qualifications or voters, they cannot change at all; but all other things they can have in their own way. Therefore, I will take only one Province where this thing is done. There the villages elect their own little committees. These committees elect the taluka committees (taluka is a sub-district), and these taluka committees again elect the district councils, and the district councils elect provincial councils. The provincial councils send their members to the central legislature if one may so dub this All-India Congress Committee. That is how we have been able to do it. If here we do some such thing, I do not mind. But take another way. We must remember that we have 700,000 villages. I believe that the 700,000 includes the Princes' India also. I speak subject to correction. We have perhaps 500,000 or a little more in popular India. We may have these 500,000 units. Each unit would elect its own representative, and these representatives would be the electorate that would elect, if you will, representatives to the Central or the Federal Legislature. I have simply given you an outline of the scheme. It can be filled in if it commends itself to our attention. If we are going to have adult suffrage, I am afraid that we shall have to fall back upon a scheme somewhat after the style that I have suggested to you. Wherever it has been working, I can only give you my evidence that it has worked with excellent results, and there has been no difficulty in establishing contact through these respective representatives with the humblest villagers. The machinery has worked smoothly; and, where people have worked it honestly, it has worked expeditiously, and certainly without any expense worth naming. Under this scheme I cannot conceive the possibility of a candidate having to spend Rs. 60,000 over an election, or even one lakh. I know of some cases in which the expenses have run to one lakh of rupees in my opinion, an atrocious

figure for the poorest country in the world.

Whilst I am upon this, I would like to give you my opinion, for what it may be worth, in connection with bicameral Legislatures. I find myself, if it would not offend your susceptibilities, in Mr. Johshi's company. I am certainly not enamoured of and I do not swear by two Houses of Legislature. I have no fear of a popular Legislature running away with itself and hastily passing some laws of which afterwards it will have to repent. I would not like to give a bad name to, and then hang the popular Legislature. I think that a popular Legislature can take care of itself; and, since I am now thinking of the poorest country in the world, the less expenses we have to bear the better it is for us. I do not for one moment endorse the idea that, unless we have an Upper Chamber to exercise some control over the popular Chamber, the popular Chamber will ruin the country. I have no such fear; but I can visualize a state of affairs when there can be a battle royal between a popular Chamber and an Upper Chamber. Anyway, whilst I would not take up a decisive attitude in connection with it, personally I am firmly of opinion that we can do with one Chamber only and that we can do with it to great advantage. We will certainly save a great deal of expense if we can bring ourselves to believe that we shall do with one Chamber. I find myself in agreement whole-heartedly with Lord Peel that we need not worry ourselves about precedents. We shall set a new precedent ourselves. After all we are a continent. There is no such thing as absolute similarity between any two human living institutions. We have our own peculiar circumstances, and we have our idiosyncrasies. I do feel that we shall have in many ways to strike out a new path for ourselves irrespective of precedents. Therefore, I feel that we would not go wrong if we tried the method of having one Chamber only. Make it as perfect as human ingenuity can, by all means; but be satisfied with only one Chamber. Holding these views, I do not need to say more about sub-heads (iii) and (iv).[1]

I come to sub-head (v)—representation by special constituencies of special interests. I here speak for the Congress. The Congress has reconciled itself to special treatment of the Hindu-Muslim-Sikh tangle. There are sound historical reasons for it, but the Congress will not extend that doctrine in any shape or form. I listened to the list of

[1] Sub-head (iii) concerned relations between the two Chambers of the Federal Legislature and sub-head (iv) distribution of financial resources between the Federation and its units.

special interests. So far as the untouchables are concerned, I have not yet quite grasped what Dr. Ambedkar has to say; but, of course, the Congress will share the honour with Dr. Ambedkar of representing the interests of the untouchables. They are as dear to the Congress at the interests of any other body or of any other individual throughout the length and breadth of India. Therefore, I would most strongly resist any further special representation. Under adult suffrage, certainly, labour units, and so on, do not require any special representation; landlords most decidedly not, and I will give you my reason. There is no desire on the part of the Congress, and there is no desire on the part of these dumb paupers, to dispossess landlords of their possessions; but they would have landlords to act as trustees for their tenants. I think that it should be a matter of pride for the landlords to feel that their ryots, these millions of villagers, would prefer them as their candidates and as their representatives than others coming from other parts or someone from among themselves. Therefore, what will happen is that the landlords will have to make common cause with the ryots; and what can be nobler, what can be better than that they should do so? But, if the landlords insisted on special treatment and special representation in either Chamber, if there are two Chambers, or in the one popular Chamber, I am afraid that they would be really throwing the apple of discord into our midst; and I am hoping that no such claim will be put forward on behalf of the landlords or any such interest.

Then I come to my friends the Europeans, whom naturally Mr. Gavin Jones claims to represent. But I would suggest to him humbly that hitherto they have been the privileged class they have received the protection that this foreign Government could give, and they have received it liberally. If they would now make common cause with the masses of India, they would not be afriad, as Mr. Gavin Jones said he was afraid. He read from some document : I have not read it. It may be that some Indians also may say, “Oh yes, if Europeans, Englishmen, want to be elected by us, we are not going to elect them;” but I would undertake to take Mr. Gavin Jones throughout the length and breadth of India and show to him that he will be preferred to an Indian if he will make common cause with us. Take Charlie Andrews. I assure you that he will be elected a delegate in any constituency in India without the slightest difficulty. Ask him whether he has not been received throughout the length and breadth of India with open arms. I could multiply those instances. I have appealed to

the Europeans to try once in a while to live on the goodwill of the poeple, and not seek to have their interests specially safeguarded or protected. If I might venture a suggestion, safeguards would be the wrong way to go about the business. Let them live in India as one of us that is how I would want them to live, and how I would beseech them to live. In any case, I do feel that, in any scheme that the Congress can be party to, there is no room for the protection of special interests. The special interests are automatically protected when you have got adult suffrage.

So far as the Christians are concerned, if I may cite the testimony of one who is no longer with us, I know that he said: "We want no special protection". And I have letters from Christian organizations saying that they want no special protection, that the special protection that they would get ,would be by right of humble service.

Then, are any special qualifications to be laid down for eligibility for membership of the Upper House? As you know my opinion about the Upper House, I do not need to give any opinion about that.

Now I come to a very delicate point that is, the Oath of Allegiance. I would not be able to give any opinion just now, because I want to know what the status is to be. If it is to be complete freedom, if it is to be complete independence for India, the Oath of Allegiance naturally will be of one character. If it is to be a subject India, then I have no place there. Therefore, it is not possible for me today to give any opinion upon the question of the Oath of Allegiance.

Then the last question: what provision, if any, shall be made in each Chamber for nominated members? Well, in the scheme that the Congressmen have adumbrated, there is no room for nominated members. I can understand experts coming, or men whose advice might be sought. They would give their advice and they would retire. I cannot see the slightest justification for clothing them with votes. Votes are given only by popular representatives if we want to have a democratic institution undiluted. Therefore, I cannot possibly endorse a scheme where there are nominated members.

But that brings me back to sub-head (v). We have provision in the Congress regarding special cases. We want women to be elected, we want Europeans to be elected, we certainly want untouchables to be

elected, we want Christians to be elected; and I know well enough that these are very large minorities. Now, supposing that the constituencies so misbehave themselves as not to elect women or Europeans or untouchables or, say, landlords, and they do not do so for no reasonable justification whatsoever, I would have a clause in the constitution which would enable this elected Legislature to elect those who should have been elected, but have not been elected. Perhaps I have not been able to express my meaning clearly, so I will give you an illustration. We have in one provincial Congress council exactly a rule of this character. We have thrown the burden upon the constituencies of electing so many women, so many Mussalmans and so many untouchables to the council; and, if they fail to do so, the election is then conducted by this elected body. They elect those who have been unjustly left out by the electorate. I would welcome some such saving clause in order that constituencies may not misbehave themselves; but, in the first instance, I would trust the constituencies to elect all classes of people and not become clannish or be caste-ridden. The Congress mentality, I may assure you, is wholly and absolutely against caste and against the doctrine of superiority and inferiority. Congress is cultivating a spirit of absolute equality.

I am sorry for having taken so much of your time, but I am thankful to you for having given me this indulgence, Lord Sankey.[1]

SIR SULTAN AHMED : I have a question I want to put to Mr. Gandhi, if you will permit me to do so. He suggested that, if the requisite number of people for any particular community were not elected, then he would have the power of election given to some other body.

MR. GANDHI : No, it is those people who are elected, who will elect.

MR. IYENGAR : Co-option.

MR. GANDHI: Call it co-option. As a layman, you would not expect me to use accurate language, please.

SIR SULTAN AHMED: But does that not imply that there will be reservation of seats for communities ?

MR. GANDHI : It need not. As I say, there can be a clause of that kind, without specifying the number; but I do not mind even the

[1] At this point Lord Sankey left the chair, which was taken by Lord Lothian.

numbers being specified. And you will please remember that that did not refer to the Mussalmans at all.

SIR SULTAN AHMED : No, I am not talking about Mussalmans at all; I am talking about those four classes whom you mentioned: Commerce, Labour, Landlords, and so on. It is nothing to do with Mussalmans at all; they do not come into it.

MRS. SUBBARAYAN : May I also respectfully ask Mahatma Gandhi a question? You referred to the position of women. Suppose the Central Legislature does not have any women on it, then you will have a clause to allow that Legislature to co-opt women ?

MR. GANDHI : I would boycott that Legislature. A Legislature that will not elect a proper share of women will be boycotted by me, and I speak for the Congress also. There would certainly be full protection. How it can be brought about is incredibly simple; but I would be no party to a setting up of special constituencies.

MRS. SUBBARAYAN : Not special constituencies; but supposing women do not come in by general election, then you will allow the Central Legislature to elect some women ?

MR. GANDHI : Then they have got to enjoy the honour of being elected by the elected legislators, before they can conduct their proceedings.

SIR AKBAR HYDARI : May I ask one question? With regard to the 500,000 villages or electorates, would they elect first to the Provincial Councils and then the Provincial Councils elect to the Federal Legislature; or would you have separate electorates for the Provincial Council and the Federal Legislature ?

MR. GANDHI: May I suggest, Sir, in the first instance, in answer to Sir Akbar Hydari, that if you accept the general outline of the scheme that I have adumbrated, all these things can really be settled without the slightest difficulty; but the special question that Sir Akbar has asked I will answer by saying that the villages will be electing candidates to no legislature in the scheme that I was trying to propound, but they will elect the electors, the voters—the villagers will elect one man, and say, “You will exercise the vote for us.” He will become their agent for the election either to the Provincial Legislature or to the Central Legislature.

SIR AKBAR HYDARI : Then that man would have a dual capacity, either to elect a man to the Provincial Council or to the Central Legislature ?

MR. GANDHI: He can have that; but today, to the relevant, I was talking simply of the election to the Central Legislature. I would certainly apply the same scheme to the Provincial Legislature.

SIR AKBAR HYDARI : Would you rule out any idea of the Provincial Legislature so elected electing to the Federal Legislature ?

MR. GANDHI: I do not rule it out, but that does not commend itself to me. If that is the special meaning of "indirect election", I rule it out. Therefore, I use the term "indirect election" vaguely. If it has any such technical meaning, I do not know.

H. H. THE MAHARAJA GAEKWAR OR BARODA : That is the line on which we are working.

MR. GANDHI : I know Your Highness's scheme.

H. H. THE MAHARAJA GAEKWAR OF BARODA : The object being that each individual, irrespective of class or creed, should be able to vote.

MR. GANDHI: Yes, I know.

Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session) : Proceedings of Federal Structure Committee and Minorities Committee, Vol. I, pp. 156-66

425. LETTER TO LORD WILLINGDON

KINGSLEY HALL,
S.W.E. 3,
September 18, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

Your air mail letter of the 4th came to me as a great relief. The same mail brought me letters from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru informing me of your very kind letters to them. All this makes my burden easy and I thank you for it. I thank you too for giving prompt attention to my letter regarding Dr. Ansari and Seths Jamal Mohammad and Birla. I suppose, in due course I shall hear from S.O.S.[1] also.

I understand what you say about Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and appreciate the frankness with which you have written about him. But I am hoping that your judgment will prove [to] have been unjustified by events. You, perhaps, do not know that he has limited knowledge of English. He cannot write letters coherently in English and he has to get assistance. All the same I recognize the ludicrousness of his secretary writing to your secretary to arrange an appointment. But I would like you still to have a corner in your heart for Abdul Ghaffar Khan. I have found him to be thoroughly trustworthy and a good worker.

I fully share your sorrow over the Chittagong murder and am doing all I can to wean the mad youths from their error.

I am glad to be able to tell you that I have received from all classes of people nothing but genuine kindness. As you know, I am deliberately living in the East End of London, and in an institution which is designed for the service of the working classes living in the East End. I therefore come in daily contact with simple poor people, and it is a matter of joy to me to see them greeting me. I do not at all feel that I am in the midst of strangers.

For the rest, it is too early for me yet to say anything.

[1] Secretary of State

I hope that this will find both you and Lady Willingdon in the enjoyment of excellent health.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 17778

426. LETTER TO WILLIAM H. UKERS[1]

[After *September 18, 1931*]

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. If and when India comes to her own, it does not follow that the British Indian Tea Estates, or any other British interests, will be confiscated. On the contrary, every legitimate interest will receive the fullest protection, but the legitimacy of all foreign and other interests will certainly by examined by an impartial Tribunal.

From a photostat : S.N. 17794

427. WHAT I WANT

The Editor has kindly asked me to say in these columns "what I want". The title is a misnomer. I am here merely as an agent for the Indian National Congress, and I can want nothing apart from the Congress. "What I want", therefore, means what the Indian National Congress wants.

Let me then introduce my principal, the Indian National Congress, to the reader. It is perhaps the oldest political organizaton in India and claims to represent the whole of India. I know that some people would deny this claim. I can only say that it is made by right of service.

The Indian National Congress is over forty-seven years old. It was conceived by an Englishman, Allan Octavius Hume. It has had, besides Hindus, Mohammedan, Parsi and Christian presidents. It had two women as presidents, Dr. Annie Besant and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu. It has zamindars, too, as its members.

The Indian National Congress is no respector of persons. It

[1] Editor of the *Tea and Coffee Trade Journal* of New York. In a letter dated September 18 he had asked how Gandhiji's plans fo a free India were likely to affect the tea industry.

knows no distinction between classes or creeds of the sexes. It has always championed the cause of the so called untouchables, and has of recent years appointed an anti-untouchability committee for hastening the destruction of untouchability.

But the unchallenged and unchallengeable claim of the Indian National Congress consists in its representing the millions of dumb paupers living in the seven hundred thousand Indian villages who constitute over 85 per cent of the population.

It is in the name of this great organization that I claim :

(1) Complete independence for India.

(2) This does not exclude partnership at will and on terms of absolute equality.

(3) Nor does this exclude Federation or such safeguards as may be demonstrably necessary in the interest of India.

I hope the readers of *The Daily Mail* will not be frightened by the claim boldly put forth on behalf of the Congress. "Do unto others as you would that others should do unto you." On the strength of the wise saying nineteen hundred years old, I hope that Englishmen and English women will not grudge India the freedom which she has remained without by reason of British rule.

No reason should be necessary for a self-evident truth. Independence is every nation's birthright.

It is India's also. But it may not be out of place to mention here that the people of India under British rule have become progressively poor and emasculate. The village industry has been killed and a whole nation has been disarmed. Nothing less than complete freedom in every sense of the term can make India happy and strong.

M. K. GANDHI

The Daily Mail, 19-9-1931

428. DISCUSSION WITH CHILDREN

September 19, 1931

Seated on the floor in the centre of the hall at Kingsley Settlement yesterday afternoon, Mr. Gandhi gave a special and strictly private reception to a group of youngsters, none of whom was over twelve, from among the children of Bow. Grown-ups were strictly excluded with the exception of one or two of Miss Lester's helpers, and the genial figures of Mr. and Mrs. George Lansbury and the dignified Prime

Minister of Bhavnagar, Sir Prabhashankar Pattani.

But immediately after the meeting (writes a correspondent) Mr. Gandhi himself told me all about it.

Questions about the weather in India, about the games the Indian children played, and so on, led to one child asking about the language I spoke.

This gave me just the opportunity I wanted, and I began talking about the common source of many of our words. I took "pater", "father", and the Hindu "*pita*"; and "mater", "mother", and our own "*mata*". When I asked what that showed, they called out, "It shows, we are all of the same breed."

Then we are all one family and ought to be friends, I said, and they agreed.

I then asked if any of the boys hit back, and ten or twelve brave boys put their hands up. So this gave me a chance for a little lesson in the principle of non-violence, and I asked what they really should have done instead. "Make friends", they replied, and I told them to remember this.

I do like the London children so much and it has been so delightful to meet them both here and in some of their homes which I visited this morning.

As a result of this meeting, some of the children expressed their determination to send a little deputation to Mr. Gandhi with a message of friendship to the children of India.

The Sunday Observer, 20-9-1931

429. SPEECH AT RECEPTION[1]

LONDON,
September 19, 1931

I have come to England to represent the starving millions of my country and I am so glad to be in the midst of the people of the East End. I shall always be enriched by the affection with which I have been received.

I was prepared for curiosity because of the costume I wear as the

[1] This was arranged by Muriel Lester at Kingsley Hall to enable some of her friends to meet Gandhiji.

representative of the poor people of India, but I feel that my reception is due to something other than curiosity.

The Sunday Times, 20-9-1931

430. LETTER TO GUNTRAM PRUFER

[After *September 19, 1931*]

Thanks for letter. It is too premature at present to envisage a visit to Germany.[1]

From a photostat: S.N. 17798

431. GUJARAT KHADI

If Gujarat does not use Gujarat's khadi, who else will? If the Gujaratis cast aside Gujarat khadi saying that it is coarse, not durable and expensive, who else will use it and why should they? It is through similar pretexts that religions have perished, countries have been ruined, and men have suffered a downfall. If you find Gujarat's khadi rough and coarse, have it produced find and smooth. If it is expensive, it will certainly become cheap if larger quantities of it are sold.

Everyone knows that khadi made in Gujarat today is finer, more durable and cheaper than it was ten years ago. Its quality will improve even more if its sales are larger. Whether this improvement takes place or not rests entirely with the Gujaratis themselves. The latter can reject it by regarding it as expensive or, alternatively, they can accept it by looking upon it as something belonging to them despite its high price and, by doing so, bring about an improvement in its quality and variety, beautify it, and make it even inexpensive.

With this worthy objective, a devotee of khadi suggests that the Provincial Committee should celebrate a Gujarat Khadi Week. During that week, the Committee should collect khadi from all those places where stock have accumulated and men and women volunteers should go from door to door and sell it. The total quantity of khadi produced in Gujarat is so small that, if it means it, Ahmedabad alone can buy it up. It is not for me to say how the Week should be celebrated. After

[1] The addressee in his letter of September 19 had urged Gandhiji to pay a visit to Germany on his way back home.

having collected all the khadi and paying up the respective dues to the various production centres, the Committee should add up the entire amount and find out the average price, and then sell it without incurring any loss. Selling it at a loss would be business practice. Here the question is not one of business but of patriotism. Patriotism can pay any price. Just as a mother does not regard her children as expensive or ugly and abandon them but sacrifices herself for their sake, similarly, even if Gujarat does something of this sort, that will be enough. Gujarat does not have to sacrifice itself, it may perhaps have to pay a slightly higher price.

The second suggestion made by the devotee of khadi is that workers in Gujarat should use only khadi made in Gujarat.

Many other ways of improving the sales of khadi in Gujarat can be thought of, only one must be earnest about it. Where there is a will, there is certainly a way.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-9-1931

432. INTERVIEW TO "THE POST"

LONDON,

[*September 19, 1931*][1]

In the course of the interview we touched on his attitude to Britain. He said :

I do not hate the British, but I hate British rule.

Gandhi did not think that the withdrawal of the British officials from India would be a very serious difficulty, though some of them could remain if they liked, "but", he explained, "on our terms". I asked whether he approved of Indians taking posts under British rule with the view of gaining experience in the work of government, and Gandhi replied that, in the days of non-co-operation he had, of course, advised against it, and that so far as the experience was concerned, it was of no great value. On the subject of the efficiency of the British officials in India, he remarked :

They are efficient in their own way and for their own interest.

From further questions it appeared that Gandhi referred only to the ac- tions of the officials in the working of the existing system. Even so, however, I felt that more

[1] The interview was held in London on a Sunday morning. Gandhiji was away from London the four Sundays previous to the publication of the interview, which would seem to leave September 20 as the likely date.

light on the point would be useful, and I said : "You have frequently criticized British officials in land assessment and other cases. Do youthink that the reports you have challenged from time to time were consciously misleading ?" Gandhi returned :

No, or very rarely were they consciously wrong. But injustice is done, and it doesn't matter to the patient if he is killed through design or merey through ignorance or accident.

The interview terminated with the repetition of two phrases Gandhiji had previously used.

I wish all nations the freedom that I desire for India, and, in my opinion, the freedom of India means the freedom of the world.[1]

The Post, 24-10-1931

433. INTERVIEW TO MRS. KNIGHT

LONDON,

[*September 20, 1931*]

Gandhi will do nothing for the Meerut prisoners.[2] He dismisses their case with the remark that they were not included in the amnesty which followed his Agreement with the Viceroy, because they were not non-violent.

This transpired at a meeting in London between Gandhi and Mrs. Knight, the mother of Lester Hutchinson, one of the Meerut prisoners who have been released on bail and is now lying seriously ill as a result of his suffering in jail.

Gandhi added that, though he knew Hutchinson was seriously ill, he could do nothing for him.

Asked whether he could not raise the question of the Meerut trial at the Round Table Conference, he replied that he could not, since the proceedings of the Conference were secret and private.

The Daily Worker, 21-9-1931

[1] The report concluded: "Despite his smallness and frailness, he is imposing; and such personal magnetism has hitherto been outside my experience. The humble man is impregnable; that I have often repeated; but only now do I realize the truth of the remark. Gandhi's humility is a thing for tears."

[2] At the instance of the District Magistrate of Meerut twenty-eight trade union leaders were arrested in Calcutta, Madras, Lucknow, Poona, Chandpur and Allahabad under Sec. 121(A) of I.P.C. which dealt with conspiracy to wage war against the King-Emperor. The trial lasted more than 4 $^{1}/_{2}$ years and resulted in the conviction of many. The motive, according to Gandhiji, was "to strike terror".

434. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

KINGSLEY HALL, BOW,

LONDON, E.,

September 22, 1931

CHI. SUSHILA[1],

I have your letter. I am writing this while attending the Conference. Mahadev, Pyarelal, Devdas and Mirabehn are with me. The cold here is still bearable. But the work has turned out to be heavier than I had thought. I cannot say what the outcome will be. I shall be here for at least a month longer. I got Manilal's cable a little late. It is natural that you two should wish to come here, but it is best that you should restrain the wish. Staying with me, you would not be able to tour and see this country well, and the expense, I think, would be much too heavy and beyond our means.

Jayashankar's death was a release to him from his pain. It would be very good if the two brothers settled down there. As long as you are there, see that you do your work well and sincerely.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4786

435. LETTER TO JAMNA GANDHI

September 22, 1931

CHI. JAMNA,

You must have read Purushottam's letter. Now my advice is that we should forget all about his getting married. Only remember that when he decides to marry, I shall be ready to find for him a suitable bride. We should be happy if he can observe *brahmacharya* all his life.

I hope you are keeping good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 849. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Wife of Manilal Gandhi

436. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

September 22, 1931

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

I got your beautiful letter. You are bound to rise spiritually. You should not feel hurt that Jamna thinks that you wish to get married. As long as you have a mind free from passion or as long as you do not desire to marry, no one can force you to get married. As for me, I would always support you.

You have been doing very good work. We shall be here for one month more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 903. Courtsey: Narandas Gandhi

437. INTERVIEW WITH CHARLIE CHAPLIN[1]

LONDON,

September 22, 1931

Gandhiji had not heard of him, but he had evidently heard of Gandhiji's spinning-wheel and the very first question he asked was why Gandhiji was against machinery. The question delighted Gandhiji who explained to him in detail why the six months' unemployment of the whole peasant population of India made it important for him to restore them to their former subsidiary industry.

CHARLIE CHAPLIN: Is it then only as regards cloth?

GANDHIJI : Precisely. In cloth and food every nation should be self-contained. We were self-contained and want to be that again. England with their large-scale production has to look for a market elsewhere. We call it exploitation. And an exploiting England is a danger to the world, but if that is so, how much more so would be an exploiting India, if she took to machinery and produced cloth many times in excess of its requirements.

CHARLIE CHAPLIN: So the question is confined only to India? But supposing you had in India the independence of Russia, and you could find other work for our

[1] The interview took place at the house of Dr. Katial in Canning Town. The report has been extracted from Mahadev Desai's "London Letter" and *My Autobiography* by Charlie Chaplin.

unemployed and ensure equitable[1] distribution of wealth, you would not then despise machinery? You would subscribe to shorter hours of work and more leisure for the worker?

GANDHIJI : Certainly.[2]

CHARLIE CHAPLIN: Naturally I am in sympathy with India's aspirations and struggle for freedom. Nonetheless, I am somewhat confused by your abhorrence of machinery.

GANDHIJI : I understand. But before India can achieve those aims, she must first rid herself of English rule. Machinery in the past has made us dependent on England, and the only way we can rid ourselves of the dependence is to boycott all goods made by machinery. That is why we have made it the patriotic duty of every Indian to spin his own cotton and weave his own cloth. This is our form of attacking a very powerul nation like England and, of course, there are other reasons. India has a diffrent climate from England; and her habits and wants are different. In England the cold weather necessitates arduous industry and an involved economy. You need the industry of eating utensils; we use our fingers. And so it translates into manifold differences.

Young India, 8-10-1931, and My *Autobiography*.

438. SPEECH AT MEETING OF FEDERAL STRUCTURE COMMITTEE

LONDON,
September 22, 1931

LORD CHANCELLOR,

With reference to the very careful statement made by the Secretary of State yesterday, and in view of the whole-hearted support given by Sir Akbar Hydari to the proposals contained in the statement, I feel it to be my duty on behalf of the Congress to state its position.

Every thoughtful Congressman must sympathize with the British nation in the crisis that has overtaken it; but I would be false to my trust if I did not express my surprise and sorrow over the manner of the action taken in India.[3] I recognize my limitations; my

[1] The source has equable.

[2] What follows is reproduced from Charlie Chaplin's *My Autobiography*.

[3] September 21, their decision to abandon the gold standard. An Ordinance was issued relieving the Government from their obligation under the Currency Act to sell gold or sterling and the three days from September 22 to 24 were declared public holidays. *India in* 1931-32

acquaintance with financial matter is of a very elementary type. I must, therefore, leave the merits to the Congress experts for examination. But what pains me is the fact that the decision in India was taken over the heads of the Legislatures, such as they are, and that especially when, in this place, we are expected to contemplate an early establishment of full responsible government. This step taken by the Government of India is striking and, in my humble opinion, unmistakable proof of the unbend-ing and unbendable attitude of the Government of India. Evidently, on matters of the most vital importance to the nation, we are not yet considered fit to be consulted, much less to decide what is good for us. This is a view I must repudiate with all the strength I can command; and, in the circumstances, so far as the Congress is concerned, I am sorry I am unable to give the support which the Secretary of State asks for the measures taken in India.

Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session) : Proceedings of Federal Structure Committee, Vol. I, pp. 278-79

439. LETTER TO "MANCHESTER GUARDIAN"

LONDON,
September 23, 1931

SIR,

My attention has been called to a letter in the *Manchester Guardian* of Monday, September 21, calling attention to some stamps which had printed on them the words "Boycott British goods". If such stamps have been emloyed by any Congress authority after the agreement of March 5, 1931, they are clearly contrary to that agreement, which declares that only an economic boycott should be permissible in future. But such stamps were undoubtedly used during the struggle before the agreement was reached. The stamps in question could not have been used after the agreement. Whenever I have found a breach of the agreement, I have immediately done all in my power to stop it.

Yours, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Manchester Guardian, 26-9-1931

440. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

LONDON,
September 23, 1931

We discussed our differences and it was a very friendly conversation.

The Hindustan Times, 26-9-1931

441. SPEECH AT GUILDHOUSE CHURCH[2]

LONDON,
September 23, 1931

You will be astonished to hear from me that, although to all appearances my mission is political, I would ask you to accept my assurance that its roots are—if I may use that term—spiritual. It is commonly known, though perhaps not believed, that I claim that at least my politics are not divorced from morality, from spirituality, from religion. I have claimed—and the claim is based upon extensive experience—that a man who is trying to discover and follow the will of God cannot possibly leave a single field of life untouched. I came also, in the course of my service, to the conclusion that if there was any field of life where morality, where truth, where fear of God, were not essential, that field should be given up entirely.

But I found also that the politics of the day are no longer a concern of kings, but that they affect the lowest strata of society. And I found, through bitter experience that, if I wanted to do social service, I could not possibly leave politics alone.

Do not please consider that I want to speak to you tonightabout politics and somehow or other connect voluntary poverty with politics. That is not my intention. I have simply given you an introduction how I came to believe in the necessity of volun- tary poverty for any social worker or for any political worker who wanted to remain untouched by the hideous immorality and untruth that one smells today in ordinary politics. The stench that comes from that life has appeared to

[1] Gandhiji made the statement after his meeting with the Aga Khan at the Ritz Hotel late in the night. No report of the interview is available.

[2] The meeting was held under the auspices of the Franciscan Society with Dr. Maude Royden in the chair. The subject was "Voluntary Poverty".

some to be so suffocating that they came to the conclusion that politics were not for a god-fearing man.

Had that been really so, I feel that it would have been a disaster for mankind. Find out for yourselves, in the light of what I am now saying, whether directly or indirectly every activity of yours today in this one of the greatest cities of the world is not touched by politics.

Well, then, when I found myself drawn into the political coil, I asked myself what was necessary for me in order to remain absolutely untouched by immorality, by untruth, by what is known as political gain.

In the course of my search, I made several discoveries which I must, for tonight, leave alone. But, if I am not mistaken, this necessity for poverty came to me first of all.

I do not propose to take you through all the details of that act or performance—interesting and, to me, sacred though they are but I can only tell you that it was a difficult struggle in the beginning and it was a wrestle with my wife and as I can vividly recall with my children also.

Be that as it may, I came definitely to the conclusion that, if I had to serve the people in whose midst my life was cast and of whose difficulties I was witness from day to day, I must discard all wealth, all possessions.

I cannot tell you with truth that, when this belief came to me, I discarded everything immediately. I must confess to you that progress at first was slow. And now, as I recall those days of struggle, I remember that it was also painful in the beginning. But, as days went by, I saw that I had to throw overboard many other things which I used to consider as mine, and a time came when it became a matter of positive joy to give up those things. And one after another then, by almost geometric progression, the things slipped away from me. And, as I am describing my experiences, I can say a great burden fell off my shoulders, and I felt that I could now walk with ease and do my work also in the service of my fellowmen with great comfort and still greater joy. The possession of anything then became a troublesome thing and a burden.

Exploring the cause of that joy, I found that, if I kept any thing as my own, I had to defend it against the whole world. I found also that there were many people who did not have the thing, although they wanted it; and I would have to seek police assistance also if hungry, famine-stricken people, finding me in a lonely place, wanted

not merely to divide the thing with me but to dispossess me. And I said to myself : if they want it and would take it, they do so not from any malicious motive, but they would do it because theirs was a greater need than mine.

And then I said to myself : possession seems to me to be a crime. I can only possess certain things when I know that others, who also want to possess similar things, are able to do so. But we know every one of us can speak from experience that such a thing is an impossibility. Therefore, the only thing that can be possessed by all is non-possession, not to have anything whatsoever. In other words, a willing surrender.

You might then well say to me : but you are keeping many things on your body even as you are speaking about voluntary poverty and not possessing anything whatsoever! And your taunt would be right, if you only superficially understood the meaning of the thing that I am speaking about just now. It is really the spirit behind. Whilst you have the body, you will have to have something to clothe the body with also. But then you will take for the body not all that you can get, but the least possible, the least with which you can do. You will take for your house not many mansions, but the least cover that you can do with. And similarly with reference to your food and so on.

Now you see that there is here a daily conflict between what you and we understand today as civilization and the state which I am picturing to you as a state of bliss and a desirable state. On the one hand, the basis of culture or civilization is understood to be the multiplication of all your wants. If you have one room, you will desire to have two rooms, three rooms, the more the merrier. And similarly, you will want to have as much furniture as you can put in your house, and so on, endlessly. And the more you possess the better culture you represent, or some such thing. I am putting it, perhaps, not as nicely as the advocates of that civilization would put it, but I am putting it to you in the manner I understand it.

And, on the other hand, you find the less you possess the less you want, the better you are. And better for what? Not for enjoyment of this life, but for enjoyment of personal service to your fellow beings; service to which you dedicate yourselves, body, soul and mind.

Well, here you find there is ample room for hypocrisy and

humbug, because a man or a woman may easily deceive himself or herself and deceive his or her neighbours also, by saying : In spirit I have given up all possessions, and yet externally I am possessing these things; you must not examine my deed, you must examine my intention; and of my intention only I must remain the sole witness." That is a trap, and a death trap. How are you then to justify the possession even of a piece of cloth two or three or four yards, say, in length and a yard in width ? How can you justify even the possession of that piece of cloth in order to cover your body somewhat, when you know that, if you left that piece of cloth alone, even that would be taken over by someone—not maliciously again—but because he would want it for he has not even so much as that piece of cloth? I am witness, eyewitness, of millions of human beings who have not even so much as that piece of cloth. How are you then to justify your act of possessing this thing with your intention not to possess anything at all?

Well, there is a remedy provided for this dilemma, this difficulty, this contradiction in life—that if you must possess these things, you must hold them at the disposal of those who want them. What happens is that, if somebody comes and wants your piece of cloth, you are not going to keep it from him, you are not going to shut any doors, you are certainly not going to the policeman to ask him to help you to keep these things.

And you have also got to be content with what the world will give you. The world may give you that piece of cloth or may not because, if you do not possess anything, naturally you do not possess the token coin with which you may buy clothing or food. You have got then to live purely on the charity of the world. And even when charitable people give you something, that something does not become your possession. You simply retain it with the fullest intention of that thing being surrendered to anybody who wishes to take it. If somebody comes and uses force against you to dispossess you, you may not go and report to the next policeman you meet and say you have been assaulted. You will not have been assaulted.

Well, that, to my mind, is the meaning of voluntary poverty. I have given you an ideal. Dr. Royden has claimed that I am the greatest exponent of voluntary poverty in the world. I must, in all humility, disown any such claim whatsoever. And this I say to you not because of false modesty, but I say it to you sincerely, believing it to

be true. I have given you but a little of my conception of voluntary poverty. And I must own to you that I am far from having realized that ideal in its fullness. In order to rea- lize that ideal in its fullness, there must be a definite intention and conviction in my mind that I do not want to, I must not, possess anything on this earth as my property, not even this body, because this body also is a possession.

If you believe with me—as you must believe with me if you are chruch-goers, that is, if you believe in God—you believe that body and soul are not one and the same thing, but that the body is a house only, a temporary residence for a soul or a spirit within; and if you believe that, as you do believe, I take it—then it follows that even the body is not yours. It has been given to you as a temporary possession, and it can also be taken from you by Him who has given it to you.

Therefore, having that absolute conviction in me, such must be my constant desire, that this body also may be surrendered at the will of God, and while it is at my disposal, must be used not for dissipation, not for self-indulgence, not for pleasure, but merely for service and service the whole of our waking hours.

And if this is true with reference to the body, how much more with reference to clothing and many other things that we use ?

Having got that conviction and held it for so many years, I am here to give you my evidence against myself, that I have not reached that perfect state of voluntary poverty. I am a poor man, in the sense you understand of struggling to reach that ideal, not poor in the sense in which we ordinarily use the word poor.

As a matter of fact, when I was once challenged by someone, I was able to claim that to my neighbours, and people in the world I seemed to be the richest man on earth, for the richest man is really one who, possessing nothing, has everything at his disposal.

And those who have actually followed out this vow of voluntary poverty to the fullest extent possible (to reach absolute perfection is an impossibility, but the fullest possible extent for a human being) those who have reached the ideal of that state,they testify that, when you dispossess yourself of everything you have, you really possess all the treasures of the world. In other words, you really get all that is in reality necessary for you, everything. If food is necessary, food will come to you.

Many of you are men and women of prayer, and I have heard from very many Christian lips that they got their food in answer to prayer, that they get everything in answer to prayer. I believe it. But I want you to come with me a step further, and believe with me that those who voluntarily give up everything on earth, includ- ing the body, that is to say, have readiness to give up every- thing (and they must examine themselves critically, rigidly, and give always an adverse judgment against themselves) those who will follow this out will really find that they are never in want.

And I will confess to you that, when I felt God had given me some portion of riches of the earth and when I had many possessions, I had not the facilities for possessing things that I have at this time. I had not certainly one-millionth part of the ability to command money and everything that I need for service.

A spirit of service had come to me even when I was practising and earning money and was in possession of several things, but at that time I had certainly not the capacity for getting whatever I wanted for service. But today (whether it is good for me or bad for me I do not know, God alone knows) I can give you this evidence, that I have never been in want.

After a period when I had really dispossessed myself by intention and had no hankering after anything that I could call my own, and began to share everything I possessed in common with my neighbours (I cannot share everything with the whole world; if I share with my neighbours, I do share with the whole world, my neighbours also doing likewise; if we do that, it is all a limited human being can do) but immediately I came to that state to a fair extent, I found that I was never in want.

Want must not, again, be taken literally. God is the hardest task-master I have known on this earth, and He tries you through and through. And when you find that your faith is failing or your body is failing you and you are sinking, He comes to your assistance somehow or other and proves to you that you must not lose your faith and that He is always at your beck and call, but on His terms, not on your terms. So I have found. I cannot really recall a single instance when, at the eleventh hour, He has forsaken me. And I have got this reputation, which I can repeat to you, a reputation for being one of the best beggars in India. And, as my critics will tell you, at one time I collected one crore of rupees; in pounds, shillings and pence I cannot

count it for you, but it is some horribly large sum (about £ 750,000), but I had no difficulty in collecting it. And since then, whenever any emergency has arisen, not for any consideration, not in the soul of my fundamental being, can I recall a single instance of my failing to obtain whatever was necessary for service.

But you will say: this is in answer to prayer. It is not just an answer to prayer, it is a scientific result of this vow of non-possession or vow of voluntary poverty. You do not want to possess anything whatever: and the more therefore you simplify your life, dispossess yourself, the better it is for you.

Immediately you come to that, you can command anything. You can command vanities,but if you only once take possession of these, this power will immediately be gone; you must not take for yourself. If you do, you are done for. I have known this happen in so many instances. Many a man has said: " Oh yes,God has now answered my prayer for money or possessions. I will now keep this—this Koh-i-noor diamond, or whatever it may be." That will be the last time. He won't be able to defend that diamond.

Thereore, all I am just now holding out before you as a grand thing is that you can command all the resources of the world for service. To one who does not believe, that may seem an arrogant statement to make. But, as I believe, it is not an arrogant thing to say that you can command all the resources of the earth for service—to the extent of your ability to serve. If you want to command the whole services of the world, it is not enough to go down to some of those houses in the East End, find out the distress of those who live there and fling in their faces a few coppers; you will not have all the resources of the world for that; God will fling in your face also a few coppers.

But if you surrender yourself, body, soul and mind, and give yourself up to the world, then I say : the treasures of the world are at your feet, not for your enjoyment, but for the enjoyment of that service, only yours for that service.

The moral that I would have us to draw from this talk that I have given to you is really very opposite at this time. I want you to believe me when I tell you that my whole heart goes out to this nation in its distress. I cannot possibly present my solution of your financial difficulty. You are great enough, resourceful enough, to find out your own remedies. But I would ask you to elaborate this thought in your

own minds in connection with the present distress.

Mr. C. F. Andrews brought to my notice a letter that was written by the Prime Minister to a correspondent and which he told me yesterday was being used as an advertisement throughout the District Railway, probably in the Tubes also; it runs somewhat like this : " You must buy only British goods; must employ only British labour, and try to buy as much as you can." That is one remedy I know. But I want to suggest to you that, in order to solve the problem of distress in the world, this idea of voluntary poverty is a root idea. No doubt, with your resourcefulness, you will tide over the difficulty and feel that there was nothing wrong. If you will permit me to say so, that would be perhaps short-sighted, for a time perhaps has come for a revision of values.

But again I must not go into deep waters. I can only throw out this hint to those who can appreciate the necessity of voluntary poverty for service. I have not tonight presented this blessed thing for the acceptance of all : though let me add that, in the innermost recesses of my heart, I feel that the world would not go all wrong, would not become a world of idiots, if all of us took the vow of voluntary poverty. But I know that this is almost an impossible thing. Everything is possible for God but, humanly speaking, it is wise to say that it is an impossible thing. But it is not an impossible thing; indeed, I hold it to be absolutely indispensable that those who give themselves wholly to the service of their fellow-beings must take the vow of voluntary poverty.

Try to find out for yourself whether you are not thereby assisting very materially in solving this great national problem that today faces you.

You will not have solved the problem if the people, who do not want to give up their salaries or whatever they are required to give up, are compelled to give them up by law. While they say: "What can we do ? We do not want to resist; we cannot resist," their minds are still hankering after these things.

But imagine that, in the midst of this hankering, there is a body of servants arising, who will themselves become voluntarily poor. They would be like lighthouses to guide the paths of those who do not know what voluntary poverty is because they know only involuntary poverty. I do not go among my fellows who starve and talk of voluntary poverty; I do not tell them how blessed they would be if they changed that involuntary poverty into voluntary. There is no

such thing as magic of that character on this earth. It is a painful process, and these men have first of all to have the necessities of life before I can talk to them of voluntary poverty.

What does happen is this: that a man like me going among them, living in their midst as best he can their life, can bring a ray of hope into their hearts. They will accept remedies that a man like me may suggest to them. At least, if I cannot suggest any immediate remedy, they would find in a man like me a friend. They would say : "He is happy although he possesses nothing; how is it?" I do not need to argue with them; they begin to argue for themselves.

How can I share these richest treasures from my experience with everybody on earth ? I could not. But today, having under- taken to speak on voluntary poverty, I am sharing, to a certain extent only, these treasured experiences of mine not amongst a few hundred people here but amongst millions of people. I tell you that it is beyond description, the bliss, the happiness, and the ability that this voluntary poverty gives one. I can only say: try it and experiment with it, test it for yourselves.

I thank you for giving me your undivided attention. There are still exactly ten minutes left before the hour of prayer, and if any of you wish to ask me any questions, I shall be glad. You need not hesitate to ask anything that is in your mind; you will never offend me by asking any questions, let them be as awkward as they may be.

Q. Can the Mahatma tell us how he can justify collecting large sums of money when Jesus, the Buddha and other great religious teachers who have practised voluntary poverty have never asked for or received large sums of money ? I cannot reconcile this with the rest of what he told us.

A. Did these great teachers never ask for or receive moneys? After Jesus many Christians, who believed in poverty also, took moneys and used them for service. And I can speak with better confidence about the Buddha who is reported in his own lifetime to have founded institutions. He could not possibly found institutions without money. And it is said that they who gave themselves body, soul and mind gave their riches also and placed them at the feet of the Buddha, who gladly accepted them—but not for himself.

Q. Why should we serve our fellow-beings ?

A. In order that we may see a glimpse of God through them; because they have got the same spirit as we have, and unless we learn that, there is a barrier drawn between God and ourselves; if we want to

demolish that barrier, the beginning is made by complete identification with our fellow-beings.

The Guildhouse, 23-9-1931

442. SPEECH AT MEETING OF M.P.S[1]

LONDON,
September 23, 1931

The Congress stand for complete independence, and complete independence does not mean, and has never meant, isolation in any form, and does not exclude partnership on absolutely equal terms to be terminated at the will of either party. It has appeared to me strange that this claim should be repudiated or laughed at by Englishmen, who themselves were never satisfied with anything less than complete freedom for themselves. I think that any nation or any body of people, after they have become conscious of their national right, would never be satisfied with anything less than complete independence.

It means to us full control over our defences, full control over our external affairs, and full control over finances, and the discussion on these points gave rise to the much-used expression "safeguards" throughout. I have no doubt that you know of the safeguards that were provisionally adjusted by the last R.T.C. I do not hesitate to say, on behalf of the Congress, that those safeguards will not be accepted by the Congress. Now if we have no control over the army or over he defence—and external affairs are also a reserved subject according to the provisional reservations of the R.T.C.—it is certainly not complete independence: it is not even a moderate form of self-government. A person does not enjoy self-government if he depends on others for his defence.

I know that it has been contended that India is not able to defend herself. Before the British advent I claim that we were able to servive invasions, and there were many invasions made, and we were able to maintain intact the civilization that we had inherited from time immemorial.

[1] The meeting was held at the House of Commons under the auspices of the Commonwealth of India League. Morley, M.P., presided in the absence of Horrabin, Chairman of the League. M.P.s of all the three parties were present.

We have disarmament in India not voluntary, but superimposed. The Hindus and Muslims are living more in peace in what is called Princes' India than in British India. There have certainly been a few riots, but my claim is that British arms are not strong enough to prevent these. If British armies were removed, it would not mean "suicide" for India, as is sometimes stated.

To take charge of our defence does not mean that we should do away with every British soldier and officer, if British soldiers or officers would be good enough to serve us.

Mr. Gandhi then said that he could not understand those who said that the British would never serve under India in this way.

Is this a proper attitude if there is to be any conciliation with India on terms of proper equality ?

Complete independence must mean complete control of the army. It means that the civil power should have absolute control over the military power, that the military would not act without the sanction of the civil power.

Mr. Gandhi then pointed out that the Indians believed the administration of India to be the most expensive in the world, and India, he said, can no longer afford it.

I am convinced that it would be suicidal for India to consent to those safeguards and take the mere husk of independence. To consent to these safeguards menas farming out our revenue to the extent of 80 per cent. Do you suppose that we can pay for our education, hygiene, hospitals, roads and constructive works , which must be undertaken, and should have been undertaken over a generation ago, with only 20 per cent of our revenue left to us?

I would not touch that independence; I would far rather remain in compulsory subjection and declare myself a rebel than take charge of a government that I know is bound to declare itself bankrupt in, say, five or ten years. No Englishman, if he were in our shoes, would accept that; and you will find that I would fight with my blood as a civil resister rather than co-operate with you and become a slave, which in my humble opinion is what is meant by these safeguards.

As regards "Safeguards" for Europeans, Mr. Gandhi said:

I can understand the Muslims asking for protection, and the Sikhs, and I can understand still more the untouchables; but for the Europeans, that is to say, the rulers, asking for protection from three

hundred million slaves, or subjects, call them by what sweet name you will, that surpasses my understanding. You must live with us on terms of goodwill. Do you want protection from the people you serve?

No protection will protect British trade in India if that trade is inimical to Indian interests. Every "interest" British or Indian, will have to pass this acid test: Is it or is it not in the interests of the people?

Partnership does mean favoured treatment for the partner, but that favoured treatment would naturally carry with it the condition that the goods were goods needed in India and of the standard quality and price. I would prefer the British typewriter and the British watch, even though I had a pay a little more, and that will be the attitude of three hundred million partners when this weight, which is gradually sinking them, is lifted from their heads. I imagine a possible India living in perfect equality with Great Britain. A partnership mutually beneficial, not framed for the exploitation of any race on earth, would be a partnership which the gods themselves would descend to witness, because it would be for the good of all the nations of the earth. India would stand erect before the world, but not to exploit any other nation, because she herself has tasted the bitterness of exploitation.

Indian News, 8-10-1931

443. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 24, 1931

CH. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. I get here less time than I used to get there. I can go to bed between 11 and 12 at night. Mirabehn wakes up every day at four. After prayer I again go to sleep. Then I get up at 6.15 and go for an hour's walk. I suppose you read in the letters from others about all that happens here. I keep very good health. The cold has not yet begun. I hope the atmosphere in the Ashram is becoming purer, and that everyone takes part in the prayers, in the spinning *yajna* and in the other activities regularly and with zest.

Write to me from time to time and give all the news from there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

444. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

September 24, 1931

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

I hope your mind is at peace and you are keeping good health. I do not immediately get all the letters to read, so I do not know whether there is one from you. Write to me every week and pour out your heart.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna patro—6: G.S. Gangabehnne, p. 61. Also C.W. 8786. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

445. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

September 24, 1931

CHI. PREMA,

Narandas writes to tell me that you are calm now. But I am unhappy that you have still not started writing to me. You can certainly help to banish my worry on your account.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10264. Also C.W. 6713. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

446. EXTRACT FROM PROCEEDINGS OF THE FEDERAL STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING

LONDON,

September 24, 1931

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU: . . . Experience in other countries has proved that democratic constitutions are much more expensive than bureaucratic constitutions. I mean, if there are any among us who think that, by adopt- ing a democratic constitution, we are going to economize, let me tell them frankly that they are living in a paradise of their own. I will not use the ordi- nary expression. Party organizations will spring up; party funds will have to be brought into existence; all the machinery and paraphernalia of Western constitutions will have to be brought

into existence before we can cope with our responsibility. Even though the salaries of the Services might be reduced to Rs. 500, even though a maximum amount of income might be prescribed for lawyers like Mr. Jinnah, still Mahatma Gandhi will have to face this problem, that he will have to find the funds to meet the requirements of the democratic constitution.

MR. GANDHI : No, I shall presently seek shelter in Bikaner or Porbandar!

H.H. THE MAHARAJA OF BIKANER : You will be welcome there; we shall be honoured.

Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session) : Proceedings of Federal Structure Committee and Minorities Committee, Vol. I, pp. 346, 371

447. INTERVIEW TO "JOHN BULL"

LONDON,

[On or before *September 25, 1931*]

I was a very ordinary body and had no inkling as to my future destiny. I used to run about the streets barefoot and play with the other lads.

I went to an Indian school, for, of course, I was born in India; not Africa, as people think. I had a happy childhood, and was not precocious in any way. My father was Prime Minister of the State in which I was born.

The call to lead India did not come to me in the nature of a sudden revelation. It simply came when it came. It was rather a gradual realization. I prepared for it by fasting and self-discipline. My political work grew out of my spiritual preparation.

You ask me to compare the poverty in the East with that of the West? It is impossible. The two cannot be compared. In the East, poverty exists to a degree undreamt of in the West. Many thousands are entirely without food, and quite without shelter.

You ask me how I would fulfil my dreams if I had the power, what I would do to wake the "dumb, starving millions" from their lethargy, make them articulate, and give them food.

I would make them work. At what? At the charkha and handlooms. I would educate them. Yes, on Indian lines.

I would build new roads—fine roads, that would benefit both man and beast. I picture the new India as filled with linked villages, happy in their industries.

If India gets her freedom, I should be guided by circumstances as to whether I should take my place at the head of the nation or return quietly to my Ashram.

I should love to go back, but I should not hesitate to shoulder the burden of leadership if it came to me. I should follow the guidance of my inner voice.

Shall I go to America? Invitations have reached me, but there again I shall do as my inner voice tells me.

You ask: Is this an actual definite voice? No ! it is the voice of conscience. I am prepared to compromise on non-essential matters, but not on essentials.

Yes, certainly, I think the co-operation of the Indian Princes is necessary for a successful swaraj.

Enemies of India say that the Hindus and Muslims will fly at each other's throats as soon as the British rule is withdrawn. I do not believe it. We have lived together in perfect unity before before the British advent in the seventeenth century and we shall do so again.

But, supposing that we have to fight, we shall fight. Will the Hindus conquer, you ask. No; neither side will conquer. There might be conflict in India, but we shall come to terms and reach an agreement.

We have fought before now and come together again. The heads of the two parties, the Hindus and the Muslims, would come to terms.

Who would fight? Not the masses. They would continue to live as they do now, in perfect peace. Those who fought would be only the interested people. I think Britain is bound to concede swaraj. Sooner or later it is sure to come.

My wife has been extraordinarily good to me, and it is she who cares for my physical welfare. How did I marry her? My parents arranged the marriage, as parents do most marriages in India, but I knew her before and love existed between us.

I started life as a legal adviser to a Mussalman firm in South Africa, and when I saw that the Indians there were being persecuted, I thought, it was my duty to take up their cause. I, thereore, settled in South Africa, and I was successful. The disabilities for which we were fighting were removed by a settlement of the South African government.

What would be the position of the women in India under swaraj?

They would be our co-workers and colleagues, enjoy the same rights and privileges as the men.

No, I was not surprised to find I had so many sympathizers here. I fully expected it. I am hoping that the people of Great Britain will see the utter justice of India's claim.

John Bull, 26-9-1931

448. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

LONDON,
September 25, 1931

We had a nice, friendly conversation—very friendly.

The Manchester Guardian, 26-9-1931

449. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[2]

LONDON,
September 25, 1931

I specially wish during this all too short visit to Lancashire to see as much as possible of working people there who are engaged in the cotton trade and to get with them face to face and heart to heart whenever possible.

The Manchester Guardian, 26-9-1931

450. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

SPRINGVALE GARDEN VILLAGE,
September 26, 1931

I have come to England, and now to Lancashire, in search of a way out of the difficulty. Unemployment in any country is always bad, and it would be a matter of the greatest joy to me if I could, in any shape or form, contribute towards relieving that unemployment. But I am powerless to do anything without the active co-operation of Lancashire and of Englishmen in other parts of Great Britain.

[1] Gandhiji made the statement after his meeting with Lord Irwin. The meeting took place at the latter's house in Eaton Square and lasted two hours and twenty minutes. No report of the talk is available

[2] Gandhiji made this statement on boarding the train to Lancashire at Euston in the evening.

The poverty I have seen distresses me, and it distresses me further to know that in this unemployment I have a kind of a share. That distress is relieved, however, by the knowledge that my part was wholly unin-tended; that it was as a result of the steps I took, and had to take, as part of my duty towards the largest army of unemployed to be found in the world, namely the starving millions of India, compared with whose poverty and pauperism the poverty of Lancashire dwindles into insignificance.

I am therefore trying to meet as many Englishmen as possible, and acquaint myself with their mentality and am trying to give them, as I know it, the correct situation in India.

The Sunday Observer, 27-9-1931

451. TALK WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF COTTON INDUSTRY[1]

EDGEWORTH,
September 26, 1931

In his speech Mr. Gandhi outlined at considerable length his economic policy for India, and explained how the khaddar movement also had a social significance, since it was aimed at producing self-respect in the Indian villager. He drew waht was generally agreed to be a heart-rending picture of Indian poverty, and said that though the conditions in Lancashire as he had seen them distressed him, they were infinitely better than those obtaining in India.

Q. Is it possible, Mr. Gandhi, to divorce boycott for a political purpose from boycott for an economic purpose?

A. When the sole object was that of punishing Britain as in 1930, when people preferred articles of American or German make to those of British make, it was avowedly of a political purpose. Even British machinery was then boycotted. But now the original economic

[1] The meeting was arranged by T. D. Barlow, Chairman of the Joint Committee of Cotton Trade Organizations, at his residence in the afternoon and included several prominent representatives of the cotton trade. Gandhiji, according to *The Manchester Guardian*, spoke for forty minutes, but a full report of the speech is not available since no reporters were present. Some of those present, however, sent to *The Manchester Guardian* their own accounts of what Gandhiji said (*vide* Appendix "Account of Meeting with Representatives of cotton Trade"). The brief report of the speech appearing here is from *The Manchester Guardian* while the questions and answers the follow are from Mahadev Desai's account in *Young India*, "Gandhiji in Lancashire".

boycott remains. You may call it boycott but it is an entirely educative effort or self-purificatory endeavour. It is an appeal to go back to our former calling, shake off idleness and earn a living, however poor, not on doles but in the sweat of their brow.

Q. But the political aspect would be there inasmuch as you would give preference to your mills over all other foreign articles.

A. The boycott was not undertaken on behalf of the mills. In fact, it was the first constructive effort begun with our quarrel with the local mill-owners, and though the mill-owners are supporting our movement, they are not controlling our policy but we are trying to influence them. And when we go out to the villages, we do not ask them to wear Indian mill cloth, we ask them to wear khadi or to make their own khadi, and every Congressman is expected to wear khadi.

Q. Whatever you may say, Mr. Gandhi, you are in for more political power, which you are bound to get, and as soon as you get it, these mill-owners, in the unscrupulousness of their greed, will build huge tariff walls and be a graver danger to your villages than even the Lancashire cotton trade.

A. If I am still living then, and if such a catastrophe happens, I make bold to say that the mills will be destroyed in the process. And, with real politcial power, universal adult suffrage will come and it will be impossible for the monied classes to crush the interests of poor villagers.

Q. Don't you think people themselves will go back to mill-cloth as the Americans are going back to liquor ?

A. No. In America, prohibition was a mighty weapon used by a powerful nation against an unwilling people. People were accustomed to drinking. Drink was fashionable. In India, mill-cloth was never a fashion, whereas khadi has become a fashion and a passport to respectable society. And, whatever happens I shall fight on for the economic salvation of my people and that, you will agree, is worth living for and dying for.

Q. It will be an unequal fight. The rapacity of economic competition will carry everything before it.

A. God, you say, has suffered defeat at the hand of Mammon and will continue to do. Well, He will not suffer defeat in India.

The Manchester Guardian, 28-9-1931, and *Young India*, 15-10-1931

452. TALK WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF COTTON INDUSTRY[1]

DARWEN,
September 26, 1931

Pray tell me what I am to do with a fifth of the human race living on the verge of starvation and devoid of all sense of selfrespect. It should occupy the attention even of unemployed Lancashire. You have told us of the help Lancashire gave us during the famine of 1899-1900. What return can we render but the blessings of the poor? I have come to give you fair trade. But, if I go without giving it, it will not be through any fault of mine. There is no bitterness in me. I claim, fellowship with the lowest of animals. Why not then with Englishmen with whom we have been bound, for good or ill, for over a century and amongst whom I claim some of my dearest friends? You will find me an easy proposition, but if you will repel my advances I shall go away, not in bitterness, but with a sense that I was not pure enough to find a lodgment in your hearts.

Young India, 15-10-1931

453. INTERVIEW TO UNEMPLOYED WORKERS' DEPUTATION[2]

SPRINGFIELD GARDEN VILLAGE,
September 26, 1931

There is no boycott of British cloth, as distinguished from other foreign cloth, since the 5th March when the Truce was signed. As a nation we are pledged to boycott all foreign cloth, but in case of an honourable settlement between England and India, i.e., in case of a permanent peace, I should not hesitate to give preference to Lancashire cloth to all other foreign cloth, to the extent that we may need to supplement out cloth and on agreed terms. But how much relief that can give you, I do not know. You must recognize that all

[1] Gandhiji had gone to Darwen to visit the Mayor, who had invited a small group of people, representative of both sides of the cotton industry to meet Gandhiji. The report has been extracted from Mahadev Desai's account, "Gandhiji in Lancashire."

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account,"Gandhiji in Lancashire"

the markets of the world are now not open to you. What you have done, all other nations are doing today. Even Indian mills would be producing more and more cloth every day. You, surely, will not want me to restrict Indian enterprise for the sake of Lancashire.

Young India, 15-10-1931

454. SPEECH IN LANCASHIRE

[*September 26/27, 1931*][1]

I am pained at the unemployment here. But here is no starvation or semi-starvation. In India we have both. If you went to the villages of India, you would find utter despair in the eyes of the villages, you would find half-starved skeletons, living corpses. If India could revive them by putting life and food into them in the shape of work India would help the world. Today India is a curse. There is a party in my country which would sooner see an end to the lives of these half-starved millions in order that the rest may live. I thought of a humane method and that was to give them work with which they were familiar, which they could do in their cottages, which required no great investment in implements and of which the product could be easily sold. This is a task which is worthy of the attention even of Lancashire.

Young India, 15-10-1931

455. REFORM OF SCRIPT

Shri Kishorelal Mashruwala writes:[2]

I publish this letter solely for the sake of discussion. I myself do not have any definite opinion on this matter, but I realize its importance. Shri Kishorelal has invited the opinion of scholars. The decision on script reform will not be taken on the basis of its merits or demerits, but will rather depend upon its popularity. From that standpoint, it is desirable to seek the opinion

[1] Mahadev Desai, from whose account of the speech, "Gandhiji in Lancashire" this is extracted, does not mention the date or place of the speech.

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had suggested certain reforms in Gujarati script to make it approximate to Devnagari script.

of readers of *Navajivan*. If the people and the public are in favour of it, it is likely that journalists will also respond favourably.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-9-1931

456. PARSIS' PROTEST

About one hundred and seventy-five Parsis were signatories to the note of protest expressing profound disapproval of the indignities prepetrated upon Shri Abidali and other Congress picketers on the 10th of August last. Among the signatories are barristers, doctors, solicitors and professors also. I compliment the signatories on making this protest. But at the same time, I should make it clear that this protest will have hardly any effect upon those who had a hand in staging these disturbances. The real need is to come into personal contact with those liquor dealers, to formulate a scheme to find some other respectable profession for them and to develop a strong public opinion among the Parsis against this present trade of theirs. The argument put forward by these liquor dealers is that, they give up their trade, someone else will take it up. What I have suggested to them is that, as a result of their giving up their trade, public opinion will be generated even outside the Parsi community, that it will become impossible even for others to take to that immoral trade. In *Navajivan*,[1] I have already cited the example of the Bhandaris of Ratnagiri district. By giving up their hereditary profession of selling liquor, they set out on the war path. Many Kolis have done likewise. Hence, if the Parsis also adopt this reform , even though they may not be regarded as pioneers they would have emulated a worthy example and they would also have contributed their share to the national welfare work of uprooting a trade which is doing such irreparable harm to labourers.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-9-1931

[1] Perhaps a slip for *Young India*. The reference is presumably to the article "Prohibition Work at Malvan" published in *Young India*, 30-7-1931 which had described the Bhandaris' abandoning of their traditional profession of toddy-tapping under the Civil Disobedience movement.

457. LETTER TO DADOO

ON THE TRAIN,
September 27, 1931

MY DEAR DADOO,

Haji Ismail Bhabha writes complaining that satyagrahis are acting violently, that they had gone to the June meeting taking lethal weapons with them, that they were exploiting Muslim women, ect. I have written to him saying that I am writing to you. I suggest your seeing him. Our duty is to see even the opponent's viewpoint and meet it wherever we can.

I hope things are shaping and proceeding well there.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 4905

458. SPEECH AT ADULT SCHOOL[1]

WEST BRADFORD,
September 27, 1931

Mr. Gandhi began by accepting the Lancashire view that a part of the country's unemployment was caused by action taken by him in India. He admitted that a great many of the politically-minded in India took up the boycott in a spirit of revenge, and found pleasure in hitting England by it. It was not a matter of pleasure to him, and his arrest took the campaign in a rather different direction from what it might have done. Had the Government understood the strength behind his letter to Lord Irwin[2] laying down the famous eleven points, history might have been written differently. When he was arrested, the boycott became a universal cry. His own plan, Mr. Gandhi explained, would have been a boycott of foreign cloth, but the people took the law into their own hands, made the boycott one of British goods, and continued to buy Japanese cloth, American typewriters, and so on.

[1] The meeting was held in the morning at Heys Farm Guest House where the school was conducted and where Gandhiji stayed the night.

[2] Of March 2, 1930 The eleven points themselves, however, were mentioned in an article in the *Young India* January 30,1931; *vide* "Clearing the Issue", 30-1-1930

When he was released in March[1], the boycott of British goods stopped, but that of foreign goods remained at his instance. Mr. Gandhi spoke of his negotiations with Lord Irwin on the boycotts of liquor and intoxicating drugs and foreign cloth, of Lord Irwin's anxiety to get the boycott on British cloth lifted, of the arguments used against this, and of Lord Irwin's final agreement that he would not endanger a settlement by insisting on the removal of the boycotts, which still remain.

As in his other statements, Mr. Gandhi compared the 3,000,000 British unemployed with India's 300,000,000. He spoke of doles as taking away self-respect, and described how, in conducting strikes in India, he had set his face against doles, and encouraged the strikers to find other employment at much less wages rather than be idle. He spoke of some strikers who had been taught to weave and make themselves independent.

Mr. Gandhi then went on to state his view that Indian poverty is the result of British policy through the overthrowing of India's old cotton industry by the machines of Lancashire more than a hundred years ago. He argued that the descendants of those who destryoed the supplementary means of livelihood (which supplied the butter to the bread which the peasant earned from the soil) could not now complain if the descendants of the dispossessed tried to rehabilitate themselves.

He declared that it was an impossibility to seek to revive the Lancashire trade on its original foundations, and he could not lend a hand to the process. Equally he would not lift a finger to sustain the Indian mills. He might some time have to seek their destruction, but at present they did not interfere with the employment of the villagers, and he was tolerating them. He did not say to the villagers that they must buy indigenous mill-cloth; what he said to them was that they must not buy foreign cloth and that they must make their own cloth.

Mr. Gandhi described the conditions of the villagers, saying that 7s. 6d. was their average monthly income; the addition of 3s. would add a fortune, and those who had taken up the spinning-wheel were free from debt. He drew an idyllic picture of little children spinning while they were playing, and contrasted the life of the villagers who lived on a little bit of rice flung by insolent wealth with their position when the glorious work was done in their own homes. The only solace he could bring to Lancashire was that these teeming millions had no ill will to Lancashire, and did not know what Lancashire was. They had no clothing, but a little bit of rag.

This led Mr. Gandhi to explain his own choice of costume: he wished to appear as faithfully as could be as the representative of the teeming and naked millions. Even, he said, if he had to appear before the King hewould be discourteous if he did

[1] Gandhiji was released in January; the boycott of British goods was stopped as a result of the Gandhi-Irwin agreement . *Vide* "Provisional Settlement'12-3-1931

not appear in his loin-cloth. He would consider himself indecent if he took a yard of cloth beyond the physical requirements of the teeming millions, whom he described as having but one meal, not knowing milk, and as sometimes being driven in the summer months to live on grass. These millions were knocking at our doors, and, in closing, Mr. Gandhi urged that England must not build her happiness on the tombs of millions, as she had done, he feared.

In the discussion Mr. Gandhi repeated his argument that the boycott may have been the last straw, but was only a contributory factor in Lancashire's loss of trade. He noted the other world causes of Lancashire's decline. He also repeated his suggestion that, assuming that there is a fair settlement with Great Britain, it is possible to have a contract with Lancashire on behalf of the Government for taking, on a decreasing scale from year to year, goods from Lancashire. This, he admitted, would simply tide over Lancashire's difficulty for a little time and no more.

Mr. Gandhi contested a suggestion that his policy is a dangerous form of nationalism. He gave the impression of desiring an India self-sufficing in food and clothing, but open to receive other kinds of goods from abroad. He left his hearers with some final words about Japanese business methods, and urged that it would be better for Lancashire to divert her attention from India and solve her problems in terms of the world crisis, in which the Indian contribution was only a speck on the screen.

The Clitheroe Advertiser and Times, 2-10-1931

459. INTERVIEW TO UNEMPLOYED WORKERS' DEPUTATION[1]

WEST BRADFORD,
September 27, 1931

I would be untrue to you, I would be a false friend if I were not frank with you. . . . I strove with Lord Irwin last March for the liberty to boycott liquor and foreign cloth. He suggested that I might give up the boycott for three months as a gesture and then resume it. I said I could not give it up for three minutes. You have three million unemployed, but we have nearly three hundred million unemployed for half the year. Your average unemployment dole is 70 shillings. Our average income is 7 shillings and six pence a month. That operative was right in saying that he was falling in his own estimation. I do believe it is a debasing thing for a human being to remain idle and to live on doles. Whilst conducting a strike, I would not brook the

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's report, "Gandhiji in Lancashire"

strikers remaining idle for a single day and got them to break the stones or carry sand and work in public streets asking my own co-workers to join them in that work. Imagine, therefore, what a calamity it must be to have 300 million unemployed, several millions becoming degraded every day for want of employment, devoid of self-respect, devoid of faith in God . I dare not take before them the message of God. I may as well place before the dog over there the message of God as before those hungry millions who have no lustre in their eyes and whose only God is their bread. I can take before them a message of God only by taking the message of sacred work before them. It is good enough to talk of God whilst we are sitting here after a nice breakfast and looking forward to a nicer luncheon, but how am I to talk of God to the millions who have to go without two meals a day? To them God can only appear as bread and butter. Well, the peasants of India were getting their bread from their soil. I offered them the spinning-wheel in order that they may get butter, and if I appear today before the British public in my loin-cloth, it is because I have come as the sole representative of those half-starved, half-naked dumb millions. We have prayed that we may bask in the presence of God's sunshine. I tell you it is impossible to do so whilst millions are knocking at your door. Even in your misery you are comparatively happy. I do not grudge you that happiness. I wish well to you, but do not think of prospering on the tombs of the poor millions of India. I do not want for India an isolated life at all, but I do not want to depend on any country for my food and clothing. Whilst we may devise means for tiding over the present crisis, I must tell you that you should cherish no hope of reviving the old Lancashire trade. It is impossible. I cannot religiously help in the process. . . .[1] Supposing, I have suddenly stopped breathing and I am helped by artificial respiration for a while and begin to breathe again, must I, for ever, depend on artificial respiration and refuse to use my own lungs again ? No, it would be suicidal. I must try to strengthen my own lungs and live on my own resources. You must pray to God that India may strengthen her lungs. Do not attribute your misery to India. Think of the world forces that are powerfully working against you. See things in the daylight of reason.

Young India, 15-10-1931

[1] Omission as in the source

460. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

WEST BRADFORD,
September 27, 1931

I have certainly been very happy here and have experienced nothing but the greatest affection and kindness. I have seen various groups of operatives and employers, with whom I have had very friendly discussion.

I feel that I have learned something of the distress in Lancashire, and my heart has gone out to the suffering operatives. I saw Mr. Davies's mill and the whole shed in which the looms are lying idle. I have explained to him my personal and that of the Congress. I have shown to him the limited extent to which help from India is possible in the event of a permanent settlement coming through. But I am also oppressed with the fact that unemployment is so widespread that the help that can possibly come from India will affect but a small class.

It has appeared to me that the cause of distress in Lancashire is more largely due to world causes than to the Indian boycott. Even before the Indian boycott came in its intense form last year, Lancashire's trade with India was not much over 15 per cent of the total production. I do not think it has been adversely affected by the boycott to more than 3 per cent, or it may be a little over.

The question, therefore, so far as India is concerned, is limited to a very small compass. It would be presumptuous for me to say what can be otherwise done in order to alleviate or entirely remove the present distress in Lancashire. And so far as India is concerned, I have already given you an idea of what is at the most possible. But whether something ultimately does or does not result, the two days of intimate contact with the employers and employed has shown me that the people of Lancashire have borne their distress very bravely, and it has been a matter of the keenest satisfaction to me that they have not shown any bitterness towards India, which I regard as a happy sign.

I had never expected anything but courteous treatment from the working people of Lancashire, but I was quite unprepared for the manifestation of deep affection that the crowds of people lining the

[1] According to the source, Gandhiji received the party of Press reporters at noon.

streets yesterday spontaneously showed to me. I shall ever treasure that affection as one of the pleasant recollections of my life.

That is all.

Asked if he was in a position to confirm a statement attributed to him that if India secured self-government, he would be agreeable to the prohibition of foreign imported cloths, with the exception of Lancashire goods, Mr. Gandhi said :

I would agree to the prohibition of all foreign cloths but Lancashire cloths, to the extent that foreign cloth was still necessary to supplement the Indian supply. Necessarily, there would have to be conditions about the standard of quality and of price, which, however, could be mutually arranged.

Asked if India's policy of manufacturing her own cotton goods would not affect her own exports of raw products, Mr.Gandhi said India would be buying from the other nations of the earth, or from England, under a favoured-nation clause, many things besides cotton piece-goods. He said :

India is not, and will not be for a long time to come, entirely self-contained for all her wants. For instance, India is at present importing large quantities of hardware, sugar, etc.

Q. Do you agree that a decline in imported goods would result in a corresponding decrease in the demand for Indian raw cotton?

A. Cotton is not such a special crop that once grown it must always be grown. The cultivator would immediately respond to changed conditions and grow other crops which are favourable.

Asked if he would specifically exclude Japanese cotton goods, Mr. Gandhi said :

I would put a prohibitive tariff upon Japanese piece-goods, also other piece-goods, and any other foreign goods. It would not be a question of discriminating against Japan. I have no complaint to make against her. I would simply take my goods from my partner. Japan or any other nation could not complain if I did not take their goods because I was manufacturing those goods myself, nor need they complain if I take them from my partner.

Q. All that depends on self-government?

A. Yes, it must be absolutely a free-will and voluntary thing. I would not be conferring a benefit on Lancashire at the expense of India. If I do need more foreign cloth, it would be foolish on my part not to take it from England, if England is my partner.

Q. Supposing these negotiations break down?

A. Then heaven help India! India must then go through the fire of suffering. There is no question of India finding her peace unless India finds also her freedom. That is a settled fact.

Asked if he was hopeful, Mr. Gandhi said :

It is in the hands of God . It is very difficult to say.

Q. Do you feel the prospects of a settlement are endangered by the political situation in England at the moment ?

A. The prospects will be, or may be, endangered if British statesmen come to the conclusion that the settlement with India is not necessary in order to solve the present porblem. If they feel it can be shunted—then there is danger. But if they feel that India is a factor in dealing with the domestic problem—then, of course, the Indian question retains the same importance, if it does not gain greater importance because of this domestic problem.

In response to an inquiry whether, if there is a General Election, he will wait until it finishes, Mr. Gandhi said :

I do not want to wait indefinitely here. It would be inconvenient for me to wait here marking time. If dissolution comes next week, my attitude would be determined by the attitude of the British Ministers as to what they want to do. If they want to mark time, to postpone the proceedings of the Conference, or to postpone effective decisions, I certainly would want to go away. Whether I returned for a resumption of the Conference depends on the situation that faces me at that time. I have certainly not calculated upon any postponement of the Conference, but I had calculated upon a final conclusion being reached.

Q. Do you think there has been progress or retrogression?

A. I don't think there has been any progress or retrogression.

Q. Do you look for progress?

A. That is a ticklish problem.

Q. Has Congress reached any conclusion?

A. Not any positive conclusion. It is difficult.

Q. Have you acquainted British Ministers with your plans in the event of a General Election being held?

A. I have no plans. I do not know what my plans will be.

In reply to a question respecting currency, Mr. Gandhi said he did not regard himself as an expert.

The Clitheroe Advertiser and Times, 2-10-1931

461. INTERVIEW TO DEPUTATION[1]

WEST BRADFORD,
September 27, 1931

Mr. Gandhi said he had no ill will either against Lancashire or England, and though he might claim to be author of the boycott, the movement was not started in any spirit of bitterness whatever. He declared that the boycott was largely a policy of economy. His idea was not so much to boycott foreign cloth as to persuade the Indians to stop using machine-made cloth of any description. While recognizing that that was practically impossible of achievement, he wished to wean them as far as possible from buying machine-made cloth. Mr. Gandhi pointed out that, owing to the situation in India, for six months in the year the peasant was absolutely without work, for it was not possible to work on the land. Therefore, during that six months the peasant was on the verge of starvation. His idea was to occupy the interim period with weaving whereby the peasants could earn a little money. Thousands of Indians were therefore reverting to the spinning-wheel, and within the last year or so there were more than 100,000 peasants spinining or weaving cloth

The Mahatama declared that politics had no charms for him. The only thing he had at heart was the moral welfare of his own class. From his own observations since coming to the country, he had realized that Lancashire was certainly suffering from the great trade depression. He wanted the people of Lancashire to understand that there were such things as comparisons in poverty, and that we were a long way above the poverty line prevalent in India. He started that the income of all the people of India, including the millionaires, averaged at 7s 6d per month per Indian. From that it would be recognized how poor the poorest of the poor must be.

Mr. Brame asked if nothing could be done to alleviate both the suffering in Lancashire and in India.

Mr. Gandhi said if he could obtain satisfaction at the Round Table Conference, he would promise to do all he could to stop the import of cloth from Japan and Italy into India, and would allow Lancashire to have the first opportunity of providing the Indians with the deficiency between what they supplied themselves and the demand. He did not wish them to overlook the fact that Lancashire's trade with India must ever be a depreciating one.

The Clitheroe Advertiser and Times, 2-10-1931

[1] Gandhiji received the deputation from the Clitheroe Weavers' Association in the afternoon. The deputation was led by H.L. Parkinson, the President, and G. Brame, the Secretary and included our unemployed weavers.

462. MYSELF, MY SPINNING-WHEEL AND WOMEN[1]

What am I here for? What do I believe in? What is the India I would build? Well, before all else, I am here to uphold the truth as I see it, for I believe it is the keystone of life. On it everything else depends. It comes first and last and always. And in all things it is possible to put Truth first. For myself I have always tried to do it. In my political ambitions I eschew all lies and fraud. For the attainment of no object would I subscribe to deceit.

I have read many varying descriptions of myself. Some call me a saint. Others call me a rouge. I am neither the one nor the other. All that I aspire to be— and I hope I have in some measure succeeded in being—is an honest, godfearing man. But the things I read about myself do not annoy me. Why should they? I have my own philosophy and my work. Everyday I spin for a time. While I spin I think. I think of many things. But always from those thoughts I try to keep out bitterness.

Study this spinning-wheel of mine. It would teach you a great deal more than I can—patience, industry, simplicity. This spinning-wheel is for India's starving millions the symbol of salvation.

MY LOIN-CLOTH

My dress, which is described in the newspapers as a loin-cloth, is criticized, made fun of. I am asked why I wear it. Some seem to resent my wearing it.

When Englishmen visit India, do they forsake their European clothing and adopt our Eastern dress, which is much more suitable to the climate? No. And there is the answer to those who ask why in England I wear the dress to which I am accustomed, the dress of India.

If I came here to live and work as an English citizen, then I should conform to the customs of the country and should wear the dress of an Englishman. But I am here on a great and special mission, and my loin-cloth, if you choose so to describe it, is the dress of my principals, the people of India. Into my keeping a sacred trust has

[1] The title supplied by *The Daily Herald* for which Gandhiji wrote this exclusive article.

been put. A special duty has been given me to perform. I must, therefore, wear the symbol of my mission. I find these different descriptions of me interesting sometimes amusing but I am just a representative of my people, endeavouring to fulfil the task they have entrusted to me.

Yes, I believe in complete equality for women and, in the India I seek to build, they would have it. The reason I have so many women co-workers is, I believe, due to my adoption of celibacy and my instinctive sympathy for women.

You have probably heard that in my country women occupy a subordinante position. This is only so outwardly. Actually, their influence has ever been of the strongest. For centuries women have worked on an equal footing with men . If they ceased work, then many of the men would starve.

PLAYTHINGS

In the cultivation of the crops our men and women toil together. Their life is a strenuous one. It is in the leisured classes that the difference is more marked. Wealth has enabled women to forget and set aside the virtue of usefulness. Thus there is a tendency for wealthy women to become mere ornaments playthings.

What I want to see is the opening of all offices, professions and employments to women; otherwise there can be no real equality. But I most sincerely hope that woman will retain and exercise her ancient prerogative as queen of the household.

From this position she must never be dethroned. It would indeed be a dreary home of which a woman was not the centre. I cannot, for instance, imagine a really happy home in which the wife is a typist and scarcely ever in it. Who would look after the children? What, after all, is a home without children, the brightest jewels in the poorest household?

FAMILY FIRST

Cases might be cited in which a clever woman might, by going out into the world to earn her living, make more money and do more for the children, paying someone to look after them. Exceptional women make necessarily exceptional cases. There are exceptions in every phase of life. but we cannot generalize from exceptions.

Generally, it is the father who should be the bread-winner. He will work all the better, knowing that he has a happy home. And it is aserious injustice to deprive a child of the tender care which only a mother can give.

It is a woman's work to bring up her little ones and mould their character. A precious work, too. Equality in status with men, I desire for women, but if the mother fails in her sacred trust towards her children, then nothing can atone for the loss.

Whatever the race, family life is the first and greatest thing. Its sanctity must remain. Upon it rests the welfare of the nation. For good or for ill home influence persists. Of that there can be no possible doubt, and no State can survive unless the sacred security of its home life is preserved. Individuals there may be who in pursuit of some great principle or ideal, forgo, like myself, the solace of family life, choosing instead one of self-sacrifice and celibacy; but for the mass of the people the preservation of home life is essential.

The Daily Herald, 28-9-1931

463. LETTER TO SIR SAMUEL HOARE

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
September 28, 1931

DEAR SIR SAMUEL,

Enclosed you will find copies of three cables[1] that I found awaiting me on my return from Lancashire this morning. They illustrate what I tried to explain the other day.

You will find in the cables mention of Mr. Birla's name. He is well-versed in matters of finance. I would suggest a meeting between Sir Henry Strakosch and Mr. Birla and other Indians versed in currency questions.[2]

If the Government of India have a good case, I should imagine that they should have no difficulty in satisfying these Indian experts.

Mr. Vallabhbhai is Sardar Patel, President of the Congress.

Yours Sincerely,

Encl. 3

THE RIGHT HON. SIR SAMUEL HOARE

From a photostat: S.N. 17869

[1] The cables including those from Vallabhbhai Patel and Federation of Bombay Commercial Associations had protested against the Ordinance linking the rupee with sterling and fixing its value at 18 pence, a measure calculated to dissipate India's slender gold reserves.

[2] Strakosch, replying to Gandhiji's letter to him (the following item), said he would welcome the opportunity to see Birla. The meeting took place on October 6.

464. LETTER TO SIR HENRY STRAKOSCH

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W. 1,
September 28, 1931

DEAR SIR HENRY,

I enclose herewith copies of cables received from India. You will now appreciate my difficulty in forming a judgment.

Will you please restate, if you can, your argument in the light of these cables? I would study it and then seek an interview with you for fuller information and instruction.

Yours Sincerely,

SIR HENRY STRAKOSCH, K.C.B.

From a photostat: S.N. 17868

465. LETTER TO TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU

September 28, 1931

DEAR DR. SAPRU,

I send you copies of three cables just received. On the strength of these cables, I have sent a letter to the Secretary of State[1]. I enclose herewith copy of that letter too. I would suggest your discussing the question with Mr. Birla or Prof. Shah or both and form an opinion and perhaps support my letter to the S. of S.

May I ask you to share this letter with Sastri and Mr. Jayakar?

Rungasamy told me that you felt that I was not keeping in touch with you. Please consider me to be at your beck and call. It would be pleasure to me to share with you my thoughts if I knew that you would care to know them. What I have felt is that, in many vital matters, I must not count upon your support. Nothing would please me more than to know that I was mistaken in so thinking. Add to this belief my retiring nature and you have the whole reason for my apparent aloofness.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 3

From a photostat: S.N. 17867

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Samuel Hoare", 28-9-1931

466. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

LONDON,
September 28, 1931

We had a hearty discussion for two and a half hours. There is no deadlock; but is is too early yet to say what the result of the conference may be, or whether the conversations may be continued later.

The Daily Telegraph, 29-9-1931

467. LETTER TO H. HARCOURT

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
September 29, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter.[2] My time-table is packed; I cannot therefore send you an early appointment. If you could call at 88 Knightsbridge on 13th October at 9.30, I should be delighted to meet you.

Yours sincerely,

H. HARCOURT, ESQ.
119 GIPSY HILL
UPPER NORWOOD, S.E. 19

From a photostat: S.N. 17824

[1] Gandhiji issued the statement after his meeting with the Aga Khan at the Ritz Hotel in the evening. No report of the discussion is available.

[2] The addressee had served in India as a district officer and on retirement had written a book on India. He had asked for an appointment with Gandhiji.

468. LETTER TO SHAW DESMOND

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W. 1,
September 29, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your very warm letter.[1] If you could conveniently come to 88 Knightsbridge at. . .[2] I would be glad to see you.

Yours sincerely,

SHAW DESMOND, ESQ.
LEICESTER HOUSE
MONTPELLIER ROW
TWICKENHAM

From a photostat: S.N. 17882

469. LETTER TO A. FENNER BROCKWAY

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
September 29, 1931

DEAR MR. FENNER BROCKWAY,

I have your letter of the 18th inst. I already gave one message to the *Irish Free Press.*

I had also the pleasure of seeing Mr. Valera's Secretary. Will your friend Mr. Fox want a message? [3] I am practically drained dry.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 17880

[1] The addressee, a well-known Irish journalist and poet had said, he no longer believed that India was ready for independence. He had asked for an appointment to see Gandhiji.

[2] This is left blank in the source.

[3] Brockway had said in his letter that Fox was a friend of his, working on the staff of *Irish Free Press,* and that he had asked if Gandhiji would give a message for the paper.

470. LETTER TO H. STANLEY JEVONS

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
September 29, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter.[1] Please come whenever you have the time, but I would suggest that you telephone (SLOANE 4232) to ask whether I should be here at the time you would reach here. My time-table is so packed that I am not sending you an appointment. Nevertheless I should like to see you if it is at all possible. The meeting address is at 88, Knightsbridge.

Yours sincerely,

H. STANLEY JEVONS, ESQ.
11 RUSSELL SQUARE MANSIONS
122 SOUTHAMPTON ROW, W.C. 1

From a photostat : S.N. 17886

471. LETTER TO FREDERICK B. FISHER[2]

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
September 29, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I was deeply touched by your prayerful greetings. My message to American Christians on World Peace and Disarmament is that Peace and Disarmament are not a matter of reciprocity. When real Peace and Disarmament come, they will be initiated by a strong nation like America—irrespective of the consent and co-operation of other nations.

An individual or a nation must have faith in oneself and in the

[1] The addressee, a retired professor of economics, had expressed a desire to meet Gandhiji.

[2] American Methodist Episcopal Churchman, author of *That Strange Little Brown Man–Gandhi*. He was a bishop and lived in Calcutta from 1920 to 1930. He had asked for a message to American Christians.

protective power of God to find peace in the midst of strife, and to shed all arms by reason of feeling the loving power of God and His protective shield, and I hold such peace to be impossible so long as strong nations do not consider it to be sinful to exploit weak nations.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

THE RIGHT REVEREND BISHOP FISHER
C/O *Christian Herald*
NEW YORK

From a facsimile of the original in *That Strange Little Brown Man–Gandhi;* also S.N.17872

472 LETTER TO EVELYN CLARE[1]

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
September 29, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 24th inst. for which I thank you.

I would love to attend your Society's lunch or dinner, if only in order to revive old memories. I would, however, like you to tell me the approximate dates that you want, and the time the whole function is likely to occupy.

Yours sincerely,

MISS EVELYN CLARE
THE FRUITARIAN SOCIETY
DODDINGTON, KENT

From a photostat : S.N.17837

[1] Honorary Secretary of the Fruitarian Society

473. LETTER TO A. FENNER BROCKWAY

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
September 29, 1931

DEAR MR. FENNER BROCKWAY,

I thank you for your letter enclosing manifesto[1] about the Meerut prisoners. I have tried in my own manner and propose to do so here, but I feel I should be excused from having to sign the manifesto. First, because it may damage the cause which you and I want to espouse.

Secondly, because I could not wholly subscribe to all the statements made to [*sic*] you.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N.17877

[1] This was in the form of a mass petition and read: "We, the undersigned, emphatically protest against the arrest and the continued imprisonment of those who are now being tried at Meerut, India, on the charge of conspiracy against the King.

"We recognize that these 31 political prisoners were arrested in March, 1929, because they led the revolt of the Indian workers against the intolerable conditions of employment which exist, and were successfully building trade union organizations which were a real challenge both to British Imperialism and to the Indian exploiters.

"These prisoners have been detained on trial for over two years; some hundreds of witnesses have been called, and many thousands of pounds have been spent by the Government on the prosecution of these heroic standard-bearers of the working class.

"Not only do we demand their unconditional and immediate release, but we further demand the immediate release of the Garhwali Riflemen who gallantly refused to fire on an unarmed gathering of their fellow-countrymen, and as a consequence have been sentenced to lifelong terms of imprisonment." (S.N.17840). The addressee had asked Gandhiji to consider whether he could sign it.

474. LETTER TO MRS. G. HAINES

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
September 29, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

It was good of you to have written to me and shown so much care for my health.

You will be glad to know that, though I do not take orange juice and honey mixed together,[1] I do take three oranges per day and, early in the morning, honey and a little lemon juice added to it.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. G. HAINES
ABBOTSFORD
10 MARKET PLACE
WARWICK

From a photostat : S.N.17883

475. LETTER TO S.S. ZAHEER[2]

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W. 1,
September 29, 1931

MY DEAR ZAHEER,

Why do you want me to give you a separate appointment? Will you not be meeting me at one of the students' meetings? I want these meetings to be meetings where you ask me all the questions you like. This arrangement will serve a useful purpose and save me so very much time.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 17874

[1] The addressee, a nurse, had suggested to Gandhiji that he should take "some orange juice and honey every day."

[2] The addressee had, on behalf of some Indian students who did not subscribe to Gandhiji's political or social ideas, asked for an appointment.

476. LETTER TO DR. KRISTIAN SCHJELDERUP

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
September 29, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 21st inst. I do not know if Norway is abandoned altogether.

In any case you will please forgive me for not writing you the article you want;[1] I have not a moment to spare. If I do not come at all to Norway, you will perhaps write to me again and I might be able to write you something.

Yours sincerely,

DR. KRISTIAN SCHJELDERUP
THE UNIVERSITY OF OSLO
NORWAY

From a photostat : S.N. 17810

477. LETTER TO J. THEODORE HARRIS

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
September 29, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

Mr. Alexander[2] has handed your letter to me. I am looking forward to meeting Dr. Montessori[3] on Wednesday next. I shall wait for her if she is not here at 10 o'clock punctually.

Yours sincerely,

J. THEODORE HARRIS, ESQ.
4 GRAHAM ROAD, E. 8

From a photostat : S.N. 17873

[1] The addressee had requested Gandhiji to give his opinion on "The Message of Jesus Christ to the Men of Today" for the journal *Fritt Ord.*

[2] Horace Alexander

[3] Dr. Maria Montessori, the educationist; for a report of their meeting, *vide* " Interview with Maria Montessori", 9-10-1931

478. LETTER TO R. B. GREGG

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,

LONDON, W.,

September 29, 1931

MY DEAR GOVIND,

I have your letter of the 27th July last.[1] Of course if I could persuade India to revert to methods of barter, it would be a capital thing, but I do not think I would get any response just now. There are, however, many things possible in that direction and these are being tried.

As I am dictating this letter against time, I am not going into details.

You see I am dictating this in London. I came because I felt that it was a clear call from God, and if I could describe to you in detail how I was led to London, even you would be surprised how it all happened when it seemed to have utterly broken down. I was packing to go away to the Ashram and I packed inside of half-an-hour to entrain by the Special taking me to the ship that brought me here.

You will like to know that I have already seen Prof. Laski; I am in close touch with him.

Don't think that Malaviyaji and Mrs. Naidu have come here over the heads of the Congress. They have come because they have an independent status and they have come with the consent of the

[1] It said: ". . . Recently I have wondered whether, after India gets her freedom it might not be a great relief to the peasantry to let them pay their taxes in the form of a percentage of their crops, as was done centuries ago. . . .Recently I talked with an English friend of mine who used to be a teacher at Harvard College . . . his name is H.J.Laski. He told me that he was Mr. Justice Sankey's chief secretarial assistant at the first Round Table Conference. . . . Apparently he has hypnotized himself into thinking that the financial safeguards there proposed would work out to be entirely in Indian control, though how any honest Englishman with a knowledge of Magna Carta could think so is beyond my comprehension. . . . And now that the Government have put Malaviyaji upon the list of delegates, I think the British Government believe that Malaviyaji has more influence with you than any other Indian who is pliable to them, and so they will work on you through Irwin on one side and Malaviyaji on the other.. Those two men, as men, may be wholly sincere but I do not think they know the falsities and horrors of the system they are trying to preserve. . . ." (S.N. 17394)

Congress. The Congress could have put them on the Deputation, but the decision to make me sole agent of the Congress was arrived at after the fullest consideration and there were so many reasons for that decision that on no account could it be changed.

I have no time to give you an account of the doings here. Most of what is happening you get through the newspapers; the rest you will get from Mahadev or Pyarelal, or Devdas or Mira if she gets the time.

With love to you all,

Yours affectionately,

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N.4665; also S.N.17876

479. LETTER TO JULIET E. BLUME

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
September 29, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 13th inst. I think the meaning of Dominion Status you have quoted is admirable.[1] What, however, the Indian National Congress is aiming at, is a Partnership or Alliance. Dominions are generally English speaking peoples, or they are otherwise called "daughter nations". India is in that sense an alien nation, therefore she can only be legitimately a partner or an ally.

The statement attributed to me and quoted by you[2] is the opposite of what I have repeated from thousands of platforms. Non-violence is an absolute creed. I could not therefore have said anything that could detract in any way from the value of that creed. Violence is excluded by the Congress voluntarily because the Congress has come

[1] The addressee, a senior at Barnard College, Columbia University, had quoted Lord Balfour's definition of Dominion status as "autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, and in no way subordinate, one to the other, in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations." She had asked Gandhiji to give his own definition of the concept.

[2] It read: "Three hundred and sixty million people without liberty cannot remain in the leashes of non-violence for ever." *Vide* "Interview to the Associated Press", 11-9-1931.

to the conclusion that it is the right thing, but the mere fact of England and India being members of the League of Nations surely does not exclude the possibility of violence if either nation is minded to offer violence England in order to retain her hold on India, and India in order to get out of that hold. Even as it is, today India is only nominally a member of the League; she is not a member in her own right, but she is a member under English patronage and at the will of Great Britain.

Yours sincerely,

MISS JULIET E. BLUME
771 WEST END AVENUE
NEW YORK, U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N. 17878

480. LETTER TO V. G. KURMA

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
September 29, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter.[1] My time-table is so crowded I dare not give you a fixed appointment. If you would come to 88 Knightsbridge some day at 10 a.m., I would try and give you just a few minutes.

I would like you to prepare notes of all you would have me to know. I shall undertake to study your notes and see you again if I find it necessary to discuss any of the points raised therein.

Yours sincerely,

V. G. KURMA, ESQ.
RAGLAN HOTEL
UPPER BEDFORD PLACE, W.C. 1

From a photostat: S.N. 17885

[1] The addressee, who had been Private Secretary to the Agent of the Government of India in South Africa, had said he had a message for Gandhiji from the South-African Indian Congress and asked for an appointment.

481. LETTER TO H. C. DHANDA

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
September 29, 1931

MY DEAR DHANDA,

I have been waiting for a letter all these days.[1] Do please come whenever you like and look me up at 88 Knightsbridge. Take away an appointment for some time during the day if I am absent or busy at the time you call.

Yours sincerely,

H. C. DHANDA, ESQ.
86 VICTORIA ROAD
OXFORD

From a photostat: S.N. 17881

482. LETTER TO ARTHUR HARRISON

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
September 29, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter.[2] I could give you a few minutes if you could come to 88 Knightsbridge, on. . . .[3]

Yours sincerely,

ARTHUR HARRISON, ESQ.
BROTHERHOOD OF THE WAY HOUSE
61 HUGH STREET, S.W.1.

From a photostat: S.N. 17825

[1] The addressee was the son of Lala Dunichand, who, according to the addressee's letter of September 24, had probably written to Gandhiji about him.

[2] The addressee was associated with a movement called the Brotherhood of the Way, based on the Sermon on the Mount. He had asked Gandhiji for an appointment.

[3] This is left blank in the source.

483. LETTER TO SIR HENRY STRAKOSCH

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
September 30, 1931

DEAR SIR HENRY,

I thank you for your letter. I would gladly be present at the forthcoming discussions between yourself and Mr. Birla. Will Saturday next at 11 o'clock suit you? Upon hearing from you, I will advise Mr. Birla of the appointment.

Yours sincerely,

SIR HENRY STRAKOSCH, K. C. B.

From a photostat: S.N. 17887

484. LETTER TO S. N. HAJI

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W. E.,
September 30, 1931

MY DEAR HAJI,

I thank you for your letter. I am glad you sent me your note on the definition of the word 'citizen'[1]. It will prove useful to me.

Yours sincerely,

S. N. HAJI, ESQ.
RANGOON

From a microfilm: S.N. 17679

[1] The addressee had taken exception to T. B. Sapru's suggestion at the Round Table Conference that the term 'Indian Citizen' might be defined to include the British in India, saying that in that way any British subject "whether a Britisher, a South African, a Canadian or an Australian would come to possess. . . . rights equal to those enjoyed by Indians born in India". He had suggested that citizenship should be so defined "as to exclude the citizens of what we may call the Anti-Indian Colonies. . .."

485. LETTER TO PASTOR FORELL

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
September 30, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your telegram[1] advising me of Sundaram's address on the Indian movement, and for your sympathies and prayers for the success of my mission.

Yours sincerely,

HERR PASTOR FORELL
SWEDISH CHURCH
BERLIN

From a photostat: S.N. 17898

486. LETTER TO DR. MAUDE ROYDEN

LONDON,
September 30, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. It was a privilege to meet you and speak to your congregation[2]. Your people did give the donation to me and if I transfer the collection to you, why should you be troubled? I could not have made better use of the gift.[3]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Guildhouse, November 1931

[1] This said: "Swedish friends of India, assembled last night to hear brother Sundaram's address on Gandhiji's movement send their sympathies and prayers for success your mission." The addressee presided at the gathering. (S. N. 17846)

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Guidhouse Church", 23-9-1931

[3] Gandhiji had desired that the colleciton be used for work among unemployed.

487. INTERVIEW WITH RAMSAY MACDONAND[1]

LONDON,
September 30, 1931

Gandhi showed no sign of any intention to break up the Conference. What he complained of was that the Conference was futile because the other delegates were only the nominees of Government and he was the sole genuine representative of the people. He thought that he could represent the Muslims and the Depressed Classes better than those who purported to do so. He and the British Government could settle the whole question if he was treated as representing everybody. The Prime Minister said that the Conference had at any rate been successful in so far as it had got Gandhi to come to London and brought him into touch with the Government; and he countered by telling Gandhi that the civil disobedience movement was a mistake and only hindered the British Government from carrying out their intentions towards India.

From a photostat: C.W. 9381. Courtesy: India Office Library.

488. SPEECH AT INDIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE[2]

LONDON,
September 30, 1931

Gandhiji said he was well aware of the sacrifices made by the merchants of India in national interests, but, much as they had done, still more was expected by the nation. Paying a tribute to Dadabhoy Naoroji and Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, Gandhiji said those great leaders recognized that, unless the merchant princes in India identified themselves with the Congress activities, progress towards freedom would be delayed.

Gandhiji proceeded to criticize the financial manipulation undertaken by the Government of India at the dictation of the Secretary of State over the heads of those who knew what India wanted and said:

I share your fear that, at this time, when we are led to ex- pect a transfer of power to ourselves, there does not after all appear to be much of a change at the headquarters. I am afraid power is not going to descend on us suddenly, but if really great changes are

[1] Except for this official note, no other report of the interview is available.

[2] The Indian Chamber of Commerce had arranged a reception in honour of Gandhiji at Hotel Metropole.

contemplated by His Majesty's advisers, we should have a foretaste in matters like this.

The Congress came deliberately to the conclusion that, without absolute control of the finances, no self-governmemt could possibly meet the nation's needs. Part of the mandate given me was that Independence was meaningless unless accompanied by complete control of defence, external affairs and finance. I cannot conceive of any government, which can be called responsible, which does not exercise those rights.

He assured British firms trading in India that, where their interests were legitimately and justly acquired and not conflicting with the vital interests of the masses, they need have no fear from the National Government.

No safeguard can possibly equal India's goodwill. Nobody who wishes to remain in India when she has acquired full freedom can come to harm if he depends upon goodwill, without which other safeguards, however carefully worded, would not be worth the paper on which they were written. Such safeguards would be a hindrance rather than a help in the solution of the great problem to which the delegates are applying their minds.

Regarding the communal question, where the position was admittedly serious, Gandhiji said the Congress had laid down its own policy in the clearest possible terms in the Lahore resolution, supplemented by the Working Committee.[1]

I can only add a personal assurance that, so far as humanly possible, I shall leave no stone unturned to reach a solution, but I cannot conceal from you that I find myself confronted with the greatest difficulties. I can only seek your prayerful assistance and whatever influence you can exert upon the different communities.

The Hindus, 1-10-1931

[1] The reference is to the resolution adopted at the Lahore Session of the Congress in January 1930 (*Vide* "Speech at Subjectes Committee, A.I.C.C.- III) and to that of the Working Committee adopted duiring its meeting in Bombay from July 7 to 13, 1931 (*vide* "Proposed Communal Solution", sub-title Congress Scheme",).

489. LETTER TO ARTHUR J. DAVIS

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W. 1,
October 1, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

Thank you for your letter.[1] Here is my message:

"It was a brave step, worthy of America, to have undertaken the most difficult task for her of total prohibition. It would be a shame and a rude shock to reformers throughout the world if for any cause America abandoned the policy and returned to the drink evil."

Yours sincerely,

MR. ARTHUR J. DAVIS
THE MASSACHUSETTS ANTI-SALOON LEAGUE
345 TREMONT BUILDING
73 TREMONT STREET
BOSTON, MASS.

From a photostat: S.N. 17808

490. LETTER TO UJJAL SINGH

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
October 1, 1931

DEAR SARDAR UJJAL SINGH,

I have to acknowledge with thanks your letter of the 30th ult.

It is quite correct that I have personally said that I would give a blank cheque to the Mussalmans regarding their demands, but such a statement has added to it a similar assurance to the Sikhs; and for that matter all other communities.

It has been a belief of a lifetime with me that he who will serve

[1] In his letter of September 21 the addressee had said: "You can perform a great service if you will send us a word of encouragement and greeting to be read... at an all-day State-wide conference on temperance and total abstinence which is to be held... on October 16th. America is in the throes of a desperate drive of the liquor interests to restore beer, and thus to re-establish the old evils which we fought so long and so successfully."

the national cause should demand no rights and make room for rights for those who demand rights, but I never meant that the blank cheque to the Mussalmans should mean a neglect, wholly or partially, of Sikhs of any other just claims.

Yours sincerely,

SARDAR UJJAL SINGH
ST. JAMES' COURT
BUCKINGHAM GATE, S.W. 1

From a photostat: S.N. 17925

491. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

We have decided to ask for an adjournment for another week of the Minorities Committee of the Round Table Conference.

These conversations will continue during the next week. There is no deadlock. Nothing is settled. I am neither happy nor unhappy about the position My conversation with the Prime Minister had nothing to do with the Communal question.

The News Chronicle, 1-10-1931

492. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

LONDON,
October 1, 1931

At this distance it is difficult to understand the implications of the budget, but I am horrified that the poor man's salt has also come in for increased taxation. I know, the Congress will fight this also. The remedy for balancing the budget does not lie through increased taxation, but through radical retrenchment in both military and civil expenditure. I tender congratulations to H.E. the Viceroy for having voluntarily accepted a cut in his salary, but I cannot escape the feeling that reduction must be on a grand scale if India is to share in real self-government.

The Hindu, 1-10-1931, and *The Bombay Chronicle,* 2-10-1931

[1] Gandhiji made the statement at the end of a two-and-a-half hour meeting with the Aga Khan and other Muslim leaders at the Ritz Hotel.

493. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

LONDON,
October 1, 1931

Mr. Gandhi said that the money would be devoted to the constructive work of the Congress. Millions of Indians were so sunk in poverty that it was almost impossible to inspire them with any hope of earning their own livelihood and the task of the Congress was formidable. If he could persuade the people to become self-sufficient in respect of the second necessity of life, namely, clothing, they would have a real swaraj.[2]

(1) Complete Independence is the present objective of the Congress. My mission here is to ask for immediate independence, but that does not exclude partnership with Britain on absolutely equal terms to be terminated at will. I would consider that complete independence.

(2) What the Congress meant (by the Lahore resolution) was severance from the British Empire which is not the same thing as severance of even honourable partnership with Great Britain. India will not belong to an Empire if it means that India becomes a subject nation, but India will be be honourable partner with Great Britain if both India and Great Britain so desire.

That India desires it is plain from the fact that I have come here to ask for Complete Independence, not excluding the idea of partnership if it is equally desired by Great Britain.

(3) The Independence Section is represented by me on behalf of the Congress.

(4) The Indian States' subjects are not being represented by representatives appointed or elected by them. I have a mission on behalf of these subjects of Indian States which I hope to fulfil according to my lights and my ability.

(5) I must say that I do not consider myself to be quite so

[1] At a reception given to Gandhiji by the Indian community at Guildhouse on the eve of his birthday. Vithalbhai Patel presided. A purse of £ 575 was presented to Gandhiji.

[2] The report of Gandhiji's answers which follows is from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 30-10-1931.

simple as to imagine that I can get independence for India by entering into a bargain of such an insignificant character compared with what I seek.

My offer of preference for British cloth to other foreign cloths is based upon its own merits and the merits are these: that if I have Great Britain as my partner, even as I would prefer Indian cloth to any other cloth so would I prefer the cloth produced by my partner to that produced by those who are not my partners.

(6) I propose to devote all my energies, when the question of franchise comes up before the Federal Structure Committee, to making good the point that I have adumbrated, i.e., showing that adult suffrage is an immediate possibility through the method that I have planned.

I am not able to say with absolute certainty that the whole of the Working Committee shares my views but it comes under the powers given to me by the Working Committee that I may use my discretion in the method of reaching adult suffrage.

My hands are tied so far as adult suffrage is concerned; they are not tied in so far as the methods are concerned. There are some members of the Working Committee who do not actually know what I mean by the method.

(7) I have already placed before the Government the written mandate of the Congress which embodies the whole of its demands wihout reservation whatsoever.

The Government has not yet laid its cards upon the table, but the time is fast coming when the Government's policy will also have to be declared one way or the other because I expect that all the members of the Round Table Conference, busy as they are, are not going to give up the whole of their time here in idle expectation of something turning up on the morrow,

I have definite instructions not to idle my time here. Therefore, as soon as I find that I cannot usefully remain here, I shall have to return to India.

(8) The Garhwali prisoners (as they are called) deliberately disobeyed their orders. I agree that it was a non-violent action on their part, but it was also a gross breach of discipline by those who had taken an oath to carry out the commands of their officers.

So long as the present Government remains, however, I have not

the heart to go to them to say you must release them. I can say: your punishment is too heavy for the crime.

After all, they thought the orders were mischievous. They might have been satisfied with the right punishment.

I am not going at this stage to confer with the Government about this thing. If I get the thing for which I have been sent here, I can do this thing, but otherwise it is [not] in conflict with the conduct of the campaign itself that some men may suffer imprisonment, even life servitude.

(9) Please understand that I have tried my level best in the manner that I know is consistent with the dignity of the nation in connection with the Meerut prisoners.

I will not fail in my duty whenever I can put in a word for them.[1]

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 3-10-1931, and 30-10-1931

494. EXTRACTS FROM PROCEEDINGS OF MINORITIES COMMITTEE MEETING

LONDON,
October 1, 1931

MR. GANDHI : Prime Minister, after consultation with His Highness the Aga Khan and other Muslim friends last night, we came to the con-clusion that the purpose for which we meet here would be better served if a week's adjournment was asked for. I have not had the opportunity of consulting my other colleagues, but I have no doubt that they will also agree to the proposal I am making. I have been having my Muslim friends anxious conversations, and I had the pleasure of meeting some other friends also, last afternoon, belonging to the different groups or classes. We were not able to make much headway, but they too felt that the time at our disposal was too short even for exchanging views. I may say for myself that beyond this week's adjournment I would not press for any further adjournment, but I would report to this Committee what has been the result of the endeavour I shall be making during the week.

[1] According to a Reuter report, towards the end of the meeting, some Indian communists caused "pandemonium" resulting in their forcible ejection.

I let out no secret when I inform this Committee that His Highness and the other friends with whom I was closeted last night laid upon my shoulders the burden of calling representatives of the different groups together and holding consultations with a view to arriving at some final settlement. If this poropsal of mine commends itself to you, Prime Minister, and to the rest of the members of this Committee, I shall be glad. I know that His Highness will second this proposal, and let us all hope that, at the end of the week, it will be possible to report some sort of a settlement.

When I express this hope, I do not wish to convey any impression that, because I express it, there is something that I know and on which I am building that hope. But I am an irrepressible optimist, and often in my lifetime when the horizon has appeared to be the blackest, some turn has taken place which has given good ground for hope. Whatever it may be, so far as human endeavour is possible, all that endeavour will be made, I have no doubt, by many members of this Committee to arrive at a settlement.

With these words I leave my proposal, that we adjourn our proceedings to this day week, in your hands for consideration.

H.H. THE AGA KHAN : I have pleasure in seconding the proposal.

SARDAR UJJAL SINGH : I rise to give my whole-hearted support to this proposal, and I share the hope that by this means we may come to some understanding, given goodwill on both sides.

DR. AMBEDKAR: I do not wish to create any difficulty in our making every possible attempt to arrive at some solution of the problem with which this Committee has to deal, and if a solution can be arrived at by the means suggested by Mahatma Gandhi, I, for one, will have no objection to that proposal.

But there is just this one difficulty with which, I, as representing the Depressed Classes, am faced. I do not know what sort of committee Mahatma Gandhi proposes to appoint to consider this question during the period of adjournment, but I suppose that the Depressed Casses will be represented on this Committee.

MR. GANDHI: Without doubt. . . .[1]

[1] All the speakers that followed generally supported the adjournment motion, but Dr. Ambedkar, Sir Henry Gidney and Rao Bahadur Pannirselvam, though they did not oppose the adjournment, said that since Gandhiji recognized only two to minority communities, namely, the Muslims and the Sikhs, they did not see how they could participate in the work of the committee which Gandhiji proposed to form for the purpose of unofficial consultations.

Prime Minister and friends, I see that there is some kind of misunderstanding with reference to the scope of the work that some of us have set before ourselves. I fear that Dr. Ambedkar, Colonel Gidney and other friends are unnecessarily nervous about what is going to happen. Who am I to deny political status to any single interest or class or even individual in India ? As a representative of the Congress I should be unworthy of the trust that has been reposed in me by the Congress if I were guilty of sacrificing a single national interest. I have undoubtedly given expression to my own views on these points. I must confess that I hold to those views also. But there are ways and ways of guaranteeing protection to every single interest. It will be for those of us who will be putting our heads together to try to evolve a scheme. Nobody would be hampered in pressing his own views on the members of this very informal conference or meeting. We need not call it a committee. I have no authority to convene any committee or to bring into being a committee. I can only act as a humble messenger of peace, try to get together representatives of different interests and groups, and see whether, by being closeted in one room and by heart-to-heart conversation, we may not be able to remove cobwebs of misunderstanding and see our way clear to the goal that lies so hazily before us today.

I do not think, therefore, that anybody need be afraid as to being able to excess his opinion or carrying his opinion also. Mine will be there equal to that of everyone of us; it will carry no greater weight; I have no authority behind me to carry my opinion against the opinion of anybody. I have simply given expression to my views in the national interest, and I shall give expression to these views whenever they are opportune. It will be for you, it is for you to reject or accept those opinions. Therefore please disabuse your minds, everyone of us, of the idea that there is going to be any steam-rolling in the Conference and the informal meetings that I have adumbrated. But if you think that this is one way of coming closer together than by sitting stiffly at this table, you will not only carry this adjournment motion, but give your whole-hearted co-operation to the proposal that I have made in connection with these informal meetings.[1]

Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session): Proceedings of Federal Structure Committee and Minorities Committee, pp. 528-9.

[1] The motion was put to vote by the chairman and was carried.

495. NOTE FOR EVELYN CLARE

[After *October 1, 1931*][1]

1.15 30th Oct. Do not take more than $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

From a photostat: S.N. 17927

496. INTERVIEW TO "THE JEWISH CHRONICLE"

LONDON,

[Before *October 2, 1931*]

I have a world of friends among the jews. In South Africa I was surrounded by Jews, and I have had a Jewish shorthand writer and typist who was regarded more as a member of the family.

I cannot, however, say that I have made a proper study of the Jewish religion, but I have studied as much as a layman can. I think the Jewish religion is a very fine religion, being so closely allied to Christianity in many respects. For example, the Prophets of the old Testament are all Jews, and Jesus himself was a Jew.

I visited the Synagogue at Johannesburg during the Festival of the Passover, and you can almost say I was keeping the Passover with my Jewish friends, because I went to their house every night and I heartily enjoyed, what do you call them now?

"*Matzos*", interjected our representative.

Yes, *matzos*, I think *matzos* are very nice and crisp.

I have,however, attended two or three Jewish services, which I think are very impressive; but my own feeling is that "the heart was lacking". That is to say, the spirit was lacking. They were too ceremonial, although I must say the ceremony was very nice. The Jewish Rabbi was a celebrated scholar, and he delivered a learned discourse, but it did not touch my herart .

My attitude towards Jews is one of great sympathy. I am very much attracted to the Jews, firstly, because of selfish motives, since I have very many Jewish friends; secondly,for a far deeper one—they

[1] This note was made by Gandhiji on a letter dated October 1, 1931 from the addressee inviting him to lunch at a meeting of the Fruitarian Society, Doddington, Kent. The meeting according to a further letter from Clare was to be held at Grosvenor House Hotel, London.

have got a wonderful spirit of cohesion. That is to say, wherever you find Jews there is a spirit of comradeship among them. Moreover, they are a people with a vision. The implication and full meaning of that vision, if I may put it without impertinence, they do not themselves realize.

I am sometimes asked whether I regard Jews as the Chosen People, and I say, well, in a sense, yes. But then all peoples consider themselves to be chosen.

Zionism in its spiritual sense is a lofty aspiration. By spiri- tual sense I mean they should want to realize the Jerusalem that is within. Zionism meaning reoccupation of Palestine has no attraction for me. I can understand the longing of a Jew to return to Palestine, and he can do so if he can without the help of bayonets, whether his own or those of Britain. In that event he would go to Palestine peacefully and in perfect friendliness with the Arabs. The real Zionism of which I have given you my meaning is the thing to strive for, long for and die for. Zion lies in one's heart. It is the abode of God. The real Jerusalem is the spiritual Jerusalem. Thus he can realize this Zionism in any part of the world.

Mr. Gandhi added that unfortunately he had not been to Palestine yet but that he hoped to go there some day.

I should love to go, for I have read so much about the Holy Land. Anti-Semitism is really a remnant of barbarism. I have never been able to understand this antipathy to the Jews. I have read Zangwill's *Children of the Ghetto*, and when I read it, I realized what unmerited persecution Jews had already gone through and I felt then as I feel now that this persecution is, if I can again say so in all humility, a reflection upon those who, in the name of Christianity, have persecuted this long-suffering race.

The remedy? My remedy is twofold. One is that those who profess to be Christians should learn the virtue of toleration and charity, and the second is for Jews to rid themselves of the causes for such reproach as may be justly laid at their door.

The Jewish Chronicle, 2-10-1931

497. INTERVIEW TO HENRY CARTER

LONDON,
[*October 2, 1931*][1]

The drink question in India is most urgent. The religious teachings of both Hindus and Mohammedans require abstinence from alcoholic liquors. The future all India Legislature would certainly regard it as ess-ential to prohibit the importation, manufacture, or sale of all alcoholic beverages, subject to an exemption which would permit the supply of alcohol for medicinal, scientific, and industrial uses. The supply for medicinal purposes would be dependent on a medical prescription. Prohibition must apply equally to distillation in India and to imports of liquor from overseas.

I asked Mr. Gandhi how he would propose to deal with the question of the substantial revenue which Government in India derives from liquor taxation. He replied that this revenue should be replaced "by a corresponding cut in the Indian military budget."

We discussed different methods of approach to a solution of the Indian liquor problem. I pointed out that in England we stressed the importance of scientific teaching in the schools as to the nature of alcohol and the effect of alcoholic indulgence. Mr. Gandhi said that to a limited extent instruction on the subject was given in Indian schools, but he was disposed to rely on the religious sentiment of the country as sufficient to maintain the national protest against the use of drink. He regarded the increase of drinking in India as closely associated with industrialization, and stressed the fact that depressing industrial conditions favour the prevalence of alcoholism.

Local option and national prohibition seem to him to differ in this way :

In a country like Britain, where the liquor habit is rooted in history, and where probably the majority of people are users of liquor, local option might be applicable . But India needs no intermediate policy; she is ready or the enactment of complete national prohibition. The sentiment of the country would unquestionably sustain it.

With regard to the opium habit, he pointed out that this is not now as widely diffused in India as the alcohol habit. The growth of the poppy has diminished in

[1] According to Carter the interview took place on Gandhiji's birthday.

recent years. The Government has rationed the export of opium, so that opium exports decrease by 10 per cent annually. This has been a wise and salutary measure. Mr. Gandhi said :

The opium habit is indigenous, but the moral sense of the Indian people would require early, thoroughgoing prohibitive action in this regard also. National prohibition of opium for use in India is requisite, except in so far as opium is required strictly for medicinal and scientific purposes.

The Manchester Guardian, 14-10-1931

498. SPEECH AT LUNCHEON[1]

LONDON,
October 2, 1931

Ever since I have come to London I have experienced nothing but friendliness and genuine affection. I have been making new friends from day to day. But you, sir, have reminded me that you have been friends in need, and friends in need are really friends indeed. When it appeared that India, or rather Congressmen, might be abandoned by nearly everybody on earth, you stood by the Congress firmly and accepted the Congress position as your own. You have today renewed your faith in the Congress programme and thereby you have lightened my labours.

It would be like carrying coals to Newcastle to deliver to you the message for which I have been sent here as the Congress representative. You know all about the merits of the Congress case and I am convinced that the Congress case is quite safe in your hands and you have by today's action set the seal upon the friendship, through the Congress, of the dumb and semi-starved millions of India's villages.

It is imagined that you have attended a lunch. My sympathies are wholly with you. I am accustomed to English lunches not through the taste but through the eyes, and when I saw this fruit-laden table, I

[1] The luncheon, to mark Gandhiji's 62nd birthday, was arranged by the Independent Labour Party, the Indian National Congress League and The Gandhi Society, at the Westminister Palace rooms. Fenner Brockway was in the chair. Altogether 388 persons were present. A charkha was presented to Gandhiji on the occasion.

realized what a sacrifice it was for you to take what is an apology for a luncheon. I hope that the spirit of sacrifice will forbear until tea-time comes and you provide yourselves with any little delicacies that English hotels and restaurants provide for you. But behind this apparent joke there is also seriousness. I know that you have sacrificed something. Some of you have sacrificed much for advocating the cause of India's independence understanding the word 'independence' in its full English sense. But it may be that you will be called upon, in you continue your advocacy of India's cause, to make much larger sacrifices. I entertained no illusions in my mind when I undertook to come here. You heard me say on the first day of my entry into London that one of the most potent causes of my having come to London was to fulfil a word of honour that I had given to an honourable Englishman[1] and in pursuance of that word, without thinking what the result is likely to be, I am endeavouring to the utmost of my ability, to show to every Englishman[1] and Englishwoman I meet that what the Congress stands for is what is deserved by India and, furthermore, I am endeavouring to show that the Congress is in earnest and I am here to vindicate the honour of the Congress, the honour of India, by asking for everything that is included in the Congress mandate. I should have no liberty to diminish anything from the Congress claim, save to the extent that is permissible in that mandate and that being so, I feel, the more I stay here, that the task is difficult almost superhuman. There is so much ignorance of the conditions that prevail in India. There is so much ignorance of true history. As a Quaker young friend reminded me, when I was about to come here, that it was no use coming here so long as from childhood you were brought up, not on truthful real history, but upon false history, and I see that truth uttered by that Quaker friend exemplified as I come into contact with Englishmen and Enlishwomen.

It is terribly difficult, almost impossible, for them to realize that, at least so far as Indians are concerned, they believe that the sum total of the activities of British administration in India has been harmful rather than beneficial to the nation. It is no use pointing out the benefit that India might have received from the British connection. It is of vital importance to sum up the pros and cons and find out how

[1] Lord Irwin

India has fared.

I have placed two infallible tests : Is it or is it not a fact that India today is the poorest country in the world, having millions of people remaining idle for six months of the year?

Is it or is it not a fact that India has been rendered emasculated not merely through compulsory disarmament,but also through being denied so many opportunities that members of a free nation are always entitled to?

If you find upon investigation that in these two cases England has failed, I do not say hopelessly, but to a very large extent, is it not time that England revised her policy?

As a friend said, and as the late Lokamanya Tilak said repeatedly from thousands of platforms: "Freedom and independence were India's birthright." It is not necessary for me to prove that British rule has been in the end British misrule. It is only enough for me to state that, misrule or good rule, India is entitled to her independence immediately, there is a demand made for it on behalf of her voiceless millions.

It is no answer to be told that there are some in India who are afraid of the words 'freedom' and 'independence'. There are some of us, and I admit there are some of us, who are afraid of talking about the freedom of India if the British protection so called is withdrawn from India. But I assure you that the starving millions and those who have become politically conscious entertain no such fear and they are ready to pay the price for the sake of freedom. There are, however, well-marked limitations so long as the Congress retains her present workers and her faith in her present policy. We do not want the freedom of India if it is to be bought through the sacrifice of the lives of others if it is to be bought by spilling the blood of the rulers. But if any sacrifice can be made by the nation, by ourselves, to win that freedom, then you will find that we will not hesitate to give a Gangesful of blood to flow in India in order to vindicate the freedom that has been so long delayed, and I know, as you, sir, reminded me, that I was not a stranger in your midst, but that I was a comrade. I know that I have this absolute assurance that so far as you are concerned and those whom you represent are concerned, you would always stand by us and prove once more to India that you are friends in need and therefore friends indeed.

I thank you once more for the great reception you have given to

me. I know that it is not an honour done to me. You have done that honour to the principles which I hope are as dear to me as to you if possible, dearer and I hope with your prayers and your assistance I shall never deny the principles that I today proclaim.

Young India, 15-10-1931

499. SPEECH AT MINORITIES CONFERENCE[1]

LONDON,
October 2, 1931

Mr.Gandhi on behalf of the Congress also opposed special representation to the Depressed Classes. He said, he would support special representation only for Muslims and Sikhs as a necessary evil. . . .

It appears that Mr. Gandhi warned the Conference that, if special representation was conceded, it must be conceded to all minorities.

The Hindu, 3-10-1931

500. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S RECEPTION[2]

LONDON,
October 2,1931

Mr. Gandhi, who arrived three-quarters of an hour late, explained that he had been attending the informal minorities conciliation committee. He said:

I have undertaken work of very considerable responsibility and I could not tear myself away from a meeting that I was attending in connection with the very mission that has brought me from India.

Mr. Gandhi said, there were 700,000 villages in India where the people lived under ill-nourished conditions. One of the best constructive activities of the Congress was that of bringing work to the workless women of the villages, irrespective of race, caste or creed. Probably at the present moment some 50,000 women were being given the work of spinning in their own homes. No constructive

[1] This was the unofficial conciliation committee formed for mutual consultations outside the Round Table Conference; *vide* "Extracts from Proceedings of Minorities Committee Meeting",1-10-1931

[2] The reception, to mark Gandhiji's birthday, was arranged by the Women's Indian Association and Saroj Nalini Dutt Memorial Association in King George's Hall at the Central Y.M.C.A. in the afternoon. Mrs. Brijlal Nehru was in the chair. A purse of £ 165 was presented to Gandhiji on the occasion.

work in India was more important than that of banishing pauperism by giving the men and women not doles or charity but work. The great mass of villagers were without work for six months in the year. When they thought of this chronic unemployment, the unemployment in England dwindled into insignificance. He did not wish to underrate the difficulties arising in in this country from unemployment, such as he had seen in Lancashire, but he did say that the unemployment in India deserved the sympathy and assistance of the whole world. He did not mean material sympathy: if they in India could give work to their people, there would be no need of money, for labour was another form of money. Mr.Gandhi paid a tribute to the "noble part the women of India took during the last struggle for the freedom of India".[1]

The manifestation of energy, devotion and sacrifice which thousands of women made during the last satyagraha in India was nothing short of a miracle. Though I had great faith in their ability to discharge their duty to the utmost, I was not prepared for the phenomenal awakening which occurred. This probably took the country several years in advance. If India today stands taller than she did eighteen months ago, I know Indian women had the largest share in it. It does not surprise me that the vast body of women in India does not want to scramble for special protection and special privileges. The women have set a noble example to men by abstaining form claiming special privileges.

I would like to have their blessings in order that I may not fail to represent the cause that has been entrusted to my hands.

The Times, 3-10-1931 and, *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 4-10-1931

501. DIGAMBAR MUNIS

It seems that some misunderstanding has arisen regarding the opinion I had expressed about Digamber Jain *munis*. My article[2] was never intended to imply that any private individual could take the law into his own hands and harass Digambar *munis* or insult them. I have heard that at present three such *munis* are staying at Mandvi. During the monsoon they are not to go elsewhere. There is a fairly large Jain population in Mandvi. But I hear that other people there harass the *munis* on the basis of my article. If this is true, it should be regarded as a misinterpretation of my article. I had only discussed the moral

[1] What follows is from *Amrita Bazar Patrika.*

[2] *Vide* "Digamber Sadhus", 5-7-1931

aspect of the question. How could I have desired in it that anybody should be harassed, let alone Digamber *munis*? I hope that no one will harass them or any other such *munis*. This note was to have been written before the last conference at Simla, but in all the hurry-skurry, along with many other important tasks, this matter also remained unattended to. I am sorry for it. I hope that no one has caused this harassment on the basis of my original article.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-10-1931

502. STATEMENT ON KHATEDARS' CASE[1]

[LONDON,
Before *October 5, 1931*][2]

With reference to the revenue collections in Bardoli and Borsad, it was from the very beginning a clear understanding that the Khatedars affected by the Civil Disobedience were to pay only as much as they could without borrowing. This was repeatedly brought out in the conversations between the Collector, Mr. Perry, of Kaira and his successor Mr. Bhadrapur and Mr. Kothawala, Collector of Surat. The correspondence carried on with them confirms this statement. So far as the terms of reference to the inquiry officer are concerned, I have distinctly understood that the standard referred to therein means ability to pay without borrowing.

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-10-1931

[1] One of the points to be determined in the Bardoli inquiry was whether the revenue collected from the Khatedars "was in excess of what would have been collected if the standard which has been applied to other villages was observed in reference to the villages in question".

[2] The statement appeared under the date-line October 5,1931.

503 SPEECH AT MEETING OF MINORITIES CONFERENCE

LONDON,
October 5, 1931

The unofficial Minorities Conference began its sitting at 3 p.m. and was still sitting at 5.45 p.m. It is understood that in order to appreciate the full claims of the minority communities, representatives of each community outlined their position and questions discussed mainly concerned with the percentage of representation and weightage and reservation of seats.

During discussion great importance was laid on settlement of the HIndu-Muslim question as the real crux of the minority problem. The impression was created that if the Hindu-Muslim question was settled, the claims of other minorities would be automatically adjusted.

The stand against communal representation and separate representation is reported to have been made by Mr. Gandhi towards the close of todays sitting of the unofficial committee after representatives of various minorities had presented their claims for separate representation and the quantum of representation.

Mr. Gandhi is reported to have given expression to the sense of unreality if all claims were taken at their face value and said that he felt cramped and hemmed in amid a plethora of claims Though he had not been idle, he was hitherto unable to see daylight but if he saw light he would act.

Mr. Gandhi is reported to have expressed the belief that he was able to help but to have invited the conference to elect another chairman if they thought otherwise, for he would not be ashamed to say that he had tried and failed.

Urging the need for a spirit of conciliation, Mr. Gandhi is reported to have invited the Conference to take more time if necessary, but declared that he was unable to compromise on fundamentals and, desirous as they were to see India a great nation, the Congress would never agree to communal representation and would be unworthy of its name if it allowed separate representation.

The Hindu, 6-10-1931

504. LETTER TO E. DOLBY SHELTON

October 6, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter and to recall the pleasant days I spent under your roof at Ventnor.[1]

I have not seen the *Vegetarian News*. I was a born vegetarian, but I had lapsed from my vegetarianism owing to foolish companionship in youth. On coming to London I became a convinced vegetarian, through having read Mr. Salt's essay.

Is this quite clear ?

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 17889

505. SPEECH AT MEETING OF FRIENDS OF INDIA[2]

LONDON,

[*October 7,1931*][3]

So far as human effort is concerned, I seem to be failing. Burdens are being thrown upon me which I am ill able to bear. It is a Herculean task, at the end of which there may be nothing more to be done and there may be no result. But it does not matter. No honest genuine effort has ever failed. But if I am experiencing these chilly and chilling difficulties so far as my work is concerned, I am having nothing but perennial joy outside the Conference and the committees. People seem instinctively to understand the thing. Although I am an utter stranger, they wish me well and wish well to the cause. The cause and I are one, they know,and so they greet me with smiles and blessings and this applies to people high and low. And so I comfort myself that, so long as my cause is truthful and the means clean and non-violent, all is well.

Young India, 22-10-1931

[1] The reference presumably is to the visit mentioned in *Autobiography*; *vid*e "An Autobiography"

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "London Letter"

[3] Mahadev Desai states that the meeting took place a day before the Minorities Committee meeting where Gandhiji announced the failure of his efforts to bring about a compromise on the communal question. This was on October 8; *vide* the following item.

506. SPEECH AT MINORITIES COMMITTEE MEETING

LONDON,
October 8,1931

PRIME MINISTER AND FRIENDS,

It is with deep sorrow and deeper humiliation that I have to anno-unce utter failure on my part to secure an agreed solution of the commu-nal question through informal conversations among and with the repres-entatives of different groups. I apologize to you, Mr. Prime Minister, and the other colleagues for the waste of a precious week. My only conso-lation lies in the fact that when I accepted the burden of carrying on these talks, I knew that there was not much hope of success, and still more in the fact that I am not aware of having spared any effort to reach a solution.

But to say that the conversations have to our utter shame failed is not to say the whole truth. Causes of failure were inherent in the composition of the Indian Delegation. We are almost all not elected representatives of the parties or groups whom we are presumed to represent; we are here by nomination of the Government. Nor are those whose presence was absolutely necessary for an agreed solution to be found here. Further, you will allow me to say that this was hardly the time to summon the Minorities Committee. It lacks the sense of reality in what we do not know what it is that we are going to get. If we knew in a definite manner that we were going to get the thing we want, we should hesitate fifty times before we throw it away in a sinful wrangle, as it would be if we are told that the getting of it would depend on the ability of the present Delegation to produce an agreed solution of the communal tangle. The solution can be the crown of the swaraj constitution, not its foundation, if only because our differences have hardened, if they have hardened, if they have not arisen, by reason of the foreign domination. I have not a shodow of a doubt that the iceberg of communal differences will melt under the warmth of the sun of freedom.

I, thereore, venture to suggest that the Minorities Committee be adjourned *sine die* and that the fundamentals of the constitution be hammered into shape as quickly as may be. Meanwhile, the informal work of discovering a true solution of the communal problem will and must continue; only it must not baulk or be allowed to block the

progress of constitution-building. Attention must be diverted from it and concentrated on the main part of the structure.

I hardly need point out to the Committee that my failure does not mean the end of all hope of arriving at an agreed solution. My failure does not even mean my utter defeat; there is no such word in my dictionary. My confession merely means failure of the special effort for which I presumed to ask for a week's indulgence, which you so generously give.

I propose to use the failure as a stepping-stone to success, and I invite you all to do likewise; but, should all effort at agreement fail, even when the Round Table Conference reaches the end of its labours, I would suggest the addition of a clause to the expected constitution appointing a judicial tribunal that would examine all claims and give its final decision on all the points that may be left unsettled.

Nor need this Committee think that the time given for enabling informal conversations to be carried on has been altogether wasted. You will be glad to learn that many friends not members of the Delegation have been giving their attention to the question. Among these I would mention Sir Geoffrey Corbett. He has produced a scheme of redistribution of the Punjab which, though it has not found acceptance, is, in my opinion, well worth studying. I am asking Sir Geoffrey if he will kindly eleborate and circulate it among the members. Our Sikh colleagues have also produced another, which is at least worthy of study. Sir Hubert Carr produced last night an ingenious and noval proposal to set up for the Punjab two Legislatures, the lower to satisfy the Muslim claim and the upper nearly satisfying the Sikh claim. Though I am no believer in a bicameral Legislature, I am much attracted by Sir Hubert's proposal, and I would invite him to pursue it further with the same zeal with which, I gratefully admit, he followed and contributed to the informal deliberations.

Lastly, inasmuch, as the only reason or my appearance at these deliberations is that I represent the Indian National Congress, I must clearly set forth its position. In site of appearances to the contrary, especially in England, the Congress claims to represent the whole nation, and most decidedly the dumb millions, among whom are included the numberless untouchables, who are more suppressed than depressed, as also in a way the more unfortunate and neglected classes known as Backward Races.

Here is the Congress position in a nutshell. I am reading the Congress resolution on the subject.

> However much it may have failed in the realization, the Congress has, since its inception, set up pure nationalism as its ideal. It has endeavoured to break down communal barriers. The following Lahore resolution was the culminating point in its advance towards nationalism :
>
> "In view of the lapse of the Nehru Report it is necessary to declare the policy of the Congress regarding communal questions :
>
> The Congress believes that in an independent India communal questions can only be solved on strictly national lines; but as the Sikhs in particular, and the Muslims and the other minorities in general, have expressed dissatisfaction over the solution of communal questions, proposed in the Nehru Report, this congress assures the Sikhs, the Muslims and other minorities that no solution thereof in any future constitution will be acceptable to the Congress that does not give full satisfaction to the parties concerned."
>
> Hence the Congress is precluded from setting forth any communal solution of the communal problem, but at this critical juncture in the history of the nation it was felt that the Working Committee should suggest for adoption by the country a solution, though communal in appearance, yet as nearly national as possible, and generally acceptable to the communities concerned. The Working Committee, therefore, after full and free discussion, unanimously passed the following scheme :
>
> 1. (a) The article in the constitution relating to fundamental rights shall include a guarantee to the communities concerned of the protection of their cultures, languages, scritps, education, profession and practice of religion and religious endowments;
>
> (b) Personal laws shall be protected by specific provisions to be embodied in the constitution;
>
> (c) Protection of political and other rights of minority communities in the various Provinces shall be the concern and be within the jurisdiction of the Federal Government.
>
> 2. The Franchise shall be extended to all adult men and women—

And then there is a note to this:

> The Working Committee is committed to adult franchise by the Karachi resolution of the Congress, and cannot entertain any alternative franchise. In view, however, of misapprehensions in some quarters, the Committee wishes to make it clear that, in any event, the franchise shall be uniform and so

extensive as to reflect in the electoral roll the proportion in the population of every community.

3. (a) Joint electorates shall form the basis of representation in the future constitution of India; (b) That for the Hindus in Sind, the Muslims in Assam and the Sikhs in the Punjab and North-West Frontier Province, and for Hindus and Muslims in any province where they are less than 25 per cent of the population, seats shall be reserved in the Federal and Provincial Legislatures on the basis of population, with the right to contest additional seats.

4. The appointments shall be made by non-party Public Service Commissions, which shall prescribe the minimum qualifications, and which shall have due regard to the efficiency of the Public Service as well as to the principle of equal opportunity to all communities for a fair share in the Public Services of the country.

5. In the formation of Federal and Provincial Cabinets, the interests of minority communities shall be recognized by convention.

6. The North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan shall have the same form of government and administration as other Provinces.

7. Sind shall be constituted into a separate Province provided that the people of sind are prepared to bear the financial burden of the separated Provinces.

8. The future constitution of the country shall be Federal. The residuary powers shall vest in the federating units unless, on further examination, it is found to be against the best interest of India.

The Working Committee has adopted the foregoing scheme as a compromise between the proposals based on undiluted communalism and undiluted nationalism. Whilst on the one hand the Working Committee hopes that the whole nation will endorse the scheme, on the other it assures those who take extreme views and cannot adopt it, that the Committee will gladly, as it is bound to by the Lahore Resolution, accept without reservation any other scheme if it commands the acceptance of all the parties concerned.[1]

That is the Congress resolution. If, however, a national solution is impossible and the Congress scheme proves unacceptable, I am not precluded from endorsing any other reasonable scheme which may be acceptable to the parties concerned. The Congress position on this question, therefore, is one of the greatest possible accommodation.

[1] *Vide* "Proposed Communal Solution", 16-7-1931

Where it cannot help, it will not obstruct. Needless to say, the Congress will whole-heartedly support any scheme of private arbitration. It seems to have been represented that I am opposed to any representation of the untouchables on the Legislature. This is a travesty of the truth. What I have said, and what I must repeat, is that I am opposed to their special representation. I am convinced that it can do them no good, and may do much harm; but the Congress is wedded to adult franchise. Therefore, millions of them can be placed on the Voters' Roll. It is impossible to conceive that, with untouchability fast disappearing, nominees of these voters can be boycotted by the others; but what these people need more than election to be Legislatures is protection from social and religious persecution. Custom, which is often more powerful than law, has brought them to a degradation of which every thinking HIndu has need to feel ashamed and to do penance. I should, therefore, have the most drastic legislation rendering criminal all the special persecution to which these fellow-countrymen of mine are subjected by the socalled superior classes. Thank God, the conscience of Hindus has been stirred, and untouchability will soon be a relic of our sinful past.

Indian Round Table Conference(Second Session): Proceedings of Federal Structure Committee and Minorities Committee ,Vol. I, pp. 530-1

507. EXTRACT FROM A LETTER TO LORD IRWIN

October 8, 1931

You will have seen with sorrow the failure of my first effort. It does not dismay me. I shall toil on. I repeat the promise given to you that I shall take no decisions on the important questions discussed by us without first seeking an interview with you and placing my difficulties before you.

Halifax, p. 317

508. SPEECH AT CONFERENCE OF MISSIONARY SOCIETIES IN GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND[1]

LONDON,
October 8, 1931

The meeting was begun with a brief period of silence and the Rev. W. Paton, who presided, welcomed Mr. Gandhi and expressed the appreciation of the missionary societies of the fact that Mr. Gandhi could spare time to meet them in the midst of tremendous pressure of work.

Mr. Gandhi, after expressing pleasure at being present and at meeting those who represented a much larger audience, said:

I am appearing before you like a prisoner at the bar, but my jailors are friends. There must be no barrier between us, no harbouring of any grievance on either side. From youth upwards I have enjoyed the friendliest relations with missionaries throughout the world, and in South Africa I came into close touch with some of the finest of Christian missionaries. I attended your churches most regularly and also private prayer meetings and the views I express now are the views I expressed then.

A temporary misunderstanding had arisen between you and me. When newspaper men pry into the affairs of those leading public lives the latter get misrepresented, sometimes maliciously and at other times unintentionally.

Responsible men should learn from my very bitter experience not to believe generally what the reporters state. The recent report about my attitude to missions was an unconscious misrepresentation, for I got to know the source and the reporter in question. I was tired out at the time and was having exercise early in the morning. The reporter walked with me and bombarded me with questions. He did not take any notes and we spoke on a variety of topics. When I saw the criticisms and innuendoes, I realized at once that I had to suffer in consequence of what the reporter wrote, even though he was friendly.

I speak as a public worker and as an amateur journalist of thirty

[1] The conference was hald at Church Missionary House, 6 Salisbury Square. The Rev. W. Paton presided. The meeting was private and the only report issued to the Press was to the effect that a friendly discussion had taken place.

years standing. I know the difficulty of telling the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and the great difficulty of doing justice to your opponents and the greater difficulty of handling facts. Do not believe generally what the reporters say about me. If you have doubt about their statements, send them to me and ask about them. I have had letters from all parts of India and from England and the U.S.A. asking me if it was true that I would prohibit all missionary enterprise and especially proselytizing. What I meant was just the contrary.

I cannot stand for any kind of compulsion. Any suggestion that I should want legislation to prohibit missionary enterprise or to interfere with the beliefs of other people is unthinkable.

The idea of converting people to one's faith by speech and writings, by appeal to reason and emotion and by suggesting that the faith of his forefathers is a bad faith, in my opinion, limits the possibilities of serving humanity. I believe that the great religions of the world are all more or less true and that they have descended to us from God. Having come to us, however, through human media, they have become adulterated. Holding this belief, I hold also that no religion is absolutely perfect. In the bosom of God there is nothing imperfect, but immediately it comes through a human medium, it constantly suffers change and deterioration. The seeker after truth most humbly recognizes this possibility. I have found that the progress of truth is impeded by the spoken word which is the limitation of thought, for no man has been able to give the fullest expression in words to thought. The very nature of thought is limitless and boundless.

A man of prayer believes that God works in a mysterious way and wants the whole world to possess the truth he himself has seen. He would simply pray for it to be shared. It passes; it takes wing.

Shall I use a simile of which I am never tired and which you will forgive. Religion is like a rose. It throws out the scent which attracts us like a magnet and we are drawn to it involuntarily. The scent of religious contact has a greater pungency that the scent of the rose, that is why I hold my view with reference to conversion. It is good and proper that, when we feel satisfied that we have found God and that God has spoken to us, we should wish to share that mystery, but as God has spoken to us mysteriously, we should allow that God Mystery to flow from us in exactly the same manner.

Whilst I criticize this part of missionary work, I willingly admit that missions have done indirect good to India. There is no doubt about this. But for my having come under Christian influence, some of my social work would not have been done. My fierce hatred of child marriage—I gladly say is due to Christian influence. I have come into contact with many splendid specimens of Christian missionaries. In spite of differences I could not possibly help being affected by their merit. And so you will find growing up in my Ashram unmarried girls, though they are free to marry if they wish. I am speaking not of university women but of girls who belong to the uneducated class.

Before I knew anything of Christianity I was an enemy of untou-chability. I could not understand my mother, whom I adored, withdrawing the hem of her garment from the untouchables. My feelings gained mo-mentum owing to the fierce attack from Christian sources on this evil.

If I want a pattern of the ideal missionary, I should instance C. F. Andrews. If he were here, he would blush for what I want to say. I believe that he is today truer, broader and better for his toleration of the other principal religions of the world. He never speaks with me about conversion to Christianity though we are closest friends. I have many friends, but the friendship between Charlie Andrews and myself is especially deep.

It was love at first sight when I saw him first at Durban. If you asked me whether I have noticed any laxity or indifference about his own fundamental position, I would say that he has become firmer in his own faith and in the growth of love for others. I think, whereas he used to see blemishes in Hinduism , today perhaps he sees those very blemishes in another setting, and therefore becomes more approachable to the Hindu. He is today a potent instrument in influencing the lives of Hindus for the better in hundreds and thousands of cases.

His Indian friends in South Africa wrote to me that he was *Deenabandhu*—brother of those in distress. He has endeared himself even to the scavenger class, the pariahs. He went to them natu rally and influenced their conduct in the simplest manner, and now he is help in very great affection. If I were to compete with him as to which of us had the greatest influence with these people in South Africa, I am not sure that he would not floor me.

I want to put all my cards on the table and I want you to do so too. I hope you will be able to say, 'We listened to the old man that evening and we heard nothing that was not truthful and sincere.'

After Mr.Gandhi had finished, and before questions were asked Mr.Paton read the resolution passed in 1924 by the Delhi Unity Conference on the subject of Religious Freedom :[1]

> This Conference is emphatically of opinion that the utmost freedom of conscience and religion is essential, and condemns any desecration of places of worship to whatsoever faith they may belong, and any persecution or punishment or any person or adopting or reverting to any faith, and further condemns any attempt by compulsion to convert people to one's faith or to enforce ones's own religious observance at the cost of the rights of others.
>
> With a view to give effect to the general principles promoting better relations between the various communities of India laid down in the above resolution and the secure full toleration of all faiths, beliefs and religious practices, this Conference records its opinion :
>
> That every individual or group shall have full liberty to hold and give expression to his or their beliefs and follow any religious practice, with due regard to the feelings of others and without interfering with their rights. In no case may such individual or group revile the founders, holy persons or tenets of any other faith.
>
> That every individual is at liberty to follow any faith and to change it whenever he so wills, and shall not by reason of such change of faith render himself liable to any puhishment or persecution at the hands of the followers of the faith renounced by him.
>
> That every individual or group is at liberty to convert or reconvert another by argument or persuasion but must not attempt to do so, or prevent it being done, by force, fraud or other unfair means, such as the offering of material inducement. Persons under 16 years of age should not be converted unless it be along with their parents or guardians. If any person under 16 years of age is found stranded without his parent or guardian by a person of another faith, he should be promptly handed over to a person of his own faith. There must be no secrecy about any conversion or reconversion.

Mr. Paton mentioned that Mr. Gandhi, though engaged in his fast at the time, had himself taken a large part in drafting these resolutions. He said that he hoped

[1] This was about the time of Gandhiji's fast for communal unity in Delhi in September 1924.

these resolutions still represented Mr. Gandhi's views.

To this question Mr. Gandhi gave definite assent.

The Rev. Godfrey Phillips of the London Missionary Society said :

"I wish we could understand one another better with regard to what is happening amongst the 'untouchables' in connection with Christian missions. There are places in the world where there is no 'scent of the rose'. We have found in our experience that when the real 'untouchable', the outcaste, is down and out, we can do nothing permanent except by implanting in his inmost heart something that has vitalizing power—in our experience that is fellowship with God in Christ. We can only get at them in a community. We are with the Mahatma in his feeling for the hungry masses. We are with him in his desire to remove untouchability, but we feel also that we must put inside the outcaste something that will work inside him for always. Can we not understand each other better ? Sometimes when we try to get land for our work, it is the Mahatma's followers who prevent us. Even if the Mahatma does not wish us to convert, our belief in conversion is due to the fact that we really can see no other way."

MR. GANDHI : I honour Mr.Phillips for his question. I don't want to prevent by legislation or force the work of converting, but I wish I could convince Mr. Phillips and other missionaries that in my own humble opinion it is an erroneous way. He has used my analogy of the rose. He says that the missionaries have to take as it were a rose to the untouchables. I would call him a walking rose, and he does not need to be anything more. He does not need to talk about God because these men would be able to see God somewhere written in him and in his conduct, just as, if the rose were planted in front of the pariah's house, it would silently spread its scent. The rose would not have to speak, neither would the Christian missionary have to speak. If Mr.Phillips thinks that before he can come to the help of the untouchables, he must bring the message of God, or the message of the Bible to the untou-chables, how much more then to a man like me. I press this point after having mixed with tens of thousands of untouchables, and done much work of this kind. They do not understand his language. They understand me better because I speak their language. I speak to them about their degraded condition. I do not speak about God. I feel that I take the message of God to them in this particular manner just as to a starving man I take the message of God through the bread I give him. I have no axe to grind. I must not exploit him, I just give him the bread. If I want to convey God to the untouchable I must take Him in the way that he needs. I go to the

untouchables and say, 'What God can I give you unless it is what you need.'

Mr. Gandhi went on to give an illustration of the pitiable state of an old man of the 'untouchable' class, who was not even allowed within sight. Said Mr. Gandhi :

He was brought to me to present an address. The man was afraid of everything, like a countryman set down in the middle of London traffic.

He dropped the address he was to give, but, said Mr. Gandhi:

I picked it up and showed him the right way to hold it. By my attitude I succeeded in gaining his confidence, and I felt that by doing so I had given him a message from God. If I were a Christian missionary (and I can enter into the hearts of Christian missionaries), I would go into their midst as Elwin[1] has gone. He is today planning to work among the untouchables, will establish Christian ashrams among the untouchables, with a church in a mud-hut for his own and his colleagues' use. He wants simply to live among them as God may guide his life.

The Rev. C.E.Wilson of the Baptist Missionary Society said :

"To me the religious life may be simply described as a life of discipleship. We are all learners. The true missionary claims to be a disciple, with a trust to carry out the commission of his Lord, and to persuade others to be disciples. Mr. Gandhi seems to me to deprecate, almost to condemn, religious teaching. We are to go and live among people but not try to make them disciples or instil new faith into them. That seems to me confute Mr. Gandhi's whole life. Does Mr. Gandhi mean that it is not right for us to go to India or any place and try to make poeple disciples, to teach the supreme truth of Jesus Christ if we believe him to be the highest that we know ? Mr. Gandhi has been preaching to us today. Does he really mean to exclude all preaching ?"

MR GANDHI : Language fails to convey meaning; the uttered word is the limitation of thought. There is room for both writing and speech, though I find it would often be better if I wrote and spoke less, but I do not seek to convert anybody to my faith. Though my conviction is strong enough in me for me to die for that conviction, that force does not carry me to the goal of believing that the same thing should be believed by my fellow men. I know what God wishes

[1] Verrier Elwin

for me, but I am not so presumptuous as to believe that I know what God wishes for others. Religious truth comes to us mysteriously. How did sudden upheaval come to Paul and others ? Religion is a matter that must be left to God. I do not say 'no religious teaching'; bring up a man to the highest light his own faith has to give him. I know how impertinent it is for an utter stranger to speak to those to whom the message of the Bible is sacred as life itself. I am speaking to you as a seeker after God, just as you also are seekers after God.

Once some of my friends thought that if I talked with Mr. F. B. Meyer it would make for my conversion. They thought that I was incomplete without acknowledging the message of Christ, and so they put me in touch with Mr. Meyer. He asked me: ''Have you found peace?' When I said 'Yes', he said: 'I have nothing to say to you.' Religion is a personal matter, and I am not going to ask another man to become a Hindu or a Parsi. I would be doing something contrary to my belief. I am sharing with you my own experience, and trying to show you as fellow-workers that probably, if you could see eye to eye with me, your work would flourish more and more. You have amazing self-sacrifice; you are great organizers; you are good men. I want to multiply occasions for your service. I want to work closer with you, but I do not want you to get India to change her faith.[1]

The Rev. W. H. G. Holmes of the Oxford Mission of Calcutta:

"I was in the south of India walking with some Indian students across a path which lay through a field. As we approached a group of Indians, they suddenly withdrew to a distance of about 40 yards into the middle of the field. I went up to these Indians and asked why they had done this. They did this because they feared we were Brahmins, and therefore they must remove themselves. I then said they need not have done that for us because we were Christians, and regarded them as our brothers, and there was a Father in Heaven to whom they were just as dear as we were. They answered me: "These are good words, will you please come to our village and open a school there.' Would we be right in going to teach them about this Father, who I told them loved them as dearly as he loved us, and would Mr. Gandhi encourage them to let us have land to build on in order to teach these people?"

MR. GANDHI : Yes, I would , on one condition, that you will teach them the religion of their fathers through the religion they have got. Don't say to them: 'The only way to know the Father is our way'.

[1] *Vide* "Foreign Missionaries",23-4-1931

God is Father to the 'untouchable', to all of us, but a Father who appears to you in another garb. Show the 'untouchable, the Father as he appears in his surroundings. Unless you are satisfied that we do not know the real Father at all, and then of course it is your duty to say 'What you know as Father is no Father at all. What you believe comes from Satan.' I somtimes receive letters saying that I am a good man, but that I am doing the devil's work. I feel I adore the same Father though in a different form. I may not adore him as 'God' . To me that name makes no appeal, but when I think of Him as Rama, He thrills me. To think of God as 'God' does not fire me as the name Rama does. There is all the poetry in it. I know that my forefathers have known him as Rama. They have been uplifted for Rama, and when I take the name of Rama, I arise with the same energy. It would not be possible for me to use the name 'God' as it is written in the Bible. It is so contrary to experience. I should not be attracted. I should not be lifted to the truth. Therefore my whole soul rejects the teaching that Rama is not my God. Go to the untouchables; give them schools; give them all, but not with your idea in the back of your mind. If anyone were able to show me that God the Father had to be approached in one particular way, I would not hesitate a moment. I would go to the whole world, but my life would have to be rewritten. I have no disciples except myself and he is a terrible one. I have followers, but I do not feel that they are disciples. My search is for peace, and to show God through the life I live. I give myself to my fellow-men. This is the secret of peace and happiness also.

A member of the conference asked two questions. First, whether Mr. Gandhi had said in an interview with Dr. Mott in India that the effect of Christian missions had been wholly bad.[1] Mr. Gandhi indicated that the quotation was entirely strange to him, and again repeated that he had been the victim of false reporting. The questioner further referred to the command to Christians to go out to all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. Mr. Gandhi's reply to this was that, if the questioner believed that these were the inspired words in the Bible, then he was called upon to obey implicitly—why did he ask a non-Christian for his interpretation?

Mr. Paton thanked Mr. Gandhi warmly on behalf of all those present for the frankness and cordiality with which he had spoken. He said that Mr. Gandhi had made it abundantly plain that the issue between himself and the Christian missionary

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Dr. John Mott", 1-3-1929

movement lay much deeper than was sometimes supposed. Mr. Gandhi was not desirous only that missionaries should be couteous and self-effacing, and should identify themselves with the people of the country, but was opposed to something which was fundamental in Christianity. Mr. Paton asked that Mr. Gandhi would believe that missionaries, and those who supported them, were sincere in saying that the content of their message was not themselves, or the fancied superiority of their country and civilization, but was the Person and Message of Jesus Christ. The spirit of missions could only be that of witness to what men and women most deeply believe to be true and therefore must share with others.

The Rev. W. Wilson Cash of the Church Missionary Society voiced the thanks of the meeting to Mr. Gandhi.

From the Records of the Conference of Missionary Societies to Great Britain and Ireland, Courtesy: Rev. C.B. Firth

509. INTERVIEW WITH MARIA MONTESSORI[1]

LONDON,
[On or before *October 9, 1931*]

Gandhiji greeting her, said:

We are members of the same family.

"I bring you the greetings of children," said Madame Montessori.

GANDHIJI : If you have children I have children too. Friends in India ask me to imitate you. I say to them, no, I should not imitate you but should assimilate you and the fundamental truth underlying your method.

MADAME MONTESSORI : As I am asking my own children to assimilate the heart of Gandhiji. I know that feeling for me over there in your part of the world is deeper than here.

GANDHIJI : Yes, you have the largest number of adherents in India outside Europe.

Young India, 22-10-1931

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "London Letter", dated October 9, 1931. The interview could have taken place on October 7, 1931; *vide* "Letter to J. Theodor Harris", 29-9-1931. Wednesday was October 7, 1931.

510. INTERVIEW TO SHAW DESMOND[1]

LONDON,
[On or before *October 9, 1931*]

He discussed the question of the education of the child, listened with rapt attention as Gandhiji gave him the rich experience of a lifetime of the value of self-restraint and the great part it plays as much in the life of the child as of the adult. "What is the cause of the present chaos?" he asked. Gandhiji said:

It is exploitation, I will not say of the weaker nations by the stronger, but of sister nations by sister nations. And my fundamental objection to machinery rests on the fact that is machinery that has enabled these nations to exploit others. In itself it is a wooden thing and can be turned to good purpose or bad. But it is easily turned to a bad purpose as we know.

"Don't you think", said Mr. Desmond, "all these people here are overfed? How can we teach them to feed less?" Gandhiji said:

The force of circumstances. They are bound to realize one of these days that England is not going to return to her old prospertiy. They must realize that many nations bid fair to divide the spoils with them and, as soon as they do so, they will cut the coat according to their cloth.

"The crisis therefore", said Mr. Desmond, with great emphasis, "is a great thing, I have no doubt."

Young India, 22-10-1931

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "London Letter", dated October 9, 1931.

511. LETTER TO ERNEST ESDAILE

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
October 9, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter.[1] If Monday, the 19th inst., at 8 o'clock is convenient to you, I would gladly address the members of the Club.

Yours sincerely,

ERNEST ESDAILE, ESQ.
CONSTITUTIONAL CLUB
NORTHUMBERLAND AVENUE, W.C. 2

From a photostat: S.N. 18045

512. LETTER TO MAHMUDULLAH

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
October 9, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You are unnecessarily sensitive. There is no disinclination on my part to give you my confidence;[2] only there was nothing to give. I have no secrets of my own; I have sometimes to keep the secrets of others, but that can have nothing to do with your relations with me.

If there were any negotiations which had to be carried on, they were being carried on by Mrs. Naidu; therefore there was nothing that I could really do. You came to give me some information, and I was greateful for it.

[1] The addressee in his letter of October 7 had requested Gandhiji to speak at the Constitutional Club. He had also acknowledged an earlier letter from Gandhiji, which, however, is not available.

[2] The addressee in his letter of October 7 had said he wanted to assist "in the settlement of the Hindu-Muslim dispute" but was hampered because of "not being able to claim your confidence".

As for the Hindu delegates, I really do not understand the complaint. I have seen everybody who has wanted to see me. Wherever consultation has been desired, I have atteneded such consultations and so far as the lead is concerned, I do not consider myself competent to give it to any one section, and for giving a general lead, I have no foothold.

Yours sincrely,

MAHMUDULLAH, ESQ.

From a photostat: S.N. 18046

513. LETTER TO S. SATYAMURTHI

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
October 9, 1931

DEAR SATYAMURTHI,

I have your letter giving me your views about the scope of our demands—about Indian States' Subjects, Defence, External Affairs and Finance. I do not know when the subjects will be reached, but of course I shall bear in mind all you say on the four heads.

Yours sincerely,

S. SATYAMURTHI, ESQ.
2/18, CAR STREET
TRIPLICANE
MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 18047

514. NOTE FOR C. LLEWELYN HOWELL

October 9, 1931

IMPOSSIBLE[1].

From a photostat: S.N. 17719

[1] This was noted on the top of Howell's letter of September 14 requesting Gandhiji to "sign some pages taken from my book".

515. SPEECH AT FEDERAL STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING

LONDON,
October 9, 1931

Well, Lord Chancellor, I know that I have been somewhat instrumental in postponing the deliberations of this Committee; and, being in that unfortunate position, I now feel some diffidence when I say that we cannot afford to waste a single minute.[1] We have come, as you very properly say, all these several thousand miles in order to work, and not in order to seek recreation or holiday; so I would certainly say that, if it is at all possible, we should go through the work of the Federal Structure Committee without waiting for a single minute. If at the back of our minds, individually or collectively, the thought is lurking that, even though we might be sitting over the deliberations of the Federal Structure Committee, we would be really marking time until the minorities question is settled if that really is the feeling which we would not or we dare not express then I would suggest that we express that feeling and come to a decision.

I myself endeavoured to express my own deliberate opinion yesterday that there is not that absolutely vital connection with the work of this Committee. The minorities question is undoubtedly a very important, if not the most important, question. It has always occupied in my own mind its natural place, but it has never overshadowed the other equally important consideration. And, after having laboured at this question for seven days, I saw more clearly than I had seen before that probably the minorities question would not be satisfactorily settled unless the great fundamental questions were settled. That being my conviction, I should like the proceedings of this Committee to be clothed with reality, and that, on several heads which you, with your amazing industry, have been piling upon us from day to day and week to week, we should come to summary decisions instead of making speeches. Therefore, if I may give my opinion without any mental reservation whatsoever, I would suggest

[1] The chairman had suggested adjournment of the meeting till Tuesday, October 13.

that, if we really feel, as I feel, that we should consider and face the questions that are before this Committee on their merits, irrespective of what may happen in connection with the minorities question, then I say that we should sacrifice every holiday; and I know that we shall get the strength to go through this work without coming to grief if we mean serious business.

But I repeat, as I conclude, that if at the back of our minds the impression is that we should continue to work and yet not work, I think that it would not be just to India, it would not be just to ourselves, and it would not be just to the British Ministers either. Thereore, I feel most strongly that we do not need any holiday. Every minute that we have is really pledged to this work and no other.

Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session) : Proceedings of Federal Structure Committee and Minorities Committee, Vol. I, p. 160

516. INTERVIEW TO H. N. BRAILSFORD[1]

LONDON,
[On or before *October 11,1931*][2]

GANDHIJI : If she wants to draw typical peasants,[3] she should not go to Gujarat. Gujarat is relatively prosperous. She should go to Orissa. There the peasants are nothing but skin and bone. Even the bullocks are mere skeletons. You can see their ribs. She must certainly go to Orissa. An artist can help by showing the world how these peasants live.

THE ARTIST: How long will it be before you can raise them into a fine race? Isn't malaria a great obstacle?

G. Malaria is quite easy to eradicate. It's all a matter of diet. It can be cured with plenty of milk and fruit.

THE ARTIST : I suppose you will have to educate them to this diet.

G. It's not education they require. They know perfectly well

[1] Extracted from Brailsford's own account of the interview. The artist figuring in the text was a friend of Brailsford.

[2] October 12, the day preceding the date of publication, was a Silence-Day. Presumably, therefore, the interview took place on October 11, or a little before.

[3] Brailsford had said that the painter was "eager to paint peasant life in India".

what they need. It's poverty that's the difficulty. We can grow the fruit in India, yet the peasants never eat it. You can't grow it in England, yet your poor have it to eat. The people here in the slums round about live as well as the middle class in India. When I think of the poverty in which the peasants live, I feel ashamed that I have fruit to eat and fruit juice to drink. We can do nothing so long as we have this octopus bleeding us white, draining us and taxing us all the time. Why, they even tax our salt—a necessity of life, only less necessary than air and water. It ought to be free as they are. I know you pay a rate for water in England. But this salt tax is worse than a rate. It's a monopoly. The idea of a thing so natural and necessary—after air and water the one thing necessary,—the idea of it being taxed! Nature bestows it on us and we may not use it. There's the salt beside the sea and they forbid us to gather it.

H. N. B. When you abolish the salt tax what substitute will you propose to fill the hole in the revenue?

G. Salt is a small matter. What really matters is the excise on toddy and opium. That is really a big proportion of the revenue. There's no way of filling that gap. unless we can cut down the cost of the army.

That is the octopus that is strangling us. This terrible drain must come to an end.

H. N. B. That, I imagine will be the chief issue at the Round Table Conference.

G. Indeed it will: we can't shirk it.

THE ARTIST : Do you intend, then, to clear out the white garrison?

G. Certainly I intend to clear it out.

THE ARTIST : Do you include the civilians with the troops?

G. They are part of the burden we have to carry; they make government too costly. There is no justificaiton for the great salaries they draw. They live far better than the same class at home.

H. N. B. : Isn't there something to be said for the usual explanation of these high salaries? These civilians are living in exile and in a very trying climate.

G. That is no longer so. Better communications have changed all that. There is a mail twice a week: they can keep in touch with thier families at home, and they go to the the hills in the hot weather. We would welcome them if they would live among us like Indians. But they isolate themselves. They shut themselves up in their cantonments. The very name has a military flavour, and, indeed, these cantonments

are still under military law. Any house within them may be seized if the military say they require it. That happened to a mutual of ours, though he had built the house for himself.

H. N. B. There are two distinct questions about the army, or rather there's one question with two branches. There's the question of principle, India's control over the army, and there's the economic question, which would be satisfied by the reduction of the army. Must you insist on both?

G. I must see to it that I have control over my army.

H. N. B. : A nation is not fully a nation unless she has it.

G. They tell me that I must have this army to protect me against the Pathans. I don't want its protection. I want to be free to take my own course. I may decide to fight them: I may decide to conciliate them. But I want to be free to do it myself. We would agree for a time to maintain some of the white army in India, but they tell us that Tommies can't be transferred to the control of an Indian Government.

H. N. B. They can't be transferred without their consent. I should think that many of them would agree to re-enlist, under satisfactory conditions, in an Indian army.

G. Yes, that might be the solution, but when the army is reduced, I'm afraid that will add to the number of your unemployed.

H. N. B. : Would you, then, if the Principle of India's control were granted, be willing to negotiate over the numbers and cost of the reduced white garrison which you would be willing to maintain for a term of years?

G. Yes, we will agree to anything of that kind, if it is in the interest of India.

H. N. B. Well, I think that would be rather to our interest than yours.

G. All the same, we would agree to that.

H. N. B. It's the principle of control that makes the difficulty. I don't think you'll get that. Reduction is another matter; in some degree you'll get that. We are going into the Disarmament Conference presently: this might be part of our contribution to world disarmament.

G. I've said what I want. My terms are known. But they are all holding back, as if they were afraid to say what they'll grant. But I'm quite prepared to wait.

H. N. B. Things are bound to move slowly while we are absorbed in our economic crisis. That may be an advantage, however. A wise statesman could make a reasonable settlement without the fear of popular clamour.

G. What has astonished me is the friendliness of the workers whom I have been meeting here in Bow.

THE ARTIST : It's the middle-class that is hostile.

G. I'll get at them through the workers. The real difficulty is that they have no conception of what India is suffering.They sincerely believe that India is the brightest jewel in the British crown. They are honestly proud of the record of British rule. It never enters their mind that there can be anything amiss.

THE ARTIST : I'm only an outsider, but isn't there another difficulty? Are not the Indian Princes the worst obstacle in your path?

G. A Prince is in the same position as a British Officer; he has to obey.

H. N. B. Then can you leave the Princes under the control of the Viceroy?

G. We must get control for the Indian Government.

H. N. B. But don't they prefer to be under the Viceroy?

G. Ask any of them, and they'll say so. But deep down in their heart of hearts is it possible that they can be content? After all, they're the same colour as we are. They are Indians.

H. N. B. But they gain something under the present arrangement which you could never allow. The bureaucracy exact politeness from them, and political correctitude, but it allows them to treat their subject to pretty much as they please.

G. "Politeness" isn't the word for it. Say rather 'abject submission'. Not one of them can call his soul his own. The Nizam may start some project or other. An angry letter from the Viceroy is enough to stop him. You know what happened in Lord Reading's time.

H. N. B. Apart from this question of control, is there any hope of legislation on behalf of your "half starved millions" if the Princes are to nominate 40 per cent of the membership of the Federal Legislature ?

G. We can deal with them as we have dealt with you. It will be much easier.

H. N. B. I think their reply would be rather more brutal than ours. We used the lathi. They would use the rifle.

G. That's your race pride. That's right. I like you for it. All of us ought to have it. But you don't realize how much British power in India rests on prestige. Indians are hypnotized by it. You are a brave race, and your reputation enables you to overawe us. I've seen the same thing in South Africa. The Zulus are a fighting race and yet a

Zulu will tremble at the sight of a revolver, even if it isn't loaded. If we get into conflict with the Princes, they won't have the advantage of your prestige. If our people have to face Mahratta troops, they will say to themselves: 'We are Mahrattas, too.' Talking of South Africa gives me a precedent for the change that we want to bring about in our relations with the Princes. Swaziland used to be under the control of Downing Street, but when the Union was formed control was transferred to it. In the same way we argue that the Princes ought to be transferred to the control of an Indian Government.

THE ARTIST : Will you have any use for British goods when India is free?

G. Yes, we shall still want what you export, with one exception. We shall want everything except cotton goods. Those we must make ourselves.

H. N. B. A Considerable part of our exports consists of machinery. Will you have use for that?

G. Certainly. Why, I use machinery myself for making soap and I imported it from England. It is only the devoted few who can live the simple life without machinery. The masses will never do without it. All the same, it is possible to do wihout it. Most of the things that we were taught to consider necessary are not necessary at all. Take soap, now. I've used one cake of soap for three months, and it isn't nearly finished yet. It is not really necessary to keep the body nice, though I used to think so myself, and used it lavishly when I was a young man. Civilization, a cultured life with a place in it for literature and the arts, is possible wihout the artificial wants the machinery has created. But I don't deceive myself: I know that the masses will never lead such a life. It is for the few.

It's amazing how these absured artificial wants swell the volume of trade. I've learnt that from the boycott. Who would have thought that toys and Chinese fireworks mattered ? Yet you export vast quantities of such things into India. We have learned in these months the tremendous power of the boycott; indeed, we are only just beginning to realize it fully now. When I started it I was thinking only of cloth, but all manner of little trades are involved as well, even perfumes. I'm sorry for all the little people who were hurt by it, though I don't care so much about the big combines in Lancashire.

H. N. B. Yes, the boytctt had a great effect. If you go back, the British attitude towards Indian self-government seems almost incredible.

G. Yes, you have advanced. But you are not yet ready to give

us freedom. It won't be this time. India will have to wait some months longer. I don't expect anything from this Conference. I came because I gave Lord Irwin my promise to attend it and discuss everything.

THE ARTIST : You don't suppose we'll go till you send us away.[1]

G. (Laughing) Just now I agree with your General Dyer. You remember his great saying that the life of one Englishman was worth a thousand Indians. I have always admired his out-spokenness. Well, for me just now one Englishman is worth a thousand Indians.

The Manchester Guardian, 13-10-1931.

517. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
October 12, 1931

MY DEAR HENRY,

Yes, I have read the *Times* report. I am not guilty. There being nothing conclusive about the conversations what could I report! I did report the relevant part to the informal committee. Like all *Times* reports, this is one-sides, inspired and mischievous. Far more mischievous things have appeared in that paper and it has ignored contradictions. But the being shocked of friends matters. How to remedy the mischief I do not know. Step into the breach and show the way. I am too shy to push myself forward. I have no secrets of my own. I am anxious to meet all friends and receive their help and offer them such services as are within my power.

You know the disease, you know me and the complainants. You should find the remedy and apply it.

Love,

BHAI

From a photostat: S.N. 18063

[1] The remarks was occasioned by Muriel Lester reminding Gandhiji that several Indian callers were waiting to see him.

518. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 12,1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got the letters from you all, but I simply get no time here to write. You should, therefore, be satisfied with what the other four members of the party write.

Today is Monday and the Committee is not meeting. That is how I have the time to write this letter. There are, of course,

some persons sitting near me, but they are talking among themselves and I am writing this while they are doing so.

I see that Chhaganlal and you are not able to work together in any matter. Have a talk with him now. He is unhappy. If nothing comes of your talk, the matter will have to wait till I return.

How is it that Jamna has again fallen ill?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Surajbhan's story is pathetic. He must have calmed down now.

I understand what you say about Rukmini.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M.U./I

519. SPEECH AT NATIONAL LABOUR CLUB RECEPTION[1]

LONDON,

October 12, 1931

He thanked Mr. Henderson for. . . "taking the trouble to come to this meeting to show what support and sympathy I am to expect from you". Mr. Gandhi invited his audience to ask questions, and said that frank speaking was the most helpful. He said he would answer the questions without any mental reservations. Continuing, Mr. Gandhi said:

Though I am here for the Conference, I believe my work lies outside the Conference in making contacts like this. In the Conference, however anxious I am to pour out my heart and lay all my

[1] The reception was arranged at Caxton Hall. Arthus Henderson presided.

cards on the table, I, like every other delegate, am subjected to certain restrictions which I must observe. I am, therefore, not successful in presenting my whole case. Even though I believe I may have to go empty-handed, in spite of all my efforts for an amicable settlement, I shall have the fullest satisfaction if I have been able to present my case to those who are earnest about India, but unfortunately are not fully informed about the Congress. I claim that Congress represents in an overwhelming manner the masses of India, and I ask you to accept it that I have come here to plead for that independence for which thousands and thousands of men and women courted imprisonment, received lathi blows, and for which some even laid down their precious lives. Complete independence does not exclude partnership on an absolute equality basis with Great Britain, terminable by either party.

Mr. Gandhi then stated the Congress claim, and the discretion that he was permitted to exercise in the matter of reservation and safeguards.

He added that Lord Irwin, of all Englishmen, was able to draw him to England . Referring to safeguards in the interest of India, Mr. Gandhi said that the safeguards would be in mutual inerest, as he would not have adjustments that did moral harm to Britain, though some of them might mean material loss.

We in India have come to the conclusion that some of the transactions of the British Government are of questionable character, causing terrible economic loss to the Indian people. It is necessary that is doing belated justice to India, Britain must sufer some material loss.

Concluding, Mahatma Gandhi expressed the fervent hope that the future historian would say that India fought and won liberty without shedding blood.[1]

Q. If we withdrew entirely the control of the British Army in India, would there not be internecine strife between Hindus and Muslims and would it not materialize into a serious and terrible condition? People from India assure me that that would be the case.

A. It is a good question and it is a question that has been asked on so many occasions ever since I have come here and in India also.

My answer is that it is possible. It is likely that we the Hindus and Muslims may fight one another if the British Army is withdrawn.

[1] The report up to this point is from *Indian News*. What follows is from *Amrita Bazar Patrika.*

Well, if such is to be our lot, I do not mind it. It is quite likely. Only if we don't go through the ordeal now, it will simply be postponement of the agony and, therefore, I personally do not mind it a bit and the whole of the Congress which today sways the votes or the minds of millions of people has decided to run the risk of it. At the same time, my own hope is that, if we are really fighting non-violently and truthfully, we shall be able to avoid that calamity. But what puzzles me is this: Why should British administrators or the British general public worry their heads about what is going to happen when the British Army is withdrawn? Why would they not recall their own history? Did the British people themselves not run the maddest risks imaginable in order to retain their liberty? Did they not

have the terrible Wars of the Roses? Did they not fight, the English against the Scots? Was there not fighting even between Englishmen and Irishmen? If you keep a foreign rule imposed, you will find the rot of emasculation going deeper and deeper and you come to the impossible barrier that these people cannot defend themselves against each other and therefore we must remain there as eternal rulers. Therefore I would rather run any risk that may be in store and get freedom today.

Q. What is it exactly that the two parties of Hindus and Muslims are afraid of ?

A. I don't know that Hindus and Muslims have raised this question. Not that they have not that fear, but the question has been raised on behalf of the administrators and not on behalf of the Indians or India as I Know.

But I shall give you what is today activating the Hindu-Muslim mind. The Hindus, who have been called "the gentle Hindu"—which is often considered a euphemism for cowardice—unfortunately have the fear that it is possible that when British troops are withdrawn, hordes from the North-West may overrun India and may inflict all kinds of losses upon her. There is certainly that fear, but we must run that risk.

Muslims say, they are less literate, less numerous and not as well-off economically as the Hindus. Therfore, they did not know what is going to happen to them. The Hindus, after all, before the British came, were able to live with the Mussalmans on free and equal terms. There are today several thousand villages in India and in the majority of these there is a very sparse Muslim population.

They are, however, living together in perfect peace among themselves. Go to the Punjab and Bengal and throw in Sind, you will find thousands of villages where the predominant population is Muslim with a few Hindus. Ask me if those Hindus are afraid of their very lives. If they were afraid, they would not be living in thsoe villages.

If you go to Baluchistan, overwhelmingly Muslim, you will find solitary Hindus carrying on trade there and, generally speaking, you can accept my evidence that they are not living in fear of their lives. Again, you would find in Kabul not one but numerous Hindus and more Sikhs.

It comes to this that this so-called fear is really more or less manufactured and is not so much fear as the desire for the exercise of power. It is not a high ambition. I admit, but no one is free from this ambition in the world—not even the Labour Party.

Q. Bearing in mind the developments of the smaller States of Europe which have been granted their freedom since the War, does not Mr. Gandhi think that there is a danger of India, if she pursues her present policy, developming a bellicose nationalism which will be a menace to the world? And does not Mr. Gandhi think it would be a dangerous ideal that he would be willing to sacrifice a million lives in order to attain freedom?

A. I do not think it to be a dangerous ideal to sacrifice your own life and these precious lives will be sacrificed by a nation that is living in compulsory disarmament. I am afraid that our friend has not perhaps listened as carefully as I would have expected, or to speak chivalrously, I was not capable of making my meaning quite clear.

India today is wedded to non-violence and therefore there is no question of taking someone else's life. We do not consider our lives so cheap as to be given away for nothing, but we do not consider our lives to be dearer then liberty itself, and thereore, if we had to sacrifice a million lives, we would do so tomorrow, and God above would say nothing but 'Well done my chilldren'.

We are trying to gain our liberty; you, on the other hand, have been an imperialistic-minded race. You have been in the habit of committing frightfulness—and as the late General Dyer put it in answer to a question in Court: "Yes, I did this frightfulness deliberately." I am here to say that General Dyer was not the only one capable of resorting to this frightfulness.

You don't want me to multiply these illustrations from your

own history, therefore, I do not think anyone in this Hall would criticize us if we sacrificed ourselves in this attempt to gain our liberty. It is up to you, those who are trustees of the honour of the British nation, to prevent this disaster if you can.

My purpose in making these contacts is to put before you the elementary position and say: 'This is India's right'.

Q. Would we not be making a mistake in giving you independence?[1]

A. I think you would if you gave independence to anyone. And please therefore remember that I have not come to beg for independence but I have come as a result of last year's suffering and at the end of that suffering, time came when we left India in order to see whether we have now sufficiently impressed the British mind with our suffering, so that I can go away with an honourable settlement.

But if I go away with an honourable settlement, I shall not go away with the belief that I have received any gift from this nation.

There is no such thing as a gift of independence from one nation to another. It has got to be gained and bought with one's blood and I feel that we have already spilt sufficient of our own blood in the process which has gone on deliberately since 1919. But it may be that God, in His grace, considers that we have not suffered enough, that we have not gone through the process of purification.

Then I am here to testify that we shall continue the process of self-sacrifice until at last no Britisher will want to remain in India as a ruler.

Q. What are Mr. Gandhi's comments on the current belief that if the British withdrew from India, the Russians would wish to extend their sphere of influence by force over the country ?

A. I must confess to you that I do not believe in this or one moment. Suppose Russia has such unholy designs upon India and thinks that she will succeed Britain in establishing an Empire there, I can only say that the same means which would have convinced the British of the impossibility of governing and the wisdom of withdrawing their Rule from India, will be the means that we propose successfully to adopt against Russia.

Imagine for one moment what Russia can possibly do agianst an

[1] The question is taken from Mahadev Desai's "London Letter" in *Young India,* 29-10-1931.

unwilling people. No people have yet been govenred by another nation against their will. I hope and I believe my people have learned that co-operation need not be rendered even reluctantly. It carries with it some measure of sacrifice a sacrifice involving that non-co-operation.

If we refuse to trade with the Russians, take their goods and thier titles, receive their money, what will the Russians do or any other nation on earth do? I admit that at the present moment India is not prepared to war against any nation, but I am hoping that I shall be able to utilize the opportunity to take my people along another step.

If you are satisfied that we have really suffered enough, that we have got unique means at our disposal in order to protect ourselves against foreign aggression and exploitatation through this non-co-operation and satyagraha; if you are satisfied, you will help me to gain this liberty for my people and you will find that people who have been able to gain liberty through these means are able to retain it through these means, then you will find that India will have made the largest contribution possible to the war against war.

Indian News, 15-10-1931, and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 30-10-1931

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM SIR ERNEST HOTSON[1]

MAHABALESHWAR,
June 30, 1931

I have been asked by His Excellency the Viceroy to ascertain privately, before an official invitation is addressed to you, whether you are willing to serve on the Federal Structure Committee of the Round Table Conference in London from the 5th September next.

Will you kindly let me have your reply as soon as possible, and in the mean while treat this communication as strictly confidential?

Young India, 27-8-1931

APPENDIX II

H. W. EMERSON'S NOTE ON DISCUSSION WITH GANDHIJI[2]

July 15/16, 1831

I saw Mr. Gandhi this afternoon. He had not his papers with him relating to the alleged breaches of the Settlement, and our discussion was discursive covering a number of subjects, to some of which we shall return later.

2. I asked him first about Gujarat. on the whole, he seemed satisfied with the course of events there. His chief complaint was about the issue of warning notices and coercive processes for collection of unauthorized arrears. His main contention was that he himself and other Congress workers had assisted in the collection of land revenue and had honestly done their best to get revenue payers to pay as much as possible, that in some cases notices and processes had been issued without giving them the opportunity of collecting what was possible, and that generally he and his friends were in a better position to assess the capacity to pay than the officials. I said that everyone was agreed that he himself had done his utmost to get the revenue-payers to play the game, but that the same could not be said of some of his friends, and that the practical test of whether there had been deliberate delay in payment seemed to be provided by the fact that as soon as notices and processes were issued a large number of revenue-payers immediately paid up. There seemed to be no difference in principle between the Government of India, the local Government and

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sair Ernest Hotson", 3-7-1931
[2] *Vide* "Interview to "Amrita Bazar Patrika", 5-7-1931

Mr. Gandhi. All were agreed that anyone who could pay should pay whether the current year's demand or unauthorized arrears, and the difficulty arose in particular cases as to whether payment was or was not possible. He admitted that, despite his efforts, there might be some persons who deliberately shirked payment, but he claimed that collections had in fact exceeded the expectations of local officers and that the limit had practically been reached within which collections could reasonably be made. He had apparently just seen the Collector of Surat, to whom he had proposed that the Congress assistance should be used to a greater extent in collections. The Collector, he said, was non-committal. I took the opportunity of saying that the special circumstances in Gujarat had made it convenient in Kaira to have very close co-operation between Government officials and Congress in the collection of land revenue, but that it was not possible to contemplate, as an ordinary feature of land revenue administration, the intervention of a third party, who practically decided what revenue could be paid, and I asked him what was to happen if the unauthorized arrears now outstanding were formally suspended. He said that they would be collectedas a matter of course after next harvest, provided of course that there were no seasonal calamities. I suggested that in that case collections would have to be made next harvest in the ordinary course of land revenue administration, that Congress would disappear from the picture, and that processes, etc., would be issued in accordance with the ordinary canons. Mr. Gandhi accepted this and said that he in fact was telling the revenue-payers that Congress was not going to intervene after this harvest, that they must conserve their resources and be ready to pay anything that was not suspended. I was careful not to suggest to Mr. Gandhi that the local Government were prepared to admit that the limit of present collections had been reached. At the same time, the definite understanding that after this harvest revenue administration in Gujarat will revert to ordinary methods seems to be of some importance.

3. I then said that lately allegations had been widely published that Government were guilty of breaches of the Settlement, that the latter did not admit that this charge had any foundation, and that on the contrary their case was that Congress had been guilty of serious breaches. I distinguished between two classes of complaints, namely, first, allegations that specific clauses of the Settlement had not been observed, and secondly vague allegations which, when examined, did not constitute a breach within the terms of the Settlement, but had reference to action taken by local Governments in the course of ordinary administration. I said that, generally speaking, we regarded the latter as not directly relevant to the Settlement and that they related to general issues which would be discussed later. In regard to specific breaches, I instanced non-release of prisoners, non-restoration of property that had been seized, collection of the cost of additional police imposed in connection with the civil disobedience movement. I said that Government were very anxious that they should not remain under any imputation of breaches of this kind,

and reminded him that when I last saw him two months ago I asked him to give specific instances which he had not so far supplied. He said that he had not done, because they had been trying to settle the cases direct with local Governments, but that he would let me have a list.

4. We had some discussion about picketing, and he mentioned that he had just received a telegram from Rajagopalachari from Madras, saying that the local Government were definitely forbidding the picketing of liquor auction sales. I said that in ignorance of the facts it was not possible to express an opinion whether the action of the local Government was justifiable or not, but, at any rate, even if picketing of auction sales came within the terms of the Settlement, I could not believe that it really advanced any temperance movement, and that generally the Congress appeared to be doing little permanent good by the methods they were pursuing. I found it very difficult to believe that anyone, who wanted to bid at an auction in the hope of making profit if he was successful in obtaining the licence, would refrain from doing so unless there was an element of coercion or at least of inconvenience. I told him that even in the case of those forms of picketing which came within the Settlement, Congress were making mistakes in arousing a great deal of resentment, and that feeling was growing. I instanced the case of Jawaharlal's action at Allahabad, and told him that both the District Magistrate and the local Government had seriously considered the necessity of an order under section 144 Cr. P. C. in order to avoid the danger of a communal clash. I made it clear to him that specific provisions of the Settlement must be subject to the requirements of public tranquillity, and that if picketing in any place endangered the public peace and, in particular, if it was likely to cause communal disturbances, there would be no hesitation in applying section 144 Cr. P. C. He accepted this principle, but stated that as a matter of fact there was no danger of any trouble in Allahabad. He said that Congress were avoiding the picketing of Muslim shops. I told him that this was very advisable, since there is a movement among Muslims to picket Hindu picketers, and this might very well lead to clashes, also that there was a movement to encourage the trade in foreign cloth among the Muslims, and that this was again likely to create Hindu resentment against Congress methods. The latter generally were creating a great deal of resentment, and only today I had received information from the Punjab Government that in one town the Hindu dealers had revolted. Mr. Gandhi said that it was in fact difficult to get volunteers for picketing now that methods were unaggressive. I mentioned to him the resolution passed by the Working Committee about the Congress not permitting the sale of foreign cloth. I told him that the resolution had caused a great deal of criticism both in England and in India, and asked him that next time Congress found it necessary to enunciate their principles, they should do so in a form which was free from ambiguity and did not admit of wider interpretation than was intended. I told him that we had thought that it might be

necessary to issue a communique explaining the position, and that we might still have to do so.

5. We then had a long discussion about the agrarian situation in the United Provinces, which covered much the same ground as that covered in previous discussion on the subject. I made it clear that Government had from the beginning regarded Congress activities in the U.P. as a very serious breach of the Settlement, and that 3 months ago Mr. Gandhi had been informed that the continuance of those activities would inevitably lead to trouble, which might force the local Government to take action under the ordinary law and also result in the application of special measures. He said that if Government regarded the activities of Congress as a breach of the Settlement, it was open to them to denounce it, but the course they had taken was, while not denouncing the Settlement, to carry on war against Congress. I explained that we had not denounced the Settlement, because we had hoped that the situation would improve and that things would settle down. For the same reason we had refrained from publicly charging Congress with breaches of the Settlement, because we realized that once we embarked on charges and counter-charges, the maintenance of the Settlement would be very difficult, but that it would be impracticable for us to continue. this policy if *ex-parte* statements continue to be made challenging the good faith of Government. I then gave him briefly the information we had about the activities of the Congress in the U.P. He would not admit that this information was correct, and his general position was that taken up on previous occasions, namely, that Congress had always associated themselves with the *kisans*, that *kisan sabhas* were in fact Congress creations, and Congress could not dissociate themselves from the interests of the peasants without renouncing their creed. I challenged his statement that Congress was identical with the *kisans*, and suggested to him that the close identity of interest had been developed since the Settlement and was part of the policy of consolidation in rural areas as preparation for a new fight, that it was mainly the last feature that inevitably made all local Governments look with suspicion on Congress activities and prevented them from co-operating with Congress to the extent that otherwise would have been possible. I said that it would be quite easy to prepare an indictment of Congress action in the U.P. which would convince world opinion that Congress had been dishonest. His reply to this was that he had no apprehension whatsoever about a statement of Congress case in regard to the U.P. provided that the facts were correctly given. He said that the outstanding facts were that the remissions were inadequate, that Government had always supported the landlords against the tenants and that the latter were not having a fair show. He said that when he saw Sir Malcolm Hailey, the latter had admitted that remissions were not liberal enough, but had said that he must consider the financial situation and his duty to the administration. I challenged this and I suggested that what Sir Malcolm Hailey had probably said in effect was that he

had to maintain a balance between the claims of Government, of the landlords and of the tenants, and that while neither he nor anybody else could say with absolute certainty in present circumstances whether the right pitch of remissions had been reached, it could be claimed that those given represented a first approximation. They were subject to the working principle, that if the actual process of collection showed that they were inadequate, then adjustment would follow as a matter of course, for it was the desire of the local Government that harsh methods of collections should not be employed either by Government or by landlords. I repeated all the old arguments about the difficulties of Government having been greatly increased by Congress intervention. Mr. Gandhi said that the situation in the U.P. was not dangerous or incapable of solution, and that a remedy could be found at once. I asked him what it was. He suggested that District officers should consult Congress workers and, more or less on their advice, fix the amount of revenue and rent to be collected. I told him plainly that this was not a practical solution and that Government could not divest itself of the duty of determining these matters themselves, and that it would be as unreasonable for Government to accept the opinion of landlords as to what rent should be paid. He then suggested that it might be possible to hold an enquiry, but admitted that Sir Malcolm Hailey had convinced him that a summary enquiry was out of the question. We then discussed the question of whether a more elaborate enquiry would be possible with the object of ascertaining what temporary adjustments in revenue and rent were necessary as a result of the slump in the prices. I made it quite clear to him that this was essentially a matter for the local Government and that, in the absence of their views and of local knowledge, our discussion was necessarily academic. I suggested that even if on examination by the local Government such an enquiry were considered to be desirable, it would certainly extend over some months, that even the general recommendations would vary considerably between the various Divisions of the Province, that even in these Divisions they would be liable to local adjustments, and that further adjustments would be necessary from harvest to harvest as prices changed, that the enquiry would have to be carried out by technical experts and the smaller the committee the more effective its work was likely to be, that it would presumably be a public enquiry and receive evidence from landlords on the one side and tenants on the other, and if Congress representatives wished to produce facts and figures before it, there would appear to be no objection. Mr. Gandhi appeared to be very keen on an enquiry of this kind and it seems to me that if it were possible to institute one at an early date it might do much to relieve the situation. The matter seems to be one which merits consultation with the local Government. I explained to Mr. Gandhi that even if such an enquiry were held, it could not affect present collections and that in regard to these the only possible course that I could see was for Government to proceed with collections, it being understood that they would, so far as possible, avoid coercive processes where land-owners were generally unable to pay

and that while taking action under the law against tenants who contumaciously refuse to pay, they would not assist landlords in squeezing more out of the tenants than the latter could pay.

Mr. Gandhi was not entirely satisfied with this statement of the position in regard to present collections. He claimed that many landlords were accepting the advice of the Congress and had recognized that it was to their advantage to do so.

6. Before we parted, the North-West Frontier Province was briefly mentioned. I told him that it was our second cause of anxiety and that any day we might be forced to take action. I told him the best thing he could do was to take Abdul Ghaffar Khan with him to London as one of his advisers. He laughed and said that he could not do so, as he was not going to take any advisers. He asked why we[1] did not get over the difficulty by inviting Abdul Ghaffar Khan as a Delegate to the Round Table Conference. I said jokingly that he could not, in any ease, go as a Nationalist Muslim, since, as Mr. Gandhi knew, other Muslims very strongly objected to Nationalist Muslims going to the Conference as such. He admitted that Abdul Ghaffar Khan could not go as a Nationalist Muslim but saw no reason why he should not go as a representative of the North-West Frontier Province.

July 16, 1931

7. My discussions with Mr. Gandhi continued on July 16th. He began by reading out a fairly long list of alleged breaches of the Settlement by Government, and he gave me the list, a copy of which is attached. So far as allegations of breaches of specific provisions of the Settlement are concerned, some are of a trivial character, some are too vague to allow of any provisional opinion to be formed, some are obviously outside the Settlement and a certain number are such as require the Government of India to satisfy themselves that no breach is involved. In fact, having regard to the danger of a breakdown of the Settlement, it will probably be necessary to give local Governments the trouble of furnishing the facts in all cases, so that no allegation may be left unanswered if the necessity arose. In addition to specific instances of alleged breaches of the Settlement, Mr. Gandhi gave a general note dealing with

(a) Bombay,
(b) the United Provinces,
(c) the North-West Frontier Province, and
(d) the other Provinces.

It will be necessary to ask local Governments to give us the facts in regard to allegations contained in this note also.

8. In regard to complaints about the North-West Frontier Province, the only incident about which I had information was that at Sarband, the facts of which are

[1] The source has "he".

quite different from those presented in the note. I gave Mr. Gandhi the facts and told him that the gross inaccuracy of the account given to him suggested that the other allegations might, to say the least of it, be much exaggerated. I gave him some facts on the other side and explained to him the critical character of the situation in the North-West Frontier Province with special reference to tribal areas, possible reactions in Afghanistan, contempt for authority which the Red Shirt movement was creating, the seditious speeches of Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the danger of the impression gaining ground that Government were afraid to tackle the movement, whereas the truth was that they were exercising, and intended to exercise, forbearance to the utmost limit in order to prevent a rupture, but that the limit might be reached any day. Mr. Gandhi himself was clearly unhappy about the Frontier, and it played a comparatively small part in the general discussion and, in particular, in regard to the difficulties which Mr. Gandhi expressed himself as feeling about his attendance at the Round Table Conference.

He raised the question of his visit to the Frontier but did not press it. I took the line that Government had no intention of forbidding a visit if he wished to go, but held the view that it was likely to complicate rather than assist the situation. He said that Abdul Ghaffar had promised to obey any orders which Gandhi gave him and, in particular, had promised to see the Chief Commissioner, if the latter asked him to do so.

9. In regard to the allegation that workers doing peaceful constructive work have been arrested in the Midnapore District, I explained to Mr. Gandhi the information we had received regarding the institution of parallel courts and the interference of Congress workers in criminal matters and their levying of fines. I told him that the local Government had reported the situation to the Government of India, who had agreed that, in the first place, representation should be made to local Congress leaders, that if this had no effect, the ordinary law should be applied, and that if this again failed, the Association concerned should be declared unlawful association, provided that their activities went beyond the sphere of legitimate methods of arbitration. He told me that he had in fact heard that the Congress had adopted his principles of arbitration (which excluded interference in criminal matters and also levying of fines or penalties). A letter since received from the Bengal Government gives confirmation to this statement. Mr. Gandhi also said that there were two parties in Midnapore, viz., the terrorist party and the Moderate Congress party, and that the latter were doing their best to oust the former.

10. The greater part of the discussion today centered round the situation in the United Provinces, and, although this was taken at various times, it will be convenient to bring it together in its relation to representation of Congress at the Conference. I abstained from asking Mr. Gandhi whether he was going to attend or not until a late

stage. In reply he said that he wished to attend, but his attendance must be conditional on Government disengaging him from his responsibilities in India. I asked him what exactly he meant. He said that he could not contemplate a visit to England if he thought that while he was there he would be constantly receiving telegrams about lathi charges, prosecutions of members of Congress and generally repressive measures. I said that it would be dishonest for Government to attempt to induce him to go to London on a definite assurance that no incidents would happen while he was away, that even in ordinary peaceful conditions, incidents were always happening in India, and the Government of India could not possibly fetter the discretion of local Governments in carrying out their responsibility for law and order in the manner that such an assurance would certainly involve, that, on the other hand, everyone wanted to avoid prosecutions and special measures, so far as this was possible, and that there had not been, and would not be, any inclination on the part of local Governments to take measures in excess of actual requirements that the best insurance against members of Congress being prosecuted was for them to keep within the law, and that where such prosecutions had been necessary it was evidence rather of a breach of the spirit of the Settlement by Congress than of a breach by Government, and generally that the only way of securing reasonable peaceful conditions was for the Congress to close down agitation and to suspend war preparations, at any rate for the next 3 or 4 months, until the Round Table Conference is over. Government would certainly respond to action of this kind. He said that he felt that Provincial Governments were out to kill the Congress and that, in particular, he had been told that members of the I.C.S. would be glad if Congress were not represented at the Round Table Conference. I repudiated both these statements, and suggested to him that, in regard to the latter, it was ludicrous to suppose that the members of the Service largely responsible for law and order would welcome developments which might be expected greatly to increase their work and responsibility. In regard to the supposed attitude of local Governments I reminded him that Government had on several occasions made it clear that the war preparations of Congress added greatly to their difficulties in co-operating with the Congress, and that if local Governments had been forced to take action against members of the Congress it had been with great reluctance and only because their activities made action unavoidable. He pursued the argument (which he had adopted on several previous occasions), namely, that the Settlement between Government and Congress placed the latter in a special position which justified previous consultation with them before any action was taken against their members and that Government and Congress should work together in close unity. I asked him what he had in mind, and he gave several specific examples. He said that, for instance, a prosecution under section 124-A., I.P.C. should not be launched against a member of the Congress without giving the Congress an opportunity of bringing the person into the line. I explained to him the existing principles on which prosecutions were launched under

this section and I said that while, on particular occasions, it might be desirable to give a *warning* and that this course was sometimes followed, it was not possible to accept as a general rule that a person belonging to a particular organization, when he offended against the law, should be placed in a privileged position in comparison with other persons who did not belong to such an organization. The next example he gave was that no proceedings under the security sections of the Criminal Procedure Code should be taken against a *kisan* in the United Provinces until the Congress had been given previous warning. I asked him how the District Magistrate was to know that a particular *kisan* belonged to the Congress and declined to accept the suggestion that every *kisan* in the U.P. was a member of the Congress. I also explained that the security sections were often used when there was imminent danger of breach of the peace and it was out of the question to expect the District Magistrate to delay what might be emergent proceedings while he was referring to a third party. Mr. Gandhi, I think, realized that these particular suggestions were outside reasonable limits and did not press them. He then [dealt with] the case of the United Provinces at great length and took the line that there was active war going on against the Congress as such. I said that, so far as I understood the position, action was being taken against individuals, not because they were members of the Congress, but because they were carrying on particular activities and that similar action was being taken against persons who carried on such activities whether they were members of the Congress or not. If a great majority of the persons against whom action was being taken were members of the Congress, this was because Congress were responsible for a campaign which was definitely assisting towards the creation of dangerous conditions. I repeated the view of Government that the rent campaign of Congress in the United Provinces was a definite breach of the Settlement and that while one object might be the relief of the economic conditions of tenants, it was impossible to dissociate it from the declared policy of Congress to consolidate their position in rural areas in preparation for a new struggle if this were to occur. Mr. Gandhi did not accept this statement and maintained the position that Congress had always been most closely interested in the welfare of the *kisans* and that they could not possibly forgo this part of their work. I reminded him that just before the Settlement very little agitation of this kind was going on in the United Provinces and that it was since the Settlement that activities had been organized and conducted on a scale not previously known. He claimed that Congress leaders and workers in the United Provinces were only desirous that tenants should not be made to pay more rent than they could reasonably pay, but he did admit that their aim was a radical change in the landlord system and the permanent alleviation of tenants' conditions apart from the present crisis. He disclaimed any intention of a confiscatory policy against landlords, but while I still think he is not prepared to go as far as Jawahar Lal, the general trend of his conversation today showed that the legitimate interests of landlords had a very

small part in his plans compared with the interests of tenants. His aim is clearly to establish the position of Congress as the champion and mouthpiece of the tenants. His case at present is that Government are taking side with the landlords against the tenants, are sanctioning rents which the tenants are unable to pay, are giving more than legitimate assistance to the landlords in their collection, and are condoning, if not approving, acts of oppression by bad landlords. I, of course, strongly contested this view. I asked him several times what his solution was of present difficulties in the U.P., and his reply was always the same that Government should definitely associate Congress with them and accept the advice of the Congress as to what rents should be collected. I told him that this would mean that Government would abrogate its functions in favour of a political party that had taken up the side of the tenants against landlords and that it was quite impracticable. He denied that this was his aim, but he was unable to give any alternative explanation of its practical effect. I said that I myself could see no solution of immediate difficulties unless Congress called off its activities in the U.P. and left it to Government to do its utmost to preserve the balance between landlords and tenants. He said that he might be willing to call off the whole force of volunteers and workers if Government gave an undertaking that they would not use coercive measures in assisting landlords to collect rents, but would leave the whole matter tomethods of persuasion. We pursued this suggestion, but on examination it was found that it would involve, according to Mr. Gandhi's ideas, the abstention of Government from executing the decree of landlords for possession against evictable tenants. In other words, it would mean that tenants would pay as little as they liked without fear of consequences and that landlords would be left without the remedy secured to them by the law. Mr. Gandhi had a good deal to say about evictions in general and stated that landlords were taking advantage, in many cases, of existing economic conditions to obtain the ejectment of statutory and occupancy tenants and to replace them by tenants at will. This was a matter about which I could say little in ignorance of the facts, but did suggest that even if this were so, Congress were making matters much worse by embittering the relations between the two. I then read out to him the portion of the weekly reports of the C.I.D., United Provinces, since the beginning of June relating to rural agitation. He was obviously taken aback by the continuous record week after week and from district after district of the activities of Congress workers, and I fancy he felt that the presentation of the Government case would very gravely prejudice the success of the appeal which Congress evidently intend to make to world opinion, if there is a break. He expressed regret that these reports had not been brought to his notice before. I reminded him that in March he had been informed of activities in the United Provinces and of their dangerous possibilities, that early in April he had been given specific instances and had been told the view of the Government of India in regard to the action it would probably be necessary for the local Government to take, that, again in May, I had

discussed with him at great length the. situation and had given him many facts, that he had seen Sir Malcolm Hailey at Naini Tal and presumably had learnt from him also what was happening, that the position in the United Provinces for months past had reference not to isolated incidents but to a campaign organized by Congress on a very large scale, and that it was unreasonable to suppose that the local leaders did not know what was going on, even if they had not stated the facts to Mr. Gandhi. We failed to make any further advance in regard to the United Provinces. I said we would probably consult the local Government both in regard to present conditions and the possibility of an enquiry as to the future, that in regard to the former I could see no chance of a solution that would meet the point of view he had expressed and that in regard to the enquiry it was of course primarily a matter for the local Government.

11. Mr. Gandhi's views regarding his attendance at the Round Table Conference, as expressed today, may be briefly interpreted as follows. He will not attend unless—

(a) Government can give a general assurance in regard to proceedings against members of Congress that would in effect place them in a privileged position in comparison with other members of the public and would effectually tie the hands of local Governments in carrying out their responsibilities for the maintenance of law and order, and

(b) the local Government of the United Provinces scraps its present scheme of remissions, throws over the landlords and accepts the advice of Congress in regard to the pitch of rents, thus surrendering its functions to that body.

We discussed the position many times from different points of view. These were the practical conclusions that invariably emerged. I doubt if he would seriously take his stand on (a) as a ground for rupture, and it is possible that he is bluffing about (b). If, however, Congress refuse participation in the Round Table Conference it will be mainly on the United Provinces issue supplemented by allegations of a general character regarding the supposed hostility of local Government towards Congress as such.

12. I told Mr. Gandhi that if he were himself to go to the Round Table Conference, there would, so far as I could see, be no difficulty in continuing liaison with the Government of India in matters regarding the Settlement through the nomination by Mr. Gandhi of a representative to take his place. I added the qualification, which he accepted as reasonable, that whoever the representative might be it would be up to him to avoid making speeches, etc., that might make meetings between him and the representative of the Government of India open to misunderstanding and misconception.

13. I did my utmost to convince Mr. Gandhi of the mistake Congress would

make if it refused to be represented at the Conference, and I used the various arguments employed on previous occasions. I emphasized the fact that the Settlement was only a means to an end, namely, to facilitate an agreed constitutional solution, that in its main features it was a temporary measure that the sooner it merged into the ordinary administrative machine the better for everyone, and that even if it were admitted that peaceful conditions could not be completely assured during the next few months, nonetheless the best means of obtaining ultimate peace was through the Round Table Conference. In particular I urged the influence he himself might exercise in London in facilitating a communal settlement and also the part he could play, if things went well in England, in convincing Indian public opinion of the sincerity of Great Britain's intentions towards India. I emphasized the probable results of the decision of Congress not to attend, and I suggested that the general verdict would be that Congress had shown a lamentable lack of political sagacity. I left him in no doubt that the Conference would go on whether the Congress decided to be represented or not.

14. Many times during our discussion Mr. Gandhi asked why, if Government considered that Congress had not observed the terms of the Settlement, they had not denounced it. I gave the obvious reasons. But the suggestion was made so often as definitely to indicate that it would have suited the Congress game better if Government had relieved Congress of the responsibility for running out.

15. I pointed out to Mr. Gandhi that the refusal of Congress to be represented at the Conference would mean that the Settlement had broken down in an essential respect. He agreed that this was so. I then asked him whether this meant that the Congress would restart the civil disobedience movement. He said that this was not necessarily the case, and I gathered that they would await the course of events. I pointed out to him that the failure of an essential part of the Settlement would inevitably weaken the sense of restraint which the maintenance of the Settlement had necessarily imposed and that this was an additional reason for keeping it intact. He recognized this and, I think, anticipates that once the decision is reached events are likely to move more rapidly than during the past four months.

From a photostat: C.W. 9372. Courtesy: India Office Library

APPENDIX III

SIR JAMES CRERAR'S NOTE ON DISCUSSION WITH GANDHIJI[1]

July 17, 1931

I had one and a half hours' conversation with Mr. Gandhi this afternoon. He traversed a good deal of the ground already covered in his conversations with

Mr. Emerson, which it is unnecessary to recapitulate. I put strongly before him the obvious arguments in favour of his going to London, but on this point he still maintained a somewhat ambiguous attitude. The position to which he most obstinately adhered was that particularly in the United Provinces, the attitude of Government, or at least of its officers, was definitely hostile to Congress and to its members as such. He referred to instances in which members of Congress, who had made complaints to Magistrate's courts, had received, as he considered, no redress. I pointed out that in that event the proper course was to take the case up on revision or appeal. He agreed to this, and said such steps were being taken. He mentioned also, a number of cases in which notices had been issued to *kisans* and others warning them against any contact or association with members of Congress. His most insistent plea was that there was a large number of cases in which, as he said, he was convinced the Settlement had been broken both in letter and in spirit. He considered the only possible means of enabling him to go to London would be some assurance that these cases would be examined by an impartial authority. By this, he said, he did not mean anything in the nature of a joint Congress and Government Arbitration Board to consider breaches of the Settlement, but something similar to the kind of impartial enquiry which, when there is a *prima facie* case of administrative abuse, the administration is ordinarily prepared to hold. His summing up was that unless he had some substantial assurance on this point, he would consider that his primary duty was to remain in India to preserve the peace rather than go to London. I endeavoured to dissuade him from this view, but without much success. He disavowed any intention of resuming the strife, and said that unless he could be convinced that he could safely go to London, his main object would be to maintain the peace in India in order that the Conference could proceed with its work. Our conversation was, throughout, perfectly friendly.

(Sd.) J. CRERAR

From a photostat: C.W. 9374. Courtesy: India office Library

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Associated Press", 17-7-1931

APPENDIX IV

LETTER FROM H. W. EMERSON[1]

SIMLA,
July 30, 1931

I write to thank you for your letter of July 21st, in which

(a) you request that an impartial tribunal be appointed for the decision of matters of interpretation of the Settlement of March 5th, and

(b) you state 11 specific points which you desire to be referred to the tribunal, if appointed, on failure of an agreement between Government and Congress as to their interpretation.

In your previous letter of the 14th of June you made a suggestion "for the appointment of a permanent Board of Arbitration to decide questions of interpretation of the Settlement and as to the full carrying out of the terms by the one party or the other".

In my D.O. Ietter No. F. 33/1/31-Poll, of the 4th of July, 1931, reasons were given why Government were not able to accept the suggestion.

2. In your interview with His Excellency the Viceroy on July 21st, you expressed the view that, while it might not be possible for Government to accept the general proposition made in your letter of June 14th, it would be unreasonable for them to refuse to accept a more narrow proposal relating to arbitration on questions of interpretation of the Settlement. After some discussion, His Excellency suggested that you should communicate the specific points which you consider suitable for submission to arbitration, and he undertook that on their receipt the Government of India would examine the proposal.

3. The Government of India have given the matter their most careful consideration. They observe that while you do not wish to press, at the moment, for a tribunal to examine questions of fact in the event of difference between Government and the Congress, you do not waive this demand, and you suggest that occasions may arise when it may be necessary to press it. You will doubtless agree that the only distinction between this request and the suggestion made in your letter of the 14th of June is that you now desire to hold in suspense the broader question, while asking for the immediate agreement of Government to arbitration on questions of interpretation. For the reasons stated in my letter of the 4th July, the Government of India regret that they are unable to alter the views already expressed on the former question.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H. W. Emerson", 21-7-1931

4. They have given further consideration to the more restricted proposal, namely, the reference to arbitration of questions relating to interpretation. In reaching a decision they have given particular attention to the eleven points stated in your letter, which you regard as coming within this category, and to the implications which acceptance of arbitration on these points would necessarily involve, with special regard to the responsibilities and functions inherent in Government. You will no doubt recognize that it would not be possible for Government to agree to any arrangement which involved the suspension of the ordinary law or of the regular machinery of administrations, or which included the appointment of an external authority to whom Government would delegate the responsibility for reaching decisions in matters closely affecting the administration, or of which the effect, direct or indirect, would be to provide special procedure, to the benefits of which members of the Congress could lay claim and from which other members of the public would be excluded and which would trench upon the jurisdiction and discretion of the courts of law. The Settlement of March 5 did not, of course, contemplate any provisions of this kind.

5. I am now to examine some of the points stated in your letter with reference to the above principles. The first three relate to picketing and are of a general character. The action that it may be necessary to take in particular cases of picketing is obviously dependent on the nature of the particular circumstances, and Government can clearly not agree to any decision of a general character which might have the effect of prejudicing this discharge by the executive or judicial authorities of their responsibility for the maintenance of law and order, or of interfering with the liberty of individuals. General references of the nature you suggest are precluded by these considerations. Nor can Government agree to the reference of particular cases, for, apart from the reasons given in my letter of July 4th, the effect would often be to give to the individuals concerned in them a position not enjoyed by members of the public in similar circumstances.

In regard to the fourth point, the Government of India have no information which suggests that local Governments are condoning breaches of the excise law in the manner suggested. In so far as the matter relates to the administration of excise matters within the law, you will no doubt realize that it is not practicable to set up a tribunal with power to decide, in effect, how local Governments should conduct the administration of excise, which, it may be observed, is a provincial transferred subject.

Points (10) and (11) raise a different issue, but one of great importance. The questions mentioned in them were neither discussed during the conversations leading to the Settlement, nor was any provision made in the Settlement regarding them. The reference of these matters to a tribunal would, therefore, involve acceptance of the

principle (which would clearly be capable of unlimited extension) that the tribunal should be competent to extend the operation of the Settlement beyond its original scope and intentiou, and without the concurrence of Government.

6. These instances appear to Government sufficiently to indicate that there are insuperable difficulties in the way of arbitration even although references be ostensibly confined to matters of interpretation. There would be constant disputes as to whether the matter was one of interpretation or not, and the arrangement would create new difficulties rather than remove old ones.

7. Several of the 11 points have in their general aspect already received the careful consideration of Government, and in this connection I would refer you to my letter No. D. 4291-Poll, dated the 2nd of July 1931, which related to students, and to my letter No. D. 380I-31-Poll, dated the 20th of June 1931, which related to arms licences. The list of alleged breaches of particular provisions of the Settlement which you gave to me at Simla contained specific nstances coming within most of the 11 points. This list was referred within a few days of its receipt to local Governments for communication of the facts, and the Government of India and local Governments will satisfy themselves as to whether any breach of the Settlement is involved. They are similarly prepared to satisfy themselves in regard to future cases of alleged breaches of specific provisions, for, it is a matter of honour with Government to observe the Settlement and they have no doubt that this is equally held by you. It is by approaching the matter in this spirit and not by resort to arbitration that Government believe that difficulties can best be surmounted.

Young India, 20-8-1931

APPENDIX V

LETTER FROM LORD WELLINGDON[1]

July 31, 1931

I write to thank you for your letter of July 29th. Emerson wrote to you officially yesterday regarding the proposals for arbitration, and I should like you to know that the proposals received the most careful consideration of my Government, and that they were only not accepted because the difficulties presented themselves as insuperable. This does not mean that your charge-sheet, as you have called it, will not receive full attention. I have, of course, taken a personal interest in everything pertaining to the Settlement and shall continue to do so and, in particular, in regard to the list of alleged breaches of the Settlement, about which we await reports from local Governments. I know that in the Provinces the Governors similarly take a

[1] *Vide* the letters to Viceroy, "Letter to Viceroy", 29-7-1931 and "Letter to Viceroy", 14-8-1931

personal interest in matters connected with the Settlement, and you can rest assured that there will be no disposition to treat allegations of breaches of it other than as matters of importance.

We have not yet received full reports regarding Gujarat but I hope that the difficulties are clearing up and that your discussion with the Bombay Government will prove satisfactory to everyone concerned. So far as my information goes, the general situation is rather easier than a month or even a fortnight ago, except for terrorist crime, which cannot fail to have important reactions if it continues, and for the position in the North-West Frontier Province, which is a cause of much anxiety. I am glad to hear that you are doing all you can to stop the insensate campaign of assassination.

I should like, with you, to feel that the atmosphere is entirely free from clouds, and you may be sure that I and my Government will unceasingly work towards this end. But I am quite sure that the best way to obtain a real and lasting solution of present difficulties is through the Round Table Conference, and that you can best assist the real interests of the country in sharing in this great constructive work.

Young India, 20-8-1931

APPENDIX VI

LETTER FROM R. M. MAXWELL[1]

GANESHKHIND,
August 10, 1931

I am directed by His Excellency to send you his considered reply on the points raised at your recent interview, so far as material is now available. As you will doubtless realize, some little time will be required to make enquiries about some of the more detailed matters which you mentioned, but His Excellency understands that it will be more convenient to you if his reply on the more important issues is not delayed until all other matters are cleared up.

2. His Excellency has carefully considered all the points you urged regarding land revenue collections in Gujarat, and particularly in Bardoli. On the information before him he is satisfied that no breach of the Settlement is involved in the steps taken to collect land revenue in Bardoli. It was clearly contemplated by the Settlement that the current demand and arrears would be paid promptly by all who could pay. The Collector did, however, show special forbearance in regard to the employment of coercive processes, and it was only after some months' delay, and then only in carefully selected cases, that he resorted to them. The prompt response

[1] *Vide* "Interview to the Press", 4-8-1931, "Telegram to Viceroy", 11-8-1931 & "Telegram ato R. M. Maxwell", 11-8-1931

of the revenue-payers and the negligible extent to which attachment became necessary showed then that there were many persons able to pay who had not done so, and established the fact that action had become necessary only in consequence of their failure to observe the Settlement.

3. Nor is His Excellency able to agree with you that there has been any breach of faith on the part of the Collector. All that the Collector undertook to do was to consider any lists which might be submitted to him by Congress workers containing the names of revenue defaulters whom they believed to be unable to pay either the whole or a part of their dues, just as he was also willing to consider applica-tions of a similar character received direct from the Khatedars, while reserving the right to decide each case on its merits. Neither the Government nor the Collector have ever accepted the position that the collection of land revenue should be dependent on the advice of the Congress, and His Excellency has no doubt that you will yourself realize that the decision as to whether particular persons can or cannot pay must rest with the Collector. Holding, therefore, as he does, that there has been neither a breach of faith nor a breach of the Settlement in any action which has been taken, His Excellency in Council is unable to approve of the refund of any sums already collected.

4. I am to explain, however, that this particular issue is no longer one of practical importance for the following reasons. It is common ground that all who can now pay should do so, and further that normal methods of land revenue administration should be pursued when the time comes for the collection of the next instalment due in January or February next. The practical question, therefore, concerns the intervening period. With regard to this the usual practice is to allow measures of collection to slacken after the end of the land revenue year, i.e., the 31st July. In accordance with this practice active coercive measures would not ordinarily be resumed until after the end of the monsoon, and His Excellency has no doubt that in ordinary circumstances most of the balance of the arrears might have been recovered in October next. I am, however, to inform you that in view of the special circumstances of this year and in order to facilitate the working of the the Settlement, His Excellency in Council has decided not to adopt any further coercive measures for the collection of arrears unless they remain unpaid at the time of the next instalment, i.e., in January or February, 1932.

5. The position therefore is that those who can now pay should freely do so, and that any arrears then outstanding will be collected together with the current demands at the time of next instalment in accordance with the ordinary rules of revenue adminsitration.

6. While the situation in Bardoli is the immediate occasion for these orders, it is intended to apply similar orders to the whole of the districts of Surat, Broach and Kaira. so far as the local circumstances render them applicable.

7. In order to prevent any misunderstanding I am to explain that these orders will not mean that no efforts will be made to collect unauthorized arrears before the date of the first instalment, but such efforts will be confined to the ordinary methods of persuasion. I am also to add that some further inquiries into the means of the defaulters may be necessary for the purpose of distinguishing those arrears which might possibly be suspended from those which should be classed as unauthorized, and His Excellency hopes that any such inquiries will not be misinterpreted.

8. I am to mention here that the sales of attached goods in Jambusar taluka, to which you draw His Excellency's attention, have now been suspended, and that the cases in question will be governed by the general orders now being issued.

9. As regards land revenue collections in the Sirsi and Siddapur talukas, the position was explained to you at the time of your interview, and His Excellency considers that since practically all the revenue in these talukas has already been collected with scarcely any use of the major coercive processes no further action is called for.

I am now to refer to some of the more detailed matters which you brought to notice.

10. I am to invite a reference to the last paragraph of my letter to you of the 10th of July, in which the position was explained. The lands in question are Kaze inam lands held for service, and since they had passed into the possession of a person incapable of performing the service for which they were granted, their resumption and regrant to another person was in accordance with the ordinary rules and did not fall within the scope of the Settlement.

11. While, as His Excellency explained to you, it is not the policy of Government to restore all forfeited licences until they are assured that the situation will remain tranquil, orders are in process of being issued authorizing District Magistrates to use their discretion in suitable cases, and the case of Mr. Shroff will no doubt receive fresh consideration under these orders.

12. His Excellency finds that orders have twice been issued for the reinstalment of the former Patel, but on each occasion it has been necessary to cancel the orders on account of the very severe persecution to which the new Patel Fakirbhai Mahomedbhai was subjected by the people of Butwada. His Excellency has before him a number of fully authenticated instances of this persecution, as a result of which the Government have lately sanctioned the retention of Fakirbhai in the patelship for a further period of one year, after which the case will be re-examined and decided on a consideration of the villagers' conduct during that period. Any act of persecution during the period will be taken as a sign that the village does not intend to abide by the Settlement.

13. It has been ascertained that the enquiry into the conduct of Jehangir Patel

has already been taken up by the Mamlatdar on the Ist of August, when two complainants out of five appeared and stated that their witnesses would not come unless summoned. Every facility will be given to any complainants who wish to appear to produce their evidence in open court.

14. The number of Talatis who have not been reinstated in the Kaira district is found to be 11. In 10 of these cases the posts had already been filled and in the remaining case the Talati was not reinstated because he had been dismissed for repeated insubordination. In the Surat District the Talatis who have not been reinstated are 1 in Olpad, 2 in Jalalpur and 2 in Chikhli. The situation in this district is that a number of posts of Talatis are due for reduction in accordance with the recommendations of the Retrenchment Committee of 1922-23 and these posts are gradually being absorbed as vacancies occur. While therefore it may be possible to absorb some of the resigned Talatis in future vacancies, it is not now possible to recreate appointments which have been abolished owing to their superfluity.

Young India, 20-8-1931

APPENDIX VII

TELEGRAM FROM SIR MALCOLM HAILEY[1]

NAINITAL,
August 6, 1931

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TELEGRAM DATED AUGUST FIVE. I AM RECOVERING FROM THE ATTACK OF INFLUENZA WHICH I HAD AT LUCKNOW. AS REGARDS EVICTIONS OF TENANTS BY LANDLORDS WE HAVE NO REASON TO THINK THAT THE NUMBER OF EVICTIONS THIS YEAR HAS BEEN EXCESSIVE. A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF EJECTIONS TAKES PLACE EVERY YEAR IN ORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES BUT I AM ASSURED THAT IN SOME DISTRICTS AT LEAST THEY HAVE THIS YEAR BEEN BELOW NORMAL FIGURE. THERE ARE ONE OR TWO AREAS IN WHICH THEY ARE SAID TO HAVE EXCEEDED NORMAL BUT WE HAVE ALREADY CALLED FOR FIGURES OF EVICTIONS AND AS SOON AS THESE FIGURES ARE AVAILABLE WE SHALL BE IN A BETTER POSITION TO APPRAISE THE SITUATION. MY IMPRESSION BASED ON CONVERSATION WITH MANY PERSONS CONCERNED IS THAT LANDLORDS HAVE IN MANY DISTRICTS BEEN AVERSE FROM MAKING EJECTMENTS OWING TO DIFFICULTY OF SECURING NEW TENANTS IN A PERIOD OF FALLING PRICES AND I KNOW ALSO THAT DISTRICT OFFICERS GENERALLY ARE USING INFLUENCE TO GET LANDLORDS TO ALLOW EJECTED TENANTS TO REENGAGE. AS REGARDS COERCIVE PROCESSES GENERALLY FOR RECOVERY

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Sir Malcolm Hailey", 5-8-1931

OF RENT WE HAVE NO REASON TO THINK THAT THE NUMBER HAS BEEN MUCH ABOVE THE NORMAL THROUGHOUT THE PROVINCE. BUT WE ARE MAKING FURTHER ENQUIRIES ON THIS POINT TO SATISFY OURSELVES THAT NO AVOIDABLE HARDSHIP IS BEING CAUSED TO THE TENANTRY. GOVERNMENT POLICY BOTH IN ACTION AND IN INTENTION IS WHILE HOLDING SCALES EVEN BETWEEN THE LANDLORD AND THE TENANT TO USE EVERY ENDEAVOUR TO SEE THAT CULTIVATORS DO NOT SUFFER UNDULY FROM PRESENT UNFORTUNATE ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES. GOVERNMENT HAVE PREPARED PROVISIONAL SCHEME FOR GENERAL ADJUSTMENT OF RENTS THROUGHOUT PROVINCE TO MEET FALL IN PRICES AND THIS WILL BE CONSIDERED NEXT WEEK BY COMMITTEE REPRESENTING ALL PARTIES IN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Young India, 20-8-1931

APPENDIX VIII

THE SECOND SETTLEMENT[1]

SIMLA,
August 28, 1931

1. As a result of the coversations between His Excellency the Viceroy and Mr. Gandhi, the Congress will now be represented by Mr. Gandhi at the Round Table Conference.

2. The Settlement of March 5, 1931, remains operative. The Government of India and local Governments will secure the observance of the specific provisions of the Settlement in those cases, if any, in which a breach is established, and will give their careful consideration to any representation that may be made in this respect. The Congress will fulfil their obligations under the settlement.

3. In regard to collections of land revenue in the Surat district, the point in issue is whether in those villages of Bardoli taluka and Valod Mahal which were visited by revenue officials accompanied by a party of police during the month of July 1931, more severe demands, having regard to their material circumstances, were made from revenue-payers and enforced by coercion exercised through the police than were made from and met by revenue-payers of other villages of the Bardoli taluka. The Government of India in consultation and full agreement with the Government of Bombay have decided, that an enquiry shall be held into this issue in accordance with the following terms of reference: "To enquire into the allegations that Khatedars in

[1] *Vide* "Interview to "The Statesman", 25-8-1931, "Letter to H. W. Emerson", 27-8-1931, "Alone, Ayet Not Alone", 28-8-1931 and "Interview to "The Bombay Chronicle", 29-8-1931

the villages in question were compelled by means of coercion exercised through the police to pay revenue in excess of what would have been n demanded if the standard had been applied which was adopted in other villages of the Bardoli taluka where collections were effected after March 5, 1931, without the assistance of the police, and to ascertain what sum, if any, was so paid." Within the terms of reference, evidence may be produced on any matter in dispute. The Government of Bombay have appointed Mr. R. G. Gordon, I.C.S., Collector of Nasik, to hold the enquiry.

4. In regard to other matters hitherto raised by the Congress the Government of India and the local Governments concerned are not prepared to order any enquiry.

5. In regard to any further matters of complaint by the Congress not coming within the specific provisions of the Settlement, such complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the ordinary administrative procedure and practice, and if any question of an enquiry arises, the decision as to whether an enquiry shall be held and if so the form it shall take will be made by the local Government concerned in accordance with such procedure and practice.

Young India, 3-9-1931

APPENDIX IX

ACCOUNT OF MEETING WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF COTTON TRADE[1]

EDGEWORTH,

September 27, 1931

T. D. BARLOW: The discussions were frank and friendly on both sides. Mr. Gandhi's main point was that 90 per cent of the population of India was dependent on agriculture, and had no work during six months of the year.The khaddar movement therefore has great social significance. Mr. Gandhi has chosen homespinning because it does not involve heavy capital expenditure, and can be widely spread.

Mr. Gandhi, I presume, would accept any alternative craft that would provide what he is seeking to achieve, the enlargement and betterment of preasant life, but so far he has not been able to find any effective substitute or competitor. It is therefore impossible for him to abandon the homespinning movement.

Mr. Gandhi denied that this movement was specifically directed against English cloth, and said it was firmly understood that when the Pact with Lord Irwin was signed on March 5, the economic boycott remained. He further maintained that it was the economic condition of the world, and above all the lowness of commodity

[1] *Vide* "Speech to 'Depressed' Classes Deputation", 26-7-1931

prices, which was responsible for the poor demand for goods far more than the boycott. Mr. Gandhi also said that if what he considered proper and the necessary arrangement between Great Britain and India were established, he fully believed it would be possible to make arrangements whereby a considerable quantity of English cloth would be imported to India, but he could hold out no hope that the Lancashire trade could regain its former magnitude.

Mr. Gandhi said that 100,000 women spinners and 10,000 men weavers were active on the homespinning movement and the villages showed marked signs of economic improvement. He said that the British-owned mills were on the whole better than indigenous mills, but that some of the letter were as good or better than anything in the world. He expressed himself as astonished at the comfort and housing of Lancashire work-people as had seen it, I hope the frank and courteous atmosphere that prevailed in the discussion will provide a favourable atmosphere for official conversations. If satisfactory arrangement is made at the Round Table Conference, it should be much easier to devise something to minimize to the greatest degree the hardship of Lancashire.

JOHN GREY: Mr. Gandhi gave us at some length his economic policy, which is directed to the regeneration of village life in India, and stressed the urgent necessity of finding the villagers some alternative to six months' idleness which would at the same time be remunerative. It is not as an industry that he regards khaddar as being important, but primarily as an opportunity for work and to supplement earnings. But he realizes that for a long time India will not be self-sufficing and will need foreign cloth, and he assured us that if India gets that measure of independence that he is seeking for her he is prepared to do all he can to promote the co-operation of India and Great Britain as two friendly States, and would go a long way toward granting us some kind of preference.

There is one fear uppermost in my mind, and I ventured very respectully to submit it to Mr. Gandhi. He has united all sorts and kinds of people, different classes, different races, different creeds, under him in a crusade of independence. But supposing that object to be attained, will his power be anything like so great as it is now? I think independence is the cement that is binding his followers together, and I think the cement might come unstuck. Mr. Gandhi does not, I suggest, appreciate fully the power underlying mechanical industry or the singleness of purpose there is about commercial rapacity. His answer was that the villages, once granted universal suffrage, would vote as units, and could govern and control the commercial elements. But I think he was troubled by this question. While he was having his tea of fruit and vegetables, after the meeting was over, I had another talk with him, and we got on to the question of poverty.

He spoke of the villages full of 'emasculated skeletons' and I agreed that there could be no outward comparison between poverty in India and poverty in Lancashire.

But I said, it is a question of degree. Poverty can be just as real here in its pain and its burden, as it is in India. It all depends on what one was accustomed to. I told him that the poverty went much deeper than he could see in a superficial visit, and that there was in Darwen, Black-burn, and Great Harwood especially a concentrated dark blot of unemployment and misery which was directly attributable to the lack of Indian demand.

Mr. Gandhi quoted figures and facts to prove, and he did it effectively, that the poverty is due to world causes as well as to the Indian boycott, but I replied that the effect of the Indian boycott was worse both in itself and its repercussions because it was concentrated intensively in one industrial area, rather than throughout the industry as a whole. Mr. Gandhi appreciated this point, and his attitude was a very sympathetic one. I am sure he is a humane man, but his humanity is first and foremost for the Indian people. He repudiates the idea that he is a politician seeking power, and his repudiation impressed us.

His appearance as he sat like a Chinese ivory of Buddha awaiting our entrance was pleasing and impressive. He has well-shaped head, which is not bald, as his pictures seem to show, but covered with close-cropped grey hair. His expression and manner are attractive.

JOHN LEE: We never anticipated that our meeting with Mr. Gandhi would give us any immediate hope. We did not expect that he would tell us he was willing to lift the boycott or give us a preference over Indian mills, but we still thought he might give some assurance for the future if the Round Table Conference should be a success. That, in a measure, he did, but emphasized that we should still have to face the native khaddar and a preference to Indian mills so long as the khaddar was not complete. He was at pains to assure us that the boycott was purely an economic and not a political one. But, frankly, we feel that the line that can be drawn between the one and the other, between political and economic, is a very fine one. One question which was put to him was: "What influence can Congress use, and what has it done already, in the interests of the natives in the mills, with regard to their working conditions and their wages?" He told us in reply of improvements which had already been effected, and assured us that Congress would continue in its work of amelioration. We all felt that from the idealistic point of view we could not quarrel with Mr. Gandhi. I myself said to one of my colleagues, "If I were an Indian, I should be a disciple of Gandhi."

Of course, in so far as he wants to get back to crude methods of production, either in agriculture or in yearn, we are puzzled. Mr Gandhi himself was spinning while we were there. He told us he always does an hour a day. But even though his machine is an improvement on the old hand-spinning wheel, it is still very slow and very crude. We welcomed his assurance that he would be willing to see a preference on Lancashire goods if all his aspirations of independence are fulfilled, and noted that this applied not only to Lancashire but to British goods as a whole. He specifically

mentioned other classes of goods. There is perhaps one direction in which one may be justified in some optimism. Perhaps when the education which Mr. Gandhi desires has come to the villages he will not be satisfied with his crude way of providing clothes for himself and will want to turn his energies elsewhere. So that in the development of the Indian Villager there might lie hope for us.

ANDREW NAESMITH: Whatever people think of Gandhi and his policy one thing is obvious. He possesses personality and magnetism. It is astounding to reflect that an individual with such a frail body and no imposing physique can yet command the loyalty, affection, and love of millions of people residing in the villages of India. The thing that struck me most was the sober statement of fact which he recounted to us of the conditions in the villages out there the social life of India, and his own relationship to it.

He spoke without gesture and in well-modulated tones. The only feeling he displayed was in the inflection of the voice. I got the impression that this man really believes he is the chosen vessel of God to lift the wide standard of life in India by the policies, he is enunciating of non-violence, truth, and love. He was frank enough to say in our protracted conversations that he recognized to the full the fearful consequences of his policy and that of the Congress Party on the industrial and economic life of Lancashire. However, when he contrasts the social conditions of our people with those of his he still believes it is his divine mission to proceed with his task. I do not think that Gandhi will vary his purposes because of what he has seen in Lancashire and learnt from us. And so I cannot see any possible hope of Lancashire's ever doing the same amount of trade with India in textile goods.

If his economic policy and political principles are sound and are eventually realized, it seems to me that fully 40 per cent of the spindles and looms in Lancashire will never run again. One has considerable sympathy with the salvation of village life in India. At the same time, when one realizes all that it means to Lancashire one is filled with apprehension for the future. Suppose, we said, there is a conflict in the future between the hand-weavers and the Bombay mills. Qutie quietly, without bombast, he replied, 'I can break the Bombay mills, if need be', and we knew from his tones he believed he could.

F. HINDLE: I had met Mr. Gandhi before, in 1926, when I went to India with Mr. Tom Shaw and others in the Trade Delegation. Mr. Gandhi was very candid on Saturday, but, despite the fact that he was meeting with British business men who had felt the effects of his policy very keenly and were determined to put their point of view, there was no bitterness and the interview was a pleasant one. All the same, I think it has brought home to us the fact that we cannot hope for the same volume of trade with India again. I don't like saying that, but we must face facts sometimes. Do I think his visit has done good? Well, yes, it has brought enlightenment, but it is

enlightenment without hope.

FRED MILLS: After meeting Mr. Gandhi I am convinced that he is very sincere, and that he means what he says when he denies that he has any animosity towards Lancashire. The boycott he declares to be purely an economic weapon and will persist even if his aspirations in respect of independence are conceded. I think it is very important that he sees no reason why a preference once the villages have produced to their fullest extent [*sic*].

The question of poverty is a difficult one. We put it to him that in the East a lower standard of life is the normal thing, and he agreed, but said that there were many millions in India who were below the lowest standard possible even in the Orient. There may be those who think Mr. Gandhi poses, but I am not one of them. He is one of the most remrakable men I have ever met, and disarms criticism by his very pleasing manner. He told us we liked, but the whole discussion was carried on in the greatest good temper. All our question he answered very fully and with perfect good humour. He paid a high tribute to his reception from everyone in Lancashire, and said he was surprised to find even the legitimate irritation towards himself which he had expected had not been shown.

T. ASHURST: I do not think we have progressed very much. Mr. Gandhi has made it clear that only if he is satisfied will he do anything to help us, and even that depends on his wants at home being satisfied. We found it was very difficult to separate the economic and political issues, more difficult than Mr. Gandhi seems to find it. The point arises whether Mr. Gandhi can control the mill-owners in his own country, and whether at some time in the future they will not be able to flood the villages with their machine-made cloth. Still, I think it was good thing for us to meet Mr. Gandhi, and we found him personally very likeable.

The Manchester Guardian, 28-9-1931

1. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

LONDON,
October 13, 1931

I do not want to be aggressive. I maintain that the failure to discover a solution for the communal question is largely due to want of knowledge about the new constitution and also tot he unrepresentative character of delegates. The Government know only too well that the Congress is the only body which can deliver the goods. What then is the use of their pretending that the Congress is one among different groups, namely, Hindus, Depressed, Classes, Christians, landlords, zamindars? When the struggle was in progress the Hindu Sabha was not different from the the Congress. I am certain that a referendum is held today, the Hindus and Depressed Classes will by overwhelming majority be found to be in sympathy with the Congress. I am certian that the Nationalist Muslims will render a good account of themselves. If I had my own way, I certainly would surrender to the Muslims, but it will be of no use for the Government to exaggerate the differences which are largely due to the composition of the delegation which is their own action. If the Government is genuinely not in favour of framing a constitution prior to a communal settlement, I invite them to put their hand to the plough. I am prepared to co-operate with the Government on the minimum terms which the Congress is prepared to accept. The Congress insists on the fullest control of the army, foreign policy and finance. The Government have the choice to accept or reject the Congress demands.

I do not expect the the Government to solve the Indian question at this Conference, but an participating in it in the fulfilment of the promise that I gave Lord Irwin to discuss every issue and I value the contacts outside the Conference more.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 15-10-1931

2. SPEECH AT INDIAN STUDENTS' MEETING[1]

LONDON,
October 13, 1931

Gandhiji, after reiterating India's fundamental claims, said he knew before starting that these were not likely to be granted because no nation ever yet obtained its lost freedom by mere appeal to reason. Something much more serious had always been required. He did not suppose India would be an exception. It was now plainer than ever that only through suffering would victory be won, but his hope was that the suffering already endured might have created a sufficient impression on the British mind favourable to reason and negotiation.

I must confess that, as I go on, I feel the task Herculean. Probably nothing would come out of it, but being an optimist, I would not give up hope in its entirely until I find nothing more can be done. Still I pray the seed being sown now will bear fruit in the conscience of this country and the Ministers will feel compelled to come to terms with the nation of sufferers.[2]

It may be that the seed which is being sown now may result in softening the British spirit and that it may result in the preventing of the brutalization human beings. I have known the English nature in its hideous form in the Punjab. I have known it elsewhere also, during these fifteen years of experience and through history, I have known the same thing happening. It is my purpose by every means at my command to prevent such a catastrophe occurring again. I am more concerned in preventing the brutalization of human nature than in preventing the sufferings of my own people.

I have often gloated over the sufferings of my own people. I know that people, who voluntarily undergo a course of suffering raise themselves and the whole of humanity, but I also know that people who become brutalized in their desperate efforts to get victory over their opponents or to exploit weaker nations or weaker men, not only drag down themselves but mankind also. And it cannot be a matter of pleasure to me or anyone else to see human nature dragged in the mire. If we are all sons of the same God and partake of the same

[1] The meeting took place in Gower Street Hostel, Bloomsbury. Sir Ewart Greaves of the Indian Y.M.C.A. was in the chair.

[2] What follows is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "London Letter" in *Young India*.

divine essence, we must partake of the sin of every person whether he belongs to us or to another race. You can understand how repugnant it must be to invoke the beast in any human being, how much more so in Englishmen, amongst whom I count numerous friends! I invite you to give all the help you can in the endeavour that I am making.

To the Indian students my appeal is to study this question in all thoroughness and, if you really believe in the power of non-violence and truth, then, for God's sake express these two things in your daily life—not merely in the political field—and you will find that whatever you do in this direction will help me in the struggle. It is possible that Englishmen and Englishwomen who come into close touch with you will assure the world that they have never seen students so good, so truthful, as Indian students. Don't you think that that would go a long way towards vindicating our nation? The words "self-purification" occurred in a Congress Resolution in 1920. From that moment the Congress realized that we were to purify ourselves. We were by self-sacrifice to purify ourselves so that we would deserve liberty and so that God would also be with us. If that is the case, every Indian whose life bears testimony to the spirit of self-sacrifice helps his country, without having to do anything more. Such, in my opinion, is the strength of the means which the Congress adopted. Therefore, in the battle for freedom, every student here need do nothing more than that he should purify himself and present a character above reproach and above suspicion.

Q. Lord Irwin is reported to have said in a speech at the Central Hall that he knew you would not insist on Complete Independence. Is this true?

A. Well : In the first instance, I do not know that Lord Irwin made the speech which is imputed to him. Secondly, I must not speak for Lord Irwin. That would be a question well addressed to him. But I never told Lord Irwin that I would not press for Complete Independence. On the contrary, so far as my memory serves me right, I told him that I would press for Complete Independence, and, for me that does not mean ruling India through deputies, i.e., Indian agents rather than English agents. Complete independence to me means National Government.

Q. How do you reconcile Complete Independence with the retention of British troops.

A. British troops may remain in India and that would depend upon the arrangement that the partners came to. This, for a limit ed period, would be to the interests of India because India has become emasculated and it is necessary to retain some portion of British troops or some portion of British officers under the National Government and in the employ of the National Government. I shall defend the partnership and yet defend the retention of those troops.

Q. Do you envisage a Viceroy when you speak of an Independent India ?

A. Whether the Viceroy remains is a question to be decided by both the parties. Speaking for myself, I cannot conceive a Viceroy remaning. But I can conceive a British Agent remaining there because there would be so many interests which the British have brought into being there which I personally do not seek to destroy and, in order to represent those interests and if there is also an army consisting of British troops and officers, I could not possibly say, 'No, there will not be a British Agent.' And since there are also the Princes concerned I cannot vouchsafe for what the Princes will do and, therefore, I do not expect that under the scheme I have in mind there will be no British Agent there—whether he is called a Viceroy or a Governor-General. But I would defend it as a partnership having the condition that it is to be terminated at the will of either on terms of absolute equality. I am writing on a slate from which I have to rub out many things.

Q. What are the common objects that such a partnership would advance ?

A. The common object that the partnership is going to advance is to cease the exploitation of the races of the earth. If India becomes free from this curse of exploitation, under which she has groaned for so many years, it would be up to India to see that there is no further exploitation. Real partnership would be of mutual benefit. It would be a partnership between two races the one having been known for its manliness, bravery, courage and its unrivalled powers of organization, and the other an ancient race possessing a culture perhaps second to none, a continent in itself. A partnership between these two peoples cannot but result in mutual good and be to the benefit of mankind.[1]

[1] What follows is from *The Hindu*.

Dealing lengthily with the communal problem, he said he was incapable of bargaining away the rights of minorities and insisted again that the Congress was predominantly representative of the dumb millions.

The golden rule is : Believe just the contrary of what the newspapers say on such matters. What I have been trying to do is to persuade Hindus and Sikhs to give Muslims what they want and persuade Muslims to so frame their demands as to make them acceptable to other communities.

Regarding smaller minorities, he pointed out the part played by the Parsis in Bombay as an example of what numerically insignificant communities could do without special advantages and what great opportunities adult suffrage would provide all alike.

The most determined opposition to the claims of untouchables and other minorities except Muslims and Sikhs was expressed by Mr. Gandhi. He said:

I shall resist those claims at the cost of my life and I appeal to you to join me in shaming the delegates into withdrawing them.

He denied that he had offered to accept the demands of Mussalmans if they would join him in resisting the demands of untouchables. He said he was forced to agree to Muslim and Sikh demands for historical reasons, but he would not agree to the grant of special representation to any other community in any circumstances.

The manifestations of goodwill by people in England had convinced him that the English people would never again tolerate repression in India. If it became necessary for Indians to resume passive resistance and non-co-operation, he appealed to the students to behave themselves and win the respect of the English people.

The Hindu, 14-10-1931, and *Young India*, 29-10-1931

3. CABLE TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,

[Before *October 14, 1931*][1]

DR. ANSARI
DARYAGANJ
DELHI

HAVE HAD THREE PAINFUL CONVERSATIONS OVER YOU WITH NO FRUITFUL RESULT. TOLD THEM COULD NOT ENDORSE THEIR

[1] The source does not give the date. But Gandhiji makes a reference to the "handicap" of Dr. Ansari's absence in his statement to the Press of October 14, 1931; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 11-10-1931

DEMAND WITHOUT YOUR CONSENT AND THAT YOUR HELP NECESSARY MOMENT TO MOMENT. HAVE AGREED HOWEVER ASSIST EVERY EFFORT FOR SETTLEMENT EVEN WITHOUT YOU THOUGH WITH LITTLE PROSPECT OF SUCCESS.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 18217

4. STATEMENT TO "THE ISLAND"[1]

LONDON,

[On or before *October 14, 1931*][2]

The movement of artists and poets who are endeavouring to free themselves from the shackles of commercial and industrial influences of this age is a most laudable venture if only they have strength enough to do it. Religion is the proper and eternal ally of art. What religion teaches people the artist brings near to them in form on the plastic plane. I hate "art for art's sake", which I think is a lamentable aberration of the human mind. Art has a profound similarity with religion inasmuch as the fundamental experience in both of them belongs to the domain of man's relationship with God. Indian art symbolizes this relationship and at the same time expresses the ritual of religious worship. If an artist who thinks he is surrounded by people without any religious sentiment chooses to become a scoffer, he will inevitably frustrate his own vocation. On the other hand if he feels that his is a mission, then a poet or artist has a right to oppose the prevalent creed or lack of creed and he will be justified by the greater value of his own revelation. I do not pretend to know anything about art, but I believe firmly that both religion and art have to serve the identical aims of moral and spiritual elevation. The central experience of life will for ever remain the relationship which man has to God and it will never be superseded or replaced by anything else, just as human bodies will never free themselves from the law of gravitation. In this relationship of man to God it is the

[1] Gandhiji made the statement in conversation with the Editor, Joseph Bard. The latter made a record of it and submitted the script for Gandhiji's approval. Gandhiji approved it, except for the last paragraph which read: "Both the priestlike and the artistic human beings aspire to what is sacred and, when the vulgar mind pities them for the sacrifices they make, they forget that for both of them a sacrifice retains the joyous meaning of its origin—the road towards the sacred."

[2] *The Island* gave the date -line October 14.

mysterious forces which matter, not the meagre texts expressed in words. There may be changes in this relationship of man to God as represented by the various and successive religious of mankind; but to quote Cardinal Newman: "One Step enough for me."

From a photostat: G.N. 1055-a

5. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

LONDON,
October 14, 1931

Though it is a matter for deep sorrow that the negotiations for a communal settlement failed, I have not given up hope of success.

In spite of the Premier's energetic disclaimer, I still hold that the causes of the failure were inherent in the composition of the Conference. I am more than ever convinced that the framing of a constitution should not depend on the previous settlement of the communal question. It was, therefore, wrong for the Premier to suggest that further progress in constitution-making largely depended on the communal settlement. In judging events here the Indian public will do well to bear in mind these two defects in Government procedure; they will then not become nervours each time there is failure.

I have had several protracted conversations with the Muslim Delegation, but we could not come to a final conclusion. I have felt the absence of Dr. Ansari a severe handicap, but he will be of no real use unless the Muslim Delegation desires or approves of his selection as a delegate.

The position I have taken up is of a double character. In an individual capacity I have retained my original position, namely, to concede all to all parties, but, as a Congress delegate,I have endeavoured to act as an intermediary, up to now without success. I have made it clear I should have to receive the sanction of the Working Committee before I accept any scheme. I have made no reference to the Working Committee, as I have nothing definite before me.

At the same time I am keeping myself in touch with all parties. The moment I have anything on which I have to take action, I shall ask for instructions. Meanwhile, I would warm the public against being affected or agitated by newspaper reports.

The Hindu , 15-10-1931

6. SPEECH AT FEDERAL STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING

LONDON,
October 14, 1931

MY LORD CHANCELLOR AND FRIENDS,

I have to tender my apology for intervening in the debate. It was my intention to request you to give me a few minutes at the end of this discussion for making a few brief remarks, but, as I listened to the discussion yesterday, I thought I might be able to make a suggestion which might remove the difficulty with which this Committee had to contend. I became more convinced than ever of this when Mr. Jinnah presented his difficulty, and therefore, it was that I requested you, Lord Chancellor, with apologies to Dr. Shafa'at Ahmad, to let me intervene and make a few remarks. I want to do so with a view to saving time if possible.

Before I proceed with my suggestion, I should like to tender my congratulations to Lord Peel's Subcommittee upon their labours and upon the exhaustive reprot they have given to us. I feel, however, that the Sub-committee aimed too hight, and hence, quite unconsciously, threw an apple of discord in our midst. The reference is clearly to examine and report upon the general principles upon which the finan cial resources and obligations of India should be apportioned between the federation, etc. Well, in my humble opinion, if the Sub-committee had not aimed too high, it could have presented us with a definite scheme. I sympathize with Mr. Jinnah's objection; but at the root of his objection is, I believe, a misunderstanding of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru's presentation of his case—this is to say, if I have understood him correctly. Mr. Jinnah's objection is that, unless there was some sort of a scheme, there could be no Federation whatsoever. I think that that would be a fatal objection if it was true. If I have understood Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru's contention correctly, it is that there should be a scheme, but that there might be, or should be, an Expert Committee to be brought into being by the Federal Government, if it ever comes into being, which could examine the whole question *de novo*, and present that Government with an exhaustive report. Naturally, that report could be shelved, could be torn to pieces, examined by all the parties and, if it commended itself to them, it could be then adopted by the Federal Government. There was no question of embodying

that report in any constitution. The constiution would have been framed before the Federal Government came into being. I personally confess that I do not envisage a constitution, to be framed by the greatest Parliament of the world, that would make us riskproof and difficulties-proof. I believe that this Federal Government, if it comes into being would be faced even in the very beginning with many difficulties with which it would have manfully to struggle; but I feel that it is not beyond the power of this Sub-committee to give us an elementary scheme about which all parties are agreed. I do not mind how humble that scheme is, but it should be a scheme which would commend itself to the States. Let the States themselves decide, in consultation with the other members of this Conference, as to how far they are willing to go.

Let me illustrate what I am saying.Here, as they have started with a mention of the natural difficulties that they have to contend against, the whole of this Report is a tentative Report and for its finality it depneds upon these two Expert Committees which have been suggested by the Sub-committee. What I feel is that, just as they have said in paragraph 10 that so many heads are marked "Federal", if they could sit again, and if this Report was referred back to them, they would then come, not with a tentative suggestion, but with an agreed suggestion that so many items of revenue would be federal. Even if there was an Expert Committee appointed, we would certainly not get absolutely accurate figures. Absolutely accurate figures can only be had after the event has happened—after the revenues have been collected—but we should have something to go by. I venture to suggest that such a thing is not necessary for our purose before we can come to an agreement as to what items shall be or shall not be considered to be Federal; and so I simply take up these items and I say, let them concentrate upon these items to the exclusion of everything else and say definitely,'Yes, External Customs, including Export duties, shall be Federal' or 'shall not be Federal'. Then they would know immediately what are the sources of revenue. Similarly, let them sit together and say'These will be the obligations that shall be Federal', and let the States decide for themselves. After all, it is they who are invited to come, or who have volunteered to come. I welcome gratefully the assurance given by His Highness of Bhopal, as also by His Highness of Bikaner. My sympathies are entirely with Sir Akbar Hydari when he says that he cannot possibly, either on behalf of Hyderabad or on behalf of the States' Delegation, take a leap

in the dark. Let there, therefore, be no leap in the dark; and, in order to avoid such a catastrophe, let there be just now a very humble scheme of participation, and let us launch that humble scheme. Then it would be open to the Federal Government—and there should be sufficient elasticity, for which His Higheness of Bhopal pleaded, in the consti tution itself to eanable the Federal Government and the Federal Parliament—to take on what burdens they chose to take on. We do not want a castiron constitution, out of which we can never get, or to which we may never make any addition or amendment. If we have an elastic constitution, then it will be open to the Federal Government, as it gains experience, to appoint, not one Expert Committee, but ten Expert Committees to examine many things; and then the Federal Government, as it begins its march, will shoulder further responsibi lities, and as it proceeds to shoulder resonsibilites, it will also have further avenues of revenue to be derived from various sources. If one the thing is launched, I anticipate no difficulty and no trouble of any kind whatsoever.

Therefore my concrete suggestion, if it commends itself to you, is that we refer this Report back to the Sub-committee with thanks, and ask the Sub-committee, with the material at its disposal, to give us a minimum scheme to which the States agree; and that we accept that scheme as a scheme to start with, without any encumbrance in the shape of Expert Committees. I we do that, we meet entirely Mr. Jinnah's objection, I think. We meet also the legitimate fears of Sir Akbar Hydari; and, what is more to the point for a man like me, we waste no more time even on a matter which is of importance. I must confess to you that I dread a committee which might report in twelve months' time or even in three months' time or even in one month's time or three weeks' time. I think that this Conference has been called upon to shoulder a particular burden. It should manfully shoulder that burden and not throw responsibilities upon any further committees. Whatever we can hammer into shape we should present to His Majesty's Government, to the Partliament, and to the people of India also; but I think that, unless we approach the task in this manner, so far as I can see, we shall certainly never see light out of what appears to me to be impenetrable darkness at the present moment.

That really is the reason why I have intervened. I think that I

have sufficiently explained the suggestion that I have ventured to place beore this Committee.

Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session) : Proceedings of Federal Structure Committee and Minorities Committee, Vol. I, pp. 192-3

7. LETTER TO ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
October 15, 1931

DEAR ARCHBISHOP,

It was a pleasure to receive your letter for which Mr. Andrews had prepared me this morning. I shall present myself at the Palace at 5.30 p.m. on Tuesday, the 20th. I was most anxious to make your acquaintance and discuss with you the mission that has brought me here.

I quite agree with you that our conversation should be confined to us two only.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 18108

8. LETTER TO PANNALAL JHAVERI

October 15, 1931

CHI. PANNALAL,

I am happy that you have gone to Khurshedbehn.[1] You must regain your health. I hope Nanibehn will also join you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari—Pannalal Jhaveri, p. 30

[1] Khurshedbehn Naoroji had gone to North-West Frontier Province to teach spinning.

9. EXTRACTS FROM PROCEEDINGS OF THE FEDERAL STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING[1]

LONDON,
October 15, 1931

SIR MANECKJEE DADABHOY: My Lord, the Mahatma goes further and says that his concrete suggestion is, if it commends itself to the meeting, to refer this Report back to the Sub-committee with thanks, and ask the Sub-committee, with the material at its disposal, to give the Conference a minimum scheme to whcih the States agree, and that we should accept that scheme as a scheme to start with, without any encumbrance in the shape of an Expert Committee. The Mahatma, however, did not make clear what he meant by a minimum scheme. I am still at a loss to understand what is meant by a minimum scheme. I have

however, a graver constitutional objection. If you are going to put the Federation into operation, you cannot do it by a patch-work system and you cannot work on a piecemeal basis. If the Federation is to come into operation, it should be a full, complete, all-absorbing Federation, which will leave no room for doubt or difficulty. You cannot make arrangements for a sort of partial Federation. If the Federation is to be brought about, moreover, it must be conformity with the general principles which underlie all such federations. Moreover, does Mahatma Gandhi feel certain that, even if we have a minimum scheme, the Indian States are going to agree to that?

MR. GANDHI: That is the crux of my scheme.

Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session) : Proceedings of Federal Structure Committeee and Minorities Committee, Vol. I, p. 205

[1] The subject discussed was distribution of financial resources between the Federation and its units.

10. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING[1]

LONDON,
[*October 15, 1931*][2]

FELLOW STUDENTS,

I have been speaking to people on all sorts of things, but principally on the mission that has brought me here and by this time you know by heart what I have to say in connection with my mission. I had not intended to speak to you on any special subject. So I said to myself: Perhaps I shall best utilize our time in answering questions instead of wasting it by a set address.

You may put me any question you like. If I do not know the subject on which you ask me, I shall frankly confess my ignorance. Barring that, you will not embarrass. It will be an act of courtesy on your part if you are frank towards me. I have addressed you as "Fellow Students". It is not a formula. I regard mysel essentially as a student and if you are wise, as I am (Laughter), in after life you will regard yourselves as students.

Throughout my varied experiences of life, I have come to the conclusion that our student life commences after we leave our Colleges and Universities and Law Chambers where we are supposed to be studying tied down to our studies with the key to our knowledge and, when we leave these premises, we practi cally forget all that we have learnt. It is really in after life that we have to unlearn many things. The so-called student's life is merely a preparation or real life of a student. When you are in college or anywhere else, you have got set subjects. Even in optional subjects you have to learn them in a particular fashion because you are definitely bound down.[3] But after that stage is over, you are free like a bird with wings to soar high and, the higher you soar, the stronger you become. So I am still a student who has not graduated in the world.

When you are buffetted about and thrown on your resources, it becomes a tough job. If you give yourselves to study, if you dedicate

[1] The meeting was held at the International Students' Movement House, Russell Square. About 200 students hailing from all parts of the world were present.

[2] The date is according to Mahadev Desai's Diary.

[3] The source has "hide-bound".

yourselves to study, to eternal research, there is no limit to joy, there is no limit to pleasure that you derive from that study. My study consistently has been the search after Truth. During the early days of my study and search I could not consistently find Truth unless I invited injury against myself and not against others. I could find Truth only when I eschewed all feeling of causing injury to others, but, when necessary, inflicting it on myself. Becuase, as you must be knowing, Truth and violence are opposed to each other: Violence hides Truth and, if you try to find Truth by violence, you will betray horrible ignorance in the search of Truth and, thereore, non-violence without any exception whatsover. I have come to realize the essence of life, that is ahimsa.

With this brief introduction I leave myself at your disposal. You are at liberty to put me all kinds of questions.

A NEGRO STUDENT FROM GOLD COAST : On your way to Dandi, you advised the police and headmen to resign—policemen bound by allegiance to Government. You also asked Gurkhas to disobey orders. It is not contrary to non-violance?

GANDHIJI: Interesting question, but shows superficial know ledge. But that cannot be helped because this philosophy could not be studied from books. No contradiction. In the first instance, I asked the village headman to resign if it is assumed that he knew that he was serving a Government which was doing wrong. And there cannot be a vow or promise or determination to do wrong. It is like the vow or determination of a man or woman to smoke 50 cigars a day or drink 2 bottles of whisky per day or before taking his meal to take one hu man life—it cannot be a vow. If a policeman enlists himself in service of a Government which does wrong, it is his bounden duty to leave the service; so I undertook to preach to the people that they were doing violence to themselves and to their country and doing disservice to the Government themselves. The consequence was imprisonment which they should put up with-without murmur. There was in this no breach of truth or non-violence. It was a good thing on their part and on my part.

I now leave the village headmen and Dandi policemen and go to the Punjab. The Garhwali soldiers received orders from their superiors. I have never condemned that as an act of violence. That too was a patriotic act. They got imprisonment which was worse. It was breach of discipline and sme of them were sentenced under Martial Law. While I admire them for having refused to shoot their

countrymen and still suffering, I shall have to ask for mercy which, as a Civil Resister, I cannot do.

If the reins of Government were given in charge of the Congress, the Congress would discharge them tomorrow. As there is no law in the reason, there is not contradiction. He who knows the whole histroy can fling in my face the whole settlement. They did so. Some countrymen thoughtlessly asked me to get these men discharged. But I said 'No'. It was no part of the Congress campaign that such soldiers should commit breach of discipline. The Congress had issued no such instructions. They were not civil resisters and remember every patriotic man is not a civil resister necessarily, nor every resister is a patriotic man.

A RUSSIAN STUDENT: If you were less religious, would you not have come to an agreement quicker?

G. Oh, I understand your question. You want to suggest that I should make a promise and break it (Laughter). It is a very good definition of politicians (Laughter). I can now tell you why I entered politics. I entered politics to free politics from the reproach. As a rule the politician is free from any law suit. But I thought that would not do. Politics like a snake's coil surrounds, crushes you and seeing that I am in the midst of it, I realize my helpless plight, and I endea vour to control politics. I am supposed to be managing somehow or other the largest organization of the world—the Indian National Congress. It represents today millions of human beings who respond to its call. If the Congress really and truly carries out the political work on [the lines of] non-violence and truth, politicians will come to the conclusion that it is not necessary to make false promises and that politics becomes corrupted when you resort to any such means. Because some religious men are bad, it is a wrong deduction to say that religion is bad. That is a hopelessly false position to take and, because politicians resort to ways that are crooked, it is wrong to say that politics cannot be improved.

Mr. Keir Hardie felt out of fatigue that the House of Commons was not a good place or a true Christian because the majority of the House were bad: but that is wrong. We must stand up for forlorn causes and we will be wholly justified in being in the House of Commons for fighting for them. It is not given to human beings to command success, but it is given to every one of us to command effort. At the same time do not forget it is arrogance to pretend to do

everything by your own effort alone, because you cannot bend even a blade of grass. Before you do that, your hand may become paralysed as life is so uncertain. We are at the mercy of God. We should give up all ambition. Be truthful at any cost and make efforts, and leave the results to God.

A KOREAN STUDENT: Why are you [not] opposed to police, or State or army on ground of non-violence?

G. I admit the inconsistency. If I said that army was essential for a State, it would be inconsistent. Whilst I can invite all States to do without police or army, I have not yet been able to bring myself to believe that you can preserve a society without police. If we would suffer thieves or robbers to go about in society, I can conceive a society without police. Tolstoy has conceived of Dukhobors. There are people all over the world not needing police protection. But they should admit that they would not even lead that life unless they were in ordered surroundings. This is not out of my scheme, but I am at present hooked on to my limited work. You can thus say that my toleration of police is a limitation of non-violence. Army is opposed to non-violence. In one case it is my want of courage, in the other it is my inability to convince my people to do without an army. I have not mustered sufficient strength to pit non-violence against thieves and scoundrels and cutthroats but I can ask people to pit non-violence against hordes of the army. If perchance India wins her deliverance through non-violence, we may perhaps show to the world that it is not necessary to have an army State—I do not regard it Utopian to think of a State without an army, but it requires a higher degree of courage and purity.

AN ENGLISH STUDENT: Your people live on land, Our people live on work. They cannot carry on strikes indefinitely. What is your remedy?

G. This is truly an embarrassing question. It is presump tuous for me to present a remedy. I am a perfect stranger in this country, not knowing her circumstances. But as we are fellow-students, we can have exchange of views. I shall place my own views. I assure you, your distress distresses me too. If God gave me courage to put an end to it, I would willingly do it. Well, I have conducted strikes. I claim for myself that I am an expert in conducting strikes fairly successfully.

But one indispensable condition was that strikes must not live on charity, but they should live on their labour. Among those who

advised them to strike and led them into it was a mill-owner's daughter[1] who worked with them in carrying sand for a building which the strikers built for a Municipality. On another occasion I was in jail, but my people gave the strikers enough work in hand-spinning and weaving and paid them wages for the work more than what they got in the market. They worked for eight hours worthy of getting enough to live. But in the situation in London, where there is a well-organized society, it is difficult. But we are bound to surmount the difficulty because when there is a will, there is a way. Be ready and prepare not to live on charity. Find out ways and means.

To Englishmen who are conferring with me on this issue, I say: break up the highly organized industrialization. Go back to the villages. You have to revolutionize your conception of life. Your standard of life is artificial, incapable of sustaining for long. The modern civilization is a toy. You are increasing your standard of life. The more a man wants the more he becomes debased and breaks under. Well, an Englishman in Lancashire said, "I do not mind starvation but I have lost in my own estimation." I know of a man who was noble and patriotic, but because of his greed when he earned a million rupees, I did not congratulate him, but I sent him condolences. But later in life, he lost all, could not see anyone and ultimately drank a bowl of poison. Alas! such a noble good friend is lost today due to the ever-increasing wants. In order to adopt my method, you have to revise your mode of life, particularly you of the English race.

You are a race of exploiters. (Laughter)

Your King is the King of England and the Dominions; but he is the Emperor of India. That shows the pride lying behind it. You are therefore having false liberty. You have committed a series of crimes in order to bend Indians to your will compelling them to take your commodities. No wonder you are one of the richest countries. But where did you get your money from? Not in this soil . It came from all parts of the Empire. Your people say they take interest in India. Why? Because so many people get employment there. What revolution I would like to suggest if you follow my plan is: revise your mode of life. Don't wait till you are compelled to do so. I have given you what is agitating my mind. Though I wanted to

[1] Anasuyabehn Sarabhai; *vide* "Ahmedabad Mill-Hands Strike", 26-2-1918

go my way, you yours, you have challenged me as fellow-students. So I have opened my heart

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-10-1931. Also manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary, 1931. Courtesy: Narayan Desai.

11. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

LONDON,
[Before *October 16, 1931*][2]

Q. If the Communal problem should not predominate over all the rest, why should you yourself have said, at one stage, that you would not think of going to the Round Table Conference, unless the Communal question was settled ?

A. You are right. But you forget that I was borne down by the extreme pressure of English and other friends in india who said that it was imperative that I should go. I was also persuaded that, if only to keep my word of honour with Lord Irwin, I should go. Now, here I find myself face to face with men who are not nationalists, and who were selected only because they were communalists. Therefore, though I said that it was a matter of humiliation for us all not to have been able to come to a decision, the principal cause was the very composition of the committee itself. It is too unreal for words. There are men who claim to represent communities which, if they were in India, and if a referendum were to be taken, would disown them.

Q. What about the untouchables? Dr. Ambedkar was very severe on you and said that the Congress had no right to claim to represent the untouchables.

A. I am glad you have asked the question. I do not mind Dr. Ambedkar. He has a right even to spit upon me, as every untouchable has, and I would keep on smiling if they did so. But I may inform you that Dr. Ambedkar speaks for that particular part of the country where he comes from. He cannot speak for the rest of India and I have numerous telegrams from the so-called 'untouchables' in various parts of India assuring me that they have the fullest faith in the Congress and disowning Dr. Ambedkar. And this confidence has a reason. They know the work that the Congress is

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "London Letter". Desai says it is "not one talk, but bits from various talks."

[2] Elsewhere in "London Letter", Mahadev Desai says: "As I am writing this, the time is drawing near for a conference with temperance workers. . . ." This conference took place on October 16.

doing for them and they know that, if they cannot succeed in making their voice felt, I would be prepared to lead a campaign of civil resistance on their behalf and paralyse the Hindu orthodox opposition, if there were such an opposition against them. On the other hand, if they were to be given special electorates, as Dr. Ambedkar persists in demanding, it would do that very community immense harm. It would divide the Hindu community into armed camps and provoke needless opposition.

Q. I see your point, and I have no doubt that you can legitimately speak for the untouchables. But you seem to ignore the fact that communities all the world over insist on being represented by their own people. The devoted Liberals of the north would truly represent the working men, but they would have their representatives from amongst themselves, and the great stubborn fact against you is that you are not an untouchable.

A. I know it very well. But the fact that I claim to represent them does not mean that I should think of representing them on the legislatures. By no means. I should have their own representatives drawn from their own class on the legislatures, and if they are left out, I should provide for their statutory co-option by the elected members. But when I am talking of representing them, I am talking of the representation on the Round Table Conference and I can assure you that, if anyone in India challenged our claim, I should gladly face a referendum and successfully.

Q. From this point of view it would be interesting to hear you about the Mussalmans too. You do not say that the Mussalmans here do not represent their community?

A. Well, they are not duly elected, and I may tell you that I asked so many of the real nationalist Mussalmans to stay away. There is a vast majority of the younger leaders—Mr. Khwaja, Mr. Sherwani, to name only two whom I came to know only through the friends who are today ranged against the Congress, and who are opposed to any Communal solution of the problem. Personally, I would give the Mussalmans all that they want and I have been waking up late after midnight in persuading the Hindus and the Sikhs to go with me, but I have failed. Do you think I would have failed if the Sikhs were elected by the Sikhs and not nominated by Government ? Master Tara Singh[1] would have been

[1] Sikh leader

here. I know his views and he has his 17 points to pit against Mr. Jinnah's 14, but I am quite sure I could bear him down, as he is after all a comrade-in-arms. Is it surprising then that we should fail to achieve a settlement in the present atmosphere? It is, therefore, I said, that having already handicapped us, do not handicap us more by saying that the solution of the communal problem must precede any decision on the Constitutional question. I tell them let us know what we are going to get, so that on that basis I might endeavour to bring about unity even in the present ill-assorted group.

Let us for God's sake have something tangible. It would be another string to the bow and help us to arrive at a solution. For I could tell them that they were dashing a precious thing to pieces. But, today, I have nothing to present them with. And even if there were no solution, I have suggested various ways—private arbitration, judicial tribunal, etc. That is the situation. I am a slave to my friends, and it is because I honour Lord Irwin as a friend that I came. But I now see that it is an impossible situation.

Q. Is it quite impossible? You think you should not have come?

A. Not quite, and I am not going to give up my efforts until the last. As for my visit I do not at all feel sorry for having come, for I know that indirectly, our of the Conference, the work that I am doing is wholly satisfactory and I am establishing contacts which I shall treasure.

Q. May I take it then that you do not attach much importance to the communal question?

A. I have never said so. I say that the question has been allowed to overshadow the main thing,which needs to be specially emphasized.

Young India, 29-10-1931

12. INTERVIEW TO CALLENDER[1]

LONDON,
[*October 16, 1931*]

Q. Do you feel, Gandhiji, that mass production will raise the standard of living of the people?

A. I do not believe in it at all. There is a tremendous fallacy behind Mr Ford's reasoning.[2] Without simultaneous distribution on an equally mass scale, the production can result only in a great world tragedy. Take Mr. Ford's cars. The saturation point is bound to be reached soon or later. Beyond that point the production of cars cannot be pushed. What will happen then?

Mass production takes no note of the real requirement of the consumer. If mass production were in itself a virtue, it should be capable of indefinite multiplication. But it can be definitely shown that mass production carries within it its own limitations. If all countries adopted the system of mass production, there would not be a big en- ough market for their products. Mass production must then come to a stop.

Q. I wonder whether you feel that this saturation point has already arrived in the Western world. Mr. Ford says that there never can be too many articles of quality, that the needs of the world are constantly increasingly that, therefore, while there might be saturation in the market for a given commodity, the general saturation would never be reached.

A. Without entering upon an elaborate argument, I would categorically state my conviction that the mania for mass production is responsible for the world crisis. Granting for the moment that machinery may supply all the needs of humanity, still, it would concentrate production in particular areas, so that you would have to go in a round-about way to regulate distribution, whereas, if there is production and distribution both in the respec tive areas where things are required, it is automatically regulated, and there is less chance for fraud, none for speculation.

[1] An American Press correspondent. Pyarelal Nayar, from whose article "Mass Production *versus* Production by the Masses", this has been extracted does not mention the name. This and the date of the interview have been taken from the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary, 1931.

[2] The interviewer had earlier met Ford in America, who had put forward the view that demand for cheaper things would stimulate mass production.

The American friend mentioned Mr. Ford's favourite plan of decentralization of industry by the use of electric power conveyed on wires to the remotest corner, instead of coal and steam, as a possible remedy, and drew up the picture of hundreds and thousands of small, neat, smokeless villages, dotted with factories, run by village communities. “Assuming all that to be possible”, he finally asked Gandhiji, “how far will it meet your obejction?”

A. My objection won't be met by that, because, while it is true that you will be producing things in innumerable areas, the power will come from one selected centre. That, in the end, I think, would be found to be disastrous. It would place such a limitless power in one human agency that I dread to think of it. The consequence, for instance, of such a control of power would be that I would be dependent on that power for light, water, even air, and so on. That, I think, would be terrible.

Q. ... have you any idea as to what Europe and America should do to solve the problem presented by too much machinery?

A. You see that these nations are able to exploit the so-called weaker or unorganized races of the world. Once those races gain this elementary knowledge and decide that they are no more going to be exploited, they will simply be satisfied with what they can provide themselves. Mass production, then, at least where the vital necessities are concerned, will disappear.

Q. As a world organization.

A. Yes.

Q. But even these races will require more and more goods as their needs multiply.

A. They will then produce for themselves. And when that happens, mass production, in the technical sense in which it is understood in the West, ceases.

Q. You mean to say it becomes local.

A. When production and consumption both become locali zed, the temptation to speed up production, indefinitely and at any price, disappears. All the endless difficulties and problems that our present-day economic system presents, too, would then come to an end. Take a concrete instance. England today is the cloth shop of the world. It, therefore, needs to holda world in bondage to se cure its market. But under the change that I have envisaged, she would limit her production to the actual needsof her 45 millions of population. When that need is satisfied, the production

will necessarily stop. It won't be continued for the sake of bringing in more gold irrespective of the needs of a people and at the risk of their impoverishment. There would be no unnatural accumulation of hoards in the pockets of the few, and want in the midst of plenty in regard to the rest, as is happening today, for instance, in America. America is today able to hold the world in fee by selling all kinds of trinklets, or by selling her unrivalled skill, whcih she has a right to do. She has reached the acme of mass production, and yet she has not been able to abolish unemployment or want. There are still thousands, perhaps millions of people in America who live in misery, in site of the phenomenal riches of the few. The whole of the American nation is not benefited by the mass production.

Q. There the fault lies in distribution. It means that, whilst our system of production has reached a high pitch of perfection, the distribution is still defective. If distribution could be equalized, would not mass production be sterilized of its evils?

A. No, the evil is inherent in the system. Distribution can be equalized when production is localized; in other words, when the distribution is simultaneous with production. Distribution will never be equal so long as you want to tap other markets of the world to dispose of your goods. That does not mean that the world has not use for the marvellous advances in science and organization that the Western nations have made. It only means that the Western nations have to use their skill. If they want to use their skill abroad, from philanthropic motives, America would say, 'Well, we know how make bridges, we won’t keep keep it a secret, but we say to the whole world, we will teach you how to make bridges and we will charge you nothing.’ America says, ‘Where other nations can grow one blade of wheat, we can grow two thousand.’ Then, America should teach that art free of charge to those who will learn it, but not aspire to grow wheat for the whole world, which would spell a sorry day for the world indeed.

The American friend next asked Gandhiji, referring to Russia, whether it was not a country that had developed mass production without exploiting, in Gandhiji's sense, the less industrialized nations, or without falling into the pit of unequal distribution.

A. In other words, you want me to express opinion on State-controlled industry, i.e., an economic order in whcih both production and distribution are controlled and regulated by the State as is being today done in Soviet Russia. Well, it is a new

experiment. How far it will ultimately succeed, I do not know. If it were not based on force, I would dote on it. But today, since it is based on force, I do not know how far and where it will take us.

Q. Then, you do not envisage mass production as an ideal future of India?

A. Oh yes, mass production, certainly, but not based on force. After all, the message of the spinning-wheel is that. It is mass production, but mass production in people's own homes. If you multiply individual production to millions of times, would it not give you mass production on a tremendous scale? But I quite understand that your 'mass production' is a technical term for production by the fewest possible number through the aid of highly complicated machinery. I have said to myself that that is wrong. My machinery must be of the most elementary type which I can put in the homes of the millions. Under my system, again, it is labour which is the current coin, not metal. Any person who can use his labour has that coin, has wealth. He converts his labour into cloth, he converts his labour into grain. If he wants paraffin oil, whcih he cannot himself produce, he used his surplus grain for getting the oil. It is exchange of labour on free, fair and equal terms—hence it is no robbery. You may object that this is a reversion to the primitive system of barter. But is not all international trade based on the barter system?

Look, again, at another advantage, that this system affords. You can multiply it to any extent. But concentration of production *ad infinitum* can only lead to unemployment. You may say that workers thrown out of work by the introduction of improved machinery will find occupation in other jobs. But in an organized country where there are only fixed and limited avenues of employment, where the worker has become highly skilled in the use of one particular kind of machinery, you know from your own experience that this is hardly possible. Are there not over three millions unemployed in England today? A question was put to me only the other day: "What are we doing today with these three million unemployed?" They cannot shift from factory to field in a day. It is a tremendous problem.

Q. Would not machine agriculture make a great difference to India, as it has done to America and Canada?

A. Probably. But that is a question I do not consider myself fit to answer. We in India have not been able to use much complicated machinery in agriculture with profit so far. We do not exclude machinery. We are making cautious experiments. But we have not found power-driven agricultural machinery to be necessary.

Q. Some people have the impression that you are opposed to machinery in general. This is not true, I believe.

A. That is quite wrong. The spinning-wheel is also machinery. It is a beautiful work of art. It typifies the use of machinery on a universal scale. It is machinery reduced to the terms of the masses.

Q. So, you are opposed to machinery, only because and when it concentrates production and distribution in the hands of the few?

A. You are right. I hate privilege and monopoly. Whatever cannot be shared with the masses is taboo to me. That is all.

Harijan, 2-11-1934

13. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

LONDON,
October 16, 1931

Q. Are you hopeful of a successful outcome?

A. Being an optimist, I never lose hope, but I can say that I am no nearer a solution than I was in Bombay. There are numerous difficulties. I know that the Congress demand appears a little too high in the atmosphere that is found to exist here, though I think that is none too high.

Q. Is there no way out of the difficulty?

A. There are many ways, but whether they will be adopted by the parties concerned, I do not know. We have been told that the solution of the constitutional question depends on the solution of the communal question. It is not true, and I am afraid, it is the very presentation of the question in this inverted form that has made the question more difficult and given it an altogether artificial importance, and because it has been made the fulcrum, the parties concerned feel that they can pitch their demands as high as possible. And thus, we are

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "London Letter". The questions were asked at a luncheon given by American Journalists at Savoy Hotel. Desai says: Gandhiji, in thanking them for it, described it as a delicate courtesy. He regaled them for some minutes with stories as to how journalists ahd misquoted him and how in one instance a misrepresentation had nearly cost him his life. The cup of bitterness, he said, would be full when, in the words of a journalist in India, they deliberately embellished truth itself with "a little bit of embroidery". He commended to them the motto of truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

moving in a hideously vicious circle and the task of peace becomes more and more difficult. But I, for the life of me, see no vital connection at all between the two questions. India will have freedom whether the communal question is solved or not solved. No doubt we would have difficult times after the attainment of freedom, but freedom itself cannot be held up by the question, for we can get freedom as soon as we are worthy of it, and being worthy of it means suffering enough for it, paying a rich price for the rich prize of freedom. But if we have not suffered, if we have not paid the price, even a solution of the question would be of no help to us.If we have suffered enough, and offered sufficient sacrifices, no argument or negotiation would be necessary. But who am I to determine that we have suffered enough? In the hope that we had suffered enough, I came here and I am not at all sorry that I came here, for I find that my work lies outside the Conference and that is why—in spite of my numerous engagements—I agreed to come here, for this I regard as part of my work.

Q. Does not the General Election make your work difficult?

A. It need not. If British statesmen realized that the financial situation would be more difficult if there were a war between England and India, however non-violent, they would not allow the General Election to hamper the solution of our problem. They must realize that, in case India's demand is not granted, there is bound to be a fierce boycott, and all the attention of Great Britain will have to be absorbed in looking after her quickly perishing trade interests in India. On the contrary, if there is an honourable partnership, Great Britain would be more free to mend her own affairs. But there is another very great difficulty in our way. So long as India is held by the bayonet, the British ministers will continue to cast their hungry eyes on the famishing masses of India and forging fresh means of draining the last ounce of silver and gold from India not necessarily by a malicious design, but forced by the necessity of the case, for when there is unemployment and want stalking the land and there is a chance of relief from some direction, no matter whether it is by exploiting another country, you cannot expect the statesmen to weigh everything in golden scales, and model their conduct on a strictly ethical code. It will drive them to desperate measures like manipulating India's currency. That may for a time put off the agony, but the ultimate doom cannot long be delayed.

Young India, 29-10-1931

14. EXTRACT FROM PROCEEDINGS OF THE FEDERAL STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING[1]

LONDON,
October 16, 1931

MR GANDHI: My Lord Chancellor, in view of the impending conversations between Their Highnesses or their representatives and Delegates on this side of the table, perhaps it is unnecessary for me to say anything in defence of the suggestion which I had the privilege of making before this Committee; but I would be unjust to Lord Peel and unjust to Sir Akbar Hydari (and I have listened with all the respect and attention which anything that Lord Peel or Sir Akbar Hydari might say deserves) if I did not confess that I am unconvinced and that I remain unrepentant. It may be that I am too obtuse to realize those difficulties; it may be that I am too impatient to see something concrete before us to see those difficulties; but I also know that I have confidence enought in myself and my countrymen to believe that we are well able to bear the burden and the responsibilities that self-government would impose upon us , and therefore I am not baffled by difficulties, real or imaginary.

But I want to apply my very simple mind to this question of apportionment of the revenue and the expenditure of the Government of India. We have been talking about principles. Well, I have really failed to see many principles in connections with the work before us. There is certainly one principle, namely, on what standard are we going to apportion the revenues and the expenditure? There certainly we shall have to come to some rough and ready principle on which we should decide; and that principle, as I visualize if before myself, is whether the British Indian part of India is to shoulder any additional burden beyond what it shoulders today by reason of Federation, and likewise whether, the states are to do so,or whether, in entering upon Federation, each party will refuse, say, for the time being, to take over any futher burdens. That, to my mind, would be the principle that would guide us in coming to an apportionment of revenue and expenditure.

[1] The Committee continued consideration of Head 4: Distribution of Financial Resources between the Federation and its Units.

The difficulty, therefore, really, that has appeared to me as a result of having listened to all these discourses, is one not of principle, but rather, if I may respectfully put it, of disinclination. If we have got the determination that we want Federation, that we want Federation at any cost consistently with the self-respect of each party, or each partner—if we have that determination I, again, as I say, as a simple man, a layman, can see no difficulty whatsoever. All we have to do is to find out those heads of revenue which we can easily understand without any complication, and we set about saying, "These are the heads of the revenue which we shall hold jointly. The balance will go either to the Federal Government or to the Provinces." That distribution can, in my opinion, easily be made. Today the greatest difficulty lies in bringing the States' and the other Delegates together and coming to a conclusion. If we lay down the principle that neither party is just now to bear any fresh burdens, we shall devide the heads accordingly; or if there is going to be a little give-and-take, each taking a little more responsibility,we shall arrive at a conclusion in accordance with that Principle. Nor do I see any difficulty in finding what items of expenditure we are going to hold in common. If we have come to the conclusion that, at the present moment, we are going to have A, B and C sources of revenue, we know today, so far as our information permits us, that from these three sources we shall get so much revenue. Then we shall take such heads of expenditure as will balance that revenue. I know that our estimate may prove to be wrong; it will be time enough for the Federal Government to decide how it would adjust the difference. If there is a surplus, there should be no difficulty; if a deficit, naturally there would be some difficulty, but not one of us expects that the Federal Government will, when it is launched out on the stormy ocean of responsibility, meet no difficulty whatsoever.

I see that there is a kind of fear regarding decisions by the Federal Government, seeing that, in the Federal Government, up to now, we have pictured to ourselves a majority of those on the Bri tish Indian side; so that the fate of the States might be in the hands of the majority. If there is any such fear, we need not have have any reservation whatsoever, or we might have some such reservation as I can just now think of, namely, that, unless there is an agreement between a two-thirds majority of the Princes on the one side and a similar majority on the other, there will be no deci sion taken binding on both sides. It ake that by way of illus

tration as it comes into my mind whilst I am speaking. I simply say that difficulties of this kind need not baffle us, and I feel that we ought to get rid of this incubus of expert opinion at every point. We are, after all, a poor country, and we are not going to get the assistance of experts at every turn. I think that, in India, we have intelligence enough to understands roughly what we want without having the guidance of experts; and in, my humble experience of things of the world, I have seen that, when you go to experts, sometimes you founder, because one expert says one thing, another expert says another. And when you come to matters of finance, which are ordinarily too deep for humble folk, these folk do not know which expert's opinion to take; so that they cast lots and trust to the future, saying that they are not going to be buffeted about by these experts. You find the same thing in law, with all deference to the Lord Chancellor.

H.H. THE MAHARAJA OF BIKANER : You are a distinguished lawyer yourself.

MR.GANDHI : That is why I speak from bitter experience. The same is true of medicine. Heaven help us from medical men! Let us get rid of these difficulties that experts cast for us. After all, if we make any mistake,we ourselves will be the sufferers. But if we tread upon this ground with fear lurking in our breast, we shall not be able to evolve a scheme consistent with the dignity of the great and ancient country that we are. I have therefore simply explained my position as a very simple man before this Committee, so that, when we have these informal conversations, we may approach the question with fresh minds and not with minds full of dread.

May I, as I conclude, respectfully suggest to the Princes that they have come here with their experts also. They have brought their best men here. I will trust myself to those experts, and use my common sense judgment also if they dare to mislead me. But I shall be entirely satisfied, and in a few hours come to a definite conclusion as to what I want and what I do not want. Hence I remain absolutely convinced that we should either send this thing to Lord Peel's Sub-committee, putting the burden on them to come with a definite conclusion, or, instead of worrying that Sub-committee, some of us should sit together and produce a very humble agreed scheme with which we can start the financial part of the Federation.

Indian Round Table Conference (second session) : Proceedings of Federal Structure Committee and Minorities Committee,Vol. I,pp.220-1

15. SPEECH AT TEMPERANCE WORKERS' MEETING[1]

LONDON,
October 16, 1931

The Speaker . . . . lost no time in plunging in thoroughly business like fashion into his subject. The first half of the hour at his disposal he devoted to what proved to be a clear, concise and convincing statement of the position in India with regard to the traffic in drink and drugs. The rest of the time, by his own request, we devoted to answering questions which, he said, was "the best way to establish contact with his hearers". And of questions there were not a few—regular fusillade, in fact—all of which were clearly and courteously replied to.

Drink, we learned, was not the fashion in India as it is with us, in U.S.A. and on the continent, In fact, it is 'taboo' in good society there. India, seeks to rid herself of the traffic in it, the revenue from which, alas! goes to the Provincial Governments and is a main source of support for education. Indians, despairing of any help from the Government, had sought in recent years to reduce the evils resulting from the trade in intoxicants by peaceful picketing of the liquor shops, a work (involving much self-sacrificing efforts on their part) heroically undertaken by Indian women, some of them of high degree. And Lord Irwin, with whom he had discussed the subject at length, had admitted the right of Indians to adopt that course of action in pursuing their campaign against "these two sinful traffics" as Gandhi with emphasis called them.

Such were some of the things we learned from the lips of this strange, asceticlooking leader of men who only twice showed any emotion or fire in his narrative; once when an interrogator suggested that if the Indians were really earnest in desiring to end the traffic, it would surely not be difficult for their representatives on the Legislative Councils to suggest alternative methods of revenue-raising (e.g., by a light tax on salt or other article in general use) . This suggestion Gandhi promptly and scornfully rejected. He would be no party, he said, to laying any greater burden on the people than they were already bearing. Reduction of the unnecessary expenditure on the standing army in India and of the excessive cost of the Indian Civil Service were his alternative methods. An inquiry respecting the payment of compensation to dispossessed licence-holders provoked amazement on his part that anyone should think of compensating them. It was the victims of the traffic, not those who conducted it, who, in his view, should be compensated.

British Weekly, 22-10-1931

[1] The meeting, which took place in the Central Hall, Westminster, was called by the Temperance Council of Christian Churches.

16. CABLE TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

[After *October 16, 1931*]

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ALLAHABAD

YOUR CABLE. YOU SHUOLD UNHESITATINGLY TAKE NECESSARY STEPS MEET EVERY SITUATION. EXPECT NOTHING HERE.

BAPU

From a photostat : S.N. 18224

[1] This was in answer to a cable dated October 16 from the addressee,which read: "Agrarian situation becoming critical. Coercive processes attachments forcible collection rent continued right through without interval. Many ejected tenants proceeded against for criminal trespass many for fear permanently losing land sold cattle belongings borrowed money paid full demand plus extras. Fresh demand now made for current season inadequate remissions threat that if full payment not made within month remission might be cancelled also no objection considered on behalf tenants till full payment made. Condition kisans deplorable thoroughly exhausted after past six months continuous harassment forcible measures. Apparently process likely be repeated this season also. Allahabad District Congress Committee resolved under circumustances ask permission start satyagraha if necessity arises by advising withholding payment rent application for permission made to Vallabhbhai and Provincial Committee. Representative District Kisan Conference being held next week to decide question. Decision likely have far-reaching consequences but question payment or withholding payment must be decided soon vital urgent problem for kisan no delay" (S.N.18223).

17. LETTER TO LORD IRWIN

KINGSLEY HALL,
BOW,
October 17, 1931

DEAR FRIENDS,

Your letter[1] came as if in response to my prayer. I was about to write to you to send me an appointment when your welcome letter came. I shall be with you at 10 a.m. on Wednesday if the hour is not too early. So far as I can see, my work at the R.T.C. is nearly finished. But I cannot take any serious step without conferring with you. Of all this when we meet.

Pray excuse the left hand writing.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : C. W. 9439

18. SPEECH AT NOTTINGHAM UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

NOTTINGHAM,
October 17, 1931

Gandhi said the Indian Congress demanded complete independence in the fullest sense of that term. India sought for power to control the defence forces, external affairs and finance.

I have used the term demand. As a matter of fact, no nation has ever secured independence by demanding it. Indepen dence has to be earned by sacrifice and self-suffering. So far as history teaches, nations have come to freedom through rivers of blood. They have beaten back the intruder, oppressor or exploiter, but in the process they have suffered a big share of the beating.

[1] It read: "I am coming to London the Monday next for two or three days—and I wondered if you had half an hour or an hour free on Wednesday morning 21. You might have cared to have another talk at Eaton Square. I know you will be very busy and may well be engaged in important Committee work. But I thought I would let you know my own movement and plans—in case you thought a talk would be helpful. I have nothing particular to say that I am afraid I have not said before—-and shall well understand if you feel reluctance to add to what must already be an overburdened engagement book!" (S.N.18100)

We are fighting by truthful and non-violent means for freedom, the birthright of every nation. I am tired of people inflicting violence on others. Justice does not come that way. Civil disobedience has limitations, for millions cannot indulge in it. Our constructive activities consist of removing the curses of alcohol, drugs and untouchability. Don't think we are all at sixes and sevens because we have not yet arrived at agreement.

Birmingham Post, 19-10-1931

19. INTERVIEW TO EVELYN WRENCH[1]

LONDON,
[On or after *October 17,1931*][2]

WRENCH : I am very glad to have this opportunity of having a talk with you, Mr.Gandhi, for the benefit of the readers of *The Spectator*.

GANDHIJI: One of the things I wanted to do while in England was to talk to the Editor of *The Spectator*, because we in India appreciate very much the part *The Spectator* has played in enlightening the people of Great Britain on Indian problems. I know that you may not necessarily agree with all the views I hold, but I recognize that you have repeatedly stated in the columns of *The Spectator* that the only satisfactory basis for the future relations of Great Britain and India is one of friendship, absolute equality and a recognition of the fact that the people of India must be the final arbiters of their destiny.

Q. Let's see; when were you last in England, Mr.Gandhi ? It was some time before the War, wasn't it ?

A. Yes, I visited England in 1909 and I was here again just two days after the outbreak of War[3]. On that occasion I assisted in the organization of a Red Cross unit, but unfortunately I fell ill and a severe attack of pleurisy prevented my doing what I wanted to do before I returned to India at the end of November that year.[4]

[1] Editor of *The Spectator*. The account has been extracted from Wrench's report "An Evening with Mr.Gandhi." The interview took place at Wrench's residence between 8 and 11 p.m.

[2] The source does not mention the date of the interview, but merely says it took place "last week".

[3] The first World War, in August 1914.

[4] Gandhiji sailed for home on December 19, 1914 and reached Bombay actually on January 9, 1915.

Q. What is your chief impression as regards the British understanding of the Indian problem today ? Do you find that public opinion has changed much ?

A. Yes, I find a vast change in the attitude of the man in the street, and I have made a special point of talking with all sections of the British people. I am very happy in London and I have received wonderful signs of affection from your ordinary folk. In the East End I have been greatly touched by the friendliness displayed. People come out of their houses and shake hands with me and wish me well. I was much gratified by the reception I received in Lancashire, where the people seemed to me to understand my position; and despite the fact that my policy in India was reported to have affected Lancashire so grievously, no grudge was borne me and I found genuine friendship both from operatives and employers alike.

Q. What about the so-called upper and official classes? Do you think their opinion has changed and are they ready to give India what it wants?

A. I fear thay still do not understand the position and are ready to give the freedom that we claim as our right. They think that India is not ready today to control her own affairs, and I fear not may of them would be prepared to admit our right to the same freedom that Great Britain possesses, that is, the right to control our armed forces, our finances and our external affairs.

Q. As you know, Mr. Gandhi, *The Spectator* has always been a great believer in what is called Dominion Status. We think it has achieved the apparently impossible task of reconciling two apparent opposites, co-operation and independence. Would India be satisfied, do you think, with the same status that South Africa has as a Dominion within the British Commonwealth?

A.I regard the status of India as unique. After all, we represent a fifth the human race. I do not think, thereore, that a political status which might suit other Dominions of the British Commonwealth would necessarily suit us. You must remember that India has been a subject nation for a very long time. If Great Britain approaches the question of the future relations between our peoples in a spirit of friendship with no reservations, she will not find India behindhand in coming to meet her proffered hand. We would be quite ready, once our right to independence has been recognized, to enter into an alliance or partnership on equal temrs which would place the relations of Great Britain and India on a satisfactory basis.

Q. Once Great Britain has stated finally and once for all that the peoples of India have the same right to control their own destiny that we have, do you think that India would still want to employ, on terms within India's means, British officials, British soldiers, British technicians, and to draw upon our experience in building up the Indian State of the future?

A. Yes, most certainly. Once Great Britain recognizes what we consider our just claims, I certainly would not wish to remove all the British officials in India.

I want to avail myself of all the experience you have gained. I believe that we could make mutually satisfactory arrangements once there is no dictation on your side.

Q. Is it true, as some of my more extreme nationalist friends have said, that India when she wants European advisers would rather turn to Continental Europeans such as Germans, French, Swedes, Dutch, in place of British?

A. No, I do not think this is true in general. We would certainly need advice and guidance from Europe in several things. If we could get these from Great Britain on terms that we can afford, we would welcome them. The only thing that would make us turn away from Great Britain would be if Great Britain refuses to grant what we consider our just demand.

If you will play the same with us and recognize our right to control our own defence, we should confer with your experts and ascertain what is considered the minimum number of British troops necessary for our needs. I would regard the British Commander-in-Chief in India as my technical adviser on military matters, but the British Army in India would, of course, have to be under the Indian National Government.

Q. What about the statement that it would be undignified for British subjects to place themselves in the position of mercenaries to the Indian Government?

A. I have heard the argument, but I cannot appreciate it. Behind the objection is the lurking belief that partnership is to be partnership in name only and that in reality we are to remain a subject nation. Or else, how can British soldiers serving a partner nation be considered mercenaries? But if British soldiers will not serve the National Government, we must do without them.

Q. In terms of self-interest, therefore, from the British standpoint, you think that a friendly India in close alliance and partnership with Great Britain would be an asset to us.

A. You should be the best judges. In my opinion, the solution

of the Indian problem in a manner satisfactory to Indian aspirations would largely help Great Britain to solve her own economic question. It would be good for Great Britain, India, and the world. If Great Britain enters into a free-will partnership with India, that is to say, a partnership of equals, she will have a friendly nation to trade with and all the boycotting of British trade would naturally cease, apart, of course, from cloth. I fear Lancashire cannot get much help as we are determined to make our own cloth, but there are many others goods required which we shall have to import from abroad. for instance, I think India imports eighteen crores worth of sugar and seven crores worth of hardware, and so on.

We shall certainly not be able to manufacture all our own requirements for a long time to come.

Q. Then, Mr. Gandhi, I understand you to mean that you want India's right to control her own destiny recognized now once for all. If this were done, you think that the whole atmosphere would change and that Great Britain would then find the India that you represent only too ready to work out the details of co-operation? Rather than that the Round Table Conference should fail, you think that the principle of India's complete control of her destiny should be acknowledged and that such problems as the communal question should be left over to arbitration?

A. Yes, that is so. I think that once the British Government proclaimed to the world that India had as much right to freedom as Great Britain, we should be quite ready to accept the principle of arbitration on the difficult communal question. I do not think, however, that all the time which has been spent at the Round Table will be found to have been wasted. Believe me, Congress is not obstructive.

Sir Geoffrey Corbett's scheme has emerged from it. Sir Hubert Carr's scheme, which practically gives to the Moslems what they want in the Lower Chamber and to the Sikhs what they want in the Upper Chamber, also deserves very careful consideration. But, as I have said, I think much the best method would perhaps be to leave the question of the adjustment of seats and separate or joint electorates to an impartial judicial tribunal which would only be called into being in the case of non-settlement.

Q. What about the untouchables? I know it is thought in some quarters that they ought to have separate electorates and that you are not qualified to speak for them.

A. I am glad you have dealt with this subject. I do not hesitate to say that, if the untouchables in all parts of India would record their votes, I should be their representative. Dr. Ambedkar is

undoubtedly clever and enthusiastic. He has every reason to be bitter. I have spent the best part of my life in championing their cause, I have mixed with them east, west, north and south in India, I have my of them in my own Ashram, I adopted an untouchable girl. My Congressmen think as I do and realize how serious is the untouchable problem.

In the interests of the untouchables themselves I think it would be fatal for them to have a special electorate, or to have reservation of seats. If this were attempted, it would create opposition to them. I think their interests would be best safeguarded by their coming "through the open door", to let them have the same voting rights as the ordinary Hindu. They will find that the leaders of Indian opinion are determined to improve their social status and give them the right to enter into temples and are ready to remove those other terrible disabilities under which they have suffered in the past.

Q. Readers of Miss Mayo's book[1] have never been able to understand the Indian treatment of animals. They know that the Hindu thinks it is wrong to take life, but they cannot understand a system whch allows wretched animals in a diseased condition to be left to die on the roadside and not put out of their misery. What have you got to say on that subject?

A. You have dealt with one of the problems which reformers in India hope to rectify in time. In my Ashram, we had a dying calf.[2] He had stinking sores and was lame. I put an end to his earthly existence by painless injections. I was bitterly attacked by some of my fellow-countrymen, who in my view have yet to learn that ahimsa never meant that suffering which could be terminated should be permitted. I think that much of the animal suffering in India today is due to this travesty of what ahimsa meant.

Q. To move on to another subject. I would be interested to know something of your religious beliefs. Have you ever had religious doubts and when did you first firmly believe in God and since then have you ever been through dark nights of the soul?

A. When I was quite young I did go through a period of complete disbelief, I was an atheist in fact. This was when I was about fourteen. Since then, however, I have always believed in God.

[1] *Mother India*; or Gandhiji's comments on the book, *vide* "Drain Inspector's Report"

[2] *Vide* "The Fiery Ordeal"

Q. Do you then believe in the personal immortality of the soul?

A. Yes, I believe in the immortality of the soul. I would like to give you the analogy of the ocean. The ocean is composed of drops of water, each drop is an entity and yet it is part of the whole, 'the one and the many'. In this ocean of life we are all little drops.

My doctrine means that I must identify myself with life, with everything that lives, that I must share the majesty of life in the presence of God. The sum total of this life is God.

Q. Did any book ever affect you supremely and was there any turning point in your life?

A. Yes, the book that affected me more than any other was *Unto This Last* by Ruskin. I was living in South Africa then. It was the reading of *Unto This Last* on a railway journey to Durban in 1904 when I was thirty-five, they made me decide to change my whole outward life.[1] There is no other word for it, Ruskin's words captivated me. I read the book in one go and lay awake all the following night and I there and then decided to change my whole plan of life. Tolstoy I had read much earlier. He affected the inner being.

Q. You were a fairly successful lawyer then, weren't you Mr. Gandhi? Did your conversion mean then that you came to the conclusion it was wrong to enjoy the good things of this life? What income were you making then?

A. As far as I recollect, I was making something like 3,000 a year by my legal practice. My "conversion", as you call it, decided for me that in future I would dedicate all my earnings to causes that I felt were for the benefit of my fellows, that in the future I would live simply and by physical labour, and imperfectly as I have tried to carry out that aim, I know that it is only be living thus that one achieves complete peace of mind.

Q. I have been very much struck with your wonderful vitality. Few men of sixty-two can be so full of energy. I have read in the papers some of the things about your diet. Would you tell me just what your daily bill of fare is?

A Certainly. I am sure that most people eat much too much. I have never felt better than I do on my present regimen and I have a horror of drugs and medicines. This is my daily bill of fare: For my breakfast at 8 o'clock I have sixteen ounces of goat's milk and four oranges, for my luncheon at 1 o'clock I again have sixteen ounces of

[1] *Vide* "An Autobiography"

milk, grapes, pears or other fruit. My evening meal is between 5 and 6 o'clock. I eat a teaspoonful of almond paste, twenty or thirty dates, several tomatoes and a lettuce or other salad. This avoids indigestion. As you will note, I eat no starch and no cereals.

Q. To sum up, Mr. Gandhi, if the Conference breaks down, do you think the people of India will be satisfied with partial Home Rule, with the possibility of a further conference in ten or twenty years when the British Parliament considers that India is in a position to control her own destiny?

A. I am sure you know what my answer will be. I have tried while I have been in England not to say anything provocative, but those of us who are giving our lives to India will never be satisfied with half-measures. If the people of India after this Conference become convinced that Great Britain is not genuine in her desire to give them immediate self-government, all the forces at their disposal will be used.

Q. What is your final word to the readers of *The Spectator*?

A. My final word to your readers is that they should use all the influence at their disposal to get their friends to see our point of view, that they should work for the great cause of a real partnership between our countries on a basis of equality. I think that a free association of our two nations or groups of nations, can be utilized for the solving of many world problems, not merely for the good of the greatest number, but for the good of all.

The Spectator, 24-10-1931

20. LETTER TO ALBERT EINSTEIN[1]

LONDON,
October 18, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to have your beautiful letter sent through Sundaram. It is a great consolation to me that the work I am doing finds favour in your sight. I do indeed wish that we could meet face to face and that too in India at my Ashram.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

PROF. EINSTEIN

From a photosat: C.W. 9500

21. LETTER TO ROMAIN ROLLAND

October 18, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I was grieved to learn from your letter to Mira that Birukoff[2] was no more. Through Sundaram now I have a beautiful note from him. This was written just before his death. Will you please convey to his widow my respectful condolences and tell her how grieved I am that the cruel hand of death has deprived me of the pleasure of meeting one who knew Tolstoy so intimately.
Hoping to meet you soon.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Romain Rolland and Gandhi: Correspondence, pp. 155-6

[1] This was in answer to Einstein's letter, dated September 27, which read; "You have shown by all that you have done that we can achieve the ideal even without resorting to violence. We can conquer those votaries of violence by the non-violent method. Your example will inspire and help humanity to put an end to a conflict based on violence with international help and co-operation guaranteeing peace to the world.

"With this expression of my devotion and admiraton I hope to be able to meet you face to face."—*Statesman*, 22-5-1965

[2] Paul Birukoff, Tolstoy's devout secretary

22. INTERVIEW WITH BISHOP OF BIRMINGHAM[1]

SELLY OAK,

BIRMINGHAM,

October 18, 1931

The scientist Bishop made out a strong case for science and machinery which he said must be made to free man from manual toil, so that he may have all his time or the bulk of it for intellectual work. Gandhiji reminded the Bishop that he could not trust the average man to use all his spare time profitably on the strength of the old adage: 'Satan always finds some work for idle hands to do.' But the Bishop demurred. "Look here", said he, "I do not do manual work for more than an hour a day. The rest of my time I give to intellectual pursuits". Gandhiji laughing, said:

I know, but if all became Bishops, the Bishops would find their occupation gone.

Young India, 5-11-1931

23. MESSAGE TO INDIANS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM[2]

SELLY OAK,

BIRMINGHAM,

October 18, 1931

You handful of Indians in the British Isles are trustees for the good name of India. So beware![3]

Put your talents in the service of the country instead of converting them into £.s.d. If you are a medical man, there is disease enough in India to need all your medical skill. If you are a lawyer, there are differences and quarrels enough in India. Instead of fomenting more trouble, patch up those quarrels and stop litigation. If you are an engineer, build model houses suited to the means and needs of our people, and yet full of health and fresh air. There is

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account: "The Birmingham Visit". According to a report in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 24-10-1931, the interview took place in the morning.

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's: "The Birmingham Visit"

[3] After this breif message, Gandhiji answered questions put to him.

nothing that you have learnt which cannot be turned to account. Do what Kumarappa[1], also a Chartered Accountant like you, is doing. There is a dire need everywhere for accountants to audit the accounts of Congress and its adjunct associations. Come to India—I will give you enough work and also your hire—4 annas per day, which is surely much more than millions in India get India will have to go through the fiery ordeal before Englishmen can be made to say : 'We are sorry, we did not do what we should have done long before.' A strong nation would not succumb so easily as we might imagine. And as one wedded to non-violence I should not have England compelled to yield anything without a will. England must be convinced that it is good for her to yield and for India to win her freedom, before she actually surrenders power.

Q. To convince England do you not think you should stay here a little longer?

No, I cannot stay beyond my time. I would cease to have any influence here if I overstayed and the people would cease to respond. The influence that I now exercise is only a temporary influence, not permanent. My place is in India, in the midst of my countrymen, who may be called upon to start another campaign of suffering. In fact, the English people seem to respond today because they knew that I represent a suffering people, and when I am suffering with my own countrymen, I would be speaking to them from India as heart speaks to heart.

Young India, 5-11-1931

[1] Dr. J.C. Kumarappa, economist

24. SPEECH AT BIRMINGHAM MEETING[1]

SELLY OAK,

BIRMINGHAM,

October 18, 1931

Whereas to other places I have gone as a matter of business, to deliver my message, I have come here as a matter of pilgrimage because this Settlement it was that spared and sent Mr. Horace Alexander to us at a time[2] when we were in need of a friend. . . . It was a time when news of satyagraha could not be transmitted from India, everything that was sent was censored, the principal men were all in jail. It was then that the friends came to the conclusion that a mission ought to be sent to India and Mr. Alexander was chosen for the purpose. Not only were you able to spare him but his wife, a cripple, spared him. Now you will understand why it is a pilgrimage for me to come here.

With regard to the work before me, I did not think I should take your time to describe it to you now. The vast majority of the people now know what the Indian National Congress claims for the nation. You know what means we have adopted, perhaps, for the first time in history, to achieve our independence. And you also know how far the nation during the last year was able to live up to its creed. I would like to emphasize upon you the fact that, if the work that is now being done at the Round Table Conference is to bear fruit, it will do so only if the pressure of intelligent public opinion is brought to bear upon it. I have often remarked that my true work in England lies outside the Conference, not in the Conference. In my few public speeches I have not hesitated to throw out a hint that no work was being done in the Conference, that it was marking time and that the precious time of those who had come from India and those who were representing British interests in the Conference was being wasted. That being my

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account: "The Birmingham Visit". The meeting was held in the afternoon at Woodbrooke Settlement with Horace Alexander in the chair. According to a report in *Birmingham Post,* 19-10-1931, those present included the Mayor of Birmingham, W. W. Saunders, and the Lady Mayoress and the Bishop of Birmingham . The meeting lasted two hours.

[2] In 1930, after the failure of the Sapru-Jayakar mediatory efforts

opinion, I cannot be too insistent that responsible leaders of public opinion in the British Isles should inform themselves of the true nature of the struggle that Indians are carrying on against heavy odds. For, unless you understand the true nature and the[1] inner meaning of this struggle, you will not be able to bring effective pressure to bear on those who are conducting the affairs of the State here.

I know enough of the composition of this meeting to know that you are all earnest seekers after truth and anxious to do the right, not only especially with regard to this, but any cause that deserves the assistance of human beings. And if you will approach this question from this standpoint, it is just likely that the deliberations of the Round Table Conference might prove fruitful.

One of the questions that were put to Gandhiji at the end of his speech was whether settlement was not made impossible by Indian representatives not agreeing among themselves on the communal question. Gandhiji, while emphatically repudiating the suggestion, said:

I know you have been taught to think like that. You cannot shake off the spell of that hypnotic suggestion. My case is that alien rulers have ruled India on the principle of "Divide and Rule". No alien Imperial rule could go on in India unless the rulers now conquetted with one and then with the other party. We will continue to be divided so long as the wedge of foreign rule remains there, and sinks deeper and deeper. That is the way of the wedge. But take out the wedge and the split parts will instantly come together and unite. Again, the attainment of unity has been rendered a task of Herculean difficulty by the composition of the Conference itself, as all the Delegates here are nominated, none of them is duly elected. If, for instance, the Nationalist Muslims had been asked to elect their representative, it would have been Dr. Ansari. Lastly, we should not forget that even if the present Delegates had been elected, they would have acted with a better sense of responsibility. We, on the other hand, are here on the sufferance of the British Prime Minister. We are responsible to nobody, we have no constituency to appeal to. Again, we are reminded that unless we agree among ourselves on the communal issue no progess is possible. In the very nature of the things, therefore, each pulls it a different way and to exact the utmost he can. Again while the Delegates are called upon to present an

[1] The source has "its".

agreed communal solution, they are not told what they would get if they agree and so the incentive that could have made agreement beforehand possible is killed at the very start, rendering agreement very nearly impossible. Let the Government declare that they are going to withdraw from India whether Indians agreed or not and you will see that we shall then soon agree. The fact of the matter is that no one feels that he is going to get real live liberty. What is offered is simply a share in the power of the bureaucracy to exploit India and this sets up an apple of discord in our midst. Further, the Government having made constitution-making dependent upon the solution of the communal question, every party is tempted to pitch its demand as high as possible. If the Government at all means business, it would unhesitatingly accept my suggestion, viz., to appoint a judicial tribunal to decide the communal question at issue. If this is done, there is every possibility of an agreed solution being reached without the intervention of the judicial tribunal.

In reply to a further question asking what would happen in India during the transition period if the British Government abdicated its function, Gandhiji said:

Alien rule is like foreign matter in an organic body. Remove the poison and body will at once start recuperating. It is preposterous to suggest that the British Government would be abdicating its funciton if it withdraws from India. The only function that it is fulfilling today is of exploiting India. Let Britain cease to exploit India and India will immediately revive economically.

Q. Have the people of India themselves come to an agreement on fundamentals?

The Congress has come with an agreed scheme of comm unal settlement, but it is not accepted. Here at the Conference the Congress is only one of the many parties that are said to be represented here. The organic fact, however, is that it is the only representative body speaking for the vast masses in India. It is the one live, organic and independent organization that has been functio ning for close upon fifty years. It is the only organization that has stood the test of untold suffering. It is the Congress which arri ved at a Settlement with the Government, and say what you will, it is the only organization that will one day replace the present Government. My claim is that the scheme that is produced through a representative committee of one Sikh, one Muslim and one Hindu member of its Cabinet would stand the test of any judicial tribunal so far as fairness and justness is concerned.

One member of the audience asked the question whether the Round Table Conference had broken down and whether India should wait for swaraj until another conference. Gandhiji replied:

I am not giving up all hope till I have severed all connection with the Round Table Conference. Apparently, thereore, I still entertain some hope though, I may say, I have little data to build on . But it is against my nature to violently break away from an organization with which I have been co-operating. I do not know whether, the next time when the solution comes, there will be another Round Table Conference or not, but this much I know that if the Round Table Conference breaks down, a solution will not be reached before India has passed through a fiery ordeal much more severe than the one it passed through last year.

Q. You talk of the impoverishment of India as being the result of British exploitation, but is it not a fact that the real cause of the agriculturists misery is the rapacity of the Bania and extravagance of expenditure on the occasion of marriages and funerals? Finally, you chare the British Government with extravagance. But what have you to say to the extravagance of the Indian Princes?

A. The Indian Bania is not a patch upon the English Bania and, if we were acting violently, the Indian Bania would deserve to be shot. But then, the British Bania would deserve to be shot a hundered times. The rate of interest charged by the Indian Bania is nothing compared to the loot carried on by the British Bania through the jugglery of currency and merciless exactions of Land Revenue. I do not know of another instance in history of such an organized exploitation of so unorganized and gentle a race. As for the profligacy of the Indian Princes, while I would have little hesitation, if I had the power, in dispossessing them of their insolent palaces, I would have infinitely less in depriving the British Government of New Delhi. The extravagance of the Princes was nothing compared to the heartless squandering of crores of rupees on New Delhi to satisfy the whim of a Viceroy in order to reproudce England in India, when masses of people were dying of hunger.

An amusing question was asked by a friend who quoted a letter from *The Manchester Guardian* in which the correspondent questioned Gandhiji's authority to speak for the untouchables, as he belonged to the priestly class which had kept that community depressed so far, and asked whether Gandhiji himself was not a great hindrance in the way of a settlement.

I never knew that I was a Brahmin, but I do happen to be a Bania, which is certainly regarded as a term of painful reproach. But let me inform the audience that my community excommunicated me when I came to English shores 40 years ago and the work that I have been doing entitles me to be called a farmer, weaver and untouchable. I was wedded to the work for the extinction of untouchability long before I was wedded to my wife. There were two occasions in our joint life when there was a choice between working for the untouchables and remaining with my wife and I would have preferred the first. But thanks to my good wife, the crisis was averted. In my Ashram, which is my family, I have several untouchables and a sweet but naughty girl living as my own daughter. As to whether I am acting as a hindrance to a settlement. I confess, I am for the simple reason that I would not be satisfied with any compromise short of real complete independence for India.

Q. Sometimes we have found it difficult to reconcile the special form of united protest that you have evolved, with an appeal to reason. What is it that makes you sometimes feel that appeal to reason should be put aside in favour of more drastic action?

A. Up to the year 1906 I simply relied on appeal to reason. I was a very industrious reformer. I was a good draftsman, as I always had a close grip of facts which in its turn was the necessary result of my meticulous regard for truth. But I found that reason failed to produce an impression when the critical moment arrived in South Africa. My people were excited—even a worm will and does sometimes turn—and there was talk of wreaking vengeance. I had then to choose between allying myself to violence or finding out some other method of meeing the crisis and stopping the rot, and it came to me that we should refuse to obey legislation that was degrading and let them put us in jail if they liked. Thus came into being the moral equivalent of war. I was then a loyalist, becuase I implicity believed that the sum total of the activities of the British Empire was good for India and for 'humanity'. Arriving in England soon after the outbreak of the War, I plunged into it and later, when I was forced to go to India as a result of the pleurisy that I had developed, I led a recruiting campaign at the risk of my life, and to the horror of some of my friends. The disillusionment came in 1919 after the passage of

the Black Rowlatt Act and the refusal of the Government to give the simple elementary redress of proved wrongs[1] that we had asked for. And so, in 1920, I became a rebel. Since then the conviction has been growing upon me, that things of fundamental importance to the people are not secured by reason alone, but have to be purchased with their suffering. Suffering is the law of human beings; war is the law of the jungle. But suffering is infinitely more powerful than the law of the jungle for converting the opponent and opening his ears, which are otherwise shut, to the voice of reason. Nobody has probably drawn up more petitions or espoused more forlorn causes than I, and I have come to this fundamental conclusion that, if you want something really important to be done, you must not merely satisfy the reason, you must move the heart also. The appeal of reason is more to the head, but the penetration of the heart comes from suffering. It opens up the inner understanding in man. Suffering is the badge of the human race, not the sword.

Young India, 5-11-1931

25. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[2]

[After *October 18, 1931*][3]

Q. Don't you think there is fear of the different communities violently quarrelling among themselves when the British withdraw from India?

A. I have compared the British rule to a wedge and no sooner the wedge is removed than the divided parts will unite. But even if we continue to fight, I should think it a godsend. A man who broods on evil is as bad as a man who does evil, if he is no worse, and so, if we are prevented from running at one another's throats simply because of the superimposed force of alien rule, the sooner that force is removed the better. We should fight harder for a time, but we should unite better ultimately.

Q. Are you quite sure that, if you had the elected representatives of the people on the Conference, you would be united at once?

[1] The Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs,

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's article: “The Fundamentals”. He had taken down all that Gandhiji said “at one meeting or another in London for other places" and put it "in the form of answers to questions, in his own language.”

[3] Mahadev Desai said, this was to be read along with his report of the Birmingham meeting, which was held on October 18, 1931.

A. I am qutie sure. We should then have gone by the decision of the majority. It is not so much the fault of men as the absence of responsibility under which they labour. Even these very people, if elected, would act differently.

Q. Would you not use salt for taxing and balancing the budget?[1] Would you not agree to the Federation having limitless powers to tax some articles including salt?[2]

A. The Federation should have no right to tax salt. Not unless I wanted to commit the sin of taxing the poor would I think of balancing the budget by taxing salt. If you want to balance the budget, why not cut down the military expenditure? It would be a crime against humanity to add to the already heavy burden of the poor Indian tax-payer. You may as well tax air and water and expect India to live.

Young India, 5-11-1931

26. LETTER TO NAWAB OF BHOPAL

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
October 19, 1931

DEAR NAWAB SAHEB,

At the meeting that is to take place at Claridge's tonight, I suggest that the following proposals be discussed.

Only certain heads of revenue such as:

a. Customs, subject to existing rights of the States.
b. Similarly salt.
c. Export Opium.
d. Excises on articles (today) levied in addition to Custom duties.
e. The receipts from federal commercial undertakings, e.g., Railways, Posts and Telegraphs.
f. Profits from Federal Currency.
g. Existing revenue derived direct from the Provinces, e.g., Income Tax, and from the States through the territories

[1] This was asked at the Brimingham meeting.
[2] This was asked by Lord Sankey.

ceded by them and in other ways, be accepted as common sources of Federal revenue against expenditure to the ex tent of the revenue that might accrue through such heads. This method secures the States against any risk of undertaking liabilities beyond the actual income.

In the event of it being found necessary to tap other sources of revenue, the Constitution may provide that no such revenue shall be Federal, unless a two-thirds or larger majority of the representatives of the States in the Federal Legislature agree.

H. H. THE NAWAB SAHEB OF BHOPAL

CHANCELLOR OF THE CHAMBER OF PRINCES

From a photostat: S.N. 18142

27. LETTER TO MRS. J.H.L. POLAK

October 19, 1931

DEAR MATER,

You are naughty. You will not write because I cannot write. I think of you often but get no time to write letters. I am obliged even to neglect the Indian mail. Maud reminds me that you are expecting to hear from me in accordance with my message sent to you.

I have a few moments today during my silence. I have had interesting accounts of your condition and I was pleased to know that you were bearing your years so well. I suppose there is little chance of our seeing each other. But I suppose physical meeting is not so much as the meeting of hearts. And I know that ours meet. I shall not easily forget the Sundays I used to pass with you in 1909.

Yours sincerely,

M.K. GANDHI

From the original : Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy : National Archives of India

28. EXTRACT FROM PROCEEDINGS OF THE FEDERAL STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING[1]

LONDON,
October 20, 1931

MR. GANDHI: If it is to be said that they are decided, I think I ought to say a word.

CHAIRMAN: Do you think there ought to be a limit?

MR. GANDHI: Not only that, but personally I should resist a tax on Salt altogether, and no merely limit it. I do not think I can say offhand, moreover, that there should be no limit so far as Customs are concerened, There are many things on which I would say, 'No, I will not go beyond this.' Similarly with opium.

CHAIRMAN: What do you say with regard to Opium?

MR. GANDHI: Opium I would have limitless.

CHAIRMAN: That is good. We are all agreed on Opium anyhow. Now, Mr. Gandhi, with regard to Customs, would you say there should be some limit there?

MR. GANDHI: I think so.

CHAIRMAN: What limit is in your mind?

MR. GANDHI: I would not take Customs in general; my judg ment would vary, and I would not allow an expert to tell me what I should do, because it would be a matter of policy.

CHAIRMAN: That means giving the Federal Authority no limit, so that you agree with regard to Customs. We are all agreed on Opium, and we agree on Customs, because you say, “I do not want any expert to tell me what I am to do”, nor does the Federal Government. Now, with regard to Salt, I know that is rather a difficult question, but we want to get to the heart of the matter now. What do you think should be the position of the Federal Government so far as a tax on Salt is concerned? Do you think there ought to be no tax at all?

MR. GANDHI: Not only no tax, but the tax which is today levied on Salt should go.

[1] The Chairman put forward for the Committee’s consideration the question whether, for the purpose of creating a balanced budget, the Federation should have power to impose certain taxes. As to this there was general agreement . Sir Akbar Hydari said, it had already been agreed that Customs, Salt and Opium should be included among the taxes to be federalized. The question then was whether there should be a limitaion on levying these taxes. A number of speakers said there should not be and the Chairman asked whether the matter should be taken as decided.

LORD PEEL: Mr. Gandhi is expressing hsi individual opinion; but does he suggest that, in the Statute itself, the right to tax Salt by the Federal Government should be expressly excluded?

MR. GANDHI: I do.

CHAIRMAN: Very well; we will make a note that Mr. Gandhi objects to any tax on salt.

LORD PEEL: It is more than that; it is more than a personal objection. He thinks Salt ought to be excluded.

CHAIRMAN: He thinks Salt ought to be excluded, yes. Now, Mr. Gandhi, would you help us with regard to this. First of all, can anybody say what the present tax on Salt brings in.

MR. GANDHI: Six crores.

SIR AKBAR HYDRAI: 6.7 crores, less 1·23.

MR. GANDHI: I will give in to anybody who says between 6 and 7 crores.

CHAIRMAN: Very well, we will say 7.

SIR AKBAR HYDARI : The Government of India figure would make it about 5·50.

CHAIRMAN : Now, Mr. Gandhi, perhaps you will help us in this way. Suppose we were to say, "Well, Mr. Gandhi is quite right; there ought not to be this tax", I would like to ask you where are we to get this five millions—taking it at five millions—from. Could you just help us with regard to that? What would you do?

MR. GANDHI: My answer is that there should be a reduction to the extent of 6 crores from the Military expenditure.

CHAIRMAN: The way you want to do things is to reduce expenditure?

MR. GANDHI: I do.

CHAIRMAN: Now, Sir, Akbar, what other taxes do you think ought to be included?

SIR AKBAR HYDARI: There are two or three sources which have been indicated in the report of the Sub-committee, and one or two were indicated in His Highness of Bhopal's speech; but before I can finally commit myself to them, I should like first of all to have before me the finally examined figures—I will not use the word 'expert', because it seems to be in a way unpalatable to certain people, and it seems to give rise to confusion as to whether these are experts in the role of arbitrators, or of explorers or of confirmers—therefore, I say, I should like to have before me the figures, from which I could see how much is required, or will be required, ordinarily to balance the budget, and what these sources are likely to produce. . . .

MR. GANDHI: Lord Peel, will you oblige us by undertaking to

frame a concrete formula? If you do not, then it might be nobody's business, and we shall get nowhere; but if you would guide us by giving us a concrete formula which we might discuss, I would gladly welcome your suggestion.

LORD PEEL: I think I can say that, whether through the Chairman or through some other member of the Government, the Government would be prepared to put forward a proposal for the consideration of the Committee.

MR. JINNAH: As I understand it, your proposal is only as to the terms of reference?

LORD PEEL: I do not want to limit it exactly to the terms of reference, but as to what should be the actual operation and the scope of the work of this Committee. I put it in more general language. I do not want to limit it too closely.

MR. JINNAH: It assumes that it must be referred to a Committee.

Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session) : Proceedings of Federal Structure Committee and Minorities Committee, Vol. I, p. 224-8

29. SPEECH AT CHATHAM HOUSE MEETING[1]

LONDON,
October 20, 1931

You were good enough to say that I have spared from my busy time a few moments to address a gathering under the auspices of this Institute. I must confess that I seize every opportunity I can of coming into touch with British public opinion and putting before them the purpose of my mission. I have therefore come before you quite selfishly, and I hope that the words I speak to you this evening will find a lodgment in your hearts. At the end of what I have to say I should like you to cross-examine me and ask me any questions you may like to put. I have found by experience that that is the only way of removing the mists of misunderstanding. I have noticed that the greatest stumbling-block in my way is the hopeless ignorance of the true facts of the situation, through no fault of yours; you belong to one of the busiest nations in the world, you have your own problems, and at the present moment this great island of yours is going through a crisis such as you have never had to face within

[1] Held under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, the meeting was attended by influential Englishmen and Englishwomen drawn from all parts of England. Lord Lothian presided.

living memory. My whole heart goes out to you in your troubles, and I hope that you will soon be able, with your marvellous energy, to cut a way out of them. No wonder, however, that, preoccupied as you are, you find no time to study the problems that affect a distant land like India. It is therefore a matter of keen pleasure to me that so many of you have found time to come here and listen to what I may have to say. I only feel grieved that many of you who are listening to my voice are unable to find accommodation in this room. With these preliminary words, I plunge into my subject.

In order to give you a description of the future of India as I conceive it, I shall tell you in as few words as possible what India is at present. India is a sub-continent by itself, nineteen hundred miles long, fifteen hundred miles wide, with a population of roughly 350 millions. Of these about 210 millions are Hindus, 70 millions are Mussalmans, 3 millions are Sikhs; there is also a fairly large Indian Christian population, and a very small European or, more correclty speaking, English population. Numerically it is insignificant, but, as you know, it enjoys a position of privilege and influence unsurpassed, belonging as it does to the ruling race.

We have within this population our own Hindu-Muslim—Sikh problem, or, as it is called, the problem of minorities. I will not go into the problem as it affects other minorities, nor will I take up your time by airing my views with regard to these minorities, but one minority I may not omit, the unhappy untouchables, a word which is a standing reproach to the Hindus of India who form the majority of the population . Untouchability is a curse upon Hinduism, and I have no hesitation in saying that, if untouchability is not rooted out of Hinduism, Hinduism must perish. The time has come when any system, no matter how hoary and ancient it may be, must stand the light of day, must be able to stand fierce criticism, and if Hinduism harbours untouchability, it has no place on this earth.

I am glad to tell you that Congress has made the removal of untouchability an integral part of its programme, and under the inspiration of Congress there are hundreds, perhaps thousands, of young Hindu reformers who have dedicated their lives to the removal of this blot upon Hinduism and upon India. These young men and women are reaching a hand to these untouchables in a variety of ways. we are digging wells for them, opening schools for them, building new temples for them and opening up old temples for them. We are

giving to twenty-five thousand untouchable women, if not more, work in their own homes. We have introduced them to spinnng-wheels. We have found for several thousand untouchables their old occupation of rough weaving, which had died out owing to the competition of modern manufactured cloth. This meant that they had taken either to scavenging or to some other occupation, because of their inability to earn their livelihood rom this noble hereditary occupation of weaving. Thanks to God and to the efforts of these young reformers, several thousand untouchables have thus recovered their old occupation of rough weaving. There are several families who were heavily indebted and who now are not only free from debts but have laid by a decent sum. One family I can recollect has laid by what in India a very respectable sum for a poor family— two thousand rupees. This family is in demand all over India as teachers, because both husband and wife are accomplished weavers and conscientious and skilled workers. You can imagine how much self-respect they must have gained, owing to their being wanted as teachers and not as scavengers and treated almost as a plague.

That is a very important minority, important in the sense that it deserves all the sympathy and all the aid that can be given to it. I have not a shadow of doubt that this untouchability is going very fast, and if, through God's grace, India comes to her own as a result of the deliberations of the Round Table Conference or otherwise, you will find that untouchability has gone for ever.

But I have not yet finished my description of India as it is. What is this 350 million population doing? More than eighty-five per cent of this population is engaged in agriculture and is living in seven hundred thousand villages, dotted over the vast surface that I have described. There are some villages in India which I have population of not more than a hundred souls; there are, again, villages which have a population of as many as five thousand. Now Indian agriculture depends very largely—it has to—upon its precarious rainfall. In parts of that subcontinent, like Cherapunji, you have a deluge of rain, as much as 600 inches. In other parts, like Sind and Central India, for examle you have hardly 5 inches. And then, often, it is not equally distributed.

Agricultural holdings are anything between one acre, or three-quarters of an acre, and two and a half acres. I think, taking province by province, in no province are the holdings, on the average, more

than two and a half or three acres per head. I am open to correction, but I think I am not far out, and there are thousands upon thousands who have less than one acre, and again tens of thousands who are absolutely landless, and who are therefore living in India as serfs, one might almost say as slaves. It cannot be called a state of legal slavery, but it is really a state bordering on slavery. This population, because all the rainfall is concentrated within two, three, four or five months at the outside, lives wihout any continuous occupation for nearly six months of the year. In some places where there are double crops, the absence of occupation extends over a period of four months, but, roughly speaking, you may say that these agriculturists of India are without any constant occupation for half the year.

That being so, there is deep and ever-deepening poverty among the masses. The average income of the people for the whole of India is two pence per day. If the average income of these 350 million people is two pence a day—and in calculating this average the wealth of a few millionaires is included—you will have no difficulty in understanding that there are tens of thousands of poeple who do not even earn two pence per day. The result is that nearly one-tenth of the popultion is living in a condition of semi-starvation. They have no more than one meal per day, consisting of stale chapati and a pinch of dirty salt. There is no such thing as bread. They do not know from year's end to year's end what milk is, or even skimmed milk; they do not know what butter is; they do not know what oil is; they never get green vegetables. That is the condition of the vast mass of sunken humanity in India.

I have now to tell you what should be, and, if the Congress had its way, would be the future state of India. I have not filled in the picture with the cities because the cities do not make India; it is the villages which make India. Nor have I put in the Princes; the Princes also have a portion of these villages, and the life of the villagers in British India. If there is any difference, and there is some, it is a dffierence of degree and in no sense a differ ence of kind. Princes will come and Princes will go, empires will come and empires will go, but this India living in her villages will remain just as it is. Sir Henry Maine has left a monograph. *The Village Communities of India*, in which you will find the author saying that all these villages were at one time, and are to a certain extent now, self-contained "little republics". They have their own culture, mode of life, and method of protection themselves, their own village

schoolmaster, their own priest, carpenter, barber, in fact everything that a village could want. There is certainly today no kind of government to be seen in the villages, but whatever their life is, these villages are self-contained, and if you went there, you would find that there is a kind of agreement under which they are built. From these villages has perhaps arisen what you call the iron rule of caste. Caste has been a blight on India, but it has also acted as a sort of potecting shield for these masses. But I must not take you into the intricacies of this caste system.

What I am trying to give you is as faithful a picture as possible of India as it is at present. I must also not detain you with the impress that British rule has left on India, what that rule is today and what it accounts for. I have dwelt upon that at other meetings and you have some of the literature; but you have no literature on the future of India. I could not possibly have given you a picutre of the future unless I had given you this background. If I tell you more about this peasantry of India, you will not now be surprised. The Congress has made it an article of faith that the test of its work and its progress shall be the measure of its becoming a predominantly presant organization, and we have set for ourselves this rule, that we shall not consider any interest in India which is in conflict with the fundamental well-being of this eighty per cent of the pupulation.

Then, what should the government of that population be? The foremost thing that the future State of India would look after would be the economic welfare of these masses. You will therefore have no difficulty in coming to the conclusion that, then, this Government is going to find some occupation or these idle six months of the year for the peasant. That should really be the primary concern of any person who undertakes this gigantic task. By a process of elimination we have come the conclusion that for this homogeneous population you must have one predominant occupation.You must have an easy occup ation; you must have tools for that occupation that can easily be made in the villages, and the product of the village industry must be capable of being consumed by the villagers. I you can give some occ upation which will answer all these tests, you will have a process of production and distribution, self-contained and without any other intermediary having to be resorted to. Such an occupation was the ancient occupation of hand-spinning and hand-weaving. I will not now take you through the histroy of how it was destroyed. But you

find that, due to the Congress, the Spinners' Association is penetrating as qucikly as it can the thousands of villages of India. We have in this manner penetrated two thousand villages. This occupaiton has nearly doubled the income of the villagers. You will understand what two pence added to two pence means to a poor man; it means, I suggest, a fortune. You will then take all the occupations necessary in connection with cotton, from hand-sinning and hand-weaving to printing, dyeing and washing. When you take into considration all these occupations, it does govern the income of the people, and when we have done that, we have given these people a little bit of hope and courage and have put a little lustre into their eyes. If you walked with me in the villages of Orissa, you would see walking death throughout the length and breadth of that thrice-afficted land. You see specimens of humanity, not voluntarily but compulsorily, mere skin and bone without any flesh on their limbs. If we give them this occupation, we put into them new life and new hope.

But the activity of the new State will not stop there. These people are living in utter ignorance of sanitation and we have to look after the hygienic conditions. So we try to introduce the hygienic methods of Dr. Poor, who has wriitten a volume on village hygiene. Briefly spea king, it consists of turning human excreta into manure. The Chinese people are the greatest people of the earth in the knowledge of the use of these human excreta, and Dr. Poor says the Chinese were his teachers in discovering the economic treatment. We are trying to do two things—to add to the wealth of the nation and to the health of the nation—and if we teach the people this method of treating human excreta, the result will be that we shall rid ourselves somewhat of the plauge of flies, and sterilize to some extent the poisonous mosquito not fully, I know, but it is in the right direction.

Then we must give them some medical assistance in his malaria ridden country. India suffers from many diseases, but malaria is essentially a disease induced by want. It is not to be driven away by simply giving the villagers packets of quinine. Quinine is essential, but it is useless unless you can give them some milk of some fruit, as their digestive apparatus is not capable of taking anything else. So we are trying to give them some simple medical aid where we can. I am not trying to give you an idea that we have already done this, but I am talking of the future State, not as a visionary but as a practical man. We have tried this on a small scale,

and if I can multiply this activity through the aid of the future State, you will understand what India can be without a vast outlay. We give this medical aid, not through the very expensive methods that the Western doctors teach us, but we revive our own ancient treatment. Every village once had its own medical man. You may say he was a quack and that he was extremely ignorant of the elementary principles which govern this little body of ours; all which is very true. But all the same he was a man who could give them some comfort, and, the occupation being hereditary, where he was not dishonest man, he really served an efficient purpose. If you give him this elementary knowledge of hygiene, which is preventive medicine, and teach him this simple way of curing the people of malaria, you have gone a very long way.

What I am telling you today is a thing that was approved by the Surgeon-General of the Bombay Presidency. When he came to see me whilst I was lying in the Sassoon Hospital[1], he was discussing it with me, and I told him, "Your English methods are too expensive for this poor country, and if you want to treat a village through your method, it would take two or three centruries." He agreed and said, "What would you do?" So I told him my plan.

That does not finish the picutre. We have the education of this future State. I say witout fear of my figures being challenged successully, that today India is more illiterate than it was fifty or a hundred years ago, and so is Burma, because the British adminis trations, when they came to India, instead of taking hold of things as they were, began to root them out. They scratched the soil and began to look at the root, and left the root like that, and the beautiful tree perished. The village schools were not good enough for the British administrator, so he came out with his programme. Every school must have so much paraphernalia, building, and so forth. Well, there were no such schools at all. There are statistics left by a British admini strator which show that, in places where they have carried out a survey, ancient schools have gone by the board, because there was no recog nition for these schools, and the schools established after the European pattern were too expensive for the people, and therefore they could not possibly overtake the thing. I defy anybody to fulifil a pro gramme of compulsory primary education of these masses

[1] In January 1924, when Gandhiji underwent an operation or appendicitis

inside of a century. This very poor country of mine is ill able to sustain such an expensive method of education. Our State would revive the old village schoolmaster and dot every village with a school both for boys and girls,

Then, although British people have spent millions in completing some irrigation works, we claim that their progress in that work has not been as quick as it might have been. The military railways, which have done some good, no doubt, in transporting goods from one place to another, have done nothing of what irrigation would have done. These irrigation schemes were and are really too expensive to cover the whole of India. We have, however, our own ancient method of irrigation: deep-well irrigation in some parts, in other parts well irrigation that is not deep well. I must confess my ignorance of this, but an Englishman, who is trying experiments in intensive agriculture , and who is now here, was telling me that he had been working in the poet Tagore's village. It was Mr. Elmhurst who really gave life to that village experiment, and owing to if they were opening canal irrigation.works which did not require any skill other than that produced in that villages. He tells me they have compelled the Government to recognize the superiority of this method. I am simply giving you the evidence that this man gave to me about this canal irrigation, but I do know that there are ancient methods of irrigation compatible with the capacity of the people.

I have told you what we would do constructively, but we should have to do something destructive also. Otherwise we should not be able to carry on, because this Indian today is ill able to afford the revenue that is being forced from it from year's end to year's end in order to support an insupportable weight of military and civil expenditure. The military expenditure takes 62 crores—an enormous sum for this country whose average income in two pence a day. Compare that with the military expenditure of any country on earth, and you will find that India is groaning under a weight that is insupportable. We should immediately set about restoring the scales, and if I could possibly have my way, we should get rid of three-quarters of the military expenditure. If we really succeed in demonstrating that we have won our freedom through non-violent means, the people of India will not require much argument to convince them that non-violence will also enable them to retain their freedom. Congress does not fear the bugbear of Afghan invasion, or invasion from Japan, certainly not invasion from Bolshevik Russia.

Congress has no such fear what ever, and if we understand the lesson of non-violent non-co- operation, then no nation on earth can bend us to its will. If the nation simply learns one single English word—and we have a similar expression in our Indian languages also—we can simply say, "No", and it is finished for any invader who casts hungry eyes on India. We are convinced that we do not need the arms that India is carrying.

For civil expenditure I must give an instance which I have given at several meetings. Here the Prime Minister gets fifty times the average income; the Viceroy in India gets five thousand times the average income. From this one example you can work out for yourselves what this civil expenditure also means to India. India cannot support this service, however efficient and able it may be. It is quite likely that, if I could send medical experts to every village in India, we should have no disease whatever, but since we cannot afford medical experts for every village in India, we have to be satisfied with quacks that we can get in our own villages. No country on earth can possibly live beyond its means; it can only take such services as it can afford to pay for. If I want strawberries and cream for every villager, I know it is a day-dream and I should be an idiot if I wished to give them to every villager. Well, I tell you that this military and civil expenditure is strawberries and cream. I cannot possibly deal out this food for my people.

I have very nearly finished my picture; if you find vacant spots, please remind me and I shall fill them by answering your questions.

Q. Would not Mr. Gandhi admit that within living memory the resisting power of the rural masses to the economic breakdown produced by a failure of crops had been enormously increased, and that the famine codes in India had been brought to a high degree of perfection at a time when the increased prosperity of the masses had rendered them unnecessary?

Mr. Gandhi replied that his experience was that the resisting power of the people had not increased, but that railway transport enabled people to get grain from other places which they had not formerly been able to obtain.

SIR PHILIP HARTOG: Would Mr. Gandhi give his authority for the statement that literacy had diminished in India during the last fifty years?

Mr. Gandhi replied that his authority was the Punjab Administration Reports, and said that he had published in *Young India* a study of the Punjab educational statistics.

SIR PHILIP HARTOG: Would Mr. Gandhi explain why the literacy figure was fourteen per cent of the men and only two per cent of the women, and why illiteracy was higher to Kashmir and Hyderabad than in British India.

Mr. Gandhi replied that the women's education had been neglected, to the shame of the men. He could only conjecture, with regard to the figures for Kashmir, that if illiteracy was greater there, it was due to the negligence of the ruler or because the population was predominantly, Mohammedan, but he thought that, as a matter of fact, it was six of the one and half a dozen of the other.

Q. Were the Brahmins in Congress helping the untouchables? If so, why was it necessary to dig wells for the untouchables? Could they not use the Brahmin wells? Was it not the Salvation Army and the missionaries who did most of the work among the untouchables?

Mr. Gandhi replied that he had given the reason why the untouchables could not use the Brahmin wells when he said it was the curse of Hinduism. If all the Brahmins had been reformed there would be no difficulty, but the majority of the workers engaged in digging wells and performing other services for the untouchables were themselves Brahmins, who considered they were doing some measure of penance for the suffering which their fellow-castemen had imposed on the untouchables . The work of the Salvation Army and the missionaries was of a different character from that done by the Hindu reformers, and he did not wish to go into that issue on that occasion.

Q. What effect would the proposed reforms have on the population of India ? If better hygiene was introduced, it would lower the death rate and increase the population, and if a better standard of living was attained through individual industry and economy of public expenditure, was there anything which would hold back the birth-rate from again rising to keep the population hard up against subsistence level? Was not permanent improvement prevented without restriction of the birth-rate?

Mr. Gandhi replied that this problem was not a monopoly of India; it was a modern superstition. He did not regard a normal increase in birth-rate as an evil, and he would congratulate the Congress workers if they could show that, as a result of their hygienic and other reforms, the birth-rate of India had increased. He was not afraid of an increase of poverty if the birth-rate did increase. They were trying to inculcate among themselves the kind of life which regarded a normal increase in birth-rate as one thing and animal indulgence resulting in birth-rate as another, and there could not be too much stress laid upon education of that character. He had undertaken a prayerful study of the question and was in correspondence with Western thinkers all over Europe and America on the subject, and he had come definitely to the conclusion that the methods of birth-control suggested by modern reformers would be found upon experience to have been death-traps.

Even though it might be proved that in England, Holland, France, other parts of Europe and some parts of America, this method of controlling birth-rate might have done some good, it could only do immeasurable harm in India, where it was not possible to give these remedies to the people. It was wicked for anybody to suggest these remedies for India when India could not understand these methods in any shape or form.

Q. Would Mr. Gandhi state briefly on what principle a strong, stable Executive could be framed for India ?

Mr. Gandhi replied that a strong, stable Executive Government could best be framed by getting strong, stable hearts, and there was no dearth of such hearts in India. He had not dwelt on the political side, because the future of India as he had been picturing it, did not admit of much political treatment. The cure of the disease of economic misery was economic, but he was dabbling in politics because it was impossible to deal wih economics unless he also dealt with politics. He had given his political faith from many platforms, and had taken it for granted that the audience knew the principles which guided Congress, but he was willing to give his political faith again if desired. He believed with Tolstoy that that country was best governed which was governed the least, and if Congress had its way, the politician would not be allowed to invade the privacy and sanctity of the home, but would be called upon to keep his place.

Q. How far was the very honourable attitude of the Brahmin reformers shared by caste Hindus throughout the country?

Mr. Gandhi said the attitude was very largely shared by those who called themselves Congressmen, but there was very great headway to make. The harvest was ripe, but the labourers were undoubtedly few. There were a few thousand, whilst tens of thousands were needed in order to get rid of the corruption which had injured the fibre of the nation. He could say with assurance that untouchability was going fast, because some had given up their lives, and counted them of no cost, in order to remove that curse. Either Hinduism would be broken to bits or untouchability would disappear before many years were past.

The Chairman then asked Mr. Gandhi if he would be good enough to say something more about the political situation.

Mr. Gandhi said that the Congress wanted nothing short of complete political independence , and therefore complete control over the army, foreign relations and finance. The easiest method of getting at Congress mentality was to step into Indian shoes and imagine the English transported on to India and Indians inhabiting Great Britain. If the Indian inhabitants of the British Isles then said, “You are not fit to govern yourselves; we shall have to see whether you can handle your army or defend yourselves from the hordes that will descend on you from China, Tibet, Afghanistan or Russia,” the British would say, “We can take care of ourselves, or at any rate

we shall try." The most that could happen would be that the Indians, as a nation, would be wiped out of existence. The iron had entered the souls of thousands of Indians who were determined to throw off the foreign yoke at any cost, however much the British Lion might put out his claws and defy the civil disobedience that India might offer. Great Britain had tremendous financial interests in India, estimated by Lord Rothermere at a thousand million pounds. Those interests would be protected by Indians, if they were legitimate interests for the battle was not one of vengeance but for the exercise of the Indian's birthright. The Indians were not as armed as the British; they did not know the science of fighting; they were called a gentle race, and he was glad to belong to a gentle race. But weakness of body did not matter when they had stout hearts. Indian women had stout hearts, and had received lathi blows with breasts forwards, not turning their backs as if they were escaping villagers who had received no education from English schools , and the greatest heroine among them was a woman who could hardly read a letter in her own mother tongue. They acted like this in order that they might gain liberty for their country. The masses in India were awakening, and it was too late to persuade them that good alien rule was better than bad indigenous rule. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman had said that good government was no substitute for self-government. The British were past-masters in the art of making mistakes, and Lord Salisbury said they knew the art of blundering through to success. Why should the British deprive the Indians of their right to make mistakes ? India was impatient of the control which denied her that right. Although his creed was non-violence, he would risk the calamity to which Sir Henry Gidney had referred. Bu what mistakes could they make ? The minorities should all have protection, but there were ways and ways of granting it. India must regain the freedom which she had lost so long, with British help if it were given, without it if it were withheld. He appealed not only to the British but to the whole of humanity that this nation, which was trying an experiment in non-violence on a scale unknown to history, should receive its full measure of support from the nations of the world.

Did the British know whether they had conferred benefit on India, or did the Indians know? Would the British be judged by their own testimony or by the testimony of men like Dadabhai Naoroji, Renade, Gokhale, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta—men who doted on England and were proud of the Western civilization, who said that, although Englishmen meant well, their rule had on the whole been harmful to India because they left an emasculated nation? If after a century of British rule the result of withdrawing was expected to be fighting amongst Indians themselves, who was to blame? British rule had left them utterly helpless. He recognized that they were helpless, and he wanted British help, but on his terms; India could not afford to have door-keepers who demanded such high wages. If India paid them seventy-five per cent of her earnings, how could she keep body and soul together

on the remaining twenty-five per cent? It was a matter of simple arithmetic. The nation was impoverished by the many burdens under which it was groaning, and as he had travelled incessantly all over India from 1916 to 1931, except for the periods when he was in prison, he could claim to know the condition of the villages better than any British officer.

He was prepared to evolve his own Constitution, and when the minorities question was flung into his face, his patience was exhausted. What was this bugbear of the minority problem? Congress was not merely one of the many political organizations. It was predominantly the one organization that had given battle and had suffered. Hundreds of villages were oppressed, their crops were destroyed and thousands of rupees' worth of land confiscated and sold. This suffering was voluntarily gone through at the bidding of the Congress. Who would go through that suffering for a mess of pottage? He had come to plead with what was finest in the British character and to tell them the whole truth. If, at the end of that chapter, he was told that nothing could be done unless he could close with the Moslems and everybody else, then he would go, but the British would have committed another blunder.

They must remember that the Round Table Conference delegates were all nominated by the Prime Minister, not elected like the members of the House of Commons whom no one could remove. They represented no one but the will of the Prime Minister. The Congress was the only organization representing the whole of India. Those who fought and went to gaols were not all Hindus. They had several thousand Mussalmans amongst them, and Sikhs and Christians too. The Congress might be called a majority community if they liked, and the Congress had its own scheme of solving the minorities problem. The scheme presented for acceptance was an organic scheme in the cause of unity. The Congress majority did not speak as Hindus; Hindus could be reduced to a minority. The Constitution to be framed was for Indians, not for Hindus. How could the Congress parcel out India among several sections of Hindus, and several sections of Indian Christians, Anglo-Indians and the rest? Imagine the whole nation vivisected and torn to pieces; how could it be made into a nation with all these divided groups ? That was what the minorities wanted. These minorities had a perfect right to full civil, social and religious liberty, and they could appeal to the electorate for election in the open field. Why did they want special electorates? Why did the Anglo-Indians fear to trust to the general mass of the electorate? Not because they were Anglo-Indian, but because they had not served India. The Parsees did not want any special reservations, simply because they had served India, and were sure to be represented by right of service. The grand-daughters[1]

[1] Perin Captain and Nargis Captain

of Dadabhai Naoroji, brought up in the lap of luxury, had so served India that no one could deny them the right to represent the people. If members of other minorities entered by the open door and served India, they also would be elected. There was no room for those who wanted to maintain special privileges. It was a shame that Englishmen should claim privileges in so poor a country and special seats on a poor people's legislature. Why should they not depend on the vote of Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and everyone to enter the legislature? They need not want to enter by the vote of a handful of Englishmen. The English still had power enough. The Indians still needed their unrivalled skill and faculty for organization, probably their capital; why did they fear for their security? They could live in India in perfect safety. If they asked for a passport of safety, he could understand, but if they asked for a special privilege to enter the legislature, he would not be a party to that guilt. There were not two millions of them. It was a claim that would be rejected before any tribunal of judges. An any rate he would in no case be party to the vivisection of a whole nation.

International Affairs, November 1931

30. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

October 21, 1931

CHI. PREMA,

I have started getting letters from you now. I am eager to reply to them at length, but I have no time for that. Please, therefore, be satisfied with this acknowledgment.

Why do you fear that I would yield on any essential matter?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10265

31. SPEECH AT CHURCH HOUSE[1]

LONDON,

October 21, 1931

I ask all Englishmen to study the case for India and, if they feel that my position is correct, they must render all the assistance they can in order to make the R.T.C. proceed to a successful

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "London Letter". The meeting, presided over by the Archbishop of York, was attended by thirty-two bishops and other church dignitaries.

issue. But I see no hope. Lord Sankey is marking time, and today we are no nearer success, no nearer even to the great issue, viz.,"is or is not India going to get Complete Independence? Is or is not India going to get full control over her defence, finance and external affairs?' We have not even discussed these things. We have been spending all our time in discussing things of a second-rate or even third-rate importance. The communal question, which is said to bar the progress, should not have been used for that purpose.

Young India, 5-11-1931

32. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

LONDON,

[About *October 21, 1931*]

Q. Is it not unfortunate that though you represent a strong body of opinion you are not today the leader of a united India?

A. I am not. But that is because unity is impossible here. Don't you see it is a packed Conference? If we had been asked to elect our own representatives, I should have represented and spoken for them all, excepting, of course, the princes who cannot speak except as vassals of the Government on whose sufferance they live. Whereas, we have here today Mussalmans talking as ultraloyalists who only a little while ago were intolerant even of British connection under any terms.

Q. Then what *The Daily Herald* said is true?

A. No, I think the Prime Minister is right in saying that the Government are not trying deliberately to break up the Conference. But they might have to wind it up for the simple reason that they cannot, in all decency, prolong the agony. For it is nothing less. We have been talking and talking about points which do not touch the fundamentals. What is the use of discussing allocation of finance between the Federation and the Provincial Government, when we do not know what finance we will have, what authority we are going to exercise and what army we shall have to pay for.

Young India, 5-11-1931

[1] Mahadev Desai, from whose "London Letter" the report is extracted, does not mention when or by whom the questions were asked. But he reports it along with the "Speech at Church House", the preceding item.

33. LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL

October 22, 1931

DEAR SIR MIRZA,

It will be a great triumph of yours if you convert Dr. A.[1]Having suffered like him in S. A.[2] , Dr. A. always commands my sympathy in all he says. He needs the gentlest treatment.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From a photostat: G. N. 2188-1

34. INTERVIEW TO "THE STATESMAN"

LONDON,

October 22, 1931

Mr. Gandhi declared that he feared the Conference would fail unless the Government offered a liberal and determined plan, of which up to the present there had been no inkling.

If the Conference fails, I very much fear there will be no choice before the Congress except a revival of the boycott and civil disobedience as early as is necessary.

Mr. Gandhi asserted that the charge that the Government was to blame for the Round Table Conference delays was true, but he was unable to say that the delay began when the Government became a National one.

Asked which was, in his opinion, the best way of arriving at a communal settlement, Mr. Gandhi said it was for the Government to declare that constitutionmaking would proceed irrespective of a settlement of differences, and if a settlement in private was not reached, a judicial tribunal would be appointed to decide the claims of three rival parties.

Mr. Gandhi declared himself completely puzzled how *The Daily Herald* got the information regarding the correspondence between him and the Premier. This correspondence, he stated, was known only to his immediate co-workers, and there must have been a leakage.

In this correspondence he made no charge against Mr. MacDonald of a change of policy.

Commenting on the General Election, the Congress leader said that the

[1] Dr. B. R. Ambedkar
[2] South Africa

absence of any mention of India in election speeches and literature showed that all parties had one policy towards India.

The Statesman, 23-10-1931

35. EXTRACTS FROM PROCEEDINGS OF THE FEDERAL STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING

LONDON,
October 22, 1931

CHAIRMAN : . . . The reason why the States would be willing to go to a Federal Court would be because, in the exercise of their sovereign power, they would consent and confer jurisdiction upon that Court. . . . I only venture to suggest for your consideration, and not for an answer now, that you could, in just the same way as you confer that jurisdiction, by the exercise of your sovereign power, on a new Court like the Federal Court, also confer it on the Privy Council.

MR. GANDHI: I should like to put a question to Sir Mirza Ismail, if I may. Sir Mirza, do you contemplate in any circumstances any right of appeal on the part of the subjects of Indian States to this Federal Court?

SIR MIRZA ISMAIL: I think so, Mahatmaji, In regard to matters arising under the Constitution or federal laws they would, in the ordinary course, have the right of appeal to the highest judicial tribunal competent to deal with such questions. . . .

LORD PEEL: . . . There should, first of all, be a small impartial committee which should investigate the questions connected with the States' contributions, ceded territories, the position of the Maritime States, and so on. Now, the question of the Maritime States need not necessarily be settled, I think, before the Bill becomes an Act; but the other matters—the question of the States' contributions and the ceded territories—have to be gone into, and gone into carefully. The first suggestion is, therefore, that this small impartial Committee shall deal with those problem and, of course report as quickly as possible. . . .

The second Committee suggested to be set up is to some extent varied from the original proposal. It was to be a Committee which should deal with the various problems submitted to it, and might have some freedom even to make alternative suggestions on matters of principle. Well, there was a good deal of anxiety expressed in some quarters that that might, I will not say lead to the tearing-up of the principles set out in the Finance Sub-committee's resport, but at least might give too much latitude to that Committee. The new suggestion cuts down considerably the functions of this Committee, and limits its powers. It is suggested that it should be a fact-finding Committee, to be appointed in India

consisting of officials familiar with questions of finance, including, of course, States' finance. . .

I hope that those suggestions will meet the views which have been expressed by the members of the Committee. I can sum them up very shortly.

There is, first of all, the general acceptance, as a basis for drafting the Bill, of the principles laid down by the Finance Sub-committee. Then there are these two Committees to be set up, the one a small body dealing with the question of the States, and the other a fact-finding Committee which can get to work rapidly and provide the material on which final decisions are taken. Then, before the end of the Conference, the Government must states its proposals and make its own recommedations as to the best method of consulting the parties concerned on the few points which may be left over to be decided after these Committees have reported. . . .

CHAIRMAN: We are very much obliged to Lord Peel. Certainly great strides have been made towards coming to an agreement, and I think the differences have nearly all been composed. I hope we shall do our best to accept that.

SIR AKBAR HYDARI : My lord, I entirely endorse what Lord Peel has said; and this represents what was really in our minds.

DR. AMBEDKAR: I should just like to say one thing. Lord Peel said just now that there was general agreement regarding the principles enunciated in the Report of the Federal Finance Sub-committee Now, whatever may be the view of the other members of the Federal Structure Committee, I should for myself like to make this reservation, that I certainly do not agree with the principles enunciated by the Federal Finance Sub-committee; and I should for myself like to say that I have no objection to the appointment of this Committee, provided it is distinctly understood that the Committee has a right to suggest alterations and amendments of the principles, in order that the future financial system for the Federal Government may be a sound system.

MR. GANDHI: I should like to say a few things, Lord Chancellor, with your permission. I have very serious misgivings about the result of this proposed Committee, although the scope of it has been very considerably altered, and therefore it is less open to objection. I wo uld, however in order not to press my objection at this stage, suggest, along the very lines adumbrated by Lord Peel, that this question might be taken up at a later stage when we are about to gather the loose ends. He says—I think very properly—that His Majesty's Government cannot at the present stage say what would be the machinery adopted in order that the conclusions of the proposed Committee might be examined by some Committee or some body that would be in a way representative of the Round Table Conference. I think that is a very

sound objection. There will, undoubtedly, be several matters left over by the time the deliberations of this Committee and of the Plenary Session of the Round Table Conference are concluded.

If rumour in this case is not baseless, we may hope that Novermber 10th will be the final day of our sitting—I mean the sitting of the Round Table Conference also—and, if that is so and I hope it is so—there could be things left over with regard to certain details, and perhaps also with regard to fundamental principles, for which some machinery will have to be devised. It might then be proper to endorse the appointment of the Committee which Lord Peel suggests, and which His Majesty's Government seem to desire; and, if that is done, my objections need not be pressed. But, at the same time, I should like to state my objection.

As members are aware, on behalf of the Congress there is a claim or demand that there should be an impartial investigation of these obligations, financial and fiscal, that the National Government will be called on to shoulder. It seems to me it would be putting the cart before the horse for me, representing the Congress, to say there should be an allocation of these debts, and that an Expect Committee should be called upon to make that allocation, when I know that, at some stage or other, I would be raising objections to the obligations themselves. If that Committee knew that the obligations were not so formidable as they appear to be today, their allocation would be of a different character; or, if they are absolutely rigid and not a rupee is to be taken away from them,that also would affect the character of the allocation. I have therefore the gravest misgivings as to the results of the deliberations of that Committee,and as to the action that I would then be justified in taking on behalf of the Congress.

My second objection is that this Committee, although its scope will be restricted, will really be doing the work that the National Government or the Federal Government should do. If His Majesty's Government feel insecure as to the ability of the Federal Government to discharge its obligations from the source of revenue that will be accepted as common, surely there are other methods of giving them a sense of security as to the ability of the National Government to cope with the obligations that might legitimately fall on its shoulders. It cannot be done, in my humble opinion, through a Committee of this character.

When I agreed roughly to the source of revenue to be common,

I had in mind undoubtedly that I should be able to press for total repeal of the Salt Tax, merely by way of instance; but I should not in any way bind myself to the other taxes. I know that legally I do not do so; but if there is a recommendation on the part of the Committee,or if there are some calculations based upon the rigidity of the taxes that are enumerated there, I should again feel that I had not done justice to the cause that I represent.

Therefore, for these three reasons, I have very grave misgivings as to giving my consent to the appointment of this Committee and finding myself debarred from raising objections of a fundamental character. So what really would please me, as representing the Congress, is that this matter might be left over entirely for the National Government to investigate and decide. It should be enough just now for His Majesty's Government to know and feel absolutely reassured—and for that they are entitled to any assurance, legal or otherwise, that they may desire—but this delicate thing (to me it is a delicate thing) should be left over to the National Government. For these reasons, if this Committee wishes to express an opinion on the point now instantly, then I must press these objections of mine. Otherwise, in order that we may have an agreed settlement in this matter, I would suggest that the matter may be for the present left over, so that, by the time we approach the end of our labours, we shall all be in a better position to make up our minds. . . .

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU: . . .I take it that what Your Lordship suggests now is that this fact-finding Committee will only find facts in accordance with the principles laid down in the Report?

LORD PEEL: Yes.

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU: Well, if that be so, I have no objection at all; but again I should like, like both Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Jinnah, to be satisfied in regard to the procedure that is to be adopted for coming to final decisions, because I take it, after the point was raised by Mr. Jinnah, that it was not intended to come to any decisions immediately after the Report has been submitted, but to arrive at tentative proposals, and that those tentative proposals will be laid before a Committee or before the whole Conference, or that you will devise some sort of machinery in order to arrive at final decisions. If that be the understanding, then I have no objection at all.

MR. GANDHI: But it is clearly subject to the principles that Lord Peel himself adumbrated.

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU: As regards the other Committee suggested by Lord

Peel, I have no objection to that.

CHAIRMAN: I think the position now is that, thanks to the tact and good sense of the parties, we have arrived at a compromise which is a workable compromise; and we are very much indebted to Lord Peel and those who are asssociated with him for having brought us this happy result. I quite appreciate Mr. Gandhi's caveat, and that will appear in the record of the proceeding; and I also appreciate Dr. Ambedkar's caveat. That, however, does not prevent us at all from accepting this very helpful compromise. We have made a very long step forward towards our future work. We will report in that sense; and let me express, at any rate, my personal thanks and your personal thanks to Lord Peel and the Sub-committee.

Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session): Proceedings of Federal Structure Committee and Minorities Committee, Vol. I, pp. 252-5

36. LETTER TO SIR PHILIP HARTOG

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
October 23, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

Inadvertently, I have no doubt, you have omitted to sign your letter,but as the address is fully given, I am hoping that this letter will reach you.

You will realize that I could not off hand give you the date, but since you would gladly study the whole question, I would find out the numbers of *Young India* in which the articles[1] appeared and send the references to you. I shall also find out what is possible to prove with reference to other Provinces, apart from the deductions that I have drawn from the Punjab. Meanwhile, I have no difficulty in drawing the deduction for the rest of the Provinces from the examples of the Punjab and Burma. Whatever may be the strides made by the Punjab during the past five or ten years cannot affect the argument that I have advanced to you.

About Kashmir, as I said in reply, mine was merely a conjecture, but since you are so interested in the question, I shall try and find out the true state of education in Kashmir.

You are quite right in feeling certain that, if there were any error

[1] Quoting figures from a Punjab Administration Report concerning education in the Punjab; *vide* "Speech at Chatham House", pp. 193-206. The addressee had questioned Gandhiji's assertion that "literacy had diminished in British India in the last fifty years."

in my reasoning or the facts that I stated, I should immediately correct them, and whilst I should try to verify more fully the statements that I made, you will also on your part oblige me by giving me such information as may be in your possession and as may help me to understand the truth.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 9395. Courtesy: India Office Library

37. INTERVIEW TO REUTER

LONDON,
October 23, 1931

Mr. Gandhi special interview by Reuter today with reference to a report published in London that he had cabled to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru that nothing could be expected from the Round Table Conference,[1] said that that was his feeling, but it must be remembered that his cable was reply to Pandit Jawaharlal's cable giving a graphic descrption of the agrarian situation in the United Provinces and he was referring to that matter.

Asked by Reuter whether the interpretation could be given to his cable that he was not giving the Round Table Conference a chance of success, Mr. Gandhi said that there was evidently some misconception. His cable to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had nothing to do with the proceedings of the Round Table Conference and referred only to the situation in the United Provinces.

At any rate, as far as he was concerned, Mr, Gandhi was giving the Conference every chance possible for him to give. He was endeavouring to help where he could, putting no hindrance in the way. If the Conference failed, it would fail because of its inherent weakness and because, as he had pointed out, the British Government was not responding to the Congress claim.

The Hindu, 24-10-1931

[1] *Vide* "Cable to Jawaharlal Nehru", 16-10-1931

38. EXTRACTS FROM PROCEEDINGS OF THE FEDERAL STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING

LONDON,
October 23, 1931

MR. GANDHI : Lord Chancellor and fellow Delegates, I feel considerable hesitation in speaking on this subject[1] , which has been rendered so highly technical by the course that the discussion has taken; but I feel that I owe a duty to you and a duty to the Congress which I represent. I know that the Congres hold some decided views on the question of the Federal Court—views which would be, I am afraid, very distasteful to a large number of the Delegates here. Whatever they are, seeing that they are held by responsible body, It is, I suppose, necessary that I should at least present them to you.

I see that the discussions are based, if not upon utter distrust, upon considerable distrust of ourselves—that the National Govern ment will not be able to conduct its affairs in an impartial manner. This communal tangle also is colouring the discussion. The Congress, on the other hand, bases the whole of its policy on trust and on confidence that, when we have come to power, we shall also come to a sense of our responsibility, and all the communal bias will drop out. But should it prove otherwise, then, too, the Congress would run the boldest risks imaginable because, without running those risks, we shall not be able to exercise real responsibility. So long as we have the mental reservation that we have to rest upon some foreign power for our guidance and for conducting our affairs at a critical juncture, so long, in my opinion, there is no responsibility.One feels also embarrassed by the fact that we really are trying to discuss this thing without knowing where we shall be. I should give one opinion if Defence was not under the control of the responsible to Government, and another opinion if Defence was under our own control. I proceed upon the assumption that, if we are to enjoy responsibility in the real sense of the term, Defence will be under our control—under national control in every sense of the term.

I entirely sympathize with Dr. Ambedkar in the difficulty that he raised. It is all very well to have a judgment of the highest tribunal; but if the writ of that tribunal does not run beyond the confines of its

[1] The Federal Court

own Court, that tribunal will be laughing-stock of the nation and of the whole world. What is then to be done in connection with that writ? What Mr. Jinnah said, of course came home—that the military would be there; but it will be the Crown that will run the writ. Then I would say, let the High Court also, or the Federal Court, be under the Crown. In my opinion, the Supreme Court has to be, if we are responsible, under the responsible Government; and therefore the process of carrying out the writ has also to be made good by the responsible Government. Personally, I do not share the fears that actuate Dr. Ambedkar; but I think that his objection is a very reasonable objection, and that a Court which gives judgments should also have perfect confidence that its judgements will be respected by those who are affected by its judgments. Hence I would suggested that the Judges should have the power of framing rules in order to regulate matters in connection with those judgments. Naturally the enforcement will not rest with the Court—the enforcement will rest with the executive authority; but the executive authority would have to conform to the rules that might be framed by the Court.

Somehow or other we fancy that this Consitution is going to give us every detail in connection with the composition of this Court. I respectfully differ from that view in its entirety. I think that this Constitution will give us the framework of the Federal Court and will define the jurisdiction of the Federal Court, but the rest will be left to the Federal Government to evolve. I can not possibly understand that the Constitution is also going to tell us how many years the Judges are to serve, or whether they are to resign or retire at the age of 70 or 95 or 90 or 65. I think that these will be matters to be taken up by the Federal Court; hence I propose a drastic method, for what it may be worth, that the Constitution will give us, to start with, the Judges, and these Judges will serve for a fixed, definite period, so that the responsible Government might not have to shoulder the burden of a Federal Court or a Supreme Court, whatever we choose to call it, which may not answer the needs of the country.

We bring in the Crown at the end of almost every sentence. I must confess that, according to the conception of the Congress, there is no question of the Crown. India desires complete inde pendence; and if India enjoys complete independence, whoever the supreme authority there may be, that supreme authority will be responsible for the appointment of Judges and several other matters which today belong to the Crown.

It is a fundamental belief with the Congress that, whatever the course the Constitution takes, there should be our own Privy Council in India. The Privy Council's portals, if it is really to give relief to the poor people in matters of the highest importance, should be open to the poorest people in the land, and I think that is impossible if the English Privy Council is to decide our fate in matters of the greatest importance. There, too, I would guide ourselves by implicit trust in the ability of our Judge to pronounce wise and absolutely impartial decisions. I know that, in making great changes, we run always very great risks. The Privy Council here is an ancient institution, and an institution which justly commands very great regard and respect; but, in spite of all the respect that I have for the Privy Council, I cannot bring myself to believe that we will not be able to have a Privy Council of our own which will command universal esteem. Because England can boast of very fine institutions, I do not think that therefore we must be tied down to those institutions. If we are to learn anything whatever from England, we should learn to erect those institutions ourselves. Otherwise there is a poor chance for this nation whose representatives we claim to be. Therefore, I would ask us all to have sufficient trust and confidence in ourselves at the present moment. Our beginning may be very small, but if we have strong, true and honest hearts to give decisions, it does not matter in the slightest degree that we have not got the legal traditions which the Judges in England claim and very properly boast of before the whole world.

That being my view, I feel that this Federal Court should be a Court of the widest jurisdiction possible, and not decide cases only that arise from the administration of federal laws. Federal laws, of course, will be there, but it should have the amplest jurisdiction to try all the cases that may come from the four corners of diction to try all the cases that may come from the four corners of India. It is, then, a question where the subjects of the Princes will be and where they will come in. Subject to what the Princes may have to say, I would suggest, with the greatest defence and with equal hesitation, that there will be, I hope, at the end of it—if we are going to make something out of this Conference—something which will be common to all India, to all the inhabitants of India, whether they come from the States or whether they come from the rest of India. If there is something in common between all of us, naturally the Supreme Court will be the guardian of the rights that we may consider to be common to all.

What those rights should be, I am totally unable to say. It is entirely for the Princes to say what they can be and what they cannot be. In view of the fact that they represent here not only their own Houses but have taken on themselves the tremendous responsibility of representing their subjects also at this Conference, I would certainly make a humble but fervent appeal to them that they would of their own accord come forth with some scheme whereby their subjects also may feel that, though they are not directly represented at this table, their voices will find adequate expression through these noble Princes themselves.

So far as the salary is concerned, you will laugh, naturally, but the Congress does believe that it is an impossible thing for the Congress,which represents a nation of dwarfs, to vie with the English nation, which represents today giants in wealth. India, whose average income is 2d. per day, can ill afford to pay the high salaries that are commanded here. I feel that it is a thing which we will have to unlearn if we are going to have voluntary rule in India. It is all very well, so long as the British bayonet is there, to squeeze out of these poor people salaries of Rs. 10,000 a month or salaries of Rs. 5,000 a month or salaries of Rs. 20,000 a month. I do not consider, however, that my country has sunk to such an extent that it will not be able to produce sufficient men who will live somewhat in correspondence with the lives of the millions and still serve India nobly, truly and well. I do not believe for one moment that legal talent has to be bought if it is to remain honest. I recall the names of Motilal Nehru, C. R. Das, Manomohan Ghosh, Badruddin Tyabji and a host of others, who gave their legal talent absolutely free of charge and served their country faithfully and well. The taunt may be flung in my face that they did so because they were able to charge princely fees in their own professional work. I reject that argument, for the simple reason that I have known every one of them with the exception of Manomohan Ghosh. It was not that they had plenty of money and therefore gave freely of their talent when India required it. It had no connection with their ability to have ease and luxury. I have seen them living the life of poor people and in perfect contentment. I can point out to you several lawyers of distinction who, if they had not come to the national cause, would today be occupying seats on the High Court Benches in all parts of India. I have therefore absolute confidence that, when we come to conduct our own affairs and so on, we will do so in a patriotic spirit and taking account of the miserable state that the millions of India occupy.

One word more and I have finished. Seeing that the Congress

holds the view that this Federal Court or Supreme Court—whichever you call it—will occupy the position of the highest tribunal beyond which no man who is an inhabitant of India can go, its jurisdiction in my opinion will be limitless. It will have jurisdiction, so far as federal matters are concerned, to the extent that the Princes are also willing; but I cannot possibly imagine that we shall have two Supreme Courts—one in order to deal with merely federal law and another to deal with all the other matters that are not covered by the federal administration or the Federal Government. because at the present moment, I suppose, as things go, the Federal Government will concern itself with the minimum subjects, matters of the highest moment will be extrafederal. Who is to adjudicate upon these extrafederal matters if not this very Supreme Court? Therefore, this Supreme Court or Federal Court will exercise double jurisdiction, if necessary treble jurisdiction. The greater the power that we give to this Federal Court, I think, the greater the confidence we shall be able to inspire in the world and also in the nation itself.

I am sorry to have taken up these precious minutes of the time of the Conference, but I felt that, in spite of my great reluctance to speak to you on this Federal Court, I must give you the views that many of us in the Congress have been holding for a large number of years, and which we would, if we could, spread throughout the length and breadth of India. I know the terrible handicap under which I am labouring. All the most distinguished lwyers are arrayed against me; the Princes also probably arrayed against me so far as the salaries and jurisdiction of this Court are concerned. But I would be guilty of neglect of duty to the Congress and to you if I did not give you the views that the Congress and I hold so strongly on the matter of the Federal Court.

CHAIRMAN: We are much obliged to Mahatma Gandhi for so very frankly and so very fearlessly expressing his view. We are here to exchange views and to hear arguments upon them; that is the object of the Conference. If he will allow me to say so, when you know what a man wants, you can do your best to meet him, and he will no doubt do his best to meet you. The difficulty is to negotiate with a man who does not know what he wants. I am very much obliged to Mr. Gandhi for putting his views before us like that. It will always be my ambition to try and go as far as possible to meet them, and, indeed, as far as possible to meet anybody's views. I am sure we shall have that spirit of accommodation all round the Federal Structure Committee. Meanwhile, let me express my personal thanks to Mr. Gandhi for putting before us so very frankly and so very fearlessly what his views upon this subject are.

MR. JINNAH: Mahatma Gandhi made a reference to what I said. I did not quite catch that.

MR. GANDHI: You see, you put Dr. Ambedkar in a quandary by saying what should happen, and Dr. Ambedkar was afraid of the logical consequences of his own remarks. Therefore, I simply brought your name in and said that, if India is divided into parts, one governed by the Crown and the other governed by herself, we are likely to fall between two stools.

MR. JINNAH: I did not express any opinion.

MR. GANDHI: No, I know you did not express any opinion; but you said: "I assume that Defence is a Crown subject."

MR. JINNAH: I did not say "I assume". I said that, so far as the report of the Federal Structure Committee has gone, it is assumed that Defence is a Crown subject. I expressed no opinion.

MR. GANDHI: That is right.

Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session): Proceedings of Federal Structure Committee and Minorities Committee, Vol. I, pp. 267-8

39. SPEECH AT GATHERING OF SCHOOLBOYS[1]

ETON,

[*October 23, 1931*][2]

You occupy a big place in England. Some of you will become prime ministers and generals in future and I am anxious to enter your hearts whilst your character is still being moulded and whilst it is easy yet to enter your hearts. I should place before you cer tain facts as opposed to the false history traditionally imparted to you. Among high officialsI find ignorance, meaning not absence of knowledge but knowledge based on false data, and I want you to have true data beforeyou as I think of you, ot as Empirebuilders, but as members of a nation which will have ceased exploting other nations and become the guardian of the peace of the world, not by force of arms but by its moral strength. Well, then, I tell you that there is nothing like a Hindu case,[3] at least so far as I am concerned, for in the

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's report: "The Week-end at Eton and Oxford: Among Future Empire-Builders".

[2] Gandhiji in his diary says that he went to Eton on this date in the evening and addressed a meeting of youths.

[3] Gandhiji had been asked to present the Hindu case just as "Mr. Shaukat Ali gave us the Muslim case".

matter of my country's freedom I am no more a Hindu than you are. There is a Hindu case put by the Hindu Mahasabha representatives who claim to represent the Hindu mind, but who, in my opinion, do not do so. They will have a national solution of the question, not because they are nationalists but because it suits them. I call that destructive tactics,and am pleading with them that, representing as they do the great majority, they must step out and give to the smaller communities what they want, and the atmosphere would be as clear as if by magic. What the vast mass of Hindus feel and want nobody knows, but claiming as I do to have moved amongst them all these years, I think they do not care for these pettifogging things, they are not troubled by the question of loaves and fishes in the shape of electoral seats and administrative posts. This bugbear of communalism is confined largely to the cities which are not India, but which are the blotting sheets of London and other Western cities which consciously or unconsciously prey upon villages and share with you in exploiting them by becoming the commission agents of England. This communal question is of no importance before the great question of Indian freedom of which the British ministers are studiously fighting shy. They forget that they cannot go on for long with a discontented rebellious India—true, ours is a non-violent rebellion, but it is rebellion none the less. Freedom of India is superior to the disease which for the time is corroding some portions of the community, and if the contitutional question is satisfactorily solved, the communal distemper will immediately vanish. The moment the alien wedge is removed the divided communities are bound to unite. There is therefore no Hindu case, and if there is one it must go by the board. If you study this question, it will profit you nothing and when you go into its exasperating details you will, very likely, prefer to see us drowned in the Thames.

I am telling you God's truth when I say that the communal question does not matter and should not worry you at all. But, if you will study history, study the much bigger question: How did millions of people make up their minds to adopt non-violence and how they adhered to it? Study, not man in his animal nature, man following the law of the jungle, but study man in all his glory. Those engaged in communal squabbles are like specimens in a lunatic asylum. But study men laying down their lives, without hurting anyone, in the cause of their country's freedom. Study man in his glory, man following the law of his higher nature, the law of love, so that when you grow to manhood you will have improved your heritage. It can be no pride to you that your nation is ruling over

ours. No one chained a slave without chaining himself. And no nation kept another in subjection without herself turning into a subject nation. It is a most sinful connection, a most unnatural connection that is existing at present between England and India and I want you to bless our mission because we are naturally entitled to our freedom which is our birthright and we are doubly entitled to it by virtue of the penance and suffering we have undergone. I want you, when you grow up, to make a unique cotribution to the glory of your nation, by emancipating it from its sin of exploitation, and thus contrubute to the progress of mankind.

The other question was what would happen to India with the rapacious Princes when the Englishmen retire from India. Gandhiji assured the young men there was no danger from the Princes, but if they ran amok, they were easier to deal with than Englishmen, that their very weakness would prevent them from doing any mischief, and that India's glory would lie, not in driving out the English, but in converting them from exploiters into friends, remaining there to protect India's honour in time of need.

Young India, 12-11-1931

40. NOTE FOR MIRZA ISMAIL

[On or after *October 23, 1931*][1]

It will be a glorious thing if the question can be satisfactorily settled.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: G. N. 2188-9

[1] This was written on a letter dated October 23 from the addressee, which read:"I saw the Aga Khan last night. He said that he was meeting the Muslim Delegation on Monday and that he would mention the matter to them and let me know how they viewed it. . . . I feel hopeful that a satisfactory settlement of the vexed question may soon be reached."

41. SPEECH AT INDIAN MAJLIS[1]

OXFORD,
October 24, 1931

Muslims and Sikhs are all well organized. The untouchables are not. There is very little political consciousness among them and they are so horribly treated that I want to save them against themselves. If they had separate electorates, their lives would be miserable in villages which are the strongholds of Hindu orthodoxy. It is the superior class of Hindus who have to do penance for having neglected the untouchables for ages. That penance can be done by active social reform and by making the lot of the untouchables more bearable by acts of service, but not by asking for separate electorates for them. By giving them separate electorates you will throw the apple of discord between the untouchables and the orthodox. You must understand I can tolerate the proposal for special representation of the Mussalmans and the Sikhs only as a necessary evil. It would be a positive danger for the untouchables. I am certain that the question of separate electorates for the untouchables is a modern manufacture of a Satanic Government. The only thing needed is to put them on the voters' list, and provided for fundamental rights for them in the Constitution. In case they are unjustly treated and their representative is deliberately excluded they would have the right to special election triubunal which would give them complete protection. It should be open to these tribunals to order the unseating of an elected candidate and election of the excluded man.

Separate electorates to the untouchables will ensure them bondage in perpetuity. The Mussalmans will never cease to be Mussalmans by having separate electorates. Do you want the untouchables to remain untouchables for ever? Well, the sepa rate electorates would perpetaute the stigma. What is needed is destruction of untouchability and when you have done it, the bar sinister which has been imposed by an insolent "superior" class upon an "inferior" class will be destroyed. When you have destroy ed the bar sinister, to whom will you give the separate electorates?

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's report: "The Week-end at Eton and Oxford: Among Future Empire-Builders". Desai says the report has been "amplified by what he said about the same thing on other occasions".

Look at the history of Europe. Have you got separate electorates for the working classes or women? With adult franchise, you give the untouchables complete security. Even the orthodox Hindus would have to approach them for votes.

How, then, you ask, does Dr. Ambedkar, their representative insist on separate electorates for them? I have the highest regard for Dr. Ambedkar. He has every right to be bitter. That he does not break our heads is an act of self-restraint on his part. He is today so very much saturated with suspicion that he cannot see anything else. He sees in every Hindu a determined opponent of the untouchables, and it is quite natural. The same thing hapened to me in my early days in South Africa where I was hounded out by the Europeans wherever I went. It is quite natural for him to vent his wrath. But the separate electorates that he seeks will not give him social reform. He may himself mount to power and poition, but nothing good will accrue to the untouchables. I can say all this with authority, having lived with the untouchables and having shared their joys and sorrows all these years.

Q. Do you still believe in the good faith of England?

A. I believe in the good faith of England to the extent that I believe in the good fait hof human nature. I believe that the sum total of the energy of mankind is not to bring us down but to lift us up, and that is the result of the definite, if unconcious, working of the law of love. The fact that mankind persists shows that the cohesive force is greater than the disruptive force, centripetal force greater than centrifugal. And inasmuch as I know only of the poetry of love, you should not be surpirsed that I trust the English people. I have often been bitter and I have often said to myself, "When will this comou-flage and? When will these people ceases to exploit these poor peoples?" But instinc tively I get the reply: "That is the heritage that they have had from Rome."I must conduct myself in accordance with the dictates of the law of the love, hoping and expecting in the long run to affect the English nature.

Q. What is your view about the industrialization of India?

A. Industrialism is, I am afraid, going to be a curse for mankind. Exploitation of one nation by another cannot go on for all time. Industrialism depends entirely on your capacity to exploit, on foreign markets being open to you, and on the ab sence of competitors. It is because these factors are getting less and

less every day for England that its number of unemployed is mounting up daily. The Indian boycott was but a fleabite. And if that is the state of England, a vast country like India cannot expect to benefit by industrialization. In fact, India, when it begins to exploit other nations—as it must if it becomes industrialized—will be a curse for other nations, a menace to the world. And why should I think of industrializing India to exploit other nations? Don't you see the tragedy of the situation, viz., that we can find work for our 300 millions unemployed, but England can find none for its three millions and is faced with a problem that baffles the greatest intellects of England? The future of industrialism is dark. England has got succesful competitiors in America, Japan, France, Germany. It has competitors in the handful of mills in India, and as there has been an awakening in India, even so there will be an awakening in South Africa with its vastly richer resources—natural, mineral and human. The mighty English look quite pigmies before the mighty races of Africa. They are noble savages after all, you will say. They are certainly noble, but no savages and in the course of few years the Western nations may cease to find in Africa a dumping ground for their wares. And if the future of industrialism is dark for the West, would it not be darker still for India?

Q. What do you think of the I.C.S.?

A. The I. C. S. is not really the Indian Civil Service, it is the E. C. S., the English Service. I say this knowing that there are Indians in the Service. Whilst India is a subject nation they cannot but serve the interests of England. But supposing India secures freedom and supposing able Englishmen are prepared to serve India, then they would be truly national servants. At the present time, under the name of I.C.S. they serve the exploiting Government. In a free India, Englishmen will come out to India either in a spirit of adventure, or from penance and willingly serve on a small salary and put up with the rigours of indian climate, instead of being a burden on poor India whilst they draw inordinately large salaries and try to live there in extra English extravagance and reproduce even the English climate. We would have them as honoured comrades, but if there is even a lurking desire to lord it over us and behave as a superior race, they are not wanted.

Q. Do you say that you are completely fit for independence?

A If we are not, we will try to be. But the question of fitness

does not arise, for the simple reason that those who have robbed us of independence have to render it back. Supposing you repented of your conduct, you can express your repentance only by leaving us alone.

Q. But why not Dominion Status? The fact is that the English understand what Dominion Status means. They don't know what is partnership, whereas Dominion Status means very nearly what you want. Why not accept it, if it is offered, as the Irish accepted the Free State status of their own accord. Does your partnership mean anything more than that?

A. present the case to me, let me examine the contents and if I find that Dominion Status that you present is the same thing as Independence, I shall accept it at once. But I must throw the burden of proving it on those who say that Dominion Status is the same as Independence.

Young India, 12-11-1931

42. TALK AT OXFORD[1]

OXFORD,
October 24, 1931

Sir Gilbert Murray. . . seemed to be very much perturbed over what he thought were most dangerous manifestation of non-violent revolution and nationalism. "I find myself today in greater disagreement with you than even Mr. Winston Churchill", he said. Gandhiji said:

You want co-operation between nations for the salvaging of civilization. I want it too, but co-operation presupposes free nations worthy of co-operation. If I am to help in creating or restoring peace and goodwill and resist disturbances thereof I must have ability to do so and I a cannot do so unless my country has come to its own. At the present moment, the very movement for freedom in India is India's contrubution to peace. For so long as India is a subject nation, not only she is a danger to peace, but also England which exploits India. Other nations may tolerate today England's Imperialist policy and her exploitation of other nations, but they certainly do not appreciate it; and the would gladly help in the prevention of England becoming a greater and grea ter menace every day. Of course you will

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's report: "The Week-end at Eton and Oxford: Among Future Empire-Builders". Those present at the talk included Dr. Gilbert Murray, Dr. Gilbert Slater, Prof. Reginald Coupland and Dr. Datta.

say that India free can become a menance herself. But let us assume that she will be have herself with her doctrine of non-violence, if she achieves her freedom through it, and for all her bitter experience of being a victim to exploitation.

The objection about my talking in terms of revolution is largely answered by what I have already said about nationalism. But my movement is conditioned by one great and disturbing factor. You might of course say that there can be no non-violent rebellion and there has been none known to history. Well, it is my ambition to provide an instance, and it is my dream that my country may win its freedom through non-violence. And, I would like to repeat to the whole world times without number that I will not purchase my country's freedom at the cost of non-violence. My marriage with non-violence is such an absolute thing that I would rather commit suicide than be deflected from my position. I have not mentioned truth in this connection, simply because truth cannot be expressed except by non-violence. So, if you accept the conception, my position is sound. . . .

You may be justified in saving that I must go more warily, but if you attack the fundamentals, you have to convince me. And I must tell you that the boycott may have nothing to do with nationalism even. It may be a question of pure reform, as without being intensely nationalistic, we can refuse to purchase your cloth and make our own. A reformer cannot always afford to wait. If he does not put into force his belief he is no reformer. Either he is too hasty or too afraid or too lazy. Who is to advise him or provide him with a barometer? You can only guide yourself with a disciplined conscience, and then run all risks with the protecting armour of truth and non-violence. A reformer could not do otherwise.

Q. Would not India wait some time before she launched on the difficult task of self-government? If we send out our soldiers, we have to be responsible for their lives, and so may it not be that the sooner you get an Indian army the better? The Muslim community said last year in a united voice that they did not want responsibility at the centre. How are we to judge?

A. The long and the short of it is that you will not trust us. Well, give us the liberty to make mistakes. If we cannot handle our affairs today, who is to say when we will be able to do so? I do not want you to determine the pace. Consciously or unconsciously you adopt the role of divinity. I ask you for a moment to come down form that pedestal. Trust us to ourselves. I cannot imagine anything

worse happening than is happening today, a whole humanity lying prostrate at the feet of a small nation.

And what is this talk of being responsible for the lives of your soldiers. I issue a notice to all foreigners to enlist for military service in India, and if some Britishers will come, will you prevent them? If they will enlist, we should be responsible for their lives, as any other Government whom they serve would be. The key to self-government is without doubt the control of the army.

As regards a united demand, I must say, what I have now said several times that you cannot have a united demand from a packed Conference. It is my case that the Congress represents the largest number of Indians. The British Ministers know it. If they do not know it, I must go back to my country and have as overwhelming an opinion as possible. We had a life-and-death struggle. One of the noblest of Englishmen[1] tried us and did not find us wanting. In consequence he opened the jail gates and appealed to the Congress to go to the Round Table Conference. We had long talks and negotiations during which we exercised the greatest patience and there was a Settlement under which the Congress agreed to be represented on the Round Table Conference. The Settlement was respected by Government more in its breach than its observance, and after much hesitation I agreed to come, if only to keep my word of honour given to that Englishman. On coming here I find that I had miscalculated the forces arrayed against India and the Congress. But that does not dismay me. I must go and quality myself and prove by suffering that the whole country wants what it asks for . Hunter has said that success on the battle-field was the shortest cut to power. Well, we worker for success on a different battle-field. I am trying to touch your heart instead of your body. If I do not succeed this time, I shall succeed next time.

Young India, 12-11-1931

[1] Lord Irwin, as Viceroy of India

43. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

OXFORD,
October 24, 1931

Q. How far would you cut India off from the Empire?

A. From the Empire entirely; from the British nation not at all, if I want India to gain and not to grieve. The British Empire is an Empire only because of India. That Emperorship must go and I should love to be equal partner with Britain, sharing her joys and sorrows and equal partner with all Dominions. But it must be a partnership on equal terms.

Q. To what extent would India be prepared to share the sorrows of England?

A. To the fullest extent.

Q. Do you think India would unite her fortunes inextricably with England?

A. Yes, so long as she remains a partner. But if she discovers that the partnership is lke one between a giant and a dwarf, or if it is utilized for exploitation of the other races of the earth, she would dissolve it. The aim is the common good of all nations of the earth and, if it cannot be achieved, I have patience enough to wait for ages rather than patch up an unreal partnership.

Q. How would you distinguish exploitation from trading with a nation?

A. There are two tests: (1) The other nation must want our goods which should in no case be dumped on it against her will. (2) The trade should not be backed by the navy. And whilst in this connection I may say that, when you realize what wrong has been done by England to nations like us Indians, you will not sing *Britannia rules the waves* with any kind of pride. Things, in English Readers, which are matter for pride today, will have to be matters for shame, and you will have to cease to take any pride over the defeat or humiliation of other nations.

Q. How far is the British attitude towards the communal question an obstacle in your path?

A. Largely, or I should say half and half. There has been consciously or unconsciously that policy of divide and rule working

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's report: "The Week-end at Eton and Oxford: Among Future Empire-Builders". The questions were put to Gandhiji at a meeting at the Raleigh Club.

here as in india. The British officials have sometimes coquetted with one party, sometimes with another. Of course, if I were a British officail, I would probably do the same and take advantage of dissensions to consolidate the rule. Our share of responsibility lies in the fact that we fall easy victims to the game.

Q. You think the British Government should suggest a solution of the communal question?

A. No, But I am the only party to say no. It is a humiliating thing and neither the Congress nor I can be party to it. But I have suggested a judicial tribunal. There are some committals on the side of Government in Government of India and Provincial Government dispatches, though all Government solutions are tinged by political considerations. As for us, each party, though talking of justice, fights shy of arbitration, which shows that there is a good deal of expediency and it is a question of degree who is wrong and who is right. The judicial tribunal can certainly be trusted to adjudicate between the various claims.

Q. Could you tell us anything about the personnel?

A. They may be non-Hindu and non-Muslim judges of the Indian High Courts or judges from the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

Q. Would their decision be accepted?

A. There can be no question of accepting the decision of a Court. I may confess that there is a trick at the back of the suggestion. If Government will play the game and adopt my suggestion, the whole atmosphere will change and before the judicial Committee comes into being the communities will come out with a solution. For, there is sufficient material in the advances already made to satisfy the politically-minded and each one knows the flaws in his own claim.

Young India, 12-11-1931

44. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

[On or after *October 24, 1931*][2]

Q. Why do Hindus want joint electorates?

A. Because they are foolish. They can take the wind out of the sails of Mussalmans by immediately giving them separate electorates and leaving them wondering whether there may not be after all something sinister in the separate electorates.

Q. Why are you so uncharitable to those who drink?

A. Because I am charitable to those who suffer from the effects of the curse.

Q. Do you ever suffer from nerves?[3]

A. Ask Mrs. Gandhi. She will tell you that I am on my best behaviour with the world but not with her.

Well, my husband is on his best behaviour with me.

Then I am sure that Mr. Miles has bribed you heavily.

Q. Is not the charkha a mediaeval device?

A. We were doing many things in the middle ages which were quite wise. But if most of us have given them up, why accuse me of my wisdom? However mediaeval the device may be, I am not ashamed of adding thereby fifty per cent to the income of my impoverished villagers. During the War you produced potatoes and fashionable ladies of Lyceum Club invited men to stitch sleeping-suits for the soldiers with plain needle and thread. Was it not mediaeval? Well, I learnt the mediaeval trick from the ladies of the Lyceum Club.

Q. What is the chief obstacle in the way swaraj?

A. It is the unwillingness of the British officials to part with power; or our incapacity to wrest power from unwilling hands. Well, you feel sorry that I have not given you the expected reply. I want you to understand that we can wrest power in spite of our disunion, and if the hands which have to yield power were willing, our disunion would soon disappear. You say the British are impartial on lookers! Well, I have had the audacity of accusing the Government of India of

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "London Letter"

[2] Desai has reported together answers given on different dates. But the first question, he says, was asked by some students at Oxford, where he was on October 24.

[3] The question was put by Mrs. Eustace. Miles.

acting like a wedge and of accusing the British Government with having appointed a packed conference. We have our own communal solution arrived at by the Congress with enlightened Mussalmans. But, if unfortunately, some Mussalmans claiming to represent a majority are not satisfied, and because of that the Government will say that they would hold on the chains they have thrown round us, I say that we shall simultaneously strike a blow to break both the chain and the disunion.

Young India. 12-11-1931

45. LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL[1]

[After *October 24, 1931*][2]

DEAR SIR MIRZA,

Many thanks for the cutting[3] which I have read. I hope you[r] effort with Dr. Ambedkar will prevail. It was a joy to me to meet Humayun at Oxford. I wish I could have seen more of him.

Yours,

M. K. G.

From a photostat: G.N. 2188-5

46. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

October 26, 1931

CHI. MANI,

I continue to get your letters. Do not stop writing because I cannot send any reply. Nowadays I have simply not the time to write letters. Today I am utilizing a few minutes snatched out of the Conference sessions.

I was delighted to learn that Dahyabhai had recovered. Convey my good wishes to him and Yashoda.

[1] This was in reply to Mirza Ismail's undated note which read: "May I request you to glance through this cutting, especially the para I have marked, May I have it back so that I may show it to Dr. Ambedkar and a few others in corroboration of what I have been telling them"

[2] From the references to the visit to Oxford

[3] Not available

Ask Laskhmidas[1] and Manjubehn[2] to write to me. I think we shall be in England till at least one more mail steamer arrives.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 79-80

47. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

LONDON,
October 26, 1931

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I simply get no time to write letters. I am writing even this letter while attending the meeting of the Federal Committee. You ought to take some treatment for your nose. All my work here is done outside the Conference. It may not yield immediate results, but I believe it will have very good results afterwards. I have very little hope of returning with anything substantial. However, I will not return with dishonour. I have been meeting many responsible men.

The work of the Conference is likely to be over by the middle of November. I have invitations from nearly all over Europe. I am very eager to visit all those countries. I think my visiting them can do nothing but good. Meet all the people and cable to me your decisions. If you think it necessary that I should undertake the tour, you may take it that I shall be away a month longer. That is, I can reach India not earlier than in January. (Having written so far, I started dozing in the chair. As you can see, the pen refused to proceed further.) If you can spare me for so long, do so. In India you may do what you think best. You must have seen my reply[3] to Jawaharlal's cable. Irrespective of what happens here, I am convinced that, if it becomes necessary to fight the Government there on any issue, you should do so. I see no possibility of anything being done here just now concerning local issues. I had thought that somet hing could be done about the Bengal detenus, but I got no opportunity to do anything. I can't say if anything can be done after the election.

[1] Lakhmidas Asar
[2] Manjubehn Mashruwala
[3] *Vide* "Cable to Jawaharlal Nehru", 16-10-1931

I see that in Gujarati the authorities are violating the Settlement in everything they do. Fight against all their decisions. The reply that has been received concerning Ras seems to me insolent. I am confident that we shall be able to fight it out with the Government on all these issues.

I think I have written enough.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 15-6

48. LETTER TO LADY EVE CRERAR

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
October 27, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

You will please forgive me for being so long answering your letter. The fact is that I have been overwhelmed with work, and your letter lay buried in the pile of arears. It was rescused today, and I am now sending you the cards duly autographed.

Yours sincerely,

LADY EVE CRERAR
CLONSKEAGH
ROTHERFIELD
SUSSEX

From a photostat: S. N. 18184

49. LETTER TO EVELYN WRENCH

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
October 27, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. The friend who writes to you has evidently missed the mark. The Congress is the Moderate Party. There is no such thing as an extreme demand. "Indepen dence" is not an extreme demand, but it is the only selfres pecting, logical and consistent demand. Moderation is in the method. Congress eshews violence in any shape or form. There is

undoubtedly a party in India which does not want independence because it fears it, but that is a constitutional disease. Those who are not suffering from that disease naturally want their digestive apparatus craves for. Nobody would call that an extreme craving, nor expect the man with a vigorous appetite to be satisfied with one [*sic*] who has all but lost it.

The friend is again wrong when he talks about meeting English sacrifice with Indian sacrifice. I am reminded of a striking sentence of Dr. Chalmers: "Duty will be merit when debt becomes a donation." I hold that it is the duty of England to return to India what she has taken away from her. There is no sacrifice in the discharge of that obligation. But so long as Englishmen believe that, whatever measure of freedom England grants means so much sacrifice on the part of England, so long will there be no meeting ground between the two countries, because England will not be able to come up to India's credit balance against England.

I do not know whether I have made my meaning quite clear. If I have not, you will please state difficulty and I shall endeavour to make it clear.

Yours sincerely,

EVELYN WRENCH, ESQ.

99 GOWER STREET, W.C.1

From a photostat: S. N. 18181

50. LETTER TO A. CARLYLE WALSH

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,

LONDON, W.,

October 27, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

The pamphlets[1] written by your late father have been, I see, already acknowledge. I heard of your father's love for India whilst I was in the jail last year.

[1] One of the pamphlets written by Walker Walsh, addressee's father, was *Gandhi and Free India*.

Though so late in the day, I would like to convey my res pectful condolence to your mother. I would also like to make your acquaintance if you could make time to see me—say Tuesday next, between 9 and 9.30 a.m. at the above address.

Yours sincerely,

A. CARLYLE WALSH, ESQ.
NORTHAM
ATHENAFEUM ROAD
WHETSTONE, N. 20

From a photostat: S. N. 18182

51. NOTE TO MIRZA ISMAIL[1]

[About *October 28, 1931*][2]

This won't do. The draft refers to all other matters. What is wanted is that all matters must be under the control of a cabinet that is wholly responsible.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: G. N. 21884

52. LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL

[About *October 28, 1931*][3]

DEAR SIR MIRZA,

Your draft is defective. My own draft is with them. Here it is.

1. Complete Independence not to exclude partnership at will and on terms of absolute equality.

2. Therefore complete control of defence forces, external affairs and finance.

[1] This was written on the following note from the addressee: "The Moslems will fully associate themselves in demanding full self-government for India, subject to such transitional reservations with regard to the Army and External affairs as may be found quite necessary in the interest of India. All other matters will be under the control of a Cabinet responsible to the Legislature."

[2] The exact date is not ascertainable. It is , however, likely that this was written about the same time as the following item.

[3] The draft mentioned in the letter was followed by another which the addressee sent to Gandhiji and which the latter found "all right", *vide* "Note to Mirza Ismail", 28-10-1931 The letter therefore must have been written before that date.

3. Resistance to any extension of special reservation or separate electorate.

I think this is all the draft contains.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 2188-2

53. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

October 28, 1931

MY DEAR AMTUL,

I have been receiving your letters. But I have not been able to reply to all the letters from the Ashram people and others. I get no time. I must not give you a detailed reply. You should take such medicine and such medical advice as may be necessary. You must get well quickley. Do not think much. Simply trust God in all things.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 247

54. LETTER TO SIR HENRY S. LAWRENCE

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
S.W.1,
October 28, 1931

DEAR SIR HENRY,

Many thanks for your kind letter. So far as the Congress is concerned, it is quite clear on the question of the vote for women. They must be on a par with men without any reservation. On all the other points you have mentioned, I am in agreement with you. I wish I could avail myself of the kind offer of your hospitality. But I see no chance so far as I can see at present.

From a photostat: S. N. 18197

55. SPEECH AT MONTESSORI TRAINING COLLEGE [1]

LONDON,
[*October 28, 1931*][2]

Madame, you have overwhelmed me with your words.[3] It is perfectly true, I must admit it in all humility, that however indifferently it may be, I endeavour to represent love in every fibre of my being. I am impatient to realize the presence of my Maker, Who to me embodies Truth, and in the early part of my career I discovered that if I was to realize Truth I must obey, even at the cost of my life, the law of love. And having been blessed with children, I discovered that the law of Love could be best understood and learned through little children. Were it not for us, their ignorant poor parents, our children would be perfectly innocent. I believe implicitly that the child is not born mischievous in the bad sense of the term. If parents would behave themselves whilst the child is growing, before it is born and after, it is a well-known fact that the child would instinctively obey the law of Truth and the law of Love. And when I understood this lesson in the early part of my life, I began a gradual but distinct change in life.

I do not propose to describe to you the several phases through which this stormy life of mine has passed, but I can only, in truth and in perfect humility, bear witness to the fact that to the extent that I have represented Love in my life, in thought, word and deed I have realized the "peace that passeth understanding". I have baffled many of my friends when they have noticed in me peace that they have envied, and they have asked me for the cause of that priceless possession. I have not been able to explain the cause by saying that, if my friends found that peace in me, it was due to my attempt to obey this, the greatest law of our being.

It was in 1915 when I reached India, that I first became ac quainted with your activities. It was in a place called Amreli that I found that there was a little school being conducted after the Montessori system. Your name had preceded that first acquaint ance. I found no difficulty in finding out at once that this school

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's report;"At Montessori Training College"
[2] According to Gandhiji's Diary, he visited the institution on this date.
[3] Madame Montesssori had welcomed Gandhiji "as a soul rather than a man".

was not carrying out the spirit of your teaching; the letter was there. But whilst there was an honest—more or less honest—effort being made, I saw too that there was a great deal of tinsel about it.

I came in touch, then, with more such schools, and the more I came in touch, the more I began to understand that the foundation was good and splendid, if the children could be taught through the laws of nature—nature, consistent with human dignity, not nature that governs the beast. I felt instinctively from the way in which the children were being taught that, whilst they were being indifferently taught, the original teaching was conceived in obedience to this fundamental law. Since then, I have had the pleasure of coming across several of your pupils, one of whom had even made a pilgrimage to Italy and had received your personal blessings. I was looking forward to meeting the children here and you all and it was a great pleasure to me to see these children. I had taken care to learn someting about these little children. I had a foretaste of what I saw here, in Birmingham, where there is a school between which and this there is a difference. But I also saw that there also human nature was struggling to express itself. I see the same thing here and it was a matter of inexpressible joy to me that from their childhood the children were brought to understand the virtue of silence, and how, in response to the whisper from their teacher, the children came forward one after another in that pindrop silence. It gave great joy to see all those beautiful rhythmic movements and, as I was watching those movements of the children, my whole heart went out to the millions of the children of the semi-starved villages of India, and I asked myself as my heart went out to those children, "Is it possible for me to give them those lessons and the training that are being given under your system, to those children"? We are conducting an experiment amongst the poorest of the children in India. I do not know how far the experiment will go. We have the problem of giving real vital eduction to these children of India's hovels, and we have no material means.

We have to fall back upon the voluntary assistance of teachers, but when I look for teachers, they are very few, especially, teachers of the type wanted, in order to draw the best from the children through understanding, through studying their individuality and then putting the child on its own resources, as it were, on its own honour. And believe me from my experience of hundreds, I was going to say thousands, of children I know that they

have perhaps a finer sense of honour than you and I have. The greatest lessons in life if we would but stoop and humble ourselves, we would learn not from grown-up learned men, but from the so-called ignorant children. Jesus never uttered a loftier or a grander truth than when he said that wisdom cometh out of the mouths of babes. I believe it, I have noticed it in my own experience that, if we would approach babes in humility and in innocence, we would learn wisdom from them.

I must not take up your time. I have simply given you what is, at the present moment, agitating me, namely, the delicate problem, considered in human terms, of drawing out the best from these millions of children of whom I have told you. But I have learned this one lesson—that what is impossible with man is child's play with God and, if we have faith in that Divinity which presides over the destiny of the meanest of His creation, I have no doubt that all things are possible and in that final hope I live and pass my time and endeavour to obey His will. Therefore, I repeat that even as you, out of your love for children, are endeavouring to teach those children, through your numerous institutions, the best that can be brought out of them, even so I hope that it will be possible not only for the children of the wealthy and the well-to-do, but for the children of paupers to receive training of this nature. You have very truly remarked that if we are to reach real peace in this world and if we are to carry on a real war against war, we shall have to begin with children and if they will grow up in their natural innocence, we won't have the struggle, we won't have to pass fruitless idle resolutions, but we shall go from love to love and peace to peace, until at last all the corners of the world are covered with that peace and love for which, consciously or unconsciously, the whole world is hungering.

Young India, 19-11-1931

56. NOTE TO MIRZA ISMAIL

[On or after *October 28, 1931*][1]

This draft seems all right so far as it goes. You know that it does not cover all points. Please get the points they already have and work on them.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: G. N. 2188-3

57. INTERVIEW TO CHARLES PETRASCH AND OTHERS[2]

LONDON,
[*October 29, 1931*][3]

Q. In your opinion, what is the method by which the Indian Princes, landowners, industrialists and bankers acquire their wealth?

A. At present by exploiting the masses.

Q. Can these people enrich themselves without exploiting the Indian workers and peasants?

A. Up to a certain point, yes.

Q. Have these people any social right to live better than the simple workers or peasants who perform the labour from which they draw their wealth?

A. No right. My social theory is that, although we are all born equal, that is to say, that we have a right to equal opportunities, nevertheless we have not all the same abilities. By the nature of things it is impossible that we should all be of an equal stature, that we should all have the same colour of skin, the same degree of intelli gence; and consequently it is natural that some of us should be

[1] The note was written on a letter dated About October 28, 1931 from the addresssee along with which he had sent a revised draft: *vide* "Letter to Mirza Ismail", 28-10-1931

[2] An account of the interview, originally published in *Le Monde,* 20-2-1932, was reproduced in the *Labour Monthly.* Petrasch says, he and his Indian friends "had drawn up a list of question which we wished to put to Gandhi before his departure from London" and that they "wrote down his replies as the interview went on." Mahadev Desai reported the interview in his "London Letter", published in *Young India,* 26-11-1931. The two reports which have slight verbal variations have been collated here.

[3] Neither of the sourcces gives the date of the interview. But Mahadev Desai says, Sarojini Naidu's son, Baba, was among the interviewers. Gandhiji's diary has an entry under October 29, indicating the meeting with Baba and other youths.

more fitted than others to acquire material gain. Those who are capable wish to acquire more, and they utilize their abilities to this end. If they use their abilities in the best spirit, they will be working to the benefit of the people. Those people will be 'trustees' and noth ing more.

I should allow a man of intelligence to gain more and I should not hinder him from making use of his abilities. But the surplus of his gains ought to return to the people, just as the earnings of the children, whose work goes to the common family fund. They are only the 'trustees' of their gains, and nothing else. I may be sadly disappointed in this, but that is the ideal which I uphold, and that is what is understood in the declaration of fundamental rights.

Q. Would you demand a higher reward for intellectual work?

A. In an ideal state no one can demand a higher reward for his intelligence. He who acquires more ought to use it for socail ends.

We asked Gandhi if he did not believe that one of the principal causes of the poverty of the Indian peasants and workers lay in the appropriation of the fruit of their labour by the landlords and capitalists, since only a minute portion of the profits of the latter class goes to the Government. Gandhi agreed.

Q. Don't you think that the Indian peasants and workers are right in throwing themselves into a class struggle in order to secure their social and economic freedom and to rid themselves once and for all of the burden of supporting the parasite classes?

A. I myself am making the revolution for them without violence.[1]

Q. By your movement for the reduction of rents in the U. P. you may ameliorate the condition of the peasants, but you do not strike at the root of the system.

A Yes. But you can't do everything at one and the same time.

Q. What would be your attitude in face of a revolution of the peasants and workers against the Princes, landlords, capitalists and their ally, the British Government? And also, what would be your attitude if such a revolution occurred in an independent India, in an India under a Protectorate, in an India with Dominion Status, or in an India in no matter what kind of circumstances?

A. My attitudes would be to convert the better-off classes into trustees of what they already possessed. That is to say, they would keep the money, but they would have to work for the benefit of the people who procured them their wealth. And for doing this they

[1] The question and the answer that follow are taken from *Young India*.

would receive a 'commission'.

Q. How do you count on organizing this trusteeship? By persuasion?

A. Not solely by verbal persuasion. I will concentrate on my means.[1] I have been called the greatest revolutionary of my time. That is perhaps not correct, but I do believe that I am a revolutionary, a non-violent revolutionary. My weapon is 'non-co-operation'. No one can thrive without the collaboration, willing or forced, of the people.

Q. Would you support a general strike?

A General strike is a form of non-co-operation. It is not necessarily violent. I should take the lead of such a movement if it were peaceful and justified from all angles. Far from discouraging it I should even encourage it.

Q. Who constituted the capitalists trustees? Why are they entitled to a commission?[2]

A. They have the right to a 'commission' because the money is in their possession. No one compels them to be 'trustees'. I invite them to act as 'trustees'. I ask all owners of wealth to act as 'trustees', that is to say, not as wealth-owners by right, but as owners mandated by those whom they have exploited. I do not fix a figure for this 'commission', but I ask them only to demand what they consider they are entitled to.

For example, I shall ask the person who has a hundred rupees to keep fifty rupees and give the other fifty to the workers; but in the case of a person who has ten million rupees I shall ask him to retain, say, one per cent. So you see that my 'commission' would not be a fixed figure because that would result in grave injustice.

Q. The Maharajas and the landlords have allied themselves with the English, and you wish to make them 'trustees'. But your best followers are among the masses, who consider the Maharajas and landlords as enemies. What attitude would you take if the masses, coming to power, decided to put an end to these classes?

A. The masses at the present time do not regard the landlords and Princes as enemies. But it is necessary to make them aware of the wrong which is being done to them. I do not teach the masses to regard the capitalists as enemies, but I teach them that the latter are doing themselves harm. My followers have never told the people that the English or that General Dyer are bad, but that they are the victims of a system and that it is necessary to destroy the system and not the individual. That is why British officials can live with impunity among

[1] This sentence is from *Young India*.
[2] This question is from *Young India*.

the people, although the latter are so inflamed by their desire for liberty.

Q. If you wish to attack the system, there is no difference between a British capitalist and an Indian capitalist. Why, then, do you not apply your system of non-payment of taxes to those which are demanded from you by your own landed proprietors?

A. A landed proprietor is only an instrument of the system. It is not at all necessary to undertake a movement against them at the same time as against the English system. It is quite possible to distinguish between the two. We have told the people not to pay the zamindars because it is with this money that they pay the Government. But we are on good terms with the zamindars.

Q. According to Tagore, Bernard Shaw and others, the suppression of the landlords, capitalists and financiers in Russia and the establishment of the Soviets as the system of Government has led in a very short time to a considerable betterment in the social, economic and cultural conditions of the people. Now, it is to be noticed that Russia, at the time of the Revolution essentially an agricultural country, presented the same condition from a religious and cultural point of view as does India today. We should be curious to know your opinion on this matter.

A. In the first place I do not care about basing my opinions on those of others. That is why I am unable to form an appreciation of the condition of Russia. Moreover, believing for this is what the Soviet leaders themselves say that the Soviet system is founded on the employment of force, I have strong doubts of its final success.

Q. What is your concrete programme for giving to the peasants and workers the absolute power of deciding their own destiny?

A. My programme is a programme which I am having elaborated by the Congress. I am certain that it is resulting in the position of the peasants and workers being infinitely superior to what they have been able to have within human memory. I do not allude to their material condition. I mean the extraodinary awakening which affected them and their capacity for resisting injustice and exploitation.

Q. How do you propose to relieve the peasantry of their debt of five hundred crores?

A. No one knows the exact amount of debt. Such as it is, if the Congress gets the power, the Congress will undertake the scrutiny of the so-called obligations of the peasantry as it insists with regard to the obligations of the incoming Indian Government to be taken over from

the outgoing alien Government.

Equally characteristic was Gandhiji's reply to the next question, asking him why he had not demanded the inclusion in the R.T.C. of a representative of the Indian States' Subjects. It would not have been consistent with the dignity of the Congress to demand the inclusion of anybody in a Conference in the making of which it had power. He explained:

I could not plead on behalf of the Congress and the Congress, being an erstwhile rebel against the Government, could not consistently entreat for the inclusion of anybody in the Conference.

Q. What do you mean by 'machine'? Is not the charkha a machine? Is it that exploitation is not inherent in certain kinds of machines? or do you think it is the matter of using machines which makes them an instrument of exploitation?

A. The charkha and similar instruments are clearly machines, and from this you can gather my definition of machines. I am willing to admit that it is largely the abuse of the machine system which is responsible for the exploitation of the working class in the world.

Q. You speak of stopping the exploitation of the masses which implies the abolition of capitalism. Do you intend to suppress capitalism, and if so are you ready to deprive the capitalists of his surplus wealth so as to prevent him from restarting a new capitalism?

A. If I come to power, I shall certainly abolish capitalism but I shall not abolish capitals, and it follows that I shall not abolish the capitalists. I am convinced that the co-ordination of capital and labour is perfectly possible. I have seen it realized with success in certain cases and what is true in one case can become true for all. I do not consider capital in itself as an evil, no more than I consider the machine system in itself as an evil.

We then went on to speak about religious matters and we asked Gandhi if he thought that there existed a Hindu-Muslim problem. His reply was definitely in the affirmative. We then asked him if this problem was of major importance for the masses, and in that case if he thought that it could be remedied by the application of political measures, or by a compromise.

A. I do not think this problem exists among the masses, or at least, not to a very great degree. It is not possible to solve it by political measures, but it can be done by a compromise, for compromise is the essence of life, inasmuch as it does not touch the roots of the principles of life.

Q. In a federal India, with the Princes as autonomous rulers, if the subjects demanded the same elementary political rights as the people of British India and had recourse to civil disobedience, with a popular uprising to enforce their demands, would the federal froces be called to help the Princes in suppressing the uprising? And what would your attitude be in that case?

A. If I had the power I should never use it, or allow it to be used, for suppressing civil disobedience, no matter how or where it arose, for I hold civil disobedience to be a permanent law of our being entirely replacing violence, which is the law of the beast.

Q. Is it true that you withdrew your support from those popular movements which arose in the native, states, movements with the object of demanding from the Princes the same which you demand from the British in British India?

Gandhi looked at us in surprise and gave the lie to this report.

We asked him what, in his opinion, was the difference between "independence" and "equality of collaboration in Empire matters".

A. There is, and there is not, a difference between the two. That is to say, two independent states in an Empire can perfectly well be partners, collaborating in an imperial association. But obviously India is not in such a situation. Consequently, an association of India with Britain in the same Empire is a state, or rather a condition, which cannot be likened to independence, for a comparison can only take place between two things of the same kind. In this case the things are not of the same kind Hence, if there is to be an association, on an equal footing, between Britain and India, the Empire must cease to exist.

At this, we retorted that the Lahore Congress made no mention of an association of equality within the limits of the Empire.

Gandhi replied that it was no use mentioning this in the Congress, but the question had been touched upon in the speeches.

Q. Does this equality of association envisage the withdrawal of the Viceroy?

A. The idea of "empire" must disappear entirely. But it is impossible for me to say definitely whether the idea of royalty must also be absolished. I am quite unable to say at present that the king of Great Britain will cease to be the king of India.

Q. Are you taking account of the fact that, since the time of the Lahore Congress, when the declaration of Independence displaced the compromise resolution adopted at Calcutta, the youth of India has believed that it was fighting for an independence India, in which there would no longer be a king? Is it not bad politics to tell the youth of India now that royalty will remain?

Gandhi, quite unruffled, replied that there was no question of bad faith. If the question had been put to him at Karachi, he would have given the same reply.

Q. Well, then, what difference is there between you and Malaviya,who was in the opposition at the Lahore Congress?

A. The difference is this, that Malaviya, still wished to give the Empire a chance, whereas I did not.

Q. Do you regard King George and his predecessors as usurpers in India?

A. I own that Great Britain and King George are usurpers of India.

We then asked him whether he thought it possible that a country which fought against exploitation could remain part of an Empire based on the exploitation of weaker races.

A. It is impossible, I would lend my heartiest support to the abolition of the British system of Government, as well as to the abolition of the capatalist system, but not to the abolition of capital and capitalists. If the British Empire does not stop exploiting the weaker races, we shall refuse to collaborate with it. Imperialist exploitation must disappear; collaboration will have to be free, and India at liberty, if she pleases, to sever the association.

Q. What were the reasons which led you to conclude a truce wih Lord Irwin? Was it because, as we have been told, the Congress movement was only fighting on one wing, and if a truce were not arranged, it would be in grave danger of being strangled? And does that mean that you and the Congress were afraid that you would be crushed by the violence of the British Government? Would it not have been preferable, for the principle of "non-violence", that those of you who believe in the principle, should continue the fight and refuse to surrender to the violence of the British Government? Even if the movement thereby suffered a set-back, the reverse itself would have been its victory.

A. The suggestion of the impending collapse of our movement is entirely false. The movement was showing no signs of slackening. It is possible, and even probable, that in certain cases, it may have wavered, but I did not know of it, since I was in prison. But it would be going absolutely against the rulers of satyagraha (non-co-operation) to come to an agreement at the moment when the satyagrahis (followers of non-co-operation) were showing any lukewarmness. It is at that moment that they refuse to come to an agreement. I had no fear whatever that the movement was weakening nor was such a thought in my head when I put forward the idea of a truce. The idea of a truce was accepted on its own merits and it is contrary to the principles of satyagraha not to come to an agreement when suitable terms are offered.

Your opinion would have been right had it been through fear of suffering that we accepted the truce, but a satyagrahi would betray his ideal if he exposed his companions without reason to suffering. You would be perfectly right if we had accepted the truce from base or selfish motives.

Labour Monthly, March 1932, and *Young India*, 26-11-1931

58. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

LONDON,
October 30, 1931

I am grieved to hear of the attacks made on the lives of Mr. Villiers[1] and Mr. Durno[2] . Ours is a difficult task and is rendered still more difficult by these senseless attacks. I am convinced that these attacks do no good, but do create harm by increasing the vindictive spirit on both sides. I know that I shall be reminded of such continuing provocations as the wicked barbarities in Chittagong, which have moved to indignation even the poet Rabindranath Tagore, and the wanton firing in the Detenus camp at Hijli.

My point, however, is that you must preserve the spirit of non-violence in spite of the greatest provocation. Our success lies through non-violence.

How I wish impatient young men would help the Congress programme, and thus hasten the day of deliverence, which consummation, I know, is as dear to them as to the Congress.

The Bombay Chronicle, 31-10-1931

59. SPEECH AT MEETING OF COMMONWEALTH OF INDIA LEAGUE[3]

LONDON,
October 30, 1921

He said, there was a great deal of ignorance among the English people as to the real state of affairs in India. There was also false knowledge spread about the history of India. He contended that most of the works that the British people read on

[1] E. Villers, President of the European Association, Calcutta, was shot at in his office on October 29. He received minor injuries.

[2] District Magistrate of Dacca

[3] The meeting was held at the Central Hall, Westminster, with J.F. Horrabin in the chair.

Indian history were, in his opinion, one-sided. For instance, he pointed out the "Black Hole" of Calcutta. It had now been found that it was largely a matter of imagination. There was no such thing as the "Black Hole". It had been found by Indian historians and other impartial writers that physically it was impossible to keep so many in that room.

I can give many instances from modern history, and later researches have shown as mere fables many things which at one time were supposed to be gospel truths. It was therefore the duty of institutions like the Commonwealth League to acquire true knowledge about India with reference to the past as well as the present.

There is also, I see, a conspiracy of silence with reference to the events happening in India. Barbarities, or, I may say, atrocities have been committed in Chittagong. Chittagong is a most important port and town in Bengal. It has a large population and there were, as there are today, large commercial interests. An officer was assassinated by a Bengali youth of about 16 years. By way of reprisal, shops were looted and atrocities were committed which aroused even men like the Poet Tagore to indignation.

Many of you may be aware that as a rule that ailing, infirm man never comes out into the public, but spends his time amidst books and dreams conducting a unique college and school at Santiniketan, experimenting with so many things. He can ill afford to go out, but he could not possibly rest himself on this occasion.

After Chittagong, we have the incident at Hijli, where are kept what are called detenus. Now, you may not know what is meant by a detenu. I shall tell you immediately. A detenu is a person kept in prison without a trial. He does not even know what the charges against him are. Simply on suspicion of being a terrorist or belonging to terrorist organization, he is detained, and detained indefinitely. In no sense is he an ordinary prisoner.

These Hilji detenus are supposed not to have behaved quite according to the proper standard—the standard of the guards on duty. I am giving you simply the newspaper reports or a bare summary of the evidence of the report of a recent inquiry. For their misbehaviour, these men were shot, two died and several others were injured.

About the Hijli atrocities the Poet is indignant. I have mentioned to you only the Poet's name because he is a well-known figure. Besides him, many people of name and fame have attended meetings convened to condemn these wanton atrocities.

But here in this country, you do not know what things are happening in India and how they stir the people.

You are simply told by the British Press that the detenus are bad fellows. They are people who deserve what Government, in the name of law and order, are giving them.

Now I shall speak to you about the attacks on the lives of Mr. Villiers and Mr. Durno. They are deplorable and, from my standpoint, disgraceful and most embarrassing to what I represent. However, I cannot understand why so much is made of these incidents. I should ask and tell you frankly that to you, the British public, other incidents such as Chittagong and Hijli should also be made much of.

You cannot ignore the fact that there is repression on the part of the Indain Government, and as a result there is terrorism on the part of those who have run amok, who have lost what I may call their balance. They are out for vengeance and are determined to take some lives.

Now, no one can claim more than I do that most severely rule out what they do. I hate violence, particularly when it is committed by my own people. It interrupts my experiment. It distrusts my mission of non-violence, which I have been making for the last so many years.

Although these young men do not belong to the Congress or accept its programme, yet a situation of such a character makes matters worse for me. This shows that the Congress is not able to exercise suffi-cient influence on these people to prevent them from doing mad things.

Things such as have happened in Chittagong and Hijli would give rise to open, widespread rebellion in any other country, but in my country things do not move so swiftly as that, for two reasons.

Believe me, I sincerely think my people are too paralysed to offer resistance to violence and, for the last ten years the gospel of non-violence which I have been preaching has become a disturbing factor to them. Non-violence has given rise to a great awakening of the people; that is, in spite of these grave provocations, the newspapers and the Press here do not care to take notice of the real situation. They ought to do what Russell did at the time of the Crimean War.[1]

[1] Sir William Howard Russell in his report to *The Times* from Crimea, exposed mismanagement of the Crimean War and inspired the work of Florence Nightingale.

Unfortunately, we have no Russell today who will give the English public a true state of the affairs, nor have the newspapers a desire to give the whole truth and nothing but the truth. They are persisting in giving an incomplete account, a wholly incorrect picture, suited to their interests.

The Viceroy has passed one more Ordinance. Do you know what is an Ordinance? An Ordinance is passed over the head of the Legislature by the Viceroy in exercise of his special jurisdictionary power. This Ordinance gives the widest powers to the police to arrest people without trial and detain them. This is done as if the powers already enjoyed were not enough. I personally think that these fresh powers are not necessary, but the Indian Government, shall I say, goes mad when this kind of terrorism takes place. This is not known as reprisal but as repression. This has commenced now and will continue for long. In spite of the repression, the terrorists have become active, fearless and, I might say, foolhardy. They dare to anything. They have sacrificed life in advance. They think their lives in the service of the country are not worth the purchase.

The only way of preventing Chittagong and Hijli is to let India manage her own affairs. Let India mismanage her affairs, as you have a right to manage or mismanage her affairs. You have recently done it. You hopelessly mismanaged affairs. You place right men in wrong places, wrong men in right places. It is a game of seesaw. Commit mistakes and you can correct them by experience. It is a fine game (Loud laughter). Human nature is like that. But what is the situation in India? We cannot manage our own affairs. Today India is one vast prison-house. We are prisoners. You Englishmen and Englishwomen are our jailors. You have to realize your responsibility, that just as we have to render an account of ourselves, you as jailors will also have to render an account of yourselves.

So what does it show? It shows our unnatural relationship. I must tell you that this unnatural relationship must be ended soon. We Indians have to do nothing but to attain our freedom. God willing, we shall take our freedom from unwilling hands. These few days of grace, brought about by that noble Englishman, may soon be over. He thought we had drunk enough of the cup of suffering and brought us out of the prison walls. He nagotiated with us, as a result of which there was a settlement, which made it possible for the Congress to be represented at the Round Table Conference.

It would have been wrong of me as a satyagrahi not to accept his offer.

Now I am telling you some home truths. It is better, really better, to end this thing that exists in India. But let me tell you that it is not your fault. It is the result of my limitations. We have not suffered enough. I shall be content to go away to India to invite my countrymen to go through the fiery ordeal once again.

For me Chittagong and Hijli are beacon lights.They are pointers, inviting me to hurry to India. But I shall not leave the Conference abruptly in anger.

That does not mean that I never become angry. But God has given me sufficient strength to suppress that anger. In any case, anger or no anger, I am not going to leave these shores because of these things. I shall wait, watch, pray and plead, but I keep in reserve for myself that, if the Round Table Conference fails and does not give what the Congress demands, what the Congress is entitled to have, I shall do what we did not a long time back.

I am hoping that we shall not be found wanting in that in the time to come. It will be your turn then to wake up England.

Therefore try to understand from now what the Congress means, what Chittagong means, what Hijli means.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 4-11-1931

60. SPEECH AT MEETING OF COMMONWEALTH OF INDIA LEAGUE[1]

LONDON,
October 30, 1931

The British people, added Mahatma Gandhi, should not hasten to condemn Indians after reading one-sided reports in their press. He wanted them to know the other side. He did not, however, ask them to accept the Congress version or any Indian version, but to seek to find the truth without blind acceptance. Mahatma Gandhi turning to the Chairman[2] said:

Till now you had too many irons in the fire. Since you are not returned to Parliament you will, I hope, have more time. As a true

[1] This is the concluding part of the speech reproduced in "Speech at Meeting of Commonwealth of India League", 30-10-1931

[2] J. F. Horabin

friend of India, your constituency, I have to doubt, is India. I am unable to express to you sufficiently our appreciation of the services that you and your League have rendered to us. I have opened out my heart to you, even at the risk of taking up so much of your time, because I want you to know what is uppermost in my mind.

Answering questions, Mr. Gandhi said he was not afraid of the Afridis, since the strength that enabled them to end British domination was sufficient to keep other invaders away. The Afridis had no grudge against Indians.

If we are able to give battle to powerful Britain, we can turn the same weapons against the Afridis. Besides, the Afridis are not savages, nor Englishmen so sober and cultured that we can fight only the latter. I have seen Englishmen savage during my experience of the South African War.

Asked whether he would not print cheap literature to distribute in England, Mr. Gandhi said that if he did that it would be discounted in advance. He said that was the true task of the Commonwealth of India League.

Your League should broadcast the literature; we can only supply you with genuine information. Stead[1] prayed in St. Paul's for reverses to British arms during the Boer War—you can do likewise.

In answer to a question on the Hindu-Muslim problem, Mahatma Gandhi said that the Congress had solved it.

But the British Government throws in our face the opinions of those who disagree with us. I have already had the audacity to accuse the Indian Government of acting like a wedge between the two palms of India.

The Round Table Conference is a packed Conference, not one of elected representatives, and I will not be surprised if it fails. Your Government is anxious to hold a chain round our neck, but we shall strike a simultaneous blow at this chain and our own disunion.

The Indian News, 3-11-1931

[1] W. T. Stead

61. CABLE TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

October 31, 1931

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI

BARDOLI (INDIA)

BENGAL REPRESSION[1] OTHER THINGS DISTURB ME. REALIZE HELPLESSNESS HERE. NEVERTHELESS REGARD PRESENCE HERE NECESSARY AND THEREAFTER TRAVELLING CONTINENT. THIS MAY MEAN INABILITY REACH HOME BEFORE MIDDLE JANUARY. SEND CONSIDERED OPINION.[2]

BAPU

From a photostat : S.N. 18211

[1] The repression (*vide* the preceding item) had been launched under the Bengal Criminal Law Ordinance No. 9, 1931, as amended to give greater power to the Bengal Government.

[2] Referring to this Vallabhbhai Patel later cabled : "Working Committee considered your cable. On facts available here feel that your further continuing Conference unnecessary and liable be misunderstood but in view your definite opinion that presence necessary apparently based on facts circumstances better known to you Committee leaves final decision to you. Situation here growing more critical. Government attitude generally much worse. Conditions Bengal worsening. Frontier Province repression increasing. All activities in some places there being stopped. United Provinces early non-payment campaign seems inevitable. Withdrawal from Bardoli inquiry may soon become necessary owing most unsatisfactory procedure and other reasons. Early return desirable. Long Continental tour would have prejudicial effect."

62. CABLE TO SAILENDRA NATH GHOSE[1]

October 31, 1931

GHOSE
31 UNION SQUARE
NEW YORK

YOUR CABLE. REGRET UNABLE VISIT AMERICA. HAVE EXPLAINED FULLY MRS. GHOSE.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 18209

63. SPEECH AT FRIENDS' HOUSE[2]

LONDON,
October 31, 1931

1. I should shortly say it[3] is intended to bear the dictionary meaning, but in the Congress mandate it is said it does not exclude termination of partnership at will by either party; in order not to create any confusion and not to be uncertain, mandate mentions that. It includes the three controls, subject to such adjustment as are absolutely necessary in the interest of India. A nation which has been a subject nation and another which has been an exploiting nation cannot easily become partners. But for the fact that our struggle is non-violent, independence and partnership are incompatible and complete severance would have been necessary.

2. Canada is not considered to be in partnership with Great Britain.It is a daughter State. They represent the same civilizationsame mode of life of course all humanity meets in the end, otherwise ours is a distinct civilization. Independence was mentioned so that there may be no idea lingering in our mind of a subject nation. Then it is used to distinguish Dominion Status. I was for it

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's cable of 30-10-1931 saying : "Thanks letter wife. Burdwan arrived launching vigorous anti-Gandhi campaign supported interested parties with practical appreciation importance American opinion. If my God same God guiding you then search inner conscience and realize with me way clear your visit. . ." S.N. 18208.

[2] Mahadev Desai also reported briefly this meeting with the Quakers in his "London Letter", published in *Young India*, 19-11-1931.

[3] "Partnership"

once, but when lawyers contended against me and said it was a higher status, I said to myself that I was certainly for no lower status. I said if Dominion Status is lower, I was for independence.

3. Separate not from British Commonwealth—if India means to be independent in reality it must be complete severance from the Empire. It is an Empire because there are Princes, vassal States. Great Britain should cease to subjugate all these Princes. It means extinction of the Empire and the Empire spirit. I should not associate with any nation which believed in exploitation and sustained its commerce by force. A tremendous principle is at stake. We are eager not only to get rid of exploitation but to prevent India from becoming a highly industrialized nation and becoming a menace to the world. We want the masses to feel that they do not want any dominion on any nation or any groups of individuals even. There should be vital equality between nations, and even if it took years to make this idea mature, we would wander in the wilderness to get them. This is no verbal jugglery, but a fundamental yearning of human nature.

Q. For some years Britain would continue certain subject territories like Gold Coast. Would Mr. Gandhi object?

A. I would certainly object. India would certainly aspire after influencing British policy. Supposing there came a cry from West Coast or Swaziland, India would feel that it was a partner . . .[1] I do not want India to be an engine of oppression. I am dreaming of a time when India would be a check on aggrandizement by other nations. But I should not immediately sever the connection, though I know that Zulus, Swazis are being corrupted and exploited. It is a policy which is radically wrong. To be able to call these dominions should be no matter for pride. There is no use your saying that, whilst they were Crown Colonies, you do for them everything, and when they become responsible, you would do nothing.

Q. Partnership means economic alliance or does it presuppose a common British Crown?

A. That question has been agitating me. There is a Crown, but how far I should be linked with the Crown I do not know. I should argue it out with friends. It is a solid and good question as to what connection India would have with the Crown. How the Council would be defined is more a matter of phraseology than of moral difficulty.

Q. Termination of partnership like termination of alliances between nations—

[1] A few words here are not clear.

on what terms?

A. If it is not profitable for Britain, it must retire. I would wish it to be in perpetuity. Common relations would be contractual relations. For constitutional partnership I have not fixed any terms. It does involve giving of a notice for dissolution.

4. I have agreed yet to no safeguards. When I have been cornered, I have said safeguards for such I.C.S. members as you will keep, such military officers as you keep. For we want to go before the world as a solvent nation. We should be sure of what we take over. . . .[1] I have been cruelly misrepresented as repudiating liabilities. A lurid picture of widows being ruined who had taken loans, etc., was cruelly untruthful. That party could not be harmed in any shape or form. Great Britain's honour, prestige and everything is concerned as partner in all these liabilities. All that happens in a commercial business should happen between Britain and India also. We should satisfy creditors that the liabilities we take over should be discharged. There is a third safeguard— existing interests of Europeans in India. . . .[2] Every legitimate interest will be legally and lawfully protected. There is no desire for recial discrimination. We have been fighting it in South Africa and elsewhere. But it is one thing and guarding the nation against ruinous competition is another thing. There is a Swedish match factory combine which has descended upon India as a blight and threatens ruin of match factories. They have secured handsome terms from Government. They have acquired fine land and have even penetrated the Andamans. I do not object to this because it is a Swedish combine. I should have objected to it if it was an Indian combine.Under the partnership there would be a favoured nation clause, with outbeing charged with racial discrimination.

5. The adjustment would be adjustment naturally due between outgoing and incoming firms. . ..[3] If Britain wants to do the thing it must do it decently. Safeguards do not in any way derogate from complete independence.

HORACE ALEXANDER : Schuster suggested assurance of establishment of a Reserve Bank and raising a new internal loan.

6. GANDHIJI : We would have to do it. We want the Reserve Bank ourselves, but there are no reserves to fall back upon. No gold

[1] A few words here are not clear.
[2] Some portions here are not clear.
[3] *ibid*

reserve. I have given you an inkling. Partnership at will. Period I do not know.

7. No one came by right of election—none by invitation. If the Prime Minister wanted to bar my entry he could do so. An M.P. cannot be put out. No procedure is necessary to put one out. It is an embarrassing position. I have come as a guest of the nation and must walk warily and I cannot tell you how warily I am walking. . . .[1] I have a tremendous moral problem before me. I have an invitation to attend the King's party. I am feeling so heart-sick and sore upon happenings in India that I should not like to go. If I had come as an elected representative, I should have had not no hesitation. Here is the function which is social [but] has a political nature, but I am doing nothing hastily. I put myself in touch with Whitehall. I am a man who every moment considers the morality of the thing, not its legality.

The Conference is packed. The other representatives have been chosen by the Viceroy. His conception was faulty. The selection was his and it was not possible for him to come to an unerring judgment. I can demonstrate to you how wicked some of these things have been, how much wire-pulling has been done. We would certainly have captured the Mahasabha. I would have been the only elected representative of the untouchables. I would be selling their birthright if I lent myself to this vile scheme of separate representation. Moonje is a friend of mine, but he is a reactionary. Would Congress have allowed the Native States' subjects' rights to be sold away? It is diabolical thing for them to say that they represent their own people also. It is a fatal flaw in the formation of the Conference that Princes should come here in a double capacity. There is a States' People's Conference and it is held back under my iron rule. I have been holding them back and though they are men of great status and ability. I have asked them to be satisfied with their present position. But this shows to you that it is wholly unrepresentative. Today the communalists occupy the front pages of newspapers. I would at once say to Mussalmans and Sikhs : take what you can. It is today the dream of a visionary. therefore, I have suggested three things : (1) I have put before the R.T.C. the Congress Scheme framed by a Committee of Hindus, Mussalmans and Sikhs. They met all leading Mussalmans and leading Sikhs. (2) Otherwise private arbitration. (3) Failing that, a judicial tribunal. The fourth thing is one with which I

[1] A few words here are not clear.

cannot associate myself, viz., asking Government to suggest a solution. It would be selling the country. For no Government in the nature of things would suggest a solution unfavourable to themselves. The utmost I said that could be done is to go to British Courts of Law, Non-Hindu, Non-Muslim Judges or Members of Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. These are concerete alternative proposals. If Government cannot summon courage, it is doomed to failure. Government put themselves into a tight corner by suggesting that nothing can be done without settlement. What has Defence to do with communal settlement? No favoured minorities but pampered minorities. Congress foolishly lent itself to a communal settlement and it cannot be easily undone. How can I go out of an express train and jump into an aeroplane? I shall only be falling to my destruction.[1] . . . I have given you an outline of what is agitating me. You may think the Congress incapable of bargaining away any minorities' rights to win swaraj. The Congress considers it bad for Mussalmans, Sikhs, Hindus and bad for the nation to give them separate electorates. But it is worst for untouchables. Untouchables are above this. For me who feels with them and knows their life, it is equal to killing them if separate electrorates are given them. They are in the hands of superior classes. They can suppress them completely and wreak vengeance upon the untouchables who are at their mercy.

I may be opening out my shame to you. But, in the existing circumstances, how can I invite utter destruction for them? I would not be guilty of that crime. Dr. ambedkar, able as he is, has unhappily lost his head over this question. He sees blood wherever Hinduism is. If he was a real representative, I should have withdrawn. Today he cannot coherently think of the problem. I repudiate his claim to represent them. I am the representative of the depressed classes. Get a mandate and I may not [*sic*] be elected but Ambedkar cannot be returned. The Congress Scheme covers the interest of minorities completely. One line or clause I would insert—Judicial Tribunal. I said I proposed this clause and I would see that it was carried.

I must take the other end. I should resist separate representa tion for Europeans on other grounds. they are the ruling race, they were able to shadow an Indian Governor and make his life a hell. Sinha's Secretariat shadowed him. His very servants were acting as his spies. He died of a broken heart. I had seen him at the height of his

[1] A few words that follow are not clear.

power. I saw him when he was utterly broken. I said smilingly to Sir Hubert Carr, "why not come to us for votes? You may be sure that a man like Mr. Andrews would always be returned by an Indian electrorate."[1] Carr said Andrews would not be a fit representative of Englishmen, Mr. Andrews no more represents the English mind than an Indian does. "Well, if the Englishman must stay there, he must represent the Indian mind. Lord Salisbury's black man Dadabhai Naoroji was elected by the suffrage of Central Finsbury."

Then Anglo-Indians. I know them much better than Col. Gidney does. I have seen them weep before me. They come to me and say, "We are bastards. Englishmen do not recognize us; Indians would not adopt us." I say, "Come to us, discard your tinsel and we will adopt you." I saw a fat man—an Anglo-Indian—he could not bear the idea that his mother was an Indian woman. they would be pariahs and untouchables with a separate electorate under Nationl Government. Sir Henry Gidney may be all right but others won't be knighted. But if they would come and claim the suffrage of our people they are quite welcome—Kumarappa—Joseph Kumarappa[2]—can turn Gujarat round his fingers by dint of service.

HORAGE ALEXANDER : You would have constituted the Conference by election. Just how tell us?

G. An orientation should have been defined. There are telegrams from Jains—also Lingayats. If you are to humour these so-called manufactured orientation, how can you do so?

The Congress Scheme recognizes (1) Weightage; (2) Sind [as a] separate province if it can be economically sustained; (3) Joint electorates and adult suffrage; (4) Reservations for minorities and weightage; (5) Guarantees-cum-rights and civic liberties for all communities;

Q. Is it not a fact that the majority of Mussalmans [do not] consent to have responsibility in Centre if the majority question cannot be settled?

A. I say whether they attend or not, the Conference must finish deliberations. If British Government wants to part with power, its progress must not be allowed to be blocked by even the Congress. If a proper scheme is prepared, what is the meaning of a party resisting the thing? After all, the Congress represents

[1] This sentence is from *Young India*.

[2] Dr. J. C. Kumarappa

Mussalmans also. Judicial tribunal composed of Parsis, Christians or all of them but not of Hindus or Muslims. It is foolish, tantalizing, humiliating—this playing a waiting game.

SIR FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND : Would a formula in Act of Parliament, indicating wish of the people of India to be separated, or not separated, do?

A. Yes; but the partnership must be a strong bond and not subject to be torn to pieces by disruptive forces.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary, 1931. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

64. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS[1]

[*October/November, 1931*]

MY DEAR REGINALD,

Just a line in reply to your question whilst I am sitting at the Conference. I favour preference to Lancashire to help a partner nation in its distress, assuming of course that partnership was possible. why should Japan complain that I prefer a partner in distress? If India becomes partner instead of remaining subject, there is no Empire. You must relate all my acts to ahimsa. In ahimsa there is no room for immoral expedience.

Of course must meet before I leave.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : C.W. 4541. Courtesy : Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

[1] The addressee, in *To Live in Mankind*, says : "It was a reply to another critical query relating to policy justifying economic concessions which I had wrongly attributed to lack of firmness on his part. His letter made it clear that he did not offer these concessions from weakness, but out of sympathy for the British people, of whose economic problems he had learnt a good deal. He had been especially interested in the conditions of the Lancashire textile workers."

65. SPEECH AT PEMBROKE COLLEGE[1]

CAMBRIDGE,
[*November 1, 1931*][2]

The partnership has to be on equal terms. It should not be 'subjection' in glorified language. That means that the present relationship must be completely transformed though the connection may be retained, and that connection should be wholly and solely for the benefit of mankind. India by herself has no capacity to exploit the nations of the earth, but with Great Britain's assistance she can do it. Now the partnership must mean that exploitation shall cease, and, if Great Britain should not desist from it, India should sever the connection. All that is wanted is a fundamental change in the British policy of eploitation. Britain cannot thereafter boast that she has a strong navy guarding the maritime highways and all her overseas commerce.

What about the South African possession? I would not insist on a transformation of Britain's relations with them, as a condition precedent to our partnership. But I should certainly strive to work for the deliverance of those South African races which, I can say from experience, are ground down under exploitation. Our deliverance must mean their deliverance. But, if that cannot come about, I should have no interest in a partnership with Britain, even if it were of benefit to India. Speaking for myself, I would say that a partnership, giving the promise of a world set free from exploitation, would be a proud privilege for my nation and I would maintain it for ever. But India cannot reconcile herself in any shape or form to any policy of exploitation and, speaking for myself, I may say that, if ever the Congress should adopt an imperial policy, I should sever my connection with the Congress.

But would not the Congress be satisfied with a status equal to South Africa or Canada, for the time being at any rate? I see the danger of saying 'yes'. If you visualize a higher or superior

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "London Letter". According to desai this is a condensation of the talk which lasted several hours. Present at the meeting were Ellis Barker, Lowes Dickinson, Dr. John Murray, Dr. Baker and Evelyn Wrench.

[2] The date is according to Gandhiji's diary, which also says that the meeting was held in the morning.

status towards which we have then to work, I should say 'no'. But if it is a status beyond which we have not to aspire, I should say 'yes'. It should be a status which the ordinary man in the street should understand to be a radically different status from the present. I would, therefore, not accept a transition period during which we may have to be satisfied with a lower status. The Congress will not be satisfied with a state lower than the best.

But what about the Princes? They do not want independence. I know they don't, and they cannot, as they are the mouthpiece of the British Government. But there are others too who think that they cannot live except under the protection of British arms. For me, I cannot accept anything short of a complete control of the army. If all other leaders of the land were to accept a compromise on the army question, I would say I would rather stay out, but would not resist it and make a call to the people to suffer. If there were such a large step taken which would ultimately and quickly lead to the final thing, I would tolerate it, though I would not endorse it.

But, if you say the British units will never serve under the national Government, it would mean to me a fatal objection to any connection with Great Britain. We do not want, we cannot possibly tolerate, an army of occupation. No scheme of Indianization can serve any useful purpose inasmuch as, until the last moment, the command will be British, and the same doubts about our capacity to take over charge will be expressed as are expressed today. The real responsible Government can come when Britishers begin to trust India and her ability. Chaos can be got over only when Britain has a living conviction that it has done wrong to India and should now, by way of undoing the wrong, keep British troops at the disposal of Indian ministers. You are afraid that British soldiers may be cut to pieces under the foolish orders of Indian ministers. Well, I ask you not to forget that, during the Boer War, there came a time when British generals were described in England as asses and British soldiers as heroes. If British generals erred, Indian ministers too may err. The Indian mininters would certainly discuss everything with the Commander-in-Chief and other military experts, but the final authority and responsibility will certainly have to be the ministers'. Let the Commander-in-Chief then resign or obey.

The idea of my paying for freedom by blood startles you. Well, I, who claim to know the conditions of India through and through, know that India is dying by inches. The land revenue

exactions mean morsels forcibly taken out of the mouths of the peasants' children. It is an indescribable agony through which the peasant is passing. In order to put that condition right, a transition stage is not the remedy. Do the British Government understand transition as I mean it? Would they keep the British soldiers to help us, i.e., only in our interests? If so, we would have them and pay them according to our means. But, if the position honestly held is that we are incapable, and the control should not be relaxed, then, if God wills it, we must go through the purgatory. I have not talked of rivers of other people's blood flowing, for I know that the party of violence is dying out. But I have talked of Gangesful of our own blood—a pure voluntary act of self-immolation to face the situation. It would be good for India to go through that purgatory if it must. Personally, I do not think there can be such communal riots as you fear. Ninety per cent of the population of India is rural and the strife is confined only to the ten per cent urban population. I would count that bloodshed as of no consequence beside this slow ignominious death which carries no glory with it. This, of course, assumes that India is being starved to death by having to pay the phenomenal expenditure for a foreign army of occupation and the most expensive civil service in the world. Even Japan, which is armed to the teeth, does not pay for her army to the extent that we have to do.

My quarrel with you is this. I know that every honest Englishman wants to see India free, but is it not tragic for them to feel that the moment British arms are removed there would be invasions and internecine strife? Well, as against that, my contention is that it is the British presence that is the cause of internal chaos, because you have ruled India according to the principle of divide and rule. Because of your benevolent intentions you feel that the harrow does not hurt the toad. In the nature of things, it cannot but hurt. It is not that you are in India in response to our invitation. You must realize that there is sullen discontent everywhere and everyone says, "We do not want foreign rule." And why this over-anxiety about how we would fare without you? Go to the pre-British period. History does not record a larger number of Hindu-Muslim riots. In fact, the history of my own times shows a darker record. The fact is that the British arms are powerless to prevent riots, though they are powerful enough to punish the guilty and the innocent. We hear of no riots in the reign of even Aurangzeb. As for the invasions, the worst invasion left the villages untouched. There were periodic visitations of the

plague. If to avoid that kind of plague, which after all may be a cleansing process, we should have to maintain an army of doctors and starve ourselves to pay for them, we would far rather have the cleansing process. Take the occasional inroads of tigers and lions. Would we submit to the erection of castles and fortresses at the expense of millions of rupees rather than fight the beasts straight and take the risks? Pardon me, we are not such a nation of absolute cowards who would always run away from risk. Better that we were wiped off the face of the earth than remain alive sustained by foreign bayonets. No, you must trust us to know how to patch up our quarrels and to deal with invasions. India, which has survived many invasions, and showed a culture and a civilization unsurpassed by any on earth, need not be pitied and kept in cotton-wool.

Young India, 19-11-1931

66. SPEECH AT INDIAN MAJLIS

CAMBRIDGE,
November 1, 1931

The attitude of the delegates to the Round Table Conference was not representative of the attitude of the people of India. If the Round Table Conference failed, civil resistance would certainly be revived in India. It would not occur immediately. Civil resistance was a movement under control and would be revived only after the Congress had formally decided to do so after due consideration.

So said Mr. Gandhi speaking at a meeting of the Indian Majlis at Cambridge.

Mr. Gandhi recalled that he addressed the Majlis in 1908.[1]

In reply to a question, Mr. Gandhi said that his solution was the Congress solution, but as that was unacceptable to the Muslims, he proposed either private arbitration or arbitration by a judicial tribunal. If those two alternatives were not accepted, only time could produce a settlement.

Failure to effect a settlement of the Punjab question arose from common distrust among Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims. He warned the hearers against exaggerating the importance of the Punjab question.[2]

Don't think that paralysis has possessed the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh masses in India. Had it been the case, I should not have been here to represent the biggest organization in India. But the

[1] This seems to be an error for 1909, when Gandhiji visited Britain as member of a deputation.

[2] What follows has been extracted from Mahadev Desai's "London Letter" published in *Young India*.

stupidity is confined to the present company. Persent company meaning not this House, but the Indian delegates in the Round Table Conference, including,of course, myself.

Q. Why does not the unemployed rural population go to the towns and join some industry?

A. Even the Royal Commission on Agriculture did not suggest this remedy.

Q. Could you please tell us how an Englishman going to India can co-operate with Indians and serve India?

A Well, the first thing he should do is to see Charlie Andrews and ask him what he did and what he has gone through to serve India. He has dedicated every minute of his life to the service of India, and done the work of several thousand Englishmen. Let the Englishman, therefore, have his first lessons from him. Then, he must go, not with a view to teach, but to learn how to serve India, and if he approaches his task in that spirit, he will certainly teach. But, in doing so, he will efface him-self and merge himself with the Indians, as for instance, Mr, Stokes has done in Simla Hills. Let them all identify themeselves, with the Indians, and try to help them. What cannot real love do? Let all those who are fired with love for India certainly go to India. They are needed there.

The Hindu, 2-11-1931, and *Young India*, 19-11-1931

67. STATEMENT AT THE FEDERAL STRUCTURE COMMITTEE[1]

LONDON,
November 2, 1931

Being silent I would like to express my dissent in writing from the draft report in the following among other matters.

I adhere to the view that one chamber would be the best for the purpose intended to be served. But, subject to certain vital modifications, I would be prepared to support Sir Mirza Ismail's proposal if the body contemplated by him becomes an advisory body.

The Congress is wholly opposed to the special representation of

[1] The Committee had concluded consideration of paragraphs 1-51 of its Third Report which were adopted with a few alterations. Since this was Gandhiji's day of silence, he made the statement in writing which was read out by Lord Sankey.

the interests of landlords, European and Indian commerce and labour. Reprsentatives of these interests should appeal to the common electorate for their election.

The Congress is similarly opposed to the nomination of members. But specialists should have facility given to them to address the chamber on required occasions.

There is much I would like to say with reference to the paragraphs about the States especially on the matter of the representation of the subjects of the States. But I reserve my opinion for the time being.

I adhere to the proposal I had the privilege of making on indirect election or, rather, election through delegates using the villages as units. This scheme is based on adult suffrage to which the Congress is pledged.

M. K. GANDHI

Indian Round Table Conference (Second Sesssion): Proceedings of Federal Structure Committee and Minorities Committee, Vol. I, p. 334

68. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

LONDON,
November 3, 1931

Gandhiji's programme depends entirely on the situation in India. Discussing this, he remarked:

I expect to spend the Xmas on the Continent or India. Everything depends on the situation in India. I am not my own master, but a willing slave of the whole nation.

The Hindustan Times, 7-11-1931

[1] Gandhiji made the statement at the conclusion of his talk with Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald which lasted from 10.15 a.m. to 11 a.m.

69. SPEECH AT CHIDREN'S HOUSE[1]

BOW,
Tuesday [*November 3, 1931*]

He said that if the children received the right kind of training and if the education was what it really should be—to bring out what was best in them—we could have great hopes of the future generation.

The general situation at the present moment is so gloomy and the only ray of light in the gloom is through the children who, profiting from our mistakes and bitterness and jealousies, can leave the world a better place for their being in it.

The Manchester Guardian, 4-11-1931

70. EXTRACTS FROM PROCEEDINGS OF THE FEDERAL STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING[2]

LONDON,
November 4, 1931

MR. GANDHI: There is a reference to "treaties of cession". I do not know whether Sir Samuel Hoare can give any information on this. Will these treaties be secret treaties or open treaties?

SIR SAMUEL HOARE: Lord Reading says that he thinks there are no private treaties of any kind.

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU: That is so.

MR. GANDHI: But will the new treaties all be public?

LORD READING: I think, in a matter of this character, when you are dealing with rights which have to be ceded, that those who are interested in the Constitution, and who are framing it, and who are taking part in it, and who are co-operating with it, must know what the treaty obligations are between the States and the Government of India. . . .

MR. GANDHI: Would you add here that the Congress opinion is, or

[1] This was at the annual meeting of the Children's House at Bow, run under the auspices of the Kingsley Hall Settlement. Gandhiji also attended a party held before the meeting.

[2] The Committee was considering paragraphs 52-66 of is Third Report, which dealt with the Federal Court.

it is contended on behalf of the Congress, that the Federal Supreme Court should be the final Court of Appeal?[1]

Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session) : Proceedings of Federal Structure Committe and Minorities Committee, Vol. I, p. 337

71. SPEECH AT INDIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

LONDON,
November 4, 1931

I really do not know why I was brought here at all. Some of the medical friends came to me and said that, as I had gone to the students, I should accept this invitation. Also, I might say I was almost compelled to come. I have only five minutes. Of this scheme[2] that has been expounded you are the best judges. I really can pronounce no opinion whatsoever.

The Manchester Guardian, 5-11-1931

72. SPEECH AT MEETING OF POSTAL WORKERS' UNION

LONDON,
November 5, 1931

I was almost going to address you as comrades. Because the Congress is trying to undertake in India all life and activities, so we have labour unions, postal unions and several other unions taking up the Congress [work][3] . . . .I know something of the lives of post men in India. Before I come to that, I must tell you what a pleasure it was to come. It was your enthusiasm that brought me, especially the story of your work for the Leper Asylum. I felt irresistibly drawn to you and was so pleased to find that postmen could take such living interest in the oppressed humanity in India. I felt it was too good to be true. This visit of mine is a compliment to you and I congratulate Mr. Cardinal. This work[4] done in India really touches only the fringe of it. Life in India is constituted quite differently from life

[1] The Committee had just concluded consideration of paragraph 58 which said that the right to refer matters to the Court for an advisory opinion must be vested exclusively in the Governor-General, "acting, no doubt in the normal course on his Ministers' advice". Shafa'at Ahmed Khan, Mohammad Shafi, Jinnah and others had opposed the inclusion of the last phrase which seemed to limit the power of the Governor-General and the Chairman had agreed to omit it.

[2] This concerned the Indian Hospital in London.

[3] A few words that follow are not clear.

[4] *ibid*

in the West and we have not in India anything like State-regulated charity. People know the value of charity themselves—so in India philanthropy of people finds its way in a healthy channel. I cannot say that all charity[1]. . . is wisely exercised. You will find in streets lepers staring you in the face and it is difficult to pass through these people to go to a leper asylum. Some have become rich and some are exploiters. In the midst of this position [workers have] dropped from the West. It is one of the few things that has come as a boon from the West.

There is no comparison between your postal employees and ours. Your officers give me joy, but there is nothing that I can offer you by way of comparison. Our men are wretchedly paid people (10/6 per month), exceedingly hard-worked men. Among a few organizations that are ably conducted, this Postal Department is one[2] . . . Postal union exists merely to ventilate grievances. I dare not suggest to my postmen to copy you and to subscribe for lepers. Whilst I congratulate you upon the noble work you are doing for lepers, I would like you to take more and more interest in your fellow-workers in India. They have not got compact organizations. They are struggling to live—and they do not know how to express themselves precisely writing in a foreign tongue. It will be a matter of charity to these younger fellow-workers of yours in India to go to the substance of those matters. You are capable of varying interests. Give of the plenty that God has blessed you with.

You know what the post office does for us—it does censoring work. I have come here to take complete independence for my country in the dictionary sense of the word. Some laugh at me—look at this man coming from a nation so utterly divided against itself. That is because you are being taught false history that if Britain withdrew there would be chaos, darkness invisible, and there is an instance—Kashmir. The Maharaja had to invite the over-worked English soldiers to go and impose order. The whole thing seems to me to stage-managed. I do not mean that the whole trouble was fomented and soldiers were to be asked for at particular hours. No, but it is the policy of divide and rule. The Maharaja could do nothing. You do not know what it is to be under a foreign yoke and to be a subjec race—not holding arms. If that is the condition of the man in the street, condition of the Princes is worse. They cannot do as they choose. They have 21 [gun] salutes, palaces, but they are

[1] In connection with leprosy

[2] A few words that follow are not clear.

prisoners in their own palaces, because while they have power of life and death on their people, they have no real power. They have armies, but are they free to train them in any way the like? These Princes are the blotting -sheet of your armoury. Your thrown-out arms the Princes use. The Nizam is fabulously rich. Could he do anything he liked against Jathas? These are utterly helpless; the restrictions may be well deserved or ill deserved, they are not independent but impotent. At the critical moment they cannot take measures they want to take. Residuary powers vest in the overlord. That is the state of things my whole being rebels against. [Indian Civil Service] is a freemasonry, the greatest secret society in the world therefore, the spell that this Civil Service has cast upon you should be destroyed. I myself showered compliments on them. If I was a loyalist among loyalists, I was delighted, but after 30 years my eyes opened and I found that underneath it was all brass. Therefore, when an Englishman tells me that you cannot defend yourself, he is paying an ill compliment to the British rule in India. We are one of the most ancient nations, depositories of a matchless civilization. Babylonian, Egyptian, Greek—where are they? Ancient India lives in the modern. A civilization which has persisted throughout all ages, through invasions of Genghis and Ghazni, India has lived. There was nothing so hopelessly wrong about India when the British came and they made it fight. We could have put up a fight. That nation which has survived all tests finds itself paralysed—that is not quite true though. I speak as a humble representative of a vast organization, the greatest the world possesses. This is a unique example in history of a world organization which has no army to back it and has carried on a sustained fight for 30 years. It is a romantic story, although I say it in all truth and humility. It is a nation which has hurled defiance against the whole Empire. Look at the other part of the enchanting story—constructive work of an amazing character. Postal Unions, Railway Unions covering thousands of members. We have men who have dedicated their lifetime: Malaviyaji. It is a libel both on England and India to say that we are incapable of managing our affairs. You can certainly mould public opinion. We may have to go through fiery ordeals of suffering and, when you hear of them, you will recall tonight's meeting and give your share. It is bound to count if it knowingly, willingly, intelligently given.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary, 1931. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

73. LETTER TO NICK SOLOMON

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,

LONDON, W.,

November 6, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. Of course I see your sister often.

You must excuse me from the task you have imposed upon me—I have really not the knack for writing messages to order. Without knowing anything of the paper, surroundings and the life, I should not know what to write.

Yours sincerely,

NICK SOLOMON, ESQ.

214 DICKINSON AVENUE

SWARTHMORE, PA., U. S.A.

From a photostat: S. N. 18249

74. LETTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER[1]

LONDON,

November 6, 1931

DEAR PRIME MINISTER,

It is with deep concern that we hear rumours to the effect that provincial autonomy will be introduced as a firt step in the political reconstruction of India, leaving federation and responsibility at the Centre to follow later.

We have read a statement to the countrary, which appeared in the daily Press this morning (namely, November 6). The rumours, however, ar so strong and persistent that we must ask for leave to place our views before you beyond a possibility of doubt.

The needs of the present situation can be met only by a com plete and comprehensive scheme, of which responsibility at the federal Centre must be as integral a part as autonomy of the federating units. To divide the scheme into parts and bring into immediate operation one of the parts and postpone the other is to arouse fears of uncertainty and suspicions of the intentions of the Government.

[1] Presumably drafted by Gandhiji

We realize the importance of the Minorities question, of which no saisfactory solution has yet been found, but, at the same time, it must not be allowed to block the way to a full and comprehensive scheme of responsible government, which alone can provide an adequate settlement of the pressing problems.

We are, dear Prime Minister,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI,

M. M. MALAVIYA, V. S. S. SASTRI, T. B. SAPRU, P. SETHNA, COWASJI JEHANGIR, M. R, JAYAKAR, RAMCHANDRA RAO, (MRS.) SUBBARAYAN, A. RANGASWAMI IYENGAR, PURSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS, G. D. BIRLA, JAMAL MUHAMMAD, S. K. DATTA, UJJAL SINH, MOONJE, (MRS.) SAROJINI NAIDU, TAMBE, RAJA NARENDRANATH, RAMASWAMI MUDALIAR, JADHAV, SAMPURAN SINGH, BAROOAH, N. M. JOSHI, V. V. GIRI, CHIMANLAL SETALVAD AND SHIVA RAO

The Hindustan Times, 11-11-1931

75. INTERVIEW WITH GEORGE BERNARD SHAW[1]

LONDON,

[*November 6, 1931*][2]

Mr. Bernard Shaw had long been wanting to see Gandhiji, and it was not without considerable hesitation that he came. He sat with Gandhiji for close on an hour, interrogating him on a bewildering variety of topics—ethno-graphical, religious, social, political, economic,—and his talk was illumined by his sparkling wit and sardonic humour. "I knew something about you and felt something in you of a kindred spirit. We belong to a very small community on earth". said he. Whilst his other questions were of universal importance, he could not help asking a question about the R.T.C. "Does not the Round Table Conference try your patience?" he asked, and Gandhiji had to confess with sorrow:

It requires more than the patience of a Job. The whole thing is a huge camouflage and the harangues that we are treated to are meant only to mark time. Why not, I ask them, make a clean breast and announce your policy and let us make our choice? But it does not seem to be in the English political nature to do so. It must go by round about and tortuous ways!

Young India, 19-11-1931

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "London Letter". No other report of the interview is available.

[2] The date is taken from Gandhiji's diary.

76. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

LONDON,
November 6, 1931

Q. Why refuse special representation to the Depressed Classes if you are agreeable to surrender to the Muslims and Sikhs?

A. I would gladly resist Muslims and Sikhs also, but special representation for Muslims has been my [stand] since 1916. As a practical man, I realize it is impracticable to escape the legacy of the Lucknow Pact[1], but, as a sincere well-wisher of the Depressed Classes as well of the Nation, I should be failing in my duty if I agreed to special representation to smaller minorities. My offer to Muslims and Sikhs stands, but I certainly expect Muslims and Sikhs to agree to state that they are unable to escape seeking special protection, but that they feel any extension of special protection is undersirable. This is especially so since adult suffrage, for which I stand, ensures the fullest opportunity to all sections who serve the community to enter legislatures.

Q. Since the need for swaraj is imperative, why not surrender to the Depressed Classes also?

A. Because that is not swaraj. I consider it fundamental. I am devoted to untouchables, but do not agree to the vivisection of the community. I am not afraid of the failure of the conference. As I feel it will fail, let us return to the country and seek other ways for swaraj.

The Hindustan Times, 9-11-1931

77. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

LONDON,
[*November 6, 1931*]

Gandhiji, commenting on the East Africa Report, confirmed Mr. Sastri's conclusion. The solution of the problem of overseas Indians lay in India's own inernal freedom. In his inimitable style Gandhiji said:

If we can do something at the centre, the circumference will be all right. When the centre is unfixed, the circumference is merely a make-shift.

The Hindu, 7-11-1931

[1] Between the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League, conceding separate electorates for Muslims.

78. INTERVIEW TO "THE STAR"

[Before *November 7, 1931*]

Gandhiji emphatically denied the suggestion that his supporters have been clamouring for his return to India because of imminent revolutionary trouble. On the contrary he proposed to remain in England until his mission to the Conference was concluded. Even then a whirlwind tour to European capitals might delay his return. He said.

Reports of trouble and unrest have been greatly exaggerated and the Congress attitude misrepresented. I don't fear at the moment any likelihood of a return before the work is finished, but if my presence is desired, I shall of course go back.

The Hindu, 7-11-1931

79. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

Sunday, November 8, 1931

CHI. PREMA,

You unnecessarily worry about developments here. Do not draw any inference from newspaper reports. Have confidence that I will not sell the country's self-respect. My method of work is bound to be different from that of others. You should not, therefore, make comparisons. You will understand in what the difference lies only when I return and explain to you. The better thing, therefore, is not to occupy your mind with what is happening here. Do you understand what I mean?

I have no time to write more. Be satisfied with this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10266

80. LETTER TO INDU PAREKH

LONDON,
November 8, 1931

CHI. INDU,

Your letter is lying before me. I hope you are giving proper attention to your studies. See that you justify my faith in you. I hope you also keep good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 6261

81. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

LONDON,
November 8, 1931

Questioned whether, if eighty per cent of the Congress demand is granted , the Congress would declare a fight, Gandhiji replied:

I am personally not interested in anything less than full hundred per cent. If, however, it is really eighty per cent that is going to be conceded, it is likely that the Congress will consider whether to work or to fight the Constitution.

The Hindustan Times, 11-11-1931

82. DIWALI MESSAGE[1]

LONDON,
November 9, 1931

True Diwali will come when swaraj is won. Let us remember that Diwali represents the annual celebration of the victory of the forces of Rama—that is, non-violence and truth—over those of Ravana—violence and untruth.

The Bombay Chronicle, 10-11-1931

[1] It being his Silence-Day, Gandhiji wrote this messsage on a slip of paper when a correspondent wished him a happy Diwali.

83. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

LONDON,
November 9, 1931

In anticipation of the Congress Working Committee's decision I have already cancelled my Continental engagements. My eye has constantly been on the events in India, but I feel it will be wrong on my part to leave England while the Round Table Conference work keeps me here. I expect that I will be able to decide the date of my departure during this week.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 10-11-1931

84. SPEECH AT FRIENDS' HOUSE[2]

LONDON,
November 9, 1931

You have asked me whether, though there was a voice cry ing in India for freedom, there were enough people ready to shoulder the responsibility of the country. To me the question is quite reasonable. I shall endeavour, as brielfy as I can, to answer this important question. Let me tell you that the real point at issue is the Congress demand on the one hand and, if I can so put it, reluctance on the part of responsible men to respond to that demand on the other. The Congress wants independence which in other words means it wants control over Defence, External Relations and Finance, i.e., partnership at will terminable by either party. That is the substance of the Congress demand, because the Congress honestly believes that the country has got capable hands to take over charge from the foreign Government.

But on the part of responsible men I have been seeing nothing during my wanderings and talks. On the other hand, I find they are raising considerable difficulties in conceding what is the legitimate claim of the Congress. I shall tell you without any modesty that the Congress seeks and claims to represent the whole mass of India. Its

[1] It being his Silence-Day, Gandhiji made the statement in writing at 11 a.m. on his return from his visit to Oxford.

[2] The meeting, held in the evening, was organized by the Fellowship of Reconciliation. The hall was filled to capacity and a large crowd had to go back disappointed.

claim cannot be disputed. You know India is in villages and not in cities like Bombay, Calcutta or Madras. The Congress claims to represent also even the Princes in spite of themselves. Of course, it does not want to usurp their rights, but does justice to them also so long as their claims do not become inconsistent with those of the teeming millions. At the same time, the Congress offers the least resistance to them because it engages itself in putting forth the claims on behalf of the masses.

As you are devoted to seeking avenues for peace, you should have no difficulty in recognizing the claim of the Congress. The history of the past fifteen months before the Delhi Pact tells you that these masses were at war with Government, but it was a peaceful war for the simple reason that the masses had taken the pledge to win freedom without shedding a drop of blood. In this struggle, thousands upon thousands of women and children received lathi blows. Tens of thousands were sent to jail. Women of India rose as if by magic. There was a phenomenal awakening on their part. Thousands of villages responded to the Congress message. I myself do not know why and how I was not prepared for such a splendid response to me. There must have been the hand of God behind. These villages and villagers were all unarmed, because remember, there is compulsory disarmament in my country.

But those who wielded lathis and used bayonets did not realize that these women and villagers had with them an instrument which was not perishable and which was far more effective. That instrument was in the form of love, non-violence and truth against heir force of arms and other brutal methods.

Though the work ‘independence’ has a specific meaning in the English disctionary, to these masses it has also a larger and deeper meaning. They do not understand what ‘Parliament’, ‘Responsible Government’, or ‘Councils’ mean, but the word ‘swaraj’ gives them the meaning in the twinkling of an eye. Today they are paying the land revenue but they do not know why and how much is spent for the country’s purposes. They do not even know that 55 crores are spent over the military. At the same time, remember they have no fear from the frontiers, or the Afghans or any other place. As a matter of fact, the invasions never bother Indian villagers because invasions in India did not begin with the East India Company. We had them even before that period. These invaders did not go beyond the cities. They did not go beyond Delhi and, as you know from the geography

of India. a vast number of its people living in villages were unaffected by the invasions. Moreover, internal quarrels do not affect by the villagers. They therefore need no protection. Today the vast masses are living in abject starvation. They do not know what it is to have two meals a day. They have no bread and butter for themselves, nor a drop of milk for their children.

We have added dignity to their life and they have gained confidence that they will be able to make both ends meet and keep the wolf away from their doors.[1]

The Congress has purified politics. It has almost spiritualized it, though personally I do not like that word. We are out to win freedom with non-violence and truth, by removel of untouchability, and by recognition of every villager as a human being. Our non-co-operation fight signifies that no man can possibly tyrannize over another. Our whole movement is based on morality. We do not believe in the theory of the sweet will of our rulers. You know what we do in India. When authorities say do this, which we know is a wrong order, we say, thank you, we will not do it. We say we won't do anything which injures our self-respect, hurts our human dignity, and in such a struggle even millionaires have discarded their wealth and have ultimately become trustees of their wealth for the betterment of Indian villagers.

If British Ministers do not recognize my claim and want to keep the yoke on our neck, we may once again go through the fiery ordeal because, perhaps, we still need to suffer. Your Government has brought no benefit to my country. It has only emasculated it. It is a shame that we are made incapable of defending ourselves against foreign yoke, and even in our internal affairs. That is terribly disgraceful, but what have we done? We have today created selfless workers in every village. They are our civil servants and they will do anything that he Congress asks them to do. They are capable of governing the country. They know, as I do know, that we have already burnt our boats and are marching with our backs to the wall, because we are working for freedom of the teeming villagers.

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-11-1931

[1] Gandhiji here was referring to the work done by the All-India Spinners' Association.

85. INTERVIEW TO J. M. SEN GUPTA

LONDON,
November 10, 1931

I shall know much this week. I expect nothing either about the particular issues[1] like Chittagong or Hijli or about the Constitution. I have been in touch with everybody. I am staying on so that I may not miss a single opportunity of coming to a settlement or to be put in the wrong. If something does come out of these discussions, the release of detenus is a certainty, but I have little on which to base any hope.

The Hindustan Times, 13-11-1931

86. SPEECH AT LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS[2]

LONDON,
November 10, 1931

The main obstacle to my mission is—myself. So many people tell me that the Congress demand is pitched too high. When I come to grips, they begin to listen to me. Those respon sible are equally guilty inasmuch as they are in no mood to listen. There does not seem to be that atmosphere which is responsive and receptive. Some of the best Englishmen and Englishwomen feel that something has got to be done to define freedom. . . .[3] I have come here out of prison; with me there were thousands. The avowed object of the Settlement with the Viceroy was that Congress should be represented at the Round Table Conference. I and many Congressmen were trying to negotiate this. Generally at a round table people sit who are elected; who have got there is their own right. I do not sit in my own right, I am there on sufferance: our of nominated members you do not expect brilliant results. I have never known a conference with nominated members which has decided on principles.

We have set out to give our own blood. But the attitude here [is]: 'Look at these ungrateful fellows, they do not see the blessings of British rule.' It is not only the official mind, but those capable of

[1] The interviewer had given Gandhiji an account of the sitaution in Bengal.

[2] According to a Press report "the theatre of the London School of Economics did not suffice to accommodate the members of the School's Students' Union who assembled to hear Mahatma Gandhi. The audience consisted mostly of English students and was perhaps the largest English audience Mahatma Gandhi had addressed in England".

[3] Some words are not clear here.

shaping public mind. It was Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman who said that good government was no substitute for self-government. Those who are concerned do not feel that British rule has done good. Gokhale said it has emasculated us. How has that nation suddenly become conscious of its strength? The obstacle is the colossal ignorance of the best of Englishmen. The ignorance is nearly appalling. It is misinformation, false history. The Press contains nothing of what happens in India. Chittagong is a black page in history. Officers ran amok and created havoc on unarmed population. In Hijli innocent men were shot down; 16 were seriously injured. I would condemn attempts on lives of Englishmen in the severest language possible.

But what does this mean? There is a vital connection between Chittagong, Hijli and these attacks.

The whole of India is seething with unrest for which there are definite causes, and in which British rule is involved. Moral and material progress of India? The sum total is nil. See what a hurdle race I have to run. I give you absolute assurance that day and night I am trying my very best to reach a solution and am putting no obstacle in the way. We have burnt our boats and we have our backs to the wall. I want freedom in the name of untouchables, poor masses. I would sacrifice a million lives, and that freedom would be cheaply bought. Voluntary sacrifice of a million lives is infinitely preferable to the death millions are undergoing by inches. I cannot tolerate this. . . .[1] The only restriction is that we shall not soil our fingers with the blood of our opponents and we will not descend to untruth.

We won't have the tremendous weight of an army of occu pation. . .[2] We pay the bulk of our savings to our door-keepers.

You have no door-keepers, only uneualled matchless policemen. The difference between freedom and slavery. The axe would descend upon the military budget. When Mir Alam Khan attacked me, an Englishman saved my life and his daughter sang "Lead Kindly Light". Are the ten thousand Mussalmans who went to jail going to be traitors?. . .[3] Immediately the wedge is withdrawn we shall close our ranks. If the God of the Afghans tells them that they should take our lives, we shall invoke that very God—though they are taking the name of that God five times a day. If God wants it , we will challenge Him too. Let us shed the fear of man.

[1] Some words are not clear here.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*

A NEGRO STUDENT: You love an Englishman as much as an Indian and yet you dislike British Government. Now British people make up the Government.

GANDHIJI : Man is superior to his method. A man's method may be vile, and yet you may not aptly apply the adjective to the man himself. . .[2] British system is Satanic. But, in spite of British system being Satanic, I love the British like my brothers. I have a boy who has rebelled against me. Yet I love that boy equally as I do the other brothers. I detest his methods and ways. I have learnt from domestic law that, if I have humanity in me, I should love the Britisher whom God has made. And yet I detest his method and am doing my best to destroy his method. . . .[3]

In the war of non-violence we walk in the fear of God, give no secret information, brook no treacherousness.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai.

87. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,

LONDON, W.,

November 11, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

You have been most diligent in writing to me and to Mahadev and encouraging others to write to me about the much-talked-of visit of mine to America. I do not know, however, wehther it was at all necessary for you to take all this trouble either for yourself or others. I never entertained the slightest doubt about the wisdom of your judgment, and I have been absolutely clear in my statements to every Pressman that I would not go to America until you had decided to bring me out there. Having made up my mind to trust your judgment, was I not right in telling all and sundry that you were the keeper of my conscience in this matter ?

Of course, it has thrown a little more responsibility upon you, but your shoulders are broad enough to bear it and I am saved a lot of worry in arguing with importunate friends and reporters.

I met Mr. Bomanji fairly often during the few days that he was here. He is now on his way to India.

Yours sincerely,

THE REVEREND JOHN HAYNES HOLMES, D.D.

From a photostat : S.N. 18283

88. LETTER TO H. H. MONTGOMERY

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,

LONDON, W.,

November 11, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have kept your long letter by me all these days to be able to send you just a line of thanks for it and for the sentiments expressed therein. Charlie Andrews also shared it with me and he found great joy to read the sentences about him.

Yours sincerely,

THE RIGHT REVEREND BISHOP MONTGOMERY

NEW PARK

MOVILLE

CO. DONEGAL, IRELAND

From a photostat : S. N. 18131

89. LETTER TO VIVIAN BUTLER BURKE

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,

LONDON, W.,

November 11, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have seen your letter addressed to a mutual friend. I have no knowledge of a previous letter from you.

As you have rightly surmised, it is true that my programme outside London is regulated by Mr. Andrews. I do not share the view that you hold.[1] I have the highest regard for Mr. Andrews. I have known him intimately for nearly twenty years, and have had no occasion whatever to repent of having followed his advice.[2]

[1] The addressee had said it was a pity that Gandhiji's plans were left to C.F. Andrews and quoted an Irish saying: "One must never trust the horns of a bull and the smile of an Englishmen."

[2] As to this the addressee, writing on November 14, said:". . . I only know Mr. Andrews through Romain Rolland's book about you: it was Indian followers of your own who told me, in former years, that they did not trust him, and it was suggested to

I am very sorry to inform you that my contemplated visit to Ireland is likely to be dropped, because of a peremptory summons from India. If it is at all possible, however, I hope to visit Ireland, in which case I shall stay with a private friend.

Yours sincerely,

MISS VIVIAN BUTLER BURKE
DUGORT
WESTPORT, CO. MAYO

From a photostat: S.N. 18207

90. LETTER TO F. B. FISHER

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
November 11, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have been receiving your very warm letters. I have time just to say this.

With reference to the American visit, my own instinct was that the time had not arrived to visit America. That instinct still abides. I had made up my mind when the visit was first talked about that I would do as Dr. Haynes[1] advised me. This was about 3 years ago or more when the visit was first talked about.

As you know we have since met. He was in London just waiting or me, and I have told him that I would be guided entirely by him in connection with the pressing invitations that I received from America on my landing here.

me that he might have been the cause of my invitation to Ireland having been ignored. I know of one case where one of the rare Englishmen who have consistently and courageously spoken for India's right to complete freedom, and who wrote to you, was answered slightingly by Mr. Andrew's secretary. As I am not a believer in Christianity myself—finding in Eastern religions what appeals to me most—I have an instinctive mistrust of Christian missionaries! —especially where Christian or Imperial interests are at stake! There are very, very few Englishmen willing to see their Empire destroyed for the sake of justice."

To which Gandhiji authorized the following reply: "Mr. Gandhi has your letter. You did a monstrous injustice to Mr. Andrews and yourself in referring to Mr. Andrews as you did, for which you will be sorry when you realize it."

[1] Dr. John Haynes Holmes

Dr. Holmes and several other friends are decidedly of the opinion that it would be a mistake for me to go to America. Your decision therefore has come upon me as a surprise. You are just as dear a friend to me as Dr. Holmes; I shall therefore look forward to the result of your conversations with him. You know Richard Gregg too. He also supports Dr. Holmes and enforces the opinion by adding that winter will not be the proper season for me to visit America.

Yours sincerely,

THE RIGHT REVEREND BISHOP FISHER
THE FIRST METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

From a photostat: S.N. 18282

91. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

LONDON,
November 11, 1931

I do not think the Conference must fail. If that were my conviction I should not stay here at all. What I believe is that, unless something startling happens and unless all that is good in English life conspires together to bring about a satisfactory result, the Conference is likely to fail.

Q. If the Conferece were to fail, to whom would you apportion the blame ?

A. I should distribute the blame evenly between the Government and he whole of the Conference delegates. I am not prepared to blame one party along, but I am convinced that, if the National Government really wills it, the Conference need not fail at all.

Q. How long do you think it will take you to be satisfied that such a will is manifest in the National Government?

A. I shall know in a week. I shall continue to hope until I have positive evidence that nothing is to be gained from my further stay in England. I am not going to think of civil disobedience as long as there is the slightest vestige of hope, and I can give my absolute assurance to all concerned that there will be no civil disobedience in connection with the Conference as long as there is a possibility of carrying on negotiations such as I am engaged in at the present moment. I have come here with a fixed determination of making every effort humanly possible to achieve an honourable settlement—honourable both to Great Britain and to India.

In a reference to the administrators in England, Mr. Gandhi said:

The administrators here, so far as I am concerned, [*sic*] but I have a suspicion that the information they have about India and what is going on there at present is at variance with the true situation as I know it, and this is a terrible handicap in spite of all their goodwill and good wishes. It has been a matter of the deepest regret to me that, for reasons I cannot understand, events of the gravest importance do not appear in the Press, and I doubt if the authorities here know them from other sources.

The atrocities that took place in Chittagong under the very nose of the officials , and as the report before me says, "with their connivance, if not direct encouragement," seems to me to be unknown to them and certainly has not been noticed by the Press, and this is only one out of the many instances that I could quote.

Yorkshire Post, 12-11-1931

92. SPEECH AT CONFERENCE OF DELEGATES TO R.T.C.

LONDON,
November 11, 1931

At a conference of the Round Table Conference delegates this evening, Mahatma Gandhi fully explained his conception of provincial autonomy, which is understood to differ entirely from what is outlined in the Simon Report and the Government of India despatch. Mahatma Gandhi's main idea contemplates unfettered popular control of all subjects, Governors not possessing any reserve powers, while the provinces should be so completely autonomous that interference from the Centre in such matters as internal disorders will be impossible except at the Provinces, request. Moreover the Provinces should be free to refuse contributions to the Central Government if they so desire.

The Hindustan Times, 14-11-1931

93. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

[Before *November 12, 1931*][1]

The whole report is garbled,[2] and contradicts what I am prepared to accept. It is wholly unnecessary for me to go into the details. It is sufficient for me to say unequivocally that there is no difference in substance between what Mr. Sastri and other friends want and what I am prepared to accept.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-11-1931

94. SPEECH AT COMMONWEALTH OF INDIA LEAGUE[3]

LONDON,
November 12, 1931

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

It gives me great pleasure to be in your midst this morning. The change that you have made in the working of your object is a good change, but I would suggest that you went a step further and have as your object *purna* swaraj which is the Indian rendering of complete independence. The original objective of the Indian National Congress was swaraj, but since certian conventional meanings grew up round this term, the Congress, in order to make its claim quite clear, added one word '*purna*', which means complete.

I have always been of the opinion that a Committee of the nature of the Commonwealth of India League should avoid affiliation to the Congress, in order that it may retain an independent existence, that it may be at liberty to exercise an independent judgment, thereby acquiring a greater influence with public opinion in this country than if it were merely the mouthpiece of the Indian National Congress. I think it would be a calamity for an organization of this nature to occupy the position merely of a creation

[1] The statement was orginally published in *The Hindu* of this date.

[2] The reference is to the rumours that Gandhiji was strongly inclined to accept Provincial Autonomy and that his attitude was not shared by Srinivasa Sastri, Sapru and others.

[3] This was a meeting of the Executive Committee and Parliamentary Committee of the League. Among those present were Horrabin, Chairman , and V.K. Krishna Menon, Secretary.

of the Congress. I have also always advised the Congress against affiliating outside. Indian Congress has in the past affiliated with England[1] but it has found it a mistake, and is now refusing affiliation with America and other countries. What you have done in remaining outside the Congress is certainly the very best thing.

As to the work which you are doing in this country, my opinion is that nothing is going to come out of this Conference. I have made this statement, but please do not think for a moment that I am, therefore, now doing nothing,or that I am obstructing the Conference in its passage towards the achievement of a Constitution for India. On the contrary, the less hope I see from outside the more efforts I have been making to achieve success from the inside. I do not want to put my country through any fiery ordeal again, but if necessary I shall do so, and I know that it will be a much more terrible struggle this time even than before, and therefore, I shall make every attempt of which a human being is capable to bring about an honourable settlement through negotiations. But remember I shall work inside the three corners of my mandate. That means I believe in that mandate and anything less than the mandate would not be enough. We must have control over Finance and the Army. However impracticable this may appear to men over here, the Congress believes that it can handle these matters as successfully, nay, even more successfully, than the Government has done.

The manipulation of the Exchange had been started before the time of Lord Curzon and through this policy 85 per cent of the population of India had suffered badly. The fixing of the rupee to the pound at a fixed price of one shilling and six pence has meant that the Indian agriculturists have to sell at prices that will not even cover the cost of production. Even the advisers of the India Office in this country have admitted that, if the rupee was set free, the agriculturists would profit. The price of imports would certainly rise, but the mass of the Indian people is so little dependent upon imports that it would not be affected. The difficulty is that the majority of Britishers have no knowledge of Indian conditions, and they draw the wrong comparisons.

[1] The Congress had set up the British Committee in London which functioned till it was abolished by a resolution at the annual session of the Congress at Nagpur in 1920

The rupee has been sustained to make a greater scope for exports from this country to India. Each time that the rupee has been fixed it has been against the advice of Indian experts. The Government is the party that has benefited. By fixing the rupee to the pound it has saved itself from insolvency. If financial control were in the hands of Indians, the financial policy would be pursued in the interests of the agriculturists, and not so much in the interests of the exporters.

India is an exporting country, and in nine out of every ten years her exports have exceeded her imports, but the balance of gain has been used either for Civil Service pensions or as capital for what I consider wild-cat schemes such as Sukkur Barrage, etc.

Mahatma Gandhi then referred to the scanty Press space that has been given to the Government's acknowledgment of hopeless miscalculations over this scheme. From a small corner in the Press he had seen that the actual cost of the irrigation scheme was twice of that estimated. Mahatma Gandhi stated that he had no confidence in these large schemes which the Government put forward as they would not benefit the small agriculturists, but merely serve to strengthen and extend the capitalist system.

Mahatma Gandhi then reasserted the Congress demand or complete control of finance and fiscal policy. He said, India must not be wrapped in cotton-wool. She must be given the chance even of making atrocious blunders. But in spite of every effort, he added, he had failed to impress this fact upon the official mind, which was fed upon blue-books and histories of India written by Englishmen, that is , the conquerors. He found himself baffled by the wall of ignorance around him in this country. Continuing, he said:

Hence it is necessary that some of you in England should give yourselves up to the task of enlightening this ignorance, to start a hurricane propaganda and the knowledge that so many in this country are working for us will perhaps soften the agony of those who are suffering over there. We shall treasure the knowledge of your friendship, and be heartened by you as Emily Hobhouse heartened those who suffered in South Africa during the Boer War. I ask you to help us, and if we are losing heart, perhaps send us a cablegram saying, ‘Never mind, we Englishmen are watching and wishing you success.’ I ask you to pray for us, anything that will give us encour- ragement and sympathy. But please do it on one condition, that you believe that our cause is worthy. If you think that we are making extravagant demands, then tell us that and reject our demands. Then, if we see that

friends are forsaking us, we shall perforce reconsider our position and think again whether what we demand is just.But in the last resort our reliance is on God. We do not ask our freedom as a gift, but as the fruit of our labours and sufferings. I came here to negotiate because I thought we had suffered enough. If the Conference fails, I shall know that India must suffer still more to impress this country with the justice of her demand.

Mr. Horrabin then asked Mahatma Gandhi what particular sources of information would be available to the League in its work of spreading true information about India, and Mahatma Gandhi said that the resources of the Congress would always be at the disposal of the Leauge. He said:

Ask for whatever you want, and it will be given to you at once. We shall not hesitate to send information by cable if necessary, also all the literature that you need. If you like, we could arrange to send you a weekly service of news. Ask, and we shall supply and if there are any difficulties with the authorities over information we have given you, please call upon us to substantiate whatever news we have given you. Put us to the proof and if we are wrong we shall apologize, or you will apologize on our behalf to the India Office. We shall be honest and shall not exaggerate or mislead because the success of our struggle does not depend upon false or exaggerated information. The policy of the Congress is to admit errors immediately and to expose every exaggeration of which its members have been guilty.

Miss Ellen Wilkinson asked Mahatma Gandhi if he thought it advisable to start a campaign about the political prisoners in India. Mahatma Gandhi in reply pointed out that, before such a campaign could be successfully begun, detailed information was necessary, as each case stood on its own merits.

Just at present the attention of the authorities could not be sufficiently engaged, but later on, if the Conference broke down then would be the time to start such a campaign. The Congress offices will always be ready to send all the information that is needed, and you must remember that it is an obstinate Government that you have to deal with.

Asked what he considered were the chief agencies responsible for the non-success of the Conference, Mahatma Gandhi replied that he believed the fault to lie equally with the Indians for failing to reach a settlement over the communal question, and with the British Government for the wrong lead that it had given in the early stages of the Conference. By making the communal question the central issue in the whole scheme, the Government had laid the

way open for Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims to pull their own ways. In reality, the communal question was only one of many issues, and the Conference was not necessarily the instrument to bring about a communal settlement. When the Government called together the Conference, it knew that the communal leaders had not come to an agreement and by bringing the communal question to the fore immediately the Government prepared the way for disunion, and for perpetuating that disunion. Also one must remember that the Conference is a packed Conference of non-responsible members. What the British Government did not realize was that the Congress is the nation as far as swaraj is concerned. Had the Government recognized this instead of treating the Congress as just one among the other parties, all this time would not have been wasted.

I am confident that ultimately it is only with the Congress that your Government will have to reckon. As for myself, although I may not represent Sir Mahomed Shafi, I do claim to represent the Mussalmans; though I do not represent Dr. Ambedkar, I do represent the Depressed Classes; though not Dr. Dutta, but the Christians.

These people do not want separate representation. I claim that 330 millions of the Indian people are represented by the Congress. The interests of all classes must be subservient to the interests of the masses. It is this representative character of the Congress that is not recognized by the Government and herein lies the chief blame.

When asked whether he did not think it was essential, should the Conference break down, that he should explain his position either at a public meeting or at least to a group people in this country, Mahatma Gandhi said that he was very anxious to have an opportunity for putting forward his reasons for action as he did, that he very much wished to speak to a group, but that his original promise not to hinder the Government would prevent his making any public declaration.

In discussing the question of the multiplicity of organizations in this country working for India, Mahatma Gandhi urged that every effort should be made at amalgamation of these organizations. All energies must be concentrated, he added, into work or thorugh one channel, and that, in the main, the burden should fall upon English people who could act with Indian advice. His advice to the Commonwealth of India League was to widen their organization as much as possible and to invite co-operation from all possible quarters.

The Hindustan Times, 4-12-1931

95. TELEGRAM TO LORD IRWIN

LONDON,
November 13, 1931

CONFERENCE CRUMBLING DOWN. LEAVING LONDON NEXT THURSDAY.[1]

The Hindustan Times, 16-11-1931

96. INTERVIEW TO "NEWS CHRONICLE"[2]

LONDON,
November 13, 1931

Q. I want to know, Mr. Gandhi, whether you are going to sign the request to the Prime Minister to arbitrate in the dispute between the Hindus and Muslims, which seems now almost certain to bring about the failure of the Round Table Conference.

A. I am afraid I cannot do so. I should have no objection to Mr. MacDonald personally as arbitrator. Do not mistake me there.

But to ask him, as Prime Minister, to arbitrate would be to petition the British Government to do so and that would be to put myself in a false position in respect of the Congress mandate.

The Government, on its side, would at once conceive itself to be in a position to bargain on matters in which, in my view, no bargain is possible—I have in mind, for example, the Army and Finance.

Mr. Gandhi went on to say that his refusal to sign the request did not mean that Mr. MacDonald need be prevented from arbitrating. He continued:

I myself would agree to any solution of the minorities problem accpeted by the Hindus, the Muslims and the Sikhs.

But, for me, the minorities problem does not travel beyond the three communities, and if arbitration were contemplated with regard to the representation on the legislatures of the other minorities, I could not tolerate it. In my view that would be the negation of responsible government.

I asked Mr. Gandhi whether, in view of the general feeling that the Conference was certian now to end in calamitous failure, he himself preserved any hope.

He answered that he was not yet altogether hopeless, although at the moment he saw little on the horizon to justify it. He added:

[1] Gandhiji actually left London on December 5, 1931.
[2] Gandhiji was interviewed by the paper's Foreign Editor.

But I myself and others are using every possible means and sparing no effort to save the Conference even at the eleventh hour.

If we have to go back empty-handed as we are, I think the unavoidable consequences in India will be deplorable.

Q. But may I not take it, Mr. Gandhi, that you will be ready to put into effect so much of the new scheme as has been agreed upon in London ?

A. I would gladly do so, but without the co-operation of the three communities nothing could be done. It is impossible that the provincial legislatures should come into being until that is assured.

Provincial autonomy is impossible without a statutory guarantee of autonomy at the Centre. We have experienced enough already to show that autonomy in the Provinces cannot be worked without complete Central responsibility.

What the public hitherto has failed to realize is that there is a connection between the Centre and the Provinces so vital that the provinces would be entirely helpless without autonomy in the Centre.

Q. And what of the proposed Constituent Assembly, the Central Convention, which it is said had been under discussion? Does that mean that it has been discussed between the Government and the Indian leaders ?

A. It has been discussed with me. But I am afraid the discussion is already at an end.

I could not possibly agree to the meeting of any such Assembly without a statutory guarantee of the same indispensable responsibility at the Centre.

I have dared to discuss provincial a part from Central autonomy simply in order to show the impossibility of creating autonomous provinces without the guarantee of Central responsibility—and yet, even some of my friends in Fleet Street have reported me as having endorsed provincial autonomy as a first instalment.

This is a thing I have never contemplated, a part from a guarantee that responsible government at the Centre will come into being almost immediately after the working of provincial authority.

I say 'almost immediately' because I have contemplated a short interval in view of certain difficulties represented to me.

Under my proposal the same statute will provide for provincial autonomy and complete responsibility at the Centre and will create the machinery for bringing into existence the Federal and Central structure.

News Chronicle, 14-11-1931

97. SPEECH AT MINORITIES COMMITTEE MEETING

LONDON,
November 13, 1931

PRIME MINISTER AND FELLOW DELEGATES,

It is not without very considerable hesitation and shame that I take part in the discussion on the minorities question. I have not been able to read with the care and attention that it deserves the memorandum[1] sent to the Delegates on behalf of certain minorities and received this morning.

Before I offer a few remarks on that memorandum, with your permission and with all the deference and respect that are your due, I would express my dissent from the view that you put before this Committee, that the inability to solve the communal question was hampering the progress of Constitution-building, and that it was an indispensable condition prior to the building of any such Constitution. I expressed at an early stage of the sittings of this Committee that I did not share that view. The experience that I have since gained has confirmed me in that view; and, if you will pardon me for saying so, it was because of the emphasis that was laid last year and repeated this year upon this difficulty, that the different communities were encou- raged to press with all the vehemence at their command their own respective views.

It would have been against human nature if they had done otherwise. All of them thought that this was the time to press forward their claims for all they were worth, and I venture to suggest again that this very emphasis has defeated the purpose which I have no doubt it had in view . Having received that encouragement, we have failed to

[1] The memorandum, submitted "on behalf of the Mohammedans, the Depressed Classes, the Anglo-Indians, The Europeans and a considerable section of Indian Christian groups", demanded *inner alia* that these communities "shall have representation in all legislatures through separate electorates. . . provided that, after a lapse of ten years, it will be open to Muslims in the Punjab and Bengal and any minority communities in any other provinces to accept joint electorates. . . With regard to the Depressed Classes no change to joint electorates... shall be made until after 20 years. . . ." Special claims were advanced on behalf of Mussalmans, the Depressed Classes, the Anglo-Indians and the Europeans. The document was signed by the Aga Khan, Dr. Ambedkar, Rao Bahadur Pannirselvam, Sir Henry Gidney and Sir Hubert Carr.

arrive at an agreement. I therefore associate myself entirely with the view, expressed by Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, that it is not this question which is the fulcrum, it is not this question which is the central fact, but the central fact is the Constitution-building.

I am quite certain that you did not convence this Round Table Conference and bring us all six thousand miles away from our homes and occupations to settle the communal question, but you convened us, you made deliberate declarations that we were invited to come here, to share the process of Constitution-building, and that, before we went away from your hospitable shores, we should have the certain conviction that we had built up an honourable and a respectable framework for the freedom of India, and that it awaited only the imprimatur of the approval of the House of Commons and the House of Lords.

Now, at the present moment, we are face to face with a wholly different situation, namely, that, because there is no communal settlement agreed to by us, there is to be no building of the Constitution, and that, as a last resort and as the last touch, you will announce the policy of His Majesty's Government in connection with the Constitution and all the matters that may arise from it. I cannot help feeling that it would be a sorry ending to a Conference which was brought into being with so much trumpeting and with so much hope excited in the minds and in the breasts of many people.

Coming to this document, I accept the thanks that have been given to me by Sir Hubert Carr. Had it not been for the remarks that I made when I shouldered that burden, and had not it been for my utter failure to bring about a solution, Sir Hubert Carr rightly says he would not have found the very admirable solution that he has been able, in common with the other minorities, to present to this Committee for consideration and finally for the consideration and approval of His Majesty's Government.

I will not deprive Sir Hubert Carr and his associates of the feeling of satisfaction that evidently actuates them, but, in my opinion, what they have done is to sit by the carcass, and they have performed the laudable feat of dissecting that carcass.

At representing the predominant political organization in India, I have no hesitation in saying to His Majesty's Government, to those friends who seek to represent or who think they represent the mino-rities mentioned against their names, and indeed to the whole

world, that this scheme is not one designed to achieve responsible government, but is undoubtedly a scheme designed to share power with the bureaucracy.

If that is the intention—and it is the intention running through the whole of that document—I wish them well, and the Congress is entirely out of it. The Congress will wander no matter how many years in the wilderness rather than lend itself to a proposal under which the hardy tree of freedom and responsible government can never grow.

I am astonished that Sir Hubert Carr should tell us that they have evolved a Scheme which, being designed only for a temporary period, would not damage the cause of nationalism, but, at the end of ten years. we would all find ourselves hugging one another and throwing ourselves into one another's laps. My political experience teaches me a wholly different lesson. If this responsible government, whenever it comes, is to be inaugurated under happy auspices, it should not undergo the process of vivisection to which this scheme subjcts it; it is a strain which no government can possibly bear.

There is the coping-stone to the structure, and I am surprised, Mr. Prime Minister, that you allowed yourself to mention this as if it was an indisputable fact, namely, that the proposals may be taken as being acceptable to well over one hundred and fifteen millions of people or about 46 per cent of the population of India. You had a striking demonstration of the inaccuracy of this figure. You have had, on behalf of the women, a complete repudiation of social representation, and as very happen to be one-half of the population of India, this 46 per cent is somewhat reduced, but not only that: the Congress may be a very insignificant organization, but I have not hesitated to make the claim, and I am not ashamed to repeat the claim, that the Congress claims to represent 85 per cent of the population not merely of British India but of the whole of India.

Subject to all the questions that may be raised, I repeat the claim with all the emphasis at my command that the Congress, by right of service, claims to represent that population which is called the agricultural population of India, and I would accept the challenge, if the Government were to issue the challenge, that we should have a referendum in India, and you would immediately find whether the Congress represents them or whether it does not represent them. But I go a step further. At the present moment if

you were to examine the register of the Congress, if you were to examine the records of the prisons of India, you would find that the Congress represented and represents on its register a very large number of Moham-medans. Several thousand Mohammedans went to jail last year under the banner of the Congress. The Congress today has several thousand Mohammedans on its register. The Congress has thousands of untouchables on its register. The Congress has Indian Christians also on its register. I do not know that there is a single community which is not represented on the Congress register. With all defence to the Nawab Sahib of Chhatari, even landlords and even mill-owners and millionaires are represented there. I admit that they are coming to the Congress slowly, cautiously, but the Congress is trying to serve them also. The Congress undoubtedly represents Labour. Therefore, this claim that the proposals set forth in this memorandum are acceptable to well over one hundred and fifteen millions of poeple needs to be taken with a very great deal of reservation and caution.

One word more and I shall have done. You have had presented to you and circulated to the members, I hope, the Congress proposal in connection with the communal problem[1]. I venture to submit that, of all the schemes that I have seen, it is the most workable scheme, but I may be in error there. I admit that it has not commended itself to the representatives of the communities at this table, but it has commended itself to the representatives of these very classes in India. It is not the creation of one brain, but it is the creation of a Committee on which various important parties were represented.

Therefore, you have got on behalf of the Congress that scheme; but the Congress has also suggested that there should be an impartial arbitration. Through arbitration all over the world people have adjusted their differences, and the Congress is always open to accept any decision of an arbitration court. I have myself ventured to suggest that there might be appointed by the Government a judicial tribunal which would examine this case and give its decision. But if none of these things are acceptable to any of us, and if this is the *sine qua non* of any Constitution-building, then I say it will be much better for us that we should remain without so called responsible Government than that we should accept this claim.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Minorities Committee Meeting", 8-10-1931

I would like to repeat what I have said before, that while the Congress will always accept any solution that may be acceptable to the Hindus, the Mohammedans and the Sikhs, Congress will be no party to special reservation or special electrorates for any other minori-ties. The Congress will always endorse clause or reservations as to funda-mental rights and civil liberty. It will be open to everybody to be placed on the voters' roll and to appeal to the common body of the electorates.

In my humble opinion, the proposition enunciated by Sir Hubert Carr is the very negation of responsible Government, the very negation of nationalism. If he says that, if you want a live European on the legislature, then he must be elected by the Europeans themselves, well, Heaven help India if India has to have representatives elected by these several, special, cut-up groups. That European will serve India as a whole, and the European only, who commands the approval of the common electorate and not the mere Europeans. This very idea suggests that the responsible Government will always have to contend against these interests which will always be in conflict against the national spirit—against this body of 85 per cent of the agricultural population. To me it is an unthinkable thing. If we are going to bring into being responsible Government and if we are going to get real freedom, then I venture to suggest that it should be the proud privilege and the duty of every one of these so-called special classes to seek entry into the Legislatures through this open door, through the election and approval of the common body of electorates. You know that Congress is wedded to adult suffrage, and under adult suffrage it will be open to all to be placed on the voters' list. More than that nobody can ask.

One word more as to the so-called untouchables.

I can understand the claims advanced by other minorities but the claims advanced on behalf of the untouchables, that to me is the "unkindest cut of all". It means the perpetual bar-sinister. I would not sell the vital interests of the untouchables even for the sake of winning the freedom of India. I claim myself in my own person to represent the vast mass of untouchables. Here I speak not merely on behalf of the Congress, but I speak on my own behalf, and I claim that I would get, if there was a referendum of the untouchables, their vote, and that I would top the poll. And I would work from one end of India to the other to tell the untouchables that separate electorates

and separate reservation is not the way to remove this bar-sinister, which is the shame, not of them, but of orthodox Hinduism.

Let this Committee and let the whole world know that today there is a body of Hindu reformers who are pledged to remove this blot of untouchability. We do not want on our register and on our census untouchables classified as a seprate class. Sikhs may remain as such in perpetuity, so may Mohammedans, so may Europeans. Will untouchables remain untouchables in perpetuity? I would far rather that Hinduism died than that Untouchability lived. Therefore, with all my regard for Dr. Ambedkar, and for his desire to see the untouchables uplifted, with all my regard for his ability, I must say in all humility that here the great wrong under which he has laboured and perhaps the bitter experiences that he has undergone have for the moment warped his judgment. It hurts me to have to say this, but I would be untrue to the cause of the untouchables, which is as dear to me as life itself, if I did not say it. I will not bargain away their rights for the kingdom of the whole world. I am speaking with a due sense of responsibility, and I say that it is not a proper claim which is registered by Dr. Ambedkar when he seeks to speak for the whole of the untouchables of India. It will create a division in Hindusim which I cannot possibly look forward to with any satisfaction whatsoever. I do not mind untouchables , if they so desire, being converted to Islam or Christianity. I should tolerate that, but I cannot possibly tolerate what is in store for Hinduism if there are two divisions set forth in the villages. Those who speak of the political rights of untouchables do not know their India, do not know how Indian society is today constructed, and therefore I want to say with all the emphasis that I can command that, if I was the only person to resist this thing, I would resist it with my life.

Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session): Proceedings of Federal Structure Committee and Minorities Committee, Vol. I, pp. 543-4

98. SPEECH AT WESTMINSTER SCHOOL[1]

LONDON,
November 13, 1931

At the present moment the Conference seems to have fizzled out and there seems to be no ray of hope in the impenetrable gloom. But some of your great men are trying their best to avoid a catastrophe. If they fail and if the Conference ultimately ends in a fiasco, as I fear it will, there will be thousands upon thousands ready to go through the fire of suffering, and will not quail before the fiercest repression. We are promised that the repression that is coming will be ten times as fierce as last year's . But I shall pray that humanity may be spared that exhibition of brute power.

Young India, 26-11-1931

99. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

LONDON,
November 14, 1931

Q. What is your attitude towards the Prime Minister's request that all parties should agree to his arbitration ?

A. I am unable to agree that a signed request should be made to the Premier to arbitrate, but I must explain that I am not opposed either to Mr. MacDonald personally or to the principle of arbitration. On the contrary, I have always pleaded for parties agreeing to arbitration, but I must refuse to be a party to requesting the Premier to arbitrate because the Premier makes the suggestion not in his private capacity as Mr. MacDonald, but as the Premier where he is placed by the Cabinet. He, therefore, speaks on behalf of the Government and I cannot be a party to the Government deciding this issue. It is because I have a high sense of honour that I refuse to seek the obligation of the Government hand. I cannot compromise as regards the Congress political demands. I can accept only such adjustments as are manifestly in the interest of India. Therefore, I will accept no obligation.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's “London Letter”. No other report of the speech is available.

Q. Does this mean that there can be no response to the Premier's request?

A. No, there can be. In fact, friends are considering addressing a joint letter to the Premier leaving me out. In fact, my consent to the Premier arbitrating is totally unnecessary since I represent the Congress and not any community. Also because, in terms of the Congress solution, I am bound to accept any settlement acceptable to Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims. Therefore, if Premier MacDonald arbitrates and Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims accept it, I am bound to accept the same. There is also another way. All the parties may sign a letter accepting arbitration on which the parties might nominate Mr. MacDonald as arbitrator. But I must repeat that such an arbitration must concern Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims. If any award deals with other communities, I cannot take a tolerant position, because I am bound to resist every attempt to vivisect India converting the nation's legislature into a communal cockpit.

Q. But you promised, speaking at the Federal Committee, to provide through convention or co-option adequate representation to smaller minorities, in case they were not elected through the open door ?

A. I have not withdrawn the offer. It stands. I accept as legitimate demands made on behalf of smaller minorities that, if they were not elected through the open door the defect must be remedied. I am prepared to provide through convention or co-option, but would not agree to separate electorates or special reservation.

Q. Are other delegates likely to approach the Premier?

A I do not know. The delegates discussed the question, but were unable to reach any decision.

Q. Is there any prospect of a communal settlement now or in the immediate present?

A. I can say no effort will be spared for that purpose, but I see no prospects.

Q. Will you continue your efforts to solve the communal deadlock when you return to India?

A. Certainly. I am sure to reach an agreement in India, though I have no concrete plans just now.

Q. Whose scheme is this to introduce provincial autonomy into the provincial legislatures electing Constituent Assembly?

A. It is correct to say that the scheme was discussed in

A. It is correct to say that the scheme was discussed in Government circles with me and also other delegates. I am unable to say whether it is Government 's scheme, but it is not proposed by any delegate.

Q. Is it true that you are agreeable to the scheme with slight modifications?

A. No, I am totally opposed to the scheme of provincial autonomy as a first instalment. The only difference between others and myself is, they refused to discuss this scheme, while I dared to discuss the scheme.

Q. What are the conditions attached to your scheme?

A. Firstly, the statute which embodies provincial autonomy must also embody responsibility at the Centre. Secondly, it must also fix a time limit within which the Federal Constitution with responsibility at the Centre will come into operation. I suggested six months. Thirdly, the provinces must enjoy practically sovereign rights.

Q. What is then left for the Constituent Assembly to decide?

A. It can be reserved for the Constituent Assembly to discuss whether it is through single or bicameral legislature and what the strength of the Federal Legislature should be. But I have left no doubt in anybody's mind that the decision must be reached here and now as regards responsibility at the Centre, especially, the control of Finance, Army and Foreign Affairs.

Q. Have you given up all hopes of reaching a settlement?

A. No, I am sparing no endeavour to explore all avenues for a settlement. I would not be surprised if a settlement were reached even at twelfth hour.

Mahatma Gandhi was asked if the Conference failed to reach a settlement, what effects would it have on India.

Mahatmaji answered if the Congress failed to reach a settlement here and now, it must inevitably result in the revival immediately of civil disobedience with all its consequences, because the failure of the Conference means that Indian reformers who are wedded to responsibility at the Centre must not hope to expect the Government to meet them for an indefinite time. The civil disobedience is bound to start immediately once it is clear that the Conference has failed.

The Hindustan Times, 16-11-1931 and 18-11-1931

100. LETTER TO PRIME MINISTER

88, KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, W.,
November 14, 1931

DEAR PRIME MINISTER,

I know that letters signed by delegates are being sent to you inviting you to settle the Hindu-Muslim-Sikh question. You will notice the absence of my signature in any of those letters. Common friends desirous of seeing a successful issue to the Round Table Conference have suggested that it would help you if I sent a letter explaining why I do not sign the letters.

I should have no hesitation in putting my signature to a letter appointing you sole arbitrator in your individual capacity to settle the communal question, so far as the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs are concerned, but you will appreciate my hesitation in consenting to your appointment as arbitrator in your capacity as Prime Minister, for the simple reason that if I did so, I should feel embarrassed in presenting the Congress claim on the constitutional issue. But my reluctance does not mean that the Congress will in any way resist your award; in fact Congress cannot do so, for it is bound by a resolution to approve of any solution that is acceptable to the three parties concerned, and if those claiming to represent the three communities refer the matter for your decison, the Congress cannot object to your award.

The portion regarding the other minorities is different. You know the position taken up on behalf of the Congress. As I reiterated at the last meeting of the Minorities Committee, in my opinion they should be satisfied with complete protection of their civic and religious rights and of all their legitimate interests. There are many extra-legal ways that can be suggested for ensuring the election of deser-ving candidates from all the other minorities through the ordinary electorate, and I feel that that is the only proper and legitimate course.

In any case, the Congress will never be reconciled to any further extension of the principle of separate electorate or special statutory reservation.

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE PRIME MINISTER
10 DOWNING STREET
S.W.1

From a photostat: C.W. 9382, Courtesy: India Office Library

101. LETTER TO MARY OSBORN

November 16, 1931

DEAR SISTER,

I have just read your letter carefully and heartily endorse all you say. You rightly say that we are one with the Universal Spirit. I have found that in order to realize this state we must serve all that lives. This service is possible only if we reduce ourselves to zero. Self-effacement, i.e., self-sacrifice, is the law of life. And lest we feel that it is I who produced a particular result, we must learn to know that no man can ever alone produce a result. We must therefore work without attaching ourselves to results. Ours is to work, the result is in the hands of God. You seem to be on the right path.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1295

102. MESSAGE TO F. B. FISHER[1]

LONDON,
November 17, 1931

My friends in India, members of the Working Committee of the Congress, have cabled me to return to India, immediately the Conference is over; so I must not go to America. It seems that there

[1] The message was conveyed to Bishop Fisher, who was in Chicago, on the telephone.

is still a long time before I could give any message to America. Perhaps God thinks that, though I would like to meet friends, I have no reason to go to America.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-11-1931

103. EXTRACT FROM PROCEEDINGS OF THE FEDERAL STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING[1]

LONDON,
November 17, 1931

MR. GANDHI: Lord Chancellor and fellow Delegates, I know that a tremendous responsibility rests upon my shoulders in having to give the Congress view on this most important question.

I have been sent here with the deliberate intention of exloring every possible avenue to achieve an honourable settlement, whether by open discussion at this table or by private conferences with Ministers and public men who influene public opinion here, and with all those who are interested in questions vitally affecting India. Therefore, I am under obli-gation not to leave a single stone unturned in order to arrive at a settle-ment, if only because the Congress is wedded to a policy which is known to you all. The Congress is intent upon reaching its goal at the earliest possible moment, and holds also very decided views upon all these matters. What is more to the purpose, it is today, or considers itself today, capable of shouldering all the responsibilities that flow from responsible self-government.

That being the case, I thought that I could not possibly allow the discussion on this most important matter to close without placing, as humbly as I could, and as briefly as I could, the Congress view on the question.

As you are all aware, the Congress case is that there should be complete responsibility transferred to India. That means, and it has been there stated, that there should be complete control over Defence and over External Affairs; but it also contemplates adjustments. I feel that we ought not to deceive ourselves, deceive the world, into thinking that we would be getting responsible government although we may not ask for responsibility in this vital matter. I think that a

[1] The subject being considered by the Committee was Defence.

nation that has no control over her own defence forces and over her external policy is hardly a responsible nation. Defence, its Army, is to a nation the very essence of its existence, and if a nation's defence is controlled by an outside agency, no matter how friendly it is, then that nation is certainly not resopnsibly governed. This is what our English teachers have taught us times without number, and thereore some Englishmen twitted me also when they heard the talk that we would have responsible government, but we would not have or would not claim control over our own defence forces.

Hence I am here very respectfully to claim, on behalf of the Congress, complete control over the Army, over the Defence forces and over External Affairs. I put in this also so as to avoid having to speak on it when Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru speaks on that tsubject.

To this conclusion we have come with the greatest deliberation. If we do not get this control at the time of embarking upon responsibility, I cannot conceive a time when, because we are enjoying responsibility in other matters, we would be suddenly found fit to control our own defence forces.

I would like this Committee for just a few brief moments to understand what this Army at the present moment means. This Army, in my opinion, whether it is Indian or whether it is British, is really an army of occupation. It does not matter to us, at any rate to me, a bit—I speak from experience—that they are Sikhs or that they are Gurkhas or that they are pathans or that they are men from Madras or that they are Rajputs; not matter who they are, they are foreigners to me whilst they are in the Army, controlled by an alien government. I cannot speak to them. Soldiers have come to me stealthily, and have been afraid even of speaking to me, because they felt that they might be reported. It is not possible for us ordinarily to go to the places where the soldiers are kept. They are also taught to regard us not as their countrymen. Unlike any other country in the world, there is absolutely no correspondence between them and the ordinary civil population. This I give as my evidence before this Committee as a man who has endeavoured to come into touch with every part of Indian life, with all those with whom it was possible for me to come into touch and this is not my own personal experience alone, but it is the experience of hundreds and thousands of Congressmen that there is an absolute wall between them and us.

I am therefore quite aware that it is a tremendous thing for us at once to shoulder that responsibility and to have control of this Army,

say, less the British soldiers. That is our unfortunate, unhappy position, created for us, I am sorry to have to say, by our rulers.

Then there is the British section of the Indian Army. What is the purpose of this British Army? Every Indian child knows that that British Army is there, including the Indian Army, for the defence of British interests and for avoiding or resisting foreign aggression. I am sorry to have to make these remarks, but that is precisely what I have learned and have experienced, and it would be unjust even to my British friends if I did not give expression to the truth as I have given it and as I hold it. Thirdly, it is an Army intended to suppress rebellion against constituted authority.

These, then, are the main functions of that Army, and hence it does not surprise me that Englishmen should take the view they do. If I were an Englishman, and had also the ambition to rule another nation, I would do precisely the same thing. I would take hold of Indians and train them as soldiers, and I would train them to be loyal to me, so loyal that they would at my command, shoot anybody I desired them to shoot. Who was it that shoot people at Jallianwala Bagh, if it was not their own countrymen? It is therefore not a matter of surprise to me, but it is a fact which stares me in the face.

The existence of the Birtish troops there is also intended to serve this very purpose; it holds the balance between these different Indian soldiers evenly. It undoubtedly protects, as it must, the British officers, and it protects British lives. Again I do not make any complaint, if I would assume the premise that it was right for Great Britain to occupy India, and that it is right for Great Britain to hold India today and to continue to hold India, no matter under what altered conditions.

That being so, I have no difficulty in answering the question which Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru would not face and which Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya also would not face. Both of them said that, not being experts, they were not able to say to what extent this Army could be or should be reduced. I, however, have no such difficulty. I have no difficulty in saying what should happen to this Army; that is to say, I would say emphatically that the whole of this Army should be disbanded, if it does not pass under my control, before I could possibly shoulder the burden of running the government of India under the terrible handicaps under which we are labouring as a legacy of alien rule.

Therefore, that being my fundamental position, I would say that if you British Ministers and British people really wish well by India, if you will transfer power now to us, then regard this as a vital condition, that they Army should pass under our control in its entirety. But then I have told you that, I know the risk that is attendant upon it. That Army will not accept my command. I know that very well. I know that the British Commander-in-Chief will not accept my command; nor would the Sikhs, nor the proud Rajputs—none of them would accept my command. But I expect, even so, to exercise that command with the goodwill of the British people, that they will be there at the time of transferring the command to teach a new lesson to these very soldiers, and to tell them that they are after all serving their own countrymen if they do so. British troops may also be told; 'Now is the time for you not to remain here to protect British interests and British lives, but you are here to protect India against foreign aggression, even against internal insurrection, as if you were defending and serving your own countrymen.

That is my dream. I know that I shall not realize that dream here. That is what I feel; the evidence that is before me, the evidence of my senses, tells me that I am not going to realize that dream today and here as a reuslt of the deliberations of this Conference. But I should still che-rish that dream. It is the dream I should like to cherish up to the end of my time. But, seeing the atmosphere here, I know that I cannot possibly infect British statesmen or the British public with the idea or with the ideal that this should be also their cherished mission. That is how I would interpret the Prime Minister's declaration; that is how I would interpret Lord Irwin's wishes. It should be the proud privilege and the proud duty of Great Britain now to initiate us in the mysteries of conducting our own defence. Having clipped our wings, it is their duty to give us wings whereby we can fly, even as they fly. That is really my ambition , and therefore I say I would wait till eternity if I cannot get control of Defence. I refuse to deceive myself that I am going to embark upon responsible government although I cannot control my Defence.

After all, India is not a nation which has never known how to defend herself. There is all the material there. There are the Mohammedans, standing in no dread of foreign invasion. The Sikhs will refuse to think that they can be conquered by anybody. The Gurkha, immediately he develops the national mind, will say: 'I alone can defend India.' Then there are the Rajputs , who are supposed to

be responsible for a thousand Thermopylaes, and not one little Thermopylae [as] in Greece. That is what the Englishman, Colonel Tod, told us. Colonel Tod has taught us to believe that every pass in Rajputana is a Thermopylae. Do these people stand in need of learning the art of defence?

I assume that, if I shoulder the burden of responsibility, all these people are going to join hands. I am here writhing in agony to see that we have not yet come to terms on the communal question; but whenever the communal settlement comes, it must presuppose that we are going to trust each other. Whether the rule is predominantly Mohammedan or Sikh or Hindu, they will not rule as Hindus or Mohammedans or Sikhs, but they will rule as Indians. If we have distrust of one another, then we want British people there if we do not want to be killed by one another. But then let us not talk of responsible government.

I at least cannot possibly think that we have got responsible government without control of the Army, and therefore I feel deep down at the bottom of my heart that if we are to have responsible government—and the Congress wants responsible government, the Congress has faith in itself, in the masses of the people, and in all those brave military races, and what is more, the Congress has faith also in Englishmen some day doing their duty and transferring complete control to us—we must infect the British with that love for India which would enable her to stand on her own feet. If the British people think that we shall require a century before that can be done, then for that century the Congress will wander in the wilderness, and the Congress must go through that terrible fiery ordeal, it must go through a storm of distress, misrepresentation and—if it becomes necessary and if it is God's will—a shower of bullets. If this happens, it will be because we cannot trust one another, because Englishmen and Indians have different angles of vision.

That is my fundamental position. I do not want to go into it in detail. I have put this case as forcibly as I am capable of putting it. But if this one thing is admitted, I am resourceful enough to submit and frame safeguard after safeguard which will commend themselves to any unbiased mind, provided that it is common cause that those safeguards must be in the interests of India. But I want to go further and endorse what Lord Irwin said, that although the safeguards in the Pact are stated to be in the interests of India, they must be

considered—I believe Lord Irwin used my name, and said that Gandhi also said they must be considered—as in the mutual interests of India and England. I endorse that. I do not conceive a single safeguard that will be only in the interests of India, not a single safeguard that will not be also in the interests of Great Britain, provided that we contemplate a partnership, a partnership at will, and a partnership on absolutely equal terms. The very reasons that I have given you today for demanding complete control for the Army are also reasons for pleading for, for demanding, control over our External Affairs.

Not being well versed in what is really meant by External Affairs and having to plead my ignorance of what is stated in these Reports of the Round Table Conference on the subject, I asked my friends Mr. Iyengar and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru to give me a first lesson in what is meant by external affairs and foreign relations. I have got their reply before me. They state that the words mean relations with neighbouring powers, relations with Indian States, relations with other powers in international affairs, relations with the Dominions. If these are external affairs, I think we are quite capable of shouldering the burden and discharging our obligations in connection with External Affairs. We can undoubtedly negotiate terms of peace with our own kith and kin, with our own neighbours, with our own countrymen, the Indian Princes. We can cultivate the friendliest relations with our neighbours the Afghans, and across the seas with Japanese; and certainly we can negotiate with the Dominions also. If the Dominions, will not have our countrymen to live there in perfect self-respect, we can deal with them.

It may be that I am talking out of folly, but you should understand that the Congress has thousands and tens of thousands of foolish men and foolish women like me, and it is on behalf of these that I respectfully register this claim, again saying that, with the safeguards we have conceived, we shall literally fulfil our obligations. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya has sketched the safeguards. With much of what he has said I entirely associate myself, but that is not the only solitary safeguard. If Englishmen and Indians put their heads together, sailing in the same direction with no mental reservation whatsoever, it is possible, I submit with every confidence, that we would bring into being safeguards which will be honourable alike to India and to England, and which would be a guarantee for the safety of every British life and the safety of every British interest to which India pledges her honour.

Lord Chancellor, I cannot go further. I tender a thousand apologies for taking up the time of this meeting, but you will understand the feeling that is welling up in me sitting here day after day, and thinking of it day and night, how these deliberations can come to a successful issue. You will understand the feeling which actuates me. It is a feeling of absolute goodwill towards Englishmen, and a feeling of absolute service to my countrymen.

CHAIRMAN: Mr. Gandhi, I have listened with very great interest to your appeal , and I want you to be good enough, if you will, to help me personally, I am very much impressed first of all by what you call your dream— I cannot, of course, share your dream—and then I am very much impressed by your ideals. Those I can—perhaps not to the height that you entertain them—share to a very great extent. I am just as anxious to secure peace and happiness in India as you are, and I am just as anxious as you are and as Lord Irwin is to carry out those conditions which he and you arrived at the beginning of the year, and which, in paragraph 2, read as follows :

> "Of the scheme there outlined, Federation is an essential part; so also are Indian responsibility and reservations or safeguards in the interests of India for such matters as, for instance, Defence, External Affairs, the position of minorities, the financial credit of India and discharge of obligations."

I will ask you to assume that I am just as anxious as you are to carry out that programme. I do not doubt your good faith. I ask you not to doubt mine.

You said, in the course of your remarks, that you hoped that we should be able to teach you the lesson of self-defence. (I am only summing up generally some of the matters that you referred to.) Nobody doubts the bravery of your fellow-countrymen. It has been, through the centuries, manifested on many a stricken field. But supposing it is right, as I think it is, that what you say is correct—namely, that at the present moment the Indians have to learn this lesson of self-defence. I agree with you. I think that is right. Now let me tell you my trouble.

If it is right that at the present moment an Indian Army is not ready for that, you are asking me and you are asking us to take a terrible responsibility when you ask us either to withdraw the Army or to reduce it to such a size as to make it not consistent with safety.

With much of what you say I have the greatest sympathy, but, if you will forgive me for saying so, Mr. Gandhi, the difficulty I feel is the responsibility that I should incur if I were a dictator and said, 'Tomorrow I will withdraw every English soldier.' It would be a terrible risk, and if anything happened to the peace and prosperity of India, I for one could never forgive myself for taking a decision to do that when, upon admission, the lesson has to be learned how Indians can conduct their own defence.

It is because I feel that responsibility that, although I like to share your ideals, I feel it is asking me, at any rate, to go beyond what I really ought to agree to. I agree with you. Mr. Gandhi, that what we have to consider here are the interests of India; but give me at any rate the same credit that I give you when I tell you that honestly I do not think it would be in the interests of India to comply with an immediate request to withdraw the Army. It is a responsibility that I think no statesman who has a real regard for the interests of India—forgive me for putting it in that way—could justify himself in assuming. The time may come, and I hope it will....

MR. GANDHI: May I just correct you ? I have not asked for the withdrawal of the British troops. I do not think that there was any sentence in my remarks to that effect, and if I did utter a sentence of that character, I should like to withdraw it.

Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session) : Proceedings of Federal Structure Committee and Minorities Committee, Vol. I, pp. 387-9

104. SPEECH AT MEETING OF WOMEN'S INDIAN COUNCIL[1]

LONDON,[2]

November 18, 1931

Gandhiji took the opportunity of correcting various fantastic notions about the women of India and presented a vivid picture of the heroic part they had played during the last struggle. He said:

They are perhaps in many ways superior to you. You had to go through untold suffering to win your suffrage. In India women got it for the asking. No hindrances have been placed in the way of their entering public life and the Congress had not only women for its Presidents, but had Mrs. Naidu as a member of its Cabinet. For several years, and during the last struggle when our organizations were declared illegal and those in charge of them put into prison, it was the women wo came to the forefront, took the place of "dictators" and filled the jails. That, however, does not mean that they have not suffered at the hands of men. They have had their bitter cups to drink, but I have no hesitation in telling you that what you have read

[1] Extracted form Mahadev Desai's "London Letter". The meeting was organized by Agatha Harrison and took place at Morley College.

[2] According to a report in *The Hindustan Times,* 21-11-1931, the meeting took place on this date.

in Miss Mayo's book about India is 99 per cent untrue. I have read the book from cover to cover and as I finished it I exclaimed that it was verily a drain inspector's report[1] . Some of the things she has said are true, but her generalizations are absolutely false, and several statements in the book are pure figments of her imaginations.

He then went on to describe how last year they came out of their homes in one mass and showed an awakening which was miraculous. They took part in processions, defied the law, and bore the lathi, without raising a little finger, without swearing at the police, and used their power persuasion to wean the drunkard from drink and the sellers and purchasers of foreign cloth from it. It was not a learned woman like Sarojini Naidu but an unlettered woman[2] who had borne lathi blows on her head which bled profusely whilst she stood unflinching, ordering her companions not to move from their posts, and converted the little town of Borsad into a Thermopylae. It was to these women that the last year's victory was mainly due.

There was little time for questions, but one or two that were asked were expressive of the anxiety with which they were watching the deliberations of the Round Table Conference. Gandhiji said:

There is yet time for these two countries to remain united on terms of equality for the good of the world. It would not satisfy my soul to gain freedom for India and not to help in the peace of the world. I have the conviction in me that, when England ceases to prey upon India, she will also cease to prey upon other nations, At any rate, India will have no part in the blood guilt.

Young India, 3-12-1931

105. LETTER TO SIR SAMUEL HOARE

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, S.W. 1,
November 19, 1931

DEAR SIR SAMUEL,

I have not troubled you save for sending copy of a cablegram on the situation as it is developing in India.

It is not my intention even now to weary you with a review of the situation there, but there are wild rumours going about in our

[1] *Vide* "Drain Inspector's Report"

[2] Gangabehn Vaidya

circles to the effect that martial law in Bengal is imminent; repression on an extensive scale has already commenced there, and that all information about the situation in Bengal is being suppressed by the authorities.

Could you please tell me whether there is the slightest justification for these rumours, and further, what is being actually done by the authorities in Bengal? Also, could I cable to the President of the Conggress asking for information about Bengal in the certain hope that the reply that might be sent will not be censored, if it otherwise complies with the Censorship Regulations ?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR SAMUEL HOARE
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA
INDIA OFFICE, S.W.1

From a photostat: C.W. 9383, Courtesy: India Office Library

106. LETTER TO SIR PHILIP HARTOG

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, S.W. 1,
November 19, 1931

DEAR SIR PHILIP,

I am much obliged to you for your letter of the 17th inst.

I do not propose just now to withdraw the statement[1] I made at the meeting at Chatham House. At the present moment I have not got any time for searching the records to which you are making reference. I, how-ever, promise not to forget the matter, and if I find that I cannot support the statement made by me at Chatham House, I will give my retraction much wider publicity than the Chatham House speech could ever attain.

[1] Namely, that the percentage of literacy in India had fallen during the British rule. The addressee had questioned the correctness of the statement. In his letter of November 17 he said he had examined the *Young India* articles and the Punjab Administration report and could find nothing in them to support Gandhiji's contention and had concluded: ". . . may I suggest that you should now withdraw your statement? . . ." *vide* also "Letter to Sir Philip Hartog", 23-10-1931

Meanwhile I am endeavouring to find out the references you want.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR PHILIP HARTOG, K.B. E.

5 INVERNESS GARDENS, W. 8

From a photostat: C.W. 9403-a. Courtesy: India Office Library

107. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

LONDON,
November 19, 1931

Not only am I not callous about the Princes joining the Federation, but most anxious that they should do so. So far as it lies in me, I should make every effort to induce the Princes to join the Federation.

The Hindu, 20-11-1931

108. EXTRACT FROM PROCEEDINGS OF THE FEDERAL STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING

LONDON,
November 19,1931

MR.GANDHI : Lord Chancellor and friends, I would like to tender my congratulations to Mr.Benthall on his very temperate statement, and I wish that he could have seen his way not to spoil that admirable statement by importing two sentiments. One sentiment expressed by him was practically that Europeans or Britishers claimed what they are claiming because of their having conferred certain benefits on India. I wish that he could have omitted this opinion, but having expressed it, there should have been no surprise expressed, as was expressed by Lord Reading, that there was a courteous retort from Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas, and now, as we have heard, reinforced by Sir Phiroze Sethna. I wish also that he could have omitted the threat that has been used in that statement on behalf of the great corporation

[1] Gandhiji, according to the source, issued the statement to refute the "baseless" report that he had told the Premier in his interview with him that he did not want the Princes to federate.

that he represents. He said that the European support to the national demand was conditional upon Indian nationalists accepting the demands of the European community expressed by Mr.Benthall, as also, not stated in this statement, but we had it, unfortunately, a few days ago,the separatist tendency expressed in the demand for a separate electorate, and their joining that separatist combination about which it was my painful position to speak the other day. I have endeavoured to study the resolution passed at the last Conference. I want to read that resolution again, although you are familiar with it, because I shall want to say a few things in connection with that resolution.:

> At the instance of the British commercial community the principle was generally agreed that there should be no discrimination between the rights of the British commercial community, firms and companies trading in India and the rights of Indian-born subjects.

The rest I need not read.

I am extremely sorry, in spite of the great regard and respect I entertain for Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar, to have to dissent from this sweeping resolution. I was, therefore, delighted yesterday when Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru readily admitted that it was vague and that it was susceptible of improvement . You will see the general character of this resolution if you will carefully study it . There is to be no discrimination between the rights of the British mercantile community, firms and companies trading in India and the rights of Indian-born subjects. If I have interpreted this correctly, I think that it is a terrific thing, and I for one could not possibly commit the Congress to a resolution of this character, much less commit the future Government of India.

There is here no qualification whatsoever . The rights of the British commercial community are to stand on exactly the same footing as those of Indian-born subjects. Therefore, it is not as if there is merely not to be any racial discrimination, or anything of that kind, but here the British commercial community are to enjoy absolutely the same rights as Indian-born subjects. I want to state, with all the emphasis that I can command, that I could not even endorse the formula that the rights of all Indian-born subjects themselves could even be guaranteed as equal. I shall show you the reason presently.

I think that you will readily grant that the future Government of India would be constantly obliged (to use the admirable phrase used

just now by Sir Phiroze Sethna) in order to equalize conditions to do what the existing Government has neglected to, namely, continually to discriminate in favour of the famishing Indians against those who have been blest by nature or by the Government themselves with riches and other privileges. It will be necessary for the future Government, perhaps, to provide quarters free for labour, and the monied men of India might say : 'If you provide quarters for them you should give corresponding grants to us, although we do not require quarters of that nature.' It would undoubtedly be discrimination in favour of poor people, and the monied men might then say, according to this formula, that it would be discrimination against them.

I therefore venture to suggest that this sweeping formula cannot possibly be accepted by us in this Conference when we are trying to assist His Majesty's Government—in so far as they will accept our assistance—in shaping the future Constitution of India.

But having said this, I want to associate myself completely with the British merchants and European houses in their legitimate demand that there should be no racial discrimination. I, who had to fight the great South African Government for over 20 years in order to resist their colour bar and their discriminating legislation directed against Indians as such, could be no party to discrimination of that character against the British friends who are at present in India or who may in future seek entry. I speak on behalf of the Congress also. The Congress too holds the same view.

Therefore, instead of this I would suggest a formula somewhat on these lines, a formula for which I had the pleasure and privilege of fighting General Smuts for a number of years. It may be capable of improvement, but I simply suggest this for the consideration of this Committee and especially for the consideration of European friends. ''No disqualification not suffered by Indian-born citizens of the State shall be imposed upon any person lawfully residing in for entering India merely"—I emphasize the word "merely"— "on the ground of race, colour or religion." I think that this is an all-satisfying formula. No Government could possibly go beyond this. I want to deal briefly with the implications of this, and the implications of this are, I am sorry to say, different from the deductions that Lord Reading drew or sought to draw from last year's formula. There would be no discrmination in this formula against a single Britisher or

for the matter against a single European as such. I propose here to draw no distinction whatever between Britishers or other Europeans of Americans or Japanese. I would not copy the model of the British Colonies or the British Dominions which have, in my humble opinion, disfigured their Statute-books by importing legislation essentially based upon distinctions of colour and race.

India free, I would love to think, would give a different kind of lesson and set a different kind of example to the whole world. I would not wish India to live a life of complete isolation whereby she would live in water-tight compartments and allow nobody to enter her borders or to trade within her borders. But, having said that, I have in my own mind many things that I would have to do—to repeat that expression—in order to equalize conditions. I am afraid that for years to come India would be engaged in passing legislation in order to raise the donwtrodden, the fallen, from the mire into which they have been sunk by the capitalists, by the landlords, by the so-called classes, and then, subsequently and scientifically, by the British rulers. If we are to lift these people from the mire, then it would be the bounden duty of the National Government of India, in order to set its house in order, continually to give preference to these people and even free them from the burdens under which they are being crushed. And if the landlords, zamindars, monied men and those who are today enjoying privileges I do not care whether they are Europeans or Indians if they find that they are discriminated against, I shall sympathize with them, but I will not be able to help them, even if I could possibly do so, because I would seek their assistance in that process, and without their assistance it would not be possible to raise these people out of the mire.

Look at the condition, if you will, of the untouchables. The law has to come to their assistance and set a part miles of territory. At the present moment they hold no land; at the present moment they are absolutely living at the mercy of the so-called higher castes, and also, let me say, at the mercy of the State. They can be removed from one quarter to another without complaint and without being able to seek the assistance of law. Well, the first act of the Legislature will then be to see that, in order somewhat to equalize conditions, these people are given grants freely.

From whose pockets are these grants to come? Not from the pockets of Heaven. Heaven is not going to drop money for the sake of the State. They will naturally come from the monied classes,

including the Europeans. Will they say that this is discrimination? They will be able to see that this is no discrimination against them because they are Europeans; it will be discrimination against them because they have got money and the others have got no money. It will be, therefore, a battle between the 'haves" and the "havenots"; and if that is what is feared, I am afraid the National Government will not be able to come into being if all those classes hold the pistol at the heads of these dumb millions an say: 'You shall not have a Gover-nment of your own unless you guarantee our possessions and our rights.

I think I have given sufficiently an indication of what the Congress stands for; of the implications of this formula that I have suggested. On no account will they find that there has been discrimination against them because they are English or because they are Europeans or Japanese or any other race. The grounds that will be applicable to them for discrimination will be also the grounds for discrimination a against Indian-born citizens, and, therefore, I have got another formula also, hurriedly drafted because I drafted it here as I was listening to Lord Reading and as I was listening Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. The second formula thatt I have got with me is in connection with existing rights :

No existing interest legitimately acquired, and not being in conflict with the best interests of the nation in general, shall be interfered with except in accordance with the law applicable to such interests.

Here, too, I would explain shortly what I have in mind. I certainly have in mind what you find in the Congress resolution in connection with the taking over by the incoming Government of obligations that are being today discharged by the British Government. Just as we claim that these obligations must be examined by an impartial tribunal before they are taken over by us, so should existing interests be subject to judicial scrutiny whenever necessary. There is no question, therefore, of repudiation but merely of taking over under examination, under audit. We have, some of us here, some of us who have made a study of the privi-leges and the monopolies enjoyed by Europeans, but let it not be merely Europeans, there are Indians—I have undoubtedly several Indians in mind —who are today in possession of land which has been practically given away to them not for any service rendered to the nation but for some service

rendered, I cannot even say to the Govenment, because I do not think that the Government has benefited, but to some official; and if you tell me that these concessions and these privileges are not to be examined by the State, I again tell you that it will be impossible to run the machinery of government on behalf of the "have-nots", on behalf of the dispossessed. Hence you will see here that there is nothing stated in connection with the Europeans. The second formula also is applicable equally to the Europeans as it is applicable to Indians, as it is applicable, say, to Sir Purushottamadas Thakurdas and Sir Phiroze Sethna. If they have obtained concessions which have been obtained because they did some service to the officials of the day and got some miles of land, well, if I had the possession of the Government, I would quickly dispossess them. I would not consider them because they are Indians, and I would just as readily dispossess Sir Hubert Carr or Mr. Benthall, however admirable they are and however friendly they are to me. They may stand me fifty dinners, but they will not stand in the way of my dispossessing them. The law will be no respector of persons whatsoever. I give you that assurance. After having given that assurance, I am unable to go any further. So that is really what is implied by "legitimately acquired"—that every interest must have been taintless, it must be above suspicion, like Caesar's wife, and, therefore, we shall expect to examine all these things when they come under the notice of that Government.

Then you have "not being in conflict with the best interests of the nation". I have in mind certain monopolies, legitimately acquired undoubtedly, but which have been brought into being in conflict with the best interests of the nation. Let me give you an illustration which will amuse you somewhat, but which is on neutral ground. Take this white elephant which is called New Delhi. Crores have been spent upon it. Suppose that the future Government comes to conclusion that this white elephant, seeing that we have got it, ought to be turned to some use. Imagine that in Old Delhi there is plague or cholera going on, and we want hospitals for the poor people. What are we to do? Do you suppose the National Government will be able to build hospitals, and so on ? Nothing of the kind. We will take charge of those buildings and put these plague-stricken people in them and use them as hospitals, because I contend that those buildings are in conflict with the best interests of the nation. They do not represent the millions of India. They may be representative of the monied men who are sitting at the table; they

may be representative of His Highness the Nawab Sahib of Bhopal or of Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas or of Sir Phiroze Sethna or of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, but they are not representative of those who lack even anywhere to sleep and have not even a crust of bread to eat. If the National Government comes to conclusion that that place is unnecessary, no matter what interests are concerned, they will be dispossessed, and they will be dispossessed, I may tell you, without any compensation, because, if you want this Government to pay compensation, it will have to rob Peter to pay Paul, and that would be impossible.

I am trying to humour you in order to present this bitter pill, for it is a bitter pill which has got to be swallowed if a Government as Congress conceives it comes into being. I have no desire to deceive you; I have no desire, in order to take away something from here, to deceive you into the belief that everything will be quite all right. I want, on behalf of the Congress, to lay all the cards on the table. I want no mental reservation of any description whatsover; and then, if the Congress position is acceptable, nothing will please me better, but, if that position is no acceptable, if today I feel I cannot possibly touch your hearts and cannot carry you with me, then, the Congress must continue to wander and must continue the process of proselytization until you are all converted and allow the millions of India to feel that at last they have got a Naitonal Government.

Up to now, no one has said a word in connection with the two lines which appear at the end of this resolution , namely :

It was agreed that the existing rights of the European community in lndia in regard to criminal trials should be maintained.

I must confess that I have not been able to study all the implications of it. I am glad to be able to say that for some days I have been engaged in carrying on friendly—absolutely friendly—and Private conversations with Sir Hubert Carr, Mr. Benthall, and some friends. I was discussing this very theme with them and I asked them to tell me what these two things meant and they said it was the same thing for the other communities. I have not ascertained what is the meaning of the same thing for the other communities. It means, I suppose, that the other communities also may demand their own jury. This refers to trial by jury. I am afraid, I cannot possibly endorse this formula.

MR. JINNAH: May I correct you, Mr. Gandhi? It refers not only to juries but to the tribunals, the tribunals which will try Europeans and Indians, and there are many other distincitons. It is not merely the jury.

MR. GANDHI: I did not know that. That is why I said I have not studied it. If there is something more, you will pardon my ignorance, but I could not possibly be a party to such reservations. I think that a National Government cannot possibly be shut in by these restrictions. All the communities today who will be the future Indian nation must start with good will, must start with mutual trust or not at all. If we are told that we cannot possibly have responsible government, that will be a state of things one can understand. But we are told there must be all these reservations and safeguards. It would not be liberty and responsible government, but it would be all safeguards. Safeguards would eat away the whole of the Government. I was trying this morning to find something analogous and I came to the conclusion that if all these safeguards are to be granted and all the talk here takes concrete shape and we are told that we are to get responsible government it will be almost on a par with the responsible governmet that prisoners have in their jails. They too have complete independence immediately the cell door is locked and the jailer goes. The prisoners inside that cell about 10 ft. square or 7 ft. have complete independence. I do not ask for that kind of complete independence, with the jailors safeguarding comfortably their own rights.

Therefore I appeal to our European friends that they should withdraw this idea of safeguarding their rights. I venture to suggest that the two formula that I have put forward should be adotped. You may cut them about in any manner you like. If the wording is not satisfactory, by all means suggest some other wording. But, outside these formula of a negative character whereby there is no bar sinister placed against you, I venture to say you may not—shall I say dare not—ask for more. So much with reference to existing interests and future trade.

Mr. Jayakar was talking yesterday about key industries and I propose to associate myself entirely with the sentiments that he expressed. I do not think that I need take up your time by talking of what importance Congress attaches to key industries. The Congress conception is that, if the key industries are not taken over by the State itself, the State will at least have a predominant say in the conduct and administration and development of the key industries.

A poor undeveloped country like India is not to be judged as a highly developed individualist island like Great Britain may be. What

is good for Great Britain today is, in my opinion, in many respects poison for India. India has got to develop her own economics, her own policy, her own method of dealing with her industries and everything else. Therefore, so far as the key industries are concerned, I am afraid that not merely the Britishers but many will feel that they are not having fair play. But I do not know what is the meaning of "fair play" against a State.

And then about coastal trade too, the Congress undoubtedly has the greatest sympathy with the desire to develop national coastal trade; but, if in the Bill about the coastal trade there is any discrimination against Europeans as such, I will join hands with the Europeans and fight that Bill or the proposal which discriminates against Englishmen because they are Englishmen. But there are the vast interests that have come into being. I have travelled fairly frequently up the great riverways of Bengal and I travelled years ago up the Irawaddy. I know something of that trade. By concessions, privileges, favours, whatever you call them, these huge corporations have built up industries, built up companies and built up a trade which does not admit of any opposition whatsoever.

Some of you may have heard of a budding company between Chittagong and Rangoon. The directors of that company, poor struggling Mohammedans, came to me in Rangoon and asked me if I could do anything. My whole heart went out to them, but there was nothing to be done. What could be done? There is the mighty British India Steam Navigation Company simply underselling this budding company and practically taking the passengers without any passage money at all. I could quote instance after instance of that character. Therefore, it is not because it is a British Company. If it were an Indian company that had usurped this thing, it would be the same. Supposing an Indian company was taking away capital, as today we have Indians who, instead of investing their capital in India, invest their capital or invest their monies outside India. Imagine that there was a huge Indian corporation that was taking away all its profits and investing them in some other parts of the world, fearing that the Naitonal Government was not going along a correct policy, and, therefore, in order to keep their money intact they were taking away that money outside. Go a little step further with me and say that these Indian directors, in order to organize in a most scientific, finished and perfect manner, brought

all the European skill that they could bring there and did not allow these struggling corporations to come into being, I would certainly have something to say and have legislation in order to protect the companies like the Chittagong company.

Some friends could not even float their ships along the Irawaddy. They gave me chapter and verse in order to assure me that it became utterly impossible; they could not get their licences, they could not get the ordinary facilities that one is entitled to. Everyone of us knows what money can buy, what presitge can buy, and when such prestige is built up which kills all the saplings, it becomes necessary then to use the expression of Sir John Gorst which he used forty-two years ago—that it then becomes necessary to lop off the tall poppies. Tall poppies ought not to be allowed to crush these saplings. That is really the case on behalf of the coastal trade. It may have been clumsily worded, the Bill. That does not matter, but I think the essence of it is aboslutely correct.

About the citizenship, that is the last thing, Well, you have the definition from the Nehru Report. Naturally the Nehru Committee had to consider situations as they arose, and, therefore, there were several changes rung on the original description; but I would like this Committee to realize that the Nehru Report is—I am sorry to have to say it, but it is so—today a back number. Even the late Pandit Motilal Nehru was obliged to say that, not because we wanted to treat the Nehru Report as a back number. The Nehru Report is undoubtedly a compromise between several positions. Though not a member of the committee, I knew exactly what was happening, because I hapened at that time to be in India, to be in touch wtth the members of the Committee, and, therefore, I know something of the history that Report and how that Committee also came into being. I am not going to weary you with the details of the history of that Committee, but, as you will see, that Report is based upon the idea that we were to have Dominion Status. Well, the Congress has taken several strides further. The Congress had to forget that Report in connection with the Hindu-Muslim-Sikh formula, as it has been obliged to forget that Report about many other things. Although the Nehru Report is a creation, or the Nehru Committee is in the first instance a creation, of the Congress, I am not able, therefore, to say that we will be able today to swear by everything that appears there. Beyond that I do not want just now to go.

The definition of "citizen" is a terrific job. I could not possibly undertake on the spur of the moment to present, as I understand the Congress mentality of today, what will commend itself to the Congress or what will commend itself to me. It is, as I say, a matter on which I would like to confer with Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and other friends and try to understand what is at the back of their minds, because I must confess that out of this discussion I have not been able to reach the heart of the thing. I have made the Congress position absolutely clear, that we do not want any racial discrimination, but after having cleared that position I am not called upon now to give a summary decision for the opinion of the Congress in connection with the definition of the word "citizen". Therefore, I would simply say in connection with the word "citizen" that I reserve my opinion as to the definition entirely for the time being.

Having said this, I want to close with this remark. I do not despair of finding a common formula that would satisfy the European friends. The negotiations in which I was privileged to be a party are, I think, still to continue. If my presence is required, I will still attend that little committee meeting.

The idea is to enlarge it and give it a little less informal shape and find out a common basis.

In spite of what I have said, I do not despair of finding a common formula, but having expressed that hope, I would again hark back to the point that, so far as I can understand it, I cannot think of any detailed scheme which could be incorporated in the Constitution. What can be incorporated in the Constitution is some such formula as this, round which all kinds of rights can arise.

There is no conception here, as you see, of doing anything administratively. I have expressed my own hope in connection with the Feederal and Supreme Court. To me the Federal Court is the Supreme Court; it is the final Court of Appeal beyond which there would be no appeal whatsoever; it is my Privy Council and it is the Palladium of Liberty. It is the Court to which every person who is at all aggrieved can go. A great jurist in the Transvaal—and the Transvaal and South Africa generally have undoubtedly produced very great jurists—to whom I used to go for assistance when I was a youngster, once said to me, in regard to a very difficult case, "Although there may be no hope just now, I tell you that I have guided myself by one thing, or else I should not be a lawyer; the law

teaches us lawyers that there is absolutely no wrong for which there is no remedy to be found in court of law, and if judges say there is no remedy, then those Judges should be immediately unseated." I say that with all deference to you, Lord Chancellor.

I therefore think that our European friends may rest assured that the future Federal Court will not send them away empty-handed, as we expect to go away empty-handed if we do not have the favour of the Minister who are the present advisers of His Majesty. I am still hoping that we shall have their ear and get round their better side, and then we may hope to go away with something substantial in our pockets, but, whether we go away with anything substantial in our pockets or not, I hope that, if the Federal Court of my dreams comes into being, then the Europeans and evrybody—all the minorities—may rest assured that that court will not fail them, though a puny individual like myself may fail them.

CHAIRMAN: We are very much obliged to Mr. Gandhi or that speech. If you will allow me to say so, everybody must be impressed by the earnestness and sincerity with which he advocates his ideals, and I thank him very much indeed. perhaps he will be good enough to give me those two formulae.

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU: I should like to ask Mahatma Gandhi to explain one part of his speech, in regard to which there is some doubt in my mind. Does he propose that the National Government of the future should examine and investigate the title to property of everyone, and if so, would it be any title acquired within a certain period of time or not? What is the machinery he proposes to bring into existence for the examination of that title and does he propose to give any compensation at all, or that the National Government should simply expropriate property which, according to his view o the majority, seeemed to have been wrongfully acquired?

MR. GANDHI: If you will give me permission, I will certainly answer those questions, which are very legitimate questions. I have really given my view. So far as I understand, it is not intended that the administration should do the things; everything that is done will be above board.

It will be done by legal machinery. All these claims—

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU: That is what I want to know. What is the legal machinery to be?

MR. GANDHI : I have not at the present moment thought of any limitation . I think that there is no limitation running against a wrong.

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU : Under your National Government, therefore, no title in India is safe ?

MR. GANDHI : Under our National Government the Court will decide these things, and if there is any undue fear about these things, I think it is possible to satisfy every legitimate doubt. I have no hesitation in saying that generally speaking this is a formula which should be accepted. Where complaints are made that there are illegitimate rights acquired, it should be open to the courts of law to examine those rights. I am not going to say today in taking over the Government that I shall examine no rights whatsoever, no titles that have been acquired.

CHAIRMAN : I think each of you will consider most carefully what the other has said and we will consider what both of you have said.

PANDIT M. M. MALAVIYA : After the very exhaustive speech of the Mahatama Gandhi, I do not propose to detain the Committee very long . I wish to make a few points quite plain. We are all agreed that there shall be no discrimination against Europeans trading in India and no wrong done to them. They shall be dealt with justly and fairly. On that point there is general agreement.

CHAIRMAN : Would you rather continue at our next meeting ?

Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session) : Proceedings of Federal Structure Committee and Minorities Committee, Vol. I, pp.425-9

109. LETTER TO W. TUDOR OWEN[1]

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, S.W. 1,
November 20,1931

DEAR FRIENDS,

I have your letter. I am likely to be free about 5 p.m. on Wednesday next. I would like you please to telegraph to me if that hour will suit you.

I would be glad to renew old memories, if we can possibly meet.

Yours sincerely,

W. TUDOR OWEN, ESQ.
BROADHURST
LITTLE COMMON
BEXHILL-ON-SEA

From a photostat : S.N.18328

[1] A former official of the Government of India, then guardian of the Maharaja of Bharatpur , a minor

110. SPEECH AT MEETING OF LONDON VEGETARIAN SOCIETY

LONDON,

November 20,1931

When I received the invitation to be present at this meeting , I need not tell you how pleased I was, because it received old memories and recollections of pleasant friendship formed with vegetarians. I feel especially honoured to find on my right Mr. Henry Salt. I was Mr. Salt's book, *A Plea for Vegetarianism*, which showed my why, apart from a hereditary habit, and apart from my adherence to a vow administered to me by my mother , it was right to be a vegetarian. He showed me why it was a moral duty incumbent on vegetarians not to live upon fellow-animals. It is, therefore, a matter of additional pleasure to me that I find Mr. Salt in our midst.

I do not propose to take up your time be giving you my various experiences of vegetarianism, nor do I want to tell you something of the great difficulty that faced me in London itself in remaining staunch to vegetarianism, but I would like to share with you some of the thoughts that have developed in me in connection with vegetarianism. Forty years ago I used to mix freely with vegetarians. There was at that time hardly a vegetarian restaurant in London that I had not visited. I made it a point, out of curiosity, and to study the possibilities of vegetarian restaurants in London, to visit every one of them. Naturally, therefore, I came into close contact with many vegetarians. I found at the tables that largely the conversation turned upon food and disease. I found also that the vegetarians who were strugg- ling to stick to their vegetarianism were finding it difficult from hea- lth point of view. I do not know whether, nowadays, you have those debates, but I used at that time to attend debates that were held between vegetarians and vegetarians, and between vegetarians and non-vegetarians. I remember one such debates, between Dr. Densmore and the late Dr. T. R. Allinson. Then vegetarians had a habit of talking of nothing but food and nothing but disease. I feel that is the worst way of going about the business. I notice also that it is those persons who become vegetarians because they are suffering from some disease or other—that is, from purely the health point of view it is those persons who largely fall back . I discovered that for remaining staunch to vegetarianism a man requires a moral basis.

For me that was a great discovery in my search after truth. At an early age, in the course of my experiments, I found that a selfish basis would not serve the purpose of taking a man higher and higher along the paths of evolution. What was required was an altruistic purpose. I found also that health was by no means the monopoly of vegetarians. I found many people having no bias one way or the other, and that non-vegetarians were able to show, generally speaking, good health. I found also the several vegetarian found it impossible to remain vegetarians because they had made food a fetish and because they thought that by becoming vegetarians they could eat as much lentils, haricot beans, and cheese as they liked. Of course, those people could not possibly keep their health. Observing along these lines, I saw that a man should eat sparingly and now and then fast. No man or woman really ate sparingly consumed just that quantity which the body requires and no more. We easily fall a prey to the temptations of the palate, and, therefore, when a thing tastes delicious,we do not mind taking a morsel or two more. But you cannot keep health under thsose circumstances. Therefore, I discovered that in order to keep health, no matter what you ate, it was necessary to cut down the quantity of your food and reduce the number of meals. Become moderate; err on the side of less, rather than on the side of more. When I invite friends to share their meals with me, I never press them to take anything except only what they require. On the contrary, I tell them not to take a thing if they do not want it.

What I want to bring to your notice is that vegetarians need to be tolerant if they want to convert others to vegetarianism. Adopt a little humility. We should appeal to the moral sense of the people who do not see eye to eye with us. If a vegetarian became ill, and a doctor prescribed beef-tea, then I would not call him a vegetarian. A vegetarian is made of sterner stuff. Why? Because it is for the building of the spirit and not of the body. Man is more that meat. It is the spirit in man for which we are concerned. Therefore, vegetarians should have that moral basis—that a man was not born a carnivorous animal, but born to live on the fruits and herbs that the earth gorws. I know we must all err. I would give up milk if I could but I cannot. I have made that experiment times without number. I could not , after a serious illness, regain my strength unless I went back to milk. That has been the tragedy of my life. But the basis of my vegetarianism is not physical, but moral. If anybody said that I should die if I did not take beef-tea or mutton, even under medical advice, I would prefer death. That is the basis of my vegetarianism. I would love to think that all of us who called ourselves

vegetarians should have that basis. There were thousands of meat-eaters who did not stay meat-eaters. There must be a definite reason for our making that change in our lives, for our adopting habits and customs different from society, even though sometimes that change may offend those nearest and dearest to us. Not for the world should you sacrifice a moral principle. Therefore the only basis for having a vegetarian society and proclaiming a vegetarian principle is, and must be, a moral one. I am not to tell you, as I see and wander about the world, that vegetarians, on the whole, enjoy much better health than meat-eaters. I belong to a country which is predominantly vegetarian by habit or necessity. Therefore, I cannot testify that that shows much greater endurance, much greater courage, or much greater exemption from disease. Because it is a peculiar, personal thing. It requires obedience, and scrupulous obedience, to all the laws of hygiene.

Therefore, I think that what vegetarians should do is not to emphasize the physical consequences of vegetarianism, but to explore the moral consequences. While we have not yet forgotten that we share many things in common with the beast, we do not sufficiently realize that there are certain things which differentiate us from the beast. Of course, we have vegetarians in the cow and the bull—which are better vegetarians than we are—but there is something much higher which calls us of vegetarianism. Therefore I thought that during the few minutes which I give myself the privilege of addressing you, I would just emphasize the moral basis of vegetarianism. And I would say that I have found from my own experience, and the experience of thousands of friends and compa-nions, that they find satisfaction, so far as vegetarianism is concerned, from the moral basis they have chosen for sustaining vegetarianism.

In conclusion, I thank you all for coming here and allowing me to see vegetarians face to face. I cannot say I used to meet you forty or forty-two years ago. I suppose the faces of the London Vegetarian Society have changed. There are very few members who, like Mr. Salt, can claim association with the Society extending over forty years. Lastly, I would like you, if you want to, to ask me any questions, for I am at your disposal for a few minutes.

Mr. Gandhi was then asked to give his reasons for limiting his daily diet to five articles only, and he replied:

That has no connection with vegetarianism. . . . There was another reason. I had been a pampered child of nature. I had acquired then that notoriety that when I was invited by friends, they placed before me ample dishes of food. I told them, I had come there to serve, and personally, I should find myself dying by inches if I allowed myself to be pampered like that. So, in limiting myself to five

ingredients of food, I served a double purpose. And I must finish all my eating before sundown. I have been saved many pitfalls by that. There are many discoveries about that in regard to health reaosns. Dietists are saying that we are more and more tending towards simplifying diet, and that, if one must live for health one must have one thing at a time and avoid harmful combinations. I like the process of exclusion better than that of inclusion because no two doctors have the same opinion.

Then I think the restriction to five articles of food has helped me morally and materially—materially because, in a poor country like India, it is not always possible to procure goat's milk, and it is a hard thing to produce fruit and grapes. Then, I go to visit poor people, and if I expected hothouse grapes, they would banish me. So, by restricting myself to five articles of food, it also serves the law of economy.

Harijan, 20-2-1949

111. LETTER TO J. R. GLORNEY BOLTON

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, S.W. 1,
November 21, 1931

DEAR MR. BOLTON[1],

I was much touched by your letter. I had already seen your letter in the *Times*, and thought it was just the thing. So far as I can see nothing is going to come out of the Conference, when therefore, the struggle revives, many Englishmen and women will be faced with the question whether they can put right before country. I am still making a desperate effort to secure a settlement, and thus avoid conflict which is likely to be more bitter than that of last year.

Yours sincerely,

J. R. GLORNEY BOLTON, ESQ.
9 KING'S BENCH WALK
E.C. 4

From a photostat: S.N. 18239

[1] Bolton had been twice in India, and later, in 1934, wrote a book *The Tragedy of Gandhi.*

112. LETTER TO SIR HENRY LAWRENCE

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
S.W. 1,
November 21, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

You will pardon this dictated letter. I am so sorry for the misunderstanding that has arisen.[1] I did not want a letter about the Depressed Classes. I personally want to keep the Depressed Classes question as out of the ordinary. It stands on its own plane. But when Mr. Davis brought them in, I did not mind the argument. What I wanted was the briefest letter possible condemning the action of the Englishmen first of all, in entering into a combination with the other Minorities, and, secondly, in asking for a separate electorate and special reservation at all. I did not even wish to bring in the adult franchise in this connection, because in my opinion adult franchise does not help a very insignificant minority. My argument about the Englishmen was that they should expect to find their way to the Legislatures by an appeal to the common electorate and expect to succeed by right of service. But Mr. Davis thought that no one would look at the proposal without the background of adult suffrage. I could have no objection to that, but I could not possibly write anything myself about a letter which did not make mention of the Englishmen's move. And then too I would have been obliged to be very cautious, for the simple reason that, whilst I am a delegate to the Conference, I do not want to engage in newspaper propaganda. I have avoided it as much possible. I say my say at the Round Table Conference. If you cannot afford to say anything about the English Combine with the other Minorities, or if you approve of that combine, I can have nothing to say, and I cannot expect you to express any opinion save that of approval of the

[1] In a letter of the same date the addressee had said: ". . . Davis telephoned me a message from you asking me to write to a letter to the *Times* advocating adult suffrage as an argument in support of your appeal. I drafted such a letter. . . . Mr. Davis then told me that you would write a letter in support of mine, and I journeyed to London to get the two letters accepted by the *Times.* Now he tells me that you decline to write this letter unless I condemn the Europeans who have supported separate electorates.... Would you please let me know the true facts of your mind? . . ."

combine, if an opinion had to be expressed. I wonder if I have made my position quite clear.

Yours sincerely,

SIR HENRY LAWRENCE
BOARS HILLS
OXFORD

From a photostat : S.N. 18332

113. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

LONDON,
[*November 22, 1931*]

Q. Is the Conference certainly doomed to failure ?

A. It is ungrateful to say so. But I see very little warrant for success.

Q. Don't you think the Government having allowed the discussion will now do something? Will the change in the Government make any difference?

A. I expected them to do certainly better, but I do not know that they have made up their minds to transfer power. As regards the two parties, I think for India it is 'six of the one and half a do- zen of the other'. In fact, I am rather glad that I have to do with an overwhelmingly large Conservative majority. For I do not want to steal anything from here. I want something large and good which poor people can easily see and un-derstand and so it is best that I have to fight a strong party and win what I want from a str-ong party. What I want is a lasting thing. I do not want to dissolve the tie, but to transform it. The relationship between India and England, the basis of equal partnership, can exist only if each does the common thing out of a consciousness of strength and not of weakness. And, therefore, I would love to feel that during the Conservative regime we were able to convince the Conservatives that we were not unworthy opponents nor unworthy partners.

Young India, 3-12-1931

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "London Letter". Desai say the questions were put "by the son of a prominent public man". On November 25 *The Hindustan Times* carreid a brief report of an interview Gandhiji gave to Randolph Churchil. On November 22. Churchill was acting on behalf of the Hearst Press.

114. LETTER TO SIR SAMUEL HOARE

88 KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
LONDON, S.W. 1,
November 24, 1931

This morning I received the enclosed telegram from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, President of the Congress. It speaks for itself. For quickly understanding the cable, I extend it here below:

> Hijli and Chittagong still unremedied. Indiscriminate arrests under ordinances continuing. Detenus' number approaching one thousand. Daily arrests by scores including many Congress workers. Numerous sedition prosecutions for protesting against Hijli and Chittagong atrocities. Recently there has been repetition of Chittagong on a smaller scale at Dacca, where police openly put innocent men, women and children to great humiliation and indignities. Bengal Europeans persistently demanding more repression. It is generally believed that Government have agreed to this. Widespread resentment prevails driving young men into desperation. You already know U.P. situation. In Andhra several Congress leaders arrested under security or sedition sections, with a view to preventing growing agitation against Krishna and Godavari District Revenue enhancements, despite unanimous opinion Government's own Committee and opposition Legislature. Situation there getting serious. Imamsaheb getting daily temperature, spitting no blood, no cause immediately anxiety.

The last sentence refers to the illness of friend.

Could I make public use of this cablegram ?

THE RT. HON. SIR SAMUEL HOARE
INDIA OFFICE, S.W. 1

From a photostat: S.N. 18339

115. INTERVIEW TO "ECHO DE PARIS"

[*November 24 , 1931*][1]

Emphasizing his refusal to accept anything less than complete Home Rule, Mahatma Gandhi said that he would re-commence the struggle if the Round Table Conference broke down. He expected all leaders to be arrested successively, but the Nationalist Movement would continue.

The Hindustan Times , 26-11-1931

116. NOTE TO MIRZA ISMAIL[2]

[*November 25, 1931*][3]

Could you manage 9.30 p.m. tonight ?

From a photostat: G.N. 2188-8

117. INTERVIEW TO "NEW LEADER"

LONDON,
[*November 25, 1931*][4]

Q. Is it possible for you to speak about what developments are likely in India if the Conference breaks down ?

A. Not in detail. As I sense the future now, there will be a revival of trouble in its intensest form.

Q. But do you think you will be able to renew the psychology of resistance? When a movement is called off, is it not always more difficult to renew it?

A. I have no doubt whatever about it. I have never found it diffi-cult to renew a movement which I have called off. But I must feel the strength within. My friends were nervous when we finished at

[1] From *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 25-11-1931, which also carried a report of the interview.

[2] This was in answer to an enquiry from the addressee for a time when he and Dr. Ambedkar could see Gandhiji.

[3] According to "Diary, 1931", Gandhiji met Mirza Ismail and Ambedkar on this date.

[4] The date is from *The Hindustan Times*, 28-11-1931, which carried a breif report of the interview. *The Bombay Chronicle*, 28-11-1931, also reported the interview.

Bardoli in 1922, and then renewed the struggle in 1930. But it was just the right time. And the suspension proved to be good. During the intervening years we were not idle. The people were imbibing our ideas. Our constructive work went on, and it told on the masses who assimilated the meaning and spirit of the movement, and there was a very wonderful response.

Q. I see that Jawaharlal Nehru is saying that it is difficult to keep back the people now.

A. That is all to the good. I can say in the plainest possible manner that I should not like to start the struggle if there were no spontaneous feeling among the people. But even at this distance, I am conscious that the people are absolutely ready. They are only waiting for the signal.

Q. Is that the case with the peasants as well as with the population in the towns?

A. Yes. I have to depend more and more on the peasants.

Q. Do they take part in the movement principally from economic or political motives?

A. Their economic difficulties have given them a grasp of the political situation. They understand that their economic position will not be better until the present political system is destroyed, root and branch. The Government in India has become the protector of the rich. There seems to be a conspiracy of the rich behind the Government to get every pice they can from the poor. The position of the peasants cannot be improved until the cruel burden of taxation which they have to bear is removed.

Q. In the struggle at the beginning of this year, South India seemed to be weak. Do you think you can count on South India this time?

A. South India gave its share steadily in the last struggle, and was coming forward splendidly when the civil disobedience campaign was suspended. It will come forward again when the struggle is renewed. South India is like that. It moves more slowly, but it is sound. I did not lose faith in the South before. In the making of khaddar the South has done the best, and its work among the untouchables has been solid... But I cannot say which province will be best this time. I have faith in all the provinces.

Q. Have you any fear that the impatience in India may prevent you from maintaining the movement on non-violent lines?

A. No, I think not. If the people continue to respond and the

mass character of the movement is maintained, violence will play no part.

Q. I don't want to embarrass you, but I cannot escape the conviction that some of the Muslims at the Round Table Conference have been more concerned about their communal claims than about Indian self-government.

A. I would not say that. I would say that their predominant concern is the guarding of what they consider to be the rights of Islam in India. That certainly occupies a very important place in their minds. But one has to say the same of the communal claims of the three sections; the Hindus, the Muslims and the Sikhs.

Q. Do you regard the communal "representatives" at the Conference as in fact representative, or would you say that the larger part of their communities are behind Congress?

A. Undoubtedly they are behind Congress. Otherwise, Congress could not do its work. We have had the hearty support of both Sikhs and Muslims. There are five Muslims on the Congress Working Committee. And they are not non-entities. They are really representative Muslim leaders.

Q. Would you say that the National Muslim Party (which supports Congress) is more representative than most of the Muslim "leaders" at the Conference?

A. Certainly. That is what Dr. Ansari, who is on our Working Committee, is always claiming. It may not be so true, perhaps, as Dr. Ansari thinks, but it is becoming truer day by day. There is no doubt whatever that it is true of the younger generation, which is turning from sectarianism.

Q. Is this tendency in the younger generation a revolt against sectarianism only, or is it a revolt against religion itself?

A. It is difficult to say. I am not able to say that they are agnostics and atheists. I can only say that they have developed the spirit of toleration. Whether that signifies less appreciation of Islam and a waning of the religious instinct, I do not know.

Q. If the Round Table Conference breaks down on the issue of responsible government at the Centre, do you think there will be a repetition of the united opposition, which was given to the Simon Commission?

A. Yes, I think so. The Liberals and Moderates will not join the direct action movement, but their opinions will be entirely on the Congress side.

Q. Do you see any possibility of agreement with the British Government on

the basis of self-government in the Provinces?

A. No. I suggested a formula, but the British Government would not accept it. There might be a possibility of agreement if the Provinces were given real control immediately and if an absolute guarantee were given of early Central responsibility. I would accept an interval in point of time, but not in legislation. The same legislation must deal with the two things. Indian Nationalists will not look at Provincial autonomy without the certainty of Central responsibility. They say they have waited a long time for complete independence, and they can wait a little longer rather than accept a compromise which withholds Central responsibility.

Q. What is your view of Mr. Brailsford's suggestion of complete Provincial autonomy, with provision for a national constituent assembly to settle the issue of the form of Central Government.

A. Only a guarantee of responsible government under statutory provision would do. We must have responsible government.

The Hindustan Times, 14-12-1931

118. SPEECH AT FEDERAL STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING

LONDON,
November 25, 1931

My Lord Chancellor, I tender my congratulations to Mr. Lees-Smith for being responsible for this debate, and I tender my congratulations to you, My Lord Chancellor, for having allowed this debate. I think that Mr. Lees-Smith has shown amazing optimism in intiating this debate. He has come as a physician with an oxygen pump and he is trying to pump oxygen into a dying body. I do not say that we are a dying body because of this rumour or threat of Provincial autonomy divorced from Central responsibility. In my own humble manner, almost from the commencement of these proceedings, I have been uttering words of warning and I was oppressed, and I said so in so many words, with a sense of unreality which dawned upon Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru only yesterday, or as I happen to know, has been dawning upon him for the last few days, because he has given me the privilege of taking me into his confidence in common with his other friends and comrades, if I can also bracket myself as one of his comrades. Out of his ripe experience of administrative affairs, having held high offices in

the Government, he has warned us of the danger of Provincial autonomy so-called. I am very often an unrepentant sinner. He had reasons for issuing this warning, especially in connection with me, because I had dared to discuss the question of Provincial autonomy with many English friends who are responsible public men in this country, and he had heard of it, and so he gave me ample warning. It was for that reason that you find me as one of the co-signatories not to the document that has been placed before you, My Lord Chancellor, but to another similar document that was issued to the Press about ten days ago and was addressed to the prime Minister. I told him, as I say here, that both he and the others who have spoken after him and I reached the same goal through different routes. Fools walk in where angels fear to tread. Not having had any experience of administration actually, I felt that, if Provincial autonomy was the Provincial autonomy of my conception, I for one would not mind handling the fruit, feeling the thing and seeing whether it really answered my purpose. I love to meet friends, who may be opponents in policy, on their own platform and find out their difficulties, and find out also whether what they are offering is likely to lead one to the same place, and in that spirit and in that sense I ventured to discuss Provincial autonomy, but I found at once on discussion that what they meant was certainly not the Provincial autonomy that I meant, and so I told my friends also that I would be quite safe if they left me alone, that I was not going to sell the interests of country out of a foolish conception of Provincial autonomy, or out of impatience to get som- ething for the country. What I am anxious to do is, having come all these miles with the greatest diffidence, having come here to tender my whole-hearted co-operation to the Government and to this Conference, without the slightest mental reservation, and having applied that spirit of co-operation in thought, word and deed, to leave nothing undone, I have not hesitated even to go into the danger zone, and hence I have dared to talk about and discuss Provincial autonomy. But I have come to the conclusion that you, or the British Ministers, do not contemplate giving India that measure of Provincial autonomy which would satisfy a man of my mentality, which would satisfy the Congress, and which would reconcile the Congress to taking up Provincial auto-nomy although there may be delay in getting responsibility at the Centre.

At the risk of taking up a little of the time of this meeting, let me

make my meaning clear, because here too I am adopting a somewhat different line of argument, and I am most anxious not to be misunderstood. Let me take, therefore, one illustration. I want to take for my illustration Bengal, because it is one of the Provinces today in India which is deeply affected. I know that there is a terrorist school active in Bengal. Everybody ought to realize by this time that I can have no manner of sympathy with that terrorist school in any shape or form. I am as convinced as I have ever been that terrorism is the worst kind of action that any reformer can take up. Terrorism is the very worst thing for India in a special manner, because India is a foreign soil for terrorism to flourish in. I am convinced that those young Indians who are giving their lives for what they consider to be a good cause are simply throwing away their lives, and that they are not bringing the country by one inch nearer to the goal which is common, I hope, to us all.

I am convinced of all these things, but, having been convinced of them, supposing that Bengal had Provincial autonomy today, what would Bengal do? Bengal would set free every one of the detenus. Bengal would not hunt down the terrorists—an autonomous Bengal, I mean—but Bengal would try to reach these terrorists and convert these terrorists, and I should approach them with every confidence and wipe out terrorism from Bengal.

But let me go a little step further, in order to drive home the truth that is in me. If Bengal was autonomous, that autonomy itself would really remove terrorism from Bengal , because these terrorists foolishly consider that their action is the shortest cut to freedom; but, having attained that freedom, the terrorism would cease.

Today there are a thousand young men, some of whom, I would dare swear, have absolutely nothing in common with the school of terrorism, a thousand young men who have not been tried and who have not been convicted; they have all, every one of them, been arrested on suspicion. So far as Chittagong is concerned, Mr. Sen Gupta, who was Lord Mayor of Calcutta, who was member of Bengal Legislative Council, and who was also President of the Provincial Congress Committee in Bengal, is here today. He has brought to me a report signed by members of all the parties in Bengal in connection with Chittagong, and it is sad reading. It is painful to read this report, but the substance of this

report is that there has been an inferior edition of the Black and Tans in Chittagong—and Chittagong is not a place of no importance on the map of India.

We now see there has been a flag-showing ceremony, and in making this demonstration all the military forces have been concentrated togehter in Calcutta, and these demonstrations have gone through ten streets of Calcutta. At whose expense, and what will it do? Will it frighten the terrorists? I promise you it will not frighten the terrorists. Will it then wean the Congresmen from civil disobedience? It will not do so. The Congressmen are pledged to this thing. Suffering is the badge of their tribe. They have determined to go through every form of suffering. It cannot, therefore, frighten them. Our children would laugh at this show, and it is our purpose to show the children that they must not be terrified, they must not be frightened by this display of artillery, guns, air force, and so on.

So you see what is my conception of Provincial autonomy. All these things would be impossible; I would not allow a single soldier to enter the Province of Bengal; I would not pay a simple farthing for the upkeep of an army which I may not command. In such Provincial autonomy you do not contemplate a state in Bengal whereby I can set free all these detenus and I can remove from the statute-book the Bengal Regulation III. If it is Provincial autonomy, then it is independence for Bengal precisely in the same manner as that responsible Government. I have seen growing up in Natal. That is a little colony, but it had its own independent existence; it had its own volunteer force and so on. You do not contemplate that thing for Bengal or any of these Provinces. It will be the Centre still dictating, still ruling, still doing all these things. That is not the Provincial autonomy of my conception. That was why I said, if you present me with that live Provincial autonomy. I shall be preapred to consider that propositon; but I am also convinced that that autonomy is not coming. If that autonomy was coming, we would not see all these protracted proceedings that have taken place here; then we would have managed our own affairs in an entirely different manner.

But what really grieves me still more is this: We have all been brought here with one single purpose. I have been brought here specially through that very pact in which it is written that I was coming here to discuss and to receive real responsibility at the Centre: Federation with all its resonsibility

safeguards undoubtedly—safeguards in the interests of India. I have said in season and out of season that I would consider every safeguard that is necessary. I personally do not really consider, with Mr. Lees-Smith or anybody, that all this Constitution-building should take all these long years—three years. He thinks of Provincial autonomy in eighteen months. My folly tells me that all this time is not necessary. Where the people have made up their minds, the Parliament has made up its mind, the Ministers have made up their minds and the public opinion here is ready, then these things do not take time. I have seen them not taking time where there has been one mind applied; but I do not know that there is not one mind applied, but there are many minds, all following their own course and all perhaps with a disruptive tendency. That being so, I feel convinced that, in spite of this debate, not only is there going to be no responsibility at the Centre, but no tangible result coming out of this Conference. It hurts me, it pains me, that all this precious time of British Ministers, of the nation and of all these Indians who have come here, all of us, should have been wasted; but I am very mcuh afriad that, in spite of this oxygen pump, the result will be nil.

I do not say that the result is, thereore, bound to be that Provincial autonomy will be thrust down our throats. I do not really fear that result. What I fear is something still more dreadful—that nothing at all is going to come out of this thing but terrible repression in India. I do not mind that repression; repression will only do us good. If we have repression in the right time, I will consider that also as a very fine outcome from this Conference. Repression has never done harm to a single nation which is sailing for her destined goal with a fixed determinatin, for that repression is really an oxygen draught, though not the draught that Mr. Lees-Smith has administered.

But what I fear is that the slender thread which I had again built up of co-operation with the British nation and with British Ministers is about to snap and that I should again declare myself a convinced non-co-operator and civil resister that I should redel-iver this message of non-co-operation and civil resistance to the millions of India, no matter how many air balloons will float over India or how many tanks will be brought to India. They will have no result. You do not know today that they produce no results even upon the tender young children. We teach them to dance with joy when bullets are flying about them they are like so many crackers. We teach them to suffer for the freedom of their country. I do not despair I do not

think that because nothing happens here there will be chaos in the land. I do not think so. Not so long as Congress remains untarnished and non-violence goes forward throughout the length and breadth of India undiminished.

I have been told so often that it is the Congress that is responsible for this terrorism. I take this opportunity of denying that with all the strength at my command. On the contrary, I have evidence to show that it is the Congress creed of non-violence which up to now has kept the forces of terrorism in check. We have not succeeded to the fullest extent I am sorry but as time goes on we hope to suc-ceed. It is not as if this terrorism can bring freedom to India. I wanted freedom precisely of the same type, only fuller, as Mr. Jayakar. I want full freedom for the masses, and I know that terrorism can do no good to the masses. The masses are silent and disarmed. They do not know how to kill. I do not talk of individual instances, but the masses of India have never moved in that direction.

Wanting that freedom for the masses, I know that this terrorism can do no good whatseover. Whilst on the one hand Congress will fight British authority and its terrorism, legalized, so also will Con-gress fight terrorism, illegal, on the part of the youth. Between these two what I feel is that there was this course of co-operation opened up for the British nation and for me by Lord Irwin. He had built this bridge, and I thought I was going to have a safe passage. I had a safe passage, I have come here, and I have come here to tender my co-operation. But I must confess to you that, apart even from what Mr. Lees-Smith has said, and from what has been said on this side by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and by Mr. Sastri and the other speakers, the limited responsibility at the Centre which they have in view would not satisfy me.

I want that responsibility at the Centre that will give me, as you all know, control of the Army and Finance. I know I am not going to get that here now, and I know there is not a British man ready for that, and, therefore, I know I must go back and yet invite the nation to a course of suffering.I have taken part in this debate because I wanted to make my position abslutely clear. What I have been saying to friends in private sitting-rooms with reference to Provincial autonomy I have now said openly at this table, and I have told you what I mean by Provincial autonomy and what would really satisfy me. I close by saying that I sail in the same boat as Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and others,

and I feel convinced that real Provincial autonomy is an impossibility unless there is responsibility at the Centre, or unless you are prepared to so weaken the Centre that the Provinces will be able to dictate to the Centre. I know that you are not prepared today to do this. I know that this Conference does not conceive a weak Centre when this Federal Government is brought into being, but that is conceives a strong Centre.

A strong Centre governed and administered by an alien authority, and a strong autonomy , are a contradiciton in terms. Hence I feel that Provincial autonomy and Central responsibility have really speaking to go together. But I say again that I have an open mind. If somebody will convince me that there is Provincial autonomy, such as I have conceived, for instance, for Bengal, available, I would grasp it.

Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session): Proceedings of Federal Structure Committee and Minorities Committee, Vol. 1, p. 453-4

119. EXTRACT FROM PROCEEDINGS OF THE FEDERAL STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING

LONDON,
November 25, 1931

My Lord[1], I followed your speech yesterday on this very important subject with the greatest attention and with all the respect that is undoubtedly your due, and in conneciton with that speech I read the paragraphs on Finance in the Federal Structure Committee's Report of last year, I think it is pragraphs 18, 19 and 20, and I regret to have to record my opinion that I cannot endorse the restrictions that have been suggested in these paragraphs. My position, and, I think the position of all of us, must be very difficult when we do not know exactly what are the financial burdens.

Let me explain. I would naturally have to consider the thing from one point of view if 'Army' was reserved subject, and another point of view if 'Army' was a transferred subject. I have also very great difficulty in expressing my view by reason of the fact that the Congress is empha-tically of opinion that the obligation to be taken over by the incoming Government should be subejct to audit and impartial examination.

[1] Lord Reading. He had taken the chair when Lord Sankey left.

I have in my hands a Report prepared by four impartial men, two of them ex-Advocates General of the Bombay High Court: I mean, Mr. Bahadurji and Mr. Bhulabhai Desai. The third examiner or member of the Committee is Professor Shah[1], for a long time Professor in the Unviersity of Bombay, a man having an all-India reputation and author of valuable works on Indian economics. The fourth member of the Committee is Mr. Kumarappa[2], who holds European degrees and whose opinions on Finance command considerable acceptance and influence. These four gentlemen have submitted an elaborate Report in which they, as I hold, make out a conclusive case for an impartial enquiry, and they show that many of the obligations do not really belong to India.

In this connection, I want very resepctfully to say that the Congress has never suggested, as it has been viciously suggested against it, that one single farthing of national obligations should ever be repudiated by the Congress. What the Congress has, however, suggested is that some of the obligations which are supposed to belong to India ought not to be saddled upon India and should be taken over by Great Britain. You will find in these volumes a critical examination of all these obligations. I do not propose to weary this Committee with a recital of these things. Those who would care to study these two volumes may, and I have no doubt will, study them with considerable profit, and they will perhaps discover that some of these obligatons should never have been saddled upon India. That being the case, I feel that if one knew exactly where one was, it would be possible to give a decisive opinion, but subject to that, I venture to suggest, that the restrictions, or the so-called safeguards, that have been suggested in paragraph 18, 19 and 20 of this Report of the Federal Structure Sub-committee will, instead of helping India on her course, hinder her progress at every step.

You, My Lord, were pleased yesterday to say that the question before you was not one of want of confidence in Indian Minsiters. On the contrary, you had every hope that the Indian Ministers would do as well as any other Minsiters, but you were concerned with the credit of India outside the borders of India, that the investors who supplied capital to India and who brought their money to India at reasonable

[1] Prof. K. T. Shah
[2] J. G. Kumarappa

rates of interest would not be satisfied if there were not safeguards of the type suggested
here; and you went on further, if I remember rightly, to say that when there were any investmens in India from here, or when there were any moneis sent to India, it was not to be supposed that they were not also for the interest of India.

If I remember rightly, Your Lordship used the words "obviously it was in the interests of India".I was really waiting to find some illustrations, but no doubt you took it for granted that we would know those matters or those illustrations which you had in mind. I had really con-verse illustrations in mind while you were speaking, and I said to myself, I have within my own experience several illustrations where I could show that the interests of India were not, in those particular illustrations, identical with the interests of Great Britain, that the two were in conflict, and that, therefore, we could not possibly say that every time there were loans from Great Britain, they were in the interest of India.

Take for instance so many wars. Take the wars of Afghanistan. As a young man I read with great avidity the history of wars in Afghanistan written by the late Sir John Kay and I have a vivid recollecton left on my mind that most of these wars were certainly not in the interests of India; and not only that, but that the Governor-General had bungled over these wars. The late Dadabhai Naoroji taught us young men that the history of British finance in India was a history of muddle and bungling where it was not also one of exploitatin of India.

The Lord Chancellor uttered the warning, and you were pleased to enforce his warning, that Finance at the present moment was a very delicate matter and that, therefore, those of us who took part in the discussion should be cautious and careful so as not to mishandle the subject and create difficulties or add to the difficulties that already face the Finance Minister in India. I, therefore, do not propose to go into any details; but I cannot help saying one thing in connection with this increase in the ratio. I mean when the rupee was appreciated to 1/6 from 1/4. Now, there the measure was adopted in the face of almost unanimous opposition from Indians—Indians who were not in any way connected with the Congress. They were all independent, some of them great experts in finance who knew exactly what they were saying. Now, there again one finds that the Indian interest

was really subordinated to foreign interest. It does not require an expert to know that a depreciated rupee is always, or as a rule would be, in the interest of the cultivators. I was very much struck by an admission made by two financiers here that, if the rupee, instead of being linked to sterling, had been left to itself, at least for the time being, it would have been of great advantage to the cultivators. They were going to the last extreme and thinking of some catastrophe that might befall India if the rupee left to itself went down to the intrinsic value, namely 6d. or 7d. Personally, I have not even then been able to see that really the Indian cultivator would be in any shape or form damaged.

Now, that being the case, I cannot possibly endorse safeguards that would interfere with the full discharge of his responsibility by the Indian Finance Minister, and that responsibility conceived predominantly in the interests of the ryots.

But I want to draw the attention of this Committee to one thing more. In spite of the caution uttered by the Lord Chancellor and you, My Lord, I feel somehow or other that if Indian Finance was properly managed entirely in the interests of India, we should not be subject to fluctuations as seriously as we are today in the foreign market, the fluctuations in London. I want to give you my reason for it. When I first became acquainted with the writing of Sir Daniel Hamilton, I approached him with considerable diffidence and hesitation. I knew nothing practically of Indian Finance, I was absolutely new to the subject, but he with his zeal insisted upon my studying the papers that he continued to send me. As we all know, he has large interests in India, he has himself held offices of importance and is himself an able financier. He is today making experiments himself along the lines he has suggested, but this is the one striking thought that he has placed before all who would care to understand his mode of looking at Indian finance, and he says that India does not need to look to the gold standard or to the silver standard or to any metallic standard. India has metal all its own, and he says that that consists in her innumerable, countless millions of labourers. It is true that the British Government has not declared itself insolvent in connection with Indian Finance, that it has been, up to now, able to pay its way; but at what cost? It has been, in my humble opinion, at the cost of the cultivator, the money has been squeezed

from the cultivator. Instead of thinking in terms of rupees, if the authorities had consulted and thought of finance in terms of these masses, they could have managed the affairs of India, in my humble opinion, infinitely better than they have hitherto done, they would not then have been obliged to fall back upon foreign market. Everybody recognizes, British financiers have told us, that for nine years out of ten India has always a favourable balance.

That is to say, whenever India has what may be called an eight-anna or ten-anna year,eight annas is really enough to give her a favourable balance. Then India produces through bountiful Nature, from Mother Earth, more than enough to pay for all her obligations, and more than for all the imports that she may ever require. If it is true, and I hold that it is true, a country like India does not really need to fall back upon the foreign capitalist. She has been made to fall back upon the foreign capitalist because of the enormous drain that has taken place from India in order to pay what are called the home charges, in order to pay terrific charges for India's Defence. She is utterly unable to discharge these obligations, and yet they have been met a revenue policy which has been condemned in unmeasured terms by one of the officiating commissioners, the late Romesh Chandra Duttt. I know he engaged in a contoversy with the late Lord Curzon on this very topic, and we Indians came to the conclusion that the right was on the side of the late Romesh Chandra Dutt.

But I want to go a step further. It is known that these millions of cultivators remain idle for six months in the year. If the British Government saw to it that these men would not remain idle for six months in the year, imagine the wealth that they would produce. Why would we then need ever to fall back upon the foreign market? That is how the whole idea of finance appears before me, a layman— a man who continually thinks of these masses and wants to feel as they would feel. They would say: 'We have all the labour; we do not want, therefore, to fall back upon any foreign capital.' So long as we labour, the whole world would want the products of our labour. And it is true the world today wants the products of our labour. We would be able to produce those things that the world would voluntarily and willingly take from us. That has been the condition of India for ages past. Therefore, I really do not feel the fear that you, My Lord, have expressed in connection with Indian Finance. Having these views, I do not really share the fear that Indian Finance would be in jeopardy if

we whispered something that need not be said now, or if a man like me said today that I would want complete control of Indian Finance if India is to have responsibility at the Centre. In my opinion, unless we have control over our own door-keepers and over our own purse absolutely unrestricted, we shall not be able to shoulder the resonsibility, and it will not be a responsibility worth the name.

Holding thie view, I feel that the safeguards that I would suggest are of a totally different character; but I am not in a position at the present moment to suggest any safeguard at all—not until I know that the nation is to have complete responsibility, complete control over her Army, over the Civil Service, that the nation will be at perfect liberty to take over so many of the Civilians as the nation would want, so many of the soldiers as the nation would want and on terms that would be suitable for a poor nation like India. Unless I know all these things, it is practically impossible for me to suggest the safeguards. As a matter of fact, when all these things are taken into consideration, probably there will be no necessity for any safeguards, unless one starts with want of confidence in India's ability to shoulder her burden and India's ability to carry on the administration of the country in a peaceful manner. The only danger under such circumstances that I can possibly conceive would be that the moment we take charge there would be utter chaos and disorder. Now, if that is the fear that seizes the British mind, then there is no meeting ground. We take responsibility, we ask for responsibility, we demand responsibility, because we have got that confidence that we would be able to carry on our affairs in a decent manner and, I would feel, certainly in a much better manner than British administrators have done or could ever do—not because they are not able. I will grant that they are much abler than we are; I will grant that they have got an organizing capacity which we have to learn at their feet. But we have one thing, that we know our country, we know our poeple and we should, therefore, be able to run our Government cheaply. We would avoid all the quarrels, and we, not having any imperialistic ambition, would not go to war with the Afghans or any other nation, but we would cultivate friendly relations, and they would have nothing to fear from us.

That is the kind of idea that runs through my mind as I conceive Indian Finance. You will see, therefore, that, in my opinion, Indian Finance does not occupy such a large place in my conception, and not such a dangerous position as it evidently occupies in your

mind, or the Lord Chancellor's mind or in the minds of British Ministers with whom I had the privilege of discussing this question. Hence, and for the reasons that I have explained I must respectfully say that it is not possible for me to subscribe to the safeguards that are suggested here, or to endorse the fears that agitate the British public or the responsible men in Great Britain.

One thing I would like to say: that for every obligation that the National Government undertakes there will be proper guarantees, such guarantees as a nation can possibly give, forthcoming, and assurances of a right type forthcoming. But, in my opinion, they will never be of the type or the character described in these paragraphs. After all, if there are, and there would be, I have no doubt, certain obligations that we would have to take over and we have to discharge towards Great Britain, supposing that we bungled and did not do anything whatsoever, no assurances given on paper would be worth anything. Or supposing that India, when she comes into her own, unfortunately for her has a series of bad seasons, then again I do not know that any safeguards that might possibly be conceived wold be enough to squeeze money out of India. In these critical circumstances—unforeseen circumstances, visitations of nature—, it is impossible for any national Government to give guarantees.

I do not wish to labour this point any further. I thought that I should occupy a few minutes of this Committee in disburdening myself of the views that a layman like myself holds upon Indian Finance.

I can only close with the great sorrow that has overtaken me in connection with these things that I should find myself in conflict with so many administrators who have experience of Indian affairs and also of so many of my countrymen who are attending this Round Table Conference; but, if I am to discharge my duty as a representative of the Congress, even at the risk of incurring displeasure I must give expression to the views I hold in common with so many members of the Congress.

CHAIRMAN: I did not want to interrupt you, Mr. Gandhi, when you were speaking, but I do not think that you quite accurately represented what I had said. Obviously I could not interrupt you, becaue it meant going back and repeating what has been said, and, after all, it stands recorded. It may be a misinterpretation of some observations that were made, and of course there are many economic and financial matters which you have raised which have not been discussed at all. I only want to

say in reference to them that you have introduced them for the purpose of your argument. All I want to say is that I have already given in the speeches that I have made with regard to finance, but I did not want it to be assumed that there is no answer to it.

GANDHIJI : Of course not.

Young India, 17-12-1931; *also Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session): Proceedings of Federal Structure Committee and Minorities Committee,* Vol. I, pp. 459-60

120. EXTRACT FROM PROCEEIDNGS OF THE FEDERAL STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING

LONDON,
November 26, 1931

CHAIRMAN : Will you please take the draft report in your hands. I do not think it will take very long, because what I have done is that I have asked various members to let me have their views and I have incorporated them. I will just read it through in the way we usually do and then come back to each paragraph. It is the fourth Report of the Federal Structure Committee, on Commercial Discrimination.

1. On this subject the Committee are glad to be able to record a substantial measure of agreement. They recall that, in paragraph 22 of their Report at the last Conference, it was stated that there was general agreement that in matters of trade and commerece the principle of equality of treatment ought to be established and that the Committee of the whole Conference, at their meeting on January 19th, 1931, adopted the following paragraph as part of the Report of the Minorities Subcommittee.

"At the instance of the British Commercial community, the principle was generally agreed that there should be no discrimination between the rights of the British mercantile community, firms and companies trading in India, and the rights of Indian-born subjects, and that an appropriate Convention based on reciprocity should be entered into for the purpose of regulating these rights."

More than one member in the course of the discussion also reminded the committee that the All-Parties' Conference in 1928 stated in their Report that "it is inconceivable that there can be any discrimination legislation against any community doing business lawfully in India."

2. The Committee accept and reaffirm the principle that equal rights and equal opportunities should be afforded to those lawfully engaged in commerce and industry within the territory of the Federation, and such differences as have

manifested themselves are mainly (though not entirely) concerned with the limits within which the principle should operate and the best method of giving effect to it. . . .

MR. GANDHI: I should like this added, Lord Chancellor, at the end of that paragraph:

> "Some, however, contend that the future Government should not be burndened with any restraint, save that no discrimination should be made merely on the ground of race, colour or creed."

CHAIRMAN: I will certainly put that in. Where do you want that to go?

MR. GANDHI: At the end of he second paragraph.

Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session): Proceedings of Federal Structure Committee and Minorities Committee, Vol. I, pp. 472-4

121. LETTER TO ABDUL KADIR BAWAZEER

November 27, 1931

BHAI IMAM SAHEB,

There is no end to your misfortunes. I learnt from Qureshi's letter that Amina lost her two children. But where is the need to console you for this? We look upon birth and death as equal. I know you will have kept your peace of mind. I have got the reply to my wire to Sardar inquiring about your health. I think we shall meet soon. There is no time to write more.

Blessings and regards from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10788. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

122. LETTER TO AMINA AND GULAM RASUL QURESHI

November 27, 1931

MY DEAR QURESHI AND AMINA,

You have been well warned by Providence. Do not grieve over the children's death. All who are born must die. I hope Amina is keeping good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10806. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

123. EXTRACT FROM PROCEEDINGS OF THE FEDERAL STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING[1]

LONDON,

November 27, 1931

CHAIRMAN : Mr. Gandhi has something that he wants to add at the end of paragraph.[2]

MR. GANDHI: I wish to add at the end of paragraph 2,[2] after the words "responsible government" the words, "and that the derogation from complete control would hamper the Finance Minister in the discharge of his duty."

CHAIRMAN: Those words are noted.[3]

Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session) : Proceedings of Federal Structure Committee and Minorities Committee, Vol. I, p. 483

[1] The Committee were continuing discussion on the Draft Fourth Reort dealing with Financial Safeguards.

[2] The paragraph ended: ". . .some members again. . . . went further in their objection to the financial safeguards, and expressed themselves as unwilling to contemplate any limitations upon the powers of an Indian Finance Minister to administer his charge in full responsbility to the Legislature, on the ground that a constitution which did not concede complete control of finance to the Legislature could not be described as responsible government."

[3] They were incorporated in the amended version of the Report.

124. CABLE TO VALLABHABHAI PATEL

[*November 28, 1931*][1]

LEAVING SATURDAY REACHING VILLENEUVE SUNDAY. THERE TILL ELEVENTH. SAILING VENICE CRACOVIA TWELFTH.[2]

Young India, 3-12-1931

125. EXTRACT FROM PROCEEDINGS OF PLENARY SESSION OF THE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

LONDON,
November 28, 1931

SIR HUBERT CARR: Lord Chancellor, during the past week or ten days we have heard a good deal regarding the alleged failure of the Conference, and I am glad to have this opportunity to express the view of my colleagues and myself, which is very emphatically opposed to that description. We feel that the deliberations extending over the past year have led to a very remarkable degree of agreement on many questions of vital importance to the future of India. In holding this view, we do not shut our eyes to the difficulties which still exist, but we have a keen recollection of the great difficulties which faced this Conference when it first assembled last year. . . .

Without their work Mahatma Gandhi might have remained for many people in this country a more or less mythical figure, making salt in forbidden places or weaving all kinds of yarns.

MR. GANDHI: You mean spinning all kinds of yarns.

Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session): Proceedings of the Plenary Session, pp. 103-5

[1] In "Diary, 1931", Gandhiji mentions having sent a cable to Vallabhbhai Patel on this date. Presumably this is the cable.

[2] Actually Gandhiji sailed from Brindisi on December 14.

126. INTERVIEW TO LONDON GENERAL PRESS

[Before *November 30, 1931*][1]

If the Round Table Conference fails the effects on British trade will be disastrous, for the boycott will increase. One would think, therefore, it is to Britain's own interests to see that the Conference does not fail. I am even prepared to make reasonable sacrifices rather than that should hap-pen. Of coure the Round Table Conference will be a partial failure should only part of our demands be granted. It would be a failure to that extent.

Q.Would you be content if only part were granted with a promise of a fuller measure later on ?

A.I should have to consider what was offered. It is not likely that I can get all I want. But if what I get is such that I can make much of it, then I might reconcile myself to it. I am prepared to compromise if necessary.

I do not think that India should appeal to the League of Nations. Not now. We are still negotiating. If the Round Table Conference fails, then those who have no faith in the direct method may place India's cause before the Tribunal of the League. But I would not do so. I prefer the method of civil resistance because it is the cleanest and the best method. The League of Nations is not strong enough to deal with the question. India is a world in itself. It is too big a bite even for the League.

Q. Do you agree with me, Mr. Gandhi, that you are the safety-catch on the great machine of India, that you are the restraining influence on the wild youth of the country, that it would be criminal folly to deport you from India, for once you are gone, there will be revolt and rebellion?

A. I agree with you. Such a thing would be the act of a blindman who wilfully shuts his eyes to the state of affairs in India, who fails to realize the extent to which this unrest, this demand for swaraj has gripped the whole country. If I were to be deported from India many evil things might happen, but I feel that even in my absence my influence for peace will last; though I may be for away

[1] The source does not mention the date. From the contents, however, it would seem that the interview took place before the commencement of the last session of the Round Table Conference on November 30.

my spirit will remain behind. The struggle would go on. It would become more acute. Yet I trust it would not become violent. I should be sorry to think my restraining influence should disappear after I had vanished. No, I should not resist deportation. No true satyagrahi should resist suffering laid on him. He must welcome any punishment that is meted out to him.

Passing to another topic Gandhi remarked :

Machinery is a grand yet awful invention. It is possible to visulalize a stage at which the machines invented by man may finally engulf civilization . If man controls the machines, then they will not; but should man lose his control over the machines and allow them to control him, then they will certainly engulf civilization and everything.

Q. What are your impressions of the West ? Do you condemn Western civili-zation ?

A. I have condemned it. It is too hurried, too materialistic, too artificial. I cannot say that I hate it. "Hate" is a bad word to use. But I strongly dislike it. No, I am not going to America. I must return to India. I must hurry back there. My country has need of me.

Yes, I have met many of the leading men of Europe. Not politicians alone—men of the world of art and literature too,of every walk of life. I have met the great ones, and I have mingled freely with the very poorest of the poor. I have met Bernard Shaw.

Q. What do you think of him ?

A. Well, I think he is a very good man.

Q. So are many people.

A. Well, I think he is a very witty man, a lover of epigram and paradox, with a Puck-like spirit and a generous ever-young heart, the Arch Jester of Europe.

Whom do I consider the most true friends of India? Comparisons are invidious; it is difficult to single out one when I have met in England so many true friends of India. I really cannot say who impressed me as having the most forceful personality. I must be discreet.

My dream of a free India ? Ah! It will take years to materialize. I see India free, self-governing and self-supporting, with peace abroad and trade and communications well established, with

great cities in which busy men and women dwell contented as bees in humming hives, and with a chain of linked villages happy in their home industries. Women shall play their part equally with men in this new, free India.

"Then to the clear , blue heavens, her banner wide unfurled, Let the New India face the future and the world."

The Hindu, 21-12-1931

127. EXTRACT FROM PROCEEDINGS OF PLENARY SESSION OF THE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

LONDON,
November 30, 1931

MR. GHUZNAVI . . . . We demand separate electorates, and we will continue to demand them. We have them now. We had them for over twenty years with considerable experience of their work and we believe them to be an absolute essential for our safety. This is the result of experience and not of mere opinion. With your permission I will just read a few passages quoted in the supplementary note by Sir Abdullah al-M'amun Suhrawardy, to the Report of the Indian Central Committee :

"I do not believe that the Mussalman is the natural enemy of the Hindu. . . . I have no desire to obtain swaraj,even if it were possible, by the sacrifice of a single legitimate interest of a single minority." (Mr. M.K.GANDHI in *Young India*,[1] quoted in the Overseas Edition of *The Stateman*, September 19th ,1929.)

MR. GANDHI : *Young India* is here to confirm that opinion.

Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session) : Proceedings of the Plenary Sessions, p.209

128. CABLE TO SANYAL

[On or after *November 30, 1931*][2]

CLOSELY FOLLOWING SITUATION. WISH YOUNG MEN WOULD LEARN PRICELESS LESSON NON-VIOLENCE.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 18367

[1] For the correct version, vide "My Limitations

[2] This was in reply to the addressee's cable received on November 30, asking Gandhiji to send a message for a special Bengal Provincial Conference which was to be held at Berhampore on December 5.

129. LETTER TO SIR SAMUEL HOARE

[On or before *December 1, 1931*][1]

DEAR SIR SAMUEL,

I appreciate your confidence. I am sorry I cannot associate myself in the address. You know the reasons. I have nothing whatsoever against the person of His Majesty. It is the principle underlying which I cannot subscribe to. The best way out of difficulty is for you to tell me when the address will be moved and for me to absent myself at the time. I do not want to do anything to mar the proceedings so far as possible.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : C.W. 10375. Courtesy: British High Commission.

130. LETTER TO CHAIRMAN, ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE[2]

[On or before *December 1, 1931*][3]

THE CHAIRMAN

ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

DEAR SIR,

In affixing our signatures to this letter, we, the undersigned delegates attending the Round Table Conference, before its conclusion, desire to express and to bring to your personal notice our deep sense of apprecia-tion of the unfailing courtesy, attention, kindness and excellent services rendered to us during our stay in England while attending the Round Table Conference, by the Joint Social Secretaries, Mr. F. A. M. H. Vincent, C.I.E., C.B.E., M.V.O., and Mr. P.K. Dutt.

[1] The letter is undated. It is clear, however, that it was written on or before December 1, 1931 on which date the last session of the Round Table Conference ended.

[2] It is not certain if this was drafted by Gandhiji.

[3] The last session of the Round Table Conference took place on December 1, and this, as the text would indicate, was written before that date.

The able manner in which these two officers have performed their onerous and delicate duties has, in our opinion, enabled all of us to come into close contact with each other and understand one another.

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI,

[AND MANY OTHERS]

From a photostat: C.W. 9384. Courtesy: India Office Library

131. SPEECH AT PLENARY SESSION OF ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

LONDON,

December 1, 1931[1]

PRIME MINISTER AND FRIENDS,

I wish that I could have done without having to speak to you, but I felt that I would not have been just to you or just to my principles if I did not put in what may be the last word on behalf of the Congress. I live under no illusion. I do not think that anything that I can say this evening can possibly influene the decision of the Cabinet. Probably the decision has been already taken. Matters of the liberty of practically a whole continent can hardly be decided by mere argumentation, even nego-tiation. Negotiation has its purpose and has its play, but only under certain conditions. Without those conditions negotiations are a fruitless task. But I do not want to go into all these matters. I want as far as possible to confine myself within the four corners of the conditions that you, Prime Minister, read to this Conference at its opening meeting. I would, therefore, first of all, say a few words in connection with the Reports that have been submitted to this Conference. You will find in these Reports that generally it has been stated that so and so is the opi-nion of a large majority, some, however, have expressed an opinion to the contrary, and so on. Parties who have dissented have not been stated. I had heard when I was in India, and I was told when I came here, that no decision or no decisions will be taken by the ordinary rule of majority, and I do not want to mention this fact here by way of complaint that the Reports have been so framed as if the proceedigns were governed by the test

[1] The session began on November 30 and, after adjourning at 11.50 p.m., was resumed at 12.5 a.m.

of majority. But it was necessary for me to mention this fact, because to most of these Reports you will find that there is a dissenting opinion, and in most of the cases that dissent unfortunately happens to belong to me. It was not a matter of joy to have to dissent from fellow Delegates, but I felt that I could not truly represent the Congress unless I notified that dissent.

There is another thing which I want to bring to the notice of this Conference, namely: what is the meaning of the dissent of the Congress? I said at one of the preliminary meetings of the Federal Structure Committee that the Congress claimed to represent over 85 per cent of the population of India, that is to say, the dumb, toiling, semi-starved millions. But I went further: that the Congress claimed also by right of service to represent even the Princes, if they would pardon my putting forth that claim, and the landed gentry, the educated class. I wish to repeat that claim and I wish this evening to emphasize that claim.

All the other parties at this meeting represent sectional interests. Congress alone claims to represent the whole of India, all interests. It is no communal organization; it is a determined enemy of communalism in any shape of form. Congress knows no distinction of race, colour or creed; its platform is universal. It may not always have lived up to the creed. I do not know a single human organization that lives up to its creed. Congress has failed very often to my knowledge. It may have failed more often to the knowledge of its critics. But the worst critic will have to recognize, as it has been recognized, that the National Congress of India is a daily-growing organization, that its message penetrates the remotest village of India; that on given occasions the Congress has been able to demonstrate its influence over and among these masses who inhabit 700,000 villages.

And yet here I see that the Congress is treated as one of the Parties. I do not mind it; I do not regard it as a calamity for the Congress; but I do regard it as a calamity for the purpose of doing the work for which we have gathered together here. I wish I could convince all the British public men, the British Ministers, that the Congress is capable of delivering the goods. The Congress is the only all-India-wide national organization, bereft of any communal basis; that it does represent all the minorities which have lodged their claims here and which, or the signatories on their behalf, claim I hold unjustifiably to represent 46 per cent of the population of India. The Congress, I say, claims to represent all these minorities.

What a great difference it would be today if this claim on behalf of the Congress was recognized. I feel that I have to state this claim with some degree of emphasis on behalf of peace, for the sake of achieving the purpose which is common to all of us, to you Englishmen who sit at this table, and to us the Indian men and women who also sit at this table. I say so for this reason. Congress is a powerful organization; Congress is an organization which has been accused of running or desiring to run a parallel Government; and in a way I have endorsed the charge. If you could understand the working of the Congress, you would welcome an organization which could run a parallel Government and show that it is possible for an organization, voluntary, without any force at its command, to run the machinery of Government even under adverse circumstances. But no. Although you have invited the Congress, you distrust the Congress. Althought you have invited the Congress, you reject its claim to represent the whole of India. Of course it is possible at this end of the world to dispute that claim, and it is not possible for me to prove this claim; but, all the same, if you find me asserting that claim, I do so because a tremendous responsibility rests upon my shoulders.

The Congress represents the spirit of rebellion. I know that the word 'rebellion' must not be whispered at a Conference which has been summoned in order to arrive at an agreed solution of India's troubles through negotiation. Speaker after speaker has got up and said that India should achieve her liberty through negotiation, by argument, and that it will be the greatest glory of Great Britian if Great Britain yields to India's demands by argument. But the Congress does not hold that view, quite. The Congress has an alternative which is unpleasant to you.

I heard several speakers—and let me say I have endeavoured not to miss a single sitting; I have tried to follow every speaker with the utmost attention and with all the respect that I could possibly give to these speakers—saying what a dire calamity it would be if India was fired with the spirit of lawlessness, rebellion, terrorism and so on. I do not pretend to have read histroy, but as a schoolboy I had to pass a paper in history also, and I read that the page of history is soiled red with the blood of those who have fought for freedom. I do not know an instance in which nations have attained to their own without having to go through an incre-dible measure of travail. The dagger of the assassin, the poison bowl, the bullet of the rifleman, the spear and all these weapons and methods of destruction have been up to now used

by what I consider blind lovers of liberty and freedom, and the historian has not condemned him. I hold no brief for the terrorists. Mr. Ghuznavi brought in the terrorists and he brought in the Calcutta Corporation. I felt hurt when he mentioned an incident that took place at the Calcutta Corporation. He forgot to mention that the Mayor of that Corporation made handsome reparation for the error into which he himself was betrayed and the error into which the Calcutta Corporation was betrayed through the instrumentality of those members of the Corporation who were Congressmen. I hold no brief for Congressmen who directly on indirectly would encourage terrorism. As soon as this incident was brought to the notice of the Congress, the Congress set about putting it in order. It immediately called upon the Mayor of the Calcutta Corporation to give an account of what was done and the Mayor, the gentleman that he is, immediately admitted his mis-take and made all the reparation that it was then legally possible to make. I must not detain this Assembly over this incident for any length of time. He mentioned also a verse which the children of the forty schools conduc-ted by the Calcutta Corporation are supposed to have recited. There were many other mis-statements in that speech which I could dwell upon, but I have no desire to do so. It is only out of regard for the great Calcutta Corporation and out of regard for truth and on behalf of those who are not here tonight to put in their defence that I mention these two glaring instances. I do not for one moment believe that this was taught in the Calcutta Corporation schools with the knowledge of the Calcutta Corporation. I do know that in those terrible days of last year, several things were done for which we have regret, for which we have made reparation. If our boys in Calcutta were taught these verses which Mr. Ghuznavi has recited, I am here to tender an apology on their behalf, but I should want it proved that the boys were taught by the schoolmasters of these schools with the knowledge and encouragement of the Corporation.

Charges of this nature have been brought against the Congress times without number, and times without number these charges have also been refuted, but I have mentioned these things at this juncture. It is again to show that for the sake of liberty people have fought, people have lost their lives, people have killed and have sought death at the hands of those whom they have sought to oust. The Congress then comes upon the scene and devises a new method not known to history, namely, that of civil disobedience, and the

Congress has been following that method up. But again I am up against a stone wall and I am told that that is a method that no Govenment in the world will tolerate. Well, of course, the government may has not tolerate, no government has tolerated open rebellion. No governmentmaytoleratecivildisobedience, but governments have to succumb even to these forces, as the British Government has done before now, even as the great Dutch Gover-nment after eight years of trial had to yield to the logic of facts. General Smuts is a brave General, a great statesman, and a very hard taskmaster also, but he himself recoiled with horror from even the contemplation of doing to death innocent men and women who were merely fighting for the preservation of their self-respect and the things which he had vowed he would never yield in the year 1908, rein- forced as he was by General Botha, he had to do in the year 1914, after having tried these civil resisters through and through. And in India Lord Chelmsford had to do the same thing; the Governor of Bombay had to do the same thing in Borsad and Bardoli. I suggest to you, Prime Minister, it is too late today to resist this, and it is this thing which weighs me down, this choice that lies before them, the parting of the ways probably. I shall hope against hope, I shall strain every nerve to achieve an honourable settlement for my country if I can do so without having to put the millions of my countrymen and countrywomen and even children through this ordeal of fire. It can be a matter of no joy and comfort to me to lead them on again to a fight of that character, but if a further ordeal of fire has to be our lot. I shall appraoch that with the greatest joy and with the greatest consolation that I was doing what I felt to be right, the country was doing what it felt to be right, and the country will have the additional satisfaction of knowing that it was not at least taking lives, it was giving lives; it was not making the British people directly suffer, it was suffering. Professor Gilbert Muray told me I shall never forget that I am paraphrasing his inimitable language. He said: You do not consider for one moment that the Englishmen do not suffer when thousands of your countrymen suffer, that we are so heartless? I do not think so. I do not know that you will suffer; but I want you to suffer because I want to touch your hearts; and when your hearts have been touched will come the psychological moment for negotiation. Negotiation there always will be; and if this time I have travelled all these miles in order to enter upon negotiation, I thought that your countryman, Lord Irwin, had sufficiently tried us through his ordi-nances, that he had sufficient evidence that thousands of men and women of India and that thousands of children had suffered; and that, ordinance or no ordinance, lathis or no lathis, nothing would

avail to stem the tide that was onrushing and to stem the passions that were rising in the breasts of the men and women of India who were thirsting for liberty.

Whilst there is yet a little sand left in the glass, I want you to understand what this Congress stands for. My life is at your disposal. The lives of all the members of the Working Committee, the All-India Congress Committee, are at your disposal. But remember that you have at your disposal the lives of all these dumb millions. I do not want to sacrifice those lives if I can possibly help it. Therefore please remember that I will count no sacrifice too great if by chance I can pull through an honourable settlement. You will find me always having the greatest spirit of compromise if I can but fire you with the spirit that is working in the Congress, namely, that India must have real liberty. Call it by any name you like; a rose will smell as sweet by any other name, but it must be the rose of liberty that I want and not the artificial product. If your mind and the Congress mind, the mind of this Conference and the mind of the British people, mean the same thing by the same word, then you will find the amplest room for compromise, and will find the Congress itself always in a Compromising spirit. But so long as there is not that one mind, that one definition, not one implication for the same word that you and I and we may be using, so long there is no compromise possible. How can there be any compromise so long as we each one of us has a different definition for the same words that we may be using. It is impossible, Prime Minister, I want to suggest to you in all humility that it is utterly impossible then to find a meeting ground, to find ground where you can apply the spirit of compromise. And I am very grieved to have to say that up to now I have not been able to discover a common definition for the terms that we have been exchanging during all these weary weeks.

I was shown last week the Statute of Westminster by a Sceptic, and he said: "Have you seen the definition of 'Dominion'?" I read the definition of 'Dominion', and naturally I was not at all perplexed or shocked to see that the word 'Dominion' was exhaustively defined, and it has not a general definition but a particular definiton. It simply said: the word 'Dominion' shall include Australia, South Africa, Canada and so on, ending with the Irish Free State. I do not think I noticed Egypt there. Then he said: "Do you see what your Dominion means?" It did not make any impression upon me. I do not mind what my Dominion means or what Complete Independence

means. In a way I was relieved. I said I am now relieved from having to quarrel about the word 'Dominion', because I am out of it. But I want Complete Independence, and even so, so many Englishmen have said: "Yes, you can have Complete Independence, but what is the meaning of 'complete independence'?" And again we come to different definitions. Therefore, I say the Congress claim is registered as Complete Independence.

One of your great statesmen[1]—I do not think I should give his name—was debating with me, and he said: "Honestly, I did not know that you meant this by Complete Independence." He ought to have known, but he did not know, and I shall tell you what he did not know. When I said to him, "I cannot be a partner in an Empire," he said, "Of course, that is logical." I said, "But I want to become that. It is not as if I shall be if I am compelled to, but I want to become a partner with Great Britain. I want to become a partner with the English people; but I want to enjoy precisely the same liberty that your people enjoy, and I want to seek this partnership not merely for the benefit of India, and not merely for mutual benefits; I want to seek this partnership in order that the great weight that is crushing the world to atoms may be lifted from off its shoulders."

This took place ten or twelve days ago. Strange as it may appear, I got a note from another Englishman whom also you know and whom also you respect. Among many things he writes: "I believe profoundly that the peace and happiness of mankind depend on our friendship," and as if I would not understand that, he says, "your people and mine." I must read to you what he also says, "And of all Indians you are the one that the real Englishman likes and understands."

He does not waste any words on flattery, and I do not think he has intended this last expression to flatter me. It will not flatter me in the slightest degree. There are many things in this note which, if I could share them with you, would perhaps make you understand better the significance of this expression, but let me tell you that, when he writes this last sentence, he does not mean me personally. I personally signify nothing, and I know I would mean nothing to any single Englishman; but I mean something to some Englishman

[1] Presumably, Lloyd George who met Gandhiji on November 18; *Vide* "Diary, 1931".

because I represent a cause, because I seek to represent a nation, a great organization which has made itself felt. That is the reason why he says this.

But then, if I could possibly find that working basis, Prime Minister, there is ample room for compromise. It is friendship I crave. My business is not to throw overboard the slave-holder and tyrant. My philosophy forbids me to do so, and today the Congress has accepted that philosophy not as a creed, as it is to me, but as a policy, because the Congress believes that it is the right and best thing for India, a nation of three hundred and fifty millions, to do. A nation of 350 million people does not need the dagger of the assassin, it does not need the position bowl, it does not need the sword, the spear or the bullet. It needs simply a will of its own, an ability to say "No", and that nation is today learning to say "No".

But what is it that that nation does ? Summarily, or at all, dismiss Englishmen? No. Its mission is today to convert Englishmen. I do not want to break the bond between England and India, but I do want to transform that bond. I want to transform that slavery into complete freedom for my country. Call it 'complete independence' or whatever you like, I will not quarrel about that word, and even though my countrymen may dispute with me for having taken some other word, I shall be able to bear down that opposition so long as the content of the word that you may suggest to me bears the meaning. Hence I have times without number to urge upon your attention that the safeguards that have been suggested are completely unsatisfactory. They are not in the interests of India.

Three experts from the Federation of Commerce and Industry have in their own manner, each in his different manner, told you out of their expert experience how utterly impossible it is for any body of responsible Ministers to tackle the problem of administration when 80 per cent of India's resources are mortgaged irretrivably. Better than I could have shown to you they have shown, out of the amplitude of their knowledge, what these financial safeguards mean for India. They mean the complete cramping of India. They have discussed at this table financial safeguards, but that includes necessarily the question of Defence and the question of the Army. Yet, while I say that the safeguards are unsatisfactory as they have been presented, I have not hesitated to say, and I do not hesitate to repeat, that the Congress is pledged to giving safeguards endorsing safeguards which may be demonstrated to be in the interests of India.

At one of the sittings of the Federal Structure Committee, I had no hesitation in amplifying the admission and saying that these safeguards must be also of benefit to Great Britain. I do not want safeguards which are merely beneficial to India and prejudicial to the real interests of Great Britain. The fancied interests of India will have to be sacrificed. The fancied interests of Great Britain will have to be sacrificed. The illegitimate interests of India will have to be sacrificed. The illegitimate interests of Great Britain will also have to be sacrificed. Therefore, again I repeat, if we have the same meaning for the same word, I will agree with Mr. Jayakari with Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, and other distinguished speakers who have spoken at this Conference. I will agree with them all, that we have after all, after all these labours, reached a substantial measure of agreement, but my despair, my grief, is that I do not read the same words in the same light. The implications of the safeguards of Mr. Jayakar, I very much fear, are different from my implications, and the implications of Mr. Jayakar and myself are perhaps only different from the implications that Sir Samuel Hoare, for instance, has in mind; I do not know. We have never really come to grips. We have never come to brass tacks as you put it, and I am anxious—I have been pining to come to real grips and to brass tacks all these days and all these nights, and I have felt: 'Why are we not coming nearer and nearer together, and why are we wasting our time in eloquence, in oratory, in debating, and in scoring points?' Heaven knows I have no desire to hear my own voice. Heaven knows I have no desire to take part in any debating. I know that liberty is made of sterner stuff, and I know that the freedom of India is made of much sterner stuff. We have problems that would baffle any statesman. We have problems that other nations have not to tackle. But they do not baffle me; they cannot baffle those who have been brought up in the Indian climate. Those problems are there with us. Just as we have to tackle our bubonic plague, we have to tackle the problem of malaria. We have to tackle, as you have not, the problem of snakes and scorpions, monkeys, tigers and lions. We have to tackle these problems because we have been brought up under them. They do not baffle us. Somehow or other we have survived the ravages of these venomous reptiles and various creatures. So also shall we survive our problems and find a way out of these problems. But today you and we have come together at a Round Table and we want to find a common formula which will work. Please believe me that, whilst I abate not a

title of the claim that I have registered on behalf of the Congress, which I do not propase a repeat here, while I withdraw not one word of the speeches that I had to make at the Federal Structure Committee, I am here to compromise; I am here to consider every formula that British ingenuity can prepare, every formula that the ingenuityofsuch constitutionalists as Mr. Sastri, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Mr. Jayakar, Mr. Jinnah, Sir Muhammad Shafi, and a host of other constitutionalists can weave into being. I will not be baffled. I shall be here as long as I am required because I do not want to revive civil disobedience. I want to turn the truce that was arrived at, at Delhi, into a permanent settlement. But for heaven's sake give me, a frail man, 62 years gone, a little bit of a chance. Find a little corner for him and the organization that he represents. You distrust that organization though you may seemingly trust me. Do not for one moment differentiate me from the organization of which I am but a drop in the ocean. I am no greater than the organization to which I belong. I am infinitely smaller than that organization; and if you find me a place, if you trust me, I invite you to trust the Congress also. Your trust in me othrwise is a broken reed. I have no authority save that I dervie from the Congress. If you will work the Congress for all it is worth, then you will say goodbye to terrorism; then you will not need terrorism. Today you have to fight the school of terrorists which is there with your disciplined and organized terrorism, because you will be blind to the facts or the writing on the wall. Will you not see the writing that these terrorists are writing with their blood ? Will you not see that we do not want bread made of wheat, but we want bread of liberty; and without that liberty there are thousands today who are sworn not to give themselves peace or to give the country peace.

I urge you then to read that writing on the wall. I ask you not to try the patience of a people known to be proverbially patient. We speak of the mild Hindu, and the Mussalman also by contact, good or evil, with the Hindu, has himself become mild. And that mention of the Mussalman brings me to the baffling problem of minorities. Believe me, that problem exists here, and I repeat what I used to say in India I have not forgotten those words that without the problem of minorities being solved there is no swaraj for India, there is no freedom for India. I know that, I realize it; and yet I came here in the hope, perchance, that I might be able to pull through a solution here. But I do not despair of some day or other finding a real and living solution in connection with the minorities problem. I repeat what I

have said elsewhere, that so long as the wedge in the shape of foreign rule divides community from community and class from class, there will be no real living solution, there will be no living friendship between these communities. It will be after all and at best a paper solution. But immediatley you withdraw that wedge, the domestic ties, the domestic affections, the knowledge of common birth do you suppose that all these will count for nothing?

Were Hindus and Mussalmans and Sikhs always at war with one another when there was no British rule, when there was no English face seen there? We have chapter and verse given to us by Hindu historians and by Mussalman historians to say that we were living in comparative peace even then. And Hindus and Mussalmans in the Villages are not even today quarrelling. In those days they were not known to quarrel at all. The late Maulana Muhammad Ali often used to tell me and he was himself a bit of an historian, he said, "If God"—'Allah', as he called God—"gives me life, I propose to write the history of Mussalman rule in India; and then I will show through documents that British people have erred, that Aurangzeb was not so vile as he has been painted by the British historian; that the Mogul rule was not so bad as it has been shown to us in British history," an so on. And so have Hindu historians written. This quarrel is not old; this quarrel is coeval with this acute shame. I dare to say it is coeval with the British advent, and immediately this relationship, the unfortunate, artificial, unnatural relationship, between great Britain and India is transformed into a natural relationship, when it becomes, if it does become, a voluntary partner- ship to be given up, to be dissolved at the will of either party,when it becomes that you will find that Hindus, Mussalmans, Sikhs, Europeans, Anglo-Indians, Christians, untouchables, will all live together as one man.

I want to say one word about the Princes, and I shall have done. I have not said much about the Princes, nor do I intend to say much to-night about the Princes, but I should be wronging them, and I should be wronging the Congress if I did not register my claim, not with the Round Table Conference, but with the Princes. It is open to the Princes to give their terms on which they will join the Federation. I have appealed to them to make the path easy for those who inhabit the other part of India, and therefore I can only make these suggestions for their favourable consideration, for their earnest consideration. I think that if they accepted, no matter what they are, but some fundamental rights as the common property of all India,

and if they accepted that position and allowed those rights to be tested by the Court, which will be again of thier own creation, and if they introduced elements—only elements—of represen-tation on behalf of their subjects, I think that they would have gone a long way to conciliate their subjects. They would have gone a long way to show to the world and to show to the whole of India that they are also fired with a democratic spirit, that they do not want to remain undiluted autocrats, but that they want to become constitutional monarchs even as King George of Great Britain is. Sir, a note has been placed in my hands by my friend Sir Abdul Qaiyum, and he says, will not I say one word about the Frontier Province? I will, and it is this. Let India get what she is entitled to and what she can really take, but whatever she gets, whenever she gets it, let the Frontier Province get complete autonomy today. That Frontier will then be a standing demonstration to the whole of India, and therefore, the whole vote of the Congress will be given in favour of the Frontier Province getting Provincial autonomy tomorrow. Prime Minister, if you can possibly get your Cabinet to endorse the proposition that from tomorrow the Frontier Province becomes a full-fledged autonomous Province, I shall then have a proper footing amongst the Frontier tribes and convene them to my assistance when those over the border cast an evil eye on India.

Last of all, my last is a pleasant task for me. This is, perhaps, the last time that I shall be sitting with you at negotiations. It is not that I want that. I want to sit at the same table with you in your closets and to negotiate and to plead with you and to go down on bended knees before I take the final leap and final plunge. But whether I have the good fortune to continue to tender my co-operation or not does not depend upon me. It largely depends upon you. But it may not even depend upon you. It depends upon so many circumstances over which neither you nor we may have any control whatsoever. Then let me perform this pleasant task of giving my thanks to all—from Their Majesties down to the poorest men in the East End, where I have taken up my habitation.

In that settlement which represents the poor people of the East End of London I have become one of them. They have accepted me as a member, and as a favoured member of their family. It will be one of the richest treasures that I shall carry with me. Here, too, I have found nothing but courtesy and nothing but a genuine affection from all with whom I have come in touch. I have come in touch with so

many Englishmen. It has been a priceless privilege to me. They have listened to what must have often appeared to them to be unpleasant, although it was true. Although I have often been obliged to say these things to them, they have never shown the slightest impatience or irritation.It is impossible for me to forget these things. No matter what befalls me, no matter what the fortunes may be of this Round Table Conference, one thing I shall certainly carry with me—that is, that from high to low I have found nothing but the utmost courtesy and the utmost affection. I consider that it was well worth my paying this visit to England in order to find this human affection. It has enhanced, it has deepened my irrepressible faith in human nature that although Englishmen and Englishwomen have been fed upon lies so often that I see disfiguring your Press, that although in Lancashire the Lancashire people had perhaps some reason for becoming irritated against me, I found no irritation, no resentment even in the operatives. The operatives, men and women, hugged me. They treated me as one of their own. I shall never forget that.

I am carrying with me thousands upon thousands of English friendships. I do not know them, but I read that affection in their eyes as early in the morning I walk through your streets. All this hospitality, all this kindness will never be effaced from my memory no matter what befalls my unhappy land. I thank you for your forbearance.

Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session) : Proceedings of the Plenary Sessions, pp. 265-75

132. INTERVIEW TO JOURNALISTS[1]

[*December 1, 1931*][2]

Q. How can Christian pacifists and internationalists help India ?

A. First of all they can do so by a thorough scientific study of the question, so that events shall not nonplus them, and so that they shall not be subject to vacillation. There are people who sometimes hug me and sometimes revile me. They are subject to the passing moment. I want them to assimilate the truth about the movement in India so that they are not easily changed. If there are such people, then the movement is safe. Otherwise it has no roots. This study must also be followed by corporate action based on the truth they have assimilated.[3]

Peace may arise out to strife, or all strife is not antipacific. To stand with folded hands is not to achieve reform.

I have been told that by suffering myself I hurt the feelings of those who are opposed to me. Yes, certainly I do. That is what I want to do. Surely you do not want your opponent to be so hard-hearted that he is indifferent to what others suffer. Of course, the sufferings must not be wanton and not merely for the sake of suffering. That would be terrible. I only suffer if I must suffer. When the suffering is there, the suffering must be borne; it is a necessity.

Is not this the process of conversion ? Instead of overthrowing your adversary and compelling him either to yield or perish you permit yourself to be overthrown and to suffer. If it hurts him to see you suffer, that is what you want. The pacifists in this country do not believe in the fundamental law of peace. They must be prepared to suffer with those who suffer.

It has been said to me, "Surely it is not necessary to impose this sufffering upon ourselves? Why cannot the object be obtained by

[1] Someone singing himself "H.W.P." met Gandhiji along with "a small party of journalists". His account of the interview in *The Friend* has been collated with another report in *Reconciliation.*

[2] "H.W.P." mentions a meeting held at Friends' House on December 2 and says the interview took place "on the previous morning, just before the beginning of the last session of the Round Table Conference". The session concluded on this date.

[3] The three parargraphs that follow are from *Reconciliation.*

way of negotiation?" I reply, 'Argument has never convinced any man, but, on the contrary, conviction precedes argument.' If that were not so, all books would appeal to all men alike. I have been touched by books which made no appeal to millions, because I already had the conviction within me.

Take my vegetarianism. I was born a vegetarian. I was a vegetarian by the vow I made before my mother. Then I read Salt's *Plea for Vegetarianism* and I was convinced, but the conviction was already in me. Similarly with Ruskin's *Unto This Last*. I was trying to follow that life, but Ruskin made it real in my own life. He changed it, but the conviction was already there. To others, in whom the conviction was not already, the same book would make no appeal.

Q.How, Mr. Gandhi, can satyagraha be effective when followed merely as a method and not as a principle?

A.'Satyagraha' means utter insistence upon truth. When a man insists on truth, it gives him power. If a man without real perception uses it, he is taking its name in vain. I may refuse to acknowledge the rule of the road because of some principle involved. Another man may do so bcause he finds it inconvenient. We are both doing the same thing, but in the one case there is moral backing for the action, but not in the other. One of us is a civil resister, the other is a criminal resister. But the danger has its own corrective in that ultimately you have to suffer, and not many will invoke suffering from an impure motive.

The true conscientious objector is correct in his conduct, for he has a spiritual backing. But the act is correct whether there is spiritual backing or not. The difference is that the conduct in one case is correct throughout, and, in the other only up to a point.

Q.You have often said that Western civilization is Satanic. What are its Satanic elements, and are none of these elements present in Indian civilization?

A.Western civilization is material, frankly material. It measures progress by the progress of matter—railways, conquest of disease, conquest of the air. These are the triumphs of civilization according to Western measure. No one says, 'Now the people are more truthful or more humble.' I judge it by my own test and I use the word 'Satanic' in describing it. You set such store by the temporal, external things. The essential of Eastern civilization is that it is spiritual, immaterial. The fruits of Western civilization the East may approach with avidity but with a sense of guilt. Your idea is the more you want

the better you are, and you don't fall far short in your belief. Your civilization has gone from one stage to another. There is no end to it. You are proud of your conquest over nature, but this makes no appeal to me. You might see me fly tomorrow, but I should be feeling guilty about it. Suppose all your London tubes and buses were taken away. I should say, 'Thank God I shall be able to walk to my quarters at Bow, even if it takes me three hours'.

A final question put to Mr. Gandhi was as to whether he found the spirit which he sought in any of the Western religious books. He replied at once:

Yes. For instance, some years ago my friend Henry Polak gave me Thomas a Kempis's *Imitation of Christ*. I read it through at a sitting and I thought I was reading an Eastern book.

Q.You mean a universal book?

A.Well, when I use the term 'Easter'' I mean 'Universal'. The term is one of my little 'foot rules'.

The Friend, 11-12-1931, and *Reconciliation*, January 1932

133. EXTRACTS FROM PROCEEDINGS OF PLENARY SESSION OF ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

December 1, 1931

CHAIRMAN: ... At the beginning of the year I made a declaration of the policy of the then Government, and I am authorized by the present one to give you and India a specific assurance that it remains their policy. I shall repeat the salient sentences of that declaration:

"The view of His Majesty's Government is that responsibility for the government of India should be placed upon Legislatures, Central and Provincial, with such provisions as may be necessary to guarantee, during a period of transition, the observance of certain obligations and to meet other special circumstances, and also with such guarantees as are required by Minorities to protect their political liberties and rights.

"In such statutory safeguards as may be made for meeting the needs of the transitional period, it will be a primary concern of His Majesty's Government to see that the reserved powers are so framed and exercised as not to prejudice the advance of India through the new Constitution to full responsibility for her own government."

With regards to the Central Government, I made it plain that, subject to defined conditins, His Majesty's late Government were prepared to recognize the principle of the responsibility of the Executive to the Legislature, if both were constituted on an all-India Federal basis. The principle of responsibility was to be

subject to the qualification that, in existing circumstances, Defence and External Affairs must be reserved to the Governor-General, and that, in regard to Finance such conditions must apply as would ensure the fulfilment of the obligations incurred under the authority of the Secretary of State, and the maintenance unimpaired of the financial stability and credit of India.

Finally, it was our view that the Governor-General must be granted the necessary powers to enable him to fulfil his responsibility for securing the observance of the constitutional rights of Minorities, and for ultimately maintaining the transquillity of the State.

These were, in broad outline, the features of the new Constitution for India as contemplated by His Majesty's Government at the end of the last Conference.

As I say, my colleagues in His Majesty's present Government fully accept that statement of January last as representing their own policy. In parti cular, they desire to reaffirm their belief in an all-India Federation as offering the only hopeful solution of India's constitutional problem. They intend to pursue this plan unswervingly and to do their utmost to surmount the difficulties which now stand in the way of its realization. In order to give this declaration the fullest authority, the statement which I am now making to you will be circulated today as a White Paper to both Houses of Parliament, and the Government will ask Parliamnet to approve it this week.

MR. GANDHI: Prime Minister and Friends, the privilege and the res-ponsibility of moving a vote of thanks to the Chair have been entrusted to me, and I have taken up the responsibility and the privilege with the greatest pleasure. It is not expected of any single one of us, and least of all of me, that I should say on this occasion anything whatsoever about the weighty pronouncement to which we have all just listened. A chairman who conducts the proceedings of his meeting in a becoming and courteous manner is always entitled to a vote of thanks, whether those who compose the meeting agree with the decisions taken at the meeting, or with the decisions that may be given by the Chairman himself.

Sir, I know that yours was a double duty. You had not only to conduct the proceedings of the Conference with becoming dignity and with impartiality, but you had often to convey the decisions of His Majesty's Government. And your final act in the Chair has been to convey the considered decision of His Majesty's Government over the many matters on which this Conference has deliberted. I propose to omit that part of your task; but for me the pleasanter part is how you have conducted the proceedings, and let me congratulate you upon

the lessons that you have given us so often in time-sense. Chairmen often neglect that very elementary duty, and I must confess in my country almost with tiresome regularity. We are not credited with proper \time-sense. Prime Minister, it will be my pleasant and bounden duty to give to my countrymen when I return to India what the British Prime Minister has done in the matter of time-sense.

The other thing that you have shown us is your amazing industry. Brought up in your hard Scotch climate, you have not known what rest is set and you have not allowed us also to know what rest is. With , shall I say, almost unexampled ferocity you worked every one of us, including old men like my friend and revered brother Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and equally old men like me. You have worked almost to exhaustion, with a pitilessness worthy of a Scotsman like you, my friend and revered leader Mr. Sastri. You let us know yesterday that you knew his physical condition, but before a sense of duty you set aside all these personal considerations. All honour to you for that, and I shall treasure this amazing industry of yours.

But let me say on this matter that, although I belong to a climate which is considered to be luxuriant, almost bordering on the equatorial regions, perhaps we might there be able to cross swords with you in industry, but that does not matter. If what you gave us yesterday, if that is only a foretaste of what you are capable of working even for a full twenty-four hours as your House of Commons has done at times—well then, of course, you will take the palm.

Thereore I have the greatest pleasure in moving this vote of thanks. But there is an additional reason, and it is perhaps a greater reason why I should shoulder this responsibility and esteem the privilege that has been given to me. It is somewhat likely I would say only somewhat likely, because I would like to study your declaration, once, twice, thrice, as often as it may be necessary, scanning every word of it, reading its hidden meaning if there is a hidden meaing in it crossing all the T's, dotting all the I's, before I come to a conclusion that, so far as I am concerned, we have come to the parting of the ways, that our ways take different directinos; it does not matter to us. Even so, you are entitled to my hearty and most sincere vote of thanks. It is not given to us in this society of ours for all to agree in order to respect one another. It is not given to us always to expect meticulous regard for each other's opinions and always to be accommodating so that there is no principle left with you. On the

contrary, dignity of humna nature requires we must face the storms of life, and sometimes even blood brothers have got to go each his own way, but if at the end of their quarrel at the end of their difference they can say that they bore no malice, and that even so they acted as becomes a gentleman, a solider if it will be possible at the end of the chapter for me to say that of myself and of my countrymen, and if it is possible for me to say that of you, Prime Minister, and of your countrymen, I will say that we parted also well. I do not know. I do not know in what direction my path will lie, but it does not matter to me in what direction that path lies. Even then, although I may have to go in an exactly opposite direction, you are still entitled to a vote of thanks from me from the bottom of my heart.[1]

CHAIRMAN: ... I am so much obliged to Mahatma Gandhi for the very kind and friendly things he said in moving this resolution. There is only one thing I quarrel with him about, and I hope he will not consider it is a major thing, and I hope he will not have any misunderstandings about it. It is this. Why does he refer to himself, in relation to me, as an old man? Why, the Mahatma has got years to his advantage. It was a young man who spoke at 12 o'clock last night—a young man, a youth. It was an old man who sat in the chair and kept him at his work. Mr. Gandhi has got the advantage of youth compared with me. I do not know which of us looks the older—but if you turn up these records that lie not, the records of "Who's Who", and that sort of thing, you will discover that in the ordinary course of nature I am much nearer the end of my time than Mr. Gandhi himself, ("No, you are not, Sir") and that, if there is anybody who has got any grievance about prolonged sitting it is not the young man who spoke, as I see you all, smiling youths—it was the old man who presided over you and whom you kept out of bed until half-past two this morning and then made him get up at 6 o'clock this morning in order to come here with a prepared statement to read to you. That is where the grievance is. But my friends, I have none not a particle, not a shadow if it has been in the interets of India and for the purpose of bringing you together.

There is only one thing more I want to say. I am so glad that my old friend opposite me (Sir Abdul Qaiyum) seconded the resolution. It is a great a chievement to get Mahatma Gandhi and him together. That is a foretaste of what is going to happen when Muslim and Hindu

MR. GANDHI : Not Hindu !

CHAIRMAN : Mr. Gandhi understands the lapses of an untrained human tongue.

MR. GANDHI : I forgive it.

[1] The vote of thanks was carried unanimously and with acclamation.

CHAIRMAN: He understands the lapses of an untrained human tongue such as mine, but the Mussalmans and the others came together. I am beginning to pick up Mr. Gandhi's thoughts, because he has always told us that you were sections and that he comprehended you all.

MR. GANDHI : Of course!

CHAIRMAN: But look at the effect of the two of you coming together in order to co-operate and express your gratitude to a Scotsman. My dear Mahatma, let us go on in this way; it is the best way; you may find it will be the only way. It is certainly a way that will enable both of us to take great pride in our work and to relate our political action with those glorious spiritual impulses which lie at the source of all our being.

One other thing. When the Mahatma takes the Chair in India, if he will let me know, I will come over and see whether he is an apt pupil of mine or not, whether he can enforce with energy and with success the "time-sense" for which he has been so kind and liberal in his praise of me this morning.

Well, a very good voyage home to you all ! A very happy and very prosperous returning! And do remember that we are enlisted in the same cause, that we are bound by the same loyalty, the loyalty to India herself. Do remember to stand shoulder to shoulder with us, to exchange views, and by mutual co-operation, with good luck and good fortune, we shall solve the problems that now confront us and see India stand self-governing and self-respecting in the world.

For the last time, I declare that the Conference now adjourns.[1]

Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session): Proceedings of the Plenary Sessions, pp. 289-300.

134. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

LONDON,
December 1, 1931

It is not so much the Premier's statement or what happened at the Conference that is worrying me as what is happening in India at the present moment. You have an English saying which is appropriate: "Coming events cast their shadow before." Well, the situation in India, especially in Bengal, is very ugly, leaving little room for hope that anything big will come out of the Conference. I refer to the

[1] The Conference terminated at 12.33 p.m.

Ordinance just passed in Bengal giving extra-ordinary powers to the Government to deal with what has been called terrorism and to a certain extent rightly so called, but past experience tells me that the Government has become panicky as it is wont when European life is taken or is attempted. I detest such a crime, but I am quite clear in my mind that the powers taken are altogether out of all proportion to the possibilities of the spread of terrorism. If it is let to me, it shall be dealt with under ordinary law.

I must say the executive in authority has very wide powers even under the ordinary law, and after all is said and done, if one were to examine the mere arithmetic in connection with terrorism, I do not think Bengal would come out the worst. Then, instead of dealing with the root cause, the Government of India, rather the Government of Bengal, assisted by the Government of India and the Secretary of State here have merely dealt with the symptom and not the disease. Terrorists, everybody admits, do not resort to terrorism for the sake of it. Nobody throws away his life without some motive behind and it is, I think, admitted by all that the terrorists resort to their method in the hope of thereby securing freedom for their country. If that freedom comes, there surely may be no terrorism, certainly no attempts on European life or the life of officials whether they are Europeans or others. If I had my way, therefore, I would certainly utilize all the ordinary legal powers to put down crime and at the same time find out what the terrorists mean by freedom and if, as a result of enquiry, I found their demands just, I would straight away concede their demands and there would be no terrorism in the land.

The late Mr. C.R. Das and many other public men of his time advised the Government to adopt this method, but their advice went unheeded or was not accepted in the fullest extent. But it is never too late to retrace one's steps in a matter of this character and I fear very much that, unless full freedom for which the nation is hungering comes, terrorism will not be rooted out.

The Congress has adopted a method whereby terrorism can entirely be replaced by means of civil resistance and all it means, and I am certain the Congress method has, in a very large degree, kept the terrorist crime under check. But I make no larger claim for the Congress method just yet. I hope, however, whether the Government regains sanity or not, the Congress will pursue its course and some day effectively stamp out terrorism. But I confess that the progress is slow as all methods of conversion are likely to be.

The relevance, however, of what I have said is that these extra ordinary powers of repression with which the Bengal Government has

armed itself seem to me wholly inconsistent with the desire expressed here to part with power, and give India the real freedom she wants. Apart, therefore, from the meaning which the Premier's declaration bears, this Ordinance and the other things that, I know, are happening in India, fill me with the greatest misgiving and may leave the Congress no choice in the matter of tendering further co-operation.

How I wish public opinion here was moved in the right direction. I am sure if the honest Indian version of the whole affair come to light as to what is happening in Bengal today, it would not, at any rate, be tolerated.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 3-12-1931

135. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

LONDON,
December 2, 1931

MY DEAR HENRY,

I was distressed to find that without waiting to discuss with me you paid the landlady two days' extra rent. You ignored the conditions that were made. And now without even caring to know the facts you have insisted upon payment of damages for the wear and tear of the carpet. prosperity and association with the rich and the powerful have evidently unfitted you to represent the poor you should know that I am not operating on my own property. I am trustee for the poor and I have no right to squander away the monies belonging to the poor. And every rupee coming into my hands becomes part of the poor man's trust. I have said nothing to you about the past transaction when you paid the cheque to the landlady. I had to speak sharply to both Maud and Andrews. I had hoped that after that incident nothing would be done over my head. I am deeply hurt. Now tell me what you would have me do about the carpet.

Love.

BHAI

H. S. L. POLAK
DE VERE GARDENS
LONDON

From a photostat: S.N. 18373

136. INTERVIEW TO SIR PHILIP HARTOG[1]

LONDON,
December 2, 1931

In my last letter to Mr. Gandhi relating to his statement at the Royal Institute of International Affairs on October 20 that literacy in India had diminished during the last 50 or 100 years,[2] I had asked him for an interview. . . I went to see Mr. Gandhi at 88 Knightsbridge at 4 p.m. and stayed till five. He was lying on a sofa, covered with his shawl, in front of a big fire, obviously tired, though he insisted on rising both when I came and when I went. He told me that he had thought his strength was equal to anything, but that he was now saturated. I suggested that he might be too tired to discuss matters, but he said that it was a pleasure to meet me and he apologized sincerely for not having written to over me an appointment.

He admitted at once that he had at present no facts to subtantiate his statements and did not attempt to answer my argument that the articles in *Young India* for December 8 and 29, 1920 by Daulat Ram Gupta, of which he had furnished me with typed copies, contained no literacy figures and that the most recent official report on them, Dr. G. W. Leitner's *History of Indigenous Education in the Punjab*, was written in 1882 and could therefore furnish no evidence with regard to the progress or decline of literacy in India during the last 50 years. He told me that Mr. Mahadev Desai (who was present) had been investigating the matter in the British Museum. Mr. Desai admitted that he had found nothing fresh up to the present. Mr. Gandhi said that he would question the writer of the articles in *Young India* and that on his return he would get competent friends at his Ashram to investigate the matter for him over there and that he would send me a cablegram with regard to the result, and that in it he would say whether he had found material that would convince me that he was right, or that he would apologize handsomely for his mistake, and he would make his withdrawl in such a way as to reach a much wider audience than his original statement.

I showed him Leinter's book and pointed out the statement on 3 in which Leitner pointed out that the Punjab was not typical, but far behind the Central Provinces and Lower Bengal in the proportion of pupils to population, a statement not referred to by Mr. Gupta, though he had quoted figures in regard to Hushiarpur from p. 2.I told Mr. Gandhi that the population of British India in 1882 was roughly speaking 210 millions, and that it had increased in 1931 to about 270 millions i.e., about 30 per cent in round figures, and that during that period the number of pupils

[1] Extracted from Sir Philip Hartog's notes of the interview.
[2] *Vide* "Speech at Chatham House Meeting", 20-10-1931

under instruction in British India had increased from about $2^1/_3$ millions to over 11 millions, i.e., more than 4 times, and that it would be surprising, therefore, if literacy had diminished during these 50 years.

I also pointed out that it was impossible to draw any accurate conclusions, on the other hand, in regard to literacy from the numbers of pupils under instruction. Howell in his *Education in British India* had pointed out that for many reasons, including the early age at which the children are withdrawn, the schools in the early 19th century were almost worthless. I also mentioned that during the years 1917-1927 in Bengal with an increased enrolment of over 300,000 pupils (the actual figure is about 370,000) there had been a decline of about 30,000 pupils in number that reached class IV where, under present conditions, literacy was first attained.

I also showed Mr. Gandhi certain figures of literacy for Bengal from Adam's *Report on Vernacular Education of 1835-38* and compared them with the census figure for 1921, Vol. 5, p.302. I further showed him census figures for 1911 and 1901 taken from the same volume p. 285, showing considerable increases in literacy in Burma, Bengal and Madras, though the Punjab, Bihar, Bombay and United Provinces had made little or no progress during those years. Mr Gandhi said, "I know very little about these things" in a tone of apology, to which I rejoined that he had no doubt many other things to occupy his attention.

Towards the end of the interview, I said that I hoped that he was now on the side of peace. He replied that he had meant exactly what he had said on the previous day, that he would read the Prime Minister's declaration over again and again, and that he felt the immense personal responsibility that rested on his shoulders in advising Congress. He said that he had postponed his departure in order to see Sir Samuel Hoare on the following Friday as Sir Samuel had said that he would have no free time during the debate in Parliament (on Wednesday and Thursday). I said: "I am sure you must be convinced that Englishmen are in earnest in wishing to give India everything possible at the present moment." He said:

Yes, but there is one thing that the English sincrely believe, but which I cannot understand. They think us incapable of managing our own affairs even with the help of experts. When I was a young man and my father was Prime Minister of an Indian State, I knew the Prime Minsiter of another Indian State (Junagadh), who could hardly sign his own name but who was a very remarkable man and managed the State wonderfully. He knew just who were the right people to advise him and took their advice. When I spoke to your own Prime Minister about the exchange value of the rupee, he said to me that he knew nothing about exchange values, that the Prime Minister had of course to do things in his own name, but had really to depend on experts.We have had experience in governing in the past and we could do equally well.

I ended up the interview by saying that I was a man of peace, and had no desire to enter on a controversy, but that I must state the facts in the *Journal Affairs,* and to this I understood Mr. Gandhi to assent. I wished him a pleasant journey back to India and said I hoped I had not tired him. He replied that it had been a real pleasure to see me, and that he hoped to keep in touch with me. . . .

Mr. Gandhi said that he had not accused the British Government of having destroyed the indigenous schools, but they had let them die for want of encouragement.

I next told Mr. Gandhi that I could accept his suggestion that universal primary education must necessarily be very remote, and that my Committee had estimated that an additional recurring expenditure of about 19 crores would bring about 80 per cent of boys and girls into the primary school system. Mr. Gandhi then asked me if I thought that primary education would be of much use unless the children went on to middle schools. I said that was the next step, that would follow, and that I regarded he encouragement of the vernacular middle schools as of the greatest importance not only for the sake of the children but children they produce the primary teachers. I said that I was sorry that Bengal despised vernacular middle schools and insisted on English teaching middle schools.

We then spoke of girl's education and I quoted the opinion of my Committee that, in all schemes of expansion, priority should be given to the claims of girls. Mr. Gandhi said that he entirely agreed, but he asked himself whether primary education would make girls better mothers. Mr. Gandhi said that he had not read the Report of my Committee.

From a photostat: C.W. Courtesy: 9408. India Office Library

137. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

LONDON,
December 3, 1931

Squatting before a fire in a small room in his Knightsbridge office, Mahatma Gandhi shortly before midnight received some 40 Press representatives, seated on the floor round him. He told them that he was unable to give his decisive view either on the Premier's statement or on the Commons debate, but assured them that, before reaching any conclusion, he proposed to exhaust all resources at his disposal in order to understand both the statement and the debate. Mahatma Gandhi added that any conclusion he might reach would have no weight until it had been submitted to the Congress Working Committee and accepted by it.

Mahatma Gandhi repeated his declaration regarding civil disobedience and reaffirmed his tentative opinion that the statement meant a parting of the ways, but he had not yet studied it as he had promised. Mahatma Gandhi said that it was a tremendous responsibility for any man to call upon a nation to go through the fiery

ordeal again. Therefore , he was not likely light-heartedly to advise the resumption of civil disobedience, but resistence in the policy of repression envisaged by the Bengal Ordinance might upset all calculations and precipitate any day civil disobedience on a national scale. Mahatma Gandhi declared that there was no justification for the Ordinance and continued:

I am no more pessimistic than when I left India. I never believed that we would get anything more than what our own internal strength entitled. The Round Table Conference negotiations have been a method of finding out the measure of our strength compared with those with whom power at present resides. We have evidently failed. The Congress, therefore, must refill the battery so that it will be powerful enough to do its work.

Mahatma Gandhi thought that it was a good thing that he came to England . His work outside the Conference had been more valuable than the work inside it. He was willing to continue negotiations provided Government's policy was a policy of conciliation and consultation of public opinion, and if the Premier's declaration left room for the acceptance of the Congress demands. In that event, he would advise the continuance of whole-hearted co-operation. Mahatma Gandhi regretted that he had not met Mr. Churchill and others. He expects to reach India on 28th December.

The Hindustan Times, 6-12-1931

138. DISCUSSION WITH J.F. HORRABIN AND OTHERS[1]

LONDON,
December 3, 1931

HORRABIN : Government proposals are dangerously plausible.

GANDHIJI: The declaration is no advance on past year. In one essential respect it is a backward step. Not that it has gone back, but whereas last year's proposals[2] were tentative, this year's leave no room for alteration. They are not provisional but final . Last year's are to be accepted subject to the recommendations made by the Federal Structure Committee. These are stiffer than last year's, e.g., Financial safeguards. Last year's conclusions were, I was told, not final and that is why I came. The declaration accepts the findings of the Federal Structure Committee. Every report states a dissent but does not say whose. If the quantum of the vote of each party was to be considered, the Congress vote would be larger than all put together.

[1] The discussion took place in the evening.
[2] Those made at the First Round Table Conference.

Defence and Finance are Crown subjects. It is a wholly untenable position. No man is master of his household unless he has control over the door-keeper and his purse. So I said Indians accepting this would make themselves a laughing-stock. It is a humiliating position. It is also dishonest. Government should have said: we are prepared to give you control. But they are talking here of transitional safeguards.

Now consider this thing in the light of happenings in Bengal . The Ordinance is most objectionable. The most objectionable was the Rowlatt Act. This is much more objectionable. It reminds us of the Mutiny days and Martial Law days. It is worse than the Martial Law. In Martial Law decisions are liable to be revised, not here. Here it is legalized Martial Law. Attempt to commit murder to be punished by hanging. No appeal, proceedings in camera, mere boys given powers to try, and they can transmit these powers to police officers. The Irish thing is not worse. Delivering up the absconders. This will punish the whole of Bengal. The crimes in Martial Law were bad, but vengeance was terrible.

When I read the declaration in the light of this Ordinance I find no readiness not part with power. The little responsibility given is a shadow and our difficulties to work under this handicap would be evidence against us. Take the assembly today. Men, practically of Goverment nomination, rejected proposals which got certified. The budget also suffered the same fate. How can you have responsible government the next day when you have undiluted repression? In South Africa, when responsible government came, it came naturally to them . People knew it was coming. Every organic growth is like that. Here is no such thing. But my opinion is subject to this that the present proposals are tentative, that some alterations would be made, that the Ordiance would be removed in two or three days.

WRENCH: I cannot help feeling that there is a great change. Rothermere and Churchill do not count very much. MacDonald's statement is better than I had hoped. If you get a Tory majority as far as it has gone, I do not think you can have anything better. Why not wait for three years ? Let Great Britain show that it is really honest.

GANDHIJI : The Irish parallel does not answer. There were negtiations during which there was no repression; here repression is going on whilst there have been negotiations going on. Sir Samuel Hoare frankly said, I have no confidence in your ability or competence." If you say, don't judge us by what Churchill says, I agree. But if you say, don't judge us by what MacDonald says or

Lothian says, then I should despair. Hoare is a straight man, a man of his word, honest; but he is rigid, hard, impossible to dislodge, [and shows an] amazing ignorance of Indian history. He feels that Indian administration has been a positive blessing. He feels that he can't conduct this Government without this thing. Others do the same thing [but] they don't say what Hoare says.

LASKI : The whole Cabinet does not believe in the Ordiance. I would allow you just a little grace.

GANDHIJI : No ? Then the members should resign. It is a sickening thing. It is positively horrid. I will break myself in the attempt to break it. If you remain silent in a matter of this kind you are guilty.

LASKI : Consider from our angle that the Prime Minister made a brilliant strategic move. He postponed the hour of effective decision. He has made your strategic position difficult, ours also difficult. It seems to me that you are entitled to ask him for the full proof of his good faith. If I was in your position , I should ask for the complete revision of the Bengal Ordinance. You can ask him to explain what is happening there . Rather than say to them: you have committed sin and I can have nothing to do with you. Then there are committees. You can insist on good faith by having right kind of men. I should demand a substantial representation of Congress on committees. Thirdly I should want proof in the shape of increasing association of Indians in the Central responsibility . It is the gravest error to regard these things as water-tight compartments. Before civil disobedience is resumed, I want you within a period to urge on Government that, if they are prepared to meet you, you would continue with the Round Table Conference work.

GANDHIJI: Even without entering into your difficulties, as a satyagrahi I can't do anything else. I do propose to take the same steps you have suggested in my talks tomorrow. I will not say safe-guards are capable of being split up.To retain the subjects for the Crown and then to part with certain things is no good for me. But there may be safeguards conceived which may not imperil the defence of India and the defence of English lives. I would certainly hammer into shape certain safeguards of this kind. It should be open to me in Committee to revise these safeguards. If so, I would consider them; but if you think 'no', then we should have nothing to do. As regards associations of Indians I would not be satisfied; there should be a radical change of policy. They will have to respond to public opinion. They should have men with Congress mentality. This Ordinance is directed against Congress. Terrorism should be fought, but an admini-

stration which takes no risks should not think of administration but retire and make room for other men. President Carnot[1] had no sense of security.

Cleveland[2] was murdered, but America did not go mad. You can't think of emasculating a whole nation. Cut off the heads of assassins but not of their parents, don't wipe out villages.Villages would have silent sympathy, but how can you help it? If you repress them, you will stimulate them all the more. Every step would be taken, until we have driven them into a corner. But the British mind is not ina emper to do anything more. In South Africa the Prime Minister's feat would be called "fun-making". What an equivocal declartion? I should make the best use of it, put the best interpretation to it, and pin him of it. But Government must understand India would not allow Bengal to lie prostrate. Failing all these, if the declaration bears only my interpretation, then there is only one alternative possible.

KINGSLEY MARTIN : Hoare has had a fight with MacDonanld and the latter has won. And on that ground too you should restrain yourself.

GANDHIJI: Not if things in India continue to be as black as they appear to be here. In South Africa I had 16 who became 16,000.

KINGSLEY MARTIN: Certain new measures you think would be necessary?

GANDHIJI: If the ordinary law could not cope with the situation, then I should have special powers. I know Sir Charles Tegart who threw all propriety to the winds.

NEVINSON: What changes would you have?

GANDHIJI: I would want complete responsibility for Central Government. For Central subjects provinces would [not] have to be responsible. Subject to responsibility of Provinces to the Centre, they should have complete autonomy. I would not have a bicameral system. We do not want to reproduce the House of Commons.

LASKI Don't reproduce the House of Lords.

GANDHIJI : Even the House of Commons worries me. If you had a Central Legislature for Ireland, Scotland and England, you would have a smaller House of Commons. I would not be satisfied without adult suffrage. At a stroke I arm the untouchables with tremendous power. My criterion would be that the representatives know

[1] Marie Francois Sadi (1837-94), fourth President of the French Republic

[2] Presumably a slip for President William McKinley who was shot by an anarchist in 1901.

what they talk about and that they are incorruptible. Would you trus the Liberal Party to effect a change? I trust to its good intentions, but not its capacity to put them into effect. The electors won't allow Labour its own way so far as India is concerned. But that is nothing. I am willing to wait, if I had room for waiting. I want the active support and sympathy of every one of you. I would placate you, but I would on principle not precipitate civil resistance. How can I allow Bengal to go pieces during the time of transition ? Smuts also has said: you either get it or fight.

NEVINSON: How is it possible with the greatest possible constitutional reform to eradicate poverty?

GANDHI JI: We are trying to do it now. Show me something [to add] to the income. I would burn the spinning-wheel.

BRAILSFORD: We may be too stupid to know when we are beaten; but you may be too clever to see when you have won. I hve been trying to see MacDonald's thing objectively—silence of the Muslims, complete lack of agreement on details and many other things. He would have found pretext after pretext under the circumstances. What you have got from a constitutionl government is vastly more than what you got from a Labour minority. . . . MacDonald maintains his position on the constitutional question, and he accepts the constitutional position on anarchism. It is a sacrifice to the wolves so that MacDonald may save the whole cargo.

You can carry out your poverty policy once you have a majority on Provincial councils.

GANDHIJI: There is no bad faith. I feel the paralysis of the British mind. You say: take what is offered. No, you can't do it. In Centre 80 per cent is reserved. Provinces are in a pitiable condition with a top-heavy administration under the present scheme. After all Central revenue is derived from the Provinces—47 crores. With all these burdens there is no scope for improvement in Provinces. Not until you give me scope for expansion can I accept this thing.

The declaration is not a dishonest declaration.

Princes are too far committed now. Bhopal, Hydari promise to examine the terms. Ismail and others are quite sound. After the brave statement of Sir Manubhai, there should be no difficulty.

Steel industry does not lend itself to hand labour. It is either the irresponsible critic or the enemy that spreads the rumour that I am opposed to machinery. I should have most delicate machinery to make fine surgical instruments. For food and clothing I would be dead against industrialization.

WRENCH : There is a tremendous change in public opinion—in unexpected places.

GANDHIJI: I am a lover of British nation. No virtue of yours has escaped me. You throw logic to the winds. I should have certainly patience, but not the patience of a stone. I should be convinced that the British official means good faith. Do you want me to sit still in the hope that things are coming right?

There should be a conference of men representing all shades of opinion. Only that party which can deliever the goods should be invited. Nothing is staged, but it looks as though it was staged. Did they not know that I and Sapru would never agree, or that Mussalmans who came here did not want to agree or that Dr. Moonje had no place? After all, our liberty will come through our own strength and not through weakness.

Under the present declaration there is no responsibility at the Centre or in Provinces. Regarding debts the fundamental rights are not foreclosed. There can be a clause which may contain all the rights. I am incapable of throwing a single card away.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai.

139. INTERVIEW TO EDMOND DEMETER[1]

LONDON,
[Before *December 5, 1931*][2]

Q. I thought you were the sworn enemy of all machines. How does it happen that you use a watch?[3]

A. I must know what time it is, consequently, I must use a watch. Moreover, I am doing nothing against my principles. I am an enemy not of mechanism but of organized mechanism. I consider this system, which has become the basis of your civilization, as the greatest danger which could menace man. If I use a watch, that does not mean that I am its slave. But when it is a question of the machine organized, man becomes its slave and loses all of the values with which the Lord endowed him.

Q. Excuse me, if I interrupt you. You speak of God. Your God is not mine.

A. But your God is also mine for I believe in your God, in spite of the fact that you do not believe in mine.

[1] Extracted from an account of the interview by Edmond Demeter

[2] The source does not mention the date of the interview, but Gandhiji left England on December 5.

[3] Gandhiji had looked at his watch just as the interview commenced.

Q. Exactly, because you have serveral.

A. That is without importance. One is able to understand as soon as one believes in man. The difference between us consists in the divergence of opinions as to man and his destinty. You say, you Europeans, that man is born without being either good or bad, and that it is the place, the institutions, and a dozen other factors which determine the road which he is going to follow. I affirm, to the contrary, that man is always good and that it is the only bad institutions which turn him from the straight road.

Q. Then it is a declaration of war against our institutions?

A. No, I never make declarations of that kind. I say simply tht one ought to reform human institutions in order to make them more just. The reforms ought to be realized by pacific means and, in this regard, I can recommend the same processes which I followed in my political struggle. I do not fight, for I believe that men are good, and that they are going to understand the truth some day if one will convince them by friendliness.

Q. Do you think that the English are good?

A. Of course. If there are differences between us, it is only because of their bad institutions. Some day they will understand the truth and abandon their present attitude.

Q. Is happiness the goal of your life, Mahatma?

A. No. Hapiness is not the purpose of my life, but it is a means of being able to approach the true beacon of my existence. It is simple: I wish to see India independent, strong, peaceful and happy.

[A VISITOR[1]] I leave tomorrow for India. I came to bid you good-bye.

[GANDHIJI:] What have you done in London ?

[VISITOR:] I have just finished my studies in the school of medicine.

[GANDHIJI:] What do you wish to do in India?

[VISITOR:] I want to spread your ideas.

[GANDHIJI:] Are you engaged?

[VISITOR:] No.

[GANDHIJI:] Listen to me. You ought to marry as soon as possible and have children as soon as possible.

[DEMETER:] In your opinion, what world figure has exercised the greatest and best influence upon the twentieth century?

A. Tolstoy. He alone.

[1] This was an Indian girl who had just come in.

In speaking of politics, Gandhi made the following declarations:

The Indin National Congress, which I represent at the Round Table Conference, makes no distinctions between classes, beliefs or sexes. It has always shown itself the champion of the cause of the pariahs. But, before everything, the Congress represents the millions of the wretched who live in India and who represent more than 85 per cent of the population.

In the name of that organiztion, I demand the Complete Independence of India without excluding a volunatry association with England in terms of absolute equality. We do not refuse certain federation or recognized safeguards for the interests of India.

The Hindustan Times, 17-12-1931

140. A MANIFESTO[1]

[On or before *December 5, 1931*]

The Congress demands Complete Independence, including full control of defence forces, External Affairs and Finance, not excluding equal partnership with Britain determinable at the instance of either party, subject to the discharge or adjustment of mutual obligtions.

SAFEGUARDS

The Congress will accept safeguards necessary in the interests of India and is willing to take over all legitimate obligations, subject to examination by an impartial tribunal. The Congress is committed to a purely national solution of the question of minorities but will, if necessary, accept the principle of special reservation of seats in legislature for Muslims and Sikhs as a necessary evil for historical reasons.

UNTOUCHABLES

The cause of untouchables will be the special care of the Congress and it would be unjust to treat them separately and thus give untouchablity a legal status when every attempt is being made to abolish the evil altogether.

[1] The source says this was a parting manifesto by Gandhiji issued by the Commonwealth of India League. Since no other version is available, it cannot be ascertained whether this was the complete text or only portions taken from the document.

NO RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

No political disability will be placed on anyone on the ground of race, creed or colour and, the Congress being wedded to adult franchise, there should be no difficulty in representatives of any adult minority getting elected to the legislatures on the strength of national service.

The Hindustan Times, 9-12-1931

141. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[1]

LONDON,
December 5, 1931

Mr. Gandhi said that the Commons debate was a distinct victory not only for the Government but for responsibility at the Centre and the Provinces.

But I fear that the vote does not carry the Indin position very far. What was outlined in the Declaration and emphasized in the debate is far short of real responsibility. The House of Commons vote lands us again in unreality.

The Hindu, 6-12-1931

142. INTERVIEW TO REUTER[2]

FOLKESTONE,
December 5, 1931

The English people should believe me when I say that, if it falls to my lot to fight them, I will be engaged in the fight, never out of hatred but most surely out of love, even as I have fought some of my dearest relations. Hence I am determined to make every effort to continue co-operation as far as it is consistent with national self-respect.

I must, however, confess that the more I study the Bengal Ordinance the more I am filled with misgivings of the gravest character. Bad as is the section which makes possible the infliction of capital punishment for attempted murder, there are other secitons which are infinitely worse.

[1] Gandhiji gave the interview just before leaving London.

[2] Gandhiji gave this interview just before embarking on the steamer, *The Maid of Kent.*

We can afford to make a present of a few innocent heads, but it is impossible to contemplate with equanimity the unmanning of the whole people. I am hoping, therefore, that the British will study the Ordinance and insist on the withdrawal of what to me is inhuman exercise of political power.

He added that he always asked Indians to fight for liberty without hatred against the English. As a result of his visit to England, he felt it more incumbent on him now to impress on his fellow-countrymen that they should have no bitterness against the English.

The Hindustan Times, 7-12-1931

143. INTERVIEW TO "BRISTOL EVENING NEWS"

PARIS,
December 5, 1931

My last words to Englnd must be: Farewell and beware! I came a seeker after peace. I return fearful of war. I do not want war, but I fear that circumstances are driving me towards it. I should not be surprised to find myself in prison within a month of my return to India...[1]

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-12-1931

144. ANSWER TO QUESTION[2]

December 5, 1931

Q. Why do you refuse to enter God's house if Jesus invites you? Why does not India take up the Cross?

A. If Jesus has reference to God, I have never refused to enter the house of God; every moment I am trying to enter it. If Jesus represents not a person, but the principle of non-violence, India has accepted its protecting power.

Young India, 31-12-1931

[1] The paragraphs that follow in the source were almost wholly taken from Gandhiji's speech at the Plenary Session of the Round Table Conference on December 1.

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "The Jesus I love". The question was asked at a Paris meeting.

145. SPEECH AT RECEPTION[1]

PARIS,
December 5, 1931

I do not at all regret having attended the Round Table Conference. I should have been ashamed of having gone there if I had compromised by an iota India's demand. I am thankful that God gave me the strength to speak the right word at the right moment, and I am not ashamed of anything that I have said or done there. I am returning home much stronger and wiser. For I know now the people we have to contend against. I know that we have to go through still more suffering to vindicate our position.

Young India, 31-12-1931

146. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING[2]

PARIS,
December 5, 1931

We had started a battle and in its midst signed a truce for negotia-tions which were not successful. But nothing is lost now because I have ascertained the character and tactics of those with whom we have to fight so that in future we shall make no mistakes. In battles, misfortunes are normal and so we must continue with greater zest and determination and must face suffering for the freedom of our country. To those of you who are living in Paris and in other parts of Europe, my plea is that you strive always to present to the world all that is best in India and her cause. Strive always to draw the atttention of the world to the real nature of India's struggle. I cannot tell you just at this moment the temper of our people in the country. But I can tell you that, when I get back, they will be ready to put up a

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Letter from Europe". The reception was organized by the Indians residing in Paris. Desai says the speech was made in Hindi.

[2] The meeting organized by the local intellectuals, was held in the afternoon and was attended by about 2,000 persons. Entry was by tickets. The full text of the speech is not available. What follows was addressed to the Indians in the audience. The questions put to Gandhiji at the end of the meeting were mostly Frenchmen.

fresh fight. What we want for our country is control of the army and the purse and it can certainly be obtained if only we are prepared to suffer and be perfectly non-violent. I shall ask our countrymen once again to obtain it by suffering. Disobedience is not violence, but disobedience means further suffering.

Q. When do you think India will be definitely freed?

A. I am not sufficiently all-knowing to answer this question, or to make any prediction which is known only to God.

Q. If India were suddenly freed, would she not, considering the ignorance of the majority of the people, be at the mercy of a handful of intellectuals?

A. Possibly, but in any case it would be preferable for her to be led for a certain time by a group of intellectuals rather than to be under the thumb of demagogic leaders as in the West.

Q. Won't you do anything to lighten the misery of Lancashire?

A. Yes, of course, I shall try my best.

Q. If India were freed, would you set up economic barriers? Would you permit commercial exchange with France?

A. No, I should not oppose commercial exchange. But I must tell you that, when India is free, she will give commercial privileges to England rather than to any other country. All the same permit me to say that France will interest us quite a good deal.

Q. Does the happiness of man reside in knowledge or in ignorance?

A. In neither, It resides in each man himself and in the search of perfection and truth.

Q. Are all men capable of seeking perfection?

A. Yes, they have it in themselves.

Q. Are you satisfied with Mr. MacDonald's Declarations?

A. I must say that, although I am not satisfied, I have great hope despite the fact that I may seem to be returning empty handed.

Q. A few years ago, I saw you dressed in European clothes. Why have you abandoned them ?

A. I am poor, and like thousands of Indians, I do not allow myself to wear European clothes. First, because they are too dear. Secondly, because they are quite unsuited to the climate of my country and, lastly, because it provides work for our Indian workers if we wear Indian clothes.

Q. Supposing there were a fresh warlike mobilization in Europe, do you think that it would be possible to avoid war by the non-co-operation of military froces and of the people?

A. Non-co-operataion in the case of war is everywhere possible and it is by this that universal peace will be obtained. According to the other things, women, who are usually called the feeble sex, will then have the opportunity of showing their power by suporting non-co-operation and non-violence.

Q. Would it be right to allow oneself to be killed without putting up a fight?

A. In either case it wuuld be a question of sacrificing one's life. For one who has decided to do this it would be better to remain passive under the law of non-violence than arm oneself wth "exterior" arms and kill another besides being killed oneself. In an emergency of this kind, one should arm oneself internally, the internal spiritul forces are stronger and induce a more certain and lasting life. It is not by arming yourself that you will guarantee peace to the world. External arms, guns, cannons, and gas have only evil and passing results. One puts down one's arms only when a respite is essential with the intention of resuming later. By using non-violence as their only weapon thousands of men will arm themselves intellectually and spiritually, with the principles which are in action during day and night and will attain this end and succeed in arousing the sympathy of the Englishmen.

Q. If India were free, what would be her attitude towards Soviet Russia?

A. I am so preoccupied with my own country that I must admit that I am rather ignorant of what concerns the Russian people. All the same I can tell you that, when India is free, she might well imitate what there is of good in Russia. If Russia becomes a little more spiritual, all would be perfect with her.

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-12-1931

147. SPEECH AT MEETING[1], PARIS

December 5, 1931

I first came to Paris in 1890 at the time of the Exhibition at which the Eiffel Tower the "chief attraction". At once I fell in love with many things in the city: The Cathedral, of which the memory is still fresh in my mind . . .[2] In my spare time I tried to read works concerning France. I read, in parts, Rousseau and Voltaire. I tried to understand, more comprehensively, your great revolution. From all this I came to the conclusion that if you choose you can give to the world a message even more grand than that proclaimed by your great countrymen.

As it seems to me, the world is tired of sanguinary wars; the world is disgusted with the falsehoods, hypocrisy and deceit that are the necessary concomitants of the way of violence; and it has begun to understand (albeit only vaguely as yet) the disastrous consequences of questionable economics. I am convinced that the economic crisis which has gripped the countries of the world, including the United States, is a consequence of the World War, which we very mistakenly, call the "Great War". Thus it seems to me that India's struggle for independence is a movement in which every Frenchman and everyFrenchwoman should take a direct interest.

That nation, comprising 350 million inhabitants and representing one-fifth of mankind, has been trying to secure its liberty by methods wholly devoid of violence. Falsehoods, duplicity, hypocrisy and deceit have no place in the method we are practising in India. Everything is open and above board. Once you have grasped the secret, that is, Truth, you will then be more open, more truthful. In the dictionary of the man who bases his life on truth and non-violence there is no place for fear and despair.

This movement is not passive; it is essentially active. It is more active than any campaign involving lethal weapons can be. Truth and non-violence are perhaps the most active forces in the world. The man who brandishes lethal weapons and wants to use them to destroy his

[1] A summary of this speech in the Magic City Hall appeared in "Answers to Question", 5-12-1931

[2] Omission as in the source

supposed enemies is obliged to interrupt his labours to give himself some rest, some sleep during his day of twenty-four hours. During that time he is essentially inactive. While it is not so with the man who uses the method of truth and non-violence. These forces reside in the human heart and are constantly struggling to come out, to find expression, whether one is asleep or awake, resting or actively working.

I shall not take your time by recounting to you all the incidents of the war of India's independence. It commenced in 1920. I have only given you a brief idea of the method employed so that you may be able to understand the source of the upsurge that has touched the very last stratum of India's masses.

I am not aware of any movement, in the history of the past hundred years and more, which has trained such vast masses of poor and illiterate people. The human race is essentially idolatrous. Since that is so, I want to say that man requires a visible, tangible manifestation of the thing he believes in and, as a corollary, is looking for miracles to happen so that he can judge the worth of his beliefs. If the movement in India succeeds, it will be the miracle the world is looking forward to, the miracle that will prove the power of truth and non-violence and strengthen the faith of people in our methods.

Before I end this short, preliminary explanation, I want to tell you of a vivid example of the efficiency and power of these methods. In the beginning of last year, during the salt march, women came forward to participate in the movement, not only women whohad received a European education, but women from the villages, who could not even sign their names. At the very beginning we had made it clear that neither sex nor age would be any bar to one's participation in the movement. Women and the aged participated in the movement as much as children.

Here I must ask you to believe me that we never had to make any effort to draw either the women or the children to us. I shall say that where attempts were made to obtain the co-operation of women it was only women in cities to whom we appealed. But we never appealed to children. But, in some way, one can say, the air of India is charged with electricity—not the same sort of electricity that illumines the streets of Paris, but a sort of spiritual electricity that goes right up to the hearts of children. Our parents are moving forward with such energy, such confidence, such ardour, that participation of the children is spontaneously brought about and the authority of the parents cannot stop them.

If you are convinced of the importance of the factors that could make the youth throw themselves into the movement I invite you to meditate on them till you can engender a wave of public opinion in favour of this cause.

I stop here, for I think this is enough by way of an introduction.

[From French]

Regeneration, Numero Special Consacre a Gandhi et a l'Inde, janvier, 1932

148. DISCUSSION WITH ROMAIN ROLLAND[1]

VILLENEUVE,
December 6, 1931

GANDHIJI: I would have to take Scarperl[2] literally and what I would want to do is to speak in their presence to the people the very things I should speak out.

ROMAIN ROLLAND: Then you should have with you American reporters.

G. It would be against my nature to make these arrangements beforehand.

R.R. They will surround you with people, English and American, who are Fascists. Your voice must break the cordon for the people of Italy.

G. I would make it a condition also that I would not like to speak to them about neutral matters. This visit has come to me unsought. Let us take it for granted that in Italian Press every word will be distorted. In Free England too my words were distorted and message boycotted. In France too wild things have been written in *Figaro*.

R.R. The other danger. You will speak, but others will speak against you and you will not understand it.

G. I would do my duty and leave the results.

R.R. You have a duty to speak to the poor people.

G. I feel that it is impossible for any person to take these meticulous precautions.

R. R. Always you must have someone with you.

G. The immediate effect will be that Italian Press will

[1] For an account of Gandhiji's visit to Villeneuve; *vide* Appendix II.

[2] It had been suggested that Gandhiji should visit Italy and see the Pope and Mussolini.

misrepresent me, but the distant effect of a good word spoken or a good thing shown must be good. We must run the risk provided we are sure that I would not fall a prey to temptation.

R. R. You will meet intellectuals—people with intellectual mask, but not the people like Formichi, Gentile, etc.

G. I saw your great pain and I realized with what enormous labours you had reached your conclusions on the situation. On the other hand I have been built differently. Whatever conclusions I have reached have not been through historical studies at all. History has played the least part in my make. A scoffer would say that I have been empirical in my methods and all my conclusions are based on my so-called experience. I call it so-called because there is a danger of self-delusion. I know many lunatics who believe in certian things as if they were their own experiences. But he has some belief as regards his wife and children, and it is impossible to dislodge him from what he calls his experience and the dividing line between his experience and mine may be very thin. Nevertheless my experience has precedents. Saints have based their institutions on experiences and, after all, the world now believes that the experiences they had recorded were correct and also that they had been tested by the historical and analytical methods. My experience has not altogether been baseless and the whole experience regarding non-violence and non-co-operation has a foundation of this character and so, whilst I was listening to yesterday's penetrating discourse, I said, "How can I react to this?" I said: "I should say such is my faith and I must work for it." It was an awful problem. Whilst non-violence may work in India, it may not answer at all in Europe. It does not baffle me for the simple reason that I should not be able to deliver the message of non-violence to Europe, except that it may percolate through India. I may never be able to deliver such a message, but God may have many things in store for me. I have met many enlightened Englishmen and also for- eigners and I have said that you must not move unless you have faith to such an extent that you would have faith in you even if the world was against you; and you will then have ways and means coming to your rescue. It is, therefore, my firm belief that non-violence alone will save Europe; otherwise I see nothing but perdition. A process of disintegration is going on in front of me. Things in Russia may be a puzzle. I have spoken least about Russia, but deep down in me I am full of the profound distrust of things happening in Russia. It seems to be a challenge to non-violence. Just

now it seems to be working well, but the basis is force. I do not know how long that force is going to be effective in keeping that society, that country to this narrow path. The Indians who are under the influence of Russian methods are betraying intolerance of an extreme type. The result is that those who are under it are under a system of terrorism. So I follow the Russian experiment with a fundamental distrust. I have crosss-questioned every Englishman and American who has been to Russia. They have seemed to me to be impartial observers. The other day Lord Lothian and Bernard Shaw went to Russia. Lothian's testimony is decidedly that he does not know how far force is going to remould society. Bernard Shaw has written enthusiastically. In his conversation with me, I missed that enthusiasm and I did not draw him out completely. On the contrary he was interested in Indian matters. So I see that even for Europe there is need for non-violence. It needs no big organization. It somehow or other organizes itself. There ought to be at the head someone who is non-violent in character, with faith immovable as a mountain, and so long as this man hs not come to the surface we must wait and watch and pray.

R.R. I sent you letters addressed to Runham Brown. Non-resistance will be successful in the distant future. But the question is immediate. In 20 years European civilization may perish. I have doubts about the method of non-violence. In 20 years' time everything would be decided. What should we do in the interval?

G. I said somewhat to this effect. The world is really idolatrous. Islam is idolatrous, and so is Protestant Christianity. It wants to see something through one of the five senses. That is what I call idolatry. It wants an ocular demonstration and, if India can successfully give the demonstration, the thing becomes easy. I am clear India should not need 20 years and, if India can come to real freedom through non-violence the world would know non-violence, and then the whole world would take it. I want to develop world opinion so that England will be ashamed to do the wrong thing. But whether that can come about, or whether this war others will fight or not, I do not, know. But I am certain that out of intense non-violence only good can come. There is no doubt about it that English opinion has undergone a revolutio nary change not to a satisfactory degree. I attribute it to a non-violence. Some brilliant Englishmen—Gilbert Murray [for instance] do not agree and don't make admission. I do not want it. The thing is there and anyone can see that but for the

fight of non-violence, the so-called R.T.C. would not have met. So I have a hope that after we have gone through...[1] I should have no difficulty in covering the rest of the ground. I know the difference, but I cannot lose faith. I have to build on the self-dedication of the few who have given their lives to it. The same thing happened to me in South Africa. The same thing happened in India where I did not know that I could give a definite battle. We would be able to give that battle. Beyond that I am not able to suggest anything further. If you can deal with the Indian situation in the correct manner, the European will be and cannot but be corrected.

R.R. Non-resistance has been applied in some cases, but our difficulties are double and triple. Indians have been ill-treated, but I do not think that they have been as ill-treated as [people in] Italy. Forced exploitation through work by children. There must be a gospel to preach to the miserable people.

In Russia you must know what the conditions were. What could non-violence do in Russia? Have we the right to ask them to be non-violent to Europe? Should we force them to yield to Europe?

G. With reference to European proletariat, the relations between employers and emloyed were fairly happy. But I said that the remedy did not come through giving battle to capitalists but in giving battle to themselves. They would then become their own employers. They look to capital to find their labour. If the capitalists gave them all the capital, they would not be happy and they could not make use of it even for one full year. I said to them, therefore, "revive your cottage industry". It is being adopted in Wales. Brave, Stalwart minds and majority of them unemployed and unemployment will increase as oil wells increase. Not one of them should be living upon doles.

R. R. The danger in Europe is in a large middle class which lives in comfort at the expense of others. After the War France was told Germany would pay. In France they are trying to prepare an Asiatic Army and go back to the times of the Roman Empire.

India is right—you are acting in the interest of mankind. Poverty has not yet come to France, though it has come to Germany. Our part is to be with the oppressed.

G. There, too, does not the remedy lie with the oppressed? If they ceased to co-operate with the exploiter, deliverance would come.

Those who have no deep religious feeling are tempted by

[1] A few words that follow are not clear in the source.

salaries and material comforts. World's greatest works are chemical industries which have for their object violence. The gospel of poverty and self-abnegation must be preached.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

149. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

VILLENEUVE,
December 6, 1931

Replying to questions he said that he had nothing to add to what he had said before his departure from London. He flatly denied the report from London in a Geneva newspaper that the Indians would resort to violence if their wishes were not realized. He said personally he would give his life to prevent this.

Asked with regard to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's statement in the House of Commons, Mr.Gandhi said that he would like to hear the views of the Congress before making pronouncement on the statement. His message to the people of India was that they should come to no hasty conclusion, but await his statement for the people.

Amrita Bazar Patrika 8-12-1931

150. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO LORD IRWIN

[VILLENEUVE,
On or after *December 6, 1931*[1]]

If the situation in India does not force a quarrel, co-operation might still be continued. Anyway, I can give you the assurance that I shall do nothing in haste or without first approaching the Viceroy.

Halifax, p.317

151. LETTER TO SIR SAMUEL HOARE

VILLENEUVE,
December 7, 1931

DEAR SIR SAMUEL,

I am reducing in writing the gist of our last conversation. You were good enough to say that neither the Prime Minister's declaration nor your speech in the House of Commons were the

[1] According to the source the letter was written from Villeneuve where Gandhiji arrived on December 6.

last word on Safeguards or Reservations, and that it would be open to any member of the proposed Working Committee to suggest amendments or the removal of any of them as also to press forward the important investigation of the financial transaction to be taken over by the National Government. You also said that whatever you would be sending to the Working Committee for consideration would not be merely formal, but that the Working Committee recommendations would receive the greatest consideration from His Majesty's Government. If this is the correct impression, I would like you, if you don't mind, to confirm it by Air Mail. My address in India would be Ahmedabad.

Yours sincerely,

The Hindu, 1-2-1932

152. LETTER TO SIR SAMUEL HOARE

C/O M. R. ROLLAND,
VILLENEUVE,
December 7, 1931

DEAR SIR SAMUEL,

I had told you I wanted to write to you about the police arrangements that were made by the Government regarding myself. I get the time to do so only today. Whilst all the detectives and the constables who were told off for the work showed extreme care and courtesy in the discharage of their duties, Sergeants Evans anad Rogers who came in daily contact with me became as it were members of the family. They looked after me with brotherly care and affection. You were kind enough to send them at my request as far as Brindisi. They are proving themselves extraordinarily useful even in these foreign parts. I shall always be glad to hear that they are doing well.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : C.W. 9385. Courtesy : India Office Library

153. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

LAUSANNE,
December 8, 1931

Q. How can East and West be brought together to work for peace?

A. This question was asked me some 5 years ago. And this was my answer: I, who belong to a subject nation, did not know how I could work for peace except by working for freedom, and if India could be help-ed to win freedom through peaceful means, it would be a very good com-bination for peace. I have said this after having attempted the deliverance of my country through absolutely non-violent and truthful means.

Q. Must we admit that, parallel to the use of non-violence in India, there should be a movement here also for use of non-violence for political ends?

A. If you are convinced that the means adopted in India are day by day bringing about the results we desire, and if you are convinced that India is doing so through spiritual means, then do so here too. Though there is greater difference in Europe.

Friends have told me there were special difficulties in Europe to adopt non-violent means. Europe consists of martial races unlike India. Here all know how to wield arms. All the male population has at one time or another wielded arms. It is difficult for you to understand the efficacy and beauty of non-retaliation. Why not punish the wrong-doer—and in an exemplary manner?—that is what is asked everywhere here. Thus non-violence is quite foreign to Europe. For people belonging to such a country it is difficult to strike out a new path. Your economic life is so constructed that it is not possible, generally speaking, for an ordinary man to get out of the ordinary rut unless he faces poverty. And the fourth difficulty is that in Catholic Europe the iron discipline allows very little free play to the intellect. These are the four difficulties we have not to face in India which you have to face. If India becomes free through non-violent means, it won't enter upon war. But if she does, God will give me strength to fight India single-handed.

[1] Although the source does not mention the occasion of the questions, these were presumably put at the very first meeting Gandhiji addressed at Lausanne.

Q. What do you think of Einstein's call to military people not to take part in war?

A. My answer can only be one. That, if Europe can take up this method enthusiastically like me, I can only say Einstein has stolen the method from me. But if you want me to elaborate the thing, I would like to elaborate the method a little deeper. To refuse to render military service when a particular individual's time comes is to do the thing after all the time for combating the evil is practically gone. The disease is deeper. I suggest to you that those who are not on the Register for military service are equally participating in the crime. He or she, therefore, who supports a State so organized is, whether directly or indirectly, participating in the sin. It is fraught with immediate danger. Seeing that each man, old or young, takes part in this sin by contributing to the State (by paying the tax to the State) I said so long as I ate wheat supplied by the Navy, whilst I was doing everything short of being a soldier, it was best for me to be shot; otherwise I should go to the mountains and eat food grown by nature. Similarly, all those who want to stop military service can do so by withdrawing all military co-operation. Refusal of military service is much more superficial than non-co-operation with a whole system which supports the State. But then your opportunity becomes so swift and so effective that you run the risk of not only being marched to jail, but of being thrown on the street. This was the position of Tolstoy.

Q. Are we not allowed to accept the State? Should we even refuse local self-government (including public works, schools, etc.)?

A. Now you have touched the tenderest spot in human nature. This question touched me as author of non-co-operation in the initial stage. And before I could make up my mind, I said to myself: I co-operate with the State in two ways. There is no State, run either by Nero or Mussolini, which has no good points about it. We have in India what is called the Grand Trunk Road. It provides facility for millions of travellers; well-equipped hospitals, grand palaces built for schools. These we may consider to be good points. But I said, if the whole thing crushes the nation, I should not have anything to do with them. They are like the snake with a jewel but with poison fangs. So I came to the conclusion that British rule in India had stunted the nation and so I denied myself all the privileges. The gentlemanly way was to deny them.

The plea of self-defence is a wretched plea. You organize your country and society to prey upon ill-organized communities and nations. It is a bad thing. . . .[1] What Einstein has said would occur only once in a year and only with a very few people. But your first duty is to non-co-operate with the State.

Q. Is there so deep a difference between a man in India and subjects of other countries which are free? Could not we say that our position is different from yours before we can quarrel with our State ?

A. Difference there undoubtedly is. As a member of a subject nation I could best help by shaking rid of my subjection. Here I am asked how best to get out of military mentality. You are enjoying amenities on condition that you render military service to the State. There you have to rid the State of military mentality. But you are in a hopeless minority. A State that rests on military violence is a bad State. You will then say that a majority of people are like that. They are. In examining the efficacy of the method I am able to draw a distinction between a free State and a subject State. If you want the minority to become a majority, you will have to deny the privileges.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

154. SPEECH AT MEETING IN LAUSANNE[2]

December 8, 1931

FRIENDS,

Let me say how overwhelmed I have felt by the kindness of which I have been the recipient ever since I have been in your beautiful city. If earthly beauty can make a paradise, you are indeed living in a paradise. I come from a land where God has showered His choicest gift in the shape of earthly beauty. There is nothing grander you can find in all the earth than the beauty you can find in the uttermost extremity of India—Travancore—and yet as the train was slowly gliding by your beautiful lake and as we passed the villages so beautifully clean, I could not but be entranced by the sublimity of the

[1] Some words here are not clear in the source.

[2] The source does not specify which meeting this was. But Mahadev Desai in his "Letter from Europe", published in *Young India*, 31-12-1931, says this was the Conscientious Objectors' meeting organized by Pierre Ceresole and his friends and was held in a church. The speech and the answers to questions that followed were translated by Edmond Privat and Prof. Bovet.

beauty. And when I came here, I enjoyed and drank deep the beauty of your affection. I could trace your affection in the many searching and relevant questions put to me, where I had heart-to-heart talks and, now to crown all in this house of God, you have commenced your bombardment by a question which has been occupying me—the whole of my being—for nearly 50 years.

You have asked me why I consider that God is Truth. In my early childhood or youth, I was taught to repeat what in Hindu scriptures is one thousand names of God. Among the several little things one of the religious teachers my family had was a little pamphlet which contained these thousand names of God. But these thousand names of God were by no means an exhaustive list. We believe—and I think it is the truth—that God has as many names as there are creatures and, therefore, we also say that God is nameless and since God has many forms we also consider him formless, and since he speaks to me through many tongues we consider him to be speechless and so on. And so when I came to study Islam, I found that Islam too had many names, but I had not come to recognize God for my personal satisfaction as Truth. I would say for those who say God is love, God is love. But deep down in me I say God may be love, but God is Truth. I it is possible for the human tongue to give the fullest description of God, for myself I have come to the conclusion that God is Truth. But two years ago I went a step further and said Truth is God. You will see the fine distinction between the two statements: God is Truth and Truth is God. And that conclusion I came to after a continuous, relentless search after Truth which began so many years ago. I found that the nearest approach to Truth is through love. But I found also that love has many meanings, in the English language at least, and human love in the sense of passion becomes a degrading thing also. I found too that love in the sense of ahimsa an non-violence has only limited number of votaries in the world. And as I made progress in my search, I made no dispute with "God is love". It is very difficult to understand "God is love" (because of a variety of meanings of love) but I never found a double meaning in connection with Truth and not even atheists have denied the necessity or power of Truth. Not only so. In their passion for discovering Truth, they have not hesitated even to deny the very existence of God—from their own point of view rightly. And it was because of their reasoning that I saw that I was not going to say "God is Truth", but "Truth is God". Therefore I recall the name of Charles Bradlaugh—a

great Englishman who lived 50 years ago. He delighted to call himself an atheist. But knowing as I do something of his life. I never considered him an atheist. I would call him a godfearing man although he would reject the claim, and I know his face would redden. I would say: No Mr. Bradlaugh, you are a truth-fearing man, not a god-fearing man, and I would disarm his criticisms by saying "Truth is God" as I have disarmed criticisms of many a young man. Add to this the great difficulty that millions have taken the name of God and have committed nameless atrocities in the name of God. Not that scientists do not very often commit cruelties in the name of Truth. I know today in the name of Truth and science inhuman cruelties are perpetrated on animals when men perform vivisection. To me it is a denial of God whether you recognize Him as Truth or by any other name. So I know that there are these difficulties in one's way no matter how you describe God. But human mind is a limited thing, and you have to labour under limitation when you think of a being or entity who is beyond the power of man to grasp. But we have another thing in Hindu philosophy viz., God alone is and nothing else exists. Now the same truth you find emphasized and exemplified in the *Kalama* of Islam. There you find it clearly stated—a Mussalman has to recite it at all his prayers—that God alone is and nothing else is and that is the same about Truth. And the name that Sanskrit has for Truth literally means that which is—*Sat*. For these and several other reasons that I can give you I have come to the conclusion that the definition. "Truth is God" gives me the greatest satisfaction. And when you want to find Truth is God, the only inevitable means is love, non-violence—and since I believe that ultimately means and ends are convertible terms I should not hesitate to say that God is love.

Q. What is Truth ?

A. A difficult question, but I have solved it for myself by saying that it is what the voice within tells one. How then, you ask, different people think of different and contrary truths?

Seeing that the human mind works through innumerable media and that evolution of the human mind is not the same for all, it follows that what may be truth for one may be untruth for another and hence those who have made these experiments have come to the conclusion that there are certain conditions to making experiments.Just as for sci ence there is an indispensable course common for all, even so it is true for persons who would make experiments in the spiritual realm—they

must submit to certain conditions. And since everybody says it is his inner voice which speaks, you must listen to the voice, and you will then find out your limitations as you go along the path.Therefore, we have the belief based upon uninterrupted experience that those who would make diligent search after Truth—God—must go through these vows: the vow of truth—speaking and thinking of truth, the vow of *brahmacharya*, of non-violence, poverty and non-possession. If you do not take these five vows you may not embark on the experiments. There are several other things which were prescribed, but I must not take you through all those. But those who have made these experiments know that it is not proper for everyone to claim to hear the voice of conscience and it is because we have at the present moment everybody claiming the right of conscience without going through any discipline whatsoever that there is so much untruth being delivered to a bewildered world. All therefore that I can in all humility present to you is that Truth is not to be found by anybody who has not got an abundant sense of humility. If you would swim on the bosom of the ocean of Truth, you must reduce yourself to a zero. Further than this I may not tonight go along this fascinating path.

Q. What do you think of Christianity?

A. A delicate question. Christianity is very good; many Christians are very bad.

The economic crisis can be relieved if people love poverty. I would ask you to emphasize the word 'love' here. There would be no economic crisis if they really loved poverty. Economic crises arise because our eyes lust after the property of our neighbour. Forced poverty is to be found on earth simply because many have more than they are entitled to. There would bo no poverty on earth if we made a sacred resolution that we would have no more than we need for our creature comforts. And it would not do for a millionaire to sluggishly say that he owns millions because he needs those for his creature comforts. On the contrary, a man who is poor will continually examine himself and find out what are the superfluous things he keeps for himself and, if you conduct yourself in a sportsmanlike spirit from day to day, you will be astounded at the fewness of things you require.

I would like very much, being in the House of God, to say: cast out the beam from your eye before you dare to see a mote in your neighbour's eye. If we would but be good enough to take care of

ourselves, I have very little doubt that the world would take care of itself.

Q. What is your message to the women of Europe ?

A. I do not know if I have the courage to give the message without incurring their wrath. I would direct their steps to the women of India who rose in one mass last year and I really believe, if India would drink in the nectar of non-violence, Europe would do it through women. Woman I hold is the personification of self-sacrifice, but unfortunately today women do not realize what a tremendous advantage they hold over men. As Tolstoy would say, they are labouring under the hypnotic influence of man. If they would realize the nobility of non-violence, they would not consent to be called the weaker sex.

Tolstoy and Ruskin renewed my faith in things which I had only darkly felt.

Q. What is the difference between non-resistance and your resistance without violence ?

A. It has been often said that the doctrine of non-violence I owe to Tolstoy. It is not the whole truth, but there again I derive the greatest strength from his writings. But as Tolstoy himself admitted, the non-resistance method I had cultivated and elaborated in South Africa was different from the non-resistance Tolstoy had written upon and recommended. This I say in no derogation of Tolstoy's fame. He is not an apt pupil who will not build upon foundations laid by his teacher for him. He only deserves a good teacher who would add to the legacy that teacher would leave for him. I should be an unworthy son to my father if I should not add to my in heritance, and so I have always regarded it as a matter of pride that, thanks be to God, what I had learned from Tolstoy has fructified a hundredfold. Tolstoy talked of passive resistance largely, but non-resistance elaborated in Transvaal was a force infinitely more active than resistance that an armed man can devise and, I am glad to recall the fact that in a long letter he wrote to me unsolicited he said that his eyes were fixed upon me wherever I was. And if you will study the movements in South Africa and India, you will find how this thing is capable of infinite expansion.

Q. Is not non-resistance submission ?

A. Passive resistance is regarded as the weapon of the weak but the resistance for which I had to coin a new name altogether

for want of a phrase in the English language and not to have this mixed up with non- resistance, namely, 'satyagraha', is not conceived in any shape or form as a weapon of the weak but as a weapon of the strongest. But its matchless beauty is that it can be wielded by the weak in body, [by the] oldest and even by children if they have strong hearts and, since resistance through satyagraha is offered through self-suffering, it is a weapon open pre-eminently to women. And we found in actual experience in India last year that women in many instances surpassed men in suffering. And children also—thousands—played a noble part in this campaign. For the idea of self-suffering became contagious and they embarked upon amazing acts of self-denial. Supposing that women of Europe and children of Europe became fired with love of humanity and said our men are doing wrong by arming, they would take them by storm and reduce militarism to nothingness in an incredibly short time. And the underlying idea is that children, women and others have the same identical soul, same potentiality. The question is of drawing out the limitless power of Truth. But I must again call a halt to this fascinating subject.

Q. What is the value of vegetarian diet?

A. Priceless value for me, not for beef-eating Europe. But I do feel that spiritual progress does demand at some stage—an inexorable demand—that we should cease to kill our fellow-creatures for satisfaction of our bodily wants. The beautiful lines of Goldsmith occur to me as I tell you of my vegetarian fad:

No flocks that range the valley free

To slaughter I condemn;

Taught by the Power that pities me

I learn to pity them.

Q. What about liquor?

A. Liquor is as we say in invention of the devil. In Islam it is said that when Satan began to beguile men and women, he dangled before them this red water. I have seen that it has not only robbed men of their money but of reason; they have for the time being forgotten the distinction between wife and mother, lawful and unlawful. See barristers rotting in gutters, taken home by the police. I have found on two occasions captains of steamers dead drunk, incapable of keeping charge of their boats, and someone else had to take charge before they came to their senses. For both flesh and

liquor the sovereign rule is: we must not live in order to eat and drink and be merry but eat in order to make our bodies temples of God and to use them for the service of man. Liquor may be a medical necessity; when life is extinct, it may be possible to prolong it. It is possible to keep perfect health without flesh or meat. If you want to develop cruelty in a soldier, he would not have it unless he takes flesh or meat. You may not know that Japan, when she took to imitating Western civilization, made beef-eating compulsory.

Q. Is non-co-operation in military matters balanced by service in non-military matters?

A. That must be the last question. It is a good question. This was very exhaustively dealt with at the first meeting of a few friends. Briefly, I entirely agree that both these services go hand in hand. Non-co-operation in military service and service in non-military matters is not compatible. Friendly relations may be cultivated. Definitely military service is an ill-chosen word. Because you are all the while giving military service by deputy because you are supporting a State which is based on military service. In the Transvaal we had this law. There were some who were debarred—Indians, Bantus, Zulus—by law. But they were obliged to pay money. They were commuting that service. You will have to extend the scope of non-co-operation, how I shall not say. There is no limit to extending service to our neighbours across our State-made frontiers. God never made those frontiers.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

155. SPEECH AT MEETING IN LAUSANNE[1]

December 8, 1931

I know I had in this great Continent of yours quite a large number of friends. In order to make that pilgrimage to Villeneuve to see Romain Rolland I had to miss one steamer and, having come here, I shall say the same thing I said to Paris citizens. I observe that throughout the West there is a sickness of heart; you seem to be tired of the military burden under which the world is groaning—and I see that you are tired of shedding the blood of fellow-men. The last War,

[1] Gandhiji addressed three meetings in Lausanne. The source deos not mention which one this was. But from a very brief report in *The Hindustan Times*, 11-12-1931, it would appear this was the one held at People's Hall.

falsely called great, has taught you and humanity many a great lesson. Human nature during that War did not by and means shine at its best. No fraud, no lie, no deceit was considered to be too much in order to win the War. Foulest charges were flung by a set of partisans belonging to one nation against another and these were reciprocated with double vehemence. No cruelty was considered too great. Nothing was considered base or mean in order to compass the destruction of the enemy. Suddenly as in a flash the friends of yesterday became the enemy of today. No honour was safe, nothing was spared, and historians tell us that there never was so much blood spilled as during the last War. This civilization of the West was weighed in the balance and found wanting and you have hardly risen from the deadly effects of that War. On the contrary, you are slowly and surely realizing the evil effect of war in a more and more concentrated form. Most of the nations are on the brink of insolvency—a direct result of the War. You are suffering not only from material bankruptcy but moral and we are yet too near the time of the War to be able to measure the frightfulness bequeathed to us, nor was evil confined to Europe. It has broken the bounds and travelled round to Asia and no one knows whether he is standing on his feet or head.

At this time there is a message of hope coming from India. India is trying to attain its liberty through non-violent and truthful means. She has been endeavouring to follow out these means during the last ten years. Tens of thousands have taken part in this movement. Those who have studied the movement have come to the conclusion that it is making a steady headway. I suggest to you that if India can give an ocular demonstration of the fact that India can win liberty wihout shedding a drop of blood, it would be a great lesson for the world. You have been trying to discover a moral equivalent for war. It is possible that the method that India has adopted is the exact equivalent for war. I know it is as yet too early to say anything with confidence about this method. But my plea tonight is that you should study the Indian movement and methods. I invite you not to study the movement as biased friends but as candid critics. Approach it as behoves good students, study the movement with impartiality and, if you come to the conclusion that it is honestly conducted with non-violence and peaceful means, throw yourselves heart and soul into the movement. There is no doubt in my mind that you can do so. You can mould the public opinion of Europe—world opinion—so that it becomes irresistible. Naturally a movement of non-violence

creates a favourable public opinion; it speaks through self-suffering of a whole people. But I must not go any further. I have endeavoured yet just to whet your appetite. The limit of this meeting is 45 minutes and as is my wont I want to leave a fair portion of my time for questions. I would therefore invite you to put whatever questions you like.

Q. [You are reported to have said that] if necessary the masses of India will resort to violence. [Is that correct?]

A. I have no hesitation in saying that it is a baseless fabrication. It is a matter of deep grief that journalists so debase themselves as to give currency to lies. I do not for a moment suggest that the editor of the paper was giving currency to a lie. But the reporter himself was a journalist and the blame lies on his shoulder, but I would now suggest for the honour of journalism that, having heard the statement attributed to me, you should correspond with the reporter and deal with him as one would deal with a servant who behaves faithlessly.

Q. Mr. Gandhi, did you really advise people to enlist in army and to shoot in the air?

A. This is another fabrication. A question like this was put to me in Paris and I said that a soldier who enlisted himself and flattered himself that he was shooting in the air did no credit to his creed of non-violence. In my scheme a man who did this would be guilty of untruth and also of cowardice—cowardice inasmuch as he enlisted in order to escape imprisonment and untruth inasmuch as he having enlisted did not fire. This discredits the cause of war against war. War Resisters have to be, like Caesar's wife, above suspicion. Their strength lies in absolute adherence to the morality of the question.

I wish I had influence enough on Hindu society and I should suggest complete surrender to Muslims an Sikhs. It is a most difficult thing to deal with men who are afraid of one another. We have become so emasculated and so unnerved that Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs fear and suspect one another and persons seized with fear and distrust do not spare one another. That is our pitiful position.

The method of non-co-operation and non-violence is not only advisable, but one who is convinced of the injustice of war is bound to offer non-violent non-co-operation even if he or she be the only person.

Q. What is your opinion about mechanism ? Why do you suppress it?

A. By mechanism you mean this tremendous activity based on machinery. What I want to supress is the supremacy of machine over man. At the present moment the craze for everything to be done by machine has become so great that we are becoming slaves of machinery. Machinery is used for two purposes: (i) for compassing destruction, and (ii) for mass production. I drew your attention to the fact that this economic distress was due to the late War, but this mass production is no less responsible for this economic distress.

Q. Love for God or love for man ?

A. This is a question which begs itself. Love for God is not to be distinct from love for man. But if there was a conflict between the two loves I would know there was a conflict in the man himself. I should therefore invite him to carry on a search within himself. But when you find love for man divorced from love for God, you will find at basis a base motive. Real love for man I regard to be utterly impossible without love for God.

Q. How is one to fight hypocrisy and slander?

A. By not noticing either.

The movement has never been outside the inspiration of God—apart from that inspiration I regard myself unfit to conduct a movement of world-wide character. I have never considered myself responsible for any of the achievements of the movement. But, being a weak instrument in the hands of God, I have always considered myself responsible for any evil effects of the movement. But I did not go in search of the movement; it came directly to me from God. I know from experience that without a living faith in God conduct of the movement would be impossible.

Q. Why don't you come to Germany which is suffering so much?

A. I would have loved to come, but the time-table is against it. My heart was in Germany: is in Germany. But I have been simply powerless.

Q. Can Egypt gain her liberty?

A. *J'ai mes doutes*. If India becomes independent, Egypt becomes independent automatically. India becoming independent is such a huge and far-reaching event that every country will pulsate with a new life. It will be a great and glorious thing.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai.

156. DISCUSSION WITH ROMAIN ROLLAND

VILLENEUVE,
December 9, 1931

GANDHIJI: I believe and don't believe in the sincerity of MacDonald, as in a sense he means to stand by the declaration he has made, but he must also know that the declaration does not mean responsibility at the Centre and yet he says it contains responsibility at the Centre and wants you to believe what is not true. There is another sense also in which he has appeared to me as insincere—not open but evasive in his conversation—and so I could not form an altogether good opinion of him. He carries a responsibility on his shoulders which he can ill afford to bear. He is overworked, and in me he has a difficult subject to deal with. He finds me a fighter; on the other hand, my demand seems to be pitched so high that he cannot circumvent me and so he gives me the idea of an insincere man. It may be weakness and not insincerity.

ROMAIN ROLLAND: He wrote beautifully about India.

G. His views are favourable even today, but then he had no responsibility. Today he has.

R. R. : His statement was impertinent. Your last speech at R.T.C. has much moved many people.

G. "Extraordinary speech openly inspired by Bolshevik ideas." That was the speech at the Federal Structure Committee on commercial discrimination. It did create consternation among my friends.

I said, I or Congress would not discriminate against a person because he was an Englishman, but there would be discriminaion on other grounds, and I presented him with the formula : any interest in conflict with the national interest or not legitimatey acquired, I said, would be taken over by the State and I said that it would apply to Europeans of India. This, I said, would not be done by an executive order but by the order from the Federal Court.

[The Ordinance] is an inhuman document, worse than the Rowlatt Act. The menace to the Government of India from its own subordinates is of a different character. They disregarded instructions of a liberal nature, which are rare, but they are ready to carry out all instructions of a destructive character. Whereas the Central power is not able to exact discipline. I have called the Civil Service of India the

greatest political freemasonry. The Secret Service is nothing before this snake-like coil of Civil Service. . . .

R. R. The German youth is quite different from what he was before War. Before War they believed in the concrete value of power. They have seen it curshed. The new youth lives in a state of relativism—no wonder they come from Einstein's place. To the German youth France seems to be a country of old values, so that German youth is ready to follow new ideals. They are angry with France which is a dead weight on the past. We can't judge Europe by the victor.

G. The Indian youth may not be capable of heroic self-sacrifice, but it is coming under the influence of non-resistance.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai.

157. SPEECH AT INTERNATIONAL SANATORIUM

VILLENEUVE, GENEVA,
December 9, 1931

It is a matter of joy to me that I am able to make this hurried visit. That you are in a beautiful building situated in pleasant surroundings must be a matter of recreation for you. As you have very properly remarked, this sanatorium should not be for merely healing the body but for promotion of international friendship. After all one finds that healing of the body plays a subordinate part in human experience. One may live down injury to the body but not the injury to the soul. And so it is a matter of keen joy to me that you are looking after things of the spirit also. I wish you many years of service, complete restoration to health and life of the inmates and useful international service thereafter.

Q. Does psychological influence promote healing?

A. I am afraid illness will remain with mankind so long as mankind exists. But I do believe that at present we are making a fetish of illness. If I had my way, I would reduce medical treatment to a minimum. I have enforced that rule not only in my life, but in the lives of hundreds of my companions. I believe that most of the illnesses we suffer from yield to hygienic treatment and I think that in life, which is beset with dangers, we should count with grave dangers also. And this has given us much consolation in illness. The rule is: let us not think of having services which millions in all parts of the earth cannot command. For instance, the favoured students and professors of medicine can have access to this, but not the millions

who are suffering like you. I do not want to say this by way of criticism of the sanatorium, but I do want to say that I am not personally in love with sanatoria like these. Therefore I know full well that if millionaires of the earth emptied their wealth it would not be enough to build millions of sanatoria for people needing them. In reducing hygienic laws we should reduce them to such proportions that the poorest may observe them in their own lives and their own health.

That brings us to psychological influence which promotes healing. I believe in this to a great extent. I believe a healthy mind presupposes a healthy body and, if you are to analyse medical students as you are illnesses that the flesh is heir to, you will find that most are avoidable and mind has a great part to play in creating illness and promoting it. Whereas, instead of pampering ourselves, if we were tolerant, we might be able to shed these illnesses. This is a subject which, as some of you know, I have been studying or experimenting in as a quack for 35 years. I could therefore keep you engaged for hours in reciting my experiences.

Q. What is the moral significance of manual work?

A. I think so much of it that in institutions I have founded manual work is a sacred obligation for the inmates and he who does not do manu-al work steals food. He is not entitled to eat his portion of food, unless he has done sufficient manual work and I have not the slightest shadow of a doubt that when man shirks manual work, he stunts his moral growth. I have no doubt that, if we recognize the significance of manual work, many of the monstrosities would die a natural death. The law of bread labour was that that man was entitled to bread who worked for it. You find that law enunciated by Jesus when he said: thou shalt earn thy bread by the sweat of thy brow; and if this was literally followed, there would be very little illness on earth and little of hideous surroundings on earth.

Q. Is it not possible to live in Europe without compromise in accordance with your ideas?

A. Not impossible but difficult. But, however difficult the thing may be, it is necessary to make a heroic effort in order to translate the ideal into practice.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai.

158. LETTER TO AMINA AND GULAM RASUL QURESHI

[After *December 9, 1931*][1]

CHI. AMINA AND QURESHI,

I was very eager to meet both of you; but my desire could not be fulfilled. The saying that it is always God's will that prevails is indeed true. This is my advice to both of you. You two should bring credit to Imam Saheb's place to which you succeed. Both of you should improve your Urdu. I should also like you to study the Koran. I hold that those who make a deep study of Islam cannot be narrow-minded. I do not wish that you should have a mere, literal knowledge of the Koran. You should penetrate behind its letter to its spirit. I have come across a biography of Hazrat Ali which I am reading these days. It is not well written, but I see that it does not take me long to reach the essence of a thing and so I find the biography quite interesting. And I derive much comfort from it. Write to me from time to time. You should both observe self-control.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10780. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

159. SPEECH AT MEETING[2]

GENEVA,
December 10, 1931

I have heard a great deal of the magnificent scenery of your country, but seeing surpasses my expectations and the affection I have received has added to the joy of seeing the scenery of your country. I wish I had more time at my disposal to make the acquaintance of individuals and to see the beautiful spots of this country of yours. But I must not detain you by inviting you to share my joy. I know that all of you who have come to this meeting have

[1] From the contents it appears that this letter was written after the death of Abdul Kadir Bawazeer on December 9, 1931.

[2] The meeting, which was held during the lunch hour in the Victoria Hall under the auspices of the International Women's League for Peace and Freedom, was attended by about 2,000 people.

been deprived of your luncheon hour and I must not waste that precious time of yours by talking to you of my joy. I want to talk to you about that to which my life is dedicated and that particularly is being tried on a scale not tried on this earth before. I refer to the means adopted in India for attaining independence. History shows that when a people have been subjugated and desire to get rid of the subjection, they have rebelled and resorted to use of arms. In India, on the other hand, we have resorted to means that are scrupulously non-violent and peaceful and strangers have testified and I am here to give my testimony that in a great measure we seem to have succeeded in attaining our goal. I know that it is still an experiment in making. I cannot claim absolute success as yet, but I venture to suggest to you that experience has gone so far that it is worth while to study the experience. I further suggest that, if that experience becomes a full success, India will have made a contribution to world peace for which the world is thirsting. You have in this great country of yours the Central Office of the League of Nations. That League is expected to perform wonders. It is expected to replace war and by its own power arbitrate between nations who might have differences between themselves. But it has always seemed to me that the League lacks the necessary sanction. It depends, as it has to, largely if not exclusively, on the judgment of the nations concerned. I venture to suggest to you that the means we have advocated in India supply the necessary sanction not only to a body like the League, but to any world organization for this great cause of the world. But I must not detain you in taking you through different phases of this movement. I must satisfy myself by just introducing to you this movement and by telling you of the progress the movement makes if it is successful. I have a series of questions and in order that I might give as much time as I can give you, I have given you only a brief introduction. I have already taken up 10 minutes. I am taking up only a few questions M. Privat has chosen.

The question about what I had and had not said in London.

This is what has been put in my mouth: "I have no sympathy for terrorism and violence. But if necessary, India will resort to violence, call that what you like."

I referred the para to the Editor for correction and the correction confirms in its entirely the report he had sent. But I see that he has not reproduced passages from speeches from which

he says he has quoted. My speeches at the Round Table Conference have been all officially reported and Ican only tell you that throughout those speeches there can't be found a single word in corroboration of this statement. Then it is stated that I made a similar statement in some other speeches also. Meanwhile I must ask you to believe me when I say that I never made the statement that masses would, if necessary, resort to violence. I regard myself in my lucid moments as incapable of making a statement of that character. Non-violence is not a policy but a creed. I would pray to God that He may give me faith to lay down my life rather than countenance violence in any shape or form and, as this matter has attained some local importance, I respectfully call upon the correspondent to give his name and reproduce the report. And though tomorrow I shall be outside your jurisdiction, I shall take care to give the fullest satisfaction though I may be outside India. And I want to do so as I want to attain your goodwill. My movement and I have to stand or fall by the declaration I have made, viz., that I must stand by non-violence wholly unadulterated. At the same time I tender you my apology for having taken up a few minutes on a personal explanation.

Q. Why did you make such a solemn protest because newspaers had reported you advising soldiers to shoot in the air?

A. Whether I made a solemn protest I do not know, but I made my position clear. I do not want a single soldier, after having taken an oath to serve the army, to mislead the people by shooting in the air. I regard myself as a soldier, as a soldier of peace. I know the value of discipline and truth and I would consider it unmanly for a soldier who has taken an oath to deny himself the consequences when he defies the order by shooting in the air. In my opinion, when a soldier comes to the conclusion that it is inhuman and beneath the dignity of man, he should lay down arms and pay the penalty of insubordination.

Q. How could workers obtain justice without violence? If capitalists use force why should not workers use pressure?

A. This is the old law, the law of the jungle—blow against blow—and I have told you that I am endeavouring to make this experiment essentially to substitute the law of the jungle, which is foreign to man. You may not know that I am supposed to be the chief adviser to a labour union in Ahmedabad, which has

commanded the testimony of labour experts. Through this labour union we have been endeavouring to enforce methods of non-violence for solving questions arising between the employers and the employed. Therefore, what I am now about to tell you is based upon actual experience—in the very line about which the question has been asked. In my humble opinion, labour can always vindicate itself provided it is united and self-sacrificing. No matter how oppressive capitalism may be, I am convinced that those who are connected with labour and guiding labour have no idea of the resources that labour can command and capitalism can never command. If labour would only understand and recognize that capital is perfectly helpless without labour, labour would easily come to its own. We have unfortunately come under the hypnotic suggestion and influence of capital that capital is all in all on earth. But a moment's thought would show that labour has at its disposal a capital that capitalists never possess. Ruskin taught in his age that labour had unrivalled opportunity. But he spoke above our heads. At the present moment an Englishman is making the same experiment. He is an economist and also a capitalist, but through economic researches he has come to the same conclusions that Ruskin arrived at intuitively and he has brought back a vital message. He says it is wrong to think that a piece of metal constitutes capital; it is also wrong to think that so much produce is capital. He adds that, if we go to the source, it is labour that is capital and that living capital cannot be reduced in terms of economics and it is inexhaustible. It is upon that law and truth we are conducting the labour union in Ahmedabad and fighting the Government and it is that law the recognition of which delivered 1,700,000 people in Champaran from age-long tyranny. I must not tarry to tell you what that tyranny was,[1] but those who are interested in that problem will be able to study every one of the facts which I have put before them. Now I tell you what we have done. There is in the English language a very potent word—all languages have it: 'No'. And the secret is that when capital wants labour to say 'Yes', labour roars out 'No'. And immediately labour comes to recognize that it has choice before it of saying 'No' when it wants to say 'No', it has nothing to fear and it would not matter in the slightest degree that

[1] For details of the Champaran struggle for the abolition of forced labour on the indigo plantations,

capital has guns and poison gas at its disposal. Capital will still be perfectly helpless if labour will assert its dignity making good its 'No'. Then labour does not need to retaliate, but stands defiant receiving the bullets and poison gas and still insists upon its 'No'. But I tell you why labour so often fails. Instead of sterilizing capital as I have suggested labour should do (I say this as a labourer myself), it wants to seize capital and become capitalist itself in the worst sense of the term. And therefore the capitalist who is properly entrenched and organized, finding in labour a desire for the same objective, makes use of labour to suppress labour. And if we were really not under the hypnotic spell, every one of us—man and woman—would recognize this rock-bottom truth without the slightest difficulty. Having achieved brilliant successes in various departments of life, I am saying this with authority. I have placed before you something not superhuman but within the grasp of every labourer. You will see that what labour is called upon to do is nothing more than what Swiss soldiers are doing, for undoubtedly the Swiss soldier carries his own destruction in his pocket. I want labour to copy the courage of the soldier without copying the brute in the soldier, viz., the ability to inflict death, and I suggest to you that a labourer who courts death without carrying arms shows a courage of a much higher degree than the man who is armed from top to toe. Though this is a fascinating subject, I must reluctantly leave this point and go to the fourth question.

Q. Since disarmament chiefly depends on the Great Powers, why force it on Switzerland which is small and neutral and non-aggressive?

A. In the first place, from this neutral ground of yours I am speaking to all powers and not only to Switzerland. If you want to carry this message to other parts of Europe, I shall be absolved from all blame and seeing that Switzerland is neutral territory and non-aggressive, Switzerland does not need this army. Secondly, it is through your hospitality and by reason of your occupying this vantage ground. Is it not better for you to give the world a lesson in disarmament and show that you are brave enough to do without an army?

Q. Why do you ignore the sacred traditions of military development? Don't you know that the mere presence of the Swiss army saved us from the horror of being overrun by foreign armies?

A. Will the questioner forgive me if I say that a double ignorance underlies this question? He deplores the fact that, if you

give up the pro-fession of soldiering, you will miss the education you receive in service and sacrifice. None need run away with the idea that because you avoid military conscription you are not in for a conscription of a severer and nobler type. When I spoke to you about labour, I told you that labour ought to assimilate all the noble qualities of soldiering: endurance and de-fiance of death and sacrifice. When you disarm yourself, it does not mean that you will have a merry time. It is not that you are absolved from the duty of serving your homes when you give up soldiering; on the contrary, your women and children would be taking part in the defending your homes. Again I am not talking to you without experience. In the little institution[1] that we are conducting, we are teaching our women and children also how to save that institution—as we are living among thieves and robbers. Everything becomes simple and easy the moment you learn to give up your own life in order to save the life of others. And lastly it is really forgotten that safety which an individual derives from innocence is safety which no amount of arms will give you. The second part of the ignorance lies in the second part of the question. I must respectfully deny the truth of the statement that the presence of the Swiss army prevented the War from affecting Switzerland. Although Belgium had its own army, it was not saved and, if the rival armies had wanted a passage through Switzerland, believe me, they would have fought you also.You might have fought in turn, but you would have fought much better non-violently.

Q. How could a disarmed neutral country allow other nations to be destroyed? But for our army which was waiting ready at our frontier during the last War we should have been ruined?[2]

A. At the risk of being considered a visionary or a fool, I must answer this in the manner I know. It would be cowardly of a neutral country if you allowed an army to devastate your country. But a moment ago I told you that there was one thing in common between the soliders of war and soldiers of non-violence and, if I had been a citizen of Switzerland or President of the Federal State, what I would have done would be to refuse passage to this army by

[1] The reference is to the Satyagraha Ashram at Sabarmati.

[2] The question is taken from Mahadev Desai's "Letter from Europe" published in *Young India*, 31-12-1931.

rufusing all supplies. Secondly, re-enacting a Thermopylae in Switzerland you would have presented a living wall of men, women and children and invited them to walk over your corpses. You may say that such a thing is beyond human experience and endurance. Then I can tell you that it was not beyond human experience last year. We showed that it was quite pos- sible. Women stood lathi charges without showing the sligh- test cowardice. In Peshawar thousands stood a hail of bullets with- out resorting to any violence whatsoever. Imagine such men and wo- men standing in front of an army wanting safe passage. It would be brutal enough, you would say, to walk over them, but you would still have done your duty and allowed yourself to be annihilated. An army that dares to pass over corpses would not be able to repeat that experiment. You may, if you would, refuse to believe in such courage on the part of the masses of men and women, but then you would have to admit that non-violence is made of sterner stuff. It was never conceived as a weapon of the weak, but of the stoutest hearts.

Q. The International Red Cross is a special gift to the world. What do you think of it? It has saved thousands of lives.

A. I am ashamed to have to own that I do not know the history of this wonderful and magnificent organization. If it has saved persons by the million, my head bows before it. But having paid this tribute, may I say that this organization should cease to think of giving relief after war but of giving relief without war. If war had no redeeming features, no courage behind it, it would be a despicable thing and would not need a speech to destroy it. But what is here being prescribed to you is infinitely nobler than war in all its branches in-cluding the Red Cross organization. Believe me there are millions wounded by their own folly. There are millions of wretched homes on the face of the earth. Therefore the non-violent societies of tomorrow would have enough work chartered out for them when they take up international service and may Switzerland give the lead to the world.

Q. Can you give any message to individual organizations?

A. I venture to say that if, in answering all the questions asked, I have not given a message, I must confess I am not able to give any other message.

Q. What is the difference between your message and the Christian which we prefer to keep?

A. I do not profess to give any original message at all. My mes-sage is as old as this earth and I do not know that it is at all

different from the Christian message. If you mean by it non-violence, I should be sorry to discover that you have given up the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount. Nothing will give me greater pleasure than that the Christians of Europe were translating in their lives the message of Jesus. The second question betrays ignorance. Shall I answer it in Biblical language—you cannot save yourself unless you are prepared to lose yourself.[1]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

160. DISCUSSION WITH ROMAIN ROLLAND

[On or after *December 10, 1931*][2]

Q. Cruelty or wickedness in man is not caused by will, but by morbid taste. What would non-resistance do to preserve society from these half-responsible people?

A. I do not need to use violence at all. But I would need to keep them under restraint. I would use some social force. I would not call it violence. My brother becomes a lunatic and I put irons on his hands.

There is no use of violence when the motive is lacking. Nor would he feel the violence. On the contrary, when he comes to his senses, he would thank me for it. In his lunacy he would feel the violence, offer resistance to it. I would not mind the resistance because my action would be dictated by unadulterated love; there is not even the selfishness of loving behind it. If I am tying his hands, it is not in order to save myself from being hurt. If I felt that I should hurt myself by trying to save him, I should subject myself to being hurt. In the same way I should treat these half-crazy men, treat them as sick men, put them in an infirmary and put them [not] under heartless jailors but under medical men who have studied their conditions and surround them by kind nurses. That is only dealing with the system.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai.

[1] *St. Mark* VIII, 35 and *St. Luke* IX. 24.

[2] The source mentions no date, but this was recorded after the meeting in Geneva on December 10.

161. INTERVIEW TO SUKHOTINA TOLSTOY[1]

ROME,
[*December 13, 1931*][2]

SUKHOTINA TOLSTOY: I have been long looking forward to an opportunity of meeting you. If my father had been alive, he would have been delighted to hear of your non-violent battle for freedom.

GANDHIJI: I am sure. And are you the daughter who wrote that famous letter[3] of your father to me?

That was another daughter, a fact which led to inquiry about Tolstoy's children.

S. T. Six of us are still living. The two daughters accept my father's principles, but the four sons do not. You know my father allowed every one of us the fullest liberty of thought and action and, whilst these brothers of mine revered my father, they were not prepared to accept his principles.

I was a friend of Romain Rolland.

G. Why was? Are you not a friend now?

S. T. No, I used to be a great friend of his until two years ago. He wrote to me fairly frequently and I also used to write to him.

G. But now ?

S. T. But now I find that he is in sympathy with Bolshevism and Bolshevik methods. I do not quarrel with their goal, but their doctrine that the end justifies the means seems to me to be frightful. How can Romain Rolland, a believer in non-violence, have any sympathy with them?

G. Supposing what you say is true, is it not all the more necessary that you should write to him and tell him what you feel about his views? Don't you as a friend of two years ago owe it to him to write freely and fully? After all, he is the one true and honest man in Europe after Tolstoy. Like your father he is old, worn-out, and unhappy over the tendencies of the present age and he has your father's childlike simplicity of never taking correction amiss, no matter whether it came from a wise man or a fool.

S. T. I know that he is all that. In the War he was the only man who stood out bravely against it and he has the same bravery even now. I also know that he has written the best book on my father that has ever been written. But somehow I have hesitated, I actually wrote a letter, but never posted it. If you like, I shall post it now.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Letter from Europe".
[2] According to an entry under this date in "Diary, 1931"
[3] *Vide* "Tolstoy's Letter to Gandhiji", 7-10-1909

G. Do I want you to do so.

S. T. Then I will say that you asked me to do so.

G. Yes, you may. I shall also write to him?[1]

Young India, 14-1-1932

162. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, ROME[2]

[*December 13, 1931*][3]

The beauty of non-violent war is that women can play the same part in it as men. In a violent war the women have no such part in it as men. In a violent war the women have no such privilege, and the Indian women played a more effective part in our last non-violent war than men. The reason is simple. Non-Violent war calls into play suffering to the largest extent, and who can suffer more purely and nobly than women? The women in India tore down the *purdah* and came forward to work for the nation. They saw that the country demanded something more than their looking after their homes. They manufactured contraband salt, they picketed foreign-cloth shops and liquor shops, and tried to wean both the seller and the customer from both. At late hours in the night, they pursued the drunkards to their dens with courage and charity in their hearts. They marched to jails and they sustained lathi blows as few men did. If the women of the West will try to vie with men in becoming brutes, they have no lesson to learn from the women of India. They will have to cease to take delight in sending their husbands and sons to kill people and congratulate them on their valour.

Young India, 14-1-1932

163. LETTER TO BRISCOE

December 14, 1931

DEAR MR. BRISCOE,

I have read your letter to Devdas. I was sorry not to have been able to visit Ireland and to see Mr. De Valera. I had looked forward to that visit but a peremptory call from India made it impossible.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Romain Rolland", 20-12-1931.

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Letter from Europe".

[3] From a reference in "Diary, 1931"

[PS.]

Do please thank Mrs. Wood for all the trouble she had taken.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: C.W. 4520 Courtesy : R. Briscoe

164. AN AUTOGRAPH

[On or before *December 15, 1931*][1]

Be true.

From a photostat: G.N. 2333

165. LETTER TO DEVI WEST

S. S. "PILSNA",
December 15, 1931

MY DEAR DEVI[2],

I often wanted to write to you but never could get the time. We are today on the Red Sea. I am slowly overtaking the arrears of sleep and correspondence it between. I was delighted to hear from Muriel that you had decided to join her. You will be a great acquisition to Kingsley Hall and I know you will be happy there. You must write to me regularly.

We are a party of nine all travelling deck. The weather is still cold but pleasant. I had your farewell letter.

Love.

BHAI

From a photostat: C.W. 4437. Courtesy: A.H. West

[1] On the same sheet, below Gandhiji's autograph, there is also one of Madan Mohan Malaviya bearing this date.

[2] Ada West, sister of A.H. West

166. CABLE TO CROFT[1]

PORT SAID
December 17, 1931

CROFT
INDIA OFFICE
LONDON

THANKS WIRE, "GIORNALE D'ITALIA" STATEMMENT WHOLLY FALSE. NEVER GAVE ANY INTERVIEW[2] PRESSMEN ROME. LAST INTERVIEW2 I GAVE WAS TO REUTER VILLEN-EUVE WHERE I ASKED PEOPLE INDIA NOT COME HASTY DECISION BUT AWAIT MY STATEMENT. I SHALL TAKE NO PRECIPITATE ACTION AND SHALL MAKE

[1] Sir Samuel Hoare, later Viscount Templewood, in his *Nine Troubled Years* (Collins, 1954), says that when he heard the report of "a fictitious interview" Gandhiji was said to have given to Gayda of *Giornale d' Italia*, he was so "horrified and amazed" that he at once telegraphed for its confirmation. "The answer came", says Templewood, "from Gandhi himself, to the effect that he had made no such statement, and that the reported interview was a fake." Presumably the answer in question was this cable.

The cable which had beeen sent to Gandhiji "from an authoritative quarter" according to a *Times* report was as follows:

'Press reports state that, on embarkation, you issued to *Giornale d' Italia* a statement which contained expressions such as following:

(1) Round Table Conference marked definite rupture of relations between Indian nation and British Government.

(2) You are returning to India in order to restart at once struggle against England.

(3) Boycott would now prove powerful means of rendering more acute British crisis.

(4) We will not pay taxes, we will not work for England in any way, we will completely isolate British authorities, their politics and their institutions, and we will totally boycott all British goods.'

Some of your friends here think you must have been misreported and, if so , denial desirable."

Notwithstanding Gandhiji's disclaimer, Gayda persisted in his claim that the interview was genuine. Gandhiji repeated this disclaimer in 1934 when he was again asked about the interview.

[2] *Vide* "Interview to the Press", 6-12-1931

MAKE AMPLE PREVIOUS ENTREATY AUTHORITIES SHOULD DIRECT ACTION BECOME UNFORTUNATELY NECESSARY. PLEASE GIVE THIS WIDEST PUBLICITY POSSIBLE.

GANDHI

From a photostat : C. W. 9398. Courtesy : India Office Library

167. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

PORT SAID,
December 17, 1931

DEAR AGATHA,

Just one line to say I have been thinking of you constantly. May your work prosper.

With Love,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1449

168. INTERVIEW TO REUTER

PORT SAID,
December 17, 1931

Mahatma Gandhi arrived here at noon, and met several deputations, including one of the Wafdists. He posed for photographers, and gave autographs. Interviewed by Reuter, he rupudiated the interview to the *Giornale d'Italia* in which he was alleged to have said that he was going back to India to renew the struggle and said that he did not give any journalist at Rome an Interview. He added:

I have reached no decision, and naturally, cannot until I arrive in Bombay and consult the members of the Working Committee.

The Hindustan Times , 19-12-1931

169. LETTER TO ULRICH HAMBURGER

S. S. "PILSNA",
December 18, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

As your letter was received on the eve of my departure from London I could not invite you to see me. In my opinion all the

principal religions of which we have any knowledge are from God. But this fact need not disturb your faith. You are not called upon to judge which is truer. It should be sufficient for you to live up to your faith. And if you see anything worth taking from other religions, surely there is nothing to prevent you from taking it.

Yours,

ULRICH HAMBURGER, ESQ.
DOWNING COLLEGE
CAMBRIDGE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

170. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

WHILE NEARING ADEN,
December 17, 1931

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have been getting from you occasionally, not letters exactly, but little notes. As I myself did not write often, I cannot blame you. However, there were strong reasons for my not being able to write. In London, I could neither sleep nor have regular meals. I used to carry my tiffin with me and ate wherever I could. This time I seldom wrote to anybody and, as for writing for *Young India* and *Navajivan*, I had to stop it altogether. You had no excuse for not writing to me or writing only brief notes. But the saying that habits die hard is true in your case. There is, however, another saying which applies to people who are prepared to try hard: "A mere string can make a dent in a black, strong, stone." What, then, cannot one achieve with effort ?

We entered the Red Sea today. There are nine of us. All of us are deck passengers. Deck passengers get no amenities worth the name. But we have everything we require and so need not worry. I mention this merely to describe the conditions on the deck.

We shall reach Bombay on the 28th. Let us see what happens when we arrive there. If the struggle starts again, you need not think you have to come away immediately[1]. First watch what form the struggle takes and then come. Do not come until you have been able

[1] From South Africa

to make proper arrangements for the work there. Moreover, all of you keep good health there, and I would not be happy if it suffered by your going to India. You should do what you think is your duty, without regard to what I may wish. I say this now because I cannot say whether I would get any time to write to you afterwards. They may even arrest me as soon as I reach Bombay.

It certainly was not expected that Shanti would be at peace after hegot the money. I am therefore not at all surprised to learn that he has gone away. I wonder how you manage things now. Do render all possible service to Sastriji who has gone there. Andrews and Sarojinidevi are already there and you should attend on them too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4787

171. LETTER TO MARCHIONESS VITELLESCHI

S. S. "PILSNA",
December [*19,*][1] *1931*

DEAR SISTER,

I had your long letter. If you will think less of yourself and lose yourself in the duty immediately in front of you, you will find your peace.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2768

[1] In the source the figure looks like 11, on which date Gandhiji was in Villeneuve. The letter has an Aden postmark bearing the date December 23, which indicates that '11' is presumably a slip for '19'.

172. LETTER TO MORRIS OSOFSKEY

S. S. "PILSNA",
December 19, 1931

DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,

In reply to your letter I may say that I expect to reach my God through truth and non-violence. I know that the American youth are with India in her struggle for Independence.

Yours

MR. MORRIS OSOFSKEY
2085 WALTON AVENUE
BRONT, NEW YORK (U.S.A.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

173. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

S. S. :PILSNA",
December 19, 1931

DEAR MURIEL,

This is the first letter I am trying to write with the left hand. After a month's disuse it feels funny writing with the right [*sic*] hand.

I hope you got my note posted at Port Said. I have now gone through your accounts. I observe that your current expenses are just now £1700 per year including repayment of loan instalment. Your receipts are nothing like your expenses. But I know that God will help you in some way or other. One rule I have found absolutely necessary—never to go into debt. It kills prayer. But I must not be dogmatic. I simply give my opinion as inmate[1] as you have promised to regard me and as I began to regard myself when I came to you. You will always share your difficulties with me.

I have read Mrs. Hobhouse's leaflet with interest.

You will please tell all the fellow-inmates that if I don't write

[1]Of Kingsley Hall in London's East End, where the addressee who ran the institution had arranged for Gandhiji's stay

to them separately, it is because I have little time left at my disposal. I often think of them. My love to them all and to Doris[1] and her children.

Please remember me to Mr. Morris, the blind friend.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

174. LETTER TO MADELEINE ROLLAND

S. S. "PILSNA",
December 20, 1931

DEAR SISTER,

what shall I say of you and your good brother's affection for me? The visit to Villeneuve was truly a pilgrimage for me. I wish I could have stayed longer than I did. However, the memory of the few days' communion with you will be among my richest treasures.

Now one word about your brother's health. You must shed the fear of fresh air, no matter of what season it is. If damp air is feared, a drier region has to be chosen. The artificial drying does no good at all unless one uses most expensive machinery for continuous drying of continuously admitted fresh air. They do this in the British House of Commons, I am told. But I feel sure that if you keep the windows continually open in the unused part of the room, it can do no harm. As it is, you are not getting the benefit of the magnificent air of Villeneuve. I have now done. You will pardon this writing prompted by love.

You will now write freely and fully whatever you feel.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Romain Rolland and Gandhi: Correspondence, pp. 242-3

[1] Addressee's sister who was running an infants' school in London

175. LETTER TO ROMAIN ROLLAND

S. S. "PILSNA",
December 20, 1931

DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

I beg you to write to the daughter of Tolstoy and satisfy her curio-sity concerning Bolshevism.[1] The General and Mrs. Moris were extremely kind to us all. We felt as if we were one of the family as soon as we entered the house. Mussolini is a riddle to me. Many of his reforms attract me. He seems to have done much for the peasant class. I admit an iron hand is there. But as violence is the basis of Western society, Mussolini's refor-ms deserve an impartial study. His care of the poor, his opposition to super-urbanization, his efforts to bring about co-ordination between capital and labour, seem to me to demand special attention. I would like you to enli-ghten me on these matters. My own fundamental objection is that these reforms are compulsory. But it is the same in all democratic institutions. What strikes me is that behind Mussolini's implacability is a desire to serve is people. Even behind his emphatic speeches there is a nucleus of sincerity and of passionate love for his people. It also seems to me that the majority of Italian people love the iron government of Mussolini. I do not wish that you should take the trouble of replying to me immediately. Take your time, I beg of you. It is not necessary to say that I do not propose to write publicly on this subject at this moment. I have simply put these questions before you as before someone who knows infinitely more than I do about the subject, and now I think, if you come during the cold season between January and March, you can easily bear the climate and probably derive some good out of it. You can certainly come by air, but I would rather you came by sea. If you take up this proposition seriously, an eventual programme can be submitted to you.

With deep love,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : C.W. 9441 .Courtesy : R.K.Prabhu

[1] *Vide* "Interview of Sukhotina a Tolstoy", 13-12-1931

176. LETTER TO CARL HEATH

S.S. "PILSNA",
December 20, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of friendly farewell. I treasure the thought that among the many friends of India's cause I can count those whose names you have kindly sent me.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N.1026

177. THE INDIAN ARMY

[*December 21, 1931*][1]

However honest the Prime Minister's declaration on the closing day of the Round Table Conference was, it fell far short of the national demand, and hence was utterly unacceptable if there was no room for expansion. And yet the pity of it is that it represents the English mind.

The true test of responsibility is control of Defence and Finance . The declaration is unequivocal about both these matters. There is to be no Indian control, certainly not of Defence, and virtually not of Finance.

The reason for this extraordinary state of affairs is the great ignorance that prevails in England about India. Many of the best Englishmen believe that we are incapable of defending ourselves or managing our Finance. If this is so, we are certainly far away from the Complete Independence we want.

But I claim that we are quite able to look after our own Defence and Finance. What is the army in India ? Roughly, it consists of sixty thousand British soldiers and a hundred and sixty thousand Indian soldiers—all hirelings. Indian soldiers are chosen for their being devoid of any national instinct whatever. They are almost trained to regard themselves as foreigners who should look down upon the

[1] According to an entry in "Diary, 1931" Gandhiji wrote an article for *The Indian News* (Which, from 1932,changed to *The India Review*) on this date . Presumably this was the article.

ordinary citizen with whom they have nothing in common. The whole of this army is used for external aggression, and the protection of British interests and British lives within Indian borders.

This army I regard as a menace, within, to nationalism, and without, to the independence of India's neighbours. Surely India managed somehow to live and to preserve her culture before the British advent. India's defence lies in the cultivation of friendly relations with her neighbours and her ability to resist, through non-violent non-co-operation, her exploitation by any nation.

The first act of a National Government should be to disband this menace, unless it were reduced to manageable proportions and the control handed honourably and peacefully to the National Government by the British Government. This is the least expiation the British Government owe to the people of India for having brought into being an army designed to crush their legitimate aspirations.

Should the British Government not see the obvious duty of doing this elementary thing, the Nationalist Party must continue to fight till hard experience had demonstrated the necessity. The Indian Army of the future will not be mercenary but voluntary, and largely in the nature of police.

But the British people have been taught to think that the army in India is the crowning act of British rule for which India should be for ever thankful. The Editor of *The Indian Review* has to dispel this colossal ignorance by hard study of facts and figures showing how the army is composed and how, from its conception, it has been used for the spoliation of India and her neighbours.

The India Review, 16-1-1932

178. LETTER TO JOHN S. HOYLAND

S. S. "PILSNA",
December 21, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I was able to read two days ago your good book[1] on the Cross. There are in my opinion several inaccuracies inevitable in a condensation like your book. But there is one I would like to correct.

[1] *The Cross Moves East*

You have said that the movement in India was not kept to the high level at which it was kept in South Africa. My own experience and opinion are to the contrary. You have instanced the consideration shown to the South Africa Government when it was in distress. The instance is not to the point. In South Africa there was no question of displacing the Government. Therefore when European movement to displace the Government took place, as satyagrahis, Indians were bound not to join the insurgents.

In India the movement is to displace the Government. Therefore there never can be any question of showing tenderness to it. It would be wrong to show tenderness to it conceived as it is as an evil. But instances of chivalry shown within the limits of satyagraha can be multiplied *ad lib*. The suspension after Chauri Choura is the most outstanding one. I would not have pursued the subject but for the imperative demand of truth. You have written the book from the highest motive, i. e., of religion. The inaccuracy I have pointed out betrays not only that of fact but also of judgement. I wonder whether you have caught what I am driving at. If I have not made myself sufficiently clear, do please write to me.

Now about the hymns.[1] I have gone through them. They cannot be printed as my translation. For they have undergone drastic changes at your hands and that rightly. In the circumstances they must be published if at all as being your original work based on my literal translation of the hymns. If you will shoulder that responsibility I have no objection to your publishing them, if you think that they helpseekers. Mirabehn and Mahadev will be writing to you separately their own opinion. At the time of writing I have not discussed the matter with them.

Yours,

JACK HOYLAND

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] From the *Ashram Bhajanavali* translated by Gandhiji during his detention in the Yeravda Prison in 1930; *vide* "Ashram Bhajanavali",

179. LETTER TO FRANCISCA STANDENATH

December 21, 1931

DEAR SAVITRI[1]

Our meeting this time was not quite happy. You jarred on me by your harsh judgments of people and your pride in you righteousness. This latter defect is a terrible handicap on progress. I do not want you to brood over what I am writing. I would like you just to think over what I am writing and forget all about it if you think that I am misjudging you. Even so, it is better that I tell you what is in my mind rather than that I should harbour a judgment about you. I would be untrue to you if I did not tell you what I thought about particular actions of yours.

Never mind whether I can write to you or not. Both you and Satyavan[2] should continue to write to me. It does happen nowadays that I do not even get the time to read the letters I receive. All the same I should be anxious if I did not hear from those who like you are in close contact.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. courtesy: Pyarelal

180. LETTER TO HORACE ALEXANDER

S. S. "PILSNA",

December 21, 1931

MY DEAR HORACE,

I must not use the ordinary language to express my feelings towards you. Your silent affection and self-effacement grew on me as I watched you daily holding yourself in readiness for any service. And then the knowledge that you found time for coming so often to London though you had a cripple companion[3] who so relied on you!!!

[1] Names given by Gandhiji to the addressee and her husband Frederick Standenath, both of whom had come to the Sabarmati Ashram in 1928 to study Gandhian philosophy

[2] *ibid*

[3] Addressee's wife, Olive

Experiences such as these make life livable and enrich one's faith in God. I often feel your presence with me.

I hope you were able to publish that statement of mine. I had expected a copy at Villeneuve.

We are all enjoying ourselves as deck passengers. I have experienced no discomfort whatsoever. The sea has been quite smooth. We reach Aden tomorrow.

Love to you and yours.

BAPU

From a photostat: S. N. 23027

181. A RETROSPECT

[*December 23, 1931*][1]

Never since taking up the editorship of *Young India* have I, though not being on a sickbed or in a prison, been unable to send something for *Young India* or *Navajivan*, as I was during my stay in London.

The uninterrupted series of engagements keeping me awake till over midnight made it physically impossible for me to write anything for these journals. Fortunately, Mahadev Desai was with me and though he too was overworked, he was able to send a full weekly budget for *Young India*.

Nevertheless the reader will expect me to give my own impressions of the London visit.

Though I approached the visit in fear and trembling, I am not sorry for having gone there. It brought me in touch with the responsible Englishmen and women as also with the man in the street. This experience will be of inestimable value in future, whether we have to put up a fight again or not . It is no small matter to know with whom you are fighting or dealing.

It was a good thing that Muriel Lester, the soul of Kingsley Hall settlement, invited me to stay at her settlement and that I was able to accept the invitation. The choice lay between Kinglsey Hall and Mr. Birla's Arya Bhavan. I had no difficulty in making my choice nor had Mr. Birla. But great pressure was put upon me by Indian friends, and that naturally, to stay at Arya Bhavan. Experience

[1] The date is inferred from the entry under this date in "Diary,1931".

showed that Kingsley Hall was an ideal choice. It is situated among the poor of London and is dedicated purely to their service. Several women and some men, under the inspiration of Muriel Lester, have dedicated themselves to such service. Not a corner of the big building is used for any other purpose. There is religious service, there are entertainments, there are lectures, billiards, reading-room, etc., for the use of the poor. The inmates live a life of severe simplicity. There is no superfluous furniture to be found in all that settlement. The inmates occupy tiny rooms called cells. It was no joke to accommodate five of us in that settlement. But love makes room where there is none. Four settlers vacated their cells which were placed at our disposal. Bedding, etc., had to be borrowed. Fortunately,we had all armed ourselves with sufficient blankets and, being used to squat on the floor, most of the articles borrowed could be returned. But, there was no doubt, my presence at the settlement put a severe tax on its times, space and other resources. But the good people would not hear of my leaving it. And to me it was a privilege to receive the loving, silent and unseen services of the members and a perennial joy to come in vital contact with the poor of the East End of London. Needless to say I was able to live exactly s in India, and early morning walks through the streets of East London are a memory that can never be effaced. During these walks I had most intimate talks with those members who joined me and others whom Muriel allowed. For she was a vigilant guardian of my time whilst I was in the settlement . And she would get easily angry if she heard that my time was being abused by people when she was not by me.

During my stay in East London, I saw the best side of human nature and was able to confirm my intuitive opinion that at bottom there was neither East nor West. And as I received the smiling greetings of the East Enders, I knew that they had no malice in them and they wanted India to regain her independence. This experience has brought me closer to England if such a thing was possible. For me the fight is never with individuals, it is ever with their manners and their measures. But this intimate contact with the simple poor people of the East End, including the little children, will put me still more on my guard against any hasty action.

I may not omit my all too brief experience of Lancashire and its operatives and employers whom, to my agreeable surprise, I found to be so free from prejudice and receptive of new facts and arguments drawn from them. Here, of course, the ground was prepared for me by

Charlie Andrews. I must mention too the never-to-be-forgotten visit to Mr. C. P. Scott of the *Manchester Guardian*, the most impartial and the most honest paper in Great Britain. A great British statesman told me the *Guardian* was the sanest and the most honest journal in the world. Nor can I easily forget the communions at Canterbury, Chichester, Oxford, Cambridge and Eton. They gave me an insight into the working of the British mind which I could have got through no other means. These contacts have brought about friendships which will endure for ever. I do not omit the two detectives and their companions and the many constables who were told off to look after me. To me Sergeants Evans and Rogers, the two detectives, were no mere police officers. They became my trusty guides and friends looking after my comforts with the punctilious care of loving nurses. And it was a matter of great joy to me that they were permitted at my request to accompany me as far as Brindisi.

Last, but not least, was my pilgrimage to Romain Rolland, the sage of Villeneuve. Could I have left India just to visit him and his inseparable sister Madeleine, his interpreter and friend, I would have undertaken the voyage. But that could not be. The excuse of the Round Table Conference made this pilgrimage easily possible, and chance threw Rome in my way. And I was able to see something of that great and ancient city and Mussolini, the un-questioned dictator of Italy. And what would not I have given to be able to bow my head before the living image at the Vatican of Christ Crucified ! It was not without a wrench that I could tear myself away from that scene of living tragedy. I saw there at once that nations like individuals could only be made through the agony of the Cross and in no other way. Joy comes not out of infliction of pain on others, but out of pain voluntarily borne by oneself.

II

I am, therefore, returning home not filled with disappointment but with hope enriched. This hope is based on the fact that what I saw in England and on the Continent not only did not shake my faith in truth and non-violence, but, on the contrary, strongly confirmed it. I found, too, many more kindred spirits that I had expected.

Of the Round Table Conference there is nothing new I can report. I spoke out plainly what I thought about its composition and its achievements. One thing, however, I would like to say here. It would be wrong to think that the British Ministers are humbugs and

that they do not mean what they say. I have come away with the impression that they are honest in their professions but they are labouring under a heavy handicap. The delegates, whilst seemingly unanimous over fundamentals, betrayed amazing differences on details of fundamental importance. The minorities, question became a hopeless tangle, not wholly through the fault of the Ministers. But, after all, this was a temporary handicap. Their greatest handicap lay in their being spoonfed on one-sided and often hopelessly false statements and anti-nationalist opinions received by them from their agents in India ever since the commencement of the British Raj. For the Ministers this information is generally gospel truth. They, therefore, believe us to be incapable of handling our own Defence and Finance, they believe that the presence of British troops and British civilians is necessary for the well-being of India. Perhaps, there is no nation on earth equal to the British in the capacity for self-deception.

In confirmation of what I am writing, I would commend to the reader the speech delivered by Sir Samuel Hoare at the House of Commons at the debate on the White Paper. In spite of warnings to the contrary, each time I saw the Secretary of State for India I came away with a higher opinion of his honesty and frankness. Of all the British Ministers If found him to be the most straightforward and frank. He is also a strong man, but he is a hard man. I believe him to be capable of advising or approving of ruthless repression and of hitting the hardest. And he would honestly think that he was merciful even as a surgeon is merciful who applies the knife when he must with a steady and strong hand. This Secretary of State is a hard-working conscientious man who would slave away even though he might have a temperature. He knows his mind at a given moment. He has behind him all the British parties and the large majority known in modern British history. His speech, therefore, is the best British type. And yet it falls hopelessly short of the Congress demand and is based, as Congressmen would say, on utterly wrong data which unfortunately he believes in common with many honest British statesmen.

How can this British mentality be changed or, in other words, how can power be wrested from such unwilling hands? No argument will carry conviction to these statesmen; they are all seasoned hard-headed soldiers. They like and appreciate facts, deeds. They will understand an open rebellion and, if they cannot suppress it, they will at once admit that we are capable of defending ourselves and administering our own affairs. And I have come away with my view

confirmed that they will also understand and perhaps more quickly appreciate a non-violent rebellion. But the unfortunate fact is that they do not believe in our cooporate non-violence. And, what is more, they believe that corporate non-violence on a mass scale is impossible. No argument can remove this disbelief. Only actual experience can induce faith.

Nor do they believe that the Congress is really the party that can deliver the goods. Even General Smuts could not convince them that the Congress was such a party. How could he in the teeth of reports of the contrary from their agents in India?

Thus it appears to me that a further fiery ordeal is a necessity of the case. The British mind is not ready for anything radically more than the Prime Minister's declaration.

III

But I can come to no hasty conclusion. This is being written on 23rd December on s.s. *Pilsna* in ignorance of the situtation in India. I do not know what possibilities there still are for further negotiation. Nor do I know how far the situation in Bengal, United Provinces, Gujarat, and the South permits of peaceful negotiations. This much is clearer to me than ever before that our true battleground is not London, it is India. We have to convert not the British Minister but the British civilians in India. The strongest Secretary of State for India cannot move much beyond the advice of his local agents. India Office is a clog on the wheel of India's progress. The real power resides in the 250 District Collectors, not even in the Viceroy. These Collectors have powers nowhere enjoyed on earth even by real dictators. The latter do not have behind them the machinery of a mighty Government which the Collectors can move at will.

But thus stated the problem becomes incredibly simple. Each district has the key to the situation in its own hands. We have to work out our own salvation in India by negotiation if at all possible, by direct action if it becomes imperatively necessary. I know that I shall not light-heartedly invite the nation to the ordeal, nor shall I hesitate, if I find no way out, to advise action. I shall strain every nerve to discover a way out.

Young India, 31-12-1931

182. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL[1]

[On or after *December 23, 1931*]

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI

BARDOLI

YES NOON.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 18408

183. TELEGRAM TO REVASHANKAR JHAVERI[2]

[On or after *December 23, 1931*]

MORALITY[3]

BOMBAY

NINE INCLUDING SWISS COUPLE.[4]

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 18409

184. STATEMENT TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF AMERICA[5]

[*December 24, 1931*][6]

I have never been able to reconcile myself to the gaieties of the Christmas season. They have appeared to me to be so inconsistent with the life and teaching of Jesus.

How I wish America could lead the way by devoting the season to a real moral stock-taking and emphasizing consecration to the service of mankind for which Jesus lived and died on the Cross.

From a photostat: S.N. 18411

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram of December 23, which read: "Your arrival being Monday suggest asking silence earlier Sunday" (S.N. 18407).

[2] This message is noted along with the message to Vallabhbhai Patel; *vide* the preceding item.

[3] Telegraphic address of Revashankar Jhaveri at Mani Bhawan.

[4] Edmond Privat and his wife.

[5] This was given to James Mills

[6] From the entry under the date in "Diary, 1931"

185. TALK ON BOARD s.s. "PILSNA"[1]

December 25, 1931

I shall tell you how, to an outsider like me, the story of Christ, as told in the New Testament, has struck. My acquaintance with the Bible began nearly forty-five years ago, and that was through the New Testament. I could not then take much interest in the Old Testament, which I had certainly read, if only to fulfil a promise I had made to a friend whom I happened to meet in a hotel. But when I came to the New Testament and the Sermon on the Mount, I began to understand the Christian teaching, and the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount echoed something I had learnt in childhood nad something which seemed to be part of my being and which I felt was being acted up to in the daily life around me.

I say it seemed to be acted up to, meaning thereby that it was not necessary for my purpose that they were actually living the life. This teaching was non-retaliation, or non-resistance to evil. Of all the things I read what remained with me for ever was that Jesus came almost to give a new law—though He of course had said He had not come to give a new law, but tack something on to the Old Mosaic law. Well, He changed it so that it became a new law—not an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, but to be ready to receive two blows when one was given, and to go two miles when you were asked to go one.

I said to myself, "This is what one learns in one's childhood. Surely this is not Christianity." For, all I had then been given to understand was that to be a Christian was to have a brandy bottle in one hand and beef in the other. The Sermon on the Mount, however, falsified the impression.

As my contact with real Christians, i.e., men living in fear of God, increased, I saw that the Sermon on the Mount was the whole of Christianity for him who wanted to live a Christian life. It is that Sermon which has endeared Jesus to me.

I may say that I have never been interested in a historical Jesus. I should not care if it was proved by someone that the man called Jesus never lived, and that what was narrated in the Gospels was a figment of the writer's imagination. For the Sermon on the Mount would still be true for me.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's report: "The Jesus I Love". The talk was given at 4.30 a.m. Half a dozen persons attended.

Reading, therefore, the whole story in that light, it seems to me that Christianity has yet to be lived, unless one says that where there is boundless love and no idea of retaliation whatsoever, it is Christianity that lives. But then it surmounts all boundaries and book-teaching. Then it is something indefinable, not capable of being preached to men, not capable of being transmitted from mouth to mouth, but from heart to heart. But Christianity is not commonly understood in that way.

Somehow, in God's providence, the Bible has been preserved from destruction by the Christians, so-called. The British and Foreign Bible Society has had it translated into many languages. All that may serve a real purpose in the time to come. Two thousand years in the life of a living faith may be nothing. For though we sang, "All glory to God on high and on the earth be peace," there seems to be today neither glory to God nor peace on earth.

As long as it remains a hunger still unsatisfied, as long as Christ is not yet born, we have to look forward to Him. When real peace is established, we will not need demonstrations, but it will be echoed in our life, not only in individual life, but in corporate life. Then we shall say Christ is born. That to me is the real meaning of the verse we have sung.[1] Then we will not think of a particular day in the year as that of the birth of Christ, but as an ever-recurring event which can be enacted in every life.

And the more I think of fundamental religion, and the more I think of miraculous conceptions of so many teachers who have come down from age to age and clime to clime, the more I see that there is behind them the eternal truth that I have narrated. That needs no label or declaration. It consists in the living of life, never ceasing, ever progressing towards peace.

When, therefore, one wishes "A Happy Christmas" without the meaning behind it, it becomes nothing more than an empty formula. And unless one wishes for peace for all life, one cannot wish for peace for oneself. It is a self-evident axiom, like the axioms of Euclid, that one cannot have peace unless there is in one an intense longing for peace all round. You may certainly experience peace in the midst of strife, but that happens only when to remove strife you destroy your whole life, you crucify yourself.

[1] The proceedings had opened with the singing of a hymn celebrating Christ's Nativity: "While shepherds watched their flocks by night."

And so, as the miraculous birth is an eternal event, so is the Cross an eternal event in this stormy life. Therefore, we dare not think of birth without death on the Cross. Living Christ means a living Cross. Without it life is a living death.

Young India, 31-12-1931

186. NOTES

THE LATE IMAM SAHEB

In the death of Imam Saheb Abdul Kadir Bawazeer, I have lost an old friend and co-worker, Inida has lost a sincere worker and Islam a gem. Who does not know of Imam Saheb's courage and patriotism? Despite his weak health, he was in the forefront of the assault at Dharasana and, despite his frail constitution, he made the pilgrimage of jail. Imam Saheb was a devout Muslim; he never missed his *namaz* or *roza*. He became known as Imam Saheb because he performed the function of a religious teacher in the Transvaal. He became a fakir for the sake of his country. After serving a term of imprisonment in the Transvaal, he came to live with me in Phoenix along with his family and began to live the life of a fakir. When I returned to India, he too returned. He brought with him his Malay wife too. He lost one wife after another. Later his elder daughter Fatima died, and now Imam Saheb himself has passed away. He leaves behind his daughter Amina Begum and her husband Qureshi. Both are engaged in serving the country. Imam Saheb was one of the trustees of the Ashram: he took full interest in its affairs, he observed its rules and freely associated with everyone there. To me this is a great loss and the fact that he passed away before I reached India adds further to my grief.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-12-1931

187. TELEGRAM TO JAMES MILLS[1]

[*December 27, 1931*][2]

I NEVER APPEALED FOR FUNDS FOR ABYSSINIAN RED CROSS OR OTHERWISE IN SAME CONNECTION. I DO NOT FEEL COMPETENT TO EXPRESS OPINION ON PROBLEM OR SUGGEST MEANS REACHING PEACEFUL SOLUTION, CAN ONLY PRAY AND HOPE FOR PEACE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

188. INTERVIEW TO REUTER

S. S. "PILSNA",
December 27, 1931

As I approach the shores of India, I am weighed down with a sense of the tremendous responsibility even as I was upon approaching London. Only this time the responsibility is a thousandfold greater.

I shall therefore take no hasty step. I shall exhaust every resource at my disposal before advising India once more to go through the fire of suffering.

I am constantly praying or God's guidance. I know He will not fail me if I remain true to my creed. Thank God, my faith in truth and non-violence for the national purpose has become strengthened by my European visit, if there was any room for further strengthening. I have no other end to serve in this life.

The Hindu, 28-12-1931

[1] In reply to the addressee's telegram, which read: "In view League Council meeting Wednesday Associated Press of America would appreciate your views on Italo-Abyssinian problem and necessity and means of reaching peaceful solution. Is report reaching London correct you appealed for funds for Abyssinian Red Cross? Reply paid 300 words address Associated London James Mills."

[2] *Vide* "Diary, 1931"

189. MESSAGE TO AMERICA

[Before *December 28, 1931*]

Tell America, as the exponent of that liberty we hunger for, not to forget our sad people in her prayers.

Home Department, Political, File No. 141, pp 15-7, 1932. Courtesy: National Archives of India

190. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

S. S. "PILSNA",
[*December 28, 1931*][1]

Real disarmament cannot come unless the nations of the world cease to exploit one another.

Gandhiji added that without sanctions, the League of Nations could not keep peace among the nations, as was evident in the present Sino-Japanese conflict in Manchuria.

Q. Do you think that the application of your principle of non-violence would bring permanent peace?

A. Non-violence would be futile unless the root cause is dealt with, and the root cause in this case is the greed of nations. If there were no greed, there could be no occasion for armaments. The principle of non-violence necessitates complete abstention from exploitation in any form. Immediately the spirit of exploitation is gone, armaments will be felt as a positive unbearable burden.

Gandhiji believed that Europe had advanced materially since his last visit fifteen years ago, but he doubted whether it had made much progress spiritually.

I think, however, that there is a greater longing for peace on the part of the poeple. Deep down everywhere, I noticed intense dissatisfaction and unrest on the part of the people with things as they are. That, to my mind, is not a dangerous, but a healthy sign. Whether the Government of Europe will translate this unrest into real action in the right direction remains to be seen.

[1] According to the source, the interview was given just before Gandhiji landed in Bombay.

Q. As a result of that unrest, do you visualize during in the next score of years a gradual disappearance of monarchies for more democratic forms of Government, as evidenced by the recent change in Spain?

A. Sudden changes such as those in Spain offer no material for a reasonable forecast. By habit, too, I am not given to peeping into the future.

The Indian National leader said it was indisputable that England had failed as a first-class power, but he had faith enough in the English people to feel that they would turn their present economic distress to good account and become an example to other nations in spiritual progress.

For England's sake and for the sake of the world, I hope, England will not regain the material supremacy she enjoyed before the war, because that supremacy might be used to oppress other nations.

The Mahatma saw the British Empire disintegrating and ultimately becoming a series of separate independent units, like Canada, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand and India, but he also hoped that these units would be united voluntarily for the good of mankind.

But this opinion may be due to the wish being father to the thought.

Gandhiji said that the strongest impression he carried away from Europe is that Europe cannot for any length of time sustain the artificial life its peoples are living today, because that life, he asserted, is too materialistic and too complicated.

There must be a return to simplicity and proper proportions. The flesh has taken precedence over the spirit. The machine age is ruining Western civilization. Over-production and lack of means of proper distribution may finally spell the doom of capitalistic society. The only solution I see is a return to hand industry and the emancipation of the individual from factory slavery.

Q. Would you recommend great industrial countries like England and the United States to adopt the spinning-wheel?

A. I think it would be an eventful day in the life of those countries if they adopted the spinning-wheel.

Q. Is the world growing better or worse?

A. So long as I believe in a benevolent God, I must believe that the world is getting better even though I see evidence to the contrary.

The Hindu, 1-1-1932

191. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

December 28, 1931

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

Indu gave me your letter. Somehow or other your arrest did not come upon me as a surprise. I have not yet been able to go to Kamala. I may tonight or tomorrow for certain. You will be glad to know that I have read your second series of letters to Indus, I had some suggestions to make, but of that, when perhaps we have come to our own.

Meanwhile love to you and Sherwani.

A Bunch of Old Letters, p. 104

192. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

BOMBAY,
December 28, 1931

In a brief conversation with pressmen, Gandhiji stated that he had closely studied the Premier's statement and the India debate. He would deal with that subject at the public meeting tonight. One thought of the Government's latest action in arresting Pandit Jawaharlal and Mr. Sherwani and Abdul Ghaffar Khan as a challenge to the Congress, but it was for the Congress President to state that those Government activities amounted to a breach of the Delhi Pact.

Questioned about his attitude towards the Subcommittees set up by His Majesty's Government to carry on the Conference work, Gandhiji said that it was too early to state his attitude. All the material was not before him. It was for the Government to consider how the Committees could work if the atmosphere was uncongenial.

Gandhiji considered the Round Table Conference a debating society. It was not representative in the sense it was claimed to be. It was not a 'Round Table' in the right sense.

Asked whether he was convinced now that the signing of the truce was a great blunder, he said, "No", and added that it was an act of statesmanship. He agreed that the recent developments in Bengal, U.P. and the Frontier were a challenge to the Congress, but the reserved action till the decision of the Congress Working Committee. He added the Round Table Conference was a debating society. Asked if he believed that the Delhi Pact was dead he said it was for the Congress President to say.

The Hindu, 28-12-1931, and *The Hindustan Times,* 30-12-1931

193. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[1]

BOMBAY,
December 28, 1931

Mahatma Gandhi denied the rumour that he was seeking an interview with the Viceroy and discussing with him the situation in the country.

The Mahatma pleaded that he had had no time to study the recent developments in the country and what he had heard from his colleagues till then was only 'titbits'. He, therefore, declined to pass any opinion on the subject. But when asked if, when the Ordinances were in force in the country, it would not be difficult for the Committees of the Round Table Conference to function in India, he vouchsafed the remark:

Well, it is very difficult. But it is for the Government to consider how the Committees shall work and function.

A pressman asked Gandhiji if he did not see a gloomy future for India if she had to go through another fight to which Gandhiji replied promptly:

Even if India has got to go through another fiery ordeal, I would not consider that a gloomy prospect in any sense of the term.

SIR PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI: But you will try your utmost to prevent another fiery ordeal?

GANDHIJI: I will strain every nerve to avoid a fiery ordeal naturally enough. But if it bccomes unavoidable, it is unbecoming of a warrior to draw a long face when death is in front of him. To me it may be imprisonment or a lathi charge.

A VOICE: Or deportation.

GANDHIJI: To me imprisonment and deportation are convertible terms. They make no difference.

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI: There may be a difference in climate.

GANDHIJI: Climatic difference I do not mind. (Laughter)

Gandhiji informed the Pressmen that he had given the most careful consideration to the statement of the Premier and had crossed its I's and dotted its I's. But he deferred the statement on it till the Azad Maidan meeting.

To a pressman who doubted the wisdom of the Congress in declaring Truce,

[1] The interview took place at Mani Bhawan. Vallabhbhai Patel, Subhas Chandra Bose and Prabhashankar Pattani were present.

Mahatma Gandhi retorted: It was an act of statesmanship to have signed the Delhi Truce.

The pressman argued that the Government taking cover under the white flag had flung thousands of the youths of the country into the prisons. This evoked the reply from the Mahatma:

More young men today are out than in the jail. I am unable to subscribe to your formula.

Several questions that followed were ruled out by Gandhiji on the ground that the Congress President in his official capacity was the proper man to answer them:

My opinion does not count. It is the opinion of an individual.

SOMEBODY: But the President has been asking the country all these days to wait for you. It shows that your opinion is final.

GANDHIJI: It may be final with the President.

Q. Why don't you go to Bengal. Don't you think it is advisable to go there?

GANDHIJI: It may be quite advisable. But I am a representative and not a free-lance like you. (Laughter) My wishes should be dominated in this instance by Bengal. Subhas Babu is here to advise me on the subject. But you have not yet given him a chance to address me.

Asked if Mr. M. R. Jayakar was right in his surmise, uttered at a recent meeting in Bombay that it would have been better if Gandhiji had accepted the offer of Lord Irwin to take 14 other Congress representatives with him to London, Gandhiji said:

I am convinced after having had this experience that it was a wise decision that the Congress could have come to in sending me alone.

It would have been a first-calls tragedy, if 14 or 15 good servants of the nation had been sent out instead of keeping them here. In other respects also it was a good thing to have sent only one delegate. When the mandate was so absolutely clear, there was no occasion for sending more than one agent unless, of course, the Congress had distrusted its agent. They did the wisest thing in sending one man and, at that, such a wise man like me. (Laughter)

Another reporter requested the Mahatma to give his impression about the R.T.C. "in a nutshell".

GANDHIJI: My experience of the R.T.C. is that it was a debating

society, and certainly not representative in the sense in which it has been claimed to be. Therefore, it was not in the right sense of the term a Round Table Conference.

Q. Is that all?

GANDHIJI: But you wanted my impressions in a nutshell. (Laughter)

Q. Why are the untouchables so angry with you?

GANDHIJI: I don't know that they are angry with me. I deny that they are angry with me.

Q. What is your attitude towards the untouchables and Depressed Classes?

GANDHIJI: My attitude is that they are bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh. I would love to die so that they may live, and live with perfect dignity and self-respect. My attitude is that I myself belong to the Depressed Classes.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-12-1931

194. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

December 28, 1931

Cheering lasted for several minutes, when Mahatmaji began to address the meeting. He thanked the citizens of Bombay for the welcome they accorded him in the morning. But he took it as a token of their confidence in the Congress and not as a personal honour.

Last night I was expecting that I would be able to speak before you something different that what I propose to do now. But evidently God has willed otherwise. I did not know till I landed this morning that there had been firing in Peshawar, nor did I know that Pandit Jawaharlal and Sjt. Sherwani were jailed or were to be prosecuted. I take these as Christmas presents to me from Lord Willingdon. It was natural that he should have made presents to me on my return home. In the Frontier Province Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, his brother and several others have been arrested and we do not know how many more will be jailed. We may not even get the news from that province. What better presents can there be for a satyagrahi than these?

[1] Held at Azad Maidan within a few hours of Gandhiji's arrival, the meeting, according to the soruce, was the biggest that any public speaker in Bombay had ever dreamt of. Before Gandhiji spoke, Vallabhbhai Patel in a speech welcomed Gandhiji home.

If we had committed any offence and were punished for that, there would have been occasion for us to regret it. But I am as certain as there is life in me that Khan Abdul Ghaffar is a true believer in the cult of satyagraha and he has understood its meaning. I need say nothing about Pandit Jawaharlal and Sjt. Sherwani. You know them as much as I do.

The question now before us is: What is our duty? Shall we take the hint from the action of the Government and launch a campaign of satyagraha or shall we try some other means? I cannot give you my opinion just at present.

I will only say that, if fate wills that we should go through the ordeal again, and if the Congress Working Committee decides on the renewal of the fight, I shall not hesitate to ask you to join it. But if there is any possibility of avoiding satyagraha, I shall do my utmost to prevent it and advise you to have patience. I think after years of experience India has learnt to hold herself in patience.

I was grieved to learn on board the steamer that in Bengal, two of our young girls are said to have committed a murder. It pained me as a satyagrahi, because our creed is to be ready to die and not to kill. Our fight is based on love. Even if we fight the Government, it is with the weapon of love and there can be no room for hatred in it. When I heard of that incident, I was sorry but that does not mean that there is the least justification for what the Government has been doing in Bengal. A Government has every right to punish the wrong-doers, but it does not behove a Government to victimize people for acts for which they are not responsible. There can be no justification for the Ordinances promulgated in the U.P. or the North-West Frontier Province. We cannot tolerate any of them.

I had hoped that it would be possible to find a way to co-operate with the Government. I wll even now do my best to find the way out. But I must admit the signs that I have noticed have considerably weakened my hopes. And if ever we have to fight, we should be prepared to do our utmost. Ours is a fight in which one and all can join. It is a fight to court sufferings. It is a struggle to give life and not to take life. In this struggle even children can play a part.

Last year we faced lathis, but this time we must be prepared to face bullets. I do not wish that the Pathans in the Frontier alone should court bullets. If bullets are to be faced, Bombay and Gujarat also must take their share. I had said in London that, if we had to offer even a

million lives for achieving freedom, I would be prepared for sacrifice without the least compunction. I believe that we must get rid of the fear of death, and when we have to court death we must embrace it as we embrace a friend. But in spite of our readiness to offer our lives, me must see to it that not even a hair of an Englishman is hurt. We must hope that by our sacrifice we shall be able to bring about a change of heart in the same Englishman who strikes us.

By my visit to Europe, my faith in non-violence has immensely increased. I believe that non-violence has the power to melt the stoniest heart. Some people thought that during my visit to Europe I would learn something new, but I honestly say that I learnt nothing new except that my faith in non-violence increased.

Another experience that I got during my visit to London was that the British Cabinet believes—and there is no reason to doubt its sincerity—that we are not fit for self-government. They believe that although the Congressmen speak of non-violence , they do not honestly believe in it. The reason is that in the reports they get from their officials in India, it is represented that Indians are unfit for self-government, and that Congress has no control over the masses. That is why they have been declaring Congress organizations unlawful. Our duty is not to find fault with the Englishmen nor to be angry with them, but to get rid of our shortcomings and to act up to the creed of non-violence.

Maybe that many of you have accepted it as a policy, but so long as the Congress has adopted that creed, we must stick fast to it. By our actions we must prove beyond doubt that we, Congressmen, exist not to harm anyone, but to protect others at the cost of our own lives. Congress stands to achieve freedom by sacrificing lives. Those who do not subscribe to that view had better leave the Congress. If we did that, we shall enhance the influence and reputation that we have earned, and if we lose it, we will not be able to attain freedom.

If we have not so far been able to attain swaraj, it does not mean that we should give up the attempt. India has not only to attain her freedom but also to give the message of peace and non-violence to the world. Even if years are required to achieve that object, it should not dishearten us.

I hear people saying that if Congress gave up satyagraha, it would be able to deal with the Government. I must make it clear that Congress and satyagraha are inseparable. In satyagraha lies the power

of the Congress, and the Government will have ultimately to come to terms with the Congress. I made this clear in London and I repeat it today before you and the whole world. The Congress does not belong to the Hindus alone. It stands equally for Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians, Jews and, in fact, all those who have made India their home. Congress stands for those Englishmen also who have made India their home. I made the claim in London on behalf of the Congress that it stands for the whole of India and I repeat it here. Its influence is bound to increase.

We could not solve the communal problem in London. I knew that it could never be solved there. It can be solved by the Congress and it is doing all that it can to solve it. The remedy is to serve all classes and communities. If the Congress serves the Sikhs and Muslims, they are sure to claim the Congress as their own.

One word about the untouchables. I claim myself to be one of them. I have served them for my whole life. I started their service even before I took up Congress work. How can I then do anything that will harm them? The untouchables have been so much oppressed by the caste Hindus that we can find no parallel to it in angry other religion. Therefore, if they get angry and do harm to ten or twenty Hindus, it should not give us cause to retaliate. I am not prepared for any concession like reservation of seats, etc., to the untouchables, because I believe that it would be perpetuating untouchability. Let the future legislatures of free India be filled with untouchables alonge, but let them come in as equals. Unless we raise them to our level, our freedom will be futile. So long as a person, whether man or woman, touchable or untouchable, rich or poor, is oppressed and does not enjoy equal rights with other citizens of the country, we cannot enjoy freedom. It will be slavery in the garb of freedom. What I did in London was only to safeguard their rights.

I had a mind to speak on many things. I had to place before you an account of what I did in London in connection with the R.T.C. If I am left free, I may do it on some other occasion or you may know it through other means.

What I have to tell you now is that, if there is to be a fight, be prepared for every sacrifice, but take a pledge that you will not do harm to others. I will do all that lies within the power of a human being to prevent another fiery ordeal, but if I find that there is no other way out, I will not hesitate to call upon you to go through it, whatever the magnitude of sufferings may be. May God give us the strength to suffer and sacrifice in the cause of freedom.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-12-1931

195. SPEECH AT WELFARE O INDIA LEAGUE, BOMBAY[1]

December 28, 1931

When I received the cable from Mr. David just before I left England inviting me to attend this meeting. I felt it was impossible for me to avoid this invitation. And so I cabled him in reply asking to arrange the time with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, because naturally he has to his disposal all the time at my disposal. It is a great pleasure to me to be able to address you this evening.

My intention when I accepted this invitation was to speak to you this evening on what I saw in England. But, on landing in India, all my plans have been upset by the startling news that I have heard about the situation here. I wished to speak to you and to the Congress about the many things I have seen in England and in Europe. They have got their dark side as also the bright side of the picture. There were things I saw from which I had every reason for hope. But there were also things which help out no hopes at all. I would gladly have spoken to you what I saw in England and in Europe. But now with the situation before me as it is, I shall have to speak to you largely about the events that face me and face you as those who want to promote the welfare of this country.

But I want to assure you that, wherever I went in London, in England or in Europe, I was surrounded with the greatest amount of affection and I felt that there was no truth in Kipling's saying that the East and West would never meet. I am not conscious of a single experience throughout my three months' stay in England and Europe that has made me feel that, after all, East is East, West is West. On the contrary, I have been convinced more than ever that human nature is much the same, no matter in what clime it flourishes, that if you approached people with trust and affection, you would have tenfold and thousandfold affection returned to you.

Though I cannot say I have achieved anything from the R.T.C. in terms of the Congress demand, I do not consider my visit to

[1] The meeting, held at Majestic Hotel at 10 p.m., was presided over by Sir Stanley Reed. Among those present were Prabhashankar Pattani, Pheroze Sethna, Nassarvanji Choksy, Vallabhbhai Patel and some members of the Congress Working Committee.

England has been useless. On the contrary, I feel that it was a good thing that I was able to go through this experience, which has further enabled me to put to test the efficiency of the methods that I have been employing for the last 30 years in connection with public questions. But I must close this part of my speech about my experiences, because instead of finding an echo of this experience in India, I find myself face to face with grim facts.

Whilst I could not say that the Round Table Conference or the Prime Minister's declaration has offered anything that would positively satisfy the Congress, I could say that there was an honest effort on the part of the British Ministers to understand the Indian situation, although they could not appreciate the Indian viewpoint as I conceive it. Instead of finding an atmosphere responsive to the expectations raised by the Prime Minister's declarations, supported by the speech of the Secretary of State for India, I find that there is absolutely no atmosphere to answer the granting of limited responsibility to India, as had been defined in the speech of the Secretary of State for India.

I am here to testify that of all the Ministers I had the privilege of meeting I found the Secretary of State for India to be an honest and frank-hearted Englishman. I had no difficulty in understanding what was at the back of his mind and every interview with him brought me nearer to him and we parted as the best of friends, as I did with all the other Ministers.

But when I come here , I find a different order of things altogether. Here is the Frontier trouble. Side by side with the declaration that the Frontier Province is about to be placed on the same footing as the other provinces, you find in that Province today an Ordinance for which I cannot find any parallel whatsoever. If you have not studied it thoroughly, I commend it to you. I have not myself studied it carefully. I have gone through the brief Press reports that are available. But I cannot tell myself that this is a human piece of legislation, if at all it can be called legislation.

This Ordinance gives no protection for life or property . The ostensible aim of this Ordinance is to put down the activities of the brave people of the Frontier with a heavy hand. I know Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his band of Khudai Khidmatgars. But I do not know of anything that has been done by these Red Shirts—the Khudai Khidmatgars—which means the servants of God . I know of the

greatness of Abdul Ghaffar Khan. He is a brave Pathan. He is a simple-hearted, sincere and honest man and he walks in the fear of God. Even some of the officials in the North- West Frontier have testified to his honesty. But now he has been deported with a band of his men.

And what is his crime ? His crime is that he wanted independence for his Province and for India, his crime is that he did not attend the Durbar that was held recently to consider the ways and means to give a new form of government to that Province. Beyond that he had done nothing, neither have any of those thousands of followers of his done anything. Was it their crime that they were wearing red shirts ? And on top of this we have received reports that they have been shot down for defying the Ordinance. Civil disobedience should be punished because that is the essence of civil disobedience. A civil resister courts suffering and punishment . But I have not seen or heard anywhere that the penalty for defying law, apart from violence done by the civil resisters, is to meet them with bullets. We have already reports that 14 people have been killed when the troops opened fire on a crowd of Red Shirts and spectators. We have no report of the casualties when the troops fired on a second occasion on a body of 2,000 Red Shirts. The casualties must be severer. More is perhaps to follow.

This is certainly an exceedingly unhappy augury for changing the Frontier Province into an autonomous province. It is a bad augury that one of its bravest men should have been deported at this time and several men killed because they have shown themselves to be brave in defying an Ordinance which is only legalized martial law.

Now I come to the United Provinces. And what do I find there ? Here Jawaharlal Nehru and Mr. Sherwani have been arrested. And what did they do ? Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru wanted to attend a conference that was to be held. But, instead of attending it, what he did was to postpone it to a later date because of some conditions that have been imposed by the Government which he thought were not consistent with self-respect. He postponed it pending the decisions of the Congress Working Committee which is meeting here tomorrow. He wanted to ascertain what step should be taken after consultation with me and the Working Committee members in the light of my experience at the Round Table Conference. But the Government served an order on

him that he should not leave the limits of the Allahabad Municipality without taking permission from the Government authorities. He wrote a letter to the Magistrate intimating his intention to proceed to Bombay to receive me. But he and Mr. Sherwani have been arrested.

But the arrests do not worry me at all. But it is the Ordinance that is now in existence in the U.P. which troubles me very much. It is almost of the same type as the Frontier Ordinance. There are enough Ordinances to the credit of Lord Irwin. But there are already thirteen Ordinances to Lord Willingdon's credit. These thirteen Ordinances outdo all Lord Irwin's Ordinances by their severity.

Now I pass on to Bengal. I might be told in Bengal you cannot possibly complain about the Ordinance because crime has been committed there. Some Bengali youths have run amuck and committed assassination. I have always been shocked by murderous violence. But I am more pained now that I hear that even girls have taken to these deeds of terrorism. But, because a few persons ran amuck, how can the whole Province be emasculated ? The effect of it will be to wean away even the sympathizers of the Government as an Ordinance such as prevails there interferes with the everyday life of the people of that Province. I have discussed this Ordinance with many public men in England and there was nothing but condemnation for the same.

This, in brief, is the picture of the situation I find myself face to face with. There does not appear to be any choice for me.

But at the same time I have pledged myself to so many British friends that I would try my level best, in spite of the disappointment at the Round Table Conference so far as the Congress demand is concerned, to continue co-operation with the Government. But, from what I have seen since I landed, I must confess to you that I see very little hope for tendering any co-operation unless I lose all my sense of self-respect.

I would be doing the greatest injustice to myself and to the nation if I advised co-operation now unless I could see some light dawn on the horizon which just now seems to be in impenetrable darkness.

I do not know how you, the members of the Welfare of India League, view these Ordinances. But I assure you that I shall strain every nerve to see, If I could not tender co-operation on honourable lines, to induce Government to withdraw or revise these Ordinances.

The Congress is charged with trying to run a parallel Government by the Governor of the United Provinces. I do not see what is wrong in running parallel Governments, so long as they are run on non-violent lines and in the interest of the people. What is wrong in a private organization of individuals running hospitals ? What even if they run, side by side with Government law courts , arbitration courts where justice could be had at less cost to the people.

The Government should welcome such enterprises and give every encouragement to them. If the Congress is running a peasant organization, as it is running today, for the relief and the welfare of the peasants, what is wrong in that ? I would welcome it if I were the Governor.

The Congress does intend to displace this Government at some time . If the Congress is not able to take charge of the Governmment, then there is no hope of swaraj coming. The question was put to the Congress : "Are you ready to take over the Defence of the country ? Are you ready to take over the Finance of the country and also take over the obligations of the country ?"

I replied : "It is ready. The Congress is undoubtedly ready to take over charge of Defence of Finance and also of the obligations you might consider India is liable for. But only in a truly businesslike way they should get all the obligations examined by an impartial examiner. Unless the Congress tries its hand at these matters, how can it learn and thrive ?"

So what is there disloyal or seditious in organizations trying to run parallel Governments, based on the goodwill of the poeple whom the organization claims to serve.

It was the very foundation of the Congress to be able one day to replace the present Government. It has been laid down by such eminent persons like Dadabhai Naoroji and many other Englishmen and Indians. So after its life of more than half a century, if it is not able to run a parallel Government, I would say we should all be ashamed of it.

The Congress has done nothing immoral nothing ungentlemanly. It is not a secret organization. It always spreads out its cards on the table. And if still the Government should mistrust it as they seem to, then all I can say is that we will have to make our power felt or allow ourselves to perish in doing so.

I would request you, members of the Welfare of India League, to direct me in this matter. I have placed before you, so to say,

my puzzle. If the Congress is not trusted, how can it give cooperation? The welfare of India is a common interest between you and me and the Congress. The Congress does not live for anything else than the welfare of India and I have myself no other aim in living this life. It may be that I and the Congress are going the wrong way about it. I am open to correction and conviction. So I would request you all to study the situation in the light of my speech and shall be glad to answer any questions that you may put to me based on my speech for better understanding and for my own guidance.

Q. Will you co-operate with the working of the various R.T.C. Committees, which would commence work in India soon if all the Ordinances are withdrawn ?

A. I have already explained that the Ordinances block the way. Firstly, the Ordinances must go. Secondly, the Congress must be satisfied that its goal can be reached through co-operation with the Committees. I can hold out no hope of the Congress reducing its demands. But if the Congress is satisfied that the door is open for argument and negotiation in regard to its demands, I would advise the Congress to tender its co-operation in the work of the Committees.

Q. Before condemning these Ordinances as you have done,why don't you please proceed to the Provinces where these Ordinances are in force and study the conditions there personally and see if they are not justified?

A. I would be most glad to do so if the Government permitt- ed me to do so. I hsve tried several times to go to the Frontier Province. But on all these occasions the Government have stood in the way, at least the Government have not shown any encouragement for this move of co-operation. I am divulging no official secret to you when I say that when the Delhi Pact was signed, Ghaffar Khan was on the brain of the Executive I requested Lord Irwin to allow me to go to the Frontier. But Lord Irwin, after consultation with the Commissioner of the Frontier, came to the conclusion that it was a dangerous thing to send me there. (Laughter) I was told that I would create ferment there and whatever I might say would be misinterpreted to the tribesmen. (Laughter) I tried another time in Simla with Lord Willingdon with no better success. I could have proceeded without taking permission, but I did not want to emba rass the Government. If the Government would permit me to proceed to the Frontier tomorrow, I shall rush to that place. So, if those of you here who have got the ear of the Government can procure for me this permission, I shall directly start for the Frontier, I would love to go there tomorrow itself.

Q. Will you not agree to go to the Frontier and Bengal on Government's terms?

A. No, I cannot, If Government will allow me to serve them, it must be on my own terms. I cannot go to the brave Abdul Ghaffar Khan and tell him that it is wrong to long for independence for the Frontier or for India. If you want a bird to fly, you must not clip its wings and then say: you can fly now. That is what the Government want to do. They clip my wings and then want me to fly. The Government must let me grow in strength, if they will let me serve them.

I can really make things easy. The Government knows that Abdul Ghaffar Khan would pay heed to my words. I have lived with the Pathans and moved with them. I have also been assaulted by them and that has ever been a link between they and me. (Laughter) So long as he (Ghaffar Khan) is satisfied that I have not betrayed the cause, he would certainly abide by my advice. It was on my advice that he went and saw the Commissioner some time ago. But the Government will not accept my services.

I also intend to visit Bengal. The situation is different in regard to Bengal. I need not ask for permission to go to Bengal. But once I go to Bengal, I will write to the Government and place my co-operation at their service as I will at the service of the people of Bengal. It will be for the Government to accept my service or not. But I will not go to Chittagong or Hijli without asking the Bengal Government if I may do so without embarrassment to them. I can go to the Frontier. I can go to Chittagong and to Hijli, whether the Government will it or not. I can practise civil disobedience if the authorities issue prohibitory orders. But I will not go to the Frontier, Chittagong or Hijli, at the cost of practising civil disobedience. If I do so, I will be embarrassing the Government greatly which is what I do not want to do. If I decide to offer civil disobedience, I shall choose, as a satyagrahi, a ground that offers to the Government the minimum embarrassment and puts the Government in the wrong.

Q. If you are satisfied that there is a seditious organization existing in Bengal, would you ask for the repeal of the Ordinances?

A. The word 'sedition' is a very elastic term. But I understand the spirit of the question. If these organizaitons are trying to subvert law and oder and trying to usurp the powers of the Government, it is certainly the duty of the Government to deal with

such activities. But all the difference lies in the method of dealing with the same. The same question was put to me in England; "How would you deal with terrorism if the Congress were running the Government" I then replied: "Give me the power and I shall show that." I would deal with an organizaiton of that character in the most sympathetic manner. There is the ordinary law which could alone deal with any kind of crime. Then why have recourse to Ordinances, which only help to estrange the feelings of the people on whom it operates. I yield to none in my condemnation of crimes, but these Ordinances instead of weaning away people from terrorism only accentuate it.

No society would tolerate the taking of innocent lives as was done by the Bengal youths. But why punish 50,000 for the crime of five? If I were the Secretary of State or the Governor-General, I would ask the Bengal Governor to resign his place when he asked for the promulgation of an Ordinance. But I would not rest there. I would dive into the root cause of this discontent and try to cure that first.

The Governor should invite the prominent leaders into his secret chamber and take them into his confidence and discuss the question thread bare and find out the means to check and stop such crime.

Mutual trust is what he wants. The Archbishop of Canterbury told me that he had understood what was at the back of the Indian problem and he had understood it well when he said that it is mutual trust we want.

Bengal has its grievances. The Bengal youths are courageous, emotional and patriotic and so speeches like those delivered in the House of Commons decrying the bravery of Bengal drive them to extremes. As I said before, I yield to none, not even Englishmen, in my condemnation of crime. But it should be dealt within the ordinary course of law.

The Congress creed of non-violence has done a great deal to check terrorism. But the methods of General Dyer would not do. I have no enmity or irritation against General Dyer. I know he was an honest man who believed in what he was doing and who justified his actions in India.

But the Dyer method is wrong. English lives in India must not be saved by Dyer methods.

The atmosphere created by the Ordinances is certainly not conducive to hammering out a Constitution for the country as it is

proposed to do. If you think young India will look at any Constitution evolved in the atmosphere of the Ordinances, it is a forlorn hope.

It is no use saying that Indian loyalists say 'yes' to Government in support of these methods. I tell you even these loyalists when they say 'yes' to the Government, they say at the back of their minds 'no'. As one who is of the people, who lives amongst them, who lives for them, I claim to know the reaction of the Indian mind to these Ordinances better than the Governor-General who issues these Ordinances living in Simla or Delhi, better than all his advisers put together.

Q. Would you not try to stamp out the terrorist movement to the exclusion of all your other activities?

A. The Congress campaign of non-violence, I firmly believe, has done a great deal to check terrorism. I am speaking with evidence. I know of any number of cases in which the Congress message has won to the cause of non-violence ex-revolutionaries. Today, I can vouch for their non-violence as I can vouch for my own. These patriotic young men are engaged in constructive work.

Q. If you were in power, would you allow another organization to run a parallel Government and usurp your place?

A. When I said that I did not see any harm in organizations running parallel Governments, I did not mean usurpation. My friend has put a word into my mouth which I never used. If these organizations run a parallel Government for the good of the people, I would certainly give them all encouragement. See what Dictator Mussolini is doing in Italy. He never interferes with voluntary activities for the betterment of the country.

I am dying for co-operation and shall not rest till I have explored all avenues. I appeal to you, Englishmen and women, to ponder over the facts I have placed before you tonight and do your bit for creating an atmosphere of love and peace in this country.

The Hindu, 31-12-1931

196. TELEGRAM TO VICEROY[1]

December 29, 1931

I WAS UNPREPARED ON LANDING YESTERDAY TO FIND FRONTIER AND U.P. ORDINANCES SHOOTINGS IN FRONTIER AND ARRESTS OF VALUED COMRADES IN BOTH ON TOP OF THE BENGAL ORDINANCE AWAITING ME. I DO NOT KNOW WHETHER I AM TO REGARD THESE AS INDICATION THAT FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN US ARE CLOSED OR WHETHER YOU EXPECT ME STILL TO SEE YOU AND RECEIVE GUIDANCE FROM YOU AS TO THE COURSE I AM TO PURSUE IN ADVISING THE CONGRESS. I WOULD ESTEEM A WIRE IN REPLY.1

India in 1931-32

197. LETTER TO SIR FAZLE HUSIAN

AS AT SABARMATI,
December 29, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I found your letter awaiting me on my landing. What I meant was that as against our not pressing for further rights and giving favoured treatment to South Africa in respect of trade, it was possible to get the Union Government to recognize the legitimacy of or legalize the existing trading businesses in the Transvaal with the right to transfer or sell such businesses.[2] The result of this would be that we

[1] For the Viceroy's reply dated December 31, *vide* "Telegram fro Private Secretary to Viceroy", 31-12-1931

[2] The position of Indians in South Africa was regulated by the Cape Town Agreement of 1927 which fell due for re-examination in 1932. But in 1931, an ordinance called the Licences (Control) Ordinance was passed by the Transvaal Provincial Council which repealed the existing General Dealers (Control) Ordinance, 1926, and gave the Transvaal municipalities complete control over the issue of Trading Licences to Indian without specifying the grounds on which the licence could be refused. This greatly perturbed the Indian community. Accordingly, the Government of India sent a delegation to South Africa, led by the addressee who was a member of the Governor-General's Executive Council, to settle the various issues.

would have to waive the right to further facilities. If this can be done, the Union Government will be able to tell the public that there will be no further addition to the existing businesses if there was also no diminution in their number. It is likely that if our people can be satisfied with such a guarantee the Union Government may protect existing businesses.

I hope that you will return to India hale and hearty and with an honourable settlement of the very difficult question.

Yours sincerely,

SIR FAZLE HUSAIN
INDIAN DELEGATIONS
CAPETOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

198. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING,BOMBAY[1]

December 31,1931

During one or two days more of freedom that I have left, let us say our prayers in peace.

The Hindustan Times, 3-1-1932

The Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Bill which was later passed into an Act, safeguarded Indian's rights to a greater extent than was expected.

This letter is in reply to the addressee's letter dated December 16, 1931, in which he had written, "I understood you then to say that the Union Govt. would not only protect interests which have already grown up and are not safeguarded by the existing law, but will also be willing, if pressed, to provide for a certain amount of expansion. I shall be grateful if you will kindly develop this idea in a letter which might be posted to me to Cape Town by the mail of the 30th."

[1] The meeting was held in the evening in the public garden near Gandhiji's camp. Gandhiji spoke in Gujarati. Earlier the Working Committee had considered the Viceroy's telegram which was received at 4 p.m.

199. DIARY, 1931

LONDON, OCTOBER 14, WEDNESDAY

Spun 180 rounds. Discussion about the army with persons called together by Sir Samuel Hoare; talk with Benthall, talk with Jinnah.

LONDON, OCTOBER 15, THURSDAY

Spun 176 rounds. Talk with Sir Samuel Hoare; with Sapru, Jayakar and others, also students' function. Talk with Latifi.

LONDON, OCTOBER 16, FRIDAY

Spun 162 rounds. The Conference, Press lunch, Mussalmans, India Office, Prohibition meeting, Nawab Saheb. Now it is 1 o'clock.

BIRMINGHAM, OCTOBER 17, SATURDAY

Spun 127 rounds. Speech for gramophone recording;[1] Madgaonkar; reprimanded Maud for renting house;[2] visit to Nottingham, Birmingham in the evening; Andrews arrived; Devdas returned to Knightsbridge.

BIRMINGHAM, OCTOBER 18, SUNDAY

Spun 129 rounds. Bishop Barnes; the Steiner school; Dr. Parghi , meeting of members of Ashram.[3]

LONDON, OCTOBER 19, MONDAY

Spun 178 rounds. Left Birmingham in the morning. Shuaib met me three or four times. Sardar Ujjal Singh, talk with Indian Princes.

LONDON, OCTOBER 20 , TUESDAY

Spun 176 rounds. Upton Close called; Archbishop of Canterbury, Samuel Hoare, Elmhurst; meeting at Chatham House.

LONDON, OCTOBER 21, WEDNESDAY

Spun 160 rounds. Lord Irwin, meeting of missionaries; the Rani of Cooch-Behar.

[1] The reference is to the recording of a portion of an article : "God Is", published in *Young India,* 11-10-1928; *vide* "God Is"

[2] *Vide* "Letter to H.S.L.Polak", 2-12-1931

[3] Presumably, the Woodbrooke Settlement ; *vide* footnote 1, "Speech at Birmingham Meeting", 18-10-1931

LONDON, OCTOBER 22, THURSDAY

Spun 153 rounds. Talk with Sir Mirza at the Bikaner get-together; met Sapru and others at Malaviyaji's. Reached Kingsley Hall today at 8.45 p.m.

ETON , OCTOBER 23, FRIDAY

Spun 221 rounds. Spoke in Federal Structure Committee on Federal Court; visited Agricultural Exhibition in the evening. Then had a talk with Sapru and others. Went to Eton at night. Spoke to youths there.

OXFORD, OCTOBER 24, SATURDAY

Spun 162 rounds. Left Eton in the morning; arrived at Oxford. On the way called at the house of Col. Maddock. Then lunched at the residence of Mira's uncle. Spent two hours with the Fellows at Oxford. Later at night in the Indian Majlis. Lala Dunichand's son called.

OXFORD, OCTOBER 25, SUNDAY

Spun 199 rounds. In the morning at Thompsons' met Prof. Murray, Sadler and others. Then met Sir Henry Lawrence, Mrs. Elwin, the Ruskin Society, then discussion with Oxford dons; at night with the Rhode scholars.

LONDON, OCTOBER 26, MONDAY

Spun 162 rounds. Reached London at 10.15. Met Sapru and others. The Committee. Called on Nawab Saheb at night. It is now 12.30 a.m.

LONDON, OCTOBER 27, TUESDAY

Spun 165 rounds. Mrs. Sheridan had slept here. Talked with Menon at night at Polak's.

LONDON, OCTOBER 28, WEDNESDAY

Spun 181 rounds. Met Madame M....[1], Madame Montessori. Mira's illness.

LONDON, OCTOBER 29, THURSDAY

Spun 215 rounds. Could not rise today at 3 o'clock. Was late by an hour. Many persons called. Felt mentally agitated. Talked with Dutta. Met Sapru and others at Malviyaji's. Met Strakosch and Sir

[1] The correct spelling of the name cannot be ascertained; probably a relation of Madame Montessory.

Basil Blackett in the evening . At night met Baba and other youths.

LONDON, OCTOBER 30, FRIDAY

Spun 182 rounds. Vegetarian lunch, meeting with Layton. The Commonwealth of India League.

CAMBRIDGE, OCTOBER 31, SATURDAY

Spun 162 rounds. Met Quaker friends. Met Sardar Ujjal Singh at Cambridge at 5 o'clock.

CAMBRIDGE, NOVEMBER 1, SUNDAY

Spun 192 rounds. Visited Pemberton College in the morning. Present at the meeting held there were Lowes Dickinson, Evelyn Wrench and others. The discussion lasted three hours. Then made a few visits. Saw Andrews's old room, visited King's Chapel. In the evening Nicholson called. At night meeting of the Indian Majlis. Commenced silence at 9.38 p.m.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 2, MONDAY

Spun 186 rounds. Reached London from Cambridge at 10.30. The Committee continued its sitting. Then went to Malaviyaji's. Then Jivraj, Bomanji and others came. Shah came at Bow.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 3, TUESDAY

Spun 161 rounds. MacDonald, Ali Imam; Irwin's portrait; to Malaviyaji's; children's gathering, Baldwin, Hoare, international students, Bomanji.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 4, WEDNESDAY

Spun 173 rounds. The Conference; Sir Daniel Hamilton; to Malaviyaji's, doctor's Turkish general.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 5, THURSDAY

Spun 220 rounds. The Emperor's party; met the members of the Postal Workers' Union; Sidney Walton.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 6, FRIDAY

Sun 172 rounds. Bernard Shaw and his wife called. Sir Darcy Lindsay called. Meeting with Sir John Maynard, Sapru and others; Letter to MacDonald; Jaiji came with me at night.

OXFORD, NOVEMBER 7, SATURDAY

Spun 208 rounds. Reached Oxford at 11 o'clock in the morning. Had talk with Malcolm MacDonald, Prof. Murray. Andrews arrived in the evening; at night had talk with Lord Lothian, Coupland was present.

OXFORD , NOVEMBER 8, SUNDAY

Spun 178 rounds. Discussions all day long. Corbett had come. Sarojini came in the evening. Commenced silence at 3.50 p.m.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 9, MONDAY

Spun 192 rounds. Came to London from Oxford. Wrote a number of letters. Purushottmdas's party; talk with Corbett; prayer and dinner at Rameshwardas's meeting at Friends' House,[1] Reynolds called on me.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 10, TUESDAY

Spun 203 rounds. Sapru and others came. Talked with them. Met Corbett and Mrs. Subbaroyan. London School of Economics, Holborn Restaurant.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 11, WEDNESDAY

Spun 169 rounds. Sir Mirza Ismail called in the morning. Then visited Lady Astor with Muriel. To Malaviyaji's at 2.30 . Thereafter went to Mr.Whitley's, then met Red Cross women at 8 o'clock.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 12, THURSDAY

Spun 183 rounds. Miss Molteno's relative , Dr. Stanley Reed; the Horrabin's committee at Malaviyaji's Letters to Hoarse, MacDonald.[2]

LONDON, NOVEMBER 13, FRIDAY

Spun 147 rounds. The Minority Committee, Smuts, the Aga Khan and others, Mrs. Benn and others, Smuts, Lansbury, the Westminster School, Birla, representative of the *News Chronicle*. Now It is midnight.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 14, SATURDAY

Spun 171 rounds. Called on Lord Irwin, then saw Benn and Less-Smith; then the Aga Khan and others. Dr. Moonje and others at night at Malaviyaji's . It is early today.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 15, SUNDAY

Spun 221 rounds. To Sastri's at 10 o'clock, then to Malaviyaji's then home. Slept a little today. Had talks with an Italian lady; in the evening went to Sir Samuel Hoare's residence; at night met Catto, Benthall and Carr at Birla's.

[1] This was organized by the Fellowship of Reconciliation.

[2] This letter actually bore the date November 14.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 16, MONDAY

Spun 166 rounds. The Committee. Lord Reading, Carr and Benthall.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 17, TUESDAY

Spun 178 rounds. The Committee, The Prime Minister, Smuts, Corbett, Lothian, Lady Astor, Benthall and others.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 18, WEDNESDAY

Spun 167 rounds. Rev. Hayes, Philip, the Committee, Women's meeting, Lloyd George for three and a half hours. Now it is 1 o'clock.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 19, THURSDAY

Spun 183 rounds. The Committee, Brockway, speech in the committee on racial discrimination and communal differences.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 20, FRIDAY

Spun 165 rounds. Foley and others called . Met Benthall and others in the evening. Thereafter Vegetarian Society meeting and the post office.

LONDON , NOVEMBER 21, SATURDAY

Spus 183 rounds. Met Findlater Stewart, Purushottamdas, Dinshaw Mulla, Pathak and others. Cable to Vallabhbhai.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 22, SUNDAY

Spun 194 rounds. Meeting at Malaviyaji's; met Sen Gupta; slept for one and a half hours in the afternoon. Commenced silence at 3.15.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 23, MONDAY

Spun 207 rounds. Saw Dagenham's Kingsley Hall, met Corbett, Pola, Maud Cheeseman,

LONDON, NOVEMBER 24, TUESDAY

Spun 194 rounds. Met MacDonald, Sankey and Hoare in the morning. In the evening met Dr. Sapru and others. Also LeesSmith. Cable from Vallabhbhai. Severe cold.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 25, WEDNESDAY

Spun 160 rounds. Made two speeches in the Committee. Mirza and Dr. Ambedkar came in the evening. Visited a Catholic church.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 26, THURSDAY

Spun 171 rounds. The Committee; Lord Irwin; went to Deepchand Zaveri's residence.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 27, FRIDAY

Spun 174 rounds. Andrews left for S. Africa. Met Samuel Hoare. Went to Bhandari's; then met Lansbury.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 28, SATURDAY

Spun 174 rounds. The Plenary Session. Hoare consulted me about a resolution to thank His Majesty the King-Emperor. I declined to be present. Cables to Vallabhbhai and Satis Babu.

LONDON, NOVEMBER 29, SUNDAY

Spun 160 rounds. Met Sir Findlater Stewart. Less-Smith came at night.

LONDON , NOVEMBER 30, MONDAY

Spun 157 rounds. Made a day-long speech in the Committee. Reached home at 3 o'clock in the morning. Meeting at Horrabin's at 8.30.

LONDON, DECEMBER 1, TUESDAY

Spun 184 round. The Conference concluded. Had a talk with Sapru and others. Also with Cart and Benthall.

LONDON, DECEMBER 2, WEDNESDAY

Spun 166 rounds. Felt feverish today. Attended the Quakers' silent worship.

LONDON, DECEMBER 3, THURSDAY

Spun 174 rounds. Meeting at Horrabin's at night. In the afternoon met Lord Lothian, journalists. It is midnight now.

LONDON, DECEMBER 4, FRIDAY

Spun 175 rounds. Met MacDonlad and Hoare.

PARIS, DECEMBER 5, SATURDAY

Spun 151 rounds. Left London in the morning. Am accompanied by Evans, Rogers, Maud, Muriel, Shamrao. Reached Paris in the evening. A big crowd there. A reception by the Indians.

VILLENEUVE, DECEMBER 6, SUNDAY

Spun 167 rounds. Left Paris in the morning. Muriel stayed behind. Arrived at Villeneuve in the evening. Meeting with Rolland,with journalists.

VILLENEUVE, DECEMBER 7, MONDAY

Spun 185 rounds. From 10 to 12.30 with Rolland. Did not go for a walk in the morning because of the rain but had sound sleep. When the sun appeared in the afternoon, I went for a stroll. Wrote letters to Hoare in the evening. Cable from Vallabhbhai; replied to it. Cable to Sir Jagdish Bose, to Ghose.

VILLENEUVE, DECEMBER 8, TUESDAY

Spun 170 rounds. Spent two and half hours in the morning with Rolland. Three meetings in the afternoon in Lausanne. Returned at midnight.

VILLENEUVE, DECEMBER 9, WEDNESDAY

Spun 160 rounds. Visited a poor woman's house and International Sanatorium; held prayers at Romain Rolland's house. Presented a shawl from Madame Cama to Madeleine Rolland.

VILLENEUVE, DECEMBER 10, THURSDAY

Spun 204 rounds. Meeting in Geneva, talks with Rolland, speech at a Chillon School, talk with Toma, talk with the Arabs.

ON WAY TO ROME, DECEMBER 11, FRIDAY

Spun 178 rounds. Talk with Rolland; Sir Cowasji met me. Left Villeneuve at 2.30. Girls from Indu's school called. Was provided a State car in Milan. Lrge crowds had gathered on the way.

ROME, DECEMBER 12, SATURDAY

Spun 204 rounds. Arrived at Rome at 8.30 in the morning. Received letter to the effect that the Pope could not receive me. Three of us stayed with General Moris, the others in a hotel. Went to see the Vatican in the afternoon. At 6 o'clock Mussolini. £ 20 to Maud.

ON WAY TO BRINDISI, DECEMBER I3, SUNDAY

Spun 180 rounds. Tolstoy's daughter came in the morning; school for young people, concessions to women, the forum, a gathering at Scarpa's, the Princess called the Amanullah's secretary. Left at 10.40 at night. The Privats are with me.

ON BOARD SHIP, DECEMBER 14, MONDAY

Spun 137 rounds. Reached Brindisi in the morning. Evans, Rogers returned. s.s. *Pilsna* sailed at 12.30. The deck is no good, hence there will be some inconvenience. It is quite cold here. Vithalbhai is with me.

ON BOARD SHIP, DECEMBER 15, TUESDAY

Spun 172 rounds. A little conversation with the captain.

ON BOARD SHIP, DECEMBER 16, WEDNESDAY

Spun 184 rounds. Had a look over the ship accompanied by the captain. Talk with Sir Akbar.

ON BOARD SHIP, DECEMBER 17, THURSDAY

Spun 190 rounds. Arrived at Port Said at 11'o clock. Sindhis and Egyptions came to fetch me. But as there was to be no halt at Suez, I could not go. The Sindhis presented me a purse of about Rs. 1,500.

ON BOARD SHIP, DECEMBER 18, FRIDAY

Spun 162 rounds. Left Suez at 5.30. Justice Holland, Lalaka and others met me. Read the *bhajans* revised by Hoyland.[1]

ON BORAD SHIP, DECEMBER 19, SATURDAY

Spun 170 rounds. Commenced writing with the right hand from today. Slept thrice during the day. Wrote letters. Read Hoyland's book, *The Cross Moves East.*

ON BOARD SHIP, DECEMBER 20, SUNDAY

Spun 171 rounds. Today also slept a lot during the day. Read and wrote a little. Talked with Vithalbhai.

ON BOARD SHIP, DECMEBER 21, MONDAY

Spun 170 rounds. We are nearing Aden. Was able to slee a little less during the day today. Wrote an article[2] for *Indian News.* Wrote letters. Completed the one to Mussolini.

ON BOARD SHIP, DECEMBER 22, TUESDAY

Spun 175 rounds. Arrived at Aden at 12.30 in the morning; went ashore; there was a meeting; visited Suraj's residence. Met the Resident Col. Riley. Returned to the ship at 4.30. Collected about Rs. 4,000. Today I have pain in the left side of the chest. The steamer weighed anchor at 5 o'clock.

[1] English rendering of hymns from the *Ashram Bhaajanvadi* made by Gandhiji during his detention in Yeravdaa Prision in the previous year; *vide* footnote 2, "Interview to Edmond Demeter", 5-12-1931

[2] "The Indian Army"; *vide* "The Indian Army", 21-12-1931

ON BOARD SHIP, DECEMBER 23, WEDNESDAY

Spun 171 rounds. Did not feel all right today. Ate only figs in the afternoon, took nothing in the evening. Slept well during the day. Completed an article[1] for *Young India*. A Bulgarian artist came to paint my portrait.

ON BOARD SHIP, DECEMBER 24, THURSDAY

Spun 172 rounds. Talked wih the German wife on an Intalian journalist. Wrote down something for Mills. Talked with Mrs. Kabraji last night. Took castor oil at 2 o'clock in the morning. Had a good motion.

ON BOARD SHIP, DECEMBER 25, FRIDAY

Spun 171 rounds, Am reading report of the House of Commons debate on the Prime Minister's speech at the Round Table Conference. Had a talk with Masani in the evening.

ON BOARD SHIP, DECEMBER 26, SATURDAY

Spun 178 rounds. Talked with Sir Akbar Hydari, saw the Princes of Hyderabad. Talked with Vithalbhai.

ON BOARD SHIP, DECMBER 27, SUNDAY

Spun 182 rounds. Shafi Dawoodi called. Commenced silence at 12 o'clock. Had to speak to Mirabehn about her lack of generosity. Wrote down a message for Mills.

BOMBAY, DECEMBER 28, MONDAY

Spun 184 rounds. Arrived at Bombay in the morning. Great welcome, mammoth meeting, the Welfare League, etc.

BOMBAY, DECEMBER 29, TUESDAY

Spun 189 rounds. Talked with Subhasbabu, representatives of Andhra, Karnatak, etc. The Working Committee, telegram to the Viceroy letter to Sir Fazli.

BOMBAY, DECEMBER 30, WEDNESDAY

Spun 214 rounds. The Stree Seva Dal in Matunga, talked with Raghvir Singh, the Working Committee, the doctor examined me. Visited Sir Chinubhai and enquired about his health. Talked with Jamnadas, with Kaka, with Jayaprakash.

[1] "A Retrospect", *vide* "A Retrospect", 23-12-1931

BOMBAY, DECEMBER 31, THURSDAY

Spun 177 rounds. The Viceroy's telegram arrived. Sent a reply.[1] Completed drafting of a resolution at 1.30 a.m. in the night. Then spun. Now it is 2.45. Lalji Sheth, Modi called. Recited morning prayers today on the way, then went to visit the Sevikas. Held the evening prayer in the Lady Northcote Orphanage.

From the Gujaraji original: S.N. 19337

200. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[*1931*][2]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Go on with your work there without worrying. Find a washerman there if possible. It will be good if all processes (of khadi) are as far as possible carried out there. I have talked to Ghanshyamdasji about the disposal of your khadi. Hence, instead of spending twice on railway freight, you may send it directly to Calcutta or wherever else he suggests. It would be better still if some types of garments could be got made by a tailor from that khadi. But all this may have to be carefully considered. Wherever you feel helpless, you may leave the subsequent processes on the manufactured khadi. After the rolls are ready I would be willing to lift even the unbleached stock. If you can you may try and introduce new spinning-wheels gradually. If you do not have enough self-confidence, do it after Krishnadas returns. Proceed slowly. Try and find customers for khadi there.

The matter regarding Gangabehn must have been settled by now.[3]

Blessings from
BAPU

Silence Day

I have your letter. What you write about the tannery is right. I have written to the Ashram about it.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Chhanganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Sabarmati Sangrahalaya

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Private Secreary to Viceroy", 1-1-1932

[2] This and the following two letters have been placed in 1931, as in the sources. From the contents too it appears that they belong to this period.

[3] The land on which the Vijapur Ashram stood, and which was in Gangabehn's name, was to be transferred to the Ashram Trust.

201. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,
Silence Day [*1931*]

CHI. KANTA,

I have your letter. Keep writing to your parents. Give me news of Brother.

If God permitted everything to happen as we wished we would really lose our reason. We may have only one wish, to remain totally dedicated to service. It is only to keep ourselves mindful of this that we recite the verses on the qualities of a *sthitaprajna* during prayer. Bear this in mind.

Oh, Partha, when a man has shed all desires that prey upon the mind, and is content to abide in the Self alone, he is called *sthitaprajna*.[1]

We want to reach that stage as soon as possible.

Inadvertently I have written this letter in the Gujarati script. Have it read out to you. Let me know if it causes inconvenience; so that I may be more careful. Do not worry if you cannot find time for learning Gujarati.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

202. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

[*1931*]

CHI. KANTA,

I have your letter. I like it very much. I have no fears about you. But in taking you in I have accepted a great responsibility. You have raised great hopes in me about yourself. That is why I am constantly trying to make you vigilant. Had I no faith in you I would not have allowed you to go alone on the very first day, and would have hesitated even this time about your visiting the villages. Therefore,have no fear on that account. I have complete faith in you. I pray that faith may bear fruit. Continue to write courteously to your

[1]*Bhagavad Gita*, II. 55

parents. What you have written is all right. Your firmness combined with courtesy will reassure them. Do not let your health suffer. The body will not have any trouble if you keep your mind cheerful. Never permit unnecessary thoughts to enter the mind. Think only about your work, and remain "calm and untroubled in the face of unhappiness" and "free from attachment in happiness". You do, remember, don't you, that we recite this verse every day? Also remember Mirabai's *bhajan:* "I shall dance singing the glory of my Hari." Service is the best song of praise to God. There was a letter from Brother. I have also written.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

203. RESOLUTION OF THE CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE[1]

BOMBAY
[*January 1, 1932*]

The Working Committee has heard Mahatma Gandhi's account of his visit to the West and considered the situation created by the extra-ordinray Ordinances promulgated in Bengal, the United. Provinces and the Frontier Province and by the actions of the authorities including the numerous arrests made among those of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Mr. Sherwani and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and by the the shootings in the Frontier Province of innocent men resulting in many deaths and many more being injured. The Working Committee has also seen the telegram from His Excellency the Viceroy in reply to the telegram sent by Mahatma Gandhi to him. The Working Committee is of opinion that these several acts and others of lesser gravity that have taken place in some other Provinces and the telegram from His Excellency seem to make further co-operation with the Government on the part of the Con-gress utterly impossible unless the Government policy is radically chang-ed. These acts and the telegram betray no intention of the part of bureau-cracy

[1] This was drafted by Gandhiji; *vide* "Talk with Welfare of India League Deputation", 2-1-1932 and "Diary, 1931", entry under December 31. The text of this was telegraphed to the Viceroy along with the following item.

to hand power to the people and are calculated to demoralize the nation. They also betray want of faith in the Congress from which co-ope-ration is expected by the Government. The Working Committee yields to no one in its abhorrence of terrorism on any account whatsoever resorted to by individuals such as was recently in witnessed in Bengal, but it condemns with equal force terrorism practised [by the Government] by its recent Acts and Ordinances. The Working Committee marks the deep natio-nal humiliation over the assassination committed by two girls in Comil-la and is firmly convinced that such crime does great harm to the nation especially when through its greatest political mouth piece the Congress it is pledged to non-violence for achieving swaraj. But the Working Committee can see no justification whatsoever for the Bengal Ordinance which seeks to punish a whole people for the crime of a few. The real remedy lies in dealing with the known cause that prompts such crime. If Bengal Ordinance has no justification for its existence the Ordinances in the United Provinces and the Frontier Province have still less. The Working Committee is of opinion that the measures taken by the Congress in the United Provinces for obtaining agrarian relief are and can be shown to be justified. The Working Committee holds that it is the unquestionable right of all people suffering from gave economic distress, as the tenantry of the United Provinces is admittedly suffering, to withhold payment of taxes if they fail, as in the United Provinces they have failed, to obtain redress by other constitutional methods. In the arrest and imprisonment of Mr. Sherwani, the President of the United Provinces Congress Committee, and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the Working General Secretary of the Congress, who were proceeding to Bombay to confer with Mahatma Gandhi and to take part in the meeting of the Working Committee, the Government have gone even beyond the limits contemplated by their Ordinance in that there was no question whatsoever of these gentlemen taking part in Bomby in a non-tax campaign in the United Provinces. So far as the Frontier Province is concerned on the Government's own showing there appears to be no warrant for either the promulgation of the Ordinance or the arrest and imprisonment without trial of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his co-workers. The Working Committee regrads the shootings in that Province of innocent and unarmed men to be wanton and inhuman and congratulates the brave men of the Frontier Province upon their courage and endurance, and the Working Committee has no doubt

that, if the brave people of the Frontier Province retain their non-violent spirit in spite of the gravest provocations, their blood and their sufferings would advance the cause of India's independence. The Working Committee calls upon the Government of India to institute a public and impartial enquiry into the events that have led up to the passing of these Ordinances, the necessity of superseding the ordinary courts of law and legislative machinery, and the necessity of several acts committed thereunder. And thereafter, if a proper enquiry is set up and all facilities are given to the Working Committee for the producition of evidence, it will be prepared to assist the enquiry by leading evidence before it. The Working Committee has considered the declaration of the Prime Minister made before the Round Table Conference and the debates in the Houses of Parliament and regards the declaration as wholly unsatisfactory and inadequate in terms of the Congress demand and place on record its opinion that nothing short of Complete Independence, carrying full control over the Defence and External Affairs and Finance with such safeguards as may be demonstrably necessary in the interests of the nation, can be regarded by the Congress as satisfactory. The Working Committee notes that the British Government was not prepared at the Round Table Conference to regard the Congress as representing and entitled to speak and act on behalf of the nation as a whole without distinction of caste, creed or colour. At the same time, the Committee recog-nizes with sorrow that communal harmony could not be attained at the said Conference. The Working Committee invites the nation, therefore, to make ceaseless effort to demonstrate the capacity of the Congress to represent the nation as a whole and promote an atmosphere that would make a Constitution framed on a purely national basis acceptable to the various communities composing the nation. Meanwhile, the Working Committee is prepared to tender co-operation to the Government provided His Excellency the Viceroy reconsiders his telegram and adequate relief is granted in respect of the Ordinances and its recent Acts, free scope is left to the Congress in any future negotiations and consultations to prosecute the Congress claim for Complete Independence, and the administration of the country is carried on in consultation with popular representatives pending the attainment of such independence. The absence of any satisfactory response from the Government in terms of the foregoing paragraph the Working Committee will regard as an indication on the part of the Government that it has reduced to nullity the Delhi Pact. In

the event of a satisfactory response not forthcoming, the Working Committee calls upon the nation to resume civil disobedience including non-payment of taxes under the following conditions and illustrative heads: (1) No Province or district or tahsil or village is bound to take up civil disobedience unless the people thereof understand the non-violent nature of the struggle with all its implications and are ready to undergo sufferings involving loss of life and property. (2) Non-violence must be observed in thought, word and deed in the face of the gravest provocation, it being understood that the campaign is not one of seeking revenge or inflicting injuries on the oppressor, but it is one of converting him through self-suffering and self-purification. (3) Social boycott with the intention of inflicting injury on Government officers, police or anti-nationalists should not be undertaken and is wholly inconsistent with the spirit of non-violence. (4) It should be borne in mind that non- violent campaigns are independent of pecuniary assistance; therefore, there should be no hired volunteers, but their bare maintenance and maintenance of the dependents of poor men and women who might have been imprisoned or killed is permissible wherever it is possible. The Working Committee, however, expects workers in the cause to continue the struggle even though they might have to suffer privations. (5) Boycott of all foreign cloth whether British or of other countries is obligatory under all circumstances. (6) All Congressmen and women are expected to use hand-spun and handwoven khaddar to the exclusion of even cloth manufactured in indigenous mills. (7) Picketing of liquor shops and foreign-cloth shops should be vigorously conducted chiefly by women but always so as to ensure perfect non-violence. (8) Unlicensed manufacture and collection of salt should be resumed. (9) If processions and demonstrations are organized, only those should join them who will stand lathi chrges or bullets without moving from their respectives places. (10) Even in non-violent war boycott of goods manufactured by the oppressor is perfectly lawful inasmuch as it is never the duty of the victim to promote or retian commercial relations with the oppressor. Thereore, boycott of British goods and concerns should be resumed and vigorously prosecuted. (11) Civil breach of non-moral laws and of laws and orders injurious to the people wherever it is considered possible and advisable may be practised. (12) All unjust orders issued under the Ordinances may be civilly disobeyed.

India in 1931-32, pp. 235-7.

204. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

BOMBAY,
January 1, 1932

I THANK HIS EXCELLENCY FOR THE WIRE IN REPLY TO MINE OF 29TH INSTANT. IT GRIEVES ME. FOR HIS EXCELLENCY HAS REJECTED IN A MANNER HARDLY BEFITTING HIS HIGH POSITION AN ADVANCE MADE IN THE FRIENDLIEST SPIRIT. I HAD APPROACHED AS SEEKER WANTING LIGHT ON QUESTIONS IN WHICH I DESIRED TO UNDERSTAND GOVERNMENT VERSION OF VERY SERIOUS AND EXTRAORDINARY MEASURES TO WHICH I MADE REFERENCE. INSTEAD OF APPRECIATING MY ADVANCE HIS EXCELLENCY HAS REJECTED IT BY ASKING ME TO REPUDIATE MY VALUED COLLEAGUES IN ADVANCE AND TELLING ME THAT EVEN IF I BECAME GUILTY OF SUCH DIS-HONOURABLE CONDUCT AND SOUGHT AN INTERVIW I COULD NOT EVEN DISCUSS THESE MATTERS OF VITAL IMPORTANCE TO THE NATION. IN MY OPINION, CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUE DWINDLES INTO INSIGNIFICANCE IN FACE OF ORDINANCES AND ACTS WHICH MUST, IF NOT MET WITH STUBBORN RESISTANCE, RESULT IN UTTER DEMORALIZATION OF NATION. I HOPE NO SELF-RESPECTING INDIAN WILL RUN RISK OF KILLING NATIONAL SPIRIT FOR A DOUBTFUL CONTINGENCY OF SECURING A CONSTITUTION TO WORK WHCIH NO NATION WITH STAMINA MAY BE LEFT. LET ME ALSO POINT OUT THAT AS TO THE FRONTIER PROVINCE YOUR TELEGRAM CONTAINS A NARRATION OF FACTS WHICH, ON FACE OF THEM, FURNISH NO WARRANT FOR ARRESTS OF POPULAR LEADERS, PASSING OF EXTRA-LEGAL ORDINANCE, MAKING LIFE AND PROPERLY UTTERLY INSECURE AND SHOOTING UNARMED PEACEFUL CROWDS FOR DARING TO DEMONSTRATE AGAINST ARRESTS OF THEIR TRUSTED LEADERS. IF KHAN SAHEB ABDUL GHAFFAR ASSERTED THE RIGHT OF

COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE IT WAS A NATURAL CLAIM AND A CLAIM MADE WITH IMPUNITY BY THE CONGRESS AT LAHORE IN 1929 AND BY ME WITH ENERGY PUT BEFORE THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IN LONDON. MOREOVER, LET ME REMIND THE VICEROY THAT DESPITE THE KNOWLEDGE ON GOVERNMENT'S PART THAT CONGRESS MANDATE CONTAINED SUCH CLAIM, I WAS INVITED TO ATTEND LONDON CONFERENCE AS CONGRESS DELEGATE. NOR AM I ABLE TO DETECT IN A MERE REFUSAL TO ATTEND DURBAR AN OFFENCE WARRANTING SUMMARY IMPRISONMENT. IF KHAN SAHEB WAS FOMENTING RACIAL HATRED IT WAS UNDOUBTEDLY REGRETTABLE. I HAVE HIS OWN DECLARATIONS TO THE CONTRARY MADE TO ME. BUT ASSUMING THAT HE DID FOR MENT RACIAL HATRED, HE WAS ENTITLED TO OPEN TRIAL, WHERE HE COULD HAVE DEFENDED HIMSELF AGAINST ACCUSATION. REGARDING THE UNITED PROVINCES, HIS EXCELLENCY IS SURELY MISINFORMED, BECAUSE THERE WAS NO NO-RENT CAMPAIGN AUTHORIZED BY CONGRESS, BUT WHILST NEGOTIATIONS WERE PROCEEDING BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND CONGRESS REPRESENTATIVES THE TIME FOR COLLECTION OF RENTS ACTUALLY ARRIVED AND RENTS BEGAN TO BE DEMANDED. CONGRESSMEN WERE THEREFORE OBLIGED TO ADVISE TENANTS TO SUSPEND PAYMENT. PENDING THE RESULT OF NEGOTIATIONS AND MR. SHERWANI HAD OFFERED ON BEHALF OF THE CONGRESS TO WITHDRAW THIS ADVICE IF THE AUTHORITIES SUSPENDED COLLECITONS PENDING NEGOTIATIONS. I VENTURE TO SUGGEST THAT THIS IS NOT A MATTER WHICH CAN BE SO SUMMARILY DISMISSED AS YOUR WIRE HAS DONE. CONTROVERSY IN THE UNITED PROVINCES IS OF A LONG STANDING AND INVOLVES WELL -BEING OF MILLIONS OF PEASANTRY KNOWN TO BE ECONOMICALLY GROUND DOWN. ANY GOVERNMENT JEALOUS OF THE WELFARE OF THE MASSES IN ITS CHARGE WOULD WELCOME VOLUNTARY CO-OPERATIONS OF A BODY LIKE THE CONGRESS WHICH ADMITTEDLY EXERCISES GREAT INFLUENCE OVER THE MASSES AND WHOSE ONE AMBITION IS TO SERVE THEM FAITHULLY.

AND LET ME ADD THAT I REGARD THE WITHHOLDING OF PAYMENT OF TAXES AS AN INALIENABLE ANCIENT AND NATURAL RIGHT OF A PEOPLE WHO HAVE EXHAUSTED ALL OTHER MEANS OF SEEING FREEDOM FROM AN UNBEARABLE ECONOMIC BURDEN. I MUST REPUDIATE SUGGESTION THAT THE CONGRESS HAS SLIGHTEST DESIRE TO PROMOTE DISORDER IN ANY SHAPE OR FORM. AS TO BENGAL, THE CONGRESS IS AT ONE WITH THE GOVERNMENT IN CONDEMNING ASSASSINATIONS AND SHOULD HEARTILY CO-OPERATE WITH THE GOVERNMENT IN MEASURES THAT MAY BE FOUND NECESSARY TO STAMP OUT SUCH CRIMES. BUT WHILST THE CONGRESS WOULD CONDEMN IN UNMEASURED TERMS THE METHODS OF TERRORISM IT CAN IN NO WAY ASSOCIATE ITSELF WITH GOVERNMENT TERRORISM AS IS BETRAYED BY THE BENGAL ORDINANCE AND ACTS DONE THEREUNDER, BUT MUST RESIST WITHIN THE LIMITS OF ITS PRESCRIBED CREED OF NON-VIOLENCE SUCH MEASURE OF LEGALIZED GOVERNMENT TERRORISM. I HEARTILY ASSENT TO THE PROPOSITION LAID DOWN IN YOUR TELEGRAM THAT CO-OPERATION MUST BE MUTUAL BUT YOUR TELEGRAM LEADS ME IRRESISTIBLY TO THE CONCLUSION THAT HIS EXCELLENCY DEMANDS CO-OPERATION FROM THE CONGRESS WITHOUT RETURNING ANY ON BEHALF OF GOVERNMENT. I CAN READ IN NO OTHER WAY HIS PEREMPTORY REUSAL TO DISCUSS THESE MATTERS WHICH, AS I HAVE ENDEAVOURED TO SHOW, HAVE AT LEAST TWO SIDES, POPULAR SIDE I HAVE PUT AS I UNDERSTAND IT, BUT BEFORE COMMITTING MYSELF TO DEFINITE JUDGMENT, I WAS ANXIOUS TO UNDERSTAND THE OTHER SIDE, THAT IS, THE GOVERNMENT SIDE, AND THEN TENDER MY ADVICE TO THE CONGRESS. WITH PREERENCE TO THE LAST PARAGRAPH OF YOUR TELEGRAM I MAY NOT REPUDIATE MORAL LIABILITY FOR THE ACTIONS OF MY COLLEAGUES, WHETHER IN THE FRONITER PROVINCE OR IN THE UNITED PROVINCES, BUT I CONFESS THAT I WAS IGNORANT OF THE DETAILED ACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES OF MY COLLEAGUES WHILST I T WAS

ABSENT FROM INDIA, AND IT WAS BECAUSE IT WAS NECESSARY FOR ME TO ADVISE AND GUIDE THE WORKING COMMITTEE OF THE CONGRESS AND IN ORDER TO COMPLETE MY KNOWLEDGE, I SOUGHT WITH AN OPEN MIND AND WITH THE BEST OF INTENTIONS AN INTERVIEW WITH HIS EXCELLENCY AND DELIBERATELY ASKED FOR HIS GUIDANCE. I CANNOT CONCEAL FROM HIS EXCELLENCY MY OPINION THAT THE REPLY HE HAS CONDESCENDED TO SEND WAS HARDLY A RETURN FOR MY FRIENDLY AND WELL-MEANT APPROACH, AND IF IT IS NOT YET TOO LATE, I WOULD ASK HIS EXCELLENCY TO RECONSIDER HIS DECISION AND SEE ME AS A FRIEND WITHOUT IMPOSING ANY CONDITIONS WHATSOEVER AS TO THE SCOPE OR SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION, AND I, ON MY PART, CAN PROMISE THAT I WOULD STUDY WITH AN OPEN MIND ALL THE FACTS THAT HE MIGHT PUT BEFORE ME. I WOULD UNHESITATINGLY AND WILLINGLY GO TO THE RESPECTIVE PROVINCES AND WITH THE AID OF THE AUTHORITIES STUDY BOTH SIDES OF THE QUESTION AND IF I CAME TO THE CONCLUSION AFTER SUCH A STUDY THAT THE PEOPLE WERE IN THE WRONG AND THAT THE WORKING COMMITTEE INCLUDING MYSELF WERE MISLED AS TO THE CORRECT POSITION, AND THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS RIGHT, I SHOULD HAVE NO HESITATION WHATSOEVER IN MAKING THAT OPEN CONFESSION AND GUIDING THE CONGRESS ACCORDINGLY. ALONG WITH MY DESIRE AND WILLINGNESS TO CO-OPERATE WITH GOVERNMENT I MUST PLACE MY LIMITATIONS BEFORE HIS EXCELLENCY. NON-VIOLENCE IS MY ABSOLUTE CREED. I BELIEVE THAT CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IS NOT ONLY THE NATURAL RIHGT OF PEOPLE ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY HAVE NO EFFECTIVE VOICE IN THEIR OWN GOVERNMENT, BUT THAT I T ALSO IS AN EFFECTIVE SUBSTITUTE FOR VIOLENCE OR ARMED REBELLION. I CAN NEVER, THEREFORE, DENY MY CREED. IN PURSUANCE THEREOF AND ON THE STRENGTH OF UNCONTRADICTED RERORTS SUPPORTED BY RECENT ACTIVITES OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA TO THE

EFFECT THAT THERE MAY BE NO OTHER OPPORTUNITY FOR ME TO GUIDE THE PUBLIC, THE WORKING COMMITTEE HAS ACCEPTED MY ADVICE AND PASSED A RESOLUTION TENTATIVELY SKETCHING A PLAN OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE. I AM SENDING HEREWITH TEXT OF RESOLUTION. IF HIS EXCELLENCY THINKS IT WORTH WHILE TO SEE ME PENDING OUR DISCUSSION OPERATION OF THE RESOLUTION WILL BE SUSPENDED IN HOPE IT MAY RESULT IN THE RESOLUTION BEING FINALLY GIVEN UP. I ADMIT THAT CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN HIS EXCELLENCY AND MYSELF IS OF SUCH GRAVE IMPORTANCE AS NOT TO BROOK DELAY IN PUBLICATION. I AM THEREFORE SENDING MY TELEGRAM YOUR REPLY, THIS REJOINDER AND THE WORKING COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTION FOR PUBLICATION.[1]

India in 1931-32; also *Young India*, 7-1-1932

205. NOTE INTRODUCING EDMOND PRIVAT AND MADAME PRIVAT

January 1, 1932

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,

Mons. Privat and Madame Privat are friends of India living in Switzerland. They have purposely come to India to study the country and the modern movement. I expect all Congressmen who may come in contact with them to assist them and render to them whatever service it is possible to render to them.[2]

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 8791

[1] For the reply from the Private Secretary of the Viceroy, *vide* "Telegram from Private Secretary to Viceroy", 2-1-1932

[2] In the source, this is followed by a Hindi version.

206. TELEGRAM TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

BOMBAY,
January 2, 1932

SIR PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI
BHAVNAGAR

PROBABLY LEAVING TOMORROW NIGHT FOR AHMEDABAD PERHAPS BETTER YOU COME AHMEDABAD.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5922

207. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

[*January 2, 1932*][1]

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

I was delighted to receive your letter. You have no cause to envy us poor folk outside. But we do envy you for getting all the glory and leaving the drudgery to the outsiders. But we are plotting vengeance. I hope you are allowed to get some newspapers. In all I am doing you are constantly before my mind's eye.

I saw Kamala the other day. She does need plenty of rest. I shall try to see her once more and insist upon her not leaving her room till she is thoroughly restored. I hope you will approve of the action taken regarding Dr. Mahmud[2]. I am sure that the promise to pay the assessment on Anand Bhawan should be paid [*sic*].

Love to you both.

BAPU

[PS.]

God and Government willing, I go to the Ashram tomorrow to return in two or three days.

A Bunch of Old Letters, p. 104

[1] The source has the date January 29, which is obviously an error. The original at the Nehru Memorial Museum bears the date January 2.

[2] Dr. Syed Mahmud

208. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

BOMBAY,
January 2, 1932

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

I was grieved to find from your wire that you were suffering from insomnia. Why not take longer rest and get rid of the disease altogether? In your present state I am not going to worry you with my troubles.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

209. LETTER TO TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU

BOMBAY,
January 2, 1932

DEAR DR. SAPRU,

Many thanks for your wire. I hope you do not still think that I can see the Viceroy, if he makes no response to my wire.[1] I would like you to study the correspondence[2] published in the papers. My conscience is quite clear. The Government here simply do not want to see me unless I approach them with straw in the mouth.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Gandhi-Sapru Correspondence; also G. N. 7590

[1] Of January 1, 1932; *vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to Viceroy", 1-1-1932

[2] With the Viceroy, from December 29, 1931 to January 3, 1932; *Ibid.*

210. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 2, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I get your letters of course, but, on my side, how can I find time to write to you? It is about 11.30 p.m. now. It is likely that I may be arrested tonight; even so I have sat down to write this letter. What advice shall I give you? I have the fullest confidence in you. God will give you the strength to meet any eventuality. Mirabehn will go there after I am arrested. You will have to guide her. If a request for her is received from any quarter, it will be for you to decide. Prabhavati, too, is likely to arrive there in a few days. Tell Lakshmi that I got her letter. I like her decision.

Convey my respects to Mother and Father. How happy I should be to see them! I remember to have told you to give away to the Vidyapith all the books in the Ashram, except those which may be useful in the school. Kaka told me that your impression was different. However that may be, I think it will be wise to give away the books to the Vidyapith.

I believe the journals and magazines will also be better used and preserved there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8198. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

211. TALK WITH WELFARE OF INDIA LEAGUE DEPUTATION [1]

[BOMBAY,]

January 2, 1932

My telegram[2] was in studiously courteous language and in the friendliest tone. My friends objected to the word 'guidance', but I pleaded with them and got them to agree. You will see that the Viceroy has placed himself completely in the wrong. And arguing

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's article: "The Historic Week"

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Viceroy", 29-12-1931

about the Ordinances was the wrong way of going about the thing. He forgot that I had not approached him as an ordinary citizen, but one who had constant dealings with him and one with whom he had to discuss the future plans as to how best to help in the R.T.C. work. It is irrelevant for him to say that I could not discuss the Ordinances. The second condition is insulting, viz., that I must repudiate my collegues. The fact is that Government has overreached itself. It is not Lord Willingdon's language. It has been drafted for him. It is a terrible affair that Government of India should act in this light-hearted fashion though they know that any error may lead to a terrible situation arising in this country. If you are convinced that Government of India have committed a grave error in repelling my advances and in banging the door on my face, then you should move heaven and earth to compel the Government of India to reconsider their decision and see me as a friend without putting any conditions. But why should I have got the Working Committee to pass a tentative reso- lution, you will ask. Is it not that you want to go with a loaded pistol? No, because the Government of India knew that the Congress was an institution with civil disobedience for its creed. The Congress had done enough to lead the country and Government to believe that in connection with a movement for redress of wrongs the Congress would not advise an armed rebellion but a non-violent dis-obedience. Evidently they overlook the fact that civil disobedience had become a permissible thing. In the Delhi Pact, civil disobedience was not given up, it was only discontinued during the Truce. In Simla, when our final letters were exchanged—letters which were published as part of the second Settlement— I said in my letter that, if all steps fail, we reserve to ourselves the right of civil disobedience. Government's reply finally banging the door is thus a direct breach of the Delhi Pact and of the Simla Pact to which Lord Willingdon was party. You have thus got to see the enormity of the error in which the Government of India have been betrayed. I therefore suggest to you that you follow your telegram by further action and go over to the side of the Congress if a simple thing like an interview cannot be granted.

It grieves me to find the suggestion being made that I was overborne by my extremist colleagues. I am the arch-extremist. I have not found colleagues who have given more loyal allegiance than has been given me during the last four days. There has been no goading on the part of my colleagues, and all resolutions and telegrams have

been drafted by me. They have accepted me as an expert in these matters and left the whole field open to me. We discussed for a long time and the sense was that we may pass the tentative resolution, but not publish it. It was I who said "No". If I suppressed it, I would be unfair to the Viceroy and the nation. Having passed the resolution, I said the Viceroy must be placed in possession of the full facts. They agreed. My colleagues are not wedded to civil disobedience nor to non-violence in the sense that I am. It is not a be-all and end-all with them as with me. But there was no course open to me. A man to whom it is open to declare an armed rebellion may parley, but a man who has no such alternative—how can he parley? That is what has happened, for civil disobedience is my creed, how can I give it up? That is why, though I am miserly in expending national money, I paid for the full text of the resolution being telegraphed along with my reply.

The way to follow out your telegram is not to send me to the Viceroy but to see the Viceroy yourselves. All you have got to tell him is that when you are about to embark on a big constitutional advance it should be absurd for the head of a State to refuse to see a public man.[1]

Young India, 7-1-1932

212. MESSAGE TO KAIRA FARMERS[2]

AHMEDABAD,
[Before *January 3, 1932*]

I had a great longing to peep into Gujarat to see the Ashramites and other companions and to console and sympathize with you in your difficulties, but I am afraid that this will not be possible.

A satyagrahi cannot even dream of a family or friend nor could he afford to wait to see them or bid farewell when the jail or the like invites him. I believe such is my present condition. If, therefore, it is not possible to see you, believe me it was due to the imperative demand of duty. It seems war stares us in the face, and it would be more grim this time.

[1] The Deputation after hearing Gandhiji authorized their president to send another telegram assuring the Viceroy that Gandhiji had an entirely open mind and that it was all the more necessary that he should have an opportunity of fully discussing the situation with His Excellency.

[2] According to the source the message was in Gujarati.

Exhorting them to bear the brunt of the fight and not to flinch, Gandhiji asks them to cheerfully sacrifice their lands, goods and cattle and to suffer all sorts of privations and to bear all oppressions, including lathi and bullets. But while enduring all these, Gandhiji appeals to them not to be excited in the least and to pity their persecutor and wish him well.

Quoting the famous Gujarati poet, Kavi Shamal Bhatt, that "he who returns good for evil has only truly lived", Gandhiji goes on:

You have drunk at this fountain of love, and perceived the experiences of others. You must therefore see that you do not offend even the farmer who does not stand by you or who is hostile to you. Pity him too, for it is not his fault that he does not see eye to eye with you in matters of duty.

Gandhi says that they conferred upon Mr. Vallabhbhai the title of Sardar and continues:

In your hands lies his honour and his strength. Not only this, but the reputation and honour of the whole of India lies in your hands . On the resumption of the struggle, the eyes of India and of the whole world are concentrated upon you. Remember all these, and pray for strength befitting a satyagrahi.

Asking the peasants to live harmoniously with their Dharala brethren, Gandhiji concludes:

Remember this, and console yourself. Rest assured that all your confiscated lands will be restored to you. This is not a bait. Believe every word of it, when I say that this only is the true foundation of a satyagrahi.

The Hindu, 4-1-1932

213. TEMPLE-ENTRY SATYAGRAHA

[On or before *January 3, 1932*][1]

Whilst the Working Committee was in session during the last week I had several conversations with representatives from Kerala and other Congress workers about many questions arising in connection with Temple-entry Satyagraha. Instead of correcting the report produced by the interviewers in the form of questions and answers. I

[1] According to the source this article was dictated by Gandhiji under very heavy pressure of work in hourly expectation of arrest and handed over for publication just before his arrest on January 4.

am giving below what I think should be the answer to their questions. The answers will be found so framed as to render unnecessary the questions being stated.

1. It is necessary to bear in mind that the question of removal of untouchability, though it has a political significance of the greatest importance, is essentially and predominantly a religious question to be solved by the Hindus and as such for them it overshadows even the political aspect. That is to say, the duty of touchables in respect of removal of untouchability can never be subordinated to any political exigencies, hence the present political situation must not in any way be allowed to postpone the endeavour to end untouchability.

2. In a religious and righteous cause the reformer has to face all consequences and even take the risk of temporary alienation of the sym-pathy of privileged classes. Those, therefore, who believe untouchability is a curse to be removed at all costs will not abate their effort for fear of finding themselves in a hopeless minority.

3. If the present *pujaris*[1] of temples strike work and refuse to perform the ceremonial required, they should be replaced promptly and, if the particular caste which has supplied the *pujaris* fail to furnish a substitute, I would not hesitate to find the priest from any other caste so long as he has the requisite qualifications and conviction. The fact is that, so far as I am aware, the majority of the existing *pujaris* are too dependent on this service for their maintenance to continue the strike for any length of time. That the right of performing *puja* is hereditary does not affect my opinion because, if the possessor himself of such a right, for any cause whatsoever, refuses to exercise the right, he has only himself to thank.

4. If temple authorities offer to set apart a corner for untouchables, it should not be considered as sufficient. No restriction against untouchables which is not applicable to other non-Brahmin Hindus can be tolerated. But a distant corner may be set apart for those who do not want to mix with the untouchables. These people then become untouchables by choice.

5. We may not force open barricades. That would be a species of violence and it will not do that barricades are inanimate things, for the hands that put up the barricades were animate.

[1] Priests

6. From the foregoing it will be clear that belief in temples should be a condition precedent to offering satyagraha regarding temple-entry. Temple-entry is a religious right. Entry, therefore, by any other person cannot be called satyagraha. At the time of Vaikom Satyagraha, when Mr. George Joseph went to jail, I sent him word that he was wrong.[1] He agreed with me, promptly apologized, and came out of jail. Temple-entry satyagraha is a penance on the part of the touchable Hindu. He is the sinner and he has, therefore, to do the penance by inviting punishment on himself for endeavouring to take these untouchable co-religionists with him to the temle. Therefore, non-Hindus can only offer help other than satyagraha. For instance, whilst the other communities helped the Sikhs at the time of Gurudwara movement in various ways, satyagraha was and could be offered only by the Sikhs who believed in the *akhanda path*.[2]

In my opinion, untouchables should not alone offer satyagraha. It should be led by touchable reformers. This is a matter of expedience. There may come a time when untouchables may offer satyagraha by them-selves. The idea behind the opinion here expressed is that public opinion amongst touchable Hindus should be sufficiently alive and active before satyagraha is taken up at all. It is a weapon whose use depends for success upon the gathering of public opinion. Therefore, it use is invariably preceded by all the known orthodox remedies.

7. There can be no entry demanded in temples on private *bona-fide* property. When a man allows free use to the public of a temple erected on a private property, but bars the entry of untouchables alone, it ceases to be a private temple.

8. It has been suggested that temple-entry through satyagraha should be postponed altogether and effected by legislative enactment. I wholly dissent from the view. Legislative enactment as a rule, and certainly always under democracy, follows the formation of public opinion, and for the formation of public opinion. I know no swifter remedy than real satyagraha properly handled. The question as to when time is ripe for offering satyagraha in a particular place is one primarily for local Congress Committees to decide.

9. Those who contend that non-Hindus can vote on questions

[1] *Vide* "Letter to George Joseph", 6-4-1924

[2] Non-stop reading of the *Granth Saheb*

arising out of untouchability I would refer to the first resolution, since the new constituion passed at Nagpur in 1920. There it is clearly stated that the question of removal of untouchability is one specially and exclusively reserved for Hindus. Therefore, a convention has grown up that Non-Hindus should not interfere by their votes or otherwise with this religious question.

Young India, 14-1-1932

214. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

BOMBAY,
January 3, 1932

THANKS YOUR WIRE EVEN DATE.[1] I CANNOT HELP EXPRESSING DEEP REGRET FOR DECISION OF HIS EXCELLENCY AND HIS GOVERNMENT. SURELY IT IS WRONG TO DESCRIBE HONEST EXPRESSION OF OPINION AS THREAT. MAY I REMIND GOVERNMENT THAT DELHI NEGOTIATIONS WERE OPENED AND CARRIED ON WHILST CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE WAS ON AND THAT WHEN PACT WAS MADE CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE WAS NOT GIVEN UP BUT ONLY DISCONTINUED. THIS POSITION WAS REASSERTED AND ACCEPTED BY HIS EXCELLENCY AND HIS GOVERNMENT IN SIMLA IN SEPTEMBER LAST PRIOR TO MY DEPARTURE FOR LONDON. ALTHOUGH I HAD MADE IT CLEAR THAT UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES CONGRESS MIGHT HAVE TO RESUME CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE GOVERNMENT DID NOT BREAK OFF NEGOTIATIONS. THAT IT WAS MADE CLEAR BY GOVERNMENT THAT CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE CARRIED WITH IT PENALTY FOR DISOBEDIENCE MERELY PROVES WHAT CIVIL RESISTERS BARGAIN FOR BUT DOES NOT IN ANY WAY AFFECT MY ARGUMENT, HAD GOVERNMENT RESENTED ATTITUDE IT WAS OPEN TO THEM NOT TO SEND ME TO LONDON. ON THE CONTRARY MY DEPARTURE HAD HIS EXCELLENCY'S BLESSINGS. NOR IS IT FAIR OR CORRECT TO SUGGEST THAT I HAVE EVER ADVANCED THE CLAIM THAT ANY POLICY OF GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE DEPENDENT ON MY JUDGMENT. BUT I DO SUBMIT THAT

[1] Evidently Gandhiji started drafting this telegram on January 2.

ANY POPULAR AND CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT WOULD ALWAYS WELCOME AND SYMPATHETICALLY CONSIDER SUGGESTIONS MADE BY PUBLIC BODIES AND THEIR REPRESENTATIVES AND ASSIST THEM WITH ALL AVAILABLE INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR ACTS OR ORDINANCES OF WHICH PUBLIC OPINION MAY DISAPPROVE. I CLAIM THAT MY MESSAGES HAVE NO OTHER MEANING THAN WHAT IS SUGGESTED IN LAST PARAGRAPH. TIME ALONE WILL SHOW WHOSE POSITION WAS JUSTIFIED. MEANWHILE I WISH TO ASSURE GOVERNMENT THAT EVERY ENDEAVOUR WILL BE MADE ON PART OF CONGRESS TO CARRY ON STRUGGLE WITHOUT MALICE AND IN STRICTLY NON-VIOLENT MANNER. IT WAS HARDLY NECESSARY TO REMIND ME THAT CONGRESS AND I, ITS HUMBLE REPRESENTATIVE, ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL THE CONSEQUENCES OF OUR ACTIONS.

India in 1931-32; also *Young India,* 7-1-1932

215. CABLE TO J. F. HORRABIN

[*January 3, 1932*]

DEEPLY GRATEFUL YOUR CABLE. SENT FULL CABLE ADDRESSED TOM WILLIAMS. RECEIVED MIDNIGHT [REPLY] FROM GOVERNMENT FINALLY CLOSING THE DOOR UPON THE REQUEST FOR INTERVIEW AND ALL NEGOTIATIONS ON THE GROUND THAT CONGRESS HAD DARED TO THREATEN CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE ON FAILURE TO SECURE RELIEF. THE VICEROY'S REPLY FURTHER ACCUSES ME OF WANTING TO IMPOSE CONDITIONS UNDER THE MENACE OF UNLAWFUL ACTION. IN THE SURROUNDING ATMOSPHERE I DETECT NO TRACE OF DESIRE FOR AN HONOURABLE AND EQUAL CO-OPERATION. VICEROY HAS FORGOTTEN THAT IN THE DELHI TRUCE THE RIGHT OF CITIZEN TO CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE WAS TACITLY RECOGNIZED; FOR CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE WAS CONTINUING WHILST THE NEGOTIATIONS WERE PENDING, AND IT WAS DISCONTINUED ONLY DURING TRUCE, AGAIN AT SIMLA THE PRESENT VICEROY ALLOWED UNCHALLENGED MY STATEMENT THAT CONGRESS RESERVED THE RIGHT TO OFFER CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IF OTHER METHODS OF GETTING REDRESS FAILED, NO DOUBT SUBJECT TO PENALTY FOR DISOBEDIENCE, WHICH IS INHERENT IN THE METHOD OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE, BUT BECAUSE CIVIL

DISOBEDIENCE WAS CONTEMPLATED UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES VICEROY NOT ONLY DID NOT BREAK OFF NEGOTIATIONS, BUT COMPLETED THEM AND SENT ME TO LONDON WITH HIS BLESSINGS. THE PRESENT ATTITUDE, THEREFORE, IS A CLEAR DEPARTURE FROM THE ATTITUDE IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE CONFERENCE. THE FACT IS THAT GOVERNMENT CANNOT TOLERATE THE RISING POWER OF CONGRESS, AND THE CONSEQUENT RISE OF THE PEOPLE'S SPIRIT. THE INTOLERANCE OF DISSENTING PUBLIC OPINION AND ITS GROWING INSISTENCE CONTINUES UNABATED. I AM CONVINCED THAT IN SUCH AN ATMOSPHERE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A FREE CONSTITUTION LEADING TO INDEPENDENCE IS UTTERLY IMPOSSIBLE. THE SUPPRESSION OF CONGRESS ORGANIZATION AND THE ARRESTS OF LEADERS SEEM IMMINENT. NEVERTHELESS, SO FAR AS I CAN JUDGE, VAST MASSES OF PEOPLE WILL NOT BE DISSPIRITED, WILL OFFER STUBBORN RESISTANCE TO AUTHORITY, AND YET IN THE MIDST OF GOVERNMENT PROVOCATION, WILL OBSERVE STRICT NON-VIOLENCE. IN SPITE OF TERRIBLE HANDICAP, I HOPE TO SUPPLY YOU WITH REGUALR "BULLETIN" BY WIRE, IF THE AUTHORITIES DON'T PROHIBIT DESPATCH OF SIMPLE VERSION OF FACTS. PLEASE ALWAYS SHARE NEWS WITH MR. ALEXANDER AND OTHER FRIENDS.

GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 4-1-1932

216. CABLE TO LORD IRWIN.

BOMBAY,
January 3, 1932

PRAY BELIEVE ME I HAVE TRIED MY BEST, BUT HAVE FAILED NEVERTHELESS, I DON'T LOSE HOPE, AND GOD WILLING, SHALL RETAIN THE SPIRIT WHICH YOU BELIEVED ACTUATED ME DURING THAT SACRED WEEK IN DELHI. I SHALL NOT BELIE YOUR CERTIFICATE.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-1-1932

217. LETTER TO DR. SCARPA

BOMBAY
January 3, 1932

DEAR DR. SCARPA[1],

Just a line, whilst I am yet free to thank you for your kindness during my all too brief stay in beautiful and historic Rome. I wish I had two months instead of only two days. Please tell the Triestano Agent with my thanks that the Commander and the officers of s. s. *Pilsna* made me and my party thoroughly comfortable.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

218. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[2]

January 3, 1932

It is a matter for deep regret to me to have received this telegram from H.E. the Viceroy and the Government. I cannot help saying that it has heaped error upon error, instead of courageously acknowledging the first errror, in practically banging the door in my face by imposing for the coveted interview conditions which no self-respecting man can possibly accept and reopen the door. The telegram has added another error by deliberately and finally shutting the door, by telling me that he cannot see me under threat of resumption of civil disobedience and introducing in the telegram argument that is not germane to my repeated request for an interview. The Viceroy and his Government have committed a flagrant breach of the Delhi Pact by using the so-called threat of resumption of civil disobedience as an excuse for refusing to see me. Surely he must know that the negotiations which resulted in the Settlement were being carried on although civil disobedience was still on, and under the Settlement it was never finally given you, but was only discontinued for the purpose of securing represen tation of the Congress at the

[1] Minister for external affairs of Italy, at whose invitation Ghandhiji had visited Rome for two days in December 1931

[2] The message was dictated to the A.P.I. reporter on telephone at about 2 a.m.

Round Table Conference, it being understood that it was likely to be resumed if the Round Table Conference failed to do satisfaction in respect of the national demand. To this I wish to add the Second Settlement that was arrived at in Simla immediately prior to my departure for London . On examining the correspondence that has passed between myself and the Government, it would be seen that notwithstanding the Truce I had reserved to myself the right to take up civil disobedience by way of defensive action in connection with the grievances about which relief might be unattainable through milder methods. Surely if civil disobedience was such a heinous crime, the Government could never have exchanged correspondence on that basis and sent me to London with Viceregal blessings; but I see that with the change of times manners have also changed.

The nation must now respond to the challenge of the Government. It is to be hoped, however, that whilst people belonging to all classes and creeds will courageously and in all humility go through the fiery ordeal considerng no price too dear and no sufferings too great, they will observe the strictest non-violence in thought, word and deed, no matter how great the provocation may be. I would also urge them not to be angry with the administrators. It is not easy for them to shed the habit handed down from generation to generation. Our quarrel is not with men but with measures.

We have faith in ourselves and, therefore, in human nature, to feel that, if we suffer long enough and in the proper spirit, our sufferings must result in converting administrators. After all, let us realize that the greater and the longer the sufferings the greater would be our fitness for swaraj, for which we are embarking upojn a fiery ordeal. I would remind the nation of the pledge I gave to the Prime Minister towards the end of the Plenary Session of the Round Table Conference that there should be no malice in the struggle if it fell to our lot to resume it and that we would do nothing unworthy. I shall trust every Indian to redeem the pledge.

To Englishmen I would say that they must beware of false reports that are often dished up for them from morning to morning and evening to evening as to the doings of the Congress in India. This feeding on false information or starvation due to suppression of correct information is a greater barrier to heart-to-heart co-operation.

The Hindu, 3-1-1932

219. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE[1]

LABURNUM ROAD,
BOMBAY,
January 3, 1932

DEAR GURUDEV,

I am just stretching my tired limbs on the mattress and as I try to steal a wink of sleep I think of you. I want you to give your best to the sacrificial fire that is being lighted.

With love,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 4632

220. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

[BOMBAY],
January 3, 1932

You have been my companions in these prayers for some days, and now that the struggle is resumed again and I may be taken away any moment, I hope you will continue to have your prayers regularly morning and evening. Let it become a daily obligatory ritual for you. Prayer plays a large part in a self-purificatory sacrifice and you will see that it will be a veritable cow of plenty for you, and will make your way clear. The more you apply yourselves to it, the more fearlessness you will experience in daily life, for fearlessness is a sign and symbol of self-purification. I do not know a man or a woman who was on the path of self-purification and was still obsessed by fear. Generally there are two kinds of fear in man's minds—fear of death and fear of loss of material possessions. A man of prayer and self-purification will shed the fear of death and embrace death as a boon companion and will regard all earthly possessions as fleeting and of no account. He will see that he has no right to possess wealth when misery and pauperism stalk the land and when there are millions who have to go without a meal. No power on earth can subdue a man who has shed these two fears. But for that purpose the prayer should be a thing of the heart and not a thing of outward demonstration. It must take us daily nearer to God, and a prayerful man is sure to have his

[1] This was dictated to Mahadev Desai on January 3 at 4 a.m. and signed the next day, "a few moments after his actual arrest", according to a covering letter Mahadev Desai sent along with it.

[2] Held at 4 a.m.

heart's desire fulfilled, for the simple reason that he will never have an improper desire. Continue this ritual and you will shed lustre not only on your city but on our country. I hope this brief prayer of mine will find a lodgment in your hearts.

Young India, 7-1-1932

221. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

BOMBAY,
January 3, 1932

What I would ask the nation to do after my arrest, is to wake up from its sleep; and

1. to discard at once all foreign cloth and take to khaddar;
2. to discard all drugs, narcotics, and intoxicating drinks;
3. to discard every trace of violence and give absolute protection to every Englishman, woman or child whether official or otherwise, no matter how provocative the action of officials may be;
4. to withdraw from Government every form of co-operation that is possible for every individual; and
5. to study the resolution of the Working Committee and carry it out to the letter and in the spirit and in that process suffer all hardships that they may be put to, including loss of life and property.

It is difficult to lay down one rule for the whole of India. But it seems to me that, since the Congress has adopted the method of self-purification through non-violence, I should begin by hartal, that is, voluntary suspension of all works for profit and undergo a prayerful fast and then begin simultaneously civil disobedience in such manner as may be possible in each locality such as

(a) unlicensed manufacture of salt,

(b) picketing of liquor and foreign-cloth shops,

(c) breach of orders under Section 144 and the like when there is no likelihood of breach of peace and where orders have been issued not out of any legal necessity, but manifestly for the sake of crushing the spirit of the people or, what is the same thing, or suppressing the Congress.

As to what particular items of programme Bombay should follow he left to Mr. K. F. Nariman and his council.

Questioned if the work of carrying on the behests of the Congress would not prove difficult if, as already contemplated, all listed Congress workers were removed from the field of action, Gandhiji commenced:

The resolution of the Working Committee was framed to cover the difficulty raised. The situation will develop so suddenly that it is not possible to be more definite than the resolution is. After experience of nearly 12 years of satyagraha in a more or less acute form, individuals are expected to know what the change in circumstances will require. Last year's experience shows that in spite of the imprisonment of almost all the leaders, the nation showed marvellous resourcefulness in the emergency as it arose, and kept up the spirit of civil defiance.

When his attention was drawn to the possibility of opposition to the Congress from certain classes of Indians, the Mahatma said that some handicap there naturally must be whenever there is internal opposition, but added:

All these difficulties will dissolve in the fire of suffering without hatred whether towards the administrators or towards our own people, whether they oppose or are indifferent to the movement.

The Bombay Chronicle, 4-1-1932

222. MESSAGE TO INDIAN CHRISTIANS[1]

BOMBAY,
January 3, 1932

DEAR CHRISTIAN FRIENDS AND FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN,

I have full trust that in the struggle on which the country is about to embark, Indian Christians, who tender their loyalty to the one whom they call the Prince of Peace, will not be found behind any community in our country in the struggle which is essentially based on peace. I venture to suggest that service in this national struggle is an infinitely greater safeguard for the protection of a minority that has tendered such service than any paper security.

I would like to lay stress upon khaddar and prohibition. When in my wanderings I have met thousands of poor Christian fellow-countrymen. I have realized the necessity for them of khaddar as much as for others. I hope, therefore, that every Christian's home will be adorned by the installation of the spinning-wheel and every Christian body with khaddar, spun and woven by the hands of our poor countrymen and countrywomen.

And then there is the curse of drink. I have never understood how a Christian can take intoxicating drink. Did not Jesus say to Satan

[1] The message was given through the Secretary, Nationalist, Christian Party.

when he want to seduce him: "Get thee behind me, Satan?" Is not intoxicating drink Satan incarnate? How can a Christian serve both Satan and Christ?

The Bombay Chronicle, 4-1-1932

223. MESSAGE TO AMERICA[1]

BOMBAY,
January 3, 1932

On the eve of embarking on what promises to be a deadly struggle, I would expect numerous American friends to watch its career and use the influence of the great nation for the sake of oppressed humanity. This Indian struggle is more than national. It has international value and importance. I am convinced that if my countrymen and women retain up to the last the spirit of non-violence, they will have inaugurated a new era upon earth.

The Hindu, 3-1-1932

224. DIARY, 1932

BOMBAY, JANUARY 1, FRIDAY

Spun 160 rounds. Spent the day at the Working Committee. Cloth and bullion merchants as also Bhulabhai and others called. Benthall called at night.

BOMBAY, JANUARY 2, SATURDAY

Spun 189 rounds. Met Modi, [members of] the Welfare League[2], Sir Ness Wadia. Went to see Venilal. Meherbaba called. Viceroy's reply came.

BOMBAY, JANUARY 3, SUNDAY

Spun 180 rounds. Sir Phi[roze] Sethna, Cowasji, Jehangir and others called. Members of the Chamber met me. Had a talk with them. Cancelled at their instance my departure for Ahmedabad.[3]

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 19337

[1] The message was given through Mills, an American Press correspondent.

[2] *Vide* "Talk with Welfare of India League Deputation", 2-1-1932

[3] The "Diary" continues in the succeeding volumes, up to January 1, 1933, the portion relating to the period covered in a volume being given at the end of that volume.

225. MESSAGE TO AHMEDABAD WORKERS[1]

[*January 4, 1932*][2]

You must keep your fair name.

Give up liquor, wear only khaddar, live harmoniously. Follow the instructions of Anasuyabehn and Mr. Shankerlal Banker.

Educate your children.

Do your work righteously.

Defend your rights without harbouring any malice against your employers.

Give your fullest contribution to the swaraj *yajna*.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-1-1932

226. MESSAGE TO AMERICA

January 4, 1932

Even as America won its Independence through suffering, valour and sacrifice, so shall India in God's good time achieve her freedom by suffering, sacrifice, and non-violence.

Home Department, Political, File No. 141, pp. 15-7, 1932. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] This and the following three items were written by Gandhiji soon after his arrest during the early hours. In *Young India*, 7-1-1932, Mahadev Desai had reported in "The Historic Week" that Gandhiji was arrested, as in the past, "under Regulation XXV of 1827 for removal of inconvenient persons without assignable reasons".

[2] From *Young India*, 7-1-1932

227. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL[1]

January 4, 1932

Infinite is God's mercy. Please tell the people never to swerve from truth and non-violence. Never to flinch, but to give their lives and all to win swaraj.

The Tribal World of Verrier Elwin, p. 67

228. LETTER TO VERRIER ELWIN[2]

January 4, 1932

MY DEAR ELWIN,

I am so glad you have come. I would like you yourself to tell your countrymen that I love them even as I love my own countrymen. I have never done anything towards them in hatred or malice and God willing I shall never do anything in that manner in future. I am acting no differently towards them now from what I have done under similar circumstances towards my own kith and kin.

With love,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 9697. Courtesy: Eldyth Elwin. Also *The Tribal World of Verrier Elwin*, p. 67

[1] In *Young India*, 7-1-1932, this was reported under the title "The Historic Week" by Mahadev Desai who had explained that Gandhiji gave this "message to the people of India through a note to Vallabhbhai Patel [the Congress President] who he did not know was under arrest at the same time".

[2] In *Young India*, 7-1-1932, Mahadev Desai had reported that Gandhiji sent this message "to all Englishmen through Verrier Elwin". For the latter's account of the arrest, *vide* "Verrier Elwin on Gandhiji's Arrest",

229. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA PRISON[1],
January 5, 1932

CHI. MIRA[2],

This goes as a business letter. Therefore no reference to it in the Press.

Please send me the larger size flask. It will be useful for keeping hot water, saving the labour of warders early morning.

I gave a cheque for Rs. 800 to Mahadev with instructions. I do not think it needed endorsement. See whether he has it and if it needs endorsement.

We are both[3] well.

Love to all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6209. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9675

230. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

January 5, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

I have been writing to you regularly. I am not sure if sometimes I forget about it. But one who follows the path of non-violence would not pay a person in the same coin. He would do a good turn to someone who has done nothing for him or even to one who has done him harm. Hence, even if I am lazy, you should not be. If your yarn snapped 12 times in 47 turns, you could have done 36 more turns if it had not snapped at all. It is my experience that if the yarn snaps once, re-uniting it takes the time required for spinning three turns.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9943. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] Also called Yeravda Mandir; *vide* "Letter to Vimalchandra V. Desai", p. 3. The place-line is not reproduced in subsequent letters. Gandhiji was in Yeravda Prison from January 4, 1932 to May 8, 1933.

[2] The source has this in Devanagari in this and other letters to Mirabehn.

[3] Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was with Gandhiji in Yeravda jail.

231. LETTER TO VIMALCHANDRA V. DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 8, 1932

CHI. NANU,

I got your letter. I was very glad. Write to me in this way from time to time. See if you can write with pen and ink.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 5758. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

232. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 11, 1932

CHI, NARANDAS,

If I wished to write to you at leisure, or write at all, I had no option but to go to jail. I got today the permission to write letters and so I am writing my very first letter to you.

The Sardar's being with me is a novel feature of my imprisonment this time. I still feel tired and my hunger for sleep has not yet been fully satisfied, and so I do no work except a little reading and sacrificial spinning. Both of us keep good health. My diet is almost the same that it was when I was outside. Instead of honey, I take jaggery mixed in hot water. The Sardar's diet consists mainly of tea, bread and vegetables. He used to eat rice when outside, but doesn't eat it here. The rice cooked here may not agree with him. He drinks some milk. His throat complaint persists. You should write to me regularly. I have no precise information as to who have been arrested. Please let me have this information, so that I may know to whom I should write.

I saw Jamna in Bombay. I didn't get time to talk much with anyone. You should now write to me and give me news about her and about others, or those persons themselves should write. I have not written to Kakasaheb, Chhaganlal Joshi, etc., thinking that they are already in jail.

It is surprising that leather for soles of sandals is not available there. It must be available in the Ashram and at several other places. Talk to Surendra about this and ask him to write to me.

I read today about Ba having been arrested. I am glad. If you are permitted to forward my letter to her, do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8199. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

233. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

January 12, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. Now you can write as usual. Did you notice that you forgot to send with me the carding-bow that I had selected? I asked for the handy thing because the larger size required the other paraphernalia. Whenever you or anyone else comes, the larger size may be brought. Thanks to your foresight, I have still quite an amount of slivers. I am therefore not anxious about the bow. And I am still resting, getting as much sleep as I can. The rest of the information about me from my letter to Narandas.

Where are the Privats? How are they keeping in health? My love to them. Let them write. I hope they had a good time at the Ashram. Have the German friends turned up? And Miss Barker? What about Verrier and Shamrao[1]? I hope Pyarelal sent the parcels to Evans and Rogers[2]? Where is he and where is Devdas? What about Bernard?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6210. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9676

[1] Shamrao Hivale, Verrier Elwin's friend and co-worker

[2] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, Mirabehn explains: "Evans and Rogers were the two stalwart detectives whom the British Government had placed in continual attendance on Bapu throughout his Round Table visit. Bapu had arranged to send them each a watch with special engraving."

234. LETTER TO MAITRI GIRI

January 12, 1932

CHI. MAITRI,

You have often been in my thoughts. Write to me. I hope that you have fully recovered from your injury.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6233

235. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI M. THAKKAR

January 12, 193[*2*][1]

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I got your letter. I often think about you all and also wish to write. But I got no time at all while I was outside jail. I see that I shall definitely be able to write from here.

The same diet does not suit all persons. In the last resort, every person has to decide for himself the quantity and the type of food he should eat, having regard to his capacity. I have discovered one thing at any rate from my own experience and that of others, namely, that ground-nut does not agree with any person for long, and it must, therefore, be given up. In any case, it should not be given to children to eat. It will not matter if they eat it occasionally. It will do them no harm if they never eat it. Nor is it necessary to eat coconut. Almonds are useful, of course. But, in your case, I think the following diet will be good.

Milk, boiled or unboiled, to a maximum of three seers.

Dates and currants, two or three sour lemons to be taken either with soda, as I take them, or in warm water with honey or jaggery. Once during the day raw carrots or radish (of the less pungent variety) or salad leaves or tender leaves of cabbage. Two or three *tolas* of any of these items should be chewed thoroughly. Eat them with a little salt. If you eat carrots or these leaves, that will probably satisfy your sense of

[1] The source has "1931", which is a slip for "1932"; *vide* "Diary, 1932", the entry under "January 13"; also "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 13-1-1932

hunger. The dates need not be soaked [in water]. They should be put in milk and eaten as they are. If any of them are not clean, they should of course be washed. If they are not soaked [in water] you will be required to chew them and that will probably give you a feeling of satisfaction. Do not start eating almonds and pistachio nuts just now. Try the diet I have suggested. You will probably feel lighter with it and the menstrual flow will become regular. There is no harm in taking curds instead of milk. If the curds are sour you may add some soda according to how sour they are. You should also eat raw tomatoes. This diet will stop gas. If unboiled milk does not agree with you, you should not consider itwrong to take boiled milk. The addition of soda will most probably stop the gas.

I had seen the children in Bombay. I saw them coughing and that had pained me. They also may be given the diet suggested above. Their weight ought to increase. Just now they should not be given dry fruit at all. You should give them more honey. They may take it either with water or with tomatoes. As for milk, it will be better if they drink it unboiled. Ground-nuts and honey never form a good combination. I think I have now answered all your questions. If any question is left out and if you are still free, you may ask it again.

My blessings to all the women. I will write to all of them one after another. Rama should write to me. I now look upon all the women as mere guests. Take care of your health and see that it does not suffer. I had thought that your health was excellent.

Ask Madhavji to write to me. If you think it necessary to send this letter to Calcutta for the sake of the children, you may do so. The person there who looks after them should write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Since I got your letter late, this letter will be posted tomorrow though I have dated it today.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6811

236. LETTER TO KASHINATH AND KALAVATI TRIVEDI

January 12, 1932

CHI. KASHINATH,

I got your letter. For the present, remain where you are and learn through patience. This is enough today.[1]

CHI. KALAVATI,

I got your letter. I have a faint impression that you did take the pledge. Whatever that be, do what Narandas asks you to do.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati and Hindi: G.N. 5284

237. LETTER TO GANGADEVI SANADHYA

January 12, 1932

CHI. GANGADEVI,

You and Panditji were in my mind often enough, but there was no time for letter-writing. How are both of you and how is your health now? Can Panditji still work hard? How is Hariprasad[2] keeping?

What is the progress on Panditji's farm? What fruits and vegetables are being grown? Is any produce being sent into the city for sale? Can the farm stand on its feet?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2545

[1] What follows is in Hindi.

[2] Adopted son of Gangadevi and Totaram Sanadhya

238. LETTER TO ABBAS

January 13, 1932

CHI. ABBAS,

Write to me and tell me what improvements you have adopted in your method of carding, etc., whether you have accepted the improvements suggested by Mathuradas[1] and whether anybody has taken up the latter's work. I hope you keep good health. How many attend the class at present?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6305

239. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

January 13, 1932

RESPECTED KHUSHALBHAI[2],

I got in Bombay your blessing in the form of your letter. I had hoped to return to the Ashram in fulfilment of your blessing, but God had ordained some other blessing for me and so now I send my respectful greetings to you both from here. If you keep good health there and if the Ashram remains, I should very much like you to stay on there. Remember me sometimes. Sardar Vallabhbhai is with me. Both of us keep good health. The cold also is not too much.

Humble greetings from

MOHANDAS

From Gujarati: C.W. 9221. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] Mathuradas Purushottam, a khadi expert

[2] Gandhiji's cousin and father of Narandas Gandhi

240. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 13, 193[*2*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

Before posting my letter to you yesterday, I forgot to put into the envelope the letter to Lakshmidas. You will find it with this. I send as many others as I could write. I got a letter from Mahalakshmi yesterday. While replying to her,[2] I wrote to some others as well. I must now hand this over, so I will not write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Professor Edward Thompson[3] will land in Bombay on the 15th. He may come to the Ashram; if he does, put him up. Look afterhis comforts. If he doesn't come on his own, write or send a wire to him to invite him. He will probably arrive by a P. & O. liner. Mirabehn knows.

BAPU

[PPS.]

There are eight letters besides that for Lakshmidas.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8200. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] The source has "1931", but in his letter dated December 5, 1931 (C.W. 9409) to P. Hartog, E. Thompson mentions his intention of visiting India in "the following year". Again, in 1931 Mirabehn was away from the Ashram on this date, but in 1932 she was there.

[2] *Vide*"Letter to Mahalakshmi M. Thakkar", 12-1-1932

[3] Author of *The Other Side of the Medal*, *Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India*, *Life of Rabindranath Tagore*, etc.

241. LETTER TO SIR SAMUEL HOARE

January 15, 1932

DEAR SIR SAMUEL[1],

I had not expected to write to you, at any rate not quite so soon from a prison.

I had promised to let you know before I took any serious step. But the events came upon me with such a sudden rush that there was no time or choice left for me. I have no doubt you have seen the telegrams exchanged between the Viceroy and me.-1-1932 I tried my best to keep up co-operation but failed in my opinion through no fault of my own. I cannot help feeling that the Viceroy was wholly in the wrong in refusing to see me except on impossible conditions. I have just written a personal letter to Lord Willingdon urging him to reconsider his position.

I can assure you that I reached Bombay with every intention of co-operating. Your letter, for which pray accept my thanks, cleared one difficulty. And I had hoped that a heart to heart talk with the Viceroy would clear up the difficulty about the ordinances and administration in the interim. Indeed I had planned things about Hindu-Muslim question and other matters with Sir Akbar Hydari who was on the same boat with me and in ignorance of what was happening in India. I had given, as you might have seen, the day before landing, a hopeful message[2] to Reuter's representative on board. But the events I saw happening in India did startle me. I at once sought an interview with the Viceroy with the result you know. Let me add this: cruel suggestions have appeared in the Press that my colleagues forced me to the position I took up.There is no warrant whatsoever for them. The initiative for every step was mine and it was a logical outcome of my creed of satyagraha. I cannot wish for more loyal colleagues. In matters of satyagraha they yield to my judgment as to an expert's[3]. I don't expect you to reply to this letter. I thought I should just tell you what I think about it all. Whatever happens, I shall always retain happy recollections of our meetings.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: C.W. 9556. Courtesy: India Office Library

[1] Secretary of State for India

[2] *Vide* "Interview to Reuter", 27-12-1931

[3] The source has "as if an expert".

242. LETTER TO LORD WILLINGDON

YERAVDA PRISON,
January 15, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

Your wire in reply to mine was a painful surprise to me. Your very cordial letters written by you after I had left for London had led me to expect a message from you awaiting me on my return to Bombay. Such a message would have been in keeping with your past as you had let me see it. Do you remember 1915 when I returned to India from self-imposed exile? You had sent me a message through the late Mr. Gokhale that I should see you before expressing my viewson Indian matters. Your astounding wire therefore in reply to mine seeking interview and guidance I could not understand at all. Nor do I understand it even now.

But I do not write this to blame you for your action for which no doubt, in your own opinion, you had the best of State reasons. But I would like you as an Englishman to review the immediate past and see whether you did not commit a grave error of judgment in repelling my sincere and well-meant advance. I ask you to believe me when I tell you that I was desperately anxious to avoid resumption of struggle and to tender my whole-hearted co-operation if it was at all possible. I am anxious to do so even now. But the difficulties are obviously much greater than before, unless you retrace your steps or convince me that I was wholly in the wrong.

Will you not realize that it is impossible to crush the Congress spirit though you have in law killed the Congress organization? Is it wrong for Indians to desire complete independence for their country? Is it wrong to seek to do so through non-violent direct action, when negotiation fails or becomes impossible? Englishmen have negotiated with men whose hands were dyed red as in Ireland but after committing a series of inhumanities. They negotiated with the Boers after trying the method of concentration for women. Even in India the same thing was done last year after trying repressive measures of a particularly strong character against most women who never did the slightest violence. Must such history be repeated again? It seems to me that you invited trouble, so as to enable you to put the Congress out of your way. Even if you succeed in producing a dead calm in India you must know that it can bring no lasting peace to the land. I ask you

therefore to give me and my comrades the same credit for honesty of intention and action that you would claim for yourself and your colleagues and with such a mind reconsider your position and if you feel sure of its correctness try to convince me of the error of my way. Why do you say I want to impose my views on the Government? Argument is not an imposing. The Congress does seek to convert the Government to its views by reason, negotiation and even by direct action, i.e., self-suffering, so long as the Congress is sure of the correctness of its own position. Is not this what every citizen or organization has done all the world over? The congress has indeed struck a new path. It has replaced the method of armed rebellion by self-suffering. If you believe in this profession of the Congress, surely you would welcome the coming in of a method that more becomes man's dignity than the old law of the jungle.

But whether you feel with me as to the method or not I invite you still to try negotiation with the Congress and especially with me as its representative whom you gave no chance of even knowing the Government side of the case. Remember the door was shut by you and not by me. Open it in a gentlemanly manner and you will find me eager to enter in.

My regards to Lady Willingdon. She must not be angry with me that I am causing worry to her husband. I do not want to. If at all, she must be angry with you in that in your anger or distrust, you banged the door in the face of a poor old man who knocked and was denied entrance.

I am,

Your sincere friend,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: India Office Library and Records. Courtesy: The British Library, London

243. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

January 15, 1932

CHI. PANDITJI,

You have given a fine description of your visit to Kashi. The fact that the Master's[1] pupils are carrying on his work in a worthy manner should make all of us happy. You should now resume your visits among Chharas[2]. If you can cultivate close contacts with them and influence them, it will be a great achievement.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 220. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

244. LETTER TO PADMA

January 15, 1932

CHI. PADMA,

Vasumatibehn told me that you had not fully recovered. Write to me and give me detailed news about your health. Where is Sarojinidevi[3] at present? And how is she? Do you get any news about Father? Do you write to him? Tell me what work you do every day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6128. Also C.W. 3480. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

245. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

January 15, 1932

BHAI VALJI,

How are you both? Has the health of either improved a little? How is Kamalnayan? Ask him to write to me. Has he made any progress in his studies? Does he feel satisfied? I hope you wander

[1] Vishnu Digambar Paluskar, addressee's music teacher

[2] An ex-criminal tribe of central Gujarat who gave some trouble to the Ashram people

[3] Addressee's mother

about a great deal there. Remember that you have gone there not to read but to improve your health. As you wander in the midst of Nature, you will daily find in her something new to read.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7417. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

246. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 15, 1932

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

You may now write long letters to me. Do write. What progress have you made with regard to the spinning-wheel? Have you completed the writing of the *Ramayana*? Are you writing on any other subject? Has the body been built up? Has your mind become clear and tension free? Has the land been purchased? Who are the other persons with you there? Is the work at Tadikhet going on?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33023

247. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 17,1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

You will know about us from my letter[1] to Mirabehn. If I know who are still in the Ashram, I can write to them. We are eager to hear from you. You can write at any time. If you have not written already write as soon as you get this letter.

I have already written twice[2].

This is the third time. The letter

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 11-1-1932 & "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 13-1-1932

which I wrote to you asking you to send me a few things was in addition. How is Radha? Write to me about the health of all the others.

Blessings to all.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

How is Punjabhai? Where does he stay?

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8201. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

248. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

January 17/18, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

I have the things sent by you. The sandals are too flimsy to last beyond a month or two, that is to say, the soles will be worn out. Sole leather is therefore a necessity. If you cannot procure it, I shall have to fall back upon rubber soles.

Are the Privats still there? Please give or send my love to them. You will send my love also to the Rollands.

We are both still keeping well. My food is the same as outside except that I have added curds for the evening meal. There is daily at least two hours' walk divided between morning and evening. I have not yet gone beyond 200 rounds of yarn. But I feel that by next week I shall have finished my arrears of sleep. I must be sleeping altogether nine hours during 24 hours. I am doing a fair amount of reading.

I had expected an Ashram mail by this time. Do not send me the other carding-bow just yet.

Love.

BAPU

January 18, 1932

[PS.]

I must apologize. I discovered today that you had packed the bow in the matting.[1]

From the original: C.W. 6211. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9677

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Mirabehn", 12-1-1932

249. LETTER TO JAISHANKAR P. TRIVEDI

January 18, 1932

BHAI TRIVEDI[1],

I got the two lots of fruit and vegetables which you sent. Please don't send any more now. Both of us get these things here if we want them. It would be better from every point of view that you should use your time and money for more important work. You mayrest assured that, if I want anything, I will not hesitate to ask you for it. Surely you know this! I had met Manu[2] in Villeneuve. Send him my blessings.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1001

250. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

January 19, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

I was very eager to meet all of you. Mridu had informed me about your health. I hope you have fully recovered now. Mridu is doing well, I hope. What does Chi. Bharati do?

Sardar and I are well.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11135. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

251. LETTER TO CHILDREN, KINGSLEY HALL

January 20, 1932

DEAR LITTLE FRIENDS,

I often think of you and the bright answers you gave to my questions when that afternoon we had sat together.[3]

I never got the time whilst I was at Kingsley Hall to send you a note thanking you for the gifts of love you had sent me. That I do now from my prison. I had hoped to transfer these gifts to the Ashram

[1] Prof. J. P. Trivedi of Poona Agriculture College

[2] Manshankar, addressee's son

[3] *Vide* "Discussion with Children", 19-9-1931

children about whom you should ask aunty Muriel[1] to tell you something. But I was never able to reach the Ashram.

Is it not funny that you should receive a letter from a prison! But though inside a prison I don't feel like being a prisoner. I am not conscious of having done anything wrong.

My love to you all.

Yours,

Whom you call uncle,

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1016-a

252. LETTER TO MANIBEHN N. PARIKH

January 20, 1932

CHI. MANIBEHN,

I am glad that you teach the children in the kindergarten. You should write to me from time to time and tell me your experience, which children are well-behaved and which are undisciplined, what difficulties you have to face, etc. Narahari[2] teaches in Nasik and you teach in the Ashram. This is very good co-operation between you two.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5963

253. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON[3]

January 21, 1932

MY DEAR CHILD,

Your account of the meeting with the ailing sister[4] is touching. Give my love to her when you visit her again.

I hope you are at peace with yourself now. The children[5] must be quite well. Kiss them for me if they will let me kiss them.

[1] Muriel Lester, Principal, Kingsley Hall, was Gandhiji's hostess in London during his visit to England from September to November, 1931.

[2] Narahari Parikh, addressee's husband

[3] The Menon family were in England, at Selly Oak, Birmingham.

[4] An English girl, poor and bed-ridden, who was a great admirer of Gandhiji

[5] Addressee's daughters, Nan and Tangai

Maria[1] was with me in Bombay. But I had hardly time to talk to her.

I hope Menon is doing well. My love to him and to all at Woodbrooke settlement[2]. Send my love to Miss Harrison and tell me where she is staying. Do you write to Maud Cheeseman?

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Sardar Vallabhbhai is with me. Both of us are doing quite well.

From a photostat: No. 107. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child*, pp. 87-8

254. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

January 21, 1932

CHI. MAHAVIR,

I got your letter. I feel unhappy that your health has still not improved completely. Do you also wish to go to Darjeeling? None of you need go, if you don't wish to. And if you do go, make up your mind to return with your health fully recouped. I shall feel very unhappy if you become more ill there. If you do not go, consult Dr. Talwalkar and follow the treatment which he advises. If you decide to go, please let me know where you intend to stay, etc. If there is no proper accommodation for you where you go, I think you will be running a risk in going there. I don't regard you as a child. Decide like a grown-up and mature person and persuade Krishnamaiyadevi[3] also to think in the same way.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6231

[1] Anne Marie Petersen

[2] The Quaker Centre, near Birmingham, in whose activities the addressee and her husband took part

[3] Addressee's mother

255. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 21, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got the post from the Ashram today, after I had waited for it for many days. I was getting worried since I had received no reply. As you posted the packet as a parcel, it was delayed. On previous occasions, too, that is what happened. I see, however, that posting things as parcel costs less. You may, therefore, continue the practice if you wish to. You can do this. Send the many other letters as parcel and send yours separately, by ordinary post. That will save expenditure and I will get one letter immediately. Ordinarily you oranybody else will be able to write to me as often as necessary. Most probably I will get the letters immediately.

You have done nothing wrong in reproducing in the "Ashram Samachar"[1] the extract from my letter.

Anyone from the Ashram will be permitted to visit us. Others too, who have not become prominent in the political field, will be permitted; for instance, Pyare Ali[2], or Rama (Ranchhodbhai's). Three or four can come at a time. We are permitted to receive visitors once a week. But we don't wish to waste money in this manner. You may, therefore, permit people to come as and when you think proper. I wish to tell you what is permissible and what my general view is, and leave the rest to you. Don't think that I am putting any restriction. How can I judge what the circumstances there require, or measure the depth of people's feelings or their foolish attachment to me?

Allow Krishnamaiyadevi and others to go to Darjeeling. It will certainly mean expense, but that will be worth incurring. I suppose in Darjeeling they will stay with some friends and we shall have to pay only the fare. Give them the fare for the outward journey. As for the return fare, tell them that you will send a note which they can show and get money from Bhai Jivanlal of the Birla Brothers. That is, you can send them a letter of recommendation when they intend to return. Will Mahavir also go with them? If he does, let him stay there for five or six months. After he has recovered, he can take up some public work in Darjeeling. Similarly, send away the girls when they wish to go.

[1] A handwritten news bulletin of the Ashram

[2] A business man from Bombay who, along with his wife Noorbanu, was an ardent follower of Gandhiji

Where is Abbas Saheb? How does he keep? Inquire and let me know. How is Raojibhai's Vimala? Where is Raojibhai Manibhai of Sojitra? Where is Shivabhai?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Venilal[1] was very ill in Bombay. How is he now? You say that Navin has come to live there for the present. What exactly do you mean? Where does he stay just now and what does he do?

The letters to the others will be posted on Tuesday. Take this letter to have been written for Dalbahadur Giri's family and for Kusum. My compliments to Kanti[2], Bal[3], Prithuraj[4] and other warriors. I will write to them later.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8202. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

256. LETTER TO RAMANANDA CHATTERJEE

January 22, 1932

DEAR RAMANAND BABU,

May I ask you for the same courtesy you extended to me during my last incarceration[5]? I did see the current issue of *The Modern Review*.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. RAMANANDA CHATTERJEE

SHANTINIKETAN[6]

From the original: C.W. 9526. Courtesy: Santa Devi

[1] Venilal Gandhi

[2] Kanti Gandhi, son of Harilal Gandhi

[3] D. B. Kalelkar's second son

[4] Son of Lakshmidas Asar

[5] During his last incarceration (May 5, 1930 to January 26, 1931) Gandhiji had written to the addressee: "I have permission to receive *The Modern Review*, among other magazines. Will you please send me copies from the May number? . . ." *The Modern Review* was among the approved periodicals this time too; *vide* "Letter from R. M. Maxwell", 16-1-1932

[6] The postcard was redirected to: 2/1 Townshend Road, Bhawanipore, Calcutta.

257. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

January 22, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. You did well in paying a visit to the women who are in prison.

There is no such thing as a miracle[1] in this world, or rather everything is a miracle. That the earth is hanging in space withoutsupport and that we do not see the *atman* though we know that it dwells in our body—these are great miracles. Compared to them, other miracles are as trivial as the conjuror's mango tree.

"Keeping one's eye single"[2] means that one should not see with a distorted vision, that one should keep one's eyes pure and not cast lustful glances. The statement has no other meaning.

Sarojinidevi's case is a painful one. If, however, we behave towards her in a spirit of non-attachment, she will keep herself on the right path, no matter whether she continues to live there or lives in Prayag.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10267. Also C.W. 6716. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

258. LETTER TO SIR FREDERICK SYKES[3]

January 23, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

The cordial conversations I had with you last year embolden me to write this to you. If you would rather that, being a prisoner, I should not write to you, I shall cease to do so and this may be thrown away. If however you don't resent this letter, I may take the further liberty of writing again, should the occasion arise.

Whilst in my opinion all the ordinances are a tragic blunder and so utterly unnecessary, I can understand the Government taking a different view and trying to crush the Congress. The organization may

[1] The addressee had asked Gandhiji what he thought of miracles.

[2] *Vide St. Matthew*, IV. 22

[3] Governor of Bombay

be put out of action for a time. The spirit will never be crushed. But this is another story.

What I want to draw your attention to is the excesses that are being committed under the ordinances.

The breaking up of a peaceful meeting in Ahmedabad by severe lathi charges and running horses through the meeting appears to have been a barbarous procedure, several young men were severely and some women were slightly hurt. One young woman had her hair pulled. This information I glean from the newspapers supplied to me. In Nadiad the treatment is said to have been still more brutal and it isreported to have been the worst in Surat. Boys in two boarding houses are said to have been hurriedly dragged out of them and the houses taken over by the authorities. Such procedure brutalizes those who are engaged in carrying it out. It should be borne in mind that all this treatment is being meted out to those who do not retaliate and have not been known to have done any previous violence.

The authorities have taken possession of the National University buildings in Ahmedabad. The University has a rich collection of carefully selected books. There is a religious section to the library. It is admitted to be a unique library built up by devoted scholars. It contains some rare and valuable manuscripts. There is, too, a little museum which has an art collection. The grounds have valuable trees planted on them. The whole of this constructive effort—a fruit of ten years patient labour—is likely to be ruined without any just cause.

One of the most respectable Indians belonging to the celebrated Tyabji family, Mr. Abbas Tyabji who is 78-year-old and who is an ex-Chief Judge of the Baroda High Court is said to have been locked up in Nadiad along with other prisoners in what can only be described as a cage.

I ask you to investigate these statements. Denials by the parties charged can be regarded as no investigation. Often have such denials been proved to be worthless.

I have picked out but a few of what have appeared to me to be glaring instances of high-handedness. If past experience is any guide, probably the worst cases have not even been allowed to appear in the newspapers. Nor do I get all the newspapers.

I write this as a friend wishing well to the English. I am anxious that on both sides every avoidable cause of bitterness should be avoided. I would like the fight to be conducted honourably on either

side so that at the end of it either party may be able to say of the other that there was no malice behind its actions.

I am,

Your sincere friend,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR FREDERICK SYKES

BOMBAY

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(41), Pt. 1, pp. 15-6; also G.N. 3856

259. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

January 23, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

The long awaited post came from the Ashram only yesterday. I shall now get it regularly I expect. Of course, you were right in going to Bombay. You should be the sole judge finally as to where you would stay and what you would do.

When you write to the Privats, tell them they are constantly in my thoughts. They must on no account impair their health. They should write to me.

I have told you already not to bring or send the hanging bow.[1] You have sent me so many slivers that I shall not need to card for some weeks yet. And I am glad. I have not yet regained my bodily strength. I sleep at least thrice during the day in spite of full sleep between 9 p.m. and 3.45 a.m. I need sleep and rest as yet. I do not spin 500 yards [like][2] I did last year. I am doing the amount in two days. I am hoping however soon to be able to do 500 yards per day. I will not strain myself to do it. I shall try to conserve what energy there is still left in me. This is no notice to you to bring or send me more slivers. If I must have them I shall soon tell you. My health is excellent and so is Sardar Vallabhbhai's. I have simply told you how much rest I still need. The London wear and tear was terrific and I suppose the body now demands prolonged rest. The Bombay rush on the top of London's undid the good the voyage had undoubtedly done.

As to the visits, this time there is no difficulty. They have

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 17/18

[2] From *Bapu's Letters to Mira*

granted what I asked for last time. Weekly visits may therefore be paid. But this does not mean that someone must come every week. I impose no restrictions. I simply give the warning that we are poor people and therefore we have to be sparing in paying visits of love. There cannot be much business. And love prospers on self-denial. No more of philosophy. I know you will all do what is best. Those who are known to political fame of course cannot visit without special permission.

My love to the sisters, Kamala and to yourself.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6212. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9678

260. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

January 23, 1932

CHI. KANTI,

I was glad to get your letter. Personally I was very happy that all of you were given a taste of the Government's kindness. If the experience does not make us angry but, on the contrary, fills our heart with compassion for the other party, and if we are as ready as ever to welcome more such experience, we shall have realized the true aim of our life. If anybody abused St. Francis, he would smile gently and thank God that He did not inspire that person to assault him, and if anybody assaulted him he would thank God that He did not inspire the latter to kill him outright. If anybody attempted to kill him, St. Francis would say that after all he did not try to torture him. The point is that he who has overcome love for his body and looks upon it only as an instrument will never be affected in his mind by anybody injuring his body.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8905. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

261. LETTER TO BAL KALELKAR

January 23, 1932

CHI. BAL,

I did get your letter, but I could find no time at all to reply. Now that I am here you may ask me whatever you wish to and I will try to answer. I have of course conveyed my congratulations to all of you who have plunged into the struggle with enthusiasm. Though I do not write separately to each one, all of you should write to me about your experiences. The little that I have written in the letter[1] to Kanti applies to you all. That letter contains all that I have to say for the present. Remember that none of us should get elated[with the service we are able to do]. We should always be dissatisfied with what we can do. We come into this world not to incur debts, but to pay them. He who has no debts to discharge no longer needs to be burdened with a body. Such a one is a free soul, and a debtor has no reason to feel elated even when he pays off his whole debt. When he has done that, he only earns his rest. To be free from one's debts is to be free from bondage.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8904. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

262. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

January 23, 1932

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

Your letter has set my mind at rest. Everyone is being tested. We should pray in our hearts that God may regard us as fit to make a pure sacrifice. It will be enough if everyone of us does the task that falls to one's lot to the best of one's ability.

How is Kaku? What is he doing at present?

Do you take enough milk and fruit? Don't be stingy about them or shrink from taking them. Regard them as medicine. If you feel better with coffee, you can take that too.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

Write to Nath[1] and request him to pay a visit from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro- 6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 62. Also C.W. 8788. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

263. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

January 23, 1932

CHI. PANDITJI,

I have your letter.

You have given a good explanation of rhythm beats. I shall find some time and try to follow the method you have suggested. However, the book has not yet reached me.

Your rule about Mathuri[2] is correct. She need not get up early. Nor should she have to bear any burden either of work or of study. She should be free to sleep and work as and when she likes. Take care about her diet. Her main food should be milk. She may take rice, but very little of it, and should take no pulses at all. It is necessary for her to take vegetables cooked without spices. It would be good if she eats one or two green tomatoes cooked.

Your advice regarding Gajanan[3] seems to me all right.

I was interested by your explanation about Panditji, the teacher[4]. I also like your having formed an Association. It seems but proper that you and his other pupils should first do something through your own efforts and then approach the public for help. That is the only right way for you. Please go slow with the scheme while the present conflagration lasts, though you may certainly do what is absolutely necessary.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 221. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

[1] Kedarnath Kulkarni, Kishorelal Mashruwala's guru
[2] Addressee's daughter, a singer
[3] Addressee's nephew
[4] Vishnu Digambar Paluskar; *vide* "Letter to Narayan M. Khare", 15-1-1932

264. LETTER TO MATHURI N. KHARE

January 23, 1932

CHI. MATHURI,

I got your letter. Your first task is to build up a strong physique. You should not try to learn more than what you can while you play. Our real education lies in learning to be good. Everybody, whether healthy or ill, can do that. Knowledge of letters is like ornaments for the body. Can all people get them?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 260. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

265. LETTER TO GAJANAN V. KHARE

January 23, 1932

CHI. GAJANAN,

I have your letter. The opinion expressed by Kakashri is correct. It is enough to be prepared to undergo suffering. No one will deter you from plunging into the sacrifice when the need arises. In the mean time you should devote yourself to your own jobs.

How are you progressing with your drawing?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 306. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

266. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

January 23, 1932

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. We at least could see each other, but what about the other women who could not even see me? However, I should have realized your eagerness and sent a special slip for you. Have it now. I should advise you not to exert yourself beyond your capacity. However, God will look after you all. Remember the first verse[1] of the

[1] »æçß ¿, mæçÚ•æßæçâÙ, •æ æ , »æ´ŧ`Ùç´Ø, |
•æÙß: ´çÚ æÌæ ×æ ç•Ù `æÙæçâ •æßæß ||

women's prayer. It has universal application. You should not think that it is a prayer which was offered by someone thousands of years ago.

All of us are helpless, as Draupadi was. Before God such distinctions as man and woman lose all meaning. The same *atman* dwells in the man's and in the woman's body. In our infatuated state, we are deluded by the different bodily forms and are even overcome by passion. If we know the soul living within and, realizing that all individual selves are essentially one and the same, devote ourselves to the service of all, no disturbing thoughts would attack us and harass us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9322. Also C.W. 6597. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

267. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

January 23, 1932

CHI. MANGALA,

I got your letter written in a beautiful hand. Yes, one can get a [walking] stick[1] even in England. Do you know by heart all the chapters of the *Gita*? How many does Pushpa know? Why did she let herself fall ill? Has her nose grown a little? Tell her that, when it is held high, she should not go and get it snapped off. Do both of you rise early? Where is Kamala just now? Does she ever write to you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4072. Also C.W. 36. Courtesy: Mangalabehn B. Desai

[1] The reference is to Gandhiji's practice of placing his hand on a girl's shoulder for support while walking.

268. LETTER TO NIRMALA H. DESAI

January 23, 1932

CHI. NIRMALA (AUNT),

Yes. If I had not seen you in Bombay, I would not have thought of asking you to write to me. But having seen you there, I did not write a separate letter to you but said in my letter to Anandi that she should ask you to write. You have improved your handwriting.

Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9462

269. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

January 23, 1932

CHI. VANAMALA[1],

I was glad to get your letter. You have improved your handwriting. Do your lessons there with attention. Do you ever remember the Vidyapith? How is Mohan[2]?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5762. Also C.W. 2985. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

270. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

January 23, 1932

CHI. BABU,

You seem to be demanding too much. Should I write when you reply or even without your writing? You seem to be still suffering from asthma. Why? How much cod-liver oil did you take? Did you feel better after taking it or not? What are you doing at present? Do

[1] Daughter and son of Narahari Parikh

you have cough? How much was your weight last year? Do you take sun-baths? Do you massage your body with oil? Fresh air, sunshine and oil massage are essential for you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9904. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

271. LETTER TO VASUDEV

January 23, 1932

BHAI VASUDEV,

I have your letter. The soul is ennobled by self-control. The true nature of the soul consists in a passionless state. That is why control over the emotions is imperative.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 8903-a. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

272. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

January 24, 1932

CHI. RAIHANA,

I had your letter. For how many days was Father kept at Nadiad? Did he suffer any hardship there? What are the arrangements for his food and other necessaries? Last time his beard was infested with lice. This time he should take precautions against that. He should ask for help for the purpose if necessary. Or he may ask for me to be brought there. Is he allowed to see everybody freely? How often areyou allowed to see him? Tell him that Sardar and I think of him often and speak of the sacrifices made by him.

Why do you feel uneasy? God will take service from you as He wills. Convey to Mother on behalf of us both repeated *vandemataram*s and repeated salaams, *Khuda Hafiz* and all else that may be befitting. How many months old is Sohaila's[1] baby now? I do know that you will keep your word. We shall talk more about it if and

[1] Addressee's sister

when God ordains that we meet. Write to me from time to time. Generally they give me all the letters received for me. There is no restriction, either, as to the number of letters that I can write from here. I am not allowed to write on political matters or to important personages like Father. But I may freely write sermons or love-letters to boys or girls like you. This freedom should be considered adequate.

Now I begin writing in Urdu. Hamida is a brave girl. God will give her great work to do and let her attain greatness. I wish for nothing more than that God should grant long life to Hamida. In this regard you also deserve thanks, for after all Hamida is your pupil, isn't she? Point out to me my mistakes. I hope this is enough exercise for today. *Khuda Hafiz.*

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Convey my blessings to Rohini, Radhabehn and others when you see them.[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9636

273. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

January 24, 1932

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

I did see you in Bombay but could exchange no word with you. Now send me your account for all these months. Your health seemed to be all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1827

274. LETTER TO LALJI K. PARMAR

January 24,1932

CHI. LALJI,

Mamasaheb[2] tells me in his letter that you are doing no work, that you have stopped weaving because you do not get yarn. How can

[1] This sentence is in Gujarati in the source.

[2] Presumably V. L. Phadke, who was running a Harijan Ashram in Godhra

one who can spin complain that he has no yarn.? You yourself should spin and, when you have got enough yarn for one cloth-piece, you should weave it. You should also persuade your friends and neighbours to spin. One who is eager to serve always gets an opportunity to do so. Do not waste the training which has been given to you. Write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3295

275. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

January 24, 1932

CHI. RUKMINI,

I know I should not expect any letter from you, the more so now that you are a mother. I requested your father-in-law to find a name for the son, and he has passed on the responsibility to me. You should help me now. Suggest some names which both of you would like. Out of these I will select the one which I like best. How is Benarsi? Your father-in-law is what you would describe as an ideal father-in-law. Besides, he is ever ready to help others. But he has not the courage to return from England without having earned enough money there, and he is not likely to succeed in doing it. The only chance now is that, if you press him, he might return. Write to him and tell him that those for whose sake he wants to earn the wealth do not want it. Why, then, should he worry himself so much?

Blessings from

BAPU `

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9059

276. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

January 24, 1932

BHAI VITHALDAS,

Just as I was asking Sardar whether he had any news about you, I got your letter. Your weakness seems to have persisted too long. Do not worry, however. Take complete rest and recover fully before you resume work. Meanwhile your mind is bound to be busy. A person

who has special capacity for some particular work[1] can do much even through his ideas. That is the excellence of karmayoga.

Both of us are quite well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

My blessings to all friends in the Ashram at Sasvad.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9779

277. LETTER TO HARIPRASAD

January 24, 1932

CHI. HARIPRASAD,

God will reward you well for your devoted services to Gangadevi. But the *Gita* teaches us to perform our job or our service without consideration of the result. Therefore, on your part rendering of service is an end in itself and that is how it should be. I hope you are keeping well. Give me your daily routine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2550

278. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

January 24, 1932

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

I have your two letters. What can I write to you? The progress of your work is as regular as the rising and setting of the sun. Keep it up. I am being provided with *datuns*[2]. These days Sardar prepares them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6539

[1] The addressee was a khadi expert.

[2] Twigs used for cleaning teeth

279. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 23[1]/25, 1932

3 p.m., Saturday,

CHI. NARANDAS,

I will write as many letters as I can and hand them over on Tuesdays for being posted. I cannot be as regular as I should like to be. I need rest. My health is very good, though. You will know more about it from my letter to Mirabehn. I was weighed today. The weight was 106_ pounds. The Sardar weighed 144_ lb. Only, I need plenty of rest and take it. Abbas Saheb is your neighbour now. I suppose you go and inquire after him. If he requires any food, send it to him. Hamidabehn, together with Kanjibhai's wife and daughter, is also there. I suppose a woman from the Ashram visits them from time to time.

I cannot think from here what special work may be assigned to Tilakam. He must, of course, pick up Hindi. It is also desirable that he should learn spinning and weaving. Does he work to your satisfaction?

Afternoon, January 25[2], 1932

I had a painful letter from Champa. Ratilal seems to be harassing her a good deal. It would be desirable if Champa could be separated from him on any pretext. She is not strong enough to bear any more children. It is likely that Ratilal is not able to control himself. We are faced with a very painful moral duty. From what Champa writes, it seems that Ratilal spends the whole day in the bungalow and beats the children whenever he feels the itch. I don't understand what you can do in this matter. If a woman or man agrees to stay with them for a payment, that may help. Consider this and do what you think best.

If someone visits Maganbhai, he should tell him that I got his letter. How can I write to him now? He should also tell Kakasaheb that I remember all that I have to write about. I will write what I can during the time I get.

You will observe that I send to you many letters addressed to persons outside Ahmedabad. I know that this means double expense

[1] The source has "24", but Saturday fell on January 23, 1932.

[2] The source has "24", but Chapter XIV of *Bhagavad Gita* referred to in the letter was written on January 25, 1932; *vide* "Letters on the *Gita*". 21-2-1932, Chapter xiv; also "Diary, 1932", the last item in the volume.

and increase in your work. If you wish, I can post such letters directly from here to the persons concerned and save both money and time. I have a faint recollection that I had put this question to you on a previous occasion, too, and that you had replied that they should be forwarded through you. Please let me know what I should do.

You will find with this, on a separate sheet, a talk[1] on Chapter XIV. Since I have started writing, I will, as far as possible, continue the series from week to week.

Today's post includes some useful letters (and slips too). If you get time, read them. I have one limitation, or say a gift. I express certain thoughts only in certain circumstances. Without those circumstances, those thoughts would remain unexpressed. If these scattered reflections are not collected, they are likely to be lost. Not that that would be much of a loss, but, since Mahadev, Kaka and others have collected such reflections, I, too, have somewhat fallen a victim to this temptation. As a matter of fact, however, my ship sails as the wind blows. I have no map of the course with me. How can I have one? Having such a map is contrary to the spirit of *bhakti*. How can one who would dance as God wills choose deliberately a course? It is enough if such a one can give single-minded devotion to the task which falls to his or her lot. But this is mere philosophizing. How does it help? "Live as you like, but realize God somehow, anyhow."

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

There are sixty letters besides this.

Lakshman Giri writes from 96 Harrison Road, Calcutta, and requests that the Giri family should be sent away. I write this for your information. You yourself should reply to him from there. I am not replying.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

[1] Gandhiji, however, forgot to enclose the talk and sent it with the letter dated January 26, 1932; *vide* pp. 40-1. For the series of talks, *vide* "Letters on the *Gita*", 21-2-1932.

280. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Silence Day, January 25, 1932

DEAR SISTERS,

I hope you will understand that it is not possible for me to write to each of you separately. Of course, whenever it is necessary, and I get time, I write to some of you individually. But this time, too, I intend to write a joint letter to the women as I used to do formerly.

During these days, when all of us are passing through a testing time, I hope that all of you will derive great consolation from Draupadi's prayer. Really speaking, all of us are now in the same plight as she was. No human being can save our honour, God alone can do that. It is true that He often sends His help through men. But such a man is only God's tool or instrument. This much in regard to the difficult time through which we are passing.

Now a little from my experiences in England. I may say that in England, too, I received from women almost the same love that I have always received from Indian women. Just as you have kept no secret from me, there in England also I came across women who opened their hearts to me. They came from long distances to accompany me in my early morning walks and to talk to me. The moral which I drew from this is that non-violence is a very wide thing. It includes absolute freedom from impure thoughts.

I also saw that Indian women were in no way inferior to European women. Much of their strength lies suppressed and some of it has had no opportunity to reveal itself. Whenever I observed the European women's superiority, I could also see the causes of it. If the same causes begin to operate in our country, the women here also would become like them. However, we should certainly reflect over the superiority which weobserve in European women. We should not feel elated thinking that that strength lies concealed in us; nor should we be complacent on that account. They possess the power of organization and can unite and work very well like the men. They don't think themselves helpless, but fearlessly move about wherever they like. In England, if a woman goes out alone either during day or at night, it is not thought necessary for anybody to accompany her. Nursing in hospitals has become an exclusive province of women, and they do the work very well indeed. The sacrifices made by some women are beyond praise. Muriel Lester who came to stay with us at the Ashram is a daughter of rich parents. Like Mirabehn, she has

given away, as a trust to the Ashram founded by her, all her share of the parental wealth. She and her sister Doris have dedicated their all to public service. Doris runs a school for children. She is helped by about ten women teachers who work for a very small pay. Muriel runs the Ashram where I was staying. Day and night the two sisters think only of service. Both have remained unmarried and now they have reached an age when even the thought of marriage would not occur to them. We can see their purity marked on their faces. In Muriel's Ashram no distinction would ever be made between high and low or between whites and non-whites. One may suppose that she could expect some publicity by acting as my hostess. But what shall one say about her having let Tilakam stay at the place? You may ask Tilakam himself how he was looked after there. He went to it as a pauper. I had agreed to pay the expenses on his account. However, Tilakam gave to the Ashram his full services like the others, so that I did not have to pay a single penny on his behalf. Negroes too she admits into her institution, and treats them with the same respect and love. I have many such happy memories of my stay. But I hope that for the present you will be satisfied with what I have given.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

281. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

Silence Day, [*January 25, 1932*][1]

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

Since I cannot write to each of you separately, I shall try to write a joint letter to you all every week as before. I now intend to write to you about the things I had been hoping to explain to you when I would meet you. It is in God's hands to fulfil the intention. We should live as He may ordain and feel happy in doing so. This is why we sing that *bhajan* by Narasinh Mehta: "Take to heart neither happiness nor suffering; they are ordained for this body from its very birth." I will now tell you a story. First I wish to tell you about the school run by a lady named Doris. She is the sister of Miss Muriel who came to stay with us at the Ashram. She has dedicated her life to the service of

[1] This being Gandhiji's first letter to the Ashram children from Yeravda Prison, it is presumed that this was written on the same day as the preceding letter to Ashram women.

children, and to that end she has been running a beautiful school for them. It has no male teacher. All the teachers are women. The school is a two-storeyed building with a spacious terrace above, a part of which is covered so that when it is raining the children might play or go to bed under the roof. I liked one thing which I saw there. All the children are made to sleep in the school for half an hour in the afternoon, for which purpose they have small folding bedsteads. You should note that these boys and girls are not more than eight years old. The children are made to do all that they can with their own hands. In the games they play the teacher invariably joins them. The teachers also show them how to wash their faces and hands and how to brush their teeth properly. There is not a single activity of the children which is not supervised by a teacher. All the children belong to poor families and pay no fees. Games, physical exercises and handicrafts also are there. These children became as close to me as you had become. They sent me toys as a birthday gift, which I have carefully preserved and brought for you.But now I don't know when I shall be able to give them to you. This is enough for today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8896. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

282. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

January 25, 1932

CHI. JAMNADAS,

You came and left without saying much. Now write to me and make the letter as long as you wish. How far are you succeeding in your work? How many pupils does the school have? And how many teachers? Where is Jagannath? Where are his brothers? How is your health?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9361

283. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

January 25, 1932

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

You must have got my letter. I have had no reply from you. I write this letter, all the same, so that you may not worry. I am eager to get news about Father and others. I hope you don't worry about things.

Both of us are quite well. My diet is practically the same as it was when I was out of jail.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3424

284. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

January 25, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. I don't know whether I shall be able to describe to you all that you want to know.[1]

I didn't know that Dhurandhar had become the King's guest.

I very much enjoyed seeing the paintings in Rome, but what opinion can I give after a visit of two hours? What is my competence to Judge? And what is my experience in these matters? I liked some of the pictures very much indeed. If I could spend two or three months there, I would go and see the paintings and sculptures every day and study them attentively. I saw the sculpture of Jesus on the cross. I have already written and told you that it was this that attracted me most.

I didn't feel, however, that the art of that country excelled that of India. The two have developed along different lines. Indian art is entirely a product of the imagination. European art is imitation of Nature. Probably this makes Western art easier to understand. But, maybe, after we have understood it, it keeps us glued to the earth, whereas the more we understand Indian art the more it lifts us above the earth. I have stated these views simply because I must say

[1] The addressee had asked for an account of Gandhiji's visits to places of artistic interest in Rome and elsewhere.

something to you. I put no great value on them. It is likely that my unconscious partiality for India makes me say this, or my ignorance makes me ride the horse of fancy. But anyone who rides such a horse is sure to fall ultimately.

Even so, if you can learn anything from these views you may. If you have risen beyond such things, leave them aside. Parents can freely tell their children, who know less than they, stories from the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* in the manner they know best; I am in a similar position in this matter.

You will be able to see from this that I do take interest in art. But I have renounced, have had to renounce, many such interests. I have relished to my heart's content the joy which everything connected with the search for truth gives me, and I would be ready still to relish it in more of such things. Tasks come unsought to a votary of truth.That is why by nature he is equipped to follow the teaching of the third chapter [of the *Gita*]. I believe I had been practising karmayoga even before I had read that chapter.

But I am straying, I am afraid, from the path.

You have done well in putting me questions[1] about the Ashram. Work is given the chief place in the Ashram life, because it is man's duty to do body labour. Anyone who shirks it, eats stolen food. Moreover, the work which we do in the Ashram is as much for service as it is for one's own benefit. We have put the spinning-wheel in the centre of our activities, because for the millions in the country spinning is the only work we can think of as a universal supplementary occupation to agriculture. It subserves moral and economic ends alike.

The Ashram exists not only for the service of the country but, through it, for the service of the world and to help us to attain *moksha*, to see God, through such service.

Not everyone can join the Ashram. It is not an infirmary, not an orphanage. It is meant for men and women who have dedicated themselves to service, to the realization of a spiritual goal. Hence it is not meant for people who cannot do body labour. However, we may admit persons who are filled with the spirit of service but who are disabled in body. Of course we can admit only a small number of such persons. And we certainly cannot ask those who joined the

[1] The addressee had asked what the ideals of the Ashram were and, quoting instances of apparently contradictory approaches to life, sought Gandhiji's opinion.

Ashram as regular members but who may have become disabled afterwards, to leave the Ashram. Outwardly, many of our actions in the Ashram may seem inconsistent but they will cease to appear so when examined more deeply. If you do not understand any point in this, you may ask me again. You may also express any other doubts which you may feel.

It was only rarely that I posed for a photograph while in England. I believe I have not violated my vow in doing that.

It is certainly not my wish, nor is it desirable, that everyone who comes close to me should be like me in every respect. That would mean mechanical imitation. If anybody wishes to take from me what may seem good to him, it will help him only if he takes what he can assimilate. In any case, who can prevail upon Sardar to stop taking tea?[1] And may it not be that tea serves as medicine to him? Some persons who are close to me, who are my co-workers, are even meat-eaters! What do you say to that?

Only those with whom tea does not agree or who refrain from it because they have considered how it is grown will never take it. Though Ba lives with me, she does take tea. She takes coffee too. I would even offer them lovingly to her. Why? I know, of course, that your question was good-humoured joking, but some false ideas and a degree of intolerance prevail among us in such matters and it is necessary to get rid of them. I don't know if you have this weakness, but it is desirable that you should know my views on this subject. There is much else in my other letters of this week; if you get an opportunity, read them and ponder over them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10269. Also C.W. 6717. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] The addressee had asked how Vallabhbhai could take tea while staying with Gandhiji in the jail.

285. LETTER TO RAMABEHN C. JOSHI

January 25, 1932

CHI. RAMA[1],

I must write to you. I often remember the tears in your eyes on that day. Is your mind at peace now? How are Vimala[2] and Dhiru[3]? Does the latter volunteer to work for Gangadevi, who looks after him with such kindness? Have Vimala and Dhiru become quiet now?

Tell Chhaganlal that I was glad to get the newspapers and read them. If he gets an opportunity now in jail to learn the *Gita* by heart, he should utilize it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5334

286. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

Y. M.,
January 25, 1932

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

Somebody has sent from Madras Ramanathan's speech against khadi, Pattabhi's and Varadachari's criticism of it and the rejoinder by Ramanathan. These have been published in the form of a small pamphlet. If the speeches by Pattabhi and Varadachari as published are complete, I would say they were inane. There is nothing much in Ramanathan's speech. But if it was thought necessary to reply to it, the reply should have been telling. Read the pamphlet if you have not done so. One point made by Ramanathan is worth considering. He says that there are very few persons if any, who spin in their spare hours. Those who spin have no other occupation and spinning to them is a full-time occupation. Even if that should be the case, I see nothing wrong in it. But if it is true, it does mean that our chain is broken. Gujarat's experience does not support Ramanathan at all.

[1] Wife of Chhaganlal Joshi
[2] Addressee's children
[3] *ibid*

Gujarat may have shown less work; but we know every one of the spinners. Those who spin for money do so only in their spare time. The others spin for their own use, but they also do so in their spare time. We should have full mastery of our case. We do not want to shield the weak. We need not be ashamed, if the progress has been slow, to admit the fact. I am not going to admit defeat even if the progress has been slow or if its rate is declining; because to me the whole thing is as clear as day-light. And Ramanathan's own statement proves it. He asks if fifty persons working with a machine can do in two hours the work which they would take eight hours to do with hand. Who would be so foolish as to employ fifty persons for eight hours? If machines can thus give work to everybody who would protest against them? But Ramanathan has totally missed the point. He is not so dishonest as to do so deliberately. I therefore believe that he has fallen into ignorance and consequently his reason has become clouded. But be that as it may, we have to draw a lesson even from his speech, which please do. The responsibility for keeping the Charkha Sangh unsullied lies with you, so that one may say I can sit back in peace here. I would therefore keep shooting arrows from here, which you must take.

I have seen the Gulzarilal[1]-Desai [note]. You must be keeping good health. Anasuyabehn too should write.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G. N. 11538

287. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 25, 1932

CHI. PRABHUDAS

It is good you have come on a short visit. As soon as the hot days begin, rush back to the hills. I do have it in mind to write a history of the Ashram[2]. But we have to see whether I will get the

[1] Gulzarilal Nanda and Khandubhai Desai, who were in the Dhulia Jail for Gandhiji's letter to Sir Frederick Sykes, *vide* "Letter to Sir Frederick Sykes", 23-1-1932

[2] Gandhiji started writing it on April 5 and completed it on July 11, 1932.

necessary time for it and also whether I will be strong enough. I doubt whether my right hand will be sufficiently strong for me to write with. Though I have let it rest for four months, it cannot be said to have improved. Let us see what happens.

You may ask any questions you wish to.

You have said nothing in your letter about the Magan spinning-wheel.

About Almora, send me your questions so that it may be easier for me to reply.

About the history of the Ashram also, if you send me your questions, I will keep them in mind when I start writing.

Has your work regarding the *Ramayana* been completed? It would have been better if you had started writing on other subjects, too.

How do you spend each day there? What is your diet? I hope you do not suffer from constipation.

I had put several questions to you in my letter[1] to which you have still not replied

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 33022

288. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

January 26, 1932

CHI. JAMNA,

I got your letter. There are three things you should do to cure weakness and loose motions. Live on curds and fruit only. Fruit may include oranges, *jamun*, pomegranates, *papayas*, pineapple andgrapes. Take hip-baths before eating anything and also sunbaths in the rays of the rising sun. You should take only a small quantity of curds at a time. Divide the total quantity into four meals. Go on reducing the quantity progressively if you find that you are not digesting all that you are eating. Do not be afraid that, if you do so, you will become weaker.

If and when you feel very eager to work, there are many types

[1] The reference, presumably is to the preceding item.

of work, both light and heavy, in the Ashram. All of them have equal value if done in a spirit of service.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 850. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

289. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Tuesday, January 26, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

The yarn which I spun during my last imprisonment was sent there to be woven into khadi. If it has been woven, please let me know what its count was and whether it was strong enough for weaving or was rather weak.

Where are Ramji and others? How many weavers live there? What quantity of yarn is spun and woven in the Ashram every month? Can you say that the quality of yarn has improved in any degree?

Do you know what happened to the books which I had brought with me from England?

Putting this letter under the pad, I discover that I forgot to enclose the talk on Chapter XIV[1]. I send it today.

Premabehn says in her letter that you have spoiled your health somewhat by eating ground-nuts. I strongly advise you not to eat them. If at all you wish to eat nuts which contain oil, you may eat only almonds. I would not advise you to eat any other nuts. The maximum quantity of almonds which you can eat is five *tolas*. If you are not taking any other nourishing food, five *tolas* of almonds will not be too expensive. The best course for you, of course, seems to be that you should take the diet of milk, fruit and uncooked vegetables which I have suggested to Kusum, provided, that is, you do not wish to eat *rotli*, etc. Alternatively, , milk or curds and some quantity ofun-cooked vegetables will form a perfect diet. If, occasionally, you drop *rotli* and milk, that will certainly help. You can live for two or three days on fruit alone. At that time, you should not eat nuts.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Naradas Gandhi", 23/25,9,1932

Modern researches show that man needs very little of rich foods such as milk, pulses, etc. It has been proved, one may say, that most diseases have their origin in rich, fatty and starchy foods.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8204. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

290. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

Y.C.P.
January 27, 1932

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

After the receipt of your very frank and good letter received by me in London, I had not expected the turn the events took on my landing. I suppose I am right in thinking that yours is the brain working behind this repression. If my surmise is correct, I should not perhaps be shocked at anything that is happening. For did you not tell me in Delhi that you could hit hard in fight, as you could be perfectly warm in friendship? I am not going to consider you as an enemy.

Hence this letter. I hope you will not regard it as an impertinence. Did I not tell you in Simla that after all we had to convert the I.C.S. rather than the English people as a whole? I do not despair. Civil Resistance is a method of conversion. Behind it there is no ill will.

Perhaps you have seen my letter to the Viceroy sent some days ago.[3] Last week I wrote to the Governor of Bombay.[4]

If the fact of the Government blunder is not recognized and repression must continue its mapped course are some of the things that are said to be happening necessary? One reads in the newspapers that notwithstanding denials, things are the worst in the Frontier Province. If they are not, why this expulsion of Father Elwin[5], a cultured Englishman, and of Miss Naoroji, who is no immature girl but a woman of high attainments past 30? She is more English than Indian, having been brought up as a child under English influences. She is no politician. She is a polished singer. Love of the country has drawn her to the struggle, as conviction of British misrule in India has drawn Father Elwin to the Indian cause. You ought not to repel the

advances of such men and women. Try and see them. They are no fanatics. I must confess that I am filled with the greatest misgivings about the happenings in the Frontier Province. How I wish my misgivings were wholly unjustified, I would need very strong evidence to allay my worst fears.

I now come nearer home. Horses were run over an absolutely peaceful meeting in Ahmedabad. I observe that one of the injured boys has just died. I know some of the Ashram boys had severe injuries done to them. And I am glad that they had them rather than unknown boys or men. In Madras one youngster has succumbed to lathi blows. There they play hose pipes even on women. Two women are reported to have fainted through the force of the jet of water.

As Mrs. Gandhi is reported to have said justly at her trial, what is the use of women like her or men like Sardar Vallabhbhai and me being pampered prisoners when others who, being misled, as you would say by us, break laws and suffer lathi blows or worse? I do really think that there is much in what *The Daily Express* says when it suggests that I as the author of "all this mischief" should be sent to the gallows.

Does it not strike you that there is something terribly wrong with a Government that has to declare a thousand associations unlawful? How is it possible to crush a movement which has taken such deep root? You have suppressed social and economic activities. You have taken possession of school buildings, hospitals, khadi depots, a library that contains valuable research and religious works. Is that what you meant by hitting hard?

I fear you have undone Lord Irwin's work. I had come with the fullest desire to tender co-operation, if it was at all possible. You should have seen me, reasoned with me and if you had found me wilfully obstinate, you might have taken such course as you had thought necessary. As it is, I cannot help feeling that you took a course which I should not have thought you to be capable of taking.

I plead : retrace your steps. Some day there is no doubt there will be negotiation if not between the present Government and the present Congressmen, then between our successors. Let us not doanything that will make them meet with bitterness in their souls. I can say for myself with the clearest possible conscience that I have done nothig to embitter the relations. If you too can say likewise, I can only say let an impartial authority judge between us. In any case,

breath in me I shall long for co-operation even through my non-co-operation. I do not believe in a make-believe co-operation.

You will please pardon me for this long letter. If it is an infliction, you are to blame, for you allowed me to think that we had become good friends. I have exercised the privilege of a friend.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: India Office Library and Records. Courtesy: The British Library, London

291. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 27, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. Mirabehn and others came and saw me. As requested by Mahavir in his letter, send the family to Darjeeling and give them money for the expenses there. Tell Valjibhai that he can send the translations[1] to me. I will see if they permit me to return them revised. My compliments to Surendra. He does not seem to have been hurt much.

The rest next week. You must have received the letter[2] which I posted today. I sent with it the talk on Chapter XIV which I had omitted.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. NARANDAS GANDHI
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8205. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Of the discourses on the Ashram vows, which Gandhiji wrote weekly in his letters to Satyagraha Ashram during his detention in Yeravda Prison in 1930. The first in the series was written in July 22, 1930; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi". These were first published in Gujarati under the title *Vratavichar* and later under the title *Mangal Prabhat*.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

292. A LETTER

January 28, 1932

MY DEAR,

You are right about the repetition of the prayers by some without knowing the meaning. Effort has been often made to remove the defect. But in a place which has a floating population, the task is difficult. A prayerful repetition is itself not a bad thing. It is like music that has no words. The music has its own distinct effect apart from words. This defence is good only where there is no hypocrisy and the mind is properly attuned.

If I am not mistaken the remains of food is not given to the cattle because it is not good for their health. They are scientifically fed. Burial is not waste. The food turns to manure. The real remedy is that there is no waste. We try to live the life of the poor and hence we should take in our dishes no more than we need. I know there are many difficulties.

Yours,

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8920. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

293. A LETTER

January 28, 1932

BHAI,

What further explanation do you want beyond what I have given in my writings on the *Gita*? Thoughts occur only in a *vikari* mind. The word *vikar* should be understood here in a very wide sense. *Vikar* means change of state. Even pure thoughts do not arise in a state of *samadhi*, and yet it is not a state of utter inertness. God does not think, because he is *nirvikar*[1]. Absence of thoughts does not mean a state of inertness, it means pure consciousness. This is a state which cannot be described but can only be experienced. I don't mean to say, however, that I have experienced it. I believe in it through faith. I may even say that I have had a faint glimpse of it.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8907. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Not subject to *vikar*

294. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

January 28, 1932

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I got your letter. I am not surprised at what is happening today. I had expected it all. Much worse will follow yet. Didn't Sudhanva have to jump into a pan of boiling oil to prove his faith? Sita had to enter the flames, and Prahlad was forced to embrace a red-hot pillar. He whose faith in God is perfect has no limit to his endurance. God provides sufficient food alike to the elephant and the ant according to the need of each. There is a verse in the *Gita*[1] which says: "In whatever way men resort to Me, even so do I render to them." This is what it means: "I give to the people in proportion to the faith with which they worship Me." If you draw water from a well with a cup, you will get a cupful and, if you draw with a pitcher, you will draw a pitcherful.

Chanchalbehn has done good work indeed. I am writing to her. Go and give the letter to her or read it out to her. It should not be published.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro- 6: G.S. Gangabehnne, p. 62. Also C.W. 8789. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

295. LETTER TO LAKSHMIBEHN N. KHARE

January 28, 1932

CHI. LAKSHMIBEHN,

Do not forget me altogether. Write to me occasionally. How are you? Why does Mathuri remain weak?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati. C.W. 279. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

[1] IV, 11

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 1-2-11932

296. LETTER TO AMINA G. QURESHI

January 28, 1932

CHI. AMINA,

I got your letter. Noorbanu also gave me news about you yesterday. I am sure that you two will do full honour to the position which Father held. May God grant long life to you both. I do know your courage.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6660. Also C.W. 4305. Courtesy: Hamid Qureshi

297. LETTER TO MANIBEHN N. PARIKH

January 28, 1932

CHI. MANIBEHN,

Do you feel happy there? Can you hear better now? Does anybody stay in the Vidyapith? How is Narahari?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5965. Also C.W. 3282. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

298. LETTER TO SHAKARIBEHN C. SHAH

January 28, 1932

CHI. SHAKARIBEHN[1],

No woman need spare me while I am here. When I am outside, anybody writing to me may increase my burden. But while I am here you can make up for your previous [self-restraint]. Do, therefore, write to me. Is your mind at peace now? Why is it that Babu[2] remains weak?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.G. 29

[1] Wife of Chimanlal Shah

[2] Addressee's daughter, Sharda

299. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

January 28, 1932

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

How are you getting along? Write to me in detail.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 422. Courtesy: Shivabhai G. Patel

300. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 28, 1932

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. I like the views of Krishnadas. I would like him to stay with you. But the occasion is inopportune. The dissociation of Krishnadas from Wardha is looked upon by official guests, viz., Jamnalal, Vinoba and others as a betrayal of trust. I believe that he cannot give up the work he has undertaken unless he can do so in normal course. Ultimately, his inner self will help him get peace of mind. He would not get that by change of work. My advice therefore is let Krishnadas stick to his views, but he should not put them in practice. It seldom happens that what we like is also good for us. I feel it is true in the case of Krishnadas but such opportunity should be welcomed when it comes in the normal course. I am of the opinion that at present we cannot even ask Jamnalal and Vinoba and cause them inconvenience. I have formed my opinion according to my understanding of the situation based on the facts you have put before me. Let me know if there is a misunderstanding on my part or some facts are left out. If there is no misunderstanding, send this reply to Krishnadas. If the misunderstanding persists, ask me again.

We can ask Jamnalal or Mathuradas for the money for Almora. We should wind it up if we can. And if it is better to postpone it, you may do that. I cannot give any definite decision from here. You will have to run away when the summer comes. We will incur expenses but that cannot be helped. You are rendering whatever service you can. We should put up with it when the public malign us but have to be very cautious when our own heart takes exception to it.

I understand about the other answers. You are disappointed with yourself, I am not. I believe things have not gone out of our hands as long as you can prevent yourself from putting your views into practice. There is no scope for pessimism as long as we refuse to entertain such thoughts and keep on fighting them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32943

301. LETTER TO BUDHABHAI

[Before *January 29, 1932*][1]

CHI. BUDHABHAI,

The complaint Parvati has made in her long letter seems to be true. You beat and abused her and then went on a fast as penance. If this is true, it is bad. Even if you regard Parvati as your wife, our dharma treats it as sin for anyone to raise his hand against his wife. Nor should you have abused her. And having accepted her as a sister, how can you even frown at her? She is as free as you or I. She may go wherever she likes and do whatever she likes. As long as she observes dharma, she may either stay with you or separately from you. You should fix a liberal allowance for her maintenance as you would for a younger sister. It is all right if you went on a fast, but do not value it too highly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33125

[1] In his letter to the addressee dated January 29, 1932, *vide* (the following item) Gandhiji says that the ill-feeling between him and Parvati still persisted. Evidently this letter was written before the letter of January 29.

302. LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA P. KAMDAR

January 29, 1932

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA,

I hear from Rasik that you gave birth to a child but the baby died after four months. That is what our life is like. All children born do not live, and even those that live will die some day. Need I, therefore, console you? Moreover, the children by the first wife are yours, aren't they? If the baby had lived, you would certainly have had my blessings for it. I would have been happy if you had come to see me. We shall meet now when God wills. Meanwhile, write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

If you wish, you may write to me directly.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7468. Also C.W. 4914. Courtesy: Hari-ichchha P. Kamdar

303. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

January 29, 1932

CHI. JANAKIBEHN,

I could only look at you and didn't get time to speak even one word to you. Well, I have time enough now to write. You also should now write to me as long as you are free. In which prison is Kamalnayan[1] lodged? How is he? Ask Madalasa[2] and Om[3] to write to me. How do you keep?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

As you know, Sardar is with me. We pass our time quite happily. We eat and sleep and pace up and down.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2894

[1] Addressee's son
[2] Addressee's daughters
[4] Sushila Gandhi's younger sister

304. LETTER TO NILKANTH B. MASHRUWALA

January 29, 1932

CHI. NILKANTH,

I got your letter. What is Kishorelal's diet? The copy of *Young India* has come with me here. Most probably *Gandhi Vichar Dohan* also is with me. I cannot revise it from here and return it. Let the thing, therefore, be printed as it is. Are all the prisoners kept together? Request Nathji to visit the Ashram off and on. How is his eczema? How often can you see Kishorelal? Where is Tara[4]? How is she?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Who is Lakhu? I don't remember him.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9419. Courtesy: Nilkanth B. Mashruwala

305. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

January 29, 1932

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got the letter you wrote from Siwan. I also received subsequently your earlier letter. I hope you get my letters. Tell Swarupraniji[1] that she should not feel worried at all because Swarup[2] and Krishna[3] have left. God protects all his creatures. How is her health? My diet is practically the same as it was when I was out of jail. The weight is 106 pounds. Sardar Vallabhbhai is with me. Both of us are quite well. Do you read any newspapers?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3423

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru's mother
[2] Vijayalakshmi Pandit and her sister
[3] *ibid*

306. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 29, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

I learn from Anand's letter that both of you will have by now reached Hyderabad. I am sorry I could not talk to you at length. I hope your mind is at peace. How is your health? Keep writing to me. Where is Dr. Choithram? Do you occasionally go to Jairamdas's? How is everyone there?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. courtesy: National Arehives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

307. LETTER TO BUDHABHAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 29, 1932

CHI. BUDHABHAI,

I see that the ill-feeling between you and Parvati still persists. It is not right to stop speaking with Parvati, nor with the children. Sooner or later, you will have to win her over with love and even when she abuses you. Write to me and tell me what the trouble is. What are your present activities? How do you keep?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33124

308. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

December 30, 1932

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I have your great and good letter quite worthy of you. I love and accept your correction, and say with you that we are near to each other; and since we are near to each other, let me say that my letter had no complaint behind it. It simply went out as an advice in order to

secure what I thought would be a better working of the organization, and I expected you, as a friend, if my advice did not find any response within your breast, to say plainly to me, 'You do not know the situation, and therefore I do not accept your advice.' Of course, your reply said the same thing, but in an unexpectedly different manner, but that is all dead and gone. After having tendered you my apology, I had dismissed the incident from my mind, but you have revived the memory, and now rendered it sacred by your generous letter.

I am glad of the news you give me about your distinguished patients. It is quite like Baby to have placed her flat at Kamala's disposal.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18493

309. A LETTER

January 30, 1932

CHI.,

I got your letter. If you wish and if your health permits, you may certainly come. But please don't feel that it is your duty to come. Where one *atman* is united with another, there is little need to express their unity through physical means. I realize daily from experience that we cannot give and receive through physical presence what we can indirectly through the heart.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8921. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

310. A LETTER

January 30, 1932

CHI.,

I got your letter. The Ashram exists in our hearts as much as it does on the bank of the Sabarmati. The Ashram on the bank of the Sabarmati can be seized by the Government or be swept away in the flood or be robbed, but no one can rob or burn the one in our hearts. That is the real Ashram. Live in Bombay with that in your heart, and

observe whatever rules your health permits. The principal vows can be observed whatever the condition of one's health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8922. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

311. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

January 30, 1932

CHI. MANGALA,

You have improved your handwriting very much indeed. What about *Gitaji*? Have you learnt by heart all the chapters? Who else has done so? *Lakdi*[1] and *ladki*[2] don't sound very different from each other, so I can say that a *lakdi* is also a *ladki*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4073. Also G.W. 37. Courtesy: Mangala B. Desai

312. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI M. THAKKAR

January 30, 1932

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I have your letter.

It is probable that the gas trouble is caused by milk. Try the following. Take curds instead of milk, but not more than half a seer at a time. Add ten grains of soda bicarb to the curds. You may take one and a half seers of curds during the whole day. You can then take one and a half seers of dates. But they also should not exceed half a seer at a time. As the dates are likely to have been soiled, you should wash them before eating. There is no harm in mixing them with the curds after washing and taking out their stones. Remember that dates will need time to get softened in curds. In addition, take also the raw vegetables I mentioned earlier, but very little of them. You will certainly feel thirsty between meals. You may then take water with

[1] A stick

[2] A girl beloved by the family

soda bicarb and lemon-juice added to it. This will stop the gas and the body will feel light. Dates never cause gas. Probably it is caused by milk. If the curds cause constipation, take milk once instead of curds. If the milk is fresh and cold, you may soak datesin it also and eat them. They will get soft only if you let them soak for some time. If you eat them soon after putting them in cold milk, you will not find them soft. Dates cannot help you to become fat, but the milk might. One cannot live on dates alone for many days, if one wants to do physical labour. In the letter to Madhavji I mentioned one seer of dates, and this letter is an amendment of that since here I have suggested one and a half seers of curds or milk in place of three seers of milk.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

It is not necessary that you must take the things in the quantities I have mentioned. If you find either of them excessive, you may reduce it. Remember that seer here means 40 *tolas*.

Ask me about anything that is still not clear to you. Why should you refer to Madhavji always as Shriyut and not as Madhavji.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6819

313. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

January 30, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

I could give to you some more reminiscences of Miss Doris's school, about which I wrote to you last week. But I will leave that subject today and write about [Madame] Montessori's schoolchildren. Montessori is an aged lady. She has dedicated her life to children's education. She is an Italian lady. Learn from your teachers where Italy is and how its government is run. Keep the map of Europe before you. In the map it looks like a fat leg which has separated from the rest of the body.

But let us leave that and return to the school of the learned Madame Montessori. The lady happened to be in England, where they were holding a conference of all teachers who followed her method. She invited me to it and explained to me how and what they taught the

children. The most important thing was that the children felt no burden of learning as they learnt everything as they played. Secondly, the aim is to develop all the senses and organs of the child, that is, its hands, feet, nose, ears, tongue, skin and the mind, and they have very carefully planned a teaching programme with that aim in view.In the programme very little place is given to memorizing. Music has an important place, and it accompanies physical exercises also. They teach dancing too, and it gives plenty of exercise to the body. The children do most of the things by themselves and learn without effort to concentrate attention. The thing I liked most in their method was that they trained children to observe silence and concentrate. This is how they do it. The children sit with closed eyes, the teacher speaks in a voice no louder than a whisper into one's ear and children strain their ears to hear what she says. As soon as any child hears it, it goes over on its toes and sits by the side of the teacher. Till all the children have done this one after another, everyone is to remain sitting and keep silent. You, too, should try this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

314. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

January 30, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. Has the trunk of books which I brought with me arrived there? Does anybody live in the Vidyapith? Does anyone take care of the books or is everything falling into ruin? Many of the monthlies too are worth preserving. It is desirable that there should be one whole-time person to look after the books assisted by two others. If this is not possible, we should not have allowed the library to grow so large. It is the duty of the Vidyapith to make this arrangement. It is not our job. It is because this was not our work that we started the Vidyapith, otherwise we would have turned the Ashram itself into a Vidyapith. The work does not lie within the Ashram's sphere of activities at all. Its work is primarily internal, and the Vidyapith's is primarily external, and so it ought to be. The aims of both are the same but their activities are different. In the Ashram, therefore, we should keep only such books as we require for our purpose. Other

books that we may need, we should borrow from the Vidyapith. All this, however, when we settle down again to our normal activities. Just now everything is being swept away by a flood, and that is all to the good. When the flood has subsided, don't we have a wide expanse of water, clear as crystal?

I remember the Nag Panchami festival, and I adhere to the reply which I gave on that occasion. Haven't I compared the breaking of heads to the explosion of crackers? Anyone who knows the nature of the *atman* will believe that to be literally so. If the *atman* never perishes, what does it matter that the houses it inhabits perish or that the garments which it puts on wear out and decay? Moreover, the *atman* is eternally perfect and so it can never lack a house to inhabit. If we but know the truth, it needs none. But all this is true only with reference to oneself. So long, therefore, as our own heads are being broken, we should think that crackers are exploding. Don't ask me how the *atman* can make a distinction between one's own and another's. So long as the body endures, we must assume this distinction in all our actions. As we die to ourselves, the distinction between one's own and another's loses its force for us, but so long as we go on killing others, the distinction becomes stronger. As the children gradually understand this truth, they too, like the young men in the Ashram, will become wise. But that requires patience on our part. In this connection, read my letter[1] to the children.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10270. Also C.W. 6718. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

315. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

January 30, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

Why don't you write to me? How are you? In what form are you? With whom have you made friends? Which of them do you like most? Where do you live?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9420. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

316. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

January 30, 1932

DEAR SISTERS,

I wish to write to you today about a lady. Her name is Maude Royden. She is an old woman. She has remained unmarried. She was the first woman in England to obtain the highest degree in theology. Besides her, there has been only one other woman who has obtained that degree. I am saying this not to show that theology is a very difficult subject, though it certainly is that. My point is that few women have been attracted to it. It does not help one to acquire status or importance in the world. Not only has Maude Royden studied the subject so deeply, but she has also dedicated her life to the service of the poor. Like Miss Muriel, she too makes no distinction between whites and non-whites. Through her own efforts she got a church built, which gives shelter to the poor and in which they hold their meetings. These services have brought the lady great honour. People valued her learning very little, but her services to the poor have made the lady very famous. She is also a powerful speaker, and in her character she is above all reproach. She relies on herself in all her activities and does not regard herself a weak and helpless woman. She has travelled widely and gathered much experience. Perhaps she may even come here to help us in our work. The main question before her will be whether she can be free from her present work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

317. A LETTER

January 30, 1932

CHI.,

Ashram inmates should in no case be invited to a wedding celebration; how can people aspiring to observe *brahmacharya* have anything to do with weddings? Therefore you must keep yourself away in every respect from that wedding. Be firm in your reply.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 8923. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

318. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

January 31, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

It seems but yesterday that you all came.

I am glad you are coming in such close touch with Radha. She has in her the making of a good woman. You tell me you are not able to keep your evening prayer hours. If so, you should shift the hour and keep it regularly, just giving a few seconds to the thought at the Ashram prayer time. This is merely by way of suggestion. You know best how to manage the thing.

Please tell Nargisbehn to write to me and tell me all about the other three sisters.

We are still keeping well. I still need as much sleep as I can get or would take.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6213. Courtesy : Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9679

319. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

January 31, 1932

CHI. TARAMATI,

I hope you are not upset because of the absence of Mathuradas. How is Dilip? Do write to me. Did you visit Mathuradas? Where is he? What does he get to eat? How is his health?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

320. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 31, 1932

CHI. NIMU,

Why are you tardy in writing to me. Do you feel lost because of Ramdas having gone to jail? How do you spend your time? How is the child? Does he give trouble? Does he also suffer from constipation? How do you keep? Do you go out for walks?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

321. LETTER TO K. RAMACHANDRA

January 31, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am sorry for the complication that has arisen there with reference to the temple-entry question. I have no doubt whatsoever that whilst a non-Hindu may sympathize with the reform movement, he cannot and ought not to take part in any direct action.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. RAMACHANDRA
SRI WICKRAMA
WELLAWATTE
COLOMBO

From a microfilm: S.N. 18494

322. LETTER TO GOPALA MENON

January 31, 1932

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

I have your letter of the 26th instant. Now that the fast is off for the time being, I shall watch what work Kerala is going to put in.

The taking of signatures to the memorial is, I hope, proceeding apace. You should report the number taken from day to day. You must have fixed a time limit.

The work of educating public opinion should continue side by side with constructive work amongst the Harijans.

Yours sincerely

From a microfilm: S.N. 18495

323. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Night, January 28/February 1,1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I feel that my right hand will not give good service for long, and so I intend to use both hands. It will take more time, of course. But I should not want time here. I will give less time to other work. I have written a letter to Chanchalbehn whose son Visu died the other day. That letter should not be published or talked about. My actions are governed by mutual trust. I do nothing without the knowledge of the authorities. I will talk to them about this letter. There seems nothing wrong to me in writing a letter of condolence. But it would be wrong if such a letter were published. That would be propaganda. That is why I have asked Gangabehn[1] to show that letter to Chanchalbehn and then bring it back with her. No letter of mine is intended for publication in newspapers. There is nothing wrong, though, in your publishing in the "Ashram Samachar" extracts from them containing moral discussions or news about our health.

Parnerkar does not seem to have calmed down. I believe that the problem before him is certainly a moral one. Call him to you and comfort him. Ultimately, of course, you will do what you think best.

I don't look upon the orchard as a white elephant. It is a useful investment. The money that is spent on it will not, in the long run, have been wasted. An orchard always increases the value of the land, helps the soil to retain moisture and cools the air. This is a universal experience. The choice of trees to be planted may of course require thinking. I have only stated a general principle. Obtain Prof. Trivedi's opinion. He has seen the plot of land. Send him a list of the plants and the number of each. Ask him if he can throw some light. Write also to Prof. Higginbottom. Pattanisaheb must have employed a curator. You may seek his assistance, too. It is possible, however, that under the present pressure of work, you will not get time to think about all this. If that is so, ignore my suggestions. Totaramji is everybody to us and we should be content with what he can do.

Where is Somabhai? And Bhansali? Have you any news of Lilabehn? How is Hasmukhram?

[1] *Vide*"Letter to Gangabehn Vaidya", 28-1-1932

Afternoon, January 29, 1932

I got your second letter today. Do not send by post the leather for repairing the soles of sandals. Anyone who may come to see us may bring it along with him. I see great risk in keeping . . .[1] alone with . . .[2] . She may have exaggerated in her letter, but . . . is not responsible for himself. How can one say when he will have a fit of madness? If you keep . . . with him, a responsible person should stay with them. If . . .[3] can control . . ., he may stay with them. Or somebody else. The position would have been different if. . . had strength of her own to stay with . . . . Moreover, . . . is a slave of passion. If, under the urge of passion, he assaults. . . and she becomes pregnant, that too would be a painful matter. Think over all this and do what you think best. I have written this because I know that you can bear the burden of every kind of responsibility.

Do they permit food to be supplied to Abbas Saheb from outside? Do we supply any? How is Mridula's condition? Is the newspaper report about Ranchhodbhai correct?

I am writing to both Budhabhai and Parvati. Is Nanibehn there?

Night, February 1, 1932

Anyone who proposes to come and see me should first see Dahyabhai or know from him if he has any message to send. This should be done so that both may not come here and Dahyabhai may be able to send a message if he wishes to.

There are 57 letters this time, not counting yours and the talk on the *Gita*.

Blessings from

BAPU[4]

At night, February 1, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

Please ask the women and find out whether they understand the purport of the accompanying summary and let me know. On further reflection I see that I should make a third attempt and give a

[1] The names have been omitted.

[2] *ibid*

[3] *ibid*

still easier summary. I do not know whether I shall be able to do that, but it may help me if I see some criticism of what I am about to complete.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8206. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

324. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

Silence Day [*January-February, 1932*][1]

CHI. JANAKIBEHN,

How are you? Have you kept up your courage? How is Madalasa? Do not worry about Kamalnayan. Haven't you learnt from Vinoba's *Talks on the Gita* that one should not worry about anything?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 83

325. LETTER TO MARCHIONESS CARLA VITELLESCHI

February 2, 1932

DEAR CARLA,

I got your letter. Yes, you are right. Had I not felt for you as for my own daughter, I would not have spoken to you as strongly as I did that morning. I am now glad of the step you have taken. I am quite sure that your place is by your husband's side. You must shake off your uncertainty and wavering nature.

You may write whenever you feel like it.

May God give you light and peace.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[1] As given in the source

[PS.]

Not remembering your full name I am addressing the envelope by your maiden name.

MADAM CARLA
HOTEL DES INGENIEURS
52 RUE BLANCHE
PARIS-MONTMARTRE, FRANCE

From a photostat: G.N. 2511

326. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

February 2, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

There is a stream of gifts from you. I understand the love behind them. But have mercy on me. Both of us get here all that we want. The money which they spend on us here is also people's money. I will not hesitate to ask you for anything that I need. I sent a message through . . .[1] requesting you not to go on sending fruits, etc. But parcels continue, and that is why this letter. I ate for many days the honey which you had given me for the voyage. It was excellent.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

LADY VITHALDAS THACKERSEY
YERAVDA HILL

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4821. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

327. LETTER TO NANIBEHN JHAVERI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
February 2, 1932

CHI. NANIBEHN JHAVERI,

I have your letter. Your handwriting has improved a great deal. You have also come up, and are coming up, nicely. Have patience.

[1] Omission as in the source

It is ignorance to think 'I do, I do.'

Even as that of the dog walking under the cart.

Believing that we are the doers can lead to much trouble, for we do nothing at all. We sing:

I move as He moves me,

I am pierced by the rapier of love.

Does the song[1] also not convey the same meaning?

Do you remember the words: "I bring attainment and possession of what has been attained"[2]? May God protect you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari—Pannalal Jhaveri, pp. 25-6

328. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

February 3, 1932

MY DEAR MATHEW,

Your letter. You are as shy as ever I see. Do shake it off and write freely.

I am glad you are looking after Tilak and took charge also of Bharatan.

You must try and write a few lines to me in Hindi. Parsuram tells me you have made progress.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1548

[1] By Mirabai

[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, IX. 22

329. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

February 3, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

I have your letter. Your handwriting is good. Your weight is far too little. You can sit in the sun after 8 a.m. Before that, you must cover yourself. As the heat increases and if you don't feel cold, you can remove the clothes and massage the body. By doing this you will not feel the chill. You may not take cod-liver oil during Gangabehn's treatment but you can massage the body with it. They say that too helps.

How much milk do you take?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9905. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

330. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

February 3, 1932

BHAI VALJI,

No one in the Ashram can keep a parrot in a cage.

If someone happens to do it, the manager will free the parrot which is bound to fly away once it gets an opportunity.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 7418. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

331. A LETTER

February 3, 1932

BHAI,

Whatever you do, do it not only with truth and ahimsa but in the spirit of surrendering all to God and of pure service.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 8932. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

332. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised *February 4, 1932*

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. I propose to post this directly. The account Damodardas gave me of your health disturbed me. He tells me, and your letter confirms that you are working at feverish heat.[1] You ought to slow down. You can't keep up till midnight always and get upat 4 a.m. If work till midnight is a necessity, you should rest fully immediately after prayer.[2]

And if a weekly visit to Yeravda will soothe your nerves, you must come every week. I have put no embargo. I simply pointed out my own feeling in the matter. A prisoner is a prisoner. As it is, the authorities allow weekly visits and I can as yet see no reason not to avail myself of the permission. But it is at best a precarious privilege not worth making much of. Self-control is the best thing for a prisoner and his friends and dear ones. But self-control to be self-control must brace one up. It becomes mechanical or superimposed when it unnerves or saddens one. You will come sparingly only if you see the beauty of self-restraint and having seen

[1] "I was busy collecting all the authentic news I could regarding the civil disobedience movement. This I selected and edited and sent abroad in cyclostyled copies."—Mirabehn

[2] "4 a.m. was the usual prayer time."—Mirabehn

it, exercise it naturally. If it depresses you, know that the effort is strained and unnatural for you. In that case, you should come without the slightest hesitation.

I have gained 1 Ib. in weight. It is now 107 lb. Vallabhbhai is steady at 144_ lb. Honey will come in useful.

I had a brief note from the Privats.

Who are the ladies in the household now?

My love to Nargisbehn, Jalbhai and Kamala. Is Kamala not going to Panchgani?

Do not expect another letter from me through the Ashram post.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6214. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9680

333. LETTER TO NIRMALA H. DESAI

February 4, 1932

CHI. NIRMALA[1],

There are indeed some persons who shed tears when they are happy and smile when they suffer. Our effort should be not to shed tears or smile in either condition.

On what subjects have you written compositions? Which poems do you like best in the text for the seventh form?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9463

334. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

February 5, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

After all I have an excuse for writing to you again.

Do you know what happened to the toys that Doris's children had sent me and which I had asked you to keep for our children? If you know where they are and if they can be easily traced, let the children have them.

[1] Mahadev Desai's step-sister

Another thing is about the case containing books. Do you know if Pyarelal or Mahadev sent the case to the Ashram or the Vidyapith? Perhaps Manilal knows. If you have no time to think of this, much less to attend to it, do not bother.

I hope you got my letter[1] directly that I wrote to you yesterday. This though being written today (Friday) will be posted only on Tuesday.

Remember, please, that you will share with the Ashram the letters. I may write to you directly.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6215. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9681

335. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

February 5, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI[2],

I observe that you have over two hundred civil resistance prisoners in the extension. Many of these are intimate co-workers. I knew that you had already several from Poona but as they were important public men, I did not ask for meeting them. But with regard to the large number now admitted, an occasional meeting with them is a human want I may not resist. Exactly the same question occurred last year and after talks with Major Martin and then Major Doyle, permission was given to me to see these prisoners occasionally and in small batches of two or three. I repeat the request and I hope that the authorities will have no objection to my seeing these fellow-prisonersand workers, subject of course to the same restrictions as last year.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5131

[1] *Vide*"Letter to Mirabehn", 4-2-1932

[2] Superintendent, Yeravda Central Prison

336. LETTER TO ABBAS

February 5, 1932

CHI. ABBAS,

I got your letter. Your description of a bamboo spinning wheel is very fine. The wheel seems very cheap. Personally, I find the portable Gandiva[1] very convenient and easy to work. Has your speed of spinning improved appreciably? I understand what you say about carding. Has any improvement been effected in the ginning machine? What is the highest count of the yarn from which we can weave khadi now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6306

337. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

February 5, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

I got the letter written by Kanu on behalf of you all.

By now you ought to have acquired a sense of duty. You ought to follow all the rules laid down for you. No one should resign the responsibility which he has undertaken. The authority going with it should be for us a means for doing greater service and learning greater self-control, and, therefore, no one should resign his post of service in a hurry. The atonements fixed by you for a breach of the various rules are good. See that you now stick to them. I will complete today the description of Miss Doris's school by telling you something which I had left out in my previous letter[2]. Once the children had arranged a social gathering. In England it iscommon for people to meet and have tea with something to eat. At this gathering there was an exhibition of things made by the children. The children were to play the games for the guests to see and were to serve tea to the gathering. And they did all this without any confusion and without the least noise. The items displayed included dances, physical exercises and some dramatic pieces. It was a very fine sight to watch these small

[1] A type of spinning-wheel

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Ashram Boys and Girls", 25-1-1932

children serving tea to the whole gathering. Remember that all these children were under eight years of age. It was no small thing for them to go round with tea-cups and bread, etc., in a tray and serve guests. And I did not notice any child spilling anything. Excellent also were their drawings, their sewing and knitting work, etc. They had made an album for me, which I have of course brought for you. But all these things remain with me. One of you should write a letter to these children. He may write it in Gujarati or in Hindi, and somebody may translate it for you into English and you may send the original letter together with the translation.

The Address is:

C/o Miss Doris Lester

Children's House

London East

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8927. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

338. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

February 5, 1932

DEAR SISTERS,

Only a few of you are now left there. But there is an ebb and flow in all things in the world. Mother *Gita* teaches us to remain unaffected by rise and fall, sunshine and cold, or happiness and misery. We are at present getting an object-lesson in the Mother's teaching. If all of you learn it well, our trust in the *Gita* will have borne fruit.I have observed that in certain respects people in Europe act according to the teaching of the *Gita* without knowing it. Just now I remember only one thing, and I will describe it to you. Whenever I went out of London I used to put up with friends, who may be said tobe well-to-do. I saw that the servants at their places lived not as servants but as members of the family. They did not put an excessive burden of work on the servants, but worked side by side with them. If anybody had to get up early in the morning, he would not disturb the servant from his sleep but attend to the work himself. At several places I found the servants to have been with the family for many years. In almost every family they

introduced me to their servants. Their love of cleanliness was wonderful. On seeing all this, my respect for the friends increased very much. Is it any wonder that these servants should be well paid? I at any rate feel that we ought to admit that we have not reached this level in our relations with our servants. Don't you agree? This is the yoga of cultivating equality. Arjuna told the Lord how difficult it was, and He replied that, though difficult, it could be learnt through patient effort and cultivation of disinterestedness. We should try and learn it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8928. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

339. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

February 5, 1932

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

I got your letter. I see that you are devoting your time to good work. Write to me regularly from wherever you may be. If God protects even ants, surely He will not leave us unprotected. He is the Creator, the Destroyer and the Preserver. That is why He preserves even while destroying.

I have nothing particular to say about ourselves. We eat and walk and sleep, that goes without saying. In between we read, spin, etc.

Wherever you may be, do not forget to pray daily.

If you can recite no other prayer, you can do at least the *Ramadhun*.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 63. Also C.W. 8790. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

340. A LETTER

February 5, 1932

CHI.,

It seems, you are destined to remain delicate all your life. That certainly ought not to be. I see that you have given up worrying about your health. From one point of view, it is good. But giving up worrying should not mean that you should make no attempt to improve it. Daily doses of medicines are not the right remedy. Change of diet and exercise are bound to cure constipation. Which food and which exercises will suit you is for you to find out.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8930. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

341. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

February 5, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. Sardar has really given up tea. I knew that he had given up the morning tea. He used to have a cup at ten. Now he has given up that too. I knew this after he had done so. I didn't say a single word to him. He has acted of his own free will.

It was not my intention to state that I had sent English toys for the children. If that is what I did, I made a slip. What I wished to say was that I had brought some toys. Now I don't know when I would be able to give them. They were in Mirabehn's custody. Perhaps she will remember where they are kept.

The books were in a trunk. Either Mirabehn or Pyarelal would know about them. If you lift and feel the weight of the trunk which has not been opened, you will know whether it contains books or something else. Perhaps Mahadev knows about it.

This is what is meant by seeming inconsistency. An apparent inconsistency either in my life or in the affairs of the Ashram can be explained. There is only an appearance of inconsistency in the actionof a person who wraps up his body in winter and keeps it uncovered in summer. He obeys the same principle both when he

covers the body and when he leaves it uncovered. Many such seeming inconsistencies can be properly explained. Other inconsistencies are such in fact. They are due to my or Ashram's weaknesses. They should be regarded as moral deficiencies and every effort should be made to overcome them. Which inconsistencies are really such and which are only apparent ones can be decided only when we examine all of them one by one. If you wish to ask me about any inconsistencies which you may have noticed, please do.

No one hates another without a cause. Hence, non-violence lies in loving a person, feeling compassion for him and serving him even when he has given us cause for hating him. There is no non-violence in loving a person who loves us; that is but the law of the world. Non-violence may be described as making a gift. Giving love in return for love is no more than doing one's duty.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10271. Also C.W. 6719. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

342. LETTER TO PUSHPA S. PATEL

February 5, 1932

CHI. PUSHPA,

I should pull your nose from here for having spent so many days before finding time to write to me. Here, take it. Just now it is eight o'clock at night on Friday. Write to me and tell me whether you felt the nose pulled. For you, the handwriting in your letter was good. Make it still better. How far have you come up in the *Gita*?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3978

343. LETTER TO RAMANANDA CHATTERJEE

February 6, 1932

DEAR RAMANANDA BABU,

Many thanks for *The Modern Review*.[1] Do please send me *The Golden Book of Tagore*. It will be allowed. My love to Gurudev when you meet him.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. RAMANAND CHATTERJEE

"[THE] MODERN REVIEW"

UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD, CALCUTTA

From the original: C.W. 9501. Courtesy: Santa Devi

344. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

February 6, 1932

DEAR MARY[2],

I was delighted to hear from you. Yes, I am permitted to write and receive non-political letters such as yours is.

The paper[3] on which you wrote your letter is nothing new to me. Ahmedabad used to be the home of such paper. It is prepared there even now but in very small quantities. There are several such places in India. The second chapter of the *Gita* has presented difficulties to many. I would commend to your attention my introduction[4] to the *Gita*. I have dealt with the difficulty in that introduction. If you have not read it, get a copy from the Ashram. It was published in *Young India*. In the first instance, forget that God is speaking through the *Gita*. God neverspeaks save through defective human agency. In the second instance, it is not to be treated as a historical book. Thirdly, it

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Ramanada Chatterjee", 22-1-1932

[2] Of Mission Boarding School near Hyderabad; popularly known as Marybehn, she became interested in Gandhiji's speeches and writings during her furlough in England in 1931 at the time of Round Table Conference; she became acquainted with Gandhiji on board s.s. *Pilsna* while returning to India.

[3] Hand-made

[4] *Vide* "Anasktiyoga"

was written by him in whose time war was not taboo and was not considered inconsistent with ahimsa, just as even now generally speaking, killing of animals for food or in self-protection is not considered inconsistent with ahimsa, though in point of fact it is. The author of the *Gita* therefore chose for driving his lesson home an illustration which we are entitled to consider as defective. Personally I have no difficulty in understanding the second chapter. The central teaching of the *Gita* is in Biblical language 'Be careful for nothing'. Results are not for us to control. Having known the path of duty it must be pursued in total disregard of consequence. Arjuna's reasoning was defective and arose from attachment to earthly ties. He was not averse to war, he was averse to fighting kinsmen. The religious answer to this attachment would be, there is no kinsman and no-kinsman[1]. All are—the whole creation is— kinsmen or no one is. If therefore it is lawful to wage war at all, it makes no difference whether it is kinsmen who are concerned or strangers. But this physical, outward war is merely a shadow of the war that is going on within—between God and Satan, forces of evil and good. And do we not always have difficult and delicate problems of conscience arising within us? The *Gita* says, "Surrender all to God, He will take care of you and your doubts; do not vex yourself about anything but simply perform the service that comes to you in the name of and for the sake of God. Cultivate uttermost selflessness and all will be well." The result of this selfless detachment must be uttermost truth and non-violence. Thus[2] read, the second chapter instead of being a hindrance becomes, in my opinion, a help. If this does not satisfy you and you will pursue the subject further, pray do not hesitate to write.

We are keeping the early morning hours[3]. I mean Sardar Vallabhbhai and I.

I am glad you liked your brief stay at the Ashram. Of course you will go there, whenever you feel like it.

[1] Perhaps a slip for 'non-kinsman'
[2] The source has "This".
[3] Of prayer

Thanks for the offer of books. I have a fair stock and friends and strangers continue to send books which they think I should read.Even apart from the *Gita* difficulty, do write whenever you feel like it.[1]

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5981. Also C.W. 3309. Courtesy: Mary Barr

345. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

February 6, 1932

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

You came and met me but we could not talk. I had been worrying about Venilal, so I had gone to see him once accompanied by Ba. How is he now? Write to me in detail. Where is Umiya[2], and how is she? How are the other girls? How are your relations with Kasumbi[3]? Do write to me about how your work is going on.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

[1] In her book, *Bapu—Conversations and Correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi,* Mary Barr explains: "I replied to the above letter and after that there was a long pause without anything from him. I . . . felt sure that he would have replied if he had received my letter. So I wrote again, a mere postcard asking if he had my second letter. His answer was equally brief and open." *Vide*"Letter to F. Mary Barr", 6-2-1932

[2] Addressee's daughter

[3] Addressee's wife, Kasumba

346. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

February 6, 1932

CHI. MANGALA,

I suppose the broken point of the thorn has come out now. Try and get over the mistakes which you make when reciting the *Gita* verses. Do you know the meaning of the verses? Have you learnt any Sanskrit?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4074. Also C.W. 38. Courtesy: Mangalabehn B. Desai

347. LETTER TO MATHURI N. KHARE

February 6, 1932

CHI. MATHURI,

I certainly like your getting up early in the morning, but a girl of weak health like you must be free to sleep whenever she wants to. You should do only as much as you can without getting tired or bored.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 261. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

348. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

February 6, 1932

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I got your letter. One must never forget prayer. As the body craves for food when it is hungry and does not forget about it, so the soul should yearn to pray. The prayer may consist of nothing more than Ramanama, but one ought not to forget it in any circumstances. To the extent that you forget it occasionally, to that extent it is an external thing to you. Prayer must become so intimately a part of

one's being that at last one's every breath is accompanied by Ramanama. As an eyelid goes on doing its work, one will go on repeating Rama's name with every breath.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9507. Also C.W. 423. Courtesy: Shivabhai G. Patel

349. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

February 6, 1932

CHI. VANAMALA,

If a boy or girl does not know what to write, he or she must be stupid. Surely, you are not stupid, are you? If you even describe the events of the day on which you write, you can fill the whole letter. Try this when you reply to this. You will have enough material to write about.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5763. Also C.W. 2986. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

350. LETTER TO RAMJI G. BADHIA

February 6, 1932

BHAISHRI RAMJI,

Your letter made me very happy. Your decision to follow Shankerlal's advice is certainly very good. I expect much from you. I felt relieved to know that Jivanlal's health was all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

351. LETTER TO NIRMALA H. DESAI

February 6, 1932

CHI. NIRMALA,

I cannot answer from here your question about foreign cloth, for it is a political subject. You may, therefore, ask Narandasbhai about it, and if you are not satisfied by his answer we shall discuss the question when we meet.

Tell Mahadev that he cannot afford to lose weight in this manner. One may eat the food that [one's body][1] requires. What does Mahadev read at present?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9464

352. LETTER TO NANIBEHN JHAVERI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
February 6, 1932

CHI. NANIBEHN JHAVERI,

I am writing letters. Sardar is going through the newspapers and reading out important items to me. I have just learnt about you and other ladies having been arrested and later released. I would not write to you thinking you would be in jail and the next thing I learn from the papers is that you are free and far away. Now, if you get this letter, do let me have all your experiences.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari—Pannalal Jhaveri, p. 26

[1] Some words are missing here in the source.

353. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
February 6, 1932

CHI. NIMU,

So, I have at long last got a letter from you. You have no such reason as I have, of preoccupation with other work for not writing. So, doesn't your not writing to me mean only lethargy on your part? The thought that my own daughter is suffering from constipation is unbearable to me. Ramdas is only a few yards away from me but, as for our meeting, if at all it is there, I do not know when that will be held. The Superintendent here told me that he is fine.

Do not be tardy again in writing to me. What is Navanit doing these days?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

354. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

[After *February 6, 1932*][1]

I got yours today. I was wondering what had happened to you. I did not receive your letter in reply to mine. Do write again and 96

repeat your questions. I think I shall receive it safely. We are all doing well, engaged in various studies and spinning. We have more books than we can cope with. Love from us all.

BAPU

Bapu-Conversations and Correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 15

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, "Letter to Jaisukhlal Gandhi", 6-2-1932

355. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

February 7, 1932

CHI. RAIHANA,

I was glad to get your letter. Of course I make many mistakes. Be patient. Leave off correcting when you get tired of doing so. I will try to write every week. Having started the practice, I will not give it up. May God grant a long life to my teacher. Tell Father that both of us remember him several times during the day. Tell him that he must come out of the jail palace a young man. It is a good thing that Ravishankar is there to look after him. Blessings from me to Hamida and other girls and women.[1]

I hope this much will be enough for today. I should not trouble you too much. If I do not learn Urdu quite well, the fault will be my teacher's. The poor pupil is helpless.

To Mother many many salaams, *vandemataram*s and love from us both, to Sohaila blessings, to the baby kisses and to you a slap.Do not think about your disease. Why should one who has fallen in love with God, worry about disease or anything else? Do you know the *bhajan*, "I will go dance now, singing praises of God"? I heard it once from that lawyer-daughter of Uma Nehru. She is quite a good singer. But why speak of *bhajans* to you? You are yourself a veritable mine of them.

Many blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9637

356. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Wednesday, February 3/8, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your packet just this evening.

Lady Vithaldas, Bhai Trivedi, Vidya Hingorani and Damodar came in the afternoon and saw me. I got the leather for the sandals. I have heard that Ramdas, Chhaganlal, Surendra, Somabhai and others, in all 190 persons, have arrived here. Most probably some of them will see us.

[1] Up to this the letter is in Urdu.

For your scabies, you should eat green leaves and tomatoes. Baths with [potassium] permanganate will certainly help.

At the bottom of the letter from C.P. Scott's son you write that you have sent by book post a biography of the late Scott. The book does not seem to have been received here. If you remember to have sent it, write to me again so that I may inquire further.

You have stated in the "Ashram Samachar" that I spin 500 rounds in two days. I spin, not 500 rounds, but 500 yards, in two days. I spin 375 rounds in two days and it is my ambition to spin as many in one day. But I do not think I shall be able to fulfil it as quickly as I had hoped.

Night, February 6, 1932

I had a letter from Tilakam. The food does not seem to have agreed with him. Read my letter to him, and if he agrees, carry out my suggestions. Pulses do not agree with people who are used to meat. If they start with milk, they experience no difficulty. They ordinarily eat *rotli*, etc., even with meat. As a substitute for meat, they generally take pulses, but a stomach used to meat cannot digest pulses. In any case such persons must not eat any kind of nuts such as ground-nuts,etc. Milk and curds are but pure forms of non-vegetarian food.

February 8, 1932

You will find with this an article on the subject of the existence of God. It is a translation of a portion of an article published in *Young India*.[1] I had read that portion[2] for a gramophone record. The record is on sale now. Anand[3] heard it. He took down the extract and sent a copy to me for translation. The Hindi article mentioned above is a translation of that extract. The translation should not be published now. Anand wants the Hindi translation to help him to make a Sindhi translation. Send it to him and ask him not to publish it just now. The inmates of the Ashram can read it. You may even publish it in the *Ashram Patrika*. If you do, publish it as an original article. Let Parasram correct its Hindi. I leave it to you to decide whether or not you should publish it in the *Patrika*. If your publishing it is likely to be misconstrued or if someone is likely to reproduce the article

[1] *Vide* "God Is"

[2] On October 17, 1931; *vide* "Diary, 1931"

[3] Anand Hingorani, who has since published its Sindhi version under the title "*Iswara Ahe*? *Ha, Ahe*."

elsewhere, drop the idea. It will be enough if the inmates of the Ashram who are there read it, think over it and understand its meaning.

I read in the papers news about a few things having been seized from the Ashram. I expect I shall get more details from you.

I have some free time today and so I wish to describe a few details of the routine here.

Both of us get up at 3.40. After brushing, we pray. After that, we take warm water with honey and lemon juice and then read till the stroke of five. From five to six, we walk. At six, if I feel the call of nature I answer it, and then sleep for about 20 minutes. I get up at 6.45, when the bell for opening the cells is given, and read up to seven. The Sardar, after answering the call of nature, walks about and sits down to breakfast when milk is brought. As he eats the breakfast, he reads from the newspaper, which has arrived by then. During the day, I read, write and spin. In between I take a nap twice. The Sardar walks about much longer than I do. He generally reads from the newspapers which are supplied to us. I have two meals a day. The Sardar occasionally eats salad or something else like that at twelve. I again take warm water and honey at that time. When the honey isexhausted, I add jaggery and lemon-juice. I once happened to remark that Mirabehn or Pyarelal used to prepare fruit for me to eat. Since then the Sardar has monopolized that duty. It is he who prepares dates and tomatoes for me and does it with great love. I have accepted this loving service without the slightest hesitation. Having mentioned the service rendered by Mirabehn and Pyarelal, it would be a useless attempt on my part to decline the Sardar's help. He takes milk and bread in the morning. At four in the afternoon, he takes bread, curds and some vegetables and, generally salad. I used to take milk in the morning, with dates, tomatoes and, from the fruit sent by Lady Thackersey or Prof. Trivedi, some oranges, *chikus*, etc. At present, I eat dates and tomatoes and, in the morning, take half a pound of milk, and in the evening the same quantity of curds. But I see that I shall have to reduce the quantity of milk still further. My health is good, of course. Do you know that my weight has increased? I see that now I do not need very nourishing food, especially when I enjoy solitude and peace of mind. This was my experience last year. While in jail, I could live without milk and maintain my weight. After my release, I lost weight in a short time for want of milk and, therefore, resumed it. In England, it was only with that that I could keep up my strength. Here I may not perhaps need milk. On the contrary milk may even do me harm. Of course I will do no violence to my body. My aversion to milk

remains. But I will give the body what it requires. Let no one, therefore, worry after reading this. I will also mention some other work which the Sardar does. It is he who trims the envelope which you send and prepares it [for use again]. There are many such happy details which I can mention. But are not these enough? Just as we walk about between five and six in the morning, so do we again in the evening. Between six and seven, I read. Meanwhile, the Sardar prepares dates, babul sticks for brushing teeth, etc., for me and then joins me in the cell. At seven, the prayers begin. After prayers, reading and writing again, till 8.30. By nine, we are in bed. Both of us sleep in the open. From among newspapers, we get *The Times* [*of India*], *The* [*Bombay*] *Chronicle*, *The Tribune*, *The Leader*, and *The Hindu*. From among weeklies, we get *Social Reformer*, and from among monthlies, *The Modern Review*. As for books, I get some from outside and I have brought some with me. They supply enough fare to both of us.

I have read the following books so far: Durant's [*The Case for*] *India*, Crozier's *A Word to Gandhi*, Brailsford's [*Rebel*] *India*, Al HajSalmin's *Imam Hussain* and *Khalifa Ally*, Samuel Hoare's *Fourth Seal*, R. MacDonald's travelogue, *Survey of Matar Taluka*[1], Ramanathan's *Speech on Khadi*, Will Hayes' *Essence of Hinduism*[2], Ruskin's *St. George's Guild*, Shah's *Federal Finance*, Rothenstein's *Ruin of Egypt*, Hayes' *The Book of the Cow*, A. E's. *Candle of Vision*, Kinley's *Money*, and *Shankh ane Kodi* (Gujarati). I am now reading the biography of Munshi Zaka Ullah written by Andrews and Shah's book, *Sixty Years of Economic Administration of India*. The Sardar has read Hoare's and MacDonald's books and is now reading the book on Egypt. He gives plenty of time to newspapers and, in addition to the two hours which he gives to walking, as I have mentioned, he must certainly be spending two hours more in walking at other times.

Besides this, there are 36 letters.

Blessings from

BAPU[3]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8207. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] By J. C. Kumarappa

[2] Among the list of books given at the end of "Diary, 1932" the name appears as "Hayes' Indian Bibles".

[3] For the text of the *Gita* discourse (Ch. XVI) which followed, *vide* "Letters on the *Gita*"

357. LETTER T O AGATHA HARRISON

February 8, 1932

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I have your letter. I was wondering how you were doing. I was therefore glad to hear from you. I may not say more beyond sending my love. Sardar Vallabhbhai is with me and we are both keeping well.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

MISS AGATHA HARRISON
2 CRANBOURNE COURT
ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD
LONDON S.W. 11

From a photostat: G.N. 1450

358. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

Y. M.,
February 8, 1932

MY DEAR ANAND,

I was so glad to see Vidya. She was looking very well indeed. I am now sending for your help, not for publication, a rendering of my speech[1] on God. It is only a fragment of a fuller thing in *Y. I.* which you should see, if you have not already.

Love to you both.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] *Vide* "God Is" and "God Is", *fn*. 3.

359. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

February 8, 1932

CHI. PANDITJI,

I have two letters from you lying before me. I now understand the riddle of *nama hasude* [*sic*]. It is a good way Narayanrao has found for honouring himself. It is not for nothing that he is a Raosaheb.

Whom did Gajanan ask? No responsible person here knows about the matter. Let me know the date and the hour too. I waited for him very long.

I do not remember whether or not I had before me the *mantra, Hiranmayena*[1], etc., when it occurred to me that "Truth is God". When such things occur to me, they spring straight from the heart as if they were original intuitions. For me, these truths have the certainty of personal experience.

If Gajanan is hereabouts, he may still accompany somebody who may be coming to see me. I have referred to Narayan's visit in the general letter.

I hope there is no hurry about the *Bhajanavali*. I wish to offer some suggestions.

Do you think that Rambhau has made good progress? Who are taking music lessons with interest at present?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 226. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

[1] *Isopanishad*, 15; *vide* "Ashram Bhajanavali"

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

ROMAIN ROLLAND'S LETTER TO AN AMERICAN FRIEND[1]

December, 1931

How I should have liked to have you here during the visit of the Indians! They stayed five days—from Sunday night until Friday afternoon, the eleventh—at the Villa Vionette. The little man, bespectacled and toothless, was wrapped in his white burnoose, but his legs, thin as a heron's stilts, were bare. His shaven head with its few coarse hairs was uncovered and wet with rain. He came to me with a dry laugh, his mouth open, like good dog panting, and flinging an arm around me leaned his cheek against my shoulder. I felt his grizzled head against my cheek. It was, I amuse myself thinking, the kiss of St. Dominic and St. Francis.

Then came Mira (Miss Slade), proud of figure and with the stately bearing of a Demeter and finally three Indians, one young son of Gandhi, Devdas, with a round and happy face. He is gentle and but little aware of the grandeur of his name. The others were secretaries—disciples—two young men of rare qualities of heart and mind: Mahadev Desai and Pyarelal.

As I had contrived shortly beforehand to get a severe cold on my chest, it was to my house and to the chamber on the second floor where I sleep at Villa Olga—you will remember it—that Gandhi came each morning for long conversations. My sister interpreted with the assistance of Mira, and I had also a Russian friend and secretary, Miss Kondacheff, who took notes on our discussions. Some good photographs by Schlemmer, our neighbour from Montreux, recorded the aspect of our interviews.

Evening at seven o'clock, prayers were held in the first floor salon. With lights lowered, the Indians seated on the carpet, and a little assembly of the faithful grouped about, there was a suite of three beautiful chants—the first an extract form the *Gita*, the second an ancient hymn of the Sanskrit texts which Gandhi has translated and the third a canticle of Rama and Siva, intoned by the warm, grave voice of Mira.

Gandhi held other prayers at three o'clock in the morning for which, in London, he used to wake his harassed staff, although he had not retired until one. This little man, so frail in appearance, is tireless, and fatigue is a word which does not exist in his vocabulary. He could calmly answer for hours the heckling of a crowd, as he did at Lausanne and Geneva, without a muscle of his face twitching. Seated on a table, motionless, his voice always clear and calm, he replied to his adversaries open or masked—and they were not lacking at Geneva—giving them rude truths which left them silenced and suffocated.

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with Romain Rolland", 6-12-1931

The Roman bourgeoisie, and nationalist, who had at first received him with crafty looks, quivered with rage when he left. I believe that if his stay had lasted any longer the public meetings would have been forbidden. He pronounced himself as unequivocally as possible on the double question of nationl armaments and the conflict between capital and labour. I was largely responsible for steering him on this latter course.

His mind proceeds through successive experiments into action and he follows a straight line, but he never stops, and one would risk error in attempting to judge him by what he said ten years ago, because his thought is in constant evolution. I will give you a little example of it that is characteristic.

He was asked at Lausanne to define what he understood by God. He explained how, among the noblest attributes which the Hindu scriptures ascribed to God, he had in his youth chosen the word 'truth' as most truly defining the essential element. He had then said, "God is Truth." "But", he added, "two years ago I advanced another step. I now say," Truth is God'. For even the atheists do not doubt the necessity for the power of truth. In their passion for discovering the truth, the atheists have not hesitated to deny the existence of God, and, from their point of view, they are right." You will understand from this single trait the boldness and independence of this religious spirit from the Orient. I noted in him traits similar to Vivekananda.

And yet not a single political ruse catches him unprepared. And his own politics are to say everyting that he thinks to everybody, not concealing a thing.

On the last evening, after the prayers, Gandhi asked me to play him a little of Beethoven. (He does not know Beethoven, but he knows that Beethoven has been the intermediary between Mira and me[1], and consequently between Mira and himself, and that, in the final count, it is to Beethoven that the gratitude of us all must go.) I played him the Andante of the Fifth Symphony. To that I added "Les Champs Elyses" of Gluck—the page for the orchestra and the air for the flute.

He is very sensitive to the religious chants of his country, which somewhat resemble the most beautiful of our Gregorian melodies, and he has worked to assemble them. We also exchanged our ideas on art, from which he does not separate his conception of truth, nor from his conception of truth that of joy, which he thinks truth should bring. But it follows of itself that for this heroic nature joy does not come without effort, nor even life itself without hardship. "The seeker after truth hath a heart tender as the lotus, and hard as granite."

Here, my dear friend, are a few hints of those days of ours together on which I have taken much more detailed notes. What I do not dwell on to you is the hurricane of intruders, loiterers and half-wits which this visit loosed on our two villas. No, the

[1] Mirabehn joined Mahatma Gandhi at the suggestion of Romain Rolland.

telephone never ceased ringing, photographers in ambuscades let fly their fusillades from behind every bush. The milkmen's syndicate at Leman informed me that during all the time of this sojourn with me of the "King of India" they intended to assume complete responsibility for his "victualling". We received letters from "Sons of God". Some Italian wrote to the Mahatma beseeching him to indicate for them the ten lucky numbers for the next drawing of the weekly national lottery!

My sister, having survived, has gone to take ten days' rest at a cure in Zurich. She returns tomorrow. For my part, I have entirely lost the gift of sleep. If you find it, send it to me by registered mail!

Bapu's Letters to Mira, pp. 180-3

APPENDIX II

TELEGRAM FROM PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY[1]

December 31, 1931

HIS EXCELLENCY DESIRES ME TO THANK YOU FOR YOUR TELEGRAM OF THE 29TH INSTANT IN WHICH YOU REFER TO BENGAL AND UNITED PROVINCES AND N.W.F.P. ORDINANCES. IN REGARD TO BENGAL IT HAS BEEN AND IS NECESSARY FOR GOVERNMENT TO TAKE ALL POSSIBLE MEASURES TO PREVENT DASTARDLY ASSASSINATION OF THEIR OFFICERS AND OF PRIVATE CITIZENS.HIS EXCELLENCY WISHES ME TO SAY THAT HE AND HIS GOVERNMENT DESIRE TO HAVE FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH ALL POLITICAL PARTIES AND WITH ALL SECTIONS OF THE PUBLIC AND IN PARTICULAR TO SECURING CO-OPERATION OF ALL IN GREAT WORK OF CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS WHICH THEY ARE DETERMINED TO PUSH FORWARD WITH MINIMUM DELAY CO-OPERATION, HOWEVER, MUST BE MUTUAL AND HIS EXCELLENCY AND HIS GOVERNMENT CANNOT RECONCILE ACTIVITIES OF THE CONGRESS IN UNITED PROVINCES AND N.W.F.P. WITH THE SPIRIT OF FRANK CO-OPERATION WHICH THE GOOD OF INDIA DEMANDS. AS REGARDS THE UNTIED PROVINCES, YOU ARE DOUBTLESS AWARE THAT WHILE THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT WERE ENGAGED IN DEVISING MEANS TO GIVE ALL POSSIBLE RELIEF IN THE EXISTING SITUATION THE PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE AUTHORZIED A NO-RENT CAMPAIGN, WHICH IS

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Viceroy", 29-12-1931

NOW BEING VIGOROUSLY PURSUED BY THE CONGRESS ORGANIZATIONS IN THAT PROVINCE. THIS ACTION ON THE PART OF THE CONGRESS BODIES HAS COMPELLED GOVERNMENT TO TAKE MEASURES TO PREVENT A GENERAL STATE OF DISORDER AND SPREADING OF GLASS AND COMMUNAL HATRED WHICH THE CAMPAIGN, IF CONTINUED UNCHECKED, WOULD INEVITABLY INVOLVE.. IN THE N.W.F.P., ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN AND BODIES HE CONTROLLED HAVE CONTINUOUSLY ENGAGED IN ACTIVITEIS AGAINST GOVERNMENT AND IN FOMENTING RACIAL HATRED. HE AND HIS FFRIENDS HAVE PERSISTENTLY REFUSED ALL OVERTURES BY THE CHIEF COMISSIONER TO SECURE THER CO-OPERATION AND, REJECTING DECLARATION OF THE PRIME MINISTER, HAVE DECLARED IN FAVOUR OF COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE, ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN HAS DELIVERED NUMEROUS SPEECHES OPEN TO NO OTHER CONSTRUCTION THAN AS INCITEMENT TO REVOLUTION AND HIS ADHERENTS HAVE ATTEMPTED TO STIR TROUBLE IN THE TRIBAL AREAS. THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER, WITH THE APPROVAL OF HIS EXCELLENCY'S GOVERNMENT, HAS SHOWN UTMOST FORBEARANCE AND TO THE LAST MOMENT CONTINUED HIS EFFORTS TO SECURE ASSISTANCE OF ABDUL GHAFFAR IN CARRYING INTO EFFECT, WITH THE LEAST POSSIBLE DELAY, INTENTIONS OF HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNEMNT REGARDING CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS IN THE PROVINCE. GOVERNMENT REFRAINED FROM TAKING SPECIAL MEASURES UNTIL THE ACTIVITIES OF ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN AND HIS ASSOCIATES AND, IN PARTICULAR, THE OPEN AND INTENSIVE PREPARATION FOR AN EARLY CONFLICT WITH GOVERNMENT, CREATED A SITUATION OF SUCH GRAVE MENACE TO PEACE OF THE PROVINCE AND OF THE TRIBAL AREAS AS TO MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FURTHER TO DELAY ACTION. HIS EXCELLENCY UNDERSTANDS THAT ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN WAS IN AUGUST LAST MADE RESPONSIBLE FOR LEADING CONGRESS MOVEMENT IN THE PROVINCE AND THAT THE VOLUNTEERS ORGANIZATIONS HE CONTROLLED WERE SPECIFICALLY RECOGNIZED BY ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE AS CONGRESS ORANIZATIONS. HIS EXCELLENCY DESIRES ME TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT HIS RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PEACE AND ORDER MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO HAVE ANY DEALING

WITH PERSONS OR ORGANIZATIONS UPON WHOM REST THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACTIVITIES ABOVE OUTLINED. YOU HAVE YOURSELF BEEN ABSENT FROM INDIA ON BUSINESS OF THE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE AND IN THE LIGHT OF THE ATTITUDE WHICH YOU HAVE OBSERVED THERE HIS EXCELLENCY IS UNWILLING TO BELIEVE THAT YOU HAVE PERSONALLY ANY SHARE IN THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR OR THAT YOU APPROVE OF THE RECENT ACTIVITIES OF CONGRESS IN THE UNITED PROVINCES AND THE N.W.F.P. IF THIS IS SO, HE IS WILLING TO SEE YOU AND TO GIVE YOU HIS VIEWS AS TO THE WAY IN WHICH YOU CAN BEST EXERT YOUR INFLUECNE TO MAINTAIN THE SPIRIT OF CO-OPERATION WHICH ANIMATED THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE . BUT HIS EXCELLENCY FEELS BOUND TO EMPHASIZE THAT HE WILL NOT BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS WHICH YOU MEASURES WHICH GOVERNEMNT OF INDIA WITH THE FULL APPROVAL OF HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT HAVE FOUND IT NECESSARY TO ADOPT IN BENGAL, THE UNTIED PROVINCES AND THE N.W.F.P. THESE MEASURES MUST IN ANY CASE BE KEPT IN FORCE UNTIL THEY HAVE SERVED THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH THEY WERE IMPOSED NAMELY PRESERVATION OF LAW AND ORDER ESSENTIAL TO GOOD GOVERNMENT; ON RECEIPT OF YOUR REPLY HIS EXCELLENCY PROPOSES TO PUBLISH THIS CORRESPONDENCE.

India in 1931-32

APPENDIX III

TELEGRAM FROM PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY[1]

January 2, 1932

HIS EXCELLENCY DESIRES ME TO ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF YOUR TELEGRAM OF 1ST JANUARY WHICH HAS BEEN CONSIDERED BY HIM AND HIS GOVERNMENT. THEY MUCH REGRET TO OBSERVE THAT UNDER YOUR ADVICE THE CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE HAS PASSED A RESOLUTION WHICH INVOLVES GENERAL REVIVAL OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE UNLESS CERTAIN CONDITIONS ARE SATISFIED WHICH ARE STATED IN

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to Viceroy", 1-1-1932

YOUR TELEGRAM AND THE RESOLUTION. THEY REGARD THIS ATTITUDE AS THE MORE DEPLORABLE IN VIEW OF THE DECLARED INTENTIONS OF HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT AND THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA TO EXPEDITE THE POLICY OF CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM CONTAINED IN THE PREMIER'S STATEMENT. NO GOVERNMENT, CONSISTENT WITH THE DISCHARGE OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITY, CAN BE SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS SOUGHT TO BE IMPOSED UNDER THE MENACE OF UNLAWFUL ACTION BY ANY POLITCIAL ORGANIZATION , NOR CAN THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACCEPT THE POSITION IMPLIED IN YOUR TELEGRAM THAT THEIR POLICY SHOULD BE DEPENDENT ON THE JUDGMENT OF YOURSELF AS TO NECESSITY OF MEASURES WHICH GOVERNMENT HAVE TAKEN AFTER THE MOST CAREFUL AND THOROUGH CONSIDERATION OF THE FACTS AND AFTER ALL OTHER POSSIBLE REMEDIES HAD BEEN EXHAUSTED. HIS EXCELLENCY AND HIS GOVERNMENT CAN HARDLY BELIEVE THAT YOU OR THE WORKING COMMITTEE CONTEMPLATE THAT HIS EXCELLENCY CAN INVITE YOU, WITH THE HOPE OF ANY ADVANTAGE, TO AN INTERVIEW HELD UNDER THE THREAT OF RESUMPTION OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE.

THEY MUST HOLD YOU AND THE CONGRESS RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL THE CONSEQUENCES WHICH MAY ENSUE FROM ACTION WHICH THE CONGRESS HAVE ANNOUNCED THEIR INTENTION OF TAKING AND TO MEET WHICH GOVERNMENT TAKE ALL NECESSARY MEASURES.

India in 1931-32; also Young India, 7-1-1932

APPENDIX IV

VERRIER ELWIN ON GANDHIJI'S ARREST[1]

Gandhi was staying in a house called Mani Bhuvan and he invited us to stay with him there. There was great excitement in the city; the Viceroy had finally rejected the Congress offer of peace; Nehru was already in jail, and arrest of other national leaders was expected at any moment.

But when we reached Mani Bhuvan and climbed to the roof, we found a great serenity in astonishing contrast to the crowds and turmoil outside. The roof was a very pleasant place. Low tents had been erected, and there were palms and plants; at

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Varrier Elwin", 4-1-1932

least 300 people could gather there. It was cool and you could see the stars. Bapu was sitting at the wheel quietly spinning. He had already begun his weekly silence. I carried on a one-sided conversation with him, and he wrote down his questions and replied on a scrap of paper which I still have. I must have begun by asking if there was anything I could do.

He wrote:

"I have sent for you for that very purpose. I have told Mahadev all I have been revolving in my mind. When he comes he will tell you or I shall briefly write what is wanted.

How are you keeping in health?

He [Mahadev][1] should be coming shortly. If he does not during the time I finish this I shall write out what I want to say.

You are sleeping here? If so is your bedding, etc., arranged?"

Then Shamrao and I retired to the smaller tent and Bapu lay down about three yards from us, while some thirty others lay on the roof under the canvas shelter. Mrs. Gandhi and Mirabehn gave us a surprisingly satisfying supper of dates, nuts and fruit. But I could not sleep. As I wrote at the time, 'I felt I had to keep vigil, and for hours I was under those splendid stars that rose, tier upon tier above me, while beside me Bapu slept like a child committed to his Father's hands. I thought of Christ going up to Jerusalem, his eyes filled with determination and courage: and I seemed to see the Spirit of Christ travelling the centuries like a bright sword turned against all wrong and injustice. Among these sleeping friends so dear to us, brave, pure-hearted, sincere, the spirit of love was manifest and unconquerable.

At last I lay down between Shamrao and Bernard on my hastily improvised bed on the floor, just beside Bapu, and fell into a deep sleep, when suddenly like the coming of a dream there was a stir and a whisper: 'The police have come.'

We started up and I saw what I shall never forget—a fully uniformed Commissioner of Police at the foot of Bapu's bed, and Bapu just waking, a little bewildered, looking old, fragile and rather pathetic with the mists of sleep still on his face.

'Mr. Gandhi, it is my duty to arrest you.'

A beautiful smile of welcome broke out on Bapu's face and now he looked young, strong and confident. He made signs to show that he was keeping silence.

The Commissioner smiled and with great courtesy said, 'I should like you to be ready in half an hour's time.'

It was five minutes past three. Bapu looked at his watch and the Commissioner said, 'Ah, the famous watch!' and they both laughed heartily. Bapu took a pencil and wrote, 'I will be ready to come with you in half an hour.'

[1] As given in the source.

The Commissioner laid his hand on Bapu's shoulder with a gesture so full of affection that I thought it was an embrace, until I realized that it was the formal token of arrest. Bapu then cleaned his teeth and retired for a moment. The door was guarded, and all of us who were on the roof sat round in a circle. I looked out on to the road where some had been keeping all-night vigil and where a little crowd, very quiet and orderly, had collected, but there were no special police precautions.

When he was ready, Bapu sat in the midst of us for the prayers and we sang together the song of the true Vaishnava. Then Bapu took pencil and paper and wrote a few messages, some last instructions to his followers and a letter[1] to Sardar Vallabhbhai, which was as follows: . . .

He then wrote a short note[2] and gave it to me: . . .

Then Bapu stood up to take farewell. It was a strange sight: the police at the door, Mirabehn and Devdas bustling to and fro with the baggage which was already packed, Bapu surrounded by his friends, many of them weeping. Mrs. Gandhi with tears running down her cheeks said, "Can't you take me with you?" Everyone in turn touched his feet, and when I said goodbye he pulled my ear with a smile. He was in very good spirits: he might have been going to a festival rather than a jail.

Then, followed by the whole company, he went downstairs. Shamrao and I watched from the roof. The tiny figure got into the car and the crowd surged round it. It was a wonderful tribute to India's non-violence that there were only a few policemen and they were able to be in the midst of the crowd without fear ofdanger. Just at that moment a message came to say that Sardar Vallabhbhai, the Congress President had also been arrested. And then the crowd scattered as the car bearing the very soul of India drove away through the dark and deserted streets.

The Tribal World of Verrier Elwin, pp. 65-8

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 4-1-1932

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Varrier Elwin", 4-1-1932

APPENDIX V

LETTER FROM R. M. MAXWELL[1]

Secret HOME DEPARTMENT (POLITICAL),

No. S. D. 310 BOMBAY CASTLE,

January 16, 1932

FROM

R. M. MAXWELL, ESQUIRE, C.I.E.

ACTING SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

HOME DEPARTMENT

TO

THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF PRISONS

BOMBAY PRESIDENCY

SIR,

I am directed to inform you that the Governor in Council has been pleased to issue the following orders with regard to the privileges to be allowed *for the present* to the State Prisoners, Messrs Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and Vallabhbhai Patel and regarding the arrangements to be made for their periodical medical examination.

2. PERIODICALS AND NEWSPAPERS: Both the prisoners should be allowed the following periodicals and newspapers: *The Times of India, The Bombay Chronicle, The Leader* (Allahabad), *The Tribune* (Lahore), *The Hindu* (Madras), *The Indian Social Reformer, The Modern Review, Young India* and *Navajivan*.

3. LETTERS: Both the prisoners may, as requested by them, be allowed to write letters once a week; or oftener with the previous permission of the Superintendent of the Prison. All correspondence to and from the prisoners should be censored by the Superintendent of the Prison. Vernacular letters which cannot be translated in the Prison should be sent to the Oriental Translator to Government for translation unless the District Magistrate can arrange to have them translated in his office. All objectionable correspondence should be withheld. In doubtful cases areference should

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Ramananda Chatterjee", 22-1-1932

be made to Government. Any letters which the Superintendent considers should be seen by the Police should be forwarded by him to the Deputy Inspector-General of Police, C.I.D., Poona.

4. HEALTH AND PERIODICAL MEDICAL EXAMINATION: The two prisoners will remain in the medical care of the Superintendent of the Prison, but arrangements should be made in consultation with the Surgeon General with the Government of Bombay for their full medical examination with as little delay as possible by the Civil Surgeon, Poona, in conjunction with the Superintendent and for a report of the examination to be submitted to Government at once. Similar arrangements should be made for subsequent medical examination by the same two officers of Mr. Gandhi once a month and of Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel once in three months. A copy of the report should in each case be submitted to the Private Secretary to His Excellency the Governor. The Superintendent should also consult the Civil Surgeon, Poona, if at any time either prisoner appears to be suffering in health or is attacked by any serious illness.

I am to request that you will communicate to the prisoners, through the Superintendent, the orders in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 so far as they pertain to them with the omission of the instructions regarding censorship of correspondence in paragraph 3.

I am also to request that you will invite the attention of the Superintendent to the first sub-section of Section 5 of the Bombay Regulations and ask him to furnish the Government with a report required by this sub-section.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

ACTING SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

HOME DEPARTMENT

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40), Pt. I

1. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM D. SARAIYA

February 10, 1932

CHI. KAKU,

I got your letter written in a beautiful hand. You have plenty of things to write about. Even if you give an account of what you did during the last year, you will have enough material. You should regard spinning as *yajna* and do it regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2807. Courtesy: Purushottam D. Saraiya

2. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

February 10, 1932

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I got the packet sent by you. I will look into the translation at least, as and when I get time and let you know when I finish it. I have already replied[1] to your previous letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7419. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

3. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

February 10, 1932

CHI. VANAMALA,

You get five marks for your handwriting. You will get eight if you leave space between the words and use a good pen. Why does man have no root? A man carries his root wherever he goes. A tree has its root under the ground because it comes out of the ground. Man is born from his mother's body, and his root also comes out with him at the time of his birth. One may say that the navel is his root. If

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Valji G. Desai", 3-2-1932

this is not clear to you, show this letter to Premabehn and ask her to explain its meaning to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5764. Also C.W. 2987. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

4. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

February 10, 1932

CHI. PANDITJI,

I got Barve's book. I will dip into it when I get time.

Your explanation about the first doubt is quite correct. I have felt that that is the implication of Chapter XVII. Ultimately one has to rely on faith. We see again and again that what seems to be the truth to one does not often appear so to others. However, to follow truth as one sees it is like walking on the razor's edge. Anyone who tries to do so ought to remain wide awake and rigidly follow all the rules and restrictions. The lazy, the licentious, and the hypocrites can claim no right to act according to their view of truth. That privilege belongs only to the *sadhak*, the seeker after truth.

As for the second doubt, I think that the *sadhak* will not trouble himself with deciding what is and what is not for general good. He would say that he was not interested in the question, and that universal good lay in truth since truth was the supreme Being. While all other names of God suggested only one aspect of His, truth signified His perfect essence, so that a person who opposed truth could never accomplish anybody's good. Truth necessitates harmony of thought, speech and act. That is, one must follow truth as one sees it and always be faithful to it in thought, speech and action. But a false notion is widely prevalent among us. We are not always bound to answer a question asked by anyone. There is no violation of truth in refraining from giving an answer. To keep silent when it is one's duty to reply to a question amounts to telling a lie. For example, if my father asked me whether I had stolen a piece of gold, I would be bound to answer the question. However, if even my father asked me whether somebody had stolen a thing, I would not be bound to answer. If, therefore, I did not reply, I would not be telling a lie. I remember the chapter in

Gitarahasya[1]. I did not agree with the suggestion in it. If you tell a lie under force of circumstances, you are certainly not telling the truth. There never can be an occasion when one must tell a lie. If there can be such an occasion, then it would follow that the principle of following truth in speech and action wasimperfect. There can be no exception to a principle, and hence there can be no atonement for untruth spoken knowingly. Or the only possible atonement would be never to do so again. Atonement is possible only when some error is committed in ignorance. I think that this answers your second question too. Ask again if anything is still left out.

I have not revised this letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 222. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

5. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

February 10, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

What you have written is as good as saying that you like *pakodas* but not chapatis. But a person whose body acquires such a tendency should be considered diseased. A healthy person will never be able to satisfy his hunger by eating *pakodas*. He would ask only for bread. The same is true about the *Gita*. Once your mind has awakened, you are bound to like the *Gita*. You must think that there is something still lacking so long as you cannot like the *Gita*. But I, who prepare such recipes, should also be blamed. My prescription of the *Gita* for you is defective and that is the reason why you are not able to absorb it. What is the remedy?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9944. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] A commentary on the *Gita* by B. G. Tilak

6. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

February 11, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter which consoles me. Those who believe in God's guidance just do the best they can and never worry. The sun has never been known to have suffered from overstrain and yet who slaves with such unexampled regularity as he! And why should we think that the sun is inanimate? The difference between him and us may bethat he has no choice, we have a margin no matter how precarious it may be. But no more speculation of this sort. Suffice it for us that we have his brilliant example in the matter of tireless energy. If we completely surrender ourselves to His will and really become ciphers, we too voluntarily give up the right of choice and then we need no wear and tear.

I have just commenced almond paste instead of milk. I was daily decreasing the quantity of milk because it was not suiting me. It may be that while I am resting, I do not need animal proteid. I am simply trying. Therefore, if you have more almond paste we had in London, please bring the bottles with you. Just now I am flourishing on dates, tomatoes and almond paste, of course with lemon and honey water twice during 24 hours. It is too early yet to say how I shall fare without milk. I shall not do anything consciously to injure my health, much as I would love to give up milk altogether.

There may be no time for you to tell me when you come, therefore let me know by letter how you washed the woollen blankets. Did you soak them in cold water or warm and how long? How much Lux did you use, in how much water? I propose to use powdered *Apana* soap. I am in no hurry.

I take it that you share my letters with the Ashram and that you get from the Ashram what may be worth knowing.

I had a letter directly from the Privats. They seem to have thoroughly enjoyed their stay and I am glad.

Do you ever meet Manilal our host and his wife?

If you meet Pyare Ali tell him or send him word not to send any more dates. I have about 20 lb. from Jerajani. Moreover what Pyare Ali gets are old dates and, therefore, they are weevily.

My love to Damodardas and his people.

Love from us both.

BAPU

[PS.]

The accompanying for Nargis. I have heard from Agatha Harrison. She says that Percy Bartlett and Hyam and a university girl are coming.[1] I forget the names. But perhaps you have heard from her too. I have Devi West's letter written to Ba.

From a photostat: C.W. 9504, Courtesy: Mirabehn

7. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

February 11, 1932

CHI. MANUDI[2],

I got your letter. You should serve aunt. You are no longer a child. You are grown-up and can understand things. Aunt has looked after you with great care and shown you much affection too. I would not even know how to show such affection. You should also take care of your [body] and acquire good knowledge. The heap of picture-cards for you is growing bigger. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1510. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

8. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

February 11, 1932

CHI. MANU,

I did think of writing to you earlier. But even here I take up some work, and for its sake I postpone doing whatever else I can afford to.

I suppose you are thinking hard what you should do but there is

[1] These three English Quakers were to visit India "on an independent mission of conciliation".

[2] Daughter of Harilal Gandhi

no reason for worrying. Your duty now is to complete your work there. Study as hard as you can without impairing your health. You should learn the wisdom of the swan. Do you ever read Tulsidas? It is very useful to read him regularly. His work contains this verse:

All things in the world,
Both living and non-living,
God has created a mixture of good and evil.
The sage will, like the swan,
Accept the milk of goodness
Leaving out the water of evil.

In the same way you should accept the good which you see there and keep away from the evil. Moreover you are there as India's representative and should always represent what is good in the country. Keep away from the evils of India even for the sake of the country where you are. Ever since I came to know you at the Sassoon Hospital, I have never imagined you capable of any evil.

You must have now learnt German quite well. Write to me about your studies, your health and your companions.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You of course know that Sardar is here with me. He sends his blessings.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1004

9. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

February 11, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

Champa seems to be pining to come and see me. Let her come next week. I hope Ratilal will not prevent her.

I got yesterday the post sent by you. It did not include a copy of "Ashram Samachar". Moreover, the second sheet of your letter was torn at the bottom. It was not torn here. Try to recollect if it was torn there. I also don't find a separate letter from Ranchhodbhai.

I could not discover here why you did not get the letter to Chanchalbehn and to the widow who had lost her son, namely, Nos. 1

and 22. They are certainly not with me. It is possible that, while the letters were being examined in the office here, these two slipped out and were lost. Henceforth I will try to send a list of names and numbers.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

After I had written this, I got your second post. Since Champa is calm, she need not come, if she doesn't wish to.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8209. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

10. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA N. KHARE

February 11, 1932

CHI. RAMBHAU ALIAS RAMACHANDRA KHARE,

Bravo! You have found a good argument. Since all others write, why need you? If everybody argued in that way, I would get no letters. Can't I also argue similarly? The correct reasoning, however, is this. If we do our duty, others also will do theirs some day. We have a saying to the effect: "If we ourselves are good, the whole world will be good."

Have you now completely overcome the habit of fibbing?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 290. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

11. LETTER TO JAISHANKAR P. TRIVEDI

February 11, 1932

BHAI TRIVEDI,

I wished to write to Manu earlier but could not write all these days. Whenever you wish, you may come and see me on a day fixed for visitors. It will always be possible to include you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1003

12. LETTER TO PUSHPA S. PATEL[1]

February 11, 1932

CHI. PUSHPA,

I have your letter. But I could not place you. Give me full particulars of yourself and tell me your age too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3979

13. LETTER TO MANIBEHN N. PARIKH

February 12, 1932

CHI. MANIBEHN (PARIKH),

If the pain in the ear has increased so much, did you consult anybody? I think you should get the ear examined once. If Haribhai[2] cannot understand the cause after examining it, you should pay a visit to Bombay. There are some good ear specialists there. Dr. Jivraj will take you to one.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5964. Also C.W. 3281. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

14. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

February 12, 1932

CHI. MANGALA (DARLING),

I got your letter. You must learn to avoid even the few mistakes which you make in reciting the *Gita* verses. Otherwise you

[1] Although Gandhiji mistook the identity, the addressee was in fact Pushpa S. Patel, as is evident from the letter to her dated March 5, 1932; *vide* "Letter to Pushpa S. Patel", 5-3-1932. The misunderstanding was due to her letter being written in unusually good Hindi.

[2] Dr. Haribhai Desai

will cease to be *ladki* and will remain a *lakdi* for ever.[1]

Where does Kamu[2] live? How is her health?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4075. Also C.W. 39. Courtesy: Mangalabehn B. Desai

15. LETTER TO MATHURI N. KHARE

February 12, 1932

CHI. MATHURI,

I will forgive you everything except writing a bad hand. You should write each letter [in a word] as neatly as you draw a picture. Gajanan is there to help you. If you ask him he will teach you how to do so. It is a sort of game. You need not spend much time inpractising. You should practise only for a short time every day. Tripathibhai's[3] Manu used to practise while lying ill in bed. He was in bed for one whole year.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 263. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

16. LETTER TO SHANTA S. PATEL

February 12, 1932

CHI. SHANTA,

Why should you feel shy because Sardar is here? Is it because he is Sardar or because he is a Patel? If for the former reason, how long can you escape him? And as for being a Patel, he is no more one. Those who mix with Bhangis belong to all communities.

You have given plenty of news. Write whatever comes into

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Mangala Patel", 30-1-1932

[2] Presumably Kamalabehn Patel, addressee's elder sister

[3] Perhaps a slip for "Trivedibhai's". The reference is to Manushankar, son of Jaishankar P. Trivedi, who was ill in 1930.

your head. And see that you don't fall ill. If you surrender everything to God, you will not fall ill.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4064. Also C.W. 15. Courtesy: Shantabehn Patel

17. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

February 12, 1932

CHI. PARASRAM,

I have your letter. I am glad that Vimal's[1] head has been shaved clean. It does not seem, at least from here, that there is anything about your Hindi teaching that deserves special notice. If you can attract all to the study of the *Ramayana*[2] you shall have gained two purposes at one stroke.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4967. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra. Also G.N. 7490

18. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

February 13, 1932

DEAR. BOYS AND GIRLS,

There is one thing which I noticed in English children but miss in those at the Ashram. Most of you cannot think what to write in a letter. This should not be. In this respect English children are smarter. I cannot say with certainty whether or not children outside the Ashram are like you. You should overcome this weakness.

So many things happen every day around you that, if you properly observe them, you would be able to write enough to fill pages. Why then should you be unable to think of anything to write about when you sit down to write to me? One can write all that one did, saw and thought during a day. You can say in a letter why you

[1] Addressee's younger son

[2] Gandhiji presumably meant *Ramacharitamanasa* by Tulsidas.

felt happy or unhappy on that day, as the case may be. You may also say what good thoughts or bad ones came to you on that day. It is possible that you are not sure whether you can write about these things in a letter. If so, let me tell you that you need have no such doubts. You can write just as you would talk to me. I shall now see what progress you make next week. Letter-writing also is an art. All our art springs from devotion to truth. Anyone who sits down to write a letter with the thought that he would write pure truth and pour out his love, is bound to write an interesting letter, since truth itself is God. There will always be art in anything we do or say or write with truth as witness and as object of our worship.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8936. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

19. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

February 13, 1932

DEAR SISTERS,

Your nest is now almost empty. However, I write down in these letters, as I remember them from time to time, the things that I thought worth noting. As these letters are preserved, they may be of some use perhaps when you reassemble in future.

You have heard the name of M. Rolland. He is a great European writer and a saintly man. I went to see him. He has a sister who also may now be regarded aged, like him. She has remained unmarried with the sole purpose of helping her brother. The language of the two, the brother and the sister, is French. Rolland does not know English, but the sister does. One may say that the sister has merged her identity in her brother's. She looks after Rolland's needs in every respect. She works as his secretary and also as interpreter when Englishmen come to see him. Rolland has delicate health, and the sister guards it too. Though such examples of renunciation are rare in this world, we do come across them in the West. If there are any in our country, I do not know about them. By linking up celibacy with *moksha* we have made it rare, and it has also, therefore, become difficult to observe. On the other hand, in the West women observe it of their own free will for the

sake of service to parents or a brother or some other cause, and they find it easy to observe. I wish to draw two lessons from this. One, the observance of *brahmacharya* for any selfless purpose is good, and two, its observance is perfectly easy for anybody who has, like Rolland's sister, a concrete reason, for his self-imposed task leaves such a person no time at all. Besides these two, there is of course the particular lesson that women have to learn from this example.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8935. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

20. A LETTER

February 13, 1932

CHI.,

This is what I mean when I say that I think of God every moment. During waking hours there is no time when I am not aware that God dwells within and observes everything. This awareness is intellectual and has been achieved through long practice. I do not say that my heart has such awareness, since I do not think that I am free from all fear. I do feel afraid of snakes, etc. Even though I look upon death as a friend, I also see deep-seated within me the desire to live. It seems that I love life and also that I would be ready to die. These two feelings together are strange, and because of this weakness I do not think I can say that my awareness of God is a matter of the heart also. That the intellect accepts that He dwells in the heart is another matter. One who actually feels the presence of God in his heart would be wholly free from blind attachment to the body. I can see that I have not reached that stage, and yet so complete and firm is the intellectual acceptance of this idea that I also feel it is slowly sinking into the heart. I cannot go further than this. . . .[1]

I trust you are no more rigid about food. It is necessary to take fruit along with milk, and preferably fresh fruit. A small quantity of uncooked leafy vegetables also should be included. Tomato and lettuce are considered good. There is a science of diet too, and it should not be disregarded. We know that our food ought to be *sattvik*,

[1] Omission as in the source

but we have to learn from experience which food can be considered *sattvik*. It is not necessary that one's food should have all the characteristics of *sattvik* food mentioned in the *Gita*.[1] Experience shows that we need fire very little. Personally, I am certain in my mind that it is sufficient that our food is ripened by the sun. All that I wish to say is that we should give the body what it requires from among the things which are acceptable to us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8938. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

21. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

February 13, 1932

You have just transcribed the Hindi letter. Didn't Parasram dictate it to you?

Ramarajya means rule of the people. A person like Rama would never wish to rule. God calls Himself a servant of his servants.

You may certainly wear shorts and a shirt when doing exercise or when cooking or doing many other things. Do you massage your body?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8964. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi Also C.W. 9906. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala.

22. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

February 13, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. Whenever a letter from me is delivered late to you, you should examine the postmark and let me know the date [of its clearance].

To what term has Kisan been sentenced? Where is she kept?

You can certainly open the trunks. If they contain books, they

[1] *Vide* "Discourses on the "Gita" "

must be taken out and kept in the right places, and, if they contain any other material, all the items will have to be listed and properly disposed of. If you do not know what to do about them, send the list to me. I will then be able to tell you what to do. Even if some of the books belong to other people, it does not matter. If they bear the names of their owners, they can easily be kept separately from the others. If they bear no names there will be no harm if the Ashram stamp is put on them. If, afterwards, these books are claimed by any persons, they should be handed over to them. Our duty is to take all possible care of the books while they are in our possession.

Which statement of mine did you interpret to mean that, according to me, the Ashram had nothing to do with education? My view is this: literary education—formal education—is given a secondary place in the Ashram. That is why the Ashram could not be made a Vidyapith. But such education is certainly useful and necessary, and that is why the Vidyapith was established. The Ashram and the Vidyapith supplement each other. Because of this limitation of its sphere of activities, the collection of books in the Ashram should be restricted.[1] The Vidyapith can have no such restriction. The restrictions on it relate to its internal experiments. The Ashram has a big name and certain extravagant notions have come to be formed about it, so that it receives books on all kinds of subjects and in many languages. The Vidyapith is the right place where they can be preserved. The Ashram, on the other hand, should have only such books as relate to the subjects which we study. What books fall in this class, you and others can easily decide. Whenever you cannot decide you may consult me. Personally, however, I don't see what difficulty you can experience in this matter. After so many years of the Ashram's existence, we should be able to tell immediately what kinds of books we generally require. If at any time we require some other books, we can take advantage of the collection in the Vidyapith. We should not regard the Ashram and the Vidyapith as two independent institutions. Their spheres of activity are different, but the two have much in common between them and that area is gradually expanding.

If you do not understand any point in this, ask me again.

I am sure I do not consciously refuse to hear or observe

[1] The addressee had objected to the transfer of books to the Vidyapith as this would be so much loss to the Ashram.

anything against a person about whom my views are formed.[1] I always hear what others say, but my views may not change. I think it would be wrong for anyone to change, quickly, views formed after careful observation. It would, of course, be obstinacy never to change them. Hence, that too would be wrong. But there should be a sound reason for changing such a view. Often I require the evidence of proved facts. I cherish this nature of mine, which has saved me from many dangers and kept my relations with people unclouded by suspicion.

You are, therefore, free to ask me what you like. You will not get such an opportunity again.

The distinction you have made is correct.[2] The writer of articles in *Young India* is one person, and the man whom the inmates of the Ashram know intimately is another. In *Young India*, I might present myself as one of the Pandavas, but, in the Ashram, how can I help showing myself as I am? I am, moreover, a votary of truth and can make no attempt consciously to hide my weaknesses. Hence, the Kauravas dwelling in me make their presence felt in one way or another. Haven't you said that a conflict is always going on in me between the divine and the demoniac? I feel, however, that the Kauravas are being vanquished. But one cannot yet be positive about that. As Solon[3] has said, the final judgment about a man can be expressed only after his death. I have known cases in which crores were reduced to a cowrie in a moment. I have, therefore, no pride in me at all. And what does pride avail one?

Remember that I do not revise the letters after writing them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10272. Also C.W. 6720. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] The addressee had made this charge against Gandhiji.

[2] The addressee had stated that Gandhiji the writer in *Young India* appeared to be on a much higher plane than Gandhiji the man who had human limitations.

[3] An ancient Greek philosopher

23. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

YERAVDA MANDIR,
February 13, 1932

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

I have your letter.

If you think it is proper, write a letter to Ramanathan pointing out the faults in his thinking. Maybe it is our duty to write to him, considering he has served us for so long. Let him misuse if he must what we write to him. This is only a suggestion.

The weaver Ramji[1] writes that he does not have any yarn. Narandas may have mentioned this to you. But since he has written to me, I am drawing your attention to it.

Are you able to meet Gulzarilal? His wife is perhaps there with him. How is his physical condition? Does he get the food his body needs. Who is now in his place?

We are both keeping well. I have given up milk for the time being as it does not suit me. Instead of that, I am taking roasted and ground almonds which I had brought from England. It keeps me in good health. It remains to be seen whether or not the weight is maintained.

You must be having information about Mridula's health. Let me know how she is.

There was a note from Anasuyabehn. I have not written to her separately.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32727

24. LETTER TO DURGA DESAI

February 14, 1932

CHI.,

Tell Mahadev that the lucky ones get 'C' class, and that the unfortunate get 'A' class even if they ask for 'C'. But we should accept whatever class we are awarded and learn what we can from our

[1] Ramji Badhia

life as a prisoner in that class. Those whose minds run after comforts and luxuries may bother themselves with the distinction between 'A' and 'C'. Those who find their happiness in self-denial should seek opportunities to practise it in all circumstances. The field for such opportunities is unlimited. One should not seek self-denial which will tear apart the skin on one's back. Such self-denial is forbidden. Let him remember the following two *shlokas*:

> Those men who, wedded to pretentiousness and arrogance, possessed by the violence of lust and passion, practise fierce austerity not ordained by Shastras.[1]
>
> They, whilst they torture the several elements that make up their bodies, torture Me to dwelling in them; know them to be of unholy re-solves.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8934. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

25. LETTER TO PADMA

February 14, 1932

CHI. PADMA,

I got your letter. The Bhowali sanatorium is very near the place where you stay. I would advise you to get yourself examined there. Is there anybody there to help you? Is Joshiji[3] there? It is rather surprising that there is no one there who can teach the *Gita*. Is Shantilal there? He is bound to know it. However, I don't worry about this. Nor need you. You should first get back your health.

I hope you know that Maitri and Durgi have gone to Darjeeling for some time. Sarojinidevi should of course stay with you. That is perfectly in order. Shila must be growing into a big girl now. Do you take care of her?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6129. Also C.W. 3481. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, XVII. 5
[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, XVII. 6
[3] Presumably Chhaganlal Joshi, who was in Almora for some time.

26. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Night, February 11/15, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got both your packets. The fact that Ramji does not get yarn means, does it not, that we are short of it. Is the position likely to be the same at other places too? You alone can explain this.

I think you know that Madanmohan Bauhra wishes to come here for my *darshan*. Read my reply to him.

The problem of Budhabhai and Parvati seems a difficult one. Personally, I feel that they should live separately for some time. If you agree with this suggestion, try for it. If something else occurs to you, write to me. Does Parvati behave properly in the Ashram? Does she observe the rules?

You are being tested fairly well, it seems.

February 12, 1932

You have to carry a fairly good burden on account of the dairy. You are strong enough for that and transfer the burden to God, and so I don't worry. It will be enough if Parnerkar can live there quietly. Let him do what he wishes.

My views about the orchard should be treated as those of a man without experience in that field. That is, unless they are confirmed by an expert, count them as no better than deserving to be thrown into the river Sabarmati.

Get some news about Prabhudas. If it is necessary, as his guardian, write to the authorities where he was sentenced to and inquire in which jail he is kept. Send to him at the address of that jail Dr. Talwalkar's letter regarding his health.

Mirabehn had written to me directly and I, too, have replied[1] to her directly. I have asked her to send that letter to you.

Totaramji should be examined by Haribhai for his piles. Does he suffer from constipation?

With whom do they intend to keep Dhiru in Palanpur? What about Vimala?

Send to the Japanese writer permission to translate *Young India*

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 11-2-1932

articles after informing Jivanji[1].

If Jairamdas's letter contains nothing objectionable, it can certainly be sent to me.

Afternoon, February 15, 1932

I don't ask you in every letter to convey the Sardar's blessings or regards to all. But you should assume that he sends them with every letter. There are 68 letters this time, besides the talk on the *Gita* and this letter to you. A list is attached herewith, so that, if you do not receive any of the letters, you and I will know which.

Blessings from
BAPU[2]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8203. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

27. LETTER TO PHILIP HARTOG

February 15, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry I was unable, owing to circumstances beyond my control, to fulfil the promise I gave you about my statement[3] on the condition of primary education in India during the pre-British time. Immediately on my landing I entrusted the research to Advocate Munshi, a member of the Bombay University Senate, and two other educationist[4] friends. But they too like me find themselves civil resistance prisoners. I had asked Advocate Munshi to put himself in direct touch with you. But his arrest came so soon after mine that I hardly think he could have corresponded with you. As I am permitted to carry on non-political correspondence, I have now asked Prof. Shah to test my statement and give you the result of his test. As I found in you a fellow-seeker after the truth, I was most anxious to give you satisfaction either by confirming my statement or withdrawing it as publicly as I had made it. I thought that I would tell you what I had done in pursuance of my promise.

[1] Jivanji Dahyabhai Desai, printer and publisher of *Navajivan*

[2] For the text of the *Gita* discourse (Ch. XVII) which followed, *vide* "Letters on the *Gita*",14-2-1932.

[3] On October 20, 1931, at the Royal Institute of International Affairs; *vide* "Speech at Chatham House Meeting", 20-10-1931

[4] The source has "educational".

As I have not your private address by me, I am sending this to you under care India Office.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9410. Courtesy: India Office Library

28. LETTER TO NIRMALA H. DESAI

Silence Day [On or after *February 15, 1932*][1]

CHI. NIRMALA (AUNT),

What sort of a girl you are that you complain of absence of letters from me while you yourself do not write. Did Durga convey my message to Mahadev? How is she? Ask her to write to me. How is Bablo[2]?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9461

29. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

February 16, 1932

DEAR MAJOR MARTIN,

In continuation of my letter[3] to Major Bhandari and in confirmation of our conversation of today, what I need is the human touch with the co-workers who are not known to political fame and who have been brought to Yeravda. I have specially in mind Messrs Chhaganlal Joshi, Surendranath, Somabhai and my son, Ramdas. They, I know, are in the batch that was first sent to Yeravda. I need scarcely say that I have no desire to have any political discussion with them. And I can have no idea whatsoever of interfering with jail discipline.

As the matter has been now hanging for some time I would thank you to expedite it as much as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Home Department, Government of Bombay, I.G.P. File No. 9

[1] From the reference to the "message to Mahadev" to be conveyed by Durga Desai (*vide* "Letter to Durga Desai", 14-2-1932), the letter appears to have been written on the Silence Day subsequent to February 14.

[2] Narayan Desai, son of Mahadev Desai

[3] *Vide* "Letter to M. G. Bhandari", 5-2-1932

30. LETTER TO RAMANANDA CHATTERJEE

February 16, 1932

DEAR RAMANANDA BABU,

I have duly received the *Golden Book*[1]. What treasures of love have you poured into it? I gave two hours to it straightway. Thank you for thinking of sending it to me here. Had I got it outside, I would not have been able to go beyond opening it and laying it down with a sigh.

Yours sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 9502. Courtesy: Santa Devi

31. LETTER TO TRIVENI J. MEHTA

February 18, 1932

CHI. TRIVENI,

I got your letter. There is no fixed mould for education. It consists in the purity of one's love. A mother spoils her child if she regards it as hers. If, instead, she brings it up as a trust received from God, the child soon learns to behave well. I am writing on this subject[2] in today's letter for the women. Read it and think over it. Instead of paying attention to the weaknesses of others, we should try to become better ourselves.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. TRIVENI JAGJIVANDAS MEHTA

SABARMATI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 70. Also C.W. 8941. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *The Golden Book of Tagore; vide* "Letter to Ramananda Chatterjee", 6-2-1932

[2] *Vide* the following item.

32. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

February 18, 1932

DEAR SISTERS,

Regardless of your number, someone among you should still shoulder the responsibility and keep your Association going. Prayers should continue without any change. I should regularly get a letter on behalf of all the women. Otherwise I, too, am likely by and by to get tired of writing. Who among you has charge of my letters and preserves them?

I will write today about a school that struck me as a wonderful institution. One or two men and one or two women run it jointly. They believe that even the dullest child responds to the law of love. And, accordingly, they have taken in hand the work of educating abandoned orphans who have become practically mindless. The school is run according to certain principles which their teacher has discovered through experiments in the method of love. These men and women have dedicated their lives to such children, who do not know that they are destitute and have no parents. They are brought up in open air and sunshine; the building they live in stands on spacious open ground. They are cured chiefly with the help of music. They make some slow artistic movements to the accompaniment of music, and even become absorbed in them. The women teachers treat the children as their own. They have their meals with the children, keep them cheerful and busy in games the whole day and gradually bring them out of their stupor. These kind-hearted men and women have been carrying on this experiment for the last three or four years only. This wonderful school is situated very near to where Mr. Horace Alexander lives. Seeing the school, I bowed my head in reverence and wondered what love could not do. It can make the dumb speak and the lame climb a mountain.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III. Also C.W. 8947. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

33. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

February 18, 1932

CHI. MANGALA,

I got your letter. I may not give you full marks, because no examiner does. But according to me you deserve full marks. I should really learn from you. Always write as beautifully as you did this time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4076. Also C.W. 40. Courtesy: Mangalabehn B. Desai

34. LETTER TO MATHURI N. KHARE

February 18, 1932

CHI. MATHURI,

I get your letters regularly. But I hope you will satisfy my wish. Learn the alphabet carefully with Gajanan's help and then write to me in a beautiful hand. Won't you do this?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 262. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

35. LETTER TO PUSHPA S. PATEL

February 18, 1932

CHI. PUSHPA,

I got your letter. You have also improved your handwriting well enough. And now you play on the harmonium. Must I come there and hear you play? But who knows how many years you will take to learn to play so well that one would enjoy hearing it? Must both of us remain here till then?

What do you say?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3980. Also C.W. 26. Courtesy: Pushpabehn N. Naik

36. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

February 18, 1932

CHI. VANAMALA,

Take this a letter for you in your own strip of paper. When you have no ruled paper, you should rule a sheet with your own hands.

When you see Narahari, tell him that I was glad he asked for and got class 'C'. I lay down one condition, however. He should take care of his health and not fall ill again. See that you learn now to write a letter properly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5765. Also C.W. 2988. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

37. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

February 18, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

I got your letter. If you cannot think what to write in your letter, take Premabehn's help. In a few days you will learn to write a very good letter. I am very glad that you feel happy there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9421. Courtesy Ravindra R. Patel

38. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

February 18, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

You have raised a correct question. You are sure that beating necessarily involves violence but it is not so. Supposing somebody has been bitten by a snake and is about to faint. In that case he will have to be fed even if it means beating him. This is no violence because this beating is inspired by love and is for the good of the patient.But supposing I have an ill feeling for you in my mind but do not beat you for want of an opportunity. Such an ill feeling is violence. The origin of violence lies in our own minds.

You can have cod-liver oil massage even if you have never taken it orally.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9945. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

39. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI

February 18, 1932

CHI. KASHI,

I have your letter. You need not at all worry about Prabhudas. God has looked after him and will do so still. After meeting him, let me know all the facts. Probably you know that I had sent to Prabhudas my replies to some questions I had received concerning Krishna.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33088

40. LETTER TO KAPILRAI MEHTA

February 19, 1932

CHI. KAPIL,

I was glad you wrote to me. I was wondering where you were. I would advise you not to become the least impatient but to take complete rest and build up good health. Don't be in a hurry to start eating cereals, but go on living on milk, curds and fruit for some more time. You should also eat lettuce and some raw tomatoes. By raw I mean not unripe; I mean fully ripe but uncooked tomatoes. And write to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Nanabhai[1] that I often think of him and the Dakshinamurti[2] people.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3977. Also C.W. 1598. Courtesy: Kapilrai Mehta

[1] Nrisinhprasad Kalidas Bhatt

[2] An educational institution in Bhavnagar

41. LETTER TO LAKSHMIBEHN N. KHARE

February 19, 1932

CHI. LAKSHMIBEHN,

I have again been writing letters to the women, but who is in charge of the work now? Why don't you write [to me]? The class which was started ought not to be given up. The women who are still there should decide to continue it and you should then let me know. It is you who should take up this burden.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 279-a. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

42. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

February 19, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

Your letter was very good. I was glad that you wrote quite freely.

This is my reply to your criticism[1]. I must hear what the persons concerned have to say in their defence. Only after that can I express my opinion in each case. In a general way, however, I can say that, whenever some freedom was permitted, it was done not as a privilege but as a matter of necessity. I have formed the impression that those who permit themselves any freedom do so not out of lethargy but because their bodies, or say their natures, demand it. We ought not to sit in judgment over others. We may not even be aware of the effort they make [to follow the rules]. This does not mean that such persons have no imperfection in them. If they did not have any, why did they join the Ashram at all? They are not hypocrites. There is a great error in believing that everyone should or can do what one does. If I tried to lift a weight which Hariyomal[2] can, I would die that very moment. Similarly, it would be wrong of him to envy me my weakness.

Many have said that people deceive me. I don't say that no one deceives me, but the number of such persons is certainly not large. I

[1] Regarding inmates of the Ashram allowing themselves freedom from one or other of the Ashram rules

[2] A strong man from Sind who worked on the Ashram farm

have observed that many persons cannot, when they are away from me, keep up the standard of behaviour which they preserve when I am there. Some even leave me for this reason. There are many such instances and that is why I have been accused of possessing a kind of magnetism.

But this is not likely to satisfy you or others. Nor have I said this to defend myself. I have only explained my attitude. The real position, however, is this, and I have held this belief for many years. The deficiencies of the Ashram reflect my own. I have told many people that they cannot know me by meeting me. When they meet me, I may even impress them as being good. Even if I am not good, people would believe that I was because I am a lover of truth. My love of truth casts a momentary spell over people. In order to know me, people should see the Ashram in my absence. There would be no error and no injustice to me in believing that all its deficiencies are a reflection of my own deficiencies. It is but true that I have drawn the crowd which has gathered in the Ashram. If, though living in the Ashram, they have not been able to overcome their weaknesses but have, on the contrary, developed more, the fault is not theirs but mine. The imperfection of my spiritual striving is responsible for this state of affairs. Nor is it that I do not observe or know about my shortcomings. All that I can say is that they are there despite my best efforts to overcome them. And, moreover, I am convinced that, because I am ceaselessly striving to improve the Ashram, it has not, on the whole, fallen altogether from its ideal. I derive some satisfaction from the thought that every one of the three Ashrams which I established served or has served its immediate aim. I will not, however, deceive myself or anybody else with this comforting thought. I wish to travel far and there are hills and valleys to be crossed on the way. I am resolved, however, to continue the journey. And I rest in peace in the knowledge that there is no defeat in the quest for truth.

It is true indeed that the Ashram has not been able to attract the learned class. The reason is that I don't regard myself as a learned man. The few learned men who were drawn to the Ashram joined it not in order to pursue their learned callings but to receive and nurse something else altogether. They [are] seekers after truth. The quest of truth may be undertaken even by the illiterate, by children and by theold, by women and by men. Literary education sometimes serves as the golden lid which covers the face of truth. I do not, by saying this,

condemn such education, but only put it in its proper place. It is one of the means [in the pursuit of truth].

We have selected most of the prayers from Sanskrit because it is chiefly Hindus who joined the Ashram. We have no aversion to prayers in other languages. Don't we use such prayers occasionally? If, instead of a large number of Hindus, a large number of Muslims had joined the Ashram, prayers from the Koran would be recited every day and I would even join such prayers.

Does this answer your doubts? Does it satisfy you? If it does not, ask me again and again. I shall not get tired. I wish to satisfy you. Don't get tired.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10273. Also C.W. 6721. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

43. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

February 20, 1932

CHI. MATHURADAS[1],

I am glad that you have gone to the Ashram. I wrote that to Kamu many years ago. Doctors are now gradually coming to the conclusion that all diseases have one common cause and that, therefore, their main remedy also should be one. If anybody disregards modifications of that one remedy, that would not do him much or any harm. It might be said that the disease was not cured. But what even if the disease is cured? Surely the body does not become immune to death. Hence, if anybody sticks to only one remedy with faith, he commits no sin.

This is also true about spiritual maladies. The cause is always one, and that is the ego. The remedy also is one—giving up the ego, that is, reducing oneself to a cipher. How will one who is a cipher steal? How will he tell a lie or commit adultery? The very questions you have asked spring from ignorance. Let us take just one example. Of course you do not steal in the ordinary sense, but you are right in thinking that your lack of control in eating is a form of stealing. The remedy for this kind of stealing and the ordinary kind must be the same, that is, to give up the habit, to stop eating what you should not.

[1] Mathuradas P. Asar, an expert carder and khadi worker of the Ashram

But who is it that eats such food? The ego-self. Once that has vanished, the other self, though eating, will not be eating and will only give the body its wages. There will be no more question, then, of indulging the palate. Probably you will accept all this with your reason, but it will have meaning only if it sinks into the heart. We live in the Ashram and seek good company, sing *bhajans*, etc., daily, in order that this truth may sink into the heart. Some day we shall find what we are seeking. In other words, our malady in the form of the ego will be cured. From this you should be able to deduce all the answers, and if you cannot, no matter how much I write and explain, you will not feel satisfied. Ask me again and again till your doubts are resolved.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3753

44. LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA P. KAMDAR

February 20, 1932

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA,

I got your letter. You have become careless about your handwriting. You ought not to have. Because you are married you should not forget what you have learnt; on the contrary, you should improve yourself. Forget your grief over Arvind[1]. Such separations are inevitable so long as we live in the body, and we ought to bear them.You may write to me whenever you wish to, and, so long as I can see visitors, you can certainly come. Do come. I don't know how long I shall continue to see visitors.

Blessings from both of us. We are both faring well.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7469. Also C.W. 4915. Courtesy: Hari-ichchha S. Kamdar

[1] Addressee's son, who died an infant

45. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

February 20, 1932

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I have your letter.

There is not the slightest doubt that if we condone or take direct or indirect advantage of the untruth spoken or practised by a person with whom we associate, we become party to his untruth. It is for this reason that Tulsidas advises us to seek the company of the good. However, in practical life we cannot always live up to the ideal. We have to bear with our co-workers. We may consider the circumstances in each case and act within the limits of our capacity. We ought not to join where untruth is being deliberately practised, but having once found ourselves in a certain situation, it may not be possible to force ourselves out of it. Where the situation is *ab initio* permeated with untruth, we have of course the weapon of non-co-operation. Surely, it cannot be claimed that no one practises untruth in the Ashram. Still, we do not close down the Ashram, nor do we condone untruth; but we bear with our associates and strive to advance further every day. Nobody in this world can do more than this.

Have you come to know about the new method of spinning the *takli*? It is being practised at Wardha. One can draw 160 rounds in half an hour by following it. Why should your diary include anything other than your own daily activities? If necessary, you may give up recording even these.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9508. Also C.W. 424. Courtesy: Shivabhai G. Patel

46. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

February 20, 1932

BHAI VITHALDAS,

I got your letter. Take rest till your body has completely recovered its strength. Do not be in the least impatient. The reason why khadi sales have gone down this time is as clear as daylight. But

do not worry over that. "It is useless to sorrow over what God ordains."[1]

Sardar is very well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9778. Also C.W. 2808. Courtesy: Purushottam D. Saraiya

47. LETTER TO LAKSHMI JERAJANI[2]

February 20, 1932

CHI. LAKSHMI,

Your handwriting is certainly good. Why don't you write in ink? The service you are giving to Jerajani [in his illness] is the best preparation for your future life.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. VITHALDAS JERAJANI

SASAVANE

DISTRICT ALIBAG

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9778. Also C.W. 2809. Courtesy: Purushottam D. Saraiya

48. LETTER TO RAMESHWARLAL BAZAJ

[Before *February 21, 1932*][3]

BHAI RAMESHWARLAL[4],

I have your letter. I hope you received the letter I sent through Miss Lester.

My health is perfect. These days I do not take milk. I usually take almond paste, dates and tomatoes. I take an occasional *papaya*. The government have put no restriction on my diet. The weight is 106 pound. It was the same outside. There is no need to send anything

[1] *Ashram Bhajanavali*; *vide* "Ashram Bhajanavali"

[2] This letter is written on the postcard to Vithaldas Jerajani; *vide* the preceding item.

[3] It is evident from the details of Gandhiji's diet given in the letter that it was written before February 21, 1932 when Gandhiji started taking vegetables in the place of *papaya*; *vide* "Diary, 1932".

[4] Benarsilal Bazaj's father, residing in Britain

from there. I get excellent almonds. Honey from Mahabaleshwar is sent to me. Write whenever you feel like it.

My time is spent in spinning and reading. A good deal of time is devoted to letter-writing as I am permitted to write to Ashram inmates. And I also sleep enough during the day-time. I walk about for two hours. Sardar Vallabhbhai is with me.

You must be receiving letters from Rukmini[1]. Both she and the baby are doing well. When will you come back?

I always recall your love.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 9446. Courtesy: Benarsilal Bazaj

49. LETTERS ON THE "GITA"[2]

CHAPTER I[3]

Tuesday Morning, November 11, 1930

The *Gita* is a small portion of the *Mahabharata*. The latter is generally looked upon as a historical work. To us, however, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* are not historical works but are treatises on religion. Or, if we call them histories, they narrate the

[1] Rukmini Benarsilal Bazaj, daughter of Maganlal Gandhi

[2] Written during Gandhiji's incarceration in Yeravda Central Prison in 1930 and 1932, these were sent weekly along with letters to Narandas Gandhi for being read out at the Ashram prayer meetings. Gandhiji commenced the series with Chapter Xll; *vide* "Letter to Behramji Khambhatta", 4-11-1930. The following week Gandhiji sent Chapter I, with a general introductory note on the *Gita*.

All the chapters are given here under February 19/21, 1932, the date of despatch of the letter to Narandas Gandhi, which carried the discourse on Chapter XVllI and concluded the series; *vide* the following item. The translation is reproduced from the *Discourses on the Gita* (Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad-14, 1960) with slight changes to bring the text into conformity with the Gujarati original.

The Translator's Preface in the *Discourses on the Gita* says: "Gandhiji's Gujarati translation of the *Gita* was published on March 12, 1930, the never-to-be-forgotten day on which he marched to Dandi from Sabarmati. A member of the Ashram who read it found it very difficult to understand and complained about it to Gandhiji who was then in Yeravda Prison. Thereupon, he wrote a series of letters to the Ashram in which he devoted one letter to each chapter on the *Gita*. . . ."

For Gandhiji's discourses on the *Gita* at Ashram prayer meetings in 1926, *vide* "Discourses on the Gita", and for his Gujarati translation of the *Gita* with a commentary thereon written in 1929, *vide* "Anasaktiyoga".

[3] This was sent along with ''Letter to Narandas Gandhi" 11-11-1930; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 11-11-1930

history of the human soul; they do not tell of what happened thousands of years ago, but depict what takes place in the heart of every human being today. Both the works describe the eternal war between the God and the demon in man—between Rama and Ravana. The *Gita* does this in the form of a dialogue between Arjuna and Krishna. The dialogue is narrated to the blind Dhritarashtra by Sanjaya. Literally *Gita* means that which is sung. The adjective applies to the noun Upanishad, which is understood, and so the full meaning of the phrase is "the Upanishad which was sung". Upanishad means knowledge-teaching. The word '*Gita*,' therefore, means Shri Krishna's teaching to Arjuna. In reading the *Gita* we should feel that Shri Krishna—God—dwells in our hearts as the holy spirit within us, and that when, yearning for knowledge, like Arjuna, we take our spiritual difficulties to Him and seek His guidance, seek refuge in Him, He is ever ready to instruct us. We slumber, but the Lord within us is ever awake. He is only waiting for spiritual yearning to be awakened in us. We, however, do not know how to question Him, do not even feel the desire to do so. And so we read a work like the *Gita* every day and meditate over its teaching. By doing so, we wish to awaken spiritual yearning in us and learn what questions to put to the Lord. Whenever we are faced with spiritual difficulties, we turn to the *Gita* for their solution and obtain peace of mind through it. This is the spirit in which we should read the work. It is as it were our revered guru, our mother, and we should have faith that we shall be safe if we seek shelter in her lap. We can get all our spiritual difficulties solved through the *Gita*. Anyone who daily meditates over the teaching of the *Gita* in this manner will ever experience new joy in his study and find new meanings. There is no spiritual problem which the *Gita* cannot solve, though it may be that owing to our imperfect faith we do not know how to read and understand the work. We read the *Gita* as daily spiritual practice so that our faith may increase from day to day and we may become vigilant. I give here, for the guidance of the inmates of the Ashram, the meaning of the *Gita* which my daily meditation over its teaching has revealed or reveals to me.

When the Pandavas and the Kauravas gathered together on the battle-field of Kurukshetra (the field of Kuru) with their armies, Duryodhana, the king of the Kauravas, approached Drona (his teacher in the science of war) and named the leading warriors on either side. As a signal for the battle to begin, conch-shell horns were sounded on both the sides and Shri Krishna who was Arjuna's charioteer drove his

chariot into a place between the two armies. The scene which greeted Arjuna's eyes unnerved him, and he said to Shri Krishna: "How can I attack these in battle? I might readily enough if I had to fight with strangers, but these are my kinsmen. The Kauravas and the Pandavas are first cousins. We were brought up together. Drona is our teacher as well as the Kauravas'. Bhishma is a revered elder for both. How can I fight against him? It is true that the Kauravas are miscreants and doers of evil deeds. They have wronged the Pandavas and deprived them oftheir lands. They have insulted the saintly Draupadi. But what shall I gain by killing them? They are fools indeed. But shall I also be equally foolish? I have some little knowledge. I can discriminate between right and wrong. I thus see that it is a sin to fight against relatives. Never mind if they have taken wrongful possession of the Pandavas' share in the kingdom. Never mind even if they kill us. But how dare we raise our hand against them? O Krishna, I will not fight against my kith and kin."

With these words, Arjuna sank down on the seat of the chariot, being overwhelmed by grief.

Here ends the first Chapter which is entitled "The Sorrow of Arjuna". All of us should feel pain even as Arjuna did. No acquisition of knowledge is possible unless there is in us a sense of something lacking and a desire to know the truth. If a man is not curious even to know what is wrong and what is right, what is the use of religion for him? The battle-field of Kurukshetra only provides the occasion for the dialogue between Arjuna and Krishna. The real Kurukshetra is the human heart, which is also a dharmakshetra (the field of righteousness) if we look upon it as the abode of God and invite Him to take hold of it. Some battle or other is fought on this battle-field from day to day. Most of these battles arise from the distinction between 'mine' and 'thine', between kinsmen and strangers. Therefore, as we shall find later on, the Lord tells Arjuna that attraction (*raga*) and repulsion (*dvesha*) lie at the root of sin. When I look upon a person or thing as 'mine', *raga* takes hold of my mind; and when I look upon him as a stranger, aversion or hatred enters the mind. Therefore we must forget the distinction between 'mine' and 'thine'. That is to say, we must give up our likes and dislikes. This is the teaching of the *Gita* and all other scriptures. To say this is one thing; to practise it is quite another. The *Gita* is there to teach us how to practise We will try to understand the method it recommends.

CHAPTER II[1]

Monday Morning, November 17, 1930

When Arjuna had picked himself up a little, the Lord rebuked him and said: "How is it that this delusion has come to you? It is unworthy of a warrior like you." But even then Arjuna stuck to his first position, refused to fight and said: "If in order to get it, I have toslay elders and other relations, I do not want not only a kingdom on this earth but even the delights of paradise. My mind gropes in darkness. I do not know where my duty lies. I put myself into your hands. Please guide me."

Finding that Arjuna was bewildered and aspired after knowledge, Krishna had pity on him and proceeded to explain things to him: "Your sorrow is for nothing, and you utter words about wisdom without understanding. You have evidently forgotten the distinction between the body and the embodied soul. The soul never dies; but the body passes through childhood, youth and old age and perishes in the end. The body is born but the soul is birthless and unchanging. It ever was, is now and will be there for all time to come. For whom then do you grieve? Your grief arises from a delusion. You look upon these Kauravas as your own, but you are aware that their bodies will come to an end. And as for the souls which inhabit these bodies, no one can destroy them. The soul cannot be wounded by weapons, burned by fire, dried by the wind or drowned in water. Then again, consider this from the standpoint of your duty as a warrior with an army under his command. If you refuse to fight this righteous war, the consequences will be the very reverse of what you expect and you will become an object of ridicule. You have always enjoyed the reputation of being a brave man. But if now you withdraw from the battle, you will be supposed to have been driven from it by fear. If it were part of your duty to flee in the face of danger, disgrace would not matter, but if you retire from battle now, you will have failed to discharge your duty, and people will be justified in condemning your flight.

"Thus far, I have tried to reason out things, draw a distinction between the body and the soul and remind you of your duty as a warrior. But let me now explain karmayoga (the method of action). A practitioner of karmayoga never comes to harm. It has nothing to do

[1] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 13/17-11-1930; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi

with chopping logic. It is something to be translated into action and experience. An ounce of practice is more profitable than tons of argumentation. And this practice too must not be vitiated by speculation about its fruit. Literalists perform Vedic rites directed to the acquisition of material rewards. If one rite does not yield the expected fruit, they have recourse to another, and being disappointed once more, they take up a third. And thus they suffer from utter mental confusion. As a matter of fact, it is up to us to do our duty without wasting a single thought on the fruits of our action. To fight is the duty you have to discharge at present. Gain or loss, defeat or victory, is not in your power. Why should you carry the needless burden of thinking about them and be like the dog who walks under a cart and imagines that it is being drawn by himself and not by the bullocks? Defeat and victory, heat and cold, pleasure and pain come to a man in turn and he must put up with them. Without worrying about the fruit of action, a man must devote himself to the performance of his duty with an evenness of temper. This is yoga, or skill in action. The success of an act lies in performing it, and not in its result, whatever it is. Therefore be calm and do your duty regardless of consequences."

On hearing all this Arjuna said: "The course of conduct you have mapped out for me seems to be beyond my capacity. Not to worry about defeat or victory, not to waste a thought on the result how can one attain such evenness of temper and steadfastness in spirit? How does a man with such attainments behave, and how are we to recognize him?"

The Lord replied: "O King, one who renounces all the cravings which torment the heart and derives his contentment from within himself is said to be a *sthitaprajna* or *samadhistha* (one stable in spirit). He is unruffled in adversity, and he does not hanker after happiness. Pleasure and pain are felt through the five senses. Therefore this wise man draws his senses away from sense-objects even as a tortoise draws in his limbs. The tortoise withdraws into his shell when he apprehends danger. But in the case of human beings sense-objects are ready to attack the senses at all times; therefore their senses must always be drawn in, and they should be ever ready to fight against sense-objects. This is the real battle. Some people resort to self-mortification and fasting as weapons of defence against sense-objects. These measures have their limited use. The senses do not make for sense-objects so long as a man is fasting, but fasting

alone does not destroy his relish for them. On the other hand that relish may be heightened when the fast is broken, and a man can get rid of it only with the grace of God. The senses are so powerful that they drag a man behind them by force if he is not on his guard. Therefore a man must always keep them under control. This end he can achieve only if he turns his eyes inward, realizes God who resides in his heart and is devoted to Him. One who thus looks upon Me as His goal and surrenders his all to Me, keeping his senses in control, is a yogi stable in spirit.

"On the other hand, if a man is not master of his senses, he is always musing on the objects of sense and conceives an attachment for them, so that he can hardly think of anything else. From thisattachment arises desire; and when the desire is thwarted he gets angry. Anger drives him nearly mad. He cannot understand what he is about. He thus loses his memory, behaves in a disorderly manner and comes to an ignoble end. When a man's senses rove at will, he is like a rudderless ship which is at the mercy of the gale and is broken to pieces on the rocks. Men should therefore abandon all desires and restrain their senses, so that these do not indulge in undesirable activity. The eyes then will look straight and that too only at holy objects; the ears will listen to hymns in praise of God or to cries of distress; hands and feet will be engaged in service. Indeed all the organs of sense and of action will be employed in helping a man to do his duty and making him a fit recipient of the grace of God. And once the grace of God has descended upon him, all his sorrows are at an end. As snow melts in the sunshine, all pain vanishes when the grace of God shines upon him and he is said to be stable in spirit.

"But if a man is not stable-minded, how can he think good thoughts? Without good thoughts there is no peace, and without peace there is no happiness. Where a stable-minded man sees things clear as daylight, the unstable man distracted by the turmoil of the world is as good as blind. On the other hand what is pure in the eyes of the worldly-wise looks unclean to and repels the stable-minded man. Rivers continuously flow into the sea, but the sea remains unmoved; in the same way all sense-objects come to the yogi, but he always remains calm like the sea. Thus one who abandons all desires, is free from pride and selfishness and behaves as one apart, finds peace. This is the condition of a perfect man of God, and he who is established therein even at the final hour attains the beatitude of Brahman."

CHAPTER III[1]

Monday Morning, November 24, 1930

When Krishna had thus set forth the marks of identification for a *sthitaprajna* person, Arjuna received the impression that one had only to sit quiet in order to attain such a state, as Krishna had not made the slightest reference to any need for action on his part. He therefore asked Krishna: "It seems as if you hold that knowledge is superior to action. If so, why are you urging me to this terrible deed and thus confusing my mind? Please tell me clearly where my welfare lies."

Krishna replied: "O sinless Arjuna, since the beginning of time seekers have taken one or the other of two different paths. In one of these the pride of place is given to knowledge and in the other it is given to action. But you will find that freedom from action cannot be attained without action, that wisdom never comes to a man simply on account of his having ceased to act. Man does not become perfect merely by renouncing everything. Don't you see that every one of us is doing something or other all the time? Our very nature impels us to action. Such being the law of nature, one who sits with folded hands but lets his mind dwell on the objects of sense is a fool and may even be called a hypocrite. Rather than indulge in such senseless inactivity, is it not better that a man should control the senses, overcome his likes and dislikes, and engage himself in some activity or other without fuss and in a spirit of detachment? Do your allotted duty, restraining the organs of sense, for that is better than inaction. An idler will only meet his end the sooner for his idleness. But while acting, remember that action leads to bondage unless it is performed in a spirit of sacrifice. Sacrifice (*yajna*) means exerting oneself for the benefit of others, in a word, service. And where service is rendered for service's sake, there is no room for attachment, likes and dislikes. Perform such a sacrifice; render such service. When Brahma created the universe, He created sacrifice along with it, as it were, and said to mankind: 'Go forth into the world; serve one another and prosper. Look upon all creatures as gods. Serve and propitiate those gods, so that being pleased they will be gracious to you and fulfil your wishes unasked.' Therefore understand that whoever enjoys the fruits of the earth, without serving the people and without having first given them their share, is a thief.

[1] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 21/25-11-1930; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 21/25-11-1930

And he who enjoys them after having given all creatures their share is entitled to such enjoyment and is thus freed from sin. On the other hand, those who labour only for themselves are sinners and eat the fruit of sin. It is a law of nature that creatures are sustained by food, food production depends on the rains, and the rains descend on the earth on account of *yajna*, that is to say, the labour of all creatures. There is no rain where there are no creatures, and it does rain where they are there. All live by labour; none can remain idle and live, and if this is true of the lower forms of life, it is still more applicable to man. Action takes its origin from Brahma and Brahma from the imperishable Brahman; therefore the imperishable Brahman is present in all kinds of sacrifice or service. And whoever breaks this chain of mutual service is a sinner and he lives in vain.

Tuesday Morning

"When a man enjoys peace of mind and contentment, it may be said that there is nothing left for him to do. He does not stand to gain by action or by inaction. He has no personal interests to serve; and yet he must not cease to offer sacrifice. Therefore do your duty from day to day without entertaining likes and dislikes and in a spirit of detachment. He who acts in such a spirit enjoys the beatific vision. Then again, if even a selfless king like Janaka reached perfection all the while working for the good of the people, how can you behave in a way different from his? Whatever a good and great man does, common people imitate. Take My own case for instance. I have nothing to gain by action, and yet ceaselessly do I pour myself out in action. Hence it is that people too go on working more or less. But what would happen if I ceased to work? The world would collapse if the sun, the moon and the stars ceased to move. And it is I who set them in motion and regulate their activity. But there is a difference between My attitude and the attitude of the common man. I act in the spirit of perfect detachment while he harbours attachment and works in his own interest. If a wise man like you ceased to act, others too would do the same and their minds would be unsettled. Therefore do your duty without attachment, so that others might not cease to work and might gradually learn to work without attachment. Man is bound to work in obedience to and in conformity with his own nature. Only a fool thinks that he himself is the doer. To breathe is a part of man's nature; when an insect settles upon the eye, the eyelid moves of its own accord. And nobody says: 'I take in the air' or 'I move the eyelid'. In the same manner why should not all human actions be

performed in accordance with the qualities of nature? Why should there be any egoism about it? In order that a man may be able thus to act naturally and without attachment, the best thing for him to do is to dedicate all his actions to Me and perform them without egoism as a mere instrument in My hands. When a man thus gets over selfishness, all his actions are natural and free from taint and he escapes many a trouble. Actions then have no binding force for him. Action being natural, it is sheer egoism to outrage nature and to claim to be inactive. The victim of such egoism will externally appear not to act, but his mind is always active in scheming. This is worse than external activity and has all the greater binding force.

"As a matter of fact the senses feel attraction and aversion for their respective objects. For instance the ears like to hear some things and do not like to hear other things. The nose likes to smell the rose, and does not like to smell dirt. This is also true of the other organs of sense. Therefore what man has to do is not to submit to these two robbers, namely, attraction and repulsion. If one wishes to escape their attentions, he must not go about in search of action. He must not hanker after this today, that tomorrow and the other thing the day after. But he should hold himself ready to render for the sake of God such service as falls to his share. Thus he will cultivate within himself the feeling that whatever he does is in fact an act of God and not his own, and his egoism will be a thing of the past. This is *svadharma* (one's own duty). One must stick to *svadharma*, for it is the best for oneself at any rate. *Paradharma* (another's duty) may appear to be better, but even so it should be looked upon as dangerous. *Moksha* (salvation) lies in embracing death while doing one's own duty."

When Krishna said that action performed by one who is free from likes and dislikes is sacrifice, Arjuna asked: "What is it that makes a man commit sin? Very often it seems as if he were driven to sin by some outsider against his own will."

Krishna replied: "The slave-drivers in this case are *kama* (desire) and *krodha* (anger). These are like blood brothers. If desire is not satisfied, anger is the inevitable consequence. One who is the slave of desire and anger is said to be inspired by *rajoguna* (the quality of passion), which is man's greatest enemy and against which he has to fight day in, day out. As dust hides a mirror, smoke suffocates a fire and the womb covers the embryo, even so anger deprives knowledge of its lustre and suffocates it. And desire is insatiable like fire, and taking possession of man's senses, mind and intellect, knocks him

down. Therefore first control your senses, and then conquer the mind. When you have done this, the intellect also will obey your orders. For, though among the senses, the mind and the intellect, the mind is greater than the senses and the intellect is greater than the mind, the soul is the greatest of all. Man has no idea of his own strength or soul-force, and tends to believe that the senses, the mind and the intellect are not amenable to his control. But when once he has gained confidence in soul-force, everything else becomes easy as a matter of course. And desire, anger and their countless hosts hold no terror for him who has mastered the senses, the mind and the intellect."

[NOTE.] I call this chapter the key to an understanding of the *Gita*, and the gist of it is that life is given us for service and not for enjoyment. We have therefore to impart a sacrificial character to our lives. Intellectual assent to this proposition is only the first step, but such assent and conduct in terms of that assent are bound to rid our heart of its impurities in course of time. But what is real service? In order to obtain the right answer to this question, restraint of the senses is essential, as it gives us a clearer and clearer vision of the God of truth. Service rendered with selfish motives ceases to be sacrifice. Hence the urgent need for the spirit of detachment. When this is understood, all manner of controversies lose their meaning for us. 'Did Krishna really ask Arjuna to kill his relatives? Could such killing ever be a part of one's duty?' Questions like these are set at rest for ever. When detachment governs our actions, even the weapon raised in order to strike an enemy down falls out of our hand. But a mere pretence of detachment serves no useful purpose. If only we persevere in our effort, detachment may come to us perhaps the very first day, or maybe only after a thousand years. We must not worry over the time this takes, for the effort carries within itself the seeds of success. We must however be on our guard and make sure that it is a genuine effort, and that there is no self-deception. And this is certainly possible for us all.[1]

CHAPTER IV[2]

Monday Morning [*December 1, 1930*]

The Lord says to Arjuna: "The yoga of selfless action which I commend to you is an ancient truth; I am not propounding any new doctrine. I have declared it to you, as you are my devoted friend, in order to heal the conflict in your mind. Whenever goodness weakens and evil grows from strength to strength, I incarnate Myself and

[1] This note has also appeared under the date of writing in "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 24-11-1930

[2] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", November 27/December 3, 1930; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 27-11-1930 , 3-12-1930.

protect the good and destroy the wicked. Those who are aware of this power (*maya*) of Mine are confident that evil is bound to go under. I am always by the good man's side. He never strays from the strait and narrow path and he comes to Me at last, for he meditates on Me and hides himself in Me and thus is delivered from passion and anger and is purified by austerity and wisdom. As a man sows, so he reaps. None can escape from the operation of the laws I have made. I established the four *varnas* (classes, not castes) by the different distribution of qualities and actions. However I am not their author, for I do notdesire the fruits of action and have nothing to do with the merit or demerit arising therefrom. This divine *maya* (course of action) is worth knowing. All activities prevalent in the world are subject to divine laws, and yet God is not defiled by them. Therefore He is, and also is not, their author. And a man who does likewise and acts in a spirit of detachment without being defiled by actions and by the yearning for their fruit is sure to be saved. In action he sees inaction and he understands at once what is wrong action. Wrong actions are all those that are inspired by desire and cannot be performed in the absence of desire, such for instance as theft, adultery and the like. These simply cannot be done in a spirit of detachment. Therefore those who do the duty that lies nearest without desire and scheming for the fruit of the action may be said to have burnt up their actions in the fire of wisdom (*jnana*). A man who has thus abandoned the attachment to the fruit of action is always contented, always independent. He has his mind under control. He gives up all his possessions. And his activity is natural like the bodily functions of a healthy individual. He is free from any pride or even consciousness that he is acting on his own. He has the realization that he is a mere instrument of the divine will. What does it matter whether he meets with success or with failure? He is neither elated by the one, nor unnerved by the other. All his work is done as a sacrifice (*yajna*), that is to say, as service to the world. He meditates upon God in all his actions and in the end comes to Him.

"There are many forms of sacrifice, the root of which lies in purity and service, such as, for instance, control of the senses, charity and *pranayama* (breath-control) practised with a view to self purification. Knowledge of these can be acquired from a wise teacher (guru) through humility, earnestness and service. If anybody indulges in various activities which he thinks are *yajna*, without any understanding of what *yajna* is, he will only do harm to himself and to the world. It is therefore necessary that all actions should

be performed intelligently. This wisdom (*jnana*) is not mere book-learning. In it there is no room for doubt. It begins with faith and ends in experience. It enables a man to see all beings in himself and to see himself in God so that everything appears to him to be actually informed by God. Such wisdom effects the salvation of the worst of sinners. It releases the seeker from the bondage of action, so that he is not affected by its results. There is nothing else in the world so holy as this wisdom. Therefore try to obtain it with a heart full of faith in God and with the senses under control, so that you will enjoyperfect peace of mind."

[NOTE.] The third, the fourth and the following fifth chapter should be read together, as they explain to us what the yoga of selfless action (*anasakti*) is and what are the means of practising it. If these three chapters are properly understood, the reader will have less difficulty in tackling what follows. The remaining chapters deal in detail with the ways and means of achieving *anasakti*. We should study the *Gita* from this point of view, and if we pursue this study we shall find without much trouble a solution of the problems which confront us from day to day. This calls for daily practice. Let everybody try it. If for instance he is angry, let him remember the verse dealing with anger and subdue that enemy. Supposing we heartily dislike somebody, or are impatient or gluttonous or in doubt as to whether we should do or should not do something or other, all these difficulties can be solved with the help of Mother *Gita* if we have faith in it and give it constant study. Our daily recitation of the *Gita* as well as this series of letters is a means to this end.[1]

CHAPTER V[2]

December 9, 1930

Arjuna said: "You speak highly of knowledge, so that I am inclined to think that action is unnecessary. But then you also praise action, thus making me feel that unselfish performance of action is the thing to do. My mind will be at peace only if you tell me definitely which of the two is better."

The Lord replied: "Sannyasa means knowledge and karmayoga means selfless action. Both of them are good, but if I had to choose between the two, I should say that yoga or selfless action is better. The man who does not hate anyone or anything, does not long for anything and is free from the pairs of opposites such as heat and cold,

[1] This note has also appeared under the date of writing in "Letter to Narandas Gandhi"

[2] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 4/9-12-1930; *vide* "Letter to narandas Gandhi"4/9-12-1930

pleasure and pain, is a sannyasi (wise man, literally, one who renounces the world), no matter whether he is or is not a performer of action. He easily casts off the chain that binds him. Only the ignorant speak of wisdom and action as different, not the learned. The fruit of both is the same; both lead to an identical goal. Therefore he who sees them as one sees truly. The man of pure wisdom achieves his object by merely willing it, and has no need to perform an outward act. When the city of Mithila was on fire, others were bound to rush to it and fight the fire. But King Janaka contributed to this fight by his mental determination only, for his servants were ready to obey his commands. If he had run about with a water-pot to quench the fire, he would only have done harm; others would have stared at him and failed to perform their own duty, or at the most would have rushed here and there with a view to the King's safety. But it is not given to every one of us to become a Janaka at once. It is indeed a very difficult task to reach a Janaka-like state. Only one in a million can reach it as the fruit of service extending over many lives, and it is not a bed of roses either. As a man goes on performing selfless action, his thought grows from strength to strength and he resorts less and less to external action. But he is hardly conscious of this change, and he has not this change in view either. He is devoted only to service, with the result that his power of rendering service increases to such an extent that he hardly seems to rest from service. And finally his service is limited to thought alone, just as an object in extraordinary motion seems to be at rest. It is obviously improper to say that such a man does nothing. But this lofty state can, as a rule, be only imagined, and not experienced. Hence my preference for karmayoga. Millions derive the fruit of sannyasa (wisdom, literally, 'renunciation') from selfless action alone. They would fall between two stools if they tried their hand at sannyasa. If they take to sannyasa, it is very likely that they will become hypocrites, and as they have ceased to perform action, they are lost altogether. But a man who has purified himself by means of selfless action, who has his mind and his senses under control and who has identified himself with all beings, loving them as himself—such a man stands apart from action although he is acting all the time, and is not bound by it. He talks, he walks, he takes part in normal human activity, but his activity seems to be merely a function of his organs of sense, and he himself seems to be doing nothing. The bodily functions of a physically healthy person are natural and spontaneous. His stomach for instance functions independently of

him; he has not to bother about its functioning. Similarly a spiritually healthy person, though acting through his body, is not tainted by it and may be said to be doing nothing. Therefore a man should dedicate all his actions to Brahma (God) and perform them on His behalf, so that in spite of his activity he does not earn either merit or demerit and is untouched by either, like a lotus leaf which is untouched by water.

Tuesday Morning

"Therefore a yogi (man of selfless action), performing action with the body, mind and understanding in a spirit of detachment and without egotism, purifies himself and enters into peace. The non-yogi, on the other hand, being attached to the fruit of action, is a prisoner bound by his own desires. The yogi lives blissfully in the city with nine gates, that is, his body, having renounced all actions by his mind, and realized that there is nothing at all that he himself is doing or getting done. The man with a purified soul does not commit sin, nor does he do any meritorious deed. He who acts in a spirit of detachment, having destroyed his egotism and renounced the fruit of action, becomes a mere machine moving at the will and pleasure of the Master Mechanic or an instrument in the hands of God. The question, therefore, of his earning merit or demerit does not arise. On the other hand, the ignorant man is always counting his merit and demerit, and sinking deeper and deeper into the pit, so that in the end the only thing he has earned is demerit. But as regards the man who destroys his own ignorance by knowledge from day to day, his spontaneous actions grow purer and purer, and appear perfect and meritorious in the world's eyes. He sees all things with an equal eye. He is equi-minded towards a learned and humble Brahma-knowing Brahmin, a cow, an elephant, a dog and a degraded human being who is worse than a beast. That is to say, he serves them all with equal devotion. He does not honour any one of them or treat another with contempt. The man of selfless action holds himself to be the world's debtor, and he repays what he owes to everyone else and does him full justice. Here on earth he takes the creation captive and is filled with the spirit of the Supreme. He is not elated if anybody does something pleasant; nor is he pained if foul abuse is poured upon him. The man attached to the world seeks happiness from outside himself. On the other hand, he who acts in a spirit of selfless detachment discovers the spring of eternal peace in himself, having withdrawn his mind from

external objects. All sensual pleasures are a source of pain. One should resist the rush of desire, anger and the like. The selfless yogi is constantly engaged in doing good to all creatures. His mind is free from doubt. He is not of the world though he is in the world. He turns his eyes inward by means of *pranayama* (control of breath), etc., and conquers desire, fear and anger. He knows Me alone to be the supreme Lord of all, the Friend, and the recipient of sacrificial offerings, and enters into My peace."

CHAPTER VI[1]

Tuesday Morning, December 16, 1930

The Lord said: "The man who does his duty without any selfish desire for fruit may be called a sannyasi as well as a yogi. But he who abstains from action altogether is only an idler. The root of the matter is that one should not allow his mind to flit from one object of desire to another and from that to a third. He who would practise yoga, i.e., evenness of temper (samatvam), cannot but perform action. The man who has achieved such evenness of temper will be serene, because his mere thoughts are charged with the strength of action. A yogi is one who is not attached to the objects of sense or to action and whose mind has ceased to roam restlessly.

"A man can be saved or ruined by himself alone. Therefore he becomes his own friend or his own enemy as the case may be. To one who has subdued his mind, his soul is a friend; while the soul is an enemy for him who has failed to achieve self-control. The test for self-control is that heat and cold, pleasure and pain, honour and dishonour do not disturb one's inner serenity. He is a yogi who is a man of knowledge as well as experience, who is unwavering and master of his senses and to whom gold, stone and earth seem all alike. He regards with an equal eye friend and foe, sinner and saint. With a view to attaining this state a man should stabilize his mind, divest it of all sensual desires, and meditate in solitude on the Supreme Self. It is not enough to practise yogic *asanas* (postures), etc. In order to achieve evenness of temper, one must scrupulously keep the major observances (*vratas*), such as *brahmacharya* (chastity) and the like. A man who thus takes his place on a firm seat, keeps the observances and concentrates his mind on God, enters into perfect peace.

[1] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 13/16-12-1930; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 13/16-12-1930

"This equanimity is not for one who overeats or merely fasts, nor for one who is too much addicted to sleep or to vigils. Its seeker has to keep a sense of proportion in all his actions such as eating and drinking, sleeping and keeping awake. To overeat one day and fast the next day, to oversleep for a day and keep a vigil the next, to work hard for a day and pass the next in idleness is no characteristic of a yogi. The yogi is stable-minded at all times, and is without effort free from all desires. He is like an unflickering lamp burning in a windless place. He is not tossed to and fro by dramatic events on the world-stage or by hisown brain waves. Such mental poise can be acquired by slow but steady effort. The mind is fickle and restless, but it should be gradually stabilized, for a man can have peace of mind only when he is firm of understanding. In order thus to stabilize the mind, he should constantly fix it on the soul. He will then see all beings in himself and himself in all beings, for he will see Me in all beings and all beings in Me. He who is absorbed in Me, and sees Me everywhere ceases to be himself, so that he is at all times attuned to Me irrespective of what he is doing, and is incapable of sin."

Yoga thus described seemed to Arjuna to be a tall order, and he exclaimed: "How is one to achieve such equanimity? The human mind is restless like a monkey, and as difficult to control as the wind. How is it to be curbed?"

The Lord replied: "You are right. But if a man earnestly sets about conquering attachment and aversion, yoga will not be difficult for him to practise. But it should be clear to you that it is not for one who cannot control his mind."

Then Arjuna posed another question: "Supposing a man has faith, but is lax in his effort and is thus unsuccessful in perfecting himself, what happens to him? Is he destroyed like a broken cloud in the sky?"

The Lord said: "Such a man of faith is never lost, for no one who takes the right path ever comes to an evil end. After death he lives for a time in some celestial world according to his merit and is then reborn on the earth into a holy family. But such a birth is difficult to obtain. He then regains the mental impressions developed in his former lives, and struggling harder for perfection, reaches the supreme goal. Thus making an assiduous effort some attain equanimity soon, while others do so after a number of lives in accordance with the measure of their faith and endeavour. This

evenness of temper is superior to asceticism, to knowledge and to sacred rites, for these latter are after all only means to the end of equanimity. Do you therefore become evenminded and a yogi. And even among yogis hold him to be the best who dedicates his all to Me and worships Me alone in full faith."

[NOTE.] *Pranayama* (control of breath) and *asanas* (yogic postures) are referred to appreciatively in this chapter, but we should remember that at the same time the Lord has stressed the need for *brahmacharya,* i.e., keeping the observances calculated to take us nearer and nearer to God. It should be clearly understood that the mere practice of *asanas* and the like can never take us to the goal of evenmindedness.*Asanas* and *pranayama* may be of some slight help in steadying the mind and making it single-purposed, provided that they are practised to that end. Otherwise they are no better than other methods of physical training. They are very useful indeed as physical exercise and I believe that this type of exercise is good for the soul, and may be performed from a bodily standpoint. But I have observed that these practices do only harm when indulged in for the acquisition of supernormal powers (*siddhi*) and the performance of miracles. This chapter should be studied as a summary of the teaching in the preceding three chapters. It cheers us up in our spiritual struggle. We should never be down-hearted and give up the endeavour to reach evenness of temper.[1]

CHAPTER VII[2]

Tuesday Morning [*December 23, 1930*]

The Lord said: "O King, I will tell you how a man who devotes his whole mind to Me, takes refuge in Me and practises karmayoga can have perfect knowledge of Me free from the shadow of a doubt. I will declare to you this knowledge based on experience, which having been known, nothing more here remains to be known. Hardly one from among thousands strives to acquire this knowledge, and perhaps one only of these strivers makes a success of it.

"Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intellect and egoism— this is the eightfold composition of My *prakriti* (nature). This is the lower nature; the other is higher nature, that is, life. This world is born of these two natures, that is to say, from the coming together of body and soul. Therefore I am the cause of the origin and destruction of all things. As pearls are strung on a thread, even so is the world held

[1] This note has also appeared under the date of writing in "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 13/16-12-1930

[2] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 18/23-12-1930; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 18/23-12-1930

together by Me. Thus I am the taste in the waters, the light in the sun and the moon, the syllable 'Om' in the Vedas, the sound in ether, the spirit of enterprise in men, the sweet smell in the earth the brightness in fire, the life in all that lives, the austerity of ascetics, the intelligence of the intelligent, the pure strength of the strong, and the craving of all beings which does not run counter to righteousness. In short you should understand that all that belongs to the states of *sattva*[1], *rajas*[2] and *tamas*[3] proceeds from Me, and depends upon Me alone. People deluded by these three qualities (*gunas*) do not recognize Me Who am imperishable. My *maya* made of these qualities is hard to overcome. But those who take refuge in Me pass beyond this *maya*, that is, the three *gunas*. Foolish evil-doers cannot think of coming to Me even in their dreams. Being steeped in illusion, they roam in darkness and do not acquire knowledge. But the doers of good deeds worship Me. Some of them do so in order to obtain relief in their distress; others seek for knowledge of Me. A third group are inspired by a desire to get something for themselves while others worship Me with understanding, thinking it to be their duty. Worship of Me means service of My creation. This service is rendered by some because of their misery, by others in order to gain some advantage, by a third group out of curiosity as regards the outcome of such activity and by a fourth group who know what they are about and for whom service of others is something that they cannot do without. These last are My wise devotees, dearer to Me than all the rest of them. Or rather they know Me best and are nearest to Me. Their wisdom is the fruit of a quest extending over a number of lives, and when they have acquired this wisdom, they see nothing in the world except Me, Vasudeva. But those who are smitten by a variety of desires resort to other deities. I alone, however, am the giver of rewards commensurate with the devotion of each. The achievement too of these devotees of limited understanding is limited, but they rest content with it. These men in their ignorance imagine that they know Me through the senses. They do not realize that My imperishable and supreme form is beyond the reach of the senses and cannot be grasped with the hands, the ears, the nose, the eyes. Thus the ignorant do not recognize Me though I am the Creator of all things. This is my *yogamaya* (creative power).

[1] Harmony, passion, sloth; or rhythm, activity, inertia
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*

Pleasure and pain are the necessary consequence of likes and dislikes and keep mankind under the influence of delusion. But those who have freed themselves from delusion and purified their thoughts and actions hold firmly to their vows and offer Me constant worship. They know Me in the form of perfect Brahman (the Absolute) as well as of individual selves embodied as various kinds of creatures (*adhyatma*), and My creative action (karma). Those who thus know Me as the One who governs the material (*adhibhuta*) and the divine (*adhidaiva*) aspects and the sacrifices (*adhiyajna*) and have attained evenness of temper, are released from the bondage of birth and death after they have died. Because they have acquired the knowledge of reality their mind ceases to dwell on trivialities; they see the whole universe to be filled with the spirit of God and are absorbed in Him."

CHAPTER VIII[1]

Monday Morning, December 29, 1930

Arjuna asked: "You spoke of 'Brahman' (the Absolute), '*adhyatma*,' 'karma', '*adhibhuta*', '*adhidaive*' and '*adhiyajna*', but I do not understand the meaning of all these words. Again you say that at the hour of death you are revealed to those who know you as *adhibhuta*, etc., and have attained evenness of temper. Please explain all this to me."

The Lord replied: "Brahman is the imperishable supreme aspect of God, and *adhyatma* is the individual soul living in the body of all beings as the doer and the enjoyer. Karma is the process through which all beings come into existence, or in other words, the process of creation. *Adhibhuta* is Myself as the perishable body, and *adhiyajna* is the individual soul purified through sacrifice. Thus whether as the body or as the foolish soul or as the purified soul or as Brahman, it is I who am everywhere. And never doubt this that he who meditates on Me in all these aspects at the hour of death, forgets himself, is careful of nothing and desirous of nothing will be united with Me. Whatever a man constantly dwells on in his mind and remembers at the time of death is realized by him. Therefore at all times you should remember Me and set your mind and heart upon Me and you will surely come to Me. You may say that it is hard thus to stabilize the mind. But you take it from Me that one can become single-minded by daily practice and constant endeavour, for as I told you just now, all embodied

[1] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 27/30-12-1930

beings are in the essence Myself in various forms. For this he should prepare himself from the very first so that his mind does not go astray at the time of death, but is steeped in devotion, keeps the life force (*prana*) steady, and thinks only of Me as the Omniscient the Ancient, the Ruler, the subtle supporter of all and dispeller of ignorance like the sun which drives darkness away.

"This supreme state is known to the Vedas as *Akshara* (the Imperishable) Brahman and is reached by sages who have freed themselves from likes and dislikes. All who desire to reach it observe *brahmacharya*, i.e., keep body, mind and speech under control and give up all objects of sense in these three ways. Men and women who die, having controlled the senses and uttering the sacred syllable 'Om' and remembering Me as they depart, reach the supreme state. Theirmind is never distracted by other thoughts, and when they have thus come to Me, they are not reborn into this painful condition. To come to Me is the only means of breaking the vicious circle of birth and death.

"Men measure time by the human span of a hundred years, and during that period do thousands of questionable deeds. But time is infinite. A thousand *yugas* (ages) make up the day of Brahma; compared with it a human day or even a hundred years of human life are as nothing. What is the use of counting such infinitesimal measures of time? Human life is as only a moment in the in finite cycle of time. It is up to us therefore to think of God alone to the exclusion of all else. How can we afford to run after momentary pleasures? Creation and dissolution have gone on unceasingly during Brahma's day and night and will do so in future too.

"Brahma who creates and dissolves beings is only an aspect of Me. He is the unmanifested which cannot be perceived by the senses. Beyond this unmanifested there is yet another unmanifested aspect of Mine of which I have spoken to you. He who reaches it is not reborn, for there is no day or night so far as this is concerned. This is a calm and immovable aspect, which can be realized only by single-minded devotion. It supports and pervades the whole universe.

"It is said that one who dies in the bright half of the month during *Uttarayana* (the northward movement of the sun from January to July) comes to Me if he is mindful of Me at the last moment, and that he who dies in the dark half of the month during *Dakshinayana* (the southward movement from July to January) is reborn into the

world. '*Uttarayana*' and the 'bright fortnight' here may be interpreted to mean the path of selfless service; and '*Dakshinayana*' and the 'dark half of month' to mean selfishness. The path of service is the path of knowledge, and the path of selfishness is the path of ignorance. He who treads the path of knowledge is released from the bondage of birth and death, while he who takes the path of ignorance becomes a bondslave. After having realized the difference between the two, who would be so foolish as to prefer to walk the way of ignorance? All men should learn to discriminate between the paths, renounce all fruits of merit, act in a spirit of detachment and discharge their duty with all their heart and soul, and thus endeavour to reach the supreme state described by Me."

CHAPTER IX[1]

Monday Morning [*January 5, 1931*]

Having described the lofty state of a yogi in the last verse of the preceding chapter, the Lord now naturally proceeds to sing the glory of *bhakti* (devotion). For the yogi in terms of the *Gita* is neither a dry-as-dust man of knowledge, nor a devotee carried away by his own enthusiasm, but a selfless performer of action imbued with the spirit of wisdom as well as devotion.

So the Lord said: "As you are free from hatred, I shall now tell you the secret of wisdom, a knowledge of which will contribute to your welfare. This is the holy knowledge above all other and is easy to translate into action. Those who have no faith in it fail to find Me. Men cannot perceive My unmanifested form by their senses; yet it pervades the universe. It supports the universe; the universe does not support it. Again in a sense it may be said that all these beings are not in Me, and I am not in them. Although I am the source of all beings and their sustainer, they are not in Me and I am not in them; for in ignorance they do not know Me and are not devoted to Me. Know this to be My divine mystery.

"But though it seems as if I am not in these beings, I am like the air moving everywhere. All creatures pass into My nature at the end of a cycle and are reborn at the beginning of creation. These acts are Mine, but they do not bind Me, for I act in a spirit of detachment and am indifferent as to the fruit they bear. These events happen as such is

[1] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 1/6-1-1931; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandi", 1/6-1-1931

My nature. But people do not recognize Me in such a guise and deny My existence altogether. They entertain vain aspirations, perform vain actions and are full of ignorance, so that they can be said to partake of the nature of demons. But those who abide in the divine nature know and worship Me as the imperishable Creator. They are firm in their determination. They are always striving for virtue, praising Me, and meditating on Me. Others again believe Me to be one or to be many. There are countless attributes of Me; therefore those who believe Me to be many think of different attributes as so many different faces of Mine. But one and all, they are My devotees.

"I am the intention to offer a sacrifice, I the sacrifice itself, I the offering made to the spirits of the fathers, I the herb, I the sacred verse (*mantra*), I the oblation, I the fire to which it is offered.I am the Father of this world, I the Mother, the supporter and the Grandsire, the object of knowledge, the syllable 'Om', *Rig-Veda, Sam-Veda* and *Yajur-Veda*. I am the end of the pilgrim's path, the sustainer, the Lord, the Witness. I am the shelter, the lover, the origin, the dissolution, heat and cold, being and non-being. Those who perform the rites mentioned in the Vedas do so in order to gain their fruit. They may thus attain the world of heaven, but they have to return to the world of mortals and to die. But if a man meditates upon Me with an undistracted mind and worships Me alone, I bear all his burdens, supply all his needs and protect his possessions. Some others who worship other deities with faith in their hearts are victims of ignorance, but they are really worshipping Me for I am the Lord of all sacrifices. However, they do not know Me in My comprehensive nature and therefore are unable to reach the supreme state. Worshippers of the gods go to the world of the gods, the ancestor-worshippers to the world of the fathers and those who worship the spirits go to the spirits, while those who worship Me with the right approach come to Me. I accept the offering of love made by seekers, even if it be only a leaf or a flower. Therefore whatever you do, do it only as an offering to Me, so that your responsibility for the good and evil results will cease altogether. As you will have renounced all the fruits of action, there will be no more births and deaths for you. I am the same to all beings; none is hateful or dear to Me. But those who worship Me with devotion are in Me, and I am in them. This is not partiality but only the natural consequence of their devotion. Devotion indeed works wonders. He who worships Me in utter devotion becomes a saint even if he has been a sinner. As darkness vanishes before the sun, a man

abandons his evil ways as soon as he comes to Me. Therefore know for certain that My devotee shall not perish. He becomes a man of religion and enters into My peace. Those who are born in the so-called lower castes and illiterate women, Vaishyas and Sudras who take refuge in Me come to Me. It goes without saying that so do Brahmins and Kshatriyas who lead a holy life. Every devotee enjoys the fruit of his devotion. Therefore you who have been born in this unsubstantial world should worship Me and work out your salvation. Fix your mind on Me, be devoted to Me, offer your sacrifices for My sake, prostrate yourself before Me. And if you are intent on Me and reduce yourself to zero by attuning yourself to Me, you are sure to come to Me."

Tuesday Morning, [*January 6, 1931*]

NOTE. We learn from this Chapter that devotion (*bhakti*) means attachment (*asakti*) to God. This is the royal road to the cultivation of a selfless spirit. Therefore we are told at the very beginning that devotion is the sovereign yoga and is easy to practise. It is easy to practise if it takes hold of our heart, but hard going if it does not. Hence it has been described as something for which we have to offer our life itself as the price. But he who has plunged into it enjoys perfect bliss though it scares the mere spectator. Sudhanva[1] was laughing as he lay in the boiling oil while the bystanders were seized with terror and anxiety. The 'untouchable' Nanda is said to have danced as he was tried by the ordeal of fire.[2] We need not bother whether or not these are true stories. But the fact is that a man reaches such a state of calmness and imperturbability when he is absorbed in something or other. He forgets himself. But who would set his heart on anything except God? 'Do not prefer the bitter *neem* to sugarcane or the glow-worm to the sun and the moon.' The ninth chapter thus shows that renunciation of the fruit of action is impossible without devotion (*bhakti*). Its last verse sums up the whole chapter and in a word means, "Seeking nothing, give yourself utterly to Me."

[1] Son of King Hansadhwaj of Champavati in the *Mahabharata.* He was thrown into boiling oil for disobeying his father who was an atheist; but he came out unscathed because of his devotion to God.

[2] Nanda was not subjected to any ordeal. The legend is that he went up in flames as he entered the shrine.

CHAPTER X[1]

Monday Morning, January 12, 1931

The Lord said: "Hear once more what I say with a view to the welfare of devotees. Even gods and great sages do not know my beginning, for the very simple reason that I am without beginning myself and am the origin of the universe including gods and sages. The wise man who knows Me to be unborn and without beginning isliberated from all sins, for when he realizes Me as such and himself as My child or as part and parcel of Me, he overcomes the human liability to sin. Ignorance of one's real nature is the root of sin.

"As all beings derive from Me, so do the various natures distributed to them, such as for instance forgiveness, truth, joy andsorrow, birth and death, fear and fearlessness. Those who know all these to be My glorious manifestations easily become even-minded, as they cease to be egotistic. Their heart is fixed on Me. They dedicate their all to Me. I am the only subject of their conversation. They glorify Me and live in happiness and contentment. To these loving worshippers always aware of Me I grant the power of understanding, by means of which they come to Me."

Arjuna then praised the Lord: "You are the Supreme Brahman, the highest Abode, and the Lord. You yourself say that sages worship you as the First of the Gods, the Birthless, the All-pervading. O Lord, O Father, no one knows your real nature; it is known to you alone. Now please tell me your glorious manifestations, and explain to me how I may recognize you by meditation."

The Lord replied: "There is no end to My divine manifestations, but I shall name the chief of these only. I am the *atman* (soul) dwelling in the heart of all beings. I am the beginning, the middle and the end of them all. Of the Adityas I am Vishnu. Among the lights I am the light-giving sun. Of the Maruts (windgods) I am Marichi. Among the stars I am the moon. Of the Vedas I am the *Sama-Veda*. Of the gods I am Indra. Of the sense-organs I am the mind. Of beings I am consciousness. Of the Rudras I am Shankara (Siva). Of the Yakshas and Rakshasas I am Kubera. Of the Daityas (demons) I am Prahlada. Of beasts I am the lion. Of birds I am the eagle. Indeed I am even the gambling of the cheats. Whatever, good or evil, happens in this world happens only by My permission. Realizing this, men should give up their pride and steer clear of evil,

[1] This was sent along with *vide*"Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 12-1-1931

for I am the dispenser of the fruits of their good and bad deeds. You should realize that only a single fraction of Mine sustains the entire universe."

CHAPTER XI[1]

Monday Morning and Afternoon [*January 19, 1931*]

Arjuna, asking the Lord for a favour, said: "O Supreme Lord, by teaching me the truth about the soul, you have dispelled my ignorance. You are All, the Creator and the Destroyer, being Imperishable Yourself. If possible, please let me have a vision of your divine Form."

The Lord said: "There are thousands of my divine forms in various colours. The Adityas[2], the Vasus[3] and the Rudras[4]—all are unified in My body, as well as all things, animate and inanimate. But you cannot see this My form with those fleshly eyes. Therefore I give you divine sight with which to see Me."

Sanjaya said to Dhritarashtra: "O king, speaking thus to Arjuna, the Lord revealed to him His marvellous form which defies description. We see a single sun in the sky every day, but supposing a thousand suns were blazing in the sky, the glory of what Arjuna saw was more dazzling than their accumulated light. The ornaments and the weapons of that form were similarly divine. Arjuna's hair then stood erect. And he spoke, shaking all over."

Arjuna said: "O God, I see everything and everybody within your body. Brahma and Siva are there, and so are the sages and the holy serpents. I see you with countless arms and faces, and find no beginning, middle or end. You shine like a mass of insufferable light, and blaze like fire. You are the ultimate foundation of the universe, the Ancient of Days, and the guardian of eternal law. Wherever I look, I see parts of your body. The sun and the moon are your eyes as it were. You pervade heaven and earth. Your splendour burns up the universe. This world is seized with awe. The gods, the sages, and the *siddhas*—all are standing with clasped hands and sing your praise. On seeing this stupendous form and brilliance I lose my nerve. My patience and peace are gone. O God, have mercy on me. I see these people rush into your mouth frightful with tusks as moths fly into a

[1] This was sent along with *vide*"Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 14/19-1-1931

[2] Various classes of gods

[3] *ibid*

[4] *ibid*

flame and you crush them to powder. Who are you with such an awful form? I cannot understand your ways."

The Lord said: "I am Time, the destroyer of worlds. You may or may not fight, but the warriors on both the sides are bound to perish. You are only an instrument of the divine will."

Arjuna said: "O God, home of all the worlds, you are the Imperishable, Being and non-Being and what is beyond either of them. You are the First of the Gods, the Ancient of Days; you are the refuge of the world. You are the one thing which is to be known. You are Vayu (wind), Yama (the God of Death and Judgment), Agni (fire) and Prajapati (the Creator). Hail to you a thousand times. Now please show me your original form again."

The Lord then said: "I showed My world-wide Form to you, because I love you. You have seen today something the vision of which cannot be won by Vedic or any other studies, rituals, alms or austerities. Do not be bewildered because you have seen it. Cast away fear, be calm and see my familiar form. That shape of Mine which you have seen is hard to see even for the gods and can be seen only by pure devotion. Whoever works for Me, makes Me his supreme good,becomes my devotee, frees himself from attachment and loves all beings, comes to me."

NOTE. This chapter, like the tenth; I have deliberately cut short. This one is full of poetry and therefore should be read frequently either in the original or in translation, so that we may be imbued with the spirit of devotion. Whether we are or not thus imbued can be found by applying the acid test mentioned in the last verse. Devotion is impossible in the absence of total self-surrender and all-embracing love. Self-surrender and a sense of solidarity with all living beings become easy of attainment if we meditate on God as world-destroying time into whose gaping mouths the universe rushes to its doom. This fate is bound to overtake us too all of a sudden, whether we wish for it or not. Thus all distinctions of small and big, high and low, man and woman, men and the lower animals, disappear. Seeing that we are all a mere morsel in the mouth of God as the Destroyer, we should become humble and reduce ourselves to zero and cultivate friendship with everyone else. If we do this, we shall cease to be afraid of this terrible Form of God. On the other hand it will give us peace of mind.

CHAPTER XII[1]

Tuesday Morning, November 4, 1930

Arjuna asks the Lord: "Some devotees adore a personal (*sakara*) God while others worship the Absolute (*nirakara*). Which of these two courses is better?"

The Lord replies: "Those who fix their minds on Me (as the One Life in all) with perfect faith and are absorbed in Me are My devotees indeed. But those who worship the Absolute and restrain and subdue their senses are equiminded towards all living beings and serve them without looking on some as of a superior and others as of an inferior grade—they also will come to Me. Neither of these two classes of devotees is superior to the other. But a full realization of the Absolute is almost impossible for an embodied being. The Absolute is devoid of all attributes and thus difficult for men even to imagine. Therefore they are all worshippers of a personal God, whether they are aware of it or not. Do you therefore place your mind in Me (the personal God in the universal form) and offer Me your all. If this is not possible, try to restrain the aberrations of the mind; that is to say, by observing the *yamas* and *niyamas*, and with the help of *pranayama* and yogic exercises, obtain control over the mind. If even this is beyond your capacity, perform all actions for My sake, so that your delusion will be destroyed, and you will be imbued with the spirit of detachment and devotion. If you cannot do even this, renounce the fruits of action, that is, cease to have a desire for the fruits of action, and do the task which is allotted to you. A man can never have any say as regards the fruit of his action, as the nature of the fruit is determined by a number of independent factors. Be you therefore a mere instrument in My hands. I have thus described four methods, none of which is superior to the others. You may adopt any one of the four you like. It may seem as if the path of knowledge (hearing the doctrine, pondering over it, etc.) is easier to take than that of *yamas*, *niyamas*, *pranayama*, *asanas*, etc. Meditation in worship is easier still and the renunciation of the fruit the easiest of all. But the same method is not equally well suited for all. And some seekers have to adopt all the four methods, which are inter-connected. You must become a devotee one way or other; you may take any path that leads

[1] This letter, the first in this series, was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", October 30/November 4, 1930; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 4-11-1930.

to this destination.

"Let me tell you what the true devotee is like. He does not hate or bear ill will to any living creature. He looks on all with love and compassion. He is free from the delusion of 'I' and 'mine'. He reduces himself to zero. Pleasure and pain, are equally acceptable to him. He forgives the wrong-doer even as he expects to be forgiven himself. He is always contented with his lot, and is unshakable in his resolve. He dedicates his intellect and mind and all to Me. He never molests his fellow-creatures; these are therefore never afraid of him. He does not allow himself to become perturbed by the world. He is free from exultation, sorrow, anger, fear and the like. He seeks nothing for himself. He is pure and skilful in action. He renounces every undertaking.[1] Although he is firm in his resolve, he is indifferent as regards the success or failure of his action; that is to say, he is not anxious about its result. He is alike to friend and foe. Honour and insult are the same to him. He is silent and content with whatcomes. He moves freely as if he were alone. He has a steady mind at all times and places. A devotee who behaves like this in faith is dear to Me."[2]

CHAPTER XIII

Monday Morning [*January 25, 1932*]

The Lord said: "*Kshetra* (the Field) is another name for the

[1] In his "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 13/17-11-1930 (*vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 13/17-11-1930), Gandhiji had explained: "The devotee 'renounces all undertakings'. This means the devotee will not draw up schemes of future expansion. For example, if a merchant who deals in cloth now has any plans of selling fire-wood as well in the future, or if he, having one shop only, thinks of opening five more shops, that would be *arambha* (undertaking) on his part, and the devotee will have none of it. This principle is applicable to service of the nation as well. For instance, a worker in the khadi department today will not take up cow-keeping tomorrow, agriculture the day after and medical aid on the fourth day. He will do his best in whatever has come to him. When I am free from egoism, nothing remains for me to do.

"The Lord has bound me with a cotton thread; I am His, no matter where He leads me. I have been stabbed with the dagger of love.' A devotee's every activity is planned by God. It comes to him as in the natural course of things. He therefore rests content with, 'this, that or anything else' (;su dsu fpr~A_ This is the meaning of 'renouncing all undertakings'. The devotee does not cease to work; indeed he is nothing if not a worker. He only ceases to think needless thoughts about his work. It is these that he has to renounce."

[2] The chapters which follow are from M.M.U./II.

human body and *kshetrajna* means one who knows the Field. Understand Me as the knower of the Field in all bodies. Real knowledge means discrimination between the Field and the knower of the Field.

"The five great elements, namely, earth, water, fire, air and ether, individuality (*ahamkara*), intellect, the unmanifest, the ten senses[1], mind, the five sense-objects, desire and hatred, pleasure and pain, *sanghata* (the power of combination inherent in the constituents of the body), consciousness and cohesion, —these constitute the Field with its modifications. Knowledge of these is essential, as they have to be renounced. Wisdom is the foundation on which such renunciation can be based. Wisdom here means and includes humility, unpretentiousness, non-violence, forgiveness, rectitude, service of the teacher, purity, steadfastness, self-restraint, indifference to sense-objects, absence of egoism, insight into the evil of birth, death, old age, disease and pain, detachment from wife and children, hearth and home, friends and relations, equimindedness to good and bad fortune, whole-hearted devotion to God, love of solitude, dislike for the enjoyment of sensual pleasures in company with others, thirst for knowledge of the soul, andat last the beatific vision. And the reverse of this is ignorance.

"Now let me tell you something about that which has to be known with a view to salvation. That is beginningless supreme Brahman. Brahman is beginningless because it is unborn and was there when there was nothing. It is neither *sat* (existent) nor *asat* (non-existent) but beyond them both. But from another standpoint it can be called *sat*, because it is eternal. Human beings cannot recognize it as such; therefore it is said to be beyond even *sat*. It pervades the whole universe. It may be said to have a thousand hands and feet, and though it seems to have hands and feet, it is devoid of the organs of sense for it does not need these organs. Sense organs are transitory while Brahman is eternal. And although being all-pervasive and all-sustaining, it may be said to be enjoying the qualities (*gunas*), it is free from them. Where there are *gunas*, there is change (*vikara*), but Brahman is changeless. It may be said to be outside all beings, because it is out for those who do not know it. And it is within all

[1] The five organs of perception, viz., ears, skin, eyes, palate and nose, and the five organs of action, viz., tongue, feet, hands and the organs of evacuation and reproduction

beings as it is all-pervading. Similarly it is both moving and unmoving. It is subtle and hence imperceptible. It is distant as well as near. It is undivided in the sense that it is imperishable though name (*nama*) and form (*rupa*) perish, but it also seems to be divided as we say that it is within all creatures. It creates, preserves and destroys. It is the light of lights beyond darkness, and the end of all knowledge. Brahman which is planted in every heart is *jneya*, the one thing worth knowing. All knowledge is a means to the end of being united with it. Not revised.

"God and his *maya* (nature) are both without beginning. Modifications (*vikaras*) are born of *maya* and these give rise to various kinds of action (*karma*). On account of *maya*, the soul experiences pleasure and pain and the fruit of merit (*punya*) and demerit (*papa*). He who, having realized this, does his duty in a spirit of detachment is not born again in spite of his activity, for he beholds the face of God in all faces, and seeing that not a leaf moves but by the divine will, he is free from egotism, understands that he is separate from the body and that the soul, though living in the body, remains by means of knowledge unaffected like the omnipresent ether."

Finished at about 2 p.m.

CHAPTER XIV[1]

Silence Day, January 25, 1932

The Lord said: "Once more I will teach you that supreme wisdom which enabled sages to reach the highest perfection. People who find that wisdom and do their duty accordingly are delivered from the cycle of births and deaths. O Arjuna, know Me to be the Father and Mother of all beings. The three *gunas* born of nature, viz., *sattva* (goodness), *rajas* (passion) and *tamas* (ignorance) bind the soul down. They may be described respectively as the highest, the middling and the lowest. Of these *sattva* is pure and unsullied and gives light; it is therefore the source of happiness. *Rajas* arises from attachment and craving and makes a man indulge in all manner of activities. *Tamas* is rooted in ignorance and delusion and makes one negligent and indolent. In short, *sattva* makes for happiness, *rajas* for restlessness and *tamas* for sloth. Sometimes *sattva* prevails, overpowering *rajas* and *tamas*; at other times *rajas* prevails,

[1] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 23/25-1-1932; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 23/25-1-1932

overpowering *sattva* and *tamas*; at still other times *tamas* prevails, overpowering *sattva* and *rajas*. When the light of wisdom shines through all the activities of the body it may be known that *sattva* is increasing. Where greed, bustle, unrest and competition are observed, *rajas* is the ruler. And the predominance of *tamas* is characterized by ignorance, sloth and delusion. If *sattva* prevails in a man's life, he is born in the sinless worlds of the great sages after death. If *rajas* dominates his life, he is born among those who are attached to action. And if *tamas* is the ruling principle, he returns to the womb of the senseless. The fruit of *sattvik* action is purity, while the fruit of *rajas* is pain and the fruit of *tamas* is ignorance. A *sattvik* man rises to the higher regions; a *rajasik* person remains in this world, while a *tamasik* individual sinks to the underworld. When a man perceives no doer of action other than these qualities and knows Me who am beyond them he enters into My nature. When the dweller in the body has overcome the three qualities from which all bodies arise, he is freed from birth and death, old age and pain and drinks the nectar of eternal life."

On hearing that one who transcends the qualities makes such great progress on the pilgrim's path, Arjuna asked: "What are the marks of such perfection? How does such a perfect being conduct himself? And how does he cross over the qualities?"The Lord replied: "A man is said to have risen above the qualities when he is not angry if the light and knowledge of *sattva* or the activity and bustle of *rajas* or the delusion and ignorance of *tamas* are there and is not wishful if they are not. He sits like one who is unconcerned and is not disturbed by the qualities. He stands apart unmoved, being aware that they are the doers of all actions. He is even-minded to pleasure and pain as well as to a lump of earth, a stone and gold. The pleasant and the unpleasant are alike to him. He is unaffected by either praise or blame. He is the same in honour and evil fame. He is alike to friend and foe. And he has abandoned all undertakings. Do not think that this is a goal you can never reach and that therefore you need not exert yourself. What I have described is the state of a perfect man. The way to it is to serve Me with single-minded devotion.

"From the third chapter onwards I have pointed out that a man cannot so much as even breathe without action (karma), from which no human being can ever hope to escape. He who would transcend the qualities should dedicate all his actions to Me, and cease to desire their fruits. If he does this, his actions will not be an impediment to his progress, for I am Brahman, *moksha*, the eternal dharma and joy for

ever.

"When a man reduces himself to zero, he sees Me alone everywhere. He is *guna-atita* (one who has transcended the qualities)."

CHAPTER XV[1]

Night, January 31, 1932[2]

The Lord said: "This world is like an *ashvattha* (sacred fig) tree with roots above and branches below and with the Vedic hymns as its leaves. And he who knows it knows the Vedas. The branches of this cosmic tree nourished by the qualities shoot to heaven and sink to earth. Sense-objects are its sprouts. It is these things of the senses which bind the soul with the bonds of karma in the world of men. The real nature of this tree cannot be known here, nor its beginning, nor end, nor foundation.

"This strongly rooted cosmic tree should be cut down with the weapon of non-co-operation, so that the soul may rise to a higher world from which there is no return [to the world of mortals]. With this end in view a man should engage himself in the constant worshipof the Ancient of Days, from whom all this activity (the cosmic process) seems to flow. The wise man who is free from pride and delusion, victorious over the vice of attachment and devoted to the Supreme Soul, who is free from cravings and to whom pleasure and pain are alike—that wise man reaches the state which is beyond all change, and which does not need to be illumined by the sun, the moon or fire. That is my Supreme abode.

"An eternal part of Myself tansformed into the individual soul in this world draws to itself the senses including the mind which reside in matter. When the soul enters the body or leaves it, it takes these senses with it even as the wind carries fragrance from its places. It enjoys sense-objects with the help of the ear, the eye, the senses of touch and taste, the nose and the mind. The ignorant cannot recognize it as it goes or stays or enjoys itself under the influence of the qualities, but the sages see it [with the eye of wisdom]. Striving yogis see it living in their own bodies, but those who have not achieved evenness of temper cannot see it even if they try. "The light of the sun that illumines all the world, that which is in the moon and in fire—

[1] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", January 28/ February 1, 1932; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 28-1-1932, 1-21932

[2] The source has "1931".

know that all that light is Mine. Permeating the soil[1] I sustain all living beings. I become the sapproducing moon and feed the plants. Becoming the fire of life in the bodies of all living creatures and being united with the life-breaths, I digest the four kinds of food. I abide in all hearts. From Me are memory and wisdom as well as their absence. I am that which is to be known by all the Vedas. So also I am the Author of Vedanta and the Knower of the Vedas.

"There may be said to be two-kinds of personalities in this world, namely, *kshara* (the perishable) and *akshara* (the imperishable). The perishable is all beings; and the imperishable is I who am the same for ever. But beyond either is the highest spirit who is called the Supreme Soul, and who, pervading all, sustains the three worlds. This too is I. I therefore transcend the perishable and even the imperishable, and am known in the world as well as in the Vedas as the Supreme Reality. The wise man who recognizes Me as such knows all that need be known, and serves Me with his whole being.

"O sinless Arjuna, I have told you this most secret teaching. By knowing this a man becomes truly wise and reaches the shores of salvation."

CHAPTER XVI[2]

February 7, I 932

The Lord said: "I will now point out the distinction between the divine and the demoniacal natures. I have earlier described at length what is meant by divine nature but I will repeat its distinctive features. Among the signs of the divine are fearlessness, purity of heart, wisdom, evenness of temper, self-control, alms-giving, sacrifice, study of the scriptures, austerity, straightforwardness, non-violence, truth, freedom from anger, renunciation, peacefulness, not speaking evil of others, compassion to all living beings, absence of greed, gentleness, modesty, absence of fickleness, vigour, forgiveness, fortitude, purity, internal as well as external, freedom from malice and pride.

"Among the signs of the demoniacal are hypocrisy, arrogance, conceit, anger, cruelty and ignorance.

"The divine nature leads to liberation while the demoniacal

[1] Literally, 'having entered their bodies'

[2] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 3/8-2-1932; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 3/8-2-1932

leads to bondage. O Arjuna, you are born with endowments of the divine nature.

"I will say something more about the demoniacal nature, so that people may easily give it up.

"Men of such a nature do not know what to do and what to refrain from doing. There is no purity or truth in them, so that they do not observe the rules of good conduct.

"They hold that the world is unreal, without basis or rule. For them sex is all the world so that they think of nothing except enjoyment of the objects of sense.

"They do horrible deeds. They are dull-witted. They hold fast to their wicked thoughts and all their activity is directed only to the destruction of the world. Their desires are insatiable. They are full of hypocrisy, pride and arrogance. They are thus plagued by innumerable cares. They want fresh sensual pleasures every day. They are 'ensnared in nooses of a hundred idle hopes', and by unlawful means amass wealth in order to gratify their desires.

'I got this today; I will get that tomorrow. I killed this one enemy today; I will also kill others. I am a man of might. I have great possessions. Who is my equal? With a view to fame I will sacrifice to the gods, give alms and make merry.' They say this to themselves with a chuckle, and being caught in the net of delusion, go to hell at last.

"Men with such a nature, given over to pride, speak ill of others and thus hate God who dwells in all hearts. They are therefore frequently born in the wombs of degraded parents.

"There are three gates to hell, leading to the ruin of the soul: lust, anger and greed. Therefore we should renounce them all. Turning aside from them, men go by the strait and narrow path and reach the highest state.

"He who disregards the scriptures composed of eternal principles and gives himself up to pleasure cannot attain happiness or peace characteristic of the right way.

"Therefore in deciding what you must do and what you must not do, you should acquire the knowledge of fundamental and immutable principles from wise men and think and act accordingly."

CHAPTER XVII[1]

February 14, 1932

Arjuna asked: "What happens to those who serve in faith, neglecting the prevailing code of conduct?"

The Lord replied: "There are three kinds of faith, characterized by *sattva*, *rajas* or *tames* as the case may be. As is a man's faith, so is he.

" *Sattvik* men worship the gods; *rajasik* men worship demigods and demons; and *tamasik* men worship the spirits of the dead.

"The nature of a man's faith cannot be ascertained offhand. In order to assess it correctly, one must know the precise nature of his food, austerity, sacrifice and alms-giving.

"Foods which make for long life and increase the vital force, energy, strength and health are said to be *sattvik*. *Rajasik* foods are violently bitter, sour, hot or pungent and give rise to disease and aches and pains. And cooked food which is stale or gives out a bad smell and the leavings of others are said to be *tamasik*.

"The sacrifice which is offered as a matter of duty without expecting a reward and with mental concentration is said to be *sattvik*. A *rajasik* sacrifice is that in which a reward is desired and which is offered for outward show. And a *tamasik* sacrifice is one in which scriptural rules are disobeyed, no eatables or alms are given away and no hymns are chanted.

"Honouring the saintly purity, *brahmacharya* and non-violence constitute austerity of the body. Truthful, pleasant and beneficial speech as well as a study of the scriptures is austerity of speech. Andcheerfulness, gentleness, silence, self-control and purity of motive—these are called austerity of the mind. Such austerity of the mind, body and speech as is practised without desire of fruit by men with an evenness of temper is said to be *sattvik*. Austerity practised for ostentation and with a view to gaining honour is said to be *rajasik*. And austerity done by obstinate fools with self-torture or with the object of hurting others is said to be *tamasik*.

"A gift 'made in due place, due time and to a fit recipient' without expecting a reward and with a feeling that it is right for a man to give is said to be *sattvik*. A gift made grudgingly with a view to

[1] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 11/15-2-1932; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 11/15-2-1932

getting something in return is regarded as *rajasik*. And the gift which is given in a contemptuous spirit, and without honour done to the recipient and without considering the proper time and place for it is said to be *tamasik*.

"Brahman is designated in the Vedas as *Om tat sat*. Therefore men of faith pronounce the sacred syllable 'Om' when they commence any rite of sacrifice, alms-giving or austerity. This single syllable stands for Brahman. *Tat* means *that*. And *sat* means *satya*, beneficient. That is to say, God is one, He alone is, He alone is truth and the benefactor of the world. He who offers a sacrifice, makes gifts or practises austerity with a realization of this truth and in a spirit of dedication is a man of *sattvik* faith. And he is free from blame if he knowingly or unknowingly does something different from the correct procedure in the spirit of dedication. But acts undertaken in the absence of such a spirit are said to be performed without faith and therefore are *asat* (unreal)."

CHAPTER XVIII[1]

February 21, 1932

Even after he had pondered over the teaching in all the previous Chapters, there was still a doubt in Arjuna's mind. So he said: "The sannyasa of the *Gita* seems to be different from renunciation as currently understood. Are sannyasa and *tyaga* really different?"

While resolving Arjuna's doubt in answer to this question, the Lord summarized the *Gita* doctrine in a concise manner: "Some actions are motivated by desire. Various activities are indulged in by men with a view to fulfilling various desires. These are called *kamya* actions. Then again there are certain necessary and natural actions such as breathing, eating, drinking, Iying down, sitting, etc., with aview to keep the body [a fit instrument of service]. And thirdly there are actions done with a view to serving others. Giving up *kamya* actions is sannyasa, and renunciation of fruits of all actions is *tyaga* as recommended to you all along.

"Some people maintain that there is evil, no matter how little, in all actions whatever. Even so, a man must not give up actions done with a view to *yajna* (sacrifice), that is to say, the service of others. Alms-giving and austerity are included in *yajna*. But even while

[1] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 19/21-2-1932; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 19/21-2-1932

serving others, a man should act in a spirit of detachment. Otherwise his activity is likely to be mixed up with evil.

"Renunciation owing to ignorance of duties that must be done is said to be inspired by *tamas*. Giving up any action merely because it involves physical suffering is said to be *rajasik*. But service rendered to others because of a feeling that it must be done and without the desire for the fruits is real *sattvik tyaga*. In this *tyaga* therefore there is no giving up of all actions, but only of the fruit of duties that must be done, and of course of other, that is, *kamya* actions. When a [wise] man acts in such a selfless spirit, all his doubts are dispelled, his motives are pure and he has no thought of personal comfort and discomfort.

"He who does not abandon the fruits of action must enjoy or put up with the natural consequences of his own acts, and is thus a bondslave for ever. But he who gives up the fruits of action achieves freedom.

"And why should a man feel attachment for action? It is idle for anybody to imagine that he himself is a doer. There are five causes for the accomplishment of all actions, namely, this body, the doer, the various instruments, efforts, and last but by no means the least, providence.

"Realizing this, a man should give up pride. He who does something without egoism may be said to be not doing it in spite of his doing it, for he is not bound by his action. Of a humble man who has reduced himself to zero it may be said that he does not kill though he kills. This does not mean that the man in spite of his humility may kill and yet be unaffected by the killing. For no occasion can arise for such a man to indulge in violence.

"There are three things that inspire action: knowledge, the object of knowledge and the knower. And there are three constituents of action: the organ, the deed and the doer. The thing to be done is the object of knowledge; the method of doing it is knowledge and he who knows it is the knower. After he has thus received an impulse toaction, he performs an action in which the senses serve as instruments. Thought is thus translated into action.

"That by which a man is able 'To see one changeless Life in all the lives' and to realize the essential unity that underlies all diversities is *sattvik* knowledge. In *rajasik* knowledge one holds that there are different souls in different creatures, while in *tamasik* knowledge a

man does not know a thing and imagines that everything is mixed up without rhyme or reason.

"Similarly there are three kinds of action. Action in which there are no likes and dislikes and no desire for personal gains is *sattvik*. That in which there are desires for enjoyment, egoism and restlessness is *rajasik* action. And *tamasik* action is one in which no thought at all is given to personal capacity and consequential injury or violence and which is undertaken through delusion.

"So also there are three classes of doers. Of course having understood the action it could not be difficult to know the doer. A *sattvik* doer is free from attachment and egoism and yet firm and enterprising and is neither elated by success nor worried by failure. A *rajasik* doer is impassioned, greedy and violent, 'slave by turns of sorrow and of joy' and of course desires to obtain the fruit of his actions. And a *tamasik* doer is unsystematic, procrastinating, obstinate, malicious and indolent; in short, without an iota of self-culture.

"Intellect, firmness and happiness also are said to be of three kinds.

"The *sattvik* intellect is able properly to distinguish between action and non-action,

> What must be done, and what must not be done,
> What should be feared, and what should not be feared,
> What binds and what emancipates the soul.

The *rajasik* intellect tries to draw these distinctions but generally fails to do so correctly, while the *tamasik* intellect 'looks upon wrong as right and sees all things contrariwise of truth.'

"Firmness is the power of taking up some thing and sticking to it through thick and thin. It is more or less inherent in all things; otherwise the world could not subsist for a single moment. Firmness is *sattvik* when there is a constantly maintained balance between the activities of the mind, the vital airs (*pranas*) and the senses. The firmness by which a man holds fast to duty, pleasure and wealth from attachment and with a view to personal advantage is *rajasik*. And firmness is *tamasik*,

> wherewith the fool
> Cleaves to his sloth, his sorrow and his fears,
> His vanity and despair.

" *Sattvik* happiness is the

> pleasure that endures,
> Banishing pain for aye, bitter at first

As poison to the soul, but afterwards
Sweet as the taste of *amrit*.

It arises from true self-knowledge.

" *Rajasik* happiness arises from sensual enjoyment.

Sweet
As *amrit* is its first taste, but its last
Bitter as poison.

"And *tamasik* happiness is that

which springs
From sloth and sleep and foolishness.

—EDWIN ARNOLD

"This threefold classification is thus applicable to all things. The duties of the four varnas are fixed by reason of the dominance or recession of the qualities planted in each.

"A Brahmin's conduct is characterized by calmness, self-discipline, austerity, purity, forgiveness, uprightness, wisdom, experience and faith in God. The characteristics of a Kshatriya are valour, splendour, firmness, resourcefulness, not flying from battle, open-handedness and leadership. A Vaishya's task is 'to till the ground, tend cattle, venture trade', and service is the Sudra's work. This is not to say that a member of any one of these classes may not be endowed with qualities characteristic of other classes or is not entitled to cultivate them in himself. But qualities and work as mentioned above serve as signs for the recognition of a man's varna. If the qualities and tasks of each varna are recognized, there is no undesirable competition or feeling of hatred among them. There is no question here of high and low. But if each does his duty selflessly according to his nature, he will reach perfection. Therefore one's own duty, though it appears to be valueless, is better than the duty of another which seems to be easy. A man may remain free from sin when he performs the task naturally allotted to him, as he is then free from selfish desires; the very wish to do something else arises from selfishness. For the rest, all actions are clouded by defects as fire by smoke. But the natural duty is done without desire for its fruit, and thus loses its binding force.

"The calm yogi who has been sanctified by thus performing his own duty, who has his mind under control, who has given up the five sense-objects, who has overcome likes and dislikes, who lives in solitude, i.e., whose eyes are turned inward, who achieves mastery of his mind, body and speech by abstemiousness, who is ever conscious

of the living presence of God, and who has given up pride, desire, anger, acquisitiveness and the like—that yogi is fit to be united with Brahman. He is equi-minded towards all men. He neither rejoices nor indulges in grief. Such a devotee has true knowledge of God and is absorbed in Him. Thus taking refuge in Me, he gains the eternal place.

"Therefore dedicate your all to Me, regard Me as the supreme object of your love, and with discrimination, fix your mind on Me. As you do this, you will overcome all difficulties. But if out of egoism you do not listen to Me, you will perish. The one thing needful is that, abandoning all conflicting views, you should come to Me alone for shelter, and thus be freed from sin.

"Do not tell this truth to anyone who is not a devotee, austere in life, and hating Me, does not wish to listen. But one who communicates this great secret to My devotees will surely come to Me in virtue of his devotion."

After having thus reported to Dhritarashtra the dialogue between Arjuna and Krishna, Sanjaya said:

"Where there is Krishna, the prince of yoga, and Arjuna with his bow and arrows, there are prosperity, victory, happiness and fundamental morality."

[NOTE.] Krishna to whom the epithet 'prince of yoga' has here been applied means pure knowledge based on spiritual experience, and by referring to Arjuna as an archer it is suggested that where there is action in accordance with such knowledge, the doer obtains every wish that is not contrary to lofty morals.

From microfilms of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. & II

50. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Afternoon, February 19/21, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your post in due time. Tell Bhai Valji that I have started reading and revising his translation[1] today.

You will of course inquire from time to time after those who are imprisoned and lodged in the Sabarmati Jail, but you should also keep yourself informed in which jails the others are lodged. Lilavati came and saw me. It was good of her.

[1]*Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi",27-1-1932, footnote 1.

Read my letter to Champa. If she is willing to endure her lot and live with Ratilal, there will be no problem. If, however, she is not willing, I think we cannot force her to live with him. Ratilal may have to be put in the asylum again. The whole problem is a difficult one. Do what you think best. In any case, keep Doctor[1] informed.

Chimanlal must take rest. His body gives no service and no one is able to diagnose the disease.

Krishnamaiyadevi has certainly not acted properly in staying on in Calcutta. You did well in writing to her. Did you get Lakshmi[2] examined by a doctor for her swelling? Is she expecting? That can be a cause. You should ask her or find out through Lakshmibehn.

Yajna does not merely mean work for the good of others; it also means body labour. If men did not do body labour, that is, did not cultivate land and grow crops, the rains would stop. My own belief is that natural phenomena are connected with moral behaviour. I have no proof for this. It is my faith. Such faith can do no harm in any case. Little research is done about such matters in the present age, and what is written about them in ancient books is treated as superstition. It is true, of course, that they contain many superstitious ideas. Who can sift truth from error in these books? In the company of thieves even an honest man is taken for a thief. That being so, we should not interpret *yajna* strictly but accept all possible meanings which satisfy our moral sense and connect the phenomenon of rain with *yajna* sounderstood.In the *Gita* as in other scriptures, we find one and the same word used in different senses. Of course, all work done as *yajna* should be inspired with the motive of service. Send this to Bhai Jivram.

Evening, February 21, 1932

I have just finished Chapter XVIII. You will see that I have taken more freedom in this Chapter than in the others. So far I used to give a simple translation, more or less, but I did not feel satisfied with that. This time, I have given the general meaning of the Chapter, with a few comments intended to make the discussion easier to understand. I have even omitted a few verses as unnecessary for our purpose. I don't think, however, that I have omitted anything useful. God willing, I will make another effort to explain the general meaning of the work

[1] Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta, Ratilal's father

[2] Lakshmidas Asar's daughter

for children.
and tell me whether you want such a letter from me. If you want it,

The position about visitors seems to have become uncertain again. Let us wait and see what happens.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

There are 32 letters, besides this one and the discourse on the *Gita*. A list accompanies.

Has Devdas's case been tried? Do you get any letters from him? I have received none.[1]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8210. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

51. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

February 21, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

I see from Mani's letter that no one undertakes to write to me on behalf of you all. What a state of affairs is this? What purpose would my writing serve if no one assumes responsibility for attending to the letter I address to all the children and if no one so much as even acknowledges receipt of the letter? You should, therefore, write to me say whether you will send me a reply every week. Do you remember what I told you about *Miss Doris's* school?[2] Though the children there are under eight years of age, what a lot of work they do on their own responsibility! Some of you are as much as sixteen years old. Though grown-up, they are counted among children. If not all, they, at any rate, should assume all the more responsibilities. At Phoenix, when Devdas and Prabhudas were twelve years old, they got other children to co-operate with them and shouldered considerable responsibility. They brought the mail from the post office and also went to post the letters. They had to walk three miles through the jungle, but courageously they went. They used to help in the printing press in a variety of ways and also fetched water from the spring.

[1] For the text of the *Gita* discourse (Chapter XVIII) which followed, *vide* "Letters on the Gita"

[2] *Vide*"Letter to Ashram Boys and Girls", 25-1-1932 and "Letter to Ashram Boys and Girls", 5-2-1932

In short, at one time Maganlal had only this batch of children to help him, and yet it was possible to cope with all the work, for the children worked as a team without sparing themselves either mentally or physically. Think, then, how much more I would expect from you. Send a reply to this and keep alive your association.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

52. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

[*February 21, 1932*][1]

SISTERS,

You have won, and I have been completely defeated. I would always like that you should win and I should be defeated. But I find it difficult to accept this defeat, for it has weakened the foundation of the Ashram. However, though I have been defeated, Truth has won. And what does it matter if, for the sake of Truth, thousands of [such] ashrams are reduced to ashes?

This is how it is your victory. Several sisters believed that the friendship of . . .[2] and . . .[3] was not innocent. Disregarding their view, I believed the contrary and defended them. The women's judgmenthas proved correct and mine wrong. The matter would have ended earlier if I had accepted your view. But it was necessary that my capacity for judging people should be tested. It was for my good and yours and for the good of the Ashram that it should be tested. It was necessary that my pride should be humbled. Let us hope that it has been. Having known the generosity of your hearts, I ought to have heeded your warning, but I did not and you bore that too. You did not forsake the company of a fool like me. Personally I believe that you will lose nothing for not doing so. Behind my folly were truth and pure love and trust in people. God will therefore mend my mistake. However, I will never disregard your warning in future and will learn from this bitter experience to be careful even in the smallest matters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

[1] The letter was presumably written on the same day as the preceding item.

[2] The names have been omitted.

[3] *ibid*

53. LETTER TO MAITHILISHARAN GUPTA

February 20/22, 1932

BHAI MAITHILISHARANJI,

I have received the gift you sent.[1] I will read it with interest. I shall enjoy reading it as the subject too is after my heart.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[PS.]

I have finished *Panchavati*[2] and liked it. Have started on *Saket*.

From Hindi: C.W. 9454. Courtesy: Bharat Kala Bhavan

54. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

February 22, 1932

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I was awaiting your letter. Yes, my health is good, so is Sardar's. I take honey and half a lemon in hot water at 4.30 in the morning, followed by one and a half *tola* of roasted, ground almonds and thirty dates in tomato juice at 7 o'clock. Lemon and honey in hot water is repeated at noon, and some vegetable, tomato, fifteen dates and one *tola* of almonds at 4 o'clock. I have started on vegetable only these two days, formerly I was taking thirty dates. On some days I was taking *papaya* at four, but I can take it no longer, as vegetable constitutes the fifth article of food. Neither is there any need for *papaya*. It has been like this for about fifteen days. Before that I used to take half a pound of milk in the morning and half a pound ofcurds in the evening, but I found milk a bit hard on digestion. Anyway, I am always pleased to give up milk on any possible pretext; so I am off milk. I do not know how long I can do without it. My weight is steady at 106 lb. Do send dates; though the ones I have are fresh and good.

They have been sent by Jerajani.You shall have to apply to Delhi or Bombay in order to visit me. The permission might be

[1] The addressee had sent *Saket*, a poetical work on the theme of Ayodhya during Rama's exile, and three other books.

[2] Another poetical work of the addressee dealing with Rama's sojourn at Panchavati.

granted, if at all, on the ground of a purely friendly visit. Nothing can be done from here.

I have collected a few books on currency. But send me whatever you like. I want to study this subject as much as possible and to the best of my ability. If you send your own observations I shall go through them too.

Tell me your experiences of America. How was your health and what places did you visit? What did you observe at Battle Creek[1]? Did you meet Holmes[2]?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 7895. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

55. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

February 25, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

I got your welcome letter this morning. I was waiting for it. We are both glad you are happy there.[3] You find yourself there just when you were about to break under the strain. I fancy that 12 oz.[4] of milk will not be enough for you. You should take 24 oz. But it may be that

[1] A town in Michigan, known as "The Health City"

[2] Dr. John Haynes Holmes

[3] As a result of my sending abroad weekly bulletins of authentic news, regarding the Civil Disobedience movement, I had been served with a notice to quit Bombay. As I had declined to comply, I was duly arrested, tried and sentenced to three months' simple imprisonment, 'A' class, and sent to Bombay female jail at Arthur Road. There being no 'A' class accommodation in the Debtor's jail, which had been temporarily turned into a jail for female political prisoners, I was put with the 'C' class prisoners for the first two nights, after which a small kitchen in the prison-yard was rigged up as my cell. But as nearly all the space was taken up by a large row of stoves, there was no room for me to sleep inside. This was a piece of good luck as it meant I had to be allowed to wander by day amongst the other prisoners in the yard and to sleep under the sky at night, while the rest were locked up in their barrack. It may be mentioned that the 'C' class political prisoners were mostly well educated women, used to a high standard of living, certainly higher than the Ashram standard. But the Bombay Government was particularly severe in its classification, Ba, Mrs. Naidu and myself being, as far as I can remember, the only women given 'A' class in the whole Province. A few were given 'B' class and all the rest 'C'. The most vital difference in this classification was the food supplied."—Mirabehn

[4] "12 oz. was the 'A' class ration."—Mirabehn

with the comparatively less expenditure of vitality 12 oz. may be enough for you. I simply caution you against any false economy. Your exercise does not appear to me to be enough unless you do a great deal of walking about otherwise.

I am glad you have so much company. If you are permitted to describe your company, please give me the description.

The books that I can think of recommending are Sister Nivedita's. I would like you to read Dutt's abridged metrical rendering of the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*, Arnold's *Indian Idylls* and *Pearls of the Faith*.

You should induce your companions to take to spinning and carding if they have time given to them for that class of labour. You should be able to do a great deal of Hindi there. But no overstraining on any account. You have this precious and unsought leisure. You will make such use as you think will elevate you.My almond experiment still continues to give satisfaction and the weight still remains 106 Ib. which is very good. You need have therefore no anxiety on that score.

Love from us both.

BAPU

SHRIMATI MIRABAI
C/O SUPERINTENDENT
ARTHUR ROAD PRISON
BOMBAY

From a photostat: C.W. 9505. Courtesy: Mirabehn

56. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

February 25, 1932

CHI. MANGALA,

I got your letter written in a beautiful hand.

Memorize carefully the chapters of the *Gita*. It would be better still if you learnt the meaning too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G..N. 4077. Also C.W. 41. Courtesy: Mangalabehn B. Desai

57. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

February 25, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter.

You want from me inspired utterances which would touch the heart. If I had a safe filled with them, I would open it and send some every week. But I have no such safe. The words which I pen or speak, come to me unsought. Only such words have truth in them, for they are living words. All other statements are insincere. They may seem arresting, but I think they produce no abiding effect on the heart. I can do nothing insincere. During my student days in England, I attempted twice [to make prepared speeches] and failed on both occasions.[1] I never tried again.

And what is true about my speaking is also true about my behaviour to you on all other occasions which you mention. I remember the conversation we had regarding Mirabehn.[2] I must have replied to you as I felt at the moment. I can understand that my words did not produce a good impression on you. That is a measure of the imperfection of my non-violence. I must have said only what I felt, but you might have felt a sting in my words. "One must speak the truth in words which are agreeable" is not only a maxim of practical wisdom but is a moral principle. "Agreeable" here means non-violent. If I had told you gently what I did excitedly, my words would not have left behind them the bitter memory which they have. Truth stated in a spirit of non-violence may hurt at the moment, but its ultimate effect must be as sweet as *amrit*. This is an essential test of non-violence. I am writing this from my own bitter experience. I may have spoken to you vehemently in defence of Mirabehn, but I have not made any man or woman weep as bitterly as I have made her. My hardness of heart, impatience and ignorant attachment were responsible for such conduct. I have felt Mirabehn's self-sacrifice to be beyond praise and, therefore, wish to see her perfect. The moment I see any imperfection in her, my ignorant attachment makes me

[1] *Vide* "An Autobiography" and "An Autobiography"

[2] The addressee had been rebuked by Gandhiji when she complained against Mirabehn's having blocked a passage; later she quoted this incident as proof of Gandhiji's unwillingness to listen to complaints against those whom he trusted.

impatient and I rebuke her sharply. The result is a flood of tears. These instances have opened my eyes to the presence of violence in me and, recalling them, I have been trying to reform myself. I, therefore, welcome your letters. I do not know whether in return I shall be able to give you anything, but personally I benefit from them. I realized this thing—my hard-heartedness—more vividly in England. Mira was the chief person in attendance on me. There, too, I caused her to weep bitterly on the slightest provocation. But I learnt a lesson from that experience. God has never let any delusion of mine last for ever. Even in the political sphere, whenever I have taken a false step God has immediately opened my eyes. Your letters help that process of awakening.

You will now understand my previous letter[1] better. How can we expect perfection from an imperfect being? A blind man has collected a band of other blind folk. But the blind man knows that he is blind, and also knows the cure for his blindness. Hence, though living with blind people, he is confident that he will not lead them into a pit, nor will he himself fall into it. He walks with a stick in is hand. He feels the path ahead with the stick before taking every step. And, therefore, things have gone well on the whole so far. If, despite his using the stick, the blind man has occasionally strayed from the path, he has immediately realized his error and retraced his steps and led back his co-workers. So long as my blindness remains, even a person like you who loves me will continue to have reasons to criticize me. When the blindness has disappeared, there will be no such grounds for criticism. Meanwhile, let all of us, blind men and women, who are seekers after truth, describe the elephant as we perceive it. Our descriptions will vary, but each will be perfectly true from the person's limited point of view. After all, everyone of us will have but touched the elephant. When our eyes open all of us will dance with joy and shout: 'How blind we were! This is an elephant, about which we had read in the *Gita*. How fortunate it would have been if our eyes had opened earlier'. But why should we worry if their opening is delayed? Time has no meaning for God, or rather He measures it differently. Ignorance, thus, will become transformed into knowledge.

I hope you will get from this an explanation of all the shortcomings you may have observed in me. That does not mean, of course, that you should not put your doubts before me. You may

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 19-2-1932

continue to put them and I will reply every time.

Send my blessings to Sushila and Kisan. And also to Dhurandhar if you are permitted to write to him. How is Jamnadas's health? What happened to his school?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10274. Also C.W. 6722. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

58. LETTER TO RANCHHODJI DAYALJI

February 25, 1932

BHAI RANCHHODBHAI,

I was glad to read your letter. I consider your family to be fortunate. Money is a fleeting thing which comes and goes. Is Kunvarji's health all right? Kalyanji, of course, has no complaint regarding health. Do all the three brothers live together?

Convey to Gangabehn compliments from us both for keeping up her courage. How is Napoleon[1]? Ask him to write to me.

Both of us are quite well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2695

59. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

February 25, 1932

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I got your letter.

Every human being is liable to err. However, nothing but good results to him who, on realizing his mistake, tries to mend it, since in the long run such a person learns not to make mistakes. His conduct is inspired by love of truth. Where there is such love, the erring man will not deceive himself or the world.

I would regard it as his error if Tolstoy expressed the opinion that you mention. He expressed such mistaken opinions on several occasions. His greatness lay in the fact that as soon as he realized his

[1] Chhotubhai, Kunvarji Mehta's son

mistake, he confessed it and corrected it. Moreover, there were so many changes in his way of life that one should also take into account the time when he expressed a particular opinion. In any case, in the matter of husband-wife relationship, I myself am definitely of the opinion that the consent of both should be necessary for their union and not for living apart. If that were not so, both would ordinarily remain in a fallen state. It happens only in rare cases that both wake up at thesame time and remain awake together.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9509. Also C.W. 425. Courtesy: Shivabhai G. Patel

60. LETTER TO SHAKARIBEHN C. SHAH

February 25, 1932

CHI. SHAKARIBEHN,

So I have a letter from you at last. If you tell them that your letter is meant for me alone, nobody will read it there. What does it matter if the jail authorities here read it? I would, therefore, advise you to write to me without any reserve.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.G. 30

61. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

February 25, 1932

CHI. VANAMALA,

Does not a man grow? And anything that grows must have a root. Otherwise, how can it grow? Will it be all right, if we say that a man's root is his stomach? By what means does a tree get its food? Is it not through the root? We get our food through the stomach. The food is turned into its essence there, and it is then digested and nourishes the body. We may, therefore, say that a man's root is his stomach. Is this all right?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5766. Also C.W. 2989. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

62. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

February 25, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

I got your letter. Your handwriting is good. Your daily programme of work also seems all right. Go on in the same manner and keep on growing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9422 Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

63. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

February 25, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

Received your letter. The inmates of the Ashram can never abuse one another. But quite often, what is not meant to be abuse sounds like abuse. Hence, let me know what you consider to be abuse and also inform me who uses those words. Anyone who stays in the Ashram must abandon fear. Whom need we fear? We should boldly tell even the elders what we regard as the proper thing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9946. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

64. A LETTER

February 26, 1932

CHI.,

I have your letter. The chief reason for my giving up milk was health, and, therefore, I will go without it only so long as I can preserve my health. So far, at any rate, my weight and strength have remained unaffected.

A crisis was bound to arise for khadi too. What would it avail even if it survives this time? Every calamity, if we properly understand it, is a test. And a test means suffering, that is, penance. Now penance always purifies the person who undergoes it and also purifies the cause for which it is undertaken. There is no exception at any time to

this law. Nothing, therefore, disturbs my joy and peace.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8950. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

65. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

February 26, 1932

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I got your letter. I did reply to you. . . .[1] It is certainly possible to acquire control over the sense organs. The Shastras proclaim in the clearest words that such control is difficult, but they were composed to help people to acquire it. It becomes possible through hard practice and the cultivation of disinterestedness. Spiritual development and self-realization go hand in hand. The remedy for your mental agitation lies in you, and rest also depends on you. I see many in jails who do no work, but all of them appear agitated. Rest for the body is not true rest. The sun that takes no rest even for a moment is always fresh. The Lord says that, though He works ceaselessly without rest and without one moment of relaxation, He is the abode of peace. You should, therefore, seek everything within yourself.At this time when the inmates of the Ashram are doing real work and not merely play-acting, you find it uninteresting. Though there are numerous weaknesses in the Ashram, I describe its work as real because it is not a shop doing business but a means of serving the world and a sincere attempt in that direction to the best of our ability. For anybody who understands the things aright, the Ashram activities are in truth rest from work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 345. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

[1] Omission as in the source

66. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

February 26, 1932

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

I got your letter after I had waited for one for a long time. Tell Chhotubhai[1] that both of us often think about him. Do you get any news about Pyarelal? How is Chandubhai's health? Where is Dr. Sumant? How does he keep? I am more or less all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1828

67. LETTER TO LAKSHMIBEHN N. KHARE

February 26, 1932

CHI. LAKSHMIBEHN,

I did get a letter from you at last. Why should you feel shy in writing to me? I hope to get your reply to my last letter.[2] I am sure you will not disappoint me.

I am very glad that you are learning weaving. Can we say that Rambhau's stay in Almora has fulfilled our expectations?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 280. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

68. LETTER TO PUSHPA P. PATEL

February 26, 1932

CHI. PUSHPA,

Since your beak has grown so long, how can I recognize you though you remain my stick? My compliments for such fine Hindi. Should they go to you or to Parasramji? Discuss the question with him and let me know.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3981. Also C.W. 27. Courtesy: Pushpabehn N. Naik

[1] Chhotubhai Purani, a pioneer of physical culture in Gujarat

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Lakshmibehn N. Khare", 19-2-1932

69. LETTER TO PUSHPA S. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Friday [After *February 26, 1932*][1]

CHI. PUSHPA,

Why are you peeved when I say that you have a pointed nose? Do you not have a pointed nose? It is a sign of beauty. Now you must write to me that you are laughing heartily. Those who want to be my walking-sticks are forbidden to feel irritated.

I shall not write to Mangala this time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11086. Courtesy: Pushpa Naik

70. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

February 27, 1932

CHI. MAHAVIR,

I got your letter. I was glad to know that you kept good health there. Since you left the Ashram to go to Darjeeling, it would have been better if you had proceeded directly there. The place is certainly cold, but this is considered the best season. Even persons who are ill go there in this season. Do you meet the Gujaratis who live in that place?

Be very careful in spending money and keep accounts. Write to me regularly. See that you and your sisters do not forget your studies.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6234

[1] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Pushpa S. Patel", 26-2-1932

71. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

February 28, 1932

MY DEAR CHILD,

I was delighted to have your letter again and the unexpected scribble from Nani[1].

I see you have a cosmopolitan company[2]. I only hope this does not give you more than your health can manage.

No, the *Gita* does not teach differently. What it does teach is that all our acts must be natural and spontaneous even when unconscious. When they are so, there is no thought of reward or result. There is, therefore, in pure love no giving and no taking. Put in another way there is no giving on earth without taking. Love gives because it must; it is its nature. It therefore does not calculate whether there is a corresponding gain. It is unconscious of the giving and more so of the taking. Love is its own reward. When there is that ineffable love, there is a joy which is above all the so-called joys we think we experience from outward circumstances. It is that joy I want you to possess. There was a time when you thought, I thought, you had it. But you had not then gone through the fire. The joy that will surely be yours one day will come out of the purifying richness of that fire. It will steal over you when it does come. May it come soon.

We are both well.

Love.

Yours,

BAPU

Photostat No. 108. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child*, pp. 88-9

72. LETTER TO NANI MENON

February 28, 1932

MY DEAR NAN,

Your attempt to write a letter to me was very good. And what a reindeer you have sent. What lovely horns! I am sorry I am not playing with the goats, though they are brought before me everyday twice to be milked. I don't play because when they come, I am always

[1] Addressee's daughter

[2] "The Menon home at Selly Oak was always an international centre." (*My dear Child*, p. 88)

doing something which I must not give up. Yes, there are a few flowers but nothing much to speak of. The ground is stony and they can't afford in prisons to lay out flowerbeds. You must write again.

Kisses to both of you.

BAPU

My Dear Child, p. 117

73. LETTER TO ABBAS

February 28, 1932

CHI. ABBAS,

In spite of his struggles a man is carried away by passion, since to destroy it completely requires an immense effort. Some things require comparatively less effort and some others require a much greater effort. We require less effort to spin yarn of 10 or 20 counts, but none has progressed so far as to spin yarn of 200 counts. To do that requires better equipment and a far greater effort. We do know that they spun yarn of 200 counts in Bengal a hundred years ago. If different degrees of effort are required in such a small matter as spinning, it is bound to be so in acquiring freedom from passion. Knowing this, the more we meet with failure the greater should our efforts be. Some mountaineers have been attempting to reach the top of the Himalayas. But none has succeeded so far. Our attempt is for a still higher cause, and it knows no failure.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6315. Also C.W. 8951. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

74. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

February 28, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

I am waiting for your reply to my letter[1]. Meanwhile, I congratulate those of you who have undertaken to help in the kitchen. Some of you are old enough to be able, if they wish, to assume the whole responsibility for it. The fact that we experience difficulties

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Ashram Boys and Girls", 21-2-1932

particularly in the kitchen is due entirely to our shortcomings. I list below for your information as many rules as I can think of. If you follow them, you will not find the least difficulty in running the kitchen.

1. Never lose your temper whatever happens, whether something is spoilt or broken. Never be impatient. Never worry about anything. Find out the cause of the trouble and remove it.

2. If a co-worker does not finish his work or is lazy about it do not get irritated with him, but take upon yourself the additional burden.

3. Do thoroughly and as perfectly as you can whatever you do.

4. Never play with one another while in the kitchen. Do not hit anybody even in jest.

5. The best thing is not to speak a word unless necessary. If anybody cannot control himself, he may talk in low whispers and make harmless and innocent jokes. However, everybody should gradually form the habit of speaking nothing at all.

6. If you do talk, do not indulge in malicious criticism of one another or back-biting.

7. It is enough for small boys to wear only tucked-up dhotis in the kitchen. The girls also, when sitting, should tuck-up their skirts behind and wear only jackets above them. It is not necessary for them to wear the half sari in the kitchen. This saves cloth and minimizes the danger of clothes catching fire. If anybody wears a shirt, the sleeves should be tucked up at the elbow.

8. When anybody feels the urge to sneeze, he should hold the kerchief over his mouth before sneezing, so that he does not blow spittle from the mouth. Use tie kerchief for blowing the nose and, if you perspire, wipe the drops with it. One ought not to let the drops fall into anything. This means that everyone must carry a handkerchief.

9. For wiping the utensils, etc., there should be a separate towel in the kitchen and it should be washed everyday with soap.

10. Everyone working in the kitchen should take special care to keep his nails clean. They should be trimmed regularly. If there is still any dirt under them, it should be removed with pointed straw.

11. No one should touch or taste any cooked item for sampling it.

12. If, to ascertain whether a vegetable or some similar dish has

been properly salted, it has to be tasted, the leader of the boys may take some in a spoon and taste it and, after doing so, immediately wash the spoon clean.

13. If some special dish or dishes have to be cooked for a sick person or a person who is observing a vow, do not regard this as a burden but cook the thing cheerfully. Experience will show that, if the time-table for the various jobs has been strictly followed, no burden will be felt at all.

14. Make it a point to arrive at the kitchen punctually at the time appointed for you. Know that every minute matters, so that you should arrive two minutes earlier but never a minute later.

15. If you have no work in the kitchen, do not remain there to gossip or just to look at the others working.

16. The kitchen should be kept clean all the time. All the things should be in their proper places. After one's job is done, one should not leave without arranging the things in order.

In addition to these, you may introduce other rules that you may think of. If you think that any of those given by me should be dropped, you may drop them with the consent of the elders. But scrupulously follow whatever rules you lay down. Everyone should make a copy of the rules and keep it with him.

I have often felt that the kitchen provides a means for us to test how far we practise the teaching of the *Gita*.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am not writing a separate letter to the women today, since this one is already longer than I had intended it to be, and, moreover, such a letter should do quite well for them also.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8955. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

75. LETTER TO MAHENDRA V. DESAI

February 28, 1932

CHI. MANU,

You certainly wrote a good letter. But there is much room for improving your handwriting. If Nanu[1] has become Vimalshah, from where shall we bring an elephant for him? Or will he make a stick an elephant and ride on it? Or will he first do deeds like Vimalshah's and make himself fit to bestride an elephant?

You wrote a description of Mount Abu. Now write one of Almora.

Ask Dudhibehn to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7420. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

76. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

February 28, 1932

CHI. SUMANGAL PRAKASH,

I have your letter. Also Kanta's. I had been awaiting letters from both of you. I had even made inquiries about Kanta. I was surprised that I had not heard from either of you. Now of course I cannot expect any letter from Kanta. Send me news about her and about Prabhavati. When did you send the parcel of books? What were the books? During the journey many things were not delivered to me. I therefore remember nothing about it. It is a pity that you are not yet fully recovered. What disease have they diagnosed that it has not been cured so far?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Addressee's younger brother Vimalchandra. Nanu is a pet name for "junior".

77. DEATH, A FRIEND[1]

February 29, 1932

There was once a wise man, named Socrates, who lived in Athens. His unconventional ideas, which, however, spread love of truth and goodness, displeased the authorities, and he was sentenced to death. In that country people were in those days sometimes sentenced to die by drinking poison. Like Mirabai, Socrates was asked to drink a cup of poison. Our purpose here is to discuss the substance of the concluding words of Socrates's defence at the time of his trial. We can all derive a moral from it. Let us call Socrates by the name Sukrit. The Arabs knew him as Sokrat.

This is what Sukrit said: 'It is my unshakable faith that no harm comes to a good man either in this world or the next. God never forsakes good men and their friends. I also believe that nobody ever dies before his time. I don't look upon the sentence of death as a punishment. The time has come for me to die and be delivered from the sufferings of this life. That is why you have condemned me to die by drinking poison. I am sure that my good lies in that. I, therefore, bear no anger against my prosecutors or against those who have condemned me. They may not have meant well by me, but they can do me no harm either.

'I have one request to make to the council of elders. If my sons forsake the path of goodness and follow that of evil, if they become lovers of wealth, punish them as you have punished me. Punish them also if they become hypocrites and try to show themselves other than what they are. If you do so, my sons and I will believe that you have acted justly.'

This is a request of Sukrit in regard to his sons. The elders of the city who had assembled to pass judgment on him, did not know the law of non-violence. He, therefore, made the foregoing request and thereby warned his sons and told them what he expected of them, and also rebuked the elders gently for punishing him for doing good. By suggesting to his sons that they should follow in his footsteps, he told them in effect that the path which he had shown to the citizens of

[1] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi"; *vide* the following item.

Athens was also meant for them, and even went to the extent of saying that, if they did not follow that path, they should be treated as deserving punishment.

I had decided to let this week be blank. But I could not reconcile myself to the idea. Glancing at the books, I saw Socrates's speech. I opened the book, intending to send something from it, and my eyes fell on the world-famous passage in it which I have summarized above.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I and II

78. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

February 24/29, 1932

Evening, February 24, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your packet. The issue of visitors has taken a serious turn and no solution seems to be in sight. As you had hinted in your last letter, you also do not seem to have made any request for permission to see me.

This week's post contains a letter by Lakshmi senior in which she complains against her letters being read [by you]. I think that once at prayer-meeting you should ask all of them whether anybody has an objection against your reading his or her letters. If any of them object, you need not read their letters, and even if you think that it is necessary to read them read only those of their letters which they permit you to read. Don't mind if your letters become long. I should like you to give me all the information which it is permissible for you to give.

Discuss with Shankerlal[1] the problem of increasing the quantity of yarn spun.

The Parnerkar affair is a painful one. Show as much love and sympathy as you can.

I understand what you say about the Giri family. Do what you can.

Padma's expenses will come to Rs. 60 a month. They are three

[1] Presumably Shankerlal Banker, Secretary, All-India Spinners' Association

in the family and, moreover, Padma is always ill.

If the agreement about visitors does not break down, even as many as five to seven persons can come and see me. But, as far as possible, we should take care that they are not more than five.

Send me a copy of Lord Irwin's letter.

If I get an opportunity to see Mukta[1] and other women, I will not let it pass.

Have you informed Dr. Jivraj [Mehta] that Triveni[2] does not keep good health?

Is it through obstinacy that Kusum does not try the remedy which I have suggested? Revashankarbhai's Dhiru had a bone whichhad decayed and he was cured by sun-baths. Countless people have benefited by this treatment.

I had a fairly long talk with Mathew. You will be happy to know that he spins and does a bit of other work.

Afternoon, February 29, 1932

I have not yet been able to start 'Bal Gita'[3]. Nor can I decide what else I can write and send. This week, therefore, I send no special material.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

In the evening, ultimately, I could not resist the impulse to write something. About visitors there is no decision yet.[4]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8211 Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

79. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

February 29, 1932

BHAISHRI BHAGWANJI,

I got your letter. Why should we feel hurt if a relation or friend gives us nothing or takes away something that is ours? If we realize that we have no claim on them, it is my experience that everything would be all right. I have observed that that is the experience of many

[1] Daughter of Jagjivandas N. Mehta of Amreli

[2] Wife of Jagjivandas N. Mehta

[3] Literally, 'Children's *Gita'*, which later came to be known as *Ramdas Gita*

[4] For the article "Death, a Friend" which followed, *vide* the preceding item.

others too. You have earned much and gone through many sweet and bitter experiences. Why should you not rest satisfied with what you have got and devote your abilities and your wealth entirely to public service?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

SJT. BHAGWANJI ANUPCHAND VAKIL

SADAR

RAJKOT

KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5814. Also C.W. 3037. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

80. LETTER TO KRISHNA M. KAPADIA

February 29, 1932

CHI. KRISHNA,

I was glad to get your letter.

Nobody has been able to come and see me recently, and that is why there has been nothing in the papers. My health is excellent. Sardar is with me. If you can come and are permitted to see us, do come, both of you. Ba must have been released now.

If you have still not overcome love of money, do so. Wealth does not accompany anyone after death, but one's good and evil deeds do. One should, therefore, do whatever service one can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII

81. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

March 1, 1932

DEAR MAJOR MARTIN,

As you know, for two weeks now I have not had any visits. They have been stopped because, I understand, the Government are revising the instructions that have been in force in this connection. The suspense is tantalizing for me and inconvenient for those who wish to

visit me. I would therefore like an early decision in the matter.

The question of seeing my companions who have been brought to this prison and on which I wrote[1] to you a fortnight ago is much more vital for me. As I have said, this meeting of some of my companions now and then is a human want I may not deny myself without shaking and impairing the whole nervous system. I had hoped that you would procure an early decision, as I have simply asked for a repetition of what was considered reasonable by the Government last year.[2] I press for an early reply.

Yours sincerely,
M.K.GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 9

82. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

March 1, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

I have been robbing you of lots of honey these days. Both of us have to take it frequently with warm water, and so two bottles get exhausted in nine or ten days. If you experience difficulty in getting honey, please let me know. Sometimes the honey is mixed with dirt and sometimes there are pieces of cork in it. That made me doubt whether the honey was collected from hives in the countryside. If that is so, I would not regard it fit for our consumption, for in collecting such honey a great many bees are killed and, moreover, it is never clean. I, therefore, eat only the honey which is collected scientifically. Such honey is now collected in our country. Please inquire how the honey which you send is collected and let me know.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Since the right hand is tired, I have written the above with the left.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to R. V. Martin", 16-2-1932

[2] The reference is to the facilities given during his last term of detention in Yeravda Prison in 1930

I wrote the following[1] through mistake on the back of the reply postcard on the date mentioned. I had preserved it and use it now.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4821-a. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

83 LETTER TO BENARSILAL BAZAJ

March 1, 1932

CHI. BENARSI,

Why have you not written to me till now? What are your present activities? What is the state of your mind? I met Father several times and came into close contact with him. He looked after me with great love. He used to come and see me practically every day. And he had literally encamped with Mahadev, Devdas and the others. I tried hard to persuade him to return to India, but did not succeed. Certainly he has in him a high degree of the spirit of self-sacrifice.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 9438. Courtesy: Benarsilal Bazaj

84. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

March 1, 1932

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your letter. It is my habit to give to children names which suggest the qualities we wish them to have. Following that practice, I suggest Gopal (lal or das) or Madhav (lal or das). Both are names of the Lord whose pet (lal) or servant (das) I would like myself or anybody else to be. Further, the word Gopal has two beautiful meanings: *Go* means a cow or a sense organ, so that the name would also signify one who keeps cows or one who controls the senses. Madhav, too, means nearly the same thing. Madhav is the destroyer of the demon Madhu, who dwells in our bodies. If you have any difficulty in choosing between these two names you may cast lots and decide. If the choice were left to me, I would prefer Gopal. If,

[1] The reference is to the following sentences in the letter dated February 2, 1932: "I ate for many days the honey which you had given me for the voyage. It was excellent." *Vide* "Letter to Premlila Thackersey", 2-2-1932

however, the name Ramesh is thought better, there is no harm in giving that name either. Santok should write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9060

85. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

March 3, 1932

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I got your letter. I was happy to learn that you were improving.

Write to Father Elwin and ask him to write to me without fail. Shamrao also should write.

Please try and mitigate Champa's suffering as much as you can.

Decide everything on the basis that a wife has the same rights as her husband.

Champa may do only as much as she voluntarily agrees to do.

I have already given detailed comments on the description of the spinning-wheel sent by Abbas. If you have not seen them, please let me know. I will send the comments again.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.G. 36

86. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

March 3, 1932

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

I got your postcard and letter. You say that you have nothing to write about, in the same way as children do. This is not right. You will be able to fill pages even if you describe your experiences. Think, and write.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1829

87. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

March 3, 1932

CHI. MANGALA,

I may say that you wrote a good letter this time.

One should not tell a lie even in jest and, if one has done so, one must immediately correct one's lapse.

Should one learn even what kind of questions to ask? We may ask questions the answers to which we do not know and which we know the other person can reply.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I was very glad that you stood first at the examination. My congratulations .

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4078. Also C.W. 42. Courtesy: Mangalabehn B. Desai

88. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

Y. M.,
March 3, 1932

CHI. VIDYA HINGORANI,

I have your letter. You will be cured by the same treatment and by being calm. The fact of the matter is that nothing is to be gained by seeking advice—mine or any one else's. The mind is its own remedy, if it means that we can be rid of all worries by remembering God alone. Keep writing to me. Do not worry about anything.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

89. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

March 4, 1932

CHI. PARASRAM,

I have your letter. Those girls writing in Hindi write very nice letters. Why should God bend to every prayer? We hardly know when he is pleased or offended. Prayer is its own reward

As a matter of fact, Truth is the best policy[1]. It is tact[2] as well as delicacy[3]. Tact[4] can be called gentleness. Than truth there is no better policy on earth, nothing more tactful or delicate.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 4968. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra. Also G.N. 7491

90. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

March 5, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

Since you have demanded a long letter, I have taken the double sheet. Now that you have entered upon your sixteenth year, you have become a responsible person. Improve your health and dedicate yourself to the service of others for life. And for this you should, of your own free will, observe the rules of Ashram life.

Now to your questions.

In the Ashram we keep no idol or image because there is before us God's image in the form of the world and we should know God through it. If we look at the sky, there are innumerable images there too, and if we wish we may meditate on any of them and think that God dwells there also. In this connection, we should remember that persons like Imam Saheb and Amina did not find it necessary to have what people call an idol.

I have rivers and valleys to be crossed, which means that I have a

[1] In the source these English words are in Devanagari.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*
[4] *ibid*

long distance to go before I can realize God.

There can be no absolution from the sin of telling a lie knowingly, no matter how severe the *prayashchitta* one undergoes for it. *Prayashchitta* wins forgiveness only for one who has told a lie in ignorance. Do you understand this? If not, ask me again.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9948. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

91. LETTER TO ISHVARBHAI PATEL

March 5, 1932

CHI. ISHVAR,

I got your letter. Both of us were pleased. Persuade Napoleon also to write sometimes. And you should continue to write. I hope all of you are well.

Blessings from us both.

BAPU

CHI. ISHVARBHAI PATEL
C/O GANGABEHN KUNVARJI
VANZ
Via SACHIN

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2696

92. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

March 5, 1932

CHI. KUSUM,

What a woman you are! You wrote to me a postcard and a letter, and yet could tell me nothing. What did you read all these months, what thoughts came to you, how much did you spin, what health did you maintain, what places did you visit? If you wish, you can tell me all this and much else.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1830

93. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

March 5, 1932

BHAI NANABHAI,

I got your letter. I had read in the papers about Tara's[1] leaving. I know that Vijayalakshmi will miss her very much. But it is things like these which test us.

I also had a letter from Manilal and Sushila. I had advised him not to return without making proper arrangements for the affairs in South Africa. Probably he will be in India next week. You gave me no news about your health. Please do in your next letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7519. Also C.W. 4995. Courtesy: Kanubhai Mashruwala

94. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 5, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I had sent a wire to Rajkot the day before yesterday to cheer Khushalbhai. I have known few persons as fortunate as he. We would be happy to see him live long and be our guide and counsellor. But, should he die now, even from the ordinary human point of view that should be no cause for grief. Since, however, there is no further news from you, I assume that the cloud has vanished.

The issue of visitors has been partly settled. Anyone from the Ashram can come and see me, though even from among the Ashram inmates those who are classed as 'political' cannot come. But there are none such at present, unless we count Valji among them. If, therefore, anybody wishes to come next week, he may. The Superintendent should be informed in advance. It would be advisable to inform me too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8212. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Tara Mashruwala; Sushila Gandhi's younger sister

95. LETTER TO PUSHPA S. PATEL

March 5, 1932

CHI. PUSHPA,

Your letter in Hindi was so good that when I read it, I thought you to be some other Pushpa.[1] Your handwriting in the last letter was not good. You would get three marks for it. One should write each letter in a word as carefully as one draws a picture. See Mangala's handwriting. How beautiful it is! However, your handwriting this time was certainly better than in your previous letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3982. Also C.W. 28. Courtesy: Pushpabehn N. Naik

96. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

March 5, 1932

CHI. VANAMALA,

You should improve your handwriting. You do write carefully, but the handwriting is not as good as it should be.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Is there any news about Narahari?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5767. Also C.W. 2990. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Pushpa S. Patel", 11-2-1932

97. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
March 5, 1932

CHI. NIMU,

Having been trained in the Ashram, why need you feel false embarrassment? If you take the lead, other women also will go out for walks. Who else, if not a mother, will go out for a walk carrying her child in her arms? Do you not have any friend in Lakhtar? Induce her to go out with you. You, mother and daughter, should go out. Take Navin along. We should effect some carefully thought out reforms in such matters.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

98. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS GANDHI

Y. M.,
March 5, 1932

CHI. KRISHNADAS[1],

I have your lucid letter. If you have no work in particular, if Balkrishna or anybody else acting as editor can spare you and if you also wish and Jamnalalji is not opposed to the idea, it might be good for you to go to Vijapur, However, my advice should have no weight outside the jail gate. It is not right at all for a prisoner to take interest in affairs outside the jail.

How are Madalasa[2] and Om[3]?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 369

[1] Son of Chhaganlal Gandhi
[2] Daughters of Jamnalal Bajaj
[3] *ibid*

99. PREFACE TO "FROM YERAVDA MANDIR"

March 6, 1932

During my incarceration in 1930 in the Yeravda Central Prison, I wrote weekly letters to the Satyagraha Ashrams containing a cursory examination of the principal Ashram observances.[1] As the Ashram influence had already travelled beyond its geographical limits, copies of the letters were multiplied for distribution. They were written in Gujarati. There was a demand for translation into Hindi and other Indian languages, and also into English. Shri Valji Desai gave a fairly full translation in English. But seeing me in possession of comparative leisure during the recurrent incarceration, he has sent me his translation for revision. I have gone through it carefully, and touched up several passages to bring out my meaning more to my liking. I need hardly add that, if I was writing anew for the English reader, perhaps I should write a wholly new thing. But that would be going beyond my commission. And perhaps it is as well that even the English reader has the trend of my thought as expressed to the inmates of the Ashram, and in the year 1930. I have therefore taken the least liberty with the original argument.

M. K. GANDHI

From Yeravda Mandir

100. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

March 6, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

You have kindly given me a copy of the fresh instructions issued by the Government about the weekly visits.

I appreciate the trust reposed in me regarding the determination as to who shall be considered political inmates of the Ashram. I am anxious to be true to the trust. But before I could do so, there should be a common definition of the adjective 'political' between the Government and me. I take 'political' to mean those who are politically minded and are actually taking part in politics as *apart*

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 27-1-1932

from civil resistance. For if by 'political' are meant those who have been heretofore imprisoned as civil resisters or are believers in the doctrine of civil resistance, then there is no non-political inmate in the Ashram. If, however, the meaning is [as] I have given it, there are only three political inmates. I mean Sjts. Mahadev Desai, Pyarelal and Devdas Gandhi. But if I may not see the first two, I may not see Devdas Gandhi for they are like Devdas to me. As it so happens, they are all incarcerated. I may also mention that at the present moment there are only boys and girls and the few adults who are reserved for looking after the youngsters and the multifarious industrial activities of the Ashram.

It is difficult, too, for me to submit a list of non-Ashram friends till I know the definition that the Government have in mind of the term 'political'. I shall await reply to this before I submit a fairly full list for approval. But, meanwhile, I give below illustrative names of those friends whom I regard as non-political and whom I would put in the same category as my relatives.

Lady Thackersey, residence—Yeravda Hill. She is a social worker. She helped me during my serious illness in 1923 when I was a patient in the Sasoon Hospital.

Prof. Trivedi of the Agriculture College, Poona. He stands to me in the same close contact as Lady Thackersey.

Yeshvantprasad Desai, mill-owner residing in Matunga. He nursed me during the same illness and took up his abode in Poona for helping me.

Pyare Ali and his wife, living in retirement at a retreat near Thana, where they have taken in a few Muslim orphans. They lived nearly a year at the Ashram. They are a deeply religious couple.

These friends are in no sense political.

Pending reply to this letter, I have written to the Manager of the Ashram[1] to send those inmates who may wish to visit me.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9554. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40), Pt. I, pp. 131-3

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 5-3-1932

101. IMAM SAHEB-I[1]

March 7, 1932

I am not yet ready to write and send chapters of the 'Bal Gita'. As I was wondering what I should send this time, it occurred to me that I should give to the inmates of the Ashram my reminiscences of the Imam Saheb and should carry out this good resolution without delay. I, therefore, wish to write out such reminiscences as occur to me and as I think I may narrate.

Imam Saheb went to South Africa about the same year as I (1893). His real name was Abdul Kadir Bawazeer, but, as he served as Imam in South Africa, most people knew him as Imam Saheb. I always addressed him by this name.

The Imam Saheb's father was the Muezzin of the famous Jumma Masjid in Bombay and served in that capacity right till his death. He died only a few years ago, after the Imam Saheb's return to India. He fell dead just as he was washing and getting ready for the *azan*[2]. Such a death comes only to the blessed. The Imam Saheb's forefathers were Arabs and had come to India and settled in the Konkan years ago. Hence he knew the Konkani language too. His mother tongue was Gujarati, but he had little schooling. He knew Arabic well enough to be able to read from the Koran Sharif with a pleasing intonation, though not so well as to be able to understand everything in the Koran. He had picked up, through contacts inpractical life, English, Dutch and Creole French. Urdu, of course, he knew. He had also a working knowledge of Zulu. His intellect was so sharp that, if he had regularly studied in a school, he would have earned reputation as a great scholar. Though he was not a lawyer, he had come to understand subtleties of law through practical experience.

The Imam Saheb had gone to South Africa for trade and had earned much. When he gave up business, he kept coaches which he supplied on hire and had a fairly good income from that calling. Being a man of independent temper, he never tried his fortune in big

[1] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi"; *vide* the following item.

[2] Call to the faithful

business. He had a sweet voice, and, since his father was a Muezzin, he occasionally officiated as Imam in the mosque in Johannesburg. But he accepted no honorarium for his services.

The Imam Saheb had married twice. Both the wives were Malays. His first marriage was not successful, and so he married the lady whom we knew as his wife. This marriage had given him much happiness. He and the Haji Saheba served each other with great devotion. He was a sincere friend. So far as I know, the Imam Saheb's views about marriage had undergone a complete change and he had come to believe in monogamy.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

102. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 7, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I infer from your second postcard that you must have returned to the Ashram. I hope you got my postcard[1] despatched from here yesterday. Through some visitor, send again a piece of leather for the soles. I observe that there is one sole every month to be repaired. There is no urgency about the leather. Both the sandals have been re-soled only recently, so that they will require no attention for two months at least. It was only in order that it may be handy in case of necessity that I have asked you so early to send one.

All inmates of the Ashram who may be described as 'non political' will be permitted now to visit me. It is left to me to decide which of the inmates should be treated as 'political'. But whom theGovernment would class as 'political', I can know only when I receive its definition of the term. I have, therefore, asked for such a definition.[2] Meanwhile, anyone who wishes to come from there and whom you permit may come and see me, since, according to me, there is no one in the Ashram at present who may be described as 'political'. If nobody is particularly eager to come, it is not necessary for any of you to come merely to make us feel happy. If, however, anybody wishes to come, I would not say 'No' to him or her. The Government has asked for a list of 'non-politicals' not living in the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Pushpa S. Patel", 5-3-1932
[2] *Vide* "Letter to M. G. Bhandari", 6-3-1932

Ashram. I will draw up such a list after I receive its definition of the term 'political'.

Do you get any news about Prabhavati?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Valji that I have revised his translation of my letters on the Ashram vows and written out the preface[1]. I will keep them with me now.

Manilal will probably arrive there during this week. If possible, the two[2] should come and see me.

There are 37 letters, in addition to this one and the reminiscences[3] of Imam Saheb.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8213. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

103. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR[4]

[*March 7, 1932*][5]

DEAR KAKA,

How are you? What food you get? How many are with you and who are they? How is Prabhudas? What food he gets? Inform me about your weight and that of Prabhudas. Similar questions I have asked Mr. Quinn fearing you might not get this letter. What are you reading? We both are all right here. For the present I take dry dates, lime-juice, green vegetables and almond-bread. I am not constipated. If my weight goes down, I will take milk again. I intend writing 'Bal Gita' and have commenced writing Imam Saheb's *Sirat*. I am stuying

[1] *Vide* "Preface to From Yeravda Mandir", 6-3-1932

[2] Presumably Manilal Gandhi and his wife, Sushila

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

[4] The source bears a note to the effect that the Gujarati original of this is not available; this translation appears to have been done by the jail authorities. The addressee was in Visapur Jail.

[5] The date is inferred from the reference in the letter to Gandhiji having commenced writing the biographical skech of Imam Saheb; *vide* the preceding item, also "Diary, 1932".

the position of the stars and for that I take assistance of that Gujarati book which is translated from Marathi and also see the maps given in the *Weekly Times*. I get up at night and see the positions of the stars. This time I hardly send for books. But I get some books from America. I think I will not be able to study Marathi this time. I feel weak and require more sleep. Perhaps after long rest I might regain my strength. How is Narahari? My blessings to you all.

Yours,

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40), Pt. I, p. 88

104. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

March 7, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I think Rama humbled your pride by making you forget to complete your sacrificial spinning.[1] I don't count your lapse to be as serious as you do. It is right, however, that you should regard it as big enough. I say that Rama humbled your pride because if we, who are but puppets constantly liable to err, did not commit a single mistake in doing something, we are likely to be filled with pride (however subtle it may be). Rama seems to have treated you in the same way as He—or was it Siva?—had treated Narad. The incident has had two good results—your pride has been humbled and you will not make the same mistake again.

I have no comment to make here on the vivid sketches in your letter. I have never believed that you are hard-hearted. Your criticisms help me. Every one of us has virtues and weaknesses. If you are less inclined to see the virtues of others, try to see them more often.

There was nothing in my letter to make Narandas ask questions about himself. He does work in the spirit of *yajna*. It is not his fault that I have left him no time to do any body labour. This, too, is evidence of my lack of organizing ability. If I had been able to make efficient arrangements from the time that the Ashram was started, it

[1] The addressee was rather proud of her unfailing observance of the Ashram rules. But once her spinning was short by eight to ten rounds and she atoned for it by a three-day fast.

would not have been necessary for several persons, as it is now, to be busy only in general supervision. We have gone on the way we started. I believe that it is still possible to change things, but I do not know how, and the Ashram has still not got a man or a woman, who will give more thought to the problem and enforce the Ashram rules more strictly. Till we get such a person, we should tolerate the present conditions. Let us always remember that the Ashram very much falls short of its ideal, for I believe it quite possible to organize things so well that everyone in it will do his or her share of body labour and good order will bepreserved. Let us work in this faith. We shall discover the key one day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10275. Also C.W. 6723. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

105. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

March 7, 1932

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

What a lot of trouble you have taken! There is no reason for getting disturbed over the change in my diet. I have little or no faith in calories. Their[1] norm applies only to them. How can we vie with them? Individual professions too must be considered while laying down a standard of calorie requirements. Now I am taking four ounces of toast too. I have received the dates. I think the good quality dates from Arabia are better than these. The ones sent to me are quite good. I will take milk as soon as I feel the need. Have no worry.

I am not surprised to read your account of America. But there are many good people too.

Did the climate over there agree with you? I am glad to learn that you have discovered the right diet for yourself. How is Malaviyaji Maharaj? Sardar tells me that Rameshwardas[2] was ill. I had no knowledge of this. How is he now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 7896. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Presumably, Americans'

[2] Addressee's brother

106. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

March 8, 1932

DEAR AGATHA,

I have your two letters also the postman's attempt [*sic*].

You are quite correct in not giving me details of the activities of friends, nor am I eager to know them. I am quite sure that all of you over there are doing your best and what is proper[1].

Do you hear from or see Maud? Please tell her to write to me and tell me all about her health and her progress otherwise.

My regards to all the friends.

I have not yet received the Ruskin volumes.[2]

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1451

107. LETTER TO MANMOHANDAS P. GANDHI

March 8, 1932

BHAI MANMOHAN[3],

I have your letter. I had been thinking about you a few days ago when I got it. The books have not yet reached me.

I cannot call to mind any particular book on wool and silk industries. You should look up the long bibliography at the end of Puntambekar's essay[4]. There is one in Gregg's book also.

For the present at least, I have quite a stock of books. Moreover, Ghanshyamdas also is going to send some, and so I do not wish to put you to trouble on that account just now.

[1] The reference, presumably, is to the India Conciliation Group, London, whose "members, varying in views, were united in a concern for the situation in India". The addressee became its Honorary Secretary in December, 1931.

[2] *Fors Clavigera*; *vide* "Diary, 1932", entries under March 25 and April 6; also in *The Diary of Mahadev Desai*, Vol. I, under March 28, 1932, Mahadev Desai explains: "Bapu is reading Ruskin's *Fors Clavigera* with great interest . . . ."

[3] M. P. Gandhi, Secretary, Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta

[4] *Hand-spinning and Hand-weaving—An Essay* by S. V. Puntambekar and N. S. Varadachari (S. Ganesan, Madras)

There is some harm even in being my namesake. If nothing else, you have to reply to correspondents and also confess that you are no Mahatma![1] Both of us are quite well. I cannot do much work with my right hand now and hence I have Written this with the left.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRIYUT MANMOHANDAS GANDHI

135 CANNING STREET

CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 15

108. LETTER TO SIR SAMUEL HOARE

March 11, 1932[2]

DEAR SIR SAMUEL,

You will perhaps recollect that at the end of my speech[3] at the Round Table Conference when the minorities' claim was presented, I had said that I should resist with my life the grant of separate electorate to the Depressed Classes. This was not said in the heat of the moment, nor by way of rhetoric. It was meant to be a serious statement.

In pursuance of that statement, I had hoped on my return to India to mobilize public opinion against separate electorate, at any rate, for the Depressed Classes. But it was not to be.

From the newspapers which I am permitted to read, I observe that any moment His Majesty's Government may declare their decision. At first I had thought that if the decision was found to create separate electorates for the Depressed Classes, I should take such steps as I might then consider necessary to give effect to my vow. But I feel that it would be unfair to the British Government for me to act without giving previous notice. Naturally they could not attach the significance I give to my statement.

I need hardly reiterate all the objections I have to the creation of

[1] Gandhiji's letters from correspondents abroad were misdirected to the addressee.

[2] Despatched on this date, the letter was drafted on March 9 and revised on March 10; *vide* "Diary, 1932".

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Minoriteies Committee Meeting", 13-11-1931

separate electorates for the Depressed Classes. I feel as if I was oneof them. Their case stands on a wholly different footing from that of the others. I am not against their representation in the legislatures. I should favour every one of their adults, male or female, being registered as voters, irrespective of education or property qualifications, even though the franchise test may be stricter for the others. But I hold that separate electorate is harmful for them and for Hinduism, whatever it may be from a purely political standpoint. To appreciate the harm that separate electorates would do to them, one has to know how they are distributed amongst the so-called caste Hindus, and how dependent they are on the latter. So far as Hinduism is concerned separate electorate would simply vivisect and disrupt it. For me the question of these classes is predominantly moral and religious. The political aspect, important though it is, dwindles into insignificance compared to the moral and religious issue. You will have to appreciate my feelings in this matter by remembering that I have been interested in the condition of these classes from my boyhood and have more than once staked my all for their sake. I say this not to pride myself in any way. For, I feel that no penance that caste Hindus may do can, in any way, compensate for the calculated degradation to which they have consigned the Depressed Classes for centuries. But I know that separate electorate is neither penance nor any remedy for the crushing degradation they have groaned under.

I therefore respectfully inform His Majesty's Government that in the event of their decision creating separate electorate for the Depressed Classes, I must fast unto death.

I am painfully conscious of the fact that such a step whilst I am a prisoner must cause grave embarrassment to His Majesty's Government and that it will be regarded by many as highly improper on the part of one holding my position to introduce into the political field methods which they would describe as hysterical, if not much worse. All I can urge in defence is that for me the contemplated step is not a method, it is part of my being. It is a call of conscience which I dare not disobey, even though it may cost whatever reputation for sanity I may possess.

So far as I can see now, my discharge from imprisonment would not make the duty of fasting any the less imperative.

I am hoping, however, that all my fears are wholly unjustified and that the British Government have no intention whatever of

creating separate electorate for the Depressed classes.

It is perhaps as well for me to refer to another matter that is agitating me and may also enforce a similar fast. It is the wayrepression is going. I have no notion when I may receive a shock that would compel the sacrifice.

Repression appears to me to be crossing what might be called the legitimate limit. A Governmental terrorism is spreading through the land. Both English and Indian officials are being brutalized. The latter, high and low, are becoming demoralized by reason of the Government rewarding as meritorious, disloyalty to the people and inhuman conduct towards their own kith and kin. The latter are being cowed down. Free speech has been stifled. Goondaism is being practised in the name of law and order. Women who have come out for public service stand in fear of their honour being insulted.

And all this, as it seems to me, is being done in order to crush the spirit of freedom which the Congress represents. Repression is not confined to punishing civil breaches of the common law. It goads people to break newly made orders of autocracy designed for the most part to humiliate them.

In all these doings as I read them, I see no spirit of democracy. Indeed, my recent visit to England has confirmed my opinion that your democracy is a superficial circumscribed thing. In the weightiest matters decisions are taken by individuals or groups, without any reference to the Parliament, and these have been ratified by the Members having but a vague notion of what they were doing. Such was the case with Egypt, the War of 1914, and such is the case with India. My whole being rebels against the idea that in a system called democratic, one man should have the unfettered power of affecting the destiny of the ancient people numbering over three hundred millions, and that his decisions can be enforced by mobilizing the most terrible forces of destruction. To me this is a negation of democracy.

And this repression cannot be prolonged without further embittering the already bitter relations between the two peoples. In so far as I am responsible and can help it, how am I to arrest the process? Not by stopping civil disobedience. For me it is an article of faith. I regard myself by nature a democrat. Democracy of my conception is wholly inconsistent with the use of physical force for enforcing its will. Civil resistance therefore has been conceived to be a proper substitute for physical force to be used wherever generally the latter is

held necessary or justifiable. It is a process of self-suffering and a part of the plan is that in given circumstances a civil resister must sacrifice himself even by fasting to a finish. That moment has not yet arrived for me. I have no undeniable call from within for such a step. But the events happening outside are alarming enough to agitate my fundamental being. Therefore, in writing to you about the possibility of a fast regarding Depressed Classes, I felt that I would be untrue to you if I did not tell you also that there was another possibility, not remote, of such a fast.

Needless to say that from my side absolute secrecy has been maintained about all the correspondence I have carried on with you. Of course Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Mahadev Desai, who has just been sent to join us, know all about it. But you will no doubt make whatever use you wish of this letter.[1]

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

SIR SAMUEL HOARE

WHITEHALL

LONDON

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(4), Pt. I, p. 5; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 13-9-1932

109. LETTER TO DURGA M. DESAI

March 11, 1932

CHI. DURGA,

Mahadev arrived yesterday unexpectedly.[2] It seems the authorities thought that I must have one more companion besides Sardar. There is no cause for worry about my leg. There is a little inflammation at one spot. Treatment is going on. There is not the slightest [cause][3] for worry. You can always write to me anything you wish to. And you may come whenever you like.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] For Sir Samuel Hoare's reply, *vide* Appendix III. For an account of Gandhiji's discussion with Vallabhbhai Patel and Mahadev Desai on separate electorates and repression, *vide The Diary of Mahadev Desai*, Vol. I, pp. 4-5, 7 & 8.

[2] Mahadev Desai, addressee's husband, was transferred from Nasik Prison to Yeravda Central Prison.

[3] The source is mutilated here.

[PS.]

You will find it convenient if you come with the party of visitors expected next week.[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9484

110. LETTER TO LAKSHMIBEHN N. KHARE

March 11, 1932

CHI. LAKSHMIBEHN,

Instead of taking somebody's help to write a letter to me, why don't you write in Marathi? I will learn that much Marathi without effort. I understand what you say about the women. Whether or not there is an association, all of you there should meet from time to time and discuss subjects bearing on your spiritual progress.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 281. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

111. LETTER TO NIRMALA H. DESAI

March 11, 1932

CHI. NIRMALA,

If the elders have gone to the temple[2], all of you should take up their work. Then you too will have followed them to the temple.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9466

[1] This sentence is in Mahadev Desai's hand.

[2] The reference is to jail.

112. LETTER TO NARAYAN DESAI

March 11, 1932

CHI. NARAYANRAO,

Now that you have graduated from Bablo[1] to Narayan, I suppose I may go further and make you a "Rao"[2]. Besides, Mahadev tells me that you seem to have learnt carding only recently. If that is true, it is proper that you should be addressed as"Raosaheb".Mahadev is here now. You may send any messages you like. How many rounds do you spin daily?

Blessings from

BAPU

PS.

Since you card, Mahadev is eager to spin with slivers made by you. Send a few pads.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9475

113. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Y. M.,
March 11, 1932

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

Write to me everything about Shankerlal. God is our Protector.

Who is this Nanakram in Majoor Hospital? What is wrong with him? If necessary have him admitted to the Municipal Hospital.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32785

[1] A baby boy
[2] Rao" and "Raosaheb" are honorific suffixes added to names of elders.

114. LETTER TO A GIRL

March 12, 1932

CHI.,

Learning the *Gita* by heart only requires a good memory, and the task is easy. But understanding the meaning calls for the use of one's intellect. This is a difficult thing, and, therefore, uninteresting. When, however, you feel interest in exercising your intellect, the desire to understand the meaning will come to you. You should, therefore, learn to take interest in subjects which require you to use your intellect.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8963. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

115. A LETTER

March 12, 1932

CHI.,

There are numerous occasions for one to speak. You may have questions to ask in your class, or may have to speak when playing games or during the recess. It is our duty to spin and hence, if we do not spin, we neglect our duty. That means that we fall into a debt.

Just as the hand becomes dirty if we touch a dirty thing so if we tell a lie the mind is defiled, and that is worse than the hand becoming dirty. We can wash the hand if it has become dirty. It is not as easy to purify the mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8965. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

116. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

March 12, 1932

CHI. PANDITJI,

If instead of reading many books we read only one and reflect over it and put its teaching into practice, we get the desired result. Sannyasa does not mean the renunciation of all activities; it means only the renunciation of activities prompted by desire and of the fruits of action performed as duty. This is real freedom from activity. That is why one must learn to see inactivity in activity and activity in inactivity. Freedom from activity means only one thing, and it is what I have explained above. And still one must win such freedom. This problem led to the idea of renunciation of the fruits of action.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 223. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

117. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
March 13, 1932

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I must thank you for your kind letter of the 2nd instant given to me on the 10th. Though I do not share your rosy opinion about the working of repression, I know I must not enter into any argument. I write this only to correct one grave misunderstanding. I cannot accept the compliment you pay me for my loyalty to my colleagues as if it was the highest thing in life to me. I wish you could have known that all my loyalties are subservient to my loyalty to truth. I have been known, even during the past twelve years, to sacrifice friendships for the sake of what I have considered to be truth. I am happy in the knowledge that at no time have I had colleagues more disposed than now to follow my guidance even though they might differ with me in important matters short of vital principle. Might not history have been written differently, if among the celestials I had enjoyed for my loyalty to truth the credit you kindly give me for my loyalty to my

colleagues, and if therefore I had received glad response to my request for the interview? God or the gods in New Delhi had willed otherwise!!!

The Bombay Government have now sent Mahadev Desai as an additional companion. Hence I am able to spare you my wretched handwriting,

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: India office Library and Records. Courtesy: The British Library, London

118. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

YERAVDA MANDIR,
March 13, 1932

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

I have your letter. When I first read it I thought you were leaving. Hence I wrote to Anasuyabehn. Now I see that it is some other notice. Let me know what has happened.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32744

119. A LETTER

March 13, 1932

CHI.,

Family influences by themselves cannot ensure one's moral and spiritual progress. Such progress is impossible without effort on one's part. If there is no progress despite such effort, we need not worry. It is as true in the science of spiritual progress as it is in the science of mechanics that no force ever fails to produce its result. If five maunds of force push an object towards the north and an equal amount pushes it towards the south, the object will remain stationary, but both the forces will have done their full work and the stationary state of the object will in fact amount to its motion. It is this truth which suggested

the method of working without attachment. We should go on doing our best.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8962. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

120. LETTER TO DAHIBEHN PATEL

March 13, 1932

CHI. DAHIBEHN,

I was very glad to get your letter. Has your brother completely recovered? Write to me from time to time. Nobody who has dedicated himself or herself to service has to go in search of work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9205

121. LETTER TO MAHENDRA V. DESAI

March 13, 1932

CHI. MANU,

Your description of Ajmer is good. But the handwriting is bad. Try and make it better in your future letters. I will look forward to descriptions of Jaipur and other places. Ask Dudhibehn to write to me. What is your weight?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7422. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

122. LETTER TO MATHURI N. KHARE

March 13, 1932

CHI. MATHURI,

This time your handwriting was better than it generally is. If you persist in your effort and try to improve it, you will be able to make each letter in a word as beautiful as a pearl. Your speed in carding is

good for your age, provided the slivers which you make are very fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 263-a. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

123. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

March 13, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. For some time I shall have to write with my left hand and I shall not, therefore, be able to write very long letters. The left hand cannot write as fast as the right hand can. True, Mahadev's help will be available, but dictating to him will be a new practice so far as letters written from jail are concerned. I shall see how far I can follow that practice. I shall have to observe whether I feel at ease in dictating Ietters which are prompted purely by love. I will certainly dictate letters of business.

I was not in the least pained by your letter.

All of us must grow or deteriorate in some measure every day. Nothing remains unchanging.[1]

When I take the blame upon myself, I do not act out of false humility and do not exaggerate. My taking the blame upon myself does not mean that others are exonerated. But the leader must take the discredit for failure as he does the credit for success.

I accept the need for inter-caste marriages up to a certain point.

If a husband has the right to divorce his wife, a wife should also have the right to divorce her husband. But generally I am against the practice of divorce. The bond of love ought to be indissoluble.

Boys and girls may be educated either separately or together. It depends on the subject of study. They will have to study law together. I cannot lay down in this matter one single rule which can be followed in all countries and in all circumstances. The problem is not a simple one. No one has been able to demonstrate decisive results in any country in this field. The whole matter is in an experimental stage.

[1] In her reply to Gandhiji's letter dated February 25 (*vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 25-2-1932.), the addressee had stated that if Gandhiji had stopped growing in stature whether in or out of jail, she would admire him less.

Beauty should certainly be praised, but silent praise is better. Moreover, [illegible]%[1] Of one who is not filled with joy by the beauty of the sky, it may be said that nothing will please him. But those who dream, in the delirium of their joy, of building a flight of steps to reach the constellations live in ignorance.

I liked the curriculum[2]. I don't think I can suggest just now any changes or improvements in it.

As regards Japan and China, our sympathy is bound to be on the side of the latter. But the real position seems to be as I have described it in my letter to a child.

What you write about Jamnadas is true. He seems troubled in mind but keeps his problem to himself. If Sushila[3] can understand what troubles him, something can be done to help him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10276. Also C.W. 6724. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

124. LETTER TO PUSHPA S. PATEL

March 13, 1932

CHI. PUSHPA,

I have written at length about speaking in some other letter and you may read it.[4] God has given us the various abilities to control them, and some to suppress them altogether. He has given us a mouth not to go on speaking in season and out of season, but to speak for doing God's work. God has given us abilities for doing both good and evil but we have to get rid of the evil impulses completely. Do you understand now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3983. Also C.W. 29. Courtesy: Pushpabehn N. Naik

[1] Renounce and enjoy" (*Ishopanishad*, 1)
[2] For the Ashram school
[3] A friend of the addressee
[4] *Vide* "A Letter", 12-3-1932

125. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

March 13, 1932

CHI. VANAMALA,

If a girl's letter does not contain anything which requires a reply, she should not expect a letter by return of post. Your last letter was of that kind. But since you have asked me to write to you every week, I have written this letter. However, in future bear in mind what I have said.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Is there any news about Narahari?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5768. Also C.W. 2991. Courtesy: Vanamala Desai

126. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

March 14, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

I got your letter. It is not right for a *brahmachari* to attend to several things at a time. He takes up only one thing at a time and concentrates all the energy of his body and mind on that thing. If, therefore, you are occupied in manual work and there is no necessity for you to talk about anything relating to it, the proper thing would be to remain silent. However, if we are playing or have gone out for a walk, talking is a part of the activity and so we can talk at that time. Anybody who regulates his life strictly according to this principle, can make it full of interest. And an institution where people work in complete silence and speak only when necessary impresses us as a very quiet place. Not only do I see no harm in the girls putting on shorts and a shirt when doing exercises and also at other times, but I actually like the thing. For the Ashram residents their goal in life has already been fixed, and it is that they are dedicated to the quest for truth.

To your question whether one should or should not aim to be like a soldier, I shall give an answer after you tell me in your next letter what all of you understand to be the meaning of the word 'soldier'.

After travelling in many countries, I have found India to be the most beautiful country. But since I am free, as I believe, from blind partiality, I have always been able to see much good in every country and so have found them all to be good and have appreciated the special excellence of each of them. On the whole, however, I have felt that India is not inferior to any other country, that one finds in it all that one may want and that what one does not find in India is not quite essential for our life.

If the Ashram has money to spare and if the things are not likely to cost much, even at such a time as the present I would have no objection to having swings and slides made for you. You should, however, bear one thing in mind, namely, that the Ashram should always be a poor people's institution, and that just because the Ashram has the necessary money we will not be justified in getting anything we want. And even things which befit poor people may be ordered only if the Ashram has the necessary funds. The question, therefore, is only whether we can afford a thing and whether it is in keeping with our aim.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8968. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

127. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

March 14, 1932

BA,

For some days past I had been thinking of writing to you; and I read today that you were still out. And so I had a mind to write. Mahadev also is with us now. Thus our company has become larger. All three of us are quite well. Ramdas came and saw me. He was all right. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

128. IMAM SAHEB - II[1]

March 14, 1932

As we know, Imam Saheb had set much store by patriotic considerations in arranging the marriages of his two daughters. He wanted to marry them to young men who would devote themselves to the service of the country, would make no difference between Hindus and Muslims and who would, by their manner of living, do honour to the Ashram ideal of life. And so he selected two Gujarati Muslims from families of average means.

My first meeting with Imam Saheb may be said to have taken place in 1903 in South Africa after my return to that country. He used to tell me that we had met once before that but I have no recollection of that meeting. When I set up practice as a lawyer in Johannesburg, he used to accompany clients to my office. He was an altogether different man then in appearance and manners. He used to dress himself in English style, and wore a Turkish cap. I immediately recognized his intelligence, but otherwise he did not produce a good impression on me at first. I thought him rather obstinate, but, as I came to know him better, I liked him more and more.

I saw, as I had more and more experience of dealing with him, that what I had thought to be obstinacy was only his eagerness to understand fully the implications of every point. If he held an opinion on any matter, he would not give it up till his reason was convinced of his error. He would not take a lawyer's word as gospel truth in legal matters merely because he himself was not a lawyer, but would argue against him even in such matters. Though he had had no education, he had complete confidence in his judgement. Moreover, he had a proud sense of self-respect. I, therefore, saw very soon that he had sufficient strength of mind to cling to his own view without being overawed by anybody.

In the beginning, Imam Saheb used to come to me on behalf of clients and explain their cases to me. But he took interest in current affairs and would draw me into discussion about them. He evinced keen interest in discussing the hardships of our countrymen in South

[1] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi"; *vide* the following item.

Africa and took part in the meetings, etc. On most issues he supportedme, but he never hesitated to oppose me even in public whenever he did not approve of my stand. Gradually, however, he was drawn towards me and, when the satyagraha commenced, proved himself as steadfast as a rock. Some fell and some weakened, and some opposed me bitterly, but I don't remember Imam Saheb to have wavered at any time. When he was imprisoned for the first time, nobody expected that he would remain strong till the end. On the contrary, many persons told me, including some who held him in high respect, that he would not go to jail again, that he had a delicate constitution, was pleasure-loving and had many wants. This was on the whole true. However, Imam Saheb never weakened, whereas I saw many who were known to be simple in their habits withdrawing from the struggle. Imam Saheb's capacity for self-sacrifice was very great, and, though he would think long before taking a decision, he showed wonderful strength in clinging to a decision once taken.

When Imam Saheb plunged into the struggle, he had no thought at all that he would have to break up his home and embrace a life of complete renunciation. As soon, however, as he saw that if he wished to remain staunch in the satyagraha movement he would have to give up the attachment to his home, he did so almost in an instant. This was no small sacrifice on his part.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

129. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Monday, March 14, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

Mahadev has joined me in the nick of time for my right hand has just gone out of service. By this I do not meant that it is continually paining, but I certainly mean that it would start doing so if I went on writing with it or doing any other work. It may even happen that I shall never be able now to do much work with it, for, I see that, though I gave it complete rest during the return voyage from England, it has not recovered sufficiently well so that I could resume working with it. We need not feel sorry even if it becomes useless for ever. Sooner or later all the bodily organs will have become weak. We need not, therefore, feel concerned when we see them gradually becoming so. It is no small grace of God that I have taken from

theright hand the service which I have done. And, after all, as our [spiritual] dictionary[1] tells us, it is He who takes work from us, and He will do so as long as He wills and on His own condition. Our hands and feet are His tools, and it will be enough if we knowingly do nothing to impair their efficiency. We were foolish to the extent that we misused them in the past. It is because we misuse our body that, when what we call old age arrives, our limbs and organs begin to decay. To one who has never misused his bodily organs, old age will not be painful but, on the contrary, it will bring happiness. If trees were thinking beings, we can easily see that they would feel no pain when their fruits, fully ripe, fell to the ground. Rather, the knowledge that these fruits would be used by human beings would make them happy. Similarly, he whose life is good must feel confident that when old age has worn out the strength of his body, his new condition will serve some greater good. But, as things are, all this seems to us as mere wise talk, for we see no instances in the world, or very few, of perfectly happy old age. Similarly, we rarely see a person who welcomes his death as a friend.

The health of all three of us may be described as good. It is true that Mahadev has been suffering pain in the bone of one of his legs, but rest and sun-bath will probably cure it. There is no cause for worry.

You have given no news about Khushalbhai during the past week. I infer from this that the cloud has dispersed for the time being.

The position about visitors is still not clear. It is not improbable that the practice may have to be stopped. However, I believe Jaisukhlal, Kashi, Lakshmi and Moti will have come and seen me in a day or two.

Haridas Gandhi[2] has been brought here. He is still in the hospital. We get reports about his health from time to time, but none of us has yet been able to see him. Ramdas came and saw me. Most probably I shall be able to see the others too. I had expected a letter from Mirabehn, but I have received none so far.

It was reported in the newspapers that Gangabehn Jhaveri has been released. It seems somebody paid the fine on her behalf. Who was that person? Do you get any news about Prabhavati?

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*

[2] A resident of Amreli who came to join the Ashram

You should not mind the expenditure on behalf of Radha. I hope Punjabhai has recovered now.

You may write to Holmes about the permission which those gentlemen from New York have asked for. Or, it might be better to send a cable. Since you cannot give a final reply to Holmes within Rs. 25, you had better send a cable to the others as follows:

"Authorizing Rev. Holmes Community Church New York do needful."[1]

Send a copy of the cable to Holmes and tell him that, if he thinks fit, he may give them the permission they have asked for.

Lilavati told me that the preparation of almonds which she had brought for me was made of a mixture of almonds and dates. If I can know how it is made and in what proportion the ingredients are mixed, we may be able to make it here. It does not seem proper that you should send a parcel of the thing from there periodically, and even if I don't mind your doing so I must know the quantities of the ingredients, for otherwise I can not judge how much of the preparation I should eat daily.

I had read in the papers about Brijkishan[2].

Blessings from

BAPU[3]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8214. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

130. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

March 14, 1932

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your letter.

I would prefer 'Madhavdas' to 'Madhavlal'. But these days a good many people do not like the suffix 'das'. Did Santok like mysuggestion?[4] You should also discuss the matter with Benarsi and

[1] The source has these words in English.

[2] Brijkrishna Chandiwala, who was arrested on February 22, 1932, and sentenced to six months' imprisonment and a fine

[3] For the article "Imam Saheb-II" which followed, *vide* the preceding item.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Rukmini Bazaj", 1-3-1932

then decide. Please do not think that the name selected by me should be approved. Do not neglect to write to me after going to Kashi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9061

131. LETTER TO SHANTILAL MEHTA

March 14, 1932

CHI. SHANTI,

I got your letter. I was happy. Why have you not mentioned where you got married? I was glad that the marriage ceremony was simple. Did you go for the ceremony alone or were you accompanied by any elders? Manilal does not seem to have arrived last week, but there was a letter from him in which he said that he would be positively here in a fortnight or two. If you can settle down peacefully in your town, I think it would be better for you to remain in India. What would your wife like? Has she had some education? I should know that too. Without that information I cannot rush forward with an opinion.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII

132. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Monday, March 14 [*1932*][1]

DEAR SISTERS,

I am glad that you want a letter from me. I will make today's letter brief. It is not good that your Association has not been working. Even though your number has become small, it would be good if you can run the Association. Its usefulness may not be apparent now, andit is also likely that there would be obstacles of various kinds in the beginning. However, if you persist and carry it on, it is bound to prove useful. To do so, you should find out collective activities, no

[1] From the reference in the letter to Gandhiji's writing to the addressees earlier about "women in other countries", *vide* "Letter to Ashram Women", 25-1-1932

matterhow small, which will be known as the Association's activities and in running which everyone would acquire a sense of personal responsibility. This does not at all mean that you are merely to add one more activity to several others; it means that the Association should take upon itself one or more of the activities being conducted at present. Do not fall a victim to the false notion that women cannot work as a team. I wrote to you earlier how much the women in other countries are able to do. Even here we have some examples; if there are none, we have to provide them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

133. LETTER TO NEWLY MARRIED COUPLE

March 14, 1932

CHI.,

You two have shown a new path.[1] Both of you have my blessings. Sardar voluntarily adds his. We wish that you two should devote yourselves to selfless service. That your request for blessings comes on a printed card makes the request purely formal and to that extent it loses its value. If blessings are worth soliciting, they are worth soliciting in a self-written letter, which should also state some good resolutions made by the couple to mark the auspicious event.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 15

134. LETTER TO CHILDREN

March 14, 1932

Even if the present stage [of the struggle] lasts a long time, our energies must not flag, as flag they must in case we are unhappy about it.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 15

[1] The addressees had asked for blessings, not as usual on the occasion of their wedding, but after the event had taken place.

135. A LETTER

March 14, 1932

I further believe that marriages should be contracted out of caste. Even though the choice is extended up to the Vaishya community only, it will suffice. But no hindrance should be placed if a worthy match is found only outside the Vaishya community and the girl likes him.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 15

136. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

March 15, 1932

DEAR MAJOR MARTIN,

I revert to my letter[1] of the 1st instant. I was thankful for the permission to see my son Ramdas Gandhi whilst the whole of my request was under consideration. It is high time however that an early decision was given. The matter has for me assumed extraordinary urgency because a co-prisoner Haridas Gandhi is seriously ill and has lost considerable weight. He has lived for a long time at the Ashram. I believe that I exercise greater influence over him than his father and I know that the very fact of my seeing him will put life into him. I would like the Government to realize that young men like Haridas who have come under my influence are no less to me than Ramdas Gandhi. It is impossible for me therefore to be at ease whilst this matter of seeing the fellow-prisoners is hanging fire, especially in view of serious illness of Sjt. Haridas Gandhi. I request an answer by Friday morning.[2]

Yours sincerely,

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Departmentt, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14)

[1] *Vide* "Letter to R. V. Martin", 1-3-1932

[2] For Martin's letter to the Home Department, Bombay Government, and the latter's communication to the Inspector-General of Prisons, *vide* "Correspondence Between R. V. Martin and R. M. Maxwell (A) R. V. Martin's Letter to R. M. Maxwell", 15-3-1932

137. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

March 16, 1932

It is possible and necessary to treat human beings on terms of equality, but this can never apply to their morals[1]. One would be affectionate and attentive to a rascal and to a saint; but one cannot and must not put saintliness and rascality on the same footing.

The Diary of Mahadev Desai, Vol. I, p. 15

138. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

March 16, 1932

CHI. RAIHANA,

I got your card. In the letter which has been lost in transit, I had asked you whether there was any rule regarding the use of *ze,* and *se, sin, hai, he.*

For example, why should *khaas* be spelt with *swad* and why not with *se* or *sin.* Why *sin* and not *swad* in *salaam?* Or why not *se?* In spelling *galat,* why *toi* and not *te?* Then I had copied the following *ghazal:*

> Life in this world called beautiful garden is only for a short while; you will enjoy the spectacle for a few days only. O traveller, prepare for the march; residence on earth is short. When the great Hakim Lukman was asked, "How long will you live?"—rubbing his hands in despair he replied: "Only a few days." After burial the angel of death said in the grave: ''You will sleep here only for a few days."[2]

I trust you will consider this much enough for today, seeing that writing with the left hand takes time. The Urdu handwriting is of course very bad, but I am sure you will have no difficulty in deciphering it. Mahadev has now been brought to stay with us here. He remembers your [favourite] *bhajan* "Awake and arise, O traveller!" Once it was even sung at prayer-time. Next time I shall send it to you in Urdu script.

Are you quite well? Where is Pashabhai? Blessings to Dahyabhai. Our *vandemataram* and many many *salaams* to Mother. Tell Father that we saw in *The Leader* his photograph with the Aligarh students. We had a hearty laugh at the sight of his face hidden away in

[1] *Mahadevbhaini Diary has* 'manner'.
[2] *Vide* "Ashram Bhajanavali"

the beard. Write to me how Hamida and Rohini are faring. My blessings to them all. Blessings to Sohaila also and kisses to the baby.

I hope this letter will reach you all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9638

139. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

March 18, [*1932*][1]

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

When I gave you the three names[2], I did not think of the female ward at all. But there are many Ashram inmates in that ward. I would therefore for the time being drop out Sjt. Chhaganlal Joshi and have Shrimati Gangabehn Vaidya instead.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5129

140. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 18, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your packet yesterday, that is, on Thursday. Harjivan[3] and Sharda wish to come here and see me. They may do so now. The present position is that those inmates of the Ashram who do not take part in political activities can visit me. About others, correspondence is going on. Only those who are regularly engaged in Congress work can be described as taking part in political activities. According to this criterion, only Mahadev, Devdas and Pyarelal can be described as doing that. To some extent Valji also may be classed with them, but none of the others. However, those who are carrying on picketing at present must be described [as 'political']. Since the whole business is left to my good faith, the final responsibility rests on me. Hence Bal

[1] From *The Diary of Mahadev Desai,* "Draft of Letter to Frederick Lely"

[2] Haridas Gandhi, Narsinhbhai Ishwarbhai Patel and Chhaganlal Joshi

[3] Harjivan Kotak whose wife was Sharda

and other boys and girls who are doing picketing should be excluded. Any of the other inmates can come. Not more than five should come at a time. As I have already explained in a previous letter, it is not necessary that five persons, or even one, should come every week. But anyone who wishes to come has my permission to do so, within the limits explained above.

It will be necessary to send the names to the Superintendent in advance, and no one else should be included later. It will be more convenient to see me between 11 a.m. and I p.m. on any day, except Sundays and other holidays. I think I have now explained the whole matter sufficiently clearly. There is nothing more, except that, if those who wish to come give their names to you in advance, please send them to me so that I might be ready. . . .[1]

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, Pt. I, pp. 322-3

141. LETTER TO NIRMALA H. DESAI

March 20, 1932

CHI. NIRMALA,

Even if we spin to meet our own requirements, the country gains since it means so much addition to its wealth. And, moreover, we shall have set an example of spending one's time usefully and of self-reliance.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9467. Also C.W. 8972. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] The letter is incomplete in the source.

142. A LETTER

March 20, 1932

CHI.,

When manure is spread in the field, it becomes fine earth and the gases which are generated in the process serve as food for the trees. Similarly, so long as the saliva remains in the mouth and the mouth is healthy, it helps to digest food. When, however, it is spat out, it makes dirt. Mixing with dust, it breeds germs. The point is that in its own place nothing is dirty, and the second point is that dirt is made by man. We should know this and understand and observe the rules of sanitation.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8975. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

143. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

March 20, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

The stars and the constellations which we see in the heavens are so many images of God.

Indian women's dress has appealed to me as the best. Mahavir, Buddha, Jesus, Mahomed and other teachers have sung praises of one and the same God.

Most of the education for women should be the same as for men. There may be some difference bearing on the special functions and duties of women.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9907. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

144. A LETTER

March 20, 1932

CHI.,

It is true that in many places people take more freedom than is proper. Such things always happen whenever there is popular awakening. Self-control cannot be forced on anybody. We should be strict in our own conduct and be liberal towards others. What we regard as excessive freedom may, however, be moderation for those concerned. One person may take milk as medicine and another may consume it to pamper himself. Such things happen every day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8979. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

145. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

March 20, 1932

CHI. GANGABEHN (JHAVERI),

Narandas must have explained to you the whole position regarding your coming to see me. The Government's order on the subject means that those who have been taking active part in the struggle cannot come. This does not apply to relations. I don't regard this issue as worth fighting for and, therefore, I think I should be satisfied with the facility which they permit. You may write a letter and say in it what you wish to, or send a message with somebody else who may be coming. You cannot ask me anything concerning the struggle. A prisoner has no right, and is not fit, to express any opinion about anything concerning himself. How did you keep in jail? Narrate your experience. Who do you think paid the fine?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3949. Also C.W. 70. Courtesy: Gangabehn Jhaveri

146. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

March 20, 1932

CHI. MANGALA (DARLING),

When we get swaraj, we will certainly do a great many things. You will see caves and many other things besides. But there are many interesting things to see all around us, and we can see them even today. If you know how to see these, then alone will you see other things correctly. Have you learnt to look at the sky? I am learning to do it in my old age.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4079. Also C.W. 43. Courtesy: Mangalabehn B. Desai

147. LETTER TO MATHURI N. KHARE

March 20, 1932

CHI. MATHURI,

By spinning as a form of *yajna* we produce yarn for the poor. Other people will follow our example and spin, and we become one with the poor and in that way are purified.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 264. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

148. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

March 20, 1932

CHI. PARASRAM,

Brushing the teeth with *datan*[1] should be supplemented by the use of fingers. That is, rub the gums vigorously with the fingers while gargling after you have brushed the teeth with *datan* and cleansed the tongue with the twig. One suffering from pyorrhoea should brush theteeth with *datan* twice daily, and I would not think it too much to give half an hour each time. I have come across negroes brushing their teeth at all times in the day. The benefit from the use of *datan* is

[1] Same as *datun; vide* "Letter to Tulsi Maher", 24-1-1932

not merely that the teeth are brushed with it, but also that all the poisonous matter in the gums is thrown out with the fluids discharged from the mouth while crushing the *datan*, as we spit out the fluids entirely. I myself use nothing else except common salt with the *datan*. Of course, my brushing the teeth does not mean much, because I have not a single tooth left in the upper jaw and even in the lower only a few remain. Both the babul and the *neem* twigs are good for *datan* but perhaps the *neem* is likely to be better for one suffering from pyorrhoea as the bitterness of the *neem* is highly beneficial.

There is not the slightest need for the girls to use a fountain pen. Really speaking, nobody in the Ashram should need a fountain pen. Why should anybody be in such hurry? For students at any rate, it is certainly a harmful thing to use. The reed-pen is the best for writing Gujarati, Hindi, Urdu and other Indian scripts. We should teach the children to use it properly.

During prayers at the Ashram, none should start reciting or singing before the leader begins. And again, the rule is that when he leads, only those can join in the recitation or singing who can do so in tune. When the whole community sings harmoniously in one tune, their singing never fails to produce an effect. Nor does silence fail. Both are beneficial, each in its proper place. In offering oblations, etc., at a sacrifice, the incantations used to be chanted aloud in the belief that thousands were witnessing the ceremony with reverence. Once that became a custom, even when only five or ten persons are present the incantations at a sacrifice continue to be chanted aloud.

The observance of one principal vow mostly includes that of several minor ones.

Just as a *neem* tree comes out of another *neem* tree, so human beings are born from human beings, and just as the general properties of the *neem* are transmitted from one to another, so are those of human beings. But because of several other factors which also operate, the transmission of all characteristics is not, as it should not be, maintained. Moreover, we observe certain peculiarities in man also because of the difference that exists between man and other living creatures.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7492. Also C.W. 4969. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

149. LETTER TO PUSHPA S. PATEL

March 20, 1932

CHI. PUSHPA,

Would a Sardar write letters? He would act as Sardar and ask others to write on his behalf.

This time your handwriting was good. If you pay careful attention, it is bound to improve. Was there any letter from Kamala?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3984. Also C.W. 30. Courtesy: Pushpabehn N. Naik

150. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

March 20, 1932

BHAI VALJI,

I got your letter. No argument of yours or mine will avail. How can anybody argue against a law? One may, against a bill. If you do without an introduction, the thing may be possible.

If children play cards during their recreation time, you cannot forbid them. We cannot forbid even grown-up people if they play. We may tell them that it would be better if they did not play. They should not play for stakes. What is your argument against cards?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati C.W. 7423. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

151. IMAM SAHEB-III[1]

March 21, 1932

We should remember that Imam Saheb had set up his home in English style. Haji Saheba had lived in that style from her very birth. Fatima and Amina also were brought up like English children. For one who had lived in this manner, it was extremely difficult to curtail his heavy expenditure and adopt an utterly simple mode of life. For Imam Saheb, however, once he had made up his mind to do a particular thing, it was quite easy to carry out his resolve. And, therefore, when I decided to leave Johannesburg and to settle in Phoenix, he himself proposed that he, too, would live there. Though I knew his firmness of mind, I was completely at a loss what to say in reply to his proposal. I described to him the hardships of life in Phoenix. A man who had never put his body to the slightest trouble and had always lived surrounded by comforts and luxuries, I wondered how such a person would be able to start forthwith living like a labourer. Even if he himself could bear the hardships of life in Phoenix, what about Haji Saheba, and Fatima and Amina, I asked. Imam Saheb's reply was brief. He said: "I have put my trust in God. And you do not know Haji Saheba. She will always be ready to live where I live, and as I live. If, therefore, you have no other difficulty in the matter, I have decided to come and live in Phoenix. No one knows when the struggle will end. I don't think I shall be able to carry on my old business of supplying coaches on hire, or take up any other occupation. Like you, I too have realized that a satyagrahi should give up love of wealth and possessions." Imam Saheb's proposal pleased me very much. I wrote to my co-workers in Phoenix. They also welcomed the proposal. And so Imam Saheb and his family came over.

Many inmates of the Ashram probably do not know that Imam Saheb joined the residents of Phoenix in all their activities. Everybody fetched water for his or her own use from a spring below. It flowed at some depth below the level of the Phoenix Settlement. The Phoenix buildings were on a hill and one had to climb about fifty feet to reach the place. Imam Saheb had a delicate constitution even atthat time, but

[1] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi"; *vide* the following item.

every morning one saw him walking down to the spring with a *kavad*[1] on his shoulders and climbing up slowly with the buckets filled with water. The place now occupied by the spinning-wheel in the Ashram was held in Phoenix by the printing press. All the inmates, boys and girls, old men and women, educated and uneducated, had to work in some department of the press. There were all kinds of big or small tasks, composing, folding the printed copies of the paper, making wrappers, pasting stamps, moving the wheel with the hand whenever the machine stopped, etc., etc. Everybody was required to give some time and help in these tasks, especially on the day on which the journal was to be published. Imam Saheb, Haji Saheba, Fatima and Amina, all four of them joined in this work. Imam Saheb had learned composing. For a man of his temper and habits and of his age, this was indeed wonderful. In this way, Imam Saheb identified himself completely with the life at Phoenix. He and the other members of his family were non-vegetarian, but I don't remember any time when they cooked such food at Phoenix.

This, however, does not mean that Imam Saheb was in any way a less devout Muslim. He never missed *namaz,* nor did he or his family ever fail to observe the *roza.* By adopting the manner of life of the other inmates and making a sacrifice for their sake, he really demonstrated the nobility of Islamic culture.

Imam Saheb's capacity for self-sacrifice was to be put to a still severe test. He went to jail again several times, and proved himself a model prisoner. When, however, in the year 1914 it was decided that most of the inmates of the Ashram should return to India, leaving only a few of them in Phoenix, Imam Saheb was put to a real test. South Africa had practically become his home. Haji Saheba, Fatima and Amina were complete strangers to India and did not know any Indian language—a little English and Dutch was all the language that they knew. But Imam Saheb took no time to come to a decision. He had made up his mind that he and his family would live wherever I did. That was his self-sacrifice for the cause of satyagraha and his contribution towards Hindu-Muslim unity.

All the inmates of the Ashram know about his life after his coming to India. I am convinced that he was rising higher day by day: his heart was becoming purer, his devotion to God was

[1] Two baskets or vessels suspended from the ends of a stick carried horizontally over the shoulders

becomingdeeper and his faith in the Ashram rules also was increasing. But it is not my intention here to give reminiscences of his life in India. I should like everybody who came into close contact with Imam Saheb to write down his experiences, and all such accounts to be put together with these reminiscences.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

152. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 19/21, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I wrote a letter[1] to you yesterday and handed it over today for posting. I hope you will get it in time. It contains detailed instructions regarding visits and Champa. In this letter, therefore, I don't say anything about these matters. That letter also contains something more.

I saw Haridas Gandhi, Chhaganlal and Narasinhbhai today. I shall now be able to see three [prisoners] every fortnight, and in this way I shall be able to know the conditions of the co-workers who are lodged in this jail and help them whenever I can. Haridas is considerably reduced, but his illness is more mental than physical. He is being well looked after. You will learn more details from my letter to Kamala. If she wants to come and see Haridas, she may do so. If she comes on a day on which other inmates of the Ashram are visiting me and her name is included in the five, she will be able to see both of us.

Hemprabhadevi frequently writes to me directly, and I also reply to her directly. That lady's goodness, her courage and industry and her intelligence fill me with wonder. Let me hear whenever you get any news about Janakibehn and Jamnalal, though I believe Madanmohan[2] also will write to me from time to time. I take it that Chimanlal's operation is over. Who performed it? Who is the vaid treating Triveni and Dudhibehn? Take prompt measures and cure your scabies. The application of the wet sheet pack is bound to cure it. I don't know what advice I should give you regarding the land in Bidaj. Do what you think right in the circumstances. Raojibhai cannot

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 18-3-1932

[2] Jamnalal Bajaj's Secretary

see you. I didn't see any letter from Ranchhodbhai. Your list too did not contain his name.

March 21, 1932

Read my letter to Tilak[am]. If he falls ill repeatedly for want of meat in his diet, and if he wishes to have it, we should inquire and find a place where he can get it. If you don't approve of this, let me know. I did this [in the past] for two or three co-workers. It is not, therefore, anything unusual which I am suggesting.

You should, if necessary, even free Hariyomal from active work and force him to attend to the improvement of his health.

What do you intend to do about Daya, who is being called away by her father? You must have read my letter to her.

Write to me in detail about your scabies.

Blessings from

BAPU[1]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8215. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

153. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

March 21, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

There is of course no sin if one has to go to answer calls of nature during the hours for manual work, but it is certainly a bad habit. A boy or girl who feels interested in such work should attend to calls before joining it. Moreover, one who has a fixed time for such calls would always go at that time. If the hours for manual work come together, then a person would certainly have to go during that period. For this reason, manual work is never prescribed for more than four consecutive hours.

Spinning is primarily an education, for it arouses in us a sense of the duty of service, we learn in it a very useful occupation and there is beautiful art in it.

One never goes to join any work unless the wish is there. But children who are not properly trained never feel the desire to do a good thing. The best rule, therefore, is to join in good work whether

[1] For the article "Imam Saheb-III" which followed, *vide* the preceding item.

the desire is there or not. A child who does this regularly comes to like the work in course of time, that is, he feels a desire to join it. If we always follow only our desires, we would become self-indulgent.We should try our best to save ourselves from that fate. You may say of me that my favourite subjects were languages and geometry.

You can come when Narandas permits you to do so, but it would be good if you control your desire to come. Remember that we are poor, wish to remain so and aspire to vie with our starving countrymen.

I will now narrate an incident.

I see here with my own eyes something I had formerly heard about. We have here a cat which, when it wants to answer nature's call, goes to a place where it would not be observed by anybody. It finds for the purpose a dusty spot and, after answering the call, scratches the ground and covers up the faeces with earth. After doing that, the cat sniffs at the spot and, if there is the slightest smell, it throws more earth on the spot. On seeing this, I asked myself: 'Do all of us cover up the excreta as carefully as this cat does?' We daily bow to Mother Earth and ask her forgiveness for walking on her with our feet; but do we cover up the ground after spitting, blowing our nose or passing urine, etc.? Those who have not been observing this rule should start doing so immediately.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8982. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

154. A LETTER

March 21, 1932

CHI.,

The real pleasure of being a prisoner lies in having no visitor. . . .[1]

As one should not eat hastily, so also one should not write in a hurry. The ideal is to avoid haste in all matters. If a person has to do anything in haste, that means that he has been too slow before. Non-attachment and haste cannot go with each other.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8969. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Omission as in the source

155. LETTER TO JUGATRAM DAVE

March 21, 1932

BHAI,

We did expect a letter from you. All those who are born do not reach maturity.[1] Moreover, when an epidemic breaks out the death-rate goes up. Hence I am not surprised by what you write. It is a wonder and a matter of joy that the death-rate has not been higher. And, in any case, why should we grieve over death? The death of one who is fit to die may deserve to be welcomed. Moreover, is it not true that people die only to be born again? Hence, there is no reason for sorrow at all. One who has not learnt the art of going his way alone may be upset by external events. But only they who are strong enough to stand alone will realize the God of Truth.

From Gujarati: C.W. 8970. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. I, p. 27

156. A LETTER

March 21, 1932

CHI.,

As grain is the body's food, so worship is the soul's. He who is convinced about the existence of the soul cannot live without worship. Prayer means the soul turning towards God.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8973. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] The addressee had complained about those who had dropped out of the struggle.

157. LETTER TO BOYS AND GIRLS

March 21, 1932

CHI.,

Do you remember my definition of God? Instead of saying that God is Truth, I say that Truth is God. I did not always think thus. I realized this only four years ago. But without knowing it I always acted as if it was so. I have always known God as Truth. There was a time when I doubted the existence of God, but even at that time I did not doubt the existence of Truth. This Truth is not a material quality but is pure consciousness. That alone holds the universe together. It is God because it rules the whole universe. If you follow this idea, it contains the answer to all your other questions. If you have any difficulty, however, put your question to me. For me this is almost a matter of direct experience. I say "almost" because I have not seen face to face God Who is Truth. I have had only a glimpse of Him. But my faith is unshakable.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8974. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary,* Vol. I, p. 27

158. LETTER TO PURATAN BUCH

March 21, 1932

CHI. PURATAN,

Wasn't the operation completely successful? What is the complaint now? I do not mind your question. My spiritual seeking, whether or not original, has always been in the form of social service. Such service is an essential part of the quest for truth.

Where do you live?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. *9164.* Also C.W. 8971. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

159. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

March 21, 1932

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

I got your letter. Pyarelal and Gulzarilal[1] keep good health. If you are permitted, go and see them[2] and others as well. Can it be said that you keep good health?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1831

160. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

March 21, 1932

CHI. VANAMALA,

I have explained about plays in my previous letter[3]. Did you receive any letter from Narahari from Belgaum? If you did, what does he write? Are all [the prisoners] kept together?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5769. Also C.W. 2992. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

161. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

March 21, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

Whenever I decide to write only with the left hand, my writing work is automatically restricted. This is because the habit of writing with the right hand has still not lost its force. The paper and other articles which I have brought from England are to be used up. If that

[1] Gulzarilal Nanda

[2] In Dhulia Jail

[3] There is no mention of 'plays' in the previous letter dated March 13; *vide*, howevever, "Letter to Indu Parekh", p. 232 and "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 24/29-3-1932.

is likely to confuse our minds [in regard to the vow of swadeshi], they may be put away in a safe place. We will use them later. I have forgotten the circumstances relating to the article with the locket. Nothing has come with me which had no historical value. Just now, therefore, everything should be kept in a safe place. Those articles which you think can be utilized may be used.

Abhiman in the sense of firm determination is necessary in regard to *yajna*, but *abhiman* in the sense of pride—that pride which makes you think how strong you are and feel confident that you will never miss your *yajna*—such *Abhiman* should be shunned.

I would have to answer your question about Meghji[1] only if I claimed that I could not be bound by human attachments. We may try to free ourselves from their bondage, but should not give up tenderness of heart or our desire to serve human beings. The thought of what will happen after someone's death springs from foolishness, not from human attachment. Everyone is to die sooner or later. Knowing this, why should we worry over death? Moreover, having surrendered ourselves as puppets in the hands of the Master, how can we bargain with Him? He may make us dance as He wills. After all, what matters is that we should be able to dance. If a person can always dance, what else can he ask for?

It is very good indeed that you are making progress in your music.[2] If it is necessary to get your tonsils removed, do so.

The matter about visitors from outside the Ashram has not been settled. I have included Sushila's name [in the list of visitors]. In asking me to discuss your defects, do you want me to praise you? I do not at all wish to tell you your defects. Haven't I pointed them out more than once? Let me know how many of them you have overcome; we shall talk about others afterwards.

Devotees of God and such other people can cultivate equal-mindedness only in a certain measure. He in whom it becomes perfect must be God. But, then, there is only one God. Hence, even the most perfect human being will have equal-mindedness in an imperfect measure. That is why we see differences in people's beliefs and conflicts among them. We need not be unhappy about this. The

[1] One of the three children who died of smallpox. Their parents had taken Gandhiji's advice and refused to have the children vaccinated. On all the three occasions Gandhiji was perturbed and could not sleep.

[2] The addressee was taking lessons from N. M. Khare.

worldis the effect of discord. Our duty lies in cultivating a greater degree of equal-mindedness every day. If we try to do this, the presence of discord in the world will cease to hurt us and become bearable, may even seem beautiful.

We need not believe that everything in India is better than elsewhere. Moreover, rise and fall is the law of the world. On the whole, there is much good in India. That is why it became a conquered country, and not a conquering country. At the basis of this attitude is the belief that an oppressor is in a worse state than his slave.

What books on astronomy and which of the works of Upton Sinclair do we have?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10277. Also C.W. 6725. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

162. LETTER TO MADALASA BAJAJ

March 21, 1932

CHI. MADALASA,

From my letter to Vatsala you will find replies to some of your questions too. Since milk didn't seem to agree with me here, I said so in my letter. It is possible that one does not require milk when leading a quiet life.

Cereals and other grains should not be eaten uncooked. Leafy vegetables, carrots, etc., can be. If they are cooked, they lose part of their nutrient value.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchaven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 312

163. LETTER TO BUDHABHAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
March 21, 1932

CHI. BUDHABHAI,

As long as you do not stop thinking about Parvati, you will continue to suffer from involuntary discharges. Stop thinking of yourself as Babu's father and regard yourself as his trustee only. Small children always live with their mother. Be content with what Narandas can do about the matter. Do not think too much, either, about what you eat, and do not be nervous if an involuntary discharge occurs. If you thus cultivate detachment, everything will be all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 33123

164. LETTER TO A GIRL[1]

March 21, 1932

Realizing the sense of brotherhood is the most important thing in the observance of *brahmacharya.* We all are children of the same Father, how can we at all marry? Food must be eaten only as medicine, not for pleasure of the palate. Mind and body should be kept occupied in service. Meditate over *Satyanarayana*[2]. Cut off your hair regardless of people's opinion if you feel it is your duty. Remain ever absorbed in service as a form of devotion to God.

Keep up a constant struggle against the passions, holding them to be our real enemy. This very struggle has been delineated in the *Mahabharata.*

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 27

[1] The addressee was aspiring to observe *brahmacharya.*
[2] God in the form of Truth

165. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

March 22, 1932

MY DEAR AGATHA,

You will recognize this hand[1]. Mahadev came in just when my right hand had begun to refuse to work for me, not that there is any continuing pain but writing with it is difficult. I do a fair amount of writing with the left hand and am using Mahadev's hand whenever I can.

You [talk][2] of Dr. Ramchandra Rao. I can't identify him He is not likely to be permitted to see me. We are now three and we are all keeping quite well, and having a fair stock of books, newspapers and spinning-wheels, we have enough to occupy our time.

With love,[3]

Yours sincerely,

BAPU[4]

From a photostat: G.N. 1452

166. LETTER TO DR. C. MUTHU

March 22, 1932

I was delighted to hear from you and to have a copy of the new edition of that excellent book[5] of yours. I am going to read it again. Please don't worry about my food. I have not yet had to resume milk. I fancy that when one is leading a quiet and contemplative life, one does not need the stimulation of milk and its vitamins. I am keeping my weight and the required energy on a diet of bread, almond paste, green vegetable and tomatoes, and lemon. I take also about 2 oz. of honey daily mixed with hot water and a pinch of bicarbonate of soda. The bowels act regularly. I am worrying you with these details as you have always interested yourself in my health. I have not received a copy of your address on "How to prolong the span of life in India" and "Health and disease in relation to childhood."[6]

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 5-4-1932

[1] Mahadev Desai's
[2] A word here is illegible in the source.
[3] These words are in Gandhiji's hand.
[4] *ibid*
[5] The *Antiquity of Hindu Medicine*
[6] This sentence is from *The Hindu*, 29-4-1932.

167. LETTER TO PADMA

March 22, 1932

CHI. PADMA,

I got your letter. I read the poem. I see that you have a gift for poetry. But don't be impatient. Your gifts will develop only if your health improves. Do you get any medical help there? Did you go to Bhowali? The very air of that place is as good as medicine. How is it that you still don't improve? I received only one letter from Sarojinidevi and replied to her. I have decided to experiment on the Magan spinning-wheel and asked them to send me one.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N 6130. Also C.W. 3482. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

168. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

March 22, 1932

BHAI VITHALDAS,

Presuming that you have returned to Bombay now, I am writing this to your address there. I got the dates you sent for the second time. They contain numerous caterpillars and weevils, which perhaps may have bred after the parcel reached here. In any case, however, you should not send more dates until I ask for them. The dates supplied here are not bad but, for some time, I wish to see if I cannot do without dates altogether. It is not possible here to preserve in good condition a large stock of any eatables. Moreover, friends outside should not spend either time or money on those in jail unless necessary. When I need [anything] I will certainly ask [for it]. I hope your health is daily improving. Sardar and Mahadev are quite well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VITHALDAS JERAJANI
KHADI BHANDAR
KALBADEVI ROAD
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9780

169. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

March 22, 1932

A devotee of the *Gita* never concerns himself with the question whether he can see God while in this body, for it is his duty to do work but he has no right to claim the fruit. If so, why should we think about that to which we have no right? All the same, it is my view that full realization of God is impossible while in this body. We may almost reach the goal, but, because of the body, it seems impossible that we can go through the doorway. We must, of course, feel continually the misery of separation from God, otherwise we would give up or relax our effort. Such misery, however, should leadnot to despair but to hope, not to relaxation of effort but to even greater effort. We have God's assurance that however small the effort, it is never wasted. In view of this, even the misery of separation should be a cause of joy to us, for we must have faith that one day we shall realize Him.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 30-1

170. LETTER TO A PENSIONER[1]

March 22, 1932

You should write to Dr. Muthu. My own knowledge, which, though not scientific, but based on experience suggests that you should fast for three days and break the fast with milk and orange juice. If you try this, it will help you.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 30

[1] The addressee had asked for a nature cure treatment for his asthma.

171. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

March 23, 1932

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

Many thanks for Mr. Stokes's book[1]. Please tell Mr. Stokes that I have set aside other reading in order to go through his book. I hope, when I have finished it, to write to him directly.

I hope that fever has not been troubling you again and that you have been otherwise too keeping well and fit.

As the right hand again causes trouble, I am using the left hand for writing. I have now Mahadev's assistance.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Jayakar's Private Papers, Correspondence File No. 407-VI. Courtesy: National Archives of India

172. LETTER TO TILAKAM

March 24, 1932

MY DEAR,

In working out plans for self-restraint, attention must not for a single moment be withdrawn from the fact that we are all sparks of the divine and, therefore, partake of its nature, and since there can be no such thing as self-indulgence with the divine it must of necessity be foreign to human nature. If we get a hard grasp of that elementary fact, we should have no difficulty in attaining self-control, and that is exactly what is implied in the verses we sing every evening. You will recall that one of the verses says that the craving for self-indulgence abates only when one sees God face to face.

Love.

From a copy: C.W. 8961. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary.* Vol. l, pp. 14-5

[1] *Satyakama or "True Desires"*

173. LETTER TO ABBAS

March 24, 1932

CHI. ABBAS,

Your question is very good. "Which does not cause pain to anybody''[1] means that the speaker should sincerely have no intention of causing pain. We can never know with certainty what the effect on the other person will be. We may, therefore, only think how we would feel if somebody said the same thing to us. The same rule applies about "agreeable" and "beneficial"

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6307. Also C.W. 8988. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

174. LETTER TO JUGATRAM DAVE

March 24, 1932

BHAI,

You have filled up pages all right. Our gharry is not driven by human beings. It is driven by God. It will certainly continue to run as long as we, the passengers, have faith in Him. The moment we lose faith, be sure that the train will stop.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8983. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. 1, p.* 34

175. LETTER TO INDU N. PAREKH

March 24, 1932

CHI.,

Yours is an interesting question.

The *Mahabharata is* a poem and not history. The poet's aim in it is to show that, if man adopts the path of violence, he will necessarily have to resort to falsehood. Even a person like Krishna cannot escape that necessity. But a wrong is a wrong no matter who does it. The

[1] *Anudvegakaram*; *Bhagavad Gita,* XVII. 15

actions of keeping Shikhandi in front and hiding the sun were certainly blameworthy. If I remember correctly, Vyasji also has represented them in that light.

If the plays which represent such incidents show that they are not worthy of imitation, there may be no harm in staging them. However, the question you have asked is certainly worth pondering over....[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8985. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary,* Vol. I, p. 34

176. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

March 24, 1932

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

You have filled your letter entirely with explanations, but you can do that only once. You can come whenever you wish to.

All three of us are in good health and keep cheerful.

Janakibehn is all right now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1832

177. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

March 24, 1932

CUNNING RAIHANA,

You are trying to delude me by praising my Urdu. By God's grace, however, I will not let myself be deluded in this way. My handwriting is very bad, and so is my spelling. Before my Urdu deserves such praise, Raihana will have grown into an old woman or I would have to give more time to it [than I do]. I now copy the *bhajan*. Imagine that Raihana is singing it.[2]

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] In the source, this paragraph and the song which follows are in Urdu.

Arise, awake, O Traveller, it's morning now.
Where is the night that you are still in bed?
He gains who stands awake,
And he who slumbers loses.
Open your eyes a little,
You careless one, turn your mind to God.
This is not the way to love,
That while He is awake, you slumber.
Know that you will have to eat the fruits of your doings,
O sinner, how can sin ever bring happiness?
You carry a burden of sin on your head,
Why, then, hold your head in grief and weep?
What you would tomorrow, to today,
And what you would today, do right now.
After the sparrows have ravaged your crops,
What will it avail you to beat your breast and weep?

I see that the handwriting continues to be bad, but I can't write better with the left hand. I will try and improve it slowly. Meanwhile, endure it as it is. Please do not feel ashamed of such a dull pupil. If you are patient, I may in course of time deserve your praise, which I do not deserve now. If that does not happen, I will blame you. Isn't there a book which explains how to spell in Urdu? Please inquire. If Hamid Ali and Sharifabehn are still there, convey to them my many *salaams* and tell them that I have not forgotten the meeting with them at Godhra and the help given by both at the Social Reform Conference.

Tell Father that I got his postcard. However, it would not be proper for a prisoner like me to write often to a big person like him. I can write as many letters as I choose to girls like you. Father may write to me as often as he wishes. There is certainly some justification for such a rule. There might be no harm in a prisoner receiving letters, but there may be in his writing. Hence a prisoner may write innocent letters to children without objection. It should cause no surprise that Father's memory is getting weak. It should be enough for us if God preserves long his strength to dance [with joy]. To Father and Mother, many *salaams* and as many *vandemataramas* from us all. Kisses to Kamalmiyan[1]. Blessings to Hamida, Rohini, and others. It is a very good thing that Ba has now returned to them. Send me from your

[1] Sohaila's son

treasury some good *bhajans* of your choice. If you write in Urdu script, it will serve as a lesson in Urdu for me. Ask Pashabhai to write. Blessings to him from Sardar and me. Let Sardar remain for ever only Vallabhkaka for you.

Long live Raihana! *Khuda Hafiz.*

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9639

178. LETTER TO SOMABHAI PATEL

March 24, 1932

CHI. SOMABHAI,

Never mind if Narandas has made a prisoner of you. Improve your health. Narrate your experiences to me. How did you spend the time? Is there any news about Bhansali? How much weight did you lose?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9220

179. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

March 24, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

This time your handwriting seems to have deteriorated. You should see that it is always good. Ordinarily it is not necessary to make any difference between men's and women's work. There is a difference in some respects, but it will come about naturally.

The correct name is "Mahadevbhai" and not "Madhavbhai".

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9423. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

180. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

YERAVDA MANDIR,
March 24, 1932

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

After your letter nothing remains to be said. In fact I should not even think about the happenings outside. But so long as I do not stop reading the newspapers, it is impossible not to think about them or to react to them. So I asked you to put my mind at ease. You should have immediately sent to him the gist of the conversation. That is my feeling in the light of my earlier experience. But now there is no need to do it. This suggestion may be useful in future. Gulzarilal is maintaining good health. It seems he has found, without seeking, the kind of company he needs. Let me know if you have any more news about Mridula. You two must be in good health.

My right hand needs rest.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32743

181. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

March 25, 1932

MY DEAR HORACE,

You will have no difficulty in recognizing this handwriting. Mahadev was just sent to me when I had again to fall back on the left hand. I was glad to have your note. Agatha has been keeping me informed to the extent that she can of your activities and the papers that I am allowed to receive do also now and then mention something of the activities of all the many friends who had interested themselves in this struggle and Hoyland has been telling me of the silent prayers. I know that they are all precious and not one prayer of the heart is without an adequate response. What though one does not see tangible results of all heartfelt prayers!

You are quite right in being happy for me to have this enforced rest. If it had not come to me there would have been in all probability, a breakdown. The time here does not hang heavy. There is the

spinning-wheel, and there are the silent companions—the books—and I need some time for doing a little writing. And then I have Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel with me who last time was not kept with me but just a wall separated him from me. And now I have Mahadev.Yes, I wanted that special message from Olive[1]. I was sorry that I could not come in closer touch with her during those precious days at Selly Oak, but I have imagination enough to understand what her beautiful life must be like. Our love to you and Olive and all the friends.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1412

182. LETTER TO ANANDI ASAR[2]

March 25, 1932

CHI.,

It was bad of you to have given a curt reply to the visitor. We should always be courteous to any visitor, no matter how he is dressed, and we must reply to a visitor's question.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8984. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

183. LETTER TO MAHENDRA V. DESAI

March 25, 1932

CHI. MANU,

Your description is good, but how about your handwriting which is very bad? How old are you now? Your handwriting must improve.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7424. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1] Addressee's wife

[2] Addressee's name is inferred from "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 24/29-3-1932.

184. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI M. PATEL

March 25, 1932

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

I got your letter. This time we are really being tested. We should not mind it. Write to me from time to time.

I suppose you know that Mahadev has been brought here. We three are practically enjoying ourselves.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8994

185. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

March 26, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

No letter from you as you had promised. But I am not surprised. Such correspondence was held up. But the bar is now lifted at least so far as I am concerned and therefore presumably so far as my correspondents are concerned. I therefore expect from you an answer almost per return. Tell me how you and your companions are doing, what you are eating and how you are passing the days.

Mahadev has now joined us and we have become a merry company. He is the most industrious spinner among us. My weak arms won't let me try to outdo him. My milkless diet continues without practically any change in the menu. I think I did tell you about the addition of bread. As yet it seems to have done no harm. My weight fluctuates between 105_ and 106_. This is not bad. The others are also doing quite well.

Love from us all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6216. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9682

186. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

March 26, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

Just as I was sending the enclosed[1], I got your two precious letters. I therefore suspended the despatch for writing this. You now know why I could not write, but then we are prisoners. We may not expect the regularity that independent people can create for themselves. But there is nothing to grumble at in these delays which must be regarded as inevitable. Henceforth, let us hope, things will move on without interruption. But whenever the unexpected hitch of any kind occurs, do not be anxious, but say, 'We are prisoners'.

I am glad you have put on weight. For your height and breadth, you can easily carry 132 lb. But the heat is bad. It is good to have dropped salt. You might even drop milk and butter for two or three days and you will feel cool.

I am glad you are growing fond of reading. Get someone to procure for you full translation of *Ramayana* by Griffiths and the translation of eleven principal Upanishads. This will be enough for the present term.

For Hindi, you should procure *Bala Ramayana*. As you now know the story, you will have no difficulty in following it in Hindi.

I had copy of Lord Irwin's letter[2] before too.

I too have no news of Rolland. But I do not worry. Such interruptions are a legitimate part of the business.

I must stop for the day as I am anxious for this letter to leave here today.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6217. Courtesy: Mirabehn, Also G.N. 9683

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] "I think Bapuwas referring to a letter Lord Irwin (now Lord Halifax) had written to me."—Mirabehn

187. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

March 26, 1932

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

What is your wish regarding the bamboo charkha? I need not see the model. I should like to see models which would help us to increase the output. If this model is strong and good otherwise, people will use it because of its low cost. Do you think it necessary that it should be used in the Ashram? I cannot judge about that from here.

Let me know what the condition of your nose is.

If Sharda does not have massage or take sun-bath, is it because she dislikes them or is it through lethargy?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.G. 12

188 LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

March 26, 1932

CHI. DEVDAS,

I received today permission to write to fellow-prisoners, and hence this letter. I think of you every day. Mahadev has been brought here. All three of us are well. More after I hear from you in reply to this. Give me news about your health, your reading and your companions. I write to Lakshmi regularly and receive her letters written in beautiful Hindi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2022

189. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

March 26, 1932

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I received today permission to write to you and other co-workers in prison.

Write to me immediately and give me detailed information about your health and your diet. All of us feel a little worried about

you. Who else are with you in prison? How is their health? How is Dr. Sumant[1]? Sardar tells me that like me Diwan Master also has lost his teeth. How is his general health? I don't know who else are with you. Gangabehn[2] has informed me that Pannalal[3] is one of them.

My *vandemataram* to all co-workers. You must have heard that Mahadev has joined us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2896

190. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

March 26, 1932

CHI. MANI,

Today I received permission to write to fellow-prisoners. Hence this letter. As I have got this permission, I take it that the recipients of my letters will be allowed to reply to me. Reply to this letter at once. I do not write today to other women prisoners, namely, Lilavati[4], Nandubehn[5] and Mridula[6]. So let me have news of them too. Who else are with you?

Mahadev has been brought here. We three are all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. MANIBEHN PATEL

PRISONER

PRISON, BELGAUM

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 80

[1] Sumant Mehta
[2] Gangabehn Jhaveri
[3] Pannalal Jhaveri, Gangabehn's step-son
[4] Wife of Harilal Desai
[5] Nandubehn Kanuga
[6] Mridula Sarabhai

191. LETTER TO NIRMALA H. DESAI

March 26, 1932

CHI. NIRMALA,

Your elder brother's weight has increased and the leg has improved so much that he can walk now. There is not the slightest cause for worry. If brother and sister are of the same age, the sister can ask the brother and learn things from him. It is a sister's duty to do what will be for the brother's good, regardless of their age.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9468

192. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

March 27, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

Call to mind the hymn "One step enough for me". What do we gain by thinking what we should do in changed circumstances? When the time comes it will suggest itself. Normally we can say that most things will still have to be learnt even in swaraj. I hope you know that [after independence] those of you who are above sixteen will be free then to do as they wish. People like me will only tender advice.

Now tell me, why don't you have massage or sun-bath?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9908. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

193. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

YERAVDA MANDIR,
March 27, 1932

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

I received your telegram[1] this evening. How did such an accident happen? Were you present at the time of the operation ? You have been placed under a great load. But you believe in God. There is assurance in the *Gita* that the load of a believer is borne by God. Have faith in God and keep your mind free.

I shall expect your detailed letter.

Vallabhbhai and Mahadev also are terribly shocked.

How many children does he leave behind?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32724

194. SOME REFLECTIONS ON EDUCATION[2]

March 28, 1932

John Ruskin was a great writer, teacher and religious thinker. He died about 1880.[3] I suppose most inmates of the Ashram know that one book[4] of his had a great effect on me and that it was this book which inspired me to introduce an important change in my life practically on the instant. He started in 1871 writing monthly letters addressed to factory workers. I had read praise of these letters in some article of Tolstoy, but I had not been able to secure them till now. I had brought with me [from England] a book about Ruskin's workand his efforts in the field of constructive activities. I read it here. This book also mentioned the letters referred to above. So I wrote to a

[1] Giving news of the death of Dhirajlal Banker, addressee's younger brother

[2] This was sent along with ''Letter to Narandas Gandhi",24/29-3-1932

[3] He died in 1900.

[4] *Unto This Last*

woman disciple of Ruskin in England, who was none else but the author of that book. Being a poor woman, she could not send me the volumes of these letters. Through foolishness or false courtesy, I had not asked her to write to the Ashram for the money. This good woman sent my letter to a friend of hers who was comparatively in better circumstances. This friend was the editor of *The spectator*. I had even met him while in England. He sent me the four volumes in which these letters had been published. I have been reading the first part. The thoughts expressed in these letters are beautiful and resemble some of our own ideas, so much so that an outsider would think that the ideas which I have set forth in my writings and which we try to put into practice in the Ashram, I had stolen from these letters of Ruskin. I hope readers will understand what is meant by 'stolen'. If an idea or ideal of life is borrowed from somebody but is presented as one's own conception, it is said to be stolen.

Ruskin has discussed many matters. Here I will mention only a few of his ideas. He says that it is a sheer error to suppose, as is generally done, that some education however little or however faulty is better than no literary education at all. It is his view that we should strive for real education alone. And then he says that every human being requires three things and three virtues. Anyone who fails to cultivate them does not know the secret of life. These six things should therefore form the basis of education. Every child, whether boy or girl, should learn the properties of pure air, clean water and clean earth, and should also learn how to keep air, water and earth pure or clean and know their benefits. Likewise, he has mentioned gratitude, hope and charity as the three virtues. Anybody who does not love truth and cannot recognize goodness or beauty lives in his own selfconceit and remains ignorant of spiritual joy. Similarly, he who has no hope, who has, in other words, no faith in divine justice, will never be cheerful in heart. And he who is without love, that is, lacks the spirit of ahimsa, who cannot look upon all living things as his kith and kin, will never know the secret of living.

Ruskin has explained these ideas at great length in his wonderful language. I hope I shall be able to write about them some time in a language which all the inmates of the Ashram can understand. Today I rest content with the brief precis given above. But I will say one thing, that what Ruskin has explained in his finished and cultivated prose with English readers in view, is practically thesame ideas which

we discuss in our rustic language and which we have been trying to put into practice. I am comparing here not two languages, but two writers. I cannot hope to equal Ruskin's mastery of language. But a time will certainly come when the love of our language will have become universal and we shall have writers like Ruskin who will have dedicated themselves heart and soul to it and will write as powerful Gujarati as the English of Ruskin.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

195. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

March 28, 1932

MY DEAR AMTUL,

I was wondering why there was no letter from you. Narandas kept me informed. Now I am glad I have your letter. It was very good of Dr. Sharma to treat you without making any charge. You may send such books of his as he may recommend. The question of deciding the place for you is a little difficult. You must go to hill or to a sea-side place. I think you can go to Porbandar or Sasavne. I cannot think of another place just now. You must not lose your gain by any false step. If any of your people are living in Mussoorie you need not hesitate to go there. I agree with Narandas that you should not live at the Ashram during these hot days.

Of course you can come and see me whenever you wish. Sardar Vallabhbhai and Mahadev are with me.

As my right hand causes a little trouble if I write with it, I have been using the left hand.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 238

196. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

March 28, 1932

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I was distressed to read a note by the Director of Information, Bombay, that the Bombay Government intended to sell out beyond recall the lands of 'recalcitrant' farmers of Ras and such other villages. I do not know that you can recall the remark made by Lord

Irwin last year, in the course of the conversations, that under a recurrence of the circumstances which had actuated the Government to sell out some holdings in Ras during the previous satyagraha campaign, the experiment must not be repeated. I do not suggest that this remark was anything more than the then personal wish of Lord Irwin. But I cannot help feeling hurt that all such generous wishes of an honourable and high functionary should be in danger of being set aside or overlooked. And even apart from Lord Irwin's *obiter* statement, I would like the legacies of bitternesses to be left either by Government officials or Congressmen to be reduced to a minimum, if they cannot be avoided altogether. Surely all irrevocable acts which parties might possibly deplore in future or for which posterity may curse us should be avoided.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Home Department, Political, File No. 14/17,1932, p. 7. Courtesy: National Archives of India

197. LETTER TO TILAKAM

March 28, 1932

Vanity is emptiness: Self-respect is substance. No one's self-respect is ever hurt except by self, vanity is always hurt from outside.

In the phrase 'Seeing God face to face', 'face to face' is not to be taken literally. It is a matter of decided feeling. God is formless. He can, therefore, only be seen by spiritual sight—vision.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 52

198. A LETTER

March 28, 1932

BHAI,

In order to strengthen your mind, you should firmly adhere to the resolutions for the day which you make every morning. After some time, you can make resolutions for a week and so gradually for your whole life. You should not let a single worthless thought arise in your mind. This is the reason for the great importance of Ramanama. It is *a tamboora*, and other good thoughts are like the other

instruments or like the music. The tune on the *tamboora* must go on ceaselessly. For good health, freedom from worry is essential. In your case, I am sure that your health will improve if your mental illness is cured. But we should certainly employ remedies for the body too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8987. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

199. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

March 28, 1932

CHI. MANGALA (DARLING),

Arithmetic is an intellectual subject and similarly the meanings of the *Gita* verses, history, geography, etc., also are such subjects. Any subject to understand which we have to labour with our mind is an intellectual subject. Memorizing the *Gita* is not an intellectual subject. Spinning can be an intellectual subject. Anybody who, while spinning, improves the method of spinning or finds out ways of improving the construction of the spinning-wheel will have exercised his intellect.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4080. Also C.W. 44. Courtesy: Mangalabehn B. Desai

200. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

March 28, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

You may ask any questions you like. You will not probably get such an opportunity again. You don't know that I can, if I choose, reply a question in just one line or may fill pages. If I cannot write a long letter, I shall be content with a short reply. The reply, however, will not be incomplete.[1]

To believe that your tongue had an effect on my right hand is

[1] The addressee had then been receiving from Gandhiji letters written with his left hand.

like believing that, because the branch of a tree fell as soon as a crow came and sat on it, it fell because of the crow's weight.

I do get dreams, but the mind hardly ever takes note of them. I attach no importance to dreams.

I think there are complete sets of Carlyle's and Ruskin's works in our library. If we have them send me a list of the volumes.

How many copies of the consolidated list of books do we have? If we have more than one copy send one to me.

I have never written to you about the grown up women. I feel inclined to do so this time. They do not seem to come together for any common purpose. That is, their Association has broken up. I have written to Lakshmibehn and Durga on this matter, but I seem to have produced no effect on them. The women should get the strength to assume responsibility for joint work. If you have sufficient courage and confidence in yourself, take up this task. If you do so, however, you must resolve not to be defeated. We have, in fact, achieved nothing if we are able to do something when all the circumstances are favourable. A carpenter gives shape to any piece of wood and a sculptor makes an image from any stone; we are, likewise, worth our salt only if we know how to live with all types of people and get work from them. I think this is the main thing we have to learn in this life. For that, our heart should be as large as the sea. If we observe the defects of a person the very moment we see him or her and are deterred by them, our work would suffer. Everyone has defects. We have them and so have others. If we are determined to mix with them despite the defects, only then can we succeed in our work. I know thatthis is a difficult task. I have been engaged in this one task all these years and yet I cannot say that I have succeeded in it. I do seem, though, to have succeeded in some measure. That is why I muster courage or have the presumption to guide others.

You may now do what you think proper. You can, if you wish, put this letter before the women.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10278. Also C.W. 6726. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

201. LETTER TO VIMALABEHN A. PATEL

March 28, 1932

CHI. VIMALA,

Narasinhbhai[1] had prepared me for your letter and the books. Perhaps you know that I was able to see him. He was in good health and quite cheerful. He is now kept with other prisoners. I will find time to read the books which you have sent. I hope your work is going on very well.

Vandemataram to Mother from both of us, and blessings to you.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3275

202. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

March 28, 1932

CHI. VANAMALA,

A girl of your age should have these things: a fine body, a strong mind and occupations for both, which include all the processes relating to spinning, cooking, various games, swimming, music, knowledge of Gujarati, Hindi and Sanskrit, elements of arithmetic, history, geography, some knowledge of the *Gita* and the ability to recognize stars and trees and plants. If you lack any of these things, that will be a deficiency. I forgot to mention the art of writing a good hand.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

How is it that Mohan[2] has fever? Has he been examined by a doctor?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5770. Also C.W. 2993. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

[1] Addressee's father

[2] Addressee's brother

203. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

March 28, 1932

CHI. TARAMATI,

There is no news at all from Mathuradas. Give me news of all of you in detail. Do you know that Mahadev is with me? How do you spend your time?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI TARABEHN MATHURADAS

C/O MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

57 MINT ROAD

BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

204. A LETTER

March 28, 1932

As the leaves of a tree always live together, so do men with similar ideas and ways. Their attraction for one another is natural.The number of one's co-workers may be a million, but there can be only one friend, and that is God. It is my view, and my experience, that other friendships are an obstacle in the way of friendship with God.

I do not know, and do not believe, that Lord Krishna could go from one place to another, without any physical means, through yogic power or some other power. A real yogi shuns the exercise of any supernatural power, for his yoga is exclusively for self-realization. Would he exchange it for a mess of pottage?

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 53

205. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 24/29, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your packet yesterday. Gangabehn came and saw me. It is necessary that we should think about Indu's health. When he returned from Bangalore, he weighed 100 lb., and he is 90 now. Discover the cause. Know from him where and what he eats, what he used to eat in Bangalore and what was his way of life there, and how, according to him, he can keep better health in the Ashram. If anybody does not keep good health in the Ashram, we should try and discover the cause and, if he or she does not improve with such measures and changes as we can try and as would be in keeping with the principles of the Ashram, we should send the person to some other place, to Visapur or Wardha, for instance. Think over this problem and, if you consider it necessary, entrust the responsibility in this matter to one particular person. You will not be able to look after every inmate of the Ashram. You should be burdened only with the responsibility of giving the final decision.

I take it that you got the letter[1] which I wrote last week and in which I explained about visitors, and I do not dwell further on the subject in this letter. I also wrote about Champa in that letter. There were two or three other points too.

Indu has raised a very good question in his letter. Read my reply[2] to him. However, you, Panditji, Premabehn, Chimanlal, Valji and others in the Ashram who think on such matters should ponder over the problem. Indu had asked whether Krishna did not do wrong in advising Arjuna to keep Shikhandi in front of him and kill Bhishma and in employing his Sudarshan wheel to hide the sun behind clouds, so that Jayadrath might be killed, and had raised the question whether plays which treated of such incidents should be performed in the Ashram. I was very much pleased by his question. If the general tendency of the drama is to show such actions as morally

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 18-3-1922
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Indu N. Parekh", 24-3-1932

wrong, I would have no objection to its being performed. All the same, I do have some doubt about the propriety of such dramas being performed in the Ashram. I don't think we do any good by repeatedly presenting to children unworthy actions of great men, even though we represent the actions as unworthy, unless it is absolutely necessary to tell them about such actions. They will probably forget the unworthiness of the action and leave with the impression that we, too, could do what great men did. It does not, therefore, seem proper to me to select such incidents and present them in dramatic performances before children. I think that the dramas which we perform in the Ashram should be of a different type. For instance, Rabindranath's *Muktadhara.* Maithilisharan Gupta's *Anagh,* which I recently read here, is also a good play and could be performed before the children there. Its Hindi is simple and sweet and the moral is excellent.

I go and inquire after Haridas from time to time.

Do you get news about Krishnadas[1] from any source? If you do not, write to Mahavir Prasad and ask him if he has any.

Amtulbehn may certainly come and see me. Your scabies and Kanu's ought to be cured now.

About the Vidyapith library, so far as we can judge from this distance, all of us feel that we should not introduce the kindof dyarchy which has been suggested. It would mean control by two authorities. Either they should hand over full control to us or should themselves exercise it properly as long as they retain it with them. However, do only what seems best to you. I shall not be able to see the women prisoners lodged in this jail, but I shall be permitted to write to them and receive letters from them.

Anandi had referred to Prema in her letter. Read my reply[2] to her. The matter requires further thought, however. In teaching the children in the Ashram to be fearless and to stand erect, we have, unknowingly, taught them rudeness. Even grown-ups are not free from such rudeness and, sometimes, their rudeness assumes a painful

[1] Krishnadas Simharai, one time secretary to Gandhiji
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Anandi Asar", 25-3-1932

form. It seems that a guest had arrived in the Ashram and the boys did not answer his inquiries properly. One directed him this way and another that way, and none would even reply to his questions. And of course none took the trouble to accompany him to the office. I understand from Anandi's letter that she was somewhere near about but she felt unhappy afterwards and wrote to me about the incident, it seems, to confess her error and atone for it. She has asked me about the duty of the inmates of the Ashram in such circumstances. There is no doubt about what it is, but since the question has been raised you should draw everybody's attention to it. Explain what I have written to Anandi, filling in the necessary details. In my letter I could write only a sentence or two explaining the general principle.

Vanamala tells me in her letter that Mohan's body temperature always remains 99°. Inquire about this. If necessary, consult a doctor. Why should a child of his age continually show 99° temperature? Or, maybe, just because he is a child, on taking his temperature with a thermometer or examining his pulse, we may feel that he is having fever but in fact there may be no fever. The heart-beat of a very active child who is playing about the whole day is bound to be faster, and, therefore, he is bound to have more heat in him and the thermometer or the examination of his pulse may show a little fever. In such a case, the real test is provided by the child's stool, the appearance of his tongue, his digestion and his weight. A child's weight must show increase every weak. His tongue should be clean and moist, he should be passing stool without effort and it must be well formed and without foul smell. If all these signs are there, we need not pay any attention to what the pulse or the thermometer may tell us. Every mother in the Ashram, and Jethalal too, should learn these things.

There was a letter from Amtul to which, as desired by her, I have replied at her Delhi address. Tell her this if she has arrived there. She may certainly come and see me. I agree with you that it would be better for her not to live at Sabarmati in summer. It would be very good if you can arrange for her to stay in Porbandar, Chorwad or Sasavne. If she has relations in Mussoorie, she may go there. It would also do her good if she can stay with Padma in Almora. I have given this advice in my letter to her also. Do help to accommodate her, if you can, as I have suggested.

On taking your letter in my hand, I read Pyare Ali's name in it.

At the place where he lives the air may be cool, and so Amtul will perhaps feel happy there and may also be able to help Pyare Ali. Sultana[1] and other children are there, too. However, treat all this as no more than suggestions. Do what you think proper.

I and Gangabehn have started writing to each other. She informs me that all the women prisoners are keeping well.

I got the leather sent by you for repairing sandal soles.

My experiment of milkless diet is continuing. It has proceeded all right so far. I deduce from this fact that for a person leading a quiet life milk is perhaps not necessary. From the point of view of spiritual well-being, it may even be harmful. As yet, this is only an inference. I can be positive only if the experiment continues successfully for a long time. In my own case this is certainly true, that before I was attacked by dysentery in 1918 I could do without milk no matter how hard I was working. However, these speculations serve no purpose just now. All that is necessary is that I should let you know about the effects of the experiment from week to week. For the present, let nobody even think of following my example.

Blessings from

BAPU[2]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8216. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Amina Qureshi's daughter

[2] For the article "Some Reflections on Education" which followed, *vide* "Some Reflections on Education", 28-3-1932

206. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

March 29, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

As there was no letter from you this week, there was no need for me to write to you. But this time I ignore the omission. Knowledge should be given only to a *jijnasu. A jijnasu* means a person who hungers for knowledge. *As* a child fed by its mother even when it is not hungry will fall ill, so also, if you are not hungry for knowledge you will not be able to digest knowledge which is forced on you, that is, you will derive no benefit from it. Hence, not only should I get a letter from you every week, but the letter should also be an interesting one. "Interesting" means sweet, one which gave you pleasure in writing and will give me pleasure in reading. If you are interested in *lejim* exercises, you may write an interesting letter on that subject but it may not be interesting to me because I may know nothing about these exercises and have no means here of knowing anything. If you write such a letter, what can I write in reply? Do you understand now the two conditions your letters must fulfil so that they may be interesting? I, too, must fulfil those conditions in my letters. That is why I once wrote to Sharda that, if you could take no interest in my letters about the *Gita*, the fault must be mine. So be it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8989. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

207. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

March 29, 1932

CHI. KAKA,

I am now permitted to write to all of you, and so I am writing this. Let me know how you keep. I have heard that Narahari and Prabhudas are with you. Write to me and tell me about their health too. Since I have asked you to do this, I am not writing separately

tothem. What have you been reading or studying?

All three of us are well. . . .[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Since I am permitted to write to you, I am sure you will be permitted to reply to me.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9485. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

208. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

March 30, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

With reference to my letter[2] of the 6th instant, I have the definition of the expression 'Non-Political' which I observe corresponds to mine, but I have yet to have the reply with reference to the five illustrative names submitted of non-Ashram friends who are likely to want to visit me or who I am likely to want to see. I shall be obliged if the reply can now be given. I am waiting for that reply to prepare the list desired by the Government.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 9

209. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

Y. M.,
March 31, 1932

MY DEAR ANAND,

It was indeed good news that Father stayed with you. That must be enough. It is unreasonable to expect coincidence of views. Mutual respect and toleration is the only thing one may expect and for one's own part cultivate.

Vidya must write regularly. You have said nothing about her. I hope you are getting more and more composed in mind.

[1] A line and a half were censored by the jail authorities.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to M. G. Bhandar", 6-3-1932.

Love to you both.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

210. LETTER TO DAHIBEHN PATEL

March 31, 1932

CHI. DAHIBEHN,

I got your letter. The harder the task, the fewer willing workers will there be. I was, therefore, not surprised by your letter. But understanding workers, when they observe the paucity of volunteers, will become more devoted to their work and make greater sacrifices. If they do so, the number of workers will increase again. There is no exception to this law.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9206

211. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

March 31, 1932

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

Since you have taken a pledge that you will write, you should do so regularly. That you have completed twenty-four years means nothing at all. You have a long span of life before you yet and should fulfil during it the hopes which I may have built on you. Do go and visit Pyarelal. Personally I think I am keeping very good health this time. That I have been able to maintain my weight without milk and do not require enemas is enough for me. I don't mind very much if I cannot write with the right hand. I shall get used to writing with the left hand. All three of us are doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1833

212. LETTER TO MOHAN N. PARIKH

March 31, 1932

CHI. MOHAN,

The letters you make vary in size. Improve your hand. It is a good thing that you rise early. Do you know the tables? If you do not, learn them.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9176

213. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

March 31, 1932

As I had no news from you at all, at last I wrote to Taramati. Then unexpectedly I got your letter yesterday and felt happy. I do not worry about your loss of weight. Your health should remain good in other respects. From the point of view of climate, Nasik is excellent. Write to me regularly from wherever you may be. If writing to me comes in the way of your writing to others, ask one of those to whom you must write to convey your message to me. The understanding between the authorities here and me is that I can write to any of my fellow-prisoners. This should mean that, if the prisoner chooses to reply to me, his letter should not count among the number he is entitled to write.

. . .[1] A prisoner ought not to even think of the outside world. Karmayoga for him would mean doing the duty which now has become his in jail.

In the verse cq_kS 'kj.kefUoPN[2]; "seek refuge in the attitude of detachment", etc., the word *buddhi* certainly does not mean the *samkhya*, or the path of knowledge. Here it has the meaning which it bears in the phrase *yogabuddhi,* about which the Lord had promised to explain in the verse ,"kk rs·fHkfgrk lka[;s cqf_;ksxsfRoeka J`.kqA[3] "Thus have I set before thee the attitude of Knowledge; hear now the attitude of Action", etc. That is to say, if any comparison is to

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] *Bhagavad Gita,* II. 49
[3] *Ibid*

be made at all, it is between karmayoga and *bhaktiyoga.* But instead of making a comparison between *jnanayoga,* karmayoga and *bhaktiyoga,* the *Gita* aims at a synthesis of the three. To practise any one of them perfectly, one must also practise the other two. That is, the three are inseparable. There is some indication of the superiority of karmayoga from among the three, but only because there is less risk in it of being deceived. usgkfHkØeuk'kks·fLr izR;ok;ks u fo|rs[1] "Here no effort undertaken is lost, no disaster befalls", etc. I believe that we must first grasp the general purport of the book we are trying to study. In other words, our thinking about it should be independent.

As for rebirth, there is no room for doubt at all. Our body changes a little every day, so that in seven years the whole gets changed altogether. It seems to be the same because the form remains the same. If the body can be transformed every seven years, there is no reason whatever to think that what we know as death means complete annihilation. The *atman* is different from the body and it is certainly not destroyed when the body is destroyed. Then, all that takes place at death is a change of state. If a change of state is possible, why not a change of the body? However, we can have a full discussion of this subject only when we meet. Meanwhile, I certainly wish that you should be able to get rid of your doubts about certain conclusions. For this purpose, you may put me any questions that you wish.

I don't think that I can write a *smriti.* What I write or say has not been thought out in conformity with a system. I have only enough strength to enable me to meet every situation as it arises in the course of my quest for truth. That is to say, I am no Shastri, and only a person learned enough to write a Shastra can compose a *smriti.* This suggestion was first made to me by Kishorelal. I would certainly write such a treatise if I could. I would be fortunate, however, if I can use rightly whatever powers God has given me.

We three are quite well. The third is Mahadev.

[PS.]

I see nothing wrong in your trying without concern for the result to come to see me. I would be very happy if you succeed.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 105-7

[1] *Ibid*

214. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
March 31, 193[*2*][1]

CHI. VANAMALA,

I hope you have completely recovered from your illness. The best subject of study for girls is how to live a pure life. As for other subjects, each may learn the subject in which she has interest. Persons of the same age are not necessarily similar in nature.

The leaves of all plants do not show as if they felt shy in our presence. I do not know why some of them do. If any of the girls among you has an aptitude for research, let her discover the reason.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5761. Also C.W. 2984. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

215. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

[About *March 1932*][2]

PARASRAM,

Questions were being left unanswered. The thing which is seen settling down in urine is the natural salt. Everyone has some of it more or less. It is good if a new entrant is medically examined. The question remains whether we can cope with it or no. Neem stick, like *babul* stick, gives good service.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7480; also C. W. 4955. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

[1] The source has ''1931", but Gandhiji was not in jail in March 1931. *Vide* also "Letter to Vimlabehn A. Patel", 28-3-1932.

[2] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Parasram Mehrotra", 20-3-1932

216. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

April 1, 1932

CHI. PANDITJI,

Sardar is in excellent health, though he has lost some weight. True, he had made a few changes in his food, but now he has practically returned to his normal diet. From the authorities there was no objection at all to his doing so. In the matter of food, the only restriction is what we lay down for ourselves.

The golden rule to follow in interpreting the Shastras is this: The various interpretations offered by the commentators may all be correct from their respective standpoints. The seeker should faithfully adhere to the meaning that appeals to his heart and act accordingly. It is for the Shastri to harmonize the different interpretations or to construct a system, and so on. For the person wishing to construct a way of life for himself, there is only one harmony to be achieved—between the meaning accepted by him and his daily life.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 224. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

217. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

April 2, 1932

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

There is no particular trouble in my hand. I am not using the right hand for writing merely as a measure of precaution. You must not let your weight increase. Fast for a few days or live only on fruit. All this weight is superfluous. It may help you even if you live for some time on buttermilk.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7425. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

218. LETTER TO NIRMALA H. DESAI

April 2, 1932

CHI. NIRMALA,

All of you seem to believe that swaraj means my rule. It will not be swaraj then. In swaraj, people who are known for their wisdom will rule. What they decide will be done. Let us hope voters will count for less than they do today.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev is quite well. The pain in his leg is much less. He eats the same things and of the same quality as at home, namely, *rotli*, dal, rice, vegetables, etc. There is not the slightest cause for worry.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9469

219. LETTER TO PURATAN BUCH

CHI. PURATAN,

April 2, 1932

Since in any case you are obliged to take rest for some time, can you not go to either Almora, Deolali, Matheran or Belgaum, or to a place on the sea-coast like Chorwad, Mangarol, Dumas, Ghogha, etc.?

I used to pray [as a child] because the elders in the family did. After earnest introspection in 1893 in South Africa, I became a conscious believer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9165

220. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

Y. M.,
April 2, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

I had been awaiting your letter. I am glad to know that you are doing well. Do not let anything perturb your mind.

I am well and my diet consists of *roti*, almonds, dates, lemon and some vegetable. My weight remains unchanged.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

221. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

April 3, 1932

CHI. MANGALA (DARLING),

You should know personally the men and women among whom you live. You should know the names and properties of all the trees and varieties of grass which you grow there. You should know where the Chandrabhaga[1] has its source. You should also know the names of the insects, birds and other animals which you see there, and give names to such of them as have no names. You should know the good and the bad points of the soil there, and also the history of the buildings in the neighbourhood. Is not this enough? How much of all this do you know?

Our capacity for observation can be increased by forming the habit of carefully examining things.

I learn to study the firmament with the help of a book.

If it is getting late, you may write less, but write it carefully and slowly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4081. Also C.W. 45. Courtesy: Mangalabehn B. Desai

[1] A rivulet near the Ashram, now dried up

222. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 3, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

Generally I get your letters on Wednesday immediately on arrival. This time, too, I have received a beautiful question from Indu: "Can we practise sword and dagger exercises in the Ashram?"[1] I don't know or remember when swords and daggers were introduced in the Ashram. Nor do I remember whether, if they were introduced when I was there, I had been consulted. Whether or not I was, I now think that these things have no place in the Ashram. All of you should sit together and think over this matter and, if you feel that their introduction cannot be defended in any way, get rid of them immediately. It seems to me that keeping lathis is the utmost limit to which we can go. However, you and other responsible inmates of the Ashram should think independently over this matter and discuss it among yourselves. If there are any other issues besides this, small or big, you should think over them too.

The other problem is about illness. Anybody who falls ill, as Indu did, as soon as he or she comes to live in the Ashram, should be sent away to some other place. For instance, Jamna[2] has returned there after gaining 12 lb. of weight. If she were to lose it all now, I would certainly feel very unhappy. If a person keeps better health at some other place than he does in the Ashram, it would be good both for him and for the Ashram to send him to stay at that place. We should try and discover the deficiencies of the Ashram because of which some persons do not keep good health there. The water there is of course one cause, but there may be other factors too. These are air and food. We should find out if we are polluting the air in any way. For this, we should examine whether the arrangements for the disposal of night soil and the excreta of cattle are satisfactory. If Anandi is always ill, she should be sent somewhere. Sharda told me that if I did not object, Velanbehn would send Anandi to live with her at Matheran. Really speaking, my permission is not required at all. It is for you to decide whether or not she should be permitted to go. Personally, I see no objection to the suggestion. At present, her expenses even in Deolali are borne by us. If, therefore, Anandi can be

[1] For his previous question, *vide* "Letter to Indu N. Parekh", 24-3-1932

[2] Presumably, the addressee's wife who had gone to Bombay for health reasons

sent to live with Sharda, that should certainly be done. This solves the problem about only one of them. I have asked you to think about the problem of all who keep bad health in the Ashram.

Tell Valji that I have carefully preserved the translation of *Vratavichar*[1] and that, if possible, I will even return it. I feel now that I shall be able to do so.

I understand what you say about Champa. Please remember that it is your responsibility to look after her.

You must have inferred from what I wrote above about Anandi that Harjivan[2] and Sharda[3] came and saw me. If you canascertain how Lakshmi, Lilavati and others are doing, please write to me about them.

I got the leather for repairing the soles and the books. The difficulty which the officials feel in permitting me to see the women prisoners lodged here is that they would have to be brought to the men's jail. And I cannot certainly be taken to *the women's jail.* Since this difficulty appeared genuine to me, I did not insist. It was agreed, therefore, that we should be permitted to correspond. I have already started writing. Gangabehn informs me that all are well in the Ashram.

Continue the treatment till your scabies disappears completely. It will benefit you in other ways too.

Is the Ashram bulletin being issued? If it is, is a copy sent to me every time? I have not seen any along with your letters for some weeks past.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I got today Prabhavati's letter. She is in the Lucknow Central Jail. Kanta also is there. She has been promoted to 'A' class. Prabhavati has been demoted to 'B'. According to me Prabhavati has been promoted and Kanta demoted. Prabhavati seems to be keeping good health. She tells me that Jayaprakash is in Bombay. For this week, Mahadev has sketched a fine word-picture[4] which I send with this letter.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8217. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 27-1-1932

[2] The Kotaks, khadi workers

[3] *ibid*

[4] An account of Duchess Elizabeth under the title "A Saintly Woman of Russia" from Sir Samuel Hoare's *Fourth Seal,* published in *Ashram Jivan*

223. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

April 3, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter.

Indu has put me some fine questions. Why should we do in the Ashram exercises with swords, *jamaiya*[1], etc.? I have discussed this question in my letter[2] to Narandas. Hence I do not say anything about it here. I have mentioned the question only to ask you whether it has also occurred to you, since you have been yourself learning these exercises.

I would not give to the Ashram the certificate which you do. I would certainly be happy if it really deserved such a certificate. You may have formed the impression that any person in the Ashram who takes up some work becomes wholly absorbed in it, but your impression is not correct. Are we able to observe the Ashram vows faithfully? It had been decided to teach Hindi, Urdu, Tamil, Telugu and Sanskrit in the Ashram, but we made only a half-hearted effort. Have we acquired proficiency in tanning? Do we spin fine yarn of the highest count? I can point to many such deficiencies, but what I have said is enough to justify my questioning [your certificate].

Everyone can pay single-minded attention to lathi exercises. But we can say likewise that everyone runs after sweets. There are indeed many things in the world the pursuit of which requires no strenuous effort. Since we are also animals in our nature, this quality [of pursuing a thing with single-minded attention] is instinctive in us. It does not have to be cultivated. The question is whether or not [in a particular case] it deserves to be cultivated. Every property of animal nature need not of course be regarded as something to be shunned.

How many persons take meals in the common kitchen these days? Do you still make bread in the Ashram? If yes, who is in charge of the work? If you make good bread, send a loaf or two with any person who may come to see me.

If anyone from the Ashram meets Lakshmi, he or she should tell her that I do not remember not having replied to any letter from her.

[1] Dagger

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

She should, therefore, write to me.

Dikshit's *Jyotishshastra*[1] has been translated into Gujarati. I have got a copy of the translation with me. Ball's work will be available to me here, and so I don't want you to send a copy from there. The books sent by Upton Sinclair belong to the Ashram. Enter them in the catalogue and send me *Boston* and *Brass Tacks.* Send a list of the rest.

I like the Upanishads. But I don't consider myself fit to write a commentary on them.

You should know my love of jesting. I can tell you only in jest that you ask me to describe your faults so that I may praise you[2]. There is, of course, this truth in my remark, that if a person asks another who loves him or her to criticize him or her, he or she will hear only praise, for love covers defects as with a veil, or sees them as virtues. It is the nature of love that it prompts one to point out on occasion the defects of the beloved one because one wants to see perfection in the person whom one loves. Did Kisan tell you that I was praising you even when I described you as hysterical before Dhurandhar? For, in that context you would have had to be held guilty of a more serious offence if I did not believe that you were hysterical. You certainly are hysterical. Sometimes you almost become mad; what does that signify? Anyone who gives way to an emotional outburst is hysterical. Do you understand what I mean?

I have always felt that Japan's policy is regrettable. She certainly deserved the victory over Russia but that does not make her policy worthy of emulation by others. Just now, however, it will be enough if we take care of our own policy. There is the Holy Being eternally awake with a million eyes to watch Japan's policy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10279. Also C.W. 6727. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] A Marathi work on astronomy

[2] *Vide* ''Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 21-3-1932

224. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

Sunday, April 3, [*1932*][1]

DEAR SISTERS,

Since I cannot write with the left hand as fast as I can with the right, I dictate this letter instead of writing it.

'Whatever women do, how can you, being their elder, employ satyagraha against them?' There is a big flaw in this argument and it is based on a misunderstanding of the nature of satyagraha. In that question, you equate satyagraha with *duragraha*[2]. Satyagraha makes no distinction between the young and the old, the prince and the pauper. God also employs satyagraha against us. His satyagraha is unceasing. In essence, satyagraha means simply this—scrupulous regard for truth. If God did not adhere to truth, the whole world would perish in an instant. The point is that offering satyagraha is as much a duty as it is a privilege. But I shall now take your own instance. If you do not discuss my letters among yourselves and reply to them, I really need not write to you every week. Even if I write, my letters will have no value and no effect. A lover of truth never writes or speaks merely for the sake of writing or speaking. There must be some definite purpose in his writing or speaking. Ordinarily he should observe complete silence. Really speaking, there can be nothing for me to tell you or anybody else, particularly while I am in prison. Though I am imprisoned, the Government permits me to maintain limited contact with the outside world, and I avail myself of that freedom. But I should do so only for writing letters with a definite aim. A person like me should teach what he wishes to teach only through his own conduct. Those who do not learn from my actions, how can they learn from my words? This is the general rule. But there are persons in the Ashram as also outside it who regard my manner of life as worth following and, for that very reason, want me to explain my ideas more clearly. It is my duty to write to them. You are included among these persons, but only if you ask me some questions. That is why I told you that, if you do not reply to me, ask me no question or discuss nothing with me, why should I write to you?

[1] A part of this letter is given in *Mahadevbhaini Diary,* "Guide to London", under the date April 4, 1932.

[2] Opposite of satyagraha

I know that you feel shy. I also know your nature. You do what service you can and say nothing. That is perfectly right, and it befits you. But even though we should learn to live in that manner, after all we have to mix with one another. Living in the Ashram means that we should live as a small community, that is, live together, have our meals together, work and spend our free time together and think together. This is the meaning of the *mantra* which we recite before commencing every meal. Animals also have some capacity for living and moving together. But man has it in unlimited measure, and it must be so because it is his dharma to realize his oneness with all living creatures. He cannot do this if he cannot live in a community. You must, therefore, strive your best and cultivate this capacity. Hence even if you do not meet regularly just now as members of an association, you should do so at least to qualify yourselves to get weekly letters from me and to reply to them. In this manner you can make some progress [towards collective living]. When any of you write to me individually, I do reply to her. But since I started the practice of writing a common letter to the women I have realized that I must write regularly something meant for all the women. The women should discuss it and I should discuss the questions which they raise. I think that I have now made quite clear what I wished to tell you and what I want from you.

This was only a preface to the letter. Trivenibehn has asked me one question which concerns all women. Today, therefore, I will discuss that. She asks why women, not only the women in the Ashram but all women with whom she has come in contact, look as if they were dead and have no spirit in them at all. There is some truth in her description, though of course it will not apply to all women. The reasons which I have been able to discover are these: (1) lack of order in women's life; (2) excessive worries; (3) wrong upbringing; (4) adoption of unscientific measures at the time of child-birth and during confinement; (5) lack of exercise; (6) eating food which is harmful to health; (7) the habit of remaining within the four walls of the home; (8) the habit of eating things which they ought not to eat; (9) in many cases, harmful thoughts which they do not try to regulate wisely, but repress.

These are the reasons which I can think of. I do not mean that all of them apply in every case. Every woman should think and find out which reason applies in her own case. I have observed one great

defect in our women, namely, that they hide their thoughts from the world. As a result, their behaviour becomes hypocritical. This can happen only to those who are habitually hypocritical. I do not know anything in the world so poisonous as hypocrisy, and especially when the evil affects our middle class women who are suppressed throughout their lives it eats them up like a canker. At every step they do things which they dislike in their hearts, and believe that they must do them. If they only think a little, they will realize that they need not let themselves be suppressed by anybody in the world. If they learn this first lesson and cultivate the courage to stand before the world just as they are, they will be able to eliminate the other causes which I have mentioned.

According to me, this is a very important letter. Think over it again and again and ask me about anything in it which you do not understand. If you read the letter twice or thrice, you will be able to understand it very clearly.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

225. LETTER TO PUSHPA S. PATEL

April 3, 1932

CHI. PUSHPA,

This time your handwriting was a little better. Keep on improving it.

About spinning, read the letter which I have written to Kanta.

If a Sardar does not order about others, how could he be called Sardar?

Having taken the part of Mother India in the dramatic piece, you should now cultivate the virtues befitting her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3985. Also C.W. 31. Courtesy: Pushpabehn N. Naik

226. LETTER TO KISAN

April 3, 1932

CHI. KISAN,

Do you wish me to address you as Krishnakumari? Your letter was very much to my liking. It is good that you have taught exercises to Jamnabehn and others.

I believe you must have recovered by now.

Anyway do write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9068

227. LETTER TO AN AMERICAN[1]

April 4, 1932

I thank you for your letter. My answer to your first question is that I would not like anybody to get me out, and certainly not on any condition. I cannot give up, for any consideration whatsoever, what I regard as my life's mission.

The Diary of Mahadev Desai, Vol. I, pp. 54-5

228. LETTER TO AN AMERICAN[2]

April 4, 1932

I have met many Christian Science friends. Some of these have sent me Mrs. Eddy's works. I was never able to read them through. I did however glance through them. They did not produce the impression the friends who sent them to me had expected. I have learnt from childhood, and experience has confirmed the soundness of the teaching, that spiritual gifts should not be used for the purpose of healing bodily ailments. I do however believe in abstention from

[1] According to Mahadev Desai, the letter was in reply to the addressee's offer "to obtain his (Gandhiji's) release on condition that he devoted himself entirely to propagating the teaching of Christ".

[2] The addressee, formerly an atheist and now a follower of Christian Science, had asked for Gandhiji's views on the subject.

use of drugs and the like. But this is purely on physical, hygienic grounds. I do also believe in utter reliance upon God, but then not in the hope that He will heal me, but in order to submit entirely to His will, and to share the fate of millions who even though they wished to, can have no scientific medical help. I am sorry to say, however, that I am not always able to carry out my belief into practice. It is my constant endeavour to do so. But I find it very difficult, being in the midst of temptation, to enforce my belief in full.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 71-2

229. LETTER TO SURENDRA

April 4, 1932

I did get your letter in which you wrote about *brahmacharya*. We shall certainly discuss the subject when we meet. The views which I had expressed at Imam Saheb's place have become stronger and are becoming stronger still. That is, I find their truth being proved by experience. That alone is true *brahmacharya* which remains inviolate at all times and in all conditions. It is extremely difficult to cultivate such a state. But that should not be surprising. We owe our birth to lust, and love our body which is the fruit of lust. It cannot but be difficult to get rid of this heritage of lust. However, when we realize that the body is the abode of the priceless *atman*, our *brahmacharya* would remain inviolate even if Rambha came down from heaven and embraced us. To everybody, his mother is as beautiful as Rambha, and the thought of this Mother Rambha banishes impure thoughts from his mind. In like manner, the thought of any woman should banish impure thoughts from one's mind. Need I go on? Reflect over this again and again and understand all its implications.

If somebody is pleased by your punishing yourself[1] it is not correct to describe that as the effect of ahimsa. But the matter is not important. As your faith becomes stronger, your reason will develop. The *Gita* seems to tell us that God Himself gives us the light of reason. Our duty is to strengthen our faith. It is, of course, necessary to understand the meaning of faith and reason in this context. We cannot understand them through verbal definitions, but can do so only

[1] The reference is to standing with knees bent and arms stretched out like a chair.

through true humility. He who believes that he knows, knows nothing. But he who believes that he knows nothing, acquires knowledge at the right time. Even God cannot pour Ganga water into a pot that is full. We should, therefore, always stand before God with empty hands. Our vow of non-possession means the same thing. But I must stop here. You may write to me whenever you wish. They will give your letters to me.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 70

230. A LETTER[1]

April 4, 1932

If in any situation it is our duty to speak, we must tell the truth whatever the cost.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 71

231. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

April 4, 1932

CHI. MANUDI,

I got your letter, and read the whole of it twice. You need not be scared. It was very good that you saw the woeful condition of Harilal with your own eyes. I knew all about him. However, we should not give up hope of anyone's future. Nothing is beyond God's power? If there is still some merit to Harilal's credit earned through good deeds in the past, it will bear fruit one day. We should not pamper him or have false pity on him, but should make our hearts purer day by day. That will have an effect on Harilal too. You have got to harden your heart and write to him and tell him plainly that, as long as he does not give up drinking, he will have to assume that you do not exist. If all of us adopt such a course, Harilal might take heed. Often a drunkard gives up his evil habit when he is greatly shocked.

I liked your reply about marriage. I am sure it will be all to your

[1] The addressee had asked if one must tell the truth even at the cost of someone else's life.

good if you stick to your resolution. In your childhood you were so ill that nobody hoped you would live. You were saved because of Ba's patient nursing and the treatment of the Ice Doctor[1]. But owing to that illness, your growth had practically stopped for five years. You are weak even now, and but for Bali's[2] care, you would become ill again. On this account, I always deduct at least five years from your actual age. We have already fixed the earliest age for a woman to marry at twenty-one years. The age, therefore, which you have laid down for yourself for marrying is proper. I would regard you as barely fit for marriage at the age of twenty-five. However, I do not wish to bind you to a pledge. I write this only to tell you that your present resolution is right. When Rami wished to get married at a younger age, I did not come in her way though I did not at all like that she should have married at that age. As for you, there are many reasons why you should not marry early. May God keep you firm in your resolution. At present your duty is to apply yourself hard to your studies, build up a strong, healthy body, understand the path which *Gita* teaches and live accordingly.

Write to me from time to time. You may come to see me if you wish. Try and improve your handwriting a good deal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1511. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

232. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

April 4, 1932

BHAI VITHALDAS,

We were all very glad to see the letter written in your own hand. Do take sufficient rest. Resume work only after you are physically quite fit.

Another parcel of dates from you arrived before my card could reach you. Dates in which worms have made their appearance should never be considered fit for consumption. They lodge themselves between the rind and the pulp, and washing does not remove them, as

[1] Dr. Kelkar

[2] Balibehn Vohra, maternal aunt of Manu Gandhi

I found from my experience of the dates this time. I send most of the quantity to the leper hospital here and eat a little from the portion which is not spoiled. But please send no more. The hard dry dates which are available in the local market are free from worms and they serve my purpose well enough. We cannot afford to waste either time or money. You should, therefore, save both.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9781

233. LETTER TO LAKSHMI JERAJANI

April 4, 1932

CHI. LAKSHMI,

I got your letter. Pencil handwriting is faint and becomes fainter day by day. By the time the person to whom the letter is addressed gets it, the characters have become so faint that he can read the letter with difficulty, and sometimes it cannot be deciphered at all. Moreover, with pencil you cannot make your handwriting really good. Finally, pencil handwriting cannot be properly judged. In future, as long as you can get ink and pen, resolve to use them in writing letters or anything else.

If Vithaldas is completely restored to health, you too will share the credit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2812. Courtesy: Purushottam D. Saraiya

234. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

April 4, 1932

May God make Raihana healthy both in body and mind and keep her so. Has the pupil gone to the teacher to learn cunning? The teacher's cunning will not avail her. The *bhajan* you have sent will seem good only when I can hear it sung, and that can be when you come and sing it to me. To do so it seems you must turn yourself into a boy to enter the jail! I shall see if Mahadev can sing. Now read the *ghazal* for the day:

If thou wouldst see Him, with each breath think of Him. Burn thy pride and smear thy body with its ashes; take up the broom of love and with it wipe out the distinctions of me and thee; reduce the notion of reality to dust and sprinkle it on thy prayer carpet; leave the carpet, break up the rosary, throw the sacred books in the river, seek the help of angels and be their servant; do not fast nor keep *Ramzan,* do not go to the mosque nor make obeisances; break to pieces the water jar for prayer cleansing and drink the wine of the joy of union; eat and drink but never be off thy guard; enjoy thy intoxication continuously; burn thy egotism. Be neither Mulla nor Brahmin; leave duality and worship Him alone. Shah Kalandar has proclaimed: Say, 'I am He.' Mad Mansur says: My heart has known truth, that is the wine shop of the intoxicated, make that the object of thy visit.[1]

I do feel ashamed of my Urdu handwriting, but [however much I try] I cannot write better with my left hand. It took me nearly three quarters of an hour to write this much. The truth is that I should practise writing every day. But I am rather ambitious and wishing to do all I can during this quiet interval, I cannot give much time to Urdu. It was you who tempted me to try writing Urdu, for you used to write a few Urdu sentences and, trying to write in Urdu myself, I became your pupil ! What a pupil, and what a teacher ! It is indeed a great pair we make. Let us see now if we can justify the designation.

We are eagerly watching what is now in store for Father. We remember you all very often. Uncle Sardar and Mahadev proudly narrate many incidents about Father. They had the benefit of staying with him. I never got that opportunity. I will have my revenge one day.

I shall expect in your next letter the news of Hamida, Rohini and others.

I got Pashabhai's letter just today. If I cannot send the reply with this, I will write to him later.

I have written enough for the day.

Many, many blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9640

[1] *Vide* "Ashram Bhajanavali". Up to this the letter is in Urdu.

235. LETTER TO ANANDLAL GANDHI

April 5, 1932

CHI. ANANDLAL,

I wrote you a letter. You will have got it. I got your postcard yesterday. Why has Harilal[1] not written to me himself if he has really reformed himself? Maybe he was too ashamed to write, in which case it is all right. But there is no reason for him to feel ashamed. Even the worst of men have mended themselves. And then the world did not remember their earlier faults but on the contrary some of them came to be honoured as devotees. If Harilal has really undergone a change of heart I regard it as happy news indeed. But I have serious doubts. People who are addicted like him often take vows only to break them, They have no spirit left in them. They lose the strength to keep a vow. Only a few blessed by God are saved. I hope that Harilal would be one such. Tell him to write.[2] You should also keep me informed about him. Harilal's resolve [you say] is up to the month of *Margashirsha* according to the calendar followed there. What does this mean? If he stays perfectly clean up to *Margashirsha*, does it mean that he will go back to his old ways again?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Sabarmati Sangrahalaya

236. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

April [5][3], *1932*

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. You will guess from the handwriting that Mahadev is here. I like your taking interest in everybody's diet. The food taken by our middle class does not constitute a balanced diet and there is no doubt that they ruin their constitution by eating useless

[1] Eldest son of Gandhiji

[2] For Gandhiji's reply to Harilal's letter; *vide* "Fragment of Letter to Harilal Gandhi", 27-4-1932

[3] *Vide* "Diary 1932".

stuff. Moreover, doctors and vaidyas in their preoccupation with making money take no note of this problem. That is why I appreciate the usefulness of your experiments and I hope that Rameshwarji and Lakshminivas have benefited. Keep me informed of whatever fresh discoveries you make.

I am fully aware that misconceptions exist about me. Experience has taught me that most of the misunderstandings are cleared up if one has patience. However long the night may be it is bound to come to an end.

For me the same diet continues. I feel well on it. Do you see Andrews? How is he keeping?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 7897. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

237. LETTER TO MAITHILISHARAN GUPTA

April 5 [*1932*][1]

BHAI MAITHILISHARAN,

I had your letter. I read *Saket, Anagh, Panchvati* and *Jhankar* with enjoyment. I liked them very much. But I do not consider myself at all qualified to make comments. However, as you have asked for my opinion and I did gather impressions while reading I am putting them down as they occurred to me.

The expression of Urmila's grief, though beautiful in style, could hardly have had a place in *Saket*. That Tulsidas did not say much about Urmila has been held against him. But this omission I have not viewed as a fault. I see in that the artistry of the poet. The composition of *Manas* is such that a worthy character like Urmila is brought to notice only by ellipsis, in that lies the greatness of the work and such characters. The character of Urmila and others could have been delineated only to enhance the impact of Sitaji's character. But Urmila's virtues were of no lesser order than Sita's. Sita's sisters were of the same calibre as herself. *Manas* is an incomparable scripture. The praise of Sita and Rama rings through every page and every verse. I expected to see the same characteristic in *Saket*. I failed in this

[1] The year is inferred from the contents; *vide* also "Letter to Maithilisharan Gupta", 26-4-1932 and "Diary, 1932", entry under April 5.

to some extent for the reason explained above. I may mention one more point. The lamentations of Dasharatha and others described in Tulsidas's *Manas* did not jar. Tulsidasji could not have done anything different. But such lamentations are not appreciated in a book of the present period. It affects adversely the sentiment of valour as well as faith. Those who have faith in the spirit and who consider worldly pleasures as transitory cannot find death and separation unbearable. They might temporarily give way to grief but how can we expect pitiful lamentations from them?

I do not at all mean by all this that you should try to make any improvements in the second edition. But it will be a different matter if you find any worth in my comments.

Mahadev is now with me. I have dictated this to him as the right hand pains and writing with the left hand takes more time.

Yours

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 9455. Courtesy: Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi

238. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI

April 5, 1932

BHAI TYAGIJI,

I was glad to get your letter and gladder still to learn that you are nursing the plague patients. I am not taking milk these days. Here I can do with bread, almonds, dates, vegetables and lemons. My views are the same as before. I am awaiting a letter from Devsharmaji[1]. My right hand pains only when writing, but it has been like this for one year and there is nothing special. Balvir's handwriting is good. Has he got rid of his former faults?

Mahadev is with me. This card is in his hand.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3259

[1] Also known as Acharya Abhaydev

239. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

April 7, 1932

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letters and enclosures, also copy of an article of yours in an old number of *Modern Review*.

I understand and even appreciate the moral repulsion against 'fasting unto death'. I have perhaps some repulsion, if not the same repulsion, against fasting unto death myself, but I remain unmoved. There are many other things I have done and am still doing against my will, because I count my will as nothing before God's will when I see it clearly before me. I will make myself as certain as it is humanly possible to be, that the will that appears to me to be God's is really His, and not the Devil's. But when I am clear about it, I rejoice in obeying that will, rather than mine, although I have no human companion to endorse it. That this kind of fasting has a definite place in Hinduism, and properly so, I have not a shadow of a doubt, but it is a privilege that comes only to a few, and when it comes in obedience to a call from above, it has a mighty force. Only, fasting unto death is a corrupt expression. When I used it first, it had its definite meaning. Now it is being used torn from its context and looks certainly barbarous. But it is there, and its real meaning is unmistakable, and you can almost say that it is not so much of a 'fast unto death' as it is a 'fasting unto a new life'.

All the same, I value your letter and the information you give me about the English attitude. I do want English sympathy in this big struggle. I do want also to be understood. You cannot therefore be too frank or too communicative with me. I shall never misunderstand whatever these few English friends might have to say.

Kerby Page's article which you have sent I shall see as soon as I get the time, and if there is anything worth saying, I shall reduce it to writing.

I hope that your brother's septic teeth were extracted and that he had benefited by the extraction.

You know all about Verrier's change of mind.[1] He had changed it before your blessings were received, and you know

[1] About not marrying Mary Gillett

the reason also for the change. Whilst I was prepared to bless the marriage, I cannot help saying that I blessed the change still more. So much depended upon Verrier's decision. I told him that if it was a human want on his part, he must marry, no matter what misinterpretation might be put upon his action. The change came over both Verrier and Mary without any prompting from anybody at all.

Our love to all.

Yours sincerely,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 1301

240. A LETTER[1]

April 7, 1932

I have your letter. I am unable to say that I have reached my destination. I fear, I have much distance to cover. . . .[2]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 59

241. LETTER TO NRISIMHAPRASAD K. BHATT

April 7, 1932

The fear of tuberculosis is worse than the disease itself.[3] The person who is suspected to have got it is always brooding over the disease and sees its symptoms in every discomfort that he suffers. If he can be helped to get rid of this obsession, he recovers very soon.

Why do you worry over the problem of money?[4] You ought to learn this lesson from me, for I am an expert in the subject. Long before the country made me a Mahatma, I had learnt that, just as it is bad economics to do business with borrowed money, so it is a false conception of dharma to run a public institution with borrowed money. And if the ablest workers of an institution have to go out

[1] The addressee, an overseer, had asked Gandhiji whether he had attained salvation and seen God face to face.

[2] Omission as in the source

[3] The addressee had mentioned the proposal to remove Gijubhai Badheka's child to Panchgani for treatment.

[4] The addressee had expressed his fears about the financial position of Dakshinamurti, an educational institution, started by him in Bhavnagar.

begging for money to run it, I would say that that is like doing business with borrowed money. Instead of fixing a specific number, why don't you follow this other method, namely, to admit only as many pupils as you can manage with the money which you get. It is the easiest thing in the world to do that. You have only to make up your mind; that is all. At the beginning of every year, you should estimate the sum which you will need. If you get it without having to go begging for it, you should carry on, otherwise you should close the institution. Yours is an established institution now, with a glorious record. You have efficient teachers. Why, then, have you no faith? Offer up your venture wholly as sacrifice to the Lord and resolve to run it in His name. He will then keep it running if He so wills. "We have heard of none who loved the Lord and whose honour He did not uphold." We sang this *bhajan* at the time of the evening prayer today. I was reminded of it by a letter which I wrote to a girl. You say that the problem would not have worried you if Vallabhbhai or I had been out of jail. But where is the problem? And if there is any, who are we to solve it? Can one blind man lead another blind man? If you think that there is a problem, leave it to Him. Do not dismiss all this as mere philosophizing, but try to act upon it.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 78

242. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

April 7, 1932

CHI. VANAMALA,

We can keep our minds pure by thinking good thoughts. We can get good thoughts by doing good actions. We cannot always know when an animal is dying. Often, the fact can be found out only by an experienced man.

I also am inquiring about Bhai.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I forgot to write in your own letter. Please forgive me. I am keeping the slip with me.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5771. Also C.W. 2994. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

243. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 8, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter.[1] It seems to me that the trouble with the right hand will persist. On coming here I began writing freely with the right hand and I soon discovered that it was no use. It may be one sign of creeping old age. If it is, it is cause neither for grief nor wonder. Had I learnt to use the body merely as an instrument of service and His temple, old age would have been like a beautiful ripe fruit with all the qualities of its species at their highest. It would be a stroke of good fortune if I escape merely with such disability. But even this is idle speculation. I have no business to speculate about these things. It is enough to note such things and take reasonable precautions within the prescribed limits. You will not therefore worry about the hand.

My weight stands at 106 lb. except for the fasting day when it naturally dropped to 103_. I take during 24 hours five to six slices of well-toasted white bread, 30 dates, bowlful of boiled vegetable once, two spoonful of honey at 4.15 a.m. with a pinch of soda and hot water and soda and lemon[2] twice. I take two ounces (nearly) of almond paste. This seems to satisfy me; if it fails, I shall go back to milk. The bowels move perfectly twice or thrice daily without my medicament or appliances. I sleep between 9 and 3.40 and twice during the daytime 20 minutes each time. I spin 375 rounds in two days. I have not begun carding yet. Your supply[3] seems to be inexhaustible. The balance of the time is given to reading and writing. Just now I am reading Ruskin's *Fors Clavigera*, a deeply human document. He is dreadfully in earnest. These letters are his last effort at self-expression in word and deed. Much time is taken up in writing and now also dictating letters. As I am allowed to write to fellow-prisoners, naturally there is more writing to be done than last time. I am glad of it. I sendsomething on moral problems to the Ashram every week.And now I have commenced the history[4] of the Ashram for the past five

[1] For extracts, reproduced from *The Diary of Mahadev Desai*,

[2] "With cold water"—Mirabehn

[3] "Of slivers"—Mirabehn.

[4] Gandhiji had started writing it in Gujarati on April 5, 1932; *vide* "Diary, 1932". Its last available portion was written on July 11, 1932, under which date the book is included in Vol. L.

days.

This answers all your questions about self.

Vallabhbhai and Mahadev are doing excellently....[1] In these matters we are subject to no restrictions that we would not impose upon ourselves.

Abstention from salt for a time can do no harm and does produce the results you have noticed for yourself. The weakening effect you notice is temporary and can be greatly counteracted by taking fresh limes in some shape or other. I suppose you know that I have gone without salt continuously for six or eight years without noticing any ill effect. Many had joined me in the experiment, you may therefore prolong your saltless experiment to the extent that it benefits you. Milk contains much free salt. There is a saltish taste in raw milk.

I understand and appreciate all you say about yourself. Let me put you at ease. When I come out you shall certainly be with me and resume your original work of personal service. I quite clearly see that it is the only way for your self-expansion. I shall no longer be guilty as I have been before of thwarting you in any way whatsoever. My only consolation in thinking over the past is that in all I did I was guided by nothing else than the deepest love for you and regard for your well-being. I see once more that good government is no substitute for self-government.[2] A Gujarati proverb says what one sees for oneself may not be visible to the nearest friend even though he may have ever[3] so powerful a searchlight. Both these proverbs may not be universally applicable. They certainly are in your case. You need therefore fear no interference from me henceforth. And who can give me more loving service than you?

Mahadev has the hymns you sent him. He is going to work at them. I forgot to tell you that I have now developed the habit of studying the heavens. As you see my pen is exhausted. This is Mahadev's. And it is now past bed time, 9.15. But I think I have left

[1] One sentence was censored by the jail authorities.

[2] This sentence, censored by the jail authorities, is reproduced here from *The Diary of Mahadev Desai*, "Letter to The Natal Advertiser", 29-9-1893

[3] The source has "never".

nothing unanswered. I have a full letter from Nurgis about Jal. What a deliverance!

Love from us all.

BAPU

[PS.]

I enclose an interesting cutting which I consider to be non-political enough to pass muster.

From a photostat: C.W. 9506. Courtesy: Mirabehn

244. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

April 8, 1932

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR) ,

I got your letters. I did get Pyarelal's letter, and had also replied to him. You should now learn to pronounce Sanskrit words correctly and learn the grammar too. This in addition to spinning on *takli.* Do you suffer from constipation? You should improve your health. I had liked the first part of *Saraswatichandra*[1] very much, but you ought to read all the four parts. You should also read the four parts of *Kavyadohan.* Besides, you should read *Karanghelo*[2] and *Vanaraj Chavdo,* as also some writings of Narmadashankar[3] and Manilal Nabhubhai[4]. If you read these works, you will have a complete understanding of the nature of the Gujarati language. Perhaps you yourself can collect these books and send them.

I didn't know at all about the Raleigh bicycle having come to India. I will write to Kingsley Hall. I got Rolland's books. I will read them. Taradevi[5] is here. I had even a letter from her. She and the other women are quite happy. She has asked for a copy of the *Ramayana*. I will send one to her. I got two letters from Sushila. If she could pick up enough courage to write, she wouldn't be Pyarelal's sister, [would she?] The book about Lancashire has gone to [Chhaganlal] Joshi. I will read it when it comes back to me, and give my opinion. I have not collected many books this time. But I do receive some from time to

[1] Gujarati novel by Govardhanram Tripathi
[2] Gujarati novel by Nandshankar Mehta
[3] 1833-86; Gujarati poet, popularly known as 'Kavi Narmad'
[4] Dwivedi (1858-98); Gujarati man of letters and Vedantist thinker
[5] Pyarelal's mother

time. I have not yet come across any which I should like to send toyou. I have received the volumes of Ruskin's *Fors Clavigera;* if you wish, I may send them to you. Pyarelal will hardly get anything new even from them. I get letters from Muriel, Agatha and Horace. My weight remains what it was, that is, 106 lb. This is the food which I take: almonds crushed into paste, dates, toast, lemon-juice and a boiled vegetable with one meal. So far I have been able to do without milk. This time I don't suffer from constipation at all. The hours of sleep have increased. I see that the weakness of the hand persists but I feel no pain. I read only for a little while. Just now I am reading Ruskin's *Fors.* As for writing, I have finished the remaining discourses on the *Gita.* I have now taken in hand a history of the Ashram. I dictate to Mahadev. The letters to Ashram inmates take a good deal of my time, particularly because I write with the left hand. Spinning takes from one and a half to two hours. Because of the trouble with the hand I deliberately do not spin longer. I have made it a rule to spin 375 rounds in two days. I have not carded any cotton so far. I have still a stock of the slivers which Mira left with me. Mahadev has started carding.

I was going to ask you about Harilal[1], but meanwhile you have picked up courage to question me on the subject. I wished to ask you what you had done, and now you have turned round on me. My condition remains. Why cannot you write? You should write what you can; it will be for me to revise and pass what you write. You should overcome your hesitation and start writing. It is probably out of lethargy that you do not try at all. If so, overcome your lethargy. If you do this, I will keep my promise of writing a foreword. The book cannot be published just now, but it is very desirable that the writing should be over. I may not perhaps be able to write the foreword after I am released. I hope you realize that there is a reason for my insisting that you should start writing. There will be no grace in publishing the letters without your essay. You ought not to do that.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1834

[1] Addressee's husband, whose letters Kusum Desai had been planning to publish with a foreword by Gandhiji and a life-sketch by her

245. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

April 8, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

Since Dhurandhar is here, I shall probably see him some time. Instead of wishing to kill many birds with one stone, why not wish to bring down many berries with one hit? You should never wish to kill a bird.

It was fortunate that you escaped being hurt by the tile.[1] We should conclude from this that you are destined to do much more.

You need not at all feel confused about the problem concerning the women. You may give your services if they want them and if you have confidence in yourself. Otherwise you should forget the suggestion as if it had never been made. You should have confidence in yourself not about your ability to teach the women, but about your humility, about your ability not to let any mis-understanding occur and to manage any difficult situation that may arise. We often hesitate to undertake a responsibility out of fear of humiliation, misunderstanding, etc. If you can overcome such hesitation, you may take up the responsibility. You do believe that all the women are good by nature. They require the help of someone who can express their thoughts in words and maintain records for them. An illiterate mother may have more sense and practical wisdom than her educated daughter, but, being illiterate, she may not be able to use them. A daughter can supply this deficiency. I should like you to do that. I certainly don't believe that the Association was doing very good work when Gangabehn was there. But on one pretext or another, she could bring all of them together. It was her ambition to do this work and she sowed the seed. She is doing similar work here too. I should like to see that seed grown into a tree. The women certainly do social work, but as individuals. I should like them to assume responsibility as a body, for some social service. This will create in them capacity for organization. When such capacity has been created, individuals may come and go but the organization will remain. God has given such capacity only to human beings. In our country, women have not

[1] The addressee was sleeping in a courtyard and a gust of wind sent a tile from the roof hurtling on her bed.

cultivated it so far. The blame for this lies with the men. But that is a question with which we need not concern ourselves just now. If we believe that women must acquire this capacity for organization, we should try to cultivate it in them. It does not matter if we commence only with my writing a letter to their Association and their replying to me. Slowly (no matter, if very slowly) we may take up other activities. If you have fully understood what I have suggested and if the suggestion has appealed to you, if the other women also approve of it and if they are ready to take interest in carrying it out, you may take up this work. If, however, you see difficulties in carrying it out or see no meaning in it, you may drop the idea.

Don't pay attention just now to my request[1] to you to send me a list of books. I don't want you, for the present, to send anything besides the books of Upton Sinclair which I have asked you to send.

I don't at all like the practice of converting a person from one religion to another. I don't believe that marriage between a man and a woman professing different faiths is impossible or always undesirable.

I think the distinguishing features of Hinduism are cow-protection and varnashrama. Any nation that wants to rise should follow the path of truth and non-violence.

I think I have answered all your questions.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

My copy of the *Gujarati Jodanikosh,* second edition, published by the Vidyapith, is lying there. Send it to me.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10280. Also C.W. 6728. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

246. LETTER TO SECRETARY OF SANTRAM ASHRAM

April 8, 1932

I got your letter and the Gujarati *Gita* and *Ramayana*. I thank Maharajshri for both. If Brahmin pandits who are also men of saintly character propagate knowledge of the Upanishads and other scriptures among the people, no one can doubt that they would be doing a good

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 3-4-1932

thing. But nowadays learning and goodness rarely go together. Hence I am a little indifferent towards such activities.

I am similarly indifferent, or even a little more so, towards public readings of the *Gita* and the *Ramayana*. I put no value on such readings by persons who do not understand the meaning of what they read, or even if they understand it, read the scriptures loudly—as if merely doing that would earn them holy merit —or read them for show or for fame. I even believe that such readings actually do harm. If Maharajshri has found a remedy for these evils and has succeeded in avoiding them in the readings organized by him, I have no doubt that they will do good to the people.

It should be remembered that I am a prisoner and a letter of this kind should not be used in public. I request you, therefore, to be careful in this matter.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 81-2

247. LETTER TO HANUMANPRASAD PODDAR

April 8, 1932

1 and 2. We must believe in God if we believe in ourselves. If living beings have existence God is the sum total of all life and this in my view is the strongest proof.

3. The denial of God is injurious in the same way as denial of ourselves. That is to say, to deny God is like committingsuicide. The fact remains that it is one thing to believe in God and quite another to realize God emotionally and act accordingly. Truly, no one in the world is an atheist; atheism is merely a pose.

4. One can realize God only by ridding oneself totally of attachment, aversion, etc., and in no other way. I hold that one who claims to have realized God has not truly done so. Realization can be experienced, but is beyond description. Of this I have no doubt.

5. I can live only by having faith in God. My definition of God must always be kept in mind. For me there is no other God than Truth; Truth is God.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 82

248. A LETTER

April 9, 1932

CHI.,

Gods signify those who do good and demons those who do evil. There can be no peace between good and evil. Hence there is no question of partiality in this matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9019. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

249. A LETTER

April 9, 1932

CHI.,

We should not pay attention to the stories of miracles in the life of Mirabai. I also don't believe that they occurred in that very manner. What we have to remember is the holiness of her character. . . .[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9025. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

250. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

April 9, 1932

CHI. MANGALA,

If we treat an enemy as a friend, he will certainly come ultimately to trust us.

People who are ill, feel tempted to eat all kinds of things. If one does not succumb to such temptations, one would get all right sooner. Your weight will increase slowly.

If you pay sufficient attention, you will surely be able to understand the *Gita*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4082. Also C.W. 46. Courtesy: Mangalabehn B. Desai

[1] The rest of the letter is not available.

251. LETTER TO MAHENDRA V. DESAI

April 9, 1932

CHI. MANU,

Your letter was well written. The handwriting ought to improve. How did you fall ill? I hope you are completely all right now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7426. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

252. LETTER TO NIRMALA H. DESAI[1]

April 9, 1932

CHI.,

People worship the sacred *tulsi* because the plant is believed to possess certain virtues. One should be angry with anger itself. Because the other person forgets himself or herself, why should we do the same? Grown-up people also do wrong in getting angry. Even when they become angry, one should cling to what one [believes][2] to be the truth. Did you get the letter which your elder brother[3] wrote to you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9470. Also C.W. 9018. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

253. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI M. PATEL

April 9, 1932

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

This is only to acknowledge your letter. Anybody who attempts to do something which is beyond his capacity lacks wisdom. He deserves compliments who does his duty to the best of his ability. Really speaking, a person need not be complimented for his devotion

[1] Addressee's name is supplied from the S.N. Register.
[2] From the C.W. copy
[3] Mahadev Desai

to duty, but when most people disown their obligations, the few who discharge theirs deserve compliments.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8995. Also C.W. 9014. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

254. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

April 9, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

God doesn't come from anywhere or go away anywhere. He simply exists for ever. I see nothing wrong in playing cards during one's free time. But I would not encourage anybody to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9424. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

255. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

April 9, 1932

CHI. JAMNALAL,

All of us had been eagerly awaiting a letter from you. It was a full one. I am very happy that the food in this jail has agreed with you. I had heard about Janakibehn and Kamalnayan. If Vinoba has not taken a vow to the contrary, I think it is necessary that he should drink milk. Even in that jail he seems to have adopted a strenuous programme. In order to be able to keep it up, I think he should drink milk. I am convinced that there must be some vegetable food which has the beneficial properties of milk but is free from its noxious one. But those vaids who are sufficiently well-read in their science to be able to discover it have never thought about the possibility of there being such a food and the task is beyond the capacity of laymen like us. Or perhaps we can discover it, if we give all our attention to this one problem. It is my firm conviction that it would be improper for any of us to do so. It is therefore our duty to cling to the task which has fallen to our lot unsought. I cannot help thinking that it is not proper for Vinoba to let his weight fall so low.

A fine group seems to have formed there with you. I envy you your 'C' class. I had felt very happy when I heard that you were placed in that class. I did not at all feel afraid that it might affect your health. I have never doubted your ability to safeguard your own health and that of your companions. Had you not been placed in 'C' class, you would never have got the experience you are nowgetting.Tell Pyarelal that, as I have fully replied[1] to the letter which Kusum wrote at his instance, I don't dictate anything here. He will probably get that reply before you get this letter. Let me know if he does not. All three of us are very well. For the past two months, my diet has been bread, almonds, dates, one vegetable and a sour lime. This keeps me all right. I never feel the need for a laxative or an enema. I am engaged at present in writing the history of the Ashram. Writing letters takes up a good deal of my time. In this small circle, we talk about you several times daily. Convey our regards to all. Write to me whenever you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2897

256. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

April 9, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

It is possible even to win a kingdom by truth, which means that there is nothing that cannot be attained with the help of truth. But this does not mean that one should make such an attempt. To do so would be tantamount to putting God to test. He who worships God would covet no kingdom. For him kingdom consists in following the path of truth. I love all languages. The meaning of *yajna* has been continually expanding. Gujarati women's dress is quite good. It requires two changes: an underwear, and a shirt in place of the blouse.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9949. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Kusum Desai", 8-4-1932

257. A LETTER

April 10, 1932

CHI.,

It depends on the nature of the vow. Someone may take a vow of spinning for a certain number of hours, and another person may take a vow of spinning a certain number of rounds. Some others may take a vow in regard to both, that is, to spin a minimum number of rounds and for a minimum number of hours. One must fulfil in letter and spirit the vow which one has taken.

Our emotions and desires are sometimes ruled by God and sometimes by Satan. We are tossed between them and that is why our emotions and desires are constantly changing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9017. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

258. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

April 10, 1932

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

You should drink through the nostrils every day tepid water in which soda and salt have been dissolved. The nasal passage, then, will not get blocked. This *is* a useful habit to form.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.G. 13

259. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

April 10, 1932

CHI. PANDITJI,

What you say about the Vidyapith library is correct.

That one should not speak anything to cause pain to a person does not mean that one should not speak anything which might pain him. Though the speaker did not wish to cause pain, it is possible that

the other person will feel hurt. When a father tells his son not to drink bhang, he does not wish to cause him pain but the latter [being addicted to bhang], feels hurt. Nevertheless, it was the father's duty to forbid the son to drink bhang.

Mahadev did not follow what I said[1] about "Narayanrao". What is the origin of the name "Hasude"?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 225. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

260. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

April 10, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

I hope to get in the next letter a short report of your programme of work during the National Week[2]. We here have not been able to do anything besides fasting and spinning a little more than on other days. You still make mistakes in spelling words. See that such mistakes do not occur. You should learn from my deficiencies. We have had that *Jodani Kosh* prepared in a hurry for people like you.

If you really keep awake during prayers, you have certainly advanced one step.

Mother *Gita* has already answered the question, 'What makes us commit sin?' Desire and anger do that. All of you will be able to see this truth if you recollect your own actions of this type in the past. Think and verify the truth of this. The Students' Union is not independent to the extent that it functions subject to the Ashram rules. The freedom of all such associations is limited to some extent. The Students' Union is of course free in its own field.

If I liked any manual work worth the name in my student days, I may perhaps say that I liked book-binding and carpentry. There are so many crafts and industries relating to spinning alone that the question of selecting some other work in addition does not arise. In order to have a full knowledge of the science of spinning, one must have some knowledge of each of the following: agriculture, chemistry,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narayan Desai", 11-3-1932

[2] Celebrated from April 6 to 13 since the starting of the satyagraha movement in 1919

dyeing, painting, carpentry, smithy, weaving, knitting, sewing, carding, ginning, laundry work, history of the industries of the different countries, engraving, Arithmetic, geometry, etc. Think for yourselves and see whether a general knowledge of the subjects just mentioned is or is not essential for [proficiency in the] science of spinning. I have enumerated here only the arts and the crafts which I could remember. If you sit together and discuss, you will find some more to add to the list. Let me know if you can think of more. I hope that you will preserve my list at least.

We worship Krishna the perfect avatar of God and not the Krishna who is supposed to have done so many bad things. That is, we worship not the historical Krishna but Krishna, the Prince of Yogis, who served to Arjuna the nectar of the *Gita*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 9020. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

261. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

April 10, 1932

CHI. MANUDI,

I am happy that you write to me. You should give up fear of Harilal and forget him altogether. Bali is a brave woman. Her slapping [your father][1] was not an act of violence, but showed her deep love.

You must have received the letter[2] which I wrote to you last week. I explained everything in it, and so I don't write anything moretoday. What is your weight now? If you have not written any letter to Ba, you should write one. She will surely expect a letter from you.

Do you pray daily? Do you sing *bhajans?* If you have not been doing either, start doing both.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1512. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

[1] From *The Diary of Mahadev Desai,* "Guide to London"

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Manu Gandhi", 4-4-1932

262. LETTER TO VIMALCHANDRA V. DESAI

April 10, 1932

CHI. NANU,

You have written a very good letter. But you should write figures so carefully that they look like printed ones. If you are really eager to learn the primer, Premabehn will teach you. Form the habit of doing very well whatever you do.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5755. Courtesy: Vilji G. Desai

263. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

April 10, 1932

CHI. PARASRAM,

The slivers given by Mirabehn are still not exhausted. Moreover, Mahadev has begun carding from the 5th and I also get a share from the slivers which he makes. I discontinued the massage during my last imprisonment. However, Mahadev rubs ghee on the soles of my feet.

I shall write on the subject of teachers if I can. It is through love and not through fear that a child can be made to give up habits like stealing things. Scolding a child has little effect.

The difference between flattery and pure service is [as great] as that between falsehood and truth.

In regard to other things which one should avoid doing, fear of social criticism has a legitimate place. We need not fear it but we should not disregard it either.

Morality is both absolute and relative.

No harm may result from chemistry itself but its misuse will certainly do harm. It is being misused very much.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7493. Also C.W. 4970. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

264. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

April 10, 1932

CHI. BRIJKISAN,

I have your letter. You did well in giving me detailed news of yourself. I consider you lucky to have Dr. [M.A. Ansari][1] and others as companions. Convey to them *salaam* and *vandemataram* from all the three of us. I hope the Doctor has a new set of teeth by now. Your letter of the 3rd instant did not reach me.

Of course you have my blessings for your thirty-third birthday. One-third of your life-span is gone by. We must hope that you avail yourself fully of the two-thirds left and that you may be granted all means of service. As you have the right aspirations I am sure that you will gradually develop the necessary strength of character and other qualities.

Continue writing. I do get news about Devdas but there has been no recent news about Krishnan Nair. I have been keeping excellent health, so have Sardar Vallabhbhai and Mahadev. I have given up milk for the last two months and take almonds instead. I take bread, one vegetable and lemons since giving up milk and seem to be thriving so far. The weight is the same, i.e., 106 lb., as when I entered the jail. The *Gita Shabdanukrama* was finished last year. At present I am writing the history of the Ashram. I read a little and of course spin.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2391

[1] The addressee was, at this time, incarcerated along with Dr. Ansari in the Delhi jail. He was transferred to Multan jail on April 11.

265. TELEGRAM TO KAMALA NEHRU[1]

April 11,1932

ANAND BHAWAN

ALLAHABAD

DISTRESSED LEARN MOTHER SUSTAINED INJURY AT PUBLIC MEETING[2] AND RANJIT[3] LAID UP FEVER. HOPE NOTHING SERIOUS. PLEASE WIRE FULL PARTICULARS.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. I, p. 127; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 18-4-1932

266. WATCHING THE HEAVENS—I[4]

A lover of truth feels undiminished joy till the end of his life. He never regards himself as too old to keep on striving for a vision of the God of Truth. He who undertakes every activity in order to see God, also called Truth, who sees Truth in everything [that exists] will not find old age an obstacle [in his quest]. So far as that quest is concerned, the seeker regards himself as immortal and for ever young.

I, for one, have been in this beautiful state of mind for years. I have never felt old age as an obstacle to devoting myself to learning anything which I believed would take me nearer to the God of Truth. A recent example of this is my desire for a study of the heavens. Deep in my heart, I had felt often enough the desire to know something about the stars, but I had assumed that the numerous activities which claimed my attention did not permit me to satisfy it. Maybe my belief was wrong, but so long as I did not myself see the error in it it could not but prevent me from making the necessary effort. I think most probably I myself had prompted Shankerlal, during our

[1] Wife of Jawaharlal Nehru

[2] At Allahabad during the National Week celebrations; Swaruprani Nehru, addressee's mother-in-law, was injured when police made a lathi charge.

[3] Ranjit S. Pandit, addressee's brother-in-law

[4] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi"; *vide* the following item.

imprisonment in 1922 [to take up this study]. Books on the subject were received. Shankerlal picked up enough knowledge to satisfy him. I could find no time!

In 1930-31, I had the good fortune to enjoy Kakasaheb's company [in jail]. He was well versed in this subject. But I did not avail myself of the opportunity, for my desire was not strong enough then. In 1931, I was filled with sudden enthusiasm during the last month of my stay in jail. Why should I not give time to watch that which, to the outward eye, instantaneously reveals the presence of God? How pathetic that one should see like an animal merely with the physical eye without the grand sight penetrating to the sensory nerves behind? How could I let go this fine opportunity to watch the great divine *lila*[1]? I am now quenching the thirst which was awakened then for a knowledge of the heavens, and I have progressed so far that I cannot restrain myself from sharing with inmates of the Ashram the thoughts which fill my mind.

We are taught right from our childhood that our bodies are made of the five great elements—earth, water, *akash*, light and air. We ought to know something about them, but in fact we know very little. At the moment we are concerned with *akash*.

Akash means space. If there were no space in our bodies, we would not be able to live even for a moment. This is true about the universe too. Our earth is surrounded by infinite space. The blue which we see extending over us in all directions is *akash*. The earth has poles. It is a solid sphere, and its axis is 7,900 miles long. But the *akash* is empty space. If we imagine this space to have an axis, we shall have to imagine it to be of infinite length. In this infinite space, the earth is like a mere particle of sand, and on this particle of sand each one of us is a particle, of such infinitesimal size that it is impossible to explain how small it is. There is, therefore, no exaggeration at all in saying that, as bodies, we are mere ciphers. Our body, as compared with the size of the earth, is a thousand times more insignificant than an ant's is as compared with ours. Why, then, should we feel attached to it? Why should we grieve when a body perishes?

However, though in itself the human body is insignificant, it has indeed great value, for it is the house of the *atman*, in truth of the *Paramatman*, of the God of Truth, if we but realize it.

[1] Play, sport

If this thought sinks deep into our heart, we would never want to make it an instrument of enjoying gross pleasures. And if we fill our imagination with the heavens and, realizing the meaning of their vastness, understand our utter insignificance, all our pride would vanish. If the countless shining divinities in the sky did not exist, we would not have come into existence. Inspite of the many discoveries of astronomers, our knowledge about the sky is practically nil. What little we know tells us beyond the shadow of a doubt that if the sun-god rested even for a day from his ever ceaseless *tapascharya,* we would perish. Likewise, if the moon stopped raining down her cool rays, we would meet with the same fate. And we can also infer that the countless stars which we see in the sky at night have some role in maintaining this world in existence. Thus, we are most intimately connected with every living creature in the world and with everything that exists; everything depends for its existence on everything else. Hence we ought to try and know something about our benefactors the shining divinities gliding in the sky.

There is one more reason why we ought to do this. We have a saying among us: "The hills look beautiful from a distance." There is much truth in this saying. The sun, which keeps us alive from a distance, would instantly burn us to ashes if we went near it. This is also true about the other heavenly bodies. Since we know both the beneficial and the harmful properties of the things which surround us on this earth, we may sometimes feel aversion to them and even feel ourselves polluted by physical contact with some of them. Of the divinities in the sky, however, we know only the merits. Hence we never tire of watching them. Knowledge about them can never harm us. Moreover, as we meditate on these divinities, we can raise our imagination with ennobling ideas as high as we wish.

There is no doubt at all that every obstacle which we place between ourselves and the sky harms us physically, mentally and spiritually. If we lived in a natural state, we would live under the sky for all the twenty-four hours of the day. If we cannot do that, we should spend in the open as many hours as we can. We can watch the heavens, i.e., the stars, only at night, and we can do that best Iying on our backs. Hence, anybody who wishes to derive the utmost profit from the observation of the stars should sleep in the open directly under the sky. If there are tall buildings or trees near the place where one is sleeping, they will obstruct the view.

Both children and grown-ups love dramas and the spectacular scenes which they present. But no drama composed or acted by human beings can even equal the great spectacle which Nature has arranged for us on the stage of the sky. Moreover, in a theatre we may harm our eyes, breathe unclean air and also run a great risk of our moral sense being weakened. On the other hand, this drama arranged by Nature can do us nothing but good. Watching the stars soothes the eyes; to watch the stars, one must remain outdoors, and this gives fresh air to the lungs; and we have heard of no instance so far of harm having been done to moral character by watching the stars. The more we meditate on this miracle of God, the more we grow spiritually. Anybody who is afflicted by impure thoughts and gets dreams in his sleep should try to sleep in the open and let himself be absorbed in watching the stars. He will soon fall into dreamless sleep. When we are totally absorbed in the grand spectacle in the heavens, we seem to hear those shining bodies in their utter silence, singing the praise of God. Let him, who has eyes to see, watch the ever-changing patterns of this eternal dance. Let him, who has ears to hear, listen to the silent music of these countless *gandharvas*.

Let us now try to learn something about these stars, or rather let me share with all co-workers what little knowledge I have picked up. The better method, of course, would be to learn something about the earth before proceeding to observation of the stars. It is quite likely that the boys and girls in the Ashram who have had the benefit of Kakasaheb's company already know the facts which I am going to describe. I should be happy if that is so. I am writing this for all inmates of the Ashram, children and grown-ups, old and new. Those to whom the subject is interesting will find the study quite easy.

The right time for the study of the sky is immediately after prayer. We need not give it more than twenty minutes at a time. Those who understand the true meaning of this study will regard it as a part of the prayer. Those of the inmates who sleep in the open may spend as much time as they wish, when they are alone, in watching the stars. As they become absorbed in the scene, they will soon fall asleep. If they wake up during the night, they may spend some more time in looking at the sky. Since the sky seems to be moving all the time, the scene keeps changing from second to second.

If we look at the sky at 8 p.m. in the west, we shall see a grand figure.

N.

E. W.

S.

This figure will be in the west. I see it directly opposite me as I lie on my back with my head in the east. No one who sees the figure from this position will ever forget it afterwards. Since this is the bright half of the month, this and other constellations shine with a rather pale light, but even then this particular constellation is so bright that even a novice like me can spot it easily. I shall refer next time to the beliefs which people formerly held about this group both in our country and in the West. Just now, I shall only tell you that from the description of the position of this constellation in the Vedas, Tilak Maharaj was able to ascertain the date of the Vedas. We have in the Ashram library, a copy of the treatise by the late Shri Dikshit which gives plenty of information on this subject. My job is only to arouse interest in this direction. Once that is done, I myself shall learn more about the subject from the inmates of the Ashram. For m e, these constellations have become a means of communion with God. May they be so for the inmates of the Ashram too.

"Live as you like,

But realize Hari somehow, anyhow."

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8218. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

267. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 11,1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I am certainly happy that nobody comes to see me. My chief reason is that such visits mean unnecessary expenditure. It makes no difference who spends the money. When a visit cannot be avoided, of course we don't mind. In such circumstances we may go even to Ceylon. Having said this, let me add that those to whom this view does not appeal need not act on it. I certainly cannot measure the strength of feelings of those who are outside.

I am sure Tilakam will not go to Malabar. He will have to be sent somewhere else. If we can send him to Bombay, the arrangement is worth trying. Sometimes it happens that Bombay suits persons whom Ahmedabad does not suit. The air in Bombay is certainly like what it is in Malabar. We know that it suited Jamna. Write to Manilal (Revashankerbhai's) and ask his view, or to Damodardas, if you approve of my suggestion. I hope Manu has completely recovered now. If Amtul doesn't have enough money, I think we should provide her the fare and other expenses.

I understand what you say about the Vidyapith library. Do only what seems best to all of you.

It is now two months since I gave up milk. I have observed no ill effects of the step. The weight is maintained, more or less. The strength also has remained unaffected. I am, therefore, continuing the experiment. As I have explained in a previous letter, I am gradually coming to the conclusion that people who do not lead a very strenuous life and who can sleep and rest regularly, can do without milk. In other words, milk is necessary only for a life of *rajasik* activities.

I do realize Hariyomal's worth. See that he does not ruin his health through his obstinacy. All of us know what Krishnamaiyadevi is, but we should tolerate her faults as we do the faults of a member of our family, should indeed go a little further than we would in the case of our own family members. When you feel that the limit is reached, you may stop sending money. I cannot say anything more than this from here.

You may give the permission asked for, for translating *Anasaktiyoga* into Malayalam. I gather from your letter that Harihar Sharma is not in the Ashram at present. My impression is that he is with Rajagopalachari.

What you say about Mathuradas is correct.

I have not received Jethalal's report from Anantpur. Nor have I had any letter from him. If Harilal comes to the Ashram, I think he should be permitted to stay there only on condition that now he gives up drinking. You should now consider how long Padma may stay on in Almora. Ascertain her own view and also that of Sitla Sahai's in the matter.

I think I have discussed sufficiently often in the past how people should act if a tiger makes its appearance in the Ashram. Let them follow what they remember and what they have imbibed in their lives from all that I have said.

I have sent from here directly, through Chintamani Shastri, a letter of condolence about [the death of] Vishnu Kane of Sasvane. Censor all letters. Raojibhai's letter should not have been passed. I know that this will increase the burden on you. But it is necessary [to do what I have suggested] in order to satisfy that by which we are always guided.

Blessings from

BAPU

Enclosure:

An English letter for Hume.

An article on "Watching the Heavens—I"[1]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

268. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHAH

April 12, 1932

BHAISHRI HIRALAL,

I got your books and your letter full of love. I got them late by a week because Dahyabhai had forgotten to send them immediately. The books will be useful to me, and your letter and notes will enhance their usefulness. But I am not as ambitious as you seem to think I am. I only wish to acquire sufficient general knowledge to be able to see God in the heavens more clearly. Please send me a small book on astronomy which you think will suit my purpose. I will take proper care of your books. I have observed the care with which you have used them. Generally I hesitate to borrow such books from friends for fear that they may be lost or damaged.

I cannot praise your industry and your neatness too much. But don't you think that your claim to have discovered a master-key may be a little exaggerated?[2] What is that key? Do you have convincing

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] In *The Diary of Mahadev Desai,* Vol. I, Mahadev Desai explains: "Hiralal Shah wrote to Bapu that he had found the master-key of interpretation in certain subjects."

reasons for believing that it is a key, and a master-key at that? Are those reasons accepted as convincing by experts? What benefits do you promise from your discovery? May it not be that there is the same drawback here as in the case of the spinning-wheel,namely, that there is no master-key at all? I am certainly ready to be convinced by you and will weigh your arguments objectively. But I should like you to cultivate the humility which would befit a dedicated seeker after truth.I know that it cannot be cultivated consciously. But it lies behind every genuine discovery. The man who has discovered some new truth remains doubtful about his discovery inspite of the immense evidence he may have in favour of his hypothesis. The result is that, when ultimately he does put his discovery before the world, he has realized its truth with absolute conviction. The people are astounded and believe him. There is authority, there is irresistible power, in his words. The world is immediately convinced by them. It is simply awed by the proofs he adduces in support of his hypothesis, for he has examined it from every possible point of view. If this is so about your discovery too, I should have nothing to say in the matter. In that case, all honour to you. It is my wish that it may be so.

All of us, that is, all three, are quite well. Please tell Shankar on my behalf that he should not endanger his health, and ask him to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 93-4

269. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 12, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I have noted that the batch of visitors will arrive here on Thursday. Send a cable to America and explain that as a matter of policy the Ashram does not claim exclusive rights [in its publications] or grant them to others. Ask them to write and give details, so that we may think carefully about the request.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

It was indeed a deliverance for poor Mani. I felt happy on reading the news.

I shall be eager to know the results of the non-stop spinning competition. Drop a separate postcard to give me the information.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8219. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

270. LETTER TO SHANTILAL MEHTA

April 12, 1932

CHI. SHANTI,

I got your second letter. Whatever you do, do it patiently. It would be good if you educate your wife a little. I expect that Manilal will come in May. He has taken more time than he had thought he would require in winding up his affairs. Be careful in your expenses. You should either educate your wife yourself or take Jamnadas's advice for making some other arrangement for her education.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII

271. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

April 12, 1932

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I got your letter just when I had been thinking of you and wondering why there was no letter from you. I gather from it that your health is all right. I did get in course of time the letter which you wrote to me from England, and I have the impression that I also replied to it. I am not aware that I always keep my hand under the head when sleeping. It is possible that the hand got under the head sometimes. I was careful in the matter after I got your letter and remained vigilant. I can say, therefore, that I have never kept the hand in that position since then. However, that seems to have had no effect on the condition of the hand. No one has yet been able to make out the cause of this weakness. As a precaution I even gave up writing with the right hand. But afterwards the doctors also came to the conclusion that the pain was not caused by writer's cramp. If your massaging the hand is likely to cure the pain, I can certainly secure the necessary permission. However, if you explain to me the exact manner of doing

the massage, I would do it myself or ask Mahadev to do it. But the fact is that the condition is not worth worrying about at all. Nor is the pain continuous. It occurs only when I use the hand to do certain things. The surgeon here was of the opinion that the pain was a sign of old age and that, therefore, no cure was possible. Certain weaknesses generally appear in old age, since we do not exercise sufficient self-control in our earlier life. This weakness may be one such, and there is no reason for sorrow or wonder if it is so. Hence, apart from taking necessary precautions, I do not worry about the matter. We have now a new doctor here, who believes that the pain can be cured. Let me see what he can do.

I hope both of you enjoy peace of mind. We three are happy. You must of course have met Andrews.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7548. Also C.W. 5023. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

272. LETTER TO R. V. MART1N

April 13, 1932

DEAR MAJOR MARTIN,

It was on the 6th of March that I wrote to Major Bhandari[1] about interviews with non-political associates. I sent a reminder[2] on the 30th March, but I am still without a reply. It is high time that I got a reply about the illustrative list I have already submitted. It causes me much inconvenience and some anxiety not to be able to see some of the friends I should like to see and who would like to see me.

The Government have been good enough to appreciate my desire to write to my prison-associates about their welfare. In virtue of the permission, I have been writing to some of them, but from Belgaum I can get no answer. I have written to Shrimati Manibehn Patel. She is Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's daughter, but she has been under the Ashram discipline for over ten years. I knew from the letter that was received some time ago by her father that she had been

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. G. Bhandari", 6-3-1932 & "Letter to M. G. Bhandari", 30-3-1932

[2] *ibid*

ailing. I therefore wrote to her asking her to tell me all about her health, but I can get no answer. Then there is Kaka Kalelkar whom you know well and who as you are aware has suffered from tuberculosis and requires special care. I have written to him also and can get no reply. The third is Prabhudas Gandhi[3] a nearly relatedcousin of mine, brought up under me as an infant whilst I was in South Africa. He is suffering from the same disease as Kaka Kalelkar and has been under special treatment. And there is Sjt. Narahari Parikh, a member of the Ashram, an old associate. He is also in the Belgaum prison. I inquired about these last two of Kakasaheb Kalelkar, but can get no information. Will you please get the necessary information about their health and diet and weight? Absence of any news about them is a cause of considerable anxiety to me.

I shall be obliged if you will kindly ascertain for me whether the telegram[1] I handed to Major Bhandari addressed to Allahabad making inquiries about the injuries sustained by Mrs. Motilal Nehru and illness of her son-in-law Sjt. Ranjit Pandit was duly sent. I may mention that my relations with the Nehrus are more private and intimate than political, and naturally I am deeply interested in the health and general welfare of the members of the Nehru family.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 9

273. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

April 13, 1932

MY DEAR CHILD,

I am always glad when I hear from you. Your letter is interesting and revealing. You are still fretting somewhat. That you should get over. If we have trust in God, we should not worry even as we would not when we have a trustworthy doorkeeper or guard. And who can be a better doorkeeper or guard than God the never-failing. It is not enough that we sing about such things or have a mere intellectual grasp. It is necessary to feel the thing within. Feeling is exactly like feeling pain or pleasure. It admits of or needs no argument. Who can

[1] To Kamala Nehru; *vide "Letter to Kamala Nehru"*, 11-4-1932

argue us out of our experience? I write this because I want you to be absolutely free from all care and anxiety.

The idea of giving the children dolls of different races was very good. What is the name of the Hindi girl and what is her province

Did I tell you that Mahadev was with me?

Kisses to the children.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 109. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child*, pp. 89-90

274. LETTER TO SHANKARRAO DEO[1]

April 15, 1932

BHAI,

I thought at length over your problem, considered it at night too and we three discussed it together. The conclusion, in our firm opinion, is that your conception of dharma is in fact *adharma*. During satyagraha, no satyagrahi can take any vow at all connected with it without obtaining the sanction of the President. Your interpretation of your vow is a gross distortion. The vow of *madhukari* has no place in the jail. You have no right at present to judge whether or not you will have any sense of shame in going out for *madukari* after the release. To envisage now the state of your mind upon leaving the jail would be to claim the role of God Almighty. All three of us hold that your duty lies in accepting the food provided for 'C' class prisoners in the spirit of an offering to God. The duty of a sannyasi indicates the same.

Now, as regards clothes, the insistence upon wearing khadi only while in jail is in no way proper. In this matter the duty of every satyagrahi prisoner is to refrain from insisting on wearing khadi until the Congress takes a decision in this. This does not in any way affect your vow of self-sufficiency. I appeal to you to give up the fast, acknowledge your mistake and start eating. It would be beneficial to remain on milk or fruit for a day or two because of the fast. I am writing this from the medical point of view only. I hope you will

[1] Addressee's name is supplied from "Diary, 1932". Mahadev Desai explains: "The addressee was under a vow of self-sufficiency in cloth, so that he wore only clothes spun by himself, and secondly he had vowed to live on food obtained by *madhukari* (begging from a number of houses), and if that was not available, on milk and fruit." (*The Diary of Mahadev Desai*)

follow our unprejudiced advice.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 98

275. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

April 15, 1932

DEAR MR. BHANDARI,

I would like the accompanying letter[2] to be delivered to . . .[3] at once, if you approve of the contents. They are nothing but re-exhortation to break his fast and take ordinary food.

Yours sincerely,

M. K GANDHI

[PS.]

If . . .[4] accepts the advice tendered in my letter to him and breaks the fast, I hope you will issue him milk for one or two days, for it is my experience as a fasting expert that the breaking of fasts on solid food often results in great harm to the body.

M. K. GANDHI

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 99

276. LETTER TO KHAGENDRA PRIYA BARUANI

April 15, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for the khadi piece you have sent me. There is no letter accompanying it. Please give me the history of the piece.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. KHAGENDRA PRIYA BARUANI
NOWGONG
ASSAM

From a photostat: C.W. 9551

[1] The addressee gave up the fast on Gandhiji's advice.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] The name is omitted in the source; but it is evident from the contents of the letter that the reference is to Shankarrao Deo.

[4] *ibid*

277. A LETTER

April 16, 1932

MY DEAR,

If almond paste agrees with you, by all means take it. But you must give a fair trial to cod-liver oil. I have heard that it has a nasty taste, but you must cover the taste or take it as we take water without bringing the cup to the lips, so that it goes down the throat without touching the palate.

Love.

BAPU

C.W. 9026. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

278. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

April 17, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

To ensure our spiritual welfare, we should scrupulously follow truth. Since we are caught in the workings of Nature, we cannot escape her effects. It is our duty to fight against evil effects. I don't think there is any truth in the belief that the direction in which we keep our head when sleeping has an effect on us. During the National Week, I spun twice as much as at other times. Mahadev also spun for *yajna* during the Week twice as much as he does normally. And, of course, we also fasted. All of you did much more than that. God ceaselessly employs satyagraha against us, for He does not tolerate untruth in us even for an instant. God means Truth. His satyagraha, therefore, cannot but be perfect. Is not this clear?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9909. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

279. A LETTER

April 17, 1932

CHI.,

We live in the Ashram in order to overcome all fears. We follow truth for its own sake, not out of fear of anybody. Those who have been suppressed by society should courageously break their bonds. This is the purpose for which the Ashram exists. I wish that the women should understand this clearly and avail themselves of the opportunity [which they have got].

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9032. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

280. A LETTER

April 17, 1932

CHI.,

We are not concerned with when the earth came into existence, what was the first living creature on it and when it came into being. That is God's business. We should know our dharma and that should be enough.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9036. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

281. A LETTER

April 17, 1932

BHAI,

Nobody should grieve over Mani's death. For her it was actually a release from terrible suffering. Nor should you repent for having decided to get her operated. Do write her reminiscences. You should all cultivate her virtues in yourselves. If you do that, she will be still alive. Truly speaking, however, the soul never dies. The bodywhich the soul inhabits perishes. That happens to all of us, to some of us sooner than to others.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9043. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

282. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

April 17, 1932

CHI. MANGALA,

You should discover the source of the Chandrabhaga by all of you going for a walk up her bed. It is not at all far. Only the name is big. All of you have seen her mouth. When you walk towards the source, you should also observe the things which you come across on the banks.

We do not spin for money. We should spin, and with careful attention, because spinning is the only work which millions can do. As we spin, one of us will be able to invent a really good spinning-wheel. Even if nobody does that, we shall be able to discover many other improvements.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4083. Also C.W. 47. Courtesy: Mangalabehn B. Desai

283. LETTER TO NARAYAN DESAI

April 17, 1932

CHI. BABLO,

Because you signed yourself as Narayan, I added "rao".[1] Now you say that you would like to be addressed as 'Narayan Desai'. What is wrong with 'Bablo' then? I will call you 'Desai' after you have invented a prize-winning spinning-wheel. The first Desais were called so in virtue of the posts which they held. How good it would be if you also become a Desai by rendering some great service! There is no fun for a son to be called a Desai because his father was called that. Would it not be better to cling to the name given to one in childhood?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9478

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narayan Desai", 11-3-1932

284. LETTER TO PRITHURAJ L. ASAR

April 17, 1932

CHI. PRITHURAJ,

I am addressing this letter c/o the Ashram, as you have not mentioned your address. In your excellent letter you say nothing about the hand.

It is not true that the same person cannot be self-reliant and also owe something to his parents. Just as one inherits certain physical qualities from one's parents, so also one may inherit from them wealth and prestige too, It would be false pride to reject them. A good son's duty is to make good use of them and add to them. In this way, one should see that one's own efforts carry forward what the parents had achieved.

We should listen to everybody's advice, but do only what our conscience tells us. And in order that our conscience may speak, we should observe the *yama-niyamas*[1]. Everybody cannot hear the inner voice. We need divine ears to hear it.

Your handwriting shows considerable improvement, but it has not yet become sufficiently well formed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12187-a. Also C.W. 9045. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

285. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI M. PATEL

April 17, 1932

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

Your letters are interesting, but they cross the limits.[2] After all, we hold ourselves answerable to the Emperor of emperors, the God of Truth. I trust all of you and, therefore, never wish to ask you for a report of your work. I shall be satisfied if I get news about how you are. This is not meant as criticism. I only wish to draw your attention to this, so that you may be careful, and to reassure you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8996. Also C.W. 9040. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Rules and regulations of conduct for a spiritual aspirant

[2] As they strayed into politics

286. A LETTER

April 17, 1932

CHI.,

I don't know when the evil of untouchability entered [Hinduism]. When there were no cars or other vehicles, people went on foot. Gangabehn and other women are all right. For infants milk would be the best food. I don't 'remember which play I liked especially. But it is true that I loved seeing dramas.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 9046. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

287. WATCHING THE HEAVENS-II[1]

April 18, 1932

There are many fanciful stories about the cluster of stars of which I drew a figure last time.[2] No figure of this cluster shows all the stars in it. Actually, there are many more stars than you will see in any such figure. Hence the best thing is for everybody to make his or her own drawing and show by dots as many stars as can be seen with the naked eye. If we follow this practice, we shall learn to recognize the different constellations much more quickly. Moreover, the drawings which we ourselves make will be much better for our purpose than those we find in books, for, when the stars are observed from different places there are bound to be differences in the drawings which represent them. It would be advisable for everybody to observe the stars from a fixed place and at a fixed time. This suggestion is meant for those who wish to make drawings or who are beginners. After we have become familiar with the different constellations, we shall be able to recognize these heavenly friends of ours, or these divinities, from wherever we observe them.

The Hindu, a daily of Madras, publishes a weekly, as does *The Times* of Bombay. Both of them give maps of the sky showing the

[1] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", *vide* the following item.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 11-4-1932

constellations visible during each month. *The Hindu* gives such a map in its issue of the first week and *The Times* gives it in its issue of the second week. If you can get either of these maps, you will learn much from it. The hundredth number of *Kumar* is due to be published. Shri Hiralal Shah has contributed some articles on this subject for that number. He seems to have made a deep study of the subject. Everybody who is curious may read those articles. Having read those articles, I don't feel inclined to write much here. I will only explain a little more clearly my point of view in studying the sky. If I attempt more, I shall not be able to write on other subjects along with my weekly letters. I may, however, write something occasionally, or in reply to somebody's question.

The constellation of which I drew a figure is known among us as *Mriga* or *Mrigashirsha*. One of the months got its name, *Margashirsha—Magshar*—from this. The months in our calendar got their names from the respective constellations. In the West, the *Mriga* is known as "Orion". The constellation is imagined to be a hunter. To its east, there are two very bright stars in a straight line. They are imagined to be the hunter's dogs. The star in the west is the bigger dog and the one to the north is the smaller dog. The cluster of stars which we see to its east and south, below the star which forms the fourth angle of the figure, is imagined to be a hare. The dogs are running towards it. The three stars in the middle are the jewels in the hunter's waist-band.

Those stars have also been shown as representing the following figures: The bigger of the two dogs is called Lubdhak among us, and those three stars represent the deer's stomach. The stars to the south represent the arrow shot by Lubdhak. The three stars to the north outside the rectangle represent the deer's head. These may be beautiful fancies. A great deal has been written about their origin, but personally I have read very little of all this.

There is, of course, no such figure in the sky. Nor are the stars as near to us as they seem. They are not what they look, but are suns far bigger than our sun. Being millions and millions of miles away from us, they twinkle in the sky as mere points. Our knowledge about these suns is very little. But these dusters of stars serve the most illiterate as their friends. If one looks at them even for a second, one would forget all one's misery and burst forth into praise of God's supreme greatness. One would realize that the stars were God's

messengers and kept watch and guarded us every night and consoled us in our suffering. This is the real truth. That they are suns and that they are very far from us are mere intellectual conceptions. Their service to us in filling us with an awareness of God is the real truth for us. From a scientific point of view, we may know a good many properties of water, but may not make any use of our knowledge. The knowledge that it is something with which we can quench our thirst and keep our bodies clean, and its use for such purposes, are very important for us and this knowledge of the utility of water is for us the truth about it, even if, in real fact, it is a substance with other properties and uses too. And the same is true about the stars. They serve us in many ways. I have drawn attention to what seems to me their chief function and suggested that one should fix one's mind on that and benefit from their message. This is what people seem to have always done from the oldest times. In the course of time, however, all kindsof other stories spread and the various myths concerning the stars arose. We may certainly read all this in order to make the study more interesting, but we should not lose sight of the primary benefit which I have suggested.

Let us now turn our attention to two other groups to the north of *Mriga.*

The bigger group is known as the *Saptarshi*[1], and the smaller one is called *Dhruvamatsya*[2]. I have shown seven stars in each group, but there are many more in the *Saptarshi.* They are shown in the drawings which appear in *The Times* and *The Hindu* weeklies. In *Dhruvamatsya* we shall not see more. It being the bright half of the month just now, we can see only three, two members of the rectangle and the one at the end of the tail, which is called *Dhruva*[3]. This is the only star which remains practically fixed and that is why it was a great help to sailors in old days. Both these groups seem to revolve round *Dhruva.* Here we find it very interesting to watch their motion every night. Their positions change continually all through the night. If we noted these positions from time to time, we would find that they trace quite a big arch. In the West, these two groups are called the Great Bear and the Little Bear respectively. In one of the books, I even saw beautiful drawings of them. The Great Bear is also known as the

[1] The Great Bear; literally, 'the seven sages'
[2] The Little Bear; literally 'the Dhruva fish'
[3] The Pole star

plough. The *Saptarshi* serves as a clock during the night. After some experience, we can always know the time of the night from the position of the *Saptarshi*.

However valuable these benefits and however interesting these names may be, they seem insignificant to me in comparison with the primary benefit. We should aspire to be as pure as the sky and as bright as the stars. We should pray to God, as the latter seem to be doing in their silence. Just as they do not depart from their paths even for a moment, so let us never be remiss in doing what we are expected to do.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

288. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 15/18 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

You must have received my postcard[1] about the cable to be sent to America. Bali and others came and saw me. I was happy that they came.

I think henceforth we should not permit Harilal to stay in the Ashram. I have written to him directly to tell him that he would not be permitted in future to stay there. I have sent the letter through Jamnadas. He begs to be allowed to stay at a place for a few days, and spend them in his habitual pleasures. And then he goes and seeks shelter elsewhere, using the name of the place which he has left. We let him stay in the Ashram so long in the hope that slowly he would change his ways there. But on the contrary, he became worse.

You seem to have celebrated the National Week very well indeed. I hope no one will fall ill in consequence of all that strain. There is one more point in this connection to which I drew your attention once. Let me do so again. Instead of overstraining ourselves during this Week and, when it is over, spending a few days in rest and then resuming our old life, I think it would be much better if we utilize the Week to learn to be more vigilant and then keep up afterwards the increase in production which we effect. In the language of the *Gita*, work done in the former manner would be an instance of

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 12-4-1932

demoniac work and work done in the latter manner an instance of God-like work or the first *rajasik* work and the other *sattvik* work. Here we celebrated the Week as I have suggested. Mahadev started carding and spun a little more than he had been doing. But I doubled the quantity of yarn spun daily and, if my right hand does not fail, I intend to keep up the increase.

Even if some of the inmates who fall ill in the Ashram stay elsewhere permanently, we should not mind the expense on their account. Did we not start the Ashram in Almora for this very purpose? Why cannot we start similar institutions at other places too? If we do, then whenever we see that the air and water of the Ashram do not suit a person, as in the case of Jamna, he or she can go and live in one of those institutions. It will not be very expensive to maintain such institutions, and, moreover, we shall be able to start work in those areas. This is what we did in Wardha. In the beginning, we sent Ramniklal or somebody else there.[1] But we had started the Ashram in Wardha in order to keep it up, and so, when Ramniklal fell ill or found it difficult to work there—I forget what actually happened—we sent Vinoba. We don't have another Vinoba, but I think we can spare one of the workers from the Ashram and carry on the work at the new place. If we can find a place on the sea-coast, we should prefer it. But perhaps this is a long-term plan. Even then this at any rate we can do immediately: find a suitable place on the sea-coast and send some of the inmates there, at the same time making up our minds that if anybody does not improve even after trying two or three such places, he or she may die, but we will not go further than this in providing external help for their illness. Whether we do or do not decide just now to fix any such limit, we must help those who keep bad health and who require change of air to get it. Our letters in which we have expressed our views about calling Padma back to the Ashram seem to have crossed. It seems she, too, wishes to return. Ascertain the views of Sitla Sahai and Sarojinidevi and do what is necessary. Jamna should either return to Bombay or select one of the places from Bardoli, Sasvane, Chorwad, Porbandar, Veraval, Mangarol, Ghogha and Gopanath. I think the fact that Bombay suited Jamna means only that sea-air suited her. If this inference is incorrect we shall know through experience. Any of the places which I think will suit Jamna will, I believe, suit Tilakam too. I knew of course from the very beginning

[1] It was Ramniklal Modi.

that the expense on account of Krishnamaiyadevi, Padma and Radha was beyond the means of the Ashram, but, as we have tolerated many other improper things, my mind tolerates this expense too. I do feel ashamed of it, of course. I shall await a report from you of the views expressed on the issues raised by the question of *lezim*[1] exercises and the final decision arrived at. The person who exercised his influence on behalf of Chandrakanta has not done her good. If there are any important letters from abroad, which you think should be sent to me, make copies of them and send them to me. The rest need not be sent. If any correspondents have asked for autographs [inform them that] they cannot be sent. I have not yet received the bottle containing the preparation of almonds and dates. I think I know now how to make it.

I am informed by the jail authorities that Kaka, Narahari, Prabhudas and Manibehn keep good health. I have received no letter from them.

Silence Day, April 18, 1932

I got a letter from Mahavir[2] directly. I have written to him and told him that he should send a budget of the likely expenditureand fix the last date up to which he will stay. I have asked him, in deciding this, to remember that our means are limited.

It seems that Nimu and the children do not keep good health in Lakhtar. I, therefore, think that it will be better if you call them back there. It seems the children find the heat at Lakhtar too much. Compared to Lakhtar, Sabarmati is certainly cool. If they prefer Vijapur, she may go and stay there. But even if you feel that she should stay at some place other than the Ashram, I think you will be able to decide finally only after she returns there.

Like the thumb of the right hand, the elbow of the left hand too pains. The doctor, therefore, has advised me to give rest to the left hand. I have not felt any pain so far when drawing the thread with the left hand. It is other movements which cause the pain. As a precaution, however, from yesterday I have started using the right hand to rotate the wheel and the left hand to draw the thread. Thus working the wheel with the left hand, I spun 95 rounds yesterday in three and a half hours and 85 rounds today in two and a half hours. There is no

[1] A short wooden device with jingling metal discs attached, used in rhythmic physical culture exercises and trills

[2] Mahavir Giri; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 21/22-4-1932.

difficulty of a mechanical nature in making the necessary change in the Gandiva wheel for this purpose. All that is necessary is to remove the spindle to the other side and fix the wheel on the left hand side. What effect this change will have on the [left] hand will be known only after some time. I had been spinning 375 rounds every day in the week, and I had wanted to keep that up. But I have had to give up my intention for the present. If, however, I get used to spinning with the left hand, that will be no small advantage. I therefore do not feel unhappy about the rounds spun being so few. My purpose in mentioning this is to induce people there who may have sufficient enthusiasm to learn to use their left hand as much as they do the right. In Japan, the people are taught from their very childhood to use both the hands equally well. This practice will give nearly if not exactly twice as much advantage as we have now. If our left hand gives as good service as the right, the latter will get proper rest every day, and if the right hand ever becomes disabled we would be able to do all the work with our left hand. This is no small advantage. If this suggestion appeals to anybody there, he or she should start using the left hand to do some of the work which we normally do with the right hand. The activities which immediately come to my mind in this connection are writing, spinning and eating. If, however, we think a little about the matter, we shall be able to think of many things which we normally do with our right hand and which we can, with a little reflection and without much effort, train our left hand to do.

The stock of cotton with me is about to be exhausted. If, therefore, you have some cotton of good quality, please send two pounds of it. There are in all 39 letters today, besides this letter to you and "Watching the Heavens-II"[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8220. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1]*Vide* the preceding item.

289. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

April 18, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

Since we ourselves are a democratic people, it is natural that our temperament should draw us towards a democracy. But as lovers of truth it is our duty to see justice and support the party which has justice on its side.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 9039. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

290. A LETTER

April 18, 1932

CHI.,

Woman's special virtues are non-violence, patience, forbearance, capacity for endurance and purity of heart. Dreams are signs of poor sleep. They may be caused by indigestion or too much of thinking. We can prevent them by discovering their cause.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9029. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

291. A LETTER

April 18, 1932

CHI.,

We see ignorance all around us. We should not feel depressed on that account, but should try to get rid of our own ignorance. If we do that, the ignorance of other people also will probably disappear. Ignorance means ignorance of one's duty, or disinclination to do one's duty even when one knows what it is.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9030. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

292. A LETTER

April 18, 1932

CHI.,

When a sister ties the *rakhi* round the wrist of her brother, she expresses her wish for his welfare and her desire that, when an occasion arises, he should help her. A person round whose wrist a woman ties the *rakhi* for ever remains her brother. The brother binds himself to help the sister even at the cost of his life.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9035. Courtesy: .Narandas Gandhi

293. A LETTER

April 18, 1932

CHI.,

If ever our sister or any helpless person is assaulted by someone, we should try to save her even at the cost of our life. Whenever one can kill, one can also lay down one's own life instead. If, however, we do not have the strength to lay down our life, we should help even by using violence. Such violence does not cease tobe violence. It remains an evil. But cowardice is worse than violence.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9037. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

294. A LETTER

April 18, 1932

CHI.,

To cure bleeding from the nostrils, one should put a mudpack on the top of the head at noon every day. Next, every morning and evening one should draw in cold water through the nostrils and throw it out *via* the mouth. It is easy to learn to draw in water through the nostrils. One should not go out too much in the sun, or let the head become hot. You should not believe that everything you read in a

book is necessarily true. Experience has proved that it is best to eat before seven in the evening.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9038. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

295. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

April 18, 1932

CHI. PARASRAM,

You certainly wrote a fine poem for Vimal. After all you are a father and do love him, and it is right that you should. I do not believe that he does not take interest in study. In a proper atmosphere, children learn spontaneously. I have often found that they learn more outside the class-room than inside it. It is our duty, therefore, to create the school atmosphere even at home so that the children may spontaneously go on learning all the time what they can. This is the true Montessori method. But this means that all the grown-up members should behave as teachers, that is, should have purity of character and should love the children. This does not mean that we should close our schools, but it certainly means that we should, as quickly as we can, make the whole atmosphere of the Ashram like that of a school, and that all the grown-up men and women should regard themselves as the children'sguardians and make themselves fit to be so. If we do this, the children will no longer feel the hours in the class-rooms boring.

You should not include for reading *Saket* and *Anagh* just because I have made that suggestion. You may do so only if you like the suggestion and feel that some at least in the Ashram will appreciate it.

1. You may give the children some work to be done outside the class-room.

2. When you go for a walk, sometimes being alone may be good for you, sometimes talking and sometimes reading and teaching, depending upon your mood at the time. You should follow your inclination.

3. All persons who deserve to be looked upon as our parents or gurus are also worthy of being revered as God !

4. Anybody who joins the Ashram should follow only the rules of the Ashram, since even the best inmates are imperfect and, therefore, their actions should not be taken as examples to be followed. It is, after all, in human nature that persons who are eager to follow rules will spontaneously be drawn to those who observe them most scrupulously.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7494. Also C.W. 4971. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

296. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

April 18, 1932

CHI. JAMNA,

Anybody who expects a letter from me regularly should himself or herself be regular in writing to me. What am I to write about, every week, unless the person writes something?

If Kusum continues to be ill, she should be forced to take rest. I am afraid she will not recoup her health unless she takes rest. I also will write to her.

It is now clear that the Sabarmati climate does not agree with you. This means that you should not live in Sabarmati for any length of time. You should not feel sorry at this, as it is not the particular plot of land that makes the Ashram. Your training in the Ashram will have borne fruit if you observe all its rules wherever you live. If you have been scrupulously observing the rules in Bombay, there must havebeen a considerable effect on the environment there. I will write some time about the importance of observing the rules.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 851. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

297. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

April 18, 1932

BHAI KHAMBHATTA,

I got your letter. I cannot ask you to come here just now. Correspondence is going on for permission to see friends. If the

matter is satisfactorily settled, I will certainly ask you to come. I have started the massage in the manner recommended by you. It is being done with an oil I have, named *Lakshadi* oil. I will let you know the result. I hope Andrews's health is all right.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6599

298. LETTER TO MANIBEHN N. PARIKH

April 18, 1932

CHI. MANI,

There is no cause for worrying about Narahari. I have had official information that his health is good. I am trying to get a letter written by himself. A person who has put his or her whole trust in God, why should he or she carry the load of worry?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5966. Also C.W. 3283. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

299. LETTER TO NIRMALA H. DESAI

April 18, 1932

CHI. NIRMALA,

Our spiritual progress will remain illusory till we learn to regard every person as our own brother or sister. Why should we feel any difference between relations and others? How should people who have no relations behave? Or those who have lost theirs through death? He who regards all human beings as his relations is never bereft of them, for they are [count][1]less. Such relationship is the only true one, and all other relationships are false and transitory. Can you understand this?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9472. Also C.W. 9033. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] The source is mutilated here.

300. LETTER TO PUSHPA S. PATEL

April 18, 1932

CHI. PUSHPA,

If swaraj were to mean Gandhi's rule, it would be a curse. Swaraj means the rule of all, and that would include Pushpa too,

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3986. Also C.W. 32. Courtesy: Pushpabehn N. Naik

301. LETTER TO PADMA

April 18, 1932.

CHI. PADMA,

I don't know who is there in Bhawali at present. Nor do I know who are still free. You can go to Bhawali only if you have cultivated some contacts there. But personally I would also like it if you now returned to the Ashram. We should trust to our fate. What does Sarojinidevi desire? It will also be necessary to know what Sitala Sahay desires. I remember to have replied to every letter of yours that I got. It is you who have not been regular in writing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6131. Also C.W. 3483. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

302. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

April 18, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

You were certainly not in a mood to write when you wrote that letter. It was as long as your letters usually are, but it seemed to be incoherent. Just as one should not eat when one is not hungry or go out for a walk when one does not feel like it, similarly one should not write a letter when one is not in a mood to write one. Or, you may say

merely that you are tired and do not wish to write, and stop there.It is not a good sign that the end of the day finds you irritable rather than cheerful. This is no evidence of a spirit of non-attachment. I advise you, nay urge you, to reduce your responsibilities. That will do no harm either to you or to the Ashram. Only work which is done with a cheerful mind bears fruit.

I see the co-workers here every fortnight, and this time I had asked Dhurandhar to come with the others. He keeps good health. He has lost some weight, for he takes the diet prescribed for 'C'-class prisoners. You will be permitted to visit him now, provided no one has visited him meanwhile.

I hope you wrote what you did about the questions arising from *lezim* exercises without giving careful thought to the subject. You don't know where the doctrine of "art for art's sake" leads a person. In its name, young men in the West have in this age descended right into hell. Perhaps you didn't have a clear idea of what art means when you wrote the letter. But, then, you yourself have warned me that there will be no sense or logic in your letter. I will not, therefore, dwell further on this subject.

It is possible that you do not appear hysterical to yourself. Kisan may also not see that you are so. Or it may be that neither of you has understood the meaning of 'hysterical'. Perhaps you have never consulted a dictionary to find out. Don't take it for granted that our M.A.s know English. Moreover, very few people know the meanings of such technical terms. You are a fine specimen of a hysterical woman. Being hysterical is not necessarily a defect of character. It is desirable, however, to overcome this tendency sooner or later. But I will not lead you into a discussion of this subject. I don't mind your thinking that you are not hysterical. Since you always wish to do what seems right to you, I don't worry about the matter. "No one striving to follow good ever comes to harm."[1]

Your statement was that it was the special excellence of the Ashram that no one in it who took up some work left it off. I would regard that as a certificate. Maybe the Ashram does not deserve it today, but we should certainly aspire to deserve it one *day*. *I* am not unhappy about our failures. I am aware of them and, therefore, I am vigilant. The fact that we get no time to learn what we had wished to

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, VI. 40

learn is only evidence of my shortcomings. My organizing ability and my ability to teach are limited, and my sense of proportion in regard to time is also limited; nonetheless, if circumstances had not kept me away from the Ashram for much of the time, I would have somehow managed to fulfil most of the programme. I say this from experience. But we should think about the past only with a view to improving things in future if we can. All of you should apply your minds and see if you can organize things and do what I have failed to do. Find some time and think over what we had planned to do, what remains undone and how much of it can still be carried out. Try to do whatever can be done. If you think that nothing can be done, forget what cannot be helped. We should not go on worrying about the matter.

To become a cipher means to shed the feeling, 'I am doing this'. There is no suggestion of pessimism in this.

Mahadev and I may claim to have done twice the normal amount of work during this Week. This time, Sardar has not yet been inspired to take up spinning. But all three of us had fasted[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10281. Also C.W. 6729. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

303. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI[2]

April 18, 1932

CHI.,

1. I have never seen any difference between the Jain doctrine and the general Vedic doctrine. The difference is only one of point of view. The God of the Vedas is both a Doer and a non-Doer. Since the

[1] On the 6th and 13th, the first and the last day of the National Week

[2] The addressee had put the following questions to Gandhiji:

(i) What is the difference between the *Gita's* theism and the Jain doctrine that there is no God?

(ii) If action cannot be attributed to God, who bestows grace? If a person following the path of devotion does not or cannot believe in Divine grace, what else can sustain his faith? Is prayer anything more than an expression of a man's pious wishes?

(iii) What is the exact meaning of your statement, "Truth is God"?

whole world is pervaded by God, He is a Doer, and yet He is not that because He remains untouched. He does not suffer the consequences of karma, since the world is not His karma in the sense in which we use the word. Looked at from this point of view, the verses which you have quoted from the *Gita* can be reconciled with one another. We should remember that the *Gita* is a poem. God does not speak nor does He do anything. We cannot say that God said anything to Arjuna. The conversation between Lord Krishna and Arjuna is imaginary. I at any rate do not believe that such a conversation took place between a real Krishna and a real Arjuna. But there is nothing inappropriate or untruthful in the method adopted by the *Gita*. It was a custom in those times to write religious works in such a form, and even today a learned writer would not be criticized for adopting a similar form. Jainism stated the truth logically and unpoetically and, therefore, coldly, and said that there was no God who might be describedas Creator of the world. It is not wrong to say this, but the ordinary mass of people do not respond to cold logic. They always crave for poetry. That is why even the rationalism of the Jains felt the need for temples, images and similar aids, for which pure *nyaya*[1] should have no use.

2. The answer to your second question is contained in the answer to the first, as the question itself, I think, is contained in the first question. The word 'grace' is a poetic term. *Bhakti* itself is poetry. But poetry is not an unworthy or inferior or superfluous thing. It is a very essential factor. That water is composed of two parts of hydrogen and one part of oxygen is a factual statement, but to describe water as a gift of God is poetry. It is essential for a full life that we should feel in this poetic way, but it is not essential that we should know the scientific truth about the composition of water. Similarly, it is perfect logic to say that everything that happens is the effect of karma. But the true nature of karma is an unfathomable mystery. We mortals are so utterly ignorant that we cannot know all the karmas which are the cause of even the most ordinary event. It is, therefore, true to say that everything happens through the grace of God. Really speaking, that is the perfect truth. Moreover, the *atman* dwelling in a body is imprisoned in it like the air in a jar, and, as that air cannot use its natural power so long as it believes itself

[1] Logic; for Gandhiji's explanation of his meaning here, *vide* "Letter to Purushottam Gandhi", 12-5-1932.

unconnected with the air outside, so the *atman* imprisoned in a body remains cut off from the power of omnipotent God so long as it believes itself the doer of things. For this reason, too, it is only when we say that everything which happens is done by God that we speak the perfect truth as befits a satyagrahi. The desires of a votary of truth are good and, therefore, they are always fulfilled. Accordingly, our prayers consisting of the verses which you have quoted[1] are bound to benefit the world also in the measure in which our prayers are sincere. The world is not separate from us or we from the world. All are connected with one another in their inmost essence and the actions of each have effects on all others. Actions here include thoughts also. Hence not a single thought is without its effect. That is why we must cultivate the habit of thinking good thoughts.

3. I was not led to the conclusion that Truth is God by considering that God is formless and so is Truth. But I saw that Truth is the only perfect description of God. All other descriptions areimperfect. Even the word 'Ishvar'[2] is a descriptive term, applied to an omnipotent something which cannot be described by human speech. If we think of the etymological meaning of the word 'Ishvar', the word does not touch our heart. Thinking of God as a ruler does not satisfy our mind. It may produce a kind of fear in us, which deters us from sin and impels us to be virtuous. But virtuous actions inspired by fear cease to be virtuous. If we act virtuously, we should do so through love of virtue and not through expectation of any reward. These and similar reflections resulted one day in my realizing that the statement that God is Truth is also imperfect. The statement that Truth itself is God is a perfect statement as far as human speech can express anything perfectly. We shall come to the same conclusion if we consider the etymological meaning of the word *'satya'*. It is derived from the root *'sat'*, which means to exist eternally. That which exists eternally is *satya*, Truth, it can be nothing else. But belief in Truth as God should not diminish our faith, on the contrary, it should increase it. That at any rate has been my experience. By regarding Truth as God, we save ourselves from many a pitfall. We no longer desire to see miracles or hear about them. We may find difficulty in understanding what 'seeing God' means; there can be no difficulty in understanding the meaning of 'seeing Truth'. Seeing Truth may itself be difficult, it

[1] The C.W. source has *"Samastah sukhino bhavantu"* (May all be happy).
[2] Literally, 'ruler'

is so. But as we go nearer and nearer towards It, we can have an increasingly clearer vision of Truth that is God, and that strengthens our hope and faith that one day we shall have a full vision of It.[1] You can ask me again if you do not find your questions answered by this. I will not be tired of answering your questions. And I am confident that we shall find a satisfactory answer. Maybe this fails to answer all the doubts that may arise in your mind; in that case you may ask me again and again.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 105-7. Also C.W. 9044. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

304. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
April 18, 1932

CHI. NIMU,

I received your letter. Ramdas has sent on to me the letter you wrote to him. I have written to Narandas and asked him to call you over to the Ashram. Probably the children will get all right there. Moreover, in the Ashram. there are also such experienced women as Lakshmibehn, etc. As a general rule, it is best to give no medicine to children. If you are careful about what they eat, they will not fall ill. If they do not pass stools with ease, you may give them a little quantity of castor oil. It will be good if you write to me regularly every week. There is no reason for you to feel lost.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original . Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] What follows is from the C.W. source.

305. A TELEGRAM

POONA,
April 19, 1932

ASHRAM SABARMATI

LAKSHMIBEHN NARMADA

DOCTOR PERMITTING AMTULSALAM MAY COME SATURDAY ONE O'CLOCK.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33516

306. A LETTER

April 19, 1932

MY DEAR,

We are all sons of *rishis* and there should be no pride of priestly or any other class. Priests are servants, voluntarily, of the people, and so are Kshatriyas. And to keep up one's vow is the duty not merely of the priest and the warrior but of all mankind. Therefore I should have respected your vow taken with deliberation and in a worthy manner without regard to your class. But if you will respect your vow [you] must surround it with all the protection it needs, i.e., you must take all the rest that your system requires so that your vow may not be discredited and so that it may not be unduly tried. Your decision not to draw anything save for your absolute necessity is quite good.

Love.

BAPU

C.W. 9041 Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

307. LETTER TO SURENDRAJI

April 19, 1932

Your letter did not require immediate reply, and I also thought that as a prisoner I should keep myself within proper limits. Hence I delayed replying to you. I have completely forgotten what you had said in your previous letter (written to me when I was in England). You should never hesitate to write to me anything you think about me. It would be a weakness in you to feel such hesitation. If friends and co-workers put before me their criticism whenever they think that I am committing an error, I would learn much from it, because there would be no malice in their criticism. Moreover, if we are displeased with anything which a friend may have done, it is a test of our friendship and love for him to tell him immediately what has displeased us. Love is not love if it hesitates to speak out through consideration for the feelings of the person loved.

In the statement, "true *brahmacharya* is that which remains inviolate in any condition"[1], the word 'condition' should be understood comprehensively. That is true *brahmacharya* which does not succumb to any temptation or allurement. If a beautiful young woman makes advances to the stone image of a man, there will be no effect on the latter. A man is a true *brahmachari* if, in similar circumstances, he remains like a stone. And that image neither hears with its ears nor sees with its eyes. Similarly, a man also should not go seeking temptations. Anybody who does that is not a *brahmachari.* A *brahmachari* should not knowingly do anything which may be regarded as a sign of lust. But your chief contention is this, that the sight and company of women are found in experience to be inimical to self-control and must, therefore, be avoided. This reasoning seems wrong to me.

That is not true self-control or *brahmacharya* which can be preserved only by avoiding even such association with women as may occur in the ordinary course and is necessitated by our work of service. It is only outward renunciation uninspired by genuine desirelessness. The suppressed craving is bound to break through when it gets a suitable opportunity. Scripture tells us that our pleasure

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Surendraji",4-4-1932

in sense-objects does not disappear completely till we have had a vision of the Supreme.[1] But the converse is equally true. Till our pleasure in sense-objects has disappeared completely, we cannot see the Supreme. In other words, our progress in regard to both is simultaneous. The meaning of the last statement should be carefully understood. Our pleasure in sense-objects does indeed disappear only after we have had a vision of the Supreme. That is, though our cravings may have subsided, our instinctive pleasure in sense-objects will have survived somewhere deep in us and, therefore, till we have seen the Supreme there will always be a possibility of the cravings being aroused again. After the vision of the Supreme, there can be no cravings whatsoever. That means that such a man loses the consciousness of sex and becomes sexless. That is to say, he ceases to be a figure and becomes a cipher, in other words, loses his self in God. When craving has ceased altogether, there can be no pleasure in sense-objects. I think this is easy enough to understand. If in this discussion we substitute the word 'Truth' wherever the words 'Supreme', 'God', 'Brahman', 'Parabrahman', etc., occur, the argument will be clear and it will also be easy to understand the meaning of realization. Self-deception will not avail anybody here. Those in the Ashram who, under the pretext of living according to the ideal of the Ashram being one family, gratify their lustful fancies mentally are the hypocrites of Chapter III [of the *Gita*]. Here we are talking about persons who scrupulously follow Truth and are considering how they should behave. Hence, even if ninety-nine per cent of the inmates of the Ashram act as above, so long as the remaining one percent sincerely try to live according to our ideal of the Ashram being one family, the aim of the Ashram will have been fulfilled and the manner of life which we have deliberately adopted in it will be justified. We need not, therefore, think what others do, but consider only what is possible for ourselves. But, at the same time, we should also take care not to imitate others without regard to our own limitations.[2] Others may claim that they can live freely according to the ideal of our being one family, but we ourselves, if we feel that we do not have such strength, should avoid physical contact with women inmates without disputing the claim of those others. We are carrying on a new and dangerous experiment in the Ashram. Those who can

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 59

[2] Literally, 'pull down our humble cottage on seeing another's palace'

join it without violating Truth may do so, and those who cannot may keep away from it. We do not regard it as everybody's duty to mix freely with the women inmates. All that we do is to permit such freedom. Those members who can take it without violating dharma may do so, but those who are afraid of violating dharma by such freedom may, even though they live in the Ashram, keep themselves miles away from the company of women. One inmate of the Ashram may be able to treat . . .[1] as his daughter. But another inmate may not be able to cultivate such a feeling towards her, though he wishes that he could. It would then be his duty not to be free with her. In this connection I have given the illustration of a corpse. If you feel that it is wrong to imagine such a case even as an illustration, you may suppose 'A' and 'B' instead. If 'C' cannot feel towards 'B' as 'A' does, it is the moral duty of 'C', so long as he lives in the Ashram, never to touch 'B'. I have tried to enforce this rule in all cases in which I came to know the truth.

You should forget what happened about the chair. No importance need be attached to it. You are a sincere seeker, and, therefore, the ultimate result will assuredly be good. So long as one has got reason, one is bound to use it. It is not at all necessary to smother it. You may commit errors, but you will learn through them and some day you will make experiments which will prove beneficial. And it is not as if all your experiments suggested by your reason fail. What does it matter if five such experiments in a hundred fail? All of us have a right to make mistakes. Whenever we realize that we have made a mistake, we shall start afresh and go forward.

I do not remember on what occasion I made it but the statement that a person who observes the vow [of *brahmacharya*] can render greater service to women is perfectly true. And there can be no question that I must have served them better in the measure in which I have succeeded in my effort to observe it.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 108-10

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

308. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
April 19, 1932

CHI. SUMANGAL PRAKASH,

I have your letter. It would have been better if efforts had not been made to have Chandrakanta given 'A' class. But what is done is done. Now she must give up the facilities of 'A' class or make the very least use of them.

I do remember that when I was in England I had a letter from you but I never had any time there to spare and I hardly wrote to anyone in this country. Even if you wrote about Kanaiyalal's death, I have completely forgotten about it. What had been the matter with him?

I also remember about the scheme for the publishing house. I do not recollect that I was able to go through it. I take it that it is unnecessary now to say anything about it. I had not been given the book about Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi. You must, if necessary, follow a strict regimen and put your health in order. It is now more than two months since I gave up milk. I give up milk whenever a pretext presents itself and that is what happened this time. This has not done me any harm and so long as no harm comes from it I shall continue to eschew milk. In place of milk I take four *tolas* of roasted almonds ground to a paste. In addition to this I take baked bread, dates, lemon and one vegetable a day such as white gourd, brinjal, etc. I take sour lemon with soda-bi-carb. In the early morning I have honey in hot water with a little soda. That is my diet. You are not to copy this. You must have chiefly milk, curd and fresh fruit. If you still feel hungry you may take greens and chapati or bread, but this is not to be a substitute for milk and fresh fruit.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to say how long my body will endure. Whatever I may say will only be guessing. I can not claim that my life has been one of self-control from the beginning. I have indulged myself in some form or other and so I cannot take from the body as much work as I should like. Most of the others, too, are poorin health and, therefore, either do not see my physical weakness or ignore it. Be that as it may. All that I wish is that the few years that are left to me should be spent in some-work or other of service. It will

be enough if I am not condemned to live the life of an invalid. The full span of a man's life is a hundred years. For the reasons explained above I do not consider myself fit to reach that age.

It is good to have the teeth scraped by a machine. Pyorrhoea must be got rid of.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

309. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
April 19, 1932

BHAI SUMANGAL PRAKASH,

I have your letter. Kanta must not be coerced into giving up the facilities she enjoys. So long as she does not herself want to give up the privileges, she should not be made to do so. To cite my example is right and not right. It is right because so long as I am engaged in public work people are bound to take me as a model, which will only create misunderstandings, because what I expect others to practise I cannot for various reasons practise myself. So there is a flaw in my leadership. Citing my example might not be right because my position is very different from that of others. One reason is my physical weakness. Another reason is my title of Mahatma. A third reason is my special situation. In whatever class I may be I have to have special food, because my body and my vow demand it. This applies to some extent to all prisoners. It is a different matter that every prisoner cannot have this facility as easily as I can. I am permitted interviews once every week instead of once every three months. As for letters there is almost no restriction. I have decided in my mind that I have no intimate friend. I meet relatives, not because they are relatives but because my meeting them serves some moral purpose. My writing letters also has the same end in view. Whether deep down it gives me some kind of pleasure I do not know. Thereseems little likelihood because withdrawal of permission to write letters or to see visitors would not upset me. In 1930 I refused to avail myself of the facility of interviews because the Government would not

accept my condition. In 1922 I had stopped writing letters. Lately I have been kept apart from others. That also is a reason. One should not make comparisons with me on this account, but if this is not obvious I would not like to persuade anyone by arguments. There is no doubt a slight difference between one who has got 'A' class after some efforts from outside the jail and one who has been given 'A' class by the jail authorities themselves. But it is no use stressing this difference. The ideal should certainly be that there should be no classification, and where as a result of classification people have been given better classes they should give up the privileges of those classes. Very few are today acting up to this idea. Therefore one does not want to bring the least pressure to bear on a delicate girl such as Kanta. She is a thoughtful girl and on her own practises such self-control as she can.

Kanaiyalal's untimely demise is distressing. But instead of losing courage you must be doubly careful. The prayer I made on behalf of Manilal was impelled not by wisdom but by a father's love for his son. Only one prayer is proper and that is "May God do as He wills." Of course one may ask what meaning this prayer has. The answer is that prayer should not be given a gross meaning. It means that to free ourselves of attachments we become aware of the God dwelling in our hearts and conceiving Him as separate from us, we pray that we may not be taken where we are impelled by the mind but that we may be taken where God who is our Master takes us. Whether our good lies in our dying or in our living we do not know. Therefore we should not rejoice in life or tremble at the thought of death. We should treat the two as the same and remain untouched. This is the ideal and it may take a long time to attain to it. Indeed very few can attain to it. But this need not discourage us from pursuing it. And the more difficulties we face in the pursuit the greater should be our efforts to overcome them.

If we think over the matter deeply we can conquer the palate. We must not accept defeat. Man's full span of life is considered to be a hundred years. It can be more but however long it may be, time is an unending stream in which a human lifetime is not even a millionth part of a drop. What can therefore attachment for it or calculation about it avail? And any calculations we may make can never be definite. We can only guess and say at the most how long a human life can be. For the rest even the healthiest children meet with untimely

deaths. We cannot even say that a man given to lustful pleasures will not enjoy a long life. The most we can say is that a man who has been free from lust from the very beginning, who leads a simple life, stands a good chance of enjoying a long life span. But to seek to conquer pleasures of sense for the sake of a long life is like digging up a mountain for the sake of a mouse. We must conquer sensual pleasures for realizing the Self. If self-control leads to shortening of life rather than to prolonging it we should not care. A life free of disease and long in years is the least significant result of self-control.

Being in jail Kanta naturally cannot practise hydrotherapy. Therefore the best way for her is to consult the best doctors. It is possible that if she restricts herself to a diet of milk, curd and fruit she may have some relief in the matter of her menstrual trouble and her toothache. Relief from pyorrhoea may be attained by chewing a *datun* for half an hour morning and evening and by massaging the gums inside and outside with a finely ground clean mixture of salt and charcoal powder. I am not writing separately to Kanta.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

310. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
April 19, 1932

CHI. KANTA,

At last you are settled. Now take full advantage of the solitude. Give your friends what you have gained and take from them what is worth accepting from them. If it is possible, write to me from there. But the number of letters you write will be restricted. It will therefore suffice if you write to Brother and he passes on to me what I should know from it. Or tell Prabhavati to include in her letter what you wish to say. Take care of your health. We three are together and enjoying ourselves

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

311. LETTER TO NRISIMHAPRASAD K. BHATT

April 20, 1932

My fear has come true. You have seen a discrepancy between my advice to you and the fact that I myself toured the country to collect money for the service of the poor. I was afraid that you would do so. I, however, see no such discrepancy. I did not feel any inconsistency with my views in this matter even when I started on my tour. The difference between our two cases is this. Dakshinamurti is your institution, as the Ashram is mine. Your duty towards it is not to go out collecting money for it, but to teach and pour your soul into the pupils. Similarly, my duty towards the Ashram is not to collect money for it but to observe its vows and help the other inmates to observe them, and to help in carrying on the various activities of the Ashram with greater vigour. I must have faith that, if I do this duty, we shall get the money that we need. The principle regarding the collection of a fund for the poor should be the opposite of this. In that case my chief aim was to raise a fund. You cannot go out to collect money for Dakshinamurti, but friends may certainly approach people for help to your institution. It is their duty to do so. Do you now see the difference between the two cases? And this is not a new kind of difference, nor have I thought of it recently. I bore this distinction in mind even in South Africa. That is, when I realized it, I stopped seeking help for Phoenix, but I begged from door to door for a public institution there. I, therefore, still suggest that you should resolve, if not immediately, as soon as may be, that you will not go out to collect money for the institution. You should write toall friends who have been helping the institution and whom you know personally, and inform them of your decision, and then let the events take their own course. The argument that our people do not yet appreciate institutions like yours and do not realize that it is their duty to give help to them on their own, is only a half truth. We who manage such institutions lack faith in our work, and, therefore, the people have not been rightly educated about their duty of providing funds for them. This is a vicious circle. The people remain ignorant of their duty because we have not tried to educate them about it; and till they learn to give money on their own, we go begging from door to door. Things will never change in this way. The people will not learn their

duty and we shall not acquire faith in our work. And the result will be that all our labour will be wasted. Some of us, therefore, should risk everything and follow the way of faith. You are in every respect qualified to take such a risk. Your institution is relatively an old one and has acquired a reputation for itself. Some of your teachers are selfless workers, and the pupils are taught with love. We have evidence of this in the fact that you have succeeded in training some pupils by your method and that you have friends who give monetary help regularly. Hence, even from the practical point of view, my advice does not seem unsound. According to me, absolute faith in one's work is also the highest practical wisdom.

Why do you suppose that, if you raise your fees and become self-supporting, only the rich will send their children to your institution? You must be admitting some children free. You should pass on that burden to the rich. They will pay, and must pay, that tax if they want their children to be educated in your institution. Why do you entertain any doubt about the value to the people of the education which you impart? Personally I am firmly of the view, and my view is based on actual observation, that even our best institutions do not grow to their full capacity because their heads spend much of their time in begging money for them. The head of a school should devote himself exclusively to the internal development of the institution. Instead, I have seen heads wasting their valuable time in collecting funds. Personally I feel that in doing so those heads betrayed ignorance of their real duty. They did not have faith in teaching as a vocation. We see the result. You and all the teachers should meet once among yourselves, and then again in the presence of the friends who have been providing you with funds. Make your resolution at that meeting. The meeting should be called not to seek the advice of those friends but to make your resolution and announce it. Faith does not wait for anybody's advice, and if you wait for advice you will stand to lose.

I stop here today. If you wish to differ from me on this issue again, you may do so. If you can spare time to write to me, I certainly have enough time to reply. I cannot get so much time when I am outside. You should, therefore, take the fullest advantage of my wider knowledge and experience. If you fail to do so, you will be the loser. I do not hesitate in the least or feel the slightest embarrassment in claiming that I am something of an expert in this matter. It is for you

to accept or reject my claim. But just as a man who knows a cure for snakebite but doubts or hides his ability would be a great fool, so also, if I know my special ability and still hide it from others I would be as good a fool as he. I would not knowingly wish to become one.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 112-4

312. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

April 21, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE[1],

Major Bhandari has read to me the reply received from Government to my letter[2] of the 13th April addressed to Major Martin regarding, among other things, an illustrative list[3] I had submitted of non-political associates who might visit me. In continuation of that correspondence I now submit as full a list of names of non-political associates as I can think of. I have given a brief description of the persons mentioned in the list. On the contrary I have confined myself to those whom I may wish to see in the near future. These are in no sense political people. I, therefore, suggest that when I want to see others outside the list, the Superintendent may be permitted to decide whether they come within the prescribed limits or not. For I find that if each case not mentioned in the list has to be submitted to Government, the delay caused in receiving the reply is likely to defeat the very object of my application.[4]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[1] Inspector-General of Prisons, Bombay Presidency

[2] *Vide* "Letter to R. V. Martin", 13-4-1932

[3] *Vide* "Letter to M. G. Bhandar", 6-3-1932

[4] In his reply dated April 23, Doyle wrote: "I have submitted to Government the further list of non-political associates whom you may desire to see and have also asked for a decision on your suggestion that the Superintendent be permitted to decide whether others outside the list may visit you or no. I shall communicate to you the orders of Government as soon as they are received."

[ENCLOSURE]

DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF NON-POLITICAL ASSOCIATES

1. Indira Nehru, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's daughter, 14 years old and studying in Mr. Vakil's School in Poona.
2. Jehangir Vakil and his wife, educationist, conducting a model school in Poona where Indira Nehru is studying.
3. Hemprabha Devi, wife of Babu Satischandra Das Gupta, purely devoted to khadi work at Sodepur (Bengal).
4. Raihana Tyabji, daughter of Mr. Abbas Tyabji, a permanent invalid.
5. Hiralal Shah, merchant, residing in Bombay, given to astronomical pursuits.
6. Damodardas Kanji, private gentleman in Bombay, holding intimate contact with the Ashram.
7. Karamchand Chunilal, share-broker in Bombay.
8. Hirewanti Mansukhlal, widow of the late Mr. Mansukhlal Chunilal, a philanthropist.
9. Nargis Captain, an invalid, widow of the late Mr. Captain of the Indian Postal Service.
10. Ramabehn, student of Gujarat Vidyapith, daughter of Sheth Ranchhodlal Amritlal of Ahmedabad.
11. Prabhashankar Parekh, private gentleman of Rajkot, father of an Ashram girl.
12. Behram Khambhatta and Tehmina Khambhatta, an osteologist of Bombay and his wife.
13. Manjukesha Mashruwala, niece of a member of the Ashram and in charge of a charitable dispensary.
14. Sushilakumari, student, Medical College, Delhi, sister of Sjt. Pyarelal of the Ashram.
15. Sushilakumari, school mistress, Girls' School, Rajkot.
16. Dinkar Mehta, an invalid student of the Vidyapith, under treatment of Dr. Muthu.
17. Puratan Buch, an invalid student of the Vidyapith.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40), Pt. I. p. 187

313. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

April 21, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

I got the cotton and the honey yesterday. May I thank you? The cotton seems to have been carded in a mill. You probably know that it can be of no use to me. May I remind you of what I said last year? I had hoped then that you would stock good, hand-ginned cotton, get it carded at your place and give it to people to spin. I wanted you to send me some from such stock of cotton, or if you did not have it, to obtain some from a khadi store. It seems that the people in the office here could not explain this to you properly. Send me such cotton immediately if you can secure it.

I was asked to give a list of persons other than inmates of the Ashram whom I should like to meet. I had sent a few such names, which included yours also. The government has replied that you can come to see me. You may, therefore, now come along with a party from the Ashram or by yourself whenever you wish to.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4822. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

314. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 21/22, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I get your post regularly on Wednesday every week. I got it yesterday too. The results of the spinning competition were excellent. I had certainly guessed that your speed would be very high, but the speeds reached by the others, too, are very good. I should be happier if all this makes a difference in the total output.

The pain in my left elbow is of the same kind as in the right-hand thumb, and the doctor has been advising me for some time that I should give up spinning for a few days and give complete rest to the elbow. I told you about this in my last letter. At the moment, all that I can say is that my experiment is continuing. I can draw yarn with the right hand with fairly good ease. It is too early yet to say

whether this will cure the pain in the elbow completely. However, there is no cause at all for worry. I shall give you definite information on Tuesday when I seal the letters in a packet. I have started dictating this letter on Thursday.

I was glad that Mathuradas came and saw me. It would be a good thing if Tilakam goes to Calicut, but we should not send him at our own risk unless somebody there offers to take care of him and treat him well. As regards Amtul, I am writing to her. Read that letter[1]. I told you in my previous letter what I wrote in reply to the letter[2] I had from Darjeeling. You may come here whenever you wish to. You will be able to see those women whom the previous visitors did not see.

I have been trying to do for Kaka everything I can from here.

Use Soniramji's money as you think proper. It should certainly be used for supplying free copies of the *Gita* whenever you think it justified.

The person who stole things from your room must have known what it contained. I cannot resist the temptation of saying that Jamna deserved the lesson. Nobody should keep a single pice in his or her room. Anything one has should be deposited in the safe of the Ashram and that, too, only when the person has no other alternative. Except for books, a few spinning-wheels and such other articles necessary for our work, we should have nothing in our rooms. Even the clothes should be the minimum we require for our daily use. As a rich man feels happier the longer the list of his possessions, we should feel happier the shorter it is.

Our ideal is to have no possessions worth keeping a record of. So long as we continue to possess things, our burglar friends are bound to claim their share. Since we do not voluntarily offer it, they seize it by force.

You will of course read the letter which I am going to write to Kusum. It would certainly be good if she learns nursing. I also believethat Mrs. Lazarus[3] will treat her well. But it seems to me that at present the work is beyond Kusum's strength. If she cannot preserve her own health, how will she be able to help others to preserve theirs? Nursing the sick imposes no small strain on one's strength.

[1] *Vide* "A Letter", 22-4-1932

[2] From Mahavir Giri; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi"

[3] Matron at the Vadilal Sarabhai Hospital, Ahmedabad

Sometimes a nurse has to be on duty the whole of the day and the night. And she is on her feet all the time. Most of the patients have little endurance. They are irritable and demand immediate attention. Hence anybody who is sincere in taking up this work must make her body and mind strong. Of course this is true only about a woman who wishes to be a devoted nurse. A nurse who doesn't care for her patients and whose heart is not in her work is a disgrace to her profession. A nurse's job, if done sincerely, is more arduous than a doctor's. Good doctors have always given credit to the nurses and claimed none for themselves. If Kusum has understood all this and if we can be sure that she can make her body strong enough for the work, I would certainly encourage her in her idea. Personally, I have always been of the view that a nurse should remain unmarried. The best nurses in the world are found among the followers of the Catholic Church, and that religion also supplies the largest number. All of them are required to remain unmarried. This is a special merit of the Catholic Church. Another noteworthy fact about it is that all teachers, from the primary to the highest level, are unmarried persons. We see very few other teachers who can excel them.

April 22, 1932

Dhiru had asked me in his letter whether he might send a Magan spinning-wheel or himself bring one, and I had replied to him and told him that he could send or bring one. How is it that it has not yet come? I thought about that spinning-wheel especially because of the pain in my elbow. Padma, too, has in her letter urged me to use that model, and so I am more keen about it today than I was when I wrote to Dhiru. If the spinning-wheel is ready, send it with anybody who may be coming to see me. If it reaches Bombay, even Dahyabhai will bring it. He comes every Saturday. I have already written to you in my previous letter asking you to send me some cotton.

Read the letter which I have written to Vinabehn in regard to Kusum. I need not write anything more. Manibehn will be released from the Belgaum jail on May 14. I had a letter from her, in which she says that Keshu had agreed to make a spinning-wheel for her. If it is ready, ask him to send it to Dahyabhai in Bombay. If it is not ready, ask him to make it by and by and send it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8221. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

315. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

April 22, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

If you, will turn up the file left by Major Martin, you will find I am referring to a matter that has been pending for some time. Kaka Kalelkar you know perhaps as well as I do. He is at present in the Belgaum Central Prison. He was transferred from Visapur to Belgaum. I have been trying to get accurate information about his health and that of three other companions, but beyond getting a little vague information after considerable delay I have been able to make no headway. In the reply Major Martin sent me just before he left, he said that he was asking for the information that I had sought. The information already received by Major Bhandari shows that Kakasaheb is weak. Probably he has lost weight and does not get cow's milk which he used to get here. Therefore if there are no political reasons to the contrary, I suggest his transfer to Yeravda, and if he can be put with me I should bring him up, I hope, to the weight he reached here in 1930, i.e., to 116 lb.

Of the other three prisoners referred to in my letter to Major Martin of 13th April, Narahari Parikh has nose trouble which often causes great pain. His wife Mrs. Parikh writes saying that she cannot even get acknowledgment from the Belgaum Prison although she has sent reply-paid postcards. She has not heard from her husband at all and naturally she is worrying. I have myself written to Kakasaheb inquiring not only about him but about the other three also, because they are all inmates of the Ashram, but I have no reply from him or them. I would like to have their personal letters if I may. I presume that the object of allowing me to hold correspondence with fellow-prisoners was to give me the human satisfaction that I need in the way of getting information from them as to their well being.

I know that you have only just arrived and must be very busy. I would not have worried you almost immediately on your arrival, but for the pressing necessity of the cases I have brought to your notice.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 9

[1] For Doyle's reply, *vide* Appendix "Letter from E.E. Doyle", 23-4-1932

316. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*April 22, 1932*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

Your expected letter has just arrived. Like you I need not delay mine.

I am delighted that you have Kamaladevi with you and that she joins you at the morning prayer and sings *bhajans* in the evening.[2] Her vigorous skipping reminds me of the time when I used to skip for the same reason as Kamaladevi. I had taught the boys also. Ramdas was the gracefullest and best. It is certainly a fine exercise especially in winter.

It is good that you are continuing your saltless experiment and that it is agreeing with you.

We have here a new doctor. He is a Parsi Major. He loves his work and has the innate dignified courtesy that you see invariably associated with a cultured Parsi. He has been giving me electric massage for the right thumb and the left elbow. The elbow has been causing pain for some time, but only when I work in particular ways. He thinks that it may be necessary to stop spinning for some days. Having done double work during the National Week, so far as my output is concerned, it is now about 85 rounds per day. For I have anticipated Dr. Mehta by using the left hand for turning the wheel. This is my fourth day. I have made very good progress. The right hand draws much more steadily and the thread is finer and more uniform.

This additional practice with the left hand again makes me think of the necessity of our trying to use the left hand equally with the right. And we should teach the children[3] from now to be ambidexterous. I have already written about this to Narandas.

[1] "Superintendent's initialling date"—Mirabehn

[2] "Kamaladevi was imprisoned as a 'B'-class prisoner, and placed like other 'B'-class prisoners, amongst the 'C'-class prisoners in the Debtors' Prison. She and I began to take too much interest in the well being of the rest of the prisoners with the result that we were both removed to the permanent women's jail inside the big Arthur Road jail, where we were placed in one of three small barracks, which had a common verandah. The other barracks were occupied by female convicts." —Mirabehn

[3] "Ashram children" —Mirabehn

As a result of the two days, fast, I suppose, I have lost 2 lb. in weight. There is nothing in this loss, if I do not lose steadily. If I do, I shall go back to milk without the slightest hesitation. I have given you this information only by way of report. You must not brood over this loss of weight.

The history of the Ashram goes on, though slowly. In order to overtake the arrears of correspondence, I have suspended it for the past three days. I shall soon resume it.

Study of the heavens has come to stay. I have now a few books on it. This study puts me more in tune with the Infinite.

I won't need to card for spinning. Mahadev has already begun. He always cards more than he spins and this he does for me. The present stock being so regularly replenished is not likely ever to be exhausted.

Radha is largely to blame for her bad health. She broods too much, gives more time than necessary to external tidiness and does not give herself full rest as prescribed by medical men. I am not now inclined to press for Almora. We should learn the poor man's art of living. I know that I am the greatest hindrance in our march towards that ideal. You and the other survivors will have to re-arrange many things that, by my identification with them, have been or will be left as they should not be.

We are all keeping well except that Vallabhbhai's nose and constipation still worry him as before. Dr. Mehta is now dealing with both the disorders and hopes to produce some relief in a short time.

Whilst this was being written in the midst of interruptions, we saw from the newspapers received, that Kamaladevi had been transferred to Belgaum. A prisoner has no choice. His or her body is not in his or her own keeping.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6218. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9684

317. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

April 22, 1932

DAUGHTER AMTUL,

If I had time I should write to you in Urdu. Why don't you? Only you should write a clear hand. It will be good exercise for me. Have I spelt your name correctly?[1]

I have not yet got Doctor Sharma's books. I shall read them when I get them and tell you all about them.

For you, I am in correspondence with Narandas.[2] Of course you can go to the Ashram when you wish. What I feel is that you should live where you keep well. There are opportunities for service everywhere. A kind word spoken at the right moment is good service. Even a kind thought that would translate itself into action is good service. It is idolatry to think that there is no service but what is rendered through the body.

You should tell me how you pass your day. Do you keep your diary?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 249

318. A LETTER

April 22, 1932

DEAR,

I think that you have erred in judging the people in the Ashram. It is very difficult for one person to say of another whether he or she has love or not. We know nothing of the struggles that go on in the human breast between the forces of good and evil. We are ready enough to see the defects of people but we are unable to know how many conquests they have made. What I say is not intended to signify that we are all perfect in the Ashram. Far from it. But I do want to say that one member has no right to judge another. It betrays want

[1] Gandhiji had written her name in Urdu.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi" and "Letter to Hiralal Shah"

ofcharity. I have also noticed that those who are very exact in the performance of their own duty are often uncharitable to others, especially when they do not see them as assiduous as themselves. This is a grave defect and a hindrance in the path of one's progress. If we take care of ourselves, God will take care of the others, if they will not do so themselves.

Nor does my writing mean that you are mechanically to shut your eyes and ears to what may be going on in front of you. What I have suggested is in no sense a mechanical performance. It is a mental attitude which comes from training. Meanwhile wherever you notice lack of love, you must as gently as possible bring it to the notice of those in whom you detect the defect and if you have not got enough gentleness to do so you should bring it at least to the notice of Narandas and leave him to do what he likes.

Love.

BAPU

C.W. 9048. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

319. A LETTER

April 22, 1932

CHI.,

We do not take stray dogs under protection in the Ashram. If we start doing that, the Ashram would be full of them, and we would be so busy looking after them that we would forget our duty to human beings. The *mantra* which we recite before starting to eat is praise of God. We should offer thanks to God whenever we start doing something. As far as possible, we should not use goods imported even from China and Japan.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9052. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

320. LETTER TO MAHENDRA V. DESAI

April 22, 1932

CHI. MANU,

This time your handwriting was a little better, but you have still to improve it in many ways. Request someone to help you and do so. If Nanu does not let you read his letters, you should not try to snatch them from him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7427. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

321. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

April 22, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I have already written[1] to you about Dhurandhar. He has not gone on hunger-strike.

I think you should not force Anandi[2] to go out for a walk with you. If she has no strength, she will not be able to walk. It will be enough if you teach her *pranayama* and some passive exercises. Do you know what passive exercises are?

Regarding conversion, I don't mean that it is never justified. But no one should invite another person to change his or her religion. In my view, the belief which underlies such practice, namely, that one's own religion is true and another's false is an error. When, however, a person has changed his religion under compulsion or in ignorance, there should be no objection to such a person rectifying his error, that is, returning to his original religion; on the contrary, he should be encouraged to do that. His action is not conversion. If I think that my religion is false, I should give it up. And I may, I ought to, accept what seems to me good in any other religion. If my religion seems to me imperfect, it is my duty to try to make it perfect. It is also my duty to try to rid it of any evil which I may see in it.

[1] *Vide* "Letter Premabehn Kantak", 18-4-1932

[2] Lakshmidas Asar's youngest daughter

I regard Mirabehn as a Christian, and now she also regards herself as a Christian. I see no inconsistency in her being a Christian and reading the *Gita* with devotion. Persons belonging to other faiths also join in our prayers with sincere feeling.

I really don't know what we shall do after we get swaraj. God will lead me then, as He does today. A man who believes in God does not plan what he will do in future. He who plans is not a man of faith, or rather his faith is weak.

There are not three separate paths, knowledge, devotion and action, for the realization of God. The three form one single path. That one path is divided into three aspects for the sake of convenience [of discussion]. Water is a compound of hydrogen and oxygen, but it is neither the one nor the other. Similarly, knowledge is not a self-sufficient path of God-realization, nor is devotion. It may be said that the path of God-realization is a chemical compound of all the three factors. This metaphor is defective, but it explains what I mean.

The protection of Draupadi's honour is not a miracle[1] like the conversion of water into wine. The faith that God succours his devotees when they are in distress helps one, and the examples which support such faith are worth cherishing. If, however, a person cultivates devotion in expectation of such help, his devotion is of no value.

I do not approve of a policy of compelling people to become strong. There should be no compulsion at all in this matter. I have not known anyone who liked to remain weak in body. This is a matter for education.

We should put before the people the ideal of reducing their needs to a minimum. Having done so, we need not concern ourselves with the result. Where is compromise in this? The question of compromise does not arise at all. The standard of life of the starving poor ought to be raised. But this is not a new idea. Even now we are making efforts towards that end.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10282. Also C.W. 6730. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] *St. John*, ii

322. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

April 22, 1932

CHI. PARASRAM,

Who helped you to write the letter in Gujarati? Whoever it was, his handwriting is excellent. I assume that the actual language was yours.

one may certainly enter into loving rivalry with a fellow-disciple of one's guru or with anybody else. That is, we can take everybody who can do something better than we as our ideal and advance. There should be no trace of envy in this. I have used the adjective 'loving' above to suggest this. In such rivalry, we should wish in our heart that the person whom we have accepted as our ideal will improve his skill day by day, so that the ideal which we seek to attain will always be rising higher as we progress. Such a wish will have a beneficial result for us too, since we shall be continually advancing.

I am firmly of the view, and it is my experience too, that, if a person has violated a moral principle in any one sphere of his life, his action will certainly have an effect in other spheres. In other words, the belief generally held that an immoral man may do no harm in the political sphere is quite wrong. And so is the other belief that a person who violates moral principles in his business may be moral in his private life or in his conduct in family affairs. Hence, whenever we do an evil we should overcome [the tendency towards] it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9437. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

323. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

April 22, 1932

DEAR RAIHANA,

I got your letter. Let Father rest for a few days. I hope that the work which requires him to stay there for some time is not anything very difficult. Many *salaams* and *vandemataram*s to him from all of us. Tell him also that I always pray to God that He may grant him a long life and enable him to render great services. Many *salaams* and

vandemataramsto Mother too. I have got the Urdu books now. I copy out today a few passages from them.[1]

My Urdu handwriting will not improve till I practise writing in Urdu regularly. But how can I spare the time? Moreover, it is my left hand which I must train. Hence I content myself with what I am able to do. The progress is bound to be slow, but we cannot help it.

This time you gave me no news about Hamida and her friends. I must get some in the next letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9641

324. LETTER TO VIDYA R.. PATEL

April 22, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

It is good to form the habit of having a bath before entering the kitchen. But the rule cannot be applied to a person who goes there to have a meal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9425. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

325. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

April 22, 1932

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I got your letter. I was glad that both of you could me Andrews. I will trouble you and request you to come here if I can secure permission for you to see me, and then also only if the condition has not improved by that time. Both of us will go through the books on massage when we get them. I find that *Lakshadi* oil is excellent.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6600. Also C.W. 4386. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

[1] This paragraph is in Urdu. The passages copied out are not translated here.

326. LETTER TO A GIRL

April [*22*][1]*, 1932*

CHI.,

Under a father's rule, exploitation may go on and the pool suffer. A mother, on the other hand, would spin always for her poor children.[2] The sacred thread and the rosary may give some help in cultivating holiness. But they are not very useful today. A cow is looked upon as a mother because, like a mother, she gives milk. Moreover, a woman feeds her own children till they are one year of age, whereas the cow gives milk to all of us, and that is why she is our mother too. A mother receives much service from her children. But who does anything for a cow? Hence a cow is more of a mother.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 119. Also C.W. 9055. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

327. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL[3]

April 22, 1932

CHI. MANI,

We were eagerly waiting for a letter from someone there, as people wait for the rains, when we received one or two . . .. See me here on your way when you are released. If it is Monday, stay on till the next day, Tuesday. Between 12 noon or 11.30 a.m. and 1 p.m. is the most convenient time when you can see me. If you come during this period, you will be able to see at least two of us. . . . All three of us are all right. . . .

[1] From the C.W. copy

[2] The addressee had asked Gandhiji the meaning of a Gujarati saying, to the effect that a child might not be as well cared for by his father even if the latter was a king, as by his mother even if she had to support herself by spinning.

[3] According to the source, parts of the letter were censored by the jail authorities.

I see that you have really tried to improve your handwriting. The result shows that anybody can improve his handwriting if he tries. This is true about everything.

To learn the *Gita* by heart also means that we should understand the meaning of every verse and pronounce the words correctly. Who teaches you the *Gita*? Perhaps you will tell me this only when we meet. But if there is time and if the jail authorities let you do so, write your last letter before you are released. As regards your health, we will issue a certificate only after seeing you. . .

Yashoda and the boy visited us once. The boy climbed on to a chair and was so thoroughly pleased with himself that he left his new pair of shoes here. Fortunately for him or for Dahyabhai, some one of us noticed it and immediately sent it to him. Yashoda's health is none too good. Indeed she has not been well for many years. Dahyabhai comes every week and can see both of us.

Jivatram[1] is still out of prison and working. Devdas is in Gorakhpur [prison]. I have just had a letter from him. He is alone there but quite happy. He reads a good deal. Lakshmi is no longer 'poor Lakshmi'! She is still nursing Papa[2], but the latter is nearly restored to health. Rajaji is fine. He keeps good health. His companions also keep fairly good health. Indu[3] has not yet come to see me. I do not know where she is at present. Most probably she is in Poona. Kamala[4] is in Prayagji. Kamalapati[5] seems to have some relief from his pleurisy, but still has slight fever.

I will write to someone in Ahmedabad about the spinning wheel. But we can spare a good one even from here, if you want one. .

. . . I wrote my first letter to Ba only today, but I do get letters written by her. She and other women prisoners are all right. Mithubehn continues to conduct her class.

[1] J. B. Kripalani
[2] C. Rajagopalachari's elder daughter
[3] Indira Nehru
[4] Kamala Nehru, wife of Jawaharlal Nehru
[5] Literally, 'Kamala's husband', one of the names of Vishnu

If your glasses are broken, you can get them changed even while in prison. But this is perhaps unnecessary now as the date of your release[1] is approaching.

Your letter was received here today and immediately given to me. The reply also is being written on the same day. I hope that it will be posted tomorrow. When you will get it depends on your luck and mine.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 81-3

328. A LETTER

April 23, 1932

CHI.,

It is not correct to say that Lord Krishna exhorted Arjuna to follow the way of violence. He only prevented him from doing a great evil in the name of non-violence. Arjuna had already committed violence when he assembled the army. He, therefore, had no other course open to him. He was not afraid of violence. But he did not wish to kill relation. He did not regard it as evil to fight other people.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9051. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] She was released on May 15, 1932.

329. A LETTER

April 23, 1932

CHI.

You did good work during the National Week.

The sound which you hear in your stomach while you are fasting is made by the movement of the gas.

In order to feel that all human beings are our relations, we should think constantly that all of us are created by one God.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9060. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

330. A LETTER

April 23, 1932

CHI.,

I would see no harm in boys and girls playing together if certain restraints are observed. I think they cannot play the game of *hututu*[1]. In this game, the players touch one another so frequently that impure feelings are likely to be aroused in some boy or girl. We should avoid that danger. We should know that, when grown-up boys and girls mix together in such fashion, impure feelings are likely to be aroused. We shall gain nothing by hiding this fact.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9061. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

331. A LETTER

April 23, 1932

CHI.,

One should certainly nurse a person who is sick, but cannot omit spinning for that reason. Nursing a sick person benefits only that person, whereas we spin for the sake of millions of the poor.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9067. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Also called ‘kabaddi’

332. A LETTER

April 23, 1932

CHI.,

Wearing the tuft of hair has little connection with dharma. The support of man's life is God. If a thing is indispensable, we may use it even if it is imported from abroad.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9068. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

333. LETTER TO DUDABHAI DAFDA

April 23, 1932

BHAI DUDABHAI[1],

I got your letter. My compliments to Sunderjibhai for his help. It seems you have attracted a good many pupils. I hope Danibehn[2] is all right now. I occasionally get news about Lakshmi[3].

Sardar and Mahadev are with me.

They send their regards to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 7757. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

334. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

April 23, 1932

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

If you have faith in yourself, my hopes in you will be realized.

You must have written to the Ashram for Gangabehn [Vaidya]'s powder and pills.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1835

[1] The first Harijan admitted by Gandhiji in the Ashram in 1917
[2] Addressee's wife
[3] Addressee's daughter, who was brought up by Gandhiji in the Ashram

335. LETTER TO MANIBEHN N. PARIKH

April 23, 1932

CHI. MANI,

I got your letter. Do not worry about Narahari at all. I even hope to get permission for him to write to me. I got news about him this week also. There seems to be nothing wrong with his health. I have written a letter to him today. Still, if you wish to go to Belgaum, you may.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5967. Also C.W. 3284. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

336. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

April 23, 1932

CHI. MANGALA (DARLING),

You deserve compliments for standing second. Did you understand the idea that our bodies are things of little value? If you have understood this, the next step in the argument is easy. Is it not a great thing that God dwells even in such a worthless thing?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4085. Also C.W. 49. Courtesy: Pushpabehn N. Naik

337. LETTER TO MOHAN N. PARIKH

April 23, 1932

CHI. MOHAN,

Your handwriting is good. You should become a good man too. Uncle Mahadev is very well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9177

338. LETTER TO NIRMALA H. DESAI

April 23, 1932

CHI. NIRMALA,

As far as possible, we should not use foreign goods at all. If, however, we refrain from using the goods of one particular country but use the same goods imported from another country, that does not necessarily imply violence. Ask Premabehn to explain this further to you.

If anyone is afraid that playing cards may tempt the players to start gambling, he or she should certainly not play. It can never be one's duty to play cards, and it may be too much if we forbid people to play. Those who can refrain from playing should not play.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9471. Also C.W. 9056. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

339. LETTER TO PURATAN BUCH

April 23, 1932

CHI. PURATAN,

Whatever spiritual growth has taken place in me is wholly the result of my worship of Truth. From that I have gained all other things. For the present, you should completely give up the thought of going to jail. Improve your health first.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9166

340. LETTER TO PADMA

April 23, 1932

CHI. PADMA,

As I should not write much with the left hand, this letter will not be long. However, I shall be able to say all I wish to. Personally, I think that you should go to the Ashram. But we should know what Ba and Sitala Sahay also think in the matter. I am now ready to spin on the Magan spinning-wheel. You have copied out quite useful instructions for spinning on it. Why did you take so much trouble? Anyway, I will now preserve that letter. Please remember that it is not one's body alone that can render service to others. You can also serve if you live a truly celibate life and become a very learned woman. They are born to no purpose who, though endowed with a strong body, do not use it for service. And the knowledge acquired by such persons also goes in vain. If you understand this, you will give up worrying and will recover your health more quickly. Blessings to Shantilal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6132. Also C.W. 3484. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

341. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA N. KHARE

April 23, 1932

CHI. RAMBHAU,

The account which you have sent of your progress is good.

As one person may live in several houses one after another, so also there is nothing strange if he should dwell in different bodies one after another.

Who knows whether Rama did grieve[1] as much as he is said to have done, or whether he grieved at all? What we read is a poet's account. It is perfectly true that such grieving would not be seen in a man of spiritual knowledge. We should, therefore, believe that our

[1] Over the abduction of Sita as described in the *Ramayana*

ideal Rama would not have grieved in that manner.

You should regain the weight which you have lost.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 291. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

342. MESSAGE ON SACRED THREAD CEREMONY[1]

[Before *April 24, 1932*][2]

The sacred thread ceremony has lost its significance for me nowadays. Still, if the sacred thread ceremony is deemed essential, it should be performed only after the boy's attaining maturity. The sacred thread ceremony means entering new life and since then constant endeavour should be made to lead a life of self-control and service.

The Bombay Chronicle, 25-4-1932

343. LETTER TO PUSHPA S. PATEL[3]

April 24, 1932

CHI.,

Mother India should possess the virtues of patience, capacity for endurance, forbearance, courage, non-violence, fearlessness, etc. One can cultivate them in the Ashram.

Do we remember every event in our present life?[4] If we did, we would become mad. After we have learnt the proper lesson from anything which we would like to remember, what harm is there if we forget it? On the contrary, it would be for our good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9053. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi. *Also Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. I, p. 119

[1] Of the son of Mr. Mahulikar, formerly painting master in the Gujarat Vidyapith .

[2] The messege was reported under the date-line: "Ahmedabad, April 24".

[3] The name of the addressee is not given in the sources; but in "Letter to Pushpa S. Patel", 3-4-1932, Gandhiji refers to her having played the role of Mother India in a dramatic piece.

[4] The addressee had also asked why we cannot remember the events of former births.

344. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

April 24, 1932

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

It is less trouble to me to reply to a letter immediately I get it, if I have the time to do so. Writing will stop automatically when I can no longer use my hand. A wife can go where her husband does, but sometimes dharma indicates a different course. What is essential is to have patience. We should cheerfully do — learn to do — the duty which has come to us unsought. Why should a woman believe herself weak ? Husband and wife are friends and equals of each other. A weak wife makes the husband also weak. Hence she should be strong even for his sake.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7428. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

345. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

April 24, 1932

CHI. DEVDAS,

You have proved your opinion of yourself to be wrong. For, your letter just received is, though not too short, not very long either. But it will do.

I used to get news of you, though I did not hear from you directly. It is good that you have got quiet there. It was necessary for you to get used to it. Since you are keeping good health, I do not worry on your account.

I certainly wish that you should master Urdu.

It is ten minutes to two now. Mahadev has come to me after finishing most of his own work, and, since I write very slowly with the left hand, I am now dictating this letter to him. My aim in asking you to complete your study of Urdu is that you should read Maulana Shibli's writings. He has written a biography of the Prophet and also anecdotes from the lives of his associates. There is much else too, with all of which I believe we should become acquainted. If you have sufficient enthusiasm, you should read all that. You can send for the

books from Azamgarh, where his office and *madrasah* are. Most probably, you were with me during that tour and saw the place. The present incumbent of Maulana Shibli's religious office is Maulana Suleman Nadvi, since the former, as you must be aware, died some time ago.

I get quite good letters from Lakshmi. That is, she replies to mine as a matter of religious duty. Her letters are rather short. But she seems helpless. She admits that she cannot think of anything to write and so contents herself with a few sentences. However, whatever little she writes she writes beautifully, and her Hindi may be said to be quite good. She writes a pleasing hand and seems to be a quiet girl. But why need I describe her to you ? I have given here, though, the impression she has made on me. She has been writing, it seems, to the Ashram inmates too.

We are happy here. We do not feel that we are in a jail. How can men be styled 'State prisoners' unless they enjoy complete freedom about food, sleep and all else? As for visitors, Dahyabhai comes every week and he sees both of us together; but Mahadev does not have our status and, therefore, cannot join us at the interview. Occasionally someone comes from the Ashram too, andwe two see the visitor. Durga and Jivanji came once and saw Mahadev. Now we have decided for the present that Durga should not come and unnecessarily spend money. However, she is free to change her mind if she wishes, as she has not taken a vow not to come.

This is our daily routine: All three of us get up at 3.45 a.m. After we have prayed together, Mahadev goes back to sleep and we two take honey and water and then have a walk. Afterwards I sleep for about a quarter of an hour. At 6.30 all the three have our breakfast consisting of bread, tea, etc., my tea of course being crushed almonds mixed in water. I like it and have so far not felt the want of milk. That is the only joint meal during the day. The other two who drink milk have their next meal at about mid-day, and I have mine at 4 p.m. In between, I eat dates and almonds. At 4 p.m. I eat some vegetables, bread and almonds. Mahadev has been doing a lot of spinning and carding, giving the spare time, if any, to reading. At present he has also to go through the proofs of the book being published by the Oxford Press. I take about two of his hours for my work. Owing to the pain in the hand, since the National Week I have been spinning with the left hand and drawing the thread with the right. I have had enough

practice by now and experience no difficulty, though the speed has of course slowed down. Formerly I used to spin 375 rounds or more a week, but I cannot maintain a steady speed now. I rest satisfied with whatever I can spin in two to three hours. The highest number of rounds I have been able to draw so far with the right hand is 182. However, I feel confident that gradually the speed will increase. As for my reading, I could get Urdu readers here and am going through them. I read Ruskin also and give some time to books on astronomy too, as I have of late fallen in love with watching the stars. With all this, I also find time for a nap of 20 or 25 minutes during the day. I have started writing the history of the Ashram, having completed the remaining chapters of the *Gita*[1] some time ago. That is the account of time for us two. As Sardar suffers from some trouble in his nose, he remains content with reading newspapers mostly and reading out something from them to me. He reads a little from other things too, but he cannot read much as his nose begins running with the leaststrain. During this jail term, I do not generally ask for books from the Ashram. Friends have been sending me enough for me to live on.In fact they are too many already—over two hundred, as I guess. Not that all of them are worth reading. I liked very much Upton Sinelair's latest book which he sent me. In the form of a novel, it gives a very good account of the working of the American Prohibition Law. I am sending you the book, which is named *Wet Parade.* Others of his books are there in the Ashram, but I believe that this new book has probably not arrived there. Mahadev told me a story of how you lost some books. I was not surprised to hear it, as I think I know well enough your capacity for losing things. Pyarelal is in Dhulia jail, and Prabhudas is in Belgaum jail, where I hear that he is in very good health. He has put on two more pounds of weight. Kakasaheb is very weak. Jamnalalji, Vinoba, Gulzarilal, etc., are in Dhulia jail. Ramdas is here, and so also are Chhaganlal Joshi, Surendra, Mohanlal, Qureshi, etc. I am permitted to see them occasionally. Mathuradas is in Nasik jail. Taramati writes to me occasionally.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2154

[1] *Vide* "Letters on the *Gita*"

346. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

April 24, 1932

CHI. JANAKIBEHN,

Please write to me. Why do you remain ill? What is your diet? You should eat fruit in sufficient quantities. You ought to improve your health. You need not worry about Jamnalal or Kamalnayan or anybody else. Do you read anything? Who are your companions in Jail?

All three of us are quite well. We often think about you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2898

347. LETTER TO RAMIBEHN PAREKH

April 24, 1932

CHI. RAMI,

A letter from you would always be a surprise for me. You said that your birthday was approaching, but forgot to mention which. As you know, I never remember. Many happy returns of the day to you. But you should also take up some work of service. Come and see me when you feel inclined.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9717. Also C.W. 698. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

348. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[1]

YERAVDA MANDIR,
April 24, 1932

CHI. TARAMATI,

I had been awaiting this letter. I think I did receive your letter of 30th March. The address is correct.

Jyotsna[2] will have recovered by now. If her fever is due to teething, it has gone on for too long.

If you have heard from Mathuradas, let me know immediately. How is your own health? Do you get any chance to meet anyone? To the extent that your health will permit you must undertake some work of service. Doing work of service helps one to attain peace of mind. One may serve even one's neighbours. There is none in the world not in need of anyone's help.

Sardar and Mahadev send their remembrances.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You can come to see me some day if you feel like it.

From the Gujarati original Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

349. A LETTER

April 24, 1932

BHAI,

If you have fully understood the value of *brahmacharya*, I think your father's pain or anger need not be taken into account. If you put his anger in one scale and dharma in the other scale, the former would weigh as light as air. But you should first decide whether you regard *brahmacharya* as dharma. If you are firm, your father will soon calm down.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9057. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] A portion of this letter appears inLetter to Taramati M. Trikumji", 24-4-1932
[2] Addressee's daughter

350. LETTER TO ASHRAM GIRLS

April 24, 1932

CHI.

If you get your hair cropped, you would save the time you have to in taking proper care of it, save expense over oil, comb, etc., and get rid of the false notion that there is beauty in hair. Without hair, the head remains clean. For a woman, absence of hair is a sign that she is observing *brahmacharya*. If girls and grown-up women get their hair cropped, the practice would cease to be regarded as sign of widowhood. If we think about the mater we may discover some other benefits also. But are not those I have mentioned enough just now?

From Gujarati: C.W. 9058. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. I, p. 120

351. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
April 24, 1932

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I would not be able to think anything about Dr. Ambedkar from here. It is enough if we can retain our right in the land. If anything has to be done, please do it yourself.

The news about Prabhudas is good. He gets milk. His health is good. He has gained two pounds.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 32866

352. LETTER TO VATSALA V. DASTANE

April 24, 1932

CHI.

I do not think that you should cut off your hair in the face of your parents' opposition. You must convince them before you take this step. I see no point in the argument put forth by your mother. If short hair is useful, the other girls may well take up the matter. But your mother will come round if you have patience. I shall write to Anna.[1]

From Hindi: C.W. 9059. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

353. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH[2]

April 24, 1931

BHAI SUMANGAL,

I can only today find the time to write to you. I see nothing wrong in your continuing to live with your parents till you arerestored to health. The plan to have Kanta stay with you also seems good. You must fully recoup your health. It seems to me a drawback that young men cannot take care of their health. I think it is wrong to be in possession of a proscribed book. The proscription has not been withdrawn. It is not possible for me to stay at one place. You should not exert yourself mentally overmuch. You should therefore give up the thought of writing a history of the War. I am writing for *Y. I.* and *Navajivan* to be sent to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am not writing separately to Kanta. Let her write to me.

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* "Letter to V. V. Dastane", 26-4-1932.

[2] The letter appears in this place due to misreading of the year in Gujarati. It should be read after item No: 430,

354. NECESSITY OF DRAWING UP A BALANCE-SHEET[1]

April 25, 1932

Many thoughts occur to me as I write the history of the Ashram. I become aware of our many short-comings. These reflections have led me to the conclusion that from time to time we should draw up a balance-sheet of our progress. A business man draws up a daily, a monthly and a half-yearly balance-sheet of his business, and a comprehensive balance-sheet at the end of every year. We are engaged in the business of spiritual seeking and, therefore, we should draw up a balance-sheet of our spiritual progress. Everybody should draw up such a balance-sheet for himself or herself and all of us together for the Ashram as a whole. If we do not follow this practice, we would become spiritually bankrupt, as a business man who is negligent in drawing up the balance-sheet of his business would find himself financially bankrupt. If we do not know whether we are progressing or going backwards in keeping our vows and in our other activities, we would become mechanical in all our work and, in the end, become less efficient even than machines. In other words, we would incur loss in our business.

How is such a balance-sheet to be drawn up? I will answer this question by writing down a few questions.

1. Are we untruthful in our thoughts, speech or actions? 'We' means every one of us.

2. If that is the case, who are the guilty persons and on what occasions were they guilty of untruth? What did they do when their guilt was discovered and also what action did the Ashram take?

3. During all these years of the existence of the Ashram, have we made any progress in this matter or have we become worse ?

4. We should ask these questions in regard to all the vows and whenever we discover short-comings, we should try to think out suitable remedies and employ them.

We can do the same with regard to the various activities in which we are engaged. We have to think about them from two different points of view. From the economic point of view, the question we

[1] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 25-4-1932; *vide* the following item.

should ask is this: ‘Is the activity self-supporting?’ It is our faith that if an activity is found economically self-supporting, from the moral point of view also it is likely to have been carried on along proper lines. If there is either loss or profit, we may be sure that there has been a violation of moral principles somewhere. The second point of view is this: ‘Is the activity carried on primarily with a religious motive?’ It is essential that all our activities in the Ashram should be carried on with a religious motive, for everything we do ought to be subordinate to dharma that is, to truth.

Concerning both these—our vows and the other activities—I cannot help asking the following questions:

1. How is it that in the Ashram itself people deceive one another in small matters?

2. When shall we cease to distrust one another? What can we do to bring this about?

3. How is it that burglars from outside still continue to raid the Ashram?

4. Why is it that the inmates have too many personal possessions?

5. Why have we not cultivated contacts with the neighbouring villages? What is the best way of doing that?

6. Why do people continually fall ill in the Ashram?

7. What have we done for the labourers who work in the Ashram? Why is it that they have not been attracted to come and live in the Ashram? Or, rather, why should there be any labourers at all in the Ashram? In the Ashram there should be no masters and labourers.

I can write down many more such questions. But these are enough to show what I have in mind. I should like all people, young and grown-up, to start thinking. This was certainly one of my aims in insisting that all inmates should maintain a diary.

From a microfilm of the Gujarat: M.M.U./II

355. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 25, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

Change the name of "Ashram Samachar". The name has given rise to a needless argument whether it is not a newspaper. Since it is not a newspaper in any sense of that word, a name which suggests that it is, should also be dropped.

The title should be "Ashramvasi ane Anya Mitro Pratye''[1], and at the end Shankarbhai should sign: 'Your servant, Shankar'. There should be no subscription. No copy is sent to anybody who was not in the Ashram. The [present or former] inmates of the Ashram who receive copies must be contributing towards its expenses. If these changes are made, I would be able to send to Chhaganlal and Gangabehn the very copy you send without being obliged to make fresh copies. I think this is quite clear.

If you have not sent the cotton, don't send it now. I got a parcel from Lady Vithaldas. The quantity will last me a long time.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Think over what I have said concerning the need for drawing up a balance-sheet.[2] I think something like that should be adopted as a regular practice among us.

Tell Durga that Mahadev got her letter. His leg is completely all right now. Treatment is going on for the teeth. Tell Jivanji that he should not forget to send with some intending visitor Mahadev's notes concerning the Round Table Conference and his diary of our stay in London and the other things which I have asked him to send. Ask Manibehn to see me without fail when she goes to see Narahari. She should fix with some inmate of the Ashram who may be coming to this side and travel with him.

[Enclosed is a list of the names of 44 persons for whom I had

[1] 'To Inmates of the Ashram and Other Friends'

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

sent signed letters to Narandas. Along with that][1] this letter to Narandasbhai and the article on "The Necessity of a Balancesheet".[2]

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8222. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

356. LETTER TO VERRIER ELWIN[3]

April 25, 1932

I wish you will not take to heart what the Bishop has been saying. Your church is in your heart. Your pulpit is the whole earth. The blue sky is the roof of your church. And what is this Catholicism? It is surely of the heart. The formula has its use. But it is made by man. If I have any right to interpret the message of Jesus as revealed in the Gospels, I have no manner of doubt in my mind that it is in the main denied in the churches, whether Roman or English, High or Low. Lazarus has no room in those places. This does not mean that the custodians know that the Man of Sorrows has been banished from the buildings called Houses of God. In my opinion, this excommunication is the surest sign that the truth is in you and with you. But my testimony is worth nothing, if when you are alone with your Maker, you do not hear His voice saying, 'Thou art on the right path.' That is the unfailing test and no other.

The Diary of Mahadev Desai, Vol. I, p. 87

357. LETTER TO A BENGALI ASPIRANT FOR BRAHMACHARYA

April 25, 1932

I have your letter. *Brahmacharya* is a mental state. It is undoubtedly helped by abstentiousness in all respects. But diet plays the least part in giving one the necessary mental state. Not that wrong diet will not hinder progress. What I want to say is that right diet, taken in moderation, is not the only thing in the observance of *brahmacharya* though it is undoubtedly one of the necessary things.

[1] From *Bapuna Patro*-9: *Shri Narandas Gandhine,* Pt. I

[2] This paragraph appears to have been added by Mahadev Desai.

[3] The letter was in reply to the addressee's letter in which he had said that a Bishop had called him a traitor to Christ and had prohibited him from preaching in churches.

Indulgence of the palate will be the surest sign of weak mental state which is repugnant to *brahmacharya.* The sovereign remedy for the observance of *brahmacharya is* realization that the soul is a part of the Divine and that the Divine resides within us. A heart grasp of the fact induces mental purity and strength. You should therefore read such books as would enable you to grasp the central fact, cultivate such companionship as would constantly make you think of the Divine presence and follow all the directions given about fresh air, hip baths, etc., in my book called *Self-restraint v. Self-indulgence.* And when you are doing all these things regularly and industriously, do not brood over all that happens, but have confidence that success is bound to attend[1] your effort.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 117

358. A LETTER[2]

April 25, 1932

I have your pathetic letter. Seeing that God is to be found within, no research in physical sciences can give one a living faith in the Divine. Some have undoubtedly been helped even by physical sciences, but these are to be counted on one's finger-tips. My suggestion therefore to you is not to argue about the existence of Divinity, just as you do not argue about your existence, but simply assume like Euclid's axiom, that God is, if only because innumerable teachers have left their evidence and what is more their lives are an unimpeachable evidence. And then, as evidence of your own faithr epeat Ramanama[3] every morning and every evening at least for a quarter of an hour each time and saturate yourself with the *Ramayana* reading.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 118

[1] The source has "attain".

[2] The addressee, an MA., B.Sc., had written: "Having studied science extensively, I cannot have faith in God, but I do feel that I should have it. How can I cultivate it?"

[3] The source has this in Devanagari.

359. LETTER TO A WOMAN

April 25, 1932

Laziness is not the only reason for your not writing the diary. It is difficult to write the truth in it. Try to do it and see.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 120

360. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

April 26, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

I thank you for your two letters and am expecting early information about my four friends in the Belgaum prison. Since writing to you last, I have received two letters, one from Manibehn Patel and one from Kakasaheb Kalelkar. From both the letters I could see that the very information that I wanted was scratched out by the Jail authorities at Belgaum. The letters therefore proved practically valueless for the purpose for which they were intended. And reading between the lines I could also see that Kakasaheb was not at all well.

However as you have kindly promised prompt attention, I am not disturbing the peace of my mind.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 9

361. LETTER TO K. NATARAJAN[2]

April 26, 1932

DEAR MR. NATARAJAN,

I am sure you must have read the reports of an exhibition given by an Indian yogi of his powers before an audience specially assembled at the Gokuldas Tejpal Hospital. The yogi is reported to have eaten a live viper's head, nails, nitric acid, and the like, and that the Chief Justice and his wife were among the distinguished audience.

[1] For Doyle's reply, *vide* "Letter from E. E. Doyle", 28-4-1932

[2] Editor, *Indian Social Reformer*

The report states that one lady was so disgusted at the eating of the viper's head that she abruptly left the hall before the exhibition was finished. I do not know how you look at such exhibitions. In my opinion they are degrading both for the demonstrator, as also for the public. And if the demonstrator died, as he most likely would, if these demonstrations were continued, those who encouraged him by attending them, I should hold guilty of manslaughter. I do not think that either science or humanity is served by such revolting exhibitions. The text-books on Hatha yoga clearly lay down that the Hathayogisare expected not to exhibit their yogic powers or make use of them for purposes of gain. If you agree with me, will you not initiate an agitation in the daily Press for preventing such cruel exhibitions? One man, I suppose you know, recently died in Rangoon precisely giving demonstrations such as the one reported in Bombay.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 123. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. I, p. 169

362. LETTER TO MAUDE ROYDEN

April 26, 1932

I thank you for your letter[2] enclosing the correspondence between yourself and Sir Erric Drummond[3] and Sir John Simon. When I read about your movement[4], I did not think that you were in any way showing preference to China over India. I then felt that you were quite right in concentrating your energy over a situation that

[1] In his reply Natarajan wrote: "I agree with you that exhibitions of the kind you refer to are repulsive, and as they serve no useful purpose, they should be discouraged by public opinion. They recall a saying of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa's, which I read somewhere. Someone asked him if it was possible to walk on water. "Yes", was his reply, "but sensible people pay a pice to the ferryman" (*The Diary of Mahadev Desai*, Vol. I, p. 107). *Vide* also "Letter to K. Natarajan", 25-5-1932.

[2] Which read: "I hesitated to send you the correspondence because I fear you must think that our first concern should have been India, but I believe you will understand and sympathize with our sense of the extreme urgency of the hostilities between China and Japan in the Far East. I, therefore, send these letters for your information." (*The Diary of Mahadev Desai*, Vol. I, p. 89)

[3] Secretary-General of the League of Nations

[4] For organizing a Peace Army

threatened to involve bloodshed on a vastscale and that too by the adoption of the method of satyagraha.

The Diary of Mahadev Desai, Vol. I, p. 90

363. LETTER TO V. V. DASTANE

April 26, 1932

BHAI DASTANE,

Shanta sent me your letter written in pencil. Vatsala seems to be impatient to get her hair cropped. I have written[1] to her saying that though I support her idea,[2] this was not a matter in which she could disregard the wishes of her parents. Vatsala desires me to write to you. I do feel that we should encourage our children to take a step like this or that, if we cannot go so far as to encourage them, we ought to give them complete freedom to act as they wish. Even if she changes her mind later, it is not as if hair will not grow again. However, do not attach any weight to my opinion in this matter. You may do as you think fit, as you may have a number of reasons for not giving yourpermission to Vatsala to do as she wishes. I hope you are in good health. I envy the company you have got.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3086

364. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI M. PATEL

April 26, 1932

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

I got all your letters, and I have also replied to them. I am very glad that you go and see Abbas Saheb. I would be happy if you come and see me here. But it would be more honourable for us if you do not come. When we are trusted, we should interpret the conditions on our side to our disadvantage. This is why I do not ask you to come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8997

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vatsala V. Dastane",24-4-1932.
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Ashram Girls", 24-4-1932

365. LETTER TO MAITHILISHARAN GUPTA

April 26, 1932

BHAI MAITHILISHARANJI,

I have your letter[1]. It is hardly a letter, it is sheer poetry. You have won over me. I follow your point and from that viewpoint Urmila's grief is pertinent. As a matter of fact, I had no right to say a word. My study of the scriptures is insignificant and of literature even less. My knowledge of the vernacular too is of the same order. Being well aware of my own short-comings, I gave you my impressions[2] just as they occurred to me. My friends, knowing my deficiencies but also my devotion to Truth, ask for my opinion whatever its worth. Prompted by love I sent you my comments, but I could never have expected such a beautiful, poetic letter in reply. I shall preserve it and read it again; which means that I must re-read *Saket* from the viewpoint expounded by you. Although your language is pretty easy, Ioccasionally find it difficult to understand it fully, owing to my scanty knowledge of Hindi. Yet another reason of my difficulty is my limited Hindi vocabulary. Is there any dictionary of Hindi wherein I may find the meanings of all the difficult words used in *Saket* and such other books? I know that a determined effort will by itself make many things clear.

My vandemataram to Ajmeriji[3]. I remember his *bhajans* very well. God willing, I shall listen to them again some time.

Yes, I have written[4] to Parasram to include *Saket* and *Anagh* in the Ashram curriculum. Possibly a start has already been made.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 9456. Courtesy: Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi

[1] Dated April 15, 1932 (S.N. 19312).

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Maithilisharan Gupta", 5-4-1932

[3] A Muslim poet who had presented a few of his works in Hindi to Gandhiji in 1929 during the latter's visit to Jhansi

[4] *Vide*, also "Letter to Parasram Mehrotra", 18-4-1932

366. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

April 27, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

I do think it would be harmful if boys and girls play *hututu* together.[1] In this game, the players catch and throw down one another. Boys and girls cannot play such a game together. We should not knowingly do something which may rouse impure feelings in us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 9063. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

367. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

April 27, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

After all if a letter had to be written about getting the specialists here, Sardar Vallabhbhai thought that he should write the letter himself. Hence the enclosed from him. You will see in that letter absence of any mention of 12 lb. loss of weight. Of course I wholly disagree with you and the other doctors that these local troubles have nothing to do with the digestive apparatus. As a layman I strongly hold the conviction that the nose trouble has much to do with the loss of weight. In Sardar Vallabhbhai's case in spite of his strong will, I know that the constant and irritating attention that the trouble invites disturbs him as it would anybody. If nothing else, the disturbance itself would be a sufficient cause to put a person off his food. I know that in my case I should simply stop taking food if I had such trouble. I would impute it to something wrong in the stomach in spite of medical opinion to the contrary. All this however is merely by the way.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 9

[1] *Vide* also "A Letter",23-4-1932

368. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI[1]

April 27, 1932

I will still not give up hope of your reformation, for I have not given up hope about myself. I have always believed that I was a bad man when Ba carried you in her body, but after your birth I have been doing greater and greater penance for my former life. How can I, therefore, give up all hope? I will continue to hope as long as you and I are alive. And hence, contrary to my usual practice, I am preserving your letter so that, when you have awakened, you may see the insolence of your letter and weep over it and laugh at your folly. I am not preserving this letter to throw it in your face then, but only that I may laugh at it, if God wills that I should see that day. All of us are full of short-comings. But it is our dharma to overcome them. I pray that you do so.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 125-6

369. LETTTER TO A SIKH

April 28, 1932

With reference to the growing of hair and beard I hold a totally different view from yours.[2] Whatever value outward symbols had before, they do not and ought not to possess the superlative value that you seem to attach to the growing of hair and beard. For me, I can see no reason whatever for departing from a long established practice which I have accepted for myself. I would far rather that people judged me by my deeds than by my outward appearance.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 129

[1] The addressee had written a letter to Gandhiji demanding that his daughter, Manu, should be taken away from the custody of his wife's sister, Balibehn Vohra, and be restored to him. He had also complained about Bali's assault on him and held Gandhiji responsible for it. *Vide* also "Letter to Manu Gandhi", 4-4-1932 and "Letter to Manu Gandhi", 10-4-1932

[2] The addressee had written: "I see not much difference between a true saint like Guru Nanak Dev and your noble self. It will be in the fitness of things if the greatest living Indian and the greatest man of the present world keep *keshas* like all the great men of all times," (*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol I, p. 128)

370. LETTER TO LAKSHMI JERAJANI

April 28, 1932

CHI. LAKSHMI,

I got your letter. You find it difficult to write in ink because you are not accustomed to doing so. But once you get accustomed to it you will discover that it is easier to write in ink than with pencil. Moreover, there is greater pressure on the fingers when we write with a pencil, and hence the hand gets tired sooner.

I myself had written the letter. If the handwriting resembles this, then the letter was written with the left hand. My handwriting is certainly bad. No one should copy me in that respect. My right thumb is paining.

Blessings from Sardar, Mahadevbhai and me.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2810. Courtesy: Purushottam D. Saraiya

371. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 28, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

We have two iron machines for crushing nuts, like almonds, etc. One was sent by Gregg and is brand new, and the other has been used for some time. Keshu or Premabehn is likely to know about them. They were used only by Pyarelal. Perhaps Kusum will know where they are. If you can find them, send one of them to me immediately. By 'immediately' I only mean that it may be sent with somebody who is coming here to see me, or by railway parcel if it does not cost more than eight annas. Let Keshu examine the machine before it is sent. He, too, has had some experience of using them. My experiment with almonds is going on. One person requires about five hours to crush them, and the quantity lasts me barely nine days. If I eat more every day, it would probably last only six days. Why should anybody, I thought, have to labour so much when we have a machine for the purpose ? Hence this request. Some almonds were crushed today and they will last me till Friday week. If the machine arrives before then, the problem will be solved. By the time you get this letter, you will

have received the letter which I wrote[1] to you today about Harilal. I expect this letter to be posted tomorrow, that is, on Friday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8223. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

372. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

April 28, 1932

The question you have put me about the meaning of *pinda* and *brahmanda is* a big one. But I will explain the idea in brief. For our purpose, we may understand the word *pinda* to mean our body, and the word *brahmanda* to mean the earth. Now, the statement [as in the *pinda, so* in the *brahmanda*] means that everything that is in the body is there in the earth, too, and likewise there is nothing in the earth which is not in our body. The latter is composed of the same substance as the earth. There are five elements of the earth, and the body is made of the same five elements. Innumerable creatures exist on the earth and also in the body. As one body perishes and another is born, so the substance of the earth also is continually undergoing transformations. We can amplify this analogy still further. But we can deduce from what I have said, that if we know the real nature of our body, we shall know the real nature of the earth as well and shall not have to go far afield in seareh of knowledge. Our body is the nearest thing to us, and if we understand it we shall have attained our object. If we try to know about the earth, our knowledge will always be incomplete. That is why wise men have told us that there is nothing in the *brahmanda* which is not to be found in the *pinda*. Therefore, if we know the self, that knowledge will include all other knowledge. But we may also enjoy the knowledge of other things which we gain while we strive for knowledge of the self, since we shall be enjoying it asincidental to our pursuit of knowledge of the self . . .[2]. I think that Narasinhbhai has not thought deeply enough in interpreting the *Gita.* We should not confuse the Krishna of the *Gita* with the Krishna of

[1] This is not available. *Vide*, however, "Fragment of Letter to Harilal Gandhi",27-4-1932

[2] Omission as in the source

history. The problem before Krishna was not that of violence or non-violence. Arjuna shrank not from violence but from having to kill his relations. Krishna, therefore, explained to him that in doing one's duty one ought not to treat one's relations differently from others. In the age when the *Gita* was composed, the men who influenced its thought did not raise the question whether the violence committed in war was right or not. That question seems to have been raised only in modern times. The principle of non-violence was accepted even then by all Hindus; but opinions differed then, as they do now, as regards what involved violence and what did not. Our descendants may see violence in many things in which we do not see it today. For instance, we do destroy life when we consume milk or cook cereals. It is conceivable that future generations may wish to refrain from such violence and stop drinking milk and cooking cereals. Today we commit this violence and still claim without any hesitation that we observe non-violence. In exactly the same manner, war was regarded such a normal thing in the age of the *Gita* that people did not feel that they violated the principle of non-violence by engaging in it. The illustration of the war in the *Gita,* therefore, seems to me perfectly innocent. If, however, we reflect over the teaching of the *Gita* as a whole and examine the characteristics of the *sthitaprajna,* of the man who has merged in the Brahman, of the *bhakta* or of the yogi, we can come to only one conclusion, namely, that the Shri Krishna who taught the path of the *Gita* was literally an avatar of ahimsa and his exhortation to Arjuna to fight does not in the least detract from the purity of his ahimsa. On the contrary, if he had advised Arjuna to follow any other course, I am sure that the perfection of his knowledge would have been called in question and he would never have come to be worshipped as the most perfect avatar of God. You should read what I have written in this connection in *Anasaktiyoga*[1].

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 127-8

[1] *Vide* "Anasaktiyoga"

373. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

April 29, 1932

CHI. PARASRAM

1. It does not befit us to ask the questions you have asked about Maulana Shaukat Ali. We should not pay attention to the short-comings of other people or sit in judgment over anybody. We should exhaust all our energies in examining ourselves. As long as we can detect even a single weakness in ourselves and, despite it, inwardly wish that our relatives, acquaintances and friends should not cut off relations with us, we are not entitled to see short-comings inothers or criticize them. If we unintentionally see such short-comings in anybody, we may, if it lies in our power and if it is proper for us to do so, ask the person concerned about them, but nobody else. There is no gain in asking other people. However, since you wished to ask me, you did quite well in doing so. For otherwise I would not have had an opportunity to lecture to you in this way.

And now I reply to your question. From a distance and on the basis of the known facts only, we should not approve of the Maulana's activities. However, I cannot arrive at any definite opinion without hearing in detail about his activities from his own mouth. According to me, it is not correct to say that the followers of the Prophet ought to, or may, do all things done by him. All people are not entitled to do everything that the great men may have done. We have seen that such imitation leads to undesirable results. However, we find that Hindus, Muslims and followers of other faiths do not only not follow this golden rule always, but even act as if they were entitled to do certain things because the Prophets or avatars had done them. Seeing that this is the general attitude, I am not surprised that the Maulana has cited the Prophet's example.

2. What we do about Bhishma and others we may also apply to social workers of the present day. I feel that the present practice of (offering) *jalanjali* needs reform.

Everyone who has written to me on the subject had nothing but praise about the *Ramayana* class which you have been conducting. Go on in the same interesting way. It would be in my view a great achievement if all at the Ashram come to love speaking in Hindi and

become interested in the *Ramayana*. I am, therefore, very much pleased that you have thrown yourself heart and soul into this work.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7495. AIso C.W. 4972. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

374. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

April 30, 1932

CHI. JAMNA,

I got your letter. I think that if you definitely feel better in Bombay than at any other place, you should go there. You should observe the rules, that is, the vows of the Ashram. You should behave courteously with everyone and make yourself useful wherever you live.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 852. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

375. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

April 30, 1932

CHI. MANGALA (DARLING),

To follow one's *atman* does not mean acting as one pleases. It means obeying the voice of God who dwells in our heart. We pray daily, keep vows and practise self-control in order that we may hear Him. When we are convinced that we have heard the voice of the Lord, we should not worry no matter who is displeased with us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4084. Also C.W. 48. Courtesy: Mangalabehn B. Desai

376. LETTER TO MATHURI N. KHARE

April 30, 1932

CHI. MATHURI,

This time your handwriting was better. You should write like this every time and keep on trying to improve it still further.

God is self-created. He is not born. If He were born, what would be the meaning of saying that He was God?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 265. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

377. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

April 30, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

It is not at all necessary to wear a pin in your hair. Dreams come to everybody. Nobody knows why they come. You will be able to improve your handwriting if you try hard enough. Do not get disheartened.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9426. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

378. FRAGMENT OF A DRAFT LETTER TO LORD SANKEY

May 1, 1932

You have given judgment against me on evidence of which I have been kept in ignorance and your judgment has been given at a time when I have been rendered incapable of defending myself.[1]

The Diary of Mahadev Desai, Vol. I, p. 97

379. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

May 1, 1932

CHI BHAGWANJI,

It is good that you wrote to me. I am going to write about the subject[2]; so I do not expatiate on it here. You drew the attention of a responsible person to what you felt was a slip. Now you have only to watch what he would do. As for you, you have done your duty.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 346. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

[1] Mahadev Desai explains: "Bapu was deeply pained to read Sankey's article in *Newsletter*. He said it was a vicious piece of writing and he felt he should write to its author. . . .

The Sardar who was listening to the dictation remarked: 'Instead of writing such a longish letter, why don't you simply tell him that he is a liar?'

Bapu laughed and replied, 'In fact I have said something stronger still. I say his conduct is ungentlemanly. I go further and say that he has betrayed a friend or colleague. This is something that would cut an Englishman to the quick, but I have written what I felt. People like Shafi and the Aga Khan who met him every now and then must have told him all these lies. And he not only believed them to be true, but never asked me about them and throws the blame on me now when I am in prison....'

The keenness of Bapu's feeling is evident from this sentence in the first draft of the letter....

Part of the sentence was later replaced with the following: 'You have given it after rendering me incapable of defending myself.' . . .

It is not true again that my claim is exaggerated. Why should our claim to independence be considered exaggerated? It may be so considered if I propose to reduce England to slavery. I set forth the Congress demand in my speeches but during the discussions I dealt with any number of formulas." (*The Diary of Mahadev Desai, Vol I*, pp. 96 -7)

[2] The reference is to "Lesson of the National Week", 2-5-1932

380. LETTER TO MOHAN N. PARIKH

May 1, 1932

CHI. MOHAN,

A boy of your age should study, play and do some work. He should also pray. I hope that if you go to Belgaum you will certainly come here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9179

381. LETTER TO MANIBEHN N. PARIKH

May 1, 1932

CHI. MANI (PARIKH),

I was expecting that you would come this week. When you come, most probably you will be able to see Mahadev too. I now get news from Belgaum.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5972. Also C.W. 3289. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai .

382. LETTER TO NARAYAN DESAI

May 1, 1932

CHI. NARAYANRAO ALIAS NARAYAN DESAI ALIAS BABLO,

If we read the *Gita* and understand it, we shall know how to do our duty. By spinning during the National Week or at other times, we increase the wealth of the country and serve the poor.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9479

383. LETTER TO PUSHPA S. PATEL

May 1, 1932

CHI. PUSHPA,

Gandhiraj means that a person, that is Gandhi, will rule the country. What is the good of that? In swaraj, everybody will rule, and everybody will include you, me and all others. If you do not understand how that can be, ask Premabehn to explain it to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3987. Also C.W. 33. Courtesy: Pushpabehn N. Naik

384. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK[1]

May 1, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

If the burden of work is excessive on you, I cannot accept your view that it cannot be reduced. That view betrays ignorant attachment and weakness. I can believe that the cause of your irritability lies in yourself and not in the weight of work on you. If that is so, you will gradually learn to keep your balance, for you will not deceive yourself for a long time. I do not, however, wish to pester you about this. Try to harden your sensitive nature.

Among our books there are some Urdu ones. A few of them are likely to be with Imam Saheb. Inquire in the Ashram too. If you cannot identify them, Parasram will certainly be able to do so. If you find *Sirat-Un-Nabi* among these books, send it to me. It is written by Maulana Shibli. There is another biography of Nabi written by Dr. Mahomed Ali. Send that too. The *Sirat is* in two parts.You are surrounded on all sides by labourers, and the life which they lead is the only true life. That has been the idea behind the Ashram. True, the labourers should be seekers after truth. Are you not one? Are not the other women and the men also such seekers? I believe that everyone is

[1] This was in reply to her letter complaining of mental exhaustion. She had also stated that she was unhappy and felt dissatisfied, and that separation from Gandhiji pained her.

so to the best of his or her capacity.

You ask me when you will be able to visit me. If you use your eyes, you cannot but see me. My spirit dwells there, though the body may be here, and it will continue to dwell there even if the latter is reduced to ashes. It is quite possible that when I am there in body, my soul may not be there. Understand this truth and give up your ignorant idea.

One must feel discontent, but it should be regarding oneself. The day one believes that one has become perfect, one's fall has begun. Hence one ought to be discontented about oneself. But such discontent does not mean that one should wish all the time to take up new duties.

I cannot, however, explain all this by argument. Time will do its work. Where you see pitch darkness today, you will see light tomorrow. "*Premal Jyoti*"[1] seems to me to be the only *bhajan* which truthfully describes this condition of mind. The meaning is very well brought out in Gujarati. The original English is a marvellous creation, though.

I have been told that Dhurandhar keeps fairly good health. What is your present weight? How much milk and curds do you take?

How many volumes do you think there are in the library?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10283. Also C.W. 6731. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

385. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

May 1, 1932

CHI. VANAMALA,

Just as from one grain of wheat grow millions of grains, so from two human beings millions of human beings may be born. You can know this even by doing a multiplication sum on your slate. Try to do it.

I did not say that we should merely learn to turn the charkha with the left hand. What is necessary is that we should learn to do with

[1] A Gujarati rendering, by Narasinhrao B. Divetia, of Newman's "Lead, Kindly Light".

the left hand everything which we can do with the right hand. To start with, try to write and eat with your left hand and clean your teeth with it, and after that you may try to do other things.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5772. Also C.W. 2995. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

386. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

May 1, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

Learn everything about spinning. Spinning is not for those who can get other useful occupations. That is why mill-hands are not told to spin for a wage. Spinning is meant for the millions of Indians who do not have an occupation for six months in the year. In short, a person may spin under any pretext; what his spinning adds to the wealth of the nation is the benefit we get from it.

Khadi is to be preferred because through it we serve the poor to the utmost.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9910. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

387. LETTER TO VIMAL KISHORE MEHROTRA

May 1, 1932

CHI. VIMAL,

Write in ink. Anyway, you did well in writing to me.

Learn about the *yajna* from Parasram and, if it needs further explanation, do write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 4973. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra. Also G.N. 7496

388. LETTER TO SANTU

May 1, 1932

CHI. SANTU,

We must make the least use of weapons which can hurt as we want to observe non-violence. I have not opposed the practice of lathi and *lezim.* I have found no fault with wax candles.

BAPU

[From Hindi]

From a photostat: G.N. 7712

389. LESSON OF THE NATIONAL WEEK[1]

May 2, 1932

I received a letter from Shri Bhagwanji regarding the self-purification week celebrated in April last. In that letter he draws my attention to the waste of cotton which occurs and he also suspects that some persons knowingly gave a higher figure for the yarn spun by them. He states that the waste was of two kinds: one, the quantity of broken threads was more than permissible, and, two, since the spinning was done with excessive speed the count of the yarn spun was very low.[2]

If anybody knowingly gave a wrong figure for the yarn spun by him or her, I would regard it as a serious matter. Such conduct would be a blot on the good name of the Ashram. The spinning done by a person who gives a wrong figure will not be accepted by God as *yajna*. The figure entered in our records has no value. The real value of the spinning done remains what it is. It cannot be increased or diminished by entering a higher or lower figure in our record. Besides, the cash value of the yarn is no more than a few annas; its real value lies in the sincerity of the motive with which the spinning is done. That value can never be estimated by us. It is recorded only in the divine book, for who but God can understand man's motives.

[1] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 28-4/2-5-1932; *vide* the following item.

[2] For Gandhiji' reply to Bhagwanji P. Pandya, *vide* "Letter to Bhagwanji P. Pandya", 1-5-1932

However, we have one test. If such *yajna* does not yield the expected result in time, we may conclude that there is some impurity in us. Let everybody examine his work from this point of view and, if anybody has been guilty of untruth, let him or her humbly confess it and so purify himself or herself. We cannot, in the Ashram, keep a secret watch over anybody; most of the work is carried on the basis of trust in one another. The Ashram cannot be run on any other basis. Everybody, therefore, should know his duty and do it. Let the inmates also think if they have been guilty of anything else besides giving wrong figures for yarn. Were they slack in doing the spinning? Did they do it as a task forced on them? Did they give to it less than the appointed time? Did they throw away the broken threads? This is the condition for a true *yajna*: the person doing it should give his whole-hearted attention to the work, and do it with all his skill and intelligence.

Let nobody believe that he or she may behave anyhow throughout the year and still be able to observe the rules explained above during the National Week. It should be remembered that one's whole life in the Ashram has to be a continuous *yajna*. Among all its activities, spinning is the supreme *yajna*. The only difference between the National Week and the rest of the year is that we give more time to spinning during that Week.

I suggest that the following rules should be observed in future:

1. If the yarn is of less than 20 counts, the spinning should not be regarded as *yajna*.

2. If the waste exceeds a fixed limit, the spinning should not be regarded as *yajna*.

3. If the strength of the yarn comes to less than a fixed limit, then also the spinning should not be regarded as *yajna*.

In *yajna* or any other work, the neatness of the product and the sincerity with which the work is done are more important than the number or quantity of what is produced. Fifty bullocks who are physically unfit will prove a burden on the owner, whereas one strong bullock will do his work well. Fifty knives with blunt edges will not be useful in mincing vegetables, but one knife with a sharp edge will do the work perfectly. We should, therefore, learn to give our full attention to every work which we do. We should devote the next [National] Week exclusively to this subject.

I observe that some inmates find spinning a boring work and

prefer something else. There is one natural weakness in this attitude. A person is bored by the work which he has to do every day and persuades himself that, if he had been doing some other work instead, he would not get bored in that manner. However, if that other work becomes his daily work, he would ask for something else still. Besides, consciously or unconsciously persons who do spinning think of the low earnings from that work. According to the standpoint of Ashram this is a wrong attitude. The wage for spinning is the lowest because it is the only work at present which millions can do and which can help them to earn a little money. All of us, therefore, do voluntary spinning as *yajna* in order to popularize the work. The idea behind *yajna is* that we dedicate the work to God and have faith that He will provide us the wherewithal for our maintenance. Let everyone understand this significance of *yajna* and daily do the *yajna* of spinning with whole-hearted devotion and with zest.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

390. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 28/ [*May 2, 1932*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have already written to you today a letter[2] about the problem of Harilal. I hope you will receive it without delay. I need not, therefore, write anything more about the matter.

Send more pills for Gangabehn made from ten *tolas* of *chaiarj* and ten *tolas* of asafoetida. I had received the quantity which I had asked you earlier to send. If, you send the pills with somebody who is coming here to see me, I will arrange for their being delivered to her.

Personally, I liked Tilakam's going to Thana. Others also may go, if they are not likely to be a burden on Pyare Ali. That would look nice too, for we should be as happy to be a Muslim's guest as a Hindu's. Besides, it would be a painful thing if anybody felt that, since Tilakam was not one of us and since he came from an *Antyaja* family, the present arrangement was good enough for him. If Jamna willingly goes there, Noorbanu will shower love on her. Since the first day that we met I have always felt a beautiful light of purity shining in her eyes.

[1] Inferred from the contents

[2] *Vide* footnote on "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 28-4-1932

I hope Gangadevi is all right now. I had a letter from Santok. She says that she would like Radha to stay on in Deolali for four months more. If that is likely to restore her health completely, it would be all right. I have had no letter at all from Ba.

I cannot say that the change of hands in spinning has reduced the pain. But I see that, had I not made this change, I would have been unable to continue working. I can see from my experience of drawing the rounds with the right hand that slowly rotating the wheel causes much less strain in the elbow than drawing the rounds hour after hour. I now draw about 200 rounds daily with the right hand. That is five or ten more than the number I used to draw with the left hand a week ago. The average then was 187_ [rounds] a day, or say rather that I kept up that average with an effort. Of course, more time is spent now in spinning. But in any case I had been giving more time in a week previously. From every point of view, therefore, the present practice seems all right. There is no cause at all for worrying about the condition of my hand.

There is, of course, no ban on printing copies of "Watching the Heavens" and the other articles I send, but I think it would be wiser not to print any. Rather than print copies, the better course would be for somebody to dictate to a group of five to ten persons. This would be more in keeping with our principles. By following this practice, we would learn again the art of writing a neat hand. The copies made in this manner could then be circulated among those who might wish to read the articles. Those persons may make more copies if they wish to. Or everybody should pass on the copy supplied to him, on the same day on which he receives it, to another person whose name is given to him. In this way it will be possible to circulate a few copies among a large number of persons and all those who get them will read the article with special interest and derive greater benefit from it. Think over this.

[*May 2, 1932*]

Read carefully what I have written about the work done during the National Week this time. If you agree with me, show it to all others, and also try to follow in practice as much of it as can be done. If you wish to make any changes in my suggestions, you may certainly do so. I have, generally speaking, only my experience to go by. In the Ashram you have a veritable mine of experience. It is possibIe, therefore, that you will find some of my suggestions impracticable,

but there is no doubt that we ought to pay attention to the fineness of the count and strength of yarn and to reducing waste. At the examination, this was the method of evaluation formerly adopted. The candidate was awarded marks equal to the figure of the count multiplied by that of the strength. I do not know what method is followed now. I would introduce the factor of waste in calculating the marks—reduce the marks in proportion to the quantity of waste. Mahadev and I have thought out this method. Waste up to one *tola* for every pound [of yarn] may be condoned. If the waste exceeds one *tola*, for every additional *tola* the marks arrived at by multiplying the figure of the count by that of the strength should be reduced by sixteen. That is, the marks should be reduced by one for every 1/16 *tola* of waste. If the waste is as much as ten *tolas*, the candidate should fail. However, you yourself may decide whether waste, of one *tola* or of more than one *tola* per pound should be condoned. I have given the figures merely as illustrations to explain my idea. If I were an examiner, I would even take into account how the candidate sat when spinning, in what condition he maintained his spinning-wheel, whether he kept the place where he sat for spinning quite clean and whether he could repair a spinning-wheel when it went out of order, and calculate marks for all these. This means that the work of the candidates would be constantly observed by somebody. This observer would be one of the examiners at the test. I would not mind if such a practice had the effect of reducing our output. What is essential is that we should be sure in our minds that we were vigilant and were progressing from day to day. I have stated in the accompanying note[1] that when the yarn spun is of less than 20 counts, the spinning should not be counted as *yajna*. This does not mean that no credit should be given for the spinning done. The candidate would go on spinning every day and be awarded marks for his work, the yarn could be made use of, but such a spinner should not be considered to be performing *yajna*. He would be only a candidate.

Read the letter which I have written to Dr. Mehta. Forward to Jetpur the letter which I have written to Manjula, Maganlal's[2] wife. I have forgotten her father's name. If you do not remember it, Champa or Ratilal will probably know it. Read the letter before sealing it, and communicate the address to me also. I have already written to you

[1] On the National Week; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's youngest son who had gone abroad

regarding Kusum. Nobody has come to see me till now except Trivenibehn. About Budhabhai, do what you think proper.

Post the accompanying letter to Hill only if you think it is all right, for if he comes just now it is you who will have to shoulder the burden. You must have received my letter regarding Harilal. I had another letter of bitter complaint from Manu.

BAPU

[PS]

In some of the letters this time, I have omitted "Blessings from". The words are understood. I have omitted them to save time. As I write with the left hand, I naturally like to save as many words as I can. You will observe that I pay more attention to making every letter in a ,word distinct. I think that, if I write still more slowly, the handwriting with the left hand may be a little better. Is there no limit to the wishes of an old man who has arrived at death's door?

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8224. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

391. TELEGRAM TO DAHYABHAI PATEL[1]

May 2, 1932

[REGARD THIS AS] RELEASE FROM LIVING DEATH.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 132

392. TELEGRAM TO MANIBEHN PATEL

May 2, 1932

YASHODA PASSED AWAY YESTERDAY. REGARD THIS AS RELEASE FROM LIVING DEATH.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 83

[1] Vallabhbhai Patel's son. According to Mahadev Desai, this was sent on receipt of the news about the death of addressee's wife, Yashoda.

393. LETTER TO SIR SAMUEL HOARE

May 2, 1932

DEAR SIR SAMUEL,

I am grateful to you for your reply[1] to my letter of the 11th March. I had hardly expected any reply to that letter. I wrote it purely as a matter of duty that I thought I owed you. However much we may differ in our views, in all I may do I want to be correct to the best of my ability and knowledge. I quite agree with you that you could not possibly have said more than you have done in your letter under reply, so far as the first part is concerned. As to the second part of your letter, it would ill become me, as a prisoner, to enter into any argument on merits. I must therefore content myself by simply declaring my conviction that even the newspapers that I am permitted to receive show how grossly misinformed you must be with reference to the state of things in this country.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9556. Courtesy: India Office Library

394. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

May 3, 1932

DEAR AGATHA,

I have your letter of the 15th ultimo. Yes, Mahadev is with us. You have in English the saying that two is company, three is none. Somehow or other we three are belying that saying and are getting on quite well. You must be feeling considerably relived now that you have Deenabandhu with you.[2] Whether you call Mahadev's little hope—or shall we say big hope?—Master Desai or some other it is the same thing to him, because he is utterly innocent of English. But the

[1] *Vide* "Letter from Sir Samuel Hoare", 13-4-1932

[2] The addressee was helping C. F. Andrews and this was one of "the ways in which she interpreted Mr. Gandhi's request . . . to work for mutual understanding between India and Britain" *(Agatha Harrison*, p. 68).

book you have sent I have no doubt contains many pictures. These he will enjoy without stopping to inquire how you have addressed him.[1]

With love from us both.

BAPU

[PS.]

Love to Charlie.

From a photostat: G.N. 1453

395. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

May 3, 1932

I got your letter. I would not worry over the loss of twelve pounds of weight, if your strength has not gone down and you suffer from no particular disease. I frequently write to Taramati, and this time she also has been writing fairly often. In the last letter Dilip[2] also wrote two lines. Of course I had to ask for that favour. By now Taramati must have visited you.

According to me, rebirth is a fact proved by scientific experiments and by people's memories of past lives. To accept such memories as proof, we have to put trust in men who have narrated their experiences. But so many persons have borne witness to their remembering their past lives that we cannot brush aside their evidence. I would not, however, spend time convincing anybody about the reality of rebirth; nor would I enter into too much argument on the subject. There are several things scientifically established, our disbelief in which is of no great consequence in our lives. It is possible that rebirth may be so defined by somebody that the usual proof offered in support of it will not satisfy him. My own definition of it is just this. The soul does not cease to exist with the end of the body, but migrates from one existence to another, and that is rebirth. That is, I would say that even Christians, Muslims and Zoroastrians who believe in the Day of Judgment believe in rebirth according to my definition of it. The acquisition of another body, in my view, follows as a necessary corollary from this belief. However, I know that the traditional Christian view does not permit it, though an increasing number of

[1] Up to this the letter is in Mahadev Desai's hand; the rest is in Gandhiji's left hand.

[2] Addressee's son

Christians now believe in the possibility of the soul getting another body. *Lagnantar* will not serve as a Gujarati equivalent of 'divorce'. *Lagnantar* means another marriage, which is possible even without a divorce. If no current word is available, I would coin a new word *Lagnabhanga*. On my asking Mahadev, he says that he was going to suggest this very word. So we have, as the saying goes, two prescriptions of the same cure for an illness.

Taramati will probably find it difficult to get the 'Yeravda chakra'—the Yeravda spinning-wheel—in Bombay. I am writing to her and advising her to write to Bardoli or the Ashram and ask them to send it directly to you. Your interpretation of *Gita*, XVIII. [66] cannot contradict mine. I do not now remember what the interpretation I offered in my letters was. But I would certainly oppose your interpretation if you tried to make out the idea of surrender to God to be a path in itself unconnected with other duties. I have often noticed that what we have said or wish to say had already been said by somebody else in different words. Instead of noting a difference or contradiction between the two explanations, I see the identity of meaning. What does it matter if the language differs? I am aware that there are certain risks in following this method, but they exist only for those persons who twist the meanings of words to see and prove the identity of the meaning of the passages in question. I don't think there is any such risk for a person who sees such identity spontaneously. Hence, the question we face is, whether the better course is to form the habit of seeing identity of meaning or to proceed on the assumption that difference in language indicates difference in meaning. In my view, it is dangerous to see difference in meaning in verbal difference. I very much like to see identity rather than difference of meaning between Ishvar and Allah.

It seems that apart from Kishorelal and Jairamdas you have no other companions. Ask them to write to me if they can without forgoing their right to write an ordinary letter, or include in such ordinary letter what they wish to write to me. I had one letter from Jairamdas, to which I replied. It is not at all necessary for you to let go writing a letter to Taramati for the sake of being able to write to me. It would be enough if you include in your letter to Taramati whatever you wish to communicate to me; or, if you write in the letter to me what you wish to tell her, to that at any rate there can be no objection.

We three are happy here. It is now three months since I gave up

milk. In its place, I take almonds with bread. So far, the weight has been maintained. And there is no complaint of constipation, so that I am carrying on with this diet for the present.

Mahadev points out that in Marathi they use the word *vivahavichchheda* for *lagnabhanga*. Both the words had occurred to me but I liked *legnabhanga* better. However, I would certainly accept the word *vivahavichchheda* and perhaps even prefer it since I supportthe view that the terms newly coined in Indian languages should be uniform.

Convey our due regards to the company there.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 107-9

396. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

May 3, 1932

DEAR SISTERS,

I had intended to send this letter along with the post dispatched today, but forgot to do so as I was in some hurry and hard pressed for time. After the packet of letters was handed over for posting, I remembered, and could still have written to you and sent the letter, but decided to put off. I hope all of you help in nursing Gangadevi. At the Ashram, it is our aim to create such an atmosphere that no one, including children and the old persons there, should feel the absence of relations. Anybody who regulates his or her life by the principles of dharma should first look after those whom he or she does not regard as relations. For, one's relations are not likely to remain uncared for, and if one makes it a point always to pay attention first to persons who are not one's relations, by and by one would learn to pay equal attention to relations and others. It is a matter of congratulation that the children of Rabaris[1] are attending Manibehn's classes. I was glad to read what you wrote about the girls. You will have taken a great step forward if you are able to act towards them exactly as you have indicated in your letter. Two girls have put me this question in their letter: 'May girls use bob-pins or hair-pins? Should they bind the hair with ribbons?' I have replied to them as I thought fit, but I put the matter before you also. I think that neither of the two things is

[1] A cattle-breeding community

necessary. At least they were not in the past. In the West the women do their hair in different styles so that every woman needs a great number of hair-pins and ribbons without number. But we do not care for outward adornment and it does not befit us. It is our duty to save every pie that we can, like misers; for the money which is given to us is not our property, we are only its trustees and, therefore, we are entitled to use out of it only just enough to feed and clothe the body. I, therefore, believe that hair-pins, etc., have no place in our life. We should seek our happiness and that of our children only in such manner as befits us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 9091. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

397. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

May 4, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

I thank you for your prompt reply[1] of 2nd instant in connection with my four friends and co-workers in the Belgaum Central Prison.[2] I thought that you would give me their weights. I would still like to have them for additional satisfaction.

I am not free from anxiety yet about Kaka Kalelkar. He often suffers from pain in the spine. From the diet scale allowed to him I miss butter altogether. You may remember that he had 4 oz. of butter allowed to him here in addition to milk, bread and vegetables, and I know that he was able to take all that butter without suffering any harm and he was able to put on weight and feel energy coming to him, whereas when he was received here he felt weak and could with difficulty take regular exercise. I would therefore like to know what his weight is now and whether he suffers from any pain in the spine. The letter he was permitted to write to me distinctly states that he had that pain at the time of writing, i.e., on 13th April last.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 9

[1] *Vide* "Letter from E. E. Doyle", 2-5-1932

[2] *Vide* "Letter to R. V. Martin", 13-4-1932 and "Letter to E. E. Doyle", 22-4-1932

398. LETTER TO PERCY W. BARTLETT

May 4, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I received your letter only last Saturday[1] together with the Poet's draft appeal[2]. I do not know that you expect me to say anything now. But this I can say, that I should yield to no one in my desire for conciliation and peace. You may therefore depend on my doing nothing that will prevent them. Consistently with national honour, I would do everything that would promote conciliation and peace. More I may not say from behind the prison wall.

I am glad you and the other friends[3] were able to visit India and hope that you were none the worse for its climate.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. I, p. 193

399. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

May 4, 1932

CHI. RAMDAS,

From Narandas's letter received yesterday, I learnt that Nemu had returned to the Ashram.

I am afraid I may not have been able to explain in my last letter what I wanted to say. It has always been my view that asatyagrahi should never fight about his food. He should thank God for whatever he gets and eat it.

[1] April 30. On April 29, the Secretary of State for India, Sir Samuel Hoare, in his speech in the Commons had said: "There dearly cannot be any question of co-operation with anyone associated with civil disobedience. If Mr. Gandhi shows a disposition to restore the relations which existed at the Round Table Conference, he will not find the slightest difficulty in conveying the fact to the Government without any intermediary. The Government will consider the position thus created. But one thing is quite clear, that there will be no question of making a bargain with the Congress as a condition of its co-operation" (*The Hindu*, 24-6-1932).

[2] *Vide* "Rabindranath Tagore's Appeal", 22-3-1932

[3] Members of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, who had visited India in Mareh 1932

The jailor is the master of a prisoner's body. Hence, a satyagrahi should accept whatever food is served to him so long as he can do so with self-respect and the food is not unclean or of a kind which he cannot eat. He may eat it if he thinks that he can digest it, otherwise he may throw it away or return it if he has not already started eating it. In this age, the laws of good health are generally observed in fixing prisoners' food. However, what should one do if they give only *rotla* and water?

One may discuss the matter courteously with the official but one cannot fight about it.

People can get many things, have got many things, by creating trouble for the authorities. But we ought not to adopt such methods.

I, therefore, believe that you should not protest at all regarding the *bhaji* which is being served. Those who wish may eat it and others may leave it. We should thank God even if we get only *rotlas* and dal.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 135

400. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[*May 4, 1932*][1]

CHI. TARAMATI,

I have a letter from Mathuradas. He says in the letter that he has asked for a Yeravda Chakra. If you do not have it at home or have not sent it already, write to Bardoli or to the Ashram with instructions to send it. It would be preferable to write to Bardoli as it would be ready there. At Bardoli Lakshmidasbhai will receive the letter if you address it to the Khadi Karyalaya. If you enclose this postcard with the letter, your work will become easier. Jyotsna must have recovered by now. Mahadev sends you his regards.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
ASAR VIRJI'S BUILDING, 5TH FLOOR
53 MINT ROAD
FORT BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the postmark

401. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

May 5, 1932

BHAI NANABHAI,

Thinking about the matter objectively, I am indifferent whether Manilal and Sushila come or do not come. In view of his vow, it would be good if they come but from the point of view of the health of all three[1] of them it would be better if they do not come. Only they can tell how strictly they interpret his vow. However, from what I know of Manilal's nature I guess that he would not put an objective and strict interpretation on his vow and Sushila also, willingly or unwillingly, would identify herself with his point of view. This is my analysis of their character. They are both good and simple-minded so that, wherever they are, they will take up some work of service and do their best.

As for revising *Anasaktiyoga,* I need the presence of Kishorelal. Unless somebody wakes me up, I shall regard the book with a closed mind. I shall see what Mahadev can do. If I getKishorelal's notes, I will certainly go through them carefully and make whatever changes I can think of. I must say you have planted your feet in a good many directions. Does Surendra maintain his weight? Do you hear from Tara? Regards to you both from all of us here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6683. Also C.W. 4328. Courtesy: Kanubhai Mashruwala

402. LETTER TO IBRAHIMJI RAJKOTWALA

May 5, 1932

I got your letter. If you ask reason for proof of the existence of God, what proof can reason give since God is above all reason? For, if you say that nothing is beyond rational explanation, you will certainly run into difficulties. If we give the highest place to reason, we shall be faced with serious difficulties. Our own *atman* is beyond reason. People have indeed tried to prove its existence with logical arguments,

[1] Manilal, Sushila and their daughter

as they have tried to prove the existence of God. But he who knows God and the *atman* with his intellect only does not know them at all. Reason may be a useful instrument of knowledge at one stage. But anybody who stops there will never enjoy the benefits of true spiritual knowledge, in the same way that intellectual knowledge of the benefits of eating food does not by itself help one to enjoy those benefits. God or the *atman* is not an object of knowledge. He Himself is the Knower. That is why we say that He is above reason. There are two stages of knowledge of God. The first is faith, and the second and the last is first-hand experience to which faith leads. All great teachers of the world have testified to their having had such experience, and people whom the world would ordinarily dismiss as fools have also demonstrated their faith. If we have faith, like theirs, one day we may have first-hand experience too. If a person sees somebody with his eyes but, being deaf, cannot hear him and then complains that he had not heard him, he would net be justified. Similarly, to say that reason cannot know God betrays ignorance. Just as hearing is not the function of the eyes, so also knowing God is not the function of the senses or of reason. To know Him a different kind of faculty is required, and this is unshakable faith. We know from experience that reason can be all too easily deceived. But we have not known anybody, howsoever mighty he may be, who could deceive true faith.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 136-7

403. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Y. M.,
May 5, 1932

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

Dahyabhai first gave me the news about Indu's illness. I have now obtained more information from Shankerlal. How did Indu fall ill? How is she now? Is it because of her illness that you are there? How long will you remain there? How are you?

Tell Saralabehn I am deliberately not writing any letter to her. Of course I think of everybody.

We are well.

You must have come to know of Yashoda's[1] death. Give our regards to everybody there,

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G. N. 11557

404. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

YERAVDA MANDIR,
May 5, 1932

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

I have your letter. Take care of your health in every way possible. If you are in good health, other things can be taken care of. What advice can I give you at the moment? What can I even suggest? May God protect you.

I am writing a separate letter to Lilavati.

We have to consider about Gulzarilal. But I am not worrying since Jamnalal is there.

Things here are proceeding well. I have not yet felt the need to take milk. Almonds seem to be helping me quite a bit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32747

405. TELEGRAM TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA[2]

May 6, 1932

WE WERE ALL TOUCHED LEARN GANGABEHN'S DEATH. AM HAPPY THAT SHE LIVED WELL AND DIED WELL WITH FAITH EVERLASTING. NO WONDER TOTARAMJI[3] IS HAPPY.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 138

[1] Wife of Dahyabhai, Vallabhbhai Patel's son

[2] This was sent to the Ashram on receipt of the addressee's letter informing Gandhiji about the death of Gangadevi Sanadhya.

[3] Totaram Sanadhya, Gangadevi's husband

406. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

May 6, 1932

I do not know that I would share Lilamani's enthusiasm.[1] Chivalry is made of sterner stuff. Chivalrous knight is he who is exquisitely correct in his conduct towards perfect strangers who are in need of help, but who can make no return to him and who are unable even to mutter a few words of thanks. But of these things some other day and under other auspices.

The Diary of Mahadev Desai, Vol. I, p. 102

407. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 6, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter was received at the expected time.

Do you remember the frail little wife of Dahyabhai— Yashoda. She died on Sunday. It was a deliverance for her. She had fits and had almost lost her memory. This means additional burden for Vallabhbhai. For she has left behind her a bright boy about five years. But he has broad shoulders.

My weight oscillates between 104 and 106. I am, therefore, not making any change. I am trying to replace almond paste with ground-nut paste. If it agrees as well as almond, it will be good. The others are also keeping well.

Magan wheel[2] was received yesterday. I am going to try it. It will enable me to give complete rest to the left elbow. And Prabhudas will be delighted when he learns that I am actually trying his invention. Of course my recent drawing [of] the thread with the right hand will come in very useful.

[1] In the source, Mahadev Desai explains: "Sarojinidevi had written to her daughter Lila that she was permitted after her arrest to deep in the Taj Mahal [Hotel] and this reminded Lila of mediaeval chivalry."

[2] "Spinning-wheel with two spindles which are propelled by a foot pedal. As Bapu used only one spindle, one of his arms could, therefore, be given complete rest"—Mirabehn

I am glad you have begun to use the left hand in place of the right. It must be done not merely for writing. Try to eat also with the left hand. No special effort, save a little thought, seems to be necessary.

I am glad you had a few days with Sarojini[1] and that you were able to serve her.

What I have said about my being a hindrance is perfectly true. I may help to start the thing, but, not being able to live up to it must hinder further progress. The ideal of voluntary poverty is most attractive. We have made some progress, but my utter inability to realize it fully in my own life has made it difficult at the Ashram for the others to do much. They have the will but no finished object-lesson. We have two delightful kittens. They learn their lessons from the mute conduct of their mother, who never has them out of her sight. Practice is the thing. And just now I fail so hopelessly in so many things. But it is no use mourning over the inevitable.I have just had a card from Narandas saying that Gangadevi is no more. She died cheerfully with Ramanama on her lips. She and Totaramji were worthy of the Ashram.

Perhaps we shall meet soon.[2]

Love from us all.

BAPU

[PS.]

I spun 24 rounds on Magan wheel. Narandas asks whether you will be able to see me on 18th. So far as I am concerned, of course you can.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6219. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9685

[1] "Mrs. Sarojini Naidu had been arrested and brought to the Arthur Road Jail. We had but a few fleeting days together. She was transferred to the women's jail in the Yeravda Central Prison"—Mirabehn

[2] "My three months' sentence was drawing to a close"—Mirabehn

408. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

May 7, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

I observe from Kaka Kalelkar's letter to me that though he and Sjts. Narahari Parikh and Prabhudas Gandhi were put together at Visapur, they were separated on being admitted to the Belgaum Central Prison. They are all inmates of the Ashram. Prabhudas Gandhi was Kaka Kalelkar's pupil and Narahari Parikh his assistant and colleague. I do not know that there was any reason for separating them from one another. If there was none, you will perhaps agree that in the present state-of the health of both Kaka and Prabhudas Gandhi, if all the three are together they can be mutually helpful.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 9

409. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

May 7, 1932

DEAR COLONEL DOYLE,

I wish to bring to your notice a matter that has reached the point of exasperation. Over two months ago Sardar Vallabhbhai wrote two letters, one to his son at Bombay and one to Mr. G. V. Mavalankar at Ahmedabad, both of which were of a business type. They were duly authorized, but never reached the addressees. On March 26th Sjt. Mahadev Desai wrote his monthly letter to his wife at the Ashram at Sabarmati. The letter never reached her. On the 28th ultimo I wrote, by permission, a letter addressed to the Ashram and meant for an erring boy of mine. It was a most important letter in answer to his. The letter was not delivered at the Ashram, though subsequent letters were delivered. Almost invariably the Ashrampost reaches the Ashram two or three days after the due day of delivery. I infer from this that the letters are delayed, where they are not withheld entirely, by some authority. I know that correspondence of civil resisters is under strict censorship. I have nothing to say against it. But the correspondence sent from a prison, duly franked by prison authorities would, I should

imagine, be free from further censorship and consequent delay or danger of being withheld altogether. I do not write letters uselessly and hope I am meticulous about observing the terms under which I am permitted to write these letters. If they require a double censorship, it may be well to let us know. If they are withheld even after being passed by prison authorities I think it is due to us that we should know at least the fact of detention. The letter that I sent to my son was designed to affect the future course of his conduct and it had attached to it an original letter which my son had sent for my inspection and which he desired should be returned to him. I have no desire whatsoever to write a single line that I would not like any Government official to see. But I do feel hurt when even letters sent by prisoners that are held to be unobjectionable by prison authorities are delayed or intercepted in course of transmission.

I should, therefore, thank you if you would kindly enquire of proper authorities as to the fate of the letters in question. I should be glad if it were discovered that my suspicions were groundless and that there had been no interference with this correspondence, and that the delays had been accidental and that the missing letters had been found and delivered to the addressees.

Yours sincerely,

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(30), Pt. I, pp. 247-8

410. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

May 7, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

If we make it a rule to draw up a balance-sheet of our spiritual progress from time to time, we shall be able to get rid of unnecessary fears and appear to the world as we really are. Obviously, this is true only about sincere people. Those who are insincere will not be able to keep up the practice of drawing up such a balance-sheet. They will find it impossible.

I believe everything you say about Narandas. He ought not to take up work beyond his strength. No one should do that. But generally man deceives himself. He is generous towards himself, and when he has done a small thing he believes that he has exerted himself

overmuch. Ordinarily, therefore, when someone works hard I do not feel inclined to dissuade him from doing so. But Narandas's way is different. He always takes too much work upon himself. Since he generally does his work in time, a stranger may not perhaps see how much he had worked. Hence it is but proper that Narandas should not undertake new burdens. I have written to him to that effect.[1] You should keep a watch.

My suggestion about a balance-sheet is not likely to make anyone mechanical in his or her work. If any person living in the Ashram becomes so, I would blame our method of running it. I know that that method is not perfect. But no one living in the Ashram has become mechanical in his or her work, and many who were mechanical have come to be filled with new life. I infer from this that our method must be at least 51 per cent effective. Those who are in charge of the various activities in the Ashram are not experts in their respective fields. It is not their fault that they are not. But it has always happened that the Ashram has either undertaken some new type of activity or has decided to carry on a traditional activity in a new manner, and, therefore, it has had to train its own experts. This has resulted in some unnecessary expenditure of time and moneys and despite that the Ashram has not always done its work so well as to win praise. The Ashram, however, exists not to win praise but toserve. If it does the work of service so well that it wins praise for it, we may feel happy. But, even if it is criticized, we should continue to serve. The conclusion to be drawn from this is that, as we become progressively more efficient, we shall be able to do more work and shall feel the burden of work less and less. Here is a recent experience. When I started the practice of rotating the wheel with the left hand, on the first day I could spin only 93 rounds. I also took more time and got more tired. When my efficiency had increased relatively, I could spin more than 200 rounds in less time and felt less fatigued. I have now started spinning on the Magan spinning-wheel. Yesterday I spun 24 rounds and spent much time. Today I spun 56 rounds in less time. The fatigue, too, was less. What is true about an individual and his small task, is also true about an organization and its big undertakings. "Yoga is skill in work.''[2] Work here means service, *yajna*. All our difficulties arise from our inefficiency. If we become efficient, what

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi" 4/9-5-1932.
[2] *Bhagavad Gita,* II 50

seems a hardship today will become a source of joy. I am convinced that in a wellorganized set-up based on right principles, no tensions should be felt.

You have joined the Ashram to acquire this efficiency. You will not learn it from anyone. Everyone has to acquire it from the atmosphere in the Ashram. If any person like you does not acquire it, he or she will not remain in the Ashram till the end. I am not talking about those who have no ambition. They will perhaps remain. Since the Ashram is really an institution based on the principle of freedom, everyone in it may rise as high as he or she wishes. But no one will be able to help a person who does not aspire to rise. It is for you to create the atmosphere in which you can work well. You can attract your friend to the Ashram. Really speaking, however, that would be self-centredness on your part. All those who live there are your friends. Give them what you have and receive from them what they have. If you believe that you have nothing to learn from others except from one or two persons, you are sunk in the well of self-delusion. I think there is none in this world from whom we may not learn something.

What you write about Ramakrishna[1] is very likely to be true. I do not regard myself as having attained any degree of spiritual realization, and I am sure, therefore, that I make mistakes again and again. But being innocent mistakes, they seem to have done no harm so far. I, therefore, continue on my path with an untroubled mind and also draw co-workers into my experiments.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Passive exercises help the weak; for example, massage, *ardhashirshasana*[2], *ardhasarvasana* lying down and raising the legs or the hands slowly upwards. In all these, the patient remains passive and gives his or her mental co-operation. Do you follow this?

Prayers have often been attacked, but they have been kept up for 16 years. How much time do they take? How much of that time

[1] Shri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa

[2] Yogic postures

[3] The addressee wanted to adopt a new name in memory of his deceased wife, Rajkishori.

can be saved? Anyone who accepts the necessity of prayers will not grudge the time given to them. We can point out a drawback in everyone. On the whole, however, our prayers seem all right. For my information, though, what change do you desire?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: 10284. Also C.W. 6732. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

411. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

May 7, 1932

CHI. PARASRAM,

The report is excellent. It is not proper to take the name Kishorikant,[3] and the motive also behind taking such a name is unworthy. It would have been better if the article about me had not been written. But now you need not feel sorry for having written it. You should not write any such article in future. Your possessing books does not violate the vow of non-possession. They are not "yours". This is also true about slips of paper.

There is no universal rule that a person who has no children has an unfeeling heart. We can try to know God through the study of chemistry, etc. But that is possible only for a few. Study of the sky is quite easy. The effect of a diary depends on the kind of diary it is.

BAPU

PS.

The report about Hindi is excellent. Who is in charge of the sales section?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4797. Also C.W. 4974. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

412. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

May 8, 1932

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

Your letter smacks of a complaint that Narandas does not listen to you. Please do not think so. Your duty ends when you have informed [him]. You told him without expecting a response, didn't you?

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 347. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

413. LETTER TO BENARSILAL AND RUKMINI BAZAJ

May 8, 1932

CHI. BENARSI,

I read your remarks. You must have read Father's letter addressed to me. It was first received there and then redirected to me. I did not understand it clearly.

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your letter. As soon as you came down to the plains, both of you lost health again. Does that mean that you should permanently stay at a hill station? I hope that you have completely recovered now. Do you take out Madhav for a walk every day? See that you do not let the child's health suffer for any reason. Write to me regularly. If you follow Mirabehn's practice and fix a day for writing to me, you will not have to try to remember.

PS.

You must have heard about Gangadevi's death.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9442. Courtesy: Benarsilal Bazaj

414. A LETTER

May 8, 1932

We violate it whenever we eat anything for the pleasure it gives. To observe the vow of non-indulgence of the palate, we should eat, from among things acceptable to us, only as much as is necessary to keep our body healthy and strong. If we observe this vow, we shall become healthy and remain so, shall find it easier to observe *brahmacharya* and acquire control over the mind in other ways too.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9087. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

415. A LETTER

May 8, 1932

When Father asked you to go, it was your duty to obey him. Not everybody likes to live in the Ashram. Only those like the Ashram who like freedom with self-restraint.

True mercy has never done harm to anybody in this world. We do not know the real facts about Prithviraj and, therefore, cannot say anything about his case. In such matters, we should not cite examples from the past. If we can test a medicine today, why do we want to know what effect it had in some case in the past?

From Gujarati: C.W. 9097. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

416. LETTER TO DURGA M. DESAI

May 8, 1932

CHI. DURGA,

You should not read *Saket* so that you may cry with sorrow as you read it. Even Urmila's protestations teach spiritual wisdom. We should read the poem for its glorification of Rama. Moreover, what comparison can there be between Urmila's separation from Lakshman and Durga's from Mahadev? Yours is no separation at all. You can write to him, see him if you wish to and get news about him from time to time. Urmila had no such consolation. How can we compare a forest with a jail-temple, and fourteen years with two years?

BAPU

[PS.]

You may eat spices if without them you do not keep good health.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9485

417. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

May 8, 1932

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

I am thinking whether or no I should continue to write to you But since you wrote a postcard to me, I write this. I should like you to

pay a visit to Dhulia[1] without waiting for a reply. But you know best whether you can spare time now.

BAPU

[PS.]

Write the essay[2] with the utmost care, and not simply as a task.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1836

418. LETTER TO MANIBEHN N. PARIKH

May 8, 1932

CHI. MANI (PARIKH),

I was glad that you came and saw me. It is true that I could not talk with the children. But you know that this is a prison. How long could we go on talking? You should give up your weakness. You should not let tears be seen in your eyes. Write to Shankarlal and tell him that I was unhappy that I could not see him. But that could not be helped. I was very glad that Babu also came and saw me. I could have no fun with him either.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5968. Also C.W. 3285. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

419. LETTER TO MAHENDRA V. DESAI

May 8, 1932

CHI. MANU,

I have already described my experiences in England which were worth describing. After all, can I describe things as well as you do? If, however, you improve your handwriting, I will think about some other experiences in England and write about them.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7429. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1] To the Dhulia District Jail to meet Pyarelal and Gulzarilal Nanda

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Kusum Desai", 8-4-1932

420. LETTER TO PUSHPA S. PATEL

May 8, 1932

CHI. PUSHPA,

You should try and understand the virtues of Mother India, and then cultivate them in yourself by degrees.[1]

If we think over everything which happens in the course of even one day, we feel giddy. If, then, we try to recollect every thingthat happened during a number of years, would we not become mad?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3988. Also C.W. 34. Courtesy: Pushpabehn N. Naik

421. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

May 8, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

Your handwriting this time was a little better. If you take sufficient care every time, it is bound to improve. I cannot answer questions about what this or the other thing is made of You should put such questions to Premabehn or somebody else there.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9427. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

422. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

May 8, 1932

MISS RAIHANA,

What have you been doing, sitting idle there? What a teacher you are! I have now procured a copy-book for improving my handwriting. I will start doing exercises in it from today or tomorrow. I have also been studying the Urdu readers. The thing is that I am ambitious to do much but can spare only limited time. Let us see. All I do I do in the name of God and for His work. He will lead me where

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Pushpa S. Patel", 3-4-1932 and "Letter to Pushpa S. Patel", 24-4-1932

He wishes. You know what you sang the other day:

Open your eyes a little
You careless one, turn your mint to God.
What you would tomorrow, do today
What you would today, do right now.

I am of course trying to do the thing just now. It is in His hands to lead me to the goal.[1]

I will not write more of the Urdu exercise today. In the midst of several other things to do, I cannot find for it the time Iwould wish to give. I hope the climate of Mount Abu has benefited Father, you and all others. Does Hamida still have difficulty about [digesting] food? How many of you are at Mount Abu? I have never seen it in my life.

Do you know very well Dahyabhai, son of uncle Sardar? Father of course does. His wife, Yashoda, died nine days ago, leaving a small child behind. Dahyabhai has been much upset. He was here to see us on Saturday. Tell Father about this if he does not already know.

If you have all returned to Baroda by now, find out from among Father's books Amir Ali's *Spirit of Islam* and send it for Sardar. Mahadev and I have read it, but Sardar has not.

All three of us are happy here. It is hotter here than it usually is at this time of the year.

Did Sohaila accompany, or has she accompanied, you to Abu? Kamal must be growing fast. Give my dearest love to him.

To all of you, our *salaam, aadaab, vandemataram* or blessings as may be proper and fitting, and to Father bhrrr from me.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9643

423. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
May 8, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter, It is very good that you are staying with Father-in-law. Do not think too much. Do what service you can and always have Ramanama in your heart.

[1] Up to this the letter is in Urdu.

I have not yet come to a decision about meeting people. I shall write to Mehta when I make up my mind.

I have Anand's letter. You should write to me every week.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi: Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

424. CLEANLINESS, TRUTHFULNESS, PURITY, NEATNESS[1]

May 9, 1932

Now that I have succeeded today in acquiring over the Magan spinning-wheel brought by Dhiru enough elementary control to satisfy me, I feel sufficiently free in my mind to pay attention to the appearance of the wheel. Vallabhbhai's sharp eyes detected a spider's web on it, and he immediately joked about it. I discovered now the real source of Manibehn's great love of neatness. The envelopes in which I seal the letters for the Ashram are an illustration of this quality of Vallabhbhai's. Anybody who has not seen these envelopes should do so immediately. Along with neatness, they exemplify great economy. The letters which I write from here do not require very long envelopes. It will, therefore, be observed that two envelopes are made out of the original one. The brown paper which comes here in the form of packets, etc., is preserved and then used for making new flaps for the envelopes.

This was by way of introduction. I noted Vallabhbhai's comment, but at the moment I was impatient to try the spinning-wheel. The doctor had been advising me not to use the left hand even for turning the wheel. Hence I thought that, if I could rotate the wheel with either foot, probably I would not have to drop spinning for a single day. In my impatience to acquire control in managing the spinning-wheel as soon as possible, I let the web remain where it was. But I felt confident today that I would be able to work with my right hand, and so began observing the poor condition of the spinning-wheel. I saw that there was not only one web, but that there were webs in seven or eight places. And the entire spinning-wheel was

[1] This was sent along with ''Letter to Narandas Gandhi', 4/9-5-1932; *vide* the following item.

covered with dust. The brass spindle-bearers were covered with a sticky layer of grease and dust. There was plenty of dust on the wooden boards too. This should be deemed unpardonable. The spinning-wheel is the divine weapon of *Daridranarayana*. It is the chief means of worship. By neglecting it and allowing it to be covered with dust, we show lack of reverence for Him. Generally, temples, mosques and other places of worship are kept clean. But we believe that every spot on the earth is as sacred as a temple. There is no place anywhere where God is not present. To us, therefore, our bedrooms, dining rooms, libraries, lavatories—all these are sacred as temples and should be kept clean as such. All the more so a spinning-wheel. If we really believe in its power, none of us, from the very young to the old, would ever let a spinning-wheel remain unclean.

I have already referred once to the cat's love of cleanliness. Recently I observed more evidence of it. She gave birth to two kittens about a month and a half ago. Their ways are wonderful. The three are rarely found separated. The mother cat lets the kitten suck whenever they indicate their desire. The two cling to her and suck at the same time. It is a sublime sight. The mother has no feeling of false shame about the matter. She does not perform all actions in public and anywhere. As soon as the kitten could walk and play, she taught them the procedure to be followed for defecation. She withdrew to a quiet spot where the earth was soft and dug out a small hollow. She put the kitten in position over the hollow, afterwards covered the excreta with earth and made the spot as clean as it was before. The kittens now follow that procedure every day. They are a brother and a sister. Four days ago, one of them was trying to dig a hollow in the earth, but the ground was rather hard. The other one went to its help and the two together dug out a hollow of the required size. After defecation, they covered up the excreta with earth and left the place. Why should we not willingly do what these creatures—even the little ones—do?

The four words in the title are intended to suggest the same meaning. Since we are conscious of ourselves as souls, our cleanliness must be both internal and external. The former means truthfulness. Truthfulness is the essence of purity, and is also another name for neatness. If we are neat and tidy outwardly but have unclean minds, we make a false show or are guilty of pure hypocrisy, or that may be a sign of our lustfulness. Thus, for men and women who strive to lead a

life of self-control, outward neatness is of value only if it is a sign of inner purity.

Our holiest temple is our body. We should take care not to let it be infected with any impurity from outside. We should not sully the purity of the mind with evil thoughts. Anybody who follows this ideal of cleanliness will display neatness and tidiness in everything he does. That would be his instinctive behaviour.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./ II

425. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 4/9, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. Both the letter and the accompanying comments of Premabehn I found very useful. I think you have become somewhat impatient. The one virtue of your character which I value most is that you never undertake any work beyond your strength, do thoroughly whatever you take up and never lose your peace of mind. We see a combination of these three virtues in very few persons. I think you have shown it in your character. It is now very necessary to take care that you do not lose this precious asset through impatience. Everybody is not capable of doing everything. We see a few persons who do many things but most people can do only a few things. It is enough that you belong to the former class. Provided you take care of your health and preserve your peace of mind and remain cheerful, I will say nothing against your taking upon yourself as much responsibility as you wish. But one forgets this condition when one becomes impatient. Maganlal forgot it and he paid a heavy price for it. We should learn from his mistake. Premabehn believes that you have taken upon yourself such a heavy burden that your body cannot bear the strain for long.[1] Kusum also seems to agree with her. Think over this and make whatever changes may be necessary. If you have been hasty about anybody else, too, in any matter, you should rectify your mistake. I think the following rules should be observed.

1. Everyone should get one hour which he may spend as he likes. Nobody should spend it in any work or activity which is part of

[1] *Vide* also ''Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 7-5-1932

his daily routine.

2. The period of silence at prayer-time should be increased from one minute to five minutes. One person should keep his eyes open and, when the five minutes are over, give a mild stroke on the bell.

3. Spinning, etc., should be done only during the time left out of compulsory bodily labour like cooking, cleaning lavatories, helping in the dairy, working on the farm, washing and bathing, etc. All these are essential activities. We should so arrange our daily programme that we are able to do full justice to them.

4. Sufficient time should be allowed to a person to leave one duty and take up another.

5. If, as a result of arranging the work in this manner, it becomes necessary to engage paid labourers, you must engage a sufficient number of them. But we should not treat them as labourers. We should see to it that they get proper accommodation and clothes to wear and gradually we should draw them towards the Ashram rules. These rules should be explained to them before they are engaged.

6. If you can reduce the activities and do without paid labourers, that would certainly be the best course.

7. Everybody, whether grown-up or young, must go to bed as soon as it is nine. Children under 12 should go to bed at eight.

You may revise these rules from time to time in the light of your experience there. Though I think about these matters from here and raise issues for you to think over, you should carry out my suggestions only to the extent practicable. I hope you do not discharge any labourers who are prepared to observe our conditions. Though they work for wages, I regard them as inmates of the Ashram.

I had a long talk with Kusum, and so I do not say anything about the matter here. Giridhari came and saw me recently Manibehn Parikh also was one of the party. I cannot describe Dhiru's health as satisfactory. I got Dr. Sharma's books. I also got *Jodanikosh*[1], etc. The yarn spun by Chhakkaddas appears very clean and even in texture like silk. I see that he has taken great care in spinning it. Mahadev thinks that the count probably does not exceed 20. I have not examined the yarn carefully from that point of view. But even if

[1] The standard dictionary of Gujarati orthography published by the Gujarat Vidyapith.

Mahadev is right, I would rate yarn of 20 counts which is strong and even in texture much higher than yarn of 40 counts which is weak and uneven in texture.

I am glad that Nimu has returned. Will her mother stay there? I should be happy if she does. Ask Nimu to write to me every week without fail. If she does, she will also be able to give some news which I may convey to Ramdas.

Jamna must run away to Bombay. What is the name of the doctor who extracted Mathew's tooth? I think Mathew should be permitted to go and visit his father. It seems to me that by and by he will become a fine worker. He is good-natured and gentle and his intentions are always good.

I have already written[1] to you that Gangabehn again requires asatotida powder and *chaiarj,* the same quantity as you sent before. Mahadev got the parcel addressed to him. It seems certain now that the packet[2] received from Jethalal has been lost. What did it contain? Who has signed the receipt?

If it is the rule in a jail to handcuff a prisoner when he is taken out and if a prisoner is so handcuffed he should not protest but, on the contrary, should cheerfully submit to being handcuffed. This has been my view from the very beginning. When I was taken out of jail in Pretoria and brought to a court to give evidence in a case, I was handcuffed. I welcomed that, for I did not regard myself as different from other prisoners and never desired treatment different from theirs. Today also I do not desire such treatment. That there should be improvement in the treatment of prisoners is a separate issue, and the change should be brought about mostly by the efforts of people outside. Prisoners can bring about a change only by obeying the harshest prison rules. There is only one exception to this, which is really not an exception, namely, that a prisoner. ought not to submit to anything which is humiliating. The law does not permit humiliation of prisoners. This may be taken as my general view. Only those who had taken a vow to spin regularly before the struggle started may insist on being permitted to spin in jail. There are very few such persons. I cannot write more than this on this subject. I have already written to you about Parvati. You did all right in giving one hundred

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 28-4-1932, 2-5-1932

[2] Containing a report of the khadi centre at Anantpur

and fifty rupees to Champa. We cannot be very rigid in such matters. I have not received the cotton yet. There is no hurry, of course, since I have already received four pounds from Lady Vithaldas.

May 9, 1932

I got the cotton. The *papayas* were excellent. The bread also was very good. The cotton parcel cost a little too much. But that is bound to happen sometimes. The machine for crushing almonds was used the very next day after it arrived. It saved much labour. I have written[1] about cleanliness this time and what I have said should be carefully borne in mind. Why did Dhiru bring the spinning-wheel in such dirty condition? Try and find out if Gangadevi gave any personal service to Totaram which some other woman also can give, and appoint someone for the purpose. Are his requirements of food being looked after? Jamna should leave and go away to Bombay without delay. A list of 38 letters accompanies.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8225. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

426. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

May 9, 1932

Bismillah

CHIRANJIVI RAIHANA,

Please do not laugh at the sight of this! Remember I am writing a copy-book, I am trying to learn to write exactly as children do. Just when, tired with other work, I had started writing this, your much-awaited letter arrived. Father and Mother are both very clever people and they know that my views very much resemble theirs. That is why they ask you to follow my advice. They have thus contrived to deprive you of your freedom. And this innocent, crazy girl is now a prisoner of old people. Let us see what happens. After all, it does not matter that people like you and me are always drawn into their net. The visit to Mount Abu seems to have done you no good.[2]

I hope this is enough for today. I take a great deal of time to

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Up to this the letter is in Urdu.

write even such a hand as this. God has given you the gift of singing *bhajans*. Go on doing that, serve your elders as best as you can, and live contented. Contentment also is a form of service in itself. Send me what Pashabhai has written. There is no harm in his going to America. It will be enough if he takes every step after careful thought. Moreover, you are there to guide him. Tell Hamida to write to me as soon as she leaves. I had expected a letter from Rohini. Many blessings to Kamalmiyan. Many . . .[1]. I hope some day to give him a slap or two. My bhrrr to the white beard. Tell all that we think of them every day. Some topic or other always crops up. It is like what Hazarat says in his *ghazal*. Even if one tries. not to think about a thing, one does think about it. Some things one cannot remember though one would like to, and some others one cannot forget though one tries to. He never lets our wishes be fulfilled. I was glad that you wrote the *ghazal* in the Gujarati script.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Uncle Sardar has made it his occupation to add to the country's wealth by making such envelopes. Did I tell you this before?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9642

427. LETTER TO TOTARAM SANADHYA

May 9, 1932

BHAI TOTARAMJI,

I am overjoyed to learn that you are not grief tricken over Gangadevi's death.[2] The grief can be only out of self-interest. As for Gangadevi, she is released from pain and has undoubtedly attained a nobler state. We all are thankful to you. Chhaganlal and Gangabehn have expressed sorrow. Chhaganlal grieves for her, remembering all her kindness to his children.

To me Gangadevi was the personification of renunciation, and her renunciation was combined with detachment which made it enduring. It was an example to be emulated by us all. I have found in you the quality of detachment. Do tell me if there is any exaggeration

[1] Omission as ill the source

[2] *Vide* ''Telegram to Gangabehn Vaidya", 6-5-1932

in my statement. And if what I say is correct, send short memoirs of Gangadevi.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2531

428. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA N. KHARE

May 10, 1932

CHI. RAMBHAU,

You now seem to be doing your duties very well. Give complete rest to the arm which has sustained injury. I have now acquired fairly good control over the Magan spinning-wheel. Truthfulness is the first step in culture.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 292. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

429. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

May 10, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

We should not follow anybody. If you wish to get your hair cropped, you should go ahead and do so. You will not then feel the weight of hair on your head. Your time will be saved, and there will be no more dirt in the hair. However, if you wish you may let your hair remain. Don't mind if people call you a bear. That is only a good-humoured jest.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9443. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

430. A LETTER

May 10, 1932

When deciding what one's duty is, many questions may arise. But when examining the teaching of the *Gita,* we have only to consider what Arjuna's question was. If a teacher goes beyond the scope of the question put to him, he would be a bad teacher, for the questioner's attention would be fixed on his question and he would be in no fit state of mind to listen to other things. The discussion may even be beyond his capacity and may, therefore, bore him. Further,

the reply to his question is likely to get lost in the discussion about irrelevant issues, in the same way that plants of grains in a field sometimes get buried under the weeds which grow round them. From this point of view, Krishna's reply to Arjuna is perfect. And when we leave Chapter I and come to Chapter II, we find that it breathes the pure spirit of *ahimsa*. We should not, believing or claiming that Shri Krishna is the most perfect avatar of God, expect that we can get from his words a simple reply to every question that may arise in our minds in the same manner that we can find the meaning of a word by looking up a dictionary. Even if we could find such replies, that would do us harm, for in that case nobody would strive for further advance or new discoveries. Man's reason would simply atrophy. Thus, the people of every age should strive to solve the problems of that age by their own hard labour and *tapascharya.* We should, therefore, try to solve the problems which arise in the present age in regard to war and other issues with the help of the principles enunciated in a noble work like the *Gita*. But even such help will be negligible. We shall get real help only from what we learn through *tapascharya*. Books on Ayurveda describe the properties of innumerable herbs and plants. We may read those descriptions for guidance. But the knowledge so gained will be useless, may even be burdensome, if the properties attributed to those herbs and plants do not pass the test of actual experience. We have to seek solutions to the many difficult problems of life in exactly the same manner. If you still wish to ask me any questions on this subject, please do.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 146-7

431. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

May 11, 1932

CHI. DEVDAS,

Yesterday, the 10th, I got the letter you wrote on the 1st It was not delayed here. According to me, this delay is not too long in the case of a prisoner. After all, what is the value of his time? 13/12 rupees per hour, for I think daily expense on account of a prisoner comes to Rs. 13. I think personally that the weakness of my hands is a symptom of old age. Don't most old people suffer from some weakness or other? We should remember that this weakness was there even when I

used to take milk. Had it not been so, I would have perhaps got alarmed and resumed taking milk. Has any of my experiments done me harm in the long run? The only such case which I can remember is that of the last experiment, that is, Gopalrao's experiment.[1] I was hasty in starting it and waited too long before giving it up. I persisted in it even though people were falling ill one after another. From the economic point of view the experiment was a good one and Gopalrao had great faith in it. Excepting this one, my impression about all other experiments is that I had benefited from them physically and spiritually. This time I am wide awake. I don't attach too much importance to the experiment. After I am released from jail, I think I shall have to take milk and, therefore, here I wish to do without it only if I can do so without harm. There is not the slightest cause for worrying about my health, as I have maintained my weight.

I will certainly go through the Urdu books which you have mcntioned, when they come. This time I had intended to take up Urdu at a somewhat later stage since I wished to do some other reading before. But Raihana began writing a few Urdu sentences in her letters to me and I thought that it would be good to reply to her in Urdu. By and by I appointed her to be my Urdu teacher, and asked her to send me the corrections in the Urdu I wrote every week. Of course this cannot satisfy me. Hence I took out from the jail library here Urdu readers and began to study them. As my Urdu handwriting is verybad, I have now procured a copy-book and some tracing paper. I am now trying to see how deep I can go into this study. On the one hand is this Urdu, and on the other the Magan spinning-wheel. I am now giving my whole self to the Magan wheel since I had already decided to please Prabhudas and to test and utilize his abilities, and since to add to this the doctors here insisted on my giving complete rest to the left hand, which was possible only if I drew the yarn with the right hand and rotated the wheel with my foot. I find it difficult to move the wheel with the foot and to draw the yarn with the right hand. But I am confident that I shall succeed. Some time ago I felt that I had acquired the necessary control, but lost it, today again I feel that I have partly regained it, though spinning in this manner takes quite a lot of time. And third is Ruskin. The study of economics, which was the fourth, has been suspended for the present. The fifth thing is Maithilisharan's *Saket,* which I wish to read carefully. Mahadev and I have already

[1] The reference is to the unfired food experiment in 1929

read it once, and Vallabhbhai also has read it. It seems to be a fine work. I am sure if you secure a copy there and read it, you also will like it. For you it will be very easy reading. I shall send the book to you from here if you cannot get a copy from the Kalyan office. And the sixth is watching the stars. I have taken this up quite seriously. During the day I read something on the subject and at night observe the particular stars carefully enough to be able to recognize them afterwards. I wonder why I did not take serious interest in this subject earlier. I always wished to do so, but the desire was not sufficiently strong to make me take up the pursuit immediately. But now I see that everybody ought to cultivate as much acquaintance with the denizens of the sky as he conveniently can. I believe that millions of people can, without much difficulty, acquire enough knowledge of them for their own satisfaction and raise themselves spiritually. Anybody who tries to study the stars from a spiritual point of view will easily experience true joy of the heart and will be filled with greater devotion to God. I do not know whether this is true of all, but I do know that such was the effect on me and that is why I have kept up the practice. Probably you get no opportunity to see the sky at night. When do they lock you up? We three sleep directly under the sky. Opposite we see the Venus shining, to our right is the Great Bear, and to the left the *Swastika* (the Southern Cross). Leo roars right over our heads and Jupiter, too, is straight above us. I read in Gujarati Hasan Nizami's *Kavan Charit.* It did not make on me the impression it did on you. When I read it I was not prejudiced against him, still I did notfeel that his motive was pure. His language seems to be good, but for anybody who wants to read Urdu books for the sake of language there are many others equally good. If one does not mind difficult words, Shibli's language has no small power. I am sure you will like Upton Sinclair's Wet *Parade.* There are many others of his books at the Ashram. I got only two here, all the rest are there. As for Mahadev's view of your capacity for losing books, you will know it from what follows. You should not readily accept their "no" to your demand for a spinning-wheel. Carry on a courteous fight for it. I will look into the book on health when it arrives. Mahadev certainly did not receive the letter written to him from Delhi. Lakshmi writes to me regularly and so do I to her.

Mahadev may or may not write to Durga a letter which will be a letter according to you. But he asks me to add this here: His charge against you about losing books referred to the loss of as many as 80

books at the jail gate in 1930. It was the goodness of the stranger that he delivered them to us, but his goodness does not mitigate your carelessness. If Mahadev had your company as he had twice formerly, he would have been much happier. Sometimes when cooking he remembers you and recalls the Lucknow days when you did joint cooking. When carding he remembers you daily (since you helped him in carding everyday). And he unfailingly remembers you whenever he gets a good book to read (though he does not get much time to read, despite his having a whole heap of books with him, for spinning and carding take up four or five hours in the morning, then he spends two hours with me, and writing the diary in detail also takes up some time). He remembers you when recalling memories of our stay in England, when singing *bhajans* at the time of prayer, when taking soda-water in the evening, etc., etc. If you read the *Gitarahasya*[1] in Hindi why didn't you read it in the Marathi original? If you can read the whole of Shibli's volume you can make from it a beautiful book in Gujarati describing incidents in the Prophet's life. Kaka, Narahari, Mani and Prabhudas, all four of them underwent considerable suffering at Belgaum, but the problems have been nearly solved now. I am in correspondence with all, (though not as regularly as I am with you). But of course how long will the thing last! Among newspapers, besides *The Time* [*of India*] we get *The Leader*, *The* [*Bombay*] *Chronicle*, *The Hindu*, and *The Tribune*. Mahadev does not get much time to read them. You know his indifference in the matter,but he pastes a good many cuttings. (It is Sardar who reads the papers to us both.) The load of correspondence is getting heavier day by day. In addition to the Ashram post, we get quite a good number of letters from other places (that is, from England and America). The entertaining letter[2] which Romain Rolland wrote to an American friend about our stay with him has been published in India. You will find quite a good deal of useful material from Mahadev's Diary and his album of cuttings—he keeps copies of important correspondence too. Jamnalalji, Pyarelal, Vinoba, and Manilal Kothari, all of them are happy in the Dhulia jail. Mathuradas and Kishorelal are at Nasik, Ramdas, Chhaganlal, Surendra and others are here, Kanti and other youngsters are at Visapur, and most of the Ashram women excepting Ba are here—I am in fairly regular correspondence with all' these.

[1] Commentary on the *Bhagavad Gita* by B. G. Tilak

[2] *Vide* "Romain Rolland's Letter to An American Friend", 12, 1931

Have you heard that Sardar's son, Dahyabhai, lost his wife? For poor Yashoda, it was a real deliverance, since her life was a living death to her.[1]

The envelope containing this letter was made by Vallabhbhai. We thus try to save every pie. Blessings from us all should always be understood.

BAPU

SJT. DEVDAS GANDHI
'A' CLASS PRISONER
DISTRICT JAIL
GORAKHPUR, U.P.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2016

432. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

May 11, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

I got a letter from you after a long time. Do not give up the work which you have begun. Look upon it as part of your education.

Why should we not treat everybody as a friend? Exclusive friendships may even result in bitterness. But our life will be full of joy if we regard everybody as a friend.

If you wish to spare the time required for the preparation of dramatics, etc., from the hours of manual work, you should consider whether the others can do without your help. We should do what farmers' and shepherds' children do. Why not spare the time for dramatics from the study hours? Think over this and let me know.

BAPU

From a microfilm Of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

433. LETTER TO MAHENDRA V. DESAI

May 11, 1932

CHI. MANU,

Your handwriting was good this time. Your weight should improve. I am glad that you have started spinning. How many rounds do you spin [per hour]?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7430. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1] What follows is in Gandhiji's hand.

434. LETTER TO PADMA

May 11, 1932

CHI. PADMA,

I got your letter. Rambhau and Dhiru told me in their letters the very same thing that you did. When it becomes impossible to use my hand now, I rotate the wheel with my foot. Since the slivers are very bad, my speed does not exceed 100 rounds. When I start using better slivers, it will go at any rate to 160.

As regards your digestion, take the measures I have described in my letter to Sarojini. In addition to them, you should drink in the morning a glass of warm water with ten grains of soda mixed in it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6133. Also C.W. 3485. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

435. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
May 11, 1932

CHI. MANGALA,

I can say that your speed in spinning on the *takli* is quite good. You will stand first.

Aminabehn's children have taught [the lesson] that parents should observe self-restraint.[1] They were only children. Men and women who observe celibacy can have no children. If there are no births, there will be fewer to die. When you grow up, won't it be good if you practise self-restraint?

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11096. Courtesy: Pushpa Naik

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Kusm Desai", 8-4-1932 and "Letter to Secrtary of Santram Ashram", 8-4-1932

436. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

May 11/12, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I asked you about your weight and diet[1] because I felt some doubt concerning your health. What was your highest weight in the past? Don't they cook tomatoes or *bhaji* any time? They had decided to plant lettuce, what happened to that? You yourself can plant lettuce or fenugreek in a small bed. They will sprout in but a few days. You must include some fresh green leaves in your diet. Since one can eat them uncooked only in small quantities, growing them is no difficult matter. I don't know why tomatoes cannot be grown all the year round. Ask someone.

I met Dhurandhar immediately [after he was brought here] and visit him from time to time, for I had come to know him closely during the March. Moreover, since I take interest in your life I take in his too, for your sake. This is an instance not of special love for an individual, but of non-violence. If we bear love for one person so that we feel aversion to others or cannot love them, then that would be an instance of special love. I believe that I bear no such love for any person. I do all that I do for you because I think you require such attention from me, because you expect it and because I believe it is in my interest to do so for I expect much from you. If you see practical shrewdness behind this attitude, I would not quarrel with you. Personally I think this is the mark of a non-violent nature.

I hope you have not forgotten about the Urdu books.

If all the people have decided to leave the Ashram at the same time, I do not approve of that. But now the Ashram has been in existence for so long that I would not argue about any matter nor complain against anything connected with it. Realizing that something is wrong somewhere, I try to get things right whenever such an occasion arises, and dissuade people from leaving it if I can do so without much trouble. If the Ashram is likely to be deserted completely and if you can stay behind cheerfully, do so, and leave when other workers return. However, it is for Narandas and you to decide what is the right course for you to adopt. How can I judge from here?

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 1-5-1932

May 12, 1932

I send with this an article by Montessori in the weekly *Hindu.* Mahadev liked it and so I asked him to take out the cutting. Read it. See if you find anything in it worth accepting. Otherwise throw it away.

Sushila will be permitted to see me. If, therefore, you wish to bring her along when you come, you may do so.

I did not intentionally leave any of your questions unanswered. I still cannot recollect which question I left unanswered. If you ask it again, I will reply to it.

The problem about the type of education imparted in the Ashram is an old one. I don't think it is proper to make any comparison with a boarding school. The whole burden is borne by Narandas, and he may, therefore, act as he thinks best. You can help him in arriving at a decision. Personally, I would apply one rule, namely, that the proposal should appeal to the children. Everything which they do unwillingly will fail in its aim and will have helped in perpetuating the tradition of compulsion. We can stop observing holidays if and only if the children welcome the idea.

I will not pass judgment about anything which you did in the Ashram school. If I were there, I would certainly interfere from time to time, but I will say nothing from here. As you follow the practice of self-examination, you will correct yourself whenever you go wrong.

I don't know if I had tried to teach you knowledge of the Brahman, but in any case you betrayed your ignorance by claiming that you had it. The arguments which you went on to advance serve only to prove your ignorance. An intellectual understanding of the concept of the Brahman does not amount to a knowledge of It. Knowledge of the Brahman awakens in the heart. And it is not true that one who has attained to that state renounces all external activity. Outwardly, the spiritually awakened man and the ignorant may look alike, but the motives which inspire their activities are as poles asunder. Ramanama is not incompatible with knowledge of the Brahman. They may mean the same thing. Any person claiming knowledge of the Brahman, who feels polluted by Ramanama has fallen into the well of ignorance and is in a desperate condition. He who merely repeats Ramanama with his lips engages in a fruitless exercise and wastes his time. Knowledge of the Brahman and being happy in my presence are certainly not incompatible with each other;

if, however, my absence affects your devotion to duty, you have not attained knowledge of the Brahman but are in a state of ignorance. Anyone who claims to have such knowledge will in all probability be devoid of it. It is a knowledge which does not speak about itself—its presence is revealed by its own light. The sun does not have to testify to the fact of its light. We can see that it shines. We can say the same thing about knowledge of the Brahman.

When I had faith in British rule, I used to believe that it was for the ultimate good of the country, that it was inspired by noble motives. But I cannot discuss this question further.

I do not like the literature on sex that is being published in America.

BAPU

[PS.]

I do intend to write about it. When children ask questions, we should give them straight answers. I don't know about the cinema, but stage performances have a place. For realizing God, the practice of non-attachment seems to me the best method. It includes everything.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10285. Also C.W. 6733. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

437. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

May 12, 1932

DEAR COLONEL DOYLE,

I am deeply grateful to you for the prompt reply you have sent in respect of my inquiry contained in my letter[1] of the 4th instant. The addition of three ounces of ghee to Kaka Kalelkar's diet certainly meets, if I may dare to say so, the physical needs of his constitution. The assurances contained in your letter do relieve me of considerable anxiety on the score of these friends of mine.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No, 9

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. E. Doyle", 4-5-1932

438. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI[1]

May 12, 1932

I got your letter. It was a beautiful one. My statement that Jainism puts emphasis on pure *nyaya*[2] has been slightly misunderstood by you. Pure *nyaya* may mean right policy or just decision, and ordinarily that is the sense in which we use the word. But I did not use it in that sense. I wanted to say that Jainism emphasizes logic, but that logic sometimes leads to wrong conclusions the consequences of which are fearful. This is not the fault of logic, but we do not always possess all the data necessary for arriving at a correct conclusion. Nor is every word understood by the hearer or the reader in the same sense in which it was used by the speaker or the writer. Hence the heart, that is *bhakti*, faith and first-hand experience, is given a higher place than logic. Logic is a purely intellectual process. We should not care in the least if logic, that is intellect, cannot understand what is self-evident to the heart. On the contrary, sometimes our intellect is convinced of certain ideas which the heart does not accept. We should, then, reject them. You will be able to think of any number of illustrations which will explain my point. In the sense in which I have used the word *nyaya* above, it can never be an end in itself. Both *nyaya* and the yoga of desireless work are means. The former belongs to the sphere of the intellect, the latter is a matter of the heart. We cannot cultivate desirelessness with the help of the intellect.

Now I will deal with the issue which you have raised. Compassion and ahimsa are not two different things. Compassion is not opposed to ahimsa. Anything which is so opposed is not true compassion. We can describe compassion as the concrete expression of ahimsa. It is a contradiction in terms to describe any man as free from attachment and without compassion. A person who is free from attachment should have a compassionate heart as large as the ocean.

[1] "Who wrote that according to the Jains even compassion is included in attachment *(raga)*, albeit a desirable one, and therefore Bapu's action in putting an ailing calf out of pain was not worthy of *vitaraga* (one who is free from attachment)" *(The Diary of Mahadev Desai*, Vol. I, pp. 108-9).

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Purushottam Gandhi", 18-41932

And when such compassion embraces millions, to say that, though *sattvik*, it is not free from attachment is to betray ignorance of the meaning of the word or else to give it a new meaning. Generally, we use the word in the sense in which Tulsidas has used it. His meaning is clear in the following *doha*[1]: n;k /keZ dk ewy gS iki@nsg ewy A Here, compassion is used as a synonym for ahimsa. Perfect ahimsa is possible only in the *atman* in its disembodied state. But when the *atman* takes on a body, ahimsa manifests itself in one as the feeling of compassion. Considered from this point of view, my mercy-killing of the calf[3] was an expression of the purest ahimsa. To endure suffering in one's own person is the very nature of the *atman*, but it is contrary to its nature to make or let others suffer. If the mercy killing of the calf had been prompted by a desire to relieve my own pain [at its suffering], the act was not ahimsa, but to end the calf's pain was ahimsa. Indeed, ahimsa implies inability to endure other creatures suffering pain. From such inability arise compassion, heroism and all other virtues associated with ahimsa. It is perverse logic to argue that we should be able to look on while others suffer. Again, it is not always true that death is more painful for human beings than anything they may suffer in life. I think that it is we ourselves that have made death the terror it is. The so-called savages do not have the same fear of death. The martial races also have very little of it. And in the West a school of thought is spreading whose followers would prefer to end their lives rather than go on living in extreme pain. I think that the assumption of excessive fear of death proceeds from ignorance or dry theorizing. Because of that assumption, we, and especially the Jains, have perverted the meaning of ahimsa, with the result that true ahimsa has practically disappeared. A woman who jumps into a well in anger may clutch at a rope offered to her, but one who has jumped into it deliberately under the force of some belief, whatever it be, will disdain to avail herself of a rope even if offered to her. The practice of *harakiri* among the Japanese is a well known example of this. Whether that practice is the result of right knowledge or ignorance is beside the point. Here I am only pointing out that there are countless instances in which men prefer death to life. In the West they kill animals whose condition is hopeless and who suffer extreme pain, and behind this

[1] Couplet

[2] "Compassion is the source of dharma and pride is the source of sin (or, the ego is the cause of the body)."

practice lies the belief that they do not experience much fear of death, and that they will prefer death to suffering pain beyond a certain limit. This idea may not be true, and it is, therefore, our duty to behave towards animals as if life was as dear to them as it is to human beings.

If you accept so much, it is not very necessary to consider the matter from a social point of view or from the point of view of our duty towards society. Where the people have regard for ahimsa, there is little risk of the example of my killing the calf being misused. Where people have no such regard, in any case animals are killed. Thus, my action is not likely to increase violence to animals. When killing the calf, it was not necessary for me to know all the possible consequences of my action. If it was certain that the calf would never die in any other manner, I should of course have paused before killing it. In other words, if it were the case that nobody but I could have ended the calf's life, it would have been necessary for me to think of all the possible consequences of my action. But the fact is that all creatures, calves as much as we, live with the possibility of death always hanging over us. Therefore, the utmost that could have happened was that the calf would have lived for a few days or months or a year more. These considerations are not irrelevant to the case, since my motive was disinterested and my only aim was to end the pain of the calf. We may, therefore, say that even if there was any error in my reasoning, no harmful consequence to the calf followed which would never have followed but for my action.[1] Ask me again and again till you have understood the point. The subject is an important one and the explanation deserves to be carefully grasped. It is easy to grasp, and once it is grasped you will be able to deduce many other consequences from it.

It is undoubtedly true that my approach to the problem attacks certain generally accepted beliefs. But I do believe that we, that is Hindus, have become so full of cowardice and inertia that the true essence of ahimsa is forgotten and the thing has come to be identified with superficial concern for the lives of lower creatures. In its essence, ahimsa is a powerful emotion of the heart which finds expression in numerous forms of service. If it manifests itself in its perfection even

[1] The rest of the paragraph is from the C.W. copy.

in one human being, its light would be far more powerful than that of the sun. But where do we find such ahimsa today?[1]

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 150-3. Also C.W. 9112. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

439. LETTER TO PUSHPA S. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
May 12, 1932

CHI. PUSHPA,

You have advanced far ahead of Mangala in spinning on the *takli*. That is wonderful.

It is good that you and Mani do the cleaning together.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11078. Courtesy: Pushpa Naik

440. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 13, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

In the hope that you would get this on or before Monday, I write in reply to your unexpected letter received today.

It is well if you do without the fountain pen. But what we must aim at is the correct attitude. This brings about lasting and drastic changes. A detailed local treatment must go hand in hand with a penetrating search after the root cause, the desire to possess. It is possible to conceive a person not being poor in spirit though he may

[1] Mahadev Desai explains: ''While the above was being dictated, we had a discussion about the two readings in Tulsidas's verse: Bapu said, ''I have heard both of them, but I prefer to read *deha* (body).'' I remarked that the Vedantic idea that pride is the root of the body did not fit in well here. Perhaps the poet wanted to say that mercy is the root of religion and pride is the root of sin. Bapu said, ''If we read *deha*, he means that the body being the root of pride is an obstacle in the way of mercy. But to spend ourselves to the uttermost in service is purest mercy. This mercy should be cherished as long as we live.'' I objected that that was so but it was not what the poet meant to say. Again Bapu's interpretation was too subtle for the common man, while he could easily understand that pride is the root of sin. In any case, the latter half of the verse had nothing to do with the subject-matter of the letter.'' (*The Diary of Mahadev Desai*, Vol. I, p. 111)

have nothing, because he is jealous of those who possess. He has nothing, but feels the deprivation. Another may have by him a golden footstool which he is seen using in order to save his feet from treading on hot ashes, but which he converts into cash for the poor the very next moment and feels the delight of dispossession. This is not to criticize what you have done but to enforce it, if it is at all necessary or possible.

You will come as soon as you can, bringing with you anyone who may wish to come and who is permitted to come. Pyare Ali and Noorbanu can come. Not yet Damodardas whose name is still under consideration. You should go to Pyare Ali's place and there see Amina's children and Tilak. Of course, Tilak can come if he wants to. There is immediately the question of poverty. But I would not bring it up in his case if he has a desire he cannot restrain.

Your left-hand writing is certainly steadier than mine. You will, in a short time, write as well with the left as you do with the right hand.

I am delighted Sofia is with you. I have met her. It is just like her to join you in prayer so heartily. Give her my love. I would almost wish for her sake that she had you longer than you would be. Let her write to me if ever she has a month when she has nobody else in particular to write to. That could not be I am sure. But who can say?

Magan wheel has caused me trouble, but I am gaining mastery over it. Ground-nuts are gone. Vallabhbhai and Mahadev frightened me and I have allowed myself to be frightened. My weight has gone up to 105½ again.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6221. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9687

441. WONDERFUL SELF-SACRIFICE[1]

May 15, 1932

Sometimes a lesson in even an ordinary school reader teaches us a great moral. Recently I have been reading an Urdu reader. Some of the lessons in it are very good. One of them produced a profound effect on me. Thinking that it may have such effect on others too, I

[1] Presumaply, this was sent along with ''Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 13/15-5-1932; *vide* the following item.

give here a summary.

A few years after the death of the Prophet, there was a great battle between the Arabs and the Romans. On both sides large numbers of warriors were killed and a great many wounded. Every evening the fighting would stop. One evening after the fighting had ended an Arab warrior went round the battlefield to find his cousin. If he found the cousin dead, he would bury the body, and if he found him alive he would treat his wounds. Thinking that the cousin might be thirsting for water, this Arab carried a jug full of water.

As, with lamp in hand, he made his way through the bodies of warriors Iying wounded and crying in pain, he found his cousin and indeed he was thirsting for water. His wounds were bleeding profusely. There was little hope of his remaining alive. The Arab held out the jug of water before him. Just then they heard a wounded warrior crying pitifully for water. The cousin felt compassion for that man and asked the Arab to go first to him and give him water. The latter immediately went in the direction from which they had heard the cry.

This wounded man crying for water was a big chieftain. As he was about to take the jug of water from the Arab, they heard somebody else crying for water. This chieftain, like the Arab's cousin, was a man of compassion. With great difficulty, he uttered a few words and made gestures to the Arab and explained to him that he should first go to that other person and, give him water. Feeling miserable, the Arab ran to the place from which the cries had come. But the moment he reached there, the wounded warrior breathed his last and closed his eyes. The water had arrived too late. The Arab quickly returned to where the wounded chieftain was lying. He found that the chieftain, too, was dead. With a heavy heart and praying to God, the Arab went back to where his cousin lay, and found that his pulse, too, had stopped and he had died.

Thus, none of the three got water. But the first two won immortal fame. The pages of history abound in such instances of pure self-sacrifice, and, if they are narrated by a master of the pen, we even shed a few tears over them. But I have narrated this wonderful story here with the hope that it may inspire in us the spirit of self-sacrifice displayed by those two brave warriors and that, when such occasions arise, we will give water first to others before drinking it ourselves, will save others' lives before saving our own and if, in trying to do so, we meet death, we will meet it with a smile on our face.

I think even more difficult than the sacrifice of water is that of air. Without it we cannot live even for a minute. That is why the whole world seems to have been filled with air. However, it does sometimes happen that men are locked up in a small room as in a cupboard. There is only one small hole letting in air, and only those who get this air are likely to survive and the others would die. We should pray to God that if ever we found ourselves in such a condition we would voluntarily give up our place near the hole.

Next to air comes water. We occasionally hear of men fighting for a glass of water. We should hope that if we find ourselves in such circumstances, we will have the spirit of self-sacrifice displayed by those brave Arabs. But very few people are tested in this manner. There are less severe tests which we face almost every day. Let all of us ask ourselves: Whenever we are confronted by such tests, do we always put our co-workers and neighbours before ourselves? If the answer is in the negative, then it means that we have failed in the test and that we have not learnt even the first lesson in non-violence.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

442. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[*May 13/15, 1932*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I received two packets from you this time. I follow your argument that yarn of 16 counts will be cheaper than that of 20 counts. But I think we shall find that on the balance yarn of 20 counts is cheaper, for in spinning such yarn we shall have to remain vigilant all the time. The spindle, etc., will have to be kept in good condition. By "cheap" I do not mean here merely economical. I give to the word a spiritual sense. If, therefore, you see no other difficulty, insist on everybody spinning yarn of 20 counts and do it yourself, and see that the other conditions are also observed. If you find that this results in decrease in production for the time being, never mind. Probably you remember one thing which I suggested to you once or twice. We should reckon the value of all types of work at the same rate. In other words, if a person works for one hour, whether he spins or cards or weaves or does carpentry work or writes accounts or works on the

[1] From *Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine,* Vol. I, p. 368

farm, the value of his work should be the same. For the purpose of our record, I had suggested that the value should be one anna per hour of work. If all inmates of the Ashram above the age of ten, other than those who may be bedridden, have been working daily for an average of eight hours, I would say that the Ashram was self-supporting. This may seem just now to entail loss from the economic point of view, but ultimately the account will balance itself even from that point of view. Of course, in proceeding on this basis we assume that all inmates have been honest. Everybody must have used the time honestly. To make sure of this, we should have considered, when making the entry, whether the person had done as much work per hour as everybody doing that work was expected to do, and whether he had done it with proper care. I did not suggest that this record should take the place of the usual account that is kept. It does not require too many entries. The daily figure will be entered against everybody's name; it may be one in some cases and two in others, and the figures will indicate the number of hours for which the person had worked. The figures will be entered only against those who pass the test in our eyes. I would call this a spiritual account. If we work in this manner, whatever the yield of our farm and our dairy I wouId describe those activities as self-supporting. Moreover, this plan assumes that the labourers will be as good as inmates of the Ashram and that we shall be satisfied with the vegetables, fruit and milk which we produce in the Ashram. These ideas have not sprung up in my mind recently. I have been discussing them ever since the establishment of the Ashram. I may not have discussed them at length with you, but I used to discuss them frequently with Maganlal. But till now they have remained as mere wishes. I am simply pouring out before you the stream of thoughts which started with reflections on the spinning *yajna* during the National Week. I do not wish that you should start implementing these suggestions right now. You are a steady man, and, therefore, I do not hesitate to put before you whatever ideas come to me. I don't wish to confuse your mind in any way or start you worrying needlessly. There are persons who become impatient as soon as a new suggestion is put before them, immediately start implementing it and, failing in their attempt, get confused. In the result they will have given up the old practice but discovered nothing to take its place. I believe you do not have this weakness in your nature and that is why I throw out to you every new fancy which occurs to me. When you are fed up with this, please drop a hint and I

shall calm down. From here I can give you no active help in your work, but within my limits I can help you with suggestions. But this help also I can give only if you receive the suggestions patiently, put each in the proper cabinet in your brain and weigh its practicability before acting on it. If, however, they become a burden on your brain, my sending them will serve no useful purpose.

Let me return for a while to the question of 20 counts. It is not quite correct that cloth woven from yarn of 16 counts lasts longer than cloth woven from yarn of 20 counts. If the cotton from which the yarn of 20 counts was woven was of suffciently good quality and was properly carded, and if the yarn spun from it was strong enough and the weaving was sufficiently close, the cloth would certainly last longer than the cloth of 16 counts which we have with us now. The fact that the latter lasts longer only means this: Both the varieties of yarn which we spin, 16 counts and 20 counts, are weak. But the yarn of 16 counts is likely to be less weak comparatively, and such yarn can be spun even from cotton of inferior quality without its quality being affected. Hence the cloth woven from it may appear stronger than the cloth woven from the yarn of 20 counts. If we cling to this belief, we shall be responsible for spreading the notion that cloth woven from yarn of 16 counts is stronger than cloth from yarn of 20 counts, and, if my argument about yarn of 20 counts is correct, we shall also be responsible for encouraging work of bad quality. Up to a limit, the finer the count of the yarn which we are able to spin the better shall we be able to serve the poor, because that will raise the prestige of khadi.

I think we shall be able to demonstrate that it is not difficult to spin fine yarn which can be used for weaving cloth. Just now I give all my attention to learning to spin on the Magan spinning-wheel. But Mahadev has been experimenting with the slivers sent by Chhakkaddas. He has made some changes in the spindle-bearer, and these changes by themselves have enabled him to spin without any difficulty yarn of 36 counts from the slivers which he has been using all along. Previously he could spin yarn of 20 counts, then of 25 counts and now he can spin yarn of 36 counts. In the letter which I wrote to Lakshmidas yesterday I have explained how this improvement took place. Get that letter from him and read it. It is true, however, that Mahadev's speed has decreased a little. When he was spinning yarn of 25 counts, his speed was 300 rounds per hour; it

was 240 when the yarn was of 32 counts, and now for yarn of 36 counts it is 210 rounds per hour. This decrease does not alarm me in the least. When the count of the yarn becomes fixed, I am sure his speed will increase a little. My point is that by gradually learning to spin yarn of finer count, we are helping the cause of khadi. It seems you celebrated Maganlal's anniversary in a most befitting manner.

Panditji, Lakshmibehn, Yashvant Prasad and Mathuri came and saw me. Manibehn was the oldest among the party, and hence I gave the letter to Harilal to her. While giving it I asked her and was told that all of them would return to the Ashram on the same day. Isent the letter with her, thinking that it would reach you earlier than by post. I feel helpless. I got one more letter from Harilal. In both letters I see pure insolence and total lack of shame. I don't see in Bali the faults for which he blames her. She has been like a mother to Manu, and, therefore, it would be a cruelty on Manu to remove her from her charge. However, I cannot have in prison the information which you may get there. After knowing my views, therefore, do what seems best to you whenever you have to decide what to do.

There is no cause for worry about my hand. It pains when I work, but not at other times. If I feel that milk will help to cure the pain, I will certainly start taking it. The pain was there even when I used to take milk.

I see that Ratilal is a heavy responsibility on you. I have had two letters from Champa. She seems to have felt hurt for some reason. See what you can do to pacify her. She says that her younger brother wants to stay in the Ashram. If you think he can stay in the Ashram, take him in. Write to Harihar Sharma and ask him if he will take away Ratilal. I am afraid that even if he goes to Rangoon he will not stay there without Champa. And the latter does not wish to go there. I believe that she has good reasons for not wishing to go there.

Grant the permission desired by Ranganath Kulkarni to make a Marathi translation. None of the papers sent by Jethalal Govindji were reports about Anantpur. But I did get one letter from him. The prison authorities tell me that the reports must have been received, but that they seem to have been misplaced. Please, therefore, obtain their copies from him.

There is probably much exaggeration in the complaint you have received regarding the women. I will, however, inquire about the matter.

I sent to you the five names of intending visitors which were

approved. The other names which have been approved are as under:

Indu Nehru, Jehangir Vakil (of Poona, Indu's tutor) and his wife, Hemprabha Devi, Raihana, Hiravanti Mansukh lal, Chhaganlal, Rama (Ranchhodbhai's) Prabhashankar (Champa's father), Behram Khambhatta and his wife, Manjukesha, Sushila (Pyarelal's sister), Sushila (Premabehn's friend), Dinkar Mehta, Puratan Buch. You need not write to them. If Puratan comes to the Ashram any time, you can tell him that he may come whenever he wishes. I have given the list only for your information. If you know of any other persons who wishto visit and if they come within the conditions laid down by the Government, please send their names to me.

There is a letter from Mahavir. He writes in it that all of them are keeping good health and that, therefore, they should be permitted to stay on for a few months more. I think that they may be permitted to stay on. It would be advisable to fix the upper limit of their expenditure. I should like them to take up some work in Darjeeling. If you can think of any, please suggest it. I think you did write to me and tell me what their monthly expenditure was, but I have forgotten the figure. I think it would be good if they marry Maitri to someone in Darjeeling. She has certainly reached marriageable age. They wished to get her married to Khadgabahadur. But I don't think he will agree. I have written directly to Maitri about this. Read that letter. If in the end they decide to stay permanently in Darjeeling and Mahavir starts earning, that would certainly be good. If you have thought about any suggestions in this regard or if any suggestion occurs to you in future, please let me know.

Ramdas writes and tells me that he has deposited some of his money in a certain bank and he wants the amount to remain where it is. I heard that Gopaldas[1], the Vidyapith graduate, has received serious injuries. Inquire about him and let me know the facts. If he is able to write, ask him to do so. Ask Chandrashankar to send me by registered post a copy of Maganbhai's *Mimansa*[2]. He should also write how he keeps.

Did Ba get my letter? I have had no letter from her at all. Did you read what Jamnadas said about Harilal? I am afraid the latter has misled you. Many persons write to me and tell me that he has abandoned all restraints. Haridas Gandhi's[3] health is fairly good. He is

[1] Gopaldas Jivabhai Patel, who was seriously injured in a lathi-charge at a Congress meeting in Delhi

[2] Maganbhai Desai's thesis *Satyagrahni Mimansa,* for which he was awarded the degree of *Samajvidya Parangat* by the Vidyapith

[3] He was one of the prisoners transferred from Sabarmati to Yeravda.

being treated properly. His illness, however, is mental. Does his father visit him? Where is Kamala?

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8226. Courtesy:Narandas Gandhi

443. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

May 15, 1932

CHI. MANU,

I got your letter. According to me, the most important benefit of your going there[1] will be improvement in your health and the good and bad experiences which you will get there. It will certainly be very good if you attain great proficiency in your medical studies, but see that you do not harm your health or let go opportunities for other experiences for the sake of your studies. Since you will have to study German, learn it sufficiently well to be able to read and understand German literature without difficulty. And you should be careful to create a good impression on the people about you, that is, about India. I have just received a letter from Walsh[2] in which he writes about you. Both he and Zimmermann impressed me as good men.

Do you meet any Indians there?

All three of us are well. Sardar and Mahadev send their blessings to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1005

444. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

May 15, 1932

CHI. MAHAVIR,

I got your letter. I cannot understand why you did not get mine. In future I will send through the Ashram my letters to you. All of you also should send your letters to me through the same channel. I hope

[1] To Germany
[2] Carlyle Walsh

the money has been sent to you. Please drop the idea of going to Kalimpong. If all of you keep good health, you may remain where you are. And everyone in the family should take up some work. What is everybody's programme during the day? Do all of you keep a correct diary?

How is it that I have had no letter from Maitri? Has Krishnamaiyadevi recovered now? With whom do you stay?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6235

445. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

May 15, 1932

CHI. PARASRAM,

You should write in your diary anything which occurs to you. You can write even your most secret thoughts. Nothing concerning ourselves need be kept secret from other people, and you should not, therefore, worry who will read your diary. For that reason, however, you cannot record others' short-comings or what anybody may have told you in confidence. Only the secretary of the Ashram or a person authorized by him has the right to read anybody's diary. But, on our part, we should not wish our diary to be kept secret from any person.

You should not in any circumstances stop spinning on the *takli* and be out of practice, no matter even if you can give to it only half an hour every day. Have you become methodical now?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7498. Also C.W. 4975. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

446. LETTER TO PADMA

May 15, 1932

CHI. PADMA,

I advised you to come away because you asked for my opinion. If, however, you yourself wish to stay there, why need I ask you to come away? When Sitala Sahai comes there, ask him to write to me.

I have kept up spinning on the Magan spinning-wheel. Your suggestion was not found very useful. It did not solve my difficulties. If the wheel has not stopped in the desired position, I have often to use the hand to put it in that position. But I can use only one hand. The left hand is useless because of the pain in the elbow.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6141. Also C.W. 3493. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

447. LETTER TO SUSHILABEHN GANDHI

May 15, 1932

CHI. SUSHILA,

You are a very clever woman. I do not understand how you can say that you have been waiting for a letter from me, having written to everybody earlier to say that you were starting today. If now you do not get a letter, you may complain. I am glad that you have decided to stay there for the sake of Sita. I also did think sometimes whether it would be good for you and her to come over. Let me know how you are helping there and also write to me in detail about your daily programme of work. I am sure you have good company now. Ask Pragji to write to me in detail. How is Parvati? Will all of you stay together or separately?

All three of us are happy.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The envelope in which this letter is being sent was made by Sardar. It was made from the paper in which the small parcels which we receive are wrapped. People like you living in a civilized country may not look with favour upon such gifts from a poor land. But what can we do? Seeing your palaces, should we destroy our cottages?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4788

448. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
May 15, 1932

CHI. MANGALA,

Why did your hand shake? Why did your eyes burn? When the eyes burn, sprinkle hot and cold water. What was it, you had asked me about the rules of the kitchen? I do not remember. Write again.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11097. Courtesy: Pushpa Naik

449. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

May 15, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

I have your letter and also Vinoba's discourse on the first chapter [of the *Gita*]. Follow it up by the second.

It will be good if all learn the new method of using *takli.* Which of you have learnt it? I hope you are keeping well.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6727. Also C.W. 4470. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

450. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

May 15, 1932

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I got your letter yesterday. I had sent a prompt reply to your letter written from Gwalior. I addressed it to Gwalior which might be the reason of its non-receipt by you. Some of my letters are certainly missing. Malaviyaji's enthusiasm as well as his optimism is worthy of emulation. We are all doing well. My diet so far continues to be the same and I am maintaining approximately the same weight. I hope Rameshwardas is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 7898. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

451. LETTER TO MAITHILISHARAN GUPTA[1]

May 15, 1932

BHAI MAITHILISHARANJI,

I got your letter and the dictionary too. I received another copy of *Saket* with your annotations. The notes will be of great help to me. I will not bother you to send *Hindi Shabdasagar*. The Kalyan office might possibly send me one. Anyhow, I shall manage well enough with your notes and the dictionary. This correspondence about *Saket* cannot be made public for the present. The condition that no letters of mine will be published during my incarceration is implied in the permission for writing letters granted to me. And there is no harm in keeping this correspondence unpublished for some time. The inherent strength *of Saket* will by itself push it ahead. Mahadev had an experience of your affection, I was extremely delighted to hear the whole account from him.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 9457. Courtesy: Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi

452. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

May 15, 1932

CHI. BRIJKISAN,

I have your letter. I had sent a lengthy reply to your earlier letter in which I answered all your queries. But it appears that it did not reach you as you have made no mention of it. We all are doing well. Convey our *salaam, Vandemataram* and respectful greetings to the friends there. I hope you are maintaining your health. Rest on hearing from you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2392

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's (C.W. 9458) suggesting publication of his correspondence with Gandhiji for the benefit of the readers of *Saket*.

453. LETTER TO BABALBHAI MEHTA

May 16, 1932

CHI. BABALBHAI,

I hope you can now spin yarn of 20 counts. The daily reading of the *Gita* you find uninteresting because probably you do not reflect over what you read. If you look upon the *Gita* as our mother who guides us daily in our life, you will not find its reading uninteresting. After the reading every day, you should reflect for a minute over what you have read. You will daily learn something new. Only a perfect man will have no more to learn from it. But the ordinary man who commits some error or other every day will not weary of reading the *Gita* if he looks upon it as the mother who will save him from his faults.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9451

454. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

May 16, 1932

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I have heard from you after a long time. I of course had learnt the fact of Harilal's beastly behaviour, but wanted to know the details from you as I did not depend in any way upon what Anandilal had written to me. What are your grounds for saying that I deliberately remain silent on the subject of Harilal's vices? I have never concealed my disapproval. I express it whenever anybody gives him something. What more do you desire or suggest that I should do? Of course I wrote to him and told him that I still cherished the hope that he would repent.[1] That has happened in the case of many. As long as a person is alive, we must continue to hope that he will reform.

Let me have more information about the school. You should not lose self-confidence and give up the work you have undertaken. According to me, it is only there that your health will improve. Howdo you find the atmosphere there? 'Is the State being ruled well? Are the people happy?

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9444

[1] *Vide* "Fragment of Letter to Harilal Gandhi", 27-4-1932.

455. A LETTER

May 16, 1932

Even if your mind wanders when praying, you should keep up the practice. You should retire to a secluded spot, sit in the correct posture and try to keep out all thoughts. Even if they continue to come, you should nevertheless complete the prayer. Gradually the mind will come under control. The Gita also says that the mind is restless, but it tells us that with patient effort we can bring it under control. "We shall never willingly accept defeat, though we lose our life in the struggle."

From Gujarati: C.W. 9114. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

456. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

May 16, 1932

RESPECTED BROTHER,

You seem to have demonstrated a miracle. From the letters . which I got, I had given up hope altogether. But the letters which I get now have raised in me the hope that we shall meet in the present life.

If you can, kindly write a letter to me, otherwise dictate one. Mahadev is with us.

Respects to you both.

MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

457. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

May 16, 1932

CHI. JAMNA,

If your health does improve there, what more can we desire?

Kusum was guilty of a serious lapse in not asking for permission. Did you draw her attention to her error? Sometimes the girls don't mean anything and forget common courtesy only through their innocence. I admit this short-coming in our education.

If the grown-up women treat all the children as their own, the latter would develop very well.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 853. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

458. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

May 16, 1932

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

The letter is altogether incomplete. I will think out questions when I have some time. You should reply to them and after that I will do what I can. I will then call for the papers here. There is no hurry just now. My promise to write means that I will write but only when I get time.

Are you referring to the letters which I dictated to you? If that is so, when some day a collection of letters dictated to various persons is published, those dictated to you will also be included in it. Is there any special reason for publishing the latter separately?

If you have not settled down by June and pay a visit in the first week, you will be able to see Mahadev too. Did you visit Pyarelal? If Sushila wants to visit me, she will be able to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1837

459. LETTER TO FULCHAND B. SHAH

May 16, 1932

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

All of us were glad to receive your letter. We need not worry over such incidents.[1] After all we are prisoners, and should be content with whatever facilities we are allowed. Time was when prisoners were not permitted either to read or write, were not even given sufficient food to eat, were kept in fetters all the twenty four hours and made to sleep on straw. We should, therefore, think it God's kindness that we get the facilities which we do. When our self-respect is attacked, we may lay down our lives to save it, but we should endure physical suffering.

[1] This sentence is reproduced from a fragment of the letter in *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. I, p. 156. From the addressee's letter to Gandhiji written from Visapur jail, 13 lines had been censored out by the jail authorities.

We were happy to learn that all of you were happy there. After all, happiness and unhappiness are states of one's own mind. The fact that you and Mama obey the rules and persuade others also to obey them and to observe cleanliness does great credit to you both.

I hope that every one of you there makes the best use of his time. You are not likely to get such quiet and leisure again in life. You may read if you get books, and you can always think and reflect. And there is so much work, too, from which you should volunteer to do something or the other. There is one serious mistake which all of us commit, and it is that we waste Government's time or property as if they did not belong to us personally. A little reflection will show that the Government's time and property belong to the people. If we waste them because they are at present controlled by the Government, it is the people's property and time we waste. We should, therefore, make the best use of anything which we have occasion to use. The goods also which we produce by our work in jail increase the nation's wealth. The fact that the present Government is foreign does not affect this argument. But I would be entering the field of politics if I go further than this, and as prisoners we cannot discuss politics. I, therefore, stop here on this subject. Tell me, when you write next, who else I know are there, or somebody else whose time for exercising his right of writing a letter has come may write to me. Is Diwan Master in that jail? Is Madhavlal of the Ashram also there?

The three of us, it may be said, are really enjoying our time. There are no restrictions on food except those which are self-imposed, nor on the hours of rest and sleep. Carding and spinning are going on fairly well. And we also read. We get a reasonable supply of newspapers too. As for books, friends send them regularly. We pray at regular hours. That is our daily programme.

Our regards to you all.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9445. Courtesy: Chandrakant F. Shah

460. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

May 16, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

If you spin with enough care, you will certainly be able to spin yarn of 20 counts.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9428. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

461. LETTER TO PUSHPA S. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
May 16, 1932

CHI. PUSHPA,

Premabehn would never refuse to reply. You must ask your question politely,

You must learn Hindi, because that is the language spoken in the major part of India.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11079. Courtesy: Pushpa Naik

462. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

Y. M.,
May 16, 1932

CHI. NIMU,

I have your letter. Sumitra should not be given rice.; Oranges should be sweet. Add some water to the milk. Add honey instead of sugar. Papaw should be given in small quantities and that well mashed. She will now have cut teeth, so probably it will be all right to give her the kind of *khakhari* they used to make with soda and salt in it and rolled thin as paper. Observe timings in feeding.

Add some water to the milk for Babu. Give him dill water. Add honey to it. Add lime water to the milk. Ask Jethalal to consult the books there and explain how to make it. Both should get lots of fresh air. Give them exercise. Do you know how to exercise children ? Mathuradas had given a book to Ramdas. Did he read it out to you? If the book is not there, ask Premabehn to explain its substance. You will get a beating if the kids' health suffers. Ramdas is well.

BAPU

[PS.]

About separate kitchen you may ask Narandas.

From the Gujarati original: Nirmala Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

463. LETTER TO VIMAL KISHORE MEHROTRA

May 16,1932

CHI. VIMAL,

Your letter this time is good. Keep it up. You can teach everyone Hindi while playing games. Try to spin fine yarn.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7499. Also C.W. 4976. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

464. A LETTER

May 16, 1932

BHAI,

Ask for anything only in the sacrificial spirit.

A guru is one who guides us to righteousness by his own righteous conduct.

True development consists in reducing ourselves to a cipher.

Selfless service is the secret of life. To rise above passions is the highest ideal.

The sages mainly from their own experiences have laid down rules of thought and conduct.

A *rishi* is one who has realized himself. Sannyasa according to *Gita* is the renunciation of actions prompted by desire.

Only one who has his body under control is a man. Beauty because of its quality of inwardness cannot be experienced in the physical sense.

All your questions have been answered.

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 9122. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

465. A LETTER[1]

May 17, 1932

Life without a ruffle would be a very dull business. It is not to be expected. Therefore it is wisdom to put up with all the roughness of life, and that is one of the rich lessons we learn from the *Ramayana*.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. l, p. 158

466. LETTER TO NIRMALA B. MASHRUWALA

May 17, 1932

CHI. NIRMALA,

I was very glad to get your letter. Write regularly in future and give me news about Kishorelal and Gomati. Do you ever go to see them? Let me know Gomati's diet at present. Who are the others there with her? I know all those who are with Kishorelal. I have written to Manju and advised her not to leave the hospital. She has taken up this responsibility of her own free will. I am of the view that she cannot give it up now without a strong reason for doing so. What is Nathji's view? And what do all of you think? All three of us keep good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2661. Courtesy: Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

[1] The addressee had asked Gandhiji if he had met anybody who was never perturbed.

467. LETTER TO WOMEN PRISONERS

May 17,1932

God cannot be seen with our physical eyes. He has no body, and, therefore, we can see Him only with the eyes of faith. When no impure thoughts or feelings disturb us, when we feel no fear and are always serene, that is a sign of God's presence in our heart. In fact, He is always there, but we do not see Him because we do not have faith, and in consequence suffer in many ways. When true faith is awakened in a person, he does not feel the outward sufferings. This is true about Taradevi Bajpai. She should do only as many *pranayamas* and in such manner as cause no physical discomfort. I have no experience of the type of *pranayamas* practised in *Hathayoga.* I cannot therefore guide her in this matter, nor is such *pranayama* necessary. We cannot know God by performing certain physical acts. To know Him we should have living faith and should live according to that faith.*Pranayama* and other processes purify the body and give us a measure of peace. They have no other benefit.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 157-8

468. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

May [*18*][1], *1932*

DEAR COLONEL DOYLE,

Major Bhandari told me today that he was instructed to prohibit Shrimati Mirabai (Slade) from seeing me should she desire to do so. As it so happened, she having been discharged from Arthur Road Jail yesterday came today to see me. It would have been courteous if she had been previously informed by Government that she would not be allowed to see me. But that is perhaps a small matter. What is of the highest concern for me is that of all the Ashram people Mirabai should be singled out for the prohibition, whereas hitherto she has never been prohibited from seeing me. I have always been under an impression, and have been grateful, that the Government had tacitly

[1]*Vide* the following item. The source has ''19', the date on which the letter was submitted for despatch; *vide "Diary, 1932"*, entry under ''May 19".

recognized not merely the fact of Mirabai being an inmate of the Ashram, but being nearer to me than an Ashram inmate, if such a thing was possible. I may mention that she is under strict instructions not to take an active part in the present political movement and not deliberately to seek imprisonment. Her activity has been confined purely to conducting the constructive khadi movement and reporting to friends in the West the present political happenings. .If these be a disqualification, there is hardly a person whom I should be able to see.

If therefore I cannot see Mirabai, I do not know how far I would be justified in availing myself of the permission to receive other visitors. Needless to say that I do not discuss politics with Mirabai or any other visitor, nor have I the slightest desire, even if it was possible for me, to direct the movement from within prison walls. All interviews take place in the presence of the Superintendent. If therefore the Government have any regard for my feelings or Mirabai's, I hope that they will reconsider their decision and permit her to visit me as before.

Will you kindly place this letter before the Government and request an early decision?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(2), Pt. I, p. 95

469. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 18/19, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

I was distressed suddenly to find that you were not to see me. My first thought was not [to] see anybody at all if I could not see you. But I restrained myself and saw the others. I have now written[1] to the Government asking them to reconsider their decision. If they do not, I imagine I must cease to see others. I have said almost as much in my letter to the Government. It would be another matter if they had any reasonable ground for the prohibition. Meanwhile you should write to me. I hope this unexpected thing has not upset you. More later.

[1]*Vide* the preceding item.

The Bombay happenings[1] are heart-rending. God's will be done.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

[*May*] *19* [*1932*]

As I handed this to Superintendent he told me he was sending me your letter. I have it now. I do not need to add anything just now. There is no such thing as a blow in reality.[2] After having entrusted oneself to God where is any room left for blow? Therefore rejoice in suffering.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6222. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9688

470. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 19, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

It has been decided not to permit Mirabehn to see me. It is a serious question now for me whether I should see other visitors. I have written to the Government and informed it almost in so many words that, unless it reconsiders its decision, I would have to think seriously whether I should see any other visitors. If, therefore, Premabehn, Sushila and you wish to come, you should come soon. I may perhaps be able to see you. If meanwhile I receive a negative reply in regard to Mirabehn, I will most probably send you a wire asking you not to come. You may come even on Tuesday if you wish.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8227. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Hindu-Muslim riots

[2] "Bapu refers to the shock of being refused admission at the gate."—Mirabehn

471. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

May 19, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

Though you are likely to visit me next week, I think it best that I should reply to your letter. Moreover, an incident which occurred yesterday shows that my receiving visitors should always be treated as uncertain.

Vali has proved her worth very well indeed. I don't think the Ashram can take credit for that. She seems to have joined it with her character already formed.

Why girls brought up in the Ashram seem so weak is a problem which I have not been able to solve. I have my explanations for that, but I think it useless to discuss them unless I can give reasons in support of them. We should try our best to discover the real reasons. It should also be borne in mind that, after leaving the Ashram, these girls do not always improve.

To keep a watch[1] over Narandas means that, when he seems to have taken an excessive burden upon himself you should caution him and also inform me. I have discovered no ambiguity in any of my statements. If they are ambiguous, they are so unintentionally and because of my imperfect command over language. My statements are short, and hence they leave many things unsaid. But in this respect they are like propositions in geometry.

Those girls who wish to learn English may certainly do so if they have paid attention to Hindi and Sanskrit and acquired a good command over Gujarati. Of course, this is subject to facilities for teaching English being available. We ought to have them, no doubt.

You do not seem to have understood my interpretation of passive exercises. What a person does himself cannot be described as passive. Passive exercises are for people who are ill. If I am ill and wish to give exercise to my bowels, and if someone massages the abdomen or raises my legs several times to form a right angle with the rest of the body and lowers them again, and I am not required to raise or lower any limb, then that is passive exercise. I don't think you have understood that this is what the phrase means.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 7-5-1932

I had two aims in practising silent prayer. One was, of course, to give rest to the mind. But it was also difficult to turn the mind inward except through such prayer. Whenever we lay aside one work and take up another, we should feel that we have ample time on hand. We should not feel impatient or restless. It is thus that we gradually learn detachment.

I think I do command concentration, but not well enough to satisfy me. I try earnestly to cultivate such concentration, but I am not impatient.

If the children take no interest in any of the prayers, a special item can be included for them, as used to be done by Prabhudas. I should be happy if they sit through the prayers with faith and in stillness.

I did not say it by way of praise that the same prayers have continued for sixteen years. It was only a statement of fact. I did not wish to suggest that all have been attending the prayers for so many years. The Ashram has clung to these prayers in the face of all troubles and criticisms and quite a few people have derived peace of mind from them. All that I intended to say was that these prayers ought not to be given up or altered without a strong reason.

Women's prayers will not seem proper in the evening. Moreover, some people devote the evening to reading, etc.

What you write about yourself is correct. You should follow your reason and your heart. I am not impatient. I may tell you what seems proper to me, but cannot force you to accept my suggestion against your reason. All I can do is to act as a friend. I can, at the most, claim my experiences over many years in my favour. If, however, they find no echo in your heart, even thousands of them will have no value for you. I make, of course, one claim for the Ashram. It helps new-comers to grow wings. They may then fly where they will. If they continue in the Ashram of their own free will, they are welcome to stay. Even if they do not stay, the Ashram will have done its duty in one matter. This can be proved to have happened to many persons, especially women. At different times in the past, girls came and joined the Ashram, who had no spirit in them at all. Today they believe themselves independent and are in fact so. Such were Gulbadan, Umiya, Vidyavati, Rukhi, etc. Love for individual persons is not wholly forbidden. Only, such love should not be an obstacle to love for all beings and for God. My love for Ba today flows from my

love for God. When I was filled with lust, it was an obstacle to love of God and was, therefore, unworthy.

The loss in your weight need not worry you, if otherwise you are all right. Sushila may come.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10286. Also C.W. 6734. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

472. A LETTER[1]

May 19, 1932

. . .[2] should not be forced to forgo the two special facilities which she enjoys. Till she herself feels a strong desire to forgo them, we cannot ask her to do so. You are both right and not right in citing my example. You are right because so long as I am doing active work people will point to my example and, in consequence, be misled. For a variety of reasons, I cannot demonstrate in my own life standards of conduct which I expect others to follow. I know that this is my deficiency as a leader. At the same time, you are not right in citing my example because my condition is now different from that of my co-workers. One reason for this is my physical weakness, another is my Mahatmaship and the third is my uncommon mode of life. Even if I were in 'C' class, my food would be different from that of the other prisoners, either because of my weakness or my vows. This would be so, more or less, in the case of any prisoner. That other prisoners may not get special facilities of diet as quickly as I get them, is another question. I see visitors once every week, instead of once every three months, and there is no restriction at all on the number of letters I can write. In justification of this, I have told myself that I have no personal friends and that I do not see relations because they are relations, but my seeing them serves a moral aim. I write letters with the same aim. Whether there is an element of self-indulgence lurking behind this, I do not know. But it is not likely to be so, for, if

[1] *The Diary of Mahadev Desai,* Vol. I, gives only the initial letter "S" of the addressee's name. The addressee had questioned how Gandhiji could advise others to forgo privileges while he himself enjoyed them; why we are grieved to see an ailing or dying man; why we thank God if he survives; why Gandhiji had himself so thanked God when Manilal was saved; what the span of human life was, etc.

[2] This name is omitted in the source.

interviews and writing letters stopped, I would not be perturbed. In the year 1930 I had stopped seeing visitorswhen a condition laid down by me was rejected.[1] In 1922 I had similarly stopped writing letters.[2] Apart from these reasons, there is another reason too, namely, that I am kept apart from other prisoners. For all these reasons, a comparison between other prisoners and me would not be right. However, I don't think it proper on my part to try to convince anybody in this matter with arguments if the difference is not self-evident to him. There is certainly some difference between the case of a person for whom 'A' class has been secured through outside influence and that of another who has got it in the normal course, but the difference is not worth stressing. The ideal, of course, is that there should be no classes and, therefore, prisoners who have been put in the so-called upper classes should give up their privileges. Very few persons yet follow this ideal in practice, and so I do not feel inclined to put any burden on a young woman like . . . . She is a very thoughtful woman. I am sure she exercises of her own accord whatever self-control she is capable of.

My praying for Manilal was not a sign of my spirituality but was a sign of a father's love for his son. There can be only one right prayer, that God may do what He wills. Of course the question can be asked what purpose such a prayer serves. The reply to it is that the meaning of the prayer is not to be understood literally. We are aware of the presence of God in our heart, but, for the moment we imagine him to be external to us and pray to Him in order that we may be delivered from ignorance. In other words, we do not wish to follow wherever the mind drags us. If, however, God is external to us, we wish to follow Him wherever He, our Master, leads us. We do not know whether it is good for us that we should live or that we should die. Hence we should not rejoice that we are alive or tremble at the thought of death. We should look upon life and death as equal and be indifferent to them. This is the ideal. We should not give it up because we cannot reach it all at once or only rare persons can reach it. On the contrary, the more we realize its difficulty the harder should be our effort to reach it.

The full span of a man's life can exceed even 100. But

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Tricumdas Dwarkadas", 28-2-1933 and "Letter to P. R. Lele", 28-2-1933

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Hakim Ajmal Khan", 12-5-1922

however long a man may live, his life is not even one ten-millionth of a moment in the infinite cycle of time. Why, then, should we be eager to live a long life and try to determine its maximum span? Any figure wedetermine will never be exact. We can only guess what the maximum span of human life can be. In actual life we even see a healthy child die suddenly. Nor can we say that a sensual man will not enjoy a long life.At the most we can say that a person whose life has always been simple and pure will very probably enjoy a long life. But those who acquire control over the senses in order that they may enjoy a long life only dig up a mountain in order to find a mouse. We should acquire control over the senses in order that we may know the self. We should not care if, as a result of such control, our life becomes shorter instead of longer. A healthy and long life is the least important benefit of freedom from the cravings of the senses.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. 1, pp. 162-4

473. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Silence Day [Before *May 20, 1932*][1]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. Your health must return to normal. Where does Krishnadas live in Kadi? Who is in Vijapur? I feel that you can also ply *takli* the same way as I do. Sitting on a chair with the hand straight and not raising it higher, is not tiring at all.

If possible, I will write something which the children can understand, about the *shloka* pertaining to *sthitaprajya.* I will not get your spinning-wheel here as my stay here is uncertain and also I have no time.

There is no time today for writing anything more. What kind of life is this that even here I do not get time. But then, you know my programme. I do not have even a single minute free.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32937

[1] From the reference to the addressee's spinning-wheel, it appears that the letter was written before the preceding one.

474. LETTER TO BABALBHAI MEHTA

May 20, 1932

CHI. BABALBHAI,

We should do a thing to please elders if it is not immoral. It cannot be a matter of dharma to sing group-prayers aloud. Hence you cannot offer satyagraha to get freedom to do so. There is no loss of self-respect at all in giving finger-prints in a jail. The practice of obtaining prisoners' finger-prints has no bearing on the fear of their running away.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9452. Also C.W. 9115. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

475. A LETTER

May 20, 1932

You should not be in the least disappointed at seeing no immediate result whatever of your work. We should stick to the work undertaken, in single-minded devotion to it, with the faith that service done with pure motives, selflessly and as sacrifice to the Lord never fails to bear fruit. We even know that often in the past men gave their whole lives to some good cause and the fruits were enjoyed only by those who came after them. It should not be a matter of any wonder if four or five years of work by men like us yield no results in a poor, despairing region like Orissa, where several people may have gone under the pretext of public service and robbed the people. On the contrary, it would be a matter for wonder if such a brief period yielded any results. Besides, you actually see the beginning of someresults. Your field of work lies there, and you and your co-workers should stick to it with the conviction that it is also the place where you can attain self-realization. I was glad to learn this time that all of you are in good health. As you get more and more accustomed to the climate there and the mind remains cheerful, that will have its good effect on your health too.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9116. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

476. A LETTER

May 20, 1932

Give up all idle thoughts and constantly wish the good of all living creatures. The more you do so the more peace of mind you will enjoy.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9113. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

477. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

May 20, 1932

CHI. JAMNA,

Kusum is still a child in some ways. Very often a child learns only through bitter experience. If she takes rest in Ranavav now, she will be all right.

If you do not improve, you too should go somewhere outside.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 854. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

478. LETTER TO PUSHPA S. PATEL

May 20, 1932

CHI. PUSHPA,

Your handwriting is improving now. Children should go from the prayer directly to bed.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3989. Also C.W. 35. Courtesy: Pushpabehn N. Naik

479. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
May 20, 1932

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I was keenly waiting for your letter. Ultimately it arrived.[1] Dhiru had come to see me and left behind the Magan spinning-wheel.

[1] A few lines after this have been crossed out in the source. They may have been censored by the jail authorities or cancelled by Gandhiji himself, who had dictated this letter, having written only the last few lines himself.

I observed him drawing yarn on it for a minute. From the very next day, I started spinning on it. I had to face a lot of difficulties but I cannot say that the written suggestions sent to me by Padma were of any help. You had assessed the qualities of a learner and a stupid learner, and according to that estimate, I stand nowhere even near the stupid learner. I wasted quite a large number of slivers while plying it, sometimes for four hours, sometimes for five hours and sometimes for three hours. Now I can say that I have acquired sufficient mastery over it. Today, I spun 183 rounds of yarn in about one and a half hours. When the switch which gives direction to the wheel does not arrive and stop at the right place, the wheel requires pushing by hand. The directions for the difficulties I encountered are not mentioned in your list of suggestions. From that, I have come to the conclusion that my difficulties are unusual. If that is a fact, it is not surprising. An old man's organs do not co-operate with each other promptly. So I took time in bringing about co-ordination between my hand and fingers. I could not work on two spindles because of pain in my left wrist. The doctors believe that the pain will not go unless I give my left wrist complete rest. So the biggest utility of the Magan spinning-wheel for me is that because of it I am able to continue spinning. I have started hoping that gradually I will be able to achieve my normal speed on the Magan spining-wheel. Al one time I feared that I would not be able to spin on it at all. But I did not want to accept defeat and therefore worked hard on it. I do not find spinning on it at all difficult. Initially I used to get tired but now I do not. . .[1] Today is the fourteenth day of my spinning. I like mydevices. It is good. The spinning-wheel is cheap and there is scope for making it still cheaper. Some modifications occur to me but I will take sometime to carry those out. I cannot say just now that I have so much mastery over the spinning-wheel as to makemodifications in it. It is plied with both hands that is no doubt a clear advantage. An efficient spinner would spin either twice or one and a half times or one and two-third times more with two hands than he would with one hand. I can think of other reasons too, for producing more yarn on it. I may be wrong.[2] You will immediately gain one or two *seers* of weight if you personally see the

[1] A few words here are illegible in the source.

[2] The remaining paragraph is already reproduced in "Letter to Prabhudas Gandhi", 20-5-1932

interest I am taking in your spinning-wheel. You will be very happy. I had decided to experiment with your spinning-wheel at a time when I had no problem with my wrist. Now I have to do that under compulsion. Either I give up spinning or spin on the same spinning-wheel. Just as a person who is in difficulty thinks of new tricks to save himself, I will keep on thinking about new techniques of improving my speed on the Magan spinning-wheel. And if you are released, and I am allowed visitors at the time, come and see me and teach me some new tricks.[1]

And when you say that you would not allow anyone to depend on you, then on whose strength are you going to buy the land? How then can you insist on buying the land? One of the conditions of buying the land was that you would stay on it as a guard. You violate that condition and suggest buying the land—how are both things possible. It does not matter if you violate the conditions because as long as the land is not bought, you have to some extent a right to change your opinion. But the moment you absolve yourself from that condition, you lose the right to suggest buying of land. Not only that. The land will be bought under new conditions in case it is bought. And as you say, the talk you had with the seller was final. Then you cannot absolve yourself from the commitment. I do not analyse all these to bind you but to show you what difficult predicament you are in. I understand you. I do not want to criticise you in any way. One need not bind a devoted worker like you. No person, however respected he is, can absolve others from their moral obligations. Everyone has to define his or her own moralobligations himself. As long as you do not have trust in yourself, you should not even accept for yourself any moral obligation. If you compel yourself, you will possibly impede your progress. It is all right if you rise gradually. No doubt you are going to rise because your intentions are pure, you are hardworking, you want to help others to the best of your ability and you do not want to deceive yourself. However, you will come across many moral dilemmas. Do not worry about them. They will help you to become a matured person.[2]

'Matparah' means 'devotion to truth'. '*Charan Padma*' means 'lotus feet of Satyanarayan'. By using the word 'Lotus feet', a

[1] A few lines are again crossed out here, probably censored by jail authorities.

[2] The following two paragraphs are already reproduced in "Letter to Prabhudas Gandhi", 20-5-1932

devotee has personified truth. Truth is formless and so people imagine it in the form they like. In spite of knowing that it is imagination, different persons conceive different images. As long as the imagination lasts, theimages are true; the devotees ascribe whatever they want, to those images. In fact, Vishnu, Maheshwar, Brahma, Bhagwan, Ishwar, etc. are all meaningless names or are wanting in meaning. But truth conveys full meaning. A person who says that he will die for God would not be able to explain what he meant by that and the listener, too, would hardly grasp the meaning of what is told to him. But a person who says that he would die for truth, knows what he had said and the listener would also most probably grasp the meaning of it. You ask me, "what does Rama mean?" It is almost meaningless to worship Him after I explain to you the meaning. But if you worship Rama with the realization that one whom you wanted to worship was Him, only then will he be a *Kamadhenu*[1] to you. If you recite the name of Rama with that faith, be it a parrot-like recitation, you will transcend the material world. The difference is that you recite the name of Rama with faith in Him which a parrot certainly does not have. A parrot is devoid of faith and will therefore feel tired and give up, or, if he worshipped God in pursuit of self-interest. he will keep quiet after collecting enough grains for himself. From this point of view, you do not need a symbol. Tulsidas has given more importance to the name of Rama than to Rama, the man. That is to say, he has suggested that the name need not have any meaning. A devotee will create the necessary meaning later on according to the nature and quality of his faith in Him. That is the beauty of the practice of such worship, otherwise it cannot be proved how even the dullest of men can enjoy spiritual awakening. The only condition is that the name of God should not be taken to impress others or to deceive others. As I have suggested, if a man worships God with faith in Him and never tires of doing so, for him He becomes a *Kalpataru.* I have no doubt about it. Men so inclined can prove this for themselves. Initially, their mind, while worshiping God, will wander for days together, in some cases for years; they will become restless, feel sleepy, even more than that, they might have some tragic experience, but even then if they keep on worshipping God, their devotion will pay. I have no doubt about it. An inanimate thing like a spinning-wheel comes under control only after giving us a lot of trouble. Other things which are

[1] The proverbial cow, believed to fulfill all wishes of the worshippers

more difficult give us more trouble before we achieve them. What can we do for a person who wants to achieve the best but does not take the medicines prescribed for it patiently for a long time and gets disappointed.

I feel that the above covers answers to all your questions; after these there remains nothing for you to ask. If you can develop faith, go on repeating His name while doing your work—eating, drinking, sitting or sleeping. Even if you have to devote your whole life, you are not going to accept defeat. If you do this, no doubt, you will be more and more at peace with yourself with each passing day.

Do only as much writing and reading as you can without straining yourself. There is no need to tire out yourself by drawing up a big programme of writing and reading or getting disappointed if you are not able to keep it up. I will see what I can do for Devidutt and Chandradutt's sister Lakshmi.[1] I believe Chhaganlal will take care of inspection and checking of trivial things about which you have written. Dhiru has lost a lot of weight and so he has gone to Ranavav. Kusum has also gone as she too keeps indifferent health. Padma has not recovered from her illness, so I need not expect much from her. The three of us are still together and are keeping good health.

I am writing on *aparigraha* for the Ashram somewhat on the lines you wanted me to write. I do not get much time as I am occupied these days with Magan spinning-wheel and the increased correspondence. And for that reason . . .[2] is lying unfinished.

I will certainly not draft trivial rules. I neither have the inclination nor it is good to draft such trivial rules. With the change of place and time, new sub-rules will emerge from great principles. At the same time, some rules will become obsolete while new ones will come in force. If you have a thorough understanding of the basic principles, then you would know the source of the sub-principles and be able to draft the rules easily. Just as a person who knows the derivation of the principles of geometry is able to find the correct time.

Totaramji's wife, Gangadevi was conscious till the last moment.

[1] Gandhiji wrote to Narandas Gandhi to accommodate her either at Wardha or at Sabarmati Ashram and inform Prabhudas accordingly. *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 19-23-5-1932

[2] A word here is illegible in the source.

She died while reciting the *Ramanama*. A few hours before her death, she knew that she was going to die. She had warned others and was herself very cheerful. Totaramji was also quite composed. Gangadevi brought credit to the Ashram in her life and in her death.[1]

Blessings from Sardar and Mahadev. Keep on asking me till you are satisfied. Do you meet Kakasaheb and Narahari?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32935

480. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

May 20, 1932

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I am enclosing a letter from Prabhudas. I have given an answer[2] to his spiritual problems. As for the Almora Iand, I have said that the idea of buying the land has been given up as no responsible person is at present in a position to stay there and Pantji[3] is also away. I have also written to him at length about the Magan spinning-wheel on which I have been spinning and over which I have acquired some control for the last four days or so. I think he will be happy to read that I have also added that he might come and see me when he is released, if I see visitors then. As for Lakshmi, Devidatta's sister, I have said that I will do the needful. You have to reply to all the remaining points. He is in excellent health and does not seem to have any trouble now. It seems he would desire a change of place when the monsoon sets in and it rains heavily. The letter has been censored at several places and this is my guess from the portions not struck off by the officials. However that may be, a request for a transfer should not be made and certainly cannot be made from here. Dr. Talwalkar may make the suggestion if he thinks it fit and wishes to do so. I do not have the fear which Prabhudas has. But no one can tell, and when the patient himself is afraid, his fear itself brings about what he fears.

As for Khushalbhai, I guess from the letter which I have received that he has got a new lease of life for a time. All three of us are well.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.G. 37

[1] The remaining letter is in Gandhiji's own hand.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] Govind Vallabh Pant

481. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

May 21, 1932

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

I hope Mavo[1] has completely recovered now. Write to Valji and tell him from me that he should demand the food which he requires. He should not think that he cannot get it. For reasons of health, even 'C'-class prisoners get milk, etc. I will write to Nanu[2] about study.

I was glad that you got the opportunity to nurse Gangadevi. The lady has become immortal through her death.

Do write to me from time to time.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7431. Courtesy: Valji G. desai

482. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

May 21, 1932

CHI. RAIHANA,

I got your letter. Convey the sympathies of us all to Tehminabehn[3]. God has ordained death as well as birth. We, therefore, should not rejoice at the one and grieve over the other. Everything has two sides, or rather, the two are one and the same thing. In our eagerness to live, we believe death to be different from life and something bad. I have read Hazrat's *ghazal* twice already. I shall read it again to understand it thoroughly.[4]

Please be satisfied with this much exercise for today, I take some time to write so much, as I write with the reed-pen and take great care to see that the handwriting is good. Please forgive me for forgetting to reply to your question. I thought I had replied to it. There is no doubt at all that your duty is to stay with Mother. That is to be the form of your *sadhana*[5] and also your service. I am, therefore, glad that you have made this choice. Always remain satisfied with it. I hope the Abu climate did good to you all. Does

[1] Self-dedication
[2] *ibid*
[3] Tehmina Khambhatta
[4] Up to this the letter is in Urdu.
[5] Sudarshan Desai and Vimalchandra Desai, addressee's sons

Father dance in his usual fashion? There he must have become a young man again. After the Bombay madness we have to forget our dancing and our playing. I can never understand how man can fight man in the name of religion. But let me check my thoughts and my pen. At present I am drinking cupfuls of this poison.

Send the book when you all return to Baroda.

Many many *salaams* and *vandemataram*s to Father and Mother from us all.

When is Hamida's time for release?

Many Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I heard on Saturday that Hamida had been released. Is the information correct? If it is, she should write to me a full account [of her stay in jail].[1]

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N.. 9644

483. LETTER TO VIMALCHANDRA V. DESAI

May 21, 1932

CHI. NANU,

I got no letter from you this week. When will you now start taking interest in study? Children learn even as they play. In prison here, even kittens learn. Their mother teaches them. If you want to know how she does it, you may listen to my account[2] which I give in a letter to someone else.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5756. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1] The postscript, written in Urdu, seems to have been written on May 23; *vide* ''Diary, 1932", entry under ''May 23".

[2] *Vide* the following item.

484. THE CAT — A TEACHER[1]

May 22, 1932

I have already written about our cat's love of cleanliness.[2] Observing her and her kittens' ways, I feel that she is an ideal teacher. Whatever they have to be taught, she teaches quietly and without any fuss. The method is quite easy. She demonstrates to them by her own example what she wishes to teach, and the kittens learn the thing very quickly. In this manner they learnt to run, climb trees and come down again carefully to eat, to kill a prey and to lick their bodies and clean them. In a very short time they have learnt to do all that their mother can do.

The cat does not leave the kittens alone for long. Her love for them is just like that of a woman's for her children. She sleeps with the kittens clinging to her. When they indicate a desire to suck, she lies down and lets them do it. If she has killed a prey, she brings it to them. Vallabhbhai gives them some milk every day. All three of them lick it from a saucer. Sometimes the mother only looks on without sharing the milk. She plays with them as if she were their own age, and even engages in a sort of wrestling with them.

I have drawn a lesson from all this, namely, that if we wish to educate children properly we should ourselves do what we want to teach them to do. Children have great capacity for imitating others. They do not easily understand what is explained to them orally. If we wish to teach them truthfulness, we ourselves should be scrupulously truthful. If we wish to teach them not to keep with them more things than they need, we, too, should not do that. And what is true about moral rules is true about bodily labour.

Looking at the matter in this light, we immediately see that the present-day education produces very little result, considering the expenditure of money and time which it involves. We also realize that all grown-ups are teachers so far as children are concerned. It is because people do not pay proper attention to their duty as teachers that education has degenerated.

[1] This was sent along with ''Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 19/23-5-1932; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 19/23-5-1932

[2] *Vide* "Cleanliness, Truthfulness, Purity, Neatness", 9-5-1932

Creatures like cats have no reason, or say, they do not have reason like man's. We, therefore, should do much more than what they do. But before we can do so, as guardians of the moral character of the next generation we should observe moral principles in our own lives. We should learn, to the best of our ability, to live as we wish the next generation to live.

I have written all this with the hope that all men and women inmates of the Ashram who give their services as teachers, and others too, may think along these lines and, wherever necessary, act accordingly.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

485. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

May 22, 1932

MY DEAR CHILD,

I understand all you are doing. Only you must not work yourself into anxiety. If we simply make ourselves instruments of His will, we should never have [an] anxious moment.

Yes, there is no calm without a storm, there is no peace without strife. Strife is inherent in peace. We should not know it without [strife]. Life is a perpetual struggle against strife whether within or without. Hence the necessity of realizing peace in the midst of strife.

It has been hot in Poona this time. As a rule it is never so hot in Poona. But the rains are now coming in and we are having beautiful sunsets and sweet songs of the birds.

Have you been to that patient[1] again?

I told you Mahadev was with me. He spins and cards about five hours daily. He is now spinning very fine counts. Owing to weakness of my hands I cannot do much. I hope you are keeping well.

Love from us all and kisses to the children.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 110. Courtesy: National Arehives of India. Also *My Dear Child*, p. 90

[1] The cripple girl; *vide* "Letter to Esther Menon", 21-1-1932.

486. LETTER TO NAN AND TANGAI MENON

May 22, 1932

DEAR NAN AND TANGAI,

You have sent me a sweet letter.

I see you are making friends with birds. We have made friends with a cat and her kittens. I call her sister. It is delightful to watch her love for her young ones. She teaches them all sorts of things by simply doing them.

God bless you. With kisses,

BAPU

My Dear Child, p. 117

487. LETTER TO P. C. RAY[1]

May 22, 1932

The work you are doing is difficult, but it is the only way to help our people. There is no substitute for charkha for universal relief.

It is nonsense for you to talk of old age so long as you outrun young men in the race for service and in the midst of anxious times fill rooms with your laughter and inspire youth with hope when they are on the brink of despair.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 169-70

488. LETTER TO ARUN DAS GUPTA[2]

May 22, 1932

Mother[3] tells me you are ailing and that you insist on reading and working. Will you not give yourself rest and the body a chance of recovery? Though death and life are the faces of the same coin and though we should die as cheerfully as we live, it is necessary until lifeis there to give the body its due. It is a charge given to us by God. And we have to take all reasonable care about it. Do write to me if you can. God bless you.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 168

[1] Dr. P. C. Ray, known as Acharya Ray, scientist and educationist; *vide* also ‘‘Tribute to P. C. Ray”, 24-5-1932

[2] Son of Satis Chandra Das Gupta

[3] Hemprabha Das Gupta

489. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

May 22, 1932

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

I had given a reply to Pyarelal's questions. Did you convey it to him? He doesn't seem to have received any message from me.

The letter[1] to you ought to be published.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1838

490. A LETTER

May 22, 1932

CHI.,

We ourselves are the source of *moha*[2]. There are two powers dwelling within us: the divine and the demoniac, the Pandavas and the Kauravas. The demoniac is the source of *moha*. Why should we not fix our minds on the true Mahadeva instead of on His image made of earth? Or rise from the inert matter to spirit? If we cling to the trunk,we automatically get hold of the branch. If, on the contrary, we cling to the branch, the branch will break and we shall fall with it. It is no sin to think about people with whom we are related by blood. However, we wish to enlarge our definition of blood-relations so as to include in it all people. If we make a distinction between 'ours' and 'the others', we suffer in innumerable ways. If we imbibe the truth that the two are the same, there will remain the pain of neither separation nor death. Do not look upon this as philosophical or difficult knowledge and be scared by it. It deserves to be digested. Such an attitude of mind means not diminishing of love but its enlargement. In truth, we always go on, knowingly or unknowingly, enlarging our idea of 'ours'. If we carefully grasp this supremelyvaluable law, it leads to very important results.

From all I have written, accept only as much as you can digest and leave the rest. The rule that applies to food applies here also

I hope that the change of climate will do you good.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9117. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] From the addressee's husband

[2] Infatuation, ignorant attachment

491. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

May 22, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

Even silence for five minutes can serve many purposes. It also means rest. If the Ashram cat makes a mess all over the place, you must take it that it has acquired the bad habit from us. No man has influenced the cat here.[1]

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9947. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

492. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
May 22, 1932

CHI. TARAMATI,

I have received your letter. You do not have to seek permission from here to visit me. You must write to Narandas, so that you can be allotted your day when someone is coming from the Ashram. Only one interview is allowed in a week. Even this is likely to be stopped. Interviews have been stopped in the case of Mirabehn. If that restriction is continued, I may have to stop interviews. You will be informed if that happens. Let me know when you hear from Mathuradas.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* "Cleanliness, Truthfulness, Purity, Neatness", 9-5-1932 and "The Cat- A Teacher", 22-5-1932

493. LETTER TO TOTARAM SANADHYA

May 22, 1932

BHAI TOTARAMJI,

Your reminiscences of Gangadevi[1] sent here are sacred.[2] Though I had inferred a great deal about her qualities your reminiscences of her are truly astounding. The Ashram is blessed where such a chaste woman lived.

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Banarsidas Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

494. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

Y. M.,
May 22, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. Your duty for the present is to be with your in-laws and serve them and do such other work of service as you can. When your turn comes God will clear the way. Be patient for the present. Improve your health.

I have had two letters from Anand. But I have not replied to them, nor did he expect an answer. I did not know his address either. Newspapers report that he has been taken to Sindh.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] Addressee's wife, who had died in the first week of May
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Totaram Sanadhya", 9-5-1932

495. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 19/23, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter on Wednesday morning. If you think that I am doing any injustice to Harilal, please tell me. I say this because you have not said in your letter what you decided after reading my letter[1] to Harilal. Provided you observe the three conditions I have mentioned, you may do all you can. I can have no objection then.

If you have found any improvement as a result of the period of silence having been increased to five minutes, please let me know.

Lady Vithaldas, Mathew and Manibehn came and saw me. Mirabehn will not be permitted. The decision has been a great blow to her. I feel that if the gates are not opened to her, I should stop seeing any visitors. I have even written a letter[2] to the Government (very nearly) to this effect. It is probable, therefore, that the next week will be the last during which I shall be seeing visitors. And even of that I am not certain, for, if I get a negative reply before that, I will stop seeing visitors immediately. I, therefore, also intend to drop a postcard to you today. If you get it in time, it should be in your hands on Sunday. If you do get it and if you do not receive a wire from me not to come, it might be advisable for you to start soon. Provided, that is, you think it necessary to come and see me. This applies to Premabehn and Sushila too.

I think it will be difficult to make the labourers give up smoking. It would of course be good if you succeed. But it would be most undesirable if they agree to give it up for fear of losing their jobs or any other similar reason and then continue to smoke on the sly. One labourer may be a smoker and still be good in other ways, while another who does not smoke may be a very bad man. Of the two, the one who smokes is a far better person. Hence, while paying attention to the habits of those whom you engage as labourers, pay as much attention as you can to their inner character as well.

I was glad to learn that Dhiru and Kusum have gone to Ranavav.

[1] This is not available; however, *vide* "Fragment of Letter to Harilal Gandhi", 27-4-1932

[2] *Vide* "Letter to E. E. Doyle",18-5-1932

Don't let them return to the Ashram all too soon. We may be sure that those who have understood the meaning of the Ashram rules of life and have fallen in love with that life will carry the Ashram wherever they go. Moreover, if Dhiru and Kusum, who have spent many years in the Ashram, cannot observe the Ashram rules even while living away from it, it will only show that they have Iearnt nothing from their stay in the Ashram. Anybody who has understood the meaning of the Ashram life can serve wherever he lives. The field of service is as wide as the world, and opportunities for it exist everywhere. Dhiru and Kusum, therefore, ought not to get impatient. If the water of Ranavav agrees with them and their health improves, let them stay there till they get completely all right.

Pyare Ali, Noorbanu and Tilakam have not come [to see me till now]. If you sent any messages with Mathew, they remained with him, for he could not speak much.

I have received no letter from Ba so far. Maybe her letters have not been dispatched from there. They don't seem to keep back any letter here. If any of you can, please inquire from theSuperintendent whether they have been dispatched. In any case Ba can certainly inquire.

May 20, 1932

Are there any Chharas still staying near the Ashram? If there are, have you cultivated contacts with them? Do they harass you in any way? Why do the Ashram inmates keep a watch [at night]? For how many hours is the watch kept? Who are the persons taking turns? Who stays in Doctor's bungalow? Who stays in Jyotirbhavan? I send with this a letter from Chhaganlal, along with one from Prabhudas to me. Read both of them. There is a reference to Lakshmi in them. If Balkrishna agrees to accommodate her in Wardha, let her go and stay there. If Balkrishna does not agree or if the girl wants to stay in Sabarmati and if you see no difficulty in that, accommodate her there.[1] If you cannot do so and if Balkrishna is not prepared to accept the responsibility, write to Devidatta and inform him accordingly. And also to Prabhudas.

I can now say that I have acquired control over the Magan spinning-wheel. Today I spun 183 rounds in about $2^1/_2$ hours. The yarn must be of about 16 counts. The slivers sent by Ramjibhai were

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 20-5-1932

full of hard particles, otherwise I think I could spin yarn of even higher count. The wheel still offers difficulties. I have often to use my hand and put the wheel in the right position. I believe this must be a defect. The pedal produces a low grating sound. Show this to Keshu. Ask him if he has any suggestion to make.

May 22, 1932

If you have not read out to the inmates of the Ashram the reminiscences of Gangadevi which Totaramji has sent, or given them a summary, you should do so. They are quite interesting.

May 23, 1932

Today I spun 89 rounds in 50 minutes. The count of the yarn, too, is 20.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

496. LETTER TO ELIZABETH F. HOWARD[1]

May 23, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

I was delighted to have your letter. I have a most vivid recollection of the very pleasant and peaceful time we had at your place.[2] From what I saw during those brief hours and in autumn I can easily picture all you say of Epping Forest in spring time.

It was a matter of sorrow to me that I could not see the friends who visited India recently to study the situation. Please give my regards to Mr. Bartlett and tell him that as soon as I received his letter enclosing the Poet's appeal I sent him my reply[3] which had naturally to pass through the Central Government. I do not know whether it was sent to him. Of course I cannot repeat the contents here.

I thank you for the extract from George Fox's writings.

Please give my regards to your mother who I hope will finish the century and accept the same for yourself. Yes, Desai is with me and wants to be remembered to you.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 862

[1] Addressee's name is supplied from the G.N. Register.

[2] Gandhiji visited the addressee at Ardmore, Buckhurst Hill, London, on September 20, 1931.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Percy W. Bartlett", 4-5-1932

497. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

May 23, 1932

CHI. MANUDI,

I have your letter now, but I have been regularly getting news about you from others. I have collected a good many pictures for you. I had collected them during my last imprisonment but I could not meet you at all and give them to you. Some of those are still left, to which I go on adding more. You will get them sooner or later. The later you getthem, the more precious they will be, won't they? I am glad that you do not wear ornaments. Never mind losing your hair. It will grow again. There is no beauty in wearing long hair. If there were any, one would look beautiful even with hair stuck on the head. Beauty lies in goodness of heart. If it was not so, the sight of glass or wax dolls would be enough to give us pleasure, and we would preserve the soulless body in a frame. The fact that we do not do so means that whatever beauty there is in the soul. Can this be in anything except its qualities? One who realizes this will look upon the body as only a means for the progress of the soul.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Write to me and tell me whether you followed what I have said in this letter.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1513. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

498. LETTER TO BENARSILAL AND RUKMINI BAZAJ

May 23, 1932

CHI. RUKMINI,

This letter is meant for both of you. I got your card and was happy to learn that the little boy had recovered. It would be good if you can manage somehow to take him out for walks.

Rameshwardas's[1] letters suggest that he is very much troubled in

[1] Rukmini Bazaj's father-in-law, Rameshwarlal

mind. Benarsi can understand the reason better than I. He should do something in the matter if he can.

I have received some reminiscences of Gangadevi. She lived a pure life devoted to the service of others. Why is it that you do not get the *Ashram Patrika* there? Probably you have not asked for it.

Probably you have also not heard of the death of Dahyabhai's wife, Yashoda. Do you read newspapers, etc.?

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. RUKMINIDEVI AND SJT. BENARSIDAS

23/96 PANCHGANGA

KASHI, BANARAS, U.P.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9139

499. LETTER TO HANUMANPRASAD PODDAR[1]

May 23, 1932

I do not remember any incident in my life which had particularly increased my faith in God. For some time I had no faith, but it began to grow when I started thinking and reflecting about religion, and it has gone on increasing ever since as I have come to feel more and more distinctly the presence of God in my heart. But why do you ask me this question? Is it with the intention of publishing my answer in a future issue of *Kalyan*? If so, it will serve no useful purpose. If you have asked it for your own guidance, I must tell you that in this matter another man's experience will not help you. Faith in God will increase only through ceaseless striving with such faith as you have.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 170

[1] Mahadev Desai explains: "The addressee had asked Bapu if there had occurred any particular incidents in his life which strengthened his faith in God." (*The Diary of Mahadev Desai*, Vol. I, p. 125)

500. LETTER TO ABHAYDEV SHARMA

May 23, 1932

BHAI ABHAY,

I have been daily looking forward to your letter when at last I got one yesterday along with two copies of *Vaidik Vinaya*[1]. I had received a copy earlier. I will certainly read it and give you my comments if I have any to make. I like your becoming an Acharya[2], but I dislike it too. But I believe it on the whole to be right because this duty has come to you unsought. You will be able to perform some great service in this way. Where is Jayadev? Daya has impressed me very favourably through her letters. I see in her the makings of a true *sevika.*

How is Ramdevji keeping and how is Vidyavati?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI ABHAY ACHARYA
GURUKUL KANGRI
DISTRICT SAHARANPUR

From Hindi: C.W. 9661

501 TRIBUTE TO P. C. RAY[3]

May 24,1932

Acharya Ray I had the privilege of knowing for the first time when Gokhale was his next-door neighbour in 1901 and I was undergoing tutelage under the latter. It was difficult to believe that the man in simple Indian dress and wearing simpler manners could possibly be the great scientist and professor he even then was. And it took my breath away when I heard that out of his princely salary he kept only a few rupees for himself and the rest he devoted to public uses and particularly for helping poor students. Thirty years have made no difference to the great and good servant of India. Acharya

[1] An annotated compilation, by the addressee, of Vedic *mantras,* to be recited one on each day of the year

[2] Headmaster, preceptor

[3] On his seventieth birthday

Ray has set us an example of ceaseless service, enthusiasm and optimism, of which we may well be proud.

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. I

502. LETTER TO SATYACHARAN LAW

May 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your circular letter about Acharya Ray's seventieth birthday celebration. I send you the accompanying humble tribute[1] in the hope that it would be allowed to reach your hands by the authorities.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. SATYACHARAN LAW
SECRETARY
ACHARYA RAY'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION COMMITTEE
CALCUTTA

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. I

503. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND PAREKH

May 24, 1932

The Harijan Samiti's resolution seemed shocking to me. What guidance, however, can I give from here? How can a single school for Harijan children be closed while the members of the Samiti are alive? If they are sincere, they would sell themselves into slavery, would sell their property but continue to run every school. Instead of accepting defeat, therefore, you should have hope that when you come forward to sell yourselves, the people will buy you and pay the Samiti all the money it needs. You may doubt this, but I do not. Don't you remember Bhoja Bhagat's lash?

Bhakti is a bargain in which you must stake your very life, for full of danger is the path ahead.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 171

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

504. A LETTER

May 24, 1932

Boys and girls should be married only after they have grown up. The partners should choose each other with the consent of their parents. Hence there is no unnatural restriction in such a method. If anybody asks my opinion, I would say that marriage between persons following different faiths was a risky experiment. If both husband and wife believe in their respective religions and actively follow them in their lives, difficulties are likely to arise between them. Thus I think that the Bhatia girl's marriage is a risky step, but I do not regard it as irreligious. I would not oppose it if their love is pure, if the Bhatia girl can follow her religion and the Muslim youth his and if their ideas about food are the same. But I do not advocate marriages between persons of different faiths as I advocate inter-caste marriages because I desire the disappearance of sub-castes. I would not agitate against such marriages either. This is an issue on which every man and woman should think and decide for himself or herself. There cannot be a uniform law for all.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 171

505. LETTER TO K. NATARAJAN

May 25, 1932

When I said that writing about the abuse of occult powers you might have been stronger,[1] I used the adjective precisely in the same sense in which I use it regarding admitted evils. I feel that whilst we should spare evil-doers, we dare not be sparing in our condemnation of evil. Perfect gentleness is not inconsistent with clearest possible denunciation of what one knows to be evil, so long as that knowledge persists; and there would need to be no cause for regret later if our knowledge of the past was found to be a great error of judgment. In our endeavour to approach absolute truth we shall always have to be content with relative truth from time to time, the relative at each stage being for us as good as the absolute. It can be easily demonstrated

[1] This letter is not traceable; for an earlier letter on the subject, *vide* " Letter to K. Natarajan", 26-4-1932

that there would be no progress if there was no such confidence in oneself. Of course our language would be one of caution and hesitation if we had any doubt about the correctness of our position. In the case in point, the motive of the exhibitor, no matter how excellent it may be, in my opinion would be no excuse for his exhibition, and the laziness of the spectators in not having thought out the consequences of their presence at such exhibitions is again no excuse for their presence. But I must not labour the point any further. I thought that as I could not endorse the position taken up by you in your letter[1], I should just place before you my argument for your consideration.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 177

506. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI[2]

May 25, 1932

It is irrelevant to the point of the story either to praise or blame the man who carried the water. If you reflect a little, you will see that he could not force the soldiers to drink water. Nor is it to the point to ask whether there was enough water for three. Each of the first two soldiers, on hearing somebody else crying for water, refused to drink the water before that other soldier had got some. Hence we need not blame the man who carried the water for having failed in his duty. You do not seem to have visualized the situation.

When a person is extremely thirsty, he feels such intense craving

[1] Which read: "As for my paragraph about occult powers which you feel might have been stronger, it is curious but I seem to have utterly lost the taste for and the knack of strong writing particularly in criticizing persons. When I take my pen intending to hit hard, the picture of the other man stands before my eyes and seems to say: 'You do not know what I have to say for myself. I too have ideals, however much they may be obscured by my conduct. Judge me as you would yourself.' I avoid all adjectives of judgement as poison and try in all that I say to be completely objective. This has become a habit, and I do not doubt that in all circumstances it is a healthy one. As regards this particular matter, the thought that after all the man takes his life in his hands weighs my judgment. As for the curious crowd, they, I suppose, find relief from the tyranny of daily circumstances in witnessing facts which show or seem to show that one man at least is able to rise above them." (*The Diary of Mahadev Desai*, Vol. I, p. 128)

[2] Misinterpreting Gandhiji's article ''Wonderful Self-sacrifice" (pp. 433 5), the addressee had argued that the man who carried the water had failed in his duty, for he could have given some water to each of the three dying men.

for water that he does not care for anybody else and, if he himself gets any water, gulps it down. In this case the poor soldiers were nearing death. But even at that time they did not forget their goodness, which means that they remained in a spiritual state right to the end. The man who carried the water was quite helpless. In any case, was it possible for him to enter into argument with the wounded soldiers, who were drawing their last breath? If you think over all this and reflect a little, you will realize that this, which actually occurred, is an example of sublime and perfect self-sacrifice, and that the man who carried the water and accidentally became the cause of their death deserves no criticism at all. Generally, we do not come across such perfect examples in history. There is always some imperfection or other. But I see none in this.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary Vol. I, pp. 172-3

507. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

May 25, 1932

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I got a letter from you after a long time. You certainly have my blessings. May you live long and render selfless service. Remember a noble verse which our people often recite:

> That which goes by the name of adversity is not such; nor is that prosperity which goes by that name. To forget God is adversity; ever to think of him is prosperity.[1]

That is, what people call misery is not real misery and what they call happiness is nothing of the sort. Real misery is forgetting God—that is, Truth, and real happiness is remembering Him.

My respectful greetings to Mother. I hope Gokibehn[2] is all right. Give my blessings to Sumati.

Sardar sends his blessings, and Mahadev his regards.

You may write to me anything you wish to.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4796. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarjee

[1] *Vide* "Ashram Bhajanavali"

[2] Addressee's aunt

508. LETTER TO RELATIVES OF DARBARI SADHU

May 25, 1932

Please tell Darbari that there was no need for him to give up the *kasti*[1] and *sadra*[2], and that it would be proper for him to resume them as soon as he returned home. There is no sin in wearing them, nor is it superstitious to do so. By wearing them he does no harm to anybody, but by not wearing them he gives pain to-other Parsis. It does not befit a servant of the people to give pain to anybody needlessly, and moreover such behaviour is a violation of ahimsa. It should be enough if one does not attach undue importance to these things. One should not idolize them, and he does not do that. The two things are only outward signs of one's being a Parsi, and I do not think it desirable from any point of view to discard them. I have asked Dahyabhai to bring for him books containing the teachings of Zoroaster. I have read Zoroaster's sayings. I read a translation of the Vendidad[3] many years ago. The work is rich in ethical teaching. Since Zoroastrianism is a very old faith, it is possible that all its scriptures have not survived and that those which are extant do not contain spiritual knowledge of the same order as the Upanishads and other works do. Darbari should read the extant works and reflect over them. But even today it is accepted that Zoroaster's teaching is based on that of the Vedas. As far as I remember, the translator of the Vendidad has pointed out a close similarity between Zend and Sanskrit. It is, therefore, in no way derogatory to Zoroastrianism or to the self-respect of the Parsi community to fill in the deficiencies which may be observed in the Parsi scriptures with the help of the Vedas and the Upanishads. In fact, it is our right, even our duty, while adhering to our own religion, to accept from other religions anything which specially appeals to us. It is fanaticism to think that we cannot adopt anything from other religions, and Darbari and all of us have grown out of it.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 173

[1] Sacred thread and shirt worn by Parsis

[2] Videvdat, a later Avestan writing

[3] *ibid*

509. LETTER TO BHUSKUTE[1]

May 25, 1932

What do you mean by asserting that there is no guiding force in the universe? How can we make such an assertion? My statement seems to have been somewhat twisted in this context. I have only said that Truth is identical with God and you may take it to be the Moving Spirit. In this context *karta*[2] does not have the meaning we usually attribute to it. Therefore Truth is *karta* as well as *akarta*[3]. But this is only an intellectual explanation. There is nothing wrong in this matter in believing whatever one's heart accepts, as no man has perfect knowledge of God nor can he express whatever little knowledge he has. It is true that I do not depend upon my intellect to decide upon any action. For me the reasoned course of action is held in check subject to the sanction of the inner voice. I do not know if others would call it the mysterious power or whatsoever. I have never deliberated upon this nor analysed it, I have felt no need of doing so either. I have faith, and knowledge, too, that a Power exists beyond reasoning. This suffices for me. I am unable to clarify this any further as I know nothing more in the matter.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 173-4

510. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*May 26, 1932*][4]

CHI. MIRA,

I was waiting for your letter. It came today. The shock such as you received must be accepted as the common lot of those who would only serve their conscience. I shall take no hasty step. If, apart from the personal equation, I did not think it to be my duty to stop seeingothers if I could not see you, I would not take that step. But let

[1] Mahadev Desai explains: ''Bhuskute had asked how Bapu acted according to the dictates of the inner voice while he believed that Truth is God and there is no Creator." (The *Diary of Mahadev Desai*, Vol. I, 127)

[2] Doer

[3] Non-doer

[4] "Date of Yeravda Postmark"—Mirabehn

us wait and see.

Tulsidas's *Ramayana* is to me a work of great religious merit. I have not myself read Griffith's translation[1], but I knew that it was the best available and I am glad you have found it so good.

Don't you try to make envelopes there?[2] It is a fascinating occupation when you have the time. If you have weak persons having no occupation, they may try their hands at the thing. But not you. For you it would be an uneconomic use of time.

I was again 105½ lb. today. So you see there is no cause for anxiety.

I have now acquired sufficient control over the Magan wheel to make the work pleasurable. I spun 202 rounds in 82 minutes, i.e., 147 rounds per hour—not bad for me. I hope to do much better still.

Give my love to the Rollands and tell them I simply enjoyed that letter[3] to the American friend. Surely there was nothing [wrong] about it. And how can there be anything wrong in an honest expression of opinion?

Love to you all from us all.

BAPU

[PS.]

No separate letter to Radha.

From the original: C.W. 6223. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9689

511. A LETTER

May 26, 1932

Tell Chhotubhai that it is useless to think about his father's illness here. Why, then, should he go on worrying? His father is under the care of the great Father of us all. At present Chhotubhai is exempted by Him from serving as His instrument and nursing his father. He need not, therefore, think about the matter. It is a weakness to lose one's peace of mind. None of us can be wholly free from that weakness, but the more clearly we realize that we control nothing the more we shall enjoy peace of mind.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9121. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Of Valmiki's *Ramayana*

[2] "Bapu and specially Sardarji [Vallabhbhai Patel] were making envelopes for Bapu's letters." —Mirabehn

[3] Describing the meeting between Gandhiji and Romain Rolland in December 1931; *vide* "Romain Rolland's Letter to An American Friend", 12-1931

512. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

May 26, 1932

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. The letter I addressed to Gwalior was somewhat lengthy. I recollect this much but nothing of the contents. We must consider the views of the workers regarding working in three shifts and also the extent of the material and moral benefit to them from it. If they gain materially but lose morally, it will not be acceptable to me. I may be considered neutral as I have at present no means of ascertaining labour's point of view. I only hope that this change has been made with due regard for the labourers' attitude towards it. I have received two books. By two books is meant one pamphlet and the proof of your speech. Is it not? These two are with me. I have not been able to read them so far, as I could not take time off from the work on hand. I had to devote a good deal of time to working the *charkha* with the foot owing to pain in the left hand. And moreover I have taken up the study of Urdu. I shall now possibly save some time and use it for reading the two items. I distinguish between optimism and simplicity of heart. Panditji[1] is endowed with both. That person is an optimist who continues to hope despite the discouraging signs on the horizon and his own knowledge of them. This quality can be found in Panditji in plenty. To accept in good faith someone's encouraging utterances is simplicity of heart. Panditji possesses that too, which in my opinion is undesirable. Panditji, by virtue of his nobility, has come to no harm on account of this quality. But we should not emulate it. Optimism is dependent upon the inner voice while credulousness is dependent upon external factors.

I am not qualified to give any opinion on foreign travel. Ordinarily my views are well known.

My diet continues to be the same. The weight too is steady.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 7900. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Madan Mohan Malaviya

513. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May 26, 1932

BHAI KRISHNACHANDRA

I have your letter. The man who has faith in God will never go to astrologers. Therefore in my view no action in deference to their prediction is called for. In fact I have observed on many occasions events happening contrary to the predictions and honest astrologers do admit that predictions merely indicate the possibility. Thus undoubtedly there is sufficient scope for individual effort. The meaning of the *Gita*, III. 33 is clear enough; our basic nature cannot be altered. The English saying that the leopard cannot change his spots also supports it. What is true of the skin is true of the inside too. That is why so many people are unable, in spite of great efforts, to change qualities ingrained in their nature.

Gulkand[1] can be taken in place of dates, raisins, etc., but it can never be as beneficial. It is difficult to specify the quantity; everyone has to find that by experience.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.G. 38. Also G.N. 4261

514. LETTER TO VERRIER ELWIN

May [*27*][2]*, 1932*

MY DEAR VERRIER,

"Ask and ye shall receive" has been verified once more. Your lovely letter arrived here today. I read it after five and today being Friday, without any prompting from me, Mahadev gave effect to your sugggestion about fellowship by singing "Lead Kindly Light" in its very beautiful Gujarati version. At the evening service it is always Mahadev's part to sing the *bhajan*. The hour would be approximately 7.40. The prayer commences at 7.30 and opens with the 19 verses at the end of the second discourse of the *Gita*. It is followed by Ramanama and then comes the *bhajan*. As soon as I read

[1] A preparation made from rose petals and sugar

[2] From the reference in the letter to ''Friday", which fell on May 27. The source, however, has "26".

your suggestion I had no hesitation in endorsing it, but I was debating as to the choice of the hymn. I had in mind the singing of the English text and so the choice was limited. It could either be "Lead Kindly Light" or "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" or "Take My Life And Let It Be" for the simple reason that I myself cannot very well sing any of the other favourite hymns of mine—not that even these three I sing accurately. But it would be a fair approach to the tune as I have heard it. Mahadev is unused to the tune of English hymns, but by thinking of taking up the Gujarati version of "Lead Kindly Light", Mahadev solved the difficulty about the choice and singing. There is a special fitness about the choice of this hymn of Newman's. It was that hymn which, when I was in physical distress, was sung to me by Olive Doke in Johannesburg under the late Rev. Doke's roof.[1] So you may take it that we shall be here singing this hymn at 7.40 every Friday evening with the knowledge that you at least will be joining us wherever you are, whether the suggestion is taken up or not by the other friends. Let there be no Press publicity about this at the present moment. I do not know that the Government will appreciate it and from my place as a prisoner I would not like to do a single thing that they would not approve of, unless of course I had to engage in an open quarrel with them in any vital matter. I shall be asking Narandas to sing this *bhajan* on Fridays at the Ashram prayer which during summer months always begins at 7.30.

Yes, I like very much, if only for the sake of the old lady and Eldyth[2], the idea of your going to England for a few months and you certainly need the change for the sake of your health. And since you should be going, the sooner you leave the better.

I do not like the idea of Mother and Eldyth coming to village India or any other India. The spirit with them may be willing but the flesh will not respond. You yourself are no bright example in this respect, and it would be unwise to put the strain on them of settling down in India. It would be however a wholly different thing if, independently of any prompting on your or anybody else's part, they felt the clearest possible call from within. But in that case, there would be no question of seeking or accepting advice from any quarter. Such cases have of course happened before now. There the spirit surmounts

[1] In February 1908; Gandhiji was taken care of by the Rev. Joseph Doke after the assault on him by Mir Alam; *vide* "My Reward"; also "Satyagraha in South Africa"

[2] Addressee's younger sister

the flesh.

I do not at all like the news about Shamrao's illness. He should be ashamed of himself. He must learn the art of living befitting a true servant of *Daridranarayana*.

The passages[1] you quote from Plotinus are very striking and very beautiful. The first is good for all time, the second the modern mind will carp at. I have personally no difficulty in understanding the author's meaning.

During your absence and Shamrao's, who will be in charge of Karanjia?

With love from us all to you all, including your host and hostess,

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. 1, p. 233

515. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI[2]

May 27, 1932

In a long letter to Devdas Gandhi, Bapu paid a generous tribute to Narandas Gandhi, the Ashram Secretary, ''who, by his firmness, patience, courage, renunciation and good judgement, has relieved all my anxiety about the Ashram." . . . As regards his Urdu studies, Bapu wrote to Devdas Gandhi:

There are lessons on history in each reader. Some of them deal with the Prophet and his times, while others are concerned with Muslim rulers in India. The standpoint from which these are written should be understood by everyone. I have an increasing realization of the importance of Urdu studies. By learning to write a language in its own script we can write letters in it. Moreover we thus also acquire greater mastery over the language, and are better able to decipher as well as understand letters received by us. I believe we should learn how to write Urdu letters to Muslim co-workers. If we are compelled to write to them in English, Hindi can never take its legitimate place as the national language. That is why I think that ability to write in Urdu is an essential part of our mental equipment.

He then referred to the circumstances in which he began to write Urdu letters to Raihana Tyabji and said:

[1] For the passages and discussion on them, *vide The Diary of Mahadev Desai,*

[2] The Translation is reproduced from *The Diary of Mahadev Desai,* Vol. I.

All these are non-violent and delicate means of establishing friendly relations with Mussalmans.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 181-2

516. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 28, 1932

MY DEAR AMTUL,

I have read both your letters. Your Urdu writing is not clear enough for me. I gave nearly an hour to it and could only get the substance of your letter. I gather that it is only a paraphrase of your English letter. If you can keep your head cool and composed, I think you should stay with the family for the time being and then go to the Ashram. If you find it impossible to be at peace with yourself living with your people, you should stay with Noorbanu.

Does this answer all your questions? If not, write again and that in English. Write partly in Urdu also.

I shall write to Dr. Sharma.

I was glad you were able to come. You must regain the lost weight.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 250

517. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

May 28, 1932

CHI. PANDITJI,

I doubt if there was any moral obligation on the pupils of your guru, the late Panditji, to do something in his memory and pay their debt to him. But, since all of you felt that something must be done, you were bound to do what you did.

Write a letter to Lakshmibehn and send it with somebody there who may be coming this way. Or ask Narandas to write. Sometimes I come to know about a thing only after it is over.

I hope Rambhau is all right now. He who rides may fall too.

I look upon the problem of untouchability from a purely religious point of view. There must be, therefore, no separate electorates in any case. But the reservation of seats for them, if it is statutory, will not test the caste Hindus and, therefore, will not be a real *prayashchitta*[1] on their part. We cannot bargain with the 'untouchables'. What is necessary is that the suspicion which they harbour in their minds should go. If you still do not understand my position, please ask me again. Please take care that these views do not find their way into print in any circumstances.

There is a possibility of the visits coming to a stop.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 227. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

518. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA N. KHARE

May 28, 1932

CHI. RAMBHAU,

You should not worry about the injury to the bone. Such accidents happen to anyone who does physical exercises. I hope the bone has now been properly set.

Your reply was very helpful to me. Following your suggestion, I have been able to stop touching the wheel with the hand. I have understood the trick, though I have not yet mastered it.

You still make mistakes in your Gujarati. Avoid them and improve your handwriting. My compliments to you on regaining your weight.

When you are entrusted with a responsible job, look upon it as an opportunity to render more service and to be more humble.

Monetary help should be given only to a person who is really in need of it. And it is properly given when it is given at the right time and without any feeling of pride that one was helping somebody.

Non-violence means that we should not give pain to anybody for our good. It comprises both such a state of mind and such conduct.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 293. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

[1] Atonement

519. LETTER TO LAKSHMI JERAJANI

May 28, 1932

CHI. LAKSHMI (BORIVALI[1]),

If you used a small slip only for economy and if you use such slips when writing to everybody, what you did was right.

How did Kaka get eczema? Who are there with him?

I write to Gangabehn every week.

If you make a mistake when writing in ink, you may certainly strike out the word or words.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2811. Courtesy: Purushottam D. Saraiya

520. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

May 28, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

How is it that you don't get rid of your illness at all? "*Satya* is bound to triumph" does not mean that it should be victorious exactly at the time we desire it to be. Moreover we cannot say that what we are convinced to be true is the truth. So we may say: 'If what we think to be truth is indeed the truth, it is bound to succeed.'

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9911. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

521. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

May 29, 1932

MY DEAR CHILD,

This is silence time. I have your longish letter—none too long for me. I forgot last time to tell you I had received the book you sent me. I shall read it as soon as I can. Every minute is pre-mortgaged. Any new reading or other work that comes my way has therefore to await its turn unless it is of such paramount importance as to warrant

[1] A suburb of Bombay

suspension of current work.

Feeling is of the heart. It may easily lead us astray unless we would keep the heart pure. It is like keeping house and everything in it clean. The heart is the source from which knowledge of God springs. If the source is contaminated, every other remedy is useless. And if its purity is assured nothing else is needed.

This is written with the right hand, for the left has become worse than the right. There is nothing to worry about. Only, it must have complete rest. I therefore spin on a wheel which has a pedal and draw the thread with the right hand.

We are three—all well.

Love from us all. Kisses to the children.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 111. Courtesy: National Arehives of India. Also *My Dear Child,* p. 91

522. LETTER TO GOSIBEHN CAPTAIN

May 29, 1932

Your welcome letter. I don't expect Jalbhai to trouble to write to me. I expect you, the nurses, to do that work. A patient has to eat, sleep, complain and bully. He is an angel when he omits to do the two last things. I hope the crutches will go.

I am no good at choosing books for others, even for you, though so near to me. The book of life is really the book to read and that you are doing more or less. The other is amusement for those who have no service. One would think that here at least one would have plenty of time to read. Well, spinning and preparatory studies leave little time for reading for amusement. But I must stop this lecturing.

Are you keeping well? Has Nargisbehn lost her headache? The Government's reply regarding her is that I am not to see her. Evidently they think that she is taking an active part in politics or that she suffers from contamination.

Now it is my left hand's turn not to be used. Can it be old age knocking vigorously at my door?[1]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 185-6

[1] The source has this paragraph in Gujarati.

523. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

May 29, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I write this letter though I had none from you this week, for when it reaches the Ashram, you too will have returned and will probably expect a letter from me.

I was happy that all of you came and saw me. Of course, we did not have much to talk about, and in any case the time was too short. I deliberately did not give time to Sushila alone. Whatever timewas permitted to me had to be divided among you, Amtul and Sharda. Did Sushila have anything particular to ask me?

In their letters to me, I am afraid the boys and the girls put to me all sorts of pointless questions, and that too merely for the sake of asking some questions. Explain this carefully to them once. Writing letters also requires to be taught to some extent.

I shall look forward to an account of your experience of the visits.

Did you see Dhurandhar? Anybody else?

I hope you have succeeded in increasing your weight.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10287. Also C.W. 6735. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

524. LETTER TO VENILAL GANDHI

May 29, 1932

CHI. VENILAL,

I got your letter. Your illness was such that you are bound to take time to regain strength. Try to regain it patiently.

You have practically got a new life. Make the best use of it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 917. Courtesy: Venilal Gandhi

525. LETTER TO DAUDBHAI

May 29, 1932

I welcomed your letter. Fight like a lion bad thoughts and impulses. It is our duty to fight. Whether we shall win rests with God. We should be content with fighting. But our fighting must be sincere. Seek the company of the good. For that, you should read good books. In a city like Bombay, reading good books is the only way of being in the company of the good. According to me, the sight of Noorbanu is also uplifting like the company of the good. She is a truthful and pure lady.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 187

526 LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA[1]

May 29, 1932

Received the letter from Venice. Let me know how you passed your time on the steamer, what things you observed during the voyage and how you spent your money, so that I may have an idea of your powers of description and of what you regard as simplicity....[2] Take walks for exercise and make yourself physically fit. Do not get others to do what you can do for yourself. Do not use a conveyance in order to reach a place if you can negotiate the distance on foot. Fight against cold by exercise, not by sitting near the fire place....[3]

Write to your father regularly. Send him a statement of accounts from time to time. Remember that parents can never have enough of letters from their children. They are interested in the minutest details about them. Fulfil your father's expectations about you.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 186-7

[1] The translation is reproduced from *The Diary of Mahadev Desai*, Vol. I.
[2] Omission as in the source
[3] *ibid*

527. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,
May 29, 1932

CHI. KANTA,

I have your letter. You kept me waiting too long. I hope you have not forgotten your Gujarati ? It is good you are learning English from Kisan[1]. I trust you have made good progress. If your health remains good, Father's anger will pass.

What else are you studying? Do you get all the material you need for writing?

Tell Prabhavati I have written three letters to her. I do not know whether she got them.

Blessings to Sarup, Kisan and Prabhavati.

All the three of us are quite happy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

528. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

May 29, 1932

CHI. BHAU[2],

I have your letter. Send me only as much [portion] of Vinoba's discourse as you conveniently can. If possible, write in ink. Did you take it down while Vinoba was discoursing or did Vinoba himself write it out? Training in *takli* is progressing well. It will be very good if all the Ashram inmates learn it.

The silence period was lengthened from one minute to five minutes in order to give people greater peace.[3] It appears that all the people were much too distracted. Concentration will be greatly helped if all observe silence with a willing heart.

[1] Kisan Ghumatkar
[2] A Co-worker of Vinobha
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi," 4/9-5-1932

To meditate upon the image of a living person is not proper. The object of concentration is expected to be, and ought to be, perfect, but how can we call any living person perfect? The illustrations in the *Ramayana* and similar works are worthless. But why do we need a concrete image? God is without form or attributes. Why not concentrate one's thoughts on Him? If that is impossible, a form or an imaginary figure, may be meditated upon. Why not meditate upon the *Gita*? It has been compared to the *kamadhenu*. Let us meditate on this; we can gain much from it. However it be, meditation upon living persons is harmful; so it should be avoided.

Write to Rameshwarji that I have already sent him three or four letters.

Krishnadas informed me that Vinoba had started grinding flour and that Jamnalalji had lost 20 lb. in weight.

Here are some remedies for constipation. They can all be tried simultaneously.

1. Drink hot water with salt and lemon-juice in the morning; Salt can be substituted by jaggery or honey.

2. Sleep with an abdominal mud-pack at night.

3. Give up pulses for some time.

If you do not benefit with this treatment within three days, follow it up by eating only boiled greens for the next three days. Eat them hot. *Tandalja is* the best among the greens. You can take salt and lemon-juice on it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6729. Also C.W. 4472. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

529. LESSON OF DEATH[1]

May 30, 1932

So far as I remember, the following deaths have occurred in the Ashram till now: Fakiri, Vrajlal, Maganlal, Gita, Meghji, Vasant, Imam Saheb and Gangadevi. (It would be desirable to record the dates on which these persons died).

[1] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 26/30-5-1932; *vide* the following item.

Fakiri's death cannot be described as one befitting an inmate of the Ashram. The Ashram had been recently established when he died and he had not imbibed its moral and spiritual influence. He was no doubt a brave boy. I have made the foregoing remark as he died a victim of gluttony. His death was a test for me. I remember that I sat up, alone, by his side for the whole night on the last day of his life. In the morning, I had to catch a train for Gurukul. I watched the bier being borne away and then, hardening my heart to stone, took the road to the station. Fakiri's father had entrusted him and his three brothers to me, knowing that I would make no distinction between them and others. When Fakiri had gone, I lost the other three brothers too.

Vrajlal had joined the Ashram when he was well advanced in years and met his death while doing an act of service, thus winning immortal fame for himself and bringing glory to the Ashram. He had descended into a well to bring up a child's pot and, while climbing up, because of fatigue lost his grip of the rope and fell and died.

Gita passed away peacefully, hearing verses from the *Gita*. Meghji was an undisciplined child, but he preserved wonderful peace during his illness. In most cases children suffer a great deal when seriously ill and are difficult patients to nurse. But Meghji was an almost ideal patient. Vasant did not have to be nursed for a long time. A fatal attack of smallpox carried him away in a day or two. His death was a painful test for Panditji and Lakshmibehn, and they stood it well.

What shall I say about Maganlal? We are describing here the deaths which occurred in the Ashram. Hence Maganlal's name has no place in the list. But how can I leave it out? He had come into the world to serve the Ashram. As gold is tested in fire, Maganlal was tested in the fire of service, and passed away after proving his perfect worth. Everything that we see in the Ashram bears witness to Maganlal's devoted service.

Imam Saheb's was the only Muslim family in the Ashram and all the members were perfectly loyal to its ideals. His death has created an unbreakable bond between us and Muslims. Imam Saheb regarded himself as a representative of Muslims and had joined the Ashram as one. (I remember here Amina's two children. But they were only infants and there is little to say about them. Their deaths certainly teach us the necessity of self-control.)

Gangadevi's face is still vivid before my eyes, and I seem to hear her voice too. I still take pleasure in recalling memories of her. Her life teaches all of us, and particularly women, many lessons. Though practically illiterate, she possessed spiritual wisdom. She was the only person who, of her own accord, refused to go for change of air though she could have gone. She looked after every child entrusted to her care as if it was her own. I do not remember any occasion when she had quarrelled with somebody or got angry. She was not attached to life. She did not fear death— she met it with a smile on her face. She knew the art of dying, for there is an art of dying as there is of living.

I have recalled all these deaths lest we forget what we are. Our earth is like a particle of sand in this vast universe. On that particle of dust we are, so far as our bodies are concerned, mere specks. We cannot count the number of ants in an ant-hill, and cannot even see with our naked eyes creatures smaller than the ant. In relation to the Cosmic Form of the Lord, we are smaller than even the invisible creatures on our earth. That is why there is perfect truth in the description of this body as *kshanabhangur*[1]. Why should we be attached to it? Why should we cause pain to a single ceature for its sake? Why should we move heaven and earth to preserve something which is more brittle even than glass? Death means nothing but the soul leaving that body. Why should we fear it, then? Why all this desperate struggle to delay its coming? Let us all, grown-up and young, ponder over this constantly and give up the fear of death, and, while the body lasts, spend it in the service of others. We recite daily the last 19 verses of Chapter II of the *Gita* in order that we may get the strength to live in this manner. We shall find in them what we seek only if they fill our very hearts.

PS.

After I had finished the foregoing, Mahadev reminds me of the deaths of Fatima, Kaki[2] and Valji's mother. But I leave the discourse as it is, since their inclusion would not affect the lesson which I have drawn. Even so, I may say that what I was told about these deaths fills my mind with holy thoughts.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

[1] Momentary
[2] Wife of D. B. Kalelkar

530. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 26/30, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

Premabehn, Sushila, Amtulbehm, Sharda, Noorbanu and Pyare Ali were here before I got your packet. When absolutely necessary you may increase the size of the party from five to six or even seven. But ordinarily it would be desirable to stick to five. Only this time the number was six, not counting Amina's children. I think it will be safer for you to stick to the limit I have given, so that you may not displease anybody. Vallabhbhai had concluded that you had dropped your name because there were already five names. Whether that is the reason or whether you did not come because you did not think it necessary to come, in either case it was all right. Probably, there will be no occasion for you to bear all this in mind. I have still not received the Government's decision in regard to Mirabehn. If it is in the negative, you may take it that I will stop seeing visitors.

Lakshmidevi, who is in the prison here, has left her spectacles in the Ashram. She has asked me to request you, if you find them, to send them here with somebody. If no one is coming, send them by parcel. And also send 20 *tolas* of asafoetida pills along with it. When you say that Ba's letters were dispatched directly, I suppose you mean that they were sent through the Superintendent. If that is so, please inquire there. In affixing a stamp on the envelope in which you dispatch letters for me, you generally affix it at one of the two ends where it is closed. But unless you affix stamps at both ends, affixing a stamp at one end only serves no useful purpose. It would be advisable, therefore, to affix stamps at both ends. Either do that, or put sealing wax at both ends. Adopt whichever method you like.

You may certainly discuss with other inmates there my suggestion about calculating the value of work at the rate of one anna per hour, but I think for your own observation you will find it very helpful to maintain such a record in an independent book. The books being kept at present will continue to be maintained. The one I have suggested will be in addition to them. If, however, I have been able to explain my idea, you will see that there is so little to be recorded that the work will not be heavy at all. Moreover we shall be able to judge whether there is any truth in what I have been saying. If the summary

at the end of a month reveals a great difference between the actual figure of expenditure and the one arrived at by following the method of calculation suggested by me, we may assume that we shall never be able to close the gap and my mind will then start working in some other direction. I am confident, however, that such a summary will lead to a conclusion which will surprise us. It is my experience that very often because of our lethargy we continue to labour under a mistaken idea, and, if we make proper calculations, we are able to get rid of our preconceived notions and correct our errors. Personally, at the moment, I see no error at all in my reasoning and I believe, therefore, that the result will be excellent. Since for hundreds of years different types of work have been paid for at different rates, we assume that that is the right thing to do but I think it is a false notion.

Did you read the latest letter which Harilal wrote to me? Even the handwriting is not steady. He seems to have written the letter with a trembling hand. Either he has written it in great excitement, or he was drunk when he wrote it. The language is all excitement and insolence. No attention is paid to ordinary syntax, words are left incomplete and even the signature is not completed. I think we should completely forget him now. If God wills, he will reform himself one day. Even in order to open his eyes, it is necessary that we should let him know plainly what we think about him. You say that you got "both" my letters to him. Does that mean that you also got the one which we thought had miscarried?[1] If you got it, did you examine the postmark on it?

The electric treatment seems to have had no effect on the hand. For the first two days, it seemed that it might really do some good. The real trouble just now is not with the right hand but with the left elbow, but the doctor does not give electric treatment for that. He has been thinking of giving radium treatment. Since I spin on the Magan wheel, I do no work at all with the left hand. But there is no cause for worry. So far it has been paining only when I work with it. At other times there is no pain. As for getting Khambhatta here to examine the bone, I cannot say anything just now. Permission for him has been received, but it will not be possible for me to avail myself of it if the reply in regard to Mirabehn is in the negative. I thought I had sent to you the five nameswhich had already been approved. You

[1] In "Letter to E. E. Doyle", 7-5-1932, Gandhiji refers to a letter dated April 28 to "an erring son"; *vide* also "Diary, 1932", entry under "April 28".

know three of them now. The other two are Trivedi and Lady Thackersey. It would be fine indeed if you think you can look after Jayantiprasad's daughter. Jayantiprasad gave me the impression, during the Dandi March, that he was careful in observing rules.

I feel rather unhappy that Chimanlal and Sharda do not improve. I write down here the suggestion which occurs to me just now as to what they should do. I will not write to them separately. Let them take this as addressed to them. Shivaji used to keep indifferent health. He read all the literature on the subject that he could get, tried the diet changes and exercises recommended in the books which he read and succeeded in improving his health. Chimanlal should do something like that. I don't mean that all could try everything that Shivaji did. But Chimanlal has been in the Ashram for a long time, has thought about the subject and has observed my experiments too. It is, therefore, possible that he will hit upon something which his body needs. We have plenty of books on the subject in the Ashram. There is a small book even on chromopathy. This remedy is quite easy to try. The doctor[1] whose treatment helped Amtulbehn employs it in many cases. Light *asana* exercises also may help. Chimanlal should find some time and read about them. According to me, these remedies are more effective than doctors' medicines, and they are spiritually harmless. We often see that even the latter fail. Medical science is altogether imperfect and much of it is based on hypotheses. Since the body of every person is a unique organism, we do not at all exaggerate in saying that there are no remedies which are universally applicable. About Sharda, I think that we know the remedies but they have not all been tried. She also may be partly responsible for this. You should gently persuade her to try them.

I think it was a very good thing that Jamna went to Ranavav. Since Purushottam is with her, you will not have to worry about her at all. Parnerkar's problem is very complicated. Do what you can. Read my letter to Titus. Compared with the heat there, the heat here is a joke. Hence our *tapascharya,* both outward and inward, is no real *tapascharya.* Yours deserves to be envied. I hope and pray that you will survive it.

If all my letters are not translated into Hindi, make it a strict rule that they must be. Even if there are sometimes only two or three

[1] Hiralal Sharma

persons who do not know Gujarati, the letter must be translated, unless the persons themselves do not wish it.

May 30, 1932

I had written one letter to Savitribehn, that is, Mrs. Standenath, and put on it the address given by her. But the letter has been returned from the D.L.O. I am now sending it to you, along with the envelope. If you have more particulars of her address, use it and send the letter by registered post. She must be awaiting a letter from me and, having got no reply from me, must be feeling unhappy. If you find her full address, please send it to me too.

Father Elwin has suggested that we should recite a Christian prayer here every Friday, and that his Christian friends will sing the same prayer on that day and at the same time. They would thus cultivate a communion of hearts with us. Mahadev accepted the suggestion as soon as we read his letter last Friday and we replied to it with *Premal Jyoti*[1]. Hence we have fixed upon that hymn as the one we will sing every Friday. Discuss the matter with Panditji and, if he agrees, sing it every Friday there too at the time of evening prayers. You will observe that I have now resumed writing with my right hand. The doctors here are strongly of the view that the left elbow requires complete rest. Failing this, they think gradually the pain will increase. I have, therefore, given up even writing with the left hand. In a day or two, they will put the whole arm in plaster. Don't get alarmed on reading this, for the elbow has never pained so far except when I have been working with the left hand. The arm is to be put into plaster only as a precaution. The doctors are convinced that this pain has no connection with my diet. People who play tennis also get such pain sometimes, and the doctors believe that, because of my regular spinning for many years, I have strained the elbow much more than tennis players do. Hence they think that it requires complete rest for some time.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8829. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* "Cable to J. F. Horrabin", 3-1-1932

531. LETTER TO GULCHEN LUMSDEN[1]

May 30, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

I thank you for your letter. I well remember the visit of Sir Henry Lawrence to this prison in 1922 or 23, and he is right in his impression that I then passed my time principally between reading *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* and spinning at the wheel. It is also true that he found me quite happy. But there was no "lovely orchard" then, nor is there now. There were then, as there are now, some tall trees about. The rooms are bare and barred cells of an ordinary Indian prison. As cells they are well lighted and well ventilated. So long therefore as the surroundings are concerned, there is no question of my memory betraying me, for at the time of writing I am exactly in the same surroundings as when Sir Henry saw me. If therefore his description of them gave you the impression of a fairy tale, it was surely erroneous. Happiness after all is a mental state, and for myself, being used, now for more than a generation, to a hard life, I have learnt to detach my happiness from my surroundings.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9527. Courtesy: Mrs. Hugh Lumsden, Canada

532. LETTER TO A. R. TIJARAY

May 30, 1932

MY DEAR TIJARAY,

I have your letter, received just now. The previous letter you refer to was not received at all. I would have attended to it there and then. Sardar Vallabhbhai who is present whilst I am dictating this and who has shared all the correspondence with me has also no recollection whatsoever of anything having been received from you. However I know no one in Vienna. I have never been there. But I haveno doubt that when you tell the specialist the whole of your story he will treat your case as he must have treated similar cases before. If

[1] Addressee's name is supplied from *Mahadevbhaini Diary,* Vol. I, p. 189.

it is of any value, you may certainly use this letter to identify you as Principal, Tilak Vidyalaya, Nagpur. I hope you will benefit by the treatment there. I am glad that Vithalbhai is improving. Please remember me to him.

Yours sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

A. R. TIJARAY

(PRINCIPAL, TILAK VIDYALAYA, NAGPUR)

C/O PENSION B. PFEFFER

WILHELM EXNERGASSE 28

WIEN IX, AUSTRIA

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. 1, p. 241

533. A LETTER[1]

May 30, 1932

In my opinion unity will come not by mechanical means but by change of heart and attitude on the part of the leaders of public opinion. I do not conceive religion as one of the many activities of mankind. The same activity may be either governed by the spirit of religion or irreligion. There is no such thing for me therefore as leaving politics for religion. For me, every, the tiniest, activity is governed by what I consider to be my religion.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 189

534. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

May 30, 1932

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

You did well in paying a visit to Pyarelal. He had become impatient to get my reply. I have written a postcard to him directly from here. Mahadev will write by and by. Inform me what your movements for some time will be. If you intend to write to Pyarelal,

[1] The addressee had advised Gandhiji to give up politics and to preach the truths common to Islam, Christianity and Buddhism.

inform him that I am still reading Ramakrishna's and Vivekananda's books[1]. I will send them over to Rameshwardas[2] when I finish them.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1839

535. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

May 30, 1932

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

I got your letter. I hope that you got my last letter which I wrote before you wrote yours and which I sent to you through the Ashram. Stick to the vow of spinning. Do not take any new vow until your mind has become firm. However, adhere with the utmost firmness to the vows which you have taken and maintained so far. Even a small vow becomes a rudder to the ship of one's life, if one sticks to it in the face of all difficulties. It will be all right if you can win over your mother and sister-in-law with loving persuasion, otherwise you should patiently tolerate their opposition. They should not be forced against their wishes. It will be good if you send the boy to the Gurukul at Kangri. There he will learn Hindi, Sanskrit and English and almost everything else that they teach at a high school. If he is unwilling to go to the Gurukul, he may go to Santiniketan. In that case he should learn Bengali. If even that does not suit him, he may join the Kashi Vishvavidyalaya. He will not be able to study at home. Since you have withdrawn him from the high school there, it would not be proper to send him back to it. Nor would it be right to interrupt his studies. It would, therefore, be desirable to send him to one of the three places mentioned above.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 181

[1] Presumably by Romain Rolland; *vide* "Diary, 1932", entries under May 22 and 23.

[2] Rameshwardas Poddar of Dhulia

536. A LETTER[1]

May 30, 1932

I believe, and doctors also hold the same view, that no woman can be absolutely and simply raped. Not being prepared to die, a woman yields to the wrongdoer. But a woman who has overcome all fear of death would die before submitting to the outrage. It is easy to say this, but difficult to act in this manner. Hence when a woman yields to the wrongdoer unwillingly, it is but right that we should regard her as having been raped. If such a woman becomes pregnant, she should not resort to abortion. A woman who has been the victim of a rape does not deserve any censure. On the contrary, people should have compassion for her. If, however, a woman wishes to conceal the very fact of her having been raped, who is to say what right she has, whether or not she has a right to resort to abortion? In her fright she would believe that she had such a right and do as she wished. After the outrage, a woman has no right at all to commit suicide, nor need she do it.

My replies to your letters or to the letters of others, being written from jail, must not be published. I write numerous letters from here and it would not at all be proper to publish them. The Government may even tolerate the publication of all these letters, but a satyagrahi ought not to take such freedom. This is one of the restrictions which a satyagrahi voluntarily imposes on himself. The world is not impatient to know my views and act according to them. Even if it is, it should exercise patience at present. Nor do I myself attach so much value to my views. And, moreover, I cannot say about any view which I may express now that I will not change it in future. I may not mind expressing my personal views to a person like you. I would assume that you would bear in mind my temperament and my short-comings and take them for what they are worth.

And now about the questions you put. Some of them are such as should not be asked at all. A seeker may ask a person in whom he has faith for solutions to a very few of his immediate difficulties. He should never raise hypothetical issues. He may certainly ask if he has any doubt about a step which he intends to take. If he asks a question

[1]*The Diary of Mahadev Desai* Vol. I, gives only the initial letter ‘‘S” of the addressee’s name.

about something which has really happened, he should give all details of the incident. He should not frame a general question on the basis of the incident, for in doing so he might ignore some relevant detail of that incident. It would be risky, in that case, to apply to that particular incident the reply given to a general question.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 188-9

537. DIARY, 1932[1]

JANUARY 4, MONDAY, YERAVDA[2]

Spun 190 rounds. The police came and arrested me at 3 o'clock in the morning. Left after reciting a *bhajan*. Elwin[3], Privat, Mills and others were present. Vallabhbhai also was arrested at the same time. We met in the jail and are lodged together. I may say I spent the day resting. I could take a walk for the first time today after landing. Started reading Will Durant's book[4]. Ate no fresh fruit today. Had two seers of milk.

JANUARY 5, TUESDAY

Spun 172 rounds. Rested well today also. Sent a note[5] about our wishes in regard to visits, etc., to I. G. just for his information. Continued reading Durant's book.

JANUARY 6, WEDNESDAY

Spun 196 rounds. Major Martin called. Got a copy of *The Times of* India today. Finished Durant's book. Commenced another by Crozier[6]. Feeling of exhaustion persists. Were weighed—I was 105. [Ib.] and the Sardar 147.

JANUARY 7, THURSDAY

Spun 197 rounds. Completed Crozier's book. Commenced Brailsford's[6]. Good rest still needed. Ate a *papaya* today. Will start

[1] In Gandhiji's own hand, in Gujarati; for the entries under October 14, 1931, when Gandhiji commenced this Diary, to January 3, 1932

[2] From January 26, 1932 Gandhiji described this as "Yeravda Mandir". This place-entry is not reproduced under subsequent dates.

[3] Verrier Elwin

[4] For the titles of the books, *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 3/8-2-1932

[5] *ibid*

[6] For the title of the book, *vide*"Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 3/8-2-1932

taking tomatoes tomorrow.

JANUARY 8, FRIDAY

Spun 195 rounds. Telegram to Lady Shaffee on the death of Sir Mohammad Shaffee. Satavlekar sent *Purushartha*[1]. A Gujarati book arrived.

JANUARY 9, SATURDAY

Spun 212 rounds. Today completed Brailsford's *Rebel India*. Received two baskets of fruits and vegetables from Trivedi.

JANUARY 10, SUNDAY

Spun 160 rounds. Yesterday commenced reading Mahomedali Al Haj Salmin's *Imam Hussain*. Completed it today. Now am reading his book on Khalifa Ally. Entered silence today at 3 o'clock. Have still not gained the strength to spin or work more. Feel like lying down all the time. Slept thrice during the day. Ate the grapes and oranges sent by Trivedi.

JANUARY 11, MONDAY

Spun 163 rounds. Received some mail today, namely, letters from Mira, Kashinath, Kalavati and Prabhavati. A lawyer named Iyer sent a book on the Scout Movement.

JANUARY 12, TUESDAY

Spun 206 rounds. Some more letters and books arrived today. Received permission to write letters.[2] Wrote to Narandas, Ba, Mira, Radha, Amina and others. Also to Prabhavati and Kashinath.

JANUARY 13, WEDNESDAY

Spun 185 rounds. Commissioner Clayton called. Received a letter from Prabhavati. Wrote to Narandas enclosing postcards to Mahalakshmi and others as also to Chandrashankar and Hemprabhadevi. Dahyabhai visited Vallabhbhai. Ordered dates today.

JANUARY 14, THURSDAY

Spun 185 rounds. Finished today the letter to the Viceroy which I had been drafting since yesterday. Completed reading life of Ally yesterday. Today commenced reading Hoare's *The Fourth Seal*. Received slivers, sandals and carding-bow from the Ashram. Also wrote a letter to Samuel Hoare. Were weighed today—my weight was

[1] A Marathi monthly

[2] The first letter to Narandas Gandhi, however, is dated January 11, 1932; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 11-1-1932

the same, Sardar's decreased by three pounds.

JANUARY 15, FRIDAY

Spun 194 rounds. Handed over to the Major letters to the Viceroy and to Hoare. Hoare's book is nearly finished. Dahyabhai came again today with a doctor for Sardar.

JANUARY 16, SATURDAY

Spun 163 rounds. Received Kumarappa's book[1] on the Matar inquiry. Got *The* [*Bombay*] *Chronicle* today. Received some letters. Finished Hoare's book. Commenced MacDonald's[2].

JANUARY 17, SUNDAY

Spun 196 rounds. I could read a good deal today. Again two baskets of fruits and vegetables arrived from Trivedi.

JANUARY 18, MONDAY

Spun 166 rounds. The Ashram mail—Narandas, Khushalbhai, Champa, Pranjivan, Abbas, Parnerkar, Surendra, Balkrishna, Chhotelal, Durga, Ratilal, Bhansali, Vasumati, Padma, Valji, Prabhudas, Ramdas, Mira, Chhotalal Gandhi, Mahuwa, Maganlal Shamji, Urmila Devi, Abdul Majid (Barabanki), Raihana, Kamala Nehru, Nirmala Joshi, Hakim Abdul Latif (Dasuya), Surbala Desai (Surat), Prof. Trivedi. Completed MacDonald's book.

JANUARY 19, TUESDAY

Spun 228 rounds. Received today intimation regarding newspapers, visits, etc. Seems to be satisfactory. Received letters from Pyarelal and others. Received fruit from Lady Thackersey. Commenced yesterday the book about the Matar Taluka inquiry.

JANUARY 20, WEDNESDAY

Spun 173 rounds. The Collector paid a visit today. Wrote letters *to The Tribune*, *The Leader* and *The Hindu* for copies. Completed Kumarappa's book, Ramanathan's pamphlet and Hayes' *Indian Bibles*. Started Ruskin's *Guild of St. George*[3].

JANUARY 21, THURSDAY

Spun 205 rounds. Ashram letters arrived today and also one from Kashinath. Stanley Jones sent me his new book. Wrote letters yesterday and today: Lester, Hopkinson, Sir George Barnes, Narandas,

[1] J. C. Kumarappa"s *Survey of Matar Taluka*

[2] Travelogue

[3] A slip for *St. George's Guild*

(Kusum, Pyarelal, Maitri, Mahavir), Esther Menon, Wrench, Mary Lauder. Today completed Ruskin's book about the Guild. Commenced Shah's[1] *Federal Finance.*

JANUARY 22, FRIDAY

Spun 231 rounds. Sent yesterday's letters for posting. In addition, wrote to Ramananda Babu, the *Chronicle,* Marie Petersen. Col. Steele examined both of us.

JANUARY 23, SATURDAY

Spun 153 rounds. Did not take milk today. Again a basket of fruit has arrived. Wrote a letter yesterday to Sir Frederick Sykes and handed it to the Major today. Wrote a few letters during the day for the Ashram. Received today letters from Hemprabha Devi and others. Also from Raihana.

JANUARY 24, SUNDAY

Spun 160 rounds. Cresswell called this morning. Did not take milk even today. Wrote a number of letters for the Ashram in the afternoon.

JANUARY 25, MONDAY

Spun 201 rounds. Completed the Ashram mail. It contained 61 letters and a talk on Chapter XIV [of the *Gita*]. The other letters are to Prabhavati, Raihana, Hemprabha, *Kangani*[2] Sundaram and Vishvanath Thanorkar. A number of books arrived again today, including a volume of Ingersol's speeches. Wrote to Josiah[3] acknowledging receipt of these books.

JANUARY 26, TUESDAY

Spun 211 rounds. Handed over yesterday's letters for posting. Took milk today. Ordered dates. The *Gita* number of *Purushartha* arrived. Prepared draft of letter to Emerson. It was so long and I was so much engrossed in it that I did not hear the clock strike seven. Hence prayer was delayed by half an hour. Wrote letters to Vichchhan Charan Patnaik, Kashinath, Edith Scott, Hope and also to Narandas, having forgotten to enclose Chapter XIV with the letter to him. Commenced *The Ruin of Egypt.*

[1] K. T. Shah

[2] Literally, "jobber"

[3] Dr. Josiah Oldfield, editor of *The Vegetarian*, President of Bayswater Vegetarian Society founded by Gandhiji during his stay in England for studies; *vide* "An Autobiography"

JANUARY 27, WEDNESDAY

Spun 190 rounds. Handed over yesterday's letters to the Superintendent. Today wrote one to Prof. Shah and handed over this also to him. Mira, Pyare Ali, Noorbanu and Radha paid a visit. Received copies of *The Hindu* and *The Leader*. Received the Ashram mail. Wrote a postcard to Narandas about the Giri family. Wrote some letters.

JANUARY 28, THURSDAY

Spun 172 rounds. Handed over to the Superintendent letters to Emerson and Narandas. Wrote letters. Received a copy of *The Leader*.

JANUARY 29, FRIDAY

Spun 179 rounds. Received *The Tribune* today. More books arrived. Received letters from Narandas and Prabhavati. Airey [*sic*] received orders to go to Bombay. I asked him to carry Hoare's book. Wrote some letters. I still feel sleepy.

JANUARY 30, SATURDAY

Spun 168-rounds. I fed great need for sleep. Wrote some letters during the day.

JANUARY 31, SUNDAY

Spun 207 (two hundred and seven) rounds. Completed *The Ruin of Egypt*. Commenced Hayes' book[1] on the cow. Among some letters received from abroad was one from Esther, too.

FEBRUARY 1, MONDAY

Spun 235 rounds. Wrote letters and got them ready. The Ashram packet—Manilal (Dhiru, Mangal, Gulab), Chintamani, *The Hindu*, Kali Babu, Prabhavati, Kamla Nehru, Chandrahas, Kevalram Dave (along with his sisters'), Emma Harker, Khushal Shah, Swami Chidatmananda, Virendranath, Hariram Mohandas, Prabhakar, Biharilal, Kantilal Trivedi. Received five books from Shah. The second mail that arrived contained Manilal's letter from South Africa. Quinn went to Visapur. Dahyabhai met the Sardar.

FEBRUARY 2, TUESDAY

Spun 164 rounds. Wrote to Lady Vithaldas not to send fruits. Handed other letters to the Superintendent for posting. Completed A. E.'s *Candle of the Vision*. Commenced Kinley's Money. Wrote

[1] *The Book of the cow*

letters to Joan Widdikiss, Gertrude Keller, De Valera, Rev. W. Hayes, Prof. Hoyland, Carla, rmani[1].

FEBRUARY 3, WEDNESDAY

Spun 152 rounds. I do not know how I spun fewer rounds today. There was the correct number of slivers. Handed letters written yesterday to the Superintendent for posting. The magistrate called. Were weighed. Vallabhbhai's weight was 144.5 lb., mine 107. Read the life of Shri Bhupati Nath. In the afternoon, Lady Vithaldas, Prof. Trivedi, Damodar and Vidya called. Mira sent leather for the soles and honey. 190 persons, including Ramdas, Chhaganlal Joshi, Surendra and Somabhai came from Sabarmati [jail]. Mani, Lilavati, Nandubehn and others arrived and they were transferred to Belgaum [jail]. Received the Ashram mail.

FEBRUARY 4, THURSDAY

Spun 210 rounds. Wrote some letters to the Ashram. Wrote a separate one to Mira. Two bottles of honey came from Lady Thackersey.

FEBRUARY 5, FRIDAY

Spun 210 rounds. Spoke to the Superintendent about meeting fellow-prisoners, wrote to him a letter. Received copy of *The Modern Review*. The Superintendent gave me oil for applying on the elbow.

FEBRUARY 6, SATURDAY

Spun 244 rounds. Today commenced reading biography[2] of Zaka Ullah. Wrote letters to the Ashram; also to Mary Barr, Karimnagar, Ramananda Babu.

FEBRUARY 7, SUNDAY

Spun 180 rounds. Wrote out summary of Chapter XVI of the *Gita*. Felt miserable upon reading the painful news of a girl's attempt on the life of the Governor of Bengal. Translated speech about God.[3]

FEBRUARY 8, MONDAY

Spun 241 rounds. Wrote letters to Anjana Devi, Lalita, Buken, Agatha Harrison, Zenkoff, Davis, Nagardas, Esther, Raihana, Khandelwal, Ambikaimukkam, 36 for the Ashram. Completed Kinley's *Money*. Commenced Shah's *Sixty Years of Economic*

[1] The first letter is illegible in the source.

[2] *Zaka Ullah of Delhi* by C. F. Andrews

[3] *Vide*"Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 3/8-2-1932

Administration of India. Did not take milk or curds today. Took almond paste.

FEBRUARY 9, TUESDAY (RAMZAN ID)

Spun 192 rounds. Sent for posting letters which were made ready yesterday. The Major did not attend office on account of Id. Received news of Prabhudas's arrest.

FEBRUARY 10, WEDNESDAY

Spun 185 rounds. Punjabhai, Juthabhai, Shankar, Amina and Kanti called on me today. Received the Ashram mail. Kanti gave a few books among which was *Sangitshastra* of Barve sent by Panditji. Received letter from the Governor of Bombay. We were weighed today. I was 105_ [lb.] and Vallabhbhai 141.5.

FEBRUARY 11, THURSDAY (VASANT PANCHAMI)

Spun 170 rounds. Got Lilavati Munshi's letter. Letters— Mira, Manu Trivedi, Narandas, Lilavati Munshi.

FEBRUARY 12, FRIDAY

Spun 183 rounds. Despatched yesterday's letters. Continued Ashram mail today. Wrote quite a number of letters.

FEBRUARY 13, SATURDAY

Spun 207 rounds. Prof. Glen Clarke sent me his books. One or two other books arrived. Wrote Ashram letters this afternoon also. Vallabhbhai passed blood in stool. The Major, therefore, examined it.

FEBRUARY 14, SUNDAY

Spun 201 rounds. Wrote letters during afternoon. Translated Chapter XVII in the evening.

FEBRUARY 15, MONDAY

Spun 217 rounds. There are 68 letters for the post. Narandas for the Ashram, Chapter XVII, and also to West, Narsi Premji, Jivraj Mehta, Philip Hartog, K. T. Shah, Chhaganlal, Metalbhai, Gertrude Keller, Rasiklal Chunilal, Velshi Ranshi, Harilal Govindji, Maganlal Mehta, Nirmala Pandya.

FEBRUARY 16, TUESDAY

Spun 189 rounds. Major Martin paid a visit today. The question of my meeting other prisoners was discussed. As a result, I wrote a letter. Handed over yesterday's letter to the Superintendent. Received copy of the *Golden Book of Tagore* as also of the biography of A. Gray [*sic*]. Telegram to the Maharaja of Bikaner. Wrote letters to

Narandas, Jhaverchand, Chakechake [*sic*], Hanumanprasad, Gosibehn, Ramananda Babu, Mrs. Gael.

FEBRUARY 17, WEDNESDAY

Spun 171 rounds. Handed over yesterday's letters to the Superintendent. Mira, Valji and Lilavati came to see me today. There was some argument about Valji and Lilavati. In the end they saw the point. Mira will be arrested tomorrow. Valji brought a book on astronomy and three letters. Received honey and *papaya* from Lady Thackersey. Mira brought soap powder and almonds.

FEBRUARY 18, THURSDAY

Spun 160 rounds. Received Gandiva wheel from Lakshmidas. Received a letter from Andrews. There is an enquiry on about the people coming to see me. Received the Ashram mail. Started writing letters for the Ashram. Were weighed today—Vallabhbhai was 142 [lb.] and I, 106. Wrote letters to Lakshmidas and Damodardas.

FEBRUARY 19, FRIDAY

Spun 150 rounds. Handed over yesterday's two letters for posting. Dahyabhai paid a visit to Vallabhbhai. Received four books from Maithilisharan. Received a telegram from Magan about going abroad. Wrote Ashram letters.

FEBRUARY 20, SATURDAY

Spun 205 rounds. The District Magistrate called. Wrote letters. Talked with the Superintendent about Ishu. Someone has sent a book about Mussolini.

FEBRUARY 21, SUNDAY

Spun 160 rounds. Completed summary of Chapter XVIII. Practically finished Ashram mail. Took white gourd as the fifth item.[1] Changed bed-cover which had got completely worn out.

FEBRUARY 22, MONDAY

Spun 160 rounds. G. N. Gokhale has sent his book on the Dharmashastras. Letters to the Ashram totalled 32. In addition to [letter to] Narandas and the summary of the *Gita* chapter, the others include those to Ghanshyamdas, Kamla Nehru, Rani Vidyavati, Maithilisharan, Jerajani, Rameshwarlal Bajaj, Raihana. Completed

[1] The reference is to Gandhiji's vow to take not more than five items in his day's food, which he had taken in 1915 during his visit to the Kumbha Mela in Hardwar; *vide* "Diary for 1915"

Shah's *Sixty Years of Economic Administration of India* and Maithilisharan's *Panchavati*. Commenced *Saket*.

FEBRUARY 23, TUESDAY

Spun 183 rounds. Ishu has been sent for a night. Spoke with the Superintendent about visits. Sent yesterday's letters.

FEBRUARY 24, WEDNESDAY

Spun 159 rounds. The Civil Surgeon examined me. Received the Ashram mail. Commenced writing letters.

FEBRUARY 25, THURSDAY

Spun 222 rounds. Sir Samuel's letter arrived, also one from Mira. Today Yashwantprasad, Jivanlal, Lady Vithaldas were to pay a visit but did not because of Superintendent's objection. Wrote to Mira, Harjivan, Babalbhai and Ranchhodbhai Kunvarji's maternal uncle—and of course the Ashram letters. Yesterday began Salvemini's book on Mussolini, having finished *Saket*.

FEBRUARY 26, FRIDAY

Spun 176 rounds. Wrote letters for the Ashram. Handed over yesterday's letters to the Superintendent. Received 24 postcards today. Received some Hindi books from Kalyan Press.

FEBRUARY 27, SATURDAY

Spun 195 rounds. Dahyabhai called. I also met him. Received [*Life of*] *Henry George*[1] and some other books from America. Received some letters. Wrote and sent a postcard to Ba. Wrote letters for the Ashram.

FEBRUARY 28, SUNDAY

Spun 206 rounds. Ate bread today. Discontinued tomatoes because of stomatitis. Wrote letters for the Ashram and some others. Wrote letters to Sir Fazli and Sir Samuel Hoare.

FEBRUARY 29, MONDAY

Spun 163 rounds. Handed over two letters of yesterday to the Superintendent. Today received letters from Munshi and others. During these days wrote letters to Lilavati (Munshi), Hemprabha, Esther, Jessie Jones, Sumangal, Lakshmidas, Purushottam, Maganlal Pranjivan, Bhagwanji Anupchand, Mulchand Parekh, Kanu Munshi, Madhavdas Gokuldas, forty-two for the Ashram in addition to

[1] American economist

Narandas's and on Socrates's ideas about death[1].

MARCH 1, TUESDAY

Spun 153 rounds, Completed [book] about Mussolini. Commenced Delisle Burns's *Democracy*. Handed over yesterday's letters to the Superintendent. Received dates from Ghanshyamdas. Wrote letters to Radha, Rukhi, Benarsi, Parasram, Tehelramani, Mahulikar, Dinkar Mehta, Trivedi, Lady Vithaldas.

MARCH 2, WEDNESDAY

Spun 163 rounds. Lady Ramanathan sent me her book, *The Ramayana*, Iyer sent a book on exchange and Sathe on morality. Wrote postcards to all the three. Narandas's letter about Khushalbhai's illness. Today commenced "Bal Gita"[2].

MARCH 3, THURSDAY

Spun 217 rounds. Ba and Shanta called on me. Fruit arrived from Lady Thackersey. Dinkar brought honey and dates. Received the Ashram mail. Wrote Ashram letters. Sent yesterday's postcards for posting and a telegram to Khushalbhai.

MARCH 4, FRIDAY

Spun 205 rounds. Some books arrived. Letters from Sir George Barnes and from Ghanshyamdas. Oranges arrived from Wardha. Wrote the Ashram letters. Dahyabhai and Yashoda paid a visit.

MARCH 5, SATURDAY

Spun 160 rounds. Five of the skeins today are likely to be short by three rounds. Government orders regarding visitors from outside [the Ashram] received today. Wrote a letter to Narandas. The other letters were for the Ashram.

MARCH 6, SUNDAY

Spun 195 rounds. Today resumed almonds which I had given up for some time. Wrote a letter to Major Bhandari about receiving visitors. Handed over for posting letter to Narandas. Completed *Democracy* yesterday. Commenced Upton Sinclair's *Wet Parade.*

MARCH 7, MONDAY

Spun 180 rounds. 37 Ashram letters, "Reminiscences of Imam

[1] *Vide* "Death, A Friend", 29-2-1932

[2] Gandhiji wrote "Reminiscences of Imam Saheb" instead; *vide* "Imam Saheb—I", 7-3-1932; 14-3-1932 and 21-3-1932 also "Letter to D. B. Kalelkar", 7-3-1932

Saheb", and letters to Birla, Quinn, Kusum, Mrs. William Donaldson, Upton Sinclair, Ishvarbhai.

MARCH 8, TUESDAY

Spun 196 rounds. Today got another improvement effected in the spinning-wheel, that of the spring. Received letters from Lakshmidas, Raihana, Manmohan and others. Wrote to Raihana, Manmohan, Lakshmi and Ramachandra, Gertrude Kellersching, Agatha Harrison, Aubrey Mony, Ramgopal Mehta, Nagardas, Kantilal Shah, Rambiharilal, Lakshmidas.

MARCH 9, WEDNESDAY

Spun 215 rounds. Today I weighed 105.5. Vallabhbhai was 139. Handed over yesterday's letters for posting. Ramdas called. Discussed what would be my duty in case separate electoral rolls were prepared for untouchables. Also prepared draft of a letter to be addressed to Sir Samuel Hoare. Received the Ashram mail.

MARCH 10, THURSDAY

Spun 189 rounds. Today spun on the old spinning-wheel, It took a lot of time. Major brought Emerson's letter. Jaisukhlal and others will come to see me. Received grapes from Trivedi. Mahadev came. Revised letter to Sir Samuel.

MARCH 11, FRIDAY

Spun 160 rounds. Today the Major examined Mahadev's leg. Despatched letter to Sir Samuel through the Governor. Vallabhbhai was willing neither to stop the letter nor to agree to its being sent, either. If his vote counted, it would be a negative one. Mahadev said having regard to my nature such a letter ought to go. Commenced Ashram letters.

MARCH 12, SATURDAY

Spun 207 rounds. Dahyabhai called. Got the book sent by Barnes. Wrote letters for the Ashram.

MARCH 13, SUNDAY

Spun 203 rounds. Wrote the Ashram letters, and one to Emerson.

MARCH 14, MONDAY

Spun 185 rounds. Wrote 41 letters for the Ashram; in addition to these letters, one to Narandas and "Reminiscences of Imam Saheb", [letters to] Sir George Barnes, Shanti Mehta, Bhanumati, Radha, Benarsi, Rukhi, Evelyn Wrench, Keelan [*sic*].

MARCH 15, TUESDAY

Spun 155 rounds. Today Kashi, Jamna, Moti, Lakshmi, Lalitabehn, Jaisukhlal, Durga, Babla and Prabodh paid a visit. Wrote a letter to Martin to the effect that I should receive a reply about seeing Haridas and others by Friday. Today received fruit from Trivedi. Completed *Wet Parade*. Commenced Carpenter's *Adam's Peak to Elephanta*. Wrote letters to Hemprabha, Alexander Gary and Dinkarrao.

MARCH 16, WEDNESDAY

Spun 185 rounds. Major Martin's reply regarding Haridas arrived. Received reply from India Office on behalf of Evans [and] Rogers.[1] Dictated letters [to] Shah, Mulchand Parekh, Oriental Eucalyptus Company, Champaklal, Syed Mustafa Husain, Napoleon, Prithuraj, Shankarsagar. Handed over yesterday's letters for posting.

MARCH 17, THURSDAY

Spun 221 rounds. Handed over yesterday's letters. Received the Ashram mail and a letter from Dhiru.

MARCH 18, FRIDAY

Spun 160 rounds. Decision about visiting prisoners is received. Received a painful letter from Champa. Commenced letters for the Ashram. Wrote letters to Narandas, Petavel[2] and Harjivan.

MARCH 19, SATURDAY

Spun 162 rounds. Handed over yesterday's letters for posting. Met Joshi, Narasinhbhai and Haridas. Sent dates to Haridas. Received Stokes's book. For the present agreed to content myself with letters from women prisoners instead of meeting them.

MARCH 20, SUNDAY

Spun 195 rounds. Completed *Adam's peak to Elephanta*. Completed *Anagh*. Wrote letters for the Ashram.

MARCH 21, MONDAY

Spun 207 rounds. Letters for the Ashram and letter to Gangabehn. Sent *Federal Finance*, *Money* and *Sixty Years of Economic Administration of India* to Chhaganlal. Commenced

[1] The reply was presumably an acknowledgement of the gifts sent by Gandhiji to them after his return to India; *vide* footnote 2 on "Letter to Mirabehn", 12-1-1932

[2] Captain J. W. Petavel

Stokes's *Satyakama*[1].

MARCH 22, TUESDAY

Spun 220 rounds. Wrote four more letters for the Ashram and another to Vithaldas. Handed over these for posting. Shah sent a book about Egypt. Someone sent *Jnaneshwari*. Wrote letters to Lester, Devi, Aristarchi, Muthu, Dinkar, Mettler, Agatha, Hemprabha, Madanmohan, Hiralal, Hanumanprasad, Jethalal.

MARCH 23, WEDNESDAY

Spun 170 rounds. Handed over for posting yesterday's letters and the one written today to Jayakar. Gangabehn paid a visit. Women prisoners have commenced a fast. Had a rather sharp discussion about this with the Major. Sent dates to Haridas. Received the Ashram mail.

MARCH 24, THURSDAY

Spun 159 rounds. Commenced Ashram letters. Prepared drafts of letters to Major Martin and Dr. Norwood. Received *Fors Clavigera*[2]. Received news of breaking of the women's fast.

MARCH 25, FRIDAY

Spun 177 rounds. Handed over for posting letters to Edith Scott, Major Martin, Raihana, Evelyn Wrench, Horace and Dr. Norwood. Wrote letters for the Ashram. Completed Stokes's book. Commenced *Fors.* Today asked for almonds and dates.

MARCH 26, SATURDAY

Spun 214 rounds. The Major informed me that I could write to fellow-prisoners. Hence I wrote letters to Mira, Mani, Jamnalal, Devdas and sent them over. Sent a telegram to Shankerlal on Dhirajlal Banker's death. Got Gangabehn's letter. Sent her slivers. Received dates from Vithaldas, and honey and *papaya* from Lady Vithaldas. Today finished the old stock of almonds. Received from Rameshwar Rolland's *Life of Vivekananda* and *Ramakrishna*. Received some other books also.

MARCH 27, SUNDAY

Spun 181 rounds. Received Ashram letters and a telegram from Shankerlal. Wrote to him and Lilavati, and also to Emerson, Raghavan. Proofs of the autobiography [for children].

[1] *Satyakama or "True Desires"*
[2] By Ruskin

MARCH 28, MONDAY

Spun 177 rounds. Got yesterday's letters. Fuss over giving dates to prisoners. Wrote letters for the Ashram. In one of them wrote about Ruskin. Letters to Taramati, Narasinhbhai's Vimala, Amtul.

MARCH 29, TUESDAY

Spun 208 rounds. The surgeon examined me. Explained about the dates to the Major. Handed over letters for the Ashram, etc.

MARCH 30, WEDNESDAY

Spun 174 rounds. Wrote to the Major about visits. Harjivan and Sharda called. Received letter from Mathuradas. Completed proofs of the autobiography for children.

MARCH 31, THURSDAY

Spun 163 rounds. Wrote to Mathuradas. Received Jayakar's letter. Commenced letters for the Ashram. Have now stopped receiving goat's milk.

APRIL 1, FRIDAY

Spun 184 rounds. Today met Qureshi and two Maharashtrian gentlemen for two hours. Two seers of almonds arrived.

APRIL 2, SATURDAY

Spun 201 rounds. Dahyabhai paid a visit. Telegram to Nargis about Jal. Wrote letters for the Ashram. Received letters from Lester and others.

APRIL 3, SUNDAY

Spun 190 rounds. Wrote and also dictated letters for the Ashram. Dictated letters for some Americans.

APRIL 4, MONDAY

Spun 186 rounds. Handed over for posting letters to Kamla Nehru, Jayakar, Radha, Kanu Desai, Jamu Dani, Chaturbhuj Sharma, 52 for the Ashram. Also a letter to Narandas along with [an article on] "A Saintly Woman of Russia"[1], and letters to Lovan, Rev. Skudder, Henarsa, Prabhavati, Jerajani, Raihana (Pashabhai), Savitri Standenath[2], Shambhushankar, Rev. Smiley.

APRIL 5, TUESDAY

Spun 182 rounds. In addition to yesterday's letters, handed over

[1] By Mahadev Desai; *vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 3-4-1932

[2] Francisca Standenath

letters for Shah and Elwin. Dictated letters to Maithilisharan, Ghanshyamdas, Gandalal, Andrews, Tyagi and Gopaldas. Started history of the Ashram. Received books from Santaram and others.

APRIL 6, WEDNESDAY

Spun 192 rounds. Handed over yesterday's letters for posting. Added to them a postcard to Durga. I fasted today. Today got a mattress made to serve as a seat for me. Received honey from Lady Thackersey. Completed the first book of *Fors.* Completed Narasinhbhai's letters, *Samarpan* and *Buddha* and *Mahavir.* Commenced second part of *Fors.*

APRIL 7, THURSDAY

Spun 198 rounds. Wrote a letter to Lakshmanrao Kane. Commenced Ashram letters. Cresswell sent two books on astronomy. A carpet arrived from Armenia. Received three seers of almonds. Received letter from Mira. Received a book on Vedanta from Jayakar. Received letter from Nanabhai. Dictated letters to Nanabhai Bhatt, Kartar Singh, Moto Edith, Roberto[1].

APRIL 8, FRIDAY

Spun 234 rounds. Handed over yesterday's letters for posting. Major Mehta arrived. Received letters from Jamnalal, Esther and Nargis. Wrote Ashram letters. Dictated letters to Hanumanprasad, Rameshwar, the Hungarian priest and Ambalal Modi.

APRIL 9, SATURDAY

Spun 235 rounds. Dahyabhai paid a visit. Received books on astronomy and a letter from Hiralal. Major Mehta examined my hand and Mahadev's leg. Applied iodine to both. Dictated a few letters.[2]

APRIL 10, SUNDAY

Spun 237 rounds. Wrote letters for the Ashram. Dictated letters to Mangal Singh, Bhailal, Dinkar, Nageshwarprasad, Charubabu, Induprasad, Jamnalal, Brijkisan.

[1] The Armenian who had sent the carpet

[2] Here, in the source, followed the following prayer by Prahlad:

नमः योनि सहस्रेषु येन येन शरीरिणाम् ।
तेषु तेष्वचला भक्तिरच्युतास्तु सदा त्वयि ॥
या प्रीतिरविवेकानां विषयेष्वनपायिनी ।
त्वामनुस्मरतः सा मे हृदयान्मापसर्पतु ॥

APRIL 11, MONDAY

Spun 383 rounds (194+189=383). Today completed 375 rounds of yarn without a break. So far a skein was completed on alternate days but today and yesterday there was one skein daily. I intend to keep this up if possible. Received Sir Samuel's reply to my letter about the caravan[1], etc. Completed letters for the Ashram. Handed over yesterday's letters to the Superintendent. Have passed on a telegram for Kamla Nehru. It will go to the I. G. Wrote about "Watching the Heavens" for the Ashram.

APRIL 12, TUESDAY

Spun (186+187)=373 rounds. The first figure within brackets is that of the rounds counted today. The second is that of today's on the spindle. Handed over letters for the Ashram. The letters numbered 28. Dictated to Vallabhbhai letters to Gangabehn and Chhaganlal. A postcard to Shankarlal Marwadi. Handed these three together to the Major. In the afternoon dictated letters to Khambhatta, Nargis, Narandas, Lalita Subbiah, Shanti Mehta, Shankarbhai, Major Martin and Hiralal.

APRIL 13, WEDNESDAY

Spun (188+207)=395 rounds. This morning wrote letters to Hiralal, Ramdhari, Lakshmi Raja, Dhiru Revashankar. Letters and copies of "Watching the Heavens" to Gangabehn and Chhaganlal. Handed over these and yesterday's letters to the Major. I am fasting today. Still I weighed 104.5 lb. Last Wednesday I was 103.5. Received the Ashram mail.

APRIL 14, THURSDAY

Spun 168+217=385 rounds. Handed over letters to Radhika, Esther and Hemprabha Devi for posting. Today met Mohanlal, Manibhai and Dhurandhar. I saw Shankarrao Deo who has been fasting. He did not listen to me. Bali, Manu, Kunvarji and Kusum called on me.

APRIL 15, FRIDAY (RAMANAVAMI)

Spun 158+248=406 rounds. Received a telegram from Ranjit, wrote a letter to Deo, sent Mahadev to Deo. He gave up his fast. Wrote an acknowledgement to Khagendra Priya Barua and acknowledged

[1] Sir Samuel Hoare, in his broadcast on January 28, 1932, had said: "Our policy is simple, straightforward and sympathetic. It is a policy of progress combined with firmness. . . . Though dogs bark, caravan passes on."

receipt of khadi. Received three seers of almonds. The earlier stock is not yet over.

APRIL 16, SATURDAY

Spun 127+282=409 rounds. Major Proll called. Dahyabhai paid a visit. Received letters from Khambhatta, Hiralal and some others.

APRIL 17, SUNDAY

Spun 93 rounds. Today spun with the left hand. There was considerable strain but as there had been some extra rounds every day the skein could be completed. The object in turning the wheel with the left hand and drawing the yarn with the right hand is to spare exertion to the left elbow which is paining. Today Major Mehta gave electric treatment to both the hands. Dictated postcards to Khambhatta, Mahavir, Hiralal and Shakarabhai.

APRIL 18, MONDAY

Spun with the left hand 85 rounds. Wrote letters for the Ashram. Today started eating from the new stock of almonds. Today worked till 11 o'clock. Handed over for posting yesterday's letters and an earlier one.

APRIL 19, TUESDAY

Spun with the left hand 85 rounds. Handed over 39 Ashram letters as well as "Watching the Heavens" and the letter to Narandas [for posting]. About a hundred books arrived from Nanabhai. Got the Government's permission to see five people not belonging to the Ashram, and Trivedi whenever necessary. Letters from Chhaganlal, Ramdas. Reply to Ramdas. Electric treatment is being continued.

APRIL 20, WEDNESDAY

Spun 112 rounds. Received the Ashram mail. Wrote to Gangabehn, Chhaganlal Joshi and Surendra. Handed over the letters to the Major. Received the Ashram mail. Dictated letters to Ghanshyamdas, Nanabhai, Nagardas and Chaturbhuj. Sent letters to Sumangal and Kanta.

APRIL 21, THURSDAY

Spun 92+33 rounds. Sent two letters to Col. Doyle, about Kaka Kalelkar and others and about visits. Wrote to Lady Thackersey about cotton, to Nanabhai, Ghanshyamdas, Nagardas and Chaturbhuj.

APRIL 22, FRIDAY

Spun 182 rounds. Today I tied up in a bundle all the 28 skeins I

had spun up to the 17th. Completed a skein of yarn spun by left hand. Sent for posting letters to Raihana, Maganlal Pranjivan, Ba, Mithubehn and Kanti. Received letters from Maithilisharan, Verrier, Mani, Kaka.

APRIL 23, SATURDAY

Spun 135 rounds. Letters—Mani, Narahari, Prabhudas, Amethia and Khambhatta. Dahyabhai paid a visit. Received books on astronomy from Shivaji and Hiralal. A book by Ford from Pashabhai. Completed second Urdu reader.

APRIL 24, SUNDAY

Spun 27+141=168 rounds. Wrote a good many letters. Almost all pending letters have been dealt with. Commenced third Urdu reader. Commenced Heath's *Astronomy*.

APRIL 25, MONDAY

Spun 171 rounds. Letters—Taramati, Devdas, Kunvarji, Harjivan, Janakibehn, Bindheshwariprasad, Satyendra Nath Ganguli, Chandrashankar, Elwin, Brijbhushan Chaudhari, Sharda Kotak, Ramananda, Lakshmidas, Sushila Nayar, Radha, Vaidehisharan and Mathuradas. Received books on the Buddha sent by Nair.

APRIL 26, TUESDAY

Spun 63+93=156 rounds. Letters for the Ashram, along with "Necessity of Drawing up a Balance-Sheet", and letters to Maithilisharan, Dastane, Hiralal (Shankar), Hemprabha, Shankerlal. Today the new Magistrate paid a visit. Received books on massage sent by Khambhatta. Received the Ashram mail.

APRIL 27, WEDNESDAY

Spun 182 rounds. Letters—Maude Royden, Dr. Nair, "Apana Sabu''[1], Dyer, Doyle and Natarajan. Vallabhbhai wrote a letter to the Major asking him to call in a nose specialist for him. I also wrote one. Received letter from Mills today.

APRIL 28, THURSDAY

Spun 100+101=201 rounds. Sent for posting letters to Narandas and Harilal. Triveni called. Vallabhbhai changed his timings of meals, so that he could eat three meals. Received letter from Maganlal.

[1] Trade-mark name of a soap

APRIL 29, FRIDAY

Spun 203 rounds. Letters—Maganlal Pranjivandas, Polak, Narandas, Dinkar Mehta, Santok. Wrote a long letter to Gangabehn. Sent her a lot of books. Spent two hours today with Ramdas, a teacher of the Tilak Vidyalaya and Gokuldas Talati. Received letters from Samuel Hoare and Percy Bartlett. Almonds sent by Bhimji were exhausted today. A new stock of three pounds arrived yesterday, which will be utilized from tomorrow. Received Upton Sinclair's autobiography.

APRIL 30, SATURDAY

Spun 71+126=197 rounds. Dahyabhai paid a visit. Urdu copy-book arrived. Began eating from new stock of almonds.

MAY 1, SUNDAY

Spun 208 rounds. Received Bernard's letter and Francis Adam's poems. Wrote and dictated letters.

MAY 2, MONDAY

Spun 41+196=237 rounds. Received telegram about Yashoda's death. Handed over for posting letters to Hoare and Sankey.

MAY 3, TUESDAY

Spun 179+16=195 rounds. 43 letters for the Ashram; they include "Lesson of the National Week", [letters to] Prabhavati, Dahyabhai, Bernard, Bhagirathi Shirodkar. Received the Ashram mail. Received honey from Parikh Dashrathlal.

MAY 4, WEDNESDAY

Spun 239 rounds. Letters—Mathuradas, Noorbanu, Lakshmidas, Manjukesha, Doyle, Agatha, Taramati, Kamala of Broach, Surbala, Mills, Lakshmidevi, Kamu, Hemprabha, Bartlett, Ramdas. Mani Parikh and Shankerlal Parikh visited Mahadev. Received some books, slivers and a dhoti from the Ashram. Trivedi sent dhotis.

MAY 5, THURSDAY

Spun 120+82=202 rounds. Letters—Sharda, Narasimhan, Lakshmi, Shankerlal, books to Chhaganlal, "Watching the Heavens", Marathi *Purusharth*, *Bhajanavali*, and the *Gita* number to Gangabehn and letter to Anasuyabehn. Mani Parikh, Vanamala, Mohan, Kusum, Girdhari paid a visit. Brought clothes, fruits, etc. Received Magan spinning-wheel. The almonds were over today.

MAY 6, FRIDAY

Spun 24 rounds on the Magan spinning-wheel. Letters— Walsh, Damji, Dasharathlal, Shankar, Nanabhai of Akola, Ibrahimji. Death of Gangadevi. Spun on the Magan spinning-wheel today. It worked with difficulty. Today ate ground-nuts. Sarojini's letter about Jail.

MAY 7, SATURDAY

Spun 56 rounds on the Magan spinning-wheel. Letters— Hanumanprasad, Chandulal Patel, Prof. Nayak, Narandas, Mira, Col. Doyle, (about Kaka and about letters which get lost), Gangabehn, Sarojini Naidu, Chhaganlal Joshi. Dahyabhai paid a visit. Received "Apna Sabu". Hiralal sent Mukerji's book on astronomy. Perhaps for the first time today spat blood while gargling. It is not likely to have been from the lungs.

MAY 8, SUNDAY

Spun 71 rounds on the Magan spinning-wheel. Letters for the Ashram. The ground-nuts are over.

MAY 9, MONDAY

Spun 59 +36=95 rounds. This is the total of those spun by the left and the right hand. Began eating from the new stock of almonds. Letters—Upton Sinclair, Benarsi, Hiralal, Harjivan, Evelyn Wrench. Have almost completed the Ashram letters. Received letters from Gangabehn and Chhaganlal, a spinning-wheel from Kantawala and Modi's book on the *Gita*. Today finished "Apana Sabu".

MAY 10, TUESDAY

Spun 102 rounds. I could not at all manage with the right hand today. Worked for almost five hours. Thirty-eight letters for the Ashram including the article on "Cleanliness, Truthfulness Purity, Neatness" and a letter to Raihana. Am reading life of Nabi Saheb[1] by Imam Saheb.

MAY 11, WEDNESDAY

Spun 131 rounds. Today the right hand gave good work. Mail—letters to Gangabehn and Biharilal Kantawala. A rather sharp argument with the Superintendent about the specialist for Vallabhbhai. Received Col. Doyle's letter about Kaka and others, a letter from Shardabehn, and Vinayachandra's books. Today I weighed 105.5, Vallabhbhai 140.5, Mahadev 147.5.

[1] *Sirat-un-Nabi*

MAY 12, THURSDAY

Spun 126 rounds, all with the right hand. Letters—Doyle, Bhikhabhai, Devdas, Lakshmidas, Pyare Ali. Panditji, Lakshmibehn, Mathuri and Yashwantprasad paid a visit. Received a second packet of letters from Narandas.

MAY 13, FRIDAY

Spun 90 rounds. Today could not give even two and a half hours to spinning. Letters—Mira and Shardabehn. Surendra, Patwardhan and Rabade were with me for more than two hours. Books by Upton Sinclair and also from Gondal arrived. Commenced Rolland's *Ramakrishna*.

MAY 14, SATURDAY

Spun 97 rounds. Felt very tired. Chhaganlal Joshi, Chandulal, Dahyabhai paid a visit. Books from Trivedi.

MAY 15, SUNDAY

Spun 78 rounds. Wrote letters for the Ashram.

MAY 16, MONDAY

Spun 90 rounds. Letters—Sushila (Phoenix), Trivedi, Mira. Got letter from Fulchand and others.

MAY 17, TUESDAY

Spun 115 [rounds]. Forty-five letters for the Ashram, including an article on self-sacrifice, and letters to Maithilisharan, Natarajan, Prataprai Modi, Birla, Fulchand Bapuji. Dictated a good many letters today.

MAY 18, WEDNESDAY

Spun 165 rounds. Getting used to spinning by hand and foot. Letters—Rameshwar Bazaj, Bindheshwari, Trivedi, Nanabhai M., Radha, Narasimhan, Lalita, Nirmala Mashruwala, Barda Yukil, Baldev Pra[sad] and Ram Mohan Roy (Bezwada). Lady Thackersey, Mani and Mathew paid a visit. Permission to see Mira has been refused. Received new stock of almonds today.

MAY 19, THURSDAY

Spun 168 rounds. Letters—Col. Doyle and Mirabehn. Today started eating from the new supply of almonds.

MAY 20, FRIDAY

Spun 183 rounds. I now seem to have acquired good control over the spinning-wheel. Letters—Sumangal Prakash, Tilak, Mithubehn Petit, Ranchhodji Shastri, Narandas, Govindbhai Chavda, Kailashnath Katju, Kamla Nehru.

MAY 21, SATURDAY

Spun 209 rounds. Letters—Nargis, Dinkar. Telegram about Bipin Babu. Dahyabhai and Mani paid a visit.

MAY 22, SUNDAY

Spun 193 rounds. Could write a good-many letters. Completed Rolland's *Ramakrishna*.

MAY 23, MONDAY

Spun 203 rounds. Letters—Taramati M., Raihana, Prabhudas, Dr. Roy, Hemprabha, Esther, Devichandra, Narayan Pandya, Ramanandan, Gertrude Keller, Sharda Kotak. Commenced *Vivekananda*. Wrote letters for the Ashram, etc.

MAY 24, TUESDAY

Spun 204 rounds. Letters—thirty-nine letters for the Ashram including an article on "The Cat-A Teacher", Miss Elizabeth Howard, Jayaprakash, Maud Cheeseman, Jethalal Govindji, Nanakchand, Rukhi.

MAY 25, WEDNESDAY

Spun 202 rounds. Letters—Gangabehn, Lakshmidas, Abhay, Mulchandbhai, Satyacharan Law.

MAY 26, THURSDAY

Spun 210 rounds. Letters—Niranjanlal, Siddhanath Pant, Mira, Shantikumar, Natarajan, Parachure Shastri, Muriel, Agatha Harrison, Devi West. Yesterday Pyare Ali, Noorbanu, Sharda, Amtul, Prema and Sushila paid a visit. Received slivers from Chhakkaddas and *Vichar Sagar, Panchadashi, Tilak Panchang* from Trivedi. Pyare Ali brought honey and mangoes.

MAY 27, FRIDAY

Spun 217 rounds. Letters—Krishnachandra Agrawal, Pyarelal, Today met Mahadev Mailar, Maganbhai and Rabade.Maithilisharan's books arrived. Letters from Ghanshyamdas, Devdas, Elwin and others.

MAY 28, SATURDAY

Spun 205 rounds. Letters—Sukhlal, Ghanshyamdas, Elwin, Devdas, Ba. Sent a spinning-wheel to Lilavati. Dahyabhai and Mani

paid a visit. Major Proll paid a visit. New stock of almonds arrived. Completed Mander's astronomy. Commenced Hindu astronomy.

MAY 29, SUNDAY

Spun 200 rounds. Stopped washing clothes from today on account of [the pain in] the left arm.

MAY 30, MONDAY

Spun 211 rounds. Letters—Maganlal Mehta, Amtul, Dawoodbhai and Tilakam, Raja, Lakshmi, Karsandas, Gosibehn, Esther.

MAY 31, TUESDAY

Spun 220 rounds. Mail—letters for the Ashram (36 including "Lesson of Death"), Harjivan, Gulchen Lumsden, Tijaray, Sumangal, Aristarchi, Newham, Renwick. Today started eating from the new stock of almonds. Completed Rolland's *Vivekananda*. Received the Ashram mail.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 19337

538. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 1, 1932

CHI. MIRA,[1]

Your letter arrived today.

I have now decided to stop the interviews from next week if the decision is delayed[2]. They will be resumed if the decision is favourable.

The left elbow has proved worse than the right hand. All work with the left elbow has stopped and presently it will be packed in splints. Doctors are sure that it is nothing but the strain caused by the uninterrupted working of the wheel from day to day. I am thankful that I have now acquired full control over the Magan wheel. Spinning, therefore, continues and will continue merrily, unless the right elbow strikes from sympathy.

[1] Superscription in this and other letters to Mirabehn is in Devanagari.

[2] Gandhiji had requested the Government to reconsider their decision not to permit Mirabehn to see him in Yeravda Jail as otherwise he might not avail himself of the permission to receive other visitors; *vide* "Letter to E. E. Doyle", 19-5-1932; also "Letter to E. E. Doyle", 9-6-1932.

You will be glad to learn that today I weighed 106 $^{1}/_{2}$ lb. This is a good record. So you see that there is not the slightest cause for worry even on account of the elbow.

Your saltless experiment is producing interesting results. I should, however, wait before ascribing all the good results to the absence of salt.

I wrote to Verrier[1] last week care of Khambhatta. I hope he got my letter. Yes, it is a good idea, his going to England for recuperation. The sooner he goes the better. It was very wrong of Shamrao to have had that fever. Have you seen him?

I am sorry about Damodardas. The enclosed is for him..

It is a superstition to think that saltless is tasteless. Salt kills flavour. I have known pepole not touch things with salt in them. Taste is a matter of habit. I suppose you do take butter and bread. These do contain salt. Your experiment is one of reducing the quantity of free salt. The effect produced on you, therefore, is due to reduction, not entire absence of salt in your food. But that does not matter. Nor needyou worry that you are taking some salt somehow. Let well alone. Do you ever see Manilal? Or is he still not there at all?

Love from us all.

BAPU

[PS.]

Verrier suggested that we should sing a Christian[2] hymn every Friday at evening prayer. So Mahadev began "Lead, Kindly Light" in Gujarati[3]. And this we shall continue every Friday. Please tell Verrier this if he has not yet got my letter.

From the Original: C.W. 6224. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9690

[1] On May 27

[2] The source has 'Xian'.

[3] *Premal Jyoti*, by Narasinhrao Divetia; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 8/13-6-1932

539. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

YERAVDA MANDIR[1],
June 1, 1932

CHI. PARASRAM,[2]

I was glad to hear that Nirmala's enthusiasm for Hindi was increasing. By all means teach Hindi poems. I do not know whether the lines on the palms (of our hands) have any significance, but there is no profit in trying to know what the future holds whether through these or through astrology or by any other means; on the contrary, it is definitely harmful. And, one who is a lover of the *Gita*, i.e., who leaves the results of one's work to God, should never desire to know the future. I have not received the booklet, but will go through it when I get it. Destruction of small creatures as a result of essential activities is unavoidable. As far as possible, we should be careful about those which we can see with our naked eyes; more than this, we cannot do.

Tiny insects like ants are not crushed under our feet when we walk. They are protected by their very smallness. But larger insects may be so crushed. Hence it has been regarded as our duty to look at the ground in front of us while walking. All these precautions are signs of our kind-heartedness, but non-violence is something more far- reaching and wonderful. It should be apparent in all our work, in our relationship with one another and in all our dealings with our fellowmen. We should remain unconcerned when we see a peacock devouring a snake. The latter is food for the former and we cannot interfere with it. Tulsidas's quatrain[3] about women which you have quoted is not only not applicable to all women but it is not even a criticism of women. It criticizes man's sensuality. Tulsidasji's point in it is that man, being lustful, thinks only of women, and he has written these lines to show what man becomes like when he is seized by lust.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:G.N. 7500. Also C.W. 4977. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

[1] Literally, Yeravda temple, that is, Yeravda Central Prison, where Gandhiji was imprisoned from January 4, 1932 to May 8, 1933. This place-line is not reproduced in subsequent letters.

[2] A khadi worker and a Hindi teacher; also a member of Gandhiji's secretariat for some time.

[3] Intellect, valour, virtue and truth are all like fish, while woman is like a bait, say the wise."

540. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

June 1, 1932

BHAI RAMESHWAR,

I got both your postcard and your letter. The conclusion which you have drawn from my letter is correct. If, instead of attempting a big leap, we take small steps according to our capacity, our enthusiasm for the work will increase and with that our self-confidence. I am not worried about Jamnalalji's loss of weight, as he otherwise keeps good health. And, as for Vinoba, let him refrain from milk and ghee so long as he can maintain his health and strength. I am satisfied with the message which he has sent.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:G. N. 179

541. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI[1]

June 2, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

There is no reply yet regarding Mirabehn. I, therefore, think that I should stop seeing visitors pending the reply. So do not send any names for the next week. I will send you a wire if a favourablereply is received. Mahadev desires that Durga[2] should be informed about this.

BAPU

SJT. NARANDAS GANDHI
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SABARMATI
B.B.&.C.I. RLY.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8231. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] The article "Concerning *Titiksha* and *Yajna*" was sent with this letter.
[2] Mahadev Desai's wife

542. LETTER TO FEROZABEHN TALEYARKHAN

June 2, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

I was glad to read your letter. Bhai Nariman had not given me your message. But since I did not come across you anywhere I concluded that you might have been out of Bombay. I hope you are keeping good health. Seeing me will, I think, not be easy. Most probably all my visitors will be stopped. We shall however know the actual position when you come. Sardar[1] and Mahadev Desai are with me. Please write to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. FEROZABEHN TALEYARKHAN
C/O POST MASTER
BODH GAYA
BIHAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9775

543. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

June 2, 1932

CHI. PRABHAVATI,[2]

I have your letter. I am writing this letter deliberately in Hindi so that it may be delivered to you without delay. I have written to you at least twice. The letters have been dispatched from here. I cannot make out how they failed to reach you. You should take milk and fruit. Jayaprakash says he is all right. My health is satisfactory. I shall write at length after hearing from you. Sardar and Mahadev are with me. Blessings to Sarup, Kisan and Kanta.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRIMATI PRABHAVATI DEVI
'A' CLASS PRISONER
CENTRAL JAIL
LUCKNOW

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3422

[1] Vallabhbhai Patel
[2] Wife of Jayaprakash Narayan

544. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

June 2, 1932

CHI. VANAMALA,[1]

As you are left-handed, you should also try to perform every function with your right hand. The human race increases through births. Do you know how you came into being? Other men and women came into being in the same way as you did. Human beings owe their birth to their parents.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5772. Also C.W. 2996. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai.

545. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Tuesday, May 31/June 3, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have practically decided that tomorrow, Wednesday, will be the last day when I will see visitors. If the Government continue to delay its reply in regard to Mirabehn, I think I should assume that it will be negative and should stop seeing visitors for the time being. I can start seeing them again if finaly the decision is favourable.

If Harilal wants to vent his anger on Bali[2], let him do so. Bali is strong enough to face it, and knows how to deal with him. Whether or not that is so, if the path of duty is clear before us we must follow it without regard to consequences. Is it not because people are concerned about consequences that they often forsake the path of dharma? The *Gita* was composed to drive this one lesson home, and it repeats the idea again and again in every possible context.

As we gradually understand more clearly the aim behind the five minutes' silence (at prayer time), we shall feel its grandeur with greater and greater force. Vasumati Thakore is being properly looked after. The doctor said that she must have suffered from the disease for a long time.

[1] Daughter of Narahari Parikh, an associate of Gandhiji
[2] Balibehn Vora, sister-in-law of Harilal Gandhi

If a labourer willingly agrees to obey the Ashram rules, do not discharge him even if there is no work for him. If he himself wishes to leave, that would of course be another matter. We should not discharge any person, who is otherwise good, merely for the sake of economy. A labourer will never be a burden on us. And the Ashram may engage paid labourers, but we shall be worthy of its great ideals only if we continue to work with our own hands or join them in work.

Don't let Dhiru and Kusum return for some time yet. It will be a great error to suppose that, after their health has improved a little, they will be all right in the Ashram, They should return only after their health has become quite strong. If they observe the Ashram ruleswhere they are staying and do whatever work their health permits, that would be as good as living in the Ashram.

Do not waste your time and energy in inquiring about Ba's letters. I got one postcard written by her. How many Chharas[1] are there and where do they live? From what part of the country do they come? What is their language? We should think what our duty towards them is, irrespective of whether or not they harass us. See if anything is possible in this matter.

I have nothing more to say about the Magan spinning-wheel. My hand seems to be fairly well set on it. I could also guess today from which part the sound comes. I am using just now the slivers sent by Chhakkaddas. I am naturally tempted to spin yarn of fine count from such good slivers. Today I drew 22 rounds from one sliver. Each sliver weighs less than one anna. The count of the yarn, I guess, must be about 30. I spun today yarn of that count at the rate of 110 rounds per hour. For yarn less fine than that I have already reached the speed of 130.

I have preserved Totaramji's[2] letter. I even made two copies. One I sent to Gangabehn and the other to Chhaganlal Joshi. If Totaramji has not kept a copy, I may return the original or send a copy from here. Because of the uncertainly in regard to visitors, I have not asked for permission for Chitalia and others. As for Thakkar Bapa, I am afraid I won't be able to write about him from here in any case. It is enough that Bhansali at least sends news about him from time to time.

Lakshmidas did get my detailed letter in which I had explained

[1] An ex-criminal tribe of central Gujarat

[2] Totaram Sanadhya, a farmer who had come from Fiji and joined the Ashram

how the change in the spindle-bearer in the Gandiva spinning-wheel immediately resulted in improvement in count and speed, for he has acknowledged it. I, therefore, think that there has been some misunderstanding. I got a letter from Krishna, but she does not mention anything in it about Choudhariji, nor have I received a letter from him. Which Choudhariji did you refer to? Ba seems to have lost much weight but I hope that she and Navin are improving now. If you interpreted Mirabehn's letter to refer to fasting, you were not correct. She spoke about the mockery of fasting, about eating only one meal on the 6th and 13th of the National Week[1].

The Narayanappa affair is a shameful one. Now that the guilty party in this theft has been found out, I suppose we must believe that Bhagwanji's suspicion, too, was correct. If, however, Narayanappa is sincerely repentant and if all of you think that he may be permitted to stay on, by all means let him do so. The spinning *yajna* will be complete if everybody hands over the yarn which he or she spun for that *yajna*. There can be no doubt at all that such *yajna* will remain incomplete so long as those who take part in it wish to keep back the yarn for their own use. The rule which I have suggested is that everybody should hand over all the yarn spun by himself to the Ashram, and he may get from the Ashram the khadi required for clothes. One should spin yarn of the highest count that one can, and accept from the Ashram as coarse a cloth as one's body can tolerate or as many fall to one's share. All this is implied in the vow on non-possession and in the ideal of self-dedication. However, I do not have the courage to make this a compulsory rule for all.Moreover I am no more in your midst and, therefore, since the matter has come up for discussion, I am merely pointing out what the Ashram dharma demands. Read this out to all and explain what I have said, and then leave it to every individual person to accept from it as much as he or she can. But we can certainly make this rule, that everyone should wind yarn into neat hanks at the end of each day or week and hand them over with details of name, place, number of rounds, etc., and, when one wants to get cloth woven from the yarn, one may ask for the hanks according to the rule which one may have accepted for oneself. I think this is absolutely essential for a correct record to be preserved.

What is Rambhau's speed, with one hand, on the Magan

[1] Celebrated in April ever since the starting of the satyagraha movement in 1919.

spinning-wheel and what is the count of the yarn?

Mahadev's yarn of 40 counts is piling up for he spins 630 rounds daily. You should get ready *rach*[1] and *fani*[2] of the type necessary for weaving this yarn. We should be able to weave yarn of 40 counts without the least difficulty.

I am of the view that we should build a regular tomb over Imam Saheb's[3] grave. But you should consult a trustworthy Muslim and find out what the proper thing would be. Maulvi Saheb Gulam Nadvi[4], who was a teacher in the Vidyapith for some time and had good relations with Imam Saheb and who was present at the funeral, will most probably be in Ahmedabad just now. You may consult him. There is no hurry, of course. If Pyare Ali[5] himself has made any suggestion in this regard, let me know it.

All the persons whose names you sent to me came and saw me. Anandlal's Ranchhod also had joined the party, so they were six in all. But that may be permitted occasionally. Now send no more names till you hear from me.

June 3, 1932

Send, by parcel, one pound of asafoetida pills for Gangabehn. She requires them urgently.

I did not keep a copy of the article[6] sent last time, thinking that I would get one from you sooner or later, but I have not received any so far.

I hope I shall get one by and by.

BAPU

[PS.]

This is the 29th letter in today's packet.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8230. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Weaving tools

[2] *ibid*

[3] Abdul Kadir Bawazeer, Gandhiji's associate since South African period and an Ashram inmate; *vide* "Imam Saheb—I", 7-3-1932.

[4] Abu Zafar Nadvi

[5] A business man from Bombay

[6] "The Cat—A Teacher", 22-5-1932

546. LETTER TO MANIBEHN N. PARIKH

June 3, 1932

CHI. MANI[1],

Patience is learnt through long effort. The secret of regarding sorrow as joy is learnt by leaving everything to God. It is for this very reason that those three verses[2] have been included in the prayer for women. I hope you do remember these verses. Through effort, one can learn to bear suffering.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5969. Also C.W. 3286. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

547. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

June 3, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I write this slip merely because I think I must write something to you. Don't fortget to send the Urdu books. If visits stop now, send them by registered book post.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10288. Also C.W. 6736. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

548. LETTER TO D.B. KALELKAR

June 3, 1932

CHI. KAKA[3],

I do get news about you from time to time. All the same, when you can next write letters, write to me and tell me how you are. . . .[4] The pain in your back must have disappeared now. I hope the rains have had no ill effect on your health. Who are your companions?

[1] Wife of Narahari Parikh

[2] Containing Draupadi's prayer to Lord Krishna when she was being disrobed by the Kauravas; *vide* "Ashram Bhajanavali"

[3] Dattatreya Balkrishna Kalelkar (b.1885), popularly known as Kakasaheb, a co-worker of Gandhiji since 1915.

[4] Seven lines here were censored by the jail authorities.

Recently I have been spinning on the Magan spinning-wheel. The left elbow is paining and the doctors say all it needs is rest. Since the pain has been caused by the exertion of drawing the thread in spinning for many years, I learnt to draw the thread with the right hand on the Gandiva spinning-wheel. But the doctors advised me not to exert the left hand even for rotating the wheel. Even otherwise, I had intended to learn spinning on the Magan spinning-wheel, and this advice gave me one more reason for taking it up. And so I have started spinning on it. I had a good deal of difficulty in learining to use it, but I may say that I have now acquired fairly good control over it. When I had good slivers, I had attained a speed of 150 rounds [per hour]. Just now I have been spinning with the worst possible kind of slivers. Thespeed is less but not much less than 100. I give some time to Urdu. And daily I read some book or other apart from star gazing. I have taken up the study in right earnest. I would not now show myself a complete ignoramus in discussing the subject with you. Among the books which I have seen, I have found Flammarion's book the most useful so far. Dikshit's book[1] seems to be the result of considerable labour, but, from a learner's point of view, it requires a good deal of improvement. Patwa's *Akashdarshan* can be of some help, but the book is very superficial. There ought to be one good book in Gujarati, which should also give some information relating to astronomy. Two separate books in Gujarati for this purpose are not a practical proposition. We must have a book which would give both scientific knowledge of astronomy and practical guidance. If you were with me here, I would have made you write such a book and I also would have made some contribution to it. I have come to take so much interest in the subject and perceived such deep religious significance in this study that, were not my knowledge altogether inadequate, I myself would have started writing such a book. I occasionally exchange letters with Hiralal on this subject. He has sent me two or three books. I read the biographies of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda written by Romain Rolland. One of them is being read by Mahadev now and the other by Sardar. (Sardar's self-chosen job is to go through newspapers and to make beautiful envelopes from used brown paper or such other thick paper which we may get. Thus he is daily adding to the nation's wealth and dust is being turned into gold, so to say.)

[1] Shanker Balkrishna Dikshit's *Bharatiya Jyotishshastra*

Mahadev gives about five hours every day to carding and spinning. There is a friend of Chimanlal named Chhakkaddas who loves spinning very much. He has sent us beautiful slivers made from Cambodian and Navsari cotton. With those slivers Mahadev daily spins 650 rounds, the yarn being of 40 to 45 counts, and also cards an equal quantity from the cotton which we have received. Hence we always have a good stock of slivers with us. My experiment of milkless diet continues. My weight is steady. All three of us are in good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Gangadevi[1] passed away about a month ago. She was perfectly calm at the time of death. Her death was worthly of an Ashraminmate. Totaramji has sent, at my request, some very beautiful remi-niscences of her. We can see from them that her life was truly great.

From the Gujarati original:C.W. 9486. Courtesy: D.B. Kalelkar

549. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

June 3, 1932

CHI. VIDYA[2],

Raw mangoes become spice or fruit when eaten as such. Collyrium should not be applied to the eyes for beautifying them. It can, however, be used as medicine for some eye-complaints.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 9429. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

550. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
June 3, 1932

CHI. KASHI,

It was very necessary for you to talk to me about Prabhudas. Because you did so, I have been able to take the necessary steps. That we should not be unhappy certainly does not mean that we should be

[1] Wife of Totaram Sanadhya
[2] Daughter of Raojibhai M. Patel

indifferent. When we see anyone suffering, whether the person is our relation or somebody else, we should do everything that is within our capacity and then stop feeling unhappy or worrying. Prabhu wrote to me a long letter and hence could not write to you. Only one letter once every three months [permitted][1].

As for your health, till you are able to digest solid food, live only on fruit juice. You may take water in which vegetables have been cooked. Avoiding 'starch' means avoiding rice and wheat and avoiding 'proteid' means avoiding pulses and milk. Try this for a few days. Do not mind if you feel weak.

At night, keep a mud-pack on the abdomen. Have sun-bath with the body uncovered. If you feel cold that way, remove one garment after another as the heat increases. Whether lying down or sitting, gently take deep breaths.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 33087

551. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

June 3, 1932

CHI. BHAU[2] ,

I have already answered your letter. Write to me if you have any fresh doubt.

Both my hands are disabled for plying the *takli*. The fingers have grown so weak that for the present I am unable to use them for manipulating the *takli*. The future rests with God. Thus I have to content myself with the reports of the progress made by others.

BAPU

From a photostat of Hindi: G.N. 6730. Also C.W. 4473. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

[1] Presumably, to prisoners. Evidently, Prabhudas was in jail at the time.

[2] He was an Ashram inmate.

552. LETTER TO D.V. PARACHURE SHASTRI[1]

June 3, 1932

All three of us were delighted to read our letter. How stupid of me to mistake Harolikar for Hukerikar. I am very bad at remembering names and faces. It gratifies me greatly that you are bearing with the disease so cheerfully. This is what I expected of you all.

I am pained to hear of your wife's ailment. Is someone looking after her? Has she any parents? I am sending you a bundle of slivers prepared by Mahadev. Do not hesitate to ask for more as our stock is always more than sufficient. Send me a list of the books you want, I shall try to procure them. Have you quoted that saying in reference to suicide from some book? My opinion in this matter is as follows: A person suffering from an incurable disease has the right to commit suicide if he cannot perform any service whatsover and lives only as a result of the ministrations of others. Fasting unto death is infinitely superior to drowning oneself. A person's strength of character is tested in fasting moreover it leaves scope for changing one's mind, which is both proper and necessary. But as long as he can perform the least bit of service, he is not justified in putting an end to his life. Although physical activity is an important and necessary feature of *yajna* a physically disabled person can certainly perform mental *yajna* which is not totally unfruitful. A man by his pure thoughts alone can render service. He can also be engaged in giving useful advice and such like. The thoughts of a man possessing a pure heart are an activity by themselves and can produce far-reaching results.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. 1, pp. 198-9

553. LETTER TO JAL A.D. NAOROJI[1]

June 4, 1932

If Mr. Cooper's plough is what he claims it to be, I should have no objection to its use merely because it is a steel plough and therefore the village carpenter will be deprived of a portion of his work. I do not mind the partial deprivation of the carpenter if the plough increases the earning capacity of the farmer. But I have very

[1] The addressee was at this time in the lepers' ward of Yeravda Central Prison.

grave doubts about the claims made by Mr. Cooper for the invention. At Sabarmati we have tried almost all improved ploughs manufactured in India and I think even others, but the claims made for each variety have not proved true in the long run. An experienced man has said that the indigenous plough is specially designed for the Indian soil. It conserves the soil, because it ploughs deep enough for the farmer's crops but never deep enough to do damage. Of course I do not claim to understand agriculture. I am simply giving you the testimony of those who have had considerable experience in these matters. What we have to remember is that all improved implements have to meet the peculiar conditions of India. There is nothing wrong in an engine plough in itself and it may be a great advantage to a man who owns thousands of acres of land, and has a cracked caky soil, which will not yield under the indigenous plough. What, however, we want is an implement that would suit owners of small holdings from one acre to three acres. . . .

I do not believe in the doctrine of the greatest good of the greatest number. It means in its nakedness that in order to achieve the supposed good of 51 per cent the interest of 49 per cent may be, or rather, should be sacrificed. It is a heartless doctrine and has done harm to humanity. The only real, dignified, human doctrine is the greatest good of all, and this can only be achieved by uttermost self-sacrifice.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol.1, pp. 200-1

554. LETTER TO ANNE MARIE PETERSEN[1]

June 4, 1932

"Be careful for nothing" is one of the verses that has ever remained with me and taken possession of me. If God is, why need I care? He is the Infallible Caretaker. He is a foolish man who fusses although he is well protected.

Mahadebhaini Diary, Vol. 1, p. 201

[1] Member of the staff of the Danish Missionary Society in South India.

555. CONCERNING "TITIKSHA" AND "YAJNA"[1]

June 6, 1932

A friend[2] suffering from leprosy writes as follows:

I am daily growing stronger in my faith that the best medicines for a person suffering from a disease like mine are *asanas*, *pranayama* and such other ordinary exercises and eating food earned through *yajna*. I spend my time in reading the *Gita*, singing *bhajans*, meditation and spinning more than 500 rounds of yarn daily. Our religion enjoins *titiksha* which means bearing all pains and miseries without opposing them even in thought, without worrying and without complaining. I am trying to cultivate such endurance, and I am discovering from experience that it is difficult to acquire such strength unless one works regularly for *yajna*. A person afflicted like me cannot do other forms of *yajna*, but, thanks be to God, I can do *yajna* by sweeping public roads, removing night-soil and spinning, and I find my happiness in doing these things and try to bear my misfortune. However, I often ask myself what my condition would be when the body became so weak that I could do no useful work. The Shastras emphatically declare that a life without *yajna* is as good as death, that it is a burden and an affliction to the world. You have said this repeatedly in your speeches and writings and my experience, too, tells the same thing. If that is so, the question arises: "What is the duty of a person who is so seriously ill with a disease that he can do no useful work at all and must live on the service of others?" I even read in a Shastra that a person who suffered from such an incurable disease should give up his life by drowning himself or by some similar means.

This is only a summary in my own language of a beautiful letter. I wish to draw a lesson for ourselves from this letter, namely, that all of us should cultivate this friend's capacity for endurance and, even when ill with a disease, should go on doing useful work as long as the body permits. That one must cultivate endurance and must do *yajna*—these are age-old ideals. We hear about them constantly in the Ashram. When, however, we read such things described by a person

[1] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 2-6-1932; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 2-6-1932

[2] D.V. Parachure Shastri; *vide* " Letter to D.V. Parachure Shastri", 3-6-1932

who is relating his own experience, they seem something new and fresh and the description has great power in it. We do not expect a person suffering from leprosy to be able to write in this manner or to feel thus. In most cases such persons, if they write about themselves, tell us how they suffer and complain about their misfortune. Here we find something different altogether, and hence I have summarized the letter for the inmates of the Ashram. The question which is raised in it also deserves attention.

We understand by *yajna* physical work voluntarily done for the service of others. But this need not be taken to mean that a person who is physically too weak to do such work performs no *yajna*. Such a person can serve with his mental capacities in many ways, and his work would most certainly be *yajna*. But we can conceive of a case in which the person does not have the necessary degree of purity or sufficient mental strength for such *yajna*, and yet he is extremely eager to do it, has lost the desire to live, dislikes having to be served by others and is convinced that his disease is incurable. I think that, in such circumstances a person who has the necessary strength of mind may certainly give up his life, one may even say that it is his duty to do so. But to tell anybody that it is his duty to give up his life will probably shock him. It is not right for a healthy person to tell another who is suffering from a disease that it is his duty to give up his life. Such a remark may even upset that person. But I think that is not likely to happen in this case, and so I have cautiously stated what seemed right to me. It is certainly desirable that we should cease to fear death and give up the intense clinging to life which impels us to try to save it by trying every possible remedy and at the cost of infinite trouble to people around us. My attitude in what I have written is that, if a thoughtful person afflicted with an incurable disease regards it his duty to give up his life, we need not think that what he does is absolutely wrong.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./11

556. LETTER TO G.D. BIRLA

June 7, 1932

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. My health seems to be well enough. The weight is satisfactory. I weighed 106 ½ lb. today. Doctors tell me that I am suffering from tennis elbow as a result of spinning continuously for years; rest is the only cure for it. So I have to give complete rest to my elbow for 3-4 weeks. I started using the Magan spinning-wheel for this reason. Before that I was using my left hand for plying the wheel instead of holding the sliver. The doctors were not satisfied with this but they agreed to my turning the wheel with the foot. But now my elbow has been put in splints in order to prevent the least movement. Let us see now if the doctors' diagnosis is correct or otherwise. You have no cause for worry, there being no pain except in moving the arm. Do send me the khadi woven out of the yarn spun by your sister. I overlooked writing on this matter as your letter was not in front of me. I have decided to study economics as much as I can while I am still here. I took up the study of other books in the expectation of a long stay here. Anyway I shall start on economics very soon.

I follow what you say about running the mill all day and night. So often have I had the idea of making a detailed observation of your mills but it came to nothing. I wish to watch the condition of the labourers with my own eyes. We are all doing well.

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 7899. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

557. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*June 8, 1932*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter came in today. Yes. the left arm is in splints. The passers-by who do not know the cause must be pitying me. If the packinig of the elbow does not improve it, I might have try milk. If I do, I shall also try the saltless experiment. But only when I learnt that there was no such thing as a thorough saltless experiment, I accepted the medical friends, advice and began taking salt. Milk contains plenty of salt as does water. And at a seaside place, you continually drink in salt. And yet there is decidedly some advantage in not taking additional free salt as a condiment. What we get in water, milk and air is perhaps quite enough for the system. I have a prejudice in favour of saltless diet. Only I do not want to abstain from it religiously, unless I feel the necessity. Meanwhile your observations are accumulating. They will be useful.

I do not quite understand the position about Verrier. What does he propose to do now? If the extension is only up to July, what is to happen thereafter? I have never understood the passport intricacies. If he cannot go to England, he must go to a hill station. Almora may be a suitable place. If he is and is to remain vegetarian, he must copy your diet as closely as possible. Very little starch, no vegetable proteid in the shape of pulses, plenty of milk and fresh green vegetables. No potatoes and such other starchy vegetables. No condiments. Has he had my letter?

What may be regarded as final answer has been received about you. The Government say they are informed that you were directing the movement before imprisonment and therefore you could not see me. I have combated that statement[2] and have said that you were under instructions not to take part in civil disobedience movement and that you were confining yourself to the khadi work and sending reports to friends! If I have erred, please correct me and I shall have no

[1] The source has "8-5-1932" which is a slip. Gandhiji's arm was put in splints of June 5, 1932; *vide* entry under date June 5, 1932 in "Diary, 1932" appearing at the end of this volume. *Bapu's Letters to Mira* also gives this date.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to E.E. Doyle", 9-6-1932

hesitation in correcting myself.[1] I do not know whether anything will result from my letter. Anyway, I am regarding the reply as a final decision and have accordingly asked N[arandas Gandhi] not to send anybody. I stopped interviews last week in anticipation, i.e., I did not see Manibehn and Dahyabhai.

You should rejoice in this additional trial and be thankful that we can write to each other. But we should rejoice even if that stops. Nothing happens without divine permission. And how can we grieve over what He permits?

You should correspond with Radha regularly. I believe your reading of her. I must not write about it. It will upset her. She may take things from you. You should make time for writing to her. I believe that her expenses are met from the Ashram and that she has not been now for some months a burden on Damodardas.

You will have another talk with Damodardas and leave his place, if it will at all ease his burden.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6220. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9686

558. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK[2]

June 8, 1932

She[3] has aged considerably—in some respects perhaps more than I have. Spiritually she has made wonderful progress. . . .

It will take me many incarnations to become disillusioned with the slowness of the charkha. The slowness of the charkha is perhaps its most appealing part for me. But it has so many attractions for me that I can never get tired of it. It has a perennial interest for me. Its implications are growing on me and I make discoveries of its beauties almost from day to day. I am not using a sewing machine in its place or at all. I know how the mistake crept into the papers. My right elbow, having been used for turning the wheel, almost without a break for over ten years, began to give pain, and the doctors here came to

[1] According to the addressee this was correct.

[2] Henry Solomon Leon Polak, a close associate of Gandhiji during the South African struggle. He had written to Gandhiji: "London papers report that you have taken up the sewing machine having been disillusioned with the slowness of charkha. I don't believe it for a moment. But it needs a prompt denial".

[3] Kasturba Gandhi

the conclusion that the pain was of the same type that tennis players often have after continuous use of the racquet. They therefore advised complete rest for the elbow. That might have meant cessation of spinning for some time, but for Prabhudas's invention. You know Prabhudas, Chhaganlal's son. His invention consists in turning the wheel with a pedal and thus freeing the right hand also for drawing the thread and practically doubling the output of yarn. I forestalled the doctors by having this wheel brought to me, and before the peremptory order to stop all work with the right elbow came, I was master of the pedal charkha called 'Magan charkha' after the late Maganlal. A stupid reporter who knew nothing about the invention, when he heard that I was moving the wheel with the pedal, came to the conclusion that I was working at the sewing machine and since there are Pressmen good enough to imagine many things of me and impute all sorts of things to me, they improved upon the false report by deducing disillusionment about the charkha from it. Now you have the whole story.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 208-9

559. A LETTER

June 8, 1932

Whatever your financial condition, bear this in mind:

(1) One who earns money has the right to lose it.

(2) There is no shame in losing money, but it is shameful, even sinful, to hide the fact of one's loss.

(3) One should never live beyond one's means. Though one may be living in a bungalow today, one should be prepared to live in a hut tomorrow.

(4) We need not feel ashamed if we do not have enough money to pay our creditors.

(5) Anybody who hands over to his creditors everything without keeping back a single pie for himself has fully repaid his debt.

(6) Wisdom lies first in not starting a business with borrowed money, but in case one has already done it, the next wise thing is to give away what one has and free oneself from one's debts.

You may go to the Ashram whenever you wish to.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 209-10

560. LETTER TO E.E. DOYLE

June 9, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE[1],

Major Bhandari[2] has infromed me of the Government's decision about Shrimati Mirabai (Slade). I appreciate the frank reasons given for the decision. I do not know what the Government would call being "actively engaged in the furtherance of the civil disobedience movement". It is likely too that the Government are misinformed. Obviously Mirabai has had no chance of refuting the information given to them. I can only reiterate my statement that like several other companions of mine she has been intentionally, and for the movement itself, kept out of its civil resistance part. But if Mirabai at any time was, or is now, actively engaged in the furtherance of the civil disobedience movement, my wife and my two sons were taking an active part in it. Yet if they were not in prison, being members of my family, they would, I presume, be allowed to see me. As I have made it clear to the Government in previous communications, I have long ceased to make any distinction between family members and others. My co-workers are as much members of my family as the members so called.

Unless therefore the Government see their way to revise their decision, I must deny myself the pleasure of having weekly visitors. I enforced the self-denying ordinance on Saturday last. Indeed under the ruling given by the Government in Mirabai's case it would be a serious thing for me to take the responsibility of deciding in the case of Ashram inmates who should and who should not see me.

Yours sincerely,

M. K.GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(2), Pt. I, p.109

[1] Inspector-General of Prisons Bombay Presidency

[2] Superintendent of the Yeravda Central Prison

561. LETTER TO NATHURAM TRIKAMDAS

June 9, 1932

BHAI NATHURAM,

I felt happy on reading your detailed letter. I am glad that you have gone there to learn khadi work. Learn it well and properly. If you get mere superficial knowledge, on your return you will not be able to teach it to others. You will be able to do that only if you acquire mastery over the smallest details. Observe the Ashram rules carefully.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

562. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

June 9, 1932

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

I got your letter. I had also received your previous letters. You must have received my replies. Repeating Ramanama certainly does not mean repeating it mechanically with the lips. The preceptor of Ramanama believes that if a person repeats it mechanically but with faith, his faith itself will some day carry the name below the throat and right down to the heart. So long as this has not happened, one cannot have true peace. I know of no other remedy which could give you peace. You should cut down your intake of food as a medical necessity at least, and if even then you do not keep well you should try fasting, etc. I wrote a postcard to Pyarelal only a few days ago.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 180

563. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

June 9, 1932

CHI. PARASRAM,

I got your two letters pinned together. I find that the short letter with paragraph headings is a summary of the first one and that it would be enough to read that alone. But it appears that you have also sent the original letter so that I may know more details if I wish.

You should certainly not strain your will to use the limb which pains, that is, use it disregarding the pain. If you feel that because of such self-restraint the pain is gradually decreasing, you may conclude nothing else is necessary. If the pain does not decrease gradually even though you take care not to use that limb, there is no option but to take complete rest.

There can be no one rule for all as to the time required for a meal. If somebody's meal consists only of milk, it would take him only five to seven minutes to sip it. If somebody else's meal consists only of one pomegranate and he has no teeth but has to eat the seeds instead of extracting the juice and drinking it, he may even take an hour to do so. Hence the following should be the rule: A meal should take up as much time as is required for chewing it properly, taking into consideration the type and quantity of the food. Ordinarily, twenty to thirty minutes should be regarded enough for those who have good teeth and who eat *rotlis*[1], dal, rice and vegetables. I have no faith in the common belief about sleeping with the head in a certain direction. I have never followed that rule.

It is my belief that the peepul tree is considered sacred because it is very big, covers a large area with shade and can be grown almost everywhere.

I understand what you say about the Hindi translation of my letters, etc. I shall be satisfied if everybody else is satisfied in this matter.

I used to keep cloves and sugar crystals in my mouth merely to prevent my voice getting hoarse. They were discontinued when I

[1] Chapatis

stopped making so many speeches and to such large audiences and I never resumed the practice afterwards.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7501. Also C.W. 4978 Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

564. A LETTER

June 9, 1932

As you say, you are continually assailed by impure thoughts and feel miserable because of that. This is what is called self-made hell. This contains the replies to both your questions. It makes clear why I said what I did and also why such a state of mind is described as hell. If you understand the nature of this hell, it will also be easy for you to understand how you can come out of it. You should not brood over the fact that you get impure thoughts. Instead, you should go on as if they never troubled you. If a person who stumbles while walking does not stop to find out the cause of his stumbling, no harm will follow. If, on the contrary, such a person sits down on the road and goes on thinking why he stumbled, he will make no progress in his journey. But he will forget that he had stumbled if he does not think much about the fact and continues his journey. Since he is advancing, he gradually gathers strength and consequently stumblesless.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 211

565. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

June 10, 1932

Most of the manual work in the Ashram is done by the inmates themselves. There are a few hired labourers, but only those men who follow the Ashram rules fairly well have remained to work in that capacity and the inmates of the Ashram work with them. Gradually they are acquiring mastery over all types of work. Children also contribute their share

Newcomers are first required to learn prayers, *bhajans,* etc. It is only after they have learnt these that those among them who wish to learn English may do so.

All the inmates spin for *yajna* in company for one hour. Yarn of less than twenty counts cannot be included as part of one's contribution through the spinning *yajna*. The yarn spun on a day has to be handed over to the depot on the same day. I have now suggested that, if all the people agree, no one should be permitted to buy the yarn spun by himself or herself for his or her own use.[1] I have always believed that our *yajna* remains incomplete because of this freedom to buy one's own yarn.

Beginning last week, it has been decided to maintain an account of everybody's labour at the rate of one anna per hour of work irrespective of the nature of work, though it has not been decided to make actual payments at this rate. Just now my suggestion to Narandas was merely that, if he agreed, he should immediately start keeping the records. These records will be in addition to the general records which are being kept now, and for the present we will merely note the results. They will give us much useful information and may also help us to realize the ideal of equality of work. In other words, all types of social service, whether spinning or weaving or cleaning lavatories, should be valued at the rate of one anna per hour of work. You probably remember that we have discussed this subject in the past at great length. Recently I have been writing to Narandas on a variety of subjects and among them I brought up this one again for discussion. It seems to me that Narandas's capacity for responding to such idea has increased considerably these days. He, therefore, welcomed my suggestion. These records do not require much time to maintain and, if the present experiment reaches the stage of implementation, the keeping of accounts would be so easy that even a person of ordinary education in Gujarati would be able to do the work. Success in maintaining accounts of this nature depends on the honesty of the people. If a person has not really worked for the number of hours which he enters against his name or supplies to the account-keeper, or if he has done the work carelessly, it is plain that the account will not be correct. That is, it will be like good and bad coins getting mixed up. I have been writing from here a great deal about children's education too. I cannot tell how much of it the inmates of the Ashram will be able to adopt. It would require much time to discuss all that here, and I cannot spare it. Have patience in this matter.

[1] *Vide* 'Letter to Gangdevi Sanadhya", 12-1-1932

All of us should make the right use, according to our lights, of this priceless opportunity which we have got. The best use we can make of it is to cultivate the power of reflection. Our minds are oftenvacant and at such times the only thing we like to do is either to read or to talk. Some of us do think, but they only build castles in the air. Really speaking, just as reading is an art so is thinking. All our thoughts should occur to us at the right time. Just we do not read useless books, so also we should not let our minds run after idle thoughts. The power which is produced and conserved by such control over one's thoughts can not be measured. I have felt during each term of imprisonment that it was the best time for learning to think in this manner.

I, therefore, advise all of you to master the art of deep reflection. If you do so, you will not find it necessary to consult me frequently. But let no one misunderstand my meaning. I do not wish to forbid anyone to consult me. I only wish to cure people of excessive dependence on me. In case of necessity, however, my advice will always be available. It is your right and also your duty to take whatever advantage you can of my experience and the results of my reflection concerning matters of which I have had more experience and over which I have reflected more deeply than others.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. 1, pp. 211-3

566. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

June 11, 1932

CHI. MATHURADAS[1],

Why do you regard yourself responsible for Meghji's[2] death? If you are responsible, how much greater is my responsibility? But even supposing you are, why grieve over it now? One should not keep thinking about the past. After drawing the proper lesson from it, one should forget it.

It will be better to keep a fixed time every day for writing the

[1] Mathuradas P. Asar, an expert carder and khadi worker of the Ashram

[2] One of the children in the Ashram who had died of smallpox; on Gandhiji's advice they had not been vaccinated.

book on weaving and not spend the whole day on it. What is written in haste often turns out to be ill-digested. If one's thoughts are perfectly clear, one always writes well and only such writing impresses.

I always prescribe the same medicine. For all diseases, though known by different names, have one and the same cause. Hence the medicine for all of them must be one.

I want you to become perfectly vigilant, build up strong health and start working regularly.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3754

567. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

June 11, 1932

BHAI NANABHAI[1],

I got your postcard. I have not yet received Manilal's letter. I have completely stopped seeing visitors. Even if this had not been the case, Medh could not have seen me without special permission. Nevertheless, when I receive Manilal's letter, I will form some opinion from it if I can. From the fact that there has been no cable from Phoenix, I had concluded that Manilal and Sita[2] were quite well. About the latter, I came to know only from your postcard. I had heard from Surendra that he was well in Visapur.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From a Photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6684. Also C.W. 4329 Courtesy: Kanubhai Mashruwala

[1] Manilal Gandhi's father-in-law
[2] Manilal Gandhiji's Daughter Dhairyabala

568. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

[*June 11, 1932*][1]

CHI. PANDITJI[2],

In the article on death Kaki's[3] name was included later, on my being reminded of her death by Mahadev. As I had already drawn the moral from the other deaths described, I did not write more about her. A few other names of persons who had died were also left out. A complete list can be made only in the Ashram.

Rasik's[4] death could not be mentioned in that article, since he had died outside the Ashram. Why I mentioned Maganlal's is explained in the article itself. Mathuri[5] was all right when I saw her.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 230. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

569. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

June 11, 1932

CHI. JAMNA[6],

I am very glad that you have gone to Ranavav. Now you must not leave that place for quite some time. To whom does the sanatorium belong? Where is it situated? Are there any people living in the neighbourhood? Do you have to pay any rent? You should not feel sad at having had to go there. You should get acquainted with the poor living there. If possible, try and serve them. If that is not possible, study on your own and increase your knowledge and improve your ability to work. It is very good indeed that Purushottam[7] is with you.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 855. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] The source has "11-5-1932" which is a slip. From the reference to the article on death ("Lesson of Death", 30-5-1932) it is evident that the letter was written later.

[2] Music teacher at the Ashram

[3] Wife of D.B. Kalelkar

[4] Harilal Gandhi's son who died in 1929

[5] Addressee's daughter

[6] Narandas Gandhi's Wife

[7] Addressee's son

570. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

June 12, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I did not consider your letter too long, for you have given in it an account of your visits such as I had wanted you to give. I have been to Sinhagarh thrice. Once I went there while the Lokamanya was also there[1], and we met each other a good many times. I saw his house. You have certainly described a few things about which I did not know. I did meet Hari Narayan Apte[2]. I certainly with to read his novels,but I do not have the courage to take up anything new just now. Urdu, economics, watching the sky, spinning and writing letters—these keep me busy enough. And off and on I take up something extra to read.

What you say about the Superintendent[3] is correct. I saw and understood everything. But we should tolerate all that. As a man he is certainly not bad. But authority is an evil thing. And, besides, authority over whom? We should , therefore, reason thus: How good is it that even in unfavourable circumstances a little measure of humanity has survived? Who knows to what depths we would have descended if we were in his place? You will frequently get the kind of experiences you had. It is through such experiences that we learn to cultivate forbearance, generosity, patience and courtesy. In favourable circumstances, everyone can behave in a manner which will win him or her the good opinion of others.

There was no special meaning behind my question. "Are you satisfied now?" I asked the question only casually. Sushila may not have felt hurt, but I myself felt sorry. Having permitted her to come with you, I should have talked with her a little. But I had no time and so contented myself with an inquiry about Jamnadas. My blessings to her.

I certainly intended to write on the subject of sex. But it would be better if you ask me specific questions. We need not stop the teaching of English. All that I meant was that we should not teach it to new pupils before they have learnt the other things. I have written more about this in my letter to Narandas.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sarrladevi Chowdhrani", 1-5-1920

[2] A Marathi novelist

[3] Of the Yeravda Central Prison, Major Bhandari.

Your body ought to be [as red] as copper. If you have no objection to fish and if you think you can maintain good health by taking it, you may go out to eat it.[1] Imam Saheb used to do that. If you wish to discuss this subject further with me, you may.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10289. Also C.W. 6737. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

571. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 8/13, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I had got your postcard before I received the other post from you today, but I did not reply to it in a separate letter since I had written in detail about Narayanappa in the letter which was dispatched yesterday along with the other letters. I have now received a negative reply in regard to Mirabehn. It was good, therefore, that I had already decided provisionally not to see visitors. That being so, though Durga and Anandi[2] had come today to see us, Vallabhbhai and I could not see them. Mahadev went and saw them. We certainly felt unhappy but it is only by swallowing such bitter draughts that one can preserve dharma. I, therefore, welcomed the pain that I felt.

I am very happy that you have decided to follow the method of calculating the value of work at the rate of one anna per hour. I think we shall make some important discoveries by following it. In order that the account may be properly kept, everybody should know exactly how long one has worked. That means that you will have to strike the bell for each hour or will have to devise some other method so that everybody can know how much time has passed. Secondly, the information about the hours of work supplied by every inmate must be correct. If it is clearly realized that time is money, it will be seen that giving wrong information will be like passing off counterfeit coins. Our records will be wrong and, in consequence, our conclusions will be wrong too. I think for at least one month the slips received from everybody should be preserved. To facilitate this, I suppose all the inmates are supplied slips of the same size. The slips should be

[1] A Physician had pointed out that she had been losing weight because she had given up fish.

[2] Daughter of Lakshmidas Asar of the Sabarmati Ashram

filled in clear handwriting. Now that I think about the matter as I dictate these lines, I feel that you yourself need not keep a daily record. Your record will be the slips. If we decide to preserve them permanently, they can be pasted [in an account book] but I do not think that is necessary at all. As the slips are received, the hours mentioned in them may be entered in the ledger. If you object that, in that case, we would not know for how many hours each type of work was done, you may enter the hours under separate heads of work. However, to be able to use that information you will have to maintain a double-entry account, that is, keep the record under each name and each type of work separately. Only then will you be able to draw up quickly a summary every month showing the hours given by each person and the total number of hours spent on each type of work. I do think that for our purpose information under both heads will be necessary. At the moment I cannot think of any other suggestions besides these. Your account of your own daily work seems all right. If necessary, you may reduce *yajna* work from two hours to something less. If anybody gives money equal to the value of the yarn spun by him, instead of the yarn itself, his *yajna* is certainly imperfect, since it is marred by his desire to wear cloth woven from his own yarn. That is, he spins yarn of the fine count through his selfish desire to be able to wear cloth woven from such yarn. Ideally,one should not wish to all to derive any personal benefit from work done for *yajna* or from any gift made as *yajna*. Anybody who works for *yajna* may take from what he produces only as much as would be the share of each if the total quantity were divided equally among all the persons for whom he works. We claim that we work for the 300 millions of our countrymen. If so, we may certainly have 1/300 millionth share of the yarn which we spin, imagining that that share is mixed with the yarn from which the cloth of our garments is woven. I know that many arguments have been advanced, from the point of view of increasing the production of fine khadi, against my stand, and I admit the force of those arguments. That is why I have tolerated *yajna* which is only half pure. But I have always felt within myself that such *yajna* is imperfect. If you clearly see the imperfection to which I am drawing attention, you should hand over all the yarn which you spin and overcome your desire to get cloth woven from it for your or Jamna's use. When all the yarn received is mixed together and woven into cloth, you may take from it what you require. If you see any error in my reasoning, please point it out to me. And you need not follow my

suggestion though you may agree with me, if you feel that it is beyond your capacity at present to do so—irrespective of whether the reason is Jamna or yourself. If we voluntarily start doing something which we had not been doing up to now, we experience nothing but intense joy from that and feel that a heavy load has been taken off our head. Do not act upon my suggestion till you feel thus. As I stated ina previous letter, I want everybody's *yajna* to be perfect, but I should like to wait till all people are convinced of the correctness of my view. I see from your letter, however, that they have now come so far that it should not be difficult to take that last step, if it is not implied in what they have agreed to. I have interpreted your letter to mean that everybody would spin for *yajna* in the porch between 12.30 and 1.30 and hand over there and then the yarn spun by him or her. Literally understood, this means that one cannot even buy back that yarn. If this is to apply to all, you also will have to hand over the yarn spun by you. Your statement, however, that the yarn spun during that time will be handed over may also mean that a person may buy back his or her yarn for personal use. If so, the arrangement will have the imperfection which I have remarked above. I should be happy if all agree to remove this imperfection. If they agree, however, everybody should understand that he will have to spin in future even more carefully than he had been doing up to now when he knew that he was spinning the yarn for his own use.

I have been spinning for the last ten days or so with such bad slivers as I have never used before. I am doing this purposely. I wrote to Premlilabehn requesting her to send me some cotton, and in reply she immediately sent slivers. The slivers with which I have been spinning are from this lot. It certainly cannot be thrown away as useless. That would mean being light-hearted about work, Nor can I send these silvers to the women prisoners. If the slivers are good enough for them I would say that they were twice for me. I, therefore, decided to use them up. I realize from my experience the great difference between good slivers and bad slivers. Theoretically I always understood it, but I realized it from experience only now, for ordinarily I would always get good slivers. Whenever I myself have carded cotton I have done so very carefully. Hence I do not remember to have spun with such bad slivers any time in the past. And I see from Mahadev's spinning what difference good cotton can make.

My purpose in writing about all this is to point out that, if we

wish to spin for *yajna* the finest yarn that we can, the slivers with which we spin should be of the best quality and the cotton must be perfectly clean. The spinning-wheel also should be in good condition. If these conditions are fulfilled, no one will find the one hour of spinning boring. On the contrary, the smoothly rotating spinning-wheels would make such sweet music when so many persons spin in complete silence that the hour would pass as but one minute and give perfect joy. Even the most interesting activities will only bore a personwho does not understand their value or who feel aversion towards them. Here ends my sermon on account-books and on *yajna*.

I have already said above that I will not see visitors now. Do not worry about my hand till I tell you that the condition is serious enough to cause worry, for I am keeping back nothing about it. I see no necessity to keep back anything. We aspire to learn to bear everything that may happen to us. If so, it would be altogether wrong to keep back anything relating to illness or pain. The left elbow is in plaster just now. I, therefore, present a pitiful sight, though there is no reason at all to pity me. If the cause of the pain in the elbow is no other than the excessive work I have done with that arm, it is obvious that it should be given complete rest. Since the only way of doing that is to put it in plaster, that has been done. We shall know the effect in a week or two. If the elbow requires only rest, the officials themselves will obtain whatever external aid may be required. In other respects my health is very good. The weight is 106 $^{1}/_{2}$ pounds, that is, it has been increasing. Though I can work only with one arm, and despite the trouble which bad slivers give, I can spin more than 200 rounds daily. I can also read for a while. I practise, like a child, writing large Urdu letters in a copy-book. I would not be able to do all this if my health was not good. The mind would simply not work.

I think your decision regarding Jayantiprasad's daughter is perfectly all right. You should not assume new responsibilities just now. If the girl were capable of looking after herself and were healthy, I would have certainly felt tempted to take her in.

Chimanalal[1] should improve his health anyhow.

Leave Parnerkar[2] to solve his problem by himself. If he can stay, we certainly want him to do so. If he cannot, we need not press him. The verse in the *Gita* which asks what avails a man to force himself

[1] One of the oldest inmates of the Ashram, a patient of asthma

[2] Yashwant Mahadev Parnerkar, Specialist in animal husbandry

beyond a certain point applies in this case too.

The fact that you do not find Savitribehn's address there means, I suppose, that you have not been getting any letters from her recently. But her connection with the Ashram is not recent. You may find some of her old letters lying somewhere. Moreover, if correspondent's addresses are being preserved in the Ashram, her address must have been written down somewhere. If anybody goes to thepress, we are bound to have her address on its record. She has also written a book about me, in which she has reproduced some of my letters. You may possibly find her address in these. However, I do not want you to spend too much of your time in finding it.

Father Elwin has not explained why he suggested Friday for a Christian prayer. On Sunday evenings pious Christians will have gone to churches and will be attending special services, so that Sunday may not suit them for the purpose of the public communion which he has in view. Moreover, Friday is the day of Jesus's crucifixion, and Father Elwin may have selected it for that reason. But this is only my guess. I very much like the idea that we should fix one day in the week for a Muslim prayer. If Friday is not available now for that purpose, we may fix Thursday. Thursday means *Jummerat*, and I think that day also is holy for Muslims. To us, however, all days and hours are equally holy. It is enough if we pray with sincere devotion.

We also had read here in the papers about the suitcase. Hence Mahadev believes that we must have lost one. Aluvihari was with us all the time and was one of the party. It seems that, having read about the suitcase in the papers, he went and claimed it. Mahadev cannot guess— and if he cannot, how can I?—whose clothes and books it contains. Well, it is safe now. Aluvihari will probably send it to you, or may use his judgement and do with it what seems best to him. I expect to hear from him.

I have always considered that the rule that newcomers should not be permitted to start immediately on English is a correct one. My stand is that they may learn English, must learn it, but only after they have acquired a working knowledge of Sanskrit, Hindi and the Urdu script, learnt music well enough to join in singing *bhajans* and mastered all the processes relating to spinning. I think a person of average ability would take one year to complete this programme, though it is likely that some may take more than that and some less. Those who have joined the Ashram for life or have joined it

temporarily with the aim of training themselves for service should have no special attraction for English. If anybody feels it, he should know that he cannot satisfy his desire in the Ashram. Nobody should understand from this that we proscribe English from the Ashram or do not love it as much as others do. Our only aim is to see that it does not occupy a place which does not belong to it. For many persons knowledge of English is essential even for the purpose of service, butwe can give instruction in it in the Ashram only in a manner convenient to the Ashram and consistent with its aims. We are entitled to expect this patience in all inmates of the Ashram.

June 11, 1932

Regarding Imam Saheb's tomb, Pyare Ali asked Khatib Saheb for his opinion. The latter said that Islam does not approve of the erection of tombs. You should, therefore, put a few blocks of stones on the spot to mark it off and to prevent the ground being used for any purpose. Take or send some Muslim to the place and ask him to arrange a few stones. If there is no objection to our laying them, somebody from among ourselves may arrange them.

Silence Day, June 13, 1932

I got you letter today. Since tomorrow (Tuesday) is a holiday, I will dispatch the post today. Read the letter which I have written to Sitala Sahay[1] . However, in the end do what you think proper. I think it is best that in this matter I should not decide from here what should be done. I will approve of whatever you do. I may not even have the necessary data for taking a correct decision.

Where is Madhavlal at present? I thought he was in jail. But I hear from Vithal that he is not in Jail.

I am not sending any article this week. I have no time to write one, and moreover, this letter to you has become something like an article

The plaster on the left arm has been removed. There has been no improvement. The cause of the pain, therefore, must be something else. But there is no cause whatever for worry. Mirabehn is on saltless diet at present, and therefore, had been pressing me to adopt it. I started it yesterday. For me it is child's play to live on such diet, for I

[1] A khadi worker from U.P.

have done that for eight years. I shall have fresh experience of it now. If there is anything to write about, I will do so before the next letter is due.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8232. Courtesy Narandas Gandhi

572. LETTER TO BHARATI

June 13, 1932

I got your letter[1] written in beautiful handwriting. I cannot have too many such letters.

I would certainly be pleased if you brothers and sisters became as strong and sturdy as steel and could endure heat and cold. But I cannot all at once make such and experiment on you in the heat *(sic)* of Simla. Training in such endurance would be fruitful only if it is undergone methodically and step by step. It is a grave error to believe that a person who generally lives a sheltered life can suddenly become hardened when the need arises. That would be going against nature. I remember hundreds of instances of persons who made such mistakes.

I would certainly enjoy reading literature. During my school days I could not read anything outside the syllabus. After that I got involved in so may activities one after another that I could get little time to read,. Whatever I did read was in jails. But I do not think that I have lost much because of this. I got a great deal of time for thinking. And, moreover, what one learns in the school of experience is always more useful than reading.

Even those who profess to cultivate art for its own sake are not really able to do so. Art has a place in life though what is art is a different question. But, art and such other things are mere means in the path that we with to tread. When they become ends in themselves they become shackles and drag us down.

God is Truth. For the past few years I have been saying that 'Truth is God' instead of saying that 'God is Truth'. I feel that this is a more logical way of putting it. Truth is the only reality in this world.

Here Truth should be given a wider connotation. It is something living. This Truth that is God and the laws of God are not distinct

[1] The addressee had asked Gandhiji whether he was interested in literature, whether art could be pursued for its own sake and what his concept of God was.

from one another but are the same thing. Hence Truth, too, is a living thing. Thus it means the same thing to say that this world is governedby Truth or by God's laws. There is infinite power in that Truth.According to Chapter X of the *Gita*, it may be said that the world is sustained by just a fraction of that power. You will, therefore, understand that I mean by God if you read, "Truth" wherever the word "God" occurs.

If God exists—though we call Him Truth—it is our duty to worship Him. We become like that which we worship. Prayer means nothing more than this. But does not that meaning of prayer explain everything? Truth dwells in our hearts, but we are not aware, or fully aware of the fact. This awareness comes through sincere prayer. . . [1]

Do you find it difficult to read my handwriting? The envelope in which this letter is sealed was made by Sardar. He spends a great deal of his time in putting to this use any useless paper he can lay his hands on.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 214-5

573. LETTER TO MAITRI GIRI

June 14, 1932

CHI. MAITRI[2],

I got your letter. There was no reason whatsoever for you to feel hurt. The question which I asked you, I put to all grown-up girls. If any girl wishes to get married, I regard that as natural. Would it not be better to tell me frankly rather than repine inwardly? But I am certainly pleased if a girl does not wish to get married. I asked you so that you may have no fear on that account. If, however, you positively do not, at present, wish to get married, that is indeed the best. You should know, however, that in order to preserve such purity, it is very necessary to cultivate devotion to God and to keep oneself engaged in some work for the service of people. All of you should improve your health. How is Krishnamaiyadevi's[3] health?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6236

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] Daughter of Dalbahadur Giri
[3] Widow of Dalbahadur Giri

574. LETTER TO SHAMAL R. RAVAL

June 14, 1932

CHI. SHAMAL[1],

I got your letter. However much your brother or others may press you, you should cling to your decision, and refuse to get married as long as you can control your mind. You may request Anasuyabehn[2] to help you in this matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3141. Also C.W. 2877. Courtesy: Shamal R. Raval

575. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 14, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

After I had dispatched the post yesterday, I got a letter from Mahavir[3] in which he says that he has not received the money. He has estimated the expenditure at Rs. 15 per head. You may decide what it should be. Maitri informs me that she has not the slightest wish to marry just now.

Personally, I think we should let them stay in Darjeeling as long as they wish.

BAPU

CHI. NARANDAS GANDHI
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8233. courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] A worker in the Navajivan Press

[2] Sister of Ambalal Sarabhai, a mill-owner of Ahmedabad. She was associated with the Labour Union of Ahmedabad.

[3] Son of Krishnamaiyadevi

576. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

June 14, 1932

CHI. TARAMATI,

I have your letter. I am not worried that Mathuradas has lost weight. It is sufficient if other things are all right. Did Mathuradas receive my letter?

Since Mirabehn is not being permitted to have visitors I am compelled to stop having visitors myself. If the restriction is removed, I shall let you know at once.

All the three of us are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

577. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

June 15, 1932

DEAR AGATHA[1],

I have your letter. You are quite right in scrupulously honouring the restrictions. Indeed by a long course of habit I have lost all curiosity. For a prisoner's curiosity can only be idle, as he can do nothing even if he came to know certain things through indirect of illegitimate means. And what is perhaps more, I have abundant faith in friends doing their very best so long as they believe in the justice of the cause.

Yes, Mahadev was able to see both his wife and son only last week. He is entitled to a visit per month

Love from us both.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1454

[1] Secretary of the India Conciliation Group (1931)

578. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

June 15, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

I could not reply to your letter of the 6th last week. Meanwhile, I got another letter from you this week. I understand your reason for discontinuing to send Vinoba's discourses. His prohibition is right.

Yes, there was some misunderstanding on my part regarding the paintings of scenes from the *Ramayana*. I do not see anything objectionable in meditating over a figure drawn as purely imaginary. If, however, meditating on the *Gita* can satisfy you, where is the need for any other object of meditation? There are two ways of meditating on the *Gita*. Since we look upon the *Gita* as Mother, you may meditate on a painting or photograph of your mother, you require one (and if your mother is dead), thinking of her as the *kamadhenu*[1] in the form of the *Gita*. Alternatively, you may have an imaginary picture of the *Gita* in your mind. You may even think of her as Mother Cow. I think it would be better if you could follow the second way. You may, at that time, meditate on any verse or phrase from the chapter of the *Gita* which you may have recited on that day or from any other chapter. All the words in the Gita are so many ornaments on the body of Mother *Gita* and, therefore, meditating on any one of them amounts of meditating on the *Gita* herself, just as meditating on an ornament worn by the woman whom one loves amounts to meditating on herself. But one may also meditate on the *Gita* in any other way that one can think of. There are as many ways as there are brains. No two persons meditate in the same way even on one and the same object. There will always be some difference between the exact pitures of the object imagined by them and their descriptions of it.

According to Chapter VI, even the least *sadhana* is not wasted, and we resume our *sadhana* in our next life from the point where we had stopped. Similarly, a person who desires to turn towards spiritual living but lacks the necessary strength for the purpose will have greater strength of mind in his next life. I have no doubt about this at all in my mind, but it does not mean that we can relax our effort in this life. If we think in that manner, our desire for a spiritual living is

[1] Mythical cow that yielded whatever one asked for

not sincere. Or, it is a desire of the intellect and not of the heart, and a desire of the intellect has no value at all. It will not survive one's death. On the other hand, a desire which has been accepted by the heart cannot but inspire sincere effort to fulfil it, though it is quite possible that owing to various cirmustances or weakness of the body our desire may not be fulfilled during this life. We have experience of this every day. But the desire will cling to the soul when it leaves the body, and in the next life the difficulties which stood in the way of itsfulfilment during this life will diminish and the desire will be fulfilled or will at least become stronger. Thus a person who aspires after spiritual life is ever advancing.

It may be that Jnaneshwar Maharaj meditated on Nivrittinath[1] while the latter was alive, but I am strongly of the view that we should not follow his example. If we meditate on a person, he must have attained perfection. It is altogether improper, and also unnecessary to ascribe perfection to a living human being. It is possible, however, that Jnaneshwar Maharaj did not meditate on the real Nivrittinath, but meditated on the perfect Nivrittinath of his imagination. But why should we need at all concern ourselves with this problem? when the question is about the propriety of meditating on a living human being, we need not bring in the question of meditating on our mental image of that person and any reply on the propriety of that is likely to confuse the reason of the other person.

The names which are given Chapter I are, according to me, more the names of certain qualities than of real persons. While describing the divine and the demoniac forces in our nature, the poet has personified them. In saying this, I do not deny the possibility of an actual battle between Kauravas and Pandavas having taken place near Hastinapur. My belief is that the poet took a well-knwon event of that age as an example and used it as material for his immortal work. I may be mistaken in this belief and all those names may be the names of real persons. If so, it was not improper for the poet to give those names at the commencement of his historical narrative, and, since the first chapter is necessary for introducing the subject, it is necessary to recite it as part of ceremonial recitation of the *Gita*.

If we spin with slivers made by somebody else, our spinning *yajna* is certainly imperfect. A person like me may not be able to make his own slivers at present owing to physical weakness, but those

[1] Jnaneshwar's elder brother, a *jnanayogi*

who can should make their own slivers.

I consider it necessary for everybody to learn spinning on the *takli* and gain mastery over it. I know that Vinoba regards it as a much easier means for the *yajna* of spinning. I have not come to a final decision about this, nor do I wish to do so without discussing the matter at length with Vinoba. I am, therefore, not particular either way. You should, however, discuss your suggestion with Narandas. I also will do so.

BAPU

[PS.]

Write to me about your constipation.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6731, Also C.W. 4474. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

579. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

June 15, 1932

CHI. MANU[1],

I got your letter. I cannot understand why you did not get the letter that was sent with my letter to Jamnadas[2] . Your courage is being tested fairly well. But there is nothing to be afraid of. You should tell very plainly that you have been living with Ba and Bali since childhood, and that you do not with to live with Harilal at all. Even parents cannot claim custody of grown-up children. Hence it depends on your own wish where you will live. Nobody can force you to marry against your will. You should, therefore, always remember that it is in your own power to save yourself. I can write in this way and give you courage, but as prisoner I cannot give anything in newspapers. Nor will my letters help you in the court. But rest assured that you will need no such help.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1514. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

[1] Daughter of Harilal Gandhi

[2] Jamnadas Gandhi, younger brother of Maganlal Gandhi and Principal of Rajkot Rashtriya Shala

580. A LETTER

June 15, 1932

Like you, some others also believe that I live a life of self-control and observe *brahmacharya*, and that, therefore, I was sure to live long. This belief about me is not correct, or it is correct only partially in contrast with how other people live. I indulged in sexual pleasure nearly up to the age of 30. Nor can I claim that I exercised self-control in eating. I used to eat all kinds of delicacies for themere pleasure of the palate. Then I steadily drifted towards restrain. But this does not mean at all that I have overcome the cravings of the senses. All I can claim is that I have learnt to hold them under control. Thus, self-indulgence had already had its effect on my body, but it has been counteracted in the measure that I have acquired self-control. My contemporaries who do not exercise even that much self-control naturally wonder at my self-control such as it is and do not observe my weakness. . . [1]

The privileges which I enjoy as a prisoner are not because of my being placed in a particular class. I am not treated as an ordinary convict. Prisoners of my category[2] are entitled to many privileges. This, of course, is no defence of what I do. Though the Government does give certain privileges to a prisoner like me, it certainly depends on the prisoner himself whether or not to avail himself of those privileges. Hence the misunderstanding which you mention is quite natural. But I regard it in public interest to continue to avail myself of the privileges even at the risk of incurring such a misunderstanding. But it should not be necessary for me to defend this point of view. Its correctness should be self-evident. Even if it is not, I should cling to it so long as I believe it to be earnest. This reasoning applies to every captain of a ship. A captain cannot always explain the reasons for the cours which he is following. But he would not deserve to be a captain if he listens to the advice of others and give up what he believes to be the right course. Such captains are known to have wrecked on rocks the ships under their charge. Hence persons like you may certainly caution me whenever they have doubt about the propriety of my actions. If, however, I do not change my policy even after that, they should have faith that what I am doing is right. It does happen

[1] Here follows Mahadev Desai's comment introducing the next paragraph but does not indicate if any portion in omitted here.

[2] State prisoners detained under Regulation 25 of 1829

sometimes that such faith proves to be misplaced. But there is no other way of managing public affairs. At the moment I am confident that, when I feel that I ought not to avail myself of a particular privilege or of any of them, I shall have the strength to renounce it or them. In South Africa I spent fairly long periods of imprisonment as an ordinary prisoner.

From whom did you hear that story about Krishnadas[1]? There is no truth in it at all. Krishnadas was certainly not sent away. For somereasons he himself asked for leave to go. But though he has left, our relations have remained the same. It is against my nature to take any such step at somebody's instigation. And nobody instigated me to take such a step in regard to Krishnadas. All the same I wish to know the source of this story. If you think you can tell me, please let me know.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 218-20

[1] Gandhiji's secretary in 1921-22

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM SIR SAMUEL HOARE[1]

April 13, 1932

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I write this in answer to your letter of 11th March and I say at once I realize fully the strength of your feeling upon the question of separate electorates for the "Depressed" Classes. I can only say that we intend to give any decision that may be necessary solely and only upon the merits of the case. As you are aware, Lord Lothian's Committee has not yet completed its tour and it must be some weeks before we can receive any conclusions at which it may have arrived. When we receive the report we shall have to give most careful consideration to its recommendations and we shall not give a decision until we have taken into account in addition to the view expressed by the Committee the views that you and those who think with you have so forcibly expressed.

I feel sure if you were in our position you would be taking exactly the same action we intend to take. You would await the Committee's report, you would then give it your fullest consideration and before arriving at a final decision you would take into account the views that have been expressed on both sides of the controversy. More than this I cannot say. Indeed I do not imagine you would expect me to say more.

As to the Ordinances, I can only repeat what I have already said both publicly and privately. I am convinced that it was essential to impose them in the face of the deliberate attack upon the very foundations of orderly government. I am also convinced that both the Government of India and the local Governments are not abusing their extensive powers and are doing everything possible to prevent excessive or vindictive action. We shall not keep the Emergency measures in force any longer than we are obliged to for the purpose of maintaining the essentials of law and order and protecting our officials and other classes of the community against terrorist outrages.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI, ESQUIRE

The Bombay Chronicle, 13-9-1932

[1]*Vide* "Letter to Sir Samuel Hoare", 11-3-1932 and "Letter to Sir Samuel Hoare", 2-5-1932

APPENDIX II

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN R. V. MARTIN AND R. M. MAXWELL[1]

(*A*) *R. V. MARTIN'S LETTER TO R. M. MAXWELL*

INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF PRISONS,
BOMBAY PRESIDENCY,
POONA,
March 15, 1932

MY DEAR MAXWELL,

I enclose a letter I have just received from M. K. Gandhi. May I please have a reply by return regarding interviews with other prisoners? He seems to be getting very agitated on the subject.

I have no knowledge regarding the illness of the prisoner he mentions

Yours sincerely,
R. V. MARTIN

R. M. MAXWELL, ESQ. C.I.E., M.A. (OXON), I.C.S., J.P.
SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT
HOME DEPARTMENT, BOMBAY
HOME SECRETARY .

Orders have already been passed. Please see that they issue promptly.

R. M. MAXWELL
16/3

(*B*) *R. M. MAXWELL'S LETTER TO THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF PRISONS*

P. 147 NO. S. D. 2357

HOME DEPARTMENT (POLITICAL),
BOMBAY CASTLE,
March 16, 1932

FROM
R. M. MAXWELL, ESQUIRE, C.I.S., I.C.S.
ACTING SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY
HOME DEPARTMENT
TO
THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF PRISONS
BOMBAY PRESIDENCY

SUBJECT: Interviews between Mr. Gandhi and other prisoners in theYeravda Jail or Camp Extension.

SIR,

In continuation of my letter No. S. D. 1568, dated the 4th March 1932, I am

[1] *Vide* "Letter to R. V. Martin", 15-3-1932

directed to state that Mr. Gandhi may be allowed to see other prisoners in the Yeravda Main Jail or Camp Extension on the conditions suggested by you, namely:

1. Interviews to be permitted with not more than three prisoners at one time, and not oftener than once in two weeks.
2. The interviews not to be treated by either side as a means of enquiring into the treatment or conduct of other prisoners in the Jail. The Jail arrangements, discipline and political subjects not to be discussed.
3. The interviews to take place in the office of the Superintendent of the Prison.
4. Interview time: 20 minutes.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

R. M. MAXWELL

16/3

ACTING SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT

Bombay Secret Abstract, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40), Pt. I

APPENDIX III

EXTRACTS FROM MIRABEHN'S LETTER[1]

April 8, 1932

Received a letter from Mirabehn with 24 pages, every line of it instinct with spotless devotion. She would not be happy unless she lived with and rendered personal service to Bapu. But Bapu wants her to get rid of this desire, as otherwise she would feel herself stranded when Bapu was no more with us. This controversy has been on ever since Mirabehn came to India. In today's letter she has poured out her wonderfully transparent heart:

Bapu, I am never without that thought in my mind, as to how best to serve you. I think and pray and reason with myself, and it always ends the same way in my heart of hearts. When you are taken from us, as in jail, an instinct impels me to work with all my strength at outward service of your cause. I feel no doubt and no difficulty. When you are with us, an equally strong instinct impels me to retire into silent

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 8-4-1932

personal service—trying to do anything else, I feel lost and futile. The capacity for the former depends on the fulfilment of the latter. The one is the counterpart of the other, and something continually tells me that it was for fulfilment in that way that I was led to you. The instinct is so strong that I cannot get round it or through it or over it. It is difficult to ask you to have faith in it as the full proof of its correctness can only leave it at that. This much I know full well that during this struggle my strength, capacity and inner peace and happiness are much greater than last time, because I had been able to serve according to my instinct (except for one short spell of anguish since your previous release). The fact that I was on the point of a breakdown when I came here had nothing to do with this question. It was sheer over-work, because when I saw that I was shortly going to be arrested, I simply spent my strength recklessly, knowing an enforced rest was coming. And there was more than enough work around me to be reckless over.

Who knows if it is all delusion! But a woman has to go by instinct. It is stronger with her than any amount of reason, and her full strength can only be harnessed and brought into service if her nature is able to express itself. I have no thought, no care, no longing in all the world except for you— (*you the cause—you the ideal*.) To serve that cause in this life and to reach that ideal in after-life, Godwho has brought me from utter darkness to the light of your path will surely not answer my prayers by leaving me now to follow a wrong instinct. I have not written all this for the sake of argument, but simply to share with you the result of my ceaseless strivings to (*understand*) since I have been in jail.

The Diary of Mahadev Desai, Vol. I, pp. 62-3

APPENDIX IV

LETTER FROM E. E. DOYLE[1]

Confidential
D.O. NO. 332

INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF PRISONS
BOMBAY PRESIDENCY,
POONA,
April 23, 1932

DEAR MR.,

Reference your D. O. of 22nd instant.

I have written to Belgaum for detailed particulars regarding the persons in whom you are interested—and hope to be in a position, within the week, to let you have the information you desire.

If circumstances permit, I intend visiting Belgaum as early as possible, and will then be able to give you first-hand information.

[1]*Vide* "Letter to E. E. Doyle", 22-4-1932

I can find no reply to Major Martin's letter so I presume, an answer was addressed to him by name, and is now chasing him to England. I trust, though, that I shall soon have all the information you require.

Yours,

E. E. DOYLE

MR. M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 9

APPENDIX V

LETTER FROM E. E. DOYLE[1]

No. 356 of 1932

INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF PRISONS,
BOMBAY PRESIDENCY,
POONA,
April 28, 1932

DEAR MR.,

I have just received a report from the Superintendent, Belgaum Central Prison, in reply to my letter. This does not give me all the details I desired, so I have asked for a further and more precise report by return post. All four persons have lost weight since admission to jail custody—but as reasons for this are not stated, I have asked for them to be supplied.

Three of the four are on special diet as shown below:

D. B. KALELKAR—	Loaf bread	12 oz.
	Milk	2 lb.
	Molasses	2 oz.
	Olive Oil	$^1/_2$ oz.
MANIBEHN PATEL—	Milk	2 lb.
	Rice	1 lb.
PRABHUDAS GANDHI—	Wheat bread	1 lb. 2 oz.
	Dhall & Vegetables	
	Milk	8 oz.

[1] *Vide* "A Letter" 25-4-1932

I shall communicate with you again on this subject, as soon as I hear from Belgaum Central Prison.

Yours,

E. E. DOYLE

MR. M. K. GANDHI

YERAVDA

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 9

APPENDIX VI

LETTER FROM E. E. DOYLE[1]

No. 365 of 1932

INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF PRISONS,

BOMBAY PRESIDENCY,

POONA,

May 2, 1932

DEAR MR.,

I have received the further information I required and am now in a position to assure you that you need have no cause for worry in respect of any of the persons you named in your letter to me.

D. B. Kalelkar's previous medical history is known to the Medical Officer at Belgaum, who is watching his health carefully and has prescribed treatment and diet as is necessary.

P. Gandhi was in hospital from 9-3-1932 to 12-3-1932 with malaria, which has left him slightly anaemic—but he is being treated for this—and is doing well.

Manibehn Patel suffered occasionally from lumbago for which she was treated and has obtained relief. Also [she] is habitually constipated. This is treated as necessary with laxatives and change of diet.

N. D. Parikh is reported as being quite fit in spite of a small loss in weight.

I trust this will relieve your mind.

Yours,

E. E. DOYLE

MR. M. K. GANDHI

YERAVDA

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 9

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. E. Doyle", 4-5-1932

APPENDIX VII

RABINDRANATH TAGORE'S APPEAL[1]

VISWABHARATI,
SANTINIKETAN,
BENGAL,
March 22, 1932

From the depths of the present atmosphere of suffering the cry has come for the inauguration of a new age of faith and reconciliation, for a fellowship of understanding between races and nations alienated by cruel politics and diplomacy. We in India are ready for a fundamental change in our affairs which will bring harmony and understanding into our relationships with those who have inevitably been brought near to us. We are waiting for a gesture of goodwill from both sides, spontaneous and generous in its faith in humanity, which will create a future of moral federation, of constructive works of public good, of the inner harmony of peace between the peoples of India and England.

The visit of our friends from England has confirmed the immediate possibility of such an intimate fellowship and truth in our mutual relationship, and I feel called upon to appeal to all who have the welfare of humanity at heart to come forward at this critical hour and courageously take upon themselves the task of fulfilling the moral responsibility, which is before us, of building upon the bare foundation of faith or acceptance of truth in a spirit of generous mutual forgiveness.

The memory of the past, however painful it may have been for us all, should never obscure the vision of the perfect, of the future which it is for us jointly to create. Indeed, our experience of the futility of suspicion and hostility must inspire us with a profounder belief in the truth of the simple fellowship of hearts, in the mighty power of creative understanding between individuals as well as nations inspired by a common urge of love.

Advance, 23-6-1932

[1] *Vide*"Letter to Percy W. Bartlett", 4-5-1932. The message was given to the Society of Friends Deputation at Santiniketan in March. Dr. Tagore asked them to take it personally to Gandhiji but permission was refused by the Government of India.

1. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

[Before *June 16, 1932*][1]

CHI. PARASRAM,

Judging from your letter the children seem to have made good progress. You speed with the *takli* is also good. Do give half an hour daily to it; if you can in what time spin 160 rounds, nothing can be better than that. What does *kule ki haddi*[2] mean? The word *Kula* is not to be found in the Hindi Dictionary. Why did the *haddi* get swollen? Has the swelling subsided now? If it has not, you must take immediate steps to cure it.

The replies to the questions which you have put to Mahadev are:

1. I consider a minimum of half an hour's walk morning and evening essential for you and others. It is not necessary to sit in one position for more than an hour. One should stand up for a minute at least, or change the posture.

2. It is natural that a mother should desire to see her son, but every mother ought to restrain such a with and, if the son is engaged in some activity of service, he must cure his mother of such attachment.

3. When a son goes abroad and lives in a foreign country for ten years, his mother has no choice but to bear the separation. There are innumerable poor mothers in India who possibly never again see the face of their son after he has gone out to earn a living. One may console the mother through a letter, and cheer her as much as one can by reasoning with her and citing other similar instances.

4. At the moment my heart has become as hard as stone so that the incidents in Bombay may have affected me, if at all, only unconsciously, and I am not aware that they have. I felt sad for a while but I think I have quietened down after that.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7481. Also C.W. 4956. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

[1] The date is inferred from the reference to the swelling of the hip-bone; *vide* "Letter to parasram Mehrotra", 16-6-1932.

[2] Hip-bone

2. LETTER TO C.F. ANDREWS

June 16, 1932

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letter and your scribble under Agatha's letter. I am following your movement in so far as it is reported in the papers here, but even without the assistance of the papers I can picture to myself what you are doing.[1] I do hope that your Chinese mission[2] will be successful. Do please send our love to the good Dean of Canterbury when you write to him. I wonder how long he is going to be there. Has he any companion with him? How is it we have not yet got your latest book[3]? I see that the first edition was sold outright.

Love from us all.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 974

3. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised *June 16, 1932*

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter[4] came in only today.

I am glad you have left Damodardas's roof. It is ominous that there is no letter from him as yet. Let us hope that he will do nothing shady and that (he) has done nothing of the kind. I have always held a high opinion of him. It will distress me to find otherwise.

I have no doubt you will make sure that Shantabai is not embarrassed in any way by harbouring you.

Yes, I have been saltless since Sunday. As the doctors removed the splints and found that there was no relief from their use, I immediately thought of you and knew that you would be more at ease if I gave up salt. It was no deprivation to me and so I stopped it at once. It meant giving up the loaf and going to chapati. Whether it was the chapati or the absence of salt, the bowels became looser than I would care. Therefore from yesterday I have been on grapes,

[1] The addressee was trying for reconciliation between the Congress leaders and the British Government by personally interviewing Lord Irwin, Lord Sankey, Sir Samuel Hoare and Ramsay MacDonald.

[2] To the flood-stricken areas of China in company with the Dean of Canterbury

[3] *What I Owe to Christ*

mangoes and a vegetable. This at once put the bowels right, though not absolutely. I would, therefore, continue the chapatiless and almondless diet for a little longer and watch the result. I was weighed yesterday and had lost 1½ Ib., nothing to grumble about. Strength is maintained. The condition of saltless ought not to mean reversion to milk. If I revert to milk and the pain in the elbow disappears, the disappearance will justly be attributed to milk. If in spite of milk, the pain does not leave the elbow and does after giving up salt, the experiment may be claimed to have succeeded. Dr. Mehta is positive that there is nothing organically wrong and that the only thing required is rest for the affected part. This I am giving so far as the wheel is concerned. Anyway, having taken up the saltless, I shall watch its other effects and take to milk if need be. I am watching myself carefully. There is, therefore, not be slightest cause for anxiety. The system is quite good in every other respect. As Vallabhbhai rightly says. if there was anything organically wrong, the mischief should spread to the other parts of the body. I am not repeating all these details in my letter to the Ashram, since you let them see what I write you.

I understand what you say about your activity. I shall see if I can make use of the information.

I suppose you know that Devdas is down with fever. The telegram received says there is nothing serious. I have wired for more particulars. And Manilal, Sushila, their daughter and Pragji were all down with that deadly malaria. But they seem to have escaped with extreme weakness. There is a splendid passage in Sir James Jeans' book: "Life is a progress towards Death." Another reading may be: Life is a preparation for Death! And somehow or other we quail to think of that inevitable and grand event. It is grand even regarded as a preparation for a better life than the past, as it should be for everyone who this to live in the fear of God.

Remember me to Shantabai. Of course, you will be seeing Damodardas often and help him with your advice. Is Keshav[1] there? What does he say? Ask him to write to me fully.

Love from us all.

BAPU

[PS.]

In the envelope you will admire Vallabhbhai's art.

From the original: C.W. 6225. Courtesy Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9691

[1] Son of Maganlal Gandhi

4. LETTER TO NARAYANAPPA

June 16, 1932

There is nothing like finding one's full satisfaction from one's daily task however humble it may be. To those that wait and watch and pray, God always brings greater tasks and responsibilities.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 223

5. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

June 16, 1932

CHI. PARASRAM,

I have not yet received your booklet. Mahadev will go through the Press cutting. Do something about the swelling[1] and cure it.

You did quite right in not running up to Vimal's[2] elder brother, but you yourself should feel so. The knowledge that he is under the care of your brother and that the latter is looking after him properly should be enough for you. If you have some special remedy for his illness or if you think that your very presence will cure him, then it may be your duty to go. That is, if you can become free from your work you should go in such circumstances. You should go, however, not only for the sake of Vimal's brother but for any person who may be ill and whose illness is likely to be cured by your presence. It is only thus that one learns to overcome the weakness of one's heart. Let us hope that the child is all right now.

I think that it would be desirable to fix the maximum number of hours for work, it that is possible. But it seems to me that the limit would be different for each person. In an institution in which all the members regard one another as members of a family and everybody has the same sense of responsibility, it would not only be impossible, but may even be improper to fix a uniform limit for all. How can weframe a rule which would not permit a person, whose health is good enough, who is himself willing and who has no other work of service to claim his time, to give all his time to the service of the institution? The conclusion which I draw from this is that, if we exercise discretion

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Parasram Mehrotra", 16-6-1932.

[2] Addressee's son

in all our work, do it calmly and selflessly and without hurry, no one would feel the burden of work. We feel work to be a burden only when we do it under compulsion. Work done willingly and cheerfully is never felt as a burden. But those who have a demoniac nature are impelled by their selfishness to take all manner of work from their body and then break down. Such persons have no peace of mind and we should never take them as examples.

The line about women which you have quoted has no other sense but what I have explained.[1] It is true only for lustful men. There is no injustice in saying that for immoral men, women are a mine of evil, just as for the greedy, a mine of gold is like hell. For the world, however, it is not so. Gold is useful in many ways.

BAPU

[PS.]

I was glad to hear that the child was all right.[2]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7502. Also C.W. 4979. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

6. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

June 16, 1932

BHAISHRI VITHALDAS,

I got your two letters. The X-rays seem to have had miraculous effect on you. Your health should improve repidly now. But it may be wrong to believe that, because the rays have proved beneficial in one disease, they would help in my complaint too. They may or may not. Here in the prison my body is in the hands of the Superintendent. Let him take such measures as he thinks may help. They seem to have no fear and believe that the pain in the elbow will disappear if it is givencomplete rest. The pain is not continuous. The elbow pains only when I do a particular type of work with the arm.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9782

[1] *Vid*e "Letter to Parasram Mehrotra", 1-6-1932.

[2] This was followed by a note from Mahadev Desai: "I have gone through your article on the *takli* and found nothing special about it, on the contrary you have omitted to discuss its economic aspect. We should prepare an interesting dialogue on this subject for children."

7. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

June 16, 1932

CHI. DEVDAS,

I did fear some such thing. I had a feeling the day before yesterday that there would be bad news from somewhere. And then I got your wire yesterday. I immediately asked Vallabhbhai what the wire contained, and on opening it he read the news about your illness. It was not likely that you would escape fever in Gorakhpur. But I assume that it will have left you before you get this letter. I think that, according to your nature, you would like to be surrounded by friends and relations at such a time. You would deserve such care becuase you have looked after many people in their illness. But I myself am a hard-hearted man. I, therefore, would not like to ask anybody from the western part to run up to Gorakhpur. And if I did feel such a wish, I would suppress it. If I don't practise my philosophy on you, on whom else should I? I wish that you should understand this nature of mine and bear it cheerfully. God is your relations and your friends and your parents; all others are so only in name. Themselves helpless creatures, how can they help you? Instead of lookiing to such cyphers for protection and support, seek the protection of the Universal Power. He will send you such help as He wills. It is my firm faith that, wherever you are, you will draw your neighbours towards you. There is no reason to believe that it will be otherwise in jail.

After saying this, I suggest that, if you want anybody from the Ashram to be near you, send a wire there. But my hope is that by the time you get this letter your illness will have been a thing of the past. You always have the blessing of us all.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 220

[1] Gandhiji, however, was persuaded by Vallabhbhai Patel to request the U.P. Governor for the addressee's transfer to a jail having less inclement climate. *Vide* "Telegram to Sir Malcolm Hailey", 18-6-1932.

8. A LETTER[1]

June 16, 1932

The story about the snake is correct only to a certain extent. The snake was passing over my body. At such a moment what could I or anyone else do except to remain still? I don't see that this deserves any such praise as the writer has given me. And how do we know if the snake was poisonous or not? Having held for years that death is not a frightening event I am not affected for long by the death of anyone.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 224

9. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

June 17, 1932

MY DEAR AMTUL,

I have your letter. I am glad you are staying with your people. I have not yet been able to write to Dr. Sharma[2]. But I will do so early[2] If the door to interviews in again opened, you shall certainly come and see me. Are you reading anything? Give me your day's diary. Do write something always in Urdu.

Love.

BAPU

SHRIMATI AMTUL SALAAM
42 GHOD BUNDER ROAD
SANTA CRUZ
B.B.& C.I. RLY.

From a photostat: G.N. 251

[1] The letter was in reply to a question whether the story about Gandhiji having allowed a venmous snake to crawl over his body was true.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Hiralal Sharma", 18-6-1932.

10. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

June 17, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

What else am I to believe but that you are a fool? If children have no interest in asking questions and still write, they waste their time. If they write with interest, though merely as a formality, there is some meaning in that. Children may not expect letters from parents, but are bound to be glad when they get one. There will be no trace of selfishness in this. In any case, you cannot see in this evidence of hysteria. I have explained to you in one of my letters what your hysteria is.[1]

I have not opposed contemplation of a personal form at the time of prayers, but have given a higher place to the formless. Perhaps it is not right to make such a distinction. What suits one person will not suit another. Comparison is out of place in this matter. For me worship of the formless has greater appeal. Your explanation regarding Sankara and Ramanuja does not seem correct.[2] Personal experience is more important than the influence of external circumstances. The latter should have no effect on a votary of truth. He ought to see beyond them. We often see that opinions formed on the basis of external circumstances are afterwards discovered to be wrong. The connection between the *atman*[3] and the body is a well-known instance of this. Because the *atman* is intimately connected with the body in this life, we cannot easily think of it as distinct from the body. No one has equalled the power of vision of the person who saw beyond this outward fact and first uttered: "Not this". You will be able to think

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 3-8-1932 and "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 18-8-1932.

[2] According to *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, the addressee had argued that our attitude towards God had changed with the change in social and political conditions. Sankara lived in an age of freedom when people talked of equality with God; Ramanuja lived in an age of slavery when people talked of being the slaves of the slaves of God. In the book *Bapuna Patro-5: Ku. Premabehn Kantakne*, pp. 99-101, however, the addressee, presumably relying on her memory, says that she had argued that both Sankara and Ramanuja could attain greater heights of spirituality because they lived in an age of freedom where as the later saints, being born in slavery, worshipped personal gods and not the abstract Brahman.

[3] Sel

of any number of such instances. It is not at all proper to take literally the utterances of Tukaram and other saints. Recently I read one such utterance of Tukaram. I quote it for your benefit.

> An image of Lord Pashupati is made out of clay: what, then, would clay called?
>
> The worship of the Lord reaches unto Him, the clay remains clay.
>
> An image of Vishnu is carved out of stone, yet the stone does not become Vishnu.
>
> The devotion is offered to Vishnu, the stone remains a stone.

From this, I draw the lesson that we should pay attention only to the idea behind the words of such saints. They may describe personal God and yet worship the formless. We ordinary human beings cannot do that and, therefore, we would come to grief if we do not try to understand their real meaning and guide ourselves by it.

If a person who can read Urdu goes to Imam Saheb's house, he will soon find the books. You have there Mirabehn's Urdu-English and English-Urdu Dictionary. Send that, too, along with the other books. Does anyone clean Imam Saheb's house periodically? Every unoccupied house should be cleaned once a week or a fortnight.

You will find it difficult to keep an account of time only till it has become a habit with you to do so. Afterwards, it shouldn't take any time. Such things have a value and bear fruit only if they are done in the right spirit.

I cite the example of children in South Africa in order to encourage the children in the Ashram and not to find fault with them. These children, too, are capable of working, if we have anyone among us who knows how to take work from them. Aren't you there?

For the pain in your back, you should sit in warm water. You should do that for fifteen to twenty minutes. At the same time you should massage the back with your palm. If you do this, your pain will be cured and there will also be a beneficial effect on menstruation. Let me know what the doctor says. Such diseases should be effectively treated at the very first appearance of their symptoms.

I carefully examined your daily programme of work. It is much too heavy. You can easily make a few cuts in it. From 12.30 to 5.40 you run a class and give instruction in crafts. That comes to five hours and ten minutes. If you reduce this period by one hour, you will get the free time which you need. You may retire into privacy and

have a nap or simply lie down for one hour, or do some work which makes you feel that you are resting. You should not, however, spend the time in talking or in any serious work. If you do not wish to utilize the free hour just then, you may advance the time of those items of the programme for which it is convenient to do so and get an hour in the evening. Anyone who feels completely absorbed in his or her work does not feel it a burden or a strain, but to one who feels no interest in his work even a small task seems heavy, as a day seems as long as a year to a prisoner. To a person given to worldly enjoyments, a year seems as short as a day!

In the past, I used to get bored when listening to European music. It is only now that I can understand and enjoy it a little.

You are not right when you say that "one should not hope to do any reading here." It is quite true that you cannot do much reading. It is equally true that reading is given less importance in the Ashram. Even so, many prisons in the Ashram have been able to do some reading. I do not like your expressions of despair. Try to perfect what you find imperfect. If, however, on the balance you feel that things are unsatisfactory, if, that is, after weighing the good points against the shortcomings, you feel that the latter exceed, you should leave the Ashram. Justice to oneself and to society requires that.

You need not apologize for your long letters. They don't bore me; on the contrary, I like them. I learn something from them, for each of them mirrors the state of your heart at the time of writing it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10290. Also C.W. 6738. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

11. LETTER TO MOHAN N. PARIKH

June 17, 1932

CHI. MOHAN[1],

Your letter was well written. Try to write still more neatly. I am glad that you do cleaning work and carding.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9180

[1] Son of Narahari Parikh

12. A LETTER

June 17, 1932

You ought not to lose your self-confidence. One often gets impure thoughts. But those who frequently clean out the dust that daily settles in their houses may be said to be clean and keeping their houses clean. Similarly, those who drive out impure thoughts from their minds as soon as they come are sure to win in their struggle. They should not be called hypocrites. To save oneself from hypocrisy, I have already suggested a golden rule, which is that one should speak about one's impure thoughts and never hide them. Of course, you need not trumpt them in public. But you should certainly tell some friend about them. And, indeed, you should be mentally prepared not to mind even if the whole world knew about them. Have faith in the words of Vinoba and do not yeild to despair.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary , Vol. I, p. 226

13. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI[1]

June 17, 1932

I, for one, daily realize this truth from experience, that Nature provides for the needs of every living creature from moment to moment, and I also see that, voluntarily or involuntarily, knowingly or unknowingly, we violate this great law every moment of our lives. All of us can see that, in consequence of our doing so, on the one hand large numbers suffer through over-indulgence and, on the other, countless people suffer through want. Our endeavour, therefore is to save mankind from the calamity of widespread starvation on the one hand and, on the other, destruction of food-grains by the American millionaires though a false understanding of economic laws. It is true, of course, that it is impossible at present to live in perfect conformity with this natural law. But that need not worry us.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 224

[1] The addressee had requested Gandhiji to explain to him the meaning of the vow of non-possession.

14. LETTER TO PUSHPA S. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
June 17, 1932

CHI. PUSHPA,

Your Hindi letter is beautiful. Have you written it yourself?

Consult Premabehn about sitting on the swing during the rains. It is very good that you are reading *Vishal Bharat*.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11080. Courtesy: Pushpa Naik

15. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

Y. M.,
June 17, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. To you household work is also service, because you are not attached to it. Since it is the only duty for you at present, you should derive perfect joy out of it. Never allow your health to suffer.

Give my blessings to Anand.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

16. A LETTER[1]

June 17, 1932

Nothing as regards the conduct of prisoners can be sent from here for publication. As you say clarification on this point is desirable but that must await a suitable opportunity. I appreciate your argument against fetters. However I still think that the distinction between ordinary and political prisoners is invalid. There is need for reform in

[1] The addressee had suggested satyagraha against politcal prisoners being taken out of jail for work, chained and fettered.

the administration of prisons. A prison should be a house of correction and not punishment. If that is so, why should a forger have fetters on his legs in prison? The fetters will not improve his character. To my mind it is intolerable that anyone should be fettered if there is no likelihood of his trying to escape or becoming unmanageable or wishing to make a nuisance of himself. But if a political prisoner is an athlete like you, always thinkinig out means of escape and unable to control his tongue and hands, it will be the duty of the authorities to put him in fetters. In short what I mean is that the discrimination between political and other prisoners is not justified. We reformers should not seek for any concessions which cannot be justified on ethical grounds and are not granted to all prisoners in the same category. I should be unbale to stand an arrangement by which wheat is given to politicals and maize to ordinary prisoners. Wheat bread must be issued to a prisoner who is unable to digest maize even if he is a murderer. And a political prisoner who has splendid digestion must give up wheat and ask for maize, and thus protect his fellow-prisoners. But these are only my views upon which I must not insist from where I am. Let each follow the dictates of his own conscience.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I ,pp. 226-7

17. TELEGRAM TO SIR MALCOLM HAILEY[1]

HIS EXCELLENCY GOVERNOR
UNITED PROVINCES

June 18, 1932

OVER THREE MONTHS AGO MY SON DEVDAS WAS TRIED DELHI AND MEERUT AS CIVIL RESISTER AND SOMETIME AFTER CONVICTION TRANSFERRED GORAKHPUR JAIL. GORAKHPUR CLIMATE NOTORIOUSLY

[1] *The Diary of Mahadev* Desai, Vol. I, p. 174 has: "A wire from Devdas. . . . was received yesterday: 'The maximum tempreature was 102°, and has now gone below 100°. The climate of Gorakhpur is very bad . . . ' Bapu remarked that Devdas had referred to the climate in the expectation that we should try to get him transferred from Gorakhpur. The Sardar suggested that he should certainly be transferred to some place with a better climate. Bapu said, 'Yes, but we must apply for the transfer ourselves, if we want it, and I have no mind to do so. Harilal was in the worst prison in South Africa, but his transfer was arranged by him himself and not by me'. The Sardar said, 'But we are not prisoners here. The circumstances in India are different. Let us apply by means.' Bapu yielded after all and wired to Hailey. . . ."

MALARIAL. CAUSE FOR REMOVAL COMPANIONLESS TO SUCH OUT OF THE WAY JAIL UNKNOWN. HE IS SUFFERING FROM SIXTH INSTANT FROM SUSPECTED MILD ENTERIC THOUGH HE SEEMS TO BE RECOVERING. REQUEST HIS REMOVAL TO HEALTHIER AND MORE ACCESSIBLE PLACE PREFERABLY TO DEHRADUN TO JOIN PANDIT JAWAHARLAL WITH WHOM HE IS CLOSE FRIENDS OR TO YERAVDA TO JOIN ME IF REMOVAL HERE AT ALL POSSIBLE.

M. K. GANDHI

PRISONER, YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(3) Pt. I, p 283

18. LETTER TO E.E. DOYLE

June 18, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

In continuation of my letter of the 9th instant regarding Shrimati Mirabai (Slade) I now enclose her original letter[1] dated Bombay, June 14, 1932 (placed below), just received in reply to my enquiry[2]. In my opinion, the precise language of this full letter is conclusive answer to the statement that she was "actively engaged in the furtherance of the civil disobedience movement". I think that Government should be in possession of this emphatic denial of the information before them in connection with her doings before her incarceration. To save time I have marked the relevant portions of the letter.

Yours Sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(2) Pt. I. p. 115

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 16-6-1932.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 8-6-1932.

19. LETTER TO KUSUMBEHN DESAI

June 18, 1932

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR)[1],

I got both your letters. You cannot come to see me till the restriction on Mirabehn is lifted. Isn't that what self-denial means?

We shall not do justice to Harilal if we do not publish his letters to you. Surely it was no fault of his that you could not live up to his ideals. You should do so now. You ought not to withhold the letters in order to hide your weakness. But why should you despair and feel weak? Or is it, rather, that you think you are too old? How can you give up hope at the age of twenty-four or twenty-five? In fact this is the time of life when you can strive and rise. Take Care!!!

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1840

20. LETTER TO SUSHILABEHN GANDHI

June 18, 1932

CHI. SUSHILA,

I hope you got my letter. When I wrote it, I believed that Manilal must have left. It must indeed have been an ordeal for you all. But that is how we are really tested. I hope that no effects of illness are left now. Did you have to call in a doctor, or did you try only common remedies? How do you help in the press?

I assume now that Manilal also will remain there. Do not feel unhappy about that. We should live as God ordains. Our wishes are not always fulfilled.

Sita is now growing up. Do you teach her anything? Has your hearing improved?

Ask Pragji[2] and Parvati to write to me. All three of us will be glad to get their letter. Will Pragji stay on there now? I would be happy if you cease being lazy in writing to me and make your letters full of news. But you are daughter of a big man and I can't take you

[1] Widow of Harilal Maneklal Desai , an Ashram inmate

[2] Pragji Khandubhai Desai, a co-worker of Gandhiji during the South African period, wrote regularly for the Gujarati secion of *Indian Opinion*.

to task if you don't do that. And, moreover, it was Jamnalalji who arranged the marriage. If you were daughter of an ordinary man, I would have forced you to write long and detailed letters !!!

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4789

21. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

June 18, 1932

CHI. MANILAL,

I got your letter sent with Medh[1]. I don't think I shall be able to see him. In the first place, as Mirabehn is not permitted to see me I have stopped seeing any visitors. And, secondly, the name of every intending visitors has to be sent to the Government and Medh's name is not likely to be approved. Even if he is permitted to see me, I don't think we would be allowed to discuss the affairs of South Africa. In the letter asking for the permission, he should state as the reason his intention to discuss them. If I see him then, there would be no need to send a cable to you. But I did not have even a letter from Medh. He can at any rate write to me.

So you were all attacked by the virulent fever. In the absence of any news by cable, I assume that all of you are well. I approved of Sushila's and Sita's staying on there because I thought they were certain to keep better health there. And so it seems God sent me this message through your illness: 'You are a fool. Who are you to think who would keep better health where? I keep people healthy or make them ill as I choose. Why don't you understand this simple thing?' Though I have now learnt this wisdom, I still think that it might be better for them to remain in South Africa. But now it seems that you, too, will have to remain there. I also think that, if Pragji is not ready to shoulder the responsibility or if the responsibility is beyond his capacity and if you cannot make any other arrangement, you cannot come. It would not be proper to close the paper at this time. The problems here will take care of themselves. Stay there without worrying about things here, and don't feel unhappy that you cannot come. After all, you live there for public service and not for your own

[1] Surendra Medh, a leading satyagrahi during the South African struggle

happiness. Write to me regularly.

All there of us are very well. We do plenty of spinning, of course. I now rotate the wheel with my foot and draw the thread with the right hand. Even otherwise, I wished to experiment on this spinning-wheel for the sake of Prabhudas. But now I have an additional reason for spinning on it, namely, that my left elbow needs rest. Mahadev spins yarn of 40 counts. Sardar makes envelopes from useless paper. It is in one such envelope that I intend to seal this letter.

Ramdas is in this jail. He sees me sometimes. His health is all right. He is reading and studying at present. Nimu and the children are in the Ashram.

Devdas is far away in Gorakhpur. He has been having fever for some days. But there is no cause for anxiety. The fever is now receding.

Ba is in Sabarmati [jail] and Kanti[1] in Visapur [jail]. There are many others, too, in jail, but I need not mention them here. Did I tell you that Devdas is engaged to Rajaji's daughter[2]? The engagement was the result of the strong desire of them both. Because of the struggle, they have put off the marriage.

A good many reforms are being introduced in the Ashram. By reforms I mean further measures of self-control.

Personally, I never think as to when the struggle would end. Let it end when it will. For him who fights for Truth and with truthful means, victory and defeat are the same. That is, he always wins, though the victory may come now or in future.

Sardar and Mahadev send their blesseings.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4790

22. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

June 18, 1932

CHI. VANAMALA,

Your first attempt at writing a letter in Hindi was good. Did you write it without anybody's help? Your handwriting can be still better.

[1] Son of Harilal Gandhi

[2] Lakshmi

All of you should do cleaning work in the Ashram with great care. One does not get peace everywhere. Alteration of head and cold is the law of the world.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5774 Also C.W. 2997. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai.

23. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

June 18, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

God never does evil, for He is Truth. Hence man himself is responsible for the evil that he does. Whatever good we do is inspired by Him, and, therefore, it may be said that He does it.

As for the degree of proficiency in Sanskrit, you should know the language well enough to be able to understand the *Gita.* This includes grammar.

If you find that the work has increased so much that you do not get even half an hour every day completely free, you should reduce the period of study. Don't think that you will learn less to that extent. By taking half an hour's rest, you will in crease your capacity for grasping to that extent and so on balance there will be nothing but gain. Scientists have proved this by experiments.

Besides books on religion, there are plenty of books on other subjects in the Ashram which you can read. Everybody may select from them and read the books which he likes. The books are not only in Gujarati, but also in Urdu, Hindi, even in Sanskrit, and of course in English.

I assume that the new office-bearers elected will do their duty properly.

I observe that boys and girls are careless in using paper. That should not be. And they should never tear out sheets from exercise books and write on them.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

24. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

June 18, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

You should not be afraid of anything you may see in a dream. Nor should you feel unhappy about it. If kitten sit in my lap, so do children.[1] A cat has no reason, whereas human beings have it. Hence there is nothing in a cat's life for which one may wish to be born a cat.

BAPU

Form a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9435. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

25. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

June 18, 1932

You will be surprised, but I would advise you just now to stop reading even the works of Raychandbhai and the *Gita*.[2] Reflect on whatever you understand from the *Gita* verses and the *bhajans* which are recited or sung during prayers. This self-restraint will be difficult to exercise, but you will see its miraculous effect. At present, your reading has become your work. Whenever you are free, take up some useful work to do. Give up trying to understand things with your reason. This is the meaning of "one step enough for me". One should give up any aid which becomes a bond.

BAPU

[PS.]

There is no harm in your reading newspapers.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 348. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

[1] The addressee had written: "You play a lot with the kitten and let them sit in your lap. How I wish I were born a cat too!" (*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. 1, p. 233)

[2] The addressee read too many books on religion and brooded too much.

26. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

June 18, 1932

I got your lettter. I think it would be better not to write about the Lothian report[1], though I see nothing wrong in principle in doing that. Personally, I would not even wish to write about it. I would always feel that I didn't have sufficient data for the purpose. Why, then, waste mental energy and also time in trying to write about it?

Devdas has taken ill. The fever is receding now and there is no cause for anxiety. Manilal, Sushila, Sita, Pragji and his daughter, all of them had caught virulent fever in Natal, but the latest news about them was reassuring.

I had never thought that you would write a play[2]. Your thoughts are turning toward ultra-modern reforms. I do believe that within certain limits divorce should be permitted, but I would not at all care to propagate that idea. Generally we are such slaves of the psychological forces in us that no one will wager that his mind will be in the same state tomorrow in which it is today. I, therefore, feel even now that a marriage tie voluntarily entered into ought not to be broken without a very strong reason. If I had divorced Ba on the difference over untouchability, surely we would never have known the beautiful relation between us which exists today. Who can say in what condition Ba would be living and with whom I would have rushed into marriage? But the idea that there can be no divorce was ingrainedin us, and so the crisis passed and only its memory is left now. I hope, therefore, that you have not advocated in your play unfettered freedom for a husband or a wife to divorce either party at will.

[1] The Franchise Committee under Lord Lothian had published its report on June 3, 1932 in which it had proposed an increase in the total number of voters in the provincial electorates from 7 millions to over 30 millions, or nearly 30 per cent of the total about population, and for the due representation of all classes and sections of the community. Regarding its recommendations, according to Mahadev Desai, Gandhiji said: "The Committee has done well in so far as it has come forward with a definition of untouchability and calculated the number of 'untouchables' so called at three crores and a half instead of the usual seven crores. For this Lothian is perhaps entitled to credit. Thanks to this definition, Hindus, if they wish, can incorporate 'untouchables' into Hindu society in one moment and at a stroke satisfy all the demands ostensibly made on their behalf." (*Mahatma*, Vol. III, p. 197; *India in 1931-32.*, pp. 50-1 and *The Diary of Mahadev Desai*, Vol. p. 147)

[2] Advocating divorce

If it were man's duty to gratify his carnal passion, I would certainly understand the necessity of artificial means of birth control.[1] If, however, we regard gratification of passion without a desire for progeny as sin—and according to me it should be so regarded—it would be putting a premium on sin to prevent progeny by artificial means. It is Nature's eternal law that one shall reap as one sows. If man idulges his carnal passion, let him bear the burden of progeny. The question why the woman should bear it does not arise, since we regard her as completely free. The adoption of artificial means of birth-control in the West is already producing one result, namely, that the sanctity of marriage is disappearing and men and women gratify their lust without any restraint. It is not many years since these means came into vogue, and yet the bond which had been held as sacred all this time is losing its strength. Advanced thinkers in the West now look upon marriage as a superstition and see nothing evil even in a brother and a sister feeling passion for each other and gratifying it, but, on the contrary, regard it as completely normal. I don't look upon these views as the swinging of the pendulum to the other extreme. I think that they are the direct and natural result of the same attitude of mind which lies at the back of artificial birth-control. It is possible that the bonds of marriage, etc., which we now regard as spiritually uplifting may actually be spiritually degrading. But I simply cannot go beyond conceding such a possibility for the sake of argument. All such talk in the name of ethics and science seems extremely dangerous to me. These new ideas are raining from the fountain of false compassion and impatience and of the thinkers' experiences limited to the hour of pleasure. I wish that we do not get drenched by this rain. Moreover, having regard also to the conditions in Îndia we have no use whatever, for these artificial methods. Millions are ruined in health and have become weak in minds. If they start gratifying their passion as soon as it is aroused, there would be an end to all possibility of our progress. Some of the men who have been using these means are almost impotent. Cast a glance at the advertisements which appear in newspapers. I am writing all this from wide observation. I wrote the articles in *Nitinashane Marge*[2] in reply to letters received every week from enfeebled students and teachers. The youth of India need justnow to learn the lesson of self-control, however painfully it may

[1] The addressee had argued in favour of birth-control.

[2] "Towards Moral Bankruptcy".

be. The condition of girls, too, is most extraordinary. How strange that a girl like . . .[1], brought up in the Ashram, only fifteen years old and weak in body, should express a desire to get married? How is it that a girl of her age feels passion? But the whole atmosphere in our society is unclean. From their very childhood boys and girls are fed on impure suggestions. I would never consent to teach such boys and girls that it was right and proper to yield to passion. But I will not dwell further on this subject. You will understand my views from what I have said.

Pyarelal is in Dhulia [jail] and Devdas in Gorakhpur [jail]. In the Dhulia jail, one may say that they have formed a society for the study of the *Gita*, for Vinoba daily discourses on the work.

Since your health is good otherwise, I am not at all concerned at your having lost 17 Ib. Weight is a factor in judging the state of one's health only within certain limits. Jamnalalji has lost 25 lb. There is of course a difference between his condition and yours. You cannot afford to lose weight as liberally as he can.

I hear from time to time from Taramati and Dilip[2]. I had asked them to come and see me. They were about to come, when I suddenly stopped seeing visitors. If the gates open again, I will repeat the invitation.

The *Times* weekly gives every month a map of the stars visible in the sky at the time. All of you should have look at it. I myself have been watching the stars every night and enjoy the experience immensely. I have woken up in old age. But what harm can there be in waking up even on death-bed if watching the stars helps one to have a glimpse of the soul? My blessings to all who may see you.

[PS.]

The envelope in which this letter will be sealed was made by Sardar from the envelope in which your own letter was received. Making envelopes has become his occupation. Any addition to the country's wealth is welcome.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 110-2

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

[2] Addressee's son

27. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

June 18, 1932

CHI. SHARDA

It is bad thing to commit a mistake. That is why we should be ashamed of it. But having committed it, it is a good thing to ask to be forgiven. Hence what is there to be ashamed of in asking to be forgiven? It implies a determination not to repeat the mistake. Once this determination is there, why should one be ashamed? Have you understood this?

Why should truth and non-violence be compared? But, if one must make the comparison, I would say that truth is superior even to non-violence; for, falsehood too is violence. And he who loves truth is bound to turn to non-violence some day.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9950. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

28. LETTER TO DR. HIRALAL SHARMA

June 18, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

Shrimati Behn Amtussalaam sent me some time ago your pamphlets and the two volumes of your book, *Light and Colour in the Medical World.* I am grateful for your having treated Amtulbehn with extreme care and attention which she tells me you gave her. As for the literature on Light and Colour I can express no opinion, as I have no experience, worth the name, of this treatment.

As I have not much faith in drugs and as I believe in the great healing power of the sun, naturally I would love to find that the methods you are advocating are sound and can bear investigation. If under the restrictions in which I am living I can make any experiments, I shall do so.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 8

29. PRAYER[1]

June 19, 1932

Prayer is the very foundation of the Ashram. We should, therefore, clearly understand what it means. If it is not offered from the heart, it is no prayer at all. We rarely see anybody dozing while eating. Paryer is a million times more important than food. If anybody dozes at prayer time, his condition must be pitiable indeed. If we miss the prayer, we should feel deeply pained. We should not mind if we miss a meal, but we should never miss a prayer. Missing a meal is sometimes beneficial for health. Omitting prayer never is.

If any person dozes at the time of prayer, feels lazy or talks with his neighbours while the prayer is going on, does not fix his attention on it and lets his thoughts wander, he has as good as absented himself from it. His physical presence is mere show. he is, therefore doubly guilty; he has absented himself from the prayer and has deceived the people. To deceive means to act untruthfully, and, therefore, to violate the vow of truth.

If, however, anybody feels sleepy or bored against his will, what should he do? But this can never happen. If we run straight from the bed to the prayer meeting, we are bound to feel sleepy. Before going to the meeting, we should rouse ourselves fully and brush our teeth, and resolve to remain awake and alert. In the meeting we should not sit close to one another, should sit erect like a walking stick, breathe slowly and, if we can speak the words correctly, join in reciting the verses or singing the *bhajans*, silently to ourselves if not loudly. If we can not do even this, we may go on repeating Ramanama. If we still cannot control our body, we should keep standing. No one, whether a grown-up person or a child, should feel shame in doing so. Grown-up persons should occasionally keep standing, even if they do not feel sleepy, in order to create an atmosphere in which nobody would feel ashamed of standing.

Everyone should make an effort and understand as soon as possible the meaning of what is recited or sung for prayer. Even if a person does not know Sanskrit, he should learn the meaning of each verse and meditate over it.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II

[1] This was sent along with "letter to Narandas Gandhi", 16/19-6-1932; *vide* the following item.

30. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 16/19, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your packet on Tuesday. Read my reply[1] to Jethalal's letter. I have not received his report. Send it by registered post. You have sent Hiralal Shastri's[2] account of his "Jivankutir", but it is not accompanied by any letter from him not do you mention anything in your letter. If you know, please tell me something about him. I have already written to you about Sitala Sahay. I hope you also got the postcard I wrote about Mahavir.

I send with this a letter for Medh. Manilal's problem has become very complicated. I think we should now give up the hope of his coming.

About prayers, I intend to write a separate article, so that it may be useful to all. I, therefore, do not write anything about it in this letter. It will be enough if you are able to keep up the new rule[3] which has been adopted.

The labourers should wear khadi, send their children, if they have any, to the Ashram school, give up smoking, but only if they can easily do so, should be free from the vice of drinking and, if they are staying on the Ashram premises, attend the morning or the evening prayer. It should not be enough if they wear khadi when in the Ashram but not outside. If they like spinning, they may spin, otherwise they need not. I think we should not lay down any other condition besides these. However, we should have faith that if we take interest in their lives, share their joys and sorrows, and care for their children, they will observe the other rules voluntarily and in the proper spirit. Just now, we should only explain to them the meaning and importance of those rules. If our company really has the power ofimproving them, Tulsidas's assurance[4] will not be proved false. We shall be tested, too. Up to now we have not looked upon labourers as our kith and kin. It is true that we have tried to be friendly with them,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jethalal G. Sampat", 19-6-1932.

[2] A constructive worker of Rajasthan, founder of the Vanasthali Vidyapith

[3] About five minutes' silence during prayer time

[4] "The wicked are reformed in the company of the righteous." *(Ramacharitamanasa—Balkanda)*

but we have done so patronizingly. There has always been a feeling in us that we are in some way superior to them. The more I understand the truth, the more I realize at nobody is superior or inferior to others. And we cannot judge, we have no means at all of judging, who has more holy merit earned in past lives. Who can say whether the mustard seed or the mountain is superior? We don't regard a thing as superior or inferior because of its size. Similarly, we cannot compare the relative worth of persons. I have, therefore, suggested the easiest rule—I should say, rather, that I have extracted it from Shastras—that everybody should regard himself as a cipher. We shall then never feel proud about ourselves. If you or anybody else, who has more practical experience of life than I, see any error in this reasoning of mine regarding labourers, please point it out to me. It will of course be difficult to act upon it. But there must be some difficulty in every attempt to do a good thing.

I feel that Dhiru and Kusum have returned much too quickly. There must be some reason why they did so. If you have been able to know it, tell me what it is. I had Dhiru's letter from Ranavav last week, in which he had said that both of them kept good health and that their weight was improving. Hence I infer that they have returned so soon because something must have happened there which hurt them. I have already explained to you my reason for not writing "Blessings from" when signing the letters—it saves energy. My blessings must be assumed.

I think that Ba's reply that the illness was caused by mangoes is not correct. Her attitude is that one should not eat mangoes at a difficult time like this, and she is right from her own point of view. She wishes in the depth of her heart that I also should feel in the same way, and the reason is her love for me. She has seen the fruit of the little self-control which I have exercised. In the past it used to trouble her and she could not even understand its aim, but gradually she realized its value. However, this time I have not excluded mangoes from my diet. Fresh fruit is essential in the diet experiment which I am making. I have always found that mangoes benefit me. Hence, when some mangoes were sent to me unasked, I did not object to eating them. The fact that I had no objection to eating mangoes become known and so parcels have been coming one after another. However, I don't criticize Ba's resolution not to eat mangoes.

If you begin mixing with the Chharas, do not give up the

practice afterwards. If, however, you discover that the task is beyond your strength, you may give up the attempt. None the less I do believe that it is our duty to mix with them even at some sacrifice to ourselves. We should not try to mix with them in the hope that thereby we shall save ourselves from possible harassment by them. If we entertain any such hope, we shall not save ourselves. God will save us, if He wills. If He does not, we will welcome the harassment as His loving gift. We should regard it as our duty to mix with them because they are our neighbours. According to me, the person most qualified to make the attempt is panditji[1] The first time we go in their midst, we should go singing *Ramdhun*. But it is necessary that Panditji should have faith in himself for this purpose. He can also take with him a party of children who will lead the procession. We can take up the job of teaching the Chhara children. We can help the Chharas who may fall ill. If we take up that work, one person should devote himself exclusively to it. We can help them in two ways in illness. In ordinary cases, we ourselves may treat the patients. If a case is beyond our skill, we may ask for help from doctors with whom the Ashram has connections, and I think they will be glad to give it.

Tell Chhakkaddas that I was so pleased with the slivers sent by him that I would not mind having more. I do not get here slivers of such fine cotton. If, therefore, he would like to send more, as he said he would, he may. I will not use them, for I don't think I can spin yarn of 40 counts on the Magan spinning-wheel. I have not heard of anybody else either, who could do so. And slivers like those are too good for yarn of lower count. Mahadev requires at most 30 *tolas* of slivers every month, and there is no immediate need. he has enough slivers from the lot sent by Chhakkaddas to last for thirty days. After it is finished, Mahadev will surely try to spin with the slivers prepared here and see what count he can produce with them. I have stated all this only in order that Chhakkaddas may not think it necessary to work very hard and send the slivers immediately. And he may send them only if he can do so without any inconvenience. Chimanlal andyou should consider independently whether Chhakkaddas should be put to all this trouble, and, if you think that he had made the offer merely through his goodness and that really it would be much trouble to him to send the slivers, do not convey my message to him. I send

[1] Narayan M. Khare

with this Totaramji's letter. Bhansali[1] is really very strong in his firmness. Where is Lilabehn[2], and what does she do? Has she kept up any connection with the Ashram? I did not get any letter from Ramnarayan Choudhari[3]. And now that the Ashram has been shifted to Wardha, he may even have courted arrest. if you have heard anything more about the matter, please let me know.

Where is Lalji[4] working at present? Is there no yarn in Vijapur or Amreli? Does any person on behalf of the Government stay in the Vidyapith? And does he use the buildings for any purpose? I hope Kanaiyalal has now completely recovered. You must have come to know that Damodardas is in serious difficulties.

I got your second letter while I was writing this. I had got a direct wire, too, about Devdas. I have sent a wire in return asking for more details. I have not received any reply to it so far.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8234. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

31. LETTER TO LAURI SAWYER[5]

June 19, 1932

MY DEAR LAURI,

Prof. Horace Alexander reminds me of your existence and tells me how weak you are. Of course I remember you perfectly. Weak in body you may be, but the very first time I met you I saw how strongyou were in will. And if God wants more service from you in your present existence, He will give you sufficient strength of body. For those who have faith in God, life and death are alike. Ours is to

[1] Professor Jaikrishnadas Prabhudas Bhansali

[2] Bhansali's sister-in-law, a widow

[3] A prominent Congress leader of Rajasthan who assisted in editing *Hindi Navajivan*

[4] Lalji K.Parmar, a Harijan student from Panchmahals.

[5] Prefacing this, Mahadev Desai writes: "Among our many women helpers in England was Lauri Sawyer. She had suffered from cancer first and then from tuberculosis, but I have seen few girls so cheerful and bright as she was. Horace suggested that she was not likely to live very much longer Bapu should write her a letter. He therefore at once wrote to her. . . . "; *vide* also "Letter to Horace G. Alexander", 23-6-1932.

serve till the last breath. Do write to me when you can. Love from Mahadeo.

Yours,
BAPU

PS.

I write nothing about ourselves as you must know all there is to know.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 232

32. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT[1]

June 19, 1932

I consider yours to be a scientific experiment, and therefore I have been watching you all along and have desired to follow your work in full detail. You are a seasoned worker and will encounter many more difficulties in the future. This is the usual pattern of every great work: once in a while we feel that the line is now clear and we shall be able to make rapid progress. We then relax a little, but all at once we notice a deep ditch in front of us. Therefore you must settle there permanently. The one thing needful is infinite patience with self confidence at the root of it. Self-confidence means an unflinching faith in one's work. Once this faith is acquired, there is no need to be anxious about the numerous errors we are unconsciously bound to commit from time to time. We must not permit ourselves to be paralysed by the fear that we are perhaps on the wrong path. I consider your experiment to be scientific, yet I think it is not perfectly scientific now; but your work shares in all the characteristics of a scientific experiment, and you have the patience needed in carrying it out. I had noticed one defect in you before, but I think you have remedied it intelligently. Or perhaps your devotion to truth has helped you to remedy it without being conscious of it. That defect was this: you were satisfied with incomplete data and drew hasty conclusions from them. But this is no longer the case. A scientific experimenter has profound confidence in himself and is therefore never down-hearted. At the same time he is so humble that he is never satisfied with his own work, and is not guilty of drawing hasty conclusions. On the other hand he measures his progress off and on and declares emphatically that the result of 'x' can be 'y' only. Our workers are

[1] The addressee had sent a report of his work among the poor of Anantapur, a village in Madhya Pradesh where he had been engaged in constructive work for the last three years.

generally lacking in this humility of the real man of science. I was therefore not surprised when I found that you were not an exception to this rule. But I do belive that you have the power of persevering till the end. Ardently wishing that you may not suffer even from this little limitation, I gently drew your attention to it many years ago. In order to succeed you must first collect a band of fellow-workers around you. They are bound to be gradually attracted to you in view of the work you are doing. In order to attract them you must cultivate the quality of tolerance springing from generosity. Co-workers cannot do everything that we are doing or we want them to do. But if they are well-intentioned and diligent, we should not despise their assistance. Only thus can we hope to build up a team. In the absence of such an accommodating Spirit some of us have to plough a lonely furrow.

One thing more about your work. You should cultivate a desire to take tips even from those who are working on other lines. It is a mistake to suppose that a scientific experiment can be performed in one particular manner, and those who fall into such error stand to lose a good deal. We for ourselves may follow a method which we think to be right or perfect, but if others do not recognize its perfection or notice defects in it, we should let them go their own way. We thus increase our power of comprehension.

I cannot say anything about your present method of work. As I am partial to you, it seems to be all right from here. But if I am able to see you actually at work, it is possible that many ideas would occur to me and I would place them before you for consideration. I cannot picture your work accurately from this distance. It would therefore be an impertinence to offer any suggestions.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 234-5

33. LETTER TO SHAMAL R. RAVAL

June 19,1932

CHI. SHAMAL,

It will be well if the food which you eat suits you. The fact that you suffer from constipation indicates that you should eat boiled vegetables in good quantity.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3142. Also C.W. 2881. Courtesy: Shamal R. Raval

34. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

June 19, 1932

BHAI NANABHAI,

I have your letter. I got as much of Manilal's letter as you have copied out and sent to me. If there is anything in the est of the letter which may interest me, please make a copy and send it to me.

I also feel that, since Pragji refuses to shoulder the responsibility of *Indian Opinion*, Manilal should stay on [in South Africa]. He should not abandon it as long as he has confidence that he can run it. His first duty is to that paper. After all, we wish to do public service, no matter where. We should be satisfied if all of them are happy in South Africa. The fever which spread in Natal was of a deadly character. They have survived the present attack at any rate. I was happy at the news that Sushila and Sita were staying behind, thinking that they were bound to keep better health there. But does anybody know what he should rejoice at and what weep for? We should stop doing either.

Give my condolences to Dadasaheb Mahajani's family.

Sardar and Mahadev send their regards.

How does Tara[1] spend her time?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7520. Also C.W. 4996. Courtesy: Kanubhai Mashruwala.

35. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI H. SHAH [2]

June 19, 1932

You write well indeed. You have made the best use of your life. One whose aim in life is service and who remains in that state of mind till death may be said to have made the best use of one's life. Narandas informs me that you fainted once again. One day you will

[1] Addressee's daughter

[2] The co-worker, who had helped Gandhiji to acquire the land on which the Sabarmati Ashram was subsequently built, was ill at this time and died in October 1932. For Gandhiji's reminiscences of him, *vide* "Long Live Punjabhai", 23-10-1932.

fall into eternal sleep as a result of such an attack. Welcome it when it comes.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I., p. 233

36. LETTER TO A CHILD

June 19,1932

Generally people do not like to clean utensils or lavatories. We, therefore, get such work done by members of certain communities. This is wrong. Anybody, therefore, who does such work for the good of the world does service through it.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 233

37. A LETTER[1]

June 19, 1932

He alone is a lover of truth who follows it in all conditions of life. Nobody is forced to tell lies in business or in service. One should not accept a job which does so, even if one starves in consequence.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 231-2

38. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

June 20, 1932

MY DEAR BHRRR,[2]

You can't disappoint me even if you try.[3] You may not therefore allow such a thought to depress you. You have simply to dance when Raihana[4] sings. We are all glad you seem to be nearing

[1] The addressee had sought Gandhiji's advice on an alternative to his job of a cloth merchant's assistant which obliged him to tell lies.

[2] This was a form of greeting between Gandhiji and the addressee.

[3] The addressee, being unable to court imprisonment again, had written: "Need I say there is hardly a minute of my conscious hours when I am not thinking of you and your companions and wondering how much I am disappointing you." (*Mahadevbhaini Diary*,

[4] Addressee's daughter

the end of earthly troubles.

Please send my salaams to the Hamid Alis. I am sure they do not think you have spoilt their holiday by giving yourself well deserved rest on that beautiful hill. You will be surprised to know that I have never been there.

Our love to you.

Yours,

BHRRR

From a photostat: S.N. 9578

39. LETTER TO PRINCESS EFY ARISTARCHI

June 20, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

I continue to receive your kind messages. The latest brings the news of your financial worries. My prayers are certainly with you. Those who walk in the fear of God do not fear financial or any other losses. They often come to the godfearing as blessings in disguise. May this trouble be so with you. Your faith and fortitude should cheer your aged mother.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

You know the next part of the beautiful verse[1] you have quoted from an Upanishad[2]. It means "Enjoy the world by renouncing it." How apposite!

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 238

40. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

June 20, 1932

Who can say whether it is better for him or her to remain ill or to enjoy good health? Haven't you heard the story of Nala and Damayanti? Nala was very handsome. To save him, God ordered a cobra named Karkotaka to bite him and make him ugly. As the cobra bit Nala, the latter became nervous. But in the end he realized that it

[1] "Everything in this universe is pervaded by God."
[2] *Ishopanishad,* 1

was divine providence. I think that is exactly so in your case. You should, therefore, go on trying remedies to cure your illness, but never feel that the illness is a misfortune. Whatever your state of health, you should sing and dance and serve Mother.[1]

My sermon is over. You should keep smiling. No matter what happens. If you have surrendered your all to God, your body is His, not yours. The disease, too, is suffered by Him, not by you. Why, then, should you feel unhappy? I shall have to try to understand the meaning of the *ghazal*[2] which you have translated into Gujarati. You think you have got an intelligent pupil. Your eyes will open in a short time. Why should an intelligent person become anybody's pupil? And particularly a pupil of a teacher like you? It doesn't matter, therefore. I am what you deserve. Or, rather, you are what I deserve. Who can say whether you chose me as a pupil or I put you in the chair as my teacher?

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 239-40

41. LETTER TO ROHINIBEHN DESAI

June 20, 1932

CHI. ROHINI[3],

I got your and Surbala's letters. What a coincidence that I got your and Hamida's letters almost at the same time! Next time you feel inspired to write, tell me how you spent your time in jail.

I hope uncle's health is all right now. Our blessings to both you sisters.

BAPU

SMT. ROHINIBEHN
C/O SJT. KANJIBHAI DESAI
GOPIPURA, SURAT

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2657

[1] Gandhiji wrote this paragraph in Urdu; the source has it transliterated into Gujarati.

[2] A lyric in Urdu or Persian

[3] Daughter of Kanaiyalal Desai

42. LETTER TO HANUMANPRASAD PODDAR

June 21, 1932

In answering question on spiritual matters it is an advantage to keep in mind the particular inquirer[1]. To write for newspapers is a difficult task for me. My mind has turned almost blank upon learning that you have asked the questions with a view to publish them in *Kalyan*. It does not mean that the public gains nothing from what I write for the papers. I am simply explaining my own point of view. That is why I have reiterated many a time in *Young India* that it was not a journal for me but a weekly letter meant for friends. And the spiritual matters discussed in *Young India* and *Navajivan* have been almost invariably written with a certain individual in view. It has areason behind it. I am not well-versed in the Shastras. Although I make use of reasoning often enough the mainspring of my talks and writings is not the intellect but the heart. And the outpourings of the heart cannot be presented in the form of an essay . . . .

Finding no alternative expression I had used "Disciplined faith".[2] But is does not express all I mean and at present no other expression occurs to my mind. What is meant is that faith should not be ignorant, devoid of discrimination and blind. For example in a matter where reasoning too applies someone asserts, "I take resort to faith and shall persist in doing so no matter what the reason indicates." There is no discipline in this kind of faith. To determine whether the earth is round or flat is a matter of intellect. Despite this someone may say that his faith suggests the earth to be flat. This is not disciplined faith.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 241-2

[1] The addressee in an earlier letter had asked Gandhiji to narrate some incidents of his life which had awakened and strengthened his faith in God, to which Gandhiji replied on May 23, 1932 and inquired if the question had been put with a view to using the answer in *Kalyan*, a Hindi journal on religious matters published by the addressee.

[2] The addressee had requested an explanation of the expression "*Sanyamamayi Shradda*" used by Gandhiji in his letter May 23, 1932. Mahadev Desai in his diary has reproduced the letter in Gujarati though the original must have been in Hindi. The expression "disciplined faith", however, does not appear in the fragment of the text reproduced in the published diary.

43. A LETTER[1]

June 21, 1932

A craving for things of beauty is perfectly natural. Only there is no absolute standard of beauty. I have therefore come to think that the craving is not to be satisfied, but that from the craving for things outside of us, we must learn to see beauty from within. And when we do that, a whole vista of beauty is opened out to us and the love appropriation vanishes. I have expressed myself clumsily, but I hope you follow what I mean. . .

The purpose of life is undoubtedly to know oneself. We cannot do it unless we learn to identify ourselves with all that lives. The sum total of that life is God. Hence the necessity of realizing God living within every one of us. The instrument of this knowledge is boundless selfless service.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 242-3

44. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

June 21, 1932

CHI. RAMESHWARDAS,

I forgot to send a reply to your letter with this week's post. Do not yield to your ignorant love and every harm the good of Shriram. Go to Kashi or Kangri from time to time and see him. What other freedom will Vinoba permit you? Remember to what distant places Kamalnayan wanders one after another. Parents have no right whatever to harm the interests of their children. If you have heard more about Shivaji, Dattu, Shankarrao and others, let me know. The distinction that is made between a diet of cereals and pulses and a fruit diet has no value. From both physical and spiritual points of view, some of the cereals and pulses may be more wholesome than fruit in certrain circumstances. Ground-nut, though it is classed as a fruit, is harmful in almost every disease, whereas rice, though a cereal, can always be eaten in a limited quantity. Anybody who wishes to control his senses may keep himself alive on rice, but groundnut is likely to

[1] The addressee was a co-worker of Muriel Lester. She had asked why we crave to see and enjoy beautiful things and what the purpose of life was.

be harmful to him. You may be sure that, for your health *pendas*[1] will be extremely harmful. Instead of eating a full meal in the evening consisting of rice, dal, *rotlis* and vegetables, if you take a little fruit, such as *munakkas*[2], oranges, pomegranates or any other juicy fruit, that will certainly be much lighter. Considered as foods, however, there is no diffrence between cereals and fruit. The distinction between them seems to have been invented by Vaishnavas[3] who could not conquer the palate and wished to deceive themselves and God. Having been born in a Vaishnava family myself, I am writing this from experience. Just as we make a poultice of linseed or wheat flour, in the same manner earth should be moistened and wrapped in a piece of cloth in the form of a bandage, which should then be bound round the abdomen. This should always be done on an empty stomach. Binding the pack in this manner when the stomach is full does harmand causes stomachache. Meditating on the *Gita* means meditating on the meaning of any verse or phrase from it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 182

45. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

June 21, 1932

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I got your letter. I had obtained permission for both of you to come and see me and was about to write to you, when an order was issued barring Mirabehn from seeing me. I thought it my duty not to see other visitors if I could not see her, and so I stopped the interviews. I am still trying to get the order barring Mirabehn withdrawn. Hence I did not write to you immediately. I assumed that you must have heard about the order against her. I think you know that last time I had stopped seeing visitors our account of the Naoroji sisters, and so I thought you would draw the necessary inference. I had obtained permission for you to see me not in your capacity as a bone-setter but as a friend. Of course, if you had come you would have examined my elbow, and if you had then thought daily massaging of the arm necessary I would have had to obtain special permission for that. How could I make it a principle not to let you do such service to me? I

[1] A sweet made out of milk
[2] A large variety of dried grapes, dark brown in colour
[3] Devotees of Vishnu

would certainly be happy if your touching my arm could cure the pain. But it is true that I would prefer, though not as a matter of principle, to leave the responsibility of calling in a doctor from outside to the Government. But such a necessity has not arisen in this case. The condition of the arm has not become hopelessly bad. Mahadev does message the arm as well as he can with the help of your book. Major Mehta has joined here as a doctor on special duty. He is trying electric shocks. If these measures have no effect and the doctors here confess their failure, the question of calling in help from outside will naturally arise and then you will be able to come in your capacity as a bone-setter even though I may not be seeing any visitors. I have always fully understood your love for me and, therefore, will not feel the slightest hesitation in accepting any service from you. I would even request it if I need it. At which place is the hymn. "Lead, Kindly Light", to be sung? Or will you two sing it every Friday in your home? If you sing it in your home and if no English friends arepresent, I suppose you know that the *Ashram Bhajanavali* contains a Gujarati translation[1] of the hymn in case you wish to use it. You may sing it if you like it. Here we sing that. Is Father Elwin with you at present or is he still in the Ashram? You had mentioned a special oil for the message. If, apart from the massage, the oil itself has an effect, send a little of it. I hope both of you are well. Are three of us are quite happy.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7549. Also C.W. 5024. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

46. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 22, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter came in yesterday.

I am defeated. I have taken milk and baker's bread and therefore salt also. Major Bhandari will not let me make experiments that might endanger health. And he thought it was time for me to take milk and bread, also fruit. He is of opinion that absence of salt must

[1] *"Premal Jyoti"* by Narasinhrao Divetia

reduce weight and that I cannot afford to lose. I succumbed. The saltless experiment I must reserve for future day. I am none the worse for the brief experiment, if I am not better. I have made certain observations. But they are of no value as they are based on much too short-lived an experiment. You will tell me of your experiment, if you have made further discoveries.

Your previous letter[1] I have sent to the Government in confirmation of my letter[2]. Let us see what happens.

You asked what the electrical treatment was. It is called high frequency—it consists in rubbing with a flat glass bulb charged with violet rays. Exposure to the early morning sun should serve the same purpose except [for] this [that the] instrumental rays are hot.

Then you asked about the Ashram history. I am trying to deal with every phase of the Ashram activities. But the work is proceedingvery slowly. Somehow or other I do not give it some time every day. And as yet, I have not felt like giving it resolutely one hour daily. However, if I am here long enough, the history will, God willing, be certainly finished.

Damodardas has written. He seems to have been hurt by that last conversation you had under his roof. I have asked him to talk to you about it. But you will yourself ask him what hurt him. I know you could have no intention of hurting him. I have begged of him to give up speculation altogether and be satisfied with a humble life. Davdas has enteric though of a mild type. You should write to him. His address is District Jail, Gorakhpur, U.P.

I do not suppose you have noticed that "The valiant only taste of death but once" has a deeper meaning conveying the perfect truth according to the Hindu conception of salvation.[3] It means freedom from the wheel of birth and death. If the world'valiant' may be taken to mean those who are strong in their search after God, they die but once, for they need not be reborn and put on the mortal coil.

The weather here at this time of the year is always cool. We, too, had showers.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 16-6-1932.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to E.E. Doyle", 18-6-1932.

[3] According to *The Diary of Mahadev Desai*, the addressee "very much liked Bapu's description of life as preparation for death, and quoted Shakespeare: 'Cowards die many times before their deaths, / The valiant only taste of death but once.' She thought these lines did not convey Bapu's idea".

My congratulations to Shantabai on her taking up the wheel again.

I am glad you are mothering Tilak[1]. He needs it. Of course Noorbhanu[2] is very good to him, But he does not speak enough Hindi to be able to talk to her to his heart's content. And Noorbanu cannot give him what you can. Of course you will try to see her and Pyare Ali.

Yes, I wrote to Narandas suggesting five minutes' silence. I forgot to write to you about it. I am not doing it here. It is unnecessary here and for you it is impracticable. The rapid repetition of Ramanama in a new assembly is undoubtedly good. For very rapid repetition, mere Ram, Ram, Ram Ram . . . is often used. If it is done with proper cadence, the effect is ecstatic. Yes, we get up at 3.40. The prayer at 4 and 7.30.

My love to Nargis and Jal. I am glad the former has so improved. I do not remember the name Hilla Petit. I may have met her.

I am glad Gulab and Manilal have seen you. Tell them to write to me. I do not need the ghee now.

I hope you are not overworking yourself.

Love from us all.

BAPU

[PS.]

You know that the Quaker practice during silence does not require the closing of the eyes. In that case the difficulty about the me is overcome. But for you all this is needless.

From the original: C.W. 6226. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9692

47. LETTER TO TILAKAM

June 22, 1932

She[3] is a pure soul with an infinite capacity for self-sacrifice.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 425

[1] A student at the Ashram
[2] Wife of Pyare Ali
[3] Mirabehn

48. LETTER TO SHANTABEHN G. PATEL

June 22, 1932

CHI. SHANTA,

I hear from Bhaktibehn[1] that you intend to come to see Narasinhbhai[2], in the beginning to July. Whenever you come, see Bhaktibehn too. When you see Narasinhbhai give him my regards. I don't ask him just now to see me, and he controls his desire to come and see me as an example to others. I have read most of the books sent by you. Now they are being read by the women.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. SHANTABEHN NARASINHBHAI
C/O GORDHANDAS P. PATEL, ESQ.
POONA CITY[3]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5229

49. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

June 23, 1932

MY DEAR HORACE,

I have your two letters. It was just like you to remind me about Lauri. I remember her quite well. She appealed to me at once as a beautiful character. And then it was Charlie who, I think, brought her to me. I wrote to her at once and sent my letter[4] by air mail. At least I asked the authorities to send it so and wrote it in time for the air mail. I know that she is brave enough to face all the illnesses that may be in store for her and death.

We are all three keeping well and quite fit. Mahadev and I pass the time spinning, reading, writing; Sardar in reading and envelope-making out of scraps of paper that come to us by chance. I call this healthy wealth-production in the name of and for the sake of all.

I wanted to write to you earlier, but somehow or other it escaped me. You will be pleased to learn that at the Ashram the minute of

[1] Wife of Darbar Gopaldas

[2] Addressee's father

[3] The letter was addressed by Gandhiji to Patidar Karyalaya, Anand, from where it was redirected to this address.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Lauri Sawyer", 19-6-1932.

silence has been increased to five minutes. From the letters I was getting from the Ashram I saw that the concentrated labours of the inmates made them high-strung and therefore I felt that it was likely that those who were not used to such concentrated work might not be able to follow the prayer with required serenity. If therefore they had five minutes' unbreakable silence to compose themeselves and put themeselves in tune with the Infinite, the prayer would be more fruitful. This was introduced now nearly a month ago or a little longer. And Narandas tells me that the silence has done much good.

I have not yet got Charlie's book. I expect it every week. We constantly think of you all at the Settlement[1]. It was happy time you gave me at Selly Oak. Olive[2] is a great reminder to us all in faithful devotion and utter cheerfulness in spite of frail condition. Mahadev says he does remember the conversation she had with him and many other sweet things at Woodbrooke. We both wish her many more years of loving service.

With love from us all to the whole family,

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1413

50. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

June 23, 1932

CHI. VANAMALA,

Yours is the first letter I see. The figure of four is written differently in Hindi and in Gujarati—4 [in Gujarati] 4 and [in Hindi]. I am glad that you are learning verses from the *Gita* by heart. Pronounce the words correctly. And also try to understand the meanings of the verses.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5775. Also C.W. 2998. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai.

[1] Woodbrooke Settlement, the Quaker centre near Birmingham
[2] Addressee's wife who was an invalid

51. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

June 23, 1932

CHI. PARASRAM,

I had no fear or anxiety about Kamal's illness. Children often get fever etc. If they do not fall into the clutches of illinformed doctors and if the parents do not, through ignorant love, go on loading their stomachs with food, most of them recover without any medicine. Children have the vitality to recover from illness and regain strength sooner than grown-up people. You should ask those who used formely to attend the *Ramayana* classes but do not do so now, the reason why they do not attend them, not with a view to pressing them to attend but in order that, if they point out any defect in your manner of explaining, you may remove it. You may, if you wish, read *Saket*[1] to all who attend . But my suggestion was not that. It was that you should teach selected portions from the work to those

who had made some advance in the study of Hindi, so that, when their interest was aroused in it, they might read the work by themselves and bring their difficulties to you.

Anasakti certainly means freedom from attachment to anything concerning oneself and one's relations, but also such deep attachment to the 'other', that is, to Truth, to God, so much so that one must lose oneself in Him, become one with Him. It is because we do not understand this that our enthusiasm wanes and other difficulties arise. You have used the word *nirutsaha*[2] as a noun. Mahadev immediately pointed out to me that it is an adjective. I told him that you had used it as a noun and that you were not likely to make such a mistake. But he told me that you had made a mistake. So we consulted a small Hindi dictionary which we have and found that it gives the word as an adjective. Solve this problem.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7503. Also C.W. 4980. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

[1] An epic in Hindi by Maithilisharan Gupta

[2] Meaning 'wanting in enthusiasm'; it is also an abstract noun meaning 'want of enthusiasm' but seldom used as such.

52. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

June 23, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

Among the Urdu books, are there two volumes by Nadvi? He wrote something in continuation of Shibli's work. Perhaps the author's name on the cover of the book will be Maulana Sulaiman Nadvi.

About fish, I have not made an exception in your favour. Though cod-liver oil is forbidden for us, I have allowed it in the Ashram. Meat and fish are forbidden in the Ashram itself, but they are not forbidden to individuals, cannot be. I at any rate have never forbidden them to anyone. That is why Imam Saheb was permitted to eat them outside the Ashram. Suppose it was Narandas and not you. He was never touched meat, etc., in all his life. But suppose he fell seriously ill and his life was in danger, and he wished to save it by eating meat. I would certainly not prevent him from eating it. Today he knows my views and also what dharma teaches. But the approachof death may change one's ideas. If at such a time, anyone wishes to eat meat, it would be my dharma not to prevent him from doing so. But suppose it is a child and I have to decide for it. I would let it die but not give it meat. Do you know that Ba once passed through such an ordeal? Most probably the incident is described in the *Autobiography*.[1] If you do not know about it, nor does anybody else, write to me and I will narrate it. It was a blessed occasion for both Ba and me. Do you now understand my meaning? I don't wish to urge you to eat fish. If by not taking it you are likely to die and you are ready for that, I am ready to let you die. Even if eating fish enables you to live longer, will not the end be death? But, then, dharma is for one who has faith in it and is ready to follow it. Do I follow such dharma in my own life in regard to milk? I do not, though it is clear to me as daylight that one should not drink the milk of any animal. Such principles of dharma however are not meant to be enforced in the lives of others. One should follow them in one's own life. I think I have said enough.

Let me know what your present diet includes, with the quantity of each item. If I feel like suggesting a change, I will.

[1] *Vide* "An Autobiography".

Your questions about men and women are good.

We should explain to a child any matter about which it shows curiosity, if we know the answer. Otherwise, we should admit our ignorance. If we think the child's question should not be answered, we should restrain it and also tell it not to ask others. In any case, we should never give an evasive reply. Children know more about these things than we think they do. If we refuse to tell them what they do not know, they learn to satisfy their curiosity in improper ways. We should, however, take that risk and not tell them what we think they ought not to be told. There are, of course, very few such things. If they want to know about the obscene act, we should certainly not satisfy their curiosity. Don't mind if they learn the facts in a clandestine manner despite our forbidding it.

If children see birds engaged in the sex-act and want to understand what it means, I would certainly satisfy their curiosity and use the opportunity to teach them the lesson of *brahmacharya*. I would teach them the distinction between man on the one hand and birds and beasts on the other. All the men and women who act in thesame manner are, despite their human form, like birds and beasts in that particular respect. There is no condemnation of anyone in this; it is only a statement of fact. We have been granted the human form and our intelligence so that we may rise above our animal nature.

All the facts about menstruation should be explained to a girl who has reached puberty; if a younger girl comes to know about the phenomenon and asks you about it, you may explain to her, too, as many facts as she can understand.

Despite all our precautions, children will not always remain ignorant about these facts. Hence, it would be better to impart that knowledge to them at the proper time. If *brahmacharya* is so frail a thing that a person who know the facts about sex cannot observe it, we have no use for such *brahmacharya*. The knowledge of these facts should strengthen one's *brahmacharya*. That is what happened in my case.

The motives for seeking or imparting this knowledge differ from person to person. One person may seek it in order to gratify his lust. Another may learn the facts without his showing any curiosity about the subject. A third person may seek the knowledge in order to calm his passions and to help others.

One should impart this knowledge to others only if one is fit for

the job. You should have that ability, and also the confidence that by imprating it to the girls you will not awaken sex-thoughts in them. You should remember all the time that you impart this knowledge to the girls in order that they may not be disturbed by such thoughts. If you yourself are not free from them you should take care that they do not disturb you while you are imparting this knowledge to the girls.

The primany aim behind the partnership in life of man and woman as husband and wife is physical enjoyment. Hinduism has tried to teach in its place the practice of self control, or say, rather that all religions have done so.

If the husband is Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwar, so is the wife. A wife is not a servant; she is a friend with equal rights, a partner in dharma. Each is the guru of the other.

A daughter's share should be equal to a son's.

A husband and a wife have equal rights in what either earns. The husband earns with the wife's help, even if she does no more than cook for the family. She is not a servant, but is an equal partner.

A wife has the right to live separately from her husband if he ill-treats her.

The two have equal rights over the children. After the children have grown up, neither of them has any. If the wife is unfit to exercise her right, she loses it. And so does the husband.

In sum, I do not admit any differences between men and women except those created by Nature which all of us can see. I don't think now that I have left any of your questions on this subject unanswered.

I have the fullest trust in Narandas. When he says that his mind is at peace, I would not believe that it is not so. I have cautioned him again and again. I will harass him no more from this distance. He has great capacity for working in a spirit of non-attachment. Such a person always works much more than another who is attached to his work, and yet seems to be doing no work. He is the last person to tire. Realy speaking, he should never feel tired, but that is only an ideal. Since you are on the spot, your duty will be different from mine if you observe that his mind is not at peace and that he is deceiving himself. In that case you ought to caution him. I, too, would do that if I were there and found that the evidence of my eyes contradicted what he said. If he disagrees with you and rejects your advice, you should accept what he says, so long as you believe that he is a truthful man. Very often our eyes, too, deceive us. If I think that you feel depressed but you contradict me, I must believe you. If I have reason to fear or

suspect that you are trying to hide the fact from me, then it would be a different matter. In that case, I should not ask you. I would have to seek other means of discovering the truth. The Ashram life, however, connot go on thus. Truth is the very foundation of that life. There even with a good motive one cannot deceive others.

You will read about khadi either in my letter[1] to Narandas or in the letter to children.

Ask Narandas and know from him why he does not try an oil massage.

By all means wait for 4th July[2]. But, then, 4th July of which year is a matter for speculation. It doesn't matter which year, though. It is much even if only the month and the date are known for certain. We won't have to wait, then, for some other month or date. After 4th July has passed, we shall wait in patience for the July of 1933.

BAPU

[PS.]

Vidya seems to require attention. I think she is dull. She does not even know how to ask questions. Look into this.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10291. Also C.W. 6739. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

53. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

June 23, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

You should learn how to write a letter. Your questions make no sense. you should show your letters to Premabehn.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9431. Courtesy: Ravindra R.Patel

54. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

June 23, 1932

Harilal's glass is always red. He goes about drunk and begs from people. He holds out threats to Bali and Manu. Even in this, his motive is to force Bali to give him money. To me also he has written letters holding out very insolent threats. He has threatened that he will

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 22/26-6-1932.

[2] It had been predicted at that time that Gandhiji would be released on this date.

file a suit against Bali for control of Manu. I don't feel hurt by all this. I only feel pity for him, and smile too. There are many other people like him. What about them? shouldn't I feel for them as much as I do for Harilal? They all obey their nature. What else can they do? If we behave in the right manner towards Harilal, he will come round in the end. I think I am not a little responsible for what he is. When he was conceived, I lived in ignorance. The years when he grew up were a time of self-indulgence. I certainly did not drink, but Harilal has made up for that. I sought my pleasure only with one woman. Harilal seeks his with many. It is only a difference of degree, not of kind. I should therefore, atone for my sinful life, and that means self-purifiction. It is an extremely slow process. . . .[1]

From here, I get certain reform introduced in the Ashram. I am taking advantage of Narandas's unquestioning faith, his purity of heart, his firmness, his habits of hard work and his competence.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 245

55. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

June 24, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

All or most of you write to me on sheets taken out from exercise books. That is not right. It means waste of paper and slovenliness. You should use other writing paper.

In permitting Premabehn to eat fish if she wants to do so, I have shown regard for non-violence. I have discussed this is my letter[2] to Premabehn. Read it. She will come to feel love for fish only if she can think independently. I have observed this in many persons with whom I came into contact. If you are not convinced even after reading this as well as my letter to Premabehn, you may ask me again.

Those of you who still feel sleepy during prayer should stand up without feeling shy. Even if they do a few pranayamas[3] sitting, the sleepiness would go. One cannot sleep while doing *pranayama*.

I have already told you that I cannot write anything from here

[1] The letter also informed the addressee about the telegram sent to the Governor of U.P.; *vide* "Telegram to Sir Malcom Hailey", 18-6-1932.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 23-6-1932.

[3] Breating exercises

for *Madhpudo*[1].

I cherish the ideal of service for the Ashram children when they grow up. God will give suitable field of service to all who have fatih in Him, and will also give sufficient strength to each to shine in the work which is given to him. God looks after the material and spiritual well-being of His *bhaktas*[2] (the *Gita,* IX. 22, X. 10). You are making slow but steady progress in reading and writing. Those of you who are keen can improve their knowledge still further. But your intelligence will grow in proportion as you do all physical work with proper attention. A child may learn to read and write and still remain mentallydull. If you do not understand this fully, ask me to explain again. Do not feel dissatisfied even in your hearts with the present arrangement. Do this. Use your intelligence in doing everything which you are asked to do. Even cleaning a lavatory requires great intelligence. If you do not know how, ask me.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U/II

56. LETTER TO MAHENDRA V. DESAI

June 24, 1932

CHI. MANU[3],

I got your letter. Your handwriting is improving now. For increasing your weight, you should do exercise in open air and include sufficient milk and ghee in your diet. How much milk do you get? If I can say everything I wish to in a short letter, why should I write a long one?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5759. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

57. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

June 24, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

You must know that what is true about the peacock is also true about us[4]. Even men and women who have been beautiful are not a

[1] Literally, 'beehive'; a handwritten magazine brought out by the Ashram boys and girls.

[2] Devotees

[3] Son of Valji G. Desai

[4] The addressee had stated in her letter that a peacock which had died in the Ashram looked as ugly in death as it had been beautiful in life.

pleasant sight after death, and we cremate them without delay. Hence, we should not be attached to bodies.

There is no hartred in complaining about anyone's lapses in discharging the duties laid down by one's superior. But the person at fault should be tenderly warned.

The expression *sahadharmacharini*[1] basically does mean what you say. But in ordianary language it is used only for a wife.

When a sister gets married , she does not stay with her brother. The expression charini has the implication of life-long adherence. And when a particular meaning comes to be attached to a word, it becomes difficulat to change it. Nor is it necessary. You are comfortable remaining alone. Look after your health.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9950. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

58. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
June 24, 1932

CHI. MANGALA,

You should not feel ashamed to carry pen and inkpot to the class. You should feel proud. But if you do not like to do that, you can certainly carry a pencil.

I intentionally selected sandy land for the Ashram because only such land can be considered good for health. If one works hard and intelligently, one can grow any fruit or flower in the rockiest soil. On our soil we can grow any fruit that the climate of the place permits.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11098. Courtesy: Pushpa Naik

[1] Literally, 'partner in dharma'; the addressee had asked why the expression could not be applied to a sister also, if she joined her brother in the practice of dharma.

59. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI[1]

YERAVDA MANDIR,
June 24, 1932

CHI. NIMU,

If you boil a clove of garlic in the oil which you drop into Babu's ears, probably it will be more efficacious. Tell Jethalal that the method of making lime-water is given in Moore's book called *Family Medicine.* He will look it up for you. The important thing is to keep a watch over diet. I do not find your name at all in the account I have received of the work done by the people there. Can you not take up some work which you may do at home? Can't you go and join the [spinning] *yajna* for an hour daily?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

60. A LETTER [2]

June 24, 1932

CHI.,

I got your long letter. According to me, the idea of anybody being possessed by a ghost is nothing but superstition. The countless millions don't feel thus. We don't find such a thing everywhere in the world. But whether we find it or not, you should trust entirely in God. He is the magic and the mantra[3] and everything else for us. You should, therefore, go on repeating Ramanama. Whatever is decreed for you will happen. You should cultivate the strength to bear it. Then let events take what course they will.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bhavnagar Samachar, 17-12-1955

[1] A part of the letter is already reproduced in, though under the date June 25, 1932.

[2] According to the source the letter was addressed to a member of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's familuy.

[3] Incantation

61. HOW TO OBSERVE AHIMSA[1]

June 25, 1932

Can we kill a snake? Can we use violence against a ruffian attempting to rape a woman? Can we plough a field, though knowing that we kill germs thereby? A votary of ahimsa need not concern himself with such problems. Let them solve themselves when they will. If we lose ourselves in this labyrinth, we shall forget ahimsa.

Those who are sincere in their desire to follow ahimsa will examine their own hearts and look at their neighbours. If one finds ill will and hatred in one's heart, one may know that one has not climbed the first step towards the goal of ahimsa. If a person does not observe ahimsa in his relations with his neighbours and his associates, he is thousands of miles away from ahimsa.

A votary of ahimsa, therefore, should ask himself every day when retiring: "Did I speak harshly today to any co-worker? Did I give him inferior khadi for myself? Did I give him imperfectly baked roti and reserve for myself a fully baked one? Did I shirk my duty and throw the burden on my co-worker? Did I neglect serving the neighbour who was ill today? Did I refuse water to a thirsty passer-by who asked for it? Did I not care even to greet the guest who had arrived? Did I scold a labourer? Did I go on exacting work from him without thinking that he might be tired? Did I goad bullocks with spiked sticks? Did I get angry in the kitchen because the rice was half cooked?" All these are forms of intense violence. If we do not observe ahimsa spontaneously in such daily acts, we shall never learn to observe it in other fields and, if at all we seem to observe it, our ahimsa will be of little or no value. Ahimsa is a great force which is active every moment of our lives. It is felt in our every action and thought. He who takes care of his pennies may rest assured that his pound is safe. But he who does not take care of pennies will lose them, and as for the pound he never had it.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

[1] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 22/26-6/1932; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 22/26-6-1932.

62. LETTER TO NATHURAM TRIKAMDAS

June 25, 1932

BHAI NATHURAM,

The use of temples and *choras*[1] is well known. The people would assemble in these places, sing *bhajans*, hold meetings, etc., and that was the purpose which they were intended to serve.

The question whether image-worship is necessary does not arise, since it has always existed and will continue to exist. Every human being is not an image-worshipper, of course.

It may be desirable to make changes in the Vaishnava rituals of worship.

God exists everywhere, and therefore, He exists in the image too. I believe that destruction of image-worship is impossible.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

63. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

June 25, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

One hundred and ninety-eight rounds in half an hour is great speed indeed. The sight must be worth watching.

Anybody who aspires to do service must possess truthfulness, humility, single-minded devotion, etc., and observe *brahmacharya.* If the question, however is what things he must learn to do, it is one which is difficult to answer. One cannot know too many things. The only rule is that one must become totally absorbed in any duty that falls to one's share, or that one should acquire proficiency in one's chosen field of service. It is difficult to say more than this. If the question is, what type of work is the best form of service in the present condition of the country, it is easy to answer and I have often answered it in the past.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. Also C.W. 4471 Courtesy: Bhau Panse

[1] Public meeting-places in villages

64. LETTER TO NIRMALABEHN GANDHI[1]

June 25, 1932

If the oil from which you put drops into Babu's[2] ears is first boiled with garlic, it will probably be more beneficial.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 255

65. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

June 25, 1932

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Prabhudas's good lies in allowing him to stay where he is. I do not know anything about his going to Almora but it will be best if Talwalkar goes and sees the place. If he likes it, we can see whether we can use it. I do not even know how big it is. But Dr. Talwalkar, if he goes there, can see other places too, and then make his plans.

I am writing to Hirji Mistri. Did Vijapur suit Chimanlal? Tell him to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 32865

66. LETTER TO LAKSHMINARAYAN GADODIA

June 25, 1932

BHAI LAKSHMINARAYANJI,

I was very glad to receive your letter.

Interviews are not allowed at present. There is little hope of the restriction being relaxed.

I hope that you both are in good spirits. Your love ever recurs to my mind.

We three are doing well. The time is spent in reading and spinning.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5623

[1] Wife of Ramdas Ghandi

[2] Addressee's son

67. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 22/26, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your packet. I examined the account sent by you. I think it is all right. Only, it does not include the information about the total number of hours given to each type of work. Do you wish to keep a record of that? The slips received from the inmates will of course contain the information. If you intend to paste them in a book, we shall be able to get any information we want and whenever we want it. If only one person enters all the information, I think he will take at least one hour. Though such an arrangement would make the work very easy, I do think that, if one person dictated and another took down, that would save time, even taking into account the time spent by both. But I can see even from the record of three days that the time spent in this work will not be wasted. If anybody has shown less than nine hours in his slip, it would be better if he also explains in it the reason. A slip will be a mine of information for us. Let this suffice for the present.

This is what I feel about the Giri family: This responsibility has come to us unsought. Dalbahadurgiri's sacrifice was very great. When he died, he asked Krishnamaiyadevi to go and live in the Ashram; so great was the trust that he put in us. Nobody else would have supported her. The Congress there did nothing, or could do nothing. If I had begged from friends on her behalf, I would have got enough help. But I did not think it necessary. The affairs of the Ashram are planned on the assumption that every inmate who works for nine hours a day would earn his food and clothes. If, therefore, Krishnamaiyadevi lived in the Ashram, I calculated that it would not be necessary to beg for help specially on her account. We regard it as our duty to support her only so long as she lives in the Ashram. After all these years, she expressed a desire to leave. Krishnamaiyadevi, Mahavir, and Dharmakumar, all of them kept bad health. Maitri, too, was not very strong either. Krishnamaiyadevi. therefore, had sufficient reason for wishing to leave. In deciding whether or not we should pay the expenses of the family, it would be irrelevant and unfair to thinkof its many shortcomings. Persons who have nothing in them besides such shortcomings would not live in the Ashram or would not be able to do so even if they wished. We may give credit to the Ashram for tolerance for the fact that all those who lived in it could do so, but it

was no small degree of endurance on their part too. You will come across many who would prefer to starve rather than endure the severity of the Ashram life. But this family bore the difference of language, of the general mode of life and the absence of non-vegetarian food and endured living in what was to them a foreign land. I think we ought not to forget all this. That means that she was justified in leaving the Ashram. If so, we should pay them their expenses. In Darjeeling, if they maintain a separate establishment the expenditure would easily come to Rs. 15 per head. Since they live with her uncle, most probably the latter is saving something from the money given to them. If, however, she emphatically states that that is not so, I would certainly believe her. He must be incurring some expenditure because of them. I had asked her for accounts and for a description of their daily routine. As for the accounts, she said that since they were living with her uncle she simply paid him the amount at the rate of Rs. 15 per head. And it is understandable that, if they live with the uncle, they cannot keep a separate account of their expenses. Probably she keeps something for miscellaneous expenses, but I did not ask her about that. I had assumed that you received detailed letters from her. The last letter which I got from her a few days ago was after an interval of 20 to 25 days and that, too, was only for complaining that she had not received the money. I had asked her to send me a description of their daily routine, but so far I have not received it. Whether or not she keeps such a diary and sends it to me, just now we must pay the money. Their living in Darjeeling will also be a test for them. I don't think they will want to stay there for more than two or three months. I have not fixed any limit in my mind. Personally, I desire that they should stay as long as they wish. I did ask her whether they would like to settle down in Darjeeling permanently. Mahavir was emphatic in his reply: "We belong to the Ashram and wish to live there. We have not come here with the intention of taking up an occupation. If you want us to go back, we would do so immediately. We wish to stay on here for some time longer only because we have come here after many years and because here our health has improved a little. I am however fully conscious of my responsibility. We will not do anything to tar the good name of the Ashram". This was the substance of his reply. In future, if I get similar letters from him I will remember to send them to you. Maitri's reply in regard to the question of her marriage was equally emphatic. "How can you ask me such a question just now? How can I think of

marriage at a time like this? I have not the least desire to get married now, and, even when I wish later to get married, you will have to fix the marriage,"[1] Finally, so long as we bear the expenditure of Rs. 100 for Radha, we must bear this expenditure of Rs. 90 too. We cannot here take into account the fact that Radha is the daughter of Maganlal, who was the very soul of the Ashram. if we pay attention to such considerations, we would sink deep into the well of discrimination between person and person. If at all we take that fact into account, it should be to expect Radha to bear more than others do. But I don't have the courage yet to ask Radha or Santok to do so. I believe that mother and daughter are doing what seems right to them and console my mind with that thought. If you see any error in this whole reasoning, please do point it out to me. I have explained the matter at such length in order that my attitude may be clear to you.

Let me also say here what I think about Dudhibehn[2] and Nimu. Dudhibehn probably runs her own kitchen. If so, she must be spending all the money she gets. Valji's mode of life is extremely simple. Dudhibehn has lived in such atmosphere that she would not ask for any help even when she is ill. I would not, therefore, like to tell her anything. Nimu's case, I admit, is in a different category, and you can even raise the matter with her. If you wish, I also may write to her. However, if I write from here that may give her pain. Ramdas makes repeated and sincere resolutions to live in a simple style. But he grew up in South Africa and always spent freely. After all, how simple can he make his life? Moreover, Nimu is but a child and she must also have spent freely when she lived under the parental roof. I am certain, therefore, that she makes the Ashram pay for some unnecessary expenses. Mahadev tells me that she takes her meals in the common kitchen. That only means that she eats food worth six or seven rupees—she probably pays for milk and curds from the sixty rupees which she gets. The food for the two children cannot be supplied from the kitchen. The expenditure for their milk and curds isprobably met from the sum of sixty rupees which is paid to her. If so, that sum may not be so shockingly large as I feel it is. However, that can be judged only by a person who knows how she spends the sum. You should get the information from her.

I left the letter incomplete with the last paragraph and busied

[1] For Gandhiji's reply to Maitri on this subject, *vide* "Letter to Maitri Giri", 14-6-1932.

[2] Wife of Valji G. Desai

myself with the meal. Meanwhile I got another letter from you, in which you have replied to my question regarding the hours of work for each type of work. Your explanation helps me to understand many things clearly. The word"Experiments" at the top probably refers to Keshu's experiments. I observe that the largest number of hours is for the spinning *yajna,* and that seems very fitting. The fact shows that when a whole group of people do work, the maximum possible time will be devoted to it and yet it will not be a hardship to anyone. If, therefore, all people live in a spirit of *yajna,* the problems of life would disappear. I knew intuitively this value of public *yajna,* but I had never tested my belief with figures.

Records are like the sixth finger. As things are, without that sixth finger everything would come to a standstill. But where everybody observes truth in thought, word and deed, there would be no necessity at all for a department of records, or, if, there was such a department, it would require a minimum of time.

In column 14, the entry is "ill" and in column 20 it is "nursing". What does "ill" mean? With whom does Sharda live now? That is, who is chiefly responsible for her support?

It is certainly a fine thing that the spinning for *yajna* is done in the *dehla*[1] and it would be very good if the practice is kept up. I have no doubt that people will form many useful habits through this practice. I am certainly glad that you are able to give two hours to this work, and I can also understand very well that it must be a time of rest for you. In the same way that prayer should give rest to a person, such *yajna* also should. Only those who feel it to be a burden will try to escape it or do it perfunctorily. I had only one consideration in mind in suggesting to you to limit your *yajna* work to only one hour. I thought that you had to do your other work under excessive pressure and might also not be getting enough time for sleep. If so, you should not look upon the *yajna* work as rest. But since you enjoy perfect peace and don't feel the work to be a burden in any way, I have nothing to say about the matter.

Bhau had suggested that, as they do in Wardha, at Sabarmati too we should use only the *takli* for spinning for *yajna*. I had replied to him that I would write to you, but I forgot in my last letter. I am indifferent in this matter. I have not weighed the pros and cons of the suggestion. But you may listen to what Bhau has to say and do what seems best to you.

My arm is not bad, nor can I say that there is distinct improv-

[1] Front part of a house

ement. I admitted defeat and started taking milk from today. I have written a detailed letter[1] to Mirabehn about this, which she will get before you get this. It will of course be shown to you, and so I don't repeat everything here. I remained on saltless diet for eleven days. I cannot say positively that the result was good, as is clear enough from the fact that I was forced to start taking milk. But I cannot say, either, that the absence of salt was responsible for the ill effects which followed. I can guess many other causes. But I cannot make here, ought not to make, any experiment which has the slightest risk in it. If I try to take any such step, I would put the officials too in a difficult position. They would not desire to put any restraint on me in such a matter. Hence, If any ill consequence followed, they would be put in a difficult situation. That is why I started taking milk from today, and have decided to eat bread from tomorrow. That means the experiment of saltless diet is over. But such diet has one effect, and, if anybody wishes to try it, the experiment is certainly worth making. I can state it as proved beyond doubt in my case that vegetables dressed without salt have a laxative effect. Saltless diet may, therefore, prove beneficial to anybody who suffers from constipation. When we were in South Africa, such diet was a rule. There should be no doubt, moreover, that saltless diet for a period is very useful for acquiring self-control. It is certain that Parnerkar's aim has not been fulfilled. Has he calmed down a little now?

Did you post the letter to Savitribehn which I had sent to you?

Mahadev had in fact opposed the suggestion that a Muslim *bhajan* should be recited on a fixed day. And now I have a letter from Chhaganlal, too, opposing it. Their argument is that Muslim *bhajans* are included in the *Bhajanavali* It should be enough if they are recited occasionally. To fix one *bhajan* to be recited on a fixed day does not seem right. I appreciate the argument But I still feel in the depth of my heart that there is much force in the suggestion to fix one day for a Muslim *bhajan* which should be the same every week. There is a great difference between our singing such a *bhajan* occasionally when we feel inclined to do so and fixing a certain day for the purpose. Why do we recite certain verses every day? For that very reason it seems to me that the feeling that one day in the week at least we establish a bond of unity with Muslims is not altogether meaningless. Now do what seems best to all of you there. I have put before you my real conviction in this matter, but I don't press you to accept

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 22-6-1932.

my suggestion. And if you decide to select a *bhajan, "Hai bahare bagh"*[1] is certainly the best, for not only was it dear to Maganlal but we have been singing it from our days in South Africa. It was introduced there at the suggestion of a pure-hearted Muslim youth.[2] That youth then passed away, so that for us the song has more in it than its literal meaning. The song was so dear to that youth that, when he came to the line "*Yad kar tu ay Nazir kabronke roz*"[3] he used to substitute his name, Hasan, for Nazir's Hasan was a frequent visitor to Phoenix. To me he was another son, and we sang that song not once but several times in Phoenix. Hasan played on the piano too, and he often sang it alone to the accompaniment of the piano while we listened. The choice of this *bhajan* is therefore excellent. Its meaning also is excellent.

Is Father Elwin being properly looked after? I feel anxious because he has rather delicate health. There is no need to write to Aluvihari about the suitcase. He will send it at his leisure. I had his address, but I do not seem to have preserved it.

Puratan is in Bhavnagar. The letter will most probably reach him if addressed c/o "Dakshinamurti".

Vallabhbhai draws my attention to the printed words on one corner of the Ashram envelope, "Satyagraha Ashram, Udyog Mandir, Sabarmati". Why both "Satya" and "Udyog"? When I looked at the words, my eyes fell on the letters "B.B.C.I" printed below. Why are they in English? And why at all are they necessary? Assuming that they are necessary, why should we not print "B.B.C.I. Railway" in Hindi? This criticism is too late for the envelopes we have in stock. It is meant only for future guidance.

June 24, 1932

Narayanappa has referred to the difficulty experienced in supplying milk to outside customers. In my reply to him, I have asked him to discuss the problem with you. Read that letter.

June 26, 1932

It has been argued that, if one is not permitted to get one's yarn woven into cloth for one's use, khadi will be costly. Other doubts, too, have been raised. This is how I feel in the matter:

[1] *Vide* "Ashram Bhajanavali".

[2] *Vide* "Haji Hussain Dawad Mahomed", 1-10-1913.

[3] "Nazir! remember the day of death."

1. The best thing of course is that one should hand over to the Ashram all the yarn spun by oneself and be satisfied with the khadi that one gets as one's share from the stock in the Ashram.

2. Those who are not ready to do this may hand over the yarn spun during the hour set apart for the *yajna* of spinning and keep for themselves the quantity spun at other times.

3. The khadi supplied to the inmates of the Ashram should be charged for at the lowest possible rates.

4. The Ashram should always have a stock of khadi which would suit everybody's requirements.

5. The khadi woven from the best yarn spun in the Ashram should always be sent out.

6. The inmates of the Ashram should do with as coarse khadi as they can accept and be happy with it. Our idea is that we wear clothes only for protecting our bodies. We will, therefore, use the cheapest quality and the minimum possible quantity.

7. If anybody fears that handing over all the yarn spun by himself as his contribution to the *yajna* of spinning will probably kill his enthusiasm for spinning yarn of fine count, let it be killed. Such fear has the terrible implication that the person concerned does the spinning *yajan* as a task. Dharma on the contrary tells us that, howsoever indifferently we may spin or cook for ourselves, we should do our best when spinning or cooking for others. Those who do not do that do not really offer *yajna* but merely work. Their *yajna* has no meaning and may be described as hypocrisy. If, therefore, our spinning for *yajan* is not better than or at least as good as our spinning previously, we shall have failed in the test.

Let everybody think over this and then express his or her desire. Every person will act as he wishes. There is no doubt at all that dharma lies in what I have pointed out. If a person is convinced of what I have said, it is his duty to act accordingly. If, however, anybody cannot do so, simply because he has acted differently up to now, let him do as he wishes. I don't wish to create any new difficulty for you, I think I have nothing more to explain,

My arm is all right more or less. I am continuing milk and bread. It is too early yet to say anything about their effect. There is no cause for worry.

I hope you do understand that although I write these letters, I am not certain how long I shall be able to go on, I would not be

surprised if, like the visits, they too are stopped suddenly. We should be quite ready for that too. Of course there is no such possibility just now, but one cannot say when the necessity may arise.

I think I have inflicted a fairly long letter on you this time.

BAPU[1]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./ I. Also C.W. 8235 Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

68. LETTER TO KRISHNABEHN M. KAPADIA

June 28, 1932

CHI. KRISHNA,

I got your and Madhavdas's letters. I hope you keep perfectly fit now. I wish Madhavdas had said something in his letter about his present financial condition. He can write even now. I give complete rest to my arm these days. There is no cause for worry at all. I suppose you know that Manilal, Sushila and Sita, all three of them were caught in the epidemic of virulent fever in Natal. But there was a letter from Sushila after they had recovered, and that means that they must be on their feet again. I get news about Ramdas's health from time to time that it is all right.

Why does Madhavdas remain worried? One never knows when one may lose one's wealth. One should not rejoice when one has it, nor grieve over its loss. One need not feel ashamed of having become poor and remaining so. Really speaking, poverty is man's natural condition. There only a few in the world who are rich.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MADHAVDAS GOKALDAS KAPADIA
MANORDAS STREET
FORT
BOMBAY

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./ XXII

[1] For the article "How to Observe Ahimsa", which was sent along with this letter, *vide* "How to observe ahimsa", 25-6-1932.

69. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

June 28, 1932

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I got your letter. I was informed about the arrival of the bottle of medicine, but Major Bhandari hesitates to let me use it. He says that it is a camphor liniment described in British Pharmacopoeia and that it smells very strong and may, therefore, injure the skin. If there is any ill effect, he would be held responsible. If he knows the composition of the solution and thinks that the strength of the ingredients is light enough, he may let me use it. That being the position, if you yourself make the oil please let him know its composition and also describe your experience of its effects. He may then let me use it. I pressed him to permit me to use it, but as he mentioned his responsibility I have kept quiet. The pain in the elbow has not increased. I give it complete rest, of course.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 7550. Also C.W. 5025. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

70. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

August 28, 1932

CHI. NIMU

I have a letter from Ramdas in which he says that it was not proper for you to have given up *ghee* without corresponding with him. He also wishes that I should write to you in the matter and explain to you your duty. He says, too, that he had not ordered you to give up cinnamon and clove. At any rate, after seeing me he had given up the idea altogether. He says moreover, that for the sake of the children also, you ought not to give up *ghee.* I agree with all this. It was your duty to have asked Ramdas what was the right thing to do. He does not in the least wish to order you. He has never believed that you are his subjects. Surely you ought to have ascertained the full facts from the person on whose account you wished to take a vow. Also, under the Ashram rules, you must obtainthe Manager's permission to undertake anything by way of expiation. You have not

done that either. Looking at the matter from every point of view, therefore, I feel that you should give up your resolve not to take *ghee*.

I hope the children are all right now. Narandas says in his letter that their illness had somewhat frightened you. Illness comes and goes. Why should it frighten one? It is certainly no easy matter to be a mother. A mother may look after her children as well as she can. Then, whether the children keep good health or bad, live or die, is in the hands of God. And this applies to all living beings alike. Therefore, why grieve? On the contrary, giving way to grief interferes with the nursing of the ill.

Be regular in writing to me. Start taking *ghee* and inform Ramdas that you have done so. You know well enough how Ramdas worries about you.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and library

71. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

June 28, 1932

CHI. RAIHANA

I got your long letter. The *ghazal* is very fine. I have preserved all your letters to read them again. I wish to prepare a dictionary with their help. The work which you have got in the Oriental Research Institute is very good indeed. Raihana will be called a scholar now. She will now fly in the air and all of us will watch her. Tell Pashabhai that all of us were sorry to learn about his misfortune. I hope the girl is all right now. Uncle Sardar has been reading Amir Ali's book with deep interest. Sincere greetings and *vandemataram* from us all to Mother and Father.

I hope Bhai Purohit is all right now. Tell him that Sardar inquires after him. Shardabehn also had informed me that Dr. Sumant was putting on weight.

I will not write further today in Gujarati. I have said above almost everything I wished to say, I am waiting for Hamida's letter. Regards and *vandemataram* from Sardar and Mahadev.

Blessings and a slap from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu/ Gujarati: S.N. 9646

72. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

June 28, 1932

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have received the khaddar, but no letter has been received. Please tell Behenji (sister) that I shall lovingly be using the khaddar. Since I wrote[1], I have been studying books on economy. I have read your two pamphlets. I can understand (the subject) better than before. But as yet the picture of the whole subject (lit. all things) does not come before me. But I am pursuing it and so I hope to be sufficiently acquainted with the subject. So far I have been reading (Prof.) Shah's book on Banking and Exchange. In this connection any books which may be considered worth reading may be sent. It would be very well if the Reports of the Herschel Committee, Fowler Committee, Babington Smith, Chamberlain and Hilton Young Committees are printed in book form. If they are not so printed they may be sent as they are available. Dissenting minutes should also be with them. I also wish to have these Reports over and above the literature you have in mind. If you send also the books our experts have written, there will be sufficient acquaintance with the subject.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(3), Pt. I. p. 319

73. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 29, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter here just now. This is just to entrust you with two letters for Damodardas and his wife. They might feel comforted by the letters.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G.D.Birla", 7-6-1932.

[2] This and some other letters, reproduced from Bombay Secret Abstracts, are official transaltions of Gujarati or Hindi originals which are not available.

I am well. The milk, bread and fruit are progressing.

More later.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6227. Courtesy Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9693

74. LETTER TO KANHAIYALAL[1]

June 29, 1932

BHAI KANHAIYALAL,

(1) One who believes in 'I'
(2) Freedom from likes and dislikes.
(3) Untruth.
(4) Non-violence.
(5) Freedom for ever from likes and dislikes.
(6) Untruthful conduct.
(7) Non-violence.

BAPU

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 271. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(3), Pt. II, p. 65

75. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

June 29, 1932

We here have boundless patience, and do not mind if a couple or more years pass [before our effort is crowned with success]. We will only claim so much more interest.[2]. . .

Rajaji seems to be rather prejudiced against American writers.[3] I have read nothing of Hardy or Zola. And I have always felt the loss of

[1] The addressee had asked the following questions: 1. Who could be said to be in bondage? 2. What is liberation? 3. What is Hell? 4. What brings about liberation? 5. What is state of liberaton? 6. Which is the main gate to Hell? Mahadev Desai did not remember the seventh question.

[2] Gandhiji is referring to Samuel Hoare's speech; he had said that no peace with the Congress was possible so long as it challenged the Government.

[3] After reading *The Wet Parade* Rajagopalachari had expressed his views to Devdas Gandhi.

not reading the latter. But Upton Sinclair is not a writer to be despised. A propagandist novel cannot be dismissed from an idea that propaganda as such is a fault in it. A propagandist devotes all his powers to the production of his work. He makes no secret of his purpose, and still does not let the interest flag in his story. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is propaganda pure and simple, but its art is inimitable. Sinclair is a great reformer and writes with a view to promoting reforms; yet it is said, all his works are interesting. I propose to read them if I have the time.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 258-60

76. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

June 29, 1932

DEAR SUMANGAL,

Your letter to hand. Your argument with regard to rape seems convincing. In circumstances similar to those in which you believe it right for a woman to take her life, it may be right for a trustee to take his life when somebody tries to rob the property under his care. But the woman and the trustee themselves should think that it is their dharma to do so. You or I have no right to accuse a woman of failingin her dharma if she does not kill herself to prevent herself from being raped. If, unlike her, the trustee dies while defending the property under his care, we cannot assume, either, that he has done the right thing. We can judge in either case only if we know the mental condition of the person concerned at the time. Though I say this from the point of view of justice, personally I believe that a woman, if she has courage, would be ready to die to save her honour. In discussing this matter with women, I would, therefore, certainly advise them to kill themselves in such circumstances and explain to them that it was easy to take one's life if one wished to do so. I would do this because many women believe that, if there is no man present to protect them or if they have not learnt to use a dagger or a gun, they have no choice but to submit to the evil-doer. I would certainly tell a woman who believes so, that she need not depend upon anybody's weapons to protect her and that her own virtue will protect her. Even if that does not happen, instead of using a dagger or any other weapon she can kill herself. She need not consider herself weak or helpless.

And now concerning hypothetical questions. I had understood your purpose in asking the questions to be exactly what you explain it to be, but I would describe such questions as hypothetical. In some cases questions of this nature may be asked, but it would be better not to ask any. In any case, you should not make it a habit of asking such questions. Anybody who does that commits the same error which a student of geometry who asks his professor to solve riders does. Such a student will never learn geometry well. That will also be the fate of a person who seeks the solutions of problems arising out of a principle from other people. Apart from this, however, there is a great flaw in the very nature of questions raised on the basis of ethical principles, namely, we never come across in life an instance exactly similar to the one we had imagined. If there is ever so slight a difference between the hypothetical case and the actual one, the answers in the two cases are likely to be entirely different. That is why I have cautioned you that, if you are not confronted with a problem relating to an actual instance which you have come across, you should not make it a habit to seek from me solutions of hypothetical problems in order to be prepared for such eventualities. If you do that, my answers to hypothetical questions will, instead of helping you in an emergency, prevent you from finding the right solution. The mind of such a person becomes incapable of original thinking. The better thing would be to grasp the basic principle thoroughly and to assimilate it, and not to mind if, in applying it in solving your problems or those of other members in your family, you make mistakes. You will learn from such mistakes, But you should not approach others, even those who understand the principle better than you do, to seek solutions of hypothetical problems in order to prepare yourself to meet them when they arise. Such a procedure destroys one's self-confidence. The author of the *Gita* seems to have written verse 10 of Chapter X because he knew this from experience. Doesn't the Lord tell us in that verse that "to these, ever in tune with Me, worshipping Me with affectionate devotion. I give the power of selfless action, whereby they come to Me." If you substitute "Truth" for "God" in this sentence, the meaning will be perfectly clear. I hope you now understand what I meant to say. I do not mind your hypothetical questions, but I fear that I may do you harm by encouraging you to put such questions. I am sure at any rate that I would not be helping you. Take, for instance, your question regarding rape. Though I may give a definite reply now to your question regarding a hypothetical instance, I would

give quite a different reply if an instance like that actually occurred, and support it with convincing reasons. It is also very possible that I would be able to point out a difference between the hypothetical case and the actual incident. I write all this from experience about coworkers. I will stop here now.

I am glad to learn that your health has improved.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 268-70, and Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, pp. 75-9

77. A LETTER[1]

June 29, 1932

Why should you wish to commit suicide? So far as I know, you have not deceived anyone. And since you have resolved never to speculate in future, that chapter is closed. Even if you have deceived anybody, that is no reason for committing suicide. A person who confesses that he has deceived people is better than other who deceive but who are not found out or than those who have not been put in circumstances in which they would feel tempted to deceive. You have, therefore, no reason for committing suicide. And now about the problem of debt. If you hand over everything you have to your creditors, your responsibility will be over. If the creditors declare you insolvent, let them do so. There is nothing to be ashamed of even in that. Manliness lies in facing whatever happens. I have already written to you and told you how you may live now. Both of you should go and live in the Ashram. Do not feel the slightest hesitation in doing so. Do not be proud and think that, now that you are a poor man, you cannot go to a place where you often used to go in the days of your prosperity. The Ashram exists for good people. Write to me from time to time. Seek Mirabehn's company for what comfort it can give you. Know that good company is like a philosopher's stone and be near her.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 258

[1] It is likely that this was addressed to Damodardas and his wife; *vide* the following item and "Letter to Mirabehn", 29-6-1932.

78. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 30, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

Being anxious to send to Damodardas and his wife a comforting letter, I wrote at once yesterday so as to catch the post. I hope you got the two letters and gave them to the friends. It is sad that loss of wealth should so affect people.

Where are your Urdu-English and English-Urdu dictionaries? I need them badly. My Urdu studies are growing. I am reading fairly extensively. I must, therefore, enrich my Urdu collection of books. There are several books at the Ashram. I propose to send for them.

There is nothing to report just now about my health.

The improvement you notice in your system is certainly very encouraging. The increase in milk and fruit was necessary.

I was glad Verrier was able to go to England after all. The visit must renew his shattered body. And his mother and sister will be overjoyed to have him in their midst.

There is no reply to my letter[1] about you. There may be no reply!

It is good thing Shantabai is giving some time regularly to spinning.

Tilak should take all the rest he may need. He must build up his body.

Noorbanu does not take enough exercise. Do coax her to take long walks. And if you can persuade her to go without salt and ghee for a month, she will lose much of her superfluous fat.

For the cadence of Ramanama, you should get hold of Panditji when he passes through Bombay. I think he could recommend one of his fellow-teachers of the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya if you wrote to him. You would learn it in half an hour's time.

Who are the principal members of the International Fellowship now?

You will send my love to all the friends in Europe, and

[1] Presumably "Letter to E.E. Doyle", 18-6-1932.

Mahadev's too, and to the Oxford uncle and his wife, and kisses to the beautiful baby. I can never forget that visit, the quiet home and the very beautiful chapel attached to it.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6228. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9694

79. LETTER TO MRS. LINDSAY[1]

June 30, 1932

You have beaten me. For the past four weeks or more I have been thinking of writing to you and I could not. And now your most welcome letter giving me a budget of family news has come. Thank you for it. What I wanted to say to you was that in everything I have done, I have asked myself how you would take it. Such was the hold your appealing eyes had on me when you spoke to me at that meeting under Prof. Thomson's roof. And then came those never-to-be-forgotten talks under your own roof when you had received me as one of the family. Mahadev is with me. We often talk of all the friends we met in Oxford. Our love to all of you.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 263

80. LETTER TO THE PRIVATS[2]

June 30, 1932

My dear bhakti and anand,

It was a great delight to hear from you both and to know that you were doing so well. I had one postcard from Anand whilst you were travelling. Nothing beyond it. Of course you remember Sardar Vallabhbhai. He and Mahadev are with me. We are all keeping well trying to made ourselves useful. Mahadev and I give fair time to spinning and studying. Sardar produces wealth by making envelopes from waste brown paper and the like. This will be enclosed in one such envelope.

I do hope you did not find the Indian climate too trying for you.

[1] Wife of Dr. A.D. Lindsay, Master of Balliol College, Oxford

[2] A Swiss couple; Gandhiji called them Anand and Bhakti.

I wonder if you often see the Rollands. When you do please give our love to them and accept it for yourselves.

Yours,
BAPU

PROF. E. PRIVAT
LA CHAUMIERE AVENUE
SWITZERLAND

From a photostat: G.N. 8792

81. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

June 30, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

Jamnalalji has already sent me three copies of Vinoba's *Gitai*[1]. Your constipation must be cured. If necessary, consult Dr. Talwalkar about it. Its effect may not be felt much now, but it is bound to become serious in future. I will suggest one remedy which has helped me. You may try it for two or three days and, if it does not work, give it up. Eat twice or thrice a day cooked *tandalja*[2] or *palak*[3] leaves—eat nothing else. This is likely to help you. As soon as you pass stools normally, resume your normal food. The immediate, and unfailing, remedy for migraine is the application of a mud-pack. Bind it when retiring. If the headache still occurs on the next day, apply the pack again and lie down.

I think that the image of the Lord reclining on the Shesha[4] has some mystic significance and does not contradict the idea of his being ceaselessly active. The word *atandrita* in that verse[5] can only mean doing everything with perfect vigilance and without lethargy. It does not mean working all the twenty-four hours of the day. This can be said about God's manner of working as contrasted with that of unenlightened human beings, and the verse only draws such a contrast. In truth, however, God is neither awake nor asleep. He neither does anything nor does nothing. It is therefore, not possible to compare

[1] Literally, 'Mother *Gita*', Vinoba Bhave's metrical Marathi rendering of the *Gita*

[2] Amaranth

[3] Spinach

[4] A serpent with a thousand heads which is the couch and canopy of Lord Vishnu.

[5] Probably *Bhagavad Gita* , III. 23

Him with anything. After saying this, I may add that this is how I interpret the image of the Lord reclining on Shesha: that God is so perfectly free from fear that He can sleep soundly even with His head on the body of a snake. I interpret it thus for my own satisfaction and the meaning gives me strength. That is, if we are filled with perfect ahimsa, we would not feel the slightest fear even in the presence of a snake and, more than that, the snake would have no fear of us.

BAPU

From a photostat of Gujarati: G.N. 6732. Also C.W. 4475. Courtesy: Bhau Panse.

82. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

June 30, 1932

CHI. PARASRAM,

I got your letter. I do not see any harm in your encouraging the girls to write to me in Hindi and correcting their language. Only see that, instead of constructing the sentences themselves, they do not write them down as you speak them. They themselves should write the letters first. Otherwise, only their handwriting will improve and their language will not improve. The questions also should be their own. There is no rule that they must ask questions. They should describe what new things they have learnt during the week, what they have observed, what made them happy or unhappy, or things which happened during the week or have left an impression on their minds. This will mean more work for you, but you can teach them to write about these things even during their Hindi lessons. I also see that Pushpa has begun to take interest in her work and is eager to make progress.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7504. Also C.W. 4981. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

83. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

June 30, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I regard you as being three years old.[1] What you say is correct. When I brought you along with me from Bombay, I was doubtful whether you would continue in the Ashram, though not a much as you believe I was. For you had kept your promise, and I do not feel doubtful about anyone who keeps his or her promise. I do not think there was sarcasm in my words, but I was not sure that you would continue as long as you have done. I recollect this to be the state of my mind then. I certainly wish that you should spend your whole life there as you have spent three years and that through deliberate resolution, not aimlessly, with the firm conviction that you belong to the Ashram and the Ashram belongs to you. But, of course, I cannot force you to do this. I may only wish that you should do so. You cannot make up your mind to stay on unless you sincerely feel that the Ashram belongs to you. I have merely expressed my wish.

This refers to your second birth in the Ashram. The other birthday falls on July 13 and you should get this letter about the 8th. You have my blessings, of course. May your highest aspirations be fulfilled! I have no doubt that they will be, since you are alert and striving with that aim. You should also have sufficiently long life and good health for that purpose. I am sure you will have them too. But, ultimately, none of these things depends on you or me. We trust everything to Him. He may do as He wills. And whatever He does will be for the best.

Send to me your account for the 13th. Tell me what resolution you make on that day. I suppose you know that I advise everyone to make a good resolution on his or her birthday.

Put no trust in the predictions of astrologers. Do not take any interest in the matter at all. Even if such predictions come true, there is no benefit in knowing them. The harm is plain.

It is hot there. But here it is very cool. There has not been much rain, though.

[1] The addressee wanted to be regarded as only three years old since she considered her coming to the Ashram as her new birth.

Send to me soon the following Urdu books—as many biographies of the Prophet as you can find, the two parts of *Asva-e-Saheba*, *Khulfa-e-Rashdin* and the English-Urdu and Urdu-English dictionary. If you can send them to Dahyabhai in Bombay, he will bring them here on Saturday.

All the buildings should be cleaned regularly on fixed days. The luggage should be lifted and the spot cleaned. You must find the necessary time for this.

It is our duty to try to raise to perfection whatever we find imperfect, whether a person or a society or an institution. If on the whole we find more shortcomings than good points, our duty is to leave the person or the thing, non-co-operate with him or it. This is a universal principle and I asked you to follow it. In doing so, I did not wish to advise you to leave the Ashram, or anything else. I only explained to you what is accepted as everyone's moral duty in certain circumstances.

In Bengal, hundreds of sheep and goats are slaughtered in broad daylight every day and offered as sacrifice to the Goddess Durga in Calcutta. I pray to God to make me a fit instrument for stopping this. Didn't you know this?[1]

I knew that men often describe themselves as *gopis*[2]. If this is done purely through *bhakti*, I see nothing wrong in it. Before God all of us are the weaker sex.

When we have swaraj, men will certainly come forward to climb the top of the Himalayas or discover the North Pole. I do believe that knowledge of the physical sciences is useful.

My experiments in diet have done me no harm. They have lasted for periods ranging between seven days and eight years.

Dhurandhar has gone to Nasik.

"Monodiet" is certainly beneficial.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10292. Also C.W. 6740. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak.

[1] The addressee had asked which particular prayer Gandhiji addresed to God every day.

[2] The cowherd maidens with whom Krishna sported in his boyhood.

84. LETTER TO SHAMAL R. RAVAL

July 1, 1932

CHI. SHAMAL,

Anasuyabehn meets everybody who wants to see her. Ask her to advise you and guide you. You do right in asking my advice. Who makes fun of you? You can meditate on God by going on repeating His name. The best way of worshipping God is to see Him in all creatures and serve them lovingly. Why are you unhappy in the Ashram? Explain the cause, whatever it is, to Narandasbhai. In any case write to me and tell me everything fully.

BAPU

S. R. RAVAL

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3143. Also C.W. 2878. Courtesy: Shamal R. Raval.

85. LETTER TO KUSUMBEHN DESAI

July 1, 1932

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

Some of your letters are no letters at all. For instance the last letter. If you cannot think of anything to write about, it would be better not to write at all. It is a weakness in you that you cannot think of anything to write about, but writing a letter which is almost a blank sheet of paper does not make up for that weakness but confirms it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1841.

86. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

July 1, 1932

CHI. VANAMALA,

This time your handwriting was bad. You should always make each letter as distinct as in print.

As regards the selection of land, see what I had written in my letter either to Mangala or Sharda, and then if there is anything you wish to ask me, you may do so.

Why does Mohan not write to me regularly?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5776. Also C.W. 2999. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

87. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

July 1, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

It is not right that Premabehn should suggest the questions which you ask. The questions must be of interest to you, and you should be eager to know their answers. They should be such as nobody there can answer. Questions should not be asked for the sake of asking them. Your letters should contain a report of the work done during the week. Work includes study also.

Now the questions :

For the past many years my life has come to be exclusively devoted to public work.

Pure food is that which involves the minimum destruction of life and which is taken merely for the sustenance of the body.

The motive behind pilgrimage should always be religious. But religious actions also serve practical ends. Religion ought not to be—cannot be—antagonistic to true practical ends.

The chief characteristic of virtuous life is *sat*, i.e., truth.

In your letters your grammar and spellings must be correct.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./ II

88. LETTER TO BABALBHAI MEHTA

July 1, 1932

CHI. BABALBHAI,

Bhakti means silent [and continuous] repetition of God's name in one's heart. God means the One Essence manifested as all living creatures. Hence the *bhakta* is a person who serves all living creatures through love of God. You have correctly interpreted the meaning of

the injunction: "Do everything as sacrifice to me".[1]

Your interpretation of the other verse, too, is correct. For stilling the movements of the *chitta*[2], observance of the *yamaniyamas*[3] is the chief thing. The same idea is expressed in two different ways: "Do everything as sacrifice to me" and "Renounce the fruits of action." People of a certain nature will understand the first easily and people of another type will understand the second easily.

The condition of my elbow is not as serious as you seem to think it is. The only thing is that it pains when I use the arm in a particular manner. Kakasaheb's health is definitely improving. Do not worry if you feel when reading the *Gita* that your life is contrary to the teaching of every verse. Instead, you should try to overcome your shortcomings patiently but with determination, no matter even if there is a whole heap of them, as big as a hill. As you go on trying, a day will come when all of them will disappear together. If, however, looking at the hill you get discouraged and stop trying, the hill will become bigger and bigger.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9450

89. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

July 1, 1932

DEAR PANDITJI,

I had never heard the name Yoga[4] before. What is her age? How far has she studied? The supervision of the Vidyapith books has come to our hands in time. Now take good care of them. Mahadev spins more than 200 rounds of yarn of 45 counts per hour. The children's problem is our own. I will discuss it in my letter to Narandas.[5] Read it. I have written to Narandas in regard to silent prayers in the morning.[6] If the silent prayers in the morning are held intelligently it would be advantageous. Though I had it in mind only for the evening. But I do not write here more. See what I have written

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, XII. 10
[2] Mind-stuff
[3] Rules and regulations of conduct for a spiritual aspirant.
[4] Address's niece
[5] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 28-6/4-7-1932.
[6] *ibid*

to Narandas. I have suggested to Mirabehn that if, instead of repeating the refrain *Raghupati Raghava Rajaram*, etc., only Ram Ram Ram . . is repeated in ascending and descending notes, then the refrain could be taken up briskly and it would be very good for the newcomers.[1] But who will teach her this? If you have anybody in view in Bombay please write to him to go and teach her. Have you followed?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 228. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

90. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA[2]

July 1, 1932

. . . As you follow whole-heartedly the remedy I have suggested, you will get more and more peace. What you have already read will have an invisible effect on you and it will be amazing. Live as if you had never read anything. Whatever you have digested and assimilated will of itself bear fruit as action.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 270-1 and Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(3), Pt. II, p. 57

91. LETTER TO SWAMI ANAND

July 1, 1932

Bhai anandanand

You made me wait for a long time. Sardar asked me several times why your letter was still not received. We knew that it was not received But what can you do? Even if the reason is known, one does hope for a thing which one ardently desires. You will receive this letter or it will come back to me.[3] Many of those who have come in contact with me had similar experience about separation as you have got,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 22-6-1932.
[2] *Vide* also " Letter to Bhagwanji P. Pandya" , 18-6-1932.
[3] What follows is collated with the Gujarati in *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. I.

though I am near you.[1] You are to draw as much satisfaction therefrom as you can. Kallenbach[2] had laid down a fine standard. His experience was that when he first came in contact with me, he met me daily and took as much of my time as he could; when we came in very close contact and began to live together he had hardly time to talk with me though we lived, ate and slept together. While returning home from office, there were always some people talking with us. So, that became a regular matter of quarrel between us. He applied the rule of three and came to the conclusion that it was his experience that the more one came into contact with me, the more he remained away from me. I supported his statement and added, "You have come so near me because you have understood me. Hence you have no right to take my time now nor have I the right to spare time for you, leaving aside those who have yet to know me."And on this understanding our affairs went on. Is it not that there is some truth underlying such experience, viz., that in the case of associates who are closely united with one another there remains nothing to make inquiries about? If they do so they may be said to fail to thatextent in their general duty. And if this is true, associates like you who are near, though living at a distance, have no reason to feel sorrowful about.[3] I did know that your weight had gone down, but I had no fears about your health. The Magan spinning-wheel is not a modified or improved form of the Gandiva wheel. It is a distinct, useful and excellent discovery made by Prabhudas.[4] Its wheel can be worked by foot instead of by hand, and so both the hands being free, two spindles can be worked simultaneously. Hence he who becomes an expert in working it can without doubt spin one and a half times, if not double, of what he can do on a one-spindle wheel. I did want to work the wheel to satisfy Prabhudas. In the mean time the doctors here prohibited me from drawing the yarn or working the wheel with the left hand. So there was a twofold reason for me to work the Prab-

[1] The addressee had stated in his letter that he would not commit the crime of taking up Gandhiji's time when he was free, and was not lucky enough to be his companion in jail. He could, therefore, never hope to be able to live with Gandhiji and have an opportunity of discussing things personally with him.

[2] Hermann Kallenbach, a German architect; devoted friend and co-workers of Gandhiji in South Africa

[3] The following is reproduced from the English rendering of the letter available in Bombay Secret Abstracts.

[4] Prabhudas Gandhi, eldest son of Chhaganlal Gandhi

hudas wheel. As Maganlal encouraged the making of that wheel and contributed largely to the scientific side of it, it has been named *Magan Rentio*. I am spinning on it at present. The speed has reached about 140 rounds. It will still go up. From the above remarks, I hope you have understood that I have been spinning only on one spindle because, giving complete rest to the left hand, I draw the thread with the right.

The yarn is of 19 counts. There us nothing to fear about the hand. When it is used in doing a particular kind of work, the elbow is aching and doctors persistently believe that the complaint is not due to any internal cause, but it is due to an external cause, viz., due to the drawing of threads daily. So, they are of the opinion that by giving rest to the muscles the complaint will subside by itself. Despite this, that part is treated by [ultra-]violet rays. Hence there is no cause for anxiety. My weight has failed to go up to 112 lb. It has not exceeded $106^{1}/_{2}$lb. I have been taking milk for the last ten days under pressure from the Superintendent. I am yet unable to say that I have benefited by it. My present weight is 104 lb. Sardar is doing well. His weight may be said to be the same as it was when he came (here). It can be said that the nose complaint is under slight control. The weight of Mahadev is also good. His health is excellent. Mahadev had been spinning 840 yards of yarn of No. 45 to 50 up to the day before yesterday. He spent about five hours daily on it. As he also felt the effects of exertion, he spins half the amount of yarn for the last twodays and is doing carding work, of course, in addition. I spin 200 yards of yarn. I study Urdu, astronomy and books on currency and write the history of the Ashram when I get time. Mahadev is reading on stray subjects. He has, of course, in addition, to write for me. Now the spinning having been reduced, he may, perhaps, begin to write something. Sardar produces wealth from dust, in other words, he has been making envelopes from wastepaper of *badami*[1] and other colours. If I were to give you a description of the papers, you will laugh a lot. To whomsoever we have to write a letter, we make use of these envelopes. As we do not differentiate between Government money and ours, we save every cowry where possible. The making of envelopes is undoubtedly an addition to the wealth of India or that of the world, however small it may be. Keeping in mind that every-

[1] Brown

thing that is used as Government property is our property, we make use of it. Sardar is spending time also in reading and has thought of acquiring a working knowledge of Sanskrit. He has also called for the *Sanskrit Pathamala* by Satavlekar[1] and intends side by side to be will versed in Hindi too. This is the account of our work. Our family consists of a cat and her two kittens. Though their names are not entered in the history ticket, they share a little of milk, etc.[2]

I have completed reading Rolland's books on Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. I always had reverence for Ramakrishna I had read little about him. But as I had heard several things about him from his devotees, that feeling had sprung up. I cannot say that Rolland's books have added to it. In fact both the books of Rolland are meant for Westerners. I will not say that we can derive nothing from these books. But I for one have derived very little benefit. The things which had influenced me are also to be found in Rolland's books. The additional matter which it contains has not added to the impression. It did not appear to me that Vivekananda was as much a devotee as Ramakrishna. Vivekananda's love was great. He was full of feeling and used to be carried away by it. It was like the golden covering for his knowledge[3] The distinction which he made between religion and politics was not correct. But it is no use criticizing such a great man and once we let loose ourselves we can criticize anyone whom we wish to. Our duty lies in learning anything we can from [the lives of] such persons. As Tulsidas's couplet has produced a deep impression on my life, I do not like to criticize. But as I know that you will wish to know if I have to offer anything by way of criticism, I have written this much. I have no doubt that Vivekananda rendered great service. We have clearly seen that he gave his life for what he considered to be the truth. When I went to see the Belur Math in 1901, I desired to see Vivekananda also. But the Swami of the Math informed me that he was ill and resided in the city and no one could see him. I was then disappointed. My devotion had saved me from many difficulties. At that time there was not a single notable person whom I did not run up to see with feelings of respect and I used to go to most of the places on foot on the long roads in Calcutta. Devotion inspired all this. I had no desire to save money though this is also in

[1] 1866-1968; renowned scholar and author of several books in Sanskrit

[2] The following paragraph has been collated with the Gujarati in *Mahadev-bhaini Diary*.

[3] cf. *Ishopanishad*, 15

my nature[1]

Respects from all three of us to Abdulla Sheth, Jabir Ali, Soman, Gokulbhai, Vishwanath, and all others. I hope you will admit now that I have written at greater length than you might have wished.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 265-7 and Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(3), Pt. II pp. 133-41

92. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

July 1, 1932

DEAR KISHORELAL,

I was waiting for your letter. I do not wish you to write to me, making use of the occasion when it is necessary for you to write to anybody else. But do write to [me] when you can easily do so. Devdas was suffering from mild typhoid. But now he is entirely cured. I receive letters from him. He was taken good care of. He is getting books to read. Ramdas is here and is all right. Chhaganlal, Surendraji, Darbari and several others are with him. Qureshi is also there. Ramniklal, Kanti, Surendra, Vithal, Fulchand, Diwan Master and several others are in Visapur jail. Jamnalal, Pyarelal, Vinoba, etc., are in Dhulia jail. There the *Gita* is being studied with great enthusiasm. Manilal, Sushila, Sita, Pragji all had an attack of the poisonous fever prevailing in Natal. But all have been saved. Pragji is not willing to undertake responsibility.[2] So Manilal is engaged and it seems that he will not come. Gangabehn, Tara, Mahalakshmi, Rama, Gangabehn Jhaveri, Nanibehn, Bhaktibehn, Shanta, Lilavati Asar, etc., are here. As doctors believe that my hand complaint is due to exertion, I have been giving rest to it. The complaint is not permanent. It recurs when a particular kind of work is done. As an experiment, it is given diathermy; but the doctors here believe that rest is the only remedy for that part of the hand. It is not necessary even to direct a thought over it. I have been taking milk nearly for the last ten days. My weight is 104 lb. The reason for taking milk is that the Superintendent here is pressing for it. I did not think that it was essential. But as the weight

[1] The following is from the English rendering available in Bombay Secret Abstracts.

[2] Of the Press, *vide* "Letter to Manilal Gandhi", 18-6-1932.

was going down, I gave up my determination. I am working Prabhudas's spinning-wheel by foot and am drawing the thread with the right hand. It is working well. Sardar and Mahadev are doing well. The nose complaint in of Sardar is lying dormant for the present. The complaint in the leg-bone from which Mahadev was suffering was completely cured in a few days after he came here. Mahadev spins yarn of 40/50 counts. He is doing some carding work and reading, of course, in addition to what he has to write for me. Sardar is reading and adding to the wealth of the world by making envelopes from seless *badami* paper. As we do not differentiate between the Government and other property, we hold the so-called Government property to be ours and make a careful use of everything. Such troubles as you infer should not arise from the working of the Gandiva spinning-wheel. Its wheel should work without the least trouble. It requires only a gentle push. But if you believe that though the wheel of the Gandiva spinning-wheel you have been using is turning very lightly, yet your wrist is aching, then you should use a spinning-wheel with a perpendicular wheel even for the sake of removing your doubt. That your weight is increasing can indeed be regarded as good news. The diagnosis of the doctor about the asthma may be correct and if two grains of quinine every day cures the trouble, it should be regarded to be very good.

I had written on prayers[1] and on subject like that of the regulations to be observed by satyagrahi[2]; but not on this subject However, I have not got a copy of the same. But as you refer to it, I shall call for it and correct errors in it and send it to you, if possible. It will not be regarded, I feel confident, as a letter. There is indeed pressure of work in the Ashram. Shankarbhai[3] writes the Ashram letter when he gets leisure. Several essential things are left out in it. I have kept up the idea of reading your book carefully, but believing that I have ample time I do not turn to it, leaving aside what I have been reading at present. You have done well in going through the *Gita* again. If you send it here, I will get it.[4] I do not desire to recommend you to read anything special.[5] I do not believe that you have read less. My own reading can indeed be regarded as being quite odd. I have been reading Urdu at present. As my ignorance on currency is unpardo-

[1] *Vide* "Prayer", 19-6-1932.

[2] *Vide* "Lesson of the national week", 2-5-1932.

[3] Shankarbhai Bhikhabhai Patel

[4] What follows has been collated with the Gujarati in *Mahadevbhaini Diary*.

[5] The addressee had requested Gandhiji to suggest what he should read in addition to what he had read already.

nable, I have been making some progress in the subject. The spirit of service lies behind both of these, and submitting to this spirit, though I can be regarded to be on the eve of death, I aspire to have a good knowledge of Tamil which has been left incomplete; and from this point of view I had begun to read Bengali and Marathi, and I shall not be surprised if I plunge into their study if a good time is passed here. If your mind is working in any such direction and if you desire to know any new language do not fail to do so. We had this aspiration about languages when the Ashram was established. It has not weakened at all so far as I am concerned. But I do not desire to draw you under this temptation. The one necessity which I see for all of us is that we should think on what we have read, digest it and make it a feature of our life. From this viewpoint I have gone even to the length of advising Bhagwanji[1] to give up (the reading of) *Gita* and writings of Raichandbhai and to remain engaged in his own work and think over it alone; because I found that he had crammed much from the *Anasaktiyoga* and the writings of Raichandbhai, but he was unable to make the right use of all these. His heart, I believe, is clean, but his intellect defeats him, he indulges in various thoughts and at last he remains where he is. My writing appears to have produced a deep effect on him and he is appeased. Whatever may be the result of this advice, it has become clear to me from several experiences that the line of thought behind it is quite correct. Accordingly I cannot think of recommending the reading of religious books to persons like you.[2] I agree to a certain extent with the realization by you of defects in you. I have, however, marked many times that you are in the habit of entering into discussions. You appear to have taken an exaggerated view of this defect in your letter. I see no reason for it. But I am, indeed, of opinion that much of the discussion can be curtailed. This does not mean that you should not reply to what one asks you. If one does not ask a man like you, whom will one ask? It is one thing to give to an inquisitive [man] what one can out of what one has, and to enter into discussion is quite a different mater. Do not be confused by interpreting these observations of mine in an unwarranted manner. Do not uselessly reprove yourself also after deep introspection. My support is not intended to magnify the defects you have seen, but is meant to explain their proportion. In order to live with ease with persons of queer nature, silence is indeed greatly essential. We must understand

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Bhagwanji P. Pandya", 18-6-1932 and "Letter to Bhagwanji P. Pandya", 1-7-1932.

[2] The following has been reproduced from the English rendering of the letter available in Bombay Secret Abstracts.

that we have not known religion until we are able to maintain calmness though we live in society.

Imitation of Christ is a treasure of experiences of a real man. So it cannot but produce effect. I will tell you how I was induced to study the sky. When I accidentally found that it had become for me a means of seeing God, I looked at it at once. Kaka was with me. He induced me much, But my mind turned me aside from it. 'When I got leisure from other work I would do it' was the feeling. In 1922 when I was here, I had collected books on the subject. At that time also, I was deferring this study for one reason or another. Shankerlal gradually studied the subject himself. I was induced several times to see Cassiopeia. After seeing a little I engaged myself again in my work[1] But at this time thoughts came to me suddenly that the sight of the sky wasequivalent to a valuable religious association. The stars were silently talking with us. I do not wish to dilate upon all these thoughts. In short what I want to say is that when everything becomes a religious lesson for me, then only I dive into it and now I cannot come out of it.

As much time has passed, I do not lengthen the letter now. If this letter will reach you safely, I will write again further.

Blessings from

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, pp. 123-31 and *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. I, p. 267

93. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

July 1, 1932

DEAR MANGALA,

A letter should not be written on a page torn from a note book.[2]

To become a cipher means to remain last in receiving a good thing, to serve everybody, to expect nothing in return and to be first in suffering inconveniences. Anybody who lives like a cipher in this manner is bound to remain devoted to his or her duty.

There must be love in our mutual dealings, It is good that you

[1] The two sentences which follow have been collated with the Gujarati in *Mahadevbhaini Diary*.

[2] The paragraph which follows has been collated with the Gujarati in *Mahadevbhaini Diary*.

have taken up a responsibility, Discharge it fully. Who stays with Kamu? Does the ever write a letter? Send (me) her address.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 270 and Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. (800), p. 51

94. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

July 1, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

Find out the meaning of "like a cipher"from the letter to Mangala.[1] There has been no rain here. I believe I am not being partial. If Bawa Muldas really said what he is supposed to have said, it was wrong.[2] Thereby, even the widow has been wronged. One should not tell a lie even to relieve someone from misery. That surely is no way of ending misery.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9952. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala.

95. LETTER TO JEKOR

July 1, 1932

DEAR JEKOR,

Those who are released go back. This is a useless question. When there is nothing specially to ask, nothing should be asked. But write an account of your work every week. (Your) handwriting is good but there is much scope for improvement yet.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(3), Pt. II, p. 53

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The addressee had asked: "Bawa Muldas saved the widow by describing her as his wife. Was it right? Can one speak a lie to save a widow?"

96. LETTER TO PUSHPA S. PATEL

July 1, 1932

DEAR PUSHPA,

Received your letter. Sultan means a king. He can do much. But if he does not worship God his whole life and begins to do so in old age, that cannot be done. There is no reason why you should [not] write a letter in Hindi. It is proper that you do. But my Hindi may not be correct, and so if I write in Hindi it may be a wrong lesson.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 53

97. LETTER TO ANANDI

July 1, 1932

DEAR ANANDI,

You have been spoiling your handwriting. This is not good. Do you write letters to Bai? How do you spend your whole day?

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 53

98. LETTER TO INDU N. PAREKH

July 1, 1932

DEAR INDU,

Your weight must be said to have been much reduced. For the present leave off prayers. In the morning, sleep as long as you can. Increase the proportion of milk and reduce that of any other thing you like. Then see if the weight increases or not. It is enough that what you can do, you should do with attention and interest. Never mind if less (work) is done for the present.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 55

99. LETTER TO MADHAVLAL

July 1, 1932

DEAR MADHAVLAL,

I was waiting for your letter. It is good news that you are keeping good health. Do not fast for having broken the vow of spinning. Do see that there is no break again. And so there must be *takli* introduced along with it. Under the new method of plying the *takli* introduced in the Ashram some have already been turning out 300 yards per hour. There should be no break in the prayers. Never mind if (they are offered) late. It would be better if it is not late. Even if it is late it should not be that the prayers are not offered [at all].

Food can be given up but not the prayers. In these circumstances I regard (the absence) of a diary to be pardonable. Ahimsa can be attained only by strict perseverance.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 55

100. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI H. SHAH

July 1, 1932

DEAR PUNJABHAI,

Received your letter. Go on renouncing the liking for the body so that when it falls, you will experience complete peace.

Blessings from
BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 59

101. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVLEKAR

July 1, 1932

DEAR SHRI SATAVLEKARJI,

Perhaps you know that Sardar Vallabhbhai and Mahadev are here with me. Sardar has a desire to learn Sanskrit, Mahadev will guide him. Please send a set of your Sanskrit Readers (Parts 1-24). I hope

you are all right. We three are doing well.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

SHRI SHRIPAD DAMODAR SATAVLEKAR
SWADHYAYA MANDAL
AUNDH, DIST. SATARA

From a photostat of the Hindi : C.W. 4762. Courtesy: S.D. Satavlekar.

102. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

July 2, 1932

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

I expect from you that you should like cloth made from the best yarn spun by you to be used by other people and that you yourself should wear the poorest variety of khadi that you can get. If, however, you lack such courage, you may go as far as you can. Do nothing under pressure from me or through false regard for me. I have pointed out the path of dharma according to my lights. But you may follow it only according to your capacity, and do not feel unhappy, either, that you cannot respect my wishes. If you feel unhappy, I would hesitate in future to make any suggestion about what is right from the point of view of dharma. I get news about Valji from time to time. God protects him.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7432. Courtesy: Valji. G. Desai.

103. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

July 2, 1932

CHI. MANI[1],

I got your letter. I hope you received my message. Since you intended to send the slivers, you have earned the merit which you would have done if you had sent them. You did well, however, not to send any. No bad slivers are now left here. The slivers we have got are enough. Mahadev has made as many as we need. They have been accumulating for the last two months. Mahadev mostly uses the slivers sent by Chhakkaddas, because they are made from superior cotton and with great care. I shall never be able to spin on the

[1] Daughter of Vallabhbhai Patel

Magan charkha as fine yarn as Mahadev does. I have always held the view—and I am sure I am right—that yarn spun for *yajna* should never be used for oneself. If a man who spins for *yajna* is careless, he has been weighed in the balance and found wanting.

The yarn spun for *yajna* should be spun with the utmost care. It would be best if one gives away all the yarn spun by oneself and uses whatever bad or good yarn one can get. If one does not have the heart to do so, one should at any rate spare one hour or half an hour daily for *yajna* and spin at least 160 rounds of yarn as an offering to Lord Krishna.

I can easily understand your preferring group prayer, for you started praying in that manner. But you must also pray by yourself, even if it be only for one minute. Our aspiration should be that ultimately we shall continually and silently go on repeating God's name in our heart, and that is impossible unless one forms the habit of praying, by oneself. One can pray by oneself even while lying in bed, bathing, eating or doing any other work. Thus it can never be a burden. On the contrary, such prayer will lighten one's heart—it ought to do so. If you do not get such experience, then you may know that your prayer is not from the heart.

Dahyabhai's[1] problem is a little difficult. But he is very sensible and, therefore, will himself recover his balance of mind. Nobody need advise him in this matter. If he wishes to marry again, nobody can dissuade him from doing so. If, on the contrary, he does not wish to marry again, nobody can tempt him to do so either. Acquaintances will certainly pester him, but Dahyabhai can deal with them. In any case you will be able to deal with them. On such occasions, I feel the sacrifice of having stopped seeing visitors, but it is our duty to bear such sacrifices. My left elbow pains when I work with the arm in a particular manner. A servant has been washing my clothes for about a month. I use utensils supplied in the jail. They are not shining bright, but are clean. Take care of your health and write to me regularly.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. MANIBEHN PATEL
C/O DR. BALWANTRAI KANUGA
ELLIS BRIDGE, AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapu*na Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne*, pp. 84-5

[1] Addressee's brother

104. LETTER TO A FRIEND[1]

July 2, 1932

DEAR . . . ,

Your letter and diary to hand. Is the diary to be returned or should I tear it off? Your disease is an old one. But do not lose heart. Pray to God daily for purity and your passions will subside.

. . . was not at fault in sending the mangoes (to you). If you really did not want them, you ought to have given them away to somebody—some labourer. Then . . . would not have sent again. A woman decidedly knows the weakness of her husband and, labouring under false affection , nourishes it (weakness). If the husband remains true (to himself), he abandons the weakness, and the woman will not tempt him.

Moreover, what is the fault of . . . ? I believe what . . . says. She has no desire for carnal pleasures. She does not become passionate towards any man. Hence there is no reason to doubt her. But supposing that she tells a lie; yet, what is the object in doubting her? A woman cannot doubt her husband. She puts up with the enjoyment of carnal pleasures by her husband. Why should a man keep a watch over and be angry with her. Let the woman behave as she may. If she does not want to be chaste, the husband cannot make her preserve her chastity by force. Purity belongs to those who remain pure. Hence, it is deemed proper that you should drive away even from your mind the idea of finding fault with . . . Such fault-finding causes the ruin of you both. Also it is sinful and unjust to involve another man on suspicion. It is entirely a sign of weakness. Drive away this weakness. You have done well in putting down such things in your diary.

May God grant you peace and purity. Vithaldas must be doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 49

[1] The names have been omitted.

105. LETTER TO SIDDHIMATI

July 2, 1932

DEAR SIDDHIMATI,

Received your letter. Learn Hindi well. What was your weight before? Can you follow Hindi well?

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 61

106. LETTER TO DHIRU

July 2, 1932

DEAR DHIRU,

I am writing to Gajanan[1] about drawing. It requires some help from others. There must be more of practice.

I am writing slowly the Urdu copy-book. Do you want the copy-book or do you want to see the way. I write the copy-book? If you want to see that, I may tear off the pages. I have written and send them to you. If you want a copy-book it can be had even there.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 61

107. LETTER TO GAJANAN V. KHARE

July 2, 1932

CHI. GAJANAN,

Now you must have learnt to read Gujarati. Dhiru is very keen to learn drawing. A few others also may get ready. If possible, spare some time for them.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 307. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

[1] Nephew of Narayan M. Khare; *vide* the following item.

108. LETTER TO SHANTI

July 2, 1932

DEAR SHANTI,

This time your handwriting is good. Write in the same way. It is good that during silent (prayers) you do not get sleep.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 63

109. LETTER TO LAKSHMI JERAJANI

July 2, 1932

DEAR LAKSHMI[1],

My hand pains while doing certain work. If is not paralysis. There is no cause for anxiety. Rest is the chief remedy.

Vithaldas had written to me as regards eczema. Radium must be regarded to have been efficacious.

Do send me your daily work.

Blessings from

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 63

110. LETTER TO LILADHAR

July 2, 1932

DEAR LILADHAR,

The girls know about the privies. I had only played a joke. Narandas had written about Shanti. Let her remain with you for the the present. Remove her stupidity with love. Do not be angry.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 63

[1] Niece of Vithaldas Jerajani

111. LETTER TO TRIVANI J. MEHTA

July 2, 1932

DEAR TRIVENI,

Received your letter. You have given a good description. There is much mismanagement in hospitals and hence it is desirable that chaste women should take up the work there. So this is good by way of having some experience. If the mind becomes engrossed in the work, the work is certainly such that to it a life may be devoted.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 63

112. LETTER TO MANJULABEHN M. MEHTA

July 2, 1932

AR MANJULA[1],

Your letter to hand. I have learnt that you are not going to the Ashram for the present. Go there, whenever it is possible for you to go. White your daily time-table. Devdas is convalescing now. You must be getting letters from Maganlal.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. MANJULABEHN
SHETH NAUTAMLAL BHAGWAN MEHTA'S HOUSE
JETPUR, KATHIAWAR

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 107

113. LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI

July 2, 1932

DEAR RADHIKA[2],

Your letter to hand. As Premkuver is involved in great difficulties, there is little possibility of her going there. Hence, are you,

[1] Wife of Maganlal Mehta, son of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta
[2] Daughter of Maganlal Gandhi

mother and daughter only there? Who does the shopping, etc.? It does not seem that any of the male members are there. Looking to the conveniences of that place, there may not be any need of them. How much do you spend? Have you kept any account? It there pipe water? Is there any news about Rupi[1] again? It seems that you have made good progress.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIMATI RADHABEHN GANDHI
BHATIA SANATORIUM
DEOLALI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 111

114. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

Y. M.,
July 2, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

I am very glad that you have gone to Quetta. Derive the fullest benefit from the air there. Walk as much as you can. Describe to me the scenery and the climate of the place. Who are the settlers there?

What you write is absolutely correct. An honest heart is a happy heart. May your happiness grow and stablilize.

Give me any news you may have of Anand. How do you spend your time there?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

115. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[Before *July 3, 1932*][2]

All the food that is digested is not transformed into blood, etc., but what is assimilated is transformed into the various elements which

[1] Presumably Rukhi, addressee's sister

[2] In the source the letter is entered under July 3, 1932, as having been written earlier.

sustain or build the body. In the same way, what we read, should be assimilated by us, just as manure is assimilated by the tree and as a result it bears fruit.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 271

116. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI PATEL

July 2/3, 1932

BROTHER MAGANBHAI,

Raojibhai's letter about his lands to hand. In it he writes that you see the necessity of selling the lands, and also believe that the lands will not fetch as much price in the absence of Raojibhai as they would have, if he were present. Instead of coming to a decision himself, Raojibhai has left it to me and Sardar (Vallabhbhai Patel) to decide (the matter). On consultation we have decided that you know most in this matter. There cannot be enough materials before Raojibhai or ourselves to arrive at a decision. Even if you make endeavours and supply us as much information as might be needed, yet it might be considered insufficient. In such matters, decision cannot be and should not be reached without one being actually on the spot. Hence we have cone to the decision that you should do whatever is proper to be done having regard to the circumstances. If you think that is should be sold, you should sell it without any hesitation. And if you feel that it can be kept—must be kept—then wait till Raojibhai is released. You do without fear whatever is more advantageous. We both of us know that Raojibhai is keen on setting apart a piece of land sufficient for building as ashram for the Dharalas. But, if in carrying out that object, less price is realized for the lands or if any debt still remains unpaid, it is not necessary to insist on that. If there is any need for an ashram, it will be seen through when Raojibhai is released.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 47

117. HOW TO OBSERVE TRUTH[1]

Sunday, July 3, 1932[2]

What I said about ahimsa[3] also applies to truth. If we split hairs about issues such as whether one may or may not tell a lie to save a cow and ignore what is daily happening before us, we cannot follow truth. By raising such complicated issues we make truth difficult to discover. If we follow truth today in solving the problems which confront us in our daily life, we shall know instinctively how to act in difficult situations when they arise.

Each of us should examine only himself or herself from this point of view. Do I deceive anybody knowingly? If I believe that B is a bad person but show him that I believe him to be good, I deceive him. Do I try to show, in order to win people's respect or esteem, that I possess certain virtues which in fact. I do not possess? Do I exaggerate in my speech? Do I hide my misdeeds from persons to whom I should confess them? If a superior or co-worker puts me any question, do I evade him? Do I keep back what I ought to declare? If I do any of these things, I am guilty of untruth. Everybody should examine his conduct daily in this manner and try to overcome his shortcomings. One to whom truth has become second nature and who has risen to a state so that he can never speak untruth may not do this. But everyone who has the least trace of untruth in him or who can follow truth only with effort should examine himself daily as explained above and put to himself those or any other similar questions which may occur to him and reply to them. Anybody who follows this practice even for a month will clearly observe a change having taken place in himself.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

118. LETTER TO FULCHAND B. SHAH

July 3, 1932

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I got your letter of April 31 [*sic*], 1932, as also Raojibhai's of June 10, 1932, only today. All of us were glad to read them. This

[1] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", June 28/-July 4, 1932; *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 28-6/4-7-1932.

[2] From Bombay Secret Abstracts

[3] *Vide* "How to observe ahimsa", 25-6-1932.

time 15 lines in your letter were completely censored. If it is possible, tell the person who deals with all such letters, or the Superintendent, to show you the portions which he thinks should be censored, so that you may write the letter again. If this is done, the context would not be suddenly broken as happens at present. Tell everybody there not to expect, or wish for, a separate letter from me. Though there is no restriction on me as regards the numbers of letters I can write, I think I myself should put a limit on it. Hence I write as few letters as I can. But I do reply to letters from co-workers in jails, or write to one of them when there are many co-workers in the same jail. That serves the purpose of writing to all of them. If, however, anybody wishes to write to me about something specially, he may certainly do so, as Raojibhai has done. We shall not often get opportunities like the unique one we have got just now for self-examination and study. All of us, therefore, should realize that we should so act and spend our time that we would be able to give a good account of every moment.[1] Even a drop of water should not be wasted. We should regard everything in the country, no matter in whose possession it is, as belonging to us and take care of it and use it accordingly. It is plain that this serves several purposes. Tell the boys and girls there that, when they can use the permission to write letters, they may write to me if they don't wish to write to anybody else. It is a strange thing that the rains have not yet commenced here. By now there should have been quite a good amount of rain. Cultivators are worried. Give the accompanying letter to Raojibhai. That is, what follows is meant for him.

I have discussed the matter with Sardar and both of us have come to the conclusion that neither (he nor I) can give an opinion from here. We cannot know many of the facts without being present on the spot, and hence I have written[2] to Maganbhai and told him that he may do what he thinks best, taking into account all the relevant circumstances. I have written to him quite a long letter to this effect. I received your letter doday and am replying immediately. I have thus not delayed by a single moment. Raojibhai should not worry about the matter at all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9445-b. Courtesy: Chandrakant F. Shah

[1] The two sentences which follow have been taken from Bombay Secret Abstracts.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Maganbhai Patel", 2/3-7-1932.

119. LETTER TO DINKAR

July 3, 1932

BROTHER DINKAR,

Your letter to hand. I have stopped all visits, as the visit of Mirabehn has been disallowed. Looking to your weight, it can be considered a great improvement (in your health). Nothing can be done about sanatorium from here. I have received here a book named *Vishva Shanti*, i.e., world peace. Mahadev and myself have glanced through it. I cannot know anything about its good or bad points, because, really I have not in me the power to appraise poetry. I have not been able to develop that taste. Doctors believe that there is nothing else except that my hand has been tired out; hence I am giving it rest. I have written by mistake that Mahadev has gone through *Vishva Shanti*. He has not read it.

Blessings from

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 109

120. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 28/July 4, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your mail today. It is seven days today since I started taking milk and fruit. I don't see any effect on the elbow. Perhaps there may be none. I cannot say positively that they have completely agreed with me. What had agreed perfectly is the experiment of almonds, bread and vegetables. But I will continue milk for the present. I feel slightly afraid of developing constipation. If necessary, I will add a little quantity of vegetable. There is no cause at all for worry on this account.

What you say about Sitala Sahay is right. His letter is rude and seems to have been written in anger. If his expenditure is more, he should send you detailed accounts. If they are all right, there should be no objection to paying him more. Hence, instead of fixing an absolute limit of Rs. 60, it seems to me that the better course would be to ask him to send accounts before paying him more. I have explained

other points fully in my letter of yesterday, and, therefore don't touch upon them here. I need not write more about the Girl family either.

If Dhiru and Kusum do less physical work and take enough milk, their weight will increase.

Do you hear any time from Nirmala Joshi? She may have some information about Lilabehn. Do you know her address?

Do what you think proper regarding Titus[1]. If you are fully satisfied with his work and his demand is in accord with his requirements, it may be proper to pay him that much. It is natural that the dependents of those who had joined the March[2] and who are no longer in the struggle but are employed in some work will expect help from them. If, therefore, we stick to the letter of their pledge, we may perhaps do them injustice.

Parnerkar's action is highly improper. It is certainly not right togo away without obtaining permission and send a message afterwards. However, since his motives are good and his mind has become very weak, I don't wish to censure him. And his sacrifice also has been good. If, therefore, you think it proper send some money to his mother. I know that strict justice will not permit that. But very often cold justice becomes injustice. It is extremely difficult to look into the heart of any human being. Hence, whenever it is a question of paying money, my inclination is always to pay something if we can.

Where are Ramarao and Pratap at present? It is enough if Father Elwin is satisfied. He would not expect from us the same attention as Mirabehn could give, nor can we fulfil such an expectation. Few persons would be capable of her careful attention to details when she looks after anybody whom she loves. We cannot, therefore, compete with her. It was very good that the matter of Imam Saheb's tomb was settled.

You must have read what I wrote to Jivram regarding Annapurna. Sharat Chandra Patnaik, from what you write about him, seems to be a good man. If he marries Annapurna, his motive would be primarily humanitarian. However, Jivram should approve of him and Annapurna should be willing. If Sharat Chandra knows the whole story of Annapurna's past and still marries her, he would certainly have my blessings, but he would also deserve compliments.

I suppose you have acknowledged receipt of the various

[1] A graduate of Higginbottom Agriculture College and trained by Parnerkar at the Ashram

[2] Dandi March in 1930.

translations of *An Autobiography* which you have received. I think Keshu spinning 350 rounds of yarn of 50 counts is good speed. On what type of spinning-wheel does he spin?

Even those rooms which contain only luggage should be opened at regular intervals. It is a practice in big office in charge of buildings that the last date on which each building was cleaned and the next date fixed for its cleaning are shown on some part of it. Even if, therefore, the list of future works does not include those items, the dates would be shown on the buildings. The staff would inspect these dates as a matter of routine, so that, if persons have been appointed to attend to such work, it would be carried out in due time without anybody having to remember the dates.

For spinning yarn of fine count, besides good slivers the spindle, the belt and the spindle-holder also are relevant factors. You cannot spin yarn of 50 counts even from the best slivers with the type of belt and spindle in the Magan spinning-wheel. The spindle of the spinning-wheel on which the Andhra women spin yarn of 80 counts is extremely fine, like the wires of an umbrella, and quite small. The belt also is very thin. That is why those women are able to spin yarn of such fine count. Examine your spindle and belt from this point of view. My own experience is that we cannot spin on any other type of spinning-wheel as fine yarn and with as much ease as we can on the Gandiva spinning-wheel, and the chief reason for this is the extremely thin belt of the latter. My eyes tell me that such thin belt will not work on a spinning-wheel which stands vertical. Moreover, we can never achieve on the wheel of the latter the same control as on the Gandiva wheel. For the same reason, a delicate spindle bearer like the one with which the Gandiva wheel is fitted will not work on the other types. We ought to master the art of spinning yarn of the finest count, and those who have very much more experience in this field than I should spin for trial on the different types of spinning-wheels and examine them from this point of view.

I went through your summary. I have said enough on this subject in previous letters,[1] and so I need not write anything here. You need not continue to send such summaries every week. If you make any changes after studying the figures, please inform me about them. If information from more persons is received and if you have any comments to make, please write. I will preserve the register sent by you, so that, if you refer to it in explaining anything, I will consult it

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 8/13-6-1932 and "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 22/26-6-1932.

and find out the point of the reference. Personally, I learn a great deal from such summaries and they also help me to think clearly. You have done well in giving details about every person which help me to identify him or her.

I see from Panditji's letter that you observe five minutes' silence in the morning too. If you have found the result of the practice good, let it be continued. My own suggestion, however, was only for the evening prayer. The inmates attend it after tiring work for the whole day and, therefore, may require a little longer time to concentrate their attention in meditation. Five minutes' silence will help in acquiring such concentration. At the time of morning prayer the condition is quite the opposite, and so silence may not be necessary for the purpose I have explained. Panditji thinks that many of them doze during these five minutes. I have here discussed the necessity or otherwise of five minutes' silence from a general point of view. From the spiritual point of view, the longer the period of silence during prayer the better it is. But that is only for those who can benefit from

it. Please do not understand me to mean that the five minutes' silence in the morning should be stopped. It is obvious that an excellent practice which has been started ought not to be discontinued in a hurry. I have said all this to tell you that, if you are of the same view as Panditji and would like to reduce five minutes to one minute but refrain from doing so because you had understood my suggestion to mean that I wanted five minutes' silence at both times, you are free to make a change.

July 3, 1932

There was a hint in Panditji's letter, and Mahadev also tells me, that children do not get enough sleep. They ought to get at least eight hours' uninterrupted sleep. They can get that only if they go to bed at 7.30 p.m., assuming that we want them to get up at 3.30 a.m. I also believe that children should get at least eight hours' sleep. It would be desirable if the grownups also get as many hours of rest. One way of ensuring this would be to start the evening prayer at 7 and finish it at 7.30 or rather at 7.20. Since half an hour is the minimum time required for the prayer, it should start at 6.50. Alternatively, [in the morning] the bell should be given at 4 and the prayer should start at 4.30. Still another way would be to have a separate time for prayer for children, which should be at the commencement of their class. There is, in fact, a prayer at that time. We should be satisfied with that. Apart from that, the children should form the habit of praying [either in the morning or in the evening]. They may pray in the morning whenever they get up. The general time for rising should not be later than

4 a.m. and morning prayer ought not to start later than 4.30. And the children must get at least eight hours' sleep. Taking these two conditions as essential, you may make any changes that may appear necessary. You will have to decide who should be counted as children. Boys and girls who are neither children nor adolescents may be counted as children if they wish. The rule for them should be that they may continue to be counted as children for one year at the longest. Those who are ill have always been exempted from attending the morning prayers. Indu and other boys like him should be exempted. whether or not they themselves wish. That is, a boy or girl who is losing weight should not be put to the strain of getting up early. That Indu does not get sleep before ten is certainly not a desirable state of affairs. If his bed is made in the open near yours, he is bound to get sleep. Even though he should be exempted from attending the morning prayer, he must form the habit of sleeping early. Think over all this and make any changes you may think necessary.

Shamal seems to be troubled in his mind. I have advised[1] him to have a talk with you. Without waiting for him to come to you, send for him and ask him what his difficulties are.

There is a letter from Manjula, in which she says that her going to the Ashram has been postponed. Perhaps she has written to you also. She has not given the reason.

There is no change in the condition of my left arm. It seems that it will improve in course of time purely through rest. You need not worry about it at all. I do take milk to please the Superintendent, but at present at any rate I don't see that it has benefited me much. However, I am continuing it for the present. Along with it I take *rotli*, instead of bread, and a vegetable with one of the meals. Just now it is the season for grapes in Karachi. Lalwani[2], therefore, sends parcels of them from time to time and I eat them too. The weight has risen to 104.

About yarn, if you see Shardabehn[3] perhaps you may be able to get yarn spun by women for the *yajna* of spinning. We must—if we can—discover some means of meeting the acute demand for yarn.

How do Jamna and Purushottam spend their time in Ranavav? If you know the details of their daily routine, let me have them.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Shamal R. Raval", 1-7-1932.

[2] Chabildas Rochiram Lalwani, Husband of J. B. Kripalani's sister

[3] Shardabehn Mehta

Inform Ba that I got only one letter written by her. Does she get mine?

BAPU

July 4, 1932

I had written about a few rules for the Ashram and about prayer. These articles[1] do not seem to have been circulated to all. Send copies of them to me. You will find in Mahadev's cupboard a big French dictionary belonging to him. Send that and the Urdu translation of *An Autobiography* along with the Urdu books which I have asked Prema to send. Why has Nirmala[2] (Aunt) stopped writing to me? Mahadevdesires you to tell Durga that she has not said anything about money and her health in her letter, and that she should write about them in her letter to him. The *rotlis* for me are made by Mahadev.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8236 Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

121. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

July 4, 1932

DEAR MANGALA,

When did you begin suffering from pain in the chest and waist and for how many years have you been suffering? How do you feel now?

It is true absence of desire when we trust that whatever we do is done by God Himself. The greatest act of one attached to truth is to stick to truth in whatever condition one is placed.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 197

[1] *Vide* "Prayer", 19-6-1932 and "Lesson of the national week", 2-5-1932.

[2] Mahadev Desai's step-sister

122. TELEGRAM TO PAPA

[*July 5, 1932*][1]

PAPA[2],

GANDHI ASHRAM, TIRUCHENGODU

DEVDAS WIRES NEWS YOUR HUSBAND'S[3] DEATH. WE ARE ALL DEEPLY STIRRED BUT YOU WILL NOT GRIEVE OVER DEATH WHICH IS COMMON LOT OF HUMANITY. REMEMBER YOU ARE DAUGHTER OF BRAVE FATHER. MAY GOD GIVE YOU PEACE. LOVE FROM US ALL.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 11

123. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

[*July 5, 1932*][4]

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

PRISONER, DISTRICT JAIL

VELLORE

WE ARE DEEPLY GRIEVED OVER PAPA'S BEREAVEMENT OF WHICH DEVDAS HAS SENT WIRE. BUT YOU STAND IN NO NEED CONSOLATION FROM US. GOD MUST BE YOUR ROCK. LOVE FROM US ALL.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 11

124. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

July 5, 1932

DEAR DEVDAS,

Just received your wire. Who can expect Varadachari to die! There was some fear that Papa would pass away, but Varadachari has

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Devdas Gandhi", 5-7-1932.

[2] Daughter of C. Rajagopalachari

[3] Varadachari

[4] *Vide* the following item.

passed away. Inscrutable are His ways. It is good that the God of Death does not renounce anybody's friendship. Sooner or later he shows his liking for all. I have wired to Papa as under: (Wire in English)[1]. To Raja as under: (Wire in English)[2].

I have sent wires as above.[3]

Raja will be shocked but his power of endurance is strong and so there need be no anxiety. Death as such seldom affects me. What touches me is the miseries suffered by relatives. What greater ignorance can there be than to grieve over death?

You must have received the letters I have sent. The letter which was thought to have been lost has been handed over to you. This information has been sent by your Superintendent to the Superintendent here. So your hunger for my letters must be satisfied.

We all three are happy. There is nothing new to write about. I have already written to you that I have begun taking *roti* and milk.

Blessings from

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800, p. 169 and *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. I, p. 274

[1] Not reproduced here; *vide* the preceding two items.

[2] *ibid*

[3] The Paragraph which follows has been collated with the Gujarati in *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. I.

125. LETTER TO SARALADEVI CHOWDHARANI

July 5, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

I was grieved to note from the papers that your mother was no more. My sympathies go out to you and Deepak[1] in your sorrow. Sardar and Mahadev join me in sending you condolences.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SMT. SARALADEVI CHOWDHARANI[2]
CALCUTTA

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 159

126. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

July 5, 1932

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Only today I got your letter[3] of June 27. In my letter of June 29[4] I have acknowledged receipt of the khadi. I have also asked for some books that came to my mind on reading your booklets. Numerous questions have occurred to me while reading the literature but I intend to take them up if any remain unsolved after the completion of the present study. These days I constantly manage to read something or other that must add something however little to my knowledge. I am still reading Prof. Shah's book. After that I shall start on Iyer's book on foreign exchange which he has sent to me.

At present, mills function side by side with the production of khadi and it will continue thus for some time. Ultimately a contest between the two is inevitable as our ideal is to produce khadi in all the

[1] Son of the addressee

[2] Wife of Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari and grand-niece of Rabindranath Tagore

[3] The addressee, who was himself a lover of khadi and jaggery although owning cotton-mills and sugar factories, had referred to the rivalry between khadi and mill-cloth and between jaggery and sugar.

[4] A slip for June 28; *vide* "Letter to G.D.Birla", 28-6-1932.

villages. Thus mills will no longer have a place in India when each village can produce khadi. But for the time being people like you can have both the activities at the same time provided the ideal is kept before the public in order to assert the truth. People so inclined will continue to indulge in criticism, it cannot be helped.

I do not possess sufficient knowledge about jaggery but I have an impression that mills will remain indispensable for the production of sugar. Sugar cannot be easily manufactured in villages, nor can every village grow sugar-cane, which means that production of jaggery cannot be a universal occupation. Perhaps I am wrong in thinking so. However, if a person can advocate mills as well as khadi he can assuredly talk of jaggery and sugar factories at the same time.

The more I study of economics the firmer I grow in my belief that the methods suggested in these books for eradicating poverty are not at all efficacious. The method lies in working out a scheme wherein the production and consumption happen to be simultaneous and this scheme can work only with the revival of village industries.

I have started taking milk on the Superintendent's insistence, also chapati and vegetable. Vegetable, I take once a day and chapati twice a day. But no longer do I notice the cleansing of the bowels that I experienced formerly on a diet of *roti*, almonds and a vegetable. But I will not give up milk in a hurry now that I have started it. I shall watch the results. These days I am taking the grapes sent from Karachi by Kripalaniji's brother-in-law.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 7901. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

127. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

July 6, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter, By trying to give artistic appearance to the envelope, you spoiled it. This is bound to be the result when one tries to create beauty which meets no practical need. Sardar makes no effort to give to an envelope artistic appearance for its own sake; such appearance is the by-product of practical utility and, therefore, please

the eye. If we wish to use again an envelope which has been used once, the address written on it should be covered up. For that purpose Sardar stuck over the written lines finely cut slips of paper of appropriate sizes, and that gave the envelope an attractive appearance. But he was not satisfied with this. So now he turns the envelopes received from there inside out, so that he need not paste slips over them and the envelops may look as good as new. You will discover this if you examine them closely. Your slips with zigzag. edges had half come off and looked very shabby. And they served no practical purpose. Your labour, therefore, was wasted, and so were the time and the paper. That was a loss to the public. Draw two lessons from this: never imitate anyone blindly, and beauty created for its own sake is no beauty. It is said about the great cathedrals in Europe that all their beautiful features serve a practical purpose. Whether this is true or not, there can be no doubt about the truth of the principle which I have stated.

Your letter this time contained very little besides a criticism of the Minister. I think is unnecessary to consider whether or not your criticism is justified, since it can have no effect. The statement "judge not lest ye be judged" deserves to be engraved in our hearts. I do not know if there is a Gujarati saying with a similar meaning. If there is any in Marathi, send it to me.

I should like to have a list of the Urdu books. In any case, send Shibli's volume. I know that Khalifa's biography, too, is there.

I should certainly like it if you would prefer to die rather than eat fish. Does that mean that you would not take codliver oil too? You need not consider what I would wish [you to do]. I have put the question simple to know your own attitude. You should increase milk/curds and/or ghee in your diet. It must also include occasionally some ripe fruit in place of uncooked vegetable. Don't you grow *papayas* there? Or tomatoes? Or *bhaji*[1] of any kind? Why should you, yourself, not grow some tomatoes? And also lettuce—it grows quickly. Unripe *papay* ought not to be eaten in large quantity. Nor should it be eaten daily. Introduce this change without thinking about the expense. Keep up Kuhne-baths with hot water. It is very necessary to massage the spot where you feel the pain. Any girl will be glad to do the massage.

[1] Vegetables

Vidya's[1] dullness will disappear if you try to teach her with love. Rambhau's case is a little difficult. There is only one remedy, however. There are three influences working on him. If they do not work in harmony, there will be a problem. The three influences are: Panditji, Lakshmibehn and you or anybody else who looks after him. Only love will enable you to discover a way out of this difficulty. In the measure that your love becomes wider in scope, in that measure will your capacity to reform such children increase.

Be generous towards the grown-up girls in the Ashram. They do not purposely shirk work and sit idle at home; they do not work because they become helpless. You and I cannot judge the degree of their helplessness. They alone can do so. Their judgment may, of coures, be wrong. But we should be satisfied if their motive is not dishonest. Among the grown-up girls, think about Anandi, Kusum[2] and Nimu. What could all these girls do? Anandi is not likely to shirk work. Kusam at any rate will never do so. Nimu is burdened with two children. She hardly knows how to bring them up, but has already become a mother. How much work, therefore, can we expect from her? Perhaps you will be able to think of many more instances. We cannot weight all such cases in scales with which we weigh gold and pearls. You will also see from experience that as you become more generous you will find it easier to make others work. I don't know how far it is true, but is said [about me] that I have great capacity for making men work. If this is true, the reason is that I never suspect anyone of shirking work. I am satisfied with the work that a person does. I then ask him to do more, and he does. There are also somewho say that there will be hardly anyone whom people deceive as much as they do me. Even if this assessment is proved correct, I shall not feel sorry. I would be satisfied if people give me a testimonial that I deceive no one in the world. If nobody else gives such a testimonial to me, I certainly give it to myself.

I hate untruth more than anything else.

I don't believe in the principles of "the greatest good of the greatest number" and "survival of the fittest". For man the rule is, the good of all, the progress of all and "the weak first". We bipeds

[1] Vidya R. Patel

[2] Kusum Gandhi, whom Narandas Gandhi regarded as his daughter

are human beings, but we have not yet risen above the nature of quadrupeds. Dharma lies in doing so.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10293. Also C.W. 6741. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

128. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

July 6, 1932

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I got your letter. You should not belittle your idea of sewing for *yajna*. Its real value lies in turning to use even the poorest quality of khadi. We cannot afford to pay for sewing. However, those who are ready to do sewing as free service can give even to the most unattractive khadi the value which devotees of God give to flowers by making garlands for the deity from them. For instance, one who gives such service should not make shirt from bad khadi, but he can make quilts, bagos or pillows from it. We can think of a number of things made from such khadi which would not need to be washed and which could be used for a long time in the same condition. I had a hand spun and hand-woven wollen blanket with me, which I had received as a gift. It had been so much worn out be use that, if used longer, it would have not torn out into pieces. But, being of an ingenious turn of mind and having a friend like Janakibehn[1] who is ever ready to help me, I gave the blanket to her and told her how she could make it into a new one. The blanket is still with me. I deliberately took it with me, when I visited the Royal Palace in England.[2] Let me explain, too, how the blanket was made new. It was sewn on to a piece of thick khadi, the whole surface being stitched both length-wise and breadth-wise. The wornout woollen blanket, being thus lined with khadi, become as good as new and gave more warmth than before. This does not mean that the effort which you are making for improving the quality of yarn is unnecessary. I daily realize the necessity of such effort. But such improvement will not reduce the importance of sewing for *yajna* or dispense with it. The love of khadi has still not spread widely in the country. It means, in other words, that love of the poor has not spread so, or, even where it exists, the people who have it

[1] Wife of Jamnalal Bajaj

[2] During the Round Table Conference in 1931

are ignorant and are not yet convinced that the best way of showing their love is by patronizing khadi. If they can be convinced of this, your discovery can become very useful. I have not, therefore, become indifferent to it in the slightest degree. Do write a book on how to spin better yarn. But do not make a single statement in it the truth of which you have not tested. Nor should you deduce any general principle only on the basis of exclusively your experience. Others also must have found it true. If you have not checked all your statements in this manner, postpone writing the book. I observe again and again that books which have no basis in experience are practically without any value. For instance, if anybody translated Charaka[1], the work would not be of any use today since we cannot find many of the herbs and plants described by him and, with regard to those which we do find, cannot prove the properties attributed to them. The most important thing therefore is that you yourself should spin the finest possible yarn of different counts and, while doing so, analyse and note the contribution of the spindle, the type of the spinning-wheel, the quality of the cotton used, the quality of the carding and your own, that is, the spinner's skill towards the result. Then tally your experience with that of other spinners. A book based on such data will accepted without question, like a bar of gold weighed on the scale kept in the market for public use. You asked me what limit I have fixed with regard to the count of the yarn spun. Previously I had fixed it at 20, then raised it to 40. I do not lay down any limit now. If we can get or grow cotton from which we can spin yarn of 400 counts and which we can card well enough for such purpose, and if we can get men or women spinners who have sufficient patience to spin yarn of such quality, I would certainly desire that we should reach that level. In short, I think it very important that we should go in this direction as far as we can, for this is likely immediately to enhance the value of the art of hand-spinning. I am sure you know that a friend of Satis Babu had reached up to 150 counts. The khadi woven from it is preserved in Satis Babu's collection. But along with this I also insist that as we progress in spinning yarn of finer and finer count the yarn should always be strong and even. I cannot say what marks any specimen of yarn should earn for passing the test in these respects. Only you and other experienced spinners can say that. I certainly have a rough test for this

[1] Author of *Charakasamhita*, a manual of Ayurvedic medicine

purpose, and it is that any weaver should be able to weave the yarn without difficulty. If a weaver rejects a lot, I would treat it as below par though it may have passed our test. When I get the cup, I will try the method suggested by you and test the strength of my yarn. Even without testing it, however, I know that it is not good enough, and I am myself not satisfied with it. Because of the pain in my elbow, I have had to change from one hand to the other [for drawing the yarn]. My hand had set very well on the Gandiva spinning-wheel and I could spin on it yarn of sufficiently uniform quality as I wished, though the speed was not much to speak of. But I was obliged to draw the thread with the right hand and then to spin on the Magan spinning-wheel, with the result that it is only now that I have acquired some control over it. As if this was not enough, I thought it my duty to use up the very inferior quality of slivers we had and I began spinning them. I have now resumed spinning with good slivers since a few days ago, and so, by the time your cup arrives and I try it, my yarn will have become good enough to pass the test. Previously I used to spin yarn of about 25 counts, but after I started spinning with the Magan wheel I remain at about 19 counts. Probably I will go up now. I think I have now answered all your questions. Have courage and cultivate strength of mind. Don't think too much. How is Motibehn[1]?

I have received the cup.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3755

129. LETTER TO FEROZABEHN TALEYARKHAN

July 6, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

Received your letter. You must be having the benefit of cold weather. Information has been received about Devdas being completely cured and hence there is no cause for anxiety. You are keeping yourself well-informed. Ba is happy. My visits are still disallowed. *Vandemataram* from the Sardar and Mahadev.

Blessing from
BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 173

[1] Addresse's wife

130. LETTER TO PARAMANAND

July 6, 1932

BROTHER,

I have today learnt from a newspaper the news of your wife's death. When you were imprisoned in the Andamans I had come to know her and was much impressed by her simplicity. May God grant you peace and patience.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 163

131. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

July 6, 1932

CHI. PARASRAM,

I have both your letters. Whenever there is doubt about the grammar of a Hindi word, is not consulting a dictionary the right course? One who knows Sanskrit will commit fewer mistakes in using his words. But a word used in Sanskrit in a particular sense would not, as a rule, be used in the same sense in Hindi. We should therefore regard the dictionary as an authority. And where the help of the dictionary is not available, we should regard one who knows Sanskrit as an authority. I looked up the word *nirutsaha* [wanting in enthusiasm] in the Hindi dictionary which is with me, and there also it is termed an adjective. Hence one who knows Sanskrit and the dictionary both agree about it. I write all this merely out the love of language. I expect a higher knowledge of the language from those who know a particular language. I also expect them to use it correctly. Hence I asked about the word *nirutsaha* in my last letter[1]. I have always thought your knowledge of Hindi to be sound and I expect you to be more and more vigilant about it day by day. Someone must dedicate his life in the service of Hindi. Politics is always on our neck. But this cannot be nor should it be an exclusive field. We might have willingly or unwillingly plunged into it, but as soon as its activities calm down, we should return to our pursuit. Also not all of us need

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Parasram Mehrotra", 23-6-1932.

plunge into politics at all times. Hence we should select, according to our capacity and inclination, any of the many permanent and constructive activities[1]. You certainly have a liking for Hindi. Now I would like you to think of dedicating your life for the spread of Hindi after adding to your knowledge of Hindi as much as you can. I do not mean to say that you should make this resolve soon. For the present you may carry on what you are doing. Most of your time is already taken up by Hindi. Whether you should stick to Hindi till the end of your life will become clear by itself in course of time. Just now I have simply sown the seed.

Now about the *Ramayana*. What you write on this subject is true. I do not regard the *Ramayanas* such as by Radhasoami[2], etc., to be refined works. The *Ramayana* of Tulsidas is a work of great refinement. We only have to create interest in it. We can surely bring out an abridged *Ramayana* in Tulsidas's own language. I had made an attempt with regard to the 'Balakanda'[3]. Most probably there is a copy in the Ashram. Twenty years have passed since then. If I were to take up the task again, perhaps I would choose entirely different quatrains and couplets from it. Prabhudas has also made an attempt in this direction. As you are engaged in teaching, it will be useful if you did something in this direction. Also you ought not to have much difficulty. Mahadev tells me that two or three such attempts have already been made in the U.P. But that need not deter you. There is no harm if a fourth is added to them. People of different temperaments, keeping in mind children or people of a different class, would make different sections. I will not insist if you do not get time during the evening prayer. The Hindi classes are always there. Try to create interest in the *Ramayana* whenever possible. Also if some wish to study the *Ramayana* out of devotion, and if you can spare time, you may arrange for such a class once or twice a week. But I do not at all insist on it. I am only expressing my desire. You alone can say how and to what extent it can be carried out.

You must be perturbed, as I write all this. I think your work is going on well. Comparatively you were never more at ease than now and I do not at all wish to disturb you or make your mind unsteady

[1] The following two sentences are from Bombay Secret Abstracts.
[2] Presumably Radheshyam Kathavachak, author of a popular Hindi *Ramayana*
[3] *Vide* "Tulsidasa's *Ramayana*", 14-10-1908.

by putting before you new ideas or schemes. These thoughts came to my mind on reading your letter and so I have placed them before you. Accept out of them whatever you can fully understand, digest and put them into execution, and forget the rest. Even if you discarded the whole lot, I would not be shocked.[1] I have only one mighty desire for you that you may feel yourself entirely at ease and may not be embarrassed at all.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9643. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, pp. 213-9

132. LETTER TO MATAPRASAD GUPTA

[*July 6, 1932*][2]

BROTHER MATAPRASADJI,

Received your letter as well as the book. Prisoners are prohibited from giving their opinions is regard to books. Therefore please excuse (me). Moreover, I am not entitled to express an opinion on a book on the culinary art, and I cannot express one.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 171

133. LETTER TO AN AMERICAN CORRESPONDENT

July 7, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I was touched by your letter. If you can possibly stand the climate of this country and the strenuous life of the Ashram, I would be delighted to have you as a member. There is no fee to be paid and you will not be called upon to pay for your board and lodging, so long as you can share the common meal. But the life is hard and incredibly simple. All the inmates are expected to labour in the field and the factory for a certain number of hours daily. All work, including scavenging, is done by the inmates. The dress we wear is

[1] What follows is from Bombay Secret Abstracts.

[2] The letter is placed in the source along with other letters of this date. In the "Diary" it is entered under July 4.

also very simple and is all hand spun and hand-woven, and sewn at the Ashram. If, therefore, you feel inclined to venture out, whilst you are welcome, I would warn you against coming unless you have enough funds to take you back to America in the event of the climate or the institution not being agreeable to you. In spite of this letter [if] you desire to come to India and join the Ashram, I would like you to see Mr. Richard Gregg, who has lived at the Ashram for a long time and knows all about it, and you will not think of coming unless he gives you encouragement. His address is: Richard Hurst Hill, Esq., Spl. Asstt. to the President, Howard University, Washington, U.S.A.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 9319. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

134. LETTER TO MANIBEHN N. PARIKH

July 7, 1932

CHI. MANIBEHN (PARIKH),

Mahadev has talked to me about your letter to him. How can you help if your body does not give service? If all those inmates of the Ashram who cannot work were to be asked to leave, we would have to send away many of them. You need not feel ashamed. Those who spare their bodies and shirk work should feel ashamed. If the Ashram cannot maintain persons like you, it should be considered useless.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5970. Also C.W. 3287. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

135. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

July 7, 1932

MY DEAR DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

I have not received any letter from you this week so far. I have read with great attention the *bhajan* and the *ghazal* which you sent to me. I liked both of them and fully understand them now. The *bhajan* is easy to understand, but there was some difficulty in understanding the *ghazal* as it contained new words. But I fully understood it after reading it over two or three times. The *ghazal* is very good indeed. I suppose "Zafar" is the nom de plume of Emperor Bahadur Shah, is it not? Send me more such *ghazals* from time to time. You wrote to me once that you would find out and send a suitable book for me. If you

have forgotten your promise, please remember it now and send a book if you find one. At present I am reading some books published by the Jamia Millia. All of them are full of good thoughts. Two of the books were plays. The book I am reading at present contains stories like the "Kimiyagar" and others. Have you seen these books? Convey respectful greetings from us all to Father and Mother. As for you, a little squeezing of your ear on my behalf, which may be done by Kamal. I am waiting for a letter from Hamida. Uncle Sardar is still reading Amir Ali's book. The rains have now set in here. Cultivators were worrying. The weather has become now fairly cool. I hope Pashabhai's sister is all right now.[1]

You should correct in the foregoing not only spelling mistakes but grammar mistakes also. The Urdu book which you send to me will be more useful if it also contains a glossary of ordinary words, rules of grammar and spelling, etc. If there is no such book you need not trouble yourself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu/Gujarati: S.N. 9647. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 151

136. LETTER TO ZOHRA BANU ANSARI

July 7, 1932

MY DEAR DAUGHTER ZOHRA,

You will be surprised to read this letter. The reason for writing this is that now the Bapa[2] has been released, you may write to me about his health. (Let me also know) how much weight he has lost. What have you been doing all these days? Sardar Vallabhbhai and Mahadev Desai are with me. We are all in perfect health. Convey our respects to (your) father and mother. May God give you long life and may He make you great servant of the country! Write to me soon. If you write a beautiful hand, then alone I shall be able to read it.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 153

[1] This paragraph is in Urdu.
[2] Dr. M.A. Ansari

137. LETTER TO RATILAL P. MEHTA

July 7, 1932

DEAR RATILAL,

Have you not completely forgotten me now? Do not remove Shashi[1] from the Sharda Mandir at all. He is being taught properly there. You must be happy.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 191

138. LETTER TO KUSUM

July 7, 1932

DEAR KUSUM (JUNIOR),

What was the question you asked me? I have entirely forgotten. You write it again and I will answer it. I thought that I had already answered all questions. It is certainly good to absorb the rays of the sun sitting under a *neem* tree. You should start taking a hip-bath. By it, the temperature will certainly go down. Rest is certainly the principal item. You should not feel tired at all when you go out for a walk. When you can read and play only the *sitar*, how do you feel tired? *Raichandbhaina Lekho*, (or writings of Raichandbhai), all parts of *Kavya Dohan, Naval Granthavali, Astodaya,* Gujarati translation of *Shakuntala*, selections from the Gujarati Reading Series, works of Kakasaheb, books by Kishorelalbhai, etc. All these will be more than enough. Many more can also be mentioned.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 191

[1] Addressee's son

139. LETTER TO SITALA SAHAY

July 7, 1932

BROTHER SITALA SAHAY,

Our letter to hand. I have carefully gone through it. It is not proper that you should compete with Prabhudas. It is likely that Prabhudas's expenses might be less as he gets some other conveniences. Some estimate can be arrived at from the expenses incurred by Prahbudas. But, as a matter of fact, the unavoidable expenses only are to be taken into account. A big amount was to be spent for Rasik all of a sudden. Maganlal fell ill and died at such a place in Patna that no expenses were incurred. One time, Krishnadas did not incur any expense. But when he was removed to Dehradun, the expenses rose at once. Hence, ultimately every case is to be separately considered. We can only desire and demand from them that they should spend money thoughtfully and keep an account of the money spent. The Ashram can spend so far as it can afford to do it. When the Ashram cannot afford, we should all assemble in the Ashram and suffer the consequences and while so doing should laugh and enjoy the pleasure. I have suggested this to Narandas also. On looking at the bill of Padma[1], if there is anything to be said, it should be written to you if you are there or to Padma. Is not this proper?

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 211

140. LETTER TO LAKSHAMI

July 7, 1932

DAUGHTER LAKSHMI[2],

If Devdas had not sent me a wire, from where could I have got intimation of Papa's condition? I hope you are at present working like a brave woman. Please let me have all information about Papa. I have written a letter for Papa and I am sending it along with this. Now Anna must have come to the Ashram. Tell him to

[1] Addressee's daughter

[2] Daughter of C. Rajagopalachari, who later married Devdas Ghandhi

write to me.

Do not spoil your health by worrying. Fear of death and sorrow should be abandoned altogether. Why should there be pain and fear for a thing which is inevitable for every human being? It is ignorance to regard death as a punishment from God. Death is a gift to man from God.

I expect a long letter from you.

Blessings from

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 149

141. LETTER TO SHAMAL R. RAVAL

July 8, 1932

CHI. SHAMAL,

There are many mill workers who never touch a drop of liquor. If your brother does not listen to you, you should stop associating with him. Pray of God to grant him good sense. First you should politely try as well as you can to persuade him to stop drinking. Anybody who is ill is expected from *yajna*. It is good to do such work at fixed times. But if one cannot do it on some day at the time fixed, one may do it at some other time.

Liquor cannot prevent any disease.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3144. Also C.W. 2879. Courtesy: Shamal R. Raval

142. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

July 8, 1932

CHI. VANAMALA,

A flower is just like ourselves. It blooms at its proper time. Then it may be said to have grown up.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5777. Also C.W. 3000. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

143. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

July 8, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

It is certainly good that those who feel sleepy during the prayers keep standing. One reason why the feet of those who stand up ache is that they do not know how to stand. Anybody who keeps his feet on the ground thus, A, and who stands erect can stand for a long time without getting tired. One who is not accustomed to standing will certainly feel tired for a day or two. But afterwards he will not feel tired. We should show love for those who follow the wrong path, and serve them, but we ourselves should follow the right path. If we do this, in time the other person will come to the right path. One who cultivates devotion to God, whether he is working or resting, teaches devotion to others too. Following the path of truth in life helps us in every way.

Your questions seem to have been asked for the sake of asking them.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

144. LETTER TO NATHURAM TRIKAMDAS

July 8, 1932

CHI. NATHURAM,

One who does not share in the work cannot be called a partner.

There is certainly *himsa* in castrating a bull.

The sacred thread worn by one cannot be used as belt for the spinning-wheel.

One who uses authority over others without consulting them is an autocrat.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

145. LETTER TO GOKIBEHN

July 8, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

I have been wanting to write to you since a month ago and had, therefore, asked for your address. I have just got it. I hope you enjoy peace of mind. Does anybody stay with you? Do write to me from time to time.

Jai Shri Krishna from

BAPU

SMT. GOKIBEHN[1]
KARSANDAS DHARAMSINH'S BUNGALOW
KRISHNA BHUWAN
BORIVLI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9813

146. LETTER TO MAHENDRA V. DESAI

July 8, 1932

CHI. MANU,

If a child does not like milk, how can he grow well? If you drink milk only when you are hungry, you will come to like it. During the five minutes' silence at the prayer time, you should repeat the name of Rama. You should not tease a child who is easily teased. If we keep a diary, we know what we did at what time and our laziness disappears.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7433. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1] Aunt of Shantikumar Morarjee

147. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI H. SHAN

July 8, 1932

DEAR PUNJABHAI,

To one who is sinless, death is a bed of happiness. When we have taken to heart the lesson that birth and death are one and the same thing, we should know that we have freed ourselves from the cycle of birth and death.

Blessings from

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 201

148. LETTER TO PUSHPA S. PATEL

July 8, 1932

DEAR PUSHPA,

You have improved your handwriting very much.

To write a biography means to write whatever we know about the life of a person which is fit to be published. If one feels sleepy at the prayer time, one must stand up.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 197

149. LETTER TO BALABHADRA

July 8, 1932

DEAR BALABHADRA[1],

I am not satisfied with your letter. The fact that questions do not occur means that you do not want to ask questions. But that does not mean that one who has a question to ask should write a letter. You write in a clear hand what you are doing, seeing and thinking about. If you go through my writings you will get the answers to the questions asked by you. Do you remember what you

[1] A student at the Ashram

had asked? If anyone commits a fault, his elder prevents him from doing so. One should not talk at the time of *yajna*.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 201

150. LETTER TO SHANTI

July 8, 1932

DEAR SHANTI,

Countless insects are born during the rains. You should not collect the snails. Such insects are the creation of God. We do not know the use of all of them.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 193

151. LETTER TO JAYA

July 8, 1932

DEAR JAYA,

When we meet a thief, we should request him not to steal, if we have courage and love for him. We must endure it if he beats us.

Sleep must be without dreams If you are at fault and the elders do not punish you, this is mercy.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 193

152. LETTER TO ANANDI

July 8, 1932

DEAR ANANDI,

I shall see how long you remember your irritability. It is good that you take milk regularly. How can I forget the stick while taking a walk in the evening? Girls like you should read books selected by the teacher. Then you will learn to select the books.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 195

153. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

July 8, 1932

DEAR MAHAVIR,

Now you must have received the money. All should keep the diary complete. You all write to me the full programme for a day or two. Durga[1] must be better now.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 199

154. LETTER TO INDU N. PAREKH

July 8, 1932

DEAR INDU,

It is very good that you have confidence in Narandas. As he says it is possible that you will benefit by being patient in taking food and sleeping for a long time. Do you get motions properly?

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 201

155. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

July 8, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

It is my belief that nobody really knows the origin of the name Bharatakhanda. But it is said the name Bharatakhanda came from Bharat, the son of Shakuntala[2]. You need not give any importance to things like the shaking of legs, etc. In olden times, if there was knowledge in one direction there was also ignorance in another.

We may describe the sister as a *sahadharmacharini* if she is staying with her brother. But it is customary to use that term only for a wife. I always tear up the letters.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9953. Courtesy: Sharadabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] Addressee's sister

[2] Wife of Dushyanta, hero of Kalidasa's *Abhijnanashkuntalam*

156. LETTER TO E.E. DOYLE

July 9, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

Upon inquiring of Major Bhandari why there has been recently irregularity about my post, I find that his orders are to send all my outgoing and incoming post to the Government. If this procedure means interminable delay in the despatch of the outgoing post and the delivery to me of the incoming post, I should lose all interest in this, what to me is, healthy mental food. I do not write idly. Nor, so far as I am aware, do I transgress the limits to which I may go in writing to my friends. If the Government intend to continue to let me write the letters I have been writing hitherto, I should like to be sure of regularity about the handing in of my correspondence. The letters to and from the Ashram are regularly written. I attach the greatest importance to this correspondence, including my letters to and from Shrimati Mirabai. I should like to know at the earliest possible moment where I stand in the matter of my post.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40), Part I, p. 239

157. LETTER TO P.G. MATHEW

July 9, 1932

MY DEAR MATHEW,

In 'God is Truth', 'is' certainly does not mean 'equal to' nor does it merely mean 'is truthful'. Truth is not a mere attribute of God but He is That. He is nothing if He is not That. Truth in Sanskrit means *Sat*. *Sat* means 'Is'. Therefore Truth is implied in 'Is'. God is, nothing else is. Therefore the more truthful we are, the nearer we are to God. We *are* only to the extent that we are truthful.

The illustration of hen and her chickens is good. But better still is that of the Lord and His serf. The latter is far from the former because both are mentally so far apart thought physically so near.

Hence Milton's "mind is its own place"[1] and the *Gita's* "man is the author of his own freedom or bondage."[2]

It is to realize this freedom that I would have us to labour as pariahs and labourers.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1555. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. I., p. 279

158. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

July 9, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

I also did not feel happy about the first stanza[3] in our prayer. But on thinking more deeply about it, I realized that reciting it daily with proper understanding of its meaning was useful. Our reason certainly tells us that we are not this physical body, but are the witness who dwells in it. The stanza describes this witness, and then the seeker asserts that he is that witness—the Brahman. Only those who daily strive to become that and loosen the bond of their physical bodies can make such an assertion. Whenever one realizes that one has forgotten one's real nature or is overcome with fear or with the dualities of love and hatred, pleasure and pain, etc., one should remember the qualities of the Brahman and try to become free from the dualities. By so doing, one becomes that on which one daily meditates. We may, therefore,daily recite that stanza with humility and firm aspiration and keep in mind our assertion in all our actions.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6733. Also C.W. 4476. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

[1] *Paradise Lost*, I. 253

[2] "न एव मनुष्याणां कारणं बंधमोक्षयो——" This, however, is not from the *Gita* but from the *Mahabindu Upanishad.*

[3] "Early in the morning I call to mind that Being which is felt in the heart, which is *sat* (the eternal),*chit* (knowledge) and *sukham* (bliss), which is the state reached by perfect men and which is the super-state. I am that immaculate Brahman which ever notes the states of dream, wakefulness and deep sleep, not this body, the compound made of the elements—earth, water, space, light and air."

159. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

July 9, 1932

CHI. JAMNA,

I got your letter. If you cannot stay at Ranavav during the monsoon, you may certainly go to the Ashram. However, if you do not keep well there, we shall have to think about another place [where you can stay]. I have also a fear that your mental condition when you live in the Ashram is not the same as when you live elsewhere. You may eat in the Ashram and same food which you eat outside and cooked in the same manner. You may of course make any change in it that may be necessary for your health. I certainly wish that the air and water of the Ashram may suit you. They will certainly suit you some day.

Ask Purushottam to write to me. Let him give a detailed description of how you live there.

You may be said to have formed good relations with your neighbours. Let me know for how many days you stayed there and how much you spent.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 856. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

160. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 9, 1932

MY DEAR AMTUL,

The monthly irregularity will go, if you will persist in the friction sitz-bath. Thousands of women have benefited by the treatment assisted of coures by a simple diet.

Thought I wrote[1] to Dr. Sharma, I have not heard from him.

I do not want you to send me your diary book. I simply wanted your day's work. This you have given quite nicely.

Your Urdu writing is quite clear this time. I have been able to decipher every word. It is undoubtedly better than your English. Try to write more and more in Urdu. And when you will let me. I too shall

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Hiralal Sharma", 18-6-1932.

write to you in Urdu.

The Governemnt have not yet granted permission for Mirabehn to see me. And if it is not granted, I am afraid I must deny myself the happiness of seeing the others.

But you must not worry.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 248. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 207

161. LETTER TO NIRMALABEHN GANDHI

July 9, 1932

DEAR NIMU,

I read your letter to Ramdas. What a fool you are! You do not write to me, nor speak to Narandas about your difficulties and write about them to poor Ramdas! Was it for this that I got you married to Ramdas? Moreover, the teaching in the Ashram is to the effect that a woman should not believe herself to be dependent, weak, should not go on looking to her husband, but should make her own way (in life). Take the instance of Gangadevi. When Totaramji became a pauper, it was Gangadevi who kept up his spirit. Your difficulty is nothing. If there is any need for a boy, Narandas will get one. You should place all your difficulties before Narandas as if he were your father. You certainly have confidence in him. This much is my advice. Do not engage a boy for doing Ashram work. Taking proper care of children I consider to be the work of the Ashram. The responsibility to taking care of children lies with the Ashram. You are doing your duty on behalf of the Ashram. Hence, believe that you have given all the hours to the Ashram. In spite of this, if you require a boy, it is a different matter. You write to me properly. Otherwise I will have to bring you round.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 205

162. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

July 9, 1932

DEAR CHHAGANLAL,

God willing, we shall meet on the 21st. You know well enough things don't always happen as we intend or wish. See, Papa seemed to be on her death-bed, but she recovered. Her husband, Varadachari, was strong and healthy, but he passed away after a brief illness, leaving for Raja a widowed daughter. Papa is hisdearest child. She is a strong-willed girl and will bear the blow with courage. If knowledge sinks deep into the heart, one does not feel the loss beyond one's strength to endure. For the wise are equally unaffected by birth and death. As this recent example of the uncertainty of life was fresh in my mind, I started the letter with "God willing". We shall meet on the 21st if our wish to meet on that date is in accord with His will. And even if we don't, we shall be equally thankful.[1]

Ashram letter is sent along with this.

Now this for Ramdas: Nimu's letter and the lines written by you on the blank part of the sheet reached me. There is nothing impolite in your writing on the blank portion. In my opinion it would be impolite not to use that part. Again, in prison we can feel greedy about everything and we should keep up this greed throughout life. This is also a prison in that the body is even a jail. So that it would be well if we can observe all the good rules of this small prison throughtout the life. If we cannot observe them, we should admit out weakness to that extent and should try to observe them as far as we can.

I have written to Narandas that after talking with Nimu, he should do what is proper.[2] I have jokingly given a mild rebuke to Nimu.[3] Why does she trouble you? Why did she not write to me direct? Why did she not make matters clear with Narandas? Is it for troubling you here also that she is married to you? Again a girl brought up in the Ashram would not believe hereself to be weak or

[1] This paragraph has been collated with the Gujarati in *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol.1.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 6/10-7-1932.

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

dependent. She would find her way out. She would not sit (idly) looking at the face of her husband. What a (good) example Gangadevi had set! Totaramji became a pauper; she kept up his spirits and did not allow his beggarliness to be felt at all. If she does not write to me hereafter she will have to be brought round. I have written to her to this effect. I have expresed my opinion that she should not engage a boy servant to do the Ashram work. A mother who takes proper care of her children is also doing the Ashram work, becaues so long as Nimu is in the Ashram the responsibility of taking care of the children rests with the Ashram, i.e., Nimu by taking care of the children discharges her duty to the Ashram and so it is equivalent to doing Ashram work. You need not be anxious over it. You have done right in throwing that anxiety on me. At present my letters are being checked. There is no reason why they should do so. But are we not prisoners? Hence perhaps why letter may reach the Ashram late. Even in that case there is no cause for anxiety. Your weight must increase. The doctor says that Ramdas can ask for and eat whetever he likes. If milk is necessary, it should be taken. You should not allow the body to become weak. I know your nature. I am also of the same views. But I would not hesitate to take those things which my other companions do not get if I am convinced that my health requires them. It is a different matter if we know that the other companions also need them.

As regards the health of Surendra, some thought has to be given. Does he take wheat at present? His weight must increase. If the energy is maintained there is no reason to add to the weight.

I have sent a Parsi book for Mr. Darbari. I have not paid for it. He may return it when he has done with it. It is a very good book. It contains a full substance of the Zoroastrian ethics. Now Mr. Darbari must be completely recovered.

Devdas is completely recovered. There is nothing settled about (his) transfer. It seems other (prisoners) are where they were lodged.

Prof. Trivedi has sent (me) the writings of (Swami)Vivekananda. I did not send for them. If anyone from your side has sent for the same please let me know so that I may send the same to him.

As regards our activity the latest news is that the Sardar has begun the study of Sanskrit. He has sent for the 24 parts of the Guide to Sanskrit by Satavlekar. The first part will be finished in about three

days. Attempts are being made by him to begin spinning. He is also doing the work of making envelopes. You already know that the weight of us three has increased.

We have not received any new books worth reading. Chandulal has sent me the Gondal Reading Series.

If Ramdas has occasion to write to Nimu, he may write a brief purport of what I have written above. So that she may know my views even if my letter reaches her late, or does not reach her at all.

It is surprising there is no letter from you this time.

We three of us remember you all.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

My post is passing through strict scrutiny. In consequence there is every possibility of the *Mimansa* of Maganbhai being lost, so Dahyabhai may bring it if the same is sent to him. He will personally hand it over to the Superintendent and then there will be no fear of its being lost.

Nevertheless, he must have a copy of it in his possession.

BAPU

[PS.]

I send herewith Mr. Bhansali's letter for your perusal. You will like it. It is not necessary to send it back.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 275-83 and *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. I, p. 284

163. LETTER TO DHIRU

July 9, 1932

DEAR DHIRU,

I do not consider your letter to be clear. You say that there in no difficulty in spinning yarn of 15 counts, and when you reach 30

counts, it is done up. But there is a great difference between yarn of 15 and 30 counts. Do you say that there is no difficulty in spinning yarn up to 30 counts? If you say that, what is the speed for spinning yarn of 30 counts? What is the waste in spinning a *tola* of yarn? What is the speed for spinning yarn of 40 counts? What is the waste after it? What is the reason that there is difficulty in spinning yarn of finer counts? Prabhudas has much faith in you. If you want to fulfil his hopes, you should be engrossed in the spinning-wheel and find out its faults if there be any, and should find out its measure of strengh. By spinning on one spindle only, perhaps, yarn of finer quality might be obtained. Also find out whether you can obtain as much yarn upon a spindle by the Magan spinning-wheel, as you would get on a spindle by an ordinary spinning-wheel.

Many Muslims believe in rebirth. There is a great difference between one who tells a falsehood once and one who has formed a habit of telling lies.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 209-11

164. EDUCATION[1]

July 10, 1932

I will explain in brief one central idea about education which has been dominating my thoughts as I am writing the history of the Ashram. Some persons see a deficiency in the Ashram, namely, absence of any arrangement for education, that is, for literary education. I also can see this deficiency. But it will probably remain as long as the Ashram lasts. I will not here go into the reasons for that.

People see this deficiency because we do not know the true meaning of education and the right method of acquiring it, or we assume that the existing system of imparting education is the right one. According to me, the present idea of education and the method of imparting and receiving it are both faulty.

True education is that which helps us to know the *atman*, our true self, God and Truth. To acquire this knowledge, some persons may feel the need for a study of literature, some for a study of physical sciences and some others for art. But every branch of knowledge should have as its goal knowledge of the self. That is so in the Ashram. We carry on numerous activities with that aim in view. All of them are, in my sense of the term, true education. Those activities can also be carried on without any reference to the goal of knowledge of the self. When they are so carried on, they may serve as a means of livelihood or of something else, but they are not education. In an activity carried on as education, a proper understanding of its meaning, devotion to duty and the spirit of service are necessary. The first necessarily brings about development of the intellect. In doing any piece of work, however small, we should be inspired by a holy aim and, while doing it, we should try to understand the purpose which it will serve and the scientific method of doing it. There is a science of every type of work—whether it be cooking, sanitation, carpentry or spinning. Everybody who does his work with the attitude of a student knows its science or discovers it.

If the inmates of the Ashram understand this, they would see that the Ashram is a great school in which the inmates receive

[1] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 6/10-7-1932; *vide* the following item.

education not for a few hours only but all the time. Every person who lives in the Ashram to attain knowledge of the self—of Truth—is both a teacher and a pupil. He is a teacher in regard to what he knows, and a pupil in regard to anything about which he needs to learn. If we know more than our neighbour about anything, we should willingly share our knowledge with him, and equally willingly receive from him what he knows more than we do. If we thus regularly exchange knowledge with others, we would not feel the absence of teachers, and education would become a painless and spontaneous process. The most important education is the training of character. As we advance in our observance of *yamaniyamas*, our capacity for learning—for knowing Truth—will go on increasing.

What about literary education, then? It is no more a question. The rule for this is the same as for the other activities. The method explained above dispenses with one superstition, namely, that for education we require a separate building known as school and a teacher to teach. When the desire for literary education awakens in us, we should know that we shall have to acquire it through self-help. There is ample scope for this in the Ashram. If I have been able to explain above my idea clearly, literary education should no more be a problem. Those who possess it should take every opportunity to impart it to others and the latter should receive it from them.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

165. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 6/10, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter and the other mail. These day I get them very regularly. I had handed over my packet on Monday for being posted and I do not understand why you did not get it till Saturday. In future, you should inspect the postmark on every packet. It is difficult to understand how a letter posted by you there reaches me the next day but what I send from here reaches you after six days.

You need not send me just now the register of hours of work. It will be quite enough it you send it whenever you observe anything special in the figures, or at the most once a month. Among other things, I am sure of this, that when the whole thing has become systematic everybody will do his or her work sincerely and then

nobody will feel any burden. If anybody feels a little worried in hismind, that also will and must disappear. For a sincere person one thing should be enough. Nobody should undertake more than what he can cope with and should wish to do less than what he can. He who attempts to do more than what he is capable of suffers from pride, he is attached to work and its fruit. He who does less than what he can is a thief. By maintaining a register of the hours of work, we can save ourselves from either mistake, may be without knowing it. I don't say that we shall positively save ourselves, for, if we do not help to keep the register willingly and with full appreciation of its need, we cannot derive the fullest benefit from it.

Did you carefully read Sitala Sahay's letter? I saw nothing objectionable in it. I see no anger in it. If what he writes about Prabhudas is correct, his demand is not unreasonable. But we can decide this justly only in the manner I have explained, that is, by examining his expenses. In such matters, examples of others give us no help. They may serve as a guide, but, when a person gives us an account of his expenses and we can find no fault with it, we must pay him what the account justifies. It is quite possible that such precedents may cause difficulties in future. But we may hope that, since our motives are sincere, we shall escape such difficulties.

He who has protected us up to now will protect us even in future. We shall go on paying as long as we have money. If we have brought His name into disrepute, He will deprive us even of what we have. Whom will we pay then? Sitala Sahay says in his letter that Padma has sent some accounts to you. I suppose they are all right, are they? I also assume that what Sitala Sahay writes about Prabhudas's expenses is correct. If, however, the facts are not as stated by him, it would certainly be necessary to think more about the matter. My opinion, thus, is based on the assumption that the information given by Sitala Sahay in his letter is correct. You do perfectly right in putting all the facts of a case before me. I should go on giving my opinions as long as I can, so that your burden may be lighter.

Nimu has written a letter to Ramdas which he has sent to me. She writes in it about having engaged a boy. She believes that she needs his help, but suspects that you may not have approved of her action. She also says that you have raised no objection Ramdas has left it to me to do what I think proper. I cannot decide in this

matter independently. I am writing a letter[1] to Nimu.

Read it and do what you think best. Don't wait for Nimu to speak to you, but go and meet her yourself and put her mind at rest.

If you can, do save Shashi, If necessary, you may speak firmly to Ratilal about him.

July, 10, 1932

My writing letters has become a serious issue and I do not know when, if at all, you got the last packet of my letters. Nor do I know when you will get this. I have sought clarification about this matter.[2] I cannot say what the outcome will be. "Neither be glad to get what is pleasant, nor be sad to get what is unpleasant".[3]

Today's article[4] is about education. Read it carefully and think over it. If you understand it properly, you will have to shoulder one more burden, a mental one this time. Examine carefully every person in your mind, and consider whether all of them fully understand the work which they do. Understand and explain to others the meaning and method of every activity in the Ashram. If there is any point which you do not understand ask me. If you question me about anything which I understand, I will answer your question. Find out whether everybody gets time to read. You will require some peace of mind to be able to take up this responsibility. As it is, you have been all the time doing a teacher's work, and so this work will not be new for you. I have only widened your sphere. However, my method of teaching is simple. It requires little memorizing to be done. Our activities concern rural life, and their science, therefore, is not beyond our capacity. As for literature and similar studies, everybody may get from the books in the library as much as he can and impart it to the others. The important thing is development of intellect and understanding the meaning of our quest of truth. If that is understood, the rest will follow. Our contentment then will be boundless. We shall have to make no effort to learn patience. We shall have secured the key to all knowledge. We shall wish to know only as much as is necessary for our spiritual progress and for self-realization.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8238. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Nirmalabehn Gandhi", 9-7-1932.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to E. E. Doyle", 9-7-1932.
[3] *Bhagavad Gita*, v. 20
[4] *Vide* "Education", 10-7-1932.

166. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

July 10, 1932

CHI. PANDITJI,

I forgot to write about one thing in my letter[1] to you last week, namely, about the time spent in prayers. One should not grudge it or feel bored. Islam enjoins prayers five times a day, and every prayer lasts for not less than 15 minutes and the substance every time is the same. In Christian prayers, one feature is constant, and that also generally takes 15 minutes every time. In the Roman Catholic Church and the Established Church of England no prayer lasts for less than half an hour, and the prayers are held in the morning, in the evening and at noon. Pious men and women do not feel this irksome. In short, none of us has a right to change the established pattern of daily activities in the Ashram, for all of us are imperfect and we have discussed these things long enough. We should now learn to take interest in our activities. We wish to realize God through them and derive our daily sustenance from them. Instead of thinking about making changes in our programme, we should carry it out as best as we can and instil life in our activities. This is how I feel as I think more and more about the matter.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 229. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

167. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

July 10, 1932

The disturbance of my correspondence continues and letters are delayed. Thus we are made to feel now and then that we are prisoners, and we should, since it gives us the opportunity to practise the *Gita* doctrine. When we cannot get what we want, we find out if the deprivation disturbs our peace of mind. If it does, it shows that we have much headway to make up. I therefore try to preserve my equanimity. We may ask only for what we are entitled to. If we get it, it is all right. If we do not get it, then also it is all right. Congratulate Sarojini on her assuming the role of a physician. Tell her also that her sweets were appreciated by many of us. But this should not be construed as a request for further favours of the same kind. Real

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narayan M. Khare", 1-7-1932.

enjoyment is derived from drops, not from mouthfuls. In my earlier letter too I had written only in jest. Sweets are not the thing for us here as they are for her, whom we dare not imitate. Here we are a servant, a farmer and a porter. If the like of us put on royal robes, the village urchins would pelt stones at us and we should have deserved such treatment. Tell all this to Sarojini Devi if you can tell her without putting her out. Otherwise this lesson may be learnt by your other fellow-prisoners. You see how I have mixed instruction with amusement.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 284-5

168. LETTER TO KANAIYALAL

July 10, 1932

BHAI KANAIYALAL,

If God is taken to mean Truth then it is possible to see Him directly. It is not correct to take literally the stories regarding Dhruva and others having seen Him. The description given by the poets is a kind of metaphor.[1]

(2) *Vanar* (monkey) must be taken to mean people with monkey-like nature.

(3) The main idea of the Vedas is spiritual wisdom (lit. the knowledge of Brahman).

(4) Practice of truth by means of mind, speech and body is always the best *yajna*. For the present time its practical form is to ply the charkha with altruistic motive.[2]

(5) The true means of (following) religion is the observance of *yamas* and *niyamas*.[3]

(6) See in Chapter II (of the *Gita*) the characteristics of a *sthitaprajna* (one who is firm in judgment and wisdom).

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. I, p.284

[1] These paragraphs have been collated with the Gujarati in *Mahadev-bhaini Diary*.

[2] *ibid*

[3] *ibid*

169. A LETTER

July 10, 1932

There is a class of people to which many of us belong. They read and read and read until they almost lose their power of thinking. To such people I suggest that they should stop reading and think over what they have previously read.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 284

170. HISTORY OF THE SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM[1]

[*July 11, 1932*]

INTRODUCTION

Ashram here means a community of men of religion. Looking at the past in the light of the present, I feel that an ashram was a necessary of life for me. As soon as I had a house of my own, my house was an ashram in this sense, for my life as a householder was not one of enjoyment but of duty discharged from day to day. Again, besides the members of my family I always had some friends or

[1] Gandhiji commenced writing this history in Gujarati in Yeravda Central Prison on April 5, 1932. He worked on it intermittently and wrote the last available instalment on July 11, 1932, though later letters show that the writing continued even after this date. On his release, he showed the manuscripts to Kakasaheb Kalelkar and said: "I could not complete this job. It badly needs revision. I do not know whether I shall ever complete it. It is not fit to be published as it is. I shall give it only when I have revised it." Kakasaheb said that he would have copies made of whatever had been written and took the manuscripts from Gandhiji's hands. Since the original could not be traced, Navajivan Publishing House issued *Satyagrahashramno Itihas* in Gujarati in May 1948 from the copy available with Kakasaheb. It was translated into English by Valji G. Desai and published by the Navajivan Publishing House under the title *Ashram Observances in Action* in 1955. The translator has occasionally changed the paragraphing, omitted a sentence or summarized an argument, but otherwise the translation is faithful and is reproduced here. Two paragraphs of the incomplete chapter on satyagraha, which were written on July 11, 1932 and which were omitted in the English version, have been translated from the Gujarati. Appendices found in Gujarati and English versions are not reproduced here, since they are placed in their chronological order under the dates February 16, 1916, June 14, 1928 and December 8, 1941. For the first two appendices, *vide* "Speech on Ashram Vows at Y. M. C. A., Madras", 16-2-1916 and "Satyagraha ashram", 14-6-1928.

others living with me, whose relation with me was spiritual from the first or became such later on. This went on unconsciously till 1904 when I read Ruskin's *Unto This Last*,[1] which made a deep impression on me. I determined to take *Indian Opinion* into a forest where I should live with the workers as members of my family. I purchased 100 acres of land and founded Phoenix Settlement, which neither we nor anyone else called an ashram. It had a religious basis, but the visible object was purity of body and mind as well as economic equality. I did not then consider *brahmacharya* (chastity) to be essential; on the other hand it was expected that co-workers would live as family men and have children. A brief account of Phoenix will be found in *Satyagraha in South Africa*.

This was the first step.

The second step was taken in 1906. I learnt in the school of experience that *brahmacharya* was a *sine qua non* for a life devoted to service. From this time onward I looked upon Phoenix deliberately as a religious institution. The same year witnessed the advent of satyagraha which was based on religion and implied an unshakable faith in the God of Truth. Religion here should not be understood in a narrow sense, but as that which acts as a link between different religions and realizes their essential unity.

This went on till 1911. All these years the Phoenix Settlement was progressing as an ashram though we did not call it by that name.

We took the third step in 1911. So far only those people lived at Phoenix who were working in the press and the paper. But now as a part of the satyagraha movement we felt the need of an ashram where satyagrahi families could live and lead a religious life. I had already come in contact with my German friend Kallenbach. Both of us were living a sort of ashram life. I was a barrister and Kallenbach an architect. However we led a comparatively very simple life in the sparsely populated country, and were religiously minded. We might commit mistakes out of ignorance, but we were trying to seek the root of every activity in religion. Kallenbach purchased a farm of 1,100 acres and the satyagrahi families settled there. Religious problems confronted us now at every step and the whole institution was managed from a religious standpoint. Among the settlers there were Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians and Parsis. But I do not remember

[1] *Vide* "An Autobiography"..

that they ever quarrelled with one another, though each was staunch in his own faith. We respected one another's religion and tried to help everybody to follow his own faith and thus to make spiritual progress.

This institution was not known as Satyagraha Ashram but as Tolstoy Farm. Kallenbach and I were followers of Tolstoy and endeavoured to practise much of his doctrine. Tolstoy Farm was closed in 1912 and the farmers were sent to Phoenix. The history of Tolstoy Farm will also be found in *Satyagraha in South Africa*.[1]

Phoenix now was no longer meant for the workers of *Indian Opinion* only; it was a satyagraha institution. That was only to be expected, for *Indian Opinion* owed its very existence to satyagraha. Still it was a great change. The even tenor of the lives of the settlers at Phoenix was disturbed, and they had now to discern certainty in the midst of uncertainty like the satyagrahis. But they were equal to the new demands made upon them. As at Tolstoy Farm, so also at Phoenix I established a common kitchen which some joined while others had private kitchens of their own. The congregational prayer in the evening played a large part in our lives. And the final satyagraha campaign was started by the inmates of Phoenix Settlement in 1913.[2] The struggle ended in 1914.[3] I left South Africa in July that year. It was decided that all settlers who wanted to go to India should be enabled to go there. Before going to India I had to meet Gokhale in England. The idea was to found a new institution in India for those who went there from Phoenix. And the community life commenced in South Africa was to be continued in India. I reached India early in 1915[4] with a view to establish an ashram though I was still unaware that I would call it by that name.

I toured all parts of India for a year, and visited some institutions[5] from which I had much to learn. I was invited by several cities to establish the ashram in their neighbourhood with a promise of assistance in various ways. Ahmedabad was selected at last. This was the fourth, and I imagine the last step. Whether or not it will always be the last is something of which no forecast is

[1] *Vide* "Satyagraha in South Africa".
[2] On September 15; *vide* "Satyagraha in South Africa".
[3] *Vide* "Satyagraha in South Africa".
[4] On January 9; *vide* "Interview to *The Bombay Chronicle*", 9-1-1915..
[5] Servants of India Society, Santiniketan, Gurukul Kangri

possible.[1] How was the new institution to be named? What should be its rules and regulations? On these points I had full discussions and correspondence with friends, as a result of which we decided to call the institution Satyagraha Ashram. It is an appropriate name if we take its object into consideration. My life is devoted to the quest of truth. I would live and, if need be, die in prosecuting it, and of course I would take with me as many fellow-pilgrims as I could get.

The Ashram was established in a rented house at Kochrab on May 25, 1915. Some citizens of Ahmedabad undertook to finance it. At the beginning there were about 20[2] inmates, most of them from South Africa. Of these again the large majority spoke Tamil or Telugu. The chief activity in the Ashram at this time was teaching Sanskrit, Hindi and Tamil to the old as well as the young, who also received some general education. Hand- weaving was the principal industry with some carpentry as accessory to it. No servants were engaged; therefore cooking, sanitation, fetching water—everything was attended to by the Ashramites. Truth and other observances were obligatory on them all.[3] Distinctions of caste were not observed. Untouchability had not only no place in the Ashram, but its eradication from Hindu society was one of our principal objectives. Emancipation of women from some customary bonds was insisted upon from the first. Therefore women in the Ashram enjoy full freedom. Then again it was an Ashram rule that persons following a particular faith should have the same feeling for followers of other faiths as for their co-religionists.

But for one thing I was solely responsible, and I am indebted to the West for it. I refer to my dietetic experiments, which commenced in 1888 when I went to England for studies. I always invite members of my family and other co-workers to join in. The experiments were designed to achieve three objects, viz., (1) to acquire control over the palate as a part of self-control in general; (2) to find out which diet was the simplest and the cheapest so that by adopting it we might

[1] Gandhiji disbanded the Satyagraha Ashram in 1933. When he shifted to Segaon in April 1936 he had no intention of establishing an ashram there. However, it gradually developed into the Sevagram Ashram.

[2] In Vol. XIII, p. 98, however, Gandhiji mentions the number as 35.

[3] For the text of the draft constitution of the Ashram, *vide* "Draft constitution for the ashram", 20-5-1915; and for the final constitution, *vide* "Satyagraha ashram",14-6-1928.

identify ourselves with the poor; and (3) to discover which diet was necessary for perfect health, as maintenance of health is largely dependent upon correct diet.

If in England I had not been under a vow to be a vegetarian, I might perhaps never have undertaken experiments in diet. But once I began to experiment, these three objectives took me into deeper waters, and I was led to make various kinds of experiments. And the Ashram too joined in, though these experiments were not a part of Ashram discipline.

The reader has perhaps now seen that the Ashram set out to remedy what it thought were defects in our national life from the religious, economic and political standpoints. As we gathered new experiences we undertook fresh activities. Even now I cannot say that the Ashram has embarked on all possible activities that I can think of. There have been two limitations. First, we were sure we must cut our coat according to our cloth, that is, we must manage with what funds were placed at our disposal by friends without any special effort in collection. Secondly we should not go in search of new spheres of activity, but if any activity naturally suggested itself to our minds, we should go in for it without counting the cost.

These two limitations spring from a religious attitude. This implies faith in God, that is, doing everything in dependence upon and under the inspiration of God. The main of religion conducts such activities as are sent by God with such resources as God places at his disposal. He never lets us see that He Himself does anything; He achieves His aims through men inspired by Him. When help was received from unexpected quarters or from friends without our asking for it, my faith led me to believe that it was sent by God. Similarly when some activity came to us unsought so that not to take it up would have been sheer cowardice, laziness or the like, I thought it was a godsend.

The same principle applies to co-workers as to material resources and to activities. We may have the funds and know how they are to be used, but we can do nothing in the absence of co-workers. Co-workers also should come unsought. We did not merely imagine but had a living faith that the Ashram was God's. If therefore He wished to make the Ashram His instrument as regards any activity, it was for Him to place the requisite men and munitions at the Ashram's disposal. Phœnix, Tolstoy Farm and Sabarmati Ashram have all been

conducted more or less according to these principles consciously or unconsciously. Ashram rules were observed at first with some laxity, but the observance has become stricter from day to day.

The Ashram population doubled itself in a few months. Again the Kochrab bungalow was a hardly suitable building for an ashram. It would do for one well-to-do family, but not for sixty men, women and children engaged in various activities and observing *brahmacharya* and other vows. However we had to manage with what building was available. But very soon it became impossible to live in it for a number of reasons. As if God wanted to drive us out of it, we had suddenly to go out in search of a new site and to vacate the bungalow. The curious will look up the *Autobiography*[1] for an account of these events. There was one defect in the Ashram at Kochrab which was remedied after we had removed to Sabarmati. An Ashram without orchard, farm or cattle would not be a complete unit. At Sabarmati we had cultivable land and therefore went in for agriculture at once.

Such is the prehistory and history of the Ashram. I now propose to deal with its observances and activities in so far as I remember them. My diary is not at hand. Even if it is, it takes no note of the personal history of the Ashramites. I therefore depend upon memory alone. This is nothing new for me, as *Satyagraha in South Africa* and the *Autobiography* were written in the same manner. The reader will please bear this limitation in mind, as he goes through these pages.

I

TRUTH

Whenever someone was found telling a lie in the Ashram, effective steps were taken to deal with the situation as symptomatic of a serious disease. The Ashram does not believe in punishing wrongdoers, so much so that hesitation is felt even in asking them to leave the institution. Three lines of preventive action were therefore adopted.

The first thing attended to was the purity of the principal workers in charge, the idea being that if they were free from fault, the atmosphere about them was bound to be affected by their innocence. Untruth cannot stand before truth like darkness before the light of the sun.

[1] *Vide* "An autobiography".

Secondly, we had recourse to confession. If someone was found practising untruth, the fact was brought to the notice of the congregation. This is a very useful measure if it is judiciously adopted. But one has to be careful about two things. The public confession must not be tainted by even a trace of force; and the confession should not lead to the person confessing taking leave of all sense of shame. If he comes to believe that mere confession has washed off his sin, he is no longer ashamed of it at all. There should be an ever present consciousness of the fact that the least little untruth is a dangerous thing.

Thirdly, the worker in charge of the Ashram as well as the wrongdoer would fast as a matter of penance. Of course it is a matter for the wrongdoer himself to decide whether or not he should undertake a fast. But as for the worker in charge, he is clearly responsible for intentional and unintentional wrongdoing in his institution. Untruth is more poisonous and more subtle than any poison gas whatever, but it dare not enter where the head of the institution is wide awake and has a spiritual outlook on life. Still if it is found to have effected an entrance, it is a warning to the principal worker, who may be sure that he must bear his share of responsibility for this infection. I for one believe that spiritual acts have clearly defined results precisely like combinations or processes in the natural sciences. Only as we have no such means of measurement in the former case as in the latter, we are not ready to believe or we only half-heartedly believe in the spiritual influences. Again, we are inclined to be lenient to ourselves with the result that our experiments are unsuccessful and we tend to move only in a circle like the oil-miller's bullock. Thus untruth gets a long lease of life, and at last we reach the melancholy conclusion that it is unavoidable. And what is unavoidable easily becomes necessary, so that not truth but untruth increases its own prestige.

When therefore untruth was discovered in the Ashram, I readily pleaded guilty for it myself. That is to say, I have not still attained truth as defined by me. It may be due to ignorance, but it is clear that I have not fully understood truth and therefore neither even thought it out nor declared it, still less practised it. But granting all this, was I to leave the Ashram, and resort to some Himalayan cave and impose silence upon myself? That would be sheer cowardice. The quest of truth cannot be prosecuted in a cave. Silence makes no sense where it is necessary to speak. One may live in a cave in certain circumstances, but the common man can be tested only in society.

What then is the remedy to be tried to get rid of untruth? The only answer which suggests itself to me is bodily penance, that is fasting and the like. Bodily penance has a threefold influence, first over the penitent, secondly over the wrongdoer and thirdly over the congregation. The penitent becomes more alert, examines the innermost recesses of his own heart and takes steps to deal with any personal weakness that he may discover. If the wrongdoer has any pity, he becomes conscious of his own fault, is ashamed of it and resolves never to sin any more in the future. The congregation takes a course of self-introspection.

But bodily penance is only a means to an end, not an end in itself. By itself it cannot bring an erring person to the right path. It is profitable only if it is accompanied by a certain line of thinking, which is as follows:

Man tends to become a slave of his own body, and engages in many activities and commits many sins for the sake of physical enjoyment. He should therefore mortify the flesh whenever there is an occasion of sin. A man given to physical enjoyment is subject to delusion. Even a slight renunciation of enjoyment in the shape of food will probably be helpful in breaking the power of that delusion. Fasting in order to produce this effect must be taken in its widest sense as the exercise of control over all the organs of sense with a view to the purification of oneself or others. Merely giving up food does not amount to a fast. And fasting for health is no fasting at all in this sense.

I have also found that frequent fasting tends to rob it of its efficacy, for then it becomes almost a mechanical process without any background of thought. Every fast therefore should be undertaken after due deliberation.

I have noted one special effect of fasting in my own case. I have fasted frequently; therefore my co-workers are nervous and are afraid that a fresh fast may place my life in danger. This fear makes them observe certain rules. I consider this an undesirable consequence of fasting. I do not however think that self-control practised on account of such fear does any harm. This fear is inspired by love, and therefore it is a good thing if a person steers clear of wrongdoing even under the influence of such fear. Deliberate and voluntary reformation is of course very desirable, but it is only to be welcomed if a person avoids sin because he is afraid of causing pain to elders, as

it involves no use of brute force. There are many cases of reformation undertaken primarily only to please one's dear ones becoming a permanent feature of men's lives.

One painful consequence of fasting must be taken into account. People sometimes do not avoid sin but only try to hide it for fear that someone else may fast if he comes to know of it.

I hold that penance is necessary in certain cases and it has benefited the Ashram on the whole. But one who undertakes it must possess certain qualifications :

1. The wrongdoer should have love for the penitent. The penitent may have love for the wrongdoer; but if the wrongdoer is unaware of it or adopts an inimical attitude towards the penitent, penance for him is out of the question. As he regards himself as an enemy of the penitent, he hates the latter. There is therefore a possibility of the fast affecting him in a manner contrary to all expectations, or acting as brute force employed against him and thus regarded by him as a form of coercion. Moreover, if everyone is supposed to be entitled to undertake penance for the failings of others who do not stand in a special relation to him, there would be no end to the programme of penance. Penance for the sins of the whole world might befit a mahatma (great soul), but here we are concerned with the common man.

2. The penitent himself must be one of the parties wronged. That is to say, one should not do penance for a failing with which he is not in any way concerned. Thus, suppose A and B are friends. B is a member of the Ashram, but A has nothing to do with it. B has wronged the Ashram. Here A has neither the duty nor the right to undertake a penance for B's fault. His interference might even complicate the situation both for the Ashram and B. He may not even possess the necessary material to pronounce a judgment on B's conduct. By agreeing to B's admission to the Ashram, A must be regarded as having transferred to the Ashram his responsibility for B's good conduct.

3. A penitent for another's wrongdoing must himself be guiltless of similar misconduct. "The pot may not call the kettle black".

4. The penitent must otherwise also be a man of purity and appear such to the wrongdoer. Penance for another's wrongdoing presupposes purity; and if the guilty man has no respect

for the penitent, the latter's fast might easily have an unhealthy effect upon him.

5. The penitent must not have any personal interest to serve. Thus, if A has promised to pay B ten rupees, non-payment of it is a fault. But B may not perform penance for A's failure to redeem his promise.

6. The penitent must not have any anger in him. If a father commences a fast in anger for a fault of his son, that is not penance. There should be nothing but compassion in penance, the object being the purification of oneself as well as of the guilty person.

7. The wrong act must be patent, accepted as such by all and spiritually harmful, and the doer must be aware of its nature. There should be no penance for inferential guilt, as it might at times have dangerous consequences. There should be no room for doubt as regards the fault. Moreover, one should not do penance for an act which he alone regards as wrong. It is possible that what one holds to be wrong today he might regard as innocent tomorrow. So the wrong must be one that is accepted as such by society. For instance, I might regard the non-wearing of khadi to be very wrong. But my co-worker might see nothing wrong in it, or might not attach much importance to it, and so might or might not wear it as he wishes. If I regard this as a wrong and fast for it, that is not penance but coercion. There can be no penance also where the wrongdoer is not conscious of having done anything wrong.

The discussion of this topic is necessary for an institution in which there is no place for punishment or which always strives to act in a religious spirit. In such institutions the penance on the part of the heads of the Ashram takes the place of penal measures. It would be impossible to maintain its purity in any other way. Punishment and disciplinary action might make for an outer show of orderliness and progress, but that is all. On the other hand penance preserves the institution both internally and externally and makes the institution firmer day by day. Hence the necessity for some such rules as those given above.

Fasts and such other penance have been undertaken in the Ashram. Still it is far, far indeed, from its ideal of truth, and therefore, as we shall see later on, we now call it by the name of Udyoga Mandir (Temple of Industry). But we can certainly say that the men in charge of the Ashram are wide awake, fully conscious of their imperfections

and constantly trying to make sure that untruth does not find a foothold anywhere. But in an institution to which new members are being admitted from time to time, and that too only on trust, and which is frequented by men from all provinces of India and some foreign countries, it is no easy thing to keep all of them on the strait and narrow path. But if only the men at the top are true to themselves, the Ashram is sure to stand the test, no matter how hard it is. There is no limit to the potency of truth, as there is a limit to the power of an individual seeker. But if he is wide awake and is striving constantly, there is no limit to his power as well.

II
PRAYER
(i)

If insistence on truth constitutes the root of the Ashram, prayer is the principal feeder of that root. The social (as distinguished from the individual) activities of the Ashram commence every day with the congregational morning worship at 4.15 to 4.45 a.m. and close with the evening prayer at 7 to 7.30 p.m. Ever since the Ashram was founded, not a single day has passed to my knowledge without this worship. I know of several occasions when owing to the rains only one responsible person was present on the prayer ground. All inmates are expected to attend the worship except in the case of illness or similar compelling reason for absence. This expectation has been fairly well fulfilled at the evening prayer, but not in the morning.

The time for morning worship was as a matter of experiment fixed at 4, 5, 6 and 7 a.m., one after another. But on account of my persistently strong attitude on the subject, it has been fixed at last at 4.20 a.m. With the first bell at 4 everyone rises from bed and after a wash reaches the prayer ground by 4.20.

I believe that in a country like India the sooner a man rises from bed the better. Indeed millions must necessarily rise early. If the peasant is a late riser, his crops will suffer damage. Cattle are attended to and cows are milked early in the morning. Such being the case, seekers of saving truth, servants of the people or monks may well be up at 2 or 3; it would be surprising if they are not. In all countries of the world devotees of God and tillers of the soil rise early. Devotees take the name of God and peasants work in their fields serving the world as well as themselves. To my

mind both are worshippers. Devotees are deliberately such while cultivators by their industry worship God unawares, as it helps to sustain the world. If instead of working in the fields, they took to religious meditation, they would be failing in their duty and involving themselves and the world in ruin.

We may or may not look upon the cultivator as a devotee, but where peasants, labourers and other people have willy nilly to rise early, how can a worshipper of Truth or servant of the people be a late riser? Again in the Ashram we are trying to co-ordinate work and worship. Therefore I am definitely of opinion that all able-bodied people in the Ashram must rise early even at the cost of inconvenience. Four a.m. is not early but the latest time when we must be up and doing.

Then again we had to take a decision on certain questions. Where should the prayers be offered? Should we erect a temple ormeet in the open air? Then again, should we raise a platform or sit in the sands or the dust? Should there be any images? At last we decided to sit on the sands under the canopy of the sky and not to install any image. Poverty is an Ashram observance. The Ashram exists in order to serve the starving millions. The poor have a place in it no less than others. It receives with open arms all who are willing to keep the rules. In such an institution the house of worship cannot be built with bricks and mortar, the sky must suffice for roof and the quarters for walls and pillars. A platform was planned but discarded later on, as its size would depend upon the indeterminate number of worshippers. And a big one would cost a large sum of money. Experience has shown the soundness of the decision not to build a house or even a platform. People from outside also attend the Ashram prayers, so that at times the multitude present cannot be accommodated on the biggest of platforms.

Again as the Ashram prayers are being increasingly imitated elsewhere, the sky-roofed temple has proved its utility. Morning and evening prayers are held wherever I go. Then there is such large attendance, especially in the evening, that prayers are possible only on open grounds. And if I had been in the habit of worshipping in a prayer hall only, I might perhaps never have thought of public prayers during my tours.

Then again all religions are accorded equal respect in the

Ashram. Followers of all faiths are welcome there; they may or may not believe in the worship of images. No image is kept at the congregational worship of the Ashram in order to avoid hurting anybody's feelings. But if an Ashramite wishes to keep an image in his room, he is free to do so.

(ii)

At the morning prayer we first recite the *shlokas* (verses) printed in *Ashram Bhajanavali* (hymnal), and then sing one *bhajan* (hymn) followed by *Ramdhun* (repetition of Ramanama) and *Gitapath* (recitation of the *Gita*). In the evening we have recitation of the last 19 verses of the second chapter of the *Gita*, one *bhajan* and *Ramdhun* and then read some portion of a sacred book.

The *shlokas* were selected by Shri Kaka Kalelkar who has been in the Ashram since its foundation. Shri Maganlal Gandhi met him in Santiniketan, when he and the children of the Phoenix Settlement went there from South Africa while I was still in England. Dinabandhu Andrews and the late Mr. Pearson were then in Santiniketan. I had advised Maganlal to stay at some place selected by Andrews. And Andrews selected Santiniketan for the party. Kaka was a teacher there and came into close contact with Maganlal. Maganlal had been feeling the want of a Sanskrit teacher which was supplied by Kaka. Chintamani Shastri assisted him in the work. Kaka taught the children how to recite the verses repeated in prayer. Some of these verses were omitted in the Ashram prayer in order to save time. Such is the history of the verses recited at the morning prayer all these days.

The recitation of these verses has often been objected to on the ground of saving time or because it appeared to some people that they could not well be recited by a worshipper of truth or by a non-Hindu. There is no doubt that these verses are recited only in Hindu society, but I cannot see why a non-Hindu may not join in or be present at the recitation. Muslim and Christian friends who have heard the verses have not raised any objection. Indeed they need not cause annoyance to anyone who respects other faiths as much as he respects his own. They do not contain any reflection on other people. Hindus being in an overwhelming majority in the Ashram, the verses must be selected from the sacred books of the Hindus. Not that nothing is sung or recited from non-Hindu scriptures. Indeed there were occasions on which Imam Saheb recited verses from the Koran. Muslim and Christian

hymns are often sung.

But the verses were strongly attacked from the standpoint of truth. An Ashramite modestly but firmly argued that the worship of Sarasvati, Ganesh and the like was violence done to truth; for no such divinities really existed as Sarasvati seated on a lotus with a *vina* (kind of musical instrument) in her hands, or as Ganesh with a big belly and an elephant's trunk. To this argument I replied as follows:

'I claim to be a votary of truth, and yet I do not mind reciting these verses or teaching them to the children. If we condemn some *shlokas* on the strength of this argument, it would be tantamount to an attack on the very basis of Hinduism. Not that we may not condemn anything in Hinduism which is fit for condemnation, no matter how ancient it is. But I do not believe that this is a weak or vulnerable point of Hinduism. On the other hand I hold that it is perhaps characteristic of our faith. Sarasvati and Ganesh are not independent entities. They are all descriptive names of one God. Devoted poets have given a local habitation and a name to His countless attributes. They have done nothing wrong. Such verses deceive neither the worshippers nor others. When a human being praises God he imagines Him to be such as he thinks fit. The God of his imagination is there for him. Even when we pray to a God devoid of form and attributes we do in fact endow Him with attributes. And attributes too are form. Fundamentally God is indescribable in words. We mortals must of necessity depend upon the imagination which makes and sometimes mars us too. The qualities we attribute to God with the purest of motives are true for us but fundamentally false, because all attempts at describing Him must be unsuccessful. I am intellectually conscious of this and still I cannot help dwelling upon the attributes of God. My intellect can exercise no influence over my heart. I am prepared to admit that my heart in its weakness hankers after a God with attributes. The *shlokas* which I have been reciting every day for the last fifteen years give me peace and hold good for me. In them I find beauty as well as poetry. Learned men tell many stories about Sarasvati, Ganesh and the like, which have their own use. I do not know their deeper meaning, as I have not gone into it, finding it unnecessary for me. It may be that my ignorance is my salvation. I did not see that I needed to go deep into this as a part of my quest of truth. It is enough that I know my God, and although I have still to realize His living presence, I am on the right path to my destination'.

I could hardly expect that the objectors should be satisfied with this reply. An *ad hoc* committee examined the whole question fully and finally recommended that the *shlokas* should remain as they were, for every possible selection would be viewed with disfavour by someone or other.

(iii)

A hymn was sung after the *shlokas*. Indeed singing hymns was the only item of the prayers in South Africa. The *shlokas* were added in India. Maganlal Gandhi was our leader in song. But we felt that the arrangement was unsatisfactory. We should have an expert singer for the purpose, and that singer should be one who would observe the Ashram rules. One such was found in Narayan Moreshwar Khare, a pupil of Pandit Vishnu Digambar, whom the master kindly sent to the Ashram. Pandit Khare gave us full satisfaction and is now a full member of the Ashram. He made hymn-singing interesting, and the *Ashram Bhajanavali* (hymnal) which is now read by thousands was in the main compiled by him. He introduced *Ramdhun*, the third item of our prayers.

The fourth item is recitation of verses from the *Gita*. The *Gita* has for years been an authoritative guide to belief and conduct for the Satyagraha Ashram. It has provided us with a test with which to determine the correctness or otherwise of ideas and courses of conduct in question. Therefore we wished that all Ashramites should understand the meaning of the *Gita* and if possible commit it to memory. If this last was not possible, we wished that they should at least read the original Sanskrit with correct pronunciation. With this end in view we began to recite part of the *Gita* every day. We would recite a few verses every day and continue the recitation until we had learnt them by heart. From this we proceeded to the *parayan*.[1] And the recitation is now so arranged that the whole of the *Gita* is finished in fourteen days, and everybody knows what verses will be recited on any particular day. The first chapter is recited on every alternate Friday, and we shall come to it on Friday next (June 10, 1932). The seventh and eighth, the twelfth and thirteenth, the fourteenth and fifteenth, and the sixteenth and seventeenth chapters are recited on the same day in order to finish 18 chapters in 14 days.[2]

[1] Regular recitation

[2] The translator supplies the following information: "Later on the *Gita*

At the evening prayer we recite the last 19 verses of the second chapter of the *Gita* as well as sing a hymn and repeat Ramanama. These verses describe the characteristics of the *sthitaprajna* (the man of stable understanding), which a satyagrahi too must acquire, and are recited in order that he may constantly bear them in mind.

Repeating the same thing at prayer from day to day is objected to on the ground that it thus becomes mechanical and tends to be ineffective. It is true that the prayer becomes mechanical. We ourselves are machines, and if we believe God to be our mover, we must behave like machines in His hands. If the sun and other heavenly bodies did not work like machines, the universe would come to a standstill. But in behaving like machines, we must not behave like inert matter. We are intelligent beings and must observe rules as such. The point is not whether the contents of the prayer are always the same or differ from day to day. Even if they are full of variety, it is possible that they will become ineffective. The Gayatri verse among Hindus, the confession of faith (*kalma*) among Mussalmans, the typical Christian prayer in the Sermon on the Mount have been recited by millions for centuries every day; and yet their power has not diminished but is ever on the increase. It all depends upon the spirit behind the recitation. If an unbeliever or a parrot repeats these potent words, they will fall quite flat. On the other hand when a believer utters them always, their influence grows from day to day. Our staple food is the same. The wheat-eater will take other things besides wheat, and these additional things may differ from time to time, but the wheat bread will always be there on the dining table. It is the eater's staff of life, and he will never weary of it. If he conceives a dislike for it, that is a sign of the approaching dissolution of his body. The same is the case with prayer. Its principal contents must be always the same. If the soul hungers after them, she will not quarrel with the monotony of the prayer but will derive nourishment from it. She will have a sense of deprivation on the day that it has not been possible to offer prayer. She will be more downcast than one who observes a physical fast. Giving up food may now and then be beneficial for the body; indigestion of prayer

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recitation was finished every seven instead of every fourteen days, and the chapters were distributed among the days as follows: Friday, 1 and 2; Saturday, 3, 4 and 5; Sunday, 6, 7 and 8; Monday, 9, 10, 11 and 12; Tuesday, 13, 14 and 15; Wednesday, 16 and 17; Thursday, 18".

for the soul is something never heard of.

The fact is that many of us offer prayer without our soul being hungry for it. It is a fashion to believe that there is a soul; so we believe that she exists. Such is the sorry plight of many among us. Some are intellectually convinced that there is a soul, but they have not grasped that truth with the heart; therefore they do not feel the need for prayer. Many offer prayer because they live in society and think they must participate in its activities. No wonder they hanker after variety. As a matter of fact however they do not *attend* prayer. They want to enjoy the music or are merely curious or wish to listen to the sermon. They are not there to be one with God.

(iv)

Prarthana (Gujarati word for prayer) literally means to ask for something, that is, to ask God for something in a spirit of humility. Here it is not used in that sense, but in the sense of praising or worshipping God, meditation and self-purification.

But who is God? God is not some person outside ourselves or away from the universe. He pervades everything, and is omniscient as well as omnipotent. He does not need any praise or petitions. Being immanent in all beings, He hears everything and reads our innermost thoughts. He abides in our hearts and is nearer to us than the nails are to the fingers. What is the use of telling Him anything?

It is in view of this difficulty that *prarthana* is further paraphrased as self-purification. When we speak out aloud at prayer time, our speech is addressed not to God but to ourselves, and is intended to shake off our torpor. Some of us are intellectually aware of God, while others are afflicted by doubt. None has seen Him face to face. We desire to recognize and realize Him, to become one with Him, and seek to gratify that desire through prayer.

This God whom we seek to realize is Truth. Or to put it in another way Truth is God. This Truth is not merely the truth we are expected to speak. It is That which alone is, which constitutes the stuff of which all things are made, which subsists by virtue of its own power, which is not supported by anything else but supports everything that exists. Truth alone is eternal, everything else is momentary. It need not assume shape or form. It is pure intelligence as well as pure bliss. We call It Ishvara because everything is regulated by Its will. It and the law It promulgates are one. Therefore it is

not a blind law. It governs the entire universe. To propitiate this Truth is *prarthana* which in effect means an earnest desire to be filled with the spirit of Truth. This desire should be present all the twenty-four hours. But our souls are too dull to have this awareness day and night. Therefore we offer prayers for a short time in the hope that a time will come when all our conduct will be one continuously sustained prayer.

Such is the ideal of prayer for the Ashram, which at present is far, far away from it. The detailed programme outlined above is something external, but the idea is to make our very hearts prayerful. If the Ashram prayers are not still attractive, if even the inmates of the Ashram attend them under compulsion of a sort, it only means that none of us is still a man of prayer in the real sense of the term.

In heartfelt prayer the worshipper's attention is concentrated on the object of worship so much so that he is not conscious of anything else besides. The worshipper has well been compared to a lover. The lover forgets the whole world and even himself in the presence of the beloved. The identification of the worshipper with God should be closer still. It comes only after much striving, self-suffering (*tapas*) and self-discipline. In a place which such a worshipper sanctifies by his presence, no inducements need be offered to people for attending prayers, as they are drawn to the house of prayer by the force of his devotion.

We have dealt so far with congregational prayer, but great stress is also laid in the Ashram on individual and solitary prayer. One who never prays by himself may attend congregational prayers but will not derive much advantage from them. They are absolutely necessary for a congregation, but as a congregation is made up of individuals, they are fruitless without individual prayers. Every member of the Ashram is therefore reminded now and then that he should of his own accord give himself up to self-introspection at all times of the day. No watch can be kept that he does this, and no account can be maintained of such silent prayer. I cannot say how far it prevails in the Ashram, but I believe that some are making more or less effort in that direction.

III

AHIMSA OR LOVE

The greatest difficulties perhaps were encountered as regards the observance of ahimsa. There are problems of Truth, but it is not very

hard to understand what Truth is. But in understanding ahimsa we every now and then find ourselves out of our depth. Ahimsa was discussed in the Ashram at greater length than any other subject. Even now the question often arises whether a particular act is violent or non-violent. And even if we know the distinction between violence and non-violence, we are often unable to satisfy the demand of non-violence on account of weakness which cannot easily be overcome.

Ahimsa means not to hurt any living creature by thought, word or deed, even for the supposed benefit of that creature. To observe this principle fully is impossible for men, who kill a number of living beings large and small as they breathe or blink or till the land. We catch and hurt snakes or scorpions for fear of being bitten and leave them in some out-of-the-way place if we do not kill them. Hurting them in this way may be unavoidable, but is clearly *himsa* as defined above.

If I save the food I eat or the clothes I wear or the space I occupy, it is obvious that these can be utilized by someone else whose need is greater than mine. As my selfishness prevents him from using these things, my physical enjoyment involves violence to my poorer neighbour. When I eat cereals and vegetables in order to support life, that means violence done to vegetable life.

Surrounded thus as I am by violence on all sides, how am I to observe non-violence? Fresh difficulties are bound to arise at every step as I try to do so.

The violence described above is easily recognized as such. But what about our being angry with one another? A teacher inflicting corporal punishment on his pupils, a mother taking her children to task, a man losing his temper in his intercourse with equals, all these are guilty of violence, and violence of a bad type, which is not easy to tackle. Violence is there where there is attachment on the one hand and dislike on the other. How are we to get rid of it?

The first lesson therefore that we in the Ashram must learn is that although to sever some person's head from his body for the sake of the country or the family or oneself is indeed a violent act, the subtle violence involved in injuring the feelings of other people day in and day out is possibly very much worse than that. Murders committed in the world will seem to be numerous when considered by themselves and not so numerous when compared with the number of deaths due to other causes; but the subtle violence involved in daily

loss of temper and the like defies all attempts at calculation.

We are constantly striving in the Ashram to deal with all these kinds of violence. All of us realize our own weakness. All of us including myself are afraid of snakes, for instance. We therefore as a rule catch them and put them out of harm's way. But if someone kills a snake out of fear, he is not taken to task. There was once a snake in the cowshed, and it was impossible to catch it where it was. It was a risky thing to keep the cattle there; the men also were afraid of working thereabouts. Maganlal Gandhi felt helpless and permitted them to kill that snake. I approved of his action when he told me about it. I believe that even if I had been there on the spot, I could not have done anything other than what he did. My intellect tells me that I must treat even a snake as my kinsman and at the risk of losing my life I must hold the snake in my hands and take it away from those who are afraid of it. But in my heart I do not harbour the necessary love, fearlessness and readiness to die of snake-bite. I am trying to cultivate all these qualities but have not still succeeded in the attempt. It is possible that if I am attacked by a snake, I may neither resist nor kill it. But I am not willing to place anyone else's life in danger.

Once in the Ashram the monkeys made a terrible nuisance of themselves and did extensive damage to the crops. The watchman tried to frighten them by making a show of hurling stones from a sling but in vain. He then actually threw stones and injured and crippled one of the monkeys. I thought this even worse than killing it. I therefore held discussions with co-workers in the Ashram, and finally we took the decision that if we could not get rid of the monkeys by gentle means short of wounding them, we must kill one or two of them and end the nuisance. Before this decision was taken there was a public discussion in the columns of *Navajivan* which may be consulted by the curious.[1]

No one outside India thinks that one should not kill even a violent animal. Some individuals like St. Francis observed this rule, but the common people did not, so far as I am aware. The Ashram believes in the principle, but it is a pity that we have not succeeded in putting it into practice. We have not still acquired the art of doing this. It is possible that many men will have to lay down their lives before this art is mastered. For the present it is only a consummation

[1] *Vide* "Monkey Nuisance", 8-7-1928 and "I have not done any killing", 18-11-1928.

devoutly to be wished for. The principle has long been accepted in India but the practice is very imperfect on account of our laziness and self-deception.

Mad dogs are killed in the Ashram, the idea being that they die after much suffering and never recover. Our people torture mad dogs instead of killing them and deceive themselves into thinking that they observe non-violence. As a matter of fact they only indulge in greater violence.

Non-violence sometimes calls upon us to put an end to the life of a living being. For instance a calf in the Ashram dairy was lame and had developed terrible sores; it could not eat and breathed with difficulty. After three days' argument with myself and my co-workers, I had poison injected into its body and thus put an end to its life.[1] That action was non-violent, because it was wholly unselfish inasmuch as the sole purpose was to achieve the calf's relief from pain. It was a surgical operation, and I should do exactly the same thing with my child, if he were in the same predicament.

Many Hindus were shocked at this, but their reaction to the incident only betrays their ignorance of the nature of ahimsa, which has for us long ceased to be a living faith, and has been degraded into formalities complied with when not very inconvenient.

Here we must take leave of the Ashram experiments with ahimsa as regards sub-human species.

Ahimsa as regards sub-human life is from the Ashram point of view an important aspect but still only one aspect of this comprehensive principle. Our dealings with our fellow-men are still more important than that. The commonest form of human intercourse is either violent or non-violent. Fortunately for humanity non-violence pervades human life and is observed by men without special effort. If we had not borne with one another, mankind would have been destroyed long ago. Ahimsa would thus appear to be the law of life, but we are not thus far entitled to any credit for observing it.

Whenever there is a clash of ephemeral interests, men tend to resort to violence. But with a deliberate observance of non-violence a person experiences a second birth or 'conversion'. We in the Ashram are out to observe ahimsa intelligently. In so doing we meet with numerous obstacles, disappointments and trials of faith. We may not

[1] *Vide* "The Fiery Ordeal", 4-10-1928 and "A young heart", 3-1-1929.

be satisfied with observing ahimsa in deed only. Not to think badly of anyone, not to wish ill to him though we have suffered at his hands, not to hurt him even in thought,—this is an uphill task, but therein lies the acid test of our ahimsa.

Thieves have visited the Ashram from outside, and there have been thieves in the Ashram itself. But we do not believe in inflicting punishment on them. We do not inform the police; we put up with the losses as best we may. This rule has been infringed at times. A thief was once caught red-handed by day. The Ashramite who caught him bound him with a rope and treated him contemptously. I was in the Ashram at the time. I went to the thief, rebuked him and set him free. But as a matter of fact ahimsa demands from us something more than this. We must find out and apply methods which would put a stop to thieving altogether. For one thing we must diminish the number of our 'possessions' so as not to tempt others. Secondly we must bring about a reformation in the surrounding villages. And thirdly the Ashram ministry should be extended in scope so that the bad as well as the good would learn to look upon the Settlement as their own.

We thus find that it is impossible for a man with 'possessions' to observe ahimsa even in the gross meaning of that term. A man of property must adopt measures for its security involving the punishment of whoever tries to steal it. Only he can observe ahimsa who holds nothing as his own and works away in a spirit of total detachment. If there are many such individuals and organizations in society, violence will not be much in evidence. As gunpowder has a large place in a society based on violence and a soldier who can handle it with skill becomes entitled to honour and rewards, even so in a non-violent society self-suffering and self-control are its 'munitions of war', and persons endowed with these qualities are its natural protectors. The world at large has not still accepted ahimsa in this sense. India has accepted it more or less but not in a comprehensive manner. The Ashram holds that ahimsa should be universal in scope, and that society can be built up on the foundations of ahimsa. It conducts experiments with this end in view, but these have not been very successful. I have been unable to cite in this chapter much that would hearten the votary of ahimsa. This does not apply of course to ahimsa as applied to politics, to which I propose to devote a separate chapter.[1]

[1] This remained unwritten.

IV

BRAHMACHARYA OR CHASTITY

This observance does not give rise to ever so many problems and dilemmas as ahimsa does. Its meaning is generally well understood; but understanding it is one thing, practising it is quite another thing and calls forth all our powers. Many of us put forth a great effort but without making any progress. Some of us even lost ground previously won. None has reached perfection. But everyone realizes its supreme importance. My striving in this direction began before 1906 when I took the vow. There were many ups and downs. It was only after I had burnt my fingers at times that I realized the deeper meaning of *brahmacharya*. And then I found that expositions made in books cannot be understood without actual experience, and wear a fresh aspect in the light of it. Even in the case of a simple machine like the spinning-wheel, it is one thing to read the directions for plying it, and it is another thing to put the directions into practice. New light dawns upon us as soon as we commence our practice. And what is true of simple tangible things like the wheel is still more true of spiritual states.

A *brahmachari* is one who controls his organs of sense in thought, word and deed. The meaning of this definition became somewhat clear after I had kept the observance for some time, but it is not quite clear even now, for I do not claim to be a perfect *brahmachari*, evil thoughts having been held in restraint but not eradicated. When they are eradicated, I will discover further implications of the definition.

Ordinary *brahmacharya* is not so difficult as it is supposed to be. We have made it difficult by understanding the term in a narrow sense. Many of us play with *brahmacharya* like fools who put their hands in the fire and still expect to escape being burnt. Very few realize that a *brahmachari* has to control not one but all the organs of sense. He is no *brahmachari* who thinks that mere control of animal passion is the be-all and end-all of *brahmacharya*. No wonder if he finds it very difficult. He who attempts to control only one organ and allows all the others free play must not expect to achieve success. He might as well deliberately descend into a well and expect to keep his body dry. Those who would achieve an easy conquest of animal passion must give up all unnecessary things which stimulate it. They must control their palate and cease to read suggestive literature and to

enjoy all luxuries. I have not the shadow of a doubt that they will find *brahmacharya* easy enough after such renun ciation.

Some people think that it is not a breach of *brahmacharya* to cast a lascivious look at one's own or another's wife or to touch her in the same manner; but nothing could be farther from the truth. Such behaviour constitutes a direct breach of *brahmacharya* in the grosser sense of the term. Men and women who indulge in it deceive themselves and the world, and growing weaker day by day, make themselves easily susceptible to disease. If they stop short of a full satisfaction of desire, the credit for it is due to circumstances and not to themselves. They are bound to fall at they very first opportunity.

In *brahmacharya* as conceived by the Ashram those who are married behave as if they were not married. Married people do well to renounce gratification outside the marital bond; theirs is a limited *brahmacharya*. But to look upon them as *brahmacharis* is to do violence to that glorious term.

Such is the complete Ashram definition of *brahmacharya*. However there are men as well as women in the Ashram who enjoy considerable freedom in meeting one another. The ideal is that one Ashramite should have the same freedom in meeting another as is enjoyed by a son in meeting his mother or by a brother in meeting his sister. That is to say, the restrictions that are generally imposed for the protection of *brahmacharya* are lifted in the Satyagraha Ashram, where we believe that *brahmacharya* which ever stands in need of such adventitious support is no *brahmacharya* at all. The restrictions may be necessary at first but must wither away in time. Their disappearance does not mean that a *brahmachari* goes about seeking the company of women, but it does mean that if there is an occasion for him to minister to a woman, he may not refuse such ministry under the impression that it is forbidden to him.

Woman for a *brahmachari* is not the 'doorkeeper of hell' but is an incarnation of our Mother who is in Heaven. He is no *brahmachari* at all whose mind is disturbed if he happens to see a woman or if he has to touch her in order to render service. A *brahmachari's* reaction to a living image and to a bronze statue is one and the same. But a man who is perturbed at the very mention of woman and who is desirous of observing *brahmacharya*, must fly even from a figurine made of metal.

An ashram, where men and women thus live and work together,

serve one another and try to observe *brahmacharya*, is exposed to many perils. Its arrangements involve to a certain extent a deliberate imitation of life in the West. I have grave doubts about my competence to undertake such an experiment. But this applies to all my experiments. It is on account of these doubts that I do not look upon anyone else as my disciple. Those who have joined the Ashram after due deliberation have joined me as co-workers, fully conscious of all the risks involved therein. As for the young boys and girls, I look upon them as my own children, and as such they are automatically drawn within the pale of my experiments. These experiments are undertaken in the name of the God of Truth. He is the Master Potter while we are mere clay in His all-powerful hands.

My experience of the Ashram so far has taught me that there is no ground for disappointment as regards the results of this pursuit of *brahmacharya* under difficulties. Men as well as women have on the whole derived benefit from it, but the greatest benefit has in my opinion accrued to women. Some of us have fallen, some have risen after sustaining fall. The possibility of stumbling is implicit in all such experimentation. Where there is cent per cent success, it is not an experiment but a characteristic of omniscience.

I now come to a point of vital importance which I have reserved for treatment towards the end of the discussion. We are told in the *Bhagavad Gita* (II.59) that "when a man starves his senses, the objects of those senses disappear from him, but not the yearning for them; the yearning too departs when he beholds the Supreme", that is to say, the Truth or Brahman (God). The whole truth of the matter has here been set forth by the experienced Krishna. Fasting and all other forms of discipline are ineffective without the grace of God. What is the vision of the Truth or God? It does not mean seeing something with the physical eye or witnessing a miracle. Seeing God means realization of the fact that God abides in one's heart. The yearning must persist until one has attained this realization, and will vanish upon realization. It is with this end in view that we keep observances, and engage ourselves in spiritual endeavour at the Ashram. Realization is the final fruit of constant effort. The human lover sacrifices his all for his beloved, but his sacrifice is fruitless inasmuch as it is offered for the sake of momentary pleasure. But the quest of Truth calls for even greater concentration than that of the hyuman beloved. There is joy ineffable in store for the aspirant at the end of the quest. Still very few of us are as earnest as even the

human lover. Such being the facts of the case, what is the use of complaining that the quest of truth is an uphill task? The human beloved may be at a distance of several thousand miles; God is there in the tabernacle of the human heart, nearer to us than the finger nails are to the fingers. But what is to be done with a man who wanders all over the wide world in search of treasure which as a matter of fact is buried under his very feet?

The *brahmacharya* observed by a self-restraining person is not something to be despised. It certainly serves to weaken the force of the yearning for the 'flesh-pots of Egypt'. One may keep fasts or adopt various other methods of mortifying the flesh, but the objects of sense must be compelled to disappear. The yearning will get itself in readiness to go as this process is on. Then the seeker will have the beatific vision, and that will be the signal for the yearning to make its final exit. The treasure supposed to be lost will be recovered. He who has not put all his strength into his effort has no right to complain that he has not 'seen' Brahman. Observing *brahmacharya* is one of the means to the end which is seeing Brahman. Without *brahmacharya* no one may expect to see Him, and without seeing Him one cannot observe *brahmacharya* to perfection. The verse therefore does not rule out self-discipline but only indicates its limitations.

All members of the Ashram, young as well as old, married as well as unmarried, try to observe *brahmacharya,* but only a few will observe it for life. When the young people come to years of discretion, they are told that they are not bound to observe *brahmacharya* any longer against their will, and that whoever feels that he is unable to put forth the requisite effort has a right to marry. And when he makes the request the Ashram helps him in finding out a suitable partner in life. This position is very well understood, and the results have been uniformly good. The young men have persisted in larger numbers. The girls too have done pretty well. None of them married before she was fifteen, and many married only after they were nineteen.

Those who wish to marry with Ashram assistance must rest satisfied with the simplest of religious ceremonies. There are no dinners, no guests invited from outside, no beating of drums. Both bride and bridegroom are dressed in hand-spun and hand-woven khadi. There are no ornaments in gold or silver. There is no marriage settlement and no dowry except a few clothes and a spinning-wheel.

The function hardly costs even ten rupees, and takes not more than one hour. The bride and bridegroom recite in their own language the *mantras* (Vedic verses) of the *saptapadi*[1] the purport of which has already been explained to them. On the day fixed for the marriage, the bride and bridegroom keep a fast, water trees, clean the cowshed and the Ashram well and read the *Gita* before the ceremony. Those who give away the bride also fast until they have made the gift. We now insist that the Ashram will not help to arrange a marriage between members of the same subcaste, and everyone is encouraged to seek his mate outside his own subcaste.[2]

V

NON-STEALING AND NON-POSSESSION OR POVERTY

These two, along with truth, ahimsa and *brahmacharya* that have gone before, constitute the five *mahavratas* (primary observances) of old and have been included in the Ashram observances as they are necessary for one who seeks self-realization. But they do not call for any lengthy discussion.

1. NON-STEALING

To take something from another without his permission is theft of course. But it is also theft to use a thing for a purpose different from the one intended by the lender or to use it for a period longer than that which has been fixed with him. The profound truth upon which this observance is based is that God never creates more than what is strictly needed for the moment. Therefore whoever appropriates more than the minimum that is really necessary for him is guilty of theft.

2. NON-POSSESSION OR POVERTY

This is covered by Non-stealing. We may neither take nor keep a superfluous thing. It is therefore a breach of this observance to possess food or furniture which we do not really need. He who can do without chairs will not keep them in his house. The seeker will deliberately and voluntarily reduce his wants and cultivate progressively simple habits.

Non-stealing and Non-possession are mental states only.

[1] For the meanings of the *mantras, vide* "With bare religious rites",7-3-1926.

[2] The translator has added the following footnote : "This was written in 1932. In 1948 Gandhiji said a marriage could be celebrated in his presence only if one of the parties was a Harijan and the other a caste Hindu".

No human being can keep these observances to perfection. The body too is a possession, and so long as it is there, it calls for other possessions in its train. But the seeker will cultivate the spirit of detachment and give up one possession after another. Everyone cannot be judged by the same standard. An ant may fall from grace if it stores two grains instead of one. An elephant on the other hand will have a lot of grass heaped before itself and yet it cannot be charged with having 'great possessions'.

These difficulties appear to have given rise to the current conception of sannyasa (renunciation of the world), which is not accepted by the Ashram. Such sannyasa may be necessary for some rare spirit who has the power of conferring benefits upon the world by only thinking good thoughts in a cave. But the world would be ruined if everyone became a cave-dweller. Ordinary men and women can only cultivate mental detachment. Whoever lives in the world and lives in it only for serving it is a sannyasi.

We of the Ashram hope to become sannyasis in this sense. We may keep necessary things but should be ready to give up everything including our bodies. The loss of nothing whatever should worry us at all. So long as we are alive, we should render such service as we are capable of. It is a good thing if we get food to eat and clothes to wear; it is also a good thing if we don't. We should so train our minds that no Ashramite will fail to give a good account of himself when testing time comes.

VI

BREAD LABOUR

The Ashram holds that every man and woman must work in order to live. This principle came home to me upon reading one of Tolstoy's essays. Referring to the Russian writer Bondareff, Tolstoy observes that his discovery of the vital importance of bread labour is one of the most remarkable discoveries of modern times. The idea is that every healthy individual must labour enough for his food, and his intellectual faculties must be exercised not in order to obtain a living or amass a fortune but only in the service of mankind. If this principle is observed everywhere, all men would be equal, none would starve and the world would be saved from many a sin.

It is possible that this golden rule will never be observed by the whole world. Millions observe it in spite of themselves without understanding it. But their mind is working in a contrary direction, so

that they are unhappy themselves and their labour is not as fruitful as it should be. This state of things serves as an incentive to those who understand and seek to practise the rule. By rendering a willing obedience to it they enjoy good health as well as perfect peace and develop their capacity for service.

Tolstoy made a deep impression on my mind, and even in South Africa I began to observe the rule to the best of my ability. And ever since the Ashram was founded, bread labour has been perhaps its most characteristic feature.

In my opinion the same principle has been set forth in the third chapter of the *Gita*. I do not go so far as to say that the word *yajna* (sacrifice) there means body labour. But when the *Gita* says that 'rain comes from sacrifice', (verse 14)[1], I think it indicates the necessity of bodily labour. The 'residue of sacrifice' (verse 13)[2] is the bread that we have won in the sweat of our brow. Labouring enough for one's food has been classed in the *Gita* as a *yajna*. Whoever eats more than is enough for sustaining the body is a thief, for most of us hardly perform labour enough to maintain themselves. I believe that a man has no right to receive anything more than his keep, and that everyone who labours is entitled to a living wage.

This does not rule out the division of labour. The manufacture of everything needed to satisfy essential human wants involves bodily labour, so that labour in all essential occupations counts as bread labour. But as many of us do not perform such labour, they have to take exercise in order to preserve their health. A cultivator working on his farm from day to day has not to take breathing exercise or stretch his muscles. Indeed if he observes the other laws of health, he will never be afflicted with illness.

God never creates more than what is strictly needed for the moment, with the result that if anyone appropriates more than he really needs, he reduces his neighbour to destitution. The starvation of people in several parts of the world is due to many of us seizing very much more than we need. We may utilize the gifts of nature just as we choose, but in her books the debits are always equal to the credits. There is no balance in either column.

This law is not invalidated by the fact that men raise bigger

[1] *Vide* "Discourse on the *Gita*".
[2] *ibid*

crops by mechanizing agriculture and using artificial fertilizers, and similarly increase the industrial output. This only means a transformation of natural energy. Try as we might, the balance is always nil.

Be that as it may, the observance best kept in the Ashram is that of bread labour, and no wonder. Its fulfilment is easy with ordinary care. For certain hours in the day, there is nothing to be done but work. Work is therefore bound to be put in. A worker may be lazy, inefficient or inattentive, but he works for a number of hours all the same. Again certain kinds of labour are capable of yielding an immediate product and the worker cannot idle away a considerable amount of his time. In an institution where body labour plays a prominent part there are few servants. Drawing water, splitting firewood, cleaning and filling lamps with oil, sanitary service, sweeping the roads and houses, washing one's clothes, cooking,—all these tasks must always be performed.

Besides this there are various activities carried on in the Ashram as a result of and in order to help fulfilment of the observances, such as agriculture, dairying, weaving, carpentry, tanning and the like which must be attended to by many members of the Ashram.

All these activities may be deemed sufficient for keeping the observance of bread labour, but another essential feature of *yajna* (sacrifice) is the idea of serving others, and the Ashram will perhaps be found wanting from this latter standpoint. The Ashram ideal is to live to serve. In such an institution there is no room for idleness or shirking duty, and everything should be done with right goodwill. If this were actually the case, the Ashram ministry would be more fruitful than it is. But we are still very far from such a happy condition. Therefore although in a sense every activity in the Ashram is of the nature of *yajna*, it is compulsory for all to spin for at least one hour in the name of God incarnated as the Poor (*Daridranarayana*).

People often say that in an institution like the Ashram where body labour is given pride of place there is no scope for intellectual development, but my experience is just the reverse. Everyone who has been to the Ashram has made intellectual progress as well; I know of none who was the worse on account of a sojourn in the Ashram.

Intellectual development is often supposed to mean a know-

ledge of facts concerning the universe. I freely admit that such knowledge is not laboriously imparted to the students in the Ashram. But if intellectual progress spells understanding and discrimination, there is adequate provision for it in the Ashram. Where body labour is performed for mere wages, it is possible that the labourer becomes dull and listless. No one tells him how and why things are done; he himself has no curiosity and takes no interest in his work. But such is not the case in the Ashram. Everything including sanitary service must be done intelligently, enthusiastically and for the love of God. Thus there is scope for intellectual development in all departments of Ashram activity. Everyone is encouraged to acquire full knowledge of his own subject. Anyone who neglects to do this must answer for it. Everyone in the Ashram is a labourer; none is a wage-slave.

It is a gross superstition to imagine that knowledge is acquired only through books. We must discard this error. Reading books has a place in life, but is useful only in its own place. If book-knowledge is cultivated at the cost of body labour, we must raise a revolt against it. Most of our time must be devoted to body labour, and only a little to reading. As in India today the rich and the so-called higher classes despise body labour, it is very necessary to insist on the dignity of labour. Even for real intellectual development one should engage in some useful bodily activity.

It is desirable if at all possible that the Ashram should give the workers some more time for reading. It is also desirable that illiterate Ashramites should have a teacher to help them in their studies. But it appears that time for reading and the like cannot be given at the cost of any of the present activities of the Ashram. Nor can we engage paid teachers, and so long as the Ashram cannot attract more men who are capable of teaching ordinary school subjects, we have to manage with as many such as we have got in our midst. The school and college-educated men who are in the Ashram have not still fully acquired the skill of correlating the three R's with body labour. This is a new experiment for all of us. But we shall learn from experience, and those of us who have received ordinary education will by and by find out ways and means of imparting their knowledge to others.

VII

SWADESHI

At the Ashram we hold that swadeshi is a universal law. A man's

first duty is to his neighbour. This does not imply hatred for the foreigner or partiality for the fellow-countryman. Our capacity for service has obvious limits. We can serve even our neighbour with some difficulty. If every one of us duly performed his duty to his neighbour, no one in the world who needed assistance would be left unattended. Therefore one who serves his neighbour serves all the world. As a matter of fact there is in swadeshi no room for distinction between one's own and other people. To serve one's neighbour is to serve the world. Indeed it is the only way open to us of serving the world. One to whom the whole world is as his family should have the power of serving the universe without moving from his place. He can exercise this power only through service rendered to his neighbour. Tolstoy goes further and says that at present we are riding on other people's backs; it is enough only if we get down. This is another way of putting the same thing. No one can serve others without serving himself. And whoever tries to achieve his private ends without serving others harms himself as well as the world at large. The reason is obvious. All living beings are members one of another so that a person's every act has a beneficial or harmful influence on the whole world. We cannot see this, near-sighted as we are. The influence of a single act of an individual on the world may be negligible. But that influence is there all the same, and an awareness of this truth should make us realize our responsibility.

Swadeshi therefore does not involve any disservice to the foreigner. Still swadeshi does not reach everywhere, for that is impossible in the very nature of things. In trying to serve the world, one does not serve the world and fails to serve even the neighbour. In serving the neighbour one in effect serves the world. Only he who has performed his duty to his neighbour has the right to say, 'All are akin to me'. But if a person says, 'All are akin to me', and neglecting his neighbour gives himself up to self-indulgence, he lives to himself alone.

We find some good men who leave their own place and move all over the world serving non-neighbours. They do nothing wrong, and their activity is not an exception to the law of swadeshi. Only their capacity for service is greater. To one man, only he who lives next door to him is his neighbour. For a second man his neighbourhood is co-extensive with his village and for a third with ten surrounding villages. Thus everyone serves according to his capacity. A common man cannot do uncommon work. Definitions are framed with an eye

to him alone, and imply everything which is not contrary to their spirit. When he observes the law of swadeshi, the ordinary man does not think that he is doing service to any others. He deals with the neighbouring producer, as it is convenient for him. But an occasion may arise when this is inconvenient. One who knows that swadeshi is the law of life will observe it even on such occasions. Many of us at present are not satisfied with the quality of goods made in India, and are tempted to buy foreign goods. It is therefore necessary to point out that swadeshi does not simply minister to our convenience but is a rule of life. Swadeshi has nothing to do with hatred of the foreigner. It can never be one's duty to wish or to do ill to others.

Khadi has been conceived as the symbol of swadeshi, because India has committed a heinous sin by giving it up and thus failing in the discharge of her natural duty.

The importance of khadi and the spinning-wheel first dawned on me in 1908,[1] when I had no idea of what the wheel was like and did not even know the difference between the wheel and the loom. I had only a vague idea of the condition of India's villages, but still I clearly saw that the chief cause of their pauperization was the destruction of the spinning-wheel, and resolved that I would try to revive it when I returned to India.

I returned in 1915 with my mind full of these ideas. Swadeshi was one of the observances ever since the Ashram was started. But none of us knew how to spin. We therefore rested content with setting up a handloom. Some of us still retained a liking for fine cloth. No swadeshi yarn of the requisite fineness for women's saris was available in the market. For a very short time therefore they were woven with foreign yarn. But we were soon able to obtain fine yarn from Indian mills.

It was no easy job even to set up the handloom at the Ashram. None of us had the least idea of weaving. We obtained a loom and a weaver through friends. Maganlal Gandhi undertook to learn weaving.

I conducted experiments at the Ashram and at the same time carried on swadeshi propaganda in the country. But it was like *Hamlet* without the Prince of Denmark so long as we could not spin yarn. At last however I discovered the spinning-wheel, found out spinners and introduced the wheel in the Ashram. The whole story has been

[1] Gandhiji wrote on the subject in *Hind Swaraj*.

unfolded in the *Autobiography*.[1]

But that did not mean that our difficulties were at an end. On the other hand they increased, since such of them as were hidden till now became manifest.

Touring in the country I saw that people would not take to the spinning-wheel as soon as they were told about it. I knew that not much money could be made by spinning, but I had no idea of how little it was. Then again the yarn that was spun would not at once be uniform as well as fine. Many could spin only coarse and weak yarn. Not all kinds of cotton were suitable for spinning. The cotton must be carded and made into slivers, and in carding much depended upon the condition of the cotton. Any and every spinning-wheel would not do. To revive the spinning-wheel thus meant the launching of a big scheme. Money alone could not do the trick. As for man-power too, hundreds of workers would be needed, and these men should be ready to learn a new art, to be satisfied with a small salary and to live out their lives in villages. But even that was not enough. The rural atmosphere was surcharged with idleness and lack of faith and hope. The wheel could make no headway if this did not improve. Thus a successful revival of the wheel could be brought about only with an army of single-minded men and women equipped with infinite patience and strong faith.

At first I was alone in having this faith. Faith indeed was the only capital that I had, but I saw that if there is faith, everything else is added unto it. Faith enlightens the intellect and induces habits of industry. It was clear that all experiments should be conducted at and through the Ashram which indeed existed for that very purpose. I realized that spinning should be the principal physical activity of the Ashram. Thus only could it be reduced to a science. Therefore spinning was at last recognized as a *mahayajna* (primary sacrifice), and everyone who joined the Ashram had to learn spinning and to spin regularly every day.

But *yajna* implies skill in action (कर्मसु कौशलम्)[2] To spin some yarn somehow cannot be called a *yajna*. At first the rule was that the members should spin for at least half an hour every day. But it was soon found that if the spinning-wheel went out of order,

[1] *Vide* "An autobiography".
[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, II, 50

one could not spin even a couple of yards in half an hour. Therefore the rule was modified and members were asked to spin at least 160 rounds, one round being equal to 4 feet. Again yarn was no good if it was not uniform as well as strong. Tests of strength and uniformity were therefore devised, and we have now made such progress that spinning yarn coarser than 20s does not count as *yajna*.

But granted that good yarn is spun, who would make use of it? I was sure from the first that the person who did spinning as a sacrament must not use his own yarn, but I was unable to carry conviction to others. Where was the harm if the spinner paid the wages and purchased his yarn for himself? I deceived myself and agreed that one who paid the wages and bought his own yarn should be considered a spinning-sacrificer. This error has not still been fully rectified. Errors not dealt with a strong hand at their first appearance tend to become permanent, and are difficult to eradicate like chronic diseases.

As a consequence of this *yajna*, spinning has made great strides in India, but it has still to take root in each of our villages. The reason is obvious. My faith was not coupled with knowledge. Some knowledge was acquired after mistakes had been committed. Co-workers have joined me, but are too few for the great task in hand. There are hundreds of workers, but perhaps they have not in them the requisite faith and knowledge. The root being thus weak, one may not expect to enjoy the ripest fruit.

But for this I cannot find fault with anybody. The work is new and wide as the ocean and it bristles with difficulties. Therefore though the result of our activity is not gratifying, it is still sufficient for sustaining our faith. We have every right to hope for complete success. Faithful workers, men as well as women, have joined in adequate numbers and have accumulated a fund of valuable experience, so that this movement is certainly destined not to perish.

Khadi has given rise to quite a number of other activities at the Ashram as well as elsewhere in the country which cannot here be dealt with at any length. Suffice it to say that cotton crops are raised, spinning-wheels are made, cloth is dyed, and simple hand-operated machines are manufactured for all the processes from ginning to weaving. These machines are being improved from time to time. The progress made in producing a more efficient type of spinning-wheel

is a piece of poetry to my mind.

VIII

REMOVAL OF UNTOUCHABILITY

The Ashram was founded in order to serve and if necessary to die in the service of Truth. If therefore while holding that untouchability is a sinful thing, it did not do something positive in order to end it, it could hardly deserve the name of Satyagraha (adherence to Truth) Ashram. Even in South Africa we recognized untouchability as a sin. When the Ashram therefore was founded in India, removal of untouchability easily became one of its major activities.

Within a month of the foundation of the Ashram, Dudabhai applied for admission along with his family. I had no idea that the testing time of the Ashram would arrive so soon. Dudabhai's application was supported by Shri Amritlal Thakkar. I felt bound to admit a family which was recommended by him.

The arrival of Dudabhai was the signal for a storm breaking upon the placid atmosphere of the Ashram.[1] Kasturba, Maganlal Gandhi and Mrs. Maganlal had each of them some scruples in living with so-called untouchables. Things came to such a pass that Kasturba should either observe Ashram rules or else leave the Ashram. But the argument that a woman in following in her husband's footsteps incurs no sin appealed to her and she quieted down. I do not hold that a wife is bound to follow her husband in what she considers sinful. But I welcomed my wife's attitude in the present case, because I looked upon the removal of untouchability as a meritorious thing. No one could uphold untouchability and still live in the Ashram. It would have been extremely painful to me if my wife had had to leave the Ashram, seeing that she had been my companion all these days at the cost of great suffering. It was hard to be separated from her, but one must put up with every hardship that comes his way in the discharge of his duty. I had therefore no hesitation in accepting my wife's renunciation of untouchability not as an independent person but only as a faithful wife.

Maganlal Gandhi's case was harder than mine. He packed up his things and came to me to bid good-bye. But who was I to bid him good-bye? I put him on his guard. I told him that the Ashram was his

[1] *Vide* also "An Autobiography—Partt V, Chapter X", 3-2-1929.

creation as much as mine, and would be destroyed if he left it. But he certainly did not want that it should perish. He did not need to seek my permission to leave an institution which he himself had brought into existence. But to leave the Ashram should be something unthinkable for him. This appeal did not fall on deaf ears. Perhaps Maganlal had thought of leaving in order to give me a free hand. I could endure to be separated from all the world besides but not from Maganlal. I therefore suggested that he should go to Madras with family. He and his wife would learn more of weaving there and would have more time to ponder over the situation that had developed. So they went and lived in Madras for six months. They mastered the art of weaving and after mature consideration also washed their hearts clean of untouchability.[1]

The internal storm thus blew over. But there was a storm outside the Ashram too. The chief person who financed the Ashram discontinued his assistance. There was even a possibility that the Ashramites should not be allowed any more to draw water from the neighbour's well. But all difficulties were surmounted by and by. As regards finance, something happened which was not unlike Narasinha Mehta's *hundi* (bill of exchange) being honoured at Dvaravati. A sum of thirteen thousand rupees was received from an unexpected source. Thus the Ashram ordeal in keeping Dudabhai at any cost was not so severe as it might well have been. The Ashram passed that test as regards its opposition to untouchability. 'Untouchable' families come to the Ashram freely and live in it. Dudabhai's daughter Lakshmi has become a full member of the family.

Three callings followed by the so-called untouchables are practised in the Ashram, and improved methods are devised in each. Everyone in the Ashram has in turn to do sanitary service, which is looked upon not as a special calling but a universal duty. No outside labour is engaged for this work, which is carried on on lines suggested by Dr. Poore. Night-soil is buried in shallow trenches and is thus converted into manure in only a few days. Dr. Poore says that the soil is living up to a depth of twelve inches. Millions of bacteria are there to clean up dirt. Sunlight and air penetrate the ground to that depth.

[1] The translator has condensed the story here. Gandhiji records that Maganlal and his family returned to the Ashram along with Manilal who had gone to Madras to learn hand-weaving.

Therefore night-soil buried in the upper layer readily combines with the earth.

Closets are so constructed that they are free from smell and there is no difficulty in cleaning them. Everyone who visits them covers the night-soil with plenty of dry earth, so that the top is always dry.

Then again we have handloom weaving. Coarse khadi was manufactured in Gujarat by Harijan weavers only. The industry was almost on the verge of destruction, and many weavers were compelled to take up scavenging for a living. But now there has been a revival of this handicraft.

Thirdly we have tanning. We shall deal with it in the chapter on the Ashram dairy.

The Ashram does not believe in subcastes. There are no restrictions on interdining and all Ashramites sit to dinner in the same line. But no propaganda in favour of interdining is carried on outside the Ashram, as it is unnecessary for the removal of untouchability, which implies the lifting of bans imposed on Harijans in public institutions and discarding the superstition that a man is polluted by the touch of certain persons by reason of their birth in a particular caste. This disability can also be removed by legislation. Interdining and intermarriage are reforms of a different type which cannot be promoted by legislation or social pressure. The Ashramites therefore feel themselves free to take permitted food with everyone else but do not carry on any such propaganda.

Schools are established and wells sunk for Harijans through the Ashram which chiefly finds the finance for such activities. The real anti-untouchability work carried on in the Ashram is the reformed conduct of the Ashramites. There is no room in the Ashram for any ideas of high and low.

However the Ashram believes that varnas[1] and ashrams[2] are essential elements of Hinduism. Only it puts a different interpretation on these time-honoured terms. Four varnas and four ashramas are an arrangement not peculiar to Hinduism but capable of world-wide application, and a universal rule, the breach of which has involved humanity in numerous disasters. The four ashrams are *brahm-*

[1] The four castes

[2] The four stages of life

acharya, garhasthya, vanaprasthya and sannyasa. *Brahmacharya* is the stage during which men as well as women prosecute their studies, and should not only observe *brahmacharya* but should also be free from any other burden except that of studies. This lasts till at least the twenty-fifth year, when the student becomes a householder if he wishes. Almost all the students thus become householders. But this stage should close at the age of fifty. During that period the householder enjoys the pleasures of life, makes money, practises a profession and rears a family. From fifty to seventy-five wife and husband should live apart and wholly devote themselves to the service of the people. They must leave their families and try to look upon the world as a big family. During the last 25 years they should become sannyasis, live apart, set to the people an example of ideal religious life and maintain themselves with whatever the people choose to give them. It is clear that society as a whole would be elevated if many carried out this scheme in their lives.

So far as I am aware, the ashrama arrangement is unknown outside India, but even in India it has practically disappeared at present. There is no such thing now as *brahmacharya*, which is intended to be the foundation of life. For the rest we have sannyasis, most of them such only in name, with nothing of sannyasa about them except the orange robe. Many of them are ignorant, and some who have acquired learning are not knowers of Brahman but fanatics. There are some honourable exceptions but even these well-conducted monks lack the lustre we love to associate with sannyasa. It is possible that some real sannyasis lead a solitary life. But it is obvious that sannyasa as a stage in life has fallen into desuetude. A society which is served by able sannyasis would not be poor in spirit, unprovided even with the necessaries of life, and politically dependent, as Hindu society is at present. If sannyasa were with us a living thing, it would exert a powerful influence on neighbouring faiths, for the sannyasi is a servant not only of Hinduism but of all the faiths of mankind.

But we can never hope to see such sannyasis unless *brahmacharya* is observed in the country. As for *vanaprasthya*, there is no trace of it. The last stage we have to consider is that of the householder. But our householders are given to unregulated self-indulgence. Householders in the absence of the three other ashramas live like brutes. Self-restraint is the one thing which differentiates man from beast, but it is practised no longer.

The Ashram is engaged in the great endeavour to resuscitate the four ashramas. It is like an ant trying to lift a bag of sugar. This effort though apparently ridiculous is part of the Ashram quest of truth. All the inmates of the ashram therefore observe *brahmacharya*. Permanent members must observe it for life. All the inmates are not members in this sense. Only a few are members, the rest are students. If this effort is crowned with success, we may hope to see a revival of the ashrama scheme of life. The sixteen years during which the Ashram has functioned are not a sufficiently long period for the assessment of results. I have no idea of the time when such assessment will be possible. I can only say that there is nothing like dissatisfaction with the progress achieved up to date.

If the ashrama scheme has broken down, the plight of the varnas is equally bad. At first there were four varnas (classes); but now there are innumerable sections or only one. If we take it that there are as many varnas as there are castes and subcastes, their name is Legion; on the other hand if, as I think, varnas have nothing to do with caste, there is only a single varna left and that is the Shudra. We are here not finding fault with anybody but only stating the facts of the case. Shudras are those who serve and are dependent upon others. India is a dependency; therefore every Indian is a Shudra. The cultivator does not own his land, the merchant his merchandise. There is hardly a Kshatriya or a Brahmin who possesses the virtues which the Shastras attribute to his varna.

My impression is that there was no idea of high and low when the varna system was discovered. No one is high and no one is low in this world; therefore he who thinks he belongs to a high class is never high-class, and he who believes himself to be low is merely the victim of ignorance. He has been taught by his masters that he is low. If a Brahmin has knowledge, those who are without it will respect him as a matter of course. But if he is puffed up by the respect thus shown to him and imagines himself to belong to a high class, he directly ceases to be a Brahmin. Virtue will always command respect, but when the man of virtue thinks much of himself, his virtue ceases to have any significance for the world. Talents of all kinds are a trust and must be utilized for the benefit of society. The individual has no right to live unto himself. Indeed it is impossible to live unto oneself. We fully live unto ourselves when we live unto society.

No matter what was the position in ancient times, no one can

nowadays go through life claiming to belong to a high class. Society will not willingly admit any such claim to superiority, but only under duress. The world is now wide awake. This awakening has perhaps given rise to some licence, but even so public opinion is not now prepared to accept any distinctions of high and low, which are being attacked on all sides. There is ever increasing realization that all are equal as human souls. The fact that we are all the creatures of one God rules out all ideas of high and low. When we say that no one is high-born or low-born, it does not mean that all have or ought to have equal talents. All have not equal talents, equal property or equal opportunities. Still all are equal like brothers and sisters of different dispositions, abilities and ages.

If therefore the varna system is a spiritual arrangement, there cannot be any place in it for high and low.

Thus there are four varnas, all equal in status, and they are determined by birth. They can be changed by a person choosing another profession, but if varnas are not as a rule determined by birth, they tend to lose all meaning.

The varna system is ethical as well as economic. It recognizes the influence of previous lives and of heredity. All are not born with equal powers and similar tendencies. Neither the parents nor the State can measure the intelligence of each child. But there would be no difficulty if each child is prepared for the profession indicated by heredity, environment and the influence of former lives; no time would be lost in fruitless experimentation, there would be no soul-killing competition, a spirit of contentment would pervade society and there would be no struggle for existence.

The varna system implies the obliteration of all distinctions of high and low. If the carpenter is held to be superior to the shoemaker and the pleader or doctor is superior to both of them, no one would willingly become a shoemaker or carpenter and all would try to become pleaders or doctors. They would be entitled to do so and to be praised for doing so. That is to say, the varna system would be looked upon as an evil and abolished as such.

But when it is suggested that everyone should practise his father's profession, the suggestion is coupled with the condition that the practitioner of every profession will earn only a living wage and no more. If the carpenter earns more than a shoemaker and the pleader or doctor more than both, everyone would become a lawyer

or doctor. Such is the case at present, with the result that hatred has increased and there are more lawyers and doctors than are necessary. It may be that society needs the lawyer or doctor even as it needs the shoemaker and the carpenter. These four professions are here taken only as illustrations and for comparison. It would be irrelevant to stop to consider whether society has particular need or no need at all for this, that or the other profession.

This principle then is an integral part of the varna system, that learning is not a trade and may not be used in order to amass riches. Therefore in so far as his ministrations may be necessary, the lawyer or doctor ought by practising his profession to earn only a living wage. And such was actually the case formerly. The village vaidya (physician) did not earn more than the carpenter but only a living wage. In short the emoluments of all crafts and professions should be equal and amount to a living wage. The number of varnas has no sanctity about it; their value is due to the fact that they define the duties of man. Varnas may be supposed to be one or more just as we like. The scriptures enumerate four of them. But when once we have assigned equal status to all, it makes little difference whether we think that there are four of them or that there is only one.

Such is the varna system which the Ashram is trying to resuscitate. It is like Dame Partington with her mop, trying to push back the Atlantic Ocean. I have already mentioned its two fundamental principles, namely, that there are no high and low, and everyone is entitled to a living wage, the living wage being the same for all. In so far as these principles win acceptance, they will render a positive service to society.

It may be objected that if such a plan is accepted there will be no incentive for the acquisition of knowledge. But the object with which knowledge is acquired nowadays tends to corrupt it, and therefore the absence of an incentive will be entirely beneficial. Knowledge truly so called is intended for one's salvation, that is to say, service of mankind. Whoever has a desire to render service will certainly try to equip himself with the requisite knowledge, and his knowledge will be an ornament to himself as well as to society. Again when the temptation to amass riches is removed, there will be a change for the better in the curriculum of studies as well as in the methods of education. There is much misuse of knowledge at present. This misuse will be reduced to the minimum in the 'new order'.

Even then there will be scope for competition in trying to be good and helpful. And there will be no discontent or disorder as all will receive a living wage.

Varna is wrongly understood today. That wrong understanding must make way for the principles outlined above. Untouchability must go, and varnas should have nothing to do with interdining or intermarriage. A person will dine with and marry whom he likes. But as a rule he will marry someone who belongs to the same varna as himself. But if he marries a person belonging to another varna, his act will not count as a sin. A person will be boycotted not by the varna but by society at large when his conduct justifies such a measure. Society will be better constituted than it is at present, and the impurity and hypocrisy which infest it now will be dislodged.

IX

AGRICULTURE

This department of Ashram activities owes its existence to Maganlal Gandhi. But for him I would not have had the courage to take up agriculture at all, although an ashram without it would be something like *Hamlet* without the Prince of Denmark. For we had not the requisite skill and environment for it as I thought. Agriculture is a very big undertaking and would call for a lot of land, money and man-power. I was afraid that it would distract our attention from other necessary things which could be done and would not wait. But Maganlal was insistent and I yielded to him. 'Let me do it', he said, 'if only for my own diversion'. Maganlal hardly ever argued with me. He thought it his duty to carry out my ideas. If he did not understand them or if he disagreed, he would tell me so. If even then I stuck to my plans, he would take it that they were correct, and execute them. In fact he believed that an ashram without agriculture was something not to be thought of, and he would have had to make out a case for his belief. Instead he put forward the supreme argument of love and the Ashram launched upon agriculture. Most of the trees in the Ashram were planted by Maganlal or at his instance.

I still have my doubts about agriculture. Even today I cannot claim that it is a full-fledged Ashram activity. But I am not sorry for what little cultivation of the soil is done in the Ashram. A considerable amount of money has been sunk in it. It is not possible to show that it is self-supporting. However I am inclined to think that this much farming was necessary for the Ashram. No farming, no Ashram; for it

must grow its own vegetables and fruit as far as possible. Indeed later on Maganlal took a vow that he would restrict himself to the use of Ashram-grown vegetables. An ashram should acquire the capacity to grow its own food grains and grass for the cattle. It may not carry on agricultural research, but an ashram without its farm would look like a face without the nose.

The Ashram farm is only in an experimental stage. It has not much to teach anybody. it is intended to impart only an elementary knowledge of agriculture. At first there was not a single tree in the Ashram, but now there are many trees, planted with a view to their utility. Vegetables are grown as well as some fruit and fodder. Night-soil is used as manure with satisfactory results.

Ancient ploughs are used as well as modern improved models, water is pumped from wells by methods which can be followed in villages. We are rather partial to ancient implements which are suitable for the poor farmer. They may be susceptible of some slight improvement, but nothing definite can be said about it, as the Ashram has not the time to apply its mind to the subject.

X

DAIRY

The Ashram ideal is to do without milk, as it holds that the milk of animals like meat is no food for mankind. For a year and more no milk or ghee was used in the Ashram, but as the health of the children as well as the adults suffered under this regimen, first ghee and then milk had to be added to the Ashram dietary. And when this was done, it was clear that we must keep cattle in the Ashram.

The Ashram believes in *goraksha* (cow-protection) as a religious duty. But the word *goraksha* savours of pride. Man is incompetent to 'protect' animals, being himself in need of protection from God who is the Protector of all life. The word *goraksha* was therefore replaced by *goseva* (cow-service). But as the experiment of doing without milk or ghee and thus serving the cow without any selfish considerations did not succeed, cattle were kept in the Ashram. We had buffaloes as well as cows and bullocks at first, as we had not yet realized that it was our duty to keep cows and bullocks only to the exclusion of the buffalo.

But it became clear day by day that cow-service alone at present stood for the service of all sub-human life. It is the first step beyond which we have not the resources to go for the time being. Again cow-

slaughter is very often the cause of Hindu-Muslim tension. The Ashram believes that it is not the duty of a Hindu, nor has he the right to take away a Muslim's cow by force. There is no service to or protection of the cow in trying to save her by force; on the other hand it only expedites slaughter. Hindus can save the cow and her progeny only by doing their duty to her and thus making her slaughter a costly act which no one can afford to do. Hindu society does not discharge this duty at present. The cow suffers from neglect. The buffalo gives more and richer milk than the cow, and keeping a buffalo costs less than keeping a cow. Again if the buffalo brings forth a bull calf, people do not care what becomes of him because buffalo 'protection' or 'service' is not a religious duty for them. Hindu society has thus been short-sighted, cowardly, ignorant and selfish enough to neglect the cow and has installed the buffalo in her place, injuring both of them in the process. The buffalo's interest is not served by our keeping her, but lies in her freedom. To keep the buffalo means torturing its bull calf to death. This is not the case in all the provinces, but where the buffalo bull is useless for agricultural purposes as in Gujarat for instance, it is doomed to a premature death.

On account of these considerations, buffaloes were disposed of and the Ashram now insists on keeping cows and bullocks only. Improvement of breed, increasing the quantity and enriching the quality of milk by giving various feeds, the art of preserving milk and extracting butter from it more easily, least painful methods of castrating bull calves,—all these things are attended to. It is in an experimental stage, but the Ashram does believe that the cow will pay for its keep if she is well treated and all her products are fully utilized.

Many perhaps are not aware that a man cannot simply afford to keep a cow, and slaughter is inevitable so long as that is the case. Mankind is not so benevolent that it will die to save the cow or allow it to live on itself as a parasite. The cattle population at present is so large that if it is well fed, the human population will not have enough food left for itself. We must therefore prove the proposition that the cow if well kept is capable of greater production.

If this proposition is to be proved, Hindu society must discard some superstitions masquerading as religion. Hindus do not utilize the bones, etc., of dead cows; they do not care what becomes of cattle when they are dead. Instead of looking upon the occupation of a tanner as sacred, they think it unclean. Emaciated cattle are exported to and slaughtered in Australia where their bones are converted into

manure, their flesh into meat extract and their hides into boots and shoes. The meat extract, the manure and the shoes are then re-exported to India and used without any compunction.

This stupidity makes for the destruction of the cow, and puts the country to huge economic losses. This is not religion but the very negation of it. Tanning has therefore been introduced in the Ashram. None of us is still a skilled tanner. No tanner from outside who would keep the Ashram rules has been available. But all the same tanning is an integral part of Ashram industry and we have every hope that it will be developed and propagated like spinning. The cow will cease to be a burden to the country only if dead cattle are fully utilized. Even then there will not be any profits. Religion is never opposed to economics, but it is always ranged in opposition to profits. If the cow is to pay for its keep, dead cattle should not be allowed to go to waste or to swell the profits of large-scale tanneries. This cannot be done by force. But Hindu society should keep the cow, treat her and her progeny well so long as they are alive, cherish them in their old age, and fully utilize their carcases when they are dead. Thus alone can the cow be saved, and in saving her we shall perhaps learn how to save the rest of the sub-human creation. Thanks to our ignorance, laziness and hatred, the cow today is hastening to her destruction. As for the other cattle, the less said about them the better.

The Ashram suggests that all goshalas and pinjrapoles should be organized religiously and scientifically. The rich should have their own goshalas and insist on using cow's milk and ghee only. Trading in cow's milk should be looked upon as a sin, and the well-to-do should manage public goshalas so as to make both ends meet. The cow would then soon be saved.

The Ashram at present has a limited object in view: to conduct a model goshala at the Ashram, to breed good cows and bullocks, to utilize their carcases fully when they are dead so as to show that cow-keeping is an economic proposition, to train workers and provide for their employment upon the completion of their training. This work is going on at present. There are many difficulties, but we are fully confident of success.

XI

EDUCATION

The word is here used in a special as well as the current sense. The Ashram experiment in education was a trial for us as

nothing else was.

We saw at once that the women and children in the Ashram should be taught to read and write, and a little later on that there should be similar facilities for even the illiterate men that came to the Ashram. Those who had already joined the Ashram could not undertake to teach. If capable teachers were to be attracted to the Ashram, the rule of *brahmacharya* had to be relaxed in their case. The Ashram was therefore divided into two sections, the teachers' quarters and the Ashram proper.

Human beings cannot overcome their weakness all at once. As soon as the two sections came into being, a feeling of superiority and inferiority poisoned the Ashram atmosphere in spite of all our efforts to scotch it. The Ashramites developed spiritual pride, which the teachers could not tolerate. This pride was an obstacle in the attainment of the Ashram ideal and therefore an aspect of untruth as well. If *brahmacharya* was to be observed in its perfection, the division was inevitable. But the *brahmacharis* had no reason to think too highly of themselves. It may be that the *brahmacharis* who sinned mentally in spite of themselves were retrogressing while those who did not claim to be *brahmacharis* but liked *brahmacharya* were making progress. This was clear to the intellect but it was not easy for all of us to put it into practice.

Then again there were differences of opinion as regards the method of education which gave rise to difficulties in administration. There were bitter discussions, but at last all calmed down and learned the lesson of forbearance. This was in my view a triumph of truth, the goal of all Ashram endeavour. Those who held divergent views harboured no evil intentions in their minds, and were indeed grieved at the divergence. They wished to practise truth as they saw it. Their partiality for their own stand-point came in the way of their giving due weight to the arguments of their opponents, Hence the quarrels which put our charity to a severe test.

I have my own perhaps peculiar views on education which have not been accepted by my colleagues in full, and here they are:

1. Young boys and girls should have co-education till they are eight years of age.

2. Their education should mainly consist in manual training under the supervision of an educationist.

3. The special aptitudes of each child should be recognized in

determining the kind of work he or she should do.

4.The reasons for every process should be explained when the process is being carried on.

5. General knowledge should be imparted to each child as he begins to understand things. Learning to read or write should come later.

6. The child should first be taught to draw simple geometrical figures, and when he has learnt to draw these with ease, he should be taught to write the alphabet. If this is done he will write a good hand from the very first.

7.Reading should come before writing. The letters should be treated as pictures to be recognized and later on to be copied.

8. A child taught on these lines will have acquired considerable knowledge according to his capacity by the time he is eight.

9. Nothing should be taught to a child by force.

10. He should be interested in everything taught to him.

11. Education should appear to the child like play. Play is an essential part of education.

12. All education should be imparted through the mother tongue.

13. The child should be taught Hindi-Urdu as the national language, before he learns letters.

14. Religious education is indispensable and the child should get it by watching the teacher's conduct and by hearing him talk about it.

15. Nine to sixteen constitutes the second stage in the child's education.

16. It is desirable that boys and girls should have co-education during the second stage also as far as possible.

17. Hindu children should now be taught Sanskrit, and Muslim children Arabic.

18. Manual training should be continued during the second stage. Literary education should be allotted more time according to necessity.

19. The boys during this stage should be taught their parents' vocation in such a way that they will by their own choice obtain their

livelihood by practising the hereditary craft. This does not apply to the girls.

20. During this stage the child should acquire a general knowledge of world history and geography, botany, astronomy, arithmetic, geometry, and algebra.

21. Each child should now be taught to sew and to cook.

22. Sixteen to twenty-five is the third stage, during which every young person should have an education according to his or her wishes and circumstances.

23. During the second stage (9-16) education should be self-supporting; that is, the child, all the time that he is learning, is working upon some industry, the proceeds of which will meet the expenditure of the school.

24. Production starts from the very beginning, but during the first stage it does not still catch up with the expenditure.

25. Teachers should be paid not very high salaries but only a living wage. They should be inspired by a spirit of service. It is a despicable thing to take any Tom, Dick or Harry as a teacher in the primary stage. All teachers should be men of character.

26. Big and expensive buildings are not necessary for educational institutions.

27. English should be taught only as one of several languages. As Hindi is the national language, English is to be used in dealing with other nations and international commerce.

As for women's education I am not sure whether it should be different from men's and when it should begin. But I am strongly of opinion that women should have the same facilities as men and even special facilities where necessary.

There should be night schools for illiterate adults. But I do not think that they must be taught the three R's; they must be helped to acquire general knowledge through lectures, etc., and if they wish, we should arrange to teach them the three R's also.

Experiments in the Ashram have convinced us of one thing, viz., that industry in general and spinning in particular should have pride of place in education, which must be largely self-supporting as well as related to and tending to the betterment of rural life.

In these experiments we have achieved the largest measure of success with the women, who have imbibed the spirit of freedom

and self-confidence as no other class of women have done to my knowledge. This success is due to the Ashram atmosphere. Women in the Ashram are not subject to any restraint which is not imposed on the men as well. They are placed on a footing of absolute equality with the men in all activities. Not a single Ashram task is assigned to the women to the exclusion of the men. Cooking is attended to by both. Women are of course exempted from work which is beyond their strength; otherwise men and women work together everywhere. There is no such thing as *purdah* or *laj*[1] in the Ashram. No matter from where she has come, a woman, as soon as she enters the Ashram, breathes the air of freedom and casts out all fear from her mind. And I believe that the Ashram observance of *brahmacharya* has made a big contribution to this state of things. Adult girls live in the Ashram as virgins. We are aware that this experiment is fraught with risk but we feel that no awakening among women is possible without incurring it.

Women cannot make any progress so long as there are child marriages. All girls are supposed to be in duty bound to marry and that too before menstruation commences, and widow remarriage is not permitted. Women, therefore, when they join the Ashram, are told that these social customs are wrong and irreligious. But they are not shocked as they find the Ashram practising what it preaches.

Not much of what is usually called education will be observed in the Ashram. Still we find that the old as well as the young, women as well as men are eager to acquire knowledge and complain that they have no time for it. This is a good sign. Many who join the Ashram are not educated or even interested in education. Some of them can hardly read or write. They had no desire for progress so long as they had not joined the Ashram. But when they have lived in the Ashram for a little while, they conceive a desire for increasing their knowledge. This is a great thing, as to create a desire for knowledge is very often the first step to be taken. But I do not regret it very much that there are insufficient facilities in the Ashram calculated to satisfy this desire. The observances kept in the Ashram will perhaps prevent a sufficient number of qualified teachers from joining it. We must therefore rest satisfied with such Ashramites as can be trained to teach. The numerous activities of the Ashram may come in the way of their acquiring the requisite qualifications at all or at an early date. But it

[1] Veil

does not matter much, as the desire for knowledge can be satisfied later as well as sooner, being independent of a time-limit. Real education begins after a child has left school. One who has appreciated the value of studies is a student all his life. His knowledge must increase from day to day while he is discharging his duty in a conscientious manner. And this is well understood in the Ashram.

The superstition that no education is possible without a teacher is an obstacle in the path of educational progress. A man's real teacher is himself. And nowadays there are numerous aids available for self-education. A diligent person can easily acquire knowledge about many things by himself and obtain the assistance of a teacher when it is needed. Experience is the biggest of all schools. Quite a number of crafts cannot be learnt at school but only in the workshop. Knowledge of these acquired at school is often only parrot-like. Other subjects can be learnt with the help of books. Therefore what adults need is not so much a school as a thirst for knowledge, diligence and self-confidence.

The education of children is primarily a duty to be discharged by the parents. Therefore the creation of a vital educational atmosphere is more important than the foundation of numerous schools. When once this atmosphere has been established on a firm footing the schools will come in due course.

This is the Ashram ideal of education which has been realized to some extent, as every department of Ashram activity is a veritable school.

XII

SATYAGRAHA

The various activities of the Ashram have already been covered more or less. The Ashram came into existence to seek the Truth by adhering to truthful conduct. And while doing so, if we are required to use the weapon of satyagraha, the Ashram may experiment with it, may explore its rules and limitations. The broad framework of these rules has also been discussed.

But what are the limits of satyagraha? When can this weapon be employed with vigour? Man's adherence to truth is also satyagraha. It is not this form of satyagraha that is being discussed here. I am examining its utility as a weapon against an opponent.

Such satyagraha can be offered against associates, relatives, society, the State and the world. At the root of it . . .[1]

Ashram Observances in Action; also from the Gujarati in *Satyagrahashramno Itihas*.

171. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

July 12, 1932

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

It is enough that you apologized to Lakshmidevi; there is no need to fuss over it. You can come over whenever you get leave. The renunciation that we value is mental; it is not going into the forest. Without it nothing is complete, At present these is no question of going to Wardha. It may be considered after Vinoba is released. 'Never say die even if it costs your life.'

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 350. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

172. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

July 13, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

You will please excuse me for worrying you again over my troubles. Major Bhandari told me yesterday that, in answer to my letter of the 9th instant, he was to inform me that there was no delay either in your office or Major Bhandari's in attending to my correspondence as soon as it was received from the Government. This I knew. My inquiry was exactly about the Government's procedure. I have been permitted to write letters to friends outside and fellow-prisoners, including those at Yeravda whether male or female. I have written to the latter as regularly as to my people at the Ashram. There is no use my writing to the fellow-prisoners in this Jail if my letters and theirs are not exchanged quickly. The letters naturally relate to mutual welfare and the welfare of those in whom they and I are interested.

The same thing applies to the Ashram letters.

[1] This section ends here abruptly.

Some of the letters I receive from others are from my standpoint important. Whether they are regarded by the authorities as important or otherwise, I should not like to lose them.

My experience of past imprisonment is that when the correspondence goes to the Government, it takes time to receive attention. In 1930, in the commencement my letters were sent to the Government and I know that they took nearly six weeks before I could get the first batch given to me and this after repeated requests. Subsequently Major Martin, the then Superintendent, was empowered to deal with the correspondence and naturally there was no delay. Of course I can have nothing to say as to who examines my correspondence. What I am concerned about is:

(1) What are exactly the revised instructions about my correspondence?

(2) How long shall I have to wait before I receive my letters and before what I write is posted?

(3) Shall I continue to receive back those letters which may be rejected, and as before be given the reasons for rejection?

(4) Will the letters and parcels withheld from me be treated as my property and cared for and delivered to me whenever I may be discharged?

I shall thank you to forward this letter to the Government and procure for me an early reply.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40), Pt. I, p. 257

173. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 14, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter of 7th instant came to hand this morning, (14th). Just now things are all upside down so far as my correspondence is concerned. All of it goes to the Government. What happens then I do not know. I am inquiring. Such is prison life. It is a good discipline in patience.

I am glad my letters gave some consolation to Damodardas

and his wife. I hope they are now out of the wood. What kind of a woman is Prem Kunver? Is she brave enough to face these tremendous losses?

I am keeping quite well. The weight now stands at 105½ The pain in the elbow is at a standstill. It is just possible that the ointment they are now trying may cure the elbow. But whether it does or not, there is nothing to worry over.

Yes, Pyarelal is sure to profit by a temporary abstention from salt. Your experiment, if it continues to yield good results, will be taken up by many. Pyarelal will surely try it. But nothing definite can be said about it until you have gone on with it for at least a year.

The papers say you are on the move. Strange you should have received the order when the police must have known you were about to leave Bombay.[1] They must have received orders before your projected departure could have come to their notice.

Vallabhbhai has now added Sanskrit studies and spinning to the envelope- making. He is most diligent in his Sanskrit studies and although new to the Gandiva wheel, is easily drawing 180 rounds of 20 counts.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6231. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9697

[1] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, Mirabehn explains: "Just as I was packing up go to and see Rajendrababu at Chapra, I received a notice ordering me to leave Bombay. I did not change my plans, but went on the day already fixed for my departure".

174. LETTER TO M.A. KHAN[1]

July 14, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your admonition. You do not expect me to argue with you. I fear that as a prisoner, I would not be permitted to enter into argument over political matters. But I can[2] tell you that deep thinking in the solitude of a jail has not induced a change in my outlook.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

MOULVI SAHEB M. A. KHAN
KOTWAL STREET BAZAAR 3
FEROZEPUR CANTT.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 185

175. LETTER TO A. VELUSAMI

July 14, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 7th instant. I never got yours of 12th March last.

There can be no manner of doubt that this universe of sentient beings is governed by a Law. If you can think of a law without its giver, I would say that the Law is the Law-Giver, i.e., God. When we pray to the Law, we simply yearn after knowing the Law and obeying

[1] The addressee had written: "You do not understand politics. Leave it to the Aga Khan and persons like Sastri and Mr. Sapru. You should retire to the Himalayas and admit your mistake." Gandhiji had written to him in his own hand. Mahadev Desai has reported the following conversation about this letter between Sardar Patel and Gandhiji:

SARDAR: Why did you write a reply to this abusive letter in your hand?

BAPU: To a person like him I must write in my own hand.

SARDAR: Because he has abused you? This is what makes many people think too highly of themselves.

BAPU: I do not think this has done us any harm. (*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, "The Indian Franchise", 16-12-1895.)

[2] *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. I has "may".

it we become what we yearn after. Hence the necessity for prayers. Though our present life is governed by our past, our future must by that very law of cause and effect be affected by what we do now. To the extent therefore that we feel the choice between two or more courses, we must make that choice.

Why evil exists and what it is are questions which appear to be beyond our limited reason. It should be enough to know that both good and evil exist. And as often as we can distinguish between good and evil, we must choose the one and shun the other.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

VELUSAMI
SIVAGANGA

From a photostat: G.N. 7947. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(3), Pt. II, p. 183

176. LETTER TO SUDHIR KUMAR SEN GUPTA[1]

July 14, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I took up goat's milk because I had vowed not to take buffalo's or cow's milk. Physiologically there is little difference between the three. It would have been better from the ethical standpoint if I could have resisted the temptation to take goat's milk. But the will to live was greater than the will to obey the ethical code. My views on the ethics of milk food remain unchanged. But I see that there is no effective vegetable substitute for milk. you should not give it up.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. SUDHIR KUMAR SEN GUPTA
C/O BABU RAJANIKANTA SEN GUPTA
PLEADER
HOOGHLY P. O.
BENGAL

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt.II, p. 185. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. I, p. 291

[1] The addressee, a Bengali boy, had written: "You had taken the vow to give up milk. But after that you took goat's milk. Did you see any special advantage in it? I am a rice- eater. From what thing other than milk can I derive nourishment?"

177. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

July 16, 1932

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I got your letter. I had asked you to write to me anything about yourself if you wished to do so. If I can share from here your joys and sorrows, I should like to do so. I cannot write anything regarding the Conference. Respectful greetings from us all to Grandmother. Does anyone stay with Gokibehn? I wrote to her some days ago.[1] My blessings to Sumati.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 4797. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarjee

178. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 16, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got today, Saturday, your mail which ordinarily I should have got on Tuesday. We should regard it as God's grace that I got it at all. But we should understand that things have become uncertain now. You will probably have received my letters by now. All of you are having experience of the practice of non-attachment, and so are we here. What could a prisoner do if he was not permitted to write or receive any letters or see visitors? If, then, he is granted some little freedom, why should he expect too much because of that? If, therefore, you stop getting my letters, you should conclude that something must have happened. I will of course go on writing regularly about something or other.

It was a very good thing that the inmate of the Raniparaj Ashram was cremated. If you have come to know his age, let me know, and also if you know of what he died.

Narmada's[3] story reads like an incident in a novel. From here I cannot guide either you or her. If necessary, you may consult Bhai

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Gokibehn", 8-7-1932.

[2] Addressee's wife

[3] Narmadabehn Rana; she was ill-treated by her in- laws and was rescued by Shambhushankar Trivedi of Saurashtra who brought her to the Ashram.

Mavalankar[1] about the matter or, if he cannot get any time or if he is not there, consult Bhai Tulsidas or Fulshankar, the lawyer. In the lastanalysis this is a question of what is right from the point of view of dharma. You may, therefore, do what you think dharma requires. You have done perfectly right in writing to her husband.

If Chhotubhai[2] stays for the present in the Ashram to look after his aged father, we may perhaps welcome the latter, However, we cannot let it become a practice for inmates of the Ashram who have invalid relations to bring them to the Ashram. If we do that, the Ashram would be disrupted. This is a difficult time and Chhotubhai's father has already arrived, and so I have suggested a *via media*. If Chhotubhai does not stay in the Ashram, the Ashram should certainly not accept the responsibility of looking after his father.

If, through some unavoidable reason, Hariyomal's[3] son cannot come to the Ashram, I do not think it would be too big a sum to send fifteen rupees every month for him. We have given such help on several occasions. The rule, of course, is what you say it is. But we should think whether it should be applied in Hariyomal's case. Since you know more facts about this matter than I, you may attach what weight you think my opinion deserves and do only what seems right to you.

For Anandi and Mani, follow Dr. Kanuga's[4] advice. I cannot say that taking milk has benefited my elbow in any way.

Think very carefully over the article about prayer[5] which I am sending with this. You will find it very easy to understand. If you understand it, you will also be able to explain its meaning to others. I see from my experience that, instead of our time being wasted in that way, our mind seems to become lighter and we feel less the burden of work or responsibility. These days I think frequently about prayer, and especially about individual prayer. Rambha[6] had taught me to pray when I was a mere child, and so prayer has become a most natural thing for me. But I still see short-comings in me. If perfect wakefulness is achieved, the grandeur of that state would make

[1] Ganesh Vasudev Mavalankar
[2] Khadi student at the Ashram
[3] A Sindhi inmate who worked at the Ashram farm
[4] Dr. Balwantrai Kanuga
[5] *Vide* "Individual Prayer", 17-7-1932.
[6] Gandhiji's nurse; *vide* "An Autobiography—Part I, Chapter X", 3-2-1929

everything else seem meaningless.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8239. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

179. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

July 16, 1932

CHI. NARMADA,

If what has been written to me on your behalf is true, that does you credit. No human being can protect your chastity. You alone can do that. And if you have complete faith in God, you may rest assured that it will be protected. Ask the women in the Ashram to explain to you the meaning of the first versein the women's prayer. Though the prayer was addressed by Draupadi, it is meant for all women. Don't look upon it as merely the prayer of a woman one or two thousand years ago. It can protect, like a shield, [the honour of] any woman who is in distress.

I cannot advise you from here whether you should go to a court or not. I cannot even decide that. I must know all the relevant circumstances. On this matter, therefore, you should follow the advice of somebody whom you trust. But in any case you must have confidence in your mind that, no matter where you are taken and kept, you can protect your chastity without anybody's help. You may be certain that such confidence will give you the necessary strength. If, however, you have resolved to live as a virgin for your whole life, you should study further and keep your mind engaged in some work of service.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2757. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak.

180. LETTER TO SHAMBHUSHANKAR TRIVEDI

[*July 16, 1932*][1]

DEAR SHAMBHUSHANKAR,

Received your letter. See what I have written in Narandas's letter[2] regarding Narmada. In such matters I cannot give any advice from here. Where a pleader requires to be consulted, he should be consulted. This is wisdom. After that if the Ashram has to do anything, Narandas has full authority, He may do whatever his duty dictates. See the letter I am writing to Narmada.

Blessings from

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40), p. 319

181. INDIVIDUAL PRAYER

July 17, 1932

Though I have already written once on this subject,[3] I feel that I should again write something about its importance. It seems to me that one reason why people feel no interest in community prayers may be that they do not realize the necessity of individual prayer. The idea of community prayers arose from the individual's need for prayer. If individuals do not feel such a need, how can a community? Community prayers also are for the benefit of individuals. They help people in their effort to attain knowledge of the self—for self-purification; It is, therefore, necessary that all of us should understand the importance of individual prayer, As soon as a child learns to understand things, its mother ought to teach it to pray. This practice is common to all religions.

There are at least two clear times for such prayer, that is, we should turn our mind to the Lord within immediately on awakening in the morning and when closing our eyes for sleep in the evening. During the rest of the day, every man and woman who is spiritually awake will think of God when doing anything and do that with Him as witness. Such a person will never do anything evil, and a time will

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 16-7-1932.
[3] *Vide* "Prayer", 19-7-1932.

come when he or she will think every thought with God as witness and as its Master. This will be a state in which one will have reduced oneself to a cipher. Such a person, who lives constantly in the sight of God, will every moment feel Rama dwelling in his heart.

For such prayers, no special *mantra* or *bhajan* is necessary. Though generally a *mantra* is recited at the commencement and conclusion of every religious act, that is not at all necessary. We have only to turn our thoughts to God, no matter by what name we call Him, by what method and in what condition. Very few form such a habit. If most people followed this practice, there would be less sin and evil in this world and our dealings with one another would be pure. In order that we may attain such a pure state, everybody should pray at least at the two times which I have mentioned. Each person may fix other hours, too, according to his convenience, and gradually increase their frequency so that, ultimately his every breath will be accompanied with Ramanama.

Such individual prayer consumes no time at all. It requires not time but wakefulness. As we don't feel that the unceasing action of blinking consumes any time, so also we do not feel that praying inwardly does. But we are aware that the eye-lids are doing their work; similarly prayer should go on constantly in our heart. Anybody who wishes to pray in this manner should know that he cannot do with an impure heart. He must, therefore, banish all impurity from his heart when praying. As one feels ashamed of doing anything wicked when being observed by somebody, so also should one feel ashamed of acting similarly in the sight of God. But God watches every action and knows every thought of ours. Hence there can be no moment when we can do anything or think any thought unobserved by Him. Thus, anybody who prays to God with his heart will in the end become filled with Him and so become sinless.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U. / II

182. LETTER TO KUSUMBEHN DESAI

July 17, 1932

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

I got your letter. It does not answer all my questions. I cannot remember now your replies to my questions put to you orally, It would not be proper for me to write anything on the basis of [my

impression of] your replies. That is why I put down the questions in writing. But I will not trouble you further. I shall see what I can do on the basis of the material you have supplied. The description which you have given of your condition is sad, but I do not despair. I am confident that you are vigilant. And since you are also striving to the best of your ability, I should like you to have trust that you will get some day the required strength. If you lose faith in yourself, other people's faith is hardly to help you.

All three of us keep well. We spend a good deal of our time in studies.

Writing and receiving letters has become uncertain now.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1842

183. LETTER TO MOHAN N. PARIKH

July 17, 1932

DEAR MOHAN,

I was glad that you wrote to me. Tell me in your next letter how you spent the *ekadashi*[1] day. Uncle Mahadev sends his blessings to you, and Sardar also would send his if you give him your respects in your letter. I forget, I see that you have done that. So accept his blessings too.

Improve your handwriting There should be no blots.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9181

184. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

July 17, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

Should we not believe that you are unlucky? I sent the birthday blessings by return of post, but the letter[2] itself was held back here. I don't know if it was posted yesterday. What good do blessings

[1] Eleventh day of the lunar fortnight; traditionally a day of fasting for Hindus.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Pramabehn Kantak", 30-6-1932.

conveyed in a letter do? You should be satisfied if my heart showered blessings on you, which it certainly did. We never know how a person feels in his heart. It is the heart which matters; all else is false.

You must cure the pain in your back. It can have some connection with your monthly periods. Are they normal? I feel the same doubt about Anandi; Mani and Mangala. Talk with the girls and find out. It is probably time for Mani to begin to have menses. I remember that she was three years old when she was brought to the Ashram. She should be sixteen now. Mangala, too, may be of the same age. Know from them all the facts.

If any of the women who have joined the Ashram recently can write, ask them to write to me. Get into close contact with Narmada. Her story is a painful one.

I do not know the life of President Wilson. I am told that he was a good man and that his motives were sincere.

The last War seems to have done no good. Moral bonds have weakened and hatred has increased. The war mentality is not less strong today than it was before the War and the lure of power and pelf has become stronger.

We can certainly pray for some person or with a material aim, and such prayer may even be rewarded. But prayer which is inspired by no such motive is probably more beneficial to the *atman* and the world. Prayer produces an effect on oneself, that is, it awakens further the Indwelling Spirit and, as the latter becomes more and more awakened, the area of its influence becomes wider. What I have said above about the heart is applicable here. Prayer is a matter of the heart. Saying it aloud and similar other activities are intended to awaken the heart. The Infinite Power which exists outside us also exists inside us and is equally infinite there. The body is no obstacle to Its operation. The obstacle is created by us. Prayers remove that obstacle. We do not know in any particular instance whether or not our prayers have answered our wish. If I pray for Narmada to be delivered from her suffering and if she becomes free from it, I should not assume that that was the result of my prayer. Such prayer is never in vain, but we do not know how it bears fruit. Moreover, when the effect for which we had prayed follows, we need not believe that it is necessarily for our good. In this matter, too, we should follow the path shown in the *Gitabodh*. Prayers should be offered in a spirit of non-attachment. Even when we have prayed for some person, we can

remain, unconcerned with the result. We may pray for a person to be delivered from his suffering because we think that is for his good, but we should remain unconcerned whether or not he becomes free. Because the effect is the opposite of what we had prayed for, we need not believe that our prayers have not been answered. Tell me if you want me to explain the matter still further.

Remember about the list of Urdu books which I have asked you to send. It is quite uncertain now when you will get this letter and when I shall get your reply. We should however cultivate and feel certainty in the midst of uncertainty.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10294. Also C.W. 5750. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak.

185. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

July 17, 1932

DEAR DEVDAS,

Received your letter dated 30th June, written on the back of the Urdu letter of Hamid Ali, yesterday noon, that is, on the 16th July, Nowadays my post has become very irregular. It comes to me after taking a big round. It must be said to be my good fortune that I get it in spite of that—what rights a prisoner has? Imprisonment means absence of rights. As I take the meaning of imprisonment to be this I can keep my mind steady. Similar is the case with visits. For the most part you will be able to see Mahadev. But there cannot be prepared a timetable as you think. Either you should take the risk of not being granted an interview or you should give up the desire of visiting him. I would have been glad no doubt to see you and Lakshmi if I could, but the step taken by me certainly seems to be proper. Ba will feel the shock the most. But she is born to endure shocks. All those who form or keep connections with me must pay a heavy price. It can be said that Ba has to pay the heaviest. I have this much satisfaction that Ba has lost nothing by it.[1]

As soon as I received a telegram about Varadachari I also wired

[1] This paragraph has been collated with the Gujarati in *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. I.

to him[1] I also wrote letters. I got receipt of my wire also by wire through Rajaji. Yesterday I received a letter from Lakshmi to that effect; in it there is no receipt of my letter[2] on the subject. But my post about that time went the wrong way.

None of us had the idea that you are to be released in September. It does not seem that you will be transferred from there, though I got a detailed report of your health from H.E. the Governor. I hope that your health will not suffer now. The presence of Hanumanprasad proved to be much peace- giving to me. I find from Hamid Ali's letter that he had sent *Ramacharcha* also. I am reading it. I read the stories about martyred lad, agriculture, alchemist, etc. It is true that I could not understand some words. Otherwise there was no difficulty. I have not got yet the book[3] on *arogya*, i.e., sanitation, from anywhere. It will be better if *Al-Faruk* is not received from Delhi. We had a copy in the Ashram. I have asked for it. I will read it after I finish *Ramacharcha* I like it. I now remember to have read it before. I find the meanings I had noted down in it. It is not wrong if this book is read two-three times. You must be writing to Hamid Ali and others in English. You must form a habit to write in Urdu. My idea is to write a short letter in Urdu to him. His handwriting resembles that of a professional writer. He must be a professional writer. We have lost the art of writing. It is still preserved in Urdu.

The reason why I am taking milk is the (persuasion of the) Superintendent of this place. He was disturbed and my health had a little bit given way and hence I am taking milk. There was no necessity for it. It was likely that the health would become normal soon. But I thought it wise not to carry on experiments here. I do not see any benefit of taking milk in particular for the present. The weight which had gone down had increased, that is, it is $105\frac{1}{2}$ lb. It had gone to 103 lb. I do not see any effect of taking milk on the hand. The pain was already there when I was taking milk. But this pain cannot be said to afflict me. Because it aches only when the elbow is given a particular movement. When that movement is stopped there is no pain. Such movement is (almost) stopped. There is no cause for anxiety at all.

[1] *Vide* " Telegram to C. Rajagopalachari",5-7-1932

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Lakshmi", 7-7-1932.

[3] *Guide to Health; Vide* "Letter to Indu N. Parekh", 17-7-1932.

Vallabhbhai has begun spinning on the Gandiva spinning-wheel and also the study of Sanskrit. When he heard that Rajaji was studying it, he became enthusiastic over it. He has begun the study in right earnest. He had sent for the 24 parts of Satavlekar's guide. He has finished (in six days) the first part thereof. Now he is reading the second part. His study is going on very briskly. The books by Satavlekar are on the whole good. They are easy to learn. Perhaps you must have seen and read them also. My study of Urdu, astronomy and political economy is going on. At intervals I read some religious books also. As for instance I read *Vaidik Vinay* of Abhay Sharma.[1] Now I am reading a book called *Swadhyaya Samhita*.[2] It contains selections from the Vedas and other books, and below them there is translation in Hindi. Mahadev is learning French and reads something else also. He writes for me if there is anything. He devotes one hour for Vallabhbhai. He also cooks bread for me. I take bread instead of the bread from the bakery. There is no chaff in the bread from the bakery, while it is contained in the bread prepared at home. That is the reason of going back to the *roti*. I am writing letters with my own hand because mostly while observing silence I am writing letters. I also get most of them written (by someone). Whatever I write I do not feel any difficulty in writing with my right hand. I am not allowed to write with the left hand, and hence I use the right hand. I am writing the history of the Ashram during leisure.[3] I hope to finish it in a short time. I am spinning on the Magan spinning- wheel.

Jalbhai Naoroji can now move about. He has escaped just from death.

I have returned Rajaji's letter to you. I am wondering about your letter dated 2nd June. I will cause a search to be made here again.Whatever (blessings) you like from my companions.

Blessings from

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II. p. 331. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. I, pp. 296-7

[1] Abhaydev Sharma, Acharya, Gurukul, Kangri
[2] By Vaidikmuni Hariprasadji
[3] *Vide* "History of the Satyagraha Ashram", 11-7-1932.

186. LETTER TO MADALASA BAJAJ

July 17, 1932

CHI. MADALASA[1],

The word *abhiman*[2] connotes an undesirable quality, whereas *swabhiman*[3] connotes a good one. If you think yourself an important person being a big man's daughter, you would be *abhimani*[4] If, however, somebody tries to insult you but you are not intimidated by him, you will be said to have preserved your *swabhiman or swaman.* Why doesn't Om[5] write?

Kamala[6]of course, I must not expect to write.

Babu[7] must be growing very fast now. Does he still love to eat plenty of sweets?

Don't be lazy in writing to me. Ask Balkrishna[8] to write too.

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 313

187. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

July 17, 1932

DEAR RAMESHWARDAS,

The adjective dear' must have been written by mistake. I cannot make one my 'dear'. He who wishes to be my 'dear' ought to wear a chain[9] on the neck. He cannot escape under the pretext of weakness. You appear to be pucca bania. You escape, (bringing) in the pretext of weakness wherever (possible). How can such (a man) become my 'dear'? If the observance of the fast of the eleventh day is in name only, God and society may be humbly told that you have no strength to observe a fast. But you cannot fight shy of it thus. The few vows

[1] Daughter of Jamnalal Bajaj
[2] Pride
[3] Self- respect
[4] Proud
[5] Sisters of the addressee.
[6] *ibid*
[7] Addressee's younger brother, Ramakrishna
[8] Balkoba, younger brother of Vinoba Bhave
[9] The source has "put on a necklace"

which may have been taken should be firmly adhered to and fully observed. From this, enormous strength may be created.

Now Vinoli[1] must be happy. Make arrangements about Ram as he says. A father should not pass on his own weakness to his descendants, He must safeguard their interest as far as he can. Dasharatha[2] preferred death and allowed Rama to go out into the jungle. Remembering this, acquire strength.

Blessings from

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 313

188. LETTER TO LAKSHMI

July 17, 1932

DAUGHTER LAKSHMI,

I have received your letter. Devdas had sent a wire to me in respect of Varadachari and so I wrote a letter[3] to you which you must have received (by now). Along with it a letter (each) was sent for Anna and Papa. What further consolation can I give? All (our) sufferings vanish when we entertain no fear of death and consider it as our greatest friend. Why should we grieve since the soul is deathless? This idea should be strengthened. Well, I hope Narasimhan[4] has not hastened to you. If he has, tell Anna that he should go back.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. LAKSHMI
GANDHI ASHRAM
TIRUCHENGODU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Part II, p. 339

[1] Presumably Vinoba; *vide* "Letter to Rameshwardas Poddar", 21-7-1932.
[2] King of Ayodhya, father of Rama
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Lakshmi", 7-7-1932.
[4] Addressee's brother

189. LETTER TO KHODIDAS H. SHAH

July 17, 1932

BROTHER KHODIDAS,

It you have taken a vow, it is your duty (religion)[1] to observe it

MOHANDAS

MR KHODIDAS H. SHAH
ROJID
KATHIAWAR

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 301

190. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

July 17, 1932

BOYS AND GIRLS,

Why is the holiday of the eleventh of the bright half of *Ashadha* (regarded) a special holiday? It has been known so far that the holiday of the eleventh day is for fasting. But Premabehn seems to have discovered something. Explain to her. My complaint is not in regard to the observing of the holiday in a new way. I want [you] to understand its significance. A student should try to realize the significance of anything he does.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No 800 (40) (3), Part II, p. 309

[1] Presumably the original had "dharma".

191. LETTER TO MANI

July 17, 1932

DEAR MANI[1],

I thought you would never fall ill, then how is it that you fell ill again? You do not write letters now. Do you like to stay at the Ashram? Why did you come away from Mother? Write to me everything in detail. Write also openheartedly what your desires are.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II p. 311

192. LETTER TO ANANDI

July 17, 1932

DEAR ANANDI,

It seems you are again down with fever. Why do you not find out the cause? Now you are taking Dr. Kanuga's pills. Let me know what is their effect. You must continue to write whether you receive mine or not.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II p. 311

193. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

July 17, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

We do not know if people meditated upon Bharata and Rama during their lifetime. Experience tells us that people are worshipped only after their death. It is a different thing that they are honoured while they are still alive. We may not call it *dhyana*[2] A living human being can certainly not be regarded as perfect. And, worship and *dhyana* would be appropriate only with reference to perfect beings. It would be harmful to worship one who has faults or who is likely to do something wrong, for we would become like those whom we

[1] Youngest daughter of Lakshmidas Asar

[2] Meditation

meditate. I do not have the power nor the wish to perform miracles as Christ did. How can there be any comparison between him and me? He was a very great man indeed. Write to Bhai that he should write to me.

You must conitinue to put on weight.

Do you not realize the difference between the bodily structure of man and woman? Whatever differences you see can be seen, one may say, with the naked eye. A man has moustaches, a woman has none. A woman bears children, a man does not. A woman suckles her child, a man does not. Are these differences not plain enough to be clear to everyone? And this means a little difference in their functions and training.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9954. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

194. LETTER TO CHHOTUBHAI

July 17, 1932

DEAR CHHOTUBHAI[1],

Received your letter. If just now you continue to remain at the Ashram for looking after your father, then there will be no objection to his staying there; otherwise I am of opinion that the Ashram will not be able to look after him and at such a time such a burden should not be allowed to fall on the Ashram. After thinking over the account received from you about his constipation, I see only one remedy and it is that unless he observes 10-15 fasts at a stretch, his stomach will not be cleansed. But only he and you can say if he has strength to do so. His strength does not mean his bodily strength, but his strength of mind. Even if he observes fast, some treatment must be taken side by side, that is, drinking a good deal of water and taking enema daily.

It does not seem that your father knows how to write, because the whole letter has been written by you. And so I do not write separately to him.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, pp. 315-7

[1] The source has "Chhonbhai";*vide* however, "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 16-7-1932.

[2] Of Jamia Millia

195. LETTER TO HAMID ALI KHAN

July 17, 1932

BROTHER HAMID ALI,

Devdas has sent your letter to me for perusal. I am grateful to you for the books sent to me. I am still reading *Ramacharcha (*i. e., life of Rama). I have finished other books. All the three books have pleased me. There was not much difficulty in understanding them. Please do not send *Al-Faruq* (life of Faruq, the 2nd Caliph of Islam) as I have got it with me (here). But do send some other books which in your opinion may be quite all right for me. Convey *vandemataram* to all the brothers of the Jamia.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[PS.]

I have not as yet got *Guide to Health*[1] I have written to Devdas about it. I am very sorry to hear about the burning of the press.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 337

196. LETTER TO INDU N. PAREKH

July 17, 1932

DEAR INDU.

If you are well, certainly attend the prayers. Sitting here I cannot know (anyting) about your demand. Do as Narandas asks you to do. Has your life been made regular? Can you concentrate your mind on study? Has the confusion of your mind lessened? Has (it) begun to understand its responsibility? Think abnout all these things.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 309

[1] An Engish version, published in India, of the Gujarati articles contributed by Gandhiji to *Indian Opinion* in 1913.

197. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

July 18, 1932

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your letter. Do not fret, if you don't hear from me at the expected moment. My correspondence has been upset a bit. I am hoping that the matter will be soon put right. However, a prisoner has got to be satisfied with facilities that may be given to him for the natural satisfaction of his healthy wants.

When you see the invalid sister, you must tell her I often think of her. I wonder if you ever visit that little school[1] in your neighbourhood for defective children. I thought the institution had earnest workers. If you have the time, I would like you to know more of the institution and its managers and tell me how it progresses.

You tell me how desolate Bajaj's house looked for want of the woman's touch. I have always considered this a result of our false notions of division of work between men and women. Division there must be. But this utter helplessness on the man's part when it comes to keeping a household in good order and woman's helplessness when it comes to be a matter of looking after herself (more here than in the West) are due to erroneous upbringing. Why should man be so lazy as not to keep his house neat, if there is no woman looking after it, or why should a woman feel that she always needs a man protector? This anomaly seems to me to be due to the habit of regarding woman as fit primarily for housekeeping and of thinking that she must live so soft as to feel weak and be always in need of protection. We are trying to create a different atmosphere at the Ashram. It is difficult work. But it seems to be worth doing.

Remember me and Mahadev to Mrs. Winston when you write to her.

Kisses to the children.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 112. Courtesy: National Archives of India Also *My Dear Child*, pp. 92-3

[1] Gandhiji visited it when he went to England for the Round Table Conference in 1931.

198. LETTER TO PRINCESS EFY ARISTARCHI

July 18, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

I have to thank you once more for your lovely gifts. I have got the beautiful book *The Way of the Cross* with your markings and the crucifixion cards with helpul descriptions and thoughtful quotations made by you at the back.

I hope all your troubles are over and if they are not, God has blessed you with sufficient wisdom to regard them, in the language of one of your quotations, as "blessings in disguise".

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

PRINCESS ARISTARCHI

HOTEL SCHOTZKY

FREIBURG I. B., GERMANY

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 253

199. LETTER TO GANESHDATTA

July 18, 1932

DEAR GANESHDATTAJI,

I have received your book. Prisoners are not permitted to write a foreword.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 251

200. LETTER TO NARHARI DEVSARMA[1]

July 18, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. As you know, it is not open to me to argue about matters political. But I can heartily endorse your remark that all the leaders must bear the natural consequences of their actions.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. NARHARI DEVSARMA
BARRACKPORE TANK ROAD
BARRACKPORE

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, p. 253. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary,* Vol. I, p. 299

201. LETTER TO NATWARLAL

July 19, 1932

DEAR NATWARLAL,

Your letter has been received. It is very good that you have been plying the *takli.* To ply the *takli* does not mcan drawing out a thread. But it is drawing 160 yards of yarn of at least 12 counts of uniform twist per hour so that there may be no difficulty in weaving. One should not have even any confidence about letters from one in jail. Your letter came to my hand today, that is, fourteen days after you wrote it. It remains to be seen when this reaches you. In these circumstances there is no meaning in my replying by return of post. But your vow is such that you must have adhered to it on the ground of not receiving my letter. This will certainly do you good. And if you can pull on without tea and sugar for so many days, how can you not do without them for ever? We know from the lives of crores (of people) in this world that both these things are unnecessary, inasmuch as they are acquainted neither with tea nor sugar. About jail life: the life of one in jail cannot be written at length. But to the

[1] The addressee had said in his letter that the leaders were responsible for the people's suffering.

prisoners whose mind is innocent this life happens to be peaceful and elevating.

Blessings from

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(3), Pt. II, p. 289

202. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVLEKAR

July 19, 1932

BHAI SATAVLEKAR,

I got your letter only today. The Sanskrit Readers came earlier but I was awaiting your letter. May I thank you for the Readers? I have received so many books from you ! *Purushartha* and other things keep coming. You will be gratified to learn that Sardar has completed the first two Readers and has gone on to the third. We are jotting down the errors that come to our notice. We had already decided to inform you of them even before the receipt of your letter. There is no doubt that on the whole the Readers are very well planned. Whatever mistakes we observe will be pointed out to you only with the purpose of enhancing the utility of the series.

My arm does not give too much pain. The left elbow pains only with a particular movement. The Superintendent gave me *Lakshadi* oil to be used for massage but it did no good. In fact, this oil helps only when the pain is caused by rheumatism but the pain in my elbow joint is not reheumatic. So far the doctors have diagnosed it as the result of constant employment of the elbow in plying the charkha. For that reason I have given up using the left arm in spinning for almost a month. It cannot be said that it has resulted in any improvement. So now I am to undergo intensive treatment. There is no cause for worry; my health is, on the whole, good enough.

What you have written about *Vishwaroopadarshanayoga*[1] is quite correct, but it does not in any way contradict what I have written

[1] "Yoga of the Vision of the Cosmic Form" in the *Gita;* the addressee had said in his letter that there was not only poetry in Chapter XI of the *Gita* as Gandhiji had made out, but also the vital truth that God is immanent in all created objects which are only different parts of His body.

in the preface[1] to that chapter. The man who sees the whole world as a manifestation of Vasudeva is bound to have a vision of the Cosmic Form but the Form will be that of his own imagining. A Christian who considers the creation as a divine manifestation will visualize an image to suit his notions. Our way of worship determines the form of God in our mind. One born and bred in the Hindu culture will never tire of reading the eleventh chapter and if he be a devotee, he will be able to picture to himself the magnificent form described therein. Such imagery is not beyond a man's imagination in this world. We may call the divine force as Brahman, *Atman* or Vasudeva, yet it remains formless. Only for the devotee it acquires dimensions; that is its expression and therein lies its poetic appeal. We can make only one deduction which you have already drawn. We must be able to see Vasudeva or God even in a dacoit. When we have acquired the strength to do that, the dacoit will give up his wickedness. And until we acquire this power all our learning and knowledge is worthless. You have not expected my comments upon your writing on *Vishwaroopadarshana*, yet I have written all this as I am engrossed with the same thoughts. It gives me great pleasure to carry on such conversations with you through letters.

I have finished reading '*Vaidik Vinay*' by Abhayji. Now I am reading *Swadhyaya Samhita* by Vaidikmuni Hariprasadji. But I find great difficulty in reading the Vedic hymns. You are acquainted with my knowledge of Sanskrit, it is of the most elementary order, and as regards Vedic Sanskrit it is almost nil. I know this much, that vedic hymns have been interpreted in several ways by different scholars—by Sanatanis in one way, by Arya Samajists in another and by Western scholars in yet another. Even among the sanatanis I find difference of opinion. All Arya Samajists too are not agreed upon the same meaning. You must be remembering the correspondence between yourself and Vaidyaji that I initiated.[2] In the light of all this I feel bewildered when I try to study the Vedic hymns and find myself at a loss to decide upon any interpretation. At present I am memorizing *Ishopanishad*. I think Shankara's interpretation of it differs from that of Aurobindo Babu; and your interpretation that I saw last year while in jail differs from both. I have now received a translation in Gujarati. This and Hariprasadji's translation are again at variance. I have

[1] In the *Anasaktiyoga; Vide* "Letter to Hemprabha Das Gupta", 21-9-1932.
[2] *Vide* Cow-Sacrifice in Vedas", 29-9-1927.

understood this Upanishad in my own way which seems somewhat presumptuous in view of my scanty knowledge of Sanskrit. Is there any work available from which I may learn the rudiments of Vedic grammar and does a collection exist containing different annotations by various scholars? In short, what should a man like myself do when confronted with interpreting correctly the Vedic *mantras?* I have not faith enough in any sect to accept their interpretation as gospel truth. Luckily or unluckily I possess just enough knowledge of Sanskrit to choose from several interpretations available to me. But I have no desire to collect a large library while I am in jail nor do I wish to involve myself in a deep study. *Gita* suffices for my own contentment. But I do like to dabble in the Vedas. Therefore please oblige me by giving whatever information you can. We are all well.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 4763. Courtesy: S.D. Satavlekar

203. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 20, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

Your letter, posted on the 18th, reached me on the 20th. But I don't know what will happen to mine. The officials here tell me that the packet which I had handed over on the 4th was dispatched on the 16th. All the letters are sent to the Secretariat for censoring, and are posted when received back here after being passed. I simply cannot understand why they should do this. I have been trying to find out, of course. I don't know if I shall succeed. We should go on writing to each other as usual and not worry when the letters will reach their destination. We should not think about the matter at all. We should be ready in our minds to face the possibility of the correspondence stopping altogether and be sure that we shall not feel upset even then.

Ask Prabhudas to write to me. Two days ago the doctor permitted me to rotate the Gandiva wheel with the left hand, and so I have started spinning on the Gandiva. I appreciate it all the more after my experience with the Magan spinning-wheel. My yarn became fine immediately and the threads also snapped rarely. I still draw the thread with the right hand. There are some defects in the spinning-wheel, and when I have removed them it will work still more smoothly.

Comparing it with the Magan spinning-wheel, I see that I cannot acquire speed on the latter. Hence I think that for spinning with one spindle only, the Gandiva or the ordinary spinning-wheel is better. For anybody who cannot use either of his hands for drawing the thread or for rotating the wheel, the Magan spinning-wheel is an invaluable invention. Obviously, anyone who can use both his hands can spin more. But we cannot spin yarn of the highest count on it. A few changes may perhaps help us to do it. It is also possible that our speed on it may increase if we make some modificatons so that we can spin on it with one spindle only. But all this requires experimentation. My experience of it in its present form is what I have described it to be. I can say that I have now acquired excellent control over the pedals.

I have been permitted to spin on the Gandiva wheel not because there is any improvement in the condition of my elbow but because complete rest has not benefited it in any way. The assumption behind this is that the pain may not have been caused by the strain of [rotating] the wheel when spinning. I shall know for certain in a few days.

I am happy that Dr. Talwalkar charges two rupees for conveyance and gives a bill for the medicines. If we call him only once or twice in a year, he can afford to charge us nothing, but he cannot afford to do so when he gives us medicines as frequently as he does. He is not so rich. As for conveyance, I think we have been paying it for a long time. Dr. Talwalkar's sending us bills for medicines is likely to have one result. Through laxity we may have been calling him during all this time even when it might not be necessary. If that is so, our laxity should go now.In any case, if we are scrupulous in following dharma, we should feel extremely reluctant to accept anybody's free services. But most people certainly do not behave in that way. Because water costs nothing, we use it freely and do not feel ashamed in doing so. On the contrary, we ask why we should not use it freely when it costs nothing. And as we are careless about using water because it costs nothing, we feel in the same way about other services or things which we get free. This is a violation of our vow of nonstealing, besides being a violation of the vow of ahimsa too.

I have had no letter from Ba. I wrote one letter to her many days ago, to which I got no reply. And so I have not written to her recently.

I simply do not understand what happens to these letters. I will write once again to her, and put the letter[1] with this. If you get it, show it to the Jail Superintendent there and give it to Ba. I hope all those who had got cold have recovered now. There is a wire from Devdas informing me that he had a mild relapse of fever. If you get this letter and if Shanti is there at the time, give him and his wife my blessings and tell him that I was happy that he had gone there. Did he get my letter? I wrote it to him at Rajkot.

It will be enough if you send the slivers, given by Chhakkaddas, to Dahyabhai with anybody who may be going to that side. I have a stock of other slivers with me. It will not matter, therefore, if Chhakkaddas's arrive a little late.

Is Parnerkar's health all right? I am sure Prithuraj[2] is quite well.

It seems to me from your description that Shankarbhai had a narrow escape. Anyone falling from the roof of the kitchen is hardly likely to survive, as the roof is at a fairly good height. I hope his arm is all right now.

I have fully explained my views regarding Sitala Sahay in a previous letter.[3] You will know what they are if you get it. I have also written about Parnerkar's mother,[4] as also about Narmada.[5]

The Jailor informed us that Mahadev's letter to Durga, written on the 11th, was posted on the 14th. But you had not got it till the 18th, from which it seems that the letters are being tampered with there too.

You should assume that for some time now you cannot be certain of getting my letters—as for the future, let us wait and see what happens. You will find more about this in my letter to Premabehn.[6]

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8240. Courtesy: Narandas Gandh

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Kasturba Gandhi", On or After 21-7-1932.
[2] Son of Lakshmidas Asar
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Ganddhi", 6/10-7-1932.
[4] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", June 28/July 4, 1932.
[5] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 16-7-1932.
[6] *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 24-7-1932.

204. TELEGRAM TO SUPERINTENDENT, CENTRAL JAIL, LAHORE

[Before *July 21, 1932*][1]

SUPERINTENDENT
CENTRAL JAIL
LAHORE

HEAR KHURSHEDBAI NAOROJI HAD OPERATOIN. PRAY INFORM ME CAUSE OPERATION AND PRESENT CONDITION.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 9

205. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 21, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

I have before me your letter and postcard. The body will take its toll. We never know when we commit a breach of the laws that govern the body. And in nature as in human law ignorance is no excuse. Your fever therefore does not surprise me.[2] I expect that the energetic remedy adopted by you checked the progress of malaria. Yes at such times services of friends become a boon and induce an early recovery. I know what lavish care is bestowed upon guests in Sivaprasad Babu's[3] home. I am glad you are having these sweet experiences. It makes attacks such as you had not only bearable but even a prized visitation in that they enable one to understand human nature at its best. And when it acts equally towards all and in all circumstances, it approaches the divine.

Your description of Ganga is quite poetic. I felt much the same as you have done. And it was probably the same spot where I was walking. I wrote my impressions for *Navajivan*. This was quite 10 years ago I think.

Milk diet still continues. The weight is 105 $^{1}/_{2}$ lb. It has produced no effect on the elbow. I feel no better than when I was taking

[1] The jail authorities forwarded this to the Home Secretary, Poona, for orders on July 21, 1932.

[2] After her arrival at Varanasi from Chhapra the addressee had a severe attack of malaria.

[3] A Congress leader of Varanasi

almonds and bread. So far as the bowels are concerned, I was most assuredly better under that diet than the milk diet.

I do not know when you will get this letter. The disturbance of my correspondence still continues. The incoming post has become regular but there is much delay about the outgoing post. I am in correspondence with the Government about [it][1]. I cannot understand this sudden disturbance at all. But there it is. Fortunately for the peace of my mind I commenced my career as aprisoner even in South Africa with the assumption that a prisonerhad no rights. If you are still outside prison walls, you will know why you do not get my letters regularly, if you do not.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Remember us to all the friends . If you at all can, try to see Devdas. He is so near you.

SHRIMATI MIRABAI
C/O BABU SIVAPRASAD GUPTA
SEVA UPVAN
NAGWA
BENARES

From a photostat: C.W. 9508. Courtesy: Mirabehn

206. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

July 21, 1932

MY DEAR DEVDAS,

The telegram from Hanumanprasadji today causes anxiety. It seems that there is an attack of fever again. It is stated in the telegram that the attack is a mild one. Hence I believe that by the time you get this letter you must have completely recovered. You must have received the letter (I) wrote before this. Still there is no certainty about the post dispatched by me. It seems that my letters take many days to get through (the scrutiny). The letters are being nicely scrutinized. You must be certainly careful of your health. Whatever the climate, I believe that it can be kept under control by effecting suitable changes in the diet. Write to me why there was a set-back again.

[1] *Vide* letters to Doyle, 9-7-1932; 13-7-1932. and also ; 22-7-1932.

It seems that I get my post regularly again. We all three are happy. Vallabhbhai is learning Sanskrit like an industrious school-boy. He devotes many hours to its study. He has finished two parts and is reading the third. There will be no wonder if he finishes all the 24 parts within four or five months at this rate. Yet, it will be considered a wonder and a miracle if he begins to understand the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* in original.

Blessings from

BAPU

DEVDAS GANDHI
DISTRICT JAIL
GORAKHPUR, U.P.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(3), Pt. II, p. 353

207. LETTER TO SONIRAMJI

July 21, 1932[1]

BROTHER SONIRAMJI,[2]

I am in receipt of your letter.[3] I have heard many interpretations of the occult significance of the sacred thread. But all these interpretations are only guesses. I do not think that all these ideas were present at the time when the sacred thread came into use. Those people who described themselves as Aryans adopted the use of the sacred thread in order to distinguish between Aryans and non-Aryans. This must have happened at the time when the art of making cloth from cotton was discovered. Crores of people merely put on the dhoti then, as they do even now, with the rest of the body uncovered. In any case those who are believed to be non-Aryans did so. The Aryans, therefore, adopted the symbol of the sacred thread in order to encourage and improve the art of spinning and prove that it was sacred work. I have no evidence from history in support of this statement. It is only my conjecture. Today there is no distinction—and there ought not to be any—between Aryans and non-Aryans. An admixture of blood between the races took place thousands of years

[1] From the English translation available in the Bombay Secret Abstracts
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*

ago and the present inhabitants of India are the progeny of such an admixture. If the sacred thread is to be worn to all, all [the castes] should have the right to wear it. I see no meaning in such a movement. For this reason, after giving up the use of the sacred thread I never tried to wear it again nor do I wish to do so. Inasmuch as the practice of wearing the sacred thread is likely to have created the distinction between higher and lower castes, it should be discarded. I would advise Gauri Prasad to give up his infatuation for the sacred thread. It is the sign of a *brahmachari*. If a person observes *brahmacharya* that itself is the best sacred thread. Why is a cotton thread needed?[1]

To keep the water in a well clean it should be covered with a wire-netting. There ought not to be any dirt anywhere around it. The well should be deep and (a certain quantity of) "permanganate of potash" or chlorine should be put into it every month. The quantity (of the drug) to be used should be ascertained from a doctor. In addition to taking these precautions it would be advisable to get the water analysed from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 323-4, and Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. II, pp. 403-5

208. LETTER TO KAPIL

July 21, 1932

DEAR KAPIL,

Received your letter. I am sorry to learn of your health. I think you should quietly improve your health and while improving health whatever service you can render, be satisfied with that.[2] To ply a *takli* is some service. Educate the children who may be in your vicinity or conduct night classes for those who are grown up. This is also service. We should purify ourselves as we advance in years and should not allow a single impure thought to enter our mind. This is, from my

[1] What follows is from the English translation available in Bombay Secret Abstracts.

[2] What follows has been collated with the Gujarati in *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. I.

point of view, a service. And even a man on sick-bed can do this much.[1] You must indeed be observing the rules regarding prayers, etc. Do write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 323, and Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. II, p. 399

209. LETTER TO HANUMANPRASAD PODDAR

July 21, 1932

BROTHER HANUMANPRASAD,

Received your letter as also your telegram today. I shall not feel anxious about Devdas since you are there. Moreover Devdas had written to me that you treated him in a very loving manner. The doctor is really a good man. I shall always expect to receive letters from you from time to time.[2]

The man who resorts to falsehood with a view to acquiring worldly goods or for some other reason in full of attachment and hatred; he cannot possibly reach God.[3] And I consider the other example you have cited as impossible. To tread the path of truth and at the same time to remain aloof from worldly affairs, i.e., from *pravritti* is a thing which is impossible like a flower in the sky. How can one tell what path one follows who keeps away from *pravritti*? To tread the truth in itself involves entrance into *pravritti*. Without *pravritti* there is no occasion for treading or not treading the path of truth. The holy *Gita* in its several verses has made it clear that a man cannot exist even for a moment without *pravritti*. The difference between a devotee and one who is not a devotee is this, that the first remains in *pravritti* with an eye to the highest good and while living in *pravritti* never lets go his hold upon truth and weakens attachments and aversions, while the other lives in a state of infatuation with

[1] What follows is from the English rendering available in Bombay Secret Abstracts.

[2] The following paragraph has been collated with the Hindi in *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. I.

[3] The addressee had asked: "Can a man who resorts to untruth for wordly purposes see God? Or is the beatific vision possible for one who gives up all activities in order to be able to observe the truth?"

pravritti and does not even try to remain aloof from such demoniac actions as falsehood, etc., while pursuing his object. These worldly affairs are not a thing to be looked upon with contempt. It is only through worldly affairs that a vision of the Lord is possible. Those worldly affairs that create infatuation deserve to be looked upon with contempt and always shunned. This is my firm opinion and experience.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 323, and Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. II, p. 401

210. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

[On or after *July 21, 1932*][1]

BA,

None can say what the matter is that you do not receive my letters and I do not receive yours? Hence I have not written any letters at present. When it is not certain that letters would reach you how can I like to write? I do receive information about you. Nimu writes to say that you appear to be losing strength. How is that? Is the food digested?

We are happy here. You must be knowing that I am at present taking milk. There was no special reason fot taking it. The Superintendent here insisted and so I began to take it. I also take *roti* and vegetable. Vallabhbhai has begun to learn Sanskrit, and has also begun to work the spinning-wheel. There is uncertainty about my letters at present and so it cannot be said what the fate of this will be.

Devdas has again fallen ill, but there is nothing to be anxious about.

You may have known of the death of Rajaji's son-in-law. If you have not written a letter of condolence, write one. Blessings to sisters.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800

[1] From the reference to the relapse of Devdas's fever; *vide* also "Letter to Devdas Gandhi", 21-7-1932

211. LETTER TO E.E. DOYLE

July 22, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

I refer to my letter of 13th instant. My son at Gorakhpur too had a relapse. I have written to him a letter[1] that should cheer him. But I have no notion when it will be passed and sent to him. Another to a friend[2] in the Lahore Jail. She has undergone an operation. A third to the sister of the missing Airman Jeejibhoi.[3] Fourth to Shrimati Mirabai Slade[4] who is down with fever at Benares. And I am writing today a postcard[5] to a girl sending her and her people condolences on a family bereavement. All these letters to be of value should surely be sent at once or not at all. But from the manner in which the Ashram post is held up, how can I hope that the foregoing letters will be passed soon? I have a postcard from the Ashram telling me that my letter of 5th July was received there on 20th instant! The letters writtenon the 12th and 19th July have still evidently not been sent. They contain important instructions about ailing inmates and others in distress that has nothing to do with political matters. If the Government do not wish to withdraw their orders conveyed to me about my letters, I should be assured of their quick despatch. This delay in sending my letters to their destination seems to me to be highly unjust to me and hardly becoming for the Government. I have willingly broken no rule about my correspondence. On the contrary I have tried to be meticulously correct in carrying out their instructions. I know no reason for this vexatious change in the disposition of my correspondence.

Could you please forward this to the Government and ascertain their wishes in the matter?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 9

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Devdas Gandhi", 21-7-1932.

[2] Khurshedbehn Naoroji; *vide* "Telegram to Superintendent, Central Jail, Lahore",Before 21-7-1932.

[3] In the entry under date July 21, 1932 in "Diary, 1932", given as the last item in this valume, there is a reference to a letter to Shirinbai; but this letter is not available. *Vide*, however, "Letter to Shirinbai", 26-7-1932.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 21-7-1932.

[5] *Vide* "Letter to Rohinibehn Desai", 22-7-1932.

212. LETTER TO ROHINIBEHN DESAI

July 22, 1932

CHI. ROHINI,

I got a letter from Hamida today. She informs me that your maternal uncle has expired. All of you are being tested severely. Give condolences to Mother or behalf of all of us. Really speaking we should never grieve over death. If we regard death as a friend, then uncle has met a friend. We may, of course, mourn his death because of our selfishness. If, however, we look at the matter in proper light, it is our good fortune that all of us will meet that friend sooner or later. I have heard that Kanjibhai[1] also feels weak. Write to me and give me detailed news. Sardar also is eager to know about his health.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. ROHINIBEHN

C/O SJT. KANAIYALAL NANABHAI DESAI

GOPIPURA, SURAT

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 2658

213. LETTER TO NIRMALABEHN GANDHI

July 22, 1932

DEAR NIMU,

You seem to be a very cunning girl. After showing that you have no time left, you turn the tables on me and say that you would devote as many hours as I would ask you to devote. But I have already written to you that the care you take of children resembles the Ashram work. It does not matter if no note can be kept of that. If from that half an hour even—not to say an hour—is spared, that also can be noted. There is no shame in it.

If Hasu sends Vinay here [*sic*], then it will serve your purpose as well as mine. There will be two girls instead of one. The elder girl has children. But there are two conditions. Either Sumitra[2] may commit theft and be convicted, appear in male guise, be big after being drawn though a machine and appear to be sixteen years of age or she should

[1] Addressee's father, Kanaiyalal Desai

[2] Addressee's daughter

have four instead of two legs and a tail! Then I may be permitted to keep a cat with four feet. Is Sumitra willing to become a cat with four feet and have a tail? If so, take medicine from Gangabehn who is going there, grow (additional) feet and tail and send (her).

Continue to write letters. All your troubles must have disappeared.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. II, p. 397

214. LETTER TO NANDUBEHN B. KANUGA

July 22, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

When I was thinking of writing a letter to you, letters began to rain from you, maybe, on the Sardar. It may rain for any reason, but it must make all wet. The same is the case with us.

I knew that you were of a humorous nature, but I knew only from your letter that you were overflowing with humour. You ask for my blessings, but they are always there.

You have been encouraging the Sardar well, but he is not a soft Bania like me. When he is inspired with courage from the heart, then only he will do what he wants to do. That is the case. Now he is enthusiastic over the study of Sanskrit, i.e., he has fully devoted himself to it. But there is no one here who can take credit[1] for that. His teacher is Mahadev. In addition, comes the Gandiva spinning-wheel. \That also when it occurred to him. So the intentions you have formed to go shares with him are useless. Yes, you can take the share you want from his knowledge of Sanskrit. If you say, we may send the same by wire.

What a shame that a doctor becomes toothless as I am. Tell Haribhai[2] that [the question is] when doctors become ill in whom we should have faith.

[1] The source has 'glory'.
[2] Dr. Haribhai Desai of Ahmedabad

You and Lilavatibehn have lost, it seems, a good deal of your weight.

Blessings from

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. II, pp. 395-7

215. LETTER TO RAGHAVDASJI

July 22, 1932

MAHARAJ RAGHAVDASJI,

I have received the book sent by you. I shall go through it when I get time. Ne review can be sent from the jail. I would, therefore, like to be excused.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. II, p. 365

216. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

July 23, 1932

CHI. KAKA,

I have received you letter after waiting for a long time. As it is heavily censored, I have not been able to get full news about your health. I have of course written to Colonel Doyle about your health. I have suggested to him that he should send you to me, in which case your health will of course improve and we could also study astronomy and even write about it.

My suggestion is twofold. Either Shanker[1] and/or Bal[2] should be sent to you, or you should be sent to me. Shanker is here. He of course wishes to be near you and serve you. I have no direct communication from Bal but I keep getting news about him and the other boys. Someone or another writes from Visapur.

About astronomy my intention and purpose was as you had

[1] Satish Kalelkar, addressee's elder son

[2] Addressee's second son

inferred. It was not in my mind that astronomy helps one to know the hour of the night by looking at the stars, nor was I thinking that the Vedic gods and goddesses are directly connected with planets, stars and constellations. I am familiar with Bhai Hiralal's ideas. I have read all the articles he sent me. All that is interesting. But my interest is of quite a different kind.

Looking at the sky the impression we get of infinity, of purity, of order and of grandeur is one that purifies us. It may perhaps be that on being able to reach the planets and the stars one will get the same experience of good and evil that one gets here on earth. But truly divine is the peaceful influence of their beauty and coolness at this great distance. Also when once we are able to establish communion with the heavens it does not matter where we may happen to be. It then becomes like receiving the Ganga in one's own home. All these thoughts have made me a keen watcher of the infinite skies. So I am acquiring knowledge of astronomy enough for my own satisfaction. At present I have gathered quite a collection of books on the subject. Professor Trivedi has sent me three books[1] by James Jeans. Of them I have read the two bigger ones. I like them both. I have now started a systematic study of astronomy. At present I am reading a book by Kharas. The author, it seems, has taken a good deal of trouble over it. The book is profusely illustrated, which is great help. I find this book interesting because I have already read other books. Had I begun with this book I may not perhaps have liked it. No effort has been made to make it entertaining.

I cannot, as yet, write to you about the kind of book on astronomy which I want in Gujarati, as my ideas on the subject are still taking shape; it would be neither easy nor desirable to indicate a framework at this stage.

It is quite all right that your spinning is reduced. Nothing need be done at the risk of your health.

Vallabhbhai has added to his work of preparing envelopes. He spins ten slivers every day on the Gandiva spinning-wheel and is immersed in the study of Sanskrit. We have sent for all the 24 parts of Satavlekar's series. It is about a fortnight that he started the study and is already finishing the first three parts. This is really good progress. He will probably finish all the parts in four or five months. He aspires

[1] *The Stars in Their Courses, The Universe around Us, Mysterious Universe*

to know enough Sanskrit to be able to read the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*.

Mahadev has reduced his spinning by half. Too much time was taken up in spinning yarn of 40 counts. It was also very tiring for him. His yarn of 40 counts turns out to be very good.

I can't say that my left elbow is completely cured; but with the doctor's permission I have gone back from the Magan spinning-wheel to the Gandiva. But I turn the wheel with my left hand and draw the thread with the right. I haven't sufficient control of the right hand to draw a thread as fine as I would like to. But even then, the thread is finer than the one I could draw on the Magan wheel. My speed also has somewhat increased, and if my left elbow does not betray me, my speed must increase a good deal. I visualize a tug of war between my speed and the fineness of the yarn.

These days, *Satyagrahashramno Itihas*[1] takes up my time. I do not feel like writing anything else before the history is finished. The study of Urdu and of the currency problem and *Swadhyaya Samhita* are of course going on. I may not, therefore, be tempted to write on the characteristics of *daivi sampat*[2]. The idea is yours and I think it is proper that you yourself should write on the subject.

The history of the Ashram is taking a strange shape. I find the task is also difficult. There is in it very little about individuals. I have explained what the Ashram observances are, and how they are being followed. Therein I have written at length on non-violence, varnashrama, bread-labour and *brahmacharya*. Perhaps the work will be finished in a fortnight. I am keeping your suggestions[3] before me. But all your suggestions cannot be incorporated in it. I myself do not know what shape the history will take finally.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9487. Courtesy: D.B. Kalelkar

[1] *Vide* "History of the Satyagraha Ashram", 11-7-1932.

[2] Divine heritage; *vide Bhagavad Gita*, XVI. 1-3.

[3] The addressee had written: "The above letter refers to my suggestions which were about what should be included in the history of the Ashram. I had particularly requested Gandhiji not to spare any of us whose narrow vision and incompetence gave him so much trouble and who were inadequate to carry on the grand experiment in community life for social reconstruction known as the Satyagraha Ashram."

217. SUPERVISION IS NOT NECESSARY[1]

July 24, 1932

This heading will probably shock the readers. I do not intend to suggest through it that we can manage our affairs at present without supervision. But I certainly wish to suggest a way of reducing its degree and doing away with it completely by and by.

If supervision is thought necessary in an institution inspired by the ideals of dharma, to that extent it is deficient in dharma. Supervision implies distrust, and distrust kills the spirit of dharma, it kills the soul. God watches everybody. Why should we then watch anyone? Why should a person who has undertaken to cook or to clean lavatories not do the work carefully unless he is watched? Why should we not trust that he will do it carefully? We may not mind [a rule to the effect that] a person who does not do thoroughly the work which he has undertaken should leave the Ashram, but supervision ought to be unbearable to us. The total quantity of work each person does every day is sufficient supervision over him.

We should understand the meaning of supervision here. A child does require supervision. It will not know how to do a thing, and should be taught to do the work given to it. Even grown-ups who do not know how to do a particular thing will require, may even want, supervision. Really speaking, such supervision is not supervision, but is guidance by a teacher. Novices are able to go forward in their work through the confidence which such guidance gives them.

But the supervision which is a form of watching in order to know whether or not the other person is doing his work properly is blameworthy. Such supervision even over children is a bad thing. We should discover some means of doing away with this blameworthy practice.

This is the first step towards that goal: we should make a list of the activities in which supervision is maintained and note the persons who are working in them. The matter should be discussed with them and they should then be left to their sense of honour. The manager of the Ashram and all the others should fully realize the God watches everything. Children, too, should realize right from now that God is present everywhere. This is not a superstition or a matter of doubt. It

[1] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 20-7-1932; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 20-7-1932.

is as much a fact as our own existence is to ourselves.

Everybody should think carefully over this suggestion It is our moral duty to put it into practice to the utmost extent possible.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

218. LETTER TO E.E. DOYLE[1]

July 24, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

Since writing to you[2] about my correspondence, Major Bhandari has showed me the Government's letter to you on the subject.

I must confess that the letter has come upon me as a shock. It betrays, if I understand it rightly, want of confidence in Indian officials as a class and, naturally therefore, a disregard of the great languages of the country spoken by the millions of its inhabitants. The consequences of the policy are disastrous for those who have to suffer from it. Those who do not know English and cannot afford to pay for English assistance or who are too proud to avail themselves of it are at once put under a disadvantage. My own case is an instance in point. A friend who has visited my ailing son[3] in the Gorakhpur Central Jail tells me that he is anxiously awaiting my letter. I did write to him. But he had not got the letter at the time the friend wrote. My son knows English, but we have never written to each other in English. My wife complains of the absence of my letters. She does not know English. I do not know what happens to her letters to me and mine to her. In my humble opinion the principal languages of

[1] The letter could not be posted the day it was written. Regarding this Mahadev Desai has reported: "Bapu prepared a letter to be sent to Doyle about our correspondence. But the Superintendent was unnerved and said, 'Please do not send any such letter. It may lead them to suppose that the Indians in charge of this prison had complained to you.'. . . [Next day] Bapu assured the Superintendent that it was not open to objection on the ground he feared. The Superintendent proposed, 'Please make it clear that you are not referring to the jail authorities.' Bapu pointed out, "In that case they will assuredly believe that is has been written at your suggestion. Instead of that, please let it go in the form in which I have written it. As a matter of fact this is an issue on which you ought to resign—if you had any self-respect. But we have lost such sense of honour. Therefore if you are not able to take any action permit me at least to do this much." (*Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. I, pp. 324-6)

[2] *Vide* "Letter to E.E. Doyle", 13-7-1932.

[3] Devdas Gandhi

India are entitled to as much status at least as English, if not a greater.

It hurts me to think that no Indian officials knowing the respective languages are considered fit or trustworthy enough to decide whether letters I write in Gujarati or Hindi or Urdu do or do not come within the passable limits. I have already in my letter of 22nd instant inquired if I have unwittingly given cause for the extraordinary scrutiny of my letters.

The revised orders of the Government therefore by implication seem to take away the liberty they have given me for letter writing.

Alike therefore for grounds of reason and sentiment, I would invite Government to reconsider their decision and so arrange as to ensure for my correspondence in the vernaculars the same quick despatch they promise for the English, If they whole-heartedly desire that I should continue to write letters as I have done hitherto.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. I, p. 249

219. LETTER TO M.G.BHANDARI

July 24, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

With reference to your inquiry about letter[1] No. 27 addressed to Chhotubhai in an Ashram packet, I have to state that I cannot trace it among my papers. It must have been lost in passing from place to place. The letters are listed after they are collected. There is therefore little chance [of] any being left here. The missing letter contained my advice to Chhotubhai about his father who is suffering from obstinate constipation and softness of the brain. I do hope that it will be traced and sent to the Ashram, if found and passed as unobjectionable.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5132

[1] Presumably "Letter to Chhotubhai", 17-7-1932.

220. LETTER TO KUSUMBEHN DESAI

July 24, 1932

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

I got your letter. You say that Pyarelal and others keep good health, whereas I had a letter from someone else telling me that Pyarelal's health has gone down. I forget who it was. I should like you to go and see him again. I have had no letter from him at all. I have written to him, but these days it is not smooth sailing with my letters.

Have you been reading anything? Have you kept up your effort to learn English?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1843

221. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

July 24, 1932

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I hope all of you reached the Ashram in comfort. Qureshi[1] should take care and see that his health, which has been improving, should not decline again. I hope you also have paid a visit to Imam Saheb's grave. Ask Qureshi to write to me about it. If it is considered desirable to put up a wall round the grave, that may be done. Where is Kevalram[2]? How is his health? Ask him to write to me. Nirmala[3], it seems, has fallen into a long sleep. I have had no letter from her at all recently.

Give me news about Dhiru[4] and Vimala. If you have seen them recently, let me know how their health is.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5503

[1] Gulam Rasool Qureshi, son-in-law of Imam Saheb
[2] Kevalram Bhimji Joshi
[3] Wife of Kevalram
[4] Addressee's children

222. LETTER TO PURATAN BUCH

July 24, 1932

CHI. PURATAN,

There is not much difference between 'bhai' and 'chi'. I do not remember how 'Bhai' came to be written or why I wrote it. I did not make the change intentionally. I sometimes do think of what the other person would prefer. But in your case I did not even do that. It is true that anybody whom I address as 'Chi'. is loaded with greater burden by me. So long as I am in jail, we need not think whether you can stay with me. If I am released some day you may ask me then. If I settle at some fixed place, I would certainly have you with me. My advice was not meant to stop you from asking questions but was intended to induce you to reflect. You must learn how to solve corollaries after knowing the principle. So long as we cannot do this, is cannot be said that we know the principle. This is like solving geometrical problems. If we can solve one, we should be able to solve others arising from it. Improve your health and make it very strong.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9167

223. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

July 24, 1932

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I got your letter. Sharda writes to me from time to time. It is good that she is staying alone. All children in the Ashram must learn to live alone without their parents. Children who are excessively dependent on parents become weak in the end.

Perhaps deep breathing may prove beneficial for your nose trouble. Drawing in water mixed with potassium permanganate into the nose may also help. Did Dr. Rajab Ali examine it? If the bone inside is affected, a doctor's help is necessary. Otherwise deep breathing must help. Please do let me know the effect of the vaid's medicine. If the air there agrees with you both, do not be in a hurry to leave the place. Chhaganlal and Kashi[1] cannot but like your company, and wherever you are will certainly be working.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.G. 14

[1] Wife of Chhaganlal Gandhi

224. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

July 24, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. I cannot say how long I shall be able to continue writing letters. A sword is hanging over them. If the delay in clearing the letters from here continues, I see no benefit in writing them. Incoming letters are now handed over to me immediately. For outgoing letters, correspondence is going on. If these letters stop, you may assume that the train is off the rails. But that need not upset you or make you unhappy. It is for the Government to permit me or not to permit me to write letters. A prisoner cannot demand such permission as a matter of right. The fact that I have been writing so long confers no right on me, and the loss of something over which one had no right should not make one unhappy.

So you have now received my letter[1] conveying my blessings to you on the occasion of your birthday. Why should you mind that you got it late? Perhaps your getting it late has increased its value. You should not have taken it as an ill-omen when you did not get it. It is impossible that I would not send you my blessings though I had your letter asking for them. Why should you take it as an ill-omen if, because of unforeseen circumstances, you do not get the letter or get it late? Really speaking, there is no such thing as ill-omen for a person who has cultivated the spirit of non-attachment. Do not, therefore, believe for a single moment that this will be bad year for you. It will be bad only if we think bad thoughts or speak or do evil. And it is in our power not to do that.

If it is the doctor's opinion that you should get the tonsils removed, you should do so. Wasn't his opinion the same when you consulted him before? The operation takes very little time. Nor have I heard that there is any risk in it. Your body ought to become completely free from disease. I believe that ultimately one is the best judge in regard to one's body.

Doctors have to depend much on what their petients tell them. This fact itself shows that, if the patient does not know what happens to his body, he cannot give correct replies to the doctor's question. If you merely tell a doctor, "I have a headache", what can he do? The

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 30-6-1932.

patient should know why he has got a headache. We can see that this is true about many other symptoms. The same argument applies to treatment. A doctor cannot know, if he is not told, what effect a particular medicine had. He has to depend on the patient for that. But all patients are not able to understand the effects of medicines. Food is a daily medicine for the body. What effect a particular food has on a person's body, only he can understand. Hence, one who knows the effects of food, water and air on the human body will be able to preserve his health better than a doctor can over do for him. I believe, therefore, that all of us should acquire some general knowledge about the body, as also about air, water and food. We do have the necessary literature for this purpose. We need not read all of it. If we read some of it, that would be enough to help us. Shivaji made his body very strong by his own efforts. Regarding myself, I am convinced that if I had not acquired sufficient knowledge for my purpose, I would have marched away long ago. This half broken body endures through my own care. I am sure that doctors have very little share in keeping it going.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10295. Also C.W. 5749. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

225. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

July 24, 1932

DEAR PRABHUDAS,

Know (what I have written) about Magan spinning-wheel from letter[1] to Narandas.[2] I have nothing to say about truth. It is difficult to define God. The definition of truth is enshrined in everyone's heart. Whatever you believe at present to be true is truth and that is your God. If one lives in accordance with this truth felt in one's heart, one is bound to reach the ultimate and pure truth, and that is *Paramatman.*[3]. I am at present reading selections from the Vedas and there the same idea occurs. According to me, so long as we do not learn to live a truthful life, all reading is fruitless. Such a life has no room for anything which is not spontaneous. The votary of truth will

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 20-7-1932.

[2] What follows is from *Mahadevbhaini Diary.*

[3] Superme Self

appear as he is. There will be unity in his thought, speech and action. We learn this sooner if we regard God as truth. In order to live such a truthful life, we do not need to read many books. Everything depends on us. Reflect over this *mantra*: "The face of truth is covered by a golden lid. O sun, remove that so that I may see the Law of Truth."[1]

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 332, and Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. II, pp. 389-91

226. LETTER TO PADMA

July 24, 1932

CHI. PADMA,

I have preserved for you and Durga slips of coloured paper. It would be very good of course if the change to another plot agrees with you. Your weight must increase. If you get better there, then there will be no necessity for you to go to Bhowali. I regard it as a great improvement that your constipation has disappeared. What fruits can you get there? How much milk can you drink? How do you pass your time? What does Sheela do during the whole day?

I have not received your father's letter mentioned by you.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6134. Also C.W. 3486. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

[1] *Ishopanishad*, 15

227. LETTER TO KAMALABEHN

July 24, 1932

DEAR KAMALABEHN,

It is good that you have come to the Ashram; now stay (there) quietly. Does the Ashram water agree. (with you)? Do you receive any information about Gopaldas? How is his health? Write to me.

I have not received at present any information about Balkrishna's health. Is he still conducting the girls' school?

Blessings from

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. II, p. 393

228. LETTER TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

July 24, 1932

BROTHER PRANJIVAN,

I am in receipt of your letter. Polak writes that he is satisfied with Maganlal[1]. His mind is engrossed in study. If that is the case and the same state continues, he will undoubtedly be benefited. Of late I have no letter from Maganlal. Ratilal[2] appears to be going on well at present. In his case changes—good and bad—will continue to take place.

Thought my left elbow was confined in splints, there was no benefit. As it gives no trouble as long [as] it is not used in a particular way, I entertain no anxiety about it. The doctor here has been giving the treatment of diathermy at present. It has so far been treated thrice only and so nothing can be said about its effect. I hope you do not look to your shop overexerting yourself.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. II, pp. 405-7

[1] Addressee's son who was studying in England at this time

[2] Addressee's son who was ill

229. LETTER TO KUSUM GANDHI

July 24, 1932

DEAR KUSUM (JUNIOR),

You must be thoughtlessly speaking out too much. My post did not reach there and so you stopped writing, though you have written to me so often that you like to write to me every week. Do not speak anything hastily or thoughtlessly. Do not take a vow before thinking fully (about it). If (once) it is taken, remember it and observe it. Has your fever gone? What amount of milk can you take? If you want to be a nurse recover (from illness) soon and pass (your) life in meditation. By searching for the cause of everything any activity which we undertake becomes interesting and it does not appear to be burdensome.

BAPU

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

230. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

July 25, 1932

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I certainly felt unhappy that I could not see you. But we have no choice when dharma requires us to act in a particular way. Having stopped receiving visitors, surely I could not make any exception. You should now write to me. Tell me how you keep. Give me news about Kaku, too. Amina[1] also should write to me. I am sure you are quite happy. All three of us are well. It is not certain whether I shall be able to continue to write letters. We must resign ourselves to whatever happens.

I suppose you met Nath[2]. Give me news about him.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G.S. Gangabehnne, p. 63. Also C.W. 8791. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] Amina G. Qureshi, younger daughter of Imam Saheb
[2] Kedarnath Kulkarni, guru of Kishorelal Mashruwala

231. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

July 25, 1932

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Received your letter on the 23rd. It would be better if the weather there agrees (with you). Has any companion been given? Are sufficient clothes provided? I had received *Popular Astronomy*. I could not know who sent it. From the name in the book I thought that it must have come from Pranlal. It has so happened that a copy of the book has come to my hands for some months past. Shivaji (brother of Vinoba) of the Ashram has made a deep study (of the subject). I had written to him to send me any book he liked. And so this book came to me. So I have with me two copies at present. It has good maps, but the contents are not of much value. At present I have got with me better books (from the point of view of contents) than this. There can be no observation of the sky in this season. In September or October when the sky clears and the sunset will take place earlier, if you are allowed to remain outside till 7.30 or 8 you can observe the sky.[1]

I see that your views about social reform are very advanced. My attitude in such matters is different. I would not discuss any matter which does not seem to be of immediate importance and about which there is the slightest room for doubt. Divorce is such a matter. For one thing, among the masses divorce is not prohibited, and where it is prohibited many other reforms need to be introduced before we can go as far as divorce. I would not therefore spend my energy in discussing the subject and create confusion in the minds of people.

As regards [artificial] birth-control, my mind revolts against it. It is possible that old ideas unconsciously influence my views, but reasons for which I oppose it [really] exist today and we can, therefore, see for ourselves the great harm done by [artificial] birth-control. By adopting artificial means to prevent conception, even those who are strong today are likely to become weak. The whole attitude to life behind the practice of birth-control is dangerous and mistaken. Its supporters believe that it is not only man's right but also his duty to satisfy his natural sex desire, and that if a man does not discharge this duty his development will be retarded. I see great evil in

[1] This paragraph has been reproduced from the English translation available in Bombay Secret Abstracts.

this view. I observe it daily in experience. It is impossible to expect self-control in those who have recourse to these artificial means. These means are being advocated on the assumption that self-control in this matter is impossible. And to regard the control of the sex urge as impossible or unnecessary or harmful is to my mind a denial of dharma, for self-control is the very basis of dharma. There are many other simple and innocent methods of preventing the birth of weak progeny. Leaving them aside, how can a dangerous method like birth-control be adopted? Almost everybody admits that it is full of dangers. Thus, from whatever point of view I think about it, it seems to me highly undesirable. I am prompted to write all this again because you have still time to think and, since the subject is very serious, it is necessary that you should examine it carefully. I shall have no fear then what conclusion you come to, for I believe that your truthfulness will save you in the end or that, if I am wrong, you will be able to correct my error. If you are convinced that birth-control is morally right, you will not rest until you have converted me to your view. And I am easy to deal with. However strongly I may cling to a view, I don't hesitate to give it up immediately if I discover my error or if it is pointed out to me by somebody.

All three of us are well. I now take milk, but I do not see any benefit. I have yielded to the pressure of the doctor here. The pain in the elbow persists, but it pains only when it is moved in a certain way, and hence there is no cause for anxiety about it. I have already written to Taramati in regard to visits.[1] Besides making envelopes, Sardar has taken up two other things, viz., spinning and study of Sanskrit. He is pursuing the study with great energy. You have probably seen the 24 books by Satavlekar. Out of these he has finished three in 15 days. This is excellent speed.

Devdas had another relapse, but from the latest information I have received it appears that fever has again come down. He says in his letter that the Gorakhpur Jail authorities looked after him very well. The position about my correspondence has become uncertain now. Incoming post is delivered fairly regularly, but the letters which I write are delayed a good deal before they are despatched. You need not, therefore, worry if you don't get my replies to your letters soon.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 14-7-1932.

Give me detailed information about the food which you get there, whether you can digest it, what exercise you can take, what your weight is and how you sleep. What are you reading at present?

I am progressing well with my Urdu reading. I can now write a little. I am happy about this.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Have you received the Gandiva spinning-wheel? Mahadev reminds me that you wrote to me about having received it. My memory may be said to be failing a little now. Can you spin on it?

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp.112-4, and Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. II, p. 465

232. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

July 26, 1932

PANDIT MALAVIYAJI

HINDU UNIVERSITY

BENARES

THANKS FOR LOOKING AFTER MIRABAI AND DEVDAS. MAIRABAI'S FEVER CAUSES ANXIETY. PLEASE WIRE HER CONDITION.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. II, p. 371

233. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 26, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

Your postcards are a great relief. I cannot understand why fever persists. I hope you have been using the mosquito-net regularly. The incoming letters are again being received in good time. There is much delay about outgoing letters. I am still in correspondence with the Government. You will not worry if you don't hear from me or hear late.

Love.

BAPU

SMT. MIRABAI
SEVA UPAVAN
NAGWA, BENARES

From the original: C.W. 6229. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9695

234. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

July 26, 1932

Your touching letter of 23rd instant came into my hand today. Papa's letter I have not received yet. My correspondence is being overhandled by the authorities. There is therefore much delay and uncertainty about it. The incoming letters are delivered in good time.

I loathe to argue about death in the face of the tragedy that has overtaken you.[1] You will say with Job, "miserable comforter."[2] But I do feel that if we would know God, we have got to learn to rejoice in death. When Narasinha Mehta the first poet-devotee of Gujarat lost his son, he is said to have joyed over it and exclaimed: "It is well that this burden is lifted. Now I shall meet God soon." This is an unhappy rendering of a beautiful musical verse. May you see greater light out

[1] The addressee had written: "Death is a dear friend, quite true, and not a frightful enemy as men suppose. But then, we all fight so vigorously against him on his approach, and employ all the knowledge of the ancient and the modern science to drive the friend away that the truth is quite forgotten just when we ought to remember it most. . . . It is not grief, but darkness that is around. I am still praying for light."

[2] *The Book of Job*, XVI. 2

of this darkness. I know that you stand in no need of any comfort from any of us and that it has to come from within. This is merely an evidence of what all of us three are feeling about you.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 329

235. LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

July 26, 1932

DEAR MAGANLAL,

I expect a letter from you every week, but I am disappointed. Mr. Polak has informed me that you are getting on all right and that you are engrossed in your studies. I receive letters from Manjula[1].

Write to me in detail. Let me know what subjects you are studying.

Develop your body well.

Hope you are writing to the Doctor regularly.

Yours,

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. II, p. 455

236. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

July 26, 1932

MY DEAR HENRY,

I see you want your pound of flesh. I had thought that your partnership with Millie would improve you. But it is the old story of the leopard repeated a millionth time. Having seen one good thing in you, you want me to see many more. I must decline the invitation with thanks. For If I accepted it, the result would be that my other companions would grow jealous and forsake me.

Devdas was always nervous when Maud drove her car. She is always high-strung and often absent-minded. She ought to give up driving the car herself. Please pass this on to her.

[1] Addressee's wife

I am writing to Leon.[1] His letter came into my hands before yours. Let us all hope that he and Marie will have many years of happiness.

I am glad Maganlal is shaping so well. Please give him the enclosed.[2]

Love to you all. Mahadev joins.

Yours,

BAPU

H.S.L. POLAK, ESQ.
5TH FLOOR, DAVES INN HOUSE
265 STRAND, LONDON, W.C. 2

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. II, p. 453

237. LETTER TO LEON POLAK

July 26, 1932

MY DEAR LEON,

I am glad you wrote to me about your engagement to Marie Lindrum. May you both have many many years of happiness and service.

My love to you both.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. II, p. 453

[1] *Vide* the following item.
[2] *Vide* the preceeding item.

238. LETTER TO SHIRINBAI[1]

July 26, 1932

MY DEAR SISTER,

I received your disconsolate letter only today. It had to pass through so many hands before coming to me. My whole heart goes out to you and your aged mother. God suffers us to blame Him, to swear at Him and deny Him. We do it all in our ignorance. A very beautiful Sanskrit verse which we recite daily at the morning prayer means: "Miseries are not miseries, nor is happiness truly happiness. True misery consists in forgetting God, true happiness consists in thinking of Him as ever enthroned in our hearts." And has not an English poet said: "Things are not what they seem?" The fact is if we knew all the laws of God we should be able to account for the unaccountable. Why should we think that the withdrawal of your brother from our midst is an affliction? We simply do not know. But we do, or ought to know that God is wholly good and wholly just. Even our illnesses such as your other brother's may be no misfortune. Life is a state of discipline. We are required to go through the fire of suffering. I do so wish that you and your mother could really rejoice in your suffering. May you have peace.

Please forget all about the honey[2] and write to me in English by all means.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 326

[1] *The Diary of Mahadev Desai*, has: "There was heartrending letter from Shirinbai, the sister of the missing airman. His 72-year-old mother was still alive; and his only brother had been in a London nursing home for 8 years. The sister had picked up a little Gujarati 30 years ago, but still she took great pains and wrote a good Gujarati letter and at the end of it requested permission to write to Bap in English."

[2] The Addressee had sent a honeycomb and offered to write about in detail.

239. LETTER TO A. SUBBIAH

July 26, 1932

I can understand your grief and hers over the loss of your child[1] of whom Lalita[2] used to write to me in such loving terms. But you have lived long enough in the Ashram to realize, especially on such occasions, that God has the right to take away from us what He gives us. You know that we believe. Our belief is that every one of us comes to this world as a debtor and we leave when the debt is for the time being discharged. The child has paid the debt and is free. You and Lalita and all the rest of us have still to discharge our obligations.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 329-30

240. LETTER TO LALITA

July 26, 1932

DAUGHTER LALITA,

From Subbiah's letter I have learnt of your grief and Subbiah writes that you have been weeping much. But you should know that religion forbids weeping. The God who gave the daughter has the right to take her away. And in the end we all are to go there. What grief can there be for that! So forget the grief and plunge yourself in service (of others). Certainly write to me. May God give you peace.

Blessings from

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. II, p. 491

[1] The addressee had lost his daughter on the very day he was released from jail.

[2] Addressee's wife

241. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

July 26, 1932

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL,

You have written to me after keeping me waiting for a long time. I received your letter after eighteen days, but that is not your fault. Do you go to bed with an empty stomach? It is a universal experience that a person who eats late at night does not get sleep immediately on retiring. If, therefore, you do not take your meals before sunset, form that habit. And if you cannot concentrate on Ramanama, go on repeating any Sanskrit stanza or *bhajan* which you like, and you will most probably get sleep. I assume that in other respects, your health is good. Prabodh[1] must have become quite big now. All three of us are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12150

242. LETTER TO HAMIDA TYABJI

July 26, 1932

DEAR HAMIDA,

Received your letter written in good handwriting. Abbaji has also been informed that you have improved in health. You did well in informing me about the death of Rohini's maternal uncle. Later on Rohini's letter was received. Though I have written to her a letter[2] of condolence I now do not like to express condolence for the death (of someone). Why run away from death? God has given us many boons and death seems to be one of the greatest of them. It is not a calamity. We should learn to regard it as a friend. That which is for every living being, how can we regard as a calamity? By so looking upon it, we become offenders before God.Like Raihana if you write letters to me both in Gujarati and Urdu you also will be an expert like her. You must write in Gujarati so that you may acquire the habit. I wish that your knowledge of Gujarati may increase.

[1] Addressee's eldest son
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Rohinibehn Desai", 22-7-1932.

It is good that you have developed so much friendship with Rohini's family. There is no doubt that the family is good and honest. But the certificate that you will give will be a true one. I am not much in touch with it. My salaams to all there.

Many blessings from

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. II, p. 471

243. LETTER TO TARAMATI M. TRIKUMJI

July 26, 1932

MY DEAR TARAMATI,

I have received a letter from Mathuradas from Belgaum in which he writes that, unless he sends for you, you should not go to Belgaum. Mathuradas's health is good till now. I have received the book on astronomy. Hope you and Dilip are well. There is no letter from you now.

Yours,

BAPU

SMT. TARAMATI MATHURADAS
21 MINT ROAD, FORT
BOMBAY

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. II, p. 447

244. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

July 26, 1932

MY DEAR DEVDAS,

Hanumanprasadji sends me regularly news about you, therefore I am relieved to anxiety. I have already written a letter[1] to you, but nowadays my outgoing letters go first to the Secretariat and are then despatched after scrutiny. And if they are written in Gujarati, they take lot of time and hence you do not receive them earlier. Therefore do not worry yourself if you do not hear from me

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Devdas Gandhi", 21-7-1932.

or receive my letters late. Such are the conditions of prison life. I am however in correspondence with the Government. How is it that you have fallen ill again?

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

DEVDAS GANDHI
PRISONER
DISTRICT JAIL
GORAKHPUR, U.P.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. II, p. 451

245. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL V. SHAH

July 26, 1932

DEAR RAMNIKLAL,

I have received your letter. I do not know your elders, therefore, I dare not write to them. You can show (them) this letter. It is our religion[1] to touch or to dine with those whom we erroneously call untouchables or of low caste. Not to touch them is a sin. I have not the slightest doubt about this. This is not a reform which has come from the West, but it is the duty of the Hindus.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

RAMNIKLAL VIMBASHI SHAH
CHINTAMANI BUILDING
2ND BHOIWADA, BOMBAY 2

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. II, p. 451

[1] Presumably the original had "dharma".

246. LETTER TO A GIRL[1]

July 26, 1932

DEAR . . . ,

I do not remember having seen you any time. It is possible that I might have seen you many years ago when I was out to beg. Although I have no direct acquaintance with you, yet, as I have connections with your father and . . ., allow me to exercise some authority as an elder. But do not consider this my letter as coming from an elder. I wish to be your friend. I have known about the misdeed committed by . . . . I am pained on account of the misdeed because . . . has been brought up in the Ashram. Hence I have to apologize to you for his misdeed. You can accept my apology only when you entirely forget . . . from your mind, and you may not henceforth be caught in the snare of any youth.

I believe that boys and girls, when they attain the age of discretion, are freed from the control of their parents. Parents may guide them as friends. (But) they cannot put pressure upon them. You have not attained the age to enjoy this freedom. You may not be knowing that I have guided many girls like you, and that from among them those who have followed my advice have become happy. In this world there is no vice (lit. dross) like untruth. He who conceals that which is not to be concealed acts untruthfully. If you believed that parents should not exercise their authority over you, but that they should guide you, then why should you write a secret note to . . . or anybody? If you fall in love with anybody, you have a right to do so. But many boys and girls nourish their secret passions only in the name of affection. If they take a vow not to conceal anything from their parents and act accordingly, they cannot but be saved from such calamities.

Your present time is for study only. You have been fortunate to have parents of broad views, and hence they are affording you facilities for study. So long as you desire to avail yourself of this facility, you must lead the life of a celibate. But it is possible that this may be beyond your power. If it is so, you must consult your parents with a pure mind. There is not the slightest need to feel hesitation in it. If you do this much and if you give me a promise (not to do such a thing again), then only I will know that there has

[1] The names have been omitted in this and the following letter.

not remained in the least upon you the effect of the misdeed committed by . . . . Give an answer to this letter if you get it. May God protect you.

Blessings from

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. II, p. 487

247. A LETTER

[*July 26, 1932*][1]

I have received today your letter dated the 8th instant. At present my post has become irregular. For some days I get my incoming post regularly. The outgoing post is still irregular. I do not know when you will receive this.

You did well in writing about . . . . I had hoped that . . . would have improved. By after reading your description, I stick to the adjective I used. The steps you had taken about . . . were certainly appropriate. I think that he ought to have been brought to his senses in still more plain terms. There is nothing to be thought about him at present.

You must have deeply thought about . . . . I see from the account given by you that her mind is still not purified. I have taken courage to write a letter to . . . . Give it to her if you think it proper to do so. From this letter you will also come to know my views about children. I am grieved at this calamity which has fallen upon you, husband and wife, on account of . . . . The responsibility for the faults (still) lurking in . . . rests as much on . . . as on the Ashram. As (the atmosphere) of purity cannot be made to pervade the Ashram, the children as well as the grown-up (inmates) do not become free from faults. It is my firm belief that where perfect sanctity prevails, an unholy person must leave off his impurities so long as he stays in this atmosphere. So much also has not been imparted in the Ashram. It is only because of this that instances like that of . . . are to be found.

I understand that there cannot be any change in your attitude towards . . . . . is exceedingly straightforward and outspoken. He has suffered much on . . . account. When he hears this, he will feel

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

intense pain.

I have returned the telescope in the beginning of this month. I was not permitted to keep it for more that a month's time. Hence, your suggestion was late. We could make very little use of it. We could see Jupiter very well. But we could not get any information regarding the stars with the help of the telescope. We could not see the beauty of Parijata about which we had read. I will carry out your suggestions, when any other telescope comes to hand. At present the clouds do not allow us to have a sight of the sky.

I have got the Sanskrit dictionary. I am reading Kharas's book at present. I like his style. I feel that if anybody makes a beginning with this book, he would find it difficult. It is, as it were, written not for those who have absolutely no knowledge of astronomy. But I have gone through other books and hence I feel no difficulty in understanding this (book). I hope to hear from your mouth about your invention some time. In the mean time, please do write to me if there is anything worth writing.

Blessings from

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. II, p. 483

248. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

July 26, 1932

DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

I have had no news from you this week. I hope you are quite well. I received a very sweet letter from Father. I was very glad to learn that the affairs of his company have been cleared up. I hope his pain has disappeared now. It is too early for him yet to get old. I hope to see him dancing. I had a letter from Hamida too. At present I am reading an Urdu book entitled *Ramacharcha*. It is beautifully printed and its Urdu is easy to follow. After finishing it, I intend to read the *Sirat*[1]. I shall finish *Ramacharcha* in a day or two. We are having good rains here. Convey our respects and *vandemataram* to Father and Mother, and bhrrr from me to Father. All of you will be pleased

[1] *Sirat-un-Nabi; vide* entry under date July 28, 1932, in "Diary, 1932" appearing at the end of this volume.

to learn that Sardar is learning Sanskrit and is making very good progress.

To Raihana,

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: S.N. 9645

249. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 27, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

It is a great consolation to me that you are giving me a daily report of your health. This sudden overtaking of weakness after every illness shows that your system has not much staying power. But there is, I am afraid, no remedy for it. In a previous letter I asked you, if you could, to see Devdas.[1] It is not to be thought of now. You need a long rest from work both mental and physical. Remember me to Babu Sivaprasad and his people.

Love,

BAPU

SMT. MIRABAI

SEVA UPVAN, NAGWA

BENARES

From the original: C.W. 6230. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9696

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Devdas Gandhi", 21-7-1932.

250. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ

July 27, 1932

CHI. RUKMINI[1],

I got a letter from you after many days. I did not know that you were having fever. Naturally in that condition you cannot write. And if you cannot write, why should Benarsi[2] write? It seems that you have lost the strength you had gained at Deolali. You should regain it. I hope the child is thriving. It was a good thing that all of you went to see Devdas.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

SHRIMATI RUKMINI
C/O SJT. BENARSIDAS
PANCH GANGA, BENARES CITY, U.P.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9451. Courtesy: Benarsilal Bazaj

251. A LETTER[3]

July 27, 1932

DEAR . . . ,

You have become emaciated. But I can understand your misery. I have already told you that in your company your life and that of . . .[4] have been spoiled.[5] If you really feel no passion, you cannot satisfy . . . although you submit to him. This is the experience of all men who seek pleasure. The result is that in spite of having intercourse with you . . . remains unsatisfied, and that increases his passion. If, therefore, you two want to live together, you must take pleasure in intercourse with him. If you cannot do so, you should live separately. I see nothing but harm in your living together in your present condition. You deceive each other, you deceive yourselves and also deceive the world. All people except me seem to believe about you that, because you live in the Ashram, you live as ascetics. The best

[1] Daughter of Maganlal Gandhi
[2] Addressee's husband
[3] The names in this and the following letter have been omitted.
[4] Addressee's husband
[5] What follows is from *Mahadevbhaini Diary,* Vol.I.

course is that both of you should come out of this untruthful life and that both of you should marry according to your wish. According to me, both of you live an immoral life just now. If . . . marries another woman, I would regard his life afterwards to be blameless because it will be natural and in the end his passion will calm down. To make this change in your life, you should have a frank talk with each other and then firmly take whatever step seems proper to you both. If this is done, . . . will one day become free from passion. If you go on as at present, he will continue to feel dissatisfied and his passion will become stronger and stronger. Do not lose the strength which you possess. Do not yield to despair. May God help you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 331-2, and Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. II, p. 509

252. A LETTER

July 27, 1932

DEAR . . . ,

Received your letter. I have carefully read your note. Your duty towards . . . appears clear to me. If she is devoid of passion you should live separately from her. If . . . does not desire it I would not regard her as being devoid of passion, that is, she ought to satisfy your passion. As you cannot suppress your passion you ought to form another marriage. Marry a suitable women if you can get one there. It would be better if she is a widow; and then satisfy your passion.[1] You will then become free in the course of time from your sexual craving. Today this seems to be almost impossible for you. The cause of your anger also is your sexual craving. Your palate is very strong, which is not surprising; for anger, sexual passion and craving of the palate go together. You believe that you are completely devoted to your work. But I doubt if that is so. I do not mean to say that you are indifferent. But anybody who is wholly devoted to his work can never be a slave of his passion. How can he find the time for that? But you are certainly not so. It can be seen that you try to become devoted to your

[1] What follows is from *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. I.

work, but then you also try to overcome your sexual passion. As you have not succeeded in the second aim, so you have not succeeded in the first either. You seem to be a prey to lustful thoughts even when you are working. Was not that my condition too? Other people saw no sign of negligence in my work, but I myself could see such signs. That is why I resolved to observe *brahmacharya*.[1] Read my previous letter and this to . . . . I wish that anyhow you both should be relieved of this misery. May God be kind to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol I, P. 331, and Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. II, p. 507

253. LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI

July 27, 1932

I have received your letter after many days. My post has now become irregular. Don't be surprised[2] if it stops entirely. I am trying to settle this matter. I hope rain has no bad effect upon your health. I have received a letter from Santok today in which she says that she is going to Kashi. I have also received a letter from Rukhi. She is now all right. She has seen Devdas. Devdas was not keeping good health, but he is well now. Tell Premkuvar that I do not remember to have received a letter from her. If I received it, I would have written to her in reply.

Yours,

BAPU

RADHABEHN GANDHI
BLOCK A, BHATIA SANATORIUM, DEOLALI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(3), Pt. II, p. 497

[1] What follows is from the English translation available in Bombay Secret Abstracts.

[2] The source has "Don't take it as a wonder".

254. LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI

July 27, 1932

I have received your letter after many days. My post has now become irregular. Don't be surprised[1] if it stops entirely. I am trying to settle this matter. I hope rain has no bad effect upon your health. I have received a letter from Santok today in which she says that she is going to Kashi. I have also received a letter from Rukhi. She is now all right. She has seen Devdas. Devdas was not keeping good health, but he is well now. Tell Premkuvar that I do not remember to have received a letter from her. If I received it, I would have written to her in reply.

Yours,

BAPU

RADHABEHN GANDHI

BLOCK A, BHATIA SANATORIUM, DEOLALI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(3), Pt. II, p. 497

255. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

July 27, 1932

You are getting worried about not receiving any letter from me, but I have already written three. One I sent to the Ashram address. This is the fifth letter I am now writing to you. We must realize that we are both prisoners. What would we have done if there was no permission to write to each other? To worry about such things is useless. I am quite well. I am now taking milk, bread and vegetables. Vallabhbhai and Mahadev are also all right. I understand that you are feeling weak. I have not received any letter from you. Write to me in detail.

Yours,

BAPU

MRS. KASTURBAI GANDHI

PRISONER

CENTRAL PRISON, SABARMATI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. II, p. 499

[1] The source has "Don'take it as a wonder".

256. TELEGRAM TO G.S. BAJPAI

July 28, 1932

G.S. BAJPAI
DUNDALION
SIMLA
OUR SINCERE CONDOLENCES ON YOUR BEREAVEMENT.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(3), Pt. II, P. 377

257. LETTER TO DR. MOHAMMAD ALAM

July 30, 1932

DEAR DR. ALAM,

I was concerned to read in the papers that you were ill and had to be removed to a hospital. Do please let me know exactly what the matter is with [you[1]]. Sardar and Mahadev Desai join me in the wish that there is nothing serious the matter with you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 24

258. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

July 30, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. There seems to be no limit to your foolishness. When you get angry, you lose all sense. In the very letter in which you write about having taken a vow to overcome anger, you get angry and that too without reason. You did not understand the reason for my gentle rebuke. I had complained that there was no beauty or art in the slips with zigzag edges which you had pasted on the envelope.[2] I would not find fault with anyone for spending time on art. But in this case there was no art at all. What art can there be in pasting slips on an

[1] The source has "is", which is evidently a slip.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 6-7-1932.

envelope? And, moreover, you had pasted them so carelessly that they had half come off. Your anger, therefore, was without reason. It only amused me. If I were with you, I would have slapped you. But your having erred is a more serious matter. You spent so much time on the thing. You entered into unnecessary argument about it and harmed your health, for scientists have discovered by experiments that anger has a very bad effect on health. Our people have always held that belief. Besides, you violated your vow. Don't get angry like this again. My criticism, moreover, was gentle and you did not show even sense enough to understand it.

About letters, follow the example of the child who eats up the carrot when he finds that he cannot blow with it as with a pipe. That is, you should not feel unhappy if the letters stop. In any case, you should go on writing from your end. If I decide to stop writing, I will let you know. Even if I cannot write to you to tell you about that, your writing to me will not be a waste of effort.

Greet the new flowers on my behalf. Try to cheer them by telling them that I hope to sleep in their midst one day.

You are very difficult to persuade. If you grow tomatoes and some *bhajis* round the flower plants, you will get them all the year round and your health will benefit. If the body is not yours, but is a trust given to you by God, you should certainly give some time for keeping it fit. Growing tomatoes and *bhajis* does not require much time. They don't cover up much plot either. An English friend of mine who lived with me in South Africa used to grow, in a few days and with little trouble, a *bhaji* named cress which is eaten uncooked.

I have already written to you in regard to the bad health of the girls. Inquire into the matter carefully and find out the facts. I was certainly afraid that it was so about Rambhau. Since he has told you everything, try and win him over.

If your weight has gone down, you must eat fruit. Don't mind a little additional expense. What is the good of trying to save money and injuring your health? What is true about food is also true about rest. You must make it a rule to take some rest in the afternoon. It is not for me to show how you can spare time for that. If you are determined to find it, you will succeed.

Now about your questions :

(1) Instead of worshipping an individual, one should worship virtues. An individual may turn out to be unworthy of our worship, and in any case he is bound to die. Virtues, on the other hand, never

perish.

(2) If you do not like most of those who run the Ashram, this is a golden opportunity to learn to tolerate their defects. No human being is without defects. If we wish to regard others as our own selves, we should have no likes and dislikes.

(3) If you accept the principles on which the Ashram is founded, differences of opinion regarding its outward form should not matter. We should be concerned with the principle of a thing and not with its form.

(4) It is your duty to remain in the Ashram so that you may overcome the defects of your temper.

(5) If you cannot realize your ideals in the Ashram, the fault is yours. Everyone enjoys perfect freedom in the Ashram.

(6) Why should the attraction of those whom you love force you to leave the Ashram? Their love should draw them to the Ashram whenever they feel the need to see you. Love never requires the physical presence of the person loved. Love which requires such presence must be momentary attraction. The purity of one's love is tested by separation from the loved one after his or her death. But all this is mere intellectual exercise. You will live only where your heart is. What can I do or you either, if your heart cannot accept the Ashram?

The yarn spun by me ought to be converted into saris. It belongs to a time before I expressed my views about yarn[1]. It was in fact earmarked for Ba. Hence it is for her to renounce her claim over it. I cannot say that it is not for her. She will never be able to wear very coarse saris. Even the saris, therefore, supplied to her by the Ashram will usually be fine. For that reason, too, she may wear saris made from the yarn spun by me. But we should be very strict about the yarn spun in future, though even with regard to that I will not exercise compulsion on Ba. I certainly wish that she should, of her own free will, refuse to use it and be content with whatever she gets as her share. But this is about the future. As yet all the yarn spun by me recently is here. In any case, my yarn should not lie unused. In fact no one's yarn should lie unused. As soon as a person has spun enough quantity of yarn to be used for weaving, it should be processed for the purpose.

[1] Gandhiji had said that those who took part in the spinning *yajna* should not keep back the yarn for their own use; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi",

31-5/3-6-1932. The addressee had argued that the yarn spun by Gandhiji should be kept for Kasturba's use.

You know about Dhurandhar. If none else, Lilavati, I believe, spins. What you say, however, is correct. Most women will prefer embroidery to spinning. What is true about eating is also true about work. The mind will run after *bhajiyan*[1] in preference to *rotli*. There is self-control and renunciation in continuing to eat *rotli*, whereas it is self-indulgence to start eating *bhajiyan*. Similarly, there is self-control in keeping to spinning and self-indulgence (relatively) in taking up other work.

Your comments on my advice "Judge not lest ye be judged"[2] are unworthy of you. You have not understood the meaning of the statement at all. There is much pride behind your comments.'Lest ye be judged" means that we should not do anything for which we should be judged by others. We should not be insolent towards the world. Why should we say, "Let the world say or do what it will"? We should be humble before the world, that is, even when we follow the right path we should not use violence against it or sit in judgment over it. On the contrary, we should endure its punishment and its condemnation. This is humility or non-violence. I should not like you to write what you did, though you probably wrote it sarcastically or in anger. I don't mind your being angry with me. I can laugh it away. But this other remark rankles in my mind. You should never be prompted to pen such a remark, that is, you should not even have such a thought. Since you had it, I don't mind your expressing it to me. It is because you expressed it that I am able to explain to you how it is wrong. I have not written this paragraph so that you may keep back your thoughts from me. I wish to see you as you are, whether foolish or insolent or humble. But what I ask of you is that you should not even let such a thought enter your mind.

If the girls cannot massage with sufficient pressure, you should teach them how to do so. That requires not physical strength but skill.

Now about what you have been reading. The belief which you refer to was held once. It is no longer held now. People have not understood some of Malthus's theories, and some others are faulty. The law which applies to lower animals does not apply to man. Lower

[1] Fried delicacy

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 6-7-1932. Commenting on it the addressee had said : "I would only be a coward if I hesitated to criticize others lest they should criticize me. Why should I be afraid of the world and refrain from telling people what I regard as truth, since I do not care?"

animals live on one another. Man strives to grow out of that condition. It is the spirit of non-violence which prompts him to do so. So long as one's body endures, one cannot realize perfect non-violence. If, however, a person cherishes the ideal of non-violence, he will live so as to commit the minimum violence. Man's excellence lies in his readiness to let others live and lay down his own life. As he progresses, his food also changes for the better. He has capacity to grow still further. There have been many more discoveries after Darwin's. The book which you have been reading seems to be an old one. Whether it is old or new, the principle of "the greatest good of the greatest number" or "survival of the fittest" is false.

Non-violence aims at the good of all. The divine law cannot be any other but the good of all. It is our duty to discover how to bring that about and what man's duty is under such a law, and not to oppose that law by another. But this is a vast subject. I have dealt with a few points in brief. If you want me to discuss the subject further, put me some questions.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10296. Also C.W. 5751. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

259. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

July 30, 1932

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter of the 22nd instant. I have gone through all the books on economics available with me. But that does not mean that I have quite understood them. Still my understanding has been enriched to some extent. I had expected to receive some more books from you before I had finished reading the last of these. But you did not receive that letter[1] of mine. Now this one is yet another letter gone astray. I want the reports of the Fowler Committee, Chamberlain Committee, Babington Smith and Hilton Young Committee along with the dissenting reports, Dadachanji's book on currency or exchange and the one recently written by Findlay Shirras.

I am a bit afraid that almonds will not suit you. I can digest almonds, ground-nuts and such oily nuts as I have subsisted on them

[1] Presumably of June 28, 1932; *vide* "Letter to G.D.Birla", 28-6-1932.

for years. For you milk and curds are the main food, very little of starch and of the dal proteins none. I have found by experience that wheat, milk, curds, salads and non-starchy fruits like grape, pomegranate, orange, apple, pineapple and *papaya*, these form the necessary and suitable diet for people like you. Almonds can supplant milk only when a vegetable is found equivalent to milk. Chemical tests prove that almonds and milk have common properties excepting a certain specific property which is found in milk but not in almonds and which is present in animal proteins only. I have full faith that among millions of vegetables there must be one possessing that specific property but our vaidyas have done no research in this matter owing to sheer lethargy. Hence almonds are not as useful to us as milk.

The condition of my arm is the same as before but it does not interfere with my work. Therefore there is absolutely no cause for anxiety.

All three of us are well. You will be glad to know that Sardar has started learning Sanskrit and he is making very rapid progress.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi : C.W. 7902. Courtesy : G.D. Birla

260. LEARN THE "GITA" BY HEART[1]

July 31, 1932

I have often written and spoken advising people to learn the *Gita* by heart. Since I myself have not been able to do that, it does not become me to advise people that they should. But I do not feel ashamed of doing so time and again, because I know the benefits of the practice. I am able to face my problems somehow, because I knew once as many as thirteen chapters by heart and have been meditating on the teachings of the *Gita* for the past many years. It may be said, therefore, that I have lived my life under its protecting shade. However, if I had been able to learn the whole *Gita* by heart and had studied it with greater care, I would probably have gained much more than I have. But what happened or may happen to me does not matter. My life, it may be said, is over, though I would, if I got an opportunity, try once again to learn it by heart.

[1] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 28/31-7-1932; *vide* the following item.

Here the word *Gita* should be understood in a wider sense. It means the book or work which is our spiritual authority. Since for most of us it is the *Gita*, I have used that name. But Amtul, Amina and Qureshi should learn by heart the whole or a part of the Koran-e-Sharif instead of the *Gita*. Those who do not know any Sanskrit and cannot learn it now may memorize a Gujarati or a Hindi translation. Anybody whose faith is not in the *Gita* but in some other holy book may memorize that.

We should also know what is meant by "memorizing". We should sincerely attempt to live according to the teaching of the book which we learn by heart. That teaching should not be in conflict with certain fundamental principles and we should have understood its meaning fully.

This practice has its reward. If at any time we do not have the book with us or our copy is stolen or burnt, if we are stranded in a strange place or lose our eye-sight or power of speech while our mind is clear—we can imagine other similar circumstances—if in such circumstances we know our beloved book by heart, it can give us great peace of mind, show us the right path and act as our friend in our misfortune.

This is also the experience of the whole world. Our fore fathers— whether Hindu, Muslim, Christian or Parsi—used to memorize certain portions of holy books. Many do that even today. We should not disregard the precious experience of all these people. In some measure this is a test of our faith.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II

261. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 28/31, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got today your letter of 25th/26th. We ought to thank God that you still get my letters. But we should thank Him even when you do not receive them. This will mean that we shall have learnt to be equal towards cold and heat, good and bad, happiness and suffering. If we have truly handed over to Him the direction of our lives, we should dance as He wills. We may be happy if He sends us a letter, and should be happy, too, when He sends none. Narasinh Mehta danced and sang with relief : "It is a blessing that the net is cut." That certainly did not

mean that his wife was not dear to him or that her presence did not make him happy. She was of course dear to him. However, when she died he felt that there was divine providence in that, even that it was God's kindness. Hence, as long as you continue to get my letters let them give you what pleasure they can. But rest content when they stop. You will discover that there is joy even in that contentment.

I got the postcard which you wrote on getting the previous packet of letters. The condition of the elbow has remained the same. The weight had risen to 105½ pounds, but it has again gone down to 104. Such minor changes are bound to be there from time to time, but otherwise my health is quite good.

As a principle it is correct that Padma ought not to have incurred a debt. But circumstances may change and a principle may no longer remain applicable. To do her justice, therefore, we should take into account the total figure and, if you feel that the expense was justified, you should pay the debt. We can imagine circumstances in which one has no choice but to incur a debt. It may even be one's duty to do that. All such principles have to be relaxed when circumstances change. Only then can we do justice in every case. If we do not act in this manner, we would be merely clinging to the letter of a rule. About Titus, do what you think best.

It is a great achievement on Keshu's part to have spun yarn of up to 200 counts. How many rounds of such quality did he spin? If you send samples of every quality of such yarn—strings of five or seven threads each tied to your letter—we shall get them safe and be able to see the yarn. Also send, with somebody who may be coming to this side, a few slivers from among those with which he could spin such fine yarn. If he can spin more such yarn, you should also be ready to get cloth woven from it. On which type of spinning-wheel did he spin yarn of 200 counts, and what was the spindle like?

I have already written to you that at present I spin on the Gandiva wheel.[1] After making some improvements in its spindle-bearer, I can easily spin on it yarn of 30 counts. Today I probably spun yarn of still higher count. The waste, moreover, is negligible. The improvements are these : There is just enough space in the spindle-bearer to fit the spindle; the spindle-bearer is made very narrow; the spindle fits so closely that there is no room for the pulley to move loosely, since

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 20-7-1932.

there is just enough space for the spindle to rotate freely. These improvements have reduced to a minimum the accidents which resulted in the snapping of the threads, and enable us to draw very fine threads without fear. I have to see whether, by making the spindle still thinner, I can spin fine yarn with greater ease.

I get news about Mirabehn quite regularly here. The latest news I had, at the time of writing this letter, was of 23rd. She was bad-ridden then, though the postcard was written in her own hand. She has become very weak.

I understand what you say about the changes in the prayers. The important thing is that nobody should look upon the prayers as an infliction. As a healthy man feels the pangs of hunger in his stomach if he has not eaten anything on some day, so also a person with a healthy soul cannot but feel uneasy if he has not prayed during a day.

Do what you think proper regarding Prabhudas.

I suppose Shankarbhai's arm is no longer in plaster.

I don't like to tell Premabehn to make her letters shorter. I ought to let her pour out her heart. I know that she must be giving a good deal of her time to these letters, but probably she feels satisfied after writing them.

I will write to Mathew. Read that letter. The inmates of the Ashram will be able to put into practice my suggestion regarding education[1] only to the extent that you have been able to understandthe idea and can carry it out. It is something which I cannot easily make clear by explaining in words. It is only by putting it into practice that one can show how easy study and learning can be if we master that key, and how the thing can be done without much ostentation.

July 31, 1932

About Narmada, I wrote to you in my letter dated 31[2] -7-1932. I don't suppose you could have got it in due time. I need not write anything more in this. I had one more letter from Shambhushankar. I am sure that, if anything was possible, you must have done it. I bless her and pray that her honour may remain inviolate.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8241. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* "Education", 10-7-1932.

[2] Evidently a slip for 16; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 16-7-1932.

262. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 31, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

You are reamarkable. In spite of your extreme weakness, your hand is just as steady and clear as ever. Malaviyaji, to whom I had wired[1] says he is going to detain you till you have regained your strength. And if the climate agrees with you, nothing can be better than that you should be under Sivaprasad Babu's hospitable roof and Malaviyaji's loving care. I should be entirely free from anxiety. So you have been having the *tulsi* [2] leaf 'tea'.[3] I have never taken it myself. I have heard of its many virtues. In my opinion, the hot water is the chief agent. But I must not discount the testimony of many physicians and patients. What I want is to see you restored to your original strength and that without the harmful quinine. The *tulsi* leaf is certainly harmless, and it has a delicate, pleasing fragrance.

Please give our love to all the friends there.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope you had my previous letters. The Government has allowed them to be posted to you. There was delay, but latterly the letters have been fairly promptly released for despatch.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 6232. Courtesy : Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9668

263. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

July 31, 1932

CHI. RAMESHWARDAS,

I got your two letters. It is good that you left Ram[4] to take care of Vinoba. This is not separation but union. Do not remove him from

[1] On July 26, 1932; *vide* "Telegram to Madan Mohan Malviya", 26-7-1932.

[2] An aromatic plant

[3] "Shivaprasad Babu's old servent prepared me a special concoction of *tulsi* leaves, one or two *parijat* leaves, black pepper, and *mishri*, which induced perspiration and relieved the fever." —Mirabehn

[4] Addressee's son

there. If Gangadevi wants to learn English, she should certainly be permitted to do so. A husband has no right to hinder his wife's progress.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 183

264. LETTER TO AMINA G. QURESHI

July 31, 1932

CHI. AMINA,

I expect to get a long letter from you by and by. How is your health? How is your study of Urdu? Write a few sentences if you can. How do you find the children? How did everybody behave towards you?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujrati : G.N. 6661

265. LETTER TO NARAYAN M.KHARE

July 31, 1932

CHI. PANDITJI,

Since Tai has come to stay with you, it is our duty to see that she improves her health while she is there. Discover the art of building up good health. Ask Tai to write to me. She may write in Marathi.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 241. Courtesy : Lakshmibehn N. Khare

266. LETTER TO NIRMALA H. DESAI

July 31, 1932

CHI. NIRMALA (ANUT),

Please let me know whether or not you like being called anut. Aren't you Babla's[1] anut? Need you use a different kind of paper for every letter? Using sheets torn from exercise books costs more and,

[1] Son of Mahadev Desai

moreover, spoils the exercise books. Again, when the sheet is [torn off], the vertical line ruled on the left side . . . [1] . A thing is well used only when it is used chiefly for the purpose for which it is meant. It is not necessary that you should ask some questions in every letter. You can give in a letter a fine summary of what you read [and understood] during the week.

Nobody, whether a woman or a man, needs a physical weapon to protect herself or himself. Sometimes such weapon is used against that person himself. Moreover, a woman who [believes in] ahimsa will protect herself by killing herself rather than the evil-doer. A woman should have faith, like Sita and Draupadi, that God will protect her honour. God dwells in us in the form of His qualities and protects us. [Do you understand] this? Mahadev had received your letter. Did you get his reply?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9473. Also C.W. 1001. Courtesy: Nirmalabehn I. Mehta

267. LETTER TO KUSUMBEHN DESAI

July 31, 1932

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

You have been keeping the letter of your promise all right, but one may be said to have really kept a promise only if one also keeps its spirit. I have no right to give you this advice, for on the issue of milk I was content to keep merely the letter of my vow. Its spirit was that if I could not take the milk of cow or/and buffalo, I could not take that of any other animal either. Because of my eagerness to live, I violated that spirit. If you can accept advice from such an imperfect person, you may. I on my part have released you from your promise. You may write when you feel like writing. I am sure you must have inquired about Pyarelal [again]. I have already written to you and told you that I am waiting for Harilal's letters.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 1844

[1] The source is illegible here.

268. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

July 31, 1932

CHI. RAMA (JOSHI)[1] ,

If there is no letter from you in the next post, I will kick up a row. I want a detailed letter, giving me information of personal interest and about the activities of the group as a whole. How are Vimu and Dhiru? Do you find the Ashram the same place that it was, or better or worse than it was?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5335

269. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

July 31, 1932

CHI. VANAMALA,

How was Surendraji's tree uprooted? Plant another in its place. Ask Viramati and Chanchal to write to me. Why can you not spin as fine yarn as Keshu?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5778. Also C.W. 3001. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

270. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA N. KHARE

July 31, 1932

CHI. RAMBHAU,

You boys and girls are now old enough to have a sense of responsibility, and it is, therefore, right that you take up such work. What do you write in English? Send me a specimen of your English handwriting. Write a short essay.

BAPU

From Gujarati : C.W. 294. Courtesy : Lakshmibehn N. Khare

[1] Wife of Chhaganlal Joshi

271. LETTER TO NIRMALA B. MASHRUWALA

July 31, 1932

CHI. NIRMALA, (TOPIWALA BUNGALOW)

I was waiting for your letter. I received the proofs of *Gitamanthan*[1] [just now], but I have not received your previous letter till the moment of writing. There was a problem about letters written to me, which had created some confusion. Things have now settled down somewhat.

It was very good that you wrote to me. You have many things to write about. I would certainly be happy if you give me news about everyone.

I had received Babukaka's[2] letter, and I had also written a long letter[3] in reply. He must have received it now. Give my blessings to Gomati. All three of us are well. Blessings to everybody there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 2885. Courtesy : Nirmalabehn Shroff

272. LETTER TO MAHENDRA V. DESAI

July 31, 1932

CHI. MANU,

This time your handwriting was a little better. It will improve if you keep model letters in front of you and copy them with a reed-pen as carefully as if you were drawing pictures. You should first learn Gujarati, a little Sanskrit, arithmetic and all the processes connected with spinning, and then you may certainly learn English if you wish. You must increase your weight by a good many pounds. You will do so if you take sufficient milk and ghee and do exercise.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 5760. Courtesy : Valji G. Desai

[1] By Kishorelal G. Mashruwala
[2] Kishorelal G. Mashruwala
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Kishorelal G. Mashruwala", 1-7-1932.

273. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI

July 31, 1932

There is a *mantra in Ishopanishad*, which can also be interpreted to mean, "concentrate on the work before you". If one does so, one will certainly realize God. God is Omnipresent. He is present in "my" work too. What I think of as "my work" is in truth His. If I concentrate on it, I shall regard it as His. Anybody who does the Lord's work attains Him.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 335

274. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

July 31, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

I may say your letters are beautiful. With regard to protection read the letter to Nirmala.[1] One whose mind is pure should have the faith that God would protect her purity. It is wrong to depend on weapons. What if the weapon is snatched away? One who follows the path of non-violence may have no faith in weapons. Non-violence and love are his weapons.

There is no violence if someone's feelings are hurt when you speak the truth. There is no violence if someone is hurt without our wanting to hurt. Supposing I ask for cow's milk, but knowing about my vow, if you do not give it to me you are not committing violence, but doing your duty.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 9912. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Nirmala H. Desai", 31-7-1932.

275. LETTER TO GULAM RASUL QURESHI

July 31, 1932

CHI. QURESHI,

Write to me in detail. I believe you remember the books I want.

It seems Premabehn has sent *Khulfa-e-Rashidin Sarat*—Part II, the biography by Dr. Mohammed Ali, and other books.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10807. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

276. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
July 31, 1932

CHI. MANGALA,

You certainly do not wish that I should write the first letter only to you every day? If I did that, it would only be called partiality. Hence I should make it a rule to write first only to the person whose letter is received first. Is that not fair?

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11099. Courtesy: Pushpa Naik

277. LETTER TO A GIRL[1]

July 31, 1932

Everything written in books should not be accepted as sacred truth. We should not believe anything which violates our moral sense or justifies cruelty, no matter where we find it. So long as we have not acquired the capacity to judge between right and wrong, we should, in regard to what we read in books, accept the opinion of elders whom we trust.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 335

[1] The addressee had asked : "If we do not believe what is given in the books about Mira's miracles, then should we have faith in what others say about her? If we do not consider books as an authentic source, then what other sources can you suggest about our heroes and heroines?"

278. A LETTER[1]

July 31, 1932

You are suffering from a subtle pride and diffidence at the same time. How can you feel lonely in the midst of so many human beings, every one of whom demands your service and in whose midst you have thrown in your lot? You are in the midst of books and you will not touch them. You are in the midst of Hindi-speaking men and women and you will not speak to them. You are in the midst of workers and you will not throw yourself into the work and make two blades of grass grow where only one was growing yesterday, make two yards of cloth where only one was woven yesterday. All our philosophy is dry as dust if it is not immediately translated into some act of loving service. Forget the little self in the midst of the greater you have put yourself in. You must shake yourself free from this lethargy.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 336

279. LETTER TO A GIRL[2]

July 31, 1932

What a reason for not going to the Ashram! what would happen if everyone followed your example? Have you not heard the story of the Kazi and his dog? The dog died, and its corpse was taken for burial in procession, which was joined by the whole town. But when the Kazi himself was dead, there were hardly enough mourners to carry his coffin to the cemetery. Are you not guilty in the same manner or as the Gujarati *bhajan* puts it, "Man's friends are selfish; they will all desert him in the end." When a man dies, we burn his corpse. But you—I leave the sentence for you to complete. My point is that we must not make an individual the object of our affection which should be reserved only for his virtues. And this attachment should spring from pure love. Every person's virtues result in some concrete act or other. If we admire his virtues, we should promote the

[1] The addressee had said in his letter that he felt very lonely and was of no use at all.

[2] The addressee had said that she did not feel like going to the Ashram in the absence of Gandhiji who had drawn her to himself as a magnet.

activities which constitute their outward expression. You must therefore go to the Ashram and take care of the girls whose acquaintance you have made. And sometimes join the prayers too.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 336-7

280. TELEGRAM TO KAMALA NEHRU

August 1, 1932

KAMALA NEHRU
ANAND BHUWAN
ALLAHABAD

ALARMING ACCOUNT PRESS ABOUT HEALTH, WIRE EXACT CONDITION.

BAPU

Bomay secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. II, p. 383

281. LETTER TO VIMALABEHN A. PATEL

August 1, 1932

CHI. VIMALA[1] ,

I got your letter. The information which you have sent will be useful to Bhaktibehn. I will try to pass it on to her, [but] a prisoner can never say anything with certainty. When you write to me next, please let me know why you wrote the last letter with pencil. Anybody who writes a letter with pencil without a special reason commits a wrong. That is, he is guilty of violence, because the writing in pencil fades out and gives trouble to the readers. Your handwriting is indeed as good as you yourself are, but because you wrote the letter in pencil the words have almost faded out.

Blessing and greetings to all of you from all the three of us.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. VIMALA PATEL
PATIDAR MANDIR
ANAND JUNCTION

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3276

[1] Daughter of Narasinhbhai Ishvarbhai Patel

282. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
August 3, 1932

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

You seem to have forgotten me. But my companions and I often talk about you.

Manilal tells me he thoughtlessly leased to someone a plot of the Phoenix land without reference to the trustees.[1] If there is no objection to the lease except on the ground of Manilal's thoughtlessness, I feel that it would be well to protect him by validating the agreement. Manilal says the other trustees are agreeable. If during the five years the whole ground has to be sold, it can be subject to the lease. I amhoping however that years of labour put in the settlement will not have that sorry end. This brings to mind Tolstoy Farm. What is the state of things there? I am well.

Love,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original : Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy : National Archives of India

283. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

August 3, 1932

CHI. MANILAL,

I got your letter. You have asked for a reply by cable but a prisoner cannot easily send cables like that. The authorities may perhaps forward it, but I must observe proper limit. Moreover nearly a month has passed since you wrote your letter and there would be no harm if another month passes. I, therefore, did not ask for permission to send a cable. It was not quite proper that a promise to hand over the lease was made directly, but now that it is made I have written to Kallenbach to endorse it if possible. The letter[2] is enclosed. I hope that you yourself will have been able to persuade him before you get this letter and it will not be necessary for you to use my letter.

[1] *Vide* " Letter to Manilal Gandhi" , 3-8-1932

[2] This is not available.

Please send me a copy in the Phoenix Trust-deed. It is possible that there is a copy in the Ashram. But in case we do not find it there, I should have a copy to consult it if necessary.

I think you will now stay there. It will not be wrong at all if you have decided to do that. There, too, you will be doing service.

But do not be lazy in writing to me.

Devdas had a good spell of illness in jail. So he has been released one month before the expiry of his term. Mirabehn also was very ill. Dr. Mehta is seriously ill.

All three of us are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4791

284. LETTER TO PRAGJI K. DESAI

August 3, 1932

CHI. PRAGJI,

Parvati and you seem to be so busy that you do not get time to write even a single line. Here, Mahadev, Sardar and I remember both of you. Please, therefore, find time some day and write to us.

We are all right. Spinning is going on, as usual. At present Mahadev spins yarn of about 70 counts. Besides spinning, Sardar studies Sanskrit with the enthusiasm of a young student and is making rapid progress. Mahadev is studying French, and I am doing a little Urdu. Sardar makes envelopes from waste paper. That is his chief occupation. This letter will be carried in one of his envelopes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a Photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5033

285. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

August 3, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter of the 1st. I hope you are not getting frightened at the crowing in the hostel. If the girls are well behaved, there will be no difficulty. There will be none, either if we have perfectly learnt the

lesson of non-attachment. Others can suggest mostly external remedies for tour health. About internal remedies, you alone can judge. I do not have much faith in psychologists. How much can even the best trained psychologist know about the human mind? Hence, you yourself should try and know what connection your ill-health has with your mind and adopt the proper remedies. In this very letter, however you say that heavy or light work and proper sleep or its absence do have an effect on health. Thus the truth is that both internal and external factors have a bearing on one's health. No one has been able to maintain good health with the help of mind alone, neglecting external measures. You should, therefore, listen to Narandas's advice in regard to sleep, rest and work, and examine the mental cause yourself. Take any measures you think necessary but make your body as strong as steel. I should have told you at the very beginning that you should not take Kuhne-bath in warm water during the period of your monthly course.

The inner voice is something which cannot be described in words. But sometimes we have a positive feeling that something in us prompts us to do a certain thing. The time when I learnt to recognize this voice was, I may say, the time when I started praying regularly. That is, it was about 1906. I searched my memory and tell you this because you asked the question. In fact, however, there was no moment when I suddenly felt that I had some new experience. I think my spiritual life has grown without my being conscious of the fact in the same way as hair grows on our body.

This is how repetition of God's name wipes out one's sins. Anyone who sincerely follows that practice is bound to have faith. He starts with the conviction that such repetition will wipe out his sins. Wiping out of sins means self-purification. One who repeats God's name daily with faith will never grow tired of doing so, and, therefore, the name which he repeats with his lips to start with sinks ultimately into his heart, and that purifies him. This is a universal experience. Psychologists also believe that man becomes what he thinks. Ramanama follows this law. I have unshakable faith in the virtue of repeating God's name. I am convinced that the person who discovered it had first-hand experience [of spiritual life] and that his discovery is of the utmost value. The door of purification should open even for the illiterate. Repetition of God's name opens it for them. (See *Gita* IX. 22, X.10.) Telling beads and similar practices help one

to concentrate and to count the number of times the name has been repeated.

Studies should be undertaken only with the aim of equipping oneself for service. Since, however, service of others gives one the highest joy, one may say that studies are for joy. I have not heard of anyone, however, who found unbroken joy in life through literary pursuits alone without devoting himself to service.

Art cannot be the monopoly of any country or individual. That which requires secrecy is no art.

It is the right and the duty of every country to protect its industries. It is the duty of a person who follows the path of non-vio-lence to give shelter to the homeless. Who should be treated ashomeless can be decided only by reference to the circumstances of each case.

What seems bad in its outward appearance is not always so in its substance. The unattractive appearance of Urdu books indicates their publishers' lack of means. But cannot their contents be excellent? In fact the contents of some of them are so. In making the list, however, how does the question of the work being or not being interesting arise? Since the list has to be made, the work must be interesting because there is interest in doing one's duty. If you take the trouble some time of learning a little Urdu, you will find the study interesting in itself.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10297. Also C.W. 5748. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

286. LETTER TO PUSHPA S. PATEL

August 3, 1932

CHI. PUSHPA,

Here is the first letter of the day to you. But would not everyone wish to have the first letter? So, we must be satisfied with what we get. And, if we have to choose, we should choose the worst for ourselves.

One who follows this rule will always be content.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11081. Courtesy: Pushpa Naik

287. TELEGRAM TO CHHAGANLAL P. MEHTA

August 4, 1932

CHHAGANLAL MEHTA[1]
8 PAGODA ROAD
RANGOON

GOD'S WILL BE DONE.[2] CONSOLATION TO YOU AND MOTHER. HOPE YOU WILL FULLY CARRY ON ALL NOBLEST TRADITIONS LEFT BY FATHER FOR COMMERCIAL INTEGRITY LAVISH HOSPITALITY AND GREAT GENEROSITY. SARDAR AND MAHADEV JOIN M E IN CONDOLENCES. FOR ME I FEEL FOR LORN WITHOUT LIFELONG FAITHFUL FRIEND. CONTINUE KEEP ME INFORMED OF EVERYTHING. MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL.

GANDHI

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 342 and Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (4) (3), Pt. II, p. 441

288. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

August 4, 1932

Dr. Mehta is no more. I have lost a lifelong faithful friend. But for me he lives more intensely by his death than before, for I treasure his many virtues now more than ever. That treasure becomes a sacred trust. Here is a letter for Maganlal. I expect you to do all you can to make him a worthy son of his father. I have advised him not to worry but continue his studies. Broken down though Dr. Mehta had become of late, I expect he had preserved his original circumspection to make suitable financial arrangem-ents for Maganlal's studies. Maganlal will know. I feel that I am not by his people's side at the present moment. But not my will, let His be done, now and for ever.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 344

[1] Eldest son of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta
[2] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta had passed away on August 3.

289. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON [1]

August 4, 1932

Brotherhood is just now only a distant aspiration. To me it is a test of true spirituality. All our prayers, fasting and observances are empty nothings so long as we do not feel a live kinship with all life. But we have not even arrived at that intellectual belief, let alone a heart realization. We are still selective. A selective brotherhood is a selfish partnership. Brotherhood requires no consideration or response. If it did, we could not love those whom we consider as vile men and women. In the midst of strife and jealousy, it is a most difficult performance. And yet true religion demands nothing less from us. Therefore each one of us has to endeavour to realize this truth for ourselves irrespective of what others do.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 345

290. LETTER TO MANILAL R. JHAVERI

August 4, 1932

CHI. MANILAL[2] ,

I have just received a cable about Doctor's death. I had been getting cables every day about his condition. You also must have received similar cables. I do not know whether you will have to go to Rangoon. I had been daily sending cables to Chhaganlal. Please let me know how much you can help in preserving Doctor's good name. I do not know whether he has left a will. If you know who is with Chhaganlal in Rangoon at present, please let me know. What will happen to Magan now? A beautiful nest is in danger of being ruined. I know that all of you will feel the loss of Doctor. But my sorrow is peculiar. I had no greater friend than Doctor in this whole world, and for me he is still alive. But I am unable to do anything from here to keep his nest whole, and that makes me unhappy. But I hope you will do all you can to that end. I will of course be in regular correspondence with Chhaganlal. Write to me regularly for some time. Where is

[1] The addressee had asked "why the idea of brotherhood did not take root among nations in spite of the example set by Bapu, Kagawa, Albert Schweitzer and others". (*The Diary of Mahadev Desai,* Vol. I, p. 270)

[2] Son of Revashankar Jagjivan Jhaveri, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's brother

Nanalal[1] at present? Hand over the accompanying letter[2] to him. I hope both of you are well. How is Tilak?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Read the letter[3] to Khimchand too, and pass it on to him.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 5045. Courtesy: Dhirubhai Jhaveri. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. I, p. 342

291. LETTER TO NANALAL K. JASANI

August 4, 1932

Doctor's passing away has put me in a more unhappy plight than it has done any of you. I feel miserable that my oldest co-worker or friend, call him what you like, has passed away and I, being in jail, can do nothing to help you. But God has a purpose in this too; it may even be His kindness. I do not know what strength you possess to preserve the prosperity of Doctor's nest. Use all the strength you have. We must wait and see whether his good name remains unsullied and his children perpetuate his virtues.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 343

292. LETTER TO BABALBHAI MEHTA

August 4, 1932

BABALBHAI,

I got your letter[4]. My experience tells me that, instead of bothering about how the whole world may live in the right manner, we should think how we ourselves may do so. We do not even know whether the world lives in the right manner or in a wrong manner. If, however, we live in the right manner, we shall feel that others also do the same, or shall discover a way of persuading them to do so.

[1] Nanalal K. Jasani, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's business manager and partner

[2] *Vide* the following item.

[3] This is not available.

[4] In which the addressee had asked : "The world has always been as it is; when will it improve?" (*The Diary of Mahadev Desai*, Vol. I, p. 276)

To know the *atman* means to forget the body, or, in other words, to become a cipher. Anybody who becomes a cipher will have realized the *atman*.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9449

293. A LETTER [1]

August 4, 1932

CHI.,

You are now without a father. But remember that the great Father of us all is alive. For Doctor, it was deliverance from great suffering. I wish that you should be as wish and good as he was. You may not have his intelligence or learning, but you can certainly cultivate his goodness, generosity and truthfulness. And it is these virtues that help us. Those who revere Doctor do so not for his learning but for his virtues. You should not be impatient. You need not go to Rangoon if you have not already started. Do not worry about your share. I am writing to Chhaganlal.[2] Have trust in him. You will gain nothing by distrusting him. Write to me from time to time. I hope you understand my meaning. God will protect you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bhavnagar Samachar, 17-12-1955

294. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL P. MEHTA

August 4, 1932

Your conduct henceforth should show to others that you understand the true significance of Doctor's death. His many virtues are his real will. They are your legacy. I hope you will do nothing which may make your younger brothers unhappy in the slightest degree. . . . [3] I feel unhappy that, at a time when my life long

[1] The letter was probably addressed to Ratilal Mehta, son of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta.

[2] *Vide* the following item.

[3] Omission as in the source

friendhas passed away, I am as helpless as a cripple. If I had been free, I would be by your side now. Perhaps Doctor would have drawn his last breath in my lap. But God is ever jealous of our wishes. I must, therefore, content myself with what I can do through letters.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 343

295. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[*August 4, 1932*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

You will find with this a letter[2] for Ratubhai. The clearing of the outgoing mail seems to have become regular once again. This has happened at the right time. For some time you may write to me daily if you find it necessary to do so. Inquire and try to get as much information as you can.

Doctor had been thinking of coming over in November, but we know that God does not always fulfil our wishes.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, Pt. I, p. 447. Also C.W. 8244.

Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

296. LETTER TO RATILAL SHETH

August 4, 1932

BHAI RATILAL[3] ,

Perhaps I will feel the loss of Doctor the most, because I am not able to do anything to help in preserving the prosperity of his business. Doctor was always apprehensive about how Chhaganlal would behave after his death. You can probably, if you do your best, prove his fear unjustified. I could see when I was in Rangoon that Lilavati[4] had great influence over Chhaganlal. I was happy that it was so. I could not judge whether Lilavati was making good use of that

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] *Ibid*

[3] Chhaganlal Mehta's father-in-law

[4] Wife of Chhaganlal Mehta

influence or abusing it. I did have some misgivings. I had even cautioned her and she had reassured me. But in Doctor's letters whichI received here he had expressed great disappointment about her. In Rangoon he had even wept before me. I do not know what influence you still have [over][1] Lilavati. Nor do I know how far Doctor's fear was justified. I hope that you will not fail to contribute your share to see that Doctor's nest is not ruined, that all the brothers preserve good relations and do not quarrel among themselves and that the business does not suffer.

Please write to me frankly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 7167. Also C.W. 4661. Courtesy: Champabehn R. Mehta

297. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

Y. M.,
August 4, 1932

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I got your letter. I had been waiting for it. You must not feel distressed that you could not meet anyone. It is a mercy that even letters are permitted, for how can a prisoner expect to be permitted to receive letters? Preserve the health with which you have come out. *Pranayama* does benefit, particularly persons with a lung disease. It must be remembered that *pranayama* is not to be done in a hurry. How was the behaviour of the jail officials? Was it courteous?

I have already conveyed to you that I have given up the Magan charkha for the present. I could not go beyond 20 counts. I am not able to use both my hands. I cannot draw the yarn with my left hand. I can therefore try only the right hand. I have got adjusted to it. But since I have been permitted to turn the Gandiv wheel with the left hand, I felt that I ought to change over to it. I have acquired wonderful control over it. Even on this I draw the yarn with the righthand and have gone up to 35 counts. I am also picking up speed, though it is still quite slow. It is around one hundred rounds, but I am satisfied. There is very little wastage and even in such as takes place, I am

[1] The source is mutilated here.

making small improvements. I have thus had to postpone the Magan charkha experiment for the present. I will of course not give it up completely. I enjoy spinning on that too. Cling to the Divine Name like one possessed. When you have no help from anywhere else, you will get it from the Name.

May your ambition of improving the Magan charkha be fulfilled.

Do go to Almora. All of us agree with your idea of not giving a big name to the Ashram at present. You may therefore call it shail Ashram. Of the five names all the three of us liked that the best. We did not waste our time in thinking of another name. Ultimately we are concerned with the work, not with the name.

The Ashram is certainly not to be filled only with invalids. Some of course are bound to come. If Padma[1] comes, she must bereceived. You should get separate expenses for any such persons who may come. There would of course be a budget for the Ashram. I will not decide the figure for it. You may settle it with Narandas. It is proper that the expenditure on you, too, should be counted separately. This would be convenient for you. What you write about your work there is also correct. You should not take up too many things just now. You should proceed slowly and only as much as your health permits. For the present you should do only what you can on your own responsibility. I would be happy if you could tempt Balkrishna. He would be very good company for you. He may also improve in health and the Ashram would gain in dignity. If Dhiru[2] desires to join, it should be with a firm resolve to be steady there. Let him join if he does so on that condition. It would of course be excellent if you could find some good hill people to join you.

You have mentioned having enclosed Krishna's letter but I don't see it. Either you forgot, or the letter was left behind at Sabarmati. Where is. . .[3]?

Blessings from Sardar and Mahadev.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Gandhi Nidhi File (August, 1976). Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

[1] Padma Sahay
[2] Chhaganlal Joshi's son
[3] A word here is illegible in the source

298. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

August 5, 1932

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM

SABARMATI

CONSOLATION RATILAL CHAMPA. STRONGLY ADVISE THEM NOT GO RANGOON. AM CONSTANT TOUCH WITH RANGOON.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 8243. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

299. LETTER TO NELLIE SEN GUPTA

August 5, 1932

What is this we hear about your husband's[1] illness? Please send me a correct report and send him kind regards from us all. You know I have Sardar and Mahadev Desai for companions.

The Hindustan Times, 14-8-1932

[1] J.M. Sen Gupta

300. LETTER TO HARDAYAL NAG

August 5, 1932

DEAR H. D. BABU,

It was a perfect delight to all of us to hear from you. You make me jealous when you say that at your ripe age[1] you learnt *takli* spinning. It was a great joy to learn that you had gained 16 lb. in weight. May you have many more years of service. We often talk about you and your wonderful vitality.

With regards from us all.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 348

301. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

August 5, 1932

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I got your letter. It seems after all I shall be able to continue to write letters.

What had Kaku done?

Ask Ramibehn to write to me. What disease is she suffering from? She should realize that you are no longer in a position to serve your family personally. She should [willingly] make that sacrifice. She is, moreover, a woman of spiritual understanding. She should rely on God for protection. She will always enjoy that, wherever she may be.

I am trying to do something about Kaku. I had a letter from him. It is not for us to worry about him. If we can do anything for him, we certainly should. Do write to me regularly.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 64. Also C.W. 8792. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] He was eighty-five.

302. LETTER TO S. A. BRELVI

August 6, 1932

DEAR BRELVI[1],

I am intensely dissatisfied with myself for having allowed our conversation of yesterday to drift into a discussion primarily of my wretched arm.[2] I wanted to know the daily routine of all the companions. For this there were hardly a few minutes left. But the information I gained emboldens me to offer a suggestion. Whilst I appreciate a study of French and other continental languages I feel that we ought first to devote our attention to our own languages. Mahadev tells me that you had already begun a serious study of Sanskrit and that you know a little Gujarati. May I then suggest your devoting your time first to studying Sanskrit, Gujarati and Hindi? I do believe that each one of us should make the very best use of the precious time at our disposal. Since you know Urdu and Persian so well, Hindi is child's play. You should be able to read the *Ramayana* of Tulsidas in the original.

You will excuse this presumption, please.

Love from us all.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: S. A. Brelvi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

303. LETTER TO MATHURADAS P. ASAR

[Before *August 7, 1932*][3]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. The hook for the cup has not yet arrived. I am not even ready to use it as yet. Every day the cup is before my eyes. It has not been our intention to go on increasing the count. I am going to be steady at around 40 counts myself. Most probably it will

[1] Editor, *The Bombay Chronicle*

[2] Gandhiji had been having pain in the left elbow.

[3] From the contents the letter appears to have been written before the one to the addressee of August 7, 1932; *vide* "Letter to Mathuradas Purushottam", 7-8-1932.

be the same in the case of Sardar. Mahadev may settle at around 80 counts. Then testing it would be the thing to do. It would be easy to see the result. If the yarn is even and does not break while being taken off and is tightly wound round the spindle, then the yarn is not likely to be weak. On the other hand, there are chances of being cheated in the tests made using the cup or the machine used in a mill. The yarn cannot be unwound from just any place. There would be much waste in doing so. Hence, only if the yarn is even from the point of unwinding can it stand the test. This means that yarn can be tested only by the weaver. The yarn which can be used for weaving without difficulty is good yarn. But the purpose of writing is not to disregard the tools of yarn-testing. My purpose is only to indicate the time for doing the test. At one time I used to do the testing every day. I had prepared the tool for the purpose with the materials available at home. But then I found that it was taking a lot of time. And I was not able to effect much improvement thereby. I also saw that where I only used my guess instead of the test, my guess frequently turned out to be correct, because, while unwinding the yarn, it would have passed before the eyes. One would also know how often it has broken and also how well the yarn has been wound on the spindle. And so, an intelligent spinner automatically gets an idea about the quality of his yarn. Otherwise you are absolutely correct in arguing that there is no reason to gloat over the fact if the yarn is of 100 counts on weighing. I know that there can be yarn of 100 counts fit only to be thrown away. I have also seen such yarn. Any attempt to spin such yarn is sheer waste of time. Hence, anyone spinning fine yarn should be convinced that the yarn will easily be turned into a length of cloth. Then alone can the yarn be considered as of good quality, otherwise it is useless; That is why I had written to Narandas two or three months ago that he should make arrangements for the weaving of fine yarn.

Your report about the Yajnik Sewing Machine is interesting. If we get volunteers in thousands involved in the . . . .[1] right at the beginning, the experiment will not go very far. Hence, we must invent something which will ensure proper use of the hand needle and does not take much time. It is only with this in view that I have kept embroidery and knitting in my mind. The art of Yajnik sewing is not for making available to the poor ready-made khadi garments, but for quick disposal of the khadi woven by the poor without loss. It is for

[1] Unclear in the original

making expensive-looking khadi inexpensive. But if we expect from a fairly wealthy person that he shall buy khadi however expensive and however coarse it may be, and then get it stitched at his own expense, then khadi cannot go very far. Alternatively khadi should be sold at a loss or the spinning charges, etc., should be brought down. In your plan I saw the suggestion to avoid doing that and so I promptly welcomed it. Hence you should convince the ladies who have protested that they should feel gratified that they adorned the khadi woven by the poor by stitching it free and serving the poor. For, by their action, the stitched garments could be sold at the price of unwashed khadi and we could pay the poor their full wages. We can certainly make an inexpensive sewing-machine in this country; but I think it can only be an imitation of the machine in vogue at present. If so, it should mean overriding the patent law. The Singer and othermachines have invested capital of millions of rupees and wherever patent laws prevail, they must be registering their patents. But I am not fully conversant with the situation, and if somebody invents an original design and prepares a sewing-machine which is simpler than the machines currently in use, he himself can earn millions by registering his patent. Because, he would then compete with the Singer machine. Our craftmanship has still not inspired such confidence in me. In the West, there are countless new inventions every day. But that is not our field at all. Something like that has no doubt been in my mind. our ancestors invented the greatest thing in the shape of the spinning-wheel. Millions of people have benefited from it. Textile machinery is based on the design of the spinning-wheel. Hence there is still much scope in the direction of improvement of the spinning-wheel. I am sure that something will emerge. There can be a profit of millions, but there is no chance for a single individual to earn millions.

Now about your diet. You have done well to give up starches. Equally important is the point about pulses. If the curd is absolutely sweet (not sour), it can never cause headache. To make it safe, a little soda may be added to it. But if one can take milk, there is no need to take curd. It is only superstition that papaw is harmful to the eyes. Any person can test this fact by taking only papaw. He should take nothing else with it. This can be tested by having a single meal of papaw. There is no need to entertain such a superstition even with regard to ripe tomatoes. Your diet can consist of thin chapati, green vegetables and milk. You must have something sweet. You can take

currants, black grape or raisins. Raw onion can do you good, but it can be taken only in the evening because I know that it gives off a terrible smell. I have myself eaten lots of raw onions. I did it only in the evening and avoided meeting anyone afterwards. But the tolerance of our women is infinite. But since Ba has been in the habit of making free comments over the years, she could not hold herself from remarking on the matter. And in the end she always warned me against going before anyone else with my mouth stinking. And she was absolutely right. I am afraid your digestive system cannot accept almonds. Do not go on brooding about your diet. Do not brood over your illness either. Once you have decided about something, it should be taken as settled. Taking a vow only means that our mind stops bothering about it after the vow has been taken. Just as a trader doesnot bother about the thing he has already sold and starts thinking about the next thing, so also the mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3761

304. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

August 7, 1932

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

What a joy to have had such a letter from you. It was thoughtful of you to have sent us the medical report. Hardly a day passed but we have talked of you. You have suffered. It is good you are going out for treatment. We all hope you will profit by it and return fully restored to health.

It was equally considerate of you to have given a full report of Jawaharlal's health.

I expect to hear from you regularly.

And now about ourselves. We have all been keeping quite well. I am taking milk. My weight is 105. We are leading a student's life. Sardar gives full 4 hours or more to Sanskrit. He gives nearly two hours to spinning and turns waste paper into envelopes. I learnt only here that he had an eye for neatness and a deft hand. This will be closed in an envelope of his make. So you see he is adding to the wealth of the country. Mahadev is reading French, gives Sanskrit

lessons to the Sardar, does my writing work, reads other things and does 3 hours' spinning and needful cooking, etc. I do over two hours' spinning and Urdu. I have read those Jamia publications that were sent to me. And now I am rereading Shibli's *Life of the Prophet*[1]. I carry on a little Urdu correspondence. One of my correspondents is a girl whom you are reported to know. Her name is Zohra[2]. What a wonderful hand she writes. My Urdu teacher is Raihana whom too you know. She is the daughter of our old young friend Abbas Tyabji. She is a brick.

Bon voyage and love from us all.

Good-bye.[3]

Yours always,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C. W. 10876. Courtesy: Dr. Zakir Husain Library, Jamia Millia Islamia

305. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

Y. M.,
August 7, 1932

CHI. NIMU,

I got your letter. Could you not understand that my letter was in part a jest? Ramdas had made no complaint against you. I complained that in my opinion you were harassing Ramdas. But are you going to stop harassing him because of my saying so? You will stop harassing anybody only when you stop considering yourself helpless and, ceasing to be a weak woman, become strong. Those who feel themselves helpless and weak always harass others wittingly or unwittingly.

Babu's ear should be all right now. If you know what medicine was given, let me know.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Nirmala Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Sirat-un-Nabi*
[2] Zohra Banu Ansari, addressee's daughter
[3] This is in Urdu.

306. DR. PRANJIVANDAS MEHTA[1]

August 7, 1932

If I were in the Ashram just now, I would have said a few words about this holy soul. He was my oldest friend. I came into contact with him when I first went to England[2], and our relations became closer as time passed. He was the first person whom I met in England and from the very beginning he acted as my guide and counsellor. But all this is there in the *Autobiography*.[3] Here I do not wish to write about our intimate relations. If we know what virtues he possessed because of which I describe him as a holy soul, we shall be able to emulate them, and can have faith that we also can achieve in our lives what he did in his.

Doctor had won a gold medal at the Grant Medical College. After that, he passed more examinations in England and was enrolled as Barrister. But I leave all these achievements. All of us cannot shine as scholars. For that we require favourable circumstances. Men are not worshipped for their attainments in letters. It is for their virtues that they are worshipped. I saw Doctor continually progressing in such virtues as firmness of mind, courage, generosity, purity, love of truth, ahimsa and simplicity. Once he had made up his mind to do something, he would never change. His word, therefore, was trusted by people who had dealings with him. And he was always fearless. When he returned from England, he found that he could not keep up his self-respect in his native town of Morvi, and he, therefore, left it for good. Doctor's liberality knew no bounds. His house was like a dharmasala. No deserving poor ever returned empty-handed from him. He had helped and supported a number of people. There was no ostentation in his help. He never boasted about it. It knew no limits of caste or community or province. There were people in all provinces and belonging to all communities and faiths who had benefited from his generosity. Doctor had enough wealth and to spare, but he was not proud of it. He spent very little of it on pleausres for himself. It can be said that in his very large bungalow he occupied the smallest space for his use. I don't remember his having ever spent money in self-indulgence. I believe that he had relations with no other woman except his

[1] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 2/7-8-1932; *vide* the following item.

[2] In October 1888

[3] *Vide* "An Autobiography".

wife. During the last many years of his life he loved *brahmacharya.* In his early life, Doctor had little interest in reading religious books, but in his later life his love for such books increased. In a letter which he wrote to me here he mentioned the books which he had been reading. All of them were religious books. So far as I know, Doctor had scrupulously followed truth both in his business and his legal practice. I know that he had great hatred of falsehood and hypocrisy. His ahimsa was visible on his face and could be read in his eyes, and it was becoming deeper day by day. Of course the *atman* in man never dies, but Doctor has become, through his virtues, immortal in a special sense. His close connection with the Ashram was a great help in its religious aspirations. Let us learn something, each one to the best of his or her ability, from the life of this holy soul.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II

307. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

August 2/7, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your mail today. If Narmada is saved, we shall think that we have rescued a cow from the slaughter-house. Help Liladhar[1] in every way you can. If you show him love, he may recover his balance of mind. Never let him feel that he lives outside the Ashram. And still he should be free and so also we. He must assume at least some responsibility for the girls. That is for his own good. Read my letter[2] to him. Do what you think proper about Jaisukhlal's[3] daughters. If the elder one does not stay there willingly, it would be difficult to watch her all the time. You must have read Indu's letter. Read my reply[4] to him. What is the doctor's opinion about Mani? If Kusum's lungs have become all right, take care and see that she does not weaken them again by over-exertion. She at least should find this weather good for her health. On two conditions, however—that she does not exert herself too much and that she consumes enough milk and ghee. As far as possible, help everybody who has come from the Vidyapith. I,

[1] A shopkeeper of Vadaj. His family stayed for some time in the Ashram when his wife was ill.

[2] This is not available.

[3] Jaisukhlal Gandhi

[4] This is not available.

too, had heard about Devdas, and also about Dr. Mehta. There is every possibility that the latter's illness may prove fatal this time. I don't know what kind of a will he has made. You must have judged from his letters that Chhaganlal and Lilavati have caused him much grief. What are Ratubhai's circumstances at present? You are likely to know whether his work leaves him any time. It would be excellent if he goes there as soon as he can and see that Chhaganlal and Lilavati play no mischief. I am sure Ratilal also would like to go. If he wishes to go, I think it will be useless to try to dissuade him. However, you will be a better judge of that. Where is Nanalal at present? I am not at all surprised by what I read about Harilal. I am afraid his whole life will pass thus. Read my letter[1] to Ramji. It is our duty to bear with him in as many things as we can. That will be our atonement for our treatment of the *Antyajas.* We are not likely to get better men from among them than he or Dudabhai.

August 4, 1932

If you show to the Municipal Engineer, Mr. Malik, the spot on the prayer-ground which was threatened by the flood, he will help you. I think you know him. He used to visit the Ashram formerly. If you ask Bhai Mavalankar, he will request Shri Malik to come and see you. The danger from floods was known from the beginning. That is why the weaving shed and "Hridaykunj" were built as farther back as possible. Probably this work cannot be done during the rainy season, but it would be best to follow an engineer's advice. Such things happen in Bengal every year. The rivers there are notorious for their power of causing erosions.

August 7, 1932

I got without delay your wire and letter about Doctor. I had been regularly getting cables from Rangoon. On the day on which I got your wire, I wrote to you[2] and to Ratilal[3] and Champa. I hope you got the letters immediately. You must have got my wire[4], too. The fact that there has been no cable from Rangoon after the one giving the news of Doctor's death makes me think. Whether or not any cable is received, I think it would be best for Ratilal and Champa not to go. They should trust to their fate. I gave similar advice about Maganlal

[1] This is not available.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 4-8-1932.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal P. Mehta", 4-8-1932.

[4] *Vide* "Telegram to Narandas Gandhi", 5-8-1932.

too.

I have made a little change in my diet since eight days ago. Eating *rotlis* twice seemed to be causing slight constipation. Hence, for one meal I eat four bananas. In the evening, I don't eat bananas, but eat some vegetables as I did previously. Just now the vegetable is generally *guvar*[1] or *patkalu*[2]. I mix the vegetable with milk and eat it. There is also a *mosambi* or an orange. I eat one in the morning too. This has relieved constipation to some extent. I am still watching. In the experiment which I am making now, most probably milk will remain one of the items. This time the weight came to 105 pounds. My health must be described as good in all respects.

There are 37 letters in all. Nine of them are bound with a string.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U/I. Also C.W. 8242. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

308. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

August 7, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

I have two postcards and one letter to acknowledge. Vallabhbhai makes the choice of the best envelopes from his ever increasing stock. No wonder you appreciate his art. It is an art which turns waste into wealth. I am delighted that Rajendra Babu is with you. If I fail to write to him, give my love to him in which Vallabhbhai and Mahadev join. I doubt not that wherever possible, you are speaking in Hindi.

You a sked me the other day about a further selection of books[3] when and if you get the leisure. Babu Sivaprasad has a very fine collection of books. He and Rajendra Babu can help you to make the selection. As you like the *Ramayana*, you are likely, too, to appreciate the *Mahabharata*. It is a big task but it is worth undertaking. And then there are the Vedas and the Upanishads. You can have selected readings from the former and read all the principal Upanishads. This course will certainly give you an insight into the Hindu thought that would be valuable. Your intuitive love of

[1] A kind of beans
[2] Pumpkin
[3] "For reading when and if I should go to jail." —Mirabehn

Hinduism will then have the backing of an informed mind. And it may be that you might have to correct some of the notions you have formed. I would balance this reading by a reading of the Koran and Amir Ali's *Spirit of Islam*. Pickthall's translation of the Koran is perhaps the best. I cannot tell. But if not that, then Dr. Mohamed Ali's translation. I have now given you fully a year's course of good, solid reading.

I say nothing about Devdas as I am writing to him separately. Tea and coffee, if they are strong, are poison for a convalescing patient. Tea made after the Chinese fashion is likely to be harmless. You know how it is made, do you not?

The note you refer to from S. Sahai and Rajen Babu I do not find at all. It must have been left there. For the time being at any rate my post both outgoing and ingoing is again in order.

For the past week I have replaced chapatis with bananas of which I take 4 daily. This I did to avoid constipation which seemed to be coming. I feel better. The result of course is that there is little salt in the food now. I take none with oranges which I am taking. I retain a vegetable on which I pour the evening milk.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 6235. Courtesy : Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9701

309. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

August 7, 1932

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I got your letter. I have preserved your letter about the cup.[1] At present all three of us are trying our best to spin fine yarn. Mahadev has reached nearly 80 counts, while Sardar and I are between 30 and 40. When we have reached our target, we will use the cup and I will then let you know the result.

The following points should be considered in regard to dress-making for *yajna*. (1) What Kind of clothes can be stitched in the shortest time. (2) What kind of clothes will be sold most. (3) What kind of clothes women can stitch more easily and what kind of clothes men can stitch more easily. (4) Whether this scheme includes

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mathuradas Purushottam", 6-8-1932.

embroidery and knitting. (5) Whether to cater to the needs of the rich also or only of the poor. (6) Scope of machine-sewing and of hand-sewing, etc., etc. The subject is an interesting one and is also of practical benefit. It requires very careful thinking. If at present, however, you concentrate on spinning, pay less attention to sewing. Think over it when you have no other work and make experiments yourself. Mithubehn and Perinbehn have done very good work in this field. But I know that your plan is much wider than theirs. If it can be implemented fully and if people respond to it, no cloth can compete with khadi. But at present your work is improvement of spinning. Give as much time to sewing as you can spare for it. Concentration on one work helps one to attain *moksha,* but to attempt many things at a time is self-indulgence.

As regards your relations with Motibehn, you should first examine your own mind. Do you still wish to enjoy pleasures of the flesh? If you have firmly resolved in your mind that you do not wish to do so, you should inform Motibehn and other friends about your resolution. That will certainly shock Motibehn, but your firmness will have an electric effect on her. Firmness means that you will remain steadfast in your resolution even if Motibehn loses her reason or dies. You should also be convinced that the good of you both lies in such firmness on your part. If, however, you have not reached this degree of firmness, give up arguing with Motibehn and silently live with her as other husbands live with their wives and exercise what self-control you can while doing so. If you do that, nobody will have a right to criticize you. Everybody can advance only within the limit of his capacity. In any case you will deserve criticism if you remain undecided and deceive yourself, your friends and the world. If you save yourself from such a position, everything will be well in the end. Do not think too much and get confused. You have spent a good many years in thinking. Come to a definite decision without further hesitation, and you will then enjoy complete peace of mind.

This is the meaning of the *Gita* verse:"The attitude, in this matter, springing, as it does, from fixed resolve is but one, O Kurunandana"[1]

Think over it and the verses which immediately follow. You will understand this letter more clearly then.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3756

[1] *Bhagavad Gita,* II. 41.

310. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

August 7, 1932

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter. My letter to you went to the Camp[1] . What is the trouble in your leg? Ramdas and Hargovind[2] told me about it when they met me this time.[3] See that you do not let your health suffer outside jail.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5505

311. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

August 7, 1932

CHI. VANAMALA,

I got your letter. You should learn to do with your right hand everything which you do with your left.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5779. Also C.W. 3002. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

312. LETTER TO NIRMALA H. DESAI

August 7, 1932

CHI. NIRMALA,

Your elder brother[4] wishes that, instead of sending a [*rakhi*][5] for him on the Balev Day, you should send a *janoi*[6] . Ask Panditji and give him as much fine yarn spun by you or Anandi, whichever is finer—preferably spun on *takli*—as he requires, and get a *janoi* made by him. If you then give it to Narandas, he will send it.

[1] Yeravda Central Prison Camp where satyagrahis used to be lodged after they were sentenced

[2] Hargovind Pandya

[3] On August 5, 1932 (*The Diary of Mahadev Desai,* Vol. I, 270)

[4] Mahadev Desai

[5] The source is illegi ble here, but Gandhiji presum ably refers to the thread tradit ionally tied by a sister on her brothe r's wrist on the Balev Day, i.e., *Shrava n Sud* 15.

[6] Sacred thread

You must have received your elder brother's letter. Afterwards, he has sent a letter for your mother too. Send both the letters to her. I hope you have not lost courage because Mother is being tested. Is it not our good fortune that we get an opportunity to suffer what other people suffer?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9476

313. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

August 7, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

The story relating to the significance of the *ekadashi* is interesting. But we observe the *ekadashi* in a different manner.

For us, the *ekadashi* should be a voluntary vow observed both physically and mentally, and its aim should be self-purification. When a person who is ill does not eat, his aim is to cure his illness and not to observe a fast. Similarly, a poor man also who does not eat because he has no food does not observe a fast thereby.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II

314. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

August 7, 1932

CHI. NARMADA,

I got your letter. Personally, I do wish that you could stay in the Ashram and make great progress. Work hard and improve your handwriting, etc. Your resolution is noble. God will certainly help you in it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Write to me from time to time.

From Gujarati: C.W. 2758. Courtesy: Ramanarayan N. Pathak

315. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

August 7, 1932

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

I certainly compliment you on your good gesture if you have given the yarn willingly. I can understand that you would like to go to Jetpur if Valji has to stay there for some time to come. The position will be clearer after he is released. See that Manu improves his handwriting.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 7434. Courtesy : Valji G. Desai

316. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

August 7, 1932

CHI. DAHYABHAI,

One of the lenses in Mahadev's glasses is broken and as a result he is very much inconvenienced. A lens of that type is not available here. The glasses were got made in June-July last year by Dr. Bhaskar[1] in the Whiton Company. The firm has got Mahadev's number. If it does not have it, you will get it from Dr. Hiralal Patel[2] who had examined Mahadev's eyes and determined the number. If you can contact Dr. Bhaskar, take his help and aks the Company to find the number and make a new pair and then send it as soon as you can. Probably the Company will also have the details of the size of the lenses and of the frame. But in case it does not have them, they are given on the accompanying sheet. If Bhaskar is not in Bombay, see Dr. Hiralal, He also will help to get the glasses made. Mahadev wrote a registered letter to Bhaskar last week, but he does not seem to have received it. I hope Karamchand's wife is completely all right now.

I have not heard from Manibehn recently. Mahadev's work has come to a standstill without the glasses. Please, therefore, send them soon.

I hope the little boy is quite well. All three of us are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] Dr. B. Patel

[2] An ophthalmologist of Bombay

[PS.]

Farther has written today a letter to Dr. Ansari at your address. Go and hand it over to him. He is leaving Bombay on the 11th. He will, therefore, be there on the 9th and the 10th.

He will probably stay with Usman Sobhani[1]. If he is not there, you will know from Usman's place where he is staying. Find out and go and hand over the letter to him.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4 : Manibehn Patelne, pp. 147-8

317. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

August 7, 1932

Cling like a friend to His name. It will be helpful even when everything else fails.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 351

318. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

August 7, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

It was good that you two girls were not frightened of Harilal and gave him bold replies.

Even though Chimanlal has come, if you like to stay in the hostel and if your health remains good, why should you not continue to stay there?

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 9913. Courtesy : Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] A mill-owner of Bombay

319. A LETTER

August 7, 1932

It was good that you went to see . . .'s[1] corpse. All of us will arrive at that condition sooner or later, and we should wish, therefore, that when our time comes we may leave this abode cheerfully. As long as we have it, we should keep it clean, pure and healthy, but should let it fall when its time comes. We have been given it for temporary use. He who has given it may take it back whenever He wishes. And we should use it only for service of other people and not for enjoying pleasures.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 352

320. A LETTER[2]

August 7, 1932

I cannot share your sorrow. Your wife has been released from suffering. She has died at such a time and in such a manner that we should envy her death. Why do you feel that you are left an orphan? Only a person who is without God's protection may regard himself as an orphan. But God protects everybody. Hence it is only because of our utter ignorance that we regard ourselves as orphans. The armour which protected you was neither Mani nor your wife. Our true armour is not our relations, but our faith in God. The capacity of the human body to endure is much less than that of even a glass bangle. The latter will remain in tact for hundreds of years if it is carefully preserved. The human body, on the other hand, does not endure beyond a certain limit however cerefully it is looked after, and even within that limit it may perish at any moment. Why should we put our trust in such a brittle thing? You should absorb yourself completely in the Ashram work and think about nothing else. You need not at all worry about Mangala, who is now a girl of six years. You yourself should look after her and you should also teach Shanti and Jekor to look after themselves. Probably you do not know that from her

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

[2] Presumably to Shankarbhai Patel, a teacher at the Ashram

childhood Rukhibehn[1] was brought up by Maganlal, though Santok was living. There was little hope that she would live. She could hardly even breathe. Maganlal used to bathe this girl, dress her hair, make her sit down beside him at mealtime and feed her, and he also looked after his other childern. And still he did more work by way of service than anybody else. The finest kitchen-garden was nurtured by him. In Phoenix he was the first to grow a rose. When he struck with his spade to dig some hard part of the compound, one felt as if there was a tremor in the ground. You can do all that Maganlal could. In all this, I have made no mention of his great artistic ability and his learning. He had confidence in himself and faith in his work. God had blessed him with a strong body. It broke down at last only because of the heavy burden of the Ashram work and his stoic habits. I believe, however, that in his short life Maganlal did as much work as another man might do in a hundred or several hundred years. I have cited his example to you because you knew him and it was his love which had drawn you to the Ashram. Let his memory, if nothing else, help you to overcome your present helplessness and gloom. I don't believe even one person in a hundred thousand in the country has the means which you command.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 352-3

321. A LETTER

August 7, 1932

To us, all useful work is good and worth doing. Thus tanning, carpentry, cleaning lavatories, farm work, weaving, cooking, grazing cattle and all similar types of work are of equal value. If I could persuade the people, I would have all kinds of work rewarded equally, the work of the educated and of the uneducated, the clerk's work and the scavenger's. Probably you know that, in order to examine the problem from this point of view, the account of work in the Ashram is being kept only in terms of hours. If, therefore, you are not getting sufficient yarn for weaving just now, please do not believe that you are doing work of less importance than farming or similar other work.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 353

[1] Rukminidevi Bazaj

322. A LETTER

August 7, 1932

What I expect from the Gandhi family is that all members should devote themselves exclusively to service work, observe the utmost self-control and have no desire for wealth. They should not marry and those who are married should observe *brahmacharya*. They should live on whatever they get from service work. The field of service is so vast that it can give opportunities to countless men and women. Doesn't this include everything?

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 354

323. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

August 8, 1932

DEAR BULBUL,

Here is a letter from Dr. Ansari which you would like to read. It is meant as much for you as for us.

You got my message about your loving gifts! This is not to invite a repetition. We are spoilt children of nature and have everything we need in the way of creature comforts.

It is naughty of Padmaja[1] to neglect me for so long. I hope she is better. Do you hear from your bearded son? If you write to him, please give him my love.

Have the ladies there[2] told you that Sardar is seriously studying Sanskrit? He has made much progress during the four weeks he has been at it. His application would shame a youthful student.

Love from us all.

Yours,

LITTLE MAN

From a photostat: G.N. 5124

[1] Addressee's daughter

[2] In the Arthur Road Prison, Bombay, where the addressee was imprisoned along with Mirabehn and Kamala Chattopadhyaya

324. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PARIKH

August 8, 1932

BHAISHRI PRABHASHANKAR[1],

I got your letter. It is natural that we should feel grieved at the death of Doctor. For himself, it was a release from suffering. I have expressed my opinion and told Ratilal and Champa that it is not necessary for them to go to Rangoon. In any case I will write to Rangoon. I do not know whether there is a will. I think that safety and good sense lie in trusting Chhaganlal. All the same, you may take the advice of Nanalal or anybody else in whose judgment you have confidence. My views will probably seem impractical to you, but to me they appear most practical.

I believe that the interests of Champa and Ratilal are safe.

I hope Mother has recovered. My respectful greetings to her.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8765

325. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

August 8, 1932

CHI. JAMNA,

I got your letter. It is the experience of most doctors that sweet curds will harm nobody. Sweet curds mean curds which have no taste of sourness at all. Everybody can digest such curds. If there is the slighest taste of sourness, add some soda bicarb. This will cause effervescence and remove the acidity. I do this every day. Fruits also will do no harm if they are sweet. *Mosambis* are always sweet, and so are the small variety of grapes. Eat all these things in small quantities. If they do not agree, you may stop them. And you must also take sun-baths and do light *pranayama*. I am glad that Janakibai has started learning Gujarati.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati : C.W. 857. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

[1] Ratilal Mehta's father-in-law

326. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

August 8, 1932

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

It is surprising that you received no letter of mine although I wrote many. The last one[1] I deliberately wrote in Hindi. I shall write at length if you receive this. We are all quite comfortable. My weight is 105 lb. and I am taking milk. There is no cause for anxiety as regards my arm. Blessings to Sarup, Krishna and Kanta. Your letters do reach me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 3421

327. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI[2]

August 9, 1932

DEAR SIR AKBAR,

I am studying Urdu. Just now I am reading Shibli's *Life of the Prophet.* But I would like to see the textbooks and other literature issued by the Osmania University. Could you please have a selection sent to me?

I often think of our meetings on board.

Please remember me to Lady Hydari and the other members of the family.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. III, p. 13

[1] Presumably of June 2, 1932; *vide* "Letter to Prabhavati", 2-6-1932.

[2] Dewan of Hyderabad

328. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS AND KRISHNA KAPADIA

August 9, 1932

CHI. MADHAVDAS AND KRISHNA,

I got the letters of you both. I am glad that you have given me detailed information. It is in adversity that we are really tested. But we ought not to lose heart at such a time. Welcome poverty. Write to me from time to time, though I may not be able to help you in any way. The knowledge that you two have not lost heart and can find happiness in adversity will reassure me. You must have received letters from Devdas. I saw Ramdas. He is in fairly good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./XXII

329. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVLEKAR

August 9, 1932

BHAI SATAVLEKARJI,

Many people here on finding Sardar learning Sanskrit have expressed the desire to do the same. Kindly arrange to send another set of the Sanskrit readers as they have different quarters. I do not know how far your institution can afford to send them free. If you consider it proper I shall see to the payment.

Ishopanishad and other books have been received. I was awaiting your second letter but I got a chance to write this. I am making a careful study of *Ishopanishad*, I have even memorized it. I shall go through the other works too. These days I am reading the Veda number of the *Ganga*. I am sending you a page cut out from the article[1] by Sahityacharya Mahendra Mishra which has appeared in it. Please note the portion I have underlined in red pencil and throw some light upon it. The Veda number contains some more similar instances but I do not wish to bother you over-much.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi : C.W. 4764. Courtesy : S.D. Satavlekar

[1] In which, quoting from the Vedas, the author had tried to establish the prevalence of cow-sacrifice and beef-eating in the Vedic period. Satavlekar, in his reply dated October 20, 1932, refuted the assertion (S.N. 18590).

330. LETTER TO BENARSILAL BAZAJ

August 9, 1932

CHI. BENARSI,

I have your letter. There was some confusion about my correspondence but it has been set right now. Do you get any news from Father[1] ? How is he? It would have been good if Rukmini had gone away with Madhav [for a change]. She has lost much weight. Health is wealth and the basic requisite for every kind of happiness.You are keeping well, I hope. How is business? You must be meeting Devdas.

Blessings from

BAPU

SYT. BENARSILAL
K 23/96 PANCHAGANGA
BENARES CITY

From Hindi : C.W. 9449. Courtesy : Benarsilal Bazaj

331. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

August 10, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

Referring to my letter of the 22nd and 24th ultimo and your kind reply, I have not since heard from you and Kaka Kalelkar who you said was to be permitted to write to me about his health. I would appreciate early attention to this matter.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 9

[1] Rameshwarlal Bazaj

332. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

August 10, 1932

CHI. MANU,

I got your letter after a long delay.

Now that you are studying, you should cease thinking about other things and complete the course. If after thinking carefully about the cruelty practised in the different fields of your study, you can prove that it is not necessary to perform such experiments on animals, you may do so when you are qualified for such an attempt. Some doctors themselves have opposed this practice.

I see that you are making good use of your time. Try to understand and follow the truth in the saying: "Study without reflec-tion is useless." We do not increase our knowledge merely by reading books; we can increase it only by reflecting over what we read and by digesting it.

All three of us are well. Sardar is studying Sanskrit. Shouldn't his example be a great source of inspiration to a young man?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1006

333. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI[1]

August 11, 1932

I understand that you have not yet resolved to give up cinnamon and cloves. I intend to write to Nimu. If she has already taken a vow, I will not press her to give it up. I will only explain what her dharma is. I think that one should not press anybody to give up a vow like this. The effect of such persuasion on a person is to tempt him to give up his firmness and in consequence his mind becomes weak. I do not regret the strictness which I imposed on the occasions which you

[1] The Diary of Mahadev Desai, Vol. I, pp. 279-80, has : "Today's letters were all from prisoners. One of these was from Ramdas who complained that Bapu who was very strict at a time in doing and imposing penance had now become too lenient and people took an undue advantage of this leniency. He seems to have taken a vow not to take cinnamon and cloves. . . with the result that his wife Nirmala has given up milk and ghee."

mention. It was justified at that time. Now I feel the slightest degree of strictness to be as heavy as the weight of the Himalayas. Formerly, I had to fast in order to make people do what I can now persuade them to do with a mere rebuke; and other people, too, had to act more or less similarly. If I continue to act as I used to do, I would be a cruel man. Does this mean that others also have advanced, as I have done? We have no reason to believe this. But since I can now influence people close to me, nothing more is necessary. In other words, you need not yourself be strict with Nimu or yourself, for I am here to keep a strict watch. After my death, all of you will have to be vigilant. It is because of this state of affairs that we often find laxity creeping in when I am away. That is so all over the world. We should, therefore, learn to be fully vigilant in our own lives. At present we may be growing as a creeper does with the support of a tree. But this is a form of dependence. We should shake it off and learn to stand on our own feet. The cause of the electric effect on Nimu is what I explained above. Conditions were not the same at the time of my life which you remember, because the atmosphere then was not responsive. It had not been purified sufficiently to be so. If I were to write anything harsh to Nimu, she would feel miserable. Do you now understand the reason for my liberal attitude? There was the same love behind the strictness of the past as there is behind the liberal attitude of the present. What you say, however, is quite correct. It would certainly be bad if anybody misunderstood my liberal attitude and became lax. The reason for entertaining such fear is different. It is that I have become less exacting to myself. My former strictness has gone. The body does not obey me. I naturally feel reluctant to ask others to do what I myself cannot. I, therefore, often told the inmates of the Ashram that I was no longer fit to be in charge of it. The gate-keeper who guards the Ashram must be an ever vigilant and strong man. Formerly, I used to work as much as anybody else did, and so the others, too, had to keep pace with me. But now they do not have the example of my work. They have to follow my preaching. It is not surprising, therefore, that you see laxity in the atmosphere. I hope you have understood all this fully.

I like your vigilance. In this case, however, you should not be strict with Nimu. My ideas about the relations between husband and wife have changed of course. I would not like any of you to behave towards his wife as I did towards Ba. She has lost nothing through my strictness, of course, for I never regarded her as my property. I always

had love and respect for her. I only wished to see her grow spiritually. However, she could not be angry with me, whereas I could with her. I did not give her the same freedom of action which I enjoyed and she did not have the capacity to exercise it either. Hindu women never have such capacity. That is a defect of Hindu society. I, therefore, wish that you should treat Nimu as having the same freedom which you have. I once wrote[1] to her and asked her jestingly not to regard herself as dependent and harass you for every little thing. She replied saying that she was dependent and that you knew that it was so. The language is mine, but this is the meaning of what she said. This sort of dependence ought to be removed. If she wants a servant, why should she ask you? She can ask Narandas to provide one and may even quarrel with him on that issue. This is but a trivial example. She should, however, be free in matters which concern herself. If you wish to enjoy immoral pleasure with another woman, you will not be afraid of Nimu. That you may be held back by your love for Nimu is another matter. Similarly, Nimu should be free to enjoy immoral pleasure with another man without any fear. Mutual love may save a couple from sin, but there should be no fear of each other. I began to teach this [equality and freedom] only in the Ashram. My behaviour towards Ba at Sabarmati progressively became in line with this attitude, and the result was that she changed. Her old fear of me has disappeared mostly, if not completely. Even if I feel angry with her, I turn the anger on myself. The cause of anger is my attachment to her. This is an important change which has taken place in me and it has had beautiful results. The results will be more beautiful only if my love becomes purer still. Numberless women trust me spontaneously. I am sure that the reason of that is my love and respect for them. Invisibly they produce an effect all the time.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 355-7

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Nirmalabehn Gandhi", 9-7-1932.

334. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[Before *August 12, 1932*][1]

MY DEAR AMTUL,

I am glad you have arrived at the Ashram and taken your niece[2] there. I hope the climate will agree with her. You ought to keep well now. The weather must be quite cool.

I was very glad to read your Urdu letter. Keep writing like this. It is good that you intend to learn Hindi. I am sure you will not find it difficult. Do you find any difficulty in reading my handwriting?[3]

I hope you can read my Urdu hand. I know it is bad. Let your niece write, if she can. How old is she?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 252

335. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

August 12, 1932

MY DEAR AMTUL,

I have your letter. There was nothing to hide from anyone in your letter. I would like all girls and women to shed this false shame about the monthly sickness. There may be a sense of shame on the part of those who want to indulge their animal passions and treat the monthly business in terms of sexuality. But those who want to lead a life of continence should discuss this sickness as any other sickness. Now for the remedy. In the first place you should take perfect rest as soon as there is any symptom of the sickness coming and rest should be continued whilst there is the slightest discharge. During the free days of the month regular sitz-baths should be taken as also hip-baths in order to avoid undue discharge or a discharge beyond three days in pains. There should [be] no pains during the sickness. If there the treatment does not answer, you should allow the womb to be examined by a doctor. On this matter you should consult Mrs. Lazarus and be guided by her. She is likely to be able to tell you what to do.

[1] In the book *Letters to Amtussalaam* this letter is placed before that of August 12; *vide* the following item.

[2] Kudsia, aged nine, lived with the addressee since her mother's death.

[3] This paragraph is in Urdu.

You should take Premabehn into your confidence. She does not know much about this. But you two can put your heads together and read up the literature on the subject. If you don't know what sitz-baths are and if Prema also does not, you should read up Kuhne's book. If you master the secret of this illness, you can impart it to the other girls. It is the most fruitful source of the diseases of women. A false sense of shame prevents girls from understanding the sickness and regulating it in the proper manner. It is sinful to hide this thing and then suffer untold miseries. Herewith letter[1] for Dr. Sharma.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Your Urdu letter is good. I will reply to it in another letter. Today the time is up.[2]

From a photostat: G.N. 253

336. LETTER TO DR. HIRALAL SHARMA

August 12, 1932

DEAR DR. SHARMA,

I was glad to receive your letter. I would strongly dissuade you from going to Europe or America for finishing your study of natural healing. You have to do it here by perfecting your observations here and making original researches. Those who have done anything in this line in the West learnt from none but their own experiments. It is [a] vast mistake to suppose that by going to the West you can learn much of this art. It is yet in its infancy there too. But the first thing for you to do is to be your own healer. If you have a broken body, you will not be listened to by people. Surely your disease[3] will yield to sun-baths and regimen.

For my elbow I would not trouble you. Thanks all the same for offering your help.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 3150. Also *Bapuki Chhayamen mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, pp. 10-1

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] The postscript is in Urdu.

[3] Tuberculosis

337. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

August 12, 1932

BHAI KHAMBHATTA,

I deliberately postponed writing to you. I wished to write only after I had used the oil sent by you. I have now started using it. It is ten days now, but there is no change. Mahadev massages the arm with it daily. There is nothing wrong with the arm in other respects, and so there is no cause for worry.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6601. Also C.W. 4387. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

338. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

August 12, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

The following books are required for parachure Shastri. Send those from among them which you have there. I will get the others from elsewhere. See if you can send them soon. Give them to Manibehn or to Nandubehn[1] . Either will send them to Dahyabhai. Parachure Shastri was in the Ashram once. He is a man of great learning. He is in this jail just now. He has been suffering from leprosy. That is why I am in a hurry to send the books to him. He spins daily. I am not permitted to see him, but can write to him. His wife, too, is ill and confined to bed. She is outside. The books are: (1) *Imitation of Christ*, (2) Works of Swami Vivekananda (whichever volumes we have), (3) Works of Sister Nivedita (whichever volumes we have), (4) Essays of Tolstoy, (5) *Vyakarana Mahabhashya*, (6) *Yajurveda Bhashya*, (7) Dispensations of Keshab Chandra Sen.

Since Parachure Shastri has lived in the Ashram, he informs me that the last three are available there. He seems to have read them while he was there.

I got your letter. You seem to believe that I could write an interesting letter whenever I wished to. But you see now that that is

[1] Wife of Dr. Balawantrai Kanuga of Ahmedabad

not true. I cannot even judge which letter is interesting and which is dull. I am telling the truth. Moreover, who can say that the letter which you think interesting is in fact so? If there is an independent yardstick for judging whether or not a thing is interesting, God seems to have kept it under lock and key. On this earth, therefore, everyone has his or her own yardstick for this purpose. If I tried to come up to your standard, wouldn't I be in a miserable plight? All my time would be taken up in trying to succeed in the effort. Should I start writing a letter all over again, or a third time, for fear that what I had written might be uninteresting? And if I must write interesting letters to you, I must write similar letters to others. And the result, bankruptcy!!! Instead of that, I follow a simple rule. Without considering whether the letter will be interesting or not, I should write what I think in such language as I can command. But you are foolish, and proud too. How can you ever appreciate this simple reasoning? And now I see that you claim to be omniscient. Any wise thing I try to explain to you, you seem to know it. But pause a little. One who believes in an idea or knows it to be true but cannot act on it does not in fact know it, or knows it in a sense and yet does not know it. Hence, as long as you go on writing foolish things, get angry and feel proud, you will remain foolish in my eyes. This does not mean that you should not let your pride, anger and foolishness be seen in your letters. As long as you have them in you, you must express them. The value of your letters lies in letting yourself be seen as you are. I don't mind your remaining foolish. But you must overcome your anger and be a little less proud. It is impossible to get rid of pride altogether.

You cite the instance of Narada. But do you know the real significance of his statement?[1] By all means worship a personal form in the manner in which he did. Such worship is proper. His Krishna is as historical as the God in Vaikuntha[2]. Narada's God dwelt in the temple of his imagination. That Narada is alive today, and so is his Krishna, for both live for ever in our imagination. According to me, imagination is superior to historical fact. This is the only possible meaning of Tulsidas's statement that the name Rama is more potent than the person Rama.

Is it not because you are caught in the whirlpool of worship of the individual that you worry me again and again? You have not been

[1] "Devotion means profound love for God."—*Narada Bhaktisutra*

[2] Abode of Vishnu

able to free me from worries regarding the Ashram. Narandas has succeeded in doing So. I can cite instances of other persons too. They also worship persons, who doesn't? But, ultimately, they go beyond the person and learn to worship his virtues, that is, his creations. We forgot this priceless truth and, in our ignorance, we taught women to burn themselves on the pyre of their husbands. That is worship of the person taken to its extreme!! The real duty of a loyal wife is to immortalize in herself her husband's life-work. If we purify the relationship of husband and wife of sex and banish from it the distinction of gender, this ideal will apply to every woman in the world, whatever her state may be. In other words, love for the husband merges in love of God. But I leave this subject now.

Why are you upset by the news that Dhiru is arriving? Have confidence that you will be able to control him too; have that much faith in yourself. Let the immortal statement, "Love conquers all", sink into your heart. We should be pleased whoever may arrive. Our only wish is to serve everyone as best as we can. Why don't you have faith that, if the other children have become wellbehaved, under their influence Dhiru also will become like them? It is also possible that Dhiru has become a wise boy now. Personally, I have always hoped much from him.

You should dedicate your whole life to the service of the girls. If they do not talk frankly about themselves to anyone, they are bound to fall ill. Read my letter to Anandi. If she lets you have that letter, all the other girls who have grown up should be asked to read it.

I have never observed from my own experience that bananas give rise to gas. I have consumed more bananas than anybody else is likely to have done. For many years they were my chief food. I neither took milk nor ate bread. My diet consisted of bananas, olive oil, ground-nut and lemon. However, I never suffered from gas. After many years, I have started eating them again. I observe no ill effects. You must, of course, observe one rule in eating them. Either bananas should be cooked or they should be completely ripe. An unripe banana is pure starch, and I saw in Gopal Rao's experiment that starch should not be eaten uncooked. Hence, one should not eat bananas which have not become soft or ripe. They will become ripe if kept aside for two or three days. If you want to eat bananas before they have become ripe, you should either roast them or boil them in water.

The book which you read may have been published in 1924, but the theory which it mentions has become outdated.

I had opponents in the past and have them even today. But I have never felt angry with them. I have not wished them ill even in my dreams. The result has been that many opponents have become friends. No one's opposition has had any effect on me. On three occasions they sought to take my very life, but I am still alive. This does not mean that no opponent would ever succeed against me in his plan. Whether he succeeds or does not is no concern of mine. My dharma lies in wishing well even to them, and serving them whenever an opportunity offers itself. I have tried to live up to this principle to the best of my ability. I think this thing is part of my nature.

I get physically tired by the worship of vast crowds. It has never made me happy, nor have I ever felt that I was worthy of it. On the contrary, I have always been conscious of my unworthiness. I do not remember to have ever hungered for honour. I always want work. I have tried my best to make people who honour me do work, and, when they refused to work, I have run away from their honour. I will feel myself blessed only when I reach my goal. But, as the saying goes, will that day ever dawn?

It is not necessary to cultivate pride or contempt in order that one may be able to stand against the world. Jesus stood against the world, Buddha stood against his times and Prahlada also acted in the same way. All of them were humility incarnate. To have such humility, one must have faith in oneself and in God. Those who have opposed the world with pride have ultimately fallen. Sometimes your pride and your anger are only pretended. But even such pretence in an evil thing. It may ultimately become a habit and often gives cause for unnecessary misunderstanding. One should be very careful in one's conduct so as to guard against such possibilities. I think it impossible for anyone to have the strength to stand alone against the world at a critical hour unless he or she has the utmost humility. And it is such strength which has any value at all. It is tested only at such a time. Many of those whom the world has believed to be brave, it had no opportunity of judging whether they were really so. Now read my letter to Amtulbehn too.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10298. Also C.W. 5752. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

339. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

August 13, 1932

CHI. PARASRAM,

In India also, if our leaders live long they would rise very high. I have not read Aristotle's writings and have read very little even of Plato's I can, therefore, say nothing about their ideas.

All the virtues mentioned by you are essential for universal service.

Children need good company. Tulsidas has explained the meaning of good company.

I have not read the article in *The Times of India*.

Anybody who has tasted the sweetness of honey in my company will taste similar sweetness wherever he goes, for he will find even bitter things sweet.

I did not receive the Anantapur report. The same thing seems to have happened regarding the *takli.* I will inquire.

I do not know who Emerson was. Don't you know that my reading is more limited than even that of a good matriculate?

Anybody who seeks happiness in his own mind should have the same qualities as the *sthitaprajna*[1] described in Chapter II [of the *Gita*]. I have not read *L'Allegro*[2] and *Il Penseroso*[3][3] either.

My ignorance has been tested fairly well. But I do not mind.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7505. Also C.W. 4982. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

[1] A man of secure understanding
[2] By John milton
[3] *ibid*

340. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

August 13, 1932

CHI. NARMADA,

I am glad that you have escaped. Live in peace now and learn everything you wish to. Acquire book-learning and learn some crafts too. understand carefully the meaning of prayer, etc. You should try to rise very high. Write to me from time to time.

BAPU

From Gujarati : C.W. 2759. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

341. LETTER TO LAKSHMI JERAJANI

August 13, 1932

CHI. LAKSHMI (JERAJANI),

I got your letter.

There was some problem about my letter[1], and that is why you got it late by some days.

It was good that you sent me your daily programme. What subjects do you study? I will make one suggestion. I see no time fixed for prayer in your programme. Immediately after rising in the morning and brushing your teeth, you must sit down quietly and praywith complete concentration. And you should do the same when retiring. Prayer is to the soul what food is to the body. The body can live for some days without food. A few days' fast may even benefit it. There can be no fast in regard to prayer. one who believes in the existence of the soul cannot do without prayer even for one day. Write to me occasionally and give me news about Vithaldas[2].

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati : C.W. 2813. Courtesy : Purushottam D. Saraiya

[1] *Vide* "Letter toLakshmi Jerajani", 2-7-1932.

[2] Addressee's uncle

342. READING AND REFLECTION—I[1]

August 14, 1932

We are taught at school: "Studying without thinking is useless." This is literally true. Love of reading is good. Those who are prevented by lethargy from reading and studying have certainly dull minds. But those also who merely read and never reflect on what they read remain more or less dull. Some of them lose their eyesight in the bargain. Reading without reflecting is only a kind of mental disease.

Many of us read in that manner. They read but never reflect on what they read, much less put it in practice. We should, therefore, read less, but think over what we read and put it in practice. We may reject what we discover from experience to be unsuitable, and go on with the rest. Persons who follow this method will satisfy their needs with less reading, save much time and become fit for creative and responsible work.

Another benefit which accrues to persons who learn to think is worth nothing. One cannot always get books to read or get time to read them. Persons to whom reading has become a habit are known to have gone crazy when they could not read. If, however, one forms the habit of thinking, the book of thoughts is always available to one, andthere will then be no danger of one becoming crazy when not able to read.

I have deliberately used the phrase to "learn to think". That way lots of people think, carelessly and unprofitably. This is only a form of madness. Some get caught in futile speculation and, overcome with despair, even kill themselves. This is not the kind of thinking I am advising. What I am advising here is only that people should reflect over what they read. Suppose we here or read a *bhajan* today. We should then reflect over it. We should try to discover its deeper meaning and think what we should accept from it and what we should reject. We should see if there is any error in its idea. If we have not understood its meaning, we should make an effort to understand it. This is called systematic thinking. I have given the simplest illustration. Everybody should apply it to his own case and draw necessary conclusions for himself, and may thus progress. One who follows this

[1] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 11/15-8-1932; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 11/15-8-1932.

method will experience great inner joy and benefit from all that he reads.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

343. A LETTER

August 14, 1932

It won't do for anyone to say I am only what I am. That is a cry of despair. A seeker of truth will say, 'I will be what I ought to be.' My appeal is for you to come out of your shell and see yourself in every face about you. How can you be lonely in the midst of so much life? All our philosophy is vain, If it does not enable us to rejoice in the company of fellow-beings and their service.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 361

344. LETTER TO GULAB

August 14, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

I got your letter. I am glad that you feel happy there. Pay great attention to study. Also do exercise and improve your body.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 1720

345. LETTER TO SHAMAL R. RAVAL

August 14, 1932

CHI. SHAMAL,

When you are afraid of anything, you should repeat Ramanama. The fear will then disappear. You should go to sleep repeating it. Does anybody sleep near you? We should have faith that God is near us. If a person has such faith, what need he fear?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3145. Also C.W. 2880. Courtesy: Shamal R. Raval

346. LETTER TO KESHAV

August 14, 1932

CHI. KESHAV,

I got your letter. Improve your handwriting. Study with great attention. If anybody takes away a utensil from your hand for cleaning it, you should request him politely to permit you to clean it. If he does not let you, you should not insist. if there is any article which contains chillies, you should leave it in the plate. At the very beginning you should request them not to serve any such article. You should make do with *rotli*, buttermilk and salt or such other things which you can get. If you cannot do that, you may eat a little quantity of whatever is offered.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3279

347. LETTER TO PADMA

August 14, 1932

CHI. PADMA,

I got a letter from you after many days. I do not remember having omitted to reply to any of your letters. I wrote a good many letters [to you]. I am glad that your health is improving. Give some description of Khadli. How many trees are there? From where do you get water? How far is it from Almora? Has Sheila grown very big?

How do you spend your time? To test the condition of my arm, I spun for a few days on the Gandiva spinning-wheel. From today I have resumed spinning on the Magan spinning-wheel. My speed does not seem to be more than a hundred rounds per hour. Write to me from time to time.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6135. Also C.W. 3487. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

348. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

August 14, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

For your constipation, you should immediately go and consult Dr. Talwalkar. It must be cured. I think that a *bhakta*[1] with a personal motive is one who asks for the fulfilment of some wish. If I pray to God daily for the success of the khadi programme, I would be a *bhakta* with a personal motive.

Arnold believes that the verse beginning with *agnirjyotih*[2] is interpolated. I also believe that it may be so. If we take it in its literal sense I cannot understand its significance. The general purport is clear enough. The first is the path of knowledge and the second is the opposite of that. The reference to the periods of six months is a metaphor. I interpret the verse in this manner for my own satisfaction. The difficulty which you experience when praying is experienced by everybody (in the beginning). But perseverance will help you to overcome both the difficulties. Despite the difficulties, you should keep up the practice of praying. One day you will learn to concentrate. We experience such difficulties because we do not feel the same hunger for prayer as we do for food. In other words, we do not have the same conviction about the existence of the soul as we have about that of the body.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6734. Also C.W. 4477. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

[1] Devotee
[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, VIII. 24 and 25

349. LETTER TO MAHENDRA V. DESAI

August 14, 1932

CHI. MANU,

Exercise books are meant for doing lessons. If you use loose sheets of paper for writing letters, they will cost you less. For learning good handwriting you should have a reed-pen. If you carefully practise writing in a copy-book, your handwriting will certainly improve. It was a little better this time.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 7435. Courtesy : Valji G. Desai

350. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

August 14, 1932

We associate the physical labour which we do in the Ashram with freedom and the other with slavery. In truth, however, there is freedom for us in both. Those who voluntarily invite suffering should not complain against it even in their thoughts. On the Contrary, they should feel happy in that suffering. How do you think could Sudhanva dance with joy in the pan of boiling oil? Or Prahlada embrace a red-hot pillar of iron? We should not regard these stories as pure inventions, for we see that people can act in this manner even today. The stories about Ridley[1], Latimer[2]and Mansoor[3] are historical incidents. You can call to mind other similar examples. Everything depends on the mind.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 360

[1] Protestant martyrs

[2] *ibid*

[3] A Sufi martyr

351. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 14, 1932

CHI. MANGALA,

May you live for many years and grow into a fine *sevika*. May God sustain you in your vow. It is very hard to be non-violent at heart, but it is-easy for one who has faith in God.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11100. Courtesy: Pushpa Naik

352. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

August 14, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

If the same thing is mentioned in somebody else's letter, why should you not read it?

It is good that you have put on three pounds. Do not reduce because Shakaribehn[1] has come.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 9914. Courtesy : Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

353. A LETTER

August 14, 1932

Do not try now to destroy. . .'s[2] soul. I feel respect for her obstinacy. How can we interfere with what she regards as dharma? On the contrary, we may even encourage her. It is your duty to support her. You should not get angry with her, just as you would not get angry with another woman for the latter's manner of life. The secret of inward happiness lies in such attitude of equality.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 361

[1] Addressee's mother
[2] The name is omitted in the source.

354. LETTER TO A GIRL

August 14, 1932

Instead of asking what you should do when you get angry, you should ask what you should do in order that you may not get angry. For that, we should cultivate a broad-minded attitude towards all and the feeling that we are in all people and they are in us. Just as the drops of water in sea are different and yet the same, so are we in this sea of life. That being so, who should get angry with whom?

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 361

355. A LETTER

August 14, 1932

Caste distinctions are not respected in the Ashram because they are not part of dharma. They have no connection with the Hindu dharma. It is sinful to regard anybody as higher or lower. All of us are equal. We are polluted by sin, never by human beings. One who wishes to serve cannot look upon anybody as higher or lower. The belief in such distinctions is a blot on Hinduism. We should remove it.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 362

356. LETTER TO A GIRL

August 14, 1932

Do not consider anything wrong unless your heart pronounces it as such. Ultimately we have no other yardstick, that is why we try to keep our hearts pure. The wicked man imputes rightness to sin because his heart is impure. However it be, he continues to act sinfully till he is enlightened. No one but yourself can judge what is good for you. I can tell you only this much that we have to tread the path of truth and non-violence and to that end we must observe some rules and regulations.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I pp. 361-2

357. A LETTER

August 14, 1932

One's respective dharma towards one's self, family, nation and the world cannot be divided into watertight compartments. The harm done to oneself or one's family cannot bring about the good of the nation. Similarly one cannot benefit the nation by acting against the world at large. Thus the purport is that we must sacrifice ourselves in the interest of the family, the family must do so for the nation and the nation for the world. But the sacrifice has to be pure. Therefore it all starts from self-purification. When the heart is pure, from moment to moment one's duty becomes apparent effortlessly.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 362

358. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

August 11/15, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your mail in due time. I send with this a beautiful letter received from a lady[1] living in an ashram like ours in Italy. All the workers in that Ashram are women. The letter will give you some idea of the devotion and patience with which they work. Explain its contents to all the inmates, particularly to the women. Tell them at the same time about St. Francis. Mahadev once wrote a sketch of his life for *Navajivan*. Maybe you have read it. I have requested these ladies to write a letter directly to the Ashram. If you get any letter from them, reply to it. If, on reading this letter, you wish to write to them immediately, you may do so without waiting for a letter from them. But please don't think that you must write. For all I know, they may have written a letter directly to the Ashram.

You seem to have had excessive rains there. It is practically the same here, though to a much lesser degree. The sky is clearing fairly well now.

My yarn was tested today and it was found that with the Gandiva wheel I have been able to go up to 53 counts. Mahadev has gone up

[1] Miss Turton of the Siena Ashram

to 80 counts, and Vallabhbhai has reached at least 40. I think such results can be achieved easily only on the Gandiva wheel. There is still room for improvements in it to make it suitable for spinning fine yarn. A few such improvements are being made by us here in the jail. Anybody who wishes to spin fine yarn must concentrate all his attention when he is spinning and have a supply of good slivers. The point is that one can spin fine yarn only if one pays careful attention to every detail. I feel more certain every day that, if we try to spin yarn of the best possible quality and the highest possible count, we shall be able to make many discoveries resulting in improvement in the quality of all yarn, and our own work will also become very methodical and neat. If we wish to bring this about, everybody who wishes to spin fine yarn should start using the Gandiva wheel. However, it is for you and the others there to decide about this after a careful discussion. Though my experience with this wheel issufficiently long, I don't attach much importance to it. It will count only if it is unhesitatingly supported by others who also have spun on it. I attach value to my experience only as a guide to others. So far no harm seems to have been done to my elbow by spinning on the Gandiva wheel. I will use the hand as long as it gives service. If it fails, I will go back to the Magan spinning-wheel. It will be a very easy thing for you to spin on the Gandiva wheel. I know that you draw the threads with the right hand. It is very easy to do this on the Gandiva wheel. If no bend has been made in the groove in the spindle-bearer, all that is necessary is to change the direction in which the spindle points. If, however, a groove is already there, you should fit another spindle-bearer with the bend pointing in the desired direction. Since the spindle-bearer in my wheel has a bend, it is easier to wind the yarn firmly. I spun the yarn of 53 counts with slivers received from Chhakkaddas. If I don't write to him this time, please tell him that the slivers sent by him have proved very useful.

I hope Virsinh's fever has left him, and that Amtul also is better.

I received the slivers sent by Chhakkaddas, the Urdu books and the French dictionary. Shankarbhai's [arm] has been in plaster long enough. I guess from this that the injury was quite serious. I hope the plaster has been removed now.

It is really a release for Narmada. What is Dhirsinh's caste? Who will pay the sum of Rs. 650? Or can Narmada's relations bear the

burden? I ask this only for my information. I think Narmada has won her freedom fairly cheaply.

If Ratubhai takes any step regarding the affairs of Doctor, please write to me immediately even if it is not your day for writing to me. If you have learnt now who are there in Rangoon, please let me know that too.

My weight varies from time to time by about one or one and a half pounds either way. I have not tried to discover if there is any particular reason for it. There is no need to try. I have omitted *rotli* from my diet for the last ten days or so because of a slight tendency to constipation. Since then I have been eating four to six bananas for one of the meals, with milk and one spoonful of almond paste. For the other meal I eat some vegetable, as when I used to eat *rotli.* I eat it mixed with milk, and generally at both meals I also take *mosambis* or oranges. This diet has cured constipation. This time the weight was 104 ½ pounds. I can say, therefore, that the omission of *rotli* has not resulted in loss of weight.There is no change in the condition of the elbow. I received the samples of yarn spun by Keshu and Abbas. Both were excellent. I will preserve them carefully. On which type of spinning-wheel did Abbas spin this yarn? I have examined the statement of work done by the inmates as *yajna* though I have not studied it very carefully. If we want trained spinners to spin yarn of not less than 20 counts, we shall have to fix the limit fairly higher than that. Hardly anybody will fall below 20 then. If a person does not wish to fall below the lowest step, he must stand five to ten steps above the lowest. Nothing in this world remains on a fixed level for ever. Nobody, therefore, can maintain himself on the lowest level fixed. And so if one does not advance, one must fall. In the method for learning which I have recommended[1] it is not necessay for people to make a special effort to spare time for one another. In an institution where the necessary atmosphere has been created, the inmates will spontaneously give time to one another for such a purpose. Just as nobody makes an effort to spare time for eating but gives time to it as a matter of course, so also this matter of giving time to one another should be spontaneous. Anybody who has wealth of any kind should willingly share it with his neighbours who are without it. But before such a habit becomes ingrained in us, it may be becessary, as you suggest, for the inmates to reserve some time for the purpose. Hence,

[1] *Vide* "Education", 10-7-1932.

if anybody has something with him which he can share with others, the time when he can do so must be mentioned in our daily time-table.

You did very well in inquiring of Krishnadas if he needed help. Regarding Nimu, I will write to her. Read the letter which I write. if she has taken a solemn vow,[1] I will not press her to give it up. If one gives up a vow, though it involves no sin, one's strength for making vows, that is, power of determination, diminishes. If there is a demand for copies of *Anasaktiyoga,* I see no harm in getting them printed in any press which you think suitable. If you think you cannot meet the demand, you should keep silent just now. I think there will be no harm in getting the discourses printed. If, however, you do that, they should be carefully revised in proof. I don't revise things carefully before sending them. Besides, my handwriting is bad. It is likely, therefore, that some bad errors will have been made. The discourses which I write now are addressed to the small circle of the Ashram inmates. Appa seems to have done very fine work. You have done right in asking Hariyomal to leave.

August 14, 1932

I did not see any letter from Narayanappa. If, therefore, he inquires for my reply, tell him that I did not receive his letter. Read my letter to Anandi and Amtul regarding the children.

BAPU

Mahadev tells me that I have not told you yet about Vallabhbhai studying Sanskrit. I think I did mention it. These days he is simply engrossed in that study. Whenever he gets any time, he studies Sanskrit or thinks about it. He gives about five hours to it. He has finished the five books of Pandit Satavlekar, and has now added five new verses from the *Gita* to be studied daily. He has completed Chapter I and is going on with Chapter II. This is how he started the study. There was a letter from Rajaji one day. He had mentioned in it having studied Sanskrit. That inspired Sardar. Five weeks have passed since this happened. Together with Sanskrit he started spinning too. He now spins with perfect concentration. The speed is increasing every day. He has gone up to about 40 counts.

August 15, 1932

Parasram tells me in his letter that you have already dispatched the Anantapur report. If that is true, please let me know the date on

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Ramdas Gandhi", 11-8-1932.

which you posted it. Did you send it by registered post?

There are 44 letters in all.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8245. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

359. LETTER TO S. SATYAMURTI

August 15, 1932

MY DEAR SATYAMURTI,

What is the matter with you? I don't trust newspaper reports. I hope there is nothing serious.

We are all three doing well.

Advance, 23-8-1932

360. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

August 15, 1932

CHI. JANAKIBEHN,

What pride! That, because you have been in jail, you do not write to me at all! As if you were the only one who could do so! How is your health? Where is Kamalnayan[1]? He does not seem to have received the letter which I wrote to him.

Where is Balkrishna? I have had no letter from him for some time. Madalasa also seems to have gone to sleep. Write to me about Shivaji and Radhakrishna. I have written to Chhotelal, but have had no reply from him, too. I expect you to tell me about all of them.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. JANAKIBAI
C/O SHETH JAMNALAL BAJAJ
WARDHA
C.P.

[PS.]

All three of us are all right.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 2899

[1] Addressee's son

361. LETTER TO VIMALABEHN A. PATEL

August 15, 1932

CHI. VIMALA,

I pass your letter this time. It gets 33 $^{1}/_{3}$ per cent marks. If you want even more than that, tell me. The letters are rather small, but it does not matter. But they are not uniform. There are a few verses by Ramdas[1] on the art of good handwriting. Have you read the poem? If you have not, get from the Ashram. I do not have it here. It is a beautiful poem. Do you know that we can make a carbon copy even of letters written with ink? There is a special kind of carbon paper for that. Your message was immediately conveyed to Bhaktibehn. But even then it was late. Dahyabhai had already seen her.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. VIMALABEHN

PATIDAR MANDIR

ANAND

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3277

362. LETTER TO BHUSKUTE[2]

August 15, 1932

I believe in both Gods, the one that serves us and the one that we serve. It cannot be that we should render service and should not receive service of any kind. But both Gods are of our imagining. There is only one God who is real. The real God is beyond conception. He neither serves nor receives service. He cannot be described by any epithets, being not an external power but something dwelling in our heart. Since we do not understand the ways of God, we

[1] A saint-poet of Maharashtra

[2] "There are two Gods. There is the God people generally believe in, a God who has to serve them sometimes in a very refined way; perhaps merely by giving them peace of mind. This God does not exist. But the God whom we all have to serve does exist and is the prime cause of our existence and of all we perceive." Referring to these words of Tolstoy, the addressee had enquired "which of these two Gods Gandhiji believed in, for if a man believed in the second God, prayer had no meaning for him".

have necessarily to think of a power beyond our conception. And the moment we think of it, the God of our imagining is born. The fact is that belief in God is a function not of the intellect but of faith. Reasoning is of little help to us in this matter and once we accept God the ways of the world cease to bother us. Then we have to accept that no creation of God can be purposeless. Beyond this I cannot go.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 364

363. LETTER TO FELLOW PRISONERS

August 15, 1932

For those who find it difficult to concentrate their mind on their studies, it is a great help to forget the outside world altogether. If a dying man has his heart in the world, he fails to attain release, he is unhappy himself and is the cause of unhappiness in others; the same is the case with a prisoner in jail who should cease to think of the outside world; for imprisonment means civil death. One who is civilly dead looks mad himself and maddens others about him if he pokes his nose into the outside world. This prescription of mine is no new discovery. [John] Bunyan could not have produced his immortal work[1] and Lokamanya Tilak *Gitarahasya* if in prison they had continued to worry about the outside world.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 363

364. A LETTER

August 15, 1932

Prayer and *brahmacharya* are not things of the same kind. *Brahmacharya* is one of the five cardinal vows, and prayer is a means of being able to observe them. I have said a great deal to explain the necessity of *brahmacharya.* But when I tried to think how one can observe it, I discovered a powerful means in prayer. For him who has realized the value of prayer and is able to pray with concentration, *brahmacharya* becomes quite easy to observe.

[1] *The Pilgrim's progress*

My idea of a doctor is a person who has acquired a good knowledge of his profession and gives the benefit of that knowledge to the people without charging fees. For his livelihood, he should take up some other work. Or he may live on whatever little the people give him voluntarily, but never regard it as fee for his services. In an ideal state of affairs, I would fix an annual allowance to be paid to such voluntary workers, in addition to which they would be permitted to charge or accept nothing either from the rich or the poor.

Japayajna means repeating the Name, so far as I can judge.

It is difficult to find how much exactly one should eat, but it is easy to eat little, that is to say, resolutely to eat less than one needs, and that is the better way.

One who would keep the vow of truth should not think a single thought which he would hide from the world. He should not mind if the world comes to know even his silly ideas. What he should worry over is his silly thoughts, his sins. Members of the Ashram are worried by the fear that someone else might read their diary, because they wish to appear better than they are. But when a man does not care even if the whole world looks into his diary, why should he hide it from his wife?

The only limit to the keeping of the vow is that of our capacity.

So long as there is the distinction of *meum* and *teum* between friends and even between husband and wife, since those chained to a body cannot get over it, each may not take anything belonging to the other without permission. Your intention that you will put it again in its original place does not meet the case, if only because you can never be sure that you will live long enough to carry it out or that the thing will not be stolen while it is still in your charge. In observing this rule, we should not mind if we are accused of pedantry and even worse on that account.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 365-6

365. A LETTER

August 15, 1932

Achara means the outward mode of living and it can change from time to time.[1] The rules of inner living must remain the same; that is, one should cling to truth, ahimsa, etc. It trying to follow them, we may change the rules of outward mode of living whenever necessary. We need not cling to anything, saying or believing that according to the Shastras *achara* is the first step in dharma. All rules given in Sanskrit were not Shastra. Even the book entitled *Manavdharmashastra* is not really speaking a Shastra. Shastra is not anything written in a book. It should be a living thing. Hence the words of a wise man of good character whose actions are in accord with his speech are our Shastra. If we do not have any such lighthouse to guide us, what seems truth to us is our Shastra, provided our minds and hearts have been purified.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 364

366. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR[2]

August 16, 1932

MY DEAR MARY,

I got your letter today. I was wondering what had happened to you. I did not receive your letter in reply to mine.[3] Do write again and repeat your questions. I think I shall receive it safely. We are all doing well, engaged in various studies and spinning. We have more books than necessary.

With love from us all,

BAPU

[1] The addressee had referred to the verse "आचारः प्रथमो धर्मः" ।', i.e., "*achara* is the first step in dharma", and asked what it meant.

[2] Of Mission Boarding School, Hyderabad; author of *Bapu : Conaersations and Correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi.*

[3] *Vide* "Letter to F. Mary Barr", 6-2-1932.

[PS.]

I note that you have joined the communion party that sings "Lead, kindly Light" every Friday evening.

MISS MARY BARR
KARIM NAGAR
H. E. H. NIZAM'S DOMINIONS

From a photostat : G.N. 5982. Also C.W. 3310. Courtesy : F. Mary Barr

367. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

August 16, 1932

MY DEAR PADMAJA,

Unlike the lotus the Lotus-born can write much and say nothing. For your letter occupies a fair space and tells me nothing except about myself. What I wanted to know was how you were keeping, what Lilamani was doing and how Father's hospital, which you had showed me and where the prayers were offered, was doing. But you would not be Padmaja if you gave me credit for wanting to know all these family details instead of being told that I was by nature a wrinkled old slave-driver rather than a saint. Anyway for your credit let me slave-drive you to give me a decent letter giving me a proper budget of family news.

I duly got the grapes and other fruit, also *The Candle of Vision*[1]. For all these gifts thanks if you need them. Mother evidently forgot when she prompted you to buy the book for me that at her instance the poet had himself sent me his own copy.

Now be good and write.

Sardar and Mahadev join me in sending you all much love.

Yours,
SLAVE-DRIVER

[PS.]

The envelope in which this is going is of Sardar's manufacturing.

SHRIMATI PADMAJA NAIDU
C/O SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
POONA

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] By George William Russell who wrote under the pseudonym 'O'

368. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

August 16, 1932

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I got your letter. I did not write my letter to you in order to discontinue your medicine but I wrote it to tell you that I had succeeded in getting possession of it. I do not worry whether the pain will be cured or not. I wished to use your oil because I knew that you had mixed your love with it. I will continue the massage till the bottle is exhausted and will not be in a hurry to stop it. How can I take sun-bath in this season? I will certainly take it as soon as the sky clears permanently. I have not tried cold packs, but I did apply mud-packs prepared with cold water. They did not help. The real difficulty is that the exact cause of the pain cannot be ascertained, and so we cannot be certain about the treatment either. The pain is not in the muscle but in the bone of the elbow. It is in the left elbow and is felt only when the bone is pressed or when the arm is moved in a certain manner. Otherwise I am not aware of it at all. Personally, I believe that this is a symptom of old age. If it is so, treatment is useless. However, the remedy suggested by you is completely harmless and I will not, therefore, discontinue it. I very much wish to request you to come over, but, since I have stopped seeing visitors I must obtain special permission for you to see me in your capacity as a bone-setter. I do not feel like doing that, for it means asking a favour and I would feel hurt if it was refused. For the present, therefore, I think it best to let things go on as they are doing.

There is no trouble so far in my right elbow. The right thumb used to give pain when writing. I think it was cured merely through rest. I will give it more rest if it again starts paining. Mahadevmassages it daily. I have filled this letter with the story of my pain. But it is not as serious as all that. I have written at such length, however, because I know that you like to hear the story.

Andrews had gone to Germany to see the grandson[1] of Gurudev there. He has now left us.

I must prescribe for your lumbago. The only remedy for it is fasting, steam-bath and hip-bath. It is my experience till now that if

[1] Nitin who died of tuberculosis in Germany

these measures do not cure it, nothing else will. Fasting is an art. [Dr.] Mehta in Poona has some experience in the matter. Have you met him at any time? I have had no personal experience of him, but had it in the case of a Sindhi friend's wife who was put under his care. Her complaint was of course of a different nature. I have mentioned her case just to fill the letter. Apart from fasting, and hip-bath, we have in the last resort the supreme remedy of surrender to the Lord.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7551. Also C.W. 5026. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

369. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

August 16, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

Again there was no letter from you. I hope that your health is all right. I told you that I had written a letter[1] in Urdu to Zohra. Dr. Ansari came to know about it. I wrote to him and told him that you were at the back of it all. He was pleased and wrote to me asking me to send his love to you. Please remember that you are responsible for the errors which I make. Write to me and explain the meaning of this *ghazal*[2] by Ghalib.

I understand the general idea of the *ghazal*, but do not clearly understand the meaning of every word. Respectful greetings from us all to Father and Mother. Has Hamida returned?

Khuda Hafiz[3]

I have taken fairly good time to write this. I hope you will have no difficulty in reading my handwriting. Whenever you cannot write, ask Hamida or anybody else who may be with you to write at least a few lines. It will not matter if the letter does not contain the usual lesson.[4]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu/Gujarati : S.N. 9680

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Zohra Banu Ansari", 7-7-1932.

[2] This is not translated here.

[3] "God be with you."

[4] This paragraph is in Gujarati.

370. A LETTER[1]

August 16, 1932

You are right when you say that one should not trust a person who is not trustworthy. What I meant to say was that we should not regard anybody with suspicion. Just as we like other people to trust us, we also should trust them; and do not repent having trusted them if they prove themselves unworthy of our trust. Nobody has ever lost anything by trusting people. Those who betray the trust put in them always lose [something precious] in spite of ganing millions. We lose something only if our soul is stained. Wealth comes and goes, and we should not grieve when it goes.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 366

371. LETTER TO RAMESHWARLAL BAZAJ

August 17, 1932

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

I saw your letter to Mahadev. I have not expressed and I do not entertain disapprobation for anyone. I am acquainted with Benarsi only and I believe him to be a good, modest, simple and truthful young man. I am in no way dissatisfied with him. He writes to me regularly. Whosoever wrote to you is totally ignorant and why he wrote this is beyond my comprehension.

I have sent proper replies to all letters received from you.

Yes, I do have a complaint against you. You are staying on there[2], why don't you sell what you have and come here? Why be scared of poverty? Come over and share our religious life. Life is misspent there.

Rukmini keeps writing regularly.

We are all well. There is nothing serious with my arm. I constantly recall your love.

Blessing from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 9063. Also C.W. 9447. Courtesy : Benarsilal Bazaj

[1] Presumably this was addressed to one of the relations of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta.

[2] In England

372. LETTER TO RAMSAY MACDONALD

August 18, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

There can be no doubt that Sir Samuel Hoare has showed you and the Cabinet my letter[1] to him of 11th March on the question of the representation of "depressed" classes. That letter should be treated as part of this letter and be read together with this.

I have read the British Government's decision[2] on the representation of minorities and have slept over it.[3] In pursuance of my letter to Sir Samuel Hoare and my declaration[4] at the meeting of the Minorities Committee of the Round Table Conference on 13th November, 1931, at St. James' Palace, I have to resist your decision with my life.

The only way I can do so is by declaring a perpetual fast unto death from food of any kind save water with or without salt and soda. This fast will cease if during its progress the British Government, of its own motion or under pressure of public opinion, revise their decision and withdraw their scheme of communal electorates for the "depressed" classes, whose representatives should be elected by the general electorate under the common franchise no matter how wide it is.

The proposed fast will come into operation in the ordinary course from the noon of 20th September next, unless the said decision is meanwhile revised in the manner suggested above.

I am asking the authorities here to cable the text of this letter to you so as to give you ample notice. But in any case, I am leaving

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Samuel Hoare", 11-3-1932.

[2] On August 17, 1932. Ramsay MacDonald, the British Prime Minister, announced a provisional scheme of minority representation, known as the Communal Award. The scheme fixed the number of seats in the provincial legislatures and retained separate electorates for the minority communities and for the Muslims both in Bengal and the Punjab, despite their numerical majority. Weightage was also conceded to the Muslims in the Provinces in which they were in a minority and to the Sikhs and Hindus in the Punjab. The Depressed Classes were recognized as a minority community entitled to separate electorate. While creating a number of specially reserved constituencies for the Depressed Classes, it gave them the additional right to contest seats in the general constituencies, with this provision that special electorates and reservation would lapse automatically after twenty years.

[3] Gandhiji commenced writing this letter on the 17th and completed it on the 18th. For conversations regarding this letter.

[4] *Vide* "Speech at minorities committee meeting", 13-11-1931.

sufficient time for this letter to reach you in time by the slowest route.

I also ask that this letter and my letter to Sir Samuel Hoare, already referred to, be published at the earliest possible moment. On my part, I have scrupulously observed the rule of the jail and have communicated my desire or the contents of the two letters to no one, save my two companions, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Sjt. Mahadev Desai. But I want, if you make it possible, public opinion to be affected by my letter. Hence, my request for their early publication.

I regret the decision I have taken. But as a man of religion that I hold myself to be, I have no other course left open to me. As I have said in my letter to Sir Samuel Hoare, even if His Majesty's Government decided to release me in order to save themselves the embarrassment, my fast will have to continue. For I cannot now hope to resist the decision by any other means. And I have no desire whatsoever to compass my release by any means other than honourable.

It may be that my judgment is warped and that I am wholly in error in regarding separate electorates for the "depressed" classes as harmful to them or to Hinduism. If so, I am not likely to be in the right with reference to other parts of my philosophy of life. In that case my death by fasting will be at once a penance for my error and a lifting of a weight from off those numberless men and women who have childlike faith in my wisdom. Whereas if my judgment is right, as I have little doubt it is, the contemplated step is but the due fulfilment of the scheme of life, which I have tried for more than a quarter of a century, apparently not without considerable success.

I remain,
Your faithful friend,
M. K. GANDHI

THE RT. HON'BLE J. RAMSAY MACDONALD
PRIME MINISTER, LONDON

The Bombay Chronicle, 13-9-1932

373. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

August 18, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter.

I got the *rakhdi*, but late by two days. I had, however, taken it

that I had received it on Monday.

If bananas do not agree with you and yet you go on eating them, they will not benefit you. Every stomach has its own peculiarity.

I have fully understood your analysis of the reasons why you get angry. Try to overcome your weakness. I know that you will succeed in overcoming it. I understood your meaning in that part of your letter which you had decided not to leave out. You did right in not leaving it out. There is great pride in not explaining one's need to a person whom one loves, it does him injustice and puts a heavy burden on him. Civility and humility on our part save him from the trouble of ascertaining our need. This is the first lesson in civility. Learn it now.

Write to Krishnan Nair and tell him that I often think about him.

You did very well in going to Rajkot. It seems your health requires such rest.

Public opinion means the opinion of that section of society for which we care. It is our duty to respect it so long as it is not against morality.

It is difficult to come to a just conclusion on the basis of the incident about the dhobi. Such conduct would certainly not meet with our approval in this age. Anyone who abandons his wife because of such criticism would be regarded as a cruel and unjust man. But I am not in a position to say what the poet's intention was in the *Ramayana* in narrating that incident. We need not bother about that problem. I would not. I do not read even works like the *Ramayana* from that point of view.

I believe that I must stop taking the freedom which I do with the girls if that shocks the inmates of the Ashram. There is no reason which makes it a moral duty for me to take such freedom, nor does my taking it violate morality. If, however, my refraining from it was likely to have an undesirable effect on the girls, I would reason with the inmates of the Ashram and continue to behave as I have been doing. If the girls themselves do not leave me, I would have to consider how to meet the situation. In any case, no one should follow my example and take similar freedom with them. The freedom one takes should be spontaneous. No one should consciously and deliberately decide to take such freedom from one fine morning and behave unnaturally; it would be quite improper if anyone did so. Narandas is free to act as he thinks proper. I would not wish even to

criticize him. The truth is that anyone who takes even the most innocent freedom with impure feelings falls into a pit and also drags others behind him. As long as the relations of men and women have not become natural in our society, one should certainly be careful in one's behaviour. There is no royal road in such matters which all can follow. There is a good deal of clumsiness in your own behaviour. Your innocence saves you, but it is certainly not proper for you to be proud of it and obstinately to persist in your behaviour. There is thoughtlessness in doing so. You do not see today the harm which such behaviour may do. But you way have to repent one day. No one's pride has endured for ever. One should not deliberately try to shock society, arguing that all conventional restrictions are bad. Have you now some idea of what public opinion means?

Write to Dhurandhar and tell him that he should bear in mind what the Major told him. He will himself have to become a walking advertisement for *asanas*.[1]

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10299. Also C.W. 5745. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

374. LETTER TO PUSHPA S. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 18, 1932

CHI. PUSHPA,

You have drawn wonderful pictures. What are the gifts Mangala received? Who gave them? Are your trees alive? Your handwriting is improving.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11082. Courtesy: Pushpa Naik

[1] Dhurandhar practised the yogic *asanas* and propagated them wherever he went.

375. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

August 19, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

So you are again in your den.[1] I hope you will regain your lost strength and vitality. And you will be anxious about nothing. Simply concentrate on your spinning and such studies as you can easily undertake. We are all doing well. Love from us all. God [be] with you.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 6233. Courtesy : Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9699

376. LETTER TO GULAB

August 19, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

If the thoughts which come to you are good, you need not worry much about them. If they are bad, try to keep them out with the help of Ramanama and think only about your work.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 1721

377. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

August 19, 1932

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

I got a letter from you after a long interval. Do not worry if you cannot keep to the prayer hours in the Ashram. Both Jamna and you have weak health, and if a person cannot get up early in the morning he should not force himself to do so. The secret of being able to get up early is to go to bed early.

I think that hip-bath, sun-bath, fruit diet and milk, only as much as one can digest, would be a sure remedy for anaemia. Open air also is essential.

[1] The addressee was sentenced to one year's imprisonment.

The book on health[1] has discussed only the diseases of which I had some experience.

BAPU

From Gujarati : C.W. 904. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

378. LETTER TO NANALAL K. JASANI

August 19, 1932

BHAI NANALAL,

I was waiting for a letter from you as we wait for rains in the months of *jeth* and *Ashadha*. I remembered you immediately the day I received the cable about Doctor's last sleep, and also wrote[2] to you. I even wished at that time that you were with me, but I did not know you were in fact so near me. I did not even know where you would be, and so I enclosed that letter and another for Khimchand with my letter[3] to Manilal. In my letter to you I asked for your help and in the letter to Khimchand I cautioned him. I mentioned my distrust of him and other people's too, but told him that Doctor had great trust in him and expressed my hope that he would not betray it. Maganlal had written me two long letters about Khimchand about the time he went to England, and I had also written to Doctor on the basis of those letters. Doctor had assured me in reply that Khimchand had turned over a new leaf and that there was no ground for distrusting him. You should not feel any hesitation now in taking a hand in the affrairs of the family. It is your duty at this juncture not to wait to be asked to intervene. Doctor's trust in you can be seen even in his last instructions. Chhaganlal writes to me. His letters have been very good. He has promised to abide by my advice. He has expressed his own views, too, but he does not insist on their being acted upon. My letters are not likely to reach there before the 13th [proximo]. Hence, without knowing what I want he has sent me a copy of the note which you had sent [to him]. All the letters and cables which I have received up to date from Chhaganlal after the passing away of Doctor can be described as perfectly satisfactory. If he seems to have an ulterior motive behind them, you should guide me. I am proceeding with full

[1] *Guide to Health.*

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Nanalal K. Jasani", 4-8-1932.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Manilal R. Jhaveri", 4-8-1932.

trust in him. Ratilal Desai[1] has written to me and told me that he does not share my trust. I have as yet made no suggestions beyond asking him to bring the accounts up to date. For the present, I am collecting all the relevant facts. I sent wires[2] to Ratilal, Champa and Manjula and dissuaded them from rushing to Rangoon. I wished to restrain Maganlal too, but I knew that he would not have that much patience, and also that he did not trust Chhaganlal. My own attitude has been that the shares of the three brothers should be separated. From what Chhaganlal writes, Doctor's property seems to be very much less than I had thought. He says that there is practically no cash, and also expresses his distrust of Mayashankar[3] . I think we should treat the last instructions of Doctor as his will. If, however, the total property is as enumerated by Chhaganlal and if there is no cash, how can we pay immediately the sums specified by Doctor? Please write to me frankly and in detail about all these matters. I feel unhappy that I am in jail at this juncture. But our wishes are not always fulfilled, and, therefore, we should do our duty as best as we can in the circumstances in which we are placed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati : C.W. 9462

379. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON, POONA

[Before *August 20, 1932*][4]

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

I was not at all vigilant. I could suspect others but I could not suspect you. Whether I was vigilant or not it was your duty to inform me immediately about the lapse. That way the lapse would have been to some extent remedied. But it is futile to think over the past.

But now you should be able to sleep. Do not strain yourself to induce it. Sleep out in the open air. Be without any thoughts. Utter Ramanama if thoughts occur. If in spite of it, thoughts keep coming,

[1] Son-in-law of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Narandas Gandhi", p. 333.

[3] Mayashankar Vrajlal Desai, business partner of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

[4] From the contents the letter appears to have been written before the one to the addressee dated August 20, 1932; *vide* "Letter to Balakrishna", 20-8-1932.

let that be so. Once you have decided that you must sleep then there is nothing to think about. Instead of worrying it is better to court failure. If there is discharge during sleep, do not fret. If you remain indifferent to it, I shall consider that you have learnt the lesson taught in the verse पश्यन् श्रण्वन् स्पशन जिघ्रन् If we have completely shut our minds to it, how are we responsible for an emission in sleep? All this can be addressed only to one following truth.

You do not require wheat for putting on weight. However, do take it if you can digest it. If you find it difficult to digest wheat then take as much milk as you can and also fruit. For the moment do not think about the cost. Therapeutically milk and *neem* could be a complete diet, but this can be proved only by experiment. If you call free yourself from there I would like you to go to Almora for a few months. Discuss it with Vinoba.

To show you how Suraj Bhan had a break-down, I send herewith his letter.

Now for the questions. I take it you have these with you.

1. Yes and No. Because I am myself not clear as to what activity goes on for the whole day.

2. Both are alike, so I have not made an effort to find out the difference. There is scope for wide difference where the word 'like' is used. There is a great difference between the statements: 'gold is like brass' and 'gold is brass', and similarly between 'a rope is like a snake' and 'a rope is a snake'. The first is a beautiful example of eloquence but is meaningless as usage. There is no eloquence in the second. There can be many usages.

3. The reply to the first question covers that to the third.

4. Both the activities are different; so there can be no comparison. Only an experienced person can say more.

5. The *brahmi* state is positive, it is an affirmation. But it cannot be described as it can only be experienced.

'Sensitive' means delicate and soft. It is good you introduced the children to me. A letter to them is enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11279

380. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

August 20, 1932

CHI. JANAKIMAIYA,

So at last you took the trouble to write a few lines with pencil. It seems you could not shake off your lethargy even in jail. I think it was a mistake [on the part of the magistrate] to have awarded you 'A' class. He should have awarded you 'C' class, so that you would have had to do hard work. Well, be as lethargic as you will, but see now that you recover your health completely. I am glad you are having an experience of Vinoba's strict discipline. If you do not write regularly, bear in mind you will be punished. Did I tell you that the old blanket which you had made into a new one by stitching it on to khadi cloth had accompanied me to the Royal Palace?[1] And it is with me in this jail, too. I am sure it will last for many more years yet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 2900

381. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

August 20, 1932

CHI. LILAVATI,

You must have got my message. I hope you have calmed down now. Remember the second chapter [of the *Gita*].

It seems best to me that you should entrust your money to the care of Narandas and let him make any arrangement about it which he thinks proper. You should know from him what arrangement he makes. Obtain receipts, etc., and preserve them, or give the original receipts to Narandas to preserve. You should consult Narandas himself for further guidance in this. I am writing to him. From here I cannot think of any other suggestion to make. I hope your health is all right. Send me a report of your work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9570. Also C.W. 6542. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mathuradas Purushottam", 6-7-1932.

382. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI[1]

August 20, 1932

One of the many causes of illness is impatience. First the mind becomes impatient, and then the body. But it is the universal experience that 'the impatient get nervous and the calm remain self-possessed'. If the world is on fire, will impatience help us to put out the fire? And is it for us to put out the fire? Do you know that firemen do not shoot water at the raging flames when a great fire breaks out? They direct their attention to the parts round the flames. If they can save them, they should be regarded as efficient, that is, as [karma] yogis. If we do our own duty well, we would in effect have put out the fire. It may not seem to the physical eye to have been put out, but you may rest assured that it has been put out. My long search for truth has revealed to me no other way but this, nor is it likely to reveal any other in future. If what I have said is not correct, it would become impossible to follow the path of truth and cling to it scrupulously. We can insist only on that which is possible. If anyone demands air of the mountains on the moon, we would have to call him a Shaikhchalli[2] for his desire can never be satisfied. And this is also true about the scope of our duty. Really speaking, everyone's duty is clear enough for him to see, for one does not have to look far to find it. One has to look no farther than the tip of one's nose. We have merely to clean the dirt immediately in front of our feet. As we clean it, we shall discover more dirt to be cleaned and will clean that too. It does not matter that, at the end of our lives, there will be as much dirt to be cleaned as when we started. In truth, however, can we say that life ends? The body perishes, but does that matter? And if life does not end, we should not feel disheartened to discover that the dirt has not disappeared. A tailor's son goes on stitching all his life. If he falls dead with a yawn, a needle in his hand, he would be a man of true devotion to duty.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 371

[1] The addressee had said in his letter that he felt frustrated by the environment and was impatient to dispose of arrears of work.

[2] One who builds castles in the air

383. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

August 20, 1932

You will soon be released now. But you will feel unhappy that you cannot see me. I also feel unhappy. I may feel tempted to relax for your sake at least. But you also will agree that it would not be proper for me to do so. We have become what we are through self-sacrifice. You should, therefore, show patience. Write to me in detail.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 373

384. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA[1]

August 20, 1932

I do not know with certainty what Shankaracharya meant by *maya*. This is what I believe. The world which we see and believe in is mere appearance; it is a product of our imagination. But in its true essence it does exist. We do not know what that essence is. We say that it is Brahman, but we characterize all descriptions of the latter as inadequate. The world also a Brahman and not different from it. The difference which we see is mere appearance.

My view is that the span of our life can be lengthened or shortened. The truth is that every species is born with its natural functioning determined. We do not know and need not know what they are.

The divisions of time are man-made and they are smaller even than particles of dust in the cosmic cycles of time. Even if crores of units of our time as big as the Himalayas were added together, the total would be smaller than a cosmic cycle of time. It is very little, therefore, which man commands. Let him be pleased with it as much as he will.

There are innumerable physical causes of dreams. I have experienced that, while dreaming, we can be conscious of its unreality. Such a moment may possibly be the point of transition from the dream state to the waking state. Involuntary discharges are sometimes the result of purely physical causes and take place even without impure thoughts in one's mind. They can be stopped by changes in one's food. Mostly they are caused by constipation. When such

[1] Presumably Balkrishna Bhave, brother of Vinoba Bhave

discharges are due to milk, mostly the immediate cause is impure thoughts, since milk has a tendency to stimulate passion. But that is not the case with you. That is, milk cannot stimulate passion in persons whose bodies have become weak even if the person is of a passionate nature. All the power of the milk is used up in building the body of such a person. Dr. Rajab Ali's view is correct within certain limits. But what he says does not apply to persons who are completely healthy in body and mind.

The desire to work for the welfare of the world is an essential element in the nature of a man of spiritual knowledge. There can be no exception to this.

I cannot say for what length of time I can keep out all thoughts from my mind, since I have never tried to test this. But I know that I am able to keep out unnecessary thoughts. If any such thoughts come, they have to run away like thieves.

Hypocrisy is nothing but the mask which falsehood wears.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 371-2

385. LETTER TO MATHURADAS[1]

August 20, 1932

The plan of voluntary dress-making for *yajna* is not intended to provide the work of stitching khadi clothes for the poor. The idea behind it is to promote quicker sale without incurring loss, of khadi woven by the poor and to reduce its price which is felt to be high . . . . [2]

Do not pay attention to carnal thoughts either. Once we have made up our mind in regard to a thing, we should take it as finally settled. A vow means that the mind stops thinking about the thing concerning which we have taken the vow. When a business man has concluded a deal, he does not think further about it and directs his attention to other things. We should act in the same manner with regard to vows.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 372-3

[1] Presumably Mathuradas Purushottam; *vide* "Letter to Mathuradas Purushottam", 7-8-1932.

[2] The discussion on food which followed is omitted in the source.

386. LETTER TO MADALASA BAJAJ

August 20, 1932

CHI. MADALASA,

I got your letter. You may believe that you are full of envy, pride, etc., but I don't believe so. From whom could you have got these defects? Jamnalal certainly does not have them, nor Janakibehn. You have also not come under the influence of bad company. And there is nothing you lack. Yes, you are inclined to be angry. I, too, observed that. But Janakibehn also has that weakness. And, moreover, your body is weak. But you are wise. Make a conscious effort, therefore, to overcome your shortcoming. Other people also are human beings like us. The same *atman* dwells in all of us. Hence, getting angry with anybody means getting angry with ourselves. Moreover, no short-comings remain in anyone in whom a passion for the service of every living creature has been aroused. You should, therefore, cultivate greater devotion to service.

It will make me happy if you write to me regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 313

387. LETTER TO UMADEVI BAJAJ

August 20, 1932

CHI. OM,

I got your letter. Your handwriting has improved greatly. If your present weight is due to a strong build, why do you wish to reduce it? You will be better equipped for service if you grow up to be big and strong in body, provided of course that your mind also becomes strong along with the body. If the body has become merely fat because of some disease, you should certainly try to reduce your weight. Do you suffer from any disease? Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 335

388. LETTER TO GULAM RASUL QURESHI

August 20, 1932

CHI. QURESHI,

I got your letter. Since the children feel at home at Noorbanu's[1], we may be satisfied that their interest will be well protected.

Improve your health. If your piles can be cured with treatment it would be very good. Do not be impatient.

I have received two parts of *Safaba*, the first part of *Sirhat* and *Al Farooqui*. I have not received anything else. With whom did you send the Koran? I must get the second part of *Sirhat* and the second part of *Shibli*. What is your weight now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10808. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

389. READING AND REFLECTION—II[2]

August 21, 1932

Awake and arise, O traveller, it is morning now;

It is no longer night that you still slumber.[3]

If anybody understands these lines to mean simply: "O traveller, arise, it is morning now. Is it night that you are still sleeping?"—then he has read the lines but not reflected over their meaning. For such a reader will rise early at dawn and feel satisfied. But a reader who wishes to think will ask : Who is this traveller? What is meant by "It is morning"? What does the poet mean when he says that it is no longer night? What does sleeping mean? He will then discover daily new meanings in every line, and understand that the traveller represents every human being. For one who has faith in God, it is always morning. Night may also signify ignorance. This line applies to any person who is negligent, be it in ever so small a degree. Anybody who tells a lie also slumbers. The line is a call to such a

[1] Wife of Pyare Ali, a businessman from Bombay

[2] This was sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 20/21-8-1932; *vide* the following item.

[3] A popular *bhajan* in Hindi

person to wake up. We may thus read a wide meaning in the line and learn peace of mind through it. In other words, meditation on this single line can supply enough provision to a man for his spiritual journey, whereas a person who has memorized the four Vedas and also studied their meaning may find them a useless burden. I have given here but one illustration which occurred to me. If all of us decide in what direction we wish to progress and start thinking, we would discover new meanings in life and daily experience a new joy.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II

390. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

August 20/21, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your heavy mail. There was a bitter letter from Champa. I immediately wrote a postcard in reply, which you should get on Sunday or Monday. Now that Narmada has been saved, we owe an especial duty to her. I think her education has been poor. Her handwriting is extremely careless. If she has the good fortune now to observe *brahmacharya* for the rest of her life, I think she will have to know things. See, therefore, if you can give her more help (by way of time) and educate her. If she does not work with sincere enthusiasm to make good use of the time which you give to her, you may stop the help. About Liladhar, what you have done seems all right. If you can, try and make Jaisukhlal's daughters forget Amreli. What is the name of Indu's maternal uncle? What is his occupation in Palitana? Kusum cannot take up nursing as long as she is not completely free from the danger of tuberculosis. It would be very bad if she joins and returns in a month or so. She ought to realize that nursing is a very strenuous work. A sincere nurse has to be on her feet the whole day. She can hardly find time even for a hurried meal.

Ratubhai's condition is pitiable. Why does he let his children remain in college when he is in debt? I can easily see that he will not be able to go to Rangoon. Will not any of his children be ready to come and stay in the Ashram? A boy who is truthful, industrious and healthy can rise as high as he wishes in the Ashram. May be he will not get there the education which he gets in a college. But, after all what is the value of that education?

You are doing a very good thing in keeping Ratilal from going. I had fine letters from Chhaganlal, so that I am now relatively free

from worry from that source. I got letters from Nanalal and Manilal, too. Manjula has been writing regularly. She is rising higher in my esteem every day.

I have been having novel experiences in regard to my food. Eating bananas did not cure my constipation completely as long as I was drinking milk. I, therefore, stopped milk and ate bananas only for some days. For the evening meal I had bread and vegetable. This relieved the constipation to some degree. But, being eager to eat the same food as 'C' class prisoners do, and remembering that in 1930 I had tried *rotlas* of *bajri* and that had cured my constipation, for the last three days I have been eating in the evening one *rotlo* with vegetable. That has cured the constipation completely. But on the last occasion the continued consumption of *bajri* had resulted in more than the disappearance of constipation, and so I had to give it up. It is possible that the same thing may happen this time. I have not decided to exclude milk completely for the present. I, therefore, intend to take it with *bajri* as soon as I am free from the fear of constipation. I have given all these details so that, if anybody there wishes to make the same experiment for constipation, he may do so. But the essential condition for the success of this experiment is that there should be no oil or ghee in the vegetable, nor should any ghee or milk be taken with the *bajri* cake. In 1930, when my constipation was cured, I ate only *bajri* and vegetables. I did not eat fruit, nor almonds. I had added the latter after the constipation was relieved. But I did consume sour lemons. The vegetables should include some greens.

If the doctor advises, Parasram should be got operated upon.

You are doing right in permitting Premabehn to go out frequently. She will take time to become steady. I do write to her letters to calm her.

I also can understand about the wire from Darjeeling. You have done quite right in taking no action on it. You should give a few details of the wire to Mahavir and ask him what the purpose behind sending that wire was. You should also write to Agamgiri and ask him the same question.

If anybody asks for permission to publish a German translation of *Vratavichar*[1], you may tell him that we claim copyright for none of

[1] During Gandhiji's detention in the Yeravda Central Prison in 1930, he wrote weekly dircourses in letters addressed to Narandas Gandhi, from July 22, 1930

our publications and that, therefore, he can translate it, but also tell him that it is essential for such a book that a translator should not depart from the original in any point.

When you say that Shankarbhai's arm will require treatment for a long time, I hope you don't mean that some defect is likely to remain.

Or, is some other complication feared? Is the arm being examined by anybody from time to time?

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8246. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

391. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

August 21, 1932

CHI. RAMESHWARDAS,

I feel no pain while writing. I of course dictate to Mahadev when the letter is long. I do not remember your vows. If you also do not remember them, then forget about them and think as if you had taken none. Your mode of life is still not such that it can endure vows. But you should make resolutions slowly one after another. If you remember the vows and are observing them, please let me know what they are. Even if you do nothing else, keep repeating Ramanama. Some day you will suddenly see light in the midst of darkness.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 204

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onwards, to Satyagraha Ashram, containing "a cursory examination of the principal Ashram observances". They were published in Gujarati under the title *Vratavichar*. Subsequently, a chapter on swadeshi was added to it and the title was changed to *Mangal Prabhat*. It was translated into English under the title *From Yeravda Mandir*.

392. LETTER TO GULAB

August 21, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

A general statement that your speed in spinning and making slivers has increased tells the other person nothing. If you say that now you spin 160 rounds instead of 150 or make seven instead of five *tolas* of slivers per hour, that will tell him something.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 1722

393. LETTER TO MANIBEHN N. PARIKH

August 21, 1932

CHI. MANIBEHN,

I have your letter. I hope you do not worry about Narahari now. Why should we worry when we have left it to God to worry for us? And what do we gain by worrying?

I will write to Vanamala some other time.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5971. Also C. W. 3288. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

394. LETTER TO CHAMPABEHN R. MEHTA

August 21, 1932

CHI. CHAMPA,

I hope you received my postcard. Do not worry about anything at all. God will solve all problems. Prabhashankar has sent me a copy of the letter which you wrote to him. But as I explained to you in a previous letter, unfortunately for you, he and I cannot agree. I will go on acting and advising you as seems best to me. May God give you patience.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8753. Also C.W. 1041. Courtesy: Champabehn R. Mehta

395. LETTER TO MATHURI N. KHARE

August 21, 1932

CHI. MATHURI,

I got your letter after a long time. The programme is good. How much do you weigh now? If you feel sleepy during prayers, you are permitted to doze off. Do you know that one can go on repeating God's name even in sleep?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 266. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

396. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA N. KHARE

August 21, 1932

CHI. RAMACHANDRA,

Your English handwriting is very good indeed, though you are rather weak in spelling. Do you understand the meaning of every word correctly?

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 295. Courtesy : Lakshmibehn N. Khare

397. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

August 21.1932

CHI. JAMNA,

You wrote to me after a long interval. It is certainly good that you get an opportunity of staying in Rajkot from time to time. Khushalbhai's recovery to this extent is indeed a miracle. Tell Jamnadas that I should be happy if he stops being lazy in writing to me.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 858. courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

398. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

August 21, 1932

CHI. NARMADA,

You should improve your handwriting. You should leave some space on both sides. The words should be spaced well. The line should be straight. it will be better if you use a reed-pen.

I should like you to become accomplished in everything. What do you mean by a boy's dress? Please describe it. For how many years have you been wearing it, and on whose advice?

Let me know your programme of daily work.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 2760. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. pathak

399. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

August 21, 1932

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I got your letter. It would be very good indeed if Ramibehn[1] recovers before leaving that place. I hope you got all my letters. Regain the weight which you have lost. Feel no hesitation in eating any food which may be necessary for your health.

The change which has taken place in Kaku's brother and sister is very good.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G. S. Gangabenne, p. 64. Also C.W. 8794. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] Ramibehn Kamdar, addressee's sister

400. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

August 21, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

You seem to have become very hard-working. That is certainly very good. But you must improve your handwriting.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 9430. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

401. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

August 21, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

Nowadays your letters have become dull. It is not possible that nothing worth mentioning would have happened during a whole week.

You can describe the trees and plants and the cattle which you see, you can give an account of your work, can say who was most alert and who was lazy, what books you read, etc. You can describe in numerable other things like these if you but try to think. Why don't you write about [all][1] these things in your letters?

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M.U./II

402. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

August 21,1932

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

It was your duty to write to me immediately after your release. Did you get the letter which I wrote to you? You have acquired very useful experience indeed. I have a faint recollection of having received a letter from you before I left for England. I have also an impression that I replied to your question. I now forget what the question was. Ask it again.

[1] Illegible in the source

Narmada scribbled a confused description and cleverly got off. That is a sign of lethargy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 3048

403. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

August 21, 1932

MY DEAR AMTUL,

Your inquiry about the Koran is pertinent. I do not believe any gospel to be a message from God delivered to someone by the angels but I do believe it to be the promptings of the inner voice of the prophets. This much should suffice for us. It is good that you are planning to understand well the text of the Koran. The very purpose of the study of scriptures is to comprehend fully the text and its impact upon our heart.

How is it that Kudsia knows no Urdu? Do all the members of your family know English only? Give me the history of your caln, where it originally belonged to, when and how the interest in Urdu was lost? I suppose you are all right now. Do not overwork or take anything to heart. Be cheerful and be satisfied with What God permitsyou to do. You must have forwarded the letter to Dr. Sharma. Tell me if you can read my letter with ease. I would prefer to write in Urdu if that pleases you. Every week you must point out my mistakes. But tell me unhesitatingly if you like my English letters better. I want you to be happy. It is better that you write to me in Urdu but in that case you will have to write legibly, otherwise I shall be unable to read the letter.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G .N. 254

404. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

August 21,1932

CHI. SHARDA,

The word for 'learned' in the *shloka* you have quoted includes the meaning 'virtuous'. In the olden times the word for a learned

man, viz., *vidvan* was synonymous with *vedavid*, meaning ‘ the knower of the Vedas’, and it was believed that anyone who knew the Vedas was bound to be virtuous. What I meant to say was that Doctor was respected because of his virtue. This does not mean that scholarship may never be honoured. But we know very well that there are many highly learned people who are utterly ignored.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 9915. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

405. LETTER TO AMINA QURESHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 21, 1932

CHI. AMINA,

You have improved your handwriting very much indeed. You must master Urdu. You know how much Imam Saheb also wanted that you should. What has gone wrong with your health? Write in detail.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10801. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

406. LETTER TO PUSHPA S. PATEL

August 21, 1932

CHI. PUSHPA,

This time your pictures are badly drawn. If you want to draw pictures you must draw them well. Otherwise you cannot learn painting.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11083. Courtesy: Pushpa Naik

407. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

Y. M.,
August 21, 1932

CHI. NIMU,

If the children are being bitten by mosquitoes, rubbing a little korosene on the body would keep the mosquitoes away. This has been the experience with many.

You must have started taking ghee and oil now.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Nirmala Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

408. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

August 22,1932

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. I am more than happy that both of you are free from fever. I hope that you have fully regained your normal health. I was pained to read what you say about Pragji. I had a letter from Mr. Ritch, in which he expresses his view that Phoenix ought not to be disbanded. He writes nothing about Pragji, but he has some complaint against you, He says that you have got involved with Sorabji and have lost some money. I hope that this is not true. What you have belongs to the Trust. Surely you know that you cannot take anything from it except what you need to meetyour normal expenses. You can neither advance a loan or make a gift from it, nor can borrow money against it. I think that the plot of twenty-five *bighas* also was leased out to meet the needs of *Indian Opinion*. Even that was a mistake, however. Since you yourself realized it, I need not say anything about it.

If you are sure that Pragji has been concerned only with his own interest, then I think that you ought not to use his services for *Indian Opinion*. I will write to him if you wish that I should do so.

All three of us are well. Devadas has recovered.He will take rest for some time. Pyarelal has been released. Manibehn is again in jail for one year and three months. Ramdas is all right. Ba is about to be released. She has lost some weight.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4793

409. LETTER TO SUSHILABEHN GANDHI

August 22,1932

CHI. SUSHILA,

Though your letter of two pages seemed long to you, a lazy woman, I found it much too short. Do you know that, whenever I wrote to my brother from England, I used to fill 20 to 25 pages and still I thought the letter was too short? I did not feel, either, that Brother would find it too long and that it would be a bother to him to read it. I was sure that he would like a long letter. I would write about everything I might have done during the week, everyone I might have met and everything I might have read and every foolishness I might have committed. No wonder the letter would be so many pages long. Moreover, I used to write only to my brother, and so I would unburden myself completely in the letter.

But you are a princess who would, if she could, write only one line but writes 50 lines with the words written wide apart form one another, and thinks that she has written quite a long letter. All right. Please yourself and rule Manilal. You were married to him because he is a rather simple man and you are deep. I always believe that your judgement about people would be correct. Exercise a little more control over him. Don't think that, because he is your husband, you have done your duty when you have advised or warned him. A good wife should hold the husband back by the ear and save him from falling into a pit. I believe that you have that strength. There is an agreement between Manilal and me that he should not look upon you as his servant but should regard you as his life-companion, his partner in the duties of life and his better-half. You two, therefore, have equal rights over each other. Since you are gifted with greater intuition, you have, to that extent, greater authority over him than he over you in matters which require it. He knows more about the press and, therefore, he has greater authority in that field. similarly, he knows more about water-treatment, and so he may have greater authority in that field too. When you read my letter to Manilal, you will understand what all this means. How is your ear? Does Tara write to you?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4792

410. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

August 22, 1932

BHAI KHAMBHATTA,

I have your letter. Do send your ointment, I will try it. But I Should tell you that I have tried iodine for a long time. If the ointment contains some other useful ingredients, it may be worth trying. What a poor memory I have that I forgot that we had Vidya treated by you. It is true that one should not have any illness even in old age. But that can be expected only of a person who has refrained from bodily pleasures throughout his life. But I have indulged in plenty of them. Only one was left, namely that I never had my hands massaged before going to bed. That is why I remember you every day at night.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6602. Also C. W. 4388. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

411. LETTER TO TRAMBAKLAL

August 22,1932

CHI. TRAMBAKLAL,

Chhaganbhai has full trust in you. Doctor also trusted you. I am sure that you are doing your best to keep Doctor's family united. Please write to me and let me know about any difficulties which hinder your efforts. And let me also have any suggestions which you would like to make.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9436

412. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

August 22,1932

DEAR DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

I got your letter, and also Father's today. I had received your letter in which you had copied Dagh's *ghazal*, but after considerable

delay. I have an impression that I had written to you about having received one of your letters. I liked that *ghazal*. I have all your letters with me. Why did you trouble Mother about Ghalib's *ghazal*? I do not wish to give so much trouble to you either. Whatever you can give without much trouble to yourself will be enough for me. I have now got quite a few Urdu books. It is good that Purohitji has been released. Why did Bhaiji have to drop the idea of going to Afghanistan? Mahadev is learning French and Urdu. Father used to teach him French. Since then he has not given it up. He will think about learning the language of Timbuctoo after having learnt these two. But, then, you will have to teach it to him, because you are likely to be the only one in our world who knows that language. I am not writing separately to Father. There is danger in writing to elders. Give my regards to Father and Mother, and *vandemataram* to the others. To you a slap.

BAPU

[PS.]

It took me half an hour to write this much. It is all your fault. Why cannot I write with speed?[1]

Blessings, good wishes, etc., from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu / Gujarati : S.N. 9671

413. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

August 23, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

I wrote one letter[2] or rather postcard at your new address.

I had made up my mind not to chide you even mentally if you fell ill again. I said to myself when I heard of your illness from Kashi that it would not do to be finding fault with you every time you got ill. No doubt we get ill through our faults. But the difficulty lies in our inability always to know our errors before hand. The other is our inability always to guard against them even when we know them. It is therefore enough to know these truths that we ail through our own mistakes and then not always to be chiding ourselves when we do get ill. Your latest lapse therefore does not surprise me. It was inevitable in

[1] The postscript is in Gujarati.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn",19-8-1932.

the circumstances related by you. God be thanked that you are able to tide over these illnesses without their leaving bad after-effects. The elimination (of) disease germs through natural treatment often leaves the system purer and stronger. the rest you are getting is providential. And you are not going to bother if you get no permission to receive visitors or even to write letters. Only 50 years ago prisoners could not receive visitors or write letters. Ordinary prison life nowadays has lost all its terrors. It was a great movement Howard[1] set on foot. It is only in its beginning stages. The day is not far distant when prisons will be rechristened and persons will be merely detained so as to be unable to do harm whether moral, social or political in accordance with the conception of the respective States. But we have to rejoice whatever the conditions of jail life, trying nevertheless to secure relief wherever possible.

Now about my food. Do you not remember that here in Yeravda I could not get rid of constipation with milk and juicy fruit and that I was able to do so only by dropping milk? This time, too, I had dropped milk only because I could not keep myself fit on milk and fruit. This time I began banana with milk. There was slight improvement. But that was not enough. I have therefore just for a few days dropped milk and am taking *bajri* chapati instead of wheat and the effect has been marvellous. During last incarceration[2] it was *bajri* that removed my constipation. And I was able to pass the rest of the term on bread, vegetables and almond cream. I propose to go back to milk and see whether with *bajri* I am able to avoid constipation. I am keeping excellent health. And as you can see I am writing with the right hand without coming to grief. For the better protection of the left elbow, I have gone back to the Magan charkha and am this time able to draw over 30 counts. I am satisfied with this. The output per hour is still bad. It hardly reaches 100 rounds per hour.

Vallabhbhai is making very rapid progress with his Sanskrit. Mahadev is doing both French and Urdu. So our time is being very usefully spent. The weather has suddenly turned bright and very hot here—unusual at this time of the year. I hope it is not bad with you.

I hope you have the mosquito-net.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6234. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9700

[1] John Howard, English philanthropist and prison-reformer.

[2] In 1930-31

414. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

August 23, 1932

CHI. VASUMATI,

Now I can write a separate letter to you. You could not meet Mahadev after all. I had expected your letter immediately. It is possible that I may get it before you get this. Describe all your experiences, what you learnt from other women, the thoughts which came to you, the books which you read etc., etc. How was your health [in jail]? Did you learn any Marathi? Could you keep up your energy of body and mind on the food that you were getting? I have had no letter from Nanibehn. Why is that so? We are all very well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9331. Also C. W. 5076. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit.

415. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

August 23, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

I got your letter and the copy of Sir Vithaldas's[1] biography. I Will go through it.

All three of us keep good health, as usual.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4832. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

[1] Addressee's husband

416. LETTER TO DARBARI SADHU[1]

August 23, 1932

It does not seem correct to me to say that it is part of man's nature to spend some time in idle thoughts. if there is a single exception to this, we cannot say that it is part of man's nature to do so. Actually, we find many exceptions. It is true that vast numbers of people are always busy thinking about all manner of things which they will do or will not do, and thus may be said to spend time in idle thoughts. If thiswere not so, it would not be necessary to emphasize the importance of concentration. What is important for us atpresent is this. We ourselves make all kinds of plans and resolutions, most of which we do not even remember aftersome time. All such thoughts are mental incontinence. Just as man dissipates his physical strength through ordinary incontinence, so he dissipates his mental strength through mental incontinence, and, as physical weakness affects the mind, so mental weakness affects the body. That is why I have defined *brahmacharya* in a wide sense and described even idle thoughts as violation of it. By defining *brahmacharya* in a narrow sense, we have made it more difficult to observe. if we accept its wider definition and try to control all the eleven organs[2] , the control of the one most important organwould be much easier. You seem to believe in the heart of your hearts that physical activity prevents or hinders us from watching the progress of our inward purfication. My experience is the opposite of this. Without inward purification, work cannot be done in a spirit of non-attachment. Hence the degree of inward purification can be judged mainly by the purity of our work. Anybody who tries to cultivate inward purity without doing work will more likely that not be in danger of falling into a delusion. I have seen many such instances. I will give an ordinary example. I have known many co-workers making all kinds of good resolutions in jail, and also seen

[1] The addressee had said in his letter that "aimless thoughts were certainly burdensome but it seemed as if even the seeker after truth had to pass through the stage of wandering thoughts. It was true that selfless action purified the mind. But after some purification has not the seeker quietly to observe his mental activity? Or was the selfless action sufficient in itself? Buddha recommended a combination of activity and contemplation with some such end in view. Bapu however was all for action, which according to him was the royal road to self-perfection. But did it enable the seeker to understand the activity of the soul?" (*The Diary of Mahadev Desai*, Vol. I, pp. 304-5).

[2] Five organs of perception, five of action and the mind

their resolutions broken at the first blow after they were released. In jail they were quite sure that they would never swerve from their resolutions, that they had achieved inward purification, that they had examined themselves in complete peace ofmind and that they had acquired concentration in prayer. ButI found that the moment they were outside the jail walls all this evaporated into thin air. The fifth verse ofChapter III of the *Gita* states a profound truth. Scientist after scientist has told us that the principle enunciated in it is a universal law. It simply means that no human being can cease from karma even for a moment. Karma or motion is the universal law of all material things and forms of life. Man's spiritual knowledge and his excellence lie in obeying it in a spirit of non-attachment. There are two verses in the *Ishopanishad*[1] which state the same truth, and they are equally profound. Who am I to criticize a great soul like the Buddha? Besides, I love and revere him. But did he himself set up the organization [of monasteries] or did his followers do so? whoever did it, the monasteries which were established became, in obedience to this universal law, stagnant and by and by acquired reputation as dens of sloth. Even today we find Buddhist monks in Ceylon, Burma and Tibet sunk in ignorance and the veritable images of sloth. In India, too, the monks known assannyasis are not found to be shiningspecimens of humanity.

Personally I am convinced, therefore, that man can achieve real and enduring purfication of heart only through work. I again feel tempted to quote the *Gita.* Verse 18 of Chapter IV means that he who sees action in inaction and inaction in action is the wise man, he is the true yogi and the true man of karma. I have, however, explained here what I have found in my own experience. I have quoted the *Gita* verses because I have found the truth of their teaching in my experience. I never quote anything from Shastras which I have not tested in experience. The experience of others may be different from mine and they may even quote verses from the *Gita* which tend in the opposite direction or they may quote in support of their experience the same verses which I do and interpret them differently. All this is possible. I, therefore, never insist that all people should accept my experience as the sole guide.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 378-80

[1] Verses 1 and 2

417. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

August 23, 1932

CHI. TARAMATI,

I have received your letter.

Mathuradas has not written to me again. But Shri Gangadharrao Deshpande received a letter from him. He says that Mathuradas is keeping good health. He has got good companions. As for the climate at Belgaum, it suited Mathuradas in the past. It is good that he has been patient and postponed going there right now. He may go there for a time after the rains stop.

All of us are keeping good health.

Are you reading anything? What is your usual activity? Do you meet anybody from among the women?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

418. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

Y. M.,
August 24, 1932

MY DEAR PADMAJA,

The basket of lovely *musambis* came in last evening. I hope you got my letter posted to Hyderabad. Mother has begun the same pranks she used to play in London. She spoiled me there by bringing the choicest fruits and now she is using you to do the same thing.

Do tell me all about you. Remember me to all the friends of the Society.

Love.

BAPU

SHRIMATI PADMAJA NAIDU
C/O SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
POONA CITY

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

419. LETTER TO NANI AND OTHERS

August 24, 1932

MY DEAR LITTLE FRIENDS, NANI[1], ANNA[2], GILLIAN[3] AND LYDIA[4],

I was delighted to have your sweet notes with funny drawings made by you. You do not mind my sending one note for all of you. After all you are all one in mind though not in body. Yes, it is little children like you who will stop all war. This means that you never quarrel with other boys and girls or among yourselves. You can't stop big wars, if you carry on little wars yourselves.

How I wish I was with you to celebrate Nani's and Anna's birthday. May God bless them and bless you all. My kisses to you all, if you will let me kiss you and Nani will pass on my love to Esther. Won's she?

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 2. Courtesy: National Archives of India.

420. LETTER TO PREMIBEHN JAIRAMDAS

August 24, 1932

MY DEAR PREM[5],

I was glad to have your letter. As you make no reference to the Koran, it must have been sent by someone else. It came with your boxes. It is not that Sardar does not like the sweets you sent. But he did not want to eat them while here. It was for that reason that both the boxes were sent to Sarojini Devi. When will you learn Hindi? Tell me all about Father. We are all well

Our love to Mother, Arjun[6] and yourself.

Yours,

BAPU

SHRI PREMIBEHN
PREMBHAVAN
MARKET ROAD
HYDERABAD, SIND

From a photostat: C. W. 9243. Courtesy: Jairamadas Doulatram

[1] Son and daughter of Esther Menon

[2] *ibid*

[3] Children whom Gandhiji had met in Selly Oak at the time of the Round Table Conference in 1931

[4] *ibid*

[5] Daughter of Jairamdas Doulatram

[6] Addressee's brother

421. LETTER TO GOVINDDAS

August 24, 1932

We read from the papers about your wife's illness. May God restore her to sound health. Sardar and Mahadev are with me, and we often remember you.

The Bombay Chronicle, 31-8-1932

422. LETTER TO HARI- ICHCHHA P. KAMDAR

August 24,1932

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA[1] ,

Won't you mind if I did not write to you for five months? I did not expect that you would be so lazy, and you do not even write your full address, so that I have to send my letter *via* the Ashram. Now give up your laziness. What was wrong with your health? write to me in detail about Rasik[2] after meeting him. Which school do Tara and Vasant attend?

Sardar Vallabhbhai and Mahadevbhai are with me.

How do you spend your day? Do you read anything or spin? Have you got acquainted with Raihanabehn? How are your eyes?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7470. Also C. W. 4916. Courtesy: Hari-ichchha P. kamdar

[1] Niece of Valji G. Desai

[2] Addressee's brother

423. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ

August 24, 1932

CHI.RUKMINI,

I got your letter, as also Radha's. Try and get back the weight which you have lost. It was good that you went to see Devdas.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. BENARSIDAS

K 23/96 PANCHGANGA

BENARES CITY

From a photostat of the Gujarati; G. N. 9140

424. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

August 24, 1932

CHI. MANUDI,

I got your letter. Why do you still cry sometimes for Harilal? We should pray to God for his welfare. You must write to me regularly. I hope you do not display temper now, and pay proper attention to study. This time your handwriting was bad. I hope all the children of Ramibehn are in good health now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 1515. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

425. LETTER TO BALIBEHN VORA

August 24, 1932

CHI. BALI,

I got your letter after a long time. Please overcome your laziness in this matter. You must refuse to pay bills in Harilal's name which you may receive. I hear that he is somewhere in Ahmedabad. My hope of his reforming is becoming dim day by day. All of us, he and we, are in God's hands.

The pain in my elbow is not much to worry about.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 1516. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

426. LETTER TO NIRMALA B. MASHRUWALA

August 24, 1932

CHI. NIRMALA,

I got your letter. I have been getting proofs of *Gitamanthan*. I have got the proofs of Chapters X to XIII, but the proofs of the last are not complete. Why have the proofs of the earlier chapters been not sent to me? When were these chapters written and who reads the proofs? When is the book expected to be published? who keeps Gomati[1] company? How does she spend the day? And now the reply to Kishorelal's letter. I have not yet been able to take up *Gandhi Vichar Dohan*[2] . Just now my correspondence is rather heavy, and it has become very much more so after Dr. Mehta's death. I have to write many letters to give what advice I can from here and get the necessary information for the purpose, and that leaves very little time for other things. I do not wish to overstrain myself or cut down on sleep to do anything. I do not even sacrifice for any work the short midday nap which I need. I can, therefore, read only during the time which is left after attending to other necessary things. During that time I read a little from the Upanishads and go through books on astronomy. This week I have not been able to read any Urdu book, though till now I could give some time at least for its study every day. The history[3] of the Ashram is almost complete, but I have had to keep it aside for some time. If the predictions of the astrologers come true, all my plans would be in a mess. But the planets betray them time and again, and, therefore, as we all go on working without thinking of death, I go on working unmindful of their predictions. In fact all three of us go on working. Nobody has sent me the book on health as yet.

[1] Addressee's mother

[2] By kishorelal Mashruwala

[3] *Vide* "History of the satyagraha ashram", 11-7-1932.

If I get it, I would go through it at the earliest opportunity. There is every likelihood of my making some changes in it. Experiments for improving spinning are going on very well. Mahadev spins yarn of 80 counts and Sardar has reached 40 counts. He will reach a still higher figure. The two spin on the Gandiva spinning-wheel and I spin on the Magan spinning-wheel. I can spin yarn of 30 counts on it, and hope to reach 40 counts. Sardar's study of Sanskrit is progressing with the speed of a race horse. He is studying at present part VI of Satavlekar's *pathamala*. In addition to that, he studies five verses from the *Gita* every day. He gives plenty of time to this study. It is indeed very good that you are learning Kannada. It is of course true that, if the script were the same, a good deal of time would be saved. But we will see about that when we have *Ramarajya*. It is my experience, however, that after we have learnt two or three scripts, more scripts give no trouble, for we discover points of similarity in all of them. I have read all the proofs of *Gitamanthan* which I have received. I liked the language. He has almost written a new *Gita* on the basis of the orginal. I have not yielded to the temptation of making changes in the book, for I feel that it would be improper to do so. I have thought it better to leave as it is the arrangement which kishorelal has adopted after careful thinking. There is no change in the condition of my left elbow. It gives me no trouble. All three of us are very well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 2884. Courtesy: Nirmalabehn Shroff

427. LETTER TO MANILAL JHAVERI

August 24, 1932

CHI. MANILAL,

I had to wait for quite some time for your letter, but at last it came. At present at least I get letters from all. Chhaganlal's letters are perfectly satisfactory But Jeki[1] , Manekbai[2] and Ratilal Desai have expressed their dissatisfaction about him. From Chhaganlal's letters, however, I can see no reason for distrusting him. All the same, I have put him some direct questions. If it becomes absolutely necessary, you

[1] Jayakunvar, elder daughter of Dr. pranjivan Mehta and wife of Manilal Doctor

[2] Wife of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

will have to go to Rangoon. As far as possible I will not involve you in this. I have received Nanalal's letter. If you have heard or if you hear anything or if you have any suggestion to make, please do not hesitate to write to me about. it. The whole business is rather delicate. Letus hope that Doctor's *punya*[1] will work and everything will be all right.

I am not writing to Manjula, thinking that she must have returned by now. I wrote one letter to her at Jetpur. Letters for Gulab, Maganlal and Tilak are enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 5043. Courtesy: Dhirubhai Jhaveri

428. LETTER TO GULAB

August 24, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

What happened so that you required change of air for such a long time? Write to me in detail. I hope you have completely recovered now. Do you hear from Dhirubhai? Does Neelam write to you any time? How are they both getting along? How is Tilak? Do you feel any inconvenience because of him?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photosat of the Gujarati: C. W. 5047. Courtesy : Dhirubhai Jhaveri

429. LETTER TO BENARSILAL BAZAJ

August 24, 1932

CHI. BENARSI,

I have your letter. I got a letter from Father saying that some one had written to him of my displeasure with you people and that it had caused him great pain. I have replied[2] to him that you have

[1] Merit earned through goodness

[2] *Vide* " Letter to Rameshwarlal Bazaj", 17-8-1932.

never given me any cause for displeasure. Who could have given him such wrong information?

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. BENARSIDAS

K 23/96 PANCHGANGA

BENARES CITY

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9140. Also C. W. 9450. Courtesy: Benarsilal Bazaj

430. LETTER TO BEGUM MOHAMMAD ALAM[1]

August 24, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

I was very glad to get your letter. I did get the letter from Doctor Saheb. It was only yesterday I learnt from it your address. I hope that Doctor Saheb is better.[2] Keep me informed. Please, convey to him *vandemataram* from Sardar, Mahadev and myself. We are all doing well by the grace of God. I hope you will find no difficulty in deciphering this letter.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Urdu: G. N. 25

431. LETTER TO KUSUMBEHN DESAI

August 25, 1932

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

I got your letter. I had told you in my letter in reply to yours, in which you had answered my questions, that I would take up the work when I got the other letters. "The other" means those which are to be published. I think it necessary to go through them. your hesitaion has made my work difficult. Unless Harilal's bond with your as revealed in his letters is properly explained, his letters by themselves will have no value. That can be done only on the basis of the facts set out by you, those which I have gathered in conversations from you and those which are revealed in the letters. The task is going

[1] Wife of Dr. Mohammad Alam

[2] Dr. Alam was in Lahore Central Jail and was ailing.

to be more difficult than I had thought. But I will try to do justice to it. At present I am in no mood to take up such work. That is certainly an obstacle in my path. Ultimately, God will let me do only what He has willed.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 1845

432. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI M. THAKKAR

August 25, 1932

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I had got the letter which you wrote befoer leaving the jail. Before you get this letter, I expect to get your letter describing all your experiences [in jail]. Also give all the news you may have heard about the children, and tell me what you read and thought while in jail. Let me know whether you were comfortable in the company of so many women and how they used to behave. Give me any news about Madhavji[1] that you may have heard.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 6820

433. LETTER TO TARA N. MASHRUWALA

August 25, 1932

CHI. TARA,

I got your letter. It is of course the ideal thing to follow the rules applicable to the lowest class. But although following the rules applicable to 'C' class prisoners, we should try to secure, if we can, whatever food is necessary for our health. Many 'C'class prisoners get milk, etc. This need not cause any surprise. If we can secure such food without sacrificing our self-respect, it should be welcome; but if we do not get it, we should do without it and not feel unhappy. The regular practice of writing a daily diary, even in the fewest possible words, cures many undesirable habits in us. For a person who wishes to live truthfully, a daily diary serves as a sentinel. Now that you have decided to keep such a diary, cling to

[1] Addressee's husband

your resolution. I hope no effect of the injury which you had received on the head is left now.

It was expected that the creation of classes [of political prisoners] would give rise to jealousies. The only thing we can do is to remain unaffected by them and to forgo as far as possible the privileges accorded to the higher classes.

What is wrong with Nanabhai's health? Manilal and Sushila wrote to me also. Manilal is in some trouble. He says that he did not get on well with Pragji. Perhaps people know about this there.

Nirmala writes to me occasionally and gives news about Kishorelal and Gomati.

Please write to me from time to time

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

All three of us are quite well. Perhaps you do not know that Sardar is studying Sanskrit with great energy. He also spins yarn of 40 counts. Mahadev has reached 80 counts.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7521. Also C. W. 4997. Courtesy: Kanubhai Mashruwala

434. LETTER TO MAHENDRA V. DESAI

August 25, 1932

CHI. MANU,

A boy who laughs during prayers may not be called mad, but he certainly lacks manners. What ticket do you mean? Human beings are given names so that people may recognize them. If no name were given to you, how would anybody call out to you if he wanted you from among other boys?

If one does not make use of what one learns, one might as well have not learnt anything.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 7436. Courtesy : Valji G. Desai

435. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 25, 1932

CHI. TARAMATI,

I have your letter and that of Dilip. I replied to your previous letter yesterday. You must have received it. Hinkalam means the Belgaum jail, just as Yeravda means the Poona jail. Mathuradas has not been transferred. I too saw it in the newspapers. Explain thoroughly to Dilip the meaning of the verse in Chapter II of the *Gita*. He should not merely cram it. I am not writing separately to him today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

436. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

August 25, 1932

CHI. MRIDULA,

You say in your message that you have written me a letter. But no letter has been received here. The Major[1] mentioned that you spoke about writing one. Now he does not remember whether or not he had received your letter. Write immediately. Tell your parents we remember them a great deal. Blessings to brothers and sisters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11183. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

437. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

August 26, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

It was a good thing that you sent me Vinoba's interpretation of those verses. We have no ground for believing that that was the author's meaning. But as I have explained in the preface to

[1] Major M. G. Bhandari

Anasaktiyoga , the utterances of poets go on acquiring ever new and revolutionary meanings, and that is as it should be. Vinoba has every right to interpret the verses as he has done. If, however, you are not satisfied with his interpretation, think over the meaning which I have given.[1] If even that does not satisfy you, you may give the verses any meaning which appeals to your reason provided it is not contrary to the chief aim of the *Gita.* And if you cannot do even that, you should leave the verses as ones which you cannot understand just now. If they do not yield a satisfactory meaning, that will not hinder your study of the *Gita.* Your daily programme of work is good. But there is no provision for rest in it. You should frame a programme which will help you to get over your headaches. For that, you should stop all work, except what you do as *yajna,* and take rest. You should lie down and put a mud-pack on your head. If you do this for one week, your headaches are bound to disappear. Also the pills given by Dr. Talwalkar will produce their effect. Headache is not a disease by itself, but is a symptom of some other disease or a warning that something is coming . If you take rest for a few days now, it will save you from a long rest afterwards. Reduce your reading. You have provided the time from 5.45 a. m. to 6.30 a.m., 9.15 a.m. to 10.30 a.m., and 11.45 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. for study of the *Gita* and reading of newspapers. You may stop both for the time being and take rest at that time. If that does not give you relief, reduce carpentry work a little. You should regard it as your moral duty to banish this disease and should try to do so by every possible means.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 6735. Also C. W. 4478. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

438. LETTER TO PADMA

August 26,1932

CHI. PADMA,

This letter is meant only for you. You complain that I do not write to you, but I wrote several letters. Narandas has sent to me the statement of expenditure received from you. In it you have simply mentioned Rs. 30 as miscellaneous expenses. This is not correct. You should give details. The expenditure seems to have exceeded even the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Bhau Panse", 14-8-1932.

figure mentioned by Sitala Sahay in his letter to me. Be careful in spending money. Send details of the miscellaneous expenses. In my previous letter[1] , I asked you to give a description of the new place and Sarojinidevi's and your daily programme of work. I want Sheila's too. What are her toys and games? How much has she grown? What is her height—how many feet and inches? Does she learn anything?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 6136. Also C. w. 3488. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

439. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

August 26, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. I hope you do not exhibit different virtues from time to time in order to win from me the praise which they deserve. If you do that my praise will lose all its value[2].

You will not see anywhere else the fierce hatreds which you see in Kathiawar. I am not, therefore, surprised that you saw an exhibition of them too. Such exhibitions take place there without any preparation. A person like . . . is likely to get frozen by an exhibition of such hatreds, but it is strange that though . . . . lives in Rajkot she could not remove . . . 's depression. I am sure she must have tied on his wrist the customary *raksha* on the Balev Day. But were they satisfied with a *raksha* of hand- spun yarn? It ought not to be beyond . . .'s strength to discover the cause of. .'s unhappiness and remove it . . . used to adore his wife, . . . My belief is that, though married, they observed *brahmacharya*. . .'s passing away was a great shock to. . . . Perhaps deep down in his heart . . . wishes to marry. He cannot understand his own condition. But. . . should have as wife a girl with the same ideals as his own. Failing to get such a wife, if he gets a sister with strong idealism in her character, . . . may perhaps blossom out. I have supposed. . . .to be a perfect *brahmacharini*. She cherishes friendship for. . . , and has idealism in her character. Since you wrote about. . .'s

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Padma", 14-8-1932.

[2] The names in the following two paragraphs have been omitted.

depression, I have been tempted to write this. If you think that I have understood . . .'s character correctly and that what I have suggested is not beyond her strength, you may safely send this letter to her. If you feel that this is beyond her strength or that it is not her work, you may ignore this part of the letter. . . . craves for pure love. But. . . is full of likes and dislikes. he can love very few persons and so remains discontented within himself all the time. Such a person feels little need for a wife. But [,if married,] he can remain absorbed in his wife. He must get the sisterly love of a woman who is free from passion. If . . . gets such a sister, his life will take a new turn.

Women in our society do not try to cultivate this virtue. They know how to be good wives, but do not know how to be good sisters. In order to be a good sister, one requires great capacity for renunciation. It seems self-evident to me that a wife can never be a perfect sister. A woman can be a true sister to the whole world. A wife can surrender herself only to one person. The capacity to be a good wife is a useful virtue, but it does not have to be cultivated, for a wife's relation to her husband permits the satisfaction of physical desire. It is extremely difficult to cultivate the virtue required in one who would be a sister to the whole world. Only a woman for whom *brahmacharya* is a natural state and in whom the spirit of service has become the strongest impulse of her life can become that . . . . has not given me the impression that she has risen so far, but I certainly believe that she has the capacity to rise so high. Maybe you have been instrumental in creating this impression in me. I have now said everything which I felt about this matter. I have indeed been striving to make you such a sister. It is a difficult task. Let the result be as God wills it.

You have given a good description of the exhibition. Your descriptions are always interesting to read and make one think.

You did right in returning to the Ashram for the Janmashtami festival. See that you overcome your anger. Do you know that Dhiru was simply not ready to go with you? Don't get angry with him at any time. He is a child; you are not. If you win over Dhiru, it will be your victory; if you fail to do so, it will be your defeat.

Is there any test by which to judge whether a father and a mother are cultured? Who can say what the parents' state of mind was at the time of conception? I think, therefore, that it is best to cling to the rule that what is good bears good fruit. If we cannot prove the

truth of this rule in every individual case, the reason may be our ignorance and not the inadequacy of the rule.

Even if I did[1] believe in Fate, its decrees could not be altered. Fate means the effect of past karma.

For saving the prostitutes from their profession, it is necessary that men should cease to be beasts. As long as we have beast-like men in the world, so long shall we have prostitutes. If any prostitutes give up their profession and turn a new leaf in their lives, the so- called "respectable" men will certainly come forward to marry them. It is not true that once a prostitute, always a prostitute.

The belief that in every country girls are abducted for the army seems exaggerated to me. In a well-governed country this cannot happen.

It is not correct to believe that residents of the Malabar coast can digest coconut even after they have left the air of that place. By mixing coconut with *tandalja,* you weakened the effect of *tandalja.* I have often included coconut in my diet. It didn't agree with me. But it is highly probable that it is essential with other articles of food in regions where it grows.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10300. Also C. W. 5747. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

440. LETTER TO RAMCHANDRA N. KHARE

August 26, 1932

CHI. RAMBHAU,

Was the Hindi of your letter your own or did you write it with Parasramji's help? The handwriting was good. If the Hindi was your own, it was good. I hope to get a detailed description of the Janmashtami celebration.

A few sentences in English will give me some idea of your progress in that language.

BAPU

[1] The addressee explains in *Bapuna Patro—5: Ku. Premabehn Kantakne* that she had asked Gandhiji whether he believed in Fate, and thinks that the reply should read: 'Even if I did not believe in Fate . . .' .

[PS.]

The "Om" which you have carved is good enough, but I don't think it is clear enough to be recognizable. How much time did it take you to carve it?

BAPU

From Gujarati : C.W. 296. Courtesy : Lakshmibehn N. Khare

441. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

August 26, 1932

How is it that you have not written to anybody since your imprisonment?[1] A prisoner is surely entitled to write a letter immediately after he or she is brought to a jail. Do write now if you have not written any letter so far. If you can, improve your health this time. Do not hesitate to ask for or eat whatever food is necessary [for your health].

I would advise you to draw up a regular plan of study in jail and master the subjects in which you are weak at present. For instance, study Gujarati grammar carefully and acquire better command over the language. You know English and can, therefore, improve your proficiency in it too. You may take Kamaladevi's[2] help for that. Lilavatibehn[3] can help you in Sanskrit. Improve your Marathi too. You should also learn something about matters which specially concern women. But all this is only a suggestion. If you do not like all these items, you may select whichever you like. If you do not like any of them, select something else of your own choice. I only want that you should fully utilize this precious opportunity for increasing your knowledge. Spinning, if permitted by the rules, prayers and keeping a diary—you must not omit any of these things.

All three of us are quite well. Father is studying Sanskrit with a speed which would astonish you. He is never found without a book in his hands. No young man is likely to show greater enthusiasm than he does. He also spins yarn of up to 40 counts, and makes envelopes.Mahadev spins yarn of up of 80 counts, besides studying French and Urdu. I spin on the Magan wheel, but rather

[1] The addressee was arrested on August 11, 1932, and sentenced to 15 months.
[2] Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya
[3] Lilavati Munshi

slowly. My study also is slow. Correspondence takes up a lot of my time. . . .[1]

If you feel like writing to me any time and can include a letter to me in the number of letters permitted to you, do write.

Blessings from us all.

BAPU

MANIBEHN PATEL
PRISONER
BELGAUM

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4 : Manibehn Patelne, pp. 85-6

442. LETTER TO D.B. KALELKAR

August 26/27, 1932

CHI. KAKA,

After a long time and through Col. Doyle's kindness I got a letter from you, dated 1 [6-8-1932][2] . The Colonel also told me today that you must have reached Ahmedabad today, and added that you should give up spinning, too, for some time in order to get rid of the pain in your back. I promised to convey this to you and to advise you to give up spinning as long as the pain persists. You should, therefore, give up spinning for some time. If you can spin on the *takli* standing and without getting tired, as you used to do here, you may do so, but you need not do even that. The only thing which I insist on your doing just now is to improve your health and get strong. Do get the area on the back where you feel the pain in the bone gently massaged. It is very good indeed that you can bathe with cold water. (Please let me know who are the other people with you there) . . .[3]

I am writing to Hiralal about the book on astronomy. He has already sent me three of the books in your list. They are as follows: *Stellar Maps*, *Khagolchitram* and *Hindu Astronomy*. I am sending them with this. There is some history behind *Khagolchitram*. It was torn when it arrived here. . . .[4] I shall soon be having a fairly good

[1] Some lines were censored by the jail authorities.
[2] Illegible in the source
[3] Two-and-a-half lines were censored by the jail authorities.
[4] *ibid*

collection of books on astronomy. There are three books by Jeans which are worth reading. If you have not read them, would you like me to send any of them? Hiralal has sent me Maeterlink's book at your suggestion. I got it only two or three days ago. Since it was sent at your suggestion, you must have read it of course. If you want it, however, please let me know and I will send it too. I can easily recognize the morning constellations whose names you have given. You used to tell me names of many constellations but at that time they were only names to me. Now I can recognize most of them. I am able to read something at least every day. I have glanced through the chapters you have written. Though I have not read them carefully, I observed one deficiency in them. I felt, after reading a short sketch of Sir William Hershel's life in Ball's *Story of the Sky*, that you should give the names and short lives of Western astronomers, some of whom, as you yourself say, were men of great courage and spirit and of noble character. A modest effort to do this was made in *Jyotirvilas.* The book on astronomy which we wish to publish should be as perfect as possible and should give an account of all discoveries to date in the field. After reading the books of Jeans, I also feel that the book should give some knowledge about physics. This means that the scope of your undertaking becomes a little wider. I have merely thrown out a suggestion here. I don't expect you to do all this while you are resting there. Perhaps it is beyond your capacity, and so I do not wish to analyse your chapters too critically. Moreover, the book should not be such as only highly educated persons can understand. It should be written with villagers in view. But you should attach more importance to your health than to even this undertaking. You should go on with the work only if you can improve your health at the same time and not at its cost.

How is it possible that I would not know Pundalik[1] ? I don't think he is likely to have accompanied you there. The disease from which he is suffering is an awful one. I have no other remedy to suggest for it except fasting, cold hip-baths and enemas. The lower intestines will recover their normal position only if they are given complete rest. Pundalik's complaint is known as prolapsus of the rectum. The effect of enema will be that the faeces will be expelled by

[1] Pundalik Katagde, follower of Gangadharrao Deshpande

the force of the water without the rectum slipping out. And since he will be fasting, the intestines will have no work to do and the rectum will not then slip out.

I think you will get this letter without much delay. Vallabhbhai's study of Sanskrit is progressing with the speed of Indra's horse. As soon as spinning is over, he picks up a book of Sanskrit. He has completed six parts of Satavlekar's series and two chapters of the *Gita.* He does five verses every day. He becomes equally absorbed in spinning. He has reached as far as 40 counts. I don't think any student of the Vidyapith can equal his capacity for hard work. Mahadev's study of French and Urdu is progressing. He has reached as far as 80 counts. I had gone as far as 53 counts on the Gandiva spinning-wheel, but I have gone back to the Magan spinning-wheel to prevent harm to the left elbow. I have not been able to rise above 30 counts on it. In addition to astronomy, I also study Urdu a little. Correspondence takes up a great deal of time. After Dr. Mehta's death, I have had to write numerous letters concerning the affairs of his family. I suppose you have heard about his death. He had got a cut in a foot with a piece of glass and the wound became septic. The leg had to be amputated. The operation was successful, but afterwards he developed double pneumonia which proved fatal. This is the fourth week since he died.

Maganlal (Dr. Mehta's) must have landed in Bombay today. He had gone to England. . . .[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

August 27, 1932

. . .[2] I had almost completed the history of the Ashram. After revising what I had written, I was about to proceed further but had to leave the work aside. I have not been able to find time for it sincethen. I am trying to do so. I have not been able to write it in as much detail as you may have thought. I believe, however, that it will contain my views in brief on all matters.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9488. Courtesy: D.B.Kalelkar

[1] Seven-and-a-quarter lines were censored by the jail authorities.

[2] The first line was censored by the jail authorities.

443. LETTER TO SULOCHANA

August 27, 1932

CHI. SULOCHANA,

I got your letter. You seem to have made good progress. learn carding as soon as you can. You make mistakes in your letters. You should form the habit of going through a letter after writing it. Get your letters revised by somebody.With a little effort, you will also be able to improve your handwriting.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1737

444. LETTER TO VIMALA JOSHI

August 27, 1932

CHI, VIMU,

Your handwriting is indeed very bad and yet I like your letter. Now see that your eyes are cured soon. What is wrong with them? It would be very good if you will now settle down in the Ashram.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5311

445. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

August 27, 1932

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter. You have been long enough in the Ashram now. I had expected from you a report of your observations without my asking for it, but I have received none till this day. Rama did send hers, though it was a short one, and secured a long letter from me in reply. You will, no doubt, read it. I want a detailed report from you. I do not mind whether it is favourable or unfavourable, so long as it gives your sincere impressions.

Do not neglect (the condition of) Vimu's eyes.[1] A disease of the eye should be treated as soon as its earliest symptoms are observed. Does Vimu still love mischief as much as she used to, or has she

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

become a little more serious? It would be a good thing if Dhiru also comes over. How did he spend his time?

Did you go and see the Vidyapith library? What is the matter with Amina? Did you visit the grave?

I am sure you must have called on Punjabhai. He is nearing the end, it seems.

Shankar met me. He seems to be repenting for what he did.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5506

446. LETTER TO CHAMPABEHN R. MEHTA

August 27, 1932

CHI. CHAMPA,

I got all your letters. I have received a copy .of Doctor's instructions. He has not signed the document, but I believe the instructions will be carried out. Why do you worry? I can never abandon you. you may, if you choose, reject my advice, and if you do so it will not hurt me. I can only try to act as your father but Prabhashankar is your real father and it would be but natural if you prefer his advice to mine. In this matter, however, you should use your reason as much as possible. if it does not help you, you should naturally follow the advice of your father. I am of course making efforts to see if Prabhashankar and I can agree. But I have not been able to understand him. I do not like, or do not understand, some of his ways. Some of his views seem devious to me. I am trying to persuade him to change his attitude. I will write to him. if we can agree, there will be no problem for you. But even if we do not agree, you need not worry. Who can rob you of what is yours? Have faith in God. You are not yet being asked to do anything. Have patience andwait. Look after the children. I hope those of them who were ill are all right now.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8754. Also C.W. 1622. Courtesy: Champabehn R. Mehta

447. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

August 27, 1932

CHI. NARMADA,

You seem to be very greedy. You have only one letter to write, and so you write a long one. I have many letters to write. How much time would it take me if I made them long? But I like your being greedy. I say in every letter all that I wish to say. You should improve your handwriting. Keep some space between lines and words.

If you remain firm and courteous, all your relatives will come round.

It is best to speak very little. I suppose you have obtained Narayandas's permission for observing silence. Who teaches you Gujarati?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2761. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

448. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

August 27, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

Your letters are always nice. the summary of Rajaji's discourse which you have sent me is good.

I know why you are having pain in the back. Find it out from my letter to Anandi and then write more about it.

Why are the slivers not up to the mark? Why don't you tell Narandasbhai about it?

BAPU

From the Gujarati original; C.W. 9916. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

449. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 27, 1932

CHI. MANGALA,

Lately you have stopped writing. Why? How do you propose to repay those from whom you received presents?

Indu[1] writes to me that you, Nirmala[2] and Kanu[3] are not on talking terms with him. What can be the reason for this? Write to me in detail. Start talking to him if possible. We cannot stop talking to anyone.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11101. Courtesy: Pushpa Naik

450. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI [4]

August 25/28, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got on Tuesday the mail posted by you. Parvati's[5] letter moves one to pity. If Budhabhai[6] will not listen, what can you do? I am in intentionally not writing to Parvati. Comfort her as much as you can. When you wish me to write to both or one of them, I will do so.

I see from kusum's letter that you have to carry a fairly heavy burden of work these days. Whatever the demands of work, you should take enough sleep and snatch at least half an hour's rest in the afternoon. It is good that Rajaji has come over as also Mirabehn. I felt very happy. why is it necessary for Amina to avoid milk, ghee and sugar? What is she suffering from? I expect the women there look after her properly. I hope you had understood that the letter for Ba[7] which I sent last week was to be delivered to her after she was released. I had got an impression that she was to be released in a day or two. Will parvati patki now live in Khamgaon permanently? It was rather amusing that you did not easily follow what I had written about the letter from Italy.[8] That happens sometimes.

If we can now spin fine yarn, the spinning-wheels, spindles and slivers are much more responsible for success than our own effort. Now that all of us are trying to spin yarn of fine count, there should be no slivers of inferior quality in the Ashram. Does every spinner use

[1] Indu N. Parekh

[2] Nirmala Desai, step-sister of Mahadev Desai

[3] Kanu Gandhi

[4] The article " Action—Thoughtful and Thoughtless", 28-8-1932, was sent along with this letter; *vide* "Action—Thoughtful and Thoughtless", 28-8-1932.

[5] A couple who had come to live near the Ashram

[6] *ibid*

[7] *Vide* "Letter to Kasturba Gandhi", 20-8-1932.

[8] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 11/15-8-1932.

slivers made by himself, or do the slivers get mixed up? I think if everyone would spin with his own slivers, the quality of carding would improve very much. If we make fine yarn as defined by us the centre round which everything else should revolve, every process from the sowing of cotton seeds to the weaving of the cloth is bound to become perfect. We shall then have to evolve the best quality seeds, improve the soil, look to the quality of the manure, pay careful attention to the manner of separating the cotton from the pods, and so on. Fine yarn means yarn uniformly of not less than 40 counts, which would stand comparison with good mill yarn of the same count and from which a weaver can weave cloth with ease. I chose the figure of 40 in this definition because it is possible to spin yarn of lower count than that with some effort form slivers of inferior quality, but not yarn of 40 counts. please let me know what inconvenience you think one feels in the posture in which one has to sit for spinning on the Gandiva spinning-wheel. According to me, one of the many excellences of this wheel is that you can spin on it while sitting in any position. One can sit on a chair or a stool, put the spinning-wheel on a box or a bench and spin. You can keep it to your left or right, or even in front. When travelling in a train, I put it on the same berth on which I sit and spin. There will be no harm if Chhakkaddas's, slivers arrive after some time. If you have not sent Keshu's slivers before you send Chhakkaddas's, you may send the two together with a sign to identify Keshu's. What is the count of the yarn which Abbas spins? Please let me know the length and circumference of his spindle. You need not worry if you cannot spin yarn of more than 20-22 counts. I would be satisfied with the quality of yarn that you can spin with the best slivers and the thinnest spindle.

I did not receive the Anantapur report even during this week. Who has signed the receipt which you have got? You may tell parasram what you consider necessary. Why did Pyarelal leave in such haste? Padma must send details of miscellaneous expenses. Read the letter[1] which I have written to her. What you have written to Mahavir's uncle is quite correct. I was glad to leran that Jivanlal's brother's wife had come there . Has she had any education?

Your question about the Dattatreya temple is good. I don't look upon the shrine as a temple. I think that it is a form of a

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Padma", 26-8-1932.

samadhi[1]. In any case, it cannot be used as a public temple. I am also not inclined to make it a private temple, though it seems to me that, if somebody goes and worships at the shrine, he cannot be forbidden. Please find out and let me know what panditji believes and what he desires that we should do. Has any issue been raised about this matter just now?

Who wrote to you and suggested that some amount should be kept with Trivedi[2]? There are now very few women left in the jail here. Trivedi would not like our keeping any such amount with him. If , however, you think it necessary, you may do that with his consent. I don't see any necessity of it. If at any time we specially require something, we can write to the Ashram, and, if we require it urgently, I would feel no hesitation even in obtaining it from Trivedi. Probably Ramabehn, Vasumati and others are there now. Know their views also.

Read my letter to Liladhar. Do only what you think right. Whose idea was the exhibition at Rajkot? Was the entire burden on Jamnadas?

August 26, 1932

If the discharge from Manjula's ear persists, consult Dr. Talwalkar and try the remedy which he advises. Ask Agam Giri a straight question, whether he is dissatisfied in any way with the Giri family, or whether he has any suggestion to make. Does Mahavir write to you regularly? To me he does not. When he had complaints to make, he wrote frequently enough.

August 27, 1932

Kaka has been transferred to the prison there. Apply for permission to see him. I have written to Ba directly this time. I don't believe that she can have lost 16 pounds of weights. If she lost so much weight, she would become a mere skeleton. Have you seen her? Make a more careful inquiry. How much milk does she consume? What other food does she eat?

Send to the Superintendent by registered post the postal acknowledgement for the registration of the Anantapur report. Keep with you a copy of the acknowledgement. When you send it, inform me too. I have still not got these papers.

[1] A structure over a place where a body is buried or cremated

[2] Prof. Jaishankar P. Trivedi of Poona Agricultural College, who usually supplied the needs of the Ashram members lodged in the Yeravda Central Prison

See my letter to Indu. There seems to be some estrangement between him on the one hand and Kanu, Mangala and Nirmala on the other. Please inquire what the matter is. Indu has become eager to learn English. Personally, I think it would be wise to let him occupy his mind in learning English if he studies nothing else.

I got your letter of the 25th posted separately. When you say four heads of cattle, do you mean cows or bullocks? What was the loss? What were the injections, and for what were they given? You did right in asking Narayanappa to leave. We have endured much from him. It seems that Bhagwanji was right in his judgment. But I don't believe that we made a mistake in trusting Narayanappa. A person in a responsible position ought not to disqualify anybody on someone's word, unless he is himself convinced. Our policy had this good result, that Narayanappa has now disqualified himself.

I hope Kusum is not nervous in the slightest degree. There is no reason at all to become nervous.

The ceremonial reading of holy works on the Janmashtami day was very well done. What is the number in the Ashram just now? How many are women, and how many men? How many are boys and girls under sixteen? And how many labourers?

August 28, 1932

Read Nimu's letter and persuade her to start eating ghee. Ramdas's argument is correct. There has been no change in my food—*bajri,* bananas, almonds, oranges and green vegetables. Constipation has disappeared completely. In other respects also the health is good. Even then, I will certainly start taking milk and see the effect. I want to find out whether *bajri* helps in preventing constipation in spite of my taking milk. I also see that green vegetables play a big part in helping complete evacuation.

Take the necessary steps immediately to see that the slivers made are of the finest quality. You need not worry if there is decrease in the quantity of slivers for some time, but pay your attention to ensuring that the work is neat and careful and the slivers are of the best quality, and that there is minimum waste.

There are 54 letters in all.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M. M. U./I. Also C. W. 8247. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

451. ACTION—THOUGHTFUL AND THOUGHTLESS[1]

August 28, 1932

I wrote about reading and reflection.[2] Today I wish to say something about working and thinking. According to me, real education consists in learning the art of thinking. If we can master it, everything else will follow in beautiful order.

The woman in the story who, on seeing the face of the mongoose red with blood threw her pot of water at it, acted thought lessly, and repented afterwards for killing the creature which had saved the life of her son. She could not wipe the stain of this act from her mind for the whole of her life. The loss of the pot and the water are not even worth mentioning, so big was her crime.

This is an extreme illustration, but it serves to drive home the idea we are discussing. If we do all our work in the Ashram after careful thought, there would be more peace, our efficiency would increase much time would be saved and we would find new interest in our work every day. We employ cattle for working the water-mill and the animal labours the whole day, but its knowledge does not increase and it feels no interest in its work. If there was none to goad it, the animal would not go round. But we are human beings. The [Gujarati] word *manas*[3] comes from *manushya*[4], and the latter means, literally, one who thinks, who knows. We ought not to live or act like animals.

We clean lavatories. If we don't think about it, we would feel the work to be low and degrading and eagerly wish that we could be saved from it. If , however, we think about it, we would realize that it was our moral duty to do it. To clean it means to make the place perfectly clean, to bury the contents of the bucket carefully, to keep in a clean condition the things with which we do the work, and to examine the contents. I there is any blood or the stink is very offensive or if there are worms, we may conclude that somebody is ill. We should then find out who that person is. We would of course know who uses a lavatory. If, while cleaning it we discover that the stool is not properly covered with dust or a portion has fallen outside

[1] This was sent along with " Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 25/28-8-1932; *vide* the proceding item.

[2] *Vide* "Reading and Reflection-I", 14-8-1932 and "Reading and Reflection-II", 21-8-1932.

[3] Human being

[4] *ibid*

the bucket or thatthe urine has fallen outside it we should find out the guilty person and explain the matter politely to him. All this will be done only by a person who does the work in a spirit of service. This means that as we think daily more careully about our work,it will be done better and more easily every day and cease to be boring and become intersting. I have not here examined the question of cleaning lavatories from every possible point of view. I have merely mentioned it by way of illustration.

Let us take another example, spinning for *yajna*. If we do this work with careful thought, we would enjoy it, too, immensely and there would be indefinite progress in the art of spinning. If everybody spun with careful thought, we would make many discoveries and spin yarn of the finest quality.

And the same is true about prayer. What is prayer? Why do we pray? Why do we observe silence? Why do we use prayers in Sanskrit, and not in Gujarati, Marathi or Hindi? We can think about these and many other questions and make our prayer a tremendous force, whereas it seems to me that we think the least about this subject.

The *Gita's* statement, " Yoga is skill in work"[1] , is a profound thought. Yoga means union. Union with God is yoga. Mother *Gita* teaches that such union can be achieved without difficulty by skill in work. Anyone who aspires to cultivate such skill must become absorbed in the work and devote all his thought to it. Somebody who used to spin on the *takli* and applied his mind to the work made the important invention of the spinning-wheel, and somebody who used the spinning-wheel with careful thought invented a spinning-machine with thousands of spindles. According to me, that person exercised his intellect brilliantly, but did not use his heart. Hence, it is not enough that we should think. Our thinking should be for a good end and should be inspired by concern for dharma. However, in contrast to absence of thinking the power of intellect of the inventor of the spinning-machine certainly deserves to be admired.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U./II

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 50

452. LETTER TO ELIZABETH F. HOWARD

August 28, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

You are quite right in addressing me as 'friend'! I continue to call you ' sister'. Perhaps it is more affectionate than 'friend'. But you may take whatever appeals to you as better.

It was good of you to have given me a brief description of your meeting. This fellowship[1] is a difficult thing. It can come only through constant practice in all walks of life and among all the different races and nationalities.

I had read the letter you sent to Mahadev Desai. I have preserved the beautiful verses you had copied.

Mahadev Desai wishes to be remembered to you.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photstat: G. N. 863

453. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

August 28, 1932.

MY DEAR PADMAJA,

Should bad handwriting be hereditary? Why should you copy Mother's vices? Being India's only poetess, she can afford to write a bad hand and do many other bad things. But you have no excuse. Do you know how long it took Mahadev to decipher your letter? Supposing you were to try to write a passable hand and give the trial some of your idle moments you will be surprised at your success. You think a pot is calling Miss Kettle black, do you? Well, I am prepared to submit to a comparative test and I know that in this at least I should beat you hollow. My handwriting is wretched, I admit, but not so indecipherable as yours. Now try to be good and render voluntary obedience to the slave-driver. I hope you got my p. c. which was sent to acknowledge the oranges you sent.[2]

Love.

BAPU

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers'. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Presumably Fellowship of Reconciliation

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 2/7-8-1932.

454. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

Y. M.,
August 28, 1932

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. I have been able to go up to 30 counts on the Magan charkha up to now. I shall be satisfied if I go up to 40 counts. The speed is very slow. It does not go beyond a hundred rounds an hour. It may go beyond that if I draw thick yarn. But I do not wish to do so. The cause of the noise that the wheel was making was discovered. Mahadev guessed it. The rod under the plate was broken and when the plate stopped functioning altogether the defect was discovered. On the rod being replaced the noise stopped and the plate also started functioning perfectly. I, too, believe with you that there is much room for improvement. None has occurred to me yet. I have got a box fixed on the plant, in which I keep the tools, spindle, etc. I do not consider this an improvement. For fine yarn we must have fine spring and fine spindle. But I doubt if a fine spindle would work. In the Ashram there is a spinning-wheel received from Darjeeling which can be worked with the foot. Examine it.

It would be sufficient if you named the Almora Ashram just Shail Ashram. The word Ashram itself carries a religious meaning and religion includes service. Janasthan sounds pompous. Kinkarashram is all right but does not sound pleasant. You can call it Shail Udyog Mandir. But I favour Shail Ashram. Devaki Nandan uses the word Sevashram and so it is clear that you cannot use it.

It is well that you paid a visit to Rajkot. It would be good if you rushed to Almora now. It is desirable that you should go there in good health. You may then devote yourself wholly to building the Ashram there as your only duty without having to worry about your health. After going there do not build castles in the air; but having formed a particular plan resolve not to go beyond it, nor even to think of doing so. As for writing, complete the work on the *Ramayana*, etc., if possible. Concentration on improving the Magan charkha, spinning and weaving the local cotton and wool and the necessary carpentry connected with it—these should be enough work. Since there is land it will certainly be possible to grow vegetables and fruit trees. Keep an account of every pie. Never go beyond the budget. Write to me as long as I am permitted to receive letters. Keep up the practice of

repeating Ramanama whether or not you feel any benefit from it.

There is no doubt that ultimately it will purify and steady your mind.

From the Gujarati original: Gandhi Nidhi File. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

455. LETTER TO NANIBEHN JHAVERI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 28, 1932

CHI. NANIBEHN,

I have been awaiting your letter every week. But it seems you have come out with a vow not to write. Write to me in detail and soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari—Pannalal Jhaveri, p. 26

456. LETTER TO SUNDERBEHN BHAGVAT

August 28,1932

CHI. SUNDERBEHN[1] ,

I got your letter. All three of us send our blessings to you and Deshpande[2] . We hope that your union will be happy, that both of you will live long and devote yourselves completely to service. Only then will your union be said to have justified itself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 2169

[1] Now Sushilabai
[2] Pandurang Ganesh Deshpande

457. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

August 28, 1932

CHI. PARASRAM,

I got your amall booklet of nine pages. I could hardly hold my sides with laughter. I remember to have laughed like this only once in my youth when I had drunk some bhang. But please do not conclude from this that you should go on sending amusing books. It is for you to teach the boys to say *sthira* or *khade ho* instead of "stop".[1] Under the intoxicating effect of your letter, I mix Hindi with Gujarati. I cannot explain from here how you can persuade the boys to do so. They must feel the power of your love and knowledge so that they will start using a Hindi or Urdu word for "stop". As you become more and more frank and loving and humble, those who are learning Hindi will increasingly come to love the language. Any boy or boys who acquire sufficient proficiency in Hindi to be able to teach it to small children my certainly be given charge of their class.

By showing that even Arjuna gets exhausted and that no one remains alive, the author of the *Mahabharata* has demonstrated the folly of armed war. The Lord's description of Himself in the *Gita* is put by the author in His mouth. In fact God is formless and speaks or does nothing. The question, then, is whether such words can be put in God's mouth. I feel that it can certainly be done. God its omnipotent and omniscient. Anything that an omniscient Being speaks is perfect truth, and therefore it cannot be described as boasting. Such description of himself by a human being would not be proper, since man cannot know his strength and power rightly. If, however, in reply to a question, a man gives his correct height, his doing so is not boasting but simple statement of truth. If a person who is five feet tall says that he is four feet tall, that is not humility on his part. It is either inexcusable ignorance or hypocrisy.

Lady Cat and her children are always enjoying themselves and turn up at meal-times to claim their share. They never touch anything except what is offered to them.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 6102. Also C. W. 3424. Courtesy: parasram Mehrotra

[1] This sentence is in Hindi.

458. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

August 28, 1932

BHAI KHAMBHATTA,

I got your letter and the ointment sent by you. I have started using the ointment. I will let you know the result.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 6603. Also C.W. 4389. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

459. LETTER TO PYARELAL NAYAR

August 28, 1932

Vallabhbhai is running with the speed of an Arab horse. He is never found without a book about Sanskrit in his hands. I had not hoped for this. Nobody can equal him in the art of making envelopes. He maks them without using measurements and is guided only by his eyes in cutting the paper, and still he does not seem to take much time. His orderliness is simply wonderul. If there is anything which he has to do, he does not leave it to his memory. He does it immediately. From the time that he started spinning, he always spins at the fixed time, and so the quantity of yarn spun and the speed of spinning are increasing daily. He rarely forgets anything which he takes up. With such orderliness, there can be no confusion any time.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 386

460. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVLEKAR

August 28, 1932

BHAI SATAVLEKAR,

I feel somewhat anxious as I have sent you three letters but have received no reply.[1]

Yours,
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

In one of the letters I have made a request for another set of the Sanskrit Readers.

From Hindi: C. W. 4765. Courtesy: S. D. Satavlekar

461. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

August 28,1932

DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I prefer to write to you in Urdu unless you forbid it. It is helpful to take full rest during the menstrual period. On other days do only as much wrok as Narandas assigns to you. One whose heart is pure and free of passions has nothing to hide from the world. I do not know of any book that deals with your pain. I shall look for it.

You can consult Mrs. Lazarus, she ought to know. Dr. Sharma must have received my letter. Your Hindi script is good. Keep writing a little in this way. How long is Kudsia to stay there?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G. N. 255

462. LETTER TO A GRIL

August 28,1932

I would certainly be happy if you could remain unmarried for your whole life. But I have known many boys and girls deceive themselves. Anybody who wants to observe lifelong *brahmacharya*

[1] The addressee's silence was due to the prolonged and serious illness of his son.

must be perfectly truthful and must hide nothing. He or she should also know what *brahmacharya* means. It is a difficult job to control carnal desire. Anybody who would do so should refrain from all forms of indulgence. That is, he should do everything not for the pleasure he may get form it but because it is necessary to do it. Accordingly, he should do nothing that is not necessary. This rule applies to eating, working, resting, dressing and all other activities. I would be happy if you have the strength for all this . If you do not have it, you should humbly admit the fact and do what all other girls do. Nobody will blame you for that. One should attempt nothing that is beyond one's capacity.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 386

463. LETTER TO A GIRL

August 28, 1932

You should know the past life of the person to whom you are betrothed. And if you do not like him, you should ask your people to break off the engagement. You should not be afraid to plainly refuse to marry him. If, however, you wish to act thus, you must give up false shame, though you should not give up humility and should be ready to suffer the consequences. A person who wishes to act in this manner should have such purity of character that it cannot but produce an effect on other people.

When you get angry, you should keep silent and overcome your anger by repeating Ramanama.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 385-6

464. A LETTER

August 28, 1932

The suggestion for five minutes' silence during the evening prayer was mine. It would certainly be fine if this practice was adopted at both times. If all those present are sincere about observing silence, the noise is bound to stop. The children also will get used to remaining silent for five minutes. I have even attended meetings where

silence was observed for half an hour. That was in England. In our country we attach great importance to voluntary silence. *Samadhi*[1] is a kind of silence. The word *muni* also is derived from a word meaning silence. It is true that at first we feel sleepy or all kinds of thoughts come to us during the period of silence. But silence is necessary to overcome these very weaknesses. We are used to speaking and hearing all the time and, therefore, find it difficult to observe silence. After a little practice we shall come to like it and the peace which we shall feel then will be heavenly. As lovers of truth, we should understand the true meaning of silence and try to observe it in a manner which will accord with that meaning. Even during silence, one can repeat Ramanama. The real thing is that our minds should be ready for silence. A little reflection will reveal its importance. Cannot we sit quietly for five minutes in an assembly? Have you gone to see a play at any time? In many theatres talking is forbidden. An enthusiast like me would take his seat one hour before the time. The pleasure from the play would make it possible for him to remain silent for one hour. But this is not all. A play lasts for four to five hours. Do not the spectators have to remain quiet all that time? But we don't mind that. Since the mind is ready for silence at that time, it is not felt irksome. Why, then, should it be difficult to observe five minutes' silence for love of God? If there is any error in this reasoning, please point it out to me, and if there is none, observe the silence willingly and be my advocate and defend it before those who oppose it.

But we should not believe that only such short-comings as we have are worth tolerating. My view is that we should keep goodrelations with all who are striving for self-improvement. Tulsidas tells us that even God shuns people who love their short-comings, that is, look upon them as virtues.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 386-7

[1] The last stage in yoga

465. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

August 28, 1932

Learn well everything which the Ashram has to teach. Remember that the most important thing to be learnt is truth.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 385

466. LETTER TO SUSHILABEHN GANDHI

August 29, 1932

CHI. SUSHILA,

I got your letter, but I have not received Manilal's. I appreciate your asking the question, but you need not seek the advice of elders and be guided by it in every matter. I have explained the basic principles as well as I could. Bear in mind as many of them as you have been able to assimilate and do what seems best to you both. How long will you go on consulting me? You should consult the self within, and do as that inner voice tells you or obey it as well as you can. I hope you remember that your question was about khadi.

The matter of the lease must be over now. I hope you got all my letters. I wrote one more letter after reading Mr. Ritch's letter. I hope Manilal got it.

At the moment it seems that Devdas has recovered completely. All three of us are well. Sardar's Sanskrit is progresing with great speed.

Even if Manilal is lazy in writing to me, you should not be so.

I hope you met, Maharajkunvar and his family.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4794

467. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

August 29, 1932

BHAI NANABHAI,

I got your and Sushila's letter. I have replied to her that in such matters she need not consult elders. Both of them should be guided by their inner voice and follow it to the best of their ability. I have not

yet received Manilal's letter.perhaps it will arrive with the Ashram post. All three of us are quite well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 6685. Also C. W. 4330. Courtesy: Kanubhai Mashruwala

468. LETTER TO HIRALAL[1]

August 29, 1932

I look upon myself as slow-witted. There are many things which I take more time to understand than other people. But that does not trouble me. There is always a limit to the growth of the intellect but none to that of the heart.

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I. p. 389

469. LETTER TO FULCHAND B. SHAH

August 30, 1932

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I got your letter of the 21st. I see that my letter of July 3 was given to you on August 14. If it was kept back there all that time, it would be better if you ask me to address my letter to another prisoner whose turn for receiving a letter comes earlier than yours and who does not expect a letter from anybody else. In this way you will get my letter earlier. I always reply immediately to a letter from any of you. If we look upon the whole country as our—and we do so—theneverybody should sincerely feel that every drop of water or blade of grass anywhere in the country belongs to us. We would then use with the utmost economy anything we get in any part of the country, even if it is regarded as somebody else's property. Even the things which are in our possession have been produced from the wealth of this country. How can we use things belonging to other people differently from those that belong to us, after we have realized that the whole country is ours? It is very necessary that, during this period of seclusion [in jail], all of us should ponder over this again and again and understand it properly. There is a large number of boys in your

[1] Presumably Hiralal Shah

jail, and that increases the responsibility of the grown-ups. who supplied you all those books of literature? It is very good indeed that the prisoners there have been learning new languages and crafts.I will tell you one thing in order to inspire greater enthusiasm among you all. Here Sardar has been studying Sanskrit like a very enthusiastic young man. He has completed six parts of Satavlekar's *Pathamala* and lerans five verses from the *Gita* daily. He is in Chapter III just now. He gives to it whatever free time he gets. His progress is wonderful. He spins also, and gives between two and two and a half hours to this work. He spins yarn of 40 counts. All this is in addition to his daily work of making envelopes. All paper with one side blank or all other useless paper on which he can lay his hands is turned into envelopes. As a result, for the last three or four months we have not had to spend money for buying a single envelope. This is the meaning of turning dust into gold. He adds to the wealth of the country, no matter in how small a measure. Similarly, we exercise the utmost economy in using everything. Mahadev is learning French and Urdu and spins yarn of up to 80 counts. Brelvi[1] is studying French, and also intends to take up Sanskrit afterwards. He, for his part, teaches Urdu to some Maharashtrian prisoners who are with him. Gangadharrao is learning Gujarati. Kishorelal is learning Kannada in Nasik [jail] with the help of some kannadigas.You have been doing good work there, of course. I have mentioned all this to encourage you in your efforts.

If we cannot expect ideal behaviour from the Ashram boys, from whom else can we expect it? I am, therefore, not surprised that you give them your certificate. Vithal must have been released now. But if he is not released, please tell him that according to me, his mother's death was a deliverance for her, and, therefore, he should not grieve over it. He is a sensible man and has learnt to look upon death as a friend. I am not surprised to learn about Ravishankar's devoted service. Has his constipation been cured, or does he still suffer from it? What is the news of his son who was at Vedchhi? Where is he now? We often talk about you all and think of you.

Blessings to all friends from

BAPU

From Gujarati : C. W. 9445-a Courtesy: Chandrakant F. Shah

[1] Presumably S. A. Brelvi, Editor, *The Bombay Chronicle*

470. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

August 30, 1932

CHI BRAJKISAN,

Well, why didn't you mention it earlier? I got your letters but it appears as if you have not received mine. One letter in particular was quite long as it contained the replies to your queries. How is your health? How did you find your companions? Where is Krishnan Nair? Sardar and Mahadev remember you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 2393

471. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

August 31, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

I got your regular letter today. I am glad you are feeling better in body. your recipe is not of use for me. That requires procuring goat's milk butter. I do not want to go to that trouble. And I do not need to, as I am keeping excellent health without. I have, therefore, no excuse for it either. For, we may not concoct dishes for the pleasure of palate. I have done enough of that for many years. you need the change especially there. I don't hesitate to procure what I fancy I need for the body. Today I have taken milk. But I propose to continue *bajri* and see whether with milk it continues to keep the bowels in order. Without milk it has produced most excellent results. This may not be true of all constitutions. I have discovered this that each body has its own peculiarities which have to be found out.

Tell little Lakshmi that I got her sweet little note[1] before she was locked up. I expect her to make the very best use of the time she has now got. I am glad too that Shantabehn and Gangabehn are also with you. Tell them they must make up their Gujarati and make their Hindi pucca. And give them love on behalf of us all.

I was quite prepared for the news that you will not be removed from there. You ought to be able to keep well there also. Narandas wrote to me about your orders for ghee and dates. I hope you have

[1] Which said: " At last, Bapu, I too am entering the temple of Liberty . . .."

both. I dropped dates because I could not get good ones weevils-free. You are able to take the hard, dry thing called *kharek*[1] . I cannot.

I hope you will have permission to see some friends at least. But if you do not, after all we have no strangers. All strangers are friends including criminals as also the jailors. We have here learnt to recognize friends among animals. We have a cat who is a revelation. And if we had vision enough, we should appreciate the language of trees and plants and value their friendship.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the orginal: C. W. 6236. Courtesy : Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9702

472. LETTER TO KUSUMBEHN DESAI

August 31, 1932

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

I got your letter. You must have got my letter in which I have explained which letters I meant. I can see from here your vacillation. But it is bound to give place one day to steadiness of mind. I will not give up my faith.

Do you write any time to Khurshedbehn[2]? All three of us are doing well. You probably know that Sardar is going ahead fast with his study of Sanskrit.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 1846

473. LETTER TO VASUDEV G. JOSHI[3]

August 31, 1932

BHAI VASUKAKA,

Narandas has sent me the letter which you wrote to him. It overflows with your love. But I am afraid I cannot avail myself of that love. There is a great difference between your complaint and mine. Ordinarily I fell nothing. I feel the pain only when I move the arm in a certain manner. In any case the pain in not increasing, and it causes no discomfort. Doctors have only advised rest. That being so, even if I

[1] Dried dates

[2] Dadabhai Naoroji's grand-daughter

[3] Proprietor of the Chitrashala Press, Poona, and a close associate of Bal Gangadhar Tilak

wished to be examined by Dr. Deshmukh, probably the authorities would not be permitted to call him in. They would be allowed to call in a doctor from outside only if there was cause to fear something serious. There is no such cause in my case, and my health is perfectly good in other respects. I will, therefore, cherish your love for the present and avail myself of it only if it becomes necessary. please thank Dr. Deshmukh on my behalf for his willingness to come .

When you were here, Sardar often talked about you and was even eager to meet you. But that was impossible, of course.

We were filled with joy to read that, though you suffered such pain in the leg, you did not mind it. May you live long.

You will be glad to know that Sardar has been studying Sanskrit with great earnestness.

I have prserved the socks sent by you as symbol of your love.

Please accept *vandemataram* from us all. Was the Gujarati your own?

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

At the top of your letter-paper are printed the words " Tipe Printers". I suppose " Tipe" is a misprint. Such a misprint should not be overlooked in the letter-head.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3616

474. LETTER TO SHANTA S. PATEL

August 31, 1932

CHI. SHANTA (PATEL),

I had received the note which you wrote before you were released. I will wait for your promised letter. With whom do you stay? Give a detailed report about yourself. Let me know about the condition of both your mind and body. What did you read? Who were your friends? Write about all these things.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4065. Also C. W. 16. Courtesy: Shantabehn Patel

475. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

August 31,1932

CHI. PREMA,

I cannot think what fresh epithet of praise I should give you this time. Tell me what epithet will please you, and I will give you that.

I have not yet received the books required for Parachure Shastri. I hope I shall get them soon.

I do not think we can say that the arrival of those two women means that educated women have started joining the Ashram. There are certainly a few stray cases of such women turning up. The Ashram has not attracted any of them to stay on, unless we regard you as an educated woman as also one who has stayed on. Your case, then, will be an exception, Who will believe that one swallow makes a summer?

I am sorry about Rambhau. I do not mind your having dismissed him from the class. Keep a watchful eye on him and bring him to the right path if you can. I understand your difficulty regarding Dhiru. If you can cultivate sufficient broadmindedness and courage, you should talk about him to Joshi[1] and Ramabehn and discover some way of winning him over to the right path. We ourselves plant thorns in our path and thencomplain about being pricked by them. We shall probably never reach our goal if we try to do so with our own strength but, if we march with God's strength, we shall see light even in darkness. If you retort that you do not have such love in you, my advice is of no value. If, again, you argue that though I believe that I am full of love I have not been able to win over many, and ask me what right I have to advise you, and thus close the door of your heart against me, I would be helpless. I admit my imperfection. Why should you take that as an example? You should follow the advice I give you from my experience. We should not take the weaknesses of co-workers as our guide but should try to be free from them and embrace only their virtues. Moreover, unlike you I do not accept defeat but hope, with God's grace, to melt the stoniest heart and, therefore, continually strive to perfect myself.

If you have been reading out newspapers in the kitchen and jesting with people, I would certainly not approve of that. There should be perfect silence in the kitchen. Why should you read out anything there? Moreover, Narandas's attention is bound to be

[1] Chhaganlal Joshi

occupied with the things around him. I do not approve of your reading out anything in such an atmosphere. In the kitchen, even if you read you should do so seriously. Do, therefore, make this change. Consider what example you would be setting to the children if you make jokes in the kitchen and try to make people laugh. If all of them start doing what you do, the kitchen would become a "bear's garden" and discipline would vanish. Can the "smart" brain of the 'smart little girl" understand all this, or has she lost her"smartness" in the Ashram?

This is enough for this time.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10301. Also C. W. 5754. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

476. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

August 31, 1932

CHI. PANDITJI,

I got your letter. Like Anandi, others also will gradually become interested in the *Gita,* provided our own interest in it remains sincere. I do not think your trying to reform Rambhau is likely to do any good. He seems to have no sense of right and wrong. I cherish the hope that some day his eyes will open.

I will write today to Anandi advising her to drink milk and take rest. I cannot immediately suggest from here a suitable time-table for her. It will be enough if, without getting tired, she does anything in which she feels interested. Children with weak health must not feel any burden on them.

Who filled Lakshmibehn's molar? This is a very delicate job. The filling should not be done till the cavity is completely cleaned. If there is the slightest negligence in this matter, decay starts inside and that does harm.

The letters dictated by Mohan and others are good. This shows that intellectual growth has little connection with knowledge of letters. Linking the former with the latter results in considerable loss of orginality. If we impart as much knowledge as can be done orally and teach the alphabet as calligraphy, childern will by themselves slowly learn to read and understand books.

BAPU

[PS.]

I know about kaka.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 232. Courtesy : Lakshmibehn N. Khare

477. LETTER TO MATHURI N. KHARE

August 31, 1932

CHI. MATHURI,

I got your letter. Do you remember that I had advised you to do only as much work as you could? Your speed in carding is certainly good. But is the quality of slivers as good as the speed? Whatever you do should be neat and well done, no matter if the speed is slow. Speed will increase slowly.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 267. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

478. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

August 31, 1932

CHI. NIMU,

I learn from a postcard from Narandas that Baba[1] is very ill. It will be as God has willed. Do not panic. If you do, it will harm Baba. You should know that the mother's feelings always affect the child. We must do our best. There should then be no cause for panic. I am keeping Ramdas informed. It will be good if you keep me informed every day. Follow the doctor's instructions carefully.

BAPU

[PS.]

Give this to Nimu after reading.[2]

CHI. NARANDAS GANDHI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM

SABARMATI

From the Gujarati original: Nirmala Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

[1] Kanam Gandhi

[2] The letter was addressed to Narandas Gandhi.

479. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 31, 1932

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

Your letter with the *rakhi* arrived, though rather late. All the time I have been wanting to reply but I can manage it only now. You did not write about Indu's health. Do so now. How is Mridula? According to Dahyabhai, she has written to me but I have not so far received the letter. How is Saraladevi ?

I keep thinking of you all.

All the three of us are well. How is your health? And what news of Gulzarilal?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32821

480. DIARY, 1932[1]

[1-6-1932 to 31-8-1932]

JUNE 1, WEDNESDAY, YERAVDA MANDIR[2]

Spun 208 rounds. Letters—Anandanand, Jaya, Radha, Ranchhod, Gajanan, Lakshmibehn, Mathuri. Rama paid a visit. Commenced Kirtikar's *Vedanta*[3].

JUNE 2, THURSDAY

Spun 278 rounds, Letters—Mira, Bhogilal Vyas, Shanti, Hemprabhadevi. Gangabehn's letter arrived, completed *Hindu Astronomy*. Commenced that by Sir Jeans.

JUNE 3, FRIDAY

Spun 214 rounds. Letters—Tilak, Pyare Ali, Feroza Taleyarkhan, Nanasaheb, Prabhavati.

JUNE 4, SATURDAY

Spun 224 rounds. Letters—Gangabehn, Parachure Shastri, Kaka. Dahyabhai and Mani paid a visit today. I did not go to see

[1] Continued from Vol. XLIX

[2] Gandhiji described Yeravda prison as " Yeravda Mandir". This place name is not reproduced under subsequent dates.

[3] *Studies in Vedanta*

them. And I got a reply about Mirabehn that she had participated in the civil disobedience movement.

JUNE 5, SUNDAY

Spun 222 rounds. Today Dr. Mehta put my left arm into splints. Amrit Nanavati's letter came from Visapur.

JUNE 6, MONDAY

Spun 248 rounds. Letters—Jal Naoroji, Ramanlal Shah, Marie Petersen.

JUNE 7, TUESDAY

Spun 191 rounds. Letters to the Ashram—29, including [an article]"*Titiksha* and *Yajna*"; [letters]—Amritlal Nanavati Visapur), Karsandas, Nagardas, Shankerlal. The Superintendent was of the opinion that the splints on the arm had not been set properly; so these were untied and tightened again. Hence the hand remained uncovered the whole day.

JUNE 8, WEDNESDAY

Spun 212 rounds. Durga, Anandi, Babla visited Mahadev. Received a telescope from Trivedi today.

JUNE 9, THURSDAY

Spun 225 rounds. Letters—Balkrishna Kolte (Fatehpur), Savitri (Ludhiana), Prabhashanker (Rajkot), Mira, Polak, Ghanshyamdas, Col. Doyle, Raihana.

JUNE 10, FRIDAY

Spun 212 rounds. Letters—Harjivan Kotak, Ramkrishna Dalmia, Jethalal Gandhi. Met Professor and Bindu Madhav Gurle.[1] Today dispensed with the bandage. Completed Vasudev Kirtikar's *Vedanta*.

JUNE 11, SATURDAY

Spun 206 rounds. Letters—Chhaganlal Joshi, Bhattacharya—about Bipinbabu's book. Glanced through Lady Ramanathan's *Ramayana*. Dahyabhai visited Vallabhbhai. Commenced Ghanshyamdas's pamp-hlets.

[1] They were fellow-prisoners.

JUNE 12, SUNDAY

Spun 216 rounds. On saltless [diet] from today. Since the splints did no good to the hand, Mira will be very much distressed. In order to please her and to test the result, I have started the saltless [diet]. Simultaneously have discontinued putting soda in the *rotli*. Completed the small pamphlet by Ghanshyamdas.

JUNE 13, MONDAY

Spun 188 rounds. Letters—Saklatwala, Nanabhai, Qureshi, Col. Doyle, the Ashram (38 letters). As it is a holiday tomorrow, handed over the Ashram letters today [for posting].

JUNE 14, TUESDAY

Spun 240 rounds. Letters—Bharati, Vithal, Gangabehn. Sent win-der, *Lokshikshan*, *Purushartha* and *Chandrakant* to Gangabehn. Col. Doyle paid a visit today. The Ashram mail arrived in the afternoon.

JUNE 15, WEDNESDAY

Spun 199 rounds. Letters—Taramati, Mahavir, Narandas. As I had soft motion today, I did not eat *rotlis* and almonds; felt better; weighed 104.5 [1b].

JUNE 16, THURSDAY

Spun 215 rounds. Letters—Devdas, Sumangal, Bali, Agatha, Andrews, Emma Harker, Shankar Kalelkar. Telegrams to Hanuman-prasad and Devdas. Urdu 4th [Reader] completed.

JUNE 17, FRIDAY

Spun 211 rounds. Letters—Vithaldas, Mira, Udit Mishra, Regarding Devdas, received his own and Hanumanprasad's telegrams.

JUNE 18, SATURDAY

Spun 219 rounds. Letters—Sarojini Naidu, Chhaganlal Joshi, Amtul. Telegram to U. P. Governor about Devdas. Sent Mira's letter to Col. Doyle.

JUNE 19, SUNDAY

Spun 204 rounds. Last evening ate saltless bread made by Merne[1] but it cannot be said to have agreed with me. Did not eat it this

[1] A Scottish fellow-prisoner

evening. Wrote a good number of letters. Am reading shah's book on finance. Completed an Urdu play entitled *Shareef Ladka*. Have taken up another book entitled *kheti*.

JUNE 20, MONDAY

Spun 198 rounds. Letters—Vrajlal, Mathuradas, Nanabhai (Akola), Sharma, Manilal, Lauri Sawyer, Damodardas, Banker, Shriram Sharma, Vaze, Radha, Shankerji, Bal, Narasimhan.

JUNE 21, TUESDAY

Spun 211 rounds. Today there were slight signs of dysentery, hence ate grapes only.

Letters—the Ashram (32 including an article of prayer and Totaramji's letter), Hemprabhadevi, Raihana, Navin, Carl Heath, Aristarchi, Lalwani, Kamala Nehru, Lalita, Rohini, Janakibehn, Lakshmi Raja.

JUNE 22 WEDNESDAY

Spun 223 rounds. Letters—Gangabehn, Khambhatta, Gladys Rigwell, Devi, Polak, Maganlal, Hanumanprasad, Tilak, Shanta Patel (Anand), Trivedi.

Today the Major pressed me hard to take bread with milk. The weight went down by one and a half pounds. *Mosambis* arrived. Also milk. I took it.

JUNE 23, THURSDAY

Spun 210 rounds. Letters—Mira, Devdas. Today added bread to milk. As the superintendent did not like the portion concerning my health in my letter to Mira, I altered the same.

JUNE 24, FRIDAY

Spun 208 rounds. Letter to Horace Alexander. Thomas[1] and Col. Doyle paid a visit. The visitors today were Morarbhai, Marathe, Dr. Pathak.

JUNE 25, SATURDAY

Spun 220 rounds. Khadi arrived from Ghanshyamdas. Shirinbehn sent honey. Dahyabhai and Mani called on Vallabhbhai. Commenced *Kimiyagar*.

[1] Home Member, Government of Bombay

JUNE 26, SUNDAY

Spun 224 rounds. Started using new dhotis from today. Again two boxes of grapes arrived.

JUNE 27 , MONDAY

Spun 207 rounds. Letters—the Ashram (31, including 'How to Observe Ahimsa"), Col. Doyle.

JUNE 28, TUESDAY

Spun 222 rounds. Letters—Gangabehn, Joshi, two to Col. Doyle about my letter to Mira and about my denture. The Ashram mail arrived.

JUNE 29 WEDNESDAY

Spun 233 rounds. Letters—Birla, Khambhatta, Raihana, Lakshmidas, Madhavdas, Balwantrai, Chhaganlal Joshi, Mira, Damodardas, Premkunvar.

Today weight was 104 1b.

JUNE 30, THURSDAY

Spun 217 rounds. Letters—Jaiji, Mithubehn, Shirinbehn, Devdas.

JULY 1, FRIDAY

Spun 203 rounds. Letters from—Hiralal, Mrs. Lindsay, Mira, Privat, Satavlekar, Cresswell (his four books), Swami Anand and Kishorelal.

JULY 2, SATURDAY

Spun 244 rounds. Letters—Kishorelal, Swami. Dahyabhai and Mani paid a visit.

JULY 3, SUNDAY

Spun 212 rounds. Wrote letters, history of the Ashram.

JULY 4, MONDAY

Spun 212 rounds. Letters—the Ashram (32, including "How to Observe Truth"), Manjula, Mataprasad, Dinkar, Radha, Lady Vithaldas, Fulchand Bapuji, Raojibhai, Maganbhai Chaturbhai, Harjivan Kotak. Wrote history of the Ashram.

JULY 5, TUESDAY

Spun 234 rounds. Returned the telescope to Trivedi. Received a telegram from Devdas about the death of papa's husband, Varadachari. Sent telegrams to Papa and Raja.

JULY 6, WEDNESDAY

Spun 220 rounds. Letters—Devdas, Birla, Saraladevi, Bhai Parmanand. Doyle paid a visit—spoke about my denture and about writing a letter to Mira. I weighed 105.51b. Have been eating almonds for three days.

JULY 7, THURSDAY

Spun 255 rounds. Letters—Ferozabehn Taleyarkhan. Satavlekar sent the Sanskrit Readers. Vallabhbhai commenced study of Sanskrit.

JULY 8, FRIDAY

Spun 223 rounds. Letters—Raihana, Zohra, Lakshmi and Papa.

Today the Major informed me that letters to and by me now go to the Government—this week's Ashram mail has gone there.Qureshi, Mohanlal, Moolshanker Dave and Haridas paid a visit.

JULY 9, SATURDAY

Spun 236 rounds. Letters—Col. Doyle, Gokibehn. Today a few letters from I. G.[1] arrived which included those from Krishnadas and Babu Motilal Roy. Today ordered *mosambis* from here.

JULY 10, SUNDAY

Spun 215 rounds. Vallabhbhai started spinning from today. Spun 125 rounds in one hour. Today completed *Kimiyagar* and *Vaidik Vinay*. Com-menced the Veda number of *Ganga* and Premchandji's *Ramacharcha*.

JULY 11, MONDAY

Spun 210 rounds. Letters—the Ashram (33, including "Education").

[1] Inspector General of Prisons

JULY 12, TUESDAY

Spun 208 rounds. The Superintendent told me that even the letters addressed to the prisoners at Yeravda would have to be sent to the Government. Almonds arrived.

JULY 13, WEDNESDAY

Spun 227 rounds. Letters—Col. Doyle, Gangabehn, Joshi. Started eating from the fresh stock of almonds.

JULY 14, THURSDAY

Spun 245 rounds. Completed Shah's *Banking* and Newcome's *Astronomy*. Commenced Iyer's *Foreign Exchange*, Kharas's *Astronomy* and *Swadhyay Samhita*.

JULY 15, FRIDAY

Spun 245 rounds. Letters—Khan, Velusami, Mirabehn, S. K. Sen Gupta. The District magistrate paid a visit. Soma was released.

JULY 16, SATURDAY

Spun 232 rounds. Other Ashram letters arrived today.

JULY 17, SUNDAY

Spun 208 rounds. Completed Ashram letters.

JULY 18, MONDAY

Spun 225 rounds. Letters—the Ashram (16, including"Individual Prayer"), Devdas, Hamid Ali, Lakshmi, Khodidas. Read *The Way of the Cross* and *The Prophet's Message to the West.*

JULY 19, TUESDAY

Spun 229 rounds. Today I spun a few slivers on the Gandiva.

Letters—Muriel, Aristarchi, Motilal Roy, Krishnadas, Washburn, Esther, Narahari, Devsarma, Ali Hussain, Ganeshdatta Gaud, Sailesh Chandra Majmudar, Nityanandam, Adigal, Sydney Nealy. Clayton paid a Visit. Received some books from Gangabehn.

JULY 20, WEDNESDAY

Spun 232 rounds. Letters—Satavlekar, Natvarlal.

JULY 21, THURSDAY

Spun 223 rounds. Letters—Nargis, Shirin, Khurshed. Telegram to Lahore Superintendent about Khurshed. Today met Chhaganlal,

Mukund Doctor and Shankar. I reprimanded Shankar about Hiralal. Today the Major gave diathermic treatment. Received a telegram about Devdas having had relapse of fever.

JULY 22, FRIDAY

Spun 221 rounds. Letters—Devdas, Mira. Today too diathermy was tried. Some books arrived. Received a list of some letters which had been posted. It contains mostly letters of the 19th.

JULY 23, SATURDAY

Spun 213 rounds. Letters—Col. Doyle, Maharaj Raghavdas, Rohini, Lala Mohanlal.

JULY 24, SUNDAY

Spun 210 rounds. The day was spent in writing letters to the Ashram, drafting a letter to be addressed to Col. Doyle and in reading.

JULY 25, MONDAY

Spun 207 rounds. Letters—the Ashram (19 letters including " Supervision Is Not Necessary"), Kaka, Col. Doyle (2), Major Bhandari.

JULY 26, TUESDAY

Spun 236 rounds. Letters—Polak, Taramati, Mathuradas, Hoyland, Devdas, Ramniklal, Mirabai, Raihana, Hamida, telegram to Malaviyaji.

JULY 27, WEDNESDAY

Spun 217 rounds. Letters—Hiralal+Lily, Rajagopalachari, Shirin, Subbiah+Lalita. Today my weight was 104 1b. It has gone down by 1.5 lb. The cause seems to be discontinuation of fruit.

JULY 28, THURSDAY

Spun 250 rounds. Letters—Harjivan Kotak, Khurshed, Rukhi, Venkataraman, Radha, Mira, Ba. Telegram to Bajpai. The Ashram mail arrived. Today commenced Locaire's *Astronomy*. For the last three days I have been reading *Sirat-un-Nabi*. Nadkarni's pamphlet.

JULY 29, FRIDAY

Spun 197 rounds. Letters—Nargis, Nirmala.

JULY 30, SATURDAY

Spun 228 rounds. Letters—Najuklal, Nagindas, Amritlal, Devdas Gandhi. Telegrams to Chhaganlal, Pranjivan and Devdas.

JULY 31, SUNDAY

Spun 216 rounds. Completed Ashram letters. Devoted quite some time to it. Ate bananas today after a long time.

AUGUST 1, MONDAY

Spun 216 rounds. Letters—the Ashram (36, including "Learn the *Gita* by Heart"), Birla, Brajkisan, Shyamkisan, Subhasbabu, Mira. Telegram to Kamala.

AUGUST 2, TUESDAY

Spun 207 rounds. Letters—Bhaktibehn, Prabhashankar, Damodardas, Vimala, Mohanlal Bhoot, Prabhavati, Jethalal, Jivabhai.

AUGUST 3, WEDNESDAY

Spun 216 rounds. Letters—Krishnadas, Jagannath Bajaj, Jawaharlal, Hanumanprasad, Modi, Devdas+Sivaprasad. The Major has informed me that an order has been received to the effect that the outgoing mail also will hereafter be censored by himself.

AUGUST 4, THURSDAY

Spun 225 rounds. Letters—Kamala Nehru, Varadarajulu, Manilal + Kallenbach, Sushila + Pragji, Narandas + Ratilal Mehta, Champa + Manjula + Ratilal Seth, Chhaganlal Mehta+Manekbai + Lilavati + Jeki + Ratilal + Mani, Manilal + Nanalal + Khimchand, Maganlal + Polak. Telegram to Chhaganlal, [letter] Sivaprasad.

AUGUST 5, FRIDAY

Spun 205 rounds. Letters—Manjula, Esther, telegrams to Chhag-anlal, Manjula, Narandas. Today met Brelvi, Jamnadas, Hargovan Pandya and Ramdas.

AUGUST 6, SATURDAY

Spun 212 rounds. Letters—Brelvi, Chhaganlal Mehta, Taramati, Mrs. Sen Gupta, Hemprabha, Hardayal Nag. After a talk about Gokhale and Suganendra who are on fast it was ultimately decided that I should meet them. Accordingly I met them and they said if they

had no right under the rules to demand food cooked by a Brahmin, they would give up their stand. The rules were then scrutinized and the position was explained to them, whereupon they have agreed to give up the fast. This took up a lot of time today.

AUGUST 7, SUNDAY

Spun 196 rounds. Devoted time to the Ashram mail.

AUGUST 8, MONDAY

Spun 204 rounds. Letters—the Ashram (37 including an article on Dr. Mehta), Manjula, Ansari, Mira + Rajenbabu, Devdas, telegram to Chhaganlal.

AUGUST 9, TUESDAY

Spun 232 rounds. Letters—Mohanlal Bhatt, Bhaktibehn, Narasin-ham, Jaydevi, Kothari, Prabhashankar + Balwant, Ramnik, Anandsh-ankar, Prabhadevi, Sarojini Naidu. Chhaganlal's telegram arrived.

AUGUST 10, WEDNESDAY

Spun 217 rounds. Telegram to Maganlal. [Letters]—Umiya, Satavlekar, Hydari, Suresh Bannerji, Manjula, Chhaganlal Mehta, Benarsi, Vithaldas Purushottam, Ketkar, Karsandas, Madhavdas, Lakshmi + Papa, Harrison, Col. Doyle.

AUGUST 11, THURSDAY

Spun 208 rounds. Letters—Parachure Shastri, Shankar, Thakkar Bapa, sisters of Siena Ashram, Devdas, Sohaila, Maria, Leonard Skiff, Trivedi + Manu + Johanna + Indrasen, Verrier.

AUGUST 12, FRIDAY

Spun 216 rounds. Letters—Ramdas Gandhi, Premi Jairamdas, Shastri.

Today Col. Doyle brought with him Dr. Dalal for Vallabhbhai's and my dentures. There was an unexpected and sharp argument[1] about Ansari with the Major.

AUGUST 13, SATURDAY

Spun 206 rounds. Letters—Devdas Gandhi, Behram

[1] For a report of the talk, *vide The Diary of Mahadev Desai.*

Khambhatta. Today also I had to go to Dr. Dalal. Ate potatoes today.

AUGUST 14, SUNDAY

Spun 223 rounds. Today also went to Dr. Dalal. Sarojini's Padma sent grapes, etc. Ate the grapes. Today started spinning on the Magan spinning-wheel. As there was a little more pain in the elbow today, I tried one sliver on the Gandiva with my left hand after several months; it worked well.

AUGUST 15, MONDAY

Spun 214 rounds. Letters to—the Ashram (44 including "Reading and Reflection[—I]", Vimala Patel, Nargis + Kamala + Sonawala, Satyamurti, Janakibehn. Feeling hungry, I foolishly took a meal this afternoon despite constipation; hence everything inside was thrown out. The vomitting this time was unlaboured and easy.

AUGUST 16, TUESDAY

Spun 202 rounds. Letters—Padmaja, Bhaktibehn, Mohanlal Bhatt, Mira. Got a new denture today. Almonds arrived. Sent *Dangers of Obedience* and an account of Bipin Pal for Kemp. Yesterday completed *Vedman Adhyatma*. Commenced Herschel and other committees' reports.

AUGUST 17, WEDNESDAY

Spun 254 rounds. Letters—Rameshwar Bazaj, Chhaganlal Mehta, manilal Revashanker, Nautamlal Bhagwanji + Maganlal + Manjula, Mary Barr, Ratilal Desai, Devdas + Rajenbabu, Raihana, Khambhatta, Prabhashankar, Narmadanand.

Tody also got the denture further improved. Conversation with the Major about Kapurthala. Ate *bajra* today.

AUGUST 18, THURSDAY

Spun 200 rounds. Letters—Manjula, Chhaganlal Mehta + Khimchand, Lily, Hiralal, Popat Virji, Krishnadas. Yesterday the decision of the British Government about the proportion of Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and others in the Legislative Assemblies was received. After some discussion, I have written a letter to Prime Minister Mac-Donald. Have given in it September 20 as deadline. I have informed him that if the decision is not altered by that time, I would go on an indefinite fast from 12 o'clock on the 20th. In case the Government suggests a postponement of the fast, I have said, I would have no objection to such postponement if it seemed necessary to do so.

AUGUST 19, FRIDAY

Spun 215 rounds. Letters—Champa, Mira, Anandshankar, Kamala Nehru, Sarojini, Jaiji, Karsandas, Mahomed Alam, Agatha. Met Gangadharrao, Shankar and Devidas Ghevaria's nephew. Shankar talked quite satisfactorily. He has reassured me and promised that he would never commit such a mistake again.

AUGUST 20, SATURDAY

Spun 234 rounds. Letters—Ghanshyamdas Birla, Nanalal, Abhyankar. Got the denture corrected again. Am continuing *bajra*. Yesterday ate jail *bhakhari* made of *bajra*. One pound of new stock of almonds arrived.

AUGUST 21, SUNDAY

Spun 200 rounds. Ashram mail—Andrew's book.

AUGUST 22, MONDAY

Spun 205 rounds Letters—the Ashram (51 including "Reading and Reflection-[II]", Manilal + Sushila + Ritch, Hemprabha.

AUGUST 23, TUESDAY

Spun 205 rounds. Letters—Taramati + Dilip, Chhaganlal + Manekbai, Mayashanker + Lilavati + Chhotalal + Tryambaklal, Ratilal Desai Lady Thackersey, Khambhatta, Kalyanji + Cutchhi, Riahana, Devdas. Fruits arrived from Padmaja.

AUGUST 24, WEDNESDAY

Spun 235 rounds. Letters—Darbari, Bhaktibehn, Nirmala Mashruwala, Prabhashankar, Velanbehn, Raja, Mira. Two seers of *kagadi*[1] almonds arrived today. My weight was 103 [Ib.]

AUGUST 25, THURSDAY

Spun 210 rounds. Letters—Padmaja, Premi, Begum Mohammad Alam, Krishnadas, Satavlekar, Radha, Govinddas (Jaipur), Govinddas (Jabalpore), Krishnanath, Benarsi, Fatehbahadur, Manilal, Revashankar + Gulab + Tilak + Maganlal, Count Lassodofie, Gijubhai, Gokhale, Jethalal Shah, Bali + Manu, Jeki, Chhaganlal Mehta, Manekbai Mehta, Keshavlal Ambalal, Nani Menon. Got the denture corrected again today. Commenced new stock of almonds. Completed Maeterlink. Commenced Jeans's *The Mysterious Universe.*

[1] A kind of almonds with a fragile shell

AUGUST 26, FRIDAY

Spun 215 rounds. Letters—Tara Mashruwala, Taramati, Kaka, Mridula, Hansa Mehta, Manibehn. The denture was examined again. Col. Doyle called and spoke about Kaka[1], about the Prime Minister's letter, and the denture.

AUGUST 27, SATURDAY

Spun 220 rounds. Letters—Hiralal, Kaka, Ba, Kevalram Dayaram, P.N. Lal Verma. Today took baker's bread in place of one of *bajra*. Put into the eyes the drops sent by the Major.

AUGUST 28, SUNDAY

Spun 225 rounds. Commenced *Gandhi Vichar Dohan*. Letter to Devdas about not going to Rangoon.

AUGUST 29, MONDAY

Spun 227 rounds. Letters—the Ashram (54 including "Action-Thoughtful and Thoughtless"), Khambhatta, Abhyankar, Nautamlal, Papa + Lakshmi, Elizabeth Howard, Sunder Bhagvat, Andrews, Savitri, Padmaja. Today ate *rotli* made of wheat. A cat gave birth to kitten. Today completed the first reading of a history of the Ashram.

AUGUST 30, TUESDAY

Spun 203 rounds. Letters—Lily, Hiralal, Devi West, Nandubehn, Revashankar, Meghji, Shastri, Sushila, Manilal, Nanabhai, Sharda Mehta, Noorbanu, Col. Doyle. My denture was examined again.

AUGUST 31, WEDNESDAY

Spun 209 rounds. Commenced milk today. Letters to Damodardas + Radha + Brijkrishna + Santok, Velabehn, Maganlal Mehta + Manilal, Ramdas, Nimu, Fulchand, Bhaktibehn.

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 19337

[1] Doyle informed Gandhiji about D. B. Kalelkar having been transferred to the Sabarmati Jail and asked him to prevail upon Kalelkar to give up spinning so that he might be from back-ache. *Vide* "Letter to D. B. Kalelkar", 26/27-8-1932.

481. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

YERAVDA MANDIR,[1]
September 1, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

I got the letter, written in beautiful handwriting, by your new secretary. I hope that the new office-bearers will discharge their duties well. By assuming responsibilities in this way you will advance very far. Associations like yours can run smoothly only if you are tolerant towards one another. If you learn to do this, you will get in time the ability to run big associations. Keep sending me weekly reports of your work. If any disputes arise, you should write about those too. The best thing, of course, is that there should be no disputes. But in case a dispute does arise, there would be no benefit in keeping it from me. If I know about it, I may be able to guide you. Moreover, the knowledge that you will have to inform me may itself save you from quarrels.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

482. LETTER TO PURATAN BUCH

September 1, 1932

CHI. PURATAN,

I certainly did not wish to stop you asking me questions. After you have thought out in your own mind the answer to a problem, you may certainly ask me to check whether your solution is correct. I may say that intellect has had very little share in shaping my life. I believe that I have a rather poor intellect. I have found it literally true in my case that God shows the means to the man who has faith. I always hold elders and men of spiritual knowledge in high respect and put faith in them. And my deepest faith is in truth, and because of that I have always found my path easy even when it is beset with difficulties.

I am happy that your health is improving.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9168

[1] Literally, Yeravda Temple; Yeravda Central Prison, where Gandhiji was imprisoned from January 4, 1932 to May 8, 1933. This place-name is not reproduced in susequent items.

483. LETTER TO KESHAV GANDHI

September 1, 1932

CHI. KESHU[1],

You will be able to improve your handwriting if you try hard enough. Man's only true friend is God. One should never eat so much that the stomach is full. The *atman* is none else but *jiva.* Just now, you should read the *Gita* in Gujarati translation and try to understand it. If you do not follow, you should ask somebody to explain. Do not make slivers pointed. If you want to know how many good slivers one can make in an hour, you may ask Abbasbhai. Memory will improve with study.

You may write to me anything which you wish to.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3280

484. LETTER TO GULAB

September 1, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

I have your two letters. You say that your speed at spinning is low. What is it exactly? Improve your handwriting. I shall be able to answer you only after you tell me what errors Krishna has committed.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1723

485. LETTER TO MOHAN N. PARIKH

September 1, 1932

CHI. MOHAN[2],

If your handwriting is not good there is no harm in dictating your letter. This does not mean that you may neglect to improve your handwriting. You are now big enough to be able to write a good hand.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9182

[1] Maganlal Gandhi's son

[2] Son of Narahari Dwarkadas Parikh

486. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

September 1, 1932

CHI. NARMADA,

I have your letter. This time your handwriting is better. If you keep up the effort it will gradually improve. You say that you have learnt everything. This cannot be true. There are many things to be learnt. Your Gujarati is still very weak. You have yet to learn Sanskrit. Ginning, carding, weaving, sewing, embroidery, spinning yarn of fine count—all this remains.

You should know arithmetic and also learn nursing. You will learn all this in time.

Speak less, think more. I understand what you say about your dress. At the moment, I cannot think of anything against it.

I wish you to become a very good girl.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2762. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

487. LETTER TO PADMA

September 1, 1932

CHI. PADMA,

I got your lettter. You have given plenty of information in it. It is good that you are eating fruit. There is no harm if you stop spinning when you get tired. You will not get tired if you draw the thread with the right hand and rotate the wheel with the foot. That is what I do. if, however, even that is a strain, then you may stop spinning. If you can, do embroidery or sewing. If you do not get cotton slivers, you may spin wool. Teach Sheela with proper care. Just now, she need not trace and retrace the letters. A lot can be taught orally. For instance, you can teach arithmetic in that manner.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6137. Also C.W. 3489. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

488. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

September 1, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

I am absolutely certain that you would do credit to the post of a secretary. Do not work beyond your capacity. And, do not be deterred by anything that may happen. You should never worry. How is it that your yarn snaps so often on the *takli*? Luck and perseverance contribute in equal measure in every act we do. We can control our efforts, so, let us work to our fullest capacity and leave the result to luck. The *Gita* teaches us this very lesson.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9917. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

489. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

September 1, 1932

CHI. GANGABEHN,

That there is no one living in the house in Kamatipura and that some property from it was stolen, you should look upon as a test of your faith. Keep repeating to yourself: "It is a blessing that the chains have broken, it will now be easier for me to find Shri Gopal."[1]

Kaka[2] wrote to me, too, about Chapter XVI. At present, however,

I have no time for it. Ask Ramibehn[3] to write to me.

I hope your health is now all right. Besides, the hakim[4] is with you. What more do you want? Give my due regards to him.

Has Nathji's[5] eczema been cured?

[1] The line is from Premanand's poem on Narasinh Mehta. The original says, "I can now worship Shri Gopal in peace." Gandhiji later admitted in an article in *Harijan Bandhu*, 2-11-1940, that he had got used to misquoting the line (સહજે મળશે instead of સુખે ભજશું).

[2] D.B. Kalelkar.

[3] Ramibehn Kamdar, addressee's sister.

[4] Addressee's instructor in Unani medicine.

[5] Kedarnath Kulkarni, Kishorelal Mashruwala's guru.

Write to me regularly.

Lakshmi[1] Jerajani impressed me as a wise and smart girl.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 65. Also C.W. 8794. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

490. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 1, 1932

CHI. TARAMATI,

I have received your letter. It is very good that a sanatorium has been opened in the sacred memory of Bhai Shantilal. Are there any restrictions of caste or community for getting admission there? Pyarelal wrote to me that he had met you.

How nice it would be if you could learn enough to improve your Gujarati from the teacher who is coming. You may brush aside my suggestion if you find it burdensome. But if you are keen to learn, you must follow it in practice as much as possible.

I never had an opportunity of reading the books that you have mentioned.

Here is a letter to Ramprasad, the teacher, about Dilip.[2] Pass it on to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Niece of Vithaldas Jerajani, a dedicated khadi worker; she was later married to Purushottam D. Saraiya, addressee's grandson.

[2] *Vide* "A letter", 1-9-1932.

491. A LETTER[1]

September 1, 1932

I had asked Dilip to send me your name. I have ventured to write to you, though I do not remember that we have met any time. It has always been my view regarding children's education that we obstruct their intellectual growth and spoil their handwriting by beginning with the alphabet. I am of the opinion that, before teaching the alphabet, we should give them orally a good deal of general knowledge. Beginning with the history and geography of the child's city or village, we should tell him something of the region, the country and the world as also of Nature's beauty, the sky, the trees and plants and teach him orally a little of arithmetic, geometry, and literature, i.e., correct pronunciation, grammar, poems, Sanskrit verses, etc. For doing any one of these, it is absolutely unnecessary first to teach reading and writing. The child should learn to read before he is taught to write. Writing should come last. Before he starts learning the alphabet, he should learn some drawing. After learning thoroughly how to draw straight lines, oblique lines, triangles, etc., the child should begin to draw pictures of the letters of the alphabet. If we follow this method, learning will not be a painful process to the child, he will have acquired a considerable amount of general knowledge through oral instruction and the letters drawn by the child will be like pearls. There is a chapter on the subject of good handwriting in *Dasbodh*[2], which is worth reading and pondering over. The sight of Dilip's handwriting prompted me to write this, from which you may accept whatever appeals to you and forget the rest. My view is supported by my own very bad handwriting. It is the result of a wrong education.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 390-1

[1] The addressee was a private tutor employed for Dilip, son of Mathuradas Trikumji.

[2] By Samarth Ramdas Swami

492. LETTER TO VIMAL KISHORE MEHROTRA

September 1, 1932

CHI. VIMAL KISHORE[1],

We all study the *Gita* because it is for us like a mother to be consulted whenever we have any doubts.

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 4983. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra. Also G.N. 7506

493. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA N. KHARE

September 2, 1932

CHI. RAMACHANDRA[2],

I have your letter. The story about Hira is good. You have written it well. You copied it from a book, didn't you? Be as brave and loyal as Hira was. You do not tell me why you left the school, but I have received complaints against you from three different persons. I know very well that you have some faults, but I thought that they had become fewer, and that you were trying to improve yourself. You do seem to have improved outwardly. Your handwriting is better and you write well. But your heart should be equally pure and good. You should never tell a lie, nor scheme against anybody. If you have any grievances let me know them. You must obey Panditji at any rate. You do not seem to have kept your vows either. Write to me and tell me everything frankly.

May God make you good.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 297. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

[1] Son of Parasram Mehrotra

[2] Son of Narayan Moreshwar Khare, music teacher at the Ashram.

494. LETTER TO YOGA V. KHARE

September 2, 1932

CHI. YOGA[1],

If you cannot read or follow this, request Panditji to read it to you. I hope that you will continue to like the Ashram as much as you do now and that your health will remain as good as it is and even improve. Anybody who is ready to learn will find much to learn in the Ashram. You should slowly learn it all. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 311. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

495. A LETTER

September 2, 1932

However wicked the man you have to face you should have faith that God will give you the strength to resist him. You should not have the slightest fear. If such a thing happens, use all your strength. Such resistance is not violence. A rat can never do violence to a cat. If, however, the rat is determined, the cat cannot eat it alive. Thus, a rat which saves itself from the mouth of a cat does no violence to the cat. Do you understand this? Remember that an immoral man is always a coward. He cannot withstand the power of a pure woman. He trembles when she roars at him.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 391-2

496. A LETTER

September 2, 1932

Our love for a dear one should not be such that in everything he says we may see a sign of his having been hurt. We should have sufficient confidence in ourselves to feel sure that such a person will

[1] Niece of Narayan Moreshwar Khare.

never be hurt by anything we say or do. If we do not have such confidence, we shall often do injustice to him or her.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 392

497. LETTER TO DR. HIRALAL SHARMA

September 2, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. What you have heard or read about nature institutions in the West is a case of distance lending enchantment to the scene. Of the best advertised institution, people of the place knew nothing when a friend enquired about it. This does not mean that there is nothing in them. My only point is that the whole of this science is yet in its infancy and that there is no common course adopted by these institutions. They are what they are through the original researches of their authors. We in India have to make our own researches in keeping with our surroundings. Whatever is to be gained from them can be easily learnt through their publications.

As to your own health I simply gathered from your letter that it was not up to much. You cannot afford to go by the cases of orthodox physicians. You are a pioneer and will therefore have to show a record that would stand the most rigorous scrutiny.

I am glad you have given up the idea of going to the West. Do buildup your own body. That in itself will lead you to many discoveries. Your progress may be slow but it will be sure, if the foundation is sound. . . .

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, pp. 12-3

498. LETTER TO DR. SURESH CHANDRA BANERJI

September 3, 1932

MY DEAR SURESH,

I was glad to have your second letter. May your hope be fulfilled. Your extraordinary effort surely deserves to succeed. You

will please report your progress from time to time. It was quite like Malaviyaji to have visited you and blessed you.[1]

Have you or the doctors who have been helping you discovered the cause of your illness? Why should you, who were to all appearances so healthy, have been caught by the germs of a dangerous malady? Or is the science of medicine still so hopelessly incomplete that it is unable for certain to trace causes of so many diseases to which all flesh is heir?

Love from us all.

BAPU

Advance, 13-9-1932

499. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

September 3, 1932

PANDITJI,

You did well in writing to me regarding the temple. If you have still something more to say, write to me. I surely don't insist that my view in this matter should prevail. However, my views on this subject are fixed. I have said regarding myself that I am both an image-worshipper and an image-breaker. The God conceived by a human being is bound to be a form, though the image may be only in the mind. In that sense, I am an image-worshipper. But I have never been willing to worship any form or image as God. Towards a form or image, I always feel *neti, neti*[2]. Hence I regard myself as image-breaker. This being my attitude, I have always felt that we should not have any temple in the Ashram. And it was for this reason that we decided to have no building even for prayers. We sit in the open, with the sky above as the roof and the horizons on the four sides as the walls. If we wish to maintain an attitude of equality towards all religions, this is how we should live. These days, I am trying to read a little from the Vedas and other sacred books. I see this same thing in them all. There is no mention of image-worship anywhere. But Hindusim has a place for it. We should not, therefore, oppose it. However, image-worship is not obligatory. It is voluntary. I feel, there-

[1] The addressee was in Calcutta undergoing treatment for tuberculosis.

[2] Literally, "not this, not this"; the Vedas thus acknowledged the indescribability of the Absolute.

fore, that it would be better if, as an institution, we kept away from image-worship. If what I have always believed to be a *samadhi* is really a temple, we should not make it a place of public worship. When the owner of the land wished to demolish the structure and carry away the bricks, I paid money to him against the estimated value of the bricks and saved the structure. But I do not wish to turn it into a temple. You may discuss this with others who are likely to understand my attitude, and then write to me again if you wish. Do not have the slightest hesitation in expressing your view.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 233. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

500. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

September 3, 1932

CHI. PARASRAM,

I have your letter and the questions. You may leave me if you like—that may happen though I do not wish it to happen. I, however, will never leave you, for I still want many services from you. There is a prescription which I always recommend, and you should never forget it. As soon as we feel the slightest anger or aversion against a co-worker or think that he has done us injustice, we should sink into deep meditation and tell ourselves: 'I certainly deserve such treatment. The fault is not my co-worker's but mine. Knowingly or unknowingly, I must have given him some cause to be angry with me or feel aversion against me.' When the mind is so persuaded and has calmed down, you should immediately go to the co-worker and ask him what fault he had seen in you. We should then examine ourselves to see that fault and overcome it. If we follow this method, we shall always enjoy peace, feel generous towards the whole world and never feel offended with anyone.

I am satisfied if the massage has really cured the pain. In such a matter, one should never deceive oneself. Do not be afraid of a surgical operation if it becomes necessary.

Of course there was the hand of Fate in the sinking of that boat, but we can see from it the fear which rules our people. It also shows how great is the fear of death in us. If the people had kept their reason to see that the serpent could not have bitten all of them, any one of them could have picked it up and thrown it into the river or even killed it, if he so wished. But where nobody thinks of others and

everybody is seized with fear, the result is bound to be what happened. The only lesson we have to draw from this is that we should never have fear of any kind and we should pray to God to grant us good sense when we unexpectedly find ourselves in such situations.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7507. Also C.W. 4984. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

501. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

September 3, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. [You must] improve your handwriting a good deal. Ask Premabehn to teach you how to do it. If you do not at once go to sleep as soon as you lie down, you should close your eyes and begin repeating Ramanama. You will soon fall asleep.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9432. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

502. LETTER TO SULOCHANA

September 3, 1932

CHI. SULOCHANA,

Your handwriting is fairly good. But you should make it still better.

What is your speed at spinning?

Why does Gulab beat you?

Learn everything well.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1738

503. LETTER TO GULAM RASUL QURESHI

September 3, 1932

CHI. QURESHI,

I get all the news about you. You must be keeping well after the operation. How long will you be confined to bed? Obey all the instructions of the doctor carefully and get well fully. Write to me when you are strong enough and are permitted to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Convey my *vandemataram* to the doctor.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10809. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

504. LETTER TO HAMID QURESHI

Y. M.,
September 3, 1932

CHI. HAMID,

It was very good indeed that you wrote. Write always in ink. What is the name of the teacher? Give him my blessings.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10804. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

505. LETTER TO AMINA QURESHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 3, 1932

CHI. AMINA,

I have your letter. It was good that Qureshi went through the operation. There will now be no cause for him to worry. Now you also should get well. It is good that Rajab Ali[1] is supervising and guiding you. Do as he advises. You should keep reading and writing even

[1] Dr. Rajab Ali

now. I hope you are observing the restrictions on your diet. Keep writing to me.

We are all well. Sardar spins fine yarn of forty counts. Mahadev has reached up to eighty counts. What is your progress? Mahadev and I are learning Urdu.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10790. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

506. LETTER TO SECRETARY, NAGARI PRACHARINI SABHA, BANARAS[1]

September 3, 1932

DEAR SIR,

I have your letter. Although I am not personally acquainted with Acharya Mahavir Prasadji I am not unaware of his services to Hindi literature. I consider it most fitting that he should be honoured by the lovers of Hindi on his entering his seventieth year.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI PRADHAN MANTRIJI
NAGARI PRACHARINI SABHA
BANARAS CITY

From Hindi: C.W. 9663. Courtesy: Bharat Kala Bhavan

507. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 3/4, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,9

I got your letter on Tuesday. I got the usual letter about Kana[2], too, posted separately. I convey the information to Ramdas as and when I think fit. I had expected a postcard today, but there was none. Pyare Ali[3] had sent me a wire about Qureshi's[4] operation. I have also

[1] The block-print of this letter appeared in the commemoration volume presented to Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi on his birthday.

[2] Ramdas Gandhi's son

[3] A business man from Bombay

[4] Gulam Rasool Qureshi

had a letter from him. I hope Champa[1] got the postcard I wrote to her. Please make whatever arrangements are possible for the education of the new girls who join. I constantly feel that you should get more free time to think about and plan things such as this. We have done much for Liladhar[2]. If he does not understand his place or his self-interest, how can we help him? Do only what seems proper to you. Indu[3] yearns for parental love. Try to understand his heart. Read my letter to Kusum[4]. If she takes careful measures, she will be completely all right. If, however, she takes rest and employs other remedies just to please you, she will lose her life altogether or else will become an invalid and then weep. I intend to devote the weekly article this time to Narayanappa's case It will contain some thoughts which may seem novel. Try to understand them and then explain them to the girls. My chief reason for resuming milk from Wednesday was to see whether *bajri* would be effective, in spite of the milk, in preventing constipation. Today is Saturday. There has been no ill-effect till now and in other respects my health has been quite good. So far *bajri* and bananas have not disagreed with me.

What you say about Parasram is correct. Though he is extremely unmethodical, he has seemed to me a useful man. His motives are good. Sometimes he exhibits great capacity for work.

Shankarbhai's hand should be completely cured by now. Is the bone-setter a man trained in the indigenous method or has he been qualified in Allopathy?

Vinoba's plan is indeed excellent. If we have the right type of men, there is plenty of work which they can do.I received today Chhakkaddas's and Keshu's slivers. I now want the thinnest spindle you can get. Only if I get it, can I carry on my experiment here properly. I got the books too. How far they tally with the ones I had asked you to send, I shall perhaps let you know after I have checked them.

Do we get money for Kaka's milk and ghee? We should, for he was supplied these items in Belgaum by the Government. If they don't supply these to him there we must do so. But we should not act

[1] Wife of Ratilal Mehta, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's son

[2] A shopkeeper of Vadaj, a village near the Ashram; when his wife was ill in 1931, the addressee had brought him and his family to the Ashram.

[3] Indu Parekh, a student of the Ashram school

[4] Kusum Gandhi, a student of the Ashram school, daughter of Vrajlal Gandhi.

like the woman who ignorantly gives away the butter along with the whey, and is called a fool into the bargain. If necessary, go and see the Superintendent and talk the matter over with him.

I have suggested in a letter to Maganbhai[1] a title for the discourses[2]. But on second thoughts it seems to me that we need not be in a hurry to print them. I have written them in great haste. You and other people there may correct my mistakes as you read the discourses, and even if you did not understand some point I would not worry much. I would not mind even if you found that a few sentences here and there were not sufficiently clear.It is not always possible for me to revise the discourses after writing them. Hence, if they are to be published I should certainly like to read them from that point of view before they are published. I would, therefore, suggest that, if you have not incurred any expense so far, you should postpone their publication.If, however, Maganbhai, Panditji, Chhaganlal—if he is there—and you feel no doubt about the meaning of any sentence and if, whenever the language was not clear, you have been able to make it clear, you may certainly print them. You have suggested *Mangal Prabhat-II* as the title, but it does not seem to me appropriate, for the discourses on this occasion were written from a somewhat different point of view. That is, I had in mind mostly the inmates of the Ashram when writing them. That is why I have suggested the title *Ashramvasi Pratye*[3] so that readers may know the limitations of the discourses and those of them who look upon themselves as among the inmates, though they do not live in the Ashram, may understand that they are addressed to them too. But I don't insist on this title being accepted. You may choose any other that may appeal to all of you.

Think about Manjula's[4] dilemma. If her disease can be cured with cod-liver oil, it would perhaps be the right thing to give it to her. I don't think she can think for herself. She will probably depend on Kashi's[5] advice in which case she should follow it. And if Kashi does

[1] Maganbhai Desai

[2] On subjects of special interest to Ashram inmates which Gandhiji sent with letters to Narandas Gandhi during the period from February 29, 1932, to September 11, 1932. They appear under their dates of writing beginning with Vol. XLIX, p. 169.

[3] "To the Ashram Inmates". The discourses were published under this title, but subsequently the title was changed to *Ashram Jivan*, "The Ashram Way of Life".

[4] Daughter of Vrajlal Gandhi.

[5] Widow of Vrajlal Gandhi.

not want to give her that, it should not be given. But if Manjula, though only a child, understands things a little and would like to take it I think we should respect her wish. You may now do what you think best.

While writing the history of the Ashram, a thought occurred to me. I have a faint recollection that I wrote to you about it once. I don't know if we have a list of the persons who came and stayed in the Ashram temporarily from the time of its establishment to the present day. If we don't have such a list, we should try to remember the names and write them down. They should be noted in a register, which should contain the full name of every such person, his place of residence, age, occupation, education, marital status and similar information; also what he learnt in the Ashram, when he left it and where he is at present. Whenever anybody comes to the Ashram in future, his name should be entered in the register, so that all this information will be available to us in one place. My only aim just now in asking for this information is to know how many persons came to and stayed in the Ashram temporarily, how each of them was trained and where he is settled now. If we have kept no such record till now, as time passes it will become increasingly more difficult to prepare one.

The pieces of leather for repairing the soles of sandals which you sent a second time have also been used up. These pieces are of such poor quality that, though I use the sandals very sparingly, the repaired soles hardly give service for a month. Like a miser, I also send small bits of leather for repair of soles. But we must make do with whatever quality of leather of dead cattle we can get. Please, therefore, send one or two pieces again.

[September] *4, 1932*[1]

Hemprabhadevi[2] used to write to me regularly. Of late I have had no letter from her except for a postcard once. Do you hear from her? If you do, give me news of her health. And write her a letter or postcard. And tell her that I complain about absence of letters from her, and that I should get her letters regularly. If she has been writing and if she has preserved the dates of the letters, she should let me have them. Probably she has been writing. Sometimes letters get lost in

[1] The source has "4-7-1932".

[2] Wife of Satis Chandra Das Gupta

transit. Her letters are not likely to have been lost here, but it is possible that they did not reach this place at all.

I hope you have dispatched the postal acknowledgment for the registration of the Anantpur report.[1] I enclose a photograph sent by Devdas. Show it to Ba too.

BAPU

[PS.]

After I had written the above, I sat down to write the article for the women. I have just finished it. I think it is very important. But probably they will find it difficult to understand the article. If you do not understant it fully, do not show it to the new group. Write to me about it. If you are convinced of its truth and can see ahimsa in that slap, you may certainly read it to them solving each difficulty that may be raised as you proceed. This is what I would suggest. If, after reading the article, you feel that you have understood it, give it to Panditji and other senior persons to read. Prema also should read it. If these persons understand it, show it to all others, and particularly to women, for it is primarily meant for them. Of course this article should not be published. It can be easily misunderstood. Those who have the spirit of ahimsa in them would understand it without difficulty. In any case, they would not misunderstand it. An article like this may be published only when I am outside. For the present, it will be enough if all of you understand it. If my reasoning is correct and if I am right about my experience, I am sure that most people who try to follow those ideas in practice are bound to realize their truth.

BAPU

[PS.]

In all there are 48 letters, 39 tied with a string along with 8 loose and a photograph.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I and *Bapuna Patro—9: Shri Narandas Gandhine*, Pt. I, pp. 463-7

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 4/9-5-1932.

508. WHAT WOMEN SHOULD DO IN A DIFFICULT SITUATION

[*September 4, 1932*][1]

Touching upon non-violence, if some maniac should try to assault a woman, and if another man should happen to be present, should he not protect her honour with the use of a weapon? Should not women train themselves in the use of weapons and learn to protect themselves? I have given my opinion. Use of weapons would certainly imply violence but I have never permitted anyone to draw from this the inference that a man or woman who happens to be present should not run to the rescue of the woman and should tolerate an outrage on her modesty. On the contrary, I have said that the man who allows the modesty of a woman to be thus outraged will be regarded as a coward. He will be a partner in violence because violence is implicit in cowardice. It is my firm opinion that heroic violence is less sinful than cowardly violence. A heroic man or woman can learn the lesson of non-violence, it is pretty nearly impossible for a coward to learn it. I have not begun this article in order to repeat all this. One will find these ideas in many other places in my writings.

But there is one thing which I think I have not remarked upon anywhere else which I wish to put down. I have dissuaded the Ashram women from learning the tricks of *jamaiya*[2], etc. The woman who depends on a *jamaiya* or a *gothi*[3] to guard her honour may some day fail to do so. When someone snatches away the *jamaiya* or the *gothi* from her, she will become defenceless, so that there is a possibility of her falling into the hands of a maniac. . . .[4] Sita had no weapons. But she had soul-force. Hence her consent was necessary before Ravana could so much as touch her. Our sisters should have self-confidence of this kind. Hence we have introduced Draupadi's prayer specially for women. But we were discussing an ideal. When a woman is faced by a maniac, what is she to do? If she truly has courage in her and also compassion, instead of becoming panicky she will melt him with the radiance of her compassion. But if that emotion has not arisen in her, she will certainly become enraged. In her rage she will slap him

[1] From *Mahadevbhaini* Diary.

[2] Dagger-like weapon.

[3] Name of a weapon.

[4] Some words are illegible here.

and raise such a row that he will run away from the scene. Or he will fall at her feet then and there. That is to say, the woman will use all her physical strength. Will that not constitute violence? If that is to be so, why not carry a weapon? My opinion is that there is violence in carrying and learning to use a weapon. But in a situation like the above, slapping or scratching, if the occasion demands it, does not constitute violence. If there is violence in a mouse biting a cat, the conduct of a woman in such a situation would also constitute violence. The trust of a woman who slaps is not in the slap, her trust is in God. Only compassion has not awakened her, while anyone can become enraged. Her rage will indicate her opposition. When a lecherous man approaches a woman, he does so in the belief that he will be able to subdue her, that is to say, that desire will also ultimately possess her. How is the woman to show that this cannot happen? Either by calm but immense compassion or by shouting and struggling. Slapping and so on is like the struggling of a mouse against a cat. The woman's slap certainly cannot cause any injury to the lecher. This will be evident, if we go deeper into it. Here I do not have in mind women of a giant's strength. Such a woman will be blinded by the consciousness of her strength. She may be faced by a man of greater strength and she may then surrender herself to him. Here I have in mind Ashram girls or women without physical strength who repose their trust in soul-force. Their slap is not an expression of violence, only of their opposition. Their cry will render that lustful man meek, because crime itself has no strength and he who has come to commit an offence knows it. This belief of mine implies that the woman will not even till death surrender herself to the man. Her anger, her alarm, proclaims for herself as well as for the man her preparedness to die. For what I have pictured may not happen and the maniac instead of becoming meek at the woman's anger, may hit her and determine to throw her on the ground. If at that time the woman is defeated, if she does not think of God, if she loses her self-confidence, she will be trembling, so that it will not occur to her to die. Even if it occurs to her to die, she will not know how to die. Fear, . . .[1] self-confidence become utterly weak. And enthusiasm in her . . . [2] This is merely to warn women. It is quite possible for her to be in a state where she may think: 'I do not have such faith in God that I shall be able to get rid of the maniac by

[1] Illegible in the source.
[2] *ibid*

my purity alone. Bapu has said that one must not use a weapon; for that will be violence. One may then not use even one's hands. What, O God, am I to do ! Oh! I am dying.' Such a thought is intolerable to me. This instruction of mine is not meant only for one man or woman. There is no question of my instruction rendering anyone weak. If anyone becomes so, it will be due to their own misunderstanding. The above suggestion is to clarify my thought. Women should just forget that they are the weaker sex. She who has the desire and the strength to die can never be regarded as weak. There is danger to the body, not to the soul. The soul which has attenuated its relation to the body, has made it absolutely insignificant like a blade of grass, cannot be harassed or defeated even by all the maniacs of the world. This lesson should be learnt by every boy and girl who is of an age to understand it. It is to impart this lesson that I have made the above observation. Instead of feeling helpless and scared, she should say to herself: 'I shall offer up my body and life, but shall not become a coward.' Her slap or scratching indicates this resolve. It is in itself an act of non-violence. She has no strength to cause harm. Hence her act is not violence; but it has power to move a lecherous mind and to awaken the woman who administers the slap.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

509. LETTER TO SETH GOVINDDAS

September 3/4,1932

BROTHER GOVINDDAS,

I have received your letter as well as the deed of renunciation.[1] I have received them only today as they have been going round from one Government office to another. I learn from the newspapers that the letters I wrote before this have been duly received.

Your letter of renunciation is very touching, so is your father's letter. I am sure he could not have acted differently. It is no ordinary matter to give up attachment. We cannot expect from the older people the same spirit of renunciation that has been awakened in the youth of this era. I have no doubt that your total renunciation is all to the good. I had forgotten that episode of 1921 but now I can recollect it. I am confident that the affection between you two will now become deeper. It is quite likely that your father will now make some sacrifice or

[1] The addressee had renounced his claim to his ancestral property.

other. It is a good thing that you are as devoted to him as before. Did you have the support from Bindanidevi[1] in this matter? Is she educated? I hope that her health will gradually improve. May your purity of heart increase. Sardar and Mahadev too thank you. I had read about your letter of renunciation but I did not feel it proper to write upon it from here. I can now write this because your letter has been allowed to reach me. But I would advise you to refrain from sending this to the newspapers.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

After writing this I have received an acknowledgment of my postcard. I hope that Bindanidevi is improving in health.[2]

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

510. LETTER TO SATYAVATI CHIDAMBER

September 4, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. Why do you think that the truth lies only in believing in Jesus as you do? Again why do you think that an orthodox Hindu cannot follow out the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount? Are you sure of your knowledge of an orthodox Hindu? And then are you sure again that you know Jesus and His teachings? I admire your zeal but I cannot congratulate you upon your wisdom. My forty-five years of prayer and meditation have not only left me without the assurance of the type you credit yourself with, but have left me humbler than ever. The answer to my prayer is clear and emphatic that God is not encased in a safe to be approached only through a little hole bored in it, but that He is open to be approached through billions of openings by those who are humble and pure of heart. I invite you to step down from your pinnacle where you have left room for none but yourself.

With love and prayer,

Yours,

M. K. G.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 395-6

[1] Addressee's wife.

[2] The postscript was written on September 4.

511. LETTER TO GULAB

September 4, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

I am glad that you wrote to me a detailed letter. It is good that your health has improved.

Meet Mirabehn as often as you can and keep me informed about her health. She also writes to me from time to time.

It is only from you that I learn that Bhai Tilakam does not live there now. I will write to him today and ask him why. He seems to me a very straightforward young man.

How far has Indira's pregnancy advanced? Do you see Nargisbehn or Jamnabehn any time?

Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5048. Courtesy: Dhirubhai Jhaveri

512. LETTER TO TILAKAM

September 4, 1932

MY DEAR TILAK,

How extraordinary! I did not know that you had left Mani Bhavan. Where are you staying now and what are you doing? Do give me a full account of your doings please. I hope you are keeping very good health now. Did you get my previous letter?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 9553

513. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

September 4, 1932

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

There was no letter from you in this week's post. It rarely happens that the week's post contains no letter from you, and, therefore, when there is none, I miss it. I read in Narandas's letter that you had gone to bring Dhiru[1] to the Ashram. Let me know how he is.

I had sent to you, when you were [in the Camp Jail] here, a book named *Flowers of St. Francis*. Have you or anybody else taken it away? Mohanlal[2] writes to tell me that he cannot find it among the books with him. And it has not been returned to me. Please look for it. Its special value lies in the fact that it was received as a gift from a lady in Europe and contained her good wishes. A few passages in it are also marked. Don't mind if you cannot recollect where it is.

If you have met Nanabhai, let me know how he is. I hope you have preserved your health. Ordinarily Vasumati would not neglect to write to me, but this time, though I had written to her and asked her to write to me after she was released, I have not heard from her. There are many other women, too, who have not written to me. But their conduct doesn't appear as strange as Vasumati's for they were not regular correspondents. Inquire about Vasumati. And remind the other women too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5507

[1] Addressee's son.

[2] Mohanlal M. Bhatt, sometime manager of the Navajivan Press. At this time he was in Yeravda Camp Jail.

514. LETTER TO MANILAL R. JHAVERI

September 4, 1932

CHI. MANILAL[1],

I have your letter. A whole pile of opinion has accumulated with me against Khimchand. There is now a wire from him, saying that Chhaganlal's[2] four letters were drafted by him. I am awaiting his letter. It seems that he had to leave Rangoon after all. Your advice to Manganlal[3] is perfectly right. Let us hope that the two brothers will create an atmosphere of harmony in the family and keep the good name of the Doctor untarnished.

Please communicate to me, anything which you may hear or any suggestion which may occur to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5044. Courtesy: Dhirubhai Jhaveri

515. A LETTER

September 4, 1932

I do not despair, as you do, but hope, with God's grace, to melt the stoniest heart and I continue to strive to that end.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 396

[1] Son of Revashanker Jhaveri.

[2] Eldest son of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta.

[3] Youngest son of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta.

516. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 4, 1932

DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

You have corrected my mistakes in a very good hand. Keep this up. Instruct me if you know the rules regarding the proper usage of. . . . Tell me when you would have an English letter from me and I shall write one with pleasure. My sole wish is for your peace and health. Dr. Sharma has given my letter for publication in the newspapers. This was not good. I shall be writing to him. You will read that letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 256

517. DISCUSSION WITH MAHADEV DESAI[1]

September 4, 1932

It then seems you have not understood my article.[2] I have actually pointed out that a slap rouses oneself, makes oneself fearless and above all, gives oneself the strength to die. A wicked person is not prepared for such, in his eyes senseless, resistance. In all probability, therefore, he would run away. But I attach less importance to that. The strength which is aroused in that woman enables her to end her life. By the time that the maniac has overpowered her, the woman has already sought protection in death; for she struggles prepared for death and has no thought of hitting the man. All that she has to do is to go on repeating Ramanama. I suggest this remedy for all circumstances, and only for those women who are pure and who want to defend themselves against attack non-violently. This article is based on my own experience. When I held on to that bar,[3] I was mentally prepared for death. I could not have inflicted any serious injury on my assailant. If, however, I had lost hold of the bar, I would have struggled on, would perhaps have slapped or bitten the man and would have resisted till death. I would not have committed violence by

[1] Since it was Gandhiji's Silence Day, he expressed his views in writing.
[2] *Vide* pp. "What women should do in a difficult situation", 4-9-1932.
[3] When Gandhiji was attacked at Pardekoph; *vide* "An Autobiography".

fighting in this manner. For, I could not have inflicted any injury upon him, nor was it my intention. I only wished to die and to avoid the necessity of sitting at the opponent's feet. This is the real test of non-violence. One's aim should not be to inflict pain nor should pain be the result.

M. D. I understand, but the purest of girls cannot subdue a hooligan with one slap and is helpless if she has to face a number of them.

GANDHIJI: Not only I but medical jurisprudence holds it impossible for a woman to be outraged so long as she does not relax. A woman who is not ready to die relaxes, may be reluctantly, and submits to the hooligan. A desperate animal breaks its bonds or else breaks itself, and every animal is capable of exerting so much strength. The fact is that love of life is too strong for one to hold fast till death. A woman who puts forth the utmost strength will have herself torn to bits and her ribs broken in fighting the assailant.

M. D. To a woman of such purity it is not necessary to suggest slapping or anything of that kind. She will herself think out some plan or other.

GANDHIJI: I may explain it all only after I break the silence.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 394-5

APPENDIX

DISCUSSION ON COMMUNAL AWARD [1]

August 17, 1932

The communal decision was published today. Bapu went about his work till the evening as if nothing had happened. . . . I said the new constitution was worse than the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms. "Certainly", replied Bapu. "Those reforms were based on the Lucknow agreement between Congress and the Muslim League. But this constitution seeks to create such divisions in the country that it can never again stand up on its own legs." Just before the evening prayer he said to me, "Well, you and the Sardar think over the situation and tell me whatever you feel like saying. The letter to Samuel Hoare details the steps I should take in order to deal with the present situation. I have therefore to serve the British Government with a notice.". . . and then Bapu began to write the letter to MacDonald.

August 18, 1932

After finishing it in the morning Bapu said, "You stop spinning for a while and go through this letter so that it may be sent at once." The Sardar and I read it. Then he [Sardar] said, "There is no reference in the letter to other parts of the decision. May not this be misinterpreted to mean that they are approved by you?" "No", replied Bapu. "My views are well known. Still if you wish, I will insert one paragraph, although I would then have to enter into argument. In this letter I propose to leave out all argument, this having been included in the letter to Samuel Hoare." I suggested that Bapu should only say his soul rebelled against the decision as a whole, but part of it was so vicious that he would lay down his life in the attempt to get it annulled. "No", said Bapu. "No such comparison may fairly be instituted. If it were, they would say that I wanted to get the decision annulled in its entirety and had seized upon a certain part of it as a pretext. I do want the whole decision to go. But at night I thought for a moment over the question whether other points should be included and decided against their inclusion."

The same subject was discussed in the evening. Bapu observed, "I cannot put in other things at all, for that would be tantamount to mixing politics with religion. The two questions are in fact distinct from each other." He then continued, "I have rehearsed everything in my own mind. Everything you have suggested was considered by me before I reached the decision. Separate electorates for the Muslims and the rest are fraught with danger. They will combine with the British to

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Ramsay MacDonald", 18-8-1932.

suppress the Hindus. But I can think of methods by which the combination can be dealt with. When once the outsider who foments quarrels is gone, we can tackle our problems with success. But as regards the so-called untouchables I have no other remedy. How possibly am I to explain things to these poor fellows? To draw suffering on oneself when misfortune dogs one's footsteps is no novelty. How did Sudhanva fall into the pan full of hot oil and how did Prahlad embrace a pillar of red-hot iron? There will be many satyagraha movements even after the attainment of swaraj. I have often had the idea that after the establishment of swaraj I should go to Calcutta and try to stop animal sacrifice offered in the name of religion. The goats at Kalighat are worse off even than untouchables. They cannot attack men with their horns. They can never throw up an Ambedkar from their midst. My blood boils when I think of such violence. Why do they not offer tigers instead of goats?"

In the morning we discussed the possible repercussions of Bapu's step. I said, "It will be misinterpreted in a variety of ways. Here in India there will be senseless imitation of it while in America they will say Gandhi obtained his release by his fast." "I know", replied Bapu. "In America they will swallow anything, and there are British agents ready to help them to do so. Many will even say that I am now a bankrupt, that my spirituality is not paying dividends; therefore, I committed suicide like cunning insolvents. And in this country there will be blind imitation, and misinterpretation. The Government will perhaps release me and let me die outside prison, or perhaps they will let me die in jail, as in the case of MacSwiney. Our own men will be critical. Jawaharlal will not like it at all. He will say we have had enough of such religion. But that does not matter. When I am going to wield a most powerful weapon in my spiritual armoury, misinterpretation and the like may never act as a check."

August 19, 1932

The Superintendent came and asked why Bapu was going to take such a drastic step. He replied there was no alternative. The Superintendent suspected that Hoare had perhaps not even informed the British Cabinet. Bapu said, "I believe he must have informed them. But your suspicion is not ill-placed. Hoare is a man of such a type that he might not inform them. And when the Cabinet comes to know of it, he will say he did not think he should worry them with the case of a man who was ready to die for such a trifle. But I think if he did not inform the Cabinet, he would lose his career as well as reputation." The Superintendent asked what effect Bapu's fast would have in England. "None", replied Bapu. "Even if all the untouchables in a body ask for joint electorates, the British can say that in the case of a minority which has been suppressed for centuries they alone can decide what is good for it; the suppressors cannot understand its needs." He then continued, " My whole life has been passed that way. This last step of mine is the crown of my career. I had no idea that I

would have to give up my life for this. But it is a noble object. The beginning was made 50 years ago, when as a child I began to smoke and then felt I was doing the wrong thing and must make a clean breast of it. Since then I have made continuous progress in the knowledge and the practice of truth."

The Collector came in the afternoon and said : "What can they do if they are not to give such a decision? There must be some solution. In matters like this you cannot insist upon absolute justice and right." "No", replied Bapu. "The solution may be unreasonable but it must be acceptable to all. But there is no agreement at the back of this decision. They asked us for a solution in England but they did not see that they were addressing a packed house, and therefore their demand could never be satisfied.". . .

In the morning Bapu said, "It is a law of satyagraha that when a man has no weapon in his hands and when he cannot think of a way out, he should take the final step of giving up his body. What did the Rajput women do? What did Kamalavati about whom we were reading the other day do? She had resolved that she would not fall alive into the hands of the enemy. She therefore embraced death as a dear friend."

August 20, 1932

The Sardar and I thought today that the news of Bapu's impending fast should be passed on to the outside world by some means or other. But that was impossible without a breach of Bapu's promise. He has promised that he on his part would never send the news out. And we could not be disloyal to him. The Sardar was very much worried . . . .

August 21, 1932

"People will tell us", said the Sardar, "that we were here with you and should have somehow or other sent the information outside, say, through Dahyabhai who sees me every week."

"That is not to be thought of", replied Bapu. "Can we tell them that we would now inform the outside world of this by some means or other? We have promised to maintain absolute secrecy from our side, and that is the end of the matter so far as we are concerned. You must have noticed that in the letter I have addressed to MacDonald I have said with perfect indifference that if he made it possible, I wanted public opinion to be affected by my letters. What can they do, supposing Malaviyaji and Rajagopalachari come to know about the impending fast this very day? It is a matter of only a few days. I think it is necessary to give a slight shock even to these two leaders. Rajaji is a clever man and will at once understand why I was driven to take this step. The shock will help him to understand it. Don't you see that I have advanced no argument in this letter? Could I not have framed a long indictment? But I restricted myse lf to this one point for which I would gladly sacrifice my life. I had reserved my life for a nobler purpose, but meanwhile this occasion has arisen. What

can I do now? The satyagraha is directed not against Congressmen who are in jail, but against non-Congressmen in order to make them understand what they are doing. Don't you see none of them is at all perturbed by the British Government's proposals as regards untouchability? This inertia is sickening, and it cannot be dealt with in any other way. The possible consequences of separate electorate for Harijans fill me with horror. Separate electorate for all other communities will still leave room for me to deal with them, but I have no other means to deal with untouchables. These poor fellows will ask why I who claim to be their friend should offer satyagraha simply because they were granted some privileges; they would vote separately but vote with me. They do not realize that the separate electorate will create division among Hindus so much so that it will lead to bloodshed. Untouchable hooligans will make common cause with Muslim hooligans and kill caste Hindus. Has the British Government no idea of all this? I do not think so. And to cap it all, they have brought in Irwin. The Archbishop of Canterbury said they could not do without Irwin's co-operation. And now the Christian Irwin is a party to this nefarious scheme."

"No, no, Vallabhbhai. Previous publication of the news will only do harm; sudden shock is the treatment required. It would be different if you felt that this was a serious blunder. You are both associated with it; and therefore you are responsible to some extent, but the final responsibility rests with me alone, for I have done what suggested itself to me. This is a case in which no one else's consent is necessary. When I fasted during the Bombay riots, C. R. Das and Motilal Nehru insisted that I should have consulted them before undertaking it. But I explained that the fast was undertaken by me not as a Congressman but as a man. I observed a certain religion and I fasted in accordance with its doctrine. I said the same thing to Hakim Ajmal Khan as regards the fast connected with Hindu-Muslim tension. Now too it is for me a religious and not a political question."

August 22, 1932

[Answering Mahadev Desai, Gandhiji said] : ". . . The suppressed classes are in great peril today. The pity of it is that no one else is aware of it. It may be that when I am released, the situation might have deteriorated to such an extent that it cannot be retrieved. Numerous untouchables might have been converted to Islam or else the caste Hindus might have crushed them into submission. This part of the British Government's decision seems so dangerous to me that even if all other parts had been acceptable, I would have been compelled to take such a step in order to combat it. . . ."

The Diary of Mahadev Desai, Vol. I, pp. 291-304

1. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

September 5, 1932

MY DEAR PADMAJA,

Your basket of oranges again! Seeing that you will insist on sending them no matter what I say. let me tell you that they are really a good variety—very juicy.

You have responded to the gentle driving by the poor little slave-driver. Even I could decipher your letter without difficulty. But I do not want you, please, to exert yourself when you are lying flat on your back. Any abomination will do. Even the abominations of loved ones are preferable to their silence. But when you are really ill, why not get some willing assistance? Anybody will gladly write to your dictation. Your mention of that magnificent story of the Buddha brings to mind many sacred things. Yes, I do dream many dreams. All may not be airy nothings or I would be crushed under the weight of the love I appropriate from people of all sorts and conditions—men, women, boys and girls.[1] Sardar and Mahadev have more books than they can cope with. The former is absorbed like a diligent student in his Sanskrit studies; the latter in his French and Urdu thanks all the same on their behalf for your offer. It is no use, I fear, your wanting to see them. I wish it was possible.

Love from us all.

Yours,

SLAVE-DRIVER

SHRIMATI PADMAJA NAIDU

C/O SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY

POONA CITY

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] This paragraph has already been reproduced in "Letter to Padmaja Naidu", 5-9-1932.

2. LETTER TO NANALAL K. JASANI

September 5, 1932

BHAI NANALAL,

I had been awaiting your letter and was relieved when it came. I have already written to Mayashankar[1] ; I hope he got the letter. I have been restraining Champa. I had also dissuaded Manjula[2]. I think Maganlal would welcome this. She seems to me a very wise girl.

Do you find any difficulty in selling the emeralds? Or is it because of obstruction by somebody that you have not been able to sell them?

It is certainly worthy of you not to wish to withdraw the money deposited in your name by the Doctor. The daughters, however, should get the money set apart for them, but at present I see no possibility of their being able to withdraw any part of it. Hence, the time has not yet come for thinking about your share. Everything can be settled if the train gets on the rails. We will see about it provided the family does not break up and the bitterness disappears.

Please write to me regularly.

If you act as Chhaganlal advises, everything will end well.

I know that you will go on doing your duty irrespective of whether they love you or slight you and, therefore, I do not worry.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9470a

3. A LETTER

September 5, 1932

You are either cunning or foolish. Do you really not know what *'vikar'* means? The *vikar* resulting from eating pulses and that resulting from physical touch, are both signs of something wrong in us. Both disturb the equilibrium. The first kind of *vikar* results from swallowing some external substance; the second is a change of mental state resulting from the sight of some external object. A *vikar* that can shake one's whole being may prove harmful. If a woman feels *vikar*

[1] Mayashankar Vrajlal Desai, business partner of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta.

[2] Wife of Maganlal Mehta.

towards a man, society does not always hold her guilty; that is, when it springs from a desire to marry that person and such marriage is not forbidden, the matter is not kept secret from one's people and one is free to marry. According to me, you are not yet fit to marry, for you are studying and are still a minor. Your having such relations with . . . [1] is improper, as he was your teacher and was, moreover, like a brother to you. Call your feeling what you like, whether *vikar* or desire for marriage, you kept it secret and, therefore, it is blameworthy.

You do not understand the meaning of independence also. When you show the letters to your elders of your own free will, you do not lose your independence but seek your safety. If somebody posts himself at our door-step, he is like a Government bailiff depriving us of our freedom; but if we station a watchman at the gate, we do not lose our freedom but protect it. In the same way, if you in your adolescent state regard your elders as guardians of your interests, open your heart to them and show your letters to them. You do not lose your independence but seek protection for it. I earnestly wish that you should become independent. It was for protecting your independence that I advised you to show your letters, etc., to your parents. If, however, you cannot reconcile yourself to this and feel it an irksome restraint, you may keep your letters private. I do not want to put pressure on you in any way, as that would crush your individuality. I only wish that you should become a brave girl and a spirited servant of the people. And I shall be extremely pained if you stop writing to me.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 6-7

4. LETTER TO BEGUM MOHAMMAD ALAM

[Before *September 6, 1932*][2]

It is my conviction that your husband[3] will come round. I have recieved the doctor's letter which has kept me informed of his health. Your letter has given me further information regarding his health.

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

[2] The report in the source is dated September 6.

[3] Dr. Mohammad Alam, who was a prisoner in Lahore Central Jail and had been ailing.

Please keep unbroken correspondence with me and convey Sardar Patel's, Mahadev Desai's and my good wishes to the doctor. Through the grace of God we are all well here, and hope you will not find any difficulty in reading this letter which is written in broken Urdu.

Advance, 7-9-1932.

5. LETTER TO MOHAN N. PARIKH

September 7, 1932

CHI. MOHAN,

May you live long. Be good and serve the country. Keep the vow which you have taken, namely, that during the year in which you are entering you will learn by heart four chapters[1] . And also make an effort to understand their meaning.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9183

6. LETTER TO RATILAL SHETH

September 7, 1932

BHAISHRI RATILAL,

I have your letter. Chhaganlal and Lilavati[2] write to me and I feel satisfied with their letters. I also receive complaints against both of them which I immediately pass on to them. Lilavati wrote about her health to me too. If Chhaganlal willingly permits her to go, I think it would be good to call her there for some time. Her health at any rate would improve. Manekbehn[3] seems to be very much displeased with her. Lilavati says that she has done nothing but I do not believe she is so completely innocent. For one thing, her tongue is very sharp. And, moreover, Manekbehn is a simple-minded woman and anybody can easily deceive her. I had observed in Rangoon and also when Lilavati was at Sabarmati, that she could not tolerate any criticism. But how can even you change her nature? You have been exercising upon her whatever good influence you can as her father.

[1] Of the *Gita.*
[2] Addressee's daughter, and chhaganlal's wife.
[3] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's widow

Maganlal wrote to me a letter with which I was quite satisfied. Manjula seems to me to be a girl who has not yet felt the evil influence of the ways of the world. If necessary, I will request you to go to Rangoon. Let us hope that the two brothers will settle everything peacefully.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7168. Also C.W. 4662. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

7. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

September 7, 1932

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. What you want cannot be sent for *Rentia Baras*. How do you forget that we are prisoners? But you may imagine that our yarn is there. Mahadev draws yarn of about hundred counts from Keshu's slivers. If there is a proper spindle, it would not take much to draw a thinner yarn. I spin a yarn of 40 counts on Magan spinning-wheel. It takes about three hours to spin 250 rounds of yarn. It takes much of my time. But as long as my hand gives work, I will stick to it. This time, I do not have with me the right mechanic. Otherwise, I would have got the alterations made. Whatever changes you make, do not sacrifice the simplicity of the spinning-wheel. In order to draw fine yarn, I feel the distance between the spindle and the tip should be reduced. There are more chances of fine yarn gettingsnapped if drawn long. The spindle should be shorter and thinner than it is. This is only my thinking.

That you have set up a limit [of work] is more than enough. Do not be impatient. Do not build castles in the air. Keep writing to me regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al : S.N. 32940

8. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

September 8, 1932

For exercise, *pranayama* done slowly and standing has wonderful effect. It should be done slowly and methodically. You have to keep time in *pranayama* as you have to in music. The breathing must be rhythmic. Once you have learnt to do this by practice, your lungs will have to do much less work and at the same time they will be able to inhale more oxygen. As they inhale more oxygen, they exhale more carbon dioxide. You can gradually increase the time of this exercise. If it is done correctly, its beneficial effects will be felt immediately. You will feel less tired, your appetite will improve, the mind will remain calm and, if the body is cold, it will become warm.

Yes, it is true that my reason does not accept the necessity of sex-pleasure, and my view is confirmed by experience. The dangerous thing about artificial means of birth-control is that their acceptance implies the acceptance of the necessity of sex-pleasure. If the principle is universally adopted, that *brahmacharya* is desirable in all conditions, nobody would use artificial means of birth-control. As thefts will continue, though stealing is an anti-social activity, so also it is likely that artifical means of birth-control will continue to be used. But it is necessary to create a climate of opinion in which they are regarded as undesirable. Anybody who indulges in sex-pleasure must accept the responsibility of progeny. The hardships resulting from the birth of children must be borne. It is only thus that one can learn the lesson of complete self-control.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 12

9. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 8, 1932

CHI. TARAMATI,

I have received a letter from Mathuradas today. He writes:

> I am maintaining fairly good health. I am in a cheerful mood. My time passes quite well. The doctor has given me a warm jacket from his own house for my use. Apart from the prescribed diet, I get one lb. of milk. I also get hot

water for both. Hard days of monsoon are about to be over. Hence, the weather will be less oppressive. I have stopped taking rice and *dal* even after coming here. Milk, wheat and vegetables are my chief food. I sleep quite well. I do not even spin at present because the *Yeravda chakra* is in disrepair. By way of physical exercise I take rounds.

With regard to reading, etc., he mentions some English titles. Mathuradas writes that he does not intend calling you right now. You will have received my letter[1] with which I had enclosed the letter for Dilip's teacher.

You must keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

10. A LETTER

September 8, 1932

I find in your letter here and there traces of deceit. If my impression is wrong, please correct me. If, on the contrary, my suspicion is correct, you should overcome this defect in you. This will be your *shraddha* to Doctor. May God grant you wisdom. If I am doing you an injustice, please save me from that sin.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 12

11. LETTER TO VIMAL KISHORE MEHROTRA

September 8, 1932

CHI. VIMAL,

I have your letter. You must improve your hand. You must not run away from the prayer meeting, it is discourtesy to God.

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 4985. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

[1] *Vide* "Statement on Untouchability—I", 4-11-1932.

12. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI[1]

September 9, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

Will you please come?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5122

13. LETTER TO RAMSAY MACDONALD

September 9, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have to thank you for your frank and full letter telegraphed and received this day. I am sorry, however, that you put upon the contemplated step[2] an interpretation that never crossed my mind. I have claimed to speak on behalf of the very class to sacrifice whose interests you impute to me a desire to fast myself to death. I had hoped that extreme step itself would effectively prevent any such selfish interpretation. Without arguing I affirm that for me this matter is one of pure religion. The mere fact of "Depressed" classes having double votes does not protect them or Hindu society in general from being disrupted. In establishment of a separate electorate at all for "Depressed" classes I sense the injection of a poison that is calculated to destroy Hinduism and do no good whatsoever to "Depressed" classes. You will please permit me to say that no matter how sympathetic you may be you cannot come to a correct decision on a matter of such vital and religious importance to the parties concerned. I should not be against even over-representation of "Depressed" Classes. What I am against is their statutory separation, even in a limited form, from Hindu fold, so long as they choose to belong to it. Do you not realize that if your decision stands and constitution comes into being, you arrest the marvellous growth of work of Hindu reformers who have dedicated themselves to the uplift of their suppressed brethren in every walk of life?

[1] Superintendent of the Yeravda Central Prison.

[2] Gandhiji had announced his intention to begin an indefinite fast from September 20 in protest against Government's announcement providing for separate electorates for the Depressed Classes.

I have therefore been compelled reluctantly to adhere to the decision conveyed to you.

As your letter may give rise to a misunderstanding, I wish to state that the fact of my having isolated for special treatment the "Depressed" Classes question from other parts of your decision does not in any way mean I approve of or am reconciled to other parts of decision. In my opinion many other parts are open to very grave objection. Only I do not consider them to be any warrant for calling from me such self-immolation as my conscience has prompted me to in the matter of "Deepressed" Classes.

I remain,
Your faithful friend,
M. K. GANDHI

Government of India, Home Department, Political, File No. 31/113/32 Pol.
Courtesy: National Archives of India

14. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 9, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

Please let me have the following information as soon as possible:

1. How much fuel is consumed in making *rotlis* and how much in making bread from the same quantity of flour?
2. The method of making bread.
   (a) How is the leaven prepared?
   (b) In addition to leaven, do we mix salt, jaggery or sugar with the flour?
   (c) The various steps of the process;
   (d) How long is the dough left over?
   (e) How long is the loaf kept in the oven?

In short, the description should be so written out that, after reading it, we can try the method here. I want this information so that I may compare our method with the method followed here. How much quantity of flour do you use these days for making bread? What does the flour cost? How many persons would have to work for making *rotlis* and for making bread from the same quantity of flour?

I hope the boy is in fine health and spirits and that Shankarbhai's hand is now free from its prison.[1]

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8249. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

15. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

September 9, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

Do not brood over the deeper meaning of the *Gita.* As you try to put into practice its teaching about non-attachment, its deeper meaning will automatically reveal itself to you, and, when you understand it, you will be perfectly satisfied. Meanwhile, you should have faith in the meaning explained by Vinoba. Mostly my explanations are his. Wherever you find a difference between us, you should tentatively accept the meaning which appeals to you. There is no doubt at all that if you can spin with ease with a bamboo *takli*. it is most suitable for the purpose. You should also learn how to make such a *takli.* If you have not tried enema for constipation, you should do so. Sometimes it seems to help very much. I get a little news about Wardha, but you also should give me in your letters whatever news you get there. Do not lose hope about overcoming your constipation.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6736. Also C.W. 4479. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

16. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

September 9, 1932

CHI. GANGABEHN,

This time you wrote to me a long and beautiful letter.

I know, of course, that to you Hakimji is not merely a physician but is a brother, one of your family, a friend, a counsellor and a respected elder too. It is, therefore, quite right that you take as much help from him as he can give. You did well in visiting the homes of

[1] Shankarbhai Patel had his arm in plaster; *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 11/15-8-1932.

Muslims. Such work will bear fruit in future. If our hearts are pure and filled with love, we shall succeed in getting rid of all prejudices.

The Inspector-General gave me news about Kakasaheb. He is in good health. I had also a letter from him. Though it is true that he has lost weight, he is not suffering from any disease. There is, therefore, no cause for worry.

Lakshmi, it seems, is enjoying the benefit of good company.

It was good that you paid a visit to Noorbanu[1]. Look after Qureshi as long as you are there. I am happy that Ramibehn is still with you.

If you feel comfortable staying with Shamalbhai[2] you may certainly do so. Do what keeps you cheerful. My mind is at rest since Nath is there always to help you.

My advice regarding Babu[3] is that, for the present, he should study, that is, he should become proficient in Gujarati, Sanskrit, Hindi, arithmetic, history, geography, all the processes through which cotton passes till it is woven into khadi, and carpentry, and learn a little music. He will then know what line to take up. His intellect must blossom and his heart must expand.

Sardar and Mahadev of course read your letters. All of us often think of you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G.S. Gangabehnne, pp. 65-6. Also C.W. 8795. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] Wife of Pyare Ali.

[2] Shamalbhai Behcharbhai Patel, a worker from Borsad taluka. He was Kakasaheb's fellow-prisoner during his first internment in Sabarmati Jail in 1930.

[3] Addressee's grandson and Purushottamdas D. Saraiya's younger brother.

17. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

Y. C. P.,
September 10, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

Just one line to thank you for your kind letter of 7th August. I have not received Bishop Fisher's[1] book yet. As you know Sardar Vallabhbhai and Mahadev Desai are with me. We are turning the time at our disposal to good account. We are just now concentrating upon drawing from the quality of cotton at our disposal as fine a thread as possible. The experiment is deeply interesting and even exciting if there can be excitement about such a humdrum process as hand-spinning. For us it is a demand of Indian humanity.

With kindest regards from us all.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

THE REV. J. H. HOLMES

From a photost at: C. W. 10963. Courtesy: S. P. K. Gupta

18. LETTER TO MATHURI N. KHARE

September 10, 1932

CHI. MATHURI[2],

This time your handwriting was bad. There were quite a few mistakes in the language too. You should try and avoid such mistakes as far as you can. And one can always improve one's handwriting if one takes sufficient care.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 268. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

[1] American Methodist, author of *That Strange Little Brown Man – Gandhi*
[2] Daughter of Narayan Moreshwar Khare.

19. LETTER TO BABALBHAI MEHTA

September 10, 1932

CHI. BABAL,

I got your letter. Once you have decided that it is good to do a certain thing, you should not wait for even one second. For death may come at any time, and therefore, delay in beginning a good thing may result in our inability to do it at all. For when the soul leaves the body, it takes with it its deeds. Its intentions which are not acted upon are merely credited to its account. Suppose I decide to take five rupees with me when going on a journey by train, but through carelessness, forget to take the money. In the train, I cannot cash my intention and the fact will make me uneasy and torment me. Any person who does not join in *bhajans*, etc., though attending the prayer, is guilty of untruth. We may or may not be at fault if somebody deceives us into giving him what he wants.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 944850.

20. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

September 10, 1932

CHI. VASUMATI,

Indeed! You could barely find time to write to me! What indolence! And the letter also is as good as no letter. What about your experiences during all these months?

I hope you will go and see Qureshi. Did you see Pyare Ali's Ashram?

Did you visit Amina's children?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 577. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

21. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

September 10, 1932

CHI. NARMADA,

You may go on hoping to receive a long letter from me even at the risk of being called greedy. One day I may think of writing such a letter to you.

Your Gujarati is not good. You should get your letters corrected by someone. But do not bother if that cannot be done. In any case, you should continue to write to me whatever you wish to.

I should like you to learn in time everything that is worth learning in the Ashram.

Who teaches you Gujarati? What other languages are you learning?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2763. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

22. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

September 10, 1932

BELOVED DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

I got your letter and *bhajan*. The *bhajan* is very good. I do not have time to write much today. I hope all of you approve of my decision to fast. Father, at any rate, should have no difficulty in understanding my step. I have taken it in God's name and for His work and He will bring me to the goal. I seek blessings from both Father and Mother. What will you send? You should indeed dance with joy that God has given me an opportunity to offer such a holy sacrifice. When is Hamida[1] arriving? Is Bhaiji still there? Convey my *vandemataram* to him. All of us are well here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: S.N. 9670

[1] Addressee's sister.

23. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

September 11, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

I have your letter. As you could easily save many hours in doing the work in the store-room and cleaning, so also, with some thought, you can save time in other work as well. For that, sincerity and co-operation on the part of everybody are required. If all of you work as a team, each doing his best, a lot more work can be done.

This holds true for all living creatures. If you watch the ants and other insects, you will learn the same lesson from their activities.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

24. LETTER TO GULAB

September 11, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

With practice, you can increase your speed at spinning. What is it at present? The slivers must be good and the spindle straight.

There is much scope for improvement in your handwriting. If possible, you should practise writing with a reed-pen with model letters of the alphabet in front of you.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1724

25. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

September 11, 1932

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

Though I am not sure you will get this letter, I am writing it. I would have been glad if you had written to me giving me your impressions about the Ashram. If you get this letter, you may write to me even now. I must know everything, though of course there is nothing I can do.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5508

26. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

September 11, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

If you have patience and faith, all the pages of the "book of nature" will be open to you. It is the promise of the God of Truth that "to those who worship Me (Truth) with love, I grant the yoga of understanding".[1] Meditation on this verse opens up to me all the pages of my nature. When the book is lying before you, whosefault is it if you cannot read it or do not take the trouble to read it? But I think I have said too much. In any case, I have explained to you the method of reading that book. You will say that you knew it. If you do, would it not prove me right in describing you as omniscient?

I can have no objection at all to your sending all my letter to . . . The last letter was about her and, therefore, I particularly wished that you should send it to her. You may now write and tell me how the matter stands. . . .[2] says that I could not find the correct remedy for . . . and she is right, but only partly. I have discovered the remedy, but I am not in a position to apply it. How can I help that? The remedy which he needs is a woman—either a woman whom he could love and would marry, or one who would be more than a sister to him. I had my eyes on . . . ever since I saw her and . . .'s affection for her and hers for him. I have always believed in the innocence of their love. But how could I burden . . . with a responsibility till an opportunity arose? Your letter gave me the required opportunity. I do not know whether my diagnosis is correct and whether . . . is the remedy for him. Perhaps . . . herself does not know it. We can discover the truth only if we try the remedy which I have suggested. All that I desire is . . .'s peace of mind. In the absence of such peace, his abilities remain unused and his health is wasting away. He does not even know whether he feels interested in the work which he does.

You seem to have collected from somewhere a good many stories about my childhood.

Do you know that Ramabehn is ill? You should at least go and talk to her. In actual fact there is often no cause for the fear which we entertain in our imagination. The saying, "A ghost is the projection

[1] *Bhagavad* Gita, x, 10.

[2] The names have been omitte

of our fancies and a witch of our fears" is literally true. It is a hundred per cent true.

I hope you are properly looking after the new arrivals among women. You may reduce your other work, but attend to this carefully.

I read about Kisan[1] in the paper. Dhurandhar has been doing fine work. But he should take care and make his body strong. What is his weight?

What did I write about you in my letter to Anandi[2] ? What did I tell Lilavati[3]? I don't remember. I have no doubt at all about your observing *brahmacharya* at present. I don't know what may happen in the future. If you can tell, you know more than Narad and Rama did. However, I have always admired your resolution. I don't believe that anyone can easily tempt you. But I have seen women as determined as you get married. How can anyone blame them for that? Hence, at present I can only wish that you will remain faithful to your resolution, and bless you that you may. I may help you as much as I can, and give you blows as often as necessary. The result lies in God's hands.

I want your letters to be in no way different from what they are. If you cease to be natural, I will take no interest in you. You are full of complexes. I can try to remove them only as and when I observe them. However, who am I to remove them? It does not lie in man's power to do so. I should like to be an instrument in removing them to the extent that He permits me to be so. It is in my interest to do this, since I hope to take much work from you. If I believed that what I was trying to inculcate in you would bear no fruit, do you think I would take the trouble to write these long letters?

I do not know any instance of the cause of an individual's or society's fall having been discovered. Many guesses, of course, have been made. The immediate cause is sometimes discovered, but in all cases there is not one such cause only. Generally speaking, however, it may be said that a fall can be traced to lack of dharma. Political subjection can never be the root cause, for it is itself the result of other causes, other weaknesses.

[1] Daughters of Lakshmidas P. Asar
[2] *ibid*
[3] Addressee's friend, Kisan Ghumatkar

One's duty as a neighbour is always to help a neighbour in a manner consistent with dharma.

The seed of ego is destroyed only when one feels oneself to be a cipher. If anyone looks inward and ponders deeply over the matter, he cannot but realize his total insignificance. As we count an insect insignificant relatively to the earth, so is man insignificant in relation to this universe which is millions of times vaster than the earth. That he is endowed with reason makes no difference to this fact. His greatness lies in realizing his insignificance, for simultaneously with such realization, he realizes that, insignificant in himself, he is an insignificant aspect of God and that, when he merges in Him, he becomes God, that this microscopic atom which he is contains the infinite power of God.

I believe in the theory of *maya* in my own way. In the cycle of Time this universe is *maya*, but, during the moment of time it exists, it is real enough. I believe in the theory of the many-sidedness of truth.

If there is anything in this world which faces man as a certainty, it is death. And yet we fear that inescapable certainty; that is the greatest wonder of life, that is real attachment and that is atheism. It is possibe only for man to rise above it.

One's good and evil deeds do accompany the soul after the death of the body. The soul, as soul, suffers their consequences, whether in another physical body or in a subtle body.

Isn't this enough?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10302. Also C.W. 5753. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

27. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

September 11, 1932

CHI. MANGALA,

I forgive you for not writing to me. But do not repeat it. It is good that you went to Baroda. Does Baroda suit your health better? Where is Kanu staying and with whom? Did you see Moti's[1] house at Baroda?

[1] Motibehn, wife of Najuklal Choksi

Consult Premabehn about the pain in your back.

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: G. W. 111022 . Courte sy: Pushpa Naik

28. LETTER TO PUSHPA S. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 71, 1932

CHI. PUSHPA,

Should not people living together give presents to one another? What about the presents given by parents to their children on their birthdays or on festivals? Besides, in the Ashram all live together. But no one can take something belonging to another without his permission. I do not say that presents have to be given. But the argument you advance is not valid. Supposing you had simply plucked a flower and presented it to Mangala that morning, it would have been a token of love. But your argument is: if Mangala is given a present, why not the other girls? Real love is not in giving the present. Love expresses itself spontaneously when the moment comes.

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: C. W. 11084. Courte sy: Pushpa Naik

29. A LETTER

September 11, 1932

It is our actions which count. Thoughts, however good in themselves, are like false pearls unless they are translated into action.

We should always see our neighbour's virtues and our own defects. A man like Tulsidas described himself as a crooked man despite all his goodness.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 15

30. A LETTER

September 11, 1932

You say that you are mentally disturbed and that, therefore, you will not write to me. This too is a sign of *vikar.* It is necessary to understand the exact meaning of this word. Even being angry is *vikar*. To feel all kinds of desires is also *vikar*. To think of wearing this or that, eating or not eating this or that is *vikar.* Similarly to wish to marry, or, even without wishing to marry, to feel pleasure in the company of boys of one's own age, in talking with a boy in private and in touching him, or in unbecoming joking with him, that also is *vikar.* This last is looked upon as a very serious *vikar*. So long as a woman is subject to any of these *vikars,* she will be subject to menstruation. In the case of man it is not menstruation, but something else. In this sense even Mirabehn cannot be considered to be free from *vikar.* So she still has menstruation. She does not sin in this. She has indeed risen very high. She is continually striving to overcome all her *vikars.* The *vikar* of desire for man has completely disappeared from within her. But she still has anger and attachment, and desires. All these too she strives to control. If a woman attains a state free from *vikars,*such as I have described, she will not get monthly periods. I would be happy if all of you girls were to strive to attain such a state. Even if you do not succeed in your present life, what does it matter? The first lesson for you to learn is to keep nothing secret. You should have no secret relations with anyone. You should cling to the vow of truth.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 17-8

31. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

September 11, 1932

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. Your letters from Banaras and Delhi have not reached me. You have not acknowledged the letters I addressed to Deolali. It is good that you have now given me detailed news.

First of all about your health. The benefit Mira has derived from salt is largely psychological. It cannot all be attributed to salt; salt does not possess all that virtue. No article of diet or medicine can affect

brahmacharya to that extent because ultimately *brahmacharya* is a state of mind; a disturbed mind affects the body. As long as the mind is not firm and rid of passions how can diet alone help? Admittedly, improper or excessive food can be harmful. Salt, taken in small quantities can do no harm. In the same way, it does not appear that you have lost much by giving up salt. Salt does not have enough strength to affect one either way. I have written to you earlier regarding a suitable diet for you. Ultimately you must find out by experiment what food suits you. Go to Deolali if you have found the climate there agreeable. It may also be a good thing otherwise, for you will be of help to Radha and Damodardas. True, there are only a few days left if they are to leave Deolali at the end of the month. But however short the period it will benefit you to go there. And even if they a have to vacate the sanatorium there is nothing wrong in your staying on at Deolali for your health's sake. It ought to be easy to find another place. What happened to your plan of going to Kuvalayanand? What did Dr. Talwalkar say? You must build up your health.

Now for the Ashram. It is true that the Ashram inmates are not what they ought to be, they are full of short-comings. That is why the public have the right to criticize and condemn the Ashram inmates who must not only tolerate the criticism but take a lesson from it. I am not surprised to learn that you too have been similarly affected because that is the truth. But in spite of all that the total result is not bad; that is my belief. People residing in the Ashram have certainly changed for the better. The fact is that much remains to be done while little has been accomplished, but that was to be expected. And who can be defined as Ashram inmates? If you have not discussed this matter with Narandas, open your heart to him and listen to what he has to say. I have no hope of finding a more steadfast, wise, sensible and conscientious man than Narandas and I consider it God's grace that it was granted me to have him. It is also true that Ashram people are not free from diseases but they do not really catch illness in the Ashram; the malady is already with them. In short we try to bring about fulfilment amid deficiency. God has ordained that we go on making efforts till we die but has reserved unto Himself the fruit. Thus I shall be content if it can be said that there is no tardiness of effort in our Ashram. I shall even admit that there is scope for improvement in the effort.

Is anybody doing something for Pandit Jagatram[1]?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2394

32. WORKING AND THINKING[2]

September 11, 1932

I wrote some time ago about fully using our power of thinking when doing any work.[3] I said something towards the end in that article, which it is necessary to explain further. I suggested there that our thinking may be either conducive to or destructive of the general good, that, in other words, it may be either divine or demoniac in nature. One person, as he spins daily, may think and try to invent improvements which would benefit the millions of spinners and make their work easier. Another person may think how fine it would be if he alone could spin on his wheel as much yarn as ten million persons and get rich. The thinking of the former is divine in nature, it is conducive to the good of society. The thinking of the second person is demoniac, it is opposed to the good of society. Thus, it is not enough that we should think when doing any work. Our thinking should aim at the good of all,and not at satisfying our own selfish desires. Indeed he who tries to serve only his selfish interests not only harms the good of others but in the end does not serve even his own good.

If everybody keeps this point of view before him and thinks about the work he is doing, and so works intelligently, he would get the best education, would find his work interesting, develop his intellect, enlarge and purify his heart, acquire efficiency in his work and make inventions and improvements which would benefit the world. As the work has become more interesting it gives him joy; he feels no fatigue in doing it and the work becomes artistic-whether it is cleaning lavatories or roads, shredding vegetables, anything connected with the dairy, writing accounts or something else. A person who

[1] A Political prisoner connected with terrorist activities incarcerated then in the Multan Jail.

[2] This was presumably sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", [7]/ 11-9-1932; *vide* the following item.

[3] *Vide* Action —Thoughtful and Thoughtless", 28-8-1932.

learns to look at everything from the point of view of public good finds no work low or uninteresting. He will see God in any work which comes to his share and feel that he was serving Him through it. His interest in work does not depend on the nature or type of thework. It springs from within, from his sense of devotion to duty. Anybody who wants to understand and practice *Anasaktiyoga* should do all work in this spirit.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U/II. also C.W. 8248 Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

33. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September [*7*][1]*/11, 1932*

CHI. NARANDAS,

It is the morning of Wednesday, and the goats are being milked, singing to us the while. I duly got your mail last evening. I send you my plentiful blessings. Why should I not? You are fulfilling all my hopes and, by your incomparable and intelligent service, fill all three of us with wonder. God seems to have gifted you with the strength to face every kind of ordeal. May you live long and realize the God of Truth through the goddess of ahimsa and help others to do the same.

I got your two postcards about Baba, but each late by a day. The reason is that they did not reach the post-office in time. The words "detained-late fee not paid" are stamped on both. And so find out from the post-office the time of the clearance. Your bigger packet of mail posted on Monday and the postcard posted on Sunday reached me on the same day.

September 10, 1932

I have had no special letter from you till today from which I infer that Kanji Sheth is out of danger. Not only that, he must also have regained strength. I hope Dahibehn[2] is all right. I read in the newspapers that you had very good rains there. Mahadev has been able to go up to 105 counts with Keshu's slivers. I see that if he gets a straight and thin spindle, he will reach 105 counts without difficulty.

[1] Gandhiji began writing this letter on Wednesday, which fell on September 7.

[2] Wife of Raojibhai N. patel.

Though I have asked you to send a thin spindle, we are trying to make one here. We must discover the reason why the cotton grown in the Ashram is not of good quality. The fact that it is attacked by insects shows that the manure is either too little or too much, or that it is not of the right kind. You should ask somebody who knows the secret, orread the descriptions of different types of manures and soils in a book on cotton cultivation available in the market, and experiment accordingly. Agricultural experts now believe that, within certain limits, any crop can be grown in any type of soil.With the help of the new methods they grow in France crops which were formerly thought impossible, and earn profits from them. If anybody there can spare the time, he should study this problem. I think that Maganlal had collected some books on agriculture. We have a copy of the report of the Cotton Committee. You may find some information even in that. If you write to Prof. Higginbottom at Allahabad, perhaps he may help you. He has inspected the soil in the Ashram fields.

If the Gandiva spinning-wheel is placed on one side at right angles to our body, instead of in front, one can stretch one's legs if one wishes to do so. If one wishes to spin sitting on a stool, one can do that, too, with ease. The spinning-wheel can be placed on a box or board on a level with the stool.

I did not follow your explanation about the Anantpur Report. If it was sent by registered post, the post-office must have a copy of the acknowledgement. It will serve. You can inquire in the post-office and ascertain who has signed it. If you are required to pay any fee for inspecting the record, you may do so. If you have called for a fresh copy of the report, it means that this is the third copy he will be sending. How can we put him to such trouble?

What you say about Padma is correct. Read what I have written[1] to Panditiji in regard to the temple. I understood that the image of Ganapati would not be kept in the gymnasium permanently. I have already written to you about Manjula and cod-liver oil.[2] Pay attention to Indu's condition. If there is a danger of his losing his reason, the condition is likely to become extreme[3] . But before that happens you should take steps to avert the possibility.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Nrrayan M. Khare", 3-9-1932.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 3/4/-9-1932.

[3] The portion of the letter from here onwards is placed in *Bapuna Patro—9: Shri Narandas Gandhine,* Pt. I, under September 3. This evidently is an error; *Vide 4th* footnote "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 3/4/9-1932.

The number in the Ashram is quite good. It is very good indeed that Jamna[1] has stayed on in Rajkot. I hope Devbhabhi[2] has fully recovered now. Where is Virmani[3] kept? Amtulbehn tells me in her letter that she liked my addressing her by her full name Amtussalaam in Urdu. I am writing[4] to her to ask her why, but please know from her why she likes the full name and, if that is the right thing, all of you should address her by that name. It is possible that there is no such name as ”Amtul”, and that ”Amtussalaam” is one single word-just as we cannot say ”Ibra” instead of ”Ibrahim” or ”Brij” instead of ”Brijkrishna ”.

September 11, 1932

Dr. Sharma seems to want to come to the Ashram for a temporary stay. Send him the list of the Ashram rules. If he can observe them while he stays there, I see no objection to informing him that he may come. However, do what you think best.

Read my letter[5] to Brijkrishna. He is a man of pure heart. Discuss the matter with him. If it is possible to remove his suspicion, try to do so.

You must have got the postcard[6] which I wrote on Saturday asking you to send me information about how bread is made there. I have started taking interest in the preparation of the bread here, and I, too, eat it. The bread is excellent. Perhaps ours is not better.

Read my letter to Sharda. We have to think over the problem of the girls. I think I can now guess the reason for their bad health. We wish to train all these women who have had very little education, and it is for you to think how that can be done.

There are 52 letters in all, 37 in a bundle and 15 loose.

[PS.]

You will find my Will lying in some place there. Send me a copy of it. If it is sealed in a cover, break open the seal. If you wish to make any suggestion about it, send it to me. I suppose it will be

[1] Addressee’s wife
[2] Addressee’s mother
[3] Wife of Madhavlal Shah
[4] *Vide* “Letter to Amtusalaam”11-9-1932.
[5] *Vide* “Letter to Brijkrishna Chandiwala”, 11-9-1932.
[6] *Vide* “Letter to Narandas Gandhi”, 9-9-1932.

necessary now to revise the names of the trustees. Imam Saheb is no more. I do not remember all the names.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8250 and 8248. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

34. A LETTER

September 11, 1932

God and Nature are one. The various gods are the individual manifestations of God. One can reach God worshipping Him. In depicting the importance of action Tulsidasji has extolled Divine justice. God condones the sins of the devotee. In the language of the Shastra the devotee is purified when he becomes one with God. Purificaton means removal of sins, like alloys from gold.

A saint living in seclusion can perform service by thought alone; there is only one such man in a million.

The very existence of body stands in the way of total ahimsa. And without complete ahimsa one is unable to see Truth. But one who has rid himself of passions comes very near to Truth. We should be content with this.

Up to now by punishment I have understood corporal punishment. Abstaining from food has not been beyond my thought. I would not call that a punishment. No one in any institution has an absolute right to food; it is a question of arriving at an arrangement. There is on the one hand the condition that rules are to be observed and on the other hand that food is to be supplied. Money is no payment for the food we receive in an institution. Rules have to be observed in exchange.

Fear and truth are mutually contradictory terms. But to conceal something which does not contain any element of fear may be not only in conformity with truth but also necessary. A physician may certainly, in the interest of the patient's health, conceal from him the gravity of his illness. It may even be his duty.

A perfect *brahmachari* is one who has all the senses under his control. This state is possible even in this body. Regulating diet is

necessary but it does not play an important part in the observance of *brahmacharya*. Lack of self-control is certainly detrimental. I feel that milk and ghee taken by way of medicine are not harmful.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 15-6

35. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 11, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

Explain to me why I should not call you only 'Amtul'[1]. It is well if you receive the money you are expecting but you should be content even if it is not forthcoming. Your letters are quite good, only you must write more legibly. Anyway, after I have read a few of your letters I shall be able to follow everything. It is astonishing to learn that there is no arrangement in Bombay for the education of girls; I had an idea that the Anjuman had pretty good provision. Consult Narandas about Dr. Sharma I think there is no harm in his coming to the Ashram if he conforms to its rules.

I understand about Kudsia[2]. How nice it would be if the girl gained her health in the Ashram! As for you rest is the most important consideration.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 257

36. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

[Before *September 13, 1932*]

I was waiting for your letter and it came today. I can understand the feelings of the survivors. But you should inculcate in them the fearlessness of death and its advent as that of a friend. We, who should be most indifferent about death, somehow or other fear it more than other religious bodies. Mussalmans appear to fear it the least.

[1] In some previous letters, Gandhiji had addressed her as 'Amtul' to which she seems to have objected; *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 7-11-1932 Her full name consisted of two words 'Amtul', meaning 'servant', and 'salaam' meaning 'peace'.

[2] Addressee's niece.

Next come the Christians. I believe the Chinese too regard death as a most ordinary event in life which it really is. We, on the other hand,remain in a state of collapse for a long time after an important death and never wholly cease to mourn it.

My love to all of you. Vallabhbhai's and Mahadev's good wishes are with you.

Yours,
BAPU

Advance, 13-9-1932

37. CABLE TO C.F. ANDREWS

[*September 13, 1932*][1]

CHARLIE ANDREWS
112 GOWER STREET
LONDON

RECEIVED. REGARD FASTING GOD'S CALL. ONLY CERTAIN PROSPECT OF WITHDRAWAL SEPARATE ELECTORATE FOR DEPRESSED CAN WARRANT POSTPONEMENT.[2] IN MY OPINION YOUR PRESENCE MORE USEFUL THERE. VALLABHBHAI MAHADEV AGREE. LOVE.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX. Also *Mahdevbhaini Diary,* Vol. II, p. 20

38. LETTER TO MOHANLAL M. BHATT

September 13, 1932

I believe that that is my supreme dharma. Hence, neither Ramdas nor any of you should feel unhappy. On the contrary, you should rejoice and thank God for His kindness that one of your co-workers has been inspired to take the ultimate step in dharma and has got an opportunity to do that. I hope all of you understand that nobody should imitate me. Everybody is not fit to undertake an indefinite fast. And the *tapas* performed by a person who is not fit for it is not in accord with the Shastra and is therefore demoniac. His only reward for such *tapas* is physical suffering. Your duty, therefore, is to do your work with greater devotion, to become purer and to remain

[1] From *Mahadevbhaini Diary.*

[2] C.F. Andrews had cabled: "Please postpone fasting till I come. Starting imme diately."

more vigilant, without thinking or worrying about my fast. . . .[1] Nobody should get excited there. Have no doubt that, for those who live in the Ashram, there is no other duty but what I have explained.[2]

Rebirth means transformation of the body—not of the *atman* which dwells in the body. Hence belief in rebirth differs from a scientific concept. The *atman* does not undergo transformation, it only changes its abode. One who does not regard himself as the doer will never kill anybody. This is not a matter of intellectual conviction, it concerns the heart. It is, therefore, incorrect to speak of "without thinking of oneself as the doer" or "dedicating a thing to the Lord". These phrases signify intellectual attitudes whereas the advice in the *Gita* and other scriptures to dedicate everything to the Lord has no reference to the intellect. Our activities are in perfect accord with Vedanta as I understand it.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 21-2

39. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

September 13, 1932

The country now knows about my intention to go on an indefinite fast. I assume that the news has not upset you in the slightest degree. One does not get such a unique opportunity by seeking it. It comes rarely, and only to a fortunate man. I believe that such an opportunity has come to me, and anybody who believes that he has got a unique opportunity would welcome it heartily. Hence you need not feel agitated. If you meet Ghanshyamdas in Calcutta, explain this to him. It will not be necessary to explain to Malaviyaji. I believe that he must be shedding tears of joy at the news and that every moment his heart must be blessing me. Tell him this. If other friends feel sad or depressed, you should show courage and persuade them not to give way to such thoughts. It will be the duty of those who appreciate my step to address themselves more earnestly to the task, to awaken the people to the evil of untouchability and to organize public opinion. If a strong public opinion is organized and expressed peacefully, I may

[1] Omission as in the source.

[2] After this the source has introduced a letter to Devdas Gandhi (the following item) and it is not clear whether any portion between this and the following paragraph has been omitted.

not even have to carry the fast to its logical end. So far as I know myself at present, I would experience nothing but the profoundest peace if I do have to carry the fast to its logical end. If, on the contrary, that does not happen and I remain alive to serve the country still more, I will welcome that too. Either result will be good if my resolution endures till the end.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 22

40. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

September 13, 1932

I have your letter. You have probably heard about my fast. Do not get frightened in the slightest degree by the news and also do not let the other women get frightened. Indeed, you should rejoice that God has granted me an opportunity to go through such an ordeal for the sake of dharma. I also hope that you have understood the meaning of this fast. I shall not have to start the fast if my demands regarding the *Antyajas* are accepted, and even if I have started it I can end it. If, however, I have to carry it on till the end, you should indeed thank God. Only one in millions meets death for which he has prayed. What a good fortune it would be if I met such a death! And if I do not die, it is clear as daylight that it would then be my moral duty to purify myself still further and to devote myself more to service. I think that after having lived with me for fifty years you will be able clearly to understand this simple thing and willingly follow me.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 22-3

41. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 13, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

You must have read in the papers the news about my indefinite fast. I assume that it has not created a panic among the inmates of the Ashram. If they see the matter in the proper light, this should be for them an occasion for rejoicing. A total fast is the ultimate and the highest ideal of the Ashram, but very few persons ever become worthy of the privilege of undertaking it. Such a fast is not an everyday

occurrence. Only a rare person on a rare occasion is entitled to undertake it; I believe that I am on this occasion. If I am wrong, people will judge my step as a sign of false pride and an instance of demoniac self-mortification. I claim nearly half a century of ceaseless effort to purify my mind completely so that I may be able to hear the voice within. I believe that as a result I can now hear it with some distinctness. I have taken the present step in obedience to that voice. The 20th is still a little way away. At present the decision to fast is only a resolve. I am writing this letter to explain that resolve, and to tell all of you that nobody there should get panicky, but that the news should make everybody more devoted to his or her work, purer and more awake. I am sure you yourself do realize that nobody should follow my example and undertake a similar fast. Explain that to others, too. I hope nobody there will wonder why I kept my intention to fast to myself and did not let it become known beyond our circle of three. It is a rule for prisoners that they must not make public the fact of such correspondence. If I even wish in my heart to make it public indirectly, I would disgrace my satyagraha and there would be a blot on the purity of my vow of truth. The value of that vow lies in the perfect purity in its observance. I got your weekly packet. I believe that this time at least I shall be able to send the replies. I am slightly doubtful because during the days which remain the work is likely to be heavier. If there is any development about which I can write to you, I will do so. You can show this letter to all persons who have connections with the Ashram.

Tell Anandi that I intend to write a long letter to her. I liked hers very much. She should have no fear. You should teach all girls to be fearless. If people there are in the habit of whispering among themselves about any girl, it is a bad habit. What is fated to happen to us and the girls will happen. We should not feel suspicious about them all the time and fill them with fear. When we see cause for cautioning any of them, we may do so and then should not think about the matter further. The girls should never feel that they are being suppressed in any way. Any restraints which are put on them should be explained to them and should be imposed in such a manner that they willingly accept them.

Personally, I think you have done the right thing in permitting Hariyomal to return. I hope Baba has completely recovered now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8251. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

42. A LETTER

[After *September 13, 1932*][1]

DEAR SISTER,

You and the other sisters may come and meet me—not that it is necessary. To do work for which the penance is being done is better than seeing this dwindling mass of flesh.

BAPU

The Epic Fast, p. 128

43. LETTER TO K. NATARAJAN

September 14, 1932

DEAR KAMAKOTI,

I have your very touching and tender letter. There need be no grief over the ordeal that 'I have set before me at conscience' call. It is a privilege that rarely comes to one. Having identified myself with our suppressed brethren for fifty years, I saw no escape from it. If however God wants more service from me through this body, He will make the way clear for me.

And why no faith in prayer? Faith is either derived or revealed from within. You should derive it from the testimony without exception of all the teachers and seers of all climes, countries and times. A true prayer is not a mere lip expression. It need never be. Selfless service is prayer. You must not say, 'I have no faith in prayer'.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 24

44. TELEGRAM TO G.D. BIRLA

Express *September* [*15*][2], *1932*

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
BIRLA PARK
BALLYGUNJ, CALCUTTA

RECEIVED. NO CAUSE BEING UPSET. EVERY CAUSE FOR REJOICING THAT GOD GIVEN OPPORTUNITY HAS COME TO ME FOR OFFERING FINAL

[1] According to the source this was in answer to one of the many letters that Gandhiji received following the publication on September 13 of Gandhiji's correspondence with the Government.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to G. D. Birla", 18-9-1932; in the source, however, the date is September 16, 1932.

SACRIFICE FOR MOST DOWNTRODDEN. AM QUITE CERTAIN FAST MUST NOT BE P OSTPONED. UTTERLY INCAPABLE SEND HELPFUL INSTRUCTIONS FROM HERE OR FORESEE FUTURE ACTION.[1]

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX. Also *The Hindu*, 17-9-1932

45. MESSAGE TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

[*September 15, 1932*][2]

No cause for distress. On the contrary, I expect you to rejoice that a comrade of yours has had this God-given opportunity for a final act of satyagraha in the cause of the downtrodden. The date of the fast is not open to reconsideration. Can see you if you get permission.

Amrita Bazaar Patrika, 18-9-1932

46. LETTER TO M.G. BHANDARI

[*September 15, 1932*]

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

Thanks for promptly sending the two important telegrams. If you have authority to pass replies I would like you to send accompanying replies by express message. You will see in my reply to Rajagopalachari that I have said that he could come whenever he chooses.[3] This I have done in the belief that the fact of your sending me a telegram asking for interview presupposes authority for you to grant it. In case you want to see the original telegrams I enclose them herewith and you will please return them to me tomorrow morning.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5127

[1] The source does not mention the date. It would appear, however, that this was one of the messages sent to M. G. Bhandari for transmission. *Vide* the following item.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to M. G. Bhandari", 17-9-1932.

[3] The message as reported, *vide* the preceding item, says "if you get permision" instead of "whenever you choose".

47. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 15, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

I had been waiting for your letter. It arrived today. I am glad you have understood the reason for the fast. There was no escape from it. It is both a privilege and a duty. It comes rarely to someone in a generation or generations. In non-violence it is the crowning act, if it is saturated with that spirit and the cause has no trace of self. I ask you, therefore, to rejoice with me that such an occasion seems to have come to me. I say 'seems' for my faith has yet to be tried. No one can dare talk of his own strength in a matter of life and death.The question, therefore, is whether I am found worthy of the needed strength and also whether the cause is of the required purity and thirdly, whether in truth I am free of every trace of violence in undertaking the vow. When I say that I feel like all that, I merely statemy belief. Judgment can be pronounced only upon the completed act. I want you to watch the progress of the event without the slightest perturbation. Nor may you at any stage fast in sympathy. Yours is to be buried in your own task which is to go through your term in full resignation, making the best use possible of every moment at your disposal.

I do not mind the drop in your weight if you are otherwise well and fit. The weight will come gradually as you become acclimatized there and the weather improves, which it will not do for yet another month.

For me, I am as fit as a fiddle. Just now my food is brown bread, milk, a vegetable, local dates (not bad) and *musambis.*

I am glad Kisen is with you. You must be a fair size family now. I know that you had naturally the art of looking upon trees and animals as friends. I wanted you to extend the idea so as not to feel the want of friends from outside. Hence my mention of strangers in the same category. That is to say, there should be a definite realization that personal friends and relations are no greater friends than strangers of the human family and bird, beast and plant. They are all one, and they are all an expression of God if we would but realize the fact. Such definite realization assuages all craving for seeing outside friends when we are inside prison walls.

The news you have from England about the family is cheering. Send my love to them all when you write.

Our cat family, or some of them, have a fancy for the *mal* of the wheel. One of them destroyed it the other day. They begin musical operations at meal times and stop only after Vallabhbhai has served them. The mother has a fancy for vegetarian dishes. She enjoys dal and rice and especially vegetables. We have an addition to the family, did I tell you? There was a human touch about the mother whilst she was in pain and two or three days after delivery. She would caress us and insist on being caressed. It was a pathetic sight. The care she bestows on the 'baby' is very wonderful.

Love from us all to you all.

BAPU

[PS.]

Ramayana is being read regularly just now by Parasram to all.

From the original: C.W. 6237. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9703

48. LETTER TO FRANCISCA STANDENATH

September 15, 1932

I think Satyavan's[1] problem is simple. No person can go beyond his or her limits. You cannot force anyone to be chaste. He or she must have the inner conviction. You can give him the fullest freedom to separate himself from you and get a divorce decree if necessary. He must be at liberty to marry some other woman of his choice. It is most dangerous to have a carnal mind constantly brooding over satisfaction of animal passion. You must surround him with all the affection you can give him and not judge him harshly. It is to his credit that he has striven all these years to control himself. Of course if you have the slightest desire to satisfy his craving, you should regard yourself at liberty to do so. For you both came to a joint conclusion about self-control. If now one party wishes to revise the agreement, the other may also, if there is the desire. Whereas if you are satisfied that you have no craving at all, you must resist every entreaty from Satyavan as lovingly as possible, but with the utmost firmness. Let him read this letter. Let him think over it and pray to God for light. And if he finds that he cannot bring his passion under subjection, he must take another wife if you have no wish to surrender. You should part as friends. If you have to part, what

[1] Frederic Standenath, addressee's husband.

happens to you is a matter of little concern. If you have the strength, as I know you have, you will earn your bread by your own labour.

May God help you and bless you both.

With deep love.

Yours,
BAPU

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 26

49. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

September 15, 1932

THROUGH THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON
POONA

DEAR SISTER,

I have received your extremely loving letter. The presence of all the children is like a gift. I took the step only when I saw it as a clear duty.[1] I took it in God's name and for His sake. I am sittingwithout any care in the firm faith that He will protect my honour. All of you should rejoice that one who is like one of your family has found such a wonderful opportunity. Mridula will have received my letter in which I had told her about having lost her letter. We are all doing well. You will probably have learnt of Vallabhbhai's doings from the letters coming from the Ashram.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujara ti origin al: C. W. 11136. Courte sy: Sarabh ai Founda tion

[1] Gandhiji had decided to undertake a fast in protest against Ramsay MacDonald's Award providing for separate electorates for Harijans. For his statement on the contemplated fast, *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 16-9-1932.

50. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

September 16, 1932

SATISBABU

KHADIPRATISHTHAN

SODEPUR

WIRE RECEIVED. YOU HAVE ACCURATELY READ MY HEART. WIRE YOUR HEALTH HEMPRABHA'S ARUN'S[1]. RECEIVED NO LETTER FROM HER LONG TIME. WROTE SEVERAL MYSELF. LOVE.

BAPU

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

51. TELEGRAM TO JAMSHED MEHTA

September 16, 1932

JAMSHED MEHTA

KARACHI

PRAY DO NOT ASK ME ALTER DECISION TAKEN GOD'S NAME AND HIS CALL. IF HE WILLS IT HE WILL KEEP ME ALIVE NOT WITHSTANDING FAST TILL SETTLEMENT REACHED. HOW IS KIKIBEHN[2]? LOVE.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX. Also *The Hindu*, 17-9-1932

52. TELEGRAM TO TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU

September 16, 1932

SIR TEJBAHADUR SAPRU

ALLAHABAD

THANKS WIRE[3] . YOU WILL NOT ASK OR EXPECT ME TO ALTER DECISION TAKEN GOD'S NAME. IT WAS JUST MY HELPLESSNESS THAT PROMPTED

[1] Addressee's youngest son.

[2] Kikibehn Lalwani, sister of J. B. Kripalani.

[3] It read: "Earnestly appeal to you to refrain from fasting until you have once again tried to settle the 'depressed' classes question. If you fail, no one else can succeed in this matter. You must live to remove this blot from the Hindu society."

DECISION. IF GOD WILLS IT BODY WILL HOLD OUT AGAINST FAST LONG ENOUGH FOR SETTLEMENT WHICH YOU AND OTHER FRIENDS OUTSIDE CAN ALONE NEGOTIATE.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX. Also *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 18-9-1932

53. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

September 16, 1932

P.S.V.
SIMLA

HAVE JUST READ WITH CONSIDERABLE PAIN ANNOUNCEMENT GOVERNMENT DECISION REMOVE ME ON COMMENCEMENT CONTEMPLATED FAST TO UNKNOWN PRIVATE RESIDENCE UNDER CERTAIN RESTRICTIONS. TO AVOID UNNECESSARY TROUBLE AND UNNECESSARY PUBLIC EXPENSE ALSO UNNECESSARY WORRY TO MYSELF I WOULD ASK GOVERNMENT NOT TO DISTURB ME FOR I WILL BE UNABLE TO CONFORM TO ANY CONDITIONS AS TO MOVEMENT FROM PLACE TO PLACE OR OTHERWISE THAT MAY BE ATTACHED TO FORESHADOWED RELEASE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3859

54. LETTER TO M.G. BHANDARI

Urgent Please *September 16, 1932*

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

The enclosed is a message[1] which I should like very much now to go if it is at all possible, and there might be no difficulty or delay seeing that it is addressed to the Government of India.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3858

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

55. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

September 16, 1932

You have been sending your lovely cards. This is just to send you and Shervani our love and prayer that both of you may soon be restored to perfect health and soon return home.

You have no doubt read all about the step I have taken. It was a peremptory call from God which I could not resist. I hope you had no difficulty in appreciating the step. The future is in His hands.

The situation is moving so fast that it is difficult to say what will have happened when this reaches you.

Supposing that this proves my last letter to you, let me tell you that my faith in Hindu-Muslim unity is as green as ever and that I feel the richer for having many Muslim friends who are as blood-brothers to me.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 28-9

56. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

September 16, 1932[1]

The fast which I am approaching was resolved upon in the name of God for His work and, as I believed in all humility, at His call. Friends have urged me to postpone the date for the sake of giving the public a chance to organize itself. I am sorry it is not open to me to change even the hour, except for the reason stated in my letter to the Prime Minister.[2]

The impending fast is against those who have faith in me, whether Indians or foreigners, and for those who have it not. Therefore it is not against the English official world, but it is against those Englishmen and women who in spite of the contrary teaching of

[1] According to a report in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 22-9-1932, and *The Epic Fast*, the statement was sent to the Government of Bombay on September 15 for being released to the Press. However, the statement signed by Gandhiji bears the date "16-9-32" in his own handwriting. *Vide* also the following item.

[2] The reason stated was: "The fast will cease if during its progress, the British Government of its own motion or under pressure of public opinion revise their decision and withdraw their scheme of communal electorates for the 'depressed' classes, whose representatives should be elected by the general electorate under the common franchise no matter how wide it is." *Vide* "Letter to Ramsay Macdonald", 18-8-1932. For Gandhiji's further views on the Communal Award and Untouchability, *Vide* Appendix "Discussion with Vallabhbhai Patel", 6-9-1932.

the official world, believe in me and the justice of the cause I represent. Nor is it against those of my countrymen who have no faith in me, whether they be Hindus or others; but it is against those countless Indians (no matter to what persuasion they belong) who believe that I represent a just cause. Above all, it is intended to sting the Hindu conscience into right religious action.

The contemplated fast is no appeal to mere emotion. By the fast I want to throw the whole of my weight (such as it is) in the scales of justice pure and simple. Therefore, there need be no undue haste or feverish anxiety to save my life. I implicitly believe in the truth of the saying that not a blade of grass moves but by His will. He will save it if He needs it for further service in this body. None can save it against His will. Humanly speaking, I believe it will stand the strain for some time.

The separate electorate is merely the last straw. No patched-up agreement between caste Hindu leaders and rival "depressed" class leaders will answer the purpose. The agreement to be valid has got to be real. If the Hindu mass mind is not yet prepared to banish untouchability root and branch, it must sacrifice me without the slightest hesitation.

There should be no coercion of those who are opposed to joint electorates. I have no difficulty in understanding their bitter opposition. They have every right to distrust me. Do I not belong to that Hindu section miscalled a superior class, or caste Hindus, who have ground down to powder the so-called untouchables? The marvel is that the latter have remained nevertheless in the Hindu fold.

But whilst I can justify this opposition, I believe that they are in error. They will, if they can, separate the "depressed" class entirely from the Hindu society and form them into a separate class—a standing and living reproach to Hinduism. I should not mind if thereby their interests could be really served.

But my intimate acquaintance with every shade of untouchability convinces me that their lives, such as they are, are so intimately mixed with those of the caste Hindus in whose midst and for whom they live, that it is impossible to separate them. They are part of an indivisible family.

Their revolt against the Hindus with whom they live and their apostasy from Hinduism I should understand. But this so far as I can see they will not do. There is a subtle something—quite indefinable—in Hinduism which keeps them in it even in spite of themselves.

And this fact makes it imperative for a man like me, with a living experience of it, to resist the contemplated separation even though the effort should cost life itself.

The implications of this resistance are tremendous. No compromise which does not ensure the full freedom for the "depressed classes" inside the Hindu fold can be an adequate substitute for the contemplated separation. Any betrayal of the trust can merely postpone the day of immolation for me and henceforth for those who think with me. The problem before responsible Hindus is to consider whether in the event of social, civic or political persecution of the "depressed" classes they are prepared to face satyagraha in the shape of perpetual fast, not of one reformer like me, but an increasing army of reformers whom I believe to exist today in India and who will count their lives of no cost to achieve the liberation of these classes and therethrough [rid] Hinduism of an age-long superstition.

Let fellow-reformers who have worked with me also appreciate the implications of the fast.

It is either a hallucination of mine or an illumination. If it is the former, I must be allowed to do my penance in peace. It will be the lifting of a dead weight on Hinduism. If it is an illumination, may my agony purify Hinduism and even melt the hearts of those who are at present disposed to distrust me.

Since there appears to be a misunderstanding as to the application of my fast, I may repeat that it is aimed at a statutory separate electorate, in any shape or form, for the "depressed" classes. Immediately that threat is removed once for all, my fast will end. I hold strong views about reservation of seats, as also about the most proper method of dealing with the whole question. But I consider myself unfit as a prisoner to set forth my proposals. I should however abide by an agreement on the basis of joint electorate that may be arrived at between the responsible leaders of caste Hindus and the "depressed" classes and which has been accepted by mass meetings of all Hindus.

One thing I must make clear. The satisfactory ending to the "depressed" classes question, if it is to come, should in no way mean that I would be committed to the acceptance of His Majesty's Government's decision on the other parts of the communal question. I am personally opposed to many other parts of it, which to my mind make the working of any free and democratic constitution well-nigh impossible, nor would a satisfactory solution of this question in any

way bind me to accept the constitution that may be framed. These are political questions for the National Congress to consider and determine. They are utterly outside my province in my individual capacity. Nor may I as a prisoner air my individual views on these questions. My fast has a narrow application. The "depressed" classes question being predominantly a religious matter, I regard it as specially my own by reason of my lifelong concentration on it. It is a sacred personal trust which I may not shirk.

The fasting for light and penance is a hoary institution. I have observed it in Christianity and Islam. Hinduism is replete with instances of fasting for purification and penance. But it is a privilege, if it is also a duty. Moreover, to the best of my light, I have reduced it to a science. As an expert, therefore, I would warn friends and sympathizers against copying me blindly or out of false or hysterical sympathy. Let all such qualify themselves by hard work and selfless service of the "untouchables" and they would have independent light if their time for fasting has come.

Lastly, in so far as I know myself this fast is being undertaken with the purest of motives and without malice or anger to any single soul. For me it is an expression of, and the last seal on, non-violence. Those, therefore, who would use violence in this controversy against those whom they may consider to be inimical to me or the cause I represent will simply hasten my end. Perfect courtesy and consideration towards opponents is an absolute essential of success in this case[1] at least if not in all cases.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3857

57. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

September 16, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

I would like the enclosed statement[2] [to be sent] to the Associated Press for publication forthwith, if the Government approve of the course.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3857

[1] Up to this the statement is in Mahadev Desai's handwriting. What follows is in Gandhiji's hand.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

58. LETTER TO NARGIS CAPTAIN

September 16, 1932

No cause for sorrow; every cause for rejoicing that a member of the family has been given by God the opportunity of offering the supreme sacrifice for the purest cause that could be thought of. There should be no imitation of the fast even partially. For you all it is a time for greater devotion to work and self-purification. You are going to brace up everyone who is at all disposed to give way to grief.

Love to you all including the caged birds.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 27-886.

59. LETTER TO VERRIER ELWIN

[*September 16, 1932*][1]

MY DEAR VERRIER,

You had, I hope, no difficulty in understanding the step I am about to take. This is therefore just to tell you that all my English friends were before my mind's eye when I penned my letters[2] to the Prime Minister. May God bring good out of this.

My love to you all in which Sardar and Mahadev join.

We sing the hymn this evening (Friday).

BAPU

The Tribal World of Verrier Elwin, p. 83

60. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

September 16, 1932

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I had your letter. Well, you know all about the step I am about to take. This is therefore just to send you my love.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1455

[1] The letter was written on a Friday. The Friday before September 20, when the fast was to begin, fell on this date.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Ramsay Macdonald", 9-9-1932. and "Letter to Ramsay Macdonald", 18-8-1932.

61. LETTER TO EDMOND AND YVONNE PRIVAT

September 16, 1932

MY DEAR ANAND AND BHAKTI,

I had your letter. On the eve of the step I am about to take this is just to send you both my love.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 8793

62. LETTER TO ROMAIN ROLLAND

September 16, 1932

DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

On the eve of taking the momentous step in my life I would like to tell you how I prize those days I had with you and your great, good and devoted sister. Mahadev Desai is with me. We often think of you.

I wonder how you have felt over the contemplated step. I can only say that it was decided upon in obedience to the imperative voice of conscience.

With love to you both.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 29

63. LETTER TO H. S. L. AND MILLIE POLAK

September 16, 1932

DEAR HENRY AND MILLIE,

Well, I expect you to fully understand and appreciate the step[1] I am about to take. It was an irresistible call from within. Pray tell Charlie. I am not writing to him as I am not sure of his movements.

With love to you all,

BHAI

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 193

[1] Fast against separate electorates for Harijans; *Vide* "Statement to the Press"

64. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

September 16, 1932

On the eve of the (to me) sacred step I am about to take I want to tell you I have been thinking constantly of the whole of the Kingsley Hall family among whom I passed so many happy months.[1]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 30

65. LETTER TO SARALA DEVI CHOWDHARANI

September 16, 1932

I have your letter overflowing with love. That the children also have joined you in expressing their love made the letter as dear to me as a sacred gift. I took this step only when I was convinced that it was my duty to do so. I have taken it in God's name and for His work. I have faith in Him that He will protect my honour and, therefore, do not worry. All of you should rejoice that one of your own family has got such a holy opportunity.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 28

66. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

September 16, 1932

I can see from here the misery on your faces—Shankerlal's and yours—and hear it in your voices. But please regard it as the result of ignorant human attachment. You ought to feel unmixed joy. It is a holy opportunity which God has sent me unasked. The duty of you all is to cultivate greater devotion to your work and become purer.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 28

[1] During Gandhiji's visit to England in 1931.

67. LETTER TO M.G. BHANDARI

September 17, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

My wire[1] to Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla which appears in the Bombay papers of today omits two key-words, viz., "from here" after the words "helpful instructions". I see also that the omission has given rise to a misinterpretation of my meaning. Could you therefore please send a message to the Associated Press asking them to circulate the necessary correction[2]?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

68. LETTER TO BHIMARAO[3]

September 17, 1932

I have your touching wire. The fast is to be undertaken in God's name, at His will. It would be wrong and cowardly now to desist. Let us hope that He will give me strength to go through it. After all no life can live without His permitting. If He has any further use for it He knows best how to keep it.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 34

69. LETTER TO GOSIBEHN CAPTAIN

September 17, 1932

Do you know that the thought that many sisters are with me in this travail sustains me? I have no time to write separately to Kamala. Let her write. My love to you all. Let God's will be done, not ours.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 32

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G.D. Birla", 15-9-1932.
[2] *Vide* also "Telegram to G.D. Birla", 18-9-1932.
[3] Secretary, Bangalore Cantonment Congress Committee.

70. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

September 17, 1932

Continue to write as if nothing is to happen. But it may be that this will be my last letter to you. In that case bear in mind that I expect you some day to gravitate to the Ashram and realize all my hopes of you. As for the coming fast, I hope you have understood that it is a rare privilege God has provided for me. It is therefore a matter for rejoicing rather than sorrow. At the same time it is not meant to be copied by anyone else. It can be taken up when there is the clearest possible call from within.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 34-5

71. LETTER TO S. M. MATE

September 17, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your wire and letter both received at the same time. I may not as a prisoner answer individual questions. But I have sent to the authorities a general statement[1] for publication. If they allow its publication, you will see your point covered by it.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. S. M. MATE, M.A.
TILAK ROAD
POONA 2

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. III, p. 181

72. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

September 17, 1932

DEAR MOTHER, SINGER AND GUARDIAN OF MY SOUL,

Your lovely letter was preceded by one lovelier—if possible—from Padmaja. The decision was taken after much prayer, in the name of God and at His call. I have no power therefore to postpone the hour of execution.

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 16-9-1932.

You have every right to call upon me to revise my decisions and actions and it is my duty to respond, if I discover the error. And I claim unquestioned 'obedience' if I cannot with all the prayerful effort discover any error. You have 'manfully' asserted the right and woman-like offered obedience.

The motherly affection has blinded the poetic vision and prompted you to appeal to my pride to retrace my steps so as to make me cling to life.

But I know you have not missed the woman in me. I have therefore chosen the way of life through suffering unto death. I must therefore find my courage in my weakness.

This is how your vision has failed you. The communal decision was the last straw. The conception of giving my life for the untouchables is not of yesterday. It is very old. There was no call from within for years. But the Cabinet's decision came like a violent alarm waking me from my slumber and telling me this is the time. It therefore provided the psychological moment and I instinctively seized it. The necessarily restricted wording of my official letter covers in their implications the very things you would have me to die for and to live for—one and the same thing in essence. She who sees life in death and death in life is the real Poetess and Seeress. But the proof of the pudding is in the eating. You will soon test it and prove it for yourself. Meanwhile pray that God may give me strength enough to walk steadily through the vale. If Hinduism is to live, untouchability must die.

It may be that this is my last letter to you. I have always known and treasured your love. I think that I understood you when I first saw you and heard you at the Criterion in 1914. If I die I shall die in the faith that comrades like you, with whom God has blessed me, will continue the work of the country which is also fully the work of humanity in the same spirit in which it was begun. If the interests of the country are to be one with those of humanity, if the good of one faith is to be the good of all faiths, it will come only by the strictest adherence to truth and non-violence in thought, word and deed.

And now for a little lesson in recognizing one's limitations. You may be a good confectioner, but you need not therefore presume to be a good baker or a judge of good bread. Well, my brown bread is really superior to your 'good white bread'. And there is an interesting, instructive history behind it, which you should get Major

Bhandari to relate to you, if he will. Anyway there was to be a choice between my delicious and digestible brown bread and leathery chapati. Those who were doomed to these chapatis have chosen the brown loaf. I accept your apology in anticipation.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 38-40

73. LETTER TO NARAYANRAO DESAI

September 17, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your wire. It is not open to me to postpone the fast without a settlement. As for your question, I have sent to the Government a statement[1] for publication. If it is allowed, you will see your point covered in it.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. NARAYAN RAO DESAI TOPIWALA
PRESIDENT
DECCAN MERCHANTS' ASSOCIATION
BOMBAY

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt, III, p. 181

74. LETTER TO BARJORJI F. BHARUCHA

September 17, 1932

BHAI BARJORJI,

I was not surprised to get your wire. But the truth is that no person can resolve on an indefinite fast relying on his own strength, and that if he does so he must be an ignorant man. For myself at any rate I can say that I did not take the vow, but that God inspired me to take it. The date too was fixed by Him, and so also the conditions under which the date could be changed. Your appeal is not covered by those conditions. What can I do now?

Another simple thing is this: a prisoner cannot himself communicate anything to the world outside. Hence, it would have been a sin for me, a satyagrahi, to convey indirectly to the nation even the slightest hint of what I had in my mind. A satyagrahi prisoner

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 16-9-1932.

voluntarily obeys prison rules and, if it becomes necessary for him to disobey any of them, he can only do so openly. Thus, the notice given by me as a prisoner to the Government should be regarded as a notice given to the people also. That is, it was for the Government to decide whether it would inform the public about my intention. If the people did not know of it earlier, we should interpret the fact only to mean that God did not intend the people to know it earlier. How can I postpone the date of the fast in order to give time to the people? Why should not those who have faith in God rather think that if it is His will that I should serve more yet, He would in spite of the fast spare my life for as long as may be necessary? And you certainly have faith in God. You should, therefore, try to understand what I have said in this letter and explain it to the men and women who get agitated over my decision and give them courage. My co-workers' duty at present is to go on vigorously with the work that now faces us. The result is in God's hands.

Remember this, that my fast cannot be, and certainly is not, intended for putting pressure on any party. Its purpose is only to see that what is in the best interests of the *Antyajas* themselves is done. If what seems proper to me does not appear so to others, they should indeed continue their opposition. Such pure fast for a public cause should aim at bringing about an awakening in the nation and should not, at any rate, be used ignorantly to lead the people on a wrong path. If, in my ignorance, I try through a fast to make the nation agree to an improper demand, I am sure that the nation ought not to yield to such a demand merely for sparing my life, no matter how much it is convinced of my services to it in the past. Not only the good of the nation, but my own good too, lies in its not yielding to an improper demand by me.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 33-4

75. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

September 17, 1932

BHAI KHAMBHATTA,

I hope you two are not upset. There is no reason to be. On the contrary, you should be happy that God has given a golden opportunity to a co-worker to take the ultimate step in non-violence.

Everybody should pray to God only that He may give me strength to carry the step, which has been taken in His name and at His call, to its logical end. Read the enclosed letter[1] and send it to Bhai Barjorji Bharucha. I am not very sure about his address.

I apply your ointment daily to the arm. The pain in the elbow has not increased; but it has not decreased either. However, I am not at all worried on that account.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7552. Also C.W. 5027. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

76. LETTER TO DARBARI SADHU

September 17, 1932

I am afraid we shall not be able to meet now. Still, do write to me and ask me if you can come. I will see if I can let you. If, however, that is not possible, then think that nothing is gained by meeting an image of clay. It is the minds and the hearts that meet and they have the power to meet in a secend even when the bodies dwell farthest away from each other. Even if the bodies are very close to each other, they are as distant from each other as the North Pole is from the South if the minds and the hearts do not meet. Therefore the nearness of the bodies has little meaning. It is only because there is a soul living in the body that we wish to meet each other. This, indeed, is the strongest infatuation and till we are free from it we are held in chains even stronger than steel. But it is not enough to understand this with our intellect. The knowledge should sink into the heart. If that happens, one has attained everything worth attaining. But one has to struggle during many lives to acquire this knowledge, and even then only a few succeed in acquiring it. Hence the *Gita* teaches, by implication, that one should wear away one's body doing one's duty. It is only in this way that one can learn non-attachment or become free from infatuation.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p.35

[1]*Vide* the preceding item.

77. LETTER TO GULAM RASUL QURESHI

September 17, 1932

CHI. QURESHI,

I was kept waiting for your letter. You should write every day. The bleeding will have stopped now. Do not worry about my fast. You should be glad that God has sent me such a great opportunity without my seeking. Amina should not get upset. Tell Noorbanubehn and Bhai Pyare Ali that they should not feel unhappy in the least,

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photos tat of the Gujara ti: C. W. 10810. Courte sy: Gulam Rasul Quresh i

78. A LETTER

September 17, 1932

CHI.,

Your letter is absurd. On the one hand, you talk about undertaking a fast and, on the other, about marrying. You are too young, and not yet fit, to undertake a fast.

So long as you are not married you may certainly write innocent letters to the young man to whom you are betrothed, after obtaining your parents' consent. I have deliberately used the word 'innocent'. It is a sin to nurse a desire which is not going to be fulfilled in the present. One's mental strength is unnecessarily wasted by doing that. It is not at all wise to waste it in such a manner. I do not know your age. If you have really come of age, and if you are a prey to passion, I would prefer that you should get married immediately. If you are not yet of marriageable age, then you should control your passion and should not be eager to write letters to your future husband. I think this will solve all your problems.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 32-3

79. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

[On or before *September* 18, 1932][1]

MY DEAR MARY,

I am working against time. Hence this card only. The story in the Mysore magazine seems to me to be unbelievable. If I survive the or deal, you must remind me and I shall inquire. My introduction[2] to the *Gita* appears in an issue of *Young India*. I hope you are able to understand the ordeal. For me it is a matter of pure joy. You shall read Ch. IX and XII of the *Gita.* But the *Guide to Health*[3] you must ask again.

Love.

BAPU

MISS F. MARY BARR
KARIMNAGAR
H.E.H. NIZAM'S DOMINIONS

From a photostat: G.N. 5983. Also C.W. 3311. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] From the postmark.

[2] The English translation of the preface to *Anasaktiyoga*; *Vide* "Letter to Valji and Dudhibehn Desai", 19-11-1932 to "Letter to V.S. Srinivasa Sastri", 20-9-1932.

[3] An English version, published in India, of Gandhiji's Gujarati articles on general knowledge about health which appeared in *Indian Opinion.*

80. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

September 18, 1932

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
BIRLA HOUSE
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

FROM MY WIRE[1] TO YOU OF FIFTEENTH REPRODUCED BOMBAY PRESS TWO IMPORTANT WORDS "FROM HERE" WERE OMITTED AFTER "HELPFUL INSTRUCTIONS". PLEASE RECTIFY MISTAKE.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

81. TELEGRAM TO CHHAGANLAL P. MEHTA

[*September 18, 1932*][2]

CHHAGANLAL
CARE ARYA
RANGOON

DO COME IF YOU FIND NECESSARY. HOPE MOTHER PEACEFUL.

BAPU

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to G. D. Birla", 15-9-1932.
[2] From the placing of the item in the source.

82. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

September 18, 1932

MY DEAR PADMAJA,

I shall treasure your very beautiful letter. It has been followed by loving sermon from Mother. You must not consider me so proud as not to need the prayers of 'friends, comrades and playmates'. Indeed God is nearer to me than the air which surrounds me and which I breathe. But I sense His invisible presence in the prayers of the innocent. They sustain me. Do therefore pray that He may give me the strength to pass through the firey ordeal that awaits me.

Be well and serve well.

Love from your intimate friend, comrade and playmate.

THE SLAVE-DRIVER

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 42

83. LETTER TO H. KALLENBACH

September 18, 1932

MY DEAR ' LOWER HOUSE'

If I go I shall go in the hope that you will one day fulfil the hope you and I have long cherished of you.

If God has more work to take from this body, it will survive the fiery ordeal. Then you must try some early day to come and meet. Otherwise goodbye and much love from,

UPPER HOUSE

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 43

84. LETTER TO M.G. BHANDARI

September 18, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

I am sorry. I took silence at 1 p.m. so as to be free earlier tomorrow. Now the only thing possible is to see those who are coming and listen to what they say. I can reply by writing my answers.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G. N. 5126

85. LETTER TO DR. MUTHU

September 18, 1932

I was much touched by your and your wife's very kind and loving letter. If the people need me in the present body and God wills it, I shall live till the people secure an honourable settlement. That will mean real freedom for our suppressed brethren. I need your and Mrs. Muthu's prayers to sustain me through the ordeal in front of me.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 45

86. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

September 18, 1932

MY DEAR C. R.,

My heart goes out to you in your distress. I have no doubt about the truth of the Inner Voice. Nor have I any doubt that you will soon see the light out of the darkness.

Love and yet more love.

BAPU

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 44

87. LETTER TO KUSUMBEHN DESAI

September 18, 1932

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

I have had no letter at all from you for some time. I hope you have not become panicky because of my indefinite fast. If I pass away, fulfil my hopes. If you can give an emphatic reply to this soon, do so.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 1847

88. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL AND KASHI GANDHI

September 18, 1932

CHI. CHHAGANLAL AND KASHI,

It is night and the time is much too short for all the letters which I wish to write. What shall I write to you? Please look upon the days of my fast as a time of rejoicing. Prabhudas[1], I forbid you to get agitated. Use all your wisdom to cultivate the utmost devotion to service. God will surely help you.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 47

89. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

September 18, 1932

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have been constantly thinking about both of you. But I believe you have patience and courage and I take heart from that thought. I am sure you wish to run up here. But please control your desire. Fulfil all my hopes about you. You know what they are. Augment thelegacy which I may leave you. God will surely prosper you.

I do not have time to write a separate letter and give my blessings to Pragji[2] and Parvati. Today is Sunday. I have commenced the silence. I wish to write yet many more letters.

As you already know, I had a cable from Kallenbach.

Blessing from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4795

[1] Addressees' son.

[2] Pragji Khandubhai Desai, Gandhiji's co-worker in South Africa. He contributed regularly in the Gujarati Section of *Indian Opinion*.

90. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

September 18, 1932

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I am certain that some of your letters have been held back. I hope you have fully grasped the significance of my fast unto death. Be brave and do not lose heart. You must not slacken in your labour. What do we gain by clinging to the body? We daily recite in the Ashram verses which tell us to give up attachment to the body. We have got this opportunity to demonstrate that we have assimilated the lesson of the verses which we daily recite. All of you should pray that I may have the strength to go through the test. It is easy (relatively) to jump into the water, but who can be sure that one will be able to reach the other shore? Hence, people need not get elated till the test has ended. But I have embarked on it with God's name on my lips and I am confident, therefore, that He will help me to go through it.

Face the situation in a manner worthy of yourself and of the cause.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5509

91. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS AND KRISHNABEHN KAPADIA

September 18, 1932

CHI. MADHAVDAS AND KRISHNA,

I got the letters from you both. Do not be perturbed in the slightest degree by my decision to fast. It is really a matter for rejoicing. Such an opportunity comes rarely to anyone. I hope that the effect of the fast on you both will be to increase your self-control and your devotion to service. Do not let yourself be made unhappy by your financial difficulties. Resign yourself to the misfortune. God will protect my body if He wants to take more work from it, otherwise He will let it perish. Either way it will be good. Fix the thought in your mind that not a blade of grass moves without God's will.

I have written this letter after commencing the silence.

Blessings from

BAPU

92. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

September 18, 1932

BHAI NANABHAI,

I got your letter. I have undertaken the fast as sacrifice to the Lord and, therefore, He will protect the body if He wants it to be an instrument of further service; otherwise He will let it perish. Either result will be the same to me. Please do not be unhappy but be glad that a co-worker has got such a great opportunity unsought.

Blessings to all of you from

BAPU

SHRI NANABHAI MASHRUWALA
AKOLA (C.P.)

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6686. Also C.W. 4331. Courtesy: Kanubhai Mashruwala

93. LETTER TO TARAMATI M. TRIKUMJI[1]

September 18, 1932

I have your letter. Do not feel unhappy because of my fast. Instead, rejoice that God has inspired me to offer such a sacrifice. Sooner or later, one has got to give up the body. But what could be more blessed than that it should be given up for the sake of the oppressed? Man, however well-fed, must die. If God desires to take more work from me, then He will create favourable circumstances and I shall be saved. If, however, my time is up, nothing can save me.

Quote the foregoing paragraph in your letter when you write to Mathuradas. Whatever happens to me, I am confident that Mahuradas will carry on my work worthily. You should help him in that.

I am not writing a separate letter to Dilip, as I have to write many other letters.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 116

[1] Wife of Mathuradas Trikumji.

94. LETTER TO HANSA MEHTA[1]

September 18, 1932

You or the Doctor need not be agitated by my decision to fast. On the contrary, you should rejoice that God has granted to a co-worker a holy opportunity like this. Such an opportunity comes rarely to anybody. Moreover, God will keep me alive if He wants this body to do more service still. If, on the contrary, my time is up, I shall not live even though I may be eating as usual.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary , Vol. II, pp. 47-8

95. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

September 18, 1932

CHI. VASUMATI,

So at last I got a long letter from you. But I am sure you do not expect from me a long reply now. Look, do not let my fast make you unhappy. Cultivate great devotion to service. I have always known that you have the strength to sacrifice your life. God will grant you all strength.

Never lose heart.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9333. Also C.W. 579. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

96. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 18/19, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

It is two o'clock now. I am observing silence. I got your letter about bread. I also got your weekly mail. As you say, God's ways are indeed inscrutable. I believe that I am dancing as a puppet in His hands. Hence I feel no burden on my mind. If only I could pass the final test in this same manner ! I will live as He wills. I wish everybody there to remain cheerful to the very end, to do his daily work with

[1] Wife of Dr. Jivraj Mehta and a former Vice-Chancellor of M. S. University, Baroda.

greater devotion and not be agitated. None should feel anxious what news he may hear the following day. Everybody should be ready for anything that may happen. The best way of maintaining such a state of mind is to be completely absorbed in the work which one may be doing at any moment. I do not know what will happen on Tuesday.

Nirmala[1] has written to me from Rajkot. She says in her letter that, when Aunt[2] had got herself operated upon for cataract of the eye, the expenses were paid by you. I suppose you did that from theAshram funds. She has again to get herself operated upon. Look into this matter and do what is necessary.

I have been looking after many things regarding Champa and Ratilal. If, however, the whole burden falls on you, I know that God has given you the strength to shoulder it. I suppose you know that a sum of Rs. 25,000 is deposited in Champa's name with Revashankerbhai[3]. Most probably the receipt for that sum is with Champa. The Doctor's last draft of his Will is unsigned. I will see that you get it. If I forget, please get it. According to it, they two should get Rs. 50,000 each, and the red bungalow is for them both. The Doctor has left a list of the names of trustees, but Chhaganlal has suggested other names and I approve of them. But no matter who are appointed, this burden will fall on the Ashram.

A gift of Rs. 6,500 has been made to the Ashram in memory of the Doctor. Chhaganlal wrote some time ago requesting that the sum be paid, but had added that it might be done only after the arrangements about the property left by the Doctor had been completed. Besides Chhaganlal, Nanalal knows all this. You may consult him whenever you cannot understand something.

8.30 p.m.

I had a letter from Kasumba[4] in which she has poured out her grief. She wants the girls to be sent back to her. The girls, too, have written to me. They say that they do not feel happy in the Ashram. Have a frank talk with them and, if you find that they really wish to go to their mother, I think they should be permitted to go. Discuss the

[1] Daughter-in-law of Raliatbehn, Gandhiji's sister.
[2] Raliatbehn.
[3] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's brother.
[4] Jaisukhlal Gandhi's wife.

matter with Jaisukhlal and do what you think proper. Go through my letters to him.

4.15 a.m., Silence Day [*September 19, 1932*]

After doing the morning prayer and walking for some time, I am now writing letters to the Ashram. The more letters I write, the more I discover those that remain to be written. I will write as many as I can. Nobody should feel disappointed if he or she does not get a letter. A person with a large family is happy beyond measure but he also becomes miserable. Anybody who does not get a letter should not envy somebody who gets one; a letter received by one has been received by all of them. Only those who see no difference between themselves and others even in such small matters will succeed ultimately in forgetting it completely. Anybody who cannot count one, cannot do sums involving millions. I am trying to write as many letters as I can and thereby feel one in my heart with the inmates of the Ashram. I am drawing the soul of the Ashram into myself and pouring my soul into the people there. I will send with this almost all the letters which I shall write this time. Read all the letters. Do not let the routine of the Ashram work be broken even for a minute. Nobody should get confused in mind or feel unhappy. Everybody should strive ceaselessly to make himself worthy of complete fulfilment of the aim of the fast. My own worthiness in that regard still remains to be proved. Solon spoke the perfect truth when he said : "Call no man happy or good till he be dead." Who can say that my self-suffering is not a demoniac mortification of the self? It must be counted so if deep in my heart I harbour ill will or anger against anybody or there is an element of selfishness in my motive. If so, my self-suffering will be a curse on the world. I am sure all of you will be ready to testify for me and say that, if my vow was prompted by ill will or any such unworthy motive, I was altogether unconscious of the fact and that I had taken the vow knowing it to be perfectly pure. All this that I am writing may even prove to be unnecessary. It is possible that the efforts of the nation may bear fruit and that my fast may not have to be continued to the logical end. If these efforts succeed, we should welcome the result. But I cannot assume while writing this letter that that will be so. I must write it assuming that this body will perish.

I got a very forceful letter from Rambhau. Read my reply[1] to him. I see from his letter that, if we can remove the layers of dirt which cover his heart, he is likely to reveal himself a real jewel. It is a difficult task. But since you have taken him in hand, he may be able to reveal the worth which lies hidden in him at present.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8252. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

97. TELEGRAM TO RAJA MAHENDRARANJAN

[*September 19, 1932*][2]

THANKS LONG WIRE. VOW TAKEN IN OBEDIENCE TO PEREMPTORY CALL FROM WITHIN. CANNOT BE RETRACTED WITHOUT ANOTHER CALL TO CONTRARY. GOD'S WILL BE DONE.

The Hindu, 21-9-1932

98. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA N. KHARE

Silence Day Morning, September 19, 1932

CHI. RAMBHAU,

I liked your letter very much. You have used all your ability in writing it. The handwriting is beautiful, and the language also is equally good. You seem to have an excellent gift for writing. There is plenty of humour in what you write and you can make it very biting.

I can see even from here the faults you have pointed out in Premabehn. But you cannot see your own faults or maybe you are hiding them from me. A virtuous and non-violent *brahmachari* who appreciates virtue instead of seeing the faults of others, admires their goodness while magnifying his own smallest short-comings. Tulsidas, Surdas, Tukaram saw their own faults and described them. Besides, whatever Premabehn is, she is your teacher. How strange it is that you could not see any virtue in her! I observe many good qualities in her. I have not told you that in one of her letters to me Premabehn had actually praised you. Look, many people know about your idle nature

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Raja Mahendraranjan", 19-9-1932.

[2] This was published under the date-line "September 20"; *Vide*, however, "Diary, 1932", entry under September 19.

and your habit of telling lies. You yourself are aware of them. But you have not so much as mentioned that bad habit. I insist that you make good of your great ability and bring credit to your parents, the Ashram and me. May God protect you.

Blessing from

BAPU

From Gujarati : C.W. 298. Courtesy : Lakshmibehn N. Khare

99. LETTER TO MEMBERS OF CHRIST SEVA SANGH

September 19, 1932

DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF CHRIST SEVA SANGH,

Without your gift of flowers I knew that I had your hearts and prayers with me. All the same I treasure this physical token.

My love.

BAPU

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 52

100. LETTER TO VELANBEHN L. ASAR[1]

September 19, 1932

You have shown admirable patience. Do not have the slightest worry about Anandi, nor about me. If this earthly frame is to perish, let it perish. If it perishes in a holy cause, what can be better? I am always there with you. For whom, then, should you weep? Be worthy of the Ashram. Take care of your health and use it for the service of others.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 49-50

[1] Wife of Lakshmidas P. Asar.

101. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

September 19, 1932[1]

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

What is that freedom which you got before and which you do not get now? If what you say is true, you should take a deputation to Narandas. You may take three minutes of his time in telling him what you wish and leave him two minutes to reply to you. After that[2] you may write to me if I am alive then, lying enfeebled in bed. And if I pass away into the final sleep, dance with joy and take a pledge that you will complete my work. What great fun and joy that work will be! All of you should acquire the strength for that ordeal.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II and *Mahadevbhaini Diary,* Vol. II, p. 53

102. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

September 19, 1932

CHI. JANAKIMAIYA,

It is because women like you fear that they would starve to death if they had to live on the diet of 'C' class prisoners, that I have decided to embrace the way of living without eating. You will see from tomorrow how I do that. Everybody in the world eats and still dies. Let us see how long you live eating the food of 'A' class prisoners. Is it not a great art to survive an indefinite fast? There is one condition, of course, for this to be made possible. All women will have to come out of their homes as dedicated workers and eradicate the practice of untouchability, and so prove their claim to be incarnations of God's powers. Do that, and go on eating the food of 'A' class prisoners all your life. If, however, you do not get 'A' class food on some occasion, you should be satisfied with 'C' class food.

Suppose, however, that the efforts of the women workers bear no fruit. In that case, let this earthly frame perish right now. Even then, I shall live for ever. As long as even one woman carries on my mission, can anybody say that I am dead? We may leave aside the *Gita's*

[1] From *Mahadevbhaini Diary*

[2] The remaining portion of the microfilm is indecipherable. Hence what follows is from *Mahadevbhaini Diary.*

philosophy about the immortality of the *atman*. But the immortality which I have explained can be witnessed with our ordinary eyes. You must not, therefore, fall into panic. Act in a manner which will do honour to yourself and to the cause. Surrender yourself and all that you possess to God, and be happy and ever remain so. I have no time today to write to the mischievous Om and the wise Madalasa.

Treat this letter as meant for all of you.

May you enjoy the blessed state of wifehood to the end of your life.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 2901

103. LETTER TO VINOBA BHAVE

September 19, 1932

KRITAYUGI[1] VINOBA,

We need not envy you for living in the *Kritayuga*, for we, too, have with us the *Kritayugi* Sardar and, therefore, rise at least a few inches higher than you. Do you know that the Sardar keeps walking for most of the time? He would, if he could, even eat walking and spin walking. Even though an old man, he tries to learn the *Gita* by heart while walking. For improving his pronunciation he should be sent to you, and you given a cane to correct him. But you are not likely to have that good fortune in the immediate future.

You seem to have mastered the art of holding out false assurances to the poor! When a poor man like me had been pining for a letter from you, you did not write at all; and now when I am getting ready to lie down on my death-bed, you write to say, "Now that I have started writing I will write regularly." But maybe I am destined to survive this ordeal, since the vows of *Kritayugis* are not known to remain unfulfilled. If I do leave this bed I will expect to hear regularly from you.

Through this bit of jesting, I have diverted my mind for a while from the letters I have been writing on serious matters and also

[1] Vinoba Bhave in his letter had quoted the text saying that while *Kaliyuga* slept, *Kritayuga* walked, and suggested that one should be a *Kritayugi*.

suggested that your activities call for no criticism. Keep me informed about them.

If I come out unscathed in body and soul through this ordeal and if there is something to write about, I will write to you. I will preserve your letter.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 51-2

104. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. DESAI[1]

September 19, 1932

There was only one Arjuna to put questions to Krishna. No wonder, then, that he could reply to all sorts of questions. Moreover, Krishna had spiritual knowlede. My knowledge is limited; and what a great number of Arjunas who ask me questions! Try and count them. If I give a little of my knowledge to every one of them, how long would that *Gita* be? Arjuna put questions to Krishna on only one occasion, whereas so many Arjunas ask me questions every week.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol, II, p. 54

105. LETTER TO NIRMALA H. DESAI

September 19, 1932

CHI. NIRMALA[2] (AUNT),

Yes, worship of a photograph also is image-worship. However, there is certainly a difference between meditating on a photograph on special days and building a temple and installing an image in it. We should not introduce image-worship in the Ashram. The Ashram should have place equally for all religions.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9465

[1] Son of Mahadev Desai
[2] Stepsister of Mahadev Desai

106. LETTER TO VALJI AND DUDHIBEHN DESAI

September 19, 1932

CHI. VALJI AND DUDHIBEHN,

You know my boundless faith in you. May God grant you the strength to justify it in full. Take as much care as you can of your health so that you may be able to join in the great *yajna*.

Blessing from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 7437. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

107. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

September 19, 1932

CHI. JAMNA,

It is indeed good that you are required to stay in Rajkot to look after the elders. Improve your health. Do not feel unhappy because of my *yajna*[1], but rejoice at it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati : C.W. 850. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

108. LETTER TO KESHAV GANDHI

September 19, 1932

CHI. KESHU,

Ink blots cannot be erased. You should let them remain or should take another sheet.

We should act with humility even towards a person who is rude to us, but should not submit to him.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3281

[1] The proposed fast against separate electorate for the depressed classes

109. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI[1]

September 19, 1932

I am sure you will welcome the *yajna* which begins tomorrow. If you approve of it as holy, I request you both to send me your sincere blessings. If I leave this world before you, please do not grieve, but rejoice that you had a younger brother whom God had granted the strength to complete such a *yajna.* You have ever been more than a brother to me. I hope my sister-in-law[2] is all right now.

At this hour of dawn, your younger brother bows in *pranam* to you both.

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 48-9

110. LETTER TO NIRMALABEHN GANDHI

September 19, 1932

Please do not get agitated in the slightest degree. I have entrusted a brave and good man like Ramdas to your charge. Why, then, should you be agitated? How long would you keep me? And if you would I am always with you all. The body is but inert matter. What will you do with it? I spent two hours with Ramdas on Friday. He did not show the slightest agitation. I felt proud of him as both his father and teacher. You also should be like him. Look after the children properly. Keep up ghee and milk in your diet.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 51

[1] Gandhiji's cousin and father of Narandas Gandhi

[2] Devkunvar, addressee's wife

111. LETTER TO GAJANAN V. KHARE

September 19, 1932

CHI. GAJANAN[1],

I do hear about you from time to time. It does not matter if none else turns up to receive lessons. It is all right if Dhiru prepares himself.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 308. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

112. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

September 19, 1932

CHI. PANDITJI,

Rambhau's letter was both very good and very disappointing. I have replied[2] to him. But I will not give up hope for such an intelligent boy.

Kaka had told me Sundarbehn's story when I left for England. From that I had concluded that Sundarbehn had never had marital relations. Her husband despised her from the beginning as he did not consider her beautiful, that is, fair-skinned. Now there is no moral reason to look upon a woman, whom her husband never accepted as wife, as a married woman. In such cases, when the legal position has no moral basis, we should ignore law and uphold morality. It would have been excellent if Sundarbehn could have remained unmarried;[1] but when she was unable to do that, the only moral course open to her was to find a suitable husband. In doing this she ran the risk of being convicted but she accepted it. I see no religious objection against such a marriage. All laws regarding marriage have their origin in custom.They should be weighed in the scales of self-control for examining their validity. A course which on the whole promotes self-control sho-uld be preferred even if it is opposed to custom.

As regards the Ashram women, if you ask me specific questions I will explain my views further.

[1] Nephew of Narayan M. Khare.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Ramachandra N. Khare", 19-9-1932.

[3] That is, after separation from her first husband. She married P. G. Deshpande.

Lakshmibehn's aching tooth will certainly continue to ache if it has not been properly filled. If necessary, take her to Dhargalkar in Bombay. If you mention my name, he will give proper attention to her and will not charge any fee. His fee otherwise is exorbitant.

I am not writing anything about the fast in this letter.

BAPU

From Gujarati : C.W. 234. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

113. LETTER TO KUSUM

September 19, 1932

You should not be upset by my decision to fast. Your duty is to take sufficient rest and build up a strong body. I need not say anything more about this. Those who advised that girls, when they are ill, should immediately be married off are ignorant men. The number of married women who remain ill is far greater in proportion to that of sickly maidens everywhere. You are also right in contrasting people's attitude towards girls with their attitude towards boys who fall ill. However, you should take the implied charge against girls in the right sense and take care never to fall ill. Some general knowledge about health, such as I have tried to give in my booklet, is necessary for preventing illness. The bodies of unmarried girls should be as strong as steel, and so should be the bodies of unmarried boys. But we find both sickly, and they are generally more so after marriage. Look at Umiya, Rukhi, and Hari-ichchha. It did seem for a while that marriage had done Rukhi good but before long she was ill again. From this, however, the girls should not rush to the conclusion that all who marry lose their health after marriage. It is true, however, that unmarried girls who burn with passion and desire will find their deliverance only in marriage, since their passion is secretly eating them. But this also means that such a girl feels before marriage as a married woman does and that she is, therefore, immoral. Any person, whether a woman or a man, who yields to passion even though only inwardly, is immoral.

Blessing from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 52-3

114. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS P. ASAR

September 19, 1932

You may be too old to be my son, but I have always regarded you as a wise son ever since you first met me in Amritsar. I, therefore, assume that you have fully understood the meaning of my fast, and also that, if I pass away, you will prove yourself a worthy heir. It is because I have this faith in you that I do not write to you except when necessary.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 49

115. LETTER TO MOHAN N. PARIKH

September 19, 1932

CHI. MOHAN,

Why do you say that you cannot think of something to write to me every week? You should give me a report of the new things which you have learnt and the pranks you played in the course of the week.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9184

116. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

September 19, 1932

CHI. NARMADA,

I got your letter. If you have patience, your defects will disappear. You should not worry. Go on doing what Narandas advises you to do.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2764. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

117. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

September 19, 1932

CHI. BABUDI (SHARDA),

What fine questions you have asked! One who is determined to die can always end her life by biting off her tongue, by pressing the hands tightly against her throat and, if she has been bound, by breaking her bones trying to loosen herself. And a very holy woman can end her life even by a sheer act of will. This will, no doubt, be suicide but in certain circumstances suicide becomes one's dharma. When a wicked man tries to rape a woman, suicide becomes necessary if there is no other way of saving her honour.[1]

I expect that you will stick to the post of Secretary, for you are truthful and steadfast.

The students will cease quarrelling among themselves not out of false shame in my presence, but because they will realize their error and feel ashamed of it. Nobody should feel false shame before me.

You must make your body as strong as steel.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9956. Courtesy: Sharadabehn G. Chokhawala

118. LETTER TO SULOCHANA

September 19, 1932

CHI. SULOCHNA,

Why does Gulab harass you? Tell Premabehn about it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1739

[1] *Vide* "What Women Should Do in a Difficult Situation", 4-9-1932.

119. LETTER TO NANIBEHN JHAVERI

September 19, 1932

CHI. NANIBEHN JHAVERI,

I ought not to forgive you for keeping me without a letter for such a long time. But a *yajna* bears fruit only if one forgives one's bitterest enemy before commencing it. If, therefore, I did not forgive my daughters like you, would I not perish utterly?

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 51

120. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

[*September 19, 1932*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Nowadays you have been writing fairly regularly. Do not at all be alarmed or upset by the *yajna* I have in mind. I am going to have you all undertake similar sacrifices. I will leave this body—if I have to—with the faith that you will be able to do it. This is the only way to atone for the sins accumulated through generations.

Such a vow is not to be imitated. It can be fulfilled only if there is a spontaneous urge. If the urge is felt while the mind is not yet pure, the fast is likely to be demoniacal. Hence such a *yajna* should beundertaken only if there has been a prior cleansing of the heart. The Ashram has come into existence to help people attain such purity.

But you say that one hears much criticism of the Ashram. You should bear with criticism. The cause for it, if found to be just, should be examined and corrected. We should be indifferent to what is not true. People have a right to say what they feel. And some may find fault simply out of spite. Is not such criticism beneath consideration?

There is some truth in what we have been hearing about . . .[2] . And whatever little there is deserves to be overlooked. My little experience of . . .[3] is very good. He is a simple man. . . .[4] has not been

[1] From *Mahadevbhaini Diary*
[2] The names are omitted in the source.
[3] *ibid*
[4] *ibid*

enjoying herself there. . . .[1] needed a change of climate. Since it could be easily had she availed herself of it. . . .[2]'s relations [with her] are absolutely pure. . . .[3] has not been living there in an unbecoming way. Her letter has given me the impression that she has continued to make such efforts as she can to purify her *atman*. But now . . .[4] has fallen. I have therefore suggested to him to lead Ashram life.

Now about your loss of peace. There are two reasons for it. First, you are not satisfied with your own performance. You aspire to do much more than you can. Your desire would be commendable if it were within limits. When it crosses the limits the result is grief. A greater reason for the loss of your peace is your intolerance. You are irked when others fail to work as much as you can or do not agree with you. The remedy for it is simple. You should rest content with whatever work you can do after applying your body and mind to it and continue to make such progress as you can. You should realize that one who does scavenging has as much right to go to heaven as one who learns the Vedas. But if a scholar of the Vedas is a mere reciter of the text or a hypocrite he will go to hell however learned he may be and a scavenger who daily cleans latrines in a spirit of service and dedicating his services unto God would certainly rise high although he may not know the word Brahman. This contentment is one remedy. The other is a liberal attitude. We should not take it amiss if others do not work as much as we ourselves do or want them to do. Only in this way can we maintain peace in the community in spite of living close to one another. Read this letter over and over again and think over it with the help of Nath. Please accommodate . . .[5] behn. What more can I wish than that you will shine out if it is God's will?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6 : *G.S. Gangabehnne*, pp. 73-5. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, pp. 50-1

[1] The names are omitted in the source.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*
[4] *ibid*
[5] *ibid*

121. LETTER TO PUSHPA S. PATEL

September 19, 1932

CHI. PUSHPA,

Is it because Mangala has been advised rest that she has not written me a letter?

Your handwriting is improving.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11085. Courtesy: Pushpa Naik

122. A LETTER

September 19, 1932

All of us were delighted to read your extremely beautiful letter. You have attained a lofty height. Rise higher still. God will certainly give you the strength to do so. I know I should write a long reply to your letter, but cannot spare so much time just now. I will preserve your letter, however, and will write to you again if I have sufficient strength and get time to do so. But please do not mind if I cannot write. I hope none of you has got perturbed by this *yajna* of my fast. God has inspired me to undertake it and may He carry it successfully to its end. None knows how many such *yajnas* we shall have to perform in order to eradicate this evil of untouchability. Get ready to perform such a *yajna* yourself. Readiness means self-purification. Self-purification necessarily includes efficiency in work.

It is true that fine yarn would be costly. But we should have the ability to revive the manufacture of Dacca muslin. While trying to do so, we shall incidentally make many small inventions. In the past, the kings forced workers to spin such yarn and weave it. Now, let us spin and weave it by way of *yajna*. Then the question of its being costly will not arise at all and, moreover, the prestige of hand-spinning also will increase. God willing, I will explain this further in another letter.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 49

123. A LETTER

September 19, 1932

Do your work well. Sita was not Rama's property. She was the apple of his eye. By banishing her to a forest, he banished himself, for his heart followed Sita. But an ordinary man cannot act towards his wife in this manner, for we do not see in any man such divine love that he regards himself and his wife as one.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 55

124. LETTER TO KANHAIYALAL

September 19, 1932

A poor man is one who has not a drop of true love. And a rich man is one who has enough love to encompass an insect as well as a mad elephant. The atheist does not recognize the all-pervasive spirit present beyond his own physical self. The believer sees everywhere nothing but the spirit.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 54

125. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

September 19, 1932

CHI. RAMESHWARDAS,

You must not torment Gangadevi[1]. She does not pester you or view all your actions with a hypercritical eye; so you must reciprocate her conduct.

Rama is happy with Vinoba. Let him remain there.

You ought to dance on hearing about my *yajna* and have more faith in Ramanama. Let us see what He does. The fast is not mine but that of Rama; the responsibility is His, not mine. If it is unfruitful He will be blamed, not I, and if fruitful He not being concerned with praises, I, a beggar at his door, will accept it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 176

[1] Addressee's wife

126. LETTER TO LAKSHMI[1]

September 19, 1932

Who knows what God has willed. You should not be worried on account of the *yajna*. See what a beautiful letter Devdas has published in the newspaper. He has not given way to panic; he is full of joy and that is how it should be. It is rarely that one gets an opportunity to sacrifice one's life for the sake of duty.

God will prosper you all and if He wills I shall rise from the death-bed.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 51

127. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

September 19, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I am tired out today writing letters. Moreover, it is time for the post. I can, therefore, write only a short letter. More in the next. We have got a new cat, which is a 'smart little lady'. In memory of your college days, we have named it Prema. It will now be tested how 'smart' you are.

Do you think you will pass the test?

More in the next letter if I get time.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10303. Also C.W. 6742. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] Daughter of C. Rajagopalachari

128. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 19, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

Do not expect a long letter from me. Do not be distressed by my illness; instead rejoice. God will grant you happiness.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

129. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

September 20, 1932

DEAR GURUDEV,

This is early morning 3 o'clock of Tuesday. I enter the fiery gate at noon. If you can bless the effort, I want it. You have been to me a true friend because you have been a candid friend often speaking your thoughts aloud. I had looked forward to a firm opinion from you one way or the other. But you have refused to criticize. Though it can now only be during my fast I will yet prize your criticism, if your heart condemns my action. I am not too proud to make an open confession of my blunder, whatever the cost of the confession, if I find myself in error. If your heart approves of the action I want your blessing. It will sustain me. I hope I have made myself clear.

My love.

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.] *10.30 a.m.*

Just as I was handing this to the Superintendent, I got your loving and magnificent wire. It will sustain me in the midst of the storm I am about to enter. I am sending you a wire.[1]

Thank you.

M.K.G.

From a photostat: G.N. 4634

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Rabindranath Tagore", 20-9-1932.

130. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

September 20, 1932

MY DEAREST FRIEND AND BROTHER,

This is early morning of Tuesday just a little after 3 o'clock. I have just finished a brief letter[1] to Gurudev.

You have been ever present before me during these days of anguish. I have perhaps read your thoughts. You know my regard for you. Though we are as poles asunder, or seem to be, in mental outlook at so many points, our hearts are one. Wherever therefore I have been able to agree with you, it has been a matter of pure joy. Perhaps this step of mine has been for you the last straw. Even so I want to have your laceration. For I do not want you to cease to strive with me—I remained in banishment from my eldest brother for, I think, fourteen years. Year after year he sent me curses by registered post. I rejoiced in his curses. His curses were so many sparks of love—I won him. Six months before his death he saw that I was in the right.[2] One of the reasons for his wrath was this very question of untouchability. In our case, I do not know who is in error. But I do know that you are as blood-brother to me. At this (may be) last crisis, you must not cease to strive with me. Send me your curses or your blessings. You may open my eyes, where others have failed, if you think I am in error. You know me too well not to know that I have the God-given capacity of owning mistakes, if the conviction comes to me. Do write or wire to me.

I wrote to you a month ago inquiring about your health. I never got a reply. I wonder if you ever got my postcard.

Deep love.

M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, p. 234

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* "An Autobiography—Part IV, Chapter V".

131. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 20, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

I got up at 2.30 today to write to Gurudev, then to Sastri and then to you. I have your tearing letter. At first I thought I would send it to the Governor. But I rejected the thought as soon as it came. You have chosen to enter the furnace. You must remain in it. My society is no easy job as you have seen all these years. Drink then the poison to the last dregs.

As I wrote that first letter conveying my vow, I thought of you and of Ba. And for a time I became giddy. How would you two bear the thing? But the voice within said, 'If you will enter in, you must give up thought of all attachment.' And the letter went. No anguish will be too terrible to wash out the sin of untouchability. You must therefore rejoice in this suffering and bear it bravely. I know how difficult all this is to do. Yet that is exactly what you have to try to do. Just think and realize that there is no meaning in having the last look. The spirit which you love is always with you. The body through which you learnt to love the spirit is no longer necessary for sustaining that love. It is well that it lasts whilst there is use for it. It is equally well that it perishes when there is no use for it. And since we don't know when it will outlast its use, we conclude that death through whatever cause means that there was no longer any use for it. If it is any comfort, know that Vallabhbhai, Mahadev, Ramdas, Surendra, Devdas, whom I have met are all bearing the thing wonderfully well. Love to your companions. I am glad Kisen is with you. She is a good and brave girl. May God sustain you.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABAI (SLADE)
ARTHUR ROAD PRISON
BOMBAY

From a photostat: C.W. 9509. Courtesy: Mirabehn

132. CABLE TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

[*September 20, 1932*][1]

HORACE ALEXANDER
FRIENDS' HOUSE
EUSTON, LONDON

HOW SHALL I DISOBEY WHAT IS TO ME GOD'S COMMAND. LET HIM PREVAIL. LOVE.

BAPU

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

133. CABLE TO AGATHA HARRISON

[*September 20, 1932*][2]

AGATHA HARRISON
DARLE KALOPH LONDON

UNDERSTAND YOUR STRUGGLE. GOD WILL GUIDE YOUR STEP.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1457

134. TELEGRAM TO MEHMUDJI ALLIJI

[*September 20, 1932*][3]

MEHMUDJI ALLIJI
AHMEDABAD

THANKS OFFER BUT YOU SEE AM STILL PRISONER.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

[1] From "Diary, 1932"
[2] From "Diary, 1932". The addressee's cable dated September 17 read: "Should value advice you care to give me at this moment."
[3] From the placing of the item in the source

135. TELEGRAM TO ASHUTOSH CHAUDHARI

September 20, 1932

ASHUTOSH CHAUDHARI
6 LYALL ROAD
ALLAHABAD

PLEASE TELL APARNA NOT TO FAST AT ALL. ALL SHOULD REJOICE AND DO UTMOST BEST REMOVE UNTOUCHABILITY.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

136. TELEGRAM TO BALWANTRAI DESAI

[*September 20, 1932*][1]

BALWANTRAI DESAI VAKIL
PALACE ROAD
BARODA

MY STATEMENT[2] PERHAPS PRESS ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

137. TELEGRAM TO RAMNIKLAL DESAI

[*September 20, 1932*][3]

RAMNIKLAL DESAI
GOKULDAS TEJPAL COMPOUND
VILLE PARLE
BOMBAY

PRAY AWAIT EVENTS.

GANDHI

Govenment of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

[1] From the placing of the item in the source
[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 16-9-1932.
[3] From "Diary, 1932"

138. TELEGRAM TO JAMNADAS DWARKADAS

[*September 20, 1932*][1]

JAMNADAS DWARKADAS
WALKESHWAR ROAD
BOMBAY

CONDOLENCES TO YOU AND FAMILY FROM US ALL. LOVE.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

139. TELEGRAM TO DAHYABHAI GINWALA

[*September 20, 1932*]

DAHYABHAI GINWALA
CARE SERVINDIA
BOMBAY

THANKS. DO NOT KNOW WHAT IS TO HAPPEN.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

140. TELEGRAM TO HARIBUKSH SINGH

[*September 20, 1932*][2]

HARIBUKSH SINGH
CARE ROSE
SIALKOT

IT WOULD BE WRONG FOR YOU FAST IN SYMPATHY BUT DO WHAT YOU CAN BLOT OUT CURSE UNTOUCHABILITY.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

[1] From "Diary, 1932"
[2] From the placing of the item in the source

141. TELEGRAM TO A. J. DODDAMATI JAKKILI

[*September 20, 1932*]

A. J. DODDAMATI JAKKILI
KARNATAK BANDHU OFFICE
GADAG

YOUR WORK IS GOOD BUT BETTER IS SOME TANGIBLE SERVICE.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

142. TELEGRAM TO KASHI KRISHNACHARYA

[*September 20,1932*][1]

KASHI KRISHNACHARYA
ALL-INDIA SANATAN DHARMA VAIDIK MAHASABHA
GUNTOOR

AM SORRY. BEYOND MY POWER SUSPEND FAST.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

143. TELEGRAM TO KRISHNADAS

[*September 20, 1932*][2]

KRISHNADAS
CARE MOTI
CALCUTTA

REMAIN THERE SERVE MOTHER.

BAPU

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

[1] From "Diary, 1932"
[2] *ibid*

144. CABLE TO INDIANS OF TAIPING, PERAK

[*September 20, 1932*]

INDIANS
TAIPING
PERAK

LET GOD PREVAIL.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

145. TELEGRAM TO DR. B. C. ROY

[*September 20, 1932*][1]

DR. BIDHAN ROY
36 WELLINGTON STREET
CALCUTTA

PRAY TELL URMILADEVI YOUR HEART-RENDING WIRE NEVER RECEIVED. LETTERS YOU MENTION I WROTE SOME IN DESPAIR. COULD GET NO ANSWER. DO WRITE. I KNOW YOU WILL BRAVELY BEAR PRESENT ANGUISH. MAHADEV JOINS SENDING LOVE.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

146. TELEGRAM TO AMBALAL SARABHAI

[*September 20, 1932*][2]

SETH AMBALAL SARABHAI
SHAHIBAG
AHMEDABAD

OF COURSE YOUR HOME MY REFUGE. DO NOT KNOW WHAT IS TO HAPPEN.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

[1] From the placing of the item in the source
[2] *ibid*

147. TELEGRAM TO AMBALAL SARABHAI

[*September 20, 1932*][1]

AMBALAL SARABHAI
SHAHIBAG
AHMEDABAD

LEARN BHARATI HAD FALL FROM HORSE. WIRE CORRECT STATE. YOU CAN ALL SEE ME WHEN YOU WISH. LOVE.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

148. A TELEGRAM

[*September 20, 1932*][2]

MEHD [*sic*]
CARE BHADRAJI DHRU MAHARAJ MANSIONS
SANDHURST ROAD
BOMBAY

THANKS OFFER. YOU SEE NOW THERE IS NO ANXIETY.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

[1] From the placing of the item in the source.
[2] *ibid*

149. TELEGRAM TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE[1]

September 20, 1932

GURUDEV
SANTINIKETAN

HAVE ALWAYS EXPERIENCED GOD'S MERCY. VERY EARLY THIS MORNING I WROTE[2] SEEKING YOUR BLESSING IF YOU COULD APPROVE ACTION AND BEHOLD I HAVE IT IN ABUNDANCE IN YOUR MESSAGE JUST RECEIVED. THANK YOU.

GANDHI

Visvabharati News, p. 25

150. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

September 20, 1932

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
B CLASS PRISONER
PRISON BELGAUM

YOU SHOULD BE BRAVE. DO NOT SEEK RELEASE UNDER PAROLE. WHERE HEARTS MEET WHAT USE PHYSICAL MEETING. LET GOD'S WILL BE DONE. LOVE.

BAPU

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

[1] This was in reply to Tagore's telegram of September 19, 1932, which read: "It is worth sacrificing precious life for the sake of India's unity and her social integrity. Though we cannot anticipate what effect it may have upon our rulers who may not understand its immense importance for our people we feel certain that the supreme appeal of such self-offering to the conscience of our own countrymen will not be in vain. I fervently hope that we will not callously allow such national tragedy to reach its extreme length. Our sorrowing hearts will follow your sublime penance with reverence and love."

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Rabindranath Tagore", 20-9-1932.

151. NOTE TO M. G. BHANDARI

September 20, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

Thank you for your note. I think I ought to see Reuter's representative now, if you do not mind.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5125

152. LETTER TO G. K. DEVDHAR

September 29, 1932

MY DEAR DEVDHAR,

Of course the Society's home is my home.[1] I have lived in exile by choice. When God wills it, He will send me back home.

I have not the slightest notion where the fast will be taken. This is a wonderful ordeal. I deserve it all. For I have the Hindu heart. And have we not deserved the most terrible chastisement from God for ourtreatment of the untouchables? And so He is trying me through and through before admitting me to the untouchable fold. It has been an effort for the past 50 years. Please send the enclosed[2] to Sastri.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 57-8

153. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

September 20, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I got your letter only yesterday whilst I was talking to the friends who came to see me. I am now replying to it at earliest opportunity. I thank you for your letter.

My position is this: My fast has reference only to separate electorate. As soon as that is withdrawn the letter of the vow will be satisfied and I would be bound to call off the fast. But a very heavy

[1] The addressee had invited Gandhiji to stay at the Servants of India Society's Home at Poona during the fast.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to V.S. Srinivasa Sastri", 20-9-1932.

responsibility will then lie upon me of having a substitute that is infinitely superior to separate electorate.

If you will not resent my saying it, I would like to say that as I am a "touchable" by birth, I am an "untouchable" by choice. And it was in this dual capacity that I wrote to Sir Samuel Hoare and then the Prime Minister. It is that dual capacity that has compelled the fast. Looking at the matter in this light I must say that I am not in love with the idea of statutory reservation. Whilst it is not open to the same objection that separate electorate is, I have not a shadow of a doubt that it will prevent the natural growth of the suppressed classes and will remove the incentive to honourable amends from the suppressors. What I am aiming at is a heart understanding between the two, the greatest opportunity of repentance and reparation on the part, of the suppressors. I am certain that the moment is ripe for the change of heart among them. I would therefore favour widest possible franchise for the suppressed and establish a convention between the two sections for securing proper election of representatives of the suppressed. I have drafted a rough tentative scheme which I handed to the friends and which I explained fully yesterday to my son Devdas. But to me this is not the largest but it is the least part of the reform I want.

Nothing will satisfy me till the last vestige of untouchability is gone. I would therefore insist on a statutory declaration that all public places of worship, wells, schools, etc., should be open to the suppressed precisely on the same terms as the suppressors. This is roughly my idea. If, however, the representatives of suppressed classes will not look at my idea, they are at liberty to have statutory reservation of seats. I should not fast against it but you will not expect me to bless any such scheme. Nor is my blessing essential to its acceptance by the Government. If I get the opportunity, I should certainly try to create public opinion among the suppressed against statutory reservation.

If my position is not clear or satisfactory, I would be delighted to meet you and other friends including R.B. Raja and Dr. Ambedkar by appointment. As you are aware this has become possible only now.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 783 Also *The Epic Fast,* pp. 168-9

154. LETTER TO VITHAL R. SHINDE[1]

September 20, 1932

I have your touching letter. I have absolutely no notion as to how I am to be disposed of. Therefore it is too early to say anything. I certainly begin the fast here at 12. God alone knows where, when and how it will end. All the same, pray accept my thanks for your sympathy and offer.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 58

155. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

September 20, 1932

CHI. KAKA,

I got your letter yesterday. On September 19. . . . [2] There will be no harm at all if you rest a little from reading and writing just as you have been resting from spinning. Only you cannot afford to stop your daily walks, as we found from our experience in Yeravda earlier. Take long walks. Be careful first about exercise, food and rest and then read and write as much as you can get time for. I have three books by Sir. James Jeans[3] which I am sending to you. I liked them very much, though I find that there are people who disagree with his views. I think I should read those books twice or thrice. There are in them several things which are not clear to me. However, I have become very much interested in the subject. In a sense, you are not wrong in describing Galileo and others as *rishis.* In a sense, because the *rishis* relied on intuition, and the word *rishi* denoted one who does that. This is not to run down the work of Galileo and others. Only it seems necesssary to keep in view the fact that the fields of the two types of men are different. Try to find another term if you can.

You must have heard of my ordeal[4] and rejoiced at the news. There can be no reason at all to be unhappy about it. Fasting and

[1] The addresee had invited Gandhiji to Ahalya Ashram, a students' hostel he had been running at Poona.

[2] One sentence was censored by the jail authorities.

[3] English physicist and astronomer

[4] These portions, censored by the jail authorities, are restored from *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, "Letter to F.S. Taleyarkhan", 10-10-1896.

eating mean the same thing[1], just as birth and death mean the same thing. In any case, if a co-worker gives up his life for the sake of his dharma, it cannot be a cause for grief. Such an opportunity comes very rarely to anybody, and when it comes it should be gladly welcomed. Instead of being perturbed you should, therefore, be more vigilant and cultivate greater devotion to duty. Leave the jail with improved health. The filth of untouchability will be removed only after a great many sacrifices have been made.

We are all happy.

Shankar[2] is doing well. I saw him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9489. Courtesy: D.B. Kalelkar

156. LETTER TO KEDARNATH KULKARNI

September 20, 1932

I was indeed waiting for your letter. I got it only last evening. I would have liked a talk with you. If, while the fast is in progress, I become convinced about its being contrary to dharma, I will immediately give it up without any false sense of shame. I am ashamed of only one thing in the world—untruth—in thought, speech and action.

My step has not been dictated by reason; it was inspired by my inner voice. My reason, however, told me: 'Hundreds of persons like you will probably have to die in order to remove the blot of untouchability'. Fasting is a very common practice in Hinduism. I have always loved it. My decision is the cry of my heart. The Prime Minister's decision was only the immediate cause. It provided me with an opportunity to undertake the fast. However, the aim of my fast is not merely to get the decision changed but to bring about the awakening and self-purification which are bound to result from the effort to get the decision changed. In other words this was an opportunity to strike at the very root of untouchability.

[1] These portions, censored by the jail authorities, are restored from *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, "Letter to F.S. Taleyarkhan", 10-10-1896.

[2] Satish Kalelkar, addressee's son

It is true that we cannot positively say that the step was right because it had brought about the desired result. Everyone should judge for himself whether or not it is right. And if one is unable to do so, one should accept the opinion of an elder. To me the step seems not only right but even imperative. Think over this and write to me again. Please do not be disappointed about me. I hope your eczema is cured.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 60

157. LETTER TO JAISHANKAR P. TRIVEDI[1]

September 20, 1932

I got your lines full of love. I know your love. God does not live somewhere in the sky. For me pure love like yours is God, and it is such love that gives me the strength to undertake *yajnas* like the present one.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 62

158. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

4.45 p.m., September 20, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your packet. You must have seen the orders which have been issued. It seems that we remain where we were. That is the position today. What will happen tomorrow, God alone knows. As things are, you can write daily if you wish. The post will be despatched daily from here. But do not expect many letters from me. I wish to conserve my strength as much as possible. There will be plenty of other work for me. If anybody wishes to come and see me, he may. But nobody should be eager to come at any cost. Tell this to Anasuyabehn, Shankerlal and Rama. Inform Saraladevi too. I would, however, advise that only those who cannot restrain their desire to come may come. Everybody should devote himself or herself as much as possible to the service of the *Antyajas*.

[1] Of Poona Agriculture College.

If I can reply to any of the other letters which I get, I will do so. If someone does not get reply, he or she should understand that I could not write because of pressure of other work.

At prayer-time this morning, we sang "*Vaishnava Jana*". Mahadev read the *Gita* from 6.30 to 8. Vallabhbhai and Mahadev are fasting today. When the fast commenced at noon, the following *bhajan* which Raihanabehn often sings was sung:

Awake, O traveller, it is morning now,

It is no longer night, that you still sleep;

He who sleeps will lose,

He who is awake will gain.

If you have got the complete *bhajan* there, Panditji should sing it to you all. If you have not got it, I will send it from here.

I feel a little worried on account of Kusum. Does she take complete rest? She may give up even spinning.

You must have got the large packet of letters I despatched yesterday. Today only this letter. No, I forget. I could not write to Punjabhai yesterday. I am enclosing a slip for him today.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8253. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

159. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[1]

September 20, 1932

For the first time in nine months journalists were permitted to see Mahatma Gandhi in Yeravda Jail this evening at 5.30 when they were treated to one of the most easily delivered and seriously thoughtful interviews to which it has ever been my fortune to listen. No journalist could see Mahatma Gandhi today and discuss the position with him five hours after he had commenced "a fast unto death" without being immensely impressed . . . .

When asked if he was hopeful about a happy ending to the affair, he said:

I am an irrepressible optimist. Unless God has forsaken me, I hope that it will not be a fast unto death.

Mahatma Gandhi said that he had many telegrams from people who had decided or wished to enter upon a fast in sympathy with him.

[1] This report of the interview first appeared in *The Times of India*, 21-9-1932.

I urge everybody not to fast in sympathy. I have undertaken it at God's call, and, therefore, unless there is a similar definite call to these people they have no business to fast. For one day, for the sake of purification or identification with the cause, it is a good thing; but that is all. Such a fast is both a privilege and a duty, and the privilegeaccrues only to those who have disciplined themselves for it.

The interview then turned to the question of the day, the representation of the Depressed Classes, or as Mahatma Gandhi calls them, the Suppressed Classes.

First of all he expressed surprise that the statement[1] given to the Government of Bombay had not been released. That had been given five days ago. Had he to redraft it today it would be rather different in the light of happenings since then, and he said at the end of the interview that his new statement was supplementary to the other, but not dependent on it. He said:

My cards are on the table, but, so far as the present instance is concerned, I could say nothing from behind prison bars. Now that the restrictions are removed, I have answered the first call of the Press. My fast is only against separate electorates, and not against statutory reservation of seats. To say that I am damaging the cause by uncompromising opposition to statutory reservation of seats is only partly true. Opposed I was, and am even now, but there was never put before me for any acceptance or rejection a scheme for statutory reservation of seats. Therefore, there is no question of my having to decide upon that point. When I developed my own idea about that point, I certainly expressed disappointment, and in my humble opinion, such statutory reservation, short of doing service, may do harm in the sense that it will stop natural evolution. Statutory reservation is like a support to a man. Relying on such support to any extent he weakens himself.

If people won't laugh at me, I would gently put forward a claim, which I have always asserted, that I am a 'touchable' by birth but an untouchable by choice; and I have endeavoured to qualify myself to represent, not the upper ten even among the untouchables, because be it said to their shame there are castes and classes among them, but my ambition is to represent and identify myself with, as far as possible, the lowest strata of untouchables, namely, the 'invisibles' and the 'unapproachables', whom I have always before my mind's eye wherever I go; for they have indeed drunk deep of the poisoned cup. I have met

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 16-9-1932.

them in Malabar and in Orissa, and am convinced that if they are ever to rise, it will not be by reservation of seats but will be by the strenuous work of Hindu reformers in their midst, and it is because I feel that this separation would have killed all prospect of reform that my whole soul has rebelled against it; and, let me make it plain, that the withdrawal of separate electorates will satisfy the letter of my vow but will never satisfy the spirit behind it, and in my capacity of being a self-chosen untouchable, I am not going to rest content with a patched-up pact between the 'touchables' and the untouchables.

What I want, what I am living for, and what I should delight in dying for, is the eradication of untouchability root and branch. I want, therefore, a living pact whose life-giving effect should be felt not in the distant tomorrow but today, and, therefore, that pact should be sealed by an all-India demonstration of 'touchables' and untouchables meeting together, not by way of a theatrical show, but in real brotherly embrace. It is in order to achieve this, the dream of my life for the past fifty years, that I have entered today the fiery gates. The British Government's decision was the last straw. It was a decisive symptom, and with the unerring eye of the physician that I claim to be in such matters, I detected the symptom. Therefore, for me the abolition of separate electorates would be but the beginning of the end, and I would warn all those leaders assembled at Bombay and others against coming to any hasty decision.

My life I count of no consequence. One hundred lives given for this noble cause would, in my opinion, be poor penance done by Hindus for the atrocious wrongs they have heaped upon helpless men and women of their own faith. I, therefore, would urge them not to swerve an inch from the path of strictest justice. My fast I want to throw in the scales of justice, and if it wakes up caste Hindus from their slumber, and if they are roused to a sense of their duty, it will have served its purpose. Whereas, if out of blind affection for me, they would somehow or other come to a rough and ready agreement so as to secure the abrogation and then go off to sleep, they will commit a grievous blunder and will have made my life a misery. For, while the abrogation of separate electorates would result in my breaking the fast, it would be living death for me if the vital pact for which I am striving is not arrived at. It would simply mean that, as soon as I called off the fast, I would have to give notice of another in order to achieve the spirit of the vow to the fullest extent.

This may look childish to the onlooker but not so to me. If I had anything more to give, I would throw that in also to remove this curse, but I have nothing more than my life.

I believe that if untouchability is really rooted out, it will not only purge Hinduism of a terrible blot but its repercussions will be world-wide. My fight against untouchability is a fight against the impure in humanity, and, therefore, when I penned my letter[1] to Sir Samuel Hoare I did so in the full faith that the very best in human family will come to my assistance if I have embarked on this thing with a heart, so far as it is possible for a human being to achieve, free of impurity, free of all malice and all anger. You will, therefore, see that my fast is based first of all in the cause of faith in the Hindu community, faith in human nature itself, and faith even in the official world.

In attacking untouchability I have gone to the very root of the matter, and, therefore, it is an issue of transcendental value, far surpassing swaraj in terms of political constitutions, and I would say that such a constitution would be a dead weight if it was not backed by a moral basis, in the shape of the present hope engendered in the breasts of the downtrodden millions that that weight is going to be lifted from their shoulders. It is only because the English officials cannot possibly see this living side of the picture that in their ignorance and self-satisfaction they dare to sit as judges upon questions that affect the fundamental being of millions of people, and here I mean both caste Hindus and untouchables, that is, the suppressor and the suppressed; and it was in order to wake up even officialdom from its gross ignorance, if I may make use of such an expression without being guilty of offence, that I felt impelled by a voice from within to offer resistance with the whole of my being.

He stated that he had made definite suggestions to the deputation from the Emergency Committee whom he received yesterday and he presumed that these would have been communicated to the Press today in Bombay.

Referring to a possible photograph Mahatma Gandhi made a jocular remark concerning his funeral rites whereupon I asked him he had made any preparations for such rites when visited by his son Devdas yesterday if the very worst happeneed, and I received a dramatic reply.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Samuel Hoare", 11-3-1932.

I have asked my son to say in my name at the Bombay Conference that he as his father's son was prepared to forfeit his father's life rather than see any injury being done to the Suppressed Classes in mad haste.

What did he really think about the possibilities of his fast lasting? He replied:

I am as anxious as anyone to live. Water has an infinite capacity for prolonging life, and I will take water whenever I feel I require it. You can depend upon me to make a supreme effort to hold myself together so that the Hindu conscience may be quickened as also the British conscience and this agony may end. My cry will rise to the throne of the Almighty God.

The Epic Fast, pp. 118-23

160. CABLE TO H. S. L. POLAK[1]

[*September 21, 1932*][2]

KALOPH[3]
ESTRAND
LONDON

PUBLIC STATEMENT EXPLAINING MY POSITION REGARDING FAST AND MATTERS THEREANENT WAS SENT TO GOVERNMENT WITH REQUEST FOR PUBLICATION ON FIFTEENTH.[4] AM TOLD IT WILL BE PUBLISHED NOW.[5] LOVE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 18534. Also Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram received on September 20, 1932, which read: "*Times* correspondent reports you complained Government not released document setting out terms you gave Government. Does this refer Depressed Classes question? Informed India Office no knowledge document."

[2] From "Diary, 1932"

[3] Telegraphic address of H.S.L. Polak.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to M. G. Bhandari", 16-9-1932.

[5] It was published in *The Hindu* on September 21, 1932.

161. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

September 21, 1932

I know how you must be feeling over this penance. But you are brave enough to perceive that this is no occasion for sorrow but for joy. Many of us may have to die before this monster of untouchability is finally destroyed. You should be filled with joy that a comrade has entered the fiery gate. It is well if I come out unhurt; it is equally well, if not better, if the fire consumes me. God has guided my step. This will be done to the very end.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 67

162. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

September 21[1]*, 1932*

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I hope you do not worry. On the contrary, you should dance with joy that the person whom you have adopted as your father is to make the supreme sacrifice for the cause which you hold dear. For you, this should be an occasion to celebrate.

I have been having a bit of good-humoured jesting with Janakimaiya. Sardar and Mahadev send you their regards.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 94-5

163. LETTER TO MANILAL V. KOTHARI

September 21, 1932

Sardar says that I must write a separate letter to my chief disciple. If I say that Manilal is included in Jamnalalji, Sardar turns red eyes on me and says, Jamnalalji and all others can be included in Manilal but Manilal can never be included in anybody. I tell him I do not agree with him. Manilal, being a votary of non-violence, can be

[1] The source has September 27. *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, however, has 21, which is confirmed from a letter of the addressee to Madalsa of the same date reproduced in *Bapu Sansmaran*, "Letter to Keshav Gandhi", 21-10-1932.

included in all, but he would never want anybody to be included in him. Now you alone can settle this dispute which has arisen in our cell. See that you do justice. Who is right, Sardar or I? And while such arguments take place, why should I worry at all about my indefinite fast, a practice which is so beloved of Jains?

Judge from this letter how happily Sardar and I pass the time. Weeping is strictly forbidden.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 68

164. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

September 21, 1932

I am naturally eager to know whether you consider my step moral or not. Nath is a little doubtful about it. I have replied[1] to his letter. If you have thought about the matter, write to me. If you feel that my step is in accord with dharma, then it must have also been clear to you that this is an occasion for rejoicing.

There is no ground for the fear which you entertain on account of Vallabhbhai's learning Sanskrit. Nothing can make him forget his farmer's Gujarati. On the contrary, Sanskrit will increase his fluency in his native tongue. What we should welcome is the determined effort which he is making this time. It is bound to have a good effect on the students. Sanskrit is like the river Ganga for our languages. I always feel that if it were to dry up, the regional languages also would lose their vitality and power. It seems to me that an elementary knowledge of Sanskrit is essential.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 67

165. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

September 21, 1932

You should not be perturbed about the fast. God has sent me unsought an opportunity for which I was pining. We ought not to feel unhappy when our desire is granted. All three of us are happy and, as we watch God's sport, dance with as much delight as we can. But we

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Keddarnath Kulkarni", 20-9-1932.

have not yet learnt how to dance well. I have obtained permission for people to write to me. You may, therefore, write to me.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 66

166. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

September 21, 1932

CHI. MANI,

Need I try to give you courage? I forbid you to shed a single tear. It is only rarely that a man is blessed with such good fortune as has come to me. You should, therefore, rejoice and not shed tears. You and others like you should not start fasting, but should devote yourselves heart and soul to your work. I have obtained permission for everybody to write to me whenever they wish. Therefore do write to me.

I hope you will get this letter without delay.

Blessings from

BAPU

MANIBEHN PATEL

PRISONER

CENTRAL PRISON, BELGAUM

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 87

167. LETTER TO FULCHAND B. SHAH

September 21, 1932

BHAI FULCHAND,

All of you should exult at the news of my fast, and not shed tears. It is only rarely that a man gets a noble opportunity like this. Nobody should copy my example and fast. Everybody may sacrifice his life when his opportunity comes. If anybody holds back then, he would not be a man. Just now, however, all of you should become

more earnest and devoted to your work and strive harder to make yourselves sufficiently pure for such a sacrifice.

Blessings to all.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 68. Also C.W. 9472. Courtesy: Chandrakant F. Shah

168. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

September 21, 1932

I can see your agitation from your wire. I hope you got mine.[1] I have imagined you to be a wise man. I hope you will prove me right. If you doubt the rightness of my step from a moral point of view, let me know. I have seen to it that this letter is sent to you soon and that you are permitted to write back to me. You know that I look upon you as a custodian of the moral correctness of my actions. Exercise that right and do that duty of yours vigilantly. If you have approved of my step, it should also have been clear to you that this is an occasion for rejoicing. Write to me a long and frank letter. I am writing to Taramati and asking her and the children to come and see me.

[From Gujrati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 115-6

169. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

September 21, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

As per our conversation I send you eight letters. I hope you will send them to the respective prisoners with instructions that they may be delivered at once and that the addressees are free to write to me in reply.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No.9

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Mathuradas Trikumji", 20-9-1932.

170. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

September 21, 1932

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

It is strange that you do not recive my letters as I do not receive yours. On receipt of this letter wire to me that you understand my fast, and if you do, you will sing, not weep. Your duty is to remain immersed in your work. We are all in the hands of God and He will act as He wills.

Tell Arun to write.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1688

171. INTERVIEW TO S. M. MATE, P. N. RAJBHOJ AND LIMAYE [1]

September 21, 1932

If I had my way I would insist on temple-entry and the like being included in any pact that may be concluded and I would invite all reformers and untouchables to do so. I am aware that temple-entry is a difficult thing to accomplish in the very limited time that my life can hold out against the fast, but all the parties to the pact should pledge themselves to realize this elementary right of human beings at the earliest opportunity. At the same time I do not want this fast to be used for coercing orthodoxy. The fast is certainly intended to sting even orthodoxy into thinking. But if they cannot get on to this elementary truth about human rights we must have patience. But temples and the like are the property not of orthodoxy but of all Hindus. Therefore this idea of excluding a section of Hindus from the use of public utilities is itself a species of violence, and, therefore, the support of legislation has got to be invoked in order to protect this fundamenal right. I recognize, however, that if the majority of the Hindus are against the exercise of this right by the so-called untouchables, mere legislation will be wholly ineffective. But my opinion is that the mind of the majority is for this reform if it comes stealthily. Therefore, reformers should prepare the ground now cease-

[1] According to the source, what follows is the substance of Gandhiji's talk.

lessly and vigilantly to convert the passive attitude towards the reform into active approval thereof. This rising tide of opinion in favour of the reform will convince orthodoxy that it is inevitable. The work, therefore, must be free of all violence, even mental.

Legislation in a free State always represents the will of the majority. All legislation in advance of general opinion argues bankruptcy of missionary effort. My reliance, therefore, always has been on missionary enterprise. Therefore, for the pact to be a living pact, it is absolutely necessary that it should be a condition precedent to an acceptance of the political part of it, that the caste Hindus party to the pact will not only endorse it but actively move in the matter. My own opinion is quite clear. I would accept any pact that has not a tinge of separate electorate about it. I would, with the utmost reluctance, tolerate reservation of seats under a joint electorate scheme. But I should insist upon what is to me the vital part of the pact, the social and religious reform. And, therefore, whilst if a settlement is arrived at on the joint electorate scheme and separate electorate is withdrawn by the British Government, I will break my fast, I will immediately give notice to the millions of Hindus, who have flocked round me at the innumerable meetings from one end of India to the other, that if within, say, six months the social reform is not demonstrably achieved, the fast will be taken up again. For, if I do not do so I would be guilty of betraying God in whose name I have taken this great fast and the interest of untouchables for whose sake it has been taken.

I have not yet approved of the Nasik Satyagraha about Kalaram temple for the simple reason that I have smelt a trace of violence in that satyagraha, and satyagraha is inconsistent with the slightest violence. I understand also that with reference to temples like Parvati temple there is a difficulty about the trust. The trust-deed itself lays an obligation on the trustees to prohibit the entry of untouchables into the temple. Where such a disability exists, I would be able to understand the powerlessness of the trustees. Any satyagraha in reference to such temples would be pure violence. I would hold that at this time of the day such a condition in any trust should be considered against public morals and, therefore, of no effect. And if such a judgment can be obtained, clearly legislation must step in and rendersuch a clause invalid. Sjt. Rajbhoj fears that if Dr. Ambedkar accepts a reasonable compromise, Government may call another leader into being who will declare his opposition, and if that fear is realized there would be eternal opposition by the Government to any

pact, and, therefore, my fast must end in my death, and that, therefore, I should give up the fast. Granting that Mr. Rajbhoj's fear is justified I cannot undo a pledge taken with God as witness. We are not able to forecast all future events. We can, therefore, only control our acts, and it is well with us and our cause if we unflinchingly act on the square in spite of the heaviest odds. Our final trust must rest upon the assured victory of truth. Such correct action has without exception confounded the opponents and brought out the intended result, granting of course that the cause is as just as the action is correct. I must not, therefore, on any account, suspend the fast unless its terms are fulfilled.

The Epic Fast, pp. 165-7

172. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

September 22, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

We can form any habit about eating and sleeping that we desire. If you rise early and do not sleep during the day time, you are bound to form the habit of going to bed early.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9433. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

173. CABLE TO WILLIAM SHIRER[1]

[On or before *September 23, 1932*][2]

WILLIAM SHIRER
CHICAGO TRIBUNE
VIENNA (AUSTRIA)

THANK YOU. NOT SURPRISED AMERICAN BEWILDERMENT. IT HAS BEEN MY MISFORTUNE OR GOOD FORTUNE TO TAKE WORLD BY SURPRISE. NEW EXPERIMENTS OR OLD EXPERIMENTS IN NEW STYLE

[1] The cable was in reply to one from the addressee, an American journalist, sent from Vienna, saying that American opinion was "profoundly befuddled" by Gandhiji's fast and could not understand his wilfully throwing away his "undisputed political leadership of Indian nationalism by starving to death".

[2] The cable was published in *The Bombay Chronicle* under the date-line: "Poona, September 23, 1932".

MUST SOMETIMES ENGENDER MISUNDERSTANDING. LAWS OF DECORUM IMPOSE ON ME RIGOROUS RESTRAINT IN LETTERS TO GOVERNMENT. LAWS OF JAIL ADMINISTRATION PROHIBITED CORRESPONDENCE WITH OUTSIDE WORLD. THESE I OBSERVED IN LETTER AND SPIRIT. PACT NOW IN PROCESS OF FORMATION WILL PROVIDE FAR BETTER AND LARGER REPRESENTATION THAN BRITISH DECISION. WERE I NOT SURE OF DEPRESSED MASS OPINION BEHIND ME AS DISTINGUISHED FROM THAT OF LEADERS I COULD NOT HAVE TAKEN FAST IN MANNER I HAVE DONE. AND EVEN AMONG DEPRESSED LEADERS SO FAR AS I KNOW VAST MAJORITY BEHIND ME. I WOULD COMPROMISE WITH LATTER TO FURTHERMOST EXTENT CONSISTENT WITH PARAMOUNT INTEREST DEPRESSED CLASSES. YOU MUST NOT BE STARTLED BY MY PRESUMPTION IN CLAIMING TO KNOW DEPRESSED INTERESTS MORE THAN LEADERS. THOUGH I AM TOUCHABLE BY BIRTH PAST FIFTY YEARS I HAVE BECOME UNTOUCHABLE BY CHOICE. AMERICANS SHOULD KNOW THAT MY POLITICS ARE DERIVED FROM MY RELIGION. IF GOD HAS ORDAINED DEATH BY STARVATION I KNOW THAT IT WILL SET LAST SEAL ON MY POLITICAL LEADERSHIP. NATIONALISM WILL BE THE STRONGER FOR SACRIFICIAL DEATH. VAST MAJORITY OF INDIAN COMMUNITY HAS INSTINCTIVELY REALIZED CORRECTNESS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THIS FAST. AM CONVINCED THAT REAL SELF-GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN ADVANCED BY THIS PENANCE AND IF GOD GIVES ME STRENGTH TO SEE THIS FAST THROUGH WITHOUT MIND OR BODY WAVERING ADVANCEMENT WILL BE STILL GREATER. HENCE EVERY DAY WELL PASSED IN EQUILIBRIUM BRINGS SWARAJ NEARER AS IT CAN BY NO OTHER STEPS. THIS PREPARATION FOR DEATH FOR UNTOUCHABILITY IS VERITABLE PREPARTION FOR DEATH FOR WHOLE OF INDIA. FOR ME REMOVAL UNTOUCHABILITY IS INTEGRAL PART OF SWARAJ. I WOULD REJECT SWARAJ THAT EXCLUDED MEANEST SINFULLEST INDIANS FROM ITS HEALTH-GIVING BALM. FOR ME RELIGION IS ONE IN ESSENCE BUT IT HAS MANY BRANCHES AND IF I THE HINDU BRANCH FAIL IN MY DUTY TO THE PARENT TRUNK I AM UNWORTHY FOLLOWER OF THAT ONE INDIVISIBLE RELIGION. ACCORDING TO THIS REASONING MY

SACRIFICE PROMOTES DELIVERANCE OF HUMANITY FROM UNTOUCHABILITY IN EVERY SHAPE OR FROM AND THEREFORE IT SERVED ALL RELIGIOUS GROUPS. IF THEN AMERICA WHICH HAS SENT ME THROUGH HER KNOWN AND UNKNOWN SYMPATHIZERS SO MUCH SYMPATHY IN MY DISTRESS NOW UNDERSTANDS THE INWARDNESS OF THIS SACRIFICE I EXPECT HER TO MOBILIZE WORLD OPINION IN FAVOUR OF THE SACRIFICE. THOUGH APPARENTLY CONCEIVED TO APPLY A CORNER OF THIS WORLD IT IS REALLY INTEDED TO COVER THE WHOLE WORLD. THOSE WHO HAVE AT ALL FOLLOWED MY HUMBLE CAREER EVEN SUPERFICIALLY CANNOT HAVE FAILED TO OBSERVE THAT NOT SINGLE ACT OF MY LIFE HAS BEEN DONE TO INJURY TO ANY INDIVIDUAL OR NATION. MY NATIONALISM AS MY RELIGION IS NOT EXCLUSIVE BUT INCLUSIVE AND THEY MUST BE SO CONSISTENTLY WITH WELFARE OF ALL LIFE. I CLAIM NO INFALLIBILITY. I AM CONSCIOUS OF HAVING MADE HIMALAYAN BLUNDERS BUT AM NOT CONSCIOUS OF HAVING MADE THEM INTENTIONALLY OR HAVING EVER HARBOURED ENMITY TOWARDS ANY PERSON OR NATION OR ANY LIFE HUMAN OR SUBHUMAN.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

174. TELEGRAM TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

September 23, 1932

HEMPRABHADEVI
KHADISTHAN
CALCUTTA

HOPE YOU ARE BETTER. YOU HAD BETTER COME. FAST GOING WELL. KEEPING UP STRENGTH. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1621

175. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 23, 1932

NARANDAS
ASHRAM
SABARMATI

YOU MAY COME WITH ALL OTHERS WHO DESIRE CONSISTENTLY WITH WORKING ASHRAM. AM QUITE WELL. SATISBABU REACHING SABARMATI TOMORROW MORNING SEE YOU.

BAPU

From a microfilm M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8254. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

176. TELEGRAM TO MAGANLAL V. MEHTA

[*September 23, 1932*][1]

MAGANLAL VELJI MEHTA
114 CHINCHPOKLI
BOMBAY

YOU MUST NOT TAKE FAST WITH OR WITHOUT WATER IF YOU HAVE FAITH ME.

GANDHI

Government of Bomday, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

177. TELEGRAM TO SHRI KRISHNADAS MOR

[*September 23, 1932*][2]

SHRI KISEN MOR
VENKATESWARA STEAM PRESS
7 KHETWADI
BOMBAY

IF YOU HAVE FAITH IN ME YOU MUST NOT FAST.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

[1] From the placing of the item in the source
[2] From the placing of the item in the source

178. TELEGRAM TO C. KRISHNA NAIR

[*September 23, 1932*][1]

KRISHNA NAIR
SWADESHI LEAGUE
CHANDNI CHOWK
DELHI

YOU MUST NOT FAST. YOU ARE UNDER DISCIPLINE AND BOUND TAKE PREVIOUS SANCTION FOR SUCH STEP. YOUR TIME JUST NOW FOR LABORIOUS WORK. GOD WILL APPOINT HIS OWN TIME FOR YOUR FASTING.

BAPU

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

179. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 23, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

The thought of you corrodes me. I wish you could be at peace. Do write daily and wire tomorrow your condition. I am taking the fast very well. I am writing this whilst I am lying down after the enema asbefore. Be steady and strong. Have faith in God. Shall send you daily report through Mahadev. May not be able myself to write.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 9510. Courtesy: Mirabehn

180. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[2]

September 23, 1932

Though weakness must naturally creep on from day to day, compared to my previous fasts, I am taking this much more easily. I find myself also at perfect peace and hitherto I have found no difficulty in carrying on the prolonged and sustained conversations

[1] The statement was "in response to an invitation to reply to one or two questions" and was taken down by Mahadev Desai.

[2] *ibid*

on the untouchability question with various deputations. Though this has required tremendous concentration, I have not felt any difficulty. I know however that I cannot carry on like this much longer. I am quite optimistic with regard to this afternoon's conference.[1] My optimism may be perfectly stupid; for, if you were to ask me to give reasons, I have none, save that I have much faith in this fast as a God-ordained thing and I have an equal faith in the cause.

My message to British and American people is that they must not mistake this for a political move. It is a deep spiritual effort, a result of fifty years' constant application to an ideal. It is a penace, and, seeing that the ideal is nothing less than the deliverance of serveral million human beings from horrible religious serfdom, success cannot but have its repercussions on the whole of humanity. It is because, rightly or wrongly, I believe the British decision imposing separate electorates threatens to put huge obstacle in the way of reform, which has been for the past ten years moving on in geometrical progression, that I have staked my life to resist it.

After threed days, my conviction is stronger that the step I have taken is absolutely correct and, if my presentation is true, this cause demands the mobilization of world opinion, so as to compel right conduct by the British Government.

The Times of India, 24-9-1932

[1] An entry in *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, under this date says: "The whole Committee along with Dr. Ambedkar was expected at 4 p.m."

181. TELEGRAM TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

September 24, 1932

HEMPRABHADEVI
KHADISTHAN
CALCUTTA

YOUR WIRES,. GOD BLESS YOU AND KEEP YOU. UNNECESSARY COME. DOING WELL. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1622

182. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

POONA,
[*September 24, 1932*][1]

NARANDAS
ASHRAM SABARMATI
AHMEDABAD

YOUR SELF-DENIAL WORTHY OF YOU BUT I WANT YOU COME IF ONLY FOR DAY. BAPU STILL MAINTAINING STRENGTH.[2] GOD WILLING EVERYTHING WILL SOON BE WELL.

MAHADEV

From the Original: S.N. 33382

[1] From the postmark

[2] Gandhiji had started a fast unto death on September 20, 1932 as protest against the British Government's announcement granting separate electorates for Depressed Classes. The fast was, however, broken on September 26, after the terms of a settlement were accepted by the British Government.

183. CABLE TO SAFIA ZAGHLOUL PASHA[1]

September 24, 1932

THANK YOU FOR LOVING INSPIRING MESSAGE. GOD'S WILL BE DONE.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. III, p. 355

184. LETTER TO MIRABEHN[2]

September 24, 1932

MY DEAREST CHILD,

You are not to break. You must be seeing God's grace pouring in abundance as perhaps never before.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6238. Courtesy: Mirabehn

185. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

September 24, 1932

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
JAIL DEHRADUN

DURING ALL THESE DAYS OF AGONY YOU HAVE BEEN BEFORE MIND'S

[1] Widow of Egyptian nationalist leader Zaghloul Pasha. On hearing of Gandhiji's fast she had cabled on September 23 the following message: "Egyptian people, men and women, who have been following with brotherly sympathy heroic struggle India and her great chief Mahatma Gandhi for liberty are now watching with beating hearts Mahatma's sublime act of self-sacrifice for sake of India's unity and freedom. As one who had shared with my late husband joy of working for and obtaining sacred unity of Egyptian Christians, Mahomedans, Copts and also other communities of whatever religion or denomination, may I express my sincere hope that India's people inspired by Gandhi's sublime act of self-abrogation would unite in one great mass of brothers and patriots to save India's liberation and save life of her great son whose life and work are patrimony of East and humanity at large."

[2] This was scribbled by Gandhiji at the top of a letter Mahadev Desai wrote to Mirabehn informing her about Gandhiji's condition on the fifth day, of his fast.

EYE. I AM MOST ANXIOUS TO KNOW YOUR OPINION.[1] YOU KNOW HOW I VALUE YOUR OPINION. SAW INDU,[2] SARUP'S[3] CHILDREN.[4] INDU LOOKED HAPPY AND IN POSSESSION OF MORE FLESH. DOING VERY WELL. WIRE REPLY. LOVE.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1932. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

186. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

September 24, 1932

DEAR MATHURADAS,

Though this is the fifth day of Bapu's fast, he is quite energetic. People like you and me would lose courage and give ourselves upto distress and dejection. But Bapu's indomitable faith is sustaining him. God willing, everything will be over in a couple of days. I am writing this letter on behalf of Bapu. Hence instructions from the Inspector-General to the authorities there to permit you to send a reply are also being sent along with it.

Yours affectionataly,

MAHADEV

SHRI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
'B' CLASS PRISONER
BELGAUM PRISON

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru in his telegram, received on September 26, said: "Your telegram and brief news that some settlement reached filled me relief joy. First news your decision fast caused mental agony confusion but ultimately optimism triumphed regained peace mind. No sacrifice too great for suppressed downtrodden classes. Freedom must be judged by freedom of lowest but feel danger other issues obscuring only goal. Am unable judge from religious view-point. Danger your methods being exploited by others but how can I presume advise magician. Love."

[2] Indira Nehru

[3] Vijayalakshmi Pandit

[4] handralekha and Nayantara

187. INTERVIEW TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"

September 24, 1932

Yes, I shall certainly fast again, should the necessity arise as I firmly believe that by this means one can convince the world of the sincerity of one's view.

So said Mr. Gandhi to me in answer to one of my questions when I had the pleasure of having a long talk with him on the fifth day of his fast in Yeravda Jail. . . .

I certainly did not expect when I set off from Poona station before seven in the morning that I would be able to see Mr. Gandhi so early. . . . What a pleasant surprise it was when I received word from the jail authorities that the time was opportune. The great doors of Yeravda swung open, and I walked in. . . .

My escort led me through a courtyard, then through another little door which led on to a small compound roughly 150 feet by 40 feet wide, on one side of which were a few cells intended for State prisoners, but they all appeared to be unocccupied. At one end of the compound under the shade of a small mango tree was Mr. Gandhi lying on a cot covered with a prison blanket.

At his head was one of his faithful followers fanning him gently with a towel to keep off pestering flies. Seated round him were Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel, Mrs. Gandhi, Mr. Mahadev Desai. Introductions over, Mr. Gandhi soon fell to asking me what particular question I wanted to ask him. But to see him looking so frail and weak and obviously ill—well, it seemed too much to start interviewing.

But his eyes flashed when he answered my question. He then appeared to recede into his shell, only raising himself up on his elbows to take a drink of water from a bottle at his side.

He said:

Very nasty, you know. At times I try to change it by putting in a pinch of salt, but through it all my stomach is in an intense state of nausea.

Mr. Gandhi said that he would be delighted to go to London for the third Conference if his demands would be met, but not otherwise.

Then I asked him what I thought was a pertinent question and certainly did not expect an answer, but the ailing man had always a ready reply, and here is what he said:

You ask, 'Suppose all Indian leaders decided to practise this method of gaining their own ends, no matter for what cause?' Well, I admit, there is a lot of risk in the method. But it is like every great power in the world. Misuse creates mischief. Let us take the

illustration of a well-known poison—arsenic. It is a most powerful medicinal drug, but should not on that account be blotted out of existence, although we know that many people make harmful use of it. Therefore, if a thing is inherently good, and it is used at the proper time and in the proper measure, it is calculated to do universal good on an extensive scale almost bordering on the miraculous. One must make use of that power irrespective of the fact that others are likely to make harmful use of it.

Further, in case of fasting of this nature, there is not much scope for it to thrive or become popular for the simple reason that it is such an agonizing process that ordinary human nature shudders at the very thought of having to undergo it.

So you see, the danger is not so very great. It is only by training the body that one can do without food for any length of time. The undisciplined and weak would soon give up the idea.

At the end of this long statement Mr. Gandhi leant back, weak from exhaustion, onto his bed. Immediately two of the jail doctor were at his side to render what help they could. But Mr. Gandhi seemed to derive most comfort from Mrs. Gandhi, who although obviously suffering, seemed delighted to have the opportunity of altering his pillow, rubbing his forehead with olive oil, and quietly talking to him.

Meanwhile, Mr. Gandhi's disciples were receiving other political visitors and soon the compound was a scene of bustle and excitement.

From his secretary I gathered that Mr. Gandhi rose duirng his fast every morning at four; prayers were said from then to about half-past four or five; then a shave by his prison barber, his breakfast—a drink of water—and, perhaps, an hour's sleep. But this was constantly interrupted by special cables from all over the world. . . .

The Epic Fast, pp. 138-41

188. TELEGRAM TO SUNDERSING AND SONS[1]

[On or after *September 24, 1932*]

CONGRATULATIONS. HOPE YOUR EXAMPLE WILL BE INFECTIOUS.

From a microfilm: S.N. 18551

189. CABLE TO C. F. ANDREWS

September 25, 1932

THE WONDERFUL MANIFESTATION THROUGHOUT INDIA IS A MODERN MIRACLE. GURUDEV HAS BEEN A TOWER OF STRENGTH. DEEP LOVE ALL FRIENDS. AT PERFECT PEACE. NO CONDITONAL ACCEPTANCE OF THE SETTLEMENT WILL WARRANT MY BREAKING THE FAST.

The Epic Fast, p. 134

190. TELEGRAM TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI [2]

[*September 25, 1932*][3]

WAS DAILY HANKERING AFTER YOUR MESSAGE. IT HAS GIVEN ME FRESH COURAGE AND HOPE. I HOPE YOU ARE WELL. LOVE.

GANDHI

The Epic Fast, pp. 196-7

191. TELEGRAM TO PANDURANG M. BAPAT[4]

September 25, 1932

YOUR REASON FOR FAST IS TOUCHING BUT I WOULD LIKE YOU RECONSIDER YOUR DECISION ON STRENGTH OF CONTRARY OPINION OF AN EXPERT LIKE ME IN SUCH MATTERS. I FEEL CONVINCED THAT YOUR FAST HAS NO RELIGIOUS SANCTION. SINCE YOU FEEL FOR ME YOU

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram of September 24, which read: "Obedience your commands throwing open our famous sherbet-house untouchables first time last twenty years risking orthodox customers. Ramdayal M.L.C. shoemaker formally opening Tuesday. Awaiting your parental blessings."

[2] This was in answer to Sastri's telegram which read: "Millions of homes rejoice and bless your superb service performed in your superb style. I confess I trembled in doubt but the result vindicates and establishes you as indisputably the foremost untouchable and 'unapproachable'."

[3] From *Mahadevbhaini Diary*.

[4] A revolutionary, popularly known as Senapati Bapat

SHOULD NOT DIE WITH ME BUT LIVE TO CARRY ON MY WORK. THINK OF CONSEQUENCE IF ALL CO-WORKERS WERE TO DIE WITH ME. WILL THAT ACT NOT BE CRIMINAL? PLEASE LISTEN. GOD BLESS YOU.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 82-3

192. CABLE TO LAWRENCE HOUSEMAN [1]

September 25, 1932

LAWRENCE HOUSMAN
46 LANCASTER GATE
LONDON

THANKS YOUR CABLE. MY FAST IS APPEAL NOT MERELY TO HINDUS OR INDIA IN GENERAL BUT BRITISH CONSCIENCE, INDEED TO WHOLE WORLD. THIS DISTRUST MISREPRESENTATION OF MAN WHO LOVES BRITISH PEOPLE IS ENIGMA TO ME SINCE MY DEEPEST FAITH FORBIDS RESORT PHYSICAL FORCES. I AM PRAYING GOD DISCOVER TO ME SUCH FINAL WAY CORPORATE SELF-SUFFERING EXTREME KIND AND GIVE STRENGTH UNDERGO IT. WHEN IF REQUIRED SUCH TIME COMES I KNOW IT WILL PENETRATE EVERY BRITISH HOME. I HAD HOPED THAT APPEAL FROM THIS FIERY BED WOULD SOMEWHAT WAKE UP BRITISH PUBLIC AS IT SEEMS TO HAVE MARVELLOUSLY AROUSED INDIA. BUT GOD'S WILL WAS PERHAPS OTHERWISE. WANTING AS I DO BRITISH SYMPATHY AND HELP I WILL VALUE ANYTHING YOUR MEETING MAY DO. I KNOW I HAVE SILENT SYMPATHYY AND PRAYER OF THOUSANDS OF BRITISH MEN AND WOMEN.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, pp. 83-4

[1] The addressee had asked for a message for a special meeting of the Friends of India to be held on September 27, 1932, to explain the significance of Gandhiji's fast.

193. TELEGRAM TO DR. NILARANJAN RAY AND DR. B. C. ROY

September 25, 1932

YOUR ADVICE AS DOCTORS IS PERFECT. ITS HUMAN VALUE IS NEXT TO NOTHING. YOU WILL NOT HAVE A FELLOW BEING DENY HIS FAITH. THANK YOU VERY MUCH. FAST GOING WELL.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 84

194. RESOLUTION AT THE HINDU LEADERS' CONFERENCE, BOMBAY[1]

September 25, 1932

This Conference resolves that henceforth, amongst Hindus, no one shall be regarded as an untouchable by reason of his birth and those who have been so regarded hitherto will have the same rights as the other Hindus as regard to the use of public wells, public roads and other public institutions. This right shall have statutory recognition at the first opportunity and shall be one of the earliest acts of the Swaraj Parliament, if it shall not have received such recognition before that time.

It is further agreed that it shall be the duty of all Hindu leaders to secure, by every legitimate and peaceful means, an early removal of all social disabilities now imposed by custom upon the so-called untouchable classes including the bar in respect of admission to temples.

Mahatma, Vol. III, p. 213

195. DRAFT RESOLUTION ON UNTOUCHABILITY

[*September 25, 1932*][2]

I am touchable by birth and an untouchable by choice. It is as an untouchable that I have conceived the following part for the acceptance of touchables and untouchables. Henceforth in Hinduism

[1] This resolution was drafted by Gandhiji.

[2] From para 2, which is reproduced as a "Resolution at the Hindu Leaders' Conference, Bombay", 25-9-1932; *Vide* "Resolution at the Hindu Leaders' Conference, Bombay", 25-9-1932.

no one shall be regarded as untouchable by reason of his birth or occupation. Those who have been so regarded have the same right that the other Hindus have to entry into public temples, use of public wells, public schools, public roads and all other public institutions. This right shall receive statutory recognition at the first opportunity and shall be the first act of the Swaraj Parliament if it has not already received statutory recognition. Every adult male and female belonging to the erstwhile untouchables class shall be registered as voter in the general joint register unless disqualified by reason of imprisonment or lunacy or mental deficiency within one year after first election for new provincial legislatures and the central legislature under the revised franchise. A referendum shall be taken of the voters belonging to the e.u.c. and if it is found that thirty-three per cent of the votes of a provincial legislature or the central legislature as the case may be, have signified their dissatisfaction with the number of representatives of e.u. class returned by the electorate, fresh elections of members of the general electorate shall take place for the particular provincial legislature or the central legislature as he case may be, with reservation of seat for the e.u.c. guaranteed by statute for the next ten years on the basis of population, provided however that no referendum will be necessary where representatives of that class have been elected in accordance with the proportion of their population.

Untouchables shall be defined as those Hindus whose touch, sight or sound is regarded by popular local Hindu custom as pollution. This pact[1] shall be sealed by representatives of Hindu Mahasabha, Hindu religious heads, well-known learned Hindu scholars and shall be accompanied by a pledge as under, signed by at least two persons who have been known for their service of the cause of untouchability.

I hereby solemnly pledge myself to serve by strictly non-violent and truthful means the due fulfilment by the so-called caste Hindus of the pact entered into between them and the Hindus hitherto known as ‘untouchables’ and to that end shall be prepared to undergo all the

[1] Presumably the Poona Pact which was entered into between the leaders of Hindus and Depressed Classes at Poona on 24-9-1932 regarding reservation of seats for the Depressed Classes in the Legislatures; *Vide* “Agreement Between Depressed Classes Leaders and Caste Hindu Leaders”.

necessary suffering, even the suffering of death by sacrificial fasting, and in order to qualify myself for that purpose I shall strive my best to lead a pure, abstemious, correct and God-fearing life.

From a photostat: S.N. 18867

196. MESSAGE TO GREAT BRITAIN [1]

September 25, 1932

Every day of the fast seems to me conclusive evidence of the hand of God in it. Even I with my boundless faith in God and His mercy was not prepared for this great wave of awakening against untouchability. That some of the great temples should have spontaneously admitted the untouchables without restriction is to me a modern miracle. They have only now admitted God. Hitherto, the images which the custodians, falsely and in their pride, thought had God within were Godless.

The Cabinet decision was to me a timely warning from God that I was asleep when He was knocking at the door and waking me up. The settlement[2] arrived at is to me but the beginning of the work of purification. The agony of the soul is not going to end until every trace of untouchability is gone. I do not want the British Cabinet to come to any hasty decision. I do not want them for saving my life or for appearing to be right with the world to accept it in a niggardly spirit. If they have not realized the true inwardness of the Agreement, they must summarily reject it, but if they have, they will not alter one word or comma of it, but they will implement every condition that is implied in the great settlement which the so-called untouchables and the so-called touchables have arrived at with all their heart and with God as their witness.

I hope that they and the world will realize that this settlement is, if I may say so in all humility, far superior to the Cabinet decision. There is no pride about it. The Cabinet composed of foreigners, knowing nothing first hand of the Indian conditions or what untouchability could mean, were labouring under a heavy handicap,

[1] The message was given in an interview to Ellen Wilkinson and V. K. Krishna Menon of the India League and was first published in *The Daily Herald* of London.

[2] For the text of the settlement, signed on September 24, *Vide* "Agreement Between Depressed Classes Leaders and Caste Hindu Leaders".

and even though some Indians had referred this matter to them, they should have declined the responsibility to which they were wholly unequal.

I am not saying this from my penitential bed in any carping spirit or spirit of irritation.

I claim to be a true friend of the British nation and also of the Cabinet, and I would be untrue to them, to myself and to my call, if at this moment I suppressed my relevant opinion. I would like finally to assure Britain that so long as life lasts in me, I shall undergo as many fasts as are necessary in order to purify Hinduism of this unbearable taint. Thank God there is not only one man in this movement but, I believe, there are several thousands who will lay down their life in order to achieve this reform in its fulness.

The Epic Fast, pp. 136-7

197. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

September 25, 1932

If the Premier accepts the settlement *in toto* I would be bound to break the fast. The settlement, as far as the political part of it is concerned, merely removes the tremendous obstacle that the Cabinet's decision put in the way of reform. The real part of the settlement is now to come and whilst, if the Premier accepts *in toto* the settlement cabled to him, my fast must end, the real struggle for me only begins. As a matter of fact if the Cabinet had published the correspondence in time I would have been in honour bound to insist on the due fulfilment of the duty that lies on the so-called caste Hindus.

I should be guilty of betrayal of trust if I did not ensure that, but as they had no notice worth the name of my intention to fast, I could not expect them all of a sudden to revolutionize Hindu thought. They must, therefore, have breathing time for work, and so I have told fellow-workers that if this fast is broken in virtue of the Cabinet's satisfactory answer it would be put in suspension, but sure as fate, it will be taken up again if the part to be performed by the caste Hindus is not well played during the coming months.

The tremendous awakening that has taken place in the country during the five days fills me with hope that orthodoxy will surpass itself and rid Hinduism of the canker of untouchability which is eating into its vitals.

I suppose the future plan is in the hands of Government.

The Epic Fast, p. 135

198. MESSAGE TO SOUTH INDIA

September 25, 1932

It has been a matter of increasing joy, day by day, to find great ancient temples being opened to the so-called "untouchables" and thus becoming purified. This one fact, among many others, has been a great sustaining force during these days of agony of body, mind and soul. But the joy about the opening of the temples has not been unmixed with sorrow, in that the South, where my work on a larger scale amongst "untouchables" began, though in South Africa, has not been as prompt and generous in throwing open the gates of the temples to outcastes. Speaking as a Hindu, striving to find and to live up to the very essence of it, I say, without the slightest hesitation, that God will be installed in the idols of the temples only if they are thrown open unreservedly to outcastes. Today, with human outcastes, God Himself is an outcaste.

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 26-9-1932

199. CABLE TO MUSTAFA NAHAS PASHA[1]

September 26, 1932

DEEPLY TOUCHED BY YOUR MESSAGE. MAY THIS PURIFICATORY FAST TOUCH ALL FAITHS; BRING THEM AND US TOGETHER IN A LIVING BOND. EGYPTIAN BLANKET PRESENTED TO ME DURING LAST VOYAGE COVERS ME DURING THIS STRUGGLE WITH ALLAH WHO IS GREAT AND MERCIFUL.

GANDHI

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 85

[1] This was in answer to Nahas Pasha's Cable of September 24 which read: "Your resolve to sacrifice your own life, rather than tolerate any measure promoting disunion or caste prejudices amongst Indians has deeply stirred the heart of Egypt, which has, since the last decade been linked with India by the holy bond of suffering for the same ideal of national self-expression and liberty. Egyptians of all sects and religions, united in love of the Fatherland, are confident that the great Indian people will unite in preserving Mahatma's life by redeeming their sacred unity. All struggling nations of the East look up to India for fulfilling the noble idea for which Gandhiji is giving up his life. In the name of Egypt and her people, I send you and the Indian people our brotherly love and heartfelt wishes for realization of ideals of truth, freedom and equality as embodied in the great example you are setting before the world." *The Epic Fast.*

200. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

September 26, 1932

MIRABEHN
ARTHUR ROAD JAIL

NO LETTER SENT TODAY. THANK GOD FAST BROKEN 5.15 PRESENCE GURUDEV OTHER LOVING FRIENDS. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6239. Courtesy: Mirabehn

201. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

September 26, 1932

The fast undertaken in the name of the God was broken in the presence of Gurudev, and Parachure Shastri, the leper prisoner and a learned pandit, seated opposite each other, and in the company of loving and loved ones who had gathered round me. The breaking was preceded by the Poet singing one of his Bengali hymns, then *mantras* from the Upanishads by Parachure Shastri, and then my favourite hymn "*Vaishnava Jana*" .

The hand of God has been visible in the glorious manifestation throughout the length and breadth of India during the past seven days. The cables received from many parts of the world blessing the fast have sustained me through the agony of body and soul that I passed through during the seven days, but the cause was worth going through that agony.

The sacrificial fire, once lit, shall not be put out as long as there is the slightest trace of untouchability still left in Hinduism. If it is God's will that it does not end with my life, I have the confidence that there are several thousands of earnest reformers who will lay down their lives in order to purify Hinduism of this awful curse.

The settlement arrived at is, so far as I can see, a generous gesture on all sides. It is a meeting of hearts, and my Hindu gratitude is due to Dr. Ambedkar, Rao Bahadur Srinivasan and their party on the one hand and Rao Bahadur M. C. Raja on the other. They could have taken up an uncompromising and defiant attitude by way of punishment to the so-called caste Hindus for the sins of generations. If they had done so, I at least could not have resented their attitude and my death would have been but a triffling price exacted for the

tortures that the outcastes of Hinduism have been going through for unknown generations. But they chose a nobler path and have thus shown that they have followed the precept of forgiveness enjoined by all religi- ons. Let me hope that the caste Hindus will prove themselves worthy of this forgiveness and carry out to the letter and spirit every clause of the settlement with all its implications.

The settlement is but the beginning of the end. The political part of it, very important though it no doubt is, occupies but a small space in the vast field of reform that has to be tackled by caste Hindus during the coming days, namely, the complete removal of social and religious disabilities under which a large part of the Hindu population has been groaning. I should be guilty of a breach of trust if I did not warn fellow reformers and caste Hindus in general that the breaking of the fast carried with it a sure promise of a resumption of it if this reform is not relentlessly pursued and achieved within a measurable period. I had thought of laying down a period, but I feel that I may not do so without a definite call from within.

The message of freedom shall penetrate every untouchable home and that can only happen if reformers will cover every village. Yet, in the wave of enthusiasm and in an inordinate desire to spare me a repetition of the agony, there should be no coercion. We must, by patient toil and self-suffering, convert the ignorant and the superstitious but never seek to compel them by force.

I wish, too, that the almost ideal solution that has been arrived at may be followed by the other communities, and that we might see the dawn of a new era of mutual trust, mutual give and take, and a recognition of the fundamental unity of all communities. I would here single out the Hindu-Muslim-Sikh question. I am the same to the Mussalman today that I was in 1920-22. I should be just as prepared to lay down my life as I was in Delhi[1] to achieve organic unity andpermanent peace between them. I hope and pray that there will be, as a result of this upheaval, a spontaneous move in this direction and then, surely, the other communities can no longer stand out.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Government and the Jail staff and the medical men appointed by the Government to look after me. Extreme care and attention was bestowed upon me. Nothing was left undone. The jail staff worked under terrible pressures, and I

[1] In September 1924.

observed that they did not grudge this labour. I thank them all from high to low.

I thank the British Cabinet for hastening the decision on settlement. The terms of the decision sent to me I have not approached without misgivings. It accepts, I suppose very naturally, only that part of the Agreement that refers to the British Cabinet's communal decision. I expect that they had a constitutional difficulty in now announcing their acceptance of the whole Agreement. But I would like to assure my Harijan friends, as I would like hencefoth to name them, that so far as I am concerned, I am wedded to the whole of that Agreement, and that they may hold my life as hostage for its due fulfilment, unless we ourselves arrive at any other and better settlement of our own free will.

The Hindu, 27-9-1932, and *The Epic Fast,* pp. 142-5

202. TELEGRAM TO M. KRISHNAN NAIR[1]

[On or before *September 27, 1932*][2]

YOU KNOW THAT KELAPPAN IS ONE OF THE BEST KERALA WORKERS, MOST DEVOTED TO THE UNTOUCHABLES' CAUSE. IF NECESSARY YOU AND OTHER INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE SHOULD PROCEED TO THE SCENE OF THE SACRIFICE AND SAVE KELAPPAN[3] BY HAVING THE TEMPLE OPEN TO HARIJANS.[4]

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-9-1932

[1] The addressee was the Law Member of Madras.

[2] The newspaper report is dated September 27.

[3] Kelappan had been fasting since September 20; *Vide* "Telegram to Maharaja of Travancore", 1-10-1932.

[4] The addressee thought the temple being private property, it would not be proper either for him or the Government to interfere.

203. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

[On or before *September* 27, 1932][2]

Thank you for your congratulations. None would be more delighted than I would be to endorse any worthy suggestion for co-operation by the Congress with the Government and the Round Table Conference. I would only emphasize and underline the adjective "worthy". Despite my repeated declarations it is not generally recognized that by instinct I am a co-operator. My very non-co-operation is intended to purge co-operation not worth the name. Therefore, as far as I am personally concerned, when the proper time comes, I should throw the whole of my weight in favour of co-operation.

The Hindu, 28-9-1932

204. TELEGRAM TO M. R. JAYAKAR

September 27, 1932

M. R. JAYAKAR
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

THANKS. WIRE EXPECT YOU CONTINUE UNABATED EFFORT UNTIL UNTOUCHABILITY WHOLLY REMOVED.

GANDHI

Jayakar's Private Papers: Correspondence File No. 421, p. 46. Courtesy: National Archives of India

205. TELEGRAM TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

September 27, 1932

RAMESHWAR SETH
DHULIA

RAPIDLY RECOVERING. NO ANXIETY.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 740.

[1] This was in response to a message of congratulations from Press representatives who had also enquired about the chances of Congress co-operation in the work of the Round Table Conference.

[2] The newspaper report is dated September 27.

206. TELEGRAM TO MAHARAJA OF TRAVANCORE

Septemberr 27, 1932

THE LIFE OF ONE OF KERALA'S GREAT SERVANTS, KELAPPAN, HANGS IN THE BALANCE FOR OPENING GURUVAYUR. SEEING THAT THE UNEXAMPLED WAVE OF AWAKENING PASSING THROUGHOUT THE LAND FAVOURS OPENING ALL TEMPLES. WILL YOU NOT EXERT YOUR GREAT INFLUENCE SECURING OPENING GURUVAYUR AND, IF POSSIBLE, OTHER TEMPLES? YOU KNOW PERHAPS THAT KELAPPAN HAS BEEN FASTING SINCE 20TH OPENING TEMPLE.[1]

GANDHI

The Hindu, 1-10-1932

207. TELEGRAM TO ABBAS TYABJI

September 27, 1932

ABBAS SAHEB TYABJI
CARE DOCTOR SHAH
WADHWAN CITY

YOUR NERVOUSNESS BETRAYS WANT OF FAITH. AM FLOURISHING ON ORANGES GRAPES. ALLAHO AKBAR.

BHRRR[2]

From a photostat: S.N. 9579

208. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

September 27, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

The substance of what I said to you yesterday before breaking my fast was this. I was breaking the fast not without misgivings in that

[1] In reply to a similar telegram from Purushottamdas, the Dewan of Travancore said: "His Highness's Government is surprised at statement that Maharaja's approval necessary to throwing open Guruvayur temple. Government unaware of any authority or privilege over Guruvayur. . . . Kindly communicate Mr. Gandhi."

[2] The source has 'burry' which seems to be a slip for 'Bhrrr', which Gandhiji and the addressee used for each other in their correspondence.

the British Government's acceptance of the Settlement related only to the part that was included in the British Government's communal decision. This was perhaps natural. But I was bound to make my position clear—that I would be in honour bound to secure a due fulfilment of the whole of the settlement. The second thing that I drew your attention to was that I would expect Government to continue the facilities given to me since 20th for seeing friends and sending messages in the matter of the untouchability question. The British acceptance has reference only to the political part of the settlement, but the most vital part for the whole of the Hindu community is that relating to social and religious reform. In order to set it on a firm footing it is necessary for me to be in touch with the workers for some time to come. In order to avoid any misunderstanding therefore I mentioned this very important thing to you before breaking the fast.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3860. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(4), Pt. I, p. 141

209. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 27, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

God is great and compassionate. He would not try His servants beyond endurance. And so the Government reply came in time to enable me to break the fast yesterday 5 p.m. The Poet led the prayer and he was followed by the leper prisoner Parachure Shastri who was for some time at the Ashram.

This is enough for today.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6240. Courtesy: Mirabehn

210.LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 28, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

I had two letters from you yesterday. I wrote a brief note[1] myself which I hope you got. Something has gone to you daily from here and the I.G. assured me that my letters would be given to you at once. So I cannot understand this absence of delivery of my letters.

However, all is over now. I am taking plenty of oranges and grapes and am gaining strength. Sleep is good. There is therefore now no cause for anxiety.

The Orissa scene you describe and two others in Malabar have haunted me during these days and made the pangs bearale. Gurudev's coming was and still is a great solace. He has been unstinting in his support.

I hope you are cheerful now. Remember me to your companions.

Love to you and Kisen.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6241. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

211. NOTE TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

September 28, 1932

I have already made my appeal to the caste Hindus as to their duty, but as a self-chosen Harijan I would like to say a word to them also. They have to perform their part during this period of purification. Owing to suppression they have been deprived of ways and means of observing, and the incentive to the observation of, the ordinary laws of cleanliness and the like, but let us hope that a new era has dawned upon us. I hope that Harijans will understand this and in so far as possible they will observe the laws of cleanliness, abstain from intoxicating liquors and drugs and make a mighty effort to get rid of all social evils.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 790

212. TELEGRAM TO K. KELAPPAN

September 29, 1932

THE ZAMORIN WIRES ASKING ME TO APPEAL TO YOU TO SUSPEND FAST FOR SOME MONTHS. HE SAYS PRESENT ENTRY OF UNTOUCHABLES WOULD WOUND ORTHODOX CONSCIENCE AND SUCH WOUNDING WOULD AMOUNT TO COERCION. ASK YOURSELF WHETHER THERE IS ANY ROOM FOR YOU ON THIS RELEVANT GROUND TO POSTPONE THE FAST AND WHETHER IN TERMS OF THE ZAMORIN'S TELEGRAM YOU HAD GIVEN SUFFICIENT NOTICE OF THE EXTREME STEP.[1]

GANDHI

The Hindus, 30-9-1932

[1] Kelappan's reply to this read: "The Zamorin may not complain insufficiency of notice. One or two people will always be found who will oppose any reform to the end of time, but the question of wounding the hearts and self-respect of thousands of depressed brethren is more real and important than the alleged wounding of the orthodox conscience."

213. TELEGRAM TO K. KELAPPAN

[*September 29, 1932*][1]

YOUR LETTER WAS JUST RECEIVED. I HAD A CONFERENCE EARLY THIS MORNING WITH PT. MALAVIYA, MR. RANGASWAMI IEYENGAR AND OTHERS ABOUT THE PROPRIETY OF MALAVIYAJI'S PROCEEDING THERE. I HAVE BEEN IN TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION WITH OTHERS ALSO. THEY ALL PRESS ME TO ORDER YOU TO STOP THE FAST. I WAS HESITATING. YOUR LETTER HOWEVER MAKES MY WAY CLEAR. EMPHATICALLY I THINK YOU MADE TWO MISTAKES. THOUGH YOU WERE BOUND TO CONSULT ME YOU FAILED TO DO SO NO MATTER FOR WHAT CAUSE. SECONDLY YOU WERE BOUND TO GIVE REASONABLE NOTICE OF THE INTENTION TO FAST. MY STRONG ADVICE THEREFORE IS YOU SHOULD SUSPEND THE FAST ON THE STRENGTH OF THIS TELEGRAM AND GIVE FROM THE DATE OF SUSPENSION THREE CLEAR MONTHS' NOTICE. IF IN THE MEANWHILE THE TEMPLE IS NOT OPENED TO HARIJANS AND SUBJECT TO MY CONSENT YOU WILL RESUME THE FAST. MEANWHILE CONCENTRATED EFFORT WILL BE MADE TO HAVE THE TEMPLE OPENED AND IF NECESSARY MALAVIYAJI WILL PROCEED THERE. YOU WILL GREATLY RELIEVE MY ANXIETY BY TELLING ME THAT YOU HAVE FOLLOWED MY ADVICE.[2]

The Hindu, 3-10-1932.

214. TELEGRAM TO RAMASWAMI IYER GOPALA NAIR

[*September 29, 1932*][3]

RAMASWAMIER GOPALANAIR

CHOWGHAT

LYING SIMILAR SITUATION MYSELF I DARE NOT INTERFERE KELAPPAN'S CONSCIENCE. SHAME WILL BE YOURS AND THOSE NEAR THERE IF SUCH A SELFLESS SPLENDID WORKER IS LOST. I HAVE ASSUMED THAT KELAPPAN'S FAST HAS NO CONNECTION WITH MINE.

[1] From *Mahadevbhaini Diary*.

[2] Kelappan's reply was: "Neither the Zamorin nor the public can plead insufficiency of notice. Ten months' satyagraha notice was sufficient. Volunteers are standing in sun and rain—a more moving sight than my fast. . . . I believe, my fast has roused the public and if continued will shortly bring the fight to victory. In my opinion, my stopping the fast would set back the movement. . . ."

[3] *Vide* the preceding item

HOWEVER IN ORDER TO MAKE ASSURANCE DOUBLE SURE I HAVE SENT LONG TELEGRAM JUST NOW TO KELAPPAN TO BREAK FAST IF IT IS IN IMITATION OF MINE.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

215. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

September 29, 1932 (*1.45 p. m.*)

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

The orders you verbally conveyed to me at 12.30 this morning I interpret as follows: I am not to be allowed to see from this date any visitors regarding untouchability or any other public work, except Sjts. Ghanshyamdas Birla and Mathuradas Vasanji. Secondly Mrs. Gandhi should be forthwith removed to the Female Yard; all other visits to be regulated as before the fast, under the general instructions that were conveyed to me soon after my admission and amended thereafter. This means that I shall not have the privilege of seeing Shrimati Sarojinidevi, whose presence during my illnesses has produced a soothing effect on me, nor of my son Devdas and his intended wife, nor of the Ashram inmates who have been in attendance upon me during this crisis. I must confess that I was wholly unprepared for this very sudden and rude reminder that I was but a prisoner whose body was entirely at the mercy of the Government. I would like, however, the Government to know that I am still considered to be convalescent and under orders not even to move from my bed. I had hoped that at least during the convalescent period I would be saved all unnecessary shock to my nerves. However, this need not be a matter of moment to the Government and ought not to worry me overmuch, if at all. Indeed I am thankful for the medical attendance that the Government provided for me and the free attendance of visitors and friends during the fast. But what I cannot understand is this sudden stopping of all visits, even in connection with untouchability work, save those of Sjts. Ghanshyamdas and Mathuradas. The Government cannot be unaware of the phenomenal awakening that has taken place in the country, nor of the repercussions of the fast whose limitations have been but little understood and which is being blindly imitated by enthusiastic young men. I therfore hold it absolutely necessary that I should be left

entirely free to see whomsoever I consider necessary regarding untouchability. The Government have not yet seemed to have revised their instructions regarding correspondence. Needless to say what applied to visitors regarding untouchability applies equally to correspondence. Nor need I add that I should not have the slightest objection to Government officials and interpreters attending any interviews I might have with visitors and my correspondence being scrutinized. As this is a matter of the greatest urgency, I hope that the Government will favour me with their decision at the earliest possible moment.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3861. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(4), Pt. I, p. 191

216. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 29, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

This is the third letter after the breaking of the fast and written just after the first fruit meal consisting of oranges and grape juice. And that has been my principal food. Yesterday I took thin soup made of *turai*[1]. Today I propose to take milk.

Your letters have come in regularly. I cannot understand why mine have not been received by you. I am inquiring.

Strength is rapidly coming. There was yesterday already a gain of $1\frac{1}{2}$ lb., i.e., 95 lb.

I did write to Romain Rolland.[2] There was a cable from him on the break of the fast.

I read your message to Gurudev yesterday and I touched his feet for you, as Mahadev, poet-like, had forgotten to do so.

Ba, of course, forgot all her misery as soon as she came here. She seems to have borne it all very bravely indeed.

[1] Ridge gourd

[2] This letter is not available.

I hope you are all quite composed now. The fast was really nothing compared to the miseries that the outcastes have undergone for ages.

Love to you and Kisen.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6242. Courtesy: Mirabehn

217. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 29, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I am becoming impatient to write to everybody. I hope to be strong enough to write in two or three days. This morning, after eating some fruit I wrote four or five letters which seemed urgent to me.

I suppose you have heard the news of Trivedi's[1] sister-in-law having died in an accident.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8257. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

218. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

September 30, 1932

Your very first wire showed what my fast meant to you. For me it was the clearest call from God. Events have converted even the scoffers. I did expect a mighty response from the orthodox, but I was unprepared for the sudden manifestation that took place. But I shall not be deceived. It remains to be seen whether the temples opened remain open and the various other things done persist. This breaking of the fast is therefore but a suspension. However, I am not worrying. The fast and its breaking were God's doing. And so will the resumption be, if it is to come.

Gurudev's visit was a blessing. We have come nearer each other than ever before. I do not know if Mahadev had time to tell you how

[1] J. P. Trivedi of Poona Agricultural College

my letter[1] written to him on the eve of the fast and his wire to me blessing it crossed each other. And then later on came Sastri's most loving wire.

But this is all history now. I am daily gathering strength. No anxiety please.

[PS.]

As I have been writing the European love letters your cable also signed by Verrier comes to me. God be thanked. I know you are labouring.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 90-1

219. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

September 30, 1932

MY DEAR HORACE,

I am expending my energy today in sending love letters to friends in England. I have written so much already that I am not going to say anything to you beyond sending my love to you, Olive and all the brothers and sisters of the Settlement. During the fast the English friends were ever near my heart.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1414.

220. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

September 30, 1932

DEAR MARY,

This is just to send you my love. I had your delicious oranges. The extract you have sent from Bunyan is very good. I am making steady progress. Every moment I mutter, God is great and merciful.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5984. Also C.W. 3312. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Rabindranath Tagore", 20-9-1932.

221. LETTER TO C. Y. CHINTAMANI

September 30, 1932

God was my guide and sustainer during those days of triple agony.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 94

222. LETTER TO VERRIER ELWIN

September 30, 1932

It required my fast, among many other things also, to bring me in physical touch with members of the Sangh[1]. I had loving chats with Father Winslow. I was glad to know these brethren. Shyamrao was also with them.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 92

223. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

September 30, 1932

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I could read your agony through your cable and your letter. But it was all well worth it. I was glad you had Charlie Andrews by your side. I had fullest faith in your doing all you could. Nothing more could be expected of anyone. As you would perhaps be reading one another's letters, I am not saying more is this brief love note.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1458

[1] Christ Seva Sangh of Poona

224. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

September 30, 1932

All is over and the much advertised fast is a thing of the past. It was an experience well worth having, if only for the sake of the love it evoked from all parts of the world and the wave of reform that passed from one end of India to the other.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 92

225. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

September 30, 1932

MY DEAR CHILD,

Even from this distance I could realize your agony. But God never comes to us except through the way of fire. There is a deep unconscious joy felt during such purifying agony. I hope that you were partaker of such joy during the trial. I saw or rather heard your name together with those of Horace Alexander and Andrews among the senders of a loving message from England. I am growing stronger day by day.

You won't expect a long letter from me today. I am expending what energy I have in writing love notes to friends in England.

Love to you. Kisses to children.

BAPU

My Dear Child, p. 93

226. LETTER TO H. S. L. AND MILLIE POLAK

September 30, 1932

MY DEAR HENRY AND MILLIE, OR MILLIE AND HENRY, IF YOU LIKE,

Your wires and telepathic messages have told me what you must have felt, and done during all these days of joyous pangs. It was travail of new birth, which it has been undoubtedly to me, as I think it has been to superstitious ignorant Hindiusm. The great manifestation was worth fasting for. Tokens of love from outside India, from England, have been also many and true. The threefold agony was much eased by the knowledge of all these things.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 93

227. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

September 30, 1932

MY DEAR REYNOLDS,

You need no written sign of love from me. But as I am writing to the English friends, I send this superfluous word of love to you.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 4542. Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

228. LETTER TO ROMAIN ROLLAND AND MEDELEINE ROLLAND

September 30, 1932

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

I had your loving message. You were ever present to me during the travail. God's mercy was bountiful and traceable during the whole of the great drama. As I was finishing this, I had Mira's letter. Hers has been an agony without felt joy. But she has chosen the spiked bed and she is bravely lying on it.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 93

229. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

September 30, 1932

DEAREST BROTHER AND FRIEND,

Your wire[1] and your letter are my treasure and my food. I shall not misunderstand you. Under better auspices I anticipate no difficulty in rendering a full and intelligible account of my doings in London. But that is a matter of small account. I want our love to stand the severest ordeal.

I am flourishing.

With deep love,

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 94

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to V.s. Srinivasa Sastri", 25-9-1932.

230. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

September 30, 1932

MY DEAR BHRRR,

Your faith was indeed great and events have justified it. It was so vital that you needed no effort to restrain yourselves from running to me as so many friends did. Yes, the prophecy or presentiment of Mrs. Abbas has come true. My warm congratulations to her.

I am flourishing on milk and fruit.

Love from us all.

Yours,

BHRRR

From a photostat: S.N. 9580

231. LETTER TO ADA WEST

September 30, 1932

MY DEAR DEVI,

I know what it must have meant to you to hear of my fast. But it was God's will. Could you not trace it in everything that followed ?

Love.

BHAI

From a photostat: C.W. 4434. Courtesy: A. H. West

232. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL AND MOTIBEHN CHOKSHI

September 30, 1932

CHI. NAJUKLAL AND MOTI,

I had got your postcard. God has given me a new life. He will now lead me where He wills.

I hope all three of you are well. I am now regaining strength.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12151

233. LETTER TO DR. HIRALAL SHAH

September 30, 1932

I suffered much physically during this fast. As atonement for our sins against the *Antyajas*, that suffering was certainly worth it. The body, however, is a shirker. It wants to avoid as much pain as it can. I do not know how many more fasts are ordained for me. But I wish to keep myself ready. Why do Jains take *ambar*[1] when they fast? How much of it do they take ? Does it prevent the flow of saliva in the mouth? Does it enable one to drink water? What is its source? Some take even musk. If you can get any information on these points from a reliable person, please send it on to me.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 94

234. LETTER TO SHARDA BEHN MEHTA

September 30, 1932

I feel love flowing from every line in your letter. Is it not my good fortune that I should get a daughter like you? I have readily accepted the position of father which you and others have bestowed on me. And I have done so with God as witness. May He make me worthy of it and protect my honour. I am rapidly regaining strength.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 94

235. LETTER TO SETH GOVINDDAS

September 30, 1932

I never had any doubts about the love of the untouchables. God has done everything for good. We must now hope that the newly-born zeal will be permanent and that untouchability will be totally rooted out.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 95

[1] Ambergris

236. CABLE TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

[*October 1, 1932*][1]

M. A. ANSARI
PARIS

ANTICIPATED YOU BY ISSUING APPEAL HINDU-MUSLIM-SIKH UNITY.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. III, p. 265

237. TELEGRAM TO GANESAN[2]

October 1, 1932

FASTS LIKE SHANKAR'S PREMATURE, IF NOT IMPROPER. ASK HIM TO ABANDON HIS FAST.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 97

238. TELEGRAM TO K. KELAPPAN

[*Ocotber 1, 1932*][3]

YOUR WIRE. IMMEDIATE PROSPECTIVE RESULT MUST NOT AFFECT THE DECISION ON PURE ETHICS. I MUST REITERATE THE OPINION THAT YOU SHOULD SUSPEND FAST GIVING NOTICE AS PER MY TELEGRAM.[4] GOD HELPING I SHALL BEAR MY SHARE OF THE BURDEN. WIRE COMPLIANCE.[5]

The Hindu, 3-10-1932

[1] Although the source mentions this cable under October 5, it is listed in "Diary, 1932" under this date.

[2] This was in answer to a telegram from Ganesan saying that Shankar Parthasarathi had been fasting for getting a temple opened to Harijans.

[3] The date is from *Mahadevbhaini Diary*.

[4] *Vide* "Telegram to K. Kelappan", 29-9-1932.

[5] Kelappan broke his fast at 8 a.m. on October 2.

239. TELEGRAM TO DR. MOHANLAL[1]

Ocotober 1, 1932

DR. MOHANLAL
ALIGARH

SUCH CLEANING BY CASTE HINDUS SIDE BY SIDE WITH REAL SWEEPERS LIKELY TO BE GOOD IF ABSOLUTELY SINCERE AND TRUE SPIRIT UNDERSTOOD BY SWEEPER BROTHERS.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 18562. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, p. 98

240. LETTER TO ABDUL RAHIM

October 1, 1932

I quite agree with you that the other communal questions should also be settled in a spirit of mutual give and take. I hope efforts will be made in that direction.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 96

241. LETTER TO CRESSWELL

October 1, 1932

Yes; God has been good and merciful to me.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 96

242. MESSAGE TO PHILIP KINGSLEY

October 1, 1932

I wish America could trace the Big Finger of God in all the happenings during the past few days in India. It was not man's doing; it was without doubt God's grace.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 95

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram saying that caste Hindus had started "demonstrative latrine-cleaning".

243. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*October 1*][1] *1932*

CHI. MIRA,

As you were not getting my letters regularly I purposely refrained from writing to you yesterday. This I am writing early morning just after taking oranges and grape juice. I am flourishing, my weight showeed $99\frac{3}{4}$ yesterday against $93\frac{1}{2}$ which was the weight on Monday. This is a wonderful improvement. In a day or two, I shall be walking a little. The bowels require the enema still but I expect them to be normal soon. Food is oranges eight, grapes, glucose powder four tea spoons, milk $1\frac{1}{2}$ Ib., clear vegetable soup marrow and tomatoes. Of these I take something on an average every $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours. I spun yesterday 235 rounds without feeling much tired. The spinning was done in two periods. Wrote a number of letters for the English mail and to correspondents here. With intervals for meals and rest, etc. I worked till 8 p.m. yesterday and now feel none the worse for it. All this is very good progress. And so I continue to hum, 'God is great and merciful.' The fast was nothing compared to what it brought forth. It was not man's achievement. It was God's doing. All this must remove your sadness.

You must have seen from the papers that as to interviews, etc., the pre-fast restrictions are practically in force. Ba can see me during the day.

Love to you and Kisen.

BAPU

[PS.]

I understand you have now no other companion.

From the original: C.W. 6243. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] The source has September 31, obviously a slip. *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, p. 96, mentions the letter under this date.

244. LETTER TO ANANDSHANKAR B. DHRUVA

October 1, 1932

To me, my experiences are a realization of God. I do not know what more there can be in other experiences of realization.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 96

245. LETTER TO MANMOHANDAS P. GANDHI

[*October 1*][1], *1932*

BHAI MANMOHANDAS,

I have your letter. I am now regaining strength.

Do take an *Antyaja* child or adult in your family and serve the cause directly.

I am glad that your book[2] has been translated.

Since you have the same name as I, you are bound occasionally to get letters intended for me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 16

246. LETTER TO JAMSHED MEHTA

October 1, 1932

Consider how much evil is done is God's name. If He tolerates all that, then the misuse of great powers which may follow an attempt to use them rightly should also be tolerated. However, as you suggest we should make every effort to prevent such misuse. You may rest assured that I will not neglect to do so.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 96

[1] From "Diary, 1932". In the letter itself the date is given as "31-9-1932", which is evidently a slip.

[2] *Pardeshi Kapadni same Harifai kem Karavi*; under English title: *How to Compete with Foreigh Cloth.*

247. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

[*October 1*][1], 1932

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

I had got your letter overflowing with love. I am using the strength which I am regaining to reply to such letters. The outcome of the fast was not man's achievement. I do not even feel that 'I' have done something. The *Gita* says: "Do everything as My instrument, and offer it to Me as sacrifice." I feel thus every moment and experience the intensest joy. When you write to Lilavati, tell her that I often think of both of you.

Sardar and Mahadev are very well. Convey our *Vandemataram* to all friends there.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7517. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

248. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 1, 1932

CHI. TARAMATI,

I have your letter. How did Dilip fall ill? By now I hope his fever has come down. Do keep dropping me postcards. I am gaining strength gradually. I was even able to walk a little today.

Blessings from

BAPU

TARAMATI MATHURADAS
21 MINT ROAD, 2ND FLOOR
FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From *Mahadevbhaini Diary*,. The source has "31-9-32", which is evidently a slip.

249. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

October 1, 1932

BELOVED DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

This is the first Urdu letter I am writing after the fast. Your *bhajans* are very good. What does it matter if the *bhajan* which was sung when I commenced the fast was not yours? After all, it was a fine *bhajan* which you yourself had sent. Of course I would have felt much happier if it had been yours. But never mind. When God grants me another opportunity for undertaking a fast, I should like to have a *bhajan* composed by you. Compose one right now. The rest from my letter[1] to Father.

From a photostat of the Urdu: S.N. 9686

250. TELEGRAM TO A LAWYER OF JABALPUR

October 1, 1932

I CANNOT GIVE OPINION.[2]

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary Vol. II, p. 98

251. TELEGRAM TO RAMASESHAN

[On or after *October 1, 1932*][3]

CONCENTRATE ON REMOVAL UNTOUCHABILITY INVISIBILITY UNAPPROACHABILITY.

From a microfilm: S.N. 18568

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Abbas Tyabji", 30-9-1932.

[2] The English original of this is not available. The addressee had asked whether inter-dining might be resorted to despite opposition from Congressmen.

[3] The addressee's telegram seeking a message for the people of Cochin on the eve of Gandhiji's birthday is dated October 1.

252. TELEGRAM TO RALIATBEHN VRINDAVANLAL[1]

October 2, 1932

BLOOMING LIKE FLOWER BY GOD'S GRACE. BUT HAVE YOU PUT YOURSELF RIGHT ABOUT UNTOUCHABILITY?

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vo. II, p. 102

253. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL ROY[2]

[*October 2, 1932*][3]

YOUR WIRE. FAST WEEK MANIFESTATION WAS SURE SIGN GOD'S HAND IN IT. LOVE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 18566

254. LETTER TO S. M. MATE

October 2, 1932

I can understand your reasoning.[4] Only my fast is not intended to coerce anybody. It is meant to quicken into life sluggish conscience. That it may coerce some is unfortunately true. But such coercion can neither be prolonged nor extensive. A religious reformer does not attempt to dominate the mind. He stirs up people and makes them think and act.

I must not purchase my release at the sacrifice of my principles. Removal of untouchability is a vital part of my life's programme, but it is not the sole part of it.[5] My life is in God's hands. He will shape it as He wills. Do you not think I am in safe hands?

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 100

[1] The addressee, Gandhiji's elder sister, had wired her good wishes on the occasion of Gandhiji's birthday.

[2] This was in reply to a telegram dated September 30, from the addressee saying he was writing a book about Gandhiji's life mission with special reference to the historic fast and seeking Gandhiji's blessings.

[3] In "Diary, 1932" Gandhiji, in the entry under October 3, mentions having sent a telegram to the addressee the previous day. Presumably this is the telegram.

[4] The addressee had advised Gandhiji that instead of seeking to coerce through fasting he should use the method of peaceful persuasion.

[5] The addressee had further said that if he were to declare that he would only work for the removal of untouchability for a year he might be released.

255. LETTER TO PURATAN BUCH

October 2, 1932

CHI. PURATAN,

You have asked a good question. Arjuna did not know what to do and he asked [Krishna][1] to guide him. No such doubt had arisen in my mind, but Krishna himself roused me and urged me not to miss this opportunity. An indefinite fast may be the highest expression of ahimsa and it may even be folly. I believe that my fast was the former. The outcome also seems to indicate that it was so. Fasting has a place, and an important one, in the *tapascharya* enjoined[2] in Hindu dharma. Thus there is a difference between Arjuna's case and [mine]. I don't wish to suggest by this that I have more knowledge than Arjuna. I only wish to point out that in this instance it was not a question of ignorance in me. Is this clear ? You must have read in the newspapers that visitors are no longer permitted to see me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9169

256. LETTER TO LAKSHMI D. DAFDA

October 2, 1932

CHI. LAKSHMI,

What did you do in Bombay? How do you spend the day now? Did I write and tell you that my fast has increased your responsibility? I hope you understand how that is so.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 7755. Courtesy: Maganbhai Desai

[1] From *Mahadevbhaini Diary*.
[2] *ibid*

257. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

October 2, 1932

CHI. JAMNA,

I had got your letter. The fast is an old story now. We should go on doing our duty.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 860. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

258. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

October 2, 1932

There is no doubt that the vow which you contemplate is excellent. If you have arrived at the decision independently on your own, there is no need to discuss the matter with Nimu for the present. Your peace of mind is bound to have its effect on her. That is the beauty of *brahmacharya.* The need for mutual discussion arises when both are equally weak in mind, but equally eager to practise self-control also; for, then, the resolution of one partner helps the other. When one partner has made up his or her mind, he or she will not discuss the matter with the other, as his or her self-control will of itself work on the other. This is only to tell you my own experience in the matter, and you are free to act as you think best. In such matters other people's wisdom does not avail one much. In such a holy resolution you can of course take my blessings for granted, but take the vow only after you are released from prison. Many have given up the vows they made while in prison. The two environments are different. They are two entirely different worlds.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 99

259. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

October 2, 1932

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

Do not expect a long letter for some time yet. I have started writing letters to the Ashram and intend to write to as many persons as I can. You exercised good self-control in not coming to see me. If you had come, I would have certainly welcomed you and not found

fault with you. But I admire you the better for not coming. The get-up of *Ashramvasi Pratye* is beautiful indeed. As for the contents, I have yet to look into them.

I know that anti-untouchability work in villages is very difficult. Only workers like you can judge how far the awakening witnessed during the week of the fast has spread among the villages. I think the fast should have been longer for that to have happened. But this is merely how the matter appears to human reason. I fasted as long as it was God's will that I should. Who knows how many more fasts He will make me undertake in future ? We should thus be content to live as He wills, and be ready to dance with joy even if He throws us into a pan of boiling oil. Has He not given His word that He will give us the strength to do so ?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5510

260. LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA P. KAMDAR

October 2, 1932

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA,

You have paid good attention to handwriting, but in the end spoilt the letter with blots of ink on the sheet. The lesson to be drawn from this is that neatness cannot be learnt in a short time. One should make a long and systematic effort to learn it. Remember that you have taken a vow to shed your lethargy. Keep your vow. Write your address in every letter; I cannot keep a complete list of addresses here. I hope the children are better now.

Do you see Raihanabehn sometimes?

I have written letters to the girls and enclosed them in the Ashram packet.

I don't say anything about my fast, since it is an old story now. I am regaining my strength. I had lost it considerably. Convey my blessings to Rasik[1] when you write to him. I do of course get news of him.

Sardar and Mahadevbhai are happy here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7471. Also C.W. 4917. Courtesy: Hari-ichchha P. Kamdar

[1] Addressee's brother

261. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

October 2, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I cannot write you a long letter today. Who is afraid of your biting? Our cat often bites its kittens, but the more she does that the more they cling to her. When she lifts Soma[1] with her teeth, he does not cry but, on the contrary, feels more secure. Your biting must be like the cat's.

You have quoted fine verses indeed. I admire your self-control, too. But neither you nor the other inmates of the Ashram need feel elated. Old man Abbas, Raihana and others danced with joy when they knew the cause of my fast. They did not even express a wish to come and see me. They trusted that I was under God's care and went on with their tasks. Others, too, acted in the same manner. Tell me, now, how much weight did you gain during my fast ?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10304. Also C.W. 6743. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

262. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

October 2, 1932

CHI. PANDITJI,

You should not expect a long letter from me today. I feel that I have had a new life. God's will be done. Lakshmibehn should take care of her teeth and have them fully attended to.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 235. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

[1] One of the kittens

263. LETTER TO MOHAN N. PARIKH

October 2, 1932

CHI. MOHAN,

Yours was a novel fast—eating bananas and drinking milk! I would not call that even a semi-fast with a fruit diet. Who said that milk was fruit?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9185

264. LETTER TO PADMA

October 2, 1932

CHI. PADMA,

I got your letter. Father came and saw me. You should learn how to keep accounts. It is very easy. Every time you spend something, you should note down the particulars immediately. It is not necessary to make a fair copy of the notes. You can send the same sheet to Narandas. If there is a swelling on your arm, you should stop even spinning. You must take care and see that you never get tired. The fast was a wonderful experience.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6138. Also C.W. 3490. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

265. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

October 2, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

My fast has become a thing of the past. Similarly, cannot your fever become a matter of the past?

BAPU

From the Gujarati original:C.W. 9918. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

266. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI M. THAKKAR

October 2, 1932

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I got your letter. You have done no wrong in starting wearing bangles. The mistake lay in your resolution not to wear them, and so I think that you have now made amends for the mistake by wearing them to please the elders in the family. Let this be a lesson to you that all resolutions should be made after careful thinking, and that once you have made a resolution you should not give it up for anybody's sake. Do not brood over what has happened.

Live on milk, vegetables and fruit if *rotli* does not agree. Milk of course includes curds and buttermilk. Aren't the children still in a condition to live in the Ashram? Pay a visit to the Ashram and see how things are there at present. If you cannot do that, don't shift them from Calcutta but be satisfied with what you can do for them there. Ultimately their place is in the Ashram, and, to accustom them to the Ashram you should live there for a short time, if necessary.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6821

267. LETTER TO KASTURBHAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,

October 2, 1932

BHAI KASTURBHAI,

It was good of you to think of me.[1] I am slowly regaining my strength. I hope your revered mother is better.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33151

[1] On Gandhiji's birthday

268. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

October 2, 1932

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (VIJAPUR),

I had your letter. I am gaining strength and therefore today I am writing letters to the Ashram. I no doubt have faith in you. By the grace of God, you have got independent work of your choice. Since you have patience, you are bound to make progress.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

[PS.]

Ba comes daily and spends the day with me. God knows how long this will continue.

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 32864

269. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

8 p. m. [*October 2, 1932*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

The accompanying letters will give you an indication of my strength. I have now regained a good deal of it. I became weaker than I had thought, but I am recovering rapidly. On the Sunday during my fast, my weight was 93½ pounds. Today, which is again a Sunday, it stands at 100 pounds. This is good improvement. My diet at present is a pound and a half of milk, eight to ten oranges, pomegranate or grape juice, soup of gourd and tomatoes, honey and lemon juice. I hope that I shall be able to increase the quantity of milk by a little. I don't expect I shall make any other change for some time. I walked a little yesterday and today. The quantity of stool has increased today in the natural course. I sleep fairly well. Ba spends the whole day with me. In the evening, she goes to Lady Vithaldas's place.

I suffered much during the fast but enjoyed boundless peace. God tested me fairly severely. Yet on the whole the test was light. A seven days' fast means nothing to me. But the physical and mental suffering during this short period was considerable. I cannot say how

[1] Although in *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, this letter is mentioned under October 3, from the contents it appears to have been written on October 2, which was a Sunday.

the experience of God-realization must be different from the experience which I have had. I don't mean that experience is a state of perfect knowledge. It is an experience which cannot be explained in words. Even perfect knowledge is not an experience of perfect realization.

I was happy that you and the others who came and saw me did so. Those who did not come must be said to have exercised great self-control. I think both those who came and those who did not, did right. May this *yajna* inspire us to strive for greater self-purification and lead us to greater awakening.

Resume the former practice of despatching the mail on a fixed day. If necessary, you may for the present write more than once during a week.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8258. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

270. LETTER TO NANIBEHN JHAVERI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 2, 1932

CHI. NANIBEHN JHAVERI,

I am resuming writing letters to the inmates of the Ashram and your name comes first. Do not misinterpret my forgiveness. Has your brother fully recovered? Make your health perfect.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari—Pannalal Jhaveri, p. 27

271. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

October 2, 1932

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your letter. Now I have regained proper strength. I am taking milk, fruit and one vegetable. My weight has risen to 100 lb. There is, therefore, no cause for worry. Your health must improve. How is Kshitishbabu? Give me news of Arun.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI HEMPRABHA DEVI
KHADI PRATISTHAN
SODEPUR
VIA CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1689.

272. LETTER TO MAITHILISHARAN GUPTA

October 2, 1932

BHAI MAITHILISHARANJI,

Your messages[1] keep pouring in. God is most kind.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 9461. Courtesy: Bharat Kala Bhavan.

[1] The addressee had sent poems of appreciation during and after Gandhiji's fast.

273. LETTER TO SOHANLAL SHARMA

October 2, 1932

BHAI MOHANLAL[1],

You can not undertake a fast in such haste. Your job now is to start a peaceful agitation.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI MOHANLAL SHARMA
HINDU SABHA KARYALAYA
PUSHKAR
NEAR AJMER
RAJPUTANA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2825

274. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

October 2, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

I shall not write a long letter now. I hope you are well. I am regaining strength. It is God's mercy. Convey my blessings to Anand.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

275. A LETTER

October 2, 1932

Physical contact, temple-entry, etc., are in my opinion an integral part of eradication of untoucability. Inter-dining is optional.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 100

[1] Mahadev Desai gives the correct name in his letter to him dated October 3, 1932 (G.N. 2826); also *Vide* "Letter to Sohanlal Sharma", 19-12-1932.

276. TELEGRAM TO A. RANGASWAMI IYENGAR

October 3, 1932

ON STRENGTH MY ADVICE AND ASSURANCE KELAPPAN HAS BROKEN FAST ONLY TO BE RESUMED IF DURING NEXT THREE MONTHS TEMPLE NOT OPENED EXPECT YOU AND FRIENDS CONCENTRATE ON OPENING TEMPLE.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(3), pt. III, p. 265

277. TELEGRAM TO THE ZAMORIN OF CALICUT

October 3, 1932

I RECOGNIZED THAT KELAPPAN BEING UNDER DISCIPLINE WAS BOUND RECEIVE MY CONSENT PREVIOUS TO FAST AND WAS BOUND ANY CASE GIVE FAIR NOTICE OF INTENTION FAST THESE DEFECTS BEING POINTED OUT HE HAS BRAVELY RESPONDED AND BROKEN FAST WHICH WILL BE RESUMED IF DURING NEXT THREE MONTHS AFTER SECOND INSTANT TEMPLE NOT OPENED. KELAPPAN'S ACCEPTANCE MY ADVICE THROWS HEAVY RESPONSIBILITY MY SHOULDERS PERHAPS EVEN EXTENT OF SHARING HIS FAST IF TEMPLE NOT OPENED TO AVARNA HINDUS DURING PERIOD OF SUSPENSION. MAY I EXPECT YOU CARRY OUT YOUR ASSURANCE AND OVERCOME ALL DIFFICULTIES LEGAL OR OTHERWISE IN WAY OF LONG DEFERRED REFORM.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(3) Pt. III, p. 265

278. LETTER TO PERCY W. BARTLETT

October 3, 1932

DEAR MR. BARTLETT[1],

I thank you for your letter enclosing copies of your letter to the Poet and the response from the Fellowship. I am quite sure that the Fellowship is exerting itself in the cause of peace.

Yours sincerely,

PERCY W. BARTLETT, ESQ.
17 RED LION SQUARE
LONDON, W. C. 1

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), pt. III, p. 201

279. LETTER TO VERRIER ELWIN

October 3, 1932

MY DEAR VERRIER,

I have your touching letter. I can enter into your heart. We can but do the best that is possible for us to do. The result is in His hands. Therefore "be careful for nothing". Did I tell you that I was able to see Father Winslow and other members of the Sangh?[2] . It was a joy to see them.

I have been writing so many letters that I do not remember them or their contents.

Love to you all.

BAPU

[PS.]

Sardar and Mahadev send their love to you, Mother and Eldyth.

From a copy: C.W. 9698. Courtesy: Eldyth Elwin

[1] A Quaker and General Secretary of the Fellowship of Reconciliation
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Verrier Elwin", 30-9-1932.

280. LETTER TO SAMUEL FRANCIS

October 3, 1932

MY DEAR SAMUEL,

I was glad to hear from you. I do not know what I, a prisoner, can do for you. But if your children will take to the Indian life, it is possible that they may be admitted to the Ashram at Sabarmati.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SAMUEL FRANCIS, ESQ.
C/O J. T. CHRISTIAN, ESQ.
8 MART LANE, EAST LONDON
SOUTH AFRICA

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(3), Pt. III, p. 201

281 . LETTER TO S. K. GEORGE

October 3, 1932

MY DEAR GEORGE[1] ,

I was glad you were in the Ashram. I hope your fever has left you. For the time being only this note. Yes, *Ramarajya* is possible even with this mixture, if the workers are true. This does not exclude me. If I am true, there must be true co-workers; if false, co-workers also false. Do write whenever you feel like it.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi's Challenge to Christianity, p. 89

[1] Teacher in charge of Deenbandhu Bhavan, Santiniketan

282. LETTER TO J. S. HOYLAND

October 3, 1932

MY DEAR HOYLAND,

I am glad you have given me a brief description of your visits to Tolstoy's home. I wish you had also told me something of your impressions of modern Russia.

I am quickly regaining lost strength of body. I need say nothing more about the fast as it is now past history. This I may say. God was most merciful to me during those days.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From a photostat of the original: C.W. 4506. Courtesy: Woodbrooke College, Birmingham, and Mrs. Jessie Hoyland

283. LETTER TO NANDINI BALA

October 3, 1932

DEAR LITTLE NANDINI[1],

It was a perfect delight to receive your letter and garland. I hope you did not feel your fast overmuch. I enjoyed mine, did you? God bless you.

Love.

M. K. GANDHI

LITTLE NANDINI
UTTARAYAN
SANTINIKETAN
BOLPUR (E. I. R.)
BENGAL

From a photostat: C. W. 11017. Courtesy: Nandini Bala

[1] Girl adopted by Rabindranath Tagore's daughter-in-law; *vide* also "In Bengal", 7-6-1925.

284. LETTER TO JAIKRISHNA P. BHANSALI

October 3, 1932

I was delighted to read your letter. Your sannyasa will shine only when you return to the Ashram with true understanding and devote yourself to service in a spirit of non-attachment. A stone cave or a cremation ground are not the real cave or the cremation ground. These are to be found in the heart. One may be truly said to have embraced sannyasa only when one lives in that cave and reduces to ashes all impure thoughts and feelings in oneself. It is this sannyasa which the *Gita* has extolled. This is still what my inner self tells me.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 103

285. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

October 3, 1932

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

You asked me about *rotlo.* But my *rotlo* has dried up. God has snatched it away from me. I am now regaining strength with milk and fruit.

I hope all of you are all right. Ask Valji to write to me. How was his health [in jail]?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7438. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

286. LETTER TO MAHENDRA V. DESAI

October 3, 1932

CHI. MANU,

Try and improve your handwriting. It is bad to smile during prayers because that is not the time for playing. It is a time for praying to God.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7439. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

287. LETTER TO MAITRI GIRI

October 3, 1932

CHI. MAITRI,

I got your letter after a long interval. Write to me and describe what you learnt there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6237

288. LETTER TO GULAB

October 3, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

Carding is very easy. With a little more effort, you will pick it up well.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1725

289. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI H SHAH

October 3, 1932

I tried to race with you, but for the present I have lost. I don't mind, however."Life or death, I value neither more than the other." This is a new life for me. God's will be done. He has preserved my honour. He has let me off with a light test. I feel His grace every moment of my life.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 102

290. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA N. KHARE

October 3, 1932

CHI. RAMBHAU,

The continuing dialogue between us also is interesting. But this time your handwriting was bad. I have already explained to you what is wrong in all this. Why should we laugh at or despise elders even inwardly? And I have explained, too, how the indifference towards our own weaknesses implied in such contempt is harmful

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 299. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

291. LETTER TO NIRMALA B. MASHRUWALA

October 3, 1932

CHI. NIRMALA,

I had got your letter of the 13th. I am slowly regaining strength. I had got the proofs of *Gitamanthan*.[1] I had also received Babu-kaka's[2] letter.

The pain in the elbow seems to have disappeared since I undertook the fast. But I don't know if it will come back when there is more flesh on the body. Ask Surendra to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI NIRMALABEHN
C/O SHRI BALUBHAI MASHRUWALA
TOPIWALA'S BUNGALOW
SANDHURST ROAD
BOMBAY

From a photostate of the Gujarati: C. W. 2887. Courtesy: Nirmalabehn Shroff

[1] By Kishorelal G. Mashruwala
[2] Kishorelal G. Mashruwala

292. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

October 3, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

I cannot today write a long letter to you.

If you persevere, you will certainly succeed in time in cultivating non-attachment. There is no harm if you remain attached to truth, etc. The world is both real and not real. Hence the sense of its reality will not disappear completely. For relief from constipation, you may consult Gangabehn. Let me know the effect on you of the latest changes in food.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6737. Also C.W. 4480. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

293. LETTER TO SHANTA S. PATEL

October 3, 1932

CHI. SHANTA[1],

You are becoming careless about your handwriting. The letter also is as bad as the handwriting. I hope now you are all right. Don't mind Sardar's jokes. You may write what you wish to.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4066. Also C.W. 17. Courtesy: Shantabehn Patel

294. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

October 3, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

I must write a long reply to your letter, but I do not have that much time or energy. You should take hip-bath in cold water.

But it should be taken before menstruation, not during it. Then there is friction bath, about which Premabehn will probably know. Santok is likely to know about it too. You must take complete rest during the period. It is bad to have white discharge. This too can be

[1] Daughter of Shankarbhai Patel

cured by hip-bath and friction-bath. If you are after it and take the treatment I am suggesting, you are sure to get well.

There are natural differences between males and females. Hence, their functions too are somewhat different. This being the case, if a man tries to perform the functions of a woman or a woman that of a man, there is bound to be trouble. But they can overcome most of the difficulties. Such a situation can be reached only when an atmosphere of physical and psychological purity is created. You may find this point difficult to grasp. Read the letter twice or thrice. If you still do not catch the point, consult Chimanlal[1] or Narandas or Premabehn and then let me know what you have understood.

We feel shy to talk about these things and feel less shy writing about them because we do not have to face and hear the other person. It is easy to write sitting far away but we feel shy when two pairs of eyes meet. But this shyness decreases as we become increasingly pure.

Trying to be your mother.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9957. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

295. A LETTER [2]

October 3, 1932

I cannot express my opinion without knowing your relations with that shopkeeper. You should seek the advice of Nanabhai[3] there. Again, you have written to me for advice after having already taken the step. This is not correct. An indefinite fast is not likely to change the opponent's nature immediately.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol II, p.104

[1] Addressee's father

[2] The correspondent, a young man, had started an indefinite fast in protest against the shopkeeper having broken his promise to let "untouchables" buy from his shop.

[3] Nrisinhaprasad Kalidas Bhatt

296. LETTER TO ZOHRA BANU ANSARI

October 3, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER ZOHRA[1],

I have both your letters. By the grace of God my health is improving. God ordained my fast and now He has vouchsafed me food. Let us all now pray to God also to bring about unity between Hindus and Muslims. I can never rest in peace until that is accomplished.

I too receive letters from Father.

Now you must become my teacher. Your letters take the place of lessons for me. Quite a few people send me letters in Urdu but no one has as beautiful a hand as you. I am inclined to read your letters over and over again on account of your handwriting. Yes, at present Ba is with me for the whole day. Sardar and Mahadev are of course with me. Please convey salaams from us all to Father. Heaps of blessings for you.

GANDHI

From a facsimile of the Urdu in *Mahatma*, Vol. II, facing p. 304

297. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

October 4, 1932

MY DEAR HORACE,

I have your letter. I have written so much to so many friends about the fast that I do not feel like saying anything in this letter. No doubt you will see some of the letters that are going by this week's mail. This however I will say. God was never nearer to me than during the fast, and I felt the love of you all although I had not then any letter from England. My love to you and Olive.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1415

[1] Daughter of Dr. M. A. Ansari

298. LETTER TO SCOTT HENDERSON [1]

October 4, 1932

If I say God inspired my fast and you say He did not, who will be the judge? Can you show me why I should prefer your opinion to the Inner Voice in me? Do you not think that I am safer in God's hands than men's?

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II , p. 106

299. LETTER TO ESSOP[2]

October 4, 1932

I thank you for your touching appeal. The matter is over for the time being. But I suggest to you that such matters are too deep for argument. They must be left to God and His creature.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p.105

300. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

October 4, 1932

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your long letter on 4th September. That is a bygone age.

After the fast is like a new birth to me. I am rapidly gathering strength. The lost weight has almost come back. The lost strength will take a little time. The days of agony were also days of inner joy. It was a little penance for the great sin of untouchability committed by millions against their fellow beings. But you know all about it by now.

You must try to get rid of your rheumatism by steam baths and a diet free of much starch and proteids and full of fresh fruit.

I wish you could persuade Nan and Tangai to go to a public school and live down the prejudice, i.e., if the teachers welcome the idea of their going there.

[1] A Christian missionary

[2] The addressee had written to say that fast unto death was tantamount to suicide.

I had a birthday greeting cable from Denmark. The name of the sender was not given.

No more today.

Love from us and kisses to the children

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 114, Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear child,* p. 94

301. MESSAGE WITH AN AUTOGRAPH [1]

October 4, 1932

May you recover soon.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol . II, p.105

302. A LETTER[2]

October 4, 1932

I thank you for your letter. Misunderstanding about the life and motive of a public man will always arise. Your confession does you credit.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 105

303. A STATEMENT[3]

October 4, 1932

Removal of untouchability does not include inter-dining unless untouchables are excluded on the ground of their being born so, when others are not.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 106

[1] The addressee, not identified in the source, was an American youth suffering from tuberculosis whose mother had written to Gandhiji explaining her helplessness and saying that her son was paying for his treatment by selling autographs of important people.

[2] The addressee, not identified in the source, had been hostile to Hindu religion and Gandhiji. After Gandhiji's fast he was convinced of Gandhiji's sincerity and as a penance had decided to observe silence and eat only one meal a day for forty days.

[3] It is not clear to whom the statement was made.

304. LETTER TO ASHRAM CHILDREN

October 4, 1932

If you little children start calling yourselves "bhais" and "behns", what shall I call myself? Who started calling Upendra "Upendrabhai" and Bhadrika "Bhadrikabehn"? If I visit your Bal Mandir, I will not address any of you as "bhai"or "behn". Would you accept this condition? I will mention the other conditions afterwards.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 105

305. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

October 4, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. Anyone who wishes to get some publicity for himself by writing a foreword, should be qualified to write it. Ask Narandas how one may become so qualified.

I am certainly getting rest. Six days of fast are nothing un-usual in my life. I have almost regained my normal strength. I experience no difficulty in attending to my correspondence.

I do not at all like that people in the Ashram should fall ill. There is some carelessness behind these illnesses. During this month when people generally fall ill, you should be very careful about food. The root cause of most illnesses is impaired digestion.

Vali[1] was thought to be among the strong and healthy girls in the Ashram. Even she has fallen ill! I see that some of the girls are a problem on your hands. I cannot guide you from here about Shanta without knowing more about her. Discuss the matter with Narandas and do what you think best. . . . 's[2] case also requires careful thinking. Menstruation in a girl of ten years is quite a serious matter. Get more facts about her from . . . [3]. She is likely to have picked up some bad practice when she used to go to school.

[1] A student of the Ashram school who later married Prithuraj, son of Lakshmidas Asar

[2] The names have been omitted.

[3] *ibid*

We have been separated from our Premi[1] for we have been shifted to another cell. We do feel the separation, but can do nothing about it. Isn't life a series of separations?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10305. Also C.W. 6744. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

306. LETTER TO CHANDRASHANKAR N. PANDYA

October 4, 1932

The whole world may change, but you will not. Some persons are wedded to their disease.You don't care if, in doing so, you are violating your dharma as a husband. And there is no possibility of your wife getting a divorce.

I am fast regaining my strength. Sardar does not stop ordering people about like a *sardar* [2] even here. If we suggest that to him, he replies by saying that he would do so when the Kathi[3] gives up his opium. To whom may I complain about this?

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p.106

307. LETTER TO JAISHANKAR P. TRIVEDI

October 4, 1932

You did right in giving me in your letter the heart-rending description of Taragouri's[4] death. Does anybody know when death, who ever stalks us like a shadow, will catch us by the throat? I know that Manu will be shocked, but he is a brave boy and will bear the blow. If, by way of *shraddha* for Taragouri, you banish the primus stove from your family, that will not be too great a sacrifice, and probably it will save other women from this monster.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 106

[1] Gandhiji's cat
[2] Leader
[3] Member of community of that name in Saurashtra
[4] Addressee's brother' s wife

308. LETTER TO RAMESHWARLAL BAZAJ

October 4, 1932

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

Chi. Purnachandra has sent envelopes with your address. My fast is an old story now. My strength is returning, you need have no anxiety.

Have you got any returns from the new enterprise? Do write to me all details.

My earlier letter must have reached you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 9448. Courtesy: Benarsilal Bazaj

309. LETTER TO C.F. ANDREWS

[*October 5, 1932*][1]

I hope your nerves are somewhat at rest. Anyway you must have been sustained by the fact of Gurudev's closest association in this matter. Mahadev has translated and read to me one of his sermons on the very first day of the fast. It is a stirring thing. But the tokens of God's love were many in those days. I never had any doubt about God's guidance throughout.

But of course the largest part of the work still remains. And your place I have no doubt is still there.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 111

[1] The source gives this letter under the date October 6, but it appears to have been written on October 5, *vide* the following item.

310. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

October 5, 1932

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I have your letter. I know I gave you all a most anxious time. It was inevitable. It was all God's doing. I could trace His hand in everything that happened during those days.

Love in which Mahadev joins.

BAPU

[PS.]

Herewith a letter for Charlie.

From a photostat: G.N. 1459

311. LETTER PREMI JAIRAMDAS

October 5, 1932

MY DEAR PREMI,

Yes, I had all you sent me. You will now tell Father I had his love letter and that I am getting on well.

You must be quick and begin to write in Hindi.

Love to you all from us all.

BAPU

KUMARI SHRI PREMI JAIRAMDAS
PREM BHAVAN
HYDERABAD, SINDH

From a photostat: C.W. 9242. Courtesy: Jairamdas Doulatram

312. LETTER TO THE LARKS OF ST. FRANCIS [1]

October 5, 1932

Your loving letter of the 2nd September has duly reached me. I had also that beautiful cable during my holy fast. Tokens such as yours were food for me sent by God.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 108

[1] From "Diary, 1932". The source merely states that this was written to the nuns of an Italian convent named after St. Francis.

313. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

October 5, 1932

DEAR DR. MAHMUD,

Many thanks for the basket of fruit. I have no letter for you. I hope you are better and that your domestic troubles are eased if not over. How I wish that the untouchables solution could lead to further unity! May your efforts fructify. My salaams to Maulana Saheb.

Love.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5073

314. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

October [*5*][1]*, 1932*

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter came in today (Wednesday). My writing was with the right hand. You found it clear because owing to the weakness of the body I had to trace my letters slowly. The left elbow was at fault. Up to yesterday there was no pain at all. But today I have a feeling that it would return with the filling in of the flesh. If it does return, it need not cause any anxiety. Of course I am spinning the full quota, i.e. 200 rounds at least. Keshu brought a new Gandiva. It works extremely well. I do not think I take more than one and a half hours. My weight stands at 99 lb. Now that I take some exercise, the weight cannot and must not increase by leaps. I have taken two pounds of milk today and for the first time, 20 dates. Ba is with me during the day, feeding and nursing me. I have to give much time to correspondence as the volume has increased enormously.

I wrote a note to Kisen. I wonder if she received it.

Narandas has got the permission to see you, if you would care to see him. Do you get all the letters collected during the week or only one per week?

So you see that you cannot build a theory on a few days' or even months' observation. Do not now try to fix the quantity of salt mechanically. The quantity will adjust itself. An occasional drop will

[1] The source has "6", but Wednesday, on which Gandhiji wrote the letter, was October 5.

always help. If you are melting and can stand cold water, you should take two or three quick cold baths. And you should try deep breathing. It cools the body at once. This is done through the mouth as when you are whistling. Try in the open air to breathe in the air and you will instantaneously find the cooling effect. And do not stint yourself for fresh fruit. Take as many oranges as you like, and raw tomatoes (ripe of course).

Mahadev had forgotten to give your message to Gurudev and touch his feet on your behalf. So, having your letter by me, I read the portion to him and, much to his embarrassment, touched his feet on your behalf. He sat speechless, expressing gratefulness through his expression.

I am glad you and Kisen are working at making perfect slivers. They are the key to fine spinning. I am just now spinning 45 counts quite easily. Probably the count is finer. It will be tested tomorrow.

Horace, Esther, Muriel and many other friends who write to me always mention you and want me to send you their love. I am so very bad at conveying these messages. I must not omit the Italian sisters who have been sending beautiful letters.

Love to both of you

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6244. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9710

315. LETTER TO VIRENDRA PRAKASH [1]

October 5, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I cannot imagine a more effective method of honouring the memory of the great Swami Dayanand than by every Arya Samajist devoting his best energies to the cause of the Harijans during this wave of reform.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 145. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary,* Vol. II, p. 109

[1] Full name is from "Diary, 1932". The G.N. source merely says "Virendra".

316. LETTER TO FRANCISCA STANDENATH [1]

October 5, 1932

My saying that in Europe people could not live without some compromise was surely not meant to apply to a man like Satyavan. But you and I must not judge him. After all even the strongest have to compromise to an extent. No one can lay down the law for the other.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 107

317. LETTER ADA WEST

October 5, 1932

MY DEAR DEVI,

So you fasted! Just like you. I am regaining my lost strength rapidly. It was all a rich experience. I have gone through many and more prolonged fasts. But none was so joy-giving.

It seems that the work there is too trying for you. Of course you must not work beyond your strength.

Ba and Devdas I see frequently nowadays. Manilal must be reaching Bombay in a day or two. Poor boy! He is coming to see me dying. He will have the disappointment of his life. Ba has aged.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 4435. Courtesy: A. H. West

318. A LETTER

October 5, 1932

I prize the weather from Mr. Lloyd George's garden charged as it is with his love.

Mahadevhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 107

[1] The source does not mention the addressee, but in "Diary, 1932", under the date October 5 Standenath is listed among those to whom Gandhiji wrote letters. Satyavan, mentioned in the letter was addressee's husband, Frederic Standenath.

319. A LETTER

October 5, 1932

Now that the fast is a thing of the past and has perhaps justified itself, George Lancaster would not want me to argue all its ethics. After all things that come from God are hardly capable of being fully reasoned out.

Mahadebhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 107

320. A LETTER

October 5, 1932

Yes, these have been days of marvel. I only hope that the enthusiasm will not wane.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p.109

321. LETTER TO BADRIDUTT PANDE

Ocotber 5, 1932

Your grief [1] is beyond words. But joy and sorrow are alike gifts of God. So we must accept both with tranquillity and in the same spirit. And why the fear of death? That is in store for all. Those who are gone are not truly gone, those living are not truly with us. Both exist but at different places. So much for philosophy. May God grant both of you peace and fortitude.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 109

[1] The addressee had suffered a double bereavement: a son had died of drowning and then a daughter had died from the shock of her brother's death.

322. LETTER TO KHAGENDRA PRIYA BARUANI

October 6, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter and khadi piece and socks. I thank you for them. I shall use them as may be required. The fine piece you sent in April was also received. It still covers me daily. I did acknowledge it on 15th April[1]. I am surprised you did not get my postcard.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SMT. KHAGENDRA PRIYA BARUA
NOWGONG
ASSAM

From a photostat: C.W. 9552

323. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

October 6, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

I am still anxiously waiting for Government's reply to my letter of the 29th ult.[2] addressed to Major Bhandari and forwarded by you, I understand, to the Government. Meanwhile arising out of Sjt. Kelappan's fast in South India I had to send a long telegram[3] to the Zamorin, Calicut, which was referred to the Government and which so far as I am aware, has not still gone to the Zamorin. Now that matter is one of life and death and though Sjt. Kelappan's fast has been suspended at my instance, he is by no means yet out of the wood. And now I am necessarily dragged into it because of my successful intervention. The Zamorin of Calicut is the central figure in this controversy. Sjt. Kelappan's fast is suspended only for three months. There is not therefore much time to be wasted. I should therefore like to know when this telegram will be sent to the Zamorin and whether I am free to carry on correspondence in connection with untouchability. Delay is a matter of great danger and vexation.

[1] *Vide* "Harijan Boards", 9-11-1934.

[2] The source has "inst". For the text of the letter, "Letter to M.G. Bhandari", 29-9-1932.

[3] *Vide* "Telegram to A. Rangaswami Iyengar", 3-10-1932.

It is also highly necessary for me to see some co-workers in this connection. I would therefore like you please to secure early decision from Government in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. III, p. 257. Also G.N. 3862

324. LETTER TO MRS. LINDSAY

October 6, 1932

Thanks for your sweet letter. Yes, it would be tragic if God was accessible only to the learned. My feeling coincides with your washer woman's. There was once a scientific expedition in search of God. The scientists are reported to have come to India and to have found God not in the homes of Brahmins, nor in the palaces of kings, but they found Him in a hut of an untouchable. Hence my cry to God to admit me to the untouchable fold. After fifty years of trial they found me worthy to be so admitted. And I rejoice over the event.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 112

325. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

October 6, 1932

I miss your presence. The flower-pots are a constant reminder. But then it is a prisoner's privilege to miss the presence of dear ones.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 113

326. LETTER TO PATANKAR[1]

October 6, 1932

I thank you for your letter and the *prasadam*. Please thank all the merchants for the *Akhand Saptah*. I have no doubt that all such spiritual effort helped the great manifestation of the fast week.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 112

[1] The addressee is not identified in the source. But "Diary, 1932" gives his name as Patankar of Belgaum.

327. LETTER TO HARIBHAU PHATAK

October 6, 1932

Let this suffice as a brief answer to your questions.

Inter-dining and intermarriage are not an essential part of removal of untouchability root and branch. These two form a separate reform and must come one day for all sections of Hinduism.

Nothing can be or should be done by compulsion. Fasting and the like are not designed to compel people to act against their wills, they are designed to make people think and act. If untouchables are no longer untouchable what are they in Hindu society? My own opinion is that the varna system has just now broken down. There is no true Brahmin or true Kshatriya or Vaishya. We are all Shudras, i.e., one varna. If this position is accepted, then the thing becomes easy. If this does not satisfy our vanity, then we are all Brahmins. Removal of untouchability does mean root-and-branch destruction of the idea of superiority and inferiority. He who says, ‘ I am more than my fellow’ debases himself; he who says, ‘I am the least among my fellows’ raises himself. My fast was intended not to deal with the question superficially but to make us true.

I wish I could mechanically fix the time limit. Who am I to do so? But this I can say from my past, there will be no fast in this matter if the reform is progressing steadily and there is no humbug or make-believe behind it. Real progress is self-demonstrated. The Harijans will feel its glow in unmistakable terms. I would beseech you therefore not to worry about the time limit.

We all believe in idols and images of some sort. I do. The ordinary temple has no attraction for me personally. But it has a tremendous spiritual value. Therefore it must be open to Harjians. Reform of temples, not their destruction, is necessary.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 109-10

328. LETTER TO V. RAMJEE RAO

October 6, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I do hope that Andhradesh will not lag behind the rest of the country in the matter of removal of untouchability.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI V. RAMJEE RAO
"DEENABANDHU" OFFICE
MASULIPATAM

From a photostat: G.N. 4578

329. A LETTER

October 6, 1932

A thief does not steal in accordance with God's wish but even his stealing cannot be but by His permission.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 113

330. A LETTER

October 6, 1932

It is certainly wrong to exclude cobblers, etc., from the scope of the Association for the poor. But it would not be proper for you at once to start a fast in protest against this injustice. You should plead with the elders. You should win their good opinion by serving them. Nobody ought to be compelled to do a particular thing.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 113

331. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

October 6, 1932

CHI. VIDYAVATI,

Wonderful! you rebuke me! I had one letter from you. I did send a reply but you did not receive it. What can I do about it? The same has been the case with many other letters of mine. True, I would not have written to you had there been no letter from you. You must understand that I am a prisoner. You see, I have not been able to write even to Swarup[1] and Krishna[2]. Now the reply to your letter. My health is perfect.I shall regain strength in a few days. You have not written anything about your health.

Blessings to all from

BAPU

[PS.]

Who are with you?

RANI VIDYAVATI
C/O DR. RAGHUNATH SINGHJI
KAROKALA, P. O. BENIGANJ
DIST. HARDOI, U. P.

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

332 TELEGRAM TO SHAUKAT ALI [3]

October 7, 1932[4]

MAULANA SHAUKAT ALI
KHILAFAT OFFICE
BOMBAY.

I AM DELIGHTED YOU HAVE POSTPONED YOUR AMERICAN VISIT. IT WILL BE GLORIOUS DAY WHEN SOLID HINDU-MUSLIM-SIKH UNITY

[1] Vijayalakshmi Pandit
[2] Krishna Nehru
[3] The telegram was withheld by the Government; *vide* "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of India", 7-11-1932.
[4] From *Mahadevbhaini Diary*

IS ACHIEVED. REST WILL FOLLOW AS DAY FOLLOWS NIGHT. IF YOU WILL SEARCH DILIGENTLY YOU WILL STILL FIND ME IN YOUR POCKET. LOVE.

GANDHI

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 115. Also Government of India, Home Department, Political File No. 31/95/32. Courtesy: National Archives of India

333. A LETTER[1]

October 7, 1932

In my opinion all selfless service leads to self-purification. Economic and moral development should go hand in hand. *Atman* is that which animates the body. Realization comes through purification. Prayer is necessary for all, if food is.

Liberty should be taken away in lunacy.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 114

334. A LETTER

October 7, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

My inner being tells me that spiritual untiy can only be attained by resisting with our whole soul the modern false life.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C. W. 9684. Courtesy: Vishvabharati Museum and Library, Santiniketan. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, p. 117

335. LETTER TO KAHAN C. GANDHI

October 7, 1932

I got your loving letter. But your love is accompanied with the demand that I should give up my conviction and labour of 50 years. How can I yield even to your love and do that?

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 114

[1] The addressee, not indentified by name in the source, was from Dharwar and had written to Gandhiji a long letter.

336. LETTER TO MANISHANKAR GANPATRAM

October 7, 1932

Inter-dining and intermarrying with *Antyajas* are not a necessary part of the movement for the eradication of untouchability. There can be no coercion in these matters. Nor should anybody be prevented from having such relations with untouchables if he wishes, just as nobody is prevented from having them with members of other communities. Eradication of untouchability has nothing to do with inter-dining and intermarrying.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 114

337. LETTER TO NIRMALA B. MASHRUWALA

October 7, 1932

CHI. NIRMALA,

You must have got my postcards [1]. All who go to Nasik or write to a prisoner there should remember what I have explained. Anybody who goes to Thana or writes to someone there may also make use of it.

I got two letters from Kishorelal and one from Gomati.

I need not say anything about the propriety or otherwise of the fast. There was certainly some defect in it, but the fast was absolutely necessary. It may be regarded as the ultimate step in non-violence. I am now gradually regaining my strength. In fact I have regained most of it. The weight, which had gone down to 93.5 lb has now risen to 99. Before the fast it was 101. I am sure that on the whole the fast will benefit my health. My daily food consists of 2lb.of milk, nine oranges or *mosambis* juice of pomegranates or grapes, and gourd or tomato soup once a day. I walk in the morning and in the evening for a total of an hour and a half without getting tired, write quite a large number of letters, and spin at least 200 rounds, going up to as far as 40 counts. Ba is allowed to stay with me during the day. Devdas is permitted to come and see me.

It is necessary that we should spin as fine yarn as we can. I also admit the moral blemish in wearing clothes of fine yarn, but fine cloth

[1] For one of these *Vide* "Letter to Nirmala B. Mashruwala", 3-10-1932.

has also some benefits. It is very necessary from an artistic point of view. In the attempt to spin fine yarn, one makes many discoveries. It makes for deftness of the hand. In the past the people were forced to spin fine yarn. Even as atonement for that, some of us ought to spin fine yarn as part of the *yajna* of spinning, so that the yarn spun by them might be available whenever fine cloth is found to be absolutely necessary. If we have to pay the full labour charges for fine yarn, the cost of such cloth would be exceedingly high.

It was not proper for Kishorelal to have insisted on spinning a thousand rounds during the week of the fast. He should have recognized his limitations in this matter. One learns real humility by doing so. One may, if one wishes, do labour which is easier even than spinning. But those who cannot do any manual work can also serve through their thoughts and writings. He is a thief who has hands but does not use them to do any work.

I like the verse as amended: "I wish I could always employ my all in relieving some creatures' pain."[1]

Kishorelal knows that Nath had some doubt about the moral propriety of my fast. At my request, Nath came and discussed the matter a little with me during the fast. I do not know whether he was finally convinced.

Rabindranath went the furthest he could this time. We have come very close to each other. I don't think I have left out anything.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2888. Courtesy: Nirmalabehn Shroff

338. LETTER TO LILY H. SHAH [2]

October 7, 1932

Do you realize what you are suggesting when you ask that you should be permitted to offer me the first meal to end my fast? Should I fast again in order that you may do that?

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 114

[1] The original Sanskrit verse means: "I desire the end of the suffering of all creatures that suffer".

[2] Hiralal Shah's daughter, now Lily Anand Pandya

339. LETTER TO NANIBEHN JHAVERI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 7, 1932

CHI. NANIBEHN,

Of course I have written you a letter. You should get it. Ba had mentioned your arrival and that of Gangabehn. We shall be able to meet only when God wills. Gangabehn must write to me in detail about the meals. How is your health? Godse met me separately also. But is Bapalal Vaidya with him? I have written a letter. It is all right that you have called somebody from the Ashram. Keep writing to me whenever you have any news. I am steadily regaining strength.

I saw Gangabehn's letter after writing this. She must put on weight fast.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari—Pannalal Jhaveri, p. 26

340. LETTER TO SARUPRANI NEHRU[1]

October 7, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

Your letter.

You should not hesitate to send for a doctor when your health warrants it. You are taking sufficient fruit, I hope. May God make you well soon.

I am delighted with your decision to remain here till I have given a final answer. The children will, of course, be pleased at it. Give my blessings to them.

Your gift has been received but do we need this kind of courtesy between us? Premlilabehn and Ramanarayan's wife anyway send me fruits in plenty.

Write to Sarup[2] and Krishna[3] and tell them that I know their

[1] Motilal Nehru's widow
[2] Addressee's daughters
[3] *ibid*

feelings even without a wire from them.

I can see what services you are rendering to the Harijans here. Ba narrates everything to me.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: Gandhiji-Indira Gandhi Correspondence File. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

341. LETTER TO C.Y. CHINTAMANI

October 8, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

No need whatsoever for apology. I hope you received my previous letter in reply to your earlier letter.

There are insurmountable difficulties about adopting the way you suggest.[1] As a prisoner I am not free to discuss them. But if it was open to me to discuss them, I think you would be convinced of the soundness of my reason. But this I may say that no one can be more eager than I am to see peace established between the Government and the people or the Congress.

I hope you are keeping well.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. C. Y. CHINTAMANI
"THE LEADER" OFFICE
ALLAHABAD

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. III, p. 223. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, pp. 117-8

[1] The addressee had suggested withdrawal or suspension of civil disobedience.

342. LETTER TO MOHANLAL

October 8, 1932

BHAISHRI MOHANLAL,

You are right in your view that inter-dining and inter-marrying with *Antyajas* are not a necessary part of the movement for the eradication of untouchability. Hence there can be no coercion brought to bear on anybody in regard to these. If, however, anybody wishes of his own free will to have such relations with *Antyajas*, he should not be prevented from doing so, just as members of "touchable" communities are not prevented from having such relations among themselves. Eradication of untouchability means permitting Harijans, and persuading others to permit them, to enjoy the rights which as a human being every Hindu enjoys.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 232

343. LETTER TO MOHANLAL M. BHATT

October, 8, 1932

There was some merit in Mohamad Kaji's decision to observe the *roza*. Islam enjoins keeping of the *roza* during a time of misfortune. One other Muslim friend also had kept the *roza* at that time. The *roza* is not a fast. In this matter Muslim friends should earnestly wish that, just as the problem of the *Antyajas* has been solved, that of the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs also may be solved, and should do their duty towards that end.

A solution of the problem from the religious point of view was certainly one of the aims of my fast. The Hindu public realized this without any propaganda for that purpose, and the great awakening that has come about is indeed of a religious nature.

From the religious standpoint the Government award would have destroyed the *Antyajas.* As compared with that aspect of the problem, the political aspect was insignificant. Politics is included in religion and is not an independent activity. The solution of the *Antyajas* problem from a religious point of view includes the solution of the problem of all oppressed races in the world. The Christians and Muslims also seem to have grasped this point.

I see no violation of principle in a teetotaller present at a feast

passing a glass of wine. If one attends such a feast, it is one's duty, according to me, to pass the glass and there is no hypocrisy in doing so. That is one way of quietly winning the love of the people who drink. This argument applies only to a strict teetotaller, and the question also was put with reference to such a person. If my reply is not properly understood, it is likely to be misapplied, but I have no fear in giving you this reply.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 116-7

344. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

October 8, 1932

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I have your letter. Do what you think best. I cannot guide you from here. Think over the pledge which was taken. It should not be violated in the slightest degree. This does not mean that I know anything in the matter. I don't remember everything now. This is why I have aways insisted that whenever a person takes a vow, he should immediately write it down. If he does not do that, afterwards his resoultion weakens and he interprets the vow to make it much milder. I have often been guilty of such behaviour myself and my conscience has pricked me afterwards.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5511

345. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

October 8, 1932

CHI. RAMA (JOSHI)[1],

Have you requested me not to take the trouble of writing to you, so that you also may not have to write to me? But how can I, when I am well enough and eat and work as usual, and get time to write, refrain from writing? I don't mind Vimu's having had a trip to Yeravda, but has she started working as a scavenger-girl? The brave

[1] Wife of Chhaganlal Joshi

Dhiru seems to have become a little wiser

Has his health improved?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5336

346. LETTER TO BABALBHAI MEHTA

October 8, 1932

CHI. BABAL,

I got your letter. I have now regained sufficient strength. Make proper use of every moment of your time.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9447

347. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

October 8, 1932

CHI. PANDITJI,

I got your letters.

Mixed dinner parties with Harijans are not a necessary part of the movement against untouchability, but they are consequence of it. I am glad, too, that they take place. Though opposition to them is only to be expected, no one will be able to stop them if such dinners have become a popular movement. There is no argument whatever based on dharma in support of ideas of pollution through food, etc.

While we do not encourage image-worship in the Ashram, we do not forbid it either. Temples in one form or another will always remain as long as Hinduism flourishes. *Antyajas* should have the right to enter all temples recognized as such by the Hindus. It cannot be otherwise if we wish to root out the very idea of a certain class of people being *Antyajas.* Hence, not only is there no contradiction of Ashram principles in an Ashram inmate encouraging temple-entry, but on the contrary it is his duty to encourage it. From a religious standpoint, this issue is very important for the *Antyajas*. It is going to be a test for the Hindus.

I think it necessary that Ashram inmates should be permitted to go, or should go, to work outside for anti-untouchability work. All Ashram inmates are intended and trained ultimately to go out to work

among the people. No inmate of the Ashram who wishes to worship Ganesh or any other deity should be stopped from doing so.[1] However, as an institution we should, in my opinion, remain equal towards all religions and, therefore, should not permit a public temple with an idol in the Ashram. Our public temple is the open prayer ground with the horizons in the different directions as its walls, the sky as its roof and formless God as the idol in the temple. If we followed any other course, we would be required to provide for a mosque, a fire temple, a church, a synagogue and so on. At present the number of Hindus is indeed greater, but we do wish that followers of other faiths also should join us in course of time. An attitude of equality towards all religions requires us to keep in view from now the necessity for all such places of worship. If we do that, however, we might not be able to keep up our attitude of equality, and therefore, the golden rule for us to follow in this as in other matters is to exercise self-control. Think over all this carefully and understand it fully, and ask me again and again till you have done so. I shall not get tired of answering your questions. I have now regained sufficient strength to attend to such duties.

I have forgotten how Sundarabai and Deshpande came to know each other. The religious issue arose because of the previous marriage that was believed to have taken place. I only suggested it as an ideal that there should be no marriage between a teacher and his pupil or between one teacher and another working in the same institution. There is certainly no religious objection to such marriages. If any two persons wish to marry, we may not encourage them but we certainly cannot prevent them. I am writing this as a general rule only; I have forgotten what actually happened in this particular case. The ideal which I have explained has also not been sufficiently explained to people. Nor is any warning given to persons joining the Vidyapith. How can we, then, apply the principle in this case? In such instances, though sticking to our ideal, we should adopt a liberal attitude.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 236. Courtesy: Lakashmibehn N. Khare

[1] Some words in this sentence, illegible in the source, are supplied from *Mahadevbhaini Diary.*

348. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

October 8, 1932

CHI. MANI,

I did get your long letter though it was not long enough for me. The fast is now a thing of the past. It was inspired by God and so it was crowned with success. I am rapidly getting back my normal health. I have almost regained my strength. Everyday I take two pounds of milk and lots of juice of oranges, pomegranates or grapes, and gourd of tomato soup. . . .[1] I can take a fairly good walk, and spin at least 200 rounds of fine yarn, of 45 counts. I also write a great many letters. So you see there is no cause now for anxiety. Ba is permitted to stay with me during the day. Davdas also is allowed to come and see me. He is all right now.

Your dreaming about food could be a sign of indigestion, if nothing more. Such dreams are common when one is very hungry or suffers from indigestion. You should find out the real cause and take the necessary measures, and then stop worrying about the matter. If one's life is regulated by rules of self discipline, such dreams are bound to stop in the course of time. We must not expect the veils of ignorance of many lives to vanish all at once; they will take their own time. But we need not, for that reason, lose heart or give way to despair or slacken our efforts, and we must entertain no doubt nor worry about the ultimate victory. This is the meaning of non attachment taught by the *Gita.*

Fasting produces different effects on different persons, and this is not surprising. They depend on one's physical constitution and psychological attitude towards the fast. One who is not accustomed to fasting will be upset by the thought of fasting even for one day. But fasting is child's play for one who is in the habit of fasting from time to time. Similarly, a person who has not much fat in his system cannot hold out for many days. But a fat person, if he is patient, can prolong the fast for a long time and physically benefit by it.

Father and Mahadev are all right. We never enjoyed such solitude before, and it has done us much good.

I hope you are in good health and so also are Lilavati and Kamaladevi. My blessings to the other women there. Tell Lilavati that

[1] Some words here are censored by the jail authorities.

I had a fine letter from Munshi. Ask her to write to me if she can and feels inclined. I enclose Nandubehn's letter which was received here.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 87-9

349. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

October 8, 1932

I have your long letter. I was very pleased. Though you did not get all my letters, it would seem that my blessings sent through others were conveyed to you all right. My fast is an old story now. I am gradually recovering my strength. I take two pounds of milk and the juice of oranges, *mosambis*, grapes and pomegranates and the soup of tomatoes and gourd. I spin daily not less that 200 rounds of 45 counts and write letters too. Ba spends the day with me and so I don't have to worry about anything. I am happy that you keep good health. Tell Sarup and Krishna that Mother is here. She came and saw me during the fast. Chand[1], Tara[2], Indu, etc., also came and saw me. Indu seems to be growing well. You have given no news about Kanta in your letter. If Rani Vidyavati is with you, tell her that I wrote several letters to her. Your enthusiasm for study is commendable. Read and learn as much as you can while you are there. After you are released, we shall make better arrangements. Do not be impatient however. Your purity, fortitude and devotion to duty represent your real education. It is true, of course, that education in letters will add to their lustre, and, therefore, God willing, your desire for it will be fulfilled. May God preserve your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3430

[1] Chandralekha and Nayantara

[2] *ibid*

350. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI M. THAKKAR

October 8, 1932

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I hope you got the letter which I wrote to you last week.

You have done right in giving up cereals and pulses for some time. If you restrict your food to milk and curds, raisins, juice of sour lemon with soda bicarb, oranges, *mosambis,* cucumber, tomatoes, radishes and salad, your weight will certainly go down. Do not eat almonds or other nuts. If you wish to chew something, you may eat one ounce of coconut. You may eat less but not more than one ounce. If it does not agree with you, you can stop it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 6822

351. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[*October 8, 1932*][1]

I got both your letters. There is nobody now among the prominent leaders who has not blessed my fast. There is no doubt that a fast is the ultimate weapon in non-violence. It is being misused and will probably be misused still more. But there is a saving grace even in its misuse. It can harm only the person who misuses it. And, if we consider the matter deeply, even the harm to him is very small. If his motive is pure, his soul will not be sullied, and only the body will be harmed. However, not many would come forward even to misuse it. How many, after all, would be ready to endure the physical suffering involved in a fast?

I am regaining strength quite rapidly. I take two pounds of milk and plenty of juice of oranges, *mosambis,* grapes and pome-granates. I also take soup of gourd or tomato. The weight, which had gone down to 93 $^{1}/_{2}$ lb., has now risen to 99 lb. I can walk for a total of an hour and a half daily, and can write a large number of letters. I have thus practically regained my original strength. I spin at least 200 rounds of nearly 45 counts. Nor do I feel much tired afterwards. There is, therefore, no cause for the slightest anxiety.

Taramati came and saw me, accompanied by her children. This

[1] From *Mahadevbhaini Diary.*

time she seems to have made good progress. Both the children are in excellent condition. Dilip writes to me occasionally. Taramati writes regularly.

Ba is permitted to stay with me during the day, and Devdas is permitted to come and see me. He has now recovered his health. He still seems to be a little weak, though.

Though I suffered much physically during the fast, I also enjoyed immense peace of mind.

I hope you are keeping good health.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 116-7

352. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

October 8, 1932

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

You will get all news about me.[1] I had a letter from Badridutt even before I got yours. I have wired and even written a letter. The news about Devakinandan is also painful.

I hope all of you are getting along quite well. These days, I use the *Gandiva* spinning-wheel. It is less strenuous to work with. lt permits great speed.

BAPU

[PS.]

Ask Hemi to write to me.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32985

353. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

October 8, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

Your letter has come. Kudsia's brother has sent a letter. He too will come to the Ashram this month. Kudsia must be all right now. I am getting back my strength. I was glad to have seen you.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 258

[1] From the papers or other sources

[2] The addressee had been permitted to see Gandhiji during his fast.

354. LETTER TO SECRETARIES, FRIENDS OF INDIA

October 9, 1932

JOINT HON. SECRETARIES
FRIENDS OF INDIA
46 LANCASTER GATE
LONDON, W. 2

DEAR FRIEND [S],

I thank you for your letter of sympathy. The funds can be sent to the anti-untouchability association formed under the chairmanship of Sjt. G. D. Birla for the furtherance of its objects.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3) Pt. III, p. 224

355. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

October 9, 1932

DEAR DR. MAHMUD,

I have your two letters–the only ones to be received by me. I hope you had my note sent through Kamala. Tell the 4-year old dame that she was forgiven for not completing her fast. Prayers of little ones are better than their fasts. Who knows but that it was such prayers that were answered. Well, the whole time the fast was on, I was thinking too of the Hindu-Muslim question and asking God to give me light. How I wish your, Maulana Abul Kalam's and Malviyaji's efforts fructified. It would be a grand day if we could achieve not a paper but a heart unity.

I am glad your wife and sisters are better. You too must be well now or you must have a compulsory fast for regaining health.

My salaams to both the Maulanas.

Love from us all.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. III, p. 223. Also G.N. 5076

356. LETTER TO VITHAL R. SHINDE[1]

October 9, 1932

I am not going to be party to any quarter being granted to untouchability—this enemy of all truth, righteousness and progress.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 122

357. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

October 9, 1932

DEAR GURUDEV,

I have your beautiful letter. I am daily seeking light. This unity between Hindus and Muslims is also my life's mission. The restrictions do hamper me. But I know that when I have the light, it will pierce through the restrictions. Meanwhile I pray though I do not yet fast.

I hope you were none the worse for the strenuous work in Poona and equally fatiguing long journey.

Mahadev has translated for us your beautiful sermon to the villagers on 20th ultimo.

With love,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4633

358. LETTER TO URMILA DEVI

October 9, 1932

MY DEAR URMILA[2],

What a tragedy! As you were going out that day, I was about to shout out, when Sarojini said you were all coming back soon. And I subsided. But so it was to be. It was to me a sharp reminder that I was a prisoner and therefore not to have all my way. It is a good thing to have these shocks. They keep me humble.

[1] The addressee had asked Gandhiji if in the matter of eradication of untouchability he would agree to a workable compromise.

[2] Sister of C.R. Das

The lesson is, never put off till tomorrow what you can do today and never put off till the next moment what you can do this moment. I wanted to know all about you and your children. Now you must write fully about your joys such as you may have and sorrows that you do have. But sorrows of God's servants are their joys. They are the fires through which God tries and purifies them. Unmixed joys of this earth will stink in our nostrils and we should die of want of the oxygen of sorrows. I have read your letter to Mahadev. Let your boy go through the hard mill of difficulties instead of getting a soft job.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 120

359. LETTER TO BASANTI DEVI DAS [1]

October 9, 1932

It was fearful not to have met you again. As you were going, I do not know whether you noticed that I was casting hungry eyes on you, when Sarojini said you were soon coming back. But you were not to.

What is the meaning of my being a prisoner, if things could happen in the natural course. Let us therefore be thankful for the mercies we had. I was glad that my fast drew you to Poona. I was hungering to see you, since you will not write.

And now do throw yourself in this glorious work of untouchability.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 119

360. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

October 9, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

Vinoba's advice is correct, but it does not mean that one should not try physical remedies. One should strive for self-purification, whatever the condition of one's health. But your constipation ought to be cured by ordinary remedies. I am writing to Narandas and suggesting to him that he should let you go to Rajkot or Vijapur.

[1] Wife of C.R. Das

Change of water often helps. Moreover, you will benefit from good company at either place.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6738. Also C.W. 4481. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

361. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

At Night, October 9, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I duly got your mail. We must help Bhau to overcome his constipation. I feel that, if you send him to Rajkot, the water there may perhaps agree with him. If it is impossible to send him to Rajkot, you may send him to Vijapur. But I am eager that he should go to Rajkot, as we know that the water of that place agreed with Purushottam. Moreover, he will benefit from the company of Purushottam and Jamnadas. Do what you think best.

I feel worried about Kusum. The thought that her health does not improve is a painful one. Does she take proper rest now? Prema told me in her letter that you abstained from many things during my fast. I hope that has not affected your health. I am regaining my strength with wonderful speed. You see how many letters I write. I must have written about 30 letters today, important and unimportant. As for spinning, I spin at least 200 rounds a day, of more than 45 counts. The elbow is in excellent condition, so far. I have gone up to two pounds of milk. Fruit continues.The weight also has gone up to 99. I can walk for a sufficiently long time. You need not, therefore, worry about me at all.

In which jail is the elder Kusum[1] to be kept? Where is she at present? After the death at Trivedi's place,[2] I felt that we should either banish the primus stove from the Ashram or the women should resolve never to light it. I enforced this rule today in the case of Ba. We have got a primus here at present. Ba went to light it. I stopped her and Mahadev went instead. The dress of our women is such that there

[1] Kusumbehn Desai

[2] Of Taragouri, his sister-in-law; *vide* "Letter to Chandrashankar N. Pandya", 4-10-1932.

is every danger of its catching fire. If the women must use a primus stove, they should ask a man every time to light it. Really speaking, it is not at all necessary.

I hope that Qureshi's piles have completely disappeared now. How is Amina? Ask her to write to me. Anyone who wishes may write. Nobody need refrain out of pity for me now. Ba is still permitted to stay with me for the whole day. But the permission may now be withdrawn any time. Devdas is free to come and see me every day. Read my letter[1] to Panditji.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8259. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

362. LETTER TO MULCHAND PAREKH

October 9, 1932

Send a report and accounts to Thakkar Bapa[2] and request him for help. While the movement for self-purification is in full swing, take a pledge that you will sell yourself and your belongings but will not let any school or Ashram be closed for want of funds. Do not reconcile yourself to the inability of Kathiawar to collect such a small amount. You have dedicated yourself to this work. You ought not to give up the task in despair so soon.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diari, Vol II, p. 118

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narayan M. Khare", 8-10-1932.

[2] Amritlal V. Thakkar, member of Servants of India Society and social worker who dedicated himself to the cause of Harijans and Adivasis

363. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

October 9, 1932

CHI. TARAMATI,

I have your letter. I have now regained sufficient strength. I am writing and going for walks properly. I am also spinning as before. Hence there is no reason to worry at all. I had received a long letter from Mathuradas. He is keeping good health. The letter was about the fast.

Blessings to all of you from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

364. A LETTER

October 9, 1932

No son is entitled to sit in judgment over his father. Your work is that of a reformer. A soldier in the cause of reform works so as to influence the criminal-minded and does not publicize their weaknesses or drag them to courts of law. Your duty is to reform your father's conduct through love, but it would be a sin for you to make his weaknesses public. You actually mention several virtues of your father. It would of course be better if he were free from greed, but you will be able to overcome that weakness in time through loving persuasion. You should tolerate it till then. Reason with your brothers and sisters. Make your own life purer and more self-controlled. If even after all these efforts you cannot persuade your father to change his ways, you may leave your home. I would see nothing improper in that. But even that you should do after giving him sufficient time to improve. We ought not to be self-righteous and expect, as soon as we have changed, that the world will change too. We may have changed in one respect, but probably we do not see the many other weaknesses which remain in us. We ought to bear this in mind and adopt a liberal attitude towards the weaknesses of other people. I think you now have the answers to all your questions.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 118-9

365. LETTER TO DR. SURESH CHANDRA BANERJI

October 10, 1932

MY DEAR SURESH,

Why have you kept me in suspense about your health? I know your views of old on caste and untouchability. I quite agree with you that caste has got to go. But whether it would do so in my generation I do not know. Only let us not mix up the two and spoil both causes. Untouchability is a soul-destroying sin. Caste is a social evil. Anyway you get thoroughly well and work away against caste well and work away against caste with your usual vigour. You will find in me a good supporter.

With love and all good wishes,

BAPU

Advance, 15-10-1932. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol . II, p. 124

366. LETTER TO HARDYAL NAG

October 10, 1932

You are always punctual in sending me the right message at the right moment. You put to shame the youth of the country by your enthusiasm at your time of life. May God enable you to finish the century in the same state of vigour.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 125

367. LETTER TO SOMASUNDARAM[1]

October 10, 1932

You do not seem to have studied my very first statement given to the Press. You will find from it that although technically I could express my purpose in the manner I did, the fast was in truth addressed to the Hindus and others who had faith in me. You will observe too that the vast mass of Hindus instinctively understood the purpose of the fast. I hope this is quite clear. The reason why

[1] The addressee, writing from Ceylon, had asked why Gandhiji was not satisfied by the Pact itself and had made the Government's acceptance of it a condition for breaking his fast.

Government acceptance was necessary was because the Pact would be useless in the teeth of the adverse decision. This was the natural corollary to the Pact and the fast.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 123

368. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

October 10, 1932

CHI JAMNALAL,

I had got your letter. You may have thought it too long, but I did not feel so, especially as it gave me the news that the 'begger' had started on his begging mission. Tell him that I had got his letter. Since he has relieved me of my worry, I intend this letter for him too. My body has almost recovered its normal strength. My diet includes milk, oranges, *mosambis*, grapes or pomegranates, and gourd and tomatoes among vegetables. Sometimes I drop milk for a day or two. I walk twice a day, for a total of an hour and a half. I write a great many letters. I spin, as I used to do before the fast, not less than 200 rounds daily, of more than 45 counts. This should reassure everyone. I suffered much physically during the fast but the mind was compeletely at peace. If the fast had had to be prolonged, I would not have felt any strain on the mind. But it was for God, at whose prompting I had undertaken the fast, to prolong it or make it short. Ba is still permitted to stay with me for the whole day. But that will probably stop now. Devdas can come and see me for some time. However he does not come every day. Sardar and Mahadev continue to be with me. Your health can be considered all right. If you have lost some weight, that is to the good. But you should not lose any more now. Vinoba's company has undoubtedly benefited you in that it has strengthened your faith in God. He has a beautiful way with him indeed. It is also good that you have had Gulzarilal's company. It is good, too, that you have come to have faith in nature-cure methods and simple food. These two save us from many diseases. Your daily programme is excellent. You should be happy that you are a 'C' class prisoner. Personally, I have always disliked being in 'A' or ' B' class. Even in 'C' class one can secure the facilities necessary to preserve one's health. Has Gulzarilal become sufficiently strong now? Is Madhavji all right? Sardar had acquired great speed in his study of Sanskrit, but owing to the fast it has slowed down a little. He is now

preparing to resume the former speed. So far our daily routine has been quite satisfactory. We eat and sleep, read newspapers, pace up and down for a walk, read and study what we wish to and spin. Carding is Mahadev's monopoly. But he has suspended that work for some time, for a fairly good stock of slivers has accumulated. Moreover, Chhakkaddas also has been sending fine slivers. I get letters from Wardha regularly. Give regards from us all to everyone there.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchama Putrane Bapuna Ashirvad, pp. 74-5

369. LETTER TO DADACHANJI

October 10, 1932

BHAI DADACHANJI ,

This is in reply to your letter of the 23rd. I wish to clarify my position in regard to Baba[1]. I find it very difficult to believe that one person can help another to see God. My heart refuses to accept this idea. When Baba, however, makes such a claim, I can only tell him that I would welcome his help if he could make me see God. We need not believe that a person has necessarily seen God just because he says that he has seen Him. Many persons who make such a claim are found to be suffering from a delusion. In many cases the claim is merely an echo of one's own wishes. I certainly do not believe that seeing God means seeing some Power outside of us, for I believe that He dwells in the hearts of us all. But only one in thousands knows Him through the heart. It is not enough to know God with one's intellect. I do feel that no person can help another to see God in this sense.

One cannot fast at the instance of somebody else in order to be able to see God. I would do so only when I feel an urge from within me. And when there is such an urge, I will not let myself be dissuaded from the step by anybody. There is absolutely no reason for assuming that fasting would help me to see God. I cannot believe that, if I agree to fast for forty days, Baba can help me to see God. That would be an easy bargain. If one can see God as easily as that, the experience has no value for me.

[1] Meher Baba

I thought that Baba did not divide life into separate fields. To a person whose life is dedicated to dharma, politics, economics, etc., are all aspects of dharma, and he cannot leave out any of them. According to me, a person who regards dharma as one of the many activities of life does not know what dharma is. It is, therefore, inconceivable to me that I might some day give up politics, social reform and other similar activities. I have entered the fields of politics, social service, etc., for the sake of dharma.

I did not promise to translate Baba's writings into Gujarati. On the contrary, I suggested to Baba that he should come out of the spell of English and not write or get somebody to write for him in English, but write and explain his ideas in Gujarati, his mother tongue, or in Persian which as he says, he knows very well. Yes, I would certainly translate into Gujarati any of his writings which deeply appeal to me.

In short, I am a student of Baba's ideas. I saw Baba, having received a wire from Jamshed Mehta whom I regard as a pure soul. I am always in search of *bhaktas* of God and, thinking that Baba was one, I met him.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol II, p. 125-6

370. LETTER TO JHAVERCHAND MEGHANI[1]

October 10, 1932

I had very much liked the loving gift which you had sent to me when I sailed for England. I cannot put this[2] on the same level. . . . I am not a good judge of poetry.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 124

[1] (1897-1947); Gurjarati poet and writer

[2] The addressee had sent to Gandhiji a poem *"Chhelli Salaam"*.

371. LETTER TO RAMANLAL SONI[1]

October 10, 1932

On the whole I liked the poems. But I did find the language of some of them bitter. . . . I am no good judge of poetry.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 125

372. LETTER TO JAISHANKAR P. TRIVEDI

October 10, 1932

After the tragic death of Taragouri, would not all of you do this by way of *shraddha* to her? You should either banish the primus stove from your home or, if that is not possible, the women members should take a vow never to light it themselves. They should always ask a man to light it for them. The dress of our women is not designed to enable them to light a primus stove.[2]

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 127

373. A LETTER

October 10, 1932

Caste reform is necessary and anybody who can do that work should undertake it. The movement for the eradication of untouchability is bound to have an indirect effect in that field. I commend the efforts to help child-widows to marry again. These tasks can be undertaken by men of self-control and pure character.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 123

[1] A Gujarati writer and translator

[2] *Vide* also"Letter to Jaishankar P. Trivedi", 4-10-1932.

374. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

October 10, 1932

BELOVED DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

You are a very clever girl. You want me to fast again in order that you may send me *bhajans* composed by you. No, I will not fast. And the *bhajan* will please me only when you sing it to me. If I had not heard you sing the *bhajan* "Arise and Awake, O Traveller", it would not have touched me so deeply. Even if you sing this *bhajan* from outside the jail walls, your voice will reach me. I do hear, for instance, the sound of all of you dancing. Greetings to Father and Mother from us all. And a slap for you. Blessings to Dahyabhai. Is Pashabhai all right now? Ba spends the whole day with me. I am now regaining strength fairly rapidly, and, therefore, Ba's visits may stop now.

Many blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: S.N. 9669

375. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

October 10, 1932

CHI. RAIHANA,

I got your letter containing the *Bhajan*. I suppose you must have got my letter today. I am writing this letter to tell you about Hari-ichchha. I forgot to write about her earlier today. She is Valjibhai's niece. She lived in the Ashram for some years and has now married Engineer Kamdar of Baroda. I had been writing to her and asking her to go and see you. But since I had not written to you about her, you could not recognize her when she called on you. The fault was mine and not yours. Hari-ichchha informs me that you did not make her feel in any way that she was a stranger, and that both Mother and you showed her great love. The other one was Shanta, who still lives in the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RAIHANABEHN
C/O ABBAS SAHEB
CAMP
BARODA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9668

376. LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA P. KAMDAR

October 10, 1932

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA,

I got your letter. Yes, it is true that I completely forgot to write to Raihanabehn. It would have been better if I had prepared her. I have now written[1] to her today. But the truth is that she does not require anybody to be introduced to her. Visit her now and then and keep up the acquaintance.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI HARI-ICHCHHABEHN
C/O SHRI P.V. KAMDAR
SHIA BAGH
BARODA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7472. Courtesy: Hari-ichchha P. Kamdar

377. LETTER TO BALDEVDAS BIJORIA

October 10, 1932

I have your kind letter. For people like me removal of untouchability is solely a matter of faith. I would never attempt to give up my life on a political issue. Yes, I agree that no coercion should be used whether in a religious or any other matter. As far as I can judge from here there is no coercion in the current activities and God is behind them. I firmly hold that there is no religion in observing untouchability. What more shall I write? I hope I shall continue to enjoy your love.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 124

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

378. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

Octoter 10, 1932

BHAI KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your letter reached me only today. Destiny is certainly there but so is effort too. Destiny simply means that in the absence of effort we have only the fruits of the actions of our past lives. Effort can change destiny. Therefore *brahmacharya* is necessary for those who wish to realize the Brahman. See the fifteenth chapter[1] of the *Gita*. Anyway *brahmacharya* is the essence of the *Gita.* One who wants to lose himself in the Brahman, one who wants to be ever immersed in service has no time for sensual pleasures. This answers all your doubts.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4262

379. LETTER TO CHAUNDE MAHARAJ

October 10, 1932

I have your letter. Here is my message:

I am growing stronger in my belief that cow-protection is an impossibility until we carefully study its economics, take into our fold the untouchables who can do immense service in this work until all the dairies are run on scientific lines and we take a vow to use the hide of dead animals only. Thus the duty now of workers for cow-protection is to understand well these significant points, act accordingly as far as possible and induce others to do so.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 123-4

[1] This was a slip ; *vide* "Letter to Krishnachandra", 31-10-1932.

380. A LETTER[1]

October 11, 1932

I thank you for your letter. I quite agree with you that milk of cows and buffaloes should be avoided for the reasons given by you. I do not take this milk. But I do take goat's milk, though I consider that too objectionable on more general grounds. I have been trying to find an effective substitute for it, but have so far failed. I did not break my fast on honey, but on orange juice. But I do take honey and I do not consider it objectionable. If honey is obtained in a scientific manner not a bee need be destroyed or starved. But I confess to you that I do not always get such innocent honey.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 130

381. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ

[*October 11, 1932*][2]

CHI. RUKMINI,

I now understand your previous letter.

You got a silver medal for singing, and now you want compliments for having made a speech. Am I right? But how can you get compliments if, in your joy for having won a medal, you fall ill? Get well if you wish to have my compliments. Who presented the medal to you? I hope you have kept up the practice on sitar.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

At present either you or Benarsi should write to me regularly.

SHRI RUKMINIDEVI
C/O SHRI BENARSIDAS BAZAJ
THATHERI BAZAAR, BANARAS CITY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9141

[1] The addressee, a Muslim Municipal Councillor from Gujarat, had said that Gandhiji ought to give up milk and honey.

[2] From the Postmark

382. LETTER TO SUSHILABEHN GANDHI

October 11, 1932

CHI. SUSHILA,

What a strange person you are! You fell ill as soon as you landed at Bombay. May I take this to mean that I should send you back to South Africa immediately? Earlier, Manilal came in hot haste and took you away. This time, too, you two seem to have come with some such conspiracy. That is why, I suppose, Sita refused to come here without you. She was afraid that you might go away without her. I hope you are improving now. Ba will come to see you. Do not be in any hurry to come and see me. There is nothing to worry about in regard to my health. Take complete rest and get well. Ask Tara to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SUSHILABEHN
C/O SHRI BALUBHAI MASHRUWALA
TOPIWALA'S BANGALOW
SANDHURST ROAD
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4796

383. LETTER TO TRIBHUVANDAS TRIKAMLAL

October 11, 1932

BHAI TRIBHUVANDAS,

I am grateful to you for sending me the works of Harikrishna Maharaj. I hope to go through them when I get some time. After that if I feel the need I will certainly call for the larger volume.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SJT. TRIBHUVANDAS TRIKAMLAL
AMRITBHAVAN
RAILWAYPURA
MANINAGAR
AHMEDABAD, B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10501

384. A LETTER [1]

October 11, 1932

Eradication of untouchability means that we should treat *Antyajas* as we treat members of the other communities. That is, we should not object to their physical touch or to drinking water served by them, and they may enter our homes or public temples and attend schools like other Hindus. This much is necessarily implied in it. Whether one should eat food cooked by them or eat in their company or intermarry with them is a matter of one's own choice. Religion does not forbid that, nor does it enjoin it. The mixed dinner parties which are often arranged these days are not a necessary part of the movement. But I have no doubt that they deserve to be commended.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 129

385. A LETTER[2]

October 11, 1932

I have your letter. The Congress workers who left the meeting because drinking water was fetched by untouchables acted most imporperly.

Drinking of water offered by untouchables is an intergral part of the eradication of untouchability. Our dharma is to treat the untouchables the same way we treat other communities. Those who have done "expiation" have committed a sin and acted against the Congress. Your being boycotted is immoral and you must on no account undergo expiation. I am distressed that some of our brothers at Bilaspur by their immoral conduct have created a misunderstanding in the minds of the untouchables. I want them to make a public acknowledgement of their mistake.

I am in favour of inter-dining and intermarriage but I do not

[1] The source says the addressee was a Marwari gentleman of Nagpur.

[2] The addressee, not identified by name in the source, had given a distressing account of a meeting held at Bilaspur in connection with Gandhiji's fast. On some people accepting water from Chamars, it seemed, protests were raised. Some were forced to go through purificatory rites and others who had refused to do so were being thratened with excommunication. The correspondent had asked whether this was right.

consider them a necessary feature of removal of untouchability. I feel that those who consider it a dharma to practise these deserve to be applauded. The mixed public dinners that are arranged these days are in my opinion a good thing. I have not noticed any injunction against inter-dining and intermarriage in the scriptures.

This answers all your questions. Please write to me about further developments in the matter.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 129-30

386. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

October 12, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

Today I will not write in Urdu.[1]

You do deserve *shabash*[2] for curing yourself quickly. You will get well quicker if you won't worry about meeting me. When God wills it, we shall meet. Meanwhile let us be thankful that we can write to each other.

Yes, I will write to the other girls about the baths.

Let us hope Kudsia will find her peace during her walks with Narandas. She will, if she keeps good health.

As for your womb it must not be removed unless it is diseased. For that you should consult Mrs. Lazarus and do as she advises. There should be no hurry about this operation. Operations are not always a sure cure. Natural treatment is the most efficacious in the long run and never harmful. Operations have often been harmful and at times even proved fatal.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 259

[1] Up to this the text is in Urdu.

[2] Compliments

387. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

October 12, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

Your weekly letter was received today. I am glad the weather there has improved and that you are feeling better. You do not tell me whether you have commenced your studies in earnest. If your health does not permit, I do not want to goad you to them. My question is, therefore, merely out of curiosity. It has been your won't to report your progress in your studies.

Though my weight shows no increase my general condition is decidedly better. I was walking with the aid of a stick. I gave it up two days ago. The feel is better in every way. Yes, Ba has been attending to my feed. It is still largely fruit. But that means much time and labour as you know to your cost and joy. The proportion is about the same. Manilal and Sushila have arrived. On hearing of the fast they could not restrain themselves. Sushila is ill and is laid up in Bombay. Manilal is not much better. I think I did tell you that he had that deadly fever through which Natal passed a few months ago. But he has seen me. He has brought many good apples from South Africa and oranges from Zanzibar. I wish you could share them. It is no use my attempting to send them there.

I understand what you say about visits. You remember Princess Aristarchi. She has kept up regular correspondence and sends very beautiful postcards containing scared representations and adorned with suitable texts of her own choice.

Love to you both from us all including Ba.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6245. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9711

388. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK [1]

October 12, 1932

What could be more auspicious than that I should execute God's will on Millie's birthday? She must have many many more birthdays and more opportunity of service.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 132

[1] Polak in a letter had drawn Gandhiji's attention to the fact that the latter had begun his fast on Millie Polak's birthday.

389. LETTER TO A. TURTON[1]

October 12, 1932

Thank God it was not I that embraked on the fast. It was all God's doing. And how shall the whole world's 'no' prevail against God's 'yes'?

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 132

390. LETTER TO CHAMAN KAVI[2]

October 12, 1932

It does not seem likely that I shall get the permission to write what you suggest. If anybody suspects my motives, God alone can remove his suspicion. Personally I feel that I have served all religions. Many friends have even realized this. If my claim is true, the fact will not remain hidden for ever. God, who inspired me to undertake the fast, will also make all people realize its significance.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 132

391. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. DESAI

October 12, 1932

CHI. NARAYANRAO ALIAS BABLO,

I did receive a complaint against you. All children play, but they should play when it is time for play and should work when it is time for work. In any case, they should not give trouble to others. I am told that these days you play all the time and also harass people. Is this true? If it is, you should not behave in that manner.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9480

[1] Turton had disapproved of Gandhiji going on a fast since, in his opinion, it amounted to suicide.

[2] A Khoja gentleman from Kutch

392. LETTER TO GULAB

October 12, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

I have your letter. You have to improve your handwriting a great deal. You should write with great care. You do right in standing up when you feel sleepy.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1726

393. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

October 13, 1932

MY DEAR ANGADA[1],

Your dear letter. It is like a soothing draught. I knew that you and others whom I have in mind would see the inwardness of the fast. God let me down gently as a mother her child. And the glorious manifestation all over the land was more than that to me. Horace Alexander told me you had accepted a job. Do tell me something about yourself. Do not think us to be uninterested in your personal life and welfare. Ba is allowed to be with me during the day. So you have love from us all four.

I have almost regained lost strength.

BAPU

From a photostat of the original: C.W. 4543. Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

394. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

October 13, 1932

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your letter. You have a difficult task. Do, cheerfully and with faith, as Narandas advises, or live alone independently. If you think you cannot possibly do that go to the Ashram. It would also be

[1] Monkey prince sent as a messenger by Rama to Ravana. The addressee had carried to the Viceroy Gandhiji's letter of March 2, 1930; *Vide* Vol. "Letter to Lord Irwin", 2-3-1930.

good if you lived under Mridulabehn's[1] care. If, however, you are determinded to work in the city, you should stay in the city. You are not strong enough to go to the city and return on bicycle. I think it would be a risky thing to do. Give up the desire to ride two horses at the same time. You should not become an obstacle in the attempt being made in the Ashram to do without outside labour as far as possible. Do not worry about your letter being long, but you should always write with ink. You should not spend a pie in excess of your income. Write to me from wherever you are. What you write about prison life is not correct. I have not come across any instance of a person having been made dull and insenstitive by prison food.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9323

395. LETTER TO RASIK S. DESAI

October 13, 1932

CHI. RASIK[2] ,

I was surprised to see your note. I hope you have gained peace of mind as much as you have improved in health—my health also has improved. Blessings to you all. Sardar and Mahadev are quite well.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6619. Also C.W. 4351. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

396. LETTER TO JAYA

October 13, 1932

CHI. JAYA,

I was surprised to see your slip. My health is now what it was before I started this fast. I am very happy that all the women of your group are together. One does not often get such experience in one's life. I get news about Venilal from time to time. My blessings to all the women. Sardar and Mahadev are quite well

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIII

[1] Mridulabehn Sarabhai

[2] Valji G. Desai's nephew

397. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

October 13, 1932

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

I got your letter written in English, as also the printed article. But I have still not got permission to write even about untouchability. Personally, I am indeed very eager to write. I have also written to the Government for necessary permission. Let us see what happens. All of us are happy here. Please take care and see that your constant travelling does not affect your health.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1103

398. A LETTER

October 13, 1932

All the varnas are Shudras and every Hindu has the right to recite the Vedas.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 134

399. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

October 13, 1932

CHI . HEMPRABHA,

I have your English letter. I am not sure how far it is proper to conduct satyagraha through the untouchables. Tell Satisbabu to go slowly. Keep writing to me. Patience is imperative. Why did Satisbabu get fever? He should take rest if that is needed. You too must not work at the cost of your health. Why hasn't Kshitishbabu recovered so far?

May God give you right discernment and strength.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have gained enough strength. I can take milk, fruit and such things.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1690

400. LETTER TO NARASINHRAO B. DIVETIA[1]

[Before *October 14, 1932*][2]

All of us were pained to read about your daughter's death. Mahadev told me that she was the only one left to you. I need not offer my condolences to you.[3] Both of you possess true knowledge. May God grant you peace.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 146

401. LETTER TO KUMUD BANDHAB CHATTERJEE

October 14, 1932

I am glad to find that temples in your part of the country are being opened to Harijans. The removal of untouchability does not necessarily include inter-dining or intermarriage, but it is open to anyone to dine or marry among Harijans. In other words, Harijans should have the same status as the rest of the Hindus in all matters. Inter-dining does not mean eating out of the same plate. Hence, there can be no question of anybody's saliva being mixed with food.

The Hindu, 3-11-1932. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, p. 134

402. LETTER TO KESHAV[4]

October 14, 1932

Yes, the fast was God's gift to me. Whatever personal service you render to the untouchables without proselytization at the back of your mind is to the good.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 135

[1] (1859-1937); Gujarati poet and man of letters

[2] Although in the source this letter is listed under October 18, 1932, the addressee in his book *Narsinharaoni Rojnishi* says that he received it on this date.

[3] According to the addressee, whose reply to this letter is quoted by Mahadev Desai, Gandhiji had said: "But you are above sorrowing on this account."

[4] Member of Christ Seva Sangh

403. A LETTER

October 14, 1932

I firmly believe that the so-called caste Hindus are responsible for every evil habit that one finds among the Harijans. They can only be removed by sympathetic treatment.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 134

404. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

October 14, 1932

CHI. VASUMATI,

I cannot be so easily persuaded to withdraw my charge of lethargy against you. Even though you help in selling khadi, you should find time to drop me a postcard. For that, however, you should learn to regard every moment as having value. You will learn that in time. Service of *Antyajas* is certainly a great cause, but it should not get priority over your former vow. I hope you remember the verse and its meaning:

> Better one's own duty, bereft of merit, than another's well-performed; better is death in the discharge of one's duty; another's duty is fraught with danger.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9334. Also C.W. 580. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

[1] *Bhagawad Gita*, III. 35

405. LETTER TO S. K. GEORGE

October 14, 1932

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I prize your letter[1] for its gentle frankness. Only I cannot give you the full reply it deserves. My position as a prisoner would not warrant my giving you a detailed reply. One thing I may say. I do not isolate politics from religion as you appear to me to do. Religion to be true must pervade every activity of life. And that activity which cannot be pursued without sacrificing religion is an immoral activity to be shunned at all costs. Politics is not only not such an activity but it is an integral part of civic life. The rest of the discussion must be postponed to more auspicious occasion. Only do not give me up in despair. I hope you had my previous letter[2].

Yours,
BAPU

Gandhiji's Challenge to Christianity, p. 93

406. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI M. THAKKAR

October 14, 1932

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

The purpose behind bangles, the vermilion mark, and the coloured sari might be adornment or conformity to custom, just as one might eat for pleasure or only to give the body its hire. One ought to give up eating for the sake of pleasure, but may give the body anything it needs, even if it be something which one enjoys eating. Milk and curds taken with dates give us no little pleasure. But you eat them, since you have not adopted that diet for the pleasure of the palate. In the same way, you should give up bangles, the vermilion mark and coloured sari despite opposition from society, if they arouse passion in you, but it is not blameworthy to retain them if you do so merely in obedience to custom or to respect the wishes of the elders. In other words, there is no absolute duty not to retain them, as there is the absolute duty of not telling a lie. It was for such a reason that I

[1] Of October 5. In it the addressee had expressed his misgivings about building up the "Kingdom of God with people who have not seen the Vision of it"— by which he meant the Congress, which had accepted non-violence only as a policy. He had also criticized Gandhiji for his fast in connection with untouchability, saying it was religious, not political and therefore was not for independence.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to S.k. George", 3-10-1932.

said in my letter that the error was in taking a vow not to wear bangles. It is not proper to take a sudden vow for something which is not an absolute duty. There is no great self-sacrifice in such a step. It would have been right for you to take that vow if you had been pining for bangles, travelling all over the world to get bangles of your choice or were in the habit of stealing them. I know women who want to have bangles of various styles, fight with their husbands to get them or steal them. It would be good for such women to take a vow not to wear bangles, but they would fight with me if I so much as made such a suggestion. A woman who thinks that all her beauty lies in her hair would get red with anger at the mere suggestion that she should cut off her hair. She might get it cut off, but it is not wrong for a woman, who dislikes long hair and thinks it to be a burden, to keep her hair long to please her parents or to avoid being cut off from society. Do you now understand this shastra of bangle-wearing?

Now about the children. The problem is similar to that of the bangles. Suppose the children do not feel at home in the Ashram without you, and suppose that there is no other place where they may be kept; then it will be your duty to stay for sometime with them in the Ashram. This cannot be described as "living"in the Ashram. Just as it is not wrong for a person who is very ill to take rest from work for a time, similarly it is not wrong to spend a fortnight or a month in the Ashram for the sake of the children, that might even be one's dharma. Such matters require careful thinking. That is why the *Gita* says that it is not easy to distinguish between what is right action, what is wrong action and what is inaction. If, therefore, you are convinced that it is difficult to keep the children at Calcutta and that it is your duty to put them in the Ashram, you should spend, on my responsibility and above all for their sake, one month with them in the Ashram after their arrival and accustom them to the life there. Even during that period, if some urgent work requires you to leave you may certainly go, and Narandas will look after the children as best he can. Wouldn't he have to look after them if you were to die and there was nobody at Calcutta? However, let the children remain where they are if this arrangement does not suit you or the children refuse to go or the elders are likely to feel very much hurt.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Do ask me if you still have any doubts.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6823

407. LETTER TO WOMEN PRISONERS

October 14, 1932

Tell Durgabai Joag that the women can get rid of the fear which they feel in going about their work through firmness of mind. They should go freely wherever necessary for work or service with a firm conviction that God is there to protect them. Whom do they fear? Why should they fear any men? Why think that all men are only waiting for an opportunity to harass women? After all, men are born of women and the latter ought to have the faith that no man would ordinarily attack a woman who is like a mother to him. Every woman should regard herself as a mother and fear a man only if she would fear her own son. If, nevertheless, a woman meets a man who is blinded by lust, she should remain firm in her conviction that the armour of her purity will protect her.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 135-6

408. A LETTER

October 14, 1932

Temple-entry is the crux of the movement for eradication of untouchability. Members of other communities should act towards *Antyajas* in the same way as they act towards one another. Inter-dining with them is a matter of everybody's own free will. It is not necessarily included in removal of untouchability. I believe, however, that there is no restriction in Hinduism on inter-dining with anybody *provided the food is otherwise acceptable.*

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol.II, p.134

409. LETTER TO A. RANGASWAMY IYENGAR

October 15, 1932

MY DEAR RANGASWAMY,

I hope you got my wire[1] two or three days ago. It was handed in by me on 3rd instant but was delayed by the authorities pending instructions from the Government of India. I enclose copy of my wire[2] to the Zamorin. You will see therefore that there is not much time to lose if the temple is to be opened in due time. I hope therefore that you and the friends you mentioned will quickly move in the matter.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI A. RANGASWAMY IYENGAR
"THE HINDU"
MADRAS

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. III

410. LETTER TO K. KELAPPAN

October 15, 1932

I should have written earlier but the authorities were considering whether such correspondence should be allowed. They had held up my telegram to the Zamorin which I had handed in the same day as I had sent the one to you, i.e., 3rd instant. It has now been sent. I enclose copy herewith. You will see therefore that I began work immediately.

You will move there gently and courteously. There should be no threats and no loud claims made. The real thing is conversion even of the most orthodox. Please keep me regularly informed of the progress of the movement.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p.137

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to A. Rangaswami Iyengar", 3-10-1932.
[2] *ibid*

411. LETTER TO THE ZAMORIN OF CALICUT

October 15, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

The wire[1] which I handed in on 3rd inst. was considered by the authorities and released for despatch only three days ago. I hope you duly received it. I trust that you will please move in the matter and ensure the opening of the temple during the period of suspenssion.

I do not know the proper style of addressing you. If therefore there is any want of propriety you will please instruct me knowing it to be wholly unintended.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 137

412. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

October 15, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

I got your letter after a long interval.

All those who were ill must have recovered now.

All I have to say for the New Year[2] is that you should understand the meaning of the vows better and become more thoughtful and vigilant about them. Both the soul and the body will benefit in proportion as you observe the vows willingly.

It was very good that once the girls by themselves did the cooking. And, moreover, there were only five items for eating, so that, if I had been there, I too would have got an opportunity to eat food cooked by them. But I forgot. How can I come there in the immediate future? God willing, I shall some day eat the food cooked by the pure hands of the girls there.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to A. Rangaswami Iyengar", 3-10-1932

[2] According to the Vikram era

413. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ

October 15, [*1932*][1]

CHI. RUKHI,

I got your letter, but it contains no mention of the letter[2] I wrote to you at the Thatheri Bazaar address. If that is not your full address, you should not give only that in a letter. Always write your full address in your letters. It is good news that you are well again; I have nearly regained my strength. It is desirable that the weight should increase slowly. Till yesterday Ba used to come daily to attend on me. Now that I do not need her help, we both decided that she should stop coming. She must have gone to Bombay today. I get Radha's[3] letters from time to time. There has been no great improvement in her health, but it seems that the improvement which had taken place at Deolali has been kept up.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RUKMINIBEHN
K 23/96 PANCHGANGA
BANARAS CITY

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 9142

414. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 15/16, 1932
At Night, October 15, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I duly got your mail.

Champa seems to be seriously ill. I had a direct letter from her. She asks me in it what she should do if her expenses go up because of illness or some other reason. Read my reply to her. Please reassure her. If she spends more sometimes, let her do so. Do you draw the money for her from Bombay or from Rangoon? I guess from yourletter that Champa's illness has improved Ratilal's temper. This is certainly good news.

[1] From the postmark
[2] *Vid*e "Letter to Rukminidevi Bazaj".11-10-1932.
[3] Addressee's sister

4.15 a.m., October 16, 1932

Panditji had asked me where the inmates of the Ashram may work to make their contribution towards removal of untouchability, and what work they should do. I had replied to him. Still, I will say something more here. One of the aims of the Ashram is that the persons trained in it should afterwards spread out in villages and start doing work in them. The work will of course be connected with khadi, removal of untouchability, etc. But they should also take advantage of the prevailing atmosphere at any time and pay more attention to that particular activity. If, therefore, we can do any work in the surrounding villages for removal of untouchability, we should certainly do it. We should, if possible, work even in cities. There is a temple on one side of the Ashram. There is one opposite to the Ashram, too. See if you can get them thrown open to *Antyajas.* We may acquaint ourselves with their conditions. If we can accommodate them, we should invite more *Antyajas* families to come and live in the Ashram. Vinoba's scheme is certainly excellent. If we can implement it, we should try to do so. These are only a few isolated suggestions for guidance. What is essential is that each one of us should take up whatever work he can think of and do his best. We should become one with the work as sugar becomes one with milk, and still remains detached. We should never think that some work was done by the Ashram or by an inmate of the Ashram. We should feel that we do everything as instruments in God's hands and act in that spirit. These suggestions do not—ought not to—interfere with other vows which we may have taken. They should remain undisturbed. Everybody should go on working in accordance with his vow and, in addition, participate in the present movement against untouchability as much as he can. If such work is not compatible with one's vow, the path is clear. However noble another's dharma may be, one's good lies in one's own dharma. Whether we live or die doing that dharma is the same for us, that is, we shall advance spiritually in either case. Who had placed Punjabhai in such a chair that he fell down? Anybody who gets fainting fits should have a seat which would not overturn. But this is wisdom after the event. However, don't we all advance by learning from one's own or other people's mistakes to avoid similar mistakes in future? We need not be perturbed by the death of Trivedi's brother's wife, Taragouri. Her death was ordained. In her case the stove has been only instrumental. And, moreover, she could not get immediate help. Taragouri also got frightened and could not loosen

the knot of her skirt. Her attempt to loosen it resulted in a further knot. All these were preordained. We ever live besieged by Death. Nobody knows from which side and when he will attack. We should draw only one lesson from such a death. What we can do today, we should not leave for tomorrow, and what we can do this minute we should not leave to the next. Apart from that, we should overcome our love of the primus stove, and everybody should also learn what to do when his or her clothes accidentally catch fire.

The leather for repairing sandal soles received this time seems to be excellent. If you had not sent the pair of sandals, I could have done without it, for I have already three pairs with me. Their upper sides are in quite good condition. But the soles of all three of them are worn out. I will now get them repaired, so that they will become as good as new. The pair which you have sent will then be the fourth. But never mind. Instead of your having to keep it safe there, we will keep it safe here.

Think a little more about Kusum. Can you arrange to send her to Almora? The whole family seems to be infected with the disease. Navin clearly exhibits signs of tuberculosis. Dhiru also seems to me going in the same direction. And Kusum does not improve at all. The condition of Manjula's ear is only a symptom. The real disease seems to be the same as in the case of the others. However, all the four may possibly recover, provided strict measures are taken immediately, Change of air may perhaps be the chief among them. Navin and Dhiru are still strong enough to be able to look after themselves. Apart from their health, they have had sufficient experience to be able to manage things. If they have the requisite spirit of service in them so that they would willingly look after Kusum, if there is sufficient space in the room, if they are eager to go, and if Prabhudas is ready to have them, and if you think that they can go, only then should you go ahead with this plan. Otherwise you should forget it.

But[1] this is for people who are passionately eager to live. The royal road was shown by Gangadevi. If they can keep alive remaining in the Ashram, they should try to do so. If they cannot, they should realize that life is always accompanied by death. I would advise them to resolve to stay in the Ashram, to live in the open air all the twenty-four hours of the day and do what work they can without

[1] What follows is from *Bapuna Patro—9*: *Shri Narandas Gandhine*, Pt. I, p. 487. Also C.W. 8260-a. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

exerting themselves too much, eat the plainest food, take hip-baths, etc. and thus pass their time. If they live thus with cheerful minds, they may even get all right. First you should think over all this. You may then discuss the matter with them if you think it proper to do so. If you think it inadvisable to discuss this just now, forget the suggestion. I have received a copy of Madan's book about fasting. Most probably you have got a copy in the Ashram. If you do not have it, I will send the one which I have received. You may go through it. Bhau at any rate should reflect over it. It is not at all necessary to get Keshu's machine patented. Nobody is likely to compete with him. And if anybody tries, we need not mind. We cannot take out a patent. This is how I feel just now. I write to Godse[1] from time to time.

I had completely followed the method of making bread. The method used here is easier. As the fast intervened, I could not send a description of it. I will do so now. Try this method there.

BAPU

[PS.]

Test Mahadev' and my yarn carefully and let me know the figures of the strength, evenness and count of each. When will you get cloth made from it? Do you have a *rach*[2] and a heddle suitable for weaving such yarn?

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8260. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

415. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

October 15, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. I welcome the news you have given about everyone. Lilavati's problem is rather difficult. Since she has faith in you, it is possible that you will be able to do something about her. She is a simple-hearted woman and her motives are good. But she is very restless and has no control over her thoughts. Show her love and do the best you can.

You should discover the cause of your losing weight and

[1] Ganesh Vasudev Godse, a graduate of Vidyapith who had joined the Dandi March in 1930.

[2] Weaving implement

remove it. If the quantity of milk, etc. is not adequate, you should increase it. Don't be obstinate and ruin a good health. I can't bear anyone describing you as too weak to work.

I am happy that . . .[1] has apologized. Take him into your confidence if you can. I have observed that he is intelligent. How nice it would be if he used his intelligence well.

The Ashram money is used for any inmate for whom it is necessary to use it, irrespective of his or her position. But it is possible to criticize any action. Perhaps we do make errors but our aim is always to use the Ashram money impartially.

The public has a right to inspect every pie of the Ashram's accounts. The Ashram is not a private institution. Its income is the limit of its expenditure. The Ashram will run even if it does not get a single pie, and it will spend even crores if someone gives so much. People will give as long as they have trust in us. The institution is run by God. It is He who prompts people to donate.

According to me, anyone who goes out of the Ashram should first obtain the Secretary's permission to do so.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. G.N. 10306. Also C.W. 6745. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

416. LETTER TO MITHIBEHN

October 15, 1932

Eradication of untouchability does not imply inter-dining and intermarriage with *Antyajas*. But I don't believe that those who inter-dine with the so-called untouchables, Harijans, violate dharma. Restrictions on inter-dining and intermarriage among communities are not an inseparable part of Hinduism. They are only a matter of custom. We cannot treat Harijans differently from other communities. Since there will be no coercion in this matter, there is no reason for anybody to feel hurt.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 138

[1] The name has been omitted.

417. LETTER TO SULOCHANA

October 15, 1932

CHI. SULOCHANA,

Put to Premabehn the questions which you have put to me. If she cannot reply to them to your satisfaction, then write to me again.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1740

418. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

October 16, 1932

MY DEAR PLAYMATE,

You know all Hyderabad. Will you write to someone at the Osmania University to send me their text-books for lower standards or if you know them[send] such selection as in your opinion is likely to be useful to me? I badly need a small dictionary that will give me spelling of Urdu words and a small grammar. And will you condescend to tell me how you are faring with all the cases [*sic*] of keeping a separate house?

Love.

SLAVE-DRIVER

SRIMATI PADMAJA NAIDU

21 SASOON ROAD

POONA CITY

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

419. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

October 16, 1932

I may say that during the fast I kept repeating God's holy name with greater concentration, since I enjoyed great peace in spite of physical suffering. It is possible, in certain circumstances, that a person suffering from an incurable disease would not be committing the sin of suicide if he gave up food. But such a person, if his mind is clear, has no right to take that step, since he can serve even with his

mind. By my last illness, do you mean the one I had in Kolhapur?[1] Whichever that may be, as far as I remember every illness has proved to be a blessing to me. And so it must be to one devoted to God even though the illness may have resulted from his own folly. Whether consciously or mechanically, I go on repeating Ramanama every day, but whenever I am in difficulty and feel helpless, I do so consciously and with my whole mind. As far as I remember, the repetition on the name has always given me peace. I cannot say that I keep some fixed time of period for Ramanama.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhini Diary, Vol. II, p. 142

420. LETTER TO JAMANABEHN GANDHI

October 16, 1932

I do not consider that your total expenditure of Rs. 125 for three months is excessive. I wished to know the details because they tell me a number of things. Everyone must keep an account of every pie spent, even though the money might be one's own. For the truth is that nothing in this world is our own but all belongs to God, as we realize from experience every day. Hence, we should not be attached to whatever we enjoy or spend. A person who does so will gladly keep an account of every pie for his own satisfaction. If you have not kept a detailed account of the expenditure of Rs. 125 in this manner, you should from now on form the habit of keeping such account. I remember that Devbhabhi used to keep a full account of her expenses mentally.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 141

421. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

October 16, 1932

I welcome a test in any form. God has given no assurance to his devotees that He will test them only so far and no further. Yes, there is certainly one limit. He never tests anyone beyond his strength.

[1] In March, 1927; *Vide* "Discussion with Dr. Wanless", 26-3-1927.

If you learn to do all work without attachment, you may rest assured that the result will always be good. I observe that the key to good health also lies in such non-attachment.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 142

422. LETTER TO NARMADA BHUSKUTE

October 16, 1932

Service, not literature, is our mission. Literature is a means of service, therefore so long as we have some work of service on hand we must quietly devote ourselves to it. The *Gita* says that God will grant the means to those who have devotion. Do add to your literary education whenever you have some time. In that matter too take it that reflection is more important than reading. However little you may read, you should digest all that you read.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 141-2

423. LETTER TO ZOHRA BANU ANSARI

October 16, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER ZOHRA,

You have explained my errors most lucidly. I am afraid that I take up too much of your time. Give me only as much time as is convenient to you. Can you tell me the proper usage of 'ص', 'س', 'ث' and also of 'ط' and 'ت'? If your handwriting cannot be called beautiful I do not know of any other which can be. I, at least, have not seen any letters more beautiful.

I have not received recently any letter from Father, so it is well that you gave me the news. Please convey our respects to Mother. Ba has now gone to Bombay. We decided that Ba should resume her duties now that I have regained enough strength. I write on a postcard deliberately because that takes up the right amout of time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Urdu in *Mahatma*, Vol. III, between pp. 304 and 305.

424. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

Silence Day, October 17, 1932

This is just 4.20 a.m. after morning prayer. I got your letter of the 7th instant yesterday. The value I attach to your letter you will perceive from the fact that I am devoting to the reply my most precious hour. The value lies in that it is an expression of your love and sincerity. It has little or no value as an agency designed to carry conviction. If I have erred, I should love to have the conviction even after the event since it would serve to protect me against repetition of the error. But I miss that conviction.

I see that though our mutual love remains the same, our view-points have become different, our way of approaching things has also become different. We have therefore to agree to differ.

In this matter, I had thought that even if everybody else would not understand my action, you and Millie would instinctively perceive it and become my shield. But that pleasure was not to be mine. I derive however the richer pleasure that our love can persist even in spite of political and spiritual differences. I was unprepared for the latter. But I see that political, social and the like are inextricably mixed up with and derived from the spiritual outlook. Therefore when we have sharp political differences, the odds are that they are traceable to the spiritual.

You seem to have missed the very core of the fast. You have to go back to my speech[1] at the Minorities Committee. It was not a prepared speech. The end of it came irresistibly. The fast was an inevitable result of that solemn declaration. I little knew how that declaration was to find fulfilment. I say that the declaration was from God and so was the fulfilment. If it was so, all argument is useless. If it was a hallucination, friends who believe it to be such are bound to drive home the truth to me with all the love and persistence they can summon to their assistance.

Everything that happened since confirms me in the opinion that the fast was a God-given trust.

Not the Premier but Sir Samuel was the vehicle through whom the message of the fast had necessarily to go. But if you had followed all the statements I have made and even my letter to the Premier you

[1] *Vide* "Extracts from Proceedings of Minorities Committee Meeting", 1-10-1931.

would have seen that the fast was addressed to the millions who had faith in me, and who had surrounded me with their undying affection whenever I went in their midst. They understood the fast with all its implications without any argument. For them, the political part of it was trivial; internal reform was everything. The latter is still going on. And remember the fast is only suspended, it may have to be resumed if people go off to sleep. When a lover fasts to prevent the loved one from going astray, it is not blackmail, it is the cry of an anguished heart ascending to heaven. Of such, in your language, is the music of the spheres made. My fast was a whip administered to lethargic love.

You ask why it was not administered ten years ago. The answer is: God did not call me to it. He comes to wake you up when you least except Him. His ways are not our ways. You will of course believe me when I say that I had then the same capacity for sacrifice that I seem to have now.

Lastly, you should accept my judgment based on much ampler data than yours that the same settlement could not have been arrived at in London and that the Premier was not called upon in any way to decide on any question outside the Hindu-Muslim-Sikh tangle.

Love to you all.

BHAI

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 148-9

425. LETTER TO HENDERSON[1]

October 17, 1932

Argument is useless when you talk of your God and my God. Hitherto I have thought there was only one God for the wise and the foolish, saints and sinners. Instead of arguing with me, I suggest your praying for me, so that 'your' God may open the eyes of my understanding and let me see what in your opinion is my error.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 143. Also G.N. 4797

[1] A Christian missionary

426. A LETTER

October 17, 1932

I can only say this that where a man pleads the promptings of the inner voice, he should be left to God's mercy.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 143

427. LETTER TO NARASINHRAO B. DIVATIA

October 18, 1932

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I am writing this after the morning prayer at 4 o'clock. I got both your letters. All three of us will join you at 8.30 p.m. today in performing the *shraddha* on the tenth day. Instead of praying silently, we will sing your translation[1] of "Lead Kindly Light". Does it not give as much peace as both of you would desire? Your children of course enjoy eternal peace. But are not all the children in this world your children? You have taught plenty of such wisdom to others. May it help you in your present plight.

You will like this story about *"Premal Jyoti"*. When Father Elwin was leaving, he thought that it would be a good thing if my Christian friends could mentally be in communion with me once every week. For that purpose, he asked me to suggest a hymn which all of them might sing at a fixed hour one day every week. I selected Newman's hymn. It is now sung by friends in America, Europe, India and other countries on every Friday at 7.30 p.m. We here, the inmates of the Ashram at Sabarmati and some other people, sing *"Premal Jyoti"* at the evening prayer on Fridays. Thus the life which you have poured into this *bhajan* is increasing in its power. May this gift of yours bear fruit for you too.

Yours sincerely,
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 147

[1] *"Premal Jyoti"*

428. LETTER TO BEGUM MOHAMMAD ALAM[1]

October 18, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

I am much obliged to you for your letter and telegram. I was shocked to read of Doctor Saheb's serious illness. May God have mercy on him. Please keep me informed of Doctor Saheb's condition weekly. Did he have these complaints when he was free? I trust he is getting proper treatment in the hospital. My salaams to Doctor Saheb and yourself. Pray to God that there may be unity between the Hindu, Sikh and Muslim communities.

GANDHI

The Hindu, 25-10-1932, and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 25-10-1932

429. LETTER TO H. F. HUDSON

October 18, 1932

DEAR MR. HUDSON[2],

You will, I hope pardon this presumption.

The restriction you conveyed to Dr. Ambedkar and me in connection with his interview, I had no difficulty in understanding from the Government standpoint.[3] It was faithfully carried out, and so far as I am concerned I shall breathe not a word to the public about it. But the threat conveyed at the end of your note was, I think, gratuitously offensive. You said that if either of us did not carry out the restriction, all such future interviews would be stopped. So far as I am concerned, it is easy enough for you to verify that I have meticulously observed the prison regulations. And the threat presupposes that such interviews are a concession, whereas in my opinion they are the necessary consequence of the Yeravda Pact. Surely untouchability reform should be, if it is not, common cause between the Government and the people. Again a prison was assuredly not the place to spring upon Dr. Ambedkar, a free man, restrictions

[1] The letter, according to the sources, was in Urdu.

[2] Home Member in the Viceroy's Executive Council

[3] The addressee in his note had desired Gandhiji and Dr. Ambedkar to be informed that Government would not allow any report of the discussions to find their way into the Press, "or any manifesto to be issued by Mr. Gandhi".

accompanied by a threat of which he was not informed in the telegram acceding to his request for an interview with Srimati Sarojini Naidu and me.

May I in this personal note ask now for a definite reply to my letter[1] of the 29th ult. addressed to Major Bhandari and forwarded to the Home Department? In view of your said memorandum, a clear definition of the Government policy has become doubly necessary. I hold it to be essential that I should be permitted to see people and carry on correspondence, stirctly regarding untouchability, without let or hindrance. You may know that my fast is only suspended. It has to be resumed if the Hindu public do not play the game by the Harijans. My contact with the public therefore is inevitable if the reform is to be carried out in all its thoroughness. Sjt. A. V. Thakkar, the Secretary of the newly-formed League has already asked for instructions. I have informed him that I am awaiting clear definition of Government policy before I could send any instructions. I would therefore esteem an early reply.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3863. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), pt. I, p. 215

430. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

Monday [*October 18, 1932*][2]

CHI. MANILAL,

I got your letter. You may come whenever you wish. It would be good if Sushila can accompany you, but she need not come if she is weak. Bring Sita if she comes. You should take care and see that your bowels move regularly. Take only light food. It will help you if you can take more milk. Take care and safegurard your health. Tell Ba that I have asked for a prescription from Major Advani. She should

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M.G. Bhandari", 29-9-1932.

[2] From the postmark

consult a doctor there too. I hope that Pyarelal has received my letter. Convey my blessings to Manibhai[1] and Gulab. I had expected Deva [2] today.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MANILAL GANDHI
MANI BHUVAN
LABURNAM ROAD
GAMDEVI, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4797

431. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

October 19, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter came in today.

My progress continues. There is no change in the food. The weight has gone up to 99½. I have almost reached the normal strength.

I had a long letter from Kisen giving a graphic description of your activities. Naturally you miss her and she misses you. She says she profited much by your company.

You mentioned criminals as your companions now. The word criminal should be taboo from our dictionary. Or we are all criminals. 'Those of you that are without sin cast the first stone'. And no one was found to dare cast the stone at the sinning harlot. As a jailor once said all are criminals in secret. There is profound truth in that saying half uttered in jest. Let them be therefore good companions. I know that this is easier said than done. And that is exactly what the *Gita,* and as a matter of fact all religions, enjoin upon us to do.

Did I not tell you that during the fast we were removed to another yard where there could be more seclusion. Our feline companions were therefore left behind us. We have now been brought back to the old yard much to the joy of these gay four-footed companions. They are all purring round about us.

I understand what you say about your studies. You will take

[1] Manibhai Revashankar Jhaveri
[2] Devdas Gandhi

your own time and do exactly as you feel. There should be no strain either on your body or your mind.

Sushila, Manilal's wife, had a slight operation. Ba is with her. Manilal is better.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6246. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9712

432. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

October 19, 1932

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

I got your letter. You do not write how you are. Has Manu forgotten me because he does not live in the Ashram now? He has to send me some more descriptions, and has still to pass the examination in good handwriting. It will not do, therefore, if he stops writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7440. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

433. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

October 19, 1932

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I got your letter and the book. Expecting that this letter will reach you, I am not sending it by registered post to save the cost. Do write to me, however, when you get it.

I may say that almost as soon as I got the book I went through it. I find your language sweet, so I did not pay attention to it. If I did I might, in my wisdom, want to suggest a few corrections, but they seem to be immaterial.

I was not favourably impressed by the book. You call it *Ishucharita*[1], but I do not see anything in it to justify the title.

If I remember correctly, you once told me or I told somebody that I believed you thought yourself too humble to produce anything

[1] "Life of Jesus"

original and that you were satisfied with translating the best that the ancestors had left to us. If I accept this argument, I would perhaps approve your book. But I do not accept the argument. If it is accepted in your case, it should be accepted for others too. And if all acted accordingly, the only result would be that we would drown ourselves in the waters of our ancestors' well. I believe that it is our duty to augment the legacy of the ancestors and to change it into current coin and make it acceptable to the present age. Mere translation cannot achieve this. What you have given in your book is already available in Gujarati. The translations brought out after immense industry by Christians themselves are not bad. Why should we put them in people's hands? I am sure you do not write such books so that people may read your sweet language. Even if you do, your purpose will not be served.

In my view this book is an example of a kind of lethargy. I am sure that you would not call a man industrious merely because he reads much and writes much. As for you, I believe that you have a mania for reading and translating. You ought to get rid of it. What I should like you to do is this. Give us by all means a book on the life of Jesus. Read the New Testamant as often as you please, but then put the book on a shelf and create a living picture of Jesus from what you have read.

Do not think that because the book has been printed, you must give it to the people. If you find substance in my view, cancel the printed matter and don't mind if so much money is wasted. Try to write something original as I have suggested. If you feel that it would be too much trouble to do so, keep quiet; give up reading and engage yourself in physical activity to improve your health. I have seen many persons both in India and elsewhere who suffer from the mania of reading. You also have that disease. To get rid of it take walks, contemplete the beauty of God's creation, read the book of nature, learn the language of trees, listen to the music of spheres in the sky, watch the drama enacted in it every night; and during the day spin, when you feel tired, do sewing or, if you can, carpentry or shoe-making. I know that your hand gets benumbed if you strain it, but with practice that will disappear.

There are in English many beautifully written books on the life of Jesus. We can get some material even from them, but I would not put that burden on you.

The portion relating to Angels, etc., in your book should be left out. Why add to the superabundance of things that we already have. Even if in fact the Angels and the wise men had not come, Jesus's fame would not suffer. My complaint is that you have failed to raise before the reader a vivid image of Jesus. You have merely given the teaching of Jesus and that, too, through quotations. Will anyone disbelieve you if you give it in your own words?

I do not know what type of readers you had in view in writing this book. If you have the general mass in view, you should not have inflicted foreign names on them. A man like me whose reading is very limited cannot make out whether you have decked the Biblical names in clothes of your make or in borrowed clothes. I am afraid there is not much to be gained from things of this kind. If your intention was to give names that might sound well in Gujarati, you should have coined fitting Gujarati names suggesting the same meanings as the corresponding Biblical names, as the latter are always significant.

If, regardless of my criticism, you decide that the book should be published, it is not necessary to offer the book free, charging only postage. Do not mind if people do not buy it even at cost price. The book is bound to sell as it will bear your name. (But don't take that as test of the quality of the book.) Your work ended with the writing, it will be up to some philanthropic institution which distributes such books free among people to give copies of this one, if it so wishes, to those who cannot afford to buy it even at cost price. It is best that one person should not attempt to ride two horses at a time. Let that sum of Rs. 150 grow with compound interest.

I have written much more than I had intended. Moreover, I have let myself go in my criticism, which means that I have yielded to ignorant nature and so I have decided to spend money on registering this.

Do you like the *takli* because you can spin on it while walking? One can spin on it while resting. Excessive greed for anything is the root of all evil. Your present task is to make your body as strong as steel.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7441. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

434. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

October 19, 1932

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I have read your letter to Mahadev. I do not know at all what blue brain is. When Dr. Gilder left after examining me the blood pressure was normal. My health is quite all right, and I have nearly regained my former strength. I have my daily walks, spin as much as I used to and can also write a large number of letters. I spend all the twenty-four hours in the open. What is blue brain, and who told you that I had high blood pressure and that there was a danger of my getting blue brain?

Why should I be prejudiced against Bhai Mehta? Was it not I who sent Vidya to him? But it was not necessary to send for him daily during the fast. And that could not be done either, in jail. It would have been improper for me to call him when so many other doctors were visiting me. Moreover, he could not have helped me much. Having had experience of many fasts, I am bound to know my body. Mehta could only suggest some simple measures and I had asked him if he knew any. Even now he may send his suggestions, if he has any. Please send me his address. I will certainly write to him to please him. In any case you should write to him and tell him that he may send me any suggestions he wishes to and write to me freely.

And you also should not worry. I will let you know if there is any difficulty. I am returning today the books about massage.

As I had a slight fear that the pain in the hand might come back, I have given up spinning with the left hand and rotate the wheel with the foot.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

PS.

I hope that you yourself are all right.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7553. Also C.W. 5028. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta.

435. LETTER TO NIRMALA B. MASHRUWALA

October 19, 1932

CHI. NIRMALA,

Manilal gave me your letter. Keep me informed about the condition of everybody who is ill. I did not receive Surendra's letter (postcard). I will certainly inquire now.

I am all right. Since Manilal will be giving you all the news, I don't write more here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2886. Courtesy: Nirmalabehn Shroff

436. LETTER TO MEHER BABA'S SECRETARY

October 19, 1932

I got your letter of the 8th and the accompanying note. I have gone through the latter. I don't think that it should be published. It leaves out a great deal, and what it includes is put in a form which can be easily misunderstood. I am, therefore, of the opinion that no part of it should be published. All that is necessary to state is that the relation between Baba and me is not that of guru and disciple but is that of two ordinary friends, and that most of the conversation related to spiritual matters. Thus, the public here or in the West need not attach any importance to our meeting or conversation.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 153

437. LETTER TO SHAMBHUSHANKAR

October 19, 1932

We should not insist on taking a Harijan to a hospital or temple at a place where public opinion is against such action. However, those who wish to serve Harijans may provide such facilities in their own locality or near it and also invite other Hindus, if they wish, to avail themselves of such hospitals or temples. Meanwhile we should continue to plead with the people gently. We shall not help our cause by getting angry with the people or by indulging in bitter criticsm of them. We can overcome their ignorance by showing perfect love towards them. We should make Herculean efforts to provide for

Harijans whatever amenities they lack. The State authorities can do a great deal. It may give them lands, improve the localities where they live, build them good houses, pay them better salaries, etc.

People should not give left-overs to Harijans. We should try to teach them rules of cleanliness, etc. In short, we should take all necessary measures, without creating any conflict, for improving their conditions of life.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 154-5

438. LETTER TO HARIJANS OF VALVA

October 19, 1932

I have your beautiful letter written in a beautiful hand. I can understand your hardships[1]. I have had a long discussion with Babasaheb Ambedkar. I can do little service from here. All I can do is to advise you to acquaint the newly formed association[2] with your tale of woes. And of course keep writing to me.

That you remain Hindu is no favour to others. Hence how can I advise you to forsake Hinduism because of the hardships? It is in tribulation that one's dharma is put to test. But I can certainly assure you that I have staked my life for the amelioration of your lot. If other Hindus do not treat you justly, I shall atone for it by resuming my suspended fast. May God give me the strength to do this.

I remain,
Your servant,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 154

[1] Such as not being permitted to build their huts on elevated ground

[2] For the service of Harijan's; it was first named All-India Anti-Untouchability League and later renamed Harijan Sevak Sangh.

439. LETTER TO SECRETARY, JAT-PANT TODAK MANDAL[1]

October 19, 1932

If abolition of castes means the abolition of the varna I do not approve of it. But I am with you if your aim is to end the innumerable caste distinctions. All the same eradication of untouchability and abolition of castes are separate problems. Eradication of untouchability requires that we deal with the untouchables in the way we do with other Hindus. Mixing up the two problems would jeopardize the success of both. For this reason intermarriage and inter-dining with untouchables are not an integral feature of the removal of untouchabliity, but their practice is not against religion either.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 153

440. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

October 19, 1932

BHAI KRISHNACHANDRA,

One boy is born sick, he conquers his disease by nature-cure. The other is stupid but learns by constant effort. Both by individual effort triumph over fate.

Fasting usually does not result in permanent weakening of the system; on the contrary frequent fasts bring an ultimate improvement of health. Every man can judge by experience his limits for fasting.

Everything can be set right if the trade is carried on by setting up a loom and charkha in the home.

I have not seen the Hindi translations. But it has been my feeling for a long time that even sesame oil cannot supplant olive oil. Some people do use linseed oil but I have no knowledge in this respect.

I have heard great praises of *triphala*[2] but I have very little faith in medicines. I believe in nature-cure.

Devdas has no intention at present of marrying. No one in my knowledge has married for the purpose of realizing God. Devdas is not free from passion. It is not a matter of surprise or regret to me. Marriage is a means of regulating passion but it has a sublime purpose too. Anyway God alone knows the human heart.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.G. 39.

[1] Literally, League for breaking down caste distinctions

[2] An Ayurvedic preparation

441. TELEGRAM TO ABUL KALAM AZAD[1]

[*October 20, 1932*][2]

MOULANA ABULKALAM AZAD

CALCUTTA

THANKS FOR WIRE. FROM THIS PLACE OF SECLUSION I CAN ONLY SAY I WISH WITH ALL MY HEART THAT WE MAY ACHIEVE THE REAL UNITY BETWEEN HINDUS MUSLIMS AND SIKHS AS SYMBOL OF ALL-INDIA UNITY FOR WHICH YOU AND I AND OTHER CO-WORKERS HAVE BEEN WISHING AND IN PRAYING ALL THESE LONG YEARS. ON MERITS I MAY SAY NOTHING IGNORANCE OF FULL FACTS AND SITUATION. BUT FOR ME PERSONALLY ANY SOLUTION THAT IS ACCEPTABLE TO PARTIES CONCERNED WILL BE ACCEPTABLE. THEREFORE I WISH ALL SUCCESS TO YOU AND ALL OTHER FRIENDS WORKING FOR ACHIEVEMENT OF LONG DEFERRED PEACE IN THIS DISTRACTED COUNTRY OF OURS. SARDAR VALLABHBHAI JOINS.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 9

442. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

October 20, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

With reference to the telegram from Maulana Abul Kalam Azad I send herewith the original and my reply[3] to it. To be of any use the reply should go promptly or not at all.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 9

[1] This telegram, which was withheld by jail authorities, was in reply to the addressee's telegram dated October 19, 1932 which read: "Muslim leaders conference unanimous not to press separate electorate if other demands accepted. In present situation no better solution possible. Your absence hindering success. Bless us by message. At least trust Government won't object."

[2] *Vide* the following item.

[3] *Vid*e the preceding item.

443. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

October 20, 1932

MY DEAREST CHARLIE,

I have your letter. God's grace has been wonderful. Those days were days of basking in the sunshine of His presence. There was not one step taken out of self-will. Never have I experienced such an immediate response to prayer.

Yes, it was well you stayed there. I knew what it would mean for you to remain there. And yet I did not take a moment to decide the reply to your cable. Vallabhbhai and Mahadev too had never any doubt about the correctness of the decision. Indeed it is wonderful how they instinctively felt the soundness of all the fateful decisions that had to be taken during those terrible days.

But the work has only just begun. It is a life and death struggle for me. The fast has to be a fast to the finish or untouchability has to go now. It is a tremendous task. I must test the affection of the millions who have flocked to those meetings, I have to wrestle with God Himself. But He is both indulgent and exacting. He will have full surrender or none. The late fast was possibly only a prelude to what is yet to come. But no more of speculation. His will, not mine be done. I can but try to prove worthy of the sacrifice if it has to come.

And you have still to be there. The untouchability you speak of is far subtler and wears the cloak of respectability. Ours in India looks what it is and therefore in a way less difficult perhaps to fight.

I have almost regained my lost strength. Our love to you and all the members of the ever-growing family.

Yours,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 975. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary,* Vol. II, pp. 158-9

444. LETTER TO ARUN DAS GUPTA

October 20, 1932

You must not give way to despair[1]. Even organic defects have been known to have been removed or at least brought under control. Proper breathing, proper diet and fresh air added to the will to be

[1] The addressee had been ailing.

better, bring the desired recovery. You should have living faith in God and know He will keep your body intact so long as He has use for it.

And why do you think that we can serve only with the body? Mind is a far more powerful instrument of service. Those serve best who have perfect purity of heart. Indeed, we serve so as to attain perfect purity. Thoughts of the pure in heart can do what the bodies with corrupt hearts can never do. Therefore in no case have you the slightest cause for despair. Do not seek to prove how thoughts work. Enough for you to believe that they do work and produce mighty results. Therefore, always cultivating purity of heart, you should be perfectly at peace whether you are well in body or not. Will you do this?

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 157-8

445. LETTER TO DOROTHY[1]

October 20, 1932

MY DEAR DOROTHY,

I prize your love letter. Muriel was right when she told you 'pray' in reply to your question. Real praying from the heart brings the real work behind it. For in the end work itself becomes prayer. I like your simple affirmation 'I am clean now'. God will keep you clean. Do not look back to the past. You have had your lesson from it. Look forward to the future in hope and confidence.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 161-2

[1] The addressee, an English girl, had written: ". . . I became interested in India 21 months ago. Before that I had been in the grip of a deadly vice which very nearly destroyed my body and perhaps my wits. . . . Then I read about *brahmacharya* and have since been humbly trying to follow your teaching. . . ."

446. LETTER TO J. S. HOYLAND

October 20, 1932

MY DEAR HOYLAND,

Your letter is among the treasures I have received on the fast. It is a matter of great joy to me that if some have misunderstood the fast, friends like you have had no difficulty in appreciating it. And if one may judge an act by its results, it has proved itself to have been from God.

Love to you all from us all.

BAPU

From a photostat of the original: C.W. 4507. Courtesy: Woodbrooke College, Birmingham and Mrs. Jessie Hoyland

447. LETTER TO SHANKAR

October 20, 1932

I am sorry about the objection to the name of Harijan[1]. You may use any name that your friends like. But do please explain to them that I had not the remotest idea of thinking of Vishnu or Shiva.. For me the name means 'people of God'. I make no distinction between Vishnu, Shiva or Brahma. They are all names of God. But let their decision be taken and prevail.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 163

448. A LETTER

October 20, 1932

Removal of untouchability does not include inter-dining and intermarriage. But in my opinion Hinduism does not prohibit inter-dining or intermarriage with anybody by reason of mere birth. Essential religion has nothing to do with the regulation of such social relations.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 163.

[1] The addressee had said that in Madras they objected to the untouchables being called 'Harijans' because they were Shaivas and not Vaishnavas. They ought, therefore, to be called 'Harajans'—men of Shiva—or Adi Hindus.

449. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

October 20, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

I got your letter. What a shame that so many of you should fall ill! And who should feel ashamed for this? I hope Mohan is all right now, and others also are out of danger.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

450. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

October 20, 1932

BHAI VALJI,

I got your letter which arrived with the Ashram mail. You seem to have lost considerable weight. Regain it now by eating properly and giving rest to the mind. You must have got the registered letter[1] which I posted yesterday in regard to your book.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7442. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

451. LETTER TO GULAB

October 20, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

I got your letter. You should ask Premabehn how the earth came into being.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1727

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Valji G. Desai", 19-10-1932.

452. LETTER TO SULOCHANA

October 20, 1932

CHI. SULOCHANA,

Your handwriting is improving. Improve it as much as you can and learn to be methodical in all that you do.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1714

453. LETTER TO NARAYAN KULKARNI

October 20, 1932

BHAI NARAYAN KULKARNI,

I have your letter. I regret my inability to write in Marathi. I hope that you will find no difficulty in following my Hindi.

Several vaidya friends of mine had informed me three or four years ago that honey should not be taken in warm water. My other friends, the allopathic doctors have no objection to it. But I am not influenced by their opinion as they have not made a close study of the effects of articles of food. In their system they do not observe much[1] distinction between what may be eaten and what eschewed. But I am writing of my personal experience. I have found no harm but rather benefit by taking honey with warm water. I started taking honey on a doctor's advice which came about in this way. Owing to a lack of carbohydrates in my system sugar was needed. The best sugar in his opinion was obtained from honey. I have taken honey since then and he never objected to my taking it in warm water.

My complaint against our vaidyas is that they hold on to whatever is expounded in the ancient texts even if it be contrary to experience as they consider them the last word. I am sure in the Ayurvedic system there is need for further research. It should be revised in the light of experience. Does honey lose its property by being poured into hot water? Have you made a chemical analysis of honey? Obesity and leanness are relative[2] terms. For which kind of leanness is warm honey undesirable and why so? To conclude, have you proved by experience what you write? Vaidyas do not follow this

[1] The letter is damaged at these places.

method but are content with quoting *shlokas* from the old texts. I beg you to give up this irrational attitude and test by trial whatever is written in the ancient works.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 803

454. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

October 20, 1932

CHI. TARAMATI,

I have your letter. When you write to Mathuradas tell him that I have sent him a letter which he must have received.

Ba has come there. She is staying at Mani Bhavan. Manilal and Devdas are also there. Go and meet all of them. I do not know if you have met Manilal's wife Sushila. She is also in Bombay. At present she is in Dosibai's hospital.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI TARAMATI MATHURADAS

21 MINT ROAD, 2ND FLOOR

FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

455. LETTER TO GULAM RASUL QURESHI

October 20, 1932

CHI. QURESHI,

Why are you not getting well? If necessary consult Haribhai. He does many operations for piles. Do you get clear motions? If there is pain you should eat only leafy vegetables, fruit and a little milk, or only leafy vegetables and fruit. To reduce her obesity Amina should eat only bread and leafy vegetables. If she does that, the fat cannot but

get reduced and she will get well. She gets tired because of the excessive fat. Do write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10811. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

456. MESSAGE TO "THE DAILY HERALD"

[On or before *October 21, 1932*]

I am keeping excellent health. My blood pressure is normal. I have now gained three quarters of a pound, thus weighing now $99^{3}/_{4}$ lb. I had no stroke at all.

The Hindu, 21-10-1932

457. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

October 21, 1932

MY DEAR MARY,

I have your letter. Devdas has been overworking himself. He had therefore a slight attack of fever. He is, I understand, better again.

It is true I do not believe in idol-worship in the sense generally understood. But I do not disbelieve in others worshipping God through idols. In one sense we are all idol-worshippers. We worship God of our image. That image need not have a physical form. Each one has his own imagination of and attributes for God. And yet God in reality is without attributes and beyond our imagination. Hence when we form our own picture of God, we are idol-worshippers. Therefore my mind does not condemn those who conceive God as residing in a stone or metal image. They are not wrong for God is everywhere and in everything. Now whenever we want to worship God in everything we consecrate it. But if a man excludes his fellows from participation in common worship we are entitled to say that God flees from such worship. And He is installed when there is repentance and the bar against one's fellows is removed. I hope this explanation is

capable of being understood even though it may not be appreciated. In my opinion it covers a profound truth. If the truth is not seen, the fault lies in my inability to express clearly what I want to say. You must tax me again if I have not stated my position clearly.

Love from Mahadev and myself.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5985. Also C.W. 3314. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

458. LETTER TO DUNICHAD[1]

October 21, 1932

Of course, I am under discipline like everybody else. But what shall man's discipline avail when God imposes His own?

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 165

459. LETTER TO JAMSHED MEHTA[2]

October 21, 1932

BROTHER JAMSHED,

What does this letter mean? I have not replied to the writer. May I ask you about it? If you will write to me, I will send a reply to the writer.

Hope Kikibehn is getting well.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. III, p. 309

[1] The addressee had said that in future Gandhiji should take the country into his confidence before taking any step and that he should place himself under the discipline of the country.

[2] There is nothing in the source to indicate that the addressee was Jamshed Mehta, ex-Mayor of Karachi. The reference, however, to Kikibehn, J.B. Kripalani's sister who lived in Karachi would suggest that it was he.

460. A LETTER[1]

October 21, 1932

Women like you instinctively saw the correctness of the fast and did not fear the result. Infect your husband with your faith.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 165

461. LETTER TO KESHAV GANDHI

October 21, 1932

CHI. KESHU,

You will improve your handwriting if you write carefully and in big, separate letters. I find it hard to read your present writing. I hope you are quite well now. Do you get clear bowels?

It was of course bad that the wasp died. We do not know what punishment God inflicts for such a sin knowingly committed, but it would be enough if we resolved not to do such a thing again. True service is service which we give with love without expecting any return. Any work that we do in the Ashram is service, because the Ashram has been established for service of others. Our vision would be purified if, instead of letting our eyes wander while we walk we kept them fixed on the ground as if bowing to Mother Earth, and while sitting if we kept them fixed on the work we might be doing.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3282

462. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

October 21, 1932

CHI. MANILAL,

I got your letter. Any of you brothers who wishes to come may do so now. I hope Devdas is now completely all right. Ask him and Pyarelal to write to me. You are acting wisely in not being in a hurry to bring away Sushila from the hospital. You should let her recover completely before doing so. Since I am writing to you, I am not

[1] The addressee, not indentified in the source, had said that her husband had been unhappy at the fast but that she had been confident that the result was bound to be good.

writing a separate letter to Ba. Tell her that Vallabhbhai and Mahadev often think about her as she does about them. Please write to me regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4798

463. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

October 22, 1932

CHI. NIMU,

If you keep to the diet you have now started taking, it will be beneficial in relieving constipation.

I hope the child has got over his cough. Can you get goat's milk there? If it is not available, you may add water and honey to cow's milk. If Sarita has already named the child 'Kanji'. let that be his name. It is quite good. To match it with Ramdas's name, you may even call him 'Kandas! or 'Kahandas'. I count it the same whether we say 'Kanji' or 'Kandas', or 'Ramji' or 'Ramdas'. If you also agree with it, write to Ramdas and tell him so. If you do not wish to write, I will write.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

464. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

October 21, 1932

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. I have resumed the Magan Charkha because the pain in the left elbow started again. I have made one improvement. I changed your spindle-frame and fixed that of the Gandiv Charkha in its place. I therefore introduced a spring. The result was that yarn was easily drawn fine. I used to spin yarn of twenty counts with great difficulty and then had made some progress. Now I can easily spin yarn of thirty counts. The speed is still the same, that is, a hundred rounds per hour. Even a little more at times. I may be able to increase

the speed as also the count. The spindle-frame still needs some changes. But I have now no carpenter. The carpenter prisoners have been released on the completion of their terms.

You seem to have lost control over your expenditure and seem to be asking for money as you please. This is not right. You have vowed to keep within your budget. You must not go beyond that. You must always keep this in mind and consult the statement before asking even for one extra rupee. If it does not provide for any particular amount, you should not ask for it no matter how big the temptation before you. If there is something very important, you must take prior permission and should not, if you do not get it, feel peeved even inwardly but remain undisturbed. If you do not maintain such firmness, the work will come to a stop.Narandas must be having the budget which I had sent to you, and you also must have kept a copy. If you have not, send for one. Do not work beyond your strength. Be satisfied with a little. I have almost regained my previous strength.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Will a popgun not be enough for wild animals? I think it does not require a licence. I once saw an advertisement about it.

From the Gujarati original: Gandhi Nidhi File. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

465. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

October 21, 1932

CHI. PARASRAM,

I got your letter after a long interval. With whom does Father stay in Lucknow?

With whom did Vimal stay in your absence?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N.7509. Also C.W. 4986. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

466. LETTER TO KHWAJA[1]

October 22, 1932

Terrorism does affect me to the very depth and if God pointed the way as He did on untouchability I should unhesitatingly take it.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 169

467. LETTER TO URMILA DEVI

October 22, 1932

By a constant study of the *Gita*, you should learn to shed all care. When God is the caretaker for us all, why need we carry the burden? Ours is but to do the task that falls to our lot.

Hence I would urge you not to think of retirement. True retirement is not a physical state, it comes from within. We have to find retirement in the midst of ceaseless work. And, are not the minds of those who are living in caves, oftner than not ceaselessly at work?

We should not brood on our hard lot. The lot of those who would serve is generally, if not always, hard.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 168

468. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

October 22, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

You can certainly take hip-baths even when you have fever. I had given hip-baths to a coughing old man of 75 years and his asthma was cured. While taking a hip-bath the upper portion of the body should be covered and also the legs if you feel cold. Only the portion between the abdomen and the thighs is kept in water and during the treatment the abdomen in gently rubbed with a small towel. The patient enjoys this bath. He shivers while getting into the tub but once in it, he enjoys it. Diet should be simple and the bowels must clear daily. Continue to have oil-message as usual. And you should not let yourself be tired. Then see how healthy your body becomes. I have no objection to idol-worship by any one who has need of it. I do

[1] The addressee had asked Gandhiji why he did not resort to satyagraha against terrorists as he did against untouchability.

not feel the need of it. Millions can do without it. Moreover, all of us are idol-worshippers in a sense. Anyone who worships God by attributing virtues to them is an idol-worshipper. I have written this very briefly. Ask me again if you have not understood. I shall explain at greater length. But before that, try to understand from Narandas. Consult Chimanlal too.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9958. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

469. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

October 22, 1932

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

Your letter and the report. The report is good. It is a matter of regret that not much khadi was sold during the Puja season. Consult Ghanshyamdasji about this and see if he can do something. Arun must have got my letter[1]. All this touring should not affect yourhealth. How are Satisbabu and Kshitishbabu?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1691

470. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

October 22, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

Your letter. You can give up hip-bath but not sitz-bath. You can take it between two and three in the afternoon. The water can be first warmed in the sun and the bath may last for two or three minutes only. It is good that you are re-reading *Talash-e-Haq*[2]. You must not work to excess. Purification will come by and by, you must be patient. It is very good that Kudsia has become equable. Can you understand fully what I have written? Tell me if you find any difficulty. Do correct my mistakes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 260

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Arun Das Gupta", 20-10-1932.

[2] The Urdu edition of Gandhiji's autobiography

471. LETTER TO DAVID

October 23, 1932

Many thanks for your elaborate letter.[1] You have almost converted me. I knew the sinfulness (for me) of taking wild honey. But stupidly and lazily I went on taking it. Your graphic description of the manner in which wild honey is prepared has almost driven me to the abjuring of wild honey. So you see what you would have me to do when, if ever, I am outside Yeravda, I am likely to do almost immediately. But surely there must be places in India where innocent honey is prepared. What about the Himalayan honey which we see in the market?

It was good of you to have sent the different varieties of honey[2]. The parcel has not yet been received. I know we shall all eat it with relish and without any sense of guilt. Do you stock these honeys or have you specially brought the specimens sent by you?

With regards from us all,

Your sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

PS.

Do I gather from your letter that it is possible to extract honey by scientific means from wild honeycombs without injuring the comb or the bees? If it is not, must wild honey be beyond human reach unless one is prepared to destroy the comb and the bees?

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 172-3

472. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

October 23, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

You should not despair. We ought to be able to overcome a simple complaint like constipation. It can be cured by determined effort. One should not neglect it, nor worry about it. The argument you had with Dr. Talwalkar was unfortunate. I am writing to him.

[1] In a long letter the addressee had described how wild honey was extracted, how impure it was and how it involved destruction of bees.

[2] The addressee had sent Gandhiji's specimens of Palestinian honey, American honey, New Zealand honey and French honey.

Read the letter[1] and understand it. Narandas will show it to you if he thinks fit.

Bhaji is certainly worth trying. Try the suggestions I made in my last letter to Narandas. Fast for three days or more. Take short walks when fasting and do some light work. Drink as much water as you can, mixing in it, if necessary, a few drops of sour lemon. There will be no harm if you drink with water the juice of two or three lemons in the course of the day. Eat or drink nothing else. Take an enema every morning. Take in 2 pints ($2^1/_2$ lb.) of lukewarm water putting in it 40 grains of soda bicarb and 20 grains of salt. Retain the water for 20 minutes if you can. You should take the enema lying on the floor. If you do not pass stool even then, you may repeat the enema in the evening. Do not worry if you still do not pass stool. Take an enema in the same way next day. Take Kuhnebath at noon. If you do not feel too weak and the tongue is still coated, continue the fast. If you begin to feel weak, break the fast with fruit juice, such as orange juice, juice of sour lemons with honey, juice of black raisins. They should be soaked overnight in water and squeezed the next morning, and the juice should be strained. It would be better to warm the juice. On the first day drink as much juice as you can. You may also eat grapes if you wish. The next day you may take *bhaji*, gourd or some other vegetable. Let two days pass in this way. Probably, you will pass stool in the natural course. If you don't you may have recourse to the enema again. Thereafter begin taking milk. Milk may be taken with green vegetables. I mix with gourd or pumpkin the milk I wish to take and eat the dish. Start bread or *rotli* only after you begin passing regular stools. Fasting in this way will most probably overcome constipation and, in any case, it will do no harm at all. If this does not help you, we will think of some other way. You are right in deciding not to take the medicine prescribed by Dr. Talwalkar. You should not think at all of leaving the Ashram whether at Sabarmati or at Wardha (they are not distinct from each other). A person who wishes to serve others, whose thoughts are pure and who works to the best of his ability, should never think that he is a burden on others. Write to me regularly and in detail. I shall not weary of your letters. Carry out with faith whatever measures I suggest from time to time.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6739. Also C.W. 4482. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

[1] This letter is not traceable.

473. LETTER TO NARANDAS GAHDHI

3 p.m., October 23, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

Ghelabhai's wire about Punjabhai having passed away reached me yesterday at 9 p.m. Who is this Ghelabhai? I will expect detailed information about him. I am sure all the inmates of the Ashram attended the funeral. I will give my reminiscences of Punjabhai in a separate article.[1]

Read my letter to Champa. What is her problem? If Kotwal[1] comes and stays with her, it will certainly be good. A letter for him also is enclosed. Champa writes in her letter about her desire to go to Rangoon. Think over this.

The Ashram does not seem to be a fortunate place for Jamna. She seems to be keeping all right in Rajkot. Why, then, should she not continue to live there? Those who live outside the Ashram but follow its rules, really live in the Ashram itself. On the other hand, those who live in the Ashram but follow its rules unwillingly and only in their letter, and who in their thoughts live outside the Ashram, do not really live in the Ashram. It would be far better that Jamna, instead of living in the Ashram and remaining ill all the time, should keep good health outside and do what service she can. I am not writing a separate letter to her today. But both of you should think over what I have said and do what seems proper.

I duly got both your postcards regarding Mohan. I should have received Anandi's postcard earlier, but I got it at the same time as yours. We should not feel surprised at such things happening here. I was glad that Mohan was out of it, soon. We should thank God if there is no relapse. That Kusum, Navin, Dhiru and Manju, all four of them are ill is a terrible thing. I have already explained my ideas concerning them. Do what you think best.

Read my letter[2] to Bhau. That letter made it necessary for me to write to Talwalkar. Read the letter which I have written to him also. Pass it on to him if you approve it and think it is all right. Bhau should see whether the facts are stated correctly. If you do not approve of the letter, tear it up.

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] A co-worker of Gandhiji in South Africa*Vide* the preceding item.

Where was Joshi arrested? Where is he at present? Is anyone permitted to see him?

Anandi may take the injection. I see that your list does include a letter from the Jain *muni*. I had replied to him directly. If you have got his address, drop a postcard to him and tell him that I sent a direct reply to him. I have advised him not to give up his *muni's* dress.

I don't remember having seen Ramniklal's letter. It must have been left behind there. Ask him to write again.

I get a letter from Mirabehn every week. She has stopped visiting me in order that she may be permitted to write to me as frequently. She is quite cheerful now. Her letter had given me the impression that she must have been in a daze during my fast. She was of course working, but could not concentrate on anything.

I see that your list includes a letter from Chhaganlal Joshi also. I did not get that letter either.

I saw your list of primus stoves. It took me aback. We certainly live in no ordinary style. However, it will be enough now if the women agree that only men may light these stoves. If they don't they should be ready to sacrifice one victim at least on the altar of this demon-god. The Ashram has no licence of exemption from such accident. In this age of freedom, I should be satisfied with this warning.

Read my letter to Lilavati.

I don't seem to have received the postcard from Wardha.

Read my letter to Prabhudas. You should certainly be strict. He must live within his budget. If it is absolutely necessary to spend more, he should get your previous permission. If there is no provision in his budget for a gardener, I think we should make it.

Manilal's and Devdas's visits have not been stopped. They can come whenever they wish to.

My food is practically the same. I ate bread for two days and then stopped it. The weight has increased by three-quarters of a pound. That is, it is $99^{1}/_{2}$ pounds.

Enquire about Kusum.

You should read the *Gita* daily for many hours during the fast.

There are 45 letters with this.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8261. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

474. LONG LIVE PUNJABHAI!

[*October 23, 1932*][1]

Once when speaking of Punjabhai I had used before his name the prefix *chiranjivi*[2] a child had asked me in suprise: "Since Punjabhai is older than you, how can you refer to him as *chiranjivi*?" I had answered somewhat as follows: "In age Punjabhai is certainly older than I, but he trusts me like a child. And he offers me even his devotion in the same way." This was literally true. I had my doubts about my fitness for that trust and that devotion. But I had not even an iota of doubt about Punjabhai's trust and devotion to me. In any kind of difficulty Punjabhai would accept my advice as gospel truth. Punjabhai was not himself without a sense of discrimination but he had deliberately decided to put his trust in me.

Punjabhai may well not be here today in the sense in which I had addressed him when I called him *chiranjivi,* but he is *chiranjivi* in a wider sense than that.

Though I used to address him as *chiranjivi,* there was nothing I could teach him. I for one was a worshipper of his virtues. In my view, no one could surpass Punjabhai in humility, in devotion to religion, in devotion to truth and in generosity. Punjabhai had the capacity to sacrifice everything.

The poet Raichand was all in all to Punjabhai. I myself was an admirer of Raichandbhai, so Punjabhai was drawn towards me. That I, unlike Punjabhai, could not look upon Raichandbhai as my guru did not pain him. Punjabhai knew that no one could become a guru merely by being offered that status. A guru attracts a disciple just as a magnet attracts iron.

Punjabhai greatly liked what I used to say about Raichandbhai and what he liked more was the fact that I tried to assimilate what I extolled. As a consequence that bond between us became stronger and stronger every day.

Punjabhai was closely associated with the Ashram right from itsinception and though he did not become an inmate of the Ashram, He lived as one. Punjabhai had shared in the ups and downs of the Ashram. He would explain to us the intricacies of the Ahmedabad

[1] From "Diary, 1932" ; Punjabhai Shah died on October 22.

[2] Literally long-lived, a term usually applied by people to those younger than themselves

market. He would bring whatever was required. We could draft Punjabhai's men for the service of the Ashram at any time. Punjabhai's shop and house had become the inmates' place of refuge in the city. He would indicate where anything from a broomstick to cereals could be had at a reasonable price. The Ashram has saved a lot of money owing to his supervision and his advice. It was Punjabhai who found and purchased the piece of land where the Ashram now stands. For these and other services he did not ever expect even a few words of thanks. Punjabhai worked till his last moment as though the Ashram were his own. Though I had occasion to come into very close contact with him, I never found him given to impatience or exageration at any time. He would not speak unless it was necessary. How could he ever take part in idle gossip? His conversation ever concerned dharma, and he loved to dwell on the lives of virtuous men. I never sensed any hatred for anyone in Punjabhai's heart. I never heard him speak harsh words about anyone.

Punjabhai was skilled in business. He earned much. He could have earned more had he so desired. But it is my impression that after coming into contact with Raichandbhai, he had reduced his business operations. His credit was first class. The monies kept with him were perfectly secure.

It was Punjabhai who administerd the finances of the Ashram. He was for a long time even the treasurer of the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee.

Punjabhai was pious; he aspired for *moksha*. In the Ashram one could count on one's fingers the men who are as free from covetousness as Punjabhai was.

Punjabhai's touch sanctified the Ashram. His religion was not narrow. It had a place in it for all other faiths.

Such a man as Punjabhai will live for ever. As far as we are concerned, we should remember his virtues and prove worthy of our association with him.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

475. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

October 23, 1932

CHI. RAMA,

I hope Chhaganlal's arrest has not made you nervous. Do you get letters from him? Do you visit him any time? Where is he lodged? I put up with your negligence in writing to me till now. I will not do so any longer. You should write to me regularly. Have you recovered strength now? How do Dhiru and Vimu behave?

BAPU

From photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5337

476. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

October 23, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter.

Jamnadas's case is a painful one. What can we do? No one can escape his fate do what he will.

I had a long letter from Kisan. She has given a good description of her daily life. Hard work comes so naturally to her that she got up at three in the morning to write that letter. I thought I was the only one who worked so hard. It seems even girls can humble my pride. You cannot do so, for in the Ashram it is a rule that everyone should get up early and so it is not surprising that you should do so. In Bombay, however, to get up at six in the morning will be a favour to one's family. This is, of course, not true of labourers. But Kisan is not one of them.

You should, if you can, spare some time and learn the art of ridding the Ashram of its frequent illnesses. But your first task is to learn how to make your body strong.

If maize doesn't grow on our farms, can we not buy it? If that is what you require to increase your weight, the matter is very simple. Here in jail they do say that maize gruel helps easy evacuation and increases one's weight. Prisoners always get maize gruel in the morning. They add salt to it. Bran does not have to be removed frommaize flour. It is worth while to make this experiment for a few days for its own sake and feel one with the prisoners. What do you

serve in the morning these days? If you have been serving wheat gruel as formerly, it should be easy to switch on to *jowar* gruel. The women, Vithal, Kanti and others are familiar with it from experience. Their judgment should be final. I am only writing what I hear from others.

I did not follow anything of what Shanta said. She has told me nothing. It would be good if she confided in you. Now that I remember, 'confides' is an English word. The Gujarati idiom is 'to open out the heart'. If Shanta wants anything to be kept confidential, you should certainly respect her wishes.

I cannot just now answer the questions which you have put to me. Have patience for some time.

There is no limit to your capacity and fitness for work. But these can be seen only if I give you an opportunity to display them. For the time being they waste their sweetness on the desert air like the flowers in Gray's poem[1] .

Our cat was really mad with joy when she saw us. She simply would not leave us. She must have keenly felt the separation from us. She is contented now.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10307. Also C.W. 6746. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

477. LETTER TO MANIBEHN N. PARIKH

October 23, 1932

CHI. MANIBEHN, [2]

I hope you are not worrying about Mohan. I used to get news about him here. Children fall ill suddenly and recover as quickly, for their stomachs are not impaired as ours are. We ruin ours by stuffing them with all kinds of harmful things. Children have not had sufficient time to ruin theirs. Do not worry about Narahari either. He is protected not by us but by God. Who can harm a person whom He wishes to save?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5973. Also C.W. 3290. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

[1] *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*
[2] Wife of Narahari Parikh

478. LETTER TO PADMA

October 23, 1932

CHI. PADMA,

I got your letter. This time your handwriting was bad. If your health has improved in other respects, the weight will increase of itself. You should do only as much work as you can without getting exhausted. Do not worry about anything. I do not know of any complaint having been made to me against you. I hope you do not regard that matter of accounts as a complaint.

Sheela must be very happy, now for she has gone to stay in Shailashram.

Tell Sarojinidevi[1] that she should favour me with a letter occasionally at least.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6139. Also C.W. 3491. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

479. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

October 23, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

You have pampered me enough with your love. Kindly do not tempt me now. Till now I used to accept all the fruit that you sent, as I could plead the excuse of weakness which followed my fast. My companions also are not men who would gladly eat whatever fruit they are given. They, too, wish to observe the restrictons proper for prisoners and for human beings in general. Hence it seems improper on my part to let you send me fruit in a continous stream. Let me, therefore, have my own way about fruit as I had about honey. I shall ask for it as and when I need it. The pomegranates which you sent are enough for me just now, and the oranges and the apples brought by Manilal are also there. I will trouble you when all this stock is exhausted.

I have written to Trivedi about honey. I have sent him a letter

[1] Addressee's mother

from a friend named David. You may read that letter. I have no choice but to give up the use of wild honey. Mr. David's letter gives a vivid description of the sin of consuming such honey. I am sure one must be able to get innocent honey in some part of India. If we cannot get it, I think we ourselves should arrange with some people to produce it. You will get a clearer idea of all this if you read Mr. David's letter. However, drop the matter if you do not feel interested in it. I don't wish to give you unnecessary trouble. These facts are worth knowing only if one is interested in the subject.

Ba has told me much about your kindness and love. But, to be able to accept all that love without hesitation, I must have a strong desire to serve humanity.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 74. Also C.W. 4824. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

480. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

October 23, 1932

CHI. LILAVATI,

I do not wish to improve you by confining you in a cage. I have faith in you. You have refrained from remarrying out of your own volition. You have come to the Ashram on your own. You will rise by your own strength. Therefore, do whatever you think proper. Come to the Ashram and stay there as if it was your father's house. Of course, even in one's father's house rules must be followed. You can consider yourself totally free and leave the Ashram. Whatever you do, do after due consideration. I regard Mridu's company as *satsang* for you. Whatever outward impression she may give, she is saintly girl. May God bless you.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

481. TELEGRAM TO SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI

October 24, 1932

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM

SABARMATI

LET US REJOICE OVER PUNJABHAI'S LONG SLEEP. SEND FULL ACCOUNT LAST MOMENTS. HOPE ASHRAM FULLY REPRESENTED AT FUNERAL.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 175

482. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

October 24, 1932

DEAR MAULANA SAHEB,

I had your telegram and I sent a reply[1] there and then. It has been forwarded to the Government for approval.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD

CARE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

CALCUTTA

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(3) Pt. III

483. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

Urgent *October 24, 1932*

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

Your communication regarding my request[2] for a definition of Government policy about my interviewing and carrying on correspondence in the matter of untouchability and another matter was read to me by Major Bhandari this morning. I was allowed to make a copy of it.

According to the communication, "Government are prepared to allow me a reasonable number of interviews (with persons approved

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Abul Kalam Azad", 20-10-1932.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to E.E. Doyle", 6-10-1932.

by them)", and to carry on correspondence, "provided it is clearly understood that it is not reproduced in the Press".

It is clear to me that Government could not be aware that my fast is only suspended and that may have to be resumed if the work of removal of untouchability is not thoroughly done. Moreover, so far as a temple in the South is concerned, I might be obliged to join Sjt. Kelappan in his fast, if by or before the 2nd of January next that temple is not opened to the so-called untouchables. This the Government has known. Three weeks have already passed without mybeing able to do much work, apart from being permitted after long delay to send two telegrams. Despatch and publicity are essential, if I am to overtake the work of reform in due time. Every day counts. I therefore submit that all restrictions on the choice of visitors and publication of correspondence should be removed. I can have no objection to the presence of an official or officials at the interviews and inspection there and then of correspondence. If assistance is supplied to me, the Government may have copies of all correspondence and short-hand notes of interviews. Naturally these interviews and correspondence should have no reference to civil disobedience and must be strictly limitied to the removal of untouchability.

Unless therefore these restrictions, as submitted above, are removed, before the 1st November next, I shall be reluctantly obliged to withdraw, subject to the limitations imposed by the law of satyagraha, such co-operation as is possible for me to do. And as a preliminiary I shall deny myself all the feeding facilities permitted to me and restrict myself to such 'C' class diet as I can within my vow consistenly take and so long as my body can accommodate itself to such food. I do hope the Government will not regard this as a threat. The contemplated step is the natural consequence of the Government attitude. I can have no interest in life if I cannot prosecute, without let or hindrance, work for which the fast was undertaken and suspended. I would have said nothing if this moral and religious reform had anything to do with civil disobedience.

With reference to my personal letter[1] to the Honourable Mr. Hudson, the reply comes upon me as a painful surprise. If the warning read out to me at the interview with Dr. Ambedkar was by way of

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H.F. Hudson", 8-10-1932.

punishment for what I am alleged to have done regarding the telegram to Maulana Shaukat Ali, common justice even to a prisoner demanded that the cause of the punishment should have been conveyed to me at the time of the warning, and before the punishment was pronounced explanation should have been called for from me. I never knew that a prisoner could be condemned unheard. Nor had I the remotest idea that the letter to my son which I had seen was intended to convey any warning to me. Let me say that my son told me definitely in offical presence that Mr. Hudson had in a generous manner not only quickly granted him permission to see me as often as he liked but that he had permitted him to talk to me about anything and carry any messages from me, so long as he gave no interviews to the Press and published nothing. In view of this conversation I saw nothing wrong in asking my son to tell Mr. Shaukat Ali that I had seen his wire and that I had replied to it, and that he was likely to receive the reply in the course of a day or two, the delay being due to the fact that it had gone to the Government for being passed. I had not then the remotest idea that the utterly innocent telegram would not be passed. I did therefore give my son also the purport of the reply. Let me however correct two mis-statements in the paragraph of your communication regarding this matter. I had no knowledge at the time of talking to my son that the telegram had not been "passed for transmission". Nor is it correct to say that the text of the reply has been published in the Press. What I have seen is only the substance. I did not give my son a copy of the reply. I add that my son out of nobility of his nature wrote a gentlemanly letter to Mr. Hudson regretting that Maulana Shaukat Ali had published his conversation with him in spite of his caution. He had expected a letter of thanks in reply for his frankness but unfortunately he received a reprimand, and he remained quiet under it. I should be sorry if after this very full explanation Mr. Hudson does not revise his opinion and think that as man to man he has done me a grave injustice.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Since it is obviously impossible for me to guarantee non-publication by my correspondents, known and unknown, of letters I may write to them, whilst the bar referred to lasts, I have to suspend what correspondence on untouchability I have hitherto carried on. I

am entitled therefore to ask that a reply to this matter be sent as early as possible before the 31st instant[1]

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. (800)(40) (4), Pt. I, p. 227. Also G.N. 3864

484. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ

October 24, 1932

CHI. RUKMINI,

As my elbow needs rest, I am now dictating my letters. You have married a well-known man indeed! For there is only one 'Bazaj' family in Banaras, and it is so famous that the mere word 'Bazaj' is enough for a letter to reach. Do you know how much that increases your responsibility? Having been married into such a family, you have to shine with the power of your character and enhance the prestige of the family too. May God give you the strength to do so.

What good fortune that you got a medal at the blessed hands of Malaviyaji! If the *sitar* is not in order, get it repaired. You should not get out of practice. Your cough will have gone by the time you get this letter. It is easy to cure it. For a day or two, take every one or two hours some hot water—just bearably hot—with a small teaspoonful of lemon juice and as much clean salt as you can tolerate. The cough will subside in only one day if it has not become chronic. But you should eat nothing whatever for that day. Take an enema if you do not get a clear motion on that day. The next day you may take milk and sweet grapes or *musambis.* Write to me from time to time.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9143

[1] On receipt of the letter, Home Department telegraphed to Bombay Government on November 1: "Your letter of 28th October forwarding important letters of Gandhi, dated 18th and 24th October, reached us only yesterday. We are after full consideration recommending to His Majesty's Government that Gandhi should be allowed complete freedom in regard to visitors and correspondence on matters strictly confined to removal of untouchability and that there should be no restriction on publicity. Conditions suggested by Gandhiji himself about right to have official present at interviews and inspection of correspondence would be accepted, though it might not be necessary to enforce them. Meantime we regard it as of utmost importance that in these conditions Gandhi should not start restriction of his diet. Please

485. LETTER TO VINOBA BHAVE

October 24, 1932

The comparison with Banabhatta and Valmiki is not right.[1] One may compare the two types of yarn with "Balakanda" and "Kishkindhakanda," or better still, with "Kishkindhakanda" and "Uttarkanda". Fine yarn of 200 counts or more is "Uttarkanda" in the absence of which "Kishkindhakanda" would lose all value. Our forefathers forced the poor to produce Dacca *Shabnam*[2] to gratify the delicate tastes of people who loved luxury. Let us atone for their sin by spinning as *yajna* yarn of the finest count and offer it to the Lord. The art in both cases is the same, but in olden times it ministered to selfishness. Let our art help in spreading the spirit of service, it is necessary to revive the old skill in order to popularize khadi among all classes of people. We should prove that what was possible then in the days of slavery can be done in the age of freedom too. Will not the devotee do for God what a libertine would do for a prostitute? This involves neither great trouble nor any expense; for, all that we wish to do is to learn slowly to spin fine yarn in a spirit of self-sacrifice. I have also found from experience that, if we try to spin finer and finer yarn, we shall more likely discover ways of producing better and cheaper khadi. Here we have the practical application of the *Gita* verse beginning with "*Yavanartha udapane*".

If this reasoning appeals to you, I need not explain to you why I put down 20 counts as the minimum for a voluntary spinner to achieve. There is however nothing sacrosanct about this figure; it is not laid down as a rigid rule. It is only a test of the devotion of the voluntary spinner. An institution must lay down some such rule. Drawing out any sort of yarn should not pass for *yajna*. There ought to be some rule, some standard. If this is admitted, then 20 counts is

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inform him immediately that his letters only reached Government of India yesterday, that the matter is under closest consideration, and that we hope to communicate decision within two or three days. Meantime suggest that it might complicate situation if he started restriction of diet before we have had opportunity of fully considering his requests." Government of India, Home Department, Political, File No. 31/95/32.

[1] Vinoba Bhave had objected to spinnig of fine yarn. He had compared coarse yarn with Valmiki's *Ramayana* and fine yarn with Banabhatta's *Kadambari*. He had also mentioned the difficulties one had to face in the villages.

[2] Literally "morning dew"; kind of muslin.

not a high requirement. A voluntary spinner should not spin as if he was doing forced labour. He should enrich his *yajna* with devotion and art and beauty, identifying himself with the work, that which is offered as sacrifice should be of the purest quality, shoudn't it?

If I have not been able to explain my point of view, you may write to me again and ask me. I have no doubt in the matter, but I cannot rest at ease till I have satisfied you.

The problem of working in the villages is a very difficult one. We need not worry what the *smriti* has to say regarding onions. We should go by our experience. As medicine, they are good. I have tried them very often. I also dislike their odour and generally do not eat them, though I certainly would if I found it necessary. One may eat them with the last meal of the day, for one meets few people thereafter. If eaten in small quantities as medicine, the odour will probably be less acute. If we cannot get cow's milk anywhere at all, I would say that the country is heading towards bankruptcy. If a person touring villages carried with him *mawa* of cow's milk, he would get both ghee and protein in it and, if he should dissolve the powdered *mawa* in hot water, it would then be as good as milk. I do not suggest the addition of sugar or jaggery to the *mawa*, since, in the first place, that is not necessary and, secondly, it may mean indulging the palate. Thus, one can live on *rotlas*[1], *pendas*[2], onions and tamarind or sour lemon. Public workers should not have their dinner late in the evening. The only things which they may accept from the village people are *rotlas* and onions, or they may cook their own food. Wherever they go, they should boil water for their use and drink only that. This way they will not have to depend on others, and no one will be put to trouble as nothing will have to be specially prepared for them. They should sleep in the open, accepting if available a charpoy to keep themselves, so far as is humanly possible, safe from the danger of snakes etc. I am giving all this advice without experience of course. I know that the facilities which were offered to me in the villages may not be available to others. Follow from this whatever is practicable and desirable, and reject the rest. I have made all these suggestions so that you may be prompted to think more about the problem. I realize very well how exceedingly difficult it is to go into the villages. However,

[1] Thick flat bread prepared usually from millet or maize flour

[2] A sweet made from milk

despite the difficulties, we must go. I therefore, very much like the beginning you are making. Every public worker ought to have some knowledge of simple remedies. It is quite easy to acquire it.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 174-5

486. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

October 24, 1932

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I got your letter. Since the pain in the elbow has returned, I have again started dictating as many of the letters as I can to give rest to my arm. None of us was scared by your letter in which you spoke of "blue brain". I had not the least idea what "blue brain" was and as I had been lying under a tree when your letter came, I said: "Who knows what 'blue brain' is! But living under a tree might cause 'green brain', and it would certainly be good to have it." Thus we had some fun about it, as I showed no symptom at all of what you feared. And we have more cause for fun now that we can understand how you came to have the fear.

There is absolutely no reason why I should not let myself be examined by Bhai Mehta. I would like him to examine me and make some suggestions. Why should not I learn from Mehta, when I am always ready to learn from anybody who has something to give? But the truth is that I would have to obtain special permission to get myself examined by him, and I am really afraid I would not get such permission if I asked for it. I do not ask the permission to spare myself the shock of the refusal. However, I would certainly think about whatever suggestions he sends in writting on the basis of any likely causes that occur to him. Like him, I also believe that disease is lurking somewhere in me, despite all the self-control I exercise, and that the disease expresses itself through the pain in the elbow or otherwise. The bowels certainly are weak. After all I have not been a man of self-control all my life. I lived a life of self-indulgence for a number of years, and who can measure the self-indulgence that must have mixed with self-control after I consiously started to lead such a life?

It would be very good indeed if both of you could go to a quiet place. Do not fight nature.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7554, Also C.W. 5029. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

487. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

October 25, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

I thank you for your letter of 24th inst. I appreciate your assurance about the health of my several friends. But you will perhaps agree that it does not give the same satisfaction as a personal letter. So far as Sjt. N. D. Parikh is concerned, my letter was sent during the fast and you are under promise to get me a letter from him in reply as you were good enough to secure from others. So far as Shrimati Manibehn Patel is concerned, her ordinary letter is overdue. She unfailingly writes either to Sardar Vallabhbhai or to me, and neither of us has heard from her. As for Swami Anand's letter, I can only rely upon your goodwill. There is no letter due from him in the ordinary course. If, therefore, you do not mind, I would like to know whether I may have the promised reply sent by Sjt. Parikh, the ordinary monthly letter from Shrimati Manibehn Patel and a letter by grace from Swami Anand .[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 9

488. LETTER TO TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU

October 25, 1932

DEAR DR. SAPRU,

As I need to give rest to my right hand, I am dictating this letter.

Many thanks for your letter. I have almost regained my normal health. I go through the usual daily routine without much difficulty.

We all feel glad that your son has nearly recovered and that his injuries were not so serious as they were reported in the Press.

I hope this letter will find you completely recovered from the effect of influenza. About the other matters I may not write anything just yet.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi-Sapru Correspondence. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta

[1] To this Doyle replied the next day that prisoner N. D. Parikh had forfeited hisprivilege of writting for having joined in a "work-strike". Miss Patel and Swami Anand had not written.

489. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

October 25, 1932

MY DEAR PLAYMATE AND SLAVE,

I was shocked to hear from Devdas about the accident. You have to be a good girl and a better slave and listen to the slave-driver. You must go to the hospital and be properly treated there. Do not consider Father and Mother to be so soft as to be shaken to bits by a very simple an necessary act. After all your own bravery is surely derived from them. I therefore expect a reply to this from the hospital. You should do as Devdas says. He is very good and very noble about such services.

May God be with you and keep you.

Love from us all.

SLAVE-DRIVER

[PS.]

This is my effort with the left hand as I want to give rest to the right.

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

490. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

October 25, 1932

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. When you come, come at twelve. Sushila and Tara can also come. Surendra too. Has he not lived in the Ashram? Moreover, being related to your father-in-law, he is a relation of ours as well. There should not be more than five at a time.

Your tour of Madras, etc., should start soon. The account of the interview with you which has appeared in newspapers does not seem to be correct. If you have not seen it, do so. It has appeared in *The Hindu*.

I hope you have fully recovered now.

Write to me regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Devdas came and saw me today. Sushila, therefore, can come on Tuesday next at the earliest. Devdas will tell the rest. I have sent the papers.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4799

491. LETTER TO SITALA SAHAY

October 25, 1932

We must not look upon young men and women with suspicion. We must not deliberately tempt them. Here there is no such thing. . . .[1] is careful. He is not a young boy any more; he is about thirty-two. . . . too is a sensible girl and . . .[2] has a commendable habit. He hides nothing from me; if he is a prey to passion he confesses it to me. Their relationship, therefore, causes me no anxiety. I am to some extent acquainted with the Roman Catholic injunctions. Our experiment is unique, it is open to many risks. It is also not in conformity with the prevalent atmosphere in India. But the service we want to render to the women of India and the freedom that we want for them, are not possible without incurring risks. We must proceed fearlessly, cautiously, and with faith in God. And this is why we must be very careful in choosing the Ashram manager. In my judgment we cannot find a purer, more patient, disciplined and balanced person than Narandas. As long as he is there, I need not worry. Still, if you have any misgivings, if anything reaches your ears, do write to me.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 177-8

492. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

October 25, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. How is Anand? How is your health? Write to me fully. I am acquiring strength gradually and attending to all work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] These names are omitted in the source.

[2] *ibid*

493. LETTER TO KRISHANDAS

October 26, 1932

Humanly speaking, it must be evil fate that took you to Sinhergaon. You went there for recuperation and came in for an attack of influenza. But who knows whether it is for your well being[1] that you have had this attack leaving you completely prostrate. And since we are so hopelessly ignorant as to the truth of things, I suppose the *Gita* teaches us to be equi-minded, no matter what fate overtakes us. So on the one hand we have to learn to be equi-minded, and on the other we have to apply natural remedies within our means in order to get well when we are ill. I shall try therefore not to be anxious about your health but pray that whatever is good for you may happen to you.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol . II, pp. 178-9

494. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

October 26, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter comes with unfailing regularity.

You will find many more gems in the Quran. Some of them are penetrating. The quotation about Chrirstianity is of a different order. It hardly does justice to the Christian doctrine. Sonship has no literal meaning. Nor does trinity mean three gods. Here 'Letter killeth' applies. Whose translation are you reading?

My weight and health keep steady. I tried bread for two days and then fell back on fruit, milk and a vegetable. I pour my milk over the vegetable which is just now alternatively marrow and pumpkin. These are the only two vegetables to be had just now in the prison garden. And I try to restrict myself just to the vegetables grown there. They seem to suit the body quite well. The monotony does not worry me.

I see with the comparative coolness of weather you are improving. I hope the improvement will be steady.

The seven years seem like a dream. As I recall the terrible scoldings I tremble. And I derive such comfort as is possible from the fact that it was love that was scolding; but I know that there was a

[1] Perhaps a slip for "who knows whether it is not for your well-being"

better way. As I look back upon the past I realize that my love was impatient. To that extent it was ignorant. Enlightened love is ever patient. Ignorant love is a crude translation of the word *moha* in Sanskrit. I shall learn to be patient. As I watch myself in little things, I know that I have not yet acquired that measure of patience which true love demands. That patience shall come.

You remember Shanti, the Chinese young man? I had a wire from him during the fast and now I have a penitent letter from him. Poor boy! He could not keep his vows and so kept silent. He is father of many children. He gives a desolate picture of China and is impatient to come back to India by way of penance for the past. His English has improved wonderfully.

Devdas was here yesterday. He is much better. Pyarelal obstinately refuses to take milk and butter and confines himself to oil. Fruit too he will not take. The result is that he has a sore throat. I have asked him not to be so obstinate.

Sivaprasad is better. Sushila is also better. And Ba will be going to the Ashram. She was anxious to see you. But I weaned her.

If Kisen is there, love to you both.

BAPU

[PS.]

This is going in a special envelope which I hope you will get.

From the original: C.W. 6247. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9713

495. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

October 26, 1932

Constant reflection will strengthen your resolution. If you analyse each word of the *Gita* in detail and reflect over its meaning, that itself will give you more than enough strength. That is what I find happens to me. Do you try and understand the *Gita* in the original Sanskrit? Do you study Sanskrit? Among other books, Tolstoy's essays. *Imitation of Christ* is worth reading. You must read an account of the life of the Buddha, and *The Light of Asia*[1], if you can understand it. It will of course be very good if you read the *Ramayana*. There is a booklet in Hindi entitled *Brahmachayra* which is very good. If you wish to read it, I will get it from the Ashram and

[1] By Sir Edwin Arnold

send it to you. There is a collection of articles by me entitled *Nitinashne Marge,*[1] which also is worth reading. For the present, this reading list is enough. Instead of worrying how you will be able to carry out your resolution, tell yourself that you are bound to succeed in carrying it out and that God will help you. Fix this thought firmly in your mind and keep yourself absorbed in your work. Do not be impatient even in reading. If you do not follow anything, read it over again. It does not matter if this takes more time. Even if you do not remember what you read, do not brood; always remain cheerful. Do not worry however slow your progress is. One day you will find everything easy. Do not do anything at the cost of your health. Put only as much burden on your mind as it can bear.

Your eagerness about the children is right. But you need not worry about them right now. Just now it is necessary that they should improve in health and become very strong. For that we require Nimu's co-operation. I will write to her about them. Recently, I have been getting her letters fairly regularly. You also should write to her often. If their bodies become strong and if they grow up in a healthy atmosphere, they will automatically become what you want them to become. You are of course right when you say that you two should exercise self-control at least for their sake. What pure education means, how it can be imparted and what kind of education will suit the present age, all this requires careful thinking. But there is plenty of time for that. You may ask me any questions which occur to you concerning these problems. If you wish, I will send you a short note which may help you.

I suppose Surendra is busily occupied with his shoemaking. Tell him that God may be found even in shoes and the leather of dead cattle. The leather for soles which I recently received was excellent. I see in it God in a beautiful form. He is not to be found only in scriptures. Ask Surendra to explain to you the story of Tuladhar, and let him also reflect again over its meaning. It is not necessary to search for Him in inaccessible places. We carry Him under our arm, but, forgetting that, we go about the whole town looking for Him. When at last we remember that He is in our arm, we weep and laugh over our foolishness.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary , Vol. II, pp. 179-80

[1] "Towards Moral Bankruptcy".

496. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

October 26, 1932

CHI. DAHYABHAI,[1]

Probably you will now get regular letters from Manibehn also. That means you will get more litrerature to read or have read out to you. And as you are allowed to do more reading, the time is drawing near when you will also be permitted to leave the bed. But don't be impatient for that. I am sure you know that it is possible for one to serve even from the sick-bed.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI DAHYABHAI PATEL
RAM NIVAS
PAREKH STREET, BOMBAY-4

[From Gujarati]

Bapnuna Patro—4: *Manibehn Patelne*, p. 149

497. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

October 26, 1932

CHI. MATHURADAS,

This time I was waiting for a letter from you every day and wondering why there was none, when I got it. You have caught the point regarding the testing of yarn. An understanding of such practical aspects saves us much time. Some of the methods followed by the mills are devised with a purely commercial aim and some others to help in mass production. These methods are of no use to us in our rural industry, though some of them do deserve to be adopted by us too. We have to use our discrimination and judge which ones we should adopt. I suggest that Mahadev's fine yarn may be passed through doubling before weaving, if you feel that it is unfit for weaving only becuase of its lack of strength. If you think, however that we do not have the type of *rach* and heddles required to weave such fine yarn, we should manufacture them. Perhaps Ramji's experience may not help us much in this matter as he may not have the intelligence necessary for dealing with yarn of such fine count. To get this yarn woven, you should approach other skilled workers in

[1] Son of Vallabhbhai Patel

Ahmedabad who weave very fine cloth. Again, it is likely that the method for testing the strength of very fine yarn is a different one, and the tools for that purpose and also the knocker required for weaving fine yarn must be especially delicate so that there is the least possible strain on the yarn. The method of starching fine yarn must also be different. It is likely, however, that the skilled weavers in Ahmedabad weave only fine silk yarn and do not know enough about very fine cotton yarn. If that is so, we should procure the necessary tools from Andhradesha or Bengal where they weave very fine yarn, or we may send to them a specimen of our yarn and inquire about the method of weaving it. Have you seen the Andhra weavers at work? Did you observe the starching and other processes which they demonstrated at our exhibitions? But I think that after reading what I have written you yourself will be able to find a better solution. We must acquire the skill to weave our finest yarn ourselves in the Ashram. You will perhaps be able to see from all this that only voluntary spinners can fully master all aspects of the art of spinning and that, when we have mastered it, it will be quite easy for us to produce ordinary khadi of the best possible quality. You will also see, if you cast a glance at other crafts and skills, that when the people themselves had not learnt the required skill the craft remained poor, and that it was only amateurs who became experts in it. It is because our people neglected hand-spinning that the country lost a cottage industry which gave work to millions in their homes. Now the craft can be revived as an occupation only if we do hard *tapascharya* and cultivate the art once again in a spirit of *yajna*. Looking at the matter from this point of view, I was very happy that you had finally decided to cling to your work and overcome your restlessness.

Keshu's carding-bow will of course be useful. As it cannot be installed in a village home, the old carding-bow will remain as the old spinning-wheel has remained. The best thing to do is to make improvements in it, and I believe that such improvements are possible. Mirabehn has been working fairly hard with that aim. She has been carding in jail too, and has made some improvements. You are quite right in applying yourself to that task.

Your test report on the yarn spun by both of us will help us very much. I saw the justice of most of your criticism. I myself have observed the defects which you have pointed out, but I ignore them sometimes when I am tired. I often observe that the yarn is rough because of an occasional bad sliver or because of uneven tension

when spinning. Instead of cutting off and taking out that part, I let it pass. I do know that this will mean a lot of trouble for the weaver, and that, therefore, by letting that yarn remain I also commit violence. However, while I am actually spinning, partly through lack of vigilance at the time, partly through greed, partly through lethargy and partly through fatigue I may ignore defects in the yarn. But now that I have received your criticism, I know that the quality of my yarn will automatically improve. If, therefore, I receive further criticism when the yarn is woven, it will certainly help both Mahadev and me, for both of us wish to spin yarn of the finest count and of the finest quality that we can. As we cannot get here other yarn for comparison, some defects will of course remain; but we will keep up our efforts to reach as high a standard as possible.

I hope you are keeping good health. I don't write anything about Meghaji.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3757

498. LETTER TO VASANTLAL MORARKA

October 26, 1932

Concentration during prayers is attainable by practice alone. When one starts thinking during prayer time that prayer is even more necessary for the spirit than is food for the body, one starts enjoying the prayers after a few days. If one holds that forgetting Ramanama is the greatest sorrow, chanting the name becomes a regular habit. Holding untruth as the greatest sin and renouncing any temporary gain accruing from it will make us naturally love truth.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 178

499. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVLEKAR

October 26, 1932

BHAISHRI SATAVLEKAR,

I had been awaiting your letter when it came. I was apprehending some trouble. Your letter makes it clear[1]. We all hope that your son will speedily recover his strength and so will you. I have often noticed that dentists make many mistakes and the patients have to suffer. Thanks for the exhaustive reply to the article by Mahendra Mishra that you have sent in spite of your poor health[2]. I shall preserve it and study it with care. Sardar's study of Sanskrit is progressing well and many learners are using the second set of the Sanskrit Readers sent by you.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 4767. Courtesy: S. D. Satavlekar

500. LETTER TO RAMNATH 'SUMAN'

October 26, 1932

Individual prayer alone can be the basis of congregational prayer. My emphasis on the latter does not at all mean that I attach greater importance to it. Since we are not used to congregational prayer, I have attempted to show the need for it. What you can experience in seclusion is certainly difficult, if not impossible, to experience in a group. I have also noticed that some people cannot pray except in a group. For such people individual prayer is essential. I would also admit that one can do without congregational prayer but certainly not without individual prayer.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol II, p. 178

[1] The addressee in his letter of October 20 had informed Gandhiji that his son had been ill with typhoid and that he had been having trouble with a tooth which a dentist had made worse.

[2] Mahendra Mishra in his article had contended that meat-eating was a common practice in Vedic times and the addressee had refuted the contention, citing profuse references.

501. LETTER TO HARISINGH GAUR

October 27, 1932

I confess that I do not feel the same afflatus as you do, for I do not share the view that you hold about the Brahminical influence.[1] Whilst the Brahmins have undoubtedly a great deal to answer for, I am sure that they have been much more sinned against than sinning. Every religion has produced its own Brahmins. That they have not been known as such makes no difference. Our Brahmins would, I think compare favourably with the others. At the same time I am not in love with the caste system with all its ignorant restrictions. I do believe in varnashrama, without the restrictions superimposed upon it about inter-dining and intermarriage and the idea of superiority and inferiority. I believe with Vivekananda that Shankara never drove Budhism from India for he was himself a *prachchhanna*[2] Buddha. He merely rid it of the bad things that were creeping into it, and prevented its alienation from Hinduism. In my opinion nowhere has the influence of the teaching of Buddha been more abiding than in India. Nevertheless I would go with you the whole distance in saying that we need again a very thorough cleansing.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 181

502. LETTER TO TARA R. MODI

October 27, 1932

CHI. TARA,

If I got your letter, it is unlikely that I did not reply to it. If you wrote to me directly, it is possible that your letter was lost on the way. If you sent it with the Ashram post, I would certainly remember receiving it. If you had asked me any special questions, please send them again. However, you should be able to get much from my numerous letters and articles.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4174. Also C.W. 1673. Courtesy: Ramniklal Modi

[1] The addressee had said that Shankaracharya, by making the supremacy of Brahmins the basis of Hinduism, had rendered it prone to many attsacks, and contended that Buddhism was Hinduism in its purity. He had enclosed a book of his on Buddhism.

[2] Disguised

503. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

October 27, 1932

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your letter.

It is a mark of intellectual laziness to believe that whoever can give an account of every moment of his life can become a mahatma. There are in the West many hard-woking men and women who can give an account of every moment of their lives, but they are not fortunate enough to have become mahatmas. Under the pretext that only a mahatma can do it, you cannot escape your duty to give an account of every moment. Every one of us should from the habit of keeping such an account. And no great credit should be given for it either.

The phrase, 'one's duty however defective 'should not be interpreted to mean a duty which violates morality. 'Defective' here means what seems to be inferior. According to the *Gita* all duties have equal value, for Mother *Gita* attaches importance only to people's hearts and, therefore, her standards are bound to be faultless. For example, if a grain-dealer who feels that his occupation is inferior to a clerk's, gives up his trade and tries to become a clerk, wouldn't he be a loser both ways? In the same way, if Titus, who looks after the dairy, leaves the cows in order to serve *Antyajas* because *Antyaja* service has become fashionable just now, he will be said to have given up his duty and acted contrary to the teaching of the *Gita.* Similarly, if you women who have bound yourselves by vows to do certain work, leave it and take up some other work of service, you will be guilty of forsaking your duty. Is this quite clear?

I see nothing wrong in a person going out of the Ashram to improve his health and returning to it after it has improved. Don't I myself ask many to do so? But anybody who vows not to return to the Ashram and keeps the vow, as Gangadevi did, deserves all honour. Only a rare person can do that, and only if he has accepted the idea with his whole heart. Such a person, even if he or she has to be looked after by others, does great service by setting an example of immense patience and non-attachment to life. Moreover, our aspiration is to live as simply as poor people do. The latter, even when they suffer extreme pain through some disease, cannot leave either their home or their village. They remain satisfied with whatever their friends and

relations can do for them and some do not get even that much service. We should bow in reverence to a person who, being a man of knowledge, voluntarily suffers with similar patience. He serves the people even by setting an example of such patience. That is why I had suggested to Punjabhai that it would be good both for him and for the Ashram if he died in it, nursed by the inmates. And for the same reason, I told Kishorelal that he should not mind having to be looked after by other people in the Ashram, for a man like him served the Ashram by his mere presence. I have only stated a principle[1] in my letter to Narandas. You need not think much about it. If anybody is inspired by that highest sense of dharma, let him take such a step. You should do only what you can.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9335. Also C.W. 581. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

504. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 27, 1932

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. I wrote[2] what I wrote to satisfy you, but I see that you are not satisfied. My intention in writing that you were free was that nobody could force you, but you could do as you wished. No other meaning was implied. I have actually said that I have trust in you and that ultimately you will attain stability. There have been numerous complaints. They are all about your impatience, your indecision and your anger. But I have not heeded them. I did not mean to suggest that you had no respect for Narandas. But my words can be interpreted to suggest that in spite of your respect for Narandas you are unable to follow his instructions. And if you are unable to doso, I see nothing wrong in your considering yourself free. I wish you would give up your craving for a bicycle. You should do whatever you can without it and be content.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 15/16-10-1932.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Ramabehn Joshi", 6-11-1932.

I have forgotten what clarification you wanted in regard to untouchability. The other question can be answered from here itself.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

505. LETTER TO SHANKARRAO GHATGE

October 27, 1932

The *atman,* as everyone will agree, is not destroyed with the body. Similarly the *atman* exists prior to the birth of the body. If we accept this, we have no reason to believe that the *atman* will not be reborn in a body or that it did not occupy a body in the past. But to hold that the *atman* will necessarily inhabit a form because it is inhabiting one at present would be merely falling in with the popular belief.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 182

506. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

October 27, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

It is good that you are learning Hindi. You must finish whatever you take up. I do not see any need for observing a weekly fast. But it is another thing if fasting is necessary for health. You may take my word in all this. Your good lies in doing with all sincerity whatever work Narandas may assign to you. Give up worrying about Kudsia. Let Narandas do what is his duty. Express your opinion if he consults you. Give me the news of Dr. Sharma. What was decided about his coming to the Ashram? Do you find any difficulty in reading this?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 261

507. TELEGRAM TO MANIBEHN PATEL[1]

October 28, 1932

MANIBEHN PATEL
PRISONER, BELGAUM JAIL

HOPE YOU ARE NOT UPSET BY GRANDMOTHER'S DEATH WHICH ANYONE WOULD ENVY. WHY NO LETTER FROM YOU LONG TIME.

Love

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 89

508. LETTER TO PRINCESS EFY ARISTARCHI

October 28, 1932

I have almost regained my normal health and am pursuing my normal activities without much strain being felt. Please therefore entertain no anxiety about me. What the future has in store one does not know, and one is not permitted to pry into it. God will take care of the future if we would mind the present.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 184

509. LETTER TO THE SECRETARY, CHILDREN'S ASSOCIATION, SCOTLAND

October 28, 1932

I have always prized the blessings of children, becuase they are generally so innocent. Don't you know that there is no such thing as soul-force without God behind it? Therefore the distinction that you have made is wrong. Anyway I have no knowledge of any person believing in the existence of the soul and denying God.

I like very much the idea of your praying for the peace and prosperity not only of your own land, but of the whole world.

Personally I do not believe in patriotism that excludes the welfare of other countries than one's own. I therefore wish you every success.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 183

[1] The original English text is not available

510. LETTER TO HENRY S. SALT[1]

October 28, 1932

I thank you for your letter. May I say in all humility that one rarely finds people outside India recognizing non-human beings as fellow beings. Millennium will have come when mankind generally recognizes and acts up to this grand truth.

Thank you.

With my best regards to you and Mrs. Salt,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 18579

511. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

October 28, 1932

CHI. PARASRAM,

No parallel can be drawn at all between what was said during the conversation with Acharya Gidwani and the question of inter-dining with Harijans. Those who arrange such dinners have already goodwill in their hearts for the latter. Hence the students who join such dinners for sharing in their pleasure cannot be compared with them. And in any case the Harijans cannot be compared with such students who are attracted to the parties by the thought of enjoyment, for what we do for Harijans cannot be described as temptation held out to them. Those who do *prayaschitta* do it not as a temptation to anybody but for self-purification. Is not all this as clear as daylight? Whether or not mixed dinner parties are proper is a separate issue. In certain circumstances such a party may be proper and in certain other circumstances it may not be so. Thus it is entirely a question of the circumstances of each case.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7510. Also C.W. 4987. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

[1] An octogenarian, Salt had met Gandhiji in London in November 1931. On October 8, 1932, he had written: "The subject under special consideration, when I saw you in London, was vegetarianism; and I feel as strongly as ever that food-reform, like socialism, has an essential part to play in the liberation of mankind. I cannot see how there can be any real and full recognition of kinship, as long as men continue either to cheat or to eat, their fellow-beings!"

512. LETTER TO GULAM RASUL QURESHI

October 28, 1932

CHI. QURESHI,

I have your beautifully written letter but it gives no news about you or Amina. You should give that information in the next letter. There should be no trace of the piles trouble left. It is very necessary, so long as the pain persists, to be very careful about food. Those who get operated upon for piles some times make the serious mistake of thinking that after the operation they can eat anything they like. It is not so at all. Those afflicted with piles cannot eat even simple food. After the piles have been removed they can eat such food. But those who after the operation eat heavy food or food which they cannot digest or hot foods like chillies and other spices invariably have a relapse. And for two or three months after the operation, the greatest care has to be exercised. Amina also should pay careful attention to what I have written. I wish of get much service from both of you. I have built castles of hope on you, but they will come down if you two do not keep good health.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10812. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

513. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

YERAVDA MANDIR,

Diwali, October 28, 1932

CHI. TARAMATI,

It was very good of you to have looked Ba up. Meet Manilal and Sushila. I have received a letter from Mathuradas today. I gather from it that he is keeping good health. He feels light in the body because he has lost weight, which is now 143 Ib. Now the doctor is giving him 1 oz. of olive oil every day, to stabilize and the weight. Mathuradas has received today the packet containing the books, *chappals*, etc., that you had sent to him. He says that he was happy to see that your letter this time did not reflect sorrow and despair. It should always be so. God has granted you happiness in every way.

But even if there in unhappiness, it should not be taken as such. We are all doing well. May the coming year bring you health and happiness and may you render more and more service day after day. You must be aware that now there are 11 weeks for the release of Mathuradas.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

21 MINT ROAD

FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

514. MESSAGE TO ARYA SAMAJ

[Before *October 29, 1932*][1]

I cannot imagine a more effective means of honouring the memory of the great Swami Dayanand than by every Arya Samajist devoting his best energies to the cause of the Harijans (so-called depressed classes) during this wave of reform.

The Hindu, 31-10-1932

515. A LETTER[2]

October 29, 1932

Your objection would be sound if 'Harijan' was to be used for all time to denote 'untouchable' brethren, but whilst they have to be distinguished, I felt that 'untouchables' or its vernacular equivalent was no longer equivalent.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 185

[1] The Report in the source is dated October 29.

[2] The addressee, a Bengali gentleman not identified by name, had said that Gandhiji appeared to perpetuate the name "Harijan" for untouchables.

516. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

October 29, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

I very much liked your programme of the 20th. I indeed feel tempted to taste the food cooked by you, both boys and girls, but I don't think you would let me, would you? You will get this letter after the New Year's day. It is my wish and my blessing to you that during the coming year all of you may keep excellent health, do sincere work and that your conduct may become more upright day by day.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

517. LETTER TO GAJANAN V. KHARE

October 29, 1932

CHI. GAJANAN,

I got the paintings sent by you. None of us here is an expert on painting. But all three of us liked both the paintings. We liked the painting of Rama and Hanuman more than the other. Sardar was pleased most. On one of them is written your name, and on the other the name is "Bhau". If the second painting is not by you, who is "Bhau"? I take it they are both by you. Are they both original or copies? Give me any other information that may be relevant.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 309. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

518. A LETTER

October 29, 1932

If you are sure in your mind that you will never marry again, you need not marry now. If, however, deep in your heart you desire to marry, you should yield to your mother's wish. The way out of the problem created by the number of eligible young men in your community[1] being smaller than that of girls is to marry the girls outside the community. The division into castes and clans has nothing

[1] The addressee was a goldsmith.

to do with dharma. It is true that it is an age-old tradition among the Hindus but traditions change with time. I have replied to your questions because your letter was so very sincere. May your love of dharma grow during the year which has commenced.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 186

519. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Padavo [*October 30*][1] *1932*

CHI. NARANDAS,

This time I got your packet on Tuesday. By the time you get this letter, I am sure Mohan will be on his feet again. I don't suppose you read Balbhadra's[2] long letter. Pass on my letter to him without reading it, since that is his wish. It is desirable that we should respect children's wishes in such matters. Send for him and tell him that, as suggested by me, the letter is given to him without being read. That will make him happy. He had mentioned two things in his letter. One, that he was very much afraid of his father, and two, that every time he did something wrong you and Prema threatened to send him away to his father. The complaint seemed exaggerated to me. But he is an obstinate child and likely to get on one's nerves. I would not, therefore, be surprised if he had really been scolded in that manner.The child has no one to care for him. And, morever, he is dull-witted, so that everybody makes fun of him. Not being able to realize his foolishness, he is uspet when people make fun of him. Such children deserve great pity. Talk to him casually and find out all this from him and give what sympathy you can. If his fear of us, whether or not he has reason for such fear, leaves him, the fear of his father also will not remain much longer. At present he is very much afraid that, if he is sent away from the Ashram, he will have to go to his father. One more complaint which he makes is that students do not now enjoy the freedom which they formerly had. I don't think there is any truth in this complaint, and I have told him so in my letter. However, you may think about the matter if there is any element of

[1] The source has October 29, *Padavo,* which however corresponded to October 30.

[2] A student of the Ashram school

truth in it.

I have a very angry letter from Ratilal. He says in it that you got very angry with him, insulted him, and so forth. Champa also has joined in the complaint. I do not understand why she is angry with you. I understand what you say in regard to money. I have a letter from Mahavir in which he says he will return to the Ashram in a few days, and also that he has asked for your permission to come and see me on his way to Ahmedabad. On my part, I have asked him to give up the idea. For one thing, it is still uncertain whether I shall start seeing visitors again. And a visit here would mean an unnecessary expense of about thirty rupees. How can it be justified?

I think it would be desirable if Navin goes to Almora as soon as he can. In my letter[1] to Mathuradas, I have written at length about spinning fine yarn. Read that letter. Did you find Tilakam's health very much improved when he returned there? What is his diet at present? I think Mirabehn's diet will suit him. His body is built on non-vegetarian diet. I have often observed that persons who have been used to non-vegetarian diet cannot preserve strength on pulses. But they can live on milk, *rotli*, green vegetables and sour lemons. The reason is this. Non-vegetarians do not require much starch. When they give up flesh, they eat plenty of starch to satisfy their hunger and a good quantity of pulses to provide nourishment to the tissues. Naturally they cannot digest all this food and in consequence fall ill. If, when giving up non-vegetarian food, such persons take milk in sufficient quantity, it would supply them the nourishment which they previously got from flesh. And their hunger would be satisfied by whole-flour bread. The bran contained in surch bread and the natural water of the green vegetables would help them to keep their bowels clean. This is the theory. Vegetarian diet agreed with Mirabehn immediately because I did not permit her to eat pulses at all. Of course her firm determination also was an important factor. She had resolved, from the very day she came into contact with me through letters, that she would not eat non-vegetarian food even if she died without it. But her resolution and faith are unusual.

I have written to Jamna a long sermon on the primus stove. Ask the other women also to read it, and then they may do as they like. Their renouncing the use of the primus stove will benefit them only if

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mathuradas Purushottam", 26-10-1932.

they do so willingly.

Read my letter to Jethalal. I need not write more about the subject here. That letter contains the answers to your questions. I hope Purushottam's health has not deteriorated after his arrival there.

You will notice that I have dictated quite a large number of the letters this time. The right elbow is in the same condition now as the left was. I may say that I took too much freedom in writing letters after the last fast. Besides the letters to people in the Ashram, I wrote a great number of other letters too. Moreover, I wrote every day. Add to that spinning for two and a half hours. The exertion proved too much. I, therefore, decided to spare the right hand from writing work as much as possible. As a result, the condition of the elbow is a little better now. But you need not worry at all. At this age, I cannot expect to regain lost fat and tissue very soon. In six days the body had thinned visibly. It cannot become as it was before the fast in a month. There is no reason in this to feel concerned. I can do all ordinary work as usual. If I have been writing for the whole life, there is nothing wrong in my giving a long rest to the hand, and no cause whatever to feel surprised or concerned. There is certainly no disease in the hand. It does not pain when I do not work with it. I do not feel the pain even when I am working but afterwards as it starts paining I feel that that part is exhausted. Hence, as a measure of precaution, I am giving rest to it.

All the inmates have my blessings for the New Year as a matter of course. Even children who can understand things know very well now what I expect from the Ashram. It is my hope that all the inmates, grown-ups and children, may acquire the strength of character and devotion to service which would fulfil my expectations and my prayer to God that He may grant such strength to you all.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8262. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

520. LETTER TO PREMLIILA THACKERSEY

Padavo, 1989 [*October 30, 1932*]

DEAR SISTER,

I am sure you got the letter which I wrote to you. And still it seems you could not restrain yourself on the Diwali day. I got your loving gift. The containers were returned. I hope you will not take any trouble now. I will not fail to write to you when I need anything.

All of us wish and pray that the New Year may bring you prosperity and happiness, that your aspirations may be fulfilled and your devotion to service may grow stronger.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4826. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

521. LETTER TO SHANKAR[1]

October 30, 1932

I hope that the New Year will give you a larger spirit of sacrifice, greater steadiness of purpose and a more vivid appreciation of self-restraint.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 186

522. A LETTER[2]

October 30, 1932

You have asked me for my opinion about occult sciences. I am not in love with them. The book of life is open to the simplest minds and it should be so. There is nothing occult in God's plan. Anyway the mysterious and the occult have never made any appeal to me. Truth has no secrets and Truth is God.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 188

[1] Presumably S. Shankar, Joint Secretary of the Harijan Seva Sangh, Madras

[2] The addressee, an English woman living in Switzerland, had asked Gandhiji what he thought of occult sciences.

523. LETTER TO MOHANLAL M. BHATT

October 30, 1932

I don't think that I can lay down rules for indefinite fasting which would satisfy you. I might say only this. A fast should be characterized by perfect truth and non-violence, and should be undertaken only upon the prompting of one's inner voice and not in blind imitation of somebody. One should never undertake a fast for a selfish end; the aim behind a fast should always be common good. A fast should never be undertaken for any object which is inspired by ill will towards somebody. But what is inner voice? Can everybody claim it? These are important questions. Of course the inner voice speaks to everybody; but he whose ear has not learnt to recognize and listen to the inner voice will not be able to hear it, just as a deaf person cannot hear even the sweetest music. The ears of one who lacks self-control cannot recognize the true inner voice. Only that person will be fit to recognize it who possesses the charactertistics of the *sthitaprajna* given in Ch. II of the *Gita*, or of the devotee in Ch. XII, or of the *gunatita* in Ch. XIV or the one in whom all the three *gunas* blend. The question put by Sundaram is improper.[1] But now that he has asked it, I ought to say that, according to me, on the whole the Hindu religion is "nearest to the truth". But at the same time I admit unhesitatingly that in holding this view I may be making a mistake through ignorance or partiality. The mistake, if any, is paradonable and one which has its use, because, in the absence of all ignorance and partiality it would be impossible for any man to cling to his religion, and he would, and ought to, embrace another religion in which he saw more of truth. Call it God's *maya* or know it by any other name you choose, but all human beings have this weakness. And yet, in spite of such attachment to one's own religion, one ought to hold all religions in equal regard. In other words, I should, as a Hindu, accept it as natural for a Christian to believe that Christianity is nearer to the truth and for a Muslim to believe that about Islam, and also that it is necessary for them to do so if they are to follow their respective religions sincerely. I ought to bear them no ill will for such a belief, nor should I regard their belief as mistaken. I hope that what I have said will be clear to Bhai Sundaram and to all of you. Probably this view of mine about equality towards all religions is a new idea. If

[1] He had asked which religion, in Gandhiji's view, was nearest to the truth.

other people also have thought about the matter along similar lines, I am not aware of the fact. For me at any rate, the idea is original and it has given me the purest joy. My view enables me to cling to Hinduism and to hold other religions in reverence at the same time, and adopt from them without hesitation whatever is good in them. I owe this discovery to non-violence.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 186-7

524. LETTER TO GULAB

October 30, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

You should improve your handwriting. You say that your weight is 169 pounds. But that cannot be. Let me know the correct figure. If you take pains over learning carding, you will succeed.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1728

525. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

October 30, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. What you write about Krishnan Nair is correct.

Did you have any talk with him before he left with Rambhau? He is misusing his intelligence. I should be glad if he could be cured of this tendencey.

You seem to have quite a large number of girls on your hands now. May God give you the strength to manage them all, i.e., purify them with your love and keep them ever pure.

Take care of Lilavati. She is an unhappy girl.

You may try gum *pak*[1], if you wish. Personally I am afraid that you will not even be able to digest it. What you need is oil massage and Kuhne bath. The whole back should be massaged.

How nice it would be if you had buried your anger with the year that has ended.

[1] A tonic preparation

Don't worry if there is no agreement about the use of the Ashram money. A solution will come by and by. It will come at any rate when one day you take the management of the Ashram in your own hands.

Greet the plants and the flowers on my behalf, and give them some hope. Ask them to give us beauty and fragrance like theirs, their single-minded devotion and their firmness, their humility, equimindedness and innocence, and thus demonstrate their friendliness.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10308. Also C.W. 6747. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

526. LETTER TO KULKARNI [1]

October 30, 1932

Vidya means knowledge and *avidya* means activity. The meanings of *sambhooti* and *asambhooti* are related to the meanings *vidya* and *avidya*. Hence *asambhooti* means the body and *sambhooti* means the self. I interpret the expressions thus for my own satisfaction. I feel that this interpretation explains the meaning of the *Ishopanishad* easily and satisfactorily.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 188

527. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

October 30, 1932

CHI. NARMADA,

I have not neglected to reply to a single letter of yours. Nor is there any possibility of a letter having got lost. Your handwriting has improved a little. Make the letters slightly bigger and write slowly. If you are patient, you will make quite good progress in learning. You should write in every letter what you learnt during the week. You

[1] The correspondent had asked Gandhiji to explain the meaning of *vidya*, *avidya*, *sambhooti* and *asambhooti* in verses 11 and 12 of the *Ishopanishad*.

should go through a letter again to see that the conjunct letters are correctly written.

Does Shambhubhai write to you? Or anybody from home?

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2765. Courtesy: Ramanarayan N. Pathak

528. LETTER TO SULOCHANA

October 30, 1932

CHI. SULOCHANA,

Your handwriting is good, but you don't write much in your letters. You can certainly describe what you did during the past week.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1742

529. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

October 30, 1932

You have still a long life before you. May all your aspirations and your ambition to serve be fulfilled. May you be a true representative of the ideals of truth and non-violence.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 188

530. A LETTER

October 30, 1932

There is no uniformity of policy in public institutions because the workers lack charity and the men at the head do not have perfect humility. Generally no difficulty is experienced in an institution in which the head is a man of self-control. From these facts, we can deduce one rule at any rate, namely, that the greater the self-control on the part of the workers the greater the chances of unity in that institution will be.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 188

531. TELEGRAM TO MANIBEHN PATEL

October 31, 1932

MANIBEHN PATEL
PRISONER, BELGAUM JAIL

GRANDMOTHER DIED PEACEFULLY WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON KARAMSAD AFTER FOUR HOUR ILLNESS. HOPE LETTER GIVING DETAILS SENT FRIDAY DELIVERED. WE ARE ALL WELL. LOVE.[1]

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 89

532. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

October 31, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

As the Government have not granted the relief sought in my letter to Col. Doyle of the 24th inst. and unless it comes in the course of the day, the progressive non-co-operation adumbrated in that letter will commence from tomorrow.

As stated in that letter, I shall begin by denying myself the special food issued to me. Will you kindly therefore have the goat's milk stopped as from tomorrow? Besides this, just now I am only drawing sour limes and vegetables in common with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and sometimes taking a little brown bread from Sjt. Mahadev Desai's ration. Sardar Vallabhbhai sends for the limes and vegetables and I have asked him not to send for my portion. In lieu of this, I shall take, for the time being and if they are issued to me, the morning *kanji* and the noon and the afternoon *bhakri* out of the 'C' class rations. I may not take anything else from the 'C' class rations, and I can only take during any twenty-four hours five ingredients besides salt, soda and water. The vegetables and dholl generally issued to 'C 'class prisoners contain more than three or four ingredients. These therefore I may not take. I do not propose to take anything specially prepared for special 'C' class prisoners[2].

[1] The original English text of the telegram is not available.

[2] On receiveing this letter, Mahadev Desai says, Major Bhandari saw Gandhiji and tried to dissuade him saying that by refusing food he was used to he would become weak and might even get dysentery. For Gandhiji's reply, *vide* the following item.

As a large amount of correspondence on untouchability, some of which is very important, has accumulated, and requires answering with a view to publication, I think that it is incumbent upon Government either to publish my correspondence with Government on the matter or to inform the public, in any other manner Government may choose, of my request and their refusal to accede to it.

It is needless to add that I have scrupulously avoided, either directly or indirectly, the leakage of any information about the correspondence.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3855. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(4), Pt. I, p. 245

533. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

October 31, 1932

I do not want to have dysentery, but if I get it I should go through it. But at the slightest sign of it I shall stop all food. The non-co-operation has to be progressive. This course I have adopted to cause the Government the least possible inconvenience. I cannot live and not work for the removal of untouchability. But if the Government would that I died rather than I lived to work for removal of untouchability I cannot help it.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 189. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(4), Pt. I, p. 249

534. LETTER TO C. K. NAMBIAR[1]

October 31, 1932

MY DEAR NAMBIAR,

I have read your letter from top to bottom. I think that you are needlessly suspicious and therefore harsh in your judgment. Whilst Press propaganda has a value, substantial results are only attainable

[1] The addressee's name is supplied from the G.N. register.

through solid, silent, persistent work. Those who realize this will not deplore absence of notice of their work in the Press.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 148

535. A LETTER[1]

October 31, 1932

I hope you will fulfil your promise never again to tell lies or steal. You would not like people to deceive you or steal your things. Therefore you do not expect that other people would like you to deceive them or to steal their things.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 191

536. LETTER TO HARJIVAN KOTAK[2]

October 31, 1932

It is your moral duty to tell him[3] about your private life too. Surely you do believe that impurity even in private life does harm to one's work. Don't argue that others who are impure in their private lives have succeeded in business, etc. It is not for us to judge whether they have succeeded or not. We make no distinction between private life, public life or business activities. All our activities are for self-purification and hence any impurity in us our will obstruct progress at every step.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 190

[1] The addressee, a little girl, is not identified in the source.
[2] Manager of Srinagar Khadi Centre
[3] Shankerlal Banker

537. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

October 31, 1932

BHAI KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your letter. Who can foresee the future? The predictions of astrologers are not gospel truth. One should pay no attention to the words of astrologers. The scripture wherein fate is discussed enjoins *brahmacharya* too. Therefore whatever be our fate our duty is to make full effort. I mentioned Ch. XV[1] by mistake. I should have said Ch. VIII, verse 11. The word *daiva* in Ch. XVIII implies *prarabdha*.

The wheel one can ply on one's own. There is adequate literature on the subject. The book[2] by Richard Gregg and the one[3] by Puntambekar and Varadachari both are worth reading. They are available from the Bombay Navajivan Karyalaya, Princess Street, Bombay 2. Of course you have my blessings on the vow of *brahmacharya*.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.G. 41

538. A LETTER

October 31, 1932

Patients observe silence on account of their suffering, some orators observe it to give rest to their throats and some observe it when in a mood for introspection. All three can benefit each in his own way. The introspective persons will, ordinarily, spend the day in seclusion, fast or have a light meal. If necessary they will study writings inducing calm thoughts. Observing silence for its own sake does little good and may cause harm. The seeker after truth should have a well-defined pourpose behind every action he takes.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 191

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Krishnachandra", 10-10-1932.

[2] *Economics of Khaddar*

[3] *Hand-spinning and Hand-weaving*

539. A LETTER

October 31, 1932

Decide upon the central core of the *Gita.* Then put into practice that interpretation of each verse which applies to one's life. This would be the best commentary on the *Gita,* and the truest study of it. There can be no doubt that non-attachment is the central core of the *Gita.* I am certain that there is no other inspiration behind the composition of the *Gita.* And I know from my own experience that observance of truth or even ahimsa is impossible without non-attachment. Undoubtedly non-attachment is difficult of attainment. But what is so strange about it? For the realization of Satyanarayana some effort is necessarily called for and this realization without non-attachment.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 191-2

540. MESSAGE TO BEGUM ALI IMAM

[On or before *November 1, 1932*][1]

Deepest sympathy in your loss which is also mine. Your dear husband[2] was one of my oldest friends.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-11-1932

541. LETTER TO PADAMAJA NAIDU

November 1, 1932

MY DEAR PLAYMATE AND UNWILLING SLAVE,

Wanting you to be a willing slave, though a driver of slaves, I slavishly carry out your wish that out of philanthropy I should write to you with the left hand. I had no notion of my being a slave-driver till mates like you from personal experience made the discovery. So I had thought that they must have willingly submitted to the yoke. But I see that your pride comes in the way of your making a frank

[1] The report is dated November 1, 1932.

[2] Sir Ali Imam, a one-time judge of Calcutta High Court and a prominent Muslim League leader, had died towards the end of October.

admission. I do not want more accidents to humble your pride. . . .[1]

About reading the books you have sent me, I shall follow the course suggested by you. I am fast increasing the number of my teachers. Raihana was the first, then Zohra was appointed. And now you have sought the honour. Let this serve as the letter of appointment. But in order to retain the honour you will have to be good and not ill and bed-ridden.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 194

542. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

November 1, 1932

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I specially remember you today. I have had no letter from you since long.

I didn't get any even in the last week of September.

How are all of you? How is Grandmother? How is Gokibehn[2]? Are your worries over now?

I wish you a happy New Year.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati; C.W. 4798. Courtesy: Shantikumar Mararjee

543. LETTER TO HOMI PESTONJI

November 1, 1932

I duly received the books sent by you. I have met Upasani Maharaj. I formed a very bad impression about him and have found his writings wanting in purity.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 193

[1] A portion is omitted in the source.

[2] Addressee's father's sister

544. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 1, 1932

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

How are you? How is Shankerlal? Has Indu recovered fully? Write down your reminiscences of Punjabhai[1] and send a copy to me. May the New Year help us all to achieve greater purity.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI ANASUYABEHN
SEVASHRAM
MIRZAPUR, AHMEDABAD

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32813

545. A LETTER

November 1, 1932

It is not for me to decide when I should fast. What God has decreed will happen.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 194

546. TELEGRAM TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

7 a.m., November 2, 1932

TO
HOME SECRETARY
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

YOUR MESSAGE WAS DELIVERED TO ME TEN O'CLOCK LAST NIGHT. IT IS PAINFUL SURPRISE TO ME THAT MY LETTER OF TWENTY-FOURTH ULTIMO SHOULD HAVE REACHED GOVERNMENT

[1] Punjabhai Shah who died on October 22

THIRTY-FIRST NOT SO MUCH BECAUSE PROSPECTIVE FAST THEREIN ADUMBRATED INVOLVED PRISONER'S LIFE AS BECAUSE FAST COVERED MATTER HIGHEST URGENCY AND DIRECTLY ARISING OUT OF YERAVDA PACT ENDORSED BY HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT. IN VIEW HOWEVER OF THIS UNFORTUNATE DELAY AND IN VIEW OF ASSURANCE AND SUGGESTION CONTAINED IN YOUR MESSAGE I HAVE SUSPENDED RESTRICTION ON DIET WHICH COMMENCED YESTERDAY[1]. I TRUST MY LETTER OF THIRTY-FIRST ULTIMO ADDRESSED TO SUPERINTENDENT YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON WAS REPEATED TO YOU. WHEN HE CAME TO ME TO UNDERSTAND IMPLICATIONS OF THE LETTER I TOLD HIM THAT IF I DID NOT GET RELIEF WITHIN FOUR DAYS FROM FIRST INSTANT AMONG OTHER THINGS I MIGHT BE OBLIGED TO STOP FOOD ALTOGETHER. THIS I MENTION TO CONVEY TO GOVERNMENT SOME IDEA OF INTENSITY OF MY FEELING. ALMOST DAILY I AM GETTING LETTERS ABOUT UNTOUCHABILITY FROM REFORMERS AND REACTIONARIES DEMANDING IMMEDIATE ATTENTION AND REPLY DESIGNED FOR PUBLICATION. A MATTER IN WHICH MILLIONS OF PEOPLE HAVE TO BE INFLUENCED CANNOT BE HANDLED BY PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE UNDER BAN OF PUBLICATION. I HAVE LETTERS AND TELEGRAMS FROM RECENTLY FORMED ALL-INDIA ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY LEAGUE ASKING FOR IMMEDIATE GUIDANCE AND ADVICE AS TO METHOD OF WORK. I HAVE MOST IMPORTANT LETTER FROM CALICUT DEMANDING IMMEDIATE REPLY AND REQUEST FROM UNTOUCHABLE FRIENDS SEEKING EMERGENT INTERVIEW. KNOWING THIS AND KNOWING THAT MY LIFE IS AT STAKE IN ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY CAMPAIGN GOVERNMENT WILL APPRECIATE MY READINESS AND DESIRE TO FORFEIT IT IF IN THIS MATTER I AM NOT TO BE ALLOWED FULL AND UNFETTERED FACILITIES AS REQUESTED IN MY LETTER. A PRISONER HAS NO OTHER HONOURABLE OUTLET FROM AN INTOLERABLE AND SOUL-KILLING POSITION.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(4), Pt. I, p. 277. Also G.N. 3866

[1] On November 1 Gandhiji had started taking food supplied to 'C' class prisoners; *vide* the following item.

547. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

Urgent *November 2, 1932*

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

With referencte to Government of India message handed to me by you last night I enclose herewith a reply[1] which I request may be sent as an express wire. As you will gather from the wire I have already suspended the restriction on my diet and partaken of my usual food. If it is at all possible, I suggest that this wire to the Government of India may not await the opening of the office of the Inspector-General of Prisons.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(4) Pt. I, p. 267. Also G.N. 3865

548. LETTER TO THE MANAGING COMMITTEE, SUNFIELD SCHOOL

November 2, 1932

I can well agree with much of what you say about the material and the spiritual. Matter without spirit is dead and spirit without matter cannot move. So long as we think of *them* and not *it*, each needs the help of the other. But I must not wander into that very beautiful realm[2].

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 197

549. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

November 2, 1932

CHI. JAMNALAL,

On hearing disturbing news about the condition of your ear, I sent you a wire[3] today. I hope you got it. We are waiting for a reply. I also expect a detailed letter from you. I have of course written to

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The letter, according to the source, also contained a reference to "my friend and daughter Esther Menon".

[3] This is not available.

Dr. Modi and requested him to send a report. May I suggest a few changes in your diet? Bananas are not at all necessary. Nor do I see any need for papaya at present. You should omit pulses for some time from your diet and add fresh grapes or oranges or *mosambis*. It would also be better if you could drink more milk. I have had no letter from you for a long time now. Give all details about your health.

How is Manilal? Give me news about other companions too. We are quite happy here. Manilal, Sushila, Tara[1], Surendra[2] and Sita paid us a visit yesterday. Sushila has improved now. I suppose you know that she had to be kept in Dosibai's Hospital for some time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2902

550. LETTER TO BHIKHIBEHN

November 2, 1932

CHI. BHIKHIBEHN,

I am glad you wrote to me. If you learnt reading and writing in the Ashram itself, then you have made very good progress. And that is as it should be. Still if you are a little more careful, your handwriting, as also your Gujarati, will improve further.

Tell me something more about yourself when you write again. What village do you belong to? Are your parents alive? What is your husband?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1743

551. LETTER TO KESHAV GANDHI

November 2, 1932

CHI. KESHU,

I got your letter. There was no harm in your ruling the sheet, but you should have ruled with a rod, and if you write slowly you can write in straight line even without ruling the sheet. God guides his

[1] Sushila's sister
[2] Sushila's brother

bhaktas. But how can we say that He guides even those who do not pray to Him and never remember Him? We use our reason well or ill according to the tendencies with which we are born as a result of our karma in past lives. God has given to all of us the strength to wipe out those effects of past karma. Anybody who uses that strength can wipe them out. Your Gujarati is very weak. Try patiently to improve it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3283

552. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 2, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

Bhau's fast must have ended now. After reading this, you or Bhau should drop a postcard to me every day without fail. I suppose he took enema daily while the fast lasted. Ask him to give me full details about the period of the fast. I think I have already explained to him what he should do after the fast has ended.

I got your letter yesterday. Manilal, Sushila, Tara, Surendra and Sita came and saw me.

BAPU

[PS.]

Think and decide about Kusum without delay. Give me news about her also by return of post. The following is for Ba. She used to take it while in Sabarmati Jail. You will notice that there are two things, one to be taken by mouth and another for external application.

Atophan—One tabloid to be powdered and divided into three parts. One portion to be taken three times a day. Belladona plaster for local application over the painful part.[1]

If Jugatram's treatment is going on, she need not follow this prescription just now.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I Also C.W. 8263. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Gandhiji gives the prescription in English.

553. LETTER TO GULAB

November 21, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

I got your letter. You have still not told me what your speed in spinning is. Remember to mention it in your next letter.

You should learn the way a letter is written.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1729

554. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

November 2, 1932

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

Your letter and my postcard seem to have crossed. You are being tested fairly severely, and I am sure that you will prove your perfect worth.

Give my respectful greetings to Grandmother. I hope she preserves her peace of mind.

My blessings to Sumati.

All three of us are quite well and often think of you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujrati: C.W. 4799. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarjee

555. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

November 2, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

I got your long letter. Today I will write only about what you should do after giving up your fast, though I think I have already written about it[1]. For the first two or three days, you should eat only fruit and *bhaji.* Then you may start bread, and then milk. Please write to me every day giving full details. This experiment must succeed.

More in the next letter.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6740, Also C.W. 4483. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

556. LETTER TO PRABODHKUMAR AND OTHERS

November 2, 1932

CHI. PRABODHKUMAR, BHUPENDRAKUMAR AND NARENDRAKUMAR,

The names of all of you seem very short. Hence think how to make them longer. A potter would never be satisfied with a badly shaped pot. He will mix up the clay again and again with the unused lot till he gets a well-shaped pot. Similarly, Prabodh should not write to me till his handwriting has improved. He should first learn to draw straight lines, triangles, circles, etc. Sardar, Mahadevbhai and I, all three of us, are well. May all of you grow up and be good men.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12152

557. LETTER TO PADMA

November 2, 1932

CHI. PADMA,

I did write to you on a slip of coloured paper. I have no doubt about that. But what can I do if you, wearing glasses, cannot see the colour? Let me know whether you can see it this time. Just now you should not touch either the *takli* or the Magan spinning-wheel or the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Bhau Panse", 23-10-1932

ordinary spinning-wheel. At present your only care should be to regain your weight and build fine health. Try and learn the correct method of writing accounts. The abcess must have been cured. You say in your letter that Mother teaches you the *Gita.* Does she teach you the syntax, too, of each verse? Is Sarojinidevi's study of the *Gita* so deep? Does she know Sanskrit? Why does she not write to me at all?

There is not much difference between pure love and universal love. Your interpretetation of the latter as non-attachment is perfectly correct.

Write to me regularly.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6140. Also C.W. 3492. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

558. LETTER TO SULOCHANA

November 2, 1932

CHI. SULOCHANA,

I got your letter. If you spin with better slivers, you will spin still finer yarn. Your should feel no shame whatever in asking Premabehn any questions. If you cannot ask a teacher, whom else can you ask? Do, therefore, ask her and let me know what replies she gives. If, even after this, you feel ashamed to ask her, write down the questions and give them to her.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1744

559. LETTER TO NANIBEHN JHAVERI

YERAVDA MANDIH,
November 2, 1932

CHI. NANIBEHN,

I had received Gangabehn's own letter. You have been detained in order to nurse the patients. If we look at it objectively this is wrong. But we cannot always do so. So it is all right that you are detained. Try to free yourself at the first opportunity. But give service without hesitation so long as it is necessary. Do not think that you are

committing any wrong. Hence, get rid of your sadness of heart.

Both of you always have my blessings. May God protect you and may your desire to serve grow from day to day.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari—Pannalal Jhaveri, p. 27

560. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

YERAVDA MANDIR

November 2, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. Do I not know the situation in Sind? I know Sindhi women well. Through love even this situation can be improved. In work, the most important thing is to do ourselves what we want others to do. This you are doing. But remember that Mother *Gita* teaches us to keep on doing work without worrying about the fruit thereof. It is for God to worry about the fruit. Anand remains sad. But the key to happiness is in his own hands and to some extent in yours. If you have faith and serenity and are cheerful, it must infect Anand too. But this will happen once Anand get out. Do you meet Kikibehn[1]?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

561. LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN CHATURVEDI

November 2, 1932

BHAI MADAN MOHAN,

I saw your letter to Narandas. Inform me of Dr. Modi's opinion by wire and ask him to send me full details[2]. Keep me posted with the news. I hear Balkoba[3] has not recovered as yet and that even speaking

[1] Kikibehn Lalvani, sister of J.B. Kripalani

[2] Jamnalal Bajaj at this time was suffering from ear trouble and was under the care of Dr. Modi; *vide*; "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 2-11-1932.

[3] Balkrishna, younger brother of Vinoba Bhave

is a strain for him. Tell Balkoba to write to me. Tell Janakibehn also. We are all well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3090

562. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

November 2, 1932

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

I got your letter after many months. We were all very glad. You have written nothing about your work. Why? Write next time. Surendra, Ramdas and others are here. I meet them occasionally. They are all doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N.6540

563. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

November 3, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

I got your letter yesterday afternoon. It is now 5.15 a.m. We have had the prayer, then the honey, hot water and a pinch of soda. Then we three together prepared my fruit, viz., two *musambis* which Mahadev peeled, two *santras* which I peeled and juice of a pomegranate which Sardar extracted. I added a pinch of salt to the juice and put the *musambi* and the *santra* pulp into the juice. They two went out for a stroll and I ate the salad. It was then 5.15. And I began this letter. The left-hand writing is by way of change and rest for the right hand.

Writing of the fruit salad, I give you my discovery. I find that fruit to produce the greatest effect should be taken by itself and on an empty stomach. You might almost say, the same law applies to juicy fruit that applies to opening medicines. In fact all food should be taken as medicine. The Sanskrit for food and medicine is a common word *aushadh*. Kisen will explain this more fully to you. Medicine need not be nasty to taste; nor is it taken for the pleasure of the palate.

Food should be treated exactly in the same manner, i.e., suitable food in suitable proportion in suitable manner and at suitable times. Here I interrupted the writing for the morning walk and now resume at 6.45.

There are many books on the life of the Prophet. The first place must be given to Amir Ali's *Spirit of Islam*. Then there is WashingtonIrving's *Mahomet and His Successors*, a very well written work. Carlyle's *Mahomet as Hero* is also well worth reading.

I am glad you have Kisen with you. She should get the most out of you and you of her. I wonder if she got my letter in reply to hers. I sent it to the address she gave. Whether she received it or not, tell her never to write a bad hand whether there is hurry or not. This lesson everyone should learn from my misfortune. Bad writing and bad everything is truly *himsa*. We have a rare opportunity of learning the virtue of patience in prison life.

I think your comparison between Jesus and Muhammed is striking and partly true. You have heard the saying comparisons are odious. In my opinion all revolutionaries are reformers and all reformers are revolutionaries. Both were great teachers and each was in response to his age and its requirements. And each made a unique contribution to the advance of mankind. They have an equal place in the universal pantheon. Your description of yourself as an ashramite is perfect. You do not deny Christ but you affirm yourself as an ashramite who denies no teacher. We are not concerned much with the interpretations of the different teachers. Each fashioned his or her own.

I am sending by registered post Amir Ali's book. When you have finished it, post it to Raihana. It belongs to the Tyabjee's.

Love from us all to you and Kisen.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6248. Courtesy: Mirabehn

564. TELEGRAM TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

November 3, 1932

HOME SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

SUPPERINDENT YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON HAS JUST CONVEYED GOVENRMENT OF INDIA'S DECISION[1] ON MY CORRESPONDENCE AND REQUEST THEREIN REGARDING UNTOUCHABILITY. THE DECISION I GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE GIVES ME ALL FACILITIES I HAD HOPED FOR AND I COULD POSSIBLY HAVE EXPECTED. I RECOGNIZE FULLY GRACEFUL MANNER IN WHICH GOVERNMENT PROPOSE TO TRUST ME TO CARRY OUT BOTH LETTER AND SPIRIT OF MY UNDERTAKING THAT NEITHER THESE INTERVIEWS NOR THIS CORRESPONDENCE SHALL HAVE ANY REFERENCE TO CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MATTERS OUTSIDE REMOVAL OF UNTOUCHABILITY. THIS TRUST SHALL NEVER BE ABUSED.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(4) Pt. I p. 289. Also G.N. 3867

565. LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON

November 3, 1932

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

I was not able before now to acknowledge your letter. As soon as I was in a position, the first thing I did was to send you a telegram which I hope you received in due time. I am glad you have written at length. It has enabled me to get an idea of the difficulties that face us. But this movement is taken up in God's name. He is our guide and I am positive that if we do not lose faith in Him, He will remove all difficulties in our path and if we would conduct ourselve in the spirit of service we would not be uncharitable towards those who may

[1] This was contained in a telegram dated November 2, addressed to the Bombay Government, which, *inter alia*, read: "Government of India recognize in view of considerations stated in Mr. Gandhi's letter of 18th and 24th October that if he is to carry out the programme that he has set before himself in regard to removal of untouchability, which they had not before fully appreciated, it is necessary that he

oppose the reforms nor should we be uncharitable to the Zamorin. After all we do not know his difficulties. We must therefore step into his shoes and look at the position even from his point of view. I have always found that this is the quickest method of reaching a goal. We may not take our gaze off the goal for one single minute but in pursuing it we may not judge those who do not see eye to eye with us. After all, as you very properly say, we have but ourselves to die in the attempt to deliver our suppressed brethern from the yoke. Whatever happens, therefore, the people who are for the reform must remain strictly non-violent in every sense of the term. You are anxious to have Pandit Malaviyaji in your midst. Of course he would be a tower of strength if he could come, but his life has been a life of dedication. There are therefore many calls on him. He has aged, he is weak in body though his mind is as vigorous as ever. I know that he will come if he can at all spare himself. But it will be the glory of the workers of Kerala if he can be saved the long journey to the South. However, if you think that his presence is indispensable you will press your suit and I will certainly write to him.

I like your idea of a sister being sent from the North to work there during these precious few weeks that are available to us before the fateful 2nd of January. I have already moved in the matter and hope to let you know whether it is possible for anyone to come.

Do please tell me how Kelappan is doing. Why have I not heard from him?[1]

From a photostat: S.N. 18602

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should have freedom in regard to visitors and correspondence on matters stirctly limited to removal of untouchability. They also recognize that if Gandhi's activities in this matter are to be fully effective, there can be no restriction on publicity. As they do not wish to interpose obstacles to Mr.Gandhi's efforts in connection with the problem of untouchability, they are removing all restrictions on visitors correspondence and publicity in regard to matters which in Mr. Gandhi's own words have no reference to civil disobedience and are strictly limited to the removal of untouchability. They note that Mr.Gandhi contemplates the presence of officials at the interviews, and inspection then and there of correspondence, should Government at any time consider that such procedure is desirable"—Government of India, Home Department, Political, File No. 31/95/32

[1] The letter as found in the source is unsigned.

566. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI DESAI

November 3, 1932

I am becoming more convinced from experience that, as one's faith in God grows, one finds greater joy in doing one's duty, becomes more efficient and vigilant, and also more calm and patient.

Since I have unlimited faith in God, I believe that it is He who enables us to do any work, small or big. I do not know how He does that. If a person who claims to have dedicated his all, body, mind and possessions, to God, believes that he himself has done something, he would be a thief. I would not sin by ignorantly believing that I have done anything. If I sometimes believe that or say that in ordinary conversation in joking or in order not to seem different from other people, it is foolishness on my part. The truth is that I am daily growing more humble and, therfore feel pained whenever I think in pride that I have done something .

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 201

567. LETTER TO PARAMANAND DESAI

November [*3, 1932*][1]

CHI. PARAMANAND,[2]

I have your letter. I am glad that Mother and you have gone there. I very much wish that both of you should now stay permanently in the Ashram. In which form are you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9483

[1] From the S.N. Register

[2] Mahadev Desai's step-brother

568. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

November 3, 1932

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your letter. I can understand your shock at the plight of the Harijans. But there is not need to be agitated. You should get what workers you can and try to improve the condition of the Harijan localities. Meet the Harijan men. Ultimately, ours is only to make the effort to the utmost, the result rests with God. Give up worrying. The *Gita* forbids us to worry. I am awaiting Arun's reply.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1692

569. LETTER TO ALI HASSAN[1]

[Before *November 4, 1932*][2]

Thanks for your letter. You must have seen my statement appealing for Hindu-Muslim-Sikh unity. From here, I can do little more. It is for those who are outside to make the move.

The Hindu, 7-11-1932

570. LETTER TO SOHANLAL SHARMA

[On or before *November 4, 1932*][3]

BHAI SOHANLAL SHARMA,

I have your letter. What is the good of merely removing the signboard? Our aim is to secure temple-entry for Harijans. If Maganiramji does not agree to it you must wait. This temple too will be thrown open when public opinion is sufficiently enlightened. Find

[1] Secretary, Bihar and Orissa Muslim Association
[2] The report in the source bears the date November 4.
[3] The postmark bears the date November 4.

out what temple-goers feel about it. This has to be done peacefully. See Ghanshyamdasji.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SOHANLAL SHARMA
PRESIDENT, HINDU SABHA
PUSHKAR VIA AJMER
(B.B.& C.I. RLY.)

[From Hindi]

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 2827

571. STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY[1] - I

November 4, 1932

For reasons over which I had no control I have not been able to deal with the question of untouchability, as I had fully intended to after the breaking of the fast. The Government having now granted me permission to carry on public propaganda in connection with the work, I am able to deal with the numerous correspondents who have been writing to me either in criticism of the Yeravda Pact, or to seek guidance, or to know my views about the different questions that arise in the course of the campaign against untouchability. In this preliminary statement I propose to confine myself to the salient questions only, deferring for the time being other questions which do not call for immediate disposal.

I take up first the question of the possibility of my resuming the fast. Some correspondents contend that the fast savours of coercion and should not have been undertaken at all and that, therefore, it should never be resumed. Some others have argued that there is no warrant in Hindu religion, or any religion for that matter, for a fast like mine. I do not propose to deal with the religious aspect. Suffice it to say that it was at God's call that I embarked upon the last fast and it would be at His call that it would be resumed, if it ever is. But when it was first undertaken, it was undoubtedly for removal of untouchability, root and branch. That it took the form it did was no choice of mine. The Cabinet decision precipitated the crisis of my life, but I

[1] Following the lifting of restrictions by the Government on Gandhiji's interviews and his carrying on propaganda in connection with anti-untouchability work, Gandhiji issued a series of statements to the Press. This is the first of them.

knew that the revocation of the British Cabinet's decision was to be but the begining of the end. A tremendous force could not be set in motion merely in order to alter a political decision, unless it had behind it a much deeper meaning even unknown to its authors. The people affected instinctively recognized that meaning and responded.

Perhaps no man within living memory has travelled so often from one end of India to the other or has penetrated so many villages and come into contact with so many millions as I have. They have all known my life. They have known that I have recognized no barriers between 'untouchables' and 'touchables' or caste and outcaste. They have heard me speak often in their own tongues denouncing untouchability in unmeasured terms, describing it as a curse and a blot upon Hinduism. With rare exceptions, at hundreds of these mass meetings or at private meetings in all parts of India, there has been no protest against my presentation of the case against untouchability. Crowds have passed resolutions denouncing untouchability and pledging themselves to remove it from their midst and they have on innumerable occasions called God as witness to their pledge and asked for His blessing that He may give them strength to carry out their pledge. It was against these millions that my fast was undertaken and it was their spontaneous love that brought about a transformation inside of five days and brought into being the Yeravda Pact. And it will be against them that the fast will be resumed if that Pact is not carried out by them in its fullness. The Government are now practically out of it. Their part of the obligation they fulfilled promptly. The major part of the resolutions of the Yeravda Pact has to be fulfilled by these millions, the so-called caste Hindus, who have flocked to the meetings I have described. It is they who have to embrace the suppressed brethren and sisters as their very own, whom they have to invite to their temples, to their homes, to their schools. The 'untouchables' in the villages should be made to feel that their shackles have been broken, that they are in no way inferior to their fellow-villagers, that they are worshippers of the same God as other villagers, and are entitled to the same rights and privileges that the latter enjoy.

But if these vital conditions of the Pact are not carried out by caste Hindus, could I possibly live to face God and man? I ventured even to tell Dr. Ambedkar, Rao Bahadur Raja and other friends belonging to the suppressed group that they should regard me as a hostage for the due fulfilment by caste Hindus of the conditions of the Pact. The fast, if it has to come, will not be for the coercion of

those who are opponents of the reform, but it will be intended to sting into action those who have been my comrades or who have taken pledges for the removal of untouchability. If they belie their pledge, or if they never meant to abide by them, and their Hinduism was a mere camouflage, I should have no interest left in life. My fast, therefore, ought not to affect the opponents of reform, nor even fellow-workers and the millions who have led me to believe that they were with me and the Congress in the campaign against untouchability, if the latter have on second thoughts come to the conclusion that untouchability is not after all a crime against God and humanity.

In my opinion, fasting for purification of self and others is an age-long institution and it will subsist so long as man believes in God. It is the prayer to the Almighty from an anguished heart. But whether my argument is wise or foolish, I cannot be dislodged from my position so long as I do not see the folly or the error of it. It will be resumed only in obedience to the inner voice, and only if there is manifest breakdown of the Yeravda Pact, owing to the criminal neglect of caste Hindus to implement its conditions. Such neglect would mean a betrayal of Hinduism. I should not care to remain its living witness.

There is another fast which is a near possibility and that is in connection with the opening of the Guruvayur temple in Kerala. It was at my urgent request that Sjt. Kelappan suspended his fast for three months, a fast that had well-nigh brought him to death's door. I would be in honour bound to fast with him if on or before the first January next that temple is not opened to the 'untouchables' precisely on the same terms as the 'touchables', and if it becomes necessary for Sjt. Kelappan to resume his fast. I have been obliged to dwell at some length upon these possible fasts because of the receipt of hot correspondence from two or three quarters. Co-workers, however, should not be agitated over the possiblity. To become unnerved over a prospect one would not like face very often results in its materializing. The best way of averting it is for all affected by it to put forth their whole strength into the work that would render the occurence impossible.

Correspondents have asked whether inter-dining and inter-marriage are part of the movement against untouchability. In my opinion they are not. They touch the caste men equally with the outcastes. It is, therefore, not obligatory on an anti-untouchability

worker to devote himself or herself to inter-dining and intermarriage reform. Personally, I am of opinion that this reform is coming sooner than we expect. Restriction on inter-caste dining and inter-caste marriage is no part of Hindu religion. It is a social custom which crept into Hinduism when perhaps it was in its decline, and was then meant perhaps to be temporary protection against disintegration of Hindu society, and emphasis on them has turned the attention of mass mind from the fundamentals which are vital to life's growth. Wherever, therefore, people voluntarily take part in functions where 'touchables' and 'untouchables', Hindus and in non-Hindus are invited to join dinner parties, I welcome them as a healthy sign. But I should never dream of making this reform, however desirable in itself it may be, part of an all-India reform which has been long overdue.

Untouchability in the form we all know it is a canker eating into the very vitals of Hinduism. Dining and marriage restrictions stunt Hindu society. I think the distinction is fundamental. It would be unwise in a hurricane capmaign to overweight and thus endanger the main issue. It may even amount to a breach of faith with the masses to call upon them suddenly to view the removal of untouchability in a light different from what they have been taught to believe it to be. On the one hand, therefore, whilst inter-dining may go on where the public is itself ready for it, it should not be part of the India-wide campaign.

I have letters, some of them angrily worded, from those who style themselves sanatanists. For them untouchability, is the essence of Hinduism. Some of them regard me as a renegade. Some others consider that I have imbibed notions against untouchability and the like from Christianity and Islam. Some again quote scriptures in defence of untouchability. To these I have promised a reply through this statement. I would venture, therefore, to tell these correspondents that I claim myself to be a sanatanist. Their definition of a sanatanist is obviously different from mine. For me sanatan dharma is the vital faith handed down from generations belonging even to prehistoric period and based upon the Vedas and the writings that followed them. For me the Vedas are as indefinable as God and Hinduism. It would be only partially true to say that the Vedas are the four books which one finds in print. These books are themselves remnants of the discourses left by the unknown seers. Those of later generations added to these original treasures according to their lights. There then arose a great and lofty-minded man, the composer of the *Gita.* He

gave to the Hindu world a synthesis of Hindu religion at once deeply philosophical and yet easily to be understood by any unsophisticated seeker. It is the one open book to every Hindu who will care to study it, and if all the other scriptures were reduced to ashes, the seven hundred verses of this imperishable booklet are quite enough to tell one what Hinduism is and how one can live up to it. And I claim to be a sanatanist because for forty years I have been seeking literally to live up to the teachings of that book. Whatever is contrary to its main theme I reject as un-Hindu. It excludes no faith and no teacher. It gives me great joy to be able to say that I have studied the Bible, the Koran, Zend Avesta and the other scriptures of the world with thesame reverence that I have given to the *Gita.* This reverent reading has strengthened my faith in the *Gita.* They have broadened my outlook and therefore my Hinduism. Lives of Zoroaster, Jesus and Mohammed, as I have understood them, have illumined many a passage in the *Gita.* What, therefore, these sanatani friends have hurled against me as a taunt has been to me a source of consolation. I take pride in calling myself a Hindu becuase I find the term broad enough not merely to tolerate but to assimilate the teachings of prophets from all the four corners of the earth. I find no warrant for untouchability in this book of life. On the contrary it compels me, by an appeal to my reason and a more penetrating appeal to my heart, in language that has a magnetic touch about it, to believe that all life is one and that it is through God and must return to Him.

According to sanatan dharma taught by that venerable Mother[1], life does not consist in outward rites and ceremonial, but it consists in the uttermost inner purification and merging oneself, body, soul and mind, in the divine essence. I have gone to the masses in their millions with this message of the *Gita* burnt into my life. And they have listened to me, I am quite sure, not for any political wisdom or for eloquence, but because they have instinctively recognized me as one of them, as one belonging to their faith. And as days have gone by, my belief has grown stronger and stronger that I could not be wrong in claiming to belong to sanatan dharma, and if God wills it, He will let me seal that claim with my death.

The Epic Fast, pp. 311-7

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*

572. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

November 4, 1932

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have two letters to answer. Of course your decision is right. Your problem of untouchability is in a way more complex than mine. Untouchability is a dying cult and has an ever-growing army of reformers to deal it death blows. Yours shows no signs of dying and claims many supporters in the name of science. And you have very few workers. But as you and I have repeatedly found, what is difficult for man is easy for God. Anyway, we have but to do our part of work, and I shall pray for success in your work.

I assure you I do not want to kill brother ass. He is in God's safe keeping. If He means to starve him, neither your effort nor mine can save him. For the present he is flourishing on goat's milk and plenty of fruit with some home made bread thrown in.

Gurudev is still at it. That little fast brought me many undreamt of treasures. Gurudev was the richest find. If someone had said "fast to find Gurudev" I should have done it without a second thought. I was dying to find a corner in his heart. Thank God I found it through the fast.

Love from us all.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 976

573. STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY–II

November 5, 1932

A correspondent, in spite of having received liberal education suggests that before Harijans are put on a level with caste Hindus, they should become fit for such reception, shed their dirty habits, give up eating carrion; another goes the length of saying that Bhangis and Chamars who are engaged in what he considers are, 'dirty occupations' should give them up. These critics forget that caste men are responsible for whatever bad habits are to be observed amongst the Harijans. The so-called higher castes have deprived them of facilities for keeping themselves clean and also the incentive for doing so. As for the occupations of scavenging and tanning, they are no more dirty than many other occupations I can name. What may be

admitted is that these occupations like several others are carried on in a dirty manner. That again is due to the high-handed indifference and criminal neglect of the 'high castes'. I can say from personal experience that both scavenging and tanning can be done in a perfectly healthy and clean manner. Every mother is a scavenger in regard to her own children and every student of modern medicine is a tanner in as much as he has to dissect and skin human carcases. But we consider theirs to be sacred occupations. I submit that the ordinary scavengers' and tanners' occupations are no less sacred and no less useful than those of mothers and medical men. We shall go wrong if caste men regard themselves as patrons distributing favours to the Harijans. Whatever is done now by the caste Hindus for the Harijans will be but a tardy reparation for the wrongs done to them for generations, and if now they have to be received in their existing state, as they must be received, it is a well-deserved punishment for the past guilt. But there is this certain satisfaction that the very act of receiving them with open hearts would be a sufficient incentive to cleanliness, and the caste men will for their own comfort and convenience provide Harijans with facilities for keeping themselves clean.

It is well to remind ourselves of what wrongs we have heaped upon the devoted heads of the Harijans. Socially they are lepers. Economically they are worse than slaves. Religiously they are denied entrance to places we miscall 'houses of God'. They are denied the use, on the same terms as the caste men, of public roads, public hospitals, public wells, public taps, public parks and the like, and in some cases their approach within a measured distance is a social crime, and in some other rare enough cases their very sight is an offence. They are relegated for their residence to the worst quarters of cities or villages where they practically get no social services. Caste Hindu lawyers and doctors will not serve them as they do other members of society. Brahmins will not officiate at their religious functions. The wonder is that they are at all able to eke out an existence or that they still remain within the Hindu fold. They are too downtrodden to rise in revolt against their suppressors.

I have recalled these tragic and shameful facts in order to make the workers vividly realize the implications of the Yeravda Pact. It is only ceaseless effort that can raise these downtrodden fellow beings from degradation, purify Hinduism, and raise the whole Hindu society and with it the whole of India.

Let us not be stunned by this simple recital of the wrongs. If the demonstration during the last week was a genuine expression of repentance on the part of caste Hindus, all will be well, and every Harijan will soon feel the glow of freedom. But before this much-desired end can be achieved the message of freedom will have to be carried to the remotest village. Indeed the work in the village is far more difficult than in the big cities where it is possible quickly to mobilize public opinion. Now that there is the All-India Anti-untouchability League, workers should work in co-ordination with that League. And here I would like to recall what Dr. Ambedkar told me. He said, "Let there be no repetition of the old method when the reformer claimed to know more of the requirements of his victims than the victims themselves", and therefore, he added "tell your workers to ascertain from the representatives of the Harijans what their first need is and how they would like it to be satisfied. Joint refreshments are good enough by way of demonstration, but they may be overdone. There is a flavour of patronage about them. I would not attend them by myself. The more dignified procedure would be to invite us to ordinary social functions without any fuss. Even temple-entry, good and necessary as it is, may wait. The crying need is the raising of the economic status and decent behaviour in the daily contact." I must not repeat here some of the harrowing details given by him from his own bitter experiences. I felt the force of his remarks. I hope every one of my readers will do likewise.

Many suggestions have been sent to me for adoption by the reformers. One is a repetition of what Swami Shraddhanandji used to repeat so often, namely, that every Hindu should have in his home a Harijan who would be for all practical purposes a member of the family. The second comes from a non-Hindu friend deeply interested in India's welfare. He says that every well-to-do Hindu should bear the expense of giving, if possible under his own observation, higher education to a Harijan young man or girl so that these after finishing their education might work for the uplift of fellow-Harijans. Both the suggestions are worthy of consideration and adoption. I would ask all who have made fruitful suggestions to pass them on to the newly-established League. Correspondents should recognize my limitations. From behind the prison gates, I can only tender advice to the League and the people. I can take no part in the real execution of plans. They should also recognize that my opinions, based as they must be on insufficient data, and often on second-hand information, are liable to

revision in the light of new facts and should, therefore, be received with caution.

Though it is now past history I would devote a paragraph to the objection raised by a correspondent and even voiced in suppressed tones in the Press. Referring to the political part of the Pact they ask, 'What have you gained by it? The Harijans have surely got much more than the Prime Minister gave'. Well, that is exactly the gain. My objection to the decision was that it gave stone instead of bread. This Pact has given bits of bread. I personally would have rejoiced with Dr. Moonje if the Harijans had got all the seats allotted to the Hindus. That would have been the greatest gain to caste Hindus and Hinduism. What I wanted and what I still want is their complete merger in the caste Hindus and the latter's in the former. It is my deliberate opinion, not likely to be altered by any fresh fact that may come to light, that the more the suppressors give to the suppressed the more they gain. They gain *pro tanto* discharge from overdue debts. Unless the caste Hindus approach the question in that humble, penitent, religious and right spirit, the remaining part of the Pact will never be observed in the spirit that seemed to pervade Hindu society during the fast week.

I would like to tender my congratulations to those Princes who have opened their State temples to the Harijans and have otherwise proclaimed banishment of untouchability from their States. If I may say it, they have thereby done some penance on their own behalf and their people's. I hope that the Hindus residing in these States will carry out the terms of these proclamations and so fraternize with them as to make the Harijans feel that they never were the despised outcastes of Hindu humanity. We are too near the scene of tragedy to realize that this canker of untouchability has travelled far beyond its prescribed limits and has sapped the foundations of the whole nation. The touch-me-not spirit pervades the atmosphere. If, therefore, this white ant is touched at its source, I feel sure that we shall soon forget the differences with regard to caste and caste and religion and religion and begin to believe that even as all Hindus are one and indivisible, so are all Hindus, Mussalmans, Sikhs, Parsis, Jews and Christians, branches of the same parent tree. Though religions are many, Religion is one. That is the lesson I would have us learn from the campaign against untouchability. And we will learn it, if we prosecute it in the religious spirit with a determination that will not be resisted.

The Epic Fast, pp. 318-22

574. LETTER TO ARUN DAS GUPTA

November 5, 1932

I hope you clearly understood what I meant when I said you should cease to think the body as yours.[1] It is God's. But God has given it to you for the time being to keep it clean and healthy and use it for His service. You are therefore the trustee, not the owner. An owner may abuse or misuse his property. A trustee or keeper has to be very careful and make the best use of the property left to his care. So whilst you must not be anxious about the body you have to take every care you can of it. God will take it away when He wishes.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 209

575. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

November 5, 1932

I have endeavoured to explain the position[2] in the Press statement which you must have seen. I wonder whether it gives you satisfaction. I draw, as I have always done, a sharp distinction between castes and varnas. Castes are inumerable and in their present condition they are a drag upon Hinduism. Therefore you and I do not observe caste distinctions. Varna stands on a different footing, and it means profession. It has nothing to do with inter-dining and intermarriage. People belonging to the four professions used formely to inter-dine and even to intermarry and by so doing they naturally could not and did not leave their varna. This is absolutely clear from the definitions of the different varnas in the *Bhagavad Gita*. A man falls from his varna when he abandons his hereditary profession. Today, however, varnashrama is a lost treasure and there is utter confusion. Therefore so far as I can see there is only one varna and that is Shudra. That there is confusion of varnas is humiliating. That we should call ourselves Shudras is no humiliation, for in religion there is none high and none low. Profession of Shudra is just as honourable and necessary as that of Brahmin. Equally so of Kshatriya and Vaishya. But even if it should hurt our pride to consider ourselves as Shudra, there is no escape from it as a moment's reflection will show. This fortunate circumstance if it is generally accepted solves the difficulty

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Arun Das Gupta", 20-10-1932.

[2] With regard to varna and caste distinctions

of ranking the Harijans. To what varna, should they belong on admission? If we say, 'to the Shudra varna' we immediately accept the gradation in varna dharma and the Harijans will have every right to resent the lowest rank being given to them. If we are all Shudras there is no difficulty left. I remember a learned Shastri in 1915 suggesting at a Social Reform gathering in Nellore that there was confusion of varnas and that as originally there was only one varna, viz., that of Brahmins, we should all now call ourselves Brahmins. I could not reconcile myself to that proposition then and I could do so less now. Whilst we can all serve and hence be called Shudras, we do not all posses learning nor do we posses divine knowledge. Therefore it would be untruthful to regard ourselves as Brahmins. If we rob inter-dining and intermarriage of religious significance in the manner it is understood, it becomes purely a matter of option, where we dine and where our children marry. And removal of untouchability would then have exactly the meaning I have always given it. This ought to be quite clear.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 205-6

576. LETTER TO V. RAMJEE RAO

November 5, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 1st inst. Go on with the work with Rama's name on your lips and all obstacles will be removed. You will see the statements on anti-untouchability work that I am issuing from day to day. Please read them carefully and digest them. They should allow enough guidance to the anti-untouchability worker.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4579

577. A LETTER

November 5, 1932

Why do you not serve all Indians, instead of only members of the Modh community? How long will these petty divisions into castes and sub-castes survive? Why do you take interest in a movement which your elders do not like and which can achieve nothing? And please do not believe that the multiplication of pamphlets does any good.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol II, p. 208

578. LETTER TO BINDANI DEVI[1]

November 5, 1932

I was very happy to have your letter. From your humorous manner I can see that your health is now improving. May God restore you to perfect health. If you are benefiting from your stay there, there is no reason to hurry back to Jabalpur.[2]

There is great disadvantage in adopting a son.[3] Men tend to be arrogant and want a share in the father's property. It is another thing that Govinddas has renounced it. The poor daughter cannot even think of demanding any share, and moreover self-appointed fathers like me extract service from the daughters. The question of making provision for the daughter does not even arise. I have warned you of the difficulties involved in becoming my daughter.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 210

[1] Wife of Seth Govinddas

[2] The addressee, a heart patient, was at this time convalescing in Jaipur.

[3] The addressee had jestingly referred to her husband's annoyance at not being considered a son by Gandhiji although she was considered a daughter.

579. LETTER TO HABIBUR RAHMAN

November 5, 1932

I was glad to get your letter. Let me know more about yourself. How much Sanskrit have you studied? For how many years? What is your age? How long have you been teaching? What is the number of boys studying Sanskrit and how many are Muslims and how many Hindus? Are your parents living? If so, what is your father's occupation?

Now I shall attempt to answer your queries. The special feature of Hinduism is that it permits considerable freedom of thought. And since tolerance towards other religions is implicit in it, Hindus may adopt such good points as they find in other religions. Indeed it is their duty to do so. That is why the exegesis of Hindu scriptures isever developing. There is nothing new in what I have said regarding the characters of the *Mahabharata* and the *Gita.* I have taken it from the commentaries. The idea has been very well developed by Sadanand Mishra in his commentary on the *Gita.* I am told that some Prakrit works contain similar views. Not all that is contained in works popularly known as Hindu scritpures is gospel truth, and it is not necessary for the Hindus to accept everything laid down in the scriptures. I am in no way prepared to accept as religion, even though it might have a historical basis, the punishment of pouring molten lead into the ears of the Shudra listening to Vedic recitations. And there are innumerable Hindus who do not accept it as religious injunction. There is one simple test laid down in Hinduism which even a child can understand: anything which is not acceptable to reason, anything which goes contrary to reason cannot be religion; so also anything that violates truth and ahimsa.

Now for the Yeravda Pact. To me at any rate votes were no consideration. To me the question was one of undoing the harm that had been done to Harijans by the declaration of the British Cabinet. What explanation can I give you about my fast? I can only say that it was inspired by God and that I could not have avoided it.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 208-9

580. LETTER TO HANUMANPRASAD PODDAR

November 5, 1932[1]

BHAI HANUMANPRASAD,

I have your letter. It does not matter that it is long. I shall make good use of it. What you write about Devdas becomes you. I still stand by my statements which you have quoted from *Navajivan.* To understand what I say one needs to understand my conduct for I try to avoid saying anything that contradicts my conduct and doing anything contrary to what I say. And I admit my own weakness whenever my conduct is inconsistent with the opinion I express. Here I do not see any inconsistency between my profession and my conduct.

Those who taunt and slander sanatanists commit *himsa* and undoubtedly injure the cause of the removal of untouchability. Thiswhole work is purely religious and should be performed in a religious spirit. Those sanatanists who see untouchability as a part of religion should not be subjected to attacks of any kind. They have as much right to stand firm on their belief as we have to stand on ours. Even in inter-dining, cleanliness and some code of conduct are always desirable. It is a sin to use coercion in this matter or to despise those who refuse to inter-dine. Similarly to force one's way into the temples against the wishes of the trustees is an act of sin. And even if the Harijans should manage to enter the temples in this manner and some Hindus should inter-dine with them, I would never accept it as removal of untouchability. Rather than be a witness to such reform I would prefer death, because I am convinced that complusion can neither remove untouchability nor safeguard Hinduism.

Let me make myself clear: I am not opposed to inter-dining in any way and I consider it *adharma* for anyone to refuse to eat in the company of a person out of contempt for him or on account of his birth. Assuredly it would be an exaggeration to assert that dining together necessarily promotes friendly feeling. But to refuse to dine with someone who is clean and is a vegetarian because he follows another religion or he belongs to another province or is an untouchable, would be *adharma*. It cannot be considered proper to attribute to the untouchables as such insanitation and such other defects and to refuse to dine with them. We must bear in mind one thing if we are to consider the question in a religious spirit. The caste Hindus, having created a class of outcastes, have up to the present day been treating

[1] The date is from *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II.

them in a most irreligious and brutal manner. This has caused uncleanliness and other vices to creep in among them. Sooner or later the Hindus have to atone for it. The time has now come when we can no longer deprive them of temple-entry, etc., by attributing to them vices of which we ourselves were the cause. Our atonement consists in meeting them as they are, allowing them to enter the temples and behaving decently with them. We must have the faith that our contact will exercise a purfying influence on their habits and that they too will make an effort to that end. There is no other way of reforming them and of the caste Hindus doing atonement. It is essential to remember that uncleanliness and similar short-comings found in Harijans are common to lacs of other Hindus who are not prevented on that accout from entering the temples or joining other public institutions. Why should we sit in judgement on the Harijans? Ultimately to whom does God belong? Does He belong to the meritorious and the rich or to thesinners who can hardly lisp His name. We must not judge others. Our duty is to judge ourselves. Read and ponder calmly over what I have written and if still there is anything to ask, do not hesitate to ask me. I want to satisfy you, and that from self-interest for I expect a great deal of work from you in this cause. To me the question is purely a religious one and I want full co-operation from religious-minded people like you.

How long will you be in Ratangarh?

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 18598

581. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

November 6, 1932

CHI. LILAVATI,

How can I help if you misunderstood my letter and made yourself unhappy? The letter which I wrote to calm you only upset you. I have already declared my faith in you. How can I forsake a daughter who became such to me on her own? I believe that I have always protected you, and will continue to do so. Do not worry at all. God will assuredly lead you to your good. But have patience and be calm. Do not be greedy. Continue to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9571. Also C.W. 6543. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

582. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

November 6, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

I got Sharda's letter giving a beautiful description of how you enjoyed the five holidays. I can give only a short reply to it. Harijan work now takes up a great deal of my time, so that neither much time nor enough strength is left to me to write a long letter to you. You also should do whatever service you can to Harijans.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

583. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

November 6, 1932

CHI. JAMNA,

Your letters please me. Keep up the fearlessness which you show in them. I thought you kept better health in Rajkot. If you keep well in the Ashram both mentally and physically, I would not like you to leave it even for a moment.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 861. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

584. LETTER TO KESHAV GANDHI

November 6, 1932

CHI. KESHU,

You have asked me why I felt unhappy to learn that Ba had kept the spinning-wheel for herself. I have so much faith in you and in your impartiality that I readily tell you the reason. I was happy that Santok wished to use my spinning-wheel. Ba's wish to have it made me unhappy because I smelt jealously in it. I have assumed in this that she knew that that spinning-wheel was earmarked for Santok. If my assumption is not correct, I must say that I have done great injustice to Ba. She has suffered so much at my hands in the past that I could not bring myself to ask her about the matter. You will understand that I was doubly unhappy. Santok did not get the spinning-wheel and Ba showed jealousy. But how could we alter what was destined to happen?

Do not feel even inwardly angry with Ba. I know I need not tell you even this. If you have as much goodness in you as I want you to have, go to Ba and say to her: 'I had asked for this spinning-wheel from Bapu for my mother, and Bapu had promised it. I will get a new one made for you. Will you kindly give me this?'

This is worth doing provided you have courage enough. I spin with the slivers sent by you. I find them quite good. There is one defect in them: they are very hard. That was the experience of both of us. From one *tola* of cotton, we should make thirty-two soft slivers.

BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev believes that Ba did not know. I would be very happy if that was so. All the same, I should like you to go and see her.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9465. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

585. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 6, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got the mail from you in due time. I understand what you say about Champa. If it is necessary to get the bungalow painted, you may do so. Let me know how much it will cost to put up a stone fence. At the present time whom else need you ask for permission? The brothers[1] are in no fit state of mind to think about such matters, and so it is I who will have to decide. But as I am dictating these lines Mahadev reminds me about the necessity to secure permission from the Govenment. He believes that that is what you have referred to. I do not think you mean that. All the same, you should ascertain whether such permission is necessary for putting up a stone or brick wall. In that case, we shall have to decide two questions: whether, if the expense is too much, we should incur it, and, if the Government's permission is necessary, whether we should apply for it at the present time.

I hope Mohan's fever has now completely left him. Even then, it will be necessary to nurse him carefully for some time. I cannot overcome my fear about Kusum. She wants to follow our advice, but

[1] Sons of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

cannot control her mind. I have written a letter to you about her and Bhau, which I suppose you will have got before you get this. After writing that letter, I also wrote a postcard to Kusum. If you have not already discussed with Bhau the subject about which he wrote to me, do so now. I have still not heard from Dr. Talwalkar. Ramniklal's and Joshi's letters were received, but they were kept back here. I had detailed information about Jamnalal. His health cannot be described as very good.

8 p.m.

Read my letter to Ratubhai. Persuade him to go to Rangoon immediately. After reading Bhau's letter this is what I think. The food which prisoners get in South Africa is wholesome from the point of view of health and self-control. In the Ashram, we serve at break-fast whole wheat flour boiled in water and with jaggery mixed in it. Here they give to every prisoner gruel of five *tolas* of *jowar* flour with salt. This experiment seems worth trying there. Perhaps we may not be able to digest five *tolas* of flour. We can start with $2^1/_2$ *tolas.* Salt is better than jaggery. Moreover, by replacing jaggery with salt we shall put ourselves in the same condition as the prisoners. Rice may be served on alternate days instead of daily as now. It follows that dal also should be served on alternate days. In the jails in South Africa, they served dal only on two days in a week, and that too with one meal only. Vegetable should be served daily. Mostly it should be leaves. It would be better if only one vegetable was served every day. It may change from day to day. In South Africa, they served in the evening the same kind of gruel which they did in the morning. I am sure that there would be no difficulty if we followed the same practice. Discuss this suggestion with others. The food which the well-to-do outside and we in the Ashram eat certainly does not keep us healthy. In jail a good proportion of prisoners maintain good health. Why cannot we make suitable modifications and discover a diet which would be conducive to self-control and help to pre- serve our health? Just now our chief motive for doing this should be to live in the same way as the prisoners do and thereby learn greater self-control. Even if we adopt these suggestions, we shall retain ghee and milk, which prisoners do not get. I am at any rate convinced that we do not need rice very much, and also that, if we consume milk and ghee, we do not need much dal either. If whole wheat flour, milk and green vegetables are available, we need little else. Yes, I do believe that some fruit in the

diet is essential. It is desirable, and even necessary, that everybody should get sour lemons, tomatoes, radish, carrots, radish pods, etc., in small quantities and uncooked. Besides ghee, we may use fresh oil also. If you feel interested in these sugges- tions, discuss them with other people. Introduce, by way of experiment, such changes as appeal to you. And the rest you may discuss with me in your letters. Actually, I have been thinking about many other changes. I have mentioned here only a few more important ones from among them. If you wish, I will discuss the others too. If you ultimately decide to introduce any of these changes, you will have of course to discuss them with the others. However, if you feel that even a tentative discussion of them will upset the people, you may leave them aside. I would certainly not press you to experiment with any changes, since I cannot be there to help in implementing them. I go on making such suggestions to you, knowing that they are not likely to frighten you.

In all there are 46 letters, 41 tied in a bundle and 5 separate.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8264. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

586. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

November 6, 1932

CHI. RAMA,

I hope you got the letter which I wrote to you after the last post and have started acting as I advised. Not to show anger against anger or speak ill of one who speaks ill of us, but to meet anger with patience, to speak well of one who speaks ill of us and to do good in return for evil—this is dharma and this is the ideal which guides our relations in the Ashram. See that you do not stray from it.

Give me news about Chhaganlal if you have any.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5338

587. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

November 6, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

The burden on me is so heavy now that I cannot possibly write long letters to the Ashram. You will be the first victim. But I know that you will be satisfied to read the long letters I shall be writing in the journal.

After reading the different accounts of the Diwali days there, I felt like flying away from here to be in your midst. But I found that the cage was closed on all sides. So I merely fluttered my wings and remained where I was.

If you increase butter in your diet and improve your health, I think the medicine would be cheap enough.

I know that your responsibilities are increasing. God will protect you. Do not give up faith in yourself. My only advice to you is that you should not lose patience.

Ramabehn has made one complaint, which seems to be justified. You got irritated and told Dhiru, "You may go to Palanpur". You should not speak thus to anyone. One should always be courteous to children. If anyone who lives in the Ashram makes a mistake, we insult him if we tell him to leave the Ashram and go his way. Take care not to speak thus to anyone and win over Ramabehn. Krishnan Nair's conversation with you was interesting. If I had the power of attorney from you, I would have given the very replies which you did.

You have given a good description of Kisen.

Our song[1] is the one that becomes us most. I cannot analyse the dream.

Did you understand Narandas's intention behind the presents which he gave?

There is no uniform rule for all occasions when one may express the emotion in one's heart. I would say that one may do so when prompted by Satyanarayan[2].

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10309. Also C.W. 6748. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] "*Vandemataram*"

[2] God as Truth

588. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

November 6, 1932

CHI. PARASRAM,

I understand about Father. You can write about me on these conditions: (1) Your writing should not interfere with the work there. (2) You should not write at the cost of your health. (3) You should not mention any facts about my life here which the people do not know. (4) You should not let yourself be carried away and become hyperbolical.

If you have realy put your life in my hands, your statement that you have no joy in life has no meaning—or, if it has any, it is this, that you have put your life in my hands unwillingly and, therefore, it has become uninteresting. Anybody who has willingly accepted the pathof service must feel his life to be full of joy, for he finds joy in service itself.

Grams are pulses. No one can digest *roti* made of gram flour. Give up the idea. Wheat, milk and greens—that is the best diet.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7511. Also C.W. 4988. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

589. LETTER TO BABALBHAI MEHTA

November 6, 1932

CHI. BABAL,

Your letter helped me very much. You forgot to mention the name of the village where you have taken up work. Mention it in your next letter. We can meet the Chamars' objection. I think there is substance in it. We should arrange to carry away the carcasses of dead cattle. Mention the name of the village, population etc. We have started this work in the Ashram with that very aim. We can carry away the carcasses in carts. It is only a matter of planning and organization. I am glad that you have started working among the Harijans. Get as much help from the villages as possible and carry on the work. Send me detailed report from time to time. If necessary, you should devote even more time to the work.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9446

590. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

November 6, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

I do not have time to write much today. I hope you got the letter which I wrote after the last weekly post. I am eager to know the effect of the fast. You should know how to resume food gradually after the fast has ended. Please remember that in connecting one's food with dharma one is likely to go to an extreme.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6741. Also C.W. 4484. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

591. LETTER TO SHANTA S. PATEL[1]

November 6, 1932

CHI. SHANTA,

You seem to be as mischievous as ever. A mother who does not listen to her daughter's complaints is no mother; similarly, a daughter who feels shy in opening her heart to her mother, thinking that she is too busy to listen to her, is no true daughter. Even in your long letter to me you have only beaten about the bush. Mahadev will, no doubt, agree to guide you, but do you think you will let yourself be controlled by anybody? You want to work. Well, there is plenty of work even in the Ashram. Besides, the Ashram supports all the three of you. Why then do you worry? If you want paid work, how much more do you expect to earn through it than what you require for your needs? You know that, generally, however much a person may earn, he feels that it is too little. He always wants to earn a little more. It is the aim of the Ashram to cure its inmates of such a desire.

Are you sure in your heart of hearts that you do not want to have a home of your own? I can see even from your letter that whether you know it or not, all your discontent springs from your desire to marry. It is not certain, of course, that you will be happy even after marriage. To marry, however, is to let yourself be bound. Then, the question of happiness or unhappiness does not arise at all. So great is the spell of this wonderful thing, marriage. Ask yourself

[1] Daughter of Shankarbhai Patel

whether you want to marry. If the answer is no, then, you must remain in the Ashram till your headstrong temper and your childishness disappear. If you trust Premabehn, you may talk to her and open your heart. You may write to me, too, or to Mahadev, if you wish. But please write seriously, to whomsoever you write. I was not happy to learn about Kamala's laziness. The remedy I have suggested for Mangala is the only one for her. She seems to have forgotten me altogether.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4067. Also C.W. 18. Courtesy: Shantabehn Patel

592. LETTER TO GULAM RASOOL AND AMINA QURESHI

November 6, 1932

CHI. QURESHI,

I got your beautiful description. I wish both of you to have equally beautiful health.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. AMINA,

I will not tolerate your silence. I wrote to you and asked you to improve your health. I should be very happy if you could pick up courage and try.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6662

593. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

November 6, 1932

CHI. NARMADA,

I got your letter. You should put a point at the end of every sentence. It is called full stop.

You wrote *utasva*. The correct word is *utsav*[1]. You wrote *pootri*. It should be *putri*[2]. You wrote *svikarsho*. It should be *sveekarsho*[3] .

Please do not feel unhappy that Panditji has stopped your training in music. You should tell yourself that he must have some reason for doing that and accept his decision.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2766. Courtesy: Ramanarayan N. Pathak

594. LETTER TO RATILAL SHETH

November 6, 1932

BHAI RATILAL,

I wrote a letter to you at your Bombay address, to which I expected a reply but did not get any. However, I had a wire from Lilavati today. She informs me that Chhaganlal has gone to Thitan, but he accepts Nanalal and you as arbitarators. This lightens my burden. Now I am waiting for your letter. I should like you go to Rangoon as early as possible. It would be very good if Nanalal and you went together. This problem must be solved.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7169. Also C.W. 4663. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Festival
[2] Daughter
[3] Please accept

595. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

November 6, 1932

BELOVED DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

Have you now really decided not to write to me? I must have at least one letter in a week from you. When I do not get it, I fear you may be ill. Did I tell you that I have found a new teacher for me? Her name is Zohara Ansari. She teaches me with great enthusiasm. She writes the Urdu letters very neatly.[1]

Teach me to write a letter [in Urdu], and tell me whom we can address as *Janab* or as *Maulvi* and when. How should I address you? Have I correctly written your address? And mind you do not fall ill. If, however, you do fall ill, then ask Hamida to write to me. Convey my regards to both Father and Mother.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

BIBI RAIHANA
C/O ABBAS SAHEB
CAMP
BARODA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9667

596. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

November 6, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I got your beautiful letter. The handwriting is very good. Keep it up. Do take hip-baths. They ought to benefit you. It is all right your taking on fresh work but do not overdo it. Do only as much as you can and be thankful for it. Or course my blessings are always with you. Have no worry about Kudsia. Narandas is responsible for her, so why must you worry? You write nothing about Dr. Sharma. What happened about his coming?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 262

[1] The letter up to here is in Urdu.

597. LETTER TO KAPILRAI M. MEHTA

[Before *November 7, 1932*][1]

CHI. KAPIL[2],

I had heard about your ill health and so was eager for a letter from you, when I got one. Your first duty now is to regain your health and strength. You should resume work only after you are completely all right. Those who take cover behind khadi work out of fear of imprisonment are hypocrites, but those who though convinced of the importance of khadi work prefer to go to jail out of fear of being looked upon as hypocrites, are conceited. We should avoid both, such hypocrisy and conceit. Hence we may do whatever service we get an opportunity to do from time to time and be content. Your conscience alone can tell you what is best for you now. Listen to what Kakasaheb may say and then do as your conscience prompts you. Do keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujrati: G.N. 3976. Also C.W. 1601. Courtesy: Shashilekha Mehta

598. STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY–III

November 7, 1932

A correspondent whom I know well and who is in sympathy with the movement against untouchability, though he does not accept the whole of the programme, wrote a long letter in Hindi from which I condense the following:

> I fear that the campaign is not being kept within bounds in all parts of the country. I understand in some cases those who claim to be workers in the cause are making use of questionable methods such as resorting to abuse of adherents of the old order, and pouring ridicule on sacred names. Anyone who dares to analyse your sayings or writings or to oppose the

[1] From the contents it appears that this letter was written before the letter to addressee dated November 7, 1932; *vide* "Letter to Kapilari M. Mehta", 7-11-1932

[2] Editor, *Gujarat Samachar* and then *Sandesh*. A student of the Gujarat Vidyapith, he had taken part in the civil disobedience movement in 1930.

extreme forms that the campaign is taking, immediately becomes a butt of ridicule and is labelled a traitor to his religion and even threatened with dire consequences. They do not seem to care for the material or moral welfare of the outcastes. They think that their effort begins and ends with promiscuous dinners and marching crowds of Harijans to temples even in defiance of the wishes to the contrary of the trustees. I am sure you do not want the movement to degenerate into mere spectacular demonstrations calculated merely to wound the feelings of the orthodox without doing the least service to the Harijans.

Out of nearly a hundred letters on untouchability received by me during the past month this is the first letter complaining of workers' conduct bordering on violence. I, however, felt the necessity for giving publicity to the complaint, if only out of regard for my correspondent's warning to workers. I know he will not indulge in wilful exaggeration. There can be no complusion in matters of religion, I should say in any matter. The public know my very strong views against violence in any shape or form against anyone, no matter what his caste, creed, or nationality may be.

Let those in charge of the movement, therefore, understand that even in their impatience to save me from the prospective fast they may not force the pace by adopting questionable methods. If they do so, they will merely hasten my end. It would be living death for me to witness the degeneration of the movement on whose behalf, as I believe, God had prompted that little fast. The cause of the Harijans and Hinduism will not be served by methods of rabble. This is perhaps the biggest religious reform movement in India, if not in the world, involving as it does the well-being of nearly sixty million human beings living in serfdom.

The orthodox section that disapproves of this is entitled to every courtesy and consideration. We have to win them by love, by self-sacrifice, by perfect self-restraint, and by letting purity of our lives produce its own silent effect upon their hearts. We must have faith in our truth and love for converting our opponents to our way. There is no doubt whatsoever that the deliverance of sixty million human beings from age-long suppression will not be brought about by mere showy demonstrations. There has to be solid and constructive programme contemplating an attack on all fronts. This enterprise requires concentrated energy of thousands of men, women, boys and girls who are actuated by the loftiest of religious motives. I would, therefore, respectfully urge those who don't appreciate the purely religious character of the movement to retire from it. Let those who

have the faith and fervour, be they a few or many, work the movement.

The removal of untouchability may produce, indeed it will produce, great political consequences; but it is not a political movement. It is a movement purely and simply of the purification of Hinduism and that purification can only come through the purest instruments. Thanks be to God there are hundreds if not thousands of such instruments working in all parts of India. Let impatient sceptics watch, wait and see; but let them not mar the movement by hasty and ill-conceived interference even though it may be prompted by laudable motives.

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-11-1932

599. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

November 7, 1932

THE SECRETARY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME DEPARTMENT
NEW DELHI

DEAR SIR,

My thoughts having been hitherto concentrated simply upon what threatened to be an impasse about untouchability, I was unable to think of any other matter. Now that it is happily over, I would like to approach the Government of India on certain decisions of theirs which I have not been able to understand.

I should, if I may, like to know why my reply telegrams to Maulana Shaukat Ali[1] and Abul Kalam Azad[2] and to Dr. Ansari, expressing my hope of Hindu-Muslim unity being achieved, were disallowed. I saw in the Press the correspondence between His Excellency the Viceroy and Maulana Shaukat Ali regarding his request for permission to interview me on the same question. If the reasons given to him for refusal to let him see me are also the reasons for disallowing my telegrams I fail to see the connection between my association with civil disobedience and Hindu-Muslim unity. My association with civil disobedience appears to the Government to be bad. But I hope my views on Hindu-Muslim unity and my desire to promote it do not so appear to them. If I am right in my assumption, I can only understand the ban on the interview and my telegrams on the

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Shaukat Ali", 7-10-1932.
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Abdul Kalam Azad", 20-10-1932.

supposition that it is a punishment meted out to me and those who would see me or correspond with me, even on matters that have no connection with civil disobedience, only because I would not set aside the dictates of my conscience and my reason and would not dissociate myself from it. I hope Government of India have not contemplated any such punishment.

The Government of India will admit that as a prisoner I have given the authorities willing co-operation. I should like it also to be intelligent. Wherever it is possible, I should know why particular requests are refused. So far as in me lies I endeavour to make no unreasonable requests. They have been generally either in the interests of my health or of public good as distinguished from selfish gratification.

So far as the telegrams which are the subject matter of this letter are concerned, they do not now need to be sent. But occasions for dealing with public matters outside untouchability and having no connection with civil disobedience will undoubtedly arise. I should like therefore not only to know the reasons for the disallowance in the cases mentioned, but also to know the future policy of the Government on similar occasions.[1]

I remain,
Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstra cts, Home Depart ment, Specia l Branch , File No. 800 (40) (4), Pt. I, p. 305

[1] The Home Secretary in a communication dated November 16 asked the Bombay Government to convey to Gandhiji the following order: "The Government of India have for exceptional reasons permitted Mr. Gandhi facilities for carrying on his programme in regard to the social and moral problem of the removal of untouchability. But his position as the leader of civil disobedience, which is still his avowed programme, makes it necessary to detain him as a State prisoner, and as a prisoner he cannot expect to take part in the ordinary public life of the country or the discussion of political questions, even though they have no connection with civil disobedience. The Government of India therefore are not prepared to give Mr. Gandhi facilities for dealing with such questions." Government of India, Home Department, Political, File No. 31/95/32.

600. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

November 7, 1932

CHI. MANUDI,

You seem to be very lazy and forgetful. After a long interval, you write a letter. You promise that you will not be lazy again, and then forget and break your promise. This is bad. One should always keep one's promise, and should never make a promise which one cannot keep. You should write a letter every Sunday and post it to the Ashram. You should give in it a report of the work done by you during the preceding week, what you studied, what other work you did and how much yarn you spun. I hope you know that we should wear khadi even at home.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 1517. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

601. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 7, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got the mail from you yesterday, the day of the week on which I usually get it. I send with this a letter from Vithal. I have replied to him and told him that he should trust you and forget Liladhar. If his sense of devotion to his father draws him towards Liladhar, he may join him and find out some means of earning. He should not divide his interest between the Ashram and his father. If you think you should reply to anything in his letter, you may do so.

I had a letter from Jethalal too. He does admit his mistake. But he thinks it was unjust to ask him to leave. I see no trace of repentance on his part. I have written to him a rather strong letter and told him that, as long as he does not feel sincere repentance, I would not advise him to return to the Ashram. But I have also said that, if he can satisfy you and if you wished to take him back, I would not oppose you either. I did not wish to waste your time by sending his letter to you, and so tore it up.

Kanti's letter was painful to read. His body seems to have

become very weak. I have, therefore, sent him a wire today and advised him to go to Rajkot. I have advised in the same wire that Prema also should get herself operated upon. Remember one rule of mine. Anybody who gets fever should be given nothing to eat except fruit. If it is necessary that he should be given some nourishing food, he should be given milk only. If this rule is not followed and if the fever afterwards turns out to be typhoid, the consequences can be dangerous.

I also repeat one rule which I have mentioned concerning the experiments in food which are going on. Anybody who finds that a certain item upsets him, may stop eating it for a day or two, and not ask for anything in its place. If this is done, most probably the thing will agree with him afterwards.

I am sure you must have got Madan's book now.

Chhaganlal has not arrived here yet.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8266. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

602. LETTER TO NIRMALABEHN GANDHI[1]

November 7, 1932

Since you do not like the name Kahandas, may I conclude that you do not like the name Ramdas, either? You should then find a new name for Ramdas also—a man of thirty-two. As Ramdas himself is a *das*, he will like a name only if it ends in *das*. But choosing such a name will not help. After all, it is you I should please. Suppose we chose the name Nirmaldas? How would you like it? Or Nirmallal? Send me some other names also which you like. And a new one for Ramdas too.

One should not meet anger with anger or repay ill with ill. One should meet anger with forbearance, repay ill with good, abuse with love and injury with kindness. That is dharma and that is the rule followed in the Ashram. Take care that neither of you depart from it.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 212-3

[1] Wife of Ramdas Gandhi

603. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

November 7, 1932

I am replying to your letter today. I had wanted to reply to it much earlier, but while searching for verses [from the *Gita*] as desired by you, I thought that it would be better if I selected at one time all such verses which you could follow in life without difficulty. I could do that today, and send with this the verses which I have selected. I have mentioned the chapter and number of the verse in each case, so that you can also look up the *Gita* and see where the verse occurs. You will see that all the verses appeal directly to the heart and are easy even for children to understand, and also that the Lord has assured not once but several times that He himself will awaken knowledge in the man who cultivates *bhakti* for Him and will provide his needs. *Bhakti* means selfless service of every living creature, in all of whom dwells the Lord. This includes repetition of Ramanama for one's own peace of mind. Moreover, you will see that even the verses selected from Chapter VI contain what I wish to teach you just now. The verses from Chapter XI are the sublimest part of Arjuna's sublime praise of the Lord. And the last verse of Chapter XVIII explains the reward of studying the *Gita* and of an earnest effort to put its teaching into practice. That is, where there is Shri Krishna, who stands for perfect knowledge, and Arjuna, who stands for action informed with knowledge, everything else will follow. If you meditate over these verses, you will see that one must never worry. A student of the *Gita* ought not to worry any time. We are enjoined to offer up everything as sacrifice to the Lord. Everything means everything without exception. Do you think anybody who does that would carry a load of worries in his head?

You must have discovered by now whether your disturbed digestion is the result of too much thinking and excessive worry, or whether it indicates the necessity of some change in your food. Do not be overambitious, either, in your reading and study. The resolutions which you have formed in your mind will now go on slowly maturing. You will know your strength when you are released. Why should you worry now whether or not you will really know it? There is no need at all to do so. You will find the meanings of the verses in the *Anasaktiyoga*, and in any case Surendra is there with you. Youmay, on your own or on the advice of Surendra or others like him, add some more to the verses which I have selected. I had made a

note of the verses which I wished to select. While doing so in my copy of the *Gita*. I gave them the title"Ramdas Gita". Let us see how much they help you.

I will now tell you about something which will amuse you. Nimu asked me to suggest a name for your son. Sarita has already christened him Kahanji. I suggested Kahandas, thinking that it would go well with your name and would also satisfy Sarita's wish. But I should have known that Nimu would not like a name ending with *das*. She disapproved of Kahandas and asked me to suggest another name, but said that if you approved of Kahandas, she also would accept it. Vasumati, claiming her right, as aunt, to name the child, wrote to me and said that I, being an old man, would naturally suggest a name which an old man would like, but that she would not approve of any such name. She, therefore, asked for a name which would please people in this twentieth century. I have replied to her and told her that it was the exclusive right of an aunt to name a baby and that, therefore, she might give the child any name she liked. I have suggested a few names for her approval such as Fakkadlal, Chhogalashankh, Lakhtarlal, Bardolikar and Sabarmatiwala.[1] In my letter to Nimu, I have suggested Nirmallal, and also told her that, if she did not like the name Kahandas, she was hardly likely to be pleased with the name Ramdas either. I have, therefore, asked her to suggest a new name for you too. I was about to suggest one but checked myself. She should call you Nirmalkant. But we would then be going back to the age of the *Ramayana*, instead of living in the twentieth century, for in that age husbands were known by the names of the wives. Ramachandra was called Sitapati, Krishna was called Lakshmikant and Mahadev was called Parvatipati. We find a number of such instances. If you wish to throw any light on this profound subject, you are welcome to do so.

You ask how I cultivated non-attachment. The thing was very easy for me since everything I did was spontaneous, that is, arose naturally from my devotion to truth. If one is filled with a desire to serve the whole world, one can easily cultivate non-attachment. If I had chosen to serve only our family, I would certainly have been filled with ignorant love and even developed attachment. I would also have suffered because of illnesses and deaths. But suffering runs away from you if you dedicate yourself to the service of the countless

[1] All these are fanciful and extremely funny names.

millions. Over whose illness would you worry and over whose death would you grieve? It would be almost impossible to do either. However, non-attachment does not mean insensitivity, or cruelty, for after all one does wish to serve the people, and, therefore, compassion becomes stronger instead of becoming weaker, and one's efficiency and concentration in work also increases. All these are signs of non-attachment. Moreover, the beauty of the thing lies in the fact that by serving the world, one does not cease to serve one's family, for service of the family is included in service of the world. I am perfectly sure in my mind that I have served Ba, you and your brothers and other members of the family no whit less than I could have done otherwise. The service was pure because attachment was replaced by equality of mind. I am sure that none of you has lost anything in consequence and that I myself have gained much. Thus I found non-attachment easy to cultivate. The word *anasakti* occurred to me when, after I had finished the translation of the *Gita*, Kaka asked me to suggest a title. It is not that I started cultivating non-attachment after realizing that, if one wished to serve the whole world, one could do so only with non-attachment. I understood only gradually that I was acting without attachment. Those around me saw that before I did. When I returned to India, people started describing me as a karmayogi. I used to read and study the *Gita* even in South Africa. But I had not then thought about the meaning of karmayogi. But other people saw all that in my life, and afterwards I also felt that their description had truth in it. All cannot have such good fortune. I had it because I think I have always loved truth right from my childhood. But you need not go into these deep waters just now. At present you should try to cultivate non-attachment without attachment even to that aim. That is, you should do with a light and happy heart any service for which you get an opportunity and read and study at the same time whatever you can manage. You need not worry either for Nimu or for the children. You will now see, with the new eyes which "Ramdas Gita"will give you, that God is there to worry for them and for you. You should not only believe this with your reason, but have faith in it and live accordingly. You will then be happy and learn everything you wish to. Fix firmly in your mind the Lord's assurance in Chapter IX, that even the most sinful man will have become a good man if he cultivates single-minded *bhakti* for Him. The entire world might perish, but anassurance by the Lord never proves false. I think I have written enough.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 214-7

604. LETTER TO KAPILRAI M. MEHTA

November 7, 1932

CHI. KAPIL,

I got your letter. By all means do only as your conscience bids you. Do nothing about which you have a doubt. Neither Kakasaheb nor I nor anybody else can give a confident opinion without knowing all the facts. The final decision, therefore, should be made by the person himself. This rule applies more especially to you. Take only as much work from your body as it can give. Get well soon. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAI KAPILRAI MEHTA
C/O SJT. RASIKLAL VORA
SUB DIVISIONAL OFFICER
GOVT. AGRICULTURE FARM
HADAPSAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3971. Also C.W. 1599. Courtesy: Shashilekha Mehta

605. LETTER TO RAMIBEHN K. PAREKH

November 7, 1932

CHI. RAMI[1],

You wrote after a long time. And that, too, when coaxed by Bali[2]. Am I right? Is it not true that you would never think yourself of writing to me?

I shall be happy if you and your family are happy. I shall welcome your letters even if you write them when urged by somebody else. But Kunverji is not lazy like you. Why does he not write? Ask him to write. Can you meet the expenses of living in Bombay? Do the air and water of the city agree with you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9718. Also C.W. 699. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

[1] Harilal Gandhi's daughter
[2] Balibehn M. Adalaja, Harilal's sister-in-law

606. LETTER TO BALIBEHN M. ADALAJA

November 7, 1932

CHI. BALI,

You wrote to me after a long time. But I don't blame you. I believe you are carrying a heavy burden. I would not find fault with you if, in the midst of all that work, you cannot write purely formal letters. It seems you live only to look after your sister's children. That is also one way, and a good one, of following the path of dharma. Who could have prevented you if you had chosen to be selfish and confine yourself to your own affair? Instead, you have chosen a path of service, however modest. May God bless you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5057. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

607. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[1]

November 7, 1932

In a special interview given to the Associated Press inside the Yeravda Jail Mr. Gandhi emphasized that South India has become the storm centre and explained the reasons why the Guruvayur question was worth the price he had expressed his determination to pay.

. . . Replying to preliminary enquires he said, for the present his campaign would be confined to the issue of a statement but he was in correspondence with the Birla Committee and would meet them at the end of the month when other plans would be decided.

Asked about Dr. Ambedkar's declaration that the temple-entry was not worth risking his life, Mr. Gandhi said :

I do not take the same light view that Dr. Ambedkar does of the temple-entry question. In my opinion it is a deciding test as to whether the orthodox Hindu mind has responded to the call of time or not and whether it is prepared to purge Hinduism of the blackmark of untouchability. Nothing in my opinion will strike the imagination of the Hindu mass mind including Harijans as throwing open all public

[1] The interview took place in the Superintendent's office. Also present in the room were Mahadev Desai, Pyarelal and P. Kodandarao of the Servants of India Society.

temples to them precisely on the same terms as caste Hindus. I can understand Dr. Ambedkar's comparative indifference, but I am not thinking of a few cultured men belonging to the depressed classes, but I am thinking of the uncultured, dumb many. After all Hindu temples play a most important part in the life of the masses and I who have been trying all my life to identify myself with the most illiterate and downtrodden cannot be satisfied until all temples are open to outcastes of Hindu humanity.

This, however, does not mean that I belittle in any shape or form other disabilities under which they are labouring. I feel about them just as keenly as Dr. Ambedkar. Only I feel the evil is so deep-rooted that one must not make the choice between different disabilities, but must tackle them all at once. That is the burden of my correspondence with the Anti-untouchability League also. The Guruvayur temple has come in my way by accident and I have no option left to me. After all, Mr. Kelappan is in my opinion one of the noblest of India's silent servants. A distinguished public career was open to him any day. He is a well-known worker of Malabar but he deliberately threw in his lot with unapproachables and invisibles. I had the pleasure and honour of working with him at the time of the Vykom Satyagraha[1]. Long before that time and ever since he has been devoting himself to the uplift of suppressed humanity. As the public know, after long waiting he made a fixed determination to give up his life in an attempt to have the Guruvayur temple opened to Harijans.

I discovered, however, a flaw in his fast and I immediately pointed it out to him and although he believed that victory was within sight, he nobly responded and let it slip from his hands; he retraced his steps and suspended his fast. When I telegraphed to him[2] I bound myself to fast with him if resumption became necessary on the termination of three months' notice he gave. I should be an unworthy servant of India and an unworthy comrade if I now flinched and abandoned Kelappan to his fate, but there is something more than the life of a comrade or my own personal honour. Everyone recognizes that the depressed classes question has to be solved now or never, not at any rate within the present generation or several generations to come. There are thousands of men and women like me who cling to

[1] This took place in March-April 1925 and was aimed at having certain roads thrown open to untouchables from which they had been barred.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to K. Kelappan", 29-9-1932.

Hinduism, because they believe that there is in it the amplest scope for mental, moral and spiritual expansion. This bar sinister put upon nearly sixty million human beings is a standing demonstration against that claim. Men like me feel that untouchability is no integral part of Hinduism. It is an excrescence, but if it is found to be otherwise, and if the Hindu mass mind really hugs untouchability, reformers like me have no other option but to sacrifice ourselves on the altar of our convictions.

I have patiently and silently listened to the taunt that such a fast is tantamount to suicide and I don't believe it to be such. On the contrary for men with deep religious convictions there is no other outlet for the soul than this final sacrifice when every other effort seems perfectly hopeless. This campaign therefore in my opinion is an acid test of what I have claimed for Hinduism and I can only repeat what I said at the Round Table Conference that Hinduism dies if untouchability lives and untouchability has to die if Hinduism is to live and today I make bold to say that there are hundreds if not thousands of Indian men and women who would lay down their lives even as Kelappan and I propose to do to vindicate the claim for Hinduism that it is not a narrow creed or dogma, but a living faith, designed to satisfy the most exacting conscience of the deepest thinker and the godliest person.

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-11-1932

608. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

November 8, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

During the fast week there were two telegrams received from Egypt, one from Madam Zaghloul and the other from Nahas Pasha. I cabled suitable replies to both.[1] During that week all the important telegrams and my replies to them were handed to the Press. But just at present I observe that garbled versions of the telegrams mentioned above in a somewhat ludicrous form are going the round of the Press as if they were the true versions. They appear to be translations from Egyptian vernacular newspapers. I should like to supply the Press with true copies. Will you please ascertain from the Government whether

[1] *Vide "Telegram to Hemprabha Das Gupta"* 23-9-1932.

these copies may be supplied by me to the Press? Of course they have reference to untouchability. I enclose herewith the text, barring Nahas Pasha's wire which for the moment I cannot trace among my papers. The cutting herewith from the *Indian Social Reformer* containing the garbled version will give some idea of the original.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. III, p. 353

609. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

November 8, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

You have been receiving on my behalf the *Vedic Magazine* a Hindi monthly, *Purushartha*—a Marathi monthly, both religious publ-ications, *Indian Review* of Madras—Hon'ble Mr. Natesan's monthly and possibly other magazines.

Now that I am permitted to do propaganda work regarding untouchability, I shall want these and other publications in order to enable me to keep myself in touch with public opinion as expressed in the Press and to combat, where necessary, criticism that may appear therein.

You seem to doubt whether these papers and magazines that are already coming and which may come in answer to my appeal may under the recent decision of the Government of India be given to me. Will you please obtain the Government interpretation in the matter as early as possible?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. III, p. 363

610. LETTER TO RADHAKANT MALAVIYA[1]

November 8, 1932

What has affected me in your letter is the information you gave me about Messrs Chintamani and Kunzru. You have therefore to help me to get their confirmation and their agreement or to leave me free to get it.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 217

611. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

November 8, 1932

DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

You will have seen that Guruvayur is being made the centre of attack by the self-styled sanatanists. There is not much time to lose. I do not know how far your health will let you organize the battle on behalf of the reformers. To the extent it is possible I would like you to put your great Sanskrit learning at the disposal of the cause. I am sure you have been thinking of the thing yourself. But I could not restrain myself from sending you a line when I am writing to many friends about the impending storm.[2]

It gives me great joy that I am able to take some work out of the Servants[3] here.

I do hope you are better.

With love,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, p. 243

[1] The addressee had written: "Fasting is the worst form of coercion. No one is satisfied with the Pact, not even Chintamani and Kunzru."

[2] According to the source, Sastri, writing to a friend, said he had "written two letters clearly stating my dissent from his views and my disapproval of his threatened fast". Sastri also said he favoured the temple-entry of the untouchables.

[3] Members of the Servants of India Society

612. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

November 8, 1932

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Your letter was delivered to me just now. It was immediately read out to me and I am now dictating this reply. May you have, on your birthday, all the blessings you desire, basketfuls of them. Why should we fear death, which comes to all sooner or later—to the great and the humble, to the white and the black, to human beings and other creatures? Why grieve over it either? I often feel that death must be a less painful event than birth. I leave aside the pain which the baby suffers in the mother's womb before birth. But all of us know the suffering in this world which commences from the moment of birth. Consider the helplessness of the baby at the moment of birth—every baby as helpless as any other. On the other hand, if our life has been pure we shall have no such experience at the moment of death. A baby does not seek knowledge, nor can it have any. At the time of death, on the other hand, it is not only possible for one to be in a state of union with the Brahman but we actually know that many persons die in such a state. Birth always means entering a world of suffering, whereas death can be complete deliverance from suffering. We can thus think from many points of view about the beauty and the benefits of death, and can also meet our death in that spirit. I bless you that your death may be of this type. This wish includes everything else which is for your good. The two friends join me in wishing this. Even after knowing all the facts about your health, I adhere to the view which I have expressed. If you are permitted to obtain your food at your own expense, I see nothing wrong in your doing so. We should regard our body as a trust, and it is our duty as its trustee to take care of it to the best of our ability. You should not ask for or accept even a grain of jaggery to gratify your palate, but I see nothing wrong in your trying and getting even the costliest variety of grapes if you need them as medicine and if they can be had. You need not, therefore, feel unhappy if you have to eat such food. If we can, we should also help others who may be placed in similar circumstances to secure such food. In my view you don't require all the wheat that is supplied to you. I also think it desirable for you to banish jaggery altogether from your food. Your body does not require it at all. It is better to take innocent honey instead. Mixing any form of sugar in milk affects its digestibility. It would be better to increase the quantity of milk instead. You are doing right in eating butter and not olive oil. The olive oil available in India is not always pure, and of course it cannot be fresh. Moreover, olive oil does not contain the vitamins

which butter does. The vegetables which you eat should always be green vegetables. Potatoes and similar vegetables are practically a substitute for *rotli.* They contain starch. You require very little starch, and whatever little you require you will get from wheat. You should not eat pulses in any circumstances. If you eat a sufficient quantity of butter, two pounds of milk will be enough for you. Whether you should increase or diminish their quantity will depend upon your weight at the time. You should go on increasing the quantity of either or both to as much as you can digest, till your weight becomes steady. Among the green vegetables, gourd, pumpkin, the different kinds of edible leaves, cabbage, cauliflower, tender bean-pods and brinjal are considered good. The wheat flour should be whole. If the wheat has been properly cleaned before it is ground, no portion of the flour should be thrown away. Among fruits, grapes, *mosambis*, oranges, pomegranates, apples and pineapple are beneficial for health. Some experiments being made in America indicate that a meal should not consist of a variety of articles. Fruit has the most nourishing value if it is eaten alone, and the best practice is to eat it when the stomach is empty. There is even a saying in English to the effect that fruit in the morning is gold and in the afternoon silver. Our first meal, therefore, should consist only of fruit, though there would be no harm if it is preceded by a glass of warm water the first thing in the morning. If you can get permission to live all the twenty-four hours of the day in open air, it would be worth while to secure it. It would help you if you can slowly do breathing exercises in open air. You need not at all be afraid of the cold at night. It will have no harmful effect on your health if you have properly covered yourself up to the neck and wound a piece of cloth over the head so as to keep the ears covered. It is essential that the lungs should be supplied with the purest air the whole day and night. You should expose your body to the sun in the morning for as long as you can bear. Discuss all these suggestions with Dr. Contractor and then do what seems best to you.

I hope Madhavji is happy and comfortable in every way. Give my blessings and regards of all three of us to the co-workers who are with you in the jail. Probably you know what is going on here in regard to untouchability. You can send any suggestions which occur to you. You will be permitted by the authorities there to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2903

613. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 8, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter, but did not get Bhau's. The thieves who carried away mattresses, etc., must have been from among those who knew the Ashram. Cannot the things lying in the red bungalow be removed? When the thieves have become neighbours, how long will you go on increasing the number of persons keeping watch at night. Is it not possible to meet the thieves themselves? Do Ratilal and Champa understand all this?

What is the total loss?

What happened to Radha all at once?

I have little faith in injections.

BAPU

[PS.]

We have a book in the Ashram entitled *Vedamen Brahmacharya*. Ask Prema to find it out and send it to me.

From a microfilm to the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8267. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

614. LETTER TO KIKI LALWANI

November 8, 1932

It is true that my companions know no such thing as rest. What can one do? God himself has said in the *Gita* that He does not relax even for a moment, that He needs neither sleep nor food nor drink. How then can any rest be granted to us?

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 218

615. A LETTER

November 8, 1932

A serious obstacle in the way of those treading the path of truth is the difficulty of deciding what to accept as Shastras. What is a man of simple faith to do when he comes across a plethora of books written in Sanskrit and passing for *smritis* and also utterances that

contradict them? For this reason I have chosen for myself the most universal doctrine of Hinduism, namely, that any conduct that is contrary to truth and ahimsa is to be eschewed and any book that violates these principles is not a Shastra.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 218

616. STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY—IV

November 9, 1932

A correspondent writes as follows :[1]

> I consider your last fast to have been coercion of the worst type. I do not want to conceal from you my feeling about Yeravda Pact. I know my view is shared by public men who, because of their respect for your personality and because of your detention in the Yeravda Prison, did not like to say anything in public against your action in bringing about the Pact. I consider the Pact to be a public misfortune which would never have been brought about but for your unfortunate fast. I know of a very esteemed friend of yours who said that if the refusal had not meant your certain death he would never have given his consent to the Pact. There is a large number of thinking Hindus who regret having had to accept the Pact, as they think that there would have been no necessity for it if you had only accepted in London what you have done now.
>
> In a statement you have said, "It was against these millions that my fast wass undertaken." I take it that was your intention but in actual result it was not these millions but others who had no course left open but to suspend their judgment and feeling in the matter and agree to terms to which nothing in the world would have made them agree, if their refusal had not meant losing your valued life. It was their spontaneous love that brought about the transformation inside of five days and brought into being the Yeravda Pact. If this is a correct statement of facts, will it not be more correct to say that it was only the fear of your death by starvation which brought about the Pact? Remembering the circumstances under which it was brought about I think you will recognize that much need not be made of it; if the Pact is not carried out in its fullness, much less would there be any justification for you to embark on a second fast.
>
> It gives me no pleasure to have to criticize a public man of your eminence, but the occasion is such that to keep quiet will not be quite honest.

[1] The correspondent was Radhakant Malaviya; *vide* p. 380, and "Letter to C. Y. Chintamani", 11-11-1932.

Your assumption that the masses whom you have addressed on the question of untouchability have accepted your views on that question, simply because they did not publicly oppose your views, is not correct. Because of their respect for your great personality and because of your political leadership they would hear in silence and, however much they may be opposed to your views, as I know many of them are, at least in Northern India, they would still consider it their duty to give you a respectful hearing. As you are aware, these people are not very vocal and they do not go out of their way to oppose the views of those who differ from them, and specially if the views are expressed by one of your eminence.

I have removed from the letter unnecessary paragraphs and names of public men referred to by the correspondent. It would be a matter of great grief to me if public men the correspondent mentions really suppressed their own opinions and accepted proposals which but for the threat of my death they would never have endorsed. If they acted as the correspondent suggests, they rendered a great disservice to the country and failed to appreciate the purely religious character of the fast. In public life one has often to perform the painful duty of sacrificing friends for the sake of truth or public weal.

And what was there in the Pact that these friends considered it to be highly objectionable? Surely not reservation of seats; not joint electorate, nor the method of nomination of candidates by primary election, as it has been called. They could not object to the resolution restoring to Harijans social and religious rights, of which they have cruelly remained dispossessed for ages. The only thing remaining is the number of seats allotted to them, but more than that was given to them by the Rajah-Moonje Pact, and as I have already said in a previous statement, caste Hindus could never give Harijans too many seats, if they really believed them to be their own kith and kin, whom they had hitherto kept under their heels. Sorry indeed is the outlook for them if what the Pact has given them is regarded as an undeserved concession wrung from reluctant caste Hindus by my fast.

Therefore, if the information given by my correspondent turns but to be true, I would hold my fast to be doubly justified. I should not care to live as a member of a society which is chary even of doing a small and tardy measure of justice to its outcastes, who are so through no fault of their own, and my fast was trebly justified if the further statement made by my correspondent is true that millions of whom I have been writing as a matter of fact never endorsed my

vehement condemnation of untouchability and that they remained silent or even signified approval purely out of their respect for my "great personality" or my "political leadership". Life in the midst of such falsity would be a burden to me. The sooner public men and people realize the necessity of resisting and asserting themselves even against so called Mahatmas like myself, the better it would be for themselves, the country and for men like me. I should gladly fast even to have such a cleansing of the atmosphere.

My correspondent's is a timely contribution to the movement. Those who are in it should know the implications both of the movement and the prospective fast. I can only repeat with all the emphasis at my command that my fast is not intended to coerce anyone to act against what he may consider to be the best interests of society or country. My fast is not against persons whom I can name or number. It is intended imperceptibly and unconsciously to affect and agitate the millions whom I have in mind and between whom and me, I believe, an indissoluble bond exists. How such fasts work I do know from personal experience gained more than once.

My correspondent suggests that "there would have been no necessity for the Pact if I had only accepted in London what I have done now". I must not rake up the past beyond saying that I could not have done in London what it was possible to do in India. The correspondent although he was in London at the time simply does not know all the facts that are in my possession.

Let not the public, however, run away with the idea that I have many letters protesting against the Pact. So far as I can remember, this is the only letter of its kind. There are two or three letters complaining of coercion but none suggesting that, therefore, anything was given to Harijans that was not their due, and against this one letter I have hundreds of letters and telegrams warmly approving of the fast itself and the Pact. My closest associates both here and in the West with one or two exceptions have endorsed it and themselves felt its spiritual effect. But according to my wont and in order to keep the cause I espouse free from any harm, I publish letters containing hostile criticism, especially when it comes from men whom I know to be guided by friendly motives, as my correpondent undoubtedly is.

As I was handing in this statement, I received a wire from the ever-vigilant secretary of the All-India Anti-Untouchability League, pointing out that the total population of untouchables in India is not

sixty millions but under forty. I am sorry for having given an incorrect figure, although Sjt. Thakkar corrected me even during the fast.

The Bombay Chronicle, 10-11-1932

617. TELEGRAM TO THE ZAMORIN OF CALICUT

[*November 9, 1932*][1]

IT WAS NOT WITHOUT PAIN I READ YOUR STATEMENT[2] IN THE PRESS TODAY. MY OPINION IS THAT THE ASSURANCE GIVEN BY YOU TO KELAPPAN WAS AN ASSURANCE GIVEN TO THE PUBLIC. WHETHER KELAPPAN WAS DISCOURTEOUS OR NOT I AM SURE YOU WILL NOT REFUSE TO CARRY OUT A PUBLIC DUTY BECAUSE THERE IS NO APPRECIATION ON THE PART OF A PUBLIC WORKER. I WOULD THEREFORE URGE YOU NOT TO TAKE UP THE IRRECONCILABLE ATTITUDE YOU HAVE TAKEN IN YOUR STATEMENT, BUT IF YOU BELIEVE THAT TEMPLE ENTRY BY AVARNA HINDUS IS A LONG OVERDUE REFORM YOU WILL SET ABOUT OVERCOMING EVERY DIFFICULTY.

GANDHI

The Hindu, 12-11-1932

618. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

November 9, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter as usual.

As against your loss of weight of one pound I show increase of nearly 3 lb., having shown nearly 102 lb. today. It is due to my ability to take more milk. I turn a portion into what may be called cheese and take it with bread. How long I shall be able to do justice to it I do not know.

You should get rid of your constipation at once. And for this fruit should be taken on an empty stomach. No other food should be taken for two hours thereafter. The second thing to do when one is

[1] From entry in "Diary, 1932" under this date

[2] This was the Zamorin's letter published in *The Hindu*, 7-11-1932; *Vide* "Interview to "The Hindu", 12-11-1932.

constipated is to avoid protein foods, i.e., bread and also milk, and take green vegetables cooked alternately with fruit. That was how I built up my body after the fast. And latterly Vallabhbhai has been correcting his constipation, heaviness and cough by such non-nutritious fat-free and starch-free food. It sustains one's weight fairly well. Dried fruit may be taken of course. It may be wise not to mix dried fruit with fresh. Thus one may take four meals, one consisting of say pomegranate and *musambis*, the other of vegetables, e.g., *dudhi* and tomatoes, third of dried figs or dates or prunes soaked in water over-night and warmed or cold, the fourth may consist of the same vegetable or pumpkin and lemons squeezed on it or tomatoes repeated or it may consist of salad made of lettuce and tomatoes or grated carrots. Such food repeated for a few days should remove obstinate constipation. Sometimes mere omission of bread or milk may answer. I take it that your bread is real wholemeal bread and when it is chapati it is made of unsifted whole-wheat flour. The wheat has to be thoroughly cleaned before it is ground. The whole of the bran is absolutely necessary if one is to get the fullest advantage from wheat. These observations are simply to be used as a help and must be corrected from your own experience.

Yes, I am devoting practically the whole of my time to untouchability work. The elbows continue to give pain when used in a particular way. Most of my letters I now dictate. For the few I write I use the hands alternately. This seems to answer the purpose. I have cut down the spinning just now to 100 rounds from 200. Of course there is not the slightest cause for anxiety over this pain in the elbows. They need rest and nothing else. With returning strength and the filling in of muscle, probably the pain will disappear.

I am glad Kisen is still with you. Let her be most rigid about your pronunciation.

We are all well and all send you both love.

BAPU

[PS.]

You will be interested in the enclosed.[1] Wonderful how even such a thing should come to me. I am one of the family.

From the original: C.W. 6249. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9715

[1] This is not available.

619. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

November 9, 1932

DEAR MOTIBABU,

Just now I must dictate my letters. Your book has been received. Mahadev knows Bengali quite well. The book was received today. He has already commenced reading it and fallen in love with it. He will read to me extracts from it as soon as possible.

Your question about varnashrama you will find somewhat answered in one of the statements issued to the Press. In my letter to Sureshbabu I never said that varnashrama was in any shape or form an evil, but I did say that caste was a social evil and had to go some day or other. I draw a sharp distinction between varna and caste. All I have written before on this subject I hold by with perhaps this exception: I have vaguely expressed in my previous writings what I have come to see now clearly, namely, that the four varnas are no longer in actual working order, even as the four Ashrams are not. Hence at the present moment there is only one varna in existence. We are all Shudras and if we can bring ourselves to believe this, the merger of the Harijans in *Savarana* Hindus becomes incredibly simple and in course of time, we might be able to reconstruct the old varnas. I also seem to see more clearly than before that the law our ancestors discovered was not that the varnas were four and were always to remain four, but that everyone had to follow his own varna which is most nearly expressed by the word profession in English. It was no part of varnadharma to regulate dining or marrying, varna determined the profession. Custom naturally grew up of people of the same varna restricting marriage to that varna. Restriction on inter-dining was of a much later growth, but marrying outside one's varna did not entail forfeiture of the varna. I hope to develop my idea of varnadharma in the statements I am issuing, but I think I have said sufficient in my letter to enable you to understand my position.

Love to you all of the Sangha.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 11039

620. LETTER TO VALJI AND MAHENDRA DESAI

November 9, 1932

BHAI SHRI VALJI,

I got your note written on a slip of paper. Vallabhbhai went through every page of your booklet carefully and said to me: "What came upon Valji? Can anyone who cares write this kind of thing? Only a Christian can. If Valji wants to write, he should write something new which our people can understand." Mahadev has not offered much criticism as he has not gone further than reading the chapter headings, but he will read the book now. I will let you know his opinion after he has read it. Personally, I do not think any book should be given free. If, however, a person who requires a particular book cannot afford to buy it, you may supply a copy to him from your stock.

BAPU

CHI. MANU,

This time your handwriting was better. Do write to me regularly.

BAPU

SHRI VALJI DESAI
P. O. SANJOLI
SIMLA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7443. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

621. LETTER TO FULCHAND B. SHAH[1]

November 9, 1932

BHAI FULCHAND,

This time I got your letter later than I had expected, but I am relieved now that I have got it. I had heard about the illness there, and hence I was all the more eager to hear from you. I do get reports from Ahmednagar. All the prisoners are now out of danger. They are being looked after well enough. Gangabehn and others even visited them. All the three of us are well here. I have almost regained my strength.

[1] The source does not indicate which Fulchand Shah this is. However, the reference to Ahmednagar suggests Fulchand Bapuji Shah who was at this time a prisoner is Visapur jail. There had been some conflict between the political prisoners and jail authorities there.

Devdas is in Prayag and Pyarelal is in Bombay. Jamnalalji keeps moderately good health. He is suffering from some ear disease, but there is no cause for anxiety. Ba is at Sabarmati.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9466. Courtesy: Chandrakant F. Shah

622. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 9, 1932

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I enclose a letter from the mill-hands. I have advised them to see you and to act as you suggest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32773

623. LETTER TO SECRETARY, ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY LEAGUE, AHMEDABAD

[Before *November 10, 1932*][1]

We should not place the Depressed Classes in a position where they might be insulted or injured. We should place ourselves in such a position for their sake. . . .

This proposal[2] is excellent but if public opinion is opposed to it, I see the risk involved in this experiment.

The Hindu, 10-11-1932

[1] The report in the source bears the date November 10.

[2] The addressee in his letter had informed Gandhiji that the League proposed to appoint persons belonging to Depressed Classes to serve drinking-water to passers-by on public roads.

624. LETTER TO RAMANANDA CHATTERJEE

November 10, 1932

DEAR RAMANAND BABU,

I thank you for copies of the annual reports...[1] for the improvement of the Backward Classes of Bengal and Assam. Glancing through the page of the reports I note the steady progress made by the . . . [2] in the work of amelioration. May its efforts bear increasing fruit from day to day.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 9581. Courtesy: Santa Devi

625. LETTER TO BHUDEB MUKERJI[3]

Rewritten *November 10, 1932*

DEAR FRIEND,

Though you have absolved me from having to write to you in reply to your letter, I must not avail myself of your kindness. You have evidently ascribed to the workers against untouchability much more than they have themselves claimed. No one has ever thought of destroying varnashrama dharma. And you are wholly wrong in thinking that the movement is carried on by or is confined to the English speaking people. It is a mass movement in which even utterly illiterate men and women are taking part with religious zeal, and are you sure that varnadharma and Ashrama dharma are being observed to any appreciable degree by even those who regard themselves as orthodox? Again I do not know what you wish to convey by the expression "levelling", and you write of forcible levelling. I do not know that anybody has used force to level down anybody else, whatever the latter expression may mean. And you are surely libelling the untouchables when you ascribe to them vices from which the touchables, you evidently claim, are free. Not all the untouchables trade in toddy or liquor dealing, and what is worse-drinking or selling intoxicating liquors? Have you any personal experience of the private

[1] Illegible in the source

[2] *ibid*

[3] An ex-lecturer of Calcutta University; he had written to Gandhiji on October 30 (S.N. 18596).

life of untouchables? Do you consider them to be guilty of the hideous immorality of the lives of many touchables who disgrace themselves and Hinduism? And who is responsible for whatever is bad about untouchables? I refrain from saying more. From your letter-head I see that you are yourself a distinguished product of English learning and have obtained an *upadhi* for your knowledge of Sankhya and Vedanta. I have never seen anything in either Sankhya or Vedanta that teaches a man to hold in contempt his fellow-beings as you seem to do in almost every line of your letter. And my grief is enhanced by my strong suspicion that you have never cared to study the lives of those unfortunate fellow-Hindus whom you and I and other Hindus who have arrogated superiority for themselves have ground down to dust. I invite you to read the signs of the times and join me in thinking that purification of Hinduism will not come through arrogance and slander of innocent people.

Yours sincerely,

BHUDEB MUKERJI
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 18609

626. LETTER TO G. S. NARASIMHACHARI[1]

November 10, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter of 23rd ultimo was received in due course, but for reasons you now know I was unable to reply earlier. Students, if they will work heartily and intelligently, can do much in spite of the orthodox opposition. They can go to the quarters of the untouchables, fraternize with them on equal terms, understand their difficulties and remove all those in their power to remove, bring them medical help, teach them the laws of cleanliness, conduct night and day schools for them, invite them to their games and take their children for outings. Those difficulties which they cannot remove, they can bring to the notice of the local branch of the newly-established League or write to the central body, make a thoroughly critical and scholarly study of their conditions and publish it in pamphlet form. This is the most

[1] Secretary of the Andhra University College Telugu Association, Vizagapatnam

effective and the easiest way students can serve without interfering with their studies. But if they have to face opposition from elders even in doing this silent service, they must stand their ground, without being irritated and without weakening.

Do please let me know whether you have begun this work and if you have, how many are doing it.

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-12-1932

627. LETTER TO K. NATARAJAN[1]

November 10, 1932

From what I can see and feel, the battle at Guruvayur is to attain all-India importance and orthodoxy is to concentrate all its fire upon the temple. I should welcome it. It should result in much greater purification than I had expected. But that means that all that is best in Hinduism has to consolidate itself and resist the orthodox onrush. I am anxious therefore for you, if it is possible for you and if you feel with me, to throw yourself heart and soul into the movement. But I observed from your writings on the last fast that you were opposed to such fasting. I hold very strong views about it and feel that it is not only a legitimate weapon, but that for one who will not resort to violence in any shape or form it becomes obligatory under given circumstances. And now that I am free to receive visitors in connection with this movement I would like you to see me any time next week, at, say, 1 o'clock, so that we can discuss the ethics of penitential public fasts and see whether we cannot agree. You know me enough to feel sure that if in the course of our discussion I discover my own error I shall have no hesitation in retracing my step.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 221-2

[1] Editor, *Indian Social Reformer*

628. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

November 10, 1932

DEAR GURUDEV,

You must have seen the statement I have circulated to the Press.[1] I want your blessings, if I can have them, for this further effort. I do not know whether you feel that this effort is, if possible, purer than before. The last fast had a political tinge about it and superficial critics were able to say that it was aimed at the British Government. This time if the ordeal has to come, it will not be possible to give any political colour to it. You will of course recall that the last fast was broken on the clearest possible notice that I might have to resume it if there was any breach of faith by the so-called caste Hindus. The prospective fast about Guruvayur temple is absolutely a point of honour. It is being made by the orthodox section the centre of attack and is being given an all-India significance. I rather like it. But it makes it all the more necessary for the liberalizing influences to be collected together and set in motion in order to overthrow the monster of untouchability. I want your whole-hearted co-opeartion if you feel as I do.

I hope you are keeping well.

With deep love,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4635. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, pp.220-1

629. LETTER TO AMBALAL[2]

November 10, 1932

I agree with most of your views about untouchability, but the reasons which you have given for refusing to join the Committee have not convinced me. I do believe that Hindus who are known to be orthodox should join such a committee. If, however, as a result of waiting for such Hindus to join, the very work for which the Committee has been formed is held up, we should do without them, and, irrespective of whether or not the Committee includes such

[1] The reference is to "Statement on Untouchability-I"; *Vide* "Statement on Untouchability", 4-11-1932.

[2] Presumably Ambalal Sarabhai

Hindus, those who have a religious disposition and want religious reforms as well must join the Committee.

The sense of responsibility which a person feels and the obligation which he accepts in joining a body, he would not feel or accept if he did not join it, however much he tried.

And now about the point on which we differ. Though I admit the usefulness and necessity of meetings, processions, speeches, conferences, etc., I believe that without constructive work we shall not succeed in eradicating untouchability completely nor will large numbers of Harijans learn to hate it. It is certainly true that such work will require an army of voluntary workers, both men and women, and much money. If, however, you recognize the imperative necessity of the work, you should not refuse to attempt it merely out of fear that we might not get the needed money and such a large number of workers. I think that, in a great movement like this, we cannot ignore a single aspect of the task.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 222-3

630. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI AND BENARSILAL BAZAJ

November 10, 1932

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your letter. The right method to follow for writing letters or doing any other work is to fix the time for every work. If you really wish to write every week, then you should fix in your mind a day and an hour when you will write. Then the thought will not be a burden on your mind and you will be able to write regularly without any difficulty. What is the name of the vaid from Mathura? Do you get cow's milk there? Is the ghee made from cow's or buffalo's milk?

CHI. BENARSI,

I saw your signature. Father writes to me every week. How is his work prospering? What does he do in Dublin?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9144

631. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

November 10, 1932

CHI. MANILAL,

You returned from Madras very soon. It was very good that you stayed with Sir Kurma. Sastri is a man of few words. Don't believe what people may say against him.

You will find with this a letter from Pragji. Read it and think over it. Do not get angry with him. Try to understand his point of view and then write to me. I will write to him only after I hear from you. You may observe that what he writes is quite the opposite of what you complain.

If you have promised to return there in December, you must start making preparations.

Reply to me by return of post.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4800

632. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

November 10, 1932

BELOVED DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

I hope you received my postcard. My fear has come true. Since you write to me regularly, whenever I do not get a letter from you I feel uneasy. When you are not well you can ask Father or Mother to write a postcard. Whatever may happen, I certainly do not wish that you yourself should write to me when you are ill. How did you fall ill? Did you overwork? You ought not to fall ill. I hope you are better now. You need not reply to this letter yourself. It will do if Father drops me a postcard. I have not received Hamida's letter so far. *Khuda Hafiz.*

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: S.N. 9666

633. LETTER TO ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY LEAGUE, UDIPI

November 11, 1932

I am quite clear in my mind that there is no occasion for you to start satyagraha just now. You have to cultivate public opinion in your favour by the gentlest means. You should see whether the temple-going population is in favour of Harijans being admitted to the temple on the same terms as the other, and you should also remember that temple-entry is not the only thing to be done. You have to ascertain the condition of untouchables in your neighbourhood in every walk of life, make a scientific study and pass the results of your study on to me, alleviating at the same time such distress among the Harijans as you are capable of doing.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 229

634. LETTER TO C. Y. CHINTAMANI

November 11, 1932

I have no doubt that you guessed who the author of the letter referred to in the fourth statement[1] on untouchability was. The names referred to therein were those of your good self and Pandit Hridayanath Kunzru. Radhakant, the writer, has now given me permission upon my request to disclose his name to you and Pandit Kunzru. Before I say anything, it is due to you that I should know from you whether you actually felt coerced by my fast and acted against your conscience. I am writing to Pandit Kunzru also. [2]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II. p. 235

635. LETTER TO BASANTI DEVI DAS

November 11, 1932

If you are at all following the papers you must have noticed that all the dark reactionary forces are being brought together to impede the progress of purification. It is therefore time for all that is clean and uplifting in Hinduism to combine together and make a united effort to overthrow the many-headed monster of untouchability. Will

[1] *Vide* "Statement of Untouchability—IV", 9-11-1932.

[2] This letter is not available, but according to the source the contents of the two letters were identical.

you respond? If you will not summon up courage enough to write a letter, I dare not accuse you of laziness. I hope you will have the courage to send me a wire. It was only last week that I invited Urmila Devi[1] to go down to the South in answer to a summons from Kerala. She at once wired consent. Will you do likewise? I do not say go down South, but I do want you to promise to take a due share in the uplift work. The field of work shall be chosen by you unless you will leave that also to me.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 228

636. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

November 11, 1932

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your latest letter telling me how in ecstasy[2] you would have run to the telegraph office to wire to me and how you subsequently realized that that would have been wrong if only because we are poor people and all the money we had, had to be held in trust for God's service. And I had your long love letter which you had sent to the Ashram address.

Well, the fast was well worth it even for enabling Menon to give up smoking. The value lies in having given up a thing which had so possessed him. I know that many young men and young women, old men and old women were moved to such restraint and self-denial during the fast week. It shows that it was from God.

I saw and we all admired the group photo with Andrews in it. It was very good. And the bare-bodied Tangai. She looks a perfect picture.

I expect in your next letter to see the account of your visit to the diseased sister.

I had a long letter from the Sunfield School people giving me an account of the new buildings.

You must not trifle with your body by putting into it things that will not suit it. You cannot build your body on pulses. You do not need them at all. Your diet must consist largely of milk, eggs (since

[1] Sister of C. R. Das

[2] At the news of the termination of the fast by Gandhiji

you do take them and it is well you do) and whole-meal bread and fruit and green vegetables, salads, tomatoes, spinach, marrow and the like. Even as a soldier keeps his arms clean and in order so must we keep our arms (God-given bodies) clean and in perfect order.

I have almost regained my strength and am taking normal food. Mira writes regularly every week and is keeping well. Devdas is much better but is overworking himself and so is Pyarelal. Mahadev of course is with me. Tilakam is at the Ashram. He is a good young man. He is not strong in body.

Enclosed is a letter[1] for the young friend from Denmark. Ba is at the Ashram. I think she has aged more than I have, though she is wonderfully active. Her mind gets easily tired. She worries too much.

Love to you all and in addition kisses to the children.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 115. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child*, pp. 95-6.

637. LETTER TO S. M. MICHAEL

November 11, 1932

I should be sorry, indeed, if my prospective fast should deprive anyone of his or her intellectual freedom. Anyway, I have declared in emphatic terms that it is intended only to affect the mass mind. Naturally friends and co-workers who believe in the removal of untouchability will be stirred to action. That is no matter for regret. Nevertheless, if you have a clear call of conscience you will, of course, fast.[2] But you will hardly expect it to move me if I continue to believe that I am also obeying God's call.

The Hindu, 21-11-1932. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, p. 236

[1] This is not available.

[2] The addressee had announced his intention to commence, from December 1, a counter-fast as a mark of "disappointment and protest" against what he described as "coercive fast" on the question of temple-entry decided on by Gandhiji.

638. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

November 11, 1932

MY DEAR RAJBHOJ,

I was very glad to be able to see you and the friends who came with you and I feel thankful that my advice proved acceptable to you. I am quite sure that no satyagraha should be attempted regarding temple-entry, nor any fast undertaken by anybody, whilst all attention is being concentrated on Guruvayur. Nor should anybody think of undertaking sympathetic fast, should it become necessary for Sjt. Kelappan and myself to do so. My advice however to suspend satyagraha whilst all energy is being devoted to Guruvayur temple does not mean that no other effort should be made about opening the other temples. That has to be made unremittingly. But just now it is a point of honour with caste Hindus to do so. It will be time enough for Harijans to think of it when it is clearly established that caste Hindus will do nothing to secure the opening of public temples to Harijans. Fortunately every day brings the news of some temple being spontaneously opened somewhere to the Harijans and from all accounts that I have been receiving such effort is being continued though undoubtedly not with the same enthusiasm that marked the fast week. What however Harijans may do to facilitate the work of caste Hindus is to take up, so far as it is possible, internal reform such as observance of the laws of cleanliness, and giving up carrion and drink. I have discussed such things exhaustively with you.

The matter of opening facilities for the technical training of Harijan children and offering scholarships to deserving Harijan youths, I propose to discuss with Seth Ghanshyamdas Birla and the other members of the A.I.A.U. League[1] when they come here to see me.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 787.Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol II, pp. 233-4

[1] All-India Anti-Untouchability League. The name was later changed to Harijan Sevak Sangh.

639. LETTER TO SHYAMJI MARWADI

November 11, 1932

BHAI SHYAMJI,

I got your letter. I am glad that you wrote to me. I have been discussing with the chief workers the problem of educational institutions in Bombay. Keep me constantly informed and also have patience.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5206

640. A LETTER

November 11, 1932

Punjabhai is still with us. I do not miss him because I do not feel that he is no more. All this time he used both to receive and to give. Now he only gives.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 212

641. LETTER TO G.D. BIRLA

November 11, 1932

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter, you too must have received mine. As we shall be meeting fairly soon, I will not write at length. There is nothing urgent to be communicated.

I have received the League's scheme. I will give you my opinion when we meet. I have written[1] to Bhai Ambalal requesting him to join the League. We must take up simultaneously both propaganda and constructive work. The League cannot leave out propaganda simply because I am doing it. What I may be doing is a different matter. But this too we shall discuss at length when we meet. I am certain that the League cannot take up the matter of inter-dining. Kerala needs the services of a lady from the north. After consulting Rajaji I have sent a wire to Urmiladevi that she is to go. I feel that her

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Ambalal", 10-11-1932.

expenses should be borne by the League. For the present I have sent her some money from the funds I had recently received. I had intended to pass these on to the League. If the League approves of Urmiladevi being sent, it will pay her the rest of her expenses. If however it is decided that the League's programme cannot envisage this kind of expense we shall see what we can do.

I am maintaining fairly good health. The weight too is now satisfactory. No doubt I miss some of my former energy. I am sure I shall soon recover it. You must build up your body. I do not agree with what you write about soda bicarb.[1] A doctor friend once assured me that a daily intake of soda can keep off rheumatism. It is beneficial in other ways too. I have never experienced any harm from it and in any case, a little soda is always present in the water.

I have gone through the pledge. I have not studied it very carefully but it seems all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 7903. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

642. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

November 11, 1932

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

I have your letter, I was so pleased. I like Tandonji's suggestion the best. Your feild is literature and service to the cause of Hindi. If while doing this you can also do Harijan service, you will have done all. I do not see any reason for reviving *Patit Bandhu*. At the present moment our conduct is the best form of propaganda. There are so many newspapers; your articles will always find a place in them.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

You can certainly come if you wish to meet me.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1072

[1] Quoting Dr. Kellogg's opinion, the addressee had suggested that Gandhiji should give up soda bicarb as its daily use was harmful to the stomach and caused nausea.

643. INTERVIEW TO P. N. RAJBHOJ[1]

November 11, 1932

RAJBHOJ: The untouchables are trying to enter the temples by all possible means. Suppose the methods of persuasion and mutual goodwill fail, do you think that the untouchables should resort to satyagraha? If they may resort to it, what should be the method adopted?

GANDHIJI: Under the present circumstances I don't think that satyagraha is at all advisable or needed. All efforts should be concentrated on Guruvayur. Harijans should for the time being watch what the caste men are doing. Whatever happens about Guruvayur is likely to happen to many if not all the other temples.

R: In the case of the entry into the Parvati temple all methods have been tried, including the attempts of Sjts. Jamnalal Bajaj and Mr. N. C. Kelkar. May I know how to get out of this fix?

G. I am aware of your efforts and satyagraha in regard to the Parvati temple. Even regarding this I should advise you to wait till the Guruvayur matter is settled one way or the other. In the meanwhile you can carry on negotiations with the Parvati Trustees and create public opinion.

R: Now that Government has permitted you to do untouchability work unfettered what objections have you to come out and devote yourself to this cause alone?

G. I cannot accept my freedom under any restrictions. But this is a matter I must not discuss.

R: We learn from the correspondence published in the papers that you have announced a fast in suit with Mr. Kelappan. Suppose any "touchable" or untouchable announces another fast in connection with some other noteworthy temple, say Kashi Vishveshwar, may I know whether you will be prepared to stake your life in every such case? Do you think that your person will be able to cope with this anomalous situation?

G. I have given my word to Mr. Kelappan, and I am in honour bound to start my fast with him on the 2nd of January, 1933. If somebody else starts a similar fast in respect of another temple, I do not hold myself bound to join him. Every case has to be examined on

[1] The text reproduced here is from a report in *The Bombay Chronicle* which gives both questions and answers. Some of the answers are reproduced from a photostat of a typewritten copy containing corrections in Gandhiji's own hand.

its merits. And in no case should workers resort to fast without full deliberation and justification.

R: What are the obligations and duties of the "touchables" and untouchables with regard to indiscriminate use by both of public wells or such other common sources of water, tanks, etc.?

G. The untouchables have as much right to have water from the public wells and tanks as the "touchables". The matter, in case of any difference of opinion should be settled amicably by persuasion and negotiation.

All the difficulties which cannot be solved locally should be brought to the notice of the All-India Anti-Untouchability League. I will of course do what I can from here.

Whereas in the matter of the use of public wells, there is a clear legal right, the untouchables can seek the protection of law-courts, but this method does not help downtrodden people. The strong will always get round or disregard the law. The chief thing therefore is by conciliatory attitude to create favourable local public opinion.

Mr. Birla and Mr. Thakkar are coming to Poona to confer with me about this problem and the methods to be adopted for its solution. You should whole-heartedly co-operate with and help the League. [1]

R: It is the desire of the depressed classes that the League should give precedence in spending its funds on technical education for the depressed classes, such as tanning, leather goods, rope-making, etc., in foreign countries as well as in India instead of spending it on other propaganda. So on behalf of these classes I have to request you to press this point of view for the promotion of this idea.

It is also our desire that common hostels be opened where "touchables" and untouchables will stay together.

G. I agree to your proposal about spending some of the funds of the League in scholarships for the untouchables and for technical education such as leather tanning, making leather goods, rope-making, etc., in India as well as foreign countries. I am wholly with you when you suggest the opening of common hostels for the "touchables" and the untouchables and trying to get the existing ones thrown open to the latter. The League will surely try and use its influence in this matter.

R. Don't you think that the campaign against untouchability should be

[1] The questions to which the foregoing three paragraphs are answers are not available.

confined to villages, the centres of orthodoxy, rather than to towns where people are educated and broad-minded to a little extent at least? Are not some women workers necessary to do propaganda work among village women ?

G. Yes, the campaign against untouchability should primarily be carried on vigorously in the villages. In the East Khandesh District and several other Provinces and districts movement of this sort has been already commenced. Women should come forward in large numbers to work for this movement.

This is a very fine question. The untouchables should help much. They should observe common cleanliness, should refrain from eating the meat of dead animals and from drink, send their children to schools, remove untouchability among themselves and generally carry on such reform from within as is possible. [1]

R. Do you feel the necessity of incorporating the question of removal of untouchability as one of the Fundamental Rights in the new constitution of India? That is to say, will it be proper to consider it a criminal offence if any Hindu is treated as an untouchable at any public place and, further, will it be proper to punish him under a law for wounding his religious susceptibilities? If time comes, will the Indian National Congress be prepared and try to embody this principle in the constitution ?

G. Removal of untouchability should undoubtedly be one of the Fundamental Rights in the new constitution of India. Yes. It should be considered a criminal offence to treat any Hindu as an untouchable. The Congress will certainly be prepared to embody this principle in the constitution.

They should see that violence is not resorted to in furtherance of their objects.

I don't think that the untouchables only are supposed to do the work of sweepers, of carrying carcases, mending shoes, etc. Cases of ill-treatment because of the so-called untouchables refusing to do any work of this sort should be referred to the local agent of the League.

Nobody should object to inter-caste dinners, but no force should be brought to bear upon persons who don't wish to attend such functions. But I am of opinion that it would not be wise to make inter-caste dinners an item in your programme.

I should not advise the untouchables to leave their trades and professions.[2]

From a photostat: G.N. 796 and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 17-11-1932

[1] The question to which this is an answer is not available.

[2] The questions to which the foregoing four paragraphs are answers are not available.

644. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

November 12, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

May I hope that you will sincerely help in Harijan work? Please come and see me when you get the time. For this work, anybody can see me. I think you probably saw Urmiladevi, Deshbandhu Das's sister, during the week of the fast. She will be going to the South in a few days for this work. But she will come and see me before going. She will stay in Poona for a day or two. Will you kindly put her up? She is likely to come on any day during the next week. Kindly inform me by telephone or postcard, or come and see me personally.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4825. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

645. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVLEKAR

November 12, 1932

BHAI SATAVLEKAR,

What part are you playing in the task of eradication of untouchability? In the face of the attacks by self-styled sanatanists we need the religious organization of those who wish to purify and ennoble Hinduism. I do not mean an organization such as the ones we see coming up these days. But the reformers should declare their considered opinion in one voice. I feel that no reformer should sit back out of lethargy or hesitation. Please do whatever you consider proper in this matter.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 4768. Courtesy: S.D. Satavlekar

646. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

November 12, 1932

Asked whether he had seen Lord Sankey's latest appeal in the *Newsletter*, Gandhiji observed :

So far as I can understand Sir Samuel Hoare's answer in the House of Commons to a question, letters dissuading me from civil disobedience can pass the jail precincts and be delivered to me. But I know that I have no authority to send replies to such letters with the assurance that they will leave the precincts of the jail. Under the limits that I have accepted or imposed upon myself, so far as these interviews are concerned, I may not give any reply in answer to questions by reporters or even by private friends who may visit me.

When reminded that Lord Sankey wanted a gesture and asked how he would get a reply, Gandhiji said he would gladly read Lord Sankey's appeal with all the respect and attention that an appeal from him would demand. The Mahatma observed :

After having read it if I come to the conclusion that I can make a useful reply, it will be duly submitted to the Government for despatch to Lord Sankey.[1]

Gandhiji answering my question regarding Guruvayur, told me that the next fast to be declared was dependent upon Mr. Kelappan's. He said :

I can conceive of circumstances when I have to take it up independently. Supposing Mr. Kelappan dies, God forbid it, I shall have to carry out the fast. I have taken an extreme illustration. Ordinarily speaking, I do not expect to take it independently of Mr. Kelappan.

Asked what his attitude would be if Mr. Kelappan felt satisfied that steps were being taken in right earnest, and the temple was bound to be opened shortly, though not exactly on January 1st next, say, one or two weeks later. Gandhiji said :

Supposing Mr. Kelappan comes to such a conclusion, he will have to reason it out with me and satisfy me that there is no occasion for fasting. Let me say I do not expect Mr. Kelappan ever to say that. But assume that Mr. Kelappan weakens and wants to wriggle out of the vow taken before God and man; if there is the slightest suspicion of that character, I would require some satisfaction for my reason. But I have always believed Mr. Kelappan to be inflexible in his

[1] For Gandhiji's reply to Lord Sankey, *Vide* "Cable to Lord Sankey", 13-11-1932.

determination and unbending in the good cause.

Questioned whether he had examined, as was his wont, the Guruvayur temple-entry question in all its details before deciding on a fast, Gandhiji replied:

I cannot pretend that I have examined the question in all its details. I have entirely depended upon Mr. Kelappan having done so though, generally speaking, I have been undoubtedly satisfying myself as to the correctness of the claim for opening the temple to the untouchables. But if anyone were to ask me whether I have seen the trust-deed, if there is any, of the Guruvayur temple or whether I have critically examined the customs or conditions governing the management of that celebrated temple, I must confess my ignorance.

When his attention was drawn to the Zamorin's latest letter published in *The Hindu* dated 7th November that the Zamorin stood no longer bound by the assurance given to Mr. Kelappan when he commenced his fast, to go into the question if in the meanwhile Mr. Kelappan broke his fast, as Mr. Kelappan had rejected the offer and continued the fast, Gandhiji observed :

The Zamorin's charge against Mr. Kelappan of discourtesy and his refusal on that ground to carry out his assurance appears to be incomprehensible. His assurance though given to Mr. Kelappan was quite an assurance to the general public and it amounted to a declaration that he was alive to the duty that rested upon him, of making every endeavour to find a way out. As a responsible person, and as a trustee, in my opinion, he is bound, irrespective of Mr. Kelappan's conduct, to carry out that assurance.[1]

The trustee of a Hindu temple is not merely to guard the customs or so-called privileges of a particular caste, but to guard the purity of Hinduism itself, and to respond to the daily-growing spiritual aspirations of the Hindus. Such a trustee cannot afford to be ruffled by what one or even many men may say against him.

And so far as the legal aspect of the question is concerned, I know the Zamorin's contention, but the legal difficulties are there to be combated and overcome when they stand in the way of a great moral reform. Therefore neither the Zamorin nor any other per- son can be allowed to plead legal difficulties as a sufficient answer against the opening of the temple. If public opinion itself is morally justified, a responsible trustee like the Zamorin is expected to remove the legal obstacles in the way of the moral demand of the public being

[1] *Vide* also "Telegram to the Zamorin of Calicut", 9-11-1932.

satisfied.

Q. Would you postpone your fast, if efforts are made to amend the Act to admit untouchables into the temple, but the legislature is not able to find time to get the Bill through before 1st January?

A. Supposing it is physically impossible to secure an amendment of the Act before 1st January, that would be sufficient justification for the postponement of the fast. That presupposes that all the steps that could be taken have been taken, and that humanly speaking, there is every chance of the legislation going through. That again presupposes that the public, trustees and everybody have to be of one mind.

Asked whether he would entertain the suggestion to invite a body of orthodox sanatanists to meet him and attempt to reach an amicable settlement of the issue, Mahatmaji said :

I would consider it a presumption to invite a body of great people to come to me. It is out of respect to them that I say that I won't invite them. I don't invite these people not because I do not want to see them, nor because I think they can have nothing to say to me. I refrain from inviting them out of regard for their status. But if I discover that if I only issued an invitation to them they would gladly come, I would have no hesitation in sending such an invitation.

Asked how he was disposed towards those who sympathized with the temple-entry movement, and at the same time wanted to respect the feelings of the orthodox sanatanists that the so-called untouchables should be allowed to go into the temples as far as the *Dhwajastambham* and the deity brought down there on festive days for *darshan*, the Mahatma said :

This movement is to remove untouchability. Therefore, the untouchables should enjoy precisely the same rights as the "touchables", but that does not mean that they should have access to the sanctuary, which is only open to those who are in charge of the ceremonial. If non-Brahmins are prevented from going because they are considered untouchables, then undoubtedly that untouchability must go. But if there is no black mark of untouchability against them, but it is only the Brahmins who are allowed to go as far as certain parts of the sanctuary, I should have nothing to say against it as a part of this movement. The question of the exclusive rights of the Brahmins in connection with religious ceremonies stands on a different footing, and if that exclusiveness has to go, that question will have to be separately examined. I am not prepared, off hand, to condemn the practice of reserving certain functions exclusively for a

particular class. This won't be a matter of right, but of duty, to be performed by a body of experts, having the required qualifications.

Referring to Mr. V. V. Srinivasa Iyengar's remark that temple-entry is being urged as generous gesture of political conciliation, Gandhiji observed :

I had the privilege of knowing Mr. V. V. Srinivasa Iyengar even before he became a Judge of the Madras High Court, and it is astonishing to me how temple-entry can, by any stretch of imagination, be regarded as a political question. I simply cannot understand it.

Concluding, Gandhiji said :

If Hinduism could cure itself of the age-long curse without outside intervention the cause of Hinduism would be better served. Non-Hindus will immediately begin to think that there is something very vital in Hinduism. I feel that the removal of untouchability is such a tremendous reform in Hinduism that it must have a reaction throughout the world. It will be a total denial of my existence if my method of approach proves a failure.

At the end of the conversation, I found Gandhiji exhausted. When I expressed my doubt as to whether he would be able to successfully undergo another fast, Gandhiji remarked that he was hopeful of it.

To another remark as to what he would do if the Madras Council rejected the proposed Bill, the Mahatma remarked :

I don't anticipate such a failure. A House which adopted Dr. Subbaroyan's resolution will not reject a Bill amending the present Act if introduced. I don't believe in dying before my days.

Gandhiji is pleased with the Madras Council's action in passing Dr. Subbaroyan's resolution and is watching what steps are taken to give effect to the same.

The Hindu, *14-11-1932*

647. LETTER TO CHAMPABEHN R. MEHTA[1]

[Before *November 13, 1932*][2]

If you think that being appointed one of the trustees[3] will make you free, you are mistaken. The word "trust" means responsibility, and I would certainly welcome a person becoming a trustee of his own property. He then ceases to be the owner of his property. He must then live within the commission which as a trustee he gets from the property. This is the meaning of trust. I am not talking here about trustees who abuse their office and misappropriate the property. I am only explaining here the duties of a trustee. You say that you want to acquire strength to stand on your own feet. Do you understand what that means? To stand on your feet means that you will not depend on your father's earnings, nor on your father-in-law's, nor your husband's but subsist on your own earnings, however small they may be. You have never shown evidence of such strength in you. Nor did I ever observe any such desire in you. . . .

In the past I have congratulated persons whose houses had been burgled. My attitude is the same in this case. We have no moral right to possess a single pie. Whatever we possess is as good as stolen property. Since all people in the world are thieves, possessions are not looked upon as theft. That, however, should not blind us to the truth. Is it any matter for wonder if other thieves rob us of some of the stolen property in our possession? The lesson you should draw from this theft is that you should not possess things which would tempt a thief, and that you may use the few things which you possess as long as they are not stolen. If you learn that lesson from the theft, you will have lost nothing but on the contrary gained wisdom.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 243-4

[1] The source does not identify the addressee. The reference to the theft in the letter however indicates that this was written to Champabehn Mehta, wife of Ratilal Mehta, whose house had been burgled. *Vide* "Letter to Ratilal P. Mehta", 13-11-1932.

[2] Though the source gives November 14, the reference to this letter in "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", before 13/14-11-1932, suggests that this was written before that letter.

[3] Presumably of Champabehn Maganlal Trust

648. CABLE TO LORD SANKEY

November 13, 1932

LORD CHANCELLOR

LONDON

PAINED READ CABLED SUMMARY YOUR APPEAL TO ME THROUGH "NEWS-LETTER".[1] CAN PRISONER MAKE GENEROUS GESTURE TOWARDS HIS JAILORS? IT IS HARDLY FAIR FOR MINISTERS AND VICEROY CRITICIZING AND MISREPRESENTING, MAY BE UNCONSCIOUSLY, MY ACTIONS OR ATTITUDE WITHOUT GIVING ME OPPORTUNITY REPUDIATION. REMEMBER I RETURNED HERE PROMOTE PEACE AS MY SPEECHES, PRIVATE LETTERS, TALKS IN LONDON AND DURING RETURN VOYAGE WILL SHOW. I HAD ACTUALLY PLANNED TOUR TO THAT END. SOUGHT INTERVIEW VICEROY AND RECEIVED HIGHLY DISCOURTEOUS REPLY ATTACHING IMPOSSIBLE CONDITIONS TO GRANT REQUEST FOR INTERVIEW.[2] REPLY AND SCARCELY VEILED PREPARATIONS OF PENDING ARREST LEFT ME NO COURSE OPEN BUT DRAW UP FOR CONGRESS TENTATIVE PROGRAMME CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE. SEQUENCE EVENTS SHOWS THAT COMPLETE PREPARATIONS INCLUDING DRAFT ORDINANCES WHILST I WAS IN LONDON WERE MADE FOR EXECUTION OF

[1] In "Letter to an Indian Friend" published in *News-letter*, Lord Sankey had observed :

"I believe that if Gandhi dropped the weapon of civil disobedience and offered to co-operate with the British Government the whole situation would be transformed. . . .

"The problem will be solved by a united effort to secure agreement among Indians. Their refusal to assist the cause of peace is as much a weapon of war as tanks and aeroplanes. No federation can be successful if the people refuse to federate. Twice in the past few years while we were doing our utmost to arrive at an agreed solution through consultation and co-operation others endeavoured to achieve their ends by a civil disobedience movement. So long as this is your work, mine is made more difficult.

"Gandhi has power to change the situation and can do much to restore peace. Civil disobedience does not strike individuals but ordinary organized Governments and civilized society. I believe that if Gandhi made the great gesture and dropped the weapon of civil disobedience and with his followers offered to co-operate with the British Government the whole situation would be transformed." *The Statesman*, 12-11-1932.

[2] For Gandhiji's correspondence with the Viceroy on the subject.

WHOLE PLAN THAT FOLLOWED. CONCLUSION IRRESISTIBLE THAT INDIAN GOVERNMENT WANTED FORCE CRISIS BY PROVOKING CONGRESS TO ACTION ANY EVENT. I CAN ESTABLISH BEFORE ANY IMPARTIAL TRIBUNAL THAT GOVERNMENT OF INDIA HAD WILFULLY BROKEN SEVERAL CONDITIONS IRWIN GANDHI PACT BEFORE MY ARREST AND COMPLETELY BROKE THEM AFTER MY ARREST. SOME OF THEM WERE OF HIGHEST PUBLIC GOOD AND NEED NEVER HAVE BEEN BROKEN. AND NOW THERE IS VIRTUAL MARTIAL LAW IN LAND. YET SPIRIT OF PEOPLE THOUGH HUSHED REMAINS UNBROKEN. DISCONTENT IS DEEPER. FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT AND PRESS VIRTUALLY DESTROYED. NO MAN'S LIBERTY OR PROPERTY SAFE. HEAVY FINES RECOVERED FROM RELATIVES OR BY SALE OF PERSONAL BELONGINGS OF PRISONERS. PUNITIVE TAXES IMPOSED IN VILLAGES AND POPULATIONS FOR GUILT OF FEW AND THOUSANDS IMPRISONED AND TREATED AS COMMON FELONS. IT DOES SURPRISE ME THAT ON TOP OF THIS YOU FIND IT POSSIBLE INVITE ME DROP CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE. YOU DO NOT EVEN SEEM TO REALIZE THAT THE MOVEMENT IS NOT IN MY HANDS OR THAT OF ANY SINGLE PERSON, THAT I AM NOT PERMITTED SEE COMRADES WHETHER IN PRISON OR OUTSIDE AND EVEN MESSRS SAPRU AND JAYAKAR AND RECENTLY MAULANA SHAUKAT ALI COULD NOT SEE ME TO DISCUSS WITH ME POSSIBILITY SUSPENSION OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE. INVITATION TO BONDSMAN TO MAKE GENEROUS GESTURE IS EQUAL TO MOCKING HIM. I WOULD LIKE YOU ALSO TO REALIZE THAT SO FAR AS I AM CONCERNED CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE UNDER GIVEN CONDITIONS IS AN ARTICLE OF FAITH WITH ME. I DO NOT BELIEVE IN USE OF BRUTE FORCE IN ANY CASE. CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE THEREFORE IS FOR ME WHAT ARMED REBELLION IS FOR INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS IN GENERAL. IN ATMOSPHERE I HAVE DESCRIBED IT IS FUTILE EXPECT LIBERAL CONSTITUTION. I WHOLLY ENDORSE YOUR PROPOSITION THAT IT IS BETTER TO BRING MEN TOGETHER THAN KEEP THEM APART. BUT YOU DO NOT FOLLOW UP YOUR THOUGHT BY RECOGNIZING THAT UNNATURAL RELATION OF CONQUERORS AND CONQUERED MUST KEEP TWO PEOPLES APART EVEN AS PRISONERS AND THEIR KEEPERS ARE IN REALITY APART THOUGH THEY ARE PHYSICALLY PLACED NEAR ONE ANOTHER. THROUGH CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE AND KINDRED METHODS I AM SEEKING MIGHT AND MAIN TO BRING TWO TOGETHER BY DESTROYING UNNATURAL

RELATION. I SHOULD LIKE TO TELL YOU THAT ONE SUPREME GESTURE THAT WAS POSSIBLE FOR ME EVEN AFTER MY IMPRISONMENT AND THAT WAS PERHAPS LARGELY AFTER YOUR STYLE I DID MAKE WITHIN A FEW DAYS OF MY INCARCERATION BY WRITING PERSONAL LETTER[1] TO VICEROY APPEALING TO HIM TO LET ME SEE HIM AND DISCUSS WHOLE THING AS BETWEEN MAN AND MAN AND I WROTE ADVISING SIR SAMUEL HOARE OF STEP I HAD TAKEN.[2] VICEROY NEVER EVEN ACKNOWLEDGED MY LETTER WRITTEN IN FRIENDLIEST TONE POSSIBLE. NOW THEREFORE ONLY HONOURABLE GESTURE I CAN MAKE OR IS OPEN TO ME IS TO DRINK CUP OF SUFFERING TO DREGS. IN FAIRNESS I SUGGEST THAT THIS REPLY MAY BE PUBLISHED.[3]

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3942. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40(4), Pt. II, p. 13

649. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY

November 13, 1932

TO

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO

H. E. THE GOVERNOR

BOMBAY

DEAR SIR,

I have seen Lord Sankey's public appeal to me. I feel that it calls for an immediate reply from me. I therefore submit the enclosed for His Excellency's approval and despatch by cable. I do not know whether this falls within His Excellency's jurisdiction or His Excellency the Viceroy's. If the latter, I request that the text of my

[1] This letter dated January 15 is not traceable

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Samuel Hoare", 15-1-1932.

[3] On recommendation of the Viceroy, the Secretary of State agreed that Gandhiji's message should not be published and that no reply should be sent. Lord Sankey was informed accordingly-Government of India, Home Department, Political, File No. 31/95/32.

reply to Lord Sankey be wired to H. E. the Viceroy for being cabled to the Lord Chancellor.

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3868. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40(4), Pt. II, p. 5

650. MESSAGE TO VERRIER ELWIN

November 13, 1932

Cleanest air, cleanest water, simplest food and cleanest thinking which really means communion with God, are the four laws-the first three flowing from the fourth. Hence your English saying--simple, that is, plain living and high thinking. I should like to simplify that saying-clean thinking and clean living. Boils are a symptom of unclean living in my sense of the expression. Let this then be my message to the brothers[1] for a beginning.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 240

651. LETTER TO M. M. ANANTA RAU

November 13, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Your argument seems to be this: *Bhagavad Gita* refers the devotee to *shastravidhi* and since Shastras support untouchability, *Bhagavad Gita* must be said to support it. The question then is what are Shastras? And I have answered that question by the answer that whatever is contrary to the main theme of the *Gita* must be rejected as being no Shastra. And since the main theme is oneness and therefore equality of all life, there is no warrant for untouchability in the *Gita.*

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 9558. Courtesy: Government of Mysore

[1] Members of Christi Seva Sangh

652. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

November 13, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

I read the names of the new office-bearers. Let me see now what work you do during this year. Do not distrust one another. Do not be rude to anybody. You should be polite even towards one another. Make the best use of every minute. Playing at the proper time also is good use of time. Reading at the time fixed for playing and playing at the time meant for study, this is bad use of time.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

653. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

November 13, 1932

CHI. JAMNA,

I have done my duty in regard to the use of the primus stove and don't think about the matter further.[1] You should do, courageously and without regard to my views, only what seems right to you.

There is no cause at all for worrying about my elbow.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 862. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

654. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

November 13, 1932

CHI. JAMNADAS,

You are blaming me, instead of yourself. You wrote to me after many months and are now impatient to get a reply. The fact, however, is that I did reply to your letter by return of post.

I got your second letter. You will continue to have difficulty about money, but I am sure that at the critical hour God will send you what you need.

If somehow you can improve your health, I would regard it as a

[1] Following an accident, Gandhiji had advised that the use of the primus stove should be discontinued; *Vide* "Letter to Chandrashankar N. Pandya", 4-10-1932.

great achievement. Do not be unnecessarily diffident. Why do you not rest happy after doing your best? Why do you think that you should have as much strength as you desire?

Your experience about Harijans is both interesting and painful. But that is the state of affairs everywhere. You can come whenever you like and see me in connection with this work. Now that you have started writing to me, keep it up. It is for me to judge whether what you write is foolishness or wisdom.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9467. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

655. LETTER TO GULAB

November 13, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

You should improve your Gujarati. The correct word is not *atyanja*, but *atyanta*, which means "very much".

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1732

656. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

November 13, 1932

CHI. RAMA,

I count Joshi more fortunate than Gangabehn. We need not worry about him. God will worry about him.

If you think that you should go and stay with your aunt's people for a few days after her death, you may do so.

As regards the taunt to Dhiru, you should not get angry or be upset if anybody has said that. Just as we should not take it seriously if somebody asks us to leave our own home, so also you should not take it seriously if anybody, who has known you long enough, still asks a woman like you to leave the Ashram, much less so if that is said to a child. There is no doubt, however, that nobody should utter such threats.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5339

657. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

November 13, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

This letter, too, will be a short one. These days most of my time is taken up by Harijan friends.

Kamalabai[1] who has recently joined the Ashram, complains that she can get no time to give to her child or to reading. See what you can do about this.

I must congratulate you on your having been able to digest the gum confection. What was the quantity? What were the other ingredients?

I fully realize the difficulty of your task. God will protect you and also give you the necessary strength.

Now that you have discovered the cause of your disease, you should find the remedy too.

You ask me about my feelings, but you can learn nothing about them. No one can analyse his own feelings.

When we seem unable to follow a principle in life, we should conclude that we have not understood the principle correctly. A principle which is correct ought to be capable of being followed in life. Of course no principle can be perfectly acted upon. But a way of life which does not conform to a principle as nearly as possible is insincere and we should avoid it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10310. Also C.W. 6749. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

658. LETTER TO GAJANAN V. KHARE

November 13, 1932

CHI. GAJANAN,

I was glad to read what you wrote about the paintings. You should get over your fever as quickly as you can. I would advise you to go either to Vijapur or Rajkot. But first you should write to the people there. If going to either of the two places is not practicable,

[1] Wife of a khadi worker from Maharashtra

you may go to whichever place you like, but get well quickly. I like your idea of going somewhere. You may go even to Wardha.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 310. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

659. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

November 13, 1932

CHI. PANDITJI,

Bhangis and Chamars do not keep clean because we have never so much as looked at them. We cannot now tell them: "Learn to be clean and then we will accept you." Instead, we should tell them this: "Come, we will embrace you and teach you rules of cleanliness, hygiene, etc." There is no exaggeration whatever in what I am saying when I think of our cruelty towards Harijans and our indifference towards their welfare, I wonder through whose power of goodness Hinduism is still living. If we fail to atone for this sin, I clearly see the destruction of Hinduism.

BAPU

[PS.]

The leaves of the *Bhajanavali* are getting loose. But I have no time. I will see, however.

From Gujarati: C.W. 219. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

660. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA N. KHARE

November 13, 1932

CHI. RAMACHANDRA,

I got your letter. It was good that you went and stayed with your maternal uncle. If you had stayed for some time longer, perhaps you would have benefited still more. I hope you will now rapidly regain your strength.

Did you ask Premabehn's forgiveness? Has she forgiven you?

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 300. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

661. LETTER TO RATILAL P. MEHTA

November 13, 1932

CHI. RATILAL,

I was glad to see your letter. I have often told you that God protects you. Don't mind the theft. Do not replace the articles which have been stolen. If we have too many things with us, we may even lose some through theft.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8764. Also C.W. 1048. Courtesy: Champabehn Mehta

662. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

November 13, 1932

CHI. NARMADA,

This time your handwriting is much better. You should leave some space at the top before commencing the letter. Where was your sister when she left? How old is she?

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2767. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

663. LETTER TO SULOCHANA

November 13, 1932

CHI. SULOCHANA,

Your report of work is good, and so is the handwriting. You did not state how much yarn you spun on the *takli.*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1745

664. A LETTER[1]

November 13, 1932

You are as dear to me as Arun, and I would have admitted you to the Ashram if that were possible. Just now, however, I would arrange for your admission in the Ashram for handicapped children in Calcutta if you agreed to go there.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 241

665. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

November 13, 1932

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

I was glad to get your letter. You must be getting all the news from this end. Give me an account of your activities.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6541

666. LETTER TO KESHORAM TANDON

November 13, 1932

BHAI KESHORAM TANDON,

I have your letter. The eradication of untouchability does not necessarily imply inter-dining and intermarriage.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI KESHORAM TANDON
JAMUNA COAL TRADING CO.
FARUKHABAD, U.P.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5057

[1] The addressee was a Muslim youth.

667. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[Before *November 13*] */14, 1932*[1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter on the usual day of the week. I got another small packet too. You will find with this a letter for Champa. Read it before you pass it on to her, for it contains my views on thefts and so, if you read it, I need not write the same thing again. You should explain my advice to others too, for I have repeated it every time there has been a theft. It is also necessary that you should glance through what I have advised Champa concerning her duty.

In the existing circumstances, I will not include your name among the trustees. I will never knowingly take any step which will put you in an embarrassing position. Our ideal is to do a duty which comes to us unsought. We have no other interest. In any case, we should never seek a position of authority or influence for its own sake.

If you remember, and if available, please send some oranges and *mosambis* from there as samples with anybody who may be coming here. I am very happy though the trees yield only a few. I do not mind the expenditure on trees and other farming activities. It is possible that some of the expenditure was unnecessary, but my impression is that on the whole it was all right.

I hope you have written to Prabhudas and made the necessary inquiries for Navin.

Damodar should have informed you that he had not gone to the bungalow to sleep at night.

If you feel that it is impossible to influence the Chharas[2] go and see Mavalankar and do whatever is possible. In the last resort, we can of course endure the present state of things.

I hope that Shelat's children have recovered. I know from a letter of Chhaganlal Joshi that Shelat has got a book entitled *Flowers of St. Francis*. If he has it, get it from him and send it to me with somebody who may be coming here. Its value lies in the fact that it was a loving gift from somebody.

[1] The letter, obviously begun before November 13, was continued on November 13 and completed on November 14.

[2] An ex-criminal tribe of Central Gujarat

I understand what you say about Balbhadra.

I got a postcard from Ramji, in which he says that, after reading my recent statements about untouchability, he wished to come and see me. I am sure he will also take the opportunity to pour out his complaints. Even then, it seems to me that it will be good to let him come here once. Moreover, he will be permitted to see me whenever he comes.

As regards the *rach* and heddle which we require for weaving khadi from fine yarn, I have just remembered that we had these implements which were made for weaving khadi from very fine yarn. We had got them from Adamji Miankhan. I also remember that Maganlal had made a number of heddles for weaving khadi from coarse yarn by breaking up this same heddle. In any case, we had quite a large number of heddles. They are probably lying in some corner among old discarded things. Ask somebody to search for them and, if you cannot get them inquire at Miankhan's place. They may be able to find another heddle of that type, or at any rate get one manufactured. They were four brothers, Adamji, Gulam Husain, Chandabhai, and one more whose name I do not recollect. Of these Adamji is dead, Gulam Husain lives mostly in Natal and Chandabhai divides his time between Natal and Ahmedabad. Chhaganlal knows him personally. Even if none of you knows his address in Ahmedabad, Chhaganlal is sure to know it. Most probably his house is in Vohravad in Kalupur and he has also a bungalow near Ellis Bridge. The elder Kusum is your neighbour. Try to get some news about her if you can. And also go and see her if any of you is permitted to do so, and send her books, etc., if she wants them.

Rice and potatoes are like poison for Tilakam. Moreover, both contain pure starch. Then how can he feel energetic? Starch does not make one energetic, on the contrary it produces acidity in the stomach. Tilakam should only drink milk, as much as he can digest, and eat fruit and green vegetables. After he is able to digest these things, he can add bread.

Do what you think proper about Jethalal. As soon as Purushottam feels constipated, you should understand that the trouble has started. Trying city water will most probably not help him. It would be much better for him to drink the Ashram water itself after boiling it. To cure the weakness of his bowels, *pranayama* excercises and light massage of the abdomen are necessary.

If Kusum herself can live cheerfully in the Ashram and follow the three important rules which I have suggested, I would be relieved of my fear and worry on her account irrespective of what the final result might be.

Why did not Raojibhai write the revised letter?

So you explained to Kasumba, with logical arguments, that by eating in your company she had lost caste. If a person thus states the plain truth, instead of deceiving himself or anybody else, he would enjoy much greater peace of mind and also earn greater merit.

The mendicant could have been the cause of so much fuss only in the Ashram. Even if we do not discover the true meaning of the Vedas, I am sure we shall be able to call ourselves vedias[1].

It is a mercy that in this world things people do are more foolish than wicked. You know this very well indeed, otherwise you would have had to be sent to an asylum long ago.

I have not yet read Parasram's letter, but even without reading it, after reading your letter and your recommendation, I give my consent for giving him the things which he has asked for.

Sunday Afternoon, November 13, 1932

[PS.]

I give to the hand as much rest as it needs. My weight has reached 102 pounds this week. But my strength has not increased to the same extent.

I hope my articles do not upset people there. It is an occasion for rejoicing. I will ask Rajaji about Ba. Urmiladevi is certain to go there.

Read my letter to Liladhar.

Morning, Silence Day [*November 14, 1932*]

[PPS.]

Vinoba's explanation of the importance of the *takli* is worth pondering over by everybody. He should learn from Bhau the art of spinning on it.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, Pt. I, pp. 501-4. Also C.W. 8268. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Pedants

668. STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY-V

November 14, 1932

In this fifth statement to the Press, in which I would like to express my gratefulness for the publicity they are giving to my statements and movement generally, I want to summarize a part of what I said last week to Sjt. Rajbhoj and his friends,[1] who met me to discuss practically the whole movement.

One of their questions related to what Harijans could do in order to help the movement. They could do a great deal in the direction. They could anticipate the charges brought against them in justification of the refusal of some caste Hindus to associate with them on terms of absolute equality. I have already said in emphatic language that the caste Hindus are wholly to blame for the undoubtedly deplorable condition of the vast mass of Harijans and that the improvement will follow the removal of untouchability as a matter of course. It should never be made a condition of removal. Nevertheless, it is the obvious duty of Harijan workers to carry on internal reform to the extent it is possible even in the face of the existing state of things.

Harijan workers should therefore devote all their energy to :

(1) the promotion of cleanliness and hygiene among Harijans,

(2) to improve the method of carrying on what are known as unclean occupations, such as scavenging and tanning,

(3) giving up of carrion and beef, if not meat altogether,

(4) giving up of intoxicating liquors,

(5) inducing parents to send their children to day-schools wherever they are available and parents themselves to attend night schools wherever such are opened, and

(6) abolition of untouchability among themselves.

Let me go through the items to indicate what is meant by them. A daily bath is necessary at least in our climate, and clean clothes are necessary under all climates. I know that water is not easily available in Harijan quarters. They have, as a rule, no access to public wells and tanks, and they are too poor to afford a change of clothing. It is not generally realized that even a *lota*-full of water can give one a clean bath. It is taken by thoroughly wetting a clean towel and vigorously

[1] *Vide* "Interview to P.N. Rajbhoj", 11-11-1932.

rubbing the body, including the head, all over, and then wiping with a dry towel. If the bath is taken daily, the wet towel after wringing out all water from it can serve the purpose of drying the body. In this climate again, the same clothes can be easily washed and dried there and then, whilst one has merely the *langoti* on.

I know there is nothing new in what I am saying, and yet I have been obliged to explain these very elementary things to hundreds of workers. Even graduates have been found to be ignorant of these elementary aids to hygiene as to the improved method of scavenging. Selfish, ignorant caste men make it well-nigh impossible to remove human remains in a decent manner. The closets, because of the untouchability, are unclean beyond description. They are dark and ill-ventilated and so constructed that only a portion is somewhat capable of being cleaned and that too under filthy conditions. To use these closets is a positive daily descent to Hell and but for the beneficent climate many more thousands than already do will find an early cremation. Owing to the superstitious refusal to see one's own faeces and to permit the untouchables or themselves to clean the interior of the closet, the Harijans who have to perform the very necessary social service can even in the existing unfavourable circumstances at least have their bath immediately after the cleaning is done and use plenty of dry earth for cleaning instead of just a little straw that they use.

Being an expert scavenger that I claim to be, I could show many very cheap, efficient and thoroughly clean methods of performing this service, especially if the villagers and city people would help, but I cannot deal with this interesting subject in this cursory statement. The curious may look up my writings on sanitation in general, and village sanitation in particular. Scavengers should wear a professional dress, while they are doing the cleaning work. Every employer or a group of employers can supply such a dress for his or their scavengers.

Clean tanning is a far more difficult proposition. Our tanners do not know the modern method of skinning carcases nor of tanning. Tanning I have here used in a comprehensive sense. The so-called higher classes having criminally neglected this useful body of their co-religionists and fellow-countrymen, the whole of the process from the carrying of the carcase to the dressing of the hide is done in a crude manner resulting in the loss to the country of untold wealth and the production of inferior hide.

The late Madhusudan Das,[1] who was a great philanthropist and had himself learnt the modern process of tanning, had prepared statistics to show what the country was losing annually owing to the superstition of untouchability masquerading under the name of religion. Harijan workers can learn the modern method and acquaint the tanners with it in so far as it is practicable. The scavengers should be taught resolutely not to accept the remains of the householder's daily food which is virtually thrown at them in the cruellest manner possible. Years of habit have dulled the aesthetic sense of the scavengers and they see nothing wrong in eating the remains of another man's dishes. They crave for what they regard as dainties from their employers' dishes. I have known Bhangis having removed their children from school because the latter were taught not to touch these leavings and be satisfied with the *jowar* or the *bajri* bread baked in their homes.

Tanners should be induced to give up carrion and beef. As a vegetarian, I would like Harijans to give up, as many have done, meat altogether, but if they are not ready for this reform they should be taught to give up carrion as being unhygienic, besides being taboo by the rest of mankind and beef as being forbidden in Hinduism. I know that carrion is part of the price they get for removing the carcases. Dr. Ambedkar told me that in some places villagers beat those who had given up carrion, telling them it was their religion to eat it. The fact was that they were afraid that if the tanners gave up carrion-eating they would demand an equivalent price or give up carrying dead cattle. Whatever the difficulty, carrion and beef eating must be given up. That one self-restraint will at once raise the Harijans in the estimation of the caste men and make the task of caste reformers comparatively easy in the campaign against untouchability.

Items four and five do not call for any remarks. They are self-explained.

The last item is abolition of untouchability among untouchables themselves. This is an urgent need. Removal of untouchability will become most difficult if this double untouchability is not removed with one sweep. It is an uphill task for Harijan reformers. But if they will realize that this movement is predominantly religious and

[1] In fact, Madhusudan Das was not dead. Gandhiji came to know of his mistake later from a member of the Ashram and at once apologized to Madhusudan Das. *Vide* Vol. LII, "Telegram to Madhusudan Das", 18-11-1932.

is designed to purge Hinduism of the uncleanness that has crept into it, they will have the necessary courage and self-confidence to carry out the great reform.

It is needless for me to stress the point that workers in such a movement must be selfless and pure in character. I have given here a constructive programme that should satisfy the most ambitious reformer among Harijans and occupy the whole of his time and energy. But there are one or two things he and the Harijans may not do during this period of grace. At any rate, no Harijan need fast against anyone nor need satyagraha be offered by them. Let them watch the caste Hindus who are on their trial and see what they do to remove the bar that separates the Harijans from them. Let them not engage in quarrels with local caste-Hindus. Their behaviour should be at all times courteous and dignified, much more so at this time. Religion can only be vindicated by self-suffering, never by violence done to the oppressors though there may be many things they may get by force. Their credit will lie in getting their rights by the conversion of caste Hindus and today they have ample reason for deriving hope from the knowledge that there are tens of thousands of caste Hindus who have a lively sense of their guilt and are straining every nerve to do reparation to Harijans. Let them have perfect confidence in the absolute justice of their cause and in the ability of self-suffering to win it.

In the next statement[1] I must give my reply to caste men who have asked what they can do to help the movement.

The Bombay Chronicle, 15-11-1932

669. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ[2]

November 14, 1932

JAMNALAL BAJAJ,
PRISONER, DHULIA JAIL

GET COMPLETE REPORT FROM DR. MODI. HE SHOULD BE

[1] *Vide* "Statement of Untouchability —VI", 15-11-1932.
[2] The original English text of the telegram is not available.

IMMEDIATELY CALLED TO EXAMINE YOU, SO THAT A DEFINITE DIAGNOSIS CAN BE MADE. HOW IS YOUR COUGH?

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchama Putrane Bapuna Ashirvad, p. 80

670. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

Morning, Silence Day, November 14, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

I am afraid I am writing this letter very late, as you will get it twelve days after the fast was ended. I wrote to you in my previous letter what food you should eat. You may make a few changes in it to suit your constituion. The fast may be said to have succeeded only if you pass stool naturally without enema in six or seven days or before that, feel sufficiently hungry, can easily digest simple food, put on weight and also regain your strength. If, however, you do not pass stool without enema, then you should take a purgative. Castor oil is very good. Take about two tea-spoon-fuls of it immediately after brushing your teeth in the morning. If you put a little salt in the mouth, then swallow the castor oil and then again lick some salt, you will not feel the unpleasant flavour of castor oil. After this, you are sure to pass stool without taking enema. If you do not, you may conclude that your bowels are still not clear. You may, in that case, fast again after a few days when you are strong enough. But this is the only method of curing constipation.

I fully believe in the importance of *takli* explained by Vinoba in his letter. I have no doubt whatever that a person who spins on the *takli* in a spirit of service and as *yajna* will attain deliverance.

BAPU

[PS.]

Can you teach your method of spinning on a *takli* by explaining it in a letter? To whow many persons are you teaching it at present?

From a photostat of the Gurajati: G.N. 6742. Also C.W. 4485. Courtesy: Bhau Panse.

671. LETTER TO M.G. BHANDARI

November 14, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

You know by now the late Dr. Mehta about whom I received so many telegrams when he died recently.[1] I am trying to look after his affairs as far as possible from here. I have now to advise the members of Dr. Mehta's family about the disposal of the estate he has left behind him. He was a diamond merchant and landed proprietor in Rangoon where he had settled many years ago. It is necessary for me to see some or all of those in the enclosed list[2] in connection with his affairs. None of them has ever been engaged in politics, and with the exception of two the rest have business in Burma. As you are aware, before the fast I had dropped receiving weekly visits altogether. After the fast I have occasionally had such visits chiefly from my wife and children. But with reference to the enclosed list it might be necessary for me to see those who will come continually from day to day till the matter is settled. I trust that the Government will have no objection to my request being granted as early as possible.[3]

Yours sincerely,

M.K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40) (2), Pt. I, p. 339. Also G.N. 3869.

672. LETTER TO KUNHAPPA

November 14, 1932

You have done well in sending your letter and also copies of letters and telegrams passed between the Zamorin and Kelappan. Your letter and the enclosures have been most valuable to me. The fast if it has to come won't be against the Zamorin. If the vast mass of *Savarna* Hindus are really in favour of the temple being opened to the *Avarnas*, do you not feel that the temple cannot be closed against them even by the Zamorin? It is not his property. It should be remembered that he does not make any claim himself and admits that he is only a trustee. And let us assume for the moment that he is a

[1] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta died in Rangoon on August 3.

[2] This is not available.

[3] The request was granted by the Government.

trustee only for the *Savarna* Hindus, who alone are the temple-goers. Then the key to the temple is in their hands and the Zamorin holds the key for them. Then if the *Savarnas* are in earnest, there are many ways of their showing their wish in unmistakable terms. Has an attempt ever been made to take a referendum of all the *Savarnas*, men and women, making use of the temple? If the position is not as I imagine it to be, and if the *Savarnas* have no rights, if the trust is not held for them, I should then be informed of the correct position. It would then be time for you to ask me to revise my decision. If, for instance, the temple is the private property of the Zamorin, if in other words he could shut the doors of the temple against anybody entering it, if he is so willed, the whole of the agitation for opening Guruvayur to the Harijans was wrong from the commencement and we have to retrace our steps. Let all the workers examine the position from this viewpoint. If a mistake has been made there need be no shame in an open confession.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 244-5

673. LETTER TO P.N. RAJBHOJ

November 14, 1932

MY DEAR RAJBHOJ,

I have your letter. Here is the corrected copy of my answers.[1] I have not made any corrections in your questions. Some questions being repetitious may be dropped.

I hope you got my previous letter which contains the message you want.

Yours sincerely,

M. K.GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 796

[1]*Vide* "Interview to P.N. Rajbhoj", 11-11-1932.

674. A LETTER[1]

November 14, 1932

I quite agree with you that no one should be treated as untouchable and I am sure that when we have ceased to treat forty millions of Hindus as such, we shall cease to treat Christians and Mussalmans as such.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, P. 242

675. A LETTER[2]

November 14, 1932

I am glad you realise that poverty is the common lot of millions. The real way to pray to Lord Krishna is to do in His name some little service to those who are less fortunate than ourselves; and when we show the spirit of service in daily life, unbelieving neighbours will begin to believe in God. You can do untouchability work by yourself going among untouchables and rendering such service as is possible to them as if, they were members of our own family. If you do not know Hindi, you should quickly learn it.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, P. 243

676. STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY—VI

November 15, 1932

If, among the Harijans, Sjt. Rajbhoj has yet been the only one to have asked me what Harijans might do to advance the movement, I have scores of letters from all parts of India, from caste Hindus, both men and women, students and others, inquiring in what way they can help without interfering with their other preoccupations; and since anti-untouchability is a movement, as applied to the masses, of merely change of heart and changing their attitude towards Harijans, the vast majority of the caste Hindus do not need to interrupt their daily activities in order to serve the Harijans.

[1] The addressee, not identified in the source, had asked: "Do we not treat others—such as Christians, etc.—also as untouchables?"

[2] The addressee, a young boy not identified in the source, had asked in what way he could do service.

The first thing is for everyone to understand the implications of the removal of untouchability in his or her own life, and if the answer is that he or she has not only no objection to, but is desirous of, seeing them entering public temples, using public places, such as schools, serais, roads, hospitals, dispensaries and the like, in short, to Harijans being put precisely on the same footing as themselves religiously, socially, economically and politically, he or she has personally taken the full step.

But that is not all that the questioners want or all that I should be satisfied with. Having gone so far, they want to know what more they can do in the furtherance of the cause. Such inquirers need not extend their activities beyond their immediate neighbourhood. Let them canvass the opinion of those with whom they come in daily contact, and if the former are not convinced of the necessity of removal of untouchability, they should, if they have critically studied the movement, endeavour to convince their neighbours or, if they are not competent, they should procure the necessary literature, supply them with it and put them in touch with those full-time workers who are specially qualified for such propaganda work. If they find that their neighbourhood is not touched by the spirit of the movement, and if they have any influence, they should arrange public lectures and demonstrations. So much for the work among caste Hindus.

But the real work that this large body of men and women can do is undoubtedly among the Harijans. Those caste Hindus who have studied my fifth statement could not fail to have noticed that there is a vast amount of silent and effective service to be rendered by caste Hindus without much expenditure of time, energy or money. Caste Hindus can effectively supplement the effort of Harijan workers in inculcating habits of cleanliness and by procuring facilities for having easy access to the required water supply. They can find out public wells and tanks situated near Harijan quarters and canvass the opinion of caste Hindus who may be using such wells or tanks, pointing out to them that Harijans have a legal right to the use of all such public services. And they can, at the same time, see to it that when the consent of caste Hindus has been secured for the use by Harijans of these services, the latter use them in a manner not offensive to the former.

As to scavenging, they can visit the owners of houses served by Harijans in their neighbourhood and explain to them the necessity of making it easy for Harijans to do the cleaning work in a hygienic

manner. To this end, it would be naturally necessary for them to study the scientific method of constructing closets and disposing of night-soil. Thy can also procure from the householders special dresses to be supplied to the scavengers and make the Harijans feel by unhesitatingly doing the scavenging themselves that there is nothing low or undignified about rendering such service. Such workers should also carry on propaganda against caste men giving to their scavengers leavings from their daily food and, where they are ill-paid persuading the employers to pay them a decent wage.

As to tanning, not much help can be rendered, unless someone of such voluntary leisure-time workers has humanity and enthusiasm enough to study the hygienic method of skinning carcases and having done so, will spread the knowledge among tanners.

They certainly can do one thing. They can find out the custom about the disposal of such carcases and see that the tanners are assured of a proper wage for the service they rendered. Those who have capacity and time can conduct day or night schools, take Harijan children for picnics and sightseeing on holidays or whenever an opportunity occurs, visit Harijans in their own homes, procure medical aid where necessary and generally let them feel that a new page has been opened in their lives and that they need no longer regard themselves as the neglected and despised portion of Hindu humanity.

All that I have described can be most easily and efficiently done by the student world. If this work is done with silent zeal, determination and intelligence by a large body of men and women, I have no doubt that we shall have taken many steps in our progress towards the goal, and it would be found too that there are more things than I have described that require attention. I have but chosen a few of the many things that have come under my observation in the course of my journeyings.

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-11-1932.

677. TELEGRAM TO FEROZECHAND[1]

November 15, 1932

HOPE EVERYONE HONOURING LALAJI'S MEMORY WILL DO SOME-THING REMOVE UNTOUCHABLITY.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 900 (40) (3), Pt. III, p. 367

678. TELEGRAM TO MANIBEHN PATEL

[*November 15, 1932*][2]

MANIBEHN PATEL
PRISONER CENTRAL PRISON
BELGAUM.

DAHYABHAI SUFFERING FEVER LAST SEVEN DAYS NOW DECLARED TYPHOID NO COMPLICATIONS SPECIAL NURSES ATTENDING NO CAUSE ANXIETY WILL TRY SEND DAILY REPORT.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (4), Pt. III, p. 55

679. LETTER TO E.E. DOYLE

November 15, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

Sjt. Dahyabhai is the only son of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. He has been suffering from fever for the last eight days. Doctors have now pronounced it to be typhoid. It is necessary to inform his sister Manibehn Patel who is in the Central Prison, Belgaum, of Dhaybhai's illness from day to day. I enclose draft of a telegram to be sent to her. I hope you will kindly send it with instructions to the Superintendent to deliver it to Manibehn Patel and to receive from her whatever message she wishes to give. And could I, whilst the fever lasts, give her detailed information from day to day and receive from her whatever

[1] Of Lahore
[2] *Vide* the following item.

messages she might have to give in reply to the daily report? My reason for wishing her to send even a daily postcard is to pass it on to the patient. It must cheer him to know that his only sister is being kept informed of the progress of his illness and that she sends him messages of love.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40) (4), Pt. II, p. 55

680. LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON[1]

[*November 15, 1932*][2]

Anyway, if there is legal difficulty we must patiently create public opinion that would demand even legislative interference. You have therefore to mobilize *Savarna* opinion in favour of the opening of the Guruvayur temple. Do not mix up the issue by raising the cry of general entry into all temples. Mr. Kelappan's fast[3] was directed to the opening of the Guruvayur temple and if it has to be resumed, it must be restricted to that purpose. If that temple is opened it will be only a question of time for other temples also to be opened, but we must be true to ourselves. There should be no abuse hurled at the Zamorin. Combat his position by all means when that is necessary. I have read his statement. If Kelappan has been discourteous, he should apologize. But in my opinion, the Zamorin is wrong in saying that his assurance was cancelled by Mr. Kelappan's discourtesy.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-11-1932

[1] President, Anti-untouchability League, Travancore

[2] From "Diary, 1932"

[3] The fast, which was begun on September 20, ended on October 2.

681. A LETTER[1]

November 15, 1932

My whole heart goes out to you and your wife. I am quite clear in my mind as to the course you have to follow. You should forget the man and the deed. God alone punishes and rewards. It was open to you, as I suppose it is even now, to prosecute the offender. But that is clearly not what you intend to do. After all he was not in his senses. Who knows that some day he may not learn the lesson and become a better man? If an opportunity offers for you to do a good turn to him you will not omit to do it. You should console your wife and induce her to forget the incident. Your daughter should not even be allowed to remember the incident. I suppose she has no knowledge of what was attempted to be done to her. But even if she has, she should be brought up so as to forget it altogether.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 245-6

682. LETTER TO VASANTRAM SHASTRI

November 15, 1932

According to me, I am the same man that I was in 1921. I hope, though, that I have progressed further in the same direction. Nothing in this world remains fixed; things either progress or decline. I did not write about people whom you imagine to be wicked. The number of people who may be described as wicked is always small. I wrote about the countless millions. They may be ignorant and stupid, but they are not wicked. If you reflect more deeply, you cannot but be convinced of this. I should like you to explain more clearly what you mean by oppression.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 247

[1] The addressee, not identified in the source, had written to Gandhiji that an acquaintance of the family, 50 years of age, had, while drunk, tried to commit rape on his, the addressee's, six-year-old daughter, which had caused much distress to himself and his wife and asked Gandhiji's advice as to what he ought to do.

683. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 15, 1932

CHI. TARAMATI,

I had kept your letter in the hope of answering it when I had some time. In the mean time another letter had arrived. The work for the removal of untouchability takes all my time. We are doing well. The children must be having a good time. Keep writing even if I delay writing.

Blessings from
BAPU

TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
21 MINT ROAD, 2ND FLOOR
FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

684. LETTER TO G.D. BIRLA

November 15, 1932

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

About your criticism of the Yeravda Pact we shall talk when we meet. I shall not waste time over it just now. What Thakkar Bapa writes about Patna is true about many other places too. We should write to local people about it. Why should not the municipality take up this work? The League should bring out a bulletin or journal or newspaper every fortnight or every week and make all these horrible things public[1]. However poor we may be, no municipality is so poor as to be unable to rectify such wrongs. I wrote to Mathuradas and to Ambalal too[2].

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 7904. Courtesy: G.D. Birla.

[1] Following Gandhiji's suggestion, Birla planned to bring out a weekly from January 1933 and had requested him for an article for the first issue.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Ambalal", 10-11-1932. The letter to Mathuradas is not available.

685. DIARY, 1932[1]

(1-9-1932 to 15-11-1932)

SEPTEMBER 1, THURSDAY, YERAVDA MANDIR[2]

Spun 238 rounds. Letters—Vasukaka, Mira, Brijkrishna, Manekbai, Anasuyabehn + Shankerlal.

SEPTEMBER 2, FRIDAY

Spun 224 rounds. Letters¾Champa, Pyare Ali, Tilakam, Nirmala Mashruwala, Devdas, Taramati + Ramachandra, Prasad+Dilip, Met Joshi, Raman Gandhi and Agashe. Dahyabhai came to see Vallabhbhai. The Collector paid a visit.

SEPTEMBER 3, SATURDAY

Spun 250 rounds. Letters—Suresh Banerji, Maneklal, Khimchand.

SEPTEMBER 4, SUNDAY

Spun 250 rounds.

SEPTEMBER 5, MONDAY

Spun 220 rounds. Letters¾The Ashram (47-"What Women Should Do in a Difficult Situation".) Manilal + Gulab + Tilak + Dhiru, Neelam, Satyavati Chidamber, Mohanlal Bhatt, Umashankar Srivastava, Nagari Pracharini, Pyare Ali + Amina + Hamida + Qureshi, Govinddas, Chhaganlal Mehta, Polak, Manilal Kothari. Sent Narandas's letter to Ramdas. Received honey, etc. from Lala Hansraj. A basket of *mosambis* arrived yesterday from Padmaja.

SEPTEMBER 6, TUESDAY

Spun 230 rounds, Letters¾Karsandas, Kaikhushru Kanga, Padmaja, Baburam, Santaram, Lily, Nanalal, Raihana. Dalal came and examined my denture.

SEPTEMBER 7, WEDNESDAY

Spun 220 rounds. Letters¾Lala Hansraj, Devdas + Dr. Das Gupta. Dr. Dalal came again to examine the denture. Corrected the lower one slightly and brought it back. Today it is Parsi *Navroz*[3]. Merne came in the evening and took a vow to abjure drink. He has promised to write to me after a few days from outside. Today ate the

[1] Continued from Vol. L

[2] This place-name is not repeated to subsequent entries. Gandhiji was arrested on January 4, 1932, and released on May 8, 1933.

[3] New Year

jail *rotli* made of wheat.

SEPTEMBER 8, THURSDAY

Spun [. . .][1] Letters¾Kamala Nehru, Krishnada, Ramsharan Sinh, Col. Doyle (about bread). Another letter to Col. Doyle regarding the 20th. Long talk with him about Government's decision. Answered the point raised by him. Talking about bread he said that those who were used to bread would not have any difficulty. Gave me news of Kaka and of Ba. Mahadev showed today some signs of fever¾had gone to help in making bread.

SEPTEMBER 9, FRIDAY

Spun 213 rounds, Letters¾Khimchand, Dinkar, Prabhashankar + Balwant, Mathuradas Trikumji, Taramati, Nirmala Mashruwala, Narandas. Received and answered MacDonald's letter. Wrote to Doyle. Today ate brown bread made here. Asked for plums and dates. The Major had brought MacDonald's letter. Mahadev has slight fever.

SEPTEMBER 10, SATURDAY

Spun 206 rounds. Letters¾Govind Ballabh Pant, Bidhan Roy. Yesterday plums worth Rs. 4 arrived. Did not at all like this, but thought I must accept them. Ate 20 in all in the morning and the evening. SEPTEMBER 11, SUNDAY

Spun 248 rounds. Spent the day in writing letters to the Ashram.

SEPTEMBER 12, MONDAY

Spun 236 rounds. Letters¾The Ashram (including "Working and Thinking [-II]"), Pyare Ali, Jamshed Mehta, Sarojini Devi. Kateli today took Mahadev along to persuade some of those on fast, to give it up. Has not succeeded so far. Prepared a draft of the appeal concerning the fast of the 20th.

SEPTEMBER 13, TUESDAY

Spun 223 rounds. Letters¾Ratilal Desai + Mani + Jeki + Manekbai, Prabhashankar, Devdas. Correspondence about the fast published. Met Naidu, who was on fast—he gave up the fast. Cable from and to Andrews.

SEPTEMBER 14, WEDNESDAY

Spun 225 rounds. Letters—Devdas, Mohanlal Bhatt, Narandas,

[1] The figure has been left out in the source.

Ba. Cable to Manekbai, [letter to] Bhaktibehn. Cables from Heath and others arrived. The Major informed me that the cable to Andrews handed over yesterday was dispatched today.

SEPTEMBER 15, THURSDAY

Spun 250 rounds. Letters¾ Parachure Shastri (four volumes of Vivekananda's works), Savitri Standenath, Ghanshyamdas, Vithal, Kamakoti, Gurudev. Telegrams from Raja and Ghanshyamdas—replied to them. Dr. Dalal came and cleaned the denture. Today the bread was spoiled.

SEPTEMBER 16, FRIDAY

Spun 205 rounds. Letters¾ Nargis, Lily, Saraladevi, Anasuyabehn, Raihana, Mira, Radha, Romain Rolland, Muriel, Verrier, Polak, Privat, Ansari, Agatha Harrison. Today a number of telegrams arrived about the fast. Sent telegrams in reply to Sapru's, Jamshed Mehta's and Satis Babu's. Woke up at 2 in the morning, left bed at 3 o'clock and drafted a public statement and handed it over to the Major for publication. Had talks with Ramdas and Surendra for about two hours and later with Khadilkar. Read in the evening that I might be released, subject to certain conditions, on starting the fast. Telegraphed to say that I would not agree to be released in that way.

SEPTEMBER 17, SATURDAY

Spun 206 rounds. Letters¾ Qureshi, Madhukanta, Narayanrao, Mate, Gosibehn. Today I drew up draft of agreement between caste Hindus and untouchables as I should like to have it. Vallabhbhai has fever. Dr. Dalal came and examined the denture.

SEPTEMBER 18, SUNDAY

Spun 240 rounds. Letters¾ Sarojini Naidu, Padmaja, Darbari Sadhu, Vallabhbhai had slight fever today too. Ghanshyamdas, Purushottamdas, Chunilal and Mathuradas came in the evening. We talked for over an hour. I explained what I had to say through written notes.

SEPTEMBER 19, MONDAY

Spun 209 rounds. Letters¾ Nanabhai Mashruwala, Rajbahadurlal, Gora, Raja, Mary Barr, Manilal Gandhi, Madhavdas + Krishna, Maganlal Mehta, Dr. Muthu, Taramati, Hansa Mehta, Shankar Kalelkar, Lakshmi (Raja's), Christ Seva Sangh, the Ashram (60 letters). Sir Purushottamdas, Mathuradas, Chimanlal, Ghanshyamdas called. We talked for two hours. Devdas came in the evening. Today

did not take milk, took almonds instead.

SEPTEMBER 20, TUESDAY

Spun 209 rounds. Letters¾ Narandas + Punjabhai, Trivedi, Nariman, Rajbhoj, Kaka, Mira, Devdhar, Gurudev, Shinde. Sent telegrams or cables to the following—Ambalal, Horace, Agatha, Urmila, Kasi Krishnacharya, Ranikaki's, Krishnadas, Indians of Taiping, Ramniklal Desai, Aparna, Gurudev, Hari Singh. Col. Doyle handed to me the Government's decision. Met reporters, Pyarelal, Brijkrishna, Sarojini. At 12 o'clock entered the fiery ordeal with Raihana's devotional songs. Mahadev recited the *Gita*.

SEPTEMBER 21, WEDNESDAY

Spun 153 rounds. Letters¾ Mathuradas, Kishorelal, Jairamdas, Mani, Fulchand, Jamnalal, Narahari. Cable to Polak. Talk with Sarojini, Sapru, Jayakar, Raja, Rajenbabu, Ghanshyamdas and others. Rajbhoj came, accompanied by Mate and others. Padmaja came to see me.

SEPTEMBER 22, THURSDAY

Spun 195 rounds. Letters¾ Nargisbehn, Taramati.

SEPTEMBER 23-29, FRIDAY -- THURSDAY

Could not write the diary all these days. It is being written on the morning of the 30th. The yarn spun during this period was: 23rd-60, 24th-43, 25th-60, 26th-60, 27th-108. The mind was full of peace during these days. Was suffering acute physical discomfort when I broke the fast on the 26th. There was a stream of visitors. Was much pleased by Gurudev's visit. Kelappan's fast weighed on the mind all the time, and is still doing so. During fast, I started spinning on Keshu's new spinning-wheel from 26th. The interviews were stopped on the 29th. Only Ghanshyamdas and Mathuradas can now see me about *Antyaja* work. Have written a strong letter about this. Ba and Sarojini were taken away in the evening. Devdas visited me at night. Was weighed on Wednesday and stood at 95. It was 93.5 on Monday. Before the fast, it was 101.

SEPTEMBER 30, FRIDAY

Spun 235 rounds. Wrote a good many letters to Europe. Read part of the mail. Sat up for quite some time. Walked a few paces. Had a natural motion in the evening. Ba was released today and then was granted permission to visit me by day. Just as I wrote the English letters in the morning, I wrote inland letters till 8 in the evening.

OCTOBER 1, SATURDAY

Spun 225 rounds. Letters¾Birla, David, Anandshankar, K. Munshi, Jamshed Mehta, Manmohan Gandhi, Krishna Nair, Krishnadas,Avantikabai, Mira. Cables to Ansari. Letters to Kingsley, *(Chicago Tribune)*, Miss. Petersen. Telegrams to Kelappan and Madhavan Nair. Ghanshyamdas and Mathuradas Vassanji came at 12 o'clock. They stayed till 4 o'clock. Ba remained the whole day.

OCTOBER 2, SUNDAY

Spun 219 rounds. Letters—Maithilisharan, Bhikshu Balchandracharya, Chaman Kavi, Hemprabha, Kamalnayan, Ali Hassan, Paul, Prabhashankar, Hassan Imam's children, Taramati, Miss Petersen, Ramdas. On being weighed today I stood at 100, Vallabhbhai at 140 and Mahadev at 143.

OCTOBER 3, MONDAY

Spun 247 rounds. Letters—Deepsinhji, Maganlal Velji, Sohanlal Sharma, Dhirajram Shastri, Gyanchand Verma, Joglekar, Khimchand, Phadke, Manilal Patel, Satyananda Bose, Kovadkar, Kesarimal Agarwal, Mate, Manekbai Mehta, Mulchand Parekh. Telegram to Motilal Roy. The above were despatched yesterday. Those being sent today¾letters to Kasturbhai Lalbhai, Fulchand Bapuji, Hari-ichchha, 50 letters to the Ashram. Telegrams to Kelappan, the Zamorin and Rangaswami. Telegram to Kewalram Gidumal about Kikibehn. Letters to Nirmala Mashruwala, Kewalram + kikibehn, Zohra, Atmaram Prabhashankar Bhatt, Kanbivad, Naran Ghughari Delo. Devdas came after getting Hudson's permission.

OCTOBER 4, TUESDAY

Spun 250 rounds. Letters¾Keki Dariyasha, Bartlett, Hoyland, Samuel, Joan Parsons, Scott Henderson, Motilal Roy, Bernard, Chandrashankar Pandya, Shankerlal, Umiyapati, Nandini, Bal Mandir ¾Khar, Joseph, Govinddas, Shankerprasad, Rameshwardas¾Dublin, Purnachandra, Krishnanand, Sitaram, Satyendrakumar, Manibehn Galiara, Kisan. Telegram to Badridutt Pande.

OCTOBER 5, WEDNESDAY

Spun 209 rounds. Letters¾Narayana Menon, Premi, Prakasam, Virendra Prakash, Badridutt Pande, Alexander, Esther, Winston, Larks of St. Francis, Subbiah, Standenath, Aristarchi, Kingsley Hall + Gladys + Devi, Ramachandra Bahal. Devdas had called. Ba of course was there. Today again the weight went down to $98^{3}/_{4}$.

OCTOBER 6, THURSDAY

Spun 217 rounds. Letters¾Vasudev, Hiralal, Padmakumar, Manilal Vyas, Padmaja, Behramshah, Maganlal Mehta, Raman Gandhi, Haribhau Phatak, Gaurishankar Bhatt, Agatha, Elvin, Mrs Lindsay, Cora Fry, Mira, Sidney Bokaine, Kamala Nehru + Syed Mahmud, Patankar, Gulbai Dastur, B.D. Lakshman, Samuel Borgai, Darbarilal (Japla, Palamow). Letter to Col. Doyle about the Zamorin's telegram and to Saruprani through Ba. Khagendra Priya's khadi arrived from Barua. *Pendas* arrived from Patankar of Belguam yesterday.

OCTOBER 7, FRIDAY

Spun 215 rounds. Letters¾Col. Doyle + Swami Anand, Nirmala Mashruwala, Annadanappa, Dahyabhai Savji, Rukhi, Manishankar, Dadachanji, Lily, Katiyal, Kahan Chaku Gandhi, Bapalal Vaidya, Chandulal Ganderia, Rani Vidyavati, Abdulla Fakir, Khagendra Priya, Shankar (Madras), Ramji Rao, Lakshminarayan Gadodia, Thappan Nair, Bhaktibehn, Kaka, Saruprani. Umedram and Atitkar called. Telegram to Shaukat Ali. Devdas paid a visit. Today Major Roy examined me. There are symptoms of piles. The District Magistrate paid a visit.

OCTOBER 8, SATURDAY

Spun 205 rounds. Letters—Prabhavati, Sadashiv, Gomati, Mani, Mathuradas, Mohanlal, Eliot Breckett, Nath Samuel, Salvi, Nanibehn, Angarika Govind, Dwarakaprasad Sharma, Jyotiprakash, Marie Petersen, Shankar Kalelkar about his fast. Sent a letter to Father Winslow through Gagan. As Shankar refused to give up the fast, again wrote a letter to him. Did not drink milk today. Took *gulkand* in the evening.

OCTOBER 9, SUNDAY

Spun 210 rounds. Letters¾Emma Harker, Chintamani, Atmaram, Krishna Narayan, Urmila, Basanti Devi, Guruvayuruppan, Mulchand Parekh, Rukhi, Surbala + Rohini, Bajeram, Paramhansa Yati, Thakorelal Mehta, Mohanlal Somalal, Shravan Choudhari, Jadunath Sarkar, Bimala C, Gupta, Chunni Mahetar, Gramya Charkha Samiti, Sursasang and Sons, Youths of Singapore, Telegraph Check Officer.

OCTOBER 10, MONDAY

Spun 204 rounds. Letters¾The Ashram-23, Dr. Mahmud, Muljibhai, Mohanlal, Somasundaram, the Friends of India, Leonard, Maude, Gurudev, Chaunde Maharaj, Suresh, Baldevdas, Meghani,

Ramayya, Raman Soni, Santhiavu, Kathirvelu, Kotak + Sharda, Taramati, Thakkar Bapa, Hardayal Nag, Hales, Jairam Varalkar, Shantiswaroop, Girindra Kishore, Krishnadas, Kirchand Shivlal, Dadachanji, Jamnalal, Trivedi, Raihana. Manilal came. Today the Major summoned Shankar and scolded him. He and the others gave up their fast yesterday on my writing to them to do so.

OCTOBER 11, TUESDAY

Spun 223 rounds. Letters¾ Potdar (Vilaspur), Krishnachandra, Nyalchand, Rohit Mehta, Jamshed, Hari-ichchha,, Raihana, Nizamuddin, Mahomed Hyatkhan, Parulekar, Bapalal, Manji Rambhai, Tribhuvandas, Indumati Patel (Mombasa), Bhogilal Popatlal, Rambhau (Nagpur), Chatursen Shastri, Raghunath Prasad, Sushila, Raghunath Limaye. Devdas had come. He brought news of Manilal's fever.

OCTOBER 12, WEDNESDAY

Spun 221 rounds. Letters¾ Turton, Polak, Aristarchi, Behramsha, Chaman, Chhotelal, Thadani, Prof. Wadia, Narasinhrao, Stokes. Manilal paid a visit. Slivers, leather, a pair of sandals, etc., arrived from the Ashram. My weight $98^{3}/_{4}$.

OCTOBER 13, THURSDAY

Spun 225 rounds. Letters¾ Mira, Vaman Athavale, Mulchand Parekh. Today began spinning on the Magan spinning-wheel. Completed Thadani's book.

OCTOBER 14, FRIDAY

Spun 207 rounds. Letters¾ Joshi Becharlal, Godse, Thakkar Bapa, Keshav, Manukumar, R[ao] B[ahadur], Aiyengar, Atmaram Shastri, Dr. Dutta, Kelavkar, Motilal Roy, Reynolds, Kumudchandraji, Hemprabha, Bhaktibehn. Devdas paid a visit. Ba will not be coming hereafter. Telegram from Dr. Ambedkar saying that if permitted he would call on Monday. Completed Wadia's book.

OCTOBER 15, SATURDAY

Spun 200 rounds. Letters¾ Dutt, Urmila Devi, Ramabhadra Iyer, Nargisbehn, Hiralal, Jeki, Mithubehn, George, Maganlal Mehta, the Zamorin, Kelappan, Rangaswami, Thakorebhai.

OCTOBER 16, SUNDAY

Spun 205 rounds. Letters¾ Manekbai Mehta, Pyarelal, Lalji Naranji, Kikibehn, Radhakrishna, Kamala Nehru, Shankar, Omkar Upasana Prachar, Rukhi. Completed Madan's book on fasting.

OCTOBER 17, MONDAY

Spun 210 rounds. Letters¾Narandas (41), Nanalal Kalidas, Padmaja, Zohra, Rangaswami, Michael, Lala Roshanlal, Scott Henderson, Polak (Jr. and Sr.). Ambedkar called today. Sarojini was also with him. Hudson had made it clear that only untouchability could be discussed and that even that discussion should not be published.

OCTOBER 18, TUESDAY

Spun 222 rounds. Letters¾Dr. Dalal, Manibehn Desai, Maganlal Mehta, Chhaganlal Mehta, Nanalal Kalidas, Narasinharao Bholanath, Begum Mohmmad Alam, Premji Dayalji, Manilal Gandhi, David. Telegram to a temple trustee in Colombo. Letter to Hudson. Dr. Katiyal called.

OCTOBER 19, WEDNESDAY

Spun 208 rounds. Letters¾Nalini, Krishnachandra, Khambhatta, Harijan (Walve), Dadachanji, Shambhooshankar, Kamalani, Jatpat Todak Mandal, Shailappa, Kanaiyalal, Arjunda, Kisan, Winslow, Gaurishankar Lal, Nath, Mohanlal Bhatt. Manilal paid a visit. We were taken to the old cells this evening.

OCTOBER 20, THURSDAY

Spun 216 rounds. Letters¾Andrews, Narayan Kulkarni, Arun, Valji Desai, Srinivasa Sinh, Mira, Mama, Shankar, Nirmala, Taramati, Col. Doyle, Dorothy Newman. Commenced bread this evening.

OCTOBER 21, FRIDAY

Spun 200 rounds. Letters¾Mrs Shivaprasad Gupta, Shakarabhai, Godse, Satikumar Chatterjee, Lala Dunichand, Kaushalya, Alu Vihari, Hoyland, Jaiji Petit. Suleman Kaji and Ishwarlal arrived from the camp. Met Brelvi too. Talked about his diet.

OCTOBER 22, SATURDAY

Spun 217 rounds. Letters—Manilal Gandhi, Dr Dalal, Khwaja, Hiralal, Urmila Devi, Jamshed, German, Mary Barr, Bhilode[1] Chandraji. Met Sardar Pratap Singh

OCTOBER 23, SUNDAY

Spun 220 rounds. Letters—Prof. Trivedi, David, Sesha Aiyangar, Jamshed, Harilal Parikh, Rambharose, Hemprabha,

[1] If the source this can be also read as “Trilok”.

Madhavan, Nagendranath, Lady Thackersey. Last night at 9 o 'clock, received Ghelabhai's telegram about the death of Punjabhai at 3.30 o'clock. Spent the day in writing letters to the Ashram. Wrote reminiscences of Punjabhai.

OCTOBER 24, MONDAY

Spun 208 rounds. Letters—The Ashram 45 including reminiscences of Punjabhai also, Abul Kalam, Lakshmi. Today Bhandari read out to me the Government's order concerning the correspondence about untouchability. Refused to give me a copy. I have sent a reply to it today. A telegram from Abul Kalam Azad also has been witheld.

OCTOBER 25, TUESDAY

Spun 200 rounds. Letters—Khambhatta, Sitala Sahay, Dinshaw Mehta, Harjivan, Rukhi, Vaikunthlal, Manilal Revashankar (Ba, Pyarelal, Neelam, Manilal). Devdas called. Sent with him Pyarelal's book and also Manilal's. Kateli called at night and suggested deletion, in my letter to Doyle, of the paragraph about his refusal to give me a copy of the Government's letter. He allowed me to take out a copy. Handed over the corrected letter today. Received yesterday the honey sent by David.

OCTOBER 26, WEDNESDAY

Spun 219 rounds. Letters—Satavlekar, Vasantlal Morarka, Brajendra, Shankarrao Godse, Ramnath Suman, Krishnadas, Doddamati, Rohit, Atulendu Gupta,Sapru, Lalji Naranji, Ramdas Gandhi, Telegram to Shivprasad Gupta. Col. Doyle, Dahyabhai Came.

OCTOBER 27, THURSDAY

Spun 223 rounds. Letters— Mira, Ratilal Sheth, Maganlal Mehta, Harisingh Gaur, Nanalal (Natvarlal), Chhaganlal (Lilavati), Shankar Ghatge, Nemchand Kacharabhai, Prabhashankar, Harchandbhai, Thadani, Narsinharao.

OCTOBER 28, FRIDAY

Spun 245 rounds. Letters—Aristarchi, Hugh Marshal, Pyarelal. Telegram to Mani. Letter to Bhaktibehn, Dadachanji, Salt. Telegram to Birla.

OCTOBER 29, SATURDAY (DIWALI)

Spun 207 rounds. Letters—Maganlal P.+Manjula, Kewalram + Nirmala, Shivji Nanji, Taramati, Narendra Dev (Calcutta), Maganlal Parmar.

OCTOBER 30, SUNDAY, PADAVO 1989[1]

Spun [. . .][2], Letters—Mathuradas, Mohanlal, Gertrude Keller, Mr. Hirnom, Mathuradas, Shankar, Kedarnath, Sukabhau, Sarojini, Lady Vithaldas. As my leg was aching today, did the rest of the spinning on the Gandiva.

OCTOBER 31 MONDAY

Spun [. . .] Letters—The Ashram 43—Harjivan Kotak, Chhotalal Shah+Manekbai, Satavlekar, Prabhavati. Telegram to Mani. [Letters] Mani Galiara+Vanita+Ratan+Devi, Kamala Nehru. Major Bhandari—about the begining of non-co-operation from tomorrow. Condolence telegram to Lady Ali Imam. Both the Majors paid a visit. Have agreed to take unspiced dal with *bhakhari*. Vallabhbhai has a severe cold.

NOVEMBER 1, TUESDAY

Spun 124 rounds on the spinning-wheel +36 on *takli*. Letters—Mulchand Parmar, Satyamurti, Homi Pestonji, Nambiar, U. Vasudev Joshi, Krishnachandra Agrawal, Dr. Latif Syed, Bhaktibehn, Padmaja Naidu, Anasuyabehn, Shantikumar. Sent five Gujarati books to Bhaktibehn. Tomatoes from Prof. Wadia. Manilal, Sushila, Tara, Surendra, Sita paid a visit. Started taking ‘ C’class food from today. Ate *bhakhari*, unspiced dal and the morning gruel. Mahadev observed a fast. Read the Gita.

NOVEMBER 2, WEDNESDAY

Spun 106 rounds. Letters—Prof. Wadia, Ramdas, The Ashram (Bhau, Rama, Titus) Jamnalal, Madanmohan. Telegram to Jamnalal. The Major called last night and handed to me telegram from the Government of India. Replied today. As a result of that telegram, I resumed today the usual food. Sent for fruit from Lady Vithaldas.

NOVEMBER 3, THURSDAY

Spun 115 rounds. Letters—Mayashankar, Mira, The Ross brothers, Michael Wilson (Sunfield), Najuklal, Dr. Gaur, Narottam

[1] The Gujrati New Year

[2] The figures have been left out in the source.

Girdhar Company. Government decision on untouchability received. May be considered good. Sent a reply. For the present at any rate God has dispersed the clouds. The hand pains so much that I want to reduce the spinning still further.

NOVEMBER 4, FRIDAY

Spun 90 rounds. Letters—Kusum Gandhi, Prabhashankar, Amritlal Shah, Hirji, Bhansali, Dadachanji. About untouchability—Gopala Menon, Har Sarup, Nibaran Chandra, Dunichand, Narsinhbhai, Sohanlal, Jagannath Prasad, Hemprabha, Jagannath Visharad, Ragunath Sashtri, Rameshwarnath Oza, Prafulla Ghosh, Chaturbhuj Vithaldas, Santapal, Prabhunath Mishra, Sharma, Dolatram Gupta, Dhanulal Shrama, Tatachari. On Vaze being invited, Vaze and Patwardhan called on me. I gave them the first statement for the Press. Trivedi and Nanavati from the Camp and Munshi from the Circle called me.

NOVEMBER 5, SATURDAY

Spun 109 rounds. Letters—S.Godse, Nirmala (Rajkot), Ghanshyam Birla, Parachure Shastri, Vernekar, Ramji Rao, Somsundaram, Atmaram Shastri, Talegaonkar. Telegrams—Sarup Rani, C. Mehta, Birla. Vaze, Kodanda Rao and Limaye paid a visit. Handed them the second statement.

NOVEMBER 6, SUNDAY

Spun 102 rounds. Letters—Nanalal Kantilal Vora, Arun, Uma, Sushila, Govinddas,, Kalidas Jaskaran, Jamshed, Chunilal Vyas, Hanumanprasad, Habibur Rahman, Satisbabu.

NOVEMBER 7, MONDAY

Spun 116 rounds. Letters—Lilavati Mehta, Bali + Kumud + Rami + Manu, the Ashram (46), Raihana. Telegrams to Birla, Urmila. Today Pyarelal, Kodanda Rao, Shastri and others came. Handed them the third statement. Mahadev got permission to stay with me.

NOVEMBER 8, TUESDAY

Spun 113 rounds. Letters—Harjivan Kotak, the Ashram (Ba+Radha+Champa+Narandas+Talwalkar), Ramdas (together with two books—the *Ramayana* and Ruskin), Jamnalal. About untouchability—Natarajan, Kodanda Rao, Shastri. Major Bhandari about the Egypt cable. Anandshankar Dhruva, Bhandari (2) about

newspapers. Telegram to Shanti, the Chinese. Mama paid a visit. Interview to the *Sakal* correspondent.

NOVEMBER 9, WEDNESDAY

Spun 111 rounds. Letters—Hasam Ali Sale, Kapil, Mrs. Chidamber, Dr. Modi, Kikibehn, Munnalal, Ranka, Annadanappa, Bernard, Fulchand, Lalji Naranji, Maganlal Mehta, Valji Desai. About untouchability—Radhakant, Motilal Roy, Vasukaka, Vakil, Gosibehn, Namjoshi, Ramasami, the President—District Council, Amaravati. Jethalal Ramji, Damodar Mishra, Mahadev Shastri, Chhotabhai U. Patel. The fourth statement on untouchability, Bhudev Mukerji. Telegrams to Rajbhoj, Sir Lallubhai, the Zamorin and Thakkar.

NOVEMBER 10, THURSDAY

Spun 103 rounds. Letters—Karsandas Chitalia, Mira, Boridas (Madras), Anasuya, Naoroji Belgaumwala, Narsinhrao, Ansari, Rukmini, Manekbai, Bhagwandas, Hiralal, Chhaganlal Mehta, Jeki, Firozechand, Bhagawati, Devi, Lakshmanlal, Narayanswami, Pyarelal, Kewalram, Raihana, Bhaktibehn. About untouchability —Chunilal, Ganesh Bhikaji, Kennedy, Hiralal Shah, Sukhabhau, Vanubhai Parmar, Vasukaka, Natarajan, Gurudev. Telegrams to Ambalal, R. Babu, Gopala Menon, Kirchand. Telegram to the Wadhwan Ashram about Qureshi.

NOVEMBER 11, FRIDAY

Spun 104 rounds. Letters—Devi West, Satyanand, G.S. Narasinhachari, Bharati, Chhagan Jhaveri, Lakshmi, Esther. About untouchability to Srinivasan, G. Ramachandran, Purushottamdas, Harkisandas, Mathuradas Vassanji, Satur, K.M.Shah, Sadanand, Buddhivallabh, Urmila, Basanti Devi, K.R. Nath. Telegram to Urmila. Sent a M.O. for Rs. 100 to Urmila. Lallubhai, Rajbhoj and his friends called. The meeting lasted three hours. Among the friends [who visited] were Prof. Oturkar, Bhagyavant, Datar.

NOVEMBER 12, SATURDAY

Spun 100 rounds. Letters—Bhatnagar, Maganlal Narsinhdas, Amritlal Gordhandas, Kotak. About untouchability to Purushottamdas, Michael, Hiralal Joshi, Vishvanath Gavarikar, Shyamji Marwadi, Swami Yoganand, Kikabhai Lavjibhai, Uttamchand Gangaram, Venkatramayya, Viyogi Hari, Rajbhoj, Birla, Vakil—his

discussions with me. Anandshankar, Chintamani, Kunzru, R[ao] B[ahadur] Raja, Avantikabai, Karsandas Chitalia, Hansabehn, Premlilabehn, Satavlekar, Hiralal Shah. Telegram to Anandashankar. Salivati of *The Hindu*, Kodanda Rao, Vasukaka and Haribhau called.

NOVEMBER 13, SUNDAY

Spun 113 rounds on Kanitkar's spinning-wheel. Letters—Hardayalbabu, Abdul Alim, Elwin, Rohit, Nanalal. About untouchability to Keshoram Tandon, Suryanarayan Vyas, Gaur Gopal, Parikshitlal, Ramnath 'Suman', Mahadev Shastri, Dhanumal Sharma, Sharada Mehta, Madanmohan Mishra, Radhakant, Basantkumar Chatterji.

NOVEMBER 14, MONDAY

Takli—52 rounds. Started spinning on the *takli* because of the pain in the arm. Telegram to Sheth Jamnalal and Chhaganlal. Letters to the Ashram (41), Dr. Modi, Sahni. About untouchability—Kanitkar, Nripendrasingh, Rajbhoj, Anantrao, Manmathrai. Telegram to Satisbabu. Gave the fifth statement to Kodanda Rao.

NOVEMBER 15, TUESDAY

Takli—40 rounds. Letters—Col. Doyle about Manibehn, Major Bhandari, Chinna Thambi. Telegrams to Kewalram and Maganlal. Letters to Bhavanji, Shukraram Shastri, Lakshmikant, Narasinharao, Lakshmanlal Mehta,Taramati,Gulabchand Shah, Paramahansa Pragnaneshwara, Lady Thackersey, Natarajan (the son). About untouchability telegrams to Kunhappa, Sharma, Jenkins and Firozechand. [Letters—] Datar, Karsandas, Ghanshyamdas, Gopala Menon, Vasantram Shastri, Hariharprasad, Nemichandra. Radhakrishna, Prof. Purandare, his wife and Kodanda Rao called.

From the Gujarati: S.N. 19337

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I[1]

(A) DISCUSSION WITH VALLABHBHAI PATEL

September 6, 1932

GANDHIJI: You were, of course, joking in the morning, but if you really have any questions to ask please ask them.

VALLABHBHAI PATEL: What do you think will these people do?

G. I still feel that they will release me on or before the 19th. It will be the limit of wickedness if they let me fast, let no one know about it and then say that I did what I as a prisoner ought not to have done, and that they could do nothing about it. I do not say that they cannot go that far, only they will not find it necessary. And they certainly are not the people to go further than it is necessary.

V. P. Then what will you do?

G. The fast cannot commence on the 20th. We cannot stick to the 20th.

V. P. Does is not mean then that we have got time till the new constitution is drawn up? Or that you can give a longer notice to the people and the Government?

G. Yes, but that depends on how much the people will allow me to do after I get out. I cannot tell what the situation will be. I have no idea of the kind of letter I may have to write. But I shall have to consider everyparty—the Hindu society, the *Antyajas*, the Government, the Muslims. It will be necessary for the Hindus to hold meetings along with the Antyajas at every place and reject this thing. The Government has done this thing as a Christian Government and hence I shall have to tell both the Government and the Christians the same thing—that as Christians they cannot do this thing. Let our swaraj come into being, then they may influence the *Antyajas* in any way they like, but they should not divide us today. I had said this to the Muslims even in England. I shall say the same thing here also. I shall explain to the Hindu society that now the *Antyajas* have no choice but to turn Muslims or Christians.

V. P. But where are the Muslims here who will listen to you?

G. It does not matter if there aren't any. But we should hope that those people too will wake up. The root of satyagraha lies in faith in human nature, in the faith that it will be possible to melt the cruellest of men. So there will surely be some Muslim who will say that if things go to that length he will not be able to bear it. To accomplish all this, I shall have to call certain people. I

[1] *Vid*e "Statement to the Press", 16-11-1932.

do not know whether all of them will be permitted to come here. But they may even insult me. They may say that they have released me because they will not take the responsibility for my death. However, if I launch civil disobedience, they will have to put me back into prison.

MAHADEV DESAI : Among the people who will come will also be Christian friends and they will say to you that before accusing the Government you should accuse yourself. Why does Hindu society regard the *Antyajas* as untouchables?

G. That is up to me to explain. That is not a difficult thing. We can say to them: 'Allow us to settle our problems ourselves, why do you interfere? After we have set about managing our own affairs, you may do what you like. Why do you divide us and then argue over things? Today the *Antyajas* have either to turn to Muslims or to you. The question of women is similar to that of the *Antyajas*. But women are not untouchables. Even if they wish to become untouchables, men will go and sit on their beds. They cannot be separated even by having a separate electorate. Today the *Antyajas* have been separated permanently. What would be the outcome of it? There would be internal strife. There are people like . . . . He would collect bad characters in the community and get them to attack Hindus, poison wells and do other things.

The duty of those of you who have remained here is merely to inform everyone in the Camp jail that fasting is wholly prohibited and that everyone must remain calm.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 7-9

(B) DISCUSSION WITH B.R. AMBEDKAR

September 22, 1932

AMBEDKAR : We must accept that in the country there are two groups belonging to two different ideologies and act accordingly, and I should get my compensation. I also want that a clear understanding should be arrived at which would recompense me in other respects also. The decision of the Government gives me seventy-one seats and I feel that is a just, reasonable and definite allocation.

GANDHI : According to you.

A. Over and above that I get the right to vote and contest elections in the general constituencies. I also have a franchise in the labourers'constituencies. We do realize that you are of immense help to us.

G. Not to you personally.

A. But I have only one quarrel with you, that is, you work for the so-called national welfare and not for our interests alone. If you devoted yourself entirely to the welfare of the Depressed Classes, you would then become our hero.

G. Very sweet of you to say so.

A. I want political power for my community. That is indispensable for our survival. The basis of the agreement therefore should be: I should get what is due to me. I wish to tell the Hindus that I should be assured of my compensation.

G. You have clarified your position very beautifully. However, I should like to ask you one question. You say that if there is any genuine party among the Depressed Classes it should be given sufficient scope to rise. Therefore their refusal to accept joint electorates without primary elections is quite reasonable. What I do not understand is why you have not said so far that there should be a separate election of this kind. I feel from whatever study I have made of the subject that if I accept the primary election, the letter of my vow is not violated. I therefore accept the Clause [of primary election] but I would most certainly have to scrutinize its wording. At the moment, I say only this, that the idea of separate primary elections does not go against my vow. But I suspect something when you insist that the panel should consist only of three candidates. It does not give me sufficient place to turn in. Moreover, you consider panel system for some seats only, thereby satisfying both the parties [among Harijans]. There would be one election, i.e., of the primary nature by the Harijan voters only. The other would be by the joint electorate. I have to safeguard without any discrimination not the interest of one group alone but of the Depressed Class as a whole. I want to serve the untouchables. That is why I am not at all angry with you. When you use derogatory and angry words for me, I tell myself that I deserved that. I will not get angry even if you spit on my face. I say this with God as witness. I know that you have drunk deep of the poisoned cup. However, I make a claim which will seem astounding to you. You are born an untouchable but I am an untouchable by adoption. And as a new convert I feel more for the welfare of the community than those who are already there. At the moment I have before my eyes the dumb untouchables—unapproachables and unseeables—of South India. I am scrutinizing the scheme to see how these people will be affected by it. You will of course say why I should worry about that. All of you will either accept Christianity or Islam. I say that you may do whatever you like after my body falls. What I say is that if the panel system is good for the Depressed Classes it should be good for the entire electorate. I do not like it from the beginning that the community should be divided into two groups. I will raze to the ground the fort of sanatanists with dynamite if all the untouchables are one and united. I want that the entire untouchable community should unitedly rebel against the sanatanists. You should not worry about the number as long as the appointing power is in your hands. I am a lifelong democrat. The whole world will agree that I was the foremost among the democrats after my ashes are scattered in the air or, if that does not happen, after they are immersed in the Ganga. I do not say this out of pride but tell the truth with humility. I learnt the lesson of

democracy at the tender age of 12. I quarrelled with my mother for treating the domestic sweeper as an untouchable. That day I saw God in the form of a Bhangi. You spoke the truth when you said that the welfare of untouchables is dearer to you than my own life. Now be honest and stick to it. You should not care for my life. But do not be false to Harijans. My work will not die with me. I have asked my son to convey my message to the Conference. In that, I have said that they should not be tempted to forsake the interests of the Harijans in order to save my life. I am sure that if I die my son will definitely follow me. Not only he but many others also will lay down their lives, for I do not have only one son, I have thousands. He would not be my worthy son if he did not lay down his life for the honour of Hinduism. Without eradicating untouchability root and branch the honour of Hinduism cannot be saved. That can only happen when untouchables are treated on par with caste Hindus in every respect. A person who is regarded as 'unseeable' today should also have the opportunity to become the Viceroy of India. I had said, in the first political speech I made on coming to India that I would like to make a Bhangi the President of the Congress.

So I appeal to you not to haggle. Do not bring to me something which is so bad that I would not even like the look of it. Bring to me some nice present which would inspire life into a person who is willingly courting death. However you will do that only if you are convinced that my co-operation has some value.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 69-72

(C) A STATEMENT

September 22, 1932

I do not see any objection from the point of view of my vow in the system of primary elections which Dr. Ambedkar has explained to me and which has been laid down in Clause B of the scheme given to me. But before I finally accept any scheme, I would like to see it drafted in very clear language. After that I will give my final decision on Clause B. I do not like its language. It requires many changes. I give below my objections against Clause B and its language.

(1) The system of primary elections and reserved seats should terminate automatically after 10 years.

(2) The number of votes should be ascertained from the Lothian Committee Report. I have double objection against Clause B. Not only that it nullifies the object for which I have staked my life but it is harmful to the nation also.

About other issues you should put the Hindu Community on its honour. Do not ask me to do anything which would not do justice to a man on deathbed. I know that the country will be ruined if I swerve from the stand I have taken.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 72

(D) INTERVIEW TO VOHRA DEPUTATION[1]

September 23, 1932

If you think deeply, you will see that no task in this world has been possible without someone sacrificing his life for it. Your love for me is inspired by my determination, my strength to give up my life. Hence those of you who love me should let me go. My life is in the hands of God. Even if I wish to depart I cannot, and if I am to depart, even expert doctors will not be able to save me. It will be a great thing if you bear witness to the fact that I died for truth. It is not that the blot to remove which I have been fasting disfigures Hindu religion alone it disfigures the whole of India, because the entire country is witness to it. Hence you should all pray that Gandhi's pledge be fulfilled. It is not as if the Hindus could not pray for Muslims and *vice versa*. That sort of belief is hypocritical.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 73-4

(E) MESSAGE TO M. M. MALAVIYA, M.R. JAYAKAR AND TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU[2]

September 24, 1932

They should not take hasty steps on my account. They should endorse only that which they feel is right. They as well as I will be doing a wrong thing if later on I had to be persuaded to change my opinion. We should not stand on our honour as far as our duty is concerned. They should therefore cling to what is true, proper and just. If in doing so my body falls, let it be so. Everyone should do what he thinks is proper. My stand is: either agree to referendum after five years or let me die. Anyone who feels that this condition is not proper and is harmful should not accept it.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, V0l. II, P. 80

[1] The Vohras had gone to urge Gandhiji to give up his intention to fast.

[2] Gandhiji had asked Mahadev Desai to convey this message.

(F) DISCUSSION WITH B. R. AMBEDKAR

October 17, 1932

AMBEDKAR: I have not come to discuss untouchability but political matters.

GANDHIJI: That is true. I cannot talk about it with you; even if you do I shall not be able to express an opinion—my mind does not work in that direction.

A. I have come here for this. I want to request you to give up civil disobedience and to join the Round Table Conference. The point is that if you do not come, we shall get nothing in England and everything will be upset. People like Iqbal who are enemies of the country will come to the forefront. We have to work any sort of constitution. Hence though I am a small man, I request you to come.

G. If you elabroate your argument, I shall think over it. I suggest you go and write about it at length in the newspapers. I shall think over it.

A. It is not a thing that can be put down in writing. In it I shall have to say a lot that will hurt the Muslims and I cannot say that publicly. But I shall write anonymously or have someone write in a different way. Please have a look at it and, taking it to be mine, think over it.

G. It will be good if you write under your own name. But of course you may do as you wish.

A. I must honestly say that I have no interest in the temples being thrown open, common dinners and the like, becuase we suffer thereby. My people have to put up with beatings and bitterness increases. After the common dinner at Vile Parle, the Maratha workers went on strike. If the caste Hindus had the strength they would have engaged untouchables as servants. But that has not been so. Hence I do not feel interested in the thing. I only want that social and economic hardships should end.

G. Give examples.

A. The untouchables do not get houses to live in; they continue to suffer injustice and oppression. In one case, an untouchable was accused of having murdered a Maratha. I could have taken the case to Sessions and got him acquitted, but the magistrate changed the charge of murder to one of grievous injury. Now he will receive some punishment. You may not know what even I have to face. I do not get any other place to live in Bombay except the Port Trust chawl. In my village, I have to stay in the midst of the Mahars. In Poona, all others stay with their friends. I have to stay at the National Hotel and have to spend Rs. 7 and transport fare.

G. Servants of India?

A. Yes, I can perhaps stay there. But only perhaps. You will know if you ask Vaze. Once Vaze's servant insulted me in his presence. I want to do away with all these hardships.

G. I am at one with you. You ought to know that my fast has not ended yet, it is still on. To correct the agreement was a minor thing. The main thing still remains to be done. I am ready to give my life for it. All the injustices you mention ought to end.

A. Birla said that I should be taken on the Committee for the Abolition of Untouchability. I declined to join, because what can I alone do? I would have to agree to the work of abolishing untouchability being done in accordance with your wishes. If we are in a majority we can get the reforms that we wish brought about. You wish that temples should be erected or wells should be dug. We might feel that that would be a waste of money, that there should be another way out for it.

G. I understand your point of view, and I shall keep it in mind and shall see what can be done.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 144-6

APPENDIX II[1]

THE AGREEMENT ARRIVED AT BETWEEN THE LEADERS ACTING ON BEHALF OF THE DEPRESSED CLASSES AND OF THE REST OF THE HINDU COMMUNITY REGARDING THE REPRESENTATION OF THE DEPRESSED CLASSES IN THE LEGISLATURES AND CERTAIN OTHER MATTERS AFFECTING THEIR WELFARE.[2]

1. There shall be seats reserved for the Depressed Classes out of general electrorates. Seats in provincial Legislatures shall be as follow[3] :

MADRAS	30
BOMBAY WITH SIND	15
PUNJAB	8
BIHAR AND ORISSA	18
CENTRAL PROVINCES	20

[1] *Vide* "Message to Great Britain", 25-9-1932.

[2] The signing took place on the 24th September, at about 6 in an atmosphere of cordiality. According to a report in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 26-9-1932, Madan Mohan Malaviya signed first, followed by Dr. Ambedkar, who used Rajagopalachari's pen for the purpose and kept it for himself and in exchange gave him his own pen to sign and keep as a momento of the occasion.

[3] These figures are based on the total strength of the Provincial Councils announced in the Prime Minister's decision.

ASSAM	7
BENGAL	30
UNITED PROVINCES	20
Total	148

2. Election to these seats shall be by joint electorates subject, however, to the following procedure:

All members of the Depressed Classes registered in the general electoral roll of a constituency, will form an electoral college which will elect a panel of four candidates belonging to the Depressed Classes for each of such reserved seats, by the method of single vote and the four persons getting the highest number of votes in such primary election shall be the candidates for election by the general electorate.

3. Representation of the Depressed Classes in the Central Legislature shall likewise be on the principle of joint electorates and reserved seats by the method of primary election in the manner provided for in clause 2 above for their representation in Provincial Legislatures.

4. In the Central Legislature 18 per cent of the seats alloted to the general electorate for British India in the said legislature shall be reserved for the Depressed Classes.

5. The system of primary election to panel of candidates for election to the Central and Provincial Legislatures, as hereinbefore mentioned, shall come to an end after the first ten years unless terminated sooner by mutual agreement under the provision of Clause 6 below.

6. The system of representation of the Depressed Classes by reserved seats in the Provincial and Central Legislatures as provided for in clauses 1 and 4 shall continue until determined by mutual agreement between the communities concerned in this settlement.

7. The franchise for the Central and Provincial Legislatures for the Depressed Classes shall be as indicated in the Lothian Committee Report.

8. There shall be no disabilities attaching to anyone on the ground of his being a member of the Depressed Classes in regard to any elections to local bodies or appointment to public service.

Every endeavour shall be made to secure a fair representation of the Depressed Classes in these respects subject to such educational qualifications as may be laid down for appointment to public services.

9. In every province out of the educational grant an adequate sum shall be earmarked for providing educational facilities to members of the Depressed Classes.

MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA
TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU
M. R. JAYAKAR
B. R. AMBEDKAR
SRINIVASAN
M. C. RAJAH
C. V. MEHTA
C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
RAJENDRA PRASAD
G. D. BIRLA
RAMESHWARDAS BIRLA
GAVAI[1]
LALLUBAHI SAMALDAS
HANSA MEHTA
K. NATARAJAN
KAMAKOTI NATARAJAN
PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS
MATHURDAS VISSANJI
WALCHAND HIRACHAND
H. N. KUNZRU
K. G. LIMAYE
B. S. KAMAT
G. K. DEODHAR
A. V. THAKKAR
R. K. BAKHLE
P. G. SOLANKI
P. BALOO
SHANKERLAL BANKER
GOVIND MALAVIYA
DEVDAS GANDHI
BISWAS
P. N. RAJBHOJ
SHANKERLAL BANKER
P. KODANDA RAO
G. K. GADGIL
MANU SUBEDAR
AVANTIKABAI GOKHALE
K. J. CHITALIA
RADHAKANT MALAVIYA
A. R. BHAT
COLAM
PRADHAN

The Epic Fast, pp. 153-6

APPENDIX III

INTERVIEW TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"[2]

November 10, 1932

GANDHIJI : The Zamorin does not say that it is impossible to throw open the temple but he goes on pointing out his difficulties. If he fails in his efforts Kelappan and I have to resort to fast unless I see some flaw in the claim advanced. In fact there is no flaw in it. There are difficulties in the way of the Zamorin but they are not such that they cannot be got over. The real test is whether the sanatanists, those who have the privilege of entering the temple, have any objection to untouchables entering the temple. All the information I have received shows that the majority of the temple-goers have no objection. The whole movement is based on the belief that the temple-

[1] The signatures that follow were added to the document in Bombay at the final sitting of the Hindu Conference on September 25.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to The Zamorin of Calicut", 9-11-1932.

goers, i.e., sanatanists are prepared for the reform. Our fast would be premature if they are not prepared for the reform.

Question : There won't be any fast if the difficulties regarding the opening of these temples are removed. Isn't that so?

G. The proposed fast is above all for the opening of this temple. To make it a test case Kelappan had concentrated all his efforts on this temple alone. They have made their utmost effort to get the temple opened. After I began my fast Kelappan also decided to follow me. But he had not given due notice. I pointed out this fault and advised him to postpone the fast. He agreed to it. Now therefore I am honour-bound to fast with him. This is the reason why we have concentrated our efforts on Guruvayur.

Q. The Zamorin says that thousands of people are willing to lay down their lives.

G. That statement of his is not true. However, I won't be worried if thousands of people who call themeslves sanatanists go on a fast. Truth is more precious than thousands of lives. I feel that a fast is a means to self-purification and awakening the inner self. It cannot be a means of coercion.

Q. Won't this movement divide the Hindu community? Won't the sanatanists be separated from the rest of the Hindus?

G. I entertain no such fear. Being a democrat, I would not oppose as I am doing now the movement known as the sanatanist movement if I am satisfied that it has the support of the majority. The whole movement of eradication of untouchability rests on the belief that the opposition does not have a formidable support. It is well known that it does not have any moral support.

Q. Don't you feel that you would be more effective if you were outside? Do you consider eradication of untouchability less important than civil disobedience?

G. I do not give anyone of them either less or more importance. For me both are religious principles and so I cannot consider one inferior to the other. Here I am talking about civil disobedience as a principle, not as a movement. I cannot give any opinion on the civil disobedience that is going on the country.

Q. It seems that the movement is not as effective as it should be.

G. I cannot say that. I am not in a position to say anything. I cannot rely on the information gathered from the newspapers. You should contact the workers outside.

Q. What do you say about Delhi resignations from Anti-untouchability League?

G. I am not surprised. However, I do hope there is nothing very significant behind it all. The foundation of the League is quite strong. It has an ideal President and a more ideal Secretary.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 225-7

1. STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY[1]-VII

POONA,
November 16, 1932

Though the questions that I shall endeavour to answer in this statement have been more or less covered by the previous statements, as they continue to recur, I thought it would be well to collect as many as possible and to deal with them in one single statement. "Are you not forcing people to do things against their will?" is one such question. At least, such is not my intention.

The contemplated fast[2] is intended to stengthen the weak, to energize the sluggards and to give faith to the sceptics.

It should be clear to anyone who will give a little thought to it that those who are hostile to the reform will not only be unaffected by the fast, but will probably and perhaps rightly, from their own standpoint, welcome it, if only it ends fatally. An angry correspondent does not hesitate to say it in so many words, but says another correspondent, "it is all very well for you to say, you do not intend to do such and such a thing. There are many orthodox people who will follow the multitude for fear of personal injury from your over-zealous followers."

An argument like this can be advanced under almost any conceivable circumstance. I have led many movements in my lifetime where there has been no fast necessary, but the charge I am now answering has been brought against me often enough, in order to turn me away from my purpose.

Whatever the intended consequences of the contemplated fast may be, apart from its being a question of honour, it must be taken up, if the occasion arises, for the additional reason that it is certain to stir to worthy effort tens of thousands of people who have faith in me. Such must be the case in every movement of a religious character.

The second question is:

[1] Issued by Gandhiji, from the Yeravda Central Prison, Poona. The earlier six statements were issued on the 4th, 5th, 7th, 9th, 14th and 15th November, 1932.

[2] In sympathy with Kelappan's fast for the opening of the Guruvayur Temple to Harijans; *vide* "Statement on Untouchability-IX", 26-11-1932. The fast was to commence on January 2, 1933, but was postponed.

Are you not setting one section of the Hindus against another?

Most emphatically not. Some opposition is inevitable in every reform. But up to a point. Opposition and agitation in a society are a sign of healthy growth. I have no fear whatsoever of a permanent cleavage between the sanatanists and the reformers. Far be it from me either to underrate the sanatanist opposition or to disregard their sentiment. I have no doubt whatsoever that some of them feel strongly that sanatan dharma is in danger. Nevertheless it is astonishing how narrow at least in theory is the difference between the sanatanist and the reformer.

Almost every letter that I have received from the sanatanists makes these startling admissions:

1. We admit that there is much to be done for the amelioration of the condition of the Harijans; 2. we admit that many caste Hindus are ill-treating the Harijans; 3. we admit that their children should receive education and that they should have better quarters to live in; 4. we admit that they should have proper arrangement for bathing and drawing water for them-selves; 5. we admit that they should have full political rights; 6. we admit that they should have ample facilities for worship and 7. we admit that they should have all the civic rights that the others have.

But, say these sanatanists, "we must not be compelled to touch them or associate with them, especially whilst they are in their present condition."

Then I say to them, since you admit the necessity for putting them on the same level with you, why are you agitated that other caste Hindus will go a step further and believe on strength of the same Shastras that you believe in, that is, their duty is not to regard the Harijans as untouchables, but to have them share with themselves all those rights and privileges which you concede to them, but which you would have them to enjoy and exercise in isolation from you? Surely you who want to guard your own liberty of action and rightly resent the very idea of coercion, will not desire that the reformers should be coerced into carrying out schemes of amelioration which you hold to be necessary in exactly the same manner as you would like.

I venture to suggest a better way. Since you are at one with the reformers in conceding the desirability of ameliorating the condition of the Harijans and since you have not hitherto done anything tangible in that direction, subscribe liberally to the funds that the

reformers are collecting, and use them as your agents for carrying out the common scheme and respect their interpretation of Hindu religion, as you would have them to respect yours. Hitherto, in practice, you have not resented the reformer's action in associating with the Harijans. You have suffered him to go his own way. You have not boycotted him. There is, then, no meaning in your opposition now simply because the movement has become more active and more universal than before.

One difficulty is still standing in the way. Who is to have the use of public temples and other public institutions that are in existence, and from which Harijans are at present debarred, in some cases legally and in other far more numerous cases, illegally? There is a very simple way out of the difficulty. If only each party will shed anger and mutual disrespect, a referendum can easily be taken for each village or a group of villages and each city or each division of a city, and whichever party has the majority in favour of its view should make use of the public institutions, including the temples. And if the sanatanists carry the majority with them, they should defray their share with the reformers of the cost of providing equal services for the reformers and the untouchables.

I bracket the reformers with the Harijans, for if they are worth their salt and will work up to their convictions, as time progresses, the duty must dawn upon them of denying to themselves the use of a single service which the Harijans cannot enjoy with the caste Hindus on absolutely equal terms.

Following out this train of reasoning the sanatanists will see that in justice they should bear the whole cost of bringing into being parallel services, because as I have understood the correspondence and as I have explained above, the sanatanists agree that the Harijans are entitled to the same services that they have hitherto enjoyed, and of which the Harijans have hitherto been deprived. Let not the sanatanists run away with themselves by picturing a condition of things as existing but which in reality does not exist.

Let them clearly understand that the removal of untouchability in accordance with the Yeravda Pact[1], and with the declaration of the

[1] Between the leaders acting on behalf of the depressed classes and of the rest of the Hindu community, regarding the representation of the depressed classes in legislatures and certain other matters affecting their welfare. For the text of the agreement, *vide* Appendix"Agreement between depressed classes leaders and caste Hindu Leaders".

recently formed All-India Anti-Untouchability League includes no more than I have narrated. It does not include inter-dining and inter-marriage. That many Hindus including myself would go muchfurther ought not to disturb the sanatanists. They will not want to stifle private judgment or private action, and if they have deep faith in what they believe, they should not take fright, in anticipation of what is to come. If a particular reform has an inherent vitality and has come in response to the needs of the time, no power on earth can stem its irresistible march.

The third question is:

Are you not retarding political emancipation by forcing on public attention your views on social and religious questions, and springing upon the public a hurricane agitation for their acceptance?

I cannot answer this question at length without trespassing upon the limits which, as a prisoner, I have accepted for conducting the anti-untouchability campaign. But this much I can say that those who know me at all should understand that I draw no hard and fast line of demarcation between political, social, religious and other questions. I have always held that they are inter-dependent and that the solution of one brings nearer the solution of the rest. This does not exhaust the questions which I have collected from the correspondence which is already proving more than I can handle with the very limited assistance which only naturally I can have. I must deal with the rest to the best of my ability in the statement[1] to follow.

I would here like to urge the correspondents to be merciful. Hitherto, I have punctiliously acknowledged almost all the letters that have reached me. But the correspondents will henceforth please be satisfied with whatever answers I can give through the series of statements I am issuing, and they will help themselves and me, if they will be brief and write only when they have something original to say or when they have questions to which they must have answers from me, before they can form their judgment on any issue arising in connection with the movement.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-11-1932

[1] *Vide*"Statement on Untouchability—VIII", 17-11-1932.

2. FOREWORD TO "HAMARA KALANK"

November 16, 1932

This venture of Sasta Sahitya Mandal is laudable. As there is such a rigorous movement afoot for the eradication of untouchability, everyone must, as a matter of course, know what is being done in this direction and how. We want, through enlightenment, to do away with this sin. It is, therefore, essential for the Hindu public to realize the implications of untouchability and our duty in this matter.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Hamara Kalank

3. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

POONA,
November 16, 1932

SHETH JAMNALAL BAJAJ
PRISONER
DISTRICT JAIL
DHULIA

WIRE RECEIVED. KEEP ME INFORMED[1] IF NECESSARY DAILY BY WIRE .

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 98

4. LETTER TO S. M. MICHAEL[2]

November 16, 1932

I do not claim ability to give satisfaction to anybody. I can only try. Sjt. Kelappan's fast was without notice and therefore began with an initial flaw. That will not apply to the contemplated fast. If the temple is opened to the Harijans it will not be due in fact to any coercion used against the trustees, but it will be opened because of the irresistible demand of the temple-goers who are the real owners. Take the converse case. If the temple-goers are not converted, can any

[1] About health; *vide* "Letter to E. E. Doyle", 18-11-1932.

[2] The addressee had written: "If you could assure me that your fast did not imply undue pressure, I will not undertake one."

pressure brought to bear on the trustees ever result in the admission of Harijans to the temple?

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 251

5. LETTER TO K. NATARAJAN[1]

November 16, 1932

I have both your letters. I am delighted that the doctor has got a suitable job in Delhi. Your second letter is an appeal to reason, and rightly so. But there are two difficulties about appeals to reason in a case like mine. In the first place, though the reasoning may be perfectly sound, it may not be based on the same premises, and therefore may fail to carry conviction. Secondly, as you yourself have justly remarked, a case like mine transcends reason. Nevertheless I have always desired in such cases to compare notes with kindred spirits. For I do believe that with fallible human beings there is no such thing as absolute surety, even about promptings of the inner voice. God requires the purest instruments to speak through, but poor mortals can only make an approach to perfection. And whilst they are confined in their bodies, they can never attain perfection. What I therefore want is with the utmost freedom to discuss with you whatever has been actuating me in the hope that either you will see my viewpoint and find perfect justification for my action, or some argument or a word coming from you may discover to me a flaw that might have escaped me. I confess however I have no doubt in my mind about the ethics of the proposed fast. I am therefore suffering from no mental disturbance and therefore I do not want you to hasten back to Bombay. Do carry out all your private and public programmes in the North and when in due course you come back to Bombay I would like you when you can spare a few hours to run up to Poona to have a brief interchange of views.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 248-9

[1] Editor, *Indian Social Reformer*

6. LETTER TO CHAMAN KAVI

November 16, 1932

If, on the one hand, hundreds of self-seeking men have misused mosques, temples and churches, on the other, millions have made good use of them. If you wish to test the truth of this statement, use your wonderful gift of imagination and suppose that a reformer razes to the ground in a single day all the churches, temples and mosques. Then picture to yourself the condition of those millions of simple good souls when they discover that the temples and mosques from which they daily derived consolation and support were no more. I see the truth of this every day. Devotees who visit even the most unholy temples with pure heart certainly feel the presence of God in those temples, so wonderful is the mystery of His Nature, or say His *maya*. But some great *bhakta* was inspired and sang: "*Maya* casts a spell on all, but she is helpless before a God-lover". If, therefore, you realize through your imagination that so long as temples exist they should be open for Harijans too, your own reason will convince you of the necessity of the fast. My fast is not aimed against the sanatanists; it is aimed against the thousands or rather the millions who are bound to me [by the tie of love]. If the fast shocks them out of their slumber, the temples are bound to be thrown open to Harijans.

I have infinite patience as regards the spinning-wheel. Your experience of villages is limited to Kutch. But conditions in the thousands of other villages are far different from those in the villages of Kutch. And even in Kutch no cloth can be cheaper than what is produced by the cultivator with his own labour from cotton growing in his own fields. If there is any such cloth, you may say that it is a shroud rather than cloth which protects the weaver against cold and heat or covers his shame. Suppose somebody offers me, instead of water, a poisonous liquid which looks like water, gives it free and even offers to me the glass which contains it as a gift, and another person offers real water but pours it from his jug into my folded palms and asks four pice for the service, whose offer should I accept? You are impatient, your mind is very much unsteady and your faith is short-lived. That is why you get irritated every now and then. But this is not your true nature. It is a disease in you. Get rid of it, Your truenature is capable of patience and iron firmness of mind. One need not put faith in anything too readily, but once we have put faith in a thing after the most careful thought, we must cling to it as tenaciously

as does a black ant to a jar of jaggery. "Better lose one's life rather than break one's plighted word." I think I have written enough now.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 250-1

7. LETTER TO NARASINHRAO B. DIVATIA[1]

November 16, 1932

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I hope I did not worry you by writing to you. If a beggar hides his begging bowl, his cause would be lost. Though you are advanced in age, I can put no limit to your capacity. Will you kindly send me the names of other persons whom you think I can approach for help?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Narasinhraoni Rojnishi, p. 548

8. A LETTER

November 16, 1932

I got your letter. I felt unhappy to see you unhappy. I can understand your anger. I know that you have suffered beyond limit. Still, I do not repent the advice which I gave to you and to others. Suffering undergone voluntarily for a good cause is not known to have harmed anybody in the world. Having to bear suffering is not an evil. But in your present condition of mind I shall not be able to explain anything to you. May God give you peace of mind and bless you. I will welcome your letters written even in anger. What do you do in Bulsar?

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 247

[1] (1859-1937); Gujarati poet and man of letters

9. STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY-VIII

POONA
November 17, 1932

Here is another question that many correspondents have asked:

> You say you believe in the Shastras. We do not understand what you mean by them, for you seem arbitrarily to reject many things which are supported by the Shastras. Even the *Gita* that you swear by requires one to follow the Shastras.

I must repeat what I have said in a previous statement[1] that for me, nothing that is inconsistent with the main theme of the *Gita* is Shastra, no matter where it is found printed. If I do not shock my orthodox friends, I would like to make my meaning clearer still. Nothing that is inconsistent with the universally accepted first principles of morality has for me the authority of the Shastras. They are designed not to supersede, but to sustain the first principles, and the *Gita* is all-sufficing for me, because it not only conforms to the first principles, but gives you reasons for adherence to them at any cost. But for this Golden Rule that I have suggested, laymen like me would flounder in the midst of a forest of conflicting texts and a pile of nicely printed and equally nicely bound Sanskrit volumes, for which rival pundits claim divine authority.

Thus, there are many *Smritis*, some of which are unknown outside the little areas in which, by a few hundred men they are held in veneration. No one can give their origin or the dates of their composition. I saw one such volume in the South. When I inquired of the learned scholar friends about this volume, they told me that they had no knowledge of it.

There are numerous *Agamas*[2] which when examined, contradict one another and which have no binding effect outside the little areas where they find acceptance.

If all these books were to be held as binding on the Hindus, there is hardly an immoral practice for which it would be difficult to find Shastric sanction, and even in the hoary *Manusmriti* from which if the verses of doubtful authenticity are not expurgated, one would discover several texts contradicting the loftiest morals and teachingsto

[1] *Vide* "Statement on Untouchability—I", 4-11-1932.
[2] Scriptures

be found spread throughout that great book. Therefore the meaning I have given to the word 'Shastras' in the *Bhagavad Gita*, wherein it occurs only in one context, is not any book or set of laws outside the *Gita* itself, but it means right conduct embodied in a living authority.

I know that this is not likely to satisfy the critic, and as a layman I can give no lead to anybody, but I can satisfy the curiosity of my critics by telling them what I mean exactly by the Shastras.

Another question put with equal persistence is this:

> What do you mean by divine guidance or the inner voice, and how would you and for that matter the world, fare, if every one claimed such guidance for himself and each acted in a manner wholly different from his neighbours?

This is a fair question, and we would come to a pretty pass if divinity had made no provision by way of self-protection. Whilst, therefore, all may lay the claim, some alone will be able to justify it. A person falsely claiming to act under divine inspiration or the promptings of the inner voice without having any such, will fare worse than the one falsely claiming to act under the authority of an earthly sovereign. Whereas the latter on being exposed will escape with injury to his body the former may perish body and soul together.

Charitable critics impute no fraud to me, but suggest that I am highly likely to be acting under some hallucination. The result for me, even then, will not be far different from what it would be, if I was laying a false claim. A humble seeker that I claim to be has need to be most cautious and to preserve the balance of mind. He has to reduce himself to zero before God will guide him. Let me not labour this point.

The claim I have made is neither extraordinary, nor exclusive. God will rule the lives of all those who will surrender themselves without reservation to Him. In the language of the *Gita*, God acts through those who have acquired complete detachment, i.e., self- effacement here.

There is no question of hallucination. I have stated a simple scientific truth, thus to be tested by all who have the will and the patience to acquire the necessary qualifications which are again incredibly simple to understand and easy enough to acquire where there is determination.

Lastly, no one need worry about my claim. What I am asking the people to do is capable of being verified by reason. Even when

I disappear from the scene, untouchability will have to be removed. Whether the fast is divinely inspired or not, need not be a matter of concern even to my closest associates. They may, out of affection for me, work with double zeal in the cause. That would [not] be a calamity, even if it was found that the fast was the foolish act of a self-willed friend. Those who have neither affection for, nor faith in, me will remain unmoved by it. Constant harping, therefore, on the contemplated fast or my claim in regard thereto, is calculated to befog the public mind and the attention from the great work before the nation.

I would therefore conclude this statement by drawing the readers' attention to a few pictures that I have picked up from the voluminous correspondence in my possession.

Here is one from Vile Parle, suburb of Bombay, inhabited by well-to-do Hindus among others. The suburb has in round figures, 1,700 villas or houses; the Municipality has an income of Rs. 70,000 of which Rs. 31,000 are spent for conservancy. The scavengers are accommodated in quarters where there are no roads, no arrangement for water-supply and no sanitary convenience. The land itself is low-lying, the huts are hovels constructed from dilapidated tins which were once used for conservancy work. There is no lighting, and nearby is the dumping ground for all the suburban rubbish which gives an eternal stench. Next to it is a structure for housing conservancy; attached to this is a water-pipe for washing dirty tins, and if the overseer is well disposed he would allow the scavengers to help themselves to water from the pipe; on the other side, is a row of carts that receive the buckets collected from the privies of households. It is in these surroundings that the scavengers have to pass their life. These quarters are surrounded by fields which are often under water, breeding mosquitoes, harbouring scorpions, snakes, field-rats. Thirty- one families live in this condition, they are composed of 35 men, 25 women, 34 boys and 15 girls.

Of this population of 109, only 9 boys can at all read and write with difficulty. The rest are utterly illiterate. This is a suburb where if the inhabitants, if they had any thought for these fellow-beings of theirs, could well afford to provide for them decent accommodation in decent quarters with lighting and water and other conveniences which are part of city life. There is work here for both the sanatanists and the reformers. It would be no answer to my complaint that the Vile Parle

Municipality has an income of only Rs. 70,000 out of which it spends the princely sum of Rs. 31,000 on conservancy. I know that the inhabitants of Vile Parle are well-to-do enough to tax themselves specially on behalf of these useful servants of society. But I would regard that as a slow process. It is the primary duty of the Hindu habitants to make decent collections overnight and provide suitable quarters and other conveniences for the scavengers. If they did so, even then it would be a tardy performance of a simple duty done to fellowmen. When they have done this, there would be a point in their moving the Municipality to take up the burden of additional annual expenditure that would undoubtedly have to be incurred in order to enable the scavengers to live in comparative comfort.

An almost identical picture has been drawn by Sjt. A. V. Thakkar, the tireless Secretary of the All-India [Anti-] Untouchability League, of scavengers' quarters he has inspected during his travels undertaken on behalf of the League. He gives a harrowing tale about the condition of such quarters in Danapur and other places about Patna in Bihar. Now I wish that instead of engaging in fruitless controversy about what is not contained in the Shastras about untouchability, everyone of us would apply ourselves to ameliorating the conditions of the so-called untouchables. There is work enough and to spare for all my learned correspondents who almost without exception have assured me that they yield to no one in their desire to better their material and moral conditions.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-11-1932

10. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

November 17, 1932

CHI. MIRA,[1]

Not that I cannot use the right hand but it is better to use the left. I have begun this before the morning prayer just making use of the odd minutes before the little family gathers together. You should not be surprised if you find my letters shorter than usual. The Harijan work has become too heavy to allow of anything else being done. The mere reading of the voluminous correspondence takes over two hours. The (here comes Mahadev) (I resume after the prayer) interviews take

[1] The superscription in this and other letters to Mirabehn is in Devanagari.

from two to three hours. Therefore I must reduce the other work. Since the doctors here are firmly of opinion that the elbows have nothing wrong about them except that they require rest from the spinning motion, I have cut off the wheel altogether and just do the *takli* forabout half an hour. The *takli* requires the use of other muscles. This compulsory saving of time has come when it was just wanted. (There was another interruption here for the drink and fruit, dressing and eating.)

I do not mind your omission of salt. Take it again when the benefit of abstention has been exhausted. I do not know if *juwari* or *bajri* chapati will suit you. Is there no prison-ground whole-wheat meal? Anyway one *juwari* or *bajri* chapati ought not to do you any harm at all. But you will fare all right by taking dried and fresh fruit liberally.

Kisan[1] must attend to her eyes and become strong and well.

For me I have still progress to report. Another increase of 1_ lb. total 103_ lb. ! This is due to a dietetic discovery as I imagine. It synchronizes with the untouchability work. But the latter has little to do with the increase. I am taking nearly an ounce of fresh, dried milk. This is called *mavo*[2] in Marathi and Gujarati. You evaporate the water. It should prove heavy. But for me it seems to have come as a godsend. It is too late to pronounce upon its efficacy. That the present increase is due to it, there is no doubt.

What you say about Amir Ali's introduction is too true. He is safe when he talks of Islam itself.

Ba is still at the Ashram. There has been the usual crop of sicknesses there. Kusum Gandhi is rather bad, fever won't leave her.

We are all well and send you both a cartload of love.

BAPU

[PS.]

It is now after 5.30 a.m. I must now go to the 'library' and then to the walk till the goats come, i.e., about 6.30.

From the original: C.W. 6250. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9717

[1] Kisan Ghumatkar, Premabehn Kantak's friend

[2] The source has this in Devanagari.

11. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,[1]
November 17, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

I thank you for your letter of the 15th instant in answer to my letter[2] regarding Shrimati Manibehn Patel. As the request made in that letter had reference to a very urgent matter, I had expected an immediate reply to be of value. Fortunately her brother's illness has not yet reached the danger point but it is serious enough to cause anxiety to those who are deeply interested in the patient[3]. A request on behalf of a near relative as Manibehn Patel that she should be informed of the progress of her brother's illness from day to day, I do not regard as one for a concession. I venture to submit that it is a human right belonging to every person although he or she may be a prisoner. I would therefore like the Government to consider my request from that human standpoint. I have no desire whatsoever to ask for a concession which being such may not be expected to be granted to every other prisoner in similar circumstances. And lest Government may not know, as you do, why I have made the request rather than her father, I may state that it is simply because Manibehn has been an inmate of the Ashram and has been placed by her father under my guidance since 1924. To complete the relevant information that should be put at the disposal of Government I may add that I wrote my letter to you with the consent and approval of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Will you kindly place this letter before the Government if their orders have not been already received ere this reaches you?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40) (4), Pt. II, p. 61

[1] Also called Yeravda Mandir. This place-name is not reproduced in subsequent letters. Gandhiji was in Yeravda Prison from January 4, 1932 to May 8, 1933.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Manibehn Patel", 15-11-1932.

[3] Dahyabhai Patel

12. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

November 17, 1932

DEAR PLAYMATE AND SLAVE,

Many happy returns of the day. This trite wish requires modification in your case. I do not want a return of the day to find you in the same state of suspended animation you are in now. I want the day to return to see you hale and hearty. And you have a whole year to do that very simple thing. Be good and do it.

Sardar did justice to your oranges yesterday, I did it this morning and Mahadev says I leave him no time think of such meaties. But he says he is going to taste them. It certainly pays to be a Mahatma. I get fruit and flowers from slaves like you when it is their birthday and also when it is mine.[1]

I am sorry to tell you that the Urdu dictionary you sent is not of much use. It has phrases but not a good vocabularly. What I want is a good vocabularly so that I can easily get spellings of words. If you can easily get hold of such a dictionary, I should like it. But do not put yourself to trouble about it.

I read today your translation of the *bhajan* with which I started the fast. I liked it very much.

Much love.

BAPU

SHRI PADMAJA NAIDU
21 SASOON ROAD
POONA

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The last two sentences of this paragraph have been reproduced under the dateline November 18, 1932 in"Letter to Padmaja Naidu", 18-11-1932.

13. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE[1]

November 17, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

I liked your question about cow-protection. Giving up milk altogether is no doubt our ideal; but I do not think that we can act upon it now. Hence, at present, our ideal should be to maintain in the Ashram as many cows as possible, and to provide as much milk as we can. We do not have the necessary stability in the Ashram for that, but when conditions become stable, I am eager to do a good deal of work in that field. God willing, I shall be able to do it. I certainly think it morally wrong to get milk from weak cows. At present we cannot escape that. In India, we get milk from really healthy cows at very few places. The fact is that Hinduism is in a state of utter confusion. Though cow-protection is one of the pillars on which Hinduism stands, nowhere in the world is the condition of cows more wretched than in India. But you need not think too much about this and worry. If you do your present duty, you will have done everything that is possible for you.

That your constipation is not yet cured indicates that your intestines have become very weak. The disease has struck deep roots. Whenever you do not pass stool and get headache, eat only vegetables if fruits are not available. You will not get fever or headache then, will get some nourishment at least and will probably be able to pass stool. I am sure that you can get many varieties of leafy vegetables in the Ashram just now. If, however, you find that the place does not suit you, you may even go and stay in Rajkot for a while after consulting Chhaganlal. The experience will be useful to you and the water of Rajkot may even suit you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6743. Also C.W. 4486. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

[1] A follower of Vinoba Bhave

14. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVLEKAR

November 17, 1932

BHAI SATAVLEKAR,

You have sent me a most encouraging reply.[1] But I hope you did not think that I was unaware of your past activities in regard to the removal of untouchability. Earlier I had read your article too. I only wanted to ascertain what your contribution is to be now in this powerful movement. I am immensely reassured now on this count. Please convey my deepest thanks to Shrimant Maharaj and Rani Saheba. I shall at the right time make good use of your beautiful account of the work going on there.[2]

Yours,

MOHANDAS

SHRI S. D. SATAVLEKAR
SVADHYAYA MANDAL
AUNDH
(DIST. SATARA)

From Hindi: C.W. 4769. Courtesy: S. D. Satavlekar

15. LETTER TO DR. RAGHUVIR SINGH AGRAWAL

November 17, 1932

BHAI RAGHUVIRJI,

I have your letter and the book[3]. I have no time at present being totally immersed in the service of Harijans. But I shall try to follow the treament you prescribe. Moreover, all three of us here are condemned to spectacles. It is hoped that we all will make anexperiment. I would not bother you to come over here and there is no difficulty in following your instructions.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

DR. R. S. AGRAWAL
EYE AND EAR SPECIALIST
BULANDSHAHR, U.P.

From Hindi: C.W. 9664. Courtesy: M. S. Agrawal

[1] In an earlier letter dated November 12, 1932, Gandhiji had asked the addressee about his participation in the eradication of untouchability; *vide* "Interview to the Hindu", 12-11-1932.

[2] The account was reproduced with Gandhiji's remarks in *Harijan*, 25-3-1933, under the title, "Aundh State and Untouchability".

[3] *Mind and Vision*

16. TELEGRAM TO JAGANNATH[1]

[*November 18, 1932*][2]

OUR CONDOLENCES TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY THOUGH WE MUST NOT SUPPRESS OUR PERSONAL HAPPINESS OVER THE FORTUNE THAT FAVOURED THE NOBLE WIDOW.

The Hindustan Times, 20-11-1932

17. TELEGRAM TO GOVIND MALAVIYA

November 18, 1932

[GOVIND MALAVIVA][3]
ALLAHABAD

THANK GOD. HOPE FATHER[4] NONE THE WORSE FOR STRAIN.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(3), Pt. III, p. 373

18. TELEGRAM TO MADHUSUDAN DAS

[*November 18, 1932*][5]

LONG LIVE MADHUSUDANDAS. I HAD GATHERED THE IMPRESSION THAT YOU WERE NO MORE. THIS IS PROOF POSITIVE OF MY STUPIDITY BUT LET IT ALSO BE PROOF THAT GOD STILL HAS SERVICE TO TAKE FROM YOU FOR MANY A LONG YEAR TO COME.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-11-1932

[1] Secretary, Servants of the People Society

[2] The telegram was published under the date-line, "Lahore, November 18, 1932", as having been sent by Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Mahadev Desai on the death of Mrs. Lajpat Rai. *Vide* also "Diary, 1932", entry under this date.

[3] From "Diary, 1932", entry under November 18, 1932

[4] Madan Mohan Malaviya

[5] From "Diary, 1932", entry under this date. *Vide* also the following item.

19. STATEMENT 0N MADHUSUDAN DAS

November 18, 1932

An Ashram inmate living in Orissa has telegraphed to me saying that Babu Madhusudandas to whose good work for the tanners I referred in my fifth statement[1] is not dead. I cannot account for my stupidity in having imagined Madhusudan Babu was no more. On receipt of the telegram I sent the following telegram[2] to Madhusudan Babu:

I tender my humble apology to Madhusudan Babu and his family for my stupid blunder.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-11-1932

20. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

November 18, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

Knowing that Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj was suffering from cough for some time and knowing also that he had ear trouble which was suspected to be tubercular, I had telegraphed to him suggesting that he should send for his special adviser Dr. Modi, the ear and throat specialist of Bombay.[3] He telegraphs as follows:

> Received General condition same. Cough and pus discharge persistent. Have today wired Inspector General of Prisons requesting to arrange X-ray examination by specialist in Bombay or Poona wherever convenient to Government.

This was received on the 15th instant. Since then I have received his usual letter also in which he gives me more information about his illness and his diet. I know what a serious view Dr. Modi takes of the ear trouble. He wants Jamnalalji to take a liberal diet. Jamnalalji is himself used to fruit. He has lost nearly 40 lb. in weightsince his admission. I venture to think therefore that he should he transferred where he can have better climate and prompt expert medical assistance, that he should have frequent access to his special medical advisers, and that meanwhile there should be no restriction as to the choice of food, all extras being paid for by Jamnalalji if the Govern-

[1] *Vide*"Statement on Untouchability—V", 14-11-1932.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] The telegram is not available; *vide*, however,"Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 2-11-1932.

ment so desire. May I request urgent attention to this matter?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (2), Pt. I, p. 383

21. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

November 18, 1932

It certainly pays to be a Mahatma. I get fruit and flowers from slaves like you when it is their birthday[1] and also when it is mine.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 253

22. TELEGRAM TO MANIBEHN PATEL

November 19, 1932

MANIBEHN
PRISONER, BELGAUM JAIL

DAHYABHAI SUFFERING FEVER LAST SEVEN DAYS. NOW DECLARED TYPHOID. NO COMPLICATIONS. SPECIAL NURSES ATTENDING. NO CAUSE ANXIETY. WILL TRY SEND DAILY REPORT.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 90

23. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

November 19, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

You have kindly showed me a memorandum from Government in connection with my interview[2] with the correspondent of *The Hindu* which refers to Lord Sankey's letter. In the light of that memorandum I have read and re-read the Government of India's decision on my letters requesting facilities in regard to visitors and correspondence on removal of untouchability. I can see absolutely no inconsistency between the undertaking given by me and the reference to Lord Sankey's letter in the interview. It would be found on a perusal of the

[1] Padmaja Naidu's birthday fell on November 18.
[2] On November 12, 1932; *Vide*"Interview to the Hindu", 12-11-1932.

interview that rather than in any shape or form depart from my undertaking I have expressed my inability, because of the undertaking, to deal with the letter except through the Government.

I am however grateful to Government for having drawn my attention to what they consider is inconsistency between my undertaking and the reference to Lord Sankey's letter in the interview in question. I would add that I am carrying out the undertaking in most difficult circumstances. Questions crop up in the course of interviews which have a vital bearing upon untouchability work, but which strictly speaking would be outside untouchability. I rigorously refrain from answering them even at the risk of being misunderstood and the cause [of] suffering. As it is, generally either you or the Jailor has been present at the interviews. You or he will perhaps bear me out when I state that I have scrupulously refused to give my opinion on any matter outside untouchability and have even refused to receive visitors, whether Indian or European, when I have known that they could not have anything important to say on untouchability or when they have desired a discussion on the political aspect of untouchability. I feel that in doing the last thing I have gone beyond the letter of the Government of India's decision and my undertaking, but I know that the spirit of them would exclude discussion even on the political aspect of untouchability. I have here in mind the corres-pondence I am carrying on with Mr. Jenkins.

Nevertheless if this reply does not satisfy the Government I suggest their sending an official to discuss with me exactly what the Government would have me to do in matters such as the one which is the subject-matter of this correspondence. And if consistently with my work I can carry out their wishes I would do so with great pleasure. My one desire in the midst of the extraordinary facilities given to me in extraordinary circumstances is, if it is at all possible, to earn at the end of the chapter a certificate from Government that the undertaking given by me had been carried out in an honourable manner.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(4), Pt. II, p. 35

24. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

November 19, 1932

CHI. DAHYABHAI,

We get daily reports about your health. Such illness comes to us as a test. Bhai Karamchand says that you are bearing it patiently. That is just what one expects of you. Don't worry about Manibehn.

God will surely protect you.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI DAHYABHAI PATEL
RAM NIVAS, PAREKH STREET
BOMBAY-4

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 149

25. LETTER TO ANANDSHANKAR B. DHRUVA

November 19, 1932

You have always been diffident about yourself. You were no less diffident when you got an offer to go to Banaras. But see, how many years have you spent there? And who knows for how many more years still you may remain there? Your diffidence is not likely to have any effect on me. Rajaji has advanced a very sound argument against Malaviyaji's going to the South. So long as he has not opened the Kashi Vishvanath Temple (for Harijans), the pundits of the South will not listen to him. They will ask him to open that temple before going to the South. We should not put him in that awkward position. Moreover, Rajaji has also argued that, in view of Malaviyaji's indifferent health, we should not ask him to undertake such a long journey. If, therefore, Malaviyaji agrees, you should immediately start as his representative. Don't mind if the people do not listen to you. But I don't think that is likely to happen. So much about your tour of the South.

Now, about the correct interpretation of the Shastras. I send with this some of the literature on the subject given to me. Go through it carefully and draft a well-reasoned reply as soon as you can and

[1] *Vide* also "Telegram to Manibehn Patel", 19-11-1932.

obtain on it signatures of all the pundits whom you can persuade to join with you. The reply should be in Sanskrit, Hindi and English. It should be addressed to four types of readers: to the honest sanatanists, to impartial students who wish to know the truth, to persons who are working for the removal of untouchability and to whom your statement can be a great help in meeting the arguments of the sanatanists and, last, to non-Hindus who should know that the true sanatana dharma does not consider anybody as untouchable from birth and that, if in certain circumstances, a person is considered untouchable, he or she soon becomes touchable again. You should also point out that the oppression to which the untouchables are subjected today has no sanction in the Shastras at all. I quote here a sentence from a man whom you, I and many other thousands respect:

> In this part of the country these classes have come to be excluded from temples from the very time the people started worshipping in temples. Scholars will find it difficult to ascertain the time when the untouchableswere permitted to enter temples. I am afraid, though I don't take pride in the fact that our religion as it is practised today enjoins exclusion of the untouchables. The people who cling to the practice as a religious principle have the law, the Shastras and tradition on their side. They are the sanatanists.

You have to reply to this argument. Law, i.e., the law of the Government, may be on their side, custom, i.e., the custom of the degenerate present, may also be on their side. But the Shastras at any rate are not. If you can honestly show that the law of the Hindu period was not on the side of the sanatanists and also that true custom, i.e., the practice of the enlightened, was never on their side during the great prosperous days of Hinduism, you should do that convincingly. Your statement should not be like a pronouncement of the Delphic oracle. Send me as early as you can a statement enunciating such a Dhruva[1]-principle.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 255-6

[1] Literally, that which is fixed or immutable; here the true essence of Hinduism.

26. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

November 19, 1932

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I am enclosing a letter from Ramsinhasan Mahto. Read it or get it read out and do what is necessary.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 7905. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

27. DISCUSSION WITH G. K. DEVDHAR

November 19, 1932

Mr. Devdhar[1] explained to Mahatmaji the scheme devised by the Board for starting work throughout Maharashtra, in connection with the uplift of the untouchables in general and the removal of untouchability in particular.

There was then a long discussion between him and Mahatmaji, as regards the latter's proposed fast in connection with the Guruvayur temple-entry. Mr. Devdhar pointed out that difficulties they had to face in removing untouchability and throwing temples open to the untouchables in the province of Malabar were much greater than those in other provinces. The Hindus of Malabar were, in the opinion of Mr. Devdhar, very stern in their religious beliefs and prejudices and they strongly resented temple-entry by the untouchables.

Mahatma Gandhi expressed his desire that Mr. Devdhar, in view of the experiences he had in Malabar, should undertake propaganda work in that province to educate public opinion in regard to the removal of untouchability.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-11-1932

[1] President, Servants of India Society and the Maharashtra Divisional Board of the All-India Anti-Untouchability League

28. LETTER TO THORNBERG[1]

Norember 20, 1932

I thank you for your letter. I was sorry not to be able to see you. The way America can help in this internal movement of reform is first by understanding and studying the movement and pronouncing intelligent opinion upon it. Even orthodoxy is today sensitive to reasoned opinion, even though it may come from outside; secondly, by placing at the disposal of the reformers the free aid of experts with reference to the economic question. For instance, there is the tremendous problem of carrion-eaters. They will not give up carrion-eating so long as they continue to take charge of dead cattle, which they skin and whose flesh they eat. I have myself tried to find clean and expeditious method of skinning carcasses and making the best use of all the contents of these carcasses. Not wanting to, and not being able to pay for expert assistance, I have been obliged to grope in the dark. America could easily send us free expert assistance in matters such as I have mentioned, without any ulterior proselytizing motives, if only religious-minded men of America could be persuaded to believe that Hinduism, Islam and other great religions are just as true as Christianity and that they do not therefore need destruction but reformation where necessary. The conviction can only come if sober-minded Americans will study the present very big movement.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 259-60

29. LETTER TO AMINA G. QURESHI[2]

November 20, 1932

FARZAND AMINA[3],

I liked your letter. I am glad that you wrote frankly. The only way to improve your health is the one suggested by me. If you have not received education, the fault is partly yours. Think about it. The rest of the fault is mine. It is that I did not pay sufficient attention to education of the children in the Ashram. If, however, you really want

[1] The addressee, an American, had sought Gandhiji's interview twice in vain. He then sent autograph books for his signature and also asked for a message for America.

[2] Imam Saheb Abdul Kadir Bawazeer's daughter, married to Gulam Rasool Qureshi

[3] Child

to study, I am ready to get you admitted to a school. If you are ready to go to Bhavnagar, I will get you admitted to the girls' school there. There is a good school at Amreli also. At both places, they will pay special attention to you. If you are unhappy only because of want of education, I can help you to remove the cause. Let me know your wish. Talk frankly to Narandas too. May God give you peace of mind.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6663. Also C.W. 4308. Courtesy: Hamid Qureshi

30. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

November 20, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

You should not expect any letter from me these days. You will then be satisfied with a few lines. You, however, should continue to write to me.

Do not get tired of the food which is similar to that in jail.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

31. LETTER TO GULAB A. SHAH

November 20, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

Four marks for your handwriting.

The *atman* is that which survives when the body has perished.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1730

32. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

November 20, 1932

CHI. JAMNA[1],

Did I not sign somewhere in a corner the letter[2] in which I wrote about the primus stove? If I forgot to sign it and if you want my signature on it, return the last page.

If you need a stove very much, you may use in place of the primus stove the kerosene stove which is available [in the market]. Mahadev tells me that these stoves are very good, and are also cheap at present. Why not try this stove? It is also very easy to light.

I hope Purushottam[3]and Kanu[4] are well.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 863. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

33. LETTER TO KESHAV GANDHI

November 20, 1932

CHI. KESHU[5]

Other people also get unwanted thoughts as you do. You should go on repeating Ramanama. The thoughts will cease then. A teacher should be a man of pure character and should know his subject well. A student should be humble and hardworking.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3284

34. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

November 20, 1932

CHI. MANI,

I hope you received my wire[6] regarding Dahyabhai's illness. I have obtained permission[7] to send you a report every day as also for

[1] Wife of Narandas Gandhi

[2] This is not available; *vide*, however, "Letter to Jamnabehn Gandhi", 13-11-1932 and also "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 9-10-1932.

[3] Addressee's sons

[4] *ibid*

[5] Son of Maganlal Gandhi

[6] *Vide* "Telegram to Manibehn Patel", 19-11-1932.

[7] *Vide* "Letter to E. E. Doyle", 17-11-1932.

you to write anything you like [to or about Dahyabhai]. You can, therefore, write to me daily from there. I will forward your letters to Dahabhai. I also will write to you every day. I have secured Dr. Madan's letter which I enclose herewith. There is also a letter today from Bhai Karamchand. So the reports up to yesterday are reassuring. Today is the fourteenth day of the fever. The temperature remains between 100° and 103°. Once it fell even to 99.5°. The lungs are clear. He can take fruit juices, barley-water and sometimes thin butter-milk diet. Special nurses have been engaged. He is thus being looked after with the utmost care and so there is no cause for anxiety.

We are all well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 90-1

35. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

November 20, 1932

CHI. NARMADA,

I am returning your letter[1] after correcting the mistakes in it. Go through them carefully. You should not feel unhappy because you make mistakes. One can learn most of the things by oneself. If you practise writing carefully every day, your handwriting will improve. You can learn the tables by heart, if you go on repeating them every day. For spellings, you should consult the *Jodanikosh*. You can improve arithmetic by doing sums daily.

Thus in most of the things you do not need anybody's help. Hard work also is a kind of education.

BAPU

[PS.]

See the corrections which I have made in your handwriting and also the model[2] at the bottom.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2768. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

[1] Dated November 14, 1932

[2] This read: "I have your kind letter. I am exceedingly happy to read it."

36. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

November 20, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

My letters will remain short for some time yet. I don't mind yours being long. I do want you to describe all the things as you do. I don't have to give you any information. I may at the most joke with you or show my love for you. Sometimes I may admonish you and, if I know how to, may give you wise advice. But you, on your part, should continue to tell me how things go with you and tell me whether you are happy or otherwise.

I don't wish to worry you about Ramabehn[1]. But the very manner of your explaining the position makes it difficult for me to judge that you have love in your heart. My only consolation is that the bitterness in your words does not affect your actions. If I had sufficient time, I would give you a long lecture on this. But the Harijan friends have saved you, since they take up all my time.

Amina seems to be very much troubled in her mind. Try to discover her malady if you can, and, if possible, comfort her.[2]

What you say about Mangala is correct.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10311. Also C.W. 6750. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

37. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI AND BENARSILAL BAJAJ

November [*20*][3]*, 1932*

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your letter. How nice it is that the boy[4] is in the Ashram. The chief thing which you should do to improve your health is to take walks, and that in a place where there is no dust in the air.

CHI. BENARSI,

[1] Wife of Chhaganlal Joshi

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Amina G. Qureshi", 20-11-1932.

[3] From the postmark

[4] Addressee's son

I got Father's[1] letter this time. He has written in it about his business. There was one word in it which I could not read. It seems to be something like 'tea' or 'coffee'. Does he carry on business in either? If not, in what else?

I hope your business is prospering.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI BENARSIDAS BAJAJ
THATHERI BAZAAR
BENARES CITY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9145

38. LETTER TO SITARAM K. NALAVDE

November 20, 1932

BHAI SITARAMJI,

I got your letter. If you and the other friends who wish to see me come on Thursday, the 24th instant, at 3 p.m., I shall be glad to see you.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 799

39. LETTER TO GULAM RASUL QURESHI

November 20, 1932

CHI. QURESHI,

You must be fully restored now. There should be no laxity in following the treatment. Amina must get over her unhappiness. If she herself does not write about it fully, then know from her what it is and write.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10813. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

[1] Rameshwarlal Bajaj

40. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

November 20, 1932

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

Prakriti and *purusha* are one and the same thing because nothing exists but God. The apparent plurality is only due to the qualities attributed. Vegetation certainly contains life but that is vegetable life. The difference is clear. Our prayer is addressed to the form as well as to the formless. Image-worship is necessary for those who desire it. Others cannot lay down a rule. One who is hungry for bread needs that alone. There can be no universal common prayer for all, the very fact that none exists, clearly proves the point.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 771

41. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

November 20, 1932

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter. I reply to your letters immediately I get them. I simply fail to understand why my letters do not reach you. My health is fairly good. I take milk, vegetable, fruit and roti. My weight has risen to 103_ lb. Blessings to you all. There is no question of disbanding the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3425

42. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

November 20, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

You must not expect long letters from me these days. Give up worrying for Kudsia[1]. Whatever is destined for her will happen. Don't talk of your own death. Why do you get so disheartened? God will exact abundant service from you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 264

[1] Addressee's niece

43. LETTER TO KASHINATH N. KELKAR

November 21, 1932

MY DEAR KASHINATH,

I must acknowledge your letter, if only because you are the son of a dear friend. If by '*garbhagriha*' is meant the '*sanctum sanctorum*', I have clearly stated that it should be reserved for the ritualists. I have always sympathized with the Zamorin's position. Where the law is against the reformer, he has to wait till the law is altered. I hope to develop these things as time progresses. Meanwhile, I expect you to help forward the reform in every way you can.

Yours Sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

KASHINATH N. KELKAR
ADVOCATE, YADUGOPAL PETH, SATARA CITY

C. W. 977. Courtesy: G. N. Kanitkar

44. LETTER TO KESHAV GANDHI

November 21, 1932

CHI. KESHU,

I feel like both smiling and crying. Look upon Santok as younger mother and Ba as elder mother. When you made a request for the spinning-wheel, I thought it was for the younger mother, and so, when the elder mother requested to have it I felt unhappy because I thought then that she wanted to snatch it from the younger mother. Now I can see from your letter that I have done great injustice to the former. God knows how often I have sinned in this manner in my behaviour towards her. She will be unhappy even if I beg her forgiveness. Hence I have to atone for my sin silently. You may talk about this to the elder mother jokingly if you can. But it may be beyond your capacity. I will certainly tell her about it when I meet her.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9468. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

45. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

November 21, 1932

CHI. MANILAL,

I got the postcard which you wrote on the train. I had also got your letter about Pragji[1]. You have not mentioned that Pragji had kept £ 450 for himself from the money which he himself had collected. Read his letter again. In another letter to me he says that you must return to Phoenix by the end of December. Whatever may happento me on 2nd January, you ought to keep your promise. You should not break your promise on my account. It should not be a matter of sorrow if my body perishes in the cause of dharma. And you cannot delay my death even by a minute by remaining here. Your remaining may make both you and me personally happy, but don't we have often to forgo such happiness? My blessings to all there.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4801

46. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

November 21, 1932

This time your letter was delayed a good deal. Why should my letters also not be censored? After all, a prisoner is a prisoner.

It was certainly good that you finished the commentary on the *Gitarahasya*[2] which you were writing. . . . As for my going through it, I don't know when that will be possible. I am so busy with Harijan work these days that I don't think it probable that I shall be able to attend to any other work. I cannot satisfy at present the desire of friends like you for long letters.

If you have read all my articles[3] about Guruvayur, you should have no doubt in the matter. In short, the position is this: Kelappan was nearing death. He gave up the fast on my advice. It was but right that he should do so. But I who persuaded him to give it up have now a moral duty towards him. If, therefore, Kelappan is obliged to undertake a fast for a moral aim, I would have to join him. It is not yet

[1] Pragji Khandubhai Desai, Gandhiji's co-worker in South Africa

[2] By B. G. Tilak

[3] *Vide* "Statement on Untouchability", "Statement on Untouchability—VII", 16-11-1932. and "Statement on Untouchability—VIII", 17-11-1932.

certain whether Kelappan would have to fast.[1]

Since you have said nothing in your letter about your health, I assume that it is good.

I have now got back the weight as it was before I commenced the fast. All three of us are in good health. I did not get the envelope made by you. Generally the envelopes are opened and the letters taken out before they are given to the prisoners.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 117-8

47. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 21, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

The pressure of work on me is increasing day by day. The condition of the two elbows also requires rest. You should, therefore, tell everybody that at present they should not expect long letters from me. Probably I may have to content myself with only a letter to you and one to Kusum[2] who is ill. We should regard this as the smallest sacrifice that we can make for our Harijan friends. We shall have to make much bigger sacrifices in future. Even if the whole Ashram gave up its other activities and plunged in this movement of self-purification, I would not regard that sacrifice as too big. But there can be no renunciation without complete freedom from desire. And there can be no freedom from desire without self-purification. Anybody, therefore, who wishes to plunge into this yajna of self-purification should purify himself. The line "Hari's way is for the brave" is perfectly applicable in the present situation.

But some of the inmates seem to tremble even at the suggestion for simplicity in food which I have made. Those who tremble and cannot overcome their misgivings are at any rate truthful, and deserve compliments for that. How long can self-restraint practised through false shame endure? Those who remember the story of the pilgrim[3] should reflect over how the other characters who, blindly following his example, got tired in two or three days and returned.

[1] *Vide* also Appendix "Discussion with The Times of India" Representative".

[2] Kusum Gandhi, daughter of Vrajlal Gandhi

[3] In John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*

I do not get much time at present. When I get some, I wish to suggest a good many more changes. If we eat more than we need or eat things which we do not need for nourishment, we are guilty of theft according to our principle, besides harming our health. The experiment which I suggest in this letter is not quackery, it is based on true science. Really speaking, we should eat what the poor and the prisoners do not get only when those things become absolutely necessary in our case. Hence I feel that we must from time to time advance towards greater and greater simplicity. We should learn thesecret of eating only a few things at one meal. Doctors have conducted experiments and proved that this is necessary for health. We may eat several things in the course of the day but we should not mix them all at the same meal. We cannot eat at the same meal *rotli*, dal, vegetables, milk, rice, etc. But we can eat at one meal *rotli* and milk, a vegetable and milk, rice and dal, rice and milk and *rotli* and dal. We should never take dal and milk together. Similarly, we should not eat wheat and bajri at the same meal. And also it is better not to eat rice and vegetables together. I make this suggestion because I have read about it and put it into practice. If we follow this practice the burden on the stomach will be lightened and the body also will feel light. Those who do not adopt such experiments with full knowledge [of their likely benefits] will certainly be upset by them. If the mind does not co-operate, such an experiment may possibly fail. We shall succeed in it if we strengthen our mind by thinking that through such a practice we shall increase our capacity for renunciation, show proper regard for the poor, save money and benefit our health.

I am realizing in actual experience that milk, bread, vegetables and fruit make a completely balanced diet. My weight has gone up to 103_ pounds. I eat fresh fruits with nothing else. With milk, I eat dates or a vegetable. I mix half the quantity of milk with dates and drink the remaining half. In this manner, I drink from two and a half to two and three-quarter pounds of milk. In the morning, I eat mosambis or oranges without fail. At seven, I have milk and dates; at twelve, two oranges or mosambis,[1] and at four a vegetable, milk and one loaf of bread. This is my daily food. I have been thinking of omitting milk or bread. I take twice a day sour lemon juice with water and soda bicarb. Perhaps this may not be necessary. I have yet to find that out. Mirabehn is at present living on almost the same diet as I am doing,

[1] What follows is also available in M.M.U.\I.

and she informs me that it has benefited her. It is too early yet to attach importance to her experience. Since her heart is behind her experiment, naturally she feels that it is benefiting her. If there is no benefit in reality, we shall know by and by. It is also necessary not to eat jowar porridge in excessive quantity. It would be advisable to observe moderation in regard to the quantity of every item. In case of stomach-ache, or headache or, for those who suffer from constipation, indigestion, one may drop one or two meals, or even fast for the whole day. Nobody should lose courage all too soon. Thebest way of running the joint kitchen without much trouble is that anybody who does not like a particular item should not eat it, but without asking for something else in its place. Every meal provides sufficient nourishment. Generally, milk and vegetables will suit everybody. They should be enough. It is a superstitious belief that one will become weak if one does not eat solid food for the whole day. Of course all this does not apply to persons who are ill. They should always get food which the state of their health demands. But I am convinced that if we plan our diet on a scientific basis and eat moderately, nobody would fall ill. This should be enough for today on the subject of food. Show this letter to all. Everybody may reject what does not appeal to him or her.

Prabhashankar[1] must have returned there. I hope he is quite happy. Tell him that I had got his letter. This time I content myself with this letter in reply to him. I think all the suggestions will be acceptable to him. Is Ratilal[2] calm? Do you know that Ramji has many complaints to make? Amina is unhappy. Ask her what the cause is.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—9: Shri Nararandas Gandhine, Pt. I, pp. 497-9. Also C.W. 8265. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Father-in-law of Ratilal Mehta

[2] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's son

48. LETTER TO PARASHURAM MEHROTRA

November 21, 1932

CHI. PARASHURAM,

I am unable now to write a long letter. Don't mind if some of the classes[1] have had to be closed. Carry on those which are running. You will be able to keep up the atmosphere even by talking with everybody in Hindi.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7512. Also C.W. 4989. Courtesy: Parashuram Mehrotra

49. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

November 21, 1932

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I am writing this on a silence day after the morning prayer. The correspondence about Harijans take so much time that I can hardly write other letters. Hence only this to you, that you should stop all thinking and do what work you can. When a question of incurring expenditure beyond your budget arises, your duty in this: If you feel that the expenditure is absolutely necessary, you may put the matter before Narandas and press him to permit it. If the item of expenditure is such that it makes no difference whether or not it is incurred, you should not write for it at all. In other words, what would you do if you were in N.'s place? Once the budget is prepared no additional item of expenditure should be allowed to be brought up.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Gandhi Nidhi File. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

[1] Hindi classes

50. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

November 21, 1932

In an interview Gandhiji thoroughly exposed the baselessness of certain assertions made by an Anglo-Indian paper, which had come out with the story that Mahatmaji was 'going spiritual' as Aurobindo Ghosh had done, and that his interest in active politics was waning.

Gandhiji says that social reform is very important for Hinduism just now. This, however, did not and could not divert him from his political objective.

To a straight question whether he intended devoting all his time to anti-untouchability work, Mahatmaji said:

> I cannot say that such is my present intention, nor is it ever likely to be. It will be perfectly true to say that my life is dedicated to this absolutely necessary reform in Hinduism, but my life is also dedicated to many other things. I don't regard my life as divisible into so many water-tight compartments. It is one organic whole, and it will be found that all my activities spring from the same source, namely, my passion for vindication of truth and non-violence in every walk of life, be it ever so great or so small.[1]

This in a nutshell supplies all the 'terms' on which the Mahatma is prepared to accept release. Prospects of his release solely depend on the interpretation which officialdom will put on the above statement.

The Hindustan Times, 23-11-1932, and *The Hindu*, 23-11-1932

51. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO LORD SANKEY

[On or before *November 22, 1932*][2]

Replying to Lord Sankey's invitation, it is understood Mahatma Gandhi has assured Lord Sankey that he was by instinct a co-operator and actually dying for co-operation. But the Ottawa[3] and the Ordinance Bills showed no such desire for securing co-operation. Finally, the Mahatma is reported to have assured Lord Sankey that he would find "Gandhi in his pocket" if a genuine gesture of co-operation is forthcoming from the Government side.

The Hindustan Times, 23-11-1932

[1] This paragraph appeared in *The Hindu* as an interview to the Poona correspondent of *The Evening News of India*. For Mahadev Desai's account of the Interview, *vide* Appendix "Discussion with The Times of India, Representative".

[2] The report was published under the date-line: "Bombay, November 22".

[3] Ottawa Tariff Bill designed to implement the Ottawa Conference agreement to impose a general tariff of ten per cent on all Empire products

52. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

November 22, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

In continuation of my letter[1] regarding Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj, I have further information from his wife and children which makes me extremely anxious. They have seen Dr. Modi of Sir J. J. Hospital, the specialist, who advised Jamnalalji before his incarceration. Dr. Modi is not satisfied with his weight and general condition. Seeing that he has not recently seen the patient, naturally his remarks are based upon the reports received by him from laymen. Nevertheless when I add Dr. Modi's remarks to the patient's own state of mind as revealed in his telegram I become nervous.

Perhaps it would not be considered impertinent in this connection if I mention the fact that Jamnalalji looks up to me as to a parent. His children are under my care and discipline. He has himself lived in the Ashram off and on for several months at a time. Naturally therefore even as a prisoner I try to give the members of his family what comfort and guidance I can, within the limitations put upon me, and it will be a great relief to me and his family if Jamnalalji could be transferred to this prison and is allowed facilities for such food and special medical advice as his health may require. I would lay stress upon the almost universal medical opinion that Jamnalalji suffers from a disease which may any day assume an acute and even fatal form and that such symptoms arise without sufficient previous warning. I therefore request an early decision by the Government.

Yours sincerely,

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (2), Pt. I, p. 385

53. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

November 22, 1932

CHI. DAHYABHAI,

Devdas tells me that you are quite cheerful and says that you would be happy if you heard from us every day. We have deliberately

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E.E. Doyle", 18-11-1932.

refrained from writing every day although we daily send our blessings [mentally] and think of you. But now you will also get a letter every day.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: *Manibehn Patelne*, p.150

54. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

November 22, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

That you are still suffering from constipation indicates that your intestines have become very weak and that your stomach also is not secreting the necessary juices. I would certainly like it if you went to Vijapur. If, however, your constipation is not cured even after going there, then you should eat only vegetables and fruit, and not even *rotlis* or *rotlas*. You may start taking milk after you begin to pass regular stools and, if that continues, you can start eating wheat, *bajri* and *jowar*. If you do this, your constipation is bound to be cured. You should, therefore, go to Vijapur and also carry out the foregoing suggestions. If there is no improvement even after this, we will think whether you should fast again. But I am confident that the complaint will disappear. Stop writing about the *takli* for the present. If possible, I will ask you to come and see me.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6744. Also C.W. 4487. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

55. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

November 22, 1932

CHI. JANAKIBEHN[1],

I had wanted to reply to your letter and tease you a good bit, but I get no time at all these days. I forgot to tell you about Kamalnayan[2], and I write about it here now. He is very eager to learn English. He wants to be kept in an atmosphere of study. I am, therefore, of the

[1] Wife of Jamnalal Bajaj

[2] Addressee's son

opinion that you should send him to Colombo. He will get there all opportunity to satisfy to the full, his desire to learn English. He will be away from you, and yet not too far away. We need not believe that children remain good or acquire a good character only if they are kept at home. It may be assumed that whatever beneficial influence the Ashram was likely to have on him, it has already had. If he lives in Nuwara Eliya in Ceylon, he will have the benefits of excellent climate and water. I believe the place also has good facilities for education. You will have no cause for worry. If you wish to write to me about the subject and discuss it further, you may do so.

Do not worry about Jamnalal at all. Report to me whatever news you get. I am in correspondence with him about the matter. I am not writing separately to Madanmohan[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2904

56. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

[*Norember 22, 1932*][2]

CHI. MANI,

I sent a wire[3] to you and also wrote a letter[4]. I hope you got both. Write to me every day, I will forward the letter to Dahyabhai. Today also the report about his condition is satisfactory. Devdas has been to see him. He says no one who looks at Dahyabhai will believe that he is having typhoid, such is his courage and physical stamina.

Give my blessings to all the women prisoners.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. MANIBEHN PATEL
PRISONER, CENTRAL PRISON, BELGAUM

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 91

[1] Madanmohan Chaturvedi, Jamnalalji's secretary

[2] The source is doubtful about the date. Its correctness is corroborated by "Diary, 1932".

[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Manibehn Patel", 19-11-1932 and "Letter to Manibehn Patel", 20-11-1932.

[4] *ibid*

57. LETTER TO MADALASA BAJAJ

November 22, 1932

CHI. MADALASA[1],

I must say that your handwriting is improving very much. Your plan of studies is also very good. See that you do not work beyond your strength. If you neglect your health for the sake of study, both will suffer. Since you know that anger is bad, you are bound to become free from it in the course of time. And the same about pride. It is a sign of weakness that you start crying at every little thing. If you start playing games, your crying will stop. Begin reciting the *Gita* loudly whenever you feel that you are about to begin crying; you will then immediately forget about crying. Try this method.

Why do you say that no one lives in a temple the whole day and night? The priest certainly does so.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p.471

58. LETTER TO MATHURADAS P. ASAR

[*November 22, 1932*][2]

CHI. MATHURADAS[3],

You can only see Mahadev's handwriting, but he may not write for himself. That would be against the law.

I understood all that you had said.

Formerly, Mahadev used to card daily. He stopped only after Chhakkaddas[4] started sending slivers regularly. Just now we have a large stock of them.

Chhakkaddas's slivers have deteriorated in quality recently. They contain dust particles and also other impurities. I am not complaining, however. After considering everything I have come to one conclusion. Instead of wasting time in testing the strength of the yarn,

[1] Daughter of Jamnalal Bajaj
[2] Illegible in the source but corroborated by "Diary, 1932"
[3] A khadi worker of the Ashram
[4] An expert sliver-maker

I should give away the yarn for weaving as soon as I have spun enough. It would be best if all the yarn is woven by the same weaver. I should watch the quality of the yarn as may be necessary in the light of the results of its testing by him. Another practical course is to wind the yarn very tightly round the spindle, no matter even if it snaps occasionally, and to watch the yarn as it is being spun to know whether it is even. Don't worry about your health, but go on employing simple remedies. I am sure you hear in due course about my latest discoveries regarding food.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3758

59. LETTER TO K. KELAPPAN

November 23, 1932

MY DEAR KELAPPAN,

I have your letter. I wish you would write daily and give me a full report of progress from day to day. Of course you will cheerfully resume your fast if it becomes necessary. But we must strain every nerve to prevent its resumption.

Do not for one moment imagine that I promised to fast with you because of anything you had said in your telegrams. I know that you would be better pleased if I did not join you. But with me it was a point of honour that I should join you if the fast which was suspended upon my advice had to be resumed. After all, you should have no difficulty in believing me when I tell you that at least during the days of the fast, all my acts were prompted by the inner voice. All the movements of a life of perfect surrender to God are so directed, and it is my perpetual endeavour to make my life one of perfect surrender. Therefore I would like you not to expend your energy in dissuading me from the fast if it becomes necessary, but devote every ounce of your energy to organizing public opinion so that the temple is opened to the Harijans before the due date. I have read your letter to the Zamorin. I think that it is quite all right. It would have been better if you had omitted all reference to the *Vaidiks* and *Tantriks*. Your position with regard to them was already known.

I had long conversations with Sadashiv Rao. He told me all about you. I have given him my views fully but in order to make assurance doubly sure I reduce them to writing.

Our claim is that the proposed fast can never savour of coercion because it is based on the assumption that the vast majority of the temple-going *savarnas* are in favour of temple-entry. If this cannot be proved up to the hilt, there is no case for fasting by us. Fasting with the knowledge that *savarnas* are opposed to temple-entry by Harijans would undoubtedly amount to coercion. If we make that painful discovery, it would not mean that we cease to agitate for temple-entry by *avarnas*, but the movement will then have to take a different turn. I can even conceive the possibility of a fast in such an event, but that could only be in an unmistakably different setting. In order to demonstrate to all concerned the fact that we have the majority of temple-goers on our side, there should be a methodical taking of a referendum of temple-goers, say within a ten-mile radius. And in order to have the thing absolutely above the board, signatures should be taken at public meetings in the presence of witnesses known to the signatories with their full names, addresses and occupations, together with age and sex. It is being suggested that whilst many people have been in favour of Harijans entering temples, they may be afraid owing to pressure from their landlords or otherwise to say so openly. I should say that even in that case we must be declared to have lost. Whatever the cause of abstention may be, if we do not get the majority of votes we must be declared to have lost the battle so far as the proposed fast is concerned.

Needless to say that there should be no coercion of any kind on our part during the taking of the referendum. On the contrary every endeavour should be made to carry on the referendum with the co-operation and goodwill of the opponents. The points of difference between the so-called orthodox party and the reformers should be reduced to a minimum. The orthodox party can have nothing to say against the reformers so long as they do not resort to any coercion. If they are assured that there will be no attempt whatsoever made either on the part of the reformers or Harijans to force entry, there would be no opposition by the orthodox, and even if there is, it is bound to fall flat. Real non-violence can never beget violence. Too much emphasis cannot be laid upon the point that the removal of untouchability, apart from the political side of it, which is settled, is a wholly religious matter.

Question was put to me whether sympathizers of temple-entry may start fasting a few days before the second of January, in order, I suppose, to force the issue. This must not be done on any account

whatsoever. Nor, if the fast begins, can anyone join us in the fasting out of sympathy.

Fasting by you, if it comes, must not take place on the public road. It must be in a house or a hut. There can be no public exhibition of you, whilst you are under fast.

Urmila Devi, the widowed sister of the late Deshabandhu Das, will be leaving here on the 27th by the Madras Express. She will be accompanied by her son. She is being sent there in response to Gopala Menon's suggestion that a sister from the North may be sent. She has a weak heart, she must not therefore be rushed too much. She leads an austere life of a Hindu widow. She is an accomplished English scholar and has been doing public work for years in Bengal. I could not think of a fitter woman for work to be sent from the North. Urmila Devi can address men as well as women. She must be taken to the homes of the orthodox and she must be taken to Harijan quarters. I do not know where it is proposed to house [her]. [If] no other arrangement has already been made, I suggest the Gujarati house where I was taken during the last tour. She should be provided with a mosquito curtain if [there] are mosquitoes at all. She should be provided with a commode wherever possible. She is a pure vegetarian.

You must keep yourself in perfect order. There should be no loss of confidence and no work under a nervous strain. We can but work with zeal and honesty. The result lies in God's hands. Purest instruments alone should lead the movement. Give me a list of all the active workers. I suggest that Malaviyaji be not worried to go to Kerala. He is too weak and he has his hands otherwise absolutely full. You should even telegraph to him saying that if he sends his blessings and messengers it would be deeply appreciated, but Kerala would spare him the trouble of undertaking the long journey whilst he is occupied in national work of the highest importance.

From a microfilm: S.N. 20004

60. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 23, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

Read my letters to Kusum and Bhau[1] and then pass them on to them. Kusum's illness requires care. There is no cause at all for fear. She holds in her own hands the key to recovery. If she lives all the time in open air and eats only what, and as much as, she can digest, she will certainly get all right. The only cure for loose motions is a fast. During the fast she should drink as much water as she can. A little soda bicarb should be mixed in every glass of water she drinks. It helps very much in stopping loose motions. The proportion of one grain of soda for every ounce of water will be all right. If she can digest fruit juices, a fast is not necessary.

I have discussed about eggs before. Compared with fish-liver oil, pure eggs are innocent. Pure eggs are those from which no chickens come out, however long they are kept, and which are laid by the hen without a cock having been brought to her. Such eggs are not boiled but opened as they are and the liquid consumed. They help in stopping loose motions and are more nourishing than milk. If Kusum is willing, she may drink the liquid of such eggs. They are available even in Ahmedabad. But I realize that no value should be attached to my advice. Instead of doing what I advise from this distance, the proper course would be to follow the doctor's advice and you should do that. Show my suggestions to the doctor and then do as he advises.

About Bhau, I do not wish to make any suggestion other than what I have done in my letter to him. If Kanti has not got all right, I would certainly say that his case requires careful watching. That is, we should treat his disease to be a case of black fever. That means that he should take complete rest, stop all food except fruit-juices and, if he really feels hungry, milk in small quantities at a time. If he does not pass stool, he should take an enema.

I would be happy if you or somebody else drop me a postcard daily.

Ramji came and saw me yesterday. He had many complaints against Mathuradas. The latter should remove his suspicions and should even tolerate occasional troubles caused by him. He is very eager to weave khadi of even texture from the yarn spun by Mahadev.

[1] Bhau Panse; *vide* "Letter to Bhau Panse", 22-11-1932.

If he is really eager and if there is no definite complaint against him, he should be permitted to weave that yarn notwithstanding any loss that this may involve. About the other matters, call him to you and ask him in confidence. We should not feel hurt by anything he says. We should even put up with insults from him. All this is part of our atonement (for our treatment of the *Antyajas*). Show this to Mathuradas.

How is Hariyomal[1] behaving?

In Poona, Ramji stayed in a room provided by the Christian Seva Sangh. Ordinarily, there should be no objection to anyone of us staying there. I would even welcome that. But I think the fact that Ramji had to stay there only means that he was not welcomed at any other place. You should have asked him and made some arrangements for him. Perhaps you would have found it difficult to do so. That is why probably you kept quiet. I will fix up with some families who will put up friends like Ramji, and then let you know.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8269. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

61. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

November 23, 1932

You should stop coming till this affair[2] is over. We shall rest satisfied by writing to each other. You must not apologize hoping that thereby you might be able to come and see me. On the other hand, when it is your duty to apologize, you need not feel the slightest hesitation or shame in doing so. Even such small incidents should teach us the way of love.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 271

[1] A Sindhi inmate of the Ashram

[2] The addressee had not been allowed to see Gandhiji the previous day, because the Jail Superintendent felt that he had been "insulted before his juniors by Devdas" during Gandhiji's fast in September.

62. LETTER TO HIRALAL A. SHAH

November 23, 1932

I was fully aware that the analogy of a dyer did not apply in all respects, but it was good enough for my purpose. You think that the problem of untouchability has been solved in prisons. But that is so only on paper. Nothing of the kind that you suppose is being done. I am speaking from personal observation. Whether in jails or outside, the fact is that in most parts of India and for most of the year, the Bhangi's dress is no more than loincloth. I myself did a Bhangi's duty continually for nearly one and-a-half years. I used to do it dressed like an ordinary labourer. In the Ashram it is done with the dhoti tucked in. A person doing Bhangi's work does not become as much soiled as a dyer. If he does his work scientifically, he need not do anything more than clean himself with earth. You probably know that according to Smritis and Islam, such cleaning is as good as a full bath. But there are occupations in which this is not sufficient, nor is even washing with water. Soap and antiseptic medicines are required for cleaning oneself properly. Such occupations are those of the Chamar, the doctor, the dyer and the worker in a coal mine. There are many others besides these. Thus the cleanliness of Bhangis has very little part in the removal of untouchability. Think over all this very carefully. You should not lose your sense of perspective. If you wish to discuss the matter further, come and see me.[1]

I did not see anything objectionable in the note in the *Chronicle*. It is true that at present Bhangis work for all classes of people. If, however, Hindus had given them a place in their fold, their condition would never have become as bad as it is. The status of Bhangis in Europe or in any other part of the world is not inferior in any respect to that of other workers. There are no special localities for their residence nor is there a special dress for them. Nowhere outside India is there a special section of the community like our Bhangis.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 271-2

[1] The source does not mention if any portion was omitted between this and the following paragraph.

63. INTERVIEW TO WOMEN[1]

November 23, 1932

The Zamorin is a good man, not even obstinate, but he must take his co-trustees with him. Only the certainty of the sincerity of public opinion will accomplish that. Women have good powers of persuasion. Let them convince the *bonafide* temple-goers that true religion will open the hearts of the people and the gates of the temple to every human being and will brand no one as an outcaste.

Go to Malabar and enlist Nambudri and Nair women there to procure signed statements from the *bonafide* attenders at the temple within a radius of 10 miles that they would be willing to admit the depressed classes into the temple. This work is specially suited to the women and the Women's Indian Association branch at Malabar should take a leading part.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 30-11-1932

64. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 23/24, 1932

CHI. TARAMATI,

I have your letter. I had a letter from Mathuradas only the day before yesterday. He is keeping good health. There is no cause at all to be anxious. Since he is to be released soon, there is no need for you to make a trip there. I have replied to his letter only yesterday.

We three are doing well. Dilip will be well.

There is no need for me to give you a summary of Mathuradas's letter as it contained only the remarks about untouchability and my fast.

A woman does not become untouchable by pronouncing her husband's name. Moreover, we have wholly renounced the idea of

[1] According to *The Bombay Chronicle*, 25-11-1932, Mrs. Cousins, Mrs. Urmila Devi, Mrs. Ambalal Sarabhai and others of Women's Indian Association met Gandhiji in the afternoon.

untouchability. You should therefore learn to speak of Mathuradas as Mathuradas and not say 'he'.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
21 MINT ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

65. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

November 24, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

It is again before morning prayer time, while waiting for Mahadev.

So you are without Kisan. You are having varied experiences.

I am sending you a book on Buddhism which has been recently received. It is likely to be interesting. I have not read it as yet. You will return it to me and tell me whether you think it is well written. I have promised the author that I would glance through it. But there is no hurry about returning it. I shall be unable to touch anything for two weeks or longer.

I note what you say about unsifted wheat. I shall pass on your experience to the Ashram.

Make any change you like so as to get thoroughly well.

My weight was registered at 103 lb. yesterday. I am likely just now to stop at that. I may not increase the quantity of dried milk now. And the growing strain of work is not likely to add to the weight. But 103 is a good weight for me. The elbows are not quite in order. The doctor wants me to drop spinning altogether for a week and I have agreed. He is so sure that the pain is due to the wear and tear of spinning that he thinks the rest is bound to do good. I am to try till Wednesday next.

Proper cold weather seems to have set in here now.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 625. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9716

66. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

November 24, 1932

SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY
HOME DEPARTMENT

DEAR SIR,

I have waited almost to the breaking point before writing this letter. Untouchability work is proving beyond my ability to cope with and this in spite of assistance I am getting from Sardar Vallabhbhai and Sjt. Mahadev Desai. The correspondence is daily growing in volume. The number of visitors is increasing daily and more and more time has to be given to these visits as the movement progresses. I am already in arrears with my correspondence and the statements I must make for the public. My difficulty is enhanced by the fact that my elbows are giving more trouble than before and I am not able to use my hands for writing as much as I should, nor have I regained my pre-fast vitality so as to enable me to put in more work than I am doing now. As it is, we all begin work at 4 o'clock in the morning and it continues with necessary intervals up to 9 p.m. The only way therefore out of the difficulty is for the Government to send one of my prisoner-associates to stay with me. The following are the names that just now occur to me:

1. Sjt. Mohanlal Bhatt —Camp Jail, Yeravda
2. „ Shanker Kalelkar—Central Jail, Yeravda
3. „ Ramdas Gandhi do—
4. „ Swami Anand —Camp Jail, Nasik Road
5. „ Chhaganlal Joshi—(Jail not known)
6. „ Jugatram Dave —Byculla, House of Correction

These prisoners have been intimately connected with me and have worked under me, and they know English, Gujarati and Hindi, which is what I need. If I had my choice, I would choose Swami Anand as being the most competent for the work. He has been Secretary of the Anti-Untouchability Committee established by the Congress in 1929 and since then has been devoting most of his time to untouchability work.

I need hardly say that I have confined my request to the least assistance I need immediately. If this is a matter which can only be

decided by the Government of India, may I ask that my request may be telegraphed to them?

Yours sincerely,

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(4), Pt. II, p. 77

67. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

November 24, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

With reference to my letter[1] to you of the 14th instant submitting certain names for approval by Government as visitors in connection with the late Dr. P. J. Mehta's estate, as the widow and the heirs of the estate are anxious for an early settlement of affairs of the deceased, may I request that the matter may be treated by the Government as urgent?

Yours sincerely,

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(2), Pt. 1, p. 347

68. LETTER TO M. M. ANANTA RAU[2]

November 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I see quite clearly that we look at the *Gita* from different standpoints. The main theme of the *Gita* to me is oneness of life. Realization thereof comes through work without attachment. Untouchability as it is practised today seems to me to be utterly contrary to this divine fact of oneness.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 9560. Courtesy: Government of Mysore

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M.G. Bhandari", 14-11-1932.

[2] Manager, Sanatana Dharma Karyalaya, Madras, who in his letter dated November 18, 1932 (C.W. 9559) had said that Gandhiji's contention that the main theme of the *Gita* was "oneness and therefore equality of all life" was perhaps based on verse 18, Chapter V, but according to the 'context and the subject' that verse referred only to "yoga by renunciation of action", and did not apply to the question of 'touchability' and 'untouchability' which were based purely upon action and the effects of action. He had asked Gandhiji to enlighten him as to the authority for his advocacy for the removal of untouchability.

69. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

November 24, 1932

DEAR BROTHER,

I had your precious letters.[1] Your criticism soothes. Your silence makes me nervous. Time only deepens my love for you. Our differences appear to me to be superficial. Deep down I feel and touch the meeting ground, and, that is precious.

I do wish I never spoke of God or the Inner Voice or Conscience. But, like Ramanama, however much it may be abused, it has got to be re-peated when it is relevant, and almost becomes imperative. Truth will receive a deep cut if, for fear of being misunderstood or even being called a fraud, I did not say boldly what I felt to be true.

I carefully read the typed notes you sent me. The reasoning failed to make any appeal to me. The implications of the *Agamas* are stretched too far by the writer.

I hope you are keeping well. With love,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, p. 245

[1] The source explains: "From other letters of the period we learn that among other points Mr. Sastri had raised these two: '(i) I took occasion to pick a bone with him. In several places in his writings, he seems to dethrone non-violence from its place of honour, and crown the pinchbeck god of physical courage instead. He actually prefers courageous violence to cowardly non-violence. This inconsistency in the apostle of ahimsa amounts to inconstancy. Like Arjuna in the *Gita*, having sent home my dart of criticism, I folded my hands and prayed: "Enlighten me, for my soul is cast in doubt and you know all."

'(ii) I have written objecting to his too frequent references the Inner Voice.' "

70. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

November 24, 1932

DEAR GURUDEV,

Your previous letter[1] comforts me. It is enough for me that you are watching and praying.

With deep love,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4636

71. LETTER TO ADA WEST

November 24, 1932

MY DEAR DEVI,

What an impertinent letter you had from Mr. R. Sole, if that indeed was the name of the writer. I do hope you had a hearty laugh over it.

Hilda must have become very clever to be able to assist Albert in his work. In these times of scarcity of work and distress I suppose it will be uphill work for Albert to command enough custom to make the two ends meet.

You are not to worry over the approaching fast. It is highly likely that things will shape themselves so that the ordeal might not have to be gone through.

Love to all.

Yours,

BHAI

From a photostat: C.W. 4436. Courtesy: A.H. West. Also G.N. 7622

[1] Dated November 15, 1932 in which Tagore had written: "The mighty liberating forces set in motion by your fast still continue to operate and spread from village to village . . . I . . . fervently hope that those who now stand in the way of truth will be converted to it."

72. LETTER TO J. S. HOYLAND

November 24, 1932

MY DEAR HOYLAND,

Mahadev to whom this letter is being dictated tells me that you do not like to be called 'Hoyland' by near or real friends—I suppose there are degrees in friendship—but I refused to change the mode, telling him there was no 'Jack' about your signature! But after all what is in a name? It is the heart behind that matters and the heart is with you whether the pen traces Jack or John or Hoyland.

Your letter this time is a book compressed in a single notepaper sheet. It tells me more about Russia than what I have read in my desultory reading and heard from travellers. I must confess that this partiality for your letter is largely due to my faith in the accuracy of your observation and your truthfulness.

I want to warn you and other friends against being agitated over the proposed second fast. Probably the ordeal won't have to be gone through. But it is the same thing whether it has to be gone through or not. I am safe in God's hands and the prayers of many friends in many lands are one of the many infallible proofs that I am under His absolute rule.

Love to you all.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 4508. Courtesy: Woodbrooke College and Mrs. Jessie Hoyland

73. LETTER TO OLIVE ALEXANDER

November 24, 1932

MY DEAR OLIVE,

It was good Miss Howard gave me the information that your father[1] was no more. I do not know that either you or Horace[2] feel real grief over the death of dear ones. I have personally ceased for years togrieve over death at all. The shock is felt when a comrade is torn away from me, but that is purely due to personal attachment which in

[1] John W. Graham; *vide* "Letter to Elizabeth F. Howard", 25-11-1932.

[2] Horace G. Alexander, addressee's husband

other words is selfishness. But I immediately recover and realize that death is a deliverance and has to be welcomed even as a friend is welcomed, and that it means dissolution of the body, not of the indwelling spirit. But I must not philosophize. To be true to you and to myself I had to declare my faith and at the same time let you know that Mahadev and I and your other friends here were not so indifferent as not to take note of the happenings in your circle.

May your father's soul rest in peace.

Love to you and Horace from us all.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1416

74. LETTER TO HARIBHAU PHATAK

November 24, 1932

DEAR HARIBHAU,

Mahadev has gone through Purandare's manuscripts. I shall see him on Monday. I agree with you that he may be taken over by the League. I shall discuss with him what can be done.

I give you below the draft manifesto. I thought that you wanted it for Maharashtra only. I make myself responsible only for the draft. Whether it should be circulated or not and whether it will be widely signed or not, I cannot judge from here. Therefore that is a matter purely for those who are outside to judge. Here is the draft:

> We the undersigned believe that untouchability is a blot upon Hinduism and should be removed. We believe in temple worship, and such believers respectfully urge the trustees of all Hindu temples to throw open their doors to the Harijans on the same terms as to the caste Hindus. We do not include in our request the *garbhagriha* which is only open to the professional ritualists, and as at present the attention of all India is directed to the Guruvayur Temple, we respectfully urge the Zamorin and all concerned to lead the way by opening that temple to the Harijans before the 1st of January next.

You will show this draft to as many friends as you like and make whatever changes. are deemed necessary, so long as they don't inter-

fere with the scope of the request. If you need to see me on this point you should come with Purandare on Monday.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20005

75. LETTER TO AN AMERICAN WOMAN

November 24, 1932

I am not enamoured of the idea of using divine healing for the purpose of proving the existence of divinity or efficiency of prayer. If Jesus came back to us, it is difficult to know what he would say to some of the uses that are being made of his powers of healing and other miracles attributed to him.

Mehadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 275

76. A LETTER

November 24, 1932

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter has come upon me like a shock.[1] Your letter written to me as you left Bombay left on my mind the impression that you were wholly with me in all I did and I think you allowed the public too, to think that you were with the majority. No one knew of your mental reservations. At least you could have let me know your mind for my guidance, knowing as you did my regard for your opinions. Truth was hurt by your silence when it did not mean consent. Friendship is hard stuff. It must be capable of standing knock-out blows. Next time please do not spare me. You will serve the cause and me by speaking out straight.

I think Radhakant was right in drawing my attention to the mine on which he thought I was standing.

All this is however for you only. I shall respect your wish by making no use of your letter which is being destroyed.

With love,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 273-4

[1] The addressee had expressed his disagreement with Gandhiji in regard to the Poona Pact as well as the fast and written: "I have not done or said anything against my conscience as I was not present either at the Bombay meeting or at the Poona Committee."

77. LETTER TO ''LARKS[1] OF ST. FRANCIS"

November 24, 1932

. . .[2] is truly a spendthrift scattering his love recklessly and captures people by playing the son to them. Of course you know that although he is in India we do not meet each other; but that does not, ought not to, matter. For I feel the presence of his spirit without needing the nearness of the body. Spiritual kinship can never be destroyed. Spiritual nearness can never be sundered. You say you are all trying hard not to forget the power of prayer. We can only do so at our peril.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 277-8

78. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

November 24, 1932

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Shindeji has a serious complaint against us, that of appropriating the name of his association. The complaint seems to be justified.[3] We are concerned only with work not with the name. Therefore my suggestion is to name our association 'Akhil Bharat Harijan Seva Sangh' and to use the same in English and vernacular too. You are coming here but this will possibly reach you before you start.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. G. D. BIRLA
BIRLA HOUSE, ALBUQUERQUE ROAD, NEW DELHI

From Hindi: C.W. 7906. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Sisters of an Italian Convent

[2] The name is omitted in the source.

[3] The recently-formed association for the eradication of untouchability with addressee as President had been named 'All-India Anti-Untouchability League' in ignorance of the fact that another association named 'All-India Untouchability League', was already operating under the presidentship of V. R. Shinde.

79. LETTER TO ELIZABETH F. HOWARD

November 25, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

I thank you for your letter and your sympathy and also your own poem. Let me confess to you that I am so overwhelmed with untouchability work that I have not had the time to go through the poem, but I did not want to delay writing to you till I was able to read the poem. I must also tell you that I am a slow reader of poetry.

It was very good of you to have informed me of John W. Graham's[1] death. I should not have known it otherwise. It was as you very properly say a very splendid way to die.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 864

80. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

November 25, 1932

MY DEAR AGATHA,

You are regular against my irregularity. But you have need to be regular, I have no cause for regular writing, unless I was to describe to you the events concerning the family consisting of cats and trees—and why not pots and pans and stove? Even they are not quite so lifeless as we imagine them to be, and we feel the loss of them in the same way that we feel the loss of dear ones. The question is only that of degree. But if I were to begin to describe all these members of the family, my letter could be dry as dust after one or two trials. Therefore the onesided bargain in which you give without expecting anything in return is in the circumstances the most natural thing. I am not going to [write] separately to Charlie. But tell him please that Gurudev and I are drawing nearer each other day by day. This news, I know, will please him more than anything else I can send him.

Love from us all.

Love.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 11460

[1] Father of Olive Alexander; *vide* "Letter to Olive Alexander", 24-11-1932.

81. LETTER TO KASHINATH N. KELKAR

November 25, 1932

MY DEAR KASHINATH,

I am grateful to you for a copy of your work on Hindu Law. Apart from the reference you have given to me, I shall prize the gift and hope some day to get the time to go through the whole work.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

KASHINATH N. KELKAR, ADVOCATE
PUSHALKARI WADA, YADUGOPAL PETH, SATARA CITY

C.W. 978. Courtesy: G. N. Kanitkar

82. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

November 25, 1932

MY DEAR BEARDED FRIEND AND BROTHER,

I am not going to send you the passport you want. The princes and the people of Kathiawar know you just as well as they know me and if your greater age, your smiles and your energy which youth can emulate cannot Secure help from the princes and the monied men of Kathiawar, no appeal that I can arm you with will do So. And I will not have you betray want of faith in yourself, in your cause and[1] God. But if there must be a passport, then let this serve the purpose.

With love,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9581

[1] The source has "am".

83. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

November 25, 1932

MY DEAR CHILD,

You are not to worry over the approaching second fast. It may not come at all. But if it does come, let it be a matter of joy to you. Life to be true must be a continuing sacrifice. Enjoyment does not come after. Sacrifice is the enjoyment. All taking must be for greater giving. This is becoming more and more clear to me. Therefore you will watch in utter calmness, joy and prayer what is happening and may happen.

I must not give you more time. Untouchability work leaves no time for love-letters.

Love to you all and kisses to the children.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 116. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child*, pp. 96-7

84. LETTER TO FRANCISCA STANDENATH[1]

November 25, 1932

The key to Satyavan's[2] purity is perhaps in your own hands. You have to be patient like the Himalayas and have the charity of the ocean. You must not irritate him on any account whatsoever nor sit in judgment upon him if he yields to his animal passion. You do not need to go through the struggle because you are a stranger to that passion. Your *brahmacharya* therefore is no merit in you, but Satyavan's is. All the time he is struggling against the Devil and if he finally subdues it, it would be indeed a great merit and a singular triumph. Let us all therefore pray for him that he may have the necessary strength to overcome the enemy.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 279

[1] Named Savitri by Gandhiji

[2] Frederic Standenath, addressee's husband

85. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO SAMUEL E. STOKES[1]

November 25, 1932

What a joy it would be when people realize that religion consists not in outward ceremonial but an ever-growing inward response to the highest impulses that man is capable of.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 279

86. LETTER TO E. RAMUNNI MENON [2]

November 25, 1932

There should be no difficulty in getting an accurate referendum as to the wishes of the temple-goers. The reformers assure me with as much firmness that popular opinion is in their favour, as you assure me that it is against temple-entry. I suggest referees being appointed by either party and an honest referendum taken without any undue pressure being exercised on either side. The question on which vote is to be taken should be properly framed and explained to the voters. There need be no heat imported into what is a purely religious matter.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 280

87. LETTER TO SECRETARY TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

November 25, 1932

I can sense his (Gurudev's) agony even from this distance, but I suppose it is inevitable. This curse of untouchability will not be removed from our midst, the hearts of the orthodox will not melt without the purest souls in our land passing through the agony that Gurudev is passing through just now. Let us pray that God may sustain him and keep him in our midst for many years.

Gurudev's firm letter to the Zamorin ought to move him. During these days of travail Gurudev's blessings and help are of inestimable value to me. Please give my love to him.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 281

[1] American missionary who had naturalized himself as a British subject and made India his home.

[2] Who, on behalf of the Guruvayur branch of the Sanatana Sabha, had written: "How did you conclude that public opinion is on your side? It is with us."

88. A LETTER[1]

November 25, 1932

I appreciate your care for my body and I fully endorse your proposition that it belongs to the nation. But the nation belongs to God and if God imposes a task upon the body, who can resist it?

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 281

89. REPLIES TO RATLAM CORRESPONDENTS[2]

November 25, 1932

1. Great things have been misused from times immemorial, and will continue to be misused. That is no reason for rejecting them. There is nothing in this world in whose name as much evil is done as in the name of religion. If, however, we were to banish religion for that reason, the world would perish.

2. Shri Kelappan's error was a very small one. It could be rectified and has been rectified. If a fast in itself was an improper means, I could certainly not have supported him. Since he has fully atoned for his error, as his co-worker and as inventor of the weapon of fasting, it was clearly my moral duty to give my support to him.

3. The Zamorin's duty is to support neither me nor the orthodox Hindus who are fasting. His clear duty is to uphold justice. Two persons may fast against each other, but both may be in the wrong. When that is so, the way of truth and non-violence tells us that we should let both of them die, and do only what is just. It isnot we who can save or kill people. God does that. People have survived long fasts, and, on the other hand, we see men and women, who have not been fasting, dying every moment through innumerable causes.

4. I am quite aware that the personal element is bound to have an effect. But should I, therefore, forsake dharma? And if anybody gives up the practice of untouchability even under the spell of my personality, surely he would not be violating dharma.

5. I pray to God, and also hope, that even if millions of people fasted against me to make me betray truth, I would make my heart as

[1] The addressee was a Bengali Assistant Accountant-General who in his letter to Gandhiji had observed: "Your body is a trust and you have no right to go on fast again and again."

[2] The questions were contained in their joint letter.

hard as a stone and not yield to them. In considering all these factors, however, we should not lose sight of one thing, namely, that not many people will come forward to lay down their lives by fasting in order to keep injustice alive. The truth is that very few people are likely to come forward to die even for justice.

6. A crore of people may act in the name of their inner voice, but they may be impostors or fools. How, then, should a man who is really urged by his inner voice act? Should he suppress his inner voice and deny God for fear that others may follow his example and falsely claim to be inspired by their inner voice?

7. If I believe that the orthodox Hindus have no popular support, why should I hide my view? If, however, they do have such support, I cannot suppress that fact and it is easy for them to prove their claim.

8. In the first place, my political, religious and social ideas are different branches of the same tree. Hence they are not inconsistent with one another. But those who see no connection among them should not forsake what they think to be dharma in order to make use of my political strength. If anybody, however, through foolishness or cowardice, is ready to barter away the diamond of dharma for the pebble of political advantage, should I for that reason forsake my dharma? It is doing violence to language to use the word 'coercion' in this connection. There will always be such powers like personal influence and, if we regard them as forms of coercion, there would be no room for determined human effort to achieve anything.

9. The question is improper.

10. Mixed dinner parties with Harijans are not a necessary part of the movement for the eradication of untouchability.

11. There is certainly some difference between Bharatbhushan[1] Panditji's views and mine, but I don't know if there is any difference regarding this fast. If there is any such difference, however, it is for the people to think what they should do. They should follow the view which appeals to their reason and their heart.

12. The fast is not intended to convert the orthodox Hindus. My aim is to arouse those who have risen above custom and realized the sin of untouchability so that they may begin working and to make those who have no conviction in the matter start thinking.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 282-3

[1] An honorific used by Gandhiji for Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya

90. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

November 25, 1932

CHI. MANI,

I have your long letter, the first after you were informed about Dahyabhai's illness. You are worrying unnecessarily. You ought to be aware that when both Father and you are in jail, those who are outside would not fail to do everything necessary. As soon as the condition was diagnosed as typhoid, Walchand[1] asked Karamchand to engage two nurses for day and night duty and to arrange for any doctor he thought necessary to visit Dahyabhai every day, and offered to pay all the expenses himself. They come to 30-40 rupees a day and are met by him. Thus Dahyabhai gets better nursing at home than he would in a hospital. Those looking after him are Karamchand, Chhotubhai[2] (who is constantly by Dahyabhai's side) and two nurses who are very kind and whom Dahyabhai has come to like very much. Bakshi[3] and other friends too are there. It is natural for you to feel unhappy at not being by Dahyabhai's side at this time. But God imposes the severest tests on those who love him. We receive daily reports from Karamchand, Chhotubhai and others. This is the third week. The temperature now does not rise above 102, and was even normal yesterday. Doctors hope, it will be completely normal from next Monday. I had even sent to you the letter received by Vallabhbhai from Dr. Madan, who is attending on Dahyabhai. You will see from it that the Doctors, too, give him loving care.

He is being given *mosambi* juice, butter-milk, etc. In typhoid as a rule the patient suffers from diarrhoea from the very beginning. But Dahyabhai has had no such troubles. So there is no cause at all for anxiety. You should go on doing your work there and pray for Dahyabhai's speedy recovery. You should not be unhappy at Grandmother's death. How many have the good fortune to meet such a death? Whenever we feel that we did not get an opportunity of nursing someone whom we loved during his or her last days on earth, we should console ourselves with the resolution that in future we would never let go an opportunity to serve people.

[1] Walchand Hirachand, the industrialist
[2] Addressee's cousin
[3] Jamnadas Bakshi, a Share-broker of Bombay

We are all well and all our waking time is taken up by Harijan work.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 92-3

91. A LETTER

November 25, 1932

You can ask the applicant whether he would do some work. Since we wish to train workers from amongst the *Antyajas*, it is necessary to make such a condition. In a very deserving case you may help generously even if you have to strain your means. We should be able to say that, if ten thousand such deserving boys applied for scholarships, we would give to all of them.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 280-1

92. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

November 25, 1932

BHAI MUNSHI,

We exchanged a few letters some time ago. In this letter, however, I have to humbly register a complaint against you. A young man has sent me a farce by you entitled *Brahmacharyashram* and has criticized it with a sad heart. Sardar went through it first. Mahadev glanced through it and read out to me some sentences. If prizes wereto be awarded for appreciating innocent humour, I suppose I would win a small one even at the age of sixty-four. Co-workers like you have also noticed my ability to understand humour. In your farce, however, I see no pleasant humour but the most offensive jesting, almost bordering on obscenity such as uncultured men might slip into, during their idle gossiping. One is entitled to expect you to produce, from jail, something really beautiful. I will not enter into detailed discussion; but having stated my criticism, I make this plea, write to the publisher and withdraw the farce. That young man informs me that some persons actually wish to stage the play, and the poor man is,

therefore, all the more upset. I also feel that the farce should never be staged. A person who laughs at himself is not entitled to employ any type of ridicule or, under cover of self-ridicule, to ridi-cule the world and its ideals. This need not be explained to a person of your keen intelligence. I hope you are taking care and im-proving your health there. Convey my *vandemataram* to all the friends.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7518. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

93. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

November 25, 1932

CHI. DAHYABHAI,

Shri Natarajan writes:

> I have every hope and pray that Dahyabhai will pull through the remaining few days without complication. His age and active habits and his naturally strong constitution are most potent assets. He is a favourite at our home, having been with us nearly all the time when he was living with his uncle. He calls Kamakoti *'Akka'*, like her brothers and sister, and is always a welcome visitor without any ceremony.

This is an extract from his reply to my letter. Karamchand's letter was received yesterday rather late, and I could not reply being engaged in a discussion with visitors about Harijan work. The range of your temperature seems to be gradually coming down. Provided that the patient takes proper rest and due care is taken about nourishment, an attack of typhoid proves beneficial in the end, for it removes all toxins from the body.

I hope you are cheerful.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 150-1

94. LETTER TO GOVINDLAL SAHA

November 25, 1932

BHAI GOVINDLALJI[1],

Prabhudas writes and tells me that you have fallen sick so much so that you were all set to leave for Ranchi to undergo an operation. I trust you are better now. Do send me the full facts.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10675

95. INTERVIEW TO KHIMJI AND J. K. MEHTA[2]

November 25, 1932

Mahatma Gandhi urged that there should be propaganda of a vigorous character for the removal of untouchability and specially for temple-entry at present. His attention was drawn to the fact that a referendum was going to be taken by women workers and others in Bombay for allowing untouchables to go to the temple of Guruvayur and he said that such a referendum was most welcome as it would show to the people all over India and the trustees of Guruvayur Temple, what were the feelings of the caste Hindus. He added that Provincial Boards should identify themselves with the referendum work.

He stressed, of course, the importance of the referendum near Guruvayur itself and he wanted it to be clearly understood that even if people all over the country were in favour of the entry of the untouchables into the temple of Guruvayur and the actual temple-goers to the Guruvayur Temple opposed it, he would abide by the decision of the Guruvayur people themselves, who should be considered the last authority on the question. He suggested that *Shastris* of note might also be asked to give their opinion regarding the authority of the Shastras on this question.

He again emphasized the importance of a census being taken of the depressed classes in the city, specially regarding the education of their children of different ages.

He also urged that adults of both the sexes among the untouchables had, through different sources, expressed a desire for education and night schools should be opened out for them. He favoured scholarships being given to students of the depressed classes in high schools or colleges so as to give an encouragement to

[1] Gandhiji's host during his visit to Takula, Nainital, in May 1931.

[2] They met Gandhiji on behalf of the All-India Anti-Untouchability League.

higher education among the depressed classes, who, after their education was over, might very well give one or two years' service to the cause of social uplift of their brethren.

The Bombay Chronicle, 28-11-1932

96. STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY-IX

[*November 26, 1932*][1]

As January 1st is nearing, the correspondence on Guruvayur is increasing. Instead of answering one by one the questions that arise from the correspondence, it would perhaps be simpler to answer them by way of a mere statement of my position. The fast will begin on January 2 next if, before that date, the Guruvayur Temple is not opened to Harijans on the same terms as it is open to the caste Hindu sin general; but the fast will be postponed, if it becomes clear that the temple-going Hindus in the neighbourhood are opposed to the temple-entry of Harijans or if it is clear that although everybody is willing to open the temple to Harijans, there is a legal difficulty that cannot be overcome before Jannuary 2, next.

The majority of letters received by me assure me that the temple-goers are in favour of admission of Harijan worshippers to the temple. One or two correspondents vehemently contest the position and claim that a proper referendum will result in an overwhelming majority against such an entry. These correspondents have given me no proof in support of their opinion, whereas others say that they have actually taken referendum after their own fashion and found it to be in favour of temple-entry by Harijans. If the orthodox people will agree, a fresh referendum can at once be taken in the presence of referees appointed by both the parties. I need not repeat here the scheme suggested last Saturday in answer to a question from *The Times of India*correspondent. Anyway,the reform party should lose no time in fortifying their contention with incontestable proof.

They, however, say that, although the opinion of the temple-goers may be overwhelmingly in their favour, the key of the temple is held by the Zamorin. That is no doubt technically true, but he is not the owner. He is a trustee representing the temple-going public. Therefore, he cannot resist the clearly expressed wish of the majority

[1] *Vide* the following item.

of them. It is his duty to overcome the legal difficulties if there are any, and if he fails to do so, it simply means that the force of the public opinion has not become strong enough to compel the performance of his obvious duty.

The fast will then further solidify public opinion so as to make itself felt. The key to the temple, therefore, is in fact in the hands of the public. But as the legal maxim has it, law or equity helps the watchful, never the slothful. Let Kerala reformers, therefore, not blame the Zamorin.

It is discourteous and wrong to impute motives to him. If he refuses to open the temple to Harijans, let us think that he is not convinced of the public demand. His refusal must be a signal not for abusing him, but discovering the weakness in our position. It is surely more dignified and proper for the public to feel that it is a clearly expressed wish and cannot be flouted by its representative which the Zamorin is.

Guruvayur has already become an all-India concern. Let the caste Hindus all over India bestir themselves and declare their opinion that they desire Guruvayur Temple to be opened to Harijans. The moral force of such an opinion honestly and freely expressed will be irresisti-ble.

I have already warned the reformers against using unbecoming language in respect of orthodox sanatanists or no-changers, as they have called themselves, in a petition addressed to H.E. the Viceroy. They are entitled to their opinion. I look upon this untouchability question as primarily religious, and I would like both the no-changers and the reformers to work in a religious spirit without imputing motives to one another. No reform, much less religious reform, can be or should be carried by compulsion. I have repeatedly stated in unequivocal terms the limitations and functions of the proposed fast.

But a correspondent writing in Gujarati for himself and others says in effect:

> It is all very well for you to say that you do not want to coerce anybody, but your position cannot but compel some people to act against their will. Some of us have no respect for your religious views or your social reforms, but we want you to live for your political power, and, therefore, if you persist in fasting, we will have to pocket our convictions and help you in your fight for temple-entry. If this is not coercion, we do not

know the meaning of the word.

My answer is, I must not be expected to surrender my cherished convictions because I hold a prominent position in the Indian world, or because I have some political influence; I cannot barter away my faith or suppress its movement for the sake of retaining my social position or political influence. Everything is subservient to and is derivable from that faith. Ask me to deny or suppress it, and it would be worse than asking me to commit suicide. I would also venture to suggest that those who subordinate their convictions to their regard for my position or political influence can only have shallow convicions if any at all.

Convictions are made of sterner stuff. People have been known to stake their all for the sake of their convictions which may then be called religion. The correspondent asks:

What is the poor Zamorin to do? On the one hand you and Mr. Kelappan will fast. On the other, 1,000 no-changers are said to have decided to do likewise. Whom is the Zamorin to please?

I answer without the slightest hesitation that he is to please neither party. He is there to please God, which is Truth. He is there to do his duty, and if it demands the sacrifice of thousands of no-changers, Mr. Kelappan and myself, he should have the courage to do so and he will deserve the honour of his own generation and posterity.

God will take care of the fasting fraternity. Those who fast will do so for defending the truth as they see it, and God of Truth will do what He likes with them. If their fast is in answer to an inner urge, it will be its own reward, and it will be well with them whether the purpose to which it is directed is apparently fulfilled or not.

The same correspondent persists:

But it is all very well for you to talk of the call of God, the conscience, the inner voice and all that. Others also can and do put forth the same claim. What are we, who have no inner voice and who have no God to parade before the public, to do and which are we to believe?

I can only say: You have to believe no one but yourselves. You must try to listen to the inner voice, but if you won't have the expression 'inner voice', you may use the expression 'dictates of reason' which you should obey, and if you will not parade God, I have no doubt you will parade something else which in the end will prove to be God for, fortunately, there is no one and nothing else but

God in this universe. I would also submit that it is not everyone claiming to act on the urge of the inner voice who has that urge. After all like every other faculty this faculty for listening to the still, small voice within requires previous effort and training perhaps much greater than what is required for the acquisition of any other faculty, and even if out of thousands of claimants only a few succeed in establishing their claim, it is well worth running the risk of having and tolerating doubtful claimants.

So much for the Gujarati correspondent. I must now conclude this statement with a question from a correspondent who writes in English. His is a long letter containing elaborate argument but I think the following epitome correctly represents him:

Hitherto I have known you to be free from any trace of communalism but you now suddenly appear in a communal garb. I could have understood and justified your fast for swaraj or for all-India unity, but I cannot understand this fast on behalf of Hinduism. I have never taken you as a Hindu at all, certainly not as a narrow Hindu. What is there in opening the temples to Harijans, who do not want to go there?

I am glad of this question. I have no desire whatsoever to appear to anyone as other than what I am. I am not ashamed of Hinduism or of the Hindu. I totally deny being narrow. I fancy I could not be held for one single moment by a narrow creed, and it is because the super-imposition of untouchability would make Hinduism a narrow creed that I have rebelled against it, and I would count my life to be a cheap price to pay for the removal of that blot.

I have nothing of the communalist in me, because my Hinduism is all-inclusive. It is not anti-Mussalman, anti-Christian or anti-any-other-religion. But it is pro-Mussalman, pro-Christian and pro-every-other-living faith in the world. To me, Hinduism is but one branch from the same parent trunk, whose roots and whose quality we judge only by the collective strength and quality of the different branches put together, and if I take care of the Hindu branch on whichI am sitting and which sustains me surely I am taking care also of the sister branches. If the Hindu branch is poisoned, the poison is likely to spread to others. If that branch withers, the parent will be the weaker for its withering.

If my correspondent and those who think with him have followed me hitherto, they will discover that if God gives me the

privilege of dying for this Hinduism of my conception, I shall have sufficiently died for the unity of all and even for swaraj. Finally let me repeat what I have said before now, that the question whether Harijans want to, or would enter into temples, if they were open to them, is irrelevant. The removal of untouchability is not a matter of bestowing patronage on Harijans. It is one of penance and purification by the caste Hindus and one of the penances they have to do is to open the Hindu temples and invite the Harijans to them.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-11-1932

97. LETTER TO S. MADHAVAN NAIR

November 26, 1932

I appreciate your letter. You should study the statement[1] I am issuing today. When I talk of criminal neglect of comrades or reformers, I have no one in particular in mind. If we are true and active, the walls of untruth must come down. It is no use saying that the Zamorin is hardening. You will find that if the temple-goers demand the entry of Harijans to the temple, no power on earth can prevent them. The fact is that our agitation is only now beginning. It must be intense and yet gentle. Not a word need be uttered against the Zamorin. Of course if the law is really against us, it must be mended. And that too cannot be stopped if the public voice is clear and emphatic. We must not lose faith in ourselves or the cause. Am I clear? Do not hesitate to write again, if I am obscure.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 287

98. LETTER TO DR. MOHAMMAD ALAM

November 26, 1932

DEAR DR. ALAM,

Your good wife has been keeping me informed through her beautiful Urdu letters of your health. Her beautifully written letters have opened my eyes to the culture among Muslim sisters. I have three such fair correspondents—Begum Alam, Johra Ansari and Raihana Tyabji. Their diction is good and handwriting of two, i.e., Begum Alam and Johra, is like copper-plate. Raihana is a spoilt girl.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

Being a poetess, she has not kept up her handwriting to the high level that the other two have. But I must not take up this letter in telling you of my good fortune, part of which, due to your unconditional release, would be now taken away from me, for Begum Alam would now consider herself to be absolved from writing to me. But let her know that I am not going to give her any such easy release. I do hope that your illness has not marred your sense of humour and that you are fit enough to receive nonsensical letters and amuse yourself over them.

You can't receive any congratulations from me on your ill-earned discharge, but we must make the best of it and fulfil the purpose for which the discharge is granted. You have therefore to hasten to [be] well. On receipt of Begum Alam's telegram I sent a wire to Dr. Deshmukh. I have wired to you his opinion and of local medical friends who consider you to be fit enougrh to travel to Bombay. You should do so and let Dr. Deshmukh take charge of you. If an operation is considered by medical advisers to be necessary, I do not believe in waiting. Please let me know what you are doing and what is the exact condition of your health. May God keep you long for His service. Love from us all.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 19

99. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

November 26, 1932

CHI. JAMNALALJI,

I have just been given the happy news of your having been brought here.[1] I hope you did not feel the strain of the journey. Now that you are here, eat all the fruits which doctors recommend for you. How is your cough? I am trying to secure permission to see you. We are all happy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2905

[1] The addressee was transferred to Yeravda Central Prison, but was confined to another ward. *Vide* also "Letter to E.E. Doyle", 22-11-1932.

100. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

November 26, 1932

CHI. MANI,

The report about Dahyabhai today is even better than yesterday's. The temperature did not rise above 100.5° and went down to 98.5°. It may, therefore, be said that the temperature is now returning to normal. Doctors hope that it will be completely normal tomorrow or perhaps the day after and will not rise any longer. Dahyabhai is weak of course, but such weakness is only to be expected, and there is no cause at all for anxiety. You need not now make inquiries by wire and I also will not send you any wire.

Father has already written to Karamchand yesterday asking him to send you money. All three of us are well. I have forwarded your letter to Dahyabhai. Why do you not say anything about your health?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 93-4

101. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ

November 26, 1932

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your postcard. Keep the resolution which you have made. A person who learns to keep his small resolutions automatically acquires the strength to keep big ones. You must do something to improve your health. I hope there is no cause now to make you inwardly unhappy. If you come here and live with me, I would daily give you fresh goat's milk to drink. Whose handwriting do you see above? Try and recognize it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9146

102. LETTER TO KUSUM GANDHI

November 26, 1932

Persons who are ill bemoan their inability to do anything for others while they themselves have to accept people's services. This is a grave error. Such a person can do service by thinking pure thoughts, by exacting the minimum of service and by bathing in love those who serve him. He can also serve by keeping cheerful. We should never forget that meditating on God with pure devotion is also service.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 286

103. LETTER TO ANAND SWARUP

November 26, 1932

BHAI ANAND SWARUP,

I have your letter. All the questions are good, but I do not have sufficient time to answer them all. I am not sure when I shall be able to reply through the newspapers, and so I think I may write at least this much.

Ramanama and *Omkar* are one and the same. Tulsidas too has shown this most clearly. He has extolled the name precisely because one lacks concentration while reciting prayers. All the Shastras assure us and the experience of devotees shows that anyone can ultimately gain concentration of mind if one goes on praying with a feeling of reverence. Closing eyes while chanting the prayer is enough but it is certainly good if the thoughts are centred on the point between the eyebrows.

The assertion that God himself is truth has a drawback that it implies some further qualities possessed by God. That God has many names, a thousand, is quite true. But remembering God as the possessor of many names is fraught with the possibility of a diminution in the significance of the entity to which we wish to offer total surrender. But all other attributes fade away when we proclaim that Truth alone is God; only the idea of truth remains in mind and this is more prevalent in monism. Atheism has no place here as even an atheist accepts existence which is a development of *sat.* Here truth does not imply merely truthfulness of speech; its meaning here is unity of thought, word and deed and yet more. Whatever is in reality here, what existed

in the past and will remain in the future is the substance, truth, Parameshwar[1] and nothing but that.

Now for the scavenging and hygiene of commodes. A commode should be placed in a room which constantly receives sunlight. It should be constructed in such a way as to be removed daily and cleaned. Two buckets should be placed on a wooden frame, one for urine and one for stools. After evacuation of the bowels the excrement should be covered with sand or mud. A bucket full of earth should be kept in the room. If the house is near a field or a garden the excreta should be regularly buried there for being converted into manure. Except during the rainy season, the roof should be removable during the rest of the year so that the room receives sunshine throughout the day. With this arrangement and daily washing out of the buckets and the room, the lavatory will be and should be as clean as a bed-room. This arrangement is very convenient in the villages and it should not prove difficult in towns like Meerut.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[PS.]

It is not essential to place the buckets in a wooden frame. They can be placed on a frame made of stone or bricks.

From Hindi: C.W. 9452. Courtesy: Bharat Kala Bhavan

104. INTERVIEW TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"

November 26, 1932

Certain people who visited Mr. Gandhi this week left Yeravda Jail under the impression that Mr. Gandhi had assured them that once the Guruvayur temple-entry matter had been settled, he would extend his fast in order to compel the temple trustees throughout India to open all temples to the untouchables. They have told their friends about this and the news has spread quickly. This morning I sought Mr. Gandhi's confirmation or denial of this as I felt that a mistake had occurred somewhere. He immediately denied its accuracy. Mr. Gandhi said:

Such a course on my part would disturb public opinion and would be a breach of faith. Once the fast is over and the temple is open, many other temples are highly likely to be opened to the untouchables because by the time Guruvayur is opened, so much propa-

[1] God

ganda work will have been done and public opinion will have been so much affected that it is not likely that there will be much hesitation on the part of other trustees to open the temples under their charge. Should it prove otherwise, I should not think of restarting the fast without the greatest deliberation and without an absolutely just cause. So far as I can say now no such fast for a particular item in the anti-untouchability programme is contemplated.

In reply to my query as to whether he had any detailed information as to the actual situation in the neighbourhood of the Guruvayur Temple, Mr. Gandhi said that so far as information is available the caste Hindus in the neighbourhood, who were in the habit of visiting the temple, were overwhelmingly in favour of Harijans beingadmitted on precisely the same terms as they themselves were admitted.

But I also have letters from people in the neighbourhood casting aspersions on the accuracy of my information. I have, therefore, suggested that a quick public referendum of the caste Hindu people within a radius of say ten miles from the temple be taken in the presence of referees, one to be appointed to act on behalf of the reformers and one on behalf of the sanatanists. If it is thought necessary there may also be an umpire. These gentlemen should supervise the taking of votes so as to avoid any chance of undue pressure being exercised, impersonation or any other malpractice.

If, however, as a result of this quick referendum it is found that the information at my disposal was wrong I will unhesitatingly advise Mr. Kelappan to postpone his fast until public opinion is sufficiently educated to warrant the opening of the temple to the Harijans.

Meanwhile he has asked[1] Urmila Devi, sister of the late Mr. C. R. Das to go south and assist in the campaign there.

The Times of India, 28-11-1932

105. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

November 27, 1932

CHI. DAHYABHAI,

Today there is even better report of your health.

I said in my letter yesterday that even a sick person can do service. This is how he can do so. He may spend the period of rest in meditating on God and, controlling his impatience and anger, bathe in

[1] *Vide*"Letter to K. Kelappan", 23-11-1932.

love those who are nursing him. I know of one example from the West and one from our country. An eighteen-year-old French girl spread so much fragrance during her illness, which ended in her death, that she has been canonized a saint. She now sleeps the sleep to which there is no end.

Ladha Maharaj of Bilkha, near Porbandar, was suffering from leucoderma.[1] He went to the temple of Shiva in Bilkha and took up a seat in an *asana* posture. For the whole day he would repeat Ramanama or read the *Ramayana*. In the end he was cured and became a famous *kathakar*[2]. I had seen him and heard him narrating a *katha*.

A devotee of God puts to good use even his illness; he does not give way to his illness.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 151

106. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

November 27, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

I hope you got my letter[3] in which I wrote to you about your constipation. Do not eat for some time any cereals or pulses which you cannot digest just now. I will write again and make further suggestions after I have more information.

The *takli* affair is a sad story. I have, of course, written about it. It is strange that anybody should not understand the importance of observing silence. Do what you can without losing patience. Even if there is only one person who is ready to learn, teach him. I should like at least one person to learn the art from you and master it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6745. Also C.W. 4488. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

[1] *Vide* also "An Autobiography—Part I, Chapter X", 3-2-1929.

[2] One who narrates stories from sacred books.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Bhau Panse", 22-11-1932.

107. LETTER TO BHIKHIBEHN

November 27, 1932

CHI. BHIKHIBEHN,

You have introduced yourself all right. May you be happy in the Ashram and learn service and *bhakti* with sincere devotion.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1747

108. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

November 27, 1932

CHI. DUDHIBEHN[1],

I got your letter. Just now, both of you should look after each other and the children. When Valji is completely all right, I shall be happy if your suggestion is acted upon. With whom do you live there? I think it would be very good if you could stay there for a long time.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. V. G. DESAI
SANJAULI, SIMLA HILLS, N.W. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7444. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

109. LETTER TO GULAB A. SHAH

November 27, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

Learn Gujarati well.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1731

[1] Wife of Valji G. Desai

110. LETTER TO UMADEVI BAJAJ

November 27, 1932

CHI. OM,

You seem to be a very cunning girl. Because you don't spin fine yarn, you gift away the coarse yarn which you spin and take credit for voluntary service. Is it Vinoba or Janakimaiya who teaches you this?

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 335

111. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

November 27, l932

CHI. JAMNA,

Kusum and all of us are in God's hands. Don't even think about [the condition of] my elbow.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 864. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

112. LETTER TO JAMNADAS AND KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

November 27, 1932

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I got your beautiful letter. Self-depreciation is good to a certain extent, but beyond that it proves harmful. Even a veteran like me may envy your descriptive power. Your language is definitely beautiful. Why, then, do you feel diffident? You have also ability for practical work. May you live long.

Send me the names of your trustees.

I cannot write more at this stage. About the second fast, try to understand as much as you can from my articles. It is true that the people get upset by such news, but such fright is sometimes necessary. It is in fact self-examination. No great reforms can be brought about without self-examination. But the fact is that my fasts are not

undertaken by me of my own free will. I believe them to be inspired by God. I am looking forward to your letter about untouchability.

Blessings from

BAPU

RESPECTED MURABBI BHAI,

If you can, I want both of you to send me your sincere blessings for success in my work. To you both,

Humble pranams from

MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M. U./II

113. LETTER TO LAKSHMI D. DAFDA

November 27, 1932

CHI. LAKSHMI,

I got your letter. If you feel really hungry, I am sure you would relish salted gruel of *jowar.* I relished it very much. A diet of *rotlas* and vegetables is better for health than of rice and pulses. In the course of time one comes to relish every kind of food. Did you not eat gruel in jail? Or didn't you relish *rotlas* and vegetables?

Maintain excellent health.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10492. Also C.W. 7756. Courtesy: Lalchand Jaichand Bora

114. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

November 27, 1932

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

I got your letter. I like your idea of going to Wardha. Countless people have benefited by fasting. I know, however, that you did not. I attribute that to my insufficient experience. But you can continue the *asana* exercises and other remedies. Do go to Lonavala for some time. The air and water of a place certainly have an effect on health. However, I don't wish to bother you with my suggestions just now. Do what you like, but improve your health.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 905. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

115. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

November 27, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. Those who understand the value of self-control will find nothing but interest in the experiments about diet. Who gave the news in papers that in the Ashram you have started eating food supplied to prisoners? No harm, of course, will have been done if this is true. But we take milk, ghee and many similar things. How, then, can we say that we have started eating prison food? If you have been able to trace the source of this rumour, let me know.

You are right when you complain that it is I who am the author of rigid rules and that I, too, am responsible for self-indulgent men coming to the Ashram. I have often said that all of you can oppose such persons and that you are not bound to admit anyone whose needs you cannot meet. I can merely advise. It is entirely for you all whether or not to act upon my advice. I do feel, of course, that though we follow very rigid rules in our own lives, we should be able to meet the needs of anyone who comes to the Ashram but cannot follow these rules, and be generous towards him or her.

I will keep in mind your suggestion. . . .'s[1] case is a painful one. "What then will constraint avail?"[2]

Find time and discuss about Indu[3] with Narandas.

I don't feel worried about Babu[4]. I am sure he will come round sooner or later.

At the moment I can say that both of you may come when you wish to.[5] I don't know, though, what the position will be to-morrow.

If we can fulfil any pledge, big or small, we should no doubt thank God for that.

[1] The name has been omitted.

[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 33

[3] Pupils in the Ashram school and the kindergarten, respectively

[4] *ibid*

[5] The addressee had sought permission to see Gandhiji along with her friend ushila.

Have a talk with Lakshmi. May it not be that she wishes to marry?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10312. Also C.W. 6751. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

116. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

After commencing silence, *November 27, 1932*

CHI. NARANDAS,

I send with this a letter from the school for handicapped children for the information of you all. I have written about that school before. I have happy memories of it. I would very much wish something like that to be done in the Ashram, too.[1] . . . I was half-asleep when I wrote the sentence which I have scored out. I find now that it made no sense. The love which the teachers of that school show to the pupils and their patience are worth emulating. Anybody who wants more information about the school should write to it and get it.

If you know the whereabouts of Khadagbahadursing[2], please inform me.

I hope Kusum gets the postcard which I write to her daily. I could not write yesterday.

It seems after grinding the *jowar,* the flour is not sifted. It should be enough if the *jowar* is carefully cleaned before grinding it. And the same about wheat. I suppose you get the wheat ground in a flour-mill outside. If we grind it ourselves in the Ashram we should use the flour as it is without sifting it. If these cereals are eaten with all their contents intact, they provide substances which help bowel movement. If anything is removed by sifting, many essential elements are lost.

Purushottam should not wait there till he falls ill. Wherever he goes, he is bound to get opportunities for work and service. He may certainly return when his health has improved a little and can be depended upon better. If your experiments succeed, anybody can

[1] In the source, the sentence which followed has been scored out.

[2] An Ashram inmate

come and live in the Ashram. I do feel that you will succeed.

I have already dropped a letter[1] to Bhau. I hope he sees you from time to time.

I have also written to you about Parashuram.

I am sending Madan's book[2] I forgot to send it immediately.

Tell everybody this about *takli.* If the spinning-wheel is the king, the *takli* is the queen. Without a queen, a king is no king, and without the king the queen can do nothing. It should also be realized that without a queen the royal house cannot go on. If the spinning-wheel is for thousands, the *takli* is for millions. It is surprising that, though Bhau has demonstrated the great power which the *takli* possesses, all the inmates of the Ashram do not learn to spin on it. In the past people spun even the finest yarn on the *takli.* The *takli* which they used was made of bamboo. Even today. the Brahmins in the Madras Presidency spin the very fine yarn required for the sacred thread on the *takli.* Making a spinning-wheel takes time, but a *takli* can be made anywhere. It does not get out of order and makes no noise. It is quite possible that the *takli* will one day win over the spinning-wheel. We, of course, do not wish either to lose ground to the other. On the contrary, we wish to acquire equal and great mastery over both.

If you have heard more news about Joshi, let me have it. Where does Nanibehn[3] live?

Send by registered post the receipt from the Goseva Sangh for Mahadev's signature.

I hope Kanti is all right now.

Ask Hari-ichchha to write to me.

I have not received Appasaheb's letter.

You did right in keeping back Maganbhai's and Raojibhai's letters. If you feel the slightest doubt about any letter, you should keep it back. I have no desire at all to know anything which should not be communicated to me. Any information concerning matters about which I can say or do nothing cannot be anything but a weight on my mind.

I get letters from Mirabehn regularly. She has again given up

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Bhau Panse", 27-11-1932.

[2] on fasting

[3] Wife of Pannalal Jhaveri, Manager of Ashram goshala

salt. Since Kisan has been removed to Thana, Mirabehn is once again without a companion. If we give up attachment to particular individuals as friends, all human beings, and, if we can see more truly, even animals, birds, trees, plants, even stones are our friends. The yoga of non-attachment does teach us that lesson. My weight came to 103 pounds this time.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

There are 45 letters in all, including the letter from the school for handicapped children.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8270. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

117. LETTER TO SULOCHANA A. SHAH

November 27, 1932

CHI. SULOCHANA,

You gave a good reply to Mother. If the new food does not agree with you, you should immediately complain. A thief gets into the habit of stealing. Some thieves steal because they see others doing that, and some make stealing their profession.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1746

118. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

November 27, 1932

CHI. MANI,

Today's report is better even than yesterday's. [Dahyabhai's] temperature had gone down to 97.5° and did not rise above 101.5°. He sleeps well. You should devote all your attention to your work.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

All the friends jointly bear the expenditure on account of Dahyabhai.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 94

119. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

YERAVDA MANDIR
November 27, 1932

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. You will manage if you do not work beyond your capacity. A humble servant is one who does not proclaim her service to the world and is not proud of it even in her heart. A humble servant does not seek respect from people. Rather, she takes insults, that is to say she suffers them. She does not become angry with people. A humble servant will not be a burden to anyone, because she knows that she renders service in order to make herself pure. She does not do it to oblige anyone.A humble servant will show herself as she is.

About the vows, you must read twice or thrice. If you still do not understand, you can ask. In the absence of anything specific what can I write to you?

Be careful. May God protect you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

120. LETTER TO PARVATI

November 27, 1932

CHI. PARVATI,

So at long last I have a letter from you. What way can 1 suggest? Do as Narandas advises.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33120

121. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

November 27, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your long letter. I can write only a short one. As regards going to Delhi and all other matters, do whatever Narandas suggests. You must be convinced that sick persons too can serve. I have mentioned two individuals[1] in the letter to Kusum. Read it. Give up thinking of too many matters. May God keep you safe and fulfil all your wishes to render service.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 265

122. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MANMATHA ROY [2]

[*Before November 28, 1932*][3]

I quite agree with you that no one should be treated as untouchable, and I am sure that when we have ceased to treat forty millions of Hindus as untouchables, we shall cease to treat Christians and Mussalmans as such.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 30-11-1932

123. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

November 28, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

Do you know the reasons for the changes in food which the Ashram has introduced? Observe the effect of the new diet on your body and mind and write to me about it.

Bhau says that none of you likes to spin on *takli.* You can produce a sufficient quantity of yarn and of good quality with *takli,*

[1] The available text of the letter to Kusum Gandhi, p.75, though it is on the same subject, does not contain the names. *Vide* also "Letter to Dahyabhai Patel", "Letter to Dahyabhai Patel", 27-11-1932.

[2] The addressee had asked Gandhiji whether his campaign against untouchability was universal in its application or limited to Hindu untouchables alone.

[3] The letter was published under the date-line, "Balurghat, November 28".

only if you spin on it with concentration and in silence. Bhau believes that you are not capable of either. You cannot stop talking even for a few minutes. If this is true, it is very bad. *Takli* is very much superior to the spinning-wheel in teaching us silence. You should know the full power of *takli* and must benefit from it. It is certain that a person who cannot live in solitude, remain silent or work with concentration can never be a true *brahmachari*. And all of you are *brahmacharis* at present. Discuss this with Bhau and see that every one of you does the *takli yajna*.

BAPU

[PS.]

This has been written on my silence-day morning, immediately after the prayer.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

124. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

November 28, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

I have today astounding news that a co-worker of mine, Sjt. Appasaheb Patwardhan, a civil disobedience prisoner in Ratnagiri Jail, is semi-fasting because he and some other prisoners who were permitted to do Bhangi work have been suddenly deprived of it under your orders. My fear is that this order was a result of my having said in the course of our conversations that your policy was inconsistent in that you were allowing non-Bhangi prisoners to do Bhangi work in the Ratnagiri Prison and you would not allow it in this. It is difficult for me to understand why those prisoners who volunteer to do such work should be prevented from doing it. Surely you do not want forcibly to keep up untouchability in prisons when it is crumbling to pieces outside. Appasaheb is an M.A. of the Bombay University, is a great social reformer and a man of character whom any State would be proud to have as a citizen. Service of untouchables is an article of faith with him. He underwent a fast in 1930 for the above reason in that very jail. I had even then to intervene on his behalf[1]. If I am misinformed about the present position you will let me know what it

[1] Appasaheb Patwardhan was not allowed to spin; *vide* "Letter to E.E. Doyle", 19-1-1931 and ; 20-1-1931.

really is. If I am correctly informed I would ask you in view of the circumstances brought to your notice please to telegraph instructions that my friend and his associates may be allowed to resume Bhangi work under whatever written guarantee as to its voluntary nature you may deem fit to take from them.

Though I am a prisoner, you will not expect me to see a comrade dying by inches, not for any crime, not for any indulgence he desires, but for deprivation of humanitarian service for the prosecution of which Government have recognized the necessity of giving me special facilities.

Here perhaps you would allow me to remind you that during this incarceration and the two previous ones in my own humble manner I have on several occasions helped the authorities to preserve prison discipline. I mention this fact not in order that it may be counted as a merit. I gave that assistance as a matter of duty imposed upon me by the law of satyagraha. I mention it here in order that you or the Government may know that in seeking relief about prisoner friends I am not guilty of any officious interference with the administration.

I am sure that you will treat this as a matter of urgency involving as it does the possibility of great damage being done to a fellow-being under your custody.

Yours sincerely,

Home Department, Political, File No. 31/108-Poll., 1932, pp. 11-2. Courtesy: National Archives of India

125. LETTER TO KESHAV GANDHI

November 28, 1932

CHI. KESHU,

I got the oranges, the slivers and the *takli* [sent by you]. I ate the oranges as if they had been sent by Maganlal. Vallabhbhai and Mahadev also ate some. I feel that the orange plants still require some special manure, for the oranges were not sufficiently juicy and sweet. You should also get our soil analysed to see what it lacks.

I have completely stopped spinning for the time being because of the pain in the elbow. I, therefore, cannot use the slivers and the spindle.

I will write to you when I use them. Nonetheless I had reached 54 counts with your slivers.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9469. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

126. APPEAL TO PUBLIC

November 29, 1932

I find people have now begun to come to see me merely for *darshan*, as it is called. I am sorry I had to refuse to meet some of them today.

Under the relaxation of restrictions on interviews, I may see people only in connection with *bonafide* untouchability work and no other. I would, therefore, ask all concerned to take note of the limitation, and even in connection with untouchability work only those should come who have some important work to be done or consultation to be held. The pressure on my time is already proving greater than I can cope with. Wherever possible, it would be better if a previous appointment is made.

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-11-1932

127. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

November 29, 1932

THE SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY
HOME DEPARTMENT

DEAR SIR,

I am grateful to Government for letting me meet Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj soon after his admission to this prison. The Government now know the relations that subsist between him and me. Both he and I asked the Superintendent at the interview today whether we could meet each other frequently and he told us that he had permission only for that single interview. If Sheth Jamnalal had not been suffering from a bad disease, and without the cause to be just mentioned, I should have been satisfied with an occasional interview like the one I had today. But seeing that he has been specially brought to Yeravda for the sake of his health, it would be putting an undue strain on both

of us if we were not allowed to see each other frequently, of course subject to restrictions as to conversation. I have no desire to hold any political conversation with him. But I shouldwant to discuss with him problems of untouchability, as he was Chairman of the Anti-Untouchability Board appointed by the Congress in 1929 and he had specialized on the question of temple-entry, having himself been instrumental in opening to the Harijans his own family temple and in having a number of other temples opened in many parts of India.

His special medical adviser Dr. Modi has advised distraction from brooding over his illness. For him to be interested in the untouchability problem would be itself like a tonic. Indeed he was tempted to discuss the problem today, but it was impossible for me to do within the limited time allowed for the interview.

Alike therefore for the sake of his health and of the work for which the Government of India have given me facilities, I request permission to have frequent interviews with Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj subject to the restrictions as aforesaid.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(2), Pt. I, p. 399; also G.N. 3871

128. LETTER TO A BENGALI YOUTH[1]

November 29, 1932

You should make a fixed resolution to be good. Always pray to God to make you good and you will be good.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 291

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's which read: "I am neck-deep in sin. My passion is roused on seeing women and I have also got into the habit of stealing. Save me."

129. A LETTER[1]

November 29, 1932

There is no institution but has some evil attaching to it. But my opinion is that in spite of the undeniable evil attaching to the temples, the millions who visit them are unaffected by the evil and derive the comfort they need from them.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 291

130. LETTER TO A SINDHI DOCTOR[2]

November 29, 1932

We must differ as to the interpretation of the *Gita.* You cannot keep your cake and eat it at the same time. *Gita* or no *Gita,* if you must have secret remedies not for the benefit of humanity but for your own pocket, there is no surrender to God, or reducing yourself to zero. Look at the Bhangis, how they eke out their living by doing unclean work for the community. If you will reduce yourself to nothing you have to do voluntarily and joyously the kind of service that the Bhangis do and at the same time give the poor and the afflicted the benefit of your medical knowledge free of charge. Do not call this impractical because many have been able to do it successfully.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 291-2

131. LETTER TO VASANTRAM SHASTRI

November 29, 1932

Somebody sent me a copy of your pamphlet[3]. I went through parts of it. I never thought even in my dreams that you could write and tell such lies. What you are doing will not harm me, but don't you think, it harms Vaishnava dharma?

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 291

[1] The addressee had raised the question of the impurity of temples.

[2] The letter was in reply to the addressee's which read: "How can I surrender myself to God? I have to keep my remedies secret and if I do not I will lose my income."

[3] *Sathina Sath Sutro* ('Sixty maxims from a Sexagenarian', suggesting that Gandhiji had become senile.)

132. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

November 29, 1932

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Your letter. What can I write to you? I am tired of writing to you over and over again. My letters do not reach you at all; hence how long can I go on writing? Why should you take it to heart if you do not get the letters I write from this end? Why can't you be confident in the belief that I can never forget you or keep you without a letter? You regularly received letters from me when you were outside, there is no reason to suppose that I no longer write to you. So forget your anguish and console yourself by imagining our predicament if we were not allowed to write at all.

One's true support is not mother, father or anyone else but God alone.

I am keeping good health. My weight is 103 lb. and I take milk, bread and vegetables. The milk intake is about 21_ pounds.

Vallabhbhai and Mahadev too are keeping well. Jayaprakash is all right and has excellent company. I hope that this reaches you and that on getting this you will write whatever you wish to.

Blessings from

BAPU

PRABHAVATI DEVI
A CLASS PRISONER, CENTRAL JAIL, LUCKNOW

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3426

133. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

November 29, 1932

BHAI KRISHNACHANDRA,

I did receive your letter and sent a brief reply. You will get it now if you have not already received it. Make an effort to find the answers to your doubts from my letters.[1] You cannot have satisfaction by merely addressing every doubt to me, you must try to own heart. I suppose you are aware that I have no time left over from my work for Harijans.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4265

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Krishnachandra", 10-10-1932 ; 19-10-1932 and 31-10-1932.

134. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

November 30, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

I thank you for your prompt reply to my letter[1] regarding Appasaheb Patwardhan, but I am sorry for the attitude you have taken up. Since the matter has gone up to the Government, I would like to draw their attention to the following facts:

1. Appasaheb Patwardhan is wedded to the idea that he should work side by side with Bhangis and it is most repugnant to him to have to observe in prisons untouchability which he does not do outside.

2. He had to fast in 1930 for this very reason.

3. I must adhere to my statement that Appasaheb Patwardhan had been actually doing Bhangi work in the Ratnagiri Jail, until he was stopped.

4. *There was no question of his issuing any threat* and, in my humble opinion, statement of his moral claim and consequence of rejection of that claim should not be considered as a threat.

5. *In considering a moral or religious question,* the question of shortage of labour does not arise.

6. In my opinion it is unjust to say of an absolutely docile prisoner like Appasaheb Patwardhan who has been always prepared to do any task asked of him that he is fighting for"a particular variety of work". He wants to do Bhangi work in addition to whatever task may be given to him.

7. There are many prisoners in Yeravda, *including us three,* who are anxious to do their own conservancy work, and it is because you have not looked upon it with favour that I have myself remained silent and with difficulty prevented my co-workers from making it an issue of conscience.

8. As you are yourself aware of the conversation about this matter and about hand-spinning by civil disobedience prisoners has remained in abeyance because of the more important matters arising, and absorbing my time and attention. But these two are matters of deepest importance to many of us.

9. With due deference I cannot help repeating that to prevent

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E.E. Doyle", 28-11-1932.

Appasaheb Patwardhan from voluntarily working side by side with his Bhangi co-prisoners because he does not belong to the Bhangi caste is a perpetuation in prisons of the bar of untouchability when that bar is being swiftly removed outside prison walls.

I would therefore implore you personally to revise the uncompromising attitude you have taken up and to let humble Appasaheb Patwardhan and his associates do conservancy work. Believe me that there is no defiance in their request. Some of us who are convinced civil resisters leave our resistance outside prison walls and having entered them are anxious to carry out and promote prison discipline to the utmost extent that our conscience would allow and we do so in order to show that our resistance is always civil and never incivil or criminal.

But if I cannot make you or Government appreciate this obvious and just position, I have with the utmost regret to inform you that from Saturday the 3rd proximo, so far as I am concerned, I must join Appasaheb in his protest and respectfully claim to do my own conservancy work, *and if he does not get the relief, I must put myself not on reduced rations but on a complete fast.* I would ask you not to treat this as a threat, but as a human being to appreciate the feelings of a fellow-being. I have already hardened my heart, but I have not hardened it so as to see an honourable colleague wasting away in defence of a cherished principle without my at least sharing his agony and sacrifice. Believe me it is no pleasure to me to have to write such letters.

Yours sincerely,

Home Department, Political, File No. 31/108-Poll., 1932, pp.16-7. Courtesy: National Archives of India

135. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

November 30, 1932

MY DEAR MARY,

You have asked for only a postcard, but that won't be adequate for me. Because I do not find a particular thing helpful for me, I may not be indifferent about others and not take the trouble of knowing whether it is helpful for them. I know that that particular form of idolatry is helpful for millions, not because they are lessdeveloped than I am, but because they are differently constituted. What must not be forgotten about me is that not only do I not consider idol-worship

to be a sin, but I know that in some form or other it is a condition of our being. The difference between one form of worship and another is a difference in degree and not in kind. Mosque-going or chruch-going is a form of idol-worship. Veneration of the Bible, the Koran, the *Gita* and the like is idol-worship and even if you don't use a book or a building but draw a picture of divinity in your imagi-nation and attribute certain qualities, it is again idol-worship and I refuse to call the worship of the one who has a stone image a grosser form of worship. Learned judges have been known to have such images in their own homes. A philosopher like Pandit Malaviya will not eat his meal without offering worship to the household deity. It would be both arrogant and ignorant to look down upon such worship as superstition. Again in the imagination of the worshipper, God is in a consecrated stone and not in the other stones lying about him. Even so, the sanctuary in a Church is more sacred than any other place in it. You can multiply for yourself instances of this character. All this is a plea not for laxity in thought or worship, but it is a plea for a definite recognition of the fact that all forms of honest worship are equally good and equally efficient for the respective worshippers. Time is gone for the exclusive possession of right by an individual or a group. God is no respector of forms or words, for He is able to penetrate our actions and our speech and read and understand our thoughts, even when we do not understand them ourselves and it is first our thoughts that matter to him.

I am glad you are with Maria and your picture of her family which includes our four-footed kinsfolk is instructive and it is just like her. I do not mind her not writing to me. Whilst I welcome her letters when she has anything to say to me, I do not want her to steal a single minute merely for writing to me because somebody else is writing.

I am glad you have fourteen months' grace. I like your programme. So far as I recall you have not been to Santiniketan. You ought to go there at least. I do not want to harness you for untouchability work before you have gone through your touring. Untouchability work is a long programme and you can be fitted in whenever you are quite ready and you have a definite call from within. I would like you also quietly to study this movement in all its ramifications and assimilate the spirit lying behind it, and if you give yourself to it I want you to do it with your whole heart without any mental reservation. I want you therefore not to hesitate to place all your doubts before me and offer yourself for the service when both your head and heart are

completely satisfied. Of course in connection with the untouchability work you can see me any time you like.

Please share this with Maria. My love to both of you in which Mahadev joins.

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this.

From a photostat: G.N. 5986. Also C.W. 3313. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

136. LETTER TO CHITTOOR RAJAGOPALACHARI

November 30, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. Your suggestion puts the movement in a different frame from what I conceived. Untouchability is an evil of caste Hindus' creation. They have, therefore, to remove the evil and everything else will follow from it. The purification of Harijans—if 'purification' is the word that can be used in this connection—will follow removal of untouchability. It must not be a condition precedent for removal. But whilst I would not like to identify myself with a movement such as you suggest, you are free to take it up and it will be a step in advance, if Harijans are admitted after going through the ceremonies prescribed by you. Of course I remember our meetings and etc., etc.

In whatever you do, please confer with your namesake.[1]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
CHITTOOR

The Hindu, 21-1-1933

[1] The addressee, in his appeal to C. Rajagopalachari, had said: "I put it to Mahatma Gandhi that this authorized method of *samskaras* and temple-entry thereafter will 'scientifically and automatically lift the status of the Harijans. . . .' "

137. LETTER TO T. CHINNIAH[1]

November 30, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is my firm opinion that the Yeravda Pact is much better than the Premier's decision. It gives many more seats than the Premier's decision and it provides against the election of any candidate who is not in the first place approved by the majority of Harijans. So far as the vow is concerned, I suppose I must be allowed to judge whether it was broken or kept. I am certainly not in favour of special electorates for merchants, landlords and others.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. CHINNIAH, S.M.P.S.
9 SARASWATHI VILLAS
PONNANGI STREET
NUNGAMBAKKAM
MADRAS

From the original: C.W. 5071

138. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

November 30, 1932

CHI. MANIBEHN,

I enclose Dr. Kanuga's letter received today. You will see from it that there is no cause for anxiety about Dahyabhai. The fever may persist for a few days more but that does not matter. We three are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 95

139. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 30, 1932

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

You have done well in sending the plan of the workers' houses. The whole scheme is indeed very good. I am sure there will be some conditions attached to the occupation of these houses. For if there is

[1] Convener of All-India Adi-Dravida Mahajana Sabha

no restriction on the number of persons staying, the best-built houses will become like slums. If there are any documents bearing on the workers' houses please let me have them.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI
MIRZAPUR
AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 32834

140. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

November 1932

CHI. PANDITJI,

The Bavas have proved quite a challenge for us. You did right in going. That temple also will be opened to Harijans one day. However much disheartened you may feel by the atmosphere in the surrounding villages, you should continue to visit them. Love will melt all knots.\

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 238. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

141. TELEGRAM TO U. GOPALA MENON

[*December 1, 1932*][1]

YOUR WIRE. GLAD REFERENDUM BEING TAKEN METHODICALLY. HOPE THOSE WHO VOTE WILL HAVE THE ISSUE CLEAR BEFORE THEM.

The Hindu, 6-12-1932

[1] From "Diary, 1932", entry under this date

142. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 30/ December 1, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I hope you read the slips to Radha and Kusum which I sent in today's mail. Call both of them and ask them everything, and then literally follow the advice of the doctor whom you have consulted. Both you and I can then stop worrying. We are not masters of life or death, nor are doctors, but we can try. We may try as our reason guides us and then be unconcerned.

It is nothing but God's kindness that . . .[1] left. You had actually sanctioned him leave, and it was pure chance that youdetained him afterwards for some days. It was as though God had willed that he should be tested. Such things have often happened in the history of the Ashram. Evil got exposed of itself.

I indeed wish to write at great length about food, but I don't think I shall be able to do that. I shall have to be brief. It is not right to serve *rotlas* of *bajri* every day. If *rotlas* of *bajri* and *jowar* and *rotlis* of wheat are served by turn, the inmates would get the benefit of all the three cereals. Every time the grain taken out for consumption should be weighed and the *rotlas* also should be of uniform weight. What the weight of each *rotla* should be, you will be able to decide only through experience. If you follow this practice, everyone will be able to know how much he should eat. Here the smallest *rotla* weighs six ounces. If people wish to derive the full benefit from the morning gruel, they should eat nothing else with it. The quantity of flour in the gruel should be measured. If the quantity of water also is measured, it will be easy to know how much flour each helping contained. If a person is not satisfied with one helping, he may by all means have another, but nobody should exceed the limit that he has fixed for himself. He may eat less sometimes if he has not enough appetite. But he should not exceed the fixed limit even if he feels more hungry than usual. This will do him no harm.

If the grain is properly cleaned before being ground, the flour

[1] The name has been omitted.

of every cereal should be used without sifting. I approve of Dr. Talwalkar's suggestion for increasing the quantity of milk and ghee, but not at all of his suggestion for including chutney. Even those who eat chutney suffer from constipation. If you wish, you may make this experiment. You may prepare chutney for those who suffer from rather severe constipation. Let them try it. If the effect on them is undoubtedly beneficial, you may try it, if you wish, for others. In preparing the chutney, you should use black pepper instead of chillies. Read the letter which I shall write to Dr. Talwalkar about this. My own experience of chutney is not encouraging. Before I went to England, I may say that I used to eat pepper and chillies in fairly good quantities. At that time good food was my chief interest in life. In England, we get extract of chillies. I must have eaten it for about a month. I had to suffer for that. Afterwards, that is, in about a month or so, the pattern of my life changed and I left off eating spices, never to eat them again. Since then I have experimented on hundreds of persons, but I do not remember any case in which spices were used as a medicine with beneficial effect. Personally I am convinced that constpation is a sign of indigestion. Food which is digested does not cause constipation. All food leaves some residue and, if it is properly digested, the bowels throw them out. However, I don't press you to follow my advice. It is well-known that spices are inimical to physical celibacy. For that reason, too, we should think a hundred times before including spices in our food. We may certainly serve any spices purely as medicine for a limited period. It is possible that, so long as they act as medicine, they may not endanger celibacy. For instance, if a person feels extremely cold, pure brandy will make him warm but will not intoxicate him, for the power of the brandy will have been used up in overcoming the cold. I think I have dwelt long enough on chutney. Dr.Talwalkar's suggestion about including ground-nut should not be acted upon in any circumstances. I have experimented with ground-nut more than anybody else is likely to have done. It has been tried for a long time even in the Ashram. On the whole the result was discouraging. In the current experiment, you seem to have excluded dal altogether. It is all right if the effect has been good. For checking the effect, you should get everybody weighed, and should know from each person how he or she feels. It is for you to judge

whether you can cope with all this work. If you do not get the fullest co-operation of most of the inmates for this experiment, you would do better to abandon it. If all of them co-operate, probably you will not feel it as a burden.

I should be happy if you can solve the problem of Ramji.

About other things, I will write in the weekly letter on Monday. Every inmate of the Ashram should understand one thing, namely, that he should eat or munch nothing between the three meals which are served. If anybody does so, even cuts a green tamarind or plucks any *bhaji* from the beds to eat, he will have violated the vow of non-stealing and jeopardized the success of the experiment.

December 1, 1932

Give Dr. Talwalkar's letter to him after reading it and only if you approve of it.

I send with this a cutting about the primus stove. Ask everybody to read it. Isn't Keshu keeping good health?

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U./I. Also C.W. 8271. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

143. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised *December 1, 1932*

CHI. MIRA,

Again this is Thursday morning before 4 o'clock. Mahadev is taking his time so as not to hurry you.[1] I should never have taken you to be 40 unless someone had told me so. Let us hope you are at least 40 times as wise as you were when you were a baby one year old and if we increase in wisdom moment by moment then the increase becomes incalculable if not infinite. May the increase in yours be infinite!

For your health, I have shared with you the new knowledge I have gained. You will now find out what is good for you. Add to your food some salad, lettuce, ripe tomatoes or tender leaves of some *bhaji*. It is undoubtedly good for the bowels. But you should know best what is good for you.

Verrier[2] came back about a month ago. He sees nobody and has given himself exclusively to good work. He is, I believe, quite well. Shamrao[3] is ailing and had to go to a hospital.

Tilakam[4] is at the Ashram. He is not quite strong. I have told him he can take up untouchability work whenever he likes. His desire is to work among the Christian untouchables.

Your time-table *reads* crowded. You should have more relaxation than you have given yourself. I do not think you should be rigid with yourself. There should be a feeling not of perpetual fatigue but of freshness. Are you giving yourself ample sleep? There should be no brooding.

For me, I have to report an extraordinary result. From 103 I have jumped to 106 lb. Dried milk continues. But there is not a corresponding increase in energy or a decrease in the pain in the elbows. Even the absence of spinning has yet made no difference. Therefore addition of weight may not be an unmixed blessing. I am carefully watching this sudden development.

[1] I n *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, Mirabehn explains: "Not to hurry Bapu's Letter to me."

[2] Verrier Elwin

[3] Shamrao Hivale, a close friend of Verrier Elwin

[4] An Ashram inmate

All my reading is suspended. Nothing but correspondence and interviews. Ba has gone to the South taking Velabehn[1] and Bal[2] with her. Urmila Devi has also been sent there. There is no doubt that Hindus have never thought about their religion so much as they are now doing.

I must stop now. It is past 5.30 a.m. I must go to the 'library' and then to the walk.

Love from us all.

BAPU

[PS.]

Hope you have received the book on Buddhism.

From the original: C.W. 6252. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9718

144. LETTER TO NANALAL K. JASANI

December 1, 1932

BHAI NANALAL[3],

I have received the Government's permission today to see you. I had sent the following names:

Manekbai Mehta[4]	Nanalalbhai
Chhaganlal Mehta[5]	Ratubhai Sheth[9]
Lilavati Mehta[6]	Manilal Revashankar[10]
Manjula[7]	Ratilal Desai[11]
Mayashankar[8]	Jayakunvar Doctor[12]
	Chhotalal Shah

[1] Wife of Lakshmidas Asar
[2] Bal Kalelkar, son of D. B. Kalelkar
[3] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's business partner and manager
[4] Dr. Mehta's wife
[5] Dr. Mehta's eldest son
[6] Chhaganlal's wife
[7] Wife of Maganlal, Dr. Mehta's youngest son
[8] Dr. Mehta's business partner
[9] Lilavati's father
[10] Dr. Mehta's nephew
[11] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's Mehta's son-in law
[12] Dr. Mehta's daughter
[13] Wife of Ratilal, Dr. Mehta's second son
[14] Champa's father

It was not necessary to send the names of Champa[13], Ratilal and Prabhashankar[14], since they had already been approved. You may consider now whether you will come first or after Chhaganlal and Maganlal have seen me. If you have not already started in reply to my wire, kindly spare me as much as you can, as you know how busy I am these days in Harijan work. However, you need not spare me in respect of any matter for which my advice is essential.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9470

145. LETTER TO BECHARDAS J. DOSHI

December 1, 1932

BHAI BECHARDAS,

I got your postcard. I cannot write more about Punjabhai than I have already done. You must have seen what I wrote.[1] You can use it. I had got the books sent by you, except *Sanmati-prakaran*. I hope your health is improving. There is no change in the condition of my elbow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1343

146. LETTER TO SHAMJI MARWADI

December 1, 1932

BHAI SHYAMJI,

I got your letter and the copies of replies received by you. Send a copy also of the final reply that you receive.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5207

[1] *Vide* "Long Live Punjabhai !", 23-10-1932.

147. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 2, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

There can be only one explanation for Bhau getting fever, namely, that he must have started eating cereals too early. If my guess is correct, he should very strictly refrain from cereals for about a month. That is, he should only drink milk and eat fruit and vegetables. Among vegetables, he should eat only greens and not roots and tubers. He should start eating cereals only when he passes stool without difficulty. A person who knows how to resume eating grad-ually after a seven-day fast will never get fever.

Madan's book had been misplaced and I could not find it till today. I am now sending it by registered book-post. Bhau should read most of it carefully, but chiefly the explanation on pages 149 and 173 of the method of ending a fast. It is an extremely easy book to read and he will be able to finish it in a short time. I am sure you also will read it. The person who has sent the book about Zanzibar has written something with pencil on the inside of the cover. It is worth reading to understand his faith and love.

I hope Kusum and Radha are all right now. I hope I shall get news about Puratan Buch in your next letter. How did Jamna get an attack of asthma so suddenly?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U./ I. Also C.W. 8272. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

148. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAJAJ

December 2, 1932

CHI. RUKMINI,

You write regularly now. You will see that you will not be tempted any more to postpone writing through lethargy, nor will you forget. You are ill there and Radha is ill in the Ashram. We should be cheerful even in illness. We should learn to welcome any condition that God ordains for us. We should exercise as much self-control as we can and leave the rest to God. Observe this one rule that you

should not exert yourself so long as you continue to get fever. How is the ventilation in the house? Chhaganlal will now be brought to me to help me. . . .[1] is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9147

149. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

December 2, 1932

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have not written to you recently because you are receving all the news as Satisbabu is here. I continue to receive news of you. I have explained to Satisbabu regarding those localities. Your work[2] is very much to my liking.

You have raised a pertinent question about the Ashram and the answer is a simple one. If we wish to run the Ashram only through disciplined men and women, we must admit only those who are willing to exercise self-control. They will come with full under-standing of the rules and willingness to abide by them. We cannot impose our rules on those who come simply for earning a living. Their status is only that of employees. But we must not treat them as employees. We must regard them as our companions and keep them as long as they perform their duties conscientiously. The problem is that even those who come with the intention of observing regulations turn slack. Discrimination is essential on such occasions. In the name of God and by His Grace we must do all, we can.

Do you follow all this? If not, ask me again.

No time to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1693

[1] A word is scored out, probably by the jail authorities.

[2] The addressee was working among the Harijans.

150. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

December 2, 1932

BELOVED DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

I was glad to see a letter from you after a long interval. Father had told me that you had gone to Ahmedabad. We should be equal-minded towards both joy and sorrow. We should regard illness, too, as a gift from God. I wrote[1] to Dr. Alam that I had among my correspondents three who wrote to me in Urdu: Zohra, Begum Alam and Raihana. The first two write Urdu like copper-plate, but Raihana, being a poet, writes in beautiful handwriting of her own. But I see that this time you also have sent copper-plate.

Have you ceased to be my poetess daughter now? Is it only a Rabindranath who can both be a poet and write copper-plate, or will Raihana also follow his example now? May God give you peace of mind.

A thousand Blessings from

BAPU

BIBI RAIHANA
C/O D. D. NANAVATI, ESQ., I.C.S.
POONA

From a photostat of the Urdu: S.N. 9665

151. INTERVIEW TO DEPRESSED CLASSES LEADERS[2]

[*December 2, 1932*][3]

Mr. Gandhi heartily welcomed them. They told Mr. Gandhi that the movement for temple-entry was making slow progress in Ahmedabad; only two temples having been so far thrown open to them. Mr. Gandhi admitted that he knew about it, and advised them to see what the local Anti-Untouchability League could do in the matter. Mr. Gandhi added that his efforts were, however, directed to that end, as he regarded temple-entry as essential for the removal of untouchability.

The interviewers agreed with the view, already expressed by Mr. Gandhi, that untouchability should be abolished by law. They also expressed satisfaction at their

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Mohammad Alam", 26-11-1932.
[2] Kikabhai, Dudhabhai, Lavjibhai and three others
[3] From "Diary, 1932", entry under this date

having secured Mr. Birla as the President of the Anti-Untouchability League, through the influence of Mr. Gandhi.

In conclusion, the interviewers requested Mr. Gandhi to contribute articles on the uplift of the Depressed Classes in the vernacular magazine *Vijay* which they had recently started. Mr. Gandhi said that he was getting a copy of that magazine, and promised to contribute articles to it.

One of the interviewers drew a sketch of Mr. Gandhi while the interview was going on, and asked Mr. Gandhi to sign it. Mr. Gandhi refused to do so, saying that it was against the rules of the jail.

The Hindu, 6-12-1932

152. TELEGRAM TO K. MADHAVAN NAIR[1]

[*December 3, 1932*][2]

YOUR TELEGRAM. MAY GOD REVEAL TRUTH.

GANDHI

The Hindu, 7-12-1932

153. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

December 3, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

At about 7.15 this morning Major Mehta handed me the following message:

> Mr. Gandhi may be allowed to do his own conservancy work if he wants to. But he should be informed that Government cannot accept his intervention on behalf of convict Appasaheb Patwardhan.

It seems to me that Government have not appreciated the position. The permission to me to do my own conservancy work is of little moment. Relief for Appasaheb Patwardhan is the chief and central thing. My fast began this morning as per my letter[3] to you and, I am sorry to say, has to continue till relief is granted to Appasaheb Patwardhan and his associates. It should be understood that they have

[1] The addressee had sought Gandhiji's blessings in a telegram informing him that anti-untouchability campaign had been started in Guruvayur at a conference opened by Kasturba.

[2] From "Diary, 1932", entry under this date

[3] *Vide* "Letter to E.E. Doyle", 30-11-1932.

asked not for doing their own conservancy work, but for joining the regular file and this they have done as a matter of sacred principle. Government should also know that it is not Bhangis alone who are given this work but others described as low castes are compelled to render this service although they have never done it outside prisons. Reformers like Appasaheb Patwardhan who were civil disobedience prisoners in 1930 in Ratnagiri could not suffer the misery of non-Bhangi prisoners being forced against their will to do the work and submitted to the authorities that they should be allowed to replace such men. This was, in my opinion, a laudable offer which the authorities should have gladly, if not thankfully, accepted. It was a voluntary offer made to help the Government. Meanwhile the Delhi Pact[1] came. The same offer was renewed this time and these prisoners were permitted to do the work. Suddenly orders seem to have been sent to prohibit the work. Hence Appasaheb Patwardhan's putting himself on reduced diet. I ventured to seek relief as soon as I came to know of this tragedy.

In rejecting my humble and helpful intervention, Government seem to have suddenly reversed the policy which they adopted as early as 1922-23 in connection with me and have continued ever since. When during my first incarceration in 1922—and that as a convict—I sought to intervene on behalf of two hunger-striking prisoners, it was at first resented and then on reconsideration the Government accepted it.[2] The then Inspector-General of Police who was deputed by His Excellency, Sir George Lloyd, to carry on negotiations with me and the Superintendent of this Prison thanked me for the happy result of the intervention. Two precious lives were saved and a beneficial circular was issued by the Government as a result of my humble effort. In 1930 under similar circumstances the new Superintendent, who knew little or nothing of the event just described of 1922-23 disliked my offer, but subsequently it was accepted by you yourself again with happy result and the practice was then established of my being allowed to see fellow-prisoners for the definite purpose of my being able to render the humble office of intermediary between them and the administration. That practice has been continued up to now, not I hope with any unhappy result. Each time I have intervened, I hope the officials concerned will testify, I have done

[1] Gandhi-Irwin Agreement of 1931.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 9-7-1923.

so in a helpful manner. It is, therefore, difficult for me to understand the Government without any apparent cause reversing this policy, and that too just when I have been obliged most reluctantly to embark upon a fast. I must regretfully adhere to the fast until relief is given to my friends and the human right of intervention that the Government have hitherto recognized is restored to me.

There is one thing I should mention. I am carrying on concentrated conversations about untouchability from day to day with many friends who come to see me. Just at present the strain is greater than usual because of the members of the Anti-Untouchability League being in Poona. The visitors are bound to notice the weakness that must overtake me even today and they are bound to inquire about the reason. I shall be unable to conceal the truth from them and yet I have no desire whatsoever that they should know anything about the unfortunate *contretemps* between Government and myself. For I am hoping that the Government will recognize the utter reasonableness of my request.

Yours sincerely,

Home Department, Political, File No. 31/108-Poll., 1932, pp. 40-2. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also G.N. 3872

154. LETTER TO G. N. KANITKAR[1]

December 3, 1932

You say Harijans should be allowed to enter temples, because all have broken the Shastras. This is an immoral attitude. If in 99 cases we have broken the Shastras that is no reason for breaking them in the 100th case. That is no reform but deform. My point is that not to allow Harijans to enter temples is wrong and against religion. This is a religious movement for elevation of religion.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 302

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's which read: "The Shastris have very often violated the Shastras. Why should they then stick to their word in this case?"

155. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL[1]

December 3, 1932

Whatever one has learnt about dharma is tested only at a time like this. If what we have read and thought does not help us in any way, we should take it that we have learnt nothing. If a doctor or a lawyer is well read in his subject and discourses learnedly on it but cannot handle even one case, he is a doctor or a lawyer only in name. Similarly, a man may be a great authority on religion but if his knowledge of dharma is confined to what he has read in books or remains only in his mind, he is a dharma pundit only in name.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 302

156. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 3, 1932

CHI. TARAMATI,

I have your letter. A habit of many years cannot be easily shed. After a couple of letters the hesitation will go and you will find it hard to write 'he' instead of 'Mathuradas'.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Mahadev Desai refers to the addressee as Mani, in the third person singular, from which it appears that the letter was addressed to Manibehn Patel who was young enough to be so addressed by him.

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to kurur Nilkantan Nambudiripad", 5-1-1933.

157. LETTER TO DILIP MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

December 3, 1932

CHI. DILIP,

The 7th is your birthday. You have the blessings of all of us. May God grant you a long life and may you grow into pure-hearted worker. You have not been writing to me of late. Do write now.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
21 MINT ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

158. INTERVIEW TO FREE FRESS

[*December 3, 1932*][1]

I have never said that I will not concentrate all my energy on that service [emancipation of the Harijans], but I cannot previously bind myself not to do anything else. Circumstances may compel me to do things, which it would be sinful on my part not to do.

Replying to a question as to why he should not carry on the Anti- Untouchability propaganda from outside as he is doing it from the prison now, he said:

I am doing nothing but concentrating the whole of my energy on the Harijans now.

Q. As you attach a great importance to fast, would you advise others to carry on the campaign by the same methods?

A. Fasting is a very special method and nobody can fast unless there is a definite special call for him to do so. Therefore there should be no fast in imitation, and I would be so presumtuous as to say that if anybody wants to fast in connection with untouchability out of sympathy he or she should refer to me and obtain my consent before so doing. But I can say that on that single issue of Guruvayur, none but Kelappan and I should fast. But everybody can and should carry on

[1] From "Diary, 1932", entry under this date

the campaign in hundreds of other ways which are open to all because the methods of service are so many and varied.

Q. Having dedicated yourself to the Harijans, does not your life belong to them now?

A. To say that my life belongs to Harijans is only half truth. The whole truth is that my life belongs to God and therefore it belongs to the Harijans and, for that matter, the whole of creation, and it is God who can keep me, or can take me away.

Questioned if, when fighting the untouchability battle, he should fritter away his energy on other issues by fasting, Mahatmaji said:

This was also along the same lines. There was therefore no question of frittering away any energy.

It will be a year now, since the campaign was launched.[1] What should be our next step? Would you give any message for the New Year?

A. That question is outside the scope of permission granted to me.[2]

The Hindustan Times, 7-12-1932

159. STATEMENT ON FAST TO ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY COMMITTEE[3]

December 4, 1932

Although the Inspector-General gave me permission to say whatever I liked about the origin of the fast and what passed between Government and myself I do not want to take full advantage of the liberty he has given me. I shall only give you the substance of what happened so that you can be at ease and my position may not be misunderstood. The fast which commenced yesterday, was, you will be glad to know, broken just before I came here. Mine is a peculiar position. Though I have hardened my heart there are things about which I have an exceedingly sensitive nature. To me there is no difference of degree in matters of moment and as I am capable of giving my life for a great cause I am equally capable of laying down my life for the life of a comrade.

[1] The reference is to the resumption of the civil disobedience movement;

[2] *Vide* also Appendix "Discussion with Free Press Representative".

[3] Members of the Committee met him at 1 p.m. He was lying in bed and spoke in a low voice.

Now in the present case, the question before me was one of choice either to allow a dear comrade to die and myself live unconcerned or in an attempt to save his life put mine in jeopardy. Appasaheb Patwardhan, who is a prisoner in Ratnagiri Jail is an incorruptible man and a dear comrade whom I know to be cent per cent honest. I came to know through regular channels that Appasaheb had to put himself on the lowest diet consistent with bare existence for the service of untouchables which he wanted to do and which he was not permitted to do. I wrote to Government[1] in mildest language possible that if relief was not given to Appasaheb, I would have to go through the same agony and sacrifice as he was undergoing. He was and is going through slow death. I said I should have to fast. If I de-serted him I would be capable of deserting the Harijans, and a man who deserts his comrades is not worth much. I had necessarily to give short notice because there was no choice for me.

Although I know that Appasaheb is a man of iron nerves, I could imagine what agonies a man on reduced rations would be going through and so I could not help giving short notice. I am glad to say that circumstances have arisen enabling me to break my fast though it does not mean that the chapter is closed. The Inspector-General of Prisons who was here is conferring with Government and pending Government's decision, which he hopes to get from Government on or before Wednesday morning, the fast stands suspended. But I have hopes I will not have to resume it. So far as my physical well-being is concerned I may say that I could not be better looked after than here and no one should run away with the idea that Government are not at all concerned about my life or they would like me to die in jail. They honestly want to see me discharged, if I am to be discharged at all, in full possession of health, that is to say, consistently with my age. In the present case I had asked for very little but perhaps Government thought it was too much; but I think they will now understand the delicate position and grant the relief which is sought for.[2] There are other matters also regarding the fast, but I do not like to go into them. It will certainly be very good if the Government publishes the correspondence I had with it. But I leave it to the Government.

I hope what I told you is enough to give an assurance that I have not acted stupidly or hurriedly or unwisely. Knowing me as you do,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. E. Doyle", 30-11-1932.

[2] What follows has been translated from *Mahadevbhaini Diary*,.

you would wish me to act in the same manner should a similar occasion arise again. So far as I am concerned I should lose all my self-esteem and consider myself a despicable creature if I did not do all I was capable of doing in the contingency. For a man like me, who may not commit violence and who has taken a vow to observe non-violence in thought, word and deed, has self-sacrifice as a last resort. I depend on wisdom given by God to a small man like me and the weapon that I possess is readiness to fling away my life when there is a desperate cause. In this way my life is based on many such fasts. This is the highest form of prayer. The world has known it recently but I knew it for many years. It is not a thoughtless action. In it there is no coercion on others. It does bring pressure on individuals and the Government but is no more than the natural and moral outcome of self-sacrifice. It shakes and awakes the slumbering soul and impels a loving heart to action. The person, who has to introduce basic reforms in man, social conditions and atmosphere, has to create fermentation in the public. It cannot be brought about without causing a shake up in the society. There are only two ways of doing this—violence and non-violence. Violence affects the body and degrades both the person who commits it and the person who is the object of it. But in fasting the person suffers himself and the pressure brought about is of quite different kind. It does not affect the body of the person at whom it is directed but strengthens his morale or nature. I hope what I have told you is enough. Who knows I may have to go through a series of fasts and die by inches. But if that does happen I want you to feel proud of my action and not feel that it was the action of an imbecile. My life is largely governed by reason and, when it fails, it is governed by a superior force, that is, faith.

The Times of India, 5-12-1932, and *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, pp. 470-1

160. TELEGRAM TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

December 4, 1932

BRIJKRISHNA
CARE MOHUR
DELHI
FAST BROKEN. NO CAUSE ANXIETY. SEE STATEMENT.[1]

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2395

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

161. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

December 4, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

I am writing this after having taken my silence.

It is better to put down in writing what I have understood to be the position.

The fast remains suspended till Wednesday morning so as to give the Government time to come to a final decision.

The fast is not to be resumed if the Government give permission to Appasaheb Patwardhan and his associates to do conservancy work in common with the regular file, it being considered sufficient even if permission is restricted to such service in the yard they occupy.

The larger question of such permission being given to volunteers to be settled as soon as possible.

By the breaking of the fast today I do not give up the human right of intervention on behalf of fellow-prisoners. The Government have called my assistance intervention. I do not regard it as such. All my previous interventions[1] have been helpful as I believe Majors Jones, Martin, Bhandari and perhaps you could testify.

I enclose herewith a letter to be sent to Appasaheb Patwardhan. I am most anxious to know how he is faring.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Home Department, Political, File No. 31/108-Poll., p. 21, 1932. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(6), p. 121

162. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

December 4, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

Many thanks for your note.[2]

I did say during the morning conversation that the present practice of employing the so-called low-caste prisoners could not be suddenly changed and that therefore there was all the greater reason

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. E. Doyle",3-12-1932.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from E.e. Doyle".

why real volunteers should be encouraged for conservancy work whenever they make the offer spontaneously. I recognize too that the experiment can only be made cautiously till the barrier between high and low is broken down.

After I made the statement[1] about the fast, the committee released me from the task of a discussion on untouchability.

Thanks for sending the letter to Appasaheb.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Home Department, Political, File No. 31/108-Poll., p. 23, 1932. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(6), p. 125

163. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

December 4, 1932

CHI. MANILAL,

You will find with this a letter from Pragji. I hope you were not upset by my short fast. A fast by me has become a common occurrence and so nobody should get upset by it. I hope you have adhered to your decision to leave.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4802

164. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

December 5, 1932

MIRABAI
PRISONER, ARTHUR ROAD PRISON
BOMBAY

GOD IS OUR ONLY ROCK. FAST BEGUN SATURDAY. BROKE YESTERDAY. TOOK MILK MORNING. NO ANXIETY WHATEVER. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6254. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9720

[1] *Vide* "Statement on Fast to Anti-Untouchability Committee", 4-12-1932.

165. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 5, 1932

NARANDAS
SATYAGRAHAASHRAM
SABARMATI

DOING WELL. HAD ONLY FRUIT YESTERDAY. MILK TODAY. NO MORE PAYMENT TO MAHAVIR.

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8275. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

166. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December [*4*]*/5, 1932*

CHI. NARANDAS,

It is surprising that you had not got my chief mail till Friday. I will inquire what happened.

The harassment by Chharas[1] seems to be increasing. You should find a remedy. Hasn't Mavalankar any suggestion to make? You can write a letter to the Collector. I think that, after consulting Mavalankar, you can write a letter somewhat to this effect: 'We cannot take any step to get anybody punished but I request you to consider how far the policy of settling a people who are habitual thieves in the neighbourhood of the Ashram is a proper one.'

Take immediate measures for Keshu's fever.

I feel a little afraid now about Radha and Kusum. If we are under the treatment of one doctor and wish to call in another, we should do so only through the former. This is not only courtesy, but it is necessary in our own interest. The new doctor will then be in a position to benefit from the experience of the first. If you have not given up Dr. Talwalkar completely, request him to see Dr. Harilal.

Write to Mahavir and inform him that I have asked you not to send any more money to him.

Morning, Monday [*December 5, 1932*]

My fast was short and soon over. In one-and-a-half days, I became fairly weak. I think I also overworked. But probably I shall

[1] An ex-criminal tribe of Central Gujarat

recover strength very soon. Nobody should worry. My fasts are a daily affair now, and should cause no worry.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U./ I. Also C.W. 8273. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

167. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

December 5, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I am writing this after prayers. You should not expect long letters from me, but you should go on writing such letters to me. I learn much from them. I do wish to know all that.

What does Taradevi[1] wish? Does she wish to go to the Punjab?

You should listen to what Amina says. Really speaking, you should listen to what anybody may say. Anyone who carries responsibility on him or her, has no choice but to do so. If we thus listen patiently to what others have to say, many problems will get automatically solved.

I used to hear about Kisen, but, now that she is transferred, that will no longer be possible. But I hope she is all right. Please send on to Sushila the letter which is enclosed.

Why should not Lakshmibehn[2], you and others go and mix with the Chharas? I know that none of you can get time for that. But you may stop work for a while and can go. What is their number? How do they spend their days?

About my fast, you will read in my letter[3] to Narandas.

You should now get a letter from Dhurandhar. I have no letter from Krishna Nair. Write to Brijkrishna and ask him to tell you about him.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10313. Also C.W. 6752. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] Pyarelal's mother
[2] Narayan M. Khare's wife
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

168. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

December 5, 1932

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your two letters. Both deal with the same thing. My fast[1] of short duration should not worry you. I will be up in a few days.

I have an idea of the situation there. We can help only those who spin of their own volition and spin well. Can't you get children or adults who are prepared to take up spinning as *yajna*? Did you try in the schools there? If you are not able to persuade anyone, but can look after the Harijan children, even that would do, or, if you want to set up an ashram, do so. Confer with Narandas. Only if the place gives you peace, will I prefer it. I will be satisfied if you are clear in your mind about what you are doing. Whatever you do, do it openly and it would satisfy me, Is not the place useful as a sanatorium? Can't you get even dry fruit there? What about vegetables?

Do whatever you feel is best for Kashi. Prabhudas keeps writingto me. He wants to fly high but is unable to do so. That is the only problem in the way of his recovering his health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32870

169. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

December 5, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

You are not to be affected by the little fast which began on Saturday and ended on Sunday at 1 p.m. It was on account of Appa-saheb, that noble worker. Can you recall him? I took only fruit yester-day and milk this morning,

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6253. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9719

[1] Started on December 3 and broken the next day

170. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

December 5, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

Narandas informs me that your fever has gone. See that you do not get it again. Drink milk and eat *bhaji* and fruit. In fruit, you may eat black raisins soaked in water. Figs also are excellent. You should eat them dry, chewing them thoroughly. It would be good if you can drink milk up to three pounds. But drink only as much as you can digest. *Tandalja*[1] *bhaji* or fenugreek *bhaji*, and gourd and pumpkin among vegetables are beneficial.

You should also eat a few oranges or *mosambis.* Do not mind the expense.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6746. Also C.W. 4489. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

171. LETTER TO CHAMPABEHN R. MEHTA

December 5, 1932

CHI. CHAMPA,

I got your letter. Narandas will not be one of the Trustees. Have some patience. Nothing will be finalized without showing it to you. The fence will not be put up just now. The expense will be too heavy. We shall know whether we can afford it when the accounts are brought up to date and we know the value of the total property.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8755

172. LETTER TO GULAB A. SHAH

December 5, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

Let me know whether or not you eat the gruel served in the morning. Do you relish it? Where is the *jowar* ground?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1733

[1] Amaranth

173. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

December 5, 1932

MANUDI,

I got your letter. I did not intend to reprimand you in what I wrote about foreign-cloth. Take care of your health and be strong. You should not cry. Write to me regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

174. LETTER TO MATHURADAS P. ASAR

December 5, 1932

CHI. MATHURADAS,

If the weaver is not intelligent and honest, he is not likely to be of much help. The finer the yarn, the less will be the value of the result of the mechanical testing. But as the weaver points out its defects to us from time to time, we should go on eliminating them.

Ramji is a different problem. Our atonement lies in winning him over. We have harassed the Harijans so much that, if, on becoming free, they harass us twice as much, we should endure that patiently. We should not do so through selfish motives or under pressure from somebody. If we do so because we want to take work from them, our motive is selfish. If you endure his conduct because I want you to do that, you will be doing so under pressure. Nor should you endure it with anger or pity in your heart.

If, however, you do not find it possible at all to work in co-operation with him, do not give him any more work. Do nothing unwillingly or if it makes you unhappy.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3759

175. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 5, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your two letters, of the 3rd and the 4th, together. I understand from what you say in your letter that Kusum will follow Dr. Talwalkar's advice, but Radha will not. She will derive any benefit from the treatment that she is likely to get only if she carries it out with determination. Qureshi's decision to go to Lucknow is correct. You did right in not sending Hasmukhrai's letter. See if you can still reason with Parvati and restrain her.

I would not have the courage to undertake the experiment which you are making with regard to Ratilal. This does not mean that you should not continue it. But it can certainly mean that you have more love in you than I, and it should not be surprising if that is so. The real test of a teacher lies in his success in training his pupil to do better than himself. In other words, he should give to the pupil all he has. If, however, he had had to struggle hard to acquire what he has, his knowledge and skill would be limited. On the other hand, if the pupil whom he is training has great natural aptitude, he can considerably increase what he receives from the teacher. I have not, therefore, paid you an idle compliment in saying what I have written above. It is nothing but an expression of my sincere wish, and that has always been my nature. Whenever I try to impart to somebody what I possess, my only wish is that the other person should improve upon what I give him. In small matters this has actually happened.

Prema seems to be deceiving herself. She overworks and falls ill. She had said in her last letter that the pain in the back had completely disappeared and that she was confident that it would not come back. Take the necessary measures immediately. If it is absolutely necessary to get her tonsils removed, do so as soon as possible.

Chhaganlal is at Hyderabad. I expect him to return here in two or three days.

I have not received *Flowers of St. Francis.* You need not, however, send it if it is with you. I have been able to get another copy.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8274. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

176. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

December 5, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

You should rejoice, and not get upset, whenever I fast. You should not speak without thinking and without reason, let alone gossip. In other words, when eating or working you should speak only if it is necessary. To speak loudly is a sign of immodesty. All of you should acquire complete mastery over the *takli*. Know that the skill which Bhau possesses is very useful.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

177. LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI

December 5, 1932

CHI. RADHIKA,

What should I write to you? Put yourself entirely in the hands of God.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8690. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

178. LETTER TO SULOCHANA A. SHAH

December 5, 1932

CHI. SULOCHANA,

You seem to be progressing satisfactorily. In order to purify the mind, you should busy yourself in good work and go on repeating Ramanama.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1748

179. LETTER TO BABALBHAI MEHTA

December 5, 1932

CHI. BABAL,

You have given me useful information. I have requested Nanasaheb to intervene. Keep me informed.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9445

180. LETTER TO GULAM RASUL QURESHI

December 5, 1932

CHI. QURESHI,

I have your letter. You must get yourself cured of the piles completely. I will take care of Amina. There are many places to which she can be sent. I will see about it after 2nd January. Meanwhile she should get ready. I am not writing separately to her.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10814. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

181. LETTER TO NANIBEHN JHAVERI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 5, 1932

CHI. NANIBEHN JHAVERI,

The Guruvayur fast cannot be compared with the fast associated with the mill-hands.[1] At Guruvayur the Zamorin is the trustee of the people, not their master. The temple should definitely be thrown open to Harijans if the people so desire. Think and write again and let me know if you find anything amiss.

Have the two boys[2] gone back to sleep again?

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari—Pannalal Jhaveri, p. 27

182. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

December 5, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

Be content with whatever work God permits you to do. It does not seem proper that we should be wrapped up in warm clothing while others shiver with cold. But we have the right if at all to wear essential

[1] Gandhiji had undertaken a fast from March 15 to 18, 1918 for a raise in the wages of the mill-hands of Ahmedabad.

[2] Mahesh and Navin, nephews of the addressee's husband

garments.[1] We must try to provide them for others too, although God is the true Provider. Do not worry about anything.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 266

183. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

December 5, 1932

BELOVED DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

I got your postcard. I am very glad that you have come to Poona. Your health should improve now. You can come whenever you feel like. A judge's daughter can come when she wants to. In form me in advance when you intend to come. Come about 1 p.m. except on a Sunday. I had a letter from Father. I had got your previous letter and I had also replied[2] to it.

As my right hand pains, I use the left hand and so the Urdu letters are very badly written. Come soon.[3]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: S.N. 9664

184. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

December 5, 1932

My future is in the hands of God.

Gandhiji was resting on a cot when I was conducted to the ward. A lady visitor, who had entered the jail premises ten minutes before, was sitting near Gandhiji, carrying on a one-sided conversation, as Gandhiji's day of silence had not yet ended. Mr. Mahadev Desai, the Mahatma's Secretary, was busy attending to the correspondence. Punctually at 2 p.m., the Mahatma broke his silence.

The Mahatma, referring to the referendum that is being taken in Guruvayur, stated that he was glad, it was being done in a thorough manner. Instructions were

[1] The addressee had expressed a sense of guilt for being warmly clad herself, while serving the scantily clothed Harijan children of Vadaj.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Raihana Tyabji", 2-12-1932.

[3] These two sentences are in Gujarati.

printed on the back of the voting-paper, and to each house-holder the issue was to be clearly explained.[1]

Referring to the legal difficulties[2], Gandhiji said that it was not his province to study those difficulties. He was prepared to be guided by the legal friends. The Mahatma stressed that every difficulty ought to be overcome. He was satisfied with Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill[3] published in *The Hindu*. Asked whether he would postpone his fast now, in view of the efforts being made in that direction, Gandhiji said that if the referendum was in his favour, and legal difficulties had to be overcome before 2nd January, so far as he could see the fast must be suspended. But if Dr. Subbaroyan was not granted leave to introduce the Bill, the fast would commence on 2nd January.

Commenting on the suggestion made in the Press that the surest way of preventing him from commencing the fast in connection with Guruvayur was to vote against temple-entry, the Mahatma said:

I cannot get out of the fast by such a dodge. I shall then have to impose upon myself a far more severe ordeal than a fast unto death.

One of those sitting round him, and listening to the answers he was giving me, remarked that there could be nothing more severe than a fast unto death. Gandhiji retorted:

No. Hitherto I have made my fast conditional. A more severe resolve would be a thirty days' fast. If I go on a thirty days' fast, I am bound to carry it out, irrespective of whether the temple is thrown open to Harijans or not.

Questioned regarding the suggestion of some pundits in South India for a compromise between sanatanists and reformers, that if Harijans underwent a purification ceremony they could be admitted into temples, Gandhiji said:

I am not in favour of such a proposal. It is the caste Hindus who have to undergo purification for having done a violent wrong to the untouchables.

The Mahatma would not agree to put a black mark on the Harijan and to say,

[1] *The Times of India*, 7-12-1932, had reported: "Nearly 300 volunteers are carrying out systematic visits collecting three sets of statistics of (1) municipal voters who favour temple-entry, (2) all males favouring or opposing it and (3) all women favouring or opposing it."

[2] Arising from the Act governing religious observances in Madras Presidency

[3] In the Madras Legislative Council. It sought: "to empower the Hindu residents in any locality to secure an alteration by a majority vote in the established practice regarding the admission of untouchables in the local temple" (*Mahatma*, Vol. III, p. 189).

for instance, that unless he put on a turban he would not be allowed into the temple. All Hindus going to temples were expected to give up carrion-eating.

Dr. Ambedkar had brought to Gandhiji's notice an incident that took place in the neighbourhood of Poona. There Harijans decided on giving up eating carrion. They were prepared to forgo the gain they were getting from the job of removing dead animals. Caste Hindus did not like the Harijans' decision not to remove dead animals. They forced Harijans to eat carrion, saying that it was their dharma. Caste Hindus were the real instigators, and just as in law the instigators were not exempted from punishment, caste Hindus should be taken to task. It was they who had to undergo purification.

Asked whether asking for the allotment of a particular kind of work in jail by the prisoners amounted to a breach of the jail discipline, Gandhiji said:

> It is not open to any civil disobedience prisoner to ask for any particular work in the place of some other work. All jail discipline will be broken if it was for the prisoners to demand so.

Mr. Patwardhan had not demanded, the Mahatma continued, a particular work in the place of some other work. What he had said was that he should not be debarred from doing scavenging or conservancy work. He would do the task allotted to him, and also do conservancy. He wanted to be placed in the same category as the so-called low-caste men. It was not merely Bhangis that did this work. All low-caste men were doing it. Every jail did not contain Bhangis. The jail authorities were confining this unclean work to low class people. If they did not do so, there would be a violent agitation by caste Hindus that the Government were breaking their religion and asking them to do low-caste work. Government did not want such an agitation. It had been the rule to exempt high-caste Hindus from doing scavenging work. Mr. Patwardhan could not possibly take advantage of the exemption and so pleaded that he should be allowed to do this work. His case was under consideration by the Government. Gandhiji said that making such a request to the Government did not amount to violation of any jail rule. It did not amount to disobedience of jail regulations.

Gandhiji declared that the future was in the hands of God, and not in the hands of the Government. In respect of last Saturday's fast, there was a divine call, and he had responded to it.

It was true, the Mahatma continued, that he was now devoting all his twenty-four hours to untouchability work. Even while sleeping, he was thinking of it.

Asked whether he would devote so much of his time to this question even when out of jail, Gandhiji with a twinkle in his eyes replied:

I shall not certainly neglect it.

The jail doctor arrived at this stage and examined the Mahatma. The doctor declared that Gandhiji was having a 'tennis-elbow'. One of the visitors said, "Gandhi has never played tennis." On this, Mahatmaji humorously remarked:

Yes, it is true. I call this '*takli*-elbow'.

Mr. Thakkar reminded Gandhiji that it was nearing 3 p.m. and Press correspondents were taking up all the time. Mahatmaji cracked a joke with him saying:

Mr. Thakkar should obey his President.

Mr. Birla (the President of the Anti-Untouchability League) declared that he had no grievance against the Pressmen.

Gandhiji expressed his satisfaction at the progress of the work going on in the country for removal of untouchability.

Gandhiji declared that he would not accept conditional release. Questioned whether he would accept 'parole' for fifteen days, to go to Guruvayur, the Mahatma remarked:

Parole is conditional release.

The Hindu, 6-12-1932

185. ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY DAY[1] *PROGRAMME*

December 6, 1932

Door-to-door collections of funds for the work of the Anti-Untouchability League should be made everywhere.

A few caste Hindus can set an example to others by cleaning the quarters of Harijans and being of service to them in similar and other ways.

Games, sports and parties should be held by mixed gatherings of Harijans and caste-Hindu children.

Processions and kirtan parties of Harijans and caste Hindus should be organized and general efforts should be made to bring the

[1] To be observed on December 18

two together, especially in the quarters of the latter.

Public meetings should be held everywhere at which evils of all forms and grades of untouchability should be clearly explained and prayers offered for their speedy and total eradication.

Also, resolutions should be adopted at these meetings for carrying on unremitting propaganda for the purpose of special resolutions in favour of entry of Harijans into all Hindu temples, especially Guruvayur.

The Hindustan Times, 7-12-1932

186. TELEGRAM TO S. P. PATWARDHAN

December 6, 1932

APPASAHEB PATWARDHAN
PRISONER, RATNAGIRI PRISON
RATNAGIRI

HAVE LEARNT SOMETHING ABOUT PUTTING YOURSELF ON REDUCED RATIONS BECAUSE OF REFUSAL BY GOVERNMENT LET YOU DO CONSERVANCY WORK. ON HEARING THIS I BEGAN FAST ON SATURDAY SUSPENDED IT SUNDAY PENDING GOVERNMENT CONSIDERATION. GOVERNMENT APPRECIATE YOUR POINT BUT THEY REGARD IT ALL-INDIA QUESTION. THEREFORE UNABLE GIVE DECISION OFF-HAND IN YOUR AND COMRADES' CASE. THEY THEREFORE SUGGEST THAT PENDING CONSIDERATION ON ALL INDIA BASIS YOU SHOULD SUSPEND PARTIAL FAST AND TAKE FULL RATIONS RESERVING TO YOURSELF RIGHT TO RESUME PARTIAL FAST EVENT UNFAVOURABLE DECISION. IF I HAVE UNDERSTOOD YOUR POSITION CORRECTLY I REGARD GOVERNMENT SUGGESTION QUITE FAIR. IF YOU APPROVE THEREOF PLEASE RESUME FULL RATIONS AND TELEGRAPH GIVING ME SAME TIME STATEMENT YOUR HEALTH.[1]

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 10

[1] The addressee's reply of even date read: "Your kind wire. Agree postpone action. Letter follows. Health quite all right."

187. TELEGRAM TO K. KELAPPAN

[*December 6, 1932*][1]

DO NOT WORRY ABOUT COMING HERE UNLESS CAUSE REQUIRES IT. YOU MUST NOT ENDANGER HEALTH TO COME.

BAPU

The Hindu, 12-12-1932

188. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

December 6, 1932

Are you able to follow the "Ram Gita"[2]? Its central idea is *bhakti* and its fruit. Pure *bhakti* is bound to lead to non-attachment and true knowledge. If *bhakti* does not produce such results, it is not true *bhakti* but mere sentimentality. True knowledge means the discrimination between the essential and the non-essential. The book-learning that does not give this power of discrimination is not knowledge but bookishness. You can see that once this is realized and the "Ram Gita" grasped accordingly, all worry and impatience disappear.

I am writing this letter soon after the morning prayers. I intended to write about the fast, but began with comments on the "Ram Gita". The fast is now a thing of the past. As it lasted only a day and a half, I feel no effect of it at all. The weakness came rather quickly but it also left as quickly as it had come. I did a lot of work on the day of the fast and also on Sunday. I can now take sufficient quantity of milk. You should not, therefore, worry about my fasts any time. You should know one thing, i.e., that it is not I who undertake a fast. It may be said that God does it, as my fasts are inspired by Him. You should not, therefore, feel unhappy when I fast, but, if anything, rejoice that I follow dharma by doing so. It should also be remembered that no one is to fast in mere imitation of my action. And particularly those who have close relations with me should fast only after consulting me. Of course it is possible to imagine circumstances in which there might be no time at all to consult me or when the inspiration from within might be unmistakable. However, the tradition

[1] From "Diary, 1932", entry under this date

[2] A selection of verses from the *Gita* made by Gandhiji for the addressee; *vide* "Letter to Ramdas Gandhi", 7-11-1932.

among spiritual seekers has been that one should take a new step only after consulting the person one has accepted as more experienced than oneself as long as such a person is physically with us. Everybody cannot hear the inner voice as a matter of course. What one hears may be only a semblance of the inner voice or in fact the voice of the ego. The ego means Satan, Ravana, Ahriman or the Demon. We cannot always recognize whether it is the voice of Rama or Ravana. Very often, Ravana appears in the garb of a sadhu and he looks like Rama. We should, therefore, consult a person of more experience if such a one is available. I intended to write a short letter, but I have written a long one. Show this to all.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 307

189. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

December 6, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

Sjt. S. B. Medh is an old co-worker from South Africa. He is due to sail from Bombay on the 14th and is anxious just to see me. He is not covered under the existing orders. Permission has therefore to be received from Government before I can see him. He came from South Africa only two or three months ago and is in no way connected with the political situation here. In his letter which I enclose herewith the operative sentence runs, "Before leaving I am anxious to receive your blessings. God only knows when I shall be able to see you again." I would like to respond to the letter if I may and this is only possible if you could obtain the permission by telephone or telegram.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 9

190. LETTER TO H. N. KUNZRU

December 6, 1932

MY DEAR HARIJI,

I have your note. In the light of your letter, I have re-read the clause, but I do not see any inconsistency in the previous sentence by retaining the word 'confine'. However, I do not mind the change suggested by you, if you think that that carries out our purpose better; but I have made certain other changes which you will please note, and I have added the proviso which I had hastily omitted. You will see that the proviso is absolutely necessary. I am returning the original with corrections, and enclose herewith a copy with all the corrections carried out leaving you to make your choice of "confine its activities to" or "work for".

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

ENCLOSURE

By untouchability is meant the pollution of a person by the touch or approach or sight of another person, but as the practice of classifying people as untouchables in the different provinces does not always conform to the definition and having considered the variety of practice, the Servants of the Untouchables Society has decided for the time being to confine its activities to or work for the removal of the follow-ing among other disabilities so as to secure for these classes the same status as the other Hindus enjoy: Prohibition to use public temples, wells, roads, schools, parks, dispensaries, hos-pitals, crematoria and the like.

It is however understood that removal of untouchability shall not include interdining as it is generally understood or intercaste marriages.

From a microfilm: S.N. 18662

191. LETTER TO K. MADHAVAN NAIR

December 6, 1932

MY DEAR MADHAVAN,

I have your letter. You do not need to apologize, and under the stress you are going through, let only one person write, and that too for giving me the necessary report. Urmila Devi, of course, writes and she won't be happy until she has written something practically every day.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18661

192. LETTER TO GENERAL SECRETARY[1]*, A.I.V.S.S.*

December 6, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I shall be glad to receive a visit from any sanatanist friends, and if they convince me of my error, I shall gladly retrace my steps.

If a meeting of no-change *Shastris* and pro-change *Shastris* can be held, I would be delighted. It would certainly be instructive, and to a certain extent, useful. Being a prisoner, I can not arrange for such a meeting[2], and even if I was not, being a layman I should have great hesitation in taking the lead in calling together such an assembly, but I would ask you to send your suggestions to Acharya Dhruva of Benares Hindu University, and perhaps you and he might be able to call together the meeting you have in view.

So far as the insinuation of coercion is concerned, I can only give you my assurance that none is intended, and I fail to see how my fast can coerce a person who holds strong views opposite to mine.

Yours sincerely,

THE GENERAL SECRETARY
ALL-INDIA VARNASHRAM SWARAJYA SANGH, RAMBAG
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 18659

[1] Hiralal D. Nanavati

[2] The meeting took place on December 7; *vide* Appendix "Discussion with Poona Sanatanists".

193. LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON

December 6, 1932

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

I have your letter. I do not want you to be writing to me when you are so fagged out that you want immediately to go off to sleep. Your sleep is more precious in these days of strain and stress than mere writing to me. When writing is an absolute necessity of course you have to sacrifice sleep, but in that case you must use your words like a miser, and if you can manage with one sentence, do not give me two, and send only a postcard, and in emergent cases you may also use the wire. In other words, please conserve your energy for the work before you. One person alone giving me the necessary report of work from day to day will be quite satisfactory.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 18663

194. LETTER U. SUBBA RAO

December 6, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I would advise you to approach the Untouchability Board of Andhra Desh. It will be difficult for me to take up individual cases and equally difficult for the Central Board to judge them.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. U. SUBBA RAO, MANAGER
SHREE HARIJANA ASHRAMAM, PONNAMANDA
EAST GODAVARI

From a photostat: G.N. 6702. Also C.W. 4448. Courtesy: U. Subba Rao

195. LETTER TO A GUJARATI STUDENT

December 6, 1932

To ensure that my fast does not by any chance pass as blackmail, the opinion of the people living in the neighbourhood of the temple is being collected. If the majority is in favour of the reform, the reform is a duty and should be effected. This in no way involves injustice to the minority. If the minority desires, a fixed time can be

set apart for them. Otherwise, it is open to them to build a temple of their own. If three of the four brothers living as a joint family change their religion, it will be justice if they become the owners of the joint family property and give the fourth brother his share. In the present case the utmost that the minority can demand is money to build a separate temple for themselves. However, they cannot do even that if an exclusive time is set apart for them when they can worship in the temple. If we apply this line of reasoning to your case, the conclusion is this: The Grandfather should have the freedom to follow dharma as he understands it, and you to follow it as you understand it. If, for this reason, he asks you to leave the home, you have no choice but to endure the boycott. If your wife refuses to live with you unless you undergo ceremonial purification, you should endure boycott by her too. You should not live with her against her will. A husband has no right whatever to force his wife to do or believe anything. But it is probable that the wife will say this: 'What else can I do even if you do not undergo purification? I will live with you.' If your wife says this, it means that she cares for you more than she does for the custom of untouchability. In other words, as between the custom of untouchability and living with you, she regards it as her duty to live with you. We have to make innumerable such choices every day in our life, but we make them spontaneously and, therefore, are not conscious of doing so. This contains a reply to all your questions. Ask me to explain again if you do not follow anything in this. If you wish to put other questions, you may do that too.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 308

196. A LETTER

December 6, 1932

For a guilty party to write about injustice having been done to him is not a sign of repentance. Nobody who has sincerely repented has ever looked upon the punishment given to him as punishment. On the contrary, such persons have always felt that the punishment was not severe enough. You compare yourself with. . .[1] and believe that you are less guilty than he. I don't know anything about . . .'s[2]

[1] The names are omitted in the source.

[2] *ibid*

misbehaviour. You don't even seem to be aware that you have come with a sullied reputation and that you have misbehaved many times in the Ashram too. I don't mind the mistakes. All of us commit mistakes. But what makes me unhappy is that you feel no sincere repentance for your errors. Till you do that, I think it improper on your part even to wish to go back to the Ashram. I am afraid sincere repentance is not in your nature. All the same, if you can convince Narandas about your sincerity and if he accepts you, I will not stand in your way.

Blessings from your unhappy

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 309-10

197. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

December 6, 1932

CHI. MANI,

Dahyabhai's temperature was expected to return completely to normal on Sunday, but it did not. It does become normal but again rises up to 99° to 100°. So the fever may perhaps persist a week longer. But the doctor has ceased to worry. He has started giving Dahyabhai Sanatogen as a tonic, besides a pound and a half of milk, which is well-digested. Ambalal[1], Thakkar[2], Ba and others went and saw Dahyabhai during the last two days or so. All of them report that Dahyabhai is cheerful. No one would believe that he had been suffering from typhoid for as long as four weeks. You should not, therefore, worry in the least.

My fast is now an old story. I hope you read all about it in *The Times of India*. Such fasts are a frequent occurrence in my life. You should, therefore, regard them as normal and devote yourself to your daily work. I hope you are quite well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 95-6

[1] Ambalal Sarabhai
[2] Amritlal V. Thakkar

198. LETTER TO C. NARAYANA MENON[1]

[Before *December 7, 1932*][2]

DEAR FRIEND,

It seems to me that if the letter addressed to the Zamorin and signed by all students who believe in the removal of untouchability be sent, it will be a striking thing showing the Hindu world that the rising generation is bent on removing the black mark and it would be a great thing if the example of the Hindu University was followed by the Hindu students throughout India.

Yours sincerely,

The Hindustan Times, 9-12-1932

199. INTERVIEW TO SRIPAD SHANKER[3]

[*Before December 7, 1932*][4]

Questioned whether he would be satisfied with the admission of Harijans up to the flag post[5], Mahatmaji made it perfectly clear that there was no halfway house in the house of God. There is no such thing as temple-entry step by step. It should be unconditional and unqualified. The Harijans should be given the same equality of status as the other caste Hindus in the matter of public worship.

Asked whether he would accept some elementary test like purification and giving up eating beef, etc., Mahatmaji said that though he was always advocating the purification and the social uplift of the Harijans in all respects, he has made it a point of honour not to accept any conditions whatsoever as conditions precedent for admission of Harijans into temples. Some of the caste Hindus who enjoy the right of free entry need as much purification, if not more.

The status of Harijans today is in direct proportion to the shameful treatment the caste Hindus have been giving them for generations past. In fact the conditions calling for purification are the result of such treatment. The position of the caste Hindus in this respect is exactly similar to that of a debtor in a commercial

[1] Professor, Benares Hindu University

[2] The letter was published under the date-line: "Benares, December 7"

[3] Of Madras, who interviewed Gandhiji about the problems of temple-entry in South India

[4] The report was published under the date-line: "Bombay, Wednesday, December 7, 1932".

[5] *Dhwajasthambha*, which stands in front of the shrine in the temple premises and to which people offer salute before worshipping the deity inside

transaction. A man who has contracted a loan is only doing his duty by paying back a portion of it and need not consider himself generous for paying back half of what he owes.

Asked whether he would allow sympathetic fasting on the issue of the temple-entry, Mahatmaji emphatically asserted that Mr. Kelappan held the field on the issue of fasting on the Guruvayur temple-entry. If the fast came off he would strongly object to anybody else fasting in sympathy with them or offering satyagraha on that issue. This does not preclude legitimate country-wide propaganda in the cause of anti-untouchability movement and temple-entry.

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-12-1932

200. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 7, 1932

NARANDAS
SATYAGRAHAASHRAM
SABARMATI

KANTI SHOULD GO RAJKOT RECOUP. PREMA SHOULD UNDERGO OPERATION.[1]

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8276. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

201. TELEGRAM TO K. M. MUNSHI

December 7, 1932

KANHAIYALAL MUNSHI
PRISONER
CENTRAL JAIL BIJAPUR

JUST RECEIVED YOUR LETTER. HAVE GIVEN NO OPINION OUTSIDE. DO NOT WANT YOU TAKE ANY STEP WITHOUT CONVICTION. WILL READ PLAY[2] AND GIVE YOU CONSIDERED OPINION WRITING. GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 7519. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Narandas Ganddhi", 5-12-1932.

[2] The reference is to the play *Brahmacharyashrama* mentioned in "Letter to K. M. Munshi", 25-11-1932 and"Letter to K.M. Munshi", 8-12-1932.

202. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

December 7, 1932

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I have had a long chat with Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla, as also Satisbabu regarding the Anti-Untouchability Board for Bengal. I have also several letters from Bengal complaining about the formation of the Board. Before it was formed Ghanshyamdas had told me that he was going to ask you to form the Board, and without giving any thought to the suggestion I at once endorsed it. But I see that the idea has not found favour in Bengal, especially so far as Satisbabu and Dr. Suresh are concerned. They think that the Board is bound to have a party colour about it. I do not know how far this fear is justified, but I do know this that the work of anti-untouchability should not become a party affair in any way whatsoever. We want all who desire the reform to associate themselves freely and whole-heartedly with any organization that may be formed. I would therefore suggest that you should call all the workers representing different groups and parties and place yourself at their disposal and let them then choose whomsoever they like as President, offering to give your whole-hearted co- operation to the President and Board of their choice. I know that this requires self-abnegation. If I know you well, I know that this is not beyond you. Of course if you feel that there is nothing in the com-plaints made and that you will be able to smooth down all the diffi-culties and that you will be able to bring all the parties together, I have of course nothing to say. In making the suggestions that I have made I have assumed the impossibility of securing the association of all parties with the Board as it is constituted at present. I have now placed the whole thing before you. You will do whatever is best in the interest of the cause.[1]

Sjt. Khaitan gave me your message about Basanti Devi. I told him that I wanted her to make her own choice, but wanted her to work effectively and ceaselessly in the cause of anti-untouchability. I am not enamoured of her accepting any office in any organization. When I was there at the time of the Deshbandhu collections, both she and I had come to the conclusion that hers was not to run any organization,

[1] For Dr. B. C. Roy's reply, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Dr. B.C. Roy"; *vide* also "Letter to Dr. B. C. Roy", 15-12-1932.

but simply to work whenever she was free and had the mind for it.

You will please tell me all about Dr. Alam[1].

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN ROY
WELLINGTON STREET, CALCUTTA

From a copy: C.W. 7907. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also S.N. 18667 and *In the Shadow of the Mahatma*, pp. 76-7

203. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

December 7, 1932

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Write to me immediately today and inform me about the condition of your health. I am trying to secure permission to see you. Appa's problem[2] seems to have been solved for the time being. The intended semi-fast and complete fast have been postponed. It seems the problem will be solved completely. I have regained two pounds of weight. I will get a copy of Ashramvasi Pratye and send it to you. If you want any other books, let me know. It is very necessary to send Kamalnayan to Ceylon.[3] He writes and tells me that Janakidevi also has agreed now. The climate and water there will certainly suit him, and his desire to learn English will also be satisfied. The present atmosphere in India cannot but have a disturbing effect on his mind, but in Ceylon he will remain calm. He will be away from home, and yet not too far away. He will be able to return home whenever he wishes to do so. And he will get excellent facilities for learning English. Thus I like the idea from all points of view. Let me know what you think; I will then take the necessary steps to arrange for his going. I shall have to write to a few persons.

Ghanshyamdas left yesterday. He could not, of course, see you. Devdas is still here. Rajendrababu's health cannot be described as too good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2906

[1] He was under Dr. B. C. Roy's treatment in Calcutta.
[2] *Vide* "Statement on Fast to Anti-Untouchability Committee", 4-12-1932.
[3] *Vide* also "Letter to Janakidevi Bajaj", 22-11-1932.

204. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 7, 1932

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Padma and his mother came and saw me yesterday. Devdas was with them, too. They had brought two long letters from Prabhudas. For the present, I have given them to Devdas to read so that I might know the impression they make on him. Those letters and my conversation with Padma have given me at any rate the definite impression that the two have become deeply infatuated with each other. They regard their relation to each other as that of a brother and sister or a father and daughter, but that is nothing but self-deception. However, I believe that they have not completely fallen. The two do not even know that they are sexually attracted to each other, but in fact they are. Padma is a silly girl and still a child, is very talkative and also affectionate. So probably she does not even know what it is to be sexually attracted. But her ways and manners and the expressions on her face are those of a wife to a husband. It is rather different with Prabhudas. He is full of sexual fancies but is fighting hard to overcome them. While he had not yet succeeded in that, he came across a girl like Padma. He is quite aware that he must entertain no sexual feelings towards her. But what can he do? That is why he keeps company with her. The two have met privately and moved about together. What is poor Sarojinidevi to do? She is very much upset and deeply hurt. Padma would not listen to her, would not wake up, and as for Prabhudas, she does not have the courage to speak to him. However, the atmosphere could not but become vitiated. The neighbours saw the impurity of their relation which the two could not see. Sitala Sahay came to know of it and was very unhappy. He has rushed to me with all of them to find a solution. Though Prabhudas has not physically fallen, he believes himself so far guilty that he has come to a decision that the two of them should not be together any time and is asking my permission to undertake a fast of fifteen or twenty days' duration so that he might learn to be vigilant. If he is not permitted to undertake a fast, he wants to be permitted to marry. All this is not quite clear in his letters, but I have been able to read it between the lines. I do not intend to permit him to undertake a fast, but wish to press him to get married. He believes that he would be able to find a suitable girl. I think he will have no difficulty in finding such a girl if

he tries to look outside the circle of our caste. I have no difficulty in making up my mind to this extent, but what is to be done about Khali? Both Prabhudas and Padma need to stay at hill station. It would be proper for both to stay in Almora and at separate places but it would not be worthy of what we believe to be our poverty or what others think to be our poverty. Our poverty may seem outdated, but then we must put some limit somewhere. However, God will show us the way. I have written all this just for your information and not to ask for your help in this matter or to cause you worry. Prabhudas is no more a child. He wants me to show him the way. Since he likes my advice, I will go on guiding him and in that way things will be right in the end. Ultimately it will happen neither as I wish nor as Prabhudas wishes. After all there is a limit to what human effort can achieve. Prabhudas's aspirations have always been noble. He is not deceitful and so, God will save him. He has struggled very hard to remain a life-long celibate, but the Fate seems to have been against him. How is Prabhudas to blame for that? He has come out safe from many difficult circumstances earlier also and will do so this time, too. I will not think it a misfortune if he marries. He will rather be happy, and so neither you nor Kashi need grieve at all and make yourselves miserable. I am not going to blame Prabhudas even in my thought, neither personally nor in my letters. If anybody has been at fault in this, it was me, for I have induced all of you to join me in a stupendous experiment as dangerous as putting one's hand into a serpent's burrow. I do not at all repent having done so. The experiment will certainly continue and its result is bound to be good. It will require sacrifices though, and we shall make them. You yourself were thinking of going to Khali. If you do wish to go and if you can hand over your Vijapur work to somebody, I see no harm in your going. Your presence at Khali will certainly be a source of consolation to Prabhudas, but your first duty is to take care of the work of Vijapur. How will Kashi manage? She also is almost a cripple. She just cannot tolerate the weather at Almora at this time of the year. This needs to be considered, too. If, after taking into consideration all this, you still wish to go and can go, you may do so. But do not think it at all necessary to go there for Pabhudas's good. I cannot think of anything more to write after this.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33067

205. INTERVIEW TO STUDENTS

POONA,
December 7, 1932

How can you fight them?[1] What do you generally do when you want your things done? You cry. Is it not ?

STUDENTS: (laughingly) Yes.

GANDHIJI: Then cry and weep. (Laughter)

One student said that as their fathers were Government servants, they were afraid to join the anti-untouchability movement.

GANDHIJI: But this is not political work. Government servants could do many things, contribute to the funds, engage in their houses untouchables, bring up the Harijan boys and girls and there was no politics in that.

How can we serve them in schools?

GANDHIJI: In schools you cannot do anything. You go there to learn. Do not bother your little heads there but out of school hours, you can do.

How ?

GANDHIJI: Where the untouchables are living, mix with them, play with them and see that their quarters are kept clean, take broom and sweep and teach them to be clean. Show by your own life that you do not observe untouchability, show them that you love them. Treat them as your blood-brothers. You are too young. Day by day you will learn better the knack of doing the right.[2]

The Hindustan Times, 9-12-1932

[1] The source had reported: " . . . a group of young high school students . . . informed Gandhiji that they wanted to serve Harijans but their fathers would not allow them to do so. Gandhiji laughingly asked them to fight them . . ."

[2] The report had concluded: "The students . . . thanked Gandhiji and offered him yarn garlands and withdrew."

206. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

POONA,
December [*7*][1], *1932*

The Government have regarded the question as of all-India importance. From the point of view of prison administration, they had difficulty in giving a decision in connection with the request of Appasaheb Patwardhan, but they have consented to consider the whole question and announce their decision as early as possible. In the circumstances, I recognized the Government's difficulty myself, and was permitted to send a telegram[2] to Appasaheb advising him, pending Government decision, to suspend the partial fast. The following telegram was received from him this morning:

> Your kind wire. Agree postpone action. Letter follows. Health is quite all right.

The result is, Appasaheb begins to take his full rations from today, and my fast stands, naturally, further suspended. From my point of view as an anti-untouchability worker, the matter is quite simple. The so-called high-caste Hindus, like Appasaheb Patwardhan and his co-workers, who voluntarily offer to do conservancy work, purely from a humanitarian motive and in a spirit of service, should be permitted to do that work. The existing practice seems to be to confine this service to the so-called low caste prisoners, although they may never have done conservancy work outside, and although they may not belong to the Bhangi caste, and this they are made to do whether they wish it or not.

People who are in prison for conscience sake cannot afford to arrogate superiority to themselves. At the same time, there are obvious administrative difficulties in suddenly disturbing a practice that has prevailed for a number of years throughout the prisons in India. I have, therefore, no hesitation in suspending the fast myself, pending an examination of the whole question by the Government of India and the Local Government. Appasaheb has specialized in this subject and therefore knows much more about it than I do. I am glad he has appreciated the Government's difficulties and has suspended the partial fast. Let us hope that an early and satisfactory decision will be arrived at by the Government so as to enable the reformers now

[1] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 8-12-1932

[2] *Vide* "Anti-Untouchability Day Programme", 6-12-1932.

undergoing imprisonment to render conservancy service, without in any way impairing the smooth administration of the various goals.

The Hindu, 8-12-1932

207. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

December 7/8, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

Your weekly letter to hand. I hope you had my wire[1] and post-card[2] regarding the fast.

The above was written last night. It is now 5 a.m. after prayer and the drink and the oranges. Of the loss of 6 lb. not in one day but in four days, I have regained 2 lb. This shows that I can gain a few pounds as quickly as I lose. In other words it is merely the weight of superficial food and water I carry about me. The fast lasted only 44 hours. It can produce no permanent harm. You are right when you say that I could not have rebuilt the muscle lost during the last fast.

But the fast has become the normal course of my life. It is the spiritual medicine applied from time to time for diseases that yield to that particular treatment. Not everyone can gain the capacity for it all of a sudden. I have gained it, if I have, after a very long course of training.

Co-workers should not be unhinged or the least disturbed whenever they hear about my fast. They should rejoice at it, if they believe in my purity and sanity. For then it must be good for us all and the whole world, even as every spiritual effort is. It must be for us all an encouragement to greater heart searching and purification.

I am glad you have again some company of the ordinary kind.

I do not want to start the saltless experiment just now. I am watching the elbows. There is no discomfort. Suspension of spinning is a deprivation. I should bear it for the time being.

Manilal and his wife are off to South Africa next week. Their presence is necessary there. They must not be diverted from their duty by my fast and the like. They cannot alter the course of events andcan

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 5-12-1932.

[2] *ibid*

render me no help. They should not have rushed here at all.

Ba and Urmila Devi are doing well in the South.

But I must stop now.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6255. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9721

208. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 7/8, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I send with this Liladhar's letter. He has said something in it against Prema. What are the facts? Parashuram also complains bitterly. And, besides, there is the general complaint that she beats children. I have no time just now to write to her and for the present leave the matter here. If, moreover, she is to be operated upon, I should not like to harass her at this time.

I return Liladhar's diary by registered post. . . .[1] came and saw me yesterday. I don't think her relation with . . .[2]is absolutely pure. They have not actually sinned, but I have no doubt in my mind that they have impure feelings for each other. They certainly cannot live together. There were long letters from . . .[3]which were painful to read. He also believes that they cannot live together. I shall consider now what we should do. This is not your worry, but mine. God will solve the problem. I will write more when I get time.

BAPU

December 8, 1932

I felt that I should somehow find time and write to Chhaganlal, and, therefore, have done so. Read the accompanying letter before sending it on to him, so that I need not write anything about the matter again to you. I shall have to write to you, if some new thought occurs to me or if I take some concrete step. If you wish to write and suggest anything, by all means do so.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8277. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] The names have been omitted.

[2] *ibid*

[3] *ibid*

209. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

December 8, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

A pamphlet published by certain prisoners recently discharged from Ratnagiri Jail has just been received by me. I enclose the original. I have marked certain portions and I send you for immediate reference a free translation of some of the most important portions. From this two things stand out prominently. Quite a large number of the so-called high-caste Hindus were actually doing conservancy work with satisfaction, till the work was stopped under your orders. The party was organized and its work supervised by Appasaheb Patwardhan himself. At the time there were not sufficient Bhangis in the Jail, therefore the so-called low-caste prisoners had to be imported from another jail. If this information is correct, it makes Appasaheb's case stronger than I had imagined. But that is not now of much moment. What however is clear to me is that this is a case which demands early and sympathetic handling.

Could you please ascertain from the Government when a decision may be expected, especially in view of my contemplated fast on the 2nd January next?[1]

Yours sincerely

, Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (6), p. 191. Also Home Department, Political, File No. 31/108-Poll., p. 31. Courtesy: National Archives of India

210. LETTER TO S. A. K. SUBRAMANIAM[2]

December 8, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am quite sure that those who prevent the use of the Hindu burial-ground for the dead bodies of Harijans are acting contrary to their religion.

Yours sincerely,

M.K.GANDHI

The Hindu, 21-1-1933

[1] Originally Gandhiji had written: "In any case, I hope that the decision of the Government of India will be reached before the 25th instant." For Doyle's comments on the change, *vide* Appendix "Letter From E.E. Doyle to R.M. Maxwell".

[2] Of Salem

211. LETTER TO P. R. LELE

December 8, 1932

Many thanks for your letter. A thousand apologies for my stupidity. But you will please excuse me. I could not help mentioning the lady, because I had her often in my mind.[1] Within the course of a few days I had had two stupid lapses of memory. What you say about Mr. Pandya's article is quite true.[2]

I understand what you say about the death anniversary of Swami Shraddhanandji. I did mention your proposal to some members of the new organization, but they thought, and I agree with them, that it would be wrong for the organization to observe the day under its auspices. There is already an organization brought into being by the marvellous activities of Shraddhanandji himself. Its scope is much larger than that of the Anti-Untouchability Society. There is every danger of its activity being misunderstood if it celebrated the anniversary under its auspices, and it would be wrong if it limited the scope of the observance so as to keep it in a line with its objective.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18671

[1] Gandhiji had confused the addressee's late daughter with his wife (S-N. 18654).

[2] The addressee had written: "I have to invite your attention to the article of Mr. Pandya, because it is symbolic of the numerous attempts that have been made to bring down the numbers of so-called untouchables since 1928. If to deny the existence of the untouchables were a solution of the problem, there was some sense in these attempts. The attempted denial is only for relieving the caste-Hindu leaders of their responsibility" (S.N. 18654).

212. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

December 8, 1932

MY DEAR RAJBHOJ[1],

With reference to your letter of the 3rd instant, here are my answers to your questions[2]:

1. If, as a result of the referendum, it is found that the majority of the temple-going population in the area covered by the referendum is against temple-entry by Harijans, the fast will undoubtedly be postponed. The postponement is likely to be indefinite, and resumption, if there is to be a resumption, can only be determined by circumstances over which I can have no control and which I cannot forsee.[3]

2. I think that it is premature to talk of satyagraha about other temples if and when Guruvayur is opened. We should always hope that the opening of Guruvayur will clear the way to the other temples.

3. I should hope that the Zamorin will not influence the people one way or the other, but even if he does, I should expect peopleat least on a religious question such as the one before them to think independently. In any event, I should consider myself bound by the opinion of the majority. The referendum will merely determine the question of the fast, not the question of opening the temple. If the result is hostile to temple-entry by Harijans, ways and means will have to be found of educating public opinion and preparing it for the opening. This is clear to me that there should be no forcible opening of any single temple. It would be an unseemly thing to have hostile

[1] Honorary Organizer and General Secretary of the Depressed Classes of India Service Society, Poona

[2] (i) "If after the referendum it is found that the caste Hindus are against temple-entry, will you fast? You stated that you will postpone your fast. How long will you postpone?

(ii) When Guruvayur Temple is opened, satyagraha will be offered at other temples. Will you render your active support?

(iii) As the Zamorin is a big landlord and influential man, will he not be able to carry a large section of the caste Hindus with him? Will it be a proper and genuine expression of the opinion of the caste Hindus that we obtain through the referendum?

(iv) Are you not aware that many caste Hindus eat beef ? In your fifth statement in reply to my question you asked Harijans to give up beef. Some people take it as a condition for entry into temples. In that case are all caste Hindus who eat beef eligible for temple-entry? You might be aware that there are several untouchables who neither eat beef nor lead unclean lives. Why are such untouchables prevented from entry into temples?" (S.N. 18652)

[3] *Vide* also Appendix "Discussion with Macrae".

sections looking daggers at one another, using the same temple.

4. I am firmly of opinion that there should be no condition made for the entry of Harijans to temples that are not applicable to the other Hindu worshippers. There should be therefore one regulation for all. I personally do feel that beef being forbidden food in Hinduism, it should be given up by beef-eating Harijans, whether the temples are opened or not. They should impose that condition on themselves without any prompting and without any consideration in the shape of temple-entry or other. There can be no doubt that every reform voluntarily made by Harijans among themselves is bound to hasten the removal of the black mark. It would make the task of caste-Hindu reformers infinitely easier than it is, and wind will be taken out of the sail of the opponents of the removal of untouchability. I hope therefore that no Harijan will say, 'First remove untouchability, and then we shall abstain from beef or do many other things expected of us.' Such an attitude will be just as bad as the attitude of those who would impose conditions on their admission to temples and the like.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. N. RAJBHOJ
207 GHORPADE PETH, POONA 2

From a microfilm: S.N. 18672

213. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

December [*8*][1]*, 1932*

MY DEAR ANGADA[2],

You do not [know] how glad we all are when we hear from you. So we were delighted to have your letter of 10th November. This is your 3rd letter. As my companions I have only the Sardar and Mahadev. Ba and Pyarelal were naturally taken away soon after the fast was over. But Ramdas, Surendra have been in this jail for some months

[1] As written in the source by an unknown hand, the original date having been defaced by the prison stamp

[2] Rama's monkey-emissary in the Ramayana. He was sent to plead with Ravana to restore Sita to Rama. Before launching the Salt Satyagraha in 1930, Gandhiji had sent his ultimatum to Lord Irwin through Reginald Reynolds. Narandas Gandhi gave him this name. *Vide* "Letter to Lord Irwin", 2-3-1930 and "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", Before 6-4-1930.

and now there is Jamnalalji —the last having been transferred here for the sake of his health.

I hope you are well in every way.

With love from us all.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 4544. Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

214. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

December 8, 1932

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

I hope you got my wire[1] and that it has healed your wound a little. I was pained to know that you had felt hurt, but at the same time I was also glad that you had such love for me. It is only the words of one whom we love that please or pain us.

You wrongly feared that I had communicated to that critic, too, the opinion I expressed to you.[2] On the other hand, I wrote to him and told him that I had no right whatever to give an opinion from jail. The youth has not replied to my inquiry as to who intended to stage the play. You should rest assured that I would never criticize your writings without ascertaining your views. I have great attachment for you both and have told you that I want a good many things from you. How can I have them unless I am able to win your heart? I shall never forget that early morning scene on the beach. I will go through your farce if I get the time. I will read it with your eyes and write to you if I have anything to say. I would not use the freedom you have granted me, and you also need not stop the sale. I do not wish to persuade you to do that even through strength of our mutual love. It is true that I have not read any of your books. I will, therefore, try to read them if you recommend any.

We shall discuss art in person if and when God brings us together. I have been able to understand you from your letter to some extent.

What shall I write to you about untouchability? You should

[1] *Vide* "Letter to K.M. Munshi", 7-12-1932.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to K.M. Munshi", 25-11-1932.

learn to see unity in my life in spite of its multiplicity, and, if you understand it, explain it to your co-workers. All my activities spring from one source.

I had received an interesting letter from Lilavati[1] just a few days before I got yours. I have still to reply to it.

I have written this with the left hand as my right elbow is paining more than usual. Our regards to you all.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From Gujarati: C.W. 7520. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

215. A LETTER

December 8, 1932

If there was any error in this, let the blame be mine, for I have drawn all of you into a very risky experiment. It is as dangerous as putting one's hand into a snake's hole. I don't regret it. It will be continued and I am sure that its ultimate result will be good. It will require sacrifices and we will make them.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 313

216. STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY-X

December 9, 1932

One of the friends who attended the meeting of Anti-Untouchability League, which because of the prior body founded by Mr. V. R. Shinde bearing practically the same name will henceforth be called, and in my opinion more appropriately, the Servants of Untouchables Society, gave me a list of several questions with argument woven into them. For the sake of brevity, I reproduce the most important of these questions in the form of a letter:

> As the Society has been formed at your instance and for the purpose of carrying out the programme for the removal of untouchability, workers naturally would expect your definite guidance. The first question that occurs to me then is this: Are the workers to constitute themselves as reformers, doing

[1] Addressee's wife

work of uplifting untouchables or uplifting themselves and if it is to be the latter, should not the greatest stress be laid upon work amongst caste Hindus themselves, and if so how is that work to be done?

This is a comprehensive question and in answering it, I hope to be able to cover the main points raised by my friend. I have repeatedly declared in unequivocal terms that caste Hindus are sinners who have sinned against those who are called untouchables. Caste Hindus are responsible for the present condition of the untouchables. Immediately, therefore, they repent for the sin and purify themselves by removing the load of untouchability from off the backs of un-touchables, we shall discover perfect transformation among the latter. Not that they will at once shed the habits of a lifetime, but there would be conscious effort on their part to shed those habits and everywhere the multitude of caste Hindus will be helping them to give up those habits.

It would be like the suppressed members of a family rejoining the suppressors, feeling the warmth of reunion and suppressors receiving them as if they were never separated. I am painfully conscious of the fact that such a consummation will take some time before it comes, but it will never come unless some of us understand and adopt the right attitude. Even among the liberal-minded workers, I have often heard the opinion expressed that untouchability should be removed only when the Harijans give up their bad habits, educate themselves and live clean lives utterly forgetting that Harijans cannot do these things whilst they remain untouchables. Even if they would, they forget also that individual Harijans who are living decently are not received on terms of equality by caste Hindus and the very best amongst them are denied the ordinary amenities of life every day and contact with caste Hindus. Their birth constitutes the automatic cause for the penal servitude for life which cannot be commuted by any change in manners or any other consideration. Hence there is and can be no incentive to better their mode of life. The idea has taken deep root in their minds that they may hope for no redemption at least during their present lifetime.

The only way therefore is to undo the mischief and make them realize the dignity of their status as men. Caste Hindus should first unconditionally take them up as their very own and then and then only can a change in their condition on a vast scale take place. Therefore the first and foremost items in the programme of work should be a whirlwind propaganda for educating and canvassing opinion among

caste Hindus. This work can be done by personal visits on a most intensive scale and by flooding the country with literature on the subject.

In my opinion untouchability is as self-demonstrated a sin as untruth. The proposition does not need the support of Shastras. Nevertheless, as there is a body of learned men who invoke the aid of Shastras in order to justify untouchability by reason of mere birth, it would be well for workers to arm themselves with pro-reform literature. There is a growing body of learned men in Shastras who emphatically hold that untouchability as it is believed and practised today, has no support whatsoever in the Shastras.

This propaganda can only be entrusted to workers who have character to lose, those who will not be easily ruffled by insults, who have patience to listen to counter argument and wit enough to combat it. In a movement of religious reform, there is no room whatsoever for coercion in any shape or form. Reformers will have to submit to their fate if as a result of this personal canvassing it is discovered that a vast majority of Hindus have no sense of sin about untouchability or even otherwise are averse to its removal and the consequent raising of the Harijans' status. They will have then without being irritated against the majority shown by personal suffering that they are in the right and the majority in the wrong and this they can best do by making common cause with Harijans and voluntarily denying themselves those rights and conveniences which are today denied to Harijans.

Such an act of self-denial by a large body of men and women will by itself fill the Harijans with hope and raise them in their own estimation and encourage them to an effort for self-improvement. The most effective work that can be done among caste men is to induce them to take one Harijan at least per family either as member or at least as domestic servant. There is an ancient practice in well-to-do households never to take their meal without having at least one guest to share it with them. Nowadays this is more observed in the breach than in the performance. This act is described as one of the five *daily yajnas* or sacrifices. I cannot conceive of a better mode of offering this *yajna* than that of having a Harijan to share the meal with us.

This must not be confused with inter-dining. For me, inter-dining means dining with those who may touch your food and whose food you may touch but dining together under the same roof without the mutual touch does not mean inter-dining.

If untouchability of Harijans is removed, there can be no objection to their sharing the family meal precisely on the same terms as other castes. There are again innumerable social functions and ceremonies to which Harijans are never invited by caste men. Their cattle and other domestic animals may share their joys and sorrows but not Harijans or, if they do, these are occasions when they are pointedly reminded that they are not the same sort of human beings as caste Hindus.

I have pointed out only a few illustrations of the kind of propaganda and work that can be and should be done amongst caste men to purge themselves of the sin but, even as special treatment and care are bestowed upon a banished member of the family when he is recalled, so will caste men do the work amongst Harijans themselves when the sense of sin has really dawned upon them. They will then go to the Harijans not as teachers or donors but as debtors going to their creditors to discharge their obligations and in that humble spirit they will offer to teach them, their children and otherwise help them in every way possible for them.

It has been suggested that if this constructive programme is taken up, it would prove too expensive and too long-drawn-out to be of immediate service, and to do it would be a programme by itself on the part of a handful of reformers. It assumes a different shape when it is conceived as an item in the programme of self-purification. A tree is judged by its fruit and so has the changed spirit of caste men to be judged by its results. It is, therefore, not enough for them to be able to say that they have touched half a dozen Harijans during the day or even that they have fed a Harijan but their newly born affection for them should make them impatient to render this neglected portion of humanity every help that it is in their power to render.

After all, Harijans themselves have to feel the effect of the new awakening in Hinduism and they cannot do so unless caste men come in contact with them in every walk of life and every activity. If the awakening is universal, constructive programme will not prove expensive. Local volunteers will work in their own localities without needing any payment and if the awakening is not universal it becomes the double duty of workers to tackle the constructive programme.

Therefore, whether it is slow or quick, expensive or inexpensive, I have no doubt it must be the integral part of the activities of the society. It may not be able to overtake all Harijan children, or all

Harijan sick needing medical aid but whatever is done in that direction will count and should be an earnest of more to come.

Moreover the monetary contributions will be the index of the extent to which caste Hindus have responded to the call of the age. In this programme temple-entry occupies the most important place, for, when the innumerable public temples are opened to Harijans they will immediately feel the dawning of a new era for them. They will forget that they were once the outcastes of the society. Intermingling at temples will of itself induce a change in their outlook and in their lives. They will forsake their objectionable habits. But say some of my correspondents:

> What are temples worth today? They are dens of iniquities. All kinds of practices are going on there.

I have a cutting before me containing a letter from a lady drawing an ugly picture of what is going on in a famous temple. I do not know how far charges made against some of these celebrated shrines are true. There is no doubt that temples are not what they must have been when they were built. Temple-reform in itself is a separate subject. Their deterioration cannot be pleaded as valid reason for not opening them to Harijans and I know that vast mass of poor people who visit these temples are untouched by corruption that may be going on in them; and whatever may be true of famous temples is undoubtedly not true of village temples. Village temples were and even now are a place of refuge for villagers. It is difficult to conceive the life of a Hindu villager being regulated without his temple. Whether it is birth or death or marriage in a Hindu family, temple plays a prominent part.

Therefore, Harijans must have access to it. But says another correspondent:

> If you do not insist on Harijans conforming to certain regulations such as cleanliness, you will lower the already tottering reputation of temples.

I anticipate no such catastrophe. What I have said is that no special condition should be laid down for the entry of Harijans that is not applicable to every other Hindu worshipper.

I heartily endorse that suggestion of Dr. Bhagwandas that instead of untouchability senselessly attaching to birth, it should attach to individual's outward conduct.[1] One cannot regulate inward

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Bhagwandas" 14-12-1939.

cleanliness but it is possible to regulate outward conduct and therefore those whose habits are unclean, who are unwashed and unkempt, who are drunk, should be regarded untouchables till they have cleaned them-selves even as every human being all the world over in decent society is untouchable whilst he is in a dirty condition from any cause whatso-ever. But under the cover of specious argument as cleanliness, etc., Harijans should no longer be kept without payment of the debt due to them by caste men.

The first step therefore is to receive them as they are, subject only to general regulations, not specially imposed for the occasion, but the regulations that have been in vogue before reforms came. New regulations may undoubtedly be framed after freedom of Harijans is honestly declared and assured to them.

The Bombay Chronicle, 10-12-1932

217. TELEGRAM TO U. GOPALA MENON

December 9, 1932

HEAR THAT VOTES TAKEN FROM ALL HINDUS IRRESPECTIVE WHETHER THEY ARE TEMPLE GOERS OR NOT.[1] IF THIS IS SO REFERENDUM WILL BE TOTALLY VALUELESS. PLEASE WIRE[2] WHAT PRECISELY IS BEING DONE. IF ABSOLUTE PRECAUTION NOT BEING TAKEN VOTES HITHERTO RECEIVED SHOULD IN MY OPINION BE CANCELLED.

GANDHIJI

From a microfilm: S.N. 18676

[1] According to *The Hindu,* 12-12-1932, "A correspondent wrote to Gandhiji expressing apprehension that the referendum at Guruvayur was not being taken in the proper way. *Vide* also the following two items.

[2] The addressee's telegram is not available, but a telegram dated December 10, 1932, from Rajagopalachari read: "Every precaution taken ensuring exact count votes of only *savarna* temple-goers. See statement Press issued along with this" (S.N. 18683).

218. LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON

December 9, 1932

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

I have your letter. I think that you are keeping the opinion of *avarnas* also. I quite recognize that the opinion based upon a knowledge of the local situation should prevail. I am glad that things are shaping themselves quite well there.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18675

219. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO T. S. KALYANA RAMA IYER[1]

December 9, 1932

I have certainly meant *bonafide* temple-goers for it is only the opinion of those who believe in temple-worship that should count.

Those who are wholly uninterested in temple-going have in my opinion no right to vote one way or the other.

The Hindu, 19-12-1932

220. LETTER TO A. S. ALTEKAR

December 9, 1932

DEAR DR. ALTEKAR,

I thank you for your letter and the pamphlet sent by you. Copies sent by you before were also received. Your pamphlet is very seasonable.

You say that my view that untouchability is not countenanced by Hinduism will not be acceptable to the average orthodox Hindu.

[1] In his reply dated December 16, the addressee, an ex-chairman of Trichur Municipality wrote: "I thank you for your kind reply of the 9th instant. I had clearly mentioned in my letter to you as follows: 'I have to request you to make it clear whether the opinion of the majority of the caste Hindus (no matter whether they are *bonafide* temple-goers or not) will prevail with you or is it the opinion of the majority of *bonafide* temple-goers' and I had concluded my letter as follows: 'If you are convinced that the majority of caste Hindus who now worship in the Guruvayur Temple (not the majority of the caste Hindus who are eligible for worship) will desert the temple if Harijans are allowed entry, will you still fast?' " (S.N. 18723)

Whether it will be acceptable or not is not the point. The question is whether there is any warrant for belief in untouchability as it is practised today. I am fully aware that there is untouchability in the *Smritis*, and perhaps also in the Vedas; but that acttaches not to birth but to external practice. If you do not mind, I would like you to examine the question from the standpoint suggested by me. According to the *Smritis*, what is the definition of untouchability? Is that untouchability incurable by any penance whatsoever? And what are the disabilities of untouchables?

Yours sincerely,

DR. A. S. ALTEKAR
HINDU UNIVERSITY, BENARES

From a microfilm: S.N. 18678

221. LETTER TO R. L. BISWAS

December 9, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I can entirely enter into your feelings, but I would plead for a little patience. If caste Hindus do anything in connection with untouchability, I fully recognize that it must be in the spirit of service and not that of patronage, and I am quite clear in my mind that there should be no idea whatsoever of taking any political advantage of the suppressed classes. The Society[1] that has been formed has therefore been kept wholly free from politics. I have repeatedly said that removal of untouchability for caste Hindus should mean repentance. I therefore share your sentiment to the full that you should not be spoon-fed and that you should work out your own salvation. I would like you to keep yourself in touch with me and draw my attention to anything which you may consider to be improper or undesirable in the programme or work of the new Society.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. L. BISWAS, B.A., B.L.
59 BADRIDAS TEMPLE ST.
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18674

[1] The Anti-Untouchability League, renamed as the Servants of Untouchables Society; *vide* "Statement on Untouchability—X", 9-12-1932.

222. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

December 9, 1932

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letter of 12th November only today. If it was an airmail letter, it should have been received about the 22nd of November. Your letter therefore seems to have gone through the whole circuit of examination before being delivered to me. I shall enquire. I am surprised that there should be any question arising as to whether I could do untouchability work more effectively as a free man than as a prisoner. I should think that it is a self-evident proposition that I could do more effective work as a free man. At the same time I can fully appreciate the Government standpoint. So long as they feel that civil disobedience must be put down at any cost and that their plan might be frustrated or checked if I was left free to carry on civil disobedience propaganda, they are bound to keep me under detention unless I would give them an assurance, be it even verbal, that I would not carry on civil disobedience propaganda. For my part, however much I may wish to confine myself wholly to untouchability work, I cannot without a full knowledge of the circumstances outside give any undertaking as to my future action. After all civil disobedience under given circumstances is as much an article of faith with me as removal of untouchability. I can therefore never say beforehand what will occupy my attention exclusively or for the most part at a given mo-ment and since a civil resister bargains for the punishment he receives for his resistance, he must not fret over it. Therefore and to that extent I am content with my lot. I hope this tells you clearly how I stand.

I hope you got there no alarming report about my little fast over Appasaheb Patwardhan. I need not, give you the details about the event for you must have seen them in the papers. All I need say is that except for a little weakness there is no ill effect left of the fast. I hope too that you are finding no difficulty in understanding and appreciating the temple-entry question and the contemplated fast.

I hope that you are keeping your health in spite of the stress.

Dr. Ansari is wonderful. If he is there, give him our love and tell him that our prayers always ascend to heaven for his complete recovery.

If what you say about the communal decision turns out to be true, it is a silver lining to the dark cloud.

Love from us all.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 977; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. III, p. 423

223. LETTER TO G. M. JOSHI

December 9, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

With reference to questions 1 and 2, they are beyond my scope and capacity.

With reference to 3, I know from personal experience that untouchability as it has been practised in India within our generation has retarded the evolution of Hindu society and by contagion of the whole of India.

No. 4 is again beyond me.

As to No. 5, I freely grant that the conscience of no one man can be sufficient warrant, or, for that matter, any warrant for changing anything, let alone customs of ancient society.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. M. JOSHI
171-A BUDHAWAR PETH, POONA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18677

224. LETTER TO DR. M. S. KELKAR

December 9, 1932

DEAR DR. ICE,

I have your letter. We must agree to differ about temples. People are allowed freely to see me only when they have real untouchability matters to discuss. To meet you in connection with my health special permission has to be obtained. This is quite unnecessary. I am being well looked after and am rapidly regaining strength.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. M. S. KELKAR
172 AUNDH ROAD
KIRKEE, POONA

From a photostat: G.N. 6643

225. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 9, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I was glad that you visited Puratan. It is necessary that somebody should visit him occasionally. I hope you got the letter about . . .[1] which I gave for posting yesterday.

I send with this letters for Puratan, Raghavan and Kusum.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8278. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

226. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

December 9, 1932

CHI. MANI,

I believe that you must be getting regular reports from Bombay and so do not write to you every day. Dahyabhai is steadily improving. There is still a slight rise in the temperature for a couple of hours every day, but he is fast regaining his strength. Devdas came here today. He said he saw Dahyabhai in Bombay and found him in very good condition. The doctor is gradually increasing the nourishment. Besides milk, he is also given vegetable soup. He remains very cheerful. There is a letter from Natarajan today, and he also reports to the same effect. So stop worrying altogether. I will send a reply to your long letter when I get some leisure.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 96-7

[1] The name has been omitted; *vide* also "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 7/8-12-1932.

227. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

December 9, 1932

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I got your telegram to which I replied promptly by wire[1]. You must have got it by now. I had to undergo a fast, but that too is an old story now. Some weakness was already there, but strength will gradually come back. Fasting has become a permanent and inseparable feature of my life. Those who understand me and those near to me should not be agitated on that account. Have faith that God will never let me die until He has extracted from me service to His own satisfaction. I hope you are keeping well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Where is Krishna Nair?

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2396

228. TELEGRAM TO K. L. DAFTARI[2]

[*December 10, 1932*][3]

COULD YOU PLEASE REACH POONA ON THE 23RD MORNING TO TAKE PART IN A SMALL CONFERENCE WITH SANATANIST SHASTRIS OPPOSING TEMPLE ENTRY BY UNTOUCHABLES? IF YOU CAN WOULD LIKE TO MEET YOU BEFORE THE 23RD.

GANDHI

The Hindu, 12-12-1932

229. LETTER TO K. RAMUNNI MENON

December 10, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter enclosing copy of a letter addressed to me by 300 ladies of Guruvayur. The proper course in all such cases is to send the original to the addressee.

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Brijkrishna Chandiwala", 4-12-1932.

[2] Sanskrit scholar of Nagpur

[3] From "Diary, 1932" entry under this date

With reference to the second paragraph of your letter, I am surprised that you should make reference to complaints about the fraudulent manner in which referendum is taken. I expect according to your promise details in proof of the charge. Meanwhile, I can only give you my assurance that every care is being taken to take the referendum openly and impartially, without using any pressure upon any person. Elaborate precautions have been taken in order to ensure complete fairness. If therefore any departure from fairness is noticed by you, I would suggest your promptly bringing it to the notice of the organizer, Sjt. Madhavan Nair, at the same time keeping me informed of any such irregularity.

I did receive a copy of the memorial to H.E. the Viceroy. I went through it carefully, and I am sorry to say that, instead of argument, I found it to be full of invective and irrelevant matters.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KOZHIPURATH RAMUNNI MENON, B.A.
"RAMACHANDRAM", GURUVAYUR P.O.

From a microfilm: S.N. 18680

230. LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON

December 10, 1932

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

Shree K. Ramunni Menon has forwarded the enclosed document[1] to me. He tells me that the original is in his possession which can be produced whenever required. You will please tell me all about it. The covering letter also I am enclosing herewith together with copy of my reply.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GOPALA MENON
CHALAPURAM, CALICUT

From a microfilm: S.N. 18679

[1] Copy of the letter addressed to Gandhiji by 300 ladies of Guruvayur; *vide* the preceding item.

231. LETTER TO SADASHIV RAO KARNAD[1]

December 10, 1932

MY DEAR SADASHIV RAO,

I have your letter. I am glad you have given me a detailed description of the activity there. The only thing I can say about secret propaganda is that you should ignore it, but you should redouble the effort to be absolutely fair and honest. It does not matter if the referendum goes against us, but there should be no undue pressure exercised by any of our workers. The opponents should be treated with perfect courtesy, no matter what they say or do. If you remain absolutely straight, you will find that the poison will become sterilized.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SADASHIV RAO KARNAD
C/O GOPALA MENON
ADVOCATE, CHALAPURAM, CALICUT

From a microfilm: S.N. 18684

232. LETTER TO CHAS. PEACOCK[2]

December 10, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I was unable to write to you earlier. You have faced an interesting question. I think that Christians who have no desire to proselytize can render substantial help to the Anti-Untouchability Movement by working under or with the ordinary Hindu organizations. The constructive work to be done covers such a wide field that there can never be too many workers. In so far as Christian Untouchables

[1] In his letter dated December 5, 1932, the addressee, giving a detailed description of the activities relating to the Guruvayur temple-entry movement, had also written: "Our work is being hampered by the secret plans of the sanatanist representatives. . . . They are holding secret meetings of a select few. The resolution come to in their deliberations . . . is that outright and unadulterated non-co-operation is to be the policy that is to be adopted by them towards our men . . ." (S.N. 18657).

[2] The addressee, in his letter dated November 17, had asked Gandhiji as to what were "the duties of an Indian Christian towards Harijans". He had written: "I am an Indian Christian employed as a teacher in a Board School. I have been a teacher for nearly twenty-five years now. I wish to devote my spare time for the raising of the *Adi-Andhras* of whom there are thousands living both in this town and in the neighbourhood. I should like to work for them without surrendering my Christ and . . . without trying to change their religion . . ." (S.N. 18633).

are concerned, I do not mean to say anything. I observe from the correspondence I am receiving from Christian friends that the Hindu movement has quickened the conscience of Indian Christians and they are impatient to get rid of the taint of untouchability in their midst. I think I have sufficiently answered your question.

Yours sincerely,

CHAS. PEACOCK, ESQ.
HEAD MASTER, BOARD MIDDLE SCHOOL, SALUR (VIZAGAPATAM)

From a microfilm: S.N. 18682

233. LETER TO R. V. PATWARDHAN

December 10, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I see clearly that you have not been studying my writings. I must adhere to my statement that there is no coercion about the temple-entry movement and so far as I am concerned there will be none.

2. No temple will be touched, caste or no-caste, where the majority of *bonafide* temple-goers within the locality surrounding a particular temple oppose the admission of untouchables.

3. There will be no defiance of law.

4. If the managers are owners, unless they consent no entry will be attempted, even if the temple-goers may be in favour of untouchables' entering.

5. Where managers are trustees in respect of a public temple, they should be expected to carry out the wishes of the majority of temple-goers.

6. No coercion will be exercised against the minority. I have already suggested that for them, if they are agreeable, certain hours of the day according to their numbers may be set apart for exclusive worship by them. In short, every attempt is being made not to hurt the religious susceptibilities of any person. I do not know the meaning of your reference to my statement about Sankaracharya.

I would ask you to re-read what I have said[1] about the unfavo-

[1] *Vide* "Statement on Untouchability—IX", 26-11-1932 and "Letter to P.N. Rajbhoj", 8-12-1932.

urable verdict in the referendum at Guruvayur. You have wholly misconstrued my position?[1]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. V. PATWARDHAN
BHUDHAWAR PETH, POONA CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18681

234. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[*Before December 11, 1932*][2]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got both your letters. I have to cope with extremely heavy pressure of work, and, moreover, since my views regarding Kamalnayan are not the same as yours, I did not think it necessary to write imme-diately. I had, therefore, intended to write to you at the first available opportunity. I was going to write today in any case when I got your second letter. One may feel after reading it that your health had become a little worse, but I have no fear of that happening. It is good that the discharge has started again. It will not help you in any way if it is stopped with artificial means. The cause for the cramp in the stomach may be that you probably ate something in excessive quantity. On one or two days recently the bread was not properly baked. Perhaps you will find toasted bread easier to digest. You have sufficiently strong teeth for that. I am sure you know that bread should be chewed thoroughly. The bread can be toasted for you here, for it is supplied to you from our ward. And as I have a hand in baking the bread, there will be no difficulty in supplying you toasted bread. If you eat bread at all the three meals, fresh toasts can be prepared for all of them and supplied to you.

You should also not give at present, as you have been doing, too much time to interviews connected with business. According to Dr. Modi, complete rest is essential. It is not advisable even to talk much. To derive the full benefit of the air of this place, it is extremely essential that you should take complete rest and talk very little.

[1] In his reply dated December 16, 1932, the addressee refutes the charge of having misunderstood any of the statements made by Gandhiji and says: "Your declared vow is altogether unjustifiable" (S.N. 18726).

[2] From the date of receipt entered in the source

Colonel Doyle talked with me about you for a fairly long time. We had a talk just the day before yesterday. His advice was that you should go to Europe. I don't think that necessary at all. We should do our best with whatever help we can get in this country and rest satisfied. Do let me know, however, if you wish to go to England. I also expect to get in a day or two a reply to my request[1] for permission to see you frequently.

And now about Kamalnayan. You will require special permission if you wish to send him to South Africa. He will not get proper facilities for education there, He will not be admitted to any English school or college. They have started a college for Indians, but from our point of view it can have nothing special to offer. Facilities for private education will also be meagre. As for Phoenix, it is in the midst of a jungle. If Kamalnayan goes and lives there, he will have to spend most of his time working in the press. From all points of view, therefore, South Africa should be left out of consideration. But it is otherwise with Ceylon. Kamalnayan can join any one of the schools there. The climate of Nuwara Eliya is excellent. There is hardly any place which can surpass it in the beauty of natural surroundings. We will also find there a large number of persons whom we know. Bernard Alovihari is a close friend. He is a very good scholar and a man of character. He was on the same boat with me when I returned from England. He belongs to one of the ancient families of Ceylon. If Kamalnayan does not feel happy there, we can immediately call him back. You can also write to him frequently and so can he to you. According to me, therefore, Ceylon is the only country to which we can send Kamal-nayan to satisfy his desire for learning English, without sacrificing our principles. He also likes the idea. If, however, you do not approve of it, let him remain at Wardha for the present. If he is happy there, we can desire nothing better than that. But I gathered from my conversation with him and knew from his letter that he was not happy in Wardha. That is how the problem arose.

Manilal, who was to leave on Wednesday, has had to postpone his departure. He can now leave on the 29th.

Chhaganlal Joshi arrived here yesterday to help me. This will

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", 29-11-1932.

not lighten my burden, but work will not remain unfinished to the same extent as it did every day till now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2907

235. LETTER TO DEONAYAKACHARYA AND HIRALAL D. NANAVATI

December 11, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 8th instant.[1] Your interpretation in para 2 of your letter is correct. You will therefore please correspond with Acharya Dhruva and arrange for the discussion suggested.[2] The object of such a joint discussion will, I take it, be to act upon my mind and heart. I would naturally follow the discussion with an open mind and respectful attention. If you mean more than this in para 4 of your letter you will please explain.

Your admonition in the two concluding paragraphs does not call for any reply.

MESSRS DEONAYAKACHARYA AND HIRALAL D. NANAVATI

From a microfilm: S.N. 18688; also *The Hindu*, 19-12-1932

236. LETTER TO PRAGNANESWAR YATI

December 11, 1932

I thank you for your frank letter.[3] I would ask you not to feel so nervous about myself. Through a period of active service covering more than forty years you will not recall more than perhaps twelve occasions of vicarious fasting. It came into my life, as I conceive it, after I had become a fit instrument for doing it. No one can do it in a

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Secretary, All-India Varnasharma Swarajya Sangh".

[2] In the source, what follows is written in Gandhiji's own hand.

[3] The addressee had written: "It is a matter of regret that you do not compromise on any point and yet keep the threat of a fast ever hanging. How can one deal with you?"

hurry and my claim you know. I do not act on my own, but I act in obedience to the inner prompting. Whether it is the voice of the divine or the devil, it is not always easy to say. Nevertheless in each case the claim to the inner prompting may be held to be justified. So far as Mr. Mate's reproduction of his conversation between him and me is concerned, your deduction is too sweeping. In order to have a proper clearance it would be better perhaps if we meet, and I shall await you on . . . at . . ."

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 318

237. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

December 11, 1932

First about Appasaheb. One should serve untouchables wherever one finds them. Moreover, persons serving the cause of anti-untouchability ought not to be silent witnesses to people who are not untouchables being treated as such. Appa's *tapashcharya* in this regard is not a new thing, and his demand was not that he should be permitted to do a particular kind of work in place of another, but that he should not be prevented from doing what he regarded as his dharma. I cannot go into further details on this subject. However, I did not have even a moment's doubt about the propriety of Appasaheb's step or about the step I intended to take. Nor have I any doubt about it now after the matter is over.

Now about the issue of temple-entry. It would of course be illegal on the part of the trustees if they go beyond their authority in doing anything. The present movement is not intended to force the trustees to take any illegal step. However, if the people on whose behalf they are acting as trustees desire a particular step to be taken, it becomes their duty to secure legal sanction for it. If the people are against a proposed step, a fast [to force the trustees to take it] would be blackmail, and a poll is being taken to prove that the intended fast is not of such character. If the majority of people express themselves against Harijans being permitted to enter temples, then I will not fast on that issue. But other more difficult duties will arise for us then, which it is unnecessary to discuss now. If a temple belongs to a particular sect, we cannot insist on people outside its fold being permitted to visit it, but the Harijans belonging to that sect must have the right to

enter it. This question, however, does not arise at all in the case of the Guruvayur Temple. The idea of fasting has a purely spiritual aim. Without it, it would be impossible to overcome our inertia. Whenever a religion had lost its vitality, men of sincere devotion went through extreme *tapashcharya* to restore life to it. Without such *tapashcharya*, no religious awakening can be brought about. If a person disappears into a jungle and undertakes an indefinite fast, nothing can be said against his step. It would of course be considered foolish if anyone did that ignorantly. But the step would be regarded as irreproachable if taken with a spiritual aim. A lighter step than that by me in the present circumstances would be fully justified. I say 'lighter' because my fast will not be absolute or unconditional. The fast will end if a certain condition is accepted. In laying down a condition one should exercise discretion and self-restraint, and I believe that I have done so in the present instance. Being conditional, the fast will shock the people less to that extent. My relation with the people has now become a family bond. For many years I have trained myself for such a bond, and I have seen from personal experience that, within certain limits, fasting has a place in domestic relationships. Even in that sphere, one must of course exercise self-restraint. It is after experimenting in the small family circle that I have widened the field of practice. I have tried to explain the idea so as to convince your reason, but the truth is that I have never undertaken any of my fasts after rational consideration, but that each one of them was undertaken in obedience to the inner voice. I do not mean to say that there can be no error in this. There goes on in the heart a ceaseless battle between the divine and the demoniac. We cannot always judge when it is the demon that deludes us or the divine that leads us. It is for this reason that religion enjoins that everybody who wishes to awaken the divine in him should walk on the razor's edge of the *yamaniyamas*.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 320-1

238. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

December 11, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

You should know that I have suggested[1] the changes in food in order to improve the health of the people and increase their self-control and peace of mind. Those who do not like them may not try them. Those who have tried them and found that they do not suit them may give them up. Nobody should accept them unwillingly or out of false shame. I hope you observe silence during meals and when spinning for *yajna*.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

239. LETTER TO GANGABEHN B. JHAVERI

December 11, 1932

CHI. GANGABEHN (JHAVERI),

It is not good that you, who used to write to me regularly should have stopped writing altogether. However busy I may be, I must get letters from you all. I hope your health is improving.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3950

240. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 11, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

Read my letter to Sitla Sahai. Read the letter to Lakshmi too.

Chhaganlal has returned. He told me that *jowar* gruel is the most popular item of food with prisoners. I am making further inquiries. Let me know the result of your observation. From time to time, ask all those who have joined the experiment. I hope you get everybody weighed.

I have been getting your letters in due time. For some time, keep

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 21-11-1932and ; November 30/ December 1, 1932.

on writing as often as necessary. Is wheat, *bajri* and *jowar* flour consumed whole? Where do you get the grain ground? Those who eat four times a day may continue the practice. My point was that nobody should eat between meals. Eating off and on does a great deal of harm. I hope that the shortage of ghee has been met. Does not Shankarbhai take milk? He should not pay excessive attention to his piles.

Raojibhai's demand seems to be reasonable. I hope Dahibehn has taken away Balbhadra.

Ask Soman to write to me. He should increase his weight. But he should take care that in his attempt to do so he does not fall ill. How did Jamna become ill? I hope she is all right now.

In all there are 25 letters. All of them are stitched together.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8279. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

241. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

December 11, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

Your tonsils must have been removed by now. I am awaiting a detailed account.

If thinner gruel agrees with you better, you should take that. My only point is that, if you take only gruel in the morning that will help evacuation. But I don't insist on anything against your wish. If you think it necessary to eat boiled vegetables, you may do so. Drinking water slowly may also help.

You must have sent some slivers to Dhurandhar. I shall expect Sushila and you at the end of this month.

When you write to Kisen, send my blessings to her.

Try to know what is in Lakshmi's mind. Try to understand Padma.

Is it true that Shanta has come? Have a talk with her and know all the facts from her. I did not like her conduct. I am writing to her.

However short my letters may be, you should go on sending me your narratives.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10314. Also C.W. 6753. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

242. LETTER TO PADMA

December 11, 1932

CHI. PADMA,

I hope you have become calm now. Do you understand now what true freedom means? If you have understood it, tell me what it is. You may come again if you wish to see me. I see that your discontent also is a cause of your ill-health. Understand this properly and become calm. If you feel the slightest desire to marry, let me know. Take complete rest there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6142. Also C.W. 3494. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

243. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA N. KHARE

December 11, 1932

CHI. RAMACHANDRA,

I got your letter. You have not replied to my question. I hope your health is all right now.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 301. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

244. LETTER TO SHANTA S. PATEL

December 11, 1932

CHI. SHANTA,

I don't like your behaviour, for I don't understand it. You seem to be going and returning at will. I also did not understand why Mangala took away Pushpa with her. Probably you have sufficient reason for all this. But it is your duty to explain it to me and to Narandas. Write to me and explain every thing. You may come and see me if you wish.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4068

245. LETTER TO THE SANATANISTS[1]

December 11, 1932

You may convert me if you can. But I cannot accept the decision of the Parishad in a religious matter as final.[2]

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 319

246. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
(POONA),
December 11, 1993

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I got your letters. I have had talks with Sarojinidevi and Padma. It is not permissible to see Sitala Sahai and so I have not met him. I have the impression that unknowingly you have yielded to impure thoughts about Padma. The impurity can be clearly seen in your letter. It is not possible for a man to conceal his impure thoughts. The behaviour of you two towards each other was not that of a brother and sister. The scandals that were doing the rounds were justified. Still, I do not wish to blame you. There was no end to your foolishness. I should not have allowed any girl to come into contact with you. Now that my eyes have been opened, I will make some other arrangement for Padma. She has understood. As for Sitala Sahai, he is extremely unhappy. I have consoled him. Marriage is the best remedy for you. By all means get married. It will be better if you find a widow as your partner. If that is not possible in any circumstances, you may do as you wish. Whomsoever you choose to marry, tell her all the facts about your body. If you thus marry, the question will arise as to what will happen to the Ashram which you will have left. At the moment, I can say without thinking over the matter further that there will be no harm if you stay on for the present. We can consider later what should be done. If you do this, a salary can be fixed for you with which you

[1] This letter was in reply to a joint letter from the addressees in which they had stated that they were willing to hold a Parishad of the pundits, but had asked Gandhiji whether he would accept their decision.

[2] For further discussion on the subject, *vide* Appendix"Discussion with Mahadeev Desai".

may meet your household expenses and may also attend to khadi and other work. If you give the Khali to somebody, you will get money for that. Do not in any way feel helpless. I am not accusing you of anything. It is only a recognition of the true situation. If you wish to suggest any change in this, write and let me know. If you wish to see me, you may come and meet me. Let me know if you have a girl in mind. I have sent Chhaganlal an account of the matter.

Padma has asked to be permitted to write to you. I have given her the permission to do so through me. It has not finally been decided what should be done about her.

I have no fears on your account. In the end, all will certainly be well with you. I have not lost my faith in you. We are quite happy. Chhaganlal Joshi is here.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

What is the arrangement for water in Khali, Do they get enough?

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32984

247. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

December 11, 1932

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

I got two letters from you. I want an account from you of the yearly increase in the number of charkhas, the expenditure, the number of carding bows, the quantity of cotton carded, or spun or woven, and other activities—an account like the one maintained in all offices. I was glad to learn that you are keeping good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6542

248. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

December 11, 1932

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

Neither the mother nor the wife can be with you for all time. Dharma is the only companion, so do the bidding of dharma.

Parameshwar and *prakriti*[1] are not different, therefore *prakriti* too has no beginning. What is not Parameshwar is only an attribute.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 772

249. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 11, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. I hope you are now well. Let me know your daily routine. Tell Anand that I remember him very much. There is no time to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi, Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

250. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

December 11, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

Your letter. Give up all worries; leave everything to God. It is good if Dr. Sharma[2] comes to the Ashram. We must have only nature cure but up to now we did not find anyone willing to observe the Ashram rules too. These days long letters should not be expected from me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 267

[1] Nature
[2] Dr. Hiralal Sharma, the naturopath

251. LETTER TO T. CHINNIAH

December 12, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1] of 9th instant. I do not know that I can convince you through letter-writing. I should be very sorry indeed if through my fast which was intended purely to serve the *Adi-Dravida*, any injustice was done to them, consciously or unconsciously. If you feel that you are part of the Hindu community, I should have imagined that you would not mind election of untouchable candidates by all Hindus including caste Hindus.

I do feel that without having lived in a *paracheri*[2] I know what you want to convey to me.

If landlords and merchants were a helpless class like the untouchables, I would certainly have felt like fasting, if special electorates had been designed for them, for I am convinced that their helplessness would be increased. Even as it is, whenever we have a popular assembly, it will be discovered that those who have special electorates would not find them a method of protection, but would find them rather a method of weakness. For the reasons I have stated above, I cannot be a consenting party to the reduction of penal to two, and in any case, no one man can alter the Yeravda Pact. I have very little doubt that as time passes you will yourself be convinced that, of the two schemes, the Premier's and the Yeravda one, the Yeravda one is better.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18693

252. LETTER TO URMILA DEVI

December 12, 1932

My fast ought not to disturb you. It is part of discipline. It is a privilege earned by hard spiritual toil. It is a most powerful weapon in the armoury of a worshipper of truth and ahimsa. It has therefore to be used sparingly. Not every one can use it. You should therefore rejoice that I can use it. This assumes that with me it is spiritually used. If I am self-deceived, Heaven help me and all you who have faith in

[1] For extracts, *vide* Appendix "Extract from T. Chinniah's Letter".

[2] The place where the depressed classes live

me. But if you grant its spirituality in my case, then coercing fast of mine should be a thrill of joy and a source of strength for you. It must move all those who have love for me but that movement should mean a spur to greater performance of duty. I know you can have no difficulty in grasping what I have written. You shall no longer therefore grumble when you learn about my fast in future. Who knows when the next fast will come!

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 321

253. A LETTER

December 12, 1932

I have seen *Bleeding Wound*[1] but did not like it. What was the purpose gained by obtaining and printing so many opinions? Should we do for books what the vaidyas do for their medicines? If an introduction was needed, Sjt. Chintamani's was enough. His introduction had lost some of its weight by the addition of so many opinions. And there is no artistic merit apparent even in the type chosen for printing them. Date, place and such details have not been given at the end of all the articles. There are other mistakes too. My remarks are not intended to discourage you but only to warn you for the future. We must have self-confidence in our undertakings, and one who possesses it need procure no introduction, but one who does not should be satisfied with a single introduction.

[From Hindi]

Mohadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 322

254. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

December 12, 1932

BHAI MUNSHI,

All of us deserve to be regarded as unfit for public work— one of us suffers from pain in the elbow, and another from neuritis of some limb, and so on. All of us are sick people. It does not matter when the pain in my elbow will disappear, but you must get rid of

[1] Compiled by the addressee with introduction, foreword, preface and blessings from four eminent men.

your neuritis. If it cannot be cured Dr. Gilder should renounce his degree. It is of course very excellent work if you wrote your letter with the left hand and if this was your very first attempt to do so.

I suppose Jijima is the same lady I saw at a public prayer, and with whom I even joked a little. The news of her paralysis has not shocked me very much. She must be older than I at any rate. Write to her and tell her that all of us are bound to fall into the eternalsleep through some cause or another. Why, then, should we mind whether it comes through paralysis or some other illness? By all means she should hope to live for a hundred years; but if she must embrace our friend, Death, she should do so smilingly. The prayer that was recited at the prayer-meeting which she attended is recited here daily at night, so that we may learn how to die with a smile on our face. She should ponder over its last verse.

I wrote a letter[1] also after sending the telegram[2]. You must have received it. In it I have reassured you even more clearly than in the telegram. If you do not get that letter, let me know. I will write again whatever I remember from it. Write to me from time to time.

I got your letter after I wrote to Lilavati this morning. I am dictating this reply at night.

If I am fit to bless you,

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7521. Courtesy. K. M. Munshi

255. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

December 12, 1932

All descriptions of the *atman* are of its pure state, just as a description of water can be of pure water only. There cannot be one description of dirty water. If water could think, every pool of dirty water would ask the same question that you have done, and one of them might describe the qualities of pure water and exhort its fellows to become like that. This is exactly what Shri Krishna, who knew the qualities of the pure *atman*, did. We should know what these qualities are and try to become such *atman*. If you ask me how the *atman*

[1] *Vide* "Letter to K.M. Munshi", 8-12-1932.

[2] *Vide* "Teleegram to Narandas Gandhi", 7-12-1932.

becomes impure, my reply is that I do not know it, nor need we know it. We know that impurity is a fact, what the qualities of the pure state are and how we may get rid of the impurity. That should be enough for us. If I have not answered your question, you may ask me to explain again.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 322-3

256. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 12, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter of the 10th. Radha's case is rather alarming. As she has been running continuous temperature going up to 103 degrees, I think she must have become very thin and weak. Kusum seems to be improving slowly. If you have now got more information about Jethalal who died in the Sabarmati jail, to what term he was sentenced and of what he died, for what offence he was arrested, etc., please let me know.

I got Mithubehn's, Bhansali's and Kanti's letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8280. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

257. LETTER TO BEGUM MOHAMMAD ALAM

[*December 12, 1932*][1]

DEAR SISTER,

This letter of yours is quite perfect. Hindu ladies usually write an atrocious hand, but the letters from Muslim ladies are all good. That is why I do mind when any letter is not up to the mark. Good that my teasing has accomplished all this! Let us hope that Doctor Saheb makes a full recovery this time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 23

[1] It is evident from the contents that this letter was written after the letter of November 26, 1932 to Dr. Mohammad Alam, the addressee's husband. Another letter addressed to him on December 22, 1932 and "Diary, 1932", entry under this date, mention a letter to his wife which in all probability is the present letter.

258. LETTER TO C. V. VAIDYA

December 13, 1932

I was delighted to receive your letter[1] so full and instructive. I wish you could have discussed your position with me before sending your letter to the Premier; but nothing is lost yet, and if you can conveniently spare the time, I would love to see you and discuss the thing with you. Meanwhile, I present my doubts:

1. Do you mean to say that under no circumstances can Hindu Law or Hindu practice be changed by Hindu public opinion ?

2. Do you say that *Smritis* are unalterable and that everything said in them has to be carried out to the letter by a devout Hindu?

3. Were not *Smritis* written or revealed in response to the requirements of the age in which they were written?

4. Were not the *Smritis* written at different times?

5. If you hold that under no conceivable circumstance can legislation alter prevailing practice, how would you deal with the legal difficulty which is supposed to exist in Madras, viz., that even one man can under the law decided by the present courts, prevent the entry of untouchables to certain temples in spite of the consensus of public opinion in favour of such entry?

6. Or, do you hold that the existing temples can never be opened to untouchables?

7. Or, is not your opposition to legislation based on the assumption that the mixed legislatures would be interfering with

[1] Dated December 8, 1932 which read: " . . . I have addressed a letter (dated November 18, 1932) to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, President, 3rd R.T.C. . . . The reason which led me to address the letter is that I apprehend that hasty reformers will force by legislation, temple-entry and such like reforms down the throats of the orthodox Hindus of India who are voiceless, not being represented in the R.T.C. or the Legislative Councils. . . . Subsequently came your declaration published in *The Times of India*, that if you had the power you would make it an offence under the Penal Code for anyone to refuse to touch the Harijans. This was the last straw that broke the back of my silence and I at once addressed a letter on the subject to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, President, 3rd R.T.C., requesting him to introduce a section in the new Constitution like the one existing in the present Government of India Act, prohibiting future legislatures from passing any laws forcing reforms in religious and socio-religious matters. . . . I feel strongly on the subject of non-interference by the State Legislatures in such matters and I thought it my duty to do what I can for it at this juncture" (S.N. 18669).

Hindu religion, although if Hindu opinion was taken, such legislation would be found to have no public backing?

8. What objection would you see to the mere Hindu legis-lators first passing legislation regarding Hindu religion and then for the sake of formality it being passed by the whole House or Houses as the case may be.

9. Who are untouchables according to the Vedas, or, if you like, traditional Hindu religion?

10. Does untouchability attach to birth and persist from generation to generation?

11. Is such untouchability incurable by any penance or purification undergone by such untouchables?

12. Is prohibition against interdining and intermarriage an integral part of varna dharma?

13. Is varna dharma fully performed if a man belonging to one varna desists from dining with those belonging to a different varna and from contracting marriage relations with people of a different varna?

14. Does a person so interdining or intermarrying forfeit his varna?

15. Is not occupation the test of varna, and 'does not a person who changes his occupation, say, Brahmin, to that of another varna, pass on to that varna, or, it may be, forfeit his right to any varna at all?

I will not exhaust your patience nor tax your energy by adding to the already long list of questions, nor do I want you to burn midnight oil in order to be prompt in your reply, as you always are. Perhaps you will be able to give in a sentence or two an exhaustive answer which will cover all the points that have occurred to me. Anyway I shall look forward to your reply, and still more eagerly to your saying that you will make time to come to Yeravda to see me. I suppose you are older than I am, but I am sure that it does not interfere with your vigour.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. V. VAIDYA, M.A., LL. B.
GIRGAUM BACK ROAD, BOMBAY NO. 4

From a microfilm: S.N. 18695

259. LETTER TO K. NAGESWAR RAO

December 13, 1932

MY DEAR NAGESWAR RAO,

I have your letter. My message to you is that I hope Andhra will be to the fore in removing the blot of untouchability of Hinduism.

As to the interview[1] with Shree Suryanarayana Rao, I do not think there is anything to send to the Press. Nearly three-fourths of the long time I gave him was passed in reading some correspondence with his guru and then discussing with him his own credentials or qualifications for knowing all about Hinduism. He quoted some verses from the *Bhagavad Gita* to convince me that untouchability was countenanced by it and that it attached to birth, but he left on me the impression that public opinion in the general interest of the community demanded removal of the bar against the entry of *avarnas* to temples, and that so far as the other disabilities were concerned they should certainly be removed. But he was emphatic that there should be no force used in connection with temple-entry, but that efforts should be made in a conciliatory manner to persuade custodians of temples to throw them open to untouchables wherever public opinion was ripe. Naturally there was no question of our agreeing, but the attempt was made to understand each other's position and he said that as he understood what it was that I was exactly fighting for, he would try to collect together the sanatanists in the South and procure a settlement. Whilst I am dictating this, Ramchandra Rao is here, and he generally confirms my impression. If Sjt. Suryanarayana Rao has said anything that is inconsistent with this statement, you should show this to him before publishing it, or, if you come to the conclusion that my statement should be published in any case, then, too, it should not be published without its being first shown to him.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. NAGESWAR RAO
"ANDHRA PATRIKA"
THAMBU CHETTY STREET, GEORGETOWN, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 18698

[1] On December 3, 1932; *vide* "Diary, 1932", entry under this date.

260. LETTER TO SADASHIV RAO KARNAD

December 13, 1932

MY DEAR SADASHIV RAO,

I am glad you are keeping me informed of your doings there. The resentment even against Ba was bound to come. We should submit to all this cheerfully as a matter of course, and if we do, that is to say, do not even mentally resent the orthodox resentment but appreciate that if we were in their place probably we would have done likewise, you will find that in an incredibly short time this resentment will spend itself for want of resistance. That anger can be conquered by want of it by the victim is a scientific fact capable of verification in day-to-day life. But I know that it is a difficult task; but whether difficult or easy, in this matter of pure religion we dare not lose self-control and retaliate in any shape or form.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SADASHIV RAO KARNAD

From a microfilm: S.N. 18699

261. LETTER TO RAMTARAN MUKHERJI

December 13, 1932

Thank you for your letter.[1] All cannot have the gift of Shankar-acharya. I am using in my own humble manner such gifts as God has given me. Just as religious preachers like Shankaracharyaji have time after time dedicated their great learning for the sake of religion, so have others promoted religion on prayer and fasting.

From a microfilm: S.N. 18660

262. LETTER TO S. P. PATWARDHAN

December 13, 1932

MY DEAR APPA,

I have got your two letters[2]. Just at present I do not want to deal with many of the important issues you have raised in your letter of the 7th instant, but there is one thing which has complicated the matter. The Inspector-General did not know and has even now no official

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Ramtaram Mukherji".

[2] Dated December 7 and 8

knowledge that you were actually doing conservancy work. The previous orders were therefore passed in ignorance of this very material fact. It is very difficult now all of a sudden to have alterations made simply in your case. After all, what you were and are fighting for is the principle, and the question of principle is now before the Government of India. It will be decided, I am hoping, within a few days, certainly not months. For the present, therefore, I think that you should be content with the progress that has been made. Your telegram to me was unequivocal and therefore I think that you should take proper nourishment. Full ration does not therefore mean to me the ration as it is issued to healthy prisoners. For you to lose ten pounds is a big loss. I think, therefore, that you should take the food that may be medically prescribed, if it is not otherwise forbidden food. The Inspector-General of Prisons has kindly given instructions, so far as I understand, that you should have the food that your constitution may at present require. I hope you have no objection to taking milk.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

SJT. APPASAHEB PATWARDHAN

Home Department, Political, File No. 31/108-Poll., 1932, p. 71. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(6), p. 253

263. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA J. SOMAN

December 13, 1932

BHAI SOMAN,

I could find your letter last night. I had a faint impression that I had received one letter. So at the time of the weekly mail there was some confusion in my mind and I asked you to write to me. But now I have found the letter I wanted.

You have raised questions of a subtle nature. It is of course likely that forbearance may result in unmanliness or cowardice. Were it not so, we would not be faced with difficult problems of what is dharma and what is not dharma. Generally speaking, we may say that we ought not to tolerate an insult if it would be spiritually degrading to do so. This does not happen frequently. If the question is not of personal convenience or amenity, we ought to resist even at the cost of

physical suffering what we were not prepared to tolerate. Everybody should decide his own limits in such a matter. Moreover, we ought to distinguish between pride and self-respect. A proud person will take offence at every little thing. He who has got rid of selfishness will probably be able to distinguish between the two. Be satisfied with this. I did not lose six pounds in a day, but lost four pounds. I will not explain about the Appa affair in this letter. You ought to learn not to worry on account of my fasts. One should rejoice at a fast if it is inspired by spiritual motives. I am sure that my fasts are so inspired.

I hope your weight is increasing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4049. Also C.W. 94. Courtesy: Ramachandra J. Soman

264. STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY-XI

December 14, 1932

> Supposing on the strength of your statement[1] that in the event of the Referendum going against you, you would have to postpone your fast indefinitely, voters, although they may be in favour of Harijans entering the Guruvayur Temple, give their votes against you for the sake of preventing the fast, what would you do?

This is a question asked of me. I should hope there would be no such trickery resorted to by the voters. If, however, it is discovered that they have resorted to any such trickery, I can only say that they would be endangering my life more than if they voted honestly and according to their convictions.

Having put my life at stake for the removal of untouchability, I hope I shall not be found so cowardly as to save it by taking advantage of any dodge. What I have said about the postponement refers only to honest voting.

If I am satisfied that the majority of temple-goers in the neighbourhood of Guruvayur are really against temple-entry by Harijans, and if I still persisted in fasting, I should be guilty of using coercive measures in order to secure my end. I am not conscious of ever having done such a thing in my life, and I am not likely to do so now,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to P.N. Rajbhoj", 8-12-1932.

when I may be nearing my end, to deny the practice of a lifetime.

I am most anxious to preserve the approaching fast against the slightest taint of coercion, and I have no doubt that at the end of it, it would be found to have been free from reproach. I am watching, as a scientist would watch, the effect the contemplated fast is producing, and it fills me with hope and delight. It has set the people thinking, and it will certainly not compel any person to act against his conscience; but it is making sluggish people shed their sluggishness and act promptly, that is to say, that it is moving to action those who bear affection towards me.

I am not sorry for that movement. Those who think that I am attempting to corrupt Hinduism, write to me angry letters and invite me to anticipate the fast and thus hasten my death. I do not mind such letters. I am used to receiving them. I merely refer to them to showthat those who are opposed to the removal of untouchability are not likely to be affected by any fast that I may embark upon; and much less by the mere contemplation of it, and this is as it should be. I should like to say more about the origin of the fasting method under the given circumstances in my life. I must, however, postpone this to a future date. At the moment, I can only say that neither Srijut Kelappan nor I can be deterred from the step which has been dictated to us by our consciences.

When every effort is being made to ensure the honesty of the Referendum, it comes as a painful surprise to me that the Zamorin is making charges of fraud against those who are engaged in the Referendum work. I regard him as an honourable man. He knows that Srijut Madhavan Nair, who is the chairman of the Referendum Committee, is a well-known advocate respected throughout Kerala, and is assisted by Srijut Rajagopalachari, who is on the spot. I do not know of any of the leading workers who would tolerate any questionable practice.

It is, therefore, the duty of the Zamorin or any other person who may hear anything about the fraudulent practice, to bring it to the notice of the Committee. It is impossible to deal with the general charge unsupported by any evidence. There is no occasion to import passion or partisan feelings into what is purely a moral and religious question; but the orthodox party and the reformers can, if they will, work in close association for the elucidation of truth. I can only repeat my assurance so often given by me that if I found I was wrong about

the local public opinion being in favour of temple-entry, I should immediately retrace my step. I have no other end to serve but that of truth.

The Bombay Chronicle, 15-12-1932

265. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

December 14, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

Will you kindly send the enclosed[1] to Appasaheb Patwardhan?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 10

266. LETTER TO SUNDAR DASS

December 14, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 8th instant. It is difficult for me to prescribe your future programme without knowing your special condition. I would therefore ask you to see the local workers and fix the programme in consultation with them. But in any case, please give me the following information:

1. What is the population of the Balmik *Achhuts*[2] in your district ?
2. What is their occupation?
3. How long have they settled there?
4. What are the disabilities they are suffering from?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SUNDAR DASS
SECRETARY, BALMIK ACHHUT MANDAL
KOHAT (N.W.F.P.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 18700

[1] *Vide* "Letter to S. P. Patwardhan", 13-12-1932.

[2] Untouchables

267. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY[1]

December 14, 1932

DEAR MOTI BABOO,

I have your letter, and now your telegram. I hope you received my telegram. I can trace through everything you write and wire your enthusiasm and optimism. It is a good thing you have decided to see me and to bring Pandit Panchanan Tarkaratna[2].

But I want you to be quite sure of your foundation. The trouble is one for making Hinduism a living faith[3]. There is therefore no room for compromise on fundamentals. It does not matter, even if at the present moment, we cannot see the revival with our physical eyes, but in our impatience we may not compromise with untouchability as we know it today. Untouchability of a type is universal. Our quarrel is against the monstrosity as we see it today.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. MOTILAL ROY
PRABARTAK SAMGHA, CHANDERNAGORE

From a photostat: G.N. 11040

268. LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON

December 14, 1932

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

I have your letter. I did not understand what you said about the conditions as to cleanliness. I had noticed it in the forms that were sent to me, but I had put the interpretation that you have, that it was a condition of universal application. Naturally, the Harijans come under the general conditions.

I am glad that villagers are proving a tough job. It is good education for them and for us. The workers should neither lose faith in themselves nor patience with the villagers.

I am glad that both Urmila Devi and Ba are keeping their health.

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's letter of December 7, asking for a telegraphic message for a conference against untouchability being held on December 25 in Bengal (S.N. 18666).

[2] A Sanatanist leader

[3] The source has "phase".

I came upon Madhavan Nair's letter after having dictated this letter to you. Please therefore share this letter with him and let it be regarded as a joint letter. Though I cannot compete with you in the strenuous labour you are going through, I have my work cut out for me and I have to economize time in order to be able to overtake the growing correspondence and the increasing number of interviews.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18705

269. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS

December 14, 1932

DEAR BABOO BHAGWAN DASS[1],

I have your most touching letter[2] of the 10th instant. I do not know in what connection I could have told Devi Prasadji that you and Paramarth Baboo should go to Guruvayur. I knew the condition of your health. I cannot now recall the conversation. I can blame no one, least of all Devi Prasadji, but it is not yet, thank God, too late to mend.

In reply to Dhruvaji's letter I sent a telegram saying it was unnecessary for you and Paramarth Baboo to come to Poona, or to go to Guruvayur. If your presence had been a necessity, I would not have hesitated to risk damage to your health, but there is no such necessity. I did want Dhruvaji, not merely as a Sanskrit scholar, but also as Malaviyaji's accredited agent, and I told Kerala friends long ago that they should telegraph to Malaviyaji not to trouble to go to Kerala. We do not want to rush to Guruvayur. If the caste Hindus near Guruvayur are ready to admit the out-castes to that temple, nothing can stop their entry; if they are not, we shall have to wait for their conversion. I wanted someone, well-versed in Shastraic lore to see the *Shastris* of Malabar face to face, and if that someone went with Malaviyaji's authority at his back, it was enough, but now even that may be unnecessary. Nevertheless, I want Dhruvaji to meet some sanatanists here, if only for the satisfaction of the latter. Some of them have been at me. I told them that whilst my conviction was deep and had been proof

[1] Dr. Bhagwandas of Varanasi, a philosopher and Sanskrit scholar

[2] The addressee had said in it that "despite the unfitness" he would start either on the 20th or the 21st and reach Poona on the 22nd and see Gandhiji with Anandshankar Dhruv on the 23rd and then, despite his indifferent health, proceed with the latter to Guruvayur (S.N. 18685).

against assault for the past 45 years, since I was a fallible mortal I was open to be acted upon by any of the sanatani friends, and if I discovered that I had mistaken darkness for light, I would have no hesitation in going back upon 45 years' conviction and be witness to truth, and it is in that spirit that I shall approach the 23rd instant, if the sanatani friends will attend the contemplated meeting. If, after all this, you feel drawn towards Yeravda, do by all means come, and if you do, do not come to rush away. There will be work enough and to spare for you for a few days. It is unthinkable to disturb Malaviyaji. I know that he has his hands full.

I hope you did not miss my statement[1] wherein I wholeheartedly endorsed your suggestion that whilst there is and should be no untouchability regarding birth, there should be as there always has been throughout the world untouchability with regard to particular kinds of work, and that such untouchability was always curable after due cleansing.

Your last paragraph[2] is the most touching in your touching letter. I would not be truthful if I did accept your certificate, for it has been a lifelong effort to hear the voice of silence and to reduce self to zero. It has been a terrific though joyful struggle. It has not ended yet. The final result God only knows. I have no doubt that my recent acts have given a shock to dearest friends but all of them have been more than good to me. I was helpless, for in reality the acts were not mine. I was dominated by the Architect of us all.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18706

[1] *Vide* "Statement on Untouchability—X", 9-12-1932.

[2] This read: "Together with the large majority of the Indian people, I have great faith in the dictates of your pure heart, even when we may not be able to understand the reasons for them; for indeed always prayerful heart must see much further and much deeper than any head; and I feel that I should obey your least wishes at this juncture as far as may be possible for me, trusting that the needed fitness will come to me through your good wishes. Dhruvaji and Prem Nathji possess, of course, all the Sanskrit learning and debating power that may be needed, and it will be a pleasure and a privilege to work in company with them."

270. LETTER TO KAMAL KUMAR BANERJI

December 14, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. I am quite clear in my mind that having given your word and heart to the girl, whether she is called a Shudra or what not, and as she is deeply attached to you, you cannot get out of this sacred pledge, no matter what befalls you. I assume that the girl herself is a virtuous one and that the same can be said of you. In other words, this is a case of pure love between you two. If, on the other hand, there is the slightest irregularity or flaw about your position, you should obey your parents. If the girl and you are really virtuous and would become model householders, your parents will forgive the difference in caste and give you both their blessings.

Yours sincerely

SJT. KAMAL KUMAR BANERJI
CENTRAL HOTEL
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18707

[1] Dated December 6, 1932. This read: " . . . some years ago when my discretion had not become sounder and intelligence had not ripened, in an unguarded moment I gave an assurance to a girl of tender age that I would be her husband. I could not foresee then that she would cling to me passionately, my assurance having become an article of faith in her. There might have been no difficulty in our union if she had been a Brahmin, to which caste I belong, but unfortunately she is a Shudra . . . The idea of a marriage between a Brahmin and a Shudra is revolting to my parents and they much resent it. I am in a fix. I dare not offend my parents who are my makers and to whom I still owe my existence. On the other hand I cannot disown the girl who has considered herself to be my betrothed for years and to discard whom now will probably cause her death. This, I frankly confess, militates against my conscience but I see no way to bridge the difficulty in which I am placed, viz., to marry the girl and at the same time to earn the blessings of the parents. I therefore earnestly appeal to you to take my hapless case into your kind consideration and hold out to me the torch so that I may see a path in the darkness which has enveloped me and is threatening to wipe out the existence of two poor souls" (S.N. 18666).

271. LETTER TO A BENGALI BOY[1]

December 14, 1932

It is quite clear to me that you should make a clean breast of everything before your parents. The shame was in committing the sins you admit, but there need be no shame in making a clean confession before your parents. If you do it with a pure heart, you will find an accession of strength coming to you which you never had before.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 335

272. LETTER TO MANIBEHN

December 14, 1932

It is but natural that palate of a person in good health should be sensitive to, and relish for himself, the tastes of various foods, and even the man of the highest degree of self-control will recognize and ought to be able to recognize, such relish. Only he should have no attachment to it. When one becomes accustomed to abstinence from a harmful thing—whatever the reason for abstaining from it, such abstinence benefits the soul as well as the body as the hankering for that thing disappears. The effect of a complete or a partial fast varies with different men according to their natures and in the same person at different times. You will be able from your numerous experiences to think of cases in which the mind or the body or both of them were the cause for such difference. Not only do I feel no hardship in observing silence, but every week I eagerly look forward to one o'clock on Sunday. The fact is that we feel hardship in doing a thing for which we are not mentally ready. Anything for which the mind is ready or is made ready becomes quite easy to do. The person who becomes absorbed in silence ceases to hear the idle chatting of people around him. I hope you remember the secluded hut erected for Kishorelalbhai. There could be nothing but peace and silence in such a place. For two or three days Kishorelal found the rattling noise made by running trains unbearable, and I suggested that he should close his ears with cotton plugs. However, when I went to him the next morning,

[1] The letter was in reply to addressee's which read: "A sinner as I am by what means should I absolve myself of the sins? You had confessed your sins before your father; how can I develop the courage to do likewise? I have read your *Autobiography*; how can I gain the strength to admit my sins?"

he told me that he had heard neither the train whistle nor the noise of the running wheels on that day. Of course both these things had been there, but he had stopped paying attention to them. In other words, he had become accustomed to silence. My suggestion about the cotton plugs had roused him, for such artificial aid would be repugnant to one who has voluntarily retired into solitude and taken a vow of silence. Those who come to love silence begin ultimately to listen to the divine music within, and are so absorbed in it that they cease to hear the sounds occurring around them.

Our cat family has three members. They present themselves daily without fail at both the mealtimes, without a bell being rung for them or without being called. If we all become as punctual as these dear creatures, we would save millions of hours of time. And we have doubtless been taught how time is money. This is perfectly true, and so money saved is money earned. Who can compute the loss of wealth to this world through people who do not value time?

I certainly do not wish that the number of anti-untouchability workers should increase artificially. I would never wish that those who have a clear duty before them should leave it for Harijan work, no matter how dear such work may be to them.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol.II, pp. 334-5

273. LETTER TO SHIVPRASAD GUPTA

December 14, 1932

If a temple is somebody's private property, it is true that it would be coercion to try to get it thrown open to Harijans.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 338

274. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 14, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got the weekly mail. I am writing this after reading Anandi's letter.

The rule about eating three times only does not apply to anybody who is ill or weak in health. Nor does it apply to children. The

rule which applies to all is this:

Everybody should eat in the same manner as he takes medicine—in measured quantity and at fixed times. Somebody may even have to be fed two teaspoonfuls of something every hour. If so he should not be given that thing every half an hour.

Thus the habit of munching something in between meals is a bad one and is violation of the vow of not indulging the palate. One should not even eat a green tamarind. But a girl like Anandi may need to eat more often than thrice. She ought not to do so just to please herself, but she may eat what is necessary for the sake of her health and as often as necessary. Children of the age of Babla may eat four times. Of course nobody should swallow in three meals the quantity that he would eat in four meals. It may help if the quantity consumed in three meals is divided into four meals, but it would be harmful to eat in three meals the quantity that one might eat in four meals.

When one has got fever, one should not eat solid food, by which I mean wheat, *jowar*, *bajri*, rice, pulses and tubers, that is, articles which contain starch and protein. If, however, one feels hungry and passes normal stools, one may drink milk in small quantities. Fruit juices may be taken in practically any condition, though even these should not be taken if one has no appetite.

Anybody who cannot digest *jowar* and *bajri* must not eat them. Anybody whose body—not palate—demands rice, may eat it. For those who are ill, the water in which rice has been boiled sometimes proves the ideal food. Ordinarily, rice is not essential for health and, sometimes, even does harm. Rice-eaters are generally seen to be flabby. They have round bellies. This is a common sight in Bihar and Madras. I hope I have now made myself clear.

What shall I write concerning the Chharas? Our *tapashcharya* is imperfect. Our faith in God is not strong enough. We do not look upon the Chharas as our own brothers and sisters. We are afraid of them. I deserve this charge more than anybody else. My shortcomings have taken visible form as the camping of Chharas in the neighbourhood of the Ashram. Endure them. Please remember that I have not advised a letter of abject supplication to be written to the Collector. I had suggested the substance of the draft after careful thought. I am, therefore, certainly eager to know what action Mavalankar has taken. I hope you yourself had followed my mean-ing. I see in this situation a severe test of our devotion to dharma. From here, I see our dharma

quite clearly. Any man or woman, old or young, who has courage and faith in God, should go and live among them, plead with them and, even if they beat him or her, show them the right path. We should know how they live. If, however, we do not have the necessary strength to do all this, we should think and decide whether we are willing to defend ourselves by fighting the Chharas. If we are willing to do that, we should decide whether we should seek the Government's help and, if not, whether we could engage paid watchmen and from which community or class we would select them. If, on the other hand, we do not wish to engage such watchmen, we should decide whether we would fight as best as we could, or whether we would prefer not to abandon our path and, though we did not possess sufficient strength to follow it well, we would be content with as much as we could do in that direction. I think I have said enough. I hope nobody will get scared. I have written all this so that people there may think over the problem.

Prema's operation must be over.

BAPU

[PS.]

Please let me know what Mavalankar has done. I am thinking what can be done in that direction.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M. U./I. Also C.W. 8281. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

275. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

[*December 14, 1932*][1]

CHI. PANDITJI,

I have your letter. I have understood the *Subodh Patrika*. Do you have any doubt about it? If you have, please let me know. I shall explain the thing. I find it very difficult to spare time for *Bhajanavali*.[2]

I have written about the Chharas. We should have the strength to win them over.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 256. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

[1] From the reference to the Chharas; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] Gandhiji wished to offer some suggestions for a new edition of the *Bhajanavali*, the Ashram hymn-book; *vide* "Letter to Narayan M. Khare", 8-2-1932.

276. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,
December 14, 19[*32*][1]

CHI. KANTA,

I have your letter. You must always keep some soda bicarb with you. Whether or not you have a cough, sour buttermilk becomes harmless if a little soda is added to it. Where raw onion is available, do not hesitate to eat it. If nothing else is available, one can carry on with a millet *rotla*, onion and ghee. Onion has both harmful and beneficial properties. Onions should be eaten but as medicine. Truly, all food should be eaten only as medicine. There is no reason at all to worry because I have lost weight. My health is fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

277. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO DHARMADEV[2]

December 14, 1932

Although what you write about the caste system is true still we cannot mix up reforming of the caste system with the work that is being done today. I have no time at present to state my views on this subject. I shall certainly do so when I find the time for it.

[From Hindi]

Vishva Jyoti, October 1959

[1] The original has '1923', evidently a slip.

[2] Quoted in addressee's reminiscences of Gandhiji. The addressee had said that as long as people were considered high and low on grounds of birth, and no effort was made to abolish the caste system, the propaganda for eradication of untouchability would serve no purpose.

278. INTERVIEW TO DEPUTATION OF ARYA SAMAJ, BOMBAY[1]

December 14, 1932

In response to *'namaste'* by the deputation, Mahatmaji welcomed them with a smile. He spent an hour and a half in discussing the subject of untouchability from Shastraic point of view. He said that he was aware of the activities of Arya Samaj in this direction, and hoped that Arya Samaj would continue it with more vigour. He directed that Arya Samaj should do propaganda work by lectures and literature and also continue more enthusiastically the constructive work among the untouchables.

Mahatmaji said that he was fully confident about the success of the Guruvayur question from the information received from the workers. He said hundreds of volunteers had reached Malabar and the work was going on satisfactorily. Some of the sanatanist *Shastris* were also supporting him. The work of referendum was also going on well. He showed his indifference towards the mischievous propaganda which some of the persons had started by misrepresenting his writings, taking a sentence from here and another from there without giving reference to the context.

On request Mahatmaji selected three books from the big bundle brought by the deputationists and being asked to have a copy of *Satyarth Prakash,* the 'Magnum Opus of Rishi Dayanand', he said in reply that he always kept that book with him.[2]

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-12-1932

[1] The deputation, which consisted of Dwijendranath, Shivdas Chapsey, Vijayashankerji, Parbhubhai Sharma, Vallabhdas R. Mehta, Jammubhaiji and Shanker Rao, "impressed upon Mahatmaji that it was essential to counteract the propaganda started by the so-called sanatanists against the work of the removal of untouchability. There was no mention or sanction of so-called untouchability in the Vedas and other ancient scriptures of the Hindus. The criteria to determine the *Chandalas,* etc., as prescribed in Manu and other *Smritis* were in no way applicable to the present so-called 'untouchables', and Arya Samaj following in the footsteps of Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati had been propagating the message of equality among all human beings. In accordance with the mission of Maharshi Dayanand, Arya Samaj was doing the work of removal of untouchability for long, and with more vigour after the epic fast. The deputation showed its readiness to help the Guruvayur cause, and thanked Mahatmaji for fulfilling the mission of Swami Dayanand Saraswati."

[2] For correction in regard to this report, *vide* "Letter to Secretary, Arya Samaj, Bombay", 19-12-1932.

279. STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY-XII

December 15, 1932

I thought I had made my position quite clear about the limitations of the temple-entry agitation. But I see sanatanist friends are still agitated over a fancied danger which they think sanatan dharma is facing from this agitation. I, therefore, summarize below what I have said in published statements and letters to correspondents:

1. The method of fasting is at the present moment confined only to Guruvayur. There are historic reasons for the fast from a reformer's standpoint. There was no escape from it. Those reasons I know will not be accepted as any justification by the opponents of reform or even by all who believe in temple-entry. My purpose in referring to it is merely to state the limitations of the fast.

2. The fast as contemplated will not be undertaken if the referendum goes against the reformers. It will be postponed if it is found that the existing law is against reformers and that every effort is made for the necessary legislation and Viceregal sanction has been obtained for the introduction of a permissive Bill, that the Bill cannot go through the Legislature before 2nd January, 1933.

3. I would not be a party to any forcible temple-entry in defiance of the wishes of a majority of worshippers at the respective temples and the agitation will be confined only to public temples. Therefore, the opening of private temples will depend entirely upon their owners and the restrictions applicable to caste Hindus will naturally be applicable to Harijans.

In my opinion, these limitations ought to satisfy any reasonable Hindu, but I know there is a body of opinion which will not tolerate the opening of any existing Hindu temple to Harijans on the same terms as to other Hindus. For such uncompromising opponents, there is no method of conciliation that I can devise short of a programme of new temple building. That means a sharp additional division in an already divided society, but I am convinced if the reformers will loyally and honestly abide by the limitations I have suggested, the unreasonable opposition will die for want of support. Those who have arrogated to themselves the name sanatan dharma, should not be surprised or shocked if opponents also derive authority for reform from the same scriptures that the sanatanists profess to believe in. There is a growing body of *Shastris,* well versed in Sanskrit lore, who believe

that it is not only permissible in Hinduism to admit 'untouch-ables' to public temples, but that it is wrong to prohibit them from offering worship in common with other Hindus at these temples. These pundits also believe that there is no such thing as untoucha-bility, attaching to birth and incapable of being cured by any penance or purification. They do believe in untouchability attaching to acts and occupations, but this is no peculiarity to Hinduism. It is common to all religions and is based upon sound hygienic principles.

I believe, too, that the alarm caused over the proposed legislation is also based on ignorance. So far as I understand the proposal, it simply amounts to this. If a two-thirds majority of worshippers at a particular temple express their desire through a regular channel devised by the legislature, such temples should be thrown open to Harijans on terms of equality with others. In my opinion, the proposal itself is so intrinsically sound that no reasonable person can have anything to say in opposition to it.

Anyway, let the opponents of reform understand exactly what the reformers seek to achieve. As it is, I am sorry to have to observe an agitation against reform being conducted in disregard of facts and that it is being sustained by statements that are contrary to truth and by baseless insinuations and imputations. Such methods can do no harm to reform if it is sound in itself, but it hurts Hinduism if the reformers or their opponents resort to methods that are less than fair and just.

The Hindu, 16-12-1932

280. CABLE TO C. F. ANDREWS[1]

December 15, 1932

ANDREWS
WOODBROOKE SETTLEMENT
BIRMINGHAM

REMAIN THERE. LOVE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 978

[1] In reply to the addressee's of December 8, which read: "Discount over-anxiety my letters. Everything clear now. If my help needed India cable. Otherwise remaining London" (Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. III, p. 431).

281. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

December 15, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter has arrived in due time. It is now nearly 4.20 and we have finished the morning prayer. Chhaganlal Joshi makes the fourth member of the human family and if we add the feline members, we make seven. Only the latter won't attend the prayers. Their recognition of kinship is confined to the common board.

Chhaganlal's arrival has facilitated despatch of work, but has not reduced my hours of labour. It was not expected to. Things that must be attended to by me, have to be. The pressure must continue at least till 2nd January.

What is it that prevents the heart from following or co-operating with reason? Can it be want of faith? Though I have not come to any final decision, my opinion tends in that direction. Though my reason tells me that there is no need to avoid a snake if I have love in me, it must be my want of faith that prevents my association with him. Instances of this character can be multiplied. I would like you to make researches in this direction and try to trace the cause of conflict between the heart and reason in every case you can recall. By so doing it may be possible for you to make the heart co-operative with reason. If it is good for me and everybody that I should fast, why should the heart refuse to rejoice? The heart does rejoice if I am healthy. It is better in certain cases that I should fast than that I should be healthy. Reason says so, yet the heart rejects the clear testimony of reason. Does it do so for want of faith? Or is there here self-deception and as a matter of fact reason has not perceived the necessity for fasting as it has for the preservation of health? Here I have simply stated the problem for you without presuming to decide. I cannot have sufficient data for coming to a decision even if I wanted to come to a decision. I must leave this subject at this point for the time being at any rate.

My weight is now 103. I have reduced the quantity of milk, knocked off bread and increased the quantity of oranges from eight to sixteen. Dates too have been dropped for the time being. Of milk I am taking just one lb. Presently I hope to increase the quantity of milk.

I have sent you Dr. Gour's book for the information it is likely to contain. Justice Amir Ali's is likely to be a superior book as a historical work. I may be mistaken.

It is useless to appeal *The Times of India* to publish my statements[1] in full. I shall try to get someone to send you copies of the statements. There can be no objection to your receiving them for they are to be found in the papers allowed to you if you took them in.

Ba is expected to finish her tour on 16th and come to Poona.

Appa[2] is not the Anna of Madras. Appa belongs to Maharashtra. He is a learned man. He was a teacher in the Ashram before you came. He is very lean. His brother Shripatrao you must have seen. He was in charge of the sales department. The whole incident was deeply interesting and very human.

We are all doing well. Dahyabhai has had a slight relapse but no complications.

Love from us all.

BAPU

[PS.]

I am sending the first nine statements save seventh and eighth.[3] These I must find out. . . .[4]

From a photostat: C.W. 9511. Courtesy: Mirabehn

282. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

December 15, 1932

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

Your letter[5] stuns me. I sent you a telegram[6] immediately I read it. I had thought that we were so near each other that you could never misunderstand a friendly letter from me. But I see that I committed a grave blunder. I ought not to have written that letter[7]. I have therefore unreservedly and unconditionally withdrawn it. That letter being with-

[1] On untouchability
[2] Presumably Appasaheb Patwardhan
[3] These were sent with "letter to Mirabehn", 22-12-1932.
[4] Some lines here were censored by the jail authorities.
[5] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Dr. B.C. Roy", 12-12-1932.
[6] *Vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 15/[16]-12-1932.
[7] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. B. C. Roy", 7-12-1932.

drawn, you need not take any of the steps adumberated in your letter. Do please, therefore, go on with the Board as if I had never written anything to you. The mental hurt that I have caused you, you will generously forget. I shall not easily forgive myself for writing that letter to you. Someone had suggested, I cannot recall who, that you might misunderstand my letter and I foolishly said that you would never misunderstand anything I wrote to you. Pride goeth before destruction, and vanity before a fall. After these amends, I hardly think you need to publish the correspondence between us. But if, for the sake of the cause, you think it necessary to publish it, you have my permission, in so far as it may be necessary.

Please tell me how Kamala and Dr. Alam are doing,[1] and ask Kamala to write to me.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 7908. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also S.N. 18715

283. LETTER TO A. RANGASWAMI IYENGAR

December 15, 1932

MY DEAR RANGASWAMI,

I have your letter enclosing a Session Judge's commentary on the present agitation. I read it through. It gave me pain to find that a judge could lose balance of mind over reform carried on as it is with the greatest restraint and many limitations. The letter is one more proof to show that the reform was overdue. In some shape or form the agitation for temple-entry and complete removal of untouchability as it is being practised today has been on for years, and I am glad that the proposed fast has put life into it.

I hope that your wife is now thoroughly restored.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. A. RANGASWAMI IYENGAR
THE HINDU OFFICE
MOUNT ROAD, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 18712

[1] Kamala Nehru and Dr. Mohammad Alam were under Dr. B. C. Roy's treatment.

284. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

December 15, 1932

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letter. I understand what you say regarding Kamalnayan. No arrangement can be made for him to stay in Poona. I had discussed the matter with Vakil. They do not accept a young man of his age, for they simply don't have the necessary facility for that. We shall discuss the matter further when we meet. Shri Kateli knew that we had a stock of the swadeshi ink for fountain pen which you wanted, and, therefore, we have sent a bottle of it for you. We have quite a large quantity of it.

The sugar used in the bread made here is probably swadeshi, for very little foreign sugar is available in Poona. Even if it is foreign, I would not consider it wrong to eat the bread for that reason, for the sugar is used for preparing yeast. That is, it mixes with the other ingredients of yeast and produces a new substance altogether—as two gases combine in a certain proportion and produce water. Hence we cannot say that when eating bread we consume two different articles, wheat and sugar. Three things are used for preparing yeast—*mahura*, sugar and salt. The *mahura* is indigenous. According to me, therefore, bread is innocent food even for a person who has taken a vow not to eat foreign sugar. However, after knowing all these facts it is for you finally to decide what you should do. If the chapatis which they prepare here agree with you, I certainly would not press you to eat bread.

I have received no reply as yet to my request[1] for permission to see you.

I understand your reason for not going to England just now for an operation. Personally, I entertain no such fear at all. Thousands of people get discharge from their ears and suffer from no other disease. Since the affected parts adjoin the brain, extreme consequences may follow in some cases. The possibility may alarm doctors and they, in turn, frighten the patients. I would, therefore, willingly rest satisfied with whatever help is availablein India But this discussion is unnecessary just now. After there is a settlement, we shall know what to do.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", 29-11-1932.

There is no change in the condition of my elbow. The weight is 103 pounds. General health is good on the whole.

I send with this Janakibehn's letter. Please read what she writes in regard to Kamalnayan. I have told her in my reply that I would certainly not agree to a tutor and a cook being sent with him. That will deprive him of the benefits of staying away from home. I have also told her that we have been discussing the matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2908

285. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

December 15, 1932

BHAI MAVALANKAR,

I had advised Narandas to consult you about the problem of harassment by the Chharas.[1] Please let me know what advice you gave. Before you take any step, I should like to know what it is. Any way that you find must be one which would become us, and if you cannot find such a way we would prefer to endure the harassment.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1229

286. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAJAJ

December 15, 1932

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your letter. I am very glad that your health is improving and that you are now gaining confidence. How fine it would be if you become as strong as you did at Deolali! I am sure you get news about Radhika and Kusum from time to time. Their health is not quite satisfactory. Kusum, however, seems to be coming round gradually.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9148

[1] *Vide* "Letter to narandas gandhi", 4/5-12-1932.

287. MESSAGE FOR ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY DAY[1]

December 16, 1932

I hope the message of hope born of the movement for the abolition of untouchability will penetrate Harijan quarters in every village in India on next Sunday which has been fixed by the Central Board for the removal of untouchability. Every Hindu child can do something by way of some little service to his or her Harijan brother or sister in this mass movement of self-purification. I have been listening to discourses of sanatanist friends with respectful attention with a perfectly open mind, and I shall continue to do so as long as they will strive with me with a view to conversion to their interpretation of Hinduism, but the conviction is daily growing upon me that untouchability as it is interpreted and practised today has no sanction whatsoever in the Hindu Shastras taken as a whole, as they must be taken. There can be no doubt that the present interpretation and practice of untouchability is utterly contrary to every canon of morality.

When therefore the evil is banished from our midst, it will be the greatest single act of purification in modern times on thepart of caste Hindus. I, therefore, hope that there will be full response to the programme issued by the Central Board.

I would invite the *sanatani* friends not to stand aloof from this movement on the ground that they cannot reconcile themselves to temple-entry. Service of no human being can be contrary to religious precepts; much less can the service of Harijans be contrary to the Hindu religion which regards them as a part of the Hindu society. There are innumerable acts of kindness that they can perform by way of serving the Harijans who are truly children of God forsaken by us.

I have seen a paragraph in newspapers about the fast of one described as Avadhut Swami. It is true that this gentleman wrote to me some letters some months ago. They were, like the many letters that I often receive, long, incoherent and irrelevant. The impression left on me was that the writer of those letters had lost his balance. He said in his letters that he had met me in 1909 or thereabouts. I have no recollection of any such meeting, and I wrote to him to that effect. He never challenged my denial.

[1] The day was to be observed on December 18.

I have no knowledge of the notice referred to in the Press message as having been received from him when he is supposed to have met me. At that time years ago, there was no question of fast either.

Someone telegraphed me a few days ago saying that Avadhut Swami was fasting and would continue to do so, unless I gave up anti-untouchability propaganda. I wired to the sender of the telegram saying that he should wean the Swami from the fast.

The movement that I hold as a part of my living faith cannot be abandoned even if a million people fast to make me give it up. To everyone the living faith comes from God, and God alone can turn him from it.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-12-1932

288. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

December 15/ [*16*], *1932*

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have sent you one telegram today about the name of the League and another about the Bengal Provincial Organization will go tomorrow.

First, about the name. I enclose herewith Rajaji's letter[1]. I think that his argument is conclusive, and if it is at all possible to adopt his suggestion, you will alter the name accordingly. I was so possessed with the idea of service that I missed the implication to which Rajaji draws pointed attention.

Now, as to the Bengal Organization, I fear that I have committed a grievous blunder. I overrated my influence with Dr. Bidhan. I am sorry because I have given him pain; and I am sorry because I have placed you in an awkward position. He will survive the pain; you will surmount all awkward difficulty; I shall not easily forget my folly.

I have sent Dr. Roy the following telegram:

Your unsigned letter received today. Correspondence not meant for publication. Have told you distinctly if you feel confident you should continue work already begun. Accept my apology for what I

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from C. Rajagopalachari", 12-12-1932.

now recognize was undue interference and what I had meant to be friendly suggestion. Please therefore treat my letter as absolutely withdrawn.—Gandhi and I enclose herewith a copy of the letter[1] I am sending him. I do not need to add anything more. I hope that the incident will close without causing much worry to you. I enclose also a copy of Dr. Bidhan's reply.[2]

I have received your letter of the 12th December. The definition that Sjt. Thakkar has sent you has been further altered by me. I en- close copy of the altered definition. Pandit Kunzru had sent me the definition that Sjt. Thakkar had sent you. I madealterations and sent him the altered copy.[3] I see that Sjt. Thakkar had not received the altered copy when he wrote to you.

I had about seven friends and followers of Dr. Ambedkar today. They complained or stated (because they said they did not want to complain but merely to make a statement) that Dr. Ambedkar's letter to Sjt. Thakkar written on board the steamer making certain suggestions was not mentioned during the meeting of the Board in Poona. I told them[4] I did not know that it was not mentioned, but I told them also that the letter could not have been passed by and it must have been considered by the Board. You will now please write to them or me as to what was exactly done in connection with that letter.

These friends also stated that our organizations were keeping up the split amongst the Harijans and wherever possible favouring Rao Bahadur Rajah's[5] party. I assured them that such never could be your intention and that the endeavour of the Board would be to steer clear of party divisions, and that the endeavour of the Board and its Branches everywhere would be to cement the relations between the two parties for which now that the political part of the question was settled there was absolutely no need.

Although I have got additional assistance in the shape of Sjt.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. B. C. Roy", 15-12-1932.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Dr. B. C. Roy", 12-12-1932.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to H. N. Kunzru", 6-12-1932.

[4] For an account of the discussion, *vide* Appendix "Discussion with Untouchables' Deputation", 15-12-1932.

[5] Government nominee representing the depressed classes in the Legislative Assembly

Chhaganlal Joshi having been sent to me, as also efficient shorthand assistance, I can have no leisure. This much-needed assistance enables me to keep abreast with the growing work. Interviews take up a great deal of time, but they are all necessary. I do not therefore grudge them.

I hope you are keeping fit. You must do something that would induce sound sleep, not by way of drugs, but through natural means or dietetic changes. Have you tried the prunes in the manner I suggested? Some of the easy *asanas* and deep breathing, which is what *pranayam* for health means, might assist digestion and induce sleep.[1]

Yours sincerely,

[*December 16, 1932*]

PS.

Since dictating the above letter, I have received the following telegram from Dr. Bidhan:

> Thanks for telegram. Respectfully submit don't understand what you mean feeling confident. As explained in letter in view of present enthusiasm in Bengal any President and Board can perform anti-untouchability work. If however you mean confidence in obtaining co-operation from those who refuse it when offered no one can ensure it. Measure of success will depend on funds and proper utilization thereof. Please wire whether I and Board can rely on your full support if we continue.—Bidhanray

to which I have sent the following reply:

Thanks your wire. By confidence I mean self-confidence. Of course you can rely upon such assistance as is within my power.—Gandhi

From a copy: C.W. 7909. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also S.N. 18715

[1] For addressee's reply to this letter, *vide* Appendix "Letter from G. D. Birla", 21-12-1932.

289. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

December 16, 1932

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY
HOME DEPARTMENT

DEAR SIR,

With reference to my letter dated the 29th[1] ultimo regarding permission to see Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj from time to time, both in respect of his health and untouchability, I shall be grateful for a reply.

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(2), Pt. I, p. 417

290. LETTER TO HARIBHAU PHATAK

December 16, 1932

MY DEAR HARIBHAU,

I had your letter yesterday. I could not send you the reply as Sjt. Agashe gave your letter to me too late for me to send you a reply through him. I note that Sjt. Deodhar will come along with Sjt. Natarajan on Sunday. You and Sjt. Deodhar and other friends can decide whether to invite Dr. Kurtukoti or not. I would warn you against accepting reports. You must be sure of his views.

With reference to the expenses, I think that the Provincial Board should approach the All-India Board. With regard to the guests who would be coming in the course of a few days, it would be best to see me about their residence, etc.

As to the other invitations including Sjt. Vaidya, you and Sjt. Deodhar should decide. Personally, I have very great regard for Sjt. C. V. Vaidya. At the same time, the list ought not to become unduly long on my account.

[1] The source has "30th"; *vide* "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", 29-11-1932.

I do not know that I can give any opinion upon the artificial tea or coffee that you brought me the other day. Unless I knew how many ingredients it contained, I could not test it, and if I do not, I could not give any opinion. If the manufacturer will give you the ingredients, and if I can take it, I shall be prepared to experiment upon it.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. HARIBHAU PHATAK
SADASHIV PETH, POONA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18721

291. LETTER TO S. NEELAKANTHA AYYAR

December 16, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. I am sorry that the Diwan Bahadur should look at this movement in a bargaining spirit. I must say what I hold to be good and true, irrespective of consequence, and so should every responsible Hindu. I hope that a humble man does not cease to be humble when he gives expression to his innermost thoughts which he

[1] Dated December 11, 1932. It read: ". . . I had an interview with Dewan Bahadur T. R. Ramachandra Ayyar last month when I found him in a fairly reasonable frame of mind towards the movement. I again met him this morning and asked him why he had changed his mind. He said it was Gandhiji's uncompromising attitude in the matter that had made him also uncompromising. Previously when Mr. K. Bhashyam and other leaders in Madras had approached him, what they proposed was, what he regarded as a compromise, viz., to admit the Harijans as far as the *Dhwaja Sthambha*, i.e., to admit them within the temple, but in the outer round,. . . . He was also agreeable to admit Harijans into the inner round once or twice such as on *Ekadasi* days.

"Now in view of Gandhiji's demand that they should be treated absolutely on the same terms as the higher castes, which he regards as most uncompromising he also assumes an equally uncompromising position and leads a movement organizing the orthodox with the support of all the *Mathadhipatis*.

"What has given him greater affront was Gandhiji's statement that it was the caste Hindus who were the sinners and were to perform *prayashchitta* and not the Harijans. He was very much excited over the idea that Gandhiji should have asked pious people like him to perform *prayashchitta* in their old age for their pious past conduct. He felt that in dictating like this Gandhiji's usual humility had entirely deserted him and made him an avatar of haughtiness . . ." (S.N. 18690).

holds to be true. I have judged no individual in saying that cast Hindus as such are sinners before God and man in their treatment of Harijans. An individual who is most pious may have to perform *prayashchitta* for the sin of the class to which he belongs. I see no dictation, either, in stating the truth andit was said by me in 1915 and was repeated since from a thousand platforms.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. NEELAKANTHA AYYAR, B.A., L.T.
SECRETARY, COCHIN-TRAVANCORE ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY BOARD
TRICHUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 18730

292. LETTER TO GENERAL SECRETARY, A.I.V.S.S.

December 16, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 13th instant. You may perhaps know that some *Shastris* from Pandharpur have had long discussions with me, at the end of which we agreed that on the 23rd instant there should be a discussion between them and those *Shastris* who generally support the view I have taken. I therefore think that there will be a discussion on the 23rd and I suggest that the *Shastris* whom you have in mind should also take part in the discussion. Personally, I do not think that any terms need be previously fixed, but if it is necessary, they can be fixed on the 23rd, and if a chairman is considered necessary, one could be appointed from those *Shastris* who will be present on the 23rd. Acharya Dhruva will reach Poona in any case on the evening of the 22nd, and he will be available so long as the discussions last. My own object in listening to such discussions is to allow my mind and heart to be acted upon, and if I discover a flaw in the attitude I have hitherto held, I should have no difficulty in owning my mistake and retracing my steps. Whether a discussion induces a change in my attitude or not, a friendly conversation between *Shastris* representing different views cannot but do good and result in removing bitterness. I quite agree with you that the number of those taking part in the discussion should not be more than seven on either side.

I do not at all anticipate that the discussion to be started on the 23rd can go on for more than two or, at the outside, three days,

three hours being devoted each day. There is therefore no occasion just now to think of the 2nd of January next.

Yours sincerely,

GENERAL SECRETARY
SANATANA VARNASHRAM SWARAJYA SANGH
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18728

293. LETTER TO MANGALDAS M. PAKVASA

December 16, 1932

BHAISHRI PAKVASA,

Dhirubhai told me that you had to get yourself op[14]erated upon for hernia. All of us felt worried on hearing this. Dhirubhai said that you had became quite weak. Write and give full details. May God restore your strength soon.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4677. Courtesy: Mangaldas Pakvasa

294. LETTER TO MANMOHANDAS P. GANDHI

December 16, 1932

BHAI MANMOHAN,

I got your letter and the books sent by you. Just now none of us get any time to read such things.

There is no cause for worry about my health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 17

295. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

December 16, 1932

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

From what Dhirubhai told me yesterday, I see that your pain is more serious than I had thought. Let me know what the doctors say.

Dictate the letter and do not write it yourself.

Do you feel the pain only in one arm? Does it remain all the time? Is there any improvement after your release?

I hope Jijima is quite well. Give my *pranams* to her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7522. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

296. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 16, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your postcard. I hope Premabehn did not suffer much after the operation. At the time of the operation one is not conscious and does not feel the pain, but very often the patient suffers afterwards. I hope that did not happen in this case. It was in order to save a day that I wrote directly to Mavalankar yesterday regarding the problem of the Chharas.

Just now I asked Chhaganlal the name of Liladhar's father, and he tells me that it is not our practice in the Ashram to note in the register the full names of the inmates. Only the name by which a person is generally known is recorded. If this is the general practice, or even if it happens only in exceptional cases, it should be immediately changed. For, if the full names are not recorded, we may sometimes find ourselves in a difficult situation. When a name is first entered in the register, full particulars including the address should be recorded. Even when a child's name is entered, the full name should be written down. The last place where the person lived before joining the Ashram should be mentioned in brackets. This is how I learnt to keep registers. If you look into the old registers, you will find in them all such information. You should, therefore, examine the whole record and, wherever the names are incomplete, write them in full.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8282. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

297. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Saturday morning, December 17, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter, as also the other letters enclosed. I saw Narayanappa yesterday. He told me that he had written several letters to you, to which he had got no reply. Let me know what the position is. He wishes to return to the Ashram. I told him that was for you to decide, and that he could return only if he satisfied you. There is still some time before he will be released.

You did right in fasting for a day. That is the best remedy when one feels liverish. Do not eat *jowar* and *bajri* if they do not agree with you. You may reduce their quantity. It is possible that they may not agree with some people. Do not harm your health for the sake of this experiment. What is your food at present ?

Kusum's ship is in mid-ocean. I hope Talwalkar examines her carefully. Did he say anything after reading my letter?

I understand what you say about Shanta. The Chharas seem to be quiet now. Did you come to know where Gangabehn and other women are kept?

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8283. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

298. LETTER TO S. K. DATTA[1]

December 17, 1932

DEAR DR. DATTA,

I was delighted to have your letter, giving me the only thing you could properly give in my present condition. In discovering the use of Indian words among the Gypsies, President Masaryk and you have perhaps made a discovery of great value. How nice it would be if some painstaking and accurate scholar could follow up your discovery and ascertain whether the few common words that you discovered were a mere accident or whether they are evidence of a recent common origin or of intimate intercourse, or may it be that the Gypsies are a set of universalists for whom the whole world is their country? The information you give about the old President is also very instructive. I wish that we could emulate his energy and vigour.

Mahadev is with me, Devdas sees me fairly often, and Pyarelal was able to see me practically only during the fast. Please send our love to Mrs. Datta and your boy. I can feel your difficulties in your new post, but God will give you strength to grapple with them. All this however is preface to the question I want to ask you: "What are your boys doing for the Harijans ?"

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S.K. DATTA
PRINCIPAL, FORMAN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE
LAHORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 18733

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's dated December 9, 1932, which read: "Last August, my son and myself went to spend two days with President Masaryk. The President talked to me a great deal about you. You remember that they invited you to stay with them at Prague, but you were unable at the end to accept the invitation. He is a wonderful old man—85 years of age—who rides his horse every day not like an old man, but athletically. I must tell you of an experience that I had when staying with him at a small village in Slovakia. . . . The inhabitants were a colony of Gypsies. . . . The strangest experience was to hear these folk speak. There were scores of words which I could understand—almost pure Hindi—such as *behn* for sister, *pani* for water, *aag* for fire, etc., etc. When I went back to the Presidential House, he and I studied with a little care that evening Bible stories written in Gypsy language and I recognized in them Hindi words . . ."

299. LETTER TO DUNICHAND[1]

December 17, 1932

DEAR LALA DUNICHAND,

You have done well according to your wont in writing to me on the burning question.

I think you are quite right in rejecting the evidence of the inner urge. I was bound to meet that statement, as I believe it to be true. But the public has not only the right but [it is] its duty to examine the question dispassionately and from a common-sense point of view. I have myself endeavoured therefore to reason out the justification for the steps I have taken and those that are contemplated. Therefore you do not want me to reiterate the argument I have publicly advanced in my own statements in justification. One issue however I have not dealt with publicly. You are quite right in saying that my body is not my own, but that it belongs to the nation. You will however recognize that it also belongs to God, or rather, it belongs to the nation because it belongs to God. And here I have got to state that it is God who is dealing with this body, and He will keep it intact against the whole world if He wants to use it for a service, great or small, and the whole world will not be able to keep it if God decides to take it away. Let us therefore wait upon Him and trust that whatever He does will be for our good.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. LALA DUNI CHAND, B.A.
KRIPA NIVAS
AMBALA CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18735

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's of December 11, 1932, requesting Gandhiji not to go on fast from January 2, 1933 (S.N. 18689).

300. LETTER TO N. SUBRAHMANYA AIYAR[1]

December 17, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[2]. Do you not remember the saying of a wise and learned man that the things you cannot say and intelligibly explain well inside of an hour are not worth saying or explaining? But I promised you full one hour. You can still take that hour if that will satisfy you.

Here are my answers to your questions:

1. A Hindu temple is one built by Hindus for worship by Hindus in accordance with the requirements of Hinduism.

2. There is no such thing as Indian caste system in Hinduism, but there is varnashrama. And varna is wholly different from the current caste.

3. Custom that is not repugnant to the moral sense must be recognized by courts of law.

4. Those who want to enforce a custom have to show that it has been in vogue for a long time and that it is not in conflict with the moral sense, but the burden may be shifted if a custom already recognized is challenged.

5. A self-respecting court will not be bullied into giving decisions by agitations, but it would be governed by well-recognized rules.

6. The question is answered in No. 1.

7. When the religious texts differ, evidence as to usage will be one of the determining factors.

8. Private property lawfully acquired is entitled to protection.

9. Communal property is also entitled to protection if communal ownership is not in conflict with the common weal.

10. A private temple is entitled to the same protection as pri-vate property.

11. I am not aware of anybody having agitated for confis-cation of temples

[1] Senior Dewan Peishkar, Travancore

[2] Dated December 10, 1932 (S.N. 18687)

12. Simple suicide is an offence under the present Law as I have been told.

13. If Gandhi took up his stand at the Viceregal gateway and threatened to fast even for one day unless the British Government withdrew from the country, the Government would be justly entitled to arrest him and imprison him till he came to his senses.

14. The contemplated fast does not make it impossible for anybody to deal with the temple-entry question in a fearless and reasonable manner; nor do I see any sign that the opponents are in any way deterred from their purpose, and I think that they are quite right in ignoring the contemplated fast.

15. I am sorry to have to remark that this question[1] is packed with ignorance of the true situation and is outside my limits.

Although I have, out of regard for you, answered your questions, you will permit me to say that many of them are argumentative and take no note of the existing situation, and some of them are based upon mere assumptions. It has filled me with sorrow to discover that learned men have imagined a woeful state of things to exist and have thrown themselves into rage over the imaginary woe.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. SUBRAHMANYA AIYAR, M.A.
C/O THE RESIDENT MEDICAL OFFICER
GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL, ROYAPETTAH, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 18731

[1] It read: "15. Is not this movement—against which orthodox opposition is only being just mobilized and is bound to rise to a proportion which neither the Government nor its present engineers have any idea of, and started at a stage of India's death and religious decline when faith in temples is steadily waning and is absolutely non-existent among the people who are projecting and conducting this movement and who are doing so more as a political stunt against the Government for winning swaraj than as a measure of religious catholicity—calculated to create increasing discord in the country, rioting and even bloodshed—and to indefinitely postpone the prospect of swaraj which is the common aim of all?"

301. LETTER TO M. M. ANANTA RAU

December 17, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. You will please pardon me for the frankness with which I propose to discuss it in the hope that it may open your eyes to the untenability of the position you have taken up and which you say represents orthodox opinion.

Before I do that, let me ask why your letter-paper is so grotesque. It cannot add dignity to the sanatan dharma by having your letter-paper printed with borders as on an address-paper, still less to have a portrait of the agent surrounded by other figures. Adver-tisers do sometimes adopt ornamentation for their letter-paper, but I have never seen anything so wholly inartistic as the paper which you are using. I restrained myself twice against drawing your attention to the incongruity of a religious agency using ornamentation, and that, too, utterly inartistic, but though my claim may be rejected, I am or am trying to be a humble representative of sanatan dharma, and therefore, whenever anything unbecoming is done in the name of that dharma, it pains me deeply. So much by way of preface.

Now, regarding the contents of your letter. Surely, it ought to be easy for you to see that since you admit that untouchability is quite contrary to the divine fact of oneness of all life, the only way to realize that oneness[2] is to have as little differentiation as possible, and wherever it exists, it should be accepted as an evil to be removed at the first opportunity. There is no such difficulty or impossibility about the removal of untouchability as we practise it today. You say that untouchability is based on "physical, moral and mental purity", and you have stated as if it was a self-proved proposition. I find it most difficult to understand your statement so utterly at variance with daily experience. To claim permanence for untouchability, as you evidently claim for it, is to indefinitely postpone realization of oneness, unless you were to postulate that that realization is to come to humanity from outside sources. But I have never heard anybody saying so; on the contrary, there is complete agreement that realization of oneness can

[1] Dated December 14, 1932 (C.W. 9561)

[2] *Vide* "Letter to M. M. Ananta Rau", 24-11-1932.

only come by incessant striving. In other words, it can only come when, in a daily increasing ratio, we obliterate differences and begin with those which are of our own creation and which have no moral justification.

Nor can we be oblivious to the practices followed in other religions. If there is oneness of all life, there is oneness of all religions. It is, therefore, instructive, if not absolutely necessary, to test our own practice by a reference to that of other religions, and then we find that untouchability as we know it today does not exist in any other religion. For justifying our untouchability, therefore, we have to prove that the other religions are defective in that they do notpractise untouchability and that it is so essential to the realization of the common goal that those religions which do not practise it will be driven to it whether they will or no. I have never heard anybody making such claim.

Those who claim to be sanatanists have put themselves in a state of rage as if I was about to violate all that is good in Hinduism, and they have rendered themselves incapable, first, of understanding what I am after, and then, of knowing what they are attacking. I can safely say that no two letters from among the mass of letters I am receiving from sanatanists have agreed about the definition of untouchability. They either swear at me or enter into argument that has no bearing on the subject. All this cannot be good for sanatan dharma. The correspondence I am having is to me a painful sign of decadence of Hinduism.

I invite you to ponder over what I have written, and if you find any force in my argument, study the whole question dispassionately, and if you feel with me that untouchability is an evil, courageously proclaim the truth and fight the evil.

You refer me to the four Sankaracharyas.[1] What shall I do by worrying them? I entertain no doubt about the correctness of my

[1] The addressee had written: "You are eager to know about true orthodox opinion about the subject of untouchability. You can do full justice to your desire to know this if you wire to (1) His Holiness Sri Sankaracharya Swami of Kamakotipeetam, now camping at Madras, (2) His Holiness the Jeer, Sri Ahobila Matam, Srirengam, (3) His Holiness Sri Sankaracharya Swami of Sarada Peetam, Sringeri, (4) His Holiness Sri Satyagnanatirtha Swami of Uttaradimatam, now camping at Benares, requesting them to send the best pundits amongst them under their nomination for the conference you intend holding. Without this your true object cannot be fully fulfilled."

position. It is as clear to me as noon-day light. If they think that I am immersed in darkness, it is for them to show me the light.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. M. M. ANANTA RAU
AGENT, SANATANA DHARMA AGENCY
40 ISHWARDAS LALA STREET, TRIPLICANE, MADRAS

From a copy: C.W. 9565. Courtesy: Government of Mysore. Also S.N. 18736

302. LETTER TO N. S. VARADACHARI

[*December 17, 1932*][1]

I have your letter. Whoever is responsible for the so-called blessings, I am not. Yours is the first intimation that I have of any swadeshi exhibition in Kumbakonam. I do not and cannot under the limitations of jail life send messages on anything except untouchability. You may therefore make whatever use you like of this letter.

The Hindu, 21-12-1932

303. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

December 17, 1932

CHI. JAMNA,

This time also you are having repeated attacks of asthma. Doesn't this mean that you should live somewhere else and do whatever service you can? You may go and live at Wardha this time if you wish. You can do much service even while living there. If you have imbibed the spirit of the Ashram you may look after the girls who are being brought up in the Ashram, at Wardha. Moreover, Purushottam is there at present. Balkrishna also is there, and Krishna frequently visits the place. Have you tried Vijapur? It is a different matter if you have decided to remain in the Ashram, irrespective of how you keep there. If, however, you can preserve better health at some other place and the spirit of service has become part of your nature, it is your clear duty

[1] From "Diary, 1932", entry under this date. This appeared under the date-line: "Madras, December 21".

to go and live there. Experience shows that one who has the spirit of service in him or her will feel at home wherever he or she goes.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 865. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

304. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

December 17, 1932

CHI. DAHYABHAI,

You are still not out of the wood, but I know that you will not lose heart. I suppose you know that to get well is something that is in the patient's own hands. He should never lose hope nor get impatient. He should suffer bravely as long as it is his lot to suffer and fight on. If you try it, you will find that Ramanama is a more powerful remedy than all diets and drugs put together. The power of electricity is nothing before it. It will give you peace of mind and keep you cheerful. It seems that you are eager to write letters. Resist your desire. At present your duty lies in taking perfect rest. If you wish, you may dictate a few sentences to us or to friends for fun, but you must not think about office work. I hope you will follow this advice. God will surely preserve you.

I have written this letter with my left hand.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 152-3

305. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

December 17, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I got your beautiful letter. If you have come away from the hospital against the doctor's advice, I would blame you. Don't you know that you can go on doing service even while lying in a hospital? See that you don't speak much. For some time live only on milk and fruit. Where did you learn that a sick person should not eat rice? Don't make haste and fall ill.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10315. Also C.W. 6754. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

306. LETTER TO SUSHILABEHN GANDHI

December 17, 1932

CHI. SUSHILA,

I got your letter. Of course I can understand your remaining behind in India for the sake of your health or some such reason. Otherwise, we at any rate have a simple rule of duty. Just as Sita followed Rama wherever he went, so the husband and the wife should live together not for carnal pleasure but for mutual service. It is, therefore, proper that you should accompany Manilal.

Fasts, etc., have become a part of my life. You need not postpone your departure for such a reason. One can understand either of you staying back at such a time if that is necessary in order to look after me. As there is no such reason on this occasion, from every point of view it seems proper that you should accompany Manilal. You should, therefore, decide to leave for South Africa without feeling anxious for me.

I will await Tara's letter attacking me. If she requires any evidence, I will send it from here. She should not mind if she loses in the argument. Her defeat will be the first step towards victory. And if she wins, that will not be surprising either, since children's victory over their elders is in fact the victory of the latter.

Does not the fact that Sita cannot be cured of her boils prove your own deficiency as a mother?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4803

307. LETTER TO KIRCHAND KOTHARI

December 17, 1932

As a general rule I can say that where there is a possibility of a riot and we are also likely to get no help from the authorities, we should abandon the idea of holding a meeting or taking out a procession. We should slowly cultivate public opinion at such a place, and at the same time go on with the work for the welfare of the Harijans. For that purpose, some persons may even have to go and live among them.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 345

308. LETTER TO PYARELAL NAYYAR

December 17, 1932

You seem to have taken a vow not to write to me. Well, I must live as God wills, or as Pyarelal wills. If your health is good and you have nothing to write to me about, I am quite content.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 345-6

309. LETTER TO PARASHURAM MEHROTRA

December 17, 1932

. . . behn[1] is like a milch cow. Her shortcomings are countless, but her virtues are far greater in number. Remember what Tulsidas taught in this regard, and look only to the virtues and disregard the shortcomings. We should know that all of us have shortcomings and bear those of our co-workers.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 346

310. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

December 17, 1932

Just now I cannot write long letters. Parashuramji knows the new *takli* method. He does not have the same speed as Bhau but he may be able to teach you.

Narandas is quite right in saying that any boy or girl who has not undergone training in khadi work, carpentry, farm work, tanning, dairy work, etc., has remained uneducated. It seems you have still not understood one special feature of the Ashram. It is that farm work, carpentry, etc., also are a part of your education, and develop your intellect and also some of the bodily senses. If these crafts are taught as part of your education, they would do more good, as I have already explained in one of my previous letters[2] to the Ashram, than a purely

[1] The name is omitted in the source.
[2] *Vide* "Education", 10-7-1932.

literal education[1] does. If you have forgotten what I said in that letter or cannot find that letter, let me know and I will write to you again about it, for the point deserves to be understood by all. Do not think that I say this because I wish to run down book-learning. I fully understand its value. You will not easily come across many men who put such knowledge to better use than I do. My purpose in saying this is to put training in crafts on the same footing as education in letters. Those who thoroughly understand this point will never be eager for a literal education at the cost of training in crafts. Their book-learning will shine better and also prove of greater benefit to the people. If you understand this fully, all of you will be ready to take out the cattle for grazing.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

311. LETTER TO KUSUM GANDHI

December 17, 1932

Every person who is ill, holds the key to his life in his own hands as long as recovery is possible. If he or she gives way to despair, no medicine will help, and, on the contrary, if he or she does not lose heart, even a simple powder will be a priceless remedy. You should, therefore, remember three rules: Do not lose courage; follow the advice of the person in whose hands you have placed yourself; and, however much you suffer, go on repeating Ramanama, remain cheerful and never cry.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 346-7

312. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

December 18, 1932

DEAR SATISBABU,

No letter from you. I have failed miserably in my endeavour to have the Board reconstructed. I have apologized to Dr. Roy and withdrawn my letter[2]. You should forget that I ever tried. Things must take their own course. You will act as may seem best to you.

Love to you both.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1619

[1] Literally, 'knowledge of letters'

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. B. C. Roy", 15-12-1932.

313. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

December 18, 1932

CHI. JAMNA,

I read your letter which arrived with the general post [from the Ashram]. I would advise you to go and stay somewhere else.[1]

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 866. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

314. LETTER TO CHHOTUBHAI TRIVEDI

December 18, 1932

CHI. CHHOTUBHAI,

You have been rendering good service. You will learn the job with practice. You may not expect specific advice from me.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10471

315. LETTER TO KOTWAL

December 18, 1932

BHAI KOTWAL,

I got your letter. The doubt which has occurred to you is a natural one.

Following the path of dharma would not have been compared to walking on the razor's edge, if no occasions ever arose when in doing one's duty, one found oneself on the horns of a dilemma. A thing which is ordinarily forbidden may with a little change in the circumstances become a duty. The thing is similar to the manner in which a chemical compound is formed. Appa's demand was not for a right or privilege, nor for any personal facility. It was for permission to do his duty. It was my duty—and I have not the least doubt about this—to join Appa in his fast, as, when we were all free, I had already given my opinion that Appa could undertake a fast in the circumstances which actually arose. As this argument appeals to reason, it is not necessary

[1] *Vide* also "Letter To Jamnabehn Gandhi", 17-12-1932.

for you to go by faith in what I say. As long as your reason is not convinced, you should not accept anything more than what you have been able to understand about the ethics of fasting. Do not think too much about the matter and get confused. Ask me again if my explanation is not clear to you. But you need not, if you do not wish. The situation in which I found myself was no ordinary one, and in such situations too much thinking is to be avoided.

It seems to be my clear duty to fast with Kelappan if it becomes necessary for him to do so, since it was I who had asked him to give up his fast. This involves a number of other issues, and I have no time to explain them in this letter. You will have no question to ask if you carefully go through all that I have written on the subject.

It need not be assumed that the fast will start on the 2nd. There are many complications. The date was not fixed recently, but was fixed at the very time that Kelappan gave up his fast.[1] The agitation is not for depriving any people of their right, but for restoring their rights to those who were deprived of them. I think that I have now answered all your questions.

What you read in the newspapers about the time limit of thirty days has no basis in fact. There is no such intention even. There is no end to the misunderstandings being spread at present by the men who come to discuss things with me. No one, therefore, should believe anything said about me. People should go by only what I myself say.

There was no need to ask the Zamorin before fixing the 2nd as the date; he himself had wired suggesting postponement of Kelappan's fast. I fixed the date that seemed to be the most suitable.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3606

316. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

December 18, 1932

CHI. NARMADA,

I got your letter. I am very glad that you keep good health. All your actions should be straightforward and all your thoughts clean.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2770. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to K. Kelappan", 29-9-1932.

317. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 18, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

So at last you also have fallen ill. All of us do. You and all others should carry out the new experiment only to the extent that it agrees with you. For some time, you should only drink milk and eat fruit. You may also eat vegetables. If you feel the need for rice, you should eat it unhesitatingly. I have suggested its exclusion purely for health reasons. Hence anybody who needs it for maintaining good health may certainly eat it. Nobody should feel ashamed to eat it. If the results do not seem beneficial, you may give up the whole experiment.

I cling to the suggestion which I have made concerning Jamna.[1]

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8284. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

318. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

December 18, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I wrote to you some letters in the course of the week. This one is in reply to your weekly letter.

I have decided to obey your order forbidding me to show your letters to Chhaganlal. Of course I had to show him your order. I think you, too, would not wish that he should remain ignorant of what you wrote about him. I showed him the relevant part of the letter and asked him not to read the rest. All the same, I did not like your order. Why should any person in the Ashram hide anything from another inmate?

I can understand a child or a grown-up who knows no better feeling thus. But what can you have to hide from anybody? The fact that others read your letters doesn't lessen, but rather increases, the sanctity of your letters. You should not at all feel embarrassed if the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jamnabehn Gandhi", 17-12-1932 and *ibid* 18-12-1932.

whole world knows your thoughts. We have no right to think any thoughts which others may not know. If we follow this as a fixed rule in our life, we automatically learn to control our thoughts. Every human being is God's representative on the earth. He knows all our thoughts, but we do not know that He does, because we do not see Him face to face. If, however, we look upon human beings as God's representatives on the earth, we should not mind others knowing our thoughts. Moreover, since we see a representative bodily, it becomes easy for us to acquire control over our thoughts. I wish that you should voluntarily withdraw your order. I had hoped that I would be able to write with my right hand, but I see that I ought not to use it and, therefore, I shall not perhaps be able to write all that I wished to say. I don't mind your writing about Ramabehn whatever comes to your mind. She does know indeed that you will write nothing out of ill-will for her. So you may write anything you may wish to. I will carry out any suggestion you may make.

You seem to have left the hospital much too soon. If you are carrying out the doctor's instructions faithfully, there will be no difficulty. It will be fine indeed if the operation succeeds in its purpose.

. . . 's[1] story is a sad one. I am not ready to blame . . .[2] without knowing his side of the case. . . .[3] is man of pure heart; he is not cruel. He knows his duty. If I had more time at my disposal, I would have explained the matter in greater detail. You should serve . . .[4] as well as you can. If she feels lonely, she is not altogether blameless in the matter. But she should not be left uncared for because of that. . . .[5] has quite a few good qualities too.

Indu is of course careless. He is a simple-hearted boy and loves play a little too much. l have written to his father and told him that he should take the boy under his loving care.

Take milk and fruit for some time and think that they are medicines. Don't eat *kanji,* etc., for a while. If you wish to eat rice,

[1] The names have been omitted.
[2] *ibid.*
[3] *ibid.*
[4] *ibid.*
[5] *ibid.*

you can. See the doctor regularly.

A letter for Sushila[6] is enclosed.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10316. Also C.W. 6755. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

319. LETTER TO GULAB A. SHAH

December 18, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

I got your letter. You should always keep a margin on the left side of the sheet. You can see such a margin in this letter.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1734

320. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

December 18, 1932

CHI. BABU ALIAS SHARDA,

Is it that you have boycotted me? You used to write beautiful letters every week and now you are silent. Why ? If you are taking pity on me, I have no use for it. What I want is beautiful letters, even if I do not write.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9959. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

321. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 18, 1932

CHI. NIMU,

So, after a long time you have condescended to write to me. Should I thank you or twit your ear? Ramdas leaves it to you to decide about Kanu Sheth's name. If you let me have a few names, I will help you make the choice. Ramdas has now started taking milk and bread.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

322. LETTER TO SECRETARY, ALL-INDIA SHRADDHANAND MEMORIAL TRUST

[Before *December 19, 1932*][1]

We hardly find a greater benefactor, a truer sympathizer of Harijans than Swami Shraddhanand[2] at the present day. The memory of Swami Shraddhanand can fittingly be celebrated by doing every possible service to Harijans and at least those that have means should contribute to the Shraddhanand Memorial Trust.

The Hindu, 20-12-1932

323. TELEGRAM TO KASTURBHAI LALBHAI

POONA,
[*December 19, 1932*][3]

SETH KASTURBHAI LALBHAI
SHAHI BAG
AHMEDABAD

OUR CONDOLENCES OVER YOUR REVERED MOTHER'S DEATH.

GANDHI

From the original: S. N. 33149

324. LETTER TO NIROD RANJAN GUHA

December 19, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your long but instructive, well-reasoned and sympathetic letter. I listened to it from beginning to end. You rightly do not expect any answer to your argument. I will however say this that the argument advanced by you was not new to me; and whilst I could subscribe to almost all you have said in your letter, I could consistently defend the course I have adopted.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. NIROD RANJAN GUHA
P 215-A RUSSA ROAD (SOUTH), P.O. TOLLYGANJ
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18744

[1] The letter was published under the date-line: "New Delhi, December 19".

[2] He was assassinated on December 23, 1926.

[3] From the postmark

325. LETTER TO R. B. TALEGAONKAR

December 19, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

Here are answers to the questions you left[1] with me:

1.The reformer has to convert the people by patience, gentleness and purity of character. My fast can only prepare the ground for the reformer's work and make the reformer also more active than before in the execution of his mission.

2. I would just as soon fast in respect of Dakornath Temple[2] as Guruvayur if the call came. I had no notion that I should have to contemplate a fast regarding Guruvayur, as everyone knows it came to me; but it would be wrong on my part to tack on other temples. Nevertheless, there are many other ways in which the movement for opening other temples is being, and should be, carried on.

3. If I refuse to be party to conditional temple-entry by Harijans, it is not because I feel less for the cow, but because it is the best way of weaning Harijans from taking beef. In matters of religion, there should be no bargaining. Every Harijan knows that one of the essential conditions of being a good Hindu is to abstain from taking beef or carrion. Therefore my formula is that those Harijans who are in the habit of taking beef or carrion should be induced to give it up, irrespective of whether the temples are opened to them or not, purely on the ground that beef and carrion-eating is prohibited in Hinduism. Similarly temples should be opened unconditionally. Even as it is the duty of Harijans to abstain from beef and carrion without asking for or receiving any consideration therefor, so is it the duty of caste Hindus, irrespective of consideration, to throw open the doors of temples to Harijans without claiming any consideration. Even today there is no inquisition held as to the Hindu practice of temple-goers. Very properly it is taken for granted that temple-goers conform to the rules applicable to them regarding temple-entry. So must we expect Harijans to do.

4. There are many courses that we can adopt in order to ensure success in a movement. There are some courses, however, which are

[1] On December 16, 1932 (S.N. 18722)

[2] In Gujarat

beyond our capacity to adopt. My release is a course which it is beyond my capacity to adopt.

5. To seek to abolish untouchability amongst untouchables before caste Hindus abolish untouchability with reference to untouchables is like an attempt to twist a rope of sand foredoomed to failure. When caste Hindus really abolish untouchability, the other will crumble to pieces practically without an effort.

6. In my opinion, seeing that the society now formed is one to do penance or to discharge an obligation due to Harijans, it should be composed of penitents or debtors, but there should be a corresponding committee or society of creditors, that is Harijans, whose wishes should be ascertained from time to time.

7. No law will abolish untouchability before caste Hindus are ready to do so. Law can only help them when they need its assistance. But it can never compel them.

8. In Hinduism, and for that matter in every religion, every activity of a religious man is governed by his religion. A man cannot be religious that is guided by his moral and spiritual sense in some activities and not in others. When there is religion about a person, it pervades his whole being.

9. All the three statements[1] are not inconsistent with one another, but they represent the same truth. Without Guruvayur there will be no Kelappan fasting, without Kelappan there would have been no inspiration for me to fast for Guruvayur.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. B. TALEGAONKAR
1034 RAVIWAR PETH, POONA CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18722

326. LETTER TO C. Y. CHINTAMANI

December 19, 1932

I am not going to judge my friends. I can only convey to them my own feeling and leave them to correct themselves where my different opinion may appeal to them. I am satisfied if by your action

[1] The reference is to statements on different occasions attributed by the addressee to Gandhiji to the effect that he was going to 'perform the fast for the sake of Guruvayur Temple'; 'for the sake of Mr. Kelappan'; and 'for the sake of God's wish inspiring him to go through this ordeal of fast' (S.N. 18722).

in Bombay you did no violence to your conscience. But I would like one promise from you. Even when you will not publicly oppose me, do warn me privately. The warning may produce no visible effect on me. But I am very receptive. Such warnings have always helped me.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 360

327. LETTER TO SECRETARY, ARYA SAMAJ, BOMBAY

December 19, 1932

I was pained to see the published report of our interview[1]. I do not carry a copy of the *Satyarthaprakash* with me. I only said that there were several copies of it in the Ashram library. I did not ask for the books, but Mahadev did.

When you offered your help to the temple-entry movement, I advised you not to interfere with it and you also accepted my advice. But the report suggests that I desired your help. The cause will suffer through such misrepresentations. I, therefore, consider it necessary that for the sake of truth and the cause you should immediately publish a correction to the report. I should like you to publish it as soon as you can. A false report can never help a cause, and it cannot but harm dharma. A correction, therefore, is desirable from every point of view.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 354-5

328. A LETTER

December 19, 1932

It is true that I refused to eat eggs. Still I believe that cod-liver oil is objectionable, milk is less objectionable than cod-liver oil and unfertilized eggs are less objectionable than either. However, people have become accustomed to cod-liver oil but not to eggs, and so even unfertilized eggs are regarded as objectionable.

In the statement: ["And if any man will sue thee at the law] and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also",[2] it is understood

[1] On December 14, 1932; *vide* "Interview to Deputation of Arya Samaj, Bombay", 14-12-1932.

[2] *St. Matthew*, v. 40

that the man who asks for your coat is a deserving person. But the statement also means that, if anybody tries to rob us of a thing and if it is not our duty to resist him, it would be better to let him take more than he wished. The golden rule behind this precept is that of non-possession. Nobody can practise it to perfection. If, however, wehave understood it fully, we should try to follow it more and more in our lives to the extent that we can.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 360-1

329. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 19, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I can judge whether or not you can write only after I see a copy of the letter which Shri Mavalankar has written. Obtain one and send it to me. Tell the German lady[1] that, if she wishes, she may certainly write to me. It is highly unlikely that she will be permitted to see me. If Parashuram told the story of the cat not merely as a joke but to argue that we might do the same thing, some pain would mingle with my amusement.

I hope you are completely all right now. All the same, be careful about your food.

BAPU

PS.

I send with this a letter from Bhai Umedram. He stayed in the Ashram once, alone. I think that, after his talk with me here, I had dropped a hint to you that he might come to live in the Ashram with his children. He has now written to me. Admit him to the Ashram. He knows its rules. He also said that he would abide by them. I think the best course would be that he should come and stay in the Ashram for some time and that, after you have had experience of each other, he should decide finally. However, you are the best judge, therefore, do what you think best. Do not think, because I wish him to be admitted, that it is your duty to admit him. I am writing to Umedram also to tell him what I have told you.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8285. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Margarete Spiegel

330. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

YERAVDA,
December 19, 1932

CHI. TARAMATI,

I had received your last letter all right. There was nothing in it that called for a reply. So I saved the time. I did hope that Mathuradas would stop losing weight. We are all fine. Dilip's education will be progressing smoothly.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
21 MINT ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

331. LETTER TO GOPIKRISHNA VIJAYAVARGIYA

December 19, 1932

BHAI GOPIKRISHNA,

Received your letter. If we exist, God exists, for God is the sum-total of all life just as the sun is the aggregate of rays. In order to have faith in God we have to have faith in ourselves, which is acquired through service without consideration of results. Another way is to have faith simply because the rest of the world has it.

I do not even think what the goal of independent India will be. This goal will be clear with the coming of independence. The rest you can see from my writings.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From a facsimile of the Hindi]

Madhya Pradesh aur Gandhi, p. 137; also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, p.

332. LETTER TO KRISHNAN NAIR

December 19, 1932

No new idea of mine warrants anyone getting upset over it and I would not expect it to be followed unless it is digested. I am translating the English word 'assimilation' as 'digesting'[1]. Invariably when we follow anything without assimilating it, we are either too involved or hurt [in the process]. There is no need to resort to faith regarding anything that can be grasped by the intellect. To do that would be a sign of mental lethargy.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 361

333. LETTER TO SOHANLAL SHARMA

December 19, 1932

BHAI SOHANLAL,

Your letter. Do whatever you can, but only peacefully.[2] Keep me informed.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

BHAI SOHANLAL SHARMA
PRESIDENT, HINDU SABHA, PUSHKAR, AJMER

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2828

334. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

December 19, 1932

BHAI KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your postcard. I had the registered letter too. I did not reply to it as it contained nothing new and I have no time these days. If you read carefully all my letters and your questions alongside, you will find the answers there.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4266

[1] "*Hajam karna*" in the source

[2] The addressee at this time was engaged in securing temple-entry for the Harijans.

335. LETTER TO R. SANKARANARAYANA IYER[1]

[Before *December 20, 1932*][2]

I have your letter. I forwarded your telegrams to Calicut. Beyond that I would do no more. The vote of the *avarnas* iswholly unnecessary. The call is not in answer to what the *avarnas* want, but it is a call to self-purification, penance, and discharge of an overdue debt and when a man pays his debt, he is unaffected by the fact whether the creditor demands payment or not.

The Hindu, 21-12-1932

336. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY A.I.V.S.S.

December 20, 1932

SECRETARY
VARNASHRAM SWARAJYA SANGH
RAMBAG
BOMBAY

YOUR LETTER[3]. SORRY CANNOT FIX OTHER THAN TWENTY-THIRD AS OTHER SHASTRIS ALREADY INVITED FOR TWENTY-THIRD. I WOULD GLADLY MEET SHASTRIS ON YOUR BEHALF ON ANOTHER DATE AND RESPECTFULLY LISTEN WHAT THEY SAY BUT IF POSSIBLE I WOULD LIKE THEM ATTEND TWENTY-THIRD. THERE ARE OTHER POINTS IN YOUR LETTER ABOUT WHICH THERE IS DIFFERENCE OPINION BUT THIS CAN BE BEST SETTLED TWENTY-THIRD OR BEFORE IF YOU WILL SEND REPRESENTATIVE FOR DISCUSSION.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 18754

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's regarding the Guruvayur referendum.
[2] The letter was published under the date-line: "Coimbatore, December 20".
[3] Dated December 19; *vide* Appendix "Letter from Secretary, All-India Varnashrama Swarajya Sangh", 19-12-1932.

337. LETTER TO RAMAGOPALA SHASTRI

December 20, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. It is wholly unnecessary for you to trouble to come to Poona, and in any case the interpretation of an Arya Samajist will be discounted by the sanatanist *Shastris*.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RAMAGOPALA SHASTRI
SECRETARY, PUNJAB DALIT SEWA MISSION, LAHORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 18755

338. LETTER TO G. M. JOSHI

December 20, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I am not sure that the meeting of the 23rd is actually coming off, but even if it is, for me it would be a deeply religious function, and nobody should be there except those pundits who are to take part in it. You will therefore kindly excuse me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. M. JOSHI
171-A BUDHAWAR, POONA CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18758

339. LETTER TO VAKKAYIL ACHUTHAN NAIR

December 20, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for sending me a copy of the plaint in the Guruvayur Case. Have you not the judgment with you, and can you not send me a more detailed history of the Temple, as also a map of it with a detailed specification?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. VAKKAYIL ACHUTHAN NAIR
GURUVAYUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 18759

340. LETTER TO K. RAMABHADRA ROW

December 20, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. In matters so deeply personal as you have stated, you must be the sole judge as to your duty.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. RAMABHADRA ROW
PODURI HOUSE, INNESPETA, RAJAHMUNDRY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18757

341. LETTER TO G. H. PATWARDHAN[1]

December 20, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. There are some people who will deliberately misrepresent me. How shall I overtake such deliberate misrepresentations except by trusting the truth in me to make itself felt in its own time? I have said repeatedly that Guruvayur was not my choice. It thrust itself upon me. If Dakorji had done likewise, I would have joyfully proclaimed a fast. I am in God's hands like clay in the potter's, and had that come my way, probably the public would have found me wrestling with the Gujaratis with greater vigour than with the Malabaris. I can throw nothing at the latter, because they are at such a convenient distance from me, whereas the Gujaratis are within a stone's throw. But as a proverb says, "You can wake up a man who is really asleep by a simple tickle in hisear, but a thousand tickles will fail to wake up a man who is pretending to sleep."

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. H. PATWARDHAN
DHULIA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18756

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's dated December 14, 1932, which read: "Since you declared that in the event of the Guruvayur Temple not being opened to the Harijans till the 1st of January 1933 you would go on a fast unto death, a Marathi newspaper has been insinuating in its columns that your choice of a distant temple like Guruvayur is due to your consciousness that were you to choose the Dakorji's Temple for this purpose you would be severely attacked by the Gujarati community who have been your staunch followers in politics, and this probably is the reason of your choice of the temple of Guruvayur. Your explanation on the point would, I submit, be greatly useful in clearing the ground with regard to this" (S.N. 18703).

342. LETTER TO R. V. PATWARDHAN[1]

December 20, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I can only say in reply to one part of it that I have signed letters asking me to anticipate the 2nd and thus end my earthly life. I do not mind these letters. I merely state the fact.

For the rest of your letter, I can only give you my assurance that behind every step I take, and every word that I utter, there is great and prayerful deliberation. I ask *sanatani* friends to give me the same liberty of thought and action as they claim for themselves. Without such mutual toleration, no reform is possible.

I may also tell you that I am leaving no stone unturned to reach some workable compromise. But I must regretfully confess that I have failed hitherto.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18760

343. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

December 20, 1932

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter[2] of the 14th instant. I hope I have made ample amends for my presumption and that there is no wound left any-

[1] The addressee in his letter dated December 16, 1932 referring to Gandhiji's statement dated 16th November had objected to it as "a most cruel and objectionable charge against the sanatanists who are opposed to temple-entry" and the fast. He had also written: " . . . If the Zamorin and the Trustees bend before your threat of fast, do you believe that it would be due to a real change of heart and not to the suppression of their honest convictions? . . . Such a suppression is the worst kind of tyranny; it is more reprehensible than the one foisted by the force of arms" (S.N. 18726).

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from G. D. Birla", 14-12-1932.

where.[1] If you think that there is still anything more left to be done by me, do please tell me. I hope not to repeat the folly.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

SJT. GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA

ALBUQUERQUE ROAD, NEW DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 18762. Also C.W. 7910. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

344. LETTER TO M. I. DAVID[2]

December 20, 1932

DEAR MR. DAVID,

I thank you for the letter and still more for the perseverance with which you are pursuing your scheme; and since you have willingly given me an inch, do not be surprised over my asking for an ell. Please prepare the whole scheme as you would have it, incorporating your latest suggestions. Then discuss it with Sjt. Mathuradas and Jaisukhlal Mehta, and if they approve of it, send it to me, and I shall devote to it exclusively a Press statement, but I must use your name as its father. After all, Sjt. Birla has already let the cat out of the bag.

And before you send me the scheme, I would like you to do a little lobbying and get as many scholarships as you can. Iknow this means a large draught of your time and energy, but you are a willing worker. Willing workers know to their cost how exacting I can be. The fact is with my dwindling physical capacity, I am hardly able to cope with the work day to day. Therefore, whenever I have a good thing suggested to me by anyone, I straightaway ask that one to present it to me ready-made, so that I should have very little to do but to put my signature to it.

Yours sincerely,

M. I. DAVID, ESQ.
4 QUEEN'S ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18748

[1] *Vide* letters to Dr. B. C. Roy, 7-12-1932 and 15-12-1932; also "Letter to G. D. Birla", 15/16-12-1932.

[2] The letter was in reply to the addressee's dated December 15, 1932 (S.N. 18718), in which he had suggested a few additional points regarding his scheme for higher education of selected Harijans about which he had already written to Gandhiji in his letter dated December 2, 1932.

345. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

December 20, 1932

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letter[1] posted days after it was written, and I have your two dear cables. I was wondering whether the later developments in the anti-untouchability campaign including the prospective fast were thoroughly understood by you. Your wires show that you have understood them fully, and I am so glad, for, whereas the fast in connection with British decision was appreciated by many, the one contemplated to take place on the 2nd January next is misunderstood by many, and I am afraid that you might not understand it at all, whereas to me the necessity is clearer than when I fasted about the British decision. The British decision was a political issue, though with me it had a deeply religious significance. In the present instance, it is a purely religious issue. I have given many explanations in defence of it. All of them put together fall far short of what I feel about it, but what, I have no adequate language to express. Of course, for me personally, it transcends reason, because I feel it to be a clear call from God. My position is that there is nothing just now that I am doing of my own accord. He guides me from moment to moment. This is a thing which you cannot make other people believe, and it would be quite proper for them to reject such testimony. That has happened before now. That which was claimed as the voice of God proved to be the prompting of the Devil. What it is in my case will be partly judged by results and partly after my death, never wholly in any case and at any time except by God. After all, the intention behind an act is the final criterion, and that God alone can know, not even the author of the intention.

There is no knowing whether the fast will have to be taken on the 2nd January. It will depend upon the legal difficulty.

Yes, I read your book *What I Owe to Christ* immediately I got it. Both Vallabhbhai and Mahadev have glanced through it. Mahadev had not the time to go through it fully. The opening chapters are very good indeed. All the chapters are a great help to a struggling soul.

[1] The reference presumably is to addressee's letter of November 10, 1932; *vide* Appendix "Extract from Letter from C. F. Andrews", 10-11-1932.

They reveal you as nothing else that you have written can do, but there was a chapter in it which as I read I criticized and I thought I had written to you about it, but evidently I have not. I should have to look at the book again in order to be able to recall the chapter and the subject. I could do so without much trouble, and if I can find a few spare moments, I will look it up and give you my criticism. I shall await copy that you promise of Gurudev's thoughts on his reading your book.

I hope that you got my cable already in answer to yours from Birmingham.

I am quite clear that your presence is most useful there, and you are not to have anxiety complex if I have to fast. You at least will have no difficulty in believing that if I enter upon the fast, it would be by God's will, and He will keep me intact if He has more service to take through this body.

With love and greetings from us all,

Yours

[PS.]

My love to all the other members of the family in both the senses. Please tell those who do not hear from me that I get little time to attend to all my correspondence.

From a photostat: G.N. 995

346. LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON

December [*20*][1]*, 1932*

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

I have your letter. The workers undoubtedly deserve warm thanks for the zeal with which they have been working. Please give them all my love. If you will not become jealous of your wife, let me tell you that everyone who had returned from Calicut tells me that whilst you have been good, your wife has been ever so much better. She has been working tirelessly and with utter self-effacement and if all the women of Malabar are as good, Malabar must be an extra-

[1] *Vide* letters to the addressee, "Letter to U. Gopala Menon", 21-12-1932 and "Letter to U. Gopala Menon", 22-12-1932. The source, however, has "21".

ordinary good place to live in. I discount all this testimony, and Mrs. Gopala Menon must be an exceptional woman, for, if all the Malabar women were as good as she is, Malabar could not be the worst place in India for untouchability. All this is meant more for her than for you, so please share this letter with her and give her my warm congratulations.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GOPALA MENON

CALICUT

From a microfilm: S.N. 18767

347. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

December 20, 1932

CHI. DAHYABHAI,

I had intended to write a long letter but now there is no time for it. Get well soon. Ba, Velanbehn[1] and Bal are sitting near me as I write this letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 153

348. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

[*December 21, 1932*][2]

Since dictating this letter[3], I had your precious letter of the 9th instant. My whole heart goes out to you with reference to your brother. I know what it is to have a man with an unbalanced mind thrown on you. Perhaps you know that I have at the Ashram Dr. Mehta's son, Ratilal, just like that. I hope, however, that things are not quite so bad as they appear to me from this distance. My prayers are all with you and for you. I am glad that you did not run to India on hearing from Amiyo. I am absolutely clear in my mind that it is we as distinguished from you that have to solve this problem of untouc-

[1] Wife of Lakshmidas P. Asar

[2] From the last paragraph

[3] *Vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 20-12-1932.

hability. We have got to do the penance. As for the Zamorin, he deserves all the pity that one can extend to him, and even if you were here, I would not think of your going to him. That I would call undue pressure. God alone can work upon him if He will. All things considered, therefore, your presence is needed there.

This ought to have gone in as postscript to the letter dictated and posted yesterday.

Yours,[1]

From a photostat: G.N. 995

349. LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON

December 21, 1932

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

Since dictating my letter[2] yesterday, I have read a notice or manifesto by Sjt. M. K. Acharya of which he has sent me a copy. I send you both the leaflet and Sjt. Acharya's notice. If the notice correctly sets forth the purport of the leaflet, it is disturbing, and the comments made by Sjt. Acharya are quite justified. The people of Ponnani Taluk are being asked not whether they would savemy life or let me die, but whether they, being themselves believers in temples as an integral part of Hinduism, are prepared to have the temple doors opened for the admission of Harijans. According to the English notice, you have befogged the issue, and that is just the charge brought by sanatanists against us and especially me, as you know they say that the contemplated fast, instead of making the people decide on the rights and wrongs of temple-entry, will take their minds away from temple-entry and lead them against their wishes to give their votes any way so as to save me. If such were the result of my fast, it would be a tragedy. I should expect co-workers, therefore, to tell the people not to be affected by the fast, but to vote for or against temple-entry according to their hearts. You will now please write to me fully, first, as to the notice, and secondly, as to what has been generally done, and if you discover that people have been misled, do not hesitate to tell me so. I will have no compunction in owning the mistake, retracing my steps and postponing the fast. It would be farcical to take a

[1] The letter was signed by Mahadev Desai "for Bapu".
[2] *Vide* "Letter to U. Gopala Menon", 20-12-1932.

referendum again if the people have been already misled by an altogether false issue having been presented to them. Whereas if Sjt. Acharya's charge cannot be sustained, you will please give me chapter and verse in support of your statement and it will give me new strength and new hope.

You will confer with Madhavan and Kelappan. I do not know whether Rajaji would be there, or Sadashiv Rao, at the time you receive this letter. You will please telegraph to me the substance of the reply you would make.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 18765

350. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

December 21, 1932

MY DEAR C.R.,

I enclose herewith my letter[1] to Gopala Menon. You would not need to see Sjt. Acharya's notice. My letter sufficiently tells you the purport of its contents. I do not know whether you would agree with me in my conclusion if it is found that Sjt. Acharya's charge is sustained.

You have not told me, and I have not worried you about the state of the law on the subject. What is happening to theBill?[2] I am told that before a Bill of a religious character receives the Viceregal sanction for introduction, he is to have clear two months. If such be the case, and if the law as it stands is admittedly against us, the fast has to be automatically postponed; whereas if the sanction is withheld or is delayed purely through want of popular expression of public opinion on it, the fast has to go on till public opinion is sufficiently mobilized, if it can be, so as to secure Viceregal sanction. If public opinion is against such legislation the fast must stand adjourned. I would like you therefore to instruct me on the law. Ba tells me you are to be expected here about the 28th, if it is not possible for you to come earlier.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: S.N. 18766

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* "Interview to the Press", 5-12-1932.

351. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

December 21, 1932

MY DEAR VENKATAPPAYYA,

It is just like you to steal into Calicut and not say anything to me. How are you keeping, how is your wife, and how is your daughter?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. VENKATAPPAYYA
C/O SJT. GOPALA MENON, CALICUT

From a microfilm: S.N. 18768

352. LETTER TO SADASHIV RAO KARNAD

December 21, 1932

MY DEAR SADASHIV RAO,

I am glad you are keeping me well-posted with progress of work. It was good to ignore the assault. We must be prepared for such things and bear them without retaliation.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SADASHIV RAO KARNAD
C/O SJT. GOPALA MENON, CALICUT

From a microfilm: S.N. 18769

353. LETTER TO K. RAMUNNI MENON

December 21, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. The letter contains so many innuendoes and imputations. It is very difficult for me to answer them all. I can only say generally that the statements you make are inconsistent with the facts as I know them. Naturally the arguments based upon misstatements must be unconvincing. My own position has been abundantly clear in the statements that have appeared in the Press. If you had asked me a series of questions to ascertain first of all from me the position, I would gladly have responded, and you could then have built your case against me. I can only give you my assu-

rance that I consider myself to be a humble follower of Hinduism constantly seeking to act according to its dictates.

In one thing I can heartily be with you with my whole heart. You are entirely right in saying that you and the members of the Sanatan Hindu Sabha will not be deterred from what you believe to be the right course by any fast of mine. My fast was never conceived with the purpose of influencing your decision, and for that matter any decision. My fast is intended to stir Hindus to action, and that, I am glad to say, is happening day after day, although the fast has yet to start.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. RAMUNNI MENON

MANAGER, SANATAN HINDU SABHA, GURUVAYUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 18772

354. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL K. MEHTA

December 21, 1932

MY DEAR JAISUKHLAL,

I have your letter. I do not think I would trouble the Shastri you name or Dr. Kurtukoti to come all the way to Poona, but what I would like is a clear expression of their opinion on the temple-entry question. Let them answer three questions:

1. Who are untouchables?

2. Is untouchability curable in this life?

3. What are the disabilities of untouchables who are not entitled to enter the Hindu temples?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 1877

355. LETTER TO PRAGNANESWAR YATI

December 21, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and the three enclosures. I have gone through the dedicatory letter, as also Swami Kevalanand's, but you do not expect me just now to go through the synopsis of your treatise on trans-migration. For me it is a fascinating subject but there are so many fas-cinating things that I am obliged to put aside.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. PARAMAHAMSA PRAGNANESWAR YATI
329 SADASHIV PETH, POONA CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18774

356. LETTER TO KIRCHAND KOTHARI

December 21, 1932

BHAI KIRCHAND,

I got your letter, and also both the pamphlets. You probably know that we are at present four kept together in this jail. When your pamphlet was read, it seemed to be an occasion either for tears or laughter. Ordinarily, I do not read the letters but they are read out to me. But it happened by chance that I started reading your pamphlet, and at the very first sentence, since I could not weep as I have now grown stone-hearted, I burst out into laughter and went on laughing to the end. But it was a matter for tears, not for laughter. The language is not in the least that of non-violence. It is not civil either. You are under the vow to remain absolutely peaceful and non-violent. You have made no effort at all in your pamphlet to win over the *sanatani* friends with love. Every word of it is likely to make them angry. You have invited them to belabour you. Your language is theatrical. It will not teach the youths the lesson either of peace or of civility, let alone truth. And there is no limit to self-praise. However, what I fear is that I am not likely to succeed in explaining to people my ideas. How can people change all at once if they are accustomed to using such language?

I hope you got my reply to your previous letter. You must have

seen that my advice had been quite the opposite to what has actually happened. If, however, you did want to hold a meeting, you could have done so without issuing violent pamphlets. Your duty was, before doing that, to see some reasonable sanatanists, or, if you did not find any, to seek the help of the State and hold the meeting if you got it. If you had not held the meeting, you would not have failed to serve the cause of Harijans. I see no victory in the fact that the sanatanists did not come to the meeting to break it up. They must have felt very angry, but they may have got frightened by the strength of your numbers. These things betoken violence on your part. Your variety of non-violence puts my non-violence to shame, and I learn some truth even from the poisonous writings of the sanatanists. This is not the way to save dharma, and it is with that end in view that we try to serve Harijans. What more shall I say?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2861. Courtesy: Shardabehn Shah

357. LETTER TO NANALAL K. JASANI

December 21, 1932

BHAISHRI NANALAL,

I had a long and frank discussion today with Chhaganlal and Maganlal. Now you, Ratubhai and the two brothers should sit together and discuss the matter. I have of course advised that Manilal also should be present. But the brothers seemed to be rather lukewarm about it, though they said that Manilal did not wish it. When I explained to them the implication of that statement, they said that they would include him, if necessary. My advice, which they seemed to accept, was as follows: Doctor's will should be fully respected as far as practicable, that is, the sisters' shares should be paid to them, though it would not matter if that cannot be done just now. It will be enough if their shares are credited to their names and they are paid interest at market rate. As for Ratilal, Doctor's wish should be respected. If, on dividing the property into three parts, Ratilal's share comes to more than that[1], the excess should be credited to his account. As for Manekbai, it is probable that the interest on the sum intended for her

[1] Probably the sum specified in the Will

by Doctor will not be enough to meet her needs, and hence a monthly allowance should be fixed for her and arrangements should be made so that she gets it regularly. If, however, she insists on taking the amount intended by Doctor, it should be decided to pay it to her and she would then get nothing more. The sums which she has drawn after Doctor's death should be deducted from that amount. The three brothers' shares should be divided, Trustees should be appointed for Ratilal and his running expense allowance should be fixed. As for the other two brothers, they may, in mutual consultation, take whichever part of the business each likes. If this is not acceptable to them, the diamonds and the farms also should be divided into two shares and the whole management should be in the hands of Trustees or Manager, and, as in the case of the mother, a monthly allowance should be fixed for them and the brothers should not exceed it. For the present, they should not interfere with the work of the Trustees or the Manager. When both have acquired sufficient reputation in business circles, they may take over the management if they wish but they should not interfere with it as long as the business has not been started again and put in order. For the present, Chhaganlal should stay at Rajkot or elsewhere in India, and for their education the children should be admitted in the National School at Rajkot or elsewhere. I have heard that Chhaganlal is addicted to a vice. He confesses that it was so, but I believe that he is still addicted to it. In their talk with me, both the brothers adopted a reasonable attitude. If they adopt a similar attitude in their discussion with you, you will be able to decide the matter in a few hours. After this has been settled, you may send for Prabhashankar, and also for Champa, if you wish. It is likely that Ratilal will get upset if Champa is called. If possible, therefore, you should settle the matter without calling her. I consider it essential that the whole matter should be settled before the 2nd. If it seems necessary to you to discuss the matter with me, you may leave your work and come any time you wish. I assume that all of you, or those of you for whom it is considered necessary, will come to me with the decision that is finally arrived at.

As for the amount to be paid to the Ashram, my advice is this. If any balance is left after paying the other contributions from the funds in the Trust, the Ashram may be given its full amount or whatever is left. It may be given nothing if there is no balance. All the other contributions which are usually paid should be fully paid. If the sum reserved does not bring enough income for this purpose, there should

be a proportionate reduction from the amounts of those contributions. I understand that Rs. 800-900 are being paid every month. Maganlal believes that after deduction for taxes, etc., the net income does not exceed Rs. 500.

If that is so, the Ashram will get between Rs. 100 and 200. It seems that the receipts are enough to pay the other contributions. I do not think I have left out anything. You may certainly ask me about anything, if you wish.

Show this letter to Ratubhai, as it is intended for both of you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9471

358. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 21, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your weekly mail. Prema left the hospital much too soon. And she was also very hasty in resuming work immediately on returning to the Ashram. If she does not become careful even now, I think she will suffer very much and will be unable to do the service which she is so impatient to do. Read the accompanying letter to Madhavlal [Shah][1] and apply to Prema every sentence of what I have said in it about the difference between what one loves and what is for one's good. At present her good lies in not talking to anyone and in avoiding exertion. And, though she loves to carry on work with determination, in fact her determination is a form of *duragraha*[2] and springs from ignorance and she should, therefore, give it up. I have still not heard from Mavalankar. I shall be able to think what to do after I know what he has done. Let me know the outcome of your meeting with the Chharas.[3]

Please let me know what you eat, and what Navin eats. Dhiru never writes to me. If anybody wishes to write to me, do not stop him. Let him write. It will be enough if at present he does not expect a

[1] From *Bapuna Patro—9: Shri Narandas Gandhine*, Pt. II, p. 524

[2] Obstinacy

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 14-12-1932.

reply from me. I may read letters at my convenience, but I cannot write or dictate letters in that manner.[1]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8286. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

359. LETTER TO RATILAL SHETH

December 21, 1932

BHAI RATILAL,

Read the long letter I have written to Bhai Nanalal.[2] I have talked frankly to Chhaganlal about his vices. I also told him about the letter which Lilavati wrote to me. I thought that it was absolutely necessary to do so. He, too, confessed that he had those vices in the past. But I could see from his face that he had them still. I also tried to convince him that, instead of being angry with Lilavati, he should believe that she had done him a great service. He has definitely promised to reform himself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7170. Also C.W. 4664. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

360. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

December 21, 1932

CHI. VANAMALA,

You have become careless about your handwriting recently. Write the next letter with your right hand. You should write with both hands alternately.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5780. Also C.W. 3003. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

[1] The letter was signed by Mahadev Desai "for Bapu".
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Nanalal K. Jasani", 21-12-1932.

361. LETTER TO PREMI JAIRAMDAS

December 21, 1932

CHI. PREMI[1],

Your Hindi letter is extremely good. The characters too are very well-formed. I did not write as I thought there was no letter from you. Inform Father when you write to him that we are all well. Jamnalalji too is quite well. I saw him only today.

This is in Mahadevbhai's hand.

Blessings from
BAPU

PREMI JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
MARKET ROAD, HYDERABAD, SIND

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9249. Courtesy: Jairamdas Doulatram

362. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

December 22, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

Your usual letter came in at the usual time but as yet without the notes from the book you are reading. For the first time perhaps I found your letter mutilated. Was it a reminder that you and I were prisoners? But I do not mind nor will you. Blessed are they that expect nothing.

You say our fears are not due to want of faith in God but want of faith in self.[2] But these are one and the same thing. Want of faith in self comes from want of faith in God. It betrays ignorance of what God is. Then again you say want of faith comes from our want of self-restraint. This is true but it connotes the same thing. Read the verse 59 of Ch. II, *Gita*. Objects of senses are eradicated only by seeing God face to face, in other words by faith in God. To have complete faith in God is to see Him. Nor is the matter any better by assuming the existence of the fourth dimension. It ultimately

[1] Daughter of Jairamdas Doulatram

[2] "I cannot remember now exactly what my theory was. Spiritual truths come to one imperceptibly but surely so long as the search is unrelenting. Today I know the truth that fear means lack of faith in God." —Mirabehn

points to the same thing, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and all else will be added unto you."[1] When we meet Him, we will dance in the joy of His Presence and there will be neither fear of snakes nor of the death of dear ones. For there is no death and no snake-bites in His Presence. The fact is that the most living faith, too, falls short of the perfect. Hence there is no such thing as complete absence of fear for the embodied, i.e., imprisoned soul. The possession of the body is a limitation. It is a wall of separation. We can therefore but try to shed our fear, i.e., increase our faith.

My weight is now 103_ lb. I have just now eliminated bread and even vegetable and therefore also salt. The quantity of milk is slightly less than 2 lb. Under heavy strain of work milk and fruit is my diet. Ba and Bal are here. Jamnalalji is getting better. He is adding to his weight.

The missing statements[2] accompany this letter.

Our cats have suffered disgrace. The mother has been found helping herself to foods without permission and during nights dirtying our carpets and papers. Vallabhbhai has therefore cut off the food supply. Thus inter-dining has stopped. What other ordinances Vallabhbhai will promulgate I do not know. Ordinance rule is the order of the day even for poor kitty!

Love from all.

BAPU

[PS.]

It is just 5.30 a.m.

From a photostat: C.W. 9512. Courtesy: Mirabehn

363. LETTER TO KOWTHA SURYANARAYANA ROW[3]

December 22, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. The way you have put the subject in your letter there is very little for me to disagree with. Untouchability

[1] *St. Matthew*, VI. 33

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 15-12-1932.

[3] The letter was in reply to the addressee's dated December 17 (S.N. 18739) in which he had requested Gandhiji to put off or give up the contemplated fast.

of a type is not only to be found in our Shastras but is universal. But that is untouchability not attaching to birth but to work or occupation. Such untouchability can only be temporary and is always easily curable. If you can make other *sanatani* friends take that view and admit that in practice we have gone far beyond the Shastras and further that in so doing we have sinned against our religion, the so-called untouchables and humanity, I think that a middle course can be found without any difficulty regarding temple-entry. I have no desire whatsoever to do violence to the scruples of any sanatanists. So far as the contemplated fast is concerned, I again agree with you that fast from a religious standpoint can only be a spiritual act and can, therefore, never be exploited for secular or selfish ends. As I have told you, I believe my fast to be spiritual, both in intention and end; intention is to purify Hinduism and end is to secure religious justice for those of the Hindus who have been hitherto denied that justice.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KOWTHA SURYANARAYANA ROW
95 BROADWAY, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 18782. Also *Swarajya*, 25-1-1933.

364. LETTER TO DR. MOHAMMAD ALAM

December 22, 1932

DEAR DR. ALAM,

I have your letter and it filled all of us with delight. I wonder if you got my letter[1] sent to you at Lahore. Then I wrote[2] to Begum Alam at the address sent by her, 57, Lansdowne Road. I hope she got that letter. If you are under a prohibition order, it is better for you not to write even to me. Begum Alam is with you as nurse, companion, secretary and many other things rolled into one. Therefore let her write to your dictation, and dictate to her in Urdu. She is a very careful writer, and her handwriting I have no difficulty in deciphering. What is more, I shall get a free lesson in Urdu. She must keep me informed regularly. I am glad that you have been keeping so well otherwise. I know that you could not be in better hands than Dr.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Mohammad Alam", 26-11-1932.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Begum Mohammad Alam", 12-12-1932.

Roy's. We are all doing well. With love to both of you and from us all and with our united prayers for your speedy recovery.

Love from us all.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. SHEIK MOHAMMAD ALAM
C/O DR. B. C. ROY, 36 WELLINGTON ST., CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 20

365. LETTER TO P. K. MATHEW

December 22, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter[1]. I do not regard the Pulayas and the others as aborigines, and so far as I am aware Hinduism regards them as Hindus. That in spite of their being Hindus, they seem tobe a class apart is the tragedy of Hinduism. You will not quote school-histories or any historical text-books in order to show that they are not Hindus but please understand the formula under which the temple-entry movement is being conducted. It is the caste Hindus who have to do an act of reparation by throwing open the doors of Hindu temples to those who are regarded as untouchables though still part of Hindu society. If Pulayas are not Hindus they will never enter Hindu temples. I quite agree with you that what is needed is a change of heart on the part of caste Hindus. Temple-entry would be one of the signs of that change of heart. If, as you say, it is quite possible that "these reformers care little for religion and temples", might it not be said with a little more truth that it is equally possible that these reformers do care for Hindu religion and temples? Seeing that they are working for temple-entry, is not the presumption in their favour till the contrary is proved? It would be proper to say that those who take no part in the movement, either for or against, care little for religion and temples. If the reformers take up the attitude of touch-me-not in their daily life whilst they advocate temple-entry, their advocacy is certainly hypocritical. But there again the evidence is contrary to what you

[1] Dated December 17, 1932 in which, dissuading Gandhiji from his fast, the addressee had said that Pulayas and others were aborigines "who were in India long before the Aryan invasion and were never amalgamated into Hindu religion or society".

think to be the attitude of "many a present-day reformer". Believe me that I would not risk my life "for achieving a sham". On the contrary I am trying to achieve on behalf of Harijans a most subs-tantial thing from a religious standpoint.

Yours sincerely,

P. K. MATHEW, ESQ.
CHRISTAVA MAHILALAYAM, ALWAYE (TRAVANCORE)

From a microfilm: S.N. 18777

366. LETTER TO J. R. GHARPURE

December 22, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry that you were put to any trouble on account of my wire. Our common friend, Haribhau, told me that he had written to you as to two or three friends and that I was to telegraph in order to reinforce the letter, and the reason was to have you, Swami kevalanand and other learned friends in Poona to have a quiet discussion on the temple-entry question and probably to join the argument between pro-reform *Shastris* and anti-reform*Shastris* on the 23rd. As there is nothing certain now about this meeting of the 23rd being attended by the anti-reform *Shastris*,[1] I will not trouble you or Swami Kevalanand to come here, at any rate just now. But if you could send me your joint-opinion on the whole question, I should value it.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. J. R. GHARPURE
GIRGAON, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18778

367. LETTER TO N. V. THADANI

December 22, 1932

MY DEAR THADANI,

I thank you for your letter enclosing copy of the resolution passed by the staff and students of your college and the letter addressed to the Zamorin.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H. D. Nanavati", 22-12-1932. However the meeting did take place; *vide* "Letter to M. G. Bhandari", 24-12-1932.

I am not treating your resolution and the letter to the Zamorin as your final contribution to the cause of the Harijans, but I regard them as an earnest of many services to come.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. V. THADANI
PRINCIPAL, RAMJAS COLLEGE, DELHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 18779

368. LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON

December 22, 1932

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

Since dictating my letter[1] of the 20th I have read a copy of the manifesto or notice issued by Sjt. M. K. Acharya. He has attached to it a copy of the leaflet said to have been issued by you. Will you please send me your comments on it?

Yours sincerely,[2]

From a microfilm: S.N. 18780

369. LETTER TO DIWANCHAND

December 22, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. You are wrong in thinking that Guruvayur is the only temple left to be opened, but whether it is the only one or one out of many yet to be opened, the fast is not my act,[3] therefore if it comes I shall be unable to avoid it.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. DIWANCHAND
GORJRA (DISTRICT LYALLPUR)

From a microfilm: S.N. 18781

[1] *Vide* "Letter to U. Gopala Menon", 20-12-1932.

[2] The letter was signed by Mahadev Desai "for Bapu".

[3] *Vide* also "Letter to Ramdas Gandhi", 6-12-1932 and "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 20-12-1932.

370. LETTER TO H. D. NANAVATI

December 22, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your wire of 21st instant. I am sorry to learn that you are ill. I hope you are fully restored. It was in pursuance of my agreement with you and other *sanatani* friends that I became party to an organized discussion. It would be impossible for me to get together again the pundits who have specially come or are coming for this discussion. At the same time I shall be pleased to meet your pundits on a day to be mutually agreed upon and try to secure the presence of some pundits who give general support to my view. You have in mind some elaborate conception of the discussion. I have failed to grasp all its implications. Mine is a very simple conception. As a humble seeker of truth, I listen to all who have honestly any light to give me. The discussion for me has no other interest apart from elucidation of truth.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. H. NANAVATI
SECRETARY, ALL-INDIA VARNASHRAM SWARAJYA SANGH
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18783

371. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,

December 22, 1932

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

I am so glad you were able to send me that long letter of 1st instant. We were all looking forward to a detailed letter from you. Sherwani must have already left for India. Western medicine and surgery seem to be becoming a very complicated and costly affair. The fewest men and women can get the whole benefit of it. It seems to me that there must be something radically wrong in the system, which daily tends to become more and more costly, and split into compartments, each one of which requires a specialist and a change from one

expert to another. I suppose you have a complete and conclusive answer to my objection. I have stated it in order to coax you. You may give me your considered answer when you have ample leisure. Anyway, I do not want you to return to India till you are completely restored, and now that you are there, I do not care if you have to go to a hundred experts to have all the parts of the body fully restored.

It is a great thing for you to have hardened your heart and resisted all temptations to attend public functions and meetings.

Of course I knew your devotion to your profession and I am glad that you will soon complete an original treatise on rejuvenation. We all wish you success in your work.

Please remember me to Shwaib and Shaukat Ali if the latter is there. Zohra and I correspond with each other regularly. You may discount her abilities as a teacher. For me she is an ideal teacher. She takes great pains over correcting my Urdu, and her handwriting has never been excelled by a single correspondent of mine in Urdu. I look forward to her weekly letter. I like her composition also but as to that, I can be no judge. Love from us all.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. M. A. ANSARI

From a copy: Ansari Papers. Courtesy: Jamia Millia Islamia Library

372. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

December 22, 1932

CHI. DAHYABHAI,

The reports I get about you are so good that I need not write anything. But let me say this. Do not think either about the illness or about office work. If possible, turn all your thoughts to God and place yourself in His hands. Don't you remember this *bhajan*[1]: "My life is in your hands, Lord; may Thou protect it."

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 154

[1] By Keshavlal Bhatt

373. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAJAJ

December 22, 1932

CHI. RUKMINI,

I had got your letter in due time. How nice it would be if you maintain the slow improvement in your health and by and by become completely all right? Do you read any newspapers? Or is it that you get no time at all to read anything? If you read newspapers, which ones do you read? I suppose you have to speak in Hindi there most of the time. Do you read anything else? Do you visit any people? Have you made any friends?

All of us are well. These days I spend most of my time in Harijan work.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9149

374. QUESTIONS FOR SHASTRI PARISHAD

[On or before *December 23, 1932*][1]

1. Define untouchability according to Shastras.

2. Can the definition of untouchables given in the Shastras be applied to the so-called untouchables of the present day?

3. What are the restrictions imposed by Shastras on the untouchables?

4. Can an individual be free from untouchability in his own lifetime?

5. What are the injunctions of the Shastras regarding beha-viour of the touchables with the untouchables?

6. Under what circumstances will the Shastras permit temple-entry by the untouchables?

7. What are Shastras?

8. How is authoritativeness of the Shastras proved?

[1] The *Shastris* were to meet Gandhiji on December 23, 1932.

9. How will the differences arising over the definitions or interpretations of Shastras be decided?

10. What are your conclusions?

The Hindustan Times, 27-12-1932

375. TELEGRAM TO ZAMORIN OF CALICUT

December 23, 1932

UNDERSTAND GURUVAYUR IS OPEN ALL HINDUS INCLUDING HARIJANS THREE DAYS EVERY YEAR. PLEASE WIRE WHETHER THE INFORMATION IS CORRECT.[1]

GANDHI

The Hindu, 3-1-1933

376. LETTER TO S. SEN

December 23, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 17th instant enclosing resolution of the students and staff of your college, for which please convey my thanks to them and accept them for yourself. You will not ask me to regard this resolution as the final contribution by your college. I take it by way of promise of tangible services to the cause of Harijans.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. SEN
PRINCIPAL, COMMERCIAL COLLEGE
8 DARYAGANJ, DELHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 18788

[1] The Zamorin in his letter dated December 26, 1932 replied: "Your telegram of the 23rd was received by me only this morning, as I had come away to Kottakkal on the 14th. I have telegraphed as follows: 'Your Telegram 23rd. Information is not correct. Letter follows.' " (M.M.U./XXII, and *The Hindu*, 3-1-1933)

377. LETTER TO MANINDRA NATH MITTER

December 23, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 16th instant. I showed it to Motibabu[1] who is in Poona at present. I am quite sure that Motibabu would not consciously be party to any sham, nor would he say anything to hurt anybody. Motibabu himself is a veteran reformer. He has banished untouchability, banished the purdah, and there is complete freedom in his Ashram at Chandernagar. His idea of drawing sana-tanists to the reform was itself, you will agree, quite laudable. He has come here not to thwart or endanger the progress of reform, but to advance it. I would therefore ask you to utilize Motibabu's services and those of his Sangh to the extent that they can give their services.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. MANINDRA NATH MITTER
SECRETARY, THE HINDU MISSION
32-B HARISH CHATTERJEE STREET
KALIGHAT, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18789

378. LETTER TO MOHAN LAL

December 23, 1932

DEAR LALA MOHAN LAL[2],

I was glad to have your letter[3] after such a long time. Whatever the remnant of the untouchability in the Punjab, it has got to be fought against. Therefore, no province should say: "We are not as the others." Every province has to show an absolutely clean slate.

Yours sincerely,

LALA MOHAN LAL, ADVOCATE
"FIRGROVE", SIMLA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18787

[1] Motilal Roy, Chairman, Reception Committee, Unity Conference, Bengal

[2] Mohan Lal, M.L.C., an Arya Samajist

[3] Dated December 15 (S.N. 18708) in which the addressee had written: "In Punjab the untouchability question is not so keen as in other parts of India."

379. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

December 23, 1932

MY DEAR HORACE,

I must dictate this letter. It is a matter of such joy to me that our little circle has not misunderstood my latest venture, and that you can trace the finger of God in it. I have gone through your little pamphlet. I think that it is a fair presentation of the case about untouchability. Dr. Ansari has written to me at length about his meeting you, Andrews and other friends.

With love to you all from us all,

BAPU

PROF. HORACE ALEXANDER
144 OAKTREE LANE, SELLY OAK
BIRMINGHAM (ENGLAND)

From a photostat: G.N. 1417

380. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

December 23, 1932

MY DEAR WHITE BEARD,

I was waiting for your letter after your tour in Kathiawar. There is the negative satisfaction that if you hadn't gone, not even Rs. 17 would have been collected. To collect money in Kathiawar in these times of general depression for anti-untouchability work is like drawing a live tooth. I am glad however that the tour was successful from the health point of view. You were in need of a change from the humdrum of domestic life. You cannot be happy till you have got some service to do, and I know that nothing delights you more than serving those who are at the bottom. Do I not remember vividly your beaming face, when, years ago, we went to the Harijan quarters in Godhra and held the real reform meeting there? I had a letter from Hamida before I got yours. I sent her a reply which I hope she received.

Please send me as early as you can a description of the rowdy Wadhwan meeting. Were they really out even to assault you? What did the wreckers actually do? I have accounts which make one's hair stand on end. Were the rowdies quite so bad as all that? I should have

thought that your glowing silvery beard would sweep all rowdyism before it.

With love from us all to you all,

Yours sincerely,

BHRRR
SJT. ABBAS TYABJI SAHEB
CAMP BARODA

From a photostat: S.N. 9582

381. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO KHORSHED NAOROJI[1]

December 23, 1932

Why do you think that my fast was due to disappointment? On the contrary it sprang from hope eternal. Fasting is as necessary for life as eating. It is a necessary part of prayer. We serve as well by dying as by living. But it is the privilege of the few to have to fast. Needless to say I write of spiritual fasts. I know that fasting may come also from despair. Then it is rank suicide. I should defend my fast against such a charge. For me it has always been a process of penance and purification. The fast of 1921 was not born of despair. The basis of all penitential fasts has always been faith in mankind, God and oneself. It gives an inward joy that sustains one. I therefore want you to share with me the joy of it. I hope you have understood my argument. Of course you know that there is no certainty about the 2nd January fast. It may have to be postponed.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 366-7

[1] Mahadev Desai explains: "Khorshed's sad letter came yesterday. 'Are you going to fast because you are disappointed? Have you been disappointed in us? I gave up my artistic aptitude on the altar of service just for your sake and your cause. Why are you still disappointed?'

"Bapu telegraphed to her. But Major [Bhandari] said that the wire could be sent only through the Government. Bapu refused to send it and asked it to be sent back [to him] and instead wrote this letter."

382. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

December 23, 1932

I am being visited by a great number of *Shastris* these days. Their plight is pitiful. It has become difficult to learn anything from them. They lack the capacity even to impart what they possess. And so I see them full of prejudices and hatreds. But I don't wish to narrate this painful story.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 367-8

383. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

December 23, 1932

BHAISHRI MAVALANKAR,

The enclosed letter is for your information. I have replied and said that I do not know the facts and that I have faith in you that you would never do injustice to anybody. I have also advised that Keshavji should see you. You may write to me what you wish.

I am awaiting your letter about the problem of the Chharas.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1230

384. LETTER TO G. V. NARASIMHACHAR

December 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I appreciate your zeal but cannot endorse your action. I am quite sure in my mind that till the Guruvayur question is settled, no one should fast in respect of temple-entry. Try still more to convince the opponents of reform that it is necessary if Hinduism is to live. For the abandonment of your projected fast, you

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. V. Mavalankar", 15-12-1932.

may make use of this letter, and seeing that the fasting method has been applied by me in the first instance, I would ask you to listen to my advice.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. V. NARASIMHACHAR
"MADHAVA VILAS", BRAHMIN STREET, BELLARY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18798

385. LETTER TO T. B. KESHAVA RAO

December 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am quite clear that there should be no fast by anybody in connection with temple-entry in any place till the Guruvayur question is finally settled. In the meantime a persistent but gentle propaganda should be carried on for convincing the orthodox people. I have written[1] to Sjt. G. V. Narasimhachar asking him to give up the idea of the fast.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. T. B. KESHAVA RAO
SECRETARY, DISTRICT ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY LEAGUE
BRAHMINS STREET, BELLARY

From a photostat: G.N. 160

386. LETTER TO R. VENKATARAMAN

December 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for giving me the particulars about S. Ponnammal.[2] Your letter was received by me two or three days after Mrs. Gandhi's arrival here. How and why it was delayed in delivery to me, it is difficult to account for. If I would have received your letter in time, I would certainly have asked her to meet Shrimati Ponnammal.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. VENKATRAMAN
CALICUT

From a microfilm: S.N. 18791

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to S. Ponnammal", 10-1-1933.

387. LETTER TO S. RAJAGOPALACHARI

December 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. If removal of untouchability is a necessary act, all the sufferings you describe have got to be undergone. Undoubtedly the movement has to be handled gently. No needless irritation should be caused to the opponents of the reform. But it is likely that in spite of all the precautions that may be taken to avoid wounding the feelings of the orthodox, some shock to orthodoxy may be inevitable. That is the price that every reform has exacted.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. RAJAGOPALACHARI
713 NORTH ADAYAVALANJAN STREET, SRIRANGAM

From a microfilm: S.N. 18792

388. LETTER TO DR. T. S. S. RAJAN

December 24, 1932

DEAR DR. RAJAN,

I enclose herewith a letter[1] received from Srirangam. You will please tell me how far it correctly describes the situation.

Yours sincerely,

DR. T. S. S. RAJAN
TRICHINOPOLY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18793

[1] Presumably from S. Rajagopalachari; *vide* the preceding item.

389. LETTER TO SECRETARY, VAIDIK DHARMAVARDHINI SABHA

December 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter supplying me with the population figures for Ponnani Taluk. They will help me when I receive the result of the referendum.

Yours sincerely,

THE SECRETARY
VAIDIK DHARMA VARDHINI SABHA, BEZWADA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18794

390. LETTER TO W. E. S. HOLLAND

December 24, 1932

DEAR CANON,

I thank you for your letter. It is a good thing that you have a night school for Chamars and other Harijans, but I hope that not only 30, which you tell me is the number out of a total of 450 giving their time to the service of the Harijans, but all those who are at all able will join this band of volunteers, and I also hope that those who give in their names will be very strict in the fulfilment of their promise. I have found again and again that those who give their service by fits and starts and can never be depended upon to keep time, often prove a hindrance rather than a help to the movement to which they promise their services.

Yours sincerely,

THE REV. CANON W. E. S. HOLLAND, M.A.
ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, AGRA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18799

391. LETTER TO N. VENKATAKRISTNAYYA[1]

December 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I remember my visit to your Samsthanam. I am trying my utmost to avoid friction between the orthodox people and the reformers, but it is difficult on all occasions for a reformer to avoid hurting susceptibilities.

You may send your representative and I shall gladly give him at the most one hour any time after the 3rd or 4th of January, if I am not fasting. Before the fasting day I have a crowded programme. It would be wise and economical if you send me your suggestions in writing. But I leave the choice to you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. VENKATAKRISTNAYYA
KHADDAR SAMSTHANAM
HOUSE NO. 21/191 GOVERNORPET, BEZWADA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18796

392. LETTER TO MUKANDI LAL[2]

December 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your interesting letter of the 16th instant. I fully realize that it will be only by persistent and gentle effort that the deep-rooted evil can be removed.

As to the proposed scholarships, I would advise you to discuss

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's dated December 18, 1932, which read: " . . . We hope you can succeed in finding out some way or other in the solution of Guruvayur temple-entry question, and revive in the Hindu community such generous spirit as existed at the time of the Poona Pact. The Guruvayur question is creating a sort of stiffness in the orthodox section of the Hindu community, and the spirit which led to the Poona Pact is now being weakened" (S.N. 18741).

[2] The addressee, Ex-Deputy President, U. P. Council, giving the details of the anti-untouchability work in Garhwal, had written: " . . . what is wanted here is financial help to give scholarships to the children of depressed classes in large numbers and to open an orphanage in which orphans could be taken from all castes. If we could do this, much could be done for them" (S.N. 18719).

your project with Pandit Kunzru who is the Chairman of the U.P. Branch of the newly formed Society.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. MUKANDI LAL
BARRISTER-AT-LAW
LANSDOWNE (U.P.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 18800

393. LETTER TO RADHAKANT MALAVIYA

December 24, 1932

DEAR RADHAKANT,

It was impossible for me to reach your letter earlier. Meanwhile, I had a long letter from Sjt. Madhavan Nair. I have advised him to give to the Press the substance of his letter. Sjt. Rajagopalachari telegraphed to me that it was impossible to do more than they had done to ensure accuracy. You will find that if the referendum is a bogus affair or otherwise improper, I shall have no hesitation in postponing the fast.[1] After all, the referendum is designed to help me to come to a decision as to the fast.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RADHAKANT MALAVIYA
207 KALBADEVI ROAD, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18801

394. LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON

December 24, 1932

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

Will you please read the enclosed letter about the lady mentioned therein, and tell me all about her, and whether the statements made in the letter are true?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18802

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to U. Gopala Menon", 14-12-1932 and 21-12-1932.

395. LETTER TO B. VARADARAJULU[1]

December 24, 1932

DEAR VARADARAJULU,

The students of your school can fraternize with the Harijan children, play with them, go in for excursions with them, clean them if they are dirty, share their own refreshments with them if they are hungry and their own clothes with them if they are ill-clad. He is an ideal teacher who has a spotless character and loves his pupils as his own children.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. B. VARADARAJULU
26 PAPER MILLS ROAD, PERAMBUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 18797

396. LETTER TO R. SANKARANARAYANA IYER

December 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your two letters of the 15th[2] and 19th[3] instant, respectively. I am sorry that I have no access to the literature refer-red

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's dated December 20, 1932 (S.N. 18764).

[2] This read: " . . . What they (*savarnas*) believe according to their Shastras is that the untouchable as every other individual in this universe, is born as such in the graded scale of caste only as a result of his own individual karma in his past life and that it is never the *savarnas* that made them so. There is thus no liability either self-contracted, undertaken or imposed to be discharged by the *savarnas* in this matter" (S.N. 18710).

[3] This read: " . . . please lay your cards clearly on the table as to what tenets of Hinduism you believe in . . . mention any religious authority quoting chapter and verse wherein it is said that an untouchable can enter a temple? According to the *Agama* Shastras if an untouchable enters a temple, pollution is caused to idol and purificatory rites should be done to remove it. . . . Do you believe in caste distinction as a fundamental tenet of Hinduism? . . . I shall thank you to favour me with clear and convincing answers to the above categorically. Lastly allow us to make this fervent appeal. . . . The underlying principle of your action is love towards huma-

to by you,[1] and even if I had, I would not find the time to study it, nor is it necessary, because of the way I look at the whole question.

Whilst I believe in all the Hindu Shastras as such, I am guided by one supreme canon of interpretation provided in the Shastras themselves. It is this. Every rule and every interpretation thereof that is inconsistent with truth or morality (one and the same thing) is to be rejected. Without some such canon in the midst of a multitude of texts and interpretations a man in the street would feel utterly helpless. As a firm believer in the necessity of temples, I have held the opinion that public temples, except when they are designed for only particular sects, should be open to all Hindus and therefore to Harijans. If your application of the law of karma was to hold good, sacrifice becomes a meaningless term and help given by one person to another a purely criminal act. If an untouchable, assuming that he is so by reason of his past actions, may not be helped out of his degraded position, why should other people suffering from distress be helped? And since I deny divine authority for rules that are inconsistent with truth, I easily come to the conclusion that the disabilities that Harijans are labouring under were imposed upon them by caste Hindus. Hence I regard the latter as debtors.

You ask whether I believe in castes. My answer is "No", but I do believe in varnashrama—a totally different institution from the modern castes.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. SANKARANARAYANA IYER
TIMBER MERCHANT
COIMBATORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 18803

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nity and it is the sanatanists who will more truly realize its force and in practice do material good to the Harijans than the present social reformers. It is the imbedded religious instinct in a man that more prompts him to do good for a fellow-being and deters him from doing injury to another. No man however high, nor any man-made laws can keep an individual's action in the path of righteousness as the call of religion can do" (S.N. 18745).

[1] The addressee had listed the following: "(1) *Madras Law Journal 27*, pages 253-8, (2) *Indian Law Reporter 31*, Madras, page 236, (3) *Indian Law Reporter 13*, Madras, page 293, (4) *Hindu and Mahomedan Endowments* by P. R. Ganapathi Iyer (Second Edition), pages 203-10."

397. LETTER TO T. S. KALYANA RAMA IYER

December 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1] of 16th instant. I have since heard from co-workers and I find that every precaution that should be legitimately taken was taken in order to ensure voting on the part of those who are bona-fide temple-goers. Thus, the question was how to distinguish the bona-fide temple-goers from the non-believers in temple going. I accept Sjt. Rajagopalachari's statement that it was not possible to have "an inquisition or a confession of faith". When the referendum is completed and the whole report is before me, I should be better able to estimate the value of the referendum. After all, the referendum by itself is not going to decide the Guruvayur temple- entry question, but it would be a material factor in helping me to decide whether the contemplated fast is to be taken or postponed.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18804

398. LETTER TO C. NARAYANA MENON

December 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I quite agree with you that no person should give his or her signature on more than one paper. The principal use of Guruvayur referendum is for the satisfaction of my own conscience. I want to be quite clear that the majority of thosewho live in the neighbourhood of Guruvayur are in favour of temple-entry by Harijans.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. NARAYANA MENON
BENARES HINDU UNIVERSITY, BENARES

From a microfilm: S.N. 18805

[1] Which read: " . . . the referendum that is now being taken is not in the sense as you have wanted it. Since a reformer can have no idea of the feelings of a no-changer in this matter, I humbly request you to give strict orders to take only votes of *bona-fide* temple-goers. I think the best and easiest way to take their votes will be from the temple-gates. Votes may be taken for three or four days at random" (S.N. 18723). *Vide* also "Fragment of Letter to T. S. Kalyana Rama Iyer", 9-12-1932.

399. LETTER TO NARAYANRAO KULKARNI

December 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. Where the villagers are so cruel as to threaten complete boycott of untouchables who would make use of public wells or tanks, the ideal course for Harijans would be to vacate such a village. Boycott of workers is a simpler matter. They should have the courage to brave all the risks attendant upon working for the reform. If they continue their service without retaliation, the opposition will die out. The other way of course is to await the conversion of the villagers.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. NARAYANRAO KULKARNI
POST ASHTA (SATARA)

From a microfilm: S.N. 18806

400. LETTER TO PURNA CHANDRA DEY

December 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[2], and had your telegram also. Why do you think that the proceedings of the meeting organized under the aegis of the Pravartak Sangha were a manoeuvre of Motibabu? He is here and tries his best to help the movement in his own manner, not to hinder it. He is a tried worker and head of a responsible institution of long standing. I think that it would be well to understand his view-point. You need not agree with it, but it would bewrong to regard him as hindrance to the progress of the movement for the removal of untouchability.[3]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. PURNA CHANDRA DEY
SECRETARY, HINDU MASS MEETING, CHANDERNAGORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 18808

[1] Dated December 17, 1932 (S.N. 18738)
[2] Dated December 20, 1932 (S.N. 18747)
[3] *Vide* also "Letter to Manindra Nath Mitter", 23-12-1932.

401. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

December 24, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

Mahadev has told me all about what you felt over yesterday's gathering. I tried my utmost to keep the numbers inside of 25, but it was impossible to prevent the *Shastris* who had come from surrounding districts and they belonged to the sanatanist school and therefore I had to walk warily. I had hoped that today would be the last day but I find that I have to prolong the period. They are coming on Monday. It taxed all my strength and tact to keep the number inside of 25 as I had promised. I shall try to keep it at that on Monday also and thereafter. But I can make no promise. I am fully aware that you have to act under instructions. But they should not be inconsistent with the orders[1] of the Government of India. According to my reading of those orders, the number of visitors has been left open, to be regulated by me. I have been endeavouring to the utmost of my ability to suit your convenience both as to number and time, but occasions arise when it is impossible for me to restrict the number as you would wish. If therefore it is necessary for you to refer the matter to higher authority, you will please do so and receive instructions as to the meeting on Monday and thereafter. As the 2nd of January approaches, I know that the pressure is bound to increase. I would therefore like a fairly free hand leaving me always to realize that I am a prisoner and therefore may not arrange things as if I have no restrictions to submit to. But I would like you and the Government to feel with me that I can consult the convenience of the administration only so far as not to inter-fere with the progress of the movement in furtherance of which extraordinary facilities have been given to me.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (4), Pt. II, p. 115; also G.N. 3875

[1] *Vide* footnote to "Telegram to Home Secretary, Government of India", 3-11-1932.

402. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 24, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your mail. I understand your point of view regarding Narayanappa. I cannot take the step about the Chharas which I wish to from here before I hear from Mavalankar.[1]

I do not know which ideas of Ramdas, Surendra is referring to.

Tara and Vasumati are at Thana. From this, I infer that Mahalakshmi also must be there. Do you get any news about Gangabehn?

I feel a little afraid about the consequences of Prema's having left her bed. If she does not exercise self-control, not about food but about speaking, I am sure she will harm herself. I do not know how to put some check on her in regard to what she writes in her letters. One way is that you should stop sending me letters written by her in excitement. The last letter contained nothing but bitter criticism of Chhaganlal.[2] I would never keep such a letter from him, and so I read out to him the whole of it. The letter has had no effect on him, since he knows nothing about the allegations which Prema has made against him. His only reply, therefore, is to endure in silence.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M. U./I. Also C.W. 8287. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

403. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

December 25, 1932

DEAR SATISBABU,

I have your letter for which I have been waiting all this time. I hope you have passed on the result of your examination of the Kirloskar Wheel to Shankarlal. I have already told[3] you what passed between Dr. Bidhan and myself. I saw that, contrary to expectations, he resented what he regarded as my interference. I therefore unhesi-

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 4/5/-12-1932, and "Letter to G. V. Mavalankar", 15-12-1932.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 25-12-1932.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 18-12-1932.

tatingly withdrew my letter and apologized.[1] That was the only thing open to me to do. I had no business to interfere except on the assumption that anything I said would be welcomed as a friendly suggestion. When therefore it was not, I had to tender apology and withdraw. You will now do exactly as your conscience leads you. Let me not guide you in such a delicate matter from this distance.

I do not mind the uttermost renunciation from you, but it must be from perfect assimilation, and the test of assimilation would be that it would give you perennial joy, there would be not a trace of anxiety in your face, and therefore in your mind. What is more, Hemprabha should go with you heart and soul and the result of such life should be freedom from illness. With you two, illness cannot be the result of dietetic error. It can only be the result of unconscious anxiety, if not even conscious. Mental worry and anxiety are as responsible for human illnesses as wrong air, wrong water, and wrong diet; but a life of natural, joyful renunciation has been known even to overcome compulsory limitations about air, water and food. Men of God have been found in utter destitution, in swamps with pestilential air, dirty water and wretched food to sustain them, and yet they have kept their health for prolonged periods and carried on their work. It is related of Mahomed that when a disciple questioned him about his own prolonged fasts and his prohibition to his followers against under-taking more than the regulation fasts, he said he was fed by God when he was fasting and therefore did not even know the privation, but such was not the case with the followers. Whether the tradition has a historical basis or not, what has been related is a permanent truth, verifiable by anybody, subject of course to the conditions laid down. Not having the capacity myself for such uttermost renunciation and being still dependent upon pure air, pure water and suitable food for retaining my health, I am incompetent to advise you. I can therefore only warn you against a hasty leap in the dark. I take it that you will not refuse monetary help if it comes in due course and without door-to-door begging. Will it not be wise of Hemprabha to do what was done for you, to come down to Poona and take rest, if necessary, for full one month if the climate is found suitable for her consti-tution? I dread the prospect of her developing beriberi. Let her not give up writing to me because you are there.

With love,

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1620

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. B. C. Roy", 15-12-1932.

404. LETTER TO P. P. SHENAI[1]

December 25, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

My fast is a process of purification and penance. Everything else flows from that fundamental fact.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. P. SHENAI
20 ANDIAPPA GRAMANI ST., ROYAPURM, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 18813

405. LETTER TO K. L. SAHU

December 25, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[2]. Please convey my thanks to the Harijans for their gift of flowers. I fully appreciate the affection of which the gift is but a token. I would ask them to follow up the\gift by making the necessary changes in their lives which are peremptorily demanded by the altered conditions. They will not wait to make the change till they see with their own eyes the alteration in the conditions that have prevailed hitherto.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. L. SAHU
BHANDARA (C.P.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 18814

406. LETTER TO T. S. KALYANA RAMA IYER

December 25, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your long letter. You are at liberty to publish your own letter and this reply.

In the first place, it seems to me that you have misconstrued the

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's dated December 22, requesting Gandhiji to justify his fast "as a means of solving a problem".

[2] Dated December 20, 1932 (S.N. 18746)

proposed Bill. It is not sought to impose the views of a minority on the majority, but it is sought to restore the condition as it was before the decisions of Courts gave a permanent legal effect to a custom. Whilst a particular custom is in vogue without at any stage being made permanent by decisions of a Court or by legislation, it becomes stagnant and is not liable to the gradual and imperceptible change that every healthy custom undergoes in process of time and under pressure of the demand of the public governed by that particular custom. The proposed Bill will so alter the Court-made Law as to make it possible for the public interested by a majority to change the then existing custom. Instances are not wanting in Hinduism to prove that even the interpretations of accepted Shastras have suffered evolution, so much so that in some cases the original meaning has completely gone into disuse. All the fears that you have described in your letter are in my opinion groundless for the reason I have stated.

You will admit that there are rival schools of interpretation of the *Agamas*, as also there are *Shastris* who question the authenticity of certain *Agamas*. If Hinduism was not in a decaying condition, we would not find those versed in Vedic lore supine, whilst gross superstition is defiling a religion that was once pure and had inherent capacity for continually throwing out impurities and responding to the call of the age. I can only give you my assurance that I have no desire whatsoever to do violence to Hindu public feeling or to ignore the Shastras on which Hinduism is based. I have, however, reserved to myself the right to determine according to my light the choice of interpretation in the midst of a variety, or even in all humility to give a new interpretation where in rare instances I feel the capacity for it, and this practice is quite consistent with the spirit of Hinduism. We would not have a variety of interpretations and make them acceptable to a large number of Hindus, not always ignorant of Shastras.

You say that whenever an idol is polluted, all that is needed to restore its purity is to do so by authorized purification.[1] Since there is no method of guarding an idol against pollution by the surreptitious entry of an untouchable or others who are prohibited from entering a particular temple, and since there is no infallible method of detecting intruders before they come within the pollution distance, does it not follow that the ceremony of purification has to be gone through every day in order to retain the efficacy of the idol?

[1] *Vide* also 2nd footnote to "Letter to R. Sankaranarayana Iyer", 24-12-1932.

Again, how would you guard against the so-called untouchables declining to be classed as such and insisting upon being classified as *savarna* Hindus at the next census? Do you contemplate courts of inquisition for determining the birth-status of tens of thousands of Hindus? If the *Agamas*, or rather the custodians of the *Agamas*, were at all alive to their trust, they would recognize the spirit of the age and draw from the very Shastras a meaning consistent with it.

From a copy: S.N. 18815

407. A LETTER

December 25, 1932

You meditate daily over the teaching of the *Gita*. In due course you will realize that one whose mind is pure will always be serene.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 371

408. A LETTER[1]

December 25, 1932

Take a lesson from your error. . . . You should never be alone with . . . behn[2]. Observe even seemingly unimportant rules scrupulously. Do not speak untruth even for Indra's throne. Prefer to give up your life by fasting rather than gratify your lust.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 370

409. A LETTER

December 25, 1932

If you stop worrying, I also would immediately do so. I hope you know that your understanding of the teaching of the *Gita* is being tested now. Even if you could read the verses with correct pronunciation and proper understanding of their meaning or learn them by heart, I would not hold you to have passed the test. You will get marks

[1] The addressee wished to observe *brahmacharya*.

[2] The name is omitted in the source.

according to the measure in which you put the teaching in practice. One who can discourse in the principles of spinning fluently is not, therefore, an expert in spinning. He is the expert who follows those principles, that is, who spins and cards. The same is true about the *Gita*. It is the best remedy for all illnesses. If you use it properly, I would not worry much about you.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 371

410. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

December 25, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

I got your letter. If you don't keep well there, you should immediately go to Rajkot and see if the climate of that place helps you. You will get milk there. Your *swadharma* means the work you are doing at present, namely, popularizing the *takli* and study. If cow-protection or other work comes to you unsought, you may do it. This is not the age for you to put into practice your own ideas about acceptable and forbidden food. For one thing you are not mature enough for that, and, secondly, being a member of an institution you should follow its rules in the faith that its practice cannot be contrary to dharma. If you do not understand this, ask me to explain it again.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6747. Also C.W. 4490. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

411. LETTER TO GANGABEHN B. JHAVERI

December 25, 1932

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I got your letter. Please don't stop writing to me. It is good news that your health is improving.

Nanibehn had written to me about Navin and Mahesh having gone there.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3951

412. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

December 25, 1932

CHI. JAMNA,

I have been thinking hard about some way of improving Purushottam's health, but I can think of nothing except that he should try out different places. I have been thinking of a place as far as Almora. There is Hajira near Surat. It is a well-known health resort. I do believe that he should go and stay there as long as necessary and improve his health. At any rate, Lonavla is there. He has even thought about it. Think over this suggestion.

How are you?

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 867. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

413. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

December 25, 1932

CHI. PANDITJI,

Do write to me and let me know your views about the changes in food.[1]

I have received Mavalankar's letter about the problem of the Chharas.I don't think it is necessary for me to do anything from here.

I liked the description of cleaning work. I do remember about the *Bhajanavali*, but I am helpless.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 239. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

414. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

December 25, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

Since we shall be soon meeting, I need not write this letter. You wanted my reply so that it should reach you before Friday, but because of your order [that Chhaganlal should not be permitted to

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 30-11/1-12-1932

read your letters] I could not read your letter immediately. Since Chhaganlal cannot read it, I cannot hear it, read out to me while I pace to and fro. Afterwards I would be busy with other things. You have yourself created a difficulty both for you and me. I showed to Chhaganlal your lengthy story of complaints against him.[1] I am sure you did not wish that it should not be shown to him. I, at any rate, cannot be a party to that. What burning hatred, though, there was in what you wrote! Chhaganlal is altogether ignorant of those short-comings. If he had the shortcomings which you have attributed to him, he could not have lived in the Ashram. And Surendra[2]! You will hardly come across in the Ashram a man as clean as he is. I had never thought that you had in you malice enough to remember for so long what he had told you in his goodness. I love your pouring out your heart to me. But it also pains me extremely to know that you can harbour such thoughts about anyone. Your duty now is to pray to God to forgive you for this grave sin and thereby purify yourself. Do that and remove the pain in my heart.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10317. Also C.W. 6756. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

415. LETTER TO SHANTA S. PATEL

December 25, 1932

CHI. SHANTA,

I got your letter. You may follow the path which you think is for your good.

What I do not like is the following:

1. Your movements;
2. your want of sense of responsibility;
3. your failure to do your duty of guiding Mangala[3] an Pushpa[4];
4. your irresoluteness.

Probably you have an explanation about all these. If you have, your failure to tell me about it before is an additional cause for my

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 24-12-1932.

[2] An Ashram inmate known for his strict observance of *brahmacharya*

[3] Addressee's sister

[4] *ibid.*

dissatisfaction. You should remove that dissatisfaction.

What did Mangala and Pushpa not like in the Ashram? Along with the Ashram, have they left me too!

Is Kamala happy?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4069. Also C.W. 20. Courtesy: Shantabehn Patel

416. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 25, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I will make this letter short.

Read my letters to Radha and Prema. Explain to everybody my comments on the *Gita*.

I think that, if Amtussalaam wishes to go somewhere for the sake of her health, you should let her go. She is a very pure-minded lady. I would be very happy if going to some other place improves her health. If she can, she may also try and get her share of the money. But this opinion of mine may be based on incomplete data. You should be guided by your own judgment.

I got Mavalankar's letter concerning the Chharas. I will do nothing just now. Nor need you do anything. We may, if we wish, try our own methods.

I hope you have completely recovered now.

Think over what I have written about Purushottam in my letter[1] to Jamna.

BAPU

[PS.]

In all there are 29 letters and they are stringed together.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8288. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jamnabehn Gandhi", 25-12-1932.

417. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

December 25, 1932

CHI. NIMU,

At long last, I received a letter from you. Kanu's name can certainly be changed. Let me have the name you would like me to give him, and I will do accordingly. I do not insist on any particular name. Nor does Ramdas.

Ba is here.[1] She can see me from time to time.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

418. LETTER TO SULTANA QURESHI

December 25, 1932

CHI. SULTANA[2],

I was greatly pleased to see your first letter. By trying hard one can learn to write well-formed characters.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10823. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

419. LETTER TO HAMID QURESHI

December 25, 1932

CHI. HAMID,

I was glad to see your letter. Try and learn to write well-formed characters.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10802. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

[1] In Yeravda Prison
[2] Daughter of Amina

420. LETTER TO PANNALAL JHAVERI

December 25, 1932

CHI. PANNALAL,

I had been awaiting your detailed letter. And then I saw your beautiful handwriting. I have been getting news about all of you. Rohit does not yet appear to be wholly out of the wood. How are you keeping?

Keep writing to me.

I am not writing to Nanibehn this time.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari—Pannalal Jhaveri, p. 30

421. LETTER TO NARADEV SHASTRI

December 25, 1932

All the doubts will be resolved if you bear in mind the fact that I am working for Harijans while confined in jail. To write more would be to violate the restrictions. No Congressman is under any compulsion to join this work. No one need give up his dharma for the sake of this work.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 370

422. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

December 25, 1932

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

Draw a circle and ask anyone to find its beginning and end. None can indicate it if the circle is drawn correctly. This being true of man's creation, what can we say of God's creation? I am unable to answer your queries because no answer will be adequate. Leave the thing alone.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 832

423. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

December 25, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I got your letter. I was sorry to read about the piles. You should avoid *bajra roti* in this condition. Take bread with butter, milk and fruit. It may help to consult the doctor. Whatever Narandas advises should be done. I would approve of your going away if that is considered necessary for your health. In this matter too follow Narandas's advice. The German lady met me and gave me all news. Kudsia seems to be doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 268

424. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

December 25, 1932

BELOVED DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

You just came and went away. I got no opportunity at all to talk to you. I did get your and Padmaja's kisses. Nobody else saw them, though. But I will tell the whole world that these two girls sent me their kisses again by post. I was looking into some letters today. I saw the two *bhajans* sent by you. How nice it would have been if I could have heard you sing them. But I am helpless, I get no time at all. Respectful greetings from us all to Father and Mother. Ask Hamida to send me some more of her copper-plate handwriting.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You do not seem to have taken full advantage of the Poona air. You went back very soon.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

BIBI RAIHANA
C/O ABBAS SAHEB TYABJI
CAMP BARODA

From a photostat of the Urdu: S.N. 9663

[1] These sentences are in Gujarati.

425. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

December 26, 1932

BHAISHRI MAVALANKAR,

I got your letter. I don't see any error in the step which you have taken. There was no such thought in my mind. I was only afraid lest my brief remarks might have been misunderstood. In fact, I myself had advised Narandas to seek your advice. A patient is ill-equipped to judge the action of the physician. In any case he has no right to do so. The poet's statement "the strong are never in the wrong" is true in all cases. I have not read the letter addressed by you, nor is it necessary to do so now. I had thought of taking some appro-priate step from here, but now I have given up the idea. I will watch the effect of your letter.

All of us know very well that you are working very hard.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1233

426. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

December 26, 1932

BHAI MUNSHI,

Your letter did not require an immediate reply. Meanwhile, Anandshankarbhai gave me news about your health. He painted a more serious picture of it than I had thought. And that has prompted me to suggest my quack-remedy. Madon gives nature-cure treatment. If, with Dr. Gilder's permission and after careful inquiry, you take it, it will probably help you.

It seems Jijima is not going. My congratulations to her. I do hope she will complete a hundred.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7523. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

427. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI AND BENARSI BAJAJ

December 26, 1932

CHI. RUKMINI,

You do write to me regularly, but you will have to make your letters more interesting. I will not be satisfied with such dry letters. You don't need to be taught how to make them interesting.

CHI. BENARSI,

I like your practice of writing a few lines in Rukmini's letters. If you want anything to be conveyed to Jamnalalji, you may write to me about it. Do you earn sufficiently from your business?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9450-a. Courtesy: Benarsilal Bajaj

428. MESSAGE TO HARI KIRTAN MAHA SAMMELAN, MEERUT[1]

[Before *December 27, 1932*][2]

I hope the Harijans would join you in your recitations of *bhajans* on the occasion of your Sammelan.

The Hindustan Times, 29-12-1932

[1] The message was sent in a letter to the Reception Committee. It was published under the date-line: "Meerut, December 27",

[2] *ibid.*

429. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

December 27, 1932[1]

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter[2] . The dazzle of my presence is really a greater embarrassment to me than to friends like you, and I wish that we can work and speak to one another on a par. I hate to have any special credit given to my word than would be claimed by any other person saying the same thing. With this preface I must say that I wholly dissent from your diagnosis. If I had written a similar letter[3] say, for instance, to you, I do not think that you would have resented it. In other words, I would not have over-rated my influence with you. How could I help Dr. Roy in securing the co-operation of Babus Suresh and Satis when I knew that such a thing was not possible unless I simply coerced them into giving mechanical co-operation, but I would not think of such co-operation even between Suresh babu and Satis-babu? Even in the Ashram, where I may be said to have equal influence with all, there are incompatible temperaments where I cannot look for co-operation, much less can I impose it; and inas-much as I believed that Suresh and Satis Babus were more effective people as plodders, I naturally desired the work to be in their hands, and I thought that Dr. Roy would appreciate my suggestion. Why should anybody feel hurt if a burden is shifted from his shoulders and put on to another, thought to be more able to carry it? And I, as it now turns out erroneously, thought that Dr. Bidhan would not misconstrue my letter, take it in good light, and contest, if he liked, the underlying assumption, but never resent the letter. And why do you say that I have rebuked Dr. Roy in my second letter? I think I have fairly put the position, but if you have not followed it, you may read it over again. I would like you to understand the motive under-lying the first letter. I shall see if I can think of a good secretary for you who will work for the love of work.

[1] In the printed source, this letter is dated December 29, 1932, which seems to be wrong as the addressee referring to this letter in his reply dated January 2, 1933, says: "I have your letters of the 27th and 28th." For the letter of the 28th, *vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 28-12-1932.

[2] Dated December 21, 1932; *vide* Appendix "Letter from G. D. Birla", 21-12-1932.

[3] The reference is to Gandhiji's letter to Dr. B. C. Roy; *vide* 7-12-1932.

I would warn you against issuing the English edition, unless it is properly got up and contains readable English and translations are all accurate. It would be much better to be satisfied with the Hindi edition only, than to have an indifferently edited English weekly.

Of course, I know that there is no question of partiality, but it is as well to bear in mind how Dr. Ambedkar's people feel about all we do.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 18825; also *In the Shadow of the Mahatma*, pp. 85-6

430. LETTER TO L. N BHARGAVA

December 27, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. I will deal with the matter of baskets[2] in one of my statements.

With reference to the temples, though they are in the hands of Goswamis, they cannot but be affected by the opinion of *bonafide* temple-goers, if that opinion favours the admission of Harijans to the temples. You should also try to see the Goswamis and discuss the thing with them. I need hardly say that they should be approached in a courteous and sympathetic spirit.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. L. N. BHARGAVA
PRESIDENT, SERVANTS OF UNTOUCHABLES SOCIETY, MUTTRA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18828

431. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

December 27, 1932

MY DEAR SHYAMLAL,

I sent the English article for *Dalit Sevak* some days ago to Sjt. Birla. You must have had it by this time. You will see to it that no mistakes occur, either of grammar or spelling in the English edition. Itis quite unnecessary to translate the Hindi article. Whenever a transl-

[1] Dated December 21, 1932 (S.N. 18776)
[2] Used for scavenging

ation is necessary of any article I may write in Hindi, I will take care to send it from here or ask you to make it there.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18821

432. LETTER TO M. R. RAMASWAMI

December 27, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I shall certainly deal with the subject-matter of your letter publicly,[1] but that may take a little time. I may therefore give you this assurance, that it is not open to those who have no faith in temple worship to join the movement for temple-entry, and I should be very sorry indeed if any person who does not believe in temple worship joined the movement simply in order to destroy the veneration for temples, and I should be very sorry to find reformers resorting to abuse of sanatanists. I would like you to give me specific instances in which case I would be able more effectively to deal with cases of abuse.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. R. RAMASWAMI, B.A., B.L.
VIVEKODAYAM, TRICHUR (COCHIN STATE)

From a microfilm: S.N. 18824

433. LETTER TO SITARAM K. NALAVADE

December 27, 1932

BHAI SITARAM,

I have your letter.

Come at one o'clock on the 7th. You can take . . .[2] from me.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[PS.]

Do not take more than half an hour.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 800

[1] *Vide* "Statement on Untouchability-XIII", 30-12-1932.

[2] The original is mutilated here.

434. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

December 27, 1932

CHI. BRIJKISHAN,

Why so much attachment? Console yourself with the thought that if I die, it will be in the cause of dharma. Then why grieve? Anyway the body has to die of some cause or other. It seems at the moment that the fast of the second proximo will be suspended. Things will be clearer in a couple of days.

I shall write something about the condition of temples in the newspapers. Temples are pretty important. Temple-entry of Harijans is the first step and the internal reforms will follow.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2397

435. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

December 28, 1932

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

The Secretary of the Friends of India Society, London, writes to me saying that she has sent you a cheque or draft for £42-0-3 being the takings during the Fast Week.[1] You will please tell me whether the amount has been received.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

C.W. 7911. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also S.N. 18832

436. LETTER TO T. S. KALYANA RAMA IYER

December 28, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. In spite of my desperate attempt to give you a detailed reply, I see that it is beyond my capacity just now to do so. I must therefore ask you kindly to await the statements that I issue from time to time which are designed to cover the points that

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Mrs. Hunter", 6-1-1933.

several correspondents raise. You will please appreciate that it is not the want of will but want of ability that I cannot give you a detailed reply.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18831

437. LETTER TO T. A. V. NATHAN

December 28, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 16th instant, and for your assurance of support in the great reform movement.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. A. V. NATHAN
EDITOR OF "JUSTICE", 14 MOUNT ROAD, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 18833

438. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

December 28, 1932

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your many love-letters. You had prepared me for them by your cable of cancellation and had evidently thought you had finished writing when the light had dawned on you. You do not want me to reason with you at all. I only want to repeat what I have already said that your being one with me gave me very great joy. As I have been saying to so many friends who know me, in all these things I am not the doer; I am merely the passive willing instrument in the hands of God. Of course, it may be a hallucination. No argument can remove hallucination. For that, God's light is needed. But hitherto, in no single case wherein I have claimed God's direction, it has been found to be otherwise.

I do not wonder that your book is rapidly going through edition after edition, and I like very much the idea of your being settled in Woodbrooke.

Love from us all to you all.

From a photostat: G.N. 1305

439. LETTER TO AN ENGLISH WOMAN

December 28, 1932

MY DEAR SISTER,

I must dictate if I must write at all. You are pouring your love on me, not merely showering it. I have your well-marked book, your telegram, your letters laden with sacred cards, each bearing some verse or proverb written by you, and your gift of £6 for Harijans, for all of which God bless you.

You will not expect me to give you long letters. I can only send you a line to tell you that you are never out of my mind.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18834

440. LETTER TO M. SWAMINATHAN

December 28, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I would like you to write to the Secretary of the Provincial Board yourself, giving him your credentials accompanied by introductions.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. SWAMINATHAN
EDITOR, "SUTHANDIRA MURASU", 2 AZIZ MULK LANE
CATHEDRAL POST, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 18830

441. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

December 28, 1932

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

I have gone through the comments you sent to me. Of course, I know that the task is difficult. It is necessary to carry on propaganda among the people in every village. It is necessary to get acquainted with the conditions of the Harijans in every village. Teachers, local-boards, etc., should be awakened. It may also be necessary to fight

legal battles at some places.

Women like Sharadabehn, etc., who were involved in this said that even though there was no conflict between the Harijan Labour Committee and their Committee, the scope of both these Committees was not well defined. And since they do not have a clear idea as to what you desire, conflict may arise in course of time. Meet them personally in this connection and clarify the issue. If it is necessary to meet me, you may come any time you wish.

As regards Harijan work you can write as much as you wish and whenever you wish. So keep writing to me without hesitation.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32705

442. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Morning, after prayer [*December 29, 1932*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

The notes were after all received. Your letter came in at the usual time.

It is a wrong thing to rehearse a calamity[2] (i.e., an event believed by us to be a calamity though in fact it may be a blessing) and to reproduce in advance the feelings one would have. It is enough that we hold ourselves prepared for the worst. This we do by an ever increasing faith in God, the Good, the Just, the Compassionate, the Bountiful, the Giver of the daily bread, the Help of the helpless, the All-powerful, the All-knowing, the Ever-vigilant, the Whole Truth.

Nirvan is utter extinction of all egoism, self. Its positive aspect is capable of being experienced but incapable of being described. But we know by inference that it is something vastly superior to any bliss that we can possibly experience on this earth.

[1] "Undated, probably December 29, 1932, postmark December 30, 1932"—Mirabehn. At the top of the letter are the initials presumably of the Jail authority in Bombay with the date December 31, 1932.

[2] "The teaching of this letter as likewise that of January 5, 1933 and January 19, 1933 has been one of the things that sank deep into my being and by now it has become a habit with me immediately to check my mind the moment it begins speculating and picturing. Cessation of mental imaginings of what might come to pass, either good or bad, is an essential condition to inner peace."—Mirabehn

Dr. Gour's book you can keep longer if you need.

Saltless diet continues without producing any effect on the elbow. Great pressure of work has led to reduction of milk and that has reduced the weight temporarily to 102 lb. No cause for anxiety.

There will be no fast on 2nd. The reasons you will see in the Press.[1] No time now.

Love.

BAPU

PS.

The dentist is Dr. D. M. Desai, Whiteway Laidlaw Buildings. Is it necessary for me to do anything from this end?

From a photostat: C.W. 9513. Courtesy: Mirabehn

443. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

December 29, 1932

BHAI BHAGWANJI,

I got your letter. It was from Bhai Khimchand's letter two or three days ago that I learnt for the first time that Bhai Manilal had any hand in his case. I don't know anything at all about this matter, andI have no right to intervene in such a matter from here.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5815. Also C.W. 3038. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

444. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

December 29, 1932

CHI. JAMNA,

I got your letter. I liked it very much. If you show in your life the same freedom and frankness of heart as you do in this letter, I shall believe that I have succeeded in teaching you all that I wished to. The Bombay climate has certainly suited you. You should regard Gangabehn's home in Borivli as your own. You can stay there if they

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Associated Press of India", 29-12-1932 and "Statement on Untouchability-XIII", 30-12-1932.

have a spare room for you. That would be the sea-coast you wanted.

You should give a trial to Vijapur also. You will stay there permanently only if you keep good health there. There is, therefore, no question of being a burden on Kashi. Nor need you stay outside the Ashram for all the months of the year. You may pass ten months outside the Ashram and build up your health, and then spend two months in the Ashram.

If it is a wife's duty to live with her husband, so also it is the husband's duty to live with the wife. However, just as owing to circumstances or for the sake of duty the husband has sometimes to endure separation from his wife, she too must bear separation from him for a similar reason. Dharma does not require that a husband or a wife should always remain present by the sick-bed of the other partner. We can know what the duty of either is in a given case only if we know the exact circumstances. It is true, however, that the two should have equal rights. I would even go further and say that the wife has more rights as long as she regards herself as the weaker one and suffers from handicaps.

I hope you keep better health now. Do think of going to some other place. I have already written[1] to you about the desirability of Purushottam going to Hajira.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 868. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

445. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

December 29, 1932

CHI. MANGALA,

We should not mind if anybody is offended as a result of our following a rule. It would be wrong for a girl who has been helping in rolling the dough to linger on after her work is over. Why, then, should another who is frying the cakes feel offended [if the former leaves]? However, if the work of rolling the dough is over before frying, it means that more girls are doing it than are necessary.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4086. Also C.W. 50. Courtesy: Mangalabehn B. Desai

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jamnabehn Gandhi", 25-12-1932.

446. LETTER TO AMINA QURESHI

YERAVDA,

December 29, 1932

CHI. AMINA,

You seem to be blaming me for what is really your fault. From whom did you learn this perverse rule of never yourself writing to me but expecting me to write to you? Those who expect letters from me should either write to me or fall so ill as to be unable to write. I hope that out of lethargy in writing to me you don't wish to fall ill so as to have letters from me from time to time.

Your studies must be progressing well. Encourage the children to write to me from time to time. That also will be a lesson in their studies. If you write, the children will copy you and write too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10791. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

447. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

December 29, 1932

Reclining on a cot in the sun, Mr. Gandhi this afternoon talked with the Associated Press correspondent for two minutes. He said:

In view of what has happened in connection with Viceregal sanction to Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill[1] and inevitable delay that has occurred in regard thereto, I have decided after full consultations with Mr. Kelappan,[2] Mr. Rajagopalachari and Mr. Madhavan Nair to postpone the contemplated fast indefinitely. I am trying to draft exhaustive statement on it but owing to tremendous pressure of work I have not been able to finish it. I hope to give it to Press at a very early date.[3]

More than this, he said, he did not want to say at this stage. He however

[1] The Viceroy's decision regarding sanction to the introduction of the Bill in the Council could not be reached before January 15.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Discussion with K. Kelappan", 29-12-1932.

[3] *Vide* the following item.

jocularly added:

The sun's rays make me strong and I love them.

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-12-1932

448. STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY-XIII

December 30, 1932

I had full consultation with Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, Mr. K. Madhavan Nair and Mr. Kelappan[1], who have come to Poona to confer with me. They have placed the results of the Guruvayur referendum before me. The referendum was taken of the Ponnani Taluk where the temple is situated.

Never perhaps was a referendum taken with such scrupulous care or with such scientific precision before this. Rarely to my knowledge, have 73 per cent of the eligible voters voted.

In order to find out the truth, voting was confined only to those who were actual temple-goers, that is to say, those who were not entitled to enter the Guruvayur Temple and those who would not, such as the Arya Samajists, were excluded from the voters' list. I had intended without thinking of all implications actually to find out by some method of examination, who were actual temple-goers, but I have found it to be utterly impracticable. It was enough to announce that only those should vote who believed in temple-going, who had faith in temple-worship as an integral part of the Hindu religion and who were entitled to enter the Guruvayur Temple.

The total population entitled to the temple-entry being approximately 65,000, the outside estimate of adults may be taken as 30,000. As a matter of fact, 27,465 adult men and women were actually visited for receiving their votes. Of these 55 per cent were in favour of temple-entry; nine per cent against, eight per cent were neutrals, and 27 per cent abstained.

It should be remembered that the referendum was taken amidst adverse influences. The Zamorin would not co-operate, and I am sorry to have to say, even cast aspersions upon the workers and the procedure they followed. The Ponnani Taluk is the stronghold of orthodoxy and yet there was a decisive majority in favour of admission of the untouchables to that shrine now made famous throughout

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Discussion with K. Kelappan", 29-12-1932.

the length and breadth of the land.

The figures were also instructive, as showing that both men and women had no hesitation in spite of the contemplated fast, of expressing their dissent. I would also draw a fair deduction from the neutrals and non-co-operators. They could not at all, if they had chosen to give their decision, be regarded as against the temple-entry of the Harijans. It would not be a bad or unfair guess to make, if I suggested that a fourth of these, at least, were probably for temple- entry. The percentage of the voters favouring temple-entry would then be sixty-five per cent of the total eligible voters. If they be excluded altogether from the referendum, the majority would be 77 per cent.

Turn the figures as we may, the unchallengeable conclusion is that a decisive majority of eligible voters are in favour of the entry by the Harijans.

That fact shows that Mr. Kelappan's statement that the majority of temple-going population surrounding Guruvayur was in favour of temple-entry, is correct.

In view of the official announcement that the Viceregal decision as to the sanction for the introduction in the Madras Legislative Council of Dr. Subbaroyan's permissive Bill with reference to the temple-entry could not possibly be announced before the 15th of January, the fast contemplated to take place on the 2nd day of the New Year will be indefinitely postponed, and in any case up to the date of the announcement of the Viceregal decision. Sjt. Kelappan concurs with this postponement. As the contemplated fast was addressed to the public, let me, at the risk of repeating what I have said previously, state my own position clearly. My fast, I regard, as a purely spiritual act, and therefore not capable of being fully explained. But in so far as I can, I may say that it is intended to stir the public conscience.

Hinduism teaches that when evils and corruption are beyond control by ordinary means and, human endeavour is supplemented by *tapasya* or penance which, in its extreme form, means fasting either conditional or unconditional.

Therefore it is no new thing. But for the influence, supposed or real, I enjoy among the masses, perhaps no notice would be taken of it.

My conviction is that Hinduism has fallen from the purity and vitality it once had. Its very scriptures are evidence of the continu-

ous progress and adaptability to circumstances that arose from time to time. Though it has retained unimpaired the claim to divine inspiration for the scriptures as a body, it did not hesitate to introduce new reforms and make changes. Hence it is that we have in Hinduism not only Vedas, but all later writings claiming authority. But a time came, when this healthy growth or evolution was arrested, and instead of the written word being used as an aid to the search for light from within, it was held to be all-sufficing, whether it accorded with longings and strivings of the spirit within or not. The descendants of those who wrestled with God Himself and drew from Him some of the imperishable things one finds in Vedas and later writings, felt too exhausted for further effort, either to wring out new meaning from an old verse or mantra or produce a new mantra. They felt that they had done with God and that God had finished His work, after inspiring the last verse of the latest Shastra. And so one finds an army of interpreters seeking to reconcile, often irreconcilable texts, unmindful as to whether they answer the pressing needs of the age or whether they can stand the light of searching examination. And even penances took mere outward form, instead of being an expression of the inward agonizing struggle. I may be wrong in my diagnosis, but such being my case and finding the Hindu society irresponsive to the central call of Hinduism, that is, progressive realization of unity of all life, not as a philosophical doctrine but as a solid fact of life, I thought that by continuous effort to live my religion as I understood it, I had the fitness for doing penance by way of fasting and that I had such a call from within

I hope it is easy for the reader to see that there is no coercion behind the fast thus conceived. If my fast was fixed as an unconditional one, it is obvious there can be no coercion about it, for nothing that the public may do or not do could suspend my fast. Therefore, if a conditional fast is held to be coercive, it would be so considered because of the condition. My experience is that the fast has not deterred people from sticking to their principles or even their incli-nations, as was seen at Guruvayur.

The public will now understand that the postponement is what it means and no more. The fast was intended to secure admission of the untouchables into the Guruvayur Temple, and if its resumption is necessary in a legitimate manner to secure the opening, it will certainly come, as for instance, if through the mere supineness of the

reformers and consequent want of expression by public opinion in demanding the necessary legislation to remove the block created by decisions of courts and the Law of Trusts or the Madras Religious Endowments Act, which itself was a measure affecting religion, naturally the fast has to be resumed.

That is to say, it must be resumed, if the original vow is to be fulfilled. The fast must be resumed for the acts of omission or commission by those who are believed to be in favour of opening the Guruvayur Temple.

The Yeravda Pact was entered into between the representatives of the caste Hindus and the Harijans, and while confirming the Pact at the memorable conference in Bombay, the former resolved as follows:

> This conference resolves that henceforth, amongst Hindus, no one shall be regarded as untouchable by reason of his birth and that those who have been so regarded hitherto, shall have the same rights as the other Hindus in regard to the use of public wells, public schools, public roads and other public institutions. These rights shall have statutory recognition at the first opportunity, and shall be one of the earliest Acts of the Swaraj Parliament, if they shall not have received such recognition before that time. It is further agreed that it shall be the duty of all Hindu leaders to secure, by every legitimate and peaceful means, an early removal of all social disabilities now imposed by caste Hindus upon the so-called untouchable classes, including bar in the respect of admission to temples. [1]

If the distinguished caste Hindus that passed the resolution, represented, as they claim to, the Hindu portion of the Indian Nation, the claim has to be made good by increasing fraternization day by day with Harijans on the part of caste Hindus by way of opening to them public institutions.

Mr. Kelappan's fast over the opening of the Guruvayur Temple was actually going on whilst the Pact was emerging, and I asked him to suspend it principally at the suggestion of the Zamorin of Calicut. Moreover, as I have already said, when on the British Government's acceptance of relevant portion of the Pact I broke the fast, I solemnly assured Dr. Ambedkar and took a vow in the secret of my heart and in the presence of God that I would hold myself as a hostage for the fulfilment of the resolution above mentioned, and the general carry-

[1] This resolution was drafted by Gandhiji and passed by the conference with Malaviyaji in the chair on September 25, 1932; *vide* "Resolution at the Hindu Leaders' Conference, Bombay", 25-9-1932, where, however, "imposed by custom" is found instead of "imposed by caste Hindus".

ing out of the Pact by the caste Hindus. It would be a betrayal of trust and a betrayal of the Harijans if, in any shape or form, I slac-kened my effort or gave up altogether the intention of fasting in connection with the removal of untouchability.

I would like the voiceless and helpless Harijans to feel that thousands of Hindu reformers, as zealous of Hindu religion and scrip-tures on which it is based, as any Hindu calling himself a sanatanistcan be, are prepared, no less than I am, to sacrifice their lives, if need be, in an attempt to remove untouchability, root and branch.

There can be no rest, therefore, for me or those who, by word of mouth or show of hands, silently endorsed the resolution, until untouchabilty becomes a thing of the past It would be only out of the ashes of untouchability that Hinduism can revive, and thus be purified and become a vital and vitalizing force in the world.

The Bombay Chronicle, 31-12-1932; also *The Hindu*, 31-12-1932

449. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

December 30, 1932

As some misunderstanding has arisen about Pandit Panchanan Tarkaratna's visit to me, it is necessary to state how he came to me, and what happened between us.

The Pandit came with Babu Motilal Roy, Director of the Pravartak Sangh of Bengal. Babu Motilal Roy has been tying to avoid a split among the Hindus over the campaign against untouchability and he was most anxious that Pandit Panchanan Tarkaratna should accompany him when he came to see me to discuss and understand the whole position from my standpoint When I heard that from Babu Motilal Roy, I telegraphed to him welcoming him and Pandit Panchanan Tarkaratna. It gave me joy, therefore, when the Pandit came to me. We had two friendly conversations, as a result of which I think we came closer together and I began to entertain hope. Though he represents the ordinary orthodox sanatani attitude, he appreciated my viewpoint and he did not despair of finding a way of solving the temple-entry question. I have made a definite suggestion to him, which ought to satisfy the most exacting sanatanist He is now in Guruvayur, and I hope a formula will be found acceptable to the Pro-Change and No-Change sanatanists.

The Hindu, 31-12-1932

450. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

December 30, 1932

VICEROY'S CAMP

RELUCTANT AS I AM TO SAY SOMETHING TO GOVERNMENT REGARDING PROPOSED BILL FRAMED BY DR. SUBBAROYAN AND FORWARDED FOR VICEREGAL SANCTION BY MADRAS GOVERNMENT PERHAPS HIS EXCELLENCY EXPECTS ME TO SUBMIT MY VIEWS THEREANENT SO AS TO HELP HIM TO CORRECT DECISION. BILL PROPOSED NO INNOVATION IN HINDU BELIEF ON CONTRARY IT SEEKS CARRY OUT REQUIREMENTS OF HINDU SHASTRAS IN ACCORDANCE WITH OPINION HELD BY PUNDITS ACKNOWLEDGED TO BE WELL VERSED IN SANSKRIT RELIGIOUS LORE. IT SEEKS TO RESTORE STATUS QUO AS IT EXISTED BEFORE BRITISH COURTS ENFORCED WHAT WAS HELD BY SOME TO BE ANCIENT PRACTICE IN MALABAR AND THUS CLOTHED IT WITH FORCE OF LAW AND IT DOES SO BY AMENDING RELIGIOUS ENDOWMENTS ACT OF MADRAS WHICH IN ITSELF WAS CONSIDERABLE INTERFERENCE WITH THEN PREVAILING PRACTICE. BILL EMBODIES UNANIMOUSLY EXPRESSED WISH OF MADRAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THROUGH ITS RECENT RESOLUTION. IT SEEKS TO RENDER TARDY JUSTICE TO VAST NUMBER OF HINDUS WHO HAVE BEEN ARBITRARILY DEPRIVED OF RIGHT TO RELIGIOUS CONSOLATION EQUAL WITH OTHER HINDUS. IT SEEMS BEST TO CARRY OUT REPEATED DECLARATIONS OF HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT TO AFFORD PROTECTION TO UNTOUCHABLES. NOT TO SANCTION MEASURE WILL BE TANTAMOUNT TO CONTRADICTION OF THOSE DECLARATIONS AND ENCOURAGEMENT TO FORCES OF REACTION. SEEING THAT BILL IS IN RESPONSE TO MOVEMENT THAT SET IN AS DIRECT RESULT OF YERAVDA PACT GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ARE IN MY OPINION MORALLY BOUND NOT IN ANY WAY TO HINDER MOVEMENT WHICH THEY WILL OBVIOUSLY DO IF THEY BLOCK BILL. BILL IS MERELY PERMISSIVE MEASURE IN THAT IT MAKES OPENING OF TEMPLES TO HARIJANS DEPENDENT UPON WISHES OF MAJORITY OF THOSE AT PRESENT ENTITLED TO OFFER WORSHIP IN PARTICULAR TEMPLE. TO THESE CONSIDERATIONS I WOULD ADD THIS VERY MATERIAL FACT THAT IF ORTHODOX OPINIONMUST CARRY

WEIGHT OPINION OF FOUR CRORES OF HARIJANS WHICH MUST BE ASSUMED TO BE IN FAVOUR OF BILL SHOULD CARRY GREATER WEIGHT NOT TO SPEAK OF DEMAND OF EVER-INCREASING NUMBERS OF REFORMERS. A WORD IS NECESSARY HERE REGARDING FAST THAT WAS TO COMMENCE ON SECOND JANUARY NEXT IF GURUVAYUR TEMPLE WAS NOT OPENED BEFORE THEN. IF FAST WERE TO BE TAKEN ON THAT DATE IT COULD NOT BUT EMBARRASS GOVERNMENT. AFTER CONSULTATION WITH KELAPPAN THEREFORE I HAVE ANNOUNCED THAT IT WOULD BE INDEFINITELY POSTPONED. BUT IT MIGHT HAVE TO BE TAKEN IF FOR LACK OF DECISIVE EXPRESSION OF PUBLIC OPINION SANCTION IS WITH-HELD OR SOME UNFORESEEN BUT AVOIDABLE CAUSE OCCURS WHICH MAY PREVENT OPENING OF GURUVAYUR TEMPLE. I MAY STATE THAT PUBLIC AGITATION HAS BEEN PURPOSELY KEPT IN ABEYANCE UNDER BELIEF THAT CASE FOR VICEREGAL SANCTION WAS UNANSWERABLE. BUT IN VIEW OF GROWING AGITATION ON PART OF SANATANISTS I HAVE SUGGESTED ORGANIZATION OF MEETINGS AND THE LIKE FOR EXPRESSION OF PUBLIC OPINION IN SUPPORT OF BILL. BUT I DO FEEL THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER IF AGITATION ONE WAY OR OTHER OVER MERE QUESTION OF VICEREGAL SANCTION CAN BE AVOIDED. I THEREFORE HOPE THAT VICEREGAL SANCTION WILL SOON BE ANNOUNCED FOR INTRODUCTION OF DR. SUBBAROYAN'S BILL IN MADRAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL. I AM NOT SENDING THIS TELEGRAM FOR PUBLICATION. BUT OF COURSE I CAN HAVE NO OBJECTION TO ITS PUBLICATION IF HIS EXCELLENCY DESIRES IT.

GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9555. Courtesy: India Office Library. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40) (7), p. 79

451. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

[*December*][1] *30, 1932*

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I have your great and good letter quite worthy of you. I love and accept your correction, and say with you that we are near to each other; and since we are near to each other, let me say that my letter[2] had no complaint behind it. It simply went out as an advice in order to secure what I thought would be a better working of the organization, and I expected you, as a friend, if my advice did not find any response within your breast, to say plainly to me, 'You do not know the situation, and therefore I do not accept your advice.' Of course, your reply said the same thing, but in an unexpectedly different manner, but that is all dead and gone. After having tendered you my apology[3], I had dismissed the incident from mind, but you have revived the memory, and now rendered it sacred by your generous letter.

I am glad of the news you give me about your distinguished patients[4]. It is quite like Baby to have placed her flat at Kamala's disposal.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18493

452. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

December 31, 1932

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Sarup[5] came to me the other day to discuss her project about untouchability. She said you had advised rest in Ceylon. I regard it as unnecessary. She is quite able to do some work and she is quite willing to do some untouchability work. I think that she should be allowed to do the work so long as she wishes to do it.

[1] Inferred from the contents; the source, however, has "January".

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. B. C. Roy", 7-12-1932.

[3] In a telegram; *vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 15/16-12-1932; also "Letter to Dr. B. C. Roy", 15-12-1932.

[4] Kamala Nehru and Dr. Sheikh Mohammad Alam

[5] Vijayalakshmi Pandit

She told me you had some more teeth out while she was busy growing grey hair. But eye-witnesses tell me you were otherwise keeping quite fit. You still seem to be refusing to see visitors. I wish you would see them, if it is at all possible. It will give them satisfaction.

We are now a happy team of four, Chhaganlal Joshi having been added unto us. I do not know whether you are interesting yourself in the Harijan work. I am having a glorious time with the *Shastris*. My knowledge of the letter of the Shastras is better but of true religion they are able to give me but little.

With love from us all,

BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, p. 108

453. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

December 31, 1932

DEAR MOTIBABU,

It was a matter of great joy to me to have you and your disciples with me for so many days. I have understood your resolve to work for the removal of untouchability. I entirely agree with you that whilst we may sacrifice nothing of what we hold dear as life itself, we must endeavour to bring round orthodoxy to our point of view, if it is at all possible. In any case we may do nothing to hurt anybody's susceptibilities. May God bless your effort.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 11041

454. LETTER TO K. RAMACHANDRA

[*December*][1] *31, 1932*

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am sorry for the complication that has arisen there with reference to the temple-entry question.[2] I have no doubt whatsoever that whilst a non-Hindu may sympathize with there-

[1] Inferred from the contents; the source, however, has "January".

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to K. Ramachandra", 28-1-1933.

form movement, he cannot and ought not to take part in any direct action.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. RAMACHANDRA
SRI WICKRAMA
WELLAWATTE
COLOMBO

From a microfilm: S.N. 18494

455. LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON

[*December*][1] *31, 1932*

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

I have your letter of the 26th instant. Now that the fast is off [2] for the time being, I shall watch what work Kerala is going to put in.

The taking of signatures to the memorial[3] is, I hope, proceeding apace. You should report the number taken from day to day. You must have fixed a time-limit.

The work of educating public opinion should continue side by side with constructive work amongst the Harijans.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18495

456. LETTER TO BHULABHAI J. DESAI

December 31, 1932

BHAI BHULABHAI,

We were all happy to have your letter. I wish that nobody should worry on account of the pain in my elbow. I am taking the necessary treatment. The [authorities] will themselves call for help from outside when there is need for it. I shall myself ask for it if I feel the need. There is not much pain.

We are all glad to know that all of you are doing well. Obviously

[1] Inferred from the contents; the source, however, has "January".

[2] Gandhiji announced the postponement of the fast on December 29; *vide* "Interview to Associated Press of India", 29-12-1932.

[3] Presumably to the Viceroy for according sanction to introduction of Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill; *vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to Viceroy", 30-12-1932.

one cannot study here as well as one can [outside].

Regards to all from all of us. Dhirubhai will come again.

MOHANDAS
ADVOCATE BHULABHAI DESAI
PRISONER
CENTRAL PRISON
NASIK ROAD

[From Gujarati]

Bhulabhai Desai Papers, File No. 1. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

457. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[*December* 1932][1]

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I have your letter. Do not worry about me. There is nothing much the matter with my arm to cause anxiety. I feel no discomfort in writing to you. I understand about the *roza*[2]. By all means observe it. I will not write any more today; there is no time. It is very good you are serving the Harijans.[3]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 263

458. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

1932

CHI. RAMA,

I am a little disappointed about you. You know that I long for letters from everybody. If somebody does not write to me in order to save my time and because he or she is all right, that is another matter.

[1] In *Bapuke Patra—8: Bibi Amtussalaam ke Nam*, this letter has been placed after the one of November 6. However, from the reference to the *roza* fast it would seem that the letter was written just before or during the Ramzan, which commenced in December.

[2] Complete abstention from food and drink during the daylight hours observed by devout Muslims in the month of Ramzan

[3] The addressee was working at Vadaj near Sabarmati Ashram.

But in your case I think the reason is indifference and lethargy. Am I right? If I am, your conduct should be regarded unpardonable.

Chhaganlal's weight has been steadily increasing. It is 115 now.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 285

459. DIARY, 1932[1]

NOVEMBER 16, WEDNESDAY, YERAVDA MANDIR[2]

Takli—43 rounds. Letters—Parachure Shastri, Mohanlal Bhatt, Keshavlal Manchharam. Telegram to Jamnalal, telegram to the Kumaon Social Conference. About untouchability—Vinoba, Kowtha Suryanarayana Row, Martand Upadhyaya. Nargisbehn, Gosibehn, Shirinbehn, and Jamnabehn called. Gave the seventh statement to Kodanda Rao.

NOVEMBER 17, THURSDAY

Takli—48 rounds. Letters—Mira, Ganga Gidwani. A packet of *Gandhi Vichar Dohan* to Martand [Upadhyaya] About untouchability—Chaman, Natarajan, Mathuradas Vasanji, Hansa Mehta, Satavlekar, Michael, Vasantram Shastri, Yugudur Ramachandra Rao, Avantikabehn, Narasimhacharya, Satisbabu, Jivanlal, Pyarelal, Chandrashankar. Hiralal paid a visit. Gave the eighth statement to Kodanda Rao.

NOVEMBER 18, FRIDAY

Takli—52 rounds. Letters—Dr. Agrawal, Needu, Rastogi, Doyle (about Manibehn, and about Jamnalal), Padmaja. About untouchability—Haribhau Phatak, Ramachandra, Gadre, Lakshman Kumthakar, Anandatirtha, Sh[ankerlal] Banker. Telegrams to Govind, Gaur Gopal, Madhusudandas, Jagannath, Doddamati (about untouchability). Met Lady Thackersey, Shankarlal, Devdas, Pyarelal, Satisbabu, Girdhari, Raja. Met the three fellow-prisoners Shankar, Purushottamdas and Bhave.

[1] Continued from Vol. LI.

[2] This place-entry is not reproduced under subsequent dates.

NOVEMBER 19, SATURDAY

Takli—43 rounds. Letters—Shankarrao Godse, Mahomed Ali Habib, Vaze, Zaulinger, Rameshwar Bazaj, Ramsinhasan, Sha[n-karrao] Godse, Habib, Ghanshyamdas. About untouchability—] Priyanath Chatterji, Srikrishna Gautam, Hakim, Jenkins, Lahiri, Salivati, Sarup Rani, Faramji Mogul, Bhanji Rathod, Anandshankar. Mathuradas, Jaisukhlal Mehta, Chunilal, Devdhar, Hansabehn, Jaishri, Karsandas Chitalia, Surajbehn, Shanta, Kastur, Kanitkar, Devdas, Kamalnayan, Girdhari, Madalasa, Janakibehn paid a visit.

NOVEMBER 20, SUNDAY

Takli—51 rounds. Letters—Bhaktibehn, Manibehn, Kantilal Desai, Vasudev Naidu. About untouchability—P. A. Vinayaka, Devnandan Sannyasi, Sitaram Nalavde, Gopalakrishnamurthi, K. Ganesan, Anant Jayawant Sona[va]ne, Shardabehn, K. Vishwanathan, Jaishukhlal Mehta.

NOVEMBER 21, MONDAY

Takli—48 rounds. Letters—Narandas (42), Chhaganlal Joshi, Rukhi, Prabhavati, Chaitanyalalji, the Andhra Kala Parishad, Pyarelal, Thornberg. About untouchability—Labhshankar Mehta, Dhirubhai Bhulabhai, Manilal, Krishnacharya Sharma, Adar Ardesher Desai, the Bharat Dharma Office. Sadasiva Rao, Macrae, Satisbabu, Haribhau. Bhave paid a visit.

NOVEMBER 22, TUESDAY

Takli—48 rounds. Letters—Zohra, Ramanujachari, Himmatlal, Harjivan, Gudel (2), Bhatnagar, Col. Doyle, Dahyabhai, Manibehn Patel, Abhoy, Bhargava, Shankarlal, Mathuradas, Ja[mnalal] Bajaj, Miss Willy. About untouchability—Principal Dhruva, Nagini, Fulchand Gurjal, Vasant Chatterji, Krishnarao, Kashinath Kelkar, Sakat Bharucha, Thomas, Kanitkar, Haribhau, Gagannarayan, Iswaran, Chaman, Medhekar, Choksi, Baban Gokhale, Avantikabai, Ratanbehn, Devdas, Dhirubhai, Ramjibhai, Padmaja. Venkatachari, a lawyer and two others, with a message from the Shankaracharya of Kumbhakonam,[1] all these came to see me. Prof. Purandare gave a handwritten copy of his speeches on untouchability.

[1] In *Mahadevbhaini Diary* (Vol. II, p. 269), Mahadev Desai refers to him as Shankaracharya of Kanchi.

NOVEMBER 23, WEDNESDAY

[Letters-] The Shankaracharya of Kumbhakonam, Hiralal Amritlal, Devdas, Narandasbhai, Durgaprasad, Manibehn Kara, Sir Lallubhai, J. K. Mehta, Bhatt, Hiralal Shah, Devdas, Dahyabhai, Mani. Telegrams to Begum Alam, Deshmukh. A gentle reproof to the Major about Devdas. Today the interviews took place under the tree where the fast was undertaken. Mrs. Cousins, Saraladevi, Shardabehn, Vidyabehn, Nandubehn called. Urmila and Jiten paid a visit. Satisbabu, Shanti the Chinese paid a visit. I told Dr. Mehta that I would not spin on the *takli* till Wednesday.

NOVEMBER 24, THURSDAY

Takli—Nil (Stopped since yesterday). On the doctor's advice decided to give my hand a week's rest. Letters—Pyarelal, Mirabehn, Kusum, Dharshi, Haridas Majmudar, Chintamani, Taramati, Effy, Miss Upton, Gilligan, Hendriks. About untouchability—Lakshmi, Vidyagauri, Gopala Menon (with a letter from Kelappan), Sastri, Gurudev, Revashankar, Gokhale, Jayantiprasad, Manilal Vyas, Shivratan Mohota, Ghanshyamdas, Patde, Nathan, Satyananda, Manibhai Morarjee, Nargisbehn, Shirinbehn Gadodia, his wife, Urmila Devi, Satisbabu and Nalavde of Wai (along with a Harijan and a Gujarati merchant) R. and also Jedhe.

NOVEMBER 25, FRIDAY

Takli—Nil. Letters—Nawale, Haridas Majmudar, Leonard, Esther, Natarajan, Horace, Devi West, Hoyland, Raghavendra Pratap, Mrs. Elwin, Goldburg, Miss Howard, Mrs. Howard, Polak. About untouchability—West, Sister Emetta, Shalivati, Narayana Menon, Chatterji, Chimanlal Narkhi, Pratapsinh Mantri, Shyamji Kuvadia, Devkaran Joshi, Haribhau. Mathuradas, Jaisukhlal (with a friend), Nanabhai, Parikshitlal, Viyogi Hari, Satisbabu, Urmila Devi called.

NOVEMBER 26, SATURDAY

Takli—Nil. Letters—Kanaiyalal Munshi, Rukmini, Manilal, Ramnik Shah, Ambaram, Baba Narasinhdas, Dr. Deshmukh, Mani, Ganpatrao Godse, Nardev Shastri, Dr. Alam. About untouchability—P. A. Vinayaka, Deorukhkar, Pyarelal, Vasantlal, Nadkarni, Abbas Tyabji, Swaminathan, Ishwarlal Modi, Setu Pandian Pillai, Ramkumar, Amiya Chakravarty, Anandswarup, Avadhesh Prasad, Kashinath Kelkar, Sunderlal Poddar, Rishiram, Habibur Rahman, Bhagat, Valji. Dr.

Nawle and his group, Sathe, Editor of *Shikshakanche Kaivari* [Champions of Teachers], Kanitkar (along with four of his friends), Urmila Devi, her son, and Satisbabu paid a visit. Arranged payment of Rs. 250 to Urmila Devi for the journey.

NOVEMBER 27, SUNDAY

Takli—Nil. Letters to—Mani, Dahyabhai, Kusum, A. Krishna Menon, Vasudevan Namboodripad, Jagannath, Pyarelal. About untouchability— Anandashankar, Atmaram Bhatt, Kowtha Suryanarayana, Bapi Needu, Ramachandra, Haribhau.

NOVEMBER 28, MONDAY

Letters—Narandas (45), Mohanlal Bhatt, Bhaktibehn, a book on *brahmacharya* to Ramdas, Khemchand, Valji Desai, the Gita Press, Banker, Madhavan, Ishwardas, Veerbhadra, Chaman Kavi, Nirantar, Upasak. Satisbabu, Kodanda Rao, Haribhau, Purandare and Kodanda Rao's friend Nayanar paid a visit.

NOVEMBER 29, TUESDAY

Letters—Siva Rao, Sudarisanam, Hirji Parmar, Prabhavati, Dr. Ghia, Gunvantbehn, Bhaktibehn. About untouchability—Nila Nagini, Patwardhan, Vasantram Shastri, Jenkins, Navle, Lallubhai Karamchand, Mahadev Shastri, Srinath Bhargava, Motilal Roy, Talegaonkar, Bhole, Nargisbehn. Met Shirin, Satisbabu, Lad, Kaligudu, Jagannathkunwar [of] Kotwa, Chhaganlal Malvi, Prof. Dandekar and his friends about Harijans. Personal meeting with Jamnalal.

NOVEMBER 30, WEDNESDAY

Mail—telegram to Manilal to come, telegram to the Lakshmidas Gordhandas [about] pinjrapole; letter to the Bombay Government regarding Jamnalal. Letter to Col. Doyle (about Appasaheb), Nathubhai, Sir Harisingh, Narasimhan, Viraraghavan, J. P. Trivedi, Kaka Kalelkar, Aggrawal, Nirmalachandra Ghosh, Kulkarni, Radha, Kusum. About untouchability—Anandshankar, Gundurao, Purandare, Chitre, Bapubhai Vashi, Vasantram Shastri, J. P., Bhaishankar Dwivedi, Narayana Menon, Jaisukhlal Mehta, Madhavan Nair, Brahmachari Ramtirtha, Kshetrapal Singh, S. C. Sen, Lallubhai, Nalin, Anasuyabehn, Ramanujachari, Tejumal, Bhagwandas, Lallubhai, Miss Barr, Rajagopalachari (Chittoor), Chinniah. Interviews with—Premlila, her friend, Satisbabu, Doddamati and his secretary, and among the prisoners Chhotubhai, Khandwala, Yashwant.

DECEMBER 1, THURSDAY

Takli—Nil. (The doctor advised that it should not be resumed for a few days more). Letters—Gangadharprasad, Pashabhai, Narandas, Mira, Magalnal, Secretary of the Dayalbagh, Agra. About untouchability—Chandrashankar, Chandrasinh Thakore, Lele, Gopala Menon, Satyanarayana Shetty, Haribhau, Vinayak, Iyer, Rajbhoj, Shamji Marwadi. Telegram to Gopala Menon. Today private visitors were Manilal, Devdas, Harjivan and Sharda. Public visitors were Bhole, Jadhav, Bhonsle, Satisbabu. Nargis and Shirinbehn brought fruit and a mattress. Received approval of the names which had been sent[1] regarding Dr. Mehta. Moreover, Chhaganlal Joshi will come here.

DECEMBER 2, FRIDAY

Letters—Benarsidas, Raihanabehn, Mohanlal Bhatt, Nanalal, C. Mehta, Reynolds, Andrews, Dorothy Newman, Rachel Price, Jayakunwar, Bechardas, Hemprabha. About untouchability—D. V. Joshi, Daftari, Narasinhachari, Tahmankar, Bachu Karim. Telegrams to Charu Bhattachari (about Dr. Roy), Nanalal, Arya (Rangoon). This morning from 8 to 10.30 Birla, Khaitan and their two friends had a meeting with me. In the afternoon, Ramjibhai, Harilalbhai and two others from Amreli, Nageswara Rao and Bapi Needu from Andhra, Kikabhai Waghela, Dudhabhai, and four other Harijans from Ahmedabad, Satkodibabu from Bengal, a gentleman from Bihar and Birla's group of the morning as also Satisbabu called.

DECEMBER 3, SATURDAY

Started fast in connection with Appasaheb's satyagraha of eating less than normal food. Major Mehta came to reply on behalf of the Government at 7.15 o'clock to the effect that if I so chose I could engage myself in scavenging work but it would not countenance my interference in the matter concerning prisoner Appa Patwardhan. A reply was sent immediately. Letters—Powalkar, Dr. Chandulal, Pyarelal, Taramati, Kanti Chandraji[?], Mahendra, Zohra. About untouchability—the Chronicle Laundry, Mamad Rajabhai, Sadhak Siddhanand, Deshmane, C. V. Vaidya, Lakhabhai Sagathia, M. S. Kannamwar, Nanasaheb, Kanitkar. Telegrams—Madhavan Nair, the Raja of Kalakankar. Kowtha Suryanarayana, Ramachandra, Lallubhai, Vaikunth, his wife, Ambalalbhai, Devdhar, Mate, Haribhau and others, *The Free Press* representative, Nargisbehn, Shirinbehn, Satisbabu, Devdas called. All these met me in the evening. In the morning the Birla party, Thakkar Bapa, Parikshitlal, Harakhchand and others paid a visit.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. G. Bhandari", 14-11-1932.

DECEMBER 4, SUNDAY

The second day of my fast. Letters—Narasinhrao Bholanath, Ramprasad Bakshi, Elwin. Wrote two letters to Doyle. Letter to Appa. About untouchability—Shambhushankar, Lallubhai Sa[maldas], Nawle, Kelkar (Ice Doctor), Urmila Devi, Sinhanarayan. This time the fast has affected me very much. Have become very weak. The weight went down at once by six pounds and the hands and feet became stiff. Doyle called after 11 o'clock and asked for time till Wednesday morning. I readily agreed and gave up the fast. If the decision is not satiafactory, the fast will have to be resumed. Ate oranges and mosambis and also took their juice, as also pomegranate juice and grapes.

DECEMBER 5, MONDAY

Letters—Manilal, Mirabehn, Narandas (23 letters). About untouchability—Gopala Menon (with letters from Ba and Urmiladevi,) Raihanabehn. Members of the Anti-untouchability League arrived, but as they numbered more than 12, there was an objection to my seeing them. The difficulty, however, was resolved. Raihana, Padmaja, representatives of *The Hindu* and *The Times* [*of India*], Lady Ramabai Pattani and Anant Pattani and Upasak.

DECEMBER 6, TUESDAY

Letters—Medh, Narandas, Ramdas, Raghavendra, Chandraprabha.

About untouchability—Upasak, Atmaram Bhatt, Nanabhai, Kelappan,

Valia, Nila Nagini, Gopala Menon (with letters from Ba, Bal and Vali), Ramachandra, Puttanna Chetty. Three telegrams to—[The Raja of] Kalakanker, Soniram, Kelappan. Those coming to visit me tomorrow—the Birla group, Thakkar, Kunzru, three school boys, Ramachandra, Satisbabu, Devdas.

DECEMBER 7, WEDNESDAY

Letters—Narandas, Jethalal, Vithal. About untouchability—Thirukutasundaram, Kajrolkar, Narayana Menon, Somji, Sonavane, U. Subba Rao, Hiralal Nanavati, Gopala Menon, Mevade, Shivdutt Shastri, Lady Lakshmibai, Dhurandhar Shastri came early for typing. Interview with Padma, Devdas and Sarojini. Discussion for two hours with *Shastris* from Poona, Pandharpur, Jalgaon, etc. They were 14 in all.

DECEMBER 8, THURSDAY

Letters—Mirabehn, Narandas (along with those to Liladhar and Chhaganlal Gandhi), Nanalal Shroff, Munshi. About untouchability

to—Dhaygude, Nawle, Tummala Basavayya, Tembekar, Manibhai Desai, Devdas, Arkate, Rajbhoj, Lele. Telegram to Belgaumwala, telegram about calling Ratubhai. The *Shastris* from Pandharpur and Jalgaon who had come to Poona for the Sanatan Dharma Sabha and others (15 in all) called on me. More will come tomorrow. Haribhau came with three women from the Seva Sadan.

DECEMBER 9, FRIDAY

Letters—Andrews, Geo. Andrews. Telegram to Subramanian, telegram to Narayana Chetty (both the telegrams about untouchability). [Letter to] Narandas (Kusum, Puratan and Raghavan). About untouchability—Subramanyam, Brijkrishna, J. K. Mehta, Pandharinath Bidkar, Ambalal, P. N. Shiromany, Shivbhakta Gandhi, Lady Lakshmibai, Radhakant and the sanatanists, Oturkar, Devdas called.

DECEMBER 10, SATURDAY

Letters—Khimchand, Margaret Cousins, Dalmia, R. Chowdhari, Damoda[r] Sundardas, Pande. About untouchability—Mathura Mohan Dev, Lachchhanrai, Sathe, Kanaiyalal Misra, Narasimhachari, Tulsiram Lodhi, Amritlal Desai, Khaladkar. Telegrams—Acharya Dhruva, Amritlal Thakkar, Daftari (all about untouchability). Upasak and his friends, Natarajan (with his son and daughter), Lady Vithaldas with her sister-in law[1], Haribhau and Divekar Shastri and Davre, Sonavane—(a Mang[2] member of the municipality) with other municipal councillors and Ratubhai called.

DECEMBER 11, SUNDAY

Letters—Vasukaka, Lalwani, Thakur, Balwant Singh. About untouchability—Gopala Menon, Nanasaheb, Mary Gilette, Karunakara Menon, Pragnaneshwar Yati, Ramji, Joseph, Sivachidambaram, Navinchandra, Anandatirtha, Ramunni Menon, Peacock, Patwardhan, Sukhabhau, Suman.

DECEMBER 12, MONDAY

Letters—Bhaktibehn, Begum Alam, Miss Cora Fry, Narandas (25). Telegram to Motilal Roy. [Letters to] Hamida, Prabhudas, Ramnath Suman, Kamalnayan. About untouchability—Gopala Menon, Secretary, Varnashram Swaraj Sangh, Talegaonkar, the Bombay Arya Samaj, Vijay Kumar, Sukhabhau (Ba, Urmiladevi, Raja), G. Behn Ghia, Kikibehn Lalwani, Godavaribehn, Purushottamdas Harkisandas, Hari-ichchha, Nanabhai, Sathe. Today Haribhau,

[1] Wife of her husband's younger brother

[2] A caste traditionally engaged in carrying carcasses

Mahadev Shastri and a Zamindar from Satara as also *The Times* [*of India*] correspondent and a businessman named Vrajlal along with a *Shastri* from Porbandar paid a visit. [Also] Ramachandra Rao and his co-worker.

DECEMBER 13, TUESDAY

Letters—K. Munshi, Mrs. Bruener, Prof. Wadia, Narandas (Soman, Damodardas, Santokbehn). About untouchability—Annaiya, Vaidya, Davre, Venkataramanaiya, Ramtaran Mukherji, Talegaonkar, Narasimhachari, Nadkarni, Munshilal Gupta, Chidananda Das, G. Chetty, Vinayaka Lagu, Kulkarni, Nathan, Sadashiva Rao, Nageswar Rao. From Nagpur Lakshman Shastri, Daftari came. Prof. Purandare paid a visit. Pashankar and his party, Sathe of the Sholapur Mill called. [Also] Ramachandra Rao and his co-worker.

DECEMBER 14, WEDNESDAY

Letters—Mithubehn, Narandas, Shankarlal Vyas, Mani, Kamalkumar Bannerji. About untouchability—Chandulal Desai, A. Dhruva, Vishwanath Misra, Panikkar, Nagini, Gadre, Amulya Sen Meta, Varadachari, Bhagwan Shastri, Dharurkar, Sundar Dass, Thakur, Mishra. Telegrams to A. Dhruva, Khaladkar, Motilal Roy, Naik (Kurla). The Arya Samaj deputationists from Bombay (seven persons), Haribhau, Daftari, Talegaonkar, five students from the Nizam's State, Miss Cora Fry (along with an untouchable girl) paid a visit. Telegram to Shamjibhai.

DECEMBER 15, THURSDAY

Letters—Rukhi, Mavalankar, Shakrabhai, Kunwarji Gordhandas, Dharmadev, Shivprasad, Mirabehn. About untouchability—Bhagwandas, Gopala Menon, Motilal Roy, Devraj, Shivdas Champsi, Keshavdutt Maharaj, Rajeshwar Shastri, Nanalal Ganatra, Lakshmanachari, Rangaswami, Priyanath Chatterji, Dharmanandarama. Telegrams—Raja, Birla. Dhirubhai, his wife, Raihana, Padmaja, Ambedkar's secretary Chitre, Editor of the Janata, five others of another organization, Pragnaneshwar Yati, Maganbhai Nayak, Agashe called on me and met Smt. Sarojini Devi in the office.

DECEMBER 16, FRIDAY

Letters—Jamnalalji, Jamnadas, Pakwasa, Munshi, Jekibehn, Chhotalalji, Janakibehn, Narandas (Prema, Vithal), Liladhar, Manmohan Gandhi, Janakibehn, the All-India Swaraj Sangh. About untouchability—Rameshwar Oza, Sukhabhau, Vishnu Datta, Mishra, Hanumanprasad, Salunke. Telegrams to Bidhan Roy, Birla, Rajagopalachari, Birla (2). Among those who met me were Talegaonkar and Joshi with seven

others.

DECEMBER 17, SATURDAY

Letters—Narandas (Kusum, Radha, Parashuram, Jamnabehn, Premabehn, [Ashram] children, Santok), Pyarelal, Manilal Gandhi, C. Gandhi, Dr. Datta, Varadachari, Yogesh Chatterji, Girdharilal. About untouchability—Nanabhai, Kirchand Kothari, Ratanshi Jetha, Davre, Dharurkar, Subra[hmanyan], Acharya, Ramachandra, Vidyarthi, Raghunath Banker, Mahadevan, Pragnaneshwar Yati, Neelakantha Ayyar, Dunichand. Babasaheb Poddar, Haribhau, Bapat Shastri, Khaladkar of Dhulia and four others paid a visit.

DECEMBER 18, SUNDAY

Letters—Mohanlal Bhatt, Fulchand, Kausalya Ram. About untouchability—Nrisinhprasad Bhatt, Manilal Dwivedi, Chhotubhai Trivedi, Vishnuprasad Trivedi, Chhotelal, Pranlal Ambalal, Subra[hmanya] Aiyer, Ananta Rau, Chandrashankar, Kotwal, Natarajan[1], Devdhar[2], Miss Barr.

DECEMBER 19, MONDAY

Letters—Lakshmi, Narandas (24), Gopikrishna, Keshu (Radha, Santokbehn), Sitla Sahai (Sarojini, Padma), Zohra, Surbala (Indumati), Madhumati. About untouchability—The Secretary of Arya Samaj, Satis Das Gupta, Sohanlal, Jivraj Solanki. Telegrams—Kasturbhai, Gidwani, Jaisukhlal Mehta. Motibabu and his two followers, the *Shastris* (Shridhar Shastri, Kokje Shastri, Lakshman, Chitrav) and also Haribhau, Poddar, Prof. Purandare called. Miss Barr and a man from the Christ Seva Sangh paid a visit.

DECEMBER 20, TUESDAY

Letters—Binod Ghoshal, Narandas (Champa), Umedram, Jaisukhlal Mehta, Chintamani, Babubhai Patel, Taramati, K. Aggrawal, Jamnadas, Kamala Nehru, K. Nair. About untouchability—Nirendra, Suba, Jaisukhlal Mehta, Dhruva, Damodardas, Raghu[nath] Swami, Tandon, Dhoot, Haribhau Phatak, Talegaonkar. Ba, Velanbehn, Bal called. Got permission for Jamnalalji to see me at any time and he called. Met for the first time Chhaganlal, Maganlal. Motibabu's group came to see

[1] For Gandhiji's discussion with them, *vide* Appendix "Discussion with Natarajan and Devdhar", 18-12-1932.

[2] *ibid.*

me along with Panchanan Tarkaratna. Dr. Maitra, Miss Barr, Satavlekar, Lakshman Shastri [of] Wai, Kokje Shastri, Daftari, Dave and others paid a visit. Telegram to Gopala Menon.

DECEMBER 21, WEDNESDAY

Letters—Premi, Nanalal, Andrews, Narandas (Madhavlal, Radhika). About untouchability—Vakkayil Nair, Joshi, Ramabhadra Row, Prabhakar, Gopaldas, Lakshmidas Dani, Kunzru, Ramgopal Shastri, G. H. Patwardhan, David, Birla, R. V. Patwardhan, Ramanath Nayak, Kikabhai Waghela, Mangalbhai Waghjibhai, Vanmali Parekh, Altekar, Bhambhania. Miss Spiegel, two American women (who came and under a misunderstanding gave me Rs. 270) Chintamanrao Vaidya, Vasukaka Joshi, S. Banker and Moolji Sikka, Miss Gilette and the Pocha sisters, Miss Barr, Motibabu and his group (along with two women), Vrajlal Sheth and Himmatshankar Shastri, Raja of Kalakanker, Raghavendra [came to see me].

DECEMBER 22, THURSDAY

Letters—Mira, Bhaktibehn, Gopala Narayan, Pyare Ali, Vanita Galiara, Ramprasad, Rukhi. About untouchability—Kirchand, Pratapsinh, Tarachand, Dhurandhar, Viyogi Hari, Pragnaneshwar Yati, H. Kunzru, Jaisukhlal, Ramunni Menon, Venkatappayya, Gopala Menon, Sadashiva Rao, Sukhabhau, Jaisukhlal, Ramunni Menon, G. Menon. Telegram to Krishnan Nair. Swarup, Raja of Kalakankar, Raghavendra, Spiegel, Panchanan Tarkaratna and Motibabu's group, Bhagwandasji, Haribhau, the Khandesh worker—Chhotubhai, Dighe [called].

DECEMBER 23, FRIDAY

Telegrams—Madhavan Nair, Shri Krishna Iyer, Khorshedbehn. Letters—Mohanlal Bhatt, Ansari, Narandas. About untouchability—Gopala Menon, Sadasiva Rao, Madhavan Nair, the sanatanists—Dharurkar, Neelameghachari (of Sholapur), Shridhar Shastri Vare, Nanasaheb Khasgiwale, Bhausaheb Lavate, Chandram Shastri [of] Nasik, the reformist *Shastris*—Anandshankar, Vaidya, Bhagwandas, Kokje Shastri, Lakshman Shastri Joshi, Chitrav Shastri, Poddar and others [called].

DECEMBER 24, SATURDAY

Letters—Maganlal (Jeki), Chhaganlal, Valji, Mavalankar, Mathuradas, Bhagwati Devi, Narandas (Bhau, Indu), Olson, Manindranath Mitra, Alexander, Sen, Gidwani, Muriel, Mohanlal, Abbas Saheb. About

untouchability—K. Waghela, Harilal Parikh, Vishwanan Giri, Nargis, Nargis (Khorshed's letter), Vasantkumar Chatterji (an insured packet for Rs. 100 to Birla). All the sanatanist and reformist *Shastris* who had come yesterday [called again].

DECEMBER 25, SUNDAY

Letters—Siva Rao, Raihana, Rustom Dhondi, Shivprasad Gupta, Lakshmidevi. About untouchability—Rane, Venkataraman, Ponnammal, Gopala Menon, Poornachandra Dey, S. N. Iyer, Bhatnagar, the Vaidik Dharmavardhini Sabha, Rajan, S. Rajagopalachari, Venkata Krishnaiya, Narasimhachari, Keshavrao, Bhole, Varadarajulu, Canon Holland, Narayana Menon, Kalyana Rama Iyer, Kulkarni, Radhakant, Mukandilal, Shyamji Marwadi, Mulchand Parekh, Vasantilal Shankarlal.

DECEMBER 26, MONDAY

Letters—Lakshmidas, Munshi, Mithubehn Petit, Benarsidas Bazaj, Narandas, Dastane, Mohanlal Bhatt, Mavalankar, A. Patel. About untouchability—Parikshitlal, Harilal Vakil, Naradev Shastri, Parashuram Khare, Veniram Tatava, P. Tripathi, C. Pandit. Sanatani and reformist *Shastris* (today Kokje and Chitrav *Shastris* did not turn up). Shankerlal Banker, Krishnan Nair, Moto Roberto, Manilal, Sushila paid a visit and Jamnadas Dwarkadas visited me by special permission of the Home Member.

DECEMBER 27, TUESDAY

Letters—Satisbabu, Ernest Newl, Kikibehn. About untouchability—Sahu, Shenoy, Brijkrishna. Anandshankarji, *Smriti*-reform *Shastris*, Devdas, Pyarelal, Ba, Nargis, Jamnabehn, Shirinbehn, Kamalabehn, Sonawala [called].

DECEMBER 28, WEDNESDAY

Letters—Jamnadas Gandhi, Parachure Shastri, Joseph (Chettur), Joseph (Madurai). About untouchability—Shri Pathak, Vasukaka, Pramathababu, Dattaram Upasak, Gajraj Kothari, Nawle, Uzgare, Nila, Jethalal. Telegram to Shivram Vaid. Rajaji, Kelappan, Madhavan Nair, Gidwani (along with his three friends), Ba, reformist *Shastris* called. Narayan Shastri had his meal here. Devdas left for Madras.

DECEMBER 29, THURSDAY

Letters—Narandas, Miraben, (Silas, Effi, Andrews, Hodge, Rev. Kulkarni, Pashabhai, Bhagwanji. About untouchability—Ghanshyamdas, Kanan, Nathan, Swaminathan, Ramaswami, Kalyana Rama Iyer, Bhargava, Jaisukhlal Mehta. Telegram to Kausalya. Raja, Madhavan Nair, Kelappan, Vaidya, Joshi, Vasukaka, Padmaja, Sheshu Aiyar, Brahmachari Vishnubuwa, Ba, Pyarelal and others called. [Also] the Mehta brothers, Nanalal, Ratubhai.

DECEMBER 30, FRIDAY

Letters—Dinkar, Madhavlal Patel. About untouchability—Ghanshyamdas, Raja, Madhavan, Kelappan, Dharurkar, Davde (with three others), Keshavdutt Maharaj, Bhagwandas, Indira Raman, Joshi Shastri, the Mehta brothers, Prema, Sushila, Jamnadas, Urmila Devi, Jiten [called].

DECEMBER 31, SATURDAY

Letters—Jivram Shastri, Madhavlal, Shankar, Kanti, Bhulabhai Desai, Manekbai, Jawahar, Elwin, the Khaitan children. About untouchability—Madhavji, Virsut, Bidhan Roy, Vedpran Indapurkar, Karsandas, Hanumanprasad, Joshi. Telegram to Deshbandhu Gupta. Among the visitors were Raja, Kelappan, Lakshman Shastri, Haribhau, Bhagwandas, Indira Raman, Urmila Devi, Jiten, from the Camp Ramdas and a man from Karnataka, Jhinabhai Joshi.

[LIST OF BOOKS] [1]

Durant [*The Case for India*][2]; Crozier [*A Word to Gandhi*][3]; Brailsford [*Rebel India*][4]; [Mahomedali][5] Al Haj Salmin's *Imam Hussain* and *Khalifa Ally*; [*Sir Samuel*] Hoare's *Fourth Seal*; Ramsay MacDonald's travelogue; *The Survey of Matar Taluka*[6]; Rama-

[1] This is in Gandhiji's hand on the last pages of the exercise book in which the Diary was written.

[2] "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 3/8-2-1932

[3] *ibid*

[4] *ibid*

[5] From "Diary, 1932" *Vide* "Diary, 1932"

[6] By J. C. Kumarappa

nathan's Speech on Khadi; [Will][1] Hayes's *Indian Bibles*[2]; Ruskin's *St. George's Guild*; Shah's[3] *Federal Finance*; [Rothenstein's][4] *Ruin of Egypt*; [Hayes's][5] *The Book of the Cow*; [A. E.'s][6] *Candle of the Vision*; Kinley's *Money; Shankh ane Kodi* (Gujarati); [Andrews's][7] biography of Munshi Zaka Ullah; *The Golden Book of Tagore*; *Saket*[8]; Shah's *Sixty Years of Indian Finance*[9]; *Panchavati*[10]; Salvemini's *Mussolini*; Delisle Burnes's *Democracy*; Upton Sinclair's *The Wet Parade*; [Edward Carpenter's][11] *Adam's Peak to Elephanta*; Maithilisharan's *Anagh*; Stokes's *Satyakama*; Ruskin's *Fors* [*Clavigera*];[12] Letters of Narasinhbhai[13]; *Samarpana, Buddha* and *Mahavir*[14]; Second and Third Urdu Reader; Imam Saheb's and Nanabhai's[15] biographies of the Prophet; Heath's Astronomy; Rolland's *Ramakrishna*; Mander's *Astronomy* [*without a Telescope*]; [Rolland's][16] *Vivekananda*; Keay's *Hindu Astronomy*; Kirtikar's *Studies in Vedanta*; Sir Jeans's Astronomy; Lady Ramanathan's *Ramayana*; Ghanshyamdas's pamphlets: *Vaidik Vinaya*; Fourth Urdu Reader of the Lahore Anjuman; K. T. Shah's *Indian Currency* [and] *Exchange Banking*; Jamia's Urdu plays, *Shareef Ladka* and *Kheti*; *Kimiyagar*; Veda number [of *Ganga*]; [Premchandji's][17] *Ramacharcha*; Kharas's Astronomy; *Swadhyaya Samhita*; Iyer's *Foreign Exchange*; *The Way of the Cross; The Prophet's Message to the West; Sirat-un-Nabi*;[18] Locaire's Astronomy; Nadkarni's

[1] "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 3/8-2-1932

[2] "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 3/8-2-1932, has "*Essence of Hinduism*".

[3] Khushal T. Shah

[4] "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 3/8-2-1932

[5] *ibid*

[6] *ibid*

[7] *ibid*

[8] by Maithilisharan Gupta

[9] Lettet to Narandas Gandhi" has "sixlty rears of *Economic Administration of India"*

[10] by Maithilisharan Gupta

[11] From "Diary, 1932"; vide Diary, 1932

[12] *ibid.*

[13] Narasinhbhai Ishwarbhai Patel

[14] By Kishorelal G. Mashruwala

[15] Nrisinhprasad Kalidas Bhatt

[16] Nrisinhprasad Kalidas Bhatt

[17] From "Diary, 1932"; vide "Diary".

[18] *ibid*

pamphlet; *Vedman Adhyatma*; Reports of Herschel and other committees; Maeterlink's *Magic of Stars*; Andrews's *What I Owe to Christ*; Jeans's *Mysterious Universe; Gandhi Vichardohan*; Prof. Wadia's *Southern Cross*; Thadani's Poems; Madan's [book on] fasting[1]

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 19337

460. LETTER TO SHANTA S. PATEL

[*1932*]

CHI. SHANTA,

I have your letter. It is good. You must now make your handwriting as good as the letter. When we meet, remain young enough to serve me as a staff for support. Some people however old they grow remain children at heart. What does child mean? Write your answer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4052

461. LETTER TO CHILDREN

Silence Day [*1932*][2]

BIRDS [OF BAL MANDIR],

Received your letter. It seems you do not love the poor enough. Otherwise, how would you feel satisfied with spinning 160 rounds of yarn? Your classes would now be regularly held. That would be very good. Then I would test all of you through letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S. N. 9178

[1] From "Diary, 1932"; vide "Diary".

[2] This and the following letter are placed in 1932, as in the source.

462. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

[*1932*]

CHI. JANAKIBEHN,

How is it that there is no letter from you again? Did Gomati receive my letter or not? Write to me about how Jamnalal and Kishorelal are keeping.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: G. N. 2895

463. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Silence Day [*1932*][1]

CHI. MANGALA,

How can I not remember you? What is the news about Pushpa with the pointed nose? We shall meet when God wants us to meet. But we meet in the spirit every day, do we not? As for the body it is here today and gone tomorrow. What does it matter whether physically we meet or not? Tell Premabehn that she should tell you the story of Lucy and her seven brothers[2].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 11105. Courtesy: Pushpa Naik

[1] From the contents and from "Yeravda Mandir" in the date-line.
[2] The allusion is to "We are Seven", a poem by William Wordsworth.

464. LETTER TO THE ZAMORIN OF CALICUT

January 1, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter[1] of the 26th ultimo. Your letter has come upon me with painful surprise. In a matter that is purely religious to me, as it must be to you, I should expect the uttermost frankness and goodwill on either side. I miss the latter in your letter under reference. Have you ever turned out an untouchable on the Krithigai Ekadasi day? Surely, if hundreds, if not thousands, of un-touchables, both men and women, enter the temple every Ekadasi, as can be proved they do, it cannot be difficult to detect some of them. The evidence in my possession goes to show that crowds of untouchables make use of the privilege every year on that holy day. You refer me to the judgment of the Madras High Court. That judgment, if I understand it rightly, shows clearly that untouchables enter the temple on the Ekadasi day, not stealthily but openly and as a matter of right.

Here is what I read in the judgment before me:

> The Guruvayur Temple is not a private temple, but a public temple and every Hindu has a right to worship in it, subject to such customary rules and regulations which have been prevailing from time immemorial. The high castes are allowed actual right of entry into the temple throughout the year. In that purpose they have a right of way over the roads leading to the temple and around the temple. The lower castes are allowed the right of entry only on Ekadasi Festival day, and on that day they have got the right of using the roads. On the other days they have neither of these rights. This was the situation from time immemorial.

[1] This read: "You ask whether the temple is open to all Hindus including untouchables for three days every year. In reply, I have to say that the information is not correct. The untouchables have no right to enter the temple on any day. But, as a large crowd admittedly enter the temple on the Krithigai Ekadasi day and as this crowd might possibly include untouchables and as in any case, it is difficult to ascertain the different castes to which the members of the crowd belong, a purificatory ceremony is performed on the next day (Dwadasi). Apart from this, the alleged entry of untouchables on the Ekadasi day is not a fact. They do not enter the-temple at all. For more definite particulars I would refer you to the judgment of Mr. Justice Ramesam Pantulu of the Madras High Court, pronounced in the middle of June last, of which I presume you have a copy."

I read then from the same judgment

> The lower-caste Hindus are after all Hindus and it may be with this consideration in view that for one day in the year the temple is thrown open to them with the ostensible excuse that on such a day it would be impossible to check the crowds, the inner object being to allow all castes' entry on that day. This was the view of Ramanuja, the famous Vaishnava reformer. According to him, all Vaishnava temples ought to be thrown open to all castes one day in the year.

Unless I am very much mistaken, these two paragraphs seem to be conclusive evidence that for that particular Ekadasi day untouchables are allowed to enter the temple without let or hindrance.

As this matter is of great public importance, I am sending the correspondence to the Press.

Yours sincerely,

RAJA MANAVEDAN RAJA
ZAMORIN OF CALICUT
KOTTAKKAL

From a microfilm: M.M.U./XXII

465. LETTER TO C. Y. CHINTAMANI

January 1, 1933

DEAR MR. CHINTAMANI,

I thank you for your letter. The matter of the fast is not for me wholly one of reason, because you will have no hesitation in believing me when I tell you that all such fasts have been prompted by an unseen power. I deliberately use the expression "unseen power", because I do not exclude the possibility of that power being evil. But these fasts have appealed to my reason as they have to that of many utterly detached friends. The silent and invisible effects of all spiritual acts are far deeper and far more pervasive than their felt and visible effects. If therefore these fasts have amounted to moral coercion in some cases, they have imperceptibly undoubtedly moved to action a thousand times more than those who have acted under moral coercion, which therefore may be regarded as a negligible quantity. That such is the result of spiritual acts is not a matter of conjecture, but provable under given conditions like any other tangible result. So much for the moral coercion.

As to the permissibility of fasts, I quite agree with you that the motive is irrelevant if the act itself is prohibited. In the first instance, a conditional fast is not a suicide, but if we accept the authority of the Hindu Shastras, then there is ample warrant not only for conditional fasts, but even unconditional, under some extraordinary circumstances. I have only recently found myself in possession of a pamphlet issued by Madras Advocates in which are collected instances of fasts like mine in the Shastras. If you would care to explore the subject, I would gladly send you my copy.

My regards to you and Mr. Krishnaram.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. Y. CHINTAMANI
17 HAMILTON ROAD, ALLAHABAD

From a photostat: S.N. 19129

466. LETTER TO P. SUBBAROYAN

January 1, 1933

DEAR DR. SUBBAROYAN,

I thank you for your letter of the 28th ultimo. All these days I have kept myself in touch with you through Sjt. Rajagopalachari. He sent me a copy of the full text of your Bill. I went through it at the time not critically. I found then that it answered the purpose. I shall apply my mind to it critically after you receive the Viceregal sanction, which, I hope, will be forthcoming without undue delay. You will see that I had anticipated your letter by announcing indefinite postponement of the fast.

With my regards to you and Mrs. Subbaroyan.

Yours sincerely,

DR. P. SUBBAROYAN
TIRUCHENGODU, SALEM DISTRICT

From a microfilm: S.N. 19133

467. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

January 1, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter of 27th ultimo. I had seen the Bill. It is not permissive in the sense you have evidently imagined. It is permissive in the sense that the Bill does not declare all temples automatically open. But individual temples can be opened by the vote of the majority of the temple-goers, not at the will of the Trustees.

I hope that your confidence about the assent will be justified by the event. Rajaji was here for three days, and we had long discussions about the Bill and the situation in Guruvayur in general.

I hope the formalities about the publication of the Weekly[1] have been completed.

BAPU

C.W. 7915. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also *In the Shadow of the Mahatma*, p. 86

468. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

January 1, 1933

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letter. The copy of the statement[2] was sent to you as soon as its last page was typed. Copies had been given to the Press reporters before then. The statement came into your hands the day before yesterday, and it appeared in the papers yesterday. The only news which came out a day earlier was that the fast had been postponed; and the statement was sent to you the moment it was ready. There was, thus, no delay. I shall send you the Gujarati translation when it is ready.

As for the letters, they are being despatched as soon as each is ready. There was no need to make another copy of the statement. I shall be able to supply a copy to anyone who may want it.

I believe that Raja, as also Ba and Shankerlal, left today for Bombay. Rajaji will leave for Madras by the night train today.

[1] *Harijan*

[2] On untouchability; *vide* "Statement on Untouchability-XIII", 30-12-1932.

Manilal and Sushila did try to see you, but without success. They left on Wednesday.

We shall meet tomorrow at 10 o'clock. As I would then be observing silence, you may tell me what you have to say. We shall be able to discuss for an hour or an hour and a quarter. I will note down the points which require a reply.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2909

469. LETTER TO VINOBA BHAVE

January 1, 1933

CHI. VINOBA,

Your love and faith bring me tears of joy. I may or may not deserve them, but they will bring their reward to you. You will be the instrument of some great service to the people. You did quite right in going to stay in Nalwadi.

For the future, I have to make only this suggestion just now: take care of your health and do not be rigid about excluding milk from your diet. Your *swadharma* at present is to work for removal of untouchability. Find time to read what I write from time to time. It is not much. Write to me regularly. It will be enough if you write once a week.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 392

470. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

January 1, 1933

CHI. PANDITJI,

You have made good progress with the Chharas. If you keep up your efforts, the result is bound to be good. I trust you did much work in Kashi.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 242. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

471. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

January 1, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

You wrote after a long interval. Don't be lazy like this. If you work hard, you will surely become thin.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9529. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

472. LETTER TO KESHAV GANDHI

January 1, 1933

CHI. KESHAV (JUNIOR),

I got your letter. You should regard all children as your brothers and *help them as much as you can*. There is only one friend, God. He never forsakes us and He fulfils all our aspirations. Why, then, do we need any other friend?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3285

473. LETTER TO CHAMPABEHN R. MEHTA

January 1, 1933

CHI. CHAMPA[1],

Your name is included as one of the Trustees. The other names are from among those which you had suggested. Narandas's name is not included. Bhai Nanalal[2] will be meeting you and he will give you the details. I, therefore, don't write more here.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8756

[1] Wife of Ratilal, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's son

[2] Nanalal K. Jasani, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's business manager and partner

474. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAJAJ

January 1, 1933

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your letter. In spite of more persons helping me as secretaries, the pressure of work remains heavy. Ba, Devdas, Pyarelal, Bal and Rajaji came and saw me. Premabehn, Jamnadas and Indu also came. Jamnadas has been very much reduced. He was ill. Isn't there a women's library? If there is one, why don't you become a member? Or is it that you have no love for reading or you get no time for it? I don't write separately to Benarsi this time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9150

475. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

January 1, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

I was glad that Sushila and you came and saw me. Today I need not write a long letter to you. I shall wait for your letter describing your impressions.

Give me news about Dhurandhar's health. Ask him to write to me.

You should find out the cause of your back-ache. Do see Haribhai in any case. You need not regret the removal of the tonsils, and don't harm your throat by speaking too much. You must cure your habit of speaking very loudly.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10318

476. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

January 1, 1933

CHI. NARMADA,

Your handwriting is improving. You should write the lines straight. I am very glad that you are learning to make bread.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2771. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

477. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

January 1, 1933

BOYS AND GIRLS,

You are doing very good work. Keep it up. Once you learn farming, you will find it more interesting than any other work. And when one gets familiar with plants, one feels they are part of one's family.

And service of Harijans itself is dharma.

Concentrate on whatever work you are doing.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

478. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 1, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I get all your letters.

The drum announcing another fast of mine has stopped beating now. Let Shri Krishna start it again when He wills.

The burden of work on you at present must be quite heavy. Who visits the Chharas these days? Do you have some peace from that quarter now? I see nothing to object to in Bhai Mavalankar's letter. You or I need not write anything just now.

Ramji wants some arrangement for more light in his house, and also a hedge round it. See what can be done.

The problem of Tilakam is a little difficult. He is still restless. He will go forward if somebody takes him under his charge.

Indu came and saw me. He cannot live anywhere outside the Ashram. Just now he will go to Cutch. Take him back when he returns. If such is his and our fate, we must submit to it.

I have just heard that Kishorelal cured his asthma by eating every night ten to fifteen roasted fenugreek seeds. Jamna should try this.

BAPU

[PS.]

There are 27 letters, all tied together.

[From Gujarati]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

479. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI

January 1, 1933

BHAI CHAND TYAGI,

I was glad to get your letter. You did well to start taking milk. The Harijan work is proceeding nicely. Have no worry. Where is Balvir?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI CHAND TYAGI
PRISONER, JAIL, SAHARANPUR, U.P.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3260

480. LETTER TO SOHANLAL SHARMA

January 1, 1933

BHAI SOHANLAL,

I have your two letters. There is no need to send me *Ramanuja-charit*. I am somewhat familiar with the life of the Acharya.

I am unable to offer any advice about the marriage. You can do whatever seems proper.

MOHANDAS GANDHI
SHRI SOHANLAL SHARMA
HINDU MAHASABHA
PUSHKAR, NEAR AJMER
RAJPUTANA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2829

481. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

January 1, 1933

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

Your letter. Sun-bathing should do you good. It would be excellent if you took some rest too. All our actions must be performed with detachment.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI HEMPRABHA DEVI
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
COLLEGE SQUARE, CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1694

482. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 1, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I have your letter. You should not move about when you have fever. You should take complete rest. You would do well to restrict yourself to milk and fruit only. You do not require anything more. Give up the idea of settling in the village. Stay in the Ashram and render what service you can.[1] It does not matter if you fall sick. Leave somethings at least to God. You did well in sending the [Ashram] regulations to Dr. Sharma. I shall write to him if he is willing to abide by them. Why do you grieve over the inability to join the prayers these days? Sick persons are always exempted. Remember God whenever you wake up. Forgo the temptation of working overmuch. Your thanks-giving to God consists in doing whatever little you can. May God grant you peace.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 269

[1] The addressee was considering settling in the village Vadaj so as to avoid being a burden on the Ashram.

483. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

January 1, 1933

CHI. SHARDA,

Nobody need take any food which does not suit him.

It does not matter if you have taken up study of English. If you have in your hand the key of grammar, you can learn it well by yourself.

Don't be lazy about writing to me.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9967. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

484. LETTER TO GULAM RASUL QURESHI

January 1, 1933

CHI. QURESHI,

I would not consider it good health if you were always constipated. You must get rid of the constipation. Try Gangabehn's tablets. Change of diet may help.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10815. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

485. LETTER TO AMINA QURESHI

January 1, 1933

CHI. AMINA,

You should give me an account of the progress of your studies every week.

I hope the children's injuries have completely healed now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10792. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

486. TELEGRAM TO DR. MOHAMMAD ALAM

January 2, 1933

DOCTOR MOHAMMAD ALAM
57 LANDSDOWNE ROAD
CALCUTTA

YOUR WIRE. THANK GOD YOU ESCAPED OPERATION AND CAN EVEN MOTOR.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 20

487. LETTER TO MADHUSUDANAN THANGAL

January 2, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter enclosing Resolution passed by the Conference of Namboodiri Brahmins of Kerala of which you were the President.

You already know that the fast has been indefinitely postponed. I however hope that the Namboodiri Brahmins, both men and women, will put forth redoubled efforts to secure for the Harijans not merely the right of entry into temples, but all the other rights to which all the other Hindus are entitled.

Yours sincerely,

SREEMAN MADHUSUDANAN THANGAL, M.L.C.
PRESIDENT, 25TH NAMBOODIRI YOGAKSHEMAM CONFERENCE
KARLAMANNA (S. MALABAR)

From a microfilm: S.N. 19139

488. LETTER TO A. KALESWAR RAO

January 2, 1933

MY DEAR KALESWAR RAO,

I was delighted to receive your letter and to have the greeting and prayers from fellow-prisoners.

I have seen your contribution to the Press. Of course there is no lack of precedent for introduction of Bills of a religious character.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. A. KALESWAR RAO
PLEADER, BEZWADA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19137

489. LETTER TO G. S. B. SARASWATI

January 2, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. As I have no personal knowledge of your work, my recommendation to the Servants of Untouchables Society can carry no greater weight than your own. I would, therefore, advise you to approach the Society directly. Its headquarters are Delhi.

Yours sincerely,

SREE SWAMY G. S. B. SARASWATI
INDUKURPET, NELLORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 19138

490. LETTER TO GOVIND RAGHAV

January 2, 1933

I have your loving note.[1] What a great thought! "He is not heavy, he is my brother." The heaviest things become light as feather when love bears them.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

491. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 2, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. How did Radha and Kusum get fever again? If you have been able to discover the cause, let me know.

Your account of Mahavir's doings makes one feel sad about him. Speak to him plainly. There is no reason why the Ashram should bear the expenses of the person whom he has brought with him. And write without fail to everybody from whom he has borrowed money and find out the facts. Do so after informing him. Read the letter which I am writing to him. Brijkrishna, at any rate, should not have

[1] The addressee had written to Gandhiji about the story of a bishop who met a little girl of about six or seven carrying over her shoulder a boy, about two years old. The bishop remarked that the boy was too heavy for her to which she replied: "No. He is not heavy, he is my brother."

given him a single pie. If he is there, ask him why he gave anything. If he is not there, write to him. If you do not know the addresses of all the persons whose names are given to you by Mahavir, write to Sitaramji and get them. I hope you know his address. If you do not know it, write to him C/o Khadi Bhandar. The Bhandar is on Harrison Road.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

492. LETTER TO NIRMALA B. MASHRUWALA

January 2, 1933

CHI. NIRMALA,

I did not get from you as many letters as Sushila spoke of. I was wondering why there were no letters from you. Write the following letter to Kishorelal[1]:

"I am able to take up today, the Silence Day (January 2), your letter of December 6, which I had kept aside for replying. For the present the fast has been postponed, as it seems that the law stands in the way of the temple being thrown open to Harijans and has to be amended. Necessary steps are being taken for that purpose. However, all your arguments are correct. Those who are directly taking part in the movement for temple-entry should be people who are entitled to visit the temple concerned. The votes of only such people were taken, and the result was excellent. Nobody can enter a private temple without the proprietor's permission. It is acknowledged on all hands that the Guruvayur Temple is a public temple. In this matter, I am scrupulously following dharma according to my lights. The issue raised by Appa's demand was clear and that is why the problem was solved so soon. It might be regarded improper if I write more on this point. You will learn everything in future.

"I can see Jamnalalji from time to time. He is better. His weight has been increasing and the ear is all right."

"Ranchhodbhai told me that your asthma was cured by the use of fenugreek seeds. If the report is correct, the remedy was quite cheap. I find no time at present to read the remaining chapters of

[1] Kishorelal G. Mashruwala

your book about the *Gita* and the other things, as Harijan [work] takes up all my time. You probably know that Chhaganlal Joshi is with me. Vinoba has gone to live in an *Antyaja* hamlet near Wardha. Kaka is coming in a day or two to see me. He seems to be keen to take up Harijan work. I neither encourage nor dissuade anybody. Manilal and Sushila seemed a little reluctant to return to South Africa, but I felt that it was their duty to resume their work there, and so they have left. There is no change in the condition of my elbow. I have started the massagemethodically from today. There is no reason at all for worrying."

Write to Gomati[1] as follows:

"You must be hearing everything about me. There is no reason for any anxiety for the present as the fast has been postponed. Even otherwise, there was none. Tell the other women there to write to me when they can. I should get all news. Jamnalalji is quite well. I see him frequently. Chhaganlal Joshi is with me. I don't read anything at present. The Harijan [work] takes up all my time. Even spinning has been stopped because of the elbow, but you need not worry on that account."

Blessings to all from

BAPU

SHRI NIRMALABEHN

C/O BALUBHAI MASHRUWALA

TOPIWALA BUILDING, SANDHURST ROAD, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1006. Courtesy: Nirmalabehn Shroff

493. LETTER TO FEROZABEHN TALEYARKHAN

January 2, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

We were all very happy to read your sweet but lisping Gujarati and had a hearty laugh over it. Though sometimes I feel like quarreling with Parsi men and women for their defective Gujarati, still I like their sweet Gujarati very much. And I would like to keep a whip ready

[1] Wife of Kishorelal

for one who knows even a bit of Gujarati but writes to me in English. I hope both of you are all right. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

FEROZABEHN TALEYARKHAN
NAZIR HOUSE
CUMBALLA HILL
BOMBAY

From Gujarati: C.W. 9777

494. INTERVIEW TO THE ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[1]

January 2, 1933

That in a spirit of compromise he had made a suggestion in order to reconcile opposition to temple-entry by Harijans at Guruvayur, was revealed by Mr. Gandhi to the Associated Press this afternoon in the course of an interview.

Gandhiji's attention was drawn to the statement[2] made by him on Pundit Panchanan Tarkaratna's visit to him in which he was reported to have made a definite suggestion to the Pundit which ought to satisfy the most exacting sanatanists. When invited to throw light on the suggestion, Gandhiji said:[3]

The suggestion I made was this: During certain hours of the day, the temple should be thrown open to Harijans and to other Hindus, who have no objection to the presence of Harijans, and during certain other hours it should be reserved for those who havescruples against the entry of Harijans. There should be no difficulty, whatsoever, in accepting this suggestion, seeing that in connection with the Krithikai Ekadasi festival at Guruvayur, Harijans are allowed to enter side by side with other Hindus and then the idol of the temple undergoes purification.

Asked if his suggestion was that the temple might undergo purification daily after the entry of the Harijans, Mr. Gandhi replied:

Personally, I am opposed to purification at all. But if that would satisfy the conscience of objectors, I would personally raise no objec-

[1] Gandhiji was reclining on a cot in the shade of the famous mango tree. A few *Shastris* were sitting around him discussing and arguing.

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 30-12-1932.

[3] This paragraph is from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 4-1-1933.

tion to purification. If purification has any value, then there are so many possibilities of daily defilement from a variety of causes referred to in the various texts, that there should be a daily purification, whether Harijans are allowed to enter or not.

Asked if the compromise suggested by him did not still maintain a distinction between Harijans and high-castes, Mr. Gandhi replied that the Harijans' attitude should be this:

If there is a person who objects to my presence, I would like to respect his objection, so long as he (the objector) does not deprive me of the right that belongs to me. So long as I am permitted to have a legiti-mate share of the day for offering worship side by side with those who have no objection to my presence, I would be satisfied.

Mr. Gandhi proceeded to say that in a place where the majority of people favoured temple-entry by Harijans, then the number of caste Hindus who would want the temple exclusively for them during certain hours, would be so small as to be negligible.

Proceeding to another aspect of the temple-entry agitation, Mr. Gandhi emphatically discouraged direct action by non-Hindus for procuring entry for Harijans. He declared:

This is a deeply religious movement, and it will be thousand pities if out of misplaced sympathy or other motives non-Hindus were to interfere by way of direct action.

What prompted Mr. Gandhi to make this observation, was a letter received by him from Colombo, in which the correspondent stated that, with reference to the local temple-entry campaign, what had been misnamed satyagraha was offered by non-Hindus, consisting of a Buddhist, a Roman Catholic lady, a Christian and a few Muslims. They were prosecuted by the law at the instance of the temple trustees and convicted. The correspondent asked Mr. Gandhi whether interference by non-Hindus in order to secure temple-entry for Harijans could be justified. Mahatmaji declared:

I have no hesitation whatsoever in saying that this could not be justified under any circumstances. It would be a most dangerous interference if non-Hindus were to express their sympathy by way of direct action. Indeed, I go so far as to say that direct action can be offered [only] by those caste Hindus who are entitled to enter the temple in regard to which such action is taken, and who being entitled, believe in temple-entry.

Asked what he had to say about Viceregal sanction for Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill, Mr. Gandhi said that he hoped that the Viceroy would give permission as early as possible.

The Hindu, 3-1-1933

495. INTERVIEW ON SUBBAROYAN'S BILL

January 2, 1933

Asked for his views on sanatanists' agitation based on the Queen's Proclamation, Gandhiji observed:

I do not know what meaning is attached to the word 'neutrality' by those who are seeking to oppose Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill. I can say, with perfect confidence, that Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill is intended to undo the wrong done by the British courts' decision. I do not suggest that the wrong was done intentionally. It should again be remembered that Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill seeks to amend the Madras Religious Endowments Act which is itself of a religious character, another breach of neutrality according to the sanatanists' interpretation. Again if one were to examine the contents of the Bill, dispassionately, it will be found that it seeks to impose nothing on the Hindus, but it merely seeks to register the will of the Hindu public in connection with temples in which that public are interested—not of the whole of the Hindu public but only of those who are entitled to have a say in connection with a particular temple. I can see in this measure no interference whatsoever, with anybody's religion. The Bill seeks to protect both the opponents and advocates of temple-entry.

Gandhiji wanted the actual text of Mr. T. R. Ramachandra Aiyar's Guruvayur speech to deal with it.

When I drew his attention to the fact that I was prohibited by the jail warders from bringing into the jail a copy of the newspaper containing the speech, Gandhiji said that he would talk to the Superintendent and see that the Pressmen were allowed to bring in their reference papers in the future.

Asked whether he would abandon the fast if the Viceroy gave his sanction to Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill, Gandhiji said that he would further postpone the fast till the next stage was reached. The Bill must be enacted and the Government's final assent given for it to become law. A referendum in which the Zamorin also would have to participate, would follow. The possibility of a fast would continue till the temple was thrown open, but at every step stated above, the possibility would be reduced. The fast would be finally abandoned only when the temple was thrown open.

Questioned what would be his attitude if the Viceroy refused his sanction to the Bill, Mahatma remarked:

Ah, if the Viceroy refused sanction, I would consider the position. Then, the fast is bound to come, but I should wait till the Govern-

ment state their attitude. I do not want to go into the question at the present moment.

Referring to the proposal of a section of South Indians for building new temples where reformers and Harijans could go for common worship, leaving the old temples to the orthodox, Gandhiji said:

The question does not arise, until I am satisfied that those who are entitled to worship are in favour of that proposal. The orthodox view is that the sanctity of a temple would decrease if Harijans are admitted. People who are in favour of temple-entry are of the opinion that the sanctity of a temple will increase if all the Hindus are allowed inside the temple. Increase or decrease in sanctity is only a mental process. If the majority of the temple-goers are in favour of such a proposal, I shall give it consideration. But I am sure that the suggestion will not be acceptable to any of the reformers.

The Hindu, 3-1-1933

496. TELEGRAM TO DAMARAJU LAKSHMAMMA[1]

[On or before *January 3, 1933*][2]

Srimathi Lakshmamma received a wire from Mahatma Gandhi requesting her not to commence fasting and stating that he was writing in detail.

The Hindu, 4-1-1933

497. STATEMENT ON UNTOCHABILITY IN HINDU SHASTRAS

January 3, 1933

I have had the privilege, as the public knows, of having a friendly discussion with Bhagwan Shastri Dharurkar of Pandharpur and others who accompanied him. These gentlemen came, as they made it clear to me, in their personal capacity, and not as representatives of any association. They came with a view to understanding my

[1] The telegram was in reply to a communication from Shrimati Lakshmamma, Congress worker and member, District Board, Ellore, informing Gandhiji of her determination to commence fasting from the 2nd instant, in respect of the local Sri Janardhana Swami Temple in case Mahatma Gandhi would fast in connection with the temple-entry problem at Guruvayur, and requesting Gandhiji's permission to do so.

[2] The telegram was reported under the date-line: "Ellore, January 3".

position regarding untouchability in general and the movement for temple-entry by Harijans in particular. No doubt they had also the intention of helping me to understand and even adopt the *sanatani* viewpoint, for which they were speaking.

I had a long discussion with them. In order to leave no stone unturned in my attempt to understand the viewpoint of *sanatani* pundits and in accordance with the arrangement made with Bhagwan Shastri Dharurkar, I had invited some friends, learned in the Shastras and who, I knew, generally supported my position, so that I may have both the schools of thought playing upon my mind.

I can say that I listened to their arguments and discourses with the greatest patience and with respectful attention. I was unable to find any error in the position which I have held for period now nearing half-a-century. I know that time never runs in favour of an error, and as I regard myself as a humble seeker after truth and prone to error like any other mortal, I have always held myself ready to confess errors as soon as the conviction went home; but these discussions have left me more convinced than ever that untouchability, as it is practised today in Hinduism, has no warrant in the Hindu Shastras. Many have done me and themselves great injustice by not giving their full value to the expression "as it is understood and practised today". But rather than just state the effect produced on my mind by these prolonged discussions, I have secured from the pundits or *Shastris* who gave me general support, their interpretation of the Shastras about untouchability, and I have pleasure in giving below an authorized translation of the statement which is in Hindi. Acharya Anandshankar Dhruva and Dr. Bhagwandas are responsible for this translation.

The statement runs as follows:

> Three kinds of untouchables are mentioned in the Hindu Dharmashastras: (1) Persons classed as untouchables by birth, i.e., progeny of the union of a Shudra with a Brahmin woman. (2) Persons guilty of any of the five heinous sins or of certain practices condemned in Hinduism. (3) Persons whilst they are in a polluted state.
>
> There is nothing to show that any of the communities now classed as untouchables come under the first category. Therefore, the rules governing untouchability and ex-communication under the first head are inapplicable to them. Assuming that any of these communities can be brought under the first head, they can be free from their untouchability and have all the privileges

enjoyed in common by the four varnas by clean living, initiation into the Shaiva or Vaishnava worship, and the like.

The second kind of untouchability obviously cannot attach exclusively to any class or community as a whole. It may apply to individuals in any and every community. The untouchability of the untouchables so-called, is not due to their fallen state under the second head, nor can they be shown to be descendants of such fallen parents. Persons guilty of heinous sins, referred to under the second head, become fully purified by the performance of appropriate purificatory ceremonies. The progeny of such fallen persons as have not become thus purified cannot be classed as untouchables. Some *Smritikaras* who regard such progeny as untouchables, prescribe a very slight purificatory ceremonial for their restoration; and persons who are guilty of practices rendering them untouchable can also be free from untouchability by giving up such practices.

The third kind of untouchability, due to one's being in a polluted state, obtains among all classes whether regarded as untouchables or not. There is nowarrant in the Shastras for considering tanners, Bhangis and others as permanent untouchables, merely by reason of their occupation. Their untouchability is due to the external uncleanness caused by the nature of their work. All untouchability under the third head is cured by a bath and a change of clean clothes at the due time.

Thus, it is necessary that the rights common to four varnas, e.g., of entry into temples, educational institutions, of use of public wells, ghats, tanks, rivers, etc., should equally accrue to the untouchables so called, and that it is wrong to deprive them of such common rights. This is probable from the texts, the fundamental principles and the spirit of the Dharmashastras.

SWAMI KEVALANAND
NARAYAN SHASTRI MARATHE
LAXMAN SHASTRI JOSHI
BHAGWANDAS
ANANDSHANKAR DHRUVA
INDIRARAMAN SASTRI
KESHAV LAXMAN DAFTARI
P. H. PURANDARE

I do not need to introduce the signatories to the public, but I can say that they claim to Sjt. C. V. Vaidya. All these I hope to share with the public as early represent sanatan dharma no less than those who call themselves sanatanists. Apart from these, I have received valuable opinions in general support from Mahamahopadhyaya Pramathanath

Tarkabhushan, Pundit Shreedhar Shastri Pathak, Krishna Thanasukh Misra and last but not least as it is possible to have them printed simultaneously with this. I am issuing to the Press the original Hindi and authorized translations in Marathi and Gujarati, and I hope that the respective journals would only print the authorized text.

The opinion of these learned men, popularly construed, means that no class of persons today bears the brand of permanent untouchability. It is obvious that untouchability by birth cannot exist today in connection with a class. In connection with individuals, it is practically impossible of detection. There are undoubtedly men who must be guilty of the five heinous sins, but all castes are capable of committing those sins, and society today takes no notice of them. The condemned practice under the second head refers to eating of carrion or beef. There are undoubtedly some people among those classed as untouchables who are given to this practice, but they are bound to give it up as soon as caste Hindus make the real advance. At the present moment the very incentive to give up beef or carrion is lacking. The temporary pollution under the third head carries no condemnation with it. It is a pollution which is inevitable for all in a certain state, and the pollution ceases immediately the state ceases.

If the signatories have correctly interpreted the Shastras, then we have been all these many years doing a grave injustice to Bhangis, tanners and others by classing them as permanent untouchables, although we recognize that their profession is as honourable as any and much more indispensable for the very existence of society than many others which do not carry the mark of untouchability with them.

M. K. GANDHI[1]

The Hindu, 4-1-1933

498. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

January 3, 1933

MY DEAR MARY,

I must dictate this letter. You will be entitled to treat us as hosts or hostesses when we agree to look upon you as a guest. But I must flatly decline to give you that treatment.

[1] From *The Hindu*stan *Times*, 4-1-1933

The experience you have related is not uncommon; hence we have the proverb that it takes two to make a quarrel. I think that your interference was quite timely and proper.

Love from us.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 5987. Also C.W. 3344. Courtesy: Miss F. Mary Barr

499. LETTER TO K. NAGESWAR RAO

January 3, 1933

MY DEAR NAGESWAR RAO,

I enclose a telegram received by me. If you know Sjt. Kasi Krishnamacharya, I would not adopt the suggestion of the sender of the telegram and drag him all the way to Poona, but if you will give his opinion on the same question put by me I should value it, and if you get the opinion please tell me also briefly who Kasi Krishnamacharya is.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19146

500. LETTER TO NAGARDAS K. BHAMBANIA[1]

January 3, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. To me the whole of your argument tends[2] to show that those who have the ideas of physical purity that you have should treat themselves as untouchables rather than treat any single human being as such, and this is the well-known practice followed among the Vaishnavas. Those who follow it do not call themselves untouchables, but they are called '*merjadees*'[3]. You know the meaning of the word.

And why so much stress upon external purity when the scriptures lay stress on inward purity? No doubt external purity is necessary as a help to the attainment of the inner, but that can be ensured by everyone for himself.

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's dated December 22, 1932 (S.N. 18785).

[2] The source has "leads".

[3] *Maryadis*, those who observe *maryada*, i.e., strict rules in regard to pollution

There is no question whatsoever of forcing sanatanists to do anything against their conviction. Private temples remain untouched by the movement. It is open to the owners to do what they liked with them. Public temples are the property of the public that is entitled to the use of these temples. Is there any force if the majority of visitors to a particular temple decide to open that temple to Harijans? The whole movement is to quicken Hindu conscience and then leave it to act according to its dictates. Can you see any flaw in this? I would like you to study the movement and its implications.

Lastly, I must tell you that I have not found a single authority in support of untouchability as it is practised today, if you will dispassionately study the question and give its full meaning to the words underlined.

NAGARDAS K. BHAMBANIA
POONA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19141

501. LETTER TO T. A. V. NATHAN

January 3, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I have not however got a copy of *Justice* referred to in your letter. If you will send me the cutting, it will reach me in safety and I shall then be able to deal with it.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19142

502. LETTER TO M. BALAKRISHNA TIVARI

January 3, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. Almost every intelligent Hindu knows that among our saints there are quite a number of Harijans, but we are such a curious mixture we have no scruple in condemning whole communities though we may worship individuals belonging to

them. I have, therefore, refrained from laying stress upon the facts you have kindly mentioned.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. BALAKRISHNA TIVARI
RETD. MUNICIPAL ENGINEER, BANGALORE CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 19143

503. LETTER TO RAMANANDA SANNYASI

January 3, 1933

DEAR RAMANANDAJI[1],

I have your letter. It is not possible for me to do much from here, but I am forwarding your letter to Ghanshyamdasji.

Yours sincerely,

RAMANANDA SANNYASI
NEW CENTRAL JAIL, MULTAN

From a microfilm: S.N. 19147

504. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

January 3, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

Here is a letter from Ramananda Sannyasi which speaks for itself. You will see if there is anything to do in this connection.

I enclose also a letter from Ganeshilal Mistry for your information and guidance. This is a letter which requires investi-gation. It is impossible for you to cope with all complaints personally, but there should be someone who would take the pains to see such writers when they are local people, and in every case find out what truth there is in their complaints and then give the writers whatever satisfaction is possible.

To save you the trouble, if you will put me on to someone to whom I should write directly I would do so, and then he will bring to your notice whatever is necessary.

Yours sincerely

BAPU

C.W. 7916. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also S.N. 19169

[1] An Arya Samajist from Delhi who was in jail. He seems to have asked for financial help for his institution; *vide* the following item.

505. LETTER TO DHARMA VIR VEDALANKAR

January 3, 1933

MY DEAR DHARMA VIR,

I was glad to receive your letter and cuttings giving a description of the various activities that took place on the Shraddhanand Day.[1]

Yours sincerely,

PT. DHARMA VIR VEDALANKAR
SHRADDHANAND BAZAR, DELHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 19148

506. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

January 3, 1933

MY DEAR VENKATAPPAYYA,

I have your letter. I hope you got my letter[2] in Calicut. In it l enquired about your daughter and your wife. How are they both doing? I hope you are completely restored. Do come whenever you like, as long as it is untouchability you want to discuss.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA
GUNTUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 19153

507. LETTER TO D. NARAYANA RAJU

January 3, 1933

MY DEAR NARAYANA RAJA,

I have your letter. I am quite sure that Lakshmamma should not fast in connection with the opening of the temple you mention. I have already wired to her.[3]

[1] For Gandhiji's message, *vide* "Letter to Secretary, All-India Shraddhanand memorial Trust", before 19-12-1932.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Konda Venkatapayya", 21-12-1932.

[3] This sentence is in Gandhiji's hand. For the telegram, *vide* "Telegram to Damaraju Lakshamma", on or before 3-1-1933.

Whilst Guruvayur is pending, only propaganda should be carried on. Fasting is a method applicable only in rare cases.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. D. NARAYANA RAJU
ELLORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 19152

508. LETTER TO M. MANICKAM

January 3, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and I am glad that you have drawn my attention to the fact of non-Hindus offering obstruction, mis-called satyagraha, in connection with a temple in Colombo. I considered it to be so important that I have dealt with it in a Press message[1] which, no doubt, you have seen. I do hope that there has been no repetition of interference by non-Hindus.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. MANICKAM
PRESIDENT, THE NEHRU SANGHAM
165 SEA STREET, COLOMBO

From a microfilm: S.N. 19151

509. LETTER TO G. VENKATARATNAM

January 3, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

The pain such as you refer to in your letter of 23rd ultimo is nerve's peculiar way and it would last to the end of time.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. VENKATARATNAM
AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE, COIMBATORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 19150

[1] *Vide* "Interview to the Associated Press of India", 2-1-1933.

510. LETTER TO S. K. DATTA

January 3, 1933

DEAR DR. DATTA,

I had your letter. The way your students can help is by doing regular, steady service to the Harijans as by conducting night schools, by organizing not expensive but indigenous sports for Harijan children in which the students would play side by side with the children, by penetrating Harijan homes and finding out their difficulties and solving them where they are able to do so. These are only some of the ways. They will no doubt discover many others.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19149

511. LETTER TO M. S. PARKHE

January 3, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and the sample envelopes.

I can say nothing about the embossed bust, because I am no judge of such things.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. S. PARKHE
THE BHARAT ENVELOPES CO., POONA 2

From a microfilm: S.N. 19144

512. LETTER TO C. R. KRISHNASWAMI

January 3, 1933

MY DEAR KRISHNASWAMI,

I am so glad you have sent me Low's cartoon. I had read about it. I am sorry it came too late for Daddy[1] to see it. I know he would have enjoyed it.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. R. KRISHNASWAMI
C/O "THE HINDU", MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 19154

[1] C. Rajagopalachari

513. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

January 3, 1933

MY DEAR C.R.,

It was stupid of me not to have discussed with you my proposal[1] to Pandit Panchanan Tarkaratna. Now I have given it to the Press; you will therefore see it earlier than you receive this. I would like to have your opinion on it.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 19170

514. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

January 3, 1933

CHI. MANI,

I do not have now a single minute to spare. I feel we should now stop writing everyday. Dahyabhai is all right now.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 97

515. APPEAL TO SANATANISTS

January 4, 1933

This is an appeal to you from a fellow sanatanist, whom you are trying to reject in spite of yourself. Hard swearing at me and the libellous charges some of you are indulging in, are proof to me of your distorted love. I feel like the wife whom her many husbands profess to reject because the poor woman cannot give equal satisfaction to all her lords and masters. But not being able to reject her, (they know she, the willing slave, has served them all well enough) they screw up all the wrath they think they have, and swear at her for all they are worth. The faithful wife, staunch in her loyalty, calmly allows

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 30-12-1932 and "Interview to the Associated Press of India", 2-1-1933.

the storm to pass over her, for she is utterly innocent of all the charges promiscuously hurled at her. After the storm has subsided, the wife finds herself a greater favourite than before of her husbands, who laugh at their own exacting nature, and realize that their patient companion had, after all, placed her all at their disposal. Thus will it be with me, I dare to prophesy.

There are some telling verses in a sanatan scripture. You, having brooded over the wrongs you fancy I have done to you, have put yourself in a state of rage. Those verses say: 'Rage generates hallucination, which produces forgetfulness. The lapse of memory clouds intelligence; and failing intelligence leads to destruction.'[1] In your rage, you do not even know what you are doing. You have not even cared to inquire what I am aiming at.

Let me put a few facts before you. The popular definition of sanatan dharma is 'that good conduct which people can reach'. It rules out bad conduct and bad habits, however popular they may be. Religion is something that binds. Bad habits loosen, and therefore can never be religion. Therefore, if after the issues are dispassionately put before the people, they choose a particular course which is not in itself an evil, is not that sanatan dharma? Is it not the way how the body of doctrine and conduct known as sanatan dharma has grown? Is it not a condition of its growth?

If I have taken you with me so far, then know that, in all that I am doing, there is nothing more and nothing less than that I amtrying to find out how far people will go along the road which I hold to be good and which some of the scholars, who have first-hand knowledge of divine books, tell me is also good, according to their reading of them. But you protest that their reading is bad. Very well. Let the two different readings be put before the people, and let them make their choice. If they accept my reading, will that not be sanatan dharma? You need not even then accept my reading. You may adhere to your own, but in that case you will not call that sanatan dharma. You think your reading is sanatan dharma, because you assume that a vast majority of the villagers will accept it, and you reject my claim to be a sanatanist because you think it will be unacceptable to the people if it was put to them. I have put forth no insolent claim. I have wandered amongst millions for a number of years, not as a politician, but as a man of religion. They have accepted me as such, and your own hot

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 63

repudiation of me is itself a proof of your having hitherto believed me to be more a man of religion than of politics. Have you not noticed that the politician will have none of me, and has always regarded me as an intruder and unpractical visionary, whilst at religious meetings I have been instinctively welcomed? And that happened even so early as 1915, when I had the good fortune to be practically an unknown man.

If you will but calmly examine the situation, you will discover that whether at Guruvayur or anywhere else, I am doing nothing but examining my claim and even yours by implication. My reading of sanatan dharma has forced me to the conclusion that caste-men have erred in treating a large number of Hindus as 'untouchables' and prohibiting them, amongst other things, from entering temples. You hold that sanatan dharma obliges you to regard these very Hindus as 'untouchables' and, therefore, they are unfit, under any circumstances, to enter the temples on the same terms as yourself. I say, let temple- goers themselves make a choice of the two readings, and you throw yourself in a state of rage, because I advance such a simple proposition. That, surely, is neither law nor common sense, nor toleration.

I am sure you would not deny me the right you have allowed to non-Hindus, that is, of preaching their opinion so long as they do not adopt illegal, immoral or otherwise questionable methods. You call my fast a species of coercion. It ill-becomes a sanatanist to describe a simple fast as coercion for, are not the pages of religious history filled with instances of fasting, whenever dharma had been in danger? I will not insult your intelligence by citing notable illustrations in support of my statement. But even the fast is off for the time being.

You then raise a hue and cry over a simple Bill such as Dr. Subbaroyan's is, and shout that religion is in danger. But if you were to examine this Bill, it again seeks to do nothing more than ascertain the wish of the parties concerned and to give effect to that wish. If the British courts had not intervened at the instance of a sanatanist, if the mixed legislatures such as we now have, had not passed a measure of a religious character at the instance of Hindu legislators, this Bill would be unnecessary. So, you see, it simply seeks to remove the obstruction created under modern conditions, and not to introduce innovations in Hinduism. It is the British law, as it exists today, that makes it possible for a single individual to thwart the will of a whole host—may be even nine-thousand-nine-hundred and ninety-nine. It may suit you today, but if you will give calm consideration to it, you will come to the

conclusion that it is a most dangerous thing both for you and for me. It is calculated to deaden religious life. Sanatan dharma, and for that matter, all dharma, must give fair play. You do not wish to play with loaded dice, as you would if this law was not altered.

I have suggested another test for the demonstration of the spirit of fair play, if there is any in you. You will not deny that there are at least a respectable number of Hindus, if not a majority, who believe that it is consistent with the Hindu religion to admit Harijans to public temples. I have therefore suggested a solution which is incapable of improvement from the fair-play point of view. It respects every prejudice and every scruple, and so far as Guruvayur is concerned and my solution is only confined for the moment to Guruvayur—it follows an established precedent, with but a variation. Harijans have been admitted from time immemorial, without restriction along with other Hindus to that temple for full one day in the year. There is, therefore nothing irreligious or extraordinary in my suggestion, that they should be always allowed, but only for certain hours in the day. You may say there is purification after this mixing of the two on the Ekadasi day. Repugnant as the idea is to me, if purification satisfied the scruples of the objectors, let there be a daily purification by all means.

All the letters I have received from sanatanists have protested that behind the sanatanists' upholding of untouchability, there is no hatred. The writers proclaim that though Harijans are children of God, equal with all others, religion demands their separation on high moral grounds, but that it should be carried out with love and not in hatred, and therefore, they should have full rights of citizenship. Let us examine this claim in the light of the existing facts.

(1) Have you ascertained who are untouchables and why? (2) Do you know why a subtle and in my opinion cruel social arrangement has made them landless? If one happens to possess land, he cannot make the same use of it that you can. (3) He cannot make use of the innumerable public utilities that you can; and you have provided no such separate utilities. Therefore, he might die of thirst, and you would not help him to a drink of water. (4) Careers that are open to you are tightly closed against him. (5) Even medical assistance and spiritual assistance are denied to him.

If these are the fruits of love, will you not think with me that hate must be far more preferable to love? I cannot think of anything

more bitter than the fruits I have pictured above.

I tell you that there is nothing like this on the face of the earth, and what is worse, bearing the stamp of religion.

I have addressed this appeal to you, which proceeds out of my soul's agony. I ask you to share that agony and shame with me, and co-operate with me, for I have no other end to serve than to see sanatan dharma revivified and lived in its reality in the lives of millions who at present seem to me to deny it. I am glad you are awakened, but you must now work and, instead of engaging in a perfectly fruitless quarrel with me, go through the catalogue of evils that have crept into Hinduism and make a giant effort to remove them. I call your quarrel with me a fruitless effort, because I won't be a party to it. An English proverb has it, that it takes two to make a quarrel—happily I will not help you to make up the two.

The Hindu, 5-1-1933

516. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

January 4, 1933

CHI. JAMNA,

I got your letter. In what I wrote[1] I had in mind only the mutual dharma of husband and wife. I certainly did not mean that you should stay somewhere away from the Ashram for a long time and that Narandas should never visit you. But don't you agree that he should go to see you only when the work in theAshram permits him? And, if you yourself go for a short stay in the Ashram every six months, would it be necessary then for him to visit you? I would certainly not think of being harsh on you in a matter like this. On the contrary, I would wish to meet your wishes as far as possible. Have no doubt at all that it has always been my effort to create conditions in the Ashram so that no woman in it should feel herself dependent.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 869. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jamnabehn Gandhi", 29-12-1932.

517. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 4, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I have already replied[1] regarding Mahavir. I hope you got the letter. About Sitala Sahay, I want you to do what you think best. I know very well that he is extremely careless about expenditure. If the understanding with him is that the expenses for all of them should not exceed Rs. 75, I am inclined to pay him that much.

It also seems to me that we have no choice but to pay him the expenditure incurred in travelling. But in future the sum of Rs. 75 should include all such expenses. However, I cannot form the correct view from here, and, therefore, after saying what I have done, I leave the final decision to you.

I believe I have already written to you and told you that Prema, Jamnadas, Sushila and Indu came and saw me. Prema must have returned there now. Kaka has not come and seen me yet. I understand about Damodar. Let him do as he likes. What are Vanamala and Mohan still suffering from?

BAPU

PS.

Read Liladhar's letter. Did Jivarambhai get for him the expenses for his daughters? If so, from when had he been doing so and what was the amount? If we are permitted to pay the same amount to Sharda Mandir, I think we should pay it. Write to me what you think about this and, if Liladhar happens to come to the Ashram, have a talk with him.

BAPU

[PPS.]

You will find with this letters for Jamna, Amina, Qureshi, Liladhar, Jaikor, Shanti, Anandi, Radha and Kusum.

[From Gujarati]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 2-1-1933.

518. TELEGRAM TO SHAMJI MARWADI

January 5, 1933

SHAMJI MARWADI
VALPABHADI ROAD
BOMBAY

CAN SEE YOU EARLIEST ELEVENTH TWO O'CLOCK.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5209

519. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Thursday Morning, January 5, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

Herewith is my copy of An Optimist's Calendar for you. The idea is not mine but Vallabhbhai's. The author, as you will see, has sent 12 copies. I asked Vallabhbhai Patel whether he thought it worth distribution and if yes, to suggest names. He gave some names to which the addition of your name came simultaneously through our lips.

Your longest letters are brief for me. You need never think of sparing me when you are writing to me. Indeed I want your long letters when you can give them to me without effort. I wish I could give you equally long letters. But I am not a good letterwriter. And just now I can't give you long letters even when I could write them, if I had the time. I must be content with giving you about 30 minutes near about the Thursday morning prayer time.

You do not need to think of the fast just now. Never imagine things good or bad until they stare you in the face.[1] Full surrender means full freedom from all care. A child never has care for anything. It knows instinctively that it is being cared for by its parents. How much more true should it be with us grown-up people? There you have the test of faith or detachment of the *Gita*, if you like.

'Untouchables' was chosen because some Harijans in the South objected to the new name. They suspected some design behind it. Therefore the word is a choice of necessity.

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Mirabehn", 29-12-1932.

Ba has gone and is on her way to the Ashram. Urmila Devi went yesterday. I may have a little less pressure now that the *Shastris* are gone. But I might have to listen to another debate on 12th instant.

My weight went up again to 103 yesterday. The saltless continues. I have no difficulty in so doing. Whether the body needs it or not is the only consideration. The elbow is no better. Of course bread and vegetables are still omitted.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6256. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9722

520. LETTER TO M. M. ANANTA RAU

January 5, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your postcard of the 1st instant.[1] I sent you a reply[2] to your letter of the 14th ultimo. Fortunately, I have a copy of it. I send you a copy.

I duly received your letter of the 18th which I thought had crossed my reply, and as my reply, of which copy is going herewith, is exhaustive, there was no occasion for a further reply to your letter of the 18th ultimo. I hope you will receive this letter safely.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19172. Also C.W. 9564. Courtesy: Government of Mysore

521. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

January 5, 1933

MY DEAR HORACE,

I am overdue in acknowledging your and other love letters, but the work before me has to take precedence over everything else.

I am glad you were able to see Dr. Ansari and other friends, and gladder still that you were able to have that long conversation with Dr. Ambedkar. Of course he has still got that over-sensitiveness and

[1] The addressee had complained that he had received no reply to his letters dated December 14 and 18, 1932 (C.W. 9563).

[2] *Vide* "Letter to M. M. Ananta Rau", 17-12-1932.

terrible suspicion, but there is to me nothing unnatural in it. As I used to say so often in London, he had every excuse for the bitterness with which only he could speak whenever he spoke about untouchability or of those touchable Hindus who had anything to do with it. He has not only witnessed the inhuman wrongs done to the social pariahs of Hinduism, but in spite of all his culture, all the honours that he has received, he has, when he is in India, still to suffer many insults to which untouchables are exposed. The wonder is that he is so tolerant and forbearing as he showed himself, for instance, at the time when the Yeravda Pact was being hammered into shape. It was perfectly open to him to withstand all pressure and remain defiant, but he allowed himself to be moved by friendly pressure. He will soften if the terms of the Yeravda Pact are carried out in full by the caste Hindus, but though things are shaping well on the whole, I am experiencing newer difficulties from day to day. They do not dismay me. I was prepared for them. I knew that that little fast was not enough penance for moving to right action the great mass of Hindu humanity. Many lives might have to be given before the last remnant of untouchability is gone. But no sacrifice will be too great to remove a wrong which lies like a dead weight, not only on Hindu society, but on all who surround it. I get now and then piteous letters from Christian Indians who, being born of untouchable parents, are isolated from the rest of their fellows. Such is the contagious nature of this dreadful disease.

With our love to you and Olive,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1418

522. LETTER TO PETER J. MASCREEN

January 5, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You will pardon me for telling you that my reading of Hinduism is wholly different from yours. The doctrine of transmigration does not entitle one man to claim superiority over another. Hinduism is not wholly different from Roman Catholicism, as you imagine. The fundamentals of all religions are the same.

Yours sincerely,

PETER J. MASCREEN, ESQ.

C/O J. MASCREEN, ESQ., VELLIYIL PARAMPIL, TANGACHERRY

QUILON

From a microfilm: S.N. 19176

523. LETTER TO BIRESWAR SEN

January 5, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

You have done well in writing to me. If the analogy you have taken was correct, what you say will be quite true, but there is no analogy between a public temple and a private house. Public temples are the common property of Hindus or sects of Hindus, and members of those sects have a perfect right to regulate admission. All I claim is just that and no more, the right of the temple-goers of the existing temples to decide whether Harijans shall enter.

You are wrong also in thinking that my fast was a suicide. A suicide is when a man does an act with the intention of ending his earthly existence. I never had any such intention. To my fast was attached a condition. That you may still call it wrong is quite possible; only the fast could not be condemned on the ground you have advanced.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. BIRESWAR SEN
3 ROAD 36, ANISABAD, P. O. PATNA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19175

524. LETTER TO GANGA RAM

January 5, 1933

DEAR LALA GANGARAM,

I thank you for your letter of the 30th ultimo and a Copy of the report you have kindly sent me. I shall try to find time to go through your report.

Yours sincerely,

LALA GANGA RAM, B.A.
ADVOCATE, SIALKOT CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 19174

525. LETTER TO KURUR NILKANTAN NAMBUDIRIPAD

January 5, 1933

MY DEAR NILKANTAN NAMBUDIRIPAD,

I thank you for your letter enclosing the considered opinion of the Government Advocate on "Usage".

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KURUR NILKANTAN NAMBUDIRIPAD
T. C. HOUSE, TRICHUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 19173

526. LETTER TO BALDEODAS BAJORIA

January 5, 1933

DEAR BALDEODASJI

I thank you for your letter of the 29th ultimo. I quite agree with you that the Shastras are inviolate, and that religion is higher than political swaraj.

I have already explained the meaning of my fast. It cannot coerce a single sanatani Hindu who has deep convictions opposed to mine; and why do you say that I hurt the feelings of the orthodox Hindus? In this connection I would like you to study carefully my appeal[1] to the sanatanists. If you will study carefully, you will discover that there can be no struggle between orthodox Hindus and the others. You should continue to strive with me till you are convinced or you have succeeded in convincing me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. BALDEODAS BAJORIA
130 MECHUA BAZAR STREET, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19171

[1] *Vide* "Appeal to Sanatanists", 4-1-1933.

527. LETTER TO AN ENGLISH GIRL[1]

January 5, 1933

MY DEAR DAUGHTER,

I was very pleased to get your letter. You are quite right in addressing me as you have done. I enjoy the happiness of having thousands of daughters. You are a welcome addition to the ever-growing family; and since I, a puny mortal, cannot cope with such a large family, I entrust you all to the safe keeping of the All-powerful and Eternal Father, and so I never feel the burden of having the large family; on the contrary, only the joy of possessing the trust remains.

I see that though you are an invalid, you have a strong faith and a great heart. May your faith increase with the progress of years and may you ever find peace in the midst of pain and sorrow.

Yes, I knew when I was fasting I had the prayers of many pure souls like yourself, and that knowledge sustained me greatly.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat No. 13. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child*, p. 123

528. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

January 5, 1933

MY DEAR CHILD,

If I am to cope with my correspondence, side by side with untouchability work, I can only dictate letters for the most part, and even then be brief. It is a fortunate thing that I have been allowed the facility. The untouchability work was going beyond my capacity in spite of the assistance I received from Vallabhbhai and Mahadev. I wish I could do justice to your long love letter. I cannot send you anything like it. I see that you have Andrews settling down in Wood brooke. You will, therefore, have him always by your side, a strong

[1] The letter was presumably addressed to Nellie Ball; *vide* the following item and Vol. LIII, "Letter to Nellie Ball", 2-3-1933.

support to lean on whenever you are in need.

Yes, I have seen the beautiful poem of Shelley's that you have copied for me. I hope you are keeping quite well, and I pray that the New Year has opened for you with much greater inner joy and peace than you have ever possessed.

I was glad for the letter from the ailing sister. Here is my reply[1] to her. Though she has given me her address, as I cannot quite make out her name I send it through you.

Love from us both and kisses to the children to whom a separate postcard is going.

Mahadev sent a book for Tangai and Nannie for Christmas gift. I hope they got it.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 117. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child*, pp. 97-8

529. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

January 5, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

Your excuse for not writing to me does not impress me. When one is living outside, one gets so many experiences that one need not search for something to write about. Moreover, if you do wish to write to me, you would tell me frankly what difficulties you experienced in observing the Ashram rules when living outside and which rules could not be observed at all, etc., etc. If all inmates of the Ashram who go to live outside describe to me their experiences, think how much that would help me.

I hope you got my letter.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5340

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

530. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

January 5, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

I got both your letters. Please do not expect a long reply from me today. The right hand has got tired and the speed with the left hand is at least four times less than with the right. Moreover, I must now spare [both] hands and save time for *Harijan*. Though I cannot write a long letter to you, I expect a detailed letter from you. You are the only one who gives me news about all the women.

I hope you have been following the advice[1] I gave you regarding your throat.

If you learn to work peacefully and not to worry about it, you would not become weak. I know very well of course that this is more easily said than done. But I have observed that sometimes such advice is taken to heart and acted upon.

Watch Lakshmi.

How is Narmada?

How is Dhurandhar's health?

What is the news about Kisan?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10319

531. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

January 5, 1933

CHI. PANDITJI,

I got your letter as well as the brief description. of Pritampur. The scheme seems to be fine. If it succeeds, it will be considered a great reform.

Some settlement must have been made about the Giri family.

Can it be said that the trouble from the Chharas has diminished?

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 243. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 1-1-1933.

532. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 5, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I must content myself with the fewest letters today. Tell all the people that I would have to write for *Harijan* and, therefore, they should not be surprised if I write fewer letters for some time. Anybody who has something to communicate may certainly write to me. In any case the women and the children must write. For them it is a kind of education too. Even if I do not write in reply, they should continue to write.

After leaving school, Rambhau's weight seems to have increased very much. That seems to have happened to Shanti and Jaikore after they left the Ashram. Try to discover the reason for this and, if you succeed, let me know it.

Two or three correspondents have complained in their letters that stray dogs loitering in the Ashram compound find nothing to eat and, therefore, try to eat shoes, etc. If this is true, it does not mean that we should give them *rotlas* to eat. You should send for a cart from the pinjrapole and the dogs should be removed in it, as used to be done in the past. Probably you know that we have such an understanding with the pinjrapole. You will even find in the office the correspondence which took place on this subject.

We should certainly think what we can do in cases like . . .'s[1]. If a young man who has been living in the Ashram wishes to marry, it seems to me that we cannot immediately throw him on the streets. We should be able to help them in some way. I have not thought what we can do, or whether we can do anything. The first thing to do is to consider whether we owe any duty to such persons. If we do, then we will think further and may discover some way of helping. You and other senior members may think about this and you may then let me know the view of you all.

BAPU

In all there are 18 letters, tied together.

[From Gujarati]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

[1] The name has been omitted.

533. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

January 5, 1933

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I got your letter. I am satisfied. I also have full confidence that you will do your best. By contribution I did not mean money. Even an unknown child who approaches you for money will get it. Don't think I am so simple-minded as to ask you for money. For that, I would simply sign a *hundi* on you. I want from you a much bigger contribution than that. You can make it and I believe that you will.

I would not use coercion even to save a cow from the hands of a butcher. I certainly don't wish to use it to secure freedom for Harijans to enter temples, nor to make the Harijans give up beef, meat, etc.

But the latter tell me: 'You force us to remove dead cattle and charge us for their flesh. We, therefore, eat it and through long habit we have come to relish it. So in the first place you should not charge us for the flesh, and secondly, should make some other arrangement for the removal of the dead cattle so that we may have no opportunity to remove their flesh.'

There is some cunning in this. They know that we cannot make any other arrangement for the removal of dead cattle in theimmediate future, and some of them wish to exploit the situation. They have a right to do so. This is what anyone would do.

I suggest this step to the States. The carcass of a dead cattle belongs, or should be considered as belonging, to the owner of the cattle. Since he does not arrange for the proper disposal of the carcass, it means that he renounces his right over it. It, therefore, becomes the property of the State, and the State should arrange for its disposal through Harijans by paying them suitably. The State should also use every part of the body for public good. If it does not do that, for the present it may utilize only the hide. It may fix a reasonable price for the hide, and the Chamar or the Harijan concerned should pay it, deducting from it the charge for his labour. Or, if separate cash payment is fixed for labour, he may have that and hand over the hide to the State. The State should instruct its officer to see that at the time of the skinning of the carcass, the flesh and the bones which cannot be sold or utilized in any way are buried deep at a spot fixed for the purpose. This will of course show the ignorance of the State. A

prudent State can make profitable use of the flesh and the bones. If you wish to know how this can be done, I will explain that in another letter. Just now, I have only suggested the easiest and simplest way, one which can be immediately adopted, of making the Chamars give up the practice of eating beef and carrion. At present, besides the hide and the flesh, the other parts of the carcass are not utilized at all. They can be easily utilized. But since that is not relevant to my purpose in writing this letter, I have saved your time and mine by not entering into a discussion of it.

I hope you will be able to read my handwriting and will get my point. I am quite well.

Why do you feel that you have grown old? Why do you believe that the body has become old, even though you continue to work? You enforce laws on others, but yourself do not obey the laws of good health. Who should punish you for that?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5924. Also C.W. 3239. Courtesy: Mahesh P. Pattani

534. LETTER TO TOTARAM SANADHYA

January 5, 1933

BHAI TOTARAMJI,

I have seen the views expressed about the Giri family. It is a pity that we could not convert them to goodness. Do send me some time an account of your farming. I hope you are keeping well.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2539

535. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[1]

January 5, 1933

In my opinion, No. What my proposal does is to respect the prejudices of a class of temple-goers who still feel that they would be doing something wrong in associating with Harijans at the time of entering temples, and since this reform movement is not one of compulsion but conversion, my proposal is intended to respect the scruples even of one single conscientious objector. In a matter, essen-tially of religion, so far as it is possible one would avoid carrying out the will of the majority. By this compromise, such an objector can, during certain hours of the day, offer worship as he used to, before the reforms.

Underlying my proposal is undoubtedly the belief or assumption that at Guruvayur (because my compromise is for the present moment confined only to Guruvayur) a large majority of caste Hindus are in favour of admission of the Harijans to that temple.

If, when the compromise is accepted and put into practice, it is found to be otherwise, then, I admit the distinction is still maintained.

If on the other hand the majority remain with the Harijans, then it would be a mark of generous self-restraint on the part of the Harijans and the majority of temple-goers. If reformers are found to be in a minority, it would be a question for considerationas to whether the Harijans should take advantage of the compromise or not. After all it is the essence of compromise that it must be a half-way house between the two extreme positions without, of course, involving any surrender of principles by either party.

In this proposed compromise, the principle on behalf of the Harijans and the reformers is that the two should offer worship on terms of equality. The period during which the worship may be offered is not an essential part. The principle on the part of the objectors is that they cannot offer worship side by side with the Harijans without doing violence to their religious sense. This objection I promise to respect in its entirety, but only limit the period during which they can offer worship consistently with their objection.

The Bombay Chronicle, 6-1-1933

[1] The correspondent had asked Gandhiji whether the compromise regarding entry of Harijans into Guruvayur Temple (*vide* "Interview to the Associated Press of India", 2-1-1933) still retained untouchability to a certain extent.

536. TELEGRAM TO RANCHHODDAS PATWARI[1]

[On or before *January 6, 1933*][2]

Mr. Gandhi has sent a wire inviting Mr. Patwari to proceed to Yeravda Jail, with a view to convincing Mr. Gandhi if he was erring.

The Hindu, 6-1-1933

537. LETTER TO JOHN MORRIS

January 6, 1933

MY DEAR FRIEND JOHN MORRIS,

I was much touched to receive your wonderful letter and the Christmas card, both of which reached me in due time. I have always treasured the memory of that early morning visit to your hospital and the handshake. It was a great sight to see you so cheerful and happy, although a permanent invalid.[3] May you retain that inward happiness till the end of your earthly days. Mira, youmay know, is also in prison, but she is quite well and quite happy. She is doing a great deal of spinning and some very useful reading. I shall send your letter to her. I think that there will be no difficulty in her being allowed to receive it, and I know that she would be as pleased as I was to have it.

Devdas whom you saw is just now touring in India in connection with untouchability work.

From a copy: C.W. 6257. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9723

[1] The telegram was in reply to a letter from the addressee, ex-Dewan of the Morvi State, requesting Gandhiji to desist from activities likely to divide every Hindu family. Shri Patwari left for Poona in response to Gandhiji's telegram. *Vide* also "Letter to Ranchhoddas Patwari", 11-1-1933.

[2] The report was published under the date-line: "Ahmedabad, January 6".

[3] The addressee was blind.

538. LETTER TO MADELEINE ROLLAND[1]

January 6, 1933

MY DEAR MADELEINE,

It was a great joy to receive your brief letter, especially as it recalled the precious days of communion with you all. It was like meeting members of one's family.

If the events at the time of the late fast[2] were a miracle, as they were, it was purely God's work. I was but a very humble instrument in His hands. At no stage did I feel that I was doing anything. I simply could not do it, but when I said that it was God working through me, it was literally true, as far as my knowledge went.

But I observe from your great and good brother's[3] telegram to Devdas that people on the Continent had not understood the contemplated second fast. I don't wonder at it. The whole conception seems to be so new, and yet it appears to me to be the logical outcome of a prayerful search after truth. There is no prayer without fasting, and fasting which is not an integral part of prayer is mere torture of the flesh doing no good to anyone. Such fasting is an intense spiritual effort, a spiritual striving. It is a penance and a process of self-purification. True fast generates a silent unseen force which may, if it is of requisite strength and purity, pervade all mankind. I have seen its unseen pervasive effect on a small scale but sufficiently large to know that it is a mighty force. It was in this instance an inevitable step in the prosecution of the campaign against untouchability. I would have been false to myself, to my companion Kelappan and tothe cause of the Harijans, if I had faltered. At the present moment, however, it stands indefinitely postponed. Even now, perhaps, I have not made myself clear. It is difficult to do so. But I have no hesitation in saying that time will prove the correctness of the step, and in any case for me it was a call from God which I could not resist. If a further explanation is necessary, please do not hesitate to write to me.

I have been tying to find out a suitable adjective for your brother. To write of him to you as 'Mons. Rolland' or as 'your brother' sounds too prosaic and distant. To describe him as simple

[1] A copy of this letter was sent to Mirabehn.
[2] Gandhiji's fast of September 1932.
[3] Romain Rolland

'brother' is too familiar and does not convey adequately the existing relationship. The two words that come to me are '*rishi*' or 'the sage'. They are almost synonymous terms but not identical in meaning. Subject therefore to his and your approval, I am going henceforth to describe him as "the *Rishi*'. I hope that this letter will find him in full possession of his normal health. I am afraid one dare not hope for perfect health for him. He will not give it all that chance. It would mean concentration on physical health at the expense of concentration on his historical researches, and with him historical is also spiritual, or else he would not be a *rishi*. Please tell the *Rishi* that some months ago I had for the first time his volumes on Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. The reading gave me great joy and enabled me more fully than before to get a measure of his love for India.

Mira and I exchange weekly letters. She is quite happy in her rest house. She is studying Hindi, reading the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, and at the present moment she is reading Dr. Gour's work on Buddhism. She is keeping her health and making dietetic experiments. There is no restriction about her diet. She is therefore able to get what she requires. She gets also one or two papers and whatever non-political books she may need.

Mahadev Desai is with me. The two others you do not know personally. Love to you both from us both.

From a copy: C.W. 6258. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9724

539. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

January 6, 1933

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letters. I am quite sure that your work still lies there for some time at least, and when I feel otherwise, there will be no hesitation in sending an S.O.S. If you could but get a month's quiet at Woodbrooke, there will be some rest for your nerves. I can well understand what the constant rush amid all the din and noise of railway traffic must mean to you. I hope you will have the needed time to finish your book on "The Sermon on the Mount".

I had your two cables telling me that you were working in connection with the sanction for Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill. Anyway till at least the fate is known, the fast stands postponed. I am hoping that you have ceased to worry about it. There can be no anxiety about

anything that comes from God. Did I ever give you the rendering of a verse we have every day at the morning prayer? "Adversity is no adversity, nor is prosperity real prosperity. Real adversity consists in forgetting God's omnipresence, and real prosperity consists in its constant remembrance."[1] If then the fast comes from God, where is there the slightest cause for anxiety?

Yes, I have had wonderful letters often from Esther, and she was enthusiastic over the news that you were to settle at least for the time being at Woodbrooke.

I hope that improvement in your brother's condition has continued. I shall look forward to your next letter bringing me still better news of him.

Mira writes to me every week and has from me a weekly letter. I shall send your love to her when I write her next. I hope I shall not forget it as I do so often forget such things.

With love from us all,

From a photostat: G.N. 1306

540. LETTER TO MRS. HUNTER[2]

January 6, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I thank you for your letter of the 8th December last, and for telling me that you had sent to the Anti-untouchability Committee a cheque for £42-0-3.[3]

Please convey my thanks to all the English and other friends. I have just heard from the Committee that they duly received your cheque. I hope you have had a proper receipt from them.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1532

[1] *Vide* "*Ashram Bhajanavali*", 15-12-1930.
[2] Addressee's name is supplied from the G.N. Register.
[3] *Vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 28-12-1932.

541. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

January 7, 1933

Of late several Congressmen have been to me and told me that there is much suppressed talk among them about my action in setting up an agitation against untouchability from within the prison walls and that they do not know whether to prosecute civil disobedience or to take an active part in the campaign against untouchability. I do not wonder at the question. All I have been able to tell these questioners is this:

'For me there is nothing inconsistent in my conduct. It would be foolish, if not sinful, for me if I did not use all the talents that my Master has given me, whenever I have the opportunity for their use. I have used all the talents, I have for civil disobedience. I found that I had also talents for the service of Harijans which I could use, and I am using them. In doing so I have abated nothing from my existing dharma or obligation. I have added service of the untouchables to it. I had therefore no question before me of making a choice. With those who are outside prison walls, the case, I know, is different. Those who are civil resisters have to decide whether to continue civil disobedience or to take up anti-untouchability work. This is a question I cannot decide for them. I am constitutionally unfit, having entered the prison gates, to guide the movement of civil disobedience in any shape or form. And even if I thought otherwise, I must not guide it as I have bound myself in honour not to take advantage of the considerable latitude given to me regarding untouchability by directly or indirectly and secretly or openly guiding the movement. Everyone therefore has to take his or her decision without reference to me.'

Having adopted this attitude, I have refused to guide even my wife and my son. My appeal for the removal of untouchability lies to every caste Hindu, be he a Congressman or other. For the resolution of Bombay arrived at during the Fast Week pledges the honour of every Hindu to remove untouchability, so far as he or she is personally concerned and to induce his or her neighbours to do likewise. The first part is a mere mental performance accompanied by personal conduct wherever corresponding action is called for. The second, that is, the propaganda part, requires everyone to make the choice between propaganda and his or her present work, where the former cannot be added to the latter.

Congressmen who are civil resisters are undoubtedly presented with a conundrum; but that would be only if they would make the vain effort of reading my mind. I think I have made it clear that I have no mind whatsoever for them. When I decided to conduct the untouchability campaign from within the prison, I had not civil resisters in my mind as such, but I had the whole of Hindu society. If that whole fails to respond, civil resisters alone cannot remove the age-long evil. But a civil resister may well feel a special call for doing untouchability work, or, he or she may think that there is no disciplined resistance left in him or her, or that the spirit of resistance is played out, or even that there is no such thing as civil resistance and that all resistance is necessarily uncivil or incivil.

It is obvious that I can offer no useful guidance in the consideration of these problems. These are all matters for those who are outside to judge. If many are filled with doubts, let them confer together and come to a decision as to the proper course to take. Those who have no doubts may be reminded of the celebrated Sanskrit verse[1] whose exact equivalent perhaps is to be found in the equallycelebrated English proverb, "Much wants more and loses all".

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9694

542. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

January 7, 1933

SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT
HOME DEPARTMENT, BOMBAY

DEAR SIR,

I feel the need of issuing the accompanying statement[2] to the Press. In my opinion it is well within the limits of the Government of India decision. But the Government may think otherwise. Before issuing the statement I would like to ascertain the view that they take of

[1] Presumably,
"यो घरवाणि परित यज य अघुवं परिषेवते ।
घुरवाुण तस्थ नश्यन्ति अघुनं नषटमेव च ॥"
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

the matter. I shall be thankful for an early reply.

As I know that there is considerable confusion in the public mind, I am anxious to let them know clearly that they must not look to me for guidance in the choice between civil disobedience and untouchability work. I feel that I owe this much to them.

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(8), Pt. I, p. 3

543. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS

January 7, 1933

DEAR BABU BHAGWANDAS,

I cannot tell you what a joy it was to have you with me for so many days. It was all so unexpected and therefore a double pleasure.

I got the letter you left with Mahadev. I am struggling through the book, if only for your sake, but I have no notion when I shall be able to finish it. I feel like a thief when I steal a singleminute for any other work than the untouchability business, because there hardly is a day when I have no arrears with reference to it. Therefore if you do not have anything from me about the book for some time, you will now know the reason for my silence, and if I am ever able to give you my opinion of the book, it won't be for publication, for I may send out nothing apart from untouchability without the permission of the Government.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BHAGWANDAS
SEVASHRAM, BENARES CANTONMENT

From a microfilm: S.N. 19184

544. LETTER TO S. SALIVATI

January 7, 1933

MY DEAR SALIVATI[1],

I have your letter[2]. The question of dividing the Hindu community, as you have seen, has already been dealt with by me. I have not yet had the time to read Mr. Iyer's address. As soon as I do, if I have anything to say, I will tell you. You should secure a proper legal opinion on the points discussed by you. Of course, I shall make no use of Sir Chimanlal's opinion.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. SALIVATI
C/O THOS COOK & SON, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 19186

545. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRA RAO

January 7, 1933

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRA,

I had your two letters. I have gone through your scheme. You should give the names of the Managing Board with their qualifications for bringing the scheme to a successful end. In the midst of tremendous pressure, I have just hurriedly glanced through it and noticed the omission. But there is something lacking about the whole thing. I have not been able sufficiently to concentrate my mind upon it to reduce to words what is lacking. A scheme has to be so framed as to carry conviction on the very first reading of it. This does not. Perhaps the business friends would immediately spot what it is that is worrying me.

[1]Correspondent of *The Hindu*

[2]Dated January 3, 1933, and signed Salivatiswaram. It read: "I had two hours' discussion with Sir Chimanlal Setalvad this afternoon on the temple-entry question. When I met him on Friday last, he was in full agreement with Mr. T. R. Ramachandra Iyer. Today after going through justice Ramesam's judgment he is of the view that the Zamorin has no case. The cry that religion is in danger is absurd when three days' entry into the temple is permitted according to the usages and custom. His argument is that if three days' entry is allowed and constitutes no danger to religion, why not 30 days? The trustees can have purification ceremony everyday if they want" (S.N. 19157).

As to the sanatanists' quotations from my writings, the less said the better. Many of them are distortions, some of them are half-quotations, and some are so contrary to what I have written as to amount to libel. But you or any friend who would answer these things must go to the pages of *Young India* and verify the quotations. I could not do so, because I have no will for it, as I know what those quotations are, and if I have the will, I have not the time. The quotation you have sent me has some resemblance to the original writing.

As regards the charges against you, I cannot understand your sensitiveness. Why do you worry if there is no truth whatsoever in those charges? You must trust to time to clear away all misunderstandings and to right every wrong conceivable. Time always runs against wrong and in favour of right.

I have secured now pure cow ghee, and I have already begun the trial of your remedy from yesterday.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO
C/O THE SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 19188

546. LETTER TO NARGIS CAPTAIN

January 7, 1933

I have preserved your letter of 26th December so as to remind me that I had to prepare the statement you wanted. But now that I have issued my appeal[1] to the sanatanists and the previous appeal[2], do you think it is still necessary to give the statement? If you do, I will have to address a letter to you which you will be free to publish, because apart from your letter, I have no correspondence raising the difficulty that you have, and I don't want to issue a statement which may not be needed by the general public. But you are not going to waive the statement in order to save my time and energy. If it is needed, the energy for it will be there.

NARGISBEN

From a microfilm: S.N. 19187

[1] *Vide* "Appeal to Sanatanists", 4-1-1933.
[2] Presumably "Statement on Untouchability-XIII"; *vide* 30-12-1932.

547. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

January 7, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. I hope you got the copy of Dr. Roy's letter[1]. It was, by mistake, omitted from the letter[2] with which the copy had to go. When we meet I would love to give you satisfaction with reference to the position I took up in my letter[3] to Dr. Roy.

I think it will be better not to take up any special agitation about Kashi Vishwanath[4] just yet. The general effort for temple-entry by way of cultivating public opinion should certainly go on, but no special effort for any particular temple just yet.

From a microfilm: S.N. 19185

548. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

January 7, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

You are as sensitive and obstinate in nursing resentment as you are quick to get angry. How long should a daughter nurse resentment against her father? Her love will melt away her pride. How long do you intend to nurse your resentment? Probably you repented immediately after writing the letter.[5] Do you know that by writing that note you have sprinkled salt on my wound, so to say? But probably I know you better than you do yourself. At first I felt extremely un-happy. But afterwards laughed. You are not as bad as you seem to be in your letter[6]. I immediately reassured myself that, as you had sulked for some time once before and afterwards, felt unhappy for that, so you would feel sorry this time, too, and apologize. If I was wrong in

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Dr. B. C. Roy", 12-12-1932.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 15/16-12-1932.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. B. C. Roy", 15-12-1932.

[4] Temple in Banaras

[5] Gandhiji's letter to the addressee, dated December 25, 1932, had offended her. She had got it on her return to Ahmedabad from her visit to Gandhiji and written back to say that she would never write to him again.

[6] Presumably the one to which Gandhiji had replied on December 25, 1932

thinking so, well I should like you to apologize now. You may then write any kind of letters. I had rebuked you only for nursing hatred in your heart. However, so long as it is there, you can relieve yourself of it only before me. And if I don't show your shortcomings to you, who else will? So long as the poison of hatred is there in your heart, you must let me drink it. Probably you do not think that it is poison. Rarely does a person know his or her own nature. I want you to know yours and wake up.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10320

549. A LETTER

January 7, 1933

There is also one more thing about all this unnecessary travelling. Even the inmates of the Ashram do not show sincere love of simplicity. This is not only your defect. Even some of the inmates who have been longer in the Ashram than you are not free from it. Nevertheless, I do wish to explain to those who will listen to me that it is our duty to live as the poorest among the poor do. We should not spend two pice where we can do with one and we should take whatever risks this may involve. We should, therefore, avoid travelling as far as possible and renounce as many facilities and conveniences as we can. We should practise such strict economy not only in money matters but also in our activities. We should be miserly even in our speech and thinking. Only then shall we be able to follow truth and ahimsa and observe *brahmacharya*. Try and overcome this deficiency in you. Do not answer me, nor think in your mind, that A, B and C in the Ashram spend more than you do. The path of dharma is for him who chooses to follow it.

And now for the question which you have asked. If we measure our children from our experience of the strength of our own passions, we shall never succeed in our aim. We did not have the benefit of the environment which, learning from our own experience, we have created for the children. We should have faith that it is bound to produce an effect on them. We need not worry if we see no such effect immediately. It may be that in making this experiment we shall sacrifice our own children. Still we should not lose faith. Our efforts will be rewarded with success only if we continue the experiment as

long as we do not see any error in it. The path is like the flame of the sacrificial fire and, therefore, we should offer ourselves and our children as oblation in it with a smiling face. Unless we act thus in all spheres of our activities, we shall not get a vision of perfect truth, ahimsa or *brahmacharya*, or we shall arrive at the conclusion that one or both of those principles are wrong. There are a good many schools of thought which regard ahimsa as a wrong ideal, and we see before our very eyes how the numbers of those who look upon *brahmacharya* as a sin keep growing. If, despite that, we wish todemonstrate that the ideal of *brahmacharya* is the right one and that those who oppose it are mistaken, we shall have to learn to sacrifice a boy like . . .[1] and a girl like . . .[2] We cannot sacrifice the children of others. We should give that privilege to our own children. But you say that our children, too, can be regarded to have passed the test only if they remain above the waves when they are thrown into the sea of life outside. I agree with you, and that is why we have made the Ashram an arm of that sea. If we do not sink in it, we can hope to be able to swim even in the great ocean of life.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 22-3

550. LETTER TO NANALAL K. JASANI

January 7, 1933

BHAI NANALAL,

I sent you a telegram in reply to your letter. I also waited for you, but you did not come. Firmness is necessary in dealing with Prabhahankar. We shall be able to manage all the others provided, the two brothers stick to the arrangement arrived at. Prabhashankar's demand seems to be quite new to me. I am sure that the demand can never be accepted. I have not the least doubt that the arrangements fully secured the interests of Ratilal or Champa.

Apart from that trouble, there is another which has come today and is more serious. Bhai Khimchand has practically served a notice. It seems that Chhaganlal had sent for him. He knows that I greatly distrust him. He now writes and says that he has decided to join in the

[1] The names are omitted in the source.
[2] *ibid*

discussions and that he disagrees with the proposed arrangement. I have written to him strongly and advised him not to interfere in this affair, but there is little chance that he will listen to me. In my letter to Chhaganlal I have urged upon him not to associate with Khimchand, and have also told him that he might see me again if he is dissatisfied in any way. I have asked him also to stick to the arrangement, and I am hopeful that he will be amenable. You or Ratubhai should try and see if you can persuade him. Also see Khimchand if possible. Show this letter to Ratubhai and Maganlal, as I am not writing to them separately. Be firm in dealingwith Khimchand also. If even then some difficulties arise, we shall face them. There will be more trouble if we lose the co-operation of both. Keep me informed. Ask Maganlal also to write to me. I shall drop postcards to him and to Ratubhai if I get time.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I got your card. Come on Tuesday. Khimchand seems to have come round. If he is sincere, we shall have one problem less.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9627

551. LETTER TO FULCHAND B. SHAH

January 7, 1933

BHAI FULCHAND,

I hope you had received the letter which I wrote to you in reply to yours. I had sent a long reply[1] to Balwant Sinha, but he does not seem to have received it. I do not remember his questions. If he has still not received my letter, he may ask the questions[2] again. Haribhau must not undertake a fast. The entire question will be solved in a few days. Prithuraj had come and seen me. He told me that all of you were well. Chhaganlal Joshi is with me now.

Blessings to all from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9626. Courtesy: Chandrakant F. Shah

[1]This is not traceable.

[2]Balwant Sinha in his book *Bapuki Chhayame*, p. 41, explains that he sent again a copy of his questions; for Gandhiji's answers, *vide* "Letter to Balwant Sinha", 5-9-1933.

552. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 7, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter and Prema's, and also those of the others. My reply[1] to Prema is enclosed. I hope that she has realized her foolishness.

What food do you eat now? What was the effect of *jowar* porridge and *rotlas* of *jowar* and *bajri*? From where do you get the ghee?

Is there any relief in the harassment by the Chharas? Does anybody visit them?

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

553. LETTER TO DHARMADEV

January 7, 1933

I like your letter immensely. You are quite right in saying that no one can find what my decisive opinion on varnashrama dharma is from all my articles published so far on the subject. The reason is that in each article I express the opinion I had reached at the time.

Now I have certainly arrived at a more definite opinion and possibly the picture seems clearer. I am writing thus vaguely because until I have put into writing my views up to date, things will not be clear to me. I intend to write an article[2] on varnashrama in connection with this agitation when I have some time.

[From Hindi]

Vishvajyoti, October 1959

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 7-1-1933.

[2] An article under the title "Confusing the Issue" appeared in *Harijan*, 4-3-1933.

554. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

January 7, 1933

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

A nice long letter from you has arrived after a long interval. Let me point out your fault which is not the one you regard as such. Your fault lies in being too greedy. "Bapu is working for the Harijans, so I must do that too." Keep away from what Bapu has taken up and stick to what you were already doing. That too was service and consumed all your time. "Better one's own duty, bereft of merit, than another's well-performed."[1] You should be satisfied with what-ever falls to your lot. Greed even for good works is to be eschewed. "Excess is to be avoided in every matter." You can give up Harijan service even now. You wish to work for your "Bapu", don't you? Bapu will be fully satisfied with khadi work alone. Your attempt to do both jobs will deprive you of both as the body will be unable to stand the strain. Khadi work involves sufficient Harijan service; be content with this. You have to be above attachment. Greed is another name for attachment, this is my reading. If you do not concur, forget it. "Do as you wish." As you always do good you can never come to grief. God is ever with you, He will never forsake you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1695

555. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

January 8, 1933

DEAR SATISBABU,

Please read my letter to Hemprabha very carefully. It probably applies to you just as well as to her. I know your passion for doing all that I am doing, but there must be a limit somewhere. If I am doing many things, the reason is that so many forces combine to enable me to handle them. Not only so, I merely seem to bedoing them. In reality, it is Truth as God working through me. In that case, you are in no way called upon to undertake all my activities unless there is a

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 35

definite clear call, and if there is such a call, you will not have to force your way to the work. It will come to you; and the way will be clear in front of you. But all this is by way of caution. You will do exactly as you like.

Now, about the Mandali. I do not like the description of the members. Instead of saying that they hold my views on religion and politics in reverence, it would be much better to state exactly the things that they approve. A general endorsement for a large body of men and women has no value. If each were to be examined separately as to what they hold in reverence and what they will endeavour to put into practice, the answer would be different. The first sentence is all-sufficing that the members want to serve the Harijans and rouse a sense of self-respect in them. You may define the scope of service beyond rousing a sense of self-respect in them. You can say what they will exactly do, and if they are to confine their work to the service of Harijans, then it is better to say that, and nothing more. The field is vast enough to occupy several thousand workers all the hours of the day for a number of years.

Then, again, why form any Mandali at all? You say that after all it is a branch of the Pratishthan. If that be so, it is cumbrous to have a new name and a constitution. The less pretentiousness there is, the better for the work in hand.

With love,

BAPU

SJT. SATISBABU
15 COLLEGE SQUARE, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 1623; also S.N. 19192

556. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

January 8, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

In reply to your letter of the 4th, I sent you a telegram yesterday. I have revived my suggestion that the English edition at least should be published in Poona, and it can be published, not simultaneously with the Hindi, but on Fridays, if the Hindi is published on Mondays. The English edition may then be issued under my supervision, and would take in as much as may be necessary from the

Hindi edition. All the facts and figures, reports and the like will be taken from the Hindi, and there will be original things also in it. In that case, you need not send anybody from there, if there is no one available. I fancy that I shall be able to get a local man, or more, to do the work.

I discussed this thing with Sjt. Thakkar yesterday and he approves of the idea. I then suggested that he should discuss it with you, but he said it would cause delay and that, therefore, I should transmit my views to you by the post. If you heartily approve of the idea, you may pursue it further, and may even come down here, if you think it necessary to discuss it. For this purpose you need not delay the Hindi edition. The English may come a week or two later.

I enclose herewith a telegram and a letter received from Lala Shamlal. I enclose also a copy of my reply[1].

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

C.W. 7917. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

557. LETTER TO SHAMLAL

January 8, 1933

MY DEAR LALA SHAMLAL,

I have your letter[2]. I have forwarded it to Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla. He can render very little assistance on the technical side. I do not know what he can do on the financial side.

I am also writing to Sjt. Shankerlal Banker.

It should be possible to provide you with an expert, but you won't get the work that you want out of an expert sent from outside the Punjab; and there seems to me to be something incongruous for the Punjab, where hand-spinning and hand-weaving are most known, to have to go out in search of an expert in these matters, and he being

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] Dated January 8, 1933, which read: "Hissar District in the Punjab has been suffering from a devastating famine. . . . Harijans are suffering most. . . . approaching you in the interests of Harijans to kindly instruct the All-India Spinners' Association to provide an expert for advising the spinners in the various centres as well as to make arrangements for the disposal of the yarn and start weaving operations in new centres" (S.N. 19155).

unfamiliar would find it very difficult to locate the spots where weaving operations may be started. An outside expert will be able only to examine and test wheels, looms and their products, but from your letter I gather that you want an organizer. I do not know a better organizer than yourself. But it is high time that the Punjab produced technical experts.

All this notwithstanding, I am sending a copy of your letter and my reply to Sjt. Shankerlal Banker and I have no doubt that he will do whatever is possible.

I should have thought that Harijans were least affected by famines, not being themselves agriculturists.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

LALA SHAMLAL
ADVOCATE
LAHORE

From a photostat: G.N. 1282; also S.N. 19190

558. LETTER TO DR. HIRALAL SHARMA

January 8, 1933

DEAR DR. SHARMA,

Amtussalaam tells me you are likely to pass through Sabarmati in the near future. I would like you to stay for a few months in the Ashram and make your experiments and at the same time observe if the Ashram-life suits you and you, the Ashram. If you cannot do this, stay, if you can, for a few days for Amtul Salaam's treatment. She has great faith in you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 15

559. LETTER TO M. M. ANANTA RAU

January 8, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 5th instant. I hope you have received my previous letter[1] enclosing a copy of the one that went previous to that.

Can you supply me with a list of all the *Agamas* in vogue in the South? Are they available in translations?

I am quite aware of the verse you have quoted, but you are begging the question by regarding the so-called untouchables as outside the four divisions. There is no such thing as a fifth division. The burden lies on those who object to the admission of the so-called untouchables to show that they are untouchables in accordance with the Shastras; and my objection about the definition of Shastras and their interpretation still stands.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

C.W. 9567. Courtesy: Government of Mysore

560. LETTER TO N. NARAYAN MURTHI[2]

January 8, 1933

MY DEAR NARAYAN MURTHI[3],

I thank you for your letter. I am glad that the Sree Raghunath Swami Temple of Berhampore is now really open to Harijans.

I take it that you are carrying on an agitation amongst Harijans for self-reform and for conforming to the common requisites of temple-entry—avoidance of beef and carrion, the taking of daily ablutions and the wearing of clean clothes.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. NARAYAN MURTHI
THE BHARATI MANDALI
BERHAMPORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 19202

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. M. Ananta Rau", 5-1-1933.

[2] The letter was in reply to the addressee's dated December 23, 1932 (S.N. 18790).

[3] Managing Editor, the *Bharathi Patrika*, a Telugu daily

561. LETTER TO S. MAHALINGA IYER

January 8, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. I refer you to the extract[2] I have published in the Press regarding the entry of *avarnas* on the Karthigai Ekadasi day.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. MAHALINGA IYER
TOWN HIGH SCHOOL ROAD, KUMBAKONAM

From a microfilm: S.N. 19201

562. LETTER TO G. V. KETKAR

January 8, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your postcard. I shall go through your essay as soon as I get the time and write to you again if there is anything to say.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. V. KETKAR
PLEADER, NASIK CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 19198

[1]Dated January 1, 1933, which read: "In connection with the compromise proposals . . . permitting the entry of *avarnas* into the Guruvayur Temple, it appears it has been reported to you that the *avarni* classes have been allowed entry into the temple as of right on the Karthigai Ekadasi Day. I beg to bring to your notice that the report is incorrect, in view of the statement of the hereditary Chief Priest of the temple, Narayanan Nambudiripad" (S.N. 19161).

[2]*Vide* "Letter to the Zamorin of Calicut", 1-1-1933.

563. LETTER TO P. V. SESHU AIYAR

January 8, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter[1]. Whilst your proposals are good in themselves, the propaganda for temple-entry has to go on side by side with the work suggested by you.

I am glad you wrote[2] to Sjt. Kelappan.

It was a pleasure to see your daughter with you. Please give her my regards.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. V. SESHU AIYER
PERUVAMBA
PALGHAT

From a microfilm: S.N. 19159

564. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

January 8, 1933

MY DEAR C. R.,

You are silent, but I know that means overwork. Here is a copy of Rao Bahadur Seshu Aiyar's letter. There is much in his suggestions which I like. I have simply sent him an acknowledgment[3] saying that temple-entry propaganda should go side by side with the working of his suggestions wherever such work is feasible.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19197

[1]Dated January 3, 1933, in which the addressee had proposed that those who had favoured temple-entry, if they owned tanks and wells, should open them to the Harijans and referendum on equal treatment to Harijans in respect of use of tanks, wells, temples, etc., be taken in villages (S.N. 19158)

[2]On January 3, 1933

[3]*Vide* the preceding item.

565. LETTER TO K. MADHAVAN NAIR

January 8, 1933

MY DEAR MADHAVAN,

I send you herewith a copy of Rao Bahadur Seshu Aiyar's letter for your consideration and remarks if you have any to offer.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19195

566. LETTER TO PROMODE BIHARI MATHUR

January 8, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. The practice you mention is by no means common all over India, but the remedy is surely in the hands of the householders. If they have got rid of the false notions of untouchability, they would dismiss a careless sweeper and do sweeping themselves. He can interfere with a new man coming, but he dare not prevent the householder himself from doing his own cleaning. The evil is of our own creation and therefore we can deal with it without any difficulty.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. PROMODE BIHARI MATHUR
KANUNGOYAN STREET, ALIGARH (U.P.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 19194

567. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

January 8, 1933

BHAISHRI MAVALANKAR,

I got both your letters. I certainly did not want you to spend so much of your time in replying. I had merely forwarded[2] to you the letter which I had received. But your letter has certainly thrown more light on the problem.

[1]Dated January 2, 1933 (S.N 19135).
[2]*Vide* "Letter to G. V. mavalankar", 23-12-1932.

I have nothing to write about the Chharas. Inform me by and by whether the step you have taken proves sufficient.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1235

568. LETTER TO DUDABHAI M. DAFDA

January 8, 1933

BHAI DUDABHAI,

I think we ought to get Lakshmi[1] married now. She gets frequent fainting fits and I believe they suggest marriage. Have a talk with her about this and then write to me. How are you getting on? How many pupils attend the school? Write to me occasionally.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3245

569. LETTER TO PARMANANDA K. KAPADIA

January 8, 1933

The explanation about Guruvayur is contained in your own statement. It is literally true that the issue is an offshoot of the withdrawal of the Cabinet decision. Ever since I came to India, I have been impressing on people the importance of a pledge, but I see that it is not readily accepted even by persons like you. At the time of the withdrawal of the decision, a pledge was taken in the name of the people under the leadership of a great man like Malaviyaji. Can we now forget the pledge even for a moment and still hope to win swaraj? People should now act with a greater sense of urgency for the removal of untouchability than they thought it necessary to do for the withdrawal of the decision. It would not matter if they do not succeed immediately. But the tempo of this campaign should be faster than that of the movement for the withdrawal of the decision. Why do you

[1]Addressee's daughter whom Gandhiji had adopted and brought up in the Ashram

believe that swaraj is something apart from the eradication of untouchability? Swaraj is not like a straight rod. It is rather like a banyan tree. The latter has innumerable branches each of which is as important for the tree as the original trunk. Feeding any of them means feeding the tree. Nobody can lay down a rule as to which of the branches should be fed when. Circumstances determine that.

Kelappan's mistake was a very small one. If, after having persuaded him to give up his fast, I had abandoned him, I am sure all of you would have left me in the end. Anybody who forsakes an humble co-worker at a difficult hour is a man of straw.

` Your other questions can be convincingly answered, but they lie outside the limits of my present freedom. If I am alive, I will explain them some other time. My fasts never spring from despair or frustration. They have their source in my undying optimism and intense faith. Nor are they as cheap as you think. If the last fast had not been postponed, I would have violated dharma. But I cannot explain all this fully just now. The fact is that I am making my experiment in the quest of truth along a new line altogether. New ideas, therefore, occur to me at every step—they are new even to me—and are placed before the nation. How can all of them be understood by the people immediately? And I also cannot explainthem freely. But truth does not require many words to explain it–if in fact it requires any. It has the power of spreading by itself, like the fragrance of a flower. The difference between the two is that fragrance disappears as quickly as it spreads, whereas truth continues to spread indefinitely and with even greater speed. Since we cannot measure that speed, we make the mistake of believing that truth does not spread. You should, therefore, have patience and faith and never give way to despair.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 27-9

570. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI AND BENARSILAL BAJAJ

January 8, 1933

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your letter. Maganlal[1] must have taught you sufficiently well how to make a letter interesting. Should I now teach it all over again? A person who desires to make his letters interesting should himelf be interested in everything round him, human beings, other

[1]Maganlal Gandhi, addressee's father

creatures, trees, earth and sky. He should also have an interest in writing the letter to the man or the woman to whom it is addressed. If you had such interest, you would be making new discoveries every day. You can describe your home, the street, the work which the persons whom you meet do, the members of your family, your thoughts, the letters which you receive, animals, birds and hundreds of things like that. Mirabehn writes to me every week, and no letter of hers is shorter than ten pages. And remember, she is in jail. Do you understand now [how to write interesting letters]?

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. BENARSI,

What is the correct name, 'lal' or 'das'? I see Jamnalalji from time to time. I will convey your message to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9151

571. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

January 8, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

Don't be altogether childish.

Do not forget that you have two duties. One duty is to pour out your heart to me. But one cannot do that duty mechanically. If the spring in your heart has dried up, what can you do ? The other duty is to give a report of your work. That certainly can be done mechanically. Do that duty at any rate.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10321

572. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

January 8, 1933

BHAI BHAGWANJI,

I got your letter. Though you usually write frankly, your postcard this time is not frank enough. You seem to believe that Manibhai is a bad man. If that is so, you should state it plainly. I wrote[1] to you

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Bhagwanji A. Mehta", 29-12-1932.

and told you that I did not know even that Manilal had complained. Do you have personal knowledge of his having complained? If you have it, your first duty as a gentleman and as a relation was to write to him. I am willing to write to him if you give me some evidence of his misdeeds. Apart from that, I don't know what to say about your suggestion as to whom I should put up with. I do not think that I am so good a man that I should never put up with a person whom the people believe to be a bad man. I myself am a bad man, and still I live in my house. Would it be proper for me, then, if I try to sit in judgment over others? Moreover, how can a man, who daily wanders from place to place and eats and sleeps at other people's places, afford to be too particular about the place where he puts up. I, therefore, follow one rule, namely, to regard all strangers as my kith and kin. My own relations remain so inany case. I do not agree with the principle, if you have laid down any such for yourself, that one must not lodge a criminal complaint against one's relations, no matter what wicked things they do, but one may do so against strangers. However that may be, I ought to tell you, as I told Khimchand some months ago, that I have not the least trust in him. You may also know that Manilal is not the cause of my distrust. It is Khimchand's own letters one after another which have increased my distrust of him. You may see now how much worry and trouble you have created for me. And still you ask for forgiveness, but I don't think, you expect to receive it. But you are free to do whatever you like and so are safe.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5816. Also C.W. 3039. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

573. LETTER TO VIMALCHANDRA V. DESAI

January 8, 1933

CHI. NANU,

I was very glad to get your letter. Write such letters often. It would be better if you write with pen and ink.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5758. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

574. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

January 8, 1933

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

I got your letter and the leaflet. Your interpretation of the dream is all right. We have so many things which are real and true that we need little help from anything seen in a dream.

I am waiting for news of your marriage. Chhaganbhai is with us at present. Jamnalalji also is in this jail, though not with me. He is in excellent health.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6543

575. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 8, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your large packet.

After reading Prema's letter, I feel that we should get Lakshmi married immediately. I have written to Lakshmidas and told him that, if Marulia has changed his mind, he has a right to do so. I think it will also be good if Prema writes to him and tells him about the special circumstances of Lakshmi. If Marulia has changed his mind, we will think what to do.

Post the accompanying letter[1] to Dudabhai. And please send me his address.

Read the letter to Liladhar and then pass it on to him. Take him back if he agrees to behave well. I leave the matter entirely to your decision. I assume that, if Liladhar comes to live in the Ashram, you will entrust him with some work.

Ask the doctor why Kusum's injection turned septic. How long will she have to take the injections?

I had agreed with what you had written about Bhikhabhai and Balwant. I, therefore, did not say anything in reply. Thus the reason was not that I had any doubt in my mind.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dudabhai M. Dafda", 8-1-1933.

There is still no letter regarding Amina's children.

I am expecting Pyare Ali's letter in a day or two.[1]

Please let the Muslim lady who has come from Ajmer stay there for the present. Write to Pyare Ali about her. Read out our rules to her. She may stay there as long as she is ready to observe them. Tell her that, meanwhile, we are inquiring about other places where she can stay. If there is an institution for Muslim women in Ahmedabad itself, you should try to get her admitted there. Know from her all details about her, whether or not she has been educated, where she was brought up, etc.

Such cases will turn up again and again. Even if, instead of becoming what we intend it to be, the Ashram becomes only a place of refuge, we shall not lose heart. I am not sure if, by rejecting such persons who throw themselves on us, we would not be committing violence. But in taking any decision in this matter, we should of course take into account our capacity, our rules, our aim, etc. After considering all these factors, do what you think best. There is no absolute dharma in this matter. If in the last resort we have to be guided by the principles of truth and non-violence in all that we do, we must sometimes relax the rules framed by ourselves. But the final decision will be entirely yours. Treat my opinions and sermons as so much weaving of words. You may use them only for coming to your own decisions.

Prabhudas can leave Almora. We should draw a lesson from this, that the place can be looked after even if nobody stays there. And in any case the boys are there. I am sure the expenditure has come down now. I am glad that, while he is in his present very unsettled state of mind, he lives at Wardha. And, moreover, he will be marrying shortly. Let him, therefore, remain at Wardha so long as the expenditure is not excessive.

I understand what you say about a well near the river bed. I know Malik's[2] goodness. Convey my *vandemataram* to him and

[1]The following was added at this point by Mahadev Desai before the letter was despatched: "Pyare Ali's reply was received today. He says that he cannot keep the children. Now discuss the matter with Qureshi. Bapu thinks that for the present the best thing would be that they should accompany Aminabehn daily to Sharda Mandir."

[2]City Engineer, Ahmedabad Municipality

thank him on my behalf. Soniramji[1] had written to me and promised to pay up to Rs. 5,000 towards the cost of a well. It is possible that I do not remember the Figure correctly, but I have no doubt about the promise itself. Write to him, therefore, for the money required for the well. He may send the actual amount spent or the amount which he had promised.

Do what you think proper about Hariyomal. I think that we have no choice but to let him stay as often as he comes. What you say about him is quite right, of course. But how can we reject him if he is so importunate?

BAPU

[PS.]

Do you still receive the annual remittance for Mirabehn? If you do, let me know what the amount is.

[From Gujarati]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

576. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 8, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

Send again, with anybody who may be coming here, a piece of leather for repairing the soles of the sandals. There is no hurry. I hope Prema has calmed down.

Teach that lady, M. Edith, everything, if she agrees to learn. Read my letter to her.

If you have heard anything regarding the Chharas, please let me know.

BAPU

[PS.]

There are in all 26 letters, tied together.

[From Gujarati]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

[1]Businessman from Rangoon, a khadi worker

577. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

January 8, 1933

CHI. VALJI,

I got your letter. I do not doubt that a referendum would result in your favour. Have I ever expressed such a doubt? My objection is not of that kind. I do not want to have my opinion[1] put before the people for their judgment. It is above their opinion. The real question is what you can give to the people. Your pen should produce something unique which would still be popular. This is not beyond your capacity. If, however, you are not convinced of this, why don't you print it? It can never be my wish that you must respect my view.

Has your health improved? Has the air of that place agreed with all of you? Give me a short account of your experience there.

I have asked Chhaganlal to go through your book.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. C.W. 7445. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

578. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

January 8, 1933

BOYS AND GIRLS,

I got your letter. One can say that there is a rush for admission. Try to acquire the art of learning even if you have no teacher. Increase your knowledge whenever you can learn it yourself. After thinking, write to me what you can all study by yourselves and what each boy or girl wants to study.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

[1]About *Ishucharita*; *vide* "Letter to Valji G. Desai", 19-10-1932.

579. LETTER TO HAMID QURESHI

January 8, 1933

CHI. HAMID,

I have your letter. By now you should be all right. You must improve your handwriting.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10803. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

580. LETTER TO SULTANA QURESHI

January 8, 1933

CHI. SULTANA,

You have written a nice letter indeed. Why are you making no progress in the school work?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10824. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

581. LETTER TO VIMAL KISHORE MEHROTRA

January 8, 1933

CHI. VIMAL[1],

Here is some coloured paper for you. I got your letter, it is good. Children like you do not need any rice. But you are used to it and if you cannot give it up, you may certainly eat it. But eat only a little quantity.

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 3423. Courtesy: Parashuram Mehrotra. Also G.N. 6101

[1]Son of Parashuram Mehrotra

582. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 8, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. Very well, henceforth I shall never ask you to follow Narandas's advice. How fine it would be if you became well by going away somewhere! Stick to milk and fruit. You have no need to take *roti* and rice. Take plenty of rest. You do have warm clothes, I hope. I am writing[1] to the doctor. It would be to my liking even if he for your sake delays leaving. Why don't you write anything about Kudsia these days? How is she keeping now? May God make you well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 270

583. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

January 8, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

You are right. I do commit many mistakes. I get absolutely no time for reading. Letters to you and Zohra are the only [Urdu] lessons I have. What can I do? That I do at least this much is something. Must a sick person like you attend a wedding ? Wouldn't the wedding have taken place if you had kept away? What sort of justice is that even sick people must perforce attend weddings? Anyway, I hope you are better now. What does '*tuk*' mean in that *bhajan*? Our respects to Father and Mother. There is no letter from Hamida yet.[2] Sohaila must be all right. Kamal Miyan must be flourishing. I acknowledge your kiss. I am treasuring them all. My kiss to Kamal and to you, too, if you wish.

Blessings from

From a photostat of the Urdu and Gujarati: S.N. 9662

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Hiralal Sharma", 8-1-1933.

[2] In the source, up to this the letter is in Urdu; what follows is in Gujarati.

584. LETTER TO DR. MOHAMMAD ALAM

January 9, 1933

DEAR DR. ALAM,

I had your letter. God be thanked that you are steadily improving under Dr. Bidhan's kind care. May you be completely restored.

We all often think and talk about you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 26

585. LETTER TO NIRMALA B. MASHRUWALA

January 9, 1933

CHI. NIRMALA,

I got your letter. I had received the extract from Gomati's letter which you had sent to me. But I have not yet heard from Gomati herself. If she has not written to me, ask her to write. If you can write to Kishorelal immediately, tell him that I have written a postcard to him today. It is only about the use of fenugreek seeds and the name 'Sukruta'. I hope you received my previous letter[1]. It contained messages for Kishorelal and Gomati. You need not, out of compassion for me, refrain from writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1007. Courtesy: Nirmala Shroff

586. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

January 9, 1933

BHAI MUNSHI,

I have preserved your letter of the 23rd. Are you better now? What treatment is being given to you there? Does your diet include fruits?

Others who do not know me may believe, but how can you

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Nirmala B. Mashruwala", 2-1-1933.

believe that I would be such a spendthrift as to risk my life without any reason? Even when you have a doubt, you should not let it grow in your mind without putting it before me. Won't you be my advocate and tell people this: 'Till we have discussed the matter with this old youngster, we should not form an unfavourable opinion about any of his steps?' Doesn't law also require this?

Sardar read your books with great interest. I will certainly read those two, and try to read the others.

Regards from us to all co-workers.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7524. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

587. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 9, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

You will find with this a letter from Kanhaiyalal to Ghanshyamdasji. Do you know anything about it? If you do not, it was improper for an inmate of the Ashram to have applied for help to an outsider, particularly to a friend of the Ashram. Kanhaiyalal him-self may not have been aware of any impropriety when writing the letter, but this incident makes it necessary to warn everybody. It is assumed that those who join the Ashram do so in a spirit of renun-ciation. Hence, while they live in the Ashram, they should not seek help from outside even for their work of service. When giving such a warning to the inmates of the Ashram, it is not necessary to mention Kanhaiyalal's name. I am writing to him too.

I have already written[1] to you suggesting that Jamna should try fenugreek seeds. A letter from Kishorelal just received gives a little more information. The discovery about the efficacy of these seeds is his own. He eats about 20-25 seeds in the morning and the same number in the evening. He roasts them till they become red. He says that they may even be eaten fried in ghee. There is a possibility that they may bring about constipation. If that happens, Jamna may reduce the quantity. If 20-25 seeds have no effect, she can increase the quantity up to 50-60 grains. Kishorelal had started with that number. The

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 1-1-1933.

asthma was cured, but he reduced the quantity because he found that the seeds had caused constipation. Jamna should first try the seeds without frying them. If necessary, she may afterwards try fried seeds.

Mahadev tells me that this experiment is worth trying on Chimanlal and Babu also.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

588. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

YERAVDA.
January 9, 1933

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

Sarayubehn is in Bombay at present. She will be doing the untouchability work for the present. Therefore she has been detained in the hope that she will be able to tour Kathiawar and Gujarat. I think it would be well to ask her to go round the villages of Gujarat and some cities like Ahmedabad, etc. If all of you think it proper, send me a telegram. Send me the programme and write to her also. I have written to Ramjibhai about Kathiawar. So you may consult him and decide whether to make the programme comprehensive or have it for Gujarat only.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32730

589. LETTER TO A SANATANI

January 9, 1933

Truth, exclusive devotion to non-violence and cow-protection are the chief points of Hinduism. One who neglects them is no more a Hindu. I have felt no need for the sacred thread and no one should be asked to wear it. One who has lost the qualities of a Brahmin no longer deserves the prerogative of a Brahmin. Why should such nominal Brahmins be fed? Only the common simple *mantras* are essential

in the wedding ceremony. They have been given in *Navajivan*.[1] I have no faith in the custom of *shraddha* as it is observed these days.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 29-30

590. LETTER TO GIRDHAR SHASTRI

January 9, 1933

I have your letter. I do accept the Shastras as authoritative. But no one gives me a list of the works and my observation so far does not even suggest the possibility of such a list. That is why the *Gita* is my refuge. I try to be courteous in whatever I undertake. But I try harder to make courtesy consistent with truth. What more can I say?

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 30

591. LETTER TO NANASAHEB KHASGIWALE

January 9, 1933

I believe in the injunctions of the Shastras, as also in custom and the practice of respected men and women. But the inner voice springs from the cumulative effect of all these. It is the moving force behind the whole world. It is no exclusive virtue or defect of mine. My inner voice may certainly be imperfect, as everybody else's. That is why man has been regarded as the embodiment of errors.

If there truly exists an untouchable class in the human race I am striving to be born only into that and no other.

My whole inclination is towards a revival of the varnashrama dharma; I have no doubt about it.

To spend thought or anything else on an irrelevant matter is against my nature.

Devotion to Krishna is the keynote of my life; and sanatan dharma is my very life-breath. One day those who at present call themselves sanatanists will accept the truth of this avowal of mine.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 30

[1] *Vide* "With Bare Religious Rites", 7-3-1926.

592. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

January 9, 1933[1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I am told that the telegram I sent about you has reached you. I was expecting a letter from you to follow it but nothing has come. My letters of course do not reach you. From a letter from Krishna received only today I learn that you are having fits. I am very sorry. I shall enquire about your condition from the Superintendent too. You must be getting letters from Jayaprakash. He is always cheerful. Chhaganlal Joshi has joined me now and we are all doing well. My weight is 103 lb. and the diet consists of 2 lb. milk, *mosambis*, oranges, dates and papaya. And of course there is honey. I maintain good health on this. The pain in the elbow is there but that is an old story. There is no need at all to worry on that account.

I have to devote a great deal of time to Harijan work and the government have sent Chhaganlal Joshi to assist me in this work.

How is Kanta? Who else is with you? What is your diet these days?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3431

593. LETTER TO BEGUM MOHAMMAD ALAM

January 9, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. It is incomprehensible why my letters do not reach you. Neither of the two letters addressed to Calcutta and Lahore reached you. The address on both was exactly the one you sent. Let us see the fate of this letter. The news about the improvement in Dr. Saheb's health is immensely pleasing. May God make him perfectly healthy. The country is in great need of his services. Keep me posted with all the news even though Dr. Saheb is able to write. Your letters take the place of Urdu lessons for me. Raihana and Zohra are already giving me such lessons. We are all well. We are four now. The

[1]The original has "1932", which is evidently a slip.

Government have sent Chhaganlal Joshi from the Ashram to assist me. I have to devote a lot of time for Harijan work these days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 26

594. LETTER TO R. V. PATWARDHAN

January 10, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. I think you have mixed argument with curses and you have addressed your argument to a state of things that does not exist. I would therefore ask you to adopt a dispassionate attitude and study this question as a student studies and works at problems. If you will do that, many of the eight points that you have raised will fall to pieces. For instance, when you have studied the question dispassionately and properly you will discover as to your first point that there is no question of 'molesting' a single Hindu temple; as to your second point that there is no legislation attempted in the matter of temple-entry, what is attempted is to remove an artificial barrier created by a foreign Court of Law; as to the third, that you should say with me those who seek equity or justice should come with clean hands.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19210

[1]Dated December 9, 1933 which read: "I solemnly warn you that you do not appear to be acting as a God-fearing Hindu; and although you may succeed in forcing the entry of the untouchables into our temples . . . all honest sanatanists will always regard your act as a sacrilegious deed becoming an atheist . . ." (S.N. 19206).

595. LETTER TO SARAT CHANDRA GUHA

January 10, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 2nd instant.[1] Upon hurried reading I can find nothing to suggest and you will excuse me for not giving more concentration to your letter. I have no spare time.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SARAT CHANDRA GUHA
KALIGHAT, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19212

596. LETTER TO N. H. PURANDARE

January 10, 1933

MY DEAR PURANDARE,

I have your letter. I am sorry for the mistakes that still remain in your book[2]. As to the remuneration, I have accepted, without demur, the figure mentioned by Haribhau. I hope that the amount has been paid to you already. Five copies of any new edition for the translation should certainly be given to you. I hope you have five copies of the first edition. I don't like the spirit of the rest of your letter. There never can be any question of anyone making a personal profit. It is not practicable to charge only the cost price. To charge the cost price would be to ensure a loss, because many copies will have to be given free of charge. There would also be lying a dead stock. Some commission will have to be paid tobook-sellers. I could understand all that you have said in your letter if you were dealing with a comm-

[1]The addressee, Secretary, Removal of Untouchability Tour Party, Hindu Mission, Calcutta, in his letter (S.N. 19136) had given an account of the untouchability work being done by the Hindu Mission and had stated that untouchability removal oath was being administered "at the instance of the Hindu Mission through their own workers and preachers throughout Bengal and Assam". In the end he had sought Gandhiji's suggestions "for further work".

[2]Based on the addressee's lectures and published by the Maharashtra Prantik Mandal; the addressee in his letter dated January 7, 1933 (S.N. 19181) had complained about a number of mistakes in the book in spite of his having already pointed them out at the proof stage. The book was a refutation of the orthodox case in favour of untouchability.

ercial firm. Please draft and let me have the letter you want for five books and I shall get it signed by Sjt. A. V. Thakkar as Secretary of the Servants of Untouchables Society.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. H. PURANDARE
POONA 2

From a microfilm: S.N. 19209

597. LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON[1]

January 10, 1933

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

I have your letter. Of course permission to Harijans and others during the non-*pooja* hours is perfectly useless. The permission must be during *pooja* hours. As a matter of fact, where there is a will, there is a way. Each *pooja* time may be divided, half of which would be for the general public and the other half for the objectors. The period allotted to each will be regulated according to the numbers, or, as you suggest, some *pooja* periods may be allotted to the general public and some to the objectors: but of course it may be that in working out details, my suggestion is impracticable. If it is found to be practicable, the objection as to keeping up untouchability can easily be met[2]. I have already partly dealt with it through an Associated Press message[3]. As to the freedom of Ekadasi, I have already quoted from the judgment you refer to in my letter to the Zamorin[4] which has been published already.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19213

[1]The letter was in reply to the addressee's dated January 5, 1933 (S.N. 19163).
[2]The source has "made out".
[3]*Vide* "Interview to Associated Press of India", 5-1-1933.
[4]*Vide* "Letter to the Zamorin of Calicut", 1-1-1933.

598. LETTER TO S. PONNAMMAL

January 10, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I was very much touched by your letter[1]. I am still unable to know why you should be getting only Rs. 8 per month. Is it possible for you to see Sjt. K. Madhavan Nair? I am writing to him and sending him a copy of your letter. He may even find you out instead of putting you to the trouble of going to him. If it is not a matter of much distance between Calicut and your place, the matter is simple. If it is a long distance to be covered, it may be difficult for you. I quite see that full use is not being made of your talents. Is your letter your own composition ?

Yours sincerely,

S. PONNAMMAL
PATTERI HOUSE
CALICUT

From a microfilm: S.N. 19211

599. LETTER TO K. MADHAVAN NAIR

January 10, 1933

MY DEAR MADHAVAN,

I enclose herewith a copy of a letter from Mrs. Ponnammal and a copy of my letter to her. Do please try to see her, and if you feel that she is a deserving woman, she ought to be relieved of the burden that she has, and her very simple wants must be assured to her. She seems to me to be a worker of a rare type, butfrom this distance I may be exaggerating her merits. You will please guide me.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19207

[1]Dated January 3, 1933 in which the addressee, a widow teaching in Lady Chandavarkar Primary School, Calicut, at Rs. 8 per month, had explained that she found it impossible to carry on with only Rs. 8 per month. The letter had explained that after school hours she had been teaching poor people music, folk dances and reading and writing, etc., and had added: "I feel that if I am relieved of my school work and if there is help for my personal living expense which is very little, and house-rent, I might be able to show some really good work" (S.N. 19186).

600. LETTER TO GIRDHARILAL

January 10, 1933

DEAR LALA GIRDHARILAL,

I have your letter.[1] I am sorry to learn that the improvement has not been continuous and that even the diagnosis may be incorrect. You will please tell me what Dr. Deshmukh said when he last saw you.

I wish you had not worried about untouchability The first three points deserve consideration. About the 4th, you should wait and watch my Statement[2]. I have no such fear as you have. Inter-dining and inter-marriage would be most dangerous interpolations. They can never form part of a campaign against untouchability, but they will be part of a campaign against unnatural caste distinctions and caste conception. It is a reform which must stand altogether separately.

Nos. 7 to 13 are suggestions outside the scope of my consideration. Actual execution of the reform I cannot control from here. If you have energy for all these things, you should write to the secretary of the local organization, but I would warn you against putting any strain upon what little energy might still be left in you. You should conserve it for regaining your past health and not spend it up from day to day.

Yours sincerely,

LALA GIRDHARILAL
ESPLANADE ROAD, FORT, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 19208

[1]Dated January 7, 1933. It contained the following four points: "(I) If all leaders and prominent men who are interesting themselves in the movement made it a point, when visiting places, to live or stay with Harijan people only, it will be a practical step and very effective in its results. . . . (2) Similarly when Harijan leaders and workers travel they should be made guests of high-caste Hindus and not allowed to stay with their own class as it is understood, and as is the general practice now. (3) This qualified separate admission to temples of Harijans at separate hours has the stamp of inferiority complex about it. The purification is another distinction difficult to gulp down (4) Equal emphasis should be laid on inter-dining and inter-marriages which automatically result in temple-entry . . ." (S.N. 19183).

[2]*Vide* "Confusing the Issue", 4-3-1933.

601. LETTER TO D. N. SHIKHARE[1]

January 10, 1933

DEAR MR. SHIKHARE,

I have your letter enclosing a summary of the discussion you had with me about temple-entry. I now enclose the corrected version.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. D. N. SHIKHARE
THE KESARI AND THE MAHRATTA OFFICE
POONA 2

From a microfilm: M.M.U./XXII

602. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

January 10, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

There is no need for pomegranates for the time being. Sardar has stopped eating them for Some time. I will not fail to write to you and ask you to send them when they are needed.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: C.W. 4827. Courtesy: Premlila Thakersey

603. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 10, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

Kanaiyalal and his wife came and saw me. Kailas did not come. I was glad that the former two Came. I got the piece of leather. It is too thin for the soles, and certainly so for the heels. I didn't require any leather for repairing the upper side of the sandals. I got the slivers too. We have several copies of *Satyarthaprakash* in the Ashram. Send

[1]In his letter dated January 8, 1933 (M.M.U./XXII), the addressee had sought Gandhiji's permission to publish the interview with him on "last Thursday".

me one of them with anybody who may be coming here. I want the edition which contains 14 *samullasas*[1].

Since Pyare Ali cannot take charge of the children, let Amina take them with her to Sharda Mandir.

BAPU

[PS.]

Letters on Amina, Champa and Manekbehn are enclosed.

[From Gujarati]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

604. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

January 10, 1933

CHI. HARIBHAU,

Why have you written or dictated no letter to me? You seem to be taking a long time to recover after the operation. How are you now? What was the trouble? How is the nursing? What is the news about Rohit Mehta ?

I often see Jamnalalji. He keeps good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6074. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

605. LETTER TO AMINA QURESHI

January 10, 1933

CHI. AMINA,

Pyare Ali is not in a position to take charge of the children just now. My advice, therefore, is that you should go to Sharda Mandir[2] with the children. There you yourself may give them instruction in Islam. The work is quite easy. Teach them to recite the *Kalma.* Teach *namaz.* Tell them some stories. Teach them the books for children published by the Islamia collage. That will be enough. For the rest, the rules of discipline and good manners are the same everywhere. Do not

[1]Chapters
[2]At Ahmedabad

give up the practice of Urdu. The children will serve you as a protective wall. Spread your fragrance in Sharda Mandir. Mix with everybody. Do not be a burden on anyone. Keep your body light and take willing part in the school work.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10793. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

606. DIARY, 1933

JANUARY 1, 1933, SUNDAY

Letters—Lady Thackersey, Ambaram, Jhinabhai, Vidyadevi, Shyamnarayan Kapur, Ramdas, Jamnalalji, Haridas, Gokaldas, David. [About] untouchability—Vasukaka Joshi, Suryakant, Subbaroyan, the Zamorin, Ghanshyamdas, Chintamani, Hiralal Nanavati.[1]

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 19337

607. STATEMENT TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

January 11, 1933

I observe that there is a lot of misunderstanding about the compro-mise proposal[2] I have made in connection with the temple-entry question, and I see that there is dissatisfaction over it even among Harijans. That dissatisfaction is quite natural. Where inequality is ram-pant, anything that savours of it is immediately suspected and conde-mned. I have however every faith in my proposal and in spite of the criticisms directed against it, I see no reason to withdraw it. If any single temple is opened according to that proposal, it would be found not only workable in practice, but that Harijans, who are now suspecting in it inequality and a surrender to orthodox opinion, will see that, while it takes that opinion into full account, it surrenders nothing of the principle, namely, that Harijans should be admitted to temples, if at all, on terms of absolute equality with the rest of the Hindus. But since there can be no compulsion in religion, prejudices, which amount to belief for those who hold them,

[1]The remaining pages of the exercise book are blank.
[2] *Vide* "Interview to the Associated Press of India", 2-1-1933.

must be respected, in so far as that respect is consistent with the main

thing. There is then needed a formula whereby such objectors will not be deprived of the religious consolation to which they are entitled. That can only be done if there is some period fixed during which they can have their *darshan*[1] in isolation.

However unreasonable it may appear to reformers, as it does to me, the sentiment undoubtedly exists that the efficacy of the idol is dimi-nished, if not altogether destroyed, by the presence of certain people in the temple in which it is installed. It is not possible to make the people who harbour that sentiment give it up by force of law or arms. That can only disappear either through an appeal to reason or through experience gained from those who act contrariwise, and yet do not suffer any misfortune which can be directly connected with their giving up that particular sentiment. I am sure that Harijans do not want to cause vio-lence to the feelings of any single person in their legitimate demand to vindicate their status in Hinduism.

This is a period of grace. Caste Hindus are on their trial. Either the Resolution[2] arrived at last September at the meeting in Bombay has the backing of the general mass of the caste Hindu or it has not. If it has, the temples must be voluntarily flung open to Harijans and if the majority of the temple-goers show their desire in no unmistakable terms for such admission, the Resolution must be regarded as fully vindicated. Cent per cent assent is almost an impossibility in human affairs, and in a mattes of religion dissenters ought to be taken into consideration. My proposal does that, and nothing more. It is an acid test for all. The dissenters are in a minority, and sincere in their conviction but tolerant to their opponents. After having made every provision for themselves, they would make equal provision for their opponents. If the reformers be equally sincere and tolerant towards the dissenters, they will make adequate provision for the dissenters' being able to offer worship according to their wont. If Harijans have no desire whatever to coerce anybody so long as they can exercise equal rights with the reformers, they should have nothing to complain of at all.

My proposal is undoubtedly based on the assumption that upon

[1] Sight of a person, place or thing considered holy

[1] *Vide* "Resolution at the Hindu Leaders' Conference, Bombay", 25-9-1932.

a referendum, a large majority of the temple-goers would vote for the admission of Harijans to temples, and that, therefore, they would visit temples only during the joint hours, and would not visit them during the time set apart for the dissenters. If, in practice, it is discovered that the reformers are a negligible quantity, they would naturally abstain from making use of such temples and if the majority of the temples show such an unfortunate minority they will rightly conclude that the Bombay Resolution has not the backing of the caste Hindus

But say Harijan friends: 'What about the purification against which you have so often written and spoken?' Of course, I am as much against purification now as ever. If purification remains a general law, then untouchability remains. But purification under my proposal assumes a different shape altogether. Do we not do many things in order to respect the sentiments of our friends and tolerate many more? The question before Harijans, before Hindu society and before the whole world is whether caste Hindus, as a whole, have undergone a change of heart, and whether they are ready to abolish untouchability as it is practised today. If the majority of the caste Hindus vote for its abolition, surely, it is the duty of both reformers and Harijans to accommodate the minority that may notsee eye to eye with the reformers, when their difference is based on what is to them a deep religious conviction. Mutual toleration is the law of the human family, and what my proposal has done is to rigidly enforce that principle.

I would like, in one sentence, to emphasize the fact that the present campaign is one against untouchability as it is practised today in Hindu-ism, and not against untouchability which is, in some shape or form, common to mankind. Such untouchability does not attach to a person, but to his work or to his conduct. It is not sought to gain complete freedom from the laws of cleanliness and hygiene and the like, the observance of which is obligatory on every temple-goer, even at the present day. But what is insisted upon is that every Harijan who conforms to these laws is entitled to admission to all public temples on terms of equality with the rest.

The Hindu, 12-1-1933

608. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,[1]
January 11, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I am permitted to see Jamnalalji as often as may be necessary and to discuss untouchability matters with him. He was reading the consti-tution of the Society[2] and these are the pertinent things to which he drew my attention:

The resolution is wrong. It is not in accordance with the resolution as it was passed by the Conference. There is nothing in the resolution as it is given in the pamphlet about temple-entry. You will see the correction made in my statement[3] of the 30th December. How the incomplete resolution came to be taken I do not know. The correct text appears in *The Times of India* of the 26th September. This point was first noticed by me, but I forgot all about it till the resolution was required for my state-ment. Then too I forgot to write to you about it. But I noted down the points that Jamnalalji brought forward, and this was the very first.

The second is that whereas the resolution[4] about electorate is described as having been passed by the Conference, the resolution about the social and religious rights of Harijans is described as having been passed by a meeting of Hindus, five days later. Jamnalalji therefore says that as the text reads, it will appear as if it was a resolution passed by a meeting of Bombay Hindus only and not by representatives of all-India Hindus. If so, the Anti-untouchability League could not be established for all India by a Bombay Hindus'

[1] Gandhiji was in this Prison from January 4, 1932 to May 8, 1933. This place-name is not reproduced in subsequent items.

[2] Harijan Sevak Sangh (Servants of Untouchables Society); original]y called the All-India Anti-untouchability League, founded on October 26, 1932, in pursuance of the resolutions of an all-India Conference of caste Hindus and a public meeting convened by them in Bombay on September 25 and 30, 1932, respectively, under the chairmanship of Madan Mohan Malaviya; G. D. Birla became the President and A. V. Thakkar the Secretary.

[3] On the postponement of fast on the question of opening of the Shri Krishna temple at Guruvayur to Harijans; *vide* "Statement on Untouchability-XIII", 30-12-1932.

[4] Ratifying the Yeravda Pact; *vide before* "Agreement between Depressed Classes Leaders and Caste Hindu Leaders", 10-11-1932.

meeting.

The third point he made was that there is nothing in the creative resolution authorizing the All-India Anti-untouchability League, as it was originally called, to alter its name.

The fourth was that the resolution describing the powers of the League or the Society was not exhaustive enough.

The fifth was that there was no Treasurer appointed, and that it was not clear as to who would have the control of the funds raised by provincial organizations.

All these points deserve consideration. I could not throw much light upon them, except that I told him that you retained in your own person the Treasurership purposely in the initial stages.

I take it that you are collecting statistics somehow or other as to the opening of temples, wells, etc., throughout India.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 19226

609. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

January 11, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter of the 6th instant. I am surprised that Kanhaiyalal[1] should have written to you. I do know him well by correspondence. He has been in the Ashram sent by Soniramji. He frequently sends me questions for solution. He should not have written to you without reference to me or at least to Narandas. You need not think of him any more.

Yours sinscrely,

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 7918. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Whose letter was forwarded by the addressee, with a request to consider how his services could be utilized

610. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

January 11, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your doleful letter of the 7th January,[1] but you are not going to be disappointed or discouraged. What you describe is the common lot of most organizations. The best in a man, as also the worst, is drawn out when he is in charge of such organizations. The best is drawn out when he works with sufficient detachment.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 7919. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

611. LETTER TO C. Y. CHINTAMANI

January 11, 1933

DEAR MR. CHINTAMANI[2],

I have your letter. No excuse necessary for dictating your letter. I am not so vain as to think that I am the only hardworked and hard-working man in all India.

The pamphlet[3] about 'Fasts' is being sent herewith. You can keep it as long as you like, and keep it altogether, if it is of use to you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. Y. CHINTAMANI

17 HAMILTON ROAD, ALLAHABAD

From a photostat: S.N. 19227

[1] The addressee had written to say that both Arya Samajists and the depressed classes in Delhi were torn by rivalries.

[2] Editor of *The Leader*

[3] Citing ancient precedents for Gandhiji's fasts; *vide* "Letter to K. V. Sesha Iyengar", 21-1-1933.

612. LETTER TO T. A. V. NATHAN

January 11, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1] enclosing three cuttings for which I thank you. I take them in order of their dates.

That of the 28th December calls for no reply.

That of the 29th, that is, the one on the postponement[2] of the fast has led you to grant me an indulgence, because you have been averse to the method of the fast. But I must not exist on indulgences from friends, especially in religious matters. Fortunately for me, your indulgence is due to an oversight of a material condition, whose happening was to automatically postpone the fast, and this was some legal difficulty which could not be got over within the time. This difficulty came in the shape of the want of Viceregal sanction. If I had taken the fast on the 2nd of January, I am afraid that you would not only have condemned the fast as such but you would have condemned it as coercion against the Government of India. So, you see that the fast is postponed, not because I have realized its uselessness, but because I have realized the sinfulness of taking it in spite of the supervening of a contingency that had been contemplated and provided for.

Your last article, that is, of the 4th instant, calls for a fairly large reply, but I shall not attempt it, if only because I have to economize time just at present. I see in my proposal no surrender whatsoever of principle. In this campaign I have endeavoured, as much as a Harijan by adoption can, to put myself in his position, and I say to the objectors: 'If you are polluted by my presence or by my touch, I am quite prepared to consent to a separate period being reserved for you to offer worship by yourselves. give you the same credit for sincerity that I claim for myself. You are as much entitled to worship in the temple as I think I am. Therefore you offer worship in your time, and I shall offer worship, along with the reformers, during the period

[1] In which the addressee had written: "I feel you have let down the reformers by your compromise formula, and I hope you will excuse me when I say that the impression in enlightened circles in South India is that you have played into the hands of orthodox Brahmins."

[2] *Vide* "Interview to the Associated Press of India", 29-12-1932 and "Statement on Untouchability-XIII", 30-12-1932.

reserved for us, and since by tradition you have been taught to think that the efficacy of the idol is diminished by my entering the portals of the temple gate, though I do not believe in it myself, let the priest perform the purification cere-mony.'[1]

This is how I rehearsed the whole thing to myself before I made the proposal to Pandit Panchanan Tarkaratna. Of course the proposal would not be worthy of consideration if there was not a big assumption underlying it, namely, that the objectors would be in a negligible minority.

My proposal, therefore, is an effective and acid test of the sincerity of all concerned. If the objectors including the *Shastris* are sincere in their protest on behalf of what they consider to be sanatana dharma, they would jump at the proposal. If the reformers and the Harijans are sincere, they should hail the proposal with joy, and if it is accepted, regard it as a vast step towards the fruition of the reform. If it is found by experience that the caste Hindus who offer worship during the joint period are themselves a negligible quantity, it would be a defeat for the reformer, and it would be a sign that the Harijans should abstain from entering those temples where they are unwelcome visitors. They would not then have to go to the temples as beggars before caste-men. They will go, if they go at all, as fellow-Hindus, welcomed by an overwhelming majority of caste-men who would not consider themselves in any way polluted by the touch of the erstwhile untouchables.

Any other solution would be tantamount to compulsion. You will recall what I said in one of my previous statements that wherever the majority of the temple-goers are against the admission of Harijans those temples should not be visited by them, and where the majority was composed of reformers, the possession should go to them along with the Harijans and that the minority should build another temple for themselves, if they so choose; but in the course of argument with Pandit Panchanan Tarkaratna, I discovered a flaw in that proposal. It is an undoubted fact that—whether it is right or wrong is not the question—thousands of people attribute particular sanctity to their favourite temples. That sanctity is for them an untransferable thing. Sanctity handed down from ancient times cannot be imparted to a new image and a new temple by the mere will of man, and therefore the

[1] Gandhiji's compromise proposed to satisfy caste Hindus. *Vide* "Interview to the Associated Press of India", 29-12-1933.

proposal I have now published dawned upon me, and the proposal to be of any value has to carry withit the consent to purification, again out of scrupulous regard for the religious sentiment of the minority.

You will sympathize with my reasoning, even if you may not agree with it, when you realize that ahimsa is a fundamental creed with me and enforceable under every conceivable circumstance. That I may fail miserably in reducing my creed to practice on all occasions does not detract from the creed, and is irrelevant to the discussion; and my non-violence would not permit me to do violence to the feelings of a single devotee who has been accustomed to visit a particular temple. I would also ask you to remember that, whatever may be said to the contrary, for me the whole of this campaign against untouchability is a purely religious campaign. It is a movement of a big reform in Hinduism which, as I have said so repeatedly, must die if untouchability as we know it today is not eradicated. I must also confess that I have a profound reverence for the Hindu Shastras as I have conceived them; but I cannot impose my conception upon others by force. I must let it work its way in the midst of competing interpretations and conceptions. Therefore wherever possible, my attitude would be to make provision for all other conceptions and interpretations.

If you would bear these things in mind, you would not only understand my position but you will support me whole-heartedly, and I want your support. I want the support of every Hindu. Your paper represents I know a very large body of advanced Hindu opinion and since you are taking the trouble of trying to understand me, I am not going easily to give up the attempt to enlist your full support.

You have asked me quite unjustly "whether he (i.e., I) would be willing to satisfy the conscience of conservative seekers in England who want that political reform in India should be postponed to some later period". I will not insult your intelligence by showing you that there is no analogy between the position underlying your question and the position with reference to temple-entry, especially in view of what I have said in the foregoing paragraphs.

Lastly, you cavil at the use of the word 'Harijan, for untouchables. Evidently, you do not know how the word came to be used in the first instance. It was suggested by certain untouchable friends who do not like to be called 'untouchables', and it was suggested because

a saintly poet[1] of Gujarat, according to their interpretation of one of his hymns, used it in connection with 'untouchables'. I immediately seized upon the word as also otherwise most fitting, for the most despised people are the most favoured of God.

I fail to see any slave mentality about the origin of the use of the word or its continuance, and let us hope that when untouchability has a decent burial, we shall all strive to become Harijans, that is, pure men of God.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. A. V. NATHAN
EDITOR, "THE JUSTICE"
14 MOUNT ROAD, MADRAS

From a microfilm: M.M.U./XXII

613 LETTER TO DUNICHAND

January 11, 1933

DEAR LALA DUNICHAND[2],

For a long time I have not heard from or about Surajbhan or his wife Yasoda Devi. Can you tell me anything about them?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5582

614. LETTER TO ZAMINDAR OF GOLLAPALLI

January 11, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter[3] of the 4th instant. Your fear is baseless as you will see from the explanations I have issued to the Press.

Yours sincerely,

THE ZAMINDAR OF GOLLAPALLI
GOLLAPALLI

From a microfilm: S.N. 19216

[1] Narasinha Mehta
[2] An advocate of Ambal

615. LETTER TO K. MADHAVAN NAIR

January 11, 1933

MY DEAR MADHAVAN[1],

Here is a letter[2] for you to see.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19217

616. LETTER TO K. R. KRISHNA MURTHI

January 11, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 6th instant, and I should be sorry if what you said was found to be correct.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K.[3] R. KRISHNA MURTHI
JOINT SECRETARY
THE DHARMA VEERA ASSOCIATON
GURUVAYUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 19219

617. LETTER TO D. RAG. RAGHAVACHANDRAYYA SASTRI

January 11, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You should have pity on me. I have no time whatsoever for reading books and manuscripts. I hardly get time to cope with the correspondence that I get daily.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. D. RAGHAVACHANDRAYYA SASTRI
SATH BRAHMAN ASHRAMA
BEZWADA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19218

[1] A lawyer and social worker of Calicut

[2] From K. R. Krishna Murthi; who had challenged the statement that the Guruvayur youths were in favour of temple-entry by the depressed classes. Regarding the referendum the addressee had said that "violence, coercion and deceit" were being exercised by Gandhiji's co-workers; *vide* the following item

[3] The source has "M", which is a slip. The addressee had signed K

618. LETTER TO L. L. YELIGAR

January 11, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter together with the cutting[1] for which I thank you. I shall read the article as soon as I get a moment's time.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. L. L. YELIGAR
C/O SRI SARPABHUSAN SWAMI MATH
BALEPETH, BANGALORE CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 19220

619. LETTER TO G. DORASWAMY

January 11, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 8th inst., enclosing a copy of the resolution[2] of your college. I hope that you are also doing constructive work. Without that the resolution cannot have much meaning.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. DORASWAMY
NO. 45 PACHAIYYAPPA'S HOSTEL
KILPAUK, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 19221

620. LETTER TO SARASVANI

January 11, 1933

MY DEAR SARASVANI,

I like your letter. You should accept my assurance that there is no intention whatsoever of wounding the feelings of orthodox Hindus. No temple will be touched where the majority of orthodox Hindus are opposed to the entry of Harijans into the temple which they are entitled to visit and which is in their neighbourhood.

Yours sincerely,

MISS SARASVANI
C/O SJT. K. V. RAMASWAMY AIYAR
CHOKKIKULAM, MADURA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19222

[1] An article about untouchability work published in the *Mysore Star*, a weekly

[2] Condemning untouchability in Hindu society

621. LETTER TO G. V. KETKAR

January 11, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have now carefully read both your articles on the *Gita.* I have found them to be interesting.

I observe that you have reached the same conclusion that I had by a different method. Yours is the learned way, not so mine.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. V. KETKAR, B.A., LL.B.
NASIK CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 19223

622. LETTER TO RANCHHODDAS PATWARI

January 11, 1933

RESPECTED RANCHHODBHAI[1],

I was pained to read your letter. Is it not strange that you should write to me in English? or that you should frame questions as if you wanted to catch in your trap a witness who was trying to escape it? But, as an elder brother, you have a right to do all that, for I could judge from our discussion[2] that you believed me to have completely forsaken dharma. However, if God grants you a long life you will admit one day that I had not knowingly done so. I will now reply to your questions.[3]

Pranams from

MOHANDAS

l. You desire that each and every sanatanist Hindu should form and express his opinion on this question according to the dictates of his conscience.

I would welcome it if it were possible.

2. Is it not a fact that there are thousands of people who believe that India cannot get real swaraj without you?

If it is so, I would regard that as a heavy responsibility on me.

[1] Ex-Dewan of Morvi State

[2] On January 7, 1933

[3] The questions are reproduced from the addressee's letter dated January 9, 1933 (S.N. 20036).

3. Is it not a fact that there are thousands of people who value your life more than what they consider to be their religion?

I would be much pained if this is true. I cannot endure anybody giving up what he regards as his dharma in order to save my life.

4. Where was the need of announcing your firm resolve to fast to death if the Guruvayur Temple was not opened to the untouchables?

This I have discussed at great length in my articles[1].

5. Why did you not issue a referendum[2] without taking such a vow?

To this too my articles contain a satisfactory reply.

6. Did not the persons who were engaged in taking votes exploit your vow ?

What you believe is not altogether improbable.

7. Can you correctly ascertain the percentage of voters who voted in favour of the entry on account of your vow before them?

It is impossible to reply to this without knowing what is in the heart of the person concerned.

8. If your case is strong and the cause you advocate is just and reasonable, why have you announced your vow to fast to death if His Excellency the Viceroy does not sanction the Bill[3] before him?

It is absolutely necessary to read my articles for a reply to this question

9. Do you know that this vow is being exploited for nourishing the agitation

[1] Statements which Gandhiji started issuing from prison from November 4, 1932.

[2] In Ponnani taluk where the Guruvayur temple is situated. The Zamorin of Calicut, a trustee of the Temple, being against temple-entry, the referendum was taken amidst adverse influences. *Vide* "Statement on Untouchability-XIII", 30-12-1932.

[3] Two Bills were awaiting Viceroy's sanction, one for introduction in the Central Legislative Assembly by Ranga Iyer and the other for introduction in the Madras Council by Dr. Subbaroyan. On January 23, the Viceroy gave his sanction to the introduction of the Untouchability Abolition Bill by Ranga Iyer in the Assembly subject to the condition that the Government did not commit themselves to accepting its principles and that the fullest opportunity would be given to every section of the Hindu community to express an opinion on its provisions. Sanction to Dr. Subbaroyan's Temple-Entry Bill in the Madras Council was refused on the ground that it was too far-reaching in implication for enactment by a provincial legislature. Afterwards Ranga Iyer drafted a second Bill, based on Dr. Subbaroyan's, which the Viceroy permitted to be introduced in the Central Assembly, subject to the same qualifications as in the case of his former Bill. The Temple-Entry Bill, as redrafted, was introduced in the Central Legislative Assembly on March 24, 1933. *Vide* also "Statement on Viceroy's Decision", 24-1-1933.

in favour of the Bill being sanctioned?

No such thing has happened to my knowledge.

10. Are you prepared to give up your vow and issue a fresh referendum in connection with the Guruvayur Temple?

If a systematic referendum is held with the Zamorin's co-operation and if he implements the result, my pledge will have been fulfilled.

11. Before issuing the referendum, did you frame definite rules as to who can rank as *bona-fide* worshipper of the deity for guidance of your men who were engaged in taking votes ?

Yes.

12 . Who can rank as *a bona fide* worshipper of the deity according to you ?

Those who, according to the present practice, are entitled to visit temples and who accept the necessity of worshipping in temples.

13. Did the persons engaged in taking votes ascertain by inquiry which of the voters were *bona-fide* worshippers of the deity?

Due publicity was given as to who were entitled to vote and leaflets were distributed to every home, and the people were then trusted to show regard for truth.

14. Can you say that a Hindu who does not visit a temple even once a month for *darshan* and who does not pay a single farthing as *bhet* or *samagri*[1], can rank as a *bona-fide* worshipper of the deity?

Certainly, if such Hindus believe in temples.

15. If the entry of the untouchables into temples depends on votes in a particular district, the condition precedent is that definite rules should be framed as to who can be treated as a *bona-fide* worshipper?

This is correct.

16. Which of the temples would you treat as public?

Any temple which is not the property of an individual or of several individuals.

17. Your parents were staunch followers of the *Pushtimarga* (a Vaishnavite *Sampradaya*). Did they freely touch the untouchables? Would they allow them to enter into temples?

No.

18. You have never worn the sacred thread, viz., *upavita. You* wore a

[1] Offerings

tulsi-kanthi[1] when you went to England in 1886. When did you give up that *kanthi?*

I used to wear the sacred thread for some time. I did not discard the *tulsi-kanthi*, but, after I had worn it for some years in South Africa, it left me, that is, it snapped.

19. Are you of the opinion that the wearing of a sacred thread or *kanthi* is not essential for a sanatanist Hindu?

I don't regard the practice as an essential requirement of sanatana dharma and so, when the *kanthi* snapped, I did not replace it.

20. During your stay in England you took meals in hotels or in the house of an Englishman?

At both places.

21. Are you of the opinion that a Hindu does not cease to be a sanatanist Hindu by this?

That is my considered view.

22. Even now you have no objection to take the food prepared in European hotels or by a Christian or a Mohammedan?

I would have no objection if I otherwise regarded the article as acceptable food.

23. Are you in favour of the *priti-bhojans*[2] in which even the Brahmins, Dheds, Bhangis, Chamars, Mohammodans and Christians dine together?

I oppose mixed dinners with Harijans as a part of the movement for the removal of untouchability. If, however, the items are cooked with proper regard for rules of hygiene, I see nothing wrong in Harijans and others sitting together and eating from separate plates.

24. Will you say that the Hindus who take part in such *priti-bhojans* can claim to be sanatanist Hindus?

Provided the foregoing condition is observed, Hindus participating in mixed dinners with Harijans should be, ought to be, regarded as sanatanist Hindus—if they have the other characteristics of such Hindus.

25. Are you in favour of intermarriages between the Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas on the one hand and the untouchables on the other?

If the bride and the bridegroom are a suitable pair, if their lives are pure and they believe in the ideal of self-control in married life, I would certainly approve of such unions. But I do not regard

[1] String of *tulsi* beads

[2] Mixed dinner parties with Harijans

interdining and intermarrying between Harijans and other Hindus as a necessary part of the movement for the eradication of untouchability.

26. Do you keep any idol or any picture of Shri Rama or Shri Krishna when you offer prayers in the morning and at night?

No.

27. Are you a staunch believer in idol-worship?

Yes.

28. Do you believe that it is necessary to go to a temple for *darshan* of the image for attaining emancipation and for acquiring supreme love for God ?

No.

29. How often have you visited the Hindu temples for the *darshan* of the idols during the last sixteen years?

I have visited them so often in the course of my tours that I cannot count the number of times.

30. What amount have you sent as *bhet* or *samagri* to temples from the funds collected by you?

I had no right to spend anything on temples from the money I had collected.

31. Do you believe that a Dhed, Bhangi or Chamar cannot attain emancipation or acquire supreme love for God unless he gets an opportunity to go into the Hindu temple for *darshan?*

I don't believe so at all.

32. If you think that idol-worship is essential for the untouchables, what if separate temples are built for them with the idols of Shri Rama or Shri Krishna ?

Since I don't see any justification for the existence of a separate class of untouchable communities, I would not be satisfied by separate temples for them.

33. Do you think that the worship of an idol in a public temple is more efficacious than that of an idol installed in the temple built for untouchables?

No.

34. Has Mr. Kelappan[1] or any Dhed, Bhangi or Chamar told you that he has such supreme love for the deity, that he will lose his life if he does not get *darshan* in a temple of the sanatanists?

No.

[1] K. Kelappan; he had undertaken a fast unto death on September 20, 1932, for the opening of the Guruvayur temple to Harijans and suspended it on Octobers 2 following Gandhiji's advice.

35. When you attended the Round Table Conference, you were under the impression that the population of the Dheds, Bhangis and Chamars, who are treated as untouchables, was six or seven crores.

No.

36. Were you under the same impression when you made a compromise[1] with Mr. Ambedkar?

No.

37. Did you even take the trouble of studying the causes with a view to ascertain the actual population of these three communities?

I don't follow the question.

38. Is it not a fact that the percentage of the population of such untouchables varies from 2_ per cent in Kathiawar and Gujarat?

This is not impossible.

39. Have you even now ascertained the actual population of the three communities in India?

I do not know the exact number.

40. Is it not a fact that lakhs of high-caste Hindus who were touchables became Mohammedans during the Mohammedan rule and Christians after the advent of the British rule?

I would be surprised if this is true.

41. Can you give even approximately the number of the untouchables who became either Mohammedans or Christians?

I can say that the number is quite large.

42. Are you for allowing any Dhed, Bhangi or Chamar admission into the Hindu temples? If not, what conditions or restrictions would you suggest ?

All Dheds, Bhangis and members of other such communities who observe the rules of cleanliness must be entitled to visit temples.

43. Who will frame these conditions and restrictions and who will enforce them? Will this not cause constant bickerings?

These rules are still accepted, and I think it easier to persuade Harijans to observe them than to persuade other Hindus to do so.

44. Has a large section of the Dheds, Bhangis and Chamars authorized you to create this sort of agitation for securing their entry into the Hindu temples?

No. The present movement is intended to persuade caste Hindus to do their duty.

[1] Yeravda Pact

45. Do you know that most of them are deadly against your agitation and say that it will widen the gulf between them and the caste Hindus, create trouble and make their position considerably worse ?

The truth is the exact opposite of this.

46. Are you prepared to issue a referendum for ascertaining wishes of the untouchables in the different parts of India?

In the light of the reply to (44), your suggestion is unnecessary.

47. Assuming that you suggest a compromise and it is accepted by some orthodox Hindus, do you think that it will be held as binding on all the untouchables and other orthodox Hindus?

The present movement is not a commercial bargain. It is a purely religious movement. It will show the path of dharma to those who accept it as such.

48. Do you know that the sentiments of untouchability are rampant even amongst the Rabaris, Bharavads, Kolis, Thakardas, Kanbis, Patidars, Rajputs, and such other castes?

That is our misfortune.

49. Do you know that the Dheds do not dine with the Bhangis and Chamars, and there are separate wells for them in almost all the towns and villages ?

That is another misfortune.

50. Can you say with some authority that the Dheds will allow the Bhangis and Chamars to enter into their temples?

If I can persuade the so-called high-caste Hindus, I think it will be easy enough to persuade the Harijans.

51. Have you got a written assurance from the bulk of the Dheds that they will give up such sentiments if public temples are opened even to the Bhangis and Chamars?

Many persons have given me assurances, though I have nothing in writing.

52. You have been constantly preaching touchability after your return from Africa? Will you state the number of temples in the towns and villages which are opened to the untouchables with the consent of the local sanatanists?

I think the number must be about 500.

53. Do you not think that the Lion of India who once roared and launched non-co-operation movement against the British Government ought not to seek help from His Excellency the Viceroy on this question ?

If I reply to this question, I would be violating my promise to

the Government.[1]

54. You propose to fast to death if the Viceroy does not sanction the Bill. Is this by way of resentment against the Viceroy or the obstinate sanatanists?

The reply to this question is contained in the reply to question

55. You do not think that your identification with the question will prejudicially affect reverence of the sanatanists for you and practically wreck the Congress and strengthen hands of the British statesmen who are against giving substantial rights to India?

I do not believe so.

56. Do you not think that the reverence for you is your real strength?

Whatever power I have is Rama's, not mine.

57. Are you prepared to face the human nature as it is?

That is what I have done all my life.

58. Do you really appreciate the practical difficulties in the way of accomplishment of your desire?

I think I am fully aware of the difficulties.

59. Can you suggest a practical way by which public temples may be opened to the untouchables without creating a split or tension among the Hindus ?

I have certainly made my suggestions.

60. Can the Jains, who are not Hindus by religion, and the Hindus who are against idol-worship, and who have therefore nothing at stake, ask the Viceroy to sanction the Bill?

No.

61. Has any of the so-called benefactors of the untouchables built or offered to build any temple for the untouchables?

No.

62. What harm is there if separate temples, having due regard to local needs, are built, and the question of the entry into the temples built and maintained by the sanatanists is shelved?

That will harm sanatana dharma itself.

63. Have you ever stayed long in places of pilgrimage with a view to correctly ascertain the depth of the religious sentiments of sanatanist males and females ?

Yes.

[1] Gandhiji was to eschew all politics during his incarceration, while he was allowed to meet and communicate freely for anti-untouchability work.

64. Is it not a fact that the heart, and not the body, is the seat of love?

It is so.

65. Is it a fact that the sacred books of the Hindus lay the greatest stress on the mutual touch by heart?

True.

66. Is it not a fact that it is the lack of mutual touch by heart which creates wars and disputes among families and nourishes civil and criminal courts?

Quite true.

67. You know that during the dire famine of Samvat 1956[1],numerous sanatanists fed the needy and supplied clothes? Can you point to a single instance of the untouchables having been denied that benefit ?

There is no limit to that.

68. Do you not think that the non-touchability of the Hindu women in menses is based on the principle of purity? Does it breathe any hatred for them ?

That is right. It implies no contempt.

69. Should a Hindu take his bath and wash his clothes if he touches a corpse or any dead creature ?

They should purify themselves.

70. You know that among then Parsis the women in menses are treated as untouchables for eight days.

I have heard that it is so.

71. Do you know that no pious Mohammedan would go to a Masjid for prayers if there be a drop of urine or pus on any of his clothes?

That is true.

72. Supposing that a majority of people in a particular village or town believe that to drink is no vice, should the minority also drink?

Never.

73. Are you of the opinion that dharma should be defined according to the notions of the majority in a particular locality ?

Whatever the theory, the practice will remain what the majority does.

74. Do you know that about 80 per cent of the boys attending schools and colleges, who wear a white khaddar cap, do not visit temples even once a year; and most of them state that the sacred books of the Hindus should be thrown into the sea ?

I would be surprised and pained if this is true.

[1] 1900 A.D

75. Have you ever advised these boys to visit temples for *darshan* at least once a fortnight or a month?

No.

76. Do you not think that if the administration of India be entrusted to the people of such views, they would follow in the footsteps of Russia, whose policy is to make the country Godless?

I have no such fear.

77. Have you ever cared to ascertain the percentage of boys referred to in Q.74, who offer prayers to God even once a day ?

Generally all pray at least once every day.

78. Do you know that the ladies residing in the 'Vanita Vishram'[1] and numerous educated high-caste ladies do not observe menses?

I do not know.

79. Has not Shri Krishna said that dear unto him is one who causes no *udvega*[2] to others? What are your notions about the ahimsa dharma?

I have replied to this question in many of my articles.

80. Can you point to two males or females having similar features of the body, etc., from the population of 180 crores of the earth?

No.

81. Is it possible to expect all human beings to be of the same temperament or the same habits?

No.

82. Do you not think that the contact of high-caste Hindus with the untouchables in their present state would do considerable harm to the former?

If the so-called high-caste Hindus really deserve to be called high-caste, mixing with Harijans will, instead of harming them, benefit both themselves and the Harijans. Even if they do not possess the kind of heart about which you have asked a question above, they will benefit by freely mixing with the Harijans because such mixing concerns the heart.

83. All tinctures contain liquor. Would you advise those who take them to take liquor or to give up the tinctures?

Personally I would appeal to them to give up drinking tinctures.

84. Can you point to any Rajput ruler following the Buddhistic religion, or to

[1] Women's home
[2] Pain

any Mohammedan ruler who had compelled the sanatanists to allow the untouchables to enter their temples?

I don't know of any.

85. Do you think that if the British Government were to violate the repeated sacred pledges of absolute non-intervention in religious matters, it would contribute to their stability and to peace and contentment among men?

No.

86. Does Malaviyaji take meals or do *Sandhya-Gayatri*[1] without taking a bath if he has touched any untouchable person?

This question should be addressed to Malaviyaji.

87. If the sentiments of the Hindus who support you on this question do not materially differ from those of our friend Mr. Shaukat Ali, is it not open to him to say that he too is a sanatanist? And can he be our teacher as to what the sanatana dharma is?

It is beyond my power to say what Maulana Shaukat Ali can do.

88. Is it a fact that most of the Dheds, Bhangis and Chamars take beef even now? Do you think that they can be all Harijans?

I know that all of them do not eat beef. Certainly all of them can become Harijans.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4112. Also C.W. 2799. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

623. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 11, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got the mail from you. I cannot judge whether or not you could read Mahavir's[2] letter. Read my reply to him and do the needful. I suppose you did write to all persons who had lent him money. Tell Mahavir what Brijkishan[3] also told you about him.

What is Ratilal's[4] state of mind? Prema's[5] anger does not seem to have cooled down. But I assume that she does not harass you in any way. And I am sure that she would not neglect her work because of

[1] Vedic prayer to the Sun-God
[2] Mahavir Giri
[3] Brijkrishna Chandiwala
[4] Ratilal Mehta, son of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta
[5] Premabehn Kantak

her anger. I hope she does not ill-treat her body because of it. If her anger is directed only against me, I don't mind it; I am passing it on to the Court above.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

624. LETTER TO MADALASA BAJAJ

January 11, 1933

CHI. MADALASA,

Your health seems to be all right these days. If you continue in the same manner, your petulance and your habit of crying will disappear in a short time. It is enough if you digest the food which you eat.

The questions which occur to you occur to all people who love knowledge. They are solved by reading and reflection. We ourselves are the world. We are in it and it is in us. God also is in us. We do not see the air in our body, but we have another physical sense with which we can feel it. We can develop a sense with which we can feel God, and, if we do so, we can know Him also. Vinoba is helping you to develop such a sense. Have patience.

Tell Janakimaiya[1] that I often see Jamnalal[2]. His health is good.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 314

625. LETTER TO GULAM RASUL QURESHI

YERAVDA,
January 11, 1933

CHI. QURESHI,

What has gone wrong with you now? What does the doctor say? I will not tolerate it in the slightest degree that you should be ill. How did a body which seemed so strong become weak? The children must

[1] Addressee's mother
[2] Addressee's father

have completely recovered now. Is Amina at peace? Do not hesitate to write to me. Such hesitation will be misplaced sympathy. I must have all the necessary information about all of you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10816. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

626. LETTER TO INDRA VIDYALANKAR

January 11, 1933

CHI. INDRA,

I have a letter from some Harijans of your area, I am enclosing it. Read it and after an inquiry do whatever is possible. I have written to them to see you.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

Enclosure: Letter from the Harijans

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7204. Also C.W. 4862. Courtesy: Chandragupta Vidyalankar

627. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Now 5 a.m., January 12[1]*, 1933*

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter arrived as usual. Also your notes on Dr. Gour's book.

I always omit to tell you about what our common friends write about you. They all think of you, would like to write to you if you could receive their letters and invariably send their love to you. Among these are the Kingsley Hall people, the Privats, the Italian sisters, the Larks of St. Francis and Mary Barr. This is not an exhaustive list, it is only an illustrative list. But I must send you some

[1] The source has "13", but in his letter of January 19, 1933, to the addressee, Gandhiji refers to this letter as of "Thursday", which was January 12. *Vidc* also "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", pp. 35-6.

of the letters themselves. Thus you will find Madeleine's[1] letter and a copy of my reply, Andrews's and John Morris's, the blind man. I must not omit Agatha, Esther, Horace and the Woodbrooke[2] people. They never fail to remember you whenever they write. You will find with this also John Morris's X'mas card and one of the very beautiful picture-cards that Princess Aristarchi sends every week. She seems to be a learned woman of deep devotion.

You are late with your remarks about the primus stove. It was banished from the Ashram now some two months ago. I ought to have written to you then. On learning of the death of Prof. Trivedi's brother's wife from the primus-lighting, I wrote[3] to Narandas that the best way to mourn the event was to banish the stove altogether from the Ashram. It was a hard job to convince some of the women. But they all realized the necessity. The banishment was not made compulsory. Everyone gave it up voluntarily. I should have given you this pleasing information before but how many such titbits I must be omitting every week! However, I know that you do not expect such things from me. And yet if I do not tell them to you, you remain ignorant of all the happenings in the Ashram which you should and may under the prison rules know. I must do what I can.

My weight is the same as last week and so is the food. No salt as yet. It is no deprivation for me. There is no craving for it. When I take it, I like it. But I would not like anything the moment I *knew* that it was harmful for me. The elbow pain remains what it was, not the slightest cause for anxiety.

You need not return the enclosed letters and the cards.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 9679. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] Madeleine Rolland, sister of Romain Rolland
[2] Woodbrooke Settlement, the Quaker Centre near Birmingham
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 15/16-10-1932.

628. LETTER FO EDMOND AND YVONNE PRIVAT[1]

January 12, 1933

MY DEAR ANAND AND BHAKTI,

We were all delighted to receive your letter after many months. I know that you are both spreading the gospel of love and also trying to live it. I often think of those very happy times we were together on the *Pilsna*[2]. I am never tired of recalling your utter indifference to possession of riches, and your losing yourselves in one another.

May this New Year make your life richer, happier and more fruitful in the service of humanity.

I had to dictate if I was to write to you at all.

Love from us all.

Did you get Mahadev's Christmas letter?

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 8794

629. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

January 12, 1933

MY DEAR MARGARETE[3],

I had your love-letter from your ship. I was glad that you were at the Ashram and were able to take actual part in the service of the Harijans and, in my opinion, inasmuch as you rendered this selfless service to downtrodden humanity, you served the whole of it.

You were quite right in giving up spinning 'ropes' as you were doing. If you could have learnt the art properly, I would certainly have advised you to continue to spin not cotton but wool; but perhaps you have no talent for such work. God has blessed you with many other gifts, and it is well with you so long as you use them for the service of mankind including of course your dear mother.

Next time we meet, if we do, you are not going to be 'awed' by me, if you are to be a daughter to me. Do not hesitate to write to me whenever you feel like it.

Mahadev joins me in sending love to you.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] A Swiss couple; Gandhiji called them Anand and Bhakti

[2] During the return-voyage from England after the Round Table Gonference.

[3] Dr. Margarete Spiegel, a German lady, who lived in the Ashram for some time. She was also a teacher at Santiniketan

630. LETTER TO V. M. NAWLE

January 12, 1933

DEAR DR. NAWLE,

I have your letter after many days, but you have not acknowledged my letter regarding Sjt. C. V. Vaidya. I therefore do not know whether you have appreciated the force of my criticism.

Please tell me in as few words as possible what "the new and unique path" to the temple-entry is; then I shall decide whether an inter-view is necessary. I have just now no time to spare for anything but the most important matters.

Yours sincerely,

DR. V. M. NAWLE
EDITOR, "DINBANDHOO"
444 RASTA PETH, POONA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18907

631. LETTER TO SIDDHIAH

January 12, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your telegram[1]. I dare not interfere in election matters with-out knowing anything and from inside a prison.

Yours sincerely,

SIDDHIAH
HARIJAN SANGH
ERODE

From a microfilm: S.N. 18908

632. LETTER TO NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA

January 12, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. What is required is not articles for the Press. So far as that kind of propaganda is concerned, it is being done by

[1] In which the addressee had requested Gandhiji to bless a Harijan candidate standing for the presidentship of the Erode Taluk Board and to ask the opposing candidate to withdraw (S.N. 18894)

ex-perienced people. What you can do is to take up some actual constructive work in which you will spend your money and yourself.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA
C/O MESSRS S.S. BRIJ BASI & SONS
BUNDER ROAD, KARACHI CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18909

633. LETTER FO PARASHURAM SHARMA

January 12, 1933

DEAR DR. PARASHURAM,

I have your letter and I had your telegram also.[1] I telegraphed to Mathuradas Jain as soon as I got your telegram. I wonder if he gave it up. I have not heard from him. His statement is of course altogether wrong. He did not even take the elementary precaution of finding out from me how and why the fast was postponed. Beyond sending a telegram, I have not taken any other steps, and even after receiving your letter I have not thought it proper to write to him. You will please tell me what has been the outcome of the fast.[2] I hope you are keeping well.

Yours sincerely,

DR. PARASHURAM
KRISHNA NAGAR
LAHORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 18910

634. LETTER TO K. KELAPPAN

January 12, 1933

MY DEAR KELAPPAN,

I have your letter. On receipt thereof I telegraphed to Gopalan

[1] The addressee had requested Gandhiji to persuade Mathuradas Jain of Ferozepur to give up his fast.

[2] Mathuradas Jain had obeyed Gandhiji's instruction and abandoned his fast; *vide* "Letter to Mathuradas Jain", 8-2-1933.

to confer with Rajagopalachariar.

I hope that you have got over the effect of the accident[1] and do please see me on your way back.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18911

635. LETTER TO R. SOMASUNDARAM AIYAR

January 12, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. Your letter seems to me to be an illustration of the imaginary quarrel between the poor wife and her many husbands. You say you will not allow my will to thwart your allegiance to God and your conscience. I say I am not going to allow a few million out of my 300 millions to thwart my allegiance to God, my conscience and, what is perhaps more pertinent for you, my allegiance to my other many million husbands. So you see the odds against me are not even. Husbands can always play ducks and drakes with their wives, for they always play with loaded dice. But God has gifted wives with infinite patience. So, you will see how at the end of it I bear down the opposition of the very few husbands out of many who are up in arms against me, and when the quarrel is over, you will shed crocodile tears over the scars "the whole host" of you may leave on your poor wife and then make her forget all about her past miseries.

You appeal to me to exploit your sympathy for the economic betterment of the backward classes. I invite you to make a sporting offer.

Your argument, I hope, you don't want me to take seriously, or, if you do, then I must ask you dispassionately to study all the statements that I have been making, and you will find that every one of the questions raised by you is sufficiently answered therein.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. SOMASUNDARAM AIYAR

ADVOCATE

MYLAPORE, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 19230

[1] Car accident

636. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

January 12, 1933

MY DEAR VENKATAPPAYYA,

I have your letter.[1] I fear that your suggestion is fatal, especially at the present moment. To set up new temples would be to set up a new religion and accept defeat. If it is to be defeat, I should take it and resign myself to it, but I will not set up a new religion. If our contention is right and the public reject it, we should know that untouchability is not to be destroyed or even shaken during our time. Whether the contemplated legislation should be there or not is a matter that should be examined on its own merits. I have come to the conclusion that both from the point of view of interference in matters religious and seeking Viceregal sanction, it is free from reproach. Any time we would want legislation in order to correct errors and, in the hottest non-co-operation days, I should not hesitate to promote legislation backed by public will. No law or rule can be cited to defeat its own end. You may then be sure that there is flaw in your reasoning. The cry of religious interference is perfectly thoughtless where it is not obviously hypocritic[al]. Of course, there is a third objection to the proposed Bill, namely, that the question who should or should not enter a temple should not be decided by those who are temple-goers' but by some extraneous authority, in this instance, learned men. I totally deny the validity of that proposition. No religion could grow under such a chilling rule. Hindu religion, so far as I know it, has never followed any such rule. Mind, I do not insist that all old temples should be opened to Harijans, but I do insist that all old temples should be opened where the majority of present worshippers are willing. It is the acid test of the sincerity or the reality of the Bombay Resolution.

I suppose we must resign ourselves to the prospect of your wife

[1] The addressee had written: "So far as Guruvayur temple is concerned, the object may be taken as having been practically fulfilled, the opinion of the people being found to be decidedly favourable. . . . There will be no need to seek the aid of law if public opinion is secured in favour of the movement and legislation will be of no value if public opinion is adverse."

leaving this stage any moment. Perhaps it would be a welcome deliverance from a lingering death. I hope you are feeling better.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

GUNTUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 19231

637. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

January 12, 1933

MY DEAR C .R.,

I have your second letter. I hope that what you have heard is not true, but if it turns out to be true, it would be unfortunate. But I should not take any action upon a mere rumour[1]. Mahadev has just suggested a public statement. I shall see whether such a thing is possible. In any case, I suppose I should know the result in a day or two.

I am glad you like the appeal to the sanatanists.[2] Of course, all such effort is costly, but the cost is worth paying. The deliberate falsehoods that are flung about are the things that shake me and cut me to the marrow. But I have no shadow of a doubt that Truth will conquer.

I expect to meet the sanatanist *Shastris* about whom Hiralal Nanavati has been writing to me.

I have written a long letter[3] to the Editor of the *Justice* about his attack on my proposal. He wrote to me sending me three cuttings from his paper and invited my criticism.

I gave also on the same question a long interview[4] yesterday to the Associated Press which you will see.

You seem to have forgotten all about Gopala Menon's letter refer-ring to the proposed All-Hindu Conference at Guruvayur. You remem-ber Gopala Menon said that you would attend to it. I therefore

[1] Based on the *Madras Mail* article suggesting that sanction for Dr. Subbaroyan's Temple-entry Bill should neither be given nor refused, and that a committee might be appointed to enquire and report on the strength of the demand (S.N. 19193)

[2] *Vide* "Appeal to Sanatanists", 4-1-1933.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to T. A. V. Nathan11-1-1933.

[4] *Vide* "Statement to Associated Press", 11-1-1933.

sent Gopala Menon a telegram yesterday to see you, because he reminded me that I had done nothing about it. If you want that Conference, you have to advise Acharya Dhruva and Dr. Bhagwandas in good time. In my opinion, Malaviyaji should still be left free.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 19232

638. LETTER TO L. B. NAYAK[1]

January 12, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Attractive as your suggestion may appear to be, it savours of dishonesty, if I have understood it correctly, and it also seems to be impracticable in the existing circumstances.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. L. B. NAYAK
34 L THAKURDWAR
BOMBAY NO. 2

From a microfilm: S.N. 19233

639. A LETTER

January 12, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and a copy of your resolution, for which I thank you.

I think you should discuss with Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla the interesting points you have raised in your letter. It is difficult for me to deal with the situation from this distance. I am forwarding your letter to Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18912

[1] General Scretary, Depressed Classes Mission Society of India, Bombay; in his letter dated January 7, the addressee had suggested that the Mahars and Chamars should designate themselves as "Kshatriyas" in all places and records.

640. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

January 12, 1933

BOYS AND GIRLS,

I got your letter. It is good to talk things over with the Harijans. With patience and love they will understand our work. You should listen to what they have to say to you. Answer to the extent you can. If you go to them regularly, there will be discussions. If you inquire about their sufferings and take interest in all aspects of their lives, slowly they will come to accept us as their relations.

Try to grow enough vegetables for the Ashram. That is not difficult.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

641. A LETTER[1]

January 12, 1933

It would be improper from every point of view for a person who cannot observe the basic rules of the Ashram to remain in the Ashram. Neither he nor the Ashram would benefit by his staying. If the inmates lived in that manner the Ashram would break up.

Anybody who wishes to live in the Ashram should have sincere love for it. He should always take care to see that he does nothing to harm its good name. I have not been able to see any such thing in you.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 42-3

642. A LETTER

January 12, 1933

You should constantly bear this in your mind, that so long as you cannot remain pure in your feelings towards her you have no right to go near her nor to serve her. If you understand this, all impure feelings towards her will soon vanish. If you remain determined, your strength will daily go on increasing.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadavbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 43

[1] This and other letters from the same source are mostly fragments from the original letters extracted by Mahadev Desai in his diary.

643. LETTER TO LAKSHMIBEHN N. KHARE

January 12, 1933

CHI. LAKSHMIBEHN,

I note every week that you do not write to me. It is not right that you should boycott me completely like this. Occasionally you should write a few lines. I cherish high hopes of the few women like you who are old inmates of the Ashram.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 284. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

644. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 12, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

Read my letter[1] to Mirabehn and pass it on to her. I hope your asthma has left you.

Mirabehn is your neighbour now. Send her fruits and any other things which she may need. I hope Mahavir and the party have left. That was the best course. The arrangement which you have made is right.

Keep a regular register for recording people's weights and get everybody weighed at fixed intervals.

Did you see the account of expenditure which Mahavir prepared from memory? If you have not seen it and wish to see it, let me know and I will send it to you. I have preserved it. It did not satisfy me. I hope you remember that I asked you to send Kellogg's book and *Satyarthapr-akash*[2].

It was necessary to write a long letter to Prema explaining everything, and, therefore, though I am rather hard pressed for time, I found the necessary time and have written it. Though the letter is addressed to her, it is meant for all, that is, for all workers of the Ashram. I hope you had noted the difference between workers of the Ashram and inmates of the Ashram which I had explained in a previous letter. My remarks about you in the letter were necessary. It is not merely formal courtesy on the part of a father but it is his moral

[1] *Vide* 12-1-1933.

[2] By Swami Dayananda

duty to express the faith which he has in his son. May God grant you, whenever the occasion arises, the necessary strength to justify my faith. I am sure that these words of mine will not upset you.

BAPU

[PS.]

There are 19 letters in all. They are all tied with a string.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

645. LETTER TO SITARAM K. NALAVDE

January 12, 1933

BHAI NALAVDE,

Your letter.

The Harijan brethren certainly have the right to give up carrion-eating as well as disposal of dead cattle. But it would be better if they took the vow to give up carrion-eating. The duty of removal of dead cattle has the sanction of society. After all someone has to perform this duty. The public will certainly be put to hardship if those who are well versed in the job give it up. It is the dharma of all to protect society from this difficulty. Therefore if necessary this job may be given up only after coming to some arrangements with . . .[1] the *mahajan*[2]. The giving up of carrion-eating is, however, obligatory. Those who give up beef and carrion-eating and have proper bath, etc., should be entitled to enter temples. They too should thus qualify themselves for *darshan* of the image and be confident that they will have the right of temple-entry.

Those who do not give up carrion-eating should not be summarily boycotted. They should have the chance of reforming themselves. It is not an easy matter for everyone to give up a long-standing habit.

I hope that the Conference will be successful. I also hope that all the Harijan brothers and sisters will resolve on self-reform.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 801

[1] The letter is damaged here

[2] Caste leaders

646. NOTE TO DEONAYAKACHARYA[1]

January 12, 1933

DEAR SHASTRIJI,

I have received all your letters. I have already stated that my mind and heart are open for a discussion with you. Though I have not been given enough time to write to the *Shastris* I have in mind, I have sent invitations to those who can come immediately. I still do not know whether they will be able to come. The subject for our discussion is not whether untouchability is sanctioned by the Shastras or not. The subject is to determine the sanction of the Shastras for untouchability as it is practised today. And if the untouchability in current usage has the sanction of the Shastras, then who can be defined as untouchable? I certainly desire in all humility to hear your views on these two questions and other points that may arise out of these and I hope you are now satisfied and will honour me by coming over.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 19229

647. NOTE TO DEONAYAKACHARYA

January 12, 1933

DEAR SHASTRIJI,

I have your note. I have made the minimum alterations in the pamphlet sent by you and signed it. I do not mean any discourtesy and sincerely wish to have a discussion. I hope the alterations made by me are in accordance with what you have said in your letter.

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 19229

[1] The addressee, Secretary, All-India Varnashram Swarajya Sangh, had arrived at Yeravda Prison, along with four other pandits representing the Sangh, to have a discussion with Gandhiji and his advisers, on the validity of untouchability according to the Shastras. On arrival at the prison, he forwarded to Gandhiji a printed pamphlet giving information about the subject of discussion, the procedure for the debate and the names of the participants. Gandhiji added the words ‘as at present classified’ to qualify 'untouchables’ in the printed pamphlet. This was not approved by the Sangh delegates and they went away without meeting Gandhiji. *Vide* “Letter to C. Rajagopalachari”, 13-1-1933.

648. NOTE TO DEONAYAKACHARYA

January 12, 1933

DEAR SHASTRIJI,

I am helpless. And I am sadly grieved too that you want, in the manner of a lawyer, to tie up a *jijnasu*[1] and *mumukshu*[2] like me. My humble request to you is to come and enlighten me taking me as I am. I am unable to make any further modifications than what I have already done.

Yours,

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 19229

649. LETTER TO N. H. PURANDARE

January 13, 1933

MY DEAR PURANDARE,

I have your letter. I am sorry to have had it. I don't like the spirit underlying it. You have looked upon the whole thing as a commercial transaction, whereas I have looked upon the whole thing as a matter of selfless service. You left the question of remuneration entirely in my hands, although I asked you to tell me what you would charge for giving me a corrected collection of your speeches on untouchability and for supervising the printing. But you would not think of it, telling me that there was no mercenary motive behind it. That being so, I had no hesitation in undertaking the delicate task, but at the end of it, I shirked it, and I asked Haribhau to name the sum. He named Rs. 125 and I straightaway accepted. Believe me, so far as I am concerned, I did not think of the Arya Bhushan bill in connection with fixing up your fee, remuneration or honorarium, whatever it may be called. Nor did I then know nor do I now know that the Arya Bhushan bill is exorbitant. My understanding is that they should not make anything but nominal profits. You are thinking of anything between Rs. 500 to 3,000. I can only meet your proposal with a reasonable offer. You can take over the book yourself by simply paying the printing charges and sell the book on your own account and make whatever profit you can, only you should not increase the published price, for any increase in the price would be unjust to the public.

[1] Seeker after knowledge
[2] Seeker after *moksha*

I have already asked Haribhau to pay you Rs. 125 if you would accept the amount in full payment and not feel any dissatisfaction. For I would be deeply hurt if, after having left the thing in my hands, you were dissatisfied with the amount declared by me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. H. PURANDARE
604 SADASHIV PETH
POONA 2

From a microfilm: S.N., 18915

650. LETTER TO DHANNU LALL SHARMA

January 13, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I will not refer you to any of my statements this time, but I will ask you to re-read your own letter[1]. I suggest to you that that letter is libellous, insulting and unworthy of one who holds the position of General Secretary of a Sanatan Dharma Sabha.

If you will re-read your letter calmly and dispassionately, you will at once apologize to the pandits whom you have libelled, and, in any event, till you apologize, your letters will neither be read nor replied to. I am sorry for it.

Your sincere friend,

SJT. DHANNU LALL SHARMA
GENERAL SECRETARY
SHREE SANATAN DHARMA SABHA
220 HARRISON ROAD
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18917

[1] In which the addressee had referred to Gandhiji's "Appeal to Sanatanists", 4-1-1933, and said that the pandits had deceived not only him but the whole world.

651. LETTER TO SATYANANDA BOSE

January 13, 1933

DEAR SATYANANDA BABOO,

You are always so good and always think of me whenever there is anything to say to me.

I think that this is hardly the time to consider improvements in Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill. The first thing is to get the Viceregal sanction. When that is had, many improvements may be possible. I am not therefore just now applying my mind to your suggestion[1]. After the principle of the Bill is once accepted, the Government themselves may take it up or may advise amendments so far as that may be necessary to free the Bill from any possible political mischief. So far as I am concerned, my one thought in connection with the temple-entry is the purification of caste Hindus. But of course I shall bear your suggestions in mind whenever the occasion arises for their use.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SATYANANDA BOSE
4 NUNDY ST.
BALLY GUNGE
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18918

652. LETTER TO S. T. RAMANUJA IYENGAR

January 13, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter together with your article[2]. I am sorry indeed that there should have been any molestation of you by the audience. I have, as you must be aware, repeatedly written against intolerance, and I shall gladly re-emphasize my warning when the time comes.

As for your article, we must agree to differ.[3] Our conception of

[1] That the Bill be confined to giving authority to the trustee of a temple to allow the untouchables to enter it and worship as the caste Hindus do (S.N. 18893)

[2] "The Drive against Untouchability"

[3] The addressee had written in his article: "He [Gandhiji] has given up his creed of non-co-operation with Government so far as untouchability is concerned by accepting special Government favours, and is actively blessing legislative efforts, once taboo, to facilitate removal of untouchability. . . ."

sanatana dharma is different. In your impatience you have not even cared to understand my fundamental position. I can only say, 'Read all my statements with a fresh mind, then if you have still doubts, discuss them with Sjt. Rajagopalachariar and if you are not still convinced and would care to do so, come down to Yeravda and I shall gladly give you one hour and try to convince you that the position I take up and the means I adopt to vindicate are both perfectly defensible.'

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. T. RAMANUJA IYENGAR
4 VARADARAJA PERUMAL COIL ST.
TRICHINOPOLY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18919

653. LETTER TO S. NAGASUNDARAM

January 13, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I have read the texts quoted by you. So far as I can make them out, they have no application to the present-day condi-tions. Those who are regarded as untouchables today cannot be classified as *Chandalas* at all.

Inter-dining is no part of the campaign against untouchabillty

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. NAGASUNDARAM
NEAR KING'S CIRCLE
MATUNGA
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18921

654. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

January 13, 1933

MY DEAR C.R.,

Vallabhbhai had a battle royal with me last night on your behalf. If a person, an utter stranger to him, had chance to be there, from the vehemence of Vallabhbhai's language, he would have concluded that we must be most quarrelsome persons.

He thought that I was doing violent injustice to you, inasmuch as, without consultation with you, I made proposals that might prove to be utterly embarrassing, as had happened on two occasions.

The cause of our quarrel was my compromise proposal[1]. He thought that I had no right to publish it without consultation with you, and he was quite sure that though you were too good to mention it to me, you had felt very much embarrassed by it, if not also irritated. I told him that you were too good to conceal your embarrassment from me, if you were really embarrassed, and that would be quite unlike you. I even added that in this particular instance you happened even to like my proposal and that even if it was discovered that you did not like it and that you were really embarrassed, it was impossible for me every time to consult you, or such other colleagues on such occasions. I went further and argued that work on such lines would become almost impossible. People act together when there is a general agreement between them on fundamentals and [provided] that their deductions from those fundamentals were, as a rule, identical, and that if, at times, they came to different deductions, a timely confession of error would keep their friendship in tact, as also the common cause. Nothing that I could say, however, would conciliate Vallabhbhai. The curfew bell, mutually agreed upon by us, came to the rescue, and put an end to what promised to be an endless discussion. But I retired to bed with a determination that I would refer the matter to you. Your reply, one way or the other, would bring some consolation to your counsel, and you know that it won't make me disconsolate if you agreed with your counsel on both his propositions, namely, that before giving to the world the compromise proposal which I had given to Pandit Panchanan Tarkaratna I should have consulted you, and that it, as a matter of fact, did embarrass you. You would also add

[1] For a discussion, *vide* Appendix "Talk with Sadashivrao and Shinde", 13-1-1933.

to your opinion on these points, your opinion whether on merits you consider my proposal to be sound or otherwise.

A perfect tragedy was enacted here yesterday. Five pandits and their five advisers came to the jail gate yesterday an hour and a half after the appointed time and took two hours and a half in exchanging brief notes with me, the three notes[1] that they exchanged with me taking all the two hours and a half. And, will you believe it, when I tell you that they would not come in and carry on the discussion because I would not remove one word I had added to their draft, the word being an adjective added to the word 'untouchables'. The adjective applied was 'as at present classified'. Of course it altered the whole scope of their discussion. So they went away. Of course it is not our position that there is no untouchability at all in the Shastras. Our position is that there is no untouchability in the Shastras as we practise it today. They were expected to prove that untouchability as at present practised has sanction in the Shastras. It is an impossible task to perform honestly. No text that has yet been cited on their behalf has proved it. The *Shastris* on our behalf are really very learned men, and also pious men. It is their honest conviction that there is no warrant for the untouchability of the present day in the Shastras. The real untouchability will be there for all time. It is a sound hygienic rule practised all over the world.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18922

655. LETTER TO GEORGE JOSEPH

January 13, 1933

MY DEAR JOSEPH,

You can better imagine than I can describe my joy at receiving your letter, and especially your letter[2] to Pyarelal. I shall try to have your letter delivered to him. But let me say two things in connection with that letter.

[1] *Vide* "Note to Deonayakacharya", 12-1-1933.

[2] In which the addressee had expressed his views on Pyarelal's book *The Epic Fast* and stated: "The Inner Voice is either a hallucination or the voice of God. If it is truly the voice of God, it cannot counsel self-destruction because the life that God gives is for Him alone to put an end to . . ."

My fast was not a fast unto death in its literal sense. The Roman Catholic priest, who is a visitor to this prison, knows me, and when I was on the eve of taking that fast, he came over to me in his kindly manner just to say one word, and he said how he drew the distinction between a suicide and a sacrifice. A suicide carried with it a certainty of destruction. A sacrifice meant risking life, the greater the risk, the greater the sacrifice. But there should be nothing beyond risk. I had no hesitation in agreeing with the distinction, and my fast being conditional was not a fast amounting to suicide, but it was a fast involving the greatest risk, but still a risk and no more.

You will be interested to know that some of my Roman Catholic friends have detected no flaw in the fast. Of course, in Hinduism some few extreme cases there are in which ending of life is peremptory, but these I need not consider at present. There is general agreement between Hinduism and other faiths that suicide is a sin.

Now, about the Inner Voice.[1] Here again I can agree with you whole-heartedly when you say that the voice of God can never counsel or ountenance sin. Encouragement to sin can only come from the devil. But the real difficulty comes in when the question of sin itself is debatable. Those who would consider a particular act to be sinful will naturally reject the claim that it was prompted by God. Hence it was that in answer to a question I said that whilst in self-defence and for the sake of truth which I worship I was bound to say what I believed, my claim was not to be accepted as part of argument in determining relevant questions. The opponents were bound to rule [out] that claim as wholly beside the point. Whether the claim for the voice of God was well or ill-made in a particular case can only be decided after the claimant's death, and in some extraordinary cases it may even then be difficult. Apart from the danger of hypocrisy there is the still greater danger of self-deception to which mankind is prone, and it is possible for self-deceived people to attain great things and yet their claim that the voice of God was behind their acts might be wholly wrong. These are final difficulties which will remain to the end of time, but if the truth is to make any progress, then self-deluded people must also be allowed full play.

Finally comes the question of confession. You may not know that I have some very valued Roman Catholic friends also. I am in the habit of picking up knowledge more from personal contact than from

[1] For a discussion, *vide* Appendix "Discussion with a Friend", 13-1-1933.

printed texts. These friends have not yet been able to clearly define the function of Confession and the Confessor. For instance, what is one to confess who has no consciousness of guilt and when there is, I can understand a Confessor granting absolution, but can he also guide the future acts of the penitent? In the place of the Confessor Hinduism has the Guru. I have all my life striven to find one, one to whom I can shift all my burdens and roam about merely doing his will. But then such implicit limitless obedience is not a mechanical act; and having got the spirit of obedience instinctively within me I would be satisfied by nothing less than tendering complete obedience. But it seems to me that it is not given to all to find the true Guru in this short span of life. But it is given to all to make that diligent search, and it may be that that very search is its own reward, and that it keeps one in possession of peace and joy everlasting. Anyway, you will accept my testimony that ceaseless search has not only given me such joy and peace, but has protected me from conscious error.

I thank you for copying for me that extract from *Imitation of Christ*. I read that book in one single sitting, I think, in the year 1905 or 1906, and a friend, only a few months ago, sent me another copy.

With our love to all of you,

Yours sincerely,

GEORGE JOSEPH, ESQ., M.A., BARRISTER-AT-LAW

"HILL VIEW", MADURA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18923

656. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

January 13, 1933

BHAISHRI MAVALANKAR,

I got your letter. Vinabehn also told me about your illness. Illness does not spare even a lawyer, nor the chairman of a municipality! It is something to be thankful for that you will be able to move about soon.

I read Keshavji's questions. We should willingly endure a great many things like this to atone for the sins of our ancestors and our contemporaries. When to suspicion is added selfishness, you can expect nothing better. But I suppose the skin of your back has become sufficiently thick by now so that you feel such blows as light

as flowers.

Thakkar Bapa[1] suggests that I should write to Dada[2] for the Harijan fund. Since when did you become Dada? It must have been before I was born. May you live long and serve the Harijans. Bapa suggests that you should use your influence with Vaishnavas like Chimanbhai, Sakarbhai, etc. They may not permit Harijans to enter temples for *darshan,* but they should liberally help with money for activities other than the movement for temple-entry. But need one commend the cause of the tongue to the teeth? If Bapa's word does not carry weight with Dada, how can Bapu of merely fifteen years, standing hope that his will? I have only passed on to you the load put on my head by Bapa. He has also ordered me to write to Kasturbhai[3] and make a similar request to him. May I give you my power of attorney?

Since you have just risen from the sick-bed, I tried to lighten business with a little humour and that has made the letter long. I, therefore, leave it to you to speak to Kasturbhai. As for Chimanbhai, I also will write to him.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1234

657. LETTER TO NANALAL K. JASANI

January 13, 1933

BHAI NANALAL[4],

I got your postcard. I had a wire from Lilavati[5] too. She has replied that she cannot say anything without consulting Padma. Let me have all the information you possess regarding this marriage. Who is the bridegroom and what kind of a man is he? What is his age? What is his economic condition and what sort of health does he have? What is his occupation? I suppose you know that Maganlal[6] is against the marriage.

[1] Amritlal V. Thakkar; "Bapa" means father.

[2] "Grand-father" in Gujarati, but "elder brother" in Marathi. Addressee's mother tongue was Marathi.

[3] Kasturbhai Lalbhai, a mill-owner of Ahmedabad

[4] Business partner of the late Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

[5] Lilavati Mehta, wife of Chhaganlal Mehta

[6] Maganlal Mehta

You seem to be very busy with the marriage in your family. I hope you have not been incurring unnecessary expenditure. Utilize the occa-sion also to give as much money to worthy causes as you can.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9628

658. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 13, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

Dr. Kanuga writes and tells me that Radha[1] does suffer from tuberculosis. She should be sent away to a place like Deolali. She will be restored to health only if she takes complete rest there. You should discuss this with Santoks and Radha[2]. This is a difficult problem, but we must solve it.

Do you get any letter from Ramabehn[3]? Chhaganlal has received no letter from her at all.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

659. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 13, 1933

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

I have your letter. Enclosed are the letters from Chamanbhai and Sakarbhai. Show them to Bhai Mavalankar. If his health has improved go with him to both of them. Or, you yourself do what you can. If we fail today, we shall succeed tomorrow. Let us not give up hope. My booklet for the Gujaratis will certainly materialize. It is taking time but now it will soon be ready, provided nothing fresh crops up to impede it.

You and Anasuyabehn must be in good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32735

[1] Radha Gandhi, daughter of Maganlal Gandhi.
[2] Widow of Maganlal Gandhi
[3] Ramabehn Joshi, wife of Chhaganlal Joshi

660. LETTER TO CHAMANLAL GIRDHARDAS PAREKH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 13, 1933

DEAR CHAMANBHAI,

Bhai Shankerlal and Thakkar Bapa write that apart from the temple-entry, you are also declining to help to other activities of Harijan service. I did not, and still do not, expect this of you. Others may find fault with me as a Vaishnava, but surely you would not join them. My ideas about Harijan service are not new. Some day, you will yourself admit that my ideas are in keeping with Vaishnava dharma. However, I will let that pass for now. Do not bring into Gujarat the conflict prevailing elsewhere. I am entitled to ask this much of you. Bhai Mangaldas gave me this right and you acknowledge it. Therefore, I urge you to contribute what you can to the Fund.[1]

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32752

661. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

January 14, 1933

MY DEAR MARGARETE,

I must continue to dictate. You are entitled to call yourself an Indian since you have felt like one from your childhood, but that is not a substitute for your German birth. The adoption should be an addition both to your name and to your strength, and what can be finer than that we should all add on the virtues of our own nations to those of the others!

Why was there a struggle to choose between Gurudev and myself? We are no competitors. Gurudev occupies a throne which belongs to him by sheer merit. I have none of the gifts that he has, and what is more, we dearly love each other, and as years roll on, our love becomes stronger, and we understand also each other better and better. I would have you therefore to say that you like us both equally for whatever gifts God has bestowed upon us. No more therefore of

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to G. V. Mavalankar", 13-191933.

choice-making, if you would be a real daughter like Mira.

I hope you got my previous letter[1] in which I acknowledged your letter written from Aden. The registered packet addressed to Mahadev was also duly received.

Love from us both.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

662. LETTER TO M. THIAGARAJAN

January 14, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The question is not so much what the Harijans need, but how the caste Hindus should behave towards them. In my opinion, it is the clear duty of caste Hindus to give to the Harijans the same rights that they enjoy. The fact that evil has survived numberless generations does not make it any the less an evil. Similarly, the fact that untouchability has survived the great religious teachers whom you name does not warrant the present generation in continuing it, if it can be proved to be an evil. I am convinced it is.

A person who has heard the inner call should still be open to reason and therefore conviction. That attitude enables him and others to test the truth of his claim.

I do say with my conception of Hinduism that God denies Himself what Harijans are denied, because they are called Harijans.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. THIAGARAJAN
42 SINGARA TOPE
TRICHINOPOLY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18928

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Margarete Spiegel", 12-1-1933.

663. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS

January 14, 1933

DEAR BABOO BHAGWANDAS,

I have your letter. I read an account of your meeting[1] in the papers. We are bound at the present moment to find obstruction at our meetings. I know that the Benares meeting was in the safest hands and I knew how you took the wind out of the sail of the adversary by always giving him the chance and even the first chance of speaking and restraining the sympathizers from retaliating. I do hope that you soon got out of the effect of the little fever. It does not do to take unnecessary risks at our age. I suppose you are a few years older.

I will send you the other essays as soon as I am ready, and I shall thank you to ask someone to send me all the cuttings dealing with untouchability from the *Aaj* and even other Hindi newspapers. I am getting cuttings from Marathi and Gujarati but not from Hindi. I have not forgotten the message for the Aaj, nor the book you kindly left for me, the very first copy. I acknowledged it in a previous letter which I hope you duly received. You will be pleased to know that I have already made the commencement, but I have to confess that I am going very slow and sometimes misreading it altogether.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BHAGWANDAS
SEVASHRAMA, SIGRA
BENARES (CANTT.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 18929

664. LETTER TO VERRIER ELWIN

January 14, 1933

I want to warn you against resisting nature beyond the saturation point. In Biblical language, I should say: "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord, thy God." I would say without the slightest hesitation, if you have another bad attack you should treat it as the clearest call from God to return to England and render what service you can render there. If God wants you here, the first thing He would give you is health of body. If you have humbly to acknowledge defeat, you should do so. Your defeat will be victory for God of truth. There is no

[1] Held on January 8, 1933, which passed a resolution in favour of temple-entry

waste in God's laboratory. The work begun there by you will not die. I do not mind if one man who has good health and is beyond reproach in character is there in sole charge. If there is no such worker just now, let the whole thing be temporarily wound up. This is no doleful picture. It is the real background for a Godly life. "Not my will, but thine, of Truth." I must not prolong this sermon. You know what I mean. Where there is complete surrender, there is no room for self-will.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

665. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 14, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I don't require any information about Liladhar from you. Do you know if Shankarbhai neglects his father? I have already written to Mahavir again. Vallabhbhai suggests Wadhwan for Radha.

I asked you to write to me about the Chharas. Their harassment of us seems to have stopped. Does a bhajan party visit their settlement? Has the Government posted police to keep watch on them?

Prema causes me some worry. Her conduct frightens me. If she is silent because she has realized her error, I need not mind. If, however, she is silent because she is angry, she has more serious defect of character than I had thought. Try and discover, if yoiu can, what is in her heart.

If you have any news about Gangabehn, Kusum and Lilavati, le me have it.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : m.m. u./i

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

DISCUSSION WITH " THE TIMES OF INDIA" REPRESENTATIVE

November 21, 1932

REPRESENTATIVE: Have you decided to devote the rest of your life to eradication of untouchability?

GANDHIJI: I cannot say that that is my present intention or that there is a possibility of it. It is wholly true to say that my life is devoted to this most important reform of Hindu dharma. But then my life is devoted to so many other things. I cannot divide my life into water-tight compartments. My life is indivisible. The root of all my activities is the same. In every sphere of life, be it small or big, my aim is to promote truth and ahimsa. This morning I read an article appearing in *The Times of India.* I would like to say something about it. I wish to correct an error in your editorial. It is not correct to say that all the questions regarding giving social rights to Harijans are covered by temple-entry. Temple-entry is just one of the many questions. If today it has come to the fore it is not because of me. At my request Shri Kelappan has given up his fast. So I am under an obligation to help him. Therefore, naturally, I have to do all I can to attract public attention to Guruvayur and see that before the second of January, the famous temple is thrown open to Harijans. The fast will be only to get that temple opened and no other. The fast will not be of my choosing. Only if Shri Kelappan is obliged to fast, it becomes my duty to undertake a fast too. In the effort to have the temple opened to Harijans, there is no thought of coercing any section of society. According to the information I have—and I have no cause to doubt the truth of it—many caste Hindus are in favour of throwing open the temples to Harijans. If this is so, it cannot be said that there was coercion. It may be kept in mind that though this question was put before the public only recently, Shri Kelappan and his associates have been working for it for a long time. And if he has won the public over to his view, it has not happened in a few days. It is the result of many years of sustained work.

R. Is your duty towards Shri Kelappan so great that if he undertakes a fast you must stake your life ?

G. If I lose self-respect, I would at once become useless for any kind of service. I do not consider it a great thing to risk my life to keep a pledge made in all awareness in a just cause.

R. Do you consider this of more importance than the work you are doing for the Harijan cause?

G. Once I have violated a pledge, my life would be of no use to Harijans. But if in keeping a vow I have to die, it will be in my view a precious thing not only for the Harijans, not only for Hinduism, but I humbly submit, for the whole of India and the entire world.

R. Since you do not believe in image-worship, why are you taking so much trouble to have the right of image-worship given to Harijans?

G. I don't think I have ever said that I have no faith in image-worship. I don't remember that there is anything of this sort in my articles either. What I have repeatedly said is that I am both an iconoclast and an idolator. Is it not a very different thing from saying that I have no faith in image-worship? But if someone says that I hardly ever go to a temple, it will be quite true. I would not like to go into the reasons why I don't visit the temples. But I will say this: that my religion is so all-embracing that I go with the same devotion to a Hindu temple, a Muslim mosque, a Christian church or a Jewish synagogue. I have never gone to any of these places as an atheist or a critic, but always with full devotion.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 261-2

APPENDIX II

DISCUSSION WITH "FREE PRESS" REPRESENTATIVE[1]

December 3, 1932

1. From the point of view of the duty of the caste Hindus the question of Guruvayur is not a small one. It is wholly wrong to use the phrase 'uplift of Harijans'. According to me, the first duty of the caste Hindus towards the Harijans is to throw open all the temples to them which are open to others.

2. I would not place the responsibility for temple-entry on the Anti-Untouchability League. Before the League was born, the question of Guruvayur was before the people. The League should certainly do as much as it can about the matter. But if the temple is not thrown open within the time fixed for it, the Sangh would not deserve to be castigated more than the other institutions.

3. If it is proved that Guruvayur is a private temple, there can be no ground for the fast.

4. If the reformers are truthful and humble, they can bring about a change of heart in the sanatanists. They should bear in mind that before they became reformers, they were sailing in the same boat with the sanatanists.

[1] *Vide* "Statement on Fast to Anti Untouchability Committee", 4-12-1932.

5. Reformers are trying their best to cultivate public opinion. And as a reformer myself, I think that public opinion has veered towards the reform to a considerable degree. I do not believe at all that most of the Hindus are under the influence of *dharmacharyas.* They listen to the Shankaracharya and other *acharyas* only to the extent it suits them. Suppose the Shankaracharya issues an injunction that nobody should drink liquor, do you think everyone will abide by it? If the *dharmacharyas* themselves observe restraint, then only can they make others do so.

6. I cannot wait to see myself fully restored before I undertake the fast. I believe that it will be at the command of God. When my body is weak, I am better able to stand fasting.

7. Millions of people—if they love me—will be distressed by my fast. They will raise such a powerful voice that it will become irresistible. There is a war between me and untouchability. If you want me to live, untouchability has to go. If you want untouchability to stay, I have to die.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 302-3

APPENDIX III

LETTER FROM E. E. DOYLE[1]

INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF POLICE,
BOMBAY PRESIDENCY,
POONA,
December 4, 1932

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I am in receipt of your letter of today for which many thanks. I shall convey its contents, tomorrow, personally to Government. There is one point, a very important point, to my mind, on which we were agreed, which you have not touched on in your letter, it is, that the present practice of employing so-called 'low-caste' prisoners is of very wide import, and that you realize it cannot at present be altered. I feel I shall have a stronger case, if I have your confirmation of this in writing. I am sorry to worry you on your day of silence, especially after the strain of interviewingthe Deputation, but I am sure you will appreciate that I desire to have all my points absolutely correct, when I place your case before Government tomorrow.

Yours sincerely,

E. E. DOYLE

Home Department, Political, File No. 31/108-Poll., p. 22, 1932. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. E. Doyle", 4-12-1932.

APPENDIX IV

DISCUSSION WITH POONA SANATANISTS

December 7, 1932

GANDHIJI: Temple-entry is a purely religious question. I have never regarded it as a question of expediency. For me religion is practice. Every Hindu has the right to go to a temple. The rules regarding personal hygiene apply to all. The custom of admitting Hindus of one particular class into temples has been in vogue for many years. But which Hindus should be admitted into a temple and which not is not a religious question. About this only the temple-goers should be consulted. Dharmashastras should not be brought in. The few who are left out should not coerce others. They should build another temple for themselves. From what study I have made of my religion, I feel that for those who are not permitted in other temples, the temple should be opened for a few hours. True religion is that which leads to spiritual progress and for which we are ready to sacrifice everything. The temple should be thrown open for 'touchables' for a few hours; but if the reformers are few, it cannot be thrown open to untouchables. The question of minority and majority arose from my fast. In answer to those who doubted if the majority wanted temples to be opened to untouchables, a referendum was suggested. If you prove beyond doubt that temple-entry by untouchables is against the Shastras, I shall be helpless.

QUESTION: Do you promise to listen to the *Shastris* if they secure a 51 per cent majority?

G. I would give up the fast today if you prove it to be *adharma.*

Q. Would you consider this opportunity for a discussion with the *Shastris* ?

G. Whether it is my good luck or bad luck, you people have come here because of my fast. I had resolved that it was our duty to throw open the temples. I decided this long ago. I met the *Shastris* at Vaikom. They showed me *Shankara Smriti* and translated it too. But there was nothing in it to support what the *Shastris* said. I shall, of course, listen to you, since you have come to throw new light on the question; but, in the course of discussion I will not give up the resolve to fast. I read through many *granthas* and their translations and in the end decided that that which stands the test of ahimsa and truth is dharma. I did not go to the *Gita,* instead the *Gita* came to me. The *Gita* is for me an independent support. To save myself from all sorts of criticisms, I fell back on my faith, reason and *bhakti.* If what you say appeals to my reason, I shall say that I have lost on the rational plane. Then I shall depend on my heart. You will have to satisfy my heart.

Q. Will it not follow that what appeals to your heart is your dharma?

G. Whatever appeals to a man's heart is dharma to him. Dharma cannot be reached by the intellect. It can only be reached by the heart. That is why it is for fools too. The question of temple-entry is purely religious. To alter my views is very difficult indeed because behind my views is a past. An ordinary man cannot decide what is and what is not dharma as regards temple-entry. It would be a mistake on my part to advocate temple-entry, if I regard it as *adharma.* But after a prolonged study and experience I have come to believe that it is our religious duty to throw open the temples to Harijans. I do not want to force on others what I have decided for myself. But I tell you that if your heart does not rebel against the existing tradition, I will be forced to undertake a fast. If it rebels, there will be no need for me to undertake it. I have already decided for myself. People have to decide for themselves.

Q. How can we appeal to your heart?

G. It is the teacher's duty to convey the lesson to the student. How to do it, is the teacher's look out. If he does not know this, how can he be called a teacher? Where am I to look for the guru? The guru should find me. If I go in search of him, I may stumble. Man does not have to go in quest of God. If we have to go in quest of Him, is It God? God finds His servants and devotees.

Q. Please talk in Sanskrit.

G. I am an ignoramus. If I were a pundit like you, I would not have allowed you to come here or I would have locked you up. I would have said, 'Go away, my study of Shastras is different from yours.'

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 310-3

APPENDIX V

LETTER FROM DR. B. C. ROY[1]

36 WELLINGTON STREET,
CALCUTTA,
December 12, 1932

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

Your letter reached me yesterday. I heard from Mr. Khaitan the details of the discussion he had with you regarding the Bengal Anti-Untouchability Board. You told him that you were going to write to me. After hearing Mr. Khaitan, I was prepared for a letter from you such as you have sent me. Before I proceed further, you will allow me to mention that the position of the Presidentship of the Bengal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. B. C. Roy", 7/15-12-1932.

Board was not of my seeking and I now know that Mr. Birla had, after consultation with you and with your approval, selected me as President. When the call came, I agreed, in spite of my imperfections and my other pre-occupations. I do not forget also that the whole scheme originated with you and friends who met at Poona and, therefore, when these friends wanted me to do so, I accepted the responsibility. You asked me to be the President because you were then convinced that I could do the work. Now that you do not feel so sure and want me to withdraw, I gladly do so. I am writing to Mr. Birla today offering my resignation. It is no matter of self-abnegation for me, because I have never in my life occupied any place or position for a moment when those who have it in their gift desired that I should not continue to do so.

You have, in your letter, suggested that I should call all workers representing different groups and parties and let them choose whomsoever they like as President. May I point out to you that under the constitution of the League, the President of the Central Board nominates the Presidents of the Provincial Boards, who in their turn nominate the members of the Provincial Boards. I have no power to dissolve the Board already formed in Bengal. It is not, therefore, possible for me to follow your instructions even if I desired to, but I am referring the whole matter to Mr. Birla, the President of the All-India Board for him to take such action as he chooses.

You say in your letter: 'But I see that the idea has not found favour in Bengal.' I feel it my duty to inform you that in Bengal there are many parties and groups, besides those led by Sjt. Satis Das Gupta and Dr. Suresh Banerji, who are interested in removal of untouchability and who are doing very valuable work now. We framed the Bengal Board very carefully and, as Syt. Debi Prasad Khaitan must have told you, the Board was representative of the various groups. Many of the district bodies already in existence have written to us signifying their desire to co-operate with the Board and in fact we have had no refusal except, as Syt. Khaitan told you, from Messrs Das Gupta and Banerji, though each had different reasons. As you, however, seem to think that in Bengal a Board cannot function effectively unless with the co-operation of Syt. Das Gupta and Dr. Banerji, which they have refused to give, there is no option left but to dissolve the Board.

As the work of the League has already begun in Bengal, it would be difficult for me and the members of my Board to explain the position unless I get your permission to send this letter and the first paragraph of your letter to the Press. I hope you have no objection.

Yours sincerely,

B. C. ROY

In the Shadow of the Mahatma, pp. 77-8

APPENDIX VI

LETTER FROM E. E. DOYLE TO R. M. MAXWELL[1]

POONA,
December 8, 1932

MY DEAR MAXWELL,

I had hardly put down the receiver after telephoning you, when I received a communication from Gandhi—further "mahseer wriggle"—I attach a copy of his letter, I shall send the original by Registered Post tomorrow, as the alterations are in his own handwriting, and it is much too important a document to chance going astray in the Post.

As soon as I received his letter I went down to Yeravda and found him interviewing a 'deputation'—however I got him apart and had a real talk—I told him straight that there was not a vestige of truth in the statement, as far as I was aware, that so-called high-caste prisoners had been doing conservancy work for several months in Ratnagiri Prison and that I had not issued any orders stopping this work. Also that when I saw him last he had appreciated Government's inability to give a reply "off-hand", and realized that if this question was to be *considered on an all-India basis* and *thoroughly* examined it must take time—and that I had reported this to Government. After a great deal of hedging and talk I got him to alter his letteras shown. I cannot help feeling that he is funking his so-called "contemplated fast" on the 2nd January and is casting round for any excuse to get out of it.

Yours sincerely,

E. E. DOYLE

Home Department, Political, File No. 31/108-Poll., p. 30, 1932. Courtesy: National Archives of India

APPENDIX VII

DISCUSSION WITH MACRAE

December 12, 1932

GANDHIJI: I don't think there is anything special I can say at the moment. I think, for the present, we should leave the question of wells. If at all I can say something, it will be about the fast. You may ask me about that.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. E. Doyle", 8-12-1932.

MACRAE: What have you to say about the allegation that through this you impose your opinion on others?

G. My answer to this question will also cover what you have said about the resolution concerning my fast. Shri Jamnadas Mehta has perfect right to make the criticism he has made. But I do not accept his allegations. I have never tried to impose my views on others. I have never imposed my views even on the closest co-workers. But it has so happened that, despite my having admitted that I have committed Himalayan blunders, my views on many things have been proved correct. For me the question of untouchability is forty years old. Ever since, I have been facing opposition on this score. It has come not only from outsiders but also from my family members—old and young. But the views I have been holding and putting into practice for the last 45 years have been commonly accepted. Today, if my sanatanist friends charge that I have been forcing my views on the public or on the sanatanists, there is not much substance in the charge. Looking at the history of mankind, we find that whenever an individual has held some good ideas, has insisted on them and put them into practice in his life, the whole society has accepted them. Now, to say that he has forced his thoughts on the people is absurd. So long as there is no physical force behind one, it cannot be said that one has forced one's views on others. It is true that my fast has evoked some anxiety. But I have no doubt in my mind that I am not at all to blame for it. I am carefully watching, with the eye of a scientist, the impact that my contemplated fast has had, and is having. What I see fills me with joy and hope. The fast has made people think. The fast will not force anybody to do anything against his conscience, but those who are lethargic will give up their lethargy and will start working with zest, that is, all those who love me will actively start working. I do not in the least feel depressed by this development. Those who feel that I am destroying Hinduism write angry letters saying I should quickly undertake the fast and depart from the world. Such letters do not have any effect on me. I am talking about these letters on]y to show that those who are opposed to eradication of untouchability will not be affected in the least by the fast which I am thinking of undertaking and it should be so. But about the fast, I will have to say more later on. At the moment I can only say that nobody would be able to deflect Shri Kelappan or me from the resolve to fast which has been inspired by God. I appreciate the efforts of Shri Mehta who has already warned the public beforehand. What causes me pain and surprise is the fact that the Zamorin is bringing all sorts of allegations against those who are engaged in organizing voting. I consider him to be a gentleman. He knows that Shri Madhavan Nair, who is the Chairman of the Voting Committee is a respectable lawyer, well-known throughout Kerala. Rajaji is helping the Committee and supervising the work. They are people who will not tolerate any unfairness. It is the Zamorin's duty to point out if they have resorted to any objectionable means. This question is purely moral and religious. There can be no

room for taking sides, for love and hate. If the sanatanists and reformers work together they will be able to bring out the truth. Let me once again assure you that as soon as I come to know that I am mistaken about the public opinion, I will immediately give up the idea of fasting. I wish to worship Truth only. I have no other aim than that.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 325-7

APPENDIX VIII

LETTER FROM SECRETARY, ALL-INDIA VARNASHRAMA SWARAJYA SANGH

December 8, 1932

We have to thank you for your prompt reply to the 6th instant.

We note that you will be pleased to receive a visit from any sanatanist friends and that if they convince you of the error, you will gladly retrace your steps. Having regard to our letter to you of which this is a reply, we take it that you are prepared to retrace your steps if, from the discussion suggested by us, you are convinced of the error of your steps from the Shastraic point of view. The object of our last letter was to know from you, whether you were willing to have an organized discussion on the lines suggested in our letter, in order to ascertain what is the truth so far as the Shastraic view on untouchability and restrictions on the temple-entry are concerned. From your letter, it appears that you are willing to have such a discussion. We never suggested that you should call such an assembly.

After you definitely declare your willingness to have the Shastraic point of view investigated in the manner suggested by us, the work of calling together the assembly may be done by Acharya Dhruva of Benares on your side and by us on behalf of the All-India Varnashram Swarajya Sangh. We take it that after the investigation of the Shastraic view, your attitude would be in accordance with such a view.

Your division of the *Shastris* into no-change *Shastris* and pro-change *Shastris* is not relevant to the present discussion, as our common object is to find out the truth as regards the statement that untouchability and restrictions on untouchables' temple-entry have no Shastraic basis.

As regards your assurance that no coercion is intended by you by your fast, please allow us to tell you the well-known maxim of law that a man is presumed to intend the consequences of his own acts.

The Hindu, 19-12-1932

APPENDIX IX

EXTRACT FROM T. CHINNIAH'S LETTER[1]

December 9, 1932

". . . . You say the Poona Pact is much better than the Award for it gives more seats. I wish to inform you that it is not the quantity that is important but it is the quality. The Award gives 18 seats by separate election, voting power in the general election, and seats if liked by the Depressed Classes and allowed by the caste people in the general electorate. The Pact gives only 30 seats in the general electorate. . . . In the words of Dr. Ambedkar according to the Premier's Award we will send to the Councils 30 diluted (in Madras). Secondly by the Award the so-called high class people would beg of the Depressed Classes to give them votes by which the pride of the high caste people will be suppressed. . . .

You say the Poona Pact "provides against the election of any candidate who is not in the first place approved by the majority of Harijans". I know you are referring to the Primary Election and its panel is four. I hope you would realize dear Mahatmaji that there is difference in confidence which each member in the panel enjoys among the Depressed Classes. Suppose in the Primary Election ten people contest. The first man secures 5,000 votes, the second 2,000 votes, the third 1,000, the fourth 900, the fifth 800, the sixth 700, . . . the eighth 600, the ninth 590, and the tenth 500. All these people enjoy the confidence of the Depressed Classes but there is difference in the confidence. . . . If the panel is six, the first six would be approved by the Depressed Classes, and if the panel is eight, the first eight would be approved by the Depressed Class. But don't you see there is vast difference between each man? After the Primary Election the selected candidates would have to stand in the joint electorate (I know the mentality of the caste people), and the result is the last man in the panel would be elected by the caste Hindus. The caste people would elect a man who possesses the least confidence among the Depressed Classes so that he may be subservient to them.

On 9-3-31 [I] wrote you a letter requesting you [to] stay in a paracheri (i.e., the place where the Depressed Classes live) whenever you visited Madras so that you may learn at first hand the difficulties of my people but you took up your residence in the palatial buildings of the Brahmins at Mylapore. If you had listened to my words, you would never have spoiled the Premier's award.

You say "I am certainly not in favour of special electorates for the merchants, landlords, and others. Then why don't you fast for their abolition; is it because that

[1] *Vide* "Letter to T. Chinniah", 12-12-1932.

your fast won't have any effect over the merchants and the landlords ?

Dear Mahatmaji, though the Poona Pact has been signed by the M.L.C.[s] yet the people of this Presidency are against it. They want at least the panel in the Primary Election should be two and not four. I request you to consent to the panel being two. . ."

From a microfilm: S.N. 18673

APPENDIX X

LETTER FROM RAMTARAN MUKHERJI[1]

December 6, 1932

I humbly beg to approach you as the greatest man of India, nay of the whole world, in view of the fact that you claim to be a sanatanist.

You know that Dadhichi gave up his bones for the benefit of the Devas, when they asked for them, but you are going to lay down your life without the asking. You know that Jesus was crucified under a decree of the then authority. You know that Socrates drank a cup of poison under certain decree of some sort of authority, but in your case, no such decree comes your way to obey. Under the circumstancesis it justifiable to lay down your valuable life without fulfilling the plainest duty of convincing the sanatanists that therefore they are in the wrong in not following your ideal?

Your ideal is lofty. But you cannot expect that the faith, conscience, and call from within of an ordinary row of sanatanists are similar to yours. Had it been so, all the sanatanists would have been transformed into so many Mahatma Gandhis. Therefore is it not just and fair and proper for the present conditions of mentality, to descend from the ideal, which is your own, to common, practical and realistic ground, with a view to enlighten and convince the sanatanists, with your sweet reasonableness? Please consider how Bhagwan Shankaracharya defeated the Bouddhas and drove them out of India by force of reason, etc. Please consider how Mahaprabhu Shri Chaitanya Deb succeeded in conquering the hearts of people by propagating the religion of love. But you have not yet launched any propaganda to convince the sanatanists that the old order of the sanatanists must be changed in a suitable manner, yielding place to new order of things and that the Shastras should not be thrown in the Ganges water, but according to the interpretation of Shastras the sanatanists must swallow the pill however bitter it may be. We admit that Bhagwan Shankaracharya had not had the occasion to refute the Christian and the Mohammedan religion. He

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Ramratan Mukherji", 13-12-1932.

refuted Jain, Bouddha, Sankhya, Vaisheshik, Bhagavat and other persuasions. But now we have come in contact with democratic civilizations of the West, which we cannot ignore. On the contrary, we must consider how far varnasrama religion should be modified, so as to meet the pressing demands of the modern times.

I, therefore, earnestly pray that you will kindly take up the propaganda of enlightening and convincing the sanatanists in right earnest and in your own way and till then you should do well to abandon the idea of self-immolation.'

Yours sincerely

RAMTARAN MUKHERJI VEDANTATIRTHA

PS.

I humbly beg to inform you as, although I am an orthodox Hindu, we have removed the ban of untouchability, if Harijans think fit to be pure in body and dresses.

Yours sincerely,

RAMTARAN MUKHERJI VEDANTATIRTHA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18660

APPENDIX XI

LETTER FROM C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

CALICUT,

[*December 12, 1932*][1]

I do not quite like the change of name you have agreed to for the League. 'Servants of Untouchables Society' is good in itself, but it means a continued recognition of untouchables as such. 'Servants of India' or 'Servants of Bhils' or 'Servants of God' are all right because 'India' must be there, 'Bhils' is a race name and not a name implying inferiority, and 'God' is always there. But 'Servants of Untouchables' or 'Servants of Slaves' would not be right if we intend to abolish untouchability or slavery. Suppose the American abolitionists had a league called 'Servants of Helpers of Slaves'. It would not have expressed the object. Of course the Society may close down when the institution of slavery or of untouchability is abolished. But the argument is not right, for it is the abolition in the psychology of men that is wanted at once. You would have to say 'Servants of Untouchables so-called' which is cumbrous and in reality open to the same objection. I would have liked 'Untouchability Abolition League' or (Society) . . . As a matter of fact, I did not

[1] The source has "12-10-1932" which seems to be a misprint for '12-12-1932'.

like 'Anti-Untouchability' as a phrase. It is so barbarous. 'Untouchability Abolition Society' would be further a literal rendering of the names already in use in Hindi, Gujarati and other Indian languages without any objection. It is really abolition of a slave status and the phrase 'Abolition' would be suggestive and emphatic, as 'prohibition' has come to stay in connection with drinks and drugs. *Service* to a group of men is not really the object and aim, if we think about it. It is really the doing away with the evil. There is a school of thought which would keep the segregation, and asks us to do all we can to make them live and eat more comfortably. This is not all we want to do.

In the Shadow of the Mahatma, pp. 81-2

APPENDIX XII

DISCUSSION WITH UNTOUCHABLES' DEPUTATION

December 15, 1932

QUESTION: There is no mention of Dr. Ambedkar's letter in the report of the Anti-Untouchability League.

GANDHIJI: Your complaint should be that the issues raised in it were not considered. You let me know your complaint against me. I will tell you in what ways I am helping you.

Q. You said to Devrukhkar: 'Win these people through love.' But there should be love in him in the first place.

G. Then you reverse the thing, and you win him through love!

Q. No, no; he is as big as the Gaurishankar mountain. No doubt, we can fight him, but there is a limit to our violence too.

G. I firmly believe that factionalism should be avoided. I will try my level best to remove this tendency among caste Hindus.

Q. What about giving some social privileges to them?

G. This is going on in all the Provinces. People are being made to understand and there is no laxity about it. Go to Malabar and see what a great change has taken place.

Q. But what plan do you have for the betterment of this section of society ?

G. It is precisely for this that I have raised the question of temple-entry. Sanatanists have got frightened because of it. They tell me, 'You do everything else, let them take water from the wells; but please don't touch the temples.' This is just the first step. When the work progresses, other problems also will be solved. There is a lot of propaganda work to be done as regards temple-entry. And this work is already

going on proper lines in Malabar.

Q. To remove the sufferings of the untouchables and the hardships inflicted on them by the touchables, please appoint a committee of lawyers to find a remedy.

G. We shall use the services of volunteer-lawyers.

Q. Volunteers will not be able to do much.

G. Even if they are like me?

Q. They [untouchables] should be admitted in the weaving department of the mills. Today there is untouchability in eating-houses and in the matter of water-taps. It is there in the tea-stalls of Majoor Mahajan. Why don't you suggest to the Chamber of Commerce that they should take casual labourers from among the untouchables? Is there any change in your views regarding the four varnas?

G. I am afraid, no. I do believe in the four varnas. There should not be any restrictions regarding inter-marriages and inter-dining. There is nothing in the Shastras that says that different varnas cannot inter-marry. I have put this into practice in my life, but at present I do not want to propagate it. If I take up the programme of reforming the castes, my work regarding eradication of untouchability would suffer. All occupations should be hereditary. Millions of people are not going to become Prime Ministers and Viceroys. Moreover, so long as ashrams dharma does not revive, varna dharma too is not going to revive.

Q. To what extent can we consider you as our man?

G. Since before Ambedkar was born, I have been your man. You will find all the things that he advocates in my old articles. Nobody has opposed untouchability in such strong language as I.

Q. That is what the Editor of *Bhala* also claims?

G. Everyone who makes the claim honestly can do so. But, as Solon said, a man should be given a certificate only after his ashes cool down.[1] Who knows I may not prove to be the worst sanatanist!

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 340-2

[1] The saying attributed to Solon is: "Call no man happy till he dies."

APPENDIX XIII

LETTER FROM G. D. BIRLA[1]

December 21, 1932

MY DEAR BAPU,

I have your typed letter with its enclosures. Dr. Roy had already sent to me a copy of his letter to you, and now with your reply to the same I have got the full correspondence with me. I should not like to waste your time over this matter any more, yet I cannot resist my inclination to write as I feel. Your mistake was somewhat of a different nature from the one as understood by you. There is no question of my being placed in an awkward position. If you put me even in a more awkward position, you can do so with pleasure. But even now I do not agree with you that your mistake was confined to over-rating your influence withDr. Bidhan. In fairness to Dr. Roy, I must say that he could not have helped feeling hurt. To my mind, the mistake lay in the fact that Sureshbabu and Satisbabu being more closely associated with you, you should have helped Dr. Roy in securing the former's co-operation instead of asking the latter to resign simply because your nearest friends would not give their co-operation to Dr. Roy. I may admit that Sureshbabu and Satisbabu had good reason to withhold their co-operation, yet I think you should not have chosen Dr. Roy for sacrifice. This, in my opinion, was your mistake. And I felt surprised when I saw your first letter to Dr. Roy, as constitu-tionally you are almost incapable of making such mistakes. We are so much dazzled with your superhuman personality that we have almost lost self-confidence in ourselves. The result is that whenever I feel doubtful about your actions I console myself with an explanation that the fault may be with my own capacity to understand the implication of your decision. So it was in this case. I still feel that in your last reply to Dr. Roy you should not have rebuked him, if I may use the word, for misunderstanding your letter. I hope I am not wasting your time. I am writing all this for my personal satisfaction and you may write to me if you think it at all necessary to do so.

As regards the definition, as you know in such matters I worry little. But your latest definition seems to be the best of all those discussed previously. As regards the complaint of Dr. Ambedkar's friends that we did not give serious consideration to the Doctor's letter, I think it is made under some misapprehension. Like Dr. Ambedkar's suggestion, there were many other suggestions before us which required to be considered and embodied in the Blue Pamphlet. But we decided not to discuss the Blue

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 15/16-12-1932 and "Letter to G. D. Birla", 27-12-1932.

Pamphlet at all in such a big meeting and therefore appointed a small committee of three to discuss and revise the Blue Pamphlet in the light not only of suggestions by Dr. Ambedkar but of many other criticisms which may be received from the Provincial Boards and other members. But I confess that our Secretariat is not so efficient as it ought to be. Poor old Thakkar is wandering from place to place and in the absence of a capable Secretary at the Head Office the work is, undoubtedly, suffering. Before we started this Society, Devidas had promised to help me, but he seems to be occupied with other work. In fact I made a grievance of it to him when I met him yesterday. But he has promised to get me a good man. As it is, I told him, the work must suffer. I myself can get a good man, but you know, my getting a good man means payment of so much money. I can get a man only on the market value. What is required in such societies is a man who wants to undergo self-sacrifice. I wonder, therefore, whether you could help me. If he can take charge of the work Devidas can do wonders, but unfortunately he is not coming.

We are issuing the Journal about the beginning of January and I am expecting a contribution from you (I have got it just now.). Viyogi Hari has been appointed to edit the Hindi Journal. I do not have a good man just now to look after the English Journal and so I am utilizing our office staff to do the work. But as you will realize all this requires the services of a good secretary and I must have one.

About the name of the Society, I am afraid it would look ridiculous to change it for the third time. Rajaji's letter although it impressed you so much did not make an impression on me. But probably it is due to the fact that I look upon all these things with some indifference.

I hope you are quite fit.

Please do not worry about my health. I am just all right. I have not tried the prunes. I propose to do so.

Yours affectionately,

GHANSHYAMDAS

In the Shadow of the Mahatma, pp. 82-4

APPENDIX XIV

DISCUSSION WITH NATARAJAN AND DEVDHAR

December 18, 1932

NATARAJAN: What you tried to avoid in England is taking place here. There is a big gulf between the sanatanists and the reformers. It is necessary for you to come out to stop our society from disintegrating. I strongly feel that you should come out to conduct this movement. To use your own words, you have to stand surety to stop

this fight. But I do not know how you can come out.

G. Nor do I. There should be no restrictions on those who want to do only this work. Those who are in jail can also go out saying that they will confine their work only to the eradication of untouchability. But whether or not they should do this, I cannot say. I cannot even say that I would like their doing so. But it is not that anyone who gives up civil disobedience will cease to be my co-worker and will become less dear to me. Suppose I am released unconditionally, it is possible I may advise people to give up civil disobedience. But today I would not like to bind myself by any such condition.

N. Is it not possible to postpone civil disobedience for the time being?

G. We can think over it after I am unconditionally released.

N. I cannot ask you for an assurance of any sort. But when you say that you have devoted your life to this work, it means that you will leave all other work and will concentrate only on this. You do not wish society to be divided. You want the caste Hindus to accept the Harijans as their own. The caste Hindus as well as the opposition both have faith in you.

G. We can certainly prevent division.

DEVDHAR: Bitterness can be removed if certain matters are cleared up.

G. I am not afraid that society will be divided. There may be some bitterness regarding Guruvayur, but I have kept that matter separate from all others.

D. If we go step by step, the sanatanists will join us.

G. They certainly will. That is why I have laid down so many restrictions with regard to other temples. But if there is laxity in securing the Viceroy's permission, I will have to undertake the fast.

N. But it will take two months to obtain that because the Bill would remain with him for two months.

D. Why don't you write to the Government that those who say that they will work only for the eradication of untouchability should be released? You must also make it public that those of your followers who devote themselves exclusively to this work will not, on that account, become less dear to you.

G. I cannot tell them to take up this work instead of going to jail. In that case, I myself should first come out by giving such an assurance. Only then I can tell others to do so.

D. If you really feel that this work requires the whole of your lifetime, you can come out without any sort of mental hesitation.

G. No. If I really felt the need for it, I would have written to the Government long ago. Today, it is my firm belief that if I go out in this way, I shall lose all the

strength for work.

D. Is it because people consider you a political leader?

G. No, people see me as a whole, for what I am. They know that politics is only a part of my service to them. They have instinctively understood that my whole life is for the service of the people. This is a question of mental justification. The moment I go out, I shall start wondering what to do in this calamitous situation. It is possible I may think only of civil disobedience and nothing else. I am fully satisfied that I am able to do this work even from here.

D. Try to find some way so that you are able to have these other people released.

G. The way I have suggested should have an impact on the Government. The Government should itself understand that the whole nation is occupied with this work.

D. Will you not say that this work is equally important and that workers should plunge themselves into it?

G. Take for instance Jamnalalji. He should not go out on any such condition. If I tell him to do so, he may agree, but I cannot tell him to go out like this. In this movement there is no need of old workers who are in jail. A new class of workers has emerged and I am happy about it. If Jamnalalji himself feels like going out, he can do so with my blessings. But I will not tell him to do so. Many prisoners meet me every fortnight. I have told them that, if they feel like going out by giving an assurance that they will work only for the eradication of untouchability, I will not say that they had done something wrong.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 351-3

APPENDIX XV

LETTER FROM SECRETARY, ALL-INDIA VARNASHRAMA SWARAJYA SANGH

December 19, 1932

DEAR SIR,

With reference to your letter of the 16th instant delivered this morning, you will please not mix up any other discussion with any other *Shastris* whether from Pandharpur or from any other place with the discussion which we have agreed upon with you.

If you have fixed 23rd instant for discussion with Pandharpur *Shastris*, you

will please appoint some other day for investigation settled between us and after reference to the pundits who are to attend on behalf of the All-India Varnashrama Swarajya Sangh, we shall confirm the said date, if convenient.

We have mentioned no terms regarding the discussion. What we said was that some *madhyasthas*[1] will have to be appointed and it will have to be settled what books shall be relied upon and the rules of interpretation will have to be settled.

It is, therefore, absolutely necessary that you will please mention the names of any two gentlemen of experience, position and dignity to sit as *madhyasthas* and the names of the pundits whom you or Acharya Dhruva intend to call to support your statements.

As soon as this is done, we shall mention the names of our pundits and the two *madhyasthas*.

The duty of the *madhyasthas* will not be the duty of the Chairman but the duty will be to see that the discussion is carried on in writing in an organized manner.

Our sole desire is that the discussion should be carried on in an organized manner as has been stated to you in the very beginning and not merely a fruitless discussion.

As has already been settled in the correspondence, the objects of the discussion would be to investigate and find out the truth whether untouchability is enjoined by Shastras and whether there are restrictions in Shastras on untouchables' temple-entry. We take it that if it is done and the pundits whom you call are unable to support the view hitherto propounded by them, you will retrace your steps.

Yours truly,

HIRALAL D. NANAVATI

SECRETARY, A.I.V.S. SANGH

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
C/O YERAVDA PRISON
POONA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18753

[1] Mediators

APPENDIX XVI

LETTER FROM G. D. BIRLA[1]

BIRLA HOUSE,
ALBUQUERQUE ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
December 14, 1932

MY DEAR BAPU,

I have received today the resignation from Dr. Roy. He has also sent to me a copy of his letter to you which he wrote in this connection. I am accepting his resignation. The more I think of the matter the more I feel that our troubles are not ended. Dr. Roy is not a quarrelsome man, and I hope he may forget the whole incident. But I doubt if his followers will so easily forget it. Besides I feel the public would not sympathize with Satisbabu and Sureshbabu, as in my opinion by humiliating Dr. Roy they have put themselves absolutely in the wrong. Thus your action instead of soothing the situation may cause a greater gulf between the various parties in Bengal. Satisbabu and Sureshbabu both being closely related to you, probably it would have been better for them to yield rather than wish for Dr. Roy's resignation. This would have helped easing the situation. As it is, you have given Bengalis cause to feel that it was a non-Bengali who could make or unmake Presidents of public bodies. This would surely be resented. If I were[2] Dr. B. C. Roy, I would refuse to accept Presidentship under such circumstances. I, however, express these views just for your information and that of Satisbabu, if he is still there. Let me hope, this will end the trouble.

We are coming out with the first issue of our weekly on the Ist of January. Please therefore send us your article in time.

Yours affectionately,

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
POONA

From a photostat: S.N. 18704

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 20-12-1932.
[2] The source has "would be".

APPENDIX XVII

EXTRACT FROM LETTER FROM C. F. ANDREWS [1]

November 10, 1932

The whole of my own religious upbringing has been such as to make any thought of suicide on my part impossible.

I am really troubled still . . . such a practice as this will certainly be used by fanatics to force an issue which may be reactionary instead of progressive. Human madness or even doting affection may become tyrannical in this way. How far my anxieties and fears are mixed with weak human affection I can hardly myself understand. I do know that I saw you finally giving your life itself for the Depressed Classes, in your last fast, and I was glad—I saw in it the 'greater love'. I can see you now preparing to do the same thing on January Ist, if the temple authorities do not give way.

. . . It seems to me that I would very gladly lay down my life to remove 'untouchability', between the white race fanatics who call themselves Christians and the other races. But you have evidently come to the point of forcing the issue, literally forcing it, and I have to think that out in terms of Christ.

I think He did force the issue, when He set His face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem. He saw then, I think, that only His own death could call the Jewish leaders to a halt. There is one strange saying of His, 'The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.' Again I am not sure whether His act in cleansing the temple was not of the same character, i.e., forcing the issue. But the method of fasting, committing suicide, still instinctively repels me.

Charles Freer Andrews, p. 264

APPENDIX XVIII

DISCUSSION WITH K. KELAPPAN[2]

December 29, 1932

KELAPPAN: When I asked you to share my burden, I said nothing about the fast.

GANDHIJI: Others gave what they could. What had I to give other than a fast? So you should have known that I would be sharing your burden only in some such way. There is nothing wrong in this. The more I think over it, the more I feel that the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 20-12-1932.

[2] *Vide* "Interview to Associated Press of India", 29-12-1932 and "Statement on Untouchability", 30-12-1932.

complications I have created were necessary. Hinduism is dying before my eyes. If I want to revive it, what else is there for me to do? You don't know what is going on inside me. You must wait and enquire and suffer. If I have to fast, you must put up with it. For the present the fast is postponed. What the future has in store, I do not know. Maybe, fasting will be unnecessary. Or I may feel that to undertake a fast for Guruvayur will be foolish and a waste of energy. You will benefit from the confusion I am causing you. The questions which Rajaji asked yesterday have set me thinking and maybe my statement will take a different shape. But you should let the matter rest here and set to work at once. Try to understand the inner meaning of the fast, of the eradication of untouchability and of temple-entry. I feel that if we can get rid of untouchability the right way, it will be the saving of Hinduism. Otherwise, there is going to be a fierce fight between caste Hindus and the so-called untouchables. The untouchables will fight with violent rage and hatred and in sheer desperation will try to obliterate Hinduism from the face of the earth. They are not going to deny Hinduism. They are also not going to embrace any other religion. But they will deny God. This strife will be more fierce than between Brahmins and non-Brahmins because they feel the pain more deeply. My fast may prevent such a strife, though I do not know. Or it may not have any effect. But I did not go in search of the fast. I lay in bed thinking about an ugly decision of the Government and this question of yours came up before me and I plunged into it. At that time, I did not even know that it would call for a fast. You did right in acquainting me with all the facts. Other friends also sent me telegrams, which too was proper. Everything that has happened has been for the good.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 382-3

APPENDIX XIX

DISCUSSION WITH MAHADEV DESAI

BAPU: In a religious matter nobody should accept anyone else's opinion as binding. One must rely on one's own intuition.

MAHADEV: Then we should not join in calling the Parishad.

BAPU: We are not doing that. They are calling the Parishad on their own. I tell them that if they can convince me that I am wrong, I will admit my error.

MAHADEV: Then we should not concern ourselves with whether or not the Parishad comes to a unanimous decision. You should merely say, you are keeping an open mind. That's enough.

Bapu further explained: Look at the man asking me why I do not challenge my opponents to a public discussion and defeat them, as Shankaracharya did. I tell him that that is beyond my strength. My strength is of a different character and I am using it. How can I change my idea of dharma in deference to other people's views?

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 319

1. LETTER TO N. H. PURANDARE

January 13, 1933

MY DEAR PURANDARE,

I have your letter. I am sorry to have had it. I don't like the spirit underlying it. You have looked upon the whole thing as a commercial transaction, whereas I have looked upon the whole thing as a matter of selfless service. You left the question of remuneration entirely in my hands, although I asked you to tell me what you would charge for giving me a corrected collection of your speeches on untouchability and for supervising the printing. But you would not think of it, telling me that there was no mercenary motive behind it. That being so, I had no hesitation in undertaking the delicate task, but at the end of it, I shirked it, and I asked Haribhau to name the sum. He named Rs. 125 and I straightaway accepted. Believe me, so far as I am concerned, I did not think of the Arya Bhushan bill in connection with fixing up your fee, remuneration or honorarium, whatever it may be called. Nor did I then know nor do I now know that the Arya Bhushan bill is exorbitant. My understanding is that they should not make anything but nominal profits. You are thinking of anything between Rs. 500 to 3,000. I can only meet your proposal with a reasonable offer. You can take over the book yourself by simply paying the printing charges and sell the book on your own account and make whatever profit you can, only you should not increase the published price, for any increase in the price would be unjust to the public.

I have already asked Haribhau to pay you Rs. 125 if you would accept the amount in full payment and not feel any dissatisfaction. For I would be deeply hurt if, after having left the thing in my hands, you were dissatisfied with the amount declared by me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. H. PURANDARE
604 SADASHIV PETH
POONA 2

From a microfilm: S.N., 18915

2. LETTER TO DHANNU LALL SHARMA

January 13, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I will not refer you to any of my statements this time, but I will ask you to re-read your own letter[1]. I suggest to you that that letter is libellous, insulting and unworthy of one who holds the position of General Secretary of a Sanatan Dharma Sabha.

If you will re-read your letter calmly and dispassionately, you will at once apologize to the pandits whom you have libelled, and, in any event, till you apologize, your letters will neither be read nor replied to. I am sorry for it.

Your sincere friend,

SJT. DHANNU LALL SHARMA
GENERAL SECRETARY
SHREE SANATAN DHARMA SABHA
220 HARRISON ROAD
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18917

3. LETTER TO SATYANANDA BOSE

January 13, 1933

DEAR SATYANANDA BABOO,

You are always so good and always think of me whenever there is anything to say to me.

I think that this is hardly the time to consider improvements in Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill. The first thing is to get the Viceregal sanction. When that is had, many improvements may be possible. I am not therefore just now applying my mind to your suggestion[2]. After the principle of the Bill is once accepted, the Government themselves may

[1] In which the addressee had referred to Gandhiji's "Appeal to Sanatanists", 4-1-1933, and said that the pandits had deceived not only him but the whole world; *vide* "Appeal to Sanatanists", 4-1-1933

[2] That the Bill be confined to giving authority to the trustee of a temple to allow the untouchables to enter it and worship as the caste Hindus do (S.N. 18893)

take it up or may advise amendments so far as that may be necessary to free the Bill from any possible political mischief. So far as I am concerned, my one thought in connection with the temple-entry is the purification of caste Hindus. But of course I shall bear your suggestions in mind whenever the occasion arises for their use.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SATYANANDA BOSE
4 NUNDY ST.
BALLY GUNGE
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18918

4.. LETTER TO S. T. RAMANUJA IYENGAR

January 13, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter together with your article[1]. I am sorry indeed that there should have been any molestation of you by the audience. I have, as you must be aware, repeatedly written against intolerance, and I shall gladly re-emphasize my warning when the time comes.

As for your article, we must agree to differ.[2] Our conception of sanatana dharma is different. In your impatience you have not even cared to understand my fundamental position. I can only say, 'Read all my statements with a fresh mind, then if you have still doubts, discuss them with Sjt. Rajagopalachariar and if you are not still convinced and would care to do so, come down to Yeravda and I shall gladly give you one hour and try to convince you that the position I take up and the means I adopt to vindicate are both perfectly defensible.'

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. T. RAMANUJA IYENGAR
4 VARADARAJA PERUMAL COIL ST.
TRICHINOPOLY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18919

[1] "The Drive against Untouchability"

[2] The addressee had written in his article: "He [Gandhiji] has given up his creed of non-co-operation with Government so far as untouchability is concerned by accepting special Government favours, and is actively blessing legislative efforts, once taboo, to facilitate removal of untouchability. . . ."

5. LETTER TO S. NAGASUNDARAM

January 13, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I have read the texts quoted by you. So far as I can make them out, they have no application to the present-day conditions. Those who are regarded as untouchables today cannot be classified as *Chandalas* at all.

Inter-dining is no part of the campaign against untouchabillty

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. NAGASUNDARAM

NEAR KING'S CIRCLE

MATUNGA

BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18921

6. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

January 13, 1933

MY DEAR C.R.,

Vallabhbhai had a battle royal with me last night on your behalf. If a person, an utter stranger to him, had chance to be there, from the vehemence of Vallabhbhai's language, he would have concluded that we must be most quarrelsome persons.

He thought that I was doing violent injustice to you, inasmuch as, without consultation with you, I made proposals that might prove to be utterly embarrassing, as had happened on two occasions.

The cause of our quarrel was my compromise proposal[1]. He thought that I had no right to publish it without consultation with you, and he was quite sure that though you were too good to mention it to me, you had felt very much embarrassed by it, if not also irritated. I told him that you were too good to conceal your embarrassment from me, if you were really embarrassed, and that would be quite unlike you. I even added that in this particular instance you happened even to like my proposal and that even if it was discovered that you did not

[1] For a discussion, *vide* "Talk with Sadashivrao and Shinde", 13-1-1933

like it and that you were really embarrassed, it was impossible for me every time to consult you, or such other colleagues on such occasions. I went further and argued that work on such lines would become almost impossible. People act together when there is a general agreement between them on fundamentals and [provided] that their deductions from those fundamentals were, as a rule, identical, and that if, at times, they came to different deductions, a timely confession of error would keep their friendship in tact, as also the common cause. Nothing that I could say, however, would conciliate Vallabhbhai. The curfew bell, mutually agreed upon by us, came to the rescue, and put an end to what promised to be an endless discussion. But I retired to bed with a determination that I would refer the matter to you. Your reply, one way or the other, would bring some consolation to your counsel, and you know that it won't make me disconsolate if you agreed with your counsel on both his propositions, namely, that before giving to the world the compromise proposal which I had given to Pandit Panchanan Tarkaratna I should have consulted you, and that it, as a matter of fact, did embarrass you. You would also add to your opinion on these points, your opinion whether on merits you consider my proposal to be sound or otherwise.

A perfect tragedy was enacted here yesterday. Five pandits and their five advisers came to the jail gate yesterday an hour and a half after the appointed time and took two hours and a half in exchanging brief notes with me, the three notes[1] that they exchanged with me taking all the two hours and a half. And, will you believe it, when I tell you that they would not come in and carry on the discussion because I would not remove one word I had added to their draft, the word being an adjective added to the word 'untouchables'. The adjective applied was 'as at present classified'. Of course it altered the whole scope of their discussion. So they went away. Of course it is not our position that there is no untouchability at all in the Shastras. Our position is that there is no untouchability in the Shastras as we practise it today. They were expected to prove that untouchability as at present practised has sanction in the Shastras. It is an impossible task to perform honestly. No text that has yet been cited on their behalf has proved it. The *Shastris* on our behalf are really very learned men, and also pious men. It is their honest conviction that there is no warrant for the untouchability of the present day in the Shastras. The real

[1] *Vide* "Fraagment of Letter to Lord Sankey", 22-11-1932

untouchability will be there for all time. It is a sound hygienic rule practised all over the world.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18922

7. LETTER TO GEORGE JOSEPH

January 13, 1933

MY DEAR JOSEPH,

You can better imagine than I can describe my joy at receiving your letter, and especially your letter[1] to Pyarelal. I shall try to have your letter delivered to him. But let me say two things in connection with that letter.

My fast[2] was not a fast unto death in its literal sense. The Roman Catholic priest, who is a visitor to this prison, knows me, and when I was on the eve of taking that fast, he came over to me in his kindly manner just to say one word, and he said how he drew the distinction between a suicide and a sacrifice. A suicide carried with it a certainty of destruction. A sacrifice meant risking life, the greater the risk, the greater the sacrifice. But there should be nothing beyond risk. I had no hesitation in agreeing with the distinction, and my fast being conditional was not a fast amounting to suicide, but it was a fast involving the greatest risk, but still a risk and no more.

You will be interested to know that some of my Roman Catholic friends have detected no flaw in the fast. Of course, in Hinduism some few extreme cases there are in which ending of life is peremptory, but these I need not consider at present. There is general agreement between Hinduism and other faiths that suicide is a sin.

Now, about the Inner Voice.[3] Here again I can agree with you whole-heartedly when you say that the voice of God can never counsel or ountenance sin. Encouragement to sin can only come from the devil. But the real difficulty comes in when the question of

[1] In which the addressee had expressed his views on Pyarelal's book *The Epic Fast* and stated: "The Inner Voice is either a hallucination or the voice of God. If it is truly the voice of God, it cannot counsel self-destruction because the life that God gives is for Him alone to put an end to . . ."

[2] *Vide*

[3] For a discussion, *vide* "Discussion with a Friend", 13-1-1933

sin itself is debatable. Those who would consider a particular act to be sinful will naturally reject the claim that it was prompted by God. Hence it was that in answer to a question I said[1] that whilst in self-defence and for the sake of truth which I worship I was bound to say what I believed, my claim was not to be accepted as part of argument in determining relevant questions. The opponents were bound to rule [out] that claim as wholly beside the point. Whether the claim for the voice of God was well or ill-made in a particular case can only be decided after the claimant's death, and in some extraordinary cases it may even then be difficult. Apart from the danger of hypocrisy there is the still greater danger of self-deception to which mankind is prone, and it is possible for self-deceived people to attain great things and yet their claim that the voice of God was behind their acts might be wholly wrong. These are final difficulties which will remain to the end of time, but if the truth is to make any progress, then self-deluded people must also be allowed full play.

Finally comes the question of confession. You may not know that I have some very valued Roman Catholic friends also. I am in the habit of picking up knowledge more from personal contact than from printed texts. These friends have not yet been able to clearly define the function of Confession and the Confessor. For instance, what is one to confess who has no consciousness of guilt and when there is, I can understand a Confessor granting absolution, but can he also guide the future acts of the penitent? In the place of the Confessor Hinduism has the Guru. I have all my life striven to find one, one to whom I can shift all my burdens and roam about merely doing his will. But then such implicit limitless obedience is not a mechanical act; and having got the spirit of obedience instinctively within me I would be satisfied by nothing less than tendering complete obedience. But it seems to me that it is not given to all to find the true Guru in this short span of life. But it is given to all to make that diligent search, and it may be that that very search is its own reward, and that it keeps one in possession of peace and joy everlasting. Anyway, you will accept my testimony that ceaseless search has not only given me such joy and peace, but has protected me from conscious error.

I thank you for copying for me that extract from *Imitation of*

[1] *Vide*, passim

Christ. I read that book in one single sitting, I think, in the year 1905 or 1906, and a friend, only a few months ago, sent me another copy.

With our love to all of you,

Yours sincerely,

GEORGE JOSEPH, ESQ., M.A., BARRISTER-AT-LAW

"HILL VIEW", MADURA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18923

8. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

January 13, 1933

BHAISHRI MAVALANKAR,

I got your letter. Vinabehn also told me about your illness. Illness does not spare even a lawyer, nor the chairman of a municipality! It is something to be thankful for that you will be able to move about soon.

I read Keshavji's questions. We should willingly endure a great many things like this to atone for the sins of our ancestors and our contemporaries. When to suspicion is added selfishness, you can expect nothing better. But I suppose the skin of your back has become sufficiently thick by now so that you feel such blows as light as flowers.

Thakkar Bapa[1] suggests that I should write to Dada[2] for the Harijan fund. Since when did you become Dada? It must have been before I was born. May you live long and serve the Harijans. Bapa suggests that you should use your influence with Vaishnavas like Chimanbhai, Sakarbhai, etc. They may not permit Harijans to enter temples for *darshan*, but they should liberally help with money for activities other than the movement for temple-entry. But need one commend the cause of the tongue to the teeth? If Bapa's word does not carry weight with Dada, how can Bapu of merely fifteen years, standing hope that his will? I have only passed on to you the load put on my head by Bapa. He has also ordered me to write to Kasturbhai[3] and make a similar request to him. May I give you my power of

[1] Amritlal V. Thakkar; "Bapa" means father.

[2] "Grand-father" in Gujarati, but "elder brother" in Marathi. Addressee's mother tongue was Marathi.

[3] Kasturbhai Lalbhai, a mill-owner of Ahmedabad

attorney?

Since you have just risen from the sick-bed, I tried to lighten business with a little humour and that has made the letter long. I, therefore, leave it to you to speak to Kasturbhai. As for Chimanbhai, I also will write to him.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1234

9. LETTER TO NANALAL K. JASANI

January 13, 1933

BHAI NANALAL[1],

I got your postcard. I had a wire from Lilavati[2] too. She has replied that she cannot say anything without consulting Padma. Let me have all the information you possess regarding this marriage. Who is the bridegroom and what kind of a man is he? What is his age? What is his economic condition and what sort of health does he have? What is his occupation? I suppose you know that Maganlal[3] is against the marriage.

You seem to be very busy with the marriage in your family. I hope you have not been incurring unnecessary expenditure. Utilize the occasion also to give as much money to worthy causes as you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9628

10. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 13, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

Dr. Kanuga writes and tells me that Radha[4] does suffer from tuberculosis. She should be sent away to a place like Deolali. She will be restored to health only if she takes complete rest there. You should

[1] Business partner of the late Dr. Pranjivan Mehta
[2] Lilavati Mehta, wife of Chhaganlal Mehta
[3] Maganlal Mehta
[4] Radha Gandhi, daughter of Maganlal Gandhi.

discuss this with Santoks and Radha[1]. This is a difficult problem, but we must solve it.

Do you get any letter from Ramabehn[2]? Chhaganlal has received no letter from her at all.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

11. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 13, 1933

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

I have your letter. Enclosed are the letters from Chamanbhai and Sakarbhai. Show them to Bhai Mavalankar. If his health has improved go with him to both of them. Or, you yourself do what you can. If we fail today, we shall succeed tomorrow. Let us not give up hope. My booklet for the Gujaratis will certainly materialize. It is taking time but now it will soon be ready, provided nothing fresh crops up to impede it.

You and Anasuyabehn must be in good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32735

12. LETTER TO CHAMANLAL GIRDHARDAS PAREKH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 13, 1933

DEAR CHAMANBHAI,

Bhai Shankerlal and Thakkar Bapa write that apart from the temple-entry, you are also declining to help to other activities of Harijan service. I did not, and still do not, expect this of you. Others may find fault with me as a Vaishnava, but surely you would not join them. My ideas about Harijan service are not new. Some day, you will

[1] Widow of Maganlal Gandhi
[2] Ramabehn Joshi, wife of Chhaganlal Joshi

yourself admit that my ideas are in keeping with Vaishnava dharma. However, I will let that pass for now. Do not bring into Gujarat the conflict prevailing elsewhere. I am entitled to ask this much of you. Bhai Mangaldas gave me this right and you acknowledge it. Therefore, I urge you to contribute what you can to the Fund.[1]

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32752

13. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

January 14, 1933

MY DEAR MARGARETE,

I must continue to dictate. You are entitled to call yourself an Indian since you have felt like one from your childhood, but that is not a substitute for your German birth. The adoption should be an addition both to your name and to your strength, and what can be finer than that we should all add on the virtues of our own nations to those of the others!

Why was there a struggle to choose between Gurudev and myself? We are no competitors. Gurudev occupies a throne which belongs to him by sheer merit. I have none of the gifts that he has, and what is more, we dearly love each other, and as years roll on, our love becomes stronger, and we understand also each other better and better. I would have you therefore to say that you like us both equally for whatever gifts God has bestowed upon us. No more therefore of choice-making, if you would be a real daughter like Mira.

I hope you got my previous letter[2] in which I acknowledged your letter written from Aden. The registered packet addressed to Mahadev was also duly received.

Love from us both.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to G.V. Mavalnkar", 13-1-1933

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Margarete Spiegel", 12-1-1933

14. LETTER TO M. THIAGARAJAN

January 14, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The question is not so much what the Harijans need, but how the caste Hindus should behave towards them. In my opinion, it is the clear duty of caste Hindus to give to the Harijans the same rights that they enjoy. The fact that evil has survived numberless generations does not make it any the less an evil. Similarly, the fact that untouchability has survived the great religious teachers whom you name does not warrant the present generation in continuing it, if it can be proved to be an evil. I am convinced it is.

A person who has heard the inner call should still be open to reason and therefore conviction. That attitude enables him and others to test the truth of his claim.

I do say with my conception of Hinduism that God denies Himself what Harijans are denied, because they are called Harijans.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. THIAGARAJAN

42 SINGARA TOPE

TRICHINOPOLY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18928

15. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS

January 14, 1933

DEAR BABOO BHAGWANDAS,

I have your letter. I read an account of your meeting[1] in the papers. We are bound at the present moment to find obstruction at our meetings. I know that the Benares meeting was in the safest hands and I knew how you took the wind out of the sail of the adversary by always giving him the chance and even the first chance of speaking and restraining the sympathizers from retaliating. I do hope that you soon got out of the effect of the little fever. It does not do to take unnecessary risks at our age. I suppose you are a few years older.

[1] Held on January 8, 1933, which passed a resolution in favour of temple-entry

I will send you the other essays as soon as I am ready, and I shall thank you to ask someone to send me all the cuttings dealing with untouchability from the *Aaj* and even other Hindi newspapers. I am getting cuttings from Marathi and Gujarati but not from Hindi. I have not forgotten the message for the Aaj, nor the book you kindly left for me, the very first copy. I acknowledged it in a previous letter which I hope you duly received. You will be pleased to know that I have already made the commencement, but I have to confess that I am going very slow and sometimes misreading it altogether.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BHAGWANDAS

SEVASHRAMA, SIGRA

BENARES (CANTT.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 18929

16. LETTER TO VERRIER ELWIN

January 14, 1933

I want to warn you against resisting nature beyond the saturation point. In Biblical language, I should say: "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord, thy God." I would say without the slightest hesitation, if you have another bad attack you should treat it as the clearest call from God to return to England and render what service you can render there. If God wants you here, the first thing He would give you is health of body. If you have humbly to acknowledge defeat, you should do so. Your defeat will be victory for God of truth. There is no waste in God's laboratory. The work begun there by you will not die. I do not mind if one man who has good health and is beyond reproach in character is there in sole charge. If there is no such worker just now, let the whole thing be temporarily wound up. This is no doleful picture. It is the real background for a Godly life. "Not my will, but thine, of Truth." I must not prolong this sermon. You know what I mean. Where there is complete surrender, there is no room for self-will.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

17. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 14, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I don't require any information about Liladhar from you. Do you know if Shankarbhai neglects his father? I have already written to Mahavir again. Vallabhbhai suggests Wadhwan for Radha. I asked you to write to me about the Chharas[1]. Their harassment of us seems to have stopped. Does a *bhajan* party[2] visit their settlement? Has the Government posted police to keep watch on hem?

Prema causes me some worry. Her conduct frightens me. If she is silent because she has realized her error, I need not mind. If, however, she is silent because she is angry, she has more serious defect of character than I had thought. Try and discover, if you can, what is in her heart.

If you have any news about Gangabehn, Kusum and Lilavati, let me have it.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

[1] An ex-criminal tribe of central Gujarat. *Vide* also "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 7-1-1933

[2] Troupe of devotional singers

Prema causes me some worry. Her conduct frightens me. If she is silent because she has realized her error, I need not mind. If, however, she is silent because she is angry, she has more serious defect of character than I had thought. Try and discover, if you can, what is in her heart.

If you have any news about Gangabehn, Kusum and Lilavati, let me have it.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

18. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI

YERAVDA,
January 14, 1933

CHI. KASHI,

I have gone through your letter. I felt very unhappy that we could not talk a little longer. If, however, we go a little deeper into the matter, we might wonder what after all there was to talk about. Since you will be reading my letter to Prabhudas, I will not say anything more about the matter. I will write directly to you and you also should send your letters directly to me. I had written to Keshu just a few days before. There is much difference between Keshu's nature and that of Prabhudas's. Prabhudas will open his mind to everyone, Keshu will not do so to anyone. With Maganlal, too, he hardly ever talked. However, it is certainly your duty to tell me if you know anything or have seen anything about him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 33075

19. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA,
January 14, 1933

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

l received your letter. It seems to me improper that you should have written directly to Nanabhai. Kakasaheb may write if he wishes to. And it would be unreasonable for me to burden him with responsibility. We may keep in mind the conditions you have

stipulated but we cannot put them down on paper. It would be altogether unbecoming to do so. Discuss with Kakasaheb all that you have written to me and do as he suggests. I can understand your impatience. Once you have decided to marry, it is best that you should do so as soon as possible. However, some time is bound to elapse. Or, perhaps it may not be so.

Certainly the best course is that you yourself should look for a girl concurrently with the work you are doing and Kakasaheb and others also may be on the lookout at the same time. Do not worry about what Vinoba will think. His blessings will always be with you. You cannot have a girl from the Ashram, for it would be improper to arouse the least traceof such a feeling in any girl in the Ashram. Even indirectly, such a feeling should not be encouraged. Hence you should also not think of selecting any of the girls who have newly joined the Ashram.

What you say about Padma in your letter shows how dangerous was the close association of you two. Both of you were forcing yourselves to behave as brother and sister, while deep down in your hearts you felt yourselves to be husband and wife. But that is an old story now. Padma will of course know the fact when you get married, but it is too much to expect her to find a girl for you. It is beyond her capacity, but even if it was within her capacity, it would be undesirable to do so. We just cannot burden her with such a responsibility. You have no reason whatever to feel helpless. Write to me without hesitation any foolish or silly idea that may occur to you. I will not misunderstand what you say, for, I have faith in you and even blind love for you. I believe that you will never deceive me. I am not in the least unhappy at your simplicity of mind. If your simplicity is a cause of fear for you, it also acts as a shield for me. You yourself may tell G.V. Pant, Harivallabh or any other of your acquaintances in Almora to guide and help you. Do not think of the high or low social status of the girl concerned, consider only her character. Write to Devdas. He may possibly have some girl in view. It would be good if you spend about a month in Kosamba and learn the harmless method of extracting honey. The whole course takes a month and a half to complete. But really speaking, it should not require even that much time. I am firmly of the view that for industrious people like us, a week or fifteen days at the most are sufficient.

There is no need at all for you to go out of your way to see

Sarojinidevi, nor to satisfy her with an explanation. If she has indulged in an exaggeration, it cannot be undone now. Our own way of looking at things should be such that if we ourselves have committed a little wrong, it should appear to us big as mountain, so that if the world regards it as such, we are not shocked. The man who looks upon his failings as if they were diamonds and pearls and weighs their value as we do that of diamonds and pearls, is certain to commit big sins and he who looks upon the smallest sin as if it was the biggest, would certainly be saved from big sins. I would see nothing wrong if you happen to meet Sarojinidevi by chance and the matter comes up for discussion but there is no need at all to open the subject intentionally.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 32983

20. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 15, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

All your letters seem to have been delivered to me. For how many days did Chimanlal[1] try the fenugreek seeds? Jamna[2] may try them along with any other medicine which she is taking. But she should take care that she does not get constipation.

About Mahavir, I can think of no other way. The whole family must leave. I have given up the hope of their observing the rules. This is my view. If, however, you wish to let them stay, I can have no objection. But have no doubt that misplaced kindness is a form of violence.

I also feel worried about Prema. I am pained and surprised that she cannot see her weakness which everybody else can see. I had hoped that I would be able to open her eyes. It seems I have been wrong, for the present at any rate. But she is a thoughtful lady. Hence I do not give up hope altogether. Her language was certainly full of hatred, but she denies it. That means that she does not know when one's language may be described as full of hatred. She does not

[1] One of the oldest inmates of the Ashram who was suffering from asthma

[2] Jamnabehn Gandhi, addressee's wife

even have faith in me to trust that, when my loving heart feels the presence of hatred anywhere, it must be there. I am partial to her and stress her virtues as outweighing her faults. If, then, I see a weakness in her, instead of getting angry with me she should be humble and try to understand her weakness. If I am committing an error, she should point it out to me. This is how I feel. I may die any day. Ultimately the burden will have to be shouldered by you. Therefore do what you think best. If I am doing injustice to anybody in any matter, do not hesitate to tell me so. And if you are convinced that my view is correct, do not hesitate to tell her so emphatically. I certainly do not wish to crush her individuality in any manner whatsoever. If the individauality of any person in the Ashram is crushed, that would harm the Ashram itself. But I think Prema misunderstands the meaning of individuality. I understand her problem, but I feel helpless before her obstinacy.

I understand what you say regarding Liladhar. Has he abandoned his plan of going to Zanzibar? If you decide to take him back, have a frank talk with him before doing so.

If the harassment by the Chharas has stopped, is it because our people have started going in their midst or does it mean something else?

I have discussed everything with Prabhudas[1]. Your letter did not give the statistics of people's weights.

BAPU

[PS.]

NARANDAS,

Durlabhji Sampat and Sitaram, two brothers, are prisoners in this jail. Durlabhji is married. After he is released, he wishes to stay in the Ashram for two months or so and have experience of the life there. And so does Sitaram. I have told them that there will be no difficulty in admitting them. They will write to you. If you can accommodate them, admit them.

Did anything happen between Balwant, Prabhashankar's[2] son, and you? How is Ratilal? I hope Totaramji[3] is completely all right now. Read all my letters to the Giri family.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I.Also *Bapuna Patro–9: Shri Narandas Gandhine*, Pt. II, pp. 14-6

[1] Prabhudas Gandhi, son of Chhaganlal Gandhi
[2] Father-in-law of Ratilal Mehta
[3] Totaram Sanadhya, an Ashram inmate

21. LETTER TO RATILAL K. SHAH

January 15, 1933

BHAI RATILAL KUNVARJI,

I got your letter. You have given very important information. But we find the same thing in regard to many temples. Hoping that what happens occasionally will by and by happen every day, we should go on trying.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 92

22. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS GANDHI

January 15, 1933

CHI. KRISHNADAS[1],

I have read your letter to Prabhudas. It is ignorance, and therefore an error, to go on working without regard to one's health till the body breaks down. You should take rest even for being able to serve, as you wish to do. I hope that Prabhudas did not drag you as far as Bombay. He could have easily gone there by himself and also seen Vinoba. I will suggest this to him if it is not too late—let me know if it is.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3084

23. LETTER TO KESHAV GANDHI

January 15, 1933

CHI. KESHU[2],

If you take only as much milk and ghee as you can digest, I don't think you will experience any difficulty in observing *brahmacharya.* Mutual service keeps love fresh.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3268

[1] Son of Chhaganlal Gandhi
[2] Son of Maganlal Gandhi

24. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

January 15, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

Your continued sulking shows that you have a good measure of childishness in you. If you do not tolerate my criticizing you, you are not at all likely to tolerate anybody else doing so. Instead of thanking me for [telling you] the impression you produce on me, you get angry with me. Your duty is to try to ask me again to explain my charge against you, if you have not understood it. You may also quarrel with me. But all your education and wisdom seem to have disappeared on this occasion. You cannot even see that behind your sulking lies your extreme pride. Let me tell you that this is not freedom but self-will. I wish that you should open your eyes and understand my love, and not falsify my estimate of you. It is not right for you to sulk; on the contrary, you should feel sorry and weep for having made me suffer. Why don't you realize that, if I say anything harsh to you, it is for your own good? If I am making any mistake in doing so, it is your duty to point it out humbly to me. If you are sure that you are innocent, you should be confident of being able to prove it to me. Instead, you resent my criticism and sulk, and thereby seem to aggravate your guilt. I had never expected this from you. Wake up and express sorrow for nursing resentment against me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10322

25. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

January 15, 1933

CHI. JAMNA,

You seem to have lost confidence in me. It doesn't matter. Go and live somewhere for a year and then tell me. Will it give you confidence if I suggest that Narandas may pay a short visit during the last month or even earlier? It will not matter if you are not able to return to the Ashram at all. Create the atmosphere of the Ashram wherever you live. You need not then go to the Ashram. Will this

satisfy you?

I feel much worried that Purushottam's[1] health does not improve. I have been thinking what to do.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 870. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

26. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

January 15, 1933

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

It is not right that your constipation does not disappear completely. It will certainly be cured if you go and live in Hajira. The air and water of that place have that miraculous effect. Or you should come to Poona and stay here for some time. I will have you treated by a doctor here. The water of this place is believed to be good and life is comparatively cheaper. This is the best season of the year. You will certainly get some work here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 906. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

27. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

January 15, 1933

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

I got your letter. I am writing this letter only to reassure you. You need not reply to this. Poor Pradhan, he has a reason to describe me as a young man. But should he do that before you? But apart from that, would it be surprising if an old man of twenty should regard you, a man of forty-five, as being 'dateless'?

I don't mind differences of opinion at all. Where the heart is one, why should we mind such differences? I shall not be so foolish as to lose you readily. We shall be like two beads in a necklace held on

[1] Addressee's son

the string of truth, no matter even if they are of rather strange colours. Lilavati's[1] boldness is beyond praise. She was always like that. Get all right soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7525. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

28. LETTER TO JIVRAM K. KOTHARI[2]

January 15, 1933

The words "twenty-four hours" you have taken rather literally. You should have understood my intention in using them. For twenty-four hours mean for as long as possible. When it is raining or is very hot, when there is a strong wind or it is extremely cold, or when for any other reason it is absolutely impossible or will be harmful to remain or sleep or work in the open, one's moral duty is to take shelter under a shade or a roof or in a house with the doors and the windows shut. All that you should have read in my words is that it is desirable to spend as much time as possible in the open without anything between oneself and the sky. Those who understand this will spend the least possible time inside their houses and will also see that there is adequate ventilation inside.

And now about knowing the time of the day. A village worker does not require a clock or a watch. All his activities follow nature. His clock also is nature's. His manner of indicating time is different from ours. He will not ask a person to come at four. He will say: 'Come at prayer time,, or 'Come an hour or two before sunset', or 'Come at daybreak', or 'Come when the birds start singing', or 'Come at dinner time', or 'Come when I am weaving tape', or 'Come at twilight' or 'at supper time'. One can thus use different descriptions for different hours of the day. And the worker is so regular in his tasks that he does not need to look at the sky to know the time of the day. Every day he does the same job at the same hour and takes the same time for doing it. Because of this exact regularity, when the work is over he knows what time of day it is. Since he is not in the habit of consulting a watch, he cannot say how many hours he would require

[1] Addressee's wife

[2] The addressee was working in Orissa

for a given job. But he says that he weaves a certain number of yards of tape daily, and from that he and others can judge for how many hours he must be working. It was because of this that in former days time was not counted in hours but was measured by the amount of work done. Even when the village worker travelled, he experienced no difficulty, for he knew how many miles he could walk between sunrise and sunset. Such a worker rests not according to the clock but only when he feels tired. In short, one feels very little need for a clock in a village; one may say that one feels no need at all. The village worker measures his work by reference to the movements of the sun or the other heavenly bodies. Clouds are no obstacles to this, because there are very few days in the year when the sky is covered with clouds. Even on such days, however, his work goes on as usual. Prayer time also is observed without any conscious effort. If one's hours of the day are filled with work and succeed one another in the same order, one will know without looking at the clock when it is time for prayer. It will, then, rarely happen that one gets up late and has to worry about how to make up for the lost time. It is not necessary to adjust the time of evening prayer with the prayer hour in the Ashram. People living in different parts of the world cannot do a particular thing at the same hour. It will, therefore, be most convenient for you to start your prayer when the sun sets in that part of the country. I think I have answered all your doubts, big and small.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 55-7

29. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

January 15, 1933

CHI. SHARDA,

Your letter. You seem to be absorbed in work. That is very good indeed. Is not writing to me part of your work? If not, why not?

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9961. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

30. A LETTER[1]

January 15, 1933

There are four remedies: First, Ramanama; second, pure air, *pranayama* in open air, *asanas* and other exercises; third, wholesome food, wheat, green vegetables and milk, exclusion of spices and sweets; and fourth, keeping the body busy with work the whole day so that one may get sound sleep at night.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 54

31. LETTER TO GOPALDAS DESAI

January 15, 1933

All four of us were at one in complimenting you for not coming.[2] Few people have observed such self-control. Compliments to you once again.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 54

32. A LETTER

January 15, 1933

If it is true that my life is dedicated to the service of all creatures, it is still more true that it is dedicated to God. How can I help when He prompts me to undertake an indefinite fast?

I can show that the use of legislatures to secure freedom to the Harijans to enter temples is not opposed to the principle of non-co-operation. But I would be violating jail rules by doing so. If, therefore, I get an opportunity later to explain that and if you are present at that time, you may ask your question. My present activities for the removal of untouchability may seem to do temporary harm, but it is a fact of universal experience that work for a good cause

[1] The correspondent had asked how he could cure wet dreams.

[2] The addressee, who had recently been released from jail, had not gone to see Gandhiji.

ultimately does no harm, and I have no doubt in my mind that this is a good cause.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 54-5

33. LETTER TO A YOUTH[1]

January 15, 1933

A great many such things are being written about me. The article is such a palpable lie that I hope nobody will put his trust in it. And if there are any people who put their trust in it, my reply to it will have no effect on them.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 55

34. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Y. M.,
January 15, 1933

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

Muldas's account is excellent. I had learnt about it from someone. Such tours may prove very effective. They are an object-lesson and real propaganda.

I saw your signature after many days. I do think of you constantly of course. I am certainly hungry for silent devotion.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G. N. 11559

[1] The addressee is described in the source as "a young man of Dar-es-Salaam"

35. A LETTER

January 15, 1933

The article[1] you have sent me is full of poison from beginning to end. I hope my life is living proof of its falsehood.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 55

36. TELEGRAM TO HOME SECRETARY GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

January 16, 1933

SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT
HOME DEPARTMENT
NEW DELHI

REGARDING MY REQUEST FOR PERMITTING CONSERVANCY WORK TO BE DONE BY HIGH-CASTE PRISONERS WHO MAY VOLUNTEER TO DO SUCH WORK MAY I NOW KNOW GOVERNMENT DECISION?

GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 3876. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(6), p. 285

37. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

January 16, 1933

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

Sjt. Mathuradas, the only grandson of a deceased sister of mine, was recently discharged from Belgaum Prison. He met me and told me that my letters were delivered to him with passages cut out. Now my letters never contain anything that might possibly be considered of an obnoxious nature from the prison or any other standpoint. They go from here duly censored. The Superintendents here have done me the favour of drawing my attention to passages in my letters which they may not like. But to cut out words or passages from a letter

[1] By Vasantram Shastri

without reference to the writer may lead to dangerous interpretations or interpretations not intended by the writer. In my opinion any letter of which a passage is held objectionable should be referred to the writer and option given to him either of withdrawing the passage or the letter altogether. And I cannot understand the practice of double censoring. My letters are all thought out and conceived as one piece. They contain mostly ethical matters. The removal of a word may change the meaning. I should not like my letters to be interfered with without my knowledge. I may say that I often receive Maniben Patel's letters with large patches making the letters meaningless.

I wish you could grant relief in this matter by no means trivial to me.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 9

38. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

January 16, 1933

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

I hope that you have now overtaken the Christmas week arrears and are comparatively free to devote a little attention to an important matter which we have often talked about but never thoroughly thrashed out. I refer to the question of handcarding and hand-spinning in the prisons. I have told you that as early as 1922 these two things were first introduced at my request in this prison. At first Sjt. Shankerlal Banker and I were permitted to do this work on our own bows and wheels with our own cotton. Then cotton was brought by Col. Dalziel from Dharwar. The result of our work was liked by Major Jones who followed Col. Dalziel and he allowed all Civil Disobedience prisoners who volunteered to do this work regularly. I was permitted to regulate and examine the daily work and issue the necessary instructions for improvement. A record was kept of the work. Spinning-wheels and bows were manufac-tured in the prison, spindles were made and the yarn was used as welt, and, if I am not mistaken, also for tapes. I was allowed to train convict warders as carders, and a considerable quantity of yarn was thus produced.

On the resumption of Civil Disobedience in 1930 the question

was raised by me and several prisoners and permission was granted in some cases and not in others. There was no fixed policy evolved when peace was declared and the C. D. prisoners were discharged.

The matter this time is also in the same uncertain state. In Dhulia for instance Seth Jamnalal Bajaj tells me hand-spinning is universal among the C. D. prisoners, so much so that much khadi has been manufactured out of the yarn so spun. I know that in some other jails too it is freely allowed. It is only here that almost complete prohibition reigns except with me, my companions and certain other prisoners and the female Civil Disobedience prisoners.

I have told you that many Civil Disobedience prisoners have been under vows to spin regularly as a sacrifice. It is only after much effort that I have succeeded generally in persuading the Civil Disobedience prisoners not to regard the vow as binding in prisons. They know that I am trying to persuade you to give the permission to spin to those who regard it as a sacred duty, either as part of their task or as extra work to be kept by them for their use.

To carding and spinning by itself I am sure the Government can have no objection. It has no connection with the Civil Disobedience campaign. Spinning organizations have not been declared unlawful nor spinning an unlawful activity. From the State point of view I can demons-trate, as I did in 1922 by actual results, that it is a more remunerative occupation than several others followed in the prisons. Indeed I endeavoured to show to one of your predecessors, viz., Col. Mel, that it was possible even to make prisons self-supporting by a universal introduction of all cotton processes in the prisons. But whilst I was carrying on these conversations, he retired. Inspectors-General and Superintendents change rapidly and I was discharged all too prematurely owing to the attack of appendicitis. If I can but get a little encouragement from you, I have the same confidence as in 1922 and could show you startling results.

But that may be a far cry. My present purpose is to ask you please to regularize the practice, which is now followed haphazard, of allowing volunteers to do hand-carding and hand-spinning with such restrictions as may be considered necessary in the interest of the administration.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 9

39. LETTER TO SANKARANARAYANA IYER

January 16, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. Had I the time, I would have attempted a reply to it. But as most of the points raised by you have been covered in my statements, you would not mind my referring you to them.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SANKARANARAYANA IYER
TIMBER MERCHANT
COIMBATORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 18933

40. LETTER TO KPA RAMESWARAN NAMBOODIRI

January 16, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and offer of the sacred oil. Believing as I do firmly in true Shastras not only tolerating but permitting Harijans of today to enter temples, I could not avail myself of the offer you kindly made. If you will investigate the Shastras, you will fail to discover a single text that would apply to those whose entry today is debarred.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. PARAMESWARAN NAMBOODIRI
OTHIKKEN
C/O TEMPLE SUPERINTENDENT
GURUVAYUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 18937

41. LETTER TO V. V. KETKAR

January 16, 1933

DEAR FRIEND ,

I have your letter. You are in a hurry. I am constitutionally opposed to coercing anybody, whether he is in the majority or in the minority, and essentially so in religious matters. Hence I would respect the scruples of the minority in so far as it is possible to do so.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. V. V. KETKAR
SADASHIVA LANE
BOMBAY 4

From a microfilm: S.N. 18938

42. LETTER TO BASANT KUMAR CHATTERJEE

January 16, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter by registered post. Of late I have missed the balanced judgment which characterized all your letters which it was my pleasure to receive. The latest one in front of me is full of hot spices, reckless statements and innuendoes. If your letter had not betrayed anger, I would have pleaded with you and shown you the mis-statements and misrepresentations with which your letter bristles. Some day, and I am sure that day is not very far, when passions have subsided, you will admit, if you have patience enough to keep this letter, that what I have said in it was all true.

Yours sincerely,

BASANT KUMAR CHATTERJEE
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18939

43. LETTER TO R. KAIMAL

January 16, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

The letters that come to me from Travancore, that is, from Trivandrum, and all practically from M.A.s and B.A.s who are also High Court vakils, are very remarkable for hard-heartedness and want of susceptibility to the upward impulse of humaneness. The writers seem to exhaust the whole of their effort in resorting to subtleties of argument for defending the obviously indefensible. I was ill-prepared for such an exhibition of ungenerous interpretation of Shastras from a place of which I have such happy memories. It is to me a vast tragedy that you, who have such a magnificent natural scenery about you, expressive of bountiful Nature, should steel your hearts against your own kith and kin and find it in you to make an appeal to me for peace[1] when, un mindful of consequences, perhaps all unconsciously to yourself, you are engaged in carrying on destruction. I would not have written thus to you if I had not traced a ring of sincerity about your letter.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. KAIMAL, M.A., LL.B.

HIGH COURT VAKIL

TRIVANDRUM

From a microfilm: S.N. 18940

44. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

January 16, 1933

According to me, the reasons why your body does not become strong and healthy are these: though you eat, you do not have faith in the food which you eat and feel aversion towards it, you waste your mental energy too much and neglect your health out of ignorant attachment to work. The remedy is indicated by the reasons themselves. You should cure your lack of faith, look upon the food which you eat as a sign of God's kindness and pray, while eating it,

[1] The addressee had pleaded: "Please drop temple-entry; vouch peace; destroy not; but, fulfil."

that it may give you strength. You should realize that it is necessary to preserve the body in good health for the sake of the *atman,* regard it as a trust and take the best care of it that you can. Anybody who neglects a trust is guilty of a wrong.

I do not know when I first became aware of the existence of God. Doing these things becomes so natural to me that I feel I have always been doing them. Who can say that the leaves of a tree became so big on such and such a day? All that I can say is that I have arrived at the present stage at the age of sixty-four. But this means nothing.

When a person has attained the *Brahmi* state[1], he does not suffer at the sight of others' sufferings because he does not rejoice at the sight of their happiness. A carpenter does not feel either happy or unhappy when repairing a ship; a Brahmin acts in the same manner. A Brahmin is one who has attained the *Brahmi* state.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 58

45. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[2]

YERAVDA,
January 16, 1933

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I shall expect you on Friday at noon. Bring along the Court decision if you have no need of it. I am cognizant of all that you write about Malabar; I have been there three or four times. The ground has also been well prepared. Work has been going on since my visit in 1925 in connection with the Vykom [Satyagraha].[3] Yet, much remains to be done. But we will talk more about it when you come. Do bring along Taramati and children.

If you have preserved my letters which you received in the jail

[1] State of oneness with Brahman, the Absolute
[2] An extract from this letter appears in "Letter to Mathurdas Trikumji", 16-1-1933
[3] *Ibid.,*

bring along with you such of them as have passages scored out or otherwise tempered with by the authorities.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
21 MINT ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

46. LETTER TO BINDU DASTANE

January 16, 1933

Bangles and *kumkum*[1] are the marks of a married woman or a maiden eligible for marriage. Therefore one who desires marriage may certainly adorn herself with both. You may, by all means, wear the bangles and the *kumkum* if you are fond of them. Anyway, you may wear them if Mother wants you to; you must not hurt her feelings.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 57

47. LETTER TO MRS. DASTANE

January 16, 1933

Read carefully my letter to Bindu. If you agree with what I have said, do encourage the girls in giving up bangles, etc. But if you do not approve of *brahmacharya*, you may ask them to wear bangles and other things. In my view a mother's duty is to encourage the spirit of renunciation in the children. The mind is bound to run after pleasures. Ultimately the girls are bound to use all those things if they are interested in marriage, but we must not compel them.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 57

[1] Vermilion mark on the forehead of women

48. LETTER TO VATSALA V. DASTANE

January 16, 1933

By doing our best to remove suffering and by faithfully observing the rules of truth and so on we serve living beings. Those who indulge in untruth, violence, hoarding, thieving and *abrahmacharya*[1] hurt life itself. By observing truth and so on they alleviate suffering, which amounts to serving.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 57-8

49. A LETTER

January 16, 1933

If you are keen to stay, you should observe the rules, be sincere and do the work.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 58

50. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

January 16, 1933

I am quite sure that Seth Chamanlal[2] could not believe that there was any likelihood of a civil war in the country. As I have said in my appeal to sanatanists, such a thing I hold to be inconceivable. If anybody knows the reformers, I should surely know them. War could take place only if there are two parties to fight one another. Self-styled sanatanists would be simply beating the air if they staged a war. And why should there be a war? The Viceroy gives formal sanction not to a Bill passed but to a Bill that has been introduced, which even when passed ensures absolute freedom from fight.

The fight may come when the matter goes out of the reformers' hands and disappointed and enraged Harijans take the matter in their

[1] Violation of *brahmacharya*

[2] Chamanlal Girdhardas Parekh, Chairman, Ahmedabad Mill-owners' Association, was reported to have urged the Viceroy not to sanction the introduction of the Temple-entry Bills, as it would lead to a religious civil war.

own hands and fight for their rights against the whole host of caste Hindus. But even that is a remote possibility, so long as reformers are alive to vindicate the honour of sanatana dharma.

The Bill can only pass if it has solid Hindu opinion behind it and not otherwise. I hope, therefore, that nobody will be scared by thetelegram to which you have just drawn my attention.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-1-1933

51. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

January 17, 1933

MY DEAR MARY,

I have your letter. Whatever you are, you are no guest.[1] You are a member of the ever-growing family. Whether you are daughter, or sister or mother, matters little. In this strange family, each one makes his or her own choice of the position he or she would occupy. Therefore you understand you will be no guest to me wherever we meet.

My conception of idol-worship is wholly different from that of the learned men. I know from the experience of many people that idol-worship has given them spiritualism of the highest type and that a philosophic conception of God has made such philosophers grossly material.

As I have told you, whilst the form may be different, mankind are idol-worshippers by their very nature. It is true that not all are uplifted by such worship, but that can be said of every form of worship. Those who look down upon idol-worship with philosophic contempt are not idol-worshippers but probably the worst form of idolaters, for they are worshippers of self.

Ba is in the Ashram. She left here some time ago. Mira writes to me every week and I to her and I often mention you to her.

I have not yet got the *Little Plays of St. Francis.* Tell me when you sent the book. Did you register it?

Love from us all.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5988. Also C.W. 3345. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] The addressee, after three visits to Gandhiji in jail in January, had remarked jokingly in a letter that although they were prisoners, she felt as if she had been entertained by them as their "guest".

52. LETTER TO DEYASA BOYS' UNION

January 17, 1933

DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,

I have your letter. I am delighted that you are serving Harijan children in the only way open to you. God will bless you for this real service of His most needy children. This is my advice. Treat these children as your own blood brothers and blood sisters. Teach them good manners by having good manners yourselves. Teach them cleanliness. If they come in a dirty condition to the school, wash them. See that their eyes, ears, nose and hair are quite clean. Let there be no dirt in their nails. If their clothes are rags, you should beg some khaddar and get a volunteer tailor or your own mothers to make nice little vests and *chaddis*[1] for them. You should take them for walks to see interesting sights. Tell them stories from *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, etc., and by being truthful and kind under every circumstance, teach them to be likewise; and to all this you may add booklearning including simple arithmetic. You will now tell me how much of this advice you have digested.

Yours sincerely,

DEYASA BOYS' UNION
C/O RAKHAHARI CHAKRAVARTY
DEYASA VILLAGE
DIGNAGAR P. O.
(BURDWAN DT.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 18941

53. LETTER TO A. SUBBIAH

January 17, 1933

MY DEAR SUBBIAH,

Never apologize for your letters, rather apologize when you keep me without any. You know how I want letters from those who are near me.

The fast about Appasaheb Patwardhan was a necessity. He had

[1] Shorts

obtained my permission during the truce period for doing what he did. When, therefore, I came to know of it, I was bound to stand up for him, especially because it was pure untouchability work. Whether I fast often or rarely, know that it could be only in obedience to the peremptory dictates of the Inner Voice.

The news you have given me about the Madras referendum[1] is very good. Tell me if you know what was the total strength of the eligible voters. Did the voters include those Hindus who are not entitled to temple-entry?

I hope you are now better. Lalita[2] should write to me occasionally if she continues her Hindi study.

Though my elbows are not yet in good condition, I am keeping quite healthy.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. A. SUBBIAH

GANDHI ASHRAM, KHADI BHANDAR

BLACKBURN LIGHT

MADURA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18942

54. LETTER TO ARUN CHANDRA DUTT

January 17, 1933

MY DEAR ARUN,

I was delighted to have your letter containing a good account of the celebration[3] and I am glad that you are able to get Satyanand Baboo to preside[4]. The resolution, too, is quite good. Now we have to continue to do the work quietly and resolutely, unmindful of all that may be said against us. Truth is bound to win in the end.

Yes, Pandit Panchanan Tarkaratna was here. He was able to

[1] In Madura, where members to the Sri Meenakshi Devasthanam Committee were elected. The addressee had written to Gandhiji: "The results are entirely in favour of temple-entry. . . . out of 1887 votes (valid) polled, 1498 voted for candidates who stood for temple-entry. . . ." (S.N. 18898).

[2] Addressee's wife

[3] Of the 50th birth anniversary of Motilal Roy of the Prabartak Sangh

[4] At a public meeting at Chandernagore, held on January 8, 1933, which passed a resolution for allowing all classes of Hindus the right of entry to Hindu temples (S.N. 18889)

make no headway in Guruvayur. I do not know that he tried much either. The impression that he has left on my mind is that he is convinced that our case is unassailable, but he has not the courage to come out boldly for the purification of Hinduism. Of course this is not for publication, but if Moti Baboo sees him, I do not mind his showing this letter to him. I do not want to say of him what I am not prepared to say in front of him. He promised to send his son or some other representative to me who was to engage in a quiet discussion with me on the meaning of the Shastras for a number of days. I thought the son or another *Shastri* was to come soon after he reached Bombay. I observed that the son was one of the *Shastris* who were to hold the discussion on the 12th, a discussion which unfor-tunately never came off. It is a painful episode[1], not worth describing. A great deal of misrepresentation is now going on in the local Press. If it goes further, I might have to publish the whole correspondence.

I shall await Moti Baboo's letter, but there is no hurry, if he has not written already. Let him take his own time.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. ARUN CHANDRA DUTT
PRABARTAK SANGHA
CHANDERNAGORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 18943

55. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

January 17, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter of the 10th instant from Gwalior. I am meeting Sjts. Deodhar[2] and Vaze[3] tomorrow (Wednesday) about the English edition of *Harijan Sevak.* I have already had a preliminary conversation with Vaze since the receipt of your letter. It seems there will be no difficulty about publishing the paper here. But I shall do nothing in a hurry. I will send you the fullest information before actually embarking on the enterprise.

[1] *Vide* "Note to Deonayakacharya", 12-1-1933 and "Letter to C. Rajagopalchari", 13-1-1933

[2] G. K. Devdhar

[3] S. G. Vaze, Editor of *Servant of India*

What is this opposition in Bengal against the Yeravda Pact? I am writing also to Dr. Bidhan enquiring about it.[1]

I note what you say about the effect of prunes. Have you tried them at all?

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 7920. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also S.N. 18944

56. LETTER TO RASIK LAL BISWAS

January 17, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I am forwarding it to Dr. Bidhan and I would suggest your meeting him if you have not done so already. All the advice that I would give you just now is that you should be patient and watch the progress of the campaign against untouchability, giving the reformers all the help they may need, and you can anticipate their need by carrying on social reformation of a concentrated character amongst the Harijans and preparing a statement giving accurately a list of all the social and other disabilities that they may be suffering from. I would like such a statement myself and also like you to prepare an accurate census of all the Harijans according to the sub-divisions . It will be of great help to me in guiding you in so far as you may need my guidance.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RASIK LAL BISWAS, B.A., B.L.
SECRETARY
ALL-INDIA DEPRESSED CLASSES FEDERATION
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18946

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. B. C. Roy", 17-1-1933

57. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

January 17, 1933

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I enclose herewith a letter from Sjt. Rasik Lal Biswas. I have advised him to see you. Do please invite him to see you.

What is this agitation against the Yeravda Pact? I would like you to give me the inwardness of the opposition. How can there be any injustice in the Pact, simply because of reservation of more seats for Harijans than had been provided in the British Government decision? Are they not also Hindus? Was there not always the cry on our part that the Harijans could take as many seats as they liked, even cent per cent? This opposition, if it is popular, is likely to estrange Harijans and to justify the fears often expressed on their behalf as to the attitude of caste Hindus. But you know the local situation infinitely better than I do. You will correct me if I have erred in putting the argument. I have given no public reply, because I felt that any reply from me at the present stage might increase the resentment of the Harijans. In any case, I did not want to say anything without first understanding the situation through you. Please guide me.

I hope Kamala and Dr. Alam are making steady progress.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18948

58. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 17, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

Some of the developments there are such as cause me worry, and so these days I wait for a letter from you almost every day. This does not mean of course that you should write daily. When there is no letter from you, I must assume, and I shall, that you had nothing to write about. I have only explained the state of my mind.

You will have to take the necessary step about the Giri family even at the risk of appearing cruel. I feel all the time that it is against their interests and those of the Ashram to let them remain. We must realize that Mahavir is supported in his behaviour by all of them.

Chimanlal has won the confidence of Krishnamaiyadevi[1] in some measure. After he has had a talk with her, call a meeting of the committee which you have appointed there and let it decide finally. Since the question is a serious one, it is desirable that you alone should not take the responsibility. If you have not already written to the people from whom Mahavir has borrowed, do so immediately and ascertain the facts.

Sitla Sahai[2] may have been arrested. Write to Sarojinidevi[3] occasionally. Inquire what happened about Padma[4]. Keep an eye on her monthly expenses.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also *Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine*, Pt. II, pp. 16-7

59. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 17, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

These days I write to you almost daily. I got today both your weekly mail and the letters despatched on the 15th. I don't remember what I wrote to Madhavlal. It did not seem necessary to me to consult you about the matter. If you wish, however, you may write to him and tell him that, instead of asking me for an explanation, he should write to you directly.

What do you mean when you say that the mill will start working soon? Do you mean the ordinary hand-mill of stone? If you have decided to revive it, I assume that you must have taken all the factors into consideration. I hope you did not think from any of my letters that I wished it to be done. Personally I believe that we shall not be able to revive it now. We do not even get good hand-mills now. It is easy and cheap to get grain ground in flour-mills. I think it will be difficult to give up the practice. But we can grind small quantities of grain in the Ashram with our own mills or with American hand-mills. If such a mill is of a good quality, it never gives trouble. When any of

[1] Widow of Dalbahadur Giri
[2] A khadi worker from U.P.
[3] Wife of Sitla Sahai
[4] Daughter of Sitla Sahai

its parts get worn out, they can be replaced.

Generally I take two pounds of milk daily. I have to reduce it to one pound once every week.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also *Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine*, Pt. II, p. 17

60. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ

January 17, 1933

CHI. RUKMINI[1],

Your letters are becoming increasingly dull. I would not be surprised if in time you begin to write as Chhotelalji does. Sometimes his letters come to me in this form:

" BAPU,

Regards from

CHHOTELAL"

Probably I should fill in whatever I wish and I need not (so that I may not have to) take the trouble of reading it at all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9644. Courtesy: Benarsilal Bazaj

61. LETTER TO A COLLEGE STUDENT

January 17, 1933

It is not correct to say that I am a champion of mixed marriages. It can be said that I do not oppose such marriages. There is a difference between the two statements. The statement that I am a champion of mixed marriages or even that I am not opposed to them is likely to give rise to some misunderstanding in so far as your idea of a mixed marriage is different from mine. Today we hardly come across any true Brahmins or true Shudras. Therefore what you do not regard as a mixed marriage is likely to be one and what, if I accepted the popular parlance, would be a mixed marriage may not actually be such. For instance, if a so-called Shudra girl possessing the qualities of a Brahmin girl marries a real Brahmin I would not call it a mixed

[1] Daughter of Maganlal Gandhi and wife of Benarsilal Bazaj

marriage, whereas you would regard it as such. On the other hand, if a so-called Brahmin boy with the qualities of a Shudra marries a so-called Shudra girl with Brahmin-like qualities it would be a mixed marriage in my view. You would also regard it as one. Both of us will, however, do it for different reasons.

You should understand from this that I never reject a scientific truth that has been established. But you should also note that in [the realm of] science what has come to be accepted as truth today is not unlikely to be proved as untruth tomorrow. Sciences founded on deduction are always bound to suffer this basic imperfection. We cannot therefore regard it as an absolute truth. I think I understand and also believe in varnashrama-dharma. But you and I seem to understand the purport of varnashrama-dharma in different ways.[1]

In spite of saying all this I ought to caution you that if you propose to consider the question of untouchability in a scientific way you should understand that interdining and mixed marriage have nothing to do with the question, and you should act accordingly. As for me today I am living, but tomorrow I may not be there, but this problem is certainly going to be there even after me. At the moment I am not at all canvassing for interdining and mixed marriage. We shall see about it when I start advocating them. It is neither scientific nor moral to condemn, because of faults you find in me, the noble work that I happen to be doing.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 61

62. LETTER TO INDRA VIDYALANKAR

January 17, 1933

CHI. INDRA,

I have your letter. I can never suggest from here that Ganeshilal or anyone else may be admitted into the Sangh. I have no acquaintance with him. I am aware of the distressing fact that there are five or six divisions among the Harijans. This is a reflection of our own deeds. Has anyone anywhere published a list of the temples and wells that have been thrown open to Harijans?

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7205. Also C.W. 4863. Courtesy: Chandragupta Vidyalankar

[1] For discussion, *vide* "Discussion with Dharmadev", 17-1-1933

63. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI

January 17, 1933

BHAI CHAND TYAGI,

I have your letter. I spend almost the whole day under the sky and in the sun. The finger is all right. My diet consists of milk, dates, oranges and, when available, *papaya*. Mirabehn is in the Bombay jail. The observance of physical as well as mental *brahmacharya is* made possible by keeping both body and mind under control.

Chhaganlal Joshi too is with me. We are all doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3261

64. A NOTE ON THE THE PROPOSED INTRODUCTION OF HAND-SPINNING IN YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON[1]

January 18, 1933

1 lb. Of carded cotton yields 840 yards of yarn of 1 count, i.e., 8400 yards of yarn of 10 counts.

An average good spinner spins at least 150 yards per hour of 10 counts. Therefore in 6 working hours he will spin 900 yards—4.14 *tolas*. Therefore 9 such men will spin 1 lb. of yarn per day.

At the rate of 3 as. per lb. of 10 [count] yarn as the ordinary wage of a spinner, 9 men will earn 3 as. a day, i.e., 1/3 of an anna each. At the present moment at least. 1000 C. D. prisoners in this jail are not producing even half of this small amount of wealth. In other words there is a dead waste of at least Rs. 10 per day in the Yeravda Central Prison.

The outlay required for producing the yarn is 120 lb. of cotton per day. It is likely that it will not be necessary to supply spinning-wheels to all these spinners. I am unable to say off-hand how many will have their own spinning-wheels. But that will need to be ascertained.

NOTE. I have given the lowest possible estimates so as to err on

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to E. E. Doyle, 16-1-1933.

the safest side. It may also be stated that it is possible to do the spinning through the *takli,* the easiest and the cheapest method, but the output would be 1/3 compared to the wheel. I suggest that the beginning should be made at once with those who volunteer to do the spinning and who can produce their own spinning-wheels .

There remains now the question as to what to do with the yarn. Yarn of 10 counts can be utilized to weave coarse cloth or the yarn as it is produced can be sold without the slightest difficulty. I have made no reference in this note to carding. The usual estimate is that one carding-bow can supply ten spinners with carded cotton. The processes to be gone through before spinning is begun are carding and sliver-making in which last is the simplest.

If further particulars are required I will gladly supply them.

I have here confined myself only to the commercial aspect and made no reference to those with whom spinning is a part of daily sacrifice. I think that for such the permission should be granted at once, in view of the fact that it is being done in several prisons.

M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I. G. P. File No. 10

65. TELEGRAM TO "THE HINDU"

January 18, 1933

WHAT PURPORTS TO BE AN INTERVIEW[1] WITH YOUR POONA CORRESPONDENT AND PUBLISHED IN THE DAK EDITION OF THE SIXTEENTH IS GROSS DISTORTION OF A CONVERSATION WHICH I HAD SPECIALLY WARNED YOUR CORRESPONDENT AGAINST PUBLISHING. I TOLD HIM I WAS UNPREPARED TO GIVE HIM ANYTHING FOR PUBLICATION. I HAVE ALSO WARNED ALL PRESS CORRESPONDENTS NOT TO PUBLISH ANYTHING WITHOUT FIRST SHOWING ME THE TEXT THEREOF.[2]

The Hindu, 19-1-1933

[1] It appeared in *The Hindu,* 16-1-1933; *vide* "Interview to "The Hindu" Crrespondent", 14-1-1933

[2] In reply, the Editor of *The Hindu* apologized as follows: "We gladly publish Mahatmaji's contradiction and deeply regret that an unauthorized and incorrect. report of a talk with him should have obtained publication".

66. TELEGRAM TO S. SALIVATI

January 18, 1933

YOUR REPORT OF INTERVIEW BADLY DISTORTED. GREATLY PAINED AT BREACH OF TRUST IN PUBLISHING IT. DAMAGE ALREADY DONE.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 68-9

67. LETTER TO R. P. AGNIHOTRI

January 18, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter enclosing a copy of your letter to the Municipal Committee of Jubbulpore. Without knowing the condition of the Harijans it is impossible for me from here to say whether the suggestions made therein are proper and feasible. Workers should generally take care that in advising Harijans they do not raise false or impossible hopes. Anti-untouchability workers are expected more to do some tangible service themselves rather than promote petitions, etc. In the first instance, local bodies are to be expected to do their duty and when they manifestly fail to do so, public agitation undoubtedly becomes a necessity.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. P. AGNIHOTRI
SECRETARY, ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY LEAGUE
JUBBULPORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 18962

68. LETTER TO C. NARAYANA MENON

January 18, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

Do you mean to suggest that in Malabar the public temples do not belong to the Hindus who have the right of worship there? Will you contend that even when the temple was first built, it was not the property of Hindus although Hindus subscribed to the cost of

building it? And if that was so, then the trustees would not be trustees, but they would be absolute owners. There are thousands of such temples owned by private persons. A public temple is so called only because it is public property; that is to say, the property of those members of the public at whose instance and with whose money and on whose behalf the temple was built. Do you think that the multitude of people who give donations daily have no right whatsoever to the temple to which they give donations? Of course you may say that the right does not include authority to change the character or quality of those who are entitled to offer worship. If you do so, you will simply beg the question. For the contention of the reformers is that the so-called Harijans are only so called, and that they should never have been excluded from rights enjoyed by any other members of the Hindu family, provided that they conform to the regulations as to cleanliness and the like.

The purity of the temples themselves is irrelevant to the present discussion. You don't want to say that if a temple has dancing girls and swindling Brahmins, it should be opened to Harijans, and not if the Brahmins cease to swindle and the girls cease to dance in those temples?

Do indeed see Malaviyaji, if he can give you a few moments, and Dr. Bhagwandas. He certainly has more leisure than Malaviyaji.

About my fast you need have no fear.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. NARAYANA MENON, M.A., PH.D.
BENARES HINDU UNIVERSITY
BENARES

From a microfilm: S.N. 18963

69. LETTER TO HRIDAY NATH KUNZRU

January 18, 1933

MY DEAR HARIJI,

Here is a letter for you to read and deal with. I have simply asked the writer to see you. Is there any truth in the charge that all the Harijan candidates were unsuccessful at the municipal election?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18964

70. LETTER TO G. B. NIRANTAR

January 18, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You and your pupils, 15 in all, can come on 23rd instant, at 2 p.m.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. B. NIRANTAR
TEACHER
SEVA SADAN HIGH SCHOOL
POONA CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18965

71. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 18, 1933

MY DEAR AMTUSSALAAM,

I must hurry on to write to you. Therefore this English letter. I would like you to make up your mind quickly as to the treatment to be followed. My advice is, if you get a doctor there who would take real interest in you, you should give him the fullest chance by obeying all his instructions and doing as he bids. That is to say, you should do as Veenabehn advises you. There should be no time wasted in simply making a decision. You should be in the hospital and take what medicine or injection is given to you and undergo the operation that may be needed. Do not think of the removal of the womb unless the doctor says so. Never mind the letter written to Dr. Sharma. You yourself say that he cannot cure piles. After you are well you shall come and see me.

Love. God may keep you well.[1]

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 272

[1] This sentence is in Urdu.

72. LETTER TO N.[1]

January 18, 1933

MY DEAR N.,

I have your two interesting and instructive letters. It is very great work you are doing, and if the young men who have responded to your call remain steadfast and do not give in after the first flush of enthusiasm is exhausted, the street-cleaning you are doing must prove infectious and it would be a great advance towards the removal of untouchability. I am therefore surprised that anybody should cavil at the work itself or take exception to the fact that you, who have become an Indian by adoption and by right of love, should have taken the lead, and if anybody thinks that I would not have advised such work if I was out, he is wholly mistaken. I have personally undertaken such work before now, both publicly and privately, and the cleaning of Harijan quarters that was done all over India on the 18th ultimo was due to the suggestion made by me and heartily taken up by the Servants of Untouchables Society. You are at liberty to make public use of this letter.

I did think from the language of your previous letter that you had fasted all the days that I was fasting. I am glad therefore of the correction you have made.

As you know, I am deeply interested in the question of scientific or (which is the same thing) hygienic and spiritual dietary. Tell me therefore more about your diet. Give me the actual things you take and the quantities, and how far you have been on this diet. As you seem to have read practically everything I have ever written, perhaps you are aware that I have lived on fruits and nuts for over six years, that I have gone without milk for over nine years, and it has been the most disappointing thing for me to have been obliged to take even goat's milk. I know of no one of my acquaintance who has been able to do hard physical work as also hard mental work, as you seem to be doing, merely on fruits and vegetables, that means, no protein, no starch and no fat of any kind. The two letters before me whet my appetite for seeing you face to face and understanding you more than

[1] An American woman who later stayed at the Sabarmati Ashram for some time; the name in this and the subsequent items, however, has been omitted.

I do. I confess that I am very stupid and I don't and I can't understand people merely through their correspondence. To know them I need to look at them and talk to them, and you have written so much to me about yourself that I do want to know you if I can. But at the same time I don't want you to come here at the sacrifice of the great work you are doing there. You should come only when you can be spared for a few days from your work.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 18966

73. LETTER TO BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

January 18, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 12th instant. I shall thank you if you will enlighten me about the facts and conditions prevailing in the Province of Bengal which require a re-consideration of the Yeravda Pact.[1]

Yours sincerely'

THE JOINT HONY. SECRETARY
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION
18 BRITISH INDIAN ST.
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18967

74. LETTER TO FULCHAND SHAH

January 18, 1933

You are carrying on spinning[2] whereas we are arguing with the *Shastris,* some of whom are being sulky. They have been pouring abuses on me. They discover weaknesses in me of which till now I was unaware. My words are interpreted in strange ways and by such means the victory of sanatana dharma is declared with beat of drums. We laugh at all this, knowing that there is no real strength behind it. If there were real strength behind it, and also public opinion, then it would be not an occasion for laughter, but one for weeping; then one

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Ramananda Chatterjee", 20-1-1933

[2] In Visapur Jail

could not help but weep. This movement of the so-called sanatanists suggests that the foundation of untouchability is tottering and the structure will shortly tumble down.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 69

75. LETTER TO VAMANBUWA BRAHMACHARI

January 18, 1933

SHRI BRAHMACHARIJI,

Your letter. I can see you on the 25th instant at 2 o'clock and shall reserve one hour for you. I shall not give this time to anyone else. But according to my vow I regard it a duty to answer your doubts.

(1)[1] I agree with all that you say in the first question but there is the difference of interpretation which is almost impossible to explain through correspondence. All human beings are like blind men but all the devotees of truth are partially right in the same way that the seven blind men were right on their part in giving varying descriptions of the elephant on each touching different parts of its anatomy,

(2) Untouchability as practised today is found nowhere in the Shastras. This is the impression I have gathered on hearing what many *Shastris* say.

(3) Everything can be found in the *Gita.* According to the change of place, time and circumstances, conduct as prescribed by the principle can change but never the principle itself.

(4) This too is a fact that we have degenerated and continue to do so because of failure in observing dharma.

(5) What you say is not true.[2]

(6) In no way do I regard myself as more learned and wiser than anyone else.

(7) I have never taken such a vow[3] as you think I have.

[1] The addressee had asked whether Gandhiji had faith in the Vedas, whether he accepted their traditional interpretation or he had his own original interpretation.

[2] The addressee had stated that the Government was creating internal disunity in the country by allowing Gandhiji, even while in jail, to work for the removal of untouchability.

[3] Of winning swaraj within a year or removing untouchability within six months

(8) I do not appreciate the extreme rules of purification and so on.

(9) The observation that things follow their natural bent should be regarded as quite correct.

(10) Intermarriage and interdining have no connection with untouchability. They are totally different; read what I have said on this subject. Certain people, because of their hostile attitude, grossly misinterpret it.

(11) The idea of founding a new religion has never occurred to me even in a dream.

(12) It is perfectly right that the politics which does not serve to protect dharma deserves to be wholly disregarded.

(13) I cannot either give up or take up fasting.

(14) What you say is almost correct.[1]

(15) I have firm faith in the worthiness of the object for which I am thinking of a 'referendum'.

(16) I hold courteous dialogue with whosoever wants to talk to me, whether he is small or big. What more can I do?

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 18956

76. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

January 18, 1933

When his attention was drawn to the report of an interview[2] between him and its correspondent appearing in a Madras paper Gandhiji said:

I had decided not to express any opinion on the proposal that a committee should be appointed to gauge opinion in respect of temple-entry, because I did not attach any importance to the proposal. But now that mention has been made, I can unhesitatingly say that the appointment of such a committee would be a most unfortunate thing.

[1] The addressee had referred to the dehumanizing effects of the Western industrial civilization.

[2] *Vide* "Interview to "The Hindu" Correspondent", 14-1-1933. For Gandhiji's contradiction, *vide* "Telegram to The Hindu", 18-1-1933

I do not believe that the Government can ever endorse such a proposal.

The report stated that Mr. Gandhi said that he had decided to express his views on the proposal and that if the Viceroy refused sanction to the introduction of Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill, he (Mr. Gandhi) would resist it with his life. While characterizing the report as a misrepresentation of a conversation never intended for publication, Mr. Gandhi said that he never told the correspondent that he had decided to express his views on. the proposal for a committee. On the contrary, he had decided not to do so.

Explaining why the appointment of a committee would be most unfortunate, Mr. Gandhi said that Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill was thoroughly inoffensive. It not only did not seek interference with religion, but was intended to sound the religious feelings of the people concerned. There was no question of sanctioning any law; the only thing the Viceroy was requested to do was to give his formal consent to the introduction of the Bill, which was the result of the unanimous vote of the Madras Council.

Mr. Gandhi expressed surprise regarding the second part of the interview attributed to him, and said that he had no recollection whatsoever of having said that if the Viceroy refused to sanction, he would resist it with his life. He had no such settled plan before him, and if he had, he was not in the habit of making premature announcements to the public and that, even before bringing such an important decision to the notice of the authorities concerned. Indeed, he could say emphatically that he himself did not know what he would do if permission was withheld.

But I know it to be a terrific ordeal for me, if the progress of reform was interfered with by the refusal of sanction to the introduction of a measure indispensable for the growth of religious freedom.

The Hindu, 19-1-1933

77. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

January 19, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

This is just after the morning prayer Thursday. Vallabhbhai and I are waiting for the hot water for honey.

I have your letter before me. Of course I wrote last week as usual on Thursday after the morning prayer. If the letter was for any reason detained by the Superintendent there, he would have at least

informed you of the fact so as to spare you the anxiety of imagining all sorts of evil. I brought the matter to the notice of Major Bhandari and he promised to inquire. The letter was duly posted at this end. It may be, however, that the letter was withheld because, for the first time so far as I can recall, I sent you with my letter, letters of welfare from Madeleine Rolland, Andrews and copy of my letter to Madame Rolland. I sent also a very beautiful picture-card containing the Virgin and the divine babe. I should be surprised if the letter was withheld for that reason and even then why the letter itself. I therefore imagine that it has been waylaid during transit. Anyway I am inquiring at this end and you may at yours. For me that card was the greatest treasure with Aristarchi's inscription at the back.

And from this incident learn the lesson that even if such a mishap occurs again feel assured that I have written as usual even though I may not have got your weekly message and that the mishap must be due to causes beyond my control. If I got ill and could not write or if I was prevented for any other cause, you should be duly informed that no letter was sent during that week. In other words do not imagine causes but wait patiently for the knowledge if it is to come and in any case never imagine the worst. Since God is a God of mercy, if we must imagine, it is best to imagine the best. Of course, a votary of the *Gita* never imagines anything. Good and bad are after all relative terms. He takes note of things as they happen and reacts naturally to them, fulfilling his part as if propelled by the Great Mechanic, even as a piece of machine in good order responds automatically to the call of the machinist. It is the most difficult thing for an *intelligent* being to be like a machine. And yet, if one is to become a zero, that is precisely what one desiring perfection has to become. The vital difference between the machine and the man is that the machine is inert, the man is all life and consciously becomes like a machine in the hands of the Master Mechanic. Krishna says in so many words that God moves all beings as if they were parts of a machine.[1]

You see I have written this with the right hand. I notice that the left too requires rest from even the little writing it does. It is probable that the pain in the elbows has something to do with outward fatigue caused by writing or spinning or both. It has certainly not yielded to the saltless, and how should it if the cause is not organic? It produces

[1] *Vide Bhagavad Gita,* XVIII. 61,

immediate effect in you, because with you the cause is organic. I have no rheumatism. If there was any, I should not fail to know it. Anyway the saltless diet still continues. And I showed yesterday an increase of one lb. It is therefore now 104 lb.

You should, if you can, discover the cause of your giddiness. Have you discussed it with the medical officer there? You ought not [to] feel giddy at the end of your walk. You should feel refreshed. It is often a good thing to dash cold water on the face and even the head before starting the walk and sip cold water during the walk on the slightest warning of approaching giddiness. Even stopping for a moment to take deep breath avoids it. These are all bits out of my own experience.

I note what you say about your reading. The *Mahabharat* is a good programme. You ought to be a good Hindi scholar when you have finished reading the unabridged Hindi translation without missing the meaning of a single word. That means a great feat. But I know there is nothing that can defeat love.

If you are allowed to drop a postcard to acknowledge this and if it is delivered on receipt, drop me a postcard.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6259. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9725

78. LETTER TO KALISHANKAR CHAKRAVARTI

January 19, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have gone through your printed letter very carefully. You don't expect me to argue out my position. My argument is to be found in my writings. Therefore, to you I can only say I have been endeavouring to follow the light that God gives me, and whatever I have written at any time, I have believed and have meant fully. Where you find contradictions in my writings, I find nothing but a due fulfilment or elaboration of a previous position. But I am not so much concerned with showing consistency in my writings as with stating that I have given to the readers the truth as I have known it at the time of writing. I however heartily endorse your fear that whatever I have said believing it to be true may after all be found to have been a vast error.

But I take comfort (very poor, you may say) in the thought that it is a possibility common, without exception, to the whole of mankind. But you will perhaps agree that so long as I do not see the error of my ways myself I would be cowardly and disloyal to the truth I worship if I fail to act up to my conviction.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KALISHANKAR CHAKRAVARTI

JYOTI

CHITTAGONG

From a microfilm: S.N. 18971

79. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

January 19, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter of 14th instant. I had a prolonged conversation with Syts. Deodhar and Vaze yesterday regarding the English edition, and as a result[1] I have telegraphed to Amritlal Thakkar to send Shastri[2] at once if he could be spared. Vaze tells me that Shastri is the fittest man for doing the editorial work. He himself will help but cannot be completely identified with the paper. I can appreciate his reason. But both told me that though Shastri had applied to the Society for admission as a probationer, the Society would have no objection to Shastri taking up the editorial responsibility. Of course, so long as Mahadev and I have the time, the columns will be filled by us, and Shastri will carry out instructions, and in time to come write original articles himself.

I wonder when the Hindi edition will be out.[3]

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 7921. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also S.N. 18970

[1] *Harijan*

[2] R. V. Shastri

[3] The first issue of *Harijan Sevak* appeared on February 23, 1933

80. LETTER TO AMULYA DHAN RAY

January 19, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I have read as you have about the movement in Bengal for the revision of the Yeravda Pact. I can assure you that I have found no reason whatsoever to revise my own attitude. You need not be anxious, for I am convinced that that Pact cannot be revised without the unanimous consent of all the parties concerned.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. AMULYA DHAN RAY, M.L.C.

JESSORE TOWN

BENGAL

From a microfilm: S.N. 18972

81. LETTER TO NARASIMHAN[1]

January 19, 1933

Oh yes, it is necessary for you to write to me, although P and L[2] write to me. They cannot tell me what you can if you choose to write. There is always an individuality about letters when they are written with a will. You know or ought to know that letter writing is an art. It can come to everyone who writes naturally and to the point. You should try to acquire this art.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

82. LETTER TO KIKABHAI WAGHELA

January 19, 1933

BHAI KIKABHAI,

I got your letter. Please do not be impatient. I will do the best I can. I did not wish to deceive people by using the word 'Harijan,. Since the word Dhed and others like that in common use are not proper, I accepted the word 'Harijan' at the request of one or two

[1] Son of C. Rajagopalachari

[2] Papa and Lakshmi, daughters of C. Rajagopalachari

Antyaja friends. You may rest assured that I am ready to lay down my life in order to wipe out this blot. Though the Harijans are despised today, they will soon become respected.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 87

83. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

January 19, 1933

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

Read the accompanying cutting carefully and then write to me giving me your views. If we have made a mistake anywhere, we will admit it. If the fast resulted in coercion on anybody but secured justice, we need not think about the matter. But we should certainly think if it has resulted in injustice. The article has had no effect on me. Is this mere agitation or is there anything serious behind it? If it is only agitation, what is the motive?

BAPU

[PS.]

I have just received your wire regarding Shastri. I shall await your letter. I had sent the wire yesterday in the presence of Deodhar and Vaze. The latter had offered volunteers on the understanding that they would not participate directly.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1104

84. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

January 19, 1933

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

After I had written a letter to you [today], I got your letter of the 16th. Hence this second letter.

I have already written to you regarding Ahmedabad. Our letters crossed each other.

Karsandas had written to me about Gokhale's death anniversary. I do not at all wish to cheapen Gokhale's name. The country is not

ready yet to celebrate the 19th[1] in a manner befitting his greatness. History will appreciate the purity of his character and the greatness of his services. I don't think they will be appreciated in our lifetime. I don't mind "Anti-untouchability Days', being celebrated independently. This is my firm view. Don't you think it is based on very good reasons?

The Sangh has not yet reached its destination. On the contrary, several swords are hanging over it. Rajaji, of course, is holding an umbrella over it, but it is the Sangh's lot to pass through an ordeal just now. So what can an umbrella avail? However, you may consult Harijan and other principal fighters. If they agree, you may proceed further, otherwise bury Rajaji's letter deep under the ground. I had passed on to Ghanshyamdas the letter which I had received from him. He is not particular about the name. If I wish, he would agree to change it. Personally I do wish [that it should be]. But time is all-powerful. He swallows our desires alive, like a snake and makes even a Mahatma like me look an *alpatma*[2]. Hence I have held my tongue. You have strong shoulders. If you wish, you may take up the responsibility. As for the name the saying is, "With great love, we name the child Hari, and it dies in infancy." The Sangh will not succeed or fail because of its name. It will be judged by its work. If it works in the manner of the Yamaraj[3], I have no doubt that it will swallow the demon of untouchability alive.

You are wrong. You yourself should have humorously advertised the Holloway ointment. There are persons who will bear witness to its efficacy. If you do not like doing it or have no time, forget about it.

I have got some free time and so could indulge in this bit of light talk.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1105

[1] Gokhale died on February 19, 1915
[2] Literally, 'a little soul'
[3] Lord of Death

85. LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

January 20, 1933

I have seen your statement convening a Conference of sanatanists[1]. I had purposely refrained from worrying you over the question of temple-entry. Much as I stood in need of your invaluable assistance, I knew that you were preoccupied with matters of the highest moment, and I felt that the least I could do, as also the most that was possible, was deliberately to forgo that assistance. Friends in Kerala pressed me to ask you to go to their rescue. I refused to do so, and I warned them against troubling you. But now I see that you have yourself taken the initiative and a tremendous responsibility. I hope and pray that great good will come out of the Conference.

I wish that it had been possible for us to meet before the Conference, or that we had exchanged ideas before you propounded your suggestions about temple-entry. I feel, however, that I should submit to you my own position.

If the Bombay Meeting, during and immediately after the fast week[2], that passed the resolution was representative of Hindu India, it is up to every Hindu to make good that resolution in its fulness. That resolution, as you know, has definite reference to temple-entry. It prescribes no conditions. The whole trend of the resolution is that temple-entry and the use of public institutions by Harijans on the same terms as the other Hindus is a debt long overdue by caste Hindus. I feel that it would be wrong, if not a manifest breach of faith, to import any conditions specially applicable to Harijans. Naturally, Harijans would be expected to conform to the conditions that are implied in Hinduism and have to be observed by everyone who enters temples. But that is a different thing from laying down special conditions to be observed by Harijans by way of penance. Most of the things that are included in your suggestions can be enunciated in a different and perfectly harmless manner, that is to say, by saying that it is the right of Harijans to enter all public temples under the same conditions that are applicable to all Hindus, irrespective of their caste or status, that is to say, (here may be described these general

[1] At Ahmedabad on January 25. For Madan Mohan Malaviya's statement, Did; "Statement by Madan Mohan Malaviya", 19-1-1933

[2] From September 20 to 26, 1932

conditions, such as, daily bath, recitation of *Dwadash*[1] or other *mantras*, abstention from carrion or beef, intoxicating drinks, if the latter abstention is enjoined in any of the current *Smritis* and Puranas).

From all the discussions that I had with the *Shastris* who favour the present movement and who are hostile to it, I have gathered that there is no warrant whatsoever for untouchability as we now know it. There is perfect confusion as to whom, of all the people classified as untouchables in the census books, the verses oft-quoted apply. Untouchability by birth seems to be utterly non-existent. There is no proof whatsoever to show that any single one of the untouchables so classed is the progeny of a Brahmin woman through a Shudra man or that he is a descendant of such a union. I would, therefore, beg of you not to surrender on the matter of principle. I would far rather that the reformers were left to plough the lonely furrow than that they should be called upon to lend themselves to an unworthy surrender. The surrender, in my opinion, of the highest type I have suggested in my compromise proposal, where the most delicate susceptibilities of a minority, however small it may be, have been taken into consideration. Even that has cost me much criticism, but I am unaffected by it, because, in my opinion, it is perfectly honourable and satisfies all sincere and religious-minded reformers and dissenters.

If I am obscure, you will, I know and hope, use the wire freely.

I am most anxious that God may make you the instrument of purifying Hinduism and keeping faith with the Harijans.

Harijan, 18-2-1933 Also C.W. 7922a. Courtesy: G. D. Birla.

86. LETTER TO S. SALIVATI

January 20, 1933

MY DEAR SALIVATI,

I had your telegram and your letter[2], for which I thank you.

I think that your letter seems completely exonerative. But I would have preferred to have seen the copy of your original despatch. In any case, I never questioned the goodness of your motive.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18978

[1] नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ।

[2] Dated January 18, explaining how his original despatch was mutilated in transmission

87. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

January 20, 1933

DEAR SATISBABOO,

Have you at all interested yourself in the opposition that is being raised in Bengal against the Yeravda Pact, and can you tell me what is at the back of it?

I hope you received my previous letter and that you are keeping well.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18980

88. LETTER TO S. G. VAZE

January 20, 1933

MY DEAR VAZE,

I have a telegram from Sjt. Thakkar telling me that Shastri is not available yet for two weeks. He is following up his wire with a letter which will give me more information.

I have the estimate for which many thanks.

Tell me, if you can, what preliminaries have to be gone through before the paper can be brought out, and what notice will the Arya Bhushan Press require to bring out the first issue. Could you let me have a copy of the latest Press Act? Do you get the permission at once and for the asking for the publication of a non-political paper? Is the filing of a security a *sine qua non?* If it is, what form does the security take? Besides the names of the printer and the publisher, is it necessary to announce the name of the editor, and if it is, is he to file a declaration?

In the estimate before me, the cost of wrappers has not been given. Is the Reay Paper Mill situated in Poona? Is this Padamjee's Mill? Padamjee has always supplied me with paper for *Young India* and *Navajivan.* Has the Arya Bhushan Press Gujarati type?

Will you also prepare for me an estimate giving me the cost of the staff and other incidental expenses?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18981

89. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

January 20, 1933

DEAR MOTI BABOO,

I have your telegram about Malaviyaji's Conference. I am not so enthusiastic as you are. Let's however wait, watch and pray.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18982

90. LETTER TO RAMANANDA CHATTERJEE

January 20, 1933

DEAR RAMANAND BABOO[1],

This letter is not for publication.

This sudden opposition in Bengal against the Yeravda Pact comes upon me as a painful surprise. The Secretary of the British Indian Association has sent me the text of the Resolution in which, among other things, an appeal is made to me to assist in revising the Pact in so far as Bengal is concerned.[2] I have refrained from taking any part in the public discussion of the question, because I do not want to make confusion worse confounded, or to give an opinion on a matter on which I am not sufficiently informed. I therefore seek your assistance and guidance in enabling me to form a judgement. Two Harijan friends from Bengal, dreading that I might weaken, have asked me what I think about the opposition, and I have told them that I have not altered my opinion and that the Pact could not be changed without the unanimous consent of all the parties concerned.

My own position is that Harijans cannot be given too much by caste Hindus. It is my confirmed opinion that if all the seats available to Hindus were taken by Harijans and other depressed classes, the so-called superior castes will not only lose nothing, but will gain by the sacrifice, if such it may be called.

Taking this into consideration, please tell me whether you share the views of the opposition, and if you do, on what grounds, and why

[1] Editor, *Modern* Review

[2] *Vide* "Letter to British Indian Association", 18-1-1933

those grounds were not at least urged at the Conference in Bombay by any one of the Bengal representatives.

You hardly need my assurance that I would be grateful to you for your frank opinion, even though it may be against the Pact. I have no other end in life to serve but that of truth. It is therefore never too late for me to mend an error, of which the conviction has gone home to me.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18983

91. LETTER TO V. M. NAWLE

January 20, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 17th instant. I never had your letter regarding Sjt. Vaidya's letter nor Mr. Seymer Stone's. If you have kept a copy, please let me have it, as also your explanation about Sjt. Vaidya.

It is a most difficult thing for me to spare you one hour just now. You should first reduce to writing exactly what your formula[1] is. It does not matter whether your English is good or bad. You may even write to me in Marathi. I shall have no difficulty in following it, if the writing is legible.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18983a

92. LETTER TO L. R. PANGARKAR

January 20, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. You have started with an error and ended with an error. I have gathered round me no one but God. I would like you to name those whom you have in mind. Who do you think could be with me fifty years ago, when the truth first dawned on me that untouchability as practised today is a sin, and do you know

[1] A proposal, described by the addressee as "new and unique path,, to temple-entry; *vide* also "Letter to V. M. Nawle", 12-1-1933

that at that age I was forlorn unlike all the other school boys?

What authority have you to say that 90% caste Hindus are against temple-entry, and supposing that they are, and supposing further that they are actually in error, why should it be suicidal for me to fight that error even though I was alone?

The untouchability question was taken up by the Congress in 1920 as an integral part of its programme. I have no knowledge that from that day onward the Congress began to dwindle down in popular favour.

I claim to know something of the saints of Maharashtra whom you have named. They have taught me a lesson quite different from the one you have learnt. This is no new experience. People learn from the Gods not what the latter would teach them but what they want to learn. If you are really an admirer of my work, you will at least do me the favour of studying what I am doing before judging me, and if you will do so, you will soon discover that I am out not to destroy varnashramadharma, but to destroy the excess of it which is the present-day untouchability, so that varnashramadharma may be revived in all its purity.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. L. R. PANGARKAR
NASIK CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20061

93. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

January 20, 1933

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

From all the accounts that I have received, I understand that you have returned this time with very great benefit to your health. I hope that the news I have received is quite correct.

The purpose, however, of writing to you is to ask you to guide me in the matter of the all-India Bill about untouchability. I hope you have read my statement on it. I would appreciate your opinion about it. What I would like you specially to apply your mind to are the following points:

1. Is the Bill itself good for the purpose intended?
2. Is my argument about it correct?
3. What are the prospects of its passing?
4. Supposing that the opinion outside the Assembly is overwhelmingly in its favour, what should be done to ensure its safe passage through the Assembly?

If in this matter you think that you should discuss the whole question with me before you can usefully guide me, and if you can spare the time, do please come. You perhaps know that in this matter you do not need to ask for any permission.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20106

94. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

January 20, 1933

CHI. KAKA,

I got your two letters. I had been waiting to hear from you. Complete the dental treatment. I am glad that you try to reassure me regarding Prabhudas. In fact I do wish my mind to be at rest in the matter. What is the doctor's explanation about the regular bleeding from the gums? or is it that a dentist cannot know that? Ask Talwalkar or Kanuga if they can explain. I saw Rohit. He must have reached Bombay now and will be under Dr. Deshmukh's treatment. See him.

I know Rajbhoj very little and have not been able to form any opinion about him. We should ask some Maharashtrian friend who knows him.

Now about the problem of freedom for Harijans to enter temples. We had a full discussion on the subject of cooked food and I had expressed my firm opinion that this was not at all a suitable time to raise the issue. Nobody has so far considered it to be a stumbling-block nor is there any proposal that Harijans should make food offerings at all in the temples. Your suggestions can be implemented when the issue is raised.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9491. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

95. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

January 20, 1933

BHAI BHAGWANJI,

You are a pessimist and an atheist. I am a great optimist and a devotee of God. I, therefore, see no possibility of our agreeing about anything. Both of us, therefore, should go our different ways and learn in the school of experience. He who survives will know the truth a little.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N, 5817

96. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 20, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

You must have got the wire I sent about you. I sent a letter[1] too. Your mind must not waver. Call it my order or my wish, doing or not doing what I have said is totally in your hands. You will give up all worry if you follow what I say. May God grant you recovery and peace.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 273

[1] *Vide* "Letter to aAmtussalaam", 18-1-1933

97. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 20, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

How do you find Kanhaiyalal? Has he acquired sufficient proficiency in khadi work? Is he hard-working? Is he careful in his work? If he has the necessary qualities, it should not be difficult to find suitable work for him.

I hope you remember about the leather for repairing soles of sandals. . I don't need it immediately, of course. Send it with somebody who may be coming this way.

I suppose you have ascertained Radha's wish. Is Prema calm? Does she do her work? Does she take care of her health? Sitla Sahai wrote to me saying that he had requested you to send Rs. 30 or 35 to enable him to take Sarojinidevi and Padma to Dehradun. I have not replied to him. You may do what seems proper to you.

BAPU

[PS.]

You will find with this letters for Keshu, Amtussalaam, Kanhaiyalal and Santok. Read all the letters except the one to Amtussalaam.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also *Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine,* Pt. II, p. 18

98. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

January 21, 1933

MY DEAR MARY,

I have got the *Little Plays* at last. Alas! What shall I do with all the literature that is pouring in on me? There are many books I would love to read. But where is the time?

Love.

BAPU

MISS MARY BARR
C|O MISS MINNS
MEDICAL SCHOOL HOSPITAL
VELLORE

From a photostat: G.N. 5990. Also C.W. 3315. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

99. LETTER TO A. RANGASWAMI IYENGAR

January 21, 1933

MY DEAR RANGASWAMI,

I have your letter. You have made all the amends that it was possible for you to make.[1] From Salivati's letter of yesterday received by me I thought that he had done likewise, but now I see that the fault seems to have been entirely his. His motives was no doubt good, but his judgement wholly bad, but before I can give my final opinion, I would like you to send me his despatch as it was received by you. In his letter of yesterday, which I enclose herewith, as you can see he protests innocence and if his despatch was as he describes it to be, I fancy that he stands exonerated. So far as my own memory is concerned, it is not at all at fault, and Mahadev, who is ever vigilant, and aspires to be another Boswell, has notes of my conversation[2] with Salivati which confirm me and in no way support him if he reported me as he appears to have done according to *The Hindu* of the 16th. The unfortunate report came at such an awkward time when the slightest error on my part could have undone a structure that is being built up with patient toil and most delicate care. Happily, the A. P. interview[3] I really gave most reluctantly, both out of my regard for you and solicitude for Salivati, and your prompt publication of my telegram averted what might have proved a dangerous situation. The only reason now for my pursuing the subject is in order that no injustice may be done to Salivati.[4]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. A. RANGASWAMI IYENGAR

EDITOR, "THE HINDU"

MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 18987

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to "The Hindu", 18-1-1933

[2] In his Diary Mahadev Desai recorded Gandhiji having said: "They know my views. They will not do anything without full deliberation. And as for the future I am simply jealous of my power, and will not fritter it away. There are so many things which are likely to happen in which I am interested. But why should I anticipate? God will give me the strength to deal with them as they arise." *(Mahadevbhaini Diary,*)

[3] *Vide* "Interview to Associated Press", 18-1-1933

[4] The addressee in his reply stated: "It was a painful shock to me to receive your message regarding Salivati's message which we edited and published in our issue on Monday. I may inform you at once that the message itself was carefully edited in the office and there is no question of any mutilation or error in transmission. I do not know what to conclude of the action of Salivati in putting through a message of this character in spite of your specific instructions and which, as you say, so grossly misrepresents whatever you may have said in private conversation . . ."

100. LETTER TO K. V. SESHA AIYANGAR

January 21, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have been glancing through the numbers of the *Bharat Dharma* and the pamphlets you have kindly sent. The precedents of *prayopavesan*[1] you have collected have proved useful to me.[2]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. V. SESHA AIYANGAR
23 NADU STREET
MYLAPORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 18988

101. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS

January 21, 1933

DEAR BABOO BHAGWANDAS,

I enclose herewith a Hindi translation of Sjt. C. V. Vaidya's contribution, which is in Marathi, and a copy of Shridhar Shastri Pathak's which is in Hindi.

Both the translations are likely to contain grammatical errors, which you will please have corrected.

The translation of Sjt. C. V. Vaidya's contribution was done by Sjt. Mahadev.

When these are published, will you kindly send me ten copies of that supplement and ten of the first supplement?

Please tell Sri Prakasa to write to me.

Here are the promised lines for the *Aaj*.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18990

[1] Fasting
[2] *Vide* also ''Letter to C. Y. Chintamani", 11-1-1933

102. LETTER TO KARNAD SADASHIVA RAO

January 21, 1933

MY DEAR SADASHIVA RAO,

I have your letter of 13th instant written on the train. Untruthful propaganda and abuse are the lot generally of all reformers. Why should we be any exception to the general rule? Those who can stand such abuse and will not retaliate by matching two untruths against one have not only nothing to fear but will actually gain in strength through such unscrupulous opposition. Therefore, so long as consciousness of the correctness of the campaign and the purity of the means employed in conducting it continue, we may not become agitated in any shape or form over such opposition. But we may be sure of thriving on it. And when we have positive consciousness of the truth in us and the strength derived from it, we need never be afraid of being charged with weakness. He who for fear of appearing weak hesitates to say or do the right thing becomes untruthful in the very act, and therefore it may be said of him that he never had consciousness of the truth in him.

I read through the questions you left with me. I have not dealt with them because you will find that every one of the points is amply covered in the statements already made by me. I wonder if you have seen my letter[1] to the Editor of the *Justice* published on the day of its expiry.

There now remains your question about the conduct of Congressmen in connection with the provincial and district branches of the Servants of Untouchables Society. They should be identified with activities of these organizations only in so far as their services are wanted and no further, even though the work may appear to them to be languishing. In a service that may take in the activity of as many true servants who will offer their services, one need not belong to or work through an organization. Even a cup of water lovingly handed to a Harijan, giving or procuring medical aid for an ailing Harijan, giving shelter to a shelterless Harijan, and innumerable such individual

[1] *Vide* "Letter to T. A. V. Nathan", 11-1-1933

acts are a solid contribution to the removal of untouchability. Therefore the embarrassing position that you picture need never arise.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18989

103. LETTER TO K. RANGACHARYULU

January 21, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. When there is opposition of the kind you mention, workers should abstain.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. RANGACHARYULU
TUNI

From a microfilm: S.N. 18992

104. LETTER TO A. D. APPADURAI

January 21, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. In my opinion, khaddar has virtues which nothing else has. Khaddar means help to the most needy, and amongst them are to be counted thousands of Harijans, for their women eke out a living by spinning and several thousands of Harijans are weavers of nothing but khaddar.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. A. D. APPADURAI
ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE
PALAMCOTTAH
(TINNEVELLY DIST.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 18993

105. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

January 21, 1933

MY DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

Your letter of the 18th instant surprises me. I never asked the Bombay Board[1] to make an advance payment of Rs. 500 on account of the Central Board, but I asked them, if they would, to pay Rs. 500 to Poona on account of the expenses that Poona had to incur because of my activities being directed from Poona. If I had intended the Central Board to pay, I would have approached the Central Board myself without the slightest hesitation. I asked the Bombay Board because of its being well able to bear these expenses, Poona being next door to it. You need not therefore refund the amount asked of you, but refer them to me.

As for the 5000 copies of my statements[2], I am not aware that I asked them to print them. There certainly was some conversation about a reprint of my statements in pamphlet form, but I cannot now recall whether I talked about it to Seth Mathuradass, or Sjt. J. K. Mehta, or Pyarelal or Chandrashankar. As a matter of fact, I warned them against incurring the expense, as I had the impression that the Ajmer people were reprinting them and therefore asked them to enquire before embarking upon this expense. But there never was the slightest intention on my part that the Central Board should be called upon to bear these expenses, and my own opinion is, as it always has been, that propaganda work should be more or less self-supporting. Therefore, I should consider it bad management if the sale of 5000 copies of my statements did not cover even the printing expenses. You should refer the Bombay Board to me about this item also.

Sjt. G. K. Devdhar's letter to you is quite in order. When Haribhau asked me about the matter I agreed with him and he was the bearer of G. K. Devdhar's message that they should have Rs. 500 over and above the grant they would receive from the C:entral Board, and I told him to tell Devdhar that I would endeavour to secure that amount either from the Central Board or the Bombay Board. But I first chose to write to the Bombay Board for the reason I have already stated, and

[1] Of the All-India Harijan Sevak Sangh

[2] On the question of untouchability

I was glad that promptly and without demur they sent a cheque for Rs. 500. Had they told me that it was on account of the Central Board, I would have asked Haribhau to return the cheque.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Bombay Board for their information.

I am sending you a copy of my letter to the Bombay Board.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18994

106. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL K. MEHTA

January 21, 1933

MY DEAR JAISUKHLAL,

I enclose herewith a copy of my letter[1] to Thakkar Bapa which speaks for itself.

How did you gain the impression that I had authorized you to debit the Central Board with the two items referred to in my letter? If I had so intended, according to my wont, I would have made it quite clear to you. Indeed, I would have approached the Central Board myself for sanction, as I have done about various matters.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18995

107. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

January 21, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. I do not want you to come out with any public statement on the Bengal question, as you have noticed I am not making any public statement myself, and I have anticipated you by copying you, that is, writing to Dr. Bidhan and Ramanand Baboo. I am not writing to Sjt. J. C. Gupta, nor is it necessary for me to do so. I might have met him, but I cannot say that I am even acquainted with him.

Please do not wait for the revision of the pamphlet till the

[1] *Vide* the preceding item

present copies are exhausted. You can do one or the other thing, either issue a revised pamphlet suppressing the old copies, or paste the full resolution onto the imperfect resolution in the existing copies, and send a public circular to the effect that by an oversight an incomplete resolution was printed in the pamphlet, giving the corrected full text.

I quite understand that you have to look after your own business also, with more concentration today than before.

What is the hitch in getting *Harijan Sevak* out?

The news about your health is disturbing. Why not have the necessary operation, if a reliable doctor advises it? I have learnt by experience that even dietetics and fasts have their limitations. They do not always answer. And whatever rest is necessary, you ought to impose on yourself. Dilatoriness in these matters should be regarded as sinful.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 7922. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also S.N. 18991

108. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI AND BENARSILAL BAZAJ

January 21, 1933

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your letter. Your handwriting seems to be getting worse and worse. That will never do. Even from her sick-bed, whenever Radha writes a letter she writes it in beautiful handwriting which looks like printed type. Surely you are not incapable of writing like that? As for the contents of the letter, though none of us could observe it Chhaganlal discovered that you had tried this time to introduce some colour in it, but the colour was so faint that six out of eight eyes could not observe it. As he is taking down this letter, Mahadev tells me that he also had observed it. You may get out of this what comfort you wish to. You should know from this with what attention even a letter of ten lines from you is being read here.

CHI. BENARSILAL,

I will not forget now. You are certainly a 'lal'[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9152

[1] Literally, 'precious stone'

109. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 21, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I send with this a letter addressed to Liladhar. It seems to have been sent to me through mistake. Or is it possible that Liladhar sent it for me to read? Ask him. If he accepts the letter, give it to him, or do what seems best to you.

The other letter is from Ramji. It is rather long. I have received many other letters like this, but I felt like sending this to you. Are his present earnings only as much as he mentions? Calm him down a little if you can. I can't believe that Mathuradas would tell a lie. We ought not to get angry with him for writing what he has done, but should learn from it whatever may be worth learning.

A letter for Ramji is enclosed. Give it to him after reading it. I hope you got the letters posted yesterday.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

110. LETTER TO VITHAL L. PHADKE

January 21, 1933

CHI. MAMA,

Narandas informs me that the yarn spun in Visapur has been woven into cloth. The khadi will soon be in my hands. I have received plenty of other khadi like that. The friends in Dum Dum Jail have been released today. They also have sent a dhoti which they had got woven in the jail itself [from yarn spun by themselves]. When all this stock of khadi is exhausted, I will ask you to send the khadi woven from your yarn. Write to me sometimes.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9645

111. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 21, 1933

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

Your letter has reached me.

If you have found out how those signatures were taken and who is behind it, write to me. This thing does not frighten me. In my view, all the dirt is coming to the surface. Ultimately, they themselves will regret it. It is surprising that persons like Girijashanker have joined hands with them.

I have been able to complete today the article I had to write. Now I shall write for *Harijan*. Now that I have started it, it will continue. If you do not like this article, reject it and put it aside. Should it not be published by the Gujarat Mandal? Anyway, consider and do what is proper.

If you would want me to write on some other subsidiary question let me know.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Let me know the date of receipt of this letter.

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32732

112. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

January 21, 1933

Referring to the Delhi message published this morning, in which probable difficulties in the way of the Government according sanction to the Temple-entry Bills were anticipated, Gandhiji observed:

If the report is an intelligent anticipation of the forthcoming Viceregal decision I can only say it will be a tragedy. I emphatically repudiate the suggestion that there is any political objective behind these measures. If court decisions had not hardened a doubtful custom into law, no legislation would probably be required. I would

myself regard State interference in religious matters as an intolerable nuisance. But, here, legislation becomes an imperative necessity in order to remove the legal obstruction and, based as it will be on popular will so far as I can see, there can be no question of a clash between parties representing rival opinions.

It has been suggested that one of the reasons for withholding sanction is likely to be that there has been no demand on the part of Harijans for legislation to remove their social disabilities. But, I do know that Dr. Ambedkar's memorandum bristles with suggestions for legislation regarding all sorts of social disabilities. Yet, I hope nobody wants a hurricane agitation on behalf of Harijans before the social and religious yoke is removed from off their necks. Furthermore, I make bold to claim, if there has not been a loud demand by Harijans for temple-entry, I am responsible for it, because I have been advising them not to enter the agitation on a large scale, whilst caste Hindus are themselves making Herculean efforts to implement the Bombay Resolution of September last, which pledges caste Hindus to opening public temples, among other things, to Harijans.

In conclusion, I would only repeat that the refusal to sanction the introduction of a measure demanded by caste Hindu opinion would obstruct the progress of reform, whose advisability no lover of religious freedom has questioned.

Mr. Gandhi has declined to comment on the suggestion that the Government might decide in favour of a single Central legislation, saying that he would like to have more details regarding this proposal.

The Hindu, 23-1-1933

113. LETTER TO RATILAL SHETH

January 22, 1933

BHAI RATUBHAI[1],

I hope you got my letter. Please try to do your best to keep the Doctor's[2] nest intact. At present things seem to be out of control. When somebody goes back on his word, I feel helpless.

[1] Father-in-law of Chhaganlal Mehta, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's eldest son

[2] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta, who died in Rangoon on August 3, 1932. As there was dispute between his sons on the question of property, Gandhiji was keen that the matter should be settled amicably. *Vide*

As if this worry were not enough, I got a wire from Chhaganlal regarding Padma[1]. And now I have received one from Lilavati[2]. They ask for my blessings. How can I give them when I have never seen or known Padma or the bridegroom? I understand that you also wish that this marriage should take place soon. Please help me. Leave me out of this, and do what you think is for their good. If you had not asked me about the matter and if Maganlal[3] had not written to me about it I would have had no occasion at all to give advice. What right had I to give any? When all of you seek my advice, looking upon me as your well-wisher, I think it my duty to give whatever advice may seem right to me. I know the limits of one's relations with persons with whom one has no blood relation.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7171

114. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI N. PATEL

January 22, 1933

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

I got your letter of the 20th. You may fix the day with me in advance and come, with or without Lalita[4]. You can write to me anything you wish to in this matter. I did not get your previous letters. If I had received them, I would not have left them unanswered.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8998

115. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 22, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I can't understand how you received on the same day the letters handed over by me on different days. I will inquire of the authorities. Henceforth, whenever you receive a letter from me mention in your

[1] Dr. Mehta's grand-daughter
[2] Wife of Chhaganlal Mehta
[3] Dr. Mehta's youngest son who was studying in England
[4] Addressee's sister

next letter the date on which it was posted, the date on the letter itself and the date on which you received it. If you let me know every time these dates as you have done this time, I can ask the authorities here to be more alert.

I got [today] the letters posted by you on the 20th. The letters posted on the 19th were received yesterday.

I am convinced that we shall gain nothing from Krishnamaiy-adevi's connection with the Ashram. If it seems proper to you, you may fix a monthly allowance to be paid to her for some time. During that period, Mahavir should secure a job. The mother and the daughters also should work. I would have no objection to their being paid Rs. 50 a month for four months plus railway fare from Ahmedabad to the place where they decide to go and live. These are my personal views. If, however, all of you there have discussed the matter and come to some other decision, you should abide by it and implement it. I still advise you to write to the persons who have lent them money. We shall thereby know, we ought to know, what the facts are.

You may derive what consolation you can from the fact that . . .[1] has harassed me more than he has done you. And he has crossed all bounds in his behaviour to me this time. All the same, we should go on doing our duty by him. I may even have made a mistake in permitting him to join the Ashram. I also doubt whether he really suffers from tuberculosis. However, I never regret such mistakes. Anybody who tries to follow ahimsa is bound to commit them. How can we judge a man's worth? Does he live in the Ashram now?

I hope Indira has recovered. How does Ramnik behave?

If Bhikhabhai lives in the Ashram, does he take his meals at home or in the Ashram kitchen?

As for the land cess to be paid by the Ashram, you may do what you think right. I am writing to Mama about khadi.[2] I have more of it here than I need.

There is no harm in Amtussalaam going to Delhi. She has faith in Dr. Sharma and the latter is confident. Just now the weather in Delhi will also be lovely. She seems to be very eager to come and see me. Do what you think right about that.

[1] The name has been omitted.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Vithal L. Phadke", 21-1-1933

I got Prema's letter. I, therefore, don't write about the matter here. You may know my views from the letter which I will write to her.

BAPU

[PS.]

In all there are 24 letters, stitched together.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

116. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

January 22, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

I was relieved to get your letter. Even worry is a child of imagination. Why should I worry if I do not get a letter from you, and why should I feel relieved on getting one? If you ask me this question, I would not be able to reply to it, or would only say: ''This is what ignorant attachment means."

A foolish letter from you would not upset me. If, however, I see your error or shortcoming and do not point it out to you, I would not be doing my duty as your well-wisher, co-worker, friend or father. What I find strange is that you should get angry with me and sulk for telling you something with a sincere motive, instead of thanking me for it. Should we not thank a person for telling us frankly what he feels? I learnt this in my very childhood. I do want you to learn it from me. If my understanding of a situation is wrong, I deserve to be pitied, and, if it is correct, I would be doing you good. In either case, you gain something, in that you come to know better the person with whom you have thrown in your lot. I want that all of you should know my shortcomings and deficiencies and it is always my effort to show them myself. I don't wish to hide even my thoughts. I would even write them down if I had the necessary gift. But I know I cannot do that. I don't think there can be any power in the world which can penetrate all the secrets of thought. Probably we shall be able to know them if somebody invents a machine to reveal them. Even while I was writing these few sentences, my imagination traversed the universe many times over.

You will admit that everybody cannot understand whether or not he has the poison in his heart. Because one does not consciously wish to nurse hatred, it does not mean that there is no hatred in one's heart.

It takes hold of us against our will. You will probably not admit that anybody whose heart is full of anger is also full of hatred. If you do not, then the word ‘‘poison” does not have the same meaning for you and me. I remember that Ba often charged me with having poison in my heart. How can I deny that charge? I may not have believed that there was any poison in my words. But that is beside the point. What should matter to me is that she felt the poison. Words which are perfectly truthful and spoken with perfect love will never hurt anybody. They may sometimes hurt one in the beginning, but such a person himself will afterwards admit their beneficial effect on him.

I should like you not to be your own judge in all matters. It is possible that others judge you better than you do yourself. I will now end this tale of “poison”.

The question of your leaving the Ashram does not arise just now. It will arise only after I am released and return to the Ashram to stay there. That is how I read your letter. Morally speaking, it can arise only then, if at all, for, so long as I cannot return to the Ashram to stay in it, in the eyes of the inmates of the Ashram I will remain a prisoner. All of you who decided to stay on when I bade good-bye to the Ashram bound yourselves thereby to remain there till I returned. If I am right in believing this, it is a waste of time and energy to think now what should be done when I return to stay there.

The news you have given about happenings in the Ashram is very useful to me. You should discuss the problem of Lakshmi with Narandas, and if both of you decide that she should be married, it should be done soon. Her restlessness also is likely to be the result of an unconscious desire to get married. She is now of marriageable age, and she does intend to marry. The desire to wait till I am released should be regarded as nothing but ignorant attachment to me. You should try and understand her heart properly, and not wait for her emphatic consent. It seems to me desirable to take the advice of Lakshmibehn and Durgabehn in this matter. They would understand the problem better than you can. I understand from what you yourself have said that you have no experience of how a girl feels when she desires to marry. In other words, you have never felt the desire to marry. I also know some other unmarried women who have never felt it. Some other women remain unmarried with an effort of will. They know what marriage means.

What advice should I give you about your health? Ghee seems

to be absolutely necessary for it. Whenever you leave the Ashram, your weight increases, and as soon as you return to the Ashram you lose the weight you had gained. You must get over this weakness. How it can be done, you alone know. I hope you experience no difficulty now in speaking.

I don't wish to catch anybody in my snare. What would be my plight if all people became my slaves? And, moreover, I am sure that any such effort would be doomed to failure. Even if it is true that I try to catch people in my snare, why should you lose confidence in yourself for that reason? Your letters are sufficient evidence that you are vigilant and not likely to succumb. It does seem, however, that you are perpetually afraid that you will let yourself be caught. That is a bad sign. Having resolved that you will not let yourself be caught, why should you feel afraid? But may it also not be possible that you and I do not mean the same thing by ''getting caught"?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10323

117. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

January 22, 1933

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

Chit and *chitta* are two different words, but the latter is derived from the former. *Chit* means consciousness, or it can be interpreted to mean that which can have consciousness, namely, the *atman*. *To* say that the *chitta* of one who has overcome attachment is always serene and contented means that his *atman* is so. *Chitta* may also mean the mind. The word should be interpreted according to the context in the sentence or the verse in which it occurs. In trying to explain the meaning of dhyanayoga, one frequently has to use the word yoga. It should be remembered when doing so that yoga means skill in work or action done without attachment.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 350a. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

118. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

January 22, 1933

CHI. NARMADA,

I got your letter. Slowly you will progress. Why should we feel hurt if somebody speaks ill of us? Learn from someone the *bhajan* "My detractor is my benefactor." Its central idea is that anybody who speaks ill of us serves us by doing so. Continue to write to me.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original; C.W. 2772. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

119. LETTER TO VIMALCHANDRA V. DESAI

January 22, 1933

CHI. NANU,

Since you have written your letter on khadi paper with red ink and in your most careful handwriting, shouldn't I also write the reply on beautiful paper? How do you like this paper? And this handwriting? Do you take plenty of exercise?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5762. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

120. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

January 22, 1933

CHI. VALJI,

There is no harm in your having published *Ishucharita*[1]. The people will certainly like it very much. The verse from Kabir also is appropriate. Still, there is some incompleteness in your evaluation, but it is not a serious defect. Only, one would expect more from you. I have no doubt that you have given what you could. But I have no doubt, either, that you can do better. We need not, however, worry about that. I would be happy if I could give you more marks every

[1] "Life of Jesus". For Gandhiji's criticism of the booklet, *vide* "Letter to Valji G. Desai", 19-10-1932

time. If your health improves, all your capacity will blossom forth. For the present, let this remain my wish and hope. Send a few copies to me—twenty-five. Don't leave that place till you are quite well again.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7446. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

121. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

January 22, 1933

BOYS AND GIRLS,

Just now please do not expect to get long letters from me.

Who cooked at Pujya Anasuyabehn's? Did you behave politely and courteously there? Did you keep on asking for food very often? Did you clean the utensils yourselves? There is nothing to worry about your eating *bhajias*[1]. But henceforward right at the beginning, whenever you have to go anywhere, tell them clearly: ''Please give us this only and do not make that for us."

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

122. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

January 22, 1933

CHI. SHARDA,

When a person wears khadi with an enlightened mind, he does it for the sake of its simplicity, for the help it brings to the starving people, for the purity it embodies. This knowledge calms down our passions. Hence, I would say that khadi, when worn with such awareness, helps *brahmacharya.* Do you get the point?

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9962. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] A fried and heavily spiced delicacy made of gram flour

123. LETTER TO GULAM RASUL QURESHI

January 22, 1933

CHI. QURESHI,

I hope you and the children are fully recovered now.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10817. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

124. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 22, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I have your letter. It would be a crime not to send you to Delhi even after receiving Dr. Sharma's letter. So you may proceed direct for Delhi but see me on the way to the Ashram on your return. You must learn to some extent the value of remaining quiet. And remember that we profess to be poor. The poor remain content by meeting their companions and relatives in the spirit only. Who would provide them railway fare? Anyway, go to Delhi immediately, get well and visit me on return. God will keep you safe. Keep writing to me. Do not be anxious about the Harijan children;[1] after all everybody is in the care of God alone.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 274

[1] The addressee was doing social work among Harijans at Vadaj, near Sabarmati Ashram.

125. DRAFT TELEGRAM TO R. V. SHASTRI

[*On or after January 22, 1933*]

YOUR LETTER[1]. CERTAINLY PROCEED MADRAS REACHING HERE END MONTH .

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 19241

126. LETTER TO PUNJAB PROVINCIAL STUDENTS' UNION

January 23, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter enclosing a copy of the resolution of your Union. I note what the resolution says about a distinct name. A name is inevitable till there is a complete fusion. The only question therefore is what name to distinguish the so-called untouchables by; and 'Harijans' was the name suggested by some of them, and as it was a name that exactly fitted the condition, I adopted it; for, those who are forsaken by mankind become the chosen of God, and 'Harijan' literally means that.

I hope that this resolution by your Union is not the end of the service to the cause, but merely a beginning and an earnest of solid and constructive service yet to come.

Yours sincerely,

THE VICE-PRESIDENT
PUNJAB PROVINCIAL STUDENTS' UNION
LAHORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 18996

[1] Received on January 22, 1933. The addressee had consented to work for the English edition of *Harijan Sevak* and sought Gandhiji's permission to shift his family to Madras before joining A. V. Thakkar at Delhi.

127. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

January 23, 1933

SUJNA BHAI,

You have returned at the right time. I hope you have come back with improved health. May I hope that your contribution to the Harijan cause will surpass that of anybody else? You may make it in your way, but that way should be such that the progress made by others will seem insignificant in comparison. If you decide, I am sure you will be able to do much. Do try. Pay immediate attention to the problem of *bham*[1]. It is necessary to introduce a great change in this practice if we wish to make the Dheds and Chamars give up eating carrion. All of us are well.

Vendemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5923

128. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

January 23, 1933

CHI. MANUDI,

I got your letter. You should not write in too small a hand, nor should you write too fast. Each letter in a word should be distinct.

It is Ba's love which makes her write that she would like you to stay with her. But you may continue to live there and be happy. If you keep good health and your mind is at peace, I shall be satisfied. Write to Ba from time to time.

Serve your aunts.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 1519. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

[1] Payment exacted from Harijans for the hide, flesh, etc., of the dead cattle which they were obliged to remove

129. LETTER TO BALIBEHN M. ADALAJA

January 23, 1933

CHI. BALI,

Kamu[1] writes and tells me that you had no time and that is why you have not written to me. I don't believe this. How can I believe that you do not get time just to write one letter?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1520. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

130. LETTER TO RANCHHODDAS PATWARI

January 23, 1933

RESPECTED RANCHHODBHAI,

I will not let you off easily now. You have said that you accept everything else except opening of temples to Harijans. You may leave me to strive for the cause of temple-entry, but the other things you must do as a sacred duty. If you help, we can soon make the Harijans give up eating carrion. All schools, hospitals, wells, and so on should be thrown open completely. You yourself have said that if the Harijans pray, bathe regularly and keep themselves clean, they will be as good as we are. You should help in making them do all that. You will then be welcome to abuse me as much as you wish to. Only help me in my work. I hope you got my answers[2] to your questions.

Pranams from

MOHANDAS

From Gujarati: C.W. 9222. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] Kumibehn T. Maniar, addressee's sister

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Ranchhoddas Patwari", 11-1-1933

131. LETTER TO GORADIA

January 23, 1933

BHAI GORADIA,

Do Thakoresaheb[1] and you contribute anything to Harijan service? Perhaps you are afraid that the local subjects may be offended if the temple is thrown open, but what about the *bham*?

What are the arrangements for the disposal of carcasses? Do you charge the Dheds for clearing them? If you wish to stop them from partaking of carrion, you ought to pay them for their services and supervise the processing of carcasses. This would involve some labour no doubt, but no loss. How are they treated in courts, and in hospitals? Will you please give me an account of this?

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 81-2

132. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 23, 1933

CHI. SUMANGAL,

I have your letter after many weeks, nay, months.

It is only proper to utilize some time for improving your health.

I keep getting news of Kanta. Saroop gives me news of her, as does Prabhavati. I have no doubt she has been putting her time to good use.

If one gets food from outside after securing permission, for the sake of one's health, one is doing nothing wrong. But it is praiseworthy if one is content with whatever food one gets inside and refrains from asking for more. But he who cannot maintain his health on the food he gets in prison, and has secured permission to obtain it from outside and can easily have it, yet does not do so and so spoils his health, is obstinate. Perhaps he could be considered a literalist.

[1] Title of the head of a small principality

I certainly do not think there is any harm in having a *shikha*[1]. It is a time-honoured custom which the reformer may not try to change and so run into trouble. You may not find a strong reason in support of every custom, yet if it is popular and there is nothing morally wrong in it, is deserves to be followed.[2]

The statement that "a few medicines are found to be effective but they are well known" is not happily phrased. The meaning can be made more explicit. Although one may not repose one's faith in allopathy, some allopathic medicines can certainly be used. One does not have to go out and look for them. They are well-known household remedies such as castor-oil, quinine, *kariata, sonamukhi*.

I have not come to any harm from fasting. Fasting may be resorted to in old age. Then, a fast undertaken from spiritual motives is not difficult to go through. Of course one does become emaciated because there is not enough fat in the body.

You write in haste and therefore your letters are difficult to decipher. If you write a little slowly they will be easier to read.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

133. LETTER TO PARAMANAND KAPADIA

January 23, 1933

BHAI PARAMANAND,

Bring along your friend and his wife on Saturday.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PARAMANAND KUNVERJI
164 MUMBADEVI
BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: G. N. 11582

[1] Tuft of hair on the crown of the head
[2] This and the previous paragraph appear under "A Letter", 23-1-1933

134. A LETTER

January 23, 1933

If one gets food from outside after securing permission, for the sake of one's health, one is doing nothing wrong. But it is praiseworthy if one is content with whatever food one gets inside and refrains from asking for more. But he who cannot maintain his health with the food he gets in prison, and has secured permission to obtain it from outside and can easily have it, yet does not do so and so spoils his health is obstinate. Perhaps he could be considered pedantic.

I certainly do not think there is any harm in wearing a *shikha*[1]. It is a time-honoured custom which the reformer may not try to change and so run into trouble. You may not find a strong reason in support of every custom, yet if it is popular and there is nothing morally wrong in it, it deserves to be followed.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 83

135. A LETTER

January 23, 1933

In order to control our passions we should turn our thoughts inward. The basic formula for spiritual progress is self-surrender. Spiritual progress is nothing but knowledge of the *atman*.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 82

136. A LETTER

January 23, 1933

The fast has in no way harmed my health. Even in old age a fast can be undertaken and completed without any ill effects. Moreover a fast undertaken with a spiritual motive is not difficult to go through. The body will of course grow weak as it has less fat [in old age].

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 83

[1] The tuft of hair on one's head

137. LETTER TO S. J. SOMAVANSHI

January 23, 1933

BHAI SOMAVANSHI,

I read your loving letter from beginning to end. I have received the books[1] also. I also listened to the life story of the Maharaj. I have read almost all the marked portions of the book. Both failed to impress me. Chiefly because we find no basis for regarding the so-called untouchables as untouchables; nor for the treatment meted out to them.

How am I at fault? I have been saying for the last 45 years the very thing about the eradication of untouchability that I say now. My views have been well known in India for more than 25 years. Now and then some opposition was certainly heard but I incurred no one's wrath. Now that I am ready to do penance for it I am blamed. But the Shastras and the saints have preached the necessity of *tapascharya*[2] whenever dharma dwindles and this is what I am attempting to do. There is no headstrongness about it. How can that man be headstrong who is ever prepared to correct his errors?

By pointing out the omission on the part of saints to lay stress on this particular problem you are doing them and me an injustice. The saints do not try to remove all the evils, nor can they do so. They simply disseminate dharma and in the process try to remove some evil. Even the avatars are unable to destroy all evil; they perform their deeds concentrating on the chief evil of their times.

An important feature of the non-violent spirit is that it always keeps the popular will in view. The anti-untouchability movement may also be taken as basically meant to test public will. The highest religion is useless for those who are not prepared to live by it. Compulsion has absolutely no place in the spirit of non-violence.

You are correct in suggesting that I should offer daily prayers to God to show me the right path. I not only constantly do that but believe that I take no action without His command; you may rest assured on this.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 18997

[1] Biographies of a Marathi saint
[2] Self-suffering as moral discipline

138. A LETTER

January 23, 1933

Observing silence implies abstaining from talking, gestures, food and drink, and closing one's eyes and ears, i.e., remaining in seclusion and losing oneself in thought. On the day of silence, one should remember God. The purpose of silence is meditation.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 82

139. LETTER TO BEGUM MOHAMMAD ALAM

January 23, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I got your letter. How great is God's grace that Doctor Saheb should recover so soon and the operation become unnecessary! I hope that he will take complete rest for the present. Keep writing to me. Tell Doctor Saheb that we all remember him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 27

140. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

January 23, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

I have your letter. The meaning of *tuk* as given by you seems correct. If I wait till I can write a good hand and commit not a single error, I shall never be able to write in Urdu. If you send me by post some extra time along with the Urdu lessons, you will find no mistakes. My respects to Father and Mother. May I send a kiss for you? But only on one condition; that you drive away the fever. Why don't you become perfectly well by taking a little more rest? There are enough duties for you if you remain well. There is no lack of jobs for those keen to serve.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: S.N. 9661

141. STATEMENT ON VICEROY'S DECISION

January 24, 1933

Having read the Government decision on the two Bills[1] about untouchability now before the country, I cannot help expressing my regret on general grounds that the Government could not see their way to allow both the Bills to be discussed by the respective Legislatures and the country.

Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill restricts itself to one particular issue of temple-entry and that too in the Madras Presidency, and the opening of each temple depends on the will of the majority of those entitled to temple-entry. It therefore reduces the possibility of a clash between one party and another party to a minimum and to a zero if the reformers play the game, i.e., allow for the religious scruples even of a microscopic minority as my compromise proposal does. But this was not to be. From a strict sanatanist point, the Madras Bill was perhaps the lesser of the two evils as they would put it. It was easier for a reformer to cope with, and for me personally too as a fasting hostage, for Viceregal sanction would have in all probability successfully prevented a fast over Guruvayur. But the Government of India had willed otherwise. I must try to trace the hand of God in it. He wants to try me through and through. If He does, He will have to give me adequate strength as He has always vouchsafed those who would surrender themselves wholly to Him.

The all-India Bill is short and sweet, being of negative character in one way. It gives no direct aid to the reformer. It merely refuses aid to any and every individual sanatanist who would come to seek assistance in the secular courts to impose his will on the whole Hindu society and to enforce a custom which the latter may consider to be repugnant to Hindu Shastras and the innate moral sense of man. It abolishes legal untouchability, leaving the social and religious to its fate. The sanction given to this Bill is an unintentional challenge to Hinduism and the reformer. Hinduism will take care of itself if the reformer will be true to himself. Thus considered, the Government of India's decision must be regarded as a godsend. It clears the issue. It

[1] *Vide* footnote 3, "Letter to Ranchhoddas Patwari", 11-1-1933. For Gandhiji's reaction to the announcement, *vide* "Talk witha M. G. Bhandari"a, 24-1-1933

makes it easy for India and the world to understand the tremendous importance of the moral struggle now going on in India. It takes it at one sweep to its natural platform to which it was timidly advancing.

As a life-long reformer and fighter, I must take up the challenge in all humility, and so must every Hindu who was directly or indirectly a party to the resolution[1] adopted under the chairmanship of the revered Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. The resolution bears repetition:

> This Conference resolves that henceforth, amongst Hindus, no one shall be regarded as 'untouchable' by reason of his birth, and that those who have been so regarded hitherto will have the same rights as other Hindus in regard to the use of public wells, public schools, public roads and all other public institutions. These rights shall have statutory recognition at the first opportunity, and shall be one of the earliest Acts of the swaraj Parliament, *if it shall not have received such recognition before that time.*
>
> It is further agreed that it shall be the duty of all Hindu leaders to secure, by every legitimate and peaceful means, the early removal of all social disabilities now imposed by custom upon the so-called untouchable classes including the bar in respect of admission into temples.

Let the reader carefully note the words printed in italics. The resolution contemplates, if at all possible, the removal of legal untouchability even before the establishment of a swaraj Parliament. The opportunity has now offered itself. No Hindu who is jealous of the honour of Hinduism or the word given to Harijans dare let the opportunity slip. Even the sanatanist, if he will read the all-India Bill, as I do, may not resist it. For, has he not said to me, has he not said it even in his writings, that he has no quarrel with political and civic rights being given to Harijans on the same terms as caste Hindus? In other words, he has no objection to Harijans being treated as equals with the rest in the eye of the law. If he is not, in the eye of religion, that is a matter for the sanatanist and his conscience. The law's assistance must not be summoned to aid him to enforce his conscience against a fellow-being.

The sanatanist *Shastris* whom I had the pleasure of meeting had been able only to cite me verses to the effect that if anyone is polluted by the touch of an untouchable he has either to take a sip of water or

[1] On September 25, 1932; *vide* also "Resolution ata the Hindu Leaders' aConference, Bombay", 25-9-1932

have a bath. There seems to be nowhere mention of punishment for an untouchable entering a public place including a temple. And, in no case, should the aid of secular law be summoned to punish an untouchable guilty of mere infringement of a sacerdotal rule. The present Bill rightly renders such an interference by law impossible.

The opening of temples to Harijans would, under the Bill, be regulated by mutual adjustment. Where the opinion of the temple-going population is not ripe for reform, naturally the Harijans cannot enter the temples. Where the opinion is ripe, the law cannot be invoked by individuals to thwart the will of the majority. But whatever the sanatanists may decide, the movement for temple-entry now broadens from Guruvayur in the extreme south to Hardwar in the north, and my fast, though it remains further postponed, depends not, now, upon Guruvayur only but extends automatically to temples in general. That is to say, the fast becomes dependent upon the actions of reformers not regarding the Madras Bill which was to cover Guruvayur only, but regarding the all-India Bill which covers all temples including Guruvayur.

And so it has been throughout my life. One step has naturally led me on to another, even despite myself. I was confining my attention to the Madras Bill. It was enough for me. Even on Saturday last, that is, the 21st January, when the Associated Press correspondent asked my opinion of the Associated Press Delhi correspondent's forecast, I declined to commit myself to any opinion on the all-India Bill as compared to the Madras Bill.[1] I was not prepared to face a bigger and graver contingency. But now that it comes upon me as an accomplished fact, I dare not flinch.

The Government pronouncement would have one to think that the Bill will be one long-drawn-out agony, and may never become the law of the land. They are right, from their standpoint, in being over-cautious. But if Hindu conscience is really roused against untouchability, as the latter is practised today, the Bill can become law in no time. The Government cannot resist the unequivocal expression of Hindu opinion in favour of it. Despite sanatanist opposition, my belief is that a vast mass of Hindu opinion is against untouchability, though it may not take energetic steps to remove it. It is that faith which sustains me. No further ordinary propaganda will convince the

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Associated Press", 21-1-1933

Hindu mind of the sense of wrong of untouchability if it is not already convinced by years of work in that behalf. It requires then, as it has done before now, the extraordinary propaganda of penance. It may be that it needs the stimulus of a fast on the part of one who has made his life one with them. If so, they shall have it. They must either remove untouchability or remove me from their midst.

Let me proclaim it, for the thousandth time, that for me, as with my co-workers, the removal of untouchability is an indispensable religious need and the opening of temples to Harijans, being a pure spiritual act, is an indispensable test of that removal. It is the one thing that alone can give new life and new hope to Harijans, as no mere economic uplift can do. Economic and all other uplift will follow temple-entry as light follows dawn. The one single act of opening temples to Harijans will purify Hinduism, and will open the hearts of both caste Hindus and Harijans to receive new light.

The message of the temples will penetrate every Harijan hut; the message of economic and educational uplift will touch only those to whom it is personally brought. This proposition of mine can easily be understood by those who, like me, believe in temples as an integral part of Hinduism, as churches and mosques are of Christianity and Islam. It is not necessary that every Harijan should at once enter the temples. It is enough and necessary if he knows that he has acquired that right. And in this religious conception of Hinduism fasts and the like take their natural and necessary place. They are then, no more coercion than any *bona-fide* cry of love of the Divine is.

The Hindu, 25-1-1933

142. LETTER TO G. M. THENGE

January 24, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[1] My statement[2] has not the meaning that you have assigned to it, as would be quite clear to you if you will read it as a whole. I have considered myself to be incapable of coming to a judgement one way or the other, if only because I have not all the data for coming to a judgement. I have therefore stated in unequivocal language that every Congressman has to decide for himself or herself, taking stock of the circumstances over which they alone have control and I have none, as also of their own individual obligations of which they alone can have knowledge and I can have none.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. M. THENGE
PAREKH STREET, GIRGAUM
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18986

143. LETTER TO SUBRAHMANIA SHASTRI

January 24, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter enclosing your reply to Acharya Dhruva's opinion in Sanskrit about untouchability.

I do not remember having said whichever side stops correspondence is to be considered to have accepted the other's position. In my opinion such a thing should not be regarded as conclusive, because each party may exhaust all points of difference

[1] The addressee had written: ''In answer to those Congressmen who wish to know whether they should prosecute the civil disobedience campaign or should take an active interest in the campaign against untouchability, you have reminded them of the celebrated English proverb: 'Much wants more and loses all.' I presume that you intend thereby to convey that we have had enough of the civil disobedience movement in the past and that we do not want it any longer, lest we stand to lose all that we aspire for. . . ."

[2] Dated January 7, 1933; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 7-1-1933

and may still maintain their respective positions. However, you will not find me suddenly stopping the correspondence, because I want to get all the wisdom and all the information that I can from everyone.

Coming to your reply or rejoinder as you call it, I shall leave Acharya Dhruva to answer for himself, but you do not carry conviction even to a layman like myself. You say that the word *api*[1] only denotes the unfitness of the *Chandala* and the height of the path of devotion. Do you not see the inconsistency of your statement? If the *Chandala* is unfit, there is no height (I suppose you mean 'greatness') about the path of devotion. The path of devotion is truly great, because it brings peace and joy and salvation even to the *Chandala*. Instances of the use of *api* by way of emphasis can surely be multiplied.

In your second paragraph, emphasis is not on the fact that here the *Chandala* was pious but that it was the *Chandala* who was speaking. Most of the sanatanists who oppose temple-entry by Harijans contend that no piety on the part of a *Chandala* would cure him of his disability.

In the third clause, your admission that all life as *atman* is one rules out the impassable barrier between touchables and untouchables. The verse in question itself notes the differentiation between persons and bodies and yet insists on equality of treatment.

I need not labour the rest of your replies except to say that they are unconvincing to me. However, without my comments on your reply, I am forwarding it to Acharya Dhruva, for his own independent reply which I shall gladly send to you when it comes to me.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18999

[1] "Also"

144. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRA RAO

January 24, 1933

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRA RAO,

I have your postcard. I shall await further information from you.

Yes, I am applying ghee religiously every day. I am sorry to report to you that as yet there is no relief whatsoever. There is no doubt about the ghee being cow's milk ghee.

The addition of 'if' was intended for the sake of preserving truth. However close I may be to a friend, in speaking to him I would have to say to him not ''since you are so and so", but "if you are so and so, you have no cause to be anxious".

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO
C/O SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
ROYAPETTAH, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 19000

145. LETTER TO T. K. S. RAJAN

January 24, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I do hope that students will not be satisfied with merely having passed a resolution but that they will engage in some concrete service of Harijans.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. K. S. RAJAN
51, I, AGRAHARAM
SALEM

From a microfilm: S.N. 19001

146. LETTER TO P. V. SUNDARAVARADULU

January 24, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You have given me interesting information.[1] Can you supplement it by giving me the exact figures of those who kill cows and buffaloes for sacrifice? What is their caste name? Are there any touchable castes that eat beef? I understand that there are numberless caste men in Andhradesh who eat pork.

I cannot think of any special message to be given to the ryots of Andhra villages. The statements that I issue from time to time are as much addressed to them as to the rest of the Hindus all over the country.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. V. SUNDARAVARADULU
SECRETARY
ANDHRA PROVINCIAL RYOTS' ASSOCIATION
KILPAUK, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 19002

147. LETTER TO D. G. VELANKAR

January 24, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You can come and bring your two or three friends at 2 p.m. on 27th instant. I hope 30 minutes will be enough for you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. D. G. VELANKAR
866 SADASHIV PETH
POONA CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20083

[1] The addressee had written: ''Their [ryots'] contention is that the Harijans eat cow, mutton, and are most indecent in their habits. . . . They [Harijans] sacrifice cows and buffaloes to their goddesses in public and offer toddy on such occasions. . . I therefore request you to turn your attention to . . . purifying the Harijans" (S.N. 18984).

148. LETTER TO R. N. BHIDE

January 24, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your pathetic letter. Do not mix up two questions, the fast and temple-entry. Dismiss the fast from your mind, because it is a personal matter and it may or may not come. Temple-entry is the question. The economic and the educational questions are what the adjectives imply. Temple-entry is a spiritual act, transforming the whole society by one single act of admission. It will electrify into a new life the whole of the Harijan population, and it will purify Hinduism as no single act that I can think of can do. If you have the Hindu religious instinct in you, you will not find it difficult to follow my argument. If you do not possess a living faith in Hinduism or do not consider temples an integral part of it, I have no effective argument to meet your difficulty. On the contrary, I must then accept a defeat.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. N. BHIDE
D. B. HOSTEL
PORT PUTTUR (S. KANARA DT.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 20088

149. LETTER TO M. M. ANANTA RAU

January 24, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for all your letters and the great pains you have been taking to instruct me and to supply me with the information I have wanted. When I have studied all your letters I shall write to you if necessary at length.

Though you have not replied to my criticism about your letter-paper, you seem to have done better by acting upon a part of my suggestion, namely, removing the portrait and the surrounding letter-press; if the removal is an acknowledgement of the correctness of my criticism, you will note that my criticism was directed also against the ornamental border. Letter-paper, especially

for a religious agency, should, in my opinion, be free from all ornamentation and contain only in just readable plain type the name and address. The beautiful verse at the top and the "Om" can stand. I have made bold to offer what may appear to be gratuitous criticism, because you have been so prompt and diligent in your correspondence. Though we may not agree finally in our conclusions,

I cannot fail to appreciate your courtesy and promptness.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. M. M. ANANTA RAU
SANATANA DHARMA KARYALAYA
40 ISWARDAS LALA STREET
TRIPLICANE, MADRAS

From a copy: C.W. 9571. Courtesy: Government of Mysore

150. LETTER TO DR. HIRALAL SHARMA

January 24, 1933

MY DEAR SHARMA,

Amtussalaam has forwarded your letter[1] of the 15th instant to me and I was glad to receive it. You have indeed fulfilled your self-imposed vow, for the letter you have written to me is not for yourself. I have already advised Amtussalaam to proceed to Delhi and I hope that she will leave the Ashram at once, stay there till you can discharge her fully cured and then return to the Ashram. I quite appreciate your desire to fulfil your present obligations before you come down to the Ashram.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. H. L. SHARMA
SUNRAY HOSPITAL
KAROLBAGH, DELHI

Bapaki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 16

[1] The addressee had stated that, leaving his in-door patients at Delhi, he did not go out of station for any patient for more than a week.

151. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

January 24, 1933

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

I have read your letter to Jamnalalji. The Ashram cannot run under its auspices the proposed Mahila Ashram or Mahila Vidyalaya or Vanita Ashram or Vanita Vidyalaya, because such an institution would not be prepared to accept Harijan girls at present. It would not be possible to burden the institution with both the tasks. It should be considered enough for it to admit Harijan girls as day scholars. The Ashram cannot even lend the support of its name to suck an institution. I agree with Vinobaji's view and also feel that such a restriction on the scope of the Mahila Vidyalaya is inevitable.

Tell Janakibehn that I see no need at present to get Jamnalalji examined by Dr. Modi. He is physically well enough. The ear gives no trouble. He can digest food fairly well and his weight has gone up. There is no cause for worry at all. Nor do I feel that Dr. Modi can say or do anything just now. There would be no difficulty and no delay in making the necessary arrangements as soon as the slightest need is felt, or if Jamnalalji himself wishes to be examined by him. I don't think it advisable that he should be taken to Bombay just now. Since the climate here has agreed with him, why make a change for a few days?

I got the two lengths of cloth woven from yarn spun by Grandmother. I shall gladly wear them as a loving gift from her.

Kamalnayan was here, but went away without seeing me. He should have seen me, and he would have been permitted to do so. Tell him to see me when he comes next. What progress has he made in his studies? Why does he not write to me now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9118

152. LETTER TO G. V. GURJALE[1]

January 25, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your very long letter. I am afraid that I cannot guide you definitely. There is much to be said in favour of your method and as much to be said in favour of the method of living in the midst of the Harijans. Therefore you alone can be the final judge. You should serve in the manner that appeals most to you, after consultation with those who know you well and know the local circumstances.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. G. V. GURJALE
KRIPA ASRAM
TIRUVENNAINALLUR (S. INDIA)

From a photostat: G.N. 1398. Also S.N. 20092

153. LETTER TO HRIDAY NATH KUNZRU

January 25, 1933

MY DEAR HARIJI,

I thank you for your letter of 19th instant with enclosures. I do hope that you will succeed in your effort at raising funds.

Since you have mentioned the fact of your having sought financial assistance from the Government, I would like to say, altogether apart from my views on non-co-operation, that if I could have prevailed with you or with your Board, I would have prevented you from seeking such assistance. I think in purely religious matters Government aid should not be sought. Anti-untouchability work is essentially for Hindus to do. It is a huge religious reform, and I should be chary of seeking financial assistance even if we had a purely national government, or if financial assistance is given, it will have to be under a scheme of just distribution to all the different

[1] The addressee, known as Bhikshu Nirmalanand, had been serving the Harijans in the village Tiruvennainallur since 1929 and had asked Gandhiji whether he should go back to the city and serve the Harijans from there.

religious denominations.

I hope you see my point, though you may not agree with it.

I am glad that Sarup[1] has offered her services to you.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20097

154. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

January 25, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

Here is the estimate for the proposed English edition of *Harijan Sevak.* As you can see, it is a very moderate sum. There will still be some overhead charges on clerical assistance, and whatever remuneration that might have to be paid to Shastri who has agreed to edit the paper.

I propose to bring out, to start with, 10,000 copies. Then if there is not that demand, we might slow down. My policy, as you know, is that I shall not handle the paper except to make it self-supporting. If it does not become self-supporting, I should conclude that there is inefficient management or editing, or that there is no public demand for such a paper. In any one of these cases, if the defect cannot be mended, the paper must be ended. I should give the paper a trial for three months, within which time it must become self-supporting.

I would therefore like you, after consultation with Thakkar Bapa and such others as you need to consult, to telegraph your sanction of the expenditure, such as it may be, up to the final limit to be fixed by you. I suggest an addition of Rs. 200 per month at the outside to the figures as per estimate, excluding the postal and telegraphic charges. I should be able to give you more definite figures after I have seen Shastri. If you can pass the budget, should I proceed with the paper whether you have brought out the Hindi edition or not? I understand that there is not likely to be any difficulty at this end about bringing out the paper.

I have your telegram from Gwalior about the Government decision on the untouchability Bills. I hope you received my reply. I hope, too, that you have read my very exhaustive statement[2] to the

[1] Vijayalakshmi Pandit

[2] *Vide* "Statement on Viceroy's Decision", 24-1-1933

Press. I do not need, therefore, to add anything to the Press statement, for I have nothing more to add.

I am sending you a copy of my letter[1] to Hariji about the Society receiving or seeking financial assistance from the Government. Here again I do not need to add to it. It speaks for itself. I hope you are better. I would like you to treat your health as much of a business concern as any other, and thus not a thing to be neglected or wasted.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 20096. Also C.W. 7923. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

155. LETTER TO VIRIYALA VENKATA RAO

January 25, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Here are my answers:

The opening of temples to Harijans is to be an act of penance on the part of caste Hindus or rather an act of payment of an obligation due to them.[2] That one act will elevate them. Throwingopen of temples to them is the foundation for their elevation and not a reward for good behaviour. They will only be liable to the same conditions as caste Hindus are as to daily bath, etc. But just as we do not ask every caste Hindu who enters a temple whether he has conformed to the conditions or not, unless he bears the mark of non-performance on his own person at the time of entry, even so we may not cross-question a Harijan in appearance showing no disregard of conditions whether he has fulfilled other conditions or not. Please remember that abstention from flesh and drink is not an indispensable condition of entry for caste Hindus in all sects of Hinduism. Personally, I would like such abstention to be a condition, but it cannot be imposed upon Harijans, if it is not imposed upon all Hindus.

If three or four orthodox Brahmins cause obstruction, miscalled satyagraha, by stretching themselves in front of the temple, they can be easily dodged. Temple-entry is not complete until Harijans are

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] For a discussion, *vide* "Talk with Duncan Greenless", 25-1-1933

allowed to enter on the same terms and up to the same part as caste Hindus are allowed. There is no question of Harijans entering the sanctuary if caste Hindus do not enter the sanctuary and only those who perform the ceremonial are allowed to enter.

I think this answers all your questions.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. VIRIYALA VENKATA RAO
ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY LEAGUE
ELLORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 19003

156. LETTER TO VAKAYIL ACHUTHAN NAIR

January 25, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I must thank you for your having taken such trouble to furnish me with the papers in connection with the Guruvayur case. I have had them looked up. I now return them to you by registered post. You need not now trouble to discover the missing papers. I see, that the information contained in the papers you were good enough to send me is all that I wanted to get.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. VAKAYIL ACHUTHAN NAIR
GURUVAYUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 19005

157. LETTER TO SURENDRA MOHAN BHATTACHARYA

January 25, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. If the sanatanists do not ill-treat—not hate as you have said—untouchables, then, why is it that they cannot get water, medical aid, decent accommodation, equal travelling facilities, equal educational facilities for their children, equal use of public places?

Educated Indians cannot be responsible for these causes; they are a microscopic minority. Will you give me instances of educated

persons having ill-treated Harijans, as you say they have? I would also like you please to furnish me with instances within your knowledge of sanatanists having done anything to help these brethren of ours to lighten their burden.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SURENDRA MOHAN BHATTACHARYA
VEDANTA SHASTRI
SECRETARY, EAST BENGAL BRAHMIN SABHA BRANCH
VILLAGE ALGI, P. O. MADHABDI
DT. DACCA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20095

158. LETTER TO N. H. PURANDARE

January 25, 1933

MY DEAR PURANDARE,

I have your postcard. I do not know how to console you and how to deal with you. I am sorry I find it so difficult to please you and I must not betray the trust imposed upon me even in order to please you. Therefore please regard what I have offered as final.[1]

Yours sincerely,

PROF. N. H. PURANDARE
604 SADASHIV PETH
POONA 2

From a microfilm: S.N. 20098

159. LETTER TO K. KELAPPAN

January 25, 1933

MY DEAR KELAPPAN,

I have a bitter complaint that *Mathrubhumi*[2] contains articles abusing Brahmins. If that is so, you will see that the abuse is stopped.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20099

[1] *Vide* "Letter to N. H. Purandare", 13-1-1933
[2] A Malayalam daily

160. LETTER TO T. KRISHNA MENON

January 25, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I would like you to give me translations of relevant parts of *Mathrubhumi*.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. KRISHNA MENON
C/O CHAMPAKLAL DEVIDAS, ESQ.
36 DALAL STREET, FORT
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20100

161. LETTER TO DR. PARASHURAM SHARMA

January 25, 1933

DEAR DR. PARASHURAM,

Thank you for your letter and the news that Mathuradas Jain broke his fast on receipt of my telegram.[1] We are all keeping quite well.

Yours sincerely'

From a microfilm: S.N. 20101

162. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

January 25, 1933

MY DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

I have your three letters, one only requires an answer. If. it could be decently done I would certainly like the name of the Society[2] to be more in keeping with the object we have in view. I should incur the risk of the ridicule of the unthinking if all those who compose the Society agree that Rajaji's suggestion[3] be adopted and if

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mathuradas Jain", 8-2-1933.

[2] Servants of Untouchables Society

[3] C. Rajagopalachari had suggested: "I do not quite like the change of name you have agreed to for the League. 'Servants of Untouchables Society' is good in itself, but it means a continued recognition of untouchables as such. . . . I would have liked 'Untouchability Abolition League' or Society."

it is not against the constitution to do so. But if the change is adopted, let it not be adopted in a hurry.

I have the articles for the English weekly[1].

I had a telegram from Shastri accepting the offer.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20102

163. LETTER TO RATILAL SHETH

January 25, 1933

BHAI RATUBHAI,

I got your letter. I too had a wire from Lilavati. I sent a wire asking not to commit me in advance. They should allow me to see Padma. I would like to see the boy too. Jekibehn came to see me yesterday and she told me: ''Padma is yet only 14 years old and the boy is immoral." What can I say if the parents are willing? But if I do not approve of the match, they should not ask me to say I do. What is your opinion about this marriage? Even you should keep me out of it. I can only interfere wherever you all wish me to. I cannot at all insist on anything.

I want to write to Chhaganlal and Lilavati too about the firm. I have written to them to come and see me. Come and see me when Maganlal arrives. Keep on writing to Chhaganlal and Lilavati.

There is no doubt that Khimchand's company is undesirable. I have written strongly to Khimchand also.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7172

[1] *Harijan*

164. LETTER TO CHHOTALAL

January 25, 1933

BHAI CHHOTALAL,

I got your letter. There is a great difference between varna and caste. There are innumerable castes, but only four varnas. Varna refers to a person's qualities of character and occupation. Caste is based at best on convenience. Caste deserves to be abolished, whereas varna should be reformed. There is a confusion of varnas at present, but it is possible and necessary to reform the system. There may perhaps be no harm in serving one's own community, but the best service which one can do to it is to cultivate relations with members of other communities. One should not be attached to one's own caste and be proud of it.

Though interdining and intermarriage will be restricted to groups of similar temperament and occupation, that is, within the limits of the same varna, this was not an essential feature of the system in former times.

With regards from,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8034

165. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 25, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I get your letters. If occasionally you cannot write for want of time, I will know that that was the reason and also that there was nothing urgent to write about.

It seems you note the weights of only the boys and girls. Since we wish to know the effect of the new regimen, it would be better if you note the weights of all the inmates. You may do so every fortnight. The weights should be recorded on fixed dates in a separate register kept for the purpose. Have you shown in the record of weights sent to me the weekly increases? In every case in which there is loss in weight, the reason, if it can be ascertained, should be noted. What effect did the change have on the

incidence of constipation? Can we say by how much the consumption of rice has decreased? I should like a record maintained of the quantity of each kind of grain consumed and the number of persons among whom consumed and the record sent to me. What vegetables do you serve? Do you buy any from the market or what is produced in the Ashram suffices? Does any fruit grow in sufficient quantity in the Ashram to meet your requirements fully? I know that you require time to think about and plan all this. You may carry out only those of my suggestions which you can and leave the rest. If, however, we can have correct information on these matters, we can so plan things as to benefit considerably both in regard to health and expenditure. Our farm, orchard and kitchen should be run with this aim in view.

It is not, it ought not to be, beyond our capacity to banish illness from the Ashram. All that is necessary is that somebody should pay attention to the problem and maintain strict vigilance about it. If you can select someone from among the many workers at your disposal, train him for the job. You can train even some of the boys or girls if you find them suitable.

I was pleased by the certificate which you have given to Kanhaiyalal. What progress has his wife made?

Tell him about the climate of Orissa. If their health is not good, don't send them to Orissa just now. If, however, they are ready to endure all hardships, they may leave even now.

I am glad to learn that Manekbai has arrived there. I don't suppose you knew her before. I hope Ba sees her frequently. Amtussalaam must have left for Delhi.

I got the slivers sent with Prabhudas. There is no change in the condition of my elbow. However, I have started spinning since yesterday. As there has been no improvement though I had stopped spinning, I don't think it right to continue the restriction. I have informed the doctor, too. If the pain increases, I will stop spinning again. I am not being unnecessarily obstinate in this matter. I look at it entirely from the point of view of dharma.

I am certainly very glad that *jowar*[1] and *bajri*[2] are grown in the Ashram itself. It would certainly be good if the hand-mill is revived even for our own needs only. But I am afraid that this

[1] Kinds of millet
[2] *ibid*

thing is beyond our capacity. Of course the practice of getting small quantities ground occasionally in the Ashram will continue.

Doesn't Bhau keep good health?

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

166. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL K. MEHTA

January 25, 1933

I understand what you say about Tambe's hotel.[1] If he does not himself announce his intention nor let us do it, how are Harijans going to know about it? Such secret help does not serve our purpose; it fails to educate the people or create public opinion. We workers would then have no chance of seeing where we stand *vis-a-vis* the people. Our initial proposition therefore should be to have an eating-house run to suit our own convenience.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 88

167. A LETTER

January 25, 1933

I know . . .'s[2] weakness. In my view it is misplaced pity or excess of pity and hence it is violence. I think I would not indulge in such pity. Therefore wherever I shall see the absence of truth I shall immediately tell you about it. You are open-minded. And so you will certainly progress. Truth and non-violence both demand fearlessness. If that is lacking, there is often a chance of untruth creeping in. And where an untruth has been committed, it is violence as well. Hence let the world laugh at you or call you a fool or bury you alive or starve you—but we shall always observe truth. This cannot be done without fearlessness.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 88

[1] The proprietor Tambe was willing to admit Harijans but reluctant to make an announcement to that effect.

[2] The name is omitted in the source.

168. A LETTER

January 25, 1933

There is no other cause but the atmosphere for the slackness which sets in at a later stage.[1] But a man who wishes to progress has always to fight against the discouraging circumstances and for the same reason Tulsidas stresses the need of *satsang*[2]. But it is not to be found everywhere. We should therefore look for the subtle form of *satsang* which is to be found within our own self, i.e., in noble thoughts and deeds. One who achieves this inner *satsang* can fight to the last against the unfavourable environment and succeed in carrying out his resolves.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 88

169. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

January 25, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. You ought to have written to me earlier that you were in the family way. There is nothing to be ashamed of in it. That is the way of the world. Of course it is very good to practise restraint but that is possible only for a few. Since the child's brithday coincides with Mahadev's let us call him Mahadev. I am returning the photograph. Hope you are both well. Keep on writing to me. Send my blessings to Anand.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] Gandhiji is referring to the pious resolutions and the initial enthusiasm of workers whenever they were imprisoned.

[2] The company of saints or good people

170. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

January 25, 1933

Asked if his intention was to hold his fast in abeyance till the fate of Mr. Ranga Iyer's Bill was known, Mahatma Gandhi replied that it would depend on circumstances arising from day to day. If Mr. Ranga Iyer's Bill hung up indefinitely, the question of temple-entry could not await solution so long.

I am hoping that Mr. Ranga Iyer's Bill being of a negative character, all Hindus will see that it does not interfere with religion in any shape or form and if sanatanists admit that the Harijans should suffer under no social disabilities they must make good their admission by welcoming the measure. They do not seem to seek legal protection for enforcing religious observances. Religious observance ceases to be religious, the moment it becomes enforceable by law. It must depend on mutual goodwill and on the readiness of Hindus in general to perform religious observances.

There are numerous religious observances in the Hindu religion as in all other religions but they are not enforceable by law and what Mr. Ranga Iyer's Bill provides is that the religious prohibition against temple-entry should not be forced at the point of the bayonet. But should the sanatanists not appreciate this obvious proposition of mine and there is opposition to the Bill, it would become a question for me as to what would be my duty. But I am hoping that there would be an unequivocal declaration by the vast mass of Hindus to favour the Bill so as to compel the acceleration of its passage through all its stages.

The Hindustan Times, 26-1-1933

171. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

January 26, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

This is before prayer time Thursday. I get your weekly letter Wednesday noon and I write the reply Thursday morning after prayer or sometimes before as now. So whenever you get my letter later than usual or not at all? you will know that there has been no delay on my part. But accidents will happen in the best of all possible worlds. There is no such thing as accident in God's dictionary. The

world is a chapter of accidents. For accidents are events which we cannot control and often can't find causes for even after they have occurred.

As you see I have again taken to writing by the right hand. I do not do much writing. Some Gujarati every day not more than two hours and the weekly English letter to you. That cannot injure the hand. At least no one has suggested that as the cause. The wheel was blamed. But even that seems to be an exploded theory. I recommenced moderate spinning on Tuesday last. But I shall not be obstinate. I shall give it up, if the pain increases. The weight went down 2 lb. yesterday but the little fluctuation is a matter of no concern whatsoever.

Now about yourself. Whatever the cause of that giddiness, you ought to discuss with the doctor. If it is due to the stenches, you should be transferred to a better place. If you do not mind I would like to write to the Government myself. You have a very sensitive nose and therefore are more readily acted upon than others by foul smells. Shall I apply for transfer? Perhaps you will be allowed to answer this question apart from your usual weekly letter.

Blind Morris[1] will appreciate your letter. It will be an event with him for many days. This reminds me of Mrs. Aiman. Did you know her? Andrews says we all did. Mahadev remembers her. I cannot. If you do, you may know that she is no more. Aiman is connected with 112 Gower Street. Andrews made me write to Mr. Aiman.

The expression "There is no prayer without fasting" is thoroughly sound. Here fasting has to be of the widest character possible. Fasting of the body has to be accompanied by fasting of all the senses. And *alpahar*, the meagre food of the *Gita*, is also a fasting of the body. The *Gita* enjoins not temperance in food but 'meagreness'. Meagreness is a perpetual fast. Meagreness means just enough to sustain the body for the service for which it is made. The test is again supplied by saying that food should be taken as required, not for taste but for the welfare of the body. 'Meagreness' is perhaps better rendered by 'measured quantities'. I cannot recall Arnold's rendering. A 'full' meal is therefore a crime against God and man—the latter because the full-mealers deprive their neighbours of their portion. God's economy provides from day to day just enough food

[1] *Vide* "Letter to John Morris", 6-1-1933

for all in just medicinal doses. We are all of the tribe of full-mealers. Instinctively to know the medicinal dose required is a Herculean task. For by parental training we are gluttons. Then when it is almost too late it dawns upon some of us that food is made not to enjoy but to sustain the body as our slave. It becomes from that moment a grim fight against inherited and acquired habit of eating for pleasure. Hence the necessity for a complete fast at intervals and partial fasts for ever. Partial fast is the meagre or measured food of the *Gita.* Thus 'There is no prayer without fasting, is a scientific proposition capable of verification by experiment and experience.

Yes, I remember Manorama. Poor girl. If I know where she is to go, I would gladly write to her. If she is there, here is a note for her. The Superintendent will kindly hand it to her or to you for giving it to her or if she is transferred, send the letter to her.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6260. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9726

172. LETTER TO SHAM LAL

January 26, 1933

DEAR LALA SHAM LAL,

I have your letter. I am glad you have fixed up everything for the famine-stricken Harijans. It is just like you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

LALA SHAM LAL
ADVOCATE ,
9 DAYAL SINGH MANSIONS
LAHORE

From a photostat: G.N. 1283

173. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR[1]

January 26, 1933

MY DEAR MARY,

I have your two letters, but not knowing whether any letter from me could reach you at Tirupattur I have refrained from writing and am now sending you this in the hope that you will receive it at the Bombay address given by you. I am trying to reach you at the Poona station also through Shastri, for if you want to stay in Bombay for two or three days, you will stay where I stay in Bombay. The place you know: "Mani Bhuvan, Laburnum Road, Gamdevi". You will present the accompanying note to Manibhai or Dhirubhai, the two brothers. It is as good as a home. You will find there also the late Dr. Mehta's daughter, Jekibehn. Of course if you stay there one or two days, you should meet as many members of the growing family that you have entered. You might have to pay heavily for the choice you have made. Perhaps you know something of what it has cost Mira to become a daughter. She is generally the Cinderella not however[2] having the expectation of getting the golden slipper some day or other.

I sent you a card[3] telling you that I have received the book *The Little Plays of St. Francis.* I got on to one of the plays marked by you, I suppose, and perhaps that is all the progress I shall have made with it. It is a hopeless thing for me to try to read or do anything outside the work in front of me.

About idol-worship I would like you not to worry. Let it unconsciously simmer in the brain, and when you have leisure and I have leisure and we can meet, you will discuss it to your heart's content. But if there is a difficulty that gnaws you, you must have it out and I shall try patiently to solve it if I can.

At the Ashram you are going to be truly at home and ask

[1] The addressee remarks in her book *Bapu: Conversations and Correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi:* "In Bombay the posted copy of this long letter reached me, enclosing the note of introduction to his friend. So he had sent four letters to make sure that one unimportant person should be safe and comfortable in Bombay. Could any meticulous business man do more for his partner, or loving father for his daughter?"

[2] The source has "who".

[3] *Vide* "Letter to F. Mary Barr", 21-1-1933

everything that you may need for physical comfort. I will not easily forgive you if you damage your health, because the foolish people at the Ashram could not anticipate your want and you foolishly would not express it. I would call it 'not playing the game'. I am supposed to have the instinct of a mother. I do often succeed in anticipating people's wants, but I admit that I have also failed miserably and not anticipated wants that I should have. I have therefore exacted a promise even from guests that if they would make me feel at ease about them, they would at once tell me what they need. If I had the time, I could give you some ludicrous instances, all at my expense, of how, if the friends had not told me, they would have made themselves miserable and judged me uncharitably in the bargain. People at the Ashram are a self-satisfied lot. They think that nobody can possibly want more than they do, wherein they are quite wrong. They would be quite right if they were to say nobody should want more than they do, for they themselves take more than what they should want and more than [what] millions of people get.

Again, don't think that the Ashram is an abode of angels where there can be no pilfering. As it so happens, we have just now very dangerous neighbours. Their occupation is stealing at night, and in broad daylight, and that without ally compunction. Quite selfishly we are trying to do some work in their midst. I say selfishly, because through that service we would like them to leave the Ashram untouched, but they don't, and they say it quite frankly. You will make their acquaintance if you are so minded. These are the known thieves, but there are unknown thieves also to warn you that you are not entitled to possess anything beyond the poorest garment that you have on your person and the coarsest food with which you can manage. But if you will have more than that, you expose yourself to be deprived of the superfluities by those who are in greater need. We have the vow of non-possession in the Ashram, but we do not follow it strictly. At the present moment it is only there as an ideal. You should study the rules of the Ashram, if you have not done so already.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

The note of introduction in the letter posted to Bombay. But you may go even without that letter for I have written directly to Dhirubhai.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5989

174. LETTER TO TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU

January 26, 1933

DEAR DR. SAPRU,

I hope that you have benefited by your English visit and that the strain this time was not anything like what it was in 1931.

This is however to seek your guidance about Ranga Iyer's Bill about untouchability. If you have not already read my statement[1] on the Government of India announcement sanctioning the introduction of the All-India Bill and withholding it for the Madras Bill, I would ask you please now to read it, and then criticize it freely, and tell me how to go about it.

To be interested in the passage of Bills is an experience I have not had since the passing of the Champaran Ryots' Relief Bill in 1917. But then my task was easy, as both the Government of Bihar and of India were interested in its passage, and it was a Government measure. Here the circumstances are quite novel. I therefore approach you, as to an expert, and if you think that you would like a conversation with me before you could guide me, I know that you would not mind taking the trouble of running down to Yeravda.

I hope that your son who had that nasty accident just after the Yeravda Pact has no trace left of it.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi-Sapru Correspondence. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta. Also G.N. 7589

175. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

January 26; 1933

MY DEAR SATISBABOO,

I understand every word of what you have said in your letter of the 21st and you are going to do as the spirit leads you. I must think aloud all the reactions that your letters produce upon me so that whenever they find an echo in your heart, you may re-adjust yourself

[1] *Vide* "Statement on Viceroy's Decision", 24-1-1933

accordingly. But there is to be no re-adjustment if there is no such echo in your heart because in reading letters, even yours, hurriedly, I may miss a word here and a word there which may alter a conclusion equally hurriedly come to. Thus, take this startling statement of yours—I mean startling for me—"As soon as I feel that I have been able to set up some arrangement for serving the Harijans on proper basis, I shall revert to my old field of activity." This is what you would undoubtedly do as a chemist and mechanic, as you have done so successfully often. But service of Harijans is no such mechanical thing to be arranged, put on a basis, and then left to workers. It is a spiritual act, soul acting upon soul, and therefore there is no such mechanical replacement as we have in purely temporal activities. There do come replacements even in spiritual activities, but those replacements are of a different character. Even the Pratishthan work is a spiritual activity but can be arranged up to a point as a temporal activity; not so the Harijan work. Your great organizing ability may even be a hindrance than a help in doing Harijan work, for you might have to plough what may appear to be a lonely furrow without yielding any fruit which you can see with your physical eyes. You have simply to believe that fruit is there whether you see it or not. Thus having once taken up Harijan work in the style that you have, there is no reversion to the "old field of activity". Reversion can only be consistently with the unimpaired continuance of Harijan service. I wonder if I have made my meaning perfectly clear. Of course your conception of personal service in the *basti* may be quite different from mine. You are not to fit in mine with your own. You must hold on to your own, unless mine appeals to you as the correct one. The two won't run together. But all this is only by way of illustration as to what I am trying to drive at. Please also bear in mind that whenever you feel like running down to Poona, you should do so. It won't be money thrown away. Andrews has done it so often with me. He has not even heeded my chiding, for, he would say, "What you consider to be waste of money is for me a definite want which I must satisfy", and from his own standpoint he has been right. He would have been torn to pieces if he had not run to me. No writing of letters would have satisfied him. Even as I am dictating this letter a cablegram has come to me from him. Just now he is sending a cablegram per day. This is a costly affair, but I cannot restrain him. I do not need his cablegrams, but he needs to send them for his peace. Look at this latest samples: "Thank God—Charlie, Esther". This cablegram

perhaps you cannot even understand but it has a world of meaning for me. The latest statement of mine has reached him and as he drafted his cable under Esther's roof, he added her name, for Esther is like a daughter to me. But the cablegram has no place in the plan of Harijan service, and considered in terms of money it deprives Harijans of so much money.

If, after your walk of 26 miles in one day, you had no sense of over-fatigue, you are certainly in a fit state, and if that is due to the pills you took, it is worth knowing them.

I would like to be just as free from anxiety about Hemprabha's health as you are making me about yours.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1624

176. LETTER TO DUNICHAND

January 26, 1933

DEAR LALA DUNICHAND,

I thank you for your letter giving me information about Surajbhan. Do please ask him to write to me.

I know your and Mrs. Dunichand's concern for me. It touches my heart. Please be assured that I am safe in God's hands.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5583.

177. LETTER TO S. SALIVATI

January 26, 1933

MY DEAR SALIVATI,

I have now got from Madras a true copy of your message. So far as I can see it, there is complete justification for my complaint. I am afraid that your over-zeal has led you astray. Thinking that you must have a copy yourself by now, I am not sending you the copy in front of me, but you can have it if you want to see it. Before I write to Rangaswami again, I would like to know what you have to say.

I have had your telegram about the Bill and now your letter. Icould not possibly postpone my statement.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20105

178. LETTER TO G. S. CHETTY

January 26, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter[1]. I do not quite understand what you are driving at. Is it the handful of Congressmen who are serving the anti-untouchability campaign who are misbehaving themselves, or, is it the very large body of non-Congress reformers who are the mischief-makers? Is your complaint against the Congressmen or the other reformers exploiting my fast which may never come? If you have any proof in your possession that Harijans do not want temple-entry, I should like to have that proof, and supposing that what you say is true, is that any reason for caste Hindus not to discharge the obligation that they owe to Harijans? Then, is it any argument against reformers that they do not carry out the principle of equality in all their transactions? May not imperfect human beings take part to the best of their ability in the progress of mankind?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. S. CHETTY

MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 20113

[1] In which the addressee had expressed doubts about the sincerity of the "so-called" reformers who, he thought, would create trouble and "disrupt the tranquillity of the peace-loving population". He had asked Gandhiji "to educate public opinion to elevate the social standards of untouchables" by teaching them clean living and good habits.

179. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 26, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

Read my letter to Kanhaiyalal.

It would be very good if Amina could be sent to Sharda Mandir. Read my letter to Qureshi too.

It would help Bhau very much if he could go to Rajkot. He and Jamnadas will like each other's company. If for any reason Bhau does not feel comfortable in Rajkot, send him here. I will arrange for him to stay at Lady Thackersey's place and keep a watch on his health. I will also give him some work to do. His constipation must be cured.

You must have received the letters posted yesterday. Let me pass on to you one discovery which I have made. If it is very cold at night or at any other time, one can keep oneself warm by wrapping paper round oneself. If the cotton sheet used for covering the body during sleep is further covered with paper, one will immediately feel warm. It is very cold here these days. But I sleep in the open. Even three blankets are not enough to keep off cold. I don't have the courage, or I don't want to use a fourth blanket. So once I put a newspaper between the cotton sheet and the blanket, as also under the bed-sheet. This gave more than enough warmth. For a long time now I have been covering the legs, when they feel very cold, with a newspaper and keep them warm. If one puts paper on the plastered floor when sitting, it does not feel cold. These are a poor man's ways of keeping himself warm. That even these are not available to the village folk is a different problem.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

180. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

January 26, 1933

CHI. BHAU,

Even if I am very busy, you must write to me. You should go to Rajkot full of faith. It will not matter if you do not improve. We shall think about fasting after you have tried Rajkot. Describe your other experiences at Vijapur.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 4491. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

181 LETTER TO GULAM RASUL QURESHI

Y. M.,
January 26, 1933

CHI. QURESHI,

I got your letter. The boys must be given education in Islam from their childhood. I will not hesitate to keep the children with Noor Banu for whatever reason. I regard her as one of the family. It is essential that the children should get instruction in Islam and Amina should get the training she needs at present. Don't mind the children being separated from her in the process. If we keep insisting on this, a Hindu institution would impart instruction in Islam and a Muslim institution instruction in Hinduism. Such a day may be distant but is not inconceivable. You may have read in the *Autobiography* that I used to do that in South Africa. I had Muslim, Christian and Prasi children with me. They got religious instruction to the extent I could provide them such instruction. At the moment, however, this is only a dream. I have mentioned it only by the way. I should be very pleased if they admit Amina to Sharda Mandir. She need not worry at all. If she does not feel comfortable there, she can go back to the Ashram. Why need one feel ashamed of returning to one's home? And in any case Amina will be joining Sharda Mandir for education. I greatly value the benefits of education. If Amina studies well and then devotes herself to service, Imam Saheb's soul, wherever it may be, will be pleased. Let Amina join that particular school without second thought.

She need not then go to Bhavnagar. I am willing to write to Pyare Ali if you wish. I hope you are now quite well. The children must have recovered. I am not writing separately to Amina.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10818. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

182. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

January 27, 1933

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

With reference to the late Dr. Mehta's estate I need to see the following parties in addition to the thirteen for whom permission has already been given:

(1) Padmabehn, Dr. Mehta's grand-daughter.

(2) Sjt. Kantilal A. Doshi, the son of the well-known Morbi shroff and engaged to be married to (1).

(3) Shrimati Vrajkunwar Ratilal Sheth, wife of Sjt. Ratilal Sheth for whom permission has already been granted.

I hope that early permission will be received as I have to advise about the marriage of (1) with (2), and it is proposed to be celebrated in February.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 3877

183. LETTER TO BILL LASH

January 27, 1933

DEAR BROTHER LASH,

I have your letter and the questions which are very good. Enclosed you will find my brief answers[1]. If you find them to be too brief to be clear, you will not hesitate to tackle me further, and if it will serve the purpose better by coming, please do not hesitate to come.

[1] These are not available.

I am glad the ointment has cured you of the poisonous sting. You should now give me a receipt for that ointment.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

BRO. BILL LASH

CHRISTA SEVA SANGHA ASHRAM

POONA

From a photostat : G.N. 39

184. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

January 27, 1933

I have your letters and plenty of cablegrams.[1] I know their meaning and the anxiety complex underlying them. I have no doubt that the Government of India should have given their assent to the introduction of both the Bills. But the sanatanist agitation has frightened them. I do not mind however the refusal to give the assent to Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill. No doubt it protracts the agony, but that cannot be helped. After all, it is the Hindu mass mind that has to be awakened. If the touchable Hindus are not ready for the removal of untouchability, I do not want even the all-India Bill, though, as you will see, from my statement[2] on the Bill, it is perfectly harmless. It simply refuses to give the sanction of secular law to untouchability, thus leaving free scope to the reformers and the objectors to carry on the education of the masses. It is strictly a Bill of non-interference either way. Nevertheless, I shall be prepared to reconcile myself to the Bill being blocked by the Government, if it is conclusively proved that caste Hindus will not have it. My difficulty is to prove the readiness of the vast mass of caste men for the change, unless the Government are prepared to accept the ordinary methods of proof. Just at present a vicious agitation that, so far as I am aware, has no authority from the public at large is being conducted in the name of sanatana dharma. It is difficult to show to outsiders that it has no genuine public support. If this agitation is taken to be the genuine expression of the Hindu

[1] The addressee had written in his letter dated January 13 that it would be better if the proposed legislation regarding untouchability was made "an all-India question" and dealt with by the Central Legislature rather than by the Madras Council.

[2] *Vide* "Statement to Viceroy's Decision", 24-1-1933

mass mind, a very difficult and critical situation will undoubtedly arise. I am however moving heaven and earth to ensure purity and trust that all will be well in the end. Meanwhile, the fast remains postponed. I have absolutely no will of my own in the matter. I am continually praying for light, and if the fast comes, you will know the source, and therefore not get at all anxious.

I observe what you say about Kunwar Maharaj Singh's boys, and I am glad that your effort was successful. It was a kind of temple-entry, as you have put it.

I take it that you are getting all my statements. Nevertheless, I enclose herewith my statement on the all-India Bill. I would like you to study it carefully and appreciate, if you can, the fundamental distinction I have drawn between the temple-entry and the economic and educational programme.

I hope your ailing mother is better and more amenable. to control.

C. F. ANDREWS

From a photostat: S.N. 19004

185. LETTER TO S. D. NADKARNI

January 27, 1933

DEAR MR. NADKARNI,

It was a pleasure to hear from you. My faith has not weakened; if anything, it has become stronger. Civic rights will certainly be protected by law if they are to be worth anything. There is no question of Harijans existing on the sufferance of anybody. But law is one thing, cultivation of public opinion wholly another. Society holds together on the strength not of law but of mutual goodwill, and unless the majority of caste Hindus are converted, there is not much use in the law protecting rights which the majority is not prepared to recognize. The whole of the present campaign is directed towards cultivating and ascertaining the opinion of caste Hindus. The legal guarantees and all that they mean are bound to be there, but they will be an expression of the will of the majority and not a superimposition.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. D. NADKARNI
KARWAR

From a microfilm: S.N. 20116

186. LETTER TO V. M. NAWLE

January 27, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You cannot say that I do not give you time. I gave you plenty of time the other day, and I am giving you time by answering your letters promptly, and I would have, given you more time by inviting you if I had found your proposal[1] to be sound or even workable. Let me tell you that it is not in any sense a new suggestion. It was put before me when I returned from South Africa in 1915 and I rejected it. It is a bad training for the Harijans and it is bad also for caste Hindus. What however you and I want is that caste Hindus should do penance and make reparation to those whom they have ignorantly or may be even insolently regarded as untouchables. What is therefore wanted in terms of religion is not a fraud, however pardonable, but a conscious act on the part of caste Hindus of welcoming Harijans with open arms. That Hinduism has absorbed people who were once under boycott but who had stolen in by assuming other names is only too true. But it is not in my opinion a practice to be copied. I wish I could convince you that the removal of untouchability[2] is purely a religious problem which does not admit of questionable methods or tricks. Do you not now agree with me?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20117

187. LETTER TO S. KRISHNA AIYAR

January 27, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. You evidently contemplate that those who are seeking the assistance of law whether in British India or in the States want to force people to do anything against their will, especially in matters of religion. What is wanted is that there should be no State recognition of untouchability. At the present moment there is

[1] That untouchables should give up caste names like Mahar, Mang, Chambhar, Dhor, etc.

[2] The. source has “this method of untouchability”.

this anomaly that the State not only recognizes untouchability, but helps believers in it to enforce their views against others, thus making what they believe to be a religious precept a matter of legal obligation. Seeking assistance of law therefore becomes obligatory for reformers in order to have the anomaly removed, and when the anomaly is removed there will be no question of forcing the entry of Harijans into temples but it would be possible for the majority of those who are under the present usage entitled to enter temples to throw them open to Harijans. In that event there can be no question of boycott of temples by the majority. There may be a minority who may cease to take advantage of the temples. It would be their loss, but I have in my compromise proposal made allowances even for their views or prejudices as I would call them. Therefore those in Travancore who believe that untouchability should be removed for the good name of Hinduism will work might and main on the one hand to convert by gentle means and purity of conduct orthodox objectors to their own view and on the other work among the Harijans so as to induce them to shed those habits or customs which are repugnant to the moral sense.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. KRISHNA AIYAR, B.A., B.L.
HIGH COURT VAKIL, TRIVANDRUM

From a microfilm: S.N. 20119

188. LETTER TO V. S. BARVE

January 27, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter, but I am very much afraid that I have no capacity for giving you satisfaction. I have not arrived at what I believe to be truth in the analytical way and therefore it is most difficult for me to understand some of your questions. It is not even possible for me to say how I have arrived at my present outlook upon life as a whole. A multitude of contacts with books, men and events are together responsible for what I am today, as they must be for everyone. Some may have the ability for locating the cause or causes

for everything they think, say or do. I confess that I am very stupid and often cannot account for things I do and beliefs I hold and sometimes I fancy that God is speaking or acting through me. I am painfully conscious of the fact that such belief may be merely a figment of my imagination, but while it lasts, believe me, it is as true to me as it is that I am dictating this letter to you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. V. S. BARVE
CONTRACTOR
917 SADASHIV PETH
POONA CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 20123

189. LETTER TO STUDENTS' HARIJAN SERVICE LEAGUE

January 27, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am glad that you have formed the League. At the present moment I do not think that I can add anything useful to the suggestions you have already made. There need be no overlapping if your League will work in conjunction with and even under instructions from the Servants of Untouchables Society.

Yours sincerely,

THE SECRETARY
THE STUDENTS' HARIJAN SERVICE LEAGUE
NAI SARAK, DELHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 20124

190. LETTER TO P. GOMATHINAYAGOM PILLAI

January 27, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and three copies of your pamphlet on untouchability. I am wholly unable to judge whether Tamil and Malayalam translations are necessary. That is a matter for the

provincial branch of the Servants[1] of Untouchables Society to determine and I would like you to consult them in the matter.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. GOMATHINAYAGOM PILLAI
ILANJI, TENKASI, (S. INDIA)

From a microfilm: S.N. 20125

191. LETTER TO V. JAGATHRAKSHAKAN

January 27, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I think we have made a fetish of preservation of the purity of stock through unnatural restrictions. The ancients never knew these restrictions. This does not mean that I am an advocate of promiscuous unions. I think that it is a wise rule to have marriage among people having common thought and common habits of life, but it is a vicious thing when it becomes so rigid as to make a departure from it a sinful act, especially in these days when the varnas have lost their purity, if not their original significance altogether. The division between the superior and inferior people that you seem to believe in is, in my opinion, a monstrous perversion of truth.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. V. JAGATHRAKSHAKAN
7 SOUTH MADA STREET
TRIPLICANE, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 20126

192. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

January 27, 1933

BHAI MAVALANKAR,

I got your letter. Blessings from us all to both the new entrants to the ranks of the twice-born. May they live long and do honour to the sacred thread.

The weakness will decrease day by day.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1236

[1] The source has "Service".

193. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAZMUDAR.

January 27, 1933

BHAI PARIKSHITBHAI,

I have your letter. Read the proposed Bills. Is not giving scholarships to the children a form of bribe or a reward for attending school? If it is, do you think this practice should be encouraged?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3961

194. LETTER TO INDU N. PAREKH

January 27, 1933

CHI. INDU,

I got your letter. How did you become ill? I hope you are careful about eating. You may use a bicycle, but you should also walk daily. Send me your time-table for the day's work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6254

195. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

January 27, 1933

Mr. Gandhi said that he was surprised and pained to find that Mr. Iyengar, an ex-judge, had spoken "so irresponsibly" as he had done.[1] If he had taken the trouble of studying the movement, he would at once have seen that, with Mr. Gandhi, the removal of untouchability was an article of faith before he knew anything of politics. If he (Mr. Gandhi) had been guided by political, instead of religious instinct, he would have excluded temple-entry from the programme and confined his attention to economic and educational uplift. But he had staked his popularity, such as it was,

[1] Srinivasa Iyengar was reported to have said at a sanatanist meeting in Madras that the present temple-entry movement was but a political stunt of Gandhiji and his followers to placate the Harijans and win them over to the Congress so as to present a united front.

because he believed that without temple-entry untouchability could not be said to have been abolished from Hinduism. Mr. Gandhi added:

I make an offer to Mr. Iyengar and other sanatanists who say that they do not wish to ill-treat Harijans, and would like to promote their economic and other temporal welfare. Let them join the Servants of Untouchables Society and finance and work its programme for temporal uplift and leave temple-entry to me and those who think with me. Mr. Iyengar should know that the Society contains few Congressmen. The organization contains many prominent Liberals. Indeed, sanatanists can, if they mean what they say, by bringing money and workers to the Society, take charge of it and shape its policy. If this does not suit them, let them run a rival organization and spread its branches all over the country, and win the hearts and gratitude of Harijans. I would take my chance of gaining religious merit by prosecuting the temple entry movement and showing that it will, at a stroke, uplift the Harijans and caste Hindus, and purify both and automatically promote the temporal welfare of the former. Mr. Iyengar should realize that, in a matter concerning the masses, no stunt can be of much use. They are open to be appealed to by everybody, and only honesty and hard work can win in the end.

As for the charge of religious interference, Gandhiji said:

I have already dealt with the question in my previous statements. I can only reiterate my view that I myself will be the first person to oppose religious interference by the State even when real power passes to the people. But sanatanists cannot have it both ways. They would want, as they have done before, the aid of law to sustain what, to one like me, appears to be prejudice or worse; and when I seek to remove that interference, the cry of interference is at once raised by the upholders of prejudice in the name of religion. Indeed, I want to respect even prejudice, for I realize what may appear to me prejudice may be enlightenment to others. But these are matters where the aid of the law cannot be sought. The law can only take a temporal view of the questions that come before it. It cannot recognize the *Agamas*[1] upholding thieving. I have, at the Ashram, neighbours who honestly believe that thieving is an occupation enjoined by God to them as a caste. I respect their prejudice, but the law does not. I am here not giving a hypothetical case. I am quoting from actual experience.

[1] Scriptures

Mr. Iyengar says that I do not believe in the Shastras. He will fail to produce a single statement of mine to support his accusation. Surely, he is too good a lawyer to claim infallibility for his interpretation of the Shastras or his judgment of their authenticity. I would ask him and those who are flinging all sorts of charges against me, distorting my writings in order to prove them, whether they will uphold sanatana dharma by such methods. Let them believe me when I say that I am quite capable of saying so if I had the slightest desire to found a new religion or a new sect.

I have no other wish in this world, but to find light, joy and peace through Hinduism. It is for that reason that I want to see it purified. It satisfies me because, as I have understood and lived it, it has enabled me to treat other religions on a footing of absolute equality and their followers even as my blood brothers and sisters. Hinduism and my conception of the *Gita,* of the Vedas, the Upanishads, the *Bhagavata,* and the *Mahabharata,* teach me that all life is one, and that in the eye of God there is no superior and no inferior. I am sick of controversy. But I am more sick of untruth and impurity. I invite sanatanists to join hands with me in fighting them.

The Hindu, 28-1-1933, and *The Bombay Chronicle,* 28-1-1933

196. LETTER TO V. M. NAWLE

January 28, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your two letters. The proposed newspaper[1] will not be issued under my editorship. It will be an English weekly issued under the aegis of the Servants of Untouchables Society. I think that you should continue your own paper without any outside interference, giving such help as you can to the movement.

With reference to your other letter, I have already sent you an answer yesterday.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20128

[1] *Harijan*

197. LETTER TO K. KELAPPAN

January 28, 1933

MY DEAR KELAPPAN,

I have your letter. You must have seen my statement. That explains my position. I think we have to concentrate on Ranga Iyer's Bill. I know that it has many difficulties to face, but that does not matter. The legal obstruction must be removed. We must therefore educate the public on the necessity of the removal of the legal bar, and meanwhile, where there is no obstruction from trustees and the public desire it, temples should be thrown open. Our programme, therefore, practically remains as it was, the all-India Bill replacing the Madras Bill. Rajaji is coming here on Monday and I shall discuss the future programme with him.[1]

My elbow need not cause you any worry. I am on the alert and if I find that it requires immediate treatment from outside, I shall not hesitate to apply for it. Without permission however no outside help can be received.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20130

198. LETTER TO K. RAMACHANDRA

January 28, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[2]. It is very difficult for me to give you any further advice.[3] I am quite convinced, however, that the interference on the part of non-Hindus cannot be tolerated in a matter which is a purely religious issue and which is one essentially for

[1] For the discussions with C. Rajagopalachari, G. D. Birla and others *vide* "Discussion with aaC. Rajagopalchari and Others", 30-1-1933

[2] Dated January 23, 1933 (S. N. 20078). Referring to Gandhiji's statement in an interview to the Associated Press of India, *vide* "Interview to the Associated Press of India", 2-1-1933, the addressee had stated that in spite of his warning non-Hindus were determined to champion the cause of temple-entry as their own, to collect funds in its name and to start direct action.

[3] For Gandhiji's previous letter to the addressee, *vide* "Letter to K. Ramchandra", 31-12-1932

Hindus to settle among themselves. I am surprised that non-Hindus should persist in their interference.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. RAMACHANDRA

SRI WICKRAMA ROAD

WELLAWATTE

From a microfilm: S.N. 20131

199. LETTER TO R.. KAIMAL

January 28, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I can only vaguely gather what you are driving at. I wish you will adopt a simple style to express simple ideas and give up all metaphor and ornamentation.

Remember the following:

1. No cause that is backed by truth is ever lost.

2. Legislation is required now and will always be required to remove legal obstruction.

3. Both hotels and *vilasams*[1] are bad; both pander to the palate.

4. One can be a glutton on vegetarian food and strictly temperate on flesh food which he does not consider forbidden food.

5. Virtue lies in abstaining from visiting public eating houses altogether, and even in one's home, partaking of food as medicine, just enough to sustain the body, and never to please the palate.

6. Don't mix up the loose life of modern times with a very big movement for religious reform.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 20132

[1] Eating-houses

200. LETTER TO N. H. PURANDARE

January 28, 1933

MY DEAR PURANDARE,

I had written to you before receiving your postcard of the 25th. I have nothing more to add to what I have said. If you are prepared to take over the book, I shall gladly go through the estimates you have received and you will pay no more than the market rate.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20134

201. LETTER TO KOKKIRAKULAM BRETHREN'S UNION

January 28, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and resolution[1]. If my compromise is ever accepted by the sanatanist Hindus, you will find that, not only does it not wound the self-respect of Harijans, but it actually enhances it; but the matter is just now irrelevant.

Yours sincerely,

THE HON. SECRETARY

THE KOKKIRAKULAM BRETHREN'S UNION

SELVAVINAYAGAR ST., KOKKIRAKULAM

TINNEVELLY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20136

[1] Which, among other things, stated that "the suggestion of allotting separate hours of worship in Hindu temples by Harijans made in Mahatma Gandhi's compromise formula is not only detrimental to the unity of Hindu society . . . but also wounding to the self-respect of the so-called Depressed Classes."

202. LETTER TO SAROJ MOHAN SEN

January 28, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I cannot imagine Sjt. Sasmal being guilty of any such thing as you attribute to him. But if he or anybody has been guilty of action such as you describe you should institute proceedings against them. I am sending your letter to Sjt. Sasmal asking him to enquire into the matter.[1]

Yours sincerely,

KAVIRAJ SAROJ MOHAN SEN
VAIDYASASTRI
CONTAI, P. O. MIDNAPORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 20137

203. LETTER TO B. N.. SASMAL

January 28, 1933

MY DEAR SASMAL,

Here is a postcard for you to digest. Please enquire and let me know what truth, if any, there is in the charge made by the Kaviraj. I have written to him saying that you are incapable of inciting people to shoot others.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1: p. c.

SJT. B. N. SASMAL
BAR-AT-LAW
MIDNAPORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 20135

[1] *Vide* the following item.

204. LETTER TO G. V. KETKAR

January 28, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your card. I have no objection to my opinion[1] on your article being published, only it must be as addressed to you, for, as a prisoner, I have no right to address letters to editors apart from matters of untouchability.

As to your article on temple-entry, I did go through it when I received it, and I have a recollection that it seemed to me to be reasonable, but I am just now working under a very severe strain and I glance through the literature that I get to an extent just enough for my purpose. My opinion therefore has no value when I do not express it as a result of deliberate study.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20138

205. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 23, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your mail[2]. I have not received slivers from Chhakkaddas. I have written to Maganlal and asked if he can send any. If you can send slivers from there without any difficulty, please do so. Parachure Shastri and Dastane also are supplied slivers from here, and Mahadev and Chhaganlal give all their time [to spinning]. Hence making slivers to meet the requirements of five spinners is likely to take a great deal of our time. If, however, Chhakkaddas from there cannot supply any, don't trouble him. If Keshu can offer any without inconvenience to himself, you may send them.

Do you get any letters from Tulsi Maher? He doesn't seem to be making much progress about spinning. If you know anything about this or have information, let me know.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. V. Ketkar", 11-1-1933

[2] According to the source this was posted on January 26.

Barring two days, I have written to you daily for the past few days.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, Pt. II, p. 24

206. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

January 28, 1933

CHI. RADHAKISAN,

I wrote one letter to you about the Mahilashram. I hope you got it. I frequently see Jamnalal. He keeps good health. I heard yesterday that the number of visitors to the Lakshminarayan temple had gone down. Is this true? Is any record maintained of the number of daily visitors? Find out also the position regarding the other temples which have been thrown open to Harijans.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3038

207. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

January 28, 1933

CHI. KAKA,

I got your letter. As I told you in a previous letter you ought not to have got into the condition in which you find yourself.

I had understood what you said about the offering of food to the deity. All the same, the issue is not worth raising now. If and when it is raised, we shall see.

Rohit is in King Edward Hospital. He is under the treatment of Dr. Deshmukh.

Would it not be wiser to cling to your decision not to take up any work till the treatment of your teeth was completed, unIess you had a valid reason for doing otherwise?

You may do what you think proper regarding Chandrashankar. Do not neglect your health.

Don’t include *chiku* and bananas among the fruits which you may eat. For the teeth, citrus fruits alone are useful. Only fruits like

pomegranate, pineapple and fruits of the citrus group (orange, *mosambi, papanas,* grapes, etc.) from which juice can be extracted will be useful. I think apple also is included in this class.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

What is the matter with Haribhau? I suppose Parel means K. E. M. Hospital. Isn't that so?

From Gujarati: C.W. 9492. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

208. LETTER TO HRISHIKESH

January 28, 1933

BHAI HRISHIKESHJI,

I have your letter. You have opened your temple to Harijans; this will do immense good. Please accept my congratulations.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6278

209. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

January 28, 1933

CHI. TULSI MAHER[1],

Your letter. It cannot be said that your work is at all progressing. Let there be no self-delusion. If it is impossible to popularize the charkha in Nepal it must be given up. There are many other branches of service. But I would say nothing if you have confidence in yourself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6544

[1] The original in Gandhiji's hand has "Mehta", evidently a slip.

210. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 28, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I hope you got the letter which I wrote yesterday. If you can arrange for Amina to be admitted in Sharda Mandir, do so immediately. I have already written to you regarding the boys and the girls. If the parents approve of the arrangement suggested, make it immediately.

If Tilakam's things have been stolen, I suppose you have replaced such of the articles as are indispensable to him.

Mary Barr must have arrived there. I would advise you to assign her some teaching work and some work connected with the uplift of Harijans. If she intends to live there for a short time only, let her, if she likes, learn ginning, carding and spinning thoroughly. Probably she is accustomed to eating fruits. If so, supply her what she needs. I am sure you must have provided her with a commode. If she wishes to join in cleaning lavatories, let her do so.

Read my letters to Liladhar, Ramji, etc.

This time my weight was less by two pounds. That is, it has gone down from 104 to 102. But my health is quite good otherwise. You must have read in the papers about my getting headaches. But they were soon cured by mud-packs and it is an old story now. There is no cause at all for worry. We have in the Ashram a book by Kellogg named *Dietetics.* Send it with somebody who may be coming to this side.

BAPU

[PS.]

There are 37 letters in all.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

211. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

January 29, 1933

MY DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

I understand what you say about the Bengal agitation on the Pact. Whilst we should know for our purposes accurately who the untouchables are, personally, the more people are included in the list

the better it is in view of the circumstances.

I do not despair of the Ahmedabad Vaishnav friends, as you seem to have done. I wrote to both Chamanlal Sheth and Sheth Sakarlal. The latter has sent an amiable reply. I shall still try.

About Shastri's suggestion, I shall write to you after he comes here and after I have discussed the whole thing with him. Of this I am quite sure, that we shall not want two men of the same level for the English weekly. You may tell me what work you were taking or you *had* intended to take from Shastri.

You have asked Mahadev to send you about 25 copies of the Hindi translation of the opinion on untouchability of the learned men. Mahadev destroyed the copies. He has only one or two copies for his file. You will therefore have to multiply the copies you have in your possession. I wonder if you have carried out all the corrections in the Hindi copy. If you are still going to have the opinion in all the principal vernaculars in one cover, I expect you to ensure absolutely correct translation and to see to it that the pamphlet is free from any errors.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: G.N. 1107

212. LETTER TO JANARDHAN SHARMA

January 29, 1933

MY DEAR JANARDHAN,

I was pleased to receive your letter. God will forgive you for having thought low of Harijans, if you will abide by your pledge and continue to treat them as if they were blood brothers and sisters.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. JANARDHAN SHARMA
C/O B. PANNALALJI
CLERK, CHANDNI CHOWK POST OFFICE
DELHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 19259

213. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

January 29, 1933

MY DEAR RAJBHOJ[1],

I have your letter with the constitution of the proposed hostel. We should discuss together your scheme if you will kindly come on the 4th February at 2 p.m.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19260

214. LETTER TO A. RANGASWAMI IYENGAR

January 29, 1933

MY DEAR RANGASWAMI,

I had a visit from Salivati yesterday. Poor man, he is very much dejected. He has really no defence. The sub-editor at your end made no mistakes at all in carrying out his message. But in his own over-zeal for the cause, Salivati drew upon his imagination. He admits that many things he attributed to me I never said, but he simply inferred from a word here and a word there that had dropped out of my lips that I had meant what he said. That of course was very dangerous, but he thought that he would serve the cause by allowing his imagination full play. He admits also that I had warned him that he was not to make any use whatsoever of the conversation, but again he thought there was no harm, since the cause was good. There was no *mala fides* behind his action. I think and hope that this mistake will last him for the rest of his life. Therefore, beyond warning him that he must act purely as a reporter and not at all as a protagonist of a cause, nothing further need be done. When one sees so much of indifferent, incompetent and even unscrupulous reporting it would be a pity to punish a mistake, though serious, quite unintentional.

Yours sincerely,

[PS.]

[1] Honorary Organizer and General Secretary of a society for the service of depressed classes

After dictating this letter I got from Salivati a carbon copy of his letter to you. I think it fairly represents what he conveyed to me yesterday.

From a microfilm: S.N. 19264

215. LETTER TO S. SALIVATI

January 29, 1933

MY DEAR SALIVATI,

I have your letter, for which many thanks. Your letter fairly represents what you said to me yesterday. I do hope that no harm will befall you.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19261

216. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS

January 29, 1933

DEAR BABOO BHAGWANDAS,

I hope you received my previous letter with the accompanying essays from *Shastris.*

I enclose today another and that is from Raghunath Shastri Kokaje. His essay is not convincing. The argument is somewhat loose, and it does not examine the position of the opposite school. The Hindi admits of much correcting, which I hope you will see to.

I have been having regularly cuttings from newspapers from the *Aaj* office, for which many thanks, and which give me useful indication of what is going on in the Hindi Press.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19262

217. LETTER TO M. M. ANANTA RAU

January 29, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your last letter which is undated but which was received yesterday.

The first part of that letter is a complaint against unseemly behaviour of certain people at the meeting organized by the "followers of sanatana dharma". I was grieved to hear of the incident referred to by you. I shall discuss it with Shri Rajagopalachariar who is expected here tomorrow. It hurts me whenever there is any rowdyism or untruthfulness on either side. Honest differences of opinion there will always be. The cause of Truth cannot be served by hard swearing, stone-throwing or untruthfulness.

The second part of your letter relieved the pain caused by the first part owing to the manner in which you approached my argument about untouchability. As it so happened, I read your letter aloud amongst us, four prisoners, and I must confess to you that, as I proceeded, I could not help bursting into laughter, in which my companions heartily joined. But behind the laughter was also a sadness that you, an agent of sanatana dharma, could not see that religion could not be treated in terms of algebra. You have, instead of going straight to the core of my argument, launched out into an irrelevant discourse, ending in a ludicrous algebraical formula.

You will pardon me for writing straight from the heart. Of all the letters that I have been receiving only yours and one or two others that I can mention have been courteous and have attempted to argue cogently. I should only return your courtesy and your honest attempt to convince me by giving you an honest reply. Let me tell you that all the letters and literature that have come to me have only confirmed me in the opinion that untouchability, as we are practising today, is a big blot upon Hinduism and an atrocious error in which we are still persisting, simply because of our laziness to understand and act up to the very fundamentals of Hinduism. This inglorious persistence in error cuts me to the quick, but I am an optimist. I have implicit faith in the ultimate victory of Truth. I know therefore that untouchability will go and Hinduism will live a purified religion.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. M. ANANTA ROW

From a microfilm: S.N. 19263. Also C.W. 9573. Courtesy: Government of Mysore

218. LETTER TO C. P. SRINIVASA IYER

January 29, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I cannot recall a single occasion when I called the *Mahabharata* a heap of rubbish. I have not had many occasions to speak or write about the *Mahabharata,* and when I did write about it I compared it to a diamond mine, whereas I compared the *Gita* to a diamond chest. Perhaps, the Shankaracharya had that simile in mind, but at the present moment, for sanatanists, whether they are big men or small men, any stone is good enough to fling at me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. P. SRINIVASA IYER
NORTH VILLAGE
CHITTUR (COCHIN STATE)

From a microfilm: S.N. 19265

219. LETTER TO K. P. RAMAN PILLAI

January 29, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for the letter giving me the information that Koteshwaram Mahadev temple near Kuzithurai in South Travancore was opened to the Harijans. I hope to see that other temples follow suit.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI
OLACODE
COLACHEL, P.O.
S. TRAVANCORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 20142

220. LETTER TO DHIRENDRANATH MUKHERJI

January 29, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. So much untruth, almost bordering on the libellous, is being broadcast at the present moment about me that I should warn you not to believe anything against me unless you have it verified by me or you yourself have verified it from my authentic writings. Thus, I have never declared to the world that "the hereditary caste system of the Hindu society is an artificial creation of some designing men". By hereditary system I suppose you mean varnashramadharma. If so what I have said and written is that I believe in hereditary varnashramadharma which is one of the gifts that Hinduism has made to the world.

Again, what I have resisted and what I would resist with my life is untouchability as it is being practised today. But I have never said that there is no such thing as untouchability. On the contrary, I have said that untouchability of a kind is common to all mankind and all religions and that it is a necessary institution, and in that real sense all mankind become untouchable while they are performing certain functions of nature. This is only one instance of natural necessary untouchability, but that carries no sin with it.

Again, interdining, intermarriage and the like are no part whatsoever of the campaign against untouchability as it is being practised today. I have written in favour of interdining and even intermarriage under certain circumstances, but that is wholly irrelevant to the present discussion. You can, if you desire to know my views on things not pertaining to untouchability, do so by studying my writings.

I hope this fully answers your letter.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. DHIRENDRANATH MUKHERJI
SENHATI P.O.
KHULNA DIST. (BENGAL)

From a microfilm: S.N. 20143

221. LETTER TO BHUJANGILAL

January 29, 1933

CHI. BHUJANGILAL,

I got your letter. If I had not understood your point of view at all, I would not have written to you. All the same, I do wish to understand it better.

I very much like your resolution to apply yourself exclusively to your studies and please your parents. I believe that you will be able to please them with your gentleness and your self-control.

Write to me occasionally.

Improve your handwriting. You will be able to do so if you write slowly and with care.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2596

222. LETTER TO KESHAV GANDHI

January 29, 1933

CHI. KESHU (JUNIOR),

I got your letter. God does not let things happen as we wish. We should go on working and rest satisfied with that. The result is in God's hand.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3287

223. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAJAJ

January 29, 1933

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your letter. Having regard to your difficulty, I should exempt you from writing to me. I know very well what the burden of guests can mean. You need not, therefore, write whenever you have guests on hand. I don't want you to put yourself to trouble for writing to me. When I don't hear from you for some time, I will conclude that

you are very busy and have not been able to write.

I am very glad that your weight has gone up.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9138

224. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

January 29, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

I must have your letters, no matter how foolish they are. So don't keep me without one any week. How are you now?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10324

225. LETTER TO BABALBHAI MEHTA

January 29, 1933

CHI. BABALBHAI,

I got your letter. There is no point in writing anything to Nanasaheb now. Nothing further can be done in the matter. You may go on doing what other service you can.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9444

226. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

January 29, 1933

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

You did very well in writing to me. You are faced with a really difficult moral dilemma. All that I can say in this matter is that you should consult your own conscience and fearlessly follow its bidding. There is a risk of your committing an error in taking that course, but that risk is worth taking. In such matters, the advice of others never helps. If, in consequence, you feel that you ought to leave the Ashram, do not hesitate to do so. Nobody can force himself to observe *brahmacharya*. If one cannot observe it, one should admit one's

weakness and follow the common way. It is possible to exercise self-control even in conjugal life. You may do as much as you can.

Write to me from time to time. Do not hesitate to write to me out of fear of adding to my burden.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9510

227. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA

January 29, 1933

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

Your handwriting is quite good, but you should make the letters larger. I know Chunilal's address. Does he write to you?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9422

228. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

January 29, 1933

CHI. PANDITJI,

The more you write to me about the Chharas, the more I feel that we the Hindus are responsible for their evils. We do not recognize our dharma. If we do, then we have not observed it. Now do what you can. If we try we can definitely reform them.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 244. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

229. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA N. KHARE

January 29, 1933

CHI. RAMACHANDRA,

Your letter is fine. It is very good indeed that your weight has increased by 20 lb. Continue putting on more weight. Those who improve in body, improve in mind also. Keep on writing to me. Since you know a little Urdu, brush it up.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 303. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

230. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

January 29, 1933

CHI. JAMNA,

I had a letter from Purushottam. Bombay will probably suit him. He should try it, and then come and see me whether it suits him or not. How happy I would be if both of you completely recover your health.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 871. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

231. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

January 29, 1933

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

I got your letter. It would be a very good thing if you would set us all at rest in regard to your health. And you can do so. I do not want you to do anything in which you have no faith. It is certainly good that you intend to seek the advice and help of Dhurandear. Let me know what exactly is. Madan also runs a 'Health Home' or some such thing. Get acquainted with it with the help of Bhai Khambhatta. His address is 275 Hornby Road. We have close relations with him and he is a very good man. I want you to come and see me after you have spent some time there or if you find that the place does not agree with you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 907. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

232. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

January 29, 1933

CHI. RAMA (JOSHI),

May I describe your letter, received after a long interval, as a favour? Chhaganlal takes down the letters which I dictate, looks after files and puts every letter in its proper file, prepares dates for me to eat, etc., etc. He is learning the *Gita* by heart and trying to improve his

handwriting. He is also trying to put on weight. I have already written to you that he has succeeded somewhat in this. All four of us take a walk every morning and evening. You need not, therefore, worry about Chhaganlal at all.

Tell this to Vimu also. If even then she continues to worry you about her father, tell her that I would then not call her a sensible girl. I should like her to say: "If father's body and mind improve and become stronger, let him remain in jail. I will endure separation from him."

BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 288

233. LETTER TO ANANDSHANKAR B. DHRUVA

January 29, 1933

I have always needed you; and do that more so now, as I have given you and Malaviyaji the rank of my guru[1]. Therefore you must act your role.

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 100

234. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

January 29, 1933

BOYS AND GIRLS,

Your letter can be said to be beautiful. I cannot send you such a beautiful one. All of you should try and increase your knowledge of farming. The more you know of farming, the more you will be interested in it. Take it from me it is a good training.

All of you going out to serve the Harijans I regard it a better training still. If you work conscientiously and do not tire of it, you will be able to win them over and wean them from their bad habits.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

[1] Gandhiji is jestingly alluding to the Bombay asnatanists' charge that he had come to look upon them as his gurus.

235. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 29, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

Your letter. You did very well in going to Dr. Sharma. Write to me every week; if you write oftener, all the better. I will certainly write. Leave Delhi only when you have recovered fully.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 275

236. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL[1]

January 29, 1933

BHAI MOOLCHAND

(i) The varna system proper is no longer in practice and there are no varnas like the Bhangi or the Chamars. If we have to make a proper division we have to take into consideration the qualities of each individual.

(ii) It is a matter of one's inclination.

(iii) Inter-dining should be left entirely to individual choice.

(iv) Who bothers about anyone's wearing *yajnopavit* these days? Having no preference in this matter I have no opinion to offer.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 769

[1] The addressee had asked the following questions: (i) Under the varna system, to which varna do Bhangis and Chamars belong? (ii) Should there be intermarriage between people of different occupations? (iii) As removal of untouchability is the goal, should not people interdine with the Harijans? (iv) You are indifferent on the subject of *yajnopavit* [sacred thread]. Nevertheless, if Brahmis, Vaishyas and others can wear *yajopavit*, can Bhangis and Chamars too wear it? *Vide* also "Three problems", 7-4-1933.

237. LETTER TO GUJARAT CASTE HINDUS[1]

[Before *January 30, 1933*][2]

I have settled amongst you since 1915. I have often spoken to you on untouchability. You have often condemned it and promised to give it up. Fulfil this promise or . . . you can fill up the sentence.

I have used the word 'so-called' purposely. I do not believe in high or low. Religion teaches that he who believes himself high commits a sin. God creates various classes, but does not make any class high or low.

Bulletins are being issued against me. I have been subjected to abuse. My writings are being torn from their context and used against me. Don't feel angry at that. Those who serve have been always treated like that. If they tolerate it, they profit thereby. I have been long used to it.

The Hindu, 31-1-1933

238. LETTER TO HARIJANS OF GUJARAT

[Before *January 30, 1933*][3]

Sooner or later, the temples are bound to be open for you. That is, you will be admitted to public temples on the same conditions as other Hindus, but devotees of God should be as clean as possible internally and externally. Do not say other Hindus are also unclean. Do not take the example of those who err.

The Hindu, 31-1-1933

[1] According to the source, Gandhiji wrote this to the "so-called highcaste brothers and sisters of Gujarat".

[2] The report is dated January 30, 1933.

[3] The report is dated January 30, 1933.

239. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

January 30, 1933

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

There has been no letter either from you or from Sushila. No sooner you leave the shores of India, my complaints start. Sita's boils must have disappeared as soon as the ship had left the shore.

I hope your work has become smoother. Let me know what arrangements you have finally made. If you wish to live happily and preserve your reputation, pay off the debt soon and never borrow money again. One should not incur a debt even for the sake of one's father. One may give one's life for him, but not forsake one's dharma, and incurring a debt is as good as forsaking dharma.

I am all right. I do not know whether or when I shall have to fast, but I am sure of this, that I will fast only if, and when, God prompts me. If you believe me when I say this, you will not be upset and will not be anxious to come running here. You should leave South Africa when you feel beyond doubt that it is your duty to do so. Till then, your duty is to remain there and do what service you can. You should live as if at present your country was South Africa.

You should preserve the utmost simplicity in your life except in regard to things which may be necessary for conforming to the standard of life there. Do not discontinue the daily recitation of the *Gita*; Chapter XII is in fact your spiritual food in the journey of life. Not only should you be able to recite the verses from memory but they should have also sunk into your heart. If they have, you will find that they contain the essence of all Shastras.

Did I write to you that Chhaganlal Joshi was with me? We are all well.

Ramdas also is well. Devdas is touring with Rajaji in connection with the temple-entry movement. Most probably they will see me today. Ba has gone to Kaira district. She writes to me. Radha and Kusum keep indifferent health. The former is likely to go and stay in Deolali. Dahyabhai is completely all right how and is now in Poona for change of climate.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4805

240. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

January 30, 1933

BHAI MUNSHI,

I read your three speeches. Two of them do not help one much to understand you but I did get something from the third. I liked it. The speeches would have told me more about you if the dates of all of them had been given. I will now try to glance through some of your books which have been received here and, if I feel like it, will write to you about them. You have aroused my interest. I do want to get much public service from you, and your books will help me to know you well.

Now about another matter. You are one of the trustees appointed by Kabibai's will. I saw your scheme for the high school. It was shown to me by Bhai Multi. You must be aware that the High Court's order includes primary education. Despite that, why have you decided to start only a high school? And even in the high school I see that you have given place only to pupils drawn from a higher social level. Think over the following points and let me have your views:

1. What is meant by "high class Hindus"?
2. Does not the clause of the will under which you have framed your scheme also include primary education?
3. If it does, why have you excluded primary education?
4. Don't you think that you have made the hostel of the high school very expensive?
5. What place have you given to the mother tongue in your scheme?
6. Does the phrase "for high class Hindus" mean that the untouchable communities cannot take advantage of the high school? I have heard of a case in which it was ruled that, if an institution was established for a particular class, there was no bar to the admission of other classes if they could be admitted without injury to the interests of the former and if that class did not raise any objection to these others being admitted.

I hope you are all right. If you cannot write with either of the two hands, you need not write yourself. You may take the help of one of your companions.

Lilavati has not yet come and seen me. We are all well. Regards from us all to you and your companions.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 20144

241. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[*January 30, 1933*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got the big packet of letters sent by you.

Your decision regarding the Giri family seems all right. It must be carried out now. Be firm and carry it out. If we do not act thus, the Ashram cannot go on. Its good requires that the decision should be carried out.

Be firm in talking with Ramji also. Discuss his problem with all the others, and call him when you do so. We should act towards him in the same way as you would towards me or I towards you in similar circumstances. The path of ahimsa is like a razor's edge. Everybody in the Ashram should realize that the institution does not exist for him or her, but that it exists in order to train all the inmates for service, to teach them to offer themselves as sacrifice in the *yajna* of self-purification. There can be no room in it for selfish objectives.

Why didn't Santok go with Radhika? Who will look after her?

BAPU

[PS.]

Give me the cost of the quantity of grains consumed of which you have supplied the figures.

I think it would be better not to trouble Chhakkaddas for the slivers. It is not quite impossible to make them here.

Take immediate measures for Prema's throat.

There are six letters: for Prema, Amina, Mathuradas, Bhau, Mahavir and Narayan.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

[1] The date is supplied in *Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine,* Pt. II.

242. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVLEKAR

January 30, 1933

BHAI SATAVLEKAR,

I am sending for your perusal a book by the late Rajendralal Mitra. Return it to me after reading. I shall then read it along with your comments. One thing needs consideration. There could hardly be any doubt that the meanings he has inferred are the same as the meanings inferred by Hindus who studied Vedas and performed cow-sacrifices on their authority. If this is a fact, is there a historical or some other reason for it?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

SHRI PANDIT SATAVLEKAR
SVADHYAYA MANDAL
AUNDH
DIST. SATARA

From Hindi: C.W. 4770. Courtesy: S. D. Satavlekar

243. LETTER TO USHAKANTA MUKHERJI

January 31, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 21st instant. I do not recollect having received yours of the 16th November last.

In reply to your elaborate argument I can only commend to your attention the various statements that I have been issuing from time to time. The more I study the question and the literature that correspondents send me, the more deeply I become convinced that there is absolutely no warrant in the Shastras for untouchability as we practise it today. He who runs may read the signs of the times and see that it is crumbling to pieces even as it is. Is it not better that we should deliberately destroy it and purify Hinduism? Its destruction merely through its own weakness will leave Hinduism weaker. The whole of

your letter in my opinion betrays want of perception of the realities of the situation.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. USHAKANTA MUKHERJI
12 MUKHERJI PARA LANE
KALIGHAT, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19272

244. LETTER TO MANMATHNATH SANYAL

January 31, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 24th instant for which I thank you. The extract from my article of 1920 seems to be quite correct though I have no means of verifying it. But I should repeat the ideas contained in that extract even today word for word, and I repeated the same thing to Sjt. R. Patwari. I do not know what is now going on in Bengal, but you can proclaim it from the house-top that in my opinion interdining and intermarriage form no part of the movement for removal of untouchability.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. MANMATHNATH SANYAL
P.O. KANTALIA
DT. MYMENSINGH (BENGAL)

From a microfilm: S.N. 19273

245. LETTER TO KALI MOHAN GHOSH

January 31, 1933

DEAR KALI BABOO,

It was a matter of great joy to me to receive your letter describing the activities of Santiniketan and Sriniketan in the service of the Harijans. My heart-felt congratulations to you for the solid work you are doing.

I note that you are presently holding a district conference of the Harijans of Birbhum. I hope that that would result in a great wave of

purification both amongst the Harijans and the caste Hindus followed by really solid work.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KALI MOHAN GHOSH
HON. SECRETARY
SERVANTS OF UNTOUCHABLES SOCIETY
BIRBHUM, BENGAL

From a microfilm: S.N. 19274

246. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS

January 31, 1933

DEAR BABOOJI,

The shorter form is more affectionate than the longer. Any. way I use it as such.

I wish I could induce you to follow my rule—not to publish a newspaper unless it becomes self-supporting. If the public want a newspaper, they should pay for it, and when it does not pay for itself, it shows that it is not wanted. For such a paper naturally there are no advertisements. There is no padding. It contains only that which the editor cannot help giving and the staff of such newspapers will also be chosen for its spirit of self-sacrifice. You at least may not be party to a paper that exists on charity. Of course you will throw these ideas in the waste-paper-basket of your mind if you have any rigid notions about the conduct of newspapers and if these ideas find no echo in you.

I take it that as editor of the supplement you have every right to add your own comments to any of the opinions you may be publishing in the supplement.

I am now torturing my brain and heart to yield to me the right method of dealing with the situation that has arisen from the Viceregal decision. My statement is but the prelude to the action that is developing.

The suggestion you make does not appear to me to be practical in the sense that the people require prolonged training for its adoption. The vast mass of those who are today in the habit of attending temples fervently believe in *darshan* and its spiritual benefit. They will not deny to themselves a spiritual benefit for the sake of

others who might be deprived of it and from their own standpoint they will be right. If they could be persuaded to believe that there can be no spiritual benefit to be derived from a temple whose trustees perpetuate injustice, it would be a different thing. That is the lesson we are trying to drive home, but we have not yet succeeded to the extent we would like to.

I never knew that Sri Prakasa was a stickler for the proper spelling of his name in the Roman character.[1] His name in Devanagari can only be spelt in one way. Rendered in a character with defective phonetics, it cannot be a matter of much consequence how it is spelt. However I shall respect his weakness.

I had a letter some time ago from Shivaprasad which led me to think that he was making steady headway. But your letter seems to point the other way. I would therefore like you to give me an accurate account about him when Sri Prakasa returns.

Of course if you can get the permission for the publication of my opinion of your book, if I succeed in sending one, I should have no objection whatsoever. Of course my private letters do find their way to the Press. That's no concern of mine. What I have to guard against is sending of opinions on books for publication or messages to newspapers for publication apart from untouchability.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19275

247. LETTER TO HRIDAY NATH KUNZRU

January 31, 1933

DEAR HARIJI,

I have your letter of the 26th instant. If you will look up my telegram about Lakshmanshastri[2], you will find that it was accurate enough. You got the telegram at 10.45 p.m. The next day began after midnight. Therefore Lakshmanshastri was reaching there, as he did, at 2 a.m. following 10.45 p.m. I would not however have bothered you about this, as it was quite a small matter, if I did not want to write to

[1] Earlier Gandhiji used to spell his name as "Shri Prakasha".

[2] Lakshmanshastri Joshi; Gandhiji had asked the addressee to receive him at the station.

you about the defeat of the Harijan candidates.[1]

This defeat makes me sad. I would not trouble you to enquire again into the matter. But I cannot help owning to you my utter stupidity. I had fondly believed, I suppose quite without any warrant, that Harijan candidates will have a walk-over at elections, especially in the beginning stages. I see, however, that without reservation they would have a poor chance of being elected unless caste Hindus develop a high sense of honour or unless Harijans are overwhelmingly represented on the voters, list, but where there is neither honour nor overwhelming representation on the voters' list, reservation seems to be their only safety. This Cawnpore election opens my eyes as nothing else before did, and I can now appreciate the force of the summary rejection by Dr. Ambedkar of any convention. Nothing but statutory reservation would satisfy him, and it may be that we shall have to have statutory reservation everywhere as fit punishment for our selfishness. In order to avert a calamity of such a nature descending upon us, if I had my way, I would right this evil by three caste Hindus vacating their seats and allowing three Harijans to be elected. It would be a striking demonstration of our ability to repair wrongs if the defeat of Harijan candidates was a striking demonstration of our selfishness.

You may make whatever use you like of this letter.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. HRIDAY NATH KUNZRU
1 KATRA ROAD
ALLAHABAD

From a microfilm: S.N. 19276

248. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS AND KRISHNA KAPADIA

January 31, 1933

BHAI MADHAVDAS,

I got your letter. May God protect you. I shall tell Devdas to wire to Medh. He is here. But if Medh sends something, isn't that enough hope?

CHI. KRISHNA,

[1] In the Municipal elections at Kanpur, all Harijan candidates had been defeated.

You should keep on writing to me. There is no need to worry about my elbow.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MADHAVDAS GOKALDAS
MANORDAS STREET
BOMBAY, FORT

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII

249. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI

January 31, 1933

CHI. KASHI,

I have your letter. Do not at all worry about Prabhudas. He is indeed *Prabhu's das.*[1] God will look after him better than we can. We may do the best that we can.

He must now go to Almora as early as possible. It seems necessary that he should again settle down there and be free from all worries. On the plains, the days will get hotter by and by. All of us will look for a suitable girl for him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33071

250. LETTER TO DR. RAGHUVIR SINGH AGRAWAL

January 31, 1933

BHAI RAGHUVIRJI,

I have your letter. I am not permitted to send for doctors from outside. They can come only with the special permission granted by the Government. So it cannot he helped. I have gone through your book and shall carry out the experiment prescribed therein when I have some leisure.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

DR. R. S. AGRAWAL
RAM EYE CHARITABLE HOSPITAL
BULANDSHAHR

From Hindi: C.W. 9665. Courtesy: M. S. Agrawal

[1] That is, Servant of God

251. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

January 31, 1933

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

Your letter. I have understood your position. God will help you. Your faith will save you from all disasters. Stay on at Sodepur and do whatever you can from there. Your health is closely connected with your mental state. It will improve as your worries diminish. Come here whenever you feel like it.

Encourage Arun to write to me.

You must keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1696

252. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

February 1, 1933

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY

NEW DELHI

DEAR SIR,

On the 30th December I sent you a telegram[1] for submission to His Excellency on the question of what is known as Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill regarding temple-entry. I have had no acknowledgement of it, formal or otherwise. Nevertheless I deem it my duty to make my submission to His Excellency on the decision just announced regarding Sjt. Ranga Iyer's Bills.

Though I feel that it would have served the cause of humanity better, in point of time, if Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill had been allowed, I feel thankful that sanction has been granted for the introduction of Sjt. Ranga Iyer's Bills, one of which is drawn after Dr. Subbaroyan's disallowed Bill.

My purpose in addressing this submission is to invite His Excellency's attention to some considerations that warrant helpful

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to Viceroy", 3-12-1932

action by the Government of India regarding the consideration of the Bills by the Assembly at as early a date as is consistent with the importance of the object of the Bills.

Not knowing the procedure of the Assembly, I sought Sjt. M.R. Jayakar's assistance and guidance which he very kindly gave me yesterday. He told me that the Government, if they wished, could make it possible to pass one at least of the Bills during the ensuing session of the Assembly.

If such is the case, I would urge that the Government are morally bound to give such assistance as may be necessary for the speedy consideration of the measures. By the acceptance of the Yeravda Pact relating to the representation of the 'depressed classes', now commonly described as 'Harijans', in the legislatures, they bound themselves morally to facilitate as far as it lay in their power the observance by caste Hindus of all the other conditions of the Pact, which had reference to social and religious matters. Inasmuch as His Majesty's Government endorsed the legislative part of the Pact, they recognized the representative character of the Conference that passed the various resolutions. One of them is as follows:[1]

It is in due fulfilment of the pledge thus given to the Harijans that the Bills have been brought. They are necessary inasmuch as the English Law of Trusts bars the progress of reform in the shape of opening temples to the Harijans. I am advised that the decisions of British Courts hold it a breach of trust by a trustee who would open temples contrary to the usage prevailing at the time of his entering upon his trust. Therefore it is not open either to the trustees or the congregations of the numerous Hindu temples even if they so wished to admit Harijans if usage shows, as it would show, that the general body of Hindu temples are not open to them on the same terms as to the caste Hindus. But for decisions based on the English Law of Trusts it would be possible for Hindu pandits and the laity to vary the custom and introduce reforms.

The Bills are designed to remove this obstacle to progress and restore the condition that existed prior to the decisions referred to above. His Excellency may not know that cases have already occurred in which Harijans have been fined for entering temples in good faith

[1] This is not reproduced here. For the text of the Resolution, *vide* "Statement on Viceraoy's Decision", 24-1-933

and for the sole object of offering worship. Hindu religious usage warrants no such punishment. It enjoins purification of the idol and the temple and prescribes purification of caste Hindus in the shape of a bath, but no punishment of the offending worshipper.

Until therefore the Bills are passed or an equivalent is found by the Government, the vital part of the Hindu pledge cannot be performed. For me, personally, holding my life as hostage for the due and timely fulfilment of the pledge, an indefinite prolongation of the impediment is an intolerable agony. And as a prisoner I have, I feel, a right to seek Government's active assistance.

I ask for no State interference in religious matters. I am personally opposed to it. In the present case what is sought is to remove the existing State interference.

I hesitate to point out how the Government can help the introduction and consideration of the Bills. It would be presumption on my part to make any such attempt. I hope however that I have shown sufficiently clearly that this is a case for the Government of India to facilitate the progress and passage of the Bills in every way legitimately open to them.

Though I have shown this to some friends, I am not sending it to the Press.[1]

From a copy: C.W. 7925. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

253. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

February 1, 1933

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I enclose herewith copy of my letter to the Viceroy on the Bills whose introduction he has just sanctioned. I take it that you have already seen my statement on the first Bill. I have not issued any public statement on the sanction for introducing a Bill which is almost a copy of Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill, except that it is meant now for the Assembly instead of the Madras Council. It is feared that the Bills, although formal sanction for their introduction has been given, will be shelved unless the Government are helpful and even anxious that the Bills should be considered by the Assembly during the session that

[1] For the Government of India's eply, *vide* "Letter from Government of India", 17-2-1933

begins on the 3rd instant. You will see my argument in my letter to the Viceroy. So far as I can judge, it is a conclusive argument making it a moral obligation on the part of the Government to facilitate the immediate consideration of the Bills.

The telegram referred to in my letter to the Viceroy was a long argument urging that sanction should be given for introduction of Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill as early as possible.

Love.

M. K. GANDHI

Home Department, Political, File No. 50/II/33, p. 7. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also S.N. 19284

254. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

February 1, 1933

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

Herewith copy of my letter to the Private Secretary to the Viceroy. I hope I have correctly set forth your advice. If you could directly write to the Viceroy, I would ask you please to do so.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Home Department, Political, File No. 50/II/33, p. 6. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also S.N. 19279

255. LETTER TO DR. MOHAMMAD ALAM

February 1, 1933

DEAR DR. ALAM,

Id Mubarak from us all. It is very naughty of Begum Alam to get sick. I hope however that it was no more than a superficial fever and that there was nothing wrong about the appendix. You must carry out rigorously all the medical instructions and become proof against disease before you take up any active work.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. SHAIKH MOHAMMAD ALAM
33 FEROZEPUR ROAD
LAHORE

From a photostat: G.N. 22

256. LETTER TO ALOO E. LALKAKA

February 1, 1933

DEAR ALOO,

I am glad you have been able to gain admission for two Harijan girls.[1] What is the use of your having got the necessary funds from Nargisbehn? You should have collected the small. amount needed in Poona itself. Next time you must develop faith in yourself. Of course the girls have my blessings, and tell them when they grow up I expect them to become fine servants of the Harijan cause.

I did know, I don't know who told me, that Sister Mary was joining Verrier.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19277

257. LETTER TO DUNCAN GREENLEES

February 1, 1933

DEAR MR. GREENLEES,

I write this in accordance to my promise. I am taking you at your word.[2] I shall make use of your services for untouchability work, but since you have offered yourself, body, soul, and mind for that service, after consultation with Sjt. Ghanshyamdas I have decided first to send you to the Ashram and have a little bit of the experience of the method we adopt in service and then to put you wherever you may be most wanted. Experience at the Ashram would enable you to come in touch with the variety of workers and the manner in which Harijan service is being organized. I mention nothing as to your remuneration because, if I understand you rightly, you want nothing more than what may be needed for the sustenance of the body. That may be fixed up after you have had your time at the Ashram. If, therefore, you retain

[1] The addressee had asked for Gandhiji's message and blessings for the two Harijan girls who were to be admitted to Karve's institute at Hingne, Poona.

[2] The addressee wanted to consult Gandhiji about his "possible future work for Harijans".

the opinion you expressed to me here, please come to Poona as early as you can. Everything else can then be fixed up.

Yours sincerely,

MR. GREENLEES
C/O THE MANAGER
ALLAHABAD BANK LTD.
ALLAHABAD

From a microfilm: S.N. 19278

258. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

February 1, 1933

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I have your letter.[1] Ghanshyamdas is here and he will be able to tell you something about what happened in Bombay, for I had no knowledge of the composition of the Conference. I have simply concerned myself with the Pact purely from the Harijan point of view, for I assumed as an axiom that whatever was good for Harijans was necessarily good for caste Hindus and that too much good can never be given to Harijans. So far as the question of separate electorate is concerned, for my purpose the scheme of the Pact bears no analogy to the separate electorate provided for in the Government scheme. That caste Hindus have no voice in the selection of candidates cannot be a matter for complaint. The election of one out of four candidates selected by Harijans leaves a wide range of choice for caste Hindu voters cum Harijan voters. However, you will please let me know the progress of events there.

I wonder if Kamala will be fully restored to health so as to enable her to do active work. Thank you also for Abdul Alim's case. I hope the young man has already been admitted to the Refuge.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN ROY
36 WELLINGTON ST.
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19280

[1] The addressee had said that the caste Hindus of Bengal wanted to alter the Poona Pact "either by taking away the reservation of seats for the depressed classes altogether or by giving them a lesser number of seats by mutual arrangement", because they apprehended that "at the second election after the new constitution is established, the number of so-called caste Hindus in the local legislature will be reduced to less than forty . . ." (S.N. 19247).

259. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

February 1, 1933

CHI. BHAU,

How did you get fever? I hope you are all right now. If your health does not improve in Rajkot, you will come here. We shall then think about a fast. In Rajkot you may eat the food which you get in the normal course, that is, *rotli*[1] made from wheat flour, ghee, milk, green vegetables and fruits. Jamnadas knows something about this subject. Follow his advice. There is also a good vaid there. If necessary, you may consult him. Instead of my advising you from here, I think it will be better if you let Jamnadas guide you there. Show this letter to him. Write to me regularly.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6794

260. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

February 1, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

You ought to be careful about your throat. I had cautioned you and advised you not to exert it soon after the operation. You should now please show it to Dr. Haribhai and follow his advice and improve it. Don't neglect it and invite trouble. You cannot afford to be obstinate in this matter. Your duty is: obey my order. The frequent colds must disappear. You are not the only one whose tonsils have been removed. Thousands of people have got their tonsils removed and benefited from the operation. If the operation turns out to have done you harm, that will be your misfortune. But before you are convinced that it has done you harm, you should give a trial to the doctor's advice. At any rate you must stop speaking loudly. Complete silence would of course be the best. But go and see the doctor and let me know what he advises.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N. 10325

[1] Chapati

261. DRAFT CABLE TO C. F. ANDREWS[1]

February 2, 1933

REUTER'S SUMMARY FAIR. HUMANLY SPEAKING THAT IS LOGICAL OUTCOME VICEREGAL DECISION. WHAT GOD WILL DIRECT GOD ALONE KNOWS. CONCENTRATING AT PRESENT ON SECURING CONSIDERATION BILLS PRESENT SESSION. GOVERNMENT IF WILLING CAN HELP HERE.

From a photostat: S.N. 19288

262. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

After morning prayer, Thursday, February 2, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

Though I have not received your weekly letter as usual, I must commune with you as I do every Thursday morning.

There is one pound increase in weight to report this week. The saltless continues. The articles have become stereotype: papaw, 20 dates, four oranges, two sour limes, four dessert-spoonfuls honey, one lb. goat's milk, one dessert-spoonful almond paste. Honey I take twice with hot water and ten grains of soda bicarb each time and limes twice with cold water and soda bicarb. Milk in the morning and almond paste evening. There is a variation between the paste and _ lb. milk. This gives you an accurate idea of my food. I began yesterday to take unboiled fresh milk. They say that unboiled milk if fresh and clean is any day preferable to and more digestible than boiled milk. I shall watch the effect of the experiment.

Raja, Birla, Devdas and Mathuradas have been among the visitors. They will all have left this morning for Bombay and thence for Delhi. Raja tells me that Devdas has discovered himself a most polished and effective speaker. He has just finished his tour in the South for untouchability work.

Radha is bad and has gone to Deolali. Kusum has slightly

[1] In reply to the addressee's cable which read: "Reuter quotes you follows: No occasion declare fast at present. Threat fast not extended embarrass Government but waken reformers. Fast now will virtually apply whole India not Garuvayur only. Is this fairly accurate satisfactory?"

improved. Mary Barr must have reached the Ashram by now, Prabhudas is now in search of a wife.

We are all well.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Herewith Devdas's speech in Hindi and its translation. It is an extraordinary performance

[PS.]

After all I have your weekly letter but not the intermediate as yet. I have not the time to say more today. I would send you another note in continuation of this. Perhaps it will be allowed as part of this.

God keep you.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6261. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9727

263. LETTER TO GAURISHANKAR BHARGAVA

February 2, 1933

MY DEAR GAURISHANKAR,

I have your letter. I presume from your letter that you are entirely free from the attack that you had of facial paralysis of which I was sorry to learn.

Do you mean that the Harijan employees in the B.B.& C.I. Railway Workshops are admitted to temples, the temple authorities and the caste Hindu worshippers well knowing that they are Harijans, or, do you imply that they being well-dressed pass unnoticed? Measures are being taken everywhere to introduce clean ways of living among Harijans. I am glad therefore that you are having a Conference[1] just for the sake of bringing this home to Harijans. I wish your Conference every success. If Dr. Ambedkar comes to see me I shall talk to him about it. I take it that you have already written to him and to Sjt. Rajagopalachari. He will be leaving Bombay for Delhi tonight. You may therefore write to him directly.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GAURISHANKAR BHARGAVA
PHUL NIWAS
CIVIL LINES, AJMER

From a microfilm: S.N. 19287

[1] Rajputana Provincial Conference of the Harijans which was to be held at Ajmer on February 25 and 26

264. LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON

February 2, 1933

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

I have your letter. Satyagraha regarding Guruvayur in the old style is not to be thought of just now. We must for the moment concentrate upon the passing of legislation and educating public opinion in favour of complete removal of untouchability and in getting those temples opened which are private properties or about which both the trustees and the public are agreed. Therefore our programme should be threefold:

Firstly, meetings all over the country urging the Government of India to provide all facilities in their power for the introduction and consideration of the two Bills and appealing to the members of the House generally not to obstruct the passage of the Bills, regarding them as measures demanded by the dictates of humanity and non-interference with anybody's private faith, and appealing to the Hindu members to vote solidly for the measures so as to leave Hindu conscience complete freedom of action regarding untouchability.

Secondly, you have to carry on house-to-house propaganda amongst caste Hindus and induce them to show in a concrete manner that they have ceased to believe in untouchability as it is practised today.

Thirdly, propaganda should be carried on amongst Harijans with reference to the observance of the laws of cleanliness and abstention from food and drink forbidden by Hinduism.

And all this work should be carried on by men of character who have a living faith in Hinduism.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19289

265. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

February 2, 1933

CHI. DEVDAS,

I read your speeches in Hindi and English. You have expressed yourself well in both languages. Every speech is short and full of thoughts and most of the suggestions are useful. It is difficult to say to what degree the reform of Hindi is possible. Many languages have irregular genders for inanimate objects and this cannot be changed. There must have been some rule originally behind this phenomenon. The difficulty is felt only by those to whom the language is not their mother tongue, and should be accepted as unavoidable. The reform suggested by you involves a change in the basic structure of the language and seems impossible, at present at any rate. There has been no instance of a language which was simplified by a deliberate effort in such manner. A common script for all the languages would probably save some effort in learning them. But this is a question which concerns the science of the study of languages. I wanted to refer only to the beauty of expression in your speeches.

Have you studied Tamil and acquired any proficiency in it?

We could not talk much and you did not come again. But don't mind. You have congenial company at present and so I do not worry on your account.

Now that you are in Delhi, send me the Urdu books which you were to send and one small dictionary in which I can find the spellings of words without difficulty. It should preferably be a combined Urdu-English and English-Urdu dictionary. One book on grammar. And any other books which you may like. Write to me often.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1997

266. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

February 2, 1933

Interviewed by the Associated Press, Mahatma Gandhi expressed pleasure that Mr. Ranga Iyer's second Bill, which is virtually a copy of Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill, has received the Viceregal sanction. He continued:

I can only hope that every facility will be offered for the immediate consideration of these measures by the Assembly. Though they are private Bills, they are measures of all-India importance and, from a humanitarian standpoint, of world importance. I hope that members of the Assembly have no difficulty in recognizing that the Bills constitute no interference with anybody's religion, whatever is being said to the contrary in utter disregard of the facts.

The Bills are necessary, if the State is to observe the strictest religious neutrality. Both the Bills are simply designed to remove impediments in the path of progress and do not coerce anybody or alter any religious custom or usage.

Replying to another question regarding the chances of the introduction of the Bills in the Assembly this session itself on which Mahatma Gandhi had been seeking information from prominent persons, he stated that he could say on authority of those who had been members of the Assembly, it was perfectly possible not only for the Bills to be introduced, but if members desired it, the Bills would become law. It was quite possible for the Government and members at least to afford reasonable facilities for the introduction of the Bills this session.

Asked for his views on the suggestion that the Bills should be circulated for eliciting public opinion, Gandhiji said:

I can only hope that no such procedure will be adopted, because the question underlying the measure is in no sense new and the Bills contain no complicated sections which may be difficult to understand. Opinion of different individuals and groups of parties is also well known. Therefore, circulation of the Bills means, to me, a mere dilatory procedure.

Asked if any definite programme has been chalked out as a result of his conversation with Messrs Birla, Rajagopalachariar and others, Gandhiji said that they had compared notes and tried to understand the implications in the Viceregal sanction for the introduction of the Bills as all-India measures. They had debated on the method to be adopted for consolidating public opinion and for demonstrating the

sincerity of the sanatanists. There was no essential difference between them and reformers, and the latter did not revolutionize religious customs or flout Shastras.

It was felt that the sanatanist agitation was largley due to the refusal of the sanatanists to appreciate the reformer's point of view, and the suspicion that more lay at the bottom of the movement for the removal of untouchability than was stated in their programme. It was, therefore, recognized that propaganda for enlightening the public should be continued and workers should be advised not to engage in vain debating but confine themselves to placing the issues in the clearest possible manner.

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-2-1933

267. LETTER TO PREMNATH BHARGAVA

February 3, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter enclosing your questions. I return the questions with answers given against them.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. PREMNATH BHARGAVA
BAGH RAMSAHAI, GHAS KI MANDY
AGRA

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. The report of the Hide Cess Committee, *vide* copy enclosed, states that the depressed classes and the peasantry would derive much benefit from the development of the tanning industry and incidentally refers to the existing appalling waste. Can this statement be accepted entirely in respect of unslaughtered cattle hides? If it can be, how should the development be brought about so as to yield maximum benefit to the depressed classes and to the peasantry?

A. It can. The development can be brought about only by teaching the classes concerned simple but scientific methods fitted for individuals and villages of lifting carcasses at the places where the cattle die and of treating every part in an economic manner excluding the use of meat for food.

Q. Should tanning of unslaughtered hides be taken up in India to the exclusion of slaughtered hides or only as an industry mixed up with that of slaughtered hides as at the present stage? Is it in any way derogatory for caste Hindus to take up this industry as a profession?

A. I should love to have tanning of the unslaughtered hides as a separate industry distinct from that of slaughtered hides. In my opinion it is not derogatory or irreligious for caste Hindus to take up this industry. It is essential for the purpose of cow-protection that this industry be developed as an aid to cow-protection and therefore on philanthropic lines.

Q. Would not the tanning of unslaughtered cattle hides on a large scale by modern scientific methods be helpful to the following?

(a) Economic uplift of Harijan brethren and an immediate item of programme of work for the Servants of Untouchables Society.

(b) Improvement of the living wealth of the country.

(c) The creation of a new field of activity for the educated unemployed.

(d) Protection of cows.

A. I have my doubts. Home or village tanning is necessary.

Q. The unslaughtered cattle hides can be tanned to near perfection of the slaughtered ones. Is your information to the contrary?

A. I believe that this is only partly true, if the carcass is taken up immediately after death and removed so as not to damage the hide.

Q. In the manufacture of leather goods, particularly shoes, difficulty is being experienced in providing lining which is to be thin and delicate. Such a leather is only available from the skins of live sheep and goat. Since Hindu India in a fair number is a flesh eater would it go against the principles of the industry of unslaughtered hides to utilize the skins for lining and other purposes of such sheep and goats as are unavoidably killed for food?

A. Much as I should like to answer otherwise, I believe that for the majority of Hindus the use of the skins of goats and sheep slaughtered for food will not offend their religious sense.

Q. In the event of the Agra Tannery at Agra restricting its activities to the tanning of unslaughtered hides exclusively, may the Tannery expect your blessings and distinguished patronage?

A. Any tannery restricting its activities as suggested would certainly receive my blessings if it is run on the lines suggested by me, but whoever does so should realize that in the initial stages he might have to lose. I can say nothing of distinguished patronage.

From a microfilm: S. N. 19291

268. LETTER TO ELIZABETH F. HOWARD

February 3, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

It was good of you to send me the *in memoriam* card announcing the death of your great and good mother, of the meeting with whom I have pleasant memories. Please accept from both Mahadev and myself our sympathies in your bereavement, though I know that those who have faith in God have the conviction that death is but a sleep and a forgetting. Do not harbour grief over the departure from this earth of loved ones.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 865

269. LETTER TO M. S. SESHACHARI

February 3, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you.[1] In every case where there has been resistance offered by prostration, whether in front of a temple or elsewhere, I have condemned it as being contrary to the rule of satyagraha. For, satyagraha requires suffering in one's own person, not offering physical resistance to another which prostration undoubtedly does. Being the author of satyagraha I have endeavoured to lay down certain rules for the guidance of those who recognize my authority, but as I claim no monopoly of the knowledge of the doctrine of satyagraha, it is open to anyone to give what meaning he likes to satyagraha and lay down rules also according to his liking.

My letter to the President of the League in Ellore has only a limited application. The word 'dodge' is to be taken in its dictionary meaning. I never knew it to bear the meaning of tramping over any person. Once Pandit Malaviyaji 'dodged' to the amusement of the public and to the discomfiture of the so-called satyagrahi students

[1] The addressee had asked why it could not be called a satyagraha and could be "dodged" if four or five orthodox Brahmins prostrated themselves in front of a temple and peacefully resisted any attempt to allow untouchables in the temple.

prostrating in front of his college by erecting a bridge over them and making a safe passage for the fellow-students who wanted to exercise the right of attending the college. Not one of the prostrating brotherhood was in any shape or form injured or molested, and, if my recollection serves me right, the prostrating ones admired Malaviyaji's non-violent resourcefulness. But that was only one way of dodging. The dictionary says you can make a dodge behind, around, under, between or into what will hide one. But you will recognize that all these dodgings exclude violence.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. S. SESHACHARI
704 NORTH ADAYAVALANJAN
SRIRANGAM

From a microfilm: S.N. 19293

270. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[*February 3, 1933*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter.

You. must have got my letter regarding Mahavir and the family must have left now. If they have not left, you may use the accompanying letter. It is best now that the chapter should be closed as early as possible. After it is closed, I will write in greater detail about the duties of people who live in the Ashram.

Titus's overstaying his leave seems improper. We would be in a better position to judge if we know the reason for his doing so. But it can be stated as a general rule that nobody should overstay his leave except for reasons absolutely beyond his control. However, do not start enforcing this rule with Titus. Know the reason from him after he has returned and write to me. But we can lay down the following rule for the future:

Anybody who violates a vow or pledge taken by him should, if he is outside the Ashram at the time of doing so, keep out of the Ashram and, if he is in the Ashram, leave it. In an ashram which is dedicated to truth, this rule should be observed without any exception.

[1] The date is supplied in *Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine,* Pt. II.

It will not apply in a case in which the reason for violating the vow or the pledge is beyond the control of the person doing so. A person who goes on leave also promises to return before a certain date. This rule is observed even in ordinary institutions. An institution in which it is not observed will not run for long or will lose its reputation.

You and other senior inmates there should discuss this rule among yourselves and, if all of you agree, read it out to the other inmates. If all the people accept it, enforce it rigorously thereafter. The enforcement of such rules is essential for the work which the Ashram has to do. I feel that it will soon be necessary for us to lay down our lives for banishing untouchability. But only those who are perfectly pure in their lives are fit to make such a sacrifice. If we did not strictly observe the necessary rules in looking after all the girls in the Ashram, we would be lost. We should not mind if the Ashram breaks up, but should not tolerate the violation of rules which we accept for ourselves. We are judged by the manner in which we observe formal rules in their true spirit. Only God can know whether we observe a rule in its spirit, but everybody can know whether or not it is formally observed. However, the Ashram does not belong to me alone; it belongs to you all. I have only stated my views. It is for you all to consider whether you should act upon them.

Mahadev had got Vasram's letter to him. I have referred to this in my letter to him. I hope he got that letter.

What you write about Chhotubhai is correct.

My headaches did not last long. They were cured by mudpacks. I have continued the packs as a preventive measure.

BAPU

[PS.]

Give the accompanying letters after reading them. Letters for Durga, Krishnamaiyadevi, Nimu, Liladhar, Bhagwanji, Ba and Mary Barr.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

271. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

February 3, 1933

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I got a letter from you after many days. Do we tolerate in other people what the Harijans do, i.e., refuse to work and yet ask for more money? What error do you see in what Narandas says? Shouldn't we expect them to give eight hours' work? Misplaced pity is violence. I make no distinction between them and other people, or only that we may tolerate faults in them which we would not in other people. Discuss this also with Totaramji, Panditji and Chimanlal and try to understand the point. I hope you will see the error in your reasoning or show me mine.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 351. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

272. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

February 3, 1933

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I got your letter. I need not write anything about the Giri family. I have seen instances of asthma being cured by giving up salt and through such other experiments. It is because of that that I recommen-ded giving up salt in the book[1] on health. In India I have not had the miraculous experiences I had in South Africa, and being very busy with other affairs I have not been able to make any experiments. However, there will be no harm at all if you try the experiment. You will also have to take the Kuhne-bath in sunshine. The head must be covered with a mud-pack or a wet towel to protect it from heat. The bath should be taken before eating anything. The diet should consist only of fruit and milk. As for fruits, the papaw and *mosambis* will suffice. Such a diet requires no salt. One should get clear stools; if there is any difficulty, one should take enema. You should also daily practise slow breathing, retaining the air in the lungs for some time. All this may help you. If you do not know how to do

[1] *Guide to Health*, first published as a series entitled "General Knowledge about Health"

the *pranayama* exercise properly, you may learn it from somebody in the Ashram who knows it. It helps very much.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 24375

273. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

February 3, 1933

CHI. HARIBHAU,

I got your letter. You should stop dates, *munakka,* dried grapes and bananas for the present. Take *mosambi* juice or juice of fresh grapes in the morning. I hope you can get good milk. Drink only as much as you can easily digest. You can take moderately fermented curds. Take honey together with milk. Take it with lemon juice and water, or take ten grains of soda bicarb with it. You can take the juice of pomegranates and apples. This should be all your diet till the wound has completely healed up. You may also drink the juice of fully ripe tomatoes without making it into soup. Just a little quantity will suffice for the present. Meet Gaurishankar who is in Santacruz. Purushottam is under his treatment. You may also inquire in Kaivalya-dhama. Gomatibehn knows Gaurishankar. I will read [what you have written] about ahimsa. Look after Rohit. Give him my blessings.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 6075. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

274. LETTER TO MOHANLAL M. BHATT

February 3, 1933

The world is not a carefully drawn geometrical figure but is a supreme work of art painted by the brush of a mysterious artist, whose significance is known only to the artist and will ever remain unknown to us. That leaves only desireless effort to us.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 113

275. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

February 3, 1933

We should try to cultivate in ourselves the strength of our elders and never follow the example of their weakness. We should see love in their eyes red with anger and save ourselves from their indulgence. Through ignorant compassion for us, they may permit us to do or ask us to do many things, but we should steel our hearts and refuse to avail ourselves of their indulgence. I may ask people never to tell a lie, but in a difficult situation may be tempted to connive at a lie. You will then show your love for me by forcibly opening my eyes, but will act as my enemy if you condone my weakness.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 113-4

276. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVLEKAR

February 3, 1933

BHAI SATAVLEKAR,

Your letter. The Harijan Sevak Sangh is to bring out a Hindi weekly from Delhi. Will it be necessary to publish something over and above that? If so, why? or, are you by any chance suggesting something in Marathi? I shall discuss it with Lakshmanshastri when I see him.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

PANDIT SATAVLEKARJI
SWADHYAYA MANDAL
AUNDH
DIST. SATARA

From a photostat of the Hindi:. C.W. 4771. Courtesy: S. D. Satavlekar

277. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

Y. M.,
February 3, 1933

CHI. NIMU,

Is it not better that you write regularly once a year rather than not write at all? Observing rules, however light, helps to form character. What would happen if the seasons did not follow a regular cycle and the sun did not rise regularly? That is why I have taught up to lesson of observing rules, by suggesting that you should write regularly once a year. Learn the lesson if you can.

Your decision to go to Lakhtar in order to wean Kanu is correct. It is also good that you will stay there for some time.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Nirmala Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

278. LETTER TO PALLATH RAMAN

February 4, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I have no doubt that when the so-called higher classes or castes have forgotten the distinctions between high and low and given up untouchability, Harijans will give up untouchability as among themselves.

The origin that you give of Nayadis[1] is very interesting and instructive if it is historically true.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. PALLATH RAMAN
"SAHITHU SADANA"
PALGHAT

From a microfilm: S.N. 19294

[1] An untouchable community of Kerala

279. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS

February 4, 1933

DEAR BABOO BHAGWANDAS,

I have your letter with 15 copies of the Supplements. I talked to Sjt. Ghanshyamdas about the cost and he told me that he would certainly send you a contribution and write to you also. If he has not done so already, will you please remind him quoting this letter?

I know what you say about caste. By caste I have not meant varna. I draw a broad distinction between varna and caste. Caste is a comparatively modern growth. It had some material use and it may even have it now, but I feel that it has outlived its use, and in any event it was and is a social institution, having no spiritual basis, which varna has. But of this I would love to write when the occasion comes and time permits. Meanwhile, do please let me have your views whenever you have the time.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19295

280. LETTER TO L. L. YELIGAR

February 4, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 30th ultimo enclosing an explanatory article on one of sister Mahadevi's sayings. As soon as I get the time I shall go through the article and write to you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. L. L. YELIGAR
C/O K. B. MUMMIGATTI
SCHOOL MASTER, HOSAYELLAPUR
DHARWAR

From a microfilm: S.N. 19296

281. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

February 4, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. If Damodarlalji sends you any money, you will of course accept it as from anybody who sends it, but in my opinion there can be no approaching him. We would be well without his financial help unless it comes unsolicited and of his free will.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

SJT. GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
BIRLA HOUSE
ALBUQUERQUE ROADS
NEW DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 19298. Also C.W. 7926. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

282. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

February 4, 1933

CHI NARAHARI,

I got your letter. It is a good sign that we are able to see our own weaknesses. Even if people call us simpletons or impractical fools, we will not violate truth in word or deed. Your experience that it is difficult to live in that manner in a place like that is that of others too, but one may be said to follow dharma only if one does so even in the face of difficulties. He is not the best captain who steers a ship in a calm sea; it is the one who does not let a ship sink even in stormy waters. But we should not feel unhappy about the past. We have learnt the necessary lesson from it. In future let God decide what work you should take up and what you should not. All that we should do is to resolve to cling to truth in whatever circumstances we may be placed. We should have faith that God does not test beyond their strength those who trust Him. The pity is that we do not trust Him. If we do, why should we feel concerned whether we shall lose our good name by clinging to truth, or harm the cause or displease a co-worker? God is there to concern Himself with all these problems.

But my purpose in saying all this is only to advise you not to

bemoan the past.

Give me a description of Kuvalayananda's Ashram. Who are the teachers there? What things do they teach? What fee do they charge?

Manibehn and you should learn this lesson from what has happened, that a mother should know how to take care of the children's teeth. Their food should not be very soft and should not contain too much starch. They should have sugar and jaggery in very small quantity only. Instead, they may be allowed to suck juice from lots of sugarcane in the season. When the season is over, the children may be given fruits containing sugar, like figs, *munakka*, dates, etc. Moreover, the mother should stand by the side of the children when they brush their teeth in the morning and teach them to clean the teeth with the babool stick vigorously, and also see that they use a mixture of powdered coal and salt which has been properly sifted. They should be taught to gargle properly after every meal and to massage the teeth and the gums with their fingers.

The truth is that most of us are scarcely fit to be parents. Why should those who have not learnt the science of child-care bring children into the world? This question led some to the discovery of *brahmacharya* and some others to the discovery of artificial birth-control. The second is a dangerous and perilous way. The middle course, that of lethargy and indifference, is still more dangerous and perilous.

While teaching Mani how to take care of the children's teeth, teach her the whole science of child-care. She should also learn to observe the stools and the urine of the children. She should examine them from time to time. She should also examine their eyes, ears and nails, their habits of breathing and their tongues, and watch how they speak and what they do during the whole day.

All these things become very easy to do once the mother has formed the habit of doing them.

Tell Gomati that she may come whenever she wishes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9054

283. LETTER TO ANANDI L. ASAR

February 4, 1933

CHI. ANANDI,

I got your letter. Your fever will not be cured by our blessings, it will be cured by your own care and effort. You should take complete rest. Complete rest means lying in bed all the time. You may read a little in bed. You should even eat without getting out of bed. The diet should be milk, curds and fruits, also boiled vegetables if you want. You may eat *rotlis* too, but need not worry about them if you cannot digest them because of lack of exercise. I am sure you will come to relish milk. If you do this, you are sure to be all right.

Not only three, but four of us give you blessings for eighteen years. Don't you want the blessings of Chhaganbhai? Ask Prithuraj to write to me and explain what the trouble with him is. Who is treating him? And what is the treatment being given? Does Rohini glow with the brightness of the constellation of that name?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5068. Courtesy: Anandibehn P. Buch

284. STATEMENT ON "HARIJAN"

[Before *February 5, 1933*][1]

The first number of the English edition of *Harijan*[2] to be published under the auspices of the Servants of Untouchables Society will be published on Saturday the 11th instant. It will be printed at the Arya Bhushan Press. Mr. A.N. Patwardhan, of the Servants of India Society, is the declared Printer and Publisher. Mr. R. V. Shastri, B.A., B.L., is the Editor. Only recently the latter left a lucrative post in partnership in Calcutta, and gave his services on a mere living wage to Mr. A. V. Thakkar, Secretary of the Servants of Untouchables Society. When it was decided that this English edition is to be published in Poona, I asked Mr. Thakkar whether he could spare Mr. Shastri for the editorial work, and whether the latter would undertake the responsibility. Both promptly responded.

I hope to contribute my full share so far as it is possible for me, to the contents of the paper. I hope the paper will have a very large patronage. It is desired to make the paper completely self-supporting. The annual subscription, inland, will be Rs. 4 including postage and Rs. 3 without, while the foreign subscription will be Rs. 5-8. A single copy will be priced one anna. Intending subscribers will please send their names to Mr. Patwardhan, with subscription charges in money or stamps.

The Hindu, 6-2-1933

[1] *Vide* "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 5-2-1933.

[2] After Gandhiji's arrest in January 1932, *Young India* was discontinued, its last issue being that of January 14, 1932. As the movement against untouchability grew stronger, Gandhiji decided to bring out another journal, *Harijan,* to propagate his views. The first issue of *Harijan* appeared from Poona on Fabruary 11 , 1933 under the editorship of R. V. Shastri. On April 13, 1935, Mahadev Desai became its editor. In 1940, during the Individual Civil Disobedience movement, it was suspended. However from January 18, 1942 it again began to make its appearance from the Navajivan Press, Ahmedabad, till the press was raided on August 21, 1942 and the journal banned. After the removal of the ban by the Government on January 10, 1946, the journal was revived on February 10, 1946, under the editorship of Pyarelal who continued to work in that capacity up to February 22, 1948. Subsequently, it was edited by Kishorelal G. Mashruwala and lastly by Maganbhai P. Desai till the journal stopped publication in March 1956.

285. MESSAGE TO HARIJAN CONFERENCE, KOLABA

February 5, 1933

I hope the Conference will pass constructive resolutions, with the full intention of carrying them into effect.

The Hindu, 6-2-1933

286. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

February 5, 1933

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

Major Bhandari has just shown me the Bombay Government's order in connection with my cable[1] to Mr. Andrews. As it was rather important that it should go at once I have asked Major Bhandari kindly to withdraw an amount from my private account which as a matter of fact is not my own property. I am hoping for a revision of the Government's order and thus to reimburse my private account. My reason for asking for a revision is this. But for the very heavy bill that was paid to the dental surgeon my account would show a good balance. You will recall that the dental surgeon was called in at your suggestion and not mine; also that when you suggested that I should obtain a new plate I asked for Dr. Desai, a dentist friend, to be called in, and that I also told you in my letter of the 28th June, 1932 that I had suggested his name as "I had no desire to land the Government in the expense of a new set of teeth", and I knew that "Dr. Desai would not want to make any charge for the plates he might make for me." You will thus see that I could have had the plate without any charge and at that time I had never suspected that the dental charges if they had to be paid would be paid out of monthly allowance. As you are aware, from month to month I was saving as much out of the hundred rupees as possible. But you chose to call in a dental surgeon of your own selection. I could have no objection and when the bill was shown to me by Major Bhandari and when he told me that the money had to be paid out of my allowance, though I demurred I did not wish to raise any objection because I did not think then that I would want to draw upon the balance that was then outstanding in my

[1] *Vide* "Draft Acable to C. F. Andrews", 2-2-1933

favour.

But in the new circumstances that have arisen, I must ask for the dental charges being removed from my account and if that be done there wouldbe at once a balance in my favour. I would further suggest that Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's and my accounts be amalgamated. There is a balance in his favour still left. If therefore these two accounts are amalgamated there would be a surplus left. I have consulted the Sardar and he is quite willing that our accounts should be amalgamated. In fact both of us have often suggested the adoption of this course to Major Bhandari.

May I ask you please to secure an early decision on this point as telegrams have to be frequently sent by me especially at this moment.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I. G. P. File No. 10

287. LETTER TO BILL LASH

February 5, 1933

DEAR FATHER LASH,

You do confound a poor man like me. Who is father, and who is brother, and when, and also perhaps why? But that is neither here nor there.

It is a fine thing to find you in Sabarmati. I hope you will feel as much at home there as at the C.S.S.A., and it is good too that you are there when Mary Barr is there. I take a promise from every stranger that visits the Sabarmati Ashram that he should give me his criticism of the Ashram and especially tell me frankly all about the defects he might have noticed in it. You have to make the promise, please.

Now, for your difficulty. It is not necessarily wrong "to be compelled to act against one's reasoning and instinct through fear of hurting someone whom we love", provided of course that the thing we do is in itself not only not wrong but morally worth doing. You will notice that I have copied your own wording. Conversely, to be compelled even through love to do a thing that is wrong is undoubtedly wrong. But then that love itself is wrong. It is good for me to love you and be loved by you. But it is immoral for me to do wrong for the sake of love. If there is any likelihood of that happening, we have

to shun each other's company.

Having stated these two propositions, let me cite the world's experience in proof. Whether it is right or wrong, it is a fact that in innumerable cases men and women are good, not for the sake of good, but for the sake of love which they owe to others or which they receive from them. In an equal number of cases such love keeps us from falling. Perhaps you will easily admit that Jesus Christ was and still remains one of the greatest among moral coercers of the world. He continually coerces you, a very weak man otherwise, to do the right thing though your weak flesh would have you to do the wrong thing, and the strange thing is that you sing hymns of praise to Him for holding you tight in His chains. You do not mind some people laughing at you for your helplessness and weakness. Do not retort by way of answer: "But Jesus was Christ and God Incarnate." I have given you the most telling illustration to show what is happening in everyday life. Some have God to rely upon; others, poor mortals, have their parents; and yet others, like me, have their wives, sons and friends to lean on. I had, not very many years ago, all but fallen, but the thought of Devdas, who was then living with me, of Mahadev, Mathuradas and others who were at that time surrounding me and whom I believed to be themselves leaning on me, and the thought of my wife, kept me from going to perdition. It was their love which chained me so tightly and strongly that I could not burst through the bond although the flesh was pulling hard enough to tear the chains to bits and rush into hell-fire.

That is the type of coercion and no other which my love, expressed through my fast, was intended to exercise, the common thing in all these illustrations being the doing of a right act. There is nothing wrong in people doing the right thing under the pressure of love and later doing the same thing for the sake of it. I hope I have made my point clear, even though I might not have carried convition.

You must pardon me when I contradict you by saying that God's shoulders are broad enough to bear the responsibility even of anything that is wrong. In Christian parlance, does He not bear easily the humanly intolerable burden of the world's sins? This contradiction is unnecessary for our purpose, but I thought I would draw your attention to what I think is a clear slip. My fast was certainly right so long as I hold the belief truthfully that it was prompted by God. But even under God's shelter I cannot claim immunity from a

fast which may be designed to compass unknowingly an immoral thing. Therefore, the motive behind must be right, the end in front must be equally right, and the act itself propelled by the motive should also be right. Hence in this chain the intermediate act, if it is violent, would vitiate both the motive and the end. Hence the necessity for unadultered ahimsa—non-violence in thought, word and deed. And since the Gita says "Man can really only control his acts"[1], if they are right he may safely leave the rest to God, and whether he willingly and wittingly does so or not, God alone controls the rest.

I do hope that your foot is quite all right now. If it is not, I would not now ask you to try the earth-cure, but ask Narandas to send you to a doctor or fetch a doctor for you. It is no use playing with even a small mischief.

With love from us,

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 40

288. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

February 5, 1933

Ere this reaches you, you will have seen from the papers that an English weekly called *Harijan* will be published from Poona by the Arya Bhushan Press, Patwardhan being the Printer and Publisher and R. V. Shastri, whom you know well, being the Editor. Of course I shall be writing for the paper and guiding the policy. It will be solely devoted to the Harijan cause. If you at all feel like it, I would appreciate a message from you, addressed in your own inimitable way, both to the caste Hindus and the Harijans, but the manner of doing it I leave entirely to you.

I hope you are keeping well.

RT. HON. SASTRI

From a photostat: S.N. 19299

[1] II. 47

289. LETTER TO N. C. KELKAR

February 5, 1933

DEAR MR. KELKAR,

I do want your active help in the campaign against untouchability. How far and in what manner you can give it, you alone know. But please understand that I am a beggar knocking at your door. When you have the leisure, do please give me a call by appointment, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays excepted.

As you know, an English weekly called the *Harijan* will be presently out. It will occupy me for the whole of Wednesday and Thursday every week, and Sunday is a bad day for the jail authorities. I would also like you to give me a message for *Harijan,* if you feel like giving one.

From all accounts, I understand that you have physically benefited by your recent visit to London.

Yours sincerely,

N. C. KELKAR

From a photostat: S.N. 19300

290. LETTER TO R. VENKATA SIVUDU

February 5, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and the memorandum of items of work to be undertaken by your Anti-untouchability League. I notice seven items, of which *five* relate to the carrying on of agitation or propaganda, one relates to satyagraha and one relates to the administration of funds. My advice is that all these may be cut out altogether and the activities of the League be confined to actual constructive work by individual workers. It is wholly unnecessary to agitate for waste land, political rights or even about matters of education. What you need today is to educate as many as possible and to relieve economic distress of as many as possible and to have as many temples opened as possible. There may be some propaganda required about this, but that is part of the constructive work itself and cannot absorb the whole of the time of

the members. There is no question just now of satyagraha for anything. Such is my idea.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. VENKATA SIVUDU
HARIJAN SEVA SAMITI
BRODIEPET, GUNTUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 19301

291. LETTER TO N. H. PURANDARE

February 5, I 933

MY DEAR PURANDARE,

I have been working at your long letter. I handed it to Sjt. Patwardhan and asked him to tell me whether there was any overcharge at all in connection with the bill for the publication of the book. He placed himself in touch with Vasukaka and he says that you never showed him the book but asked him for quotation for printing a book containing eight demi pages. When he saw the proof and saw the corrections you have made, he said that in some respects the Arya Bhushan bill was lower than his. Thus whereas for composing, the Arya Bhushan bill is Rs. 18, for the same amount of work, Chitrashala's will be Rs. 36, for printing, Arya Bhushan 3, Chitrashala 5; for paper, Arya Bhushan 4, Chitrashala 8; and even in the bill as rendered by Chitrashala Press, the amount is 32 as against Arya Bhushan's 25/8. For covers Arya Bhushan has charged 7, Chitrashala would charge 7/8, for binding Arya Bhushan has charged 7/8, Chitrashala would charge 10.

So you will see that at every step you are wrong. I wish you could see your mistake.

Yours sincerely,

PROF. N. H. PURANDARE
POONA 2

[PS.]

Before this letter was typed, I had your postcard. You will see I have anticipated you in the foregoing. But if you will have Vasukaka Joshi to formally go through the bill, I will gladly hand the Arya Bhushan bill to him and give his opinion as to its fairness or otherwise, I will accept his opinion as final and on payment by you of the amount fixed by Vasukaka Joshi, less what might have been received for the books already sold, the books will be delivered to you.

From a microfilm: S.N. 19302

292. LETTER TO SEENU

February 5, 1933

DEAR SEENU,

I must thank you for your letter and the very good photographs you have sent me. They gave me a good idea of the work you are all doing.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19303

293. LETTER TO T. SUNDARAM

February 5, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Please do not ask me to read and correct what you have written[1]. It is really beyond me, and from what little I have read, my advice to you is to abstain from writing anything at all about temple-entry or anything else to the papers. You have no restraint over your pen.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. SUNDARAM

TYPIST

TEPPAKULAM P. O.

TRICHINOPOLY

From a microfilm: S.N. 19304

294. LETTER TO T. M. KRISHNAMURTHI

February 5, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. Let me first of all set your mind at ease by telling you that no temple is to be opened to the Harijans except by the consent of the overwhelming majority of those who are at present entitled to offer worship at the respective temples.

[1] On "Temple-entry Compromise"

Therefore, there never will be any cause for desertion. Nor, so far as I know, are temples already opened—and there are no fewer than 500 temples opened—deserted by the ordinary temple-goers except a few.

I entirely agree with you that the hearts of people can only be changed by prayer, but my own experience and the experience of innumerable people shows that there is no intense prayer without fasting. My fasts have been in the past, as I hope they will be in the future, if they have to come, an expression of intense prayer.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. M. KRISHNAMURTHI
2/19 CHENGAL ROY MUDALI ST.
TRIPLICANE, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 19305

295. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

February 5, 1933

CHI. KAKA,

I got your letter. You should have got your teeth extracted earlier. Even now, you should get as many of them extracted as may be necessary, and not only thirteen. As too many midwives complicate labour, so also with doctors. Till you feel safe about the teeth, remain in Bombay. Don't feel at all that by doing so you will neglect your duty. You can serve in many ways while staying in Bombay While the treatment of the teeth is going on, you should live in the open air and daily go for as long walks—up to fifteen miles—as your body can endure without fatigue. I am sure you go to bed early and rise early. The morning hours should always be spent in taking walks. In food, it is necessary to exclude all starches for the present. The best diet of course would be milk, curds, ghee and the juice of oranges and *mosambis.* These things do not have to be chewed. The starch should be converted into sugar in the mouth, which will not be possible in the present condition of your teeth. Hence the diet which I have suggested is the only suitable one. You may, if you wish, eat some green vegetables, like gourd or *bhaji,* but even these are not necessary.

Have no fear about my teeth. Since the doctors here don't worry about my elbow, why should I? For calling my own doctor, I would have to obtain special permission, which the Government is not

likely to give. You should rest assured that I am not at all neglecting my health. The moment I suspect something, I will not remain indifferent even for a moment. And why should you worry about that which I myself am ready to worry about?

Your suggestion about Bal is correct. Write to me and let me know when he comes to Bombay. I believe *Harijan* will be published on Saturday.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9490. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

296. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA[1]

February 5, 1933

BHAI BALWANTSINH,

I have your letter.

l. The guru must possess the virtues of a *sthitaprajna*[2]. I have not come across such an embodiment of perfection. But I have found a few people in all countries who possess varying degrees of these virtues.

2. To remain equally unmoved by happiness and unhappiness, honour and dishonour means that one should not be hurt by insults nor feel elated by honours. But in no way does it follow that one should not reply to the insult or end the sorrow.

3. The virtues of a devotee can be acquired by effort and the direction of effort has been indicated in the chapter[3] on *bhakti*. But there is nothing to hinder one from acquiring the virtues in a different way if it be possible.

4. Sleep can become sounder by practice. On waking from sound sleep there is awareness of nothing except sleep and a sense of well-being. Even when the *Gita*, etc., are recited many thoughts rise unawares in the mind. Sound sleep is possible when the soul is in rapport with the *Gita* or, in other words, with God. Therefore we should faithfully continue the present effort of filling ourselves with the *Gita*.

[1] The letter carries the following note in English evidently for the jail authorities: ''This contains only answers to religious questions. M.K.G."

[2] A man of steadfast wisdom

[3] *Bhagavad Gita*, Xll

5. The idea of writing about the *Ramayana* too has always been there but lack of time has stood in the way. Anyway there is no longer much need of it. One who studies *Anasaktiyoga*[1] well can easily get at the secret of the *Ramayana*.

6. The history contained in the *Ramayana is* only secondary. Spiritual philosophy is the main thing. Dharma has been revealed through the unfolding of events. Hence while studying the *Ramayana*, you must regard Rama as the Supreme Being and Ravana as the forces opposed to Him. You may equate Rama with Krishna, his forces with the Pandava army, and Ravana with Duryodhana. The *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* express one and the same idea.

Your study of the Gurumukhi works is also useful. The vow of memorizing the *Gita* must be kept.

I have answered Bhai Fulchand's letter. I hope this letter reaches [him].[2]

We are all well.

Blessings to all from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1869

297. LETTER TO G. T. HINGORANI

[Before *February 6, 1933*][3]

You should not be impatient. There should be no satyagraha just yet. We must educate public opinion, and deal gently with orthodoxy. Remember that at one time many of us shared the same prejudices as orthodox people do today. You must, first of all, ascertain whether it is the trustees who refuse to open the temples or whether it is the temple-goers who would not tolerate the admission of Harijans. For that purpose, you should have a scientific and accurate referendum, voting being strictly confined to those who are entitled to enter the respective temples. The proprietors of hotels and saloons stand on a somewhat different footing. They have their bread and butter to consider, and they must not be expected to take risks.

[1] Gandhiji's commentary on the *Gita; vide*

[2] An earlier letter to the addressee had miscarried; *vide*, "Letter to Fulchand B. Shah", "Letter to Ada West", 24-2-1933

[3] The letter was released to the Press from Karachi on February 6, 1933.

Therefore, you must take a referendum of their actual patrons and if the patrons have no objection, I have no doubt the proprietors of hotels and saloons will be quite glad.

The Hindu, 7-2-1933

298. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

February 6, 1933

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY
HOME DEPARTMENT

DEAR SIR,

I enclose herewith letter from Shrimati Mirabai (Slade) dated 28th ultimo and handed to me only this day. It speaks for itself. Being in answer to an anxious enquiry from me, the letter might have been given to me earlier. Since this letter was written the usual weekly letter was received in which she stated that she was examined by the Civil Surgeon who had recommended her for transfer. Miss Slade had repeatedly complained to me in her weekly letters about the stenches and the stifling atmosphere of Arthur Road Prison and recurring attacks of headache, giddiness, eruptions and the like. But I felt, as she had felt, that as a prisoner she must suffer the hardships of prison life. It might however be held pardonable, if not even right, in cases causing anxiety about health, for prisoners to bring to the knowledge of superior authority the condition of their health. Acting in accordance with that rule I have approached Government before now, wherever I have felt the necessity of bringing to their notice cases of prisoners in whose welfare I have been interested as if they were my own nearest relatives. The letter enclosed gives a true picture of Miss Slade's health, and her attachment towards me. It has been a privilege to me to enjoy that affection. She came to me with the fullest consent of her late mother and the reluctant consent of her father the late Sir Edmond Slade who never cut off the annuity that he used to give to her. I hardly need to say anything more about her family connections which are better known to Government than to me.

You will notice the dread she has of being sent away to a place further away from me. I wish she was less sensitive, but her sensitiveness has to be taken into account as it so quickly affects her body. I therefore suggest her transfer to the Female Yard attached to

this Prison. From all the accounts that I have heard of the Yard, it is airy, roomy and much cooler than Arthur Road Prison. She will certainly be happier there.

I suggest too that she be examined by specialists in view of what she says about her glands and the condition of her tonsils. I would gladly name my doctors if Government would entertain their names, but I have no desire to press the point. I should be entirely satisfied so long as she is examined by specialists.

It grieves me to have to approach the Government over a delicate and personal matter. But I entertain the hope that perhaps the Government may even appreciate the fact that I have brought this matter to their notice. I shall be thankful for an early decision.

I remain,

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. IV, pp. 29-31

299. INTERVIEW TO MACRAE[1]

February 6, 1933[2]

There may undoubtedly be points on which we will agree to differ, but I have no doubt that there will be so many points of contact between us that there will be no real difficulty. Whether there is or not, my own course in the matter is simple, as I have said repeatedly that caste Hindus have wronged the so-called untouchables, and that those of us who have realized the magnitude of that wrong have got to do penance for it.

Home Department, Political, File No. 44/35, 1933, pp. 16-8. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] This has been extracted from R. M. Maxwell's letter dated February 14, addressed to Home Secretary, M. G. Hallet.

[2] From *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. III, p. 129

300. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

February 7, 1933

MY DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

I have your several letters. As to the second edition of Holloway's, we must give up the idea for the time being.

As to the second Harijan day, can you tell me how much was collected on the previous Harijan day?

It is most vexing that the Hindi *Harijan* is taking all this time. I wonder if I sent you or Ghanshyamdas an offer from Delhi from a man to take over his weekly which he is now publishing—lat;- It might be worth while seeing him. According to his statement, Indra knows him.

The English edition would be out on Saturday. We are bringing out 10,000 copies of the first issue. It will be stopped if it does not become self-supporting, and it cannot but be self-supporting if all the Provincial Boards subscribe to a certain number of copies. They must need them for their workers if they are efficiently working organizations. Every such organization has to have a common organ. This applies to you also. So you will please telegraph to me how many copies you will want and you have to pay in advance for the copies you may need. You may send for the minimum number, so that at your end too there may be no waste. Some copies no doubt you will have to distribute free.

I would like you also to send Patwardhan a cheque or draft for Rs. 500. I had Rs. 544-6-0 with me which I wanted to transfer to you, but now I am paying that amount to Patwardhan. It would be regarded as a loan as from you to the paper, and as soon as subscriptions arrive, the loan will be refunded, unless there is a loss from the very commencement. Thus, you will credit me with Rs. [5]44-6-0[1] as having been received from me for untouchability work and debit *Harijan* with Rs. 544-6-0 in addition to the Rs. 500 I have asked you to send from there. Patwardhan cannot possibly need more than Rs. 1000 to go on with. Before he begins to receive subscriptions, moneys have to be disbursed for stamps, wages and paper.

If there is any news to impart for publication in *Harijan* you

[1] The source is illegible here.

should send a telegram to Shastri; as a matter of fact, if you are receiving reports from all the Boards, you should be able to send Shastri a press telegram every week.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1108

301. LETTER TO VISHWANATH PRASAD MISHRA

February 7, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[1] Whilst I should be delighted to see election of Harijans to all elective institutions, I must not intervene by way of anticipating results. It would be hardly proper for a prisoner to do so.

Yours sincerely

SJT. VISHWANATH PD. MISHRA

PLEADER

CHAPRA

From a microfilm: S. N. 19306

302. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS

February 7, 1933

DEAR BABOO BHAGWANDAS,

A professor of Arabic has written to me asking for assistance in the work that he has undertaken of translating *Manusmriti* into Arabic. He does not know Sanskrit himself. Therefore he has to rely upon English translations. I have, however, warned him against taking the printed text going under the name of *Manusmriti* as the reality. When I read this book, whilst I was stirred by many verses of moral beauty, I was repelled by several verses which seemed to be so wholly contrary to the spirit of the moral teaching. I have therefore always held that the printed text is not the work of the same author nor written at the same time and that there have been many interpolations after the

[1] The addressee had requested Gandhiji to send his blessings for the success of a Harijan candidate in a bye-election for the membership of the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council.

original verses were written. I have no authority for this statement save my own instinct. You have however made a deep study of this book and perhaps a comparative study of all the *Smritis.* If you have come to any decision and written something on it, I would like to have your opinion, or, if you know any person who has held the view that I hold of the *Smriti* or how he has reconciled the contradictory verses, I would like you to enlighten me. I am just now hard pressed owing to *Harijan* work falling on my shoulders. I wanted to write separately to Principal Dhruva on this matter, but I must give up that ambition and ask you to kindly pass this letter on to him so that he can let me have his own views also. I have warned Professor Haqqi against translating the printed text without examining the question from the standpoint suggested by me. But I cannot help him if he wants to be guided along the lines suggested by me unless I have some authoritative guidance myself. My instinct is good enough for my consolation but it can be no guide for others if I cannot support it with external convincing evidence.

Yours sincerely

From a microfilm: S.N. 19308

303. LETTER TO N. R. KSHIRSAGAR

February 7, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter.[1] I understand what you say. If Harijans were not Hindus, *samskara*[2] would be necessary. None is necessary for Hindus before they can enter temples. Of course they have to observe the laws of ceremonial cleanliness and the rest.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. R. KSHIRSAGAR
15 NABHIKAM STREET
VELLORE (N.A.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 19309

[1] The addressee had written: "It is yet not a settled fact that the untouchables are really Hindus."

[2] Literally, 'impression'; here, a ceremony, especially of initiation

304. LETTER TO HARIBHAU PHATAK

February 7, 1933

MY DEAR HARIBHAU PHATAK,

I have your letter. I am sorry that Mr. Mate should think that I betrayed any impatience or anger in carrying on the argument with him the other day. If there was any such betrayed, I must apologize to him. It was certainly not intended. He can come and discuss the whole thing with me. I promise to observe complete silence and listen to him whilst he is speaking. After all, my business is to deliver my message and convert those who think differently from me. I have no desire whatsoever to impose my views on anybody, and I cannot convert anybody by being impatient or angry. He may bring any friend he likes. Let there be a previous appointment made so as to avoid disappointment. Now that I have to attend to *Harijan* I must not give any appointments for Wednesdays and Thursdays. Fridays and Saturdays would be quite good.

As to the subject-matter of your letter Mr. Mate is quite wrong in thinking that any but Hindu voters will have the right of voting under the Temple-entry Bill, and I can show quite clearly that there is absolutely no question whatsoever of compulsion. Nor is there the slightest desire to see the Bill passed if the Hindu Members do not want it. The first Bill has no reference even to temples. It is the most innocent that can possibly be conceived. It simply takes untouchability out of the penal law of the land. Surely, it was wrong when the courts were first called upon to give a legal status to untouchability. I should very much like to know in what respect either Bill constitutes an interference with anybody's liberty.

I am sorry to hear about Yashoda Bai. I shall certainly write to her.

With reference to the charkhas as you know, Kanitkar was manufacturing the very thing in Poona. His boy knows the thing. I had suggested slight improvements in the pattern that was brought to me. To have them from Bardoli would mean probably four annas railage, if not more, for each charkha, when the whole thing is capable of being made locally and cheaply. But if they must be had from Bardoli, I can easily get them.

Please thank the makers of the oils of the two bottles. I have still

a lot left of *Narayan Thaila*[1]. I would plead with them not to send any more till I ask for it, and I undertake to ask for it when I have exhausted the stock so kindly sent by them.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20175

305. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

February 7, 1933

MY DEAR C. R.,

I am sure you are doing good work there.

I do not at all like Ranga Iyer's statements in reply to Jagadguru's telegram. He there says, in spite of the Guruvayur referendum result, that Malabar Hindus are against temple-entry and gives a certificate to sanatanists for earnestness of purpose, conservatism and what not, and makes me out to be a fair approach to Buddha. If all the three statements were correct, one could have nothing to say against them, however embarrassing they may be. But they are all the three wrong. Apart from the Guruvayur referendum, nobody knows the opinion of Malabar Hindus. Your own evidence of Travancore is against Ranga Iyer's opinion. The sanatanists cannot deserve a good certificate if they can produce no one who will at all listen to reason and understand the viewpoint of the reformer. They exaggerate the reformers' claim out of all proportion, and then to describe me as Buddha is to damn the cause in advance, for orthodoxy believes Buddha to have been an atheist denying the authority of the Vedas, varnashrama and everything. They take pride in the fact that Shankar arose to drive out Buddhism and they will naturally want to drive me out if I am anything like the Buddha of their imagination. The latest statement of Ranga Iyer therefore increases my fear of advocacy.

I hope Devdas had my letter awaiting him when he reached Delhi. That letter anticipated his letter just received. I am too full of *Harijan* work just now to give you more or write to him separately.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20176

[1] Narayan oil used in massage

306. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

February 7, 1933

Requested to explain further his statement of 14th January[1] in view of interpretations in the Assembly yesterday, Gandhji declared to the Associated Press:

The written words stand. I must not add to what 1 have already said in my statement.

Gandhiji's attention was drawn to different interpretations put on this statement, and particularly to the reference made by Sir Harry Haig in this connection to the meaning attributed to his statement by the Bombay Congress Bulletin. Gandhiji replied:

I cannot help people putting all sorts of interpretation to my writings. It is not a new experience to me. My statement is quite explicit. You can surely find the correct meaning. I have certainly not intended the statement to be equivocal, but it should be read as one whole. You can read many meanings out of sentences detached from their context.

Always alive to the limitations to his freedom of speech, Gandhiji declined to answer more pointed questions in this connection, saying:

You are treading on slippery ground.

Replying to another question regarding the charge of inconsistency levelled against him, in so far as he, a non-co-operator, had sought the aid of the Government and the legislature in connection with temple-entry, Gandhiji said he could not answer the question without entering into the region of politics, which he could not do. He proceeded:

I must therefore take the risk of damage to my reputation. But I prize my honour above reputation, and if that remains safe, then reputation will take care of itself.

The Hindu, 8-2-1933

[1] Drafted on January 7; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 7-1-1933

307. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

February 7, 1933

Commenting on the letter of Jagadguru Shankaracharya of Puri to Mr. Ranga Iyer and the latter's reply thereto, Gandhiji said in an interview to the Associated Press:

I am really sorry that the Jagadguru should have written that letter about the Bills. I venture to think that the Bills do not, in any shape or form, interfere with religious liberty. On the contrary, both the Bills jealously guard it. Nor is the analogy used by the Jagadguru correct. There is no technical question involved in the Bills requiring technical knowledge. It is always open to worshippers to determine what company they would take with them for prayer. You may call that even a change of religion if you like. But you cannot deprive the people of that right.

What is there to prevent cent per cent of the worshippers in a temple admitting whomsoever they choose, even though such admission may be against the *Agama* governing that particular temple? There is no religious interference involved in restoring to the people a right that should never have been taken away from them. And if it is admitted that cent per cent of the worshippers can, if they choose, alter the rules of admission into a temple, then it should easily be conceded that a sufficient majority should have the right of determining the question of admission so long as they do not interfere with the liberty of the minority to perform worship in isolation from the majority.

Surely, it is a serious thing for a responsible person like the Jagadguru to label reformers, who claim to be followers of the same faith and believe in the same Shastras, as renegades from sanatana dharma. It also passes my comprehension how the passage of the Bills can be considered an unconstitutional procedure.

If the Jagadguru's letter is thus open to objection, I am afraid Mr. Ranga Iyer's reply also needs some corrections. I am not so sure as he is, that Malabar Hindu opinion is against the Bill, and so against the temple-entry of Harijans. The results of the Guruvayur referendum may be regarded as an indication to the contrary. Eyewitnesses who have been in Malabar have also told me that popular opinion is by no means against temple-entry. But that is a

matter which can be determined anywhere if both the parties agree to have an unofficial referendum under joint supervision.

Then, Mr. Ranga Iyer, in his enthusiasm and blind affection for me, has been betrayed into an unfortunate analogy. I do not consider myself in any way fit to be compared with the Buddha. I regard myself as a very common man—a poor worker, liable to all the errors mankind is prone to make. I am merely a humble truth-seeker. But the analogy is unfortunate for another reason also. Sanatanists would say that the Buddha was an atheist, and that he did not accept the authority of the Vedas and did not believe in their divinity—not that as a matter of fact he was an atheist or did not believe in the Vedas. But, what he really was, is not pertinent to our point. Therefore, if I am also considered an atheist or non-believer in the divinity of the Vedas, I am certainly out of court, as a reformer asking Hindus to reject modern untouchability as being wholly against Hindu Shastras regarded as a whole.

The Hindu, 8-2-1933

308. LETTER TO G. R. ABHYANKAR

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
February 8, 1933

MY DEAR ABHYANKAR,

Will you please go through this letter and do whatever you can in connection with the money? Get hold of it or let it be sent to me, and do please advise me as to the best method of using a part of it in connection with untouchables in Sangli.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: G. R. Abhyankar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

309. LETTER TO R. D. ATHAVALE

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
February 8, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

Sjt. V. Joshi of Sangli was here the other day to discuss matters about untouchability, and he reminded me that when I was in Sangli a part of the collections made there amounting to over Rs. 850/- was left with you. He told me too that the amount had accumulated with you together with interest and that you would not part with the amount except under my authority. As I did not remember much about the collection and as Sjt. Gangadharrao Deshpande was entrusted with the collections, I referred the matter to him, and he tells me that he has recollection of this particular collection.

Will you kindly now send the amount with interest to me, or, if it suits you better, hand it over on my behalf to Mr. Abhyankar to whom I am writing by the same post that will take this letter?

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: G. R. Abhyankar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

310. LETTER TO MATHURADAS JAIN[1]

February 8, 1933

MY DEAR MATHURADAS,

I was glad at last to hear from you. If I was to stop your fast I had to use strong and precise language. As you had taken the fast in connection with something I had done or not done, I had to assume authority and also presume that I knew you sufficiently to send you a peremptory telegram. Now that you claim to have known me through my writings and doings, evidently the authoritative tone I adopted in my wire was quite justified. You must remember that I was acting like a responsible physician to his patient and I am glad that you promptly responded by breaking your fast. I am quite sure even after receiving

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Dr. Parashuram Sharma", 25-1-1933

your letter, that you did well in acting in accordance with my telegram. Since you cannot write in English yourself, do write to me in Urdu, but write in bold clear hand and I shall be able to follow it.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. MATHURADAS JAIN

ZIRA

DIST. FEROZEPORE, PUNJAB

From a photostat : G.N. 8942

311. LETTER TO S. A. K. SUBRAMANIAM[1]

[Before *February 9, 1933*][2]

I can say, with certainty, that those who prevent the depressed classes from burying their dead in Hindu burial places are against religious truth.

The Hindu, 14-2-1933

312. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*February 9, 1933*][3]

CHI. MIRA,

Your weekly letter came in, in due course. And just two days before that was given to me your special letter describing your condition. Whereupon I sent a letter to the Government requesting your transfer to Yeravda and also an examination by specialists. I have done what I thought was my duty to do from every point of view. No prisoner has a right to demand transfer. He has to submit to the condition in which he is placed except under extraordinary circumstances. When I think of the prison life of Howard's[4] days and

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter regarding the controversy raging in the Settlement of Penang between caste Hindus and depressed classes over the Hindu burial grounds.

[2] The letter was released to the Press on February 9, 1933.

[3] The source has "9-1-1933" which is evidently a slip as the "special letter", was dated 28-1-1933; *vide* "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", 6-2-1933

[4] John Howard (1726-90), prison reformer

I look at today's, I marvel at the betterment in the condition. And yet to prisoners who find themselves in for conscience's sake, thereshould be no difference whatsoever between that life and this. They must be prepared cheerfully to submit to the life of Howard's days. For to them conscience is dearer than the ease of body and the pleasure of communion through physical means with the nearest and dearest ones. There should be therefore on the one hand every honest and permissible attempt to keep the body in good condition and to obtain the other amenities, on the other to receive disappointment with perfect detachment. You should continue to report the whole of your condition to the Civil Surgeon and give him the history of your previous glands. I wish you had written about them before to me. Anyway now the matter is in the Government's hands and more in God's hands. 'Not a blade moves but by His will.'

The passage you quote from the *Gita* refers to moderate habits. That is not what I had in mind. The passage I had in mind occurs in the last chapter, 52nd verse. I should translate it thus. "Who prefers solitude, who eats meagre food, who has under perfect control thought, speech and action, who is intent on meditation, who is free always from attachments."

You have no reason to complain of the quantity of your food. You dare not go by the abstract measurement. Double your quantity would be really meagre for many of our friends. The condition of your own body should be the sole guide as to the quantity without reference to that taken by others. All we should recognize is that voluntary meagre eating is one of the most difficult things in the world. It is a perpetual fast much more difficult than the complete periodic fasts. Meagre food voluntarily taken *must* lead to perfect poise, i.e., perfect health of body and mind. We can but make the attempt.

My food and weight remain what I described them to be last week. The elbow continues as before. I do not think any more about it. I thought I told you that I had resumed spinning. I did it, I think, Tuesday last week. I do it whilst I am receiving visitors. I have fixed no minimum. I have not yet reached even 160 rounds. Yesterday's was the highest, 141. The count is over 40.

What you say about Devdas is true. His must prove a very happy

marriage. Lakshmi[1] too seems to be blossoming. It appears to be a case of pure love with high motive behind it. Devdas has always liked to serve Rajaji whom he regards as his English teacher. He could not have found a better.

I am, we all are, just now very busy over the forthcoming *Harijan*. I have a very good editor and an equally good manager. The press belongs to the Servants of India Society with which I enjoy what may be called spiritual relations. I have therefore not to worry about the details of management. God is great and compassionate if He is also terrible.

Love from us all. It is now 5.15 a.m.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6262. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9728

313. LETTER TO KESHAVRAO JEDHE

February 9, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

With reference to our conversation of the 7th instant, I do hope that the members of the Satya Shodhak Samaj[2] will throw themselves heart and soul into the campaign against untouchability subject to the limitations prescribed by the Servants of Untouchables Society. I know that the Satya Shodhak Samaj is against Brahminism and against varnashrama. The present campaign does not deal with varnashrama at all and is not a campaign against Brahminism, but against untouchability, pure and simple, because the Society does not believe that untouchability is any part of Brahminism. We must not here mix up Brahmins who swear by untouchability with Brahminism. For we have a large and growing body of Brahmins who are as much opposed to untouchability as you and I can be.

Yours sincerely,

KESHAVRAO JEDHE

JEDHE MANSION, POONA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20191

[1] Daughter of C. Rajagopalachari

[2] 'Society for Discovery of Truth'; founded by Jyotiba Phule

314. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

Immediate *February 9, 1933*

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

Major Bhandari communicated to me yesterday the contents of the Government orders about a certain letter from Appasaheb Patwardhan addressed to me and withheld by Government. Not knowing the contents of the letter I can say nothing about it. I see in this morning's *Times of India* that Appasaheb Patwardhan has put himself on reduced rations. This has naturally disturbed me. I shall thank you to tell me whether there is any truth in the report.

Will you also please let me know what the orders of the Government of India are in the matter of conservancy work by volunteer prisoners?

Yours sincerely,

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (6), p. 319

315. LETTER TO RAMJI

February 9, 1933

BHAISHRI RAMJI,

Swarupbehn, wife of Ranjit Pandit and daughter of late Motilalji, is at present in Bombay. I think it would be nice if a tour of Kathiawar was arranged for her in connection with untouchability. You should collect money for that purpose and perhaps it may influence people. At present she is going to do this work alone. She has been detained so that she can be of service to Kathiawar. She is married to a Kathiawari, so we have a claim over her. If you wish to invite her, send me a wire and the programme. Who will tour with her? One woman should also travel with her. It would be better if Saraladevi or some other woman from there itself went with her. She could well be taken to several places in Gujarat. I shall write about this to Ahmedabad.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XX

316. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

February 9, 1933

Mahatma Gandhi has put himself in communication[1] with the Government in connection with the reported fast of Appasaheb Patwardhan, a political prisoner in the Ratnagiri jail, and he will decide his course of action in this matter on receipt of the Government reply.

I have no knowledge of the fast or rather his putting himself on reduced rations, apart from the newspaper report just shown to me. Of course, the news is disturbing; it has vital connection with my previous action[2] regarding Appasaheb and untouchability in Indian prisons. I have sought authoritative information from the Government, and meanwhile, I hope the Press report is incorrect.

Asked if this fast will have his support, Gandhiji said he would prefer not to say anything at present, not having all the facts in his possession.

The Bombay Chronicle, 10-2-1933

317. TELEGRAM TO MANILAL J. VYAS

[After *February 9, 1933*]

MANILAL[3]
SERVANTS UNTOUCHABLES SOCIETY
BUNDER ROAD
KARACHI

YOUR LETTER[4]. SUBJECT JAMSHED[5] OTHER EXPERTS' OPINION RESERVATION UNDER JOINT ELECTORATE INEVITABLE.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 20194

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. E. Doyle", 9-2-1933

[2] On December 4, 1932, Gandhiji had suspended the fast he commenced on the previous day in sympathy with Patwardhan on the question of granting permission to political prisoners for doing scavenging work; *vide* "Statement on Fast to Anti-Untouchability Committee", 4-12-1932 and "Telegram to S. P. Patwardhan", 6-12-1932

[3] Joint Secretary, Servants of Untouchables Society, Sind

[4] The addressee, in his letter dated February 9, 1933, had stated that since the Karachi Municipality Bill was being presented in the Legislative Assembly provision for reservation for Harijans should be made in it.

[5] Jamshed Mehta, President of the Karachi Municipality

318. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

Immediate *February 10, 1933*

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

I had hoped to receive your answer by this time (11 a.m.) in reply to my inquiry[1] about Appasaheb Patwardhan. I would like you please to answer my query today and allay, if you will, the growing anxiety.

Yours sincerely,

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(6), p. 323

319. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

February 10, 1933

MY DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

I have your letters. With reference. to Jitendralal Bannerji and B. C. Chatterji, I think you should take no public notice of their letters, but you should carry on quiet correspondence with Ramanand Baboo. I am carrying on correspondence both with them and Dr. Bidhan. No public controversy is needed at least at this stage.

With reference to your letter about *Harijan*, after the letter was sent Ghanshyamdas came here and he gave the verbal sanction. Nothing more was therefore necessary. Nevertheless, the written sanction should be recorded in your books.

With this you will have the *Harijan* itself. I am hoping that it will be entirely self-supporting.

I have also the Memorandum about the proposed change of the name of the Society. I note the decision recorded by you and Hariji. Nothing more need be said about it now, and I think that the decision was inevitable.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1109

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. E. Doyle",9-2-1933

320. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

February 10, 1933

MY DEAR HORACE,

This is just to tell you that the prayers of us all are with you for your complete restoration to health and we all hope that you are again healthy and strong.

I want your criticism of *Harijan*, as also of Jack Hoyland, to whom I am not writing this week.

Love from us all to you and Olive.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1419

321. LETTER TO SUBEDAR GHATGE AND OTHERS

February 10, 1933

DEAR FRIENDS,

With reference to the application of A. J. Sonone for the post of Personal Assistant to the Chief officer, Poona Municipality, and our conversation about it, it is obvious that I can give no opinion in such matters, but I can say as a matter of guiding principle that merits of candidates being equal a candidate belonging to the depressed classes should be given the preference.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SUBEDAR GHATGE AND OTHERS

POONA CITY MUNICIPALITY

POONA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20200

322. LETTER TO BERNARD

February 10, 1933

MY DEAR BERNARD,

I was sorry to hear of your brother-in-law's sudden death. But birth and death are always with us and if there is joy about birth we must cancel it through the knowledge of coming death, and if there is sorrow about death we must cancel it by the knowledge of coming birth.

Florence has hardened her heart after her operation. Wrote long and good letters before; now she observes complete silence.

This week you will get ten copies of the first number of *Harijan*. You must try to get at least ten subscribers who would send the subscriptions in advance. That will save some commission. But if you cannot get the subscribers you need not worry. Only remember that unless there is advice from you, copies won't be sent to you next week.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20204

323. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS

February 10, 1933

DEAR BABOO BHAGWANDAS,

I have your letter for which many thanks. I think that as a matter of courtesy and for our record, we should print Raghunath Shastri Kokje's essay.

I have already written to you about the expenses. Ghanshyamdas has promised to send you a contribution and he told me that he would write to you too. I hope you will remind him if you have not done so already.

Shastri Dharurkar's replies were sent only for your information and satisfaction. They need not be published at all.

I know you want to save my time by writing to Mahadev, but it is as well not to do so. It may cause delay and your letters are no strain on me.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20205

324. LETTER TO GULCHEN LUMSDEN

February 10, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I thank you for your letter. This time Sir Henry Lawrence was right when he told you that "Abide with me" was one of my favourite hymns.[1] Though I am a devout Hindu, or even because I am a devout Hindu, I have no difficulty in appreciating the devotional hymns of other religions, and having had intimate contact with many Christians I came to appreciate some of the hymns even as a young ster. You will perhaps be glad to know that among them "Lead,Kindly Light" is the most favourite. But there are others also which you do not need to know.

As to the fast, let me say that you have been wholly misinformed. My fast was not directed to a political purpose at all. It was a purely spiritual act after the same style as Buddha's, only upon an infinitely humbler scale.

I am sending you a new weekly which is being published this week. In the light of your letter you might find it of some little interest.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 9528. Courtesy: Mrs. Hugh Lumsden

325. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

February 10, 1933

MY DEAR CHILD,

Yes. You did keep me without a letter this time for some weeks and I was wondering why. I must not give you a long letter this time, because the new weekly *Harijan* absorbs me to the exclusion of everything else. You will see the copy that will reach you at the same time as this.

I can quite understand what a source of pleasure Charlie Andrews's presence must be to you and the children. His presence in

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Gulchen Lumsden", 3-5-1932

your midst takes away from me too a load of anxiety on your behalf.

Love from us all to you all.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 118. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also My Dear Child, p. 98

326. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

February 10, 1933

MY DEAR MARGARETE,

I do hope you have been receiving my letters. I have the lovely photographs you have sent me. Everyone admired the album.

I am glad you are able, with the consent of your mother, to keep up your vegetarianism. I hope the body will feel none the worse for it. The spirit can only prosper under that simple food. But you must not be so cock-sure about your being more economical than I. You spent 5d. on one meal. I have made occasionally 3 meals out of 6d. in London. This may be in your favour that I did it when the things were cheaper than now. I did it in London in 1890. You were not even born then, were you?

You will get by this mail the *Harijan* which I hope you will like. Love.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

327. ITS IMPLICATIONS

Rev. Stanley Jones paid me a visit the other day[1] before sailing for America. He said that in America he would be asked many questions about the campaign against untouchability and had, therefore, some questions which he wanted me to answer. I was glad of the visit and I readily answered his questions. I do not propose to reproduce the whole of our conversation and all his questions and crossquestions, but I propose to give to the readers the main questions

[1] On February 4, 1933. Mahadev Desai's report of this meeting appeared in *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, "Indian Traders in Natal", 18-11-1899

and the substance of my answers. His first question, then, was:

> Why do you restrict the movement to the removal of untouchability only? Why not do away with the caste system altogether? If there is a difference between caste and caste, and caste and untouchability, is it not one only of degree?

ANSWER: Untouchability as it is practised in Hinduism today is, in my opinion, a sin against God and man and is, therefore, like a poison slowly eating into the very vitals of Hinduism. In my opinion, it has no sanction whatsoever in the Hindu Shastras taken as a whole. Untouchability of a healthy kind is undoubtedly to be found in the Shastras and it is universal in all religions. It is a rule of sanitation. That will exist to the end of time; but untouchability as we are observing today in India is a hideous thing and wears various forms in various Provinces, even in districts. It has degraded both the 'untouchables' and the 'touchables'. It has stunted the growth of nearly 40 million human beings. They are denied even the ordinary amenities of life. The sooner, therefore, it is ended, the better for Hinduism, the better for India and, perhaps, better for mankind in general.

Not so the caste system. There are innumerable castes in India. They are a social institution. They are so many trade guilds, as was well said by the late Sir William Wilson Hunter. And at one time they served a very useful purpose, as, perhaps, they are even now doing to a certain extent. This institution has superadded to it restrictions which, in my opinion, are undesirable and are bound to go in course of time. There is nothing sinful about them. They retard the material progress of those who are labouring under them. They are no bar to the spiritual progress. The difference, therefore, between caste system and untouchability is not one of degree, but of kind. An 'untouchable' is outside the pale of respectable society. He is hardly treated as a human being. He is an outcaste hurled into an abyss by his fellow-beings occupying the same platform. The difference, therefore, is somewhat analogous to the difference between heaven and hell.

There is one thing more to be remembered about the caste system. For me, it is not the same as varnashramadharma. Whilst the caste system is an answer to the social need, varnashrama is based upon the Hindu scriptures. Not so the caste system. While there are innumerable castes (some dying out and new ones coming into being), the varnas are, and have always been, four. I am a firm believer

in varnashrama. I have not hesitated before now to consider it as a gift of Hinduism to mankind. Acceptance of that dharma is, so far as I have been able to see it, a condition of spiritual growth. But I may not here elaborate my view of these four famous divisions in Hinduism. Their consideration is irrelevant to the present purpose. . But I may make this admission that today this varnashramadharma is not being observed in its purity. There is an utter confusion of varna and if Hinduism is to become a living force in the world, we have to understand its real purpose and revive it; but we cannot do so, unless the canker of untouchability is destroyed. The idea of inferiority and superiority has to be demolished. The four divisions are not a vertical section, but a horizontal plane on which all stand on a footing of equality, doing the services respectively assigned to them. A life of religion is not a life of privileges but of duty. Privileges may come, as they do come to all, from a due fulfilment of duty. In the book of God, the same number of marks are assigned to the Brahmin that has done his task well as to the Bhangi who has done likewise. The second question was:

> Why do you want temple-entry for Harijans? Are not temples the lowest thing in Hinduism?

ANSWER: I do not think so for one moment. Temples are to Hindus what churches are to Christians. In my opinion, we are all idolators; that in Hinduism we have images of stone or metal inside temples makes to me no difference. Thousands of Hindus who visit temples in simple faith derive precisely the same spiritual benefit that Christians visiting churches in simple faith do. Deprive a Hindu of his temple, and you deprive him of the thing he generally prizes most in life. That superstition and even evil have grown round many Hindu temples is but too true. That, however, is an argument for temple reform, not for lowering their value for Harijans or any Hindu. It is my certain conviction that temples are an integral part of Hinduism. His third question was:

> Was not your fast pure coercion?

ANSWER: If it is agreed that my fast sprang from love, then it was coercion, only if love of parents for their children or of the latter for the former, or love of husband for wife and wife for husband, or to take a sweeping illustration, love of Jesus for those who own Him as their all, is coercion. It is the implicit and sacred belief of millions of Christians that love of Jesus keeps them from falling and that it does

so against themselves. His love bends the reason and the emotion of thousands of His votaries to His love. I know that, in my childhood, love of my parents kept me from sinning, and, even after fifty years of age, love of my children and friends kept me positively from going to perdition, which I would have done most assuredly but for the definite and overwhelming influence of that love. And, if all this love could be regarded as coercion, then the love that prompted my fast and, therefore, my fast, was coercion, but it was that in no other sense. Fasting is a great institution in Hinduism, as perhaps in no other religion, and, though it has been abused by people not entitled to fast, it has, on the whole, done the greatest good to Hinduism. I believe that there is no prayer without fasting and there is no real fast without prayer. My fast was the prayer of a soul in agony.

Harijan, 11-2-1933

328. DR. AMBEDKAR AND CASTE

The following has just been received from Dr. Ambedkar:

At the end of our conversation[1] on Saturday last you asked me to send a message for insertion in the first issue of your new weekly *Harijan*. I feel I cannot give a message. For I believe it will be a most unwarranted presumption on my part to suppose that I have sufficient worth in the eyes of the Hindus which would make them treat any message from me with respect. I can only speak as man to man. As such it may be desirable that the Hindus should know my views on the momentous issue of Hindu social organization with which you have chosen to occupy yourself. I am, therefore, sending you the accompanying statement for publication in your *Harijan*.

STATEMENT

The outcaste is a bye-product of the caste system. There will be outcastes as long as there are castes. Nothing can emancipate the outcaste except the destruction of the caste system. Nothing can help to save Hindus and ensure their survival in the coming struggle except the purging of the Hindu faith of this odious and vicious dogma.

DAMODAR HALL

PAREL, BOMBAY 12

7th February, 1933

B. R. AMBEDKAR

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with B. R. Ambedkar", 4-2-1933

Dr. Ambedkar is bitter. He has every reason to feel so. He has received a liberal education. He has more than the talents of the average educated Indian. Outside India he is received with honour and affection, but, in India, among Hindus, at every step he is reminded that he is one of the outcastes of Hindu society. It is nothing to his shame, for, he has done no wrong to Hindu society. His exterior is as clean as that of the cleanest and the proudest Brahmin. Of his interior, the world knows as little as of that of any of us. In spite of all this, he believes that 'it will be a most unwarranted presumption on his part to suppose that he has sufficient worth in the eyes of the Hindus which would make them treat any message from him with respect'. This is the caste Hindus' shame, not his, but I would like him to feel that there are today thousands of caste Hindus who would listen to his message with the same respect and consideration that they would give to that of any other leader and that in their estimation there is no person high and no person low. I would like him, too, to know that *Harijan* is not my weekly. So far as the proprietary rights are concerned it belongs to the Servants of Untouchables Society and, therefore, I would like him to feel that it is as much his as of any other Hindu.

As to the burden of his message, the opinion he holds about the caste system is shared by many educated Hindus. I have not, however, been able to share that opinion. I do not believe the caste system, even as distinguished from varnashrama, to be an 'odious and vicious dogma'. It has its limitations and its defects, but there is nothing sinful about it, as there is about untouchability, and, if it is a bye-product of the caste system it is only in the same sense that an ugly growth is of a body, or weeds of a crop. It is as wrong to destroy caste because of the outcastes as it would be to destroy a body because of an ugly growth in it, or a crop because of the weeds. The outcasteness, in the sense we understand it, has, therefore, to be destroyed altogether. It is an excess to be removed, if the whole system is not to perish. Untouchability is the product, therefore, not of the caste system, but of the distinction of high and low that has crept into Hinduism and is corroding it. The attack on untouchability is thus an attack upon this 'high-and-low'ness. The moment untouchability goes, the caste system itself will be purified, that is to say, according to my dream, it will resolve itself into the true varnadharma, the four divisions of society, each complementary of the other and none inferior or superior to any other, each as necessary for

the whole body of Hinduism as any other. How it can be and what that varnashrama is, it is not necessary to examine here. But, such being my faith, I have always respectfully differed from those distinguished countrymen, Dr. Ambedkar among them, who have held that untouchability will not go without the destruction of varnashramadharma. They have made no distinction between caste and varna. But that is another story. At the present moment, it is the 'untouchable', the outcaste, with whom all Hindu reformers, whether they believe in varnashrama or not, have agreed to deal. The opposition to untouchability is common to both. Therefore, the present joint fight is restricted to the removal of untouchability, and I would invite Dr. Ambedkar and those who think with him to throw themselves, heart and soul, into the campaign against the monster of untouchability. It is highly likely that at the end of it we shall all find that there is nothing to fight against in varnashrama. If however, varnashrama even then looks an ugly thing, the whole of Hindu society will fight it. For this campaign against untouchability is not one of compulsion, but conversion. At the end of the chapter, I hope that we shall all find ourselves in the same camp. Should it prove otherwise, it will be time enough to consider how and by whom varnashrama is to be fought.

Harijan, 11-2-1933

329. UNTOUCHABILITY

Untouchability as at present practised is the greatest blot on Hinduism. It is (with apologies to sanatanists) against the Shastras. It is against the fundamental principles of humanity, it is against the dictates of reason that a man should, by mere reason of birth, be for ever regarded as an untouchable, even unapproachable and unseeable. These adjectives do not convey the full meaning of the thing itself. It is a crime for certain men, women and their children to touch, or to approach within stated distances, or to be seen by those who are called caste Hindus. The tragedy is that millions of Hindus believe in this institution as if it was enjoined by the Hindu religion.

Happily, Hindu reformers have recoiled with horror from this practice. They have come to the conclusion that it has no support in the Hindu Shastras taken as a whole. Isolated texts torn from their context and considered by themselves can no doubt be produced in

support of this practice, as of any evil known to mankind. But there is abundant authority in the Shastras to warrant the summary rejection, as being un-Hindu, of anything or any practice that is manifestly against the fundamental principles of humanity or morality, of ahimsa or *satya*[1].

This movement against untouchability has been daily gathering strength. It was in last September that leading Hindus, claiming to represent the whole of Hindu India, met together and unanimously passed a Resolution[2], condemning untouchability and pledging themselves to abolish it by law, if possible even during the existing regime, and, failing that, when India had a Parliament of her own.

Among the marks of untouchability to be removed was the prohibition against temple-entry by Harijans. In the course of the struggle, it was discovered that the British Courts in India had recognized this evil custom, so much so that certain acts done by untouchables as such came to be offences under the British Indian Penal Code. Thus, the entry by an untouchable into a Hindu temple would be punishable as a crime under the I.P.C

Before, therefore, the movement of temple-entry can make headway, it has become imperative to have this anomaly removed. It is for this purpose that Sjt. Ranga Iyer has given notice of two Bills to be introduced in the Central Legislature. After ascertaining the opinion of the Provincial Governments, H.E. the Viceroy has sanctioned the introduction of these Bills. But, being private Bills, they have a poor chance of becoming the law of the land, unless the Government and the members of the Assembly refrain from obstructing its consideration. It may be argued that, being pledged to neutrality in matters of religion, the Government are bound to facilitate the passage of the first Bill at any rate, inasmuch as it merely seeks to undo the effect produced by the decisions of British Indian Courts, and this it does by withdrawing legal recognition from untouchability.

There are practices in various religions professed by the inhabitants of this land whose breach is not regarded as criminal, though it would be regarded as very serious by the respective religious codes. Thus, beef-eating by a Hindu is an offence in the eye of the Hindu religious code, but rightly not punishable as a crime under the

[1] Truth

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Ramdas Gandhi", 6-12-1932

Indian Penal Code. Is there, then, any reason why the common law of India should punish a breach of the custom of untouchability? If there are many Hindus learned in the Hindu scriptures who find support in them for the present practice of untouchability, there are quite a number of equally learned Hindus holding the opposite view. Though this opinion of the pandits has already appeared in the Press, it is reproduced elsewhere for ready reference. Let it be noted that the signatories are all orthodox Hindus, as much lovers of their faith as are the learned men of the opposite school. On the 25th of January 1933 was held the session of the All-India Sanatan Dharma Sabha, presided over by Pandit Malaviyaji and attended by over one hundred learned men. It passed a resolution to the effect that Harijans were as much entitled to temple-entry as the rest of the Hindus.

If the Bills are not passed, it is obvious that the central part of the reform will be hung up almost indefinitely. Neutrality in matters of religion ought not to mean religious stagnation and hindrance to reform.With due regard to the sanatanists, it is difficult to understand the cry of 'religion in danger'. Under neither Bill will a single temple be opened against the will of the majority of temple-goers in question. The second Bill expressly says so. The first Bill takes up a neutral attitude. It does not help a Harijan to force his way into a temple. The reformers do not seek to compel the opponents to their will. They desire, by the fairest means possible, to convert the majority or the minority, as the case may be, to their view of untouchability.

It is said that the Harijans themselves do not want temple-entry and that they want only betterment of their economic and political condition. The reformer, too, wants the latter, but he believes that this betterment will be much quicker brought about, if religious equality is attained. The reformer denies that the Harijans do not want temple-entry. But it may be that they are so disgusted with caste Hindus and Hindu religion itself as to want nothing from them. They may in sullen discontent choose to remain outside the religious pale. Any penance on the part of caste Hindus may be too late.

Nevertheless, the caste Hindus who recognize that untouchability is a blot on Hinduism have to atone for the sin of untouchability. Whether, therefore, Harijans desire temple-entry or not, caste Hindus have to open their temples to Harijans, precisely on the same terms as to other Hindus. For a caste Hindu with any sense of honour, temple prohibition is a continuous breach of the pledge taken at the Bombay

meeting of September last. Those, who gave their word to the world and to God that they would have the temples opened for the Harijans, have to sacrifice their all, if need be, for redeeming the pledge. It may be that they did not represent the Hindu mind. They have, then, to own defeat and do the proper penance. Temple-entry is the one spiritual act that would constitute the message of freedom to the untouchables and assure them that they are not outcastes before God.

Harijan, 11-2-1933

330. TO THE READER

The English edition of *Harijan* is being published by and for the Servants of Untouchables Society at my request and, therefore, in accordance with the views I have long held regarding reform journals.

It is being published on the assumption that

1. unfortunately, the Hindi edition cannot as yet serve the South and probably, Bengal,

2. it is necessary for the people in the different Provinces to know the progress of the reform from week to week in the Provinces other than their own,

3. since the movement, though essentially Hindu, has a world wide significance and seeks the sympathy, if possible, of the whole of humanity, it is necessary to keep the world acquainted with its implications and progress.

If these assumptions are correct, *Harijan* will supply a felt want and should, therefore, become self-supporting. If it does not, it must stop publication. If it is published at a loss, it will mean so much money taken from the mouths of Harijans. An endeavour is being made to expend every pice of subscription received on behalf of the Society for the sole service of Harijans and the advance of the movement for the removal of untouchability.

You will note that no advertisements are being taken for the upkeep of the paper. It has to depend solely upon the subscriptions received.

You can send the subscription for yourself or your friends, Indian or foreign, or for institutions, such as libraries, or for poor and deserving Harijans.

Ten thousand copies are being printed for the time being. Some

copies will be sent free, either by way of compliment or exchange, but the list can only be limited. It is possible for you to extend it. I would like every English-knowing Harijan student and every untouchability worker to have a free copy on a certified application. This is possible only through the active co-operation of the reader who can afford to pay more than his own subscription.

The provincial organizations should send and pay for their own copies of which they should send advice in time, accompanying it with cheques or money orders.

So much for the financial part of this appeal.

That part of your obligation I know you will fulfil, if you are a reformer. But the harder is the necessary consequence of your fulfilment of that part. By paying subscriptions for yourself or others, you buy the right of, and recognize the duty of, serving the great cause in every legitimate manner possible for you. Thus, you can become an active helper in spreading the message of *Harijan* among those who are opposing the reform. This requires special qualifications. You need to have self-restraint. The opponents are in a state of rage just now. Some of them believe that sanatana dharma is in danger, as it has never been before. They imagine much more than the reform means and, therefore, do not hesitate to ascribe motives to reformers. You have, by your gentleness and gentlemanliness, to disarm suspicions and enable them to understand what the reform means.

If you will diligently study *Harijan*, it will equip you for the delicate task. It will give you an epitome of the week's doings in the various parts of India in connection with the campaign against untouchability. It will also tell you what the others are doing and what the opponents are saying. It will also lay bare the weaknesses and mistakes of workers. Will you become a fellow-worker in this movement of liberating over forty million human beings from an intolerable yoke and of purifying Hinduism?

But I do not despair of even some opponents subscribing to *Harijan*. I am an irrepressible optimist. I have no quarrel with the opponents. These pages will be written as much for them as for the reformers. If *Harijan* stands for truth and if the reformers have patience, the opponents of today will be the reformers of tomorrow.

Harijan, 11-2-1933

331. WHY 'HARIJAN'

Several correspondents have asked me why I have adopted the name 'Harijan' for 'untouchable'. Some English friends have asked me for its meaning. It is not a name of my coining. Some years ago, several 'untouchable, correspondents complained that I used the word *asprishya* in the pages of *Navajivan*[1]. *Asprishya* means literally untouchable. I then invited them to suggest a better name and one of the 'untouchable, correspondents suggested the adoption of the name 'Harijan', on the strength of its having been used by the first known poet-saint of Gujarat. Though the quotation he sent me did not exactly fit the case he wanted to make out for the adoption, I thought that it was a good word. 'Harijan' means 'a man of God'. All the religions of the world described God pre-eminently as the Friend of the friendless, Help of the helpless and Protector of the weak. The rest of the world apart, in India who can be more friendless, helpless or weaker than the forty million or more Hindus of India who are classified as untouchables? If, therefore, any body of people can be fitly described as men of God, they are surely these helpless, friendless and despised people. Hence, in the pages of *Navajivan*, since the correspondence, I have always adopted Harijan as the name signifying untouchables. And, when God chose to entrust me with their service even whilst undergoing imprisonment, I could not use any other word for describing them. I recoil with horror from that word and all it implies. Not that the change of name brings about any change of status, but one may at least be spared the use of a term which is itself one of reproach. When caste Hindus have of their own inner conviction and, therefore, voluntarily got rid of the present-day untouchability, we shall all be called Harijans, for, according to my humble opinion, caste Hindus will then have found favour with God and may, therefore, be fitly described as His men.

Harijan, 11-2-1933

[1] *Vide* "My Notes", Harijana

332. SEEKING OR GIVING?

Several friends have written to me letters asking me in substance the following question:

> Why is it that you, who have always sworn by non-co-operation with the Government and Legislatures, are now carrying on propaganda for the passage of untouchability Bills by the present Legislatures, and are thus co-operating with both the Government and the Legislatures?

Newspaper reporters also have been plying me with the same question. I have evaded both by saying that I cannot, consistently with my obligation as a prisoner, deal with this question as fully as I would like to. But I can say this much, that there is no doctrine in the world which admits of the same kind of application under every variety of circumstance. Different circumstances evoke different applications of the same doctrine. Thus, my love for a starving man would require me to feed him. My love for my overfed child would require me to starve him, even though he may be crying for food. I am today non-co-operating with sanatanist friends, but I would like my questioners to analyse my non-co-operation, and they will find that in the very act of non-co-operation I am seeking their co-operation in my campaign. Exactly in the same manner, I may non-co-operate as much as I like with Government or any institution, but I would be a very foolish man, if I did not know that I was non-co-operating in order to secure co-operation from them. Thus, I am now seeking the co-operation of the Government and the Legislatures in order to further my purpose, which I hold to be very sacred and altogether good. Beyond this I may not go, for the reason I have already stated and which the reader should respect.

Harijan, 11-2-1933

333. AN OVERDUE CIVIC REFORM

Sjt. Hiralal A. Shah writes:[1]

The suggestion made by Sjt. Shah is certainly worthy of consideration as well by municipalities and local bodies as by individuals, but particularly by the former. Corporate cleanliness can only be ensured, if there is a corporate conscience and a corporate insistence on cleanliness in public places. Untouchability has a great deal to answer for the insanitation of our streets and our latrines, whether private or public. In its inception, untouchability was a rule of sanitation, and still is in all parts of the world outside India. That is to say, an unclean person or thing is untouchable, but immediately his or its uncleanliness is shed, he or it is no longer untouchable. Therefore, a person who is to attend to scavenging, whether it is a paid Bhangi or an unpaid mother, they are unclean until they have washed themselves clean of their unclean work. If, instead of being regarded as untouchable for ever, the Bhangi was treated as brother and was given an opportunity and even made to become clean after performing an unclean service for society, he should be as acceptable as any other member of that society. Corporations can, therefore, lead the way in this matter, but they will not unless the citizens insist. It is truly said that Corporations have no souls, that is, apart from the souls of the citizens. Whilst, therefore, commending Sjt. Shah's suggestion to all concerned, I would advise him to concentrate his energy upon one single spot and there agitate, both amongst the public and their Corporation, for the much needed reform. Let him, therefore, devote every ounce of his spare energy to educating public opinion in Bombay, where he has his habitation, evolve concrete suggestions and get them accepted by the people in the different wards, and he will soon find that his labours are crowned with success.

Harijan, 11-2-1933

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had suggested that sweepers should be provided facilities for becoming clean after work.

334. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

February 11, 1933

DEAR SIR,

On the 8th instant Major Bhandari communicated to me the information that Government had decided to withhold a letter addressed to me by Appasaheb Patwardhan. The next morning I saw in *The Times of India* a paragraph to the effect that Appasaheb had put himself on reduced rations. Thereupon the same day I wrote[1] to Col. Doyle inquiring about the news and asking to know the orders of the Government of India about conservancy work in the prisons by volunteer prisoners. Not having any reply I sent yesterday a reminder.[2] Since then I have a copy of the orders of the Government of India, but no reply to my inquiry about Appasaheb. For me the matter is of the gravest importance involving my honour. As a result of the protracted correspondence between the authorities and me there was a settlement about the subject-matter thereof and at the instance of Col. Doyle I sent the following wire[3] to Appasaheb Patwardhan on the 6th December last.

It clearly foreshadows resumption of fast by him in the event of an unfavourable decision.

The Government will observe that any decision in this matter that affects Appasaheb affects me equally. As I read the whole of the transactions between December 1st and now in this matter, the Government have recognized the correctness of my action. I hope that they do not now intend to revise their attitude and cut me off from Appasaheb. For the moment therefore I ask whether Appasaheb is or very recently had been on a partial fast and whether he and his comrades have been now permitted to do conservancy work.

Owing to the increasing tension caused by the report of Appasaheb's partial fast, I am requesting Major Bhandari, if he has authority, or to request Col. Doyle, if he has not, to telegraph or

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. E. Doyle", 9-2-1933

[2] *Vide* "Letter to E. E. Doyle", 10-2-1933

[3] Not reproduced here; *vide* "Telegram to S. P. Patwardhan", 6-12-1932

telephone to the Government the contents of the substance of this letter and hope that the Government will end the tension by favouring me with an early reply.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (6), p. 329

335. LETTER TO V. M. NAWLE

February 11, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 8th instant. If you will take my advice I say "Go slow, be patient, do not mind what Bhalakar[1] says but do the service that falls to your lot faithfully and well."

Yours sincerely,

DR. V. M. NAWLE
444 RASTA PETH
POONA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20212

336. LETTER TO JAGANNATH PANT

February 11, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and I appreciate it. Beyond what I have said in the columns of the *Harijan*, it is not possible for me to go and yet not commit breach of faith. If. therefore the article in *Harijan* "Seeking or Giving"[2], does not convince you, I can only ask you to be patient with me and still give your whole-hearted service to the cause of Harijans.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. JAGANNATH PANT
RAMNAGAR
NAINITAL

From a microfilm: S.N. 20213

[1] L. B. Bhopatkar, editor of a conservative Marathi journal, *Bhala*

[2] *Vide* "Seeking or Giving", 11-2-1933

337. LETTER TO BABAN GOKHALAY

February 11, 1933

DEAR GOKHALAY[1],

I was too glad to have your note[2]. I have not yet seen the pamphlet but I shall get it in due course.

I shall be glad to see Mr. and Mrs. Wadia on Tuesday the 14th instant, at 2 p.m. if that date is convenient, if it is not, then on Friday, the 17th instant, at 2 p.m.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. B. GOKHALAY
GIRGAUM

From a microfilm: S.N. 20214

338. LETTER TO P. NARAYANAN NAIR

February 11, 1933

DEAR NARAYANAN,

I have seen your letter to Mahadev Desai. I have asked the correspondent to send me cuttings from *Mathrubhumi* to which he refers. As soon as I get them I shall certainly let you have them. Meanwhile, I am glad of the assurance you have given me that *Mathrubhumi* never descends to the abuse of any community.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20215

339. LETTER TO RAMANANDA CHATTERJEE

February 11, 1933

DEAR RAMANANDA BABOO,

I thank you for taking so much trouble over my letter of the 20th ultimo about the Yeravda Pact. I had read all that appeared in the

[1] Gandhiji's co-worker in Champaran; *vide*
[2] Report of a lecture by Sophia Wadia

Modern Review[1] on the Pact and I wish that I had spared you the trouble of sending me copies by telling you that I had read them and asking you if you had any further comments to offer on the matter in view of the agitation set up in Bengal. I am not so bad as I used to be out of prison. Then, I had not a moment to read even the *Modern Review* let alone other magazines and papers. Inside the prison hitherto I have had time to read the Modern Review which you have been so kindly and punctually sending me from month to month.

The argument in your letter[2] is quite clear to me though it does not convince me. I was surprised even when I read your note on the Yeravda Pact. For I had heard that you had been party to the statement made by Dr. Moonje that so far as Hindu Sabha was concerned he was quite willing that cent per cent seats were given to the depressed classes, and I was glad when I read the statement and still more so when I heard that you had heartily approved of it.

My own position is fundamentally different from yours. If there was to be any reservation at all, and I saw that there had to be, we could not afford to give it in a niggardly spirit. We were bound to give as many seats as Harijan representatives desired and certainly up to their numerical strength. My action was based on absolute trust. If we have to suffer for it no one will be to blame but ourselves. We can never suffer if we will be only strictly just to them. We can never be generous, for there is no danger for years to come of our giving them too much. I wish that I can persuade every caste Hindu as to the measure of the enormity of the wrong done by them to Harijans. Nor do I mind many who have hitherto described themselves as caste Hindus rushing to the registering officers to be classified as Harijans. I do not mind because daily we must be advancing towards effacement of the vicious distinction between caste Hindus and outcastes, so much

[1] Of Octobers, 1932

[2] Wherein the addressee had written: "My individual opinion is against the Poona Pact, so far as it relates to Bengal . . . Reservation of seats for the depressed will not help the really "depressed" or "untouchable" people. . . . The present "depressed" class M.L.C.s generally oppose nationalist parties and side with the pro-bureaucracy Mussalmans. Giving 30 seats out of 80 to the depressed castes would mean the practical wiping out of a nationalist opposition party in the future Bengal Council. . ." (S. N. 20155).

so that it would be a privilege for a caste Hindu to be classified as Harijan.

Indeed, in my opinion Bengal is in a better position than the other Provinces, if it is true that there are very few untouchables in the real sense of the term and I think that it is true but that many are classed as such because they are economically depressed and are suffering from other social disabilities than untouchability. So far as I am concerned, let all, everywhere, who are at all economically depressed and are suffering from any social disability get themselves registered as Harijans, if to be registered as Harijans is an optional act. That very fact will be a factor in the removal of untouchability instead of, as you fear, in hardening it.

Lastly, I do not share your fear that in many elections only those who may be called advanced Harijans will be elected. That and many other things will undoubtedly happen if the reformer either goes to sleep or is insincere. If he is sincere and active, untouchability will be a dying cult and those who are lowest in the social scale and intelligence will get their due. And if at the bottom of all your arguments and fears there is the suspicion that the reformer is not all that one would desire it to be, for a moment, but only for a moment, I would be tempted to share that suspicion, but I am a born optimist. I have faith in my sincerity and activity. Therefore I refuse to suspect my comrades. Hence the counter arguments that I have advanced. I would invite you to share my faith in the reform and the reformers and believe with me that if we are true the Harijans will be true and all will be well. If you find nothing in my letter that appeals to you I would like you to strive with me and tear my argument to pieces. You know the regard I have for you. If it admits of enhancement it would only be enhanced by your frank and fearless criticism. I am anxious that we approach the Yeravda Pact and all it means with perfect confidence in its correctness.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RAMANANDA CHATTERJEE
C/O ‘‘THE MODERN REVIEW”
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20217

340. LETTER TO P. SUBBAROYAN

February 11, 1933

DEAR DR. SUBBAROYAN,

I thank you for your letter and I hope that although even your Bill[1] has gone to Delhi you have not ceased to interest yourself in it and the larger measure and that both you and Mrs. Subbaroyan are doing all you can at your end to promote the cause both generally and particularly with reference to the Bills. My regards to both of you.

Yours sincerely,

DR. P. SUBBAROYAN

FAIRLAWNS

EGMORE, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 20218

341. LETTER TO N. S. VARADACHARI

February 11, 1933

MY DEAR VARADACHARI,

I had your letter of the 6th instant. I am looking forward with interest to the proceedings[2] of tomorrow. If you can get me a brief statement such as the opinion published in this week's *Harijan*, do get it for publication in the next issue. Even an endorsement of the opinion from a well-known pandit or pandits I would like.

Yours sincerely

SJT. N. S. VARADACHARI

A. I. S. A. KHADI VASTRALAYA

MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 20220

[1] On temple-entry; *vide* footnote 3, "Letter to Ranchhoddas Patwari", 11-1-1933

[2] Of the meeting of pandits and important citizens who were to consider the question of temple-entry in Vaishnava temples

342. LETTER TO P. R. THAKUR

February 11, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 6th instant. I have never believed that the problem of untouchability can be solved by mere temple-entry. But I do believe that it can never be solved without temple-entry on equal terms with the others, and I further believe that the economic and educational advance can be accelerated by temple-entry which is really the mark of the removal of untouchability. One may be ever so educated and ever so rich and yet be untouchable, but immediately he has got religious equality through temple-entry, untouchability is gone. At the same time, I believe with you that the educational and economic advance must not be neglected nor subordinated to temple-entry. As a matter of fact, that isbeing prosecuted [as] vigorously as it is possible to do.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. R. THAKUR
VICE-PRESIDENT
ALL BENGAL DEPRESSED CLASSES FEDERATION
127/1 RUSSA ROAD
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20221

343. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

February 11, 1933

CHI PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter only yesterday. It was very good. Those who recite *Gita* give up any worry whatsoever. I do know that your fits are caused by some worry or other. If you need to write every fortnight to Jayaprakash you must write only to him and he can send me the news. If a monthly letter is sufficient for him it will be enough if I too may receive one in the month. Ba is again behind the bars, she is at Sabarmati. Mirabehn too has been transferred to Sabarmati Jail as her health was deteriorating.

Your letter to Ba I shall send to Sabarmati. You are doing well in

studies. Can you understand English well? It was excellent that you were given the job of teaching.

Inform Kanta that I deliberately refrain from writing to her so that she may receive the essential mail due to her without any hindrance. Her news I continue to get through Sumangal.

Mrityunjaya and Vidyavati do not even write to me but I get the news about Father's health. There was no serious complaint about the women inmates of the Ashram; anyway neither your nor Kanta's name was mentioned in it. My work certainly goes on increasing, but I do have some help now that Chhaganbhai is here. Still who can share the work that only I can do? Either it remains undone or I myself do it somehow or other. Do see me on your release.

My health is perfect. I take milk and fruit. I take 1 lb. milk, oranges, dates and *papaya*, sometimes some roasted and crushed almonds too. The weight hovers around 103 lb. The pain in the elbow has become chronic. It should not cause any anxiety. I can spin every day but not much. It is about 100 rounds. Sardar, Mahadev and Chhaganlal are all doing well. Which newspapers can you get? Would you be allowed the *Harijan* that I am bringing out? Mirabehn's letter comes every week. She is permitted to write every week as she does not see anyone.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

[PS.]

If I write to you in Gujarati, will the letter be delivered to you, or must I write only in Hindi?

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3433

344. MESSAGE TO MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

February 11 1933

I am hoping that all the Members, irrespective of their opinion on the merits of the Temple-entry Bills will join in facilitating consideration of the measures in this session itself.

The Hindu, 13-2-1933

345. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA[1]

February 12, 1933

MY DEAR SATISBABU,

You will have got on Sunday a parcel of 500 *Harijans*. I do not know how you will distribute them, but I suppose you can think of better ways than I can suggest from here. From among the friends in the mofussil you will please have as many subscribers as possible and get newsboys to do the street sales. I do not know if you will want the Khadi Pratishthan to act as agents. But if you feel that the Pratishthan cannot undertake the work, please try to get as many subscribers as possible and collect the money and send a cheque for the amount and save so much money for the *Harijan*. In case you would have the Pratishthan to take up the agency please let the Manager know direct the maximum number of copies you will want.

With *pranams* to Hemprabhadevi,

Yours sincerely,

MAHADEV

From a photostat: G.N. 1625b

346. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

February 12, 1933

MY DEAR MARY,

I have your letters but I have also the news that you are suffering from asthma. Are you not overdoing it? You will not succeed in bending the flesh beyond its capacity. Humbly recognize your limitations. No one in the Ashram is expected to go beyond his or her strength. Do not go barefoot and do not expose your head to the sun. Do not draw water at the well. Insist on getting fruit for yourself. Let the doctor be called in if necessary. You have chosen to be a daughter. Now you have the opportunity of proving one and quickly getting well by carrying out instructions. I hope you are taking warm baths unless you are used to cold baths.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5991. Also C.W. 3316. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] This was countersigned by Gandhiji.

347. LETTER TO G. M. THAWARE

February 12, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. The idea of a separate university for Harijans is attractive, but it is hardly necessary to create a separate university. In the place of that we have Mr. David's scheme of which you must have already read and of which you will see a little more in last week's *Harijan*. It is elastic and economical in the sense that every rupee obtained under the scheme goes directly for the tuition of Harijans and it is also the quickest method of giving higher education to selected Harijan students. If Mr. David's scheme proves successful, there should be no difficulty in extending it so as to cover a further selection of students for being sent to foreign countries.

Industrial education too I should treat precisely in the same manner as I would treat higher education.

Of cinema shows I understand but little, having never attended any. An attempt is already being made to induce the better classes to engage Harijans as domestic servants and I think it is coming.

As to the caste system, I would commend the last week's issue of *Harijan* to your attention for my views. I think this answers all your questions. I take it that you have sent a copy of your letter to the Central Board or at least a similar letter, if not a copy.

Yours sincerely

G. M. THAWARE
ASST. GEN. SECY.
ALL-INDIA DEPRESSED CLASSES ASSOCIATION
NAGPUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 20229

348. LETTER TO N.

February 12, 1933

DEAR N.,

Kumar Diwakar Singh whom you call Devula gave me your note.

Your way of addressing me as your son is very strange. I lost my mother years ago. I am fast making daughters and sisters. But mother I have not found. Age is no bar. If you can inspire me with mother-worship towards you nothing would please me better. But let me say that your letter before me has filled me with misgivings. It smells of the hysteric. Your judgment of the friend whom you have sent is not confirmed by my talks with him. He seems to me to be a youth of unbalanced mind. He is not likely to do much in Allahabad.

But more serious still is the attack upon your character that came to me yesterday from an unexpected source. The friend who gave me the warning is a man of great worth and has no end to serve by misleading me. He simply warns me against my playing into your hands; of course the friend has no first-hand information.

But it is against my nature to keep such reports from those of whom I have them and in whose welfare I may be interested as I am in yours. Your first letters prepossessed me in your favour and I thought that I could use you for the common service of Truth. This report coupled with your latest letter have created a doubt in my mind. I should hope that it has no solid foundation.

If you have any care for my opinion, you will lay aside all work and without trumpet come to Poona, leave your luggage at the station and come to me any day after 9 a.m. and let me see you face to face and ask you some straight questions.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 20041

349. LETTER TO DR. HIRALAL SHARMA

February 12, 1933

DEAR DR. SHARMA,

I was glad to have your letter.[1] Amtussalaam being with you puts me at ease. She has such great faith in your ability to cure her. I do hope that she will be thoroughly restored to health. I hope that your troubles will be soon over. I am glad you are preparing yourself for the Ashram life. It will please me greatly if you could go to the Ashram.

Yours,

BAPU

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 18

350. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[*February*][2] *12, 1933*

CHI. DEVDAS,

I got your letter. Write to me when you get time and let me know your reasons for thinking that the reforms suggested by you in Hindi are possible. There is Dr. Sharma's Sun-ray Hospital in Karol Bagh. Amtussalaam has been admitted there. She has great faith in Dr. Sharma. Find some time and get acquainted with him, and learn from him whatever appeals to you. Give me some details about the hospital. See Amtussalaam and inquire after her health. I hope you remember about the small Urdu dictionary. I will remember what you have written about Rajaji. Do not be lazy in writing to me. Send me Rajaji's and your comments on *Harijan*. Request him to write to me a few lines.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1993

[1] Amtussalaam had told the addressee that Gandhiji, being worried about the correctness of the nature-cure treatment followed for the Ashram inmates, wanted him to go to the Ashram and stay there for some time. The addressee had therefore written to Gandhiji that after disposing of the work in hand he would immediately go to the Ashram.

[2] From the postmark and the reference to *Harijan*; the source has "12-1-33", which is evidently a slip.

351. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

February 12, 1933

CHI RAMA,

How is this? After taking a vow to write to me every week, you broke it the very next week. But please remember I will not leave you. One may not give one's word, but having given it one should keep it even at the cost of one's life.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5361

352. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

February 12, 1933

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I did not find your letter incomplete in any respect. I hope you got my previous letter.

An act of expiation for violation of a vow should be directly related to the nature of the vow. If one has been guilty of telling a lie, the proper expiation for it should be observance of silence for some time and not a resolution to give up drinking, for the latter is desirable even in itself. If drinking was the cause of one's speaking, untruth, then of course it would be one's duty to give it up. Similarly, if you touched your wife's body with impure thoughts, you should stop going to her room or even refrain from the sight of your wife for some days. In addition to doing this, you may give up eating sweets as reminder to yourself of your resolution. However, you are fully awake and conscious of your lapses. You will, therefore, be saved.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9512

353. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA N. KHARE

February 12, 1933

CHI. RAMBHAU,

This time you have signed your letter in Bengali. If you have done all this with a proper plan, it is certainly good. It should not be a matter for wonder that a young man should try to learn Sanskrit, Bengali, Urdu, Tamil, Punjabi, Sindhi, Hindi, Gujarati, Marathi, Oriya, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and English, for of all these the really independent languages are only three, English, Sanskrit and Tamil. The other languages are the daughters either of Sanskrit or Tamil. But you will be able to learn them only if you are really interested in them.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 304. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

354. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

February 12, 1933

CHI. KAKA,

I got your letter. If we have trouble when we cut teeth, why should we not have it also when we lose them? Do you get pure milk? Though your experience is that a milk diet brings on weakness and causes diarrhoea, I still think that the experiment is worth making. Cereal foods should not be necessary for one to be able to digest milk. The fact that you require them indicates some weakness in the system. I cling to my belief that one can eat wheat only when one is able to digest milk and fruits. Some people believe that solid food helps in the digestion of milk. But in fact it is not digested, and is retained in the body in some harmful form which gives one the illusion of strength. If you get pure and fresh milk, it is worth while trying the experiment of drinking it without heating it. These days I drink such milk. It has done no harm so far, though I have not carried on the experiment long enough to say that it has benefited me. I started it about fifteen days ago.

You should get your knees massaged. You cannot afford to be an old man so soon. I have been rising at three these days and find

Jupiter and Mars right over my head., I still indulge in my love of watching the stars. Just when my interest had become absorbing, you left me.[1] How much I miss you! I am expecting a big telescope on Monday.

Give me your comments on *Harijan*, and also write on some subject if you think of one. Don't be particular about writing artistically. If you think of any questions which you think I should discuss, send them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9493. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

355. LETTER TO BAL KALELKAR

February 12, 1933

CHI. BAL,

I got your letter.

You did a very good thing in fasting as a remedy for your fever.

An innocuous egg is one from which no chick can come out. Personally I regard such eggs as acceptable food. From a medical point of view, they are beneficial in a variety of conditions. They are likely to be harmful in regard to brahmacharya, but not to persons of weak health. There are two considerations which can be urged against such eggs. From a religious point of view, they are an unnecessary addition to the number of articles which we eat, and from the point of view of vegetarianism they are as objectionable as milk. Probably it gives a hen greater pain to carry such eggs and be caged for their sake than it does a cow to be milked. However, such eggs are not in the same category as meat, which we regard as forbidden. It may be necessary in some cases to recommend innocuous eggs as medicine. This fully sums up my view on this subject. Keep a diary and do not neglect to spin for *yajna*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9494. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

[1] Gandhiji and Kalelkar were together in Yeravda Jail in 1930; for Gandhiji's articles "Watching the Heavens", *vide*

356. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

February 12, 1933

I have received Panditji's letter. It is disappointing. But I look upon it as a gift of love. I also am wiring to him to come and see me. If he does not come, it may be necessary for you to go there.

You should not worry about my fast. I am ascertaining the facts. I will not take a single step without careful thought, though I may not be able to convince you and others every time. Let me always remain true to myself. On the day on which I am false to myself, you may be sure that I will have fallen. "Being false to myself" means not doing what I think to be right.

Yes, the heat which is being given to me is diathermy, but it has not benefited me at all. The Chief Surgeon here says that the trouble is a symptom of old age. This hypothesis does not seem to be altogether fanciful. If it is correct, why should we be upset? The only remedy then will be simple life and less strain on the affected parts.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 120

357. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
February 12, 1933

CHI. LILAVATI,

Your letter has delighted me. Do no allow your health to deteriorate now that it has improved. I do not remember receiving Gangabehn's letter. I keep receiving news about her. Do you know the conditions about visiting? Do come if you want to come under those conditions.

Do keep writing.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

358. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR
February 12, 1933

CHI. PRABHUDAS

I cannot write a long letter. It does not matter whether you stay in Khali or outside but it seems proper to me that you should so live that you spend only what is necessary for you alone. It will be more convenient if you live in the Ashram. Gomatibehn has in view a girl of twenty-two. But the fact that she belongs to the *Bania* caste, does present a difficulty. However if the girl is agreeable, all the conditions stipulated by you will be fulfilled. If, therefore, you think you can marry her, I would advise you to get married immediately. Everybody will be pleased. If you wish, you may come and see me. Have you calmed down now ?

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32987

359. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

February 12, 1933

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

I shall publish the questions and the answers[1] somewhere as the occasion permits.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 833

360. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

February 12, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

If the name Mahadev is astrologically unsuitable ask Father for a few suitable ones and send them to me. I shall select one from

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Moolchand Agrawal", 29-1-1933

among them. Why does not Father himself give him a name? Hope you are both well. Blessings to Anand.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

361. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

February 12, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I have your letters. You did right in going straight to Delhi. Now you must remain there until you recover fully. You should come to see me on your recovery before you go to the Ashram.

That Dr. Sharma is preparing to go to the Ashram is comforting news to me.

You can write to me whenever you wish. It will cause me no discomfort to write to you, but your not writing will certainly grieve me.

Inform Kudsia that she may keep writing to me. How is she doing at Patiala?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G. N. 276

362. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALCHARI

February 12/13, 1933

MY DEAR C. R.,

I have read your and G.'s[1] appeal to the public. Why do you even so much as mention the fast and its possibility? You surely undermine its spiritual value, if the fast, if it at all comes, is to be a spiritual fast. I do not even know that the fast is a certainty if the Bills do not pass during this session or at all. I think that you should all dismiss it from your consideration altogether and let the public mind work unfettered by it. When it does come it will produce its own effect

[1] Ghanshyamdas Birla

if it is a spiritual act. If it is the product of a diseased or arrogant mind, it will merely torture the body and excite pity or contempt according to the temperament of the people who may hear of it. Do take this advice as from an expert and act up to it to the fullest extent.

Then you have seriously to consider Pt. Malaviyaji's attitude.[1] He is strongly against the Bills especially if they are not to be circulated. Of course I do not share the view. I shall be writing to him. But you should see him if you can at all spare yourself or send Devdas alone. But on this I have no firm opinion. You will do what appeals to you most. You know the outside atmosphere firsthand. All my knowledge is secondhand and therefore worthless.

I had what must be described in one way as a very unsatisfactory interview with Dr. A.[2] He is irreconcilable. In another way it was satisfactory. I know him better than I did.

Please share the letter with G. and Thakkar Bapa.

Love.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 20230

363. DRAFT TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

[February *13, 1933*][3]

C. R.

PLEASE DO NOT MENTION POSSIBILITY FAST ANYWHERE ANY ACCOUNT. SUCH MENTION UNBECOMING AND IRRELEVANT. BUT TELL ALL MEMBERS ASSEMBLY ESPECIALLY HINDU MEMBERS THAT FOR INDIA'S HONOUR IT IS NECESSARY CONSIDER UNTOUCHABILITY BILLS THIS SESSION. IF BOMBAY MEETING OF SEPTEMBER WAS REPRESENTATIVE HINDU OPINION HINDU MEMBERS BOUND DELIVER GOODS BY PUSHING FORWARD BILLS. IF HINDU HONOUR MAY ALSO BE REGARDED INDIA'S HONOUR OTHER MEMBERS IN MY OPINION BOUND FACILITATE DISPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION BILLS. AM CONVINCED THAT NONE DESIGNED COERCE SINGLE PERSON OR INTERFERE WITH ANYBODY'S RELIGION. EXISTING POSITION STIFLES CONSCIENCE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 20230.a

[1] For a talk, *vide* "A Talk", 13-2-1933

[2] Dr. B. R. Ambedkar

[3] This telegram is found on pages 5 and 6 while the preceding letter is found on pages 1 to 4 of the same sheaf of papers.

364. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

February 13, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

It is the morning of the silence day. I got up at three and have taken up your letter to reply to it. I liked it very much indeed. You have given me in it all that I wanted. It fully answers to my imagination of what women can give me. What it gives seems small and unspectacular, but is very useful to a seeker after truth. I learn something from an objective letter like this one, and it helps me to guide you and others.

The Ashram is indeed a dharmashala. But the word has two meanings. It means a place where people can stay free, but it also means a place where one can learn dharma and try to follow it. The Ashram is a dharmashala in this second sense of the word. But dharma means truth. The Ashram, therefore, is a place where one may know the truth and try to follow it, that is, show *agraha*[1] for it, and hence it is Satyagraha Ashram.

In our quest for truth, we wish to cultivate unity with all living creatures. The Ashram, therefore, is an ever-growing family. But it is something more even than that, for it is the means and dharma is the end, and not *vice versa*. It is also a big school, and yet it is not so; for, since it is a family, we cannot mechanically apply there rules of outward behaviour such as are followed for other types of training. The letter of the rule has to be sacrificed in order to save the spirit of the rule.

I will now apply these observations to some specific cases. In bringing up and educating Lakshmi, we, including you, are being tested. What would we do to children in our own family? What would you do to your own sister? If Lakshmi does not observe the rules, the fault is chiefly mine, and then yours. I leave out the others. I leave out Narandas, too, for if we hold him responsible for the behaviour of every person in the Ashram, he will not be able to attend to his own duties. Looking after Lakshmi is a woman's job, and particularly of the woman to whom it is entrusted. The fault is chiefly mine because I am her adopted father and also mother. I did my duty as a father but

[1] Firmness

not as a mother, because I remained away from the Ashram most of the time. I feel now that I should not have accepted Lakshmi at all. But who was I to decide? I am but a servant of God. I did not seek Lakshmi. God sent her. Let Him, then, look after her. She was under the charge of Ba first, then of Santok, then of Gangabehn, and now she is under your charge. None of you asked to have charge of her. It was time and circumstances which put her under the charge of these persons one after another. You should now do the best that you can. Whenever necessary, you may consult me. Do not get tired of your charge or despair. Have faith and bathe her with your love. God will ultimately solve the problem. She has come to us as a representative of Harijans to claim payment of the debt which we owe to them. If she is full of shortcomings and is indolent, the responsibility for that lies on you, me and on the caste Hindus. We reap as we sow. I am trying to get her married off. I have written to Lakshmidas and inquired about Maruti. I have also written to Dudabhai.

You need not get upset because more boys and girls are coming to the Ashram. They will benefit to the extent that they observe the rules. We may let them stay as long as we tolerate their laxity, and ask them to leave when we can do so no longer. People do not stay in a dharmashala permanently. Even near relations do not stay permanently. Those of them who can accommodate themselves to the discipline of the Ashram will stay, and the others will leave. Why should we care either way? Moreover, we cannot adopt any other policy in the present circumstances. As long as we can do so, we should admit people who come unasked and who seem deserving. Most of them will leave on their own. Our rules themselves will drive them away. Everybody who comes must do physical work. They should clean lavatories and eat simple food in the same manner as we swallow medicine. They will not get jaggery, nor wheat as often as they might wish. If we can daily demonstrate more and more clearly by our manner of life that the Ashram is a representative of the starving poor, we shall always be safe and happy. This means that there should be increasing simplicity in our life in the Ashram and the rules should be observed more and more strictly. If fire preserves its nature, creatures which cannot endure it simply cannot live near it. That is the virtue of fire and not its defect. It is because, unlike fire, we are not true to ourselves that all the problems arise. My suggestion about simplicity and strictness in observing the rules concerns ourselves. We should cultivate them in ever greater degree. We seek

,protection for ourselves in our inner selves and not outside of us "we" here means all of us who voluntarily stay in the Ashram, you, I and everybody else. And one should not observe only as many rules as the other inmates do. One must observe every rule as strictly as one can. In this lies the secret of the progress of the Ashram. The rule should be, a liberal attitude towards others and strictness towards oneself. Even so, we shall preserve some minimum decency in our attitude to ourselves, for very often our liberal attitude towards others will not be sincere and our strictness towards ourselves will be so only in appearance.

The ideal for girls is a life of inviolate *brahmacharya*. Training for it includes training for ideal married life. Boys and girls do not require to be instructed as to what married life means. That relation is a part of the animal nature of men and women. The institution of marriage was devised as a means of exercising some control on that nature. Its perfect control means *brahmacharya*. Anybody who can observe this perfect control will also be able to observe the limited control of marriage. But those who regard marriage itself as their ideal will not understand the real purpose even of marriage. What training does one require for lust? It will grow of itself. However, the girl who has accepted complete *brahmacharya* as her ideal must learn how to manage a home. She must learn something about child-care. She will not be a nun living in a cave. An unmarried woman marries the whole world, makes herself a mother and a daughter to all people and thereby becomes fit to manage the affairs of the whole society. May be there has been no such unmarried woman. Nevertheless that is the ideal. For all girls, therefore, the training should be the same. I think I have explained the idea clearly. If I have not done so, ask me to explain it again.

This will explain your duty towards that Muslim woman.

The real cause of fainting fits and similar ailments in girls lies in our own shortcomings. If we have made fairly satisfactory progress, even the presence of young people among us will not be dangerous to the Ashram. But whenever we see such danger, we should ask the young man or woman to leave. If you wish to stop admitting other young men or women, you may do so.

All my hopes rest on Narandas. If Narandas who is the secretary of the Ashram is the Narandas as I imagine him to be, everything will be well. My faith in him is daily increasing. If he is defeated, some

other old inmate of the Ashram will grow and advance, and I am sure, therefore, that everything will be well. There are many residents in the Ashram but only a few inmates. That is why we do not get sufficient workers. In these very imperfect conditions, all of you should do the best that you can.

The Ashram is the measuring rod by which people can judge me. I take it with me wherever I go. Wherever my body may be, my soul is always in the Ashram. All the shortcomings found in the Ashram must be present, visibly or invisibly, in me too. If I have made a mistake in understanding you all, the blame must be mine and nobody else's. If, however, I do not know myself, how can I sit in judgment over all of you? When I think of particular persons, I see that I did not invite anybody except Chhaganlal and Maganlal. All the others were sent to me by God to test me or to help me.

And now another matter. You made a mistake in not going to Dr. Patel yourself. You cannot ask a doctor's advice through a note. Observe complete silence. Show your throat to the doctor and follow his advice. You should not be obstinate in this matter.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10326

365. LETTER TO HINDU CENTRAL COMMITTEE

February 13, 1933

DEAR FRIENDS,

1. In continuation of my letter acknowledging yours of 4th instant I have now to say that I have read the statement of the Hindu Central Committee with much attention and when after reading the statement I saw the names of distinguished lawyers amongst other notabilities as the original members of the Committee I was filled with sorrow.

2. Take this assertion in the statement:

> We feel that there is no question of inferiority complex in the divisions of Hindu society and least of all, no sin has been committed all these centuries by the orthodox Hindus who have been following the traditions established by all the merciful humanitarian sages of this land.

Is this assertion borne out by the evidence of the senses? If the Committee were to contend that there is in the Hindu Shastras no

inferiority or superiority I should at once agree. But untouchability as it is practised today with the attendant system of locations and deprivation practically of all the amenities of life for the so-called untouchables is surely proof of their inferiority. These disabilities have been often enumerated in the public Press. The precept of equality therefore seems to have been systematically and cruelly disregarded by modern Hindu society. Is the Committee able to point out any act on the part of what it calls the orthodox Hindus for the amelioration of the economic and material condition of the depressed classes? And is not the very existence of a class called "depressed" sufficient contradiction of the above-quoted assertion?

3. The Committee then proceeds and says:

> There are also in many places in the country large sections of the population amongst caste Hindus who are worse than *Panchamas* both economically and culturally.

I am unaware of any sections of caste Hindus who are both economically and culturally worse than *Panchamas*, and if there are I should very much like to know their names.

4. The third statement of the Committee to which I would invite attention is:

> It will be a travesty of truth to suggest that the orthodox Hindus have not been generous in their dealings with the *Panchamas* or Harijans in the villages.

Is it a sign of generosity on the part of caste Hindus to give leavings of their dishes to Harijans, to force their labour against a starvation wage, to deny to them the services of physicians, schoolmasters, barbers and practically all the other services to which they, the caste Hindus, are used?

5. Another statement of the Committee is:

> Except in the higher classes today, there is no unemployment problem in the country.

Surely, this is a sweeping statement at complete variance with known facts as found in historical and Government records.

6. The Committee then proceeds:

> The first creed of the orthodox Hindu is always the gift of food to the hungry and he has always felt it as a religious duty and his first prayer has been to the Lord to vouchsafe happiness to all human beings.

The creed is undoubtedly there. Has the Committee any

evidence to show any corresponding action on the part of the orthodox Hindus in connection with Harijans?

7. Then the Committee goes on to say:

> It cannot be suggested for one moment that though the Congress has thrown itself whole-heartedly in favour of this agitation for the removal of untouchability and for temple-entry after the announcement of the fast of Mr. Gandhi, it has done any appreciable service for the economic and material uplift of the depressed classes.

The Committee should know that it is not possible for the Congress "to throw itself whole-heartedly into the agitation". It is being carried on by the general Hindu population organized by the recently formed Servants of Untouchables Society. That Society invites all without distinction of party to help it to remove untouchability. This Society has planned a wide constructive programme. In so far as the Congress itself is concerned, its Hindu members have a record for the service of Harijans which is second to that of no other similar organization.

8. But the Committee goes on:

> If the call to join the movement for such uplift comes from persons who are pledged to temple-entry, the orthodox Hindus on their part cannot but view it with suspicion, especially when it is preceded by Gandhi's cry of "Leave the temple-entry to me".

I fail to see why the orthodox Hindus should view with suspicion the call for joining the movement for uplift because it comes from persons who are openly advocating temple-entry, not by compulsion but by conversion. And what can be the meaning of emphasis on my statement "Leave the temple-entry to me"? I am charitable enough to assume that the Committee framed that sentence without knowing the context in which ''Leave the temple-entry to me" was first used. It was said in answer to correspondents who were impatient to offer satyagraha and adopt energetic measures for opening other temples. In order to keep the movement within fixed limits and in order to confine direct action by way of fast for the present at least to Sjt. Kelappan and myself I said to the correspondents, "Leave the temple-entry to me and go on with the other constructive programme of economic and educational uplift". The Committee can easily verify this from my writings. I hope therefore that the Committee will disabuse their minds of the prejudice betrayed against me in the sentence quoted.

9. The next sentence in the Committee's statement runs:

> If Mr. Gandhi and his followers will give an undertaking to save temples and other religious institutions from interference by the mixed legislatures of the land, we are willing to whole-heartedly co-operate with them.

I have shown repeatedly that the two Bills before the Legislative Assembly imply no interference with temples or other religious institutions. They seek to restore the status quo existing before certain decisions of law-courts, well known to the legal members of the Committee. I can give the assurance on my behalf and on behalf of my co-workers that we have no desire whatsoever to invoke interference by the legislatures in matters of religion and if only the Committee will co-operate in the prosecution of the general movement for the removal of untouchability, not of the desirable type such as is mentioned in the Shastras in the interests of sanitation, but of the—in my opinion—undesirable type as is being practised today, the Committee will soon discover that there is no cause whatsoever for alarm or suspicion and that if there is anything in the two Bills that can be shown to be an interference with religious liberty, the defect can undoubtedly be remedied without difficulty.

10. With the sentiment expressed in the last two sentences of the statement of the Committee I can whole-heartedly agree, for so far as I am concerned there is no desire indiscriminately "to import Western ideals of society, civilization and equality". Perhaps, no one has written, and endeavoured as much as possible to act in accordance with the writing, against Western civilization and I have not the slightest desire to destroy the foundations of Hindu caste system, if by that is meant varnashramadharma. The movement against untouchability is on that very account deliberately circumscribed and restricted to the very things described by the Committee except temple-entry, and as to this last, it can be shown conclusively that there is no desire whatsoever to force temple-entry but by proper disciplined agitation to bring about a change in Hindu public opinion, a change not inconsistent with the spirit of the Shastras.

11. If the Committee will dispassionately read my analysis of the statement, I am not without hope that it will see that whoever has framed the statement has committed the members of the Committee to assertions which cannot be supported by existing facts. The statement though sent to me is merely a copy of what has already been sent to

the Press, but on reading the statement I discovered that according to the Committee's admissions there was a great deal that was common between the Committee and the reformers and that the assertions which were made in order to emphasize differences were mostly if not wholly imaginary and not capable of proof. I felt that I would point out to the Committee in a private communication the glaring flaws in the statement and see if there was not any possibility of meeting on a common platform.

12. If the Committee however considers that all the assertions made in the statement can be supported and that I am labouring under self-delusion, I would be glad to be corrected. If the Committee sees any good in my letter, I invite it to send one or more representatives to confer with me with a view to exploring possibilities of common action or at least of understanding the real differences in matters of principle. Pending your reply, I am not sending this letter to the Press, but if the Committee finds it to be hopeless, it is at liberty to publish it.

Yours sincerely,

THE HON. SECRETARIES
HINDU CENTRAL COMMITTEE
459 MINT STREET
P.T., MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 20232

366. LETTER TO RAMJI

February 13, 1933

BHAISHRI RAMJI,

I got your wire. Swarupbehn's name in her husband's house is Vijayalakshmi. Her address at Bombay is Meher Mansion, Laburnum Road, Gamdevi. I have sent her your wire and your suggestions. See that after coming there, she does not have to bear the expense. Arrange interviews with the Raja and Ranis. Introduce her to some courteous sanatanist, if there is such a one. Do not let her run up and down too much.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XX

367. LETTER TO M. S. ANEY

February 13, 1933

I am no more a general. I am as good as dead. I have ceased to be a general as I am dead in the civil sense. Not only that, but I am not even a pawn. All your generals and pawns are out. In reply to those who had doubts I quoted a well-known Sanskrit saying[1]. Who could make it clearer? The Government has correctly interpreted my words.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 141

368. LETTER TO URMILADEVI

February 13, 1933

No one has a right to physical rest. Spiritual rest is always possible. One must have the will power. This will be *anasaktiyoga*[2]. Those who work with non-attachment, never tire physically; if they do, they will soon go to sleep and have all the rest. In the absence of attachment the *atman* will surely be at peace.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 141

369. A LETTER

February 13, 1933

I hope you must have dismissed the idea of employing a Pathan,[3] haven't you? If one gets beating from one's wife and yet would not be angry, one should dance [with joy]. While among husbands there would be quite a few for every hundred who are given

[1] यो ध्रवारित्यज्य, अध्रुवं परिषेते।
ध्रवाणि तह्यय नश्यान्ति, अध्रवं नष्टमेव च॥

"He who pursues an insecure object leaving the secure ones loseth the latter, the former being as good as lost."

[2] Performing actions without attachment to their outcome

[3] The addressee, harassed by his wife, wanted to employ a Pathan so that the hirelings of his wife may not annoy his girl friends and two other girls who were accommodated in his house.

to beating their wives, the proportion for wives who beat their husbands may not be one in ten thousand. . . .[1] They may belong to a very small class. Make use of the knowledge you have acquired.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III p. 141

370. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS[2]

February 13, 1933

Asked if permission was given to Appasaheb as a special case, Mr. Gandhi declined to answer. But it is learnt that the new orders of the Government of India, while permitting high-caste Hindus to do voluntary conservancy work, leave it entirely to the discretion of the Jail Superintendent to permit or not to permit a particular prisoner to do this.

Asked why he attached such importance to this subject, Mr. Gandhi replied that untouchability had to go everywhere, and more so in jails. Untouchability could not exist in jails where prisoners could not insist on high-class and low-class distinctions, and where they must be willing to perform all services, including those imposed on the so-called low castes.

Asked if he would advise high castes outside also to do conservancy work, Mr. Gandhi replied:

I would most decidedly expect high-caste men to render voluntarily all useful services which today are reserved to certain classes. The idea that the most necessary service in the world will be considered degrading or should carry any sin with it is abhorrent to me. Our villages will wear a different appearance altogether when sanitary services begin to be classed among the honourable occupations, nor will the streets of our cities be so dangerously dirty as they are today, when we have ceased to consider it degrading to take a brush, bucket and broom in order to do the necessary cleansing.

The Hindu, 14-2-1933

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] Gandhiji was interviewed after he had received information of the breaking of partial fast by Appasaheb Patwardhan in Ratnagiri Jail when he was permitted to do conservancy work as a volunteer.

371. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

February 14, 1933

YOUR LETTER. (I) SUGGEST YOUR COMING HERE (TO) DISCUSS IMPORTANT QUESTIONS BEFORE COMING (TO) DEFINITE CONCLUSIONS. (I) CONSIDER BILLS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY IN TERMS OF (THE) BOMBAY PLEDGE. THEY DO NOT CONSTITUTE COMPULSION, BUT THEY RESTORE FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE. NEWSPAPERS PUBLISH INFORMATION THAT YOU HAVE WRITTEN ME OPPOSING BILLS. DO YOU DESIRE PUBLICATION (OF) YOUR LETTER (AT) THIS STAGE? AWAITING WIRE. [1]

GANDHI

Harijan, 18-2-1933

372. LETTER TO SRIPRAKASA

February 14, 1933

MY DEAR SHRIPRAKASH,

Though doleful, the receipt of your letter was a matter of joy for me. I have no doubt whatsoever that in the quiet of the village surroundings you will soon recover your lost health and repair your broken spirits. You are not an old man but being a man of emotion and possessing a sensitive nature, you imagine all sorts of evil. You have many years of active. life and service in front of you. Many people have gone through much more distress of the body than you have and yet I see them today in possession of sound health and bright spirits. *Mens sana in corpore sano* you learnt in your youth and as soon as the body becomes healthy, the mind is bound to react. Meanwhile therefore your first and the last care is to regain your health and not to worry about the future of the family, the country or the world. You cannot be the architect of any of these but you can contribute your own share to the advancement of all the three. In a true scheme of life the real advancement of one conduces to the advancement of all.

You may not write anything of your experiences of the events

[1] For the addressee's reply, *vide* "Telegram from Madan Mohan Malaviya", 15-2-1933

happening around you. That must be a sealed book to me except what I can gather through the papers that I am permitted to receive; nor, constituted as I am by nature, have I the slightest desire to know them. A prisoner is civilly dead to the outside world, and that is right. If he hankers after peeping into the forbidden land he is like the departed ghost which according to our belief misbehaves itself if it hankers after establishing communication with the world he was made by the Angel of Death to leave. A prisoner who misbehaves like the ghost fails to establish real communication with the world he has left and in the vain pursuit loses the pleasure, such as it may be, which falls to the lot even of the prisoner. Realizing this beautiful truth I have never misbehaved like the ghost.

I shall remember what you say about the spelling of your name.[1] It was Father who gave me the idea that you were a stickler for the right spelling of your name. You have now repaid him in his own coin and retort that he is a stickler, not you. I have thrown the apple of discord between father and son. You will now fight it out amongst yourselves. I do not mind because I am out of harm's way, and since I have your permission I shall continue to spell your name after my own fashion.

But if I am not concerned about your health I am much concerned about Shivaprasad's. I now understand why he is silent after having promised that he would send me weekly report about his health. I am deeply distressed. I will write to him, but in any case you will continue to give me such news as you may receive, and though you may not give me the news of the outside world you must continue to write to me about your own progress.

Remember me to the children and give them the love of us all and accept the same for yourself.

BAPU

Sriprakasa Papers, File No. G-2. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Bhagwandas", 31-1-1933

373. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

February 14, 1933

MY DEAR RAJBHOJ,

I have your letter. I see that you are in a hurry. I have thought over your scheme and I have conferred with Sheth Jamnalalji also. I think that at the present moment you should concentrate your attention upon your Hostel. That will certainly absorb much of your time if you are to make it an ideal home for students and then you will want some leisure from that routine work for public engagements. If you took up the responsibility of conducting an Ashram you will have to devote yourself entirely to it and then possess qualifications which you might not have today. In any case, seeing that you have that high ambition, I would like you, when you can spare yourself, to pass at least three months at the Ashram and try to live the Ashram life. That will certainly be of use to you in every one of your activities.

I am quite sure that you should give up the idea of reviving *Dalit Bandhoo*. As to the Marathi edition of *Harijan*, I am considering the thing myself. You have seen how it is a rule with me not to issue any paper that does not become self-supporting. It is to me a test of its being wanted by the public. It is only in rare cases that a paper may be issued in the first instance at a loss.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. P. N. RAJBHOJ
207 GHORPADE PETH
POONA 2

From a photostat: G.N. 789

374. LETTER TO T. K. S. RAJAN

February 14, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am glad you have already taken the work among Harijans. You would report to me a fortnight hence the results of your activity, and I will say what more can be done.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. K. S. RAJAN
SALEM

From a microfilm: S.N. 20241

375. LETTER TO K. V. RADHAKRISHNA SHASTRI

February 14, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter.[1] I am afraid, however, that I cannot adopt the advice you give me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. V. RADHAKRISHNA SHASTRI
VEPERY
MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 20242

376. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

February 14, 1933

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

I thank you very much indeed for sending me a prompt reply, and I am glad that you have written to the Viceroy[2]. I have no doubt that it will have its weight. I thank you also for two copies of the Bill

[1] The addressee had written: "You will do well to secure your release from jail. . . [and] . . . work for swadeshi."

[2] On the question of procedure to be followed in regard to the Untouchability Bills in the Assembly

which you had sought to introduce into the Legislative Assembly, and as you have very considerately given me two copies of the Bill, I am promptly sending one to Rajagopalachariar for such use as he may want to make of it. I shall very probably make use of it for the ensuing number of *Harijan*.[1] I hope you got a copy of the first issue. If you had the time to go through it, I would value your criticism and your opinion for publication on the interpretation of the Shastras on untouchability. As that of a Sanskrit scholar and jurist your opinion will have great value if you can at all find time to give it.

Yours sincerely,

M. R. JAYAKAR, ESQ.

ASHRAM

WINTER ROAD

MALABAR HILL

BOMBAY 6

From a microfilm: S.N. 20243

377. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

February 14, 1933

MY DEAR C. R.,

Herewith a copy of the Bill that Mr. Jayakar sought to introduce into the Legislative Assembly of his time, and of his letter. The text of his Bill might be of use to you.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20249

[1] *Vide* "Sjt. Jayakar on Untouchability", 18-2-1933

378. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

February 14, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter.[1] I understand the situation. We can but do whatever is possible and await the result. It is beyond the control of man. I have a long letter from Malaviyaji in which he opposes the introduction of the Bills altogether and in any case insists upon their circulation. I am suggesting to him that he should come over here and discuss the whole thing with me before coming to a conclusion. I have suggested to Rajaji[2] that he should go to him or send Devdas. I do not know whether it is worth while your going. I leave the thing to you.

About Bengal, I hope you saw my letter[3] to Ramanand Baboo. And now Dr. Ambedkar appears on the scene,

I have written to Rajaji and also telegraphed[4] him as to what I feel about exploiting the possibility of my fast. I think that it should not be done. The fast must be dismissed out of consideration altogether. This exploiting robs it of any spiritual value it might possess. The knowledge that it is a possibility may colour your action but you may not use it to affect the actions of others. That would amount to illegitimate pressure. I wish you will not henceforth mention it anywhere.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20244

[1] The addressee had written: "The Bill could be introduced with a Select committee appointed in this session and can be passed in the Simla session only if the Government help. If the Government obstruct, then of course the Bill may not be introduced even in this session. But from what I see, I hope hey will at least help the introduction of the Bill in this session, but they would not be prepared to go beyond that. They would insist on the Bill being circulated. . . ."

[2] *Vide* "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 12/13-2-1933

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Ramananda Chatterjee", 11-2-1933

[4] *Vide* "Draft Telegram to C. Rajagopalchari", 13-2-1933

379. LETTER TO RANCHHODDAS PATWARI

February 14, 1933

I got your postcard. You had said in it that you would write a long letter. I waited for it, but since none came I am writing this. Ceaseless efforts are being made to persuade Harijans to follow the rules of cleanliness and hygiene. Others may not distinguish between the different aspects of my work for Harijans, but why don't you do so, and help me in regard to those which you accept? I hope you don't doubt my intention or ability to adhere to a decision firmly made. It was my elders who joined themselves in a mutual bond with the Patwari family and, following in their foot-steps, I became personally indebted to you and have, therefore, always looked upon you as a respected elder. How can I give up this respectful attitude and why do you try to make me give it up? What does it matter if there are differences of opinion between us? Haven't I such a difference with my sister too? But she does not cease to be my elder sister for that reason. My family has had the same kind of bond with the Patwari family for half a century and I, for my part, will not break it.

My *pranams* to Chhaganbhai.

Pranams from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 20239

380. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

February 14, 1933

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

I got your postcard. Do not be impatient but learn as much from the Yogashram as you can. I have seen many who thought that they had learnt much in a short time, but repented afterwards. You should not, therefore, be impatient. You need not try Madan's treatments, but it would be worthwhile to see whether his institution is actually running and how. Come here at 12 noon on Saturday. Mathuradas also may accompany you if he wants. Others also who

have secured permission and wish to come may do so. I have no letter from anyone about his coming.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati. C.W. 908. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

381. LETTER TO G. R. ABHYANKAR

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
February 14, 1933

MY DEAR ABHYANKAR,

I thank you for your letter. Enclosed you will find copies of correspondence between Sjt. Athavale and myself. You will now do the needful. I am sorry to have troubled you in the matter, but I know you will not mind it.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: G. R. Abhyankar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

382. LETTER TO R. D. ATHAVALE

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
February 14, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 11th instant. I referred to Sjt. Gangadharrao and he says: "So far as I can remember I do not think that you had given any authority to Mr. Chhapkhane or to anybody else to use the money as he liked. It was understood that the amount collected at the meeting should be sent either to me or to you. The amount collected in the tour was to be applied to khadi."

Your letter appears to be positive. I myself have no recollection whatsoever but it is most unusual for me when I am touring for a specific purpose and with a responsible man like Sjt. Gangadharrao Deshpande to leave any collections with anybody and that too without

any instructions whatsoever as to its use. I would therefore like a letter from Sjt. Chhapkhane himself as to what he knows about it.

I must dissent from the proposition you have laid down that a person has no control over the monies entrusted by him to another for disposal even when the amount is unspent. But the first thing to determine is what was actually intended by me when the money was left with you. I take it that from now you will not make any use of the money till the matter is finally settled as to its control and disposal.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. D. ATHAVALE
SHRI RAM STORES
SANGLI

From a copy: G. R. Abhyankar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

383. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

February 14, 1933

I have most carefully read Dr. Ambedkar's statement[1] for which I cannot conceal my sorrow, but I must also confess he has a perfect right to make a statement as he has done. Harijans have laboured under grievous wrongs for ages, and Dr. Ambedkar and other educated Harijans are fully conscious of these wrongs. The marvel to me is that they are not more bitter and more resentful than they are.

Having therefore excused their position, I cannot travel the same length that Dr. Ambedkar would have me do. He has asked me a straight question, and is entitled to an equally straight answer from me.

I have described myself as a Harijan by adoption and in order to qualify myself for the privilege that it is to me, I have endeavoured to enter the very depths of their feelings. I have lived with them, dined with them, and they have always claimed the first place in my thoughts and my prayers. I have done so not to do any favour to them, but as a matter of religious duty.

I am a Hindu not merely because I was born in the Hindu fold,

[1] *Vide* "B. R. Ambedkar's Statement", 13-2-1933

but I am one by conviction and choice. As I know it and interpret it, it gives me all the solace I need, both here and hereafter. It solves for me many riddles of life. But it also contains, as it is practised today, the big blot of untouchability in the sense in which it is understood today, that is, distinction between man and man, one occupying the topmost rung of the ladder and another the lowest. If this doctrine of utmost superiority and utmost inferiority, descending from father to son for eternity, is an integral part of Hinduism without the slightest prospect of a change, then I no more want to belong to it than does Dr. Ambedkar. But I am convinced that this doctrine of eternal damnation is a thing utterly foreign to the spirit of Hinduism and the Shastras as I have understood them. There is no superiority or inferiority in the Hinduism of my conception. Therefore I should go the whole length with Dr. Ambedkar in fighting the arrogation of superiority on the part of any individual or class over any other. My fight against untouchability is a fight against this horrid doctrine. If untouchability goes from the heart of Hindus, superiority and inferiority are also gone.

But when Dr. Ambedkar wants to fight varnashrama itself I cannot be in his camp, because I believe varnashrama to be an integral part of Hinduism. It is quite evident that the varnashrama of Dr. Ambedkar's conception is being practised today, but that is not my conception of varnashrama. In my opinion, at present both varnadharma and ashramadharma are in abeyance, and if I were asked what varna is in operation at present, I would say Shudra varna, not because it is the lowest, but because it is the only thing that remains, for the divine knowledge, the power behind it and wealth for the support of this knowledge and power are gone. Knowledge, power and wealth there certainly are in a way. But in the religious conception of varnadharma, these three have to be used not for personal ends, but for spiritual and social advance. The only thing that remains open for all today is service, also included in the scheme of varnashramadharma, for a spiritual end. Out of that spirit of service, it is possible to revive spiritual knowledge, the power to defend it and the wealth to sustain both. Then, those who are in possession of that knowledge, and will use it for society will be Brahmins, those who use that power for the benefit of society will be Kshatriyas, and those who gain wealth and use wealth, also for society, are Vaishyas. They will all depend for their very existence on Shudras, the embodiments of real service. For me that is true varnashrama, and there is no question

of superiority or inferiority in this conception.

The Shudra is as necessary for society as the Brahmin. Each will have, more or less, all the qualities and privileges of the rest, but people belonging to particular varnas will perform the special service assigned to them. There is then, in this conception, no question of privilege, but only duty and service.

I invite Dr. Ambedkar to shed his bitterness and anger and try to learn the beauties of the faith of his forefathers. Let him curse the caste Hindus as much as he likes but let him not curse Hinduism without making an unbiassed study of it, and if it fails to sustain him in the hour of need, by all means let him forsake it.

Coming to the question of temple-entry, I entirely agree with him that Harijans cannot be and must not be beggars for it. It is for the caste Hindus to open temples whole-heartedly or not at all. I would repeat that the opening of temples is one of the duties that caste Hindus owe to Harijans. I hope Dr. Ambedkar's statement is not intended to convey the meaning that Harijans do not feel the deprivation of the right to temple-entry, for I know from personal knowledge that for thousands of them, it is a serious deprivation. The betterment of their economic and educational conditions is undoubtedly required. But no betterment of those conditions will give religious equality. That can be attained only by admission into temples and all the religious consolation to which caste Hindus are today entitled. This religious equality cannot be attained even by statute, but only when the heart of the caste Hindus is changed. The Bills before the Assembly are not intended to force open the temples to Harijans, but only to make it possible for the caste Hindus to throw them open when the hearts of the majority are changed.

Dr. Ambedkar has confined himself to the criticism of the second Bill (Temple-entry Bill on the model of Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill). In my opinion, this Bill is designed to test caste Hindu feelings. When the hearts of the majority are changed, temples would be thrown open. Surely, Dr. Ambedkar does not want forcible opening of temples. I do not, for one moment, hold the opinion, which he does, that the majority of caste Hindus today are not prepared to open temples to Harijans. Evidence of the Guruvayur referendum, despite Dr. Ambedkar's belittling, is undoubtedly in favour of a change of heart on the part of caste Hindus. The referendum in Madura too, recently published, points in the same direction. There will be time

enough to show dissatisfaction and disappointment when caste Hindus had been given an opportunity of expressing their opinion. Dr. Ambedkar, I observe, has remained silent about the first Bill (Untouchability Bill). It withdraws the recognition of secular law from the recognition of religious belief. I hope he has no objection to this Bill, but whether he has or not, caste Hindus have a duty to perform, that is, to secure the passage of the Bills with the utmost despatch.

The Hindu, 15-2-1933; also *The Hindustan Times*, 15-2-1933

384. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

February 15, 1933

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

There are two matters that I have discussed with you, with which you have told me you have no authority to deal.

The first matter relates to the supply of newspapers to me in terms of the orders of the Government of India, giving me special facilities about untouchability propaganda. Somehow or other hitherto I have managed to cope with my work in spite of restrictions that you have been exercising about newspapers addressed to me. I have already drawn your attention to very important matters escaping my notice owing to the non-delivery of these papers. However careful your staff may be, they cannot always be sure of having all the cuttings relating to untouchability in the papers received. Some papers such as Dr. Ambedkar's I have to look through fully and carefully. So far as I read the Government of India orders they contemplate no restrictions on the prompt receipt by me of correspondence and newspapers. It is obvious that I cannot carry on propaganda if I do not get such things in proper time. I therefore ask that all the newspapers received for me and which do not come under the heading of "prohibited literature" should be delivered to me as they arrive. Of course they may be taken away from me as soon as I have used them. I need hardly repeat the assurance that I have no use for them save for the one purpose to which all my energy and attention are being exclusively directed. I shall therefore thank you to obtain necessary and early instructions in the matter.

The second matter is about the new weekly *Harijan* which is being published in Poona in the interest of the Servants of Untouchables Society. Its policy is naturally being controlled by me

as it has been published at my instance. It has therefore to deal exclusively with questions relating to untouchability only and therefore it is a purely socio-religious weekly. I ask you whether copies could be sent to my associates and fellow-prisoners whether belonging to 'B' class or 'C' class. I would thank you if you will kindly ask for Government's instructions on my request. I may draw the attention of the Government to the fact that in 1922 when I was admitted into this Prison as a convicted prisoner and when in all other matters except food and sanitary conveniences I had no facilities given to me except what were permitted to other prisoners, there never was any difficulty about my getting newspapers of a purely socio-religious character. I hope, therefore, there will be none this time about the giving of *Harijan* to my friends, the fellow-prisoners.

Lastly, will you please convey my thanks to the Government for their very prompt attention to my letters[1] about Shrimati Mirabehn (Slade) and Appasaheb Patwardhan.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (4), Pt. II, p. 123

385. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

February 15, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

In the hope of giving you a good letter against your splendid letter[2] I have been postponing writing to you. But I can do so no longer. Daily the work is increasing. I must therefore write now and do the best I can. I wonder if you are allowed an innocent paper like *Harijan*. I am sending it in the hope that you will get it. If you do, you will please let me have your opinion. The fight against sanatanists is becoming more and more interesting if also increasingly difficult. The one good thing is that they have been awakened from long lethargy. The abuses they are hurling at me are wonderfully refreshing. I am all that is bad and corrupt on this earth. But the storm

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", 6-2-1933 and "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", 11-2-1933

[2] *Vide* "Letter from Jawaharlal Nehru", 5-1-1933

will subside. For I apply the sovereign remedy of ahimsanon-retaliation. The more I ignore the abuses, the fiercer they are becoming. But it is the death dance of the moth round a lamp. Poor Rajagopalachari and Devdas! They are also in for it. They are dragging out the engagement with Lakshmi and weaving round it foul charges. Thus is untouchability being supported!

Sarup and Krishna[1] saw me the other day about untouchability and Indu[2] as part of the domestic interview. Indu was in excellent health and seemed to be quite happy. Sarup is having a brief tour in Kathiawar and Gujarat for anti-untouchability and Krishna was to have gone to Allahabad. Devdas is in Delhi helping Raja who is moving the M.L.A.s for the anti-untouchability Bills. Our time is being wholly occupied by the untouchability work. Sardar Vallabhbhai contributes all the envelopes for the ever-increasing number of outgoing letters. He is the diligent newspaper reader who digs out odd bits of information on untouchability and what not. He is also a factory for the inexhaustible supply of mirth. The inspection day is just the same to him as any other day. He never has any request to make. With me never a day passes but I have some request to make. But I do not know which is the happier. Why may I not be as happy as he, if I can take my defeats without pulling a long face!

We all envy your solitude and your studies. It is true that our burdens are of our own making or more accurately of my making. I have dashed to pieces all Vallabhbhai's hope of becoming a good Sanskrit scholar. He can't concentrate on his studies in the midst of the excitement of Harijan work and the daily dish of spiced criticism which he enjoys like the Bengal footballers their game. Mahadev continues to be what Shaukat described him to be—the *hamal*[3] of the party. No work is too much for him or beyond him. Chhaganlal Joshi is still finding his feet. But he is flourishing. With the spring now well on us, he cannot fail to blossom out. We are not a bad assortment. We observe the rules of the game and so make a fairly decent family strictly regulated by the code of varnashrama which between Dr. Ambedkar and me will soon provide a new sensation for the sanatanists. More trouble for me but none of my seeking, I assure

[1] Krishna Hutheesing
[2] Indira Gandhi
[3] Porter

you. I have now only space and time enough to say we all hope your progress all round continues steadily.

Love from us all.

BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, pp. 109-10

386. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

February 15, 1933

MY DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

I have your letter of the 9th instant, regarding Travancore Christian Pulayas. If they are unapproachable I don't know that we can exclude them from our service. After all, what is the service? The admission to schools we may not refuse to Christian unapproachables, or to wells. Again we may not refuse to share the wells with them. The line has to be drawn at the temples of course. Therefore you can say that Christian unapproachables would be entitled to the same civic services as the other unapproachables. When it comes to the question of giving individual scholarships, there may be a difficulty. But I am not inclined to anticipate and provide against it now. When it comes, we shall deal with it. All this, however, is my individual view and you should take it for what it is worth.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1110

387. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

February 15, 1933

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

With reference to your letter of the 11th instant, Mr. Simon's[1] letter cannot be disregarded. He should be definitely asked whether he and the young men who would work under his supervision can conscientiously work amongst the untouchables purely with a view to

[1] M. R. Simon, a representative of the Children's Special Service Mission in London. He had requested the addressee to accept some people from his Mission for the untouchability work.

‘service’ and without the slightest mental reservation as to making them Christians. Their ambition should be to make them better Hindus and better members of society. You should tell Mr. Simon plainly that unless we have that guarantee, we may not make the experiment of employing non-Hindu agencies. If Mr. Simon undertakes work under those conditions he should be entrusted with it and called upon not only to render at least a fortnightly report to you but to keep himself in touch with the local branch of the Society. You should also find out through Christian friends from St. Stephen’s College what they can say about Mr. Simon.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: G.N. 1111; also S.N. 20252

388. LETTER TO HARDAYAL NAG

February 15, 1933

DEAR HARDAYAL BABOO,

I have your cheery letter. I hope you are combating the disease[1] for all you are worth and that though you are the oldest member of the family you have still vigour enough to fight it.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20255

389. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

February 15, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I send with this letters for Jethabhai, Jivaram and Budhabhai. I also send the letter written by Jivaram. It should be shown to all the inmates. It reveals his sincerity and the devotion with which he is working in Orissa. The letter need not be returned.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./1

[1] Of untouchability

390. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

February 15, 1933

CHI. JANAKIBEHN,

It is Jamnalal's definite opinion that Om[1] should be separated. His next suggestion is that Om should be placed with Varutai. She will look after her carefully. If, however, you have any objection to this, she may be put either in the Ashram or in Sharda Mandir according as you wish. You should now select one of the three places, make the necessary arrangements without delay and inform me what you have done. Jamnalal thinks that you will prefer the Varutai proposal to the others, and he himself likes it most.

As for Kesarbehn, Jamnalal intends to make arrangements for separation as soon as he is released.

You should not delay in taking the necessary steps in such matters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2910

391. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

February 15, 1933

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I got your telegram. I did not mean Saruprani, Jawaharlal's mother, but meant Sarupbehn, his sister, wife of Ranjit Pandit, who is in Bombay. As Pandit belongs to Rajkot, Sarupbehn can be regarded as a Kathiawari. The name given to her by her husband's family is Vijayalakshmi. She will reach Bhavnagar on 19th. Consult Ramjibhai and fix up your programme. Sarupbehn's address is: Meher Villa, Laburnum Road, Gamdevi, Bombay. If you can, send a weekly report of the progress of work in Gujarat for publication in *Harijan*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3962

[1] Addressee's daughter Uma

392. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI AND BENARSILAL BAJAJ

February 15, 1933

CHI. RUKMINI,

I forgot to reply to one question which you had asked in your postcard. If the yarn spun by a person as contribution to the Spinners, Association is removed from the spindle and wound into a hank by somebody else, there will certainly be no violation of the *yajna*. However, the porridge will be sweet in proportion to the quantity of jaggery which you mix with it. Similarly, the *yajna* will be perfect in proportion to the labour which one puts in for spinning and producing yarn. If the spinning-wheel is got ready by one person, the yarn is moistened by somebody else, the length is measured by a third person and the yarn is wound into a hank by a fourth person and I only spin, I shall have done the *yajna* but shall deserve only pass marks. Radhika's ship of health is certainly weak. One cannot say whether it will reach the shore safely.

CHI. BENARSILAL,

Jamnalal is quite well. Janakidevi was here on a visit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9153

393. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

January 15, 1933

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Your letter has reached me today after a long time. I hope you received the special letter I wrote four days back. I wrote it on learning of your fits. But your letter contains no mention of the fits. I gave the details of my food, etc., in that letter. Blessings to Kanta. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3432

394. LETTER TO TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU

February 16, 1933

DEAR DR. SAPRU,

I thank you for both your letters[1] and your telegram. I am approaching the members of the Assembly in my own way. Though I have written to the Viceroy,[2] there is no reply from him. Rajagopalachari and Ghanshyamdas are both doing their utmost to consolidate the opinion of the members of the Assembly. I see that you have considered only one Bill[3]. I would like you to consider the other also. It is a very short Bill. That also is before the Assembly and it is the first of the two to receive sanction for introduction. Therefore I take it that it would be the first to be considered by the current session of the Assembly, if it is to be considered at all.

For ready reference I am sending you Rajagopalachari's booklet containing both the Bills. If it does not come into your hands at the same time that this letter does, you will perhaps not mind sending for the first Bill from the *Leader* office.

I would suggest your writing to the Viceroy. Mr. Jayakar has written at my request.

Thank you for your enquiry about my health. I am keeping quite fit and well.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: G.N. 7588. Also Gandhi-Sapru Correspondence. Courtesy: National Library of Calcutta

[1] Dated February 2 and 11. In his letter dated February 2, 1933, the addressee had expressed his sympathy and support for the campaign against untouchability and stated: ". . . that even a moderate measure of this character has not much of a chance in the Assembly as it is constituted. . . . Meanwhile, my advice is that you should, over your own signature, address a communication to the members of the Legislature asking them to push forward this legislation. I fear an attempt will be made to secure the circulation of this Bill, which, in my opinion, will be tantamount to shelving it for the time being. orthodox opinion may well be presumed to be hostile to it. It seems to me a clash with that opinion is inevitable." For extracts from his letter dated February 11, *vide* "Dr. Sapru on Untouchability Bills", 25-2-1933.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Viceroy", 1-2-1933

[3] Ranga Iyer's Bill on untouchability

395. LETTER TO L. R. PANGARKAR

February 16, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I endeavoured to send you as full a reply as the time at my disposal would permit me to send.

I entirely endorse your suggestion that just as others learn from the Gods and the scriptures what they want to, so must I. Some people learn only by making blunders. I have often found myself doing so, but I don't regret for the simple reason that at the time I made the blunders I was wholly unconscious of them. I try to be cautious, but however cautious I may be, unless I become a perfect man, I cannot become proof against unconscious errors. But so long as I retain the capacity to own them frankly and fully as soon as I become conscious, it is well with me and well even with those who may be affected by my errors. If by fear of blunder I hesitated to act at all I should never succeed in reaching truth.

I must persist in saying that the Bills before the Assembly are in no way intended to compel anybody to act contrary to his conscience. I quite see your own viewpoint. It is my misfortune that I cannot make you see mine. I can therefore only ask you to be patient with me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. L. R. PANGARKAR

NASIK CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20262

396. LETTER TO DUNCAN GREENLEES

February 16, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I was wondering what had happened to my letter[1] when I received yours of the 10th instant. Of course there can be no pledge

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Duncan Greenless", 1-2-1933.

till you know those with whom you have to work and they know you.[1] I hope you have got your box. I shall await your arrival.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20263

397. LETTER TO B. R. AMBEDKAR

February 16, 1933

DEAR DR. AMBEDKAR,

I thank you for your letter of the 12th instant enclosing your statement. I did not receive anything from the Associated Press, but I saw it in the daily Press. I hope you saw my reply[2]. I wish that you could appreciate my viewpoint.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20265

398. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

February 16, 1933

Commenting on the statement in the *News Chronicle* that untouchability is an evil extraordinarily difficult to uproot by legislation alone, Mr. Gandhi said:

I am not surprised at the ignorance betrayed by the writer in the *News Chronicle* when we have in India itself obstinate refusal on the part of many people to see that there is nothing at all in the two Bills in the shape of compulsion. I could understand the difficulty, if there was a measure to abolish untouchability by law.

Again, the writer asks whether the Government ought to regard the abolition of untouchability as a duty imposed on it by considerations of humanity such as compelled it to abolish suttee. Surely, a comparison between the Suttee Suppression Law and the present Bills is most misleading. The practice of suttee is a penal offence, whereas the present Bill merely withholds legal recognition from untouchability. In my opinion, the Government is morally bound to help the reformers to adopt reforms wherever public opinion is ripe for it.

[1] The addressee had welcomed the opportunity of going to the Ashram provided it was treated by both as an experiment, with no pledge as to the future on either side.

[2] *Vide* "Interview to Associated Press", 14-2-1933

British journalists should recognize the correctness of the reformers' position. They do not seek to bring about reforms by compulsion. Not to pass these measures will be a block on the progress of reform, which is being prosecuted by reformers against heavy odds.

Asked if he was doing anything to persuade the members of the Assembly to facilitate the passage of the Bills, Mr. Gandhi said that he had adopted the most effective step in sending Mr. Rajagopalachariar there to present his case and seek the assistance of every member, Hindu members for supporting the Bills, and non-Hindus for facilitating consideration of the Bills in this session itself.

The Hindu, 17-2-1933

399. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

February 17, 1933

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I had written a postcard to you. I had not much expected to receive a reply, since, if you wrote to everybody, you would soon exhaust the number of letters which you were entitled to write. However, I got news about you from time to time. When you are out of jail, write to me an account of how you passed your time. My companions and I are quite well. But you will know all about that from my letter[1] to Mira.

I regularly write to the women prisoners here.

Blessings, from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8796. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

400. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

February 17, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

I begin this at 3.15 a.m. on Friday. It seems that now I shall get your weekly letter not on Wednesday morning but on Thursday afternoon. It suits me better. For I have no time for personal letters on Wednesdays and Thursdays, both the days being required for *Harijan*. Everything must go out of my hands by 6 p.m. on

[1] *Vide* the following item.

Thursday. Hence though I must write on other days as well for *Harijan*, I must devote Wednesdays and Thursdays entirely to it. This is almost as before.

The extra note that I thought I might have to write I did not and could not have written with but extraordinary effort.

I gather from your letter that you are not locked for the night. You must take the fullest advantage of that liberty. The best food you want is the freshest air all day and all night. Therefore you should work outdoor during the day, if, as I learn, you have many *neem* trees in your yard. You should sleep all night directly under the sky—not even the shade of the trees—dew or no dew. The most direct contact with the stars is absolutely essential. Dew causes no mischief so long as you are well covered from toe to neck and the head also if necessary and so long as your lips are tightly closed and you are sure that you are breathing only through the nose—to ensure this at the time of retiring you should take a few deep breaths through the nose whilst you are lying flat on your back with legs fully stretched. You should set apart certain fixed time, say, five minutes each time for taking these breaths. Then you will acquire the habit of always breathing through the nose. Those who, without practice, think that they naturally breathe through the nose, are not always right. They do not know when they breathe through the mouth. Unfortunately in the majority of cases correct breathing is an acquired habit. Tuberculosis is an impossibility with one who takes freshest air, drinks pure water, eats properly the proper quantity of the proper food and has proper exercise.

I have thanked the Government for removing you from Arthur Road. They have done it promptly and well. It is true that I had definitely asked for transfer to Yeravda. But they must have their good reasons for not transferring you there. Sabarmati is undoubtedly the next best, knowing you as I do—Sabarmati should be the best if you realized that though my body dwells in Yeravda, my spirit is to be found in Sabarmati. The body without the spirit is like the Taj without Shahjehan a tomb!

You should have reported all about the glands to the Surgeon at Arthur Road. We may not ask for transfers but we are bound to report our condition. For the authorities hold our bodies in the expectation that we shall report all about their condition to them. If we do not, we commit at least a technical, if not a full breach, of prison discipline.

You will therefore report every irregularity to the Superintendent who the Government tell me is an I. M. S. officer and therefore a fully qualified physician. You should try to make your body 100 per cent proof against disease.

It is a great joy to me that you have Ba with you and Gangabehn and Kusum. Have you no access to the others?

Tell Gangabehn[1] and Kusum that I wrote to both of them. I enclose letters for them and Ba. You will hand them, if they are entitled or permitted to have them. There is nothing in them but welfare news.

My weight and food continue as usual and so also the elbows.

With love from us all,

BAPU

[PS.]

Have just heard from Verrier that Verrier is to marry Mary Gillett on Thursday during Easter week, i.e., 13th April.

[PPS.]

Of course all the instructions I have given in this letter are subject to revision by the Superintendent.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6263. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9729

401. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

February 17, 1933

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I hope you have been receiving my letters regularly. Herewith Dr. Ambedkar's statement and my reply[2]. The rest you have in *Harijan*. I also want you to read the statements of the two Harijan leaders Rajan and Deorukhkar.

I have now heard from the Viceroy[3] in reply to my letter[4]. The trend of it is that he insists upon circulating the Bills, and in the Assembly too there is little hope of a majority resisting circulation. I

[1] Gangabehn Vaidya; for the letter to her, *vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* "Interview to Associated Press", 14-2-1933

[3] *Vide* "Letter from Government of India", 17-2-1933

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Viceroy", 1-2-1933

don't mind. It simply shows against what odds one has to fight, and on the top of that has come Malaviyaji's disagreement. This legal difficulty is an unexpected thunderbolt, but one has to deal with such difficulties also. I had expected that the Government would not help to impede the progress of reform. God will show me the way. You must not worry.

Love from us all.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 980; also S.N. 20269

402. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

February *17, 1933*

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I have your letter with the two enclosures which you dug out of Andrews's pocket.

Now that I give you a long letter in the shape of *Harijan*, you must not expect personal letters except rarely.

I know that you are working full speed and that is all we can do. The results are controlled by the Infinite Power, and hence we may not worry.

I have enclosed a number of important cuttings with Andrews's letter. Do get them all and read them.

Love from us both.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1461

403. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

February 17, 1933

MY DEAR MARY,

You have dried up after your misbehaviour in getting asthma. I understand that you are better. That is not enough. You have to be thoroughly restored. I hope your food is all right. Dal is not light food. You should eschew it. Bread, greens, milk and fruit is your diet.

Do please tell me all about your experiences.[1] Was Father Lash comfortable there?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5992. Also C.W. 3317. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

404. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

February 17, 1933

MY DEAR CHILD,

Nowadays my time is more than fully occupied. Two clear days have to be given to *Harijan* to the exclusion of every other work. Therefore brief as they were, my love-letters have to be briefer still. But there is some compensation in that you have my general letter in the form of *Harijan*.

I know quite well what my visit to London meant to you. We do not know God's hidden ways. If we only submit to Him, He makes us do many things even unconsciously to ourselves. It will be such a joy to me if you never find yourself in the Valley of Despair, for, to be there even for one moment means lack of faith in a living God.

I enclose herewith a letter[2] for Jack Hansen[3].

Mahadev was delighted to have Tangai's sweet letter.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 119. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also My Dear Child, p. 99

405. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

February 17, 1933

MY DEAR MARGARETE,

I have your letter. I hope you have been receiving all my letters.

You should not think of coming here in the hope of getting a professorship or something of that kind so as to enable you to support

[1] The addressee was staying at the Sabarmati Ashram at this time. Father Lash also stayed there for some time; *vide* "Letter to Bill Lash", 5-2-1933

[2] This is not available.

[3] "John Hoyland" in *My Dear Child*

your mother. You will only come when the way is perfectly clear for you. Surely, it is possible for you to love India even from where you are and to do many acts of service. You have plenty of years before you. Go through the necessary training, keep India your goal, and some day you will gravitate here. Of course you are like Lakshmi to me or Mira. But you must also realize that it is a hard yoke to bear.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

406. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

February 17, 1933

DEAR SATISBABOO,

Your telegram was received yesterday. A reply was sent most hurriedly. I forgot therefore to give you my opinion of the name of the Bengali edition. Why should it not be identical with the title of the English weekly, simply 'Harijan'? You will publish the Bengali edition as of the original, but you need not give and it should be wrong to give whole translation of everything that may appear in the English weekly. You should give only a condensed translation of whatever appears in the English edition. You will even omit certain things which may not be necessary for the Bengali reader and put in many other things, but nothing inconsistent with the tenor of the English edition. You will therefore personally supervise every line that appears in it. You will send me also for the English weekly whatever news you may have about the progress of the movement in Bengal.

Perhaps you have replied to the Manager of the *Harijan* as to the number of copies you want per week.

How is your work in the *bastis*[1] progressing, and how are you keeping yourself?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20272

[1] Localities inhabited by the poor

407. LETTER TO STUDENTS OF SEVA SADAN HIGH SCHOOL

February 17, 1933

DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,

I have your letter. I shall be glad to see you all on Monday next, the 20th instant, at 2.30 p.m. You will not take more than 30 minutes and if you will come with questions prepared beforehand, we should be able to go through a lot of work in 30 minutes.

Yours sincerely,

THE SECRETARY
STANDARD VI
SEVA SADAN HIGH SCHOOL
POONA CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20271

408. LETTER TO MANIBEHN N. PARIKH

February 17, 1933

CHI. MANIBEHN,

You should not regard anything I write as a rebuke to you. If you do that, I shall be able to write nothing which may help you. What I wrote certainly does not apply to you alone. It applies to all, not excluding even myself. We must know what an ideal mother should be. I don't think that you have enough knowledge to be an ideal mother. Hard work may certainly help a woman to make up for part of the deficiency, but the original deficiency can be removed only by realizing it and taking the necessary steps to overcome it. The practice of making the children brush their teeth before going to bed is a good one. Massage the gums vigorously with your fingers. The babool stick is not so efficacious.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5974

409. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

February 17, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

Wednesdays and Thursdays are devoted wholly to *Harijan*. I cannot, therefore, write any letters on those days. Amina's problem seems to have been solved for the present. How painful that a Muslim boy or girl cannot be admitted in a Hindu institution? Of course Chandulal[1] or Nanabhai[2] are in no way to blame. They could not have given any other reply.

I don't think you read the letter written by Suresh. It is a long one. Let me know how you found him. Mahavir wrote to me from Bombay. He wants a letter of recommendation. I don't wish to give him one. Krishnamaiyadevi does not wish at all to work. I intend to write to her.

You will find with this a letter from Maruti. In view of what he says in it, it is best that they should be married as soon as possible. If Dudabhai or Lakshmi rejects the proposal, we will refuse further responsibility for getting her married. Read the accompanying letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

[Letters:] Narahari, Suresh, Manibehn, Maruti's to Lakshmidas, Marybehn[3], Lakshmi, Dudabhai, Amina.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

410. LETTER TO CHHOTALAL K. MEHTA

February 17, 1933

CHI NAPOLEON,

I was very happy when I read your letter. I did not receive the one written from Navasari. It was good that you went to Visapur. What is Somabhai suffering from?

Your handwriting is certainly better than it was. But it should improve still further. How many boys are there in your class? Give me

[1] Chandulal Kashiram Dave, Principal of Sharda Mandir, Ahmedabad
[2] Narsinhprasad Kalidas Bhatt
[3] F. Mary Barr

details about what you are learning.

Sardar, Mahadevbhai and Chhaganlal send their blessings to you. Where is Kunvarji? How is he?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have written this letter with the left hand to give rest to the right hand.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2694

411. LETTER TO BHAILAL MOTIRAM PATEL

February 17, 1933

BHAI BHAILAL,

Thanks for sending me Lord William Bentinck's views on suttee.

Regards from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3298

412. LETTER TO AMINA QURESHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
February 17, 1933

CHI. AMINA,

So after all you could not go to Sharda Sadan[1]. If you are satisfied with what you can get in the Ashram you will get everything from it. You should have the desire for that. You must find time for reading and writing. I have already written to you regarding the children. Learn to write the Urdu characters correctly. It is in your hand to do that. It will be enough if you write to me in Urdu once every week. If you write every day, it will be the daily lesson. Quietlyadjust your work so as to find time for reading and writing and be a good teacher to the children.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10794. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

[1] Slip for 'Mandir'; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 17-2-1933

413. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[1]

February 17, 1933

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. You will see from *Harijan* that I do not see any particular need to go to Panditji now. It is all to the good that the secret is out.

I can meet Ambedkar any number of times. But nothing can be done against his will. His nature also should be understood.

In most cases, there is no cause to get frightened by children's fever.

You must get rid of your cold. Coughing is also the result of cold, is it not? Come whenever you feel like it except on Wednesday and Thursday. Send your comments on *Harijan.*

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

53 MINT ROAD

FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

414. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

February 17, 1933

CHI HEMPRABHA,

I have your letter. Do whatever khadi work you can but with a carefree attitude even though the work prospers but a little. If our faith is sustained to the end, khadi and *Daridranarayana* are bound to emerge victorious.

When it becomes possible you can come here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1698

[1] An extract from this letter appears in "Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", 17-2-1933

415. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

February 17, 1933

CHI. BRIJKISAN,

Your letter. That you two are together is to my liking.[1] Both must be keeping fit. Yes, you will have to give up the attachment to Mother and the brothers. By our attachment we give them cause for hope and they are grieved when we cannot later fulfil their hope. When they are made to understand clearly, they no longer harbour hope but acquire a healthy attitude.

We are all well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2398

416. LETTER TO RAMADEVI CHOWDHARY

February 17, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. You have not introduced yourself nor given your proper address. Give me a weekly account of your work. Who are the other ladies working there and what exactly are they doing? To what extent do the townspeople co-operate with you?

Blessings from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SMT. RAMADEVI[2]
HARJAN SEVIKA
C/O HARIJAN SEVA SANGH
CUTTACK

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2789

[1] The addressee was under detention in the Delhi jail.
[2] Wife of Gopabandhu Chowdhary, a prominent khadi worker of Orissa

417. AN APPEAL TO M. L. A.S

A valued friend suggests[1] that I should send personal letters to the members of the Assembly bespeaking their support to the consideration, during the current session, of Sjt. Ranga Iyer's two Bills on untouchability. I hope there is no false pride in me. Having made up my mind, or, as critics would say, deceived myself into the belief, that in spite of my non-co-operation there was nothing wrong in asking the members to do what was right, I would not hesitate, if I was free, to go to them personally and show to them why it was necessary for all the members to allow the Bills to be considered without delay and for the Hindu members to back them for the sake of the purity of their religion. But I am not free and I have found in Sjt. C. Rajagopalachariar a better lobbyist than myself and perhaps better also at the art of wooing obstinate members. He is, therefore, in Delhi as my duly authorized agent to plead my cause. The public know what confidence I have in him as an exponent of and believer in whatever philosophy there may be in me. Therefore, it would be superfluous, and if it was any other agent, even discourteous to him, if I was to write directly to the members who, I hope, will regard Rajagopalachari's appeal to them as much more than a letter to them individually.

Harijan, 18-2-1933

418. SJT. JAYAKAR ON UNTOUCHABILITY

The foregoing[2] is the text kindly sent to me by Sjt. Jayakar of the Bill on untouchability which he had sought to introduce into the Assembly while he was a member. It is important for three reasons: Firstly, it shows that he, as a distinguished lawyer and an equally distinguished Sanskrit scholar, considers that his Bill merely seeks to remove "obstacles", created by British Indian courts' decisions, in the way of the abolition, even by the people concerned, of customs which they may consider contrary to their welfare, morals or conscience. Secondly, it is in substance a combination of the two Bills now before the Assembly and the country; and thirdly, it shows that

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Tej Bahadur Sapru", 16-2-1933

[2] Not reproduced here

the matter has been before the country for several years and is in no sense new. The British Indian courts' decisions and rulings referred to by Sjt. Jayakar have acted on the Hindu society as a deadweight which has stopped its healthy growth. The two Bills, like Sjt. Jayakar's combination, seek merely to remove the deadweight.

Harijan, 18-2-1933

419. WORK IN CALCUTTA BASTIS

Sjt. Vasantlal Morarka writes from Calcutta:

> We have already commenced to do work amongst the Harijans. We have taken charge of 20 night and day schools in the *bastis*. Nearly 500 boys and girls are receiving instruction in these schools, and we are tackling the problem of having water-pipes laid, sanitary conveniences supplied and of carrying on propaganda for the eradication of the drink evil and other evil habits. Moreover, we had a meeting and sports organized under the chairmanship of Shrimati Saruprani Nehru. Marwadi, Harijan and other boys freely mixed together. Men and women also did likewise. There was absence of all artificiality about this gathering. Nevertheless, I must confess to you that the work in the *bastis* is very difficult.

I know what the work in the *bastis* is like. Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta of Khadi Pratishthan has already described to me in graphic and heart-rending terms the condition of the Harijans living in the *bastis*. These difficulties may not daunt workers. If removal of untouchability was an easy job, we would have achieved it long ago. It is only now that we are having a foretaste of these difficulties. But patience and perseverance will overcome even an Everest of them.

Harijan, 18-2-1933

420. IS THIS BROTHERLINESS?

As sanatanists persist in their statement that untouchability, as we know it, is not a blot upon Hinduism and that Harijans are well treated and are a happy and contented lot, and as I know that some of them, if not many, honestly believe in that statement, it becomes necessary to demonstrate the fallacy of that belief and show that the treatment actually received by Harijans cannot possibly be worse. Such demonstration will also give the reformer an idea of the work that is in front of him. Even when sanatanists and reformers join hands, as they

undoubtedly will one day, there will be work enough and to spare for several thousand volunteers. Though I have written and I shall continue to write with vigour about the necessity of admission of Harijans to temples, I have never given and shall never give a back seat to the constructive work. But what I am certain about is that admission of Harijans to temples will automatically quadruple the pace of constructive reform.

Here is, then, a free translation of a letter from a Gujarati worker among Harijans in parts of Gujarat near Ahmedabad:

> Harijans suffer great hardships from the so-called higher classes. In some villages they are not allowed to build verandahs for their houses. They may not build houses with an upper storey. They may not wear decent clothing, nor ride horses. There can, therefore, be no question in these villages of Harijan children receiving any education or having a decent recreation ground. The high-class people will not even tolerate any discussion about reform. The Harijans cannot take advantage of the Government instructions that they should have access to public places on the same terms as other Hindus. And now there have sprung among them false sadhus and *bavas*[1] who under all kinds of pretences cheat them. Then, there is the vicious habit they have copied from higher classes of having infant marriages and incurring expenses in connection with these marriages. They do not hesitate to pay 30% interest on two or three hundred rupees that they must spend on the marriage of their children, and it often happens that these little children die before they come of age and so the whole of the expense becomes a complete waste. These customs have resulted in a perpetuity of debts which continue to increase without the prospect of ever being discharged. And, of course, they have untouchability amongst themselves. The result is that those who are considered the lowest have to exist on what dirty water they can collect from anywhere.

This is from one of the latest letters. The following is taken from a letter received by Sjt. Amritlal Thakkar from one Mr. Simon, M. A., who is a missionary for Children's Special Service in the West Godavari District.[2] He writes from Narsapur and says:

[1] Mendicants

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar", 15-2-1933

The principal untouchables are Malas and Madigas who live on the outskirts of the main village, far from the habitations of the caste Hindus, and are the worst untouchables in the sense that they live in an appalling environment of dirt and squalour. The boys and girls live in huts under the most insanitary conditions and are ragged and dirty, as they have never understood or experienced the joy of being clean. Their parents themselves are careless of the cleanliness and the education of their children, not to say of their morality.

I believe that such a condition is due to their poverty on the one hand, and the dirt to which they have become habituated from ages. The Malapalem and the Madiga gudem are on the borders of the caste Hindus' village, hemmed in, on all sides, by the encroachments of the paddy field owners. The Malas are a coolie class employed only for field work and the Madigas are shoemakers. The latter class eat the meat of dead animals. So, they live outside the pale of decent society, caged like wild animals, treated worse than the most uncared for village dogs.

It is not possible for me to reject any of these two pieces of evidence as exaggerated, because I have been an eye-witness to such things in other places. Nor am I disposed to underrate Mr. Simon's evidence because of his being a foreigner, for the simple reason that his letter has been written for the sake of doing some service through the Servants of Untouchables Society and, therefore, incurs the risk of being utterly discredited if he made an exaggerated report. Even from the most selfish point of view, it can be shown that this criminal neglect of the manpower of the country is an economic waste which can never be exaggerated. The same people, if they were made honourable and equal members of Hindu society, will add to the material and moral resources of the country to an extent it is difficult to conceive. At the present moment they are a burden upon society. For, they discredit Hinduism, and the depression of 40 million human beings cannot but drag down the other 260 millions with them.

Harijan, 18-2-1933

421. WHEN IS IT POSSIBLE?

I observe that Sjt. C. Rajagopalachariar and Sheth Ghanshyamdas Birla have, in a statement issued by them, referred to the possibility of another fast by me. If these two friends have thus not hesitated to exploit such a possibility, it is not unlikely that others are

doing likewise without my knowing it. I have already sent a wire[1] to the two friends urging them not to repeat the mistake. And hereby I warn all friends against copying their example.

Such exploitation robs a spiritual act of all its value. The dreaded event may never come to pass. All I know is that there is, so far as I am aware, no present possibility of its coming.

Pandit Malaviyaji, whom I regard as an elder brother, has sent me a loving message of which the following is the substance:

> You are in a hurry. You must go slow. Take care that pride of *tapasya* does not corrupt you. *Tapasya* without humility is of no avail and may even be harmful. There should be no more fasting.

I prize this warning. I know that pride of merit damages a soul like a heinous sin. I hope I am not consciously proud. What I am, unconsciously and in spite of myself, God only knows fully and, to some extent, those who surround me. I am not impatient with anyone. I am, however, impatient of untouchability. But I know that its destruction is no one man's work. God has suffered the evil to exist all these long years and He will remove it in His own good time.

Nevertheless, He expects all Hindus to do their duty. Suffering even unto death and, therefore, even through a perpetual fast is the last weapon of a satyagrahi. That is the last duty which it is open to him to perform. Therefore, fast is a part of my being as, I hold, it has been, to a large or small extent, of every seeker of Truth. I am making an experiment in ahimsa on a scale perhaps unknown in history. That I may be wholly wrong is quite possible, but quite irrelevant to the present purpose. So long as I am not conscious of the error, but, on the contrary, am sure, as far as it is humanly possible to be, of being in the right, I must go on with my pursuit to the farthest end. And in this manner, but in no other, a fast or a series of fasts are always a possibility in my life. I have undergone many before now since childhood. There should be no alarm felt if they are undertaken for public causes. Nor must anyone exploit them in anticipation. When they come, they will produce their own effect and result, whether anybody wills or no. But it is wrong to speculate over the contingency.

I, therefore, implore the public to dismiss from their minds, and be unaffected by, the remote possibility of another fast by me in this

[1] *Vide* "Draft Telegram to C. Rajagopalchari", 13-2-1933

campaign against untouchability and to accept my assurance that, if such a fast does come, it will have come in obedience to the call of Truth which is God. I will not be a traitor to God to please the whole world.

Harijan, 18-2-1933

422. AGREEING TO DIFFER

There are some whose friendship and co-operation I prize beyond measure. One of such men is Pandit Malaviyaji, whom from the time that we first met I have recognized as an elder brother. Nevertheless, it has been often my misfortune to disagree with him. Our disagreement, however, has never in the slightest degree diminished our mutual affection.

The correspondence published below[1] will show the reader how we have again found it necessary to differ. Conscience is a hard taskmaster.

I do not propose to deal with all the points covered in the correspondence. I would confine myself to the vital matter referred to in it, viz., the interpretation of the Bombay Resolutions. In my opinion, with all the deference that I owe to Malaviyaji, I feel that the Bombay Resolution[2] which I give below has only one meaning. Under it, responsible Hindus are bound to give to the Harijans through law that which only law can give. This they are bound to do now, if at all possible, and wait for the swaraj Parliament only if the legal relief becomes an impossibility now. It cannot be considered an impossibility till all effort humanly possible has been made.

My duty and that of the Hindus who accept my interpretation is quite clear. We must ask all the members of the Assembly, and especially the Hindu members, to help us to fulfil the pledge given, not merely to Dr. Ambedkar and cultured Harijans like him, but to the dumb and suffering forty millions whom they seek to represent, and whom it should be the duty and privilege of every caste Hindu to represent equally with the leaders of the Harijans. Let me repeat for

[1] Not reproduced here; *vide* "Letter to Madan Mohan Malaviya", 20-1-1933, "Telegram to Madan Mohan Malaviya", 14-2-1933 and "Statement by Madan Mohan Malaviya", 19-1-1933

[2] Not reproduced here; for the text of the Resolution, *vide* "Statement on Viceroy's Decision", 24-1-1933

the hundredth time that there is a legal bar against temple-entry which cannot be removed by any agreement on the part of all the Hindus combined. A legal bar can only be removed by a legislative act. What an agreement amongst Hindus can do is to move the Government to give effect to it as was done in connection with the political part of the Yeravda Pact. Those caste Hindus who strained themselves to ensure recognition of the political part of the Yeravda Pact are now doubly bound to give effect to the other resolutions which were the direct and natural consequence of the Yeravda Pact; and since in the course of complying with those resolutions it has been discovered that there is a legal difficulty which was not foreseen then, that difficulty has got to be removed at the earliest possible moment. Hence the two Bills.

But, says Malaviyaji, temple-entry, the opening of wells, etc., had to be done by persuasion, not by compulsion. I quite agree, but to remove a legal bar is not to do the desired thing by compulsion. There is the Madura temple. If I am correctly informed, the trustees of that temple are elected by the Hindu voters. They are pledged to open the temple. By an overwhelming majority, the Hindu voters have desired the opening of the temple. But, because of the legal bar, the trustees cannot open the temple to the Harijans. Will it be compulsion to have that legal bar removed by law? I can cite several other instances where willing trustees of public temples are powerless to give effect to the public demand and their own wishes. I venture, therefore, to think that there is no escape from permissive and corrective legislation. If the Bills are defective, the defect can be remedied. I have submitted the Bills to two eminent lawyers for their opinion. Sjt. Jayakar's the public will learn from another column of this issue of *Harijan*.[1] I have also approached Dr. Sapru,[2] and I betray no confidence when I inform the public that he has already expressed his opinion in emphatic terms in favour of the second Bill, i.e., the Temple-entry Bill, to which Malaviyaji has taken strong exception. Dr. Sapru sees no compulsion in it. I have invited him to examine the first Bill also. Every legitimate difficulty can be easily met if the principle of securing immediate relief from the legal obstacle is admitted. Therefore, in my opinion, the way before the reformer is quite clear. He must invite the Government to facilitate consideration of the Bills

[1] *Vide* "Sjt. Jayakar on Untouchability", 18-2-1933

[2] *Vide*"Letter to Tej Bahadur Sapru", 26-1-1933; for Sapru's opinion, *vide* "Dr. Sapru on Untouchability Bills", 25-2-1933.

during the current session, and appeal to the members also to give that facility. Success or failure is not his concern. But earnest and ceaseless effort is his concern and is under his control, and he must not flinch, whether he is one or many.

Malaviyaji suggests that the Bills be circulated. I have not been able to follow his reasoning. If the Bills were of a compulsory character, I should not only support circulation, but perhaps I should oppose their introduction altogether. But the Bills are purely of a permissive character. They pave the way for ascertaining Hindu opinion in accor-dance with rules laid down in the law itself. I should be prepared to accept any amendment that would make it impossible to force the opening of a single public temple against the will of those who have been hitherto entitled to offer worship in the particular temple. After all, what is wanted is not removal of untouchability by law. If the Hindu heart harbours untouchability, it will be there, whether the law recog-nizes it or not. But the aid of law cannot be invoked to regulate religious belief, as it was invoked by sanatanists when the court decisi-ons referred to by Sjt. Jayakar were obtained. Legal interference, therefore, was invoked by the very people who are today stoutly opposing the introduction of the Bills, which seek not to impose any compulsion, but to remove the existing compulsion, that makes impo-ssible a due fulfilment of the pledge embodied in the Bombay Resolutions.

Harijan, 18-2-1933

423. TEMPLE-ENTRY AND VARNASHRAMA

It is to be hoped that the reader has read Dr. Ambedkar's statement and my reply[1] on the temple-entry question and there-anent on varnashramadharma. I had intended to republish them in *Harijan*, but I see that it is not possible to do so without enlarging the size of a journal which is just entering upon the second week of its existence. I have, therefore, relied upon the reader having read both Dr. Ambedkar's statement and my reply.

Let the reader understand that Dr. Ambedkar does want temple-entry, but he wants something more. Very rightly, he would not beg for it. Quite wrongly, he would not even help caste Hindus to

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Associated Press", 14-2-1933

do the correct thing. The more that he wants is complete destruction of varnashramadharma of his imagination. Varnashrama to him means the essence of superiority and inferiority. I admit that today varnashrama does mean that, if it also means much more, but the evil of high-and-low-ness is represented by untouchability. When, therefore, the latter is demolished, varnashrama will be purged of the very thing for which Dr. Ambedkar abhors it.

Varnashrama of my conception is a wholly different thing. It exists only in name today. Let the reader, therefore, be not led astray from the main purpose. It will be time enough to look after varnashrama when the doctrine of high and low is demolished.

It is necessary, too, not to be disturbed over my definition of varnashrama. I am aware that it will shock sanatanist friends, but they will permit me to act according to my reading of the Shastras and the whole spirit of Hinduism. The letters that I receive from sanatanists do not tell me that they believe in the doctrine of high and low. On the contrary, they protest against my statement that caste Hindus have regarded Harijans as inferiors, always to be kept at a distance. Therefore, they should join hands in purging Hinduism of the doctrine of inequality of status, irrespective of their conception of varnashrama. After all, only that conception which the masses accept will hold the field. The scope of the present campaign against untouchability is strictly limited. It will be a great pity to befog the public mind by raising before it the cry of 'Varnashrama in danger'. I am convinced that it is more in danger from those who will be blind to what is going on in Hinduism today than from Dr. Ambedkar who courageouly says: 'I shall have nothing to do with varnashrama that would keep me and mine for ever at the bottom of the social scale.' If we would find room for such as him in Hinduism, let us show him by our acts that varnashrama is not a vertical line but that it is a horizontal plane on which all the children of God occupy absolutely the same status, though they may be engaged in different pursuits of life and though they may have different qualities and different tastes.[1]

Harijan, 18-2-1933

[1] For a discussion on varnashramadharma, *vide* "Talk with Mathuradas", 18-2-1933

424. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

February 18, 1933

DEAR MOTI BABOO,

I had expected to hear from you after your visit to Allahabad. Please make up the defect now.

I expect your criticism of *Harijan*. You should also ask some responsible people to get subscribers and send me a weekly report of the actual constructive work done by the members of the Sangh[1] among Harijans. The report should be unvarnished.

Please tell Panchanan Shastri Tarkaratna that he has keenly disappointed me. Nothing pains me so much as a breach of promise. He promised to prosecute his search for a meeting-ground between sanatanists and reformers.[2] I have heard nothing from him on the point. He promised twice that he would send his son or someone equally learned to put before me his own view and to answer my questions and help me generally to understand the sanatanists, standpoint. Is he still going to send some such person?

Again, his son was one of the pandits who were to have seen me. I was grieved that he should have been amongst those who, in my opinion, behaved in a manner unworthy of learned men.[3] I had to exercise great self-restraint in drawing the curtain over the events of that painful day. They were painful because those who should be repositories of the real Shastras seemed to be so wanting in dignity and ordinary courtesies of life. This is the very first occasion when I have put my pen to paper in order to characterize the conduct of the learned men on that day, and I have done so because of my regard for Panchanan Shastri, and because his son was one of those Shastris. If I accept anything from Panchanan *Shastri*, he should know exactly where I stand, and he should know what I think of those to whom he lent the weight of his name and the services of his son.

You will either send this very extract to him or its translation or go over to him and personally tell him what I have written to you.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20283

[1] Pravartak Sangh

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 30-12-1932

[3] *Vide* "Note to Deonayakacharya", 12-1-1933 and "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 13-1-1933

425. LETTER TO LOKANATH MISRA

February 18, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your very touching letter, but you must not be bewildered nor be pained. My reply was in Gujarati, but the translation you have read is fairly correct. What I have said[1] in answer to the questions put by the ex-Dewan of Morvi I have said repeatedly in my writings. It could not have escaped you if you had followed my writings carefully. Nor is it inconsistent with the law of heredity. The law cannot be changed but if we know the law we will suit our actions in accordance with it and that is precisely what my answer means. Essential qualities are transmitted from father to son. If parties having like qualities marry, they carry out the law of heredity and therefore also the law of varna. Such marriages have taken place in Hindu society ever since the establishment of varnashrama. This ought to give you satisfaction. You do not expect me to give you a detailed reply to the conundrums you have raised. You will believe me when I tell you that I have not even the time for doing it. If you will carefully follow the pages of *Harijan*, all your doubts will be solved But if they are not, you should dismiss me from your consideration. The cause is far superior to me. You and I live for the cause and work for it. If I err in the common prosecution of the common cause, you will leave me and march forward towards the goal. The limits of untouchability work are well defined. Never mind my views of extraneous matters, such as caste and varna, intermarriage and interdining. I am not presenting my views on these matters for public acceptance at the present moment. I give those views for the satisfaction of enquirers, for I would have my friends and the public to know me as I am and not picture me as something they fancy but has no likeness to me. If even this does not give you satisfaction, you must find time to come to me and discuss the whole thing with me till you have full satisfaction.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. LOKANATH MISRA, M. A., B. L.
SECRETARY, ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY COMMITTEE
PURI

From a microfilm: S.N. 20284

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Ranchhoddas Partwari",11-1-1933

426. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

February 18, 1933

MY DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

You have sent me draft of constitution and rules of the Society. Four people have been at it. All of us four feel that it is to be re-drafted altogether. Shastri is at it just now. You will please forgive me if I am not ready with my suggestions yet for some time. It does not matter if it takes a little time, but whatever we give must be thoroughly sound and perfectly readable.

About the Harijan Day, I think that the announcement should come from you officially. I will then support it. It might be as well if a Harijan Day is desired to be proclaimed now and again to fix a day in the month or a day every two months so that people automatically know and it becomes a kind of a monthly or six-weekly or bi-monthly religious observance. You will now do whatever you think is necessary.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20281

427. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

February 18, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

Lest you might have forgotten all about the contribution to the *Aaj* through Baboo Bhagwandas, on account of his publishing the learned opinions by way of supplement to the *Aaj*, if you have not already sent anything, please do so now.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 7928. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

428. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS

February 18, 1933

DEAR BABOOJI

I have your letter of 13th instant. The reversion to the longer style of addressing was purely mechanical without thinking that I had taken to the more homely style. You will please keep me to it if in the hurry of dictating correspondence I repeat the mistake.

I have already written[1] to Ghanshyamdas about his promised contribution. I have no doubt that it will come if it has not already. He might have forgotten it. I will no longer belabour the point about the necessity of newspapers being self-supporting. I observe that you have sterilized my argument through your great soul theory;[2] only this soul had no greatness thrust upon him when he developed and reduced to practice the proposition.

I am deeply grieved to have the disturbing news about Shivaprasad's[3] health and the death of his grandson through accident.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: S.N. 20274

429. LETTER TO B. N. SASMAL

February 18, 1933

MY DEAR SASMAL,

I was delighted to have your letter. I suppose we have various editions of the Kaviraj all over India. I hope you are getting your copy of *Harijan* and that if you are not reduced to utter poverty, as I see you are not, you will straightaway send your own subscription and subscriptions and names on behalf of others.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: S.N. 20279

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The addressee had written: "The Aaj has, so far. been carried on by the charity of its sole proprietor, Shivaprasadji. . . . *Young India* has realized the ideal you describe, yet this has been possible because a 'Great Soul' was its editor, and it costs Providence and whole nations many crores of rupees—if the matter must be treated in terms of finance—to evolve such a Great Soul".

[3] A leading Congressman and philanthropist of Varanasi and the founder of *Aaj*, a Hindi daily

430. LETTER TO M. M. ANANTA RAU

February 18, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have before me your two letters dated 8th and 14th February respectively. I would now ask you to cry a halt. I esteem the great pains you are bestowing upon your compositions, but I must tell you that your arguments produce no effect on my mind. Some of them I cannot follow at all. Some of them are wholly irrelevant to the issue. You often beg the question and equally often make assertions as if they were axioms. In my opinion that is not the way in which you will drive the truth home to anybody. I believe that I am very pervious to argument and that I have the capacity for seeing my critics' standpoint. You have prepossessed me in your favour by your courteous language and by your quietly accepting and acting up to my suggestion about the ornamentation of your letter-paper. I therefore approach your letter[s] with a desire to find substantial help from them, but you will excuse me for saying that I do not find any. I would therefore now ask you to close this correspondence. I would be guilty of discourtesy towards you if I left you under the impression that your argument was at all going home and that therefore you could continue your correspondence.

Yours sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 9576. Courtesy: Government of Mysore

431. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

February 18, 1933

MY DEAR MARY,

Our letters crossed with each other. You are living up to the failing ascribed to your sex. The Ashram has been made to rid each sex of its failings. Will you get rid of yours and learn to give in your letters the things that should be there. You have omitted to mention your asthma. I hope it has left you entirely. *Puniam* is usually spelt *punyam*. You should learn the Devanagari script. You will take no more than a week giving one hour daily. Then you will know why

you cannot express the original by *puniam*. Even the 'n' does not give the original sound. There are five nasal sounds in Sanskrit.

'Narandas' is quite enough. But the bad habit of attaching 'bhai' or 'ji' has been the vogue and takes the place of 'Mr.'. Strangers would use only the other suffix. But you may omit either, if you are older than Narandas. If you are younger, 'bhai' becomes necessary as a member of the family. Being daughter to me, you are as sister to Narandas and every other member in the Ashram. 'Bhai' means brother as 'behn' means sister. Here endeth the first lesson.

You must not be impatient with yourself, if you pick up new things slowly. They will all become easy and natural by determined practice.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5993. Also C.W. 3318. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

432. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

February 18, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I am sending a friend to you. His name is Duncan Greenlees. He is a B. A. of oxford University. He was a teacher in a school in U. P. He has also been in jail. He intends to devote himself to Harijan work. I have advised him to stay in the Ashram for some time and see how he feels there. If we and he find that he will be able to work with us, we may assign him some work. So let him stay there and give him some work. He should also do spinning and weaving. He may be given teaching work too. He is a man of simple habits and is a vegetarian. Ascertain his requirements. I am sure that he will not be a burden on you. Give him the expenses of his journey from Poona to Ahmedabad, or credit the amount to his name. It is likely to be between Rs. 10 and 12.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

433. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

February 18, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

I got your letter. If you come on a Friday or Saturday and inform us in advance, you will be able to meet me. It is not necessary to write to anybody in advance to get an interview with me. It will be enough if you inform me about the date. People can see me between 12 and 1.30. I will fix up about Joshi after you let me know the date.

Since Vimu does not want me to call her silly, I hope she has given up her tantrums.

BAPU

[PS.]

I just learn that Chhaganlal wishes that you should not come just now, but may come after three months. If you want to, you may write to me about this.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5342

434. LETTER TO VIMALA JOSHI

February 18, 1933

CHI. VIMU,

I got your letter, and also the peahen sent by you. But what is the use of a peahen who does not speak at all? And your handwriting is no better than your peahen, and, moreover, the letter is written in pencil. This will not do.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5309

435. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

February 18, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I have already written to you about . . .[1]. You did right in writing to Harjivan. I am afraid . . .[2] will not live in Bombay. He has still not become straightforward. . . .[3] seems to be deceiving us. She does not at all wish to do any work. We, however, should support her as long as we can afford. If, therefore, your suggestions have been acted upon and are working, continue the arrangement. Read the letters to Marybehn and pass them on to her.

Did Father Lash make any suggestions? Did you cultivate his acquaintance?

What happened about that Muslim lady? How is she?

BAPU

[PS.]

Letters for Mary, Rama and Vimu enclosed.

From a microfilm of Gujarati: M.M.U./I

436. LETTER TO GANGABEHN B. JHAVERI

February 18, 1933

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Your letter was welcome. I had been waiting for it. Come and see me next Tuesday. I am not writing more here as we shall meet soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3952

[1] The names have been omitted.
[2] *ibid*

437. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

February 18, 1933

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

It is not necessary to arrange a tour programme for Sarupbehn in Gujarat. I was never keen about it. My suggestion was only that you should take advantage of her presence if you thought it necessary.

I am in correspondence with Bhai Jaisukhlal about Gujarati *Harijan*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3993

438. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

February 18, 1933

CHI. HARIBHAU,

I got your letter. When it is no longer necessary for you to go to the hospital for dressing and you have regained sufficient strength, you may come and see me provided you wish to discuss with me anything connected with the problem of untouchability. There has been no harm in your having got yourself operated upon. But otherwise your explanation as to the cause of the trouble is correct. It has its origin in the stomach. The only remedy, therefore, is fasting followed by a period of light diet. For some time you should live on milk and fruits. What you have written about ahimsa is right. I was pained to read about Rohit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 6076. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

439. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
February 18, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I have your telegram. I desisted from writing directly to you lest what I desired or suggested became a burden to you. I made the suggestion to Ramjibhai thinking that you would decline without hesitation if you had not still recovered fully. In my foolishness I assumed that he would not use my name in writing to you. You were quite right to decline. Send Vidyabehn[1] or Sharadabehn[2] if you think it fit. I shall not insist. I must say you have taken very long to recover.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON
POONA

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11137. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

440. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

February 18, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I have your letter. Think no more of Kudsia[3]. After all, only her father has the right to decide her future. Our duty is to perform with heart and soul whatever job falls to our lot. The result rests with God. I hope Dr. Sharma's daughter[4] is all right. What was the treatment? I am very happy to learn that you are making all-round progress. What

[1] Vidyagauri Nilkanth and her sister Sharadabehn Mehta
[2] *ibid*
[3] Addressee's niece who, upon her return from the Ashram, had again become absorbed in the home atmosphere while the addressee had different hopes for her
[4] Who was suffering from smallpox

treatment is given to you? what do you eat? Tell me everything. I have written quite a few letters to you. I am keeping count of them. I shall certainly keep on writing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 277

441. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

BISAMILLAH[1]

February 18, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

I have your letter. I have always expected you. Why should you depend on Padmaja to bring you? Can you not use some other car? Remember to avoid Wednesdays or Thursdays as both are reserved for the *Harijan*. Your hand is all right, I hope. When you are completely free of fever you may be prepared for a kiss.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: S.N. 9660

442. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR AND B. D. KALELKAR

February 19, 1933

CHI. KAKA,

I got your letter.

If milk, when taken without any other food, is not digested, it does no harm, but the milk which seems to be digested with the help of other food is not really digested but mixes with the food, and remaining in the body in the form of poison, it harms the gums, etc. This is the view held by more and more doctors and seems to be correct. You can have with milk oranges, grapes, pineapples, pomegranates and other juicy fruits. They will prevent milk from causing constipation. You should, therefore, start the experiment of milk-diet as soon as possible and accustom your body really to digest it. I make no distinction between milk and curds. Some doctors,

[1] Literally, 'by the name of God'

probably most, believe that curds are more easily digested. The curds should not taste sour at all—the curds which we used to make by adding drops of lemon juice to milk would be the best. You should not drink the milk but sip it slowly. It would be better to take a spoonful at a time. To start with, you should take a quarter pound every hour. Do not mind if you get diarrhoea. It will stop in a few days. You may drink the fruit juice separately at any convenient time. In fruit juice, you should have the juice of six mosambis or of one pound of fresh grapes in two parts. You should take about four pounds of milk or curds, and mix with it as much butter as may be necessary. If you take milk in sufficient quantity, I doubt the necessity of butter. But it will do no harm if it can be digested even in the absence of other food. Doctors believe that, like milk, butter too does no harm if taken by itself. See how I have described the benefits of milk. But I have no choice. I can find no plant or herb which can equal milk in food value. There is certainly some truth in the belief that milk is a wholesome food even for yogis. It is the only substitute for meat. Only our vaids[1] could have discovered a vegetable substitute for milk, but, lacking zeal for dharma, they made no such attempt. I have failed in my search and given it up. We do not know if anybody else will take it up and succeed. Perhaps in the West they may succeed. Among us there is no one who possesses the necessary medicinal knowledge to make such a discovery. We do not regard it as our dharma to acquire such knowledge and to make experiments with that aim. Anybody who wishes to undertake the task should be inspired with zeal for the welfare of the cow. He should be convinced that no milk other than the mother's milk can be the proper food of a human being. Such a person should then study medicine. We do not have at present men with such a spirit. If India is destined to discover such a substitute, God will send among us a person with the necessary gifts. Till then, let us sing praises of milk and do the duty which lies before us. I hope you will feel satisfied that I have replied to your question in greater detail than you had expected. I also hope that you will understand the relative importance of the issues involved. Think over all this and do what seems right to you, for even in such matters the final decision should be one's own. What I have said is true only about people with weak health. Those who are healthy will eat normal food and may even be able to digest it. If you want to experiment with

[1] Physicians practising Ayurvedic system of medicine

milk-diet in a scientific manner, you can do so only in the Ashram or in the neighbourhood of a dairy where we have a right of entry; it is only then that we can get fresh milk. I suppose you know that yogis mix crushed *neem* leaves in milk before drinking it.

Write something for *Harijan* when you feel like doing so. I think innocent eggs are laid by hen without having been inseminated by a cock. You will get more information from the friend at Sangli. An innocent egg is one from which no chick can be born.

Personally, I very much liked the design for the title page of *Harijan*. It was entirely my choice. At first we had thought of getting a block made. But I liked the design better after it was printed and so the idea of getting a block made was dropped.

Shastra does not mean the pronouncements of men of spiritual experience in the past. It means the words of living men today who have had first-hand spiritual experience, that is, who have realized the Brahman. Shastra is something which is daily embodied in somebody's life. What exists only in books and is not followed in life may be philosophy, or it may be foolish chatter or mere hypocrisy. Shastra must be immediately capable of realization in experience, it must spring from the living experience of the person who utters it. It is only in this sense that the Veda is eternal. All else is not Veda, but theorizing about Veda.

If . . .[1] is resolved to marry . . . he should ignore our opposition and do so. There is no harm in doing that. The Gita verse, "What can self-control avail[2]", applies in this case. But then the couple should have courage and confidence in themselves. If the people ultimately see that they lead a life of self-control, the world will forgive the couple. It is such action which forsakes the rule of Shastra.[3] If it is inspired by a pure and noble ideal, it is ultimately condoned. But just now such conduct will be and ought to be disapproved. Our duty, therefore, is clear. We should not directly or indirectly give our consent to his marriage to . . . . If, however, he does marry her and if the people ultimately approve the marriage, we also will join in the applause. I think . . . is now forgetting . . . .

Blessings from

BAPU

5 a.m.

[PS.]

[1] The names are omitted in the source

[2] *ibid*

[3] A reference to the *Gita*, XVII. 5-6.

I wrote this letter between 3 and 5 and in the morning, excluding the time spent in prayer. I did not intend to give so much time to you I cannot afford to do so. But ?

CHI. BAL[1],

Since children emulate their elders, the latter also should follow a child's praiseworthy example. Hence I follow yours. The news about Shankar[2] is certainly good. But I will try and know more. Since I have given too much time to Kaka, I will not write more than this for you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9495. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

443. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

February 19, 1933

To

THE SECRETARY

HOME DEPARTMENT

DELHI

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for the reply[3] to my letter[4] addressed to the Private Secretary to the Viceroy dated the 1st instant. There are two things about which I would like to make brief observations.

The Government have assumed without just cause that "education and the provision of the normal facilities of life" are not considered by me as the vital part of the Resolution referred to therein. It was wholly irrelevant to the purpose of my letter to the Private Secretary to the Viceroy to state what was being done by me or through me in connection with these things. Indeed I have shown in my writings being published in the course of the controversy that education and the like were being prosecuted with all the vigour possible and that the pace would be quadrupled by the temples being

[1] Balkrishna D. Kalelkar

[2] Satish D. Kalelkar

[3] *Vide* "Letter from Government of India", 17-2-1933

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Viceroy", 1-2-1933

opened to the Harijans.

As to the two measures now before the legislature, I may be permitted to point out that they are not intended to affect religious "customs and usages of the Hindu community". They are specially designed to leave that question to the community itself. The law as it stands makes impossible the operation of the Hindu mind on certain religious customs and usages, and the measures are designed to release the Hindu mind from those fetters. I would submit that it is the duty of the Government, which is pledged to neutrality in religious matters, to free the reformers from the shackles of, not of religious custom, but of the law. For, had it not been for the law, it would have been open to the trustees, with the consent of the temple-goers, to change the custom. Nor may it be forgotten that the Bills have come before the legislature as a result of the formation of a very strong body of public opinion in favour of the change of custom.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Home Department, Political, File No. 50/II/33, p. 40. Courtesy: .National Archives of India. Also G.N. 7587

444. LETTER TO TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU

February 19, 1933

DEAR DR. SAPRU,

I thank you for your prompt telegram in reply to mine. I do need at the present moment all the legitimate support I can get.

I send you herewith a copy of the Government's reply to my letter and my reply[1] there to. I send you also a copy of my letter of the Ist instant to which you will find the reference in the Government's reply.

If you have not already covered the ground in the letter promised in your wire, will you please supplement your reply with such remarks as you may think necessary in view of the enclosures, without of course referring to the correspondence in your supplement?

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: G.N. 7586. Also Gandhi-Sapru Correspondence. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

445. LETTER TO PERIN CAPTAIN

February 19, 1933

I must dictate if I am to overtake my correspondence. I was delighted to see the familiar writing and signature. You and Gosibehn and Kamalabehn shall come on Friday next at 2 p.m. Mathuradas told me that you were none the worse for your life in Bijapur Mandir except that you had left there a few pounds of your weight.

With love to you all from us all.

PERIN CAPTAIN

ORIENT CLUB BUILDING

CHOWPATTY, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20287

446. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

February 19, 1933

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

I was glad to hear that at the instance of Seth Bhagoji Kir you were going to open two temples in Ratnagiri to Harijans on the 22nd instant. I hope that both caste Hindus and Harijans will appreciate this religious act of Seth Bhagoji Kir and that Harijans will take advantage of the opportunity they have now got of offering worship in these two temples.

I have no doubt that you will remind Harijan brothers and sisters that it is necessary in order to gain the full advantage of worship to conform to the obligations that lie upon all worshippers to observe the law of cleanliness, such as daily individual bath, wearing of unpolluted clothing and offering individual worship in the home, and abstain from carrion and beef eating and intoxicating liquors.

I am posting a copy of this to reach you at Ratnagiri lest this should reach Bombay after your departure for Ratnagiri.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20288

447. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

February 19, 1933

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

I enclose herewith a copy of the reply received from the Government and my reply[1] thereto.

In view of this, could you not send me for publication as early as you can your opinion, if you can give it, that neither of the Bills contains any element of compulsion or constitutes any interference with religious observance and generally supporting, if you can do so, my argument in my reply to the Government letter, without of course making any reference to that letter?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20289

448. LETTER TO CHARU CHANDRA MITRA

February 19, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I have not yet got your pamphlet[2]. When I do, I shall certainly go through it carefully and answer your argument if necessary even through the columns of the *Harijan.* You may depend upon it that speaking for myself personally, not even a single argument of the sanatanists has escaped me, or, so far as it was possible for me to do, remained unanswered.

I did enquire about the meeting[3] in Calcutta that you have referred to, and the information that I received was that the statements made were gross exaggerations. I do not know if you have or can produce any proof for the charges made. I would at once ask my friends for a reply. For me this is purely a religious struggle in which neither untruth nor violence can have any place whatsoever.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. CHARU CHANDRA MITRA
5 HASTINGS STREET
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S. N. 20291

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of India", 19-2-1933

[2] *Untouchability and Temple-entry,* embodying the viewpoints of the sanatanists

[3] A protest meeting, presided over by Bipin Behari Ghosh, ex-judge of the Calcutta High Court, which was broken up allegedly by the reformers

449. LETTER TO DR.. B. C. ROY

February 19, 1933

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

Could you send me for publication in the *Harijan* a resume of all the constructive activities on behalf of Harijans that will come under your observation in Bengal?

I hope you are getting your copy.

I dare not ask you to send me subscribers, for I know that your time is otherwise fully occupied. But I must make the paper self-supporting, and I can ask you to send subscriptions on behalf of the Provincial organization for a certain number of copies for free distribution amongst those who should have the copies but whom you do not expect to pay.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20293

450. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

February 19, 1933

MY DEAR C. R.,

You are not going to worry over the reference to the fast. Such errors come out of the depths of love—but love gone mad. I mended the error by magnifying it a hundred fold and driving a rich lesson home to people. I know that neither you nor Ghanshyamdas will repeat the error. Where is the cause for it? We simply work away.

Your reading of the *Gita* is perfect so far.

The A.P.I. news about 27 members did not disturb me in the slightest degree. You are there delivering the message to everybody who will listen. What does it matter now if nobody listens? As it is you have made considerable progress.

Nor has Malaviyaji's bombshell[1] disturbed me. It was bound to come. We have to have him with all his limitations as we consider them to be. But his so-called limitations are also his strength. It may be wise not to worry him now by sending Devdas and Shankerlal.

[1] *Vide* "Telegram from Madan Mohan Malaviya", 15-2-1933

I send you herewith a copy of the Government's reply to me and my reply[1] to them. You will share all this with Ghanshyamdas.

I see you have in giving me your address struck off the names 'Lakshmi' and 'Narayan' and 'near Clock Tower'. Therefore the address is merely C/o Seth Gadodia, Delhi. What is the significance of the omission? Do you thereby get the letters delivered earlier?

I hope absence of any mention of Devdas's cold means he is all right.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20296

451. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

February 19, 1933

MY DEAR SATISBABOO,

I have your letter of the 15th instant. The description you give of smallpox in the *bastis* makes painful reading. I do not know how far that faith in Sitala Devi[2] is to be admired, and if it is to be admired, why should we undermine it? It seems to me that by patience and perseverance we have to undermine this blind faith and show to the people that smallpox is like every other disease caused by irregular living and that it is amenable like every other disease to proper treatment.

I do not know how far you are justified in avoiding vaccina-tion and perhaps encouraging co-workers to do likewise. Of course I myself am a fanatic about some of these matters. But I never like people to copy fanaticism. A fanatic has his own justifi-cation. He may never be copied. Fanaticism must be instinctive. It may be almost compared to the blind faith of the people whom you have described and who recklessly touch and mingle with smallpox patients. But just as you and I cannot copy their blind faith with any prospect of success, so also may nobody copy anybody else's fanaticism; and since you have such occular demonstration of the success of vaccination, unless you have your own independent faith and conviction that vaccination is bad you ought to be vaccinated and you should encourage your co-workers to do likewise. Anyway, I have

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of India", 19-2-1933

[2] Goddess believed to be cause of smallpox

washed myself clean of any responsibility for your daring experiment, if it is an experiment, and if it is a faith like mine, I have nothing to say. For it is not merely vaccination, but the whole of the serum treatment which to me appears as another species of superstition, not far removed from that of *basti* Harijans.

You should send me from week to week, if there is anything to be sent, a report of constructive work actually done in connection with Harijans in your part of the world, whether by you or others. If Suresh or anybody connected with him is doing this work, please pass on this message to them also.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20300

452. LETTER TO SURESH CHANDRA BANERJEE

February 19, 1933

MY DEAR SURESH,

I have been thinking of you almost every day, and not having heard from you for a long time, in my despair I dictated a message, quite selfish, to you, in my letter to Satisbaboo, and immediately I had finished that letter, Mahadev put your letter of 15th instant in my hands. You can better imagine my joy than I can describe it.

I see you have been near death's door again. It is better perhaps to realize that we are always near death's door, the healthy-looking people no less than the ill-looking. I know many bed-ridden people surviving the loss of dear ones who had looked pictures of health and who they had thought were bound to survive them.

Pray, do not become impatient. Understand thoroughly the distinction I have drawn between caste and varnashrama. Caste is a touch-me-not institution. If untouchability goes, you will find that touch-me-not-ism will go. According to my meaning of it varnashrama has not the slightest tinge of touch-me-not-ism. It is a spiritual law just as valid as any physical law, whether we recognize its existence or whether we do not. He who recognizes the existence of this law profits by his knowledge, even as a scientist, knowing the properties of a drop of water and the laws which are responsible for those properties, makes railway trains to move at a speed our ancestors had never thought of. So also if we recognize the law of varnashrama

and give effect to it, we can do away with many ills of life. I can understand Dr. Ambedkar in his rage against caste Hindus refusing to see the wood for the trees, but you have no excuse whatsoever for not understanding the very clear distinction I have pointed out.[1] In any case I am convinced that to precipitate a fight on varnashrama today is to do a great disservice to the cause of the removal of untouchability. I must not worry you any more.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SURESH CHANDRA BANERJEE
88-G CORPORATION STREET
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20298

453. LETTER TO PARASHURAM MEHROTRA

February 19, 1933

CHI. PARASRAM,

I got your letter. You should acquire equal facility in both styles, so that you can use either as the occasion may require. We will use both also when we have an opportunity to revive *Navajivan.*

Work hard to help Duncan Greenlees as you have been doing to help Marybehn. It is desirable that he should learn Hindi as soon as possible. Let us pray to God to give peace to Father.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7514

454. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI N. PATEL

February 19, 1933

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

It seems that you have not got the letter I wrote to you some time ago about Lalita. However, it is likely that you received it after you wrote your letter, as it is dated the second. Now there is no

[1] The addressee had endorsed the statement of Dr. Ambedkar explaining his objections to Mr. Ranga Iyer's Temple-entry Bill, and written: "The untoucha-bility problem will never be effectively solved until and unless the caste distinction is removed from the Hindu society."

immediate problem. In two years' time, Lalita will probably decide for herself. The solution should be such as will not shock Nathabhai and as will safeguard the interests of Lalita. We should have faith that we shall be able to find such a solution when the time comes.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8999

455. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

February 19, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

I am determined not to make this a long letter.

If you can win over Maitri and all the three sisters improve, I will certainly regard that as your and Ashram's victory. Narandas has tried the way of love. See if you succeed.

You must have realized that Lakshmi must be married off now, or else she should leave the Ashram. I do not think any of you should be burdened any longer with her responsibility. Maruti is an exceptional young man. Lakshmidas also has had a hand in his training. You have found that what Moti had told you about him was not correct.

The arrangements which you have made about the girls seem to be all right. I liked your suggestion about Nirmala. I have not yet been able to discuss it with Mahadev, though. I also understand what you say about Prithuraj. I am eager to know more details about the Muslim lady. Cultivate the acquaintance of the English friend[1] whom I have sent there. He has impressed me as a man inclined to a life of renunciation. Look after his needs.

To which aspect of my behaviour, when you came to see me with Sushila, did your question refer? I do not remember anything. If you ask this question again, I will try to answer it.

I understand what you say about doctors. Once we have put ourselves in a doctor's hand, we should get from him whatever he can give. Otherwise we shall not do him justice, and may do harm to ourselves. We must admit that doctors do succeed in some cases, though it is also well known that they spoil many others through

[1] Duncan Greenlees

negligence or ignorance. I would certainly respect a person who takes a vow not to consult doctors any time. Millions of people cannot consult them at all. But I think that such self-denial is beyond the capacity of the inmates of the Ashram. We may, therefore, consult doctors who are reputed to be intelligent. You may certainly seek the advice of Kisan's uncle.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10327

456. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA N. SHARE

February 19, 1933

CHI. RAMACHANDRA,

I got your letter. You should always write what you do after careful thought. Anybody who wants to be scrupulously truthful would not utter or write even one word without care fully weighing it. I had got confused by what you wrote. Now everything is clear.

You write *Jai Jai* to Sardar and *Pranams* to Mahadevbhai and Chhaganbhai. Explain the difference between the two. What does *Jai Jai* mean? Does it mean the same thing as *Jaya Jaya?* A person like me can afford to make a mistake in spelling a word. You boys and girls should always write correct Gujarati.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 305. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

457. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

February 19, 1933

BHAI DAHYABHAI,

I got your letter. It is beautiful. I have not received the books as yet. They will arrive by and by. Your introduction is so good that I will read the books with interest. Write to me and let me know about the discoveries which you may make concerning Harijans.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2701. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

458. LETTER TO VIMALCHANDRA V. DESAI

February 19, 1933

CHI. NANU,

I got your letter. Your handwriting still leaves much to be desired. If you understand that one should write each letter as carefully as one draws a figure, your handwriting will be beautiful.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5757. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

459. LETTER TO SUDARSHAN V. DESAI

February 1*9, 1933*

CHI. MAVO,

I got your letter. Do you go out daily for a walk? I have preserved coloured slips for children like you. Which colour do you like?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 5761. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

460. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

February 19, 1933

CHI. VALJI,

I had got your letter. I did not reply immediately because I was waiting for the book[1]. I have got the copies now. I am distributing them among friends. I request everyone to whom I send a copy to let me have his comments. How many copies have been sold? I hope you get copies of the *Harijan*. Send me your comments. If you feel inspired to write something, do so. I hope your health is improving.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7447. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1] "Life of Jesus"

461. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

February 19, 1933

BOYS AND GIRLS,

I got your letters. It is not wise to keep on changing the volunteers or, shall we say, the organizers. You may if you wish keep a number of them for a certain period for the sake of giving them experience but it should not be for less than six months. There would be order only if you saw that no one left on account of quarrels or because they felt offended. Do you keep a record of your activities? You should have a few rules for your organization and then cling to them. If you do this, your progress will be speeded up.

Pay more attention to farming. You should eat, and you will like to eat, vegetables produced by you all and by you only.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

462. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[*February 19/20, 1933*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

Is the cost of milk, etc., which you send for Ba and Mirabehn paid by the jail authorities or is it borne by us?

I follow what you say regarding the weight of Rambhau, Jekore and others. I feel relieved. We should take care and see that the children do not feel the burden of the Ashram life. What you say about Chhotubhai is correct. Keep me informed about Liladhar. Duncan Greenlees will have arrived there and have been one of you by the time you get this letter. He will give you a letter which I have sent with him. He has produced a good impression on me. Make some arrangement to help him to learn Hindi. I hope you are not taken by surprise when I send somebody in this manner without previous warning. I could have written to you about D[uncan] G[reenlees] five days earlier, but I forgot to do so and he arrived suddenly yesterday. I knew that he might arrive any day. If, therefore, I had written to you

[1] From the reference in the letter to the arrival of Duncan Greenlees in Poona; *vide* also "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 18-2-1933

at the same time when I decided to write to him, you would have got five days, or at least three days, notice. If you think that it is improper for me to send people like this without previous intimation, tell me so. I will not then do it again. Give him clothes and other things which he may require. Supply him the required utensils too. Ask him not to keep any money or costly article with him. I forgot to do that.

If the digging of wells is about to be completed, write to Soniramji for money. Does Ranchhodbhai[1] visit the Ashram occasionally? I wonder because I have had no letter from him at all. Let all those to whom Hariyomal has written describe to him in plain words the bitter experiences they have had. He seems to be an honest man and, therefore, such frank letters are likely to produce an effect on him. Persons like Hariyomal learn only from bitter experience.

I felt depressed after reading . . . 's letter. You must have read it. It is likely that . . . beat her, as she says he did. Inquire and find out the truth. Ask . . . . Who writes the letters for. . .? or is her own handwriting well-formed and firm? Where is . . . now?[2]

Read what I have written to Kusum about sun-bath. Tell Dr. Talwalkar about it. If he approves of my suggestion, put up a sort of wall of hay or hessian or any other suitable material round the place where Kusum sits. The wall should be such as can be removed every day. Or you may select some other suitable place in consultation with the doctor and put up such a wall there and let her have sun-bath in that enclosure. If necessary, she may be carried there in a cot. Find out whether it is necessary to obtain Government's permission for putting up such temporary wall on agricultural land. Patients like Kusum are known to have recovered by only taking sun-bath with their bodies completely uncovered.

Some boys ask me in their letters to write "Blessings from" at least when I write to them. Please remind all that in order to save time and spare the hand unnecessary work I don't say it in words but leave it to be understood by the addressee. Everybody, therefore, should supply the phrase in his or her letter.

4 o'clock, Monday [*February 20, 1933*]

Prakash complains that the inmates of the Ashram do not like looking after a sick person. If there is any truth in this criticism, we

[1] Ranchhodlal Amritlal Shodhan, a mill-owner of Ahmedabad

[2] The names in this paragraph have been omitted.

should hang our heads in shame. Do not misunderstand Prakash's criticism. All of us should examine our hearts and reform ourselves in whatever respects may be necessary.

Write to . . .[1] also what you wrote to me about him. Don't mind if he feels a little hurt. He is childish, but not dishonest.

BAPU

[PS.]

I had got the soap sent by Panditji. Why has he coloured it?

There are 36 letters in all, tied with a string.

From a microfilm of Gujarati: M. M. U./I

463. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

February 20, 1933

DEAR GURUDEV,

At the instance of Seth Ghanshyamdas you sent a poem[2] for the *Harijan* of which I hope you received the first issue. Harijans are your special care. I am therefore not going to be satisfied with that message only. If you can send something occasionally it will be a source of strength to me personally and a help to the readers of *Harijan* in the midst of so much that is going on to undermine their faith.

I hope you are keeping well.

With love from us all.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4637

464. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL K. MEHTA

February 20, 1933

MY DEAR JAISUKHLAL,

If it is at all possible, I would like you to get the opinion of some legal friends on the following points. I have already asked Sjt. Jayakar to help me, but he will do so both as lawyer and politician

[1] The name has been omitted.

[2] *Vide* "The Cleanser"

perhaps. But if we can get four or five signatures from well-known lawyers with his amongst them, I should value the thing all the more. I do not know that, it is necessary to go through the stiff course of solicitors preparing a brief and submitting it to several advocates for their opinion. I would like it to be a considered opinion of lawyers as public men applying their knowledge of law to a question of great importance. The points to which I would like them to address themselves are these:

1. Is there any element of compulsion in any of the two Bills?

2. Is there any interference with any person's religious practice or conscience?

3. In spite of the willingness of the trustees as well as the worshippers of a particular public Hindu temple, is not one of the two Bills at least or a measure like them necessary before it is possible for a public Hindu temple to be opened in view of the English Law of Trusts and known decisions of the High Courts in India?

You should approach Mr. Bahadurji on this matter. But I do not insist; you know better what to do and how to do it.

You should attend to this as early as you possibly can.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. JAISUKHLAL MEHTA
"THE RECLUSE"
MURZBAN ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20302

465. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

February 20, 1933

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Milk should not be drunk, but eaten. Take it with papaw. Have no doubt that, if one does not get strength with milk, the strength given by other foods is likely to be illusory. Don't mind if you have to spare some time, but take hip-bath every day. Do go in sunshine, so that you do not feel cold at all.

We need not worry about Mahavir. Even if he is forced to resort to begging or stealing, ultimately he will come to good if it is so

decreed. In the Ashram his soul was being degraded, for his life was not true there. Harilal will one day reform himself, though he drinks and goes after immoral pleasures. If, however, I had kept him in the Ashram and somehow found him the money which he wanted, he would have let his thoughts run after immoral pleasures and would have been deceiving himself and the world.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 24376

466. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

February 20, 1933

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

Your desire is noble and your efforts are wonderful. You have put your discoveries before Narandas and me. Now listen to what Narandas says and go on doing your work with single-minded devotion. Others also will follow your example and all shortcomings will disappear.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 352. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

467. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

February 20, 1933

CHI. JAMNA,

Purushottam came and saw me. He has acquired fairly good knowledge on the subject. I have asked him to stay there for some time longer still and learn more. He now hopes, and so do I, that he will be all right. I hope you are progressing satisfactorily.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 872. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

468. LETTER TO BHOGILAL

February 20, 1933

BHAI BHOGILAL,

We can acquire "full and perfect knowledge" by observing the *yamaniyamas*[1].

The true aim of education is spiritual development. One should, therefore, go in for such kind of education as will bring it about. It need not be of one fixed type. Hence it is not necessary to say anything on that subject. One should lead a life of self-control.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4752

469. LETTER TO NANALAL K. JASANI

February 20, 1933

BHAI NANALAL,

I had received your invitation. I had sent my blessings to Indira directly. She claimed an old connection with me. However, convey my blessings to both the brides and both the bridegrooms, and also my hope that they will lead a pure life and continually grow in the spirit of service.

You must have heard everything about the divisions. Chhagan is there. I have discussed the matter with Ratubhai. Do meet him. If Chhagan agrees, we may proceed further. Lilavati also has promised.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9629

[1] Rules and regulations of conduct for a spiritual aspirant

470. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

February 20, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

You wrote to me after a long time. Write regularly from now on. It is not good for Premabehn to get angry with you. But a boy or girl who is eager to learn will not mind the teacher getting angry and will learn attentively.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9637 Courtesy : Ravindra R. Patel

471. LETTER TO K. NATARAJAN

February 21, 1933

DEAR MR. NATARAJAN,

I thank you for your letter.[1] I can never take amiss any intervention from you. On the contrary, I have always welcomed it. You will perhaps be interested to learn that the original draft of the Resolution on Temple-entry and the like was also framed by me and handed to Sjts. Purushottamdas and Ghanshyamdas Birla. The Resolution as passed at the Bombay meeting is undoubtedly different from the one I had worded. The essential features of my Resolution have however been kept in the Bombay Resolution. Nevertheless I must apply to it the same canon of interpretation as we apply to Government's ordinary laws and the like. The intention of the author is irrelevant to the interpretation of his work if that intention is not carried out in his language. I have therefore mentioned the fact of my authorship of the original text as a mere matter of historical interest. If you will read the first Resolution[2] you will find the following:

> This right shall have statutory recognition at the first opportunity, and shall be one of the earliest acts of swaraj Parliament, if it shall not have received such recognition before that time.

[1] The addressee had referred to the Bombay Resolution of September 25, 1932 and written: "Of course, the Pact itself was largely your doing and you are the best authority as to what it was intended to mean. But the Bombay Conference, of which I was a member, did not intend more than Malaviyaji says. Perhaps, less."

[2] *Vide* "Statement on Viceroy's Decision", 24-1-1933

Therefore, the legislative aid was clearly contemplated by the resolution. But I go a step further. The meeting further agreed

> by every legitimate and peaceful means to secure an early removal of all social disabilities . . . including the bar in respect of admission to temples.

In the course of the conduct of the campaign one discovered that there was a legal obstacle in the path of the progress towards reform. Surely, it is up to the caste Hindus to remove the obstacles at the earliest possible moment. Every lawyer to whom I have referred the matter has assured me that even when the trustees and temple-goers desire a particular temple to be opened, it cannot be done because of the state of the law. So far as the defects in any of the Bills are concerned, they can surely be easily remedied. If you have any doubt about the position I have taken up, I would like you, if you at all can, to come over to Yeravda and discuss the position before you differ. If, however, you have no doubt whatsoever about your view of the matter, I must not trouble you to come merely for my pleasure.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. NATARAJAN
KAMAKSHI HOUSE
BANDRA, BOMBAY 20

From a microfilm: S.N. 20310

472. LETTER TO KESHAV

February 21, 1933

MY DEAR KESHAV,

I never thought that you wanted me to say anything in connection with your appeal, or if you did and I promised to do anything, I forgot all about it to the extent that I cannot now recall the contents of the appeal which was destroyed after I had read it. Please therefore send me a copy and I shall see what can be done with reference to it.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KESHAV
CHRIST SEVA SANGHA ASHRAM
AUNDH, NEAR KIRKEE

From a microfilm: S.N. 20312

473. LETTER TO S. GANESAN

February 21, 1933

MY DEAR GANESAN,

I have your letter[1]. It is not possible to send you proofs before Friday mail, because the last article does not lave me before Thursday evening, and it will be dangerous to send you anything from day to day, because there is no certainty of what I write appearing in the issue for which it is written, nor of its appearing in the form in which it is written in the first instance. I can therefore only send you proofs of what is actually to go in and in the form in which it is to go in. That is determined only on Fridays.

You and your wife can certainly come and see me any time you like, except on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays,

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. GANESAN

C/O "SWATHANTHRA SANGU"[2]

TRIPLICANE, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 20313

474. LETTER TO PARESHNATH BHATTACHARYYA

February 21, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 15th instant for which I thank you.

I endeavour to be as precise as I possibly can about anything I write and therefore when I am confronted with anything as having been said by me, in justice to me I should have the very words that I have said. You will understand what I mean when I tell you what distinction there is between what you think I have said and what I have actually said.

I do not consider "the *Gita* to be the only scripture of

[1] The addressee wanted to publish a supplement in Tamil and Telugu every Monday containing Gandhiji's articles in *Harijan* and had therefore requested for advance proofs which he wanted to reach him on Friday or Saturday.

[2] A Tamil tri-weekly

unquestionable authority which alone should be our true guide". What I have said and what I still hold is that for me in view of the multitude of books claimed to be scriptural and [of] conflicting texts, *Gita* is the only safe guide, because it contains the concentrated essence of all that the Hindu scriptures have to teach and that I would unhesitatingly reject anything that is in conflict with the spirit of the *Gita.* Thus I would test the validity of every religious precept or code of conduct on the anvil of that teaching.

Thus you will see that I exclude nothing. I take in all the scriptures, but I use the *Gita* to unlock their meaning.

I quite agree with your view of the *Samhitas,* but my difficulty in applying them to daily conduct arises from the fact that there are conflicting statements in the same *Samhita* and there is conflict among the different *Samhitas.* There again I summon the *Gita* to my aid.

Whilst I agree also that rules of conduct will show variation from the ideal and even between man and man, to be true to the ideal they should conform to it and enable one to make a progressive approach to it. They must not take one away progressively further from it.

Examined thus, untouchability, as it is practised today, in my opinion, is clearly contrary to the Hindu scriptures. As I read your several propositions, untouchability stands condemned by them.

As to the referendum, you have evidently missed the strict limitations placed upon its scope. If I had believed that current untouchability had its roots in Hinduism and that untouchables were clearly prohibited from entering temples, there would be no question whatsoever of referendum. But since there are two schools of opinion, why should not the people decide to which school they will belong? Who will decide for the people whether they should belong to the Shaivite sect or Vaishnavite, if not they themselves? Is that not what the Hindus have done all through their great history?[1]

Yours sincerely,

PANDIT PARESHNATH BHATTACHARYYA, M. A.

VEDANTARATNA

COOCH BEHAR (BENGAL)

From a microfilm: S.N. 20315

[1] *Vide* also ''A Sanatanist's Conclusions", "A Sanatanist's Conclursions"

475. LETTER TO GAJANAN BHARADWAJA

February 21, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 19th instant. I can only advise you patiently to follow the columns of *Harijan.* Perchance you will find some answer in them to your questions[1]. As you yourself admit in effect that varnashrama is irrelevant to the issue that is agitating the public mind, I must conserve the energy of myself and the public by not saying more than is necessary on varnashrama, not that there is anything to conceal; as a matter of fact, what I may say hereafter can be gleaned by a patient reader from my writings. Only I have observed repeatedly that not until a particular question has become a live issue have readers of my writings concentrated upon what I have said upon that issue before it became a live issue. You may depend upon it that Dr. Ambedkar himself will not let me off as easily as you will. You will perhaps allow yourself to be put off, not Dr. Ambedkar quite so easily. Therefore you will please hold yourself in patience.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GAJANAN BHARADWAJA

LONAVLA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20316

476. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

February 21, 1933

One cannot say that there is coercion even in the second Bill. How can we say that there is coercion if a majority of the Hindus are ready? Moreover, it will also be possible to implement the compromise which I have suggested. Even so, if the first Bill is

[1] The addressee had asked: ''How would you determine the varna or the ashram of an individual at the time of reconstruction of the present Hindu society and when that reconstruction is to commence? What about the intermarriage and interdining amongst the four varnas? At what age would the varna be determined? Who would supervise and be responsible for the maintenance of the order of varnashrama? If marriage or dining is immaterial, how would your varnashrama differ from the Western order of society?"

accepted I am not at all keen about the second. The second has been brought forward to satisfy the sanatanists. I think Malaviyaji does not like the first Bill. But if you think you can persuade him to accept it, certainly try to do so. . . .[1] If you wish to discuss the Bill further and understand its implications, come and see me.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 121

477. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVLEKAR

February 21, 1933

BHAI SATAVLEKAR,

I did not answer your postcard expecting to see Lakshmanshastri any day. Now I do not know when I shall see him. But I shall write more when I do see him. I am aware that Hindi or English are not useful for Maharashtra.[2]

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 4773. Courtesy: S. D. Satavlekar

478. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

February 21, 1933

BISMILLAH

DEAR DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

Your letter. You must not attempt to visit me while you are still weak. It will be enough if you send a card regularly. Tell your sister not to come to me. She must not worry about it but devote herself even more to Harijan service. You do get the *Harijan* I hope.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: S.N. 9659

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] The reference here is to the possibility of bringing out a journal in Marathi on the subject of untouchability; *vide* also "Letter to S. D. Satavlekar", 3-2-1933

479. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

February 22, 1933

MY DEAR C. R.,

You must not take to heart what I have said about the mention of the fast by you.[1] I could not drive the lesson home unless I drew pointed attention to your mention. I have certainly forgotten all about it. Will you do likewise? Nor must you take to heart Dr. Ambedkar's explosion[2], the Government's decision[3], or Malaviyaji's opposition[4]. These are all in the day's happenings. Somehow or other not one of the three things has shaken me, possibly because I was prepared for all the three. Our satisfaction must lie in our having done the very best that we are capable of doing. You have certainly. You are not going to worry therefore in any shape or form. I know that you have left no stone unturned to have the Bills passed during this very session. No one could have done more.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20321

480. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

February 22, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your two letters. I do not understand the intricacies of Assembly procedure. I have said and written as I have felt and having done that I should leave things to work themselves out. Circulation as I have understood from M. L. A.s means much more than you seem to think it does,[5] but if it merely means consideration of the Bills at the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 12/13-2-1933

[2] *Vide* "B. R. Ambedkar's Statement"

[3] *Vide* "Letter from Government of India", 17-2-1933.

[4] *Vide* "Telegram from Madan Mohan Malaviya", 15-2-1933

[5] In his letter dated February 18, the addressee had written: "If we are to command a greater measure of support from the M. L. A.s we should not try to rush the measure through the House and so we have to reconcile ourselves to the circulation course. I know you do not agree with this, but personally I feel that for all practical purposes there is no difference between the circulation and the appointment of a Select Committee. Even if a Select Committee is appointed, nothing could be done before the Simla session and even if the Bill is circulated with a specific time-limit the Select Committee could be appointed in the Simla session and the Bill may then be taken into consideration. Thus in reconciling ourselves to the circulation course, we are not wasting any more time than would be wasted in any case. . . ."

next session, there may not be much harm; but I do not know. You will now do whatever you all think proper,

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 20329

481. WHY 'HARIJAN'[1]

Many people have asked me why I have used the name 'Harijans' for people whom we commit the sin of regarding as untouchables. Years ago a Kathiawadi *Antyaja* had written to me that names like *Antyaja, achhoot, asprishya* hurt his community. I could appreciate their feelings. For me they were neither *Antyajas* nor untouchables. It was this correspondent who had pointed out to me that the poet-devotee Narasinh Mehta in one of his *bhajans* had referred to the *Antyajas* as 'Harijans'. In my view the *bhajan* he had sent to me to support his contention did not yield the meaning which he thought it did. All the same I liked the name 'Harijan' immensely. 'Harijan' means a devotee of God, beloved of God. It is God's promise that He is the Protector of the oppressed, an ocean of compassion, the strength of the weak, the Refuge of the helpless, the Support of the lame and the Eye of the blind. One may therefore expect Him to bestow especial grace on the oppressed. Looked at from this point of view, I am sure the name 'Harijan' is appropriate in every way for the *Antyaja* brethren.

Some argue that the *Antyajas* became untouchables because of their actions in their previous birth. Still others say: 'Let us suppose for a moment that we regard four crores of our brethren as untouchables. But what special miseries do they have to suffer that the other crores of people do not? The miseries that they suffer because of untouchability must be only mental and there is no remedy for it. Being the fruit of a previous birth, it must be regarded as a divine dispensation. The privations which the *Antyajas* suffer because of their poverty and destitute condition are the common lot of all the people of India with the exception of two or three crores of people. Why then should not all of them be called Harijans?' This argument is utterly absurd. Untouchability as we observe today is neither the result of actions of previous births nor of God's making. The

[1] Gandhiji wrote under the same title in the English *Harijan, vide* "Why 'Harijan' ", "Why Harijan", 11-2-1933.

untouchability prevalent at the present time is man's doing. The caste Hindus are responsible for it. No one can escape the fruit of his action. But by accepting the law of karma, we acquire no right to put the blame on others. The way of karma is indeed inscrutable. No one knows what karma will bear what fruit. We are all laden with one or other shortcoming, hence we have no right whatever to judge the shortcomings or sins of others. Our right and duty is only to help one another get rid of such shortcomings. Compassion is incompa-tible with untouchability whether predestined or unavoidable. Four crores of Hindus have to face unparalleled hardships because we treat them as untouchables. They do not get even food or a place to live in as others do, even though they have the money as well as other means. They have no temples, or dharmsalas or hospitals or schools for them as other people have. We have crushed them so much that they have almost forgotten that they are human beings. These four crore brethren have not even the will to rise from this abject and abominable situation.

There is no exaggeration in my account of Harijans. It may be there in one respect. No one knows the exact number of Harijans. I have accepted the figure given by Shri Amritlal Thakkar. Thakkar Bapa is himself not very sure about the figure After thorough survey all that can be said is that the number of Harijans cannot be more than four crores. But irrespective of the fact whether there are four crore Harijans or one, the guilt on the part of the caste Hindus remains the same. If there is any fault in my description of Harijans it may be one of understatement and certainly not of exaggeration.[1] If this oppressed class were not to have God's grace or mercy the world would cease to have faith in God.

The truth is that He exists and He is an ocean of compassion, the Protector of the oppressed, and the Feeder of the hungry. Therefore, in India, those who are most unhappy deserve to be called Harijans. And it is my firm belief that if we do not remove the untouchability practised against the Harijans and did not treat them as our brethren, Hindu society would perish under their curse.

As Tulsidas says,

[1] A Gujarati version of this article which appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 12-3-1933, has the following additional sentences: "Whatever I have written can be substantiated. The facts therefore must be worse than what I have described."

The sighs of the weak never go waste,
Bellows of carcase-hide turn iron to dust.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 23-2-1933

482. LETTER TO VERRIER ELWIN

February 23, 1933

MY DEAREST SON,

Son you have become of your own choice. I have accepted the responsible position. And son you shall remain to the end of time. The tie between you and me is much thicker and tougher than blood. It is the burning love of Truth at any cost. Therefore whatever you may do will not disappoint me. But I was sad.

I am not thinking of superiority of celibacy over marriage. I am thinking of what you had intended, almost pledged yourself to be. But I know that you had to be true to yourself and appear as you were.

I showed your letter to Jamnalalji and he too felt the same as I did.

But whilst I was trying to make time to write to you, in came Ala, tears dropping from her eyes. She put into my hands your letter and said, "How can I bear this? It was agreed between us that we were both to remain single, or if we could not, we were to marry each other." I consoled her and advised her to send you her blessings. I do not know what she has done or written. You will tell me what understanding there was between you and her.

But taking it for granted that your word was never given to Ala as she imagines it was, you and Mary[1] have my blessings. I have met her. I have a vivid recollection that the innocence of her face stamped itself upon my mind. I know that your joint life will be one of complete dedication to service. But if there is the slightest possibility of a breach (moral) of word given to Ala, you must both—you and Mary—be prepared to bear what will be the heaviest cross and sacrifice your cherished hope on the altar of Truth which is God. If there is a trace of suspicion of breach, you certainly and Mary and Ala—the latter two if they have the same living faith in Truth as I have

[1] Mary Gillett

credited you with—have to live single lives in spite of yourselves. Your love of Truth will transmute your desire for exclusive marriage into the universal marriage with Truth. For this divine marriage we men and women are all women and Truth is the only Lord, Master and Husband.

I need say no more. My letter is not satisfactory because it is written in ignorance of facts. But it need not be unsatisfactory as being between father and son. You can fill in the gaps. Of this you have my assurance that whatever you do, I am certain, will have been done out of obedience to Truth as it might reveal itself to you. More than that no man can do.

May God guide you and Mary.

With my deep love to you and Mary,

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

This was written just after the morning prayer—4.30 a.m. 23-2-33.

From a microfilm: S.N. 20351

483. LETTER TO ELLEN HORUP

February 23, 1933

MY DEAR ELLEN,

I was delighted to hear from you. I appreciate all your affection. I have gone up hills but I have never walked along them all day long but I do know however what you mean by the mountains reaching the horizon.

The knowledge that I am a guiding *varde* to some friends humbles me and makes me more and more conscious of the tremendous burden that I carry on my shoulders. I have to watch myself and incessantly pray to the God of Truth that I may not prove a false guide to anybody.

Yours sincerely,

MISS ELLEN HORUP
GENEVA

From a photostat: S.N. 20335

484. LETTER TO H. V. GLASENAPP

February 23, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have just got your letter addressed to the Secretary of the Ashram at Sabarmati. I have no knowledge of the book called *India* by Luciano Magrini. I have not read the book. I do not know Italian and I have never given any opinion on the book to anybody, and so far as my knowledge goes, I have seen no notice of the book in the Indian newspapers.

Yours sincerely,

H. V. GLASENAPP, ESQ.

PROFESSOR OF SANSKRIT

KOENIGSBERG UNIVERSITY (GERMANY)

From a photostat: S.N. 20336

485. LETTER TO K. R. CHHAPKHANE

February 23, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

Perhaps you know the correspondence I have been having with Sjt. Athavale. As he refers me to you and perhaps rightly, I approach you and would ask you kindly to let me know under what conditions and terms I handed over to you the collections I had made in Sangli during my visit[1].

Yours sincerely,

SJT. CHHAPKHANE

SANGLI

From a microfilm: S.N. 20337

[1] In November, 1920

486. LETTER TO K. SANTANAM

February 23, 1933

MY DEAR SANTANAM,

I must dictate my letter to you to save time. I was delighted to see your old familiar hand but sorry to learn that you had not been keeping well. You must not put on fat. Though I am a quack, I am a quack who has tried experiments on himself and therefore can speak with some authority. You ought to take plenty of exercise. Walking is the prince of exercises, and you should give up all prepared fat, such as, oil or ghee, and take as little milk as possible and live on juicy fruit and brown bread without butter. In a month's time you will find yourself a changed man. You may take green, non-starchy vegetables simply boiled. We do not realize how we become prey to disease by criminal ignorance of the right dietary and the absolute necessity of exercises in the fresh air. I shall keep a letter with this for Krishna.

I know that you will do all you can for *Harijan* newspaper and the Harijan cause in general.

Yours sincerely,

PT. K. SANTANAM
7 RACE COURSE ROAD, LAHORE

From a photostat: S.N. 20338

487. LETTER TO BAJI KRISHNA RAO

February 23, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your telegram, as also your interesting letter.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. BAJI KRISHNA RAO, PLEADER
IST CHETMI BAZAAR
SECUNDERABAD

From a microfilm: S.N. 20345

488. LETTER TO TANGAI MENON

February 23, 1933

MY DEAR TANGAI[1],

You have sent me a note not written by you. Therefore you cannot complain if I sent you a reply not written by me.

I know that Uncle Charlie eats much salt, but you must not copy bad habits of elderly people, and eating much salt is a bad habit, and much salt spoils the original flavour of things with which it is mixed.

Uncle Charlie has also a habit of spoiling little children by giving them too many sweets. Therefore, if I were you, I should distribute sweets amongst lots of poorer children and I should feel happy at the thought of sharing with them gifts received from friends.

Love and kisses from us both.

BAPU

My Dear Child, p. 119

489. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

February 23, 1933

MY DEAR CHILD,

Having dictated this letter[2], it has got to go to Tangai, though it is going to cost 2_ annas to the Harijan cause. Let us hope that both Nan and Tangai will make up for the loss a thousandfold and more.

Love.

BAPU

My Dear Child, p. 119

[1] Daughter of Esther Menon
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

490. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

February 23, 1933

MY DEAR MARY,

Your Hindi letter is extraordinarily good. We all admired your very clear handwriting.

God has many definitions: as many as there are men and women on this earth. सतू, चितू, सुख are also among them, they may be rendered as Truth, Knowledge and Bliss. They are interlaced.

The selection of morning verses is designed to satisfy all wants. Every verse represents a power or powers of God the Infinite and the Indescribable.

Yes, I had a letter from Verrier. It surprised me, it did not disappoint me. I believe with Paul that men should marry rather than burn. Celibacy is good for those whose mind co-operates with the body. I do remember Mary Gillett well. Her innocent face impressed itself on me the very first time I saw her.

I am glad you are getting on well there. And now you have Duncan Greenlees to care for. You will please see to his comforts and know him too.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

You should sleep under the sky and you will feel cool throughout the night. I have your letter about Kashmir. Of course you should go and stay there till June if the climate agrees and then come down. But the duration will depend upon circumstances.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5994. Also C.W. 3319. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

491. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

February 23, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got the large packet of letters sent by you. You will find with this a letter[1] for Mary and one for Greenlees. Lakshmidas and Anandi have come here. Anandi has been having fever and the temperature remains at 99. It even rises by one or two points in the course of the day. It does not fall below 99. But I am completely hopeful that we shall be able to cure her fever here. For one thing, the climate of the place is excellent.

When Dudabhai comes there, have a talk with him and come to a definite decision. If he agrees, let the marriage take place as soon as possible. If he does not give his willing consent, tell him that we shall not be able to look after Lakshmi any longer. If your own experience is contrary to my inference and if you feel inclined to let her stay, you may ignore my opinion.

Impart to Amina as much as you can. It would be good if she daily practises the Urdu script. What happened about Parvati? Is Ranchhodbhai in difficulty about anything? I worry about him as I have had no letter from him. Parnerkar's scheme which all of you have approved is an old one, though it is certainly good. Ask him to write to me. What arrangement do you propose to make for selling milk? I follow what you say regarding the land at Bidaj. Let me know how you find Duncan. If the impression which he has produced on me turns out to be correct, he is likely to prove a fine worker.

What is the composition of the plaster applied to Kanu? By whom was it recommended? In all such cases of injury, complete rest for the injured part is the most important thing. Some times the injury is to such a part that, in order to give rest to it, it is necessary to rest the whole body. But this is the quickest remedy for curing the pain. Have a talk with Prabhudas and try to help him to overcome his restlessness.

If Bhagwanji devotes himself whole-heartedly to his new job, he can do excellent work. Has Dhiru's health improved? I am not happy that he has stopped writing to me altogether. I hope you had a talk

[1] *Vide* thee preceding item.

with Motibehn. Have any people there enlisted themselves as subscribers of *Harijan?* Or do any people buy retail copies? Do you get any visitors?

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

492. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

February 23, 1933

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. I know I can comfort you if I can meet you. But the path of truth is like the edge of a sword. Service of the untouchables must not be used as a pretext. You can visit me if you are sincere about it. Be patient. Therein lies your good. Write to me to your heart's content. We shall meet when God wills. Is it a small comfort that we can exchange letters? Keep writing. I shall promptly reply. It is good news that you have given up tea and your health is good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

493. LETTER TO DEVIDUTT SHUKLA

February 23, 1933

BHAI DEVIDUTTJI[1],

I have your letter. I am aware of the service rendered by Pandit Mahavir Prasadji[2] to the Hindi language. *Sarasvati* was known to me even in South Africa. I may also be allowed to join in congratulating him on the occasion of his 70th birthday and I hope that we shall have the benefit of his literary services for many more years and that *Sarasvati* will continue to progress.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI,

From Hindi: C.W. 9666. Courtesy: Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Prayag

[1] Then editor of *Sarasvati*, a monthly journal

[2] Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi, founder-editor of *Sarasvati*

494. TELEGRAM TO RAGHAVENDRA RAO

February 24, 1933

HON. RAGHAVENDRA RAO
HOME MEMBER
NAGPUR

JUST HEARD SETH POONAMCHAND RANKA SEONI JAIL FASTING. DO NOT KNOW REASON. WILL YOU PLEASE INQUIRE AND LET ME KNOW WHETHER REPORT TRUE, AND IF SO, CAUSE OF FASTING.

GANDHI

Home Department, Political, File No. 31/108, 1932, p. 59. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3) A, p. 3

495. TELEGRAM TO CHHAGANLAL P. MEHTA

February 24, 1933

CHHAGANLAL MEHTA
NASIK VILLA
PARSIVADA
RAJKOT

HOPE MARRIAGE WILL BE SIMPLEST POSSIBLE. MY BLESSINGS KANTILAL PADMA. HOPE YOU AND CHILDREN QUITE WELL.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 7173. Also C.W. 4667. Courtesy: Chhaganlal P. Mehta

496. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

February 24, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

This is Friday morning 3.30 a.m. No letter from you as yet for this week! I wrote to you regularly last week. That was on Friday as yours was received Thursday afternoon. I take it your new abode and new keepers mean a temporary disturbance in the routine. I shall wait

and pray and take to heart the message of *Gita Mata*. She is a wonderful mother. I suppose you know that she is called Mother. *'Gita'* means 'song'. It is used as an adjective applied to Upanishad which is in the feminine gender. It has been likened to the sacred cow, the giver of all desires. Hence Mother. Well, that immortal Mother gives all the milk we need for spiritual sustenance, if we would but approach her as babes seeking and sucking it from her. She is capable of yielding milk to her millions of babes from her exhaustless udder.

In doing the Harijan work in the midst of calumny, misrepresentations and apparent disappointments, her lap comforts me and keeps me from falling into the Slough of Despond.

So you find me laughing and free from care. My weight has become steady at 103 and the diet also the same in quantity and kind. For the time being unboiled fresh milk goes on without doing any harm. Writing for *Harijan* occupies most of my time and Mahadev's. Chhaganlal too is kept fairly busy.

No more this time. I must wake up the others for prayer now.

Love to you and the others from us all.

BAPU

[PS.]

I send you by registered book post religious postcards which Princess Aristarchie sends almost every week with carefully selected verses at the back of each. Do you know that Verrier intends to marry Mary Gillett in April!

Mahadev reminds me that I wrote to you last week about Verrier.[1]

I have just got your letter. But no time to deal with it today.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6264. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9730

[1] *Vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 17-2-1933

497. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

[*February 24, 1933*][1]

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letter. You know what is happening to the Bills. It is unfortunate and it is bad. The Government have taken up, in my opinion, not an attitude of neutrality but one of partiality. I do not know if you have caught the central point of my argument. It would be partiality to the reformers and would also be interference with religion if the Government gave facilities for the consideration of a measure compelling temple-entry. It is partiality to orthodoxy in that the Government will not remove the legal bar to temple-entry created by decisions of courts of law, decisions not based on statutory law but on religious usage, thus making untouchability a crime as if it was part of the Penal Code. The Government to be neutral should lift this bar and say to either party. 'We cannot take sides in religious matters. Untouchability may be for some of you a breach of your religion, but there is no breach in it of common law and therefore there can be no punishment under the common law.' There are innumerable religious practices in Hinduism not even [as] offensive to the moral sense of the world as untouchability undoubtedly is, and yet their breach is not penal under the common law. All that the reformers want is opportunity for progress, opportunity for converting public opinion, and when and where it is converted, opportunity for giving effect to that conversion. Today even if cent per cent of Hindus entitled to worship in a particular temple desired the admission of Harijans to that temple, they could not carry out their wish because of the decisions I have referred to. The two Bills are designed to remove this anomaly. I watch, wait and pray.

Love.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 979; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. IV, p. 113

[1] From Bombay Secret Abstracts

498. LETTER TO S. GANESAN

February 24, 1933

MY DEAR GANESAN,

I have your letter of 20th instant, but as I have anticipated you and told you that advance copies[1] can be sent to you on Fridays and not before,[2] I need not say anything more.

Mahadev just reminds me that sending you copies on Fridays gives you no advantage because Madras copies are all sent on Fridays. My previous letter tells you how utterly impossible it is to send you anything earlier.

I return the letter from Dr. Rajan.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20347

499. LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

February 24, 1933

I had your telegram[3] asking me whether you could release the correspondence for publication. As I had done so 48 hours before the receipt of your telegram I did not send a wire in reply, thinking that you must already have seen the notice of the publication[4].

Since then I had no time to dictate a reply to you, as *Harijan* takes up practically all my time up to Thursday evening.

I hope you are getting regularly your copy of the *Harijan.* I do not know whether you at all get the time to look at it. Now that the world knows the difference of outlook between you and me as to these Bills, I would like you to review the whole position in the light of what you yourself have suggested.

You say that it is possible by discussion between sanatanists and reformers to arrive at a compromise without the aid of legislation. I taxed myself as to how this could be, even assuming that there was

[1] Of *Harijan*

[2] *Vide* "Letter to S. Ganesan", 21-2-1933

[3] *Vide* "Telegram frokm Madan Mohan Malaviya", 15-2-1933.

[4] In *Harijan,* 18-2-1933

complete agreement between sanatanists and reformers that public temples should be thrown open to Harijans. Even that agreement cannot supersede the law which lays down that Harijans cannot enter public temples.

I therefore cannot get away from the very real moral difficulty that unless we get the law altered, we are not in a position to keep the pledge given in the Bombay Resolution. We cannot plead helplessness under cover of this law, of which I knew nothing at the time I drew up the Resolution about temples. I suppose that you do know that the original draft was prepared by me. True, several changes were made after, but no change was made so as to alter the substance of my draft.

I wish therefore that for the sake of the very religion which you and I hold dearer than life itself, you will examine the moral difficulties I have presented here. And let me repeat, if it is at all necessary, what I have said in my article in *Harijan* that this latestdifference in viewpoint between you and me does not, in the slightest degree, diminish my regard or affection for you.

PANDIT MALAVIYAJI

From a photostat: S.N. 20348

500. LETTER TO ADA WEST[1]

February 24, 1933

MY DEAR DEVI,

I was glad to have your letter. I see you are now doing lighter work. The change was certainly necessary for you and I hope that it has benefited you. Of course we have cold here, but in this part of India cold weather is very nice and pleasant, not at all severe, but it is very severe in the Punjab, though it is very bracing.

I think I did meet Dr. and Mrs. Gray whilst I was there. You should give me news of Albert whenever you have any, because I do not hear from him at all. I have written to him.

Devdas is in Delhi doing Harijan work. Ramdas is in the same prison, but not in the same yard. I am permitted to see him occasionally. Mahadev is of course with me and doing quite well. Ba and Mira are together in the Sabarmati prison, and so far as I am aware, they are keeping well. Pyarelal is in a jail at a place called

[1] Sister of Albert West, Gandhiji's co-worker in South Africa

Nasik. I hear from Manilal and his wife almost every month. Medh and Pragji also write to me occasionally.

Are you getting *Harijan* every week? The whole of my time is occupied with that work just now.

I am not writing to Muriel[1] this week. Please give my love to her and all the dear friends of Kingsley Hall and the School House.

SHRI DEVI
KINGSLEY HALL
POWIS ROAD
BOW, E.3

From a photostat: S.N. 20349

501. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

February 24, 1933

I had your beautiful letter. I prize your love. Of course I was not angry with you and therefore there is nothing to forgive. On the contrary, it is a matter of joy to me that I have friends to whom I can write without reserve and without any fear of being misunder-stood.

However, I am glad that you have resolved upon not spending money on love cables. Love need not express itself in words, but if it must, love-letters ought to be quite enough. Immediately we realize that we have nothing of our own, that all we have is held in trust for those in greater need, we have to spend it like misers.

I hope you are getting your copy of *Harijan* every week.

From a photostat: S.N. 20350

502. LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL[2]

February 24, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

N. I came to know through the temple-entry agitation. And I was taking interest in her work for the removal of untouchability. Meantime a friend brought rumours to me about her character. I

[1] Muriel Lester
[2] Dewan of Mysore

straightway put the substance of the rumours before her and invited her to come and see me if I was to take Harijan service from her. She came without hesitation. She will be with me for a few days longer. She tells me that you know her. Will you please tell me what your impressions of her and her work are?

SIR MIRZA ISMAIL

BANGALORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 20353

503. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA

February 24, 1933

DEAR RAMACHANDRA,

N. is in Poona as you may know. She tells me you were for some time in the Ashram at Sabarmati. What year could that be?

She further tells me that latterly you have not felt quite happy about her. Please tell me quite frankly all you know about her or may have against her.

KINGHERI ASHRAM

BANGALORE CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20354

504. LETTER TO NARGIS CAPTAIN

February 24, 1933

I have at last a letter from you. You will tell me all your experiences in Kumbhakonam and Guruvayur. You can do khadi work most decidedly, and you can also meet the orthodox people and discuss with them the whole question of the service of Harijans. Though orthodoxy is well entrenched in Cochin, you will have no difficulty in approaching the orthodox people, and then of course there is a large Gujarati colony in Cochin. You should meet them.

Lastly, you should secure subscribers for the *Harijan* among the very large number of English speaking Cochinites.

NARGISBEHN

From a microfilm: S.N. 20359

505. LETTER TO N. D. VARADACHARIAR

February 24, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 20th instant, as also a copy of *The Madras Law Review*, for both of which I thank you.

I have now sent for the text of Rao Bahadur Rajah's Bill. As soon as I get it, I shall certainly study it carefully and try to write about it in the *Harijan.*

So far as I can understand the Bill from your note, I do not know that it solves the temple-entry question. Meanwhile, if you have a copy of the Bill, I shall thank you to send it to me, so that if I get a copy from you earlier than from friends in Delhi, I shall begin to work at it.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. D. VARADACHARIAR
C/O "THE MADRAS LAW REVIEW"
118 ARMENIAN ST.
MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 20362

506. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

February 24, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your mail including letters by Narahari and others.

Read the letter to Prabhudas. Have a detailed talk with him and calm him. Ask him to discuss his problems with Narahari or Panditji. Don't let him go till he has become calm.

Yes, I had a long talk with Purushottam. I will write to him more about the subject when I get time.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

507. LETTER TO MUNI SHANTIVIJAYJI

February 24, 1933

MUNISHRI SHANTIVIJAYJI,

I have known N. through correspondence since she communicated to me her intention to fast by way of protest against me. It was from her own letter that I learnt how she regarded you as her all in all. As I heard certain allegations against her while our correspondence was going on, I wrote to her about them immediately and suggested that she should come and see me. She did so immediately. It appears from our conversation that the allegations against her may be baseless. I have been guiding her to an extent, but I think it to be my duty to ascertain your wish before I give her any positive advice. Hence this letter. I have written it with her knowledge. She will remain here till your reply is received. I request you to have no hesitation in making any suggestion you wish to do.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 20352

508. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

February 24, 1933

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

Narandas says that you have become very restless.[1] How is that? If you have faith in me, you can have no reason to be restless. You must joyously do what you are asked. Have you heard or sung the *bhajan:* "I will dance singing praises of the Lord"? Devotion to duty is singing praises of the Lord. To do as asked by a person in whom one has faith is also singing praises of the Lord. Hence the need for careful thinking before putting one's faith in anyone. Why don't you write to me? Stop thinking about your marriage. You may marry if you happen to come across a suitable girl. Jamnalalji says that he will try to find a match as soon as he is released. He is certain to succeed. He has now three or four months of his sentence left. As for work, do what Narandas assigns to you. But I will not mind even if you are not able to do that. It will be sufficient if you can live at Almora and look after yourself. I will not expect anything more from you at present. It

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to N. D. Varadachariar", 24-2-1933.

will be enough if you build up your health.

Write to Kaka from time to time.

What did you do where you went to learn about honey?

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Gandhi Nidhi File (August 1976). Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

509. HIGHER EDUCATION FOR HARIJANS

I hope all those who are interested in the removal of untouchability are familiar with Mr. David's scheme for the higher education of selected Harijans by caste Hindus. The scheme was published some time ago in the Bombay Press after being enthusiastically accepted by the Servants of Untouchables Society. In Mr. David's words, "It aims at enabling a large number of untouchables to enjoy the benefits of the best higher education (including technical instruction) possible in this country." Under it, "well-to-do caste Hindus are expected throughout India each to bear the expenses for such education of at least one Harijan student for a period of five years. Scholarships should be given to selected candidates and the expenses imply the provision of educational fees, books and living expenses on a modest scale". Mr. David thinks that Rs. 500 per year per Harijan would be required for college education and half as much for high school education. He advises donors to subscribe, wherever it is possible, the whole amount covering five years in one lump sum.

"In order to build up the self-respect of Harijan scholars", says Mr. David, "it should be laid down that each scholar would be expected to reimburse the amount originally advanced for his education as soon as he is in a position to do so. Thus a student under this scheme is provided by means of a loan and not a gift." And if a large number of students discharge these debts of honour, Mr. David anticipates that a permanent fund will be created.

Mr. David advises the formation of a committee or committees in Provinces which will frame rules for the selection of candidates, and the disbursements of subscriptions will be subject to the recommendation of such committee or committees. He is emphatic that the scheme, if carried out, should "produce important and sustained results", and make possible within a comparatively short

period the creation of a large number of lawyers, teachers, doctors and engineers from among Harijans. The existence of a considerable number of such persons would be of material help in raising the social status of the depressed classes, and, he adds, "it is framed on strictly non-controversial lines, thus widening to the maximum its potential field of response. It should win the support of even the staunchest sanatanists. . . . It is an opportunity at hand for caste Hindus to give concrete expression of their feeling towards untouchables."

Let me hope, with Mr. David, that the scheme will commend itself to the "staunchest sanatanists" and that in any case it would receive liberal support. I do not know whether the Central Board or the Bombay Board has received any donations. I venture to suggest to the Bombay Board that, if it has not already done so, it should form a small committee getting, if possible, a sanatanist to work on it, frame rules and get scholarships.

Whilst it would be the most proper thing to get 1,000 donors who would contribute Rs. 2,500 or 1,250, as the case may be, for full five years' expenses, it is not necessary to confine oneself to the letter of Mr. David's scheme, so long as its spirit is observed. The central point of the scheme is that there should be a decent fund at once collected from caste Hindus for the higher education of a select number of Harijan boys or girls. I, therefore, invite subscriptions for the scheme. They will be duly acknowledged in these columns. Donors should send moneys to the Manager, Sjt. A. V. Patwardhan, marking the envelopes 'the David Scheme'. Acknowledgements will be published from week to week, and the money will be handed to the Central Board for their disposal strictly in accordance with the donor's instructions. As soon as the first full subscription is received, I would advise the Central Board to make its selection. Donors may make their own choice of the Province from which Harijan boys or girls may be selected, or they may even make their own selection of such boy or girl and hand the donation to the Central Board or Provincial Board for disbursement to, and supervision of, the candidate so selected.

Harijan, 25-2-1933

510. DR. SAPRU ON UNTOUCHABILITY BILLS

As the public know, I have been in communication with Dr. Sapru and Sjt. Jayakar over the two Bills which have stirred Hindu opinion. Sjt. Jayakar's opinion I have already published. Dr. Sapru's opinion is now before me on both the Bills. In his letter of the 11th instant on the first Bill, he says:[1]

> . . . Whatever may be my own personal views, there is no doubt that some eminent Judges (Hindus included) in Madras, Bombay and elsewhere have interpreted the law in such a way that you cannot throw open the temples everywhere to Hindus of the depressed classes except by an Act of the Legislature. . . .

Now coming to the Bill itself.

> . . . I am afraid the forces of orthodoxy are strong in the Assembly and I am more than doubtful whether the reformers will carry the day. . . . I should not, however, feel surprised if dilatory tactics are adopted and the motion to circulate the Bill is carried. . . . Framed as the Bill is, I should strongly oppose the motion to circulate the Bill and should enlist the sympathy and support of the members of the Legislature to go ahead with the consideration of the Bill. I appreciate the moderation of the Bill, though, speaking for myself, I should not hesitate to go much further than the Bill. . . .
>
> . . . In my individual capacity I can be of very little use, so far as the Assembly is concerned, but I can assure you of my support, even though I feel that the Bill is a very mild measure.[2]

On this I telegraphed for his opinion also on the shorter Bill of the two. His reply dated 18th instant (omitting the immaterial or personal matters) is as follows:[3]

> . . . As I read this clause, it seeks to remove disabilities from which the untouchables are suffering under the existing law, but it does notseek to impose any disability on caste Hindus. So far as the latter are concerned, there does not seem to me to be anything like an element of compulsion contemplated by the Bill. If they do not wish to associate with the untouchables in the temples, they are not, by this Bill, compelled to do so. All that it requires them to do is that they must not stand in the way of the untouchables. It also lays down a rule of law for the courts which are required

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.
[2] For Gandhiji's reply, "Letter to Tej Bahadur Sapru", 16-2-1933
[3] Only extracts are reproduced here.

not to recognize any custom of untouchability for judicial purposes. I, therefore, fail to discover any element of compulsion in this Bill.

I have read in this morning's papers the telegram of Malaviyaji to you and your reply to him. Personally I am in complete agreement with you, both as a lawyer and as a public man.

I think I owe it to you to say frankly that I look upon both these Bills as being essentially very moderate. Left to myself, I should be prepared to go much further and I have not the same horror of compulsion in a matter of this character as some others have. You are, however, taking the line of least resistance and I am prepared to stand by you. . . .[1]

Harijan, 25-2-1933

511. A SANATANIST'S CONCLUSIONS

Pandit Pareshnath Bhattacharya, M. A., Vedantaratna, writes from Cooch Behar under date 15th February, 1933:[2]

. . .I beg to note down in brief outlines the chief points and principles on which I have failed to concur with you.

(1) You are reported to have said to the effect that the *Gita is* the only scripture of unquestionable authority which alone should be our true guide in matters social, religious and spiritual. . . .

(2) The sources of Hindu religion are enumerated in the first chapter of the *Manusamhita.* There is no valid reason for its rejection on the mere suspicion of interpolations.

(3) Scriptures are clearly distinguishable into two classes:

(a) those dealing with high principles of philosophy and directions for spiritual advancement,

(b) and others laying down laws for social discipline and prescribing penalties for lapses and crime.

(4) In dealing with society and socio-religious institutions, we must recognize and abide by the authority of the *Samhitas* . . .

(5) The noble ideal of Vedantic Monism, Pantheism or Panatheism has no application to the problems of social organization or reform, for the simple reason that a whole people can never soar to that height.

(6) Humanism is admittedly the highest form of religious idealism, but for all practical purposes it must remain the private property of the saints and

[1] For Gandhiji's reply, *vide* "Letter to Tej Bahadur Sapru", 19-2-1933

[2] only extracts are reproduced here. For Gandhiji's reply, *vide* "Letter to Pareshnath Bhattacharyya", 21-2-1933

siddha purushas. There are inequalities in the society, both in natural endowments and personal habits. No amount of love or legislative efforts will do away with these inequalities between man and man.

(7) According to the abstract theory of justice, we cannot condone invidious distinction between man and man for the mere accident of birth or the mistaken choice of profession. But in dealing with men, we must face the stern reality and admit the necessity of differential treatment between different castes and classes of people.

(8) The Hindu law-makers were not insensible to the theoretical rights of men, nor were they actuated by the pride of caste or racial hatred. . . .

(9) According to the Shastras, a sannyasin has no caste. Likewise in practice, a truly pious man is always revered irrespective of his caste. This shows the true spirit of Hindu religion. . . .

(10) Religious reform cannot be enforced on the results of referendum. For religion, unlike politics, is always cherished by a small minority and it is always for these few to guide, and for the majority to follow. Religion cannot be democratised with impunity.

With these observations, I beg to request you to reconsider the position which you have taken up with regard to the temple-entry question, and if it is not possible, to convince the orthodox people who are always open to conviction.

It would have been much better if the Pandit had quoted my very words about the *Gita*, as he would at once have seen the difference between what I am reported to have said and what I have actually written. This is what I wrote in my statement dated 4th November last:

> It is the one open book to every Hindu who will care to study it, and if all the other scriptures were reduced to ashes, the seven hundred verses of this imperishable booklet are quite enough to tell one what Hinduism is and how one can live up to it. And I claim to be a sanatanist because for forty years I have been seeking literally to live up to the teachings of that book. Whatever is contrary to its main theme I reject as un-Aindu. It excludes no faith and no teacher.

The Pandit and the reader will see that there is a very wide difference between what I have actually said and what is attributed to me, and, that being the case, the grounds for showing the untenability of a position I have never taken up become irrelevant.

Similarly with reference to the Code of Manu, I never rejected the whole of it on "the mere suspicion of interpolation"; and as to interpolations, they are more than a suspicion, for what I consider as interpolations are clearly in contravention of the fundamentals laid down in the *Gita* and, for that matter, in Manu's Code itself. The following is Manu's touchstone of religion:

विद्वद्भि: सेवित: सद्भिनित्यमद्वेषरागिभि: |

ह्रइयेनाभ्यनुझातो यो ध्र्मस्तं निवोधत ||

> Whatever is always followed by the learned, the good and those who are free from anger and attachment and whatever is experienced in the heart, know that to be religion.[1]

Another text is, again, from the same Code:

धृति क्षमा दमोऽस्तेषं शैचमिन्द्रियनिग्रह |

धीविद्या सत्यक्रोधे दश्कं धर्मलक्षणम् ||

> Steadfastness, forgiveness, restraint, non-stealing, purity, control of the senses, intelligence, learning, truth, freedom from anger, these ten are the touchstone of religion.[2]

Accordingly, whatever is clearly contrary to this touchstone must be rejected as an interpolation.

The Pandit has summarilÁŸy dismissed the ideals of Hinduism about equality and justice, by regardiÁfng them as the private property of the saints, forgetting that ideals and saints become perfectly useless if the practice of the poor sinners can never approach the ideals and their repositories, the saints. What is that justice "which will not condone invidious distinction between man and man but will make us face the stern reality and admit the necessity of differential treatment between different castes and classes of people"? Who are the different castes and what is the differential treatment between them? For instance, among the Banias, whom I should know best, there are about 50 castes. I know of no differential treatment between them. Nor do I find any authority for the formation of these castes in the *Smritis.* There are as many castes among the Brahmins as there are leaves in the little tree under which I am sitting, but I do not find any Smriti which enumerates these castes and the differential treatment. I

[1] *Manusmriti,* II. 1

[2] *Manusmriti,* VI. 92

have a shrewd suspicion that these gentlemen will fight to the last ditch any attempt made to mete out differential treatment to them, and some of them may even, like my non-Brahmin friends, consign to the flames Sanskrit verses printed and stitched together and passed off as divinely inspired *Smritis.*

The Pandit says:

> The best way, therefore, of rising superior to the stigma of social inferiority is not enfranchisement, but emancipation from the snare of the dark forces of Nature.

Who is to be emancipated from the snare of the dark forces of Nature? Evidently the Pandit means that it is not the Brahmin who has to emancipate himself from the snare of superiority, but the poor Harijan has to disengage himself from the snare of inferiority. Unfortunately, that is precisely what the modern sanatanist Brahmin is resisting, and that is precisely what Dr. Ambedkar demands almost at the point of the bayonet. For, he says, 'the dark forces of Nature shall no longer hold me in their snare. I shall rise to the same height that the Brahmin occupies, even though I may have to demolish both him and myself in the attempt.,' Yet that is the net result of the Pandit's prescription.

As against the Pandit's, my humble prescription is that it is the Brahmin whose privilege and duty it is to disentangle himself from the snare of superiority and himself become a 'Harijan' man of God,. Then only will he vindicate the glory of varnadharma and the true message of Hinduism, for which he is supposed ''to live, move and have his being". I invite the Pandit to appreciate this very simple prescription.

Lastly, he has done himself and me less than justice by misreading the scope of the referendum suggested by me. Surely, worshippers in a temple have at any time the right to admit others to worship with them on the same terms as they themselves do, so long as they do not interfere with the ceremonial or the mode of worship, which undoubtedly can only be regulated by experience.

Let us know this ancient practice by its own ancient name, and perhaps it will cease to frighten the Pandit, and other orthodox friends. Have not Mahajans always decided matters of admission to temples? And Mahajans are assemblies of men and they decide by putting their heads together and taking the sense of the meeting. I presume that this would be described as a referendum in the English language. I have suggested nothing more and nothing less than this.

Harijan, 25-2-1933

512. THE SCHOOLMASTER ABROAD

I wrote to the Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri for a message to the *Harijan.* And I received a characteristic reply marked 'private'. The letter seemed to me to be too good to be suppressed. I, therefore, wired for permission to publish it. The reply wire was as characteristic as the letter.

> Firstly inappropriate to *Harijan,* secondly, offensive to partisans. Ill requital for your steadfast affection. However if perchance useful please publish.

And here is the letter:

Private

SVAGATAM,MYLAPORE,
February 13, 1933

DEAR BROTHER,

Thanks for your affectionate letter, in which you ask for a message to your new baby.

I am going to change towards you. It is necessary in your interest, no matter what effort it costs me.

You live in a difficult world. Waking or dreaming, you are racked by thoughts of sin and penance, confessions and truth-quests, satyagraha and moral self-flagellation. Those that talk to you or correspond with you continually pose doubts and serious problems, only deepening the grimness and suffocation around you. Few bring lightness of talk, familiar expletives, innocent jokes, revealing banter. You badly need a privileged jester in your establishment. Have you read a story called Ardath by Ouida? The hero there has a critic whose business is to expose his errors and bring to light the flaws in his character. Being a professional fault-finder, he overdoes his part in the end and defeats his first object. I shall vary my function from time to time and disappear from the scene every now and then. But I will endeavour to awaken parts of your mind long gone to sleep and to supply elements of nourishment which it has long been without. Of course, you can stop the medicine if it disagrees and you cannot stand it. That would be a sign to me that the disease had gone too far.

You are an extraordinarily correct writer of English. The ordinary reader will not detect any slips on your part. They are not only rare but of a subtle nature. The eye of a schoolmaster, made acute by dwelling on trivialities of

grammar, can alone see them. Here are some, all from the first number of the *Harijan* and from the parts bearing your name.

Page 3. "If it is a bye-product of the caste system, it is only in the same sense *that* an ugly growth is of a body". ('That' is fast undergoing a change in English, but this use is far in excess of present usage. Better say 'in *which* an ugly growth is a bye-product of a body'.)

Also read the whole passage again. Don't you say in effect 'if the caste system is a bye-product of the caste system'?

Page 3. "The outcaste-ness, in the sense we understand it, has therefore to be destroyed altogether." (A slip similar to the above. Between 'sense' and 'we' insert 'in which'.)

Page 4. "Caste Hindus have to open their temples to Harijans, precisely on the same terms as the other Hindus.,,

(Say 'the same terms as to the other Hindus'. Else, it would mean that the other Hindus opened their temples on certain terms to Harijans.)[1]

Page 7. "Beyond this I may not go, for the reason I have already stated and which the reader should respect." (Insert 'which' after 'reason'. The conjunction 'and' must not be made to connect a suppressed 'which' and an expressed 'which'.)

Page 8. "Untouchability has a great deal to answer *for* the insanitation of our streets and our latrines." (Idiomatically, 'for' is part of the verb 'answer', and cannot govern 'the insanitation'. We must insert 'in' after 'for', though the sentence becomes inelegant. I would recast it: 'Untouchability is answerable for a great deal of the insanitation etc.').

Page 8. "Therefore, a person who is to attend to scavenging, whether it is a paid Bhangi or an unpaid mother, they are unclean until they have washed themselves clean of their unclean work."

(The looseness is, perhaps, the result of rapid dictation unchecked by subsequent reading. 'A person' is left hanging in the air. The plurals 'they', 'themselves' and 'their' are justified by the common gender required. Still the discord of number is apparent to the point of harshness and may be avoided. Read 'A person . . . is unclean until washed clean of the unclean work.')

Let me add a criticism of substance. On page 7 you answer a question under the heading "Seeking or Giving?". The paragraph has gained brevity at the expense of clearness. The difference between giving co-operation and seeking it requires more elucidation. Likewise the analogy of love leading to feeding in one case and starving in another. But you are obscure and even baffling when you say that your policy of non-co-operation with Government

[1] This correction has been made in the text at p. 264.

allows of your seeking its co-operation when ever your purpose is, in your opinion, 'very sacred and altogether good'. Most sensible people follow this rule in ordinary life, not seeking co-operation when they don't care and seeking it when they care. They don't proclaim it as a policy or give it a grand name.

Ever yours affectionately,

V. S. SRINIVASAN

I wanted to share this letter with the public, because such a letter would help any publicist and his cause and that in an unexpected manner, more so when written without any thought of publication.

I want also to use the publication of the letter for easing the tension between sanatanists and reformers. Let them learn that closest friendships can subsist between persons of contrary temperaments. As the public know, Sastri and I have opposite views on many important questions. our mutual regard and affection have never suffered on that account. There is no reason whatsoever why the same rule cannot be extended to parties and groups representing opposite schools of opinion. The sanatanists are out to defend religion as they believe it. I take their claim at its face value and deal with it as such. Why need they impute to me political motives when I solemnly assert that for me, too, the question of untouchability is a matter purely of religion? Would that the affection subsisting between Sastri and me prove so deep and extensive as to reach and affect the whole society !

But enough of this. I almost hear Sastri's spirit whispering to me: 'You are misusing the medicine I prescribed to wean you from your disease of grimness and the like., Therefore, let me hasten to tell him and the public that I have in my little camp of privileged jester in Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. He succeeds in bending me almost double every day with laughter over his unexpected sallies. Gloom hides her fiendish face in his presence. No disappointment, however great, can make him gloomy for long. And he will not let me be serious for two consecutive minutes. He will not spare even my 'saintliness'! It may deceive simple people but never the Sardar or the sanatanists. Both tear down the mask and compel me to see myself as they delight to see me. To be just to the sanatanists, let me admit that Vallabhbhai does not see me quite as sanatanists do. But that is beside the point. The thing that Sastri wants in our little family is there cent per cent. Next time he enters the Assembly or some such place, he must vote special thanks to the Government for putting Vallabhbhai with me or

me with him.

But this consoling information does not it any way release Sastri from his self-imposed obligation. For the Sardar will not do what Sastri can be trusted to do mostly. Unlike him, the Sardar has the wretched habit in the end of saying 'ditto' to all I say. And that is bad for anybody.

Let the student note in passing Sastri's love for the language he has mastered as few men have done. He is a purist in everything. We badly need purists in our counry. I want only purists as fellow-workers in this glorious compaign of abolition of untouchability.

As to the purity of the language of *Harijan*, whatever faults are found notwithstanding Sastri's warning will be shared with me by Shastri, the Editor, and by Mahadev Desai, who shares with the schoolmaster the weakness for writing correctly in the language which for the moment he is using.

I must leave the reader to find out for himself or herself the many other beauties of Sastri's letter. If he will do so, he must read the letter three or four times and look up all the references in the first issue of *Harijan.*

Harijan, 25-2-1933

513. A CAMPAIGN OF ABUSE

Correspondents have been sending me cuttings from sanatanist newspapers containing distortions of conversations with me and attributing to me things I have never said.

There is a sheet in Tamil that the Editor has been kindly translating to me. It contains nothing but libels against reformers. There is in it what purports to be a report of my conversation with a Madura Pandit[1] who came to see me some time ago. One correspondent wonders if, as the report has tried to make out, I could have said that there were no chaste women in India. The whole report is a caricature, the most material portions having been omitted. But I must not fill the columns of *Harijan* with a transcript of the caricature and the true version of the conversation of which Mahadev Desai took notes at the time. But I reproduce the portion relating to women. Here

[1] Presumably Subramanya Sastrigal ; *vide* letters to K. S. Subramania Aiyar,. 25-2-1933, and K. K. Venkataram Aiyar, 25-2-1933

is first a free translation of the Tamil report:

GANDHI: Should a pure woman consort with her husband when he is given up to sinful ways?

THE PANDIT: Yes. The sinful husband will be metamorphosed into a virtuous man by the chastity of the wife.

GANDHI: Are there chaste women in these days?

PANDIT: How can we say there are none? There may be virtuous women for all we know. But why wander from our topic of conversation? Let us go on with our discussion.

Be it noted that the Madura Pandit or his friend took no notes. Here is the relevant portion of Mahadev Desai's notes:

PANDIT: The temples are intended for women and Shudras. According to Shastras, Shudras only can enter the temples today, because they alone are observing their *swadharma*[1]' viz., service, and chaste women have the same right. The others are burdened with karmas and duties, which now they have ceased to perform and, therefore, not entitled to enter a temple.

GANDHI: So whilst a Brahmin may be a karma *Chandala*[2]' his chaste wife may be entitled to enter a temple.

PANDIT: The wife because of her chastity purifies her husband.

GANDHI: Then, the moment a man has a wife who is pure, he becomes pure, no matter what sort of life he lives.

PANDIT: Yes; his wife saves him.

GANDHI: A man may go to the dogs, and yet if his wife is chaste, he becomes pure?

PANDIT: Yes, his wife saves him; though what he does is wrong, his sins will be neutralized.

GANDHI: So, if a man wants to remain immune from the consequences of his acts, all that he has to do is to be armed with a chaste wife.

PANDIT: Quite so.

GANDHI: Well, then, since we are not going to impute bad character to a single woman in India, for we must assume every one of them to be pure, unless, of course, she admits that she is impure or she has been found to be impure—every married man is pure and there should be no untouchability.

PANDIT: She should be a true *pativrata*, a genuinely chaste woman, described

[1] Duty of oneself
[2] Untouchable for one's actions

in our religious books like *Ramayana.*

GANDHI: How are you to determine that a particular woman satisfies that definition?

PANDIT: *Agni-pariksha.* She must prove her chastity by undergoing the ordeal through fire, as Sita did.

GANDHI: And so, those who cannot come scatheless out of it must be declared to be impure?

PANDIT: Indeed.

GANDHI: I have done.

Enough, however, about the Tamil sheet. A Gujarati sheet published by one claiming to be a sanatanist *Shastri* and now distributed broadcast in Hindi by sanatanist papers in North India professes to publish excerpts from my writings, sixty in all, which have the effect of proving me to be the very embodiment of everything anti-Hindu. Excerpts are torn from their context and made to bear a meaning the opposite of what they have when read in their context. Here is a sample of statements attributed to me:

> My parents and Sita were Bhangis.
>
> The Shastras are the productions of hypocrites, and the sages are so many Satans.
>
> I regard a Bhangi to be superior to a Brahmin.
>
> I am an iconoclast.

Now my correspondents, some of them frankly puzzled, invite me to deal with these charges. I must respectfully but resolutely decline the invitation. If there are people who will believe of me the things that are said in the writings sent to me, no refutation will save me. The public must take me as I am. What is more, the cause is everything, I am nothing.. If the campaign against untouchability is just and necessary for the very existence of Hinduism, it will survive the reputation of a thousand Gandhi.

What is, however; sad, almost tragic, about these libellous statements is that they are made by responsible sanatanists reported to be learned men and presumed to be holy men fit to be religious teachers of unsophisticated simple folk. Their curious interpretations of the Shastras, their refusal to read the signs of the times, their defence of obviously superstitions and even inhuman beliefs and customs, one can understand as being honestly held. What may appear as superstitious and inhuman to the reformer may not appear so to

them. But the resort by responsible pandits to untruths, distortions and suppression of truth is bound to do incalculable harm to Hindus and Hinduism. Let sanatanists put up as stubborn a fight as they like in defence of what they regard as a good cause. But I implore them to weed it of untruth.

Harijan, 25-2-1933

514. 'WE DO NOT HATE'

One who is a Vedanta Shastri and Secretary of a branch Brahmin Sabha writes:

> Sanatanists do not hate untouchables but hate their customs and daily actions. They are always ready to give all the Hindus, whether touchables or untouchables, every help they can. They give the untouchables priests, preceptors, Shastras with Ramnam, etc. But there are some so-called educated persons who always hate those untouchables. They are always keeping aloof from them and they want to pollute the sanatanists with the impurity brought by them from non-Hindus.

The foregoing I have taken from a fairly long letter and I have taken it as a sample from many such letters. 'Hate, is perhaps the wrong word. I should use the word 'despise'. And if to relegate a body of people to distant locations, to regard their touch, approach or sight as pollution, to throw at them the leavings of one's food, to deny to them the use of public roads and institutions, even the use of public temples, is not to despise them, I do not know what the word 'despise, means.

The writer says that the untouchables have priests and preceptors. My own experience and the experience of numerous reformers is to the contrary. Despairing of real priests, they have raised from among themselves what must be called 'an apology for priests'. The writer betrays the secret when he says that untouchables have the "Shastras with Ramnam", implying that they can have no access to any other Shastras. What are their daily customs and daily actions which evoke hatred? Their daily action was described in graphic terms by the Poet in his message[1] for our first issue. Save for carrion-eating, their customs are the same as those of innumerable caste Hindus. And carrion-eating is by no means common to all the

[1] *Vide* "The Cleanser"

untouchables so called. If a census were taken, we would be astonished to find that there are so few. I hope to present the readers of *Harijan* with reliable statistics in this matter. And I have not a shadow of a doubt that caste Hindus are responsible for this habit of carrion-eating and that, immediately they are welcomed as brothers and sisters and are offered the ordinary amenities of life on the same terms as caste Hindus, that habit will automatically drop out.

Lastly, the common experience is that whatever has been done for the Harijans by caste Hindus has been done by those who have received education or who are otherwise ranked as reformers. It will give me pleasure to know that sanatanists as such have done much or anything for Harijans. I would gladly publish the list of their charities or other acts of service rendered to Harijans.

Harijan, 25-2-1933

515. "HARIJAN" IN THE VERNACULARS

Some readers are anxious to know when, if at all, *Harijan* will be published in Hindi and other languages of the country.

The idea was to publish the Hindi edition first and the English and the other editions after. But, as there was delay in publishing the Hindi edition, the Chairman of the Central Board of the Servants of Untouchables Society authorized the publication of the English edition without waiting for the former.

I am happy to be able to inform the reader that the Hindi edition will have been out before this is in his hands. Arrangements are proceeding as fast as possible for the publication of provincial editions in the provincial languages, e.g., in Bengali, Marathi, Tamil, Gujarati, etc. My prescription has been and is that they should all be self-supporting. Moneys that are being collected for and by the Central and the Provincial Boards must be predominantly spent among the Harijans, i.e., for their educational and economic uplift. The weekly journals and leaflets are part of the necessary propaganda chiefly among caste Hindus. Therefore, they should pay for it. Except up to a point, I do not believe in presenting the public with free literature on any subject. It may be ever so cheap, but never free. I believe in the old Sanskrit proverb, 'Knowledge is for those who would know'. But these are my personal views. I can only tender my advice to the organizations and organizers. There is no copyright in

Harijan. Enterprising vernacular newspapers will publish their own editions of *Harijan.* Some have already written to me of their intention to do so. I can prevent no one, I can only plead with everyone to follow the advice which I have tendered and which is based on considerable experience.

Harijan, 25-2-1933

516. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

February 25,1933

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
CARE GADODIA, DELHI

SEND RAOBAHADUR RAJAH'S BILL[1] AMENDING SECTION 144 WITH YOUR OPINION.

BAPU

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I. G. P. File No. 20-X, 1933

517. TELEGRAM TO SUPERINTENDENT SEONI JAIL

Reply Prepaid

February 25,1933

SUPERINTENDENT
DISTRICT JAIL, SEONI (C. P.)

AM INTERESTED IN SETH POONAMCHAND RANKA PRISONER YOURS JAIL. PLEASE WIRE CONDITION HIS HEALTH.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I. G. P. File No. 20-X,1933

[1] For Gandhiji's comments on the Bill, *vide* "Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah's Bill", 4-3-1933

518. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

February 25,1933[1]

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI'

As you know I have been endeavouring during my present incarceration to study the heavens. You have kindly allowed astronomical literature to come in to me. I need a fair-sized astronomical telescope. Lady Vithaldas has one and has kindly consented to give me a loan of it. Drs. Ramnathan and Desai of the Government observatory (Poona) who put the telescope right say that I won't be able to use it unless they gave personal directions. They need to be with me for that purpose for about half an hour after the stars are observable. If there is any objection to this lesson being given to me in the yard in which I am kept during the night, it may be given in the yard reserved for untouchability interviews.

I shall thank you if you will please ascertain the wishes of the Government in the matter.[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 5130; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (4),p. 151

519. LETTER TO DR. MOHAMMAD ALAM

February 25,1933

DEAR DR. ALAM'

I was delighted to have your letter and to observe that you were making steady progress.

If she continues to be as careless as she has been in her Urdu writing in her latest letter, please tell Begum Alam that I shall have to tone down my compliments. At one time I thought that she was

[1] According to the Bombay Secret Abstracts, "4-3-1933"

[2] The last sentence is from the Bombay Secret Abstracts. In reply Gandhiji was informed that the Government could not relax the rule "by which no visitors are allowed inside the jail after lock up, as this would disturb the jail routine and prevent the staff going off duty",

competing with Zora[1] in beautiful writing, but in her present letter I fancy that I can easily beat her after half a dozen letters from Zora. This won't do. I do not want to break my idols. I had begun to think that Muslim women beat their Hindu sisters hollow in perfect writing, for every Muslim sister who has written to me has a beautiful hand. Begum Alam must keep up that reputation. I hope to enclose with this a letter for Begum Alam.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Encls.

From a photostat: G.N. 28

520. LETTER TO SAMUEL FRANCIS

February 25,1933

DEAR SAMUEL'

I had your letter of 12th January. I am writing[2] to Hon'ble Mr. Natesan to look after you and your children on your reaching Madras. You will therefore please write to him giving him the exact date of your arrival and the name of the boat. You will not expect Mr. Natesan to [do] more than finding lodgings for a short time. If your children can live simply and in the Indian style, he won't find any difficulty. Nor will he find any difficulty in supporting a high style of living if you have ample money at your disposal.

Yours sincerely,

SAMUEL FRANCIS, ESQ.
8 MARK LANE
EAST LONDON C. P. (S. AFRICA)

From a microfilm: S.N. 20387

[1] Zohra Ansari
[2] *Vide* the following item.

521. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

February 25,1933

MY DEAR NATESAN'

I enclose herewith a letter from Samuel Francis of East London, and a copy of my reply to him. This will remind you of the old days when I had thrown on your broad shoulders the burden of looking after quite a number of Indian deportees from South Africa.[1] I hope that I have not done anything wrong in expecting you to find quarters for Samuel Francis and his children on their landing in Madras if they give you previous intimation.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20368

522. LETTER TO SESHGIRI BALKRISHNA RAO SONDE

February 25,1933

DEAR FRIEND'

I have your letter of the 11th instant. There was a similar letter from another friend, whose name I forget at the moment, to whom I gave my views.

I am quite convinced that sacrifice of dumb animals to appease a deity cannot have any religious or other merit about it. It is a sinful act. These sacrifices are a relic of barbarism and it would be a great sin if, in the face of the anti-untouchability movement with temple-entry as a part of it, animal sacrifices are not stopped altogether.

You can make whatever use you like of this letter.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SESHGIRI BALKRISHNA RAO SONDE
LANDOWNER AND MERCHANT
SIRSI (N. KANARA)

From a microfilm: S.N. 20369

523. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

February 25,1933

MY DEAR C. R.'

Your letter of the 21st. I have heard Vallabhbhai reading your reply to C.P.R.

Tastes differ. You consider the second number of *Harijan* excellent except for the denunciation. I consider it excellent certainly for that, if for nothing else. But I agree with your opinion that the thick types for some of the headings look ugly, but things will gradually improve.

I am following your great effort for getting the Bills through. I am not going to shed tears if you do not succeed.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR
C/O SETH L. N. GADODIA
NEAR CLOCK TOWER, DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 20370

524. LETTER TO K. S. SUBRAMANIA AIYAR.

February 25,1933

DEAR FRIEND'

I have your letter. There is an article in the current issue of the *Harijan* with reference to the conversation[1] mentioned by you. There is no cause for dejection. In all great movements, hypocrisy and fraud will spring up. We must battle against them in the purest manner possible having full faith that truth must conquer in the end.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. S. SUBRAMANIA AIYAR
SREERAGAVAPURAM ST.
KULLADAIKURICHI
(TINNEVELLY DISTT.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 20371

[1] Which Gandhiji had with Subramanya Sastrigal on January 9, 1933; *vide* "A Campaign of Abuse",25-2-1933

525. LETTER TO M. V. PARAMESWARAN CHETTIAR

February 25,1933

DEAR FRIEND'

I have your letter. You are quite right in thinking that the object of the anti-untouchability movement is to level down the distinctions of high and low. There would be to the end of time different professions and occupations, different qualities also, but none of these differences necessitate the distinction of high and low.

The motive behind the temple-entry is from this standpoint easily understood. It is to demonstrate to the Hindu mind and to the world that in the house of God there is no one high and no one low. This is a reform wanted by those caste Hindus who have got the conviction that hitherto the treatment meted out to the so-called untouchables has been sinful and contrary to the spirit of Hinduism.Those who think that temple-entry has anything to do with Congress politics are wholly mistaken.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. V. PARAMESWARAN CHETTIAR

VALLAT ANGADY

POST ANGADIPURAM (S. MALABAR)

From a microfilm: S.N. 20373

526. LETTER TO M. C. RAJAH

February 25,1933

DEAR RAO BAHADUR'

I thank you for your letter of 22nd instant enclosing copy of your Bill to amend the Code of Criminal Procedure. I shall surely study it and publish the text in the next issue of *Harijan* and comment upon it. If there is anything special about the Bill which I cannot incorporate in my note in the *Harijan* I shall certainly write to you about it separately. I hope you are getting your copy of the *Harijan.* You will please let me have any comment you may have on it.

I am glad you are doing your best to expedite the passage of the two Untouchability Bills.

Why should you thank me for any humble effort that I can

make for the common cause? Am I not myself a member of the community? I may not be yet a fit member, but I shall leave no stone unturned to become fit.

Yours sincerely,

RAO BAHADUR M. C. RAJAH, M.L.A.

ROYAL HOTEL, DELHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 20374

527. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

February 25,1933

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR'

I see you have the old enemy[1] again. I hope however that with the aid of good medical advisers you have successfully routed him. I wonder if you were able to pass on my letter[2] about the opening[3] ceremony to Vinayakrao[4]. He has certainly done very good social work in Ratnagiri, and it must have been a very serious disappointment to him, as also to Sjt. Kir that you were disabled from performing the opening ceremony.

I hope you got my second letter[5] together with the letter about the Ratnagiri temple. With the letter I sent you a copy of the Government's reply to my letter and of my rejoinder.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 20375

528. LETTER TO H. KHADER KHAN

February 25,1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and copies of the *Light.*

It is impossible for me to find the time for writing out a reply to all the things said in the paper, but there is no difficulty for a diligent

[1] The addressee was suffering from fever.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to M. R. Jayakar", 19-2-1933

[3] Of two temples in Ratnagiri to Harijans

[4] V. D. Savarkar (1883-1966), an old revolutionary who later became leader of the Hindu Mahasabha

[5] *Vide* "Letter to M. R. Jayakar", 19-2-1933

student to find an answer to every one of the things in my writings.

I do not consider myself qualified for writing out a learned comparison between the *Gita*, the Bible and the Koran. I have studied these sufficiently for my own satisfaction. Beyond that I have considered it unnecessary for me to go.

Yours sincerely,

H. KHADER KHAN (OF SALEM)
ARKALGAD (P. O.)
HASSAN DIST. (MYSORE STATE)

From a microfilm: S.N. 20376

529. LETTER TO S. NEELAKANTA AIYAR

February 25,1933

DEAR FRIEND'

I thank you for your two letters, one of which is unsigned, of the 14th instant.

I quite agree with you that so far as the civil rights are concerned, we can make no distinction between Christian untouchables and Hindu untouchables, except that where Christians have special facilities for education you need not worry about them.

About the other letter, I am unable to say anything definite in the absence of fuller information, but this I can say that if the rites are intended as a condition precedent to their admission to varnashramadharma, I am wholly opposed to the performance of the rites; if on the other hand, they are meant for their betterment and as part of a spiritual instruction, they might be quite harmless and even beneficial, if the selection is properly made and the rites are performed by men, qualified both by their character and learning.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. NEELAKANTA AIYAR
SECRETARY
SERVANTS OF THE UNTOUCHABLES SOCIETY
TRAVANCORE BOARD
TRICHUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 20377

530. LETTER TO HARIBHAU PHATAK

February 25,1933

MY DEAR HARIBHAU'

I had a very long conversation with Upasak. His wife is a very unsteady woman, she may even desert him any day and she is wholly incapable of observing self-restraint. Such a couple cannot possibly go to the Ashram where *brahmacharya* is indispensable. I do not think also that Upasak will be able to conform to all the conditions of the Board, but he says that if the grant up to April is now paid, i.e., Rs. 22, he will try to do what he can to keep the school going and he will take his chance if he cannot. I think that this is a proposal worth considering. If, therefore, it is possible, I recommend Rs. 22 being paid to him with the absolute warning that nothing more will be paid to him thereafter.

Yours sincerely'

From a microfilm: S.N. 20378

531. LETTER TO D. M. DAVIDSON

February 25,1933

DEAR FRIEND'

I thank you for your letter[1] of the 23rd instant giving me your experiences of your visit to Rahuri.

Yours sincerely'

MR. D. M. DAVIDSON

B. I. T. BLOCK NO. 5/25

ST. MARY ROAD, MAZAGAON

From a microfilm: S.N. 20381 a

[1] It gave an account of the work done by the addressee among untouchables during the Christmas holidays.

532. LETTER TO K. K. VENKATARAM AIYAR

February 25,1933

DEAR FRIEND'

I thank you for your letter. You will find a brief reference, in the current issue of *Harijan,* to the matter referred to in your letter.[1]

Yours sincerely'

SJT. K. K. VENKATARAM AIYAR
C/O UDIPI HINDU RESTAURANT
EAST VELI VEEDI
MADURA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20383

533. LETTER TO HAQQI

February 25,1933

DEAR PROFESSOR'

As I have already told you, I wrote[2] to Baboo Bhagwandas of Benares. I hope he has written to you, but if he has not, you shouldput yourself in touch with him. His address is as follows: "Seva Ashram, Sigra, Benares Cantt".

I hope to find another friend very shortly. As soon as I have met him, I shall see that he writes to you.

Yours sincerely'

From a microfilm: S.N. 20384

534. LETTER TO GOKUL MOHAN ROY CHAURAMONY

February 25,1933

DEAR FRIEND'

I have your letter. The simplest manner in which I can put before you my views about the education of children is that they should be put in the company of people having a character beyond reproach. If we were living in an ideal age, the parents should be such

[1] The addressee, in his letter dated February 17, 1933, (S.N. 20273) had referred to the report of an interview between Gandhiji and Subramanya Sastrigal on January 9, *1933; vide* "A Campaign of Abuse",25-2-1933

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Bhagwandas", 7-2-1933.

people. Unfortunately parents are not always in a position to take up this responsibility, and we have therefore to find suitable people from society, and although it is not easy to find such people, it is a search worth making.

Yours sincerely'

SJT. GOKUL MOHAN ROY CHURAMONY

C/O SJT. SRISHCHANDRA GHOSH

RAMCHANDI SAHE

PURI

From a microfilm: S.N. 20388

535. LETTER TO D. RAGHAVACHANDRAYYA

February 25,1933

DEAR FRIEND'

I have your letter. Many people dedicate books to others without waiting for their permission. You can also do likewise. I can do nothing to you. For me to give you the permission would mean that I have read your book and have generally approved of it. You will admit that this I cannot honestly do.

Yours sincerely'

SJT. D. RAGHAVACHANDRAYYA

SATH SASTRI

SATE RAHMANA ASRAMAM, BEZWADA

From a copy: S.N. 21545 a

536. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

February 25,1933

CHI. RAMDAS'

Khushaldas has passed away. I received both the accompanying letters yesterday evening. I have written to Shantilal and informed him. Khushaldas has indeed been released from the suffering of this life. The truth is that everybody who goes on a journey along that royal road is released from this life. For this life is given to us for repaying our debts, and nobody can leave before he has paid off his. If this idea is correct, death means that the person has paid off his debt

partially at least.

He who knows with perfect conviction that this life is given to us for repaying our debts can repay his debts to all, and the ancients described that as attaining *moksha*. *Moksha* means complete freedom from debt and, consequently, end of the cycle of births for the person.

I was pained to see your condition yesterday, your broken health and your mental suffering. I had no remedy for either, and was pained because you attributed to your father more power than he possessed. I felt as Harishchandra had done. He had become ready to sell his only son for the sake of dharma. I have been doing very much the same thing. Though I know the remedy for your poor health, I cannot adopt it because of my concern for dharma, nor can end your mental suffering for the same reason

If you follow the rule that you cannot avail yourself of facilities which other prisoners who keep bad health would not get, you can do nothing to improve your health. I can understand that you would not like to ask for special facilities for yourself but it does not seem right to me that you should not avail yourself of facilities which may be offered to you when you explain to the authorities the condition of your health. When you are outside, you enjoy more facilities than the countless millions and never think about the matter. I ask for and enjoy, both in jail and outside, facilities which they can never hope to get, and am fully aware that I do so. But I do not feel that I violate dharma thereby. If an elephant tries to crawl like an ant, he will not succeed in becoming an ant thereby and will cease to be an elephant, which means that he will have lost his true nature. An elephant like me, however, would humbly accept his big size and consume food weighing more than thousands of ants and would also draw, without the least effort, loads which those ants could never draw. An elephant is entitled to consume food which the size of his body requires. Only, he must not waste that food by not giving proportionate service in return. That is, he should carry loads proportionate to his strength. If he does that, he will have consumed as much food and given as much service as an ant. This is communism. If, therefore, you can secure the food which your body requires by legitimate means and without humiliating yourself for the purpose, you should do so and improve your health, and then serve other people to the best of your ability.

But even in trying to serve other people and securing facilities for yourself by legitimate means, you should know and understand

your duty as a prisoner. A prisoner has no right except that of preserving his self-respect, for he ceases to be the master of his body as soon as he becomes a prisoner and the jail superintendent becomes its master. Even if the latter does not give the prisoner enough to eat or to drink or sufficient clothes to wear, the prisoner should remain contented and cheerful. Anybody who cannot do so is not a true prisoner. We must admit that in this age the British policy towards prisoners is comparatively more liberal than that of any other government. It is improving day by day. There is certainly room for much more improvement still, but that is another matter. A prisoner may fight to bring about such improvement. If, however, he remembers the general principle stated above, he will not be disappointed if he fails in his attempt—for he has no absolute right to enjoy any facility. If you understand this reasoning fully, I shall be relieved and you will be able to overcome your mental unrest.

I will certainly try to do what I can in regard to everything which you mentioned—but in my own way, and that is bound to take time. The delay will not make me impatient, and I wish that you also should not be. What can you or I do? Certainly we are not masters of the result.

We can only try the best that we can. You have been doing what you can, and I also will do what I can. Even if we don't succeed, you should dance with joy, and so will I.

Be not moved by joy or sorrow; with the body were they created;

None can escape them for by the Lord of Raghu were they decreed.

Do you follow all this? Read the letter three or four times, and if you do not follow any point ask me to explain it again.

Keep me informed about the condition of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 20366

537. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

February 25,1933

BHAI VIYOGI HARI'

I have your telegram. I do not know whether the Hindi *Harijan*[1] has or has not come out. What should I write for you? You may select anything you like from the published issues of *Harijan.* Your skill will be tested in making a proper selection of articles and translating the relevant portions. After seeing the Hindi version I shall decide if anything more needs to be written. Yes, one thing you can do. If you address me some questions, I may by way of answer write on some important topic. I hope the journal will become self-supporting from the very start.

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Badonke Preranadayak Kuchh Patra, frontispiece

538. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

February 25,1933

CHI. HEMPRABHA'

Your letter. Who do you mean by 'Arun's[2] father'[3]? Where was he? Yes, do send me the Hindi translation when it is printed. Why not get the Hindi version printed in the Vishal Bharat Press? Benarsidasji would love to get it printed. Do you know him? If not, show this letter to him. Have you noticed any improvement from sun-baths? Arun must be all right by now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1697

[1] *Harijan Sevak,* edited by the addressee. The first issue came out on February 23, 1933, but Gandhiji got a copy only on February *26. Vide* "Letter to Viyogi Hari", 26-2-1933

[2] Addressee's son

[3] Actually Arun's grandfather; *vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta," 5-3-1933.

539. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

February 26,1933

MY DEAR BHRRR,[1]

So you have entered your eightieth year and you do not want to believe it!! Shall we say it is your eighteenth year? Being nearly 15 years younger than you, I should be a four-year-old baby expecting to grow new teeth. How nice! Then the sanatanist friends can swear at me to their heart's content for many, many years to come.

But no such good luck for them. For with your silvery beard, even little children won't take you to be only 18. They would vote us down as old humbugs wishing to give them no chance.

If you get your Rs. 2'000 from the Maharajah, it would be a good start.[2]

You should waylay all the lecturers that come there. They should give you something for the great cause.

Poor Rehana! I had a note from her. You will not hurry her out of Poona if she is comfortable at Nanavati's.

Do you know what time it is now? Not yet 4 a.m. Good morning.

Love from us all.

Yours,

BHRRR

From a photostat: S.N. 9583

540. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

February 26, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

Champa has written to me about repairs in her bungalow and the need for getting it painted. She also wishes to go to some hill station during the summer. If painting and repairs are necessary, get them done. About her desire to go to a hill station, I have put some questions to her in my letter. Read it. Does she remain on good terms

[1] This was the form of greeting between Gandhiji and the addressee.

[2] The addressee was collecting funds in Kathiawar for Harijan work.

with you? Does she behave with proper courtesy? How is Ratilal? Does he wish to go to a hill station?

Read my letter to Parashuram. He wishes to spend some time with Rajaji. I don't know whether the latter will give his consent. Can you make him free for two months? Who will teach Hindi during his absence?

Tell Kusum that as I wrote to her separately some time ago, I don't write to her today. I shall get another opportunity to write separately to her.

BAPU

[PS.]

In all there are 14 letters. They are all stitched together.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

541. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

February 26, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. You will find with this a letter for Bhagwanji and one for Panditji. I believe that up to a certain quantity (12 ounces) milk is supplied to a prisoner at the cost of the jail.

Personally I am glad that you have told Hariyomal that he could come back. Such persons learn only through experience. Your suggestion regarding Parvati is excellent. If it is acted upon, both will be free.

We must bear the expenses of Prabhudas's journeys. He is rather timid. He will probably take time to find a partner, and it may even be a difficult task. He will not get over his restlessness till he marries. The forcible repression of his strong desire to marry was the cause of his restlessness.

Your remaining firm about the problem of Lakshmi is very necessary. I cannot understand Dudabhai's opposition. I have had no letter from Purushottam. I did ask him to write to me. I don't think fasting will do him any harm. If he knows how to break the fast gradually, he is bound to benefit from it. If the bone-setter knows his job well, there will be no harm. It will probably be safer to get Kanu

examined by Haribhai[1]. If Mathuradas remains firm in his resolve, Motibehn will give up her opposition. It has been my unfailing experience that if one of the two parties is firm and the other party knows that he or she cannot be shaken from his or her resolve, the latter resigns herself or himself to the situation. As we forget in time our grief even over the death of one who was dearest to us, so also this folly leaves us by and by. The truth is there is some weakness in both parties and that is why they need each other's support. Really speaking, such support is of no avail. If it helps any couple to keep their resolve, the fact must be counted as an accident. How can a blind person lead another blind person? How can one who is drowning save another in the same plight as himself? How can a person who is not free from passion help his or her partner to be so? The reasoning is quite simple.

You need not take any trouble to enlist subscribers for *Harijan.* We will send five copies to the Ashram addressed to no particular subscribers. You may use them in any way that you can. See if you can maintain a file with four out of the five copies, or with the copies which remain unsold. Some day they will be useful.

I got *Satyarthaprakash*, the slivers and the leather for the soles. Kellogg's book must have been sent to Dhulia jail for Madhavji. Or it was with somebody in Vijapur. I am sure about this.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I; also *Bapuna Patro–9: Shri Narandas Gandhine,* Pt. II, pp. 35-6

542. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

February 26,1933

CHI. PREMA,

Do not expect a long letter today. I have been writing so much with the right hand that it has got tired now. Nor have I much time.

I got the slivers sent by you. They were received yesterday evening. I spun with them today. Assuming that their weight as stated by you is correct, I see that I can spin yarn of 60 counts with slivers made from the *devkapas* variety of cotton. I will give half the quantity

[1] Dr. Harilal Desai

to Mahadev to spin. He has better skill in handling slivers than I have. Very probably he will be able to spin yarn of 100 counts at the very first attempt.

You give no news about your health. Is your throat all right? How is the backache?

Let me know how you found Mr. Duncan.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10325

543. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

February 26,1933

CHI. BHAU

If Rajkot agrees with you, you should stay there for a longer time. While there, you may help Jamnadas in any way you can. If you are completely cured there, the improvement will remain even after you have left Rajkot. Let me know your daily programme of work and also your diet.

Those who have money ought to help others. Those who cannot meet their needs in any other way, like totally disabled people and sannyasis (genuine),etc., deserve to be helped.

The mendicant may be deserving if he gives all his time to social service and accepts no other return.

The woman certainly deserves help.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6750

544. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

February 26,1933

I got your letter only today. I would certainly advise you to go to Banaras. It is our duty to plead with Malaviyaji. Whether we shall succeed or fail does not depend on us. The interpretation which you put upon his wire[1] is correct. From the wire it seems that he has an open mind on the subject.

[From Gujarati]
Bapuni Prasadi, p. 121

[1] Presumably Madan Mohan Malaviya's telegram dated February 15; *vide* "Telegram from Madan Mohan Malaviya", 15-2-1933

545. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

February 26,1933

CHI. VIDYA,

I got your letter. You should have faith in Premabehn's advice and follow it. That will be for your good. This applies to the other teachers too.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9633. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

546. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

February 26,1933

BOYS AND GIRLS,

Harijan children won't listen to talk on abstinence from liquor. But coming in contact with you, they will gradually be influenced. It is a nice idea to visit them on Sundays. Try if possible to make this arrangement. It would be enough if the Friday programme is shifted to Sunday. Discuss it with Narandas. If your conduct is spotless, it will definitely influence them. It is inevitable that you should mix with older people. They also will be won over by love and service. Sometimes you may invite the Harijan children to the Ashram. Before inviting them take permission from Narandas.

I regard it as good news that the weights of most of you have gone up and also the counts of the yarn.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

547. LETTER TO KALICHARAN

February 26,1933

BHAI KALICHARANJI,

I have your letter. I know all that is written about me. I do not think there is any remedy for it except remaining unperturbed. I hope that nobody believes it at all. And how can my denial have any effect on those who believe it? Anyway I have written something in this connection in the current issue of *Harijan.*[1]

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8039

[1] *Vide* "A Campaign of Abuse", 25-2-1933.

548. RESIST UNTRUTH WITH TRUTH

February 26,1933

It is unfortunate that untruth is being preached these days in the name of the sanatana dharma. I am receiving many new sanatanist newspapers which abound in untruth and indecency. I have been severely attacked in them. Many correspondents ask me to write something in reply to them. What can I write? Some say I do not believe in religion. In answer to that, except for me to say that religion is my life-breath what other reply can I give? A learned religious propagandist has written in the same vein. I can only give this reply to it that every word of it is almost entirely untrue. His words are not proved untrue because I say so, just as, his mere saying so does not establish what he says as truth.

Still untruth can be resisted by truth alone. It is necessary to understand this great saying. The root of all actions is in thought. False thoughts result in false utterances; and after that, or along with it or without the utterances, action follows. In the same way right action has its roots in right thoughts. If the thought is not true then that action or utterance which seems true is only false, is erroneous. That is to say, if I am entirely truthful even in my thoughts falsehood will be warded off automatically. People will not believe these canards. This firm faith keeps me unperturbed, and my friends also should be unperturbed. This false propaganda cannot last long. It is that for a short while the atmosphere will be contaminated by it. In every agitation such things always happen.

Let the reformer remember one thing. Let him never even contemplate untruth. We have a great religious mission before us. The abolition of untouchability is the great religious task before me, an onerous duty. To eradicate untouchability is the supreme duty of every Hindu. We can never accomplish this religious task with untruth. Ultimately anger or violence is also untruth. For this reason, it is necessary for those who serve Harijans never to be angry with their opponents; never to utter lies; but to overcome anger with affection, rudeness with courtesy, falsehood with truth, and violence with non-violence. And since we cannot control the outcome but can certainly practise truth and other virtues, God has said, “You have

only the right to action; and not to the fruit thereof."[1] If all those who serve Harijans will stick to truth, then the result will only be good. There is no doubt whatever in this.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1068; also *Harijan Sevak,* 10-3-1933

549. KEEPING THE WORD

February 26, 1933

A gentleman writes:

> You are very hasty. Although a non-co-operator, you even seek help from the Assembly. Why such weakness? Negotiate with the sanatanists and have the temples thrown open.

I replied to this gentleman on these lines:

I am not hasty. I am striving to fulfil my pledge. In Bombay, at the end of September, this large conference of Hindus leaders on behalf of the Hindus resolved to strive to get the temples thrown open to Harijans in as peaceful a manner as possible. Now this difficulty has cropped up in our way, namely, the British courts have decided that Harijans cannot enter many temples. Even a consensus among Hindus cannot abolish the law. Law can be abrogated by law alone. So legislation has become necessary and Shri Ranga Iyer has presented the Bill. It does not have even a hint of force or of interference with religion. According to the Bill, if the Hindu public wish so, temples can be thrown open to the Harijans. The temples will be thrown open when Hindu public decide to do so; never by the Bills. There is no question of co-operation or non-co-operation in this. But this matter is outside my province today. People should have this much faith that if I, the author of the principle of non-co-operation, am a partisan to the passing of these Bills, the possibility of the principle being violated is very little. The important thing is that it is the duty of those who made the solemn declaration in Bombay to do their utmost to remove the legal obstruction. Only then can they say:

> Rather die than go back upon one's word.[2]

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1070; also *Harijan Sevak,*10-3-1933

[1] *Bhagavad Gita,* II. 47

[2] *Ramacharitamanasa,* Ayodhyakand

550. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

February 26,1933

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

It is mail-time now. I received your telegram. I had sent a reply. I have also received Hindi *Harijan*[1] today. I am sending two articles[2] with this letter; I hope they will reach in time. I have not been able to read *Harijan Sevak* yet. I shall write about it in the English [*Harijan*].

BAPU

[PS.]

You may correct the language.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1086

551. LETTER TO BEGUM MOHAMMAD ALAM

February 26,1933

DEAR SISTER

Your letter should serve as an Urdu lesson for me. However short the letter may be, the letters must be well formed. Your earlier letters were beautiful. I was extremely glad to learn that both of you were now maintaining good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

BEGUM ALAM

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 29

552. LETTER TO BENARSILAL AND RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ

February 27,1933

CHI. RUKMINI

Two letters from you are lying before me. I am writing this before the morning prayer. I am glad that you don't want to be exempted from writing to me even when there is pressure of work. If

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Viyogi Hari", 26-2-1933

[2] Resist Untruth with Truth', and "Keeping the Word''; *vide* "Resist Untruth with Truth", 26-2-1933

one works methodically, one does not feel any strain. Such work becomes part of one's nature. Since you get news from Deolali and the Ashram, I need not mention anything. Hindi *Harijan is* being published now.

BAPU

CHI. BENARSI,

Your simile for that string of sixty allegations is a good one.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9646. Courtesy: Benarsilal Bazaj

553. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

February 27,1933

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

I have gone through *Harijan Sevak;* I did not like it. It requires more labour and more study. It contains the news of the opening of the Santram temple at Nadiad. The news is published despite the fact that the Santram temple has not been thrown open. No news item should be quoted from the papers without verifying it. Publication of such news always undermines one's prestige and harms the cause of dharma. The prefix 'it is reported' is certainly there but who can thank you for it? Very many things are reported but few turn out to be true on verification. This must now be corrected. Enquire from the head of the Santram temple. The account of activities has taken up too much space. It indicates that you had nothing left to print and that is why even after so much space being used up the lower portion remained blank. And that is an eyesore. You could have found sufficient material from the two issues of *Harijan* lying with you. Certainly there was no lack of time. The translation of my article should have borne at the end the appellation 'translation'. Even the translation is not satisfactory. *Harijan Sevak* should not be stuffed with articles but it should be a guide to the workers and should abound with news. The problems facing the sanatanists should be indicated and solutions suggested. The falsehoods of the sanatanists should be exposed at the appropriate time. Hence we must receive exhaustive reports from all provinces. The letters published already in *Aaj* need not be reproduced.

I am sending today a wire[1] in this connection. I trust you will not mind my plain speaking. All this is meant not to discourage but to encourage you.

The two articles I sent yesterday must have reached you.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 20393

554. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

February 28,1933

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

I know you don't believe in giving yourself rest. I propose to join you in not giving you rest. Mahadev wrote to you at my instance yesterday about the wretched get-up of the *Harijan Sevak*, both as to the matter and the manner. I sent even a telegram to Viyogi Hari. Today I send you what has appealed to me as an extraordinarily clever report on the Harijan organizations of the Punjab. I am dealing with it in the ensuing *Harijan*, but you should circulate the copies of the enclosed report among the Punjab organizations and get their replies. If you think that there is absolutely nothing to be said for the report and that it simply contains a series of exaggerations and unsupported statements, naturally you will not go to the expense of copying the report and multiply your and your staff's work. You will then return me the report with a brief note that it is not worthy of consideration. Perhaps you know the writer; if you do, you will let me know all about him. I am still in correspondence with him. I wonder if you read the English *Harijan*. It is addressed to you personally as it is to every Harijan servant, because it contains suggestions for workers, appeals to them, as also arguments to arm them for their battle. Arguments and appeals you may not need at all, but suggestions you must welcome, no matter from what quarter they come. There is one suggestion of my making in my article on the Punjab report which I do not want to duplicate, because I expect you to see it in the *Harijan*. If you see a flaw in the reasoning, or if you find it to be impossible to carry out, you will tell me and if your counter-argument appeals to

[1] This is not available.

me I shall correct it. But it is better that instead of making big suggestions privately I make them publicly.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI A. V. THAKKAR
BIRLA MILLS
SABJI MANDI
DELHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1112, also S.N. 20410

555. LETTER TO R. KAIMAL

February 28,1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I believe I have a previous letter of yours unanswered. I must however deal with it when I come to it in the regular course.

With reference to your question in your letter of 23rd instant, my emphatic answer is, like the rest, the present priesthood is decadent. If it was not, we should find Hinduism in a different state altogether.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. KAIMAL
TRIVANDRUM

From a microfilm: S.N. 20400

556. LETTER TO K. N. KATJU

February 28,1933

DEAR DR. KATJU,

I thank you for your valuable letter.[1] I am glad that yourdaughter is happy with her husband. I know you will do all you can for the *Harijan.*

I appreciate your argument about temple-entry. In my opinion, based even upon the present experience of new temples which are being opened, the donors have no fixed ideas. They simply build temples for Hindus without a rigid definition for the class of Hindus to be admitted to the temples. Hinduism has never been a rigid faith. It has kept abreast of the times. Untouchables of today were not the untouchables, say, a hundred years ago, and those who were untouchables a thousand years ago are undoubtedly not untouchables today.

Would you say that the English law of Trusts is applicable to Hindu usage? Some of the most learned *Shastris* who are no reformers of the Western style do not hesitate to give the opinion that Hindu public temples should never have been closed to untouchables. According to your argument, our ancestors could stop the march of Hinduism by opening temples in accordance with the usage then in existence. I would like you therefore to re-consider your position, and if there is a flaw in my deductions from your argument, I would like you to strive with me. For I have no desire to see any injustice done to any party or person.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. N. KATJU

19 EDMONSTONE ROAD, ALLAHABAD

From a microfilm: S.N. 204 1

[1] The addressee had written: ". . .It cannot be denied that . .. for many many centuries, rightly or wrongly, untouchables have not been allowed access to public temples. . . . it seems to me that it is not so much a question of Hindu Shastras or their right and correct interpretation, but in truth a question of what the founder must be deemed or presumed to have intended. . . . otherwise I do not see what right has the majority to override the intention of the founder, and it may be open to any member of the Hindu public to appeal to a civil court to give effect to the intentions of the founder. I am just mentioning this point for your consideration. . . ."

557. LETTER TO VITHALRAO K. JOSHI

February 28,1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[1] As soon as I got Sjt. Athavale's letter, I wrote[2] to Sjt. Chhapkhane. I did not know his full name and address, but I am sure he will get my letter.

Yours sincerely

SJT. VITHALRAO K. JOSHI
NEW PETH, SANGLI

From a microfilm: S.N. 20402

558. LETTER TO P. H. GADRE

February 28,1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. If you do not mind, I would wait till I see your article in the Press, but you may certainly come and see me if you feel like it any day except Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays between 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. by previous appointment.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. H. GADRE
NASIK CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20403

[1] The addressee had written: "It is quite false that you commended that the sum be retained by Mr. K. R. Chhapkhane of Sangli, for use in the political advancement in general and specially in the Sangli State, at his absolute discretion. . . ."

[2] *Vide* "Letter to K. R. Chhapkhane", 23-2-1933

559. LETTER TO GAYA PRASAD SINGH

February 28,1933

DEAR GAYA BABOO,

Many thanks for your letter and all the effort you are putting forth in connection with the Untouchability Bills.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GAYA PRASAD SINGH
13 C FEROZSHAH ROAD
NEW DELHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 20404

560. LETTER TO TRICUMDAS DWARKADAS

February 28,1933

MY DEAR TRICUMDAS

I thank you for your letter enclosing counsels, opinion. I see that I put down my questions[1] stupidly and I have got what I deserved.[2] But as Dr. Sapru had understood my questions put in identical language I thought that I was quite safe. If I get a moment's leisure I will re-frame the questions and see what I can get. Even the present answers you and I can understand, but the general public will certainly cry out 'His own lawyers say there is compulsion and interference.' I am therefore not making any public use of this opinion. My thanks are all the same due to the friends for taking the trouble of promptly giving their answers.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. TRICUMDAS DWARKADAS
C/O MESSRS KANGA & CO.
YUSUF BUILDING
CHURCH GATE STREET
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20409

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jaisukhlal K. Mehta", "Letter to Jaisukhlalm K. Mehta", 20-2-1933

[2] The addressee had forwarded opinions of D. N. Bahadurji, V. F. Taraporewala and M. C. Setalvad.

561. LETTER TO P. R. LELE

February 28,1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I knew about Jaisukhlal's illness and I wrote to him on Sunday. Will you be in full charge then? I received today Sjt. Tricumdas's letter with opinion. I have sent him a letter[1] of acknowledgement.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. R. LELE
THE RECLUSE
31 MURZBAN ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20405

562. LETTER TO C. NARAYANA RAO

February 28,1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your postcard.[2] I quite agree with the sentiment expressed therein.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. NARAYANA RAO
PEDDA WALTAIR
UPLANDS, WALTAIR P. O.

From a microfilm: S.N. 20407

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The addressee had regretted that some sanatanists were opposing the two proposed Bills and stressed the importance of legislation for the removal of untouchability.

563. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

February 28,1933

DEAR DAUGHTER,

Your letter. It is very good indeed that Devdas has arrived.

You must not be impatient for serving others. First of all improve your health, everything else will be all right then. If Dr. Sharma puts his trust in God and has a sincere wish to go to the Ashram his path will be cleared by Him. If the doctor has full faith in his treatment the Ashram offers good scope and the people will learn to trust him. However, he must not hope for the present to sell his books.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 278

564. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

[On or after *February 28,1933*][1]

YOUR WIRE. SORRY BUT UNRUFFLED. WE MUST CARRY ON.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 20408

565. LETTER TO DUNCAN GREENLEES

March 1,1933

Newcomers do find the routine a stiff business. But we are trying to live the life of the billions of the earth. They are toilers all the day long. They have to do their thinking whilst their bodies are working. When the routine becomes natural, it becomes pleasant and does not interfere with hard thinking. All thinking is not useful. Clear thinking is the need. That can only come through continuous sacrifice, i.e., toiling for the service of others.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] The telegram was in reply to the addressee's received on February 28. It reads: "Despite generous disciplined co-operation majority House and cruel neutrality Government all but one hurdle overcome. Obstruction had its way. House adjourned quarter after five. Bill not reached. Next only non-official day twenty-fourth."

566. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 1,1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your mail (a big packet). I think it would be best to serve rice to Maitri and others who insist on it. We may only explain the properties of the different classes of grain and not press anybody to follow our advice. These properties are a matter of direct experience. I see from experience every day that we should consume a minimum of starches. Rice is pure starch, and so it is served to people who cannot digest any other grains. The derogatory use of the term "rice-eater', is perfectly justified. But this argument will convince only those who use their reason. It is not at all likely to appeal to a person whose stomach will not tolerate anything but rice. I could write a great deal more on this subject, but I have no time for that.

Ramabehn saw me yesterday. You have not won her trust. Try harder. She wishes to learn English. She wishes to do so in spare time after doing her work for the Ashram. Go and meet her. Listen to what she has to say and request Mathew or Mary or Duncan to give her one hour daily. Do all you can to satisfy her desire to learn English. If any of the women who are old inmates of the Ashram wish to learn English, their desire is natural. We feel the necessity of its knowledge every hour, and also observe that as soon as a person learns English he or she goes up in the esteem of others. We cannot check this tide. There is no harm in knowing the language itself. The harm comes from the misuse of the language, from its blind worship. Women are not likely to cultivate such an attitude soon. If you see any flaw in this reasoning, point it out to me.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

567. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Morning, March 2, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

You must have received the letter which I wrote to you yesterday. Make careful preparations for Lakshmi's marriage and see that everything goes well. Jamna and you should give away the bride, and Velanbehn should offer the bridegroom. If possible, I will send Lakshmidas there. As usual, keep a dhoti, shirt, cap, *takli* and a copy each of the *Gita* and the *Bhajanavali* ready for the bridegroom. Tie the marriage knot with the ends. Give a translation of the vows[1] to both the bride and the bridegroom. And they should fast on that day and eat nothing till after the ceremony is over. You, Jamna and Velanbehn also should fast. Both the bride and the bridegroom should perform the ceremonial worship of the cow and the tree and recite Chapter XII of the *Gita*. It is not necessary to invite any friends except Anasuyabehn. We don't want the marriage to be published in newspapers, though we do not wish to keep it a secret either. The bride and the bridegroom may leave for home by the night train and start working immediately. Velanbehn will arrange for the sari on behalf of Maruti. If you wish to ask any other question, you may do so. Invite all Harijan friends to attend the wedding. If you wish, you may serve them refreshments. In that case, I believe fruit will be the best. But consult your own convenience in all this, and make any changes which you feel necessary. Let the members of the Committee come together and plan the arrangements. Invite the senior women inmates also to the meeting of the Committee. Let the day of marriage be for us a sacred day of tapascharya and self-purification and one to be celebrated in keeping with our ideal of simplicity and self-control. Let all present shower their blessings on the bride and the bridegroom. Maruti's letters simply fill me with admiration for him. If he remains true to the aspirations which he expresses in them, we shall believe that he must have become a member of Lakshmidas's family blessed with the holy merit of his good deeds in previous lives. Lakshmidas's love for him, too, must be wonderful beyond words.

[1] The marriage vows, called *saptapadi*, which form the essential part of the Hindu marriage ceremony. For a translation of the vows, *vide* "With Bare Religious Rites", 7-3-1926

And what excellent training he must have given!

Explain to everybody in the Ashram that it is the universal experience that anybody who does not give his best, physically and mentally in serving the sick, can do no other useful work, and that the Ashram exists to enable its inmates to serve others. Nobody in the Ashram, therefore, should be half-hearted in doing service.

BAPU

[PS.]

Doesn't Velanbehn keep well? Read my letter to Dudabhai. I have not pressed him to attend the wedding. I am enclosing letters for Dudabhai, Lakshmi, Velanbehn and Durga.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

568. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

March 2,1933

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I have not been able to overtake your letter of 10th February before now. Please forgive me. I see that it required a prompt reply. I hope, however, that this will be in time for you in helping you to come to a decision if you had not arrived at it when this reaches you.

I have no hesitation in saying that you should accept the invitation[1] of the Y. W. C. A. if they will bear the expense of the journey. Poor workers must not be expected to find the expenses themselves.

I hope the *Harijan* gives you all the information you may need about the untouchability movement.

Love from us all.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

MISS AGATHA HARRISON
2 CRANBOURNE COURT
ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD
S. W. 11

From a photostat: G.N. 1462; also S.N. 20436

[1] For the Quadrennial Conference to be held at Ootacamund from April 29 to May 8

569. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

March 2,1933

MY DEAR MARGARETE,

You are sending me letters regularly. But you are telling me nothing except about myself. You must now begin to tell me something about your children, and the many things that you teach them and how you teach them. You don't think that those things will not interest me. They will, because they might be of use for the Ashram children. You should tell me also as a teacher what you would do to and for the Ashram children if you had them under your charge.

Love from us both.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also S.N. 20429

570. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

March 2,1933

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your letter. I am sending it to Maria. I know she will be delighted with it. Probably you wrote the same time that you wrote to me. Even so, the news of your joining her early will not be stale to her.

I posted a letter[1] last week to Tangai and just gave you a line only. I hope she felt duly proud to receive a letter all to herself, put in an envelope bearing her address, and I hope that she sent me a thousand kisses when she got that letter.

As I am pouring out my heart through *Harijan*, I feel that I have nothing more to say to the members of the growing family.

With all the experience gained in a big hospital, Menon should return as a distinguished specialist in surgery.

Love from us all and kisses to children.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 120. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child,* pp. 99-100

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Tangai Menon", 23-2-1933

571. LETTER TO W. TUDOR OWEN

March 2,1933

DEAR FRIEND,

It was good of you to think of me and send your paper[1]. Whether I can agree with you or not, I know that you have always something useful and original to say.

With the restrictions natural in a prison-house, you will not expect me to discuss the political aspect of your paper. I have therefore only to tell you that I shall read the paper with sympathy and attention and shall approach it without any preconceived ideas. I have no axe to grind. I believe that I have got the mind of a scientist. I endeavour always to look at all the sides of a question and I have sanity and courage to own my mistakes as soon as I detect them.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 20423

572. LETTER TO JON ROMMEL

March 2,1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter[2] and your book called *Regeneration.* I glanced through the pages, but I must confess to you that I found in it nothing to appeal to me.

Yours sincerely,

JON ROMMEL, ESQ.

NIAGARA FALLS

N. Y.

4111 SAUNDERS ROAD

LEWISTON

From a microfilm: S.N. 20425

[1] "India at the Cross Roads"

[2] The addressee had asked Gandhiji not to "start another fast", and stated that his "mode of dress, and method of procedure" did not coincide with his views.

573. LETTER TO NELLIE BALL

March 2, 1933

MY DEAR NELLIE[1],

Next time when you feel like writing you should trace the spelling of your name. As I read your signature I can only make out 'Mell Bull'. I can easily read 'Bull' as 'Ball', but Esther confounds me. She has clearly spelt your name as 'Nellie Ball'. I have therefore adopted her clear spelling in preference to your doubtful 'Mell'. If therefore I have made any mistake you must go for Esther. But I see that you are a little philosopher with a big heart. Therefore you will exclaim, 'What is in a name? It is the spirit that matters'. And whether I trace Mell or Nellie my spirit goes out to you, the little invalid daughter. But I propose a peremptory change in the way you describe yourself. Your body is no doubt shattered, but your spirit seems to have risen triumphant over the body. I do not want to think of you therefore as my 'little invalid daughter', but my 'little daughter strong with the faith in God'. Now that C. F. Andrews is there you will certainly have the joy of receiving visits from him frequently and not only rarely. He is a genius for seeking out persons like you and going to them as often as he can. To visit people in power is a tax upon his mind. To visit people like you and me is a matter of perennial joy to him. He derives his strength from his association with those whom the world calls weak and helpless and who often but wrongly feel so themselves. But I must now stop.

You should give my love to your doctor and ask him to write to me about you.

Yours,

From a photostat: S.N. 20427

574. LETTER TO ANNE MARIE PETERSEN

March 2,1933

MY DEAR MARIA,

I enclose herewith letter from Esther which I have no doubt you will like and prize. We shall all look forward to their coming in autumn and it will be a great relief to me.

Mary Barr wrote to me that she was likely to accompany you

[1] Of Birmingham

during your visit to Kashmir. I hope it is coming oft and that it will do you good and give you a little bit of bracing air and rest to your tired limbs and mind.

I hope you are getting your copy of the *Harijan* regularly.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 20431

575. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

March 2,1933

MY DEAR MURIEL,

I know you will always be wandering. That is part of your work and therefore it does not appear to me quite as horrible as you think it might. I hope your new child will not fare as badly as the preceding one. Of course those who have read your book[1] do not mind having read it, but these are very few. Those who do not want to know anything about your having entertained a funny little man cannot be blamed for not wanting your book. There must be quite a few thousand people who would like to know the story of Kingsley Hall and Children's House dedicated to the service of the neglected poor. Why were you sorry that John Morris was being removed to an old workhouse? Would he not get there the same kind treatment he had at the hospital? Where is the place situated? I suppose you will see him often enough, or, is the workhouse far away from you? When you see him you should take my love to him. I see you are in your 18th year and so is the Ashram at Sabarmati. Let us hope that both the institutions pass muster in God's book. I am glad that Devi[2] has lighter work .

Yours,

From a photostat: S.N. 20432

[1] Presumably *Entertaining Gandhi*, published in 1932

[2] Ada West

576. LETTER TO GERTRUDE S. KELLER-CHING

March 2,1933

DEAR SISTER,

I continue to receive your letters fairly regularly. You must not hesitate to write as often as you like so long as you don't always expect prompt acknowledgement from me.

I hope you got over the effects of the hurt long ere this reaches you.

I am glad you possess all the volumes of the Upanishads. Some of them will no doubt appear dry to you, but I am quite sure that you will not miss the central teaching which permeates all the principal Upanishads. But no teaching, however lofty it may be, enables us to control our nerves and our senses. That control only comes from incessant prayer from the heart and from utterly selfless service.

Yours sincerely,

GERTRUDE S. KELLER-CHING

VILLA LAVOISIER

LA SIGNALS, LAUSANNE

From a photostat: S.N. 20433

577. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR[1]

March 2,1933

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

I thank you for your letter.[2] If you can give me your opinion without much tax on[3] your energy, I would value it. Every help that comes counts in the midst of the difficulties that are being created day after day.

I hope you are fast regaining your lost strength.

I wonder if you have seen the *Madras Law Review's* opinion on

[1] A letter, in terms identical with paragraph 3 onwards, was sent to C. Rajagopalachari on March 3.

[2] The addressee had written: "I am doubtful whether you still desire to have my opinion."

[3] The source has "of".

Rao Bahadur Rajah's Bill.[1] I enclose it for your perusal. Tell me whether you still hold to your opinion. I personally think that Mr. Rajah's Bill deserves support.

You had my telegram[2] in reply to yours. Whether for the moment we succeed or not, we must continue to create public opinion in favour of the Bills and make such effort as is possible to have them passed. That we did not succeed on the 27th does not worry me.

I hope you are following carefully what I am writing for the *Harijan*. It is my weekly letter to you as much as it is to other co-workers. You will read what I have said about temples.

Mathuradas must have gone to Benares to see Malaviyaji.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. R. JAYARAR, BAR-AT-LAW
THE ASHRAM
WINTER ROAD
MALABAR HILL

From a photostat: S.N. 20434

578. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

March 2,1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have received from Mr. M. I. David Rs. 2,500. So far as I know, it is the first answer to the appeal on behalf of his scheme. Mr. David wants to remain anonymous. I am sending the money to you by registered and insured packet. For the present you will please retain the money on account of the David Scheme. It would be better to put it so as to bear interest at once. We won't need to use it all at once and I expect to get his own letter which he has promised.

I think that we ought to be able to announce a few scholarships. You blessed the scheme, the Bombay board blessed the scheme and if it ends with a solitary subscriber, and that also the creator himself, it would be a miniature disaster. Do, therefore, induce Lala Shreeram and others at least to give these paltry sums and let me announce some

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. C. Rajah", 25-2-1933, and also Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah's Bill", 4-3-1933

[2] Presumably identical with "Telegram to C. Rajagopalachari'', 28-2-1933

names.

I hope Viyogi Hari and Amritlal Thakkar have shown you what I had to say about the Hindi *Harijan*. It needs very considerable improvement. You were to have given some personal attention to it. Do please give it.

I hope you are keeping good health. Is the nose causing trouble? Whether it is or not, it should receive early attention.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

[PS.]

The sooner now the Selection Board or Committee that I have suggested is formed the better it will be.

From a microfilm: S.N. 20435. Also C.W. 7929. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

579. LETTER TO P. J. ANDREASEN

March 2,1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and a copy of *The Secret of the Universe.*

Though you have asked me to acknowledge your letter only after I have read the book, I do not want you to be in suspense, because I am so preoccupied with the work on hand that I have no notion when I shall be able to reach the book.

Yours sincerely,

P. J. ANDREASEN, ESQ.

30 EVANS WAY, BOSTON, MASS.

From a photostat: S.N. 20437

580. A LETTER

March 2,1933

You seem to have cultivated a spirit of service beyond my expectation. I, therefore, have no fear now. May you always remain what you are. It is no ordinary responsibility which you are undertaking. In your hands lies Dada's honour and, if I may say so, of Hinduism, too, in large measure. If you shine in the life which you

have adopted, even your detractors will be converted and become your admirers.

Don't feel unhappy at my absence. Though my body will be here, my soul will be with you and watch you both and protect you.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 168

581. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

March 2,1933

Gandhiji stated in reply to a question that, if the necessary permission was given, he would, after duly examining the terms of the permission, quite willingly make a declaration of his policy on political questions. But just now he was not thinking about it at all. Politics was excluded from his thoughts. He was deliberately practising and doing this for two reasons, firstly, that he might not be burdened with its weight when he had another subject in hand to which he had been permitted to devote attention, and secondly nothing might escape his lips, even inadvertently, which would be tantamount to a breach of faith with the Government. He was now so constituted that he could not discuss politics. He added:

It is a wonderful gift God has given me.

Did it mean he was not interesting himself in contemporary political events? Gandhiji replied:

Oh yes, but only as a foreigner would. I note them in passing, but I bestow little thought on them. Of course, if the ban is lifted, and I am permitted to speak, I can, without any difficulty, speak on questions of policy and fundamental principles.

He added that those agents in his brain who were now on leave would then begin to work.

Asked if in his own opinion, the Harijan movement had not diverted attention from civil disobedience, Gandhiji replied:

Surely, it is a matter which everyone can decide for himself, because, all the materials are before him. One might as well ask me what is the height of the Himalayas when both he and I are seeing it. one will say it is 23,000 feet, another 25,000.

Asked as to what was his estimate of the height, Gandhiji replied at once.

The Hindu, 3-3-1933

582. LETTER TO K. RAMACHANDRA[1]

March 3,1933

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRA,

I thank you for your wire. But I did not reply as I would not trouble you to come just now. I would like you however to write out whatever you know about N. It should not be difficult for you to do so although you consider the case to be intricate. Then, if necessary, I might ask you to come.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20440

583. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

March 3,1933

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

I thank you for your two letters with your opinion[2]. It will assist me greatly. I would like you to bear the Bills in mind and do whatever is possible.

I hope you have recovered all your lost strength.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 20445

584. LETTER TO DIWAKAR SINGH

March 3,1933

MY DEAR DIWAKAR SINGH,

I am glad you wrote to me. I had already seen a notice in the papers about your work. If you will stick to it, I am sure that the work will prosper. The quieter it is, the better it will be. Do please continue to report progress. N. is here just now and I have shown your letter to her. She is happy over the beginning made by you and she agrees

[1] Of the Deena Seva Sangh, Bangalore
[2] Published in *Harijan,* 11-3-1933

with me about the necessity of avoiding showy demonstration and sheadds that this she can say from bitter experience.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

KUNWAR DIWAKAR SINGH
3 CANNING ROAD
ALLAHABAD

From the original: C.W. 9655. Courtesy: Municipal Museum, Allahabad. Also S.N. 20447

585. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

March 3,1933

MY DEAR ANAND,

I have your letter. They say dreams go by contraries. Naturally, therefore, there was nobody and no prisoner and no trial.

The more we merely think of the duty in front of us the greater is the satisfaction from it. Absorption in the immediate duty is like *brahmacharya*, peace-giving and invigorating.

Love.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

586. LETTER TO PRABHULAL

March 3,1933

BHAI PRABHULAL,

I got your letter. If you go on working with patience and firmness, your success is assured.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4133

587. LETTER TO LILAVATI

March 3,1933

CHI. LILAVATI

I got your letter. Come on Monday at 2 p.m. I do not write more as we are to meet. Narandas's letter is enclosed. Write down all your questions and bring them with you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9324

588. LETTER TO AMAR SINGH

March 3, 1933

BHAI AMAR SINGH,

I got your letter. It is only through silent service that one can reach God and realize the self for, such service reveals that all are equal. I am glad to know that your are well now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: S.N. 33627

589. 'NO INFRINGEMENT'

The following important opinion[1], on the question of temple-entry, of Sjt. T. R. Venkatarama Sastri, ex-Law Member of the Madras Government, is taken from the daily Press.

SJT. KELKAR'S COMPROMISE

Sjt. N. C. Kelkar was good enough to pay me a visit at my request to discuss the question of temple-entry. I was anxious to know what he thought of the proposed legislation. He said that

[1] Not reproduced here. It said that temple-entry legislation did not infringe the property rights of anyone.

he had for years held that there was no way out of legislation in matters, even affecting religion, where a law alone could set them right, as in the case of temple-entry. Judge-made law had ordained that trustees of public Hindu temples were bound to pre vent Harijans from entering them. No amount of public opinion could undo that law. It could demand the passage of a law but could not make the law permitting temple-entry.

Whilst, therefore, Sjt. Kelkar agreed that measures like Sjt. Ranga Iyer's were necessary, he said that actual temple-entry would only be effected by amicable settlement. He had no doubt that Harijans should enter temples on precisely the same terms as caste Hindus. But public opinion might not be ripe for the former's admission to the sanctuaries. If so, the caste Hindus should forgo the rights which Harijans could not have. He, therefore, suggested that in all the public temples there should be a common barrier set up, beyond which nobody but the priest actually in charge of the ceremonial could go. This would mean that, in some temples where now caste Hindus are able to enter the sanctuary and touch the idol, they would have to deny themselves that right, if they were not prepared to let Harijans enjoy it equally with them. I said I should have no objection whatsoever to such a compromise, provided, of course, that it was honestly carried out in practice. Nothing would please me better than to see this unseemly domestic wrangle close at the earliest moment.

HARIJAN, 4-3-1933

590. A WAIL FROM KUMAON

A Harijan correspondent from Haldvani writes complaining that nothing is being done by caste Hindus on their behalf in his district. This complaint is a sign that the message of the September resolutions has reached the Harijan masses and that, therefore, they are expecting great things. Provincial Boards of the Servants of Untouchables Society will have to organize their work so as to penetrate the remotest village and let the Harijans know that every attempt is being made to fight the monster of untouchability.

Harijan, 4-3-1933

591. JOINT OR SEPARATE?

Correspondents suggest that there should be separate temples, schools, wells, etc., for Harijans for the time being. A general adoption of the suggestion may easily be the way to perpetuate untouchability, and we might as well have had separate electorates

and elections for them, if we are to have everything else separate for them. I would certainly not have staked my life just to avoid separate electorates. I staked it, and it is still at stake, for the purpose of eradicating the present unnatural untouchability from the religion itself. I rose against separate electorates, because it would have spelt an end to the effort for the destruction of the canker. They would have meant an end to effective penance by the penitent caste Hindu. With the Yeravda Pact, such penance is a possibility, whether the penitents are in the majority or the minority. That there is a mighty upheaval in Hinduism and that we have two well-defined divisions working actively for their respective objectives is the surest justification for the Yeravda Pact. As a result of it, the religious untouchability goes or the reformer. If he is to be true to his pledge, the reformer has no other choice.

Therefore, separate temples and separate other services must be regarded with suspicion. Let us consider the limitations of the suggestion.

Till the legal obstacle in the way of opening public temples to untouchables is removed, the opening of existing temples on a large scale comes to a standstill. But the march of reform cannot be stayed. There are three ways of doing the thing.

(a) Where public opinion and trustees are quite demonstrably in favour of opening temples, trustees may open the temples under their charge and may take the risk of an injunction being issued against them.

(b) Private temples should be opened where the owners are willing to open them.

(c) Wealthy and spiritually minded people may open new temples under pure methods of consecration. (I add the adjective advisedly because I believe that all is not well with the existing temples.) These temples will be purposely designed for the Harijans as well-as for the other Hindus. These must, therefore, be situated in such

localities as are easily accessible to Harijans.

Common schools and wells should be opened where the existing ones are not available for Harijans either owing to the violent and successful opposition of the neighbours or some other unavoidable cause. Harijans cannot be left uncared for in matters of necessary services till public opinion has ripened. If there is a clearly awakened body of Hindus who have the same feeling towards Harijans as if they were their own kith and kin, they will not wait for public opinion to consolidate itself before taking action. They will do their best to supply pure water and good education to their own newly found kith and kin.

There is one special consideration in favour of opening what may be called preparatory schools for Harijan children. I cannot do better than quote the reason in the words of a co-worker who has gone to live in their midst and who writes:[1]

> My school is conducted in a Harijan verandah. Some of my scholars are . . . full of dirt. . . . My lesson, therefore, begins with telling them how to keep clean, and behave. . . . They are bad liars. Some of them are industrious and wise. I play with them and perhaps learn more than I teach. . . . I begin my class in the early morning. I sleep in a Harijan dharmasala about a furlong from the school. . . . I naturally sometimes enter their homes when they do not mind. Many of them are dark holes with inmates packed like matches. . . . But I am a novice. I know my limitations. . . . I long to fulfil God's conditions for becoming a true Vaishnav.

This is but a sample of the condition of raw Harijan children. We want every one of these children to learn to live in a clean and decent manner. We want them all to attend the common public schools. Therefore, preparatory schools for them are an absolute essential if we mean honest business.

Harijan, 4-3-1933

592. CONFUSING THE ISSUE

The Secretary of the Jat-Pat Torak Mandal, i. e., Society for the Abolition of Caste, has published in the daily Press his letter to me of the 18th ultimo.

He does me the honour of calling me a 'deep thinker' and in the same breath withdraws it by saying:

> You have failed to see that the caste system is the origin of

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here

untouchability and that one cannot do without the other.

I venture to suggest to the Secretary that, if he is really honest in his paying me the compliment, he must suspend his judgement about the caste system and follow out the reasoning of the 'deep thinker' of his imagination; whereas if he has called me a 'deep thinker' in order to increase the height from which I have fallen, I fear that no reasoning of mine will affect him.

However, according to my wont, I propose to give the Secretary credit for honesty and shall, therefore, strive with him. I am one of those who think that the caste system, in so far as it is the English equivalent for varnashrama, is nothing but a division of labour or duty. Anyone who will take the trouble of looking at any religious book must find this out for himself. In that sense the divisions or classes are four and no more, and these classes are known all the world over. One is the repository of knowledge, the other is that of power, the third is that of wealth and the fourth is that of service. All these four labours are regarded as duties to be discharged by every one of them for the protection and advancement of dharma, and everyone who performs his duty to the best of his knowledge and ability gains equal merit with the rest, if the latter, too, do likewise. The merit, therefore, consists not in being one or the other, but in the performance of the duty assigned to it. Here, there is no untouchability. There is no superiority. And this is the essence of varnadharma. It may be non-existent today and it is so. That, however, in no way diminishes the force of my argument that there is no superiority and inferiority in the original conception of varnadharma and that untouchability can never be a necessary outcome of this pure division of duties. If this varnashrama cannot be revived in its original simplicity and purity, persons like me would consider it to be a calamity. Others may welcome it, but let varnadharma and untouchability stand or fall on their own merits or demerits. Confusing the two can only add to the difficulty of removal of untouchability, which all reformers and even many sanatanists desire. The caste-abolitionists must, therefore, hold their souls in patience and join the battle against the common and admitted evil of untouchability.

Varnashrama, as I interpret it, satisfies the religious, social and economic needs of a community. It satisfies the religious needs, because a whole community, accepting the law, is free to devote ample

time to spiritual perfection. Observance of the law obviates social evils and entirely prevents the killing economic competition. And if it is regarded as a law laying down, not the rights or the privileges of the community governed by it, but their duties, it ensures the fairest possible distribution of wealth though it may not be an ideal, i.e., strictly equal, distribution. Therefore, when people in disregard of the law mistake duties for privileges and try to pick and choose occupations for self-advancement, it leads to confusion of varna and ultimate disruption of society. In this law, there is no question of compelling any person to follow the parental occupation against his or her aptitude; that is to say, there can be no compulsion from without as there was none for, perhaps, several thousand years, during which the law of varnashrama worked without interruption. By training, the people had recognized the duty and the justice of the law, and they voluntarily lived under it. Today, nations are living in ignorance and breach of that law and they are suffering for it. The so-called civilized nations have by no means reached a state which they can at all regard with equanimity and satisfaction.

It is easy enough to see that this conception of varnashrama has nothing to do with restrictions as to inter-dining and intermarriage. The Vedas and the *Mahabharata* are filled with illustrations both of inter-dining and intermarriage. But these are matters of choice, not a matter of religious regulation. No one can be compelled or required to dine with any other or contract marital relations. No doubt social habits will grow up and regulate these things more or less rigidly. But it would be wrong to dignify them by the name of religious observances. Therefore, inter-dining and intermarriage can form no part of the campaign against untouchability. In so far as they are a matter for reform, they must be treated, in my opinion, as an absolutely separate subject, unconnected either with untouchability or even with varnashrama reform. So far as the multiplicity of castes apart from varnadharma are concerned, they are essentially trade guilds or societies, with intermarriage and inter-dining restrictions of a more or less rigid character superimposed upon them. Castes are as numerous as the leaves of the famous banana tree whose every branch becomes a trunk for shooting out more branches. They are undergoing a perpetual transformation. Many have disappeared and new ones are appearing. Surely they have nothing to do with varnashrama; nor have they anything to do with religion. That today they are regarded by sanatanists as an integral part of Hinduism arises,

in my opinion, from an utter ignorance of the working of these trade guilds. There are undoubtedly many undesirable practices that have crept into these corporations, but that is only because Hinduism as a religion has ceased to be a living, vitalizing force. We are today living upon capital which is itself being fast exhausted.

Harijan, 4-3-1933

593. THE DAVID SCHEME

It is a matter of great pleasure for me to be able to announce, so far as I am aware, the very first subscription of Rs. 2,500 to the David Scheme for the higher education of Harijans.

As the reader may remember, this amount covers five years' expenses for one Harijan student. I am sorry I cannot publish the name of the donor[1], as he desires to remain anonymous. I hope that this announcement will result in inducing others to send in their donations.

Harijan, 4-3- l 933

594. RAO BAHADUR M. C. RAJAH'S BILL

Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah, M. L. A., has sent me a copy of his Bill, 'Further to amend the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898'.[2]

This measure is not likely to give much relief to the Harijans from the disabilities they are suffering from. But I should welcome its passage as a nail driven in the coffin of a custom which I regard as wholly evil.

Harijan, 4-3-1933

[1] M. I. David; *vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 2-3-1933

[2] The Bill, not reproduced here, provided that no order under section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code might be made preventing the exercise of lawful rights by "untouchables" on the ground that persons belonging to the "higher castes" might create disturbances.

595. HINDI "HARIJAN"

The Hindi edition of *Harijan* is at last out. The first issue was published on the 23rd ultimo.[1] It is the same size as the English edition and has no paid advertisements. The annual subscription is Rs. 3-8-0, a single copy is one anna. It contains among other things articles by Swami Satyadeva and Sheth Ghanshyamdas Birla and me, a brief poem by the well-known Hindi poet and author, Shri Maithilisharam Gupta. There is naturally something from the pen of the Editor, who is Sjt. Viyogi Hari, well known to the Hindi literary world. For years, service of the Harijans has been a passion with Sjt. Viyogi Hari. He was for some time himself editing and publishing a journal specially devoted to the removal of untouchability. There are, too, the usual news columns. The news service leaves much to be desired. But no doubt, in this and every other respect, every succeeding number will be better than its predecessor till the desired standard is reached. The habitation of the paper is Birla Mills, Delhi, the address of the Servants of Untouchables Society, under whose auspices the paper is being published. I may inform the reader that the Bengali edition was expected to make its appearance on the 28th ultimo with Sjt. Satis Das Gupta of the Khadi Pratishthan as Editor. Satisbabu says in his letter to me that, in order to overtake the last issues of the English edition of the Harijan, his first two numbers would be double numbers. Arrangements are in progress for bringing out the Gujarati *Harijan*.

Harijan, 4-3-1933

596. A MAHARASHTRA SAINT'S TESTIMONY

Sjt. R. D. Paradkar,. Editor and Publisher, *Moropant's Works*, writes:[2]

> You have pointed out[3] that the use of the word 'Harijan' to denote the untouchable class in the present movement inaugurated in their behalf has by no means been novel and that the word had thus been used previously by a Gujarati poet. I have taken up the pen just to let you know, as the news is

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Viyogi Hari", 25-2-1933

[2] Only an extract is reproduced here.

[3] *Vide* "Why 'Harijan,", 23-2-1933

likely to give you particular pleasure, that the very word has been used in the same sense by Moropant, the celebrated Maharashtrian poet. The stanza[1] in question is as follows. ...

Similar testimony is to be found in the writings not only of the other saints of Maharashtra but also the saints of the whole of India. If industrious scholars will collect such sayings of the saints from different parts of the country, I shall gladly hand them to the Editor for publication in the *Harijan*, and they will be a help and an inspiration to the workers in the cause of the abolition of untouchability.

Harijan, 4-3-1933

597. AS THEY SEE US

Hardly has the great central organization of the Servants of Untouchables Society made the commencement, when complaints against it and the provincial organizations have cropped up. They come chiefly and naturally from Harijans. One of these correspondents sent to me some time ago an able letter, undertaking to give details if I desired. I took him at his word and asked him to give me details; and the letter he has sent me in reply is abler than the first. It will compete with any well-written report of an inspector. It contains a summary of reports of every organization claiming to work in the writer's Province for the uplift of Harijans, and after giving me sufficient details, his one conclusion about all the organizations practically without exception is:

> They are run principally by caste men who have their own axes to grind or who are in need of some occupation that would maintain them decently. The utmost that some of these have done is to fling a few scholarships at Harijan boys. Some others have been great at delivering lectures. All have come to us as patrons. Hardly has anyone come as a friend and equal, let alone as a servant. Your provincial organization is no exception. It is difficult for a Harijan to approach its chief man without fear and trembling. He is always in danger of being met with a frown.

My correspondent is also not without suggestions, which may be

[1] Which is translated as follows: "In your superior wisdom you give Harijans names like Mahar, Yawan, Kunbi. It is the fruit of the tree that reveals the property concealed in the seed (i.e., actions reveal the man)."

summarized thus:

> If you are to take advantage of the great awakening that has taken place, you must concentrate upon primary education on a mass scale. You will not drive out the ignorance of ages without spreading that education. We shall certainly help, but seeing that caste Hindus want to remove untouchability and make us one with them, there is no better way of employing their money and their labour than in imparting this education.

It is necessary to know the Harijan mind in any programme of work that may be taken up. Caste Hindus, for whom removal of untouchability is a matter of penance and purification, have undoubtedly to do much more than open schools everywhere. I have discussed elsewhere[1] where such schools may be opened. The conduct of caste Hindus would be generally tested by its reaction upon the mass mind of the Harijans. If we have really changed towards them, they will feel the change in a thousand ways. Our activity, I mean that of caste Hindus, will affect every department of their lives. Even in the remotest village we are interdependent, so much so that this interdependence cannot be dissolved all at once, even if we desired it, without resulting in the greatest harm to the nation in general; and this interdependence, which is today that of slave and master, will never be corrected unless there is absolute religious equality. It is a tremendous task, but as we progress towards the goal, the truth must dawn upon every caste Hindu that there is no half-way house between abject slavery and perfect religious equality. Hence my humble insistence upon temple-entry without losing sight of the other things we must do.

My correspondent is bitter in discussing what he considers to be the extravagant management of the different organizations that have come under his lash. As an expert organizer that I may claim to be, I have been generally guided by the rule that the cost of administration, that is, overhead charges, should never exceed 10% of the receipts—5% being the ideal—the balance going to the cause which brought the organization into being. I suggest this test to the Central Board and the Provincial Boards and all other independent Harijan organizations run by caste Hindus. Let it not be said of us that we spend more on running the organizations than upon Harijans themselves. Let us see

[1] *Vile* "Joint or separate?", 4-3-1933

to it that, out of every Rs. 100 received as donation for the Harijan cause Rs. 90 go straight into the pockets of Harijans. Therefore, our officials should be largely volunteers, never highly paid wherever paid service is required. Wherever it is possible, we should get Harijans. We should select candidates and train them. The correspondent says that peons in the organizations inspected by him are not drawn from the Harijan ranks.

Let every organization for the service of Harijans introspect itself in the light of the criticism I have condensed and the suggestions I have made. I know that the correspondent has painted the picture as black as he could. He has refused to see the bright side. I know something of Harijan service done by caste men in the different Provinces. I know that there is a bright side to the work of the organizations referred to by my correspondent, but it was unnecessary for me to give the bright side. It will take care of itself, if the organizations will take care of the dark side of the picture. Most organizations have a capacity for self-deception. There is a tendency towards self-glorification. The *Harijan* exists for the sake of giving due prominence, therefore, to every bit of criticism that can be levelled against us by Harijan critics.

Harijan, 4-3-1933

598. IS IT LOSS OF FAITH?

A co-worker writes:

> Some of us feel that your 'fasting unto death' may mean a conscious or unconscious loss of faith in the efficacy of non-violence. Can you enlighten us, who have derived our faith in non-violence from you?

It is a flattering thought that some people have derived their faith in non-violence from me. But I would warn them that I may prove a broken reed at a critical juncture, if they have not assimilated the spirit of non-violence and if it has not become an integral part of their life. Faith in a man is a perishable quantity, for it vanishes like smoke when their idol does not come up to their expectations; but what gives us hope and courage in the nick of time is an undying faith in a cause or a principle, irrespective of persons from whom it is derived.

Having uttered this warning, let me say that my 'fast unto death, was not due to loss of faith in non-violence, but it was, as I have

already said on more than one occasion, the last seal upon that faith. Sacrifice of self even unto death is the final weapon in the hands of a non-violent person. It is not given to man to do more. I, therefore, suggest to this co-worker and all the others that in this religious battle against untouchability they must be prepared joyously even to 'fast unto death, if such an urgent call comes to them. If they feel that they are party to the September pledge[1] given unsolicited to the Harijans and if they cannot make good the pledge in spite of ordinary effort, how else, being non-violent, will they propose to deliver the goods except by laying down their lives?

The Shastras tell us that, when people in distress prayed to God for relief and He seemed to have hardened His heart, they declared a 'fast unto death' till God had listened to their prayer. Religious history tells us of those who survived their fast, because God listened to them but it tells us nothing of those who silently and heroically perished in the attempt to win the answer from a deaf God. I am certain that many have died in that heroic manner, but without their faith in God and non-violence being in the slightest degree diminished. God does not always answer prayers in the manner we want Him to. For Him life and death are one, and who is able to deny that all that is pure and good in the world persists because of the silent death of thousands of unknown heroes and heroines!

Harijan, 4-3-1933

599. THE BOGEY OF BOYCOTT

This is the substance of what a correspondent[2] writes in the course of a long letter:

> Some of us caste men tried and succeeded in having certain wells in some of the Bihar villages opened to the use of Harijans. But the Brahmin *pujaris* nearby retorted by stopping the service in the village temple, and the local Brahmins threatened to stop all religious services at *shraddha*[3], marriage and the like. This frightened the simple villagers. I feel tempted to offer satyagraha, but I desist lest I might do so in anger. What would you advise in such cases?

[1] *Vide* "Statement on Viceroy's Decision", 24-1-1933

[2] Janakdhari Prasad; *vide* "Letter to Janakdhari Prasad", 4-3-1933

[3] The Hindu ceremony of oblation for the spirit of deceased ancestors

Not long ago there was a similar case near Trichinopoly. Dr. Rajan acted with decision. Himself a Brahmin by caste and Shudra by right of service, he defied the orthodox Brahmins who had refused even to perform the funeral rights in the case of death in a reformer's family.

My advice, therefore, is that there is no occasion in such cases for satyagraha. Those who regard untouchability as a sin must be prepared to suffer all the hardships of boycott and the like as a part of the process of purification and penance. In all humility they must learn to dispense with the outward form. Anything done in the name of God and for His sake needs no support from an officiating priest, whether it is a death or a marriage or a *shraddha*. Anybody can unite a couple in marriage by reciting the sacred *mantras*, whether it is Ramanama of any of the known formulae according to the tradition in which one has been brought up. God is known not by His thousand names only but by millions of names. Any name which comes from the heart and by which we can recognize Him is as good as any other or, rather, the best of all for us. But these things can only be done by those who have the courage of their conviction, faith in themselves, faith in their cause and faith in a living God. This is not a movement in which faint-heartedness can be of any use. Only workers with stout hearts and irreproachable character will be able to infect the villagers with their own strong convictions and enable them to do the right thing in the face of boycott or worse persecution.

Harijan, 4-3-1933

600. LETTER TO MIRABEN

March 4, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

This is Saturday before prayer time 3.30 a.m. No letter from you till Friday evening. I put off even yesterday in the hope of getting your letter in the afternoon and still posting you something yesterday but that was not to be. So each week your letter is getting later in coming. But though I look forward to it I do not worry.

The letter-writing is not a right of prisoners. Therefore there is no deprivation. What in ordinary life religion calls duty becomes or seems to be compulsion in the prison life. But that is not the case with us. We are in a way voluntary prisoners. Therefore we may not feel

the compulsion as such when a certain permission is withdrawn or is regulated in the manner suited to the authorities. I can do without your letters if need be and you must train yourself to do likewise and *feel happy*[1]. In a manner everybody trains himself to do without things when he cannot get them. A follower of the *Gita* dharma trains himself to do without things *with happiness*[2] called equanimity in *Gita* language, for happiness of the *Gita* is not the opposite of unhappiness. It is superior to that state. The devotee of the *Gita* is neither happy nor unhappy. And when that state is reached, there is no pain, no pleasure, no victory, no defeat, no deprivation, no possession. Prison life is a life of privilege if we learn to practise the *Gita* teaching. It is easier in the prison than outside. For outside we have the opportunity of picking and choosing. Hence we are not always able to test ourselves. In the prison, there are various jarring occasions. Are we able to bear them with equanimity? If we are, it is well with us.

I have kept your letter of 19th February which I got after I had written my weekly letter. You had Mridula in your party. I hope she is quite well. She was not quite strong and healthy. Ba should look after her jaws. Does she wear her teeth? Does she take enough exercise? Does she do any reading herself? Does she get weekly letters or fortnightly? I know last time she did not get several of my letters. I do not know what happened to them. This time I am anxious that she should get my letters. So far as I am aware prison authorities had not withheld her letters.

I do propose to write to Dr. Saunders[3] about your history. But whatever the history, there is only one treatment which I have mentioned to you. There need be therefore no waiting for his report. It would be interesting to know what he has to say. Sunlight, simple food in which vitamins have not been destroyed and exercise in the open air will dissolve all glands and other affections.

Verrier has cried off the proposed marriage with Mary Gillett. But his communications are not happy. He is showing a very vulnerable spot in his character. But it is well to know our friends as

[1] These words are underlined in the source.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Arthur Saunders, addressee's cousin, who had attended on her from her childhood in England. *Vide* also "Letter to Dr. Arthur Saunders", 5-3-1933.

they are and still to love them.

Here they come for the prayer. 4.10 a.m. I stop.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6265. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9731

601. LETTER TO JANAKDHARI PRASAD

March 4, 1933

DEAR JANAKDHARI BABOO,

You were quite right in sending me your long letter. You will see that one portion of your letter I have dealt with in the columns of the *Harijan*.[1] I have purposely refrained from using your name. You will have to lead the way by defying the priesthood yourself, and you will find, as I have found elsewhere, that the boycotting priests will immediately quiet down and want to perform the ceremonies, for they would not want to lose the income that they get from the performance of these ceremonies. They proclaim the boycott today, because they think that thereby they will be able to get more money from frightened people, and you will find too that you will presently get reformers who will gladly officiate at these functions. That was what Dr. Rajan was able to do.

Do please continue to write to me whenever you feel you have something to say to me.

As for your personal struggle, no *prayashchitta is* necessary except that you should resolutely live apart from your wife, and you will soon find you will be quite all right. You must develop the will to enforce this resolution.

The other thing you ask is much more difficult. You attain to *'param'* i.e., truth, by constantly practising it. The saying that a man becomes what he thinks is a scientific truth. Here thinking does not mean the mental vapours. It means perfect accord between thought, speech and deed, and when there is that completely, you are within sight of Truth. I wonder if it is clear to you.

[1] *Vide* "The Bogey of Boycott", 4-3-1933

I am glad you like Miss Lester's book. She is indeed a good woman. Her address is: Muriel Lester, Kingsley Hall, Bow, London, E

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. JANAKDHARI PRASAD
ISLAMPUR
P. O. MUZAFFARPUR (BIHAR)

From a photostat: G.N. 53

602. LETTER TO RAMA RAJU

March 4, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. Of course I would gladly discuss the problem of untouchability with Pandit Krishnamacharya if he could possibly visit Yeravda.

The difference between Malaviyaji and myself is as you properly say unfortunate, but since the difference was there it is as well that it has come out. It promotes healthy public opinion.

Yours sincerely,

RAMA RAJU
MASULIPATAM

From a microfilm: S.N. 20453

603. LETTER TO BOYD TUCKER

March 4, 1933

MY DEAR BOYD[1],

I have your long and good letter but none too long to mar my pleasure. You were quite right in writing the letter. The best appreciation I could show was to publish the relevant parts of it and to offer my own criticism. I had prepared the article[2] for this week's issue of the *Harijan*, but it had to stand aside for matters more urgent. I hope however it will go in next week. I shall then send you a proof copy and as I have said there all I had to in connection with your

[1] An American correspondent who was at Santiniketan at that time
[2] *Vide* "Are Temples Necessary"

letter I will not repeat the argument just now. The reference to Gurudev I have not given in the *Harijan*. I know he has been specially tender towards me of late. Perhaps Truth suffers through his reticence if he has absolutely strong and confirmed views on the question as your letter would suggest he has. I should hold it to be a great tragedy if through the tenderness of friends, untruth had crept into my life or had passed current among the people. If what I hold is truth, it must stand the light of fiercest criticism even of friends who have hitherto worked with me. I have no end to serve but that of Truth. If my defeat means victory of Truth, I would count that defeat itself as victory. I do not regard my judgements as infallible and even though I may be right in 99 cases out of 100, I do not want to trade upon it and assume or expect other people to assume that the 100th judgement is also right. I have for that reason called Gurudev the great sentinel, and I have always appreciated his warnings even when I have not been able to depart from my course by reason of his warnings. They have put me on my mettle and made the . people think and choose. It is not good for individuals or nations to be under the hypnotic influence of any single person. It is a golden cover that hides the face of Truth. You may, if you like, read this to Gurudev, and if he is clear in his mind, after reading the article that you will see in a few days, that he has no doubt in his mind that I am in error, let him issue his warning by way either of a public statement or a letter addressed to me for publication. But if he has any doubt I want the benefit of that doubt because I do not want the people to be confused. As it is, on this temple-entry question I do not hold the field undisputed. They have all kinds of arguments put before them for examination. I do not want Gurudev's to be one of this crowd of arguments against the simple issue. His must be an overpowering deliverance standing by itself in its strength and originality.

I am personally not quite sure that Gurudev agrees with you in your attitude, for Santiniketan has its own temple or church or mandir, whatever you like to call it. Where two or three people gather together in a particular place in the name of God to offer worship, it becomes a temple. In Santiniketan we have a humble but beautiful building where prayers are offered, incenses burnt and sermons given. In Sabarmati we have no building, no walls, but the cardinal points are the walls, the sky is the roof and mother earth is the floor; nevertheless, the spot that has been selected for the morning and the evening prayers has all the essentials of a temple. But in accordance

with your letter even that bare ground is a prostitution of religion. Surely, Gurudev will not agree with you in this attitude if I have understood it correctly.

With love from us,

Yours *sincerely,*

From a photostat: S.N. 20454

604. LETTER TO N. V. THADANI

March 4, 1933

MY DEAR THADANI,

Though I cannot immediately promote you to the rank of a privileged jester, your letter just enables you to be admitted as a candidate for that coveted service. You have therefore every reason to persevere. You have no reason to fear publicity. When you have actually been admitted to that high order, whether you fear or covet publicity, it will be there.

You had only one English educated Indian seriously to tell you that untouchability has been from the beginning of time. I discover these celebrities practically every day, and, if I was not a child of the Mother Gita all the fears that Sastri entertained would have been long ago realized in spite of the presence of a privileged jester. But thank God, the *Gita* is a never failing mother, and what is more, she is immortal.

Yours sincerely,

PRINCIPAL THADANI
RAMJAS COLLEGE
DELHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 20455

605. LETTER TO MELISCENT SHEPHARD

March 4, 1933

MY DEAR SISTER,

I am glad you are back to your work. I did not know that you had come.

Yes, Benarsidas is one of the good men we have. I know him very well indeed.

Your appeal I appreciate though it is superfluous. For I began

this work after my own fashion when I was 15 years old and, finding myself in the house of a prostitute[1] I discovered suddenly that God had deprived me at that time, to my shame as I then thought and later as I discovered to my great pleasure and the glory of God, of the animal instinct. I knew then how man was misbehaving towards woman, and since then I have never allowed a single opportunity to pass by without making an effort to eradicate the evil. I have written strongly against it, spoken against it still more strongly. My private correspondence is filled with the same thing. At the present moment my activities in that direction must be necessarily circumscribed. But within that limit you may depend upon my doing all I can to deal with the evil. In the *Harijan* I won't be able to handle the problem directly. The reason for it is obvious.

You have no need to apologize for being a foreigner doing this service. When people realize that you have no other motive, but the simple motive of serving these fallen sisters of India and through their service also serving the fallen men of India, they will forget that you are a foreigner. Those who have other ends to serve under the guise of humanitarian service will always be treated as foreigners, whether they wear the white skin or the brown skin.

Yours sincerely,

MELISCENT SHEPHARD
6 RAJPUR ROAD, DELHI
From a photostat: S.N. 20456

606. LETTER TO P. N. SANKARANARAYANA AIYAR

March 4, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your postcard. I had your letter also with copy of your report and pictures. These are lying in my file awaiting disposal. When I reach them and if I have anything to say I will certainly write to you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. N. SANKARANARAYANA AIYAR
NO. 1, 3RD STREET
GOPALAPURAM
CATHEDRAL P. O., MADRAS
From a microfilm: S.N. 20457

[1] *Vide* "An Autobiography"

607. LETTER TO L. M. SATOOR

March 4, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and figures of census for which I thank you. In the census you are taking in Poona you should have a column for giving the sub-caste to which Harijan may belong, and for children you should have a column showing who attends school and what occupation, if any, the child is following, what he or she is earning. There should be a description too of their tenements, the condition of water-supply, lighting and streets or roads if they are living in separate quarters.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. L. M. SATOOR
99 MAIN STREET, CAMP, POONA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20458

608. LETTER TO ANNAPURNANAND[1]

March 4, 1933

Tell Shivaprasad to give up reading the newspapers. He can read the *Gita or Yogavasishtha* or the *Ramayana*—Balkanda or Uttarkanda—or the dialogue of Socrates on death[2]. He should leave worldly affairs solely to God.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 172

609. WHAT SHOULD HARIJANS DO?

Q. (1) What should be done to unite the several sub-castes among Harijans into one?

(2) In large cities where there is sewerage the Harijan brothers are being deprived of their livelihood. What should they do under these circumstances?

(3) In certain towns at the time of marriages and the like Harijans are not

[1] The addressee was secretary to Shivaprasad Gupta who was seriously ill
[2] Plato's *Phaedo*

allowed to ride a horse. You have written about the duty of caste Hindus. But please write and say what the Harijans should do under such circumstances.

A. The above three questions have been sent by a Harijan brother. All the three are difficult questions. As long as there are several sub-castes among caste Hindus it is very difficult to abolish the different sub-castes among Harijans. But this much is true that if there is a great awakening among Harijans then they can march ahead by leaps and bounds, at once. I should like to see a time when Harijans will be actually far ahead of the caste Hindus. But the question here is about the present condition.

In the present circumstances, it can only be said that castes considered higher among the Harijans should attempt to mix with castes deemed lower. For example, the Mahar[1] caste should mix with the Mang[2] caste; they should begin to eat together and intermarry. The Mahars who mix in this way with the Mangs should be fearless and face whatever difficulties they might encounter.

The second question is common to all. In this age of transition many occupations will vanish and new ones will crop up. It has always been so. The question of sewerage can never arise in villages, Only towns can have sewerage. Scavengers are found in towns. I imagine that where there is sewerage, some scavengers must lose their jobs. It is the duty of the municipality to provide work for such unemployed scavengers. My advice is that weaving or some such occupation should be learnt by the scavengers. In Gujarat I noticed that scavengers who lost their jobs took to weaving. There is no common remedy for all in this matter. It varies with the individual.

The third question is very difficult. It is implied in the question itself that Harijans are entirely helpless and frightened. Under these circumstances, it can only be said that they should go to the police for help. Dr. Ambedkar told me that since the police belong to higher castes, they do not assist and this is quite possibly true. Therefore, it can only be said that where there is police indifference or opposition and where no help is offered by the caste Hindus and where the Harijans are not sufficiently strong, it is best to have patience. The only consolation is that there are occasions in the life of every person and every community when there is no other course open except to

[1] Sub-castes among Harijans of Maharashtra
[2] *ibid*

keep patience. Were it not so, man would become an atheist, and forget God. Therefore, if the Harijans can see no non-violent way out of a difficulty, then they had better pray to God for help.

Harijan Sevak, 5-3-1933

610. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS

March 5, 1933

MY DEAR BABOOJI,

I have your letter of 28th ultimo. If you need more for the *Aaj*[1] Supplement, you will please ask Sjt. Ghanshyamdas. He told me that he was writing to you to that effect. I have received 20 copies of Kokje Shastri's opinion, for which many thanks. I am now having a weekly bulletin about Shivaprasad's health from Calcutta. Let's hope that the prayers of the many for his recovery will be answered.

Differences of opinion with Malaviyaji are sometimes inevitable. But I have regarded them always as blessings in disguise. One can have differences with him without the slightest bitterness, and as they are always honest they serve to educate public opinion.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BHAGWANDAS

From a microfilm: S. N. 20460

611. MESSAGE TO "SOCIAL SERVICE QUARTERLY"[2]

March 5, 1933

The field of social service is as wide as India itself, but it may not be an exaggeration to say that the centre of it is Harijan service; for, in serving the Harijans, the worker will meet with every conceivable social problem in a concentrated form and he will have to possess the best qualities.

From a photostat: S. N. 20468

[1] The source has "Art".

[2] The message was addressed to Vaikunthlal Mehta and was meant for a special issue of the journal to be published in April.

612. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

March 5, 1933

CHI. MARY,

Received your letter.[1]

Your letters are never fault-finding. You need not therefore be afraid of writing as you feel, without any polish. I want you to think aloud. Polishing is often a concealment of thought. If it is relevant thought, the concealment amounts to an untruth. In ordinary life our speech is rarely 100 per cent truthful. If you will go through the translation of all the verses we sing for the morning prayer you will perhaps find what you are craving for. Only remember that Mother Earth, Mother Saraswati, etc., are all manifestations of God, even as Father God is a manifestation. No one has described the whole of Him.

The test of your yarn is not at all bad.

The coolness of a room is never the same as the coolness right under the sky. In London, I slept with the door and the window open but had the roof for fear of the rain coming down any moment. But you must not try, so long as you have any fear.

I wonder if I answered your question [as to] when I began spinning. I began it in 1919, i. e., when I was 50. I know people who began after 60. You have therefore no cause whatever for despair. And if it will give you comfort, know that I was a dunce.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

It is not necessary to fast whilst you are silent. Begin first with a few hours.

From a photostat: G.N. 5955. Also C.W. 3320. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] The superscription and the first sentence are in Hindi in the source.

613. LETTER TO CHARU CHANDRA MITRA

March 5, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I am now sending your letter to Dr. Bidhan Roy for such investigation as may be possible for him to undertake.With reference to your pamphlet, I have read it. You will permit me to say that I regard it as unbalanced. Such argument in it as is relevant has already been dealt with in the pages of the *Harijan* which you can easily secure, because there is a local sale of the paper. Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta, 15 College Square, is the Agent.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. CHARU CHANDRA MITRA, ATTORNEY-AT-LAW
5 HASTINGS STREET
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm. S.N. 20475

614. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

March 5, 1933

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I enclose herewith a letter from Sjt. Charu Chandra Mitra. Will you please make what enquiry is possible and perhaps write direct to Sjt. Charu Chandra Mitra, sending me a copy of your reply, or, if you prefer it, send your reply directly to me? If the reformers were in error, we should publicly apologize.

I hope that the Board is doing constructive work.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. I Letter

From a microfilm: S.N. 20461

615. LETTER TO DR. ARTHUR SAUNDERS

March 5, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

Mirabai (Madeleine Slade) is, as you perhaps know, undergoing imprisonment under the Civil Disobedience policy of the Government of India. Her health has latterly been a cause of some anxiety. She tells me that you, as the family physician, attended at all her youthful illnesses and were present at an operation she had undergone for glands.[1] If you have a record of her illnesses I would thank you to send me a copy for use when required. I may mention that there is absolutely nothing serious about her health just now. She has been removed to a better prison and has been feeling better also after her removal. But as there was a fear at one time that she might have tubercular glands, by way of precaution I have asked you to give me what information you can about her previous condition.

Yours sincerely,

DR. ARTHUR SAUNDERS
37 HARLEY STREET
LONDON, W.

From a photostat: S.N. 20466

616. LETTER TO P. N. VENKATARAMAN

March 5, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. You will find that I shall be constantly writing about varnashramadharma in the pages of the *Harijan* as so many correspondents have been writing to me as you have done.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. N. VENKATARAMAN
580 PYCROFT'S ROAD
TRIPLICANE, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 20469

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 4-3-1933

617. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

March 5, 1933

DEAR SATISBABU,

I have your letter, and I have also two copies of the Bengali *Harijan*. I wish my knowledge of Bengali was such as to enable me to read what you have been writing. Sjt. Ghanshyamdas has heard me say that I am studying Bengali. Unfortunately, that is untrue. What I told him was that I was studying Urdu and that if I had the time I had a great longing for studying Bengali and reviving my knowledge of Tamil. A study of Bengali, as you know, is an old dream. It was about to materialize in 1914, but I had to abruptly leave London for India and the lessons which Mrinalini Devi was giving to me had to be suspended. Therefore when Mahadev has read the paper 1 will send you what he has to say. The cover is certainly attractive. You will let me know what reception it has had from the public. As for the articles to be sent in advance, there are tremendous difficulties, but I shall see what can be done.

I understand your position about vaccination. Your faith will sustain you.

You will see how the report that you sent about the Bengali work was interwoven by Shastri into the "Week to Week" columns.[1]

Have you noticed the 'comedy of errors, that happened in connection with the information that Hemprabha had given me about Aroon's father's death? When I read her letter, I could not believe my eyes. There was nothing wrong with you. You were Aroon's [*sic*] father and yet the expression 'Aroon's father, was there right enough. I read or showed it to the 9 Sardar, Mahadev and Chhaganlal, and we all came to the conclusion that it must be another Aroon whose father was dead, because later from the language used by Hemprabha it was clear that you were to have seen Aroon's father before he died, but you and she were too late. I had a vague recollection of Hemprabha having adopted a boy or girl, so I connected Aroon with this adoption, and yet there were not two Aroons to my knowledge. Therefore my letter[2] to Hemprabha baldly referred to a strange Aroon's father. Your

[1] Of *Harijan*

[2] *Vide* "Letter Hemprabha Das Gupta", 25-2-1933

letter cleared the mystery. And now comes Aroon's postcard, but of course your letter itself was quite clear that it was your father who had died. If I had remembered, as I should have remembered, that your father was still alive, I would at once have known that Hemprabha meant grandfather instead of father. But at the time I read Hemprabha's letter I had forgotten altogether that your father was still alive. It was only your letter which revived the recollection.

I hope you and Hemprabha, Aroon and everybody who read my letter had a hearty laugh at my expense. But if I had been there when my letter was received, I should have joined that hearty laughter, or perhaps called for a laughter at Hemprabha's expense. I am not writing separately to Aroon. You will therefore share this portion with him. I see that he is still not quite well. And tell Aroon that I shall write to him when he has written to me the letter he has promised.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 20470

618. LETTER TO V. S. R. SASTRI

March 5, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have read your letter of 24th February from beginning to end with greatest attention. Whilst I acknowledge the great pains you have bestowed over the composition and the Sanskrit learning which you exhibit, you will permit me to say that I miss the application of that learning to the reality, and it has been a matter of very deep grief to me that in the contact I am having with so many learned sanatanists, hardly any one of them has touched the fundamental points I have raised. I state them for you.

Of all those who appear as untouchables in the census figures, who are the untouchables by birth? Where is the authority in the Vedas for regarding them as such? And if there is none in the Vedas, call the later Shastras impose disabilities or create classes not contemplated by the Vedas? What is there in the Shastras to justify the numerous disabilities which I have described in the pages of the *Harijan* and which are suffered by those who are classified as untouchables?

You ask me whether I claim to be a sannyasi. I do not. I claim to be a very ordinary Hindu trying to serve the faith of my ancestors in the best manner I know.

Yours sincerely,

PANDIT V. S. R. SASTRI
25 N. SUBBARAYA MUDALY ST.
MADHAVAPURAM, MYLAPORE
MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 20472

619. LETTER TO ALASTAIR MACRAE

March 5, 1933

DEAR MR. MACRAE,

I got your letter of the 3rd instant yesterday. I was deeply grieved like you to see the A. P. report. The interview was undoubtedly only for you, and I had no notion that Gopalan had taken it. But not only did he take it, he never even showed it to me. Hence the extremely bad form in which it has appeared. It does not even accurately convey my opinion. Nevertheless, I am quite satisfied there was no dishonourable conduct on Gopalan's part. It was a *bona-fide* mistake. I hope therefore you will dismiss from your mind all irritation against him.

Yours sincerely,

ALASTAIR MACRAE, ESQ.
ARSENAL ROAD
POONA

From a microfilm S.N. 20473

620. LETTER TO P. R. LELE

March 5, I 933

DEAR MR. LELE,

I thank you for your postcard.

Yes, I have already got Sjt. Jayakar's opinion. I understand what you say about yourself. I hope it would be possible for you to continue. Can you tell me how Sjt. Jaisukhlal is getting on?

Yours sincerely

SJT. P. R. LELE
3 1 MURZBAN ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20474

621. LETTER-TO M. I. DAVID

March 5, 1933

DEAR MR. DAVID,

I thank you for your letter. I duly received the notes for Rs. 2,500. You must have seen the announcement in the *Harijan*.[1] I shall jealously guard your wish that your name should not be published. I shall do what is possible to ensure a proper selection of the first student.

The name[2] that you give to the Scholarship is an impossible name, but I do not know that any name is at all necessary, and if there must be one, it must have the ancestral name, and that would be 'The David Scheme Scholarship'.

Whilst I shall try to secure the name of a suitable student, you will not hesitate to let me know if you ever come across a good candidate. I need hardly tell you that in all I do the cooperation of Sardar Vallabhbhai is always there.

Yours sincerely,

M. I. DAVID, ESQ.
4 QUEENS ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20476

622. LETTER TO KESHAV GANDHI

March 5, 1933

CHI. KESHU,

You should ask Narandas why you have lost weight. It should not have gone down so much. Get rid of anger and envy. Ask someone there to tell you why the name of the Ashram was changed.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3288

[1] *Vide* "the David Scheme", 4-3-1933

[2] The addressee had suggested "Mahatma Gandhi-Vallabhbhai Scholarship".

623. LETTER TO MATHURADAS P. ASAR

March 5, 1933

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Motibehn[1] is again impatient. You will have to face the test once more. If you are firm, all will be well. Cling to your vow.

Don't work at the cost of your health. Moti writes that you do not keep well. Continue to write to me.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3760

624. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

March 5, 1933

CHI. JAMNA,

I heard that you have had another attack of asthma. How is it? You did well in writing to Purushottam not to be in a hurry to leave Santa Cruz. He had promised to write to me but till today I have had no letter from him.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 873. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi :

625. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

March 5, 1933

CHI. NARMADA,

You seem to have no regard for truth. You did not write any letter yourself and you demand that I should write to you

You did well in paying a visit to your home. Now devote yourself completely to work

Write to me regularly. :

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2773. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

[1] Addressee's wife

626. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

March 5, 1933

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

I got your postcard. It seems that you are being weighed down by misfortunes. But probably man cannot be tested except through suffering. I had already given a 'quick doctor's' advice to let Jagdish stay where he was if his health had deteriorated very much. Your hand does not seem to have improved yet. Take proper treatment and see that it does.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7527. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

627. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

March 5, 1933

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I am glad that you are released. You did not get the second letter which I wrote to you, but I think they must have given it to you at the time you were released. Write to me about your experiences in jail this time. You have done right in accompanying Lakshmi. Write to me about your experience in the Ashram together with your experience in jail. And also tell me how your health was while in jail.

What did you read, and what did you think about? And what work did you do? the women prisoners here are quite well. The Jail Superintendent often tells me in joke that, when you were here, all the other women prisoners wanted medicines form you, but now nobody asks for any medicine. I replied to him, of course. But you also may send your reply, if you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 67. Also C.W. 8797. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

628. LETTER TO NANIBEHN JHAVERI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
March 5, 1933

CHI. NANIBEHN JHAVERI,

You have written after a long time. But you have said nothing in the letter. You should let me know about your programme.

Gangabehn met me. She was to come again. But she has not come, probably because she had nothing further to ask me.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari—Pannalal Jhaveri, p. 27

629. LETTER TO BUDHABHAI

March 5, 1933

CHI. BUDHABHAI,

Parvati has made a serious complaint against you. Have we not made an agreement that you will not abuse her nor beat her? To abuse or beat a weak woman ought to be regarded as a terrible form of violence. Wake up, reform your ways, calm down. If a person like you cannot exercise such self-control, who else can we expect to observe ahimsa?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 33121

630. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

March 6, 1933

BOYS AND GIRLS,

I got your letter. It is violence to tear sheets from a notebook and use them for writing letters. Do you understand this? Don't do it again.

If the secretary or the other office-bearers show themselves unfit or if the members harass them, in either case our progress will be arrested. When you grow up you will behave as you now do. What you do not learn now you will never learn later. I hope you do understand that. Just as mangoes cannot grow on a babul tree, you are not likely to change suddenly after ten years if you cannot work unitedly or behave with self-restraint. You should, therefore, learn to manage your body in a proper manner.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

631. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,[1]
March 6, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

I am starting on this letter at five sharp (Silence Day). Yours was the last letter I read from the Ashram post.

I have not been able to go beyond 75 counts with the slivers which you sent. Yarn of 75 counts should be regarded as very much below the mark. I have calculated the count on the basis of the figure you give for weight. The scales here are not good enough for weighing with any minute accuracy. I do believe, however, that if my hand was all right I would be able to go up to 100 counts.

What you write to me regarding Sushila is simply incomprehensible to me. I am not aware of having ignored her in theleast. She herself made me feel that there was no need to inquire after her or

[1] Literally, 'Yeravda Temple', that is, Yeravda Central Prison, where Gandhiji was imprisoned from January 4, 1932 to May 8, 1933. This place-line is not reproduced in subsequent letters.

advise her. So I did not ask her any detailed questions. Tell her this. How could I know that like you she also craved for a show of love and for compliments? I ought to have known that your friend would be like you. Isn't that what you suggest? But probably Sushila herself will not admit this. Isn't one Prema enough for me? There are other Premas, of course, but they are all different from one another and from you. However, I will be more careful in future.

How old is Vijaya? How does she behave?

Train Lakshmi thoroughly.

I also suspect something from the fact that Durga's boils cannot still be cured. She used to write to me regularly, but she never writes now. From that, too, I suspect that she is hiding something. Inquire and find out if she is suffering from some other disease.

A diet of raw vegetables and dates is bound to help you to reduce your weight. You should also include in it two and a half ounces of unboiled milk. Among raw vegetables, you may eat tomatoes, radishes, carrots, lettuce, etc. You should exclude salt. You should take two or three lemons with water or with dates. Probably it will be better to take it with water. If, however, it sours your teeth you may not take it. You can also mix soda bicarb with it.

I cannot discuss the question asked by Rajaji and others. That would be violating truth. It can be done when a suitable opportunity arises. My writings, however, contain a reply to every doubt.

I will admit all the shortcomings of the Ashram which you may point out. But you will help me better if you also suggest suitable remedies at the same time. Even if, however, you cannot do that, I must have your criticism. I use my brain as much as I can. I know this: the Ashram's shortcomings are not its own, but mine. If the potter makes an ill-shaped pot, is that the fault of the pot or of the potter? I literally believe what I have said, and the shortcomings of the Ashram, therefore, are a measure of my ignorance. But notwithstanding its shortcomings, I like the Ashram, for I am not ready to say positively that I do not like myself. I like myself in the measure that I do not feel the sense of "I", and ceaselessly strive to overcome what still remains of that sense.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10329. Also C.W. 6768. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

632. LETTER TO CHHOTUBHAI PATEL

March 6, 1933

BHAI CHHOTUBHAI,

I got your letter. Indulgence in moderation is less harmful, but *brahmacharya* is the best. The *atman* is not a body and can exist without the body, as God does. That which is bodiless can have no need for sex-gratification, and, therefore, one who has awakened from the state of ignorance also can have none. If it is one's dharma to shed ignorance, sex-gratification is contrary to dharma and, therefore, harmful.

The earth is certainly ever alive, but man who is of earth is not. He must perish.

I cannot say whether at present people are rising or falling, It seems to me to be a futile question.

It is certainly true that we have no strength of our own except what God gives us and we must, therefore, admit it.

He who has real humility has risen far above the man who is proud, for humility is truth and pride is falsehood.

One should not brush the teeth with a babul stick after a meal, but one must clean them with a finger and gargle well.

The future will show what relations you will maintain with the Ashram after your marriage. It is needless to think of it Just now.

I cannot say that I immediately recognized you on reading your letter. I cannot say that with regard to anybody.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10476

633. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

March 6, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

The fact that you have been putting on weight in the Ashram shows that the Ashram has suited you. As one's health improves, one's heart and mind too gain strength.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9638. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

634. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
March 6, 1933

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. I understand what you say about the girl. I am not likely to be satisfied with any sort of girl for you. Gomati had approved of her. She believed that the girl did not belong to the *modh* sub-caste. The only point was that if an educated girl is desirable for a match, though rather grown-up, she should be accepted and the objection on the ground of her being a Gujarati or belonging to the *Bania* caste, should be waived. I have no intention whatever of doing anything without your approval.

You have not said in your letter anything about honey or the school. Do they make honey there? From what do they make it? What is the quality of teaching? Who are the people who are learning?

I hope you have not completely given up your writing work or your study, have you?

I do not want to burden you with any responsibility in Almora. Let the Shail Ashram remain just a *dharmashala*[1] for the present. We will see later what should be done.

I, too, would welcome keeping the Chandradutta brothers. If they are good men, no harm will be done. It would of course be good if Mahavirprasad accepts them. I think it would not be proper to give a big salary for the care of the Shail Ashram. But in this matter, too, Narandas will know better. If you trust his decision, you will be at peace and so will I.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32992

[1] An inn

635. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

March 6, 1933

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

Your letter. This issue[1] is better though there is still room for improvement. It is not necessary to take everything from English nor is it necessary to translate in full all that is taken. Some article may deserve full translation, another only a summary, yet another may be rejected; in brief, the Hindi readers should get all that is worth giving. Items published in other journals too should be screened. But sometimes those translations may be faulty. For purity, simplicity and restraint our translation should read like original writing. As for the translated items appearing in newspapers, they need not be included in Hindi *Harijan* if the translations are accurate. I am arranging to send English articles in advance. Satisbabu wants them and so does Ganesan. I shall see what can be done. Why do you not include articles by Hindi writers? But they should not be mere essays. They should contain either the views or arguments of some sanatanists and answers to them or a discussion of problems faced by the workers or an account of the hardships suffered by Harijans. All the articles, in short, must be written with a view to solving the current and immediate problems. An abstract of the activities in Provinces should be a must every time.

From now on I shall send everything care of *The Hindustan Times.*

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1075

636. LETTER TO K. R. CHHAPKHANE

March 7, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 26th ultimo and now your letter of the 3rd instant. Owing to pressure of work in connection with the *Harijan* I have not been able to acknowledge your first letter earlier.

I have no ground whatsoever to dispute the facts which you

[1] Of *Harijan Sevak,* the Hindi edition of *Harijan*

seem to remember so well. Have you any recollection of the subscribers to the fund?[1] If you have, and if you can send me their statements also, it completes for me the chain of evidence. My only interest just now is to secure as much money as I can legitimately for Harijan work, and when I was told by Sjt. Joshi that I had control over the money in question I was naturally pleased. You may depend upon it however that if I could by any chance persuade you to let me have a say in the disposal of a purse that was supposed to be presented to me, it won't be Sjt. Joshi who would have the fund. I could not even write to you this letter if there was the slightest political motive behind my investigation of the fund.

I thank you for reminding me that I had the honour of being your guest at the time of my visit[2] to Sangli and that the alleged presentation was only formal and was made under your roof.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. R. CHHAPKHANE
PLEADER, SANGLI

From a microfilm: S.N. 20486

637. LETTER TO BUDHI RAM DHYAN

March 7, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your postcard. I favour khaddar because everything I spend on it goes directly into the hands of the poor.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. BUDHI RAM DHYAN
CLASS XII-A
D. A. V. COLLEGE
DEHRA DUN

From a microfilm: S.N. 20487

[1] The reference is to the allegation against the addressee and one Athavale that they misappropriated a public fund raised during Gandhiji's visit to Sangli in 1920. Chhapkhane had claimed that the fund in question was raised from selected contributors for starting a movement for uplift of ''States' subjects", that the matter had been discussed with Gandhiji at the time and that he had asked the addressee to start the said movement and keep the money on his (addressee's) responsibility. *Vide* also "Letter to Vithal K. Joshi", 9-3-1933

[2] In November 1920

638. LETTER TO KESHAV

March 7, 1933

DEAR BROTHER KESHAV,

I have your letter and copy of your appeal. As I take up your letter, Kakasaheb[1] is sitting by me and so I have asked him to see you, understand from you the scheme, see the brother who has had his training in the Ashram, and he would then advise me, after which I shall form my opinion and let you know. As you know, Kakasaheb is a founder-member and so he knows the evolution of spinning and weaving from the beginning.

Yours sincerely,

BROTHER KESHAV
CHRISTIE SEVA SANGHAM
AUNDH (NEAR POONA)

From a microfilm: S.N. 20484

639. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA[2]

March 7, 1933

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRA,

I thank you for your exhaustive letter of the 4th instant. I had entirely forgotten your stay at the Ashram. Your letter is quite helpful. N.[3] . . left Poona on Saturday, the 4th instant. Your presence is now quite unnecessary. Perhaps by this time I know more about her than you do. She has been much worse than you have described her to be. She has led for years an utterly immoral and extravagant life and has been an utter stranger to truth. She has made that confession to me and has also definitely promised that she would make that confession publicly before the world and she has also promised to turn over a new leaf and lead henceforth a truthful, chaste life, and to that end she would retire from all public activity and live a beggar's life in Harijan quarters in the poorest possible style, living on charity, unknown to the world. Whether she has the strength to carry out this promise or

[1] D. B. Kalelkar
[2] Joint-Secretary of the Mysore Board of Servants of Untouchables Society
[3] The name has been omitted.

not I do not know. Let's hope that she has. She thinks that she has that strength. If she is sincerely desirous of leading this life, you will render her what help you can. You are at liberty to show this letter to her and you will please tell me all about her from time to time. From her talks with me she led me to understand that she had great regard for you, but that regard has very little value because she was leading an altogether false life when she entertained this regard for you. Even here truth had not dawned upon her when she came, but if it has really come to her, it dawned slowly and unperceivably. That of course is all the better. Some of the young men at least who have surrounded her do not seem to have behaved well. But of that perhaps some other time if necessary.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20481

640. LETTER TO V. N. SOMASUNDARAM[1]

March 7, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. The only thing I can advise is that you should on the one hand persuade the temple trusteesand on the other cultivate public opinion among the present temple-goers.

Your sincerely,

SJT. V. N. SOMASUNDARAM
43 SALGADO ST.
MUTWAL
COLOMBO

From a microfilm: S.N. 20485

641. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

March 7, 1933

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL[2],

I have your letter. For the present you should give up the idea of starting a school of the Sangh in Surat. If we can manage well what we have already undertaken, we shall later think about Surat.

[1] Hon. Secretary, Mutwal Young Men's Hindu Association
[2] Secretary of the Gujarat Board of Servants of Untouchables Society

I understand about Sarupbehn[1].

We are thinking of starting a Gujarati edition of the *Harijan* to be published from here.[2] The idea of publishing a leaflet is not bad.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3994

642. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Silence Day, 5.25 [Before *March 8, 1933*][3]

CHI. NARANDAS,

Send Prabhavati the volume of Speeches. She has written to tell me that she had asked for it but has not received it.

Probably you know Parachure Shastri. He has once stayed in the Ashram. He is suffering from leprosy, but the symptoms may be considered to have dried up now. He is in jail and will be released on the 8th. He is a good man, a man of renunciation. He knows Sanskrit, is married, and has three children. The children are foolish. The wife is weak in the brain. She had once been admitted to a lunatic asylum. I think we should keep him. Give him one room. Kaka says he should be given Mirabehn's room. The wife will of course live in the women's wing. The children could be kept anywhere. Parachure Shastri will observe the modern hygienic rules for lepers. That is, he will not touch anyone and will keep his clothes separate. It will be necessary to send his meals to his room. Probably he will live on milk and fruit, or on a mixture of fresh milk and *neem* leaves. He can do a great deal of work sitting in his room. He will teach Sanskrit. He can teach even Marathi there. He will arrive there by the 10th or the 12th. He will presently go to see his wife. I will know from him what he intends to do if his wife is against his

[1] Vijayalakshmi Pandit; *vide* "Letter to Nagendra Nath Bhattacharjee", 6-4-1933

[2] The first issue of *Harijanbandhu* came out on March 12, 1933.

[3] The letter does not bear the date of writing, but in his letter to addressee dated March 8, 1923, Gandhiji says: "I have replied to Parachure Shastri. Everything will depend on your wire." *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 8-3-1933. Evidently, the wire expected by Gandhiji would be in reply to this letter. Again, in his letter to the addressee dated March 10, 1933, Gandhiji says, " I just received your wire about Parachure Shastri. I had been waiting for it before asking him to go there." *Ibid*.

joining the Ashram. He spins a great deal. He has spun quite a lot in the jail. He will spin there, too. He was in fact a teacher in Chinchavad. I do not think I have any further suggestion to make. I take it that no one will take fright by this news. Leprosy does not spread through the air. Personally, I doubt if it is contagious. In our country, lepers freely move about everywhere. But we should observe the prohibitation about physical contact with a leper since that would be the right thing for us to do. We cannot completely ignore modern science. Shastri himself willingly observes that prohibition. If he employs the remedies I have suggested, he may even be cured of his leprosy. I have assumed that you yourself will not be reluctant to take him in. If, however, you are, send me a telegram. Ask the Managing Committee, too. It is better to consult the other permanent inmates of the Ashram as well. In fact I feel that it is my dharma to ascertain the opinion of every member in this matter. I took this step only after all of us here unanimously agreed on it. But I do not worry about it. I felt it is to be my clear dharma to take him in. He had in fact arrived with the purpose of living in the Ashram but had to leave because his wife was against it. I think we cannot reject him. However, there may be room for difference of opinion in this matter. Since he had left the Ashram once, we cannot say without further deliberation that it is our dharma to take him back again. Hence, on getting this letter, think over the matter. First yourself, then the Committee, and after that the rest. If your own view is against taking him in, I should not send him there, nor if the Committee is against it, nor if the old-time members are against it. I would not consider it essential to seek the consent of those who have joined the Ashram only for a short period. However, it would be proper to discuss the matter with all the members. I feel that I have abused the freedom which I obtained from you. Such things come naturally to me, but I have no right, without the co-workers' consent to send anyone who might be a burden on them. I followed the same rule at Phoenix. Once, when I was practicing there, someone suffering from a dangerous disease turned up and I made Ba nurse him. I am nearing the end of my life doing such things but have still not changed my ways. That is, I act on the assumption that the co-workers, particularly those who are very close to me, will as a matter of course do what I do. Let us believe and hope that this will prove to be my last misdeed. I will settle the matter perfectly well with Parachure Shastri. Hence nobody should come to a decision on the basis of my assurance to him. After considering the matter

independently and examining the Ashram's dharma in this case send me a telegram whether thedecision is 'yes' or 'no'. Let no one believe that I will be shocked, whatever the decision. I had expected that I would have to give but one sheet of paper to this subject, but now it seems that I would instead be giving five. I went on writing as ideas came to me one after another. In the matter of observing one's dharma, taking a decision in a hurry is harmful and ought to be avoided. It implies self-conceit. You will see from this something of the present state of my mind. My fitness to think about anything except what relates to Harijan service seems to be fast leaving me. To think about other things or to do anything or speak about anything else has become painful to me. I am going through painful experiences which I find impossible to describe. Even if I wished to describe them, I have no time to do so. But no more of this now. I feel perfectly at ease in pouring out my heart to you. I believe you have the capacity to respond to such things. If you have followed all I have said and wish to give the letter to others to read, I will have no objection. If you feel that what I have written is strange, keep the letter with you after reading it. I will explain it if we meet some day. What I have said is nothing mysterious. It is easy enough to understand, but it gives a glimpse into what agony one, who unswervingly follows the path of dharma, has to endure. I do feel that if someone who has not associated himself with my life were to read this, it would do much harm.

Tell Parasaram firmly what your decision is. I am writing to him. If he wants to leave despite your being straightforward in dealing with him, let him do so. If he wishes to stay in spite of it, no objection need be made. There is no room for charity in the sphere of dharma. It would be easy to acquiesce in it if we transgress the proper limit of ahimsa. But it becomes difficult to do so when in the name of ahimsa one shows undeserved compassion and is thereby guilty of a subtle form of violence. Just as we do not indulge an invalid's fancies so also we need not indulge the fancies of a person who violates the rules. This is the way to put an end to Parasaram's noisy complaints.

I think it will be difficult to arrange for Kusum's trip to Almora. At present, there are just no such facilities there. I think it will be difficult to look after her there. We cannot put the burden of doing so on Prabhudas, nor on Navin. If her disease gets aggravated, who will look after her there? It might be possible to send her either to Deolai

or Matheran. Whether or not she can be sent to Deolali, will have to be considered. I do not think it proper for the whole family to go. Beyond this my brain refuses to work just now.

I have already written to you about Lakshmi. Lakshmidas will certainly come there. Perhaps Devdas also will come. Rajaji and Shankerlal are here at present.

BAPU

[PS.]

Monday, 5.25

One thing was left out in the letter for the children. Some of them write to me to say that they have got tired of the agricultural work. Tell them that this does not become them. A duty once undertaken cannot be abandoned. Even music tires one so long as one has not learnt it well. Those who have learnt agricultural work well, do not give it up. If agricultural work were not interesting, millions in the world would not engage themselves in it. It does require hard work, but hard work is interesting, not indolence. Moreover, the hard work is only physical. But our bodies love ease and comfort and therefore we avoid hard work and in consequence suffer from diseases. I therefore hope that the children will not tire of agricultural work. Besides, the mother *Gita* also teaches us that it is in doing our duty that we find pleasure and agricultural work is one of our duties. I have looked into the result of the yarn-test competition. It is disappointing. Only one sample bears the mark 'excellent'. The mark against two is 'bad'. All other samples fall short in both respects. This defect must be remedied. Ask those whose yarns have gone through the test and the others also, to be vigilent. Spinning good quality yarn that is even and strong, requires nothing more than careful attention. If the sliver is of inferior quality, the yarn may fall short in respect of . . .[1] but it will certainly not be uneven or weak. I still consider the count of the samples low. The quality of slivers is likely to be at fault in that. It does not matter if we produce a smaller quantity of slivers and yarn, but what we do produce must be of the finest quality. Pay attention to this subject and induce others to do the same. Wake up all of them. In. . .[2] for achieving perfection, everyone must acquire speed and . . .[3] It would be good if they acquire speed in carding and ginning also.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33383

[1] One word at each of these places is illegible in the source.

[2] *ibid*

[3] *ibid*

643. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR AND DUNCAN GREENLEES

March 8, 1933

CHI. MARY AND DUNCAN,

I like your letter very much indeed. Before I argue to the contrary, let me say what I have told Narandas and I think I made clear to both of you, that you should not be treated as the other learners who come to the Ashram, that you should take only such part in the Ashram work as you like and can digest and that you should use your time as may seem most profitable to you from your own standpoint.

Now for my own opinion. The Ashram is a place where the idea is to enforce literally the maxim 'to labour is to pray'. This labour was interpreted by Thoreau and Tolstoy to mean physical labour and Tolstoy adopted Bondaref's maxim of bread labour being God's law for all mankind. I read the same thing in the third chapter of the *Gita*. I have tested the truth of the interpretation in my own life and in the lives of many companions and I have felt that our lives have been incomplete and unsatisfying exactly to the extent that we have failed to carry out the interpretation in practice. Therefore I would say that, so long as the routine of the Ashram appears to be a slavish following of it, the spirit of tile Ashram is not imbibed. I confess unhesitatingly that so few have imbibed the spirit. Many follow the routine mechanically and, therefore, slavishly. I do not grumble over the mechanical following, because even that is better than people idling away their time and I am not without hope that even those who are mechanically following the routine will some day detect the spirit and the beauty behind it. So many Englishmen and women, especially missionaries, make, in my opinion, the tremendous mistake of directing the activity of others without themselves taking a direct part in it. They, therefore, remain untouched by the activity itself and often become blind guides. As I am dictating this, illustrations from life crowd in upon my mind. I would, therefore, say that if you can appreciate and understand the spirit of my remarks and feel the truth of them, then follow the routine patiently, intelligently, whole-heartedly, till it becomes a part of your nature, lies light upon your mind and seems to speak to you its message. Then, but not tillthen, are you really able to write anything serious for public service. Not even every good thought is worth giving to the world unless it is repeatedly tested on the anvil of experience. All true labour is both contagious and

infectious. I wonder if I have driven my meaning home. If I have not, you must reject all my argument without the slightest hesitation and do exactly as you feel you should, so as to get the best out of your experience of the Ashram.

With loving blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5996. Also C.W. 3321. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

644. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

March 8, 1933

MY DEAR MARY,

I had your two letters. You are not going to put an undue strain on your body. By all means try your utmost to live the Ashram life but not at the cost of your health. And don't hesitate to tell me all about the Ashram drawbacks. I would like you to show my long letter[1] to Narandas.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5997. Also C.W. 3322. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

645. LETTER TO Y. R. DATE

March 8, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

This is my message for the Gaekwar Birthday Commemoration[2] Volume:

"There can be no doubt that His Highness the Maharajah Saheb Gaekwar of Baroda deserves the warmest congratulations of usall for his treatment of Harijans and his withdrawing all State recognition of untouchability."

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. Y. R. DATE
C/O SJT. HARIBHAU PHATAK

From a photostat: S.N. 20497; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. IV, p. 127

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The photostat source does not have this word.

646. LETTER TO P. R. LELE

March 8, 1933

MY DEAR LELE[1],

I have your letter, being your answer to "As They See Us"[2]. It is a very good reply, if my assumption is correct that the whole of the balance after deducting overhead charges has gone into the pockets of the Harijans. Your letter is going in this week, but I would like you to let me have the details showing how the disbursements were made.

As to the reply received by you from the Government regarding the supply of *Harijan* to prisoners, I must not deal with it through the *Harijan.* You too may regard the matter as closed.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. R. LELE
31 MURZBAN ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20496

647. LETTER TO P. RAMAMURTI[3]

March 8, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and I am glad you have written to me. I wish you would care to read all the numbers of the *Harijan* and I think that most of your doubts will be solved. You will find in them that I have unhesitatingly said that all that is bad about varnashrama and caste should be wholly removed. Temple-entry is certainly coming much sooner than you expect. It is the centre of reform because it would be a visible sign to the millions that untouchability is gone. Therefore we must prosecute the reform whether the vast mass of caste Hindus come round or not.

Anti-untouchability leagues are, I think, working satisfactorily. A great deal is being done by them for the educational advancement

[1] Acting Secretary of the Bombay Board of Servants of Untouchables Society

[2] Published in *Harijan*, 4-3-1933; *vide* "As They See Us", 4-3-1933

[3] A Harijan teacher and member of the Andhra University Senate; Vice President, Board of Servants of Untouchables Society, East Godavari District

and you should study the columns of the *Harijan* to note the progress in that direction. I think that you are not doing justice to Sjt. Nageswar Rao when you say that nothing but platform lectures are being given in Andhradesa. But I am writing for fuller particulars.

If you were to start the leagues and the Birla Committee[1] were to furnish the funds, you won't call that self-reliance. As a matter of fact, what you need is not money but men who having received education would take it to the humbler Harijans. My advice to the Harijan youths, therefore, is to take up the reform energetically among the poorest.

I do not know the effect of the Madras Services Commission. You will perhaps enlighten me on the point, but Harijan graduates and other highly educated Harijans have limitless scope for serving fellow-Harijans.

If there is no Telugu newspaper specially devoted to Harijans, I suppose it is because there are very few literate Harijans. Before, therefore, you think of starting a paper, all the educated Harijans should spread themselves among the illiterate Harijans and impart instruction to them. Every educated Harijan should, therefore, become a walking newspaper, and this you can supplement by issuing leaflets from time to time as they may be demanded.

Please keep yourself in touch with me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. RAMAMURTI, B.A.
P. R. COLLEGIATE SCHOOL
COCANADA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20495

648. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 8, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your big packet of mail.

My views about the teaching of English, it may be said, have changed to a certain extent. I feel that the older women in the Ashram should be permitted to learn what they wish to. They feel their deficiency at every step, and particularly, in our circumstances, their

[1] Officially named "Harijan Sevak Sangh"

ignorance of English. They don't mind being ignorant of arithmetic nor do they mind their indifferent Gujarati, but they feel unhappy that they don't know English. Our connections with Englishmen will continue, ought to continue, and, therefore, we shall also continue to use the English language. Hence the women feel that if they know a little English, they will be able to use it every now and then. This argument is not altogether tenable, but there is enough truth in it to make them wish to learn English. It is certainly not immoral to learn English. I think that, if the women do not feel interested in any other subject, it would be good to teach them even English to make them study-minded. It is desirable that the older women should become interested in study, no matter how. It is also desirable that they should increase their knowledge. I, therefore, think that we should provide whatever facility we can to any older woman who may wish to learn English. Please point out to me any weakness that you may see in this reasoning. I will try to explain again.

I see from Kikabhai's letter that a large crowd of Harijans will be attending Lakshmi's wedding. I think that Jamna and you are the right persons to give away the bride. I hope Jamna does not harbour the prejudice of untouchability in her heart. Don't make the Harijans who may attend sit apart from the others. Since their proportion will be large enough for the gathering, serve them some fruit as refreshment, as I have suggested. I suggest copra and raisins. If possible, I will write something to be read out to the assembled guests and enclose it with this letter.[1] You will have to give some dresses to Lakshmi as a gift from the Ashram. Think over this. If you can, see Ba and ask her advice. I should be happy if she gives one of her saris, a new one or an almost new one. If she has preserved any jewellery, she may give some of it too. Tell the Superintendent that you wish to see her specially for this reason. If he permits you, well and good, if he does not, don't mind. Discuss with the women this question of what to give to Lakshmi. See that we omit to do nothing which would be proper on such an occasion. I will write to you again if I think of anything more. You can ignore any of my suggestions which you don't think appropriate.

I have replied to Parachure Shastri. Everything will depend on your wire.

[1] *Vide* the following item.

I have received Kellogg's book. Gangabehn and Sharda have arrived here. They have not seen me yet. Gangabehn will not be able to do so. Sharda will see me on Saturday if she is here on that day.

You did the right thing in keeping Lakshmi's younger sister with Anasuyabehn. I see that Dudabhai[1] has stayed on. Dahibehn[2] should be welcomed if she comes. You did right in agreeing to pay her the expenses of her journey.

For the present, at any rate, Anandi seems to be completely free from danger. I will give her some work every day. She lives on milk and fruit. For some time she must remain here. You may ask Lakshmidas about the remedies which are being tried for her. They will be useful to others, too. It cannot be said, though, that they will agree with everyone. But they will certainly do no harm.

I have no fear about your health so long as your diet includes milk and curds. But I should certainly like you to exclude gram from it. It makes the mental work you are doing more difficult. The best food for mental workers is milk and fruit. If you eat uncooked cabbage, it should be tender. But this is not necessary if you eat it boiled. It would be better if you drink milk without boiling it.

Jamna should take sun-bath, get her body massaged with oil, do *pranayama* systematically and, for food, drink milk and eat *papaya*, raisins and, if she wishes, some vegetable. I believe she will be all right if she restricts her diet to these things.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8328. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

649. MESSAGE ON WEDDING OF LAKSHMI AND MARUTI

March 8, 1933

I feel a little unhappy that neither Ba nor I will be present in the Ashram on the occasion of the wedding of Lakshmi and Maruti[3], but I think that is ignorant love. One should feel happy wherever devotion to dharma may make it necessary for one to be. Since one who

[1] Lakshmi's parents. The family joined the Ashram in 1915; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 16-9-1915

[2] *ibid*

[3] A South Indian orphan boy, brought up by Velabehn and Lakshmidas Asar

follows dharma should never wish that things should be otherwise than they are, he can have no cause to feel unhappy.

Moreover, when so many elders and friends, men and women, will be assembling to give their blessings, Ba's presence or mine should not be considered at all essential.

Lakshmi was of course eager that Ba and I should be present at her wedding. So was Chi. Maruti. I could understand their desire. But all of us felt that the marriage should take place without delay, and hence I advised both the bride and the bridegroom to have the wedding as soon as possible and they accepted my advice. Lakshmi has been brought up in the Ashram since her childhood. But we have not been able to educate and train her as well as the Ashram and I would have liked to do. We did not, therefore, think it desirable to keep a girl in the bloom of youth unmarried for very long after betrothal. The fact that Chi. Lakshmi is getting married does not mean that her education will stop. I regard Maruti as a very worthy young man. He is a man of self-control. He has received training at the hands of Bhai Lakshmidas and Velabehn. He realizes the responsibility he is undertaking. He will not only be a husband to Lakshmi, but will also be a friend and teacher to her. There can be no doubt that, if this marriage is successful, it will benefit both Harijans and Hinduism a great deal. Looked at from this point of view, this marriage is of great importance and makes the responsibility of both correspondingly greater.

Chi. Maruti and Chi. Lakshmi were betrothed some years ago. It was a big problem for the Ashram to whom Lakshmi should be married. We thought that, having regard to the training she had received in the Ashram, she would be happy only if she got a partner who had received a similar training. The Ashram believes in the principle of varnashrama and tries to follow it as well as it can. I cannot speak for all, but I have often stated that I myself believe that in the present age all Hindus can, and do, belong to one varna only. If we wish to revive the varnashrama system, we shall have to start with a clean slate. This being my view, it was my duty to find a suitable husband for Lakshmi. Velabehn came to my help and suggested Maruti's name. Lakshmidas also liked the idea. I put the suggestion to Lakshmi, and she, too, accepted it. Her father also gave his consent and the two were betrothed. In my opinion all that we did was in conformity with dharma. I regard marriage too as a protective hedge

for dharma, and we should hope that the bride and the bridegroom also will regard it in the same light.

This marriage has no connection with the present movement. Mixed marriages like this one are in no way a part of the movement for the removal of untouchability. This marriage is a recognition of the point of view of one who believes in all the various ideals of the Ashram. I hope that no one will misunderstand its significance because it is taking place at the present time when the movement for removal of untouchability is going on and because it is inspired by one who is the chief leader of that movement. I do not hold up this marriage as an example for anybody to follow. I regard marriage as a matter of the parents' and their children's free will. I believe that there is ample support for this view in Hinduism. However, it has no connection with the problem of the removal of untouchability. The question belongs to another field of reform in Hinduism.

[*Vandemataram*] *from*

MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8329. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

650. DRAFT CONSTITUTION OF THE HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH

[*March 9, 1933*][1]

The following resolution was adopted on behalf of what are known as caste Hindus by a meeting of their representatives from all India held at Bombay under the presidentship of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya on 25th September, 1932.[2]

> This Conference resolves that henceforth, amongst Hindus, no one shall be regarded as an untouchable by reason of his birth and those who have been so regarded hitherto will have the same rights as the other Hindus in regard to the use of public wells, public roads and other public institutions. This right shall have statutory recognition at the first opportunity and shall be one of the

[1] This is presumably the draft mentioned in "Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar", 14-3-1933. The Sunday previous to March 14 was March 9. The constitution was finally adopted with minor changes on January 2, 1935. Gandhiji says in the above letter that the draft was prepared by Mahadev Desai. The portions of the original draft left after Gandhiji had revised it are underlined.

[2] *Vide* "Resolution at the Hindu Leaders' Conference, Bombay", 25-9-1932.

earliest acts of the swaraj Parliament, if it shall not have received such recognition before that time.

It is further agreed that it shall be the duty of all Hindu leaders to secure, by every legitimate and peaceful means, an early removal of all social disabilities now imposed by custom upon the so-called untouchable classes including the bar in respect of admission to temples.

This was followed up by a public meeting convened by the Hindu leaders from all parts of the country and held in Bombay on the 30th September, under the presidentship of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, at which following resolution among others was passed:

This public meeting of the Hindus resolves that an All-India Antiuntouchability League, with its headquarters at Delhi and branches in different provincial centres, be established for the purpose of carrying on propaganda against untouchability and that for this purpose the following steps should be immediately taken:

(a) All public wells, dharmsalas, roads, schools, crematoriums, burning-ghats, etc., be declared open to depressed classes.

(b) All public temples be opened to members of depressed classes. Provided that no compulsion or force shall be used with regard to (a) and (b), but peaceful persuasion will be adopted as the only means.

This public meeting of Hindus appeals to the Hindu community to collect as large an amount as possible to be used for the removal of untoucha-bility and cognate objects and for this purpose authorizes the President and [the] Secretary to take all necessary steps.

In pursuance of the said resolutions a society, named the All-India Anti-untouchability League subsequently named as Harijan Sevak Sangh was duly formed and a constitution was adopted by it at [Delhi] on 26th [October, 1932].

It was then considered advisable to frame a fuller constitution and the following was finally adopted at a meeting of the central board of All-India Harijan Sevak Sangh held at Delhi on . . . superseding the previous constitution.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH

REFERENCE TO
PRESENT RULES

1. The name of the Society will be Harijan Sevak Sangh.

2. The object of the Sangh shall be the eradication by truthful and non-violent means of untouchability in Hindu Society with all its

incidental evils and disabilities, suffered by the so-called untouchables hereinafter described as Harijans in all walks of life and to secure for them absolute equality of status with the rest of the Hindus.

3. In furtherance of its objects the H. S. S. will seek to establish contact with caste Hindus throughout India and show them that untouchability as it is practised in Hindu society is repugnant to the Shastras and to the best instinct of humanity, and it will also seek to serve Harijans so as to promote their moral, social and material welfare.

4. The affairs of the Sangh shall be managed by a Central Board constituted as hereinafter provided.

5. The Central Board shall consist of the following members and (2) the Presidents of the Provincial Boards of the Sangh with power to the President to co-opt not more than five members.

The organizing members are:

1. Sjt Ghanshyamdas Birla, President
2. Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas, Bombay
3. Sir Lalubhai Samaldas, Bombay
4. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Bombay
5. Seth Ambalal Sarabhai, Ahmedabad
6. Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, Calcutta
7. Lala Lachmandas, Delhi
8. Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah, Madras
9. Rao Bahadur Srinivasan, Madras
10. Dr. T. S. S. Rajan, Trichinopoly
11. Sjt. A. V. Thakkar, General Secretary
12. Mr. Baloo P. Palwankar, Bombay
13. Mr. J. P. Mandelia, Treasurer, Delhi
14. Mr. D. P. Khaitan, Calcutta
15. Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru, Lahore.

6. The Central Board may co-opt members from time to time either for life or for a fixed period. The organizing and the co-opted members together shall at no time exceed the number of ex-officio members.

7. The President shall subject to re-election retire every three years and be elected by the then existing Board.

8. The President shall have the power to remove [the] Secretary or [the] Secretaries and [the] Treasurer and appoint others In their stead provided that there shall never be more than three Secretaries or more than two Treasurers.

9. The Sangh shall have as many branches in provincial centres as the President of the Central Board may deem necessary.

10. The President of the Central Board shall select the President of each Provincial Board who, in his turn, will select as many members for his Board as he may think fit not, however, more than ten.

11. The President of a Provincial Board shall appoint a working Secretary for his Board from among its members, subject to the approval of the President of the Central Board.

12. Each Provincial Board may form as many committees or agencies as may be found necessary in the interest of the Harijan cause.

13. The Presidents of the Central and Provincial Boards and their committees shall all be honorary.

14. The office-bearers and members of the Central Board he Provincial Boards and committees and agents shall (1) sign the pledge hereto annexed, (2) pay annual subscription in advance of Rs. 6.00 payable at his will in two half-yearly instalments subject to special exemption by a President within his jurisdiction, (3) perform some definite Harijan service named by him and approved by one half of the board, (4) send a diary to competent authority from month tomonth containing a record of such services.

15. It shall be competent for the Sangh to acquire and hold immovable properties. Such properties shall vest in a permanent Trustee or Trustees appointed by the President of the Central Board. The Trustee or Trustees shall be entitled to deal with them only in accordance with the resolutions of the Central Board.

16. The funds of the Central Board of the Sangh shall be deposited in a bank or banks in the name of the Sangh and the account shall be operated upon by the President or his nominee or nominees.

17. The funds of the Provincial Boards and their committees shall similarly be deposited in banks as far as possible and the accounts shall be operated upon by the respective Presidents or their nominees.

18. The Central Board shall meet in any convenient place in India at least once in a year. The quorum for its meeting shall be ten.

19. It shall be competent for the Central Board to frame bye-laws for preparing and passing of the central and provincial budgets, for the custody, disposal and audit of the funds of the Sangh and for otherwise regulating its work.

20. The Central Board may function in Indian States in which there is no prohibition against its activities.

21. No member or agent of the Central Board or Provincial Boards or committees shall while holding such position in any way engage in any campaign of civil disobedience.

22. A member of any Board or agent who fails without just cause to attend three consecutive meetings of Boards to which they belong shall be deemed to have vacated office.

23. Any member of a board when required thereto fails to carry out instructions duly issued to him by a competent authority may be relieved of his office at the discretion of the Central or the Provincial Boards.

24. Any person who subscribes to the object of the Sangh and will help the Sangh by paying and collecting contributions to the Sangh and otherwise further its object can become an associate of the Sangh and shall be kept informed of the proceedings of the Sangh from time to time and shall be entitled and invited to attend the meetings of the Central Board or of the Board of his Province without however the right of voting.

25. The Central Board, the Provincial Boards and the committees shall establish contact with Harijan organizations throughout the country and invite them to send lists of advisers who will be kept informed of the activities of the Sangh and who will be invited to attend the meetings of Boards or committees and to take part in their deliberations, without however exercising the right to vote.

26. Every Board or committee shall have as many Harijan members as it is possible to secure consistently with its maximum provided that the pledge to be signed by them shall be as per form B hereby attached and that they will be exempt from other conditions laid down in sub-clauses 2, 3 and 4 of clause 14 hereof.

27. For the better administration of the affairs of the Sangh the President shall select from among the members of the Central Board executive committee of seven members including himself as Chairman and two Secretaries.

28. The E. C. shall meet every three months and oftener when necessary and have all the power exercisable by the Central Board subject however to revision of its work by the Central Board in so far as such revision is possible. The four members besides the President and Secretaries will subject to re-selection retire every year.

29. All the acts performed hitherto and transactions undertaken under the superseded constitution are hereby ratified.

30. Consistently with the foregoing, the old constitution is hereby repealed—not inconsistently with the object of the Sangh, Central Board shall have the power to revise this Constitution from time to time.

31. During the transition stage the existing organizations shall function till changes in consonance with this Constitution are completed.

32. This Constitution shall come into effect as from . . .

APPENDIX A

I, name, age, occupation, residence believe in the complete eradication of untouchability as it is practised today in Hindu society- and hereby subscribe to the constitution of H. S. S. I do not consider any human being as inferior to me in status, shall pay in advance every half year commencing from 1st January 1935 the sum of . . . .

I further undertake to perform personal service of Harijans in the following manner:

(State)

I shall regularly send every month a diary of personal service to Harijans.

Date Signature

Place

APPENDIX B

I, full name, age, occupation, residence

I believe in the mission of the Harijan Sevak Sangh and

subscribe to its constitution.

I shall carry out all the instructions that may be issued from time to time by the Central Board or its branches.

From a photostat: G.N. 8733; also from *Constitution of the Harijan Sevak Sangh*

651. LETTER TO ABHYANKAR

March 9, 1933

MY DEAR ABHYANKAR,

Here is copy of my further correspondence with Sjt. Chhapkhane.[1] I suggest your seeking him and fixing up whatever is possible. He is so definite about what happened during my visit to Sangli that it is difficult to contradict him without unimpeachable evidence or to believe that he is guilty of saying what is not true.

Sjt. Joshi will perhaps show my letter[2] to you.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20512

652. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

March 9, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

The English *Harijan* has become self-supporting already. The subscriptions received to date from street sales and annual subscribers leave a balance without the aid of the Rs. 1044 from the Central Board[3]. This money can, therefore, now be refunded. Will you kindly tell me how you would want this money to be sent to you? I understand that you have to pay something to the Maharashtra Board. My enquiry as to the method of refunding the money is merely with a view to saving commission on money order, draft or cheque.

Arrangements have been made to issue a Gujarati *Harijan* also. It is being issued from Poona. The Bombay Board has guaranteed the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to K. R. Chhapkhane", 7-3-1933

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Vithal K. Joshi", 9-3-1933

[3] Servants of Untouchables Society

cost for three months in the event of any loss being incurred, but I have no such fear.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

[PS.]

Your letter written from Benares has arrived. You have been postponing the operation, which I do not like.[1]

From a copy: C.W. 7930. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also *In the Shadow of the Mahatma,* pp. 106-7

653. LETTER TO BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

March 9, 1933

THE JOINT HON. SECRETARIES
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION
18 BRITISH INDIAN STREET, CALCUTTA

DEAR FRIENDS,

I thank you for your letter of 23rd ultimo enclosing a memorandum on the Poona Pact on behalf of the British Indian Association.[2] I have been carrying on private correspondence with friends in this matter to ascertain Bengal opinion. My own position is quite clear. I was wholly uninterested in the number of seats reserved for untouchables or depressed classes. Once the principle of reservation was conceded, my own position was that the more they got the better it was for them and for Hinduism and, therefore, for the whole of India from every point of view. If untouchables are a part of ourselves, what can be grander than that we reserve seats for them without any

[1] The postscript appears only *In the Shadow of the Mahatma,* according to which source it was written in Hindi.

[2] The memorandum was prepared by a subcommittee, with Sir Bepin Bihary Ghose as its president" appointed by the All-Parties Bengali Hindu Conference held on the January 11, 1933, in the hall of the British Indian Association. The memorandum *inter alia* said: "It will thus be seen that the caste Hindus of Bengal are already smarting under a sense of injustice; and the Prime Minister's acceptance of the Poona Pact comes as a sensible addition to their grievances. Upon the basis of the facts set forth above, it is submitted that the Poona Pact did not fulfil the conditions for a substituted agreement laid down in the Prime Minister's Award, and that, therefore, the Prime Minister has ample justification for re-considering his assent to the same" (S.N. 20341) .

reservation. That to my mind would be the very best method of killing the spirit of difference. I wholly dissent from the view that the principle of separation is left intact in the Yeravda Pact[1]. On the contrary, the principle of joint election has been the main feature of the Yeravda Pact so far as the political side is concerned. That the candidates for joint election have to be selected by Harijan electors in the first instance is surely no drawback, if we have faith in ourselves and in our regard for them, and if all the four candidates selected happen to be anti-Hindu reactionaries it would be to me proof positive that during the period of grace we had failed to command their affection or esteem and we would have to thank our stars if we have to elect from among reactionary candidates. I do not in any way share your fear that depressed class members will not do justice to the Hindu or the national cause. Nor have I any fear that they will not be able to discharge their proper function as representatives of the people. Should it prove otherwise it will mean that we are not fit for swaraj.

All things considered, therefore, I fear that I can be no party to the revision of the Pact, and in any case I am only one of the parties concerned, and my opinion will be valueless if all the other parties consent to or desire revision of the Pact in the direction suggested by the British Indian Association.

As I do not wish to compromise your position in any way, I have not entered into a public discussion of your position nor will I do so now unless you wish me to. The very first person I wrote to was, I think, Dr. Bidhan Roy, and he told me that he was seeing all the interested parties and that he would write to me. I have not heard from him since. I am now in your hands.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20511. Also C.W. 7931. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] For the full text of the Pact, *vide* Appendix " Discussion whit a Friend", 13-1-1933

654. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

March 9, 1933

DEAR SATISBABOO,

I have your letter giving me the contents of the two issues of the Bengali *Harijan.* You will see the note[1] that is to appear in the ensuing number of the *Harijan.*

I note what you say about smallpox. I do not know however whether it is a useful thing for us to have statistics about the distribution of smallpox among different castes.

I am glad you are keeping in touch with sanatanists. That they will not listen to the other things until we give up temple-entry is well known. My suggestion is before them that they should start their own organizations and take up the other items. If they don't, it shows the hypocrisy of the whole thing.

As to varnashrama, I do mean that today if we must classify the whole of Hindus according to varna, there is only one varna possible, and that is Shudra. Acceptance of the fourth varna by all will represent not only the true state of Hindu society, but it will at one stroke level down all distinctions of high and low. That does not prevent anybody from attaining divine or any other knowledge, but it does mean that all live by their labour and all become entitled therefore to nothing more than simple maintenance. That in my opinion is varna dharma in a nutshell. That Hinduism has never lived up to it perfectly is true, but in my opinion it is equally true that Hinduism has in its purest period consciously lived up to it with success.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20507

[1] *Vide* "A True Servant", 11-3-1933

655. LETTER TO VITHAL K. JOSHI

March 9, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I have heard from Sjt. Chhapkhane.[1] He gives a categorical reply confirming Sjt. Athavale's and he also suggests that you should have gone to Sjt. Chhapkhane to have the matter cleared up. I suggest your doing it. Copies of the balance of correspondence are being forwarded to Sjt. Abhyankar. Of course there is no question of a court case. I can only plead with those who hold the money, but it is difficult for me to believe that a man like Sjt. Chhapkhane could be guilty of giving a false version of what happened during my visit to Sangli. No theory can be built upon Sjt. Gangadhar Rao's recollection. He does not say anything with confidence and it is not possible for anyone to recollect events that happened so many years ago. Therefore, unless there is unimpeachable evidence to the contrary, Sjt. Chhapkhane's word must be taken, and in that event I can only plead with him to use some part of the money at least in connection with Harijan work.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. VITHAL K. JOSHI
NEW PETH
SANGLI

From a microfilm: S.N. 20514

656. LETTER TO N.

March 9, 1933

MY DEAR N.[2],

I had hoped to hear from you today. I had your note scribbled on the back of the telegram that was received by you. You were right in refusing the Rs. 25. I did not like the subscription to your note. "Your son" looks unnatural and theatrical. If the truth has really dawned on you, you must realize the enormity of the past wrong and

[1] For Gandhiji's reply to him, *vide* "Letter to K. R. Chhapkhane", 7-3-1933

[2] An American women who later stayed at the Sabarmati Ashram for some time; the name in this and the subsequent relevant items, however, has been omitted.

you ought to shed all hysteria and unnaturalness. You can only become my daughter if you would be good as you have promised to me.

I had letters from S.[1] and Sir M.[2] I am therefore writing to Sir M. a letter giving him the purport of your confession and your promise, naturally withholding the names you have given me and I am sending a similar letter to S. That is right, is it not? S. adds in his letter that he would be delighted if you came under my guidance and utilized your services.

May God bless you and give you strength to keep your promise.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20504

657. LETTER TO M.

March 9, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter about N. She was with me for a few days and I regret to have to report to you that her record is not what you describe. Bit by bit she made her confession and it made a ghastly story. She seems to have led a most extravagant and immoral life, even from tender years. She was open to the advances of practically any person, and she was no better after her acceptance of Hindu religion. She has debts amounting to nearly Rs. 10,000 spread over Europe and India. She has travelled under a false name. The only thing I am able to say in her favour is that she has been quite frank with me in her recital of her recklessnesses, though, as I have said, they came bit by bit in answer to my cross-examination. She has professed penitence and made me a definite promise to say good-bye to her past life. I have told her that I could not take her on trust but that if she proved true to her promise I would not hesitate to defend her and to guide her. I do not know what capacity she has still left for controlling herself and keeping her promises.

In giving you this painful story of her confession I am betraying no confidence, for, she was to have published a confession much like this immediately on her reaching Bangalore. She was also to give

[1] An American women who later stayed at the Sabarmati Ashram for some time: the name in this and the subsequent elevant items, however, has been omitted,

[2] *ibid*

up the boarding house and with her son become a beggar relying purely upon a forgiving world's charity and was to live in a corner in Harijan quarters the simplest possible life giving up the governess and letting her baby son share the privilege of her penitent life.

There are some further details, some other particulars of her life, which I may not disclose, nor, so far as I am aware, will she.

Her confession has made me sad. I have had many boys and girls making their confessions to me, but it has never been my misfortune to come across a case like N.'s. But I have no right to judge her. Judgment is in the hands of God. Being myself in need of pity from the world I only pity her and love to help her to the extent of my ability. I felt drawn to her when she wrote to me announcing her decision to fast with me if I had commenced the fast in the begin-ning of the year. I had warned her against it and the correspondence became lengthened. I had hoped that she would become an excellent member of the army of Harijan servants and her letters give all that promise.

I thank you for your personal wishes for me and kind thoughts about me.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 20502

658. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA

March 9, 1933

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRA,

Here is a letter which I would like you to read and hand it to N.

I would like you also to give me the full name and address of R. of the Engineering College. I understand that he has been her chief companion in connection with the scavenging work.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20503

659. LETTER TO R. RAMAMOORTHY

March 9, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 10th February, reminding me of a quotation from "Santi Parva".

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. RAMAMOORTHY
C/O SJT. RAMACHANDRA RAO
1 RAVANA IYER ST.
P. T. MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 20508

660. LETTER TO PANCHANAN TARKARATNA

March 9, 1933

DEAR PANDITJI,

I was amazed to receive your undated letter.

So far as your son's visit is concerned, he was to come to me not as one of the *Shastri* disputants but as one desirous of answering my questions, enlightening me and to this end seeing me from day to day for 10 days or longer if necessary, and he was to come to me as your representative even as you had come[1] without imposing any conditions on me. It surprises me that now you should describe his coming to me as one of the disputants in the nature of fulfilment of your promise. Secondly, from the very commencement of the discussions, untouchability as it is practised today was the subject-matter of discussion[2], and I have a letter written by Pandits on the very date that they came to the effect that that was the common ground between them and me. You, your son or anybody can see the original document in my possession. But the Pandits had imposed another condition which they thought I would never accept, but in order not to miss the discussion with them when they had come as far as the jail gate, I

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 30-12-1932 and "Letter to Motilal Roy", 18-2-1933

[2] With sanatanist *Shastris,* on January 12; *vide* "Note to Deonayakacharya", 12-1-1933

waived my objection and accepted their condition retaining the words "as at present practised". Still they would not come. I cannot help saying that this was unreasonable, discourteous and unworthy of learned men. Of all the painful episodes that I have had the misfortune to face in my contact with *Shastris*, this was the most painful.

Of the other parts of your letter I desire to say nothing beyond this that I am unable to endorse your interpretation of the Shastras as being repugnant to common sense, universal morals and contrary to the interpretation of the Shastras by Pandits having no less learning and authority than the opposite school and in the presence of such a conflict of interpretation you will not blame me if I accept that which is more consistent with my moral sense.

As to your proposed fast, whilst I should deplore it if you ever came to undertake it, such fasts are an everyday occurrence in Hinduism and have always to be welcomed when they come from the purity of one's heart and without anger or malice.

You would not write as you have done about the two Bills now pending before the Legislature if you had carefully studied the contents and application of these Bills.[1] In my opinion they constitute no interference with anyone's religion or conscience. One Bill takes untouchability out of the domain of civil law which is what you and I and everybody else should desire, and the other ensures the free exercise of conscience by all, whereas today the conscience of a growing number of people is constrained.

Yours sincerely,

PANDIT PANCHANAN TARKARATNA
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20509 a

[1] These were unofficial Bills relating to the abolition of untouchability: one to be sponsored in the Central Legislative Assembly by Ranga Iyer and the other in the Madras Legislative Council by Dr. Subbaroyan. Ranga Iyer's Bill was to come up for introduction first on February 27 and then again on March 24. On both occasions "protracted discussions on other non-official Bills by members who were hostile or indifferent to the anti-untouchability movement" vitiated the attempt. —*India in 1932-33*

661. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

March 9, 1933

DEAR MOTIBABOO,

You have asked me to send my reply to Pandit Panchanan Tarkaratna directly. Unfortunately, you have not given me his address and he has omitted to give it in his letter. I therefore send my reply[1] to you. You may, if you like, put it in an envelope and post it from there. You should read the letter before posting. I patiently await your letter promised in your postcard.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20509

662. LETTER TO DEVA PRASAD SARVADHIKARI

March 9, 1933

DEAR SIR DEVA PRASAD,

I thank you for your letter of 3rd March and was grateful to learn that Abdul Alim of Tipperah had already been admitted to the institution[2] and that you were having him examined by a doctor and making arrangements for special attention being paid to him.

Let us hope that he will prove worthy of all the kindness that is being shown to him

Yours sincerely,

SIR DEVA PRASAD SARVADHIKARI
125 BOW BAZAR ST.
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20506

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Named ''The Refuge"; this was a home for the ''homeless, helpless and hopeless" of which the addressee was the President.

663. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 9, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I send with this my reply[1] to the question asked by Mary and Duncan. Read and think over it and then pass it on to them. I wrote to you[2] yesterday regarding Lakshmi and also sent a message for the occasion. Most probably Devdas will arrive there on Sunday.

I am becoming convinced that the source of asthma also is in the stomach. If, therefore, Chimanlal and Jamna cling to the experiment of milk diet with determination, their asthma is bound to be cured. And they need not also think that they must drink a certain quantity of milk. I think that they will be able to digest only a very small quantity. Milk is drunk for the sake of the proteins, the ghee and the vitamins which it contains. If proteins give strength, they also diminish it if there is the slightest excess of them. Weak people, therefore, can build up strength by drinking milk in a very small quantity. The chief food of such people should be vegetables and juicy fruits. Without trying other remedies, therefore, if they eat *bhaji* and juicy fruits in plenty and drink a very small quantity of milk for strength, they are bound to get all right. And if this regimen does not help them, I will not mind their concluding that nothing else will and doing nothing. They should drink the milk unboiled and mixed with some fruit or green vegetable. In doing so, they would be eating milk instead of drinking it, and it will then be much easier to digest. They should also regularly do *pranayamas*, slowly and moderately, on an empty stomach. Besides, they should take sun-bath. In this season, hip-bath also is bound to be beneficial.

I have looked into Radha's accounts. I am returning them. I think in the present circumstances we are helpless in this matter.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to F. Mary Barr and Duncan Greenless", 8-3-1933

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 8-3-1933

Expenses on food alone come to Rs. 30. Rs. 55 account for rent, railway fare and other expenses during the journey, and Rs. 25 for the doctor's fees, maid servant, postage, repair of watch, etc., and playing cards for bezique. There may be room for criticism in regard to this item of Rs. 25, but there can be no criticism in regard to the Rs. 30 for food, if the amount is for one month. The whole question of Ashram expenses, that is, of our way of living, is a complicated one. If we carefully watch ourselves daily and introduce greater and greater simplicity in the Ashram, we shall learn to rely more and more on God in our misfortunes in the shape of illness and accidents. Our work then will shine better. We shall feel happy with ourselves and will be safe in all circumstances. It will then be easy for us to control, without criticizing them, those others who spend too much. "We" here means most of the inmates of the Ashram who are seekers after truth and have dedicated themselves to its pursuit. Personally I feel that a time is coming when we shall have to live like sannyasis confined to the Ashram. That is, we shall have to be content with whatever treatment we can get in the Ashram itself for any illness. Almora was intended, is still intended, to supplement the Ashram. But I think it would be desirable to renounce even that. But we can do all these things only by cultivating such a climate of opinion in the Ashram. In doing so, nobody should look to what the other inmates do. Anybody who feels that he ought to practise such sannyasa should start doing so. In other words, he will not go anywhere outside the Ashram for treatment of illness or for his personal work. Just now, this is only an aspiration. I have merely taken this opportunity to put the suggestion before you so that you may think over it at leisure and discuss it with other senior inmates.

Sitla Sahai has attacked me too. But I have thrown the responsibility for the whole thing on you. He also has complained that I have shifted the responsibility. I will put up with that charge. Ask Purushottam to write a detailed letter to me. The doctor's remarks in regard to Kanu seem justified to me. If he has carefully learnt how to do the massage, if he gives complete rest to the affected part and if it is gently massaged every day, it will certainly be cured. The improvement will of course take time.

Parashuram seems to have joined the Ashram to test your capacity for endurance. But you are strong enough and so we need not worry. You may give him divorce when you can bear it no longer. Personally, I am now ready to accept this reform in Hindu marriage. Millions of poor Hindus do have the custom of divorce. Their lives would become unbearable without it. I see no dharma in people regarding themselves as belonging to the twice-born class and forcing women to accept their ideal. Spiritual bonds must be indissoluble. But when the ideal is forced upon people through law, it ceases to be dharma. I was discussing the question of marriage with the Ashram, but I digressed and discussed the problem of ordinary marriage. Those who join the Ashram marry it, and say so. The Ashram is the wife and the person who joins it is the husband. When, however, the bond becomes unbearable to the poor wife, she has every right to ask for divorce. You may use this right whenever you wish to.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C. W. 8330. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

TALK WITH SADASHIVRAO AND SHINDE[1]

January 13, 1933

BAPU: Even after this Bill is passed the majority should not exercise their right to frighten away the minority. The temple should be kept open for a few hours daily for the sake of the minority. They too have a certain sentiment for the image and believe in its importance and power. I would say to them that they should have *darshan* to their heart's content before the temple becomes 'impure'; I would go in after that.

SADASHIVRAO: But would it not hurt their inferiority complex?

BAPU: The question of inferiority arises only in the case of Harijans. If the reformists are in a majority, the Harijans should act like seniors, and should do out of their free will what they are not bound to do by law.

I don't want separate temples erected. But I would say to them [the sanatanists]: 'I shall make the necessary arrangement for you. You should not go away. I do not want to pay you in the same coin. You had regarded us as low. You asked up to be content with having *darshan* of the tower. But we are not going to regard you as low. We shall let you precede us and we shall respect your sentiments regarding the purity of the image.' Man compromises either through weakness or because he is strong. As a votary of truth I would make a compromise on the basis of my strength. Only yesterday I dealt with the sanatanists in this way. They asked me to sign some document. Normally I would not endorse such a statement. But in order to satisfy them I affixed my signature, but after making a couple of most essential changes. If I disclose what took place between them and me, it is not going to shed lustre on Hinduism.

I have learnt a lot from my involvement in this issue. I came to know what the Shastras had to say. Without knowing all this I could not have issued such statements. I would not have at any rate been able to write with such authority. Even the thought of this compromise would not have occurred to me had I not had all these interviews with them.

SHINDE: But they think this is where the hitch comes in.

BAPU: I do not look upon it as any hitch. I do not believe that all those who

[1] *Vide* "Letter to S. Nagasundaram", 13-1-1933

raise objections are insincere. I don't want to drive them out of the temples. The lives of those who go to temples with a sincere heart are linked with the temples. I say this on the strength of my mother's example. She would not put a grain in her mouth without having *darshan* in a temple, however ill and bed-ridden she might be. She used to derive strength from this practice of hers. I do not want to exercise the right I have acquired as though I were a demon or a bully. I have to give a thought to a true mother. All the women who visit temples are but mothers to me. If they want to preserve the purity [of the images], they may do so. The Harijans should be charitable enough to let them do it. In fact they should let them do it of their own free will. Take the instance of spectacles and injections which are in vogue. Our ancestors would regard these as superstitions. Tomorrow there may come up somebody who may regard praying as so much superstition. Even then we ought to respect people's sentiments. Therefore the compromise I have suggested is absolutely correct. The sanatanists would not admit it but I do see they are coming closer to me. I am myself a Harijan and I have influence over them.

SHINDE: The Harijans will of course listen to you. They are bound to listen to you. When I ask you not to make any compromise, I do not mean that there will never be any compromise.

BAPU: Mate wanted a segregated space for having *darshan.* That was an unfair compromise.

SHINDE: From the spiritual point of view your compromise is no compromise at all. It will gradually wear out.

BAPU: Yes, it takes for granted mutual respect and sincerity. Only then does a temple become a true temple. In the same way the sanatanists can, if they want to, have tables reserved in restaurants. While I suggest all this I take it for granted that we are in the majority. If the sanatanists are in the majority we may not set foot in the temples.

I have found out a new way of looking at compromises. The initiative for compromise should come from the stronger party. Only he who has truth on his side can arrive at such a compromise.

SHINDE: Yes, the same is true of forgiveness, which only the strong can practise.

BAPU: This compromise in no way detracts from your principles, or mine or anybody else's. One that would do violence to other's principles can only be called cruel.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 47-9

APPENDIX II

DISCUSSION WITH A FRIEND[1]

January 13, 1933

Q. What is meant by the Inner Voice?

A. The Inner Voice is the voice of the Lord. It is a voice other than our own. It could be the voice of Satan or of God. In order to ensure that it is God that speaks from within us, we should correctly observe the *yamas* and *niyamas.* Millions of men may claim to hear the Inner Voice but the true Inner Voice could be heard in very few. We cannot adduce proof in its support. But it does have its influence. The Inner Voice is a power beyond us but it is not an outer force. 'Beyond us' means 'a power which is beyond our ego'. When the ego is lying dormant there are two forces which act upon it, the real and the unreal. When we are one with the power that is real it is said, in the language of mysticism, that God is speaking through us. When we are one with *sat* our ego is reduced to zero.

Q. When can man claim to have heard the Inner Voice?

BAPU: That depends upon the man. When he experiences that he is not acting on his own he can make that claim. Supposing I constantly try to hear the Inner Voice, I constantly pray to God that He should act through me and reduce me to a cipher, a moment will come when I shall feel that the Lord is letting me hear Him. At such a time I can even say that I am hearing the voice of the Lord. But how can I prove it? It is for my conduct to prove it. But that too will not be the final test. Supposing a man lies buried in a cave in the Himalayas and God sends me there to see him. Supposing I reach the place, I dig a little and meet the man. Even then quite likely it may not be that I heard the Inner Voice. It could be a mere accident or even my illusion or someone might have said it to me. The world will no doubt judge me from the result. If the result is favourable the world will say that it was a miracle. But indeed there can be no final proof in this case. Man himself does not know when he is deceiving himself, or when he is pretending. There is a greater danger in hypocrisy than in self-deception.

We find further proof when there are many instances pointing towards the same conclusion. This includes all the great men, Buddha, Krishna, Mohammed. It was not with their own power that they uttered the truths. But some occult power urged them to such utterance. Some people are worthy enough, and through them the occult power works. But we cannot be sure when it will happen.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 49-50

[1] *Vide.* "Letter to aGeorge Joshph", 13-1-1933.

APPENDIX III

DISCUSSION WITH DHARMADEV[1]

January 17, 1933

BAPU: I accept heredity to the extent that the progeny of a pure Brahmin man and a pure Brahmin woman should be a Brahmin. If such a Brahmin raises his children as Shudras he should be regarded as fallen from his varna. He becomes a fallen Brahmin.

DHARMADEV: But why at all call him a Brahmin?

BAPU: There is no high and low among the varnas. We may call him only fallen because he can return to his varna by quitting his fallen state. Leave aside the talk of high and low. Suppose a carpenter gives up carpentry and takes up the work of cleaning lavatories. The *Gita* would describe him as fallen from dharma. "Better is death in the discharge of one's duty." A carpenter may not go after the work of a goldsmith. Similarly, if he tries to get instructed in the Vedas, even then I would call him a carpenter who had fallen. We want to bring about harmony between dharma and karma (i.e., practical life). Will it do if we talked of making people adventurous and asked them all to embark upon trade? Hence occupations came to be hereditary. We may only ask them to apply their talents and powers for society's enduring welfare. Today we admire those who assault the Kanchanjungha. My heart does not admire them; it censures them. It is not that we never made any discoveries. Patanjali is responsible for the scientific discovery of ahimsa.

DHARMADEV: Does it mean that one may not develop in oneself any quality appropriate to [any other] varna? I am a Kshatriya but I have no Kshatriya quality. You are a Vaishya, but where is your Vaishya conduct?

BAPU: I was talking of a pure social order. No such order exists today. There is today a confusion of varnas because the ashrama system has disappeared. Only one ashrama remains now—the householder's. And that too not based on dharma but on self-indulgence. And the varna that remains is the Shudra's. Today we are slaves under an alien rule because there are no more Kshatriyas, no more Brahmins, no more Vaishyas. The Vaishyas are busy making money. And can we describe ourselves even as Shudras? We serve only under compulsion, not regarding service as our dharma. A *Shastri* admitted to me that we are all *Chandalas* by our actions. What should this *Chandala* community do? Should it attempt to bring about varnadharma? I don't say that this varnadharma should have the same name. The Shastras have described

[1] *Vide* "Letter to A College Student", 17-1-1933.

dharma as without beginning but they do speak of organization into varnas. I am yet doing my *sadhana*. I cannot speak in this matter with any self-confidence because my *sadhana* is not adequate.

DHARMADEV: Then why don't you say that you don't believe in any varna, as there is no varna today? You have maintained that a Brahmin is born, but Brahminhood is not acquired by birth. "A man is born a Shudra."[1]

BAPU: I don't agree with you on this point. The Arya Samajists have restricted their reason. My language is aphoristic, it lacks precision. It is therefore open to several interpretations.

DHARMADEV: You say that Brahmins should regain the high position they held of yore.

BAPU: Quite correct. I was born a Vaishya, but people see in me certain qualities worthy of a Brahmin and say that I am a Brahmin. But I must earn my livelihood through my qualities as a Shudra. At the Ashram everyone works eight hours a day to earn his food. This communism of mine is deduced from Hinduism. Ruskin also taught the same thing. But today the Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra all want to become multi-millionaires. Hence I maintained that everyone should have equal payment, whether a barrister or a Shudra. Everyone should dedicate his talent to the service of the community. If the whole community made sacrifices the people would not starve. Even gamblers have everything in common. We are worse than the gamblers. I have come across such generous gamblers on board who pocket nothing as their personal gains but spend it off in the company. My heart weeps at our present condition. Tears may not fall from my eyes but my heart does weep. I cry when anyone commits an untruth or succumbs to passion at the Ashram which runs on public funds. I wish that the experiment which I am carrying on at the Ashram is tried in the whole world. If I fail in this I would not mind taking a thousand births to fulfil it. Whoever employs his talent for personal gain is good for nothing. One's talent ought to be utilized for one's own community. I must express my thoughts in a new language.

DHARMADEV: But you also say that you accept both varna and karma [one's actions as deciding one's caste].

BAPU: Look, here is a matter of justice. What can we do if people do not lend us their ear however much we may carry on our propaganda? That is why man has been advised to observe silence. What else can be propagated except truth? I have declared what varnadharma is, but now I don't propagate it because it is irrelevant. There is no feeling of high and low in varnadharma, but it is very much there in untouchability.

[1] The second half of the verse says, "He becomes a twice-born (Brahmin) through-his sacraments."

Therefore untouchability is an excrescence on varnadharma.

DHARMADEV: It was born of caste.

BAPU: Yes, from caste; but with the disappearance of untouchability the feeling of high and low among the castes will also go. The greatest reptile is the serpent of untouchability. I don't care if the rest, such as the scorpion and so on persist. When untouchability goes . . . .

DHARMADEV: But it will not go unless we break the barriers of caste.

BAPU: Why did I undertake this fast? only to do away with that feeling of high and low.

DHARMADEV Why don't you say it plainly? You mix up the issues of heredity and actions.

BAPU: But I do proclaim myself an enemy of caste; I am a champion of the varnas.

DHARMADEV: But you do mix up [the issues of] heredity and actions. Why should we regard Harijans as Shudras? But you have said as much.

BAPU: Now I would not repeat that statement. Now I would only say that we may not regard him as *Chandala*.

DHARMADEV: Why don't you clarify the sanatana dharma? Sanatana dharma is the eternal dharma.

BAPU: Sanatana dharma might contain the eternal dharma, but if the people would not accept this position how will it remain eternal? I subscribe to the Jain theory of *anekantavada.* I do not accept any one thing as admitting only one solution. Hence I call this dharma the true dharma. But I would not call it *sanatana*— as long as the world does not accept it.

DHARMADEV: Where did you find this interpretation?

BAPU: This is the historical interpretation. The historical interpretation of *goghna*[1] is different from its actual meaning.

DHARMADEV: No. You are not clarifying your position to the sanatanists. You ought to tell them that sanatana dharma means the eternal dharma, the Vedic dharma; all that is opposed to it is *adharma.* "There is no dharma higher than the Veda." You have said in one place that the Shastras should be acceptable both to the reason and to the heart. Nothing in the Vedas is contrary to reason.

BAPU: Say, there are two *Shastris* quarrelling over the interpretation of the word *duhitri*. One says that it means a daughter, the other says it means one who milks the cows. Both of them went far in the dispute and the judge ordered both of them to be sent to the gallows because one talks of one thing and the other talks of

[1] Slaughterer of cows

the same thing in a different sense. Similarly we cannot carry on a discussion by each of us offering a different interpretation of sanatana dharma. Therefore I say that you are making nonsense of sanatana dharma. They say there is a sanatana dharma to marry off a ten-year-old girl. Now if the people would not support such a thing, who would call it sanatana dharma? They say they have millions of men behind them, I say there are millions of men behind me. I emphatically say that I talk of nothing but the ancient dharma which I interpret as above. Someone said that I should declare myself an Arya Samajist. I said, "Why? Is it because people might stop agreeing with me?" Should I give up the *Smritis, Itihasas,* Puranas? I have a different interpretation of image-worship in which I believe. I even maintain that there is image-worship in Christianity and even Islam. According to my dharma I should preserve all that is worth preserving and reject all else. Hence I say that I don't want a new name. The name Hindu dharma is enough for me. For me Hindu dharma is an unfathomable ocean. It includes many things. Therefore I call myself neither an Arya Samajist nor a Brahmo Samajist but only a Hindu.

DHARMADEV: In what sense do you believe in image-worship? Acharya Ramadev maintains that since the temple is a public place it should be open to all. However, we should try and persuade the priests to give up image-worship.

BAPU: Here I differ with you. I believe that those who have the *darshan* of the Lord in Kashi Vishwanath [really] see Him. My mother never took a meal without having *darshan* of the Lord in the temple. She used to tell me that she went there to become pure, to fulfil her dharma. I bow to her. I wondered what dharma I could teach this mother. All these things are imaginary and are sustained only by faith.

DHARMADEV: But would one agree to see bread in stone?

BAPU: Yes, if a man looked upon stone as bread and ate it he will no doubt have peace at the moment. Vishwamitra took the flesh after stealing it. He bathed and performed *sandhya,* and then threw it away. But did he not have peace when in the first instance he took it? I am a votary of truth, I am in quest of God, I find new gems daily which I go on distributing to others. The same thing is to be found in my recent statement about civil disobedience and untouchability. It may look incomprehensible because the science of satyagraha is new, people are not used to it.

DHRMADEV: Some say that you are promulgating a new Veda with the help of your Inner Voice.

BAPU: Let them say so! I believe there can be no new Veda. The Vedas are endless. Anybody's utterance at the inspiration of the Lord within is nothing but Veda. What Mohammed has said could also be Vedic utterance. That is precisely why truth is Veda.

DHARMADEV: Veda is truth.

BAPU: All right, but Vedas mean pure knowledge and pure knowledge cannot be opposed to truth. If you come across a statement opposed to morality or truth you should say that it is an interpolation. Or if it is a Vedic statement you do not accept it.

DHARMADEV: Do you still find *Satyarthaprakash* a disappointing work?

BAPU: I have not yet said that I don't. What should I do?

DHARMADEV: At the time when you said it you wanted to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity by any means. That is why you said so.

BAPU: That means I told a lie?

DHARMADEV: No. But the atmosphere had influenced you. I request you to please read the book again. I have read it many times and every time I read it I find something new in it.

BAPU: This I can accept. But at present where can I find the time to read? But I shall see.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 62-6

APPENDIX IV

INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU" CORRESPONDENT[1]

POONA,
January 14, 1933

"Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof" cryptically remarked Mahatma Gandhi when your correspondent met him this afternoon in the shade of a mango tree in the jail compound and asked him what would be his attitude if the Government decided on some dilatory course of action to gain time and refused immediate sanction to Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill.

The Mahatma's general health, I was told, is fairly good. I learn that no specialist has yet been called in to examine his right elbow. He was signing numerous replies to letters, which Mr. Mahadeo Desai had prepared earlier in consultation with him. At one corner was sitting Gandhiji's Madrasi typist.

Gandhiji said that he would await the Government of India's decision. He stated that he had decided to express his views on the much discussed proposition to send round a committee to gauge opinion in respect of temple-entry.

Gandhiji wanted the lawyers to examine the legal issue and pronounce their

[1] Vide'Telegram to "The Hindu" , 18-1-1933 and "Interview to Associated Press", 18-1-1933

opinions irrespective of the Government's decision on the question of giving sanction to the Bill. If the Government decided against giving sanction to the Bill, he was sure matters would not be allowed to rest there. He would try to unsettle a settled question, in the same manner as he had done in the case of the Premier's Award. He would enter into correspondence with the highest authority and would resist with his life, if necessary, what he considered to be a piece of injustice to a section of humanity.

The Hindu, 16-1-1933

APPENDIX V

STATEMENT BY MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA[1]

The object of the special session of the Sanatana Dharma Mahasabha is to focus and voice the most informed and most esteemable orthodox opinion on some questions, including those relating to the removal of untouchability and temple-entry which has been agitating the sanatanist world on one side, and those who are described as reformers on the other. I have been distressed to note differences between the two sides becoming acute, and it is evident that if these differences are unsolved, the Hindu community would be further divided and weakened. The differences are largely due to misunderstanding, and this, in its turn, is due to a great extent on imperfect knowledge of what the Shastras have laid down for our guidance in important matters in question. It should not be necessary to say that Mahatma Gandhi cannot desire to injure sanatana dharma. He has proved to the world that he is willing and determined to throw away even his life in the attempt to serve the country by removing disabilities under which the vast number of those who belong to it labour, so that they may enjoy the full benefit of being Hindus and remain contented and happy members of the community.

It is equally necessary to say that sanatanists who do not agree with Mahatma Gandhi's proposals or methods are not wanting in sympathy with the depressed classes. This being so, I am confident that it is possible to arrive at a solution of the problem in conformity with the Shastras which should be acceptable to both sections of sanatanist opinion—more advanced and less advanced—and which should establish peace and religious unity among the Hindu community on a basis that will endure.

From statements recently made by Mahatma Gandhi, it is clear that he is not only willing, but anxious to show every respect for the orthodox opinion.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Madan Mohan Malaviya", 20-1-1933 and "Agreeing to Differ", 18-2-1933

From utterances of several esteemed exponents of sanatana dharma, it is also clear that they are willing to move forward to bring about an understanding which will be consistent with the Shastras. This being so, I believe that, by dispassionate consideration of the Shastras by those who claim to expound them, it will be generally conceded, rules of action can be laid down which would secure the most liberal and practicable advance for the humblest Hindu and satisfaction to the most orthodox conservative opinion which is willing to act in conformity not merely with the letter, but also with the spirit of the Shastras. I have convened the Mahasabha with the conviction that such a unity can be brought about among the sanatanist Hindus and appeal to all of them to make such contribution to the success of this effort as lies in their power.

To prevent misunderstanding, I wish to make the position clear. Speaking in 1923 as the President of the Hindu Mahasabha of Holy Kashi in the presence of great gathering of learned and pious men, I pleaded that opportunity should be afforded even to the humblest Hindu to have a purifying and ennobling *darshan* of the deity whom we adore in our temples and offer his prayer to Him. I urged that this may be done in conformity with rules which may be laid down in that behalf and further urged that other disabilities from which the depressed classes suffered should be removed. I still hold the same opinion and have publicly repeated it many times during the last few years and last few months, but have never been able to approve of recourse to satyagraha with the object of getting the temple opened to the depressed classes. I do not think it right that this kind of pressure should be exerted in a matter where religious convictions and practices come into play. Those who adhere to the orthodox view have also got their convictions which are deep-seated and come down through the ages. I believe that it is the sacred duty of those of us who differ from them to do our best to bring about a change of those convictions. But by the very nature of the case, this duty demands that we should attempt it by resort to peaceful persuasion only.

This was laid down in a resolution which was passed by the Bombay public meeting held immediately after the Poona Pact over which I presided, and at which, the All-India Anti-untouchability League was established for the purpose of carrying on propaganda against untouchability. That resolution stated that "for this purpose steps should immediately be taken to secure as early as possible that (a) all public wells, schools, roads, sarais, dharmashalas, crematoriums, burning-ghats, etc., should be declared open to the depressed classes and (b) all public temples should be open to members of the depressed classes provided that for carrying out (a) and (b) no force or compulsion be used but resort shall be had only to peaceful persuasion." It is both just and expedient that the solution of such a question should be one that would satisfy the community as a whole. In my opinion, such a solution can be reached only

by the method of argument and persuasion with the help of those scholars who are versed in the Shastras and who desire the good of every section of the community. It is to bring about such an agreement and solution that I have invited the special session of the Sanatana Dharma Mahasabha, and I am hoping and praying too that God will bless the attempt and crown it with success.

Towards this end, I intend to place the following concrete proposal before the Mahasabha, that for the uplift of the depressed classes, the following plan may be adopted:-

1 (a) *Samskar* and *updesh*—initiation and instruction—known as *diksha.* This will consist (a) of *prayashchittam*—penance and purification;

(b) *tyag*—giving up carrion and beef, leavings of dishes (*uchchhishta*), wine;

(c) *diksha*—receiving *mantram,* either *ashtakshar mantram* (with or without wearing *tulsi* bead); *panchakshar mantram* (with or without wearing *rudraksha* bead);

(d) *Achara grahana*—daily bath and daily prayer (morning and evening), daily reading of the sacred book (teaching every man, woman and child to read and write will be an integral part of the scheme);

(e) *vrata*—vows—observing five necessary vows which are prescribed for all castes, ahimsa, satya, *asteya, shaucham* and *indriyanigraha,* (hurtlessness, truth, non-stealing, purity of body and mind, and control of senses);

2 (a) freedom to join public meetings and public schools;

(b) use of public wells, roads, parks, sarais, dharmashalas, burning-ghats, etc.; and

(c) entry into public temples for *devadarshana* and *stuti*.

NOTES. If the scheme is approved, the giving of *diksha* should be completed within a month. The carrying out of this scheme will mean a great social, religious and spiritual uplift of the classes. It will mean making them Harijans in the full sense of the term. This will be only one of the proposals to be placed before the gathering of Acharyas and learned men. There will be many proposals before them for their consideration. There is every hope that with God's grace result of deliberations will be one which will be welcomed with joy by all followers of sanatana dharma and all well-wishers of humanity.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-1-1933

APPENDIX VI

TALK WITH M. G. BHANDARI[1]

January 24, 1933

The Superintendent read the statement. When Gandhiji woke up he said, "What do you propose to do now? Let me know so that I may inform the Government. . . . But it would be better if you do not go on a fast now."

BAPU: There is no Inner Voice urging me to go on a fast forthwith. It would be regarded as an arbitrary action if I went on a fast now. I am perturbed at the Viceroy's decision, no doubt, but it is likely that my perturbation might be only temporary. A fast might be in the offing but not now. If it comes up in its natural course let it. I cannot say when it will come. I shall have to go on a fast only if I feel helpless—as I had been at the time of the Award when I resorted to a fast. You can inform the Government that it is not my intention to go on a fast in the immediate future. You have already seen my statement. I have nothing in my heart over and above this statement. Today I woke at 3 in the morning, and my mind was absolutely clear about what I had to write. The beautiful Chitra star was shining above.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 86

APPENDIX VII

TALK WITH DUNCAN GREENLEES[2]

January 25, 1933

BAPU: Whatever the non-Hindus might do is not likely to touch the core of this injustice because the Harijans are still clinging to Hinduism. I know how much they are inter-twined with Hinduism. That is why I had poured out my heart in my speech at the Round Table Conference. In India the villages are mostly populated by Hindus. All the untouchables say that they are Hindus. Quite a few do not even feel the injustice. They are in such a miserable plight that the thought of renouncing their faith would not occur to them. But I shall not be surprised if some day they set out to kill the Savarnas.

G. Would they be suffering from inferiority complex?

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Abegum Mohammad Alam", 23-1-1933

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Viriyala Venkata Rao", 25-1-1933

BAPU: No, worse. In the case of inferiority complex there is the consciousness of injustice being done. But these people are not even aware of it. That is why I say that if a non-Hindu happens to be interested in this movement he should be prompted only by compassion. If a non-Hindu wants to help, he should associate himself with a Hindu organization before doing so.

G. I have been to the temples of South India.

BAPU: I want to stop this parody of Hinduism. I want pure gold. There will be political consequences of this activity, but I don't at all think of political consequences. I would engage myself in this activity even if there were to be no political consequences, I don't care for them. I want to bring about spiritual results and for that I am willing to sacrifice thousands of lives including mine. This is a great injustice being done to a large section of the community. To remove it we ought to work with a sense of atonement. One should work with the feeling that one has committed an injustice and one must remove it oneself. I don't want a Gengiz Khan to descend upon us and threaten to cut the throats of the obstinate Savarnas and bring about this reform.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 89-90

APPENDIX VIII

DISCUSSION WITH C. RAJAGOPALACHARI AND OTHERS[1]

January 30, 1933

Today Rajaji, Devdas and Ghanshyamdas arrived and discussed the situation arising from the Viceregal sanction to Ranga Iyer's Bill. Bapu explained that the whole question was religious and had nothing to do with politics.

My position is wholly religious. I cannot look at this thing from a political viewpoint. I must have the Bill withdrawn if people are really opposed to it. Then someone will tell me with the promptness of an arrow what I should do. We certainly do not wish to enter temples stealthily. Temple-entry is definitely a spiritual act and it must bring about a revolution in society. This whole idea of my fast is based on the belief that a large section of the people favour temple-entry, but they do not voice it. If people are on our side but the law is not, we can ask the trustees to break the law and to put up with it if someone were to bring an action against them under this law.

Bapu then stated that they should obtain a clear referendum in this regard. . . . But Bapu thought that even if it were to take three months the work must be

[1] *Vide"* Letter to K. Kelappan", 28-1-1933 also footnote 3, "Letter to Ranachhoddas Patwari", 11-1-1933

accomplished in the area chosen.

BIRLA: In that case the best referendum is that there should be fresh elections to the Legislature on this issue.

BAPU: We would easily win them. But that will not give us the ratio of the temple-going Hindus' vote.

. . . Acharya invites us to go to the Varnashrama Swarajya Sangh. He is involved in it. And if we want to do so, we can, by capturing the Sangh and defeating him as it happened in 1921 when the Hindu Mahasabha was captured. But whatever it is, it is intolerable that the Bill should hang fire for two years simply because it was being circulated among the members.

RAJAJI: Why should we object to it if the delay was due to the circulation of the Bill among the members?

BAPU: Because we know it is only an excuse and it is dishonest. If as a result of the referendum public opinion suddenly sways in favour of the Bill I would press for its early passage. . . .

Then they discussed the subject of *Harijan Sevak.* Rajaji's objections were: (1) our journal will be read only by our own people whereas at present your statements are published in all the newspapers. (2) The journal might prove useless.

BAPU: It is very necessary for training our workers and also for tying up all loose ends. There are so many things which cannot be conveyed through A.P.I. In fact I wonder why you did not feel the necessity of a journal till now.

For conducting the referendum Birla suggested having pandits instead of laymen but added few men of character could be found among them.

BAPU: Then they are not needed. Character means clinging steadfast to one's beliefs. The beliefs of a man who changes them for a higher fee have no worth. I would of course choose to have a sincere pandit, but I would prefer a layman to a pandit who lacks character.

B

January 31, 1933

Vallabhbhai had a heated discussion continuing from the previous evening about a referendum and about utilizing Rajaji in upper India for this purpose. . . . [He argued] that a referendum as such could be of no use unless we have our further aims clarified.

BAPU: My doubt increases whether the people are firmly behind us.

VALLABHBHAI: We never had the opportunity to show it. . . .

Yesterday Bapu had said to Rajaji that he would be able to advise him in this matter to a certain limit only.

RAJAJI: Since you have started this movement we must work for it. . . . But if the movement would work only if I were out of it I would prefer to quit.

BAPU: If you independently and dispassionately feel that you alone would be my representative in this movement you should regard this as a clear call to work for the movement and ought to continue the work without caring for public criticism. But I always recite the verse: "Whoever, leaving secure things etc."[1] to those who have the slightest doubt in their minds and tell them that they ought to give the benefit of the doubt to their initial pledge of civil disobedience. But if you feel you have a clear call, and it seems you do, you must do Harijan work.

RAJAJI: Is the fast yet impending?

BAPU: Yes, it is unavoidable. Looking at the happenings around I think the sooner it comes the better. I have heard about a case at Kanpur. Three Harijan candidates contested the Municipal Corporation election. The other party sponsored none but three Harijan candidates to oppose them. With the result that no Harijan was elected. This has deeply hurt me. I had girded up my loins against having reserved constituencies. But now I think that had I been in Ambedkar's place I would have opposed it much more violently. In this Kanpur case they prevented the Harijans from winning only to safeguard their own interest. The people should have only seen to it that three Harijan candidates win the election either for their own party or for the opposition. This case is a clear violation of the Poona Pact. I wrote to Hariji (Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru).

He attempted to explain it with cool unconcern and informed me that he would further investigate it. But I want no such investigation. I have already told him to set right this injustice.

Birla and the others told Bapu that the Kanpur case was only an exception. The Hindu society was undergoing a speedy change for the better.

BAPU: I do know it. Such instances should not precipitate the fast. But such incidents do upset me. I am however consciously striving to postpone the ordeal of fast.

BIRLA: But once these Bills are passed wouldn't there be an end to this question of the fast?

BAPU: No, my friend, not at all. The fast does not depend solely on the Bills. The question before me is not merely that of temple-entry but the whole question [of untouchability]. Day after day I feel more and more that the likelihood of my fast is not diminishing but growing. I cannot say why it is so. I do not even know what will

[1] The verse runs as follows: "Whoever, leaving secure things runs after insecure ones loses the former, the latter being as good as lost."

precipitate it but this feeling is slowly but certainly growing. I know this much that I am not at all at ease. All these incidents taken as a whole fail to make a good impression on me. True, some good things are also happening. I cannot shut my eyes to them. On the contrary, I try to close my eyes to unfavourable things. For instance look at this nasty correspondence I am carrying on with these religious teachers and legal pandits.

BIRLA: But you should be content with the speed at which the reform is proceeding.

BAPU: Yes, those who have patience will be content. But it does not at all comfort my heart. I know our workers have plunged into activity, there is no lethargy in them. But looking at the whole thing there is hardly anything that can satisfy my heart.

RAJAJI: . . . To cut a long story short I may say that you have grown impatient.

BAPU: I know, as a practical man I must hold my patience. There is no reason to be impatient. Let me assure you that I entertain no such feeling. I had taken no time to come to the decision before January 2 that I should not go on fast. And let me inform you that some of my co-workers are sore because I didn't begin my fast on January 2. Only a few days ago a friend argued that no reasons had come up to postpone the fast which had already been decided upon.

RAJAJI: You have pampered all these co-workers. (Loud laughter)

BAPU: That is all right. But there are others too who have condemned this postponement and they are not at all known to me. One gentleman even went on an eleven-day fast protesting against me. I sent him a severe wire telling him that his fast was a sin and nothing less; only then did he give it up. Hence as far as this question goes please believe me that I am struggling within myself. Yet I cannot say to you that there will be no fast. When I say this my friends in England do not get angry with me. Whenever they have a doubt in their mind they try to believe that there must be God's hand behind. Andrews had written to me several times expressing his doubts. Afterwards he wired to me cancelling all his letters and assured me that he had then understood the whole thing correctly.

Alluding to people's superstitions, Rajaji said: Some people really believe that hitherto Gandhiji used to bring the rains but now he is committing an act owing to which the rains may fail.

BAPU: You are talking about the ignorant people. But I have heaps of letters from people with B.A. and B.L. degrees, which are full of anger, bitterness, venom and abuses, besides superstition.

RAJAJI: This looks like a misalliance between legal expertise and a low class master. (Laughter)

BAPU: My present feeling is that the possibility of the fast is not very far away.

How can I say when the fast will come up? When I started my fast in Bombay in 1921, I abruptly woke up Mathuradas who was sleeping by my side and told him: 'Don't argue with me, this is my resolution., The same was the case with my 21-day fast—Hakimji, Mohammed Ali all were dazed. But will anyone on that account say that the fast was wrong? I for one think that the fast did achieve its object then, it will prove useful even after 5000 years.

Mathuradas then asked what a worker should do who felt bound to offer civil disobedience but was tired.

BAPU: It is difficult to tell. But why shouldn't such a person do Harijan work? Of course there will be one condition, that he must declare that he is tired and that therefore instead of going to jail he wants to do Harijan work. He cannot do Harijan work by concealing this fact. Rather than doing Harijan work while concealing the truth he had better sit at home doing nothing. There is courage in humbly confessing the truth. Those who want to rest should declare it and say that they want to improve their health and till then they will do Harijan work. The point is that one should not practise deceit. Deceit will benefit neither Congress work, nor the work of civil disobedience nor untouchability work.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 100-6

APPENDIX 1X

LETTER FROM GOVERNMENT OF INDIA[1]

[Before *February 17, 1933*]

The Governor-General-in-Council has carefully considered the points urged by Mr. Gandhi in his letter of the 1st February 1933, addressed to the Private Secretary to the Viceroy, in which he requests that, for the reasons stated therein, the Government of India should facilitate the progress and passage of the Bills regarding temple-entry, which will be introduced in the Assembly by Mr. Ranga Iyer and others. He is unable to accept the arguments developed by Mr. Gandhi relating to the Poona Pact, and notes that the Resolution he has quoted did not form part of the Pact as communicated to the Government of India. In the matter of the Pact, Government

[1] This was received on February 17. *Vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 1-2-1933, "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 17-2-1933 and "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of India", 19-2-1933

were concerned merely to accept a modification of the representation in the Legislatures which had been provided in the Communal Award by His Majesty's Government. But quite apart from the Pact, the Government for many years have taken an active interest in the improvement of the conditions under which the depressed classes live. That interest has been directed to the matters referred to in the Resolution which he quotes, such as education and the provision of the normal facilities of life, which were placed in the forefront of the Resolution but appear not to be regarded by him as the vital part of it. The Government have naturally taken no initiative in matters which specifically affect religious practice. In regard to that, they have nothing to add to the statement issued to the Press on 23rd January. They must reiterate that in their opinion it is essential that the consideration of a measure, which so closely affects the religious customs and usages of the Hindu community, should not proceed unless the proposals are subjected to the fullest examination in all their aspects, not merely in the Legislatures, but also outside it, by all who will be affected by them. This purpose can only be satisfied if the Bill is circulated in the widest manner for the purpose of eliciting public opinion, and if adequate time is given to enable all classes of Hindus to form and express their considered views.

Gandhi-Government of India Correspondence. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta

APPENDIX X

DISCUSSION WITH B. R. AMBEDKAR[1]

February 4, 1933

Discussing the propriety or otherwise of Ranga Iyer's two Bills [Ambedkar] said: The one-paragraph Bill is a very simple one. Its fair point lies in admitting that this custom is immoral. There is no such admission in the second Bill.

BAPU: No, it is there in its preamble.

A. But it is not clear. . . . I also think that the two Bills do not go together. . .

BAPU: The one-paragraph Bill is certainly superior to the other. But the other lengthier Bill was brought forward because the first one could not be introduced in the Provincial Legislature. There is no contradiction in the two Bills. In one Bill untouchability ceases to be a disability and the law refuses to accept the argument based on untouchability. As a result of the second Bill, temple authorities are obliged to take steps under certain circumstances. If we can get both the Bills passed the trustees will not be able to put up any kind of obstacle. I take it upon myself to have all the temples opened within one month if we could get both the Bills passed. The

[1] *Vide* "Dr. Ambedkar and Caste", 7-2-1933

sanatanists would prefer the second Bill. But speaking as a sincere sanatanist I would prefer the first Bill.

A. . . . Now the Government will have to issue orders against the sanatanists under Section 144 because they would be regarded as interfering with untouchables' rights.

BAPU: However, I want you now to emphatically proclaim your ideas in very clear words.

A. . . . As far as we are concerned we have no immediate concern other than securing political power . . . and that alone is the solution of our problem.

. . . We want our social status raised in the eyes of the *savarna* Hindus.

There is another point of view also. The object of this effort could be that you want the depressed classes to be retained in the Hindu religion, in which case I am inclined to believe that it is not sufficient in the present awakened state of the depressed classes. . . . If I call myself a Hindu I am obliged to accept that by birth I belong to a low caste. Hence I think I must ask the Hindus to show me some sacred authority which would rule out this feeling of lowliness. If it cannot be I should say goodbye to Hinduism. . . . I am not going to be satisfied with measures which would merely bring some relief. . . . I don't want to be crushed by your charity.

BAPU : I have nothing to say if you have come with a final decision that you are not going to move your little finger to have this Bill passed.

A. We have not made any decision. However, I have shown you how my mind is working.

BAPU : I told you that I could have nothing to say if you have already taken a decision.

A. We cannot ask the *savarna* Hindus to decide for themselves whether or not we are a part of them. You ought to demonstrate your determination by getting these Bills passed. . . .

BAPU: I am not asking you to do anything. I never wanted the depressed people to go on their knees to the *savarna* Hindus and ask them to get these Bills passed. Unfortunately, the solution of this problem is in the hands of a third power which is in a position to mend or worsen the situation.

A. I can set right the thing.

BAPU: That is right. Of course I agree with you that it does not behove your dignity to approach the Hindus. I take the position—you might remember since I made the speech at the Round Table Conference—that we should atone for this. If you repudiate us and go away I would think that we only deserved it.

A. The Bill mentions temple-entry but it makes no mention of entry into the sanctum sanctorum. Will they let a member of the depressed community place flowers

on the idol, or will they let him offer a tray containing oblations? Malaviyaji has already declared that question of offering *puja* does not arise.

BAPU : Temple-entry is meant for *puja* if anything. But if the language of the Bill is not right it can be amended and we can say 'entry for the purpose of *puja*'. It seems there has been some misunderstanding somewhere in the case of Malaviyaji. He would not say what you attribute to him. Flowers, sweets or any other offerings from Harijans will surely be accepted. So we two agree on this point that there is no question of your imploring the *savarna* Hindus. When some *savarna* Hindus tell me that Harijans do not want to enter the temples I ask them to throw open the temple doors for the Harijans whether or not they wish to come in. They ought to have the satisfaction that they have done their duty. They ought to discharge the debt which they owe whether the creditor keeps it or throws it into the gutter. But I must say that you ought not to say that you are not a Hindu. In accepting the Poona Pact you accept the position that you are Hindus.

A. I have accepted only the political aspect of it.

BAPU : You cannot escape the situation that you are Hindus in spite of your statement to the contrary.

A. We ask of you that our silence should not be misconstrued. After that I accept your point.

BAPU: I go one step further. You will not be able to go ahead a single step unless you maintain your position absolutely correct. I regard temple-entry as a spiritual matter through which everything else will bear fruit.

A. The Hindu mind does not work in a rational way. They have no objection to the untouchables touching them on the railway and other public places. Why do they object to it only in the case of temples?

BAPU: We are well caught on this point. I take up the question of temple-entry first of all because these people want to cling to untouchability in the temples. Many sanatanist Hindus say that they would admit Harijans in schools and public places but not in temples. I ask them to grant the Harijans equal status before God. It will raise their status.

A. Supposing we are lucky in the case of temple-entry, will they let us fetch water from the wells?

BAPU: Sure. This is bound to follow it. And it is also very easy.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 117-22

APPENDIX XI

A TALK[1]

February 13, 1933

Like Angada and Krishna who had gone with the message of truce, we approach these legislators and the Government. Justice can be demanded from any source and that, too, forcefully. We fail in dharma if we do not demand justice. What does the pledge taken at Bombay imply? [It implies that] as far as possible we will abolish untouchability by law before the attainment of swaraj. We do not want to accomplish anything by force. I do not want to achieve it by undertaking a fast—God will make me undertake one [sooner or later]—for it is likely that I might be deluded into describing it as inspired by God. Kelappan had said to me that the temple would be thrown open within a couple of days. Yet I told him that though it might help throw open the temple immediately how could we continue a fast that was initiated on unjust grounds.

Now remains the question of the law. I for one want no laws. I am an anarchist. Bat I want to act within the limits of the law. In this case we want a law enacted in order to undo another. At present the decision of the law-courts has become as good as the *shruti* (Revelation) and the Government is the God who reveals it. Therefore we ask the Government to repeal it. Let us take the first Bill. The Invisible Power will punish breach of a religious commandment, a ruler does not have this authority. The wholly Hindu State might acquire this authority. But in the present case it is the Government which inflicts punishment for breach of a religious injunction. This is gross injustice. We must have it removed and thus follow our dharma. How long can we keep it pending? Whether it is a mixed legislature or even a Muslim Government, we should have it passed by them. Today we cannot follow our dharma. Even where the trustees are willing to throw open the temple the law forbids them from doing so. Now have I any other course open? Hence the Bill. With the passage of this Bill no one believing in untouchability will be compelled to give it up. I am this day prepared to give in writing that unless the sanatanists are willing to throw open the temples they will not be forced to do so.

By fighting we can get justice even from anti-national Government— rather it becomes our dharma. Malaviyaji is a Yudhishthira. He is always in doubt. In his perpetual anxiety to follow the dictates of dharma, he often fails to follow it at all. Vyasa had such wonderful power. He depicts Yudhishthira as a rather weak person; yet

[1] On Madan Mohan Malaviya's objection to the Bills; *vide* "Drafta Telegraam toa C. Rajagopalchari", 13-2-1933

he is Dharmaraja. In the same sense Malaviyaji also is a Dharmaraja. We can never give him up. He has boundless love for me and whenever he loses in an argument he thinks that there must be some truth in what I say.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 140-1

APPENDIX XII

TELEGRAM FROM MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA[1]

February 15, 1933

THANKS TELEGRAM. MUCH AS I DESIRE, REGRET HEALTH DOES NOT PERMIT JOURNEY (TO) POONA AT PRESENT. (I) REGRET (I) DON'T AGREE (THAT) RANGA IYER'S BILLS (ARE) NECESSARY EVEN IN TERMS (OF THE) BOMBAY PLEDGE. PART ONE (OF THE) RESOLUTLON PLEDGES US (TO) SUPPORT LEGISLATLON TO ENSURE THAT THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN HITHERTO REGARDED AS UNTOUCHABLE WILL HAVE THE SAME RIGHTS AS OTHER HINDUS REGARDING (THE) USE (OF) PUBLIC WELLS, PUBLIC SCHOOLS, PUBLIC ROADS, AND ALL OTHER PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS. THESE MEANT DHARMASALAS, BURNING GROUNDS, ETC. REMOVAL DISABILITY (OF) DEPRESSED CLASSES IN RESPECT (OF) ADMISSION (TO) TEMPLES (IS) DEALT WITH SEPARATELY IN SECOND PART. UNDER IT, (IT IS) THE DUTY (OF) HINDU LEADERS WHO (ARE) PARTY (TO) RESOLUTION OR ACCEPTED IT TO SECURE BY EVERY LEGITIMATE (AND) PEACEFUL MEANS EARLY REMOVAL (OF) ALL SOCIAL DISABILITIES NOW IMPOSED UPON (THE) DEPRESSED CLASSES INCLUDING (THE) BAR IN RESPECT (OF) ADMISSION (TO) TEMPLES. BY CONTRAST WITH FIRST PART EVIDENTLY SECOND PART DID NOT CONTEMPLATE LEGISLATLON IN THIS CONNECTION. PLEASE ALSO NOTE PROVISO RESOLUTION PASSED (AT THE) PUBLIC MEETING, BOMBAY, 30TH SEPTEMBER. PYARELAL'S 'EPIC FAST (PAGE) 195,, WHICH SAYS, PROVIDED NO COMPULSION OR FORCE SHALL BE USED WITH REGARD EITHER (TO) OPENING WELLS, ETC., OR TEMPLES, BUT PEACEFUL RESUASION WILL BE ADOPTED AS THE ONLY MEANS. RANGA IYER'S FIRST BILL REQUIRES CAREFUL EXAMINATION. (IT IS) ONLY FAIR (THAT IT) SHOULD BE CIRCULATED. HIS BILL RELATING (TO) TEMPLE-ENTRY SHOULD BE WITHDRAWN. AM OPPOSED ON PRINCIPLE TO EVEN INDIRECT INTERFERENCE BY LEGISLATURE IN MANAGEMENT (OF) OUR TEMPLES. AM ALSO OPPOSED

[1] *Vide* "Telegram ato Madan Mohan Malaaviya", 14-2-1933, "Letter toa C. Rajagoapalachari", 19-2-1933, "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 22-2-1933, "Letter to Madan Mohan Malaviya", 24-2-1933 and "Letter to Mathurdas Trikumji", 26-2-1933

TO BILL BECAUSE OF VERY WRONG PRINCIPLE IT LAYS DOWN THAT (THE) QUESTION (OF) THROWING OPEN TEMPLES TO ANY CASTE WHICH HAS HITHERTO BEEN EXCLUDED FROM IT SHALL BE DECIDED BY VOTES OF (A) MAJORITY OF HINDU VOTERS OF THE AREA IN WHICH IT IS SITUATED AND THAT THEIR OPINION SHALL BE BINDING ON TRUSTEES OF THE TEMPLE AND ALL WORSHIPPERS THEREIN. I CONSIDER IT ABSOLUTELY WRONG AND UNJUST TO DECIDE A QUESTION WHICH IS ONE OF RELIGION AND CONSCIENCE BY VOTE OF MAJORITY. THIS WILL BE NOTHING BUT COMPULSION. WE MUST SOLVE THIS QUESTION BY WAY OF RELIGION (I.E.,) BY PEACEFUL PERSUASION ONLY. I AM CERTAIN WE SHALL SUCCEED BY THIS METHOD. AM EQUALLY CERTAIN (THAT THE) METHOD OF LEGISLATION WILL BE STRONGLY OPPOSED TO (THE) LAST AND WILL DELAY FULFILMENT OF OBJECT WE HAVE IN VIEW. IN VIEW (OF) TOTALITY (OF) CIRCUMSTANCES CONSIDER YOUR RELEASING MY LETTER AND THIS WIRE FOR PUBLICATION DESIRABLE. IF YOU THINK IT FIT, YOU MAY SUPPORT PROPOSAL FOR CIRCULATION IN VIEW OF (THE) FEELINGS AROUSED AND (OF THE) JUSTICE OF PROCEEDING WITH GOODWILL (AMONG) ALL SECTIONS (OF THE) COMMUNITY.

MALAVIYA

Harijan, 18-9-1933

APPENDIX XIII

B. R. AMBEDKAR'S STATEMENT[1]

Although the controversy regarding the question of temple-entry is confined to the sanatanists and Mahatma Gandhi, the Depressed Classes have undoubtedly a very important part to play in it, in so far as their position is bound to weigh the scale one way or the other, when the issue comes for a final settlement. It is, therefore, necessary that their viewpoint should be defined and stated so as to leave no ambiguity about it.

To the Temple-entry Bill of Mr. Ranga Iyer as now drafted, the Depressed Classes cannot possibly give their support. The principle of the Bill is that if a majority of municipal and local board voters in the vicinity of any particular temple on a referendum decide by a majority that the Depressed Classes shall be allowed to enter the temple, the trustees or the manager of the temple shall give effect to that decision. The principle is an ordinary principle of majority rule, and there is nothing

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Associated Press", 14-2-1933 and "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 22-2-1933

radical or revolutionary about the Bill, and if the sanatanists were a wise lot they would accept it without demur.

The reasons why the Depressed Classes cannot support a Bill based upon this principle are two. One reason is that the Bill cannot hasten the day of temple-entry for the Depressed Classes any nearer than otherwise would be the case. It is true that under the Bill, the minority will not have the right to obtain an injunction against the trustee, or the manager who throws open the temple to the Depressed Classes in accordance with the decision of the majority. But before one can draw any satisfaction from this clause and congratulate the author of the Bill, one must first of all feel assured that when the question is put to the vote, there will be a majority in favour of templeentry. If one is not suffering from illusions of any kind, one must accept that the hope of a majority voting in favour of temple-entry will be very rarely realized if at all. Without doubt, the majority is definitely opposed today—a fact which is conceded by the author of the Bill himself in his correspondence with the Shankaracharya.

What is there in the situation as created after the passing of the Bill, which can lead one to hope that the majority will act differently? I find nothing. I shall, no doubt, be reminded of the results of the referendum with regard to the Guruvayur Temple. But I refuse to accept a referendum, so overweighted as it was by the life of Mahatma Gandhi, as the normal result. In any such calculations, the life of the Mahatma must necessarily be deducted.

If Hindu religion is to be a religion of social equality, then an amendment of its code to provide temple-entry is not enough. What is required is to purge it of the doctrine of *chaturvarnya*.

The Bombay Chronicle, 13-2-1933

APPENDIX XIV

LETTER FROM JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

DEHRA DUN JAIL,
January 5, 1933

MY DEAR BAPU,

Your letter is always a tonic, and when it comes after a long interval, it brings a thrill with it and its effect is all the more exhilarating. I recognized Mahadev's handwriting on the envelope. Yours did not seem as of old. Perhaps your left hand was functioning and I am not so familiar with it.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 15-2-1933

I am following of course with great interest your campaign against untouchability, as far as I can from *The statesman* and the *Pioneer.* Anything that you may do is bound to interest and fascinate. The subject itself has tremendous possibilities. Not being a man of religion, my interest is largely confined to the social aspect and to the wider issues involved.

Of course Sarup should do untouchability work if she feels like it. My suggestion about a short holiday in Ceylon was made chiefly in the interest of Krishna. I am a little worried about her. After a year in prison, with our home practically broken up, she feels rather at a loose end and does not know what to do. Ever since her childhood the poor girl has been deprived of real home life and proper education because of our preoccupations and repeated visits to prison. She grew up a rather lonely girl not having as much friendship and sympathy as she was entitled to.

Father's death shook her up a great deal. I tried to soothe her and win her confidence and I am glad to say that I succeeded to some extent. But 1931 was for all of us a year full of work and worry and anxiety. Then came a long spell of prison for her, and for a young girl this was a far greater ordeal than it could be for most of us. As her release drew near I sensed how she must be feeling and how life in Anand Bhawan as it is today would be no joy to her. She would feel out of joint. She would want to do something and yet not know what to do, and this would rob her of peace of mind. I was myself not clear what to suggest to her. Latterly she has begun to look upon me almost as a kind of refuge in a friendless world. If I had been out I might have been of help to her but I could do little from Dehra Dun Jail.

I felt that a short holiday in neutral surroundings would ease her mind and remove the tension. Hence my proposal about Ceylon. Three weeks in Ceylon would not have solved any problem but she would have freshened up and returned with a brighter outlook on life. These were my reasons. I was thinking more of mental health than of physical health. But the proposal seems to have fallen through as nobody seems to be keen on it. In the present, therefore, Ceylon is off.

Perhaps Krishna will go to Poona to see you and you might be able to advise her about her work. I might see her also. It is easy enough to suggest odd bits of work but this must appeal to the person concerned.

As for my interviews, it is now nearly seven months since I had one. I have missed them greatly but the U. P. Govt. had been very discourteous to Mother and Kamala and I felt that I had no alternative; besides I have not yet got rid of my obstinacy—a hereditary failing in me of which you cannot be unaware. The Government made some partial amends and the Home Member, the Nawab of Chhatari, came and expressed his concern. All this was more or less beside the point and the graceful thing and the right thing was not done, but then the right thing is seldom done. I wrote again to Government. Still I decided in my mind that should

special necessity arise I would withdraw my prohibition and consent to an interview. So matters have stood for the last few weeks. I did not suggest an early interview as there was some talk of my transfer back to Naini Prison.

Now that you have also written about it, what can I do but immediately to capitulate to you? So henceforth, and unless something untoward intervenes, I shall take my usual interviews. Kamala may not be able to see me for several weeks still. She [is] in Calcutta under Bidhan's treatment. But I shall see Mother and Indu and Sarup and Krishna or such of them as can find me.

The stopping of interviews has made me retire a little more into myself. But I have had pleasing and a friendly neighbour—the Himalayas. The sight of their outline against the sky, and now their summits and sides covered with fresh snow, have meant a geat deal to me. They seem to rouse in me ancient memories of the long ago when perhaps my ancestors wandered about the mountains of Kashmir and played in their snow and glaciers. I have had companions here but largely I have been left to myself, and I have grown a little contemplative, in defiance of heredity and family tradition and personal habit! But that is a thin veneer which I am afraid will rub off at little provocation. How can the Ethiopian change his skin?

I have read a lot, and if wisdom could be had in books I would be wise. But wisdom eludes me, and big question-marks confront me wherever I look. Sometimes I think of Prince Siddhartha's old question and no answer comes:

How can it be that Brahma
Would make a world and keep it miserable,
Since, if all-powerful He leaves it so,
He is not good, and if not powerful,
He is not God?

From all accounts in the papers you are as ever the slave of industry and are over-working yourself even in prison. The new industrial system of the West is often criticized and blamed because it makes man a machine for ceaseless work and robs him of all leisure. You are supposed to be no lover of this system. And yet, you seem to personify to me often this very industrial system !

I am intrigued at your remark that eye-witnesses have told you that I am keeping fit. The information is correct but who could these eye-witnesses be who have managed to reach you? I have had no interviews for a long while and, except for a colleague who was discharged a month ago, I can think of no other likely recent eye-witness. It is true that I am poorer by four teeth. I have sacrificed them at the altar of modern science to appease the goddess of physical health.

This is a long letter for gaol. But this I am writing to you after over a year and I have not seen you for over sixteen months. My last glimpse of you was when you

were sailing away to the far West and your figure grew smaller and smaller as the ship bore you away and left us, feeling rather lonely and forlorn, on the pier.

With my love to all the happy family of yours in Yeravda.

Yours affectionately,

J.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX XV

TALK WITH MATHURADAS[1]

February 18, 1933

[BAPU]: It is true that according to the Vedas the Shudras have no privileges; mainly they speak of only three varnas. However, the Vedas which are available to us are not the only ones. Of the thousands of books only a few have come down to us. There is religion as well as history in the Vedas. And history is not religion. The part dealing with religion is timeless and eternal whereas the one dealing with history describes the circumstances then prevailing. Who knows how long I have to live? But if I had no other task to demand my attention, I would certainly wish to take up the work of varnashramadharma. But the establishment of varnadharma needs the foundation of ashramadharma without which the whole structure would necessarily be weak. There is contentment at the root of varnashramadharma. It implies willing acceptance of one's dharma and karma. Therefore varnashramadharma is a divine way of life whereas all the others are demoniac ones. Varnashramadharma has nobility as its predominant quality whereas the others are dominated by calculated selfishness.

Once this law is understood many other things will follow. If we know how to drink water but do not know the science behind it, then it is of no use. If we know the various forms of water such as snow, vapour and hydro-electricity, then we can be said to have understood the science of water. Similar is the case with varnashrama. This is a principle applicable in all cases.

[M.D.]: In other words, as Muslims claim that Islam means peace, and that it is the universal law meant for the whole world, you say that varnashramadharma is the universal law.

BAPU: Yes, it is in the same sense. Every religion has some eternal principles and the followers of a particular religion follow their dharma in that measure. The rest of their religion is related to the circumstances of time and place.

I would give up varnashramadharma this very day, were it not connected with

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Motilal Roy", 18-2-1933.

birth. What would otherwise be left in it? I would maintain that the correct thing would be that the son of a carpenter should be a carpenter and not a blacksmith. If as a result there are to be hundreds of castes, let there be. So long as there is inter-dining and intermarrying among them let there be any number of castes. The restrictions about dining and marriage have turned the whole thing into a wretched affair.

I would certainly say that Dronacharya had fallen from dharma. What I mean is not that a member of one varna may never follow the profession of another varna, but that it is not proper. This varnashramadharma as I propound it is for everybody to follow not blindly but after due deliberation. Like Hindus, Muslims also may follow it. It was in this sense that I described it as 'Hinduism's greatest gift to mankind'. With the observance of this dharma the entire community will be saved and it will become invincible.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 152-3

APPENDIX XVI

THE CLEANSER[1]

(A free rendering, from the Bengal;, of Satyendranath Datta's "Scavenger")

Why do they shun your touch, my friend, and call you unclean?

Whom cleanliness follows at every step, making the earth and air sweet for our dwelling, and ever luring us back from return to the wild?

You help us, like a mother her child, into freshness, and uphold the truth, that disgust is never for man.

The holy stream of your ministry carries pollution's away and ever remains pure.

Once Lord Siva had saved the world from a deluge of poison by taking it himself.

And you save it every day from filth with the same divine sufferance.

Come friend, come my hero, give us courage to serve man, even while bearing the brand of infamy from him.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Harijan, I 1-2-1933

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Rabindranath Atagore", 20-2-1933 and "We Do Not Hate", 25-2-1933

1. LETTER TO K. S. RAMABHADRA AYYAR

March 10, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 22nd ultimo. I do not encourage your advances because your letters create no favourable impression on me. They seem to be unbalanced and if what you write creates a bad impression on me your visit is not likely to improve matters, hence I do not like the idea of your wasting your money in travelling here and then wasting your time and mine. I assure you that I have not a single minute to spare.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. S. RAMABHADRA AYYAR
ADVOCATE, HIGH COURT
LUZ MYLAPURE, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 20532

2. LETTER TO SURENDRA MOHAN BHATTACHARYA

March 10, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you.

You remind me of slave-owners of old who used to recount their services to their slaves in that they gave them food and shelter somewhat after the style in which they gave both to their cattle, only the treatment of the slaves was in many respects worse than that of their cattle and in no respect better, and it is quite evident to me that you do not even take the trouble of knowing what educated and religiously-minded Hindus have done and are doing for Harijans whom they do not consider in any shape or form lower than themselves but regard them as their own kith and kin.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SURENDRA MOHAN BHATTACHARYA
VEDANTA SHASTRI
VILLAGE ALGI
P.O. MADHABOLI
DT. DACCA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20521

3. LETTER TO L. N. HARDAS

March 10, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry that being preoccupied I have not been able to reach your letter of the 10th February earlier than now. Even if I had reached your letter earlier I could not have sent you anything, but you are at liberty to copy anything you like from my writings in the *Harijan.*

Yours sincerely,

SJT. L. N. HARDAS
C/O THE "MAHARATTA"
KAMPTEE (C.P.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 20536

4. LETTER TO M. A. GOPALASWAMI IYENGAR

March 10, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have not been able to deal with your letter of 23rd February earlier. Please excuse me.

1 think that you are quite right in your contention that if the Untouchability Abolition Bill is passed, Temple-entry Bill is unnecessary. If you can therefore get the Abolition Bill passed in the Mysore Asse-mbly, it would be unnecessary to press for the passage of the Temple- entry Bill so far as Mysore is concerned. But you will see to it that the interpretation of the Abolition Bill is accepted by the sanatanists. If that is achieved the rest may be left to the ripening of public opinion.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. A. GOPALASWAMI IYENGAR
ADVOCATE
BANGALORE CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20535

5. LETTER TO E. LINDSAY

March 10, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I was delighted to have your letter and to have the beautiful anecdote about the social worker. I have just glanced through the lines you have sent me. Did I never tell you that I was very stupid at judging poetry? I shall therefore need to read your lines half a dozen times before their beauty and message will dawn upon me. Mahadev is a poet and he has no difficulty about making up his mind when he sees a piece of beautiful poetry. I shall therefore seek his assistance. He is doing his work only within a few feet of me, but we are so immersed in our tasks that we have hardly time to talk about so many common things and interests apart from the task in front of us.

Yours sincerely,

MADAM E. LINDSAY
BALLIOL COLLEGE
OXFORD

From a photostat: S.N. 20529

6. LETTER TO MICHAEL LINDSAY

March 10, 1933

MY DEAR MICHAEL,

I was so glad you sent your little note with Mother's letter. We have often thought of you.

The two sayings you have sent me of Confucius are very beautiful and very seasonable for me.[1]

Please remember us to Father, and accept Mahadev's and my regards for yourself.

Yours sincerely,

MICHAEL LINDSAY, ESQ.

From a microfilm: S.N. 20531

[1] Confucius, when asked by a ruler what he ought to do, is said to have replied, "Be in advance of the people and work for them." Asked for further advice, he is said to have said, "Do not get tired of doing this."

7. LETTER TO THE MANAGER, "MILAP"

March 10, 1933

THE MANAGER
THE "MILAP"
LAHORE

DEAR FRIEND,

It was not possible to send you any message in reply to your telegram. I am therefore returning the voucher received by me so as to enable you to collect the rupee.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20527

8. LETTER TO USHAKANTA MUKHOPADHYA

March 10, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your interesting letter which I have read carefully. There is no difficulty about understanding your letter. The prescription that you have suggested is being followed in all the parts of the country. Sanskrit literature has been translated in the vernaculars and is accessible to even the illiterate masses.

As far as the law is concerned, there is no question of compelling anybody to regard any other as untouchable. The object of the Bill is to withdraw the sanction of the law to a custom which cannot be defended by any ordinary rule of morality. The law is simply meant to give the reformer the scope of bringing the message to those who will listen to it.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. USHAKANTA MUKHOPADHYA
12 MUKHERJIPARA LANE
KALIGHAT, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20526

9. LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT, YOUNG MEN'S BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION

March 10, 1933

THE PRESIDENT
YOUNG MEN'S BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION
MAHA BODHI ASHRAM
PERAMBUR, MADRAS

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I wish that it was in my power to help you.[1] Whatever was possible for me to do I did some years ago.[2]

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20537

10. LETTER TO SAMANERA SANGHARATNA

March 10, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I have in my own way tried to do whatever was possible in connection with Buddha Gaya Temple.[3] More is not possible at the present moment.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SAMANERA SANGHARATNA
MULAGANDHA KUTI VIHARA
SARNATH, BENARES

From a microfilm: S.N. 20523

11. LETTER TO SATCOURIPATI RAI

March 10, 1933

DEAR SATCOURIBABU,

I was glad to have your letter and report of the work in January last. Your report was too late for the ensuing issue. Please send everything so as to reach me on Wednesdays at the latest. By all means

[1] The addressee had enclosed a resolution of the Young Men's Buddhist Association which sought Gandhiji's help in gaining control of Buddha Gaya Temple from a non-Buddhist *mahant*.

[2] *Vide* "Belgaum Impressions[—II]", 8-1-1925 and "Speech in Reply to Buddhists' Address Colombo", 15-11-1927.

send anything you wish to write for the *Harijan.* I would love to have fresh and suitable ideas.

In your report I see you say that the Kali Temple was opened. I have heard reports to the contrary, namely, that the Kali Temple was always open to Harijans in a way and that even now it is open only in a way. You will therefore please enquire about this and let me know. I have had reports from other places also about the opening of temples and then the information was challenged.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S. N. 20534

12. LETTER TO LEONARD N. SCHIFF

March 10, 1933

MY DEAR LEONARD,

I have another charming letter from you. Your letters are always inside the line. Verrier is quite free from malaria now and his work seems to be steadily going forward. I suppose you know all about his intended marriage with Mary Gillett and their joint decision afterwards not to marry each other but for each to be married to the service to which they have dedicated their lives. It must have been a very bitter cup for them to drink, but they have drunk it courageously. I have not been able quite to follow the latest developments arising out of the Oxford Union resolution on the Pacifism debate.[1]

I hope you are getting your copy of the *Harijan* regularly.

With love from us all.

Yours sincerely,

LEONARD N. SCHIFF, ESQ.
9 GT. WILSON ST.
LEEDS 11

From a photostat: S.N. 20522

[1] At a Union debate the University had decided that "on no account would the House ever again fight for King and Country" (S.N. 20238).

13. LETTER TO S. V. SONAVANE

March 10, 1933

MY DEAR SONAVANE[1],

I have your letter. I would like you to See Jajuji at Sheth Jamnalalji's residence in Wardha and let him investigate your case and report to me. Show him this letter. You will give him all the particulars about yourself, your age, the members of your family and any other information that he may need.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. S. V. SONAVANE

PULFILE

WARDHA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20520

14. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

March 10, 1933

MY DEAR MARGARETE[2],

I receive your letters regularly and I have now your notes from your pupils' papers. They make very interesting reading. What worries me is the time you have spent over the translation and copying. Is it not stealing time from your pupils? I hope you have had my letters that I have been sending you not quite every week but fairly regularly. I hope you are now satisfied that the work you may be doing there is also my work inasmuch as you are observing the rules of the Ashram and doing your work purely from a spirit of service, and I have no doubt that so long as your mother lives your duty is to be by her side.

Mahadev has all your letters. You don't expect him to reply to all of them. Do you? He can write but once a month, but he will deal with your letters as soon as he is released in a couple of months.[3]

Yours sincerely,

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] A Harijan student. He had failed in the Intermediate examination and was unable to continue his studies owing to poverty. He had appealed to Gandhiji to "support" him or get him a "supporter" (S.N. 20343).

[2] A German follower of Gandhiji whom he later gave the Indian name Amala.

[3] This paragraph is in Mahadev Desai's hand.

15. LETTER TO SOPHIA WADIA

March 10, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I thank you very much for your letter and a typed copy of your lecture given on the 2nd instant at the Cowasji Jehangir Hall.

Yes, I was looking forward to your visit, and whenever you have the time, do please both of you come, and I shall be delighted to see you and know more fully your ideas on untouchability and caste than I can from your interesting lecture.

Yours sincerely,

MADAM SOPHIA WADLA
HILL CREST
PEDDER ROAD
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20524

16. LETTER TO NRISINHPRASAD K. BHATT

March 10, 1933

If the Hindus of Bhavnagar pass a resolution by an overwhelming majority asserting that there are no classes among Hindus who are descendants of the original Shudras or who should be regarded as untouchable, I would see no moral objection to the admission of A*ntyajas* despite the particular clause in the agreement being against their being admitted. For, if such a resolution were passed, there would be no community which could be described as *Antyajas*.

We often find contradictory rules being followed in the different branches of the same institution. Since the prohibition applies to residence, I see no moral objection to the admission of *Antyajas* to the school. On the contrary, it would show disregard for dharma to deny admission to them.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 20533

17. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

March 10, 1933

CHI. NARAHARI,

I could read your letter of the 4th only today. Your question is good. One who is convinced that there is no other way but *brahmacharya* should know that the right thing for him is to strive exclusively to discover the means of perfecting it and should continue his experiments to that end in the faith that large numbers of people will adopt it one day. He should also be convinced at the same time that artificial means of birth-control are dangerous from every point of view and are bound to loosen morals. Even if we assume that people will have to suffer during the interval before *brahmacharya* comes to be widely accepted, I see nothing wrong in that. Like an individual, a society also will reap as it sows. But God is merciful. There is mercy even in those of His acts which we regard as punishment. When the birth-rate is high, the death-rate also will be proportionately high. Mankind, therefore, will live on. It is true that such life will not be happy, and it is best that it should be so. This knowledge also will persuade people to adopt *brahmacharya*, for even a little experience of it will show that, when it has become habitual, it is a source of much greater happiness than indulgence can give. In order that the world may go on satisfactorily, isn't it also necessary to obey the other laws of God? One such law is that nobody has a right to take more than the minimum he needs for his physical maintenance. If everyone obeyed this law, there would be no starvation even if *brahmacharya* was not observed by large numbers. Physical labour is not confined to work in the fields. Every farmer ought to use his hands and feet fully, especially the hands. In a country where the farmers have no subsidiary industry, they become almost like animals. If the company of animals is necessary, the experience of using tools is equally necessary. If all men cultivated manual skill, then even if the population went on increasing, within limits, everybody would have enough food to eat, cloth to cover his or her body with and protection against heat and cold in a home. Remember the meaning of varnadharma which I have been explaining these days.

I think I have answered all your questions, but write to me again if I have not.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9056

18. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 10, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I enclose with this letters for Narahari, Moolchand and Champa. I just received your wire about Parachure Shastri. I had been waiting for it before asking him to go there. In reply to a letter which I had written to him, he wrote me a beautiful letter. I am enclosing it. Preserve it there. I have, however, informed him that, if you consent he must go to the Ashram but that he should see his wife, and if she and the children are fit and are willing to stay in the Ashram, all of them should go. I will now let you know what he decides as soon as he informs me. Parachure Shastri also will keep you informed. The final decision will be based wholly on considerations of dharma. All of us, therefore, may rest assured that it will be for our good. I hope you got my previous letters in which I wrote to you about Lakshmi. I wrote one yesterday and one the day before.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8331. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

19. LETTER TO CHHOTUBHAI K. MEHTA

March 10, 1933

CHI. NAPOLEON,

I got your letter after a long time. A letter from me is as good as one from Sardar. You do not improve your handwriting. The letters should be like pearls. It was you that paid a visit to Visapur. Write to me from time to time. Try and do some Harijan work there also.

Blessings from

CHI. NAPOLEON
C/O DR. NATHABHAI PATEL

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2697

20. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

March 10, 1933

BHAI MOOLCHAND,

Your query has already been answered in *Harijan.*[1]

The exercise of the tongue and the pen cannot be regarded physical activity. In this context it means only labour by hands and feet.

If people do not labour on the land and then starve, what can the brain do? At that time whosoever cultivates even a little will be the saviour. What is the use of a speech when the house is on fire? You will need water to fight the fire, and so on. It does not mean that brain work has no utility. It only means that ideas of those alone will bear fruit who appreciate the significance of manual labour and themselves undertake it. Both types of work should proceed side by side and the best principle is to earn one's bread from manual labour and to employ the intellect for service only. That will secure a perfect balance. You may take it that the Ashram was founded with the same objective. You have to grasp this fact if you wish to benefit from a stay in the Ashram.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 770

21. NOTES

WHAT THEY TEACH

The reader should study the tell-tale figures, collected by the Editor and published in another column, of the 'depressed classes', otherwise called the 'exterior castes' of the Madras Presidency. They have eighty-six sub-divisions among them. The sanatanists would claim that they are all untouchables by birth!!! What were they before they were so classified in the census? It is interesting, too, to note that the criterion of untouchability has not been the same for all the Provinces, nor the same in every part of the same Province, nor is the untouchable of Madras necessarily untouchable in Bombay or Bengal. The more one studies these figures, the stronger will grow the conviction that this untouchability is purely man-made. The census superintendents have been the sole judges. The reader will note also that the various Governments have differed in their views as to the

[1] Perhaps Gandhiji meant *Harijan Sevak* as no answer is identified in *Harijan.*

classification. If the untouchables are God-made, why all these differences? The time is coming when there will be a bid on the part of caste Hindus for being classified as 'untouchables'. Signs have already begun to appear on the horizon. If untouchables were God-made, we should be able unfailingly to distinguish them without effort from the rest, as we distinguish one species from another.

And who will answer for these sub-divisions if not caste Hindus? If they will give up untouchability, there is every hope of untouchables giving up the sub-untouchability among themselves.

A GRADUATE'S DIFFICULTY

A graduate correspondent wants to know why I say that the practice of untouchability is common to all mankind and religions and that it is a necessary institution.

When we perform natural functions involving uncleanness or have unclean diseases, we are untouchable till we have become clean. The extent of untouchability and the methods of becoming clean no doubt vary among the nations, but the practice of such untouchability, be its extent ever so small, is common to all, including the so-called savage nations. It is a sound hygienic rule when it is intelligently observed. But it was reserved to modern Hinduism to brand a person asuntouchable by birth and call him an offspring of sin. It is a most tragic spectacle that a religion which boasts that ahimsa is the highest thing in life should carry vindictiveness into the other world. It is against this insane untouchability that I have invited all Hindus who are proud of their faith and jealous of its purity to wage relentless war.

The same correspondent further asks, "Does not your varnadh-arma deprive people of all chances of rise in the social scale? Should not everyone have the permission to follow what occupation he likes?"

According to my conception of varna, all inequality is ruled out of life. Inequality of intellect or in material possessions ought not to mean inequality of social status. I do most emphatically maintain that man is not made to choose his occupation for 'rising in the social scale'. He is made to serve his fellow-men and earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. And since the primary wants of all are the same, all labour should carry the same value.

This law Hinduism discovered and called the law of varna, and carried it out in practice more or less perfectly with amazing success. What we see today in Hinduism is its caricature. It is my certain conviction that obedience to that law alone can save the perishing world. Its conscious recognition means contentment and consequent freeing Of human energy for the moral uplift. Its disregard spells

unhealthy discontent, greed, cut-throat competition and moral stagnation ending in spiritual suicide. This law, as I understand it, is not and never has been a mere ceremonial rule regulating the restrictions on eating and marrying.

WHAT IS SPIRITUAL PROGRESS?

"When you write about the spirit, the spiritual progress of Harijans, what do you mean? And why is such progress of the world retarded because that of Harijans is? Why is the spiritual progress of Harijans retarded if they are not admitted to temples? " —asks a persistent correspondent who has many other questions which need not engage us just now.

Spirit is that moral being which informs the human body and which is imperishable. Spiritual progress is that which promotes the realization of that imperishable essence. What retards the progress of my neighbour must retard mine. India is a big neighbour of other parts of the world. India's spiritual progress cannot but be retarded if that of forty million Harijans and, therefore, of the two hundred and thirty million Hindus is.

As to temples, I have discussed elsewhere[1] in this issue what a large part they play in the life of mankind. Spirit itself is capable of intellectual dissection only up to a point. It transcends reason, hence it is a matter of faith. Even so are places of worship matters of faith in the last resort.

THE BENGALI "HARIJAN"

Two issues of the Bengali *Harijan* are already out. It is published in the form of a magazine with an attractive cover with a Harijan woman carrying a basket of refuse on her head. It is published under the auspices of the Khadi Pratishthan, College Square, Calcutta, and the annual subscription is Rs. 4 including postage, and Rs. 3 without.

The first and second issues contain either full translations or substance of all the articles that have hitherto appeared in the English edition. It contains also translations of some of my previous writings on Hindu religion and editorials or editorial notes from Satisbabu's pen, such as, "Result of Neglect", "Solution of Some Problems of Untouchability", "The Sanatanists' Prayer", "Responsibility of Municipality", "Depressed Classes and Untouchability".

It came out with 2,000 copies the first week, all of which were sold out. It came out with 3,000 the second week. I hope that it will receive generous support from the Bengali public.

Harijan, 11-3-1933

[1] *Vide* "Are Temples Necessary?", 11-3-1933.

22. A TRUE SERVANT

Experience that is being daily gained shows that the service of Harijans is perhaps the hardest of all services. There are to my knowledge many girls and grown-up women performing daily personal service. One of them gives a graphic account of her experience in scavengers' quarters. It was with the greatest difficulty that she could restrain herself from vomiting when she first went to these quarters. I am glad women are taking their due share in the movement.

How are the Harijans living in hideous filth to be served? They have no will to be served. They curse those who go to their quarters. Some even stone workers out of their streets. Still they must be served, if we will serve ourselves. They must be raised out of this state, if we will raise ourselves. We have pressed them down and in so doing wehave gone down ourselves. Not everyone can perform this high service. Let me sum up the qualities that I have found to be indispensable in a Harijan servant:

He must have true love for Harijans as if they were members of his own family.

He must have great patience and courage to bear physical injury and insults.

He must have a character above suspicion and reproach.

He must be prepared to live on the barest possible sustenance.

To go through all my correspondence and to have interviews with Harijans, sanatanists and workers is to pass through a raging fire. Harijans who have at all become vocal are naturally suspicious and often exacting. They are impatient. The sanatanists think that the Hinduism of their belief is in danger. They have money which they are using freely. New organs are daily coming into being. They impute motives, make the wildest statements about the reformers and distort the whole movement. The workers are not all an ideal team. I have seen how one worker can poison the whole atmosphere around him unless he is thoroughly trustworthy and is pure in mind and body.

If the worker is to satisfy both the Harijans and the sanatanists, he will do so only by showing the highest character, deep humility and great charity. In other words, he will have to be a man of religion. This is a movement for the purification of religion. No religion has ever been purified by brag and bluster or by men with a loose character.

Workers will have to be most circumspect. Sanatanists are

reported to be resorting to goondaism and not to hesitate to resort to force to break up meetings. This is no wonder. Evil has its own vested interests. These are undoubtedly in danger. And they will put up a fight for existence. Where, therefore, there is any danger of disturbance, the workers must avoid it, even if they have to give up public meetings and the like. In such cases they must take the message of deliverance from house to house. They must not engage in vain disputations or interpretation of Shastras. They must rely upon the unfailing ability of Truth to protect itself. Truth is life and it propagates itself the moment it has got a habitation in some human personality. Mute conduct is often the most effective speech. Workers, therefore, need to have a living faith in themselves and the cause. But they know that by themselves they are nothing. Therefore, faith in themselves means faith in God. Those who empty themselves of all pride and all egotism have the greatest help from God.

Hinduism will be purified of the evil of untouchability only by the willing sacrifice of thousands of such true servants.

Harijan, 11-3-1933

23. ARE TEMPLES NECESSARY?

An American correspondent[1] writes:[2]

> . . . The great religious truths which the prophets of religion have apprehended and proclaimed have always been lost when their disciples have tried to localize them in priestcraft and temples. Truth is too universal to be confined and made sectarian. Therefore, I consider temples, mosques and churches to be a prostitution of religion. . . . When religion is made a monopoly by the priesthood and temples become vested interests, the great mass of mankind becomes isolated from truth. . . .
>
> Therefore, I can see no advantage in gaining permission for the Harijans to enter the temples. I know that justice demands that they shall have the liberty even to do wrong. But if they are to learn the lessons of self-respect which will enable them to take an equal place with caste people in the development of the future of our civilization, I think they must learn an independence of all priests and temples. . . . When you spoke in Europe that you "formerly considered that God is Truth but now you realized that Truth is God", you struck a responsive chord in the hearts of all of us, whatever our traditions may have been. But when you become a defender of the faith of temple Hinduism, even though it be a purified type, we feel that you have lost

[1] Presumably Boyd Tucker; *vide* "Letter to Boyd Tucker", 23-3-1933.

[2] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.

your universal appeal, an appeal which I consider you to have made not as a Hindu, but as one of that large body of spiritual-minded Hindus who do not look to the temples for the spiritual sustenance of their lives. I do not believe that such men are outside the best traditions of Hinduism but are rather in the line of the creators of the religious spirit which has made the spirituality of India her greatest contribution to humanity.

Nor do I believe that this higher Hinduism is too high for the Harijans, whose spiritual intuitions have never been dulled by our modern type of education. Buddha, Chaitanya and Kabir all made a large appeal to this class, and the teachings of Jesus were most appreciated, not by the high and mighty, but by publicans and fishermen, who were outside the pale of respectable society. . . .

This considered opinion representing a large body of people throughout the world deserves respectful consideration. Such an opinion, however, does not appear before me for the first time. I have had the privilege and opportunity of discussing this subject with many friends in the light it is presented. I can appreciate much of the argument, but I venture to think that it is inconclusive, because it has omitted material facts. Some priests are bad. Temples, churches and mosques very often show corruption, more often deterioration. Nevertheless, it would be impossible to prove that all priests are bad or have been bad and that all churches, temples and mosques are hotbeds of corruption and superstition. Nor does the argument take note of this fundamental fact that no faith has done without a habitation; and I go further that in the very nature of things it cannot exist, so long as man remains as he is constituted. His very body has been rightly called the temple of the Holy Ghost, though innumerable such temples belie the fact and are hotbeds of corruption, used for dissoluteness. And I presume that it will be accepted as a conclusive answer to a sweeping suggestion that all bodies should be destroyed for the corruption of many, if it can be shown, as it can be, that there are some bodies which are proper temples of the Holy Ghost. The cause for the corruption of many bodies will have to be sought elsewhere. Temples of stone and mortar are nothing else than a natural extension of these human temples and though they were in their conception undoubtedly habitations of God like human temples, they have been subject to the same law of decay as the latter.

I know of no religion or sect that has done or is doing without its house of God, variously described as a temple, mosque, church, synagogue or *agiari*[1]. Nor is it certain that any of the great reformers including Jesus destroyed or discarded temples altogether. All of them

[1] Parsi fire-temple

sought to banish corruption from temples as well as from society. Some of them, if not all, appear to have preached from temples. I have ceased to visit temples for years, but I do not regard myself on that account as a better person than before. My mother never missed going to the temple when she was in a fit state to go there. Probably her faith was far greater than mine, though I do not visit temples. There are millions whose faith is sustained through these temples, churches and mosques. They are not all blind followers of a superstition, nor are they fanatics. Superstition and fanaticism are not their monopoly. These vices have their root in our hearts and minds.

My advocacy of temple-entry I hold to be perfectly consistent with the declaration which I often made in Europe that Truth is God. It is that belief which makes it possible, at the risk of losing friendships, popularity and prestige, to advocate temple-entry for Harijans. The Truth that I know or I feel I know demands that advocacy from me. Hinduism loses its right to make a universal appeal if it closes its temples to the Harijans.

That temples and temple-worship are in need of radical reform must be admitted. But all reform without temple-entry will be to tamper with the disease. I am aware that the American friend's objection is not based upon the corruption or impurity of the temples. His objection is much more radical. He does not believe in them at all. I have endeavoured to show that his position is untenable in the light of facts which can be verified from everyday experience. To reject the necessity of temples is to reject the necessity of God, religion and earthly existence.

Harijan, 11-3-1933

24. WHY N0T SIMPLE 'HINDU'?

In the course of a letter, a caste Hindu correspondent writes:

> If these depressed classes are finally to be merged in the Hindus, was it not better that instead of 'Harijans' they should have been given the name 'Hindus' which would have applied to both the caste Hindus and the depressed classes? It is still time that the word 'Harijan' is given up in favour of the 'Hindu', so that the caste Hindus and the Hindu depressed classes are known in common parley as well as in Government papers as only Hindus.

The correspondent is too late with his suggestion. If a separate register of untouchable classes had not come to stay, at least for the time being, the common name might have answered the purpose. But the separate register makes it absolutely necessary to know the untouchable classes by some name, and if such is the case, why not

give them a name that truly befits them and has no ill-flavour about it. I regard 'Harijan' as a fitting name, because the caste Hindus cannot be properly considered God's children, but the untouchables certainly can.

I have suggested the real method of abolishing the distinction between caste Hindus and Harijans, namely, by caste Hindus performing the purification ceremony of ridding themselves of untouchability and becoming Harijans themselves. And if it was open to anyone to be classified as untouchables in the register for untouchables, I should most decidedly advise caste Hindus to declare themselves as such and to live also as such. That will be a substantial and organic method of amalgamating the two into one body.

This is the proper place for referring to the same suggestion made by a Harijan friend but from a different standpoint. He says that the best way of getting rid of untouchability is to advise Harijans to adopt names that will never signify an untouchable and to declare themselves also as mere Hindus or as Brahmins, Kshatriyas or Vaishyas. This suggestion was made to me even as early as 1915 when I began the crusade against untouchability. This Harijan had his own experiences and told me that he had travelled from one end of India to the other, that he had freely entered all the principal places of pilgrimage without let or hindrance and that he had taken with him a party.

When he was introduced to me, I saw no mark about him of being a Harijan. He was dressed like a Brahmin, had a *tilak* on his forehead, a *mala* of *tulsi* or *rudraksh*—I forget which—and his speech was that of an ordinary Gujarati. He and his party took up their abode in dharmsalas and never had the slightest difficulty, having unhesitatingly proclaimed themselves as belonging to one varna or the other.

My visitor told me that this practice of untouchables hiding their identity was quite a common thing amongst them and that it was growing. He unfortunately received no encouragement from me. I told him that that practice might be convenient for him and the few who could afford the means and had sufficient training to be able to shed some of the habits which marked out an untouchable from the rest, but that the practice of a few, apart from its being dishonest and, therefore, tending to deterioration of manhood, would make no impression upon the tens of thousands of untouchables who could not even stir out of their villages.

The reply that I then gave applies with equal force even today. The straightest and the quickest method, therefore, is to conduct the movement openly, to know the untouchables as such and yet for caste

Hindus to treat them on terms of absolute equality with themselves; and as the movement has begun on a very large scale and the declaration was made on behalf of caste Hindus in September last that untouchability was gone, it surely became necessary to know untouchables by an inoffensive name whilst the process of amalgamation was going on. 'Harijan' in my opinion was the best name to know them by.

Harijan, 11-3-1933

25. A GROUNDLESS FEAR

A sanatanist correspondent writes:

> Suppose a sanatanist builds a new temple and appoints trustees for its management; suppose he throws it open to all Hindus of the four castes, but not to untouchables. According to the Anti-untouchability Bill, the disqualification of the untouchables will be inoperative. According to the Temple-entry Bill, if the reformers are in the majority, they will be able to secure the admission of untouchables. Thus, although the person who dedicates the temple may be of opinion that the temple will be polluted by the admission of untouchables, although he may be of opinion that he, and persons who are of his way of thinking, cannot worship properly if untouchables are admitted, yet untouchables will be allowed inside the temple and his express desire will be violated.
>
> If, however, a sanatanist builds such a temple in, say, Tibet or China or Afghanistan, his desire will no doubt be respected, as there is no Anti-untouchability Law or Temple-entry Law in any of those countries. Thus a sanatanist cannot worship as he likes in a temple built by him in India if he desires that his brother sanatanists of the higher castes should have the right of entry into that temple. But he will enjoy this privilege if he builds the temple in any other country except India.
>
> Do you think that this position is satisfactory?

If I was a believer in untouchability, I should not dread the Bills as my correspondent does. So far as the supposed greater freedom in Tibet, China or Afghanistan is concerned, the correspondent forgets that there is no such thing as untouchability in these three countries, so far as I am aware, and he certainly will not be able there, as he is in this country, to prevent the entry of a single person merely on the ground of untouchability. But even when untouchability ceases to be recog-nized by the law, that fact will not necessarily entitle the untouchables to enter any temple they choose. Thus, a sanatanist who builds a temple for certain persons exclusively builds a private temple and he will have the perfect right to exclude any person he likes, whether untouchable or touchable. All he will not be able to do is to

exclude a person purely on the ground of untouchability and secure the assis-tance of the law in order to compass his purpose. And even public temples will successfully prevent the entry of untouchables if public opinion is against their entry. All that the first Bill does is to refuse legal sanction to the cult of untouchability. No Hindu temple will, however, be opened to the Harijans till caste Hindus have been converted. Under the second Bill, private temples are uninterfered with and public temples can only be regulated according to public usage, which is always subject to change from time to time. And when a sanatanist builds a public temple for the four varnas, it is only by implication that untouchables are excluded; but if untouchables are merged in the four varnas, surely there is no violence to the sanatanist's will, because he could not regulate the religious belief of posterity nor stop its growth.

The only objection of the correspondent, therefore, that needs consideration is the right of the minority under the second Bill. I have ventured to suggest a compromise which jealously guards the rights of a minority even of one. For, I have no desire personally to interfere with the religious right of a single individual.

But what the correspondent hopelessly fails to do is to recognize the right of the reformers which he insists upon their recognizing in respect of himself and his co-sanatanists.

Harijan, 11-3-1933

26. TELEGRAM TO BACHHRAJ

March 11,1933

BACHHRAJ
WARDHA

JAJUJI SHOULD SEE POONAMCHAND[1] DISSUADE FROM FAST MY BEHALF.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-X

[1] Poonamchand Ranka had been fasting from March 4 for the removal of jail classification of political prisoners, for more facilities for them regarding food, clothes, books, etc., and for removal of intervening bars during the interviews.

27. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

March 11, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

It is 3.15 a.m., 11th, Saturday now. The day of my writing to you has become upset owing to the uncertainty of the arrival of your weekly letter. This week I had two from you. Last week's was received only on Tuesday and this week's on Wednesday. But yesterday morning I thought I had still to hear from you and I devoted the morning to writing other important letters. And then when it dawned upon me that there was nothing more to come from you, I would not write to you during what you may call office hours. I love to write this letter and such others in the early morning.

I see that you are once more enjoying the company of birds and animals. Frogs have somehow or other appeared to me helpless creatures. They can't run, they can't fly and thus become an easy prey to the wily cat. And they seem to look at you so appealingly in their helplessness. The monkey on the other hand never excites my pity. He is a most resourceful and mischievous fellow and takes delight in overreaching you. He has no such thing as thankfulness in him. And yet I suppose all this is imagination or ignorance! If we thrive on knowledge, we seem somehow to do so on ignorance and imagination too. 'It is folly to be wise when ignorance is bliss.' And the shortest and the oldest Upanishad[1] says, "He overcomes death through ignorance and mounts to immortality through knowledge." The original words are 1 अविद्या and विद्या, meaning also respectively activity and inactivity, body and spirit, attachment and detachment. They can-be made to mean several other things without doing violence to the text. It is a very simple and lofty Upanishad and is also abstruse. It is an epitome of all knowledge like the *Gita.* The latter is perhaps a commentary on the former. An old commentator or rather the devotee of the *Gita* compares the Upanishads to cows, the *Gita* to milk and Krishna to the cowboy who milks them.[2] But no more of this now.

I hope your progress continues and will not be interrupted by the hot weather which is on us now. Make use of the earth bandage on the forehead or a mere wet rag. It has a wonderfully cooling effect.

[1] *Ishopanishad,* 11

[2] सर्वोपनिषदो गावो दोग्धा गोपालनन्दनः ।
पार्थो वत्सः सुधीर्भोक्ता दुग्ध गीतामृतं महत् ॥

What cools the head cools the whole body. I came across a potent sentence yesterday in an American book on the eyesight, a book received from Gregg. It says that a lie heats the body and injures the eyesight. It is true if you would give an extended meaning to 'lie'. Any departure conscious or unconscious from the laws of nature is a lie. A conscious departure from the known laws is a lie that hurts our moral fibre, not so, or not to the same extent an unconscious departure. But the body is injured in every case. Writers on *pranayama* claim that the ability to regulate and control breath, enables one to defy changes of climate. The *Gita* seems to lend support to the belief. This is a field that needs reinvestigation in the light of modern knowledge Kuvalayananda of Lonavala is doing it. Form your lips as you would when whistling and slowly breathe the outside air and you will have an immediate sensation of cooling. When lying flat on the back, remember that the muscles of the back do not expand. Hence your breathing must be extra gentle. It is intended to create a soothing effect on the system and relax it and rest it. There is nothing apart from sleep to relieve tension of the mind and body. Therefore the deep breathing should be taken whilst sitting cross-legged with the body erect like a straight board. All these exercises have to be gentle, deliberate and rhythmic, always on an empty stomach.

Here the writing was interrupted for prayer and is now resumed after a break of 25 minutes at 4.35.

I have always found Arnold's to be on the whole a more helpful translation than any other. "Abstemious" is a wrong word. "Spare diet" is a good expression. vYi means less than enough. What is enough is a matter of conjecture, therefore our own mental picture. The man of truth knowing that man is always indulgent to the body, said, in order to counteract the indulgence, that he should take less food than what he would think was enough; then there was likelihood of his taking what in fact was enough. So what we often think is spare or meagre is likely even to be more than enough. More people are weak through overfeeding or wrong feeding than through underfeeding. It is wonderful, if we chose the right diet, what an extraordinarily small quantity would suffice.

I am glad Ba is prospering with you and learns Hindi and makes you sing *bhajans*. Does Mridula sing? She ought to if she does not. She must shed her shyness if she has any still left. How otherwise does she pass the day? She should now be Ba's secretary or letter-writer.

My weight now registers at 104. The food still remains fruit and milk (raw). I am taking just now less than one lb. of milk. It is the fruit that keeps up my weight. The elbows remain as they are. No

cause for anxiety. I have reduced the spinning to a minimum—no fixed quantity. The count just now is anything round 55 and 60. This from *devakapas* carded on Keshu's little invention.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6266. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9732

28. LETTER TO ABDUL ALIM

March 11, 1933

MY DEAR ABDUL ALIM,

I was delighted to see your postcard telling me that you had safely arrived in Calcutta and housed in "The Refuge''.[1]

I had a letter from Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikari also.

You should not feel homesick. You are a wise young man. You should therefore cultivate a brotherly spirit with all the helpless inmates there and by your exemplary conduct endear yourself to the officials. And if you will only believe that God is our constant companion, guard and protector, you will not feel destitute or lonely.

I hope you have got some paper to read.

I am writing[2] to some friends to see you now and then.

Do keep me informed of how you are faring there.

Yours sincerely,

MR. ABDUL ALIM
THE REFUGE
125 BOW BAZAR
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20548

29. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

March 11, 1933

DEAR SATISBABU,

You will remember my having talked to you about Abdul Alim. He is now safely lodged in "The Refuge" I talked to you about. "The Refuge" is situated in 125, Bow Bazar St. Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikari is the President. You should tell some young men to go

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Deva Prasad Sarvadhikari",9-3-1933
[2] *Vide* the following item.

and see Abdul Alim and just let him feel that he is not utterly neglected. I enclose herewith his card to give you an idea of how he feels. He may be supplied with some books if he needs them. You might also be able to interest some Mohammedan to visit him.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20545

30. LETTER TO BALMUKUND

March 11, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I hope that your Conference will devote itself to internal reforms, such as the observance of the rule of hygiene, giving up of carrion-eating if it is prevalent amongst the Harijans in the Punjab at all, total abstinence from drink, etc.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. BALMUKUND
GENERAL SECRETARY
THE BALMIK ACHHUT MANDAL
LAHORE CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20547

31. LETTER TO VERRIER ELWIN

March 11, 1933

MY DEAR VERRIER,

This time too there was unavoidable delay in replying to your two letters. As if this was all God's design, Alla came in yesterday to change the scope of my letter. I wanted this to be a mere thanksgiving letter. But Alla's talk has not made it quite possible. She said she had a copy of your letter to me. But she was not satisfied. She insisted that there was a promise made by you. She does not want the marriage now but she does not want to be the liar. She wants you to be the liar ! I gently suggested that neither need be one and that in matters of love making mistakes was the most common thing in life and that whilst you had never meant marriage, she who wanted it might easily have interpreted every word and gesture of yours to mean marriage. She would not have it that way at all and yet was loath to accuse you of untruthfulness. I told her that you were incapable of lying and that if there was the slightest suspicion of your having meant marriage you would make the admission. You will now tax your memory and if

there is anything to correct in the light of what Alla has to say, you will do her the reparation. I think that she ought not to go there yet for some time. Though you and Mary have taken the sacred and most momentous resolution[1], it must have been a terrific strain on your nerves. Mary does not even seem to have recovered from the shock. Though your first letter to me is joint, Mary does not seem to have quite assimilated the truth of the dissolution of the intended tie. My whole heart goes out to her. I have no doubt that such things mean much more to woman than to man. But M. must realize that before God there is no sex or we are all women, His brides married to Him in an indissoluble tie. If she has realized the beauty of this immortal marriage, she must dance with joy that she is free from the bondage of the human marriage. The human marriage is good and necessary if the flesh is weak but if the flesh is strong it surely is hindrance for the servant of humanity that M. has become. Let her remember too, all sacrifice to be true must bring inner peace and joy. She must not therefore brood over what was to be and what was a concession to the flesh. Let her sing out the praise of God for enabling you both to triumph over the flesh. And since she has chosen to be my daughter she has got to write to me without reserve and pour out her heart to me.

But till you are both composed and have tested yourselves Alla must not go there and must not be induced to do so. She herself does not want to go until the so-called promise matter is cleared up.

And now I know that my whole heart is with you. My spirit is watching you, praying for all the strength you need. These months must have been terrible for you. May Truth, which is God, shine through your lives.

All my love to you and Mary.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 20541

32. LETTER TO MARY GILLETT

[*March 11, 1933*][2]

MY DEAR MARY,

I have just finished my letter to V. and have now but a few moments before the prayer begins. V. will share with you my letter or

[1] "Not to marry each other but for each to be married to the service to which they have dedicated their lives".

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

as much of it as he thinks you should see; whatever he withholds will be for your sake.

Since you are a new addition to the ever growing family I do not know the right word for you. But this I know and you may be sure of [it] that my whole heart is with you. My spirit follows you. My spirit follows you like that of a mother. And this quite selfishly. I do not want to feel lonely in the incessant search after knowing and seeing God as Truth and that only. V. is my son and you are my daughter because of that invincible bond. So far as I am concerned my letter to V. is as much for you as for him. But as I know you through him he must be the judge of how much of it you may see with profit, this is not from want of trust in you but from want of confidence in my ability to diagnose and prescribe. And has not a father to know his children's wants and prescribe for them? But I am a blind father. The infallible Father of us all will surely guide you and give you the strength you need for fully carrying out your great resolve of full surrender without any reservation whatsoever.

From a microfilm: S.N. 20774

33. LETTER TO T. K. MENON

March 11, 1933

MY DEAR MENON,

I have had the relevant extracts in the *Mathrubhumi*[1] sent by you translated for me.

Whilst there are one or two passages to which some objection might reasonably be taken, I see nothing in the articles to warrant the sweeping condemnation that you pronounced. In leading their argument, journalists will write spicy things which one may not resent except when all bounds of decency have been crossed. However, if ever you find anything highly offensive, you should send the cuttings and I shall write to the editor. He has promised to be very careful about his language.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. K. MENON
C/O SJT. CHAMPAKLAL DEVIDAS
26 DALAL STREET FORT
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20543

[1] A Malayalam daily

34. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

March 11, 1933

Why do you worry about Harilal? He will not write. If God suffers his drunkenness, what can we do? God will reform him when He wills.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 185

35. LETTER TO MULCHAND PAREKH

March 11, 1933

Only labour with one's hands and feet is physical labour and one must earn one's livelihood with such labour. Mental and intellectual ability should be used exclusively for the service of society. If we do not use our hands and feet, will we do agricultural work with our intellect? If there is a fire raging, will we try to put it out by composing a poem?

The maxim "Yoga is skill in work''[1] is true. There should be perfect combination of physical and mental work. Mussolini was a blacksmith's son who did hard labour in his home and who, in his youth, worked as a labourer in a factory carrying bricks to the second floor of the building 120 times a day and went to jail eleven times. But this hard life gave him valuable training. His mind was not slumbering when he did all this labour. If it had been slumbering, why, there have been millions and millions of labourers who have carried bricks and farmers who have worked in the fields but have left behind them no mark in the world.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 184

36. TO GUJARATIS

Harijanbandhu is the Gujarati edition of the English *Harijan.* That the Gujarati *Harijan* could not be published simultaneously with the English edition is a matter of shame both to you and to me. To you because the Bombay branch of the Harijan Sevak Sangh did not

[1] *Bhagavad Gita,* II. 50. The correspondent had asked: "Is a labourer only a person who does physical work? Can one who does mental and intellectual work not be called so?"

have confidence that enough subscribers would be found to make *Harijanbandhu* self-supporting. A Gujarati gentleman had agreed to make good the loss that would be incurred. But the Gujarati edition cannot at all be conducted at a loss. Moreover, I had insisted that if there was any loss in the beginning, that should be borne either by the Bombay or Gujarat branch. Ultimately Bombay has undertaken to make an experiment for three months and has launched *Harijanbandhu*.[1] I hope that the Gujaratis will in the very first week reassure the Bombay branch on this point.

However, the object in publishing *Harijanbandhu is* not to take from you one anna for a copy or four rupees annually and thereby to provide maintenance for two, four or more persons. Your subscription will be a token of your desire either to do away with untouchability or to know, if you are an orthodox Hindu, what the reformers have to say. I shall take it that the subscribers to *Harijanbandhu* pay a fee in order to gather information about the movement to abolish untouchability. If you wish to remove the blot of untouchability from Hinduism, you ought to know what the movement is, how and by whom it is being conducted, what the Shastras have to say on the subject, what the world thinks of it, what part you can play in it and the rest. And *Harijanbandhu* will give you all this information.

I hope that your one anna will not be spent in vain. Do not buy *Harijanbandhu* to please me. I am afraid that a number of people will take *Harijanbandhu* out of blind love for me even though they may not feel the need. I do not want this.

I am not at all eager to publish *Harijanbandhu* merely for the sake of publishing it. I do not have that much time. Do not get upset by the fact that it will mostly contain translations from the English. You will find novelty in these translations. I shall have to write at least something addressed to Gujaratis only. I shall have to bear some burden therefore. To me *Harijanbandhu* is a special atonement. I have been pouring my soul into this movement. Removal of untouchability is not for me a recent activity, it dates back to the days before my entry into politics, to my childhood.

But as a result of the Yeravda Pact, that activity has become the subject of a pledge. My fast was a death-bed to me. In accepting the Pact, the British Cabinet honoured it in the letter. But the observance of the pledge taken by the Hindu representatives in the name of the followers of Hinduism constituted and constitutes the spirit. I had explained this to the leaders at that very time. I gave up my fast in the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 9-3-1933.

confidence that the pledge would be observed every moment. For that observance my body was the hostage, and it is that even today. The moment I feel that those who have taken the pledge have weakened, I must again take to my death-bed.

But I am not eager to die. I am eager to live and commit untouchability to the flames. And if I have to die in order to see that glorious hour, I am ready to die. The *mantra* of my life consists in making preparations for it. To live while untouchability lives is like a cup of poison to me.

Now perhaps you will have understood more clearly why my expiation lies in conducting the *Harijan* in English and the national and provincial languages. I must either helplessly lie on my death-bed or employ whatever strength I have to subjugate the demon of untouchability. The *Harijan* and other activities are there to put off death. Thereby it is my object to caution the Hindus. There may well be a greater responsibility on me for the observance of the pledge, but it rests also, to a greater or lesser extent, on every Hindu who regards untouchability as a sin. *Harijanbandhu* will help to show how that responsibility can be discharged.

Even an orthodox Hindu can, if he tries, learn a lot from this. Those who today have become our foes were yesterday our friends. *Harijanbandhu* will prove to the patient orthodox Hindus that there was no need for this to happen. There is no place here for bitter criticism. Here all the discussion will be conducted from a religious point of view. According to me, removal of untouchability is simply a religious activity. It may well have many other results, some of which may well be political even. To my mind these are mere sham if they do not have a religious foundation. Instead of enjoying the peace of imprisonment, I would never for the sake of a sham take up the burden of conducting a big movement outside. God has given me the capacity to observe limits. Hence I am able to draw inspiration from whatever circumstances I may be placed in. There may be disadvantages in being a prisoner, but for the wise it certainly offers the peace that comes from looking into one's own soul. But at the moment I see that I can get this glimpse into my soul in conducting this huge movement while being a prisoner behind the bars. It is precisely for that reason that I have exchanged my sleep for wakefulness. And *Harijanbandhu* will every week call upon every Gujarati Hindu to immolate himself in this *yajna* to purify the Hindu religion.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 12-3-1933

37. DISPOSAL OF CARCASSES[1]

[*March 12, 1933*]

There are several sections among Harijans, e.g., the Chakkiliyans and Madigas in South India and Chamars in Gujarat, who remove and dispose of dead cattle and eat their flesh. Disposal of dead cattle is a sacred obligation and occupation. But the eating of carrion is a most filthy habit, regarded as one of the heinous sins in Hindu scriptures, and it is essential that at this hour of self-purification our Harijanbrethren should be helped to get rid of this habit. But they plead their inability to do so for various reasons. "It is a habit to which we have been accustomed for ages", they say, "and now it is a positive delicacy which we cannot forgo any more than you can do without your finest delicacies. You should also know that removal of dead cattle is an obligation imposed upon us and we may not shirk it without risking the wrath of the *Mahajans*; you know, perhaps, that carrion is part of the remuneration for the removal. We are thus tied down to carrioneating for three reasons."

The argument deserves consideration. Written and spoken appeals will be of no avail; we must show them the way out. We should first acquaint ourselves with the conditions obtaining in various parts of the country regarding the removal of dead cattle, and have them altered as circumstances may require; we should supervise the actual skinning and other attendant processes and see to the proper disposal of the remains. The removal must be made conditional on a promise not to eat the carrion, and no one should be compelled to remove dead cattle.

This work demands a fair number of volunteers. They must learn the art of skinning dead cattle in a clean manner and teach it to the Harijans who are doing it today in the old fashion. The carcasses should not be dragged as at present, as it damages the hide and decreases its value. They should be lifted and removed in an expeditious and efficient manner. The hide-curers will willingly adopt the new method, but not until the so-called high caste people have mastered it.

The way in which dead cattle are disposed of today is most uneconomical and entails a loss of crores of rupees to the country. Every bit of the carcass must be made proper use of. Much of it is

[1] This is a translation of a Gujarati item which was published in *Harijan-bandhu,* 12-3-1933 .

wasted today. The hide, the bones, the entrails and the flesh are all useful and ought to be properly utilized. The hide is being put to use of a sort. The bones are mostly wasted. They should be carefully collected and turned scientifically into manure. The entrails are utilized for gut, etc., but there is room enough for improvement. The flesh should be saved from the filthy use it is turned to and must be made to yield fat, which will be valuable for manufacturing grease for factories. The remains should finally be converted into manure or buried deep. If volunteers make a point of remaining present throughout all these processes, the men will easily take to the new departure and will stop eating carrion.

There is nowhere any room for compulsion. Where the hidecurers are not ready for the change, they must be left undisturbed. They are no more bound to remove the dead cattle than the caste organizations are bound to get them removed by them. It should be a matter of mutual adjustment.

But the beginning must be made by the volunteers supervising the processes, wherever, of course, the supervision is not resented. The supervision need not be delayed until the volunteers have first mastered the processes. Actual work will be a training in itself.

Municipalities and local bodies and States can immediately undertake the work of training volunteers in scientific skinning and hide-curing. This does need a little expense on buildings and experts. They should really have a training school for this purpose and invite philanthropic experts and veterinary surgeons for co-operation, suggestions and help.

Harijan, 18-3-1933

38. TRUTH THE ONLY WAY[1]

[*March 12, 1933*][2]

I have already summed up in an article in the last issue of *Harijan* the qualities regarded as indispensable in a servant of the Harijans.[3] If this movement is essentially religious and has for its object the purification and protection of Hinduism, it can be carried on only by truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Truth is the very foundation of religion. If Truth is God, there can be no room for untruth in religion. Let every Harijan Sevak inscribe this

[1] The article was first published in *Harijan Sevak*, 17-3-1933.

[2] Gandhiji says he wrote it on this date.

[3] *Vide* "A True Servant", 11-3-1933.

fundamental principle on the tablet of his heart.

I am being inundated with sanatanist literature. New weeklies and leaflets are coming in daily. Sanatanists have loosened their purse-strings. I like the awakening. How I wish it was on the right lines! The writings I see contain palpable falsehoods. Their sole object is to stop the anti-untouchability movement somehow or other. How can one answer such propaganda?

Most certainly not by untruth. Truth can be the only answer. I have indeed had complaints against reformers from sanatanists to the effect that the former are resorting to untruth and rowdyism. These complaints have been unsupported by evidence. I have requested the correspondents to supply me with it. Only in one case has an attempt been made to furnish evidence. And I have forwarded the complaints to the proper quarters for investigation. I do not wish to suggest that refusal to furnish me with evidence is proof positive that the reformers are all above reproach. These lines are being written in order to warn them against any departure from truth and non-violence.

My attempt is to know no distinction between the sanatanist and the reformer. I ask for truthfulness from both. But as the sanatanists refuse to regard me as one of their own—some even look upon me as their foe—I am afraid my appeal will have no weight with them. I should be satisfied if the reformers will listen to my appeal. For, their truth will overcome the opponents' untruth, even as light overcomes darkness. If, therefore, the Harijan Sevak will pursue every one of his activities with truth as the guiding principle, he is sure in the end to convert the sanatanists.[1]

I shall certainly declare that no one can destroy the Hindu religion or any other religion by aggression. This is a self-evident truth. That which can be destroyed by any external force is not religion. It may well be a form of social behaviour. Religion can be destroyed only by internal corruption. Untouchability is one such corruption in the Hindu religion. If that is not eradicated, Hindu religion is bound to be destroyed. Untouchability is a monstrous untruth. It can be overcome by contact. Untouchability exists in our hearts. It is a great sin to think, 'This man belongs to the untouchable caste; so I will not touch him.' This thought is filled with hatred, with pride, with the notion of superiority and inferiority. All this is irreligion, it is untruth. I know that untruth cannot be supported by truth, hatred cannot be supported by love, pride cannot be supported

[1] The paragraph that follows has been translated from *Harijan Sevak*, 17-3-1933.

by humility. This is the reason why I see today the sanatanist newspapers full of hatred, pride and untruth. The sanatanist will ask me, 'Do you not expose your own truth, hatred and pride in saying so?' Perhaps it is so. I can only assert that to my knowledge I have no such thoughts. When I see them I shall eschew them, then and there. In order to perceive my own faults, I receive the critics with respect, and listen to them; what they write I read as much as I can. The harder I tried, the more the faults I found in those critics. I do not wish to write about this sad experience here.

But let the workers know that exaggeration is also a species of untruth. I receive reports about opening of temples and wells to Harijans. But sometimes it has been discovered that all the temples and wells referred to have not been opened and that the information supplied to me has been based on insufficient data. The Dhulia Anti-untouchability Committee has published a small pamphlet containing a list of temples and wells opened all over India. It is an imposing list, but I am not inclined to accept it at its face value, not because the Committee has been careless in its compilation, but because it had no opportunity of testing the accuracy of the information supplied from all-India sources. Very often workers gain their information from newspapers, instead of being themselves suppliers of information to newspapers. Statements received from Anti-untouchability Committee cannot be accepted as conclusive evidence, if they are based upon untested reports published in the daily Press. And then there is the great temptation to swell the list of temples and wells opened, for fear of my fast being precipitated. It is a disheartening thought for me and it betrays a poor opinion of the great movement. My fast was not designed to coerce people in any shape or form. It was designed merely to make Hindus think and to spur them to action. Truth is made of sterner stuff, and it must be held superior to any life or lives, be they ever so precious. It must live even if a million lives had to be sacrificed. In a big, religious movement like the drive against untouchability, which many believe to be an integral part of Hindu religion, nothing but unadulterated truth and unconquerable faith in the cause will avail. The reformers hold untouchability to be itself the biggest blot on Hinduism, a great lie. If it is, it can be defeated only by truth and gentleness.

Harijan Sevak, 17-3-1933 and *Harijan*, 18-3-1933

39. LETTER TO KUSUMBEHN DESAI

March 12, 1933

CHI. KUSUM (DESAI),

You must have been released by now. How is it that still I have had no letter from you? Did you, on your release, take a vow not to write to me?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1848

40. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 12, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got the mail you posted on the 9th. I am dispatching this hoping that you will get it on Tuesday.

I had a postcard from Ramabehn. She says that you have not called on her yet. About helping her to learn English, you may discuss the matter further with me, but my understanding of the letter in which I advised you to go and see her is that the suggestion was not open to discussion. Ramabehn had told me, and that is also what she indirectly suggests in her letter, that you would never take the initiative to call on her. I had told her that that could not be so. You should prove that I was right.

Is it true that Babla[1] escaped drowning in the Magan tank? How and when did the accident occur?

I had received your wire about Parachure Shastri on Friday. If all of you came to the decision independently, it is to be highly welcomed. Kaka has conveyed it to Parachure Shastri. He has gone to his place just now. I will let you know what he decides. I hope Lakshmi's wedding went off well. The bride and the bridegroom may come and see me if they wish. I think Maruti does.

I hope you got the letters posted yesterday. They contained one for Lakshmidas in which I wrote to him about Anandi.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarat: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8333. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Narayan Desai, Mahadev Desai's son

41. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

March 12, 1933

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM[1],

I have your letter. I had been waiting for it. You are right when you say that many of the books in the Ashram collection are useless. If any book of Macfadden's[2] is not there in the library and you cannot get a copy from elsewhere, you should buy it. Glance through other books also. Take the fullest advantage of Gaurishankar's experience. By all means try your experiments on Jamna[3] and Chimanlal[4]. There is no risk at all in doing so. Complete the experiment on yourself patiently. You will learn from the experiment itself.

Write to me from time to time. If you send me a list of the books there, I shall be able to tell you which of them are worth reading.

Blessings from

From Gujarati: C.W. 909. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

42. LETTER TO GULAB A. SHAH

March 12, 1933

CHI. GULAB,

Normally it is not proper to wear a shirt and trousers and change over to half-length sari and skirt whenever you feel like doing so. I suppose by trousers you mean only shorts. It will be better if you keep to one dress. If your pronunciation has improved, you can try to memorize the *Gita* verses while working in the field. You cannot keep a book with you unless your teacher permits.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1735

[1] Son of Narandas Gandhi
[2] Bernarr Macfadden; American author and advocate of milk-diet
[3] Addressee's mother
[4] An Ashram inmate

43. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

March 12, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

I have your postcard. Do not lose your peace of mind. Narandas will certainly come and see you. It is my duty to ask him to go and it is his duty to go. Your duty is not to ask him to come and, if he wishes to come, to tell him that he need not do so. This is how sweetness is preserved in social relations. But now you may take that further step only after you have tested him. Meanwhile, you should not worry. I hope your arm is all right now.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5343

44. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

March 12, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

Your argument is worthy of an M.A. "If someone can hang himself upside down, why can I not play music?" Many other questions like this can be framed. The only reply is that no reason can be given why you may not. If one person can do one thing, why may another person not do something else?

But it is certainly possible that someone who hangs himself upside down may be able to give a valid reason even for such an action, while a person like me who then starts playing music may not be able to give a convincing reason for doing so. But let that pass. You should now put your proposal before the other inmates of the Ashram and, if a majority supports it, by all means go ahead and make the necessary preparations. Being a prisoner, I myself will not be able to join that marriage procession. And a prisoner has no vote either, so you need not consult me. Q.E.D.

I will patiently wait for Dhurandhar's letter.

Whether you reply to my question or not, I will keep on inquiring about your health. Tell me, therefore, is it all right? Is the throat all right and can you speak? How is the backache? Is your weight increasing?

When the time comes for giving away the yarn which I am spinning with the slivers sent by you, I will certainly give it to you if you continue to deserve it even then. I hope you will be satisfied with

this answer. The count of the yarn will not exceed 75. There are fairly numerous rough particles in the slivers. It is possible that even Keshu's machine is not good enough for *devkapas*. I hope you know that this variety of cotton cannot be carded with the ordinary bow.

I don't know anything about Mahadev having been offended. Nor did I know that he had written to anybody about the matter. I knew something from Narandas's letter. I knew about disrespect only from your letter. Mahadev has told me nothing. Nor did I know, when I asked him to spin [with your slivers], that he found himself in a moral dilemma.[1] In this matter your case seems to be perfectly correct. I did not feel disrespect to anybody in your remark or your request. I don't know why Mahadev felt it. I am observing silence just now, otherwise I would have asked him. I did feel, however, that your request sprang from ignorant attachment. Why should you have such attachment for me? One should eschew attachment for a person who cannot belong to any one individual but daily strives to belong to all. Such attachment can avail nothing. But this is one thing. To deduce from it a dislike for others is a different thing.

Sardar, I believe, was only joking, as is his wont.

And now see how I valued your love. Surely you will agree that I should make what I believe to be the best use of the slivers sent by you. Wouldn't that be the best way of showing how I valued your love? If a vaid, out of his great love for me, sends me gold *bhasma*[2], would it not be right to give it to my neighbour to whom it might be more useful than to me? Or, if somebody sends me a carriage to drive and if my neighbour can drive it more safely than I can, would I not show better appreciation of the donor's love by letting that neighbour drive it for me? The same argument applies to slivers. Among us here, Mahadev can make the best use of such fine slivers, and so I gave half the quantity to him. This will test his skill and increase national wealth and I also will feel happier. You should, therefore, change your nature which makes you wish that your gift should be used only by the person to whom it is given. If you make a gift, you should do so unconditionally. Sushila's description of you was correct. If Kisan was not likely to get in time the fruit which were brought for her, you would have served both Sushila and Kisan by eating it yourself. It was foolish of you to have let them rot. Q.E.D. again.

I am sorry I cannot reply to your last question.

[1] The addressee had inscribed on a gift parcel of slivers to Gandhiji: "To revered dear Mahatmaji". Mahadev Desai, therefore, had felt that it would not be proper for him to spin them.

[2] Gold oxide used as medicine in Ayurveda, the Hindu system of medicine

I hope you have had long talks with Lakshmi.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10340. Also C.W. 6769. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

45. LETTER TO LAKSHMIBEHN N. KHARE

March 12, 1933

CHI. LAKSHMIBEHN,

I was really very happy to get your letter. Who can find fault with your handwriting? It is much better than mine. Do, therefore, write to me from time to time. Your letter this time seems to have been written merely to please me.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 282. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

46. LETTER TO MAITRI GIRI

March 12, 1933

CHI. MAITRI[1],

I have your letter. Have you tried a purgative for constipation? If constipation persists even after taking a purgative, then try to live on milk and green vegetables cooked without oil. Milk should be taken unboiled.

Why has Durga[2] stopped writing to me? Mahavir[3] also has not written recently.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6238

47. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

March 12, 1933

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

You are very well occupied. I hope you will not give up this work. Do not lose faith. Mix with the Harijan families. When you have won their love, teach them not to eat left-overs. Learn from them the

[1] Daughter of Khadag Bahadur Giri, a Congress worker of Nepal
[2] Addressee's sister
[3] Addressee's brother

names and addresses of the families where they work, so that you can explain to those families also not to give them leftovers. Keep on writing to me about your experiences. You must have seen that I have made use of your first letter in the English *Harijan.*

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 353. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

48. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

March 12, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

You may certainly try to learn the *Gita* verses by heart while working in the field, but you must not do so if your pronunciation is bad. Pronunciation can be learned only from the teachers.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9364. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

49. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

March 12, 1933

CHI. GANGABEHN (VAIDYA),

I have your beautiful letter. We did what was right in not meeting, and we should always feel happy in doing what is right.

Your experience this time was splendid. You read well and also kept good health. Mirabehn did write about you. Let me have your impressions of her.

In all jails there is the same story about letters. I do not expect much improvement in that state of affairs just now. Wouldn't we submit even if they did not permit us to write any letters? We should, therefore, feel satisfied with whatever freedom we are allowed. A prisoner means a person over whose body the imprisoning authority assumes complete control. Those who court such imprisonment voluntarily should know that it would be their duty to remain contented even if they were given nothing to eat. That is the secret of living which the *Gita* teaches.

I hope you got my previous letter. I will eagerly wait for your letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: G. S. Gangabehnne. Also C.W. 8798. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

50. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 12, 1933

I wrote one letter this morning and posted it. It must be on the way. I need not, therefore, write more in this. I hope you have been to see Ramabehn.

Devdas will have arrived there.

BAPU

In all, there are 16 letters, stitched together.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8332. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

51. TELEGRAM TO MANEKBAI MEHTA

March 13, 1933

MANEKBAI[1]
121 MOGAL STREET
RANGOON

YOUR WIRE. PRAY HAVE PATIENCE. AM TRYING BEST.[2]

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I. G. P. File No. 20-X

52. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

March 13, 1933

MY DEAR MARY,

I must dictate this. I have your letter describing Babla's exploits. He is in many ways a precocious child and therefore you will find him having picked up all kinds of odds and ends, many of them quite correctly, and if you were to ask him where he picked them up he might not even be able to tell you, because in things one picks up there is no conscious effort.

I am glad you are sleeping out. After years of experience I can say that there is nothing like sleeping directly under the sky to soothe one, so much so that even the roof of a mosquito-net has proved a

[1] Widow of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

[2] About the division of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's property. *Vide* "Letter to Nanalal K. Jasani", 27-3-1933.

hindrance for me as if there was an obstacle to the direct contact with the heavens. That of course does not mean that you should hesitate to adopt the net if mosquitoes worry you even when you are right under the sky. You must have the net if at all you are disturbed by the mosquitoes. I don't want you to have malaria in the Ashram through mosquito bites.

You are quite right and wise in not making for speed till you have got control over the strength and evenness of your yarn. When you have both, the speed will come for the trying.

I am wholly unconscious of any danger or difficulty surrounding me, and don't you give way to any forebodings. One step enough for me is the command we may not break.

I have not yet got your Hindi written at Parashuram's dictation. When I get it I shall examine it and let you know the result of my examination.

I hope you duly got my letter addressed to you jointly with Duncan in reply to your joint letter.

Love.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5999. Also C.W. 3324. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

53. LETTER TO GAURISHANKAR BHARGAVA

March 13, 1933

MY DEAR GAURISHANKAR,

I have your letter together with resolution of the Rajasthan Oppressed Classes Conference. I fancy that I missed the *Times of India* report.[1] Anyway, I have no recollection of it. Nevertheless, I am glad you have drawn my attention to it as also to the feelings of the Harijan friends there. I wish you would explain to them the origin of the word 'Harijan' as it is given in the earliest issue of the *Harijan*.[2] The word has had a mixed reception. The majority of those who have written to me rather like the name. After all, it was adopted at the suggestion of some Harijans themselves, and those who suggested the name were themselves representatives.

[1] The report, published in the *Times of India* of March 2, had said that the Conference had been critical of Gandhiji. This, according to the addressee, was a misrepresentation of the proceedings of the Conference.

[2] *Vide* "Why Harijan", 11-2-1933.

So far as the suggestion that the whole movement should be "left in the hands of the depressed classes" and that the Board or Boards should only assist them by their guidance, [is concerned], it is not practicable in that the penance has got to be done by caste Hindus, therefore, it is they who have to prove their sincerity by conducting the movement. No doubt it should meet with the approval of Harijans if it is at all possible to secure it. But the penance has naturally to be done by the penitent himself and not by deputy. I can well understand a parallel movement of reform by Harijans and it should be there. It must also be the natural consequence of sincere penitence by caste Hindus.

As to the third suggestion, I do not know whether Sjt. Sarda is a proper representative of the Board or not. As to that, you should write to the Central Board.

Lastly and fourthly, the programme of the anti-untouchability movement is in no way confined to the temple-entry, but it is designed to improve the economic, social and educational conditions of these classes. Temple-entry is a part of the programme, and it is contended that it not only ensures for Harijans religious equality but it conduces to the acceleration of the pace of economic, social and educational programme. You will please explain this to all the Harijan friends and others whose misgivings you have expressed in your letter. You were quite right in bringing to my attention the various points.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20562

54. LETTER TO N.

March 13, 1933

MY DEAR N.,

I dictate this letter to save time, and you have nothing to hide from anybody.

I was glad to have your letter though later than I had expected. I wrote to you the other day a letter care of Ramachandra, and I am sending this also under his care till you advise me to the contrary.

I am glad you have moved to Harijan quarters and that you were able to fix up everything with the landlady. You should give me your detailed programme from day to day. Avoid all conversation save such as may be absolutely necessary, and you should interest S.[1] also in all acts of service. That will be the truest education for him if you

[1] The name has been omitted.

will let him understand what he is doing and why. You will also naturally give him such literary education that you are capable of giving.

Tell me what food you are getting and how and what arrangements are there for bathing, washing clothes, etc., and whether you are doing the washing yourself. I want you to get cent percent marks in the test you have put yourself to. We often talk of you and think of you. My prayers are ever with you.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20571

55. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA

March 13, 1933

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRA,

I have your letter. I am glad you are keeping me informed of the happenings there. If N. cannot stay in the Cantonment, she should shift at once. If she cannot remain in Bangalore anywhere, she should stay in Poona. I cannot send her anywhere else till she has gone through the ordeal.

I do not know what can be done for the landlady. Of course N. is primarily responsible, but so is the landlady herself. She ought to have insisted upon advance payment and if she did not want to do so, she should at least have insisted upon weekly payments. The only thing I can now suggest is that those young men who hovered round N. should collect subscriptions from amongst themselves and for very shame discharge the whole or part of the debt due to the landlady.

Enclosed is a letter for N. You may share this too with her if you like.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20570

56. LETTER TO S. NAGASUNDARAM

March 13, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 10th instant enclosing copy of a printed appeal to the Government and the Legislatures.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. NAGASUNDARAM
FIRST FLOOR, LUXMI NIVAS
NEAR KING'S CIRCLE
MATUNGA, BOMBAY 19

From a microfilm: S.N. 20565

57. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

March 13, 1933

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I thank you for your letter. I have handed the management the names of the 12 subscribers. Probably the money will have been received there. I have also given instructions that Satcowribaboo should have 100 copies sent to him every week at the address given by you. Payments are all expected in advance. You will please therefore give strict instructions that the money should be sent for the 100 copies regularly from week to week and that when they do not need them they will send a wire.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN ROY
36 WELLINGTON ST.
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20569

58. LETTER TO SATYAMURTHI

March 13, 1933

MY DEAR SATYAMURTHI,

I was delighted to have your letter enclosing little Kamala's letter addressed to me in Hindi. She thinks that she is too young to be my daughter and therefore she has become granddaughter. You ought to learn Hindi if only in order to appreciate the joke and with all your talents I promise you will learn enough Hindi in one month's time to understand the joke and you have now an army of Hindi teachers in the South. Meanwhile, I must let Kamala interpret the joke to you as you hand the enclosed letter to her, and you must take away the gold pendant from her if she cannot explain the joke to you. Sardarsaheb says it is high time you got quite well and strong again. We are all keeping well and pretty busy as you can imagine.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 20568

59. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

March 13, 1933

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I got your letter. I would be content to accept from you as much as you can give. I must, therefore, make my request and leave the matter to your discretion. In relation to you, I am in the same position as Ramabehn. If she does not get something from you, will she complain about that to me?

You seem to believe that you are immortal and that, therefore, the people are safe. But the truth is that in matters in which action by the Ruler is essential, he must act. "Ruler" here may mean, if you wish, his Executive Council or the Assembly. Responsibility must vest with some individual or body so that a tradition may be maintained. When I analyse even your method, I discover the same thing, namely, that power is being exercised, though secretly. You may deceive yourself and the people that things go on by themselves, but the truth is that nothing goes on by itself. Hence in regard to such problems as removal of carrion, admission to schools, etc., about which something ought to be done and about which public opinion also is favourable, legislation is essential. Where there are no laws, there can be no government but only anarchy or misrule. Even Mussolini pretends to run a government. Nobody should object to a declaration that the Durbar, that is, Bhavnagar State, does not recognize untouchability. Sanatanists may, if they wish, continue to follow the practice and enforce it by social sanctions. You follow many principles in your own family, but try and see if you can enforce them in your immediate circle in which you have influence. You will not succeed. You can declare, without hurting anybody, that for the Ruler all subjects are equal. Having done that, don't mind if no child from the so-called untouchable communities can attend your schools. I have written a note in the Gujarati *Harijan* about the problem of carcasses.[1] Find some time and read it. Some of what I have said there is addressed to you, though no particulars of name or place are mentioned. Though both of us are old, we are greedy. We have even the courage to do service. We give away all the money we may have. But you have to run a State, and your hair has become grey under the burden. You should also cultivate the company of persons like me. You have accepted a difficult Superficially it might seems that your path and mine are different. Both of us have the same aim and pursue

[1] *Vide* "Disposal of Carcasses", 12-3-1933

the same goal. Must you, then, insist every time that you will follow your own method? Well, have it your own way. I am concerned with the result and leave niceties of methods to politicians. I will be happy if you can satisfy the Harijans somehow.

I am afraid I have not expressed myself very welt but I hope you will generously overlook the insufficiency of the letter.

Take care of your health. I have received much from you, and wish to have much more still.

With good wishes for the welfare of Harijans from,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5980. Also C.W. 3242. Courtesy: Mahesh P. Pattani

60. LETTER TO RANCHHODDAS PATWARI

March 13, 1933

RESPECTED BHAI,

I have your letter. I will not give up hope of you, nor should you give up hope of me. Many have been able to get along together in this way. It has also happened that some were not able to do so. I shall not dismiss our case as belonging to the latter category. It is in God's hands. However, I shall go on trying.

All reformers are not pure. Nobody is pure. But many struggle to be pure, many love dharma. They believe that untouchability is really an inner matter and that it has no external sign. We must all keep away from such untouchability. No one is born an untouchable. If there is anything in Hinduism which is not to be found in any other religion, which promotes dharma, it should be amenable to rational proof. And its result should be manifest to the eye. The theory of untouchability by birth neither appeals to reason nor has it any visible beneficial effect. If you say that *Antyajas* should be helped except in the matter of admission to temples, why should you not regard it your dharma to give such help? If you don't wish to give such help through me, you may give it independently.

You also see the continual degradation of dharma. But do you think it can be prevented by laying exclusive stress on external cleanliness? I am not averse to such cleanliness. I think I observe all rules of cleanliness which I know, but I don't believe that their observance purifies me spiritually. They help me to preserve physical cleanliness. For preserving spiritual purity, it seems to me that what is necessary is observance of rules of internal cleanliness. These we have forgotten altogether. The result is that, though we have forsaken

dharma, lost our spiritual strength and remain absorbed in worldly pursuits, we believe that our dharma is safe and, if somebody like me comes forward to wipe out the blot of untouchability, a loud cry of dharma being in danger is raised and lies are spread against that person. I do wish that people like you should not lend your support to such activities and that is why I plead with you. On matters on which we differ, we should try to understand each other's point of view and, in regard to other things about which we have no differences between us, we may work separately but with the same aim. If all of us do this, the waste of energy that is taking place at present would stop.

Read this letter when your mind is free from other worries. I am sure you will be able to get some time in Adhoi.

Pranams from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 20564

61. LETTER TO SWARUP RANI NEHRU

March 13, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I got your letter. I was looking forward to it.

I have a letter from Jawaharlal in which he has given an account of your health and stated that you have lost much weight. Poona should be the place for you as soon as you can come. I shall try this time to arrange for you a different accommodation. Jawahar too has written about it.

As for Calcutta you should follow your own inclination. I have no opinion in this respect, I do not even have the right to hold any.

Kamala must be by now leaving for Dehra [Dun]. In a few days Sarup will be here Her Kathiawar tour was satisfactory. Indu[1] and Chand[2] visited me on Saturday. They were fine. Tara[3] of course has hardly any time left from playing to come to me. Jamnalal's Kamalnayan and Ramakrishna are also at the same school.

Do inform me in advance of your coming.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

[From Hindi]

Gandhi-Indira Gandhi Correspondence File. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Indira Gandhi

[2] Chandralekha and Nayantara, Vijayalakshmi Pandit's daughters

[3] *ibid*

62. LETTER TO GIRDHARILAL

March 14, 1933

MY DEAR GIRDHARILAL,

I was glad to receive your weekly report and to notice that the progress was maintained, though still slow. May it-keep steady and result in permanent cure is the wish and prayer of us all.

Yours sincerely,

LALA GIRDHARILAL
109-A MAHENDRA MANSIONS
ESPLANADE ROAD, FORT
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20580

63. LETTER TO MIAN MOHAMMAD RAFIQUE

March 14, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I am obliged to you for your letter and your book of poems about myself. I wish I had the time I would love to give to your work so that I may know myself through your eyes and add to my knowledge of Urdu, but *Harijan* just now absorbs the whole of my time and I do not know when I shall be able to reach your poem. I cast hungry eyes on it even as I received it and I saw that I should find it difficult to understand your classical Urdu.

Yours sincerely,

MIAN MOHD. RAFIQUE, ESQ.
BAGHBANPURA
LAHORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 20578

64. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

March 14, 1933

THE SECRETARY
GOVERNMENT OF
BOMBAY
HOME DEPARTMENT

DEAR SIR,

With reference to my application for permission to Drs. Ramnathan and Desai of the Meteorological Department to come to the Yeravda Central Prison in the evening just after dark to show me

the use of an astronomical telescope, the Superintendent has just informed me that the Government cannot see their way to grant the permission for reasons stated in the order. I cannot help saying that I was wholly unprepared for this decision. I have known both Yeravda Central Prison and Ahmedabad Central Prison to be opened at night. My application was for the admission not of strangers, but of Government officials, on a day convenient to the authorities only for half an hour for innocent instruction. As I would not like to think that the Government would reject such a simple request, I renew my application. But should the Government refuse to reconsider, would they allow the above mentioned officials to give me such instruction as may be possible just before the prison gates are closed?[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3880; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(4), Pt. II, p. 159

65. LETTER TO DR. HIRALAL SHARMA

March 14, 1933

DEAR DR. SHARMA,

I have your letter[2] today and I reply at once before deciphering Amtussalaam's. What I would like you to do is to go over to the Ashram, see the patients who are still there and will be for some time, and see whether they can be treated there without being removed to a cooler climate. After all, it is not quite so hot in Ahmedabad as one may think till April. The nights are perfectly cool and I have not found even the summer to be trying. I have not hesitated to take my own cure in the Ashram more than once, even though I was advised by some doctors to go to a hill station or at least to a seaside place. But you shall judge for yourself, and then if you find it to be necessary I shall endeavour to select a cooler place. Your going to the Ashram will serve a double purpose. You will know the place and surroundings and you will have your first experience of it. You will also be able to deal with cases of obstinate constipation which are common enough in the Ashram. There are two patients there who are chronic asthmatics and who do not generally go to watering places

[1] The meteorologists were finally given permission to visit the jail during day-time and they arrived on April 3.

[2] The addressee, a naturopath, had decided to go to the Ashram for some time and had asked Gandhiji what his duties there would be.

and try to keep as much as possible in the Ashram itself. You can go to the Ashram whenever you like, and if you want to take Amtussalaam with you, you can do that also.

I am glad your daughter was cured of smallpox through natural treatment.

If you propose to go to the Ashram, you have simply to send a telegram or a letter telling them when you will reach there. I will send a copy of this letter to the Manager.

Yours sincerely,

DR. H. L. SHARMA
SUNRAY HOSPITAL
KAROL BAGH
DELHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 20579; also *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh,* pp. 19-20

66. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

March 14, 1933

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

I have been very slow in sending you the draft constitution[1]. Now I have your telegram. I was ready with it only last Sunday and then it awaited the dictating of this letter when your telegram was received. You will see what labour has been put into it. The draft as it comes to you is the 3rd draft prepared by Mahadev. I was simply supervising and suggesting. I think I told you that I read it first and found that it required a lot of re-drafting and thinking out. It was then handed to Shastri[2]. Shastri went through it carefully and made suggestions. Then Mahadev tackled it. So, you may say that it is the result of the joint labours of three persons. Before it is printed, it should be passed by the Committee of the Society. I feel that Hariji[3] should apply his legal mind to it and, as a lawyer, make what amendments and additions he may think necessary before it is considered by the Committee. If he cannot give it the necessary time, it should be put in the hands of some lawyer who is experienced in drafting constitutions for societies such as ours. No labour now given to it will be a waste of time and effort if the Society is to grow into a big and efficient organization. Constitution alone will not do it, I

[1] *Vide* "Draft Constitution of the Harijan Sevak Sangh", 9-3-1933.
[2] R. V. Shastri, editor of *Harijan*
[3] Hridaya Nath Kunzru

know, it will be the workers who will perform the trick. Nevertheless, without a good workable constitution we will not be able to bind together the different units composing the organization and its branches. After you have the final draft for passing, if there is any time, I would like you to send me a copy of that draft, for, you should know that I have not examined the enclosed draft in all its details.

I am anxious to receive your impressions in detail of your Punjab tour, your experience of the Harijan leaders. Swatmanandji[1] appears to me to be an able man. He is a polished Hindi writer and seems to have original ideas. He tells me that he met you. He has sent me a copy of the representation that was submitted to you by his Society. As you have seen from his report which I have sent you he has no faith in the chief caste Hindus working the different anti-untouchability organizations. We have to give him as much satisfaction as is possible, and if there is nothing whatsoever in his charges, we should be able to tell him so and support our statement with convincing evidence.

I know I have deprived you of the only secretary who was giving you the fullest satisfaction. If you had pleaded your inability to part with Shastri, I should have managed somehow. I have not the courage now to say, "You can have Shastri if you wish". At the same time I know that you must not remain without an efficient secretary. Would you like me to make a search? If you will, let me know your exact requirements and what you are prepared to pay.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: G.N. 1113; also S.N. 20576

67. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

March 14, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

Your letter gave us great relief. We had been eagerly waiting for news[2], but the note was handed over only in the morning and not at night though we waited for it. After all a prisoner is a prisoner, and so I don't complain.

It was very good that you and Lilabehn both remained present at the time. Do attend by turns now, and also keep me informed.

As your note says, you will go to the hospital at 12 o'clock. I

[1] Swatmadas; *vide* "Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar", 16-3-1933.

[2] About Anandi Asar, who was operated upon on the previous day for appendicitis in the Sasoon Hospital, Poona

am, therefore, enclosing a note for Anandi. Please read it out to her, and convey to me her message. I am putting you to much trouble. But I am helpless. One has to incur debts against one's wishes. God will repay them. I have of course received a telegram from Lakshmidas[1].

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

PS.

Do not send any oranges or *musambis* for the present. I have received a large supply from Wardha.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4828. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey. Also G.N. 74

68. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

March 14, 1933

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I see from Prabhudas's letter that nobody is left with you now.Why is that so? And what is to be done about it? I can understand your inducing someone from the Ashram to join you. But how could anyone be sent there by some other person ? Either train somebody from that place or attract somebody from the Ashram or, if you can get anybody from Dhrangadhra, send for him. All that I ask is that you should not feel helpless.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33068

69. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

March 14, 1933

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. Why are you frightened? I have not at all changed towards you, nor lost my faith in you. You are the same today as you were before. It is my duty to guide you. Whenever you make a mistake, I will correct you. I wrote about Jamnalalji to reassure you. Go on with your search within the limits of propriety. It will please me if you get married before Jamnalalji comes out. Do not let even Narandas's warning upset you. I both understand and fail to understand your partiality for Gujarat. Surely I can have no aversion to a Gujarati girl. It will therefore be quite good if you can find a

[1] Lakshmidas Asar, Anandi's father

suitable Gujarati girl. There will be nothing to object in the girl you ultimately get since we do not wish to form an unsuitable connection. Your being easy in mind makes me so, too. Now it is indeed time for you to leave for Almora. Even so, I leave it to you when to go.

You have not even told me Motiba's name. To whom should I address the letter? However, I have managed somehow. The letter is enclosed.

No point now remains to be answered. I cannot think of anybody to send from the Ashram for Chhaganlal. Can you suggestany name? I will deal with *Varnas*[1] in *Harijan.* A copy of Hindi *Harijan* will go to Shail Ashram.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32993

70. LETTER TO BADRINATH SHARMA

March 14, 1933

BHAI BADRINATH SHARMA,

I have your letter. I have not seen any cutting of the article. The Prayag resolutions are unsatisfactory.[2]

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI BADRINATH SHARMA
KETAKI DEV
GAYA
BIHAR

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9556

71. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 15, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

Kakasaheb has removed Anandi today to Prof. Trivedi's house. Since the facilities in the hospital were not very satisfactory and since both the operation and the post-operation dressing were quite simple, the doctor himself suggested that she should be removed to some private hospital or house where she could be properly nursed. The

[1] For Gandhiji's articles on the subject, *vide* "Varnadharma", 19-3-1933, "Significance of the Varna System", 9-4-1933 and "Five Questions on Varnadharma", 21-4-1933.

[2] The reference is perhaps to the resolutions passed on March 5, 1933 expressing dissatisfaction with the proposals for Indian Constitutional Reforms.

doctor will visit Prof. Trivedi's place every morning and evening to dress the wound. And there is no dearth of nurses—women volunteers. Two or three Parsi ladies who do Harijan work and a daughter of Lilavati Munshi take turns. Premlilabehn and Lilabehn, Lakshmidas's sister, are with Anandi all the time. She gets a little temperature during day-time, but the doctor says that is common. She drinks fruit juice and milk and is quite happy and cheerful. There is no cause for worry at all. But she was saying that she would be happy if Velabehn was with her. Premlilabehn, therefore, seems to have sent a wire. If Velabehn cannot resist her desire, she may certainly come. She may have even started yesterday. Or she will arrive tomorrow morning with Devdas.

Blessings from[1]

BAPU

SHRI NARANDAS GANDHI
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a microfilm: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8334. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

72. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

March 16, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I am able only today to reach your letter of 8th March.

What I meant about a Selection Board was this. You should appoint a small and efficient committee consisting of, say, a man like Thadani and someone from St. Stephen's College and another person as Secretary with you and Thakkar Bapa as members ex-officio. This Committee would invite applicants for the David Scheme Scholarships.[2] It will examine the applications and recommend them to the Board. The Board will, if it accepts the recommendations, grant the scholarships. This Committee will also be invited to frame a scheme giving conditions under which scholarships should be given describing the qualifications of the candidates and it will be under these conditions that applications would be invited. I would suggest the Committee keeping in touch with Mr. David in so far as he may be willing to assist the Committee with his informal guidance and advice.

[1] This was signed for Gandhiji by Mahadev Desai.

[2] The scheme was to collect a fund from "caste Hindus for the higher education of a select number of Harijan boys and girls". *Vide* "Higher Education for Harijans", 25-2-1933.

So much about the Selection Board.

With reference to the donations, I am not satisfied with what you say. I had the fear that there might not be an adequate response to an appeal for such donations. I had said as much to Mr. David when I told him why even though I liked his scheme I was reluctant to back it publicly. I advised him therefore to consult you and to consult the Bombay Board which he did, and both of you warmly took it up. You even advertised it in the draft constitution. I therefore felt encouraged after having waited for a long time to bless the scheme in the *Harijan.* I do feel that there must be some earmarked donations apart from the general collections. I do not like the idea of setting apart sums from the general collections already made. We must draw, if we at all can, some sanatanists among the donors. Anyway, that's my idea, and that's also Jamnalalji's, Sardar Vallabhbhai's and of all of us. I have already approached Janaki Devi to give the scheme Rs. 2,500/-and I am presently going to write to others. I would like to include your name among the donors and publish it.

Before writing anything in the *Harijan,* I shall await your considered reply to this.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 20592. Also C.W. 7932. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

73. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

March 16, 1933

DEAR SATISBABU,

I have your letter. I am making use of the translation[1] you have sent me, and of the same thing in Bengali Mahadev has given a translation for Gujarati *Harijan.* I had already seen the translation of your article in the Hindi *Harijan.* What you say about the imperfection of the latter has been before me also and I have drawn the Editor's pointed attention to it. He is a willing worker and accepts all suggestions with good grace. You will therefore notice a steady improvement in it.

I shall continue to send you the English articles as they get ready. My writing or dictating them has got to be finished by Thursday morning. Nothing begins before Monday. The bulk is finished between Tuesday and Wednesday.

Your analysis of the 48 columns is interesting. No wonder you

[1] "Kabuli Zulam", published in *Harijan,* 1-4-1933

are commanding an ever-increasing circulation.[1] All this is work after your heart and it is a good thing. There is no reason why you should not command a circulation of 10,000 or even more. I hope you have a good staff of workers. You must not break under the strain. I should love to learn Bengali, if only to read your articles, but, for the time being, that must remain only a dream.

I see you have already sent me the first form of your Hindi introduction to the *Ramayana*. I am keeping it by me to read it as soon as I find the time.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20594

74. LETTER TO G. K. DEVDHAR

March 16, 1933

MY DEAR DEVDHAR[2],

I have your letter about Prof. Purandare[3]. The thing is this. He had delivered some addresses in Poona. He was brought to me by Haribhau. Haribhau told me that his addresses were well received, and so in order to begin the propaganda and in order to help Purandare I suggested that his speeches should be published in book form. He was quite agreeable. He told me that his wants were very few and that he would gladly dedicate himself to the cause. I asked him to tell me what he would require for his labour in collecting the speeches, perhaps even rewriting them, examining proofs, etc. He would not name the sum although I pressed him hard. But he told me that he would be entirely satisfied with whatever I named and got from the Central Board. When the book was finished and the time came for payment I hesitated to name the sum. I therefore referred the matter to Haribhau. He suggested Rs. 125. I immediately accepted the amount and had the cheque prepared, when, lo and behold, Prof. Purandare declined to accept the money and wanted "Rs. 1000, if not Rs. 3,000".

Since then the story is one of my receiving angry letters of abuse and nothing else. That, however, is not a matter of much moment. I told him that he could have the book against payment of

[1] Of the Bengali *Harijan* which was published under the auspices of the Khadi Pratishthan, Calcutta, and of which the addressee was the Editor

[2] President of the Servants of India Society and the Maharashtra Divisional Board of the All-India Anti-untouchability League

[3] N. H. Purandare

the printing charges. He disputed the reasonableness of the printing bill saying that it was exorbitant. I said I would accept any sum that might be fixed by an independent arbitrator. He would not accept that. There is much more that I could write, but I think this is enough.

Now, I am acting as a Trustee for the Central Board. How can I possibly ask the Central Board, without the slightest justification, to pay more? The translation rights, etc., he can have. There is not much demand even for the books that we have. I would gladly say that if there is any surplus left after discharging the printers' bill, he should have it. What more is it possible to offer?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20591

75. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

March 16, 1933

MY DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

I promised to write to you at length in reply to your complaint of the 11th instant.[1] You have done well in writing as freely you have done. That enables me to explain what I have done. Perhaps your letter was dictated without your having seen the *Harijan.* I dealt with Swatmadas's letter without mentioning his name, or the Province, or the organizations and purposely gave it a general colouring, so that even Swatmadas could not make out that I had built my article[2] on his letter, and you will be agreeably surprised to know that Lele thought that it had reference to Bombay. This is the way I have successfully dealt with so many things for over a generation. But at the same time I did not want to wait till you had dealt with the report yourself and were able to send me your observations. That would have been a long drawn out agony, whereas what I wanted to do was to drive a lesson home as early as possible. The particular Province and the particular complaints about particular organizations were left untouched and awaited treatment till after you had examined the whole question. Do you see anything wrong in this method? Have the Punjab organizations been compromised in any manner or Swatmadas given undeserved credit? In the hypothetical article in the *Harijan* I have not

[1] The addressee had generally complained against Swatmadas, calling him a "young enthusiast" "without any work behind him" and, in answer to Gandhiji's suggestion that Swatmadas's report containing strictures against various anti-untouchability bodies be circulated among them, had said that it would not be courteous to do so.

[2] *Vide* "As They See Us", 4-3-1933.

even said that the writer's complaints were true. I simply called for self-introspection on the part of the uplift organizations throughout India. And let me tell you that that article is serving its purpose. It is still open to you, and I want you to investigate all the complaints of Swatmadas and give me your reply so that I can deal with them. I know that the Punjab organizations mentioned by Swatmadas are not all affiliated to the central organization. That should not matter. Nor need these organizations take it amiss if we made courteous enquiries of them. Their reception of your enquiry would naturally depend upon the manner of it. You, I know, would always write in a courteous tone and a perfectly friendly manner, and make your intention perfectly clear that you wanted to help them as a friend and not approach them in an inquisitorial manner. However, that is really my suggestion. You will do whatever you think is proper, and if you think that no enquiry is necessary you will say so and I shall be quite satisfied. My purpose is served if I have made it clear to you that there was nothing improper in my having dealt with the subject anonymously and in a perfectly general manner.

As to Swatmadas himself, I was not at all unprepared for your description of him. But we have to deal with and come in contact with such young men. It is inevitable. We are responsible for what they are and it serves us right. Therefore we have to deal with them in the gentlest manner possible, listen to them most patiently, and try to take what service it may be possible to take from them. I think this covers all the points raised in your letter.

I hope you had my letter sent you on the 14th, and the draft constitution went to you yesterday by registered post. I sent you a telegram[1] also advising you of its despatch.

Your description of the Punjab Alienation of Land Act makes bad reading. Can nothing be done to correct the mischief? I would like you to send me a copy of that Act.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1114

[1] This is not traceable.

76. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 16, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter of the 11th. What you say is perfectly correct. This seems to be the last ordeal. I should like to sacrifice everything in it. However, if we could always to do what we liked, all of us would be kings.

I have already informed you that Parachure Shastri has gone to his place. My previous letters may have helped you to arrive at your decision, but it was my duty to leave the decision to you which in my impatience I failed to do.

From whom has Parashuram borrowed? The news has perturbed me. Who has been lending him? Give me all details. Let me know Parashuram's weaknesses. We should tolerate much, but please remember that there is a limit even to that.

Co-operation and non-co-operation either may be one's duty.

A pair of brass pots, a *thali* and a *tapeli*—I hope Lakshmi will not get crushed under the weight of all these things. Even these are marks of love, however, but I am glad that you refused to be a party. I am also glad that Velabehn and others decided to give something. I cannot judge from here where the limit should have been put. Didn't I myself wish to give Lakshmi a string of beads, when I was reluctant to give anything to Rami? Love shows itself in such contradictory forms. I do not doubt your sincerity in the least [in refusing to join]. It is the wisdom of giving a pair of pots which should be doubted.

You will read the copy of my letter to Dr. Sharma which I am enclosing. I will not therefore write more on the subject. Do you agree with what I have written to him? A letter for Marybehn[1] also is enclosed.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8385. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] F. Mary Barr

77. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

March 16, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. I have already written to Dr. Sharma.[1] He should leave for the Ashram and take you too. I will not write in detail as you will see that letter. It is not at all correct to say that the Ashram is the hotbed of phthisis. The fact is that there is hardly any phthisis in the Ashram.

Who was treating Kudsia[2]?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 279

78. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

March 17, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

This is Friday morning 3.15. Your letter came in due time.

I must be brief today as I have many other important letters to write. I have no doubt whatsoever that your progress will continue if I have succeeded in explaining my instructions about deep breathing and gentle breathing whilst lying flat on your back. With plenty of good *bhaji*[3] constipation must yield. Whilst you have to avoid bread, paupau should be taken if available.

I suspended my saltless last week without making any change in the diet. I simply began taking salt with the fruit—not more than 30 grains altogether during the day. The only change I can report is that the weight went up yesterday to 105. There has been no increase in milk or fruit. But I am not able to say whether the increase is due to salt. We shall see.

Verrier seems to have calmed down now and definitely off the marriage. Whether they will ever accept the restriction as to intermarriage between members of the same Ashram, it is difficult to

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Hiralal Sharma", 14-3-1933.

[2] The addressee's niece who had lived in the Ashram for a few months.

[3] Leafy vegetable

say. I am going to make the suggestion in your name.

About Laxmi and Anandi in Ba's letter which goes with this.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6267. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9733

79. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 17, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

While waiting for the others to arrive for the morning prayer, I wrote out a letter to Mirabehn and one to Ba. I made them brief and started this. I read Narahari's letter and your two letters. I have discussed these only briefly. Where is the time? I however put down the thoughts which occur to me.

You should invite Narahari to see you and try to understand his point of view. I know his temperament very well. He is one of the few sincere workers who have come together in the Ashram. They should all learn to become one as milk with sugar. If they cannot do this, the Ashram is bound to perish. Naturally, it is the responsibility of the secretary to see that different parts of an organization work in harmony. It is my duty to explain this clearly to you. The secretary is the centre of an organization. Those who do not feel the pull of his attraction are outsiders in that organization. The secretary should either free them or give them a proper place in the organization and keep them in it. You cannot regard Narahari as an outsider. We look upon certain persons as the limbs of the body that is the Ashram. We can never imagine the Ashram without them. If we can imagine it without them, we can imagine it without ourselves too, which would mean the end of the Ashram.

I have only stated the principle. You may draw from it what lesson you can.

Narahari should be regarded as an expert in the field of education. In that field, therefore, we should subordinate our views to his. If in conesquence we find that mistakes are being made, we should let them be made and draw the expert's attention to them afterwards. There is no other way, and there can be none. If anybody tries to point out my mistake in my own field, I would not readily admit it. I must, therefore, taste the bitterness of failure. This holds true of all other fields. In this, too, I have stated only the general principle.

All persons of the category of Maganbhai should have free access to the books. If as a result some books are spoiled or lost, we should write them off rather than create unpleasantness. The rules for using the books should be pasted on the walls at numerous places. In big libraries, even ordinary members are permitted to take them out of the shelves. If they do not put them back in their places after they have done with them, they leave them on the table, and at the end of the day the librarian puts them back in the shelves. The inmates of the Ashram should have free access to the books. They can have the keys whenever they wish. If you cannot decide who should be treated as inmates of the Ashram, you may draw up a list of selected names of persons who should be permitted to take out books and ask for the keys.

If the children go to bed at 8.15 p.m., they should be permitted to sleep from 8.30 p.m. to 4.30 a.m. without fear. In addition, they should also get one full hour during day-time for sleeping. You will have to consider who may be described as children. You may respect the parents' wishes in this matter.

A teacher should get time to prepare himself. I cannot accept Chimanlal's excuse that he gets no time. If one undertakes a job, one must do it well, otherwise one ought not to undertake it. To undertake a job and not to do it well is a form of untruth. If a person who is driving a car does not drive it carefully, he will be committing a crime. Similarly, if a person who has undertaken to teach something does not do it well, he will commit a greater crime than that driver. Nobody should undertake anything which is beyond his capacity.

We should faithfully obey Kuvalayanandji's instructions regarding exercise.

The conclusion to be drawn from all this is that all of you should sit with Narahari, discuss the problem frankly and do what you think best.

However, do only as much from this as you can easily do. I am far away from there. After all it is you who have to decide and act. It is you who have to run the Ashram and will have to accept the responsibility. I may, therefore, make suggestions to you but you should have complete freedom to accept or reject them. You should assume that you have that freedom.

Prema also is involved in all this. She should learn to control her tongue and restrain her obstinacy. She behaves in such a manner as to wipe out all that she does. Try to persuade her as much as you can. If you wish to free her from any responsibility, you may do so. If her working the whole day does not let her have peace of mind, she

should reduce her work. If she has such peace, she should be able to listen to criticism from anybody.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8336. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

80. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

March 17, 1933

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

We are all so glad that your brother is getting better.

The *Harijan* tells you all about the activities in connection with untouchability. Though the storm is raging on all sides, somehow or other I am enjoying perfect peace. This temple-entry question is indirectly solving many spiritual problems. It has given and is still giving the movement its real religious background. Many thought, and some still think, that the question is purely political and economic. It is now being recognized that everything else depends upon the religious conversion of caste Hindus. For, that is the significance of temple-entry. It may be that the religious conversion may not come at all in our time. It may turn out that I had underrated the strength of the superstition. Nevertheless, the issue is becoming clear day by day. Untouchability will not have gone without temple-entry and all it signifies—temple-entry not at the point of the bayonet but at the will of the people. I have not yet succeeded in showing the sanatanists that the two Bills do not seek to interfere with Hindu conscience in any shape or form. They are simply meant to remove the legal obstacle to the freest exercise of Hindu conscience. It has been a matter of great grief to me that Government have not seen this very clear intention of the two Bills. But I have purposely refrained from dwelling on that aspect in the *Harijan*. I have simply remained satisfied with having written[1] to the Viceroy.

Love from us all to all.

Yours sincerely,

MOHAN

C. F. ANDREWS
WOODBROOKE, SELLY OAK
BIRMINGHAM

From a photostat: S.N. 981

[1] Gandhiji did this on February 1 and l9.

81. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

March 17, 1933

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I have your letter. I thought that I had sent you a parcel containing 10 copies of the *Harijan.* Anyway, copies are being sent to all those friends who were helping during my visit, but if you want more copies, you should tell me.

Love.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

MISS AGATHA HARRISON
119 GOWER STREET, W.C. 1

From a photostat: G.N. 1463

82. LETTER TO H. L. HUBBARD

March 17, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter containing your good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

REV. H. L. HUBBARD
ALL SAINTS' VICARAGE
MARGATE
ENGLAND

From a microfilm: S.N. 20605

83. LETTER TO S. KELAPPAN

March 17, 1933

MY DEAR KELAPPAN,

What is this dictatorship? Do please keep me informed of the progress of the movement. It is strange that I have not heard from you for all these days.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20600

84. LETTER TO S. MADHAVAN NAIR

March 17, 1933

MY DEAR MADHAVAN,

I have your letter advising me that Sjt. Kelappan has been appointed the sole dictator and that the provisional committee has been dissolved. I hope that the change will justify itself. I have not been quite able to understand it.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20599

85. LETTER TO J. S. M. JOSEPH AND HELEN KONARD

March 17, 1933

DEAR FRIENDS,

I thank you for your letter and the book accompanying it.

You will be glad to hear that I had already read it and that Was with much interest and profit. This was years ago.

Yours sincerely,

DR. J. S. M. JOSEPH & HELEN KONARD
158 HARRISON STREET
PASSAIC, N.J. (U.S.A.)

From a photostat: S.N. 20601

86. LETTER TO P. R. LELE

March 17, 1933

MY DEAR LELE,

I have your three letters. I must confess that I am not satisfied with your two previous letters. The letter I have published[1] was surely composed as if it was meant for publication and meant also to show that the balance had gone into the Harijan pockets. You may not have meant it for publication, but then there was no meaning in writing that letter. You are not a mere publishing department so that you can boast that your overhead charges were only 10% of the cost of your publishing activity. If you will read the resolution which brought into being these committees, my meaning will be clear to you.

I note you do not want me to publish the figures that you have sent me.

[1] In *Harijan*, 11-3-1933

I thank you for the two cuttings accompanying your letter of the 15th instant.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. R. LELE
31 MURZBAN ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20595

87. LETTER TO N.

March 17, 1933

MY DEAR N.,

I have your letter. I had intended to write this letter in my own hand, but that could not be done. An unexpected visitor came on the scene and I became helpless.

My spirit hovers about you as a mother's about her lost child. I would love to own you as a child, but I have not got that trust in you yet. It may be no fault of yours, but there it is. You should know the whole of my mind. That is the only way I can guide you and the only way in which I can ever own you as a daughter.

I do feel that you are again in a trap. There is only one spiritual husband, companion and friend to all, both men and women, and that is God, whom I know more fully as Truth. Before God alone there is no sex. He alone is pure spirit. All other marriage, however lofty-minded both parties may be, is more or less carnal. For a person who has dedicated himself or herself to the service of humanity there is no such thing as exclusive relationship.

If, therefore, you will take my word, you will not travel from error to error, as you seem to me to be doing just now. Your promise is to have no exclusive or secret or private companionship. You are simply wedded to your work and nothing else.

You should write regularly.

May Truth, which is God, be your sole guide, friend, companion and rock of ages.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20603

88. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA

March 17, 1933

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRA,

I have your postcard. Here is a letter for N.

Though as a vegetarian I do not like the idea of poultry-farming and chicken egg-selling, I am unable to say that no Harijan Seva Organization should do so, and if you feel like introducing that industry, you should unhesitatingly do so. Is this ordinary hatching of eggs or is it the new innocent method of the laying of sterile eggs?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20598

89. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

March 17, 1933

MY DEAR MARGARETE,

Why do you want to come here for three days or at the most a fortnight? If you have at all imbibed the central truth of the *Gita*, it will tell you that this kind of wish has got to be subjugated and sublimated into pure action, which for you consists in doing your duty there. You should hold on to your savings, and if you cannot restrain yourself from spending them somehow, you should send them here for the Harijan cause.

I do hope you got all my previous letters, as also the Harijan which is being posted to you every week.

Love from us both.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also S.N. 20602

90. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

March 17, 1933

CHI. NARAHARI,

Why did you tear up your letter to Mahadev? Just think how much anger and violence there was in your action. Narandas put the pieces together, reconstructed the whole letter and sent it here. It was not right for you to tear up the letter, no matter how much at fault

Narandas was. I have gone through your letter and also the brief reply Narandas has sent to Mahadev. I have conveyed to Narandas in short the impression which was produced on me, and have suggested that he should show you that letter.

It is true that my trust in Narandas is as complete as you have heard it is. That is my nature. It is not that I have such trust in him alone. I have similar trust in you, Panditji, Kaka and others whose names you yourself can supply. I would never believe anything against any of them unless I had direct evidence. Hence, there was—should have been—nothing surprising in what you heard. Apart from it, this is what I believe regarding Narandas. He has in him the qualities of efficiency, patience, power of discrimination, balance of mind, impartiality and firmness, of the highest order. They have cast a spell on me. I therefore wish that you and other co-workers should appreciate his qualities and take full advantage of his services. However, he cannot have these merits, nor can others see them in him, simply because I attribute them to him. How can you help if you fail to see them? And it is clear that if you fail to see them, you cannot avail yourself of his services even as much as you may wish. So much about my faith in Narandas. Apart from that, however, I liked your letter very much. It is not necessary, and I have not the time, to analyse the letter in detail or point out your errors that it shows. I think I have drawn from it the necessary lesson. You will see this from the suggestions which I have made to Narandas.

What I expect you to do is that you should see Narandas, have a quiet discussion with him and persuade him to make the changes which seem necessary to you. Do not press the points which Narandas finds unacceptable. I don't think that you wish, or believe it desirable, that the charge of the Ashram should be entrusted to somebody else. Do tell me if that is what you wish or think. But if that is not so, your duty is to persuade Narandas as much as you can. You are responsible for the welfare of the Ashram quite as much as I or Narandas or others. We are what we are, and it is we who will make the Ashram what it will be. You cannot, therefore, regard yourself as an outsider and disclaim responsibility for it, since the bond among the inmates of the Ashram is an indissoluble one as that in a Hindu marriage. The Gower Bill has not still been passed into a law; but even when it has, those who wish to adhere to the present form of indissoluble marriage will certainly do so. The Gower Bill has for its subject matter forced marriages and ill-matched pairs. I am sure you will not regard our marriage as of that type. It is a marriage of choice. You should bear this in mind and know that you have no choice but to endure what is inevitable and act accordingly. I have read your letter in some haste.

If there is anything in it about which I should do something but which has escaped my attention please do let me know.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9057

91. LETTER TO PROF. SOARES

March 17/18, 1993

DEAR PROF. SOARES,

I was delighted to meet you yesterday and have the interesting information that caste is observed among Goan Christians and that it was confined to the restriction upon inter-caste marriages.

If you can give me comparative statistics about the population of Harijans and other Hindus and the occupations of Harijans in Goa or rather Portuguese India, I shall be obliged.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20597

92. NOTES

EVILS A RESULT

> In the Telugu districts as well as the adjoining Tamil districts, Madigas and Malas, both of whom are at presents untouchables, kill cows and buffaloes for purposes of sacrifice to Matamma Mariyamma and Gangamma. There is no doubt that a certain number of caste people also take vows before these goddesses in times of emergency and calamity, but the actual sacrifice is done by the so-called outcastes. The untouchables not only sacrifice animals in public but eat the beef. They also eat carrion. Caste Hindus do not, but they do freely eat pork. I would request you, therefore, to advise the untouchables to give up this sacrifice and carrion-eating. The latter is responsible for their physical degeneration. Could you not also send a message for us who are working in the cause of anti-untouchability?

This is a condensed extract from a long letter from the Secretary of the Andhra Provincial Ryots' Association. There is no doubt that this habit of carrion-eating, and especially beef-eating, has a great deal to do with the prevalent prejudice, but in no other thing is the weakness of Hinduism, or rather of caste Hindus, betrayed so forcibly as in regarding a portion of fellow-Hindus to be untouchable and neglecting them in the cruellest manner possible. We have, therefore, only ourselves to thank that the untouchables are what they are. But it is not yet too late to mend. The Harijans should realize that

untouchability is dead and gone. Its evil effect will persist for a long time to come. The duration will be the measure of our joint neglect. Greater by far is the responsibility of the caste Hindus. If they will do their duty and work whole-heartedly, they will certainly succeed in stopping these sacrifices and the habit of carrion-eating. Nothing but the spread of enlightenment is required to rid the community of evil superstition and evil habits. But I cannot too often remind the reformers and caste Hindus in general that they will not purify Harijans of any single one of the evil habits, if they will make the reform the condition of the removal of untouchability. Rather let us realize that the evils are a result, and not a cause, of untouchability, anyway most decidedly not at the present moment.

So far as carrion-eating is concerned, the reader will find concrete suggestions which I have made in the Gujarati columns of *Harijanbandhu* and which have been translated for these columns.[1]

CHRISTIAN HARIJANS

'Christian Harijans' should be a contradiction in terms. For, untouchability that is sought to be driven out of India is the special curse (according to the reformers) or the privilege (according to the sanatanists) of Hinduism. But the Hindu contact has so infected the Christian that at least in Malabar it seems to show itself among Christians almost in the same form as among Hindus. Thus writes a Malabar Christian to Sjt. Amritlal Thakkar:[2]

> From the days of the famous Vaikom Satyagraha, the real condition of the Travancore Harijans . . . has been brought to light to a very great extent, but it is not yet suspected or detected, . . . that the Christian Harijan in Travancore is not [*sic*], in matter of civic or social rights and in abject poverty, absolutely the same as his Hindu Harijan brother. Pulayas or Cherumas, Parayas or Sambhavas with Ignaoas or Ina Pulayas and some other minor communities number about 6,00,000 according to the last year's census report and are considered the lowest strata of the outcaste societies of Travancore.
>
> Converted (Christian) Pulayas or Parayas as a whole are as good, or as bad, as the others of the communities, except in a few cities like Trivandrum, where the difference, if there is any, exists more in pretension of the converted, though hardly any in reality, and where a handful of them may be a little more literate or a little better employed than those of the others.
>
> Public institutions, roads, inns, rest houses, temples, churches, court houses, business houses, shops, streets and even taverns that are unappro-

[1] *Vide* "Disposal of Carcasses", 12-3-1933

[2] Only extracts are reproduced here.

achable by the one are exactly to the same extent unapproachable by the other. To both, caste men like Nambudiris are unseeable to this day.

Prosperous (Christian communities like Nadars in the South and Syrians in the North . . . are to us what no-change sanatanists are to our Hindu Harijan brother. Hundreds of churches unapproachable by us (Harijans, either Christian or Hindu) will explain why Christian Harijans of the bottom ranks have to make common cause with their fellow outcaste brothers. . . .

Allow us to add that we, being agricultural serfs mostly, have been and are dependent on the caste Hindu and Christian masters and that, owing to increasing poverty and fragmentation of land, we are day by day reduced to greater and greater economic plight, ...

This state of things is no doubt a disgrace to Hinduism but it is no less so to Christianity, if not more so. The present movement is automatically helping the Christian Harijans, but I should be surprised if advantage is not being taken of the movement to drive out untouchability from the church. I hope too that the numerous educated Nadars and Ezhavas are putting forth their best effort to abolish the distinctions among Harijans themselves.

Harijan, 18-3-1933

93. WHAT HARIJANS THINK

The reader must have read and digested what Thakkar Bapa, as he is endearingly called in Gujarat, especially by Harijans, said in the telegraphic account of his tour in the Punjab, published in the last issue of *Harijan*. Harijan deputations that waited on him have sent me copies of the addresses they presented to him. The one from the Ad Dharma Mandal of Jullundur City and Balmic Ad Dharma Mandal of Lahore City contains these observations:

The high-class proud Hindus of the Punjab Province have degraded and lowered our position in the society to an *unbreakable* extent. They think themselves to be polluted if we happen to touch them. Our entry at the public places and getting water from the public wells and tanks is thought objectionable. Hindu washermen and barbers are not prepared to serve us in their respective occupations. We are not allowed to dine at Hindu hotels. We are not *privileged* to use bands, palanquins on the occasions of our marriage celebrations. We are forced to carry the palanquins of Hindu brides at their marriage. If we happen to put on good clothes, they irritate them. The depressed classes of the Punjab Province are faced by many troubles. High-class Hindus have pressed and degraded them from all sides. Caste question has proved very troublesome. Even the houses in which they live are not considered their property. In the villages and towns their economic condition is very much

degraded, and for their uplift a vigorous campaign of propaganda is required.

If the condition is as bad as this in the advanced Punjab, what must it be in the other Provinces of India? And as would be clear from Thakkar Bapa's wire, law seems to have conspired with the caste Hindus in depriving the Harijans of even the right of owning agricultural land. Let us hope that the numerous uplift associations of the Punjab will make a united effort to remove at once some of the numerous disabilities enumerated above.

Harijan, 18-3-1933

94. EVEN UNTO THESE LAST

For the heading of this article I have dared to steal from Ruskin a classical phrase stolen by him in his turn from the Bible. I have added 'even' to the original and changed 'this' into 'these' to bring out the whole sense of what I want to say. Among the Harijans the poor scavenger or the Bhangi seems to stand last in the list, though he is perhaps the most important and indispensable member of society, as indispensable to it as a mother is to her children in one respect. The Bhangi attends to the sanitation of society as a mother to that of her children. If the caste men had to do the scavenging for themselves, some of the methods that the Bhangi has to submit to for doing his work would have been swept away long ago. I copy the following from a letter of the Anti-untouchability Board of Muttra to its Municipal Board:[1]

> . . . He must be a heartless fellow who has remained unmoved at the pathetic sight of a slender, aged and emaciated woman carrying, and being crushed under, the weight of a basket full of night-soil over her head every morning from the city lanes to the trenching ground or the flushing pit. The practice, though old, is inhuman, cruel and a relic of barbaric days. It is most unhygienic. . . . The solution is simple. Just purchase hand-driven trolleys and let these speechless servants of yours use the trolley as a carrier rather than the head. Another matter for your consideration. Every privy should be provided with metal or earthen basins, so that the process of removal of night-soil may be rendered less uncleanly.

Let not the reader laugh at the somewhat high-flown language of the writer. What he has said is God's truth. The Bhangis have hitherto done their work uncomplainingly, and therefore the caste men have not cared to know how these have served society for centuries. If we had not regarded these servants of society as

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

untouchables, we would not have shut our eyes upon them or their work. Having chosen to do so and having confined them to infernos, we ourselves daily descend to these infernos called privies and do not care to look at the dirt about us or to notice the stink that pervades these places. What is true of the Bhangis and the municipality of Muttra is true more or less of all the Bhangis and all the municipalities of India. The reform suggested by the Anti-untouchability Board of muttra is most desirable and can be undertaken without much cost by every municipality.

I read the other day a notice in the *Leader* of Allahabad of the scavenging work, inaugurated by a zamindar, in the Allahabad streets, and hardly had the work gone on for two days, when the enthusiastic young men who had undertaken this glorious service thought of replacing the baskets by a better arrangement. Let me again quote, this time from the *Leader* dated February 27:

> An effort is being made by the anti-untouchability workers to replace the baskets at present in use by the sweepers for the disposal of rubbish from private latrines with light iron hand-carts fitted with detachable buckets. According to the proposed scheme, the cost of such carts would be borne by the employers of the sweepers. It is understood the Manager of the Allahabad Law Journal Co., has generously undertaken to have a model baby filth removal cart constructed at his own expense for propaganda work. According to the scheme, every private latrine would have to be provided with two receptacles. An anonymous donation has been received from a high caste Brahmin woman for the construction of a public bath-room at or near Kalimaika Asthan. This work would be undertaken as soon as proper drainage and water-supply arrangements are made by the municipal authorities in the locality in question.

I hope that the enthusiasm has not died down during the weeks that have intervened between the date of the report and now. Some earnest workers have simply to persist and the much-needed reform can be inaugurated in every town and city.

If the report that a Brahmin lady has generously come forward with her donation for the construction of a public bath-room is true, it would delight the heart of Sjt. Hiralal Shah, who has been energetically pursuing his proposal for bath and change of clothes for sweepers after they have performed their daily task.[1]

There are thus three reforms which can be with a little forethought and very little extra cost inaugurated throughout India, resulting in comfort and cleanliness for Harijans and promotion of the

[1] *Vide* "A Worthwhile Scheme", 19-3-1933.

health of society in general. All that is required is that we should behave 'even unto these last' members of society as we would unto ourselves.

Harijan, 18-3-1933

95. POSERS

An iconoclast schoolmaster asks the following three questions.

> 1. Is it necessary for a Hindu, following the life of Shri Ramachandra, also to go and see his image in the temple? Is *darshan* better than action?
>
> 2. If we bow our head or join our hands before a living person, he replies in return, but the image does not. Then what is the use of doing it? What is the use of writing letters to one who never replies?
>
> 3. The person, whose image a Hindu adores, might have committed some wrongs in his lifetime. Will not the adorer be harmed by copying those wrongs, which he is likely to copy if he worships his image?

Questions like these have been asked and answered often enough before now. But the temple-entry question has revived them and they torment honest doubters like the correspondent, as if they had never been raised and answered before. I must do the best I can, though I doubt if doubters like the correspondent will be satisfied.

It is not necessary for any Hindu to go to a temple to worship (the image of) Ramachandra. But it is for him who cannot contemplate his Rama without looking at his image in a temple. It may be unfortunate, but it is true that his Rama resides in that temple as nowhere else. I would not disturb that simple faith.

The sub-question in the first question is badly put. There is no question of comparison between the *darshan* and the deed. If there was, I would unhesitatingly say that the deed is better. But the function of *darshan* is to enable the deed to be done, to steady and purify the soul. Thus, *darshan* is not a substitute for right doing. It is an encouragement for it.

In asking the second question, the schoolmaster has missed the whole point of temple-worship. When I bow to a living person and he returns it, it is a mutual exchange of courtesy and there is no particular merit about it. It may be a sign of good breeding. Temple-going is for the purification of the soul. The worshipper draws the best out of himself. In greeting a living being, he may draw the best out of the person greeted, if the greeting is selfless. A living being is more or less fallible like oneself. But in the temple, one worships the living God, perfect beyond imagination. Letters written to living persons often end in heartbreaking, even when they are answered, and

there is no guarantee of their being always answered. Letters to God, who, according to the devotee's imagination, resides in temples, require neither pen nor ink nor paper, not even speech. Mere mute worship constitutes the letter which brings its own unfailing answer. The whole function is a beautiful exercise of faith. Here there is no waste of effort, no heart-breaking, no danger of being misunderstood. The writer must try to understand the simple philosophy lying behind the worship in temples or mosques or churches. He will understand my meaning better if he will realize that I make no distinction between these different abodes of God. They are what faith has made them. They are an answer to man's craving somehow to reach the Unseen.

The third question shows, perhaps, that the correspondent has not taken the trouble of understanding the Hindu theory of incarnations. For the faithful Hindu, his incarnation is without blemish. Krishna of the Hindu devotee is a perfect being. He is unconcerned with the harsh judgment of the critics. Millions of devotees of Krishna and Rama have had their lives transformed through their contemplation of God by these names. How this phenomenon happens I do not know. It is a mystery. I have not attempted to prove A. Though my reason and heart long ago realized the highest attribute and name of God as Truth, I recognize Truth by the name of Rama. In the darkest hour of my trial, that one name has saved me and is still saving me. It may be the association of childhood, it may be the fascination that Tulsidas has wrought on me. But the potent fact is there, and as I write these lines, my memory revives the scenes of my childhood when I used daily to visit the Ramji Mandir adjacent to my ancestral home. My Rama then resided there. He saved me from many fears and sins. It was no superstition for me. The custodian of the idol may have been a bad man. I know nothing against him. Misdeeds might have gone on in the temple. Again I know nothing of them. therefore, they would not affect one. What was and is true of one is true of millions of Hindus. I want my Harijan brother, if he wishes, to share this temple-worship with the millions of his co-religionists, the so-called caste men. It is the latter's duty to throw open their temples their Harijan brethren. Temple-worship supplies the felt spiritual want of the human race. It admits of reform. But it will live as long as man lives.

Harijan, 18-3-1933

96. THE DANGER OF IMITATION

> I am a humble student of philosophy and so I thoroughly appreciate the movement for the removal of untouchability which has hindered the progress of a large portion of mankind. I can also appreciate the way of penance by fast, but there is one difficulty in my way. You know that the *Bhagavad Gita* has said, "What the great ones do, the others follow", and if a great soul like you set the example of fasting, is there no danger of others blindly imitating you, and quoting your example in support? Then again, you talk of the inner voice, and everybody will claim to speak in the name of the inner voice, and it will be held responsible for mixed marriages, mixed dinners, and consequent disruption of society. And when such reckless indiscipline takes place in the name of the inner voice, how would you propose to raise the level of the ordinary men, especially of untouchables?

I must confess that I have considerably abridged the original which is fairly long. But I am sure that the substance of the correspondent's argument has not in any way been lost in the abridgment. My answer is simple. I accept the teaching of the *Gita* verse that the correspondent has quoted. Surely, it was meant to warn leaders against conduct that might, if copied, result in harm to society. It cannot possibly apply to conduct whose intelligent imitation can do no harm. For if it did, it would mean an end to all progress and the setting of good examples. There is no such thing in human affairs as insurance against all danger. There is always danger of even the most irreproachable conduct being misinterpreted and misapplied, but the right thing has got to be, and has always been, done, in spite of the risk of misinterpretation and misapplication. I hold my fast to have been wholly good and obligatory on me. If the whole of mankind imitated the fast subject to all its conditions, no harm could result. A fast that was calculated to affect a big movement for the better could not be given up because of the fear of some people abusing it. Penitential fasting is admittedly a good institution.

And lastly, fasting is its own safeguard against abuse. Not many people would be willing to fast, and much fewer still would be able to do so, even though they might be willing.

Much the same may be said about the inner voice. Nobody has to my knowledge questioned the possibility of the inner voice speaking to some, and it is a gain to the world even if one person's claim to speak under the authority of the inner voice can be really sustained. Many may make the claim, but not all will be able to substantiate it. But it cannot and ought not to be suppressed for the

sake of preventing false claimants. There is no danger whatsoever if many people could truthfully represent the inner voice. But, unfortunately, there is no remedy against hypocrisy. Virtue must not be suppressed because many will feign it. Men have always been found throughout the world claiming to speak for the inner voice. But no harm has yet overtaken the world through their short-lived activities. Before one is able to listen to that voice, one has to go through a long and fairly severe course of training, and when it is the inner voice that speaks it is unmistakable. The world cannot be successfully fooled for all time. There is, therefore, no danger of anarchy setting in because a humble man like me will not be suppressed and will dare to claim the authority of the inner voice, when he believes that he has heard it. Unbridled licence is undoubtedly in the air. Everywhere one sees unrest, whether in the religious field or any other. The spirit of independence is abroad. Youth has always been found to be most impressionable and, therefore, it has naturally fallen a prey to this spirit; and in its haste to realize independence it has missed the central fact that independence can only come out of interdependence and that it is a fruit of long training in self-restraint. It has forgotten that independence is never synonymous with indulgence. The blame for the wildnesses of youth lies, therefore, at the door of the spirit of the times. It would be wrong to impute it to the assertion of sterling independence based upon a conscious practice of self-restraint and an ever-increasing effort implicitly to obey the will of God speaking within and then known as the inner voice.

It is now, perhaps, easy enough to answer the third question of the humble philosopher. The only way to raise the level of Harijans is for the Harijan servants to raise their own level by prayer and penitential fasting and by so training their acoustic faculty as to listen to the inner voice.

Harijan, 18-3-1933

97. LETTER TO DR. MOHAMMAD ALAM

March 18, 1933

DEAR DR. ALAM,

You have certainly supplied me with sufficient material to precipitate a quarrel in the family, but as I am a votary of ahimsa, you are quite safe. But whatever Begum Alam might have to say about your betrayal, you have certainly done me a good turn. For you have given me in Anwar one more charming corrrespondent in Urdu. Even for selfish reasons also, therefore, I shall avoid being a cause of

quarrel between you and Begum Alam.

I am glad you are getting better and that you will be soon going to Calcutta for finishing the course of treatment. Let us hope that will be the last. You will be glad to know that we are all keeping well, often thinking of so many of our mutual friends.

Yours sincerely,

DR. SHEIKH MOHAMMAD ALAM
3 BAHAWALPUR ROAD
LAHORE

From a photostat: G.N. 30

98. LETTER TO T. AMRITHALINGAM

March 18, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. You should read what I have written about varnadharma and you will see that if my interpretation and my suggestion are accepted, there is no room whatsoever for high and low.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. AMRITHALINGAM
DINDIGAL

From a microfilm: S.N. 20613

99. LETTER TO NARGIS CAPTAIN

March 18, 1933

MRS. NARGIS CAPTAIN,

I have your letter. What a frail body God has given We have to be thankful to Him that your mind remains as fresh as ever, though the body so often fails you.

I hope you will see me on your way back to Bombay.

I take it that you will pass the hot months in Panchgani. Like the poor, Harijans are with you wherever you go, therefore, even in Panchgani you will have some Harijans to move amongst and care for. That's what Khambhatta is going to do during the two months that he wants to pass in Mahabaleshwar.

I enclose herewith a returned letter[2] which I had sent to you at Kumbhakonam.

From a microfilm: S.N. 20162

[1] Of March 9. The addressee had suggested abolition of caste system, calling it ungodly.

[2] This is not available.

100. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

March 18, 1933

DEAR SATISBABU,

I did not like your telegram to the *Harijan*. It was published by Shastri as he did not know all the implications and had no time to refer it to me and so used his own discretion and published it. If it had come to me, I would have withheld it. My own view you will learn from the copy I am sending you herewith of my reply[1] to the British Indian Association. As you will see, that letter too is not for publication. I think until there is any danger we should try to affect the opinion of pro-changers by arguing with them but not engaging in a public controversy which instead of easing the position, will only aggravate it. If the controversy forced itself upon our attention, we should not hesitate to take it up. So much for our conduct.

Now, for the quality of your argument. You cannot say that untouchability is a greater curse in Bengal than in Madras. That means that it is of a more virulent type in Bengal than in Madras, which is certainly not the truth. In fact, there is no pollution by touch or sight or shadow in Bengal as in Madras. Bengal untouchability is peculiar and confined to the restriction upon the handling of water. Bad as even this is, it is wholly different from the unthinkable atrocities of the Madras type. What you want to say is that the number of untouchables according to the Bengal definition is much larger in Bengal than in Madras. If you had put the argument that way, it would not have lost its force. All therefore that was necessary was to remove the offensive sentence: "I repeat . . . Madras." And, are you right in saying that the Government definition is identical with the definition of S.U.S.[2]? Then you cannot omit the fact that some of those who are classed as untouchables by the Bengal Government themselves resent the inclusion. You also seem to think that the councillors want to repudiate the Pact wholly and restore the original.[3] I have not understood their demand in that light. If it was so, it would be most regrettable. I think that all that they want is to reduce the number of seats allotted to Harijans in Bengal. It will be time enough to act when they approach the parties interested in the Pact. I think that our

[1] *Vide* "Letter to British Indian Association", 9-3-1933.

[2] Servants of Untouchables Society

[3] On March 14, the Bengal Legislative Council had passed a motion against the Poona Pact.

profession of ahimsa should also guard us against rushing to print till we have tried every means of conciliation outside publication in the Press.

This is how I feel, but it may be that you had ample justification for sending the wire and wording it as strongly as you have done.

I read the Hindi translation of your preface to the Bengali *Ramayana*. It is a very good thing indeed, full of the devotional spirit. I look forward to the balance of proof sheets.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20618

101. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

March 18, 1933

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I hope you are strong and well. I appreciate all you say about the organization of weaving in Hissar and I know that you will do the best that is, possible.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20610

102. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

March 18, 1933

THE HOME SECRETARY TO THE
GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

DEAR SIR,

I was grieved to hear yesterday from Major Bhandari that my telegram[1] to Seth Jajuji of Wardha advising Seth Poonamchand Ranka, a prisoner in Seoni Jail, C. P., to abandon his reported fast was withheld by Government. A similar telegram to the Home Member, C. P. Government, was also withheld. I thought I could understand the reason for it. But the reason for withholding the telegram to Seth Jajuji I have failed to understand. Ever since 1922[2] the Government have recognized that they should allow me freely to do humanitarian services[3] for which Nature has qualified me and to which among other

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Bachhraj", 11-3-1933.

[2] This should be 1923.

[3] Gandhiji was permitted to see fellow-prisoners who were fasting in order to persuade them to give up the fast; *vide* "Letter to F.C. Griffiths"", 17-7-1923 and Jail Diary", 1923.

things my life is dedicated. This telegram was along those lines. Seth Poonamchand is a co-worker. He has often been guided by me. I am sure that the Government would prize the lives of prisoners as much as the public, and therefore, would not shut out any help that might be legitimately tendered for saving them. I have no knowledge as to how Seth Poonamchand is doing. But I respectfully urge the Government to reconsider their decision and allow my telegram to go. As time is of essence, I request earliest answer.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3881; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3) A, p. 55

103. LETTER TO H. KHADER KHAN

March 18, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and a newspaper cutting from *The Light*.[1] My difficulty is more serious than you imagine. I do not criticize religions, because I look upon all the great faiths of the world with just as much respect as I entertain for Hinduism. I believe them all to be supplying the varying wants of humanity, and if we will realize this central fact, instead of wanting to compare religions with one another, study them, we shall find profitable things from them for ourselves. I myself approach all religions from a purely religious standpoint and therefore search them merely to find their beauties, and I would advise you to do likewise, and if you will do so, you will find sufficient in my writings to show you the way to approach the other religions of the world.

Yours sincerely,

H. KHADER KHAN, ESQ.
ARKALGOD P. O.
(S. INDIA)

From a microfilm: S.N. 20609

[1] *The Light* had said Gandhiji wanted to keep the untouchables "at arms, length", that he was "not prepared to allow interdining and intermarriages with them nor to abolish caste,"

104. LETTER TO C. NARAYANA MENON

March 18, 1933

MY DEAR MENON,

I like your letter of the 9th instant. There is just one difficulty in accepting your argument, but it is a big difficulty. Your argument is as ancient as the hills. If it had held good, progress would have been impossible. Is not yours the argument of prescription? But prescription cannot run in favour of error. Therefore every practice must be tested on the anvil of universally accepted morals. Not even the so-called divine revelation can avail against a practice or belief which runs contrary to fundamentals accepted as such by mankind, and I have seen as yet no argument whatsoever from this universal standpoint in defence of the practice of untouchability.

I need not combat your argument on the Temple-entry Bill, because I know that you are carefully following the pages of the *Harijan*. Nor need I worry you with my answer to the other paragraphs of your letter. I believe you to be a seeker and, therefore, I have little doubt that you will reach the truth sooner or later, and if I mistake not, sooner rather than later.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. NARAYANA MENON, M.A., PH. D.
BENARES HINDU UNIVERSITY
BENARES

From a microfilm: S.N. 20614

105. LETTER TO DR. T. S. S. RAJAN

March 18, 1933

DEAR DR. RAJAN,

Sjt. Ganesan was talking to me the other day about the impending closing of a Theosophical Harijan school in Madras. It would be a pity if a school of such a long standing should be closed or pass out of the public hands. If therefore the facts about the school are as they have been stated to me, I think that every effort should be made to save that school. Sjt. Ganesan tells me you have already all the figures.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20619

106. LETTER TO C. KUNHI RAMAN

March 18, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. The origin of varnadharma that you have correctly quoted I interpret quite differently from you. Comparing the four varnas to the four parts of the same body shows that all are equal though they have different functions. For, surely your contention is wholly wrong when you say that the head is superior to the arms, or the arms to the thighs, and all the three to the feet. In their own places they are all equally useful and each has to take care of the rest.

For further information, I must ask you, if you have the patience, to read the *Harijan* from week to week.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. KUNHI RAMAN

NARAYANA VILAS

EVANS ROAD

CALICUT

From a microfilm: S.N. 20608

107. LETTER TO R.[2]

March 18, 1933

MY DEAR R.,

I hope you will not resent this letter, nor my dictating it. The impression left on my mind by long conversations with N. is that you and other young men who have come under her influence have not really benefited by it and that you have contributed to your own and her fall. She happened to show me one of your letters. I did not like the unduly familiar style of address, nor the contents of your letter. I fear very much that you have taken liberties with her which, as young men of self-restraint, you and your associates should never have taken with a stranger. N. tells me that you are talking about spiritual mar-

[1] Of 10-3-1933. According to the addressee Gandhiji had said that the true varnashrama was an integral part of Hinduism and that varnashrama of Dr. Ambedkar's conception was being practised today.

[2] The name of the addressee has been omitted.

riages or spiritual friendships bordering on marital relations. This is nothing but playing with fire and an echo of very subtle sensuality. I therefore fervently urge you and the other young men not to play with fire, and not to be instrumental, consciously or unconsciously, in preventing the moral progress of N. who has only just begun to perceive the immorality of her past life. You should recognize that she has a pliable nature. She has hitherto not even understood that what she was doing was horribly untruthful and essentially immoral. I hope you will not misunderstand my letter. Probably, when I was convalescing in Bangalore some years ago, I saw all of you young men, but whether I did or not, I have no other feeling towards you except that of a parent to his children, and it is under a sense of that self-chosen responsibility that I am writing this letter to you in the hope that you will put yourself right, if what I have said carries conviction to you, and by refraining from any familiarity with N. help her to outgrow her past life.

You can share this letter with your associates and I would like you to share it with N. I feel for her deeply because I believe that in spite of her untruthful and immoral past she has great capacity for sacrifice and service.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20624

108. LETTER TO SRI PRAKASA

March 18, 1933

MY DEAR SRI PRAKASA,

I have your letter and I am glad that with the recovery of body you are shedding the despondency that had overtaken you and I have no doubt that you will outgrow the whole of it if you will take sufficient rest and forget all about everything else. In this matter I think that the Englishmen beat us though we are supposed to be followers of the *Gita* dharma which enjoins upon us the obligation of having no cares about anything and leaving the result in the all-powerful hands of God. I remember the late Lord Asquith going for a cruise in the Mediterranean under medical advice when the War was at its height, leaving the cares of State in the hands of his successors.

Though I hold very strong views about the matter of classification[1], I must not discuss it as being outside the permitted topics of

[1] Of prisoners

discussion.

I shall write to Babooji[1] asking him to take rest, but I know that his whole heart is in the battle against untouchability.

Yes, I get a weekly bulletin from Shivaprasad[2] which we all anxiously await every week. Jamnalalji is keeping fair health. He cannot altogether get rid of his eye-trouble. Sardar and Mahadev and Chhaganlal Joshi, whom perhaps you have not met though you must have seen him in the Ashram, join me in sending love to you.

Love.

Yours sincerely,

Sri Prakasa Papers, File No. G-2. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also S.N. 20623

109. LETTER TO G. SUBRAMANIAN

March 18, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I wholly disagree with you that there are no workers in the Harijan cause in the State of Mysore except yourself. My information is quite to the contrary.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. SUBRAMANIAN
PROPAGANDIST
SRINGERI POST

From a microfilm: S.N. 20617

110. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

March 18, 1933

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

With reference to your letter marked 11th February—but I suppose it means 11th March—in connection with your visit to Hissar and the famine raging in that area, I have now had a letter from Dr. Gopichand also. I think that there is much substance in what Dr. Gopichand says. It is not possible to open weaving centres everywhere and expect weavers to weave indifferently spun yarn. Like every other industry, this hand industry too requires a high degree of technical skill, as a matter of fact in some respects higher than what is required

[1] Dr. Bhagwandas, addressee's father

[2] Shivaprasad Gupta, Congress leader and philanthropist of Varanasi

in a spinning and weaving mill. Every branch in the latter is standardized. Nothing can be standardized to perfection in handicrafts, because each craftsman's manufacture has its own individuality and when it comes to handling the individual work of a thousand such persons, it baffles the most skilled organizer. Relief through spinning and weaving has, therefore, like everything else, its own limitations, if it has also the largest potentiality of all relief works. If we had an agency commanding the knowledge of thousands of experts and enough pecuniary resources, we should be able to provide good remunerative work for everyone in need, and it will prove comparatively the most remunerative to the needy as also to the agency. But unfortunately we have not that army of expert workers nor sufficient pecuniary resources.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1115

111. LETTER TO D. VALISINHA

March 18, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and a copy of the *Maha Bodhi Journal*.[1]

My attempt is not to replace Hinduism by any other is, but to reform Hinduism. My own belief is that Gautam Buddha himself did not desire to found a separate sect or religion but to rid Hinduism of what appeared to him to be evil. In any case, it is my conviction that there is no occasion whatsoever for Hindus to change their faith.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. D . VALISINHA
GENERAL SECRETARY
MAHA BODHI SOCIETY
4-A COLLEGE SQUARE
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20621

[1] The addressee had sought Gandhiji's views on his article published in the *Maha Bohi journal* in which he had "endeavoured to show how Buddhism can solve the [untouchability] question to the satisfaction of all".

112. A WORTHWHILE SCHEME

The scheme published by Shri Hiralal Shah regarding the cleanliness of Bhangis is worthy of consideration. The aversion to the Bhangis is due to the kind of work they do. Here it is beyond doubt that the entire fault is that of the so-called high-caste Hindus. But I have not started writing this to blame anyone. We have to consider what our duty is at present and Shri Hiralal's scheme will help us in doing so. The scheme is this: They should wear a special dress when they carry filth and after they have done the cleaning they should be encouraged to take a bath and change their clothes. Right now they would do neither of their own accord. The object may be achieved only by persuasion and by giving them requisite facilities. Municipalities can take up this work on a large scale, but all the householders who utilize the Bhangis' service can do so in a small way. They should employ their own Bhangis, should suggest to them to bathe, should give them the facilities for bathing and should themselves provide them the separate dress. One Bhangi family serves many houses. One who is conscious of the value of cleanliness should find out the other employers of his Bhangi and should take their help in providing him with a dress; thus no one will find the expense too burdensome. If this kind of work continues for some time the Bhangis will develop the habit of remaining clean and untouchability, in so far as it stems from dislike, will be eradicated. No one should ignore this easily practicable suggestion by falling a prey to the age-old folly that everyone's work is no one's work. Whoever is in a position to do the work should make a beginning with it and draw other people behind him.

Along with this, there are two other reforms which can immediately be put into effect: the reform of latrines and in the mode of carrying filth. The so-called high-caste people have kept the Bhangis at a distance, so that their latrines are like the abyss of hell, and the Bhangis are compelled to carry filth in a very odd and cruel way. Improvements in latrines can be easily introduced. The main requirement is dry earth. The practice of carrying baskets of filth on the head should be done away with. This movement has already begun in Mathura and Prayag.[1] There the filth is carried in a hand-cart instead of on the head. It is possible that the cart cannot be taken everywhere. In such cases, the filth can be carried in a bucket

[1] *Vide* "Even Unto These Last", 18-3-1933.

hung on a rod. Where the bucket is not heavy, it can be lifted by hand. The practice of carrying the filth on the head is one which can be stopped immediately.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 19-3-1933

113. ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

ADMIT AFTER SHUDDHI[1]

Requiring *shuddhi* for Harijans is to grant that they are not Hindus. But then our whole movement is based on the principle that the Harijan community is an important section of Hindu society. Therefore whatever is to be done in this matter has to be done only after abolishing untouchability. Moreover, who will perform the *shuddhi* and for whom? One should have *shuddhi* of the heart. Only a pure, i.e., a perfect man can perform for another the sacrament of shuddhi. So the very idea of going through *shuddhi* according to certain rites is unthinkable to me. In any case, this kind of *shuddhi* cannot be a condition for the removal of untouchability.

But I cannot prevent you or anyone else from implementing your proposals. It is clear that it will not have my support. But I will not oppose you if you can admit Harijans of your area to the Sringapatam Temple after performing the ritual of *shuddhi* as suggested by you.

EVERYTHING WILL BE ACHIEVED THROUGH PURITY[2]

Certainly, there is no end of difficulties. I am certain too that patience alone will solve them all. Our means ought to be absolutely pure. Untouchability has spread under the guise of religion. It won't be destroyed as long as it is not confronted with pure dharma. We are not forming a new sect but are endeavouring to cleanse an existing one. He who points out a fault in another ought himself to be free from it. That is to say the extent of our progress will depend on how pure we are. The sub-division of the untouchables into Dhed, Bhangi, etc., will disappear only when we have done away with untouchability. Work with the utmost perseverance and utmost love, Soften the wrath of the sanatanists with love. Take upon yourself only such work as

[1] A correspondent had suggested that, if Gandhiji agreed to Harijans going through *shuddhi* (ceremonial purification) before seeking temple-entry, the Sringapatam Temple might be thrown open to them.

[2] This was written to a worker bewildered by difficulties.

you can cope with. But whatever you take up, see it through. Do not stretch your legs beyond the sheet.

WHY MODERN?[1]

I do not at all believe that untouchability is as old as or even in any way connected with sanatana dharma.. Various forms of untouchability based on ideas of cleanliness are to be found, more or less, in every country and every civilization. But I do not at all believe that the decadent form of untouchability that we find today ever existed in ancient times. It is not to be found in any other religion. If this kind of untouchability were an integral part of sanatana dharma, that religion has no use for me. I am not foolish enough to lay down my life for this sanatana dharma.

I expound sanatana dharma as I understand it. If the entire people disowned me on that account my claim of being a sanatanist Hindu would have been rejected.

DO YOU BELIEVE IN TEMPLES?[2]

I am not talking of temple-entry for the first time. I have been doing so for years—in fact right from the time I started talking about the removal of untouchability. Even before I took a pledge in public to lay down my life for ending untouchability I had announced that temple-entry for Harijans was an important element in the removal of untouchability. I have myself performed the ceremony of throwing open a number of temples and encouraged Jamnalalji to do so. I make no distinction between a temple and a mosque or a church. Men everywhere worship images in some form or other. And through the image everyone worships God alone though their attitudes and methods may differ. Perhaps you are not aware that I have in my life visited temples on a thousand occasions if not more—sometimes out of politeness, but often with sincere devotion. I did not know you were so intolerant as to regard temples as a greater evil than untouchability. Imagine the terrible consequences of abolishing the institution, thereby depriving millions of people of the temples that are a solace to them. You equate temple-entry with going to hell! So you think—do you?—that Bharat Bhushan Malaviyaji who has a temple in his

[1] A correspondent had asked why Gandhiji called untouchability 'modern'; the evil in his opinion was as old as sanatana dharma.

[2] A friend had expressed surprise at Gandhiji's movement for temple-entry for Harijans and asked if he actually believed in temple-worship which was worse than untouchability.

own house and who is a regular worshipper there descends into hell every day and is worse than you and I in the eyes of God. Please delve deeper into the matter and decide for yourself.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 19-3-1933

114. WHAT DOES A HINDU TEMPLE MEAN?

A Harijan worker writes:[1]

This letter has been written with a pure and good intention and it reflects the views of some, though not of many youths; so I publish it.

To my mind there is nothing but excitement in this letter. The writer has no proof to justify what he has said about temples. Perhaps he has not visited Kashi Vishwanath, Puri and Guruvayur. Even if some malpractices are prevalent in these temples, the Hindu pilgrims and visitors are unaware of and untouched by them. One gets there what one goes in search of. A father will look upon a woman as his daughter, her husband as his wife, her son as his mother and a sensualist as his victim. Should the father, the husband and the son forsake that woman because of the sensualits? I have been to the temples at both Kashi Vishwanath and Puri. I must admit that I was not inspired by faith to visit them, but I had seen innumerable innocent souls going there with devotion. I did not pity them, but I fell in love with them and I could understand their devotion. These numerous devotees had no idea whatever of the malpractices prevalent in temples. One must bear in mind that wicked acts take place secretly and only a few people have knowledge of them. Devotees attribute perfection to God. The devotees' God is full of innocence, that of non-devotees full of faults. The Krishna of the innumerable Hindus is a perfect incarnation. To the critics Krishna is immoral, a gambler, a liar and so on. The mind alone is the cause of bondage and of deliverance. The young correspondent must know and understand this eternal truth. Just as human beings cannot think of the *atman* without the body, similarly they cannot think of religion without temples. The Hindu religion cannot survive without temples. There is corruption in

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had argued that the activities for promoting the welfare of Harijans would do more harm than good to the Harijans, since the temples were not the dwelling places of God but breeding grounds for vice. The sanatanist Hindus, while ill-treating the Harijans, had done one good thing indirectly by keeping the Harijans out of these temples. Gandhiji, therefore, was ill-advised in seeking the help of law to win temple-entry for Harijans.

the temples; it may be in some persons but not in all. An idol is a stone to one who merely goes through the ritual of worship, but to a true devotee it is all life. There is room for reform in the temples. It is not proper to demolish them. Demolish the temples and you destroy religion.

Moreover, the putrefaction that has set in is not to be found in all temples. It is not there in many temples in villages. The many superstitions prevalent among the villagers have no connection with the temples. Temples are veritable museums of the cultures of different religions. In old times, God dwelt in the temple and godliness too; it housed a school, a dharmasala; and it was the place where the leading people of the locality met together. Such temples are still to be found in many places. Harijans have set their hearts on temples to such an extent that they build their own temples of sorts. We discern their helplessness in these temples. As long as the Harijans cannot enter the temples of caste Hindus, their helplessness will never end, their Hinduism will remain incomplete; in spite of being the sixth finger of Hinduism, they will only remain uncared for. No Hindu should doubt that the first and all-comprehensive sign of their admission into Hinduism is temple-entry. It is the height of ignorance to believe that the Harijans have fared well by remaining outside the temple. By remaining outside the temples, they have remained outside everything. And even today the attempts made by the sanatanists to keep them out of the temples suggest that they want to perpetuate their exclusion.

The letter in question makes sad reading despite the noble views expressed in it. It depicts the pitiable condition of sophisticated modern youth. Young people may perhaps be angry at this statement and may believe that people like me deserve to be pitied. But my experience clearly shows how ignorant they are.

I have visited many temples in my childhood. That did not at all have any bad influence on me. Today I see many of my friends going to the temples. They know nothing of their shortcomings, but they are aware of the vices of the temple-goers. They are quite untouched by those vices. I do not consider it a mark of greatness that I do not visit temples. I feel no need to go to temples; hence I do not visit them. To secure temple-entry for the Harijans does not necessarily mean taking them into a temple. Those will visit it who wish to. Those who go there will not get a stigma and those who do not may possibly lose something.

Now a few words about the law. In the same heat of excitement in which the writer has condemned temples with little or no

justification, he has here also exposed his ignorance. In spite of having some acquaintance with me, he did not ponder over the fact that, if I who depend the least on law believe in the necessity of it in respect of temples, there must be some potent reason for it. Now he may understand that reason. Today the law says that not a single temple is open to the Harijans and a trustee who opens it for them is liable to punishment. In the circumstances, if we do not demand a law to do away with such a state of affairs, the temples will never be thrown open to Harijans. The help of the law is indispensable. A bad law can only be abolished by a good law. There is no other way at all. Here we have not sought the interference of law but the doing away of such interference. Those who concede that a law is required even to nullify a bad law can understand that the movement is to get enacted for the Harijans a law of that type.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 19-3-1933

115. VARNADHARMA

A Harijan worker puts me the above question[1]. I am not understood because I do not believe in what we today regard as the varna system. Varnashrama as we see it today implies restrictions as regards untouchability and intermarriage and inter-dining among the varnas. I regard today's untouchability, in Akha's language, as an extraneous growth fit to be rejected. It is not the Shastras but only usage that supports the restriction on intermarriage and inter-dining as part of the varnadharma.

As against this, the varnas have an intimate relation to one's profession. The pursuit of one's calling is one's dharma. He who forsakes his, falls from his varna. He himself is destroyed, his spirit decays. That man causes confusion of varnas and thereby society is harmed and its organization breaks down. When everybody discards his varna, the malorganization of society grows, chaos reigns and society perishes. If the Brahmin class abjures its work of imparting education, it falls from its pedestal. If a Kshatriya gives up his work of protecting the people, he dishonours his varna. If a Vaishya discards the earning of money, he falls from his varna. If a Shudra abandons

[1] Not translated here. The question was how Gandhiji could say that he wanted, not abolition, but only reform of the varna system, even though he wanted feelings of high and low among the castes to go and approved of inter-varna marriages. Gandhiji was further asked to what extent he would permit intermarriages and inter-dining.

serving, he falls. All stay in their places by remaining engrossed in their own duty. He falls who gives up his proper duty. A Shudra who does his appropriate duty is better than a Brahmin who discards his duty.

This system of varnas left no scope for privileges. It was merely a duty, an obligation. There is no room at all for feeling of high and low where it is a question of an obligation.

Today we see the disappearance of the varnadharma. If one varna discards its own duty, the whole varna system declines. Today the Brahmin has discarded the attributes of a Brahmin the Kshatriyas his fighting qualities and the Vaishya his Vaishya character. Some may ask: "Since all are engaged in earning money, what is wrong if one considers that the qualities of a Vaishya still persist?" However, it isnot correct to say so. The Vaishyas of today earn wealth only for themselves, hence they would be regarded as thieves in the language of the *Gita*. It is the Vaishya's dharma to earn money and, taking out of it only as much as is needed for his livelihood, to utilize the remainder for the benefit of society. One rarely comes across a person who observes such Vaishya dharma. Hence even Vaishya dharma has perished.

Now there remains Shudra dharma. How many Shudras are there who observe it? Labour involuntarily rendered is not service. There is no place for coercion in dharma. It is only labour regarded as sheer duty and rendered voluntarily for the betterment of society that can be called service. Hence we have regretfully to admit that varnadharma has been totally destroyed. By defining a Shudra as a labourer, the commentator has insulted him and has harmed Hinduism.

Nevertheless, varnadharma has come to pervade the very being of the Hindu. He may well have connected it, through lack of understanding, with inter-dining and intermarrying and with untouchability. A Hindu cannot be at peace with himself without a concept of varnadharma. Therefore its revival is possible. Without penance religious awakening or revival is improbable. Penance is the only great force whereby religion can be safeguarded and established. Penance without knowledge is no penance but merely self-torture. A blending of penance and knowledge is possible in Brahmin dharma alone. He alone who strives to acquire knowledge of the Brahman is fit to be a Brahmin. If such an endeavour is made today, Hinduism, that is to say, varnadharma, will be revived some day. Fortunately, there is a small class engaged in it today. Hence I have an unshakable faith that Hinduism—pure sanatana dharma—will once again reveal its lustre

and point out to the world the way to its good.

My Hindu religion is all-embracing. It does not advocate antipathy towards other beliefs. Religions have been interwoven. One sees a special quality in every one of them. But no one religion is higher than another. All are complementary to one another. Since this is my belief, the speciality of any religion cannot run counter to another, cannot be at variance with universally accepted principles. Examining varnadharma from that point of view, its interpretation can only be what I have put forward. Moreover, history indicates that followers of Hinduism at one time voluntarily observed it.

In order to make observance of this varnadharma possible again, all must voluntarily accept Shudra dharma. The Shudras render service mainly through manual labour. This dharma is feasible for all. That is why it is possible-for everyone to follow it. Moreover there has been a feeling of contempt for the Shudras. If everyone regarded himself as a Shudra, religion would be well rid of this concept of high and low.

Someone may say, 'If everyone regards himself as a Shudra, why not as a Harijan?' I would definitely not oppose such insistence, but since there are not five varnas in Hinduism and since untouchability is on the wane, I use the word 'Shudra'. After the pledge[1] about Hindu awakening was taken in Bombay under the presidentship of Malaviyaji, there is no room for untouchability in Hinduism. Hence at the time of revival of varnadharma, the talk of regarding all as Harijans will be considered out of place. If Harijans and all others stay as Shudras, all will easily be men of God.

But if, with full understanding, all begin to observe the dharma of service and to regard themselves as Shudras, it will certainly not imply that none will learn *brahmavidya*[2]. Some people will learn and teach it according to their desire and ability. Some will look after the people, some will earn money. The standard of living of all will be about the same. The condition where one is a millionaire and the others beggars will not subsist. The wealth of the Vaishyas will be regarded as the wealth of the people. All these three forces will be utilized merely for social service. All will be regarded as Shudras only, so that there will be no feeling of high and low. All this will automatically promote the revival of varnadharma.

[1] For the text of the pledge, *vide* "Draft Constitution of the Harijan Sevak Sangh", 9-3-1933.

[2] Knowledge of the Brahman

There certainly is room in varnadharma for tradition. Without that there cannot be proper order; therefore, the progeny of those who impart knowledge will observe the same vocation. All cannot all of a sudden become *brahmajnanis*[1]. There is no objection if they do. And, to become a *brahmajnani* is to reach the ultimate in service. There is not even a trace of pride or selfishness at all. And if there emerge many such *brahmajnanis*, then the varna system can once again be rehabilitated.

Now a few words about inter-dining and intermarriages.

For those who have correctly understood the foregoing portion, there is no need to write more. No one is obliged to eat in the company of a particular person nor obliged to give his daughter in marriage to anybody in particular. Therefore, all will naturally follow their own practice and traditions in respect of giving their daughters in marriage and inter-dining. I have now thought of only one varna, and the Harijan is not excluded from it, so it will suffice to say that all will seek alliances according to their convenience and live and move and eat where their soul finds satisfaction. After untouchability has ended, there is no need to say more on this subject.

In the end, I shall repeat what I have said many times before. This question of varna system has no direct concern with the removal of untouchability. The abolition of untouchability is the highest duty of every Hindu. The Harijan Seva Sangh exists for that purpose. It has its sphere defined and I have played the chief role in making it do so.

The ideas about varnadharma at present are my own. Even he who does not subscribe to them should not shirk from working for the abolition of untouchability. None need fight shy of it because I happen to be the major participant in it. If the Hindu community does not accept my ideas concerning the system of varnas, they will remain mine alone. I cannot force those on others, nor have I the desire to do so. If those ideas are contrary to Hindu religion I will be thrown out of the Hindu community like an unwanted grain[2]. Observance of the dharma to banish untouchability is certainly the common duty of all Hindus. I do not wish to hide a single idea of mine and thereby deceive anyone. The question of varna system has indirect relationship with untouchability, hence it is understandable that my associates and others wish to know my ideas about it. That is why I have to develop those ideas. But there is not the slightest reason for anyone to feel confused because of them. Individuals do not matter at all where

[1] Knowers of the Brahman

[2] A Gujarati phrase

the question of religion is concerned. These will come and go. Religion is eternal, it will go on. There have been many ideas about it, and there will be many more. Just as God's attributes are endless, the frontiers of religion are unending. No one has understood it thoroughly. All should follow it to the extent they understand it, so that the chariot of religion will keep moving forward. Knowing this, and leaving me out of account, all should do research in religion for their own sakes. The conditions of doing that research are well known. He who will observe these conditions will alone know religion to some extent. There are certain rules for getting knowledge of all type. They call for effort. Religious research requires the utmost effort. Therefore, at the very outset of that research, those with experience have suggested the observance of *yamaniyamas*.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 19-3-1933

116. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

March 19, 1933

MY DEAR MARY,

I have your two nice letters before me. Of course you did a lot of body labour in the Mission as do many. That was not my point. My point was doing just as systematic body labour as the inmates and mastering the different crafts. But let me not labour this point. Body labour for bread and therefore bread labour is the ideal we are trying to reach at the Ashram. But you are to do just what and as you like. I do not want you to work under tension. I would be deeply grieved if I found you had worked under tension in order to fulfill the Ashram routine. I want you to catch the spirit of the Ashram. There should be a feeling of satisfaction and joy at the end of every period. And that. comes if every minute is dedicated to God and every activity done for Him and His. No more time to say more today.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6000. Also C.W. 3325. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] Rules and observances for the spiritual aspirant

117. LETTER TO KESHAV

March 19, 1933

MY DEAR BROTHER KESHAV,

I am now able to give you my opinion about your scheme.[1] Kakasaheb is of opinion that you do not need any pretentious building just now. The brother who went to Sabarmati has not gained much experience. You have already two looms. They should be worked for the time being. You are not manufacturing enough yarn even to feed those two looms. You should therefore go slowly but steadily and extend only when you have a nucleus of trained spinners and trained weavers having perfect control over their work and are able to produce what may be called marketable yarn and khadi. If you do not do this, you will share the fate of several organizations that I know have started with a high purpose and a noble motive but for want of efficiency and application have died out. This is an industry which requires just as much scientific skill, application and time as any other. Indeed this requires a little more, but certainly not less.

I would therefore ask you to withdraw this public appeal and develop the work silently and unostentatiously, and when you have done that, you will find that you have money waiting for you for extension.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20626

118. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

March 19, 1933

MY DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

This is in reply to your letter of the 13th instant No. 921.

I am afraid I cannot take shelter under the easy solution you have suggested for my discharge from your complaint. I did mean what I said when I dictated the sentence, "I wonder if you read the English *Harijan.*"[2] I know the kind of worker you are, and ordinarily I should certainly not expect you to read the papers and magazines that may be issued on behalf of the Society[3]. It would be an impossible task for any secretary to undertake. As it is, we have not

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Keshav", 7-3-1933.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar", 28-2-1933.

[3] Servants of Untouchables Society

many newspapers, magazines and literature published under the auspices of the Society. But even what is being published you cannot be expected to read, and if you attempted, you could only do so at the sacrifice of much more valuable work. But I wanted to single out the English *Harijan* and the Hindi *Harijan*, the English, because I write down all my thoughts in that paper, and they are as much addressed to you as to other Harijan servants, and that I do, because I am supposed to be guiding and shaping the policy of the Society; therefore it was that by politely asking the question I suggested that you should make an exception in favour of the English *Harijan* and make time to read it; the Hindi edition you have to read, because it is being published under your very nose, and because the latest matter can be supplied to the Hindi *Harijan*, but it cannot be to the English because of the distance. The Hindi *Harijan* has to be packed with facts and figures which I would have to copy from it and which I would love to do. You will be speaking to the innumerable workers and giving them precise instructions through that paper, or else it has no reason for existence. The Hindi *Harijan* need not contain essays. It should simply contain a translation of my messages and first-class authentic information from the Central Office, as also definite weekly instructions to workers. Then and then only will it justify its existence.

Now, as to the other part of your letter. I have told you already what view I take of the other organizations. We have to treat them as if they were our own, not in order to dictate, but in order to serve them and in order to harness their services, if they will give them to us. But you know best whether to approach them and how, if at all. Of course, I had and could have nothing against Lala Mohanlal[1]. Your and my business, however, is, as I conceive it, to investigate all complaints, good, bad and indifferent, so that we leave no loopholes for mistakes or complaints so far as it is humanly possible to do it.

This brings me to the last part of your letter—Overhead Charges. Both you and I have been lifelong workers and connected with numerous organizations. I really regard myself as an expert economist and organizer in my own way. We shall deserve the curses of posterity, if not also of the present generation, if we do not show that we have put the bulk of our collections into Harijan pockets. 10% overhead charges, therefore, I regard as a liberal estimate. Propaganda we must have, and plenty of it, both among Harijans and caste men. But we have to make the propaganda practically self-supporting, especially amongst caste men. In my opinion, the best propaganda is constructive work amongst Harijans. It will tell not only upon the

[1] Secretary, Punjab Branch of Servants of Untouchables Society

latter but also upon caste men. For the present you may have two collections, one for constructive work, that is, for putting directly into Harijan pockets, and the other for propaganda. As a matter of fact, propaganda work ought to be paid for out of the sale proceeds of our weeklies and the sale of our other literature, so that the moneys we may actually collect otherwise would all find their way into Harijan pockets. Our caste-Hindu workers should therefore be volunteers or receiving just maintenance money, and we should find out every available Harijan worker whom we would pay fairly well. He may not give just now very efficient work; I would not worry, but would teach him to do the work. All this can be done only if we have workers religiously-minded, treating this movement as an essentially religious one and approaching it in the religious spirit. Then you will find that we shall have the least opposition to encounter, and no matter what opposition we encounter, the movement must flourish. If we cannot get sufficient hands to work the movement and to work it in that fashion, I, for one, will not hesitate to say that we should cease to be an organization. Without that organization you had your own great work cut out for you, and I have mine. The organization was set up in the belief that it was needed by the people, as I still believe it is, but the test that I have laid down would be the proof of that need.

I have given you only an outline of what is passing through my mind. You will share this letter with Sjt. Ghanshyamdas; if you think it worth while, you may come down here to discuss the whole thing, or, if you have caught the spirit of my letter and appreciate it, you need not trouble.

Lastly, I do not want you to reduce to practice anything of this letter because I have written it. You will only reduce to practice that which commends itself to you, and never otherwise. My duty is done when I have passed on my thoughts to you.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20633

119. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

March 19, 1933

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

I have your letter. You must have improved your spinning in regard to the count, evenness and the strength of the yarn. Great care, even more than about the count, should be taken about the strength and the evenness. There is bound to be a difference in the count if the cotton or the sliver is bad, but there should be no difference in the

evenness and the strength. Till you reach the standard when you may be said to pass in regard to these two, it cannot truthfully be said that you have spun.

Whether one is working in the field or doing some other work, one must feel interested. Anybody who is devoted to duty is interested only in doing his duty and not in doing a particular work. Such a person never wishes to choose his own work. He does with interest whatever falls to his lot because he considers that his dharma. Anybody who does some work unwillingly is not doing it as dharma. Can anybody force himself to do any work as dharma.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

120. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 19, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

As soon as I have solved one moral problem, I am faced with another. At the moment it seems that . . .[1], in whom I had put absolute trust, has fallen. He has become mad after. . .[2]. He has been inflamed with passion. By chance his passionate letters to . . .[3] fell into . . .'s[4] hands. He sent them to me. They give a picture of one blinded by passion. He tried to get hold of the letters by devious means, but failed. He met me yesterday with . . . [5]. Her generosity of heart is in no way less than . . .'s[6]. Her love of me crushes me under its weight. I see that, instead of being angry with me, she still shows me more love than a daughter to her father. On the other hand, . . .[7] makes me tremble. He now says that it was never his intention to marry . . .[8], but that he was only testing her. I should like to believe that this is true, though it would be bad enough. But it sounds incredible. Nobody believes it. If . . .[9] is even now deceiving, he is showing a greater depravity than could have been imagined in him. Vallabhbhai, who had great liking for . . .[10] also seems to have lost it. Personally, I have not been able to judge what is in his heart. My condition is like that of Arjuna: "I do not know where I am, nor can shake off my fear.''[11] I have work before me which I must do, and it helps me to forget all my pain. But, unknown even to me, a fire is raging inside.

I do not know what atonement I would do if I were outside. Nor

[1] to [10] The names have been omitted.

[11] *Vide Bhagavad Gita*, Xl. 25.

[12] to [15] The names have been omitted.

do I know what my duty is while I am here. I do not feel that . . .[12] has been guilty. She is a completely innocent and trustful girl. Do show this letter to Panditji, Chimanlal, Gangabehn, Durga, Lakshmibehn and Totaramji, and to others to whom you may think it desirable to show. Ask them to write and tell me what they think about this matter. If . . .[13] is there, he also must read it. I wrote to him only the day before yesterday. I have asked Kaka to discuss the matter with . . .[14]. He was to go to . . .[15]. I have advised Kaka to detain him. I should like you to throw what light you can on this subject. I am not in a condition just now to write more, for I am in darkness as to my dharma in the situation.

I have faith that I will not fail to do my dharma and that, as always, God is clearing my path even on this occasion. Hence, even though you may see in this letter the anguish of my heart, believe that I am calm.

BAPU

[PS.]

You will find with this letters for Santokbehn and Lakshmidas.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8337. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

121. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 19, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I handed over a few letters this morning for being posted. You will have received them before this.

The letter to Lakshmidas was left behind here. It has now been posted to Bardoli.

Anandi is steadily improving. She is still weak, and gets a little temperature. I hope it is due to the operation. She is being nursed carefully.

You must have now known Parachure Shastri's decision.

Suresh's letter contains this remark: "In all institutions, respect is shown to the rich and never to a poor person." I have asked him if this is true about the Ashram too. Read my letter to him. If that is his experience about the Ashram, ask him gently for evidence. If we have

that defect, we should overcome it.

Have you received there a copy of Valji's *Ishucharita*? If you have, let anybody who has read it write to me and tell me what he thinks about the book.[1] If you have not received any, I will send one from here.

BAPU

Total: 22

[PS.]

All the twenty-two letters are bound together.

The twenty-third, to Prabhudas[2], is loose.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8338. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

122. LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

March 19, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

Now that you have Mahadev[3] why should you write to me? Be frank and say that because of the appearance of Mahadev in the house, you have got behindhand in writing and therefore need not apologize.

It is necessary to keep children free of constipation. You can give him castor oil even daily. Just ten drops will be more than enough. Give my blessings to Anand whenever you write to him.

I have not met Dr. Mehta again.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] For Gandhiji's opinion of the book, *vide* Vol. LI, pp. 258-60.

[2] Addressee's nephew and Chhaganlal Gandhi's son

[3] Addressee's son

123. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

March 19, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

I wrote to Narandas, who says in reply:

> I have already written to you that Yamuji has started teaching Ramabehn. She must have got angry before this arrangement was made. I hope now her anger will disappear. How could I say that I would never call on her? I should not even think of taking up such an attitude. I arranged for somebody to teach and talked with her for a while. And now I look in every day at her house or at the Bal Mandir. If she has no confidence in me, I shall try to win it.

So, now, you will admit that' you are defeated. Or do you still adhere to your view?

From time to time send me a report of the progress in your study. How is the condition of the arm?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5344

124. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

March 19, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

Your suspicion is baseless. As you frankly criticize other people and say about them what you feel, so did Mahadev. I asked him. He sensed disrespect for him in your repeatedly emphasizing "For Mahatmaji"! He said what he felt. You explained and the matter is over. You should learn to endure criticism of you and overcome your sensitiveness. Cultivate some sense of humour. We should not weigh all the criticism against us with the weight which we use in weighing gold; for some of it, we should use the weights with which we weigh iron or stones. And in doing so, we should take no account of half a maund this way or the other. You don't look delicate, but your heart is very sensitive. Harden it now and make it less sensitive. Instead of reasoning with you, I am now going to order you. You may then disregard my order if you wish. You are not permitted to disregard others' orders, but you may disregard mine as often as you like. Whether your conduct in doing so is rude or civil, whether your offence is criminal or civil, we shall decide in each case.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10330. Also C.W. 6770. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

125. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

March 19, 1933

BHAISHRI PARIKSHITLAL,

I received your sincere letter. It is from my own point of view that I find the figure you state to be frightening, but if I accept the other opposite standpoint it is the most reasonable. Your duty is that of a soldier. You should follow the standard laid down. It is for Thakkar Bapa and your local or provincial (or whatever they call it) Committee to lay it down. My function is only to point out the direction. You may carry out as many of my suggestions as seem practicable in the circumstances. There is every risk, and even probability, of the result being contrary to what was intended if my advice is followed mechanically. Your first duty, therefore, is to weigh my suggestion in the light of your experience and, if it does not seem sound enough, to set it aside and forget all about it. You may put it before your Committee if you find any worth in it. If the Committee also approves of it, you should take it to Thakkar Bapa and carry it out only if he also approves of it. I will not say more than this here. I am now going to discuss my suggestions in the English and the Gujarati editions of the *Harijan*. So you will be able to know about them.

I state here two rules for your consideration.

l. The money needed for propaganda work should be found from such work itself. In other words, it should be self-supporting.

2. Constructive activity is the best propaganda. Money invested in it will be fully rewarded.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 20629

126. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

March 19, 1933

CHI. NARMADA,

I got your letter. If you are really eager to learn the *Gita* and music, you will certainly succeed in learning them. But whatever you learn you should learn thoroughly.

My compliments to all if they feel interested in working in the fields.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2774. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

127. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

March 20, 1933

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

I have more than once told you about the condition of Sardar Vallabhbhai's nose. You know also how reluctant he is to talk about it. But we who know it are getting nervous. He suffers terribly whilst the attack lasts. All the remedies that you and Major Mehta suggested have been tried without success. The attacks are becoming more and more frequent and more and more troublesome. The worst attack was witnessed on Saturday last. The discharge from the nose and sneezing continued for more than thirty hours. The eyes were blood red and the nose naturally so. The whole day long he ate nothing, drinking only tea in the morning and having fruit and milk and boiled vegetable in the evening. He is not able to take his ordinary meals. I do feel that it is time that he was examined by his own specialists. Dr. Deshmukh is his general adviser and I should leave it to Dr. Deshmukh to bring such nose specialist as he likes. Dr. Damani has generally attended to his nose but I understand that he is suffering from smallpox and may not be available.

Will you please send this to the Government for an early decision?

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: G.N. 3882; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(1) A, p. 3

128. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

March 20, 1933

CHI. BHAU,

Your decision to stay on there for the present is correct. It is desirable that you should get rid of your constipation completely. Can you do any work there? You should sometimes visit the villages around Rajkot. Some of them you can visit even casually while out for a walk.

You say that you tell stories to farmers in the evenings. Does this mean that you also stay with them?

I read your letter all over again. I see from it that Jamnadas does not give you any work there. Have you made any new acquaintances?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6754. Also C.W. 4495. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

129. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

March 20, 1933

CHI. JAMNADAS,

Why are you lazy in writing to me? You do not yet seem to have been restored to health. Is there no chance of its improving?

Sarupbehn was there recently. Why have you not written anything about her? I expected an account of the visit from you.

Tell me your experience of Bhau, and also give an account of the Harijan work there.

How is Khushalbhai[1] now? Prabhudas wrote in his letter that there was discharge of pus from the ear. How is Devbhabhi[2]?

Does Bhai help in any way?

Kanti[3] writes in his letter that aunt[4] wants to come to see me. Tell her that she should give up this desire born of ignorant love, and that I am very well. If she is still eager, she may certainly come. How are her eyes? I am enclosing letters for Sushila and Bhau.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I find that you do not give any work to Bhau. You may write to the Ashram to send you the expenses on his account.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9647. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

130. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

March 20, 1933

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letters, I hope that you get mine. I will write to Shanti along with this.[5] Sita's boils seem to have persisted. I was surprised to read about Jalbhai's daughter. Was it some known man? How did the girl come into contact with him, and how did she get rid of him? How

[1] Khushalchand Gandhi, Gandhiji's cousin and addressee's father
[2] Wife of Khushalchand Gandhi
[3] Son of Harilal Gandhi
[4] Presumably Raliatbehn, Gandhiji's sister
[5] *Vide* the following item.

are Sorabji's affairs?

Lakshmi was married to Maruti last Tuesday. At present at least it seems that the marriage will be successful. Lakshmi and Maruti are staying with Manju. Anandi has been operated upon, as it was detected that she had appendicitis. She is at Shri Trivedi's place. Velanbehn is here with her. Anandi is progressing satisfactorily. Ramdas and Jamnalalji are here and live together. They are both well. I hope you get the *Harijan*, both English and Gujarati. Rajaji and Devdas are at Delhi. Ba is with Mirabehn and keeps fairly well. I suppose Manilal must have been appointed a trustee now. Did you discuss about the press with West? You ought to cultivate relations with him, irrespective of whether the talks bear fruit or not.

All four of us are happy.

Sushila now seems to have learnt how to write letters. If Jalbhai taught Sita a game, may I not say that I taught Sushila to make her letters a little interesting?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4808

131. LETTER TO SHANTILAL J. MEHTA

March 20, 1933

CHI. SHANTI,

Is it too much to expect a letter from you?

Either you should leave Phoenix just now, or, if you decide to stay there, you should give up doing odd jobs and also your desire to make money. Everyone who has tried to serve and to pursue his personal aims at the same time has failed in both. I expect better from you.

I hope your wife agrees with you. Encourage her to study. Do not live extravagantly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII

132. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

March 20, 1933

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

Read this letter. I have written to Shantilal that I like the idea. Let the bungalow go. The rest of the land may be kept and huts built on it in which occasional visitors may stay. To what extent this will be practicable, what arrangement can be made for water, whether occasional visitors can stay in this way and from where they will buy provisions, all this is for Shantilal and you to consider. May be the idea is impractical.They must have received the letter I wrote to Vijapur as you had suggested.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Gandhi Nidhi File (August 1976). Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

133. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

March 20, 1933

CHI. SUMANGAL,

I am only today able to reach your letter of February 20. I am sorry. I get no time. I hope you are now well. Prabhavati keeps me posted with news of Kanta. I hope you get English *Harijan*. If you do not, I will send it. I will arrange for all the issues to be sent to you.

The little booklet about health[1] needs a lot of improvement. There has been some change in my views about vegetables. Vegetables are inferior to fruit but they are easier to digest than cereals. In our country they are a substitute for fruit. If therefore you cannot get fruit in adequate quantities, you should take in liberal quantities leafy vegetables and gourds. Of starchy vegetables you should take only a little or none at all.

About salt I have no definite opinion as of now. Naturopaths differ in the matter. I do not consider the opinion of the ordinary doctors reliable. But I am sure of this, that it is necessary for everyone who wants to cultivate self-control to give up salt for five or six

[1] *Guide to Health*, first published as a series entitled "General Knowledge about Health".

months and afterwards from time to time. There is no reason to suppose that giving up salt altogether will necessarily cause harm. Fruits and vegetables contain salt. And it is always there in water. The quarrel is only about salt as a separate article.

I had sent a long reply to your earlier letter. Fortunately Mahadev had kept a copy, which I am therefore, enclosing and sending by registered post.

What work do you do at present?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I see that there is no copy of my reply to yours of the 5th February. It cannot be ascertained even whether I answered the letter, or whether the letter was received at all.

From the Gujarati original: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

134. LETTER TO R. R. CHAKRAVARTI

March 21, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I propose to deal with it in the columns of the *Harijan*.[1] Nevertheless, I would like you to furnish me with proof in support of your statement that there is a propaganda going on against Brahminism. I should be able more fully to deal with the question if I knew what was at the back of your mind and what was the evidence in your possession.[2]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. R. CHAKRAVARTTI
PROFESSOR, NARSING DUTT COLLEGE
129 BELILIOS ROAD
HOWRAH

From a microfilm: S.N. 20641

[1] *Vide* "The Much-maligned Brahmin", 25-3-1933.
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to R. R. Chakravarti", 1-4-1933.

135. LETTER TO ISHWAR SINGH

March 21, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 15th instant. You can publish the Urdu translation of English *Harijan* on your own responsibility and without in any way identifying me with its contents. If you finally come to the conclusion that an Urdu translation of the *Harijan* should be published by you, I can only hope that you will take care that the translations are faithful, and if you publish it in collaboration with the provincial organization of the Servants of Untouchables Society, it will be better.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. ISHWAR SINGH

MANAGER, LAJPAT RAI & SONS

LOHARI GATE, LAHORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 20644

136. LETTER TO K. R. KRISHNA IYER

March 21, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. The marriage[1] you refer to had no connection with the untouchability movement. It was arranged years ago. We do not know to what varna the husband of the child belongs. He was picked up as an orphan boy by one of the members of the Ashram and he has been brought up as his own child.

So far as varnashrama is concerned, I have expressed my views already in the pages of the *Harijan* and I have stated my belief that restriction on the intermarriage and inter-dining is no part of varnadharma and was not in the palmy days of Hinduism.[2] I have also expressed my opinion that at the present moment in India there is in reality but one varna possible, and that is of Shudra, in other words, that of service. But you can learn my views more fully from the pages of the Harijan.

[1] The reference is to the marriage of Lakshmi, a Harijan girl, with Maruti.

[2] *Vide"Letter to Narandas Gandhi*

Lastly, whilst all anti-untouchability workers are bound by the programme of the Servants of Untouchables Society, nobody is bound by my personal views or acts.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. R. KRISHNA IYER
KALLADAIKURICHI (S. I. R.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 20645

137. LETTER TO M. MEYAPPA

March 21, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 17th instant and I am glad that you distributed khadi to poor Harijans and that you presided at an anti-untouchability meeting. There are many more things that you can do, and these you can study from the pages of the *Harijan*.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. MEYAPPA
VETRIYUR, *via* SIVAGANGA (S.I.R.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 20647

138. LETTER TO MOHANLAL[1]

March 21, 1933

MY DEAR MOHANLAL,

I am much touched by your letter for which you need not have apologized at all; nor were you an accused person in my estimation. I knew that you were a member of Lalajee's Society. But workers have got to answer all kinds of charges in a detached spirit. You do not perhaps know what charges Lalajee himself had to answer. I had long discussions with him about these. I have referred to the charges against Dadabhai in my autobiography. Therefore you have been in quite good company. You have given me however the letter that I

[1] In his letter dated 15-3-1933 (S.N. 20518), the addressee at the instance of Amritlal V. Thakkar had given replies to the charges made against him by Swatmadas. *Vide* also "Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar", 16-3-1933.

desired and expected from you .

Yours sincerely,

LALA MOHANLAL
C/O SERVANTS OF THE UNTOUCHABLES SOCIETY
LAJPAT RAI BHAVAN
LAHORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 20648

139. LETTER TO ANN MARIE PETERSEN

March 21, 1933

MY DEAR MARIA,

Just one line to acknowledge your letter and to tell you that generally speaking the Superintendent's permission is not needed for people to visit me on matters of untouchability, because a general order has already been passed by the Government. Lest therefore there is any delay in your receiving an official reply, I write this to tell you that you will be admitted if you come during the ordinary hours, which are between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. except on Sundays, and also on Wednesdays and Thursdays, if you can possibly avoid the last two days. Sundays have to be avoided for the convenience of the administration, Wednesdays and Thursdays for my *Harijan* work.

The sooner you get away and rest your tired body the better for you and your work of love.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20646

140. LETTER TO RAMPAL SINGH

March 21, 1933

DEAR RAJA SAHEB,

I had a circular letter signed by you sent to me, which showed that the U. P. Dharma Rakshana Sabha were securing the opinions of the pundits on the question of temple-entry. I wonder whether any further steps were taken in the matter, and if so, what was the result.

Yours sincerely,

HON. RAJA, SIR RAMPAL SINGH, K.C.I.E.
PRESIDENT
U. P. DHARMA RAKSHANA SABHA
LUCKNOW

From a microfilm: S.N. 20649

141. LETTER TO SWAMI SHYAMANANDA

March 21, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I quite agree with you that only temple-goers should have the right of deciding as to who shall not enter their temples.

As to the necessity or advisability of our temples being regularly visited by the middle-class people, it is a different matter. Much reform in temple-worship has to be undertaken before people will voluntarily desire to visit temples. I think that reform will come but in its own time.

Yours sincerely,

SWAMI SHYAMANANDA
C/O THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION
RANGOON

From a microfilm: S.N. 20650

142. LETTER TO SUDARSHAN V. DESAI

March 21, 1933

CHI. MAVO,

I have your letter. You should learn to draw the letters. You can do that only after you have learnt to draw straight lines, triangles and circles since drawing letters is more difficult than drawing those three figures. How can I explain this to you convincingly?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5764. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

143. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 21, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter of the 18th yesterday. What you write regarding Ramabehn is fully worthy of you. That is what dharma requires. I hope Duncan has recovered now.

Parachure Shastri will now be arriving there very soon, accompanied by his son. His wife is not coming just now. You will, therefore, send every month a sum not exceeding Rs. 30 for her support. All the jewellery she had, has been eaten up. Get fully acquainted with Parachure Shastri.

I am returning to you Shanta Panwelkar's letter to keep. I think we should pay her Rs. 20. But you and Prema know better. I have not even seen her. If, therefore, your view is different from mine, don't forward my letter to Shanta. If you agree with me, obtain the consent of the Committee and forward the letter. Don't do anything on the responsibility of you two alone. We are having bitter experience of . . .[1] here. He seems to have fallen completely. He is trying hard to hide his guilt. He is discussing the matter with Kakasaheb. I am waiting to see what the outcome is. Meanwhile, I am awaiting the views and

[1] The name has been omitted.

experiences of you all.. . .[1] has been asked to remain here for the present. If . . .[2] is there, show him this letter.

BAPU

[PS.]

Enclosed are Shanta's letter and my reply, one letter for Duncan and letters for Valjibhai and Mavo.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8339. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

144. LETTER TO DIWAKAR SINGH

March 22, 1933

MY DEAR DIWAKAR,

I have your letter. No doubt the less demonstrative you are the better and more permanent your work will be.

Your last paragraph makes bad reading. You say, "Sweeping of public roads has become irregular." That's wrong. Having started the work you should have done it with scientific precision and regularity. Your irregular scavenging will produce no effect on the public. You saw with what trumpeting the work was inaugurated and I read with pleasure that you were thinking of constructing special carts or wheelbarrows for removing the refuse. But this can be necessary only if you are doing your work thoroughly. Your energy will be frittered away if you will jump from work to work without doing anything completely. What will happen if after having half-finished a table, a cabinet maker began a chair and so on? Will you not call it all a waste of effort? That is precisely what happens generally to philanthropic undertakings. I would like you to guard yourself against that error. If you will do the street-cleaning then you must have a map and a programme according to the number of volunteers you have, and after you have begun a street, you may not leave it till its dwellers have taken up the cleaning themselves. In order to impress them with the necessity of so doing, you will have to be gentle and patient with them, and your cleaning will have to be so thorough as to excite their pleasure and admiration, and when that happens you will see that the thing will work, but you will have to concentrate your attention wholly

[1] The names have been omitted.

[2] *ibid*

upon one single piece till outsiders who are the sole judges are able to say, "It's well done".

I am not able to appreciate your presentation of the football to the Harijan boys. For a country like India a ball that costs Rs. 4 to Rs. 5 is an expensive thing. Harijan boys will have footballs given to them by patrons. Servants have got to exercise the greatest care and discretion in their service, especially when it is they who have to make the choice.

Your having shifted to servants' quarters is undoubtedly a very fine idea, and if you will try to live as simply as the Harijans, consistently with your health, it would be a good thing.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

KUNWAR DIWAKAR SINGH
HOLLAND HALL
ALLAHABAD

C.W. 9656. Courtesy: Municipal Museum, Allahabad. Also S.N. 20658

145. LETTER TO PRAKASH

March 22, 1933

MY DEAR PRAKASH,

I was glad to have your letter and to know that you had no lung trouble whatsoever. If you were taking meat foods before, you will not spoil your health by abstaining from such foods. Unless you have a religious conviction that meat-eating is wrong and if you do persist in giving up meat, you will flourish only if you will take as much milk and butter as you can, and take starchy foods sparingly, avoiding all pulses, if it is possible to do so. Whole wheatmeal chapatis or bread, green vegetables, some juicy fresh fruits, milk and butter should be an ideal complete diet.

I would advise you to send your detailed observations and suggestions about the Ashram to Narandas.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. PRAKASH
C/O ANANTA CHARAN ROY
JAILOR
PATNA CAMP JAIL

From a photostat: S.N. 20666

146. LETTER TO M. C. RAJAH

March 22, 1933

DEAR RAO BAHADUR,

I have your letter accompanying the appeal for funds for the permanent building of the Kannappar Free Reading Room. You may depend upon my doing whatever is possible for me to do.[1]

I presume that you received my previous letter regarding your Bill. Of course there was nothing in it to call for any acknowledgment, nor need you now send any acknowledgment. Absence of contradiction from you will be sufficient presumption for me that you had received my letter.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20660

147. LETTER TO DR. T. S. S. RAJAN

March 22, 1933

DEAR DR. RAJAN,

Here are some papers in connection with Kannappar Free Reading Room.

Please tell me what can be done by you and what need be done by me. You should return the papers when you reply to me.

Yours sincerely,

Encl.[2]

From a microfilm: S.N. 20661

[1] *Vide* the following two items.
[2] These are not available.

148. LETTER TO SECRETARY, KANNAPPAR READING ROOM

March 22, 1933

THE SECRETARY
KANNAPPAR FREE READING ROOM
ROYAPURAM, MADRAS

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter of 24th January last was received by me yesterday through the kind offices of Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah.

I am taking immediate steps to find out what is possible for me to do in the matter.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20659

149. LETTER TO P. R. SATHE

March 22, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I do not quite see what you are driving at. I see nothing wrong in preaching temperance and habits of cleanliness so long as they are not made a condition of removal of untouchability.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. R. SATHE
PLEADER
GONDIA, C. P.

From a microfilm: S.N. 20662

150. LETTER TO SECRETARY, JATHI NASHINI SABHA

March 22, 1933

THE SECRETARY
THE JATHI NASHINI SABHA
CANNANORE

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Though you can read your meaning in my writing, I must confess that I am too dense to read my meaning in your writing. You are no doubt satisfied that I do not recognize any distinction between high and low. Are you equally satisfied that everyone should pursue his ancestral occupation so as to conserve national energy, national talent, avoid unequal distribution of wealth and keen competition? If you are, then you will alter the aims and objects of your Sabha, but if you are not prepared to alter the aims and objects in accordance with the idea presented, you might agree with me that your prosecution of your aims and objects is likely to create confusion and suspicion if you tack it on to untouchability. Do you not observe that I do not tack on even reformed varnadharma to untouchability? I have simply stated my position in order to avoid misunderstanding, and, what is more important still, the charge of suppressing my opinion in order to gain adherence for the cause of the abolition of untouchability.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20665

151. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

March 22, 1933

CHI. LILAVATI[1],

You are a silly girl. Would you feel hurt if I told you that I tolerated you because you were a good girl and that I would take no interest in you if you were a bad girl? If not, then why should you be hurt by what I said? My remarks were prompted only by love. I

[1] A child widow who had joined Sabarmati Ashram in 1930. She later studied medicine at Bombay, worked in hospitals and took part in the national movement.

expressed my love by saying that I tolerated you in spite of your unsettled state because your intentions were good, but you misunderstood my remark completely. What is one to do to a person who thus displays his or her ego?

You should know that by learning some work or by studying you may become self-supporting, but you cannot be sure that that will make you good. On the other hand, if you become good, mentally strong, and healthy in body, then your character will be sound and you will become self-supporting also. This does not mean that you should not study further or learn a craft. Do that in the Ashram as much as you can during spare time and be satisfied. Engrave in your heart the golden rule that devotion to duty includes everything else. For the present, only do this much, have full faith in Narandas and follow his advice. Do not look upon your money as your own but regard yourself as a trustee. You should not, therefore, spend it even on buying fruit for me, since I get fruit from the other people. It is the Harijans who need the money most. Keep it for them.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9572

152. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 22, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your big packet of mail.

It was a great thing indeed that the [Chamar] children gave up buffalo flesh. But there may possibly have been violence behind this. If they parted with it through fear, what happened was bad. If they so wished they should have been given some compensation for giving it up since it was their food. Hence you or some other responsible inmate of the Ashram should go and ask them. It would be fine if they handed over the flesh of their own accord and could give up eating buffalo flesh for ever. If they are not ready to do that, we should have patience with them.

You should find out from them or from Chamars who have connections with the Ashram the money value of a carcass. Try and find out from them, if you can, what the hide, intestines, bones, etc., would fetch if sold separately and how they use these things.

If anybody else feels sick as Duncan did, you should immediately apply hot fomentation on the abdomen and give the person a piece of ice or lemon to suck. He may also drink cold water one tea-spoonful at a time. Very often the vomiting stops with these measures. If one had not eaten any poisonous food, there is no cause for alarm at all. An enema also will stop vomiting. You should tell this to all who live in the Ashram.

Impure attraction had sprung up between . . .[1] and . . .[2] They hid their love for quite a long time. I came to know of it by chance. They used to meet secretly and also write to each other secretly. I have still not been able to fathom what is in their hearts. I do not know how far . . .'s passion has carried him. Neither seems to have purified his or her heart of lust. We have a rigid rule, to which no exception is condoned, that all young men and women who live in the Ashram as inmates should regard one another as brothers and sisters. The love of these two had gone beyond that relationship. The men and women living in the Ashram are forbidden to meet each other alone. These two have violated that rule. And they also tried, successfully, to deceive the whole Ashram, which means that they have violated our chief vow, that of truth. Thus they have violated three important rules of the Ashram.

I had boundless trust in . . . . I had thought him to be a *brahmachari* of the highest purity. I had proudly believed that he would never deceive me at any rate. I had believed . . . to be an innocent and pure-minded girl who could never feel passion. I looked upon her as my first-born daughter. I have been proved wrong in my estimate. Falsehood cannot hide itself from one who scrupulously follows truth, non-violence and *brahmacharya*. Such a person immediately knows anybody who is lustful and all violence subsides in his presence. I have ceaselessly striven for many years to observe these three vows, but I admit that I have failed in my effort. I do not say this in pride. It is my vow of truth which compels me to make this admission. I should have discovered the true character of . . . and . . . . My failure to do so is a sure sign of the imperfection of my spiritual attainment. I see that it is imperfect in regard to all the three requirements. I know my spiritual poverty. Unknown to me, falsehood, violence and passion are lurking in me.

[1] The names have been omitted.
[2] *ibid*

I, therefore, feel as much compassion for . . . and . . . as anger against myself. Personally, I don't judge them, nor should anybody from among us do so. However, my attitude towards them will appear to have changed from now onwards. In fact, it is they who will have changed. Equality consists in treating a sick person and a healthy person as each deserves. One's attitude towards both should be inspired by love. In either case, one must consider the good of the other person. My attitude towards these two will be in conformity with this principle. I will treat them as sick persons and nurse them as such. All of us should do that. How we can do so, I shall be able to explain later.

Everybody should learn from this incident. The boys and the girls should take a warning from it. Any of them who feels passion should confess the fact. They need not be ashamed of it. If I discover a snake in my bed, I cannot be blamed for it. After I have discovered it, I should remove it. Passion is like a snake in the body. One need not feel ashamed of admitting its presence. On the contrary, it is one's duty to do so. It is a sin to let the snake remain and feed it. One's duty is to get rid of it. If any girl or boy wishes to marry, she or he is free to do so, except that the prohibition against a brother and a sister or other near relations marrying ought to be observed. I have often cautioned people that nobody should write or receive private letters. Everybody should hand over to the Secretary his or her letter without sealing it. The Ashram is one family. Truth can have nothing private. Everybody who observes this one rule will save himself or herself from many pitfalls. However, nobody should be forced to observe it. The letters of all adult inmates will continue to be treated as they are treated now.

This is meant for all. If you would like to suggest any change in this or if you don't feel inclined to read it out to the people there, you may hold the letter back for some time and let me know what you desire. You had warned me against . . .'s[1] disregard of rules and his lethargy, and I had been warned by many against his excessive intimacy with . . .[2] But I did not wake up. Let me see whether I who have been so stupid and obstinate, change now.

[1] The names have been omitted.
[2] *ibid*

Even when you send many letters, you put them in an ordinary envelope. By the time it arrives here, it is almost completely torn. Some day some letter will get lost. You should either send in a stronger cover, or tie the envelope with a string as we do a packet sent by book post but stamp it as an ordinary letter. The risk in adopting the latter course lies in what might happen in the office here. One of the letters may slip out. If you wish to economize, let somebody make strong envelopes in the Ashram itself. Even if he makes only one every day, that will suffice. You must be receiving strong brown paper. Probably some persons will also have khadi which can no longer be used. With these materials, you can easily make cloth-lined envelopes.

Are there any persons, besides Parashuram, who know Hindi and English well? If there are, send me their names.

BAPU

[PS.]

Read my letter to Dhiru. Discuss the matter with him and let me know. You will have received the letter which I wrote yesterday. I wrote in it about Shanta Panvelkar. I have read . . .'s[1] letter. I don't see how we have a duty to let him live in the Ashram. The Ashram cannot be turned into a home for invalids. He also asks for allowance for the maintenance of his parents. We cannot pay it. Explain this to him. If he wishes to get admitted to a hospital, he may certainly do so. His mother should do some work. He may write to somebody in his town. In any case, I don't think we can keep him.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8340. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

153. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

March 23, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter and the cuttings. Unless you make time for the operation I know you will never have the time. This always happens with busy people, and, therefore it is necessary to consider matters of health as real matters of business. I do not write this as a philosophic truth, but as a practical truth which I have enforced in my own life and

[1]The name has been omitted.

in that of others. I hope, therefore, that you will set apart a month or so for the treatment and make an appointment with the doctors beforehand with the fixed resolution of keeping that appointment.

I note what you say about the work in Calcutta.

About Mr. David's scheme[1] I hope to hear from you further.

I shall certainly write something in the columns of the English *Harijan* about the Hindi edition as soon as I find the Hindi to be up to the mark. I have written fully about this to Thakkar Bapa, as also to Viyogi Hari. I need not, therefore, repeat what I have written to them. You will give to it what time it is possible for you to give, and make it brimful of instructions and information so that no workers would care to be without it.

You suggest that I should send the money due to the Central Board to your firm in Bombay.[2] How should I save the commission thereby, unless you have meant that I should send notes through someone going to Bombay? If I do that, it would mean my having to run some risk of the money being lost. I have not that courage.

As to the denunciation of the Yeravda Pact by the Bengal Council, I have not felt much disturbed and I am not quite certain that counter-propaganda is necessary at the present moment. In no case can the Pact be revised unless all the parties to it agree. It will be time enough to apply our minds to the Bengal opposition when the parties are regularly consulted. I was consulted and I have sent my opinion[3], of which I send you a copy. But you and Satisbabu know much better than I can what to do in Bengal.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 20671. Also C.W. 7933. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

154. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

March 23, 1933

DEAR SATISBABU,

I have your letter of 12th instant. In my opinion, according to the Pact, in the heading 'untouchable' can only be included those

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G.D. Birla", 16-3-1933.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to G.d. Birla", 9-3-1933.
[3] *Vide* "Letter to British Indian Association", 9-3-1933.

whose touch pollutes and who labour under the disabilities incidental to untouchability, but if the Pact can be otherwise interpreted and all those who are considered and are depressed, including the so-called backward classes [are covered], I should be delighted. I should be also delighted if it were open under the Pact to anybody to be classed as untouchable. But I see serious difficulties in the way. The inclusion of any but birth-untouchables might be resented by the latter on the ground that they would then be entitled to stand for Parliamentary elections and thus deprive birth-Harijans of the certainty that they have of election today, and they will be right in their contention, and in the present demoralizing atmosphere I do not see any chance of reason and charity having full play or any play.

This explains my opinion and my fears. I do not however ventilate my opinion just now in public, because it is irrelevant and unseasonable. When the time comes, I shall not hesitate to express it.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20679

155. LETTER TO S. C. GHOSH

March 23, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

What is the use of asking me questions which you have asked? What matters is not what I believe but what you believe and your belief will come to you through prayer and service of God's creatures.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. C. GHOSH
96 BELTALA ROAD
KALIGHAT
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20673

156. LETTER TO GIRDHARILAL

March 23, 1933

DEAR LALA GIRDHARILAL,

I have your letters and Sarup duly brought the sweets you sent, for which please accept the joint thanks of the family. I am glad the progress continues. I have not tried Dr. Agarwal's treatment. I simply acknowledged the letter and the book he sent me. I am always attracted to such natural treatment and therefore wrote saying that I would like to try the treatment. But unfortunately I do not get the time.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20669

157. LETTER TO N. K. GOGTE

March 23, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter.[1] I appreciate your argument. I am myself a follower of the Advaita doctrine. But that doctrine does not reject belief in temples.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. K. GOGTE
CHALISGAON

From a microfilm: S.N. 20672

[1] It dealt with Gandhiji's article, "Are Temples Necessary?", 11-3-1933.

158. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

March 23, 1933

TO
THE HOME SECRETARY TO
THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

DEAR SIR,

I have just had the Government's reply to my letter of the 18th instant.[1] I fear that the reply raises a vital issue which I thought the Government had decided once for all in 1922[2]. The very principle that the Government have now communicated was departed from in that year. Then too it was a question of fasting by the fellow prisoners. Major Jones was then the Superintendent. When the fasting became known to me, I sought an interview with the prisoners so that I could advise them. Major Jones would not listen to my proposal. I had to approach H.E. the then Governor, and I was permitted to see the prisoners with the happiest of results.[3] Exactly the same question arose in 1930 when I was incarcerated for the second time.[4] Major Martin was the Superintendent and he would not listen to my request to see a fasting prisoner. There was correspondence with Government in which I suggested that I was humanitarian above everything else and that I could not exist without being able to make use of my influence as such, wherever it was possible to do so. Here there was not the slightest intention of disturbing the prison discipline and at last my contention was allowed by Government and I was permitted to see prisoners every week, so as to understand their position, and wherever necessary offer helpful suggestions. So far as I am aware Major Martin never had any occasion to deplore the Government's decision to allow me the liberty. That liberty has been continued during this incarceration, with restriction as to the number of prisoners I may see during any single fortnight. And I am not aware of any inconvenience having been thereby caused to Major Bhandari. The Superintendents under whom

[1] *Vide*"Letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", 18-3-1933.
[2] This should be 1923.
[3] *Vide* "Letter to F.C. Griffiths", 17-7-1923 and "Jail Diary, 1923".
[4] *Vide* "Letter to R.V. Martin", 21-9-1930.

I have been a prisoner and the Inspector-General of Prisons will perhaps testify that my intervention, wherever it was found necessary, has been helpful.

My present request has no connection whatsoever with special orders passed by the Government of India regarding matters arising out of untouchability. I would request Government not to disturb a decision they arrived at as long as 1922, which was after full deliberation confirmed in 1930, and which has been carried out during the present incarceration. I venture to suggest that no new circumstance has arisen for the revision of that decision. I have raised no new point. Indeed I was painfully surprised when my telegram about the reported fast of Seth Poonamchand Ranka was stopped. I therefore renew my request that the telegram to Bajaj[1] (Wardha) may be sent without delay and that the decisions of 1922 and 1930 that I have referred to may be confirmed so as to set my mind at ease.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3883; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), A, p. 73

159. LETTER TO V. D. HULYALKAR

March 23, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. To all the preaching that you are doing I should add some tangible work, say, teaching Harijan children. I take it that you diligently read the weekly *Harijan*.

Now about your questions.

1. The *Devadasi* question is very little, but by the purity of your own life and perseverance you will be able to reduce the evil. The only effective argument I can suggest is that Harijans should realize that there can be no religion in reserving one daughter as *Devadasi*, for the simple reason that the millions of other Hindus do not do so and regard such reservation as impure. Those who have already given themselves up to an immoral life will only leave it when a sense of shame is created in Harijan circles. It will not do for you to become

[1] This seems to be a slip for Bachhraj; *vide* "Telegram to Bachhraj", 11-3-1933.

panicky.

2. The game of mud and water will be given up if you will carry on your propaganda in perfect gentleness and if you have endeared yourself to Harijans by constructive service.

3. If Harijans can become vegetarians, nothing can be better; but if they will not, they should at least give up carrion and beef.

4. Of course it is difficult for you to find them in their homes during the day-time. Certainly, therefore, visit them at night or early in the day, but they will not be in the mood to listen to you early in the morning.

5. By constantly defending the Harijans against insults they will themselves learn to resent insults.

6. All things considered, a well-chosen vegetarian diet with the addition of pure milk is undoubtedly better than a mixed diet of meat and vegetables.

7. Smoking surely is not necessary in order to secure rest. Wherever organized labour is working, employers of labour should be induced to give rest at fixed intervals to all, smokers and non-smokers.

8. I am afraid that the argument that field labour is more paying than a peonship requiring a knowledge of the three R's is true and therefore Harijan parents will not be easily induced to send their children to schools without being shown that it will be more profitable in the end.

9. There is no question of first and last; the awakening should be general, both amongst the Harijans and the caste men.

10. Truth and non-violence must always succeed. Tit-for-tat is the law of the beast, not of man.

11. I have no doubt that the present Harijan movement will purify Hinduism all round and will succeed in preventing disturbances or disruption.

12. Everybody is authorized to ask Harijan servants all kinds of questions, much more so their parents, therefore such questions should be patiently and courteously answered.

13. If your silence and fast on Mondays is a matter of vow, you cannot break it on any account unless you have left any loophole.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. VISHNU DAMODAR HULYALKAR

FREEDOM HOUSE

JAMKHANDI (S.M.C.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 20674

160. LETTER TO P. R. LELE

March 23, 1933

MY DEAR LELE,

I have your letter of 20th instant. I understand your point and your difficulty. You need not now worry over the thing. I must not issue any general instructions, for I have no authority. These must come from the Central Board, that is, Thakkar Bapa. I can only give my humble opinion and I know also that I may make egregious mistakes not being in touch with the outside world. Therefore I confine myself to a discussion, as a rule, of general principles.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20675

161. LETTER TO S. T. MISRA

March 23, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

The opinion[1] of M. Sreedhar Shastri and his friend was published in the supplement of the *Aaj*. A copy was handed to Sjt. Haribhau Pathak to be sent to the Mahamahopadhyaya. This was some time ago.

Yours sincerely,

PT. S. T. MISRA
MOGLAI BAZAR
DHULIA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20677

[1] Regarding the untouchability question

162. LETTER TO N. Y. NADKARNI

March 23, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and the information contained therein. When reformers persevere in their effort I have no doubt that they will leave an impression upon the sanatanists.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. Y. NADKARNI
4TH CONTRACTOR'S CHAWL
CHARNI ROAD
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20678

163. LETTER TO BOYD TUCKER

March 23, 1933

MY DEAR BOYD,

You can never tire my patience, for I value the interest you are taking in everything I say or write or do. I know also that you do not argue in any spirit of controversy. I see your difficulty. You take or seem to take only one view of things. I have a profound faith in the Jain doctrine of Anekantvad. It is the manysidedness as opposed to one-sidedness. To illustrate this celebrated doctrine we have a well-known story of 'the elephant and seven blind men', all of whom described the same creature in seven different ways, and the poet ends by saying 'they were all true and they were all false', and we may add 'God alone is true, no one and nothing else is or can be wholly true.'

Holding this view I can appreciate and defend your attitude, but I can also defend my own. If the world will be influenced by my attitude on the question of temple-entry, not in its own way but in my way, I have no fear about its moral safety.

You will be pleased to know that I have an energetic letter from a Maharashtrian, completely defending your position and wholly dissenting from my reply[1]. You must have seen Gurudev's splendid letter on the question. It came to me when the ensuing *Harijan* was

[1] *Vide* "Are Temples Necessary?", 11-3-1933.

filled up. I hope therefore to publish it next week.[1] I believe that he has sent it to me for publication. But you may enquire. If he does not desire publication, I will naturally withhold it, but in that case, please telegraph at once. I hope he is doing well. With love and respects from us all to him.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 20684

164. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

March 23, 1933

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I hope you remember the draft [Bill] approved by you, which Sarupbehn, that is, Vijayalakshmibehn, has shown to me. May I publish it? I will do so if you permit me. It seems to be good. It pertains to throwing open to Harijans one of the State-owned temples. In a subsequent letter you say that the idea has been dropped, as there is a danger of its leading to something like a referendum and that, in that case, the caste Hindus might stop going to the temple. The result thus might be the opposite of what is desired. May I express my view? Why should we fear the consequence of doing what is right? Let other caste Hindus not go to that temple; at any rate you and Ramabehn, the Maharaja, Ranisaheba, etc., will go. And I am sure a few other individual reformers also will go to it. It will be good if the Harijans are allowed the use of even one temple. If the reason you have given is the only one, I would request you to throw open one very popular temple even at a great risk. It seems from your letter that in Bhavnagar itself there are about four temples under State control. Even the sanatanists should not object to the Harijans being permitted to go to one of them. I hope you got my previous letter.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5927. Also C.W. 3243. Courtesy: Mahesh P. Pattani

[1] *Vide* "This Fight Is Necessary", 1-4-1933.

165. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

March 23, 1933

CHI. BRAJKISAN,

Your letter. Of course you have my blessings on your birthday. God will grant you non-attachment and equanimity. My companions too join in my good wishes. Give our regards to all the friends there. That you have the company of such friends is good fortune for both of you.[1] Radha is keeping indifferent health. Kusum's condition too is not good. We are all well. Jamnalalji is keeping fit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2399

166. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

March 23, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. The letter I wrote to you ought to reach you. You must not lose hope. Whatever He wills will happen. You should take the treatment and then keep silent. I have written a long letter to Dr. Sharma regarding his going to the Ashram,[2] which should reach him. Your letter was enclosed with that. You must have heard of Lakshmi's marriage. She has gone away to Bardoli.

Many Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 280

[1] The addressee was at this time in the Multan Jail from where he was released in early May.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Hiralal Sharma", 14-3-1933.

167. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

[On or after *March 23, 1933*][1]

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I got both your letters. I hope you received the telegram I sent yesterday about the temple. It will be a fine step if you succeed about it. You are also perfectly right in what you say about receiving an order from me. One should not wait for my views every time. I have even made an earnest appeal to Pattaniji to throw open one temple at Bhavnagar. We should get as many temples opened at as many places as we can. It will of course be excellent if some people build new temples which are open to all and if sanatanists also help in doing so.

You write nothing about your health. You ought to write something.I follow what you say regarding the elders. Who can explain to them that they should now live on fruit juice, that that will keep their bodies free from impurities and their minds calm and that they do not require any other food for energy? This is, however, not for them, but only for you, so that you should know from now what you should do when you become old. If God puts me in a similar condition and I am not willing to stop eating altogether, may He grant that I wish and have the strength to live only on fruit juice. I have no doubt that when most of the organs of the body begin to fail, air and water are the only food. All this, however, is in the lap of the future.

I am returning your draft herewith.

BAPU

[PS.]

I enclose with this letters[2] for Sushila and Bhau. I have not received Jethalal's letter regarding Harijan work.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9625

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's appeal to throw open a temple to Harijans; *vide* "Letter to Prabhashankar Pattani", 23-3-1933.

[2] These are not traceable.

168. LETTER TO N.

March 23/24, 1933

MY DEAR N.,

I had your two letters. I like them. The poetic touch about one of them was quite in its place.[1] I hope you got my telegram[2] which I sent immediately I finished reading your letters approving of the idea of going to a village and living amongst its Harijans. If it is well thought out, it is an excellent plan. But there should be no hurry or hysteria about a single step which you may now take. Until Truth has become natural to you, life will certainly appear hard and you will experience what may appear to be disappointments. There is no such thing as disappointment when one is filled with Truth. It then simply shines through one and lights the whole life.

You must tell me more about Rudramani. There should be no guide for you but God, the Truth. I do not want you to be under any more spells. You may be thankful for such service as is rendered to you and is legitimate for you to accept, and mostly it can only be the food that you may need and the other necessaries of life. A servant has no further wants, and especially a servant of Harijans. I can imagine nothing nobler or more inspiring than this service. It carries with it complete satisfaction.

You will find a note for S.[3] with this. It was good that you made him write those few lines, and it was good that you used the balance of the money left in the way you have described. The description made my eyes wet.

Yours sincerely,

[PS.]

I have your very good letter today. The foregoing was dictated yesterday. May Truth surround you and fill you.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 20689

[1] In a letter dated March 21 the addressee had said, ". . . I shall follow through any trials the way you point out. There is no "guru" on the face of the earth or in the heavens—nothing for me now but Truth, which is the vast beautiful cosmos.

[2] *ibid*

[3] The name has been omitted.

169. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

March 24, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter came in yesterday. It is now 3.15 morning.

I am glad you are free from constipation. You won't feel the heat at all if you will continuously keep the wet cloth on the head. It cools the whole system. I do not know how they bring your milk. If it is strained as soon as it is milked or if it is bottled immediately and well corked and wrapped in a wet cloth, it should keep for many hours and drunk cold and unfired. I have given up fired milk altogether without any ill consequence. I get all the vitamins and perhaps only one pound that I take gives me more strength than more of boiled milk will. I am still on milk and paupau and oranges and dates. Oranges I take only once. This appears to be quite enough, perhaps more than enough. But what I want to tell you is that if you can manage unfired milk you will suffer less from the heat. The milk must be kept in as airtight a bottle as possible and the latter put in a wet cloth. The wet cloth keeps it ice-cold. You may strain it through a cloth before you. The cloth should be washed well immediately after use and so should the bottle. If that is done, I should feel quite at ease even though you may take your milk unfired. I think I have made my instructions quite clear. If you do not like the change and are otherwise feeling quite well, you need not make the change.

My weight stands at 104 lb. I do wonder. Though I try to live without attachment[1], I have no doubt that there are things that unconsciously affect me. You know my great regard for . . .[2]. He has been my greatest *brahmachari* in the Ashram and the most truthful boy. You have also known what might even be called my partiality for . . .[3]. Well, both have been found making love to one another and trading on my faith in them. They have even been contemplating marriage. . . .'s[4] letters have come into my hands. I had hopes of making . . . a proper Harijan girl. But now I do not know what will happen to . . . and . . . . I am making an effort to patch up the broken vessels. But I do not know how far I shall succeed or how far they will

[1] The source has "detachment", evidently a slip.
[2] The names have been omitted.
[3] *ibid*
[4] *ibid*

help. But all this is the language not of detachment but of attachment. I know the language of detachment, I am not practising the art. Hence it would be untruthful to use the language. I cannot dismiss these two lightly from my mind. I hope to do so in time. The immediate work in front of me does not permit me to brood over their sin. But because I have written to you, I see quite clearly how I stand myself. You are not going to worry over this. I am quite all right in spite of the tempest. God keeps me. I have laid bare the struggle going on within. But it is momentary. Truth will stand even if the Ashram is reduced to ashes and all my idols are broken to pieces. . .[1] has been grand. And who knows that this discovery will not lead to a greater cleansing all round. Therefore you are not to grieve but to rejoice. Here at 4.15 the prayer began. This is after prayer and hot water and honey 4.45. Princess Aristarchi continues to send her weekly letters full of love for *Harijan*. She is fasting and praying and saving for the cause. If you will like to have more of the cards she has been sending, I would gladly send them. She sends you her love and so does Madeleine Rolland. The Rishi[2] seems to be keeping fair in spite of the rigours of the winter and the collapse of order and democracy in Germany, They of course send their love to you. And for that matter all who write from Europe. But you know how indifferent I am about sending you these messages. Tell Ba I may not write to her every week.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 9672. Courtesy: Mirabehn

170. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

March 24, 1933

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letter. The *Harijan* will go to Malcolm MacDonald as desired by you. Agatha has sent some more names. It will go to them also. I am glad the lettering for *Harijan* was liked so much.

I have not quite understood the suggestion about Banarsidas. Of course he is a capital worker and an equally capital Hindi writer. His whole soul is also in such work. But what special work can be taken

[1] The names have been omitted.

[2] The reference is to Romain Rolland.

from him? There is a Hindi edition of the *Harijan* issued in Delhi under the direct supervision of Ghanshyamdas and Amritlal Thakkar. There is also a Bengali edition, a Tamil edition and a Gujarati edition. Gurudev is co-operating. I had a very fine letter[1] from him only this week and a poem[2] being his own translation of a Bengali poem of his. Do you suggest anything else or anything more?

We are all keeping fairly well and fit and putting in as much work as is possible to put in.

Love from us all.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 982

171. LETTER TO PRINCESS EFY ARISTARCHI

March 24, 1933

Your letters are all touching. I do value your selfless love and your heart-felt prayers, and I have not a shadow of a doubt that the prayers of the pure are always answered. You are therefore absolutely correct in saying that you have to develop all possible purity in order to have your prayers for the Harijans answered. You will not therefore apologize for your long letters. They are not too long for me. If they reach me when I am too busy, I glance through the contents and then leave them aside to be read fully on finding a little leisure.

I am glad you like the *Harijan*. If you want any complimentary copies to be sent to anybody, please do not hesitate.

I hear weekly from Mira. I send your love to her and she sends hers to you. But I am a very indifferent carrier of such love messages. I expect friends to take these for granted.

PRINCESS ARISTARCHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 20698

[1] For the text of the letter, *vide* ''This Fight Is Necessary", 1-4-1933.

[2] Published in *Harijan*, 25-3-1933, under the title "The Sacred Touch"

172. LETTER TO DR. HARRY J. EHRLICH

March 24, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. The name of one book is *Keener Vision Without Glasses* by Benjamin Gayelord Hauser, and the address is Tempo Books Inc., 580, Fifth Avenue, New York.

Yours sincerely,

DR. HARRY J. EHRLICH
84 CHURCH ST.
NEW BRUNSWICK, N. J.

From a microfilm: S.N. 20700

173. LETTER TO R. B. GREGG

March 24, 1933

MY DEAR GOVIND,

I have your letter and I had the book[1] also. I am at the book now. I do want to give a trial to the method, and I would rejoice if I can throw away the spectacles I have used for years. Kakasaheb is here. He never gave the method a real trial, but he may do so now.

I hope you are regularly getting your copy of the *Harijan*. I want you and Radha[2] to read it critically and give me your suggestions.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GOVIND
543 BOYLSTON ST.
BOSTON, MASS., U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N. 20699

[1] *Keener Vision Without Glasses* by Benjamin Gayelord Hauser
[2] Addressee's wife

174. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

March 24, 1933

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your long letter after some waiting. The account of your meeting is very interesting. It was impossible that with all the earnestness and force you could put into your words you could fail to be effective.

The Cross undoubtedly makes a universal appeal the moment you give it a universal meaning in place of the narrow one that is often heard at ordinary meetings. But then, as you put it, you have to have the eyes of the soul with which to contemplate it.

I am glad you are mothering the Muslim girl from Hyderabad. You must tell me more of her when you have known her more.

I never knew that people out there ever carried loads on their heads. Is what you saw the usual practice in your part of England? What could be the weight, and what are the receptacles made of in which the load is carried ? What is the distance that is covered? Is it the ordinary house-refuse that they contain ?

I hope Hans[1] has found an answer to his prayer.

Maria wrote to me the other day and I saw how glad she was that you were at last coming. She is weary with fatigue, both in body and mind. She is almost on the verge of breaking, and I am anxious that, whilst she is still fit, she should run away to Kashmir and give her body and mind rest for a few months. She needs it desperately.

Love from us all and kisses to the children.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 121. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also S.N. 20697

[1] A German boy living with the Menons at Selly Oak

175. LETTER TO N.

March 24, 1933

MY DEAR N.,

It is not enough that you will strive. It is necessary that you have the strength. Striving is enough for God. But the promise is that real striving generates always enough strength. Therefore I shall judge you in accordance with the actual result you show. Have I made myself clear? You have a fearful struggle in front of you to overcome the wretched past. But if truth really possesses you, there is nothing to fear. Light dispels the deepest darkness. Truth conquers the blackest sin which may be otherwise rendered as untruth. I want you therefore to be on the watch-tower.

Yours sincerely,

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

176. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA

March 24, 1933

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRA,

I have your letter. There need be no feverish anxiety about the publication of N.'s statement. As you will see from the letter[1] enclosed herewith I have asked her to let me have a copy; if you have it, you may let me have a copy. I telegraphed to her on Wednesday on the strength of her letter that she might go to a Harijan village. After all, that is her destination, and if she can go there now, so much the better. I have asked her, but you will also tell me what will happen to her post when she goes to a village.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20696 a

[1] This is not traceable.

177. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

March 24, 1933

MY DEAR MARGARETE,

Your letters continue to come with clock-work regularity. Of course you are not going to be upset if you are turned out as a Jewess. I shall be now eagerly waiting for your letters to know your fate.

If you will have it so, you can take the palm for economy, though you must remember the old proverb that "One swallow does not make a summer", and for that reason your summary dismissal of the question of food does not mean that the solution is as easy as you fancy it is for you. Whilst it need not be given undue importance, it is a gross error to think that food has nothing to do with a person's moral or even physical growth. The experience of the sages of the world shows that they have given importance, some more and some less, to it, and the majority have admitted that a bloodless diet is necessary for full spiritual enlightenment.

You need not worry over the poor comprehension that your girls have shown of ahimsa.[1] I do not wonder. There is no response to ahimsa from the atmosphere. They have never been taught to attach the slightest value to it, and probably they have been taught to despise it. You can not expect them all of a sudden to understand the value of ahimsa in an atmosphere so hostile as yours.

Mahadev has been receiving your letters and he has got your booklet too. As I have heard of *Parsifal* and as it was quite a booklet I read it during odd moments in two days and I liked it very much.

Yes, Mr. Kodanda Rao also got your letter.

Yours sincerely,

Spiegel Papers: Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also S.N. 20701

[1] The addressee had said, "For two months I have been studying your works with my girls: a German school edition, excerpts from *Young India* . . . The result is miserable. Out of 20 girls, I have not converted a single one to ahimsa."

178. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

March 24, 1933

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I have just read your article about ahimsa. Your ideas are good as far as they go. But the article is not worth printing. You should go still deeper into the subject. Ahimsa does not seem to me to be a simple thing to write about. Instead of trying to write an article about it, it would be better to describe the thoughts which arise and the difficulties which are experienced while putting the principle into practice. Your statement that as an ethical principle ahimsa is universally accepted is also not true, though to a certain extent it is so accepted. Many people regard it as dharma to kill deadly animals or creatures. Others regard the killing of sinful men as dharma.

Of course there would be nothing wrong in your frequently writing such articles in order to clarify your own thoughts to yourself.

How are you now?

I am returning the article.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 6078. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

179. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

March 24, 1933

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I got your long and beautiful letter. Who wrote it for you? Stay there as long as you think it necessary and solve the problems.

Why does Ramibehn[1] carry a burden on her mind? Has she forgotten her study of Sanskrit and the *Gita*?

Do not spoil Mahavir and Krishnamaiyadevi. The latter must do some work. And Mahavir should keep an account of every pie. Do not let him become a beggar. He must make some return. He will be happier if he learns to face difficulties. He should not use the name of the Ashram anywhere. By all means give him whatever help you can

[1] Ramibehn Kamdar, addressee's sister

in finding a job.

We cannot meet, but you may write to me and ask any question which you may wish to.

For what was Mirabehn criticizing Ba? The latter is full of faults, no doubt, but her devotion is immeasurable. There can be no doubt that Ba is covering herself with glory. Her faults are overshadowed by her firmness of mind.

I did get the list of simple books which you read. I am now waiting for your account of your reflections.

Kaka and I meet every day. He keeps good health. At present he lives only on milk and fruit. By milk I mean curds.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8799. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

180. NOTES

WILL NOT TEMPLES BE DESERTED?

An M.A.,LL.B. enquires:

> If temple-entry is allowed to Harijans, it is highly likely that the caste Hindus and the priests will desert them. In that event, of what avail would the right of temple-entry be?

My only answer to this question should be that the correspondent evidently does not follow the movement but has simply condemned it, as his question implies and as I know from his long letter from which I have taken the question. But such an answer will not be sufficient for the cause.

Let the correspondent and those who think like him understand that the contingency that they contemplate can never happen, because the movement is not designed to force entry into any single temple, whether by law or otherwise. The assistance of the Legislature is being sought in order to make it possible to throw open temples where public opinion is ripe. It is impossible today even where public opinion unanimously desires it. When, therefore, caste Hindus, as also the priests, desire the entry of Harijans into particular temples side by side with them, there can be no question whatsoever of the temples being deserted. When the temple-entry of Harijans is permitted under

these voluntary conditions, the temples would be all the purer for their admission, as is the case with numerous private temples which have been opened and which have not been deserted either by the priests or the caste Hindus.

WOMEN WORKERS IN CUTTACK

Shrimati Rama Devi[1] of Cuttack sends me a letter in Hindi, giving an account of the work being done by the women of Cuttack amongst Harijans. I give a translation of portions of the letter:

> Since October I have been working amongst Harijans, with seven other sisters. We confine our attention to Cuttack only. We are all volunteers, working under the direction of the Anti-untou-chability Board. The only pecuniary assistance we receive is in the shape of books and medicine from the Municipality. The stock of medicine is supplemented by local *Kavirajs*. We have distributed ourselves in four *bastis* of Bhangis, allotting two workers to each. We give instructions in the three R's to the girls, teach them *bhajans* and read to them simple religious books. We distribute medicines amongst the ailing inhabitants, clean their quarters, report their special difficulties to the Committee, and we put before the womenfolk the desirability of refraining from eating beef or carrion. They were afraid of us when we first approached them. They had no faith in what we said to them and would not even listen. Slowly they shed their fear of us and now they do listen to us to some extent. We hope to get other volunteers amongst the women of Cuttack. Some girls have already begun work with us.

I congratulate these sisters of Cuttack on their devotion to the cause of the much-desired reform. Women are special custodians of all that is pure and religious in life. Conservative by nature, if they are slow to shed superstitious habits, they are also slow to give up all that is pure and noble in life. In this struggle for religious reform, therefore, the women of India may be expected to take a leading part. I hope, therefore, that the example of the women of Cuttack will prove infectious and that the work begun by Shrimati Rama Devi and her companions will be continued in spite of the difficulties and disappointments that they might have to face.

[1] Rama Devi Choudhry. *Vide* also "Letter to Rama Devi Choudhry", 4-4-1933.

WHAT MORE CAN I DO?

A correspondent from the South writes:

> I and my friend bought Khadi worth Rs. 20 and distributed it amongst Harijan brethren. I presided at a meeting advocating removal of untouchability and I am proud to be able to say that my friends are taking steps in the direction. What more can I do?

This is a curious question. But I have not taken it literally. The writer, I am sure, does not mean to convey that he is fully satisfied with what he has done. But whether he is or not, in my opinion no one can afford, in this big campaign, to be satisfied with giving a little of his substance and occasionally presiding at meetings, assuming, of course, that he or she has much more time at their disposal. When the spirit of reform seizes one, hundreds of things will press upon one's attention. It is not, however, for me to say what a particular person should do. He must take up the whole programme of the Servants of Untouchables Society and do all those things which it may be possible for him to do, consistently with his other obligations. The programme of the Society is merely illustrative, by no means exhaustive; therefore, it is open to anyone to supplement it, so as to meet with any peculiar circumstances that may be prevalent in his own locality.

FROM EUROPE

The reader will be glad to share the following with me from a letter[1] from a friend in Europe.

Harijan, 25-3-1933

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had said, ''You are perfectly right to have reminded me of the useless expenses in cabling to you", and had gone on to say that it would not happen again. He had also said that he had begun to save up for the Harijans.

181 . THE MUCH-MALIGNED BRAHMIN

A Bengali Professor[1] writes a long letter from which I take the following extracts:

> You will be distressed to learn that the anti-untouchability movement in certain parts of the country has degenerated into a vile and violent propaganda against Brahminism and all that it stands for. Misleading half-truths and deliberate untruths are being assiduously circulated in order to lower the Brahmins as a class in the estimation of the general public. Is the practice of untouchability confined exclusively to the Brahmins? Are not the other caste Hindus equally guilty? Even admitting that the Shastras were made by the Brahmins, where is the proof that the Shastras enjoin a rabid type of untouchability as is practised today in certain parts of India?
>
> Is it not a fact that the Brahmins have made a very substantial contribution towards the success of the present anti-untouchability movement? Is it not, again, true that the majority of those of our worthy M.L.A.s who have adopted an obstructionist attitude towards the Temple-entry Bill happen to be other than Brahmins ? Why, then, this tirade against the Brahmins, who perhaps realize more than anybody else the gravity of the situation created by the scourge of untouchability?

Except for the writings in the papers and periodicals representing the anti-Brahmin movement which has been going on in the country for some years and which was inaugurated long before the campaign against untouchability was, I have not seen any attack, violent or otherwise, upon Brahminism. Certainly the Servants of Untouchables Society has had nothing to do with any such attack, and the writer is quite right in saying that I would be distressed if I learnt that the anti-untouchability movement had degenerated into a vile and violent propaganda against Brahminism. I have, therefore, asked the correspondent to furnish me with the evidence that may be in his possession to prove the serious statement he has made. The letter enables me, however, to reiterate my own opinion of Brahminism and Brahmins.

I believe Brahminism to be unadulterated wisdom leading one to the realization of Brahman, that is God. If I did not hold that view, I should no longer call myself a Hindu. Brahmins, however, like all the

[1] R. R. Chakravarti.

other members of the human family, are not all true representatives of Brahminism. But I have to believe that, of all the classes in the world, the Brahmin will show the largest percentage of those who have given up their all in search of knowledge, that is Truth. I know of no system other than Hinduism under which a class has been set apart from generation to generation for the exclusive pursuit of divine knowledge and consigned to voluntary poverty. That Brahmins could not keep up the high standard that they had imposed upon themselves is no special fault of theirs. Their imperfection merely proves that they were as fallible as the rest of mankind, and so corruption crept into the so-called sacred books, and we have the spectacle of the most selfless rules governing Brahmins side by side with the selfish rules also made by them in order to help their breed. But it was the Brahmins who rose against the corruptions and selfish interpolations into the sacred texts. It was they who time and again strove to purge themselves and society of evil. I confess that I have the highest reverence for Brahminism and a sneaking regard for Brahmins and that, in spite of what is to me the sorrowful spectacle of Brahmins so-called making a frantic effort against the reform movement and lending their undoubted ability to the opposition, I am consoled, and let every unbiased Hindu be consoled, by the fact that the reform movement, too, is being led by those who are born Brahmins but who today take no pride in their birth. If a census was taken of all the workers against untouchability, I think it will be found that the majority of workers who are devoted to the cause without any remuneration or with only just enough to keep body and soul together are Brahmins. But I admit that Brahmins as a class have suffered degradation. If they had not, if they had lived up to their profession, Hinduism would not be in the degraded state in which it is. It would be a contradiction in terms to suggest that Hinduism is what it is in spite of the correct life of the Brahmins. That could not be, because the Brahmins themselves have taught us to believe that they are the true custodians of the divine wisdom and that, where there is divine wisdom, there is no fear, there is no grinding pauperism, there is no high and low state, there is no greed, jealousy, war, plunder and the like. Because Brahminism went down, it drew down with it all the other classes of Hindus, and I have not a shadow of doubt in my mind that, if Brahminism does not revive, Hinduism must perish, and for me the infallible test of the revival of Brahminism, that is, Hinduism, is the root-and-branch removal of untouchability. The more I study the Hindu scriptures and the more I

discuss them with all kinds of Brahmins, the more I feel convinced that untouchability is the greatest blot upon Hinduism. This conviction is amply supported by many learned Brahmins who have no axes to grind, who are devoted to the pursuit of truth and who receive nothing, not even thanks for their opinion. But today Brahmins and Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras are mere labels. There is utter confusion of varna as I understand it and as I have explained it in these columns, and I wish that all the Hindus will voluntarily call themselves Shudras. That is the only way to demonstrate the truth of Brahminism and to revive varnadharma in its true state. Because all Hindus may be classed as Shudras, wisdom and power and wealth will not disappear, but they will be all used for the service of not a sectional religion but the service of Truth and humanity. Anyway, in battling against untouchability and in dedicating myself to that battle, I have no less an ambition than to see a complete regeneration of humanity. It may be a mere dream, as unreal as the silver in the sea-shell. It is not so to me while the dream lasts, and in the words of Romain Rolland, ''Victory lies not in realization of the goal but in a relentless pursuit after it."

Harijan, 25-3- 1933

182. IDEAL HARIJAN TEACHER

The question is being asked as to what I expect of a teacher of Harijans. I admit that my test is exacting, but it will be found also that it is none too exacting for a willing worker. Moreover, my test is the only real test, if it is granted that this movement has a purely religious motive behind it. I may also add that I tried the experiment with complete success, while it lasted, in Champaran years ago.[1] It could not be continued, because my stay in Champaran proved to be brief, and the volunteers who had offered their services had undertaken merely to give a start, the idea being to raise local teachers of the type contemplated.

Let me briefly describe the teachers and the experiment.

The teachers were Avantikabai Gokhale, Anandibai Vaishampayan, Kasturbai Gandhi, Manibehn Parikh, Dharanidharbabu, Narahari Parikh, Babasaheb Soman, Chhotelal Jain and Devdas Gandhi.

[1] *Vide* a "An Autobiography—Part V, Chapter XVII".

These were all, of course, responsible men and women, some of them pleaders and graduates. None of them were trained teachers. The majority had no knowledge of Hindi except that they could, with more or less difficulty, make themselves understood. Kasturbai Gandhi was illiterate but was in no way behindhand to other teachers. These were spread out in four or five villages. I forget the exact number for the moment. They were to start with the children but finish with the men and women. A knowledge of the three R's was only one of the items. They had to look after their health and their character. They were not to use corporal punishment on any account whatsoever. Work was to be like play. The children—boys and girls—were on no account to be tired out. The first business of the teacher was to examine the appearance of each boy and girl—their eyes, ears, teeth, hair, nails, etc., and clean them, wherever necessary, and teach the boys to keep themselves clean, to see to it that the children behaved properly towards one another and that they did not use foul language.

Let me say in parenthesis that the non-Hindi teachers learnt their Hindi from the children. They were otherwise so raw that the teachers could merely see that the children traced the alphabet correctly and count the numerals in proper sequence. The central fact was to create round the school an atmosphere of culture.

The teachers were given no domestic servants. They had to do their own cooking, washing, etc. Where there were no buildings, they were to help building bamboo huts. In every case, clean, open spaces and, in my opinion, the simple art of the rustic were insisted upon. Paraffin tin shanties or dungheap surroundings were religiously shunned. In one instance we were able to secure the site of a temple. In every case the school became the pride of the villagers and a centre of culture.

But it had also to radiate its direct influence upon the grownup men and women. They received medical aid and therethrough also object-lessons in cleanliness, etc. The teachers' living quarters, which were adjacent to the school, or where both house and school combined, were to be the dispensary of the village and contained stock of quinine, an opening medicine, and an ointment with dressings. They were to confine their attention to constipation, malaria and simple ulcers. The dispensaries were organized under the late lamented Dr. Dev of the Servants of India Society who personally

supervised this department of relief and attended to all serious cases. He penetrated the homes of the villagers and transformed little Bhitiharva in a few weeks' time from a dung-and-mud-sodden village into a clean-looking cluster of hamlets with the willing assistance of the villagers, and if I remember rightly, without the cost of a single pice. Dr. Dev was not a mere overseer of works. He was himself the leading labourer working with the spade and the shovel.

What Dr. Dev himself did in Bhitiharva the teachers did with more or less success in the other villages. The village roads and wells were cleaned. Inroads were made into the huts with the willing consent of the dwellers. Their little yards were cleaned for them in the first instance. The teachers had to become one with the villagers, share their troubles and sorrows and point to them the way to health and happiness in that malaria-and-superstition-ridden, unknown part of India, once the land of Janak and Sita. It was in remote Bhitiharva that Kasturbai made the discovery that several women had no wardrobe but the one ragged sari on their persons. When one of the poor but dignified ladies was gently advised to bathe daily, she hotly replied," Come into my room, see if I have a change of sari and then give me your advice. You don't expect a lady to bathe naked, do you?" There was nothing more to be said. When I heard the tragic story, I could but drop a silent tear in shame and sorrow.

I need hardly carry the description any further. The would-be teacher of Harijans can easily fill in the details.

That was my very first experiment in village schools, as it was my first living experience of Indian villages. Fifteen years have rolled by since. My experience has widened considerably. During these years I have seen hundreds of villages. I fancy I understand their wants much better than I did in 1917. To my ideal school for Harijans, therefore, I would add handicrafts, and most certainly begin with spinning and other cotton processes. I would add night schools for both the grown-ups and the children. I would entertain no high hopes of success. I would not even attempt to carry things by storm. I would, on the other hand, approach my work in due humility and infinite faith in my mission. I would let the children and the parents dominate me before I dream of dominating them. I would seek to qualify myself as their servant by right of love, in the fullest confidence that in the end I would dominate not them but their hearts. I have already outlined this scheme before two co-workers, one a High

Court pleader and the other a very well-educated sister. Each wanted to know how they could take up immediate service. And I gave them each a fair half hour inviting them to be the ideal teacher. I now present the invitation to every servant of Harijan who is in need of work. I offer no pay. But I undertake to find villages for those who cannot. Everyone has to pay his or her own expenses and if he or she is too poor, he or she has to beg enough from his or her friends. The teacher has to live like a Harijan. Therefore, not much expense is needed. The school building will be any verandah or open space that might be offered by the Harijans. ‘‘Where there’s the will there’s the way.”

Harijan, 25-3-1933

183. AUNDH STATE AND UNTOUCHABILITY

I had requested Pandit Satavlekar, the well-known Vedic scholar of Aundh, to acquaint me with facts about the anti-untouchability movement in the Auadh State, as I had seen reports about it in the Press. His letter traces the progress of the movement during the last ten years and recounts the difficulties in the way of the reformer. I give below a condensed rendering of his Hindi letters:

> There are 72 villages in the State. The Chief is a Brahmin of advanced views and wants untouchability to go. Ten years ago, he invited the so-called untouchables in the State to fulfil the following three conditions, in order to enable him to declare them on a level with other Hindus and entitled to temple-entry:
>
> 1. giving up of carrion,
> 2. giving up eating leavings of food,
> 3. daily bath.

These simple conditions were proclaimed in all the villages. The response was not encouraging. This was in effect the reply received from every one of the villages:

(1) It is impossible for us to give up carrion as we get it free. We can think of giving up carrion if we are given clean meat in lieu of it.

(2) We would fain give up leavings of food. Give us clean food instead.

(3) There is not enough water for bathing and washing.

(4) We are indifferent as regards temple-entry.

The matter was allowed to rest there. Then came Sjt. V. R. Shinde, the great abolitionist, who visited them in their homes and appealed to them to avail themselves of the Chief's offer. He also asked them to abolish untouchability amongst themselves. This appeal, too, fell on deaf ears.

After this I started a village sanitation programme. We went out every morning singing *prabhat pheris* and offering to clean the courtyards and surroundings of houses of which the tenants were indifferent. The results were somewhat encouraging. We offered soap and other washing facilities to those who were doing scavenging. But they said it was too much to expect them to keep clean, when they had to earn their living from an unclean occupation.

This was followed up by propaganda in the shape of *bhajans, kathas,* and special fairs. Classes were held to familiarize the Harijans with religious books. Schools with two teachers—an untouchable and a touchable—were started to induce them to learn the three R's. No grown-ups came forward, but youngsters did come and are still coming to these schools.

Here is an account of the present state of things:

The State schools are open to all, and they are being availed of by Harijan children. Harijans may visit temples after a bath, and they are doing so.

In October last, a Health Day was held, volunteers were posted in every Harijan quarter and the Chief was good enough to announce prizes to those whose houses and surroundings were found to pass the test of cleanliness. One month's intensive work before the Day was enough to do the trick. Every street and every Harijan quarter was a model of cleanliness. In fact, some Harijan houses in Aundh looked cleaner than Brahmin houses. His Highness, with the Ranisaheba, made a point of visiting every quarter and in Aundh alone, 105 prizes were awarded, half of them being won by the Harijans. The Ranisaheba went into every Harijan house, made inquiries about their appointments and needs, and the Harijan women honoured her with marking with their own hands her forehead with the auspicious kumkum mark.

This led to a general awakening throughout the State. On October 26th a meeting was held in the Bhawani temple for distribution of prizes. It was attended by numerous untouchables.

Harijans have free access to the palace, and the Ranisaheba and her daughters often attend Harijan weddings. The Chief has allowed a Harijan Chamar to open his shop in a highcaste quarter. On the auspicious Makarsankranti day—14th of January—the Ranisaheba invited Harijan women to the palace and distributed Sankranti gifts to them. A Harijan *kathakar* gave a discourse in a famous temple and a number of caste Hindus attended it.

I may, therefore, say that, so far as the State is concerned, there is in Aundh State no recognition of untouchability. But neither the caste Hindus nor the Harijans have reaped the full benefit of this. I shall illustrate what I say. The opponents of reform are more non-Brahmins than Brahmins. Temples visited by the Harijans are boycotted for the most part by non-Brahmins. In my own press there are six Harijan workers. The Mahar among these regards himself as superior to the five Mangs. When they sit down to feed in my house, they decline to sit in the same row.

In towns untouchability is going, but villages do still seem to be a difficult proposition. In this connection, I must advert to carrion-eating once again. It has led to most unfortunate results. It seems to stand like a dead wall between Harijans and caste Hindus and has often led to quarrels, and it may lead to bloody feuds. The reason is that the Harijans do not scruple to poison cows and buffaloes and bullocks to the consternation of the poor agriculturist, who feel that association with these cow-killers is unthinkable. There were no fewer than 124 cases of cattle-poisoning in the course of four months during the last year and special provision had to be made in the Law to prevent such crime.

I would request you to guide us with suggestions for future work.

This is an instructive and truthful account of the campaign against untouchability in the Aundh State. Pandit Satavlekar is an old silent reformer of unremitting zeal. He is a great Sanskrit scholar and has dedicated himself to the spread of the mission of the Vedas. Aundh has a liberal-minded Chief who, with the Ranisaheba, deserves congratulations for abolishing untouchability from his State. Notwithstanding the existence of favourable circumstances, in Aundh, the progress of reform has been slow. For progress is lame and taxes the reformer's patience. Pandit Satavlekar has asked for suggestions. The work has been so thorough that I can only say, 'Continue without

losing faith and success is a certainty.'

I must confess that I have no anger against the Harijans who poison cattle. We are reaping as we have sown. We dare not neglect a single limb of society without the whole of it suffering. We have wholly misinterpreted the great law of karma and virtually consigned the Harijans to their own fate. We have forced them to labour for us on utterly inadequate remuneration and never cared to know how they have lived and fared. The wonder is that they are not much worse than they have been described.

I have suggested the only infallible method of weaning them from carrion-eating. All dead cattle should be declared State property and the cattle should be treated under the supervision of reliable officers, and proper remuneration should be given to the Harijans who may be willing to skin the carcasses and dispose of the several parts thereof as they may be directed. Here there can be no quarrel, no cattle-poisoning and no carrion-eating. All the proceeds from the disposal of the skin and other parts of carcasses should be earmarked for the benefit of Harijans, thus freeing the State from suspicion of exploitation.

For further guidance on this matter, I suggest a careful perusal of my article on "Disposal of Carcasses"[1] in last week's *Harijan*.

Harijan, 25-3-1933

184. CABLE TO GEORGE LANSBURY

March 25, 1933

RT. HON. LANSBURY
BOW, LONDON

MY CONDOLENCES.[2]

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3) , Pt. IV, p. 201

[1] *Vide* "Disposal of Carcasses", 12-3-1933.
[2] The addressee had lost his wife.

185. TELEGRAM TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

POONA,
March 25 [*1933*][1]

PRABHUDAS GANDHI
VIJAPUR

GLAD ABOUT SATYAVATI. YOU CAN GO ALMORA.

BAPU

From a copy S.N. 32986

186. LETTER TO BERNARD

March 25, 1933

MY DEAR BERNARD,

I suppose if I subscribed myself 'M. K. Gandhi' it must have been in awe of your impending practice as a lawyer.[2] As long as you remain a spinner and weaver, bottle-washer and doorkeeper, I could afford to be 'Bapu', but to a practising lawyer in his gown, it becomes a different proposition. I am glad that at least your luck, if not that of all the lawyers, depends upon the good luck of the producers. You are welcome to a reasonable share of their produce for encouraging quarrels between them and then professing to adjust them. It is any day better that you should thrive on their quarrels than that you should thrive on their quarrels plus poverty.

You give me bad news about Florence[3]. That accounts for her complete silence. So you have failed in your first examination as husband. Let's hope you will do better next time and not grudge poor Florence a mosquito-net.

What tragedy to be killed by bandits! Where was Dr. Vishnu Ram[4] killed and how and what was the cause of the murder?

I am not quite so sure as you are that you will die gladly when your debt is paid. For I am quite sure that when one debt is paid,

[1] From the reference to Satyavati whom Prabhudas was engaged to marry, the year seems to be 1933; *vide* A Letter", 24-6-1932.

[2] The addressee had complained about Gandhiji signing his letter as M. K. Gandhi.

[3] Addressee's wife, who was down with fever at this time

[4] Florence's uncle

another would be hanging over your head for, is not life a perpetual duty? And I am quite sure you would like to live for its proper discharge, unless you develop a fondness for 'fasting unto death', as my critics will point out, like me.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 20706

187. LETTER TO SATYENDRANATH GANGULI

March 25, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. For me God and Truth are one, and of all the names by which we know God, Truth has always appeared to me the most appropriate name to know Him by, and for me selfless service is contemplation and meditation, whereas the so-called meditation may be self-indulgence. For me God is formless and therefore my vision of Him does not consist of any form. I think you will realize the Truth of what I am saying if you read the *Bhagavad Gita* carefully in the light of my remarks and live up to the interpretation I have tried to put before you.

You can hardly ever get pure, fresh olive oil in India. I am told that there are olive trees in Kashmir and that olive oil is pressed there. I have never seen it. The olive oil one generally gets at the chemists'. It is often a year old, never less than six months, and I have ceased to believe that it can be a substitute for milk. You may therefore dismiss olive oil from your mind considered as an independent food. Fresh sweet oil that we can get abundantly in India is, medical men say, a good substitute for olive oil.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SATYENDRANATH GANGULI
P. O. JAMALPUR
MYMENSINGH

From a microfilm: S.N. 20707

188. LETTER TO ABDUR RAHIM

March 25, 1933

DEAR PROFESSOR,

I thank you for your letter of the 14th instant. I entirely agree with you that the proper thing is to abolish all distinction between touchables and untouchables and know them both by the generic name 'Hindu'. But so long as it is necessary to distinguish untouchables from touchables, surely it is better that they are known by an inoffensive name than by an offensive one. An undutiful or unregenerate son might call his mother 'father's wife', but a dutiful regenerate son would respectfully call her 'mother'.

As to over-emphasis on temple-entry, I shall be entirely at one with you. Temple-entry, again, you will not mind agreeing, is necessary for the untouchable if he is to be an integral part of Hindu society and an equal partner with the caste Hindus.

As to your third question, whilst all non-Hindu help would be welcome, surely penance has only to be done by those who have committed the sin. Temple-entry has got to be given by those who have robbed the Harijans of their sacred right, but I would certainly draw the line sharply at the natural religious boundary, but I should summarily put down any political differences or political exploitation. For me this is purely a moral and religious question.

Yours sincerely,

PROF. ABDUR RAHIM
DELTA HOUSE, 77/60 BONDEL ROAD
BALLYGUNJ, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20703

189. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

March 25, 1933

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

I have your several letters, all received today. I shall be interested to know the replies you may get from the various associations in the Punjab. Whatever may have happened in the past, we must not leave alone the Punjab Alienation Act. But the first thing is to have the full text.

As to the disposal of the funds, I propose to carry on the discussion in the *Harijan* before we evolve a definite policy. You will see my article[1] in next Sunday's Gujarati edition, and I hope to write something for the English edition[2] also.

As to Bengal's quarrel with the Yeravda Pact, my own opinion is that Satisbabu was hasty in throwing down the challenge. I have written to him to that effect.[3] His telegram appeared in the *Harijan* inadvertently. Shastri had no time to show it to me, and he used his discretion, as he soon found out, not wisely. But that does not matter. I wrote straightway to Satisbabu and gave him my view. You will have seen my reply[4] to the British Indian Association. I have sent a copy of it to Sjt. Ghanshyamdas. When we are required to give an opinion, there should be no mincing matters, but so long as the opposers do not refer to us, we need not take any notice. The Pact is a solemn agreement and it can never be altered without the consent of all the parties to it.

With reference to your tracts, certainly all of them can be advertised in the *Harijan*. Send a descriptive advertisement.

Enclosed is an interesting letter[5] from Dr. Gopichand.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

Encl. 1

From a photostat: G.N. 1117

190. LETTER TO T. TITUS

March 25, 1933

MY DEAR TITUS[6],

As I am anxious that in the Ashram we should use unfired milk, it is necessary to ensure perfect cleanliness and as little exposure to air as possible. Hence the following questions:

l. Are all our cows free from disease?

[1] *Vide* "Propaganda *v*. Construction", 26-3-1933.
[2] *Vide* "Propaganda *v*. Construction", 1-4-1933.
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta",18-3-1933.
[4] *Vide* "Letter to British Indian Association", 9-3-1933.
[5] This is not available.
[6] Manager of the Ashram dairy

2. Are their teats and udders free of all boils or cracks?

3. Before they are milked, are the udders properly washed with warm water ?

4. Are the hands and arms of the milkman washed thoroughly up to the elbow?

5. Are the utensils thoroughly disinfected?

6. Are the strainers treated likewise?

7. Is the milk returned at once to thoroughly disinfected milk cans with air-tight lids?

8. What are the hours of milking, both in the mornings and in the evenings?

9. Have you a special milking place, such as I saw at the dairy in Bangalore, and if you have, is it a good, well-lighted, airy place ?

10. Is the cow-shed kept in perfectly clean condition?

11. Are you conserving all the dung and urine and using both for manure ?

12. What is the average quantity of milk yielded by each cow per day?

13. What is the total yield per day and how much of it is sold out?

14. Are the calves allowed their share?

15. What is the highest yield of a single cow in the Ashram and the lowest during 24 hours?

From a microfilm: S.N. 20704

191. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 25, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I send with this the letters written by . . .[1] to . . .[2] which have come into my hands. All of them were received in one envelope on the same day. You may read them if you wish. I send them for . . .[3] to read. After he has seen them, send the letters to . . .[4]. I have kept

[1] The names have been omitted.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*
[4] *ibid*

copies with me. I have promised to return the letters to . . . . Only so is it our duty to send them back to him. Otherwise he has no right to them. It is only a question of keeping my promise.

The wound which has been inflicted on me has still not healed, but I do not brood over the matter either. I cannot think much about anything just now except the work for the removal of untouchability. It helps me to forget all my sorrows. But whenever I have to think about . . .' s conduct, the wound revives and reminds me that it has not healed.

Though . . . wrote such letters, he says that he did not wish to marry . . . , but only wanted to cure her of the desire to marry him. He admits that the evidence of the letters proves the contrary but says that he will prove his statement by his future conduct. I have lost my trust in him, however, and that is what pains me most.

I have now told . . . that he should return to the Ashram as soon as his health has improved and in future scrupulously observe all the rules of the Ashram. I have also told him that he should stop enjoying whatever freedom he enjoyed till now, and that he should excel all the others in observing the rules. He has unreservedly promised to do all this. If he does not keep his word, he cannot continue to live in the Ashram. I know that you can keep a strict watch in such matters. Do so. Give him whatever work you like. He should always have his meals in the common kitchen and should have no relations with any girl.

This is my personal view. . . . has proved by his conduct that he is not fit to live in the Ashram. But he will not reform outside the Ashram nor can we know whether he has reformed. I do believe that we should give him the opportunity which he desires. But it is possible that all of you there hold a different view. I think it is our duty to respect . . .[1]'s wishes in this matter. If he feels that there is a risk in letting . . . remain in the Ashram, the latter certainly cannot remain. I would not at all be pained if he thought so. But even if he agrees with me, do consult the Committee and, if all of you feel that my view is morally correct, let . . . remain. I have had a frank talk with . . .[2] and he has promised that he will take . . . with him and return to the Ashram. Even if she falls ill there, he will not take her anywhere else. He believes that we should be content with whatever treatment is possible in the Ashram. It goes without saying that I fully agree with

[1] The names have been omitted.
[2] *ibid*

this view. That is the only course which is in keeping with our vow of poverty. . . .[1] will, therefore, have my fullest support. But this means that both . . . and . . . will live in the Ashram. . . .[2] has no objection to that. I also see no danger. I don't think . . . will make a mistake again. And, moreover, everybody will be vigilant now.

Let all the boys and girls learn a lesson from this episode, and the grown-ups too. If any of them has impure feßelings towards another or if any two have secret relations, they should confess to you orally or in a letter. We respect the privacy of everybody's correspondence. But I think it absolutely essential for the ideal of the Ashram that nobody should have secret relations with anybody. It has been my experience over many years that such relations militate against purity of character. I hope you have shown all my letters on those subject to . . .[3]. Other senior inmates also may read them.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8341. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

192. NOTES

UNTOUCHABILITY AMONG SWAMINARAYANS AND JAINS

A gentleman writes.[4]

I did not know this. I had always believed from my childhood that there was no untouchability at all among the Swaminarayans because the Gandhi family has had a very close relations with the follo-wers of this sect for many years past. But I have been able to read very little literature of that sect. From the books on Jainism and my Jain friends, I have come to know that there should not be an inkling of untouchability among the Jains. But the Jains also are very much influenced by untouchability. The Poet Rajchandra often used to say that Jainism had spread mainly among the Vaniks, so the Jains who should have the highest courage were filled with cowardice and

[1] The names have been omitted

[2] *ibid*

[3] *ibid*

[4] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had said that cobblers, generally considered untouchables, had been accepted by a Swaminarayan sect and allowed to enter its temples, and that among the Jains, there was an *Antyaja* saint known as Mahetaraj Muni, who was very popular in his time.

those who should have the best knowledge have become dry, and penance without knowledge had no power in it. Having known the Jains very well, I bear testimony to the truth in this allegation and that has always made me unhappy. The Jains have always regarded ahimsa as their exclusive virtue but its real form has been completely hidden. Kindness towards living beings other than human beings has always assumed an acute form and the Jains do not hesitate to enforce that even by compulsion. If ahimsa in its pure form were alive among the Jains, there would have been no trace of untouchability in their midst, every Jain would be an embodiment of love and thousands of men and women social workers would have come forth from amongst them.

DHED AND BHANGI

I give below[1] the experience of a Harijan teacher to show what kind of difficulties a person who works as a teacher among the Harijans has to face, how cautiously he has to deal with them, and how he has to identify himself completely with the children.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 26-3-1933

193. ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

ABSOLUTE LAW[2]

You seem to have grown very impatient. Please examine carefully the distinction I have made between the castes and the system of varnas. Untouchability springs from the sub-castes. When untouchability has been removed, the barriers of caste will also go, followed by the divisions of sub-castes. In the case of varnashrama-dharma however there is not the slightest suggestion of untouchability, i.e., in the varnashramadharma as I understand it. It is a spiritual law like physical laws, and has no exceptions. Whether or not we accept it, the

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had said that Dheds considered the Bhangis as their inferiors. The Bhangis wanted to educate their children with Dhed children but the Dhed elders were opposed to their children studying with the Bhangi children and separate classes for the Bhangi children had to be started.

[2] A correspondent had asked whether there might not be other Harijans who would subscribe to Dr. Ambedkar's views. It was possible, he had argued, that in their heart of hearts there might be lurking a feeling that their serfdom would end only with the wiping out of the caste system, the varnas and everything else. Was it not Gandhiji's aim, too, to eliminate all inequalities in the long run?

law will continue to operate. One man may rest content after knowing that water is a compound of oxygen and hydrogen; another may discover its properties and potentialities and put them to various uses. It was one such inquiring mind that invented the steam engine. Those who understand the significance of the law of varnas fall into this category. I am never tired of saying that there is no idea of superiority and inferiority in varnadharma as I understand it; where then is the need for a specific demand to remove it? Dr. Ambedkar has a right to be angry with caste Hindus because they do not speak as reasonably as they ought to. You at any rate should understand that to declare a war on varnashramadharma cannot but harm the struggle for the removal of untouchability.

ONLY ONE VARNA NOWADAYS[1]

If we must classify all Hindus according to varnas, there is today no varna other than the Shudra. And the ultimate good of Hindu-society lies in admitting this state of affairs. If we admitted this the distinctions of higher and lower varnas would cease to exist without our having to do anything about it. Not that after this no one may endeavour to pursue spiritual knowledge or any other branch of learning; none the less it does mean that all shall earn their bread by their own effort and through body labour and shall apply their other talents in the service of the masses. True, we have not seen varnadharma of this kind being practised; I have however no doubt that it must have been followed in what Hinduism regarded as *Satyayuga*[2].

WHAT WILL MERE TEMPLE-ENTRY AVAIL?[3]

I have never believed that mere temple-entry would solve the problem of untouchability but certainly I do believe that untouchability will not disappear unless Harijans get the freedom to enter temples like the caste Hindus. And I also believe that after the temple doors open for them means of wealth and wisdom will not be difficult to find. I know very well that even a highly educated Harijan with a good income cannot gain admittance to an orthodox Hindu home, his untouchability does not leave him. But his untouchability will go if

[1] A co-worker had asked, "Since you wish to preserve varnadharma how can you say that there is only one varna, viz., Shudra, although as a matter of fact, we do not deserve to be called even that?"

[2] Age of Truth

[3] The barrister president of a Harijan uplift society had argued that temple-entry was not the answer to all problems and that means of educational and economic progress ought to be made available first.

the temples are thrown open to Harijans, i.e., as soon as the unity of religion is found. Anyway I have never said that no constructive work can be accomplished without temple-entry; in fact constructive work is the main programme of the association for removal of untouchability.

A MATTER OF PLEDGE[1]

You have completely lost track of [our ideal]. Would one following the path of truth care for the consequence? Temple-entry is certainly a part of the pledge the Hindu society took in the meeting of September 25 held after the Yeravda Pact. *Antyajas* have a right to enter temples; therefore we ought to try to keep our pledge even if the entire society is opposed to it. To a votary of truth this should be as clear as light. Society's opposition will be only momentary in so far aswe never want to force our entry. We intend to preserve dharma at the cost of our lives. How long then would the opposition last?

The resolution pledging all this includes the demand for legislation as well. With this resolution, Hindu society has given the assurance that so far as it can it would certainly get such and such things done through the present Legislatures. And if we fail to achieve it, it is no doubt going to be the first task of the swaraj Parliament. Can there be a more unambiguous pledge? I am surprised that you do not see the great difference between offering and asking for co-operation. You would not co-operate with me if I offered to lead you to a den of vice, but does it follow that you would not want, would not even ask for, my co-operation if I wanted to guide you to the house of the Lord? It was and still is our duty to ask for people's co-operation for the will.

BRANCHES OF THE SAME TREE[2]

The twigs, leaves and fruit of the same tree, though they are separate from one another, do not remain untouchable among themselves; on the contrary they grow, in form and substance, with one another. The human race has to live like a tree. If one branch is severed as untouchable, it dries up and the tree is weakened to that extent. This is exactly what has happened to Hindu society.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 26-3-1933

[1] A worker, irked by the opposition to removal of untouchability, had suggested other non-controversial programmes. He also wanted to know if the temple-entry movement would serve any useful purpose, since it was a step side-tracking the principle of non-co-operation.

[2] A correspondent had described the movement for the removal of untouchability as no less futile than crossing berries with mangoes.

194. WOMEN'S DUTY

With the passage of time, I feel that women will have to make a very big contribution to the work of serving the Harijans. The whole world knows that woman most truly protects religion because she is by instinct conservative. If she sustains superstitions, she also observes *vratas.* A religion cannot be safeguarded without tolerance and patience. Woman is the embodiment of tolerance and patience. Religion would not endure even a moment without faith. A man's faith cannot measure up to a woman's. Only linguists may know the true position, but in Sanskrit and in the languages derived from it, we find that many words indicative of virtue are feminine. *Shri*[1], *smriti*[2], *medha*[3], *dhriti*[4], *kshama*[5], ahimsa, *pavitrata*[6], *shanti*[7], *daya*[8], *namrata*[9], are all feminine names. And everywhere these qualities are met with in greater measure in women. I do know of saints who dismiss the proposition by saying that one glimpses these virtues in a woman because she is often illiterate. But the sum total of the experience of the whole world bears testimony to what I say. The above-mentioned virtues have no connection with knowledge of the alphabet but have a direct bearing on religion. Moreover, religion would have perished long ago if it was thought that the educated alone could preserve it. It is not many centuries since the art of printing was invented. But religion has come down to us from time immemorial. We have not heard of any religious preachers having been praised for their knowledge of the letters. On the contrary their followers have proudly affirmed that if they had any literary knowledge, it was of little significance. Whatever intelligence they had in them was only God-given. Their knowledge of the language was not bookish but was due to their penance and devotion to truth.

Whether all this is true or false, I have long held this belief and even if it is an illusion, so long as it is not removed it is to me not a falsehood but pure truth. So for the religious activity of removing

[1] Beauty, grace, wealth
[2] Remembrance
[3] Intellect
[4] Fortitude
[5] Forbearance
[6] Purity
[7] Serenity
[8] Compassion
[9] Humility

untouchability, I am laying great store by women's contribution. Without their help and goodwill, this task cannot be accomplished. Hence I reproduce the following extract from a letter received from a woman from Cuttack.[1]

Because I have cited the example of Utkal, the women of Gujarat should not feel that I mean to suggest that they do no such work. They should not forthwith bring any such charge against me. But at the same time they should never imagine that they alone render such service and no one else does so. If anyone has this misconception, it is only to remove it that I have quoted the above letter. The women, and even the men, of Utkal are considered to have the least awakening. But even there women have started working. This may, perhaps, give fresh encouragement to the women of Gujarat. I do not know whether even in Gujarat the women are doing such work as the women in Cuttack do. If they are doing it, they should send me an account of it and if they are not, they should start doing so.

Men as well as women have to do two kinds of work—one among the Harijans and the other among caste Hindus. One has to bring home patiently to the caste Hindus that untouchability is a great sin and also raise fresh workers from among them. The magnitude of the work is so great and the dirt of untouchability has accumulated to such an extent that as long as several men and women do not come out to work, this monster of untouchability will not be destroyed. If fortunately there has been a genuine religious awakening, all those who have had such awakening will be able to do this work easily.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 26-3-1933

195. PROPAGANDA v. *CONSTRUCTION*

The summary which I gave of a Harijan's severe criticism of the Savarna Harijan Seva Sangh of his Province has produced good effect. The workers have become vigilant. But they are also baffled. Does putting money into the pockets of Harijans mean constructive work or teaching a few children, digging a few wells and getting a few temples opened? This is work for a century. Propaganda means a countrywide effort to create among the people a feeling against untouchability through speeches, pamphlets, and social dinners, parties, etc. (The reader should understand the difference between

[1] The letter is not translated here; for a summary of it, *vide* "Notes", 25-3-1933.

social dinner and inter-dining. Social friendly dinners mean sitting together for meals at a social get-together, each one eating from his own plate food which is acceptable to him. While interdining means eating at each other's home food prepared by the inviting party. Brahmins and Vanias who believe in caste restrictions will participate in social dinners but may not associate with inter-dining.) What a contrast between constructive work progressing at snail's pace and propaganda work conducted at the speed of a hurricane! This is what puzzles the workers.

Propaganda is of course essential. But mere propaganda is likely to prove as short-lived as a bubble. Really speaking, the most effective propaganda lies in pure constructive work. But since pure constructive work is a near impossibility, propaganda is necessary to supplement constructive work. Pure constructive work means constructive activities by men and women workers of character who have perfect faith in the cause and who do their work in a missionary spirit. We, however, are imperfect. We may, therefore, sincerely do the best we can by way of constructive work and simultaneously carry on propaganda, too.

Here I wish to examine the question only from the financial point of view. One thing should be self-evident, namely, that we are bound to get a hundred per cent return on whatever money is put into the Harijans, pockets in the right manner. Whereas the money spent on propaganda work will remain an uncertain investment till we actually see the result.

I would, therefore, advise all branches of the Sangh to utilize the contributions they have received for constructive activities. We shall never have to repent for the money so spent. If we get from among caste Hindus, teachers, masons, carpenters, etc., to work without remuneration or for nominal remuneration, our constructive work will progress so fast that we shall have very little need for propaganda. In that case the entire money except what is paid as wages to the caste Hindu teachers and artisans will go to the Harijans. I would regard the money thus spent on running a school or digging a well as reaching the pockets of Harijans. Our ideal, of course, should be to see that the wages in connection with public wells or schools for Harijans should go into the pockets of Harijans. But, till such time as we are able to reach this ideal, we should humbly content ourselves with the next best thing. Every institution for Harijan welfare should maintain a separate account for such constructive work.

Propaganda work should be self-supporting. Pamphlets ought not to be distributed free of charge. A public-spirited printing press may print at nominal charge or free of charge, and the cost price of

each pamphlet may be borne by the people. One who wishes to circulate the pamphlet among his acquaintances free of charge should pay for the copies himself or anyone from among the people whose interest has been aroused in the movement should pay for them. Pamphlets received free are thrown into the waste-paper basket. Only a speculator would do such business. But even he adds such expenses to the price of the things to be sold. A religious body like the Harijan Seva Sangh simply cannot afford to indulge in such speculation. From whom would it recover the expenses incurred? What information about eradication of untouchability can we get from a report stating that one crore copies of pamphlets were distributed? Who can say how many people cleansed themselves of the evil of untouchability after reading them? Who can say, even, how many people read them? If, however, the reader had paid one pie at least for a copy, we may assume that he must have read some portion of it.

Propaganda work carried on along these lines would not only be self-supporting but, if it becomes popular, it would promote constructive work, too. I cherish the ambition even today that, if the *Harijan* weeklies become popular, we may be able to save some money from their proceeds and utilize it for constructive work. The reader may note that some of the work of these weeklies is done with the help of volunteers and that, whenever money is paid, it is paid at lower than market rates. I mention this fact merely to point out that the *Harijan* weeklies are in the nature of propaganda work and that they are also self-supporting. *Harijan* is published in Bengali, Tamil, Gujarati and Hindi. The Gujarati edition is on the point of becoming self-supporting. The Hindi has not become so. The principle for pamphlets, books, etc., should be the same as for the *Harijan* weeklies.

And now about the expenses on the salaries and travelling allowances of the workers engaged in propaganda activities. Most of such workers would be caste Hindus. They, however, would never ask for any payment. What effect can the speeches of paid workers have on the people? Their travelling expenses should not have to be borne by the institution employing them but should be met by the people. That is to say, the reception committees of the places which have invited them should bear the expenses. The permanent body may arrange these things but should not bear their expenses. And lastly about the office expenses, the salary of the accountant, the travelling expenses of the secretary, the rent for the building, etc. This expenditure should not exceed ten per cent of the total budget. Any institution whose administrative expenses total up to more than ten per cent should be looked upon as a self-destroying and useless organization.

It is my firm opinion that the institution for serving Harijans which has been set up solely for the purification of religion and which exists for that one purpose cannot continue to function in any other way. If I have been able to clarify my idea the reader should be convinced that

(1) it includes a mighty organization;
(2) there is great scope for widespread propaganda;
(3) it is a test of the people's faith and also conducive to its growth.

Finally, it is necessary to state that I am offering advice without being engaged in that field at the moment; so my views may be wrong. If they do not appeal to the workers, intellect, they deserve to be discarded. Even if they appear suitable, I do not have the right to get them accepted or put into practice, but the Harijan Sevak Sangh and its sub-committees certainly have that right. My duty is to give my opinion and to keep quiet. The institutions concerned may give thought to this article and send their suggestions to Thakkar Bapa. Then, on receiving his suggestions, all of them may act accordingly.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 26-3-1933

196. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

[*March 26, 1933*][1]

CHI. MARY,

My joint letter[2] set forth my views not necessarily for your acceptance. You are to do just what you think is best. My letter was a help to your thoughts and no more. You can get and give the best only if you do what appears to you to be proper. You two have come to see things for yourselves and not to take a set course at the Ashram.

I know you did not suggest but I meant that many in the Ashram were unconsciously slavishly following the Ashram routine and therefore not getting the best out of it. And then many of them, unlike you, have come in the hope of forming their character and making something out of themselves. They may and can afford to follow the routine unintelligently but you may not and dare not. If you follow the routine you must do so intelligently and

[1] From *Ma"Indian of Coolie", 11-8-1901hadevbhaini Diary*, "Indian or Coolie", 11-9-1901.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to F. Marry Barr and Duncan Greenlees", 8-3-1933.

whole-heartedly. Therefore you should take only what you can easily digest of the routine.

You must not get malaria. You should take things easy. The bowels must be kept in order. The stomach should not be loaded. No cold bath whilst you are at all weak. No pulses, only a little bread plus milk, greens and fruit. Smear the uncovered limbs with paraffin oil. Do not be afraid of it or its smell. It does not soil anything. The mosquitoes keep away from paraffin. Do not live under tension. This is a mental process. 'Be careful for nothing' is both a spiritual and physiological maxim.

The *Punch* is quite all right in spite of the hard facts of life but the harder fact is that neither Mahadev nor I nor any other of our company can give a minute to anything outside *Harijan* and other kindred work. Therefore we arrange a *Punch* and *Judy* show from among the threads of our work. And it beats the original, I assure you. You may pass this on to your aunt.

Others besides you have asked me to write on Jesus. If God wants me to do it, He will find the time for me.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5998. Also C.W. 3323. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

197. LETTER TO DUNCAN GREENLEES

March 26, 1933

Consider it a temptation. Ever since you came, my eyes are fixed on you. I on my part want to entrust to you a pure Harijan school where you can teach both the children and their parents.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 202

198. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

March 26, 1933

BOYS AND GIRLS,

I have your letter. You must have heard about . . [1] All of you must take a lesson from what happened. If you wish to be good, and follow truth, observe the following rules:

(1) Nobody should hide anything or talk anything secret with

[1] The name has been omitted.

anybody.

(2) Nobody should meet anybody in private.

(3) A boy must not have friendship with a girl. It is not natural. Why should a girl wish to have friendship with a boy instead of with another girl?

(4) The boys and girls living in the Ashram are like blood brothers and sisters. Just as brothers and sisters cannot marry, so also those living in the Ashram at the same time cannot marry. The relationship between brother and sister is not friendship. It is a pure relationship and of a kind which a man or woman can have with any other woman or man. Brother and sister never wish to be alone. There is nothing secret between them.

(5) If any boy or girl feels an impure desire, they should immediately confess it before their elders.

I desire that you should observe these rules voluntarily.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

199. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

March 26, 1933

CHI. JANAKIMAIYA,

What is this? You do not even reply to my letter. Are you so much afraid of me? If you feel unhappy about giving money for Harijans,[1] tell me so. Is it that you find the purse-strings easy to loosen when you wish to send me oranges, but too tight when you have to give money for Harijan work?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Jamnalal went to Bombay yesterday. He will be examined there by Dr. Modi. His health is perfectly all right. He has gone only for your and his own satisfaction.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2911

[1] For the David Scheme; *vide* "Letter to G.d. Birla", 16-3-1933.

200. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 26, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your mail.

I wrote to you about . . [1] yesterday.[2] I have also sent his letters. I understand what you say regarding Narahari.

You did right in paying Parachure Shastri the expenses for the journey and fixing Rs. 30 to be sent to his family. Arrange a class for those who wish to learn Sanskrit, and also ask him how many hours he can give for teaching Marathi. Let me know how you find him. Write about Shantaram[3] also. I would be very happy if his intellectual powers develop.

Read my letter[4] to Titus in which I have written to him about milk. How many times does Parachure Shastri drink milk? If milk is preserved for him in a clean bottle every day and if the bottle is wrapped in thick or double or twofold wet cloth it would remain as cool as ice and he can drink it without heating it. It would be better if he drinks unboiled milk. The bottles and the corks should be washed every day in boiling water. The cork should be made of strong material. The bottle should be filled to the top, so that no air might remain inside. I think that all those who are trying the experiment of living on milk would benefit more if they drink it unboiled. I have been drinking my milk unboiled for the last six weeks. Show this letter to Purushottam. His view should be treated as final. Kusum still gets fever, and yet she is better! I don't wish to suggest that this is impossible. If the range of temperature is going down, she may certainly be said to be better.

BAPU

[PS.]

[Letters enclosed for] Soniramji, Duncan, Mary, Parachure and Titus.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8342. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] The name has been omitted.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 25-3-1933.

[3] Parachure Shastri's son

[4] *Vide* p "Letter to T. Titus", 25-3-1933.

201. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

March 26, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

I got your beautiful letter. I hope you will always keep up this attitude. Haven't I promised to preserve the yarn for you?

I will keep my promise. You need not refuse it. You certainly have a right to ask anything from me. Your request for the yarn was blameless. It was the manner in which you made it that was wrong. You have now rectified your mistake, and so I have nothing to say.

You see how my hopes are being reduced to ashes. How much I thought of. . .[1] and of. . .[2]? I could never suspect them. I had built high hopes on them, but they were like a house built on sand. What should we do to realize the ideal which the Ashram has placed before itself? It can be done only if everybody tries to do what he can independently of others. Do you do that? I hope you know my definition of *brahmacharya*. Do you think you can observe such *brahmacharya*? Likes and dislikes have no place in it at all. I don't wish to criticize you, nor to lecture to you. I only beg. Till my begging bowl is filled, the Ashram will never become a true Ashram.

I am glad that you wrote about your health. If you eat crushed cabbage, uncooked, it may possibly do you no harm, but it will certainly do no harm if you eat it boiled. It is not necessary to eat all vegetables uncooked. It will be enough if you eat a few raw vegetables. But the main thing is that you should speak as little as possible. The delay in following this rule may lead to such serious consequences that subsequent self-control will not avail you. Everything should be done at the right time. The throat requires rest exactly when it is sensitive.

I am glad that you became acquainted with Maruti. Write to the couple from time to time. Lakshmi wants a companion from the Ashram. Is there anybody whom you can send? Also write to Lakshmidas and find out if she can stay there.

Jamnalalji told me that there were many Maharashtrian ladies in the Ashram whom he had sent there. It is his desire, which he wanted me to convey to you, that you should train some of them for the Mahila Ashram. Is there anybody whom you can train? She should be a mature woman. Let me know if there is any such. Jamnalalji wants this to be conveyed to Narandas also. I will not mention this message

[1] The names have been omitted.

separately in my letter to him. I reserve for it some further explanation in connection with it.

I cannot say anything about the White Paper[1]. Moreover, the matter is out of my sphere while I am in jail, and so I have not even read it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10331. Also C.W. 6771. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

202. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 26, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

This is in continuation of the message from Jamnalal which I have given in my letter[2] to Prema. One reason why we have been able to take no service from the older women in the Ashram (after the struggle) is the Ashram's lack of ability, that is, my lack of ability. When Jamnalal talked to me about some other ladies, I felt a stab in my heart. He also felt unhappy that he had to make the suggestion which he did. But what could he do? He had often asked me in the past for workers, but I could not do anything then. I think we have got an opportunity now. I first thought of Lakshmibehn[3] and then of Durga[4]. There is a Mahila Ashram in Maharashtra, and that too in Wardha. There will be Vinoba's company and guidance, too. There is also Janakibehn. Will Lakshmibehn agree to go and stay there without Panditji? Will Panditji like that? If not, why not? Mathuri[5] also will go and stay with Lakshmibehn. She will get the same kind of training there that she does in the Ashram. If Lakshmibehn does not agree to go or cannot go, why shouldn't Durga go? She is in any case bound to remain separated [from Mahadev] at present, probably for some years. She will not have to do hard physical work there. She will have only to supervise. The burden will not be too heavy for her health. She may certainly take Nirmala[6] with her if she wishes. Narayanswami[7]

[1] Setting out the British Government's proposals for constitutional reforms in India

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] Wife of Narayan M. Khare

[4] Wife of Mahadev Desai

[5] Daughter of Narayan M. Khare

[6] Mahadev Desai's sister

[7] Probably Narayan Desai

also may go if he wishes. I thought about Kashi[1] too. But she is a complete invalid and so I dropped the idea. I cannot think about Santok[2] just now, and I do not know Jamna's[3] capacity. I think Lakshmibehn and Durga would be the best. Manibehn[4], too, I think, can go. She has done such work in Champaran. I have not discussed this idea with Mahadev here. I cannot think of any other senior women. I think I have given you ample information. If any lady volunteers are willing to go, let me know. And if the Maharashtrian ladies who have recently joined wish to go, they also may go. Their services will certainly be required. But there should be a mature and experienced woman at their head who would look after all the women as her daughters and be in charge of the Ashram. The work requires maturity, purity of character and common sense. Other qualities will follow from this.

I hope Mohan[5] has fully recovered.

I have already written about Raojibhai of Dharasana and, therefore, say nothing about him in this letter. It is not our duty to shelter him. I think it is beyond our means to do so.

I have also written to you about buffalo flesh. Sitla Sahai continues to write to me. But I tell him every time in my reply that he should convince you. Does Mahavir write to you? I have had no letter from him at all. Gangabehn has helped him to get a job of Rs. 25 per month,[6] and she says in her letter that she will try to get some work for Krishnamaiyadevi also. How are Maitri and Durga? I had no letter from . . . [7]. This creates a doubt in my mind whether she has fallen again.

BAPU

[PS.]

Prabhavati has not received a copy of the discourses[8]. Send one to her. I have received today's post, that is, the letters posted on the 25th. I have replied to Amina in a separate letter enclosed with this. What is the doctor's diagnosis of Mohan's illness? I got Jamna's

[1] Wife of Chhaganlal Gandhi

[2] Wife of Maganlal Gandhi

[3] The addressee's wife

[4] Wife of Narahari Parikh

[5] Narahari Parikh's son

[6] *Vide* ''Letter to Gangabehn Vaidya", 24-3-1933.

[7] The name has been omitted,

[8] Which Gandhiji wrote for the Ashram inmates from Yeravda Prison in 1930 They were subsequently published under the title *Mangalprabhat.*

letter. Tell her only this: She should put complete trust in Purushottam and continue the experiment faithfully.[1] She is bound to get cured.

[PPS.]

The list of books and chart of stars are attached separately. Nineteen letters are bound together and Amina's is kept loose.[2]

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I Also C.W. 8343. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

203. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

March 26, 1933

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

I have your letter. I am returning the list of books. It will be worth while, when you get the time, to go through the books which I have marked in it. If you do not understand any words in them, you may take Dr. Talwalkar's or Dr. Hariprasad's help. The best thing to do however would be to read up one or two short books on anatomy and physiology. You would then be able to follow by and by what you may not follow now. You have sufficient patience and I am sure, therefore, that you will master the subject. The experiment of drinking unboiled milk is worth trying. Write to Gaurishankar and ask him. Do you suffer from constipation? Keep me informed about the results of the experiment of Chimanlal and Jamna.

BAPU

[PS.]

I got your letter. For stopping vomiting, enema with 20 grains of soda bicarb in water may be given slowly drop by drop. This will take half an hour. A special catch is available which permits the water to flow only drop by drop. Ask Mrs. Lazarus to show you the method.

From Gujarati: C.W. 910. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Purushottam Gandhi", 12-3-1933.

[2] According to the source, this was preceded by a list of the letters.

204. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

March 26, 1933

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I have your report. If you show these people the same love that you did for Gita when you nursed her without any feeling Or aversion during her attack of smallpox, even their filth will smell sweet to you. I hope you take with you medicines for the sick. If you work with the patience of the Meru, you will never give way to despair. You are not the only person doing this kind of work. There are others also doing similar work in other parts of the country. I have not written about them but their work is going on. Such work should become a common thing among us.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 354. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

205. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

March 26, 1933

CHI. MITHUBEHN,

I got your letter. You have undertaken a Herculean task. You will succeed in it only if the women whose signatures you have sent are sincere workers who will remain with you till the last, and have a religious spirit in them and are capable of strict self-discipline. Do not embark on anything beyond your strength. Success will be yours if you have the necessary strength.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 20708

206. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

March 26, 1933

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I shall write a few things just now and the rest later. Your articles are the only thing in the Hindi *Harijan* that we find worth reading. Your language is sweet and vigorous but I cannot be satisfied with this. A major portion of the material will have to be sent from here till proper arrangements are made there. Mahadev and I will translate as well as write original articles. Viyogiji can correct our Hindi.

Moreover the Sangh should supply notices, suggestions, provincial news, and such things. All this should go toward raising the sale of Hindi *Harijan* to thousands of copies. It ought to become the chief gazette of the Seva Sangh. I have refused to send items to Ramdasji or anyone else for translation. *Harijan Sevak* cannot be successful at all under such an arrangement. If no translators can be found in Delhi and Viyogiji cannot undertake the translation or arrange for it I would consider it necessary to discontinue the *Harijan Sevak.*

I notice that there is more work to do for the *bastis* of Calcutta.

I understand about the David Scheme. The suggestion should be considered. I shall write more. Appoint the Selection Board.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 7934. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

207. LETTER TO SULOCHANA

March 26, 1933

CHI. SULOCHANA,

I have your letter. As regards marriage you must tell your father that this period of your life should be devoted to studies and that you will let your wishes be known if on the completion of studies you desire to marry. Marriage cannot be essential for all There are many women in the world who remain unmarried.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9133

208. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

March 27, 1933

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

With reference to Seth Jamnalalji's transfer to Arthur Road Prison for medical examination, will you please ascertain from the Government whether I may correspond with him freely and receive letters from him freely in view of the daily interviews I was permitted to have whilst he was here, of course subject to the limitation of the correspondence strictly to his health and untouchability matters?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3884; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. IV, p. 261

209. LETTER TO BHAILAL

March 27, 1933

BHAI BHAILAL,

I have received your letter. I intend to make use of the information given therein.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3299

210. LETTER TO NANALAL K. JASANI

March 27, 1933

BHAI NANALAL[1],

I send herewith Maganlal's[2] letter and telegram. You will also find on the telegram form the reply I am sending to him.

It seems to me that now the only thing to do is to effect a partition. That also will require the signatures of all. Hence in my reply, I am asking Maganlal to come here. I believe that Chhaganlal[3] also will welcome the partition. And Champa[4] seems to be eager for it. If that is so, and if you do not think Maganlal's presence necessary at all, you should wire to him from there asking him not to come. However if you think with me that the presence of all the three brothers will be necessary you too should send a wire to Maganlal asking him to come.

I feel worried about Champa's and Ratilal's[5] attitude. Champa will naturally follow her father's advice and Ratilal seems to be under Champa's influence at present. I have no trust now in Prabhashankar[6]. His motives do not at all seem to be pure. That day he showed no regard for truth or courtesy. I felt that for the sake of money he was ready to harm the interests of his daughter and son-in-law. I will not, therefore, be inclined in his favour, that is, I will not approve of his being made the guardian. However, I certainly do not think myself to

[1] Business manager and partner of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta
[2] Sons of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta
[3] *ibid*
[4] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's daughter-in-law; Ratilal's wife
[5] Champa's father
[6] Chhaganlal's father-in-law

be the only friend of the Doctor. I regard you and Ratubhai[7] to be equally his friends. You may certainly, therefore, appoint Prabhashankar as the guardian if you so wish. Sardar, to whom I have shown this letter, is of my opinion. You may rest assured that I will not come in the way of anything that may be decided. I have only explained my own feeling. If it finds no echo in your heart, it should be ignored. I am writing this so that I may have a clear conscience in the matter. I will have no objection to your showing this letter to Prabhashankar. In fact I wish that you should do so. It seems best that he should know what I feel. I do not wish to write all this to Champa and Ratilal. It is not right that I should tell them all this. But just as I feel unhappy at the thought of creating ill-will towards Prabhashankar in their minds, I would be untrue to you if I did not tell you what I thought.

I am not happy that this business is getting complicated and dragging on. Please try your best to settle it as early as possible.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9640

211. LETTER TO LAKSHMI JERAJANI

March 27, 1933

CHI. LAKSHMI[1],

At last I had a letter from you. I did write to you. I hope you keep good health. What is your daily programme of work now?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Can I take it that Uncle has completely recovered now?

CHI. LAKSHMI JERAJANI

KHADI BHANDAR

KALBADEVI[2]

BOMBAY

From Gujarati: C.W. 2814. Courtesy: Purushottam D. Saraiya, Bombay

[1] Niece of Vithaldas Jerajani, a khadi worker of Bombay

[2] The source has ''Kalka Devi".

212. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

March 27, 1933

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I have your letter. After reading the article in Gujarati *Harijan*, you may ask me whatever you want. I have written on similar lines for the English. It will be published shortly. I know that you get something for your monthly expenses. There is nothing wrong in it. If this money is drawn from the main account, I would not think it wrong in principle. But if that account can't bear the burden, I would not mind the money being drawn from this account. I know that in this poor country it is difficult to find all honorary workers, but no institution will find workers like you a burden.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PARIKSHITLAL MAJMUDAR
UNTOUCHABILITY ERADICATION SOCIETY
ELLISBRIDGE
AHMEDABAD B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3995

213. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

March 27, 1933

CHI. NARMADA,

I got your letter. You did well in burying the piece of meat with your own hand. I hope you took it away from those people without hurting their feelings. Remember that nothing should be done forcibly.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2775. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

214. LETTER TO AMINA QURESHI

March 27, 1933

CHI. AMINA,

It is good that you are fasting. You will gain much from it. As days pass you will feel less weak. If you cannot write, there will be

nothing wrong at all in Shankarbhai or somebody else writing the letter for you. Be very patient. God will protect you. Write daily to me. Once you get well you may study as much as you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10795. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

215. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

March 27, 1933

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have been writing to you regularly. What can I do if the letters do not reach you? I wrote a letter in Gujarati on hearing from you. Why did it not reach you? That was a long letter. [All][1] your questions had been answered.

It is well that you did not take up the duties of a watchman.

That you do not receive regular letters or visitors does not mean that you should give up [your right to receive] either.

Even if no one or no letter comes, you must learn the art of remaining cheerful. If they come, well and good, but you must be content even if they don't come. If they don't come you may consider all that time well-saved for some work. But take it that however busy I may be I shall always save some time for writing to you.

I shall write to Narandas about the *Mangal Pravachan.*[2]

My weight is 104 lb. which is good. I am taking fresh milk, papaw, oranges and dates.... I take it twice a day. I wake up in the morning. . . . The *Harijan* practically takes up the whole day.

I hope Kanta knows that I am deliberately not writing to her so that she may receive other letters.

Give up all worry.

Lakshmi has been married to Maruti.[3] About 100 Harijans came from Ahmedabad to bless them. They were all served with fruits. Maruti lives at Bardoli with Lakshmidas.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3305

[1] The letter is damaged here and at several places.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Purushottam Gandhi", 26-3-1933.

[3] *Vide* "Message on Wedding of Lakshmi and Maruti", 8-3-1933

216. INTERVIEW TO THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

March 27, 1933

Now more than ever before redoubled efforts should be made to open all the private temples to the Harijans.

Asked if the failure of the Assembly to pass the motion for circulation of the Bill held up temple-entry, Gandhiji replied in the negative and proceeded:

It does not mean that the temple-entry question would be held up, but it does mean that what is due to the Harijans in the light of the pledge given in September last has not been paid and, therefore, every effort should be made in order to redeem that pledge. Meanwhile whatever other ways are open to educating public opinion and gaining access to temples for the Harijans should be tried and one thing that naturally suggests itself to me is the opening of all private temples to Harijans.

There is no custom in connection with the private temples which can be pleaded by the third party in order to prevent the entry of Harijans to them. They should be thrown open to them and those who have none may even build new temples for the Hindus in general and these would be the model temples with model management and model priests so that they would be a true expression of Hinduism.

The Hindustan Times, 28-3-1933

217. LETTER TO VERRIER ELWIN

March 28, 1933

MY DEAR VERRIER,

Although I have often found that truth however ugly it might look in reality did good, I believe that A.[1] came nearer to you both. The fact is that even if one party is pure the others tend to become so. But when the others are striving in the same direction the success of one almost ensures the success of the others.

I did not tell her that you were being unconsciously self-deceived. She says she did not wish to convey any such meaning to you. I had no proof that you were being self-deceived. What I did say was that all of us were likely to be self-deceived but that you were incapable of conscious falsehood and that therefore you would confess your promise at once if you had ever made it.

There is no doubt that she loves you both and she wants to work

[1] Alla; *vide* "Letter to Verrier Elwin", 11-3-1933.

with you. She is doing some Harijan work now. I have told her that it [is] impossible at present but if all goes well, there is no reason why she should not be able to work with you later.

And now about Mary[1]. To me it seems quite necessary that you should separate for the time being and test yourselves. Mary or you may go to Almora or to Sabarmati or Wardha or any other place you may think fit and do there some Harijan work of a temporary character. If you have shed exclusive love altogether you should feel happy as well in association as in separation and just now there should be positive joy in separation. I have found this indispensable in all such cases and there have been several. You should think it over and give immediate effect to the proposal if you find substance in it.

And now for your health.

It is now 3.45 a.m. and I must leave you in God's care. His care is the only true care. A human being's is good enough only in so far as it anticipates His. You will therefore accept of my suggestions only that which finds an echo in your heart. Every moment makes me humbler and conscious of the sublime fact that man's true effort consists only in knowing the will of God who is Truth.

You carry the love of every one of the company.

With deepest love,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20727

218. LETTER TO ABHA

March 28, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Your questions are very queer. If I knew exactly who I was it would be a great feat. My mission is service of all.

I think that the legend about Radha and Krishna is celestial.

I would advise you not to study me but study God which is Truth.

Yours sincerely,

SHREEMATI ABHA
18-B HARTAKI BAGAN LANE
P. O. BEADON ST.
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20728

[1] Mary Gillett

219. LETTER TO AMULYA KUMAR BASU

March 28, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. You have no cause whatsoever for apologizing for doing what you conceive is your duty. I give the others the same credit for honesty of purpose that I would claim for myself. All therefore I would expect you to do is never to swerve from truth even in order to gain an end which you may consider to be desirable. You will then receive congratulations from me for your fighting me, and who knows that you may not teach me to see the Light if I am enveloped in darkness. It is therefore in a friendly spirit that I shall approach your paper[1], and if I find untruthfulness, unfairness or bitterness anywhere in it, I shall draw your attention, and I would like you to do the same thing towards me if you find in the *Harijan* any untruth, any exaggeration, any discourtesy towards those who think differently from me. Rightly or wrongly, I regard untouchability as the greatest curse for Hindu religion. I am therefore sparing no pains to get rid of that curse. But if it is a blessing and if anybody can make me see it, I shall accept him as my deliverer, for, he would have saved me from an error which I have nursed practically for the past fifty years.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. AMULYA KUMAR BASU
5 AKSHAY KUMAR BASU LANE
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20731

220. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

March 28, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I hope you received my letter[2] in Hindi which I wrote the day before yesterday, i.e., 26th. I do think that we ought to find out a means of dealing with the *basti* problem in Calcutta as a whole, and not piecemeal. When therefore you next go to Calcutta I suggest your having an informal meeting of the principal Municipal Councillors. No matter what vested interests have grown up, they should be

[1] *Sanatani*, an English weekly
[2] *Vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 26-3-1933.

attacked and the problem dealt with. From what you write to me, the cheapest method evidently seems to be to demolish these *bastis.* The opposition to the introduction of a more humane method of carrying night-soil seems to me to be perfectly useless. Improved methods must in the beginning stages mean more expense, but undoubtedly less in the end. The question behind all the difficulties that arise resolves itself, as a rule, into apathy on the part of those who profess their appreciation of the necessity for reform, but are not prepared to sacrifice anything for it. You must therefore turn this apathy into active sympathy, and a way out will be quickly found.

As to the Hindi *Harijan*, I wrote to you the day before yesterday telling you that the only articles that were found worth reading were yours, except the first. Your style is pleasing, simple, idiomatic. Your method of dealing with the subject is plain, direct and easily understandable. Of course the translation of my articles was faulty, but that difficulty will now be got over by sending translations ready-made from here. The Hindi will have to be polished there. This ought to reduce expense and improve the paper.

Pray do not worry about the David Scheme. I just told you how I came to write about it. But I quite understand your difficulty. If it becomes necessary, we must naturally fall back upon the Central Fund. But let us for a while wait and see if we can get even half a dozen subscribers with the full amounts. I do not despair; only I never get time to frame nice letters. But I will do so one of these days. When I have one or two names I propose to announce your name with these.[1] There was no question of your letting me down by your enthusiastically taking up the Scheme.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

[PS.][2]

You would remember our discussion about Ramanand Sannyasi. After that, I had written to him that I had received complaints concerning his character. I enclose his reply. He now writes to me that you have asked him to produce Urdu *Harijan.*

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 7935. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also S.N. 20732

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla",16-3-1933.

[2] The postscript is in Hindi.

221. LETTER TO ABINASH CHANDRA DAS

March 28, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I know the difficulties that you have to undergo. I am hoping and praying that untouchability has now not a long lease of life. Anyway, there are many caste Hindus who do not believe in untouchability as an integral part of Hindu religion and are prepared to give their lives in order to eradicate it. I do hope that you will not repeat the mistake that caste Hindus have made by erecting barriers amongst the so-called untouchables.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. ABINASH CHANDRA DAS
BANGIYA JHALLA MALLA KHATRIYA SABHA
14 NARENDRA SEN SQUARE
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20730

222. LETTER TO GIRDHARILAL

March 28, 1933

DEAR LALA GIRDHARILAL,

I do not know Dr. Tripathi, nor does any of the other three. But you do not want anybody to write to him, do you?

Prickly heat could be easily got over if the doctor would allow you to take Kuhne-baths, otherwise called hip-baths, in which only the hips remain under water and the legs are kept outside. Perhaps you know that.

Yours sincerely,

LALA GIRDHARILAL

109-A MAHENDRA MANSIONS

ESPLANADE ROAD, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20729

223. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

March 28, 1933

THE SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY
HOME DEPARTMENT

DEAR SIR,

In continuation of my letter of the 23rd instant I enclose herewith a cutting from *The Bombay Chronicle* reporting Seth Poonamchand's fast. In view of the report I would respectfully ask for a reply by tomorrow evening. I would urge the Government to enter into my feelings, although I am a prisoner. With all the will in the world to find my peace as a prisoner in complete obedience to authority, I cannot suppress the humanitarian in me; I cannot give up the mission of a lifetime. I would ask the Government also to realize, if I may say so with due humility, that I occupy the position of a parent to hundreds of men and women. They would not expect me to let Seth Poonamchand die without my making an effort to save him if I can.

I am asking Col. Doyle to telegraph or telephone the contents of this letter to you.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Encl. 1

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3)A, p. 87

224. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY[2]

March 28, 1933

The matter is so urgent that it is most difficult for me to wait. As it is, it has been a torturing thing for me. If anything happens to Seth Poonamchand, it will haunt me for the rest of my life that I failed to

[1] Doyle conveyed the message on telephone and received the reply: "We are corresponding with the India Government. Won't Gandhi wait till day after tomorrow?"

[2] This was written on receipt of the Bombay Government's reply to the preceding letter.

secure permission from Government to establish communication with him in the nick of time. I must therefore ask for an immediate reply.[1] I would suggest that the Government of Bombay should on their own responsibility allow me to establish communication with Seth Poonamchand through the C. P. Home member.[2]

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40) (3)A, p. 91

225. LETTER TO R.

March 28, 1933

MY DEAR R.,

I thank you for your two letters but I must tell you that they do not give me any satisfaction. I did not write[3] in haste. I wrote simply on the strength of what N. Devi had told me and afterwards written to me. Even your own letters strengthen my suspicion that lurking behind your actions there is a subtle emotional love which is undesirable and which borders on the impure. That is the mildest manner in which I could put it. Nor am I satisfied about this guru of yours if that is the gentleman whom N. Devi has described. Here I am on delicate grounds, because I know nothing of him and I may be doing the gravest injustice to him. You cannot disown your responsibility about your companions. You were all working together, the central attraction being N. Devi, at that time not a fountain of purity. You cannot divest yourself of responsibility for all that happened during that period. I would like you therefore to be a little more introspective than you have been, and tell me whether the scavenging work continues unabated as it was begun, and if it is continuing, who are the workers, how is it being done, who is the leader, and what is the result up to date. If the work has evaporated, you will tell me why.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20735

[1] This was received on March 30, 1933; *vide Mahadevbhaini Diary*, "Speech at Farewell Meeting", 15-10-1901.

[2] Gandhiji requested the jail authorities to convey the letter on telephone.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to R.", 18-3-1933.

226. LETTER TO N.

March 28, 1933

MY DEAR N. ,

I have your letters of 23rd and 24th. I expect that you left for the village on Sunday as you had intended. May Truth take care of you there!

I know from personal experience how difficult it is to wash heavy khadi if you do not have plenty of water. Generally washing comes before sewing, but if it is the same cloth that requires washing and sewing, the sewing undoubtedly precedes, because you thereby save time. Washing will tear the cloth more at the point where it requires mending, therefore more time has to be given to sewing if it is done after the washing. Your dress itself may require a little alteration when you have got rid of all the ornamental part of it and made it just so as to protect the body and satisfy the surrounding convention. The quantity required is very small, the convention being the convention of the poorest.

I am glad you heard from Sir Todd Hunter.

I am not at all satisfied with R.'s letters. There is still the old infatuation lurking, and as I read them, a disposition to justify the past. I have written[1] to him gently drawing his attention to the inadequacy of his letters. Durgadas's letter I like still less. The mode of address is unpardonable. He can be no guide, friend and brother to you, who, although on his own showing he knew that you were a fallen woman, did not lift his little linger to save his sister. There is no question of your resuming your correspondence. Your correspondence just now must be with God of Truth and yourself. Nothing should come between you and Him. I come in because I am witness to the promise that you have made to your Maker and because I want to be able to claim you as a permanent co-worker in the service of the Harijans, in my opinion the most suppressed in the world, but neither I nor you can render that service unless that direct touch with Truth is completely established and the utmost purity attainable by a human being has become the exclusive passion.

You must beware of cold.

If you can procure whole wheat meal you ought not to take any rice at all. You should learn how to make chapatis. It is an incredibly simple performance. Take 4 ounces of clean wheat meal, mix in water

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

and knead it well, roll it on any smooth surface, wooden or stone, with a rolling pin—even a clean ruler will serve the purpose—and roll it slightly thinner than a cardboard piece and bake it on a flat iron disk, turning the sides while it is baked. Out of 4 ounces you can make six of these chapatis, 6 inches in diameter. These would be perfectly digestible. I am sure that the lady of the house or hut where you are to stay knows all this simple cookery. Pulses should be avoided altogether. Of tender coconut you may take one whole per day if it is very tender, and of course you use all the water in the coconut also. You ought to procure some fruit and green vegetables, not potatoes and the like, but leaves, marrow, cucumber, pumpkin, etc.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20733

227. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRAN

March 28, 1933

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRAN,

It is refreshing to see your signature after so many months. I have been following you nevertheless.

Narayana Iyer I know well from his *Permanent History of Bharat Varsha,* and I think I met him also in Trivandrum. He is a learned man but not a very clear thinker. That was the impression that his *Permanent History* left on my mind. But he is an enthusiast. Anyway, I shall try to read his pamphlets.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20734

228. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY[1]

March 23, 1933

DEAR MOTIBABU,

I have your two letters, one enclosing a translation of the letter from Shree Panchanan Tarkaratna. Do please take your own time to deal with the questions that you want to in your letter to me. I shall be patient. As soon as I get a moment I shall read the Trust-Deed you have sent me and let you have my criticism, if there is any to make.

What is the matter with your eyes? Do please let me know exactly what it is.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20725

[1] Of Prabartak Sangha, Chandernagore

229. LETTER TO D. VALISINHA

March 28, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and a copy of your journal.

As a prisoner I am precluded from sending messages except on untouchability. Therefore the only message that I can send you is this, if it is of any use to you: One of the many things for which I revere the life of Gautama Buddha is his utter abolition of untouchability, that is, distinction between high and low.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. D. VALISINHA
MANAGING EDITOR, ''MAHA BODHI"
HOLY ISIPATANA, SARNATH
BENARES

From a microfilm: S.N. 20736

230. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

March 28, 1933

CHI. BHAU,

I have your letter. For the present, you should continue to stay there. You should learn how to mix with people and yet remain uninvolved. You should cheerfully clean latrines and do other physical work which other people ordinarily do not do. You should keep up the desire to return to the Ashram,[1] so that you may be able to observe all its rules. For the present, however, you should keep the wish in check, stay there, and build up good health. We only wish to serve our fellow men wherever we may be, and there, too, you have enough opportunities for service. It is very good indeed that you come in contact with labourers.

Write to me regularly. Fix a particular day of the week for that purpose and write on that day without fail.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6752. Also C.W. 4495. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

[1] At this time the addressee was in Rajkot; *vide* "Letter to Bhau Panse", 20-3-1933.

231. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

March 28, 1933

. . . This Friday will be a day of family gathering. . . .[1] is eager to come. You also may come on that day if you wish to, teach the lesson about Harijans to Dilip[2]. He needs your company. Taramati[3] should learn to be a teacher.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 122

232. LETTER TO BABULAL

March 28, 1933

BHAI BABULAL,

l. If, in spite of your mother's opposition, you regard eradication of untouchability as your dharma, it would be your duty to follow it as much as you can, but keeping your mother mollified.

2. Where no arrangement of clean water for Harijans exists the first duty would be to provide the facility. To that end a good well should be constructed which may be used by all but its situation should be convenient primarily to the Harijans. An explicit notice should be put up there to the effect that the well is both for touchables and untouchables but the untouchables have the first right to it.

3. The agitation for the use of other wells should be continued alongside.

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 20737

233. LETTER TO SECRETARY, CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION, BENARES

March 28, 1933

SECRETARY
CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION
BENARES

There may not be anything very wrong in distributing clothes and sweets to Harijan children but it does not in any way impress me.

[1] The name is omitted in the source.
[2] Addressee's son
[3] Addressee's wife

Were they in need of these things? If they were it was well that the things were distributed. If there was no need I am afraid it will not help eradicate untouchability, it can possibly lead to self-delusion. Is it not possible that we forget our true duty by making such donations? Such are the questions that arise in my mind. But I do not wish to judge your action. And I have no right to comment on any activity in which the revered Malaviyaji was himself participating. It happens at times. I hope you understand me,

From a microfilm of the Hindi: S.N. 20724

234. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

March 28, 1933

Two large-sized telescopes[1] placed in the open yard occupied by Mr. Gandhi in the Yeravda Jail presented an unusual spectacle amidst the severe simplicity of the jail surroundings. . . .

[Mr. Gandhi said:]

They are for me.

Astronomy had always interested him, Mr. Gandhi stated, but after entering the jail this time, he was devoting himself to it with greater interest than ever before. Mr. Gandhi proceeded:

Now it has become a passion with me. Every free minute I get I devote myself to it. It is a wonderful subject, and more than anything else impresses upon me the mystery of God and the majesty of the universe. To be lying on your back in the open air on a starry night and regarding universe after universe in the immeasurable expanse, you cannot help becoming a worshipper of God. My mind leaps with joy as I do so. Oh, it is marvellous !

It did not require a study of higher mathematics, Mr. Gandhi added, as his interest in astronomy was not professional. He had been reading numerous books on the subject and with the aid of the apparatus before him, he would see more of those universes with his own eyes. He could easily understand their use as their adjustments, though delicate, were simple.

The Hindu, 3-4-1933

[1] According to the report, these were lent to Gandhiji by Lady Premlila Thackersey of Poona.

235. LETTER TO P. R. LELE

March 29, 1933

MY DEAR LELE,

You have sent me a cutting from the *Free Press* about the opening ceremony of a school. What I should like to have from you is not Press cuttings for reproduction, but an authenticated report from you so that I can publish it under the authority of the Provincial Board. Sjt. Anjaria should have supplied you with this report of the opening of the school in Andheri.

In the report it is stated that the gathering consisted mainly of Harijan men and boys. Could that be true? An authentic report should also state how much the running of the school is likely to cost and how much has been already collected towards the cost, and there should be something of the description of the building itself. And then it is bad to have to print a report of an isolated event. There should be a connected narrative of the activities of or under the Board during a given period.[1] Do you not think so?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20743

236. LETTER TO N.

March 29, 1933

MY DEAR N.,

I have your letter of 26th instant. You are right. I do want truth and love to peep out of every word I write, and if they do not do so, it is not due to want of effort on my part. You need not therefore be afraid about my consciously rubbing up R. the wrong way. I wrote[2] to him yesterday expressing about the same sentiments that you have in your letter before me. He sent me two letters in the same cover, both of them were unsatisfactory.

I could see that truth had not yet dawned upon him.

You will describe your new situation as fully as you can, your surroundings, the neighbours, the population of the village, the things

[1] In reply to this, the addressee assured Gandhiji in his letter of April l, 1933, (S.N. 20798) that the *Free Press* report was "an exact reproduction of the authenticated report that was sent to the Press".

[2] *Vide* "Letter to N.", 28-3-1933.

that can be purchased in the village, its distance from Mysore or Bangalore or any big centre, distance from the nearest railway station, the condition of water supply, the composition of the population and the like. Tell me also whether you can have good milk there. What are the cattle in the village? And if you cannot get good cow's milk, and if there are goats there, you will not hesitate to have goat's milk for S.[1] You should learn to milk goats yourself and have the goat brought before you, so that you are sure of the purity of the milk supplied, and if there are cows there, learn to milk the cows yourself. If you feel weak or if you find that your digestive apparatus does not keep up to mark, I would like you to go back to milk and butter, but no butter so much as milk, and take unfired milk, as you saw me take it. I should then have no anxiety about your health.

Whilst I would like you to live the life of the poorest of Harijans, I do not want you to do the impossible, and therefore whatever your health peremptorily demands, you should take if you tan get it for the begging. If you cannot, in a perfectly honourable way, God will give you the strength to suffer privation, but even then you will not misfeed yourself. Fasting is better than taking food that you cannot assimilate or that gives you no stamina. A few dry dates or raisins or figs well washed will at a pinch sustain you and even S., but I am sure that if you have living faith in living truth, it will not try you beyond your capacity for endurance.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20751

237. LETTER TO R. F. PIPER

March 29, 1933

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I was sorry not to be able to meet you. Here are the answers to your questions:[2]

l. By machinery I have no doubt you mean power machinery. Considered in terms of millions of the population of India, power machinery is not indispensable for their material prosperity.

[1] Addressee's son

[2] The questions asked by the addressee were:

(1) Are not machines necessary for the material development of India? (2) What can religion contribute to human progress? (3) What chiefly is faulty in Christianity? What strong? (4) By what methods do you come by your basic discoveries or insights? (5) How make man good? (S.N. 20667)

2. Mankind has found religion in some shape or other indispensable for its very existence, hence it is fair to presume that mankind will need religion and I cannot conceive the moral growth of mankind without religion.
3. It would be presumption on my part to pronounce any judgment on Christianity, or for that matter any religion other than my own.
4. By incessant and prayerful striving.
5. I know of no method whereby man can be made good, but in so far as any making is possible it can only be done by setting a personal example.

Yours sincerely,

R. F. PIPER, ESQ.
PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
SYRACUSE, NEW YORK

From a photostat: S.N. 20750

238. LETTER TO PANCHANAN TARKARATNA

March 29, 1933

DEAR PANDITJI,

I thank you for your letter which Motibabu has kindly translated for me.

On the one hand I see that you consider the matter of untouchability supersensuous and on the other you are applying mere mundane situations to the matter. Personally, I do not regard untouchability as a supersensuous matter. I regard nothing as supersensuous which is capable of being proved through the senses. Thus, I would consider the question of the existence of God as supersensuous but not so the shape of the earth, and as our Shastras teach us, it would be a misuse of spiritual gifts to apply them for the discovery or for proving the properties of material objects. Untouchability as described in the Shastras is a purely material thing. There is nothing supersensuous in it. Therefore if I apply the ordinary laws governing the examination of ordinary things I am doing no violence to the Shastras.

Thus examined, in spite of what may be said in the Shastras, hereditary untouchability has no basis, and if a *Chandala, so* described, did not disclose his birth, there is no test whereby he could

be distinguished from the rest. What applies to him applies with much greater force to his progeny.

I am afraid that your analogy of the Red Indians, the Australian Indians and other such races has no application whatsoever to Indian conditions, and it is historically untrue to say that in India there has been no mixture of races. On the contrary, there is incontestable proof that mixture of blood has been constantly going on in India since the known beginnings of time.

As to the pandits whose testimony I have cited, several who have upheld my interpretation I have not even had the pleasure of knowing. They have accepted the same authority that you are quoting, only they have given a different interpretation to yours.

With due humility I claim that though I can make no pretension to Sanskrit learning, I know enough of Sanskrit and have read enough of the scriptures to be able to form my own judgment on conflicting interpretations being presented to me of the Shastras.

With reference to your son, my own recollection is distinct that he was to have come as your representative, not in order to have a religious disputation but to hold a discourse with me in order to present your viewpoint and in order that I could understand it, so that if it was at all possible we might find ourselves on the same platform.[1]

Surely, that was an object wholly different from that of the pandits who came to engage in a set debate between rival schools of thoughts with judges to regulate the debate. Your son coming as one of these disputants was not the same as his coming as your deputy without the conditions that governed the Pandits. Of course there was nothing wrong about his being one of the pandits, but that could not be a fulfilment of your promise. If he had the intention of engaging in a friendly and personal conversation with me after the debate, he could still do so. I shall be pleased to meet him any time he comes and patiently listen to all he might have to say. I can give you my assurance that I have not shut my ears to anything that might have still to be said on behalf of the part that upholds modern untouchability as an integral part of Hinduism.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20744

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Panchanan

239. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

March 29, 1933

DEAR MOTIBABU,

Here's my replay[1] to Pandit Panchanan Tarkaratna.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

SJT. MOTILAL ROY
PRABARTAK SANGHA
CHANDERNAGORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 20744

240. LETTER TO KEDAR NATH TEWARI

March 29, 1933

MY DEAR TEWARI,

I have your letter. I well remember meeting you and your wife on the metre gauge Delhi line.

I am delighted to find that you have opened a well for the public including Harijans. I hope the general public is making use of it side by side with the Harijans.

With regards to both of you,

Yours sincerely,

PT. KEDAR NATH TEWARI
C|O R. S. JHANGI RAM BHATIA
BEHIND GOVT. PRESS
LAHORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 20749

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

241. LETTER TO AMINA G. QURESHI

March 29, 1933

CHI. AMINA,

I hope Qureshi's imprisonment has not made you unhappy. It seems that you have again stopped your study. Has Wahid's[1] fever gone? You must continue to write to me.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6664

242. A LETTER

March 29, 1933

Is it truthfulness to live in the Ashram but follow a mode of life different from the Ashram ideal? I want you to get out of this. I would rather say that you lived thousands of miles away from me but followed truth than that you should stay with me and live in falsehood. I have already failed once in judging you. Similarly, it is possible that I may be proved wrong again in distrusting you. I pray to God that I may be. If that happens, my first failure will be cancelled out. At present, however, I feel that you have been deceiving me.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 205

243. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 29, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your big packet of mail today. You will find with this a detailed letter of suggestions to Purushottam. Ramabehn cannot be got operated upon immediately. In any case do get her examined by Haribhai[2]. So far as I can judge, the operation will not be an easy one. I also doubt its necessity. Is it likely that the arms which did not become limp all these years will become so now? I cannot be easily alarmed by such a fear.

Kanu's[3] case requires careful thinking. Get him examined again

[1] Addressee's son
[2] Dr. Harilal Desai
[3] Addressee's son

by Haribhai. Let me know what he says. The pain in the arm seems to have lasted very long. I think it is not being vigorously massaged. He is likely to benefit if that part is also exposed to the rays of the sun. I have had no experience as to whether it would help better if the rays were passed through a red glass. My experience means the experience of Hanumantrai. Ask Purushottam to read Dr. Sharma's book which we have there and to try the experiments described in it. Perhaps they may help.

I understand what you say regarding Narahari's letter. Discuss with him and other responsible inmates of the Ashram, the suggestions which you approve of and let me know the result. I think you will find most of the suggestions acceptable. That you will be able to please Narahari is also an important consideration.

Mohan must have recovered now. His illness has lasted quite long.

It is not that I want only scholars' criticism of *Ishucharita*[1]. I want yours and the women's too, if you and they have read the book. Since the book has been written for the layman, Valji is eager to know the opinions of all. He wants them no matter whether they are favourable or otherwise.

You should start utilizing Parachure Shastri's services now. Has his son been given any work? Can he do anything? Can you control him?

I will wait for your next letter for your views regarding Shanta.

I have written to Santok regarding Keshu. You need not write from there. She and Damodardas are coming tomorrow to see me. I have a letter from Keshu written yesterday in which he says that he may not now go there.

If Dhiru[2] himself wants to learn painting in a spirit of dedication and agrees to observe the [Ashram] vows in Santiniketan and live there as an ideal student, if he is also ready to learn whatever else he can learn there, I think he can do excellent service afterwards. Painting also can be of two kinds, divine and demoniac, *sattvik* and *rajasik*, moral and immoral. I believe every word of what Dhiru has said. If he is so cager to learn painting, I think we should encourage him. Just as Panditji has dedicated his art to service and people get its benefit and are likely to get it in a still greater measure in future, so also can one dedicate painting to service. Painting is silent music. We can see from our experience of paintings which excite passion that, if a painter painted pictures which would purify us of passion, their power would

[1] "Life of Jesus"; *vide* "Letter to Valji G. Desai", 19-10-1932.

[2] Vrajlal Gandhi's son

be felt even by the coarsest of men. There are pictures painted with this aim. But of course there are very few painters of this type. If somebody from the Ashram becomes such an artist, we should admire him. Probably you do not know that we had started training Balkrishna[1] to make him such a sculptor. He had even made a few statues. He himself then gave up the work. He has even given his reason for doing so in the letter which I received from him this week. We shall not mind if Dhiru's effort to learn painting also meets the same fate. I don't know how they teach painting in Santiniketan. But there is no better place in India at present for learning this art. But I should also like to say that if anybody else, following Dhiru's example, wishes to learn painting, we may not readily agree. Dhiru's heart has been set on this art for many years and his love of it is pure. He seems to be well-behaved in other ways and has the strength and the will to observe the Ashram rules. He has also been living in the Ashram for many years. If these assumptions are not correct, we cannot send him. We cannot send him also if there is the slightest doubt about the purity of his character. He can be sent only if he understands all this, willingly accepts the conditions which I have put in my letter to him and if all of you can trust his word, and if all these requirements are fulfilled I think it is our duty to let him go. All of you should consider the case from this point of view and decide. Don't forget to invite Narahari to join in the discussion. After the incident concerning . . .[2], we should be careful. A frightened man sees a cause of fear everywhere. If Dhiru indulges in lustful fancies, if he is a boy with an impure mind, painting is likely to prove a dangerous pursuit for him. These arts are alluring. The world itself is alluring, and it is no wonder that the arts of an alluring world should be equally alluring. But just as the world, though it is alluring to the senses, can be a field, for attaining *moksha*, can be a manifestation of the glory of God, so can art. Out of a thousand artists one may become a *bhakta*. I know that nine hundred and ninety-nine become lovers of the flesh. If you have faith in Dhiru that he will be one in a thousand, if all of you feel sure about that, let him have your blessings and go. Having done so, we should trust to our fate. We will dedicate to Shri Krishna our decision to send him.

I started writing this letter before the morning prayer and end it exactly at four o'clock. It is still ten minutes before the prayer starts.

BAPU

[1] Balkrishna Bhave

[2] The name has been omitted.

[PS.]

Anandi is now able to move about. She has been coming to see me for the last two days.

There are nine letters in all, including this.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8344. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

244. LETTER TO PANNALAL JHAVERI

March 29, 1933

CHI. PANNALAL,

I have received both your letters. You have been hasty in passing judgement on Narandas. The decision about Mahavir[1] was not his; it was mine. Considering his rudeness, the lies that he resorted to and his financial bungling, any other decision was impossible. Behind the seemingly harsh decision, there is only pity. Krishnamaiyadevi[2] did not know the truth. Even then, after Narandas gave his opinion, Panditji, Totaramji and Chimanlal conducted an inquiry. They gave their views separately and their conclusions were the same. Only then were Mahavir and Krishnamaiyadevi asked to leave the Ashram. I had not been inclined to have women [in the Ashram]. But Narandas showed courage. I have very little to do even with the help that is to be given. I had only suggested that they should be enabled to reach Darjeeling and provided with expenses for two months.

Narandas found this course difficult and found an easier way. The Ashram was under no obligation to accommodate the Giri family. In having them there, I had saddled Maganlal with a great burden, and had stretched the rules of the Ashram. It was with great difficulty that we passed these many years. I have no regrets about it. But if I go on witnessing violations of the Ashram rules, there certainly will be reason for me to regret. Now if Mahavir continues with his tales of woe, that will be one more reason why he should go. He is not as innocent as you think. Thinking him innocent I am not prepared to make him helpless. If you have the time, go deeply into the matter and if you find you are mistaken correct the mistake. If not, and if you think I am in the wrong, show me how.

Do not judge anyone in haste, certainly not your colleagues. You have written to me that you heard many complaints against Narandas. Let me know whatever you have heard.

[1] Mahavir Giri, son of Krishnamaiyadevi

[2] Wife of Dalbahadur Giri

Let me know your programme if you can. Where is Gangabehn at present? She has not written to me at all after she came to meet me. It is long since I had any letter from Nanibehn.

We are all doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

As you have forgotten to write the address, I am sending this to Harjivanbhai.

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari—Pannalal Jhaveri, pp. 30-31

245. TELEGRAM TO BACHHRAJ[1]

March 30, 1933

TO
BACHHRAJ
WARDHA

REPORT FULL CONDITION POONAMCHAND. IF JAJUJI OR POONAMCHAND'S WIFE ABLE SEE HIM THEY MUST TELL HIM FAST QUITE WRONG IF IT BE FOR ABOLITION CLASSIFICATION.

GANDHI

Home Department, Government of Bombay, I. G. P. File No. 20-X

246. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

March 30, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

Today I take this up after prayer and after writing important letters to the Ashram about the ailing persons of whom three are having the fasting cure under Purushottam's supervision. So you are not to grumble if I give this only half an hour.

Your letter came in yesterday, i.e., record good time after your transfer.

[1] According to *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, "Speech at Farewell Meeting", 15-10-1901 Gandhiji was permitted by the Government to send a telegram to Jajuji but not to Poonamchand directly; *vide* the letters to the Secretary, Government of Bombay, "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", 28-3-1933 and ; 1-4-1933.

You are hard on poor babies!! You forget that you were one and I expect thankful for having survived the baby stage! Celibacy for those who can appreciate it and live up to it is a very fine thing. But it must be allowed that it is a supernatural state for embodied beings. They live in pain and will to the end of time. It is therefore perhaps improper to be impatient with the married state and its results. After all we owe Gautam Buddha, Jesus, Zoroaster, Mohammed, Rama, Krishna, St. Francis and numberless such men and women to the married state. We cannot afford to be self-righteous. We cannot fathom the mystery of God. We need therefore to be charitable at every step. We ourselves stand in need of charity every moment. Married state is the only deliverance for millions from a life of lust and misery. It is well that Verrier and Mary have been able to give up the idea of marriage but I was not going to judge them if they had married. They are both striving to do the best that is possible for them. They are brave and true souls. No one is expected to do more than the best. To live up to one's dharma (i.e., the best in one) is better than trying (vainly), to live up to another's dharma (i.e., his best). A sweeper who lives up to his state is superior to the Brahmin who is merely playing at his state. Is all this clear, I wonder? I did not want to deliver this sermon to you. But your references to Verrier and the poor dead twins jarred and I thought I would warn you. Do not brood over this. These are momentary things in you. Your bottom is sound and fully weather-proof. It is good that you pour out your innermost thoughts to me without staying to think how I would take them. I want to know you just as you are. And here goes the 5.30 bugle. I must not stay with you longer today. The rest you will have from Ba's letter.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6268. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9734

247. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

March 30, 1933

DEAR SATISBABU,

I have your letter of 23rd instant. I understand what you mean. Of course I saw the sentences that followed your description of Bengal untouchability as a greater curse. There was no logical sequence between that description and what you stated. By describing it as a greater curse you prepared the reader for the greater depths of degradation but not the extent in point of numbers. And then, I

suppose you are not aware of the fact that if the Bengal description of untouchability was applied to Madras, then the untouchables would be perhaps 90% of the Hindu population, for every non-Brahmin is practically an untouchable to a Brahmin in the Bengal sense of untouchability. There are only two divisions in the south, Brahmins and non-Brahmins. Are you aware that if a non-Brahmin looked at the food of a Brahmin, that food becomes polluted? Hence my insistence upon stepping into the opponent's shoes and examining his argument from his own standpoint. I think that there is decidedly a meaning in the Bengal argument that untouchability in Bengal is of the mildest type and that real untouchability is confined to the Bhangis, Mehtars and the like, who are, after all, imported. That we have to deal with every aspect of untouchability is quite true, but we shall only be able to deal with it when we are exquisitely balanced in our statements and that balance can only come if we will give even an exaggerated importance to the arguments of the opponents. Ahimsa is a most exacting dame and it sits with the most sensitive scales noticing even an atom's weight of *himsa* or want of charity. We are on the safest ground. We therefore need not be in a hurry to give them battle. It will be time enough when they reach our border. Whatever case they have, they are weakening by going about it the wrong way, but there we cannot help them. They will have to see the error themselves.

I wonder if I have made my argument quite clear. If I have not, you must hammer away at it till I see your point or you see mine.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20756

248. LETTER TO K. KELAPPAN

March 30, 1933

MY DEAR KELAPPAN,

I have got your long-looked-for letter. You ought not to keep me waiting so long. You do not consider that the Guruvayur affair is over. It won't be over till every public temple, let alone Guruvayur, is open to the Harijans. Therefore it is necessary for me to keep myself in touch with you, the prime cause of making Guruvayur the centre of the temple-entry fight. All your activity therefore has to have the opening of Guruvayur as the background. Public opinion should be cultivated. The sanatanists should be converted. We do not want the temple to be opened in the teeth of their opposition, but we want them to be converted. That can only happen if we are pure, single-minded, gentle, courteous toward them and show that religion is just as

precious to us as they claim it is to them.

I see what happened at the Conference. Do not now wait for any instruction from the All-India Board, but make a list of the names proposed by you as the Committee and send that list to the All-India Board and a copy to me. Give a brief description of every member of the Committee.

I am surprised that you are not getting a copy of the *Harijan.* I shall see to it that you get a copy. The paper is being sent to you at Shraddhanand Ashram, Payyoli. The address will now be changed. But you must enquire at the above address.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. KELAPPAN
PAKKANARPURAM, PAYYOLI (N. MALABAR)

From a microfilm: S.N. 20754

249. LETTER TO VITHAL S. PANDIT

March 30, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your interesting letter of 26th instant describing your work in the matter of untouchability. You should continue to inform me of the progress from time to time. I don't need to give you any special guidance, but I take it that you are diligently following the columns of the *Harijan.*

Yours sincerely,

SJT. VITHAL S. PANDIT
HON. SECRETARY
R. D. HARIJAN SEVA SANGH
KUDAL (DIST. RATNAGIRI)

From a microfilm: S.N. 20755

250. LETTER TO M. M. ANANTA RAU

March 30, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Forgive me. I evidently missed your question. You may show the correspondence between us to anybody you like.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. M. M. ANANTA RAU
SANATANA DHARMA KARYALAYA
40 ISWARDAS LALA ST.
TRIPLICANE, MADRAS

From the original: C.W. 9579

251. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

March 30, 1933

MY DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

You have given me a capital story[1] for the *Harijan*. It is going in this week. It does not show you as a sentimentalist, but, thank God, it shows that you do possess sentiment. Every possessor of sentiment is not a sentimentalist. Let us hope that this advertisement would not mean loss of employment to him. Let us hope that this example will prove infectious.

Poor Shastri and his wife have had a bad time of it. They were both laid up in bed with malaria and Shastri's mother-in-law is not keeping overwell. But they are much better now.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1118

[1] This was about a Bengali youth, an Oxford graduate, working as sweeper in the streets of Delhi in the regular employment of the city Municipality and was published in *Harijan*, 1-4-1933, under the title "Sweeper by Choice".

252. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

March 30, 1933

MY DEAR BHRRR,

I have your letter. I hope that the heat which must have now commenced in Kathiawar was not unbearable. You have been luckier than before in your collections this time. If you had not been, the white beard would have been required to be dyed black. That it would have made you look much younger than you are is true, but one cannot have the cake and eat it also. Happily, no such transformation is now necessary and let the silvery beard continuously produce silver coins in abundance.

Yes, Raihana came to me and presented me with a Harijan song. Let her stay here as long as it is possible for her to do so. What she requires is quiet and cool air. There she would be besieged by young men requiring her advice. But she has no business to act the grandmother whilst she is so feeble in health. Kamalmian should behave better, and he must get out of the middling condition. Please give my love to Mrs. Hamidali. May she take you away to Mussoorie before May, if it is possible. Devchand Parekh is greedy. You cannot go to Africa for collections and it is a wrong thing on principle. You cannot carry on anti-untouchability work by getting money from outside. Local work must be locally paid for. If the very large population of Kathiawar cannot find sufficient money for untouchability work, it had better not be done. And after all, money is not the primary thing. The primary thing is character and application. Money won't change the sanatanist's heart. Untouchability campaign is service of God. You cannot summon Mammon to your assistance for rendering that service. Therefore so far as Kathiawar work is concerned your limit is Kathiawar.

Love from us all to you all.

Yours,

BHRRR

From a photostat: S.N. 9584

253. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

March 30, 1933

MY DEAR RAJBHOJ,

At last you are in the Ashram. Now I want you to become of the Ashram. You will therefore commence with silent labour and feel at home with everybody.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 782

254. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 30, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I forgot to write to you about Rajbhoj. Look after him. Ask him and find out his needs. He will have to observe all the Ashram rules and take part in all its activities.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C. W. 8345. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

255. LETTER TO AMINA G. QURESHI

March 30, 1933

CHI. AMINA,

Everyone writes and tells me that you are showing great courage and patience. If Imam Saheb's daughter, brought up in Phoenix and in the Ashram, does not do that, whom else can we expect to do it? If you keep up your patience till the end, both you and I will win. I always wished to see you in excellent health and capable of complete self-control. I suppose you know that both the words, *sanyam* and *parhejgari* mean self-control. One cannot cultivate devotion to God without self-control. It was for cultivating self-control that Imam Sahebcame to live with me permanently. He was very eager to see you having grown up to be a woman leading a life of self-control, and it seems that you will fulfil his hope.

I hope the children are happy.

I have written to Purushottam for your treatment.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6665

256. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

March 30, 1933

CHI. MRIDU,

Your letter came after a lapse of many days. In fact, instead of one, I received two letters, for, when you write to Sardar, it is as good as all of us receiving the letter.

Your letters reflect your composure. May you always be as calm.

Your experiences are good. Those who have an understanding of life have been able to drink draughts of joy from it. They have even been able to change their lives.

Everybody is entitled to plead for Ba. You have that right all the more, for your love is such. You may take it that as a result of your pleading I have written a very long letter to Ba. But you will be pleased to know what Ba has conveyed through Kusum. With reference to my letters to her Ba commented: "Yes, Bapu is an absolute *sadhu* where I am concerned." I alone know what a humbug I am as a *sadhu.* But what if it is my partiality for Ba which makes me write briefly to her. Surely you have heard the saying that a lover's love does not wait upon civilities. But Ba is fully entitled to blame me. Her words may condemn me, but her actions make her rise and since I am holding on to her, shall I not rise too? So, you should go on pleading for Ba.

It is only here that I realized that Mani has inherited her dexterity from Sardar. Motilalji had been astonished by Mani's dexterity. I gave her room in the Ashram to Motilalji. He commented at once: "I have not seen such neatness even at Anand Bhavan." You should at least learn this from her. She also has an amazing capacity for devotion to the person whom she has chosen for it. In fearlessness some of your girls can rival her. So I shall not draw your attention to

it. I would have very much liked to have Mirabehn's company for a longer period, but we must live as God makes us live.

I always have you before my mind's eyes. You are of course shy by nature. So I must draw your attention to it. It is true that whatever we do should be done rightly. But rightly does not mean perfectly. God alone is perfect. All beginning is imperfect. That is why it should be considered enough if what we do is done rightly. If we join our voices in *Ramdhun,* we may say we sing rightly. But that does not mean that we have learnt music. The same applies to *bhajans.* We can in a little time develop the capacity. Cultivating music as an art is a different subject. You may do it with pleasure when the time for it comes. But you can do immediately the things mentioned above.

Bharati has forgotten me altogether.

Now there is no time to write more. I do intend writing to Ambalalbhai.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11113. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

257. A LETTER[1]

March 30, 1933

I discovered only here that Mani's orderliness is inherited from her father. It astonished Motilalji who was given her room at the Ashram and he exclaimed that such neatness he had not seen even at Anand Bhawan. This is something which you can learn from her. And she has a wonderful capacity for service to anyone whom she chooses to serve. In courage some of you can compete with her, so I will not say anything about it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Maniben Patelne, p. 98

[1] The source identifies the addressee as a co-prisoner of Manibehn Patel in Belgaum Jail.

258. LETTER TO GOPIKANT CHOWDHURY

[Before *March 31, 1933*][1]

DEAR BROTHER GOPIKANT,

Yours is to hand. Let the wells be open to one and all. Public opinion should be gathered in favour of temple-entry. Interdining is not a component part of the removal of untouchability. 'To drink water polluted by Harijans is not a sin'—this is my personal motto. When we wish to do away with untouchability, it is not a sin to drink water 'polluted' by untouchables.

Whether to drink or not to drink water is a thing of individual concern. You are ever welcome to me, if there arises any necessity.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a newspaper cutting: S.N. 20785

259. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

March 31, 1933

MY DEAR HORACE,

Your long letter pleased me immensely. You should repeat the performance whenever the spirit moves you.

You will see that I have made use in the current *Harijan* of one important portion of your letter.[2] The other important part is with reference to reproducing in the *Harijan* the views of Dr. Ambedkar and those of the sanatanists. This is not always possible. I gave much thought to it. To make the paper self-supporting, to refuse all advertisements, as the initiator of the movement to give my views as exhaustively as possible on the current happenings about Harijans, to combine all these things in one paper becomes almost an impossible task. And then the reproduction of sanatanist views and those of the Ambedkar school was unnecessary for the vast majority of readers, because they knew all the sides of the question and they had been published in the daily Press. It could then be of use only to the

[1] The newspaper report is dated March 31, 1933.

[2] *Vide* "Notes", sub-title "Hard Facts, Not Words".

foreign readers, of whom there are naturally but a select few. Whether few or many they could not be neglected, and I knew that they were being well-supplied with the literature outside what could be handled by the *Harijan*. And this extra reading they had to do, whether through the *Harijan* or through the original sources, and I came to the conclusion that I must leave them to gather the different viewpoints through the original sources. And because I have done so, it has been possible for me, even from almost the beginning, to make the *Harijan* self-supporting. I have certainly taken extraordinary precaution not to give any colouring to the views of the other sides, whenever it has been necessary for me to give them. More than this I must not say.

Thus, though I am not able to give effect, as you would wish it, to this part of your letter, you know that everything you say must produce its invisible effect upon my mind, and therefore whatever you think is worth passing on to me you should do unhesitatingly. The freer and fuller the criticism of friends and associates like you, the lighter and better will my work be, and such criticism will itself be an important part of our contribution to the *Harijan* cause.

Please share this letter with C. F. Andrews, Jack Hoyland and others.

I hope you are now so well that there is no occasion even to make any enquiry about your health.

Love to you all from us all.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1420

260. LETTER TO ELIZABETH F. HOWARD

March 31, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I was greatly touched by your letter. The information that you give me about the proposed Ashram at Itarsi is instructive. I hope that when the founders do actually come, they will keep themselves in touch with me.

It will no doubt be a very great thing if you could start an inter-racial settlement in South Africa. I know how difficult it is, but

what is difficult for us, frail human beings, will not be difficult for God when it becomes His will.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MISS ELIZABETH HOWARD
ARDMORE
BUCKHURST HILL
ESSEX

From a photostat: G.N. 866

261. LETTER TO JOHN. S. HOYLAND

March 31, 1933

MY DEAR HOYLAND,

I have your letter. I take this up at the point where I have left the letter to Horace Alexander.

You have asked whether I could suggest anything for your silent prayers on Friday evenings in connection with the Harijan cause. This is what suggests itself to me as I am dictating this letter:

Let those who are working for the cause of the most helpless people in the world never swerve an inch from truth and cause them always to be humble in what they do. Let them do it all for Thy sake.

Love from us all.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

JOHN S. HOYLAND, ESQ.
HOLLAND HOUSE
WOODBROOKE
SELLY OAK
BIRMINGHAM

From a photostat: C.W. 4509. Courtesy: Woodbrooke College, Birmin-gham, and Jessie Hoyland. Also S.N. 20765

262. LETTER TO KAMALADEVI

March 31, 1933

DEAR KAMALADEVI,

I have your letter. Do come and see me on the 10th April. I shall be looking out for you on the day at about 2 o'clock. That would be a convenient hour for me.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20786

263. LETTER TO GERTRUDE S. KELLER-CHING

March 31, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I have your long letter and I was glad to find that you had gone to a meeting addressed by Mr. Errivaz.

There is one sentiment in your letter which I should like to correct. You say: "My life is a great rush and I do not get much time to pray and meditate." This is what people often say, but it is not right. I think the Latin proverb is literally true: "To labour is to pray." And if you would but labour for the sake of God, then no work becomes a rush. We simply give then the best of what is in us. Then there is no feeling of utter exhaustion, and when the whole life becomes a dedication, it becomes a perpetual prayer and meditation. For meditation you do not need a special time. Meditation to be true should be interwoven with every activity of ours. Try and test the truth of this for yourself.

You have asked me how I am keeping. Thank you for the enquiry. I am keeping quite well indeed.

Mrs. Gandhi and Mirabai are co-prisoners living in the same jail. They are quite well and happy.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. GERTRUDE S. KELLER-CHING
VILLA LAVOISIER
LE SIGNAL

From a photostat: S.N. 20779

264. LETTER TO N.

March 31, 1933

MY DEAR N.,

Ramachandra tells me how he saw you off for your village and how Rudramani was too late for the train and how Ramachandra had to advance Rs. 10. Who was to pay the railway fare? Was it Rudramani? Do tell me all about him, his age, his education, his occupation, and let him write to me.

I am sending you this letter to the address that, Ramachandra has given me.

Then Ramachandra says, "To her I particularly said that she must dress very much more modestly than now and live like the village womenfolk do." This is right. You know how best to give effect to it. Of course the idea of modesty differs with different countries and different people, and if we leave our surroundings and adopt others, we have to respond to them when we want to suit ourselves to the surroundings and identify ourselves with the people as you do with the *Harijans*. I know that there is the question of expense involved here. You will tell me all about the proposal frankly and fully. Let me have a copy of the statement that you were to publish.

Then Ramachandra says, "Please be writing to her if possible to keep silence for some hours daily and not to talk much and get worried." This means that you have been talking away and if that is so, again Ramachandra's warning is correct. It would not be a bad thing at all if you actually imposed silence on yourself for a few hours daily and made a conscious attempt not to talk except when it became absolutely necessary. Let your service be your sermon, your talk, your delight.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20777

265. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA

March 31, 1933

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRA,

I have your postcard. What you say is quite correct. I am writing to N. Devi. Do please tell me something more about Rudramani. Who is he, what is his education, what is his occupation? Did he refund you the Rs. 10? Was he to pay for the fare, or was he not? Has he sufficient means?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20778

266. LETTER TO ADA WEST

March 31, 1933

MY DEAR DEVI,

I am glad you have been accommodated in a place where you will be less prone to colds. Muriel tells me how useful you had made yourself at Kingsley Hall. You could not do otherwise, no matter where you were placed. I would have been surprised if she had given me a different report. I shall expect to hear from you during the next week. Then I shall know how you actually felt in your new place.

Yours sincerely,

MISS DEVI WEST
C/O MISS A. PALMER
218 WHIPPENDEL ROAD
WATFORD, HERTS.

From a photostat: S.N. 20775

267. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

March 31, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

You are still unrepentant. Be it so then.

You did a very good thing in calling Amina to stay with you. She will be happy there. Treat her children as if you had adopted them as your own.

I hope your study is progressing well. One must never give up a task that one has undertaken. When you are very busy, you may give less time to study, but you should have some practice every day in reading, writing and speaking.

We should not decide about the arm in a hurry. I have written to Narandas. Sardar will write from here to Dr. Patel. It is necessary to get information about some details from him. I hope the advice about the operation has not frightened you. Wasn't Anandi operated upon without any trouble? About you, too, I will decide quickly after gettingall the information. There is no cause at all for worry.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5346

268. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVLEKAR

March 31, 1933

BHAI SATAVLEKAR,

I have your letter. Your reply about beef is very much to my liking.[1] Rajendralal Mitra was a great scholar. He died many years ago. Someone had casually sent me the booklet[2].

The propaganda work should not be totally abandoned even though no journal is brought out in Marathi. I hope *Sakal* and other papers lend their support to the eradication of untouchability.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

PANDIT SATAVLEKAR
SVADHYAYA MANDAL
AUNDH
DIST. SATARA

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 4774. Courtesy: S. D. Satavlekar

[1] The addressee in his letter had said that where the Shastras mentioned eating of the cow, the word 'cow', was to be interpreted as "produce from the cow".

[2] *Beef in Ancient India* Gandhiji had sent it to the addressee for his comments.

269. NOTES

MAJORITY *V.* MINORITY

A graduate from Madras sends the following quotation from *Indian Home Rule*:

> It is a superstition and an ungodly thing to believe that an act of a majority binds a minority. Many examples can be given in which acts of majorities will be found to have been wrong, and those of minorities to have been right. All reforms owe their origin to the initiation of minorities in opposition to the majorities. If among a band of robbers, a knowledge of robbery is obligatory, is a pious man to accept the obligation? So long as the superstition that man should obey unjust laws exists, so long will their slavery exist. And a passive resister alone can remove such a superstition.[1]

and writes:

> Kindly permit me to invite your attention to the above extract from your *Indian Home Rule.* From this we see that you once held the opinion contained therein. However, the above opinion of your own has been trampled under foot in connection with the temple-entry question. Are we to take that the present position differs from then position held by you then? Apparently, the position taken up by you is inconsistent. We hope to be enlightened on the subject.

It is unjust to a writer to quote against him passages from his writings without reference to the context. Nor should I care to defend what may appear to be my inconsistencies. I should leave the readers to judge for themselves. In this instance the quotation appears to me to propound a great truth often overlooked. Anyway I believe in every word of it. The Temple-entry Bills do not violate the rule. They do not bind the minority to anything, they compel it to do nothing. But if a majority may not compel a minority to its will, nor may the latter compel the former. But the natural rule is that, where there is a dispute between a majority and a minority, the latter will, without admitting the rightness of the action of the former, let it have its way and, if it believes the majority in the wrong, refuse its co-operation. One of the Temple-entry Bills does that and nothing more. But I am myself so jealous of the rights and wishes of minorities if only

[1] *Vide* "Hind Swaraj".

because I have been always, in the beginning at least, in a minority. I have, therefore, proposed, as the reader should know, a solution whereby the minority will have its wishes also respected. The other Bill takes away no rights of anybody. It simply takes the question of untouchability from the purview of the civil law. It does not interfere with the conscience or the religious observances of anybody. In fact, the Bills are designed to protect all views and one merely provides what to do in the event of a difference of opinion. Here I see no infringement of the rule enunciated in the quotation from *Indian Home Rule*. It shows how a minority can protect itself.

"HARD FACTS, NOT WORDS"

For the guidance of anti-untouchability workers I quote the following from a long and instructive letter from an English friend[1] from whom I had invited suggestions for improving the *Harijan*:

> The statement of *things done*, of progress, from week to week, seems to be very valuable. I wish it could sometimes be expanded, and not give only the skeleton. . . . I have wondered if the new Society will undertake any local surveys and publish the results. I should like to read paragraphs like this: 'In . . . taluka according to a survey made by a member of the Society during the last fortnight, 25 village wells are being used by all castes without discrimination. Twelve of these have been opened to the untouchables since last September. But there are still 18 village wells from which the untouchables are excluded. The figures for temples are . . . and so on.
>
> Of course, I do not know if you have enough volunteers present for much work of this kind. Naturally, they will combine propaganda with their survey. You know that we, Britishers, prefer hard facts to many words—or at least, we think we do!

I venture to think that it is not only the Britisher who wants hard facts rather than words, that is, practice more than precept. Everyone wants deeds. Words may follow to explain the deeds sometimes. The more reports one can have of the work done and the difficulties experienced both with the sanatanists and the Harijans, the more useful will the *Harijan* become. There should be no difficulty in producing surveys such as has been suggested by the correspondent. We have nothing to conceal. If we find that in a particular area there are one hundred wells and only one has been opened to the Harijans,

[1] Presumably Horace G. Alexander. 31-3-1933.

we should not be ashamed to own the fact. The shame will lie not in the confession of the fact but in its existence. The confession will be the beginning of its end. We shall learn to deal with difficulties only when we know them in their full measure.

Harijan, 1-4-1933

270. PROPAGANDA v. *CONSTRUCTION*

The indictment[1] by a Harijan of Harijan uplift organizations that was published in these columns some time ago has given rise to interesting correspondence.

It is necessary in the light of that indictment and the correspondence to examine the pros and cons of propaganda and construction and to know exactly what is meant by the latter.

Propaganda in connection with the anti-untouchability movement has meant an energetic distribution of literature among the caste Hindus, spreading information about untouchability and holding meetings among them. The Guruvayur referendum was essentially such propaganda. It has also meant holding Harijan conferences and the like for the purpose of telling the Harijans what is being done by the caste Hindus and what is expected of Harijans in the way of internal reform, such as observance of the laws of sanitation and giving up carrion-eating and other un-Hindu practices.

Such propaganda is undoubtedly necessary. We cannot have too much of it, if we can carry it on without creating bad blood and friction. Whilst the sanatanists are organizing, themselves and imagining Hinduism to be in danger from the reformers' activity, the latter have to be careful. We do not want to rub the sanatanists up the wrong way. Wherever, therefore, these are in a state of rage, the reformers would do well not to hold their meetings. They are bound to contradict all falsehoods and exaggerations and themselves be scrupulously careful about what they say, write or do. Falsehood will never help any cause, certainly not religion.

Such clean propaganda should be self-supporting. Insistence on making it self-supporting will help to keep it pure and within bounds and make it most effective. Leaflets and other literature must be paid for and may even leave a margin of profits to pay for the necessary

[1] *Vide* "As They see us", 4-3-1933.

expenses of travelling, etc. Let not the reader imagine that I am writing this without any experience. On the contrary, what I am saying is based on an extensive experience gained before I became a 'Mahatma' and whilst I was little known in the surroundings in which God had placed me. Economy of time and money (one and the same thing) was an instinct with me. One who has faith in his mission will find it easy enough to enforce this golden rule of truthful propaganda.

This does not mean that the reader pays for his leaflet in every case. That would be an ideal state. But it does mean that the central organization does not bear the cost. The local agency requiring the leaflets should pay the central organization for them. The local agency in its turn will see that it gets the cost repaid to it, partly by readers and partly by moneyed men interested in the distribution of leaflets. In this way the cost of propaganda will be evenly distributed and not felt by anybody. Such distribution would be a fair index to the strength and popularity of the propaganda. The various editions of the *Harijan* are most certainly designed as propaganda. They will have to be self-supporting or they must stop. The English. and the Bengali editions have already become so. The Gujarati is on a fair way to being so. The Hindi edition is still struggling. The Tamil edition is being published by Sjt. Ganesan without any cost to the provincial organization. The publication of these editions renders it easy for local organizations to carry on their propaganda without much or any cost. They can have all interesting and instructive information published in the various editions of the *Harijan*, which is their organ.

There then remain the travelling charges of lecturers. It goes without saying that they must be all volunteers. If they are moneyed men, they often pay their own travelling expenses. Where this cannot happen, these expenses must be found by the inviting agency. And the general rule is for reception committees formed for the purpose to raise special subscriptions and defray the cost locally. Thus the permanent organizations, whether central or local, merely procure lecturers, give guidance, lend the weight of their name and influence, but, as a rule, incur no expense.

Thus considered, the overhead charges include merely the cost of the organizing staff, rent, stationery and the travelling expenses of the Secretary. The chief officials are often wholly honorary, or are volunteers drawing just enough for their maintenance and always

below their market price. And if the general staff consists wholly, or so far as possible, of Harijans, there will be very little money going into the pockets of caste Hindus, certainly nothing like even ten percent of the collections of the organizations. Thus, Lala Mohanlal of the Punjab Provincial Branch says:

> Regarding the overhead charges, I have briefly to submit that, excepting the peon and the clerk, whose bill comes up to Rs. 50 p.m., no overhead charges of permanent or temporary nature have been incurred by the Punjab Board. I am working as General Secretary of the body, but I am drawing my allowances from the Servants of the People Society of which I happen to be a life member. I think this is the minimum staff required for running a provincial organization.

The bulk of the collections will, according to the scheme suggested above, be available for constructive work, such as conducting preparatory schools for Harijans, giving scholarships, opening wells, etc. Here again, care has to be taken to see that most of the paid staff is composed of Harijans, or caste Hindu volunteers who have offered their services free or for less than their market price. But it must be our aim to replace all paid caste Hindus by Harijans. Then there is every chance of all but ten percent of the collections finding its way into Harijan pockets.

And who will deny that this will be the best and the most effective propaganda both for Harijans and caste Hindus? The latter cannot but be touched by the silent, effective and dignified selfless work of caste Hindu volunteers and the consequent rise of the Harijans in the social scale. And there is no reason why we should not have thousands of young men and women from among caste Hindus doing this noble service among those whom society has cruelly neglected for generations. Have we got these missionaries? I have already shown in these pages that we do not need highly educated persons. We want men and women of grit, immovable faith and character that will resist temptation.

Harijan, 1-4-1933

271. STUDENTS AND VACATION

The following is a condensed rendering of a Hindi letter received from a student in Dehra Dun:

> In the hostel belonging to our College, hitherto the Bhangis have taken the leavings of our dishes. But since the awakening we have stopped this practice and we have been giving them clean chapatis and dal. The Harijans are dissatisfied with this. In the leavings they get some ghee and delicacies. The students cannot afford to set apart all these things for Harijans. Then there is this difficulty. We may adhere to the new practice we have adopted, but the Harijans will continue to receive leavings of caste dinners, etc. What is now to be done? And at the same time that you answer this question, I would like you also to say how best we can use our vacation which will presently be upon us.

The difficulty that the correspondent has raised is real. The Harijans have got so used to the leavings that they not only do not mind them but look forward to them. Not to receive them they will regard as a positive deprivation. But this tragic fact just shows the degradation both of Harijans and of caste Hindus. The students need not worry about what happens in other places. The first thing is for them to be in the right and I suggest to them that they should resolutely set apart for their sweepers a liberal amount of the food that is ordinarily cooked for them. The Dehra Dun student has raised the question of cost. I know something of the hostel life all over India. It is my conviction that the general body of students spend far more on delicacies and luxuries than they should. I know, too, that many students consider it undignified not to leave their plates with ample remains of the helpings they had. I suggest to them that to have any leavings whatsoever on their plates is undignified and a sign of disregard of the poor people. No one, least of all a student, has the right to take on his plate more than he could comfortably eat. A student has no business to multiply the delicacies and luxuries. The student life is meant for the cultivation of self-restraint in everything and if they will follow the method of self-restraint and adopt the clean habit of not having any leavings on their plates, they would find that they would effect a saving in their expenses, in spite of setting apart a

generous portion for their sweepers from the ordinary food that may be cooked for themselves.

And then, after having done that, I should expect them to treat the Harijans as if they were their own blood relations, speak to them kindly and tell them why it is necessary for them to give up the unclean habit of eating the leavings of other people's plates and of making other reforms in their lives. As to the use of the vacation by students, it they will approach the work with zeal, they can undoubtedly do many things. I enumerate a few of them.

1. Conduct night and day schools with just a short course, well conceived, to last for the period of the vacation.

2. Visit Harijan quarters and clean them, taking the assistance of Harijans if they would give it.

3. Taking Harijan children for excursions, showing them sights near their villages and teaching them how to study nature, and generally interesting them in their surroundings, giving them by the way a working knowledge of geography and history.

4. Reading to them simple stories from the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*.

5. Teaching them simple *bhajans*.

6. Cleaning the Harijan boys of all the dirt that they would find about their persons and giving both the grown-ups and the children simple lessons in hygiene.

7. Taking a detailed census in selected areas of the condition of Harijans.

8. Taking medical aid to the ailing Harijans.

This is but a sample of what is possible to do among the Harijans. It is a list hurriedly made, but a thoughtful student will, I have no doubt, add many other items.

I have so far confined my attention to the service of Harijans, but there is a service no less necessary to be rendered to caste Hindus. The students can often in the gentlest manner possible carry the message of anti-untouchability to them in spite of themselves. There is so much ignorance which can be easily dispelled by a judicious distribution of clean authentic literature. The students can make a survey of those who are for abolishing untouchability and who are against and, whilst they are making this survey, they may take note of wells, schools, ponds and temples open to Harijans and of those closed to them.

If they will do all these things in a methodical and persistent manner, they will find the results to be startling. Every student should keep a log-book in which he should enter the details of his work, and at the end of the vacation a comprehensive but brief report of the results of their labours could be prepared and sent by them to the Servants of Untouchables Society of their Province. Whether other students accept all or any of the suggestions made here, I shall expect my correspondent to give me a report of what *he* and his associates have done.

Harijan, 1-4-1933

272. 'THIS FIGHT IS NECESSARY'

The reader will appreciate the following instructive letter that Gurudev wrote on reading mine to Boyd Tucker on the place of temples, churches and mosques in religion in reply to his letter to me.[1]

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

It is needless to say that I do not at all relish the idea of divinity being enclosed in a brick-and-mortar temple for the special purpose of exploitation by a particular group of people. I strongly believe that it is possible for the simple-hearted people to realize the presence of God in the open air, in a surrounding free from all artificial obstruction. We know a sect in Bengal, illiterate and not dominated by Brahminical tradition, who enjoy a perfect freedom of worship profoundly universal in character. It was the prohibition for them to enter temples that has helped them in their purity of realization.

The traditional idea of Godhead and conventional forms of worship hardly lay emphasis upon the moral worth of religious practices; their essential value lies in the conformity to custom which creates in the minds of the worshippers an abstract sense of sanctity and sanction. When we argue with them in the name of justice and humanity, it is contemptuously ignored, for, as I have said, the moral appeal of the cause has no meaning for them and you know that there are practices and legends connected with a number of our sectarian creeds and practices which are ignoble and irrational.

There is a tradition of religion connected with temple worship, and though such traditions can be morally wrong and harmful yet they cannot

[1] For the text of Gandhiji's letter to Boyd Tucker, *vide* "Letter to Byod Tucker", 4-3-1933. *Vide* also "Letter to Boyd Tucker",23-3-1933.

merely be ignored. There the question comes of changing them, of widening their range and character. There can be differences of opinion with regard to the methods to be adopted. From the point of view of the trustees of traditions, they are acting according to an inherent sense of propriety in preserving them as they are, in keeping the enjoyment of idol-worship in temples for exclusive groups of people. They not only deny the right of such worship to Christians and Mahomedans but to sections of their own community. Particular temples and deities are their own property and they keep them locked up in an iron chest. In this they are acting according to traditional religion which allows them such freedom, rather enjoins them to act in this manner. A reformer, in dealing with such morally wrong traditions, cannot adopt coercion and yet, as in fighting with other wrong and harmful customs, he must exert moral force and constantly seek to rectify them. This fight is necessary. I do not think Tucker makes this point clear.

As to the Santiniketan prayer-hall, it is open to all peoples of every faith. Just as its doors do not shut out anybody, so there is nothing in the simple form of worship which excludes peoples of different religions. Our religious service could as well take place under the trees, its truth and sacredness would not at all be affected but perhaps enhanced by such a natural environment. Difficulties of climate and season intervene, otherwise I do not think separate buildings are really necessary for prayer and communion with the Divine.

I have sent a poem[1] for the Harijan—translating it from one of my recent Bengali writings. I do hope it is one in spirit with the ideals of the Harijan, which I read with much pleasure and interest. There can be no more hopeful sign for India than the fact that her repressed humanity is waking up as a result of the great fast.

With loving regards,

Yours sincerely,

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Harijan, 1-4-1933

[1] "The Sacred Touch"; it was published in *Harijan,* 25-3-1933.

273. KABULI ZULUM[1]

The training in patient endurance of the Harijan has to be very generously supplemented by inviting Muslims of piety and influence to meet the Kabulis and point out to them that the taking of exorbitant rates of interest and the use of force for its recovery is contrary to law, morals and Islam and that, therefore, they should either [*sic*] be satisfied with the ordinary interest and recourse to law, if there is failure to pay. Similar educative propaganda has to be carried on among the Bania money-lender who charges the same unconscionable rate of interest as his Kabuli brother.

Harijan, 1-4-1933

274. ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY IN BIHAR

The following report has been received from Bihar of the work done to the middle of March.[2]

It is surely not enough for the local Committees to state that certain wells having been opened to Harijans were closed. It is necessary to state what steps have been taken to mend matters. In so far as a pure water-supply is concerned, it seems to me that it is the first duty of every Committee to make a rapid survey of the conditions as to water-supply and, where it is wholly inadequate, to take steps to redress the grievance.

Harijan, 1-4-1933

[1] The article under this caption, which was adapted from Bengali *Harijan*, and which is not reproduced here, described the plight of Harijans who had borrowed money from Kabuli and Bania money-lenders.

[2] The report, not reproduced here covered various aspects of anti-untouchability work done in Bihar and gave figures concerning temples and wells opened to Harijans, Harijan boys admitted to schools and scholarships given and temperance meetings held.

275. PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

The Home Office in England published for official use a carefully prepared pamphlet entitled *Protective Clothing for Women and Girl Workers Employed in Factories and Workshops*. I am obliged for the pamphlet to Sjt. Hiralal Shah's industrious zeal. It contains different patterns of protective clothing for a well-classified list of employments, and it states that protective clothing has been found to be required for safeguarding the worker against accident or injury to health, or for securing her comfort and convenience in her work, or for protecting her ordinary clothing against damage caused by the materials, machinery, etc., used in the process in which she is employed, or resulting from the conditions under which the work has to be carried [on]. It goes on to state that in the great majority of cases the need for protective clothing arises from one or other of the following causes:

1. dusty or dirty processes,
2. working about machinery,
3. climbing ladders, etc.,
4. use of acids or caustic liquids,
5. wet processes,
6. excessive heat,
7. exposure to weather, etc.

Then follows an instructive but brief description of every type of clothing recommended. There are seven such types designed for 31 employments, coming under the headings I have already given. The pamphlet is profusely illustrated.

I mention this only in order to show the care with which the lives of employees are regarded by the Government in England and to drive the truth home that such meticulous care is exercised in devising methods of not only protecting employees engaged in dirty or injurious trades but also of protecting the public. How much more care is necessary in this climate for protecting the so-called untouchables engaged in dusty or dirty processes and for protecting also the public from the contamination caused by the workers in such employment becoming living carriers of dust and dirt! Their untouchability in no way protects society. On the contrary, a false

sense of security aggravates the danger of contagion or infection and this aggravation is doubled by the fact that such employees, being neglected by society, become themselves so inured to insanitation that the surroundings in which they live become positive factories for disseminating dirt and disease. Hence the necessity for adopting without delay the very simple reform advocated by Sjt. Hiralal Shah. If we did not take a crooked view of untouchability, we should go to the quarters where the untouchables reside; we would begin our study of their conditions by entering our sanitary closets with our eyes wide open. Then society will not consider any cost too great for initiating and completing the reform, by ensuring the necessary measure of sanitation not only in the closets but also in the quarters inhabited by Harijans and by providing protective clothing and conveniences for washing and change.

Harijan, 1-4-1933

276. LETTER TO R. R. CHAKRAVARTI

April 1, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1] of 28th ultimo for which I thank you. I have read Hardayalbabu's letter[2] and carefully noted the parts underlined by you. Are you not hyper-sensitive? I regard it as an inoffensive letter. The substance of it is unfortunately true. The Brahmin as a class does not show himself at his best. I hope you read my article[3] about it in the *Harijan*. I would like you, if you can, to shed what appears to me to be false sensitiveness and to join the ranks of reformers for the purification of Hinduism.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20796

[1] Presumably in reply to Gandhiji's letter to him; *vide* "Letter to R.R. Chakravarti", 21-3-1933.

[2] This was enclosed in proof of his complaint regarding a campaign against Brahmins.

[3] *Vide* "The Much-maligned Brahmin", 25-3-1933.

277. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

April 1, 1933

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY
HOME DEPARTMENT

DEAR SIR,

I am thankful for the receipt in due time of the Government reply to my request about the C. P. prisoner, Seth Poonamchand Ranka, who is reported to be fasting in the Seoni Jail. I am hoping that the permission will be adequate for the purpose intended.

The permission however does not dispose of the larger issue discussed in my letter of the 23rd March. The Government's reply raising the larger issue disturbs the whole arrangement under which I have lived as a prisoner under successive Superintendents. I would therefore like to know the Government's decision on my request. The delay caused in my establishing contact with Seth Poonamchand has meant to me an agony I would not like to go through again.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3885; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 40)(3)A, p. 109

278. LETTER TO V. B. KIRTIKER

April 1, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter[2] of the 15th ultimo. I kept it by me all these days in order to read your argument. It is instructive but not convincing. Varnadharma is not a man-made law but it is a law

[1] The addressee in a despatch advising the Government of India as to the contents of the letter said the letter was under consideration. He also informed Government of India that two requests from correspondents of foreign newspapers to interview Gandhiji had been turned down.

[2] In this the addressee had suggested abolition of the four varnas and a healthy fusion of all the castes and sub-castes of Hinduism.

governing the soul. Man may break it as often as he likes, as he is doing, but he pays the penalty for it. Obedience to it sets free a vast amount of energy for the development of the substantial self, whereas disregard of it involves the expenditure of an amount of energy far too much for the result achieved. You have got to demolish not the varnadharma itself, but its inverted form. I am at one with you in doing so, but I have endeavoured to show that true varnadharma is a great discovery of Hinduism. I can be no party to the attempt to destroy it because the form in which we see it today is serious [*sic*].

Yours sincerely,

SJT. V. B. KIRTIKER
KASHI NIVAS
40 JUHU ROAD
SANTA CRUZ
[BOMBAY]

From a microfilm: S.N. 20797

279. LETTER TO MOHANLAL

April 1, 1933

MY DEAR MOHANLAL,

I have your letter together [with] *The Punjab Land Alienation Act* by Justice Shadi Lal and your articles which I am sure will help me to understand the implications of the Act.[1]

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20799

[1] Gandhiji had asked for the text of the Act in his letter of March 25, 1933, to Amritlal Thakkar who must have passed on the request to Mohanlal, a prominent worker of Punjab; *vide* "Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar", 25-3-1933.

280. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

April 1, 1933

I was sorry that you had to run away so abruptly, but I do hope that there is nothing serious with Father. I hope too that you will behave yourself and not get worse than you were here.

You will render me an account of what you may do without much exertion for the Harijan cause.

PADMAJA NAIDU

From a microfilm: S.N. 20805

281. LETTER TO V. S. R. SASTRI

April 1, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I kept your letter[1] all these days without acknowledgement, because I did not want to send you a reply without having read your letter which you have had so carefully prepared. I must thank you for all the labours that you have given to the task. The texts you have quoted are not unfamiliar to me nor the meanings that you have given. The difference arises from the application. I observe that there is a fundamental difference between you and me, if I may for the moment put myself, a layman, side by side with one so learned as you. That difference is in the interpretation. I look at the Shastras as one organic whole. You take isolated texts and prove your point. That method is as ancient as the human race, but I hold it to be altogether erroneous. It has led to the formation of innumerable sects and rival divisions without bringing us nearer to God or Truth. I will not therefore trouble you any more with my questions but will naturally always welcome anything you might wish to say.

I note also what you say about ahimsa and truth. Here again the same difficulty faces me. I can agree with the position you have taken up and yet defend my own without the slightest difficulty and on the strength of the very Shastras with which you are undoubtedly so familiar. May it not be just possible that those who have the Shastras

[1] Of March 11

and the different interpretations of every one of the texts by heart may miss the central point, and those who neither know them by heart nor understand the meaning of various texts may realize that central truth?

Yours sincerely,

PANDIT V. S. R. SASTRI
25/N SUBBARAYA MUDALY ST.
MYLAPORE, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 20800

282. LETTER TO S. V. SONAVANE[1]

April 1, 1933

MY DEAR SONAVANE,

I have your letter. I have heard from Shree Jajuji also. Am I right in assuming that you will take the whole of your course at the Benares Hindu University? If so, have you got the syllabus and the terms? If you have not, you may make the preparations, for I am hoping that the needed scholarship will be found for you, subject of course to satisfactory certificate being received from the University from time to time.

You are asking for Rs. 10 towards the maintenance of your parents. Why do you want that assistance? Are you at present finding that amount for them? If you are not, how have they managed up to now? I understand that you have a grown-up sister or sisters. Should they not be earning something? Have they received any education? If they are willing workers, work can surely be found for them. But I am in darkness. Please give me the exact condition of your home.

The enclosed is the form I would suggest for your signature if you approve of it. If you do not, you would tell me what alterations you desire.

Yours sincerely,

[ENCLOSURE]

With reference to the scholarship up to Rs. 2,000 (Rupees two

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's application for monetary help in the shape of a scholarship for Harijan students. His ambition was to study Civil Engineering for the next five years.

thousand only) that I may get from . . . for the prosecution of my studies at the Benares Hindu University, I undertake, at the end of the course, to use all my services for the advancement of the Harijan cause, and I shall always regard the scholarship as a moral obligation to repay it out of my earnings, should they exceed my requirements calculated on a simple scale.

Place .....

Date .....

From a microfilm: S.N. 20801

283. A LETTER

April I, 1933

I have read the addition to the original legal opinion. I do not think that it is necessary to publish it now. It will simply raise an unnecessary discussion. What may prove useful is another considered opinion based on other questions altogether. I could frame them, but I have not got the time If Mr. Bahadurji could think out something original and striking, I would love it. I do not mind even if it is an anonymous contribution, but I want something solid, absolutely impartial, a study of the Bills that will compel attention and show, as I think they do show, that there is no compulsion, as it is generally understood, involved in either Bill against anybody.

I enclose herewith letter[1] for Goolamben.

Encl. 1

From a microfilm: S.N. 20795

[1] This is not traceable.

284. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 1, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

. . .'s[1] affair is becoming a very painful one. It has led to other revelations. I still do not quite see my way, but I will draw your attention to one rule of the Ashram.

Nobody in the Ashram can accept a personal gift. Anything received by any inmate belongs to the Ashram. Nobody possesses anything that is his personal property. This rule is implicit in the vow of non-possession. But I think there are some exceptions to this rule. All of you should consider what they are and commit them to writing.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I Also C.W. 8346. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

285. LETTER TO MANSHANKER J. TRIVEDI

April 1, 1933

CHI . MANU,

I read your letters to your father. Every word in them bespeaks the purity of your heart. But you are altogether on the wrong path, as you have forsaken your duty. It would be considered a breach of trust if a person appointed to do one thing leaves it and does another. An agent commissioned to buy vegetables has no authority to return with a precious stone, though the latter is more valuable than the former. A jewel cannot serve the same purpose as a vegetable. As you are still a student and went abroad specially for study, you ought not to marry Elizabeth even if she is as good-looking as Rambha and as faithful as Savitri. To fall in love while one is a student is against dharma. If you understand this, wake up from the spell under which you have fallen. If, however, you think that it is your dharma to cling to your error, I am helpless.

[1] The name has been omitted.

I have written to your father about the other points.

May God show you the right path and lead you to your good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 22622

286. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

April 1, 1933

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

Your letters are received regularly. I have written to Amina. It will certainly be good if she gives up tobacco. If she can, let her prolong the fast. She will definitely benefit by it. After one breaks the fast only fruit should be given for a few days, afterwards milk and fruit. You may consider unboiled milk also.

Jamna and Chimanlal will certainly be benefited. There can never be any harm.

But now I am a little worried about you. You should improve your own health. If you only interest yourself in other patients, you will not benefit either. Then you need a little more study and experience of nature cure. I want that you should familiarize yourself with the experience of all such centres in India. I know most of them. I don't know whether you are well acquainted with Gaurishanker. You have also to see whether you have mastered yogasanas. It is my desire to exact a good deal of work from you after you have gained the necessary proficiency. But we should not be hasty. For the present, you should observe and treat the patients there. This will take quite a bit of your time. You should also keep writing to me about the condition of your health. I am not concerned about weight. It is enough if the bowels are cleared regularly and you feel fresh and energetic.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 912. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

287. EXPERIENCE OF A TEACHER

I have already given[1] some experience of a teacher who has been working among Harijans. From his other letters, I give below some more of his experiences.[2] The reader need not be startled by this teacher's enthusiastic language. He is an emotional person. His experience is very new. We hope the English proverb about new brooms will not apply to this teacher and his enthusiasm will grow day by day. And it will only grow if he has faith. The sun of faith can melt mountains of ice. If this teacher has towards these Harijan children the same feeling of love that a mother has for her child suffering from a repulsive disease, he will not be repulsed by their uncleanliness but will make them tidy and clean like other cultured children. Whether this teacher fulfils the promise or not, the conditions that he has laid down for himself are indispensable for an ideal teacher of Harjians.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 2-4-1933

288. IN KODINAR TALUKA

The well-known lawyer of Amreli, Shri Harilal Govindji, describes the workers' tour in Kodinar taluka as follows.[3]

I know that the pace of Harijan welfare activities in Kathiawar is slow. In spite of that if those who work there do not lose heart and give up patience, if they work with steadfast faith and love, untouchability will be uprooted from Kathiawar also. It is a very bad habit to concentrate on results. A person who gets disappointed at seeing results over which we have little control and which necessarily depend on many other factors is not a brave man but a coward. Cowards have never produced results. Those who are indifferent to results but remain engrossed in their work become instrumental in

[1] *Vide* Notes", 26-3-1933.

[2] Not translated here; for a free and condensed translation by Gandhiji, *vide* "What It Means", 8-4-1933.

[3] The report is not translated here. The correspondent had described how he and other Harijan workers had tried to create an atmosphere congenial to the removal of untouchability and how favourably the sanatanists and the Harijans had responded to his gesture.

bringing about early results. Moreover, there is never any defeat for them because their success lies in their doing their duty and not in the results thereof. One is master of one's actions, the master of results is God alone. Therefore I hope that Shri Harilalbhai and his friends will cling unto death to the resolve they have expressed in this letter.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 2-4-1933

289. LET THERE BE NO BLUNDER!

Shri Hiralal Shah sounds the following warning[1] about what I wrote concerning his scheme[2].

This warning is justified. If anyone's scheme is not presented as it is, there may be terrible consequences. And one who has presented his thoughts methodically is shocked if their translation is given by someone else differently; not only that, but at times it may produce a contrary effect and a blunder may be committed.

I have presumed on the part of the readers an acquaintance with Hiralal's scheme and have thus endeavoured to save my article from possible misinterpretation. I have made no effort to put the scheme just as it is before the reader. I have only given a summary. I have suggested that the scheme deserves consideration. My work is at present limited. I place many things before the readers. Whether to implement them or not is up to the men and women workers. It is the author's responsibility to take care of his scheme after I have more or less introduced it [to the public]. At present I can do no more than this.

There was much else in Shri Hiralal's letter. I have quoted only the essential part of it. Those who are interested in this scheme should write to Shri Hiralal and obtain full information and should then do what they can to implement his scheme.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 2-4-1933

[1] This is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that if a scheme were not properly introduced, the result would be contrary to what was desired. He had then cited the example of the uniform and added that if proper care were not taken about its use, instead of removing untouchability it might actually perpetuate it by becoming a symbol of it.

[2] *Vide* "A Worthwhile Scheme", 19-3-1933.

290. ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

WRATH OF HARIJANS[1]

How can your anger be pacified? I do not quite understand what your demand is. The chief executives of the Harijan Sevak Sangh are caste Hindus because it is for them to atone for their sins. Harijans can most certainly form their own organizations and they have been doing it. They should try to provide guidance to the institutions manned by caste Hindus. Ultimately, it is for the caste Hindus to pass the test at the hands of Harijans. God alone knows whether or not they will. The caste Hindus' burden of sin is so great that they are beyond redemption; who can save them now? If their sins have accumulated so much, they are most likely to meet their doom. But tell me what else can the caste Hindus do except regarding the Harijans like themselves and how can they make amends to the Harijans who do not regard themselves as Hindus? And, pray, what kind of amends?

IS NON-CO-OPERATION NOT APPLICABLE TO HARIJANS? [2]

I have your letter. Convey the following to your friend: No one is surprised that the food accepted by the stomach of a sturdy man is not acceptable to the stomach of a delicate man. It is sheer lack of understanding to apply the great rule to the absolutely uneducated when it can be applied only to the sensible. All rules are not equally applicable at all times and places and to all men. Such rules could hardly be as many as the fingers of one's hand. Many other rules have to be modified according to differences of time, place and individuals. If we thought in terms of the good society, we would realize that applying to Harijans or their children the rule we have applied to ourselves is likely to prove grossly unjust. The friend should adhere to his position and firmly participate in the giving of scholarships, etc., to Harijan children.

[1] A small section of Harijans, not satisfied with the Temple-entry Bill, the services of Hindu reformers or the Yeravda Pact, had demanded the management of all Harijan welfare bodies by Harijans themselves.

[2] The correspondent, Nrisinhaprasad Bhatt, a co-worker, had found it odd that the people participating in the non-co-operation movement should be called upon to help the Harijan students studying in Government schools and universities (S.N. 20714).

Your argument that all Hindus, whether touchable or untouchable, should be known as Hindus is correct. But so long as untouchability is not wiped out, why should not our brethren who are regarded as untouchables be addressed by a sweet rather than a bitter name? A wayward son can refer to his mother as his "dad's woman", whereas, an obedient son will address her as "honoured mother".

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 2-4-1933

291. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

April 2, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. You did well in writing it. It is a good one. I cannot reply to you in detail today. Though the letter is good, it shows a pride unworthy of a woman who claims to be a *brahmacharini*. Remember the story of Narad. The moment he felt proud of his *brahmacharya*, he fell. One who aspires to observe *brahmacharya* relies only on God, and hence he is always humble. He never trusts himself. Anybody who is incapable from birth of feeling passion is not a human being. Such a person is either God, or lacks the power which makes a man a man or a woman a woman. In other words, he or she is an incomplete human being, is diseased. How can God be proud? Is a stone proud of being a stone? A diseased person should not be proud of being so. A man or a woman can cultivate the strength to control his or her passion and put the power so conserved to better use. But as soon as he or she becomes proud of such strength, it will be lost. How do you know to what extent the power of *brahmacharya* which you may have in you is being wasted? Your *brahmacharya* is certainly not perfect. Find out the natural truth about you. If you never feel passion, are you a goddess? A goddess would be a different kind of being from what you are. You are no goddess, and I don't think that you are diseased, since you get monthly periods. Examine yourself and write to me again.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10332. Also C.W. 6772. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] A gentleman had remarked that by calling the untouchables Harijans untouchability would be perpetuated under a new name.

292. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 2, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

The clock has just struck three and, after cleansing the teeth, I have sat down to write this letter.

You seem to feel a little defeated. That will not do. You must have observed that I tell everybody in my letters that they should do nothing mechanically unless they are convinced about it. One should accept a thing either with one's heart or with one's reason. One can accept a thing with the heart only if one has faith. But in either case one feels satisfied and happy. When reason does not understand a thing nor does the heart accept it, one feels discontented and slowly loses strength and energy. Though such a person works day and night without rest, his work is not well done and he becomes weaker and weaker and falls ill. This does not happen when one does work in which one has faith. 'What can I do? I know that all this is not right, but I have to do it out of respect for my elders.' This is not faith, but false civility. According to our definition of truth, it is also a form of untruth. This is the feeling which your letter [of the 31st] gives. Don't do anything because Narahari or I ask you to do it. Do a thing only if you are convinced that it is right. You are completely free to reject all suggestions of Narahari, for the final responsibility is yours. Many of Narahari's suggestions appeal to me, that is, they seem good on paper. If you feel that some of them are already being acted upon or that some others don't deserve to be accepted, you ought to take no action about them. You should try to explain your point of view gently to Narahari, and, if he does not see it, you should be patient and have faith that he will see it in the end or that you will see your error. Meanwhile, you should not let estrangement grow between him and you and neither of you should suspect the other of deliberate hostility. In some matters everything depends on one's method of work. You should understand Narahari's point of view. He is particular only about two things. He is open-hearted, hard-working and sensible. He has no control over his temper and is incapable of understanding certain things. But he doesn't worry about those things either. He is good at heart and harbours no resentment. One should be

patient with such a person. You should, therefore, try to understand his suggestions patiently and reason with him. Do not get upset or lose your peace of mind.

Read the letter which I have written to Parachure Shastri. I have written in it about his diet. He should now start working.

I sent a wire to Jivraj[1] at once yesterday. I will write to him today. We should bear all things. Just now I am probing the depths of mental leprosy. This case of physical leprosy, therefore, does not affect me much.

Umedram wants to learn music. Make the necessary arrangements for that and then arrange the rest of his programme of work.

Invite Marybehn to come again.

Personally I don't feel at all that Kusum is improving. Did you forward to Talwalkar my letter to him? I myself have no faith in his method of treating consumption. I would prefer Sharma's treatment if he agrees to come. Now Purushottam is our Sharma. I don't want to load him with much work till he is sure of his health. It is desirable that he should undertake more responsibility only after his experiment on himself has succeeded. Otherwise his health would break down. We will make no change before I get Talwalkar's reply. Nor should we upset Kusum. Talwalkar is a gentleman. He is also an experienced physician. Many patients put complete faith in him and remain under his treatment till the end. Quite a few of them die, but some recover too. It is the same with other physicians. If, therefore, we lose somebody by trusting to Talwalkar completely, we will not blame him. I have only expressed my own lack of faith in his method of treatment. I have faith only in nature-cure. When a case requires an operation, we certainly require a surgeon, but that happens in very few cases. If you have thought further about Kusum's case and have any suggestions to make, write to me. Get from Talwalkar his reply to my letter as early as possible.

Don't burden Purushottam with responsibility for more than four patients at a time.

. . .[2] does not seem likely to come in the near future. All the

[1] Dr. Jivraj Mehta

[2] The names have been omitted,

same, I have discussed the subject further in my letter to . . which you should read.

I will not write more now.

BAPU

[PS.]

> As for those who worship Me, thinking on Me alone and nothing else, ever attached to Me, I bear the burden of getting them what they need.[1]

If . . .'s[2] letters have been read by the people concerned there, please return them to . . .. Send to him my letter to . . .[3] also. Read all the accompanying letters before handing them over. There are eleven in all including this.

Umedram, Jivraj, Amina, Purushottam, Mary, Parachure Shastri, Kusum, Narahari, Lakshmidas, Prema.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8347. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

293. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

April 2, 1933

BOYS AND GIRLS,

I would like you to collect the bones you come across. I will find a use for them. Manure is certainly made by grinding them. But how to grind them or whether they can be put to still better use—I will have to find out.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, IX. 22
[2] The names have been omitted.
[5] Addressee's younger son
[3] *ibid*

294. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

April 2, 1933

CHI. JAMNA,

There is no need to write to you separately since I write to Purushottam regularly. Cling to Purushottam's treatment till he admits failure. I am sure, simple remedies will cure your disease. Patience and faith are absolutely necessary. I do not know yet what is the matter with Kanu[5]. I have been thinking about Kusum. You have wisdom and can also write well. Use your ability and pour out your heart in long letters to me.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 874. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

295. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

April 2, 1933

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I have your letter. I don't think it possible to get a temple built. However, you should continue your efforts. Some day failure will change to success.

I send you with this a letter for Ranjit Pandit. He has gone there. You may give it to him if you want to and if he is there.

Who is Rana? His suggestions seem very bad and your criticism is fully justified. Stick to your stand, and don't mind it if, in consequence, you fail in your aim. I see no objection to a temple being built even if the funds are collected from the reformers. If such a temple is built and is maintained properly on religious lines, it can become a great centre. The site must be good and the men in charge of it should be persons of character. We do need a few model temples.

Sarupbehn gives an unfavourable account of the Bhangi quarters at Rajkot. Are they quite so bad? Wouldn't the municipality do anything to improve them?

Let me know how you are.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9648. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

296. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

April 2, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

I wrote one letter[1] to you today morning. You will probably get it before this. What you write about . . .[2] and . . .[3] is a half-truth. Everybody makes mistakes. We should not be upset if somebody makes one, but we are bound to feel unhappy when a person hides his mistake and it is brought to light in spite of him, and then he puts up an unworthy defence. If we do not feel unhappy, we shall never find a way of preventing such incidents. If we assume that such things will always happen and do nothing to prevent them, that will mean destruction of society. We must, therefore, do what we can to prevent them. We will do so only if we are shocked by such incidents. We can say that one should not feel pain or get angry for things which don't matter, and I think you also mean only that. If you mean anything more, I am sure that you are wrong. If some other word is suggested in place of "pain" or "shock", I might accept it. But your letter seems to spring from *moha*[4], I cannot explain how. I cannot say whether the word *moha* is correct. I will be satisfied if you understand what I mean.

I have already admitted the mistake which I made.

What I want you to show is simplicity of heart, tenderness, humility, patience, forbearance and generosity towards others. You can show these things only if you come down from the sky to the earth. When will you begin to feel that you are nothing? Is it proper to bow down to Mother Earth every day and then kick her every day? If our prayer to her is sincere, we should make ourselves mere particles of dust and learn to suffer the kicks of the world. Mother Earth then will not feel our feet, as we shall have become ash, though still alive. "Scatter the dust of separateness", as the poet says.

I have still a stock of the slivers sent by you. It was not your fault that they contain rough particles. The fault was partly that of the carding-bow and partly of the cotton. If you had carded the cotton

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 2-4-1933.

[2] The names have been omitted.

[3] *ibid*

[4] Attachment

still further, the fibres would have become weak. Other slivers do not yield very fine yarn, but they contain fewer particles.

I am very glad that you have taken Parachure Shastri's son in your hand.

You advised Shanta well. She may now do whatever she likes.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10333. Also C.W. 6773. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

297. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

April 2, 1933

CHI. PANDITJI,

I have your letter.

It will be better if Dattatreya meets me before coming to you. What salary does he want? Which languages does he know? Perhaps we may be able to give him some work.

Umedram wants to become proficient in music. Do what you can for him.

Are the Chharas[1] still there or have they gone away? If they are there, are they still active?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 245. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

298. LETTER TO PARASHURAM MEHROTRA

April 2, 1933

CHI. PARASHURAM,

Teach Rajbhoj[2] well and see that he becomes proficient. Marybehn and Duncanbhai missed you very much.

You should not hesitate to write to me anything that comes to your mind. I wish to get plenty of work out of you, if you are ready to give it. And for that I must know your mind completely.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7513. Also C. W. 4990. Courtesy: Parashuram Mehrotra

[1] An ex-criminal tribe of central Gujarat

[2] P. N. Rajbhoj, a Harijan leader. He had gone to stay at the Ashram for some time; *vide* "Letter to P. N. Rajbhoj",30-3-1933

299. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

April 2, 1933

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I have your letter.

I do not wish to issue an order, nor do I have any such right. In the end I will always be satisfied with what you do, but I will continue to tell you what I want. I attach herewith a [draft bill] approved by you.[1] I shall publish nothing in your name without your desire or permission, and anything I might do would be not to compliment you but to serve the Harijan cause

The suggestion is not for building a new temple and throwing it open, but for permitting the entry of Harijans to one of the four which already exist.[2] I do wish that you should do this much if possible. I am also of the view that it should be published in the *Gazette* that the Bhavnagar Ruler does not approve of discrimination against anybody in regard to schools, etc. There is some such law in your State. It will be enough if this principle is explicitly declared in it. It can be enforced only to the extent that the people are ready to co-operate. I do not wish that you should force the people to do anything. All that I want is that the State subjects should be informed of the policy of the Ruler, and that not orally but through a legal declaration. In any case I do not wish to kill the goose that lays golden eggs. For my part I want no eggs at all. The milk of a milch goat would satisfy me and I would not complain even if the goat occasionally hit me with its horns.

Do take care of your health.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5928. Also C. W. 3244. Courtesy: Mahesh P. Pattani

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Prabhashankar Pattani", 23-3-1933.

[2] *ibid*

300. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

April 2, 1933

BHAI HARIBHAU,

Indefinite fasts certainly have their place in the circumstances which you have described. But they require the utmost fitness on the part of those who fast. It would be enough even if we get only one thousand such persons. What God has ordained will happen.

What you write about Gaurishanker is correct. Keep me informed about yourself. You claim to have gained experience only after you have fully recovered. What does Modi say? I have not heard from him as yet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 6077. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

301. LETTER TO AMINA QURESHI

April 2, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER AMINA,

Keep up the courage you have displayed. You are bound to get over the craving for chillies, etc. If you wish to have your body shining like gold and to devote yourself to service, you have to overcome that craving. There is no need at all to rub the teeth with tobacco. In place of it, use charcoal dust strained through fine cloth and mixed with salt. Use a neem or *babul* twig as brush. Since you have progressed so far, get rid of all weak habits. But do only as much as your strength permits. If one attempts such things out of regard for anybody one may be led into untruth and false show. Let them never come near you. Keep writing to me.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10796. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

302. LETTER TO RAM NARAYAN CHAUDHRI

April 2, 1933

BHAI RAMNARAYAN,

I have made use of your letter in *Harijan Sevak*[1]—you may look it up. Dewan Bahadur[2] and you should approach rich men and collect donations for sinking wells. Also prepare a map indicating the various spots where wells are needed. You must publish a compilation of data about the number of Harijans, their occupations and so on. Find out the outlay on the wells and other relevant facts.

Blessings to Anjanadevi[3].

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapu-Maine Kya Dekha? Kya Samajha?, p. 112

303. LETTER TO KAMAL KISHORE MEHROTRA

April 2, 1933

CHI. KAMAL KISHORE ALIAS HANUMAN[4],

You have introduced yourself well. Remain a Hanuman even now. Hanuman as a child was very rampageous but on growing up he displayed his powers of *brahmacharya* and became a great devotee of Rama, so much so that when we sing praises of Rama we remember Hanuman first. You should become like him and be worthy of the name 'Hanuman'. Let us see what you do.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 4992. Courtesy: Parashuram Mehrotra. Also G.N. 7515

[1] *Vide* "Deprived even of Water", 14-4-1933.

[2] Dewan Bahadur Harbilas Sarda

[3] Addressee's wife

[4] Parashuram Mehrotra's eleven-year old son who used to keep on changing places during prayers and thus cause disturbance

304. LETTER TO AMARNATH TANDON

April 2, 1933

BHAI AMARANTH,

The books should be lent to the untouchables on the same conditions as are applicable to others. But they should not be charged any subscription.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[PS.]

Congratulations on the additions to the library.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 229

305. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

April, 2, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I have your letter. I write regularly. You must now put your faith in Dr. Sharma's treatment. God will do as He wills. Not all people spending thousands on treatment get well. So we must stick to one in whom we have placed our confidence. Doctor's son must have fully recovered. He can come to the Ashram whenever he wishes.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Do you know that Amina is fasting in order to lose weight? Purushottam is treating her.

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 281

306. LETTER TO GAURISHANKAR

[About *April 2, 1933*][1]

DEAR GAURISHANKAR,

It is two days since Bhau[2] came here. His health has improved a great deal. He has a feeling of respect for you. I am thankful to you for helping him recover so fast.

Radhakrishna told me that at present you can treat one or two persons well. When there is a little free time, I shall try to send Bapa. He is a pure-hearted man. He too suffers from constipation like Bhau. He has very little appetite.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

307. LETTER TO P. R. LELE

April 3, 1933

MY DEAR LELE,

I have your letter for which I thank you[3]. What I would like you to do is to send me the week's activities giving me the option of publishing them or not. I want the *Harijan* to be, among other things, a true record of substantial activities of the different organizations. I know you understand exactly what I mean. We do not want any show of work and if we cannot have any substantial work, we must humbly make that confession.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. R. LELE
C/O SERVANTS OF UNTOUCHABLES SOCIETY
JEHANGIR WADIA BUILDING
ESPLANADE ROAD, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20818

[1] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Haribhau Upadhyaya", 3-2-1933 and; 2-4-1933.

[2] Bhau Panse

[3] The addressee had asked in his letter of April 1, 1933, if it would be all right for him to send consolidated monthly reports instead of weekly reports (S.N. 20798).

308. LETTER TO BAJI KRISHNA RAO[1]

April 3, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I was sorry to read your announcement, but I cannot help saying that your fast was an utterly uncalled for and an ignorant performance. I hope it has left you none the worse for it bodily. There can be no spiritual gain from such an ill-conceived fast like yours. Surely you had no data to enable you to come to the conclusion that the defeat suffered by Sjt. Deorukhker was due to the sins of caste Hindus. I do not know the cause of his defeat but I am quite sure that you could not know them either. And why should you take it for granted that every Harijan candidate for election should succeed, whether he deserves or not? It would be a terrible test for caste Hindus if you expected them in open elections invariably to elect a Harijan candidate when one offers himself for election. What therefore in my opinion you need to do is to do real penance for the unjustified penance you have done and that penance consists in never again to do a single thing thoughtlessly.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. BAJI KRISHNA RAO
1ST CHETMI BAZAAR
SECUNDERABAD, DECCAN

From a microfilm: S.N. 20819

309. LETTER TO DR. HIRALAL SHARMA

April 3, 1933

DEAR DR. SHARMA,

I have your letter and I am glad you are coming at last to the Ashram. Do please bring your child, and I shall be delighted if the place is found to be suitable both by you and him. Narandas warns me that the principal patients are just now out of the Ashram. I do not mind it at all. There are many things for you to examine and see from

[1] The addressee, a social worker, in his letter of April 1, 1933 had informed Gandhiji of his intention to fast from April I to April 3 in order to do penance for the depressed classes leader Deorukhker's defeat at an election.

the nature-cure standpoint, and there is the common complaint about constipation which you would be able to deal with.

I am glad you have driven out Amtussalaam's superstition that she is suffering from T. B. She has a very vivid imagination and she conjures up evil where there is none.

I want from your presence in the Ashram much more than mere treatment of a few patients. A firm believer in nature-cure myself, I would like to find in you a kindred spirit given up wholly to truthful research without any mental reservations. And if I can get such a man with also a belief in the Ashram ideals, I could regard it as a great event. I know you too are approaching the visit in that light. You will therefore please make yourself thoroughly at home at the Ashram and study it in every detail. It is my belief that a nature-cure man should be able to vanquish the climate. Millions of human beings ought to be able to live healthy life by understanding the laws of adaptability to the climate in which they find themselves. They cannot have changes that rich men can afford and I cannot imagine nature to be so cruel as to be partial to the rich and indifferent to the poor. On the contrary I believe in the Biblical saying that "it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven", and another Biblical verse says that "the Kingdom of Heaven is within you". Therefore I have always imagined that laws of nature are simple and understandable and capable of being followed easily by the millions.

I would ask you therefore to approach the Ashram with the set purpose of discovering the means of preserving or regaining health in the ordinary Indian climate.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, pp. 22-3

310. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 3, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

The morning post has already been dispatched. I got your letter after it was sent.

I send with this a copy of the letter which I have written to

Dr. Sharma. You will know my views from that letter. You will also find in it answers to all your questions. I, therefore, don't write more about the subject in this letter. Your question regarding Parachure Shastri is good. This is the difference between his and Raojibhai's case. Parachure Shastri belongs to the Ashram. He had come to live in the Ashram as a regular member. He intended to stay at least for three years, but circumstances obliged him to leave. I, therefore, thought that it was our duty to support him. But any number of outsiders like Raojibhai may wish to live in the Ashram. I am afraid that we cannot take in all such persons. If you and I were the only inmates of the Ashram, we could please ourselves and do anything we liked.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M M.U./I. Also C.W. 8348. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

311. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

Y. M.,
April 3, 1933

CHI. MRIDULA,

I have received your letter. Have you received Sardar's letter? It was written before mine. The purpose of writing this is to say that Manibehn does not seem to be getting Sardar's letters, though Sardar has been writing regularly and I too have been scribbling a few words at the bottom. I may not have one it in a few cases. It is a mystery why Manihas not been receiving the letters. We are making enquiries. Meanwhile let Mani know this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11114. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

312. LETTER TO BEGUM MOHAMMAD ALAM[1]

April 3, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

Your letter. I am afraid I cannot write a long letter. Restrain the Doctor from working overmuch.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 32

313. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

April 3/4 /933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your two letters. I have been watching the progress of the *Harijan Sevak*. Of course there is a steady improvement. There has to be a choice made, even of my writings; not all that I write for the English *Harijan* can be fit for reproduction in the Hindi edition, and I quite agree with you that what is reproduced should have the Hindi flavour about it; and not be a mere mechanical translation. I will bear your remarks in mind and will not send translations from here. Of course I want Viyogi Hari to do that. It was only because he was just now unable to cope with it that I began to translate here instead of sending the articles to Kashinath and Ramdas Goud. I quite agree with you that there should be some stories from Sanskrit or other sources, and poems too, if they are original and have first-class merit. I shall be entirely satisfied if you will look through the *Harijan Sevak* week to week as you have been doing recently.

I understand now what to do about the transfer for funds to you. Besides the money lying at the Press, I have received an anonymous donation of Rs. 500 today to be used for the cause at my discretion.[2] I am having that too transferred to the Board to be used subject to the donor's condition.

[1] Wife of Dr. Sheikh Mohammad Alam of Lahore

[2] This was from Dr. Behramji Khambhatta.

I am glad you have definitely decided to have the operation performed. I would be still gladder when you give me the definite date.

I understand what you say about the controversy in Bengal.

You ask me to send a copy of the *Harijan* to the Bengal Secretariat for His Excellency the Governor. I have a great deal of hesitation in doing so, for I do not know him personally. If therefore I send a copy to one, I should send to all the Secretariats, but that is not what you want me to do, and that is not what is necessary either, as it appears to me. I think I told you that Lord Reading and also Lady Reading used specially to subscribe to *Young India*. These big functionaries do not hesitate to express their wants, and it would look officious to supply them in anticipation. But you know the Governor of Bengal, and after all, the *Harijan* is being published under the aegis of the Central Board. It would be therefore quite proper for you to send a paper in your capacity as President to any of your big acquaintances.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 20814

314. LETTER TO PREMNATH BHARGAVA

April 4, 1933

MY DEAR PREM NATH,

I have a copy of your letter of 27th February. My guidance consists in a radical change in outlook.[1] What I would like you to do is to satisfy the requirements set forth in my article in the *Harijan* on the 'disposal of carcasses'[2]. If you have not read it, you should procure a copy and read it. That would mean your learning the A B C of treatment. You have to begin by handling the carcass at the spot where it is found and treating it, not in a central depot but in the village near by, knowing what to do with every part of the carcass. When you have succeeded in doing this, the second step will be to take charge of the

[1] The addressee's plan was to appoint an agent of his factory to treat carcasses on the spot, fuller curing to be done in the tannery afterwards.

[2] *Vide* "Disposal of Carcasses", 12-3-1933.

hides that have at least gone through the primary cure, but this is a programme for which you are hardly prepared. If you are, you will certainly be my man.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. PREM NATH BHARGAVA
BAGH RAM SAHAI
AGRA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20824

315. LETTER TO P. H. GADRE

April 4, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have now gone through your collection[1] over which you have laboured so much and so well.

Although the whole of the selection is good, I have omitted some of the verses, though good in themselves, as being not quite relevant to the issue.

I would like you now to make a collection of such verses, if there are any, from Gnana Dev and other saints of Maharashtra.

I shall expect in due course the information about the sweepers and Mahars in Nasik.

Yours sincerely,

GADRE

From a microfilm: S.N. 20825

316. LETTER TO GIRDHARILAL

April 4, 1933

MY DEAR LALA GIRDHARILAL,

I have your letter. I am glad you are again moving forward.

I do not think that Dr. Agrawal will get the permission[2]. If he

[1] This was a collection from Tukaram's poems relevant to untouchability. A selection from it was published in *Harijan*, 8-4-1933; *vide* "Tukaram and Untouchability", 8-4-1933.

[2] To visit Gandhiji in prison to help him give up spectacles through eye-exercises

does, I have no doubt that the Sardar may give him the time and so would I. But even if he asks for permission he should not use our names. If I can summon up sufficient courage, I shall ask for the permission myself.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20823

317. LETTER TO D. G. KALE

April 4, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your postcard quoting a verse from Vaman Pandit. The use of the word 'Harijan' there does not necessarily show that it means an 'untouchable'; if it does, you should send me the connecting verse or other authority entitling you to interpret 'Harijan' to mean 'untouchable' in the verse quoted by you.

Yours sincerely,

KALE
ASODE

From a microfilm: S.N. 20828

318. LETTER TO P. R. LELE

April 4, 1933

MY DEAR LELE,

This is what appears in a Bengali newspaper[1]:

> We know that on Harijans having been allowed the right of entry into a certain famous temple in Bombay, no Brahmins enter it any longer; those who are merely reformers have no liking for the worship of images. In consequence this temple is now lying forsaken. . . .

Do you know anything about such a temple? If you do not, and if it is possible, please enquire and let me know whether there is any truth in that statement. If the statement can be substantiated, you will please let me know the name of the temple also.[2]

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20827

[1] Prabartak
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Motilal Roy", 4-4-1933.

319. LETTER TO N.

April 4, 1933

MY DEAR N.,

I have your two letters. I see that you are still struggling. I do not mind so long as each time you continue to come out unhurt. I hope you got my letter sent to your new address. In that letter I gave you two warnings and I hope that you took them both to heart. Who pays for all your little expenses? For instance, for the stamps and stationery, even an occasional telegram. You cannot give me too many details of your life. Truth peeps out through infinite details but it can be hidden from ourselves as well as from the spectators when a whole picture is presented. That is to say, a generalization can be made to cover an untruth. It will be true enough when I make a general statement. 'I'm all right', but that general statement will cover the untruth, namely, the fact of the bad elbow. That will only come out of a careful cross-examination of me unless I said, 'I'm all right, but for a bad elbow'. There is a great passage in the most ancient and the simplest and I think the shortest of the Upanishads. The translation is "The face of truth is covered with a golden lid", and then the seeker ends with prayer, "O God! remove the lid for me so that I can see truth face to face."[1] You now know what I mean by the golden lid.

I hope you and S. are keeping well, both in body and in mind.

Is 'Chitaldrug', complete address for you?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20831

320. LETTER TO J. NARASIMHAM

April 4, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter enclosing a brief history of your Seva Sadan. I will see what can be done with it.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. J. NARASIMHAM

MASULIPATAM

From a microfilm: S.N. 20832

[1] *Ishopanishad*, 15

321. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

April 4, 1933

MY DEAR RAJBHOJ,

I hope you got my letter[1] sent to you as soon as I learnt that you had reached the Ashram. I have now got your own letter. In a few days' time I expect you to write to me in Hindi, for there is not much difference between Marathi, Hindi and Gujarati. They are all sister languages; a large part of the vocabulary is common to them and it is easy enough to detect a similarity in grammar.

You will resist the temptation to give. I would ask you to be in no hurry. You have gone to the Ashram for the purpose of taking, therefore quietly and persistently take in all that the Ashram has to give and when that has been done, begin giving by all means, and you will find that you are able to take much more than you had expected. Do not combine giving and taking for the time being, rather believe that you cannot fail to be unconsciously giving while you are taking properly. I am most anxious that for the time at least you should bury yourself in the Ashram, and when you have either assimilated enough of the Ashram atmosphere and attitude or rejected it as unassimilable or unsuitable, you should proceed to the next stage, and in all you do whilst you are in the Ashram, I would like you to be guided implicitly by Narandas. That seems to me to be the best way of taking the most out of any institution.

I had seen the rough draft of your reply to Dr. Ambedkar's statement. There was not much in it and in no case could I have published it, seeing that Dr. Ambedkar's statement was not published in the *Harijan*. The draft was so roughly drawn that I did not know that you would want it back. I think I destroyed it after having read it.

I am surprised at what you tell me about Sind, because there there are very staunch workers. Jamshed Mehta is a host in himself. Narayandas Bechar has given himself to the Harijan cause and there are several others. The Harijans in Karachi are better housed and better looked after than elsewhere. Of course there is room for improvement, but that would be so in every case. However if you will send me concrete proposals I would gladly forward them to Jamshed Mehta. I hope that you have completely thrown off the headache you had in the beginning.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 791; also S.N. 20826

[1] *Vide* "Letter toP. N.Rajbhoj", 30-3-1933.

322. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

April 4, 1933

DEAR MOTIBABU,

I enclose herewith a cutting from the *Sanatani* dated 12th March. I wonder whether the cutting represents your views. If it does, you are bound fearlessly to express them even though they may be contrary to mine. I know full well that mutual regard ought not to mean always identity of views. If therefore I discovered that you hold different views from mine, my regard for you will not suffer. What binds us is a relentless pursuit after Truth at any cost.

Do you know which Bombay temple is referred to?[1] I should like to enquire. I know that several temples that were opened during the fast have since been closed to the Harijans again, but I have not known of a temple in Bombay or elsewhere deserted by Brahmins because it has been opened to Harijans. Such threats were uttered no doubt, but they were not carried out, except in the case of individuals; at least such is my information. But we have simply to know the truth and base our action accordingly. I would therefore like to enquire more fully when I get the name of the temple. As it is, I have already written to the Secretary of the Bombay Board if he knows of any such temples referred to by the writer in the Bengali *Prabartak*.

There are other statements which are open to question, but they can be regarded as matters of opinion. Therefore I have not commented on them, but I have underlined the passage, for your attention.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20829

323. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 4, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

The packet of letters which I despatched this morning was a large one as usual. Compared to it, this will be a much smaller one. I despatched the packet in the morning because the letters were urgent.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to P. R. Lele", 4-4-1933.

I did not find Dhanvant Raka's letter which you say was included.

I return Narahari's letter with this.

This is my view regarding guests. Even if every guest is given a copy of the rules to be observed by him, he should be given a seat by the side of a responsible inmate of the Ashram. The latter should take away from him his dish for cleaning and also clean the spot where he is asked to sit. These two things should be left to the guest only after he has himself started doing them. About the food also, the neighbour should explain to him that the general menu of the Ashram contains no rice, but that it is included in the special menu and he can ask to be served according to either. If there is only one solitary person who wants rice, he need not be asked. As soon as a guest arrives, somebody should elicit from him his special requirements and as many of them should be provided as possible.

Potatoes and *ratalu* should not as a rule be served as vegetables. I would have them served only in place of bread or rice. They are mostly starch. Vegetable means any green which contains no starch. If people would agree, I would make it a rule to serve rice onl to persons who are ill. The quantity of *dal* served should be very small. Rice is not necessary at all. Those who get milk need very little quantity of *dal*. There is no doubt that our diet contains an excess of starch. It is being proved day by day that the body needs very little starch. But we cannot force this reform on unwilling people, and in any case we should watch the result.

We should not tolerate snacks being bought from the market. But we need the fullest co-operation of the families to put a stop to this practice. If people went and saw for themselves how these things were prepared, they would never eat them again.

You should insist on the children sleeping for eight hours at night.

I believe that it is not proper to withhold a meal by way of punishment. I myself, though, have been guilty of ordering such punishment. I am also becoming more and more convinced that there should be no physical punishment either. I have no doubt that the very fact that the need for punishment is felt bespeaks our imperfection. We must learn how to teach without the use of any form of punishment, and we can do that only if we refrain from punishing even in extreme cases.

The suggestion about the dictionary should be immediately implemented. A copy should be kept not only in the library but also in the office. Everybody in the Ashram should form the habit of consulting it. This will mean some expense, but it is worth incurring.

BAPU

[PS.]

Narandas,

Please tell Titus that I will reply to him some other time.[1]

I have not heard from you what you have decided regarding Dhiru.[2]

My suggestion about the women stands.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8849. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

324. LETTER TO NANALAL K. JASANI

April 4, 1933

BHAI NANALAL,

I have your letter. I also will wire to Maganlal. Let us see what he does. Bhai Prabhashankar has written to me. There is no need to reply to his letter. Do keep in touch with him. I have said what I felt. I have heard from Chhaganlal too. He agrees to the division of the property.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9630

325. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

April 4, 1933

CHI. MANI,

I do not understand your complaint about letters. We do write to you regularly. We are now trying to find out why you do not receive our letters. I abstained from writing to you when Father wrote but

[1] *Vide* "Letter to T. Titus", 4-4-1933.

[2] Regarding giving him permission to join Santiniketan; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 29-3-1933.

even then I generally penned something at the bottom. Sometimes possibly that was also not done. That is the reason why I am confused. You have certainly the right to complain and even be angry if you do not hear from anyone of us. You ought to feel sure that we shall never, for whatever reasons, refrain from writing to you and if we do you should know that it must be through accident.

We are all well here. Father has resumed his study of Sanskrit. I would not say that he is making rapid progress but he is doing quite well. He makes constant efforts to remember what he has learnt so far. Dahyabhai generally comes every week to see us.

My hand is as it was but it does not interfere with my work. Mahadev is in good health. Chhaganlal Joshi is also well. If you need good slivers we can send some from here, as we receive plenty of them. We had news of you from Mridula and also from Kamaladevi and Lilavati. You have created a good impression on all of them. Ba and Mirabehn are all right. Mirabehn writes to me every week. At present Kakasaheb is here and helps with the *Harijan* work. It is also published now in Gujarati, Hindi and Bengali.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 98-9

326. LETTER TO KARSANDAS VITHALDAS

April 4, 1933

BHAI KARSANDAS,

The chapters that you have sent are good. I will send them back after using them.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

SHRI KARSANDAS VITHALDAS
HARGOVAN DESAI'S CHAWL
3RD FLOOR, BEHIND PORTUGUESE COMPOUND WALL
BHULESHWER, BOMBAY 2

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII

327. LETTER TO AMBALAL SARABHAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
April 4, 1933

DEAR BROTHER,

I am fascinated by the love both of you show for your children. But I think your anxiety for Mridula is unnecessary and harmful. Her sacrifice and her courage should delight you so that she can feel reassured. But your anxiety cannot but affect her mind. I have been impelled to write this because all your actions are guided by reason and you do nothing without proper thought. I know that reason cannot control our feelings. But this is not wholly true. Man can succeed to a certain extent if he tries to fight back feelings before they assail him. Leave Mridu under God's protection. Her strength of character is her real shield. She will surmount all difficulties. It is the earnest wish of us all that you should have this much faith and save yourself from anxiety.

All of you will of course go to Mussoorie.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11126. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

328. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

Y. M.,
April 4, 1933

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON
POONA

CHI. MRIDU,

I dictated a postcard very hurriedly yesterday. Today I am writing this to reply to your question.Love knows what the other person wishes and whenever it is proper and possible fulfils that wish. Our wishes are not always proper. Pure love will not feel hurt when things do not happen as wished. you should not take it as want of love but as good intention. This does not mean that we can never feel hurt

by anything at all. But the hurt is momentary and does not diminish love in the least. Indeed, it strengthens love. Here I have only cited my own experience. But it is not just my experience. In short, as one's love becomes purer the need for words becomes less. If this did not happen, love would become a burden; it would certainly never be so wide in scope.With regard to music also, learn from Mani. She has no voice of course. But she realized that if she waited till she acquired a voice, the time for reciting Ramanama would slip by. If one can learn to sing in tune with others, one can at least recite Ramanama. The voice is trained by reciting Ramanama a couple of times and singing a few *bhajans*.

I wrote a special letter to Mani yesterday.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11115. Courtesy : Sarabhai Foundation

329. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

April 4, 1933

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I did write to you. It is surprising if you have not received the letter so far. I have no letter from Chaturbhai. If you too have not heard from him, should not we take it that he has changed his mind? He has not conveyed his consent after Prabhudas had a talk with Satyavati. Try to find out if you can.

About the wedding,[2] I had written that it should take place wherever the girl's parents want. If they agree and I am given the permission [to solelmnize the marriage] here, I would certainly do it. But that would not suit them. The couple can certainly come and see me after the marriage.

Prabhudas has written to me that I should talk to Satyawati before marriage. I do not think it is necessary. Her parents may feel that we are demanding too much.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Manibehn Patel", 4-4-1933.

[2] Prabhudas Gandhi, however, got married to one Amba Devi, daughter of Lala Lalchand of Bijnor, on October 17, 1933 at Wardha; *vide* "Letter to Kanti Gandhi", 26-5-1935.

All these things were mentioned in that letter. Along with that, there was also a note for Nimu. Tell her to write to me. Hope Kashi is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32851

330. LETTER TO RAMA DEVI CHOWDHRY

April 4, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. The correction has been made.[1] Send me the names and other particulars of the ladies working with you. Send also your own particulars. I hope the work is done daily and regularly. I shall have a better idea of it if you give me your daily programme.[2]

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI RAMA DEVI
ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY LEAGUE
CUTTACK, ORISSA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2787

331. LETTER TO T. TITUS

April 4, 1933

MY DEAR TITUS,

Your letter is full and very good. I shall read your report with avidity. It may be sent to me by registered post and I shall return it after reading; that would save time and labour.

You must have read literature about the qualities of unfired milk and how long such milk remains in an eatable condition without needing to be boiled. I have simply suggested its being put in an air-tight bottle or an air-tight vessel and wrapped in wet cloth under the belief that milk so kept remains for 12 hours or so without altering its quality, and if your reading confirms my belief, you should

[1] *Vide* "Notes", sub-title "Women Workers in Cuttack" and "Notes", 8-4-1933, sub-title "Two Corrections".

[2] The addressee did this in her letter of April 11.

popularize the use of unfired milk in the Ashram, and begin to preserve it in the manner suggested by me. You begin the milking early. Some of the milk is not used till 10.30 or 11 o'clock. If therefore it is taken in an unfired condition, it has got to be preserved against atmospheric changes. And I think that the milkmen or milkmaids should be frequently watched and taught to wash the udders, etc., in a thorough manner.

My recollection of the Bangalore Dairy is that the animals were taken to a special open place for the purpose of milking. Was that not so? I have a notion that Col. Smith told me that it was better to take the animals to a free open space for milking. If this is a good practice, and I think it is, we ought to adopt it. But you know better. I do not want to give you more work than is absolutely necessary. I do want our dairy to be a first-class model dairy of its kind. We cannot go in for expensive methods, but we must go in for all the methods that would ensure, through methodical labour and meticulous care, cleanliness and purity of milk. What is the lowest yield required from a cow to make her self-supporting? And what is the cost?

Now about homoeopathy. I must confess that without any specific cause I have never been able to take kindly to it, though some of my friends have often recommended it to me. I have noticed too that these friends themselves at critical moments have given up homoeopathy and gone to allopathy. Though I should like to believe to the contrary I am driven to the conclusion that allopathy, although it has great limitations and much superstition about it, is still the most universal and justifiably the most popular system; Allopathy provides opening medicines, ointments for a variety of boils and eruptions, disinfectants for various situations and includes surgery of a most wonderful type. It is an all-inclusive system. It can well include homoeopathy, biochemistry and the latest nature-cures. If therefore allopathy rids itself of the worship of mammon, which has overtaken most human activities, and could exclude vivisection and other practices which I call black, and liberally took advantage of the new methods discovered by lay people, it would become all-satisfying and quite inexpensive.

Having said this, if you have an accurate knowledge of homoeopathy and can easily spare the time necessary for treatment, I do not mind your introducing it in the Ashram subject of course to consultation with Narandas and the other responsible people in the

Ashram. I would love to think that we were independent of outside medical assistance or that it was only rarely that we have to trouble our medical friends. My ideal is to find whatever alleviation we want in the Ashram itself. It pains me when any of us have to go out for medical relief or treatment or to call in medical assistance. We may never reach that perfect state, but the nearer the approach to it the better for us. I would therefore be pleased if you could even minimize the occasions for seeking medical help from outside. Tell me what treatments you would give to Kusum, Jamna, Chimanlal and last but not least Parachure Shastri. These are all typical cases.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20830

332. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

[About *April 4, 1933*][1]

CHI. NARAHARI,

What is the matter with Mohan? What is wrong with his hands? What is the cause, according to the doctor, of their becoming paralyzed? So far I did not worry about him, thinking that he suffered from ordinary fever; but now I feel a little worried and want to understand what exactly is the trouble with the hands.

I read your letter to Narandas. I liked some of the suggestions you have made in it. I suggest that you should discuss them with Narandas. It was of course good that a meeting was held, but the person who is expected to execute them should understand them fully. I should like unity of hearts between you, if that is possible. I fail to notice it at present. Try your best to bring it about. Do not give up the attempt in despair.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9059

[1] From the reference to addressee's letter to Narandas Gandhi; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 4-4-1933.

333. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

April 5, 1933

DEAR SATISBABU,

I have your letter of the 1st instant enclosing a copy of your letter of the 19th March.[1]

The *Sanatani* I have been getting regularly. You need not therefore send it to me. Who is the editor? He wrote to me saying that he had met me before. I cannot recall his features. What was or is his occupation?

Ramanandababu's note is indeed interesting; but that is his style whenever he is displeased with anything.[2]

I have given you my views fully about our duty concerning the Pact.[3] You will now do exactly what you think is called for by the local situation. I have the Bengal schedule prepared by the Bengal Government.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20839

334. LETTER TO V. R. DIGHE

April 5, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter giving an account of buffalo sacrifices in Janjira State. I shall see if it is possible for me to do anything in the matter.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. V. R. DIGHE
KHADI BHANDAR
DADAR

From a microfilm: S.N. 20836

[1] This gave details of the facts behind the agitation against the Yeravda Pact. One of the complaints was that the Pact had given an excessive number of Council seats to Harijans, Namashudras and Rajbanshis thus adversely affecting the interests of caste Hindus and national progress.

[2] Ramananda Chatterjee, editor of *Prabasi* and *The Modern Review*, had written a scathing editorial "Help for Harijan Students", backing the opponents of the Yeravda Pact.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 18-3-1933.

335. LETTER TO DIWAKAR SINGH

April 5, 1933

MY DEAR DIWAKAR,

I have your letter. I cannot possibly undertake to judge you, and if, on closer introspection, you have found the present method of serving better than the one you started with, you should stick to it.[1] You have understood my point and that is enough for me.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20837

336. LETTER TO AMULYADHAN ROY

April 5, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you.

My position is quite clear. The Yeravda Pact is a solemn document.[2] It cannot be altered except with the consent of all the parties interested in it.

So far as I am concerned, I have seen nothing warranting a change in my opinion.

Of course you are at liberty to publish my reply, if you wish it.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. AMULYADHAN ROY
GIRISH GHOSH LANE
GHUSURI
P. O. BELURMATH (HOWRAH)

From a microfilm: S.N. 20838

[1] The addressee had stated in his letter that he had given up street-cleaning and taken to cleaning his own lavatory as well as the other hostel lavatories when occasion arose.

[2] The addressee, an M.L.C., had informed Gandhiji of the motion passed against the Yeravda Pact in the Bengal Legislative Council on March 14, 1933. He had opposed the motion but asked for advice as to future action.

337. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

April 5, 1933

CHI. SUMANGAL PRAKASH,

I have you letter.

(1) One cannot give reasons for everything in this world. Dharma does not lie in giving up a custom simply because no reason can be given for it. On the contrary dharma consists in respecting the customs of the society of which one is part, provided these do not go against morality. Therein lies truth and non-violence. To cause pain to anyone without reason is untruth and violence. A person who gives up a practice because he cannot see any reason for its continuance is unwise and wilful.

(2) In regard to inter-dining and inter-marriage there is not contradiction between my earlier writings and present writings. When I wrote those articles I had Lakshmi with me and I was planning to have her married outside the Dhed community.[1] I still hold that in inter-dining and inter-marriage some restrictions are necessary. I do not think that varnashrama comes in here. There is no loss of dharma in marrying a suitable partner outside one's varna. I may say that my views are now much clearer than before. But I hesitate to revise the views I have held for a long time. My present views supplement the views I have expressed earlier. However, if it appears that there is conflict between the two you should accept what I say now and reject what I have said before.

(3) I should not answer this question. I am also not competent to answer it. Everyone should be able to find the meaning of the vow he has taken. The meaning that I may give to your vow should be considered false, while the meaning you give it should be taken as valid. When one does not have confidence in oneself one may accept a witness's interpretation. Here the witness is not in a position to givean interpretation. Therefore you should either interpret the vow yourself or ask other co-workers.

(4) That is because the address of the journal is changes.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Ramachandra", 31-3-1933.

[PS.]

I have left out the question about smallpox. Whether the patient is a child or an adult, I know only one treatment: apply a wet pack to the stomach. Dissolve some permanganate of potash[1] in cold water, enough to make the water rose-pink. Dip a sheet, large or small, in the water and wring it. Then spread a rug on a cot and cover the rug with this wet sheet. Then wrap the whole round the patient right up to the neck. Keep him in this position for as long as he can bear it. If the patient does not get a motion in the natural course, give him an enema. For diet only fruit juice. If the tongue is clear and the patient feels hungry, milk also may be given. Give him a much water as he can drink. Add fews drops of lemon juice to the water if he likes that. The room should be well ventilated. I have heard that red curtains help.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

338. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 5/6, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I send with this a letter written by a lady named Malidoshi on behalf of the labourers working in the Ashram. You may not have read it. Inquire about the matter and let me know what the facts are.

Madhavji's brother Chatrabhuj writes to tell me that the former's two children cannot be properly looked after in Calcutta. I have already suggested that the children's aunt should take them to the Ashram and keep them there. She might leave after the children begin to feel at home there. You also should write to them and get the children under your charge if you can. I have written to Madhavji and Lakshmi about this.

I hope Duncan is better.

Read my letter to Titus.[2] You may send the report of the dairy as it is. I will get a copy taken out here if necessary. Otherwise I will return it after reading it.

[1] This is in English in the source.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to T. Titus", 4-4-1933.

To me also Keshu writes only a few lines every time. I have now given up hope about him. He has made up his mind to leave the Ashram. It seems Radha also wishes to live outside.

I hope you received my letter in which I wrote about Dr. Sharma and Parachure Shastri, and followed what I said. If you did not follow any point, please ask me to explain.

BAPU

Enclosed: Malidoshi's letter and letters for Champa, Parachure Shastri, Titus, Malidoshi and Rajbhoj.

April 6, 1933

[PS.]

Tell Durga that I gave her the date of my release as May 4, but it is not correct. It is May 19. Ramdas will be released on May 1. I get Durga's letters regularly. I will write to her in a day or so.

I had a letter from Gaur Gopal. I replied to him immediately. That was many days ago. Write to him and tell him that he may go to Shail Ashram. It has a vacant room. He will make his own arrangements for meals, etc. Prabhudas will help him in that. It is our duty to look after his comfort as much as we can.

I hope Dhananjay is being properly nursed. You know what he is suffering from. Let me know who attends on him. It would be better if he was an elderly person, for he would then run less risk of infection.

What has happened to Liladhar?

BAPU

[PPS.]

We have a copy of Poore's *Sanitation* in our library. Send it to Shri N., Chitaldrug, Mysore.

In case you don't have Gaur Gopal's address there, I give it below:

C/o Sjt. Gagendraprasad Das, Advocate, Patna

Enclosed letters:

Duncan, Premi, Chimanlal, Amina, Anandi, Nanibehn, Durga, Purushottam, Narandas, Talwalkar, Durga (Babo).

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8350. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

339. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 6, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter came in only yesterday. I am beginning this before prayer 3.45. I overslept myself. Being the fasting day it does not much matter perhaps.

You have done well in writing as you have done. The difficulty about the execution is threefold. (1) The Ashram site has to be removed or the other activities have to be. (2) There is no one in the Ashram who would stay on the condition you name, save perhaps Narandas. (3) The Ashram has not been conceived in the manner suggested by you.

The last is perhaps the fatal difficulty. Mine is a novel experiment, dangerous and, it may be, even impossible of achieving. The idea is to have a place where people can train themselves to lead the celibate life in the midst of ordinary temptations. . . [1] and . . .[2] fell not because they could not overcome animal passion. They have not gone so far. But they suppressed truth. Now truth can only be cultivated in the midst of men and women of different temperaments and subtle temptations. It is easy enough for a few people of similar habits not to deceive one another or be found out. That is no truth. It has to be lived in the natural surroundings. Exception has been taken even to the Ashram life as being not natural.

I wonder if you have followed me so far. If you have, you must at once perceive that the first two difficulties are the natural consequence of the deliberate creation of the third. Having constituted the Ashram as it is we have the men and women and the activities that we have. And out of these men and women and the activities we cannot create what you have contemplated. What you suggest can only be done by withdrawing two or three men and women and sending them to another place to live their own life and draw some kindred spirits in due time. But that would be to admit failure. I should not mind it if it became inevitable. I am not at all convinced that it is. If out of the present experiment a few of us lived of whom it could be said that they fairly satisfied the test, I should be quite satisfied that the experiment had succeeded. In an experiment such as we are making failures must be the order of the day. Each will be a

[1] The names have been omitted.

[2] *ibid*

stepping-stone to success. The . . . incident has disturbed me but not baffled me at all. Prompt measures have been taken after the discovery and are still being taken.

You should know also my diagnosis. The fault lay in my over-confidence in both these young people. The earlier fault lay in their parents. . . . had the notion that his children will better conform to the Ashram ideal if they were brought up in isolation. . . . nursed the thought. And so the children grew to be selfish, and exclusive and self-centred. The motive behind . . . was good. And so I carried out the tradition after . . .'s death. I was bound to as his heir to test its efficacy. The result we know. I am not sorry. . . . had every right to do what he thought was good for the Ashram. As for . . . the way with . . . was reverse. But . . . did not quite assist her husband. She had no policy of her own but she herself could not follow out the Ashram ideal and so . . . grew anyhow as the pet of the Ashram. The natural thing is likely to happen now. The proud family of . . . will cut themselves from the Ashram and live their natural life. That will not be bad. . . . has learnt her lesson. She will for . . .'s sake more and more conform to the ideal. . . . was the dupe, . . . was the villain (used not in its quite ugly sense). The whole Ashram knows that truth at any cost will alone save it. Things will tighten themselves along these lines.

Several other things will be gradually done. No violent changes will be made. There is not the slightest cause for alarm. You are perhaps unnecessarily harsh on Prema. She has her grave blemishes but she has contributed nothing to the incident. Her physical *brahmacharya* appears to me to be above suspicion and she is truthful to the point of bluntness. She is meticulous in the observance of the outward rules. She has a vile tongue. She is trying to control it. Anyway there is no one who can conduct the Ashram better than Narandas. He must be left to manage it to the best of his ability.

Now I want you to work at this exhaustive letter and give me your criticism, ideas and suggestions unhesitatingly and without reserve. You have plenty of time for hard thinking. I am unperturbed, I am taking things easy, meeting each situation as it arises. Narandas will faithfully carry out instructions. And if I felt the call I am quite capable of disbanding the whole Ashram in so far as I have the power which legally I have not. But that is nothing. The moral authority is there. You may therefore make any drastic suggestions you like.

All well here otherwise. You will explain to Ba whatever is said here in so far as it may be necessary.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 9673. Courtesy: Mirabehn

340. LETTER TO NAGENDRA NATH BHATTACHARJEE

April 6, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 27th March and now I have got the piece of khaddar woven out of the yarn spun by Junu[1]. Please thank the little friend on my behalf and tell her that I shall gladly make use of the khadi and think of her when I use it.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. NAGENDRA NATH BHATTACHARJEE
DHALBARIA VILLAGE
MATHURESHPUR P. O.
KHULNA DIST. (BENGAL)

From a microfilm: S.N. 20855

341. LETTER TO R. K. GOLIKERE

April 6, 1933

MY DEAR GOLIKERE,

I was certainly surprised to get your letter, and still more so to read the contents. I thank you for thinking of me and sending me your book. I shall certainly make time to read it. I shall understand more fully than now the significance of your new difinition of astronomy.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. K. GOLIKERE
SARASWAT BUILDINGS
GAMDEVI, GRANT ROAD
[BOMBAY]

From a microfilm: S.N. 20856

[1] The addressee's six-year old daughter who had spun for two years in order to present the yarn to Gandhiji

342. LETTER TO DUNCAN GREENLEES

April 6, 1933

I have your letter. It fills me with joy.[1] It is so frank and downright sincere. I understand every word of what you say and you shall do as truth in you guides you and it will give me full satisfaction. And, no matter where your lot is cast, I shall regard you as an Ashramite. Meanwhile, take whatever is to be taken from the Ashram without in any way forcing yourself. You have taken a great step in fasting. I hope you are letting Purushottam guide you. As much water as you can drink, hot or cold, should be taken. It can do you no harm whatsoever if it is properly taken. You know the best and cheapest method of keeping water cold. Wrap the vessel in which it is kept with wet cloth. You have to take a full enema daily and if there is a feeling of nausea, you will take a few drops of lemon with water, and even honey, if you have a sweet tooth.

DUNCAN GREENLEES

From a microfilm: S.N. 20840

343. LETTER TO V. S. KATHAVTE

April 6, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have our letter. I think that you have to give up all idea of marrying the girl. You do not seem to realize that she is only eleven years old. She cannot have any idea of marriage at her age, and if she has, it is an unhealthy and premature knowledge, which is not to be encouraged. Apart therefore from the close relationship which undoubtedly exists I think that the age of the girl is an effective bar, and you ought not to read into her eyes any message for you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. V. S. KATHAVTE
SAVANUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 20849

[1] The addressee had informed Gandhiji of his intention to go to Madanapalli to take up teaching.

344. LETTER TO KESHAV

April 6, 1933

MY DEAR KESHAV,

I like your frank letter. I thoroughly understand your position, and though I may not quite agree with it, I can appreciate it. You know my own fundamental position, don't you? I never feel that what appeals to me as the whole truth must necessarily appeal to the others as such. Truth that we see is always relative knowledge and therefore it need not have universal application. My prayer therefore for my neighbours is: "May they see the Truth as Thou the All-knowing One, would have them to see it."

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20852

345. LETTER TO P. R. LELE

April 6, 1933

MY DEAR LELE,

Your postcard announcing your resignation[1] does not come upon me as a surprise, as your letters of late had prepared me for it. The language betrayed your uneasiness. I hope that in spite of your leaving the Board, your interest in the Harijan cause will continue unabated.

Yours sincerely.

SJT. P. R. LELE
WADEKAR BUILDING
BOMBAY NO. 4

From a microfilm: S.N. 20853

[1] From the secretaryship of the Bombay Provincial Board of the Servants of Untouchables Society

346. LETTER TO N.

April 6, 1933

MY DEAR N.,

I have your letters of 31st March and 2nd April together.

You were quite right in accepting Sreenivas Rao's gifts and asking him to send you whole wheatmeal and dried fruit. It is a great handicap that you can get no fresh leafy vegetables. But you know that leafy vegetables are grown in no time. I had an English friend living with me in South Africa who grew sufficient cresses in a fortnight's time. You should get some seeds, have just a little plot of land, fence it in, dig it well superficially and beat up the earth well. You can use the manure that the animals around you may give, and sow lettuce seeds, tomatoes and any of the leaves that grow easily there. You should make some explorations also in and about Chital-drug. I cannot imagine all that place being without leafy vegetables known as *bhaji*. I would ask you not to abstain from milk and butter at least just now. You may take only a little quantity if you like, but I am afraid that you will become weak in due course if you do not take these two things, for you are not having enough fresh fruit nor wheatmeal.

You need not write anything to Durgadas[1] about your statement, but write it out yourself from memory and let me have it.[2]

I understand what you say about pulses for S. As he is very active according to the description you gave me here, perhaps there is no harm if he is given a moderate quantity.

I shall send you the book on village sanitation. I am writing to the Ashram, but let me give you the substance of Poore's method. The theory is that 18 inches of the surface of earth is all filled with germs which do the work of scavenging for all the creatures that reside on it. These germs can work on all the filth that the creatures deposit on the surface of the earth from day to day. Poore having known this and having understood the most economical use that the Chinese make of human excreta developed his method and said that

[1] Then an editor of the Associated Press of India

[2] The addressee had prepared a statement about herself and sent it to the Associated Press of India for publication. It was, however, not published.

all the excreta, both liquid and solid, should be buried not more than 12 or at the outside 18 inches below the surface of the earth. He therefore does not suggest movable latrines nor the ordinary deeppit latrines. He suggests receiving the excreta in buckets, each person covering the excreta with earth, which is ready in the closet, so that the closet remains clean and sweet-smelling all the time. These buckets are emptied in the squares, dug up and kept ready, not many yards away from the latrine itself, and then the earth, which is heaped up on the edge of the square, is taken up and the excreta covered with it. No more excreta should be heaped upon the deposit just made. Ample earth is thrown on each deposit so that dogs and other animals may not dig out the thing. Inside of a fortnight all that excreta is worked upon by the germs and turned into fine manure and the ground is ready for cultivation.

We have followed this plan most successfully at the Ashram for 17 years, that is, since its inception. The whole of the performance takes no time and there is no smell emitted out of these squares.

I hope you will have no difficulty in following what I have said. This is the cheapest method of dealing with human and other excreta. All the kitchen refuse is also dealt with in the same manner, only this cannot be mixed up with the excreta, because the work of the germs done upon vegetable rubbish is different from the work done upon the excreta. But the process is the same in all other respects. We have found in the Ashram, by observation, that wherever we have made use of this excellent manure, our crops have been much richer in quantity and quality.

If you have any difficulty in following this, please ask.

Of course you are quite right in asking the Municipality to give you all the assistance you need. If they give it, well and good; if they do not, you won't worry or fidget. For the time being, you have your work cut out for you amongst the Harijans, and what is more, in mending yourself.

Now about the dress. You need three articles only—a loose vest somewhat after men's shirt with short sleeves reaching up to the elbow only, skirt reaching 2 or 3 inches above the ankles, and a *kuchh* like mine but not so long and smaller in size. If you want to go to the trouble of sewing, you can have something after the style of men's shorts. This makes the simplest dress. The *bawis*, that is, the female mendicants, wear something like this. Your saris can be turned into

vests or shirts. The skirts you have should serve the purpose, and very probably you have something answering knickers or shorts.

Yours sincerely,

[PS.]

As to your addressing me Bapu, you are wrong. You will address me as such when you have confidence in yourself that you will inspire me with trust in you and will never deceive me. I am trying to trust you by signing myself Bapu.

From a microfilm: S.N. 20849-a

347. LETTER TO B. ANAND NAICKER

April 6, 1933

MY DEAR NAICKER,

I purposely kept your long letter of the 15th March in order to be able to find time to read it. I have now read it. I fear that you will not be able to do justice to the shop. What I would like you to do is to take up some outdoor physical work such as would occupy you during the day, free your mind from thought of yourself and what you will do and what you will not do, but simply concentrate on the work in hand. Such work is undoubtedly light gardening. You will then understand the language of flowers and fruit and I have no doubt that it will interest you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. B. ANAND NAICKER
C/O POSTMASTER
POST OFFICE, BASAVANGUDI
BANGALORE CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20851

348. LETTER TO K. A. SREENIVASA SETTY

April 6, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your three letters and I was delighted to understand that His Holiness[1] had thrown open the Mutt at Chitaldrug to Harijans and that he is advising them to abstain from meat-eating.

Your objection regarding the name of the Central Board is quite sound, but the name was adopted before the name 'Harijan' came into vogue. But all the Boards are known as Harijan Seva Samaj or Mandal in the Indian languages.

I note that an association has been formed at Devangere for the uplift of Harijans, and I am glad to find that the Brahmin graduate, who is doing the teaching work, is living in Harijan quarters bringing about clean living amongst them.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. A. SREENIVASA SETTY
HON. SECRETARY
ADI-KARNATAKA SAHAYA SANGH
DEVANGERE (MYSORE STATE)

From a microfilm: S.N. 20850

349. LETTER TO T. V. K. SWAMI

April 6, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. All people do not ask for my permission for dedicating their books to me, and in your case I must not give any permission because I would not understand your work[2]. But, like so many others, you are free to dedicate your work to me, so long as you do not announce that you have done so by permission.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. V. K. SWAMI
GITA VILAS
KALLAKURICHI
S. ARCOT

From a microfilm: S.N. 20847

[1] Jagadguru Jayadeva Murugharajendra Swami of Lingayat community
[2] This was a Tamil translation of the *Gita*.

350. LETTER TO DR. G. R. TALWALKAR

April 6, 1933

DEAR DR. TALWALKAR,

I was delighted to have your full letter about Kusumbehn and I appreciated your having got it typed for me.[1] I understand the letter thoroughly. You have given me the information I was anxious to have. Kusumbehn is perhaps the most obedient patient you have had, at least in the Ashram, and since you have full confidence in your treatment having done her good, it shall continue without interruption, so long as she retains faith in you and in your treatment. She is disturbed, as I am also, over the frequent attacks of diarrhoea she is having. I suppose I am properly describing the frequent motions she has every few days, but if that also is a part of the treatment, then neither she nor I can have anything to say. Of course I have in mind your idea of a proper sanatorium, but that lies in the womb of the future.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 20848. Also C.W. 9687. Courtesy: R. K. Prabhu

351. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

April 6, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

You are both foolish and wise, and so I cannot apply one epithet to you. You must stop speaking almost completely, and speaking loudly altogether. You must also stop singing. When absolutely necessary, you may speak in a whisper, otherwise you may convey what you wish to say by writing. You will repent if you don't do this.

If *bajri* and *jawar* don't suit you, you must stop them. I should like to put you on unboiled milk. You may at the same time eat a few raisins, chewing them slowly and sucking the juice. That will make you feel that you have eaten something. Tomatoes should grow in the Ashram all the year round. And when *bhaji* is in season, you may eat

[1] The addressee had prescribed tuberculin injections for Kusum Gandhi who was suffering from T.B.

that and other greens, boiled. If you can live on these things, I don't think anything more will be necessary. You will be able to keep up your strength on this diet. Try it.

I was pained to hear about Kisan.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10334. Also C.W. 6774. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

352. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS P. ASAR

April 6, 1933

I was very happy to learn that you would be able to come and live in the Ashram. That will be a great help to Narandas.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9534. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

353. LETTER TO AMINA QURESHI

April 6, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER AMINA,

It is all right that you have terminated your fast. But do not be in a hurry to start taking milk. Take only fruit that will practically serve the same purpose as a fast. Then you have to go over to milk and curds. If you give up chillies and other spices, you will be saved from many troubles. Having shown this much self-control make it complete.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10797. Courtesy : Gulam Rasul Qureshi

354. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

April 6, 1933

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

You have to bear with your wife's misguided fondness.[1]

If your son-in-law loves khadi your daughter is bound to be influenced.

You should leave your younger brother to himself.[2]

In order to overcome your anger you should daily recite Ramanama and remove yourself from the spot the moment you feel angry.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 773

355. LETTER TO DR. G. V. DESHMUKH

[Before *April 7, 1933*][3]

DEAR DR. DESHMUKH,

I badly need your assistance in one or two things.

(1) Is there any chemical or physiological distinction between carrion and slaughtered meat? If there is, what is it?

(2) Do you know of any medical reason for the great repugnance that even meat-eaters have against carrion?

(3) If you are of opinion that there is no difference between fresh carrion and slaughtered meat, can you say whether flesh of dead cattle treated two or three days after death or even 24 hours after death would make any difference?

(4) You may know that some Chamars poison cattle for possessing the carcasses and they are said to eat their flesh. Will not the flesh of poisoned cattle affect the eater in any

[1] The addressee had said that though his wife habitually wore khadi she was still fond of other clothes.

[2] He was addicted to tobacco and hemp.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to G.V. Deshmukh", 7-4-1933 in which Gandhiji acknowledges the addressee's reply to this letter.

way? Is the flesh not tainted by the poison, or are there any poisons which, while they kill the cattle, do not harm their flesh?[1]

You know all about the Bombay Corporation and, therefore, you know all about the slaughter-houses. What I would like you, therefore, to give me is the scientific method of skinning dead cattle and of separating all the different parts of the carcass and the way of disposing of all the parts in the most economical manner. You should be knowing how, apart from the meat, the skins, bones, entrails, etc., of the slaughtered cattle are disposed of.

If those in charge of slaughter-houses cannot give all the information, I would like you to go out of your way to secure the most exhaustive information for me.

I do hope you are getting the English *Harijan*. In that case you must have read my article about "Disposal of Carcasses"[2]. If you have not read it, I would like you please to do so.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Harijan, 8-4-1933

356. THE LAW AND THE HEART

A sanatanist who believes in temple-entry by Harijans but who does not think that legislation to this effect will serve any purpose, in one of his letters writes.[3]

The extract quoted above is couched in beautiful language but the writer has not attempted to understand facts relating to legislation. There is no doubt that untouchability is a mental attitude. It cannot be abolished by legislation. Law can touch the body, but not the mind. The mind can be touched only by love and persuasion.

For the spreading of dharma any other means cannot be effective, nor should they be resorted to.

[1] For extracts from addressee's letter answering these questions, *vide* Appendix.

[2] *Vide* "Disposal of Carcasses", 12-3-1933.

[3] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had questioned the desirability of legislation enabling Harijans to enter temples, on the ground that this might lead to friction. He had advocated educating public opinion for the purpose.

The correspondent is afraid of strife. This fear too in my opinion is unfounded. No one wants to have the temples opened by force. Temples will be opened only where public opinion has been prepared in favour of opening the temples to the Harijans and nowhere else.

If that is so, then why the legislation? As conditions are today, even if the Hindu temple-goers, priests and custodians of a temple desire that Harijans should be allowed inside the temple for *darshan*, the law prevents them from doing so. There is no doubt about this; it is a self-evident fact. Legislation is needed to have this obstructive legislation revoked. It is clear enough that only legislation can remove legislative restriction. Yes, in the new legislation that is being talked about there should be no compulsion. One compulsive legislation should not be replaced by another compulsive legislation. As far as I understand, no question of compulsion arises in either of the two bills. The idea in both is to remove legal interference only.

But, today, the orthodox are so adamant that they are not prepared to listen to anyone. They write lies, they slander, abuse, and even resort to violence. Under such conditions what are the reformers to do? If the reformers wish to safeguard dharma, their first duty is patiently to put up with the high-handedness of the orthodox, answer hatred with love, and lies with truth. Let them bear abuses and violence. Let them continue to do their duty. Let them continue their efforts to have the obstructive law repealed. Let them make attempts to have private temples opened to Harijans, and themselves keep away from temples which are barred to Harijans. The reformers should also endeavour to remove any other difficulties that the Harijans may be facing.

I have spoken and written several times that for me abolition of untouchability is a penance. Religious impurity cannot be removed without self-purification. Untouchability is the greatest impurity in Hindu religion. Even if thousands of Hindus were to fast in order to remove it I should not consider it a great thing. Perhaps, even such a great offering may not be sufficient for that great *yajna*. In order to find Lord Shiva what a great deal of fasting Parvati had to do! Every time man was faced with a spiritual crisis he invoked God through fasting and penance and only then was he able to overcome the crisis. Tulsidas has written:

By the strength of *tapasya* God created the universe,

By the strength of *tapasya* Vishnu protects all creation,

By the strength of *tapasya* Shambhu destroys,

By the strength of *tapasya* Shesha carries the burden of the earth.

All creation rests on the strength of *tapasya*. Understand this, and go forth to do *tapasya*.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 7-4-1933

357. THREE CONUNDRUMS

A teacher asks:

1. According to the system of varnashrama, in which varna would the Bhangis and Chamars be placed?
2. May one following one trade marry among those following another trade?
3. Since untouchability must be eradicated why should we not also inter-dine with the untouchables?

Strictly speaking all these questions have been answered in *Harijan Sevak* in one way or another. I shall nevertheless answer them here in the hope further to elucidate the matter.

In my view the system of varnashrama does not today exist any more. All the varnas have given up their respective functions. The Shastras say, and reason agrees, that when all the attributes of the varnas vanish the varnas themselves vanish. The varnas have today given up their dharma and so there has come about a confusion of varnas. If there is any varna that still survives it is the Shudra varna. It is under this varna that all of us, "touchables" and untouchables, ought to be classed. If this is not desired, people may choose for themselves what varna they like. The point is that varnashrama as an institution does not exist any more. Dharma is not a matter of choosing; it is not a matter of rights, only of duty. In dharma there is no one high and no one low.

The second question concerns intermarriage. I have repeatedly said that marriage is not a matter necessarily connected with the varna divisions. It is a personal matter. As a rule, however, people like to enter into matrimonial alliances with their neighbours or with people who are like them. The practice therefore of people marrying among people belonging to the same occupations as themselves will continue.

The third question is one concerning inter-dining. Removal of untouchability as it has today been defined does not include within its scope inter-dining, and rightly so. Eating and drinking are personal matters. One will eat and drink where it pleases one to. Certain norms will nevertheless remain. Everyone will not be eating everywhere indiscriminately. While no hard and fast rules can be laid down it must however be said that no considerations of high and low should apply here. Unfortunately in Hinduism today the only things that remain are these considerations of high and low, touchability and untouchability. Everyone treats others as lower than themselves and refuse to touch food or water offered by them. I see nothing of dharma in this. On the contrary in this way we only make ourselves the laughing-stock of the world.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 7-4-1933

358. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

April 7, 1933

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letters and enclosures, also copy of an article of yours in an old number of *The Modern Review*.[1]

I understand and even appreciate the moral repulsion against 'fasting unto death'. I have perhaps some repulsion, if not the same repulsion, against fasting unto death myself, but I remain unmoved. There are many other things I have done and am still doing against my will, because I count my will as nothing before God's will when I see it clearly before me. I will make myself as certain as it is humanly possible to be that the will that appears to me to be God's is really His, and not the Devil's. But when I am clear about it, I rejoice in obeying that will, rather than mine, although I may have no human companion to endorse it. That this kind of fasting has a definite place in Hinduism, and properly so, I have not a shadow of a doubt, but it is a privilege that comes only to a few, and when it comes in obedience to a call from above, it has a mighty force, only fasting unto death is a corrupt expression. Where I used it first, it had its definite meaning.

[1] The article bearing the caption, "Racial Segregation and Untouchability", appeared in the March issue of *The Modern Review*.

Now it is being used torn from its context and looks certainly barbarous. But it is there, and its real meaning is unmistakable, and you can almost say that it is not so much a 'fasting unto death' as it is a 'fasting unto a new life'.

All the same, I value your letter and the information you give me about the English attitude. I do want English sympathy in this big struggle. I do want also to be understood. You cannot therefore be too frank or too communicative with me.[1] I shall never misunderstand whatever these few English friends might have to say.

Kirby Page's article which you have sent I shall see as soon as I get time, and if there is anything worth saying, I shall reduce it to writing.

I hope that your brother's septic teeth were extracted and that he had benefited by the extraction.

You know all about Verrier's change of mind. He had changed it before your blessings were received, and you know the reason also for the change. Whilst I was prepared to bless the marriage, I cannot help saying that I blessed the change still more. So much depended upon Verrier's decision. I told him that if it was a human want on his part, he must marry, no matter what misinterpretation might be put upon his action. The change came over both Verrier and Mary without any prompting from anybody at all.[2]

Yours sincerely,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 1301; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. IV, pp. 281-2

[1] Gandhiji reproduced one of the letters from C. F. Andrews in *Harijan*, 15-4-1933; *vide* "Thinking Aloud", 15-4-1933.

[2] Verrier Elwin and Mary Gillett decided not to marry as the possible family demands would make their social service difficult for them.

359. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

April 7, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter of 28th March.

I do not mind those who have, under a mistaken notion, gone away from the Hindu fold, returning when they like. But what I cannot understand is the occasion for any expense whatsoever in connection with their return. For, if they have left the Hindu fold under a mistaken notion, as soon as they discover their mistake, it is itself a sufficient *prayashchitta*, and no further ceremony is necessary. So much on the merits. Assuming that there must be some expense which the returning Doms[1] cannot be expected to pay, why should not the S.U.S.[2] bear the expense or contribute its quota? I should give my answer in the negative, because I feel that the S.U.S. has its very defined sphere, namely, service of the Hindu Harijans. It has no connection with those who are today not Hindus. Its sphere begins after the return of the prodigals. The latter is the function of a separate organization altogether. Here therefore there is no question of fear, but it is a question of confining ourselves to the original purpose. However limited it may be, the return of the Doms is a kind of *shuddhi*, and the difference between the extreme *shuddhi* and this modified *shuddhi* is a difference in degree only. And once the Society takes up this modified form, it would be most difficult for it [not] to lend its assistance to the various other shades. However desirable therefore the return of the Doms to Hinduism may be, I am quite clear that its encouragement by the Society is outside the scope laid down at its very foundation.

As to the advertisement of the Titagarh Mills, I am quite clear that we may not entertain their advertisement in any shape or form, and if it is a matter of getting cheap paper, it can be had from many other mills without the slightest difficulty. We are getting the paper for the English edition at less than market-price. It was possible to have a still more reduced quotation, but I thought it would not be proper to ask for further accommodation.

[1] The lowest among Harijan's working at cremation ground

[2] Servants of Untouchables Society

As to the Hindi *Harijan*, I have already told you that it is getting on quite satisfactorily, and if you persist in the effort, I have no doubt that you will make it self-supporting in about a month's time. You will see the note about it in the ensuing number of the English *Harijan*.[1]

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. IV, pp. 215-6; also S.N. 20861

360. LETTER TO DR. G. V. DESHMUKH

April 7, 1933

DEAR DR. DESHMUKH,

I am very grateful to you for your most exhaustive and learned reply to my query. I liked it so much that although the editing of the ensuing number of the *Harijan* was finished, I made room for your letter. Of course you may hand the correspondence for publication in the local Press.

There is a domestic matter on which I want your advice. As you know, Sardar Vallabhbhai has some trouble about his nose. It has worried him all these many months, but just now the irritation has gone almost beyond endurance, as it seems to us onlookers. As you know it is not his habit to complain, but we, his companions, know what it all means to him. The prison medical men have undoubtedly done whatever they were capable of doing. But their remedies have brought no relief. I notice that he has, constantly to clean his nose, and there is always some discharge coming out. He uses a big towel for the purpose and in 24 hours it is fairly dirty all over. By a big towel I mean a bathing towel that is used in middle class Hindu households. It has appeared to me that if he cleaned his nose with warm water 3 or 4 times a day he will not have so much discharge and will not have the trouble he has in cleaning the nose. But he has been told by a doctor here that washing the nose is likely to dry it. All the affected part is therefore likely to cause greater discomfort. Though I did not have the same class of disease as Sardar Vallabhbhai has, the only way I have kept myself clean and free from any trouble has been

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 8-4-1933.

to wash out the nose constantly, sometimes taking in the water and bringing it out through the mouth. At one time I used to have a nasal douche with a little permanganate solution added to the water and sometimes a few grains of chinosol. I do not know whether in your opinion washing of the nose with simple warm water or with anything added to it is likely to give relief to the Sardar. If you have any other suggestion to make you will please make it. I would ask you not to publish this information. I have simply written to you for my own satisfaction.

There are one or two more questions of a public character and regarding public health which I would like to ask presently if I am not unduly encroaching upon your time.

Yours sincerely,

[PS.]

You say that everything except the skin and fat should be buried for manure. But entrails are used for making guts and other purposes. And do the fresh bones become decomposed as early as they would be if they were pounded after being dried? What is the practice in the municipal slaughter-houses?

DR. G. V. DESHMUKH
39 PEDDAR ROAD
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20859

361. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 7, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got the post dispatched too, after the usual big mail. The envelope was torn. There was a remark on it by the post office that the letters were in danger of slipping out. You should get cloth-lined envelopes made there, or pay for such envelopes or tie the envelope carefully with a string. But the last course will take more time, and, if we look upon time as money, we shall stand to lose in the end. Collect some pieces of old, worn out khadi and get about a hundred envelopes made in advance. The time spent in making them will not have been wasted.

Ramabehn has complained that, as Dhiru's weight is not increasing, you gave, at Panditji's instance, a coupon for an additional *tola* of ghee, but that you deducted money for it the following month. Ramabehn's request to raise the amount from Rs. 11 to Rs. 12 was not granted. She is afraid of talking to you about this lest she be insulted. This is the substance of her letter. Read my reply to her. Go and see her and hear what she has to say. Let me know what truth there is in her complaint. How is her arm? . . .[1] is coming to see me today. After our meeting I shall probably write to you about another painful affair. I am sure that he will now leave the Ashram.

I hope you got the letters dispatched yesterday.

BAPU

[PS.]

Letters enclosed: Rama, Amina, Mani, Kusum.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8351. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

362. LETTER TO MUNNALAL SHAH

April 7, 1933

BHAI MUNNALAL,

We were all happy to read your letter. Your impression is correct. Describe those of your experiences in Pondicherry which you found particularly interesting. I hope you have settled down now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8647

363. LETTER TO AMINA QURESHI

April 7, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER AMINA,

You seem to be progressing well. Write to me every day, slowly and in clear handwriting as you do an exercise.

Try to discover why Qureshi suffers from piles. What is his

[1] The name has been omitted.

food? After ending a fast one always feels weak because the nerves are put to greater strain.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10798. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

364. LETTER TO NANIBEHN JHAVERI

April 7, 1933

CHI. NANIBEHN,

I liked your letter very much. You may gladly study whatever you want. However, the solution to the problem you see is contained in the idea on which the Ashram is founded. It may not appear so today but you should have no doubt in your mind that is the only solution. There is no other. This is the key to understanding a religion. First it should be grasped in all its details. Then we should consider the views of its opponents. Then if we find that it does not triumph in all experience we must not despair. Here, it is faith that works. There will be apparent oppositions and failures. But we should not be frightened by them.

If Pannalal has not received my letter, give it to him after taking permission if possible. It is at the Ashram.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari—Pannalal Jhaveri, p. 27

365. NOTES

"HARIJAN SEVAK"

The readers know that there is a Hindi edition of the *Harijan* called the *Harijan Sevak*, which is published in Delhi by the Hindustan Times Press.

It has not yet become self-supporting, whereas the English has. If any of the editions has to show a loss, I should personally prefer that it were English, for real propaganda against untouchability has to be carried on amongst the masses and, therefore, the message has to be delivered to them. Hence the necessity for publishing correct infor-

mation in the various Indian languages, and as Hindi is admittedly the most largely understood and spoken language, one would like to see a large circulation of the Hindi *Sevak*. It is steadily improving and, being more or less the same in substance as the English edition, it naturally contains most of the things to be found in the English edition, besides things of special interest to the Hindi reader. At the present moment about 1,000 copies are sold. At least 2,500 copies should be sold in order to make it self-supporting. I hope that the various organizations in the Hindi-speaking areas will see to an increased circulation of the Hindi edition. The workers should report their need of the kind of literature wanted in their districts.

TWO CORRECTIONS

The newly published *Sanatani* has a well-deserved laugh at the expense of *Harijan* by telling its readers that the opening of two temples in Ratnagiri reported in the issue of 25th February was repeated in that of 4th March. This was an obvious mistake for discovering which I offer the *Sanatani* my congratulations. Its inference, however, that, if temples continue to open as in Ratnagiri, there should be no need for Temple-entry Bills is hardly justified, inasmuch as these were private temples. And even if the trustees of a stray public temple were to run the risk of a prosecution and open the temple under their charge, the trustees of other public temples cannot be expected to do so.

The other correction to be made is on behalf of Shrimati Rama Devi of Cuttack, who says that in the general description of her activity[1] she did not mean that she herself did the actual teaching but that the girls who accompanied her did it.

BHOR STATE AND UNTOUCHABILITY

One read in the papers that the Chief of Bhor had abolished untouchability in his State, so far as the law was concerned.

I have now got the text of the proclamation dated 1st November 1932. It is as comprehensive as it can be and advises the subjects of the State for the sake of their own religious advancement to do away with untouchability as it is observed today.

Those who have supplied me with a copy of the proclamation have also given me a bulky report of the reformers' activity in the

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 25-3-1933.

Sudhagad Taluka of the Bhor State and they mention their hopes and their difficulties about their work. The workers are few, and the tremendous activity that has covered the whole of India in connection with untouchability woke up the orthodox party also in Bhor State, and so the reformers experienced unexpected opposition, so much so that the Harijans were themselves frightened to take advantage of the services that the few reformers were prepared and able to offer.

I need not take up the space of *Harijan* and the time of the reader by recounting the difficulties and describing the successes that the reformers had. The reading of their report has left the impression on my mind that reformers need not expect thorough success, unless they are themselves willing to suffer boycott, complete ostracism, and, maybe, even loss of their social position and their belongings. Easy chair and substantial religious reform go ill together. The orthodox party, sincerely believing that their religion is in peril, may be expected to fight every inch of the ground and to give no quarter to the reformers. They have been taught to believe that to relegate a large portion of mankind to perpetual untouchability and all it means is a just retribution. They will not hesitate to believe that those who seek to free untouchables from their shackles would deserve the same retribution and, from their own point of view, they may not be blamed. The reformer, therefore, who has a religious conviction about the necessity of reform is expected to brave all the consequences of his activity, and if a sufficient number is found all over India, the result is a certainty in spite of the opposition of orthodoxy. For I believe that truth and time are on the side of reformers, and where these are ensured, it matters little whether reformers are few or many.

As Thoreau has said so well, "All reform all the world over always began with one person taking it up."

Harijan, 8-4-1933

366. HARIJANS AND TEMPLE-ENTRY

The other day a deputation of Harijans led by Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah waited on H. E. the Viceroy with reference to the Temple-entry Bills. The following extract from their representation will be read with interest:

> The opening of temples to our people along with other Hindu castes is a matter of the greatest importance for our social emancipation. We quite

realize that we cannot hope for a permanent emancipation and betterment unless our status in the Hindu religion is improved. We, therefore, hope Your Excellency's Government will assist the passage into Law of the Temple-entry and Anti-untouchability Bills. . . .

The courts in India are now assisting the enforcement of the superstition of untouchability. British Law has not left the superstition to its own resources, but has placed the machinery of the courts and the State at the disposal of the caste Hindus in the maintenance of those superstitious practices. Even if the Government cannot interfere in the religious practices of the Hindus, it should at least refrain from assisting in the enforcement of such practices, when they are opposed to humanity and public welfare as in the case of the treatment accorded to us. The Bill for the abolition of untouchability, sought to be introduced in the Assembly, puts an end to this anomaly and does not interfere with the religion of any person or community.

The Temple-entry Bill, for which we seek Your Excellency's support, is drafted so as to provide a legal machinery for peaceful and gradual evolution of reform with the consent of the people concerned. Each locality will be enabled to work out a suitable compromise for solving the question of our status. We beg Your Excellency to help in the achievement of a peaceful solution of this question that so fundamentally affects the dignity and the daily life of a community of forty-six million souls who cling to the ancient Hindu religion, to which they belong, and who wish to find an honourable place in it without causing turmoil or disturbance.

In the face of the above, it is a cruel suggestion to make that the Harijans do not want temple-entry. There is undoubtedly a difference of opinion as to the emphasis laid on temple-entry as compared to the economic and political uplift. But not even Dr. Ambedkar opposes temple-entry. He will be the first man to bring it up against the caste Hindus, and rightly, if there was no movement for temple-entry. The fact is temple-entry is not a substitute for any other uplift. It is an indispensable test that religious untouchability has been abolished and that the Harijan is no longer the pariah of Hindu society. It is not impossible to conceive that untouchables may all become economically and politically superior to the caste Hindus and may yet be treated as untouchable by caste Hindus, no matter how poor and even degraded they themselves may be. There are many individual Harijans who are economically well off and are members of legislative and municipal bodies, but to the orthodox caste Hindu, they are just as untouchable as they ever were, so long as they have no right of

temple-entry, as the caste Hindus have. Temple-entry prohibition and the consequent segregation that it carries with it constitute the distinguishing bar sinister of perpetual degradation. When that is lifted, and only then, will religious untouchability be said to have been abolished. The question, therefore, is not how many Harijans want temple-entry or, having got the privilege, will exercise it.

Caste Hindus have to recognize that right if they will purify Hinduism and render justice to over forty millions of fellow Hindus. The reformers may not, therefore, slacken their effort. The fact that the Bills have been hung up is no cause for despondency or going to sleep. The passage of the Bills, since they are private, will mean a mere register of the Hindu will, if they are passed by a clear Hindu majority and if they have the backing of Hindu opinion outside. They would be of no importance to me if they were forced upon Hindus by a superior power. I am interested in them because they are necessary to remove a legal hindrance in the way of reform. Whether orthodoxy represents the majority or the minority of one, it is able to stop the onward march of reform. The Bills are required for the sake of religious toleration. They have no further or other use.

That points to the necessity for legislation and the education of public opinion in the matter of Temple-entry Bills, if the public temples are ever to be opened. The pace will be accelerated if private temples, of which there are many, are opened and if temples for general worship are built where public opinion demands it. As a result of the recent brief tour of Shrimati Vijayalakshmi Pandit in Kathiawar, she told me that there was a movement in Rajkot for the building of a general temple for the use of all Hindus—Harijans, reformers and the orthodox, if the last will join.[1] The temple is proposed to be built after the ancient pattern, so as to combine a school dharmashala, a place of congregation and worship. I do hope that those who have the scheme in hand will persevere with it and bring it to fruition. There need not be much money required for it. It can be built in sections as the huge temples of the South could only have been. A beginning can be made at once by securing a good open site and the services of a devout honest *pujari*. Mere brick and mortar is of no use, if the *pujari* in charge is corrupt.

But I am digressing; my purpose for the moment is to drive

[1] *Vide* "A Model Temple", 29-4-1933 and 30-4-1933.

home the truth that the temple-entry movement must be carried on by

1. educating public opinion as to the necessity of legal provision for removing the legal difficulty,

2. inducing private owners to open their temples to the Harijans and

3. building new temples where necessary and where public benefaction would provide funds to build combination temples after the ancient manner on sites easily accessible to Harijans.

Harijan, 8-4-1933

367. TUKARAM AND UNTOUCHABILITY

A controversy has been going on whether the saints, especially of Maharashtra, have favoured untouchability. Sjt. P. H. Gadre of Nasik has contended that they have not only not favoured it but written unequivocally against it and have laid it down in emphatic terms that a man is to be judged and known, not according to his birth, but according to his deeds and that devotion to God purifies all men irrespective of their caste.

I reproduce below a selection[1] from the verses collected by Sjt. Gadre from the celebrated saint Tukaram.

The translation is taken, unless otherwise stated, from the work of Messrs Fraser and Marathe, who have kindly permitted Sjt. Gadre to quote from their work.

I hope that Sjt. Gadre or some other student will send a similar collection from the writings of the other saints. The reader will remember the quotation reproduced in these columns from Moropant, who describes untouchables as Harijans.

Harijan, 8-4-1933

[1] Not reproduced here

368. WHAT IT MEANS

I gave the other day an extract[1] from the experiences of a new teacher of Harijans. Here is a free and condensed translation of extracts from a recent letter of his:

> Within the few days that I have been teaching these children, I see that I have to give them object-lessons in every- thing. Cleanliness is the most difficult thing. For the past fortnight, therefore, I take the children regularly for bathing. I get them to wash their clothes with a bit of soap. Of the little children I wash the clothes myself. I supply them with brush sticks and get them to use them every day. I pare their nails and attend to every other detail. The result is that cleanliness occupies a larger place in my mind just now than giving them a knowledge of the three R's. Their parents appreciate this personal attention that is being given to their children. Now they, too, come to my nightly gatherings. I give them stories from the *Ramayana*, *Jatakmala* and adaptations from Tolstoy, and I propose to add Nanabhai's sketches of the heroes of the *Mahabharata*.
>
> In the morning I have an attendance of about ten children. There is a double attendance in the evening. Generally I take pleasure in this work, but events happen that confound me. Sometimes drunkards appear on the scene. Sometimes there is a proper fight between husband and wife, and sometimes I have to be an unwilling listener to choice abuse. Boys try my temper at times. Once one of them went beyond limits in his pranks and I had to take him by the hand and put him out. But I have faith in God and I am hoping that this will be my life-work. I know that it is most taxing and if I did not hold on to my faith in God, I should have a recurring fit of disappointments.
>
> You have drawn my attention to weaning them from the habit of taking leavings of food from their employers. But I shall be patient. When I have gained their confidence, I shall broach the subject to them.
>
> I would love to learn how to skin carcasses and tan the hides. This is necessary if I am to deal with the habit of

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 26-3-1933.

carrion-eating. Many of them add to it the drink habit and it is the commonest thing for both men and women to indulge in tobacco. The more I come in touch with them, the more I am baffled by the insanitation amongst many of them. There is a stench coming from their bodies and their clothes, especially when they have eaten carrion. Add to this the foul smell coming from the dung heaps. In order to minimize the effect of these smells, I generally sit under the open sky.

This is followed by a heart-rending description of the dirty habits of two boys. Such experiences need not dishearten any teacher. Let us remember that this is a direct result of the criminal neglect of caste men and of compulsory segregation of the most useful members of society, and all that in the name of religion. If we are to reduce our death-rate and to bring under control the diseases that are rampant among us, we will have to have hundreds like this teacher, who would work amongst Harijans with real love and unquenchable faith. We have to feel towards these children as if they were our very own. What do parents do when they have their children suffering from terrible confluent smallpox or still more dreadful diseases, filling their rooms with stench and dirt? They do not mind staking their everything in order to see their children cured. We shall have to bestow the same love on these Harijan children. We shall have to have the same patience with them even as we have for our own. Whatever may be said to the contrary, I shall proclaim from the housetops that, unless we remove the scourge of untouchability from our hearts, Hinduism is doomed. The Shastras do not warrant the neglect of a single human being in the way in which we have neglected over 40 millions, and if we would repent of our sins, I would like to have an army of voluntary workers, drawn from the so-called higher classes, offering to teach and take care of Harijan children.

Harijan, 8-4-1933

369. A DONATION

A friend who wants to remain anonymous sends Rs. 500 to be used at my discretion for the Harijan cause. The money is being forwarded to the Central Board to be used subject to my approval.[1]

Harijan, 8-4-1933

370. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

April 8, 1933

CHI. MARY,

I have your letter.

So far as I am concerned, I have no hesitation in saying 'welcome'.[2] The hesitation may well be all on your part. I would love to have all nationalities and religions represented in the Ashram, but if it has not up to now succeeded in attracting them all, it is due to our limitations. We have many shortcomings to overcome.

You talk of your 'old age'. If you can disclose it without blushing, let me have it; but I am quite sure that you are not 64, and I should be sorry to think that I am regarded as an encumbrance because of my old age. Totaramji, whom you must know by this time by his name, is older I think even than I am. Therefore you need not worry about your age. What view Narandas and the other members of the Ashram take, I shall presently ascertain. I shall ask him to give their opinion quite frankly as they should do without needing any warning from me. But even if you decide to throw in your lot with the Ashram and the Ashram gladly takes you, as a preliminary, let it be definitely for one year, for your convenience. I attach very great importance to the spiritual value of a promise, a pledge or a vow, by whichever name we may describe the act. Therefore if you take the final plunge at once it means that it will leave no door open for escape. One who has great regard for the sanctity of vows will therefore be cautious. After you have tried yourself in the Ashram for one year and found that you like the physical as well as the spiritual

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 3/4-4-1933.

[2] The addressee had stayed in the Ashram for a few weeks and had asked Gandhiji in a letter whether she could return to it for a longer period.

surroundings, then you may take the final plunge.

I hope you are both enjoying yourselves in beautiful Kashmir. Do write regularly from there.

Love from us all to you both.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6002. Also C.W. 3328. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

371. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

April 8, 1933

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

A letter from Seth Poonamchand's wife which I see is dated 27th March and two letters from Seth Jaju dated 30th March and 1st instant were received by me only yesterday about 4 p.m. These relate, as you know, to Seth Poonamchand Ranka's fast and about which the Government have passed special orders. These are of no avail for the purpose intended, if the letters received and sent are to be held up for many days before they are delivered to me. I would like to know why they were held up in spite of the orders and whether in future I may have the correspondence in this matter promptly delivered to me.

This delay makes me more anxious than ever to receive the Government's answer to my letter[1] of the 1st instant addressed to the Secretary to the Bombay Government.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40) (3)A, p. 167; also G.N. 3886

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", 1-4-1933.

372. LETTER TO HARKISONDAS

April 8, 1933

MY DEAR HARKISONDAS,

I have your letter of 7th instant. I think that it is necessary for you to give the local Press as fast as you can all the news in connection with the activities of the Board. Nothing should be kept as the first copy for *Harijan*. *Harijan* exists for the movement and not the latter for the *Harijan*. But I would like a fortnightly or weekly report, whichever is more convenient for you, giving in a concise form the activities of the Board, so that the news in the *Harijan* may reach those who have no access to the local Press or who would not look at it even if they had. Moreover, the *Harijan* can only publish the barest summary of your activities, whereas the local Press would be expected to give ample space to each one of the items you may supply it with. I think I have made my meaning quite clear.

Yours sincerely,

HON. SECRETARY
BOMBAY BOARD

From a microfilm: S.N. 20870

373. LETTER TO RAMESH CHANDRA

April 8, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter.[1] Is it not a universal experience that things that were at one time pure have become impure through the march of time? Both the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* containample evidence that at one time varnadharma was followed in the sense I have described.

I never knew that it was the impression of almost all the Hindus that the caste system was the same as the varnashrama. No Hindu to my knowledge has claimed that there are innumerable varnas, but every child knows that there are numberless castes. Is it not also a fact that there are many castes claimed to belong to the same varna? So far

[1] In this the addressee had contended that no varnadharma could be practised without doing away with the caste system,

as I can see, the origin of caste is wholly different from the origin of varna, and except up to a certain point the function also of caste differs from that of varna.

I do claim that in ideal varna there can be no inequality whatsoever. There would be a variety, but not inequality.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. RAMESH CHANDRA

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER

SILCHAR

(ASSAM)

From a photostat: G.N. 6092; also S.N. 20865

374. LETTER TO SRI PRAKASA

April 8, 1933

MY DEAR SHREEPRAKASH,

I must disappoint your hope that I would stop all further correspondence, only let not the hope deferred make the heart sick. Your letters though long give me more and more insight into your mind and I like that in connection with all co-workers. You have not perceived that you have put the cart before the horse in the proposals you have made. In none of your proposals is there any effort required on our part. Everything has got to be done through the Legislatures, therefore through the Government, and that, throughout history, has been the way to perdition. All the reform that you adumbrate can only come after we have made adequate effort at least to arouse public conscience against the monster of untouchability. Untouchability is the extremist form that the oppression by the high-caste Hindus over so-called lower castes has taken. I would like you therefore to study the genesis of untouchability and its far-reaching effects far more fully than you seem to have done.

I hope you have almost regained your lost strength.

I am glad Father has been paying occasional visits.

The weekly bulletin from Calcutta shows that Shivprasad is still far from well. Let's hope that we shall soon have better news of him.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

SJT. SHREEPRAKASH
SEVA ASHRAM
BENARES CANTT.

Sri Prakasa papers: File No. G. 2. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also S.N. 20866

375. LETTER TO N. V. THADANI[1]

April 8, 1933

MY DEAR THADANI,

You have tried to cover your mischief with a jester's tricks, but the bulky enclosures[2] were there to tell their own tale. When the day for the weekly editing comes, I shall go through the correspondence and see whether I can extract something useful for me.

I shall look forward to your unveiling the mystery of the *Mahabharata*. Many have tried and failed. If you succeed, your success will be due to the accumulation of their failures, and if you also fail, it would be an additional stepping-stone to the success which your successor will unjustly seek to claim for himself, if he is a fool.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. V. THADANI
RAMJAS COLLEGE
DELHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 20872

[1] Principal of Ramjas College, Delhi

[2] These formed the addressee's correspondence with Jagadguru Shankaracharya concerning Vedic authority for the existence of the fifth caste in Hinduism.

376. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

April 8, 1933

CHI. JAMNALAL,

You ought to go and see Seth Poonamchand Ranka as early as possible. Tell him that his fast is against the principle of satyagraha and on my part I feel that it cannot be defended on any grounds. Everyone is not against the classification of prisoners. Not all of the prisoners who get "A" and "B" classes willingly accept "C" class. One who is given a higher class is not bound to enjoy all the conveniences of that class. Those who avail themselves of those facilities are doing that of their own accord. How can Seth Poonamchand compel them to forsake those facilities? How can he resort to fast for that? That he may give up a number of facilities himself is a different thing altogether. I myself do not like classifications but fasting is not the means by which the changes can be effected. I hope that Shri Poonamchand Ranka will give up his stubbornness. He should know that as long as he considers himself a satyagrahi, he is obliged to observe discipline. As an originator of satyagraha I should have some right to lay down the code for a satyagrahi. From that point of view also he should listen to my advice.

May God grant you success.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 107

377. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

April 8, 1933

CHI. KAKA,

I got your letter. I sent my reply[1] to Keshav three days ago. It was a brief one. He must have seen you by now.

These friends may start using honey at the Eucharist. But other Christians, and particularly the Roman Catholics, will never agree to

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Keshav", 6-4-1933.

do that, since the word used in the service is "wine". It is more likely, however, that they might use grape juice which has no intoxicating effect. Some scholars do interpret "wine" in the original as "unfermented grape juice". So in any case there must be grape juice. Such blameless juice is used in some churches, and nowadays hundreds of thousands of bottles of such grape juice are available. In Trivedi's books also which you have sent, different methods of obtaining such grape juice are described. Hence the suggestions to use it can be immediately implemented.

It could be very good if that gentleman undertakes to publish a Marathi edition of *Harijan*.

Give me detailed information about you from time to time.

Send me that American book about eye treatment. Do get your eyes treated there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9496. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

378. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

April 8, 1933

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter.

Read the accompanying letter to Sharda[1] and give it to her.

You may not be able to provide Krishnamaiyadevi a job, but you can certainly give her some work to do. You can give her sewing and embroidery work, as you formerly used to do. My point is that she must produce something and not feel that she is living on charity.

Dharmakumar's education should consist in his upbringing at home. That is the ideal of education in the Ashram. If children learn from their parents to be virtuous and to love bodily labour, book-learning they will get afterwards. We know from experience that book-learning does not always make a person virtuous. I am sure that anybody who possesses a good character will never starve, though he may not become rich. Misplaced compassion is not non-violence; it is, on the contrary, a form of subtle violence and one should, therefore,

[1] Daughter of Chimanlal N. Shah, an Ashram inmate

guard against it all the more carefully. You should help both Krishnamaiya and Mahavir, but in the right manner. They should shake off their lethargy and work, and live contentedly. Pyare Ali says that he can help Mahavir to earn up to Rs. 40 or 50. If he does not get more than Rs. 25 at Sundardas's place and if he satisfies Sundardas by his work, it would be better, provided of course the latter can release him, to keep him with Pyare Ali. Think over this. . . .'s[1] whole family is leaving the Ashram. I have still not been able to understand . . . [2]. He believes that he was never fit to live in the Ashram, since he wants to become a big engineer . . .[3] says that she cannot do without certain pleasures and, therefore, she also was not fit to live in the Ashram. If they leave, . . .[4] certainly cannot live alone in the Ashram. Thus the whole family will leave. This is no ordinary event. But it is right that they should leave. We would not like anybody to stay against his wishes. This is our reward for having practically exempted the family from observing the Ashram rules. . . .[5] now wishes to take up an independent job in some factory. It seems he wants to join . . . [6]. There will be no harm if he can do so. Of course his expenses will be high. In Deolali itself the family will spend about Rs. 100. . . .[7] himself will spend rather freely. I, therefore, think that their expenses will come to Rs. 150. God's will be done. The Ashram, of course, will stop giving them money. But I think we shall have to give them a month's expenses.

You seem to be fairly occupied in solving family problems there. Do try and solve them.

If Kaku and Lakshmi have developed such relations that they even meet each other alone, I would advise that they should be married off. After they are married, they may, if they wish, live separately and may observe *brahmacharya* as much as they wish. But, before they are married, if they constantly think about each other, feel physical attraction towards each other and even occasionally touch each other with such feelings, that would definitely be against dharma. An engagement may be broken off, but a marriage cannot be dissolved. If, therefore, there are occasions for them to go out together, it is desirable that they should get married. Discuss this with Kaku and Lakshmi, and also with Nath.

How much would your sister need? Meet Jamnalalji and have a

[1], [2], [3], [4], [5], [6] & [7] The names have been omitted.

talk with him and afterwards take your sister to meet him. If she is not eager to earn money, if she wants to live a life dedicated to service and has no responsibility for supporting anybody, and if she is ready to follow the Ashram way of life, I think she can live in the Ashram. But this may not perhaps be possible for her at this age.

Ask Gomati why she has stopped writing to me. I have not heard from Kishorelal of late.

If Manju[1] wants to be a doctor and if you can meet her expenses, encourage her in her ambition. I don't think it is a great achievement to be a doctor. All the same it is a form of education and one acquires knowledge. If she loves it, by all means let her have it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8800. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

379. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE VARNA SYSTEM

A student after reading my article[2] on the system of the varnas writes.[3]

Yes, I believe in the hereditary division into varnas. Had it not been so, the varna system would have had no meaning at all and serve no purpose. It would be mere jargon.

The system of varnas is no man-made scheme. It emanates from the law of Nature or God. It rests with man whether or not to abide by the law. Hence, man's individuality does not suffer in any way. Fire says you will burn yourself if you touch it. If we do not pay heed to what fire says and hold it in our hand just to assert individual freedom, we are bound to get burnt. The same applies to the law of varnas. The sages, at the end of their penances, realized that a class structure was essential for social progress and so brought about this division. It is left to us whether or not to accept it. No one is going to take us to task if we refuse to do it. But who can then stop Nature's punishment? Why indeed call it punishment? Who can prevent what may be the

[1]Addressee's grand-daughter

[2]*Vide* "Varnadharma", 19-3-1933.

[3] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had asked whether Gandhiji believed that varna was determined by birth, which belief would be contrary to the doctrine of individual freedom.

natural consequence of not abiding by the laws of the varna system? So, the division into varnas can do no harm to individuality.

But why should varnas be by birth? It is not something I have produced out of my pocket. Birth is at the very root of the varna system. The very name Brahmin is suggestive of the qualities expected of a Brahmin and one would prepare his progeny for them. The same is true of a Shudra. He will cultivate in his children the qualities expected of a Shudra. This is not to imply that a Shudra is not entitled to knowledge. The system of the varnas is necessarily related to livelihood. A person shall earn his livelihood only by pursuing the occupation of the varna in which he is born. There is no objection to one varna acquiring the knowledge of all the other varnas. For individual progress and protection of freedom, all people should have the qualities generally found in all the four varnas. But each man must especially develop the qualities of his own varna.

The varna system emphasizes the curbing of material greed so that it can leave greater scope for spiritual development Material objects and material happiness are transitory. If man gets himself entangled in acquiring that alone, makes it the sole aim of his life, he will not be able to think about his soul. This does not in any way dampen human endeavour. When man does not have to go in search of means of livelihood, when means of livelihood are ready for him, all his efforts would be directed towards the spiritual quest. It is my firm conviction that by hitting upon the varnas the Hindus have made a great spiritual discovery, and have provided means for spiritual development. In course of time we forgot this fact and the varna system became disorganized. It reduced itself to touchability and untouchability and to restrictions on inter-dining and intermarriage. This resulted in its fall, viz., the confusion of the varnas. People lost themselves in encroaching upon the vocations of the other varnas. The Brahmin gave himself to greed and abandoned his duty as a Brahmin.

If the sea catches fire, who shall put out that fire? If the salt loses its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? That is why Hindu dharma is in decline today.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 9-4-1933

380. OBEDIENCE TO PARENTS

It is one's duty to obey one's parents. They are one's teachers. They are God. Shravana achieved his salvation by regarding his parents as God. While obeying his father's orders, Rama gave up his kingdom. Now you say that untouchability is *adharma*, that Hinduism will perish if that blot is not washed off. To many of us what you say sounds true. But our parents do not accept it. As one of my friends undertook to do service to Harijans, his mother left her home and could be located only after midnight. She has returned home, but a great difficulty faces my friend. What should this friend do now? This must be the case with many young people.

This is a summary of a letter. This is a real difficulty. I believe in devotion to parents. While my parents were alive, I conducted myself regarding Shravana as an ideal. I believe that whatever I have achieved is due to my devotion to my parents and the fruit of their blessings. Despite that, I think we can imagine circumstances in which disobedience to the orders of parents becomes one's clear duty. Where the parents have been given the place of a teacher and of God, they have been thought of as perfect beings, so that to their offspring they are perfect. The children do not even entertain a doubt that what their parents say may be full of ignorance or error. They certainly are partial to their parents, because they desire their welfare. Where there exists a pure environment and the children have complete faith in their parents, the latter's well-being consists in carrying out their parents' orders.

But when the children have a doubt, what is to be done? The parents say, 'Drink liquor, eat carrion, offer bribes, secure that job by telling lies, one can speak an untruth in business, marry a nine-year old girl, there is sin in touching an untouchable,' etc., etc. What should children do when such a situation arises? I think that the answer is provided in asking the question itself. When parents issue an order which appears to the children to be clearly an *adharma*, it is their dharma to disobey it. But where there is the slightest room for doubt as to what is right and what is wrong, it is one's dharma to do one's parents' bidding. One cannot compare any other man's word with that of one's parents. In such circumstances, one has to follow one's parents' word only. Only he may disobey his parents who feels it incompatible with his dharma to obey them.

But who can claim such religious prompting? An impudent, licentious or selfish son may get such an urge. But he does not thereby acquire the right to disobey his parents. Only a son who has restraint, thoughtfulness, renunciation, forbearance, etc., who has known what it is to obey orders, who has clearly experienced religious awakening, may alone have the obligation to act contrary to his parents' orders. Moreover, in an age of licentiousness and independence when many sons belittle their parents, it is difficult to say who disobeys his parents' command regarding it his dharma to do so. But because of that we cannot observe their dharma. I believe he who observes the conditions which I have pointed out will not commit a mistake.

Again, those young men and women, who act contrary to their parents' wishes cannot claim the facilities of their parental homes and their parents' money. They should be ready to give up home and wealth without hesitation and anger. Very often such conduct produces a good effect. The parents' opposition calms down. Where the parents are licentious and the son is restrained, one very often sees a change brought about in the parents. One cannot say this in regard to untouchability. Here both can be restrained. Both can regard their own conduct as dharma. Such honest differences may even endure. Here one can only expect that both will conduct themselves by tolerating mutual differences. Parents should not expect their grown-up sons or daughters always to obey them. And where the parents remain obdurate or threaten to kill themselves and so on, the youths who clearly know their dharma should thoughtfully observe it.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 9-4-1933

381. NEW USAGES OF TERMS[1]

[*April 9, 1933*]

From the point of view of the correspondent[2] there is some truth in what he says, from my point of view there is none. I have given words a wider meaning, no doubt, but I have not rejected the popular meaning. The correspondent gives up the popular meaning, and tries to accept mine. This attempt itself is misguided. If we give up the popular meaning, what meaning can we expand? I have faith also in stone and other images. The fact is that language can never completely express human thoughts. So, the meanings of words continue to expand. It is impossible, it is unnecessary, to coin new words for every sense. When the same word is used to convey opposite ideas, there is a definite danger of ambiguity and absurdity. There is no such danger here as I have only expanded the popular meaning. In fact, it is not an expansion but a clarification of the meaning. The popular meaning tells us that the stone is God. But the correct idea is not that the stone is God but that God pervades the stone. People might say that if there is God in the stone, why should we not regard the stone as God? The body is not the soul, but the soul dwells in the body. Yet millions say and believe that the body itself is the soul. It is of course true from their point of view, or rather, there is an element of truth even in what they think. It means that the popular meaning does not deserve to be abandoned altogether. As a concept grows wider, the meaning of the term would go on expanding too. What I am doing is nothing new. My ideas themselves may strike one as something new. This is inevitable because that is my *sadhana*[3]. One has to think in the search for Truth. The narrow meaning does not satisfy. With contemplation the same meanings of the same words are found satisfying. It is said that the Vedas are but an expansion of *Om*. Tulsidas says that Rama himself is *Om*, Rama himself is the Vedas. Rama includes everything. He alone is, all else is illusion. But the Rama of the people is only a son of Dasharatha. Tulsidas says: "My Rama may be Dasharatha's

[1] The Gujarati translation of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 9-4-1933.

[2] The correspondent had stated that Gandhiji had used terms like 'idolworship' and 'temples' in a new sense and wanted these new meanings to be explained so as to avoid possible misunderstanding.

[3] Spiritual striving

son but He is also much more: He is *Sachchidananda Purnabrahma*." There is no contradiction in this at all. It is the broadening of an idea, expansion of a meaning. Tulsidas meditated and in his meditation had a vision of the flawless, formless, all-pervading Rama. This has not led to any absurdity. On the contrary, we have a better understanding of the significance of the avatars. It has brought peace to our mind and heart. And we also realize how Rama has come to be known as more than Dasharatha's son. Similarly, let us proceed from the stone to the atom and we have endless images. And we see God hidden even in the atom. Hence, the whole world is given to image-worship. The place in which the image of Jagannatha is installed is a Jagannatha temple. And the place where a few persons sit together and pray to God is also a temple. So a temple is an integral part not only of Hindu dharma but of religion as such—one may call it a church or a mosque, a gurudwara or an *upashraya*[1]. As long as the body and the soul are related, temple and God will always stay together. The body is a fountain of filth as well as an abode of God. Similarly, a temple can also become a den of vice, and it is already an abode of God. "As is one's faith, so is one's gain."

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 14-4-1933

382. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

April 9, 1933

CHI. LILAVATI,

You have acted like a child who, forbidden to touch a centipede, tries to catch a snake. Since the primus stove does not require much methylated spirit, you chose a stove which works with such spirit only! But God is kind to you, so you escaped with only a little hair burnt. Take a lesson from this. Try to understand the meaning of every prohibition or permission. That is, make your life steady, calm and thoughtful.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9325

[1] Of the Jains

383. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

April 9, 1933

BOYS AND GIRLS,

What had happened to Vinod? I hope she is all right now.

Shantaram will grow mentally if you give him adequate love. I hope you do not make fun of him. Does the new diet suit all of you? Do all of you write to Lakshmibehn? She remembers all of you very much.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

384. LETTER TO CHAMPANERIA

April 9, 1933

BHAI CHAMPANERIA,

I have your letter. I am glad you wrote. Even if only a handful of workers show extreme humility on the one hand and firmness even to the extent of being ready to lay down their lives and sacrifice their all on the other, the demon of untouchability is bound to perish.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4140

385. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 9, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got today the post despatched by you on the 7th and despatched today's post from here after reading it.

Parachure Shastri had joined the Ashram for a three-year course of training with a view to doing Ashram work. His aim and mine was that he and his co-workers should work according to the ideals of the Ashram. Though, unfortunately, he had to leave before completing the period, he did Ashram work to the best of his ability and that is why I look upon him as an inmate of the Ashram. Here the phrase "inmate of the Ashram" is not interpreted literally. The meaning

which I have given to it is wider, and not narrower, than the literal meaning. Did you read what I wrote in my letter to Duncan? According to me, he has already become an inmate of the Ashram. If he were to find himself in a difficult plight anywhere while doing public work, I would invite him to the Ashram. Wherever he goes, he will keep up his connection with the Ashram. I believe Parachure Shastri has done so. Some workers at Chinchvad also may. I would not say that about everyone who joins the weaving school. Some of them give up the Ashram way of life altogether after they have learnt weaving and work only for a living. If you are still not convinced, ask me again.

I accept all your criticism of Narahari's letter. I had observed the harshness of his language which you have noticed. But I ignored it and paid attention only to his motive and his suggestions. I read it as I would have done if it were written about me. I would ignore harsh language used by anybody about me. I, therefore, paid no attention to Narahari's harsh language about you. Moreover, I know his temperament. Your dharma is to disregard the language used about you. If your correspondent's motive is not malicious and if his suggestions deserve consideration, we should think about them. This is the way of non-violence. It is the swan's manner. "The creator has made all things, animate and inanimate, full of virtues and defects. The good follow the example of the swan and accept the milk of virtues and leave the water of defects." Unless one acts thus, one cannot attain goodness and truth or preserve them for long even if attained. We may observe other people's defects, but it is for the spotless Brahman alone, and not for an imperfect man, to judge them. Man is described by some as an embodiment of imperfections. You must not, therefore, get disheartened. I close this chapter here for today.

I have already written to you about . . . [1]. I have no hope that any of them will continue to live in the Ashram. They cannot endure the strict discipline of the Ashram rules. I, therefore, believe that they have decided to leave the Ashram after considering their capacity. They have also no respect for you and no faith in you, but I would not mind that. I would urge you, too, not to mind it, but when the truth is that they lack the strength or the will (the two things, ultimately mean the same) to observe the Ashram rules, both they and

[1] The name has been omitted.

the Ashram would feel suffocated if they continued to live in it. I think both . . .[1] and . . .[2] can support themselves. If . . .[3] were not ill, she, too, is fully capable of supporting herself. Perhaps their capacities will grow outside the Ashram and they will do quite well. They cannot conform to the mould of the Ashram life. If you believe otherwise and can tempt them to continue to live there, I should certainly be happy. I feel that their leaving the Ashram means my doing so. It has a serious implication for me, but their remaining in the Ashram against their will or in an unnatural manner would be unbearable to me and also contrary to dharma.

We could not do anything here except keep a fast to mark the commencement of the National Week.

I have not received Valji's article mentioned in your letter. Perhaps I will get it tomorrow.

BAPU

[PS.]

In my ignorance, I have committed myself to the Board here to supply 25 Gandiva spinning-wheels at 12 annas each. After making the promise, I asked Lakshmidas the price of the wheel and he informed me that it was a rupee and a half. But I must supply 25 spinning-wheels. I had written to Keshu about this in one of my letters. But he has now left. I don't know if there is anybody now in the factory who can attend to such work. If the spinning-wheels cannot be manufactured there, request Lakshmidas to manufacture and send them. If they cost more than 12 annas each, he should recover the balance from the Ashram. Each spinning-wheel must be fitted with a spindle-bearer, a spindle and a spring. The spinning-wheel which I had made in jail is there. The new ones should be as simple. They need not be varnished. There should be a hook at the top, so that the spinning-wheel can be hung up on a wall after the work is over. The hook can be made of tin sheet. Or a hole may be made and a string may be tied into a loop. The wheel need not have a steel axle. The one sent to me by Keshu does not have it. In the spinning-wheel which we used in the beginning, there were only two nails in the wheel. I have done plenty of spinning on such a spinning-wheel. It will be enough if they are not carelessly made and if they work smoothly. The freight will be paid by the Board.

[1], [2] & [3] The names have been omitted.

Wherever you get the spinning-wheel manufactured, they should be ready soon. If you have not followed any point, ask me to explain. Show this letter to Lakshmidas.

BAPU

[PPS.]

There are 26 letters in all.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8353. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

386. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 9, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

The packet which I despatched yesterday contained a report of discussion arising out of . . .'s[1] affair along with two letters relating to it, a letter from Mary with my reply to her and a copy of the same for being preserved there.

I very much liked Marybehn's letter. I am sure you will understand my reply to her. If all of you like her nature, respect her wish. But before you do that let all the inmates of the Ashram meet together and think about the suggestion independently. None of you need think that my view has to be accepted. You will see that I have made that clear in my letter to Marybehn also.

You will find with this a letter from Jekibehn[2]. Her sons have grown up now. They can be easily looked after there. If you can keep them in the Ashram, write to Manibhai[3] and ask him to send them over. Ask him also to send the estimated expenses on their account....[4] If we only would, all of us have much to learn from the cases of ... [5]. ...[6] had to leave the Ashram because he repeatedly violated the Ashram rules. ...[7] did not observe the Ashram rules and has also realized that he will not be able to observe them in future. He has not observed any of the rules till now and will not be able to observe them in future, and so the whole family is leaving the Ashram. ...[8] was the

[1] The name has been omitted.
[2] Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta's daughter
[3] Manilal Doctor, Jekibehn's husband
[4] A paragraph has been omitted.
[5], [6], [7] & [8] The names have been omitted.

pillar of the Ashram. Without him, the Ashram would not have come into existence at all. It is a painful and serious thing that his family should leave the Ashram. But I believe all the same that it is necessary for the sake of dharma that they should leave. We will not cease to love them for having left the Ashram. We will continue to take interest in them wherever they are. We should wish that, even though they live away from the Ashram, they will observe its rules to the best of their ability and will never do anything to bring shame on the Ashram.

I do wish that nobody will feel superior and think that they were not perfect because they left and that those who have not left are so. Those who leave can be morally worthier than those who remain. The imperfections of those who are leaving became known to all, but who knows the imperfections of the others which may have remained unknown? We should not sit in judgment over anybody. God alone knows who is good and who is bad.

We should learn a lesson from these instances and wake up. No one should conceal his shortcomings. Everybody should become more vigilant. Let nobody do anything out of false shame. One should do only what one spontaneously can, and if anyone cannot observe the Ashram rules or does not wish to do so, it would be better for them to leave. All of us are imperfect, but if, knowing imperfections, we constantly strive to follow the Ashram ideals and do not hide our shortcomings, we are fit to live in the Ashram. We should, however, leave if we do not wish to follow those ideals or have no faith in them.

If you circulate the foregoing among all friends there, it will suffice. If you wish to suggest any changes in what I have written, you may do so.

BAPU

[PS.]

Chhaganlal does not worry about Rama at all. He is sure that you will do whatever is necessary.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8352. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

387. LETTER TO NANALAL K. JASANI

April 9, 1 933

BHAI NANALAL,

I have your letter. Even if Maganlal does not join you, you two should divide the property and put the suggested divisions before Chhaganlal. We should hope that Maganlal will accept whatever you do. You should make the divisions with due regard for the sums earmarked by Doctor for specific purposes— that is, the total value of the property should be reduced by that much.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9631

388. LETTER TO MADHAVJI AND KRISHNA KAPADIA

April 9, 1933

CHI. MADHAVJI AND KRISHNA,

I have received letters of both of you. I too had written to Medh. He wrote to me. I did not inform you as the promise was to materialize only after some time. I am very happy to know that you have a little peace of mind. There are always ups and downs. The great thing is that you have not lost your peace of mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

MADHAVJI GOKULDAS
SHAMJI SHIVAJINO MALO
MANORDAS STREET
BOMBAY

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII

389. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

April 9, 1933

CHI. NARMADA,

You should not write in a scrawl. Write neatly in big letters.

I note that you had taken away the carrion from them with their consent.[1] They eat carrion even though there are plenty of other things to eat because they have come to relish it.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2776. Courtesy: Ramnarayana N. Pathak

390. LETTER TO SHAMAL R. RAVAL

April 9, 1933

CHI. SHAMAL,

I welcome your question. Of course I would never say that people should give up eating carrion and eat the flesh of slaughtered animals instead. However, I do say that carrion has a very bad effect on the person eating it. It is considered bad all over the world. Yes, I do say that a person who cannot give up eating flesh may eat the flesh of a slaughtered animal. Of course it cannot be that a person accustomed to eating flesh will eat only carrion. It is certainly not that those who eat carrion do so because they think it to be against dharma to kill an animal for food. It is sheer superstition to believe that carrion is especially good for health.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3146. Also C.W. 2882. Courtesy: Shamal R. Raval

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Naramadabehn Rana", 27-3-1933.

391. LETTER TO PADMA

April 9, 1933

CHI. PADMA,

I have your letter. If none of you can keep good health there, you should not stay on as a burden on the others. My advice then would be that you should go and stay in the Ashram. Instead of changing from place to place without any definite benefit, it would be better to live in the Ashram and be reconciled to whatever happens there. If, however, you keep good health at that place, you should settle there permanently. I shall await your reply.

I trust Shila is all right now and that Sarojini Devi is keeping good health.

How is Vidyavatiji's health? How many girls are there at present? What is your food? How is the climate of the place? Give me all such details.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6143

392. LETTER TO AMINA G. QURESHI

April 9, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER AMINA,

I am awaiting a letter from you after your visit to Qureshi. I also wish to know what you feel concerning tobacco and chillies. Write frankly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6666. Also C.W. 4311. Courtesy: Hamid G. Qureshi

393. TELEGRAM TO POONAMCHAND RANKA

Express [*April 10, 1933*][1]

SETH POONAMCHAND
PRISONER
DISTRICT JAILS KHANDWA

REGARD YOUR FAST AGAINST RULE OF SATYAGRAHA AND DISCIPLINE. COMFORT MAY NOT BE DEMANDED BY HUNGER-STRIKE AND NO ONE IS OBLIGED TO USE COMFORTS PROVIDED IN CLASSES A AND B. HOPE THEREFORE YOU WILL PLEASE BREAK FAST.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3887. Also Home Department, Government of India, Political File No. 31/108, 1932, p. 98. Courtesy: National Archives of India

394. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

April 10, 1933

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

I got two wires yesterday about Seth Poonamchand Ranka, dated 6th inst. According to the postmarks on them they were delivered to you on the Same date. You know how important they were. This delay baffles me. The only way I can somewhat undo its effect is to send a wire direct to Seth Poonamchand. But that I know is not covered by the Government orders. If you have the power to use the telephone or the wire I would request you to secure permission from the Government to despatch the enclosed wire[2] as an urgent message to Seth Poonamchand or the Superintendent of the Khandwa Jail at Government expense.[3] This in my humble opinion is the least that is due to the fasting prisoner and me.

I would ask for an early explanation of these delays in the

[1] *Vide* the following item.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] The text of the telegram was wired by the Government of Bombay to the Government of Central Provinces to be delivered to Poonamchand Ranka.

handling of correspondence in reference to the life of a prisoner and authorized by Government.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3887

395. LETTER TO ABDUL ALIM

April 10, 1933

MY DEAR ABDUL ALIM,

I was glad to receive your letter. You ought not to be downhearted. God has been really merciful to you. Without the goodwill of many people, you could not have gone to the 'Refuge'[1] nor to the Campbell Hospital. And you have Satisbabu and all the people of his Ashram willing to render such help as may be necessary. Whilst it is true that money can buy many things, poverty has its compensations, which money can never command. If it had no attractions, many people would not have voluntarily embraced poverty. You have read the Koran, and you know that the Prophet himself and many of his companions were very poor people and they suffered privations. You should not therefore grieve over your lot.

According to your instructions I am sending this letter care of Satisbabu.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20886

396. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

April 10, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have had two cheques for the David Scheme, in all Rs. 5,000, Rs. 2,500 from Shri Suvta Devi and another Rs. 2,500 from Shri Janaki Devi.

The first donation is to be utilized for a Rajputana Harijan student, if one with proper qualifications is available, otherwise for a Harijan student in the Bombay Presidency.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Deva Prasad Sarvadhikari", 9-3-1933.

The second donation is to be used preferably for a Harijan student from C. P., Marathi, failing that, from C. P., Hindustani, both failing, for any Harijan student.

I have also Rs. 100 from Janaki Devi to be used for Harijan cause at my discretion.

I have handed the amounts to Thakkar Bapa and verbally given also the instructions accompanying the donations. This is however for your record. I have still Rs. 500 to be sent to you of which I have already given you advice,[1] and I am hoping that Thakkar Bapa withdrew from the Arya Bhushan Press the sum of Rs. 1,044 which was the advance given on behalf of *Harijan*.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20885

397. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

April 10, 1933

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

I was delighted to see your handwriting after such a long time. I hope you are keeping quite well.

Is the donation of Rs. 5,000 from Sjt. Uttamchand Gangaram[2] to be announced in the *Harijan*, and if so, in what terms?

Is Dr. Choithram able to move about? Give him love on account of us all.

Premi[3] had become a regular correspondent, but of late she is frozen up. Ask her why she has been silent.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20876

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 3/4-4-1933

[2] Retired head master of a Government school in Sind. His donation was intended to finance a scheme for providing scholarships to Harijan pupils in primary schools in Sind.

[3] Addressee's daughter

398. LETTER TO N.

April 10, 1933

MY DEAR N.,

For the last three days or four I have not heard from you. I have developed regarding you a mother's anxiety. I am sure it is unnecessary, but when I do not hear from you, I imagine all sorts of things. Could you have fallen ill? Or, could you have fallen from your resolution? You must not therefore fail in writing regularly as you have promised to do.

I hope you got the long letter[1] I sent you on Friday. It contained answers to every one of your questions.

I had a satisfactory letter from Ramaswami in reply to my letter about which I wrote to you. Who is this guru of his with whom you are said to be living? How old is he? What languages does he know? Is Chitaldrug his home? How is Rudramuni behaving?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20875

399. LETTER TO K. RAMASWAMI

April 10, 1933

MY DEAR RAMASWAMI[2],

Your latest letter, that is of the 8th April, is quite satisfactory. I now understand the position better.

So far as your guru is concerned, I know it is too sacred a thing to be discussed. I suppose he is the gentleman whom Rudramuni also claims as his guru. Could you describe him? How old is he? What languages does he know? Not that a man to be good and true and advanced spiritually needs to know a single language. My enquiry is merely to satisfy my curiosity.

So far as your work amongst Harijans is concerned, I do not feel like guiding you for the moment. I can only hope that the work you

[1] This was presumably the one dated April 6, which may have been sent on the following day.

[2] A student volunteer who had engaged himself in social welfare activities such as scavenging, etc.

and some others with you began will not be given up altogether, but that it will take a truer form, as I hope it has taken in the case of N.

It gave me great joy to read of your many self-denials[1] as a result of your having taken to scavenging work.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. RAMASWAMI
C/O SJT. R. KRISHNA RAO
WEAVER'S LINES
MYSORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 20874.

400. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

April 10, 1933

CHI. JAMNA,

When I have sent you a vaidya like Purushottam, do you still want advice from me? And that too without yourself writing to me. I don't remember not having replied to any of your letters. I am still waiting for your reply to my last letter. Those who want me to write to them should write beautiful letters to me, or else fall so ill that they do not have strength enough even to write a letter.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 875. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

401. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

April 10, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

I got the slivers sent with Narahari. I will give the figures afterwards. The Surati slivers weigh 18 *tolas*.

I understand what you say about Shanta. She has not yet written anything to me. It will be better if you write about both the ladies to Jamnalalji at Wardha.

Lakshmi complains that nobody writes to her. Inquire if this is so. I hope you at any rate write to her.

I am used to being harassed. God has been testing me in a

[1] The addressee had given up coffee and visits to cinemas.

number of ways. How can a person grow unless he is tested? You certainly harass me by refusing to do your duty. I have all along been advising you to give rest to your throat and also to your body. But you have been disregarding both the orders. I have given you these orders not for your good but in the interest of the Ashram. If your throat is harmed permanently and your health breaks down, the Ashram will suffer more than you will. Do you understand this simple truth? If you understand it, you would be humble and do whatever I ask you to do for your health. This is true about your temper too. It also is a disease. You should get rid of it, and also overcome your impatience.I hear that Kisan is a little better. I cannot understand how she gets fits.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10335. Also C.W 6775. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

402. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

April 10, 1933

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I got your two letters. It was good that you observed the cutting up of the carcass of a buffalo. Now seize the first opportunity to do it.

Try to get help for the sick where it may be necessary. There are well known remedies for three or four of the diseases. You should know them. If I get time, I shall write about them.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 355. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

403. LETTER TO T. R. BHATT

April 11, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. If you will do your own bit for the removal of untouchability in your part of the world,[1] you will find that your example will be copied by others if they find in you a determined and selfless worker.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. R. BHATT
3 LAWRENCE ROAD
NAMNAIR, AGRA CANTT.

From a microfilm: S.N. 20887

404. LETTER TO R. R. CHAKRAVARTI

April 11, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and the cutting[2] you have sent me, and it made me glad to find that you were already doing all you could to remove the curse of untouchability.

I would not have you to infer from my defence[3] of Hardayalbabu that I would write exactly as he did. I hope you saw my article[4] in the *Harijan* on Brahmins. That explains my own personal position. I am wholly averse to a crusade against Brahmins or any particular class. I fear that we are all tarred with the same brush so far as this monster of untouchability is concerned.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20888

[1] The addressee had expressed his intention to work for the removal of untouchability at Badrinath, Garhwal.

[2] Of a letter that the addressee had written to *The Statesman* on the subject of temple-entry

[3] *Vide* "Letter to R. R. Chakravarti", 1-4-1933.

[4] "The Much-maligned Brahmin"25-3-1933.

405. LETTER TO ANNADA PRASAD CHOUDHARI

April 11, 1933

MY DEAR ANNADABABU,

I was delighted to hear from you and still more so to learn that Suresda[1] had improved wonderfully, so much so as to enable him to go to Kurseong for a change. It would be a matter of great joy for us all if he is completely restored at Kurseong.

I note what you say about the Free Press correspondent. It was not possible to give the Free Press the messages that I used to give to the A.P.[2] Otherwise too, I was so dissatisfied with the utterly reckless manner in which they published misstatements that I did not care to give any such facilities to the Free Press.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. ANNADA PRASAD CHOUDHARI
88 G CORPORATION ST.
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20898

406. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

April 11, 1933

DEAR SATISBABU,

There is no doubt about it that untouchability works nowhere so cruelly as in the South. That in the South all the non-Brahmins are not classed as untouchables has a historical reason. But in its working it is the same, whether you call them untouchables or not; and hence it is that you find in Madras alone non-Brahmin constituencies. Therefore in Madras you have reservation of seats for non-Brahmins and untouchables instead of merely untouchables, and the feeling between Brahmins and non-Brahmins runs much higher and keener than between touchables and untouchables. In Bengal no doubt things are bad enough and need to be mended. The untouchables in Bengal

[1] Dr. Suresh Chandra Banerjee

[2] The addressee who was at one time in charge of the khadi work at Abhoy Ashram, Comilla, had requested Gandhiji to give copies of his statements to the Free Press of India also as he did to the Associated Press of India.

would feel the irritation just as much as the untouchables in Madras, for they know nothing worse. But when we begin to set up comparisons we have to admit that the Madras pattern is infinitely worse than the Bengal one, and if you went to Madras and studied the question you will immediately say, 'Bad as things are with us in Bengal, they are infinitely worse in Madras.' Therefore I want you to work away against untouchability in Bengal as unremittingly as you have begun, but at the same time avoid comparison with the other Provinces and be more than fair in your judgment of the sanatanists.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20893

407. LETTER TO MARY GILLETT

April 11, 1933

MY DEAR MARY,

It was wholly unnecessary for you both to leave the Ashram. What I thought necessary was a temporary separation. That seems to have come naturally.

I am glad that you are now happier. I hope to hear from you that all the excitement and nervousness have disappeared altogether and that you have a peace such as you never enjoyed before.

I can well understand what all these events must mean to your parents and especially to your mother.[1] It seems to me that if the way is otherwise open and if you have private means, it might be well not to wait for the imminence of a mental breakdown, but to go now at once, pay your parents a short visit, explain everything to them, and express your unalterable determination to serve in India. If this is at all possible I think you will find that it would save time and worry and also money. It is not to be expected that your parents will be able to follow your quick changes intelligently and sympathetically.

Your assurance about Verrier's health makes me happy.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20896

[1] The addressee was at this time working in the Gond Seva Sangh at Karanja (C. P.). Her parents did not approve of this and wanted her to return to England. Her mother was in danger of mental breakdown.

408. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 11, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

Your long letter came yesterday. Your argument appeals to me. Women themselves have resisted the argument that you have advanced. I have believed it always that man is the aggressor. He is more sensual than woman. I have therefore no difficulty in following your argument. But the corollary you draw defies experience. It has been happy where it has worked. But they are rare cases and will always be so—nor is it unfortunate. The usual condition is marriage and procreation. That means breach of *brahmacharya* as we know it. That does not mean that we should not aim at it. We must aim at it even though there may be only one case of perfect *brahmacharya* out of the experiment. Many attempt, only a few will attain salvation. Therefore generally we shall have to be satisfied with married people growing to *brahmacharya* and a few only being life *brahmacharis*. If I am right, the Ashram will have to be what it is, always rising higher after every failure. . .[1] and . . . are infinitely better for having lived in the Ashram nor is the Ashram any the worse for their having lived in it. They would easily have been much better if I had been less imperfect and more wise and for that matter the other elders. But I was their foot-rule, so imperfect and untrue. Yet I do not consider myself an unsafe guide because I am not consciously untruthful and always attempt to discover and throw away my imperfections. All I say is that failures there must be so long as we have not in our midst a perfect man or woman. But we need not lose hope nor become unnerved on discovering instances like . . .'s; they are attempts of the system to throw off impurities. I rejoice at the discovery, while I deplore . . .'s error, even as I would rejoice at the discovery of a disease in my own body, though I may deplore it. Further than this I cannot carry this tremendous problem—'one step enough for me, I do not ask to see the distant scene'. We know the fundamental truth we want to reach, we know also the way. The details we do not know, we shall never know them all, because we are but very humble instruments among millions of such moving consciously or unconsciously towards the divine event. We shall reach the Absolute Truth, if we will faithfully

[1] This and the subsequent names in the letter have been omitted.

and steadfastly work out the relative truth as each one of us knows it.

Ba wants her letter separately because of the separate delivery. According to the date of the delivery of my letter to her, the fortnight is not yet complete. I do not understand this intricate working of the jail regulations. It differs in every jail evidently. But that ought not to cause any worry. The philosophy of prison life is that the body belongs to the keeper, i. e., the State. Therefore generally speaking it may be said that a prisoner is foolish who worries about exterior wants the supply of which depends wholly upon the keeper's will. Thus everything given to a prisoner is a concession which may be withdrawn at the will of the State. Domestic letters fall under that category. We may thankfully receive and write them so long as they are allowed but we may not foam or fret or curse, if we are not allowed to do so. Regularity of delivery we may prize but irregularity ought not to unhinge us. Those who are prisoners for conscience' sake should at least grasp this very simple but not generally understood truth. If you can explain it to Ba, you should do so.

I shall see about the delivery of Hindi *Harijan*. My weight is steady at 104.

Love from us all.

BAPU

[PS.]

Sacred cards going in a separate packet.

The slip containing your copy of the vows is too precious a possession to be with me. I therefore return it for you to keep.

From a copy; C.W. 9674. Courtesy: Mirabehn

409. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

April 11, 1933

MY DEAR RAJBHOJ,

I am not publishing your article because there is nothing in it except the oft-repeated generalization.

As I have already told you, just now it is better for you to take in what you have gone to the Ashram to receive and to bottle up all your thoughts. Let there be no hurry about sharing them with the world,

and you will find that at the end of the discipline you will be able to speak with authority because you will speak with knowledge.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20804

410. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA

April 11, 1933

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRA,

I thank you for your postcard. I see that you are rendering whatever service it is possible to render to N. Let's hope that she will pass through the fire all right and come out all the purer for the ordeal.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20897

411. LETTER TO P. PANDURANGA SHENAI

April 11, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I hope when I get the time to deal with one portion of your letter in the pages of the *Harijan* without in any way mentioning your name.

As to the last question in your letter, the Brahmin who discoursed upon untouchability was in my opinion utterly wrong. Untouchability in the case of womenfolk is only in respect of a temporary condition and if there was untouchability observed about people in similar cases, there would be nothing to be said. But here it is a permanent untouchability with heartless conduct attached to it. Between the two conditions there is no resemblance.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. PANDURANGA SHENAI
20 ANDIAPPA GRAMANI ST.
ROYAPURAM, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 20895

412. LETTER TO SAROJINI NANAVATI

April 11, 1933

CHI. SAROJINI,

Raihana has familiarized me with you so much that I feel as if I knew you from birth. She has mentioned you even in the postcard she wrote before she left Poona. I can understand that you feel lonely in the house without Raihana. May God give you long life and enthusiasm and strength for service.

Blessings from

BAPU

SAROJINIBEHN
C/O JUSTICE NANAVATI, POONA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10484

413. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

April 11, 1933

CHI. VASUMATI,

Your letter has neither gone to the Ashram nor come to me. I had been waiting for it all the time. Yes, I did get your letter of March 21. The reason why I have received no letter from Narandas must also be the same. If there was anything important in that letter, write to me again about it.

How are you all? Write and tell me what work you are doing and what you are reading. Mahalakshmi must have received the letter I wrote to her about the children. I am waiting for her reply. To which of her letters does Kisan want a reply? I do not remember to have left any of her letters unanswered. How did she fall ill?

We are all happy. I regularly get reports about Ba and Mira. Ramdas is quite well on the whole. Surendra is not here. Devdas has been touring.

To all sisters,

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9336. Also C.W. 582. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

414. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

April 11, 1933

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

A letter from you has come after a long interval. This should not happen. A particular day should be fixed for writing to me so that I may take it for certain that a letter will arrive on a specific day.

How is Arun? Abdul Alim writes that he is not keeping well.[1]

I understand about Mithibehn. You need not involve yourself in the matter of sacrificial killings at Kalighat[2]. The work already on your hands is enough and that itself is your *sadhana*. It will be a great achievement when the Pratishthan becomes a perfect ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1699

415. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

April 11, 1933

DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

I have your letter written on the train. Sarojini also has sent one. She says that she misses you now that you have left. What could not be accomplished in Poona must be achieved in Mussoorie.[3] Only after that can anything be considered. Greetings from all of us to you all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: S.N. 9658

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Abdul Alim", 10-4-1933.

[2] The Kali temple in Calcutta

[3] The reference presumably is to the addressee's being restored to health.

416. LETTER TO M. G. BHAGAT

April 12, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter addressed to the President of the Servants of Untouchables Society.[1]

From the certificates enclosed by you it would appear that you do not belong to the Harijan class, and if you do not, no part of the donation of the Rs. 500 referred to in your letter will be available to you, but there is no reason why the general funds of the Society should not be used for the purpose indicated in your letter. If therefore you do not belong to the Harijan class, you should approach the Bombay Branch of the Society and satisfy it of the reasonableness of your application.

Pending receipt of your reply, I am keeping your papers with me.

Yours sincerely,

M. G. BHAGAT
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20907

417. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

April 12, 1933

THE SECRETARY TO THE
GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY
HOME DEPARTMENT

DEAR SIR,

I have just read the Government's reply to my request contained in my letter[2] of the 1st instant.

[1] The addressee had applied for the scholarship of Rs. 500, announced by the Servants of Untouchables Society, to finance the research he was conducting on the subject of untouchability in the *Mahabharata* under the aegis of the Bombay University.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", 1-4-1933.

I am thankful for the correction that it was not in 1922 but in 1923 that I was permitted to see two fellow-convicts in the Yeravda prison who were fasting.

I am sorry for the decision of the Government on the issue raised by me.

Technically the Government are right in their reply. Naturally every concession lapses with the end of the prisoner's incarceration. The limits of the current concessions I have not questioned, though I did not like them in so far as the inquiry about the treatment or conduct of other prisoners was concerned. Happily there was no occasion for definitely raising the point. My endeavour has been to avoid, as far as possible, occasion of conflict with authority. I have been content to live, as becomes a prisoner, a hand-to-mouth existence in the hope that with the march of time my conduct would inspire the Government with confidence in my desire to tender and promote prison discipline to the best of my ability and thus make my way smooth for humanitarian work that was possible for me even as a prisoner to do. And I may be pardoned for referring to a policy once established by the Government and pleading for its continuity.

But the Government would on the contrary seem to repent of past concessions and to want to curtail them. For the communication under reply says, "Government are unable to extend this concession so as to cover direct communications between him and prisoners in jails other than Yeravda." Does this mean that I am not now to exchange communications which I have hitherto carried on with prisoners in jails other than Yeravda, and that in cases such as Seth Poonamchand's I am not to be permitted to offer friendlyintervention? I can only hope that the Government do not mean to curtail or restrict the concession already granted to me. I request an early reply as even the concession granted in the matter of Seth Poonamchand has not, in my opinion, been properly given effect to.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40) (3)A, p. 195; also G.N. 3888

418. LETTER TO P. R. LELE

April 12, 1933

MY DEAR LELE,

Of course, I know that you were attached to the cause of untouchables long before the question of saving my life occurred.[1] You had yourself corresponded with me as editor of the *Liberator*[2]. My point was that you should continue your interest along the lines chalked out by the Society, whatever your differences with the Bombay Branch. As you say, Thakkar Bapa is an institution in himself. I should be sorry indeed if it was a fact that the other agencies working for the service of the Harijans had materially weakened because of the existence of the Bombay Branch. I would like you to throw more light on it. And you mystify me by saying that you will 'have to be satisfied with such opportunities to serve as Dr. Ambedkar allows and gives you'. Whatever the difference as to the way of working between Dr. Ambedkar and others, surely the goal is the same except for the fact that Dr. Ambedkar would not be satisfied with anything less than destruction of varnashrama, but there is absolutely common ground so far as destruction of untouchability in the sense of out-casteness is concerned. The field therefore is so vast that all can serve, whether by belonging to some of the organizations or independently.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20906

[1] The addressee had said that the Bombay Branch of Servants of Untouchables Society had been concerned solely with preventing Gandhiji from fasting and that its existence had weakened other such organizations.

[2] Swami Shraddhanand's paper devoted to the service of the untouchables, which the addressee had joined in 1926

419. LETTER TO USHAKANTA MUKHOPADHYAY[1]

April 12, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I am grateful to you for your very long and reasoned letter. But that letter does not convince me of the necessity of untouchability, as we observe it today, for any beneficial purpose whatsoever, and you seem to give up your case when you suggest that common temples may be built which would be accessible to all classes of Hindus so that in time to come people may forget the artificial distinctions that are observed today.

So far as the four divisions are concerned, I am wholly at one with you if you agree that they are designed to regulate the duties of the four divisions and not to set up grades of superiority and inferiority nor to erect impassable barriers as to inter-dining and intermarriage. That there would be a custom set up as to marriage and dining I can quite see, but it would not be and never was an integral part of varnadharma.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20908

420. LETTER TO N.

April 12, 1933

MY DEAR N.,

After having kept me waiting for four days and holding me in suspense, you have given me a long letter.

I do not like the boil on your left foot and right leg. I hope that you know the simple treatment of boils and that by the time this reaches you, nothing will have been left of them. It is much better to stop all work than to run the risk of dirt getting into them when they appear on inconvenient parts of the body. If you do not know simple treatment of simple diseases, you have got to learn it quickly. Truly, this new life is a new birth for you. May you come safely through it.

As for S[2]. I do not know what you mean by giving him another

[1] The addressee had claimed that untouchability was designed to protect the weak in the society as was the *purdah* in the North.

[2] The names have been omitted.

chance. I hope you have written to him strongly about his unwarrantable familiarity. Unless he is truly repentant, nothing whatsoever can be accepted from him, and it would not be proper to accept his mere word in order to enable you to receive a gift from him. It is demoralizing to receive gifts from those whom you want to reform or from those with whom we had questionable relationship. Therefore S. may have all the chances for showing his repentance. Nothing whatsoever should be received from him, or, for that matter from R[1]. The only person whom I regard as quite reliable is Ramachandra. Get everything you need from him and no one else. I shall write to Ramachandra to look to your wants. He told me that in reply to your letter asking for soap, he offered to send you a remittance so as to enable you to buy soap locally. This was meant to save railage for a small parcel. The local purchases you could only do if you knew the bazaar prices or if you had a reliable person who would not cheat you. Somehow or other I do not feel quite safe about R[2]. He is for me an unknown quantity. He may be a very good man, only I do not feel quite safe.

This brings me to soap. For cleaning the body, as I told you when you were with me, no soap was required. Clean water and a rough towel is all that is necessary for keeping the body quite fit. For washing the hair there is nothing to approach the soap-nut. It is to be had all over India. A few nuts soaked overnight and then well mashed with hand in the water produces soap suds with which you can clean the hair perfectly. But I have an easier method. You have abandoned everything for the Harijan service and for self-purification. Hence, you are, to all intents and purposes, a sannyasin. Therefore you have to remove the hair from your head and have a close crop almost amounting to a shave. Mira has that. Tens of thousands of widows have that crop. If you can easily let your hair go, I need not prescribe elaborate things for keeping your hair in a clean condition. I do not want to press for the crop. I do not know what attraction your hair has for you. Much as I would like every girl in the Ashram to have her hair cropped, I have been able to persuade only a few. If you have the same partiality for your hair as these Ashram girls have, I have nothing to say. But if you would let your hair go as easily as you pare your nails, then I would say: Get hold of the closest barber, get him to

[1] The names have been omitted.

[2] *ibid*

wash his hands and his scissors in hot water and get him to take off your hair. If he has not the clippers, then let him do so with the ordinary scissors. It won't be as close a crop as I would like, but it would be close enough to save you all the anxiety about your hair and it would save you also a great deal of time. If you do not want your hair to be cropped, I must write to you in my next letter what you should do to keep it clean without having to resort to soap. Remember that millions in this country do not know what soap is. Again, in asking you practically to do without soap, I am asking you to do something I have not succeeded in inducing all the Ashram people to do.

Now for the washing of the clothes. I wonder if you have enough firewood to heat your water. If you are a bit of an engineer, you can even heat your water by the sun-heat. It requires a metal pot and a bit of piping undoubtedly. An American educational missionary, Sam Higginbottom, is heating his water by the sun-heat in Allahabad. But this is not yet for you. I am simply whetting your appetite for doing simple things in the villages. But if you can heat your water all you need to do is to obtain the crude washing soda. Add that to your water and it becomes as soft as soap water. Soak your clothes in that water while it is boiling and let them lie in that water overnight. Wash them well the next morning and they are free from dirt though not white as snow, because they take somewhat the colouring of the crude soda. But that should not matter and is in keeping with the village life. But the clothes will be as clean as if washed in a first-class hotel in America, and all you want is cleanliness.

The change you have made in your apparel seems to me to be quite suitable. You have almost anticipated me if the robe is in addition to the skirt I have mentioned in my letter. You are hard on poor Ramachandra. I think that his remark was well meant. Your argument about the women is quite logical, but unfortunately we are not governed by logic. I must not enter into the history of the women whom you see bare-bodied. You will however realize at once that you cannot afford to vie with these sisters. Truth demands that your external appearance should be as near a representation as possible of the internal condition. You cannot afford today to claim unassailable internal innocence. When you have attained it, you won't need to demonstrate it. Do you know the story of Shukdevji and Vyas? If you don't, you must ask me to give it to you some other day.

I am not at all satisfied about your food. The *ragi* bread should go. You must have got whole wheatmeal flour by this time. If you have, you must bake your own chappati. If you have not got that, you should live on milk and such dried fruit as you might have. It would keep you in good health and give you the needed energy. Milk for yourself you should beg, if the people will willingly supply to you. Buffalo milk is fairly rich and if you get one pound, it will serve the purpose. Of course S.'s[1] portion is a first charge. Whatever fruit and vegetables you may get now and again will really be enough to give you the necessary vegetable salts and vitamins. So far as health is concerned, a daily supply of fresh vegetables and fruit is not an absolute necessity, especially when you are living out in the open air and are not called upon to undergo extraordinary physical or mental strain.

You must control your temper, even with reference to S. You should be patient with the people who surround your little cottage and would not let you have even a little bit of privacy when you want to sleep. A little reasoning with them will set them right. Whilst you are still becoming inured to your new life, you should insist on taking an hour's sleep during the middle of the day and giving it to S. It will be good for your body and good for your temper, and if you and S. have a close crop, you will use a wet rag for the head, as you saw me use. It cools the head and the whole body instantaneously.

You should have sent me R.'s letter as he wrote it. Let me know him as he is and not as you would have him to appear.

I think I have covered all the points in your letter.

May God the Truth surround you and S. with His protecting care. I know that if you will have complete faith in Him, it will be all well with you. Here is a note for S.[2]

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20910

[1] The name has been omitted.

[2] *Vide* the following item.

421. LETTER TO S.

April 12, 1933

MY DEAR S.,

I have your lovely letter. You must continue to write to me all [and] tell me more of what you see in and around the village in which you are living. Have you made friends with any of the boys there?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20910

422. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRAN

April 12, 1933

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRAN,

In your otherwise exhaustive and excellent report on the conflict between Nattars and Harijans, you have omitted the dates, the respective population of the two parties, and a rough map of the area affected. But I do not want to send you this letter in order to criticize your report which Thakkar Bapa handed to me on the 6th instant, but to ask you whether you desire in the interest of the cause publicity for the report and editorial comments upon the subject-matter of it. As Thakkar Bapa was very anxious that I should take notice of it, I was preparing to do so when suddenly I came upon the paragraph of recommendations. Therein you have stated that the Committee would be trying through local influence to adjust the quarrels between the two parties. The question at once arose with me as to whether any publicity given to the report and comment would harm the progress of pacification through friendly intervention or whether it would help it. Please help me to come to a decision. Your word would be final. And if the matter has got to be dealt with in the next week's *Harijan*, you should telegraph to me. This letter should be in your hands on Saturday, and if I get your wire before or on Monday, it will answer the purpose.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. RAMACHANDRAN
PROVINCIAL SECRETARY
SERVANTS OF UNTOUCHABLES SOCIETY
NO. 77 A SAMSAPIRAN ST.
BIG BAZAAR, TRICHINOPOLY

From a microfilm: S.N. 20909

423. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

April 12, 1933

CHI. JAMNALAL,

After reading Kamalnayan's[1] letter, I feel that, if you can become free from the work at Wardha, you should immediately go to a hill station. I like Mahabaleshwar the best. You can stay there for a full one month and a half. After that you can descend to Panchgani or go to any other place if you wish. You should not remain in the plains so long as the discharge from the ear continues.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2913

424. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 12, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your weekly post. I found Smt. Dhanvanti's[2] letter, but did not find Valjibhai's article. If you did send it, it seems to have been lost in the office here. I hope he has kept a copy. If it has not been left behind there, write to Valji and inform him, so that time may be saved. He should know that this is a jail.

Vaseline will help Amina better than ghee can. She should thoroughly mix a little boric acid powder with it.

I cannot take the final decision about Dhiru, since I do not know him well. Only you and others there who have known him for many years can do so. He has studied under Panditji. Probably Narahari also knows him well. He is working at present under your direct supervision. If what he writes to me can be trusted, it is our duty to let him go. But we cannot do that if we have the slightest doubt about him. Whether or not Santiniketan is a suitable place for him may be doubtful, but we have no choice in the matter. Besides, there is no doubt that they teach painting well there. Whether Dhiru will use his skill well or not will depend entirely on his character. I cannot judge whether he is a boy of good character, whether he is hard-working

[1] Addressee's son

[2] Poonamchand Ranka's wife

and whether he has any aptitude for painting. After writing a long letter to me, he has kept silent. I don't feel very happy about that. But it is possible that he has not written again because of shyness or out of respect for me.

It is desirable that everybody should keep silent for some time after prayer or talk only in whispers. A person may speak about Ashram work, however. In army barracks, soldiers are not permitted to talk after the bell for retiring is sounded. In any case there should be no murmuring immediately after the prayer. This is necessary for the good of the boys as well as of the Ashram. This rule is strictly enforced in jails. Were it not so, life in a jail would be intolerable. In jails even lights are generally put out at a fixed hour. And talking in loud voices is never permitted. If, therefore, you can introduce a rule that people should be silent or talk only in whispers, you should do so immediately.

BAPU

[PS.]

I suppose you have read Dr. Sharma's letter. Welcome him heartily when he comes. His daughter also should be welcomed. Give him the necessary facilities for his experiments. His letters carry a very good impression of him.

I have had no comments from you recently regarding the effect of the changes in food. Let me know the results. Nobody should be forced to accept these changes. If anybody desires some modification, grant his request within our limits. Chhotubhai has written to me about this. Read my reply to him.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8354. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

425. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

April 12, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. It is enough that I have cautioned you. Your belief that I do not read your letters carefully is not correct. I had fully understood what you had said. Such cock-sureness is itself a sign of pride. The pride shows in your language. This does not mean that I

want you to hide your thoughts or express them in carefully chosen words. I like you to write as you feel. According to me it is your virtue that you let me see you as you are both inwardly and outwardly. If you were to write with unnatural self-control, I would be helpless and unable to advise or admonish you.

I cannot teach you to become humble as a dust particle. If one understands what God is, one naturally feels like that. That understanding will come to you in its own time.

Nor do I mean that you do not have to endure many things from others. But the fact that you can wipe out all that in a moment makes me unhappy.

You believe that an atmosphere of prejudice against you has been created around me. You are mistaken in this. Sardar is certainly not against you. Do not take his humour as a sign of his being against you. I do not at all feel that Mahadev is against you either. What Chhaganlal has said against you is nothing new. He knows your worth, but says that till you can control your tongue you should be entrusted with no responsibility. This is his old complaint. You should know that I rarely talk with my three companions. There is, except for a little joking at meal times or during walks, no time for any discussion. We rarely talk about anybody unless there is an occasion to do so. With all my work, I never feel in a mood for talking about other things, nor could I waste my time in idle discussions. I have hardly been able to discuss even the painful episode of . . .[1] and . . .[2]. I have contented myself with the briefest exchange of views. There is no atmosphere of prejudice against you around me, nor is there any such prejudice in my mind. If I admonish you rather harshly, it is because I regard you as my daughter and want to see you perfect. Why, then, do you feel hurt by my criticism? You may accept such of it as you think worth accepting and forget the rest. For it is perfectly possible that my criticism may be based on ignorance and that I may not have correctly understood what you said.

It is quite true that different people may see the same thing differently. We daily observe that the same energy or strength is used in different ways.

I do feel that no woman should be asked by others to do any routine work during her menses. Nobody can know when she may be

[1] The names have been omitted.

[2] *ibid*

having a pain. It would be best not to burden a woman with any work during such a period. She may do of her own free will whatever work she feels inclined to do. Some women feel nothing during menstruation and go on doing their work as usual. Some others feel unbearable pain. Some don't feel any pain, but can do no physical work. A woman who spends the period in the right manner gains fresh energy every month. Those three or four days are for getting back lost strength, and for that the woman should be left free from all responsibility. She should be free to lie down if she wants to. Some ignorant women do not lay aside their hectic domestic work even during that period, not knowing the harm which they do themselves. They should be properly advised. On the whole, therefore, I like Lakshmidas's suggestion.

What you say about Kisan is possible. I was very glad to learn that she had recovered. She seems to have waited for my reply to her letter. But I do not remember having not replied to any of her letters.

I have already written to you about your slivers.

You will not lose weight by living on unboiled milk. If you eat boiled vegetables once a day, I am sure you will benefit. Probably your throat needs them; I think it does unboiled milk. Why not try?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10336. Also C.W. 6776. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

426. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

April 13, I 933

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

You will see in this week's *Harijan* a reply[1] to your difficulty about the fast. I shall anxiously await your criticism. The story of Nineveh came into my hands quite accidentally, but it fitted in so well I thought.

In your letter of 22nd March you have asked a question about Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill. As soon as I got the Bill I felt the difficulty about a fair majority myself and I brought it up to Rajagopalachari's notice. I had suggested too an amendment even to the extent of three-fourths majority being required, because my idea always has

[1] *Vide* "Thinking Aloud", 15-4-1933.

been that unless the majority is a very decisive majority, the big reform contemplated could not work satisfactorily, and you must have seen how I have contemplated meeting the objection even of a minority of one, because what might be superstition to me may be a matter of life and death to that minority of one. His particular temple might be all-in-all to him and it might be his absolute faith that the temple will be no good to him if he had to offer worship side by side with a Harijan. But all these things are to be done when the proper time arrives. I have discussed them publicly too, but I do not want to reopen the discussion because nobody thinks of it just now. But you can have the assurance and give it to those who need it that when the Bill reaches the Committee stage an amendment for a decisive majority will certainly be carried, and any other amendment that might satisfy the sanatanists and that could leave the principle intact will most decidedly be accepted.

Mahadev has not yet made any guess about the name you have for me. I have no doubt that you have many names and not only one.

Thangai naturally would want to say nothing to me about your capacity for taking in dates because she knows that there at least I could always beat you and not by a bare majority.

About under-stamping of the envelope, there was no economy, false or otherwise, possible for us. Not having been ever a prisoner, you evidently fancy that we are free to do as we like even to the extent of putting on stamps. You may then know that stamps are not affixed by us. They are affixed in the prison office.

Love from us all.

Yours sincerely,

MOHAN

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. IV, pp. 289-90; also G.N. 1302

427. LETTER TO PRINCESS EFY ARISTARCHI

April 13, 1933

I have your two letters.

You often ask me to pray for you, pray for your mother. Up to now I have never said anything about this. But today I feel tempted to put my position before you. Though I believe in temples, I do not

visit them nowadays, and, as you know, the temple at the Ashram has the sky above as the roof and mother earth as the floor. The walls consist of the four directions. And in this temple there are no prayers offered for friends. The morning and the evening prayers consist of set verses in Sanskrit and hymns from a composite hymn book in Gujarati, Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Urdu and English, the latter only when there is someone who can sing English hymns. My response therefore to requests from friends for intercessory prayers consists simply in there and then silently commending them to God. I do not know that this would be considered at all an adequate response. But I can truthfully do no otherwise. Prayer to God with me has a different meaning perhaps from the ordinary. He needs no asking. He reads our hearts even as we do not read them. He anticipates our demands and wishes. He knows what is good for us much better than we do. He has no hesitation in summarily rejecting our wishes and desires which in His estimation are unlawful. Having all this belief in me I have not the heart to approach Him with special prayers and hence there is not that definite asking as there is with so many Christian friends, and even Hindu friends. I do not want to imply that what I am doing is better than, say, what you are doing. Each one approaches God after his own manner and each manner is equally acceptable to Him if it proceeds from the heart. I thought that I would just say this much in answer to all the love you are pouring on me.

Yours,

From a photostat: S.N. 20923

428. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

April 13, 1933

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I am not acknowledging all your letters, because I give you a long printed letter unfailingly every week.

Sastri's letter notwithstanding, of course you are going to write naturally and not think of grammar.[1]

Like his economy, Andrews's *purdah* is a fraud. He pretends

[1] The addressee had made a humorous reference about her diffidence in writing to Srinivasa Sastri after reading his and Gandhiji's correspondence; *Vide* "The Schoolmaster Abroad", 13-2-1933.

that he needs quiet for his writing and sits down to write in the midst of bustle and produces quiet from within.

I hope you have been visiting Vithalbhai Patel in his illness, and therefore I expect to hear from you about his condition. Brief cable messages published in the Press show that he is sinking. We are all anxious about him.

I hear from Mira every week. She is keeping fairly well.

Mahadev will be leaving us shortly.[1] Devdas is in Benares with Malaviyaji, and Pyarelal is in the Nasik Jail. I have not heard from him.

Love from us both.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

MISS AGATHA HARRISON
2 CRANBOURNE COURT
ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD
[LONDON] S. W. 11

From a photostat: G.N 1464; also S.N. 20920

429. LETTER TO V. A. HODKE

April 13, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to have your card telling me that the buffalo-sacrifice was stopped and that the sacrifice of other animals was reduced and that it was likely to be stopped altogether next year.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. V. A. HODKE
SECRETARY
PRANI DAYA SANGH
SIRSI (N. CANARA)

From a microfilm: S.N. 20919

[1] Mahadev Desai was to be released on May 19, 1933.

430. LETTER TO GERTRUDE S. KELLER-CHING

April 13, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I must answer your latest letter. Your account of your visit to Geneva is most interesting and I am glad that you made so many acquaintances.

And now you want me to give you an Indian name. There was a meaning in Mirabehn asking for an Indian name, having physically cast in her lot with Indians, but what is the meaning of your wanting an Indian name? Nobody will address you by that name. I therefore think that you should give up this desire for having an Indian name. It is enough that you have an Indian heart.

I hope that the quiet you were contemplating to have did you good. Of course the real thing is to find one's quiet from within. Then and then only are we quite safe.

Please remember me to all those friends whom you mention.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. GERTRUDE S. KELLER CHING

From a photostat: S.N. 20921

431. LETTER TO DOROTHY E. NEWMAN

April 13, 1933

MY DEAR DOROTHY,

You have given me a long defence of Kamalani[1], but it was wholly unnecessary as I know Kamalani to be a very nice, steady, sober, young worker.

I am glad that the *Harijan* is proving useful to so many foreign friends. If you are not a blind reader, as you say you are not, you will sometimes tell me as gently as you like or as bluntly as you can wherein you differ. For it is the criticism of friends which I treasure and by which I profit most.

Yours sincerely,

MISS DOROTHY E. NEWMAN

20 EVENDALE ROAD

STOCKWELL, S. W. 9

LONDON

From a photostat: S.N. 20922

[1] An Indian settled in London and working for the Indian cause

432. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

April 13, 1933

MY DEAR MARGARETE,

Your letter of 20th March is disturbing. Everything done in a hurry generally proves unsatisfactory when it is not positively harmful. All haste must be deprecated. From the highest standpoint, and that is the only one I am sure which you want to apply to yourself, your coming will be justified only when you are ready for the Ashram life. That clearly you are not. Your immediate duty is to be by your mother's side. You cannot risk bringing her to India. If you are thrown out of employment and have to be in search of one, you have to courageously stand by your people and suffer the hardships that they will have to suffer, and if you have imbibed the fundamentals of the Ashram life, you might even render inestimable help to them. All your letters to 24 people in India, therefore, to get you a job should not have been written. You do not want a job in India, but you want to give your free service, the whole of yourself, to India. You cannot do two contrary things at the same time. I wish therefore you would give up the idea of the job, remain there by your mother's side and live the Ashram life there, so that if God wills it, He will send you some day to the Ashram.

Yours sincerely,

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

433. LETTER TO ISWAR SARAN

April 13, 1933

MY DEAR MUNSHIJI,

I thank you for your letter of the 5th instant and a copy of the report produced by the Committee appointed by the Allahabad Branch of the Servants of Untouchables Society.

You will be glad to know that I began reading the report as soon as I received it. I finished reading it today. It was received yesterday. Your letter came in today. As I hope to deal with the report in the pages of the *Harijan*,[1] I do not think I need say anything in this letter.

Two things, however, I must say here which I would not want to

[1] *Vide* "Immediate Duty", 22-4-1933.

say in dealing with the report publicly. If the figures of the population and some other necessary figures were given and the report was condensed to half the size, it would become a valuable document. I should omit the appendices. If such a condensation is possible and if you could publish it, I have no doubt that it would be a guide for the workers, and possibly to the other municipalities .

I shall hope that as a result of the report you will take effective steps to destroy the inhumanly insanitary quarters described in the report and procure a better residential site for the Harijans.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20914

434. LETTER TO DR. HIRALAL SHARMA

April 13, 1933

DEAR DR. SHARMA,

I have your letter. I am glad that you would be in the Ashram soon, if you are not already there by the time this reaches the Ashram. I hope you have brought with you your four-year-old daughter also and I hope that the little boy stuck up for his sister. I would call him very unchivalrous if he did not insist upon her being with him. You will please make yourself at home in the Ashram and express to Narandas freely all your requirements.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

DR. H. L. SHARMA
C/O THE ASHRAM
SABARMATI

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 29

435. LETTER TO SUSHILA PAI

April 13, 1933

May your friendship[1] remain unbroken. I have shown the way of preserving it. It is self-evident that personal friendship cannot last for ever. Such friendship, therefore, should be converted into love of God. It does not cease thereby but becomes enlarged and pure. The happiness of personal friendship is temporary and valueless. I believe that your friendship is only for the sake of service. What personal element can there be in such friendship? Let this thought sink in your mind. You will realize its truth from experience.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 227

436. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

April 13, 1933

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I got your letter. You have described things very vividly. It is of course a hard task, but persist in your efforts. Don't worry about the result. You should not worry if the temple is situated at some distance. Actually there will be an advantage in having it at some distance. Though very few Harijans may visit it now, large crowds of them will visit it by and by if there is a school, etc., attached to it. One may take the children to the temple for *darshan* in the evening. And the elders might visit it on holidays. For example, Jagannath and Bhutnath temples were at one time considered to be far way. They are probably considered quite near now. So let this new temple also be thought distant. The temple should stand on a large plot of land. According to me, even ten acres would not be enough.

I feel worried about your bad health. There is a connection between it and your mind. You alone can cure it. You should do so. I want you to do so.

I should like you to write to me more frequently, so that I might be kept acquainted with your work and the state of your mind.

[1] With Premabehn Kantak

Let me know if you have observed anything noteworthy about Bhau.

I am enclosing letters for Sushila and Bhau.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9649. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

437. LETTER TO NANALAL K. JASANI

April 13, 1933

BHAI NANALAL,

I have your letter. I have been thinking a great deal about this matter. I think Ratilal has consented only to a division of the property. Chhaganlal need not be blamed. He has no control over his mind at all, and so Maganlal is naturally afraid. If the property is divided, something at least may be saved. If it is kept undivided, there is a danger of all of it being lost. If my first suggestion is accepted and implemented, the property may remain undivided, but nobody seems inclined to accept it. It was that all the three brothers should keep away for five years and leave the management of the property to trustees, accepting for themselves fixed allowances. More when we meet.

Jamnadas seems to be a fine worker. He seems to be managing the branch office there admirably. If he has produced the same impression on you, please relieve his anxiety about money. He has been worrying so much that it has told on his health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9650

438. LETTER TO SUBHADRA, SARALA AND JAYADEVI

April 13, 1933

CHI. SUBHADRA, SARALA AND JAYADEVI,

How can I say to you, you will reap as you sow? The sanatanists say: ‘The Harijans reap as they sow. How can we commit the sin of helping them to improve their condition in disregard of that law?’ If I were to apply the sanatanists’ logic to you, I would have to demolish

the little nest I have built for the Harijans. Since I can't do that, you are safe. According to the sanatanists' idea of justice, since you wrote your letter with a lead pencil, I should reply with a pencil made of stone, shouldn't I? But our aim is to win over even the sanatanists. But you have shown that you deserve Nandubehn's description of you.[1] As soon as you were out, you showed your nature. You started straight away drinking leaf-water. And dry leaves at that![2] I must say Chinese bullocks are better than Kathiawari bullocks. They also drink leaf-water but the leaves are green. If you again run away to the cattle-pen in a huff, Sardar is generous and will forgive your getting angry and so you need not be afraid.

In one sense the description given by Nandubehn seems to be perfectly apt. Has anybody ever heard of cows, bullocks, horses and other animals worrying? If animals had knowledge, they would be no less than yogis. It is said that yoga is extremely difficult for men to practise, but that it is part of women's nature. If a woman gives up ignorant attachment, she could easily be a *yogini*. But all of you are only learned animals!!! Remember that if you squander away the health cultivated in the yoga school by eating all kinds of sweets, you will deserve to be punished for that.

In your next letter describe some other doings of yours, namely, what you read, etc.

I am helpless about Manibehn. I write to her, but she does not get my letters. After all there must be some indications that one is a prisoner.

Kevalrambhai and my elder brother were of the same age. Both were liberal and extravagant. They both loved luxuries and comforts. In their old age, both of them lost interest in worldly pleasures and pursuits. They wrote to me, independently of each other, that they wished to join me in South Africa and spend the rest of their life there and hand over their children to my care. I gladly welcomed their desire and made preparations to receive them. But fate was unkind to me. They left me. I never got my elder brother's children under my care, though I tried hard to get them. But I got all of you without trying. Shall we attribute this to fate ruling human relations, or to the ripening of the fruit of our deeds in past lives? Now that you have

[1] As bullocks

[2] Gandhiji means "tea".

come, do not leave me. Everybody who wishes may have a share in what I have to give. Secure as much of it as you can and wish good name for yourself in life. Where has that Chandrahasa hidden himself?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Where is Nirmala? How is she?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4087. Also C.W. 52. Courtesy: Mangalabehn B. Desai

439. A LETTER[1]

April 13, 1933

I read your whole letter. Your sentiments are pure, but I do not at all possess the power you attribute to me. I too am a sinful being like others but am eager to see God face to face and striving to that end. I certainly wish that God may grant long life to you and your husband, inculcate a sacred spirit of service in you both and enrich your mutual and pure love. Please regard this letter as meant for you both. Hence I am not writing a separate letter to your husband.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 227

440. DEPRIVED EVEN OF WATER

Shri Ramnarayan Choudhari, Secretary of Rajputana Harijan Sevak Sangh, writes.[2]

The matter cannot be set right by simply discussing it in *Harijan Sevak*. Sevaks must find out how many such sweepers there are and where, and they must, wherever they are faced with the difficulty of

[1] This was in reply to a letter from a woman from the Punjab who had declared that Gandhiji was like God to her. She had requested him to write to her and her husband granting them domestic happiness.

[2] The letter, not translated here, complained of inadequate facilities of drinking-water for sweepers in Western Rajasthan, describing how, in this arid region, sweepers were compelled to take drinking-water from water-troughs where cattle drank and men and women washed themselves and their clothes.

getting water, persuade the wealthier sections of the community to have wells dug or make some other suitable arrangement. They must also side by side guide and induce the sweepers to improve their own condition. It will be for the sevaks to see in what ways their condition can be improved. In short, individual acquaintance with the sweepers is necessary. To do this devoted and efficient sevaks are required.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 14-4-1933

441. CABLE TO VITHALBHAI J. PATEL

April 14, 1933[1]

V. J. PATEL
CARE INDIA OFFICE
LONDON

GOD SPARE YOU. WIRE CONDITION.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(3), Pt. IV, P. 319

442. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

April 14, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter of the 10th instant about the Titaghar Paper Mill. Our letters must have crossed. I have given my firm opinion that we cannot take in advertisements at all, as a special favour, but if you hold different views about the conduct of the *Harijan* and would open the *Harijan* for receiving advertisements in general, that would be a different proposition, and I would not resist it if you came to the conclusion that advertisements should be received. As you know, I hold strange but fixed views about advertisements even in the ordinary[2] newspapers, but these views cannot become a decisive factor

[1] The Government's sanction for the despatch of the cable was not received till the afternoon of the 19th by which date the addressee had been sent to Vienna for treatment. Gandhiji therefore did not send it. *Vide* "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", 19-4-1933, where, however, the date given is April 13.

[2] Kamalapat Singhania, a leading industrialist of Kanpur

in the conduct of a big movement like ours, but I am quite certain that we could never defend a policy of taking one advertisement by way of exception.

Do you want me to take notice of the Rs, 3,000 received from Lala Kamalapat

As to Ramanand Sannyasi[1], I understand what you say. I simply wanted to know whether you had found any reason to change your opinion about him. Since you still have suspicion I would suggest your sending for him and speaking to him frankly about it. If he is a good sannyasi, he would appreciate your frankness, and you will find it easier to take work from him.

I hope you received my letter[2] regarding donations from Suvta Devi and Janaki Devi.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 20934

443. LETTER TO SUDHIR CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY

April 14, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I can do nothing. But you should approach first of all the Provincial Untouchability Board and then, if you like, the Central Board.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SUDHIR CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY

10/1 NEPAL BATTACHERJI ST.

KALIGHAT

From a microfilm: S.N. 20936

[1] A leading worker of Delhi in the uplift of the depressed classes

[2] *Vide* "Letter to G.D. Birla", 10-4-1933 also "Rs. 5,000/- For David Scheme", 15-4-1933.

444. LETTER TO M. N. CHOWDAPPA

April 14, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You have not sent me the cutting containing the address referred to by you.[1] I remember that a portion of the address was read to me but I did not then think that there was anything for me to comment upon.

I do not understand the meaning of the 4th paragraph of your letter.

Yours sincerely,

THE ASSTT. EDITOR
"PRAJA [MATA][2]"
143-5 MINT ST.
MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 20937

445. LETTER TO S. PAUL DANIEL

April 14, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I do not feel as you do about worship of God through idols. You should read what I have written about it in the columns of the *Harijan*. Then if you wish to argue, you can do so, I have written also about varnashrama. I believe in it as I interpret it. For this also I have to refer you to the columns of the *Harijan*.

As to intermarriage and inter-dining, I do not regard them as essential for the removal of untouchability. I regard no person as untouchable, but that does not mean that I should be obliged to inter-dine with that particular person or have intermarriage relations with him. These stand on a different footing altogether. We

[1] The Dewan of Mysore, Sir Mirza Ismail had said in a speech at Chitaldrug that untouchability "is really to my mind more a social than a religious problem and it should be handled as such". The addressee had objected to the remark and sought Gandhiji's opinion.

[2] The source has "Mitra", which is a slip.

continually pick and choose so far as these two things are concerned, but there is no choice about touching people.

Yours sincerely,

MR. S. PAUL DANIEL
TRICHENDUR ROAD
PALAMCOTTAH

From a microfilm: S.N. 20933

446. LETTER TO DIWAKAR SINGH

April 14, 1933

DEAR DIWAKAR,

I have your postcard. If you have resumed street-cleaning you will, I hope, stick to it quite undemonstratively, but I am going to write presently on the plague spots of Allahabad, and I would like you to read my article[1] when it appears in the Harijan, and devote your attention to that work. I shall be quite patient with you so long as you continue to work.

Perhaps you do not know what has happened to N. I feel that I should tell you at this stage what impression she left upon me ultimately. During my conversations with her I found that she was not leading a straight and moral life even whilst she was working at scavenging in Bangalore. But she seemed to me to be truly repentant. She has now thrown her lot completely with Harijans, has given up the gay life entirely and is living as much as possible like a Harijan in a Harijan village near Chitaldrug in obscurity and lives on such food as is brought to her. She has her son with her. She is supposed to be living under my guidance. I have no reason to suspect her. Her letters to me are quite satisfactory. But it is too early yet to say how she will ultimately develop. I am saying this to you because it was agreed between us that at least those who had come in contact with her should know generally about the sins of her immediate past.

Yours sincerely,

KUNVER DIWAKAR SINGH
HOLLAND HALL
ALLAHABAD

From a microfilm: S.N. 20932

[1] *Vide* "Immediate Duty", 22-4-1933.

447. LETTER TO H. N. KUNZRU

April 14, 1933

MY DEAR HARIJI,

I have a letter from a correspondent in Bulandshahr who says that in common with the reduction in the wages of the general staff by its Municipal Board, the scavengers also have come in for the reduction. This latter have struck against the reduction. As it is, their wages are, the correspondent contends, low enough. The Chairman of the Board does not listen to the scavengers' complaint at all. On the face of it, the correspondent's letter appears to me to be reasonable. Will you please enquire and do whatever is possible?

I enclose the letter received by me.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

From a microfilm: S.N. 20935

448. LETTER TO SUDHIR MITRA

April 14, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 10th instant. I doubt very much if a monthly magazine exclusively devoted to untouchability is called for. You would therefore forgive me for not blessing your venture in anticipation.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SUDHIR MITRA
MITRA COTTAGE
2 KALI LANE
KALIGHAT

From a microfilm: S.N. 20925

449. LETTER TO HARIBHAU PHATAK[1]

April 14, 1933

MY DEAR HARIBHAU PHATAK,

My claim to be a servant of Harijan, of *Daridranarayana*, has yet to be established, and I freely admit that my food is undoubtedly one of the obstacles to the successful establishment of my claim. But you should know that I do not spend anything on my food. Here it is the costly Government assisted by spendthrift friends who supply me with my food, but the fact that somebody else spends a lot of money over my food is no defence, nor perhaps is it any defence that the goat's milk and the fruit that I take are a medical need for the body. I know that there are thousands, if not millions, whose bodies too would be pronounced to be in medical need of the kind of food that I am taking. But they have no doctors who would issue such certificates to them, and if they happen to get such a doctor, neither this Government nor our millionaires would supply them with the food that I receive.

I am an out-and-out believer in the doctrine of swadeshi, but I flatter myself with the belief that my swadeshi is not a narrow doctrine. I will take from the whole world what I cannot and do not produce in India profitably in terms of the millions. Therefore I do not hesitate to take from Arabia its health-giving dates or from Afghanistan its equally health-giving raisins. These are only a few examples of the foreign articles that I use. But my claim to be a votary of swadeshi is well established because I would take the coarsest hand-spun manufactured by Harijans in preference to the finest cloth manufactured in Indian mills.

Yes, poor Pyarelal, knowing my weakness for everything Indian, thought that he had found out dates in his paradise, the Punjab, and he did find them. These were expensive enough for those who sent them, but I had to pay nothing for them. I took them whilst they lasted at the expense of Arabia, but the latter won the day, because the Punjab dates were available only during the season which lasts only two or three months. So, on the whole, Arabia will remain the victor with me

[1] The addressee in a letter dated April 13 had expressed his agitation over hearing sarcastic remarks from friends regarding gandhiji's diet, its cost and its indigenous quality. He wanted gandhiji's assurance on this matter in order in answer such attacks.

because I do not propose to deny myself the dates which my body needs and by taking which I deprive no date-grower in India. I cannot give you the name of the agents because Pyarelal could not get the names, for he interested a friend of his in procuring the Punjab dates.

I am glad that the Poona Municipality has passed Sjt. Pashankar's resolution throwing open all public reservoirs to the Harijans.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 20927

450. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRA RAO

April 14, 1933

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRA,

I have your letter. I wish you every success in producing an Indian Tuskegee.[1] I knew much about Booker T. Washington even when I was in South Africa and I have great regard for him. You have kept before you a worthy model, but you cannot be an Indian Booker T. Washington. Only a Harijan can be that. Therefore you have to devote yourself, might and main, to the task of producing from among Harijans a prototype of Booker T. Washington. May you succeed.

You have established your right to beg, but have you established beyond doubt your fitness for making donations yield a thousandfold fruit? I want you to be foolish enough, if that is the word you would have, to do that.

Yes, I used the ghee that was specially prepared by Lady Thackersey to the last drop, and you will be glad to know that I was free of salt during the bulk of that time. Some time after I went back to salt and did not call for more ghee when I found that neither the massage nor the saltless produced the slightest impression on the elbows. I went back to salt because I was developing a queer kind of headache. I imputed it, perhaps quite wrongly, to the omission of salt. Curiously enough, the restoration of salt eased the headaches. Whether this was an accident or a result of the return to salt, not perhaps even

[1] The addressee had proposed a scheme for a "Seva Vidyalaya" or an "Indian Tuskegee" on the American model. "Begging" was to be the portfolio of G. Ramachandra Rao.

15 grains during the day, I do not know.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO
C/O SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
ROYAPETTAH (MADRAS)

From a microfilm: S.N. 20938

451. LETTER TO SAMARASA SUDHA SANMARKA SANGHAM

April 14, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and the book[1]. Please do not send the other book referred to by you, because I cannot read Tamil to understand without difficulty, nor have I the time for such reading.

Yours sincerely,

SAMARASA SUDHA SANMARKA SANGHAM
36 SWAMI PILLAI ST.
CHHOLAI POST
MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 20940

452. LETTER TO RAM GOPAL SHASTRI

April 14, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for a copy of your letter to Sjt. A. V. Thakkar in answer to the complaint of Sjt. Swatmadas.[2]

You will forgive me for saying that your letter is not convincing. I do not for one moment suggest that the Dalit Seva Mission has not done much service, but your letter says nothing about

[1] Ramalinga Swami's *Thiru Arutpa*

[2] The addressee in his letter of March 31, 1933 had said that Swatmadas was a mischief-maker who denounced the various associations as being for the benefit of caste Hindus only. *Vide* also "Letters to Amritlal V. Thakkar"14-3-1933 and; 16-3-1933.

the nature of the service rendered by your Mission. We who claim to be Servants of Harijans may not take amiss even mischievous complaints. They are best silenced by unvarnished hard facts. I had asked Sjt. Thakkar to circulate the complaint among the associations which were mentioned by Sjt. Swatmadas so that they may know what has been said about them and if they would care to give their replies so as to enable the Central Board satisfactorily to answer charges against the respective associations.

Your sincerely,

VAIDYA BHUSHAN PANDIT RAM GOPAL SHASTRI
SECRETARY, PUNJAB DALIT SEVA MISSION
LAHORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 20939

453. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

April 14, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

It was only today that I could read Dr. Patel's[1] letter to Sardar. According to it, there is nothing serious in your condition. If an operation is found necessary, there will be no risk in it whatever. Let me know how much pain you suffer in the arm just now. There is no harm in moving the arm if you do it slowly. There is no fear of the arm becoming limp. That may be the ultimate result if the condition is neglected. But the trouble has been diagnosed. Hence there is no cause for worry. You should give a little exercise to the arm every day. Give me all details in every letter. I hope you are cheerful.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5347

[1] Dr. Motibhai D. Patel, an eminent surgeon of Ahmedabad

454. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 14, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your postcard.

Read my letter to Ramji. In his postcard there are sentences such as, "The stomach kicks at the head", etc., and he asked for permission to put everything before Rajbhoj. I have told him that he could do as he wished. I simply cannot understand what has happened to him. Has he lost his reason? From his behaviour I do feel sometimes that he has. He suspects everybody, even his relations.

You will find with this letters to Dr. Sharma and Rajbhoj. Discuss with Dr. Sharma the whole problem of constipation. I hope the cracks in the skin on Amina's thighs have disappeared.

You certainly cannot pay Manilal's bills from the Ashram money. Who has provided Rs. 300 to Devdas? I hope he has not been given the sum from the Ashram. The Ashram funds cannot to be used for private purposes.

What did the doctor tell Kusum? That her motions do not stop is not a good sign. She will continue to be treated by Dr. Talwalkar, but do get her examined by Dr. Sharma also. We should know his opinion.

Keshu is trying to find a job.

BAPU

[PS.]

I have read Dr. Patel's letter to Vallabhbhai regarding Ramabehn. If he has come to more definite conclusion now, let me know. The arm was to be X-rayed. What happened about that? If it is necessary to pay Rs. 15 for that, it may be desirable even to do so. Follow the doctor's advice. There is no urgent need for an operation. It seems that she has no difficulty in using the arm for light work. A letter for Ramabehn also is enclosed.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8355. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

455. A LETTER

April 14, 1933

I feel that you should accept L.'s conditions without any hesitations. After all he is your husband. There is nothing degrading in pacifying his wounded feelings. By doing that you will rise not in your eyes only but in the eyes of God too. Moreover by not disregarding him you will definitely be able to win back his love. In friendship one does not have any right over the other. Husbands and wives are more than friends. That you follow different paths today should not affect your relations. Be calm and everything will be all right. The welfare of the children should be the highest consideration and it will be most looked after if you do not insist on anything. Even after doing this you have to remain satisfied. You want to see the children not for your happiness but for their well-being. Banish from your mind the thought of resorting to law and courts. I hope you understand what I say. Don't you? May God help and guide you.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 230

456. NOT MERELY BY BIRTH

The following three verses from Madame Wadia's instructive address delivered the other day will bear reproduction in these pages, though they have been often quoted and published:

> Listen to these words of Yudhishthira in the "*Vanaparva*" of the *Mahabharata*:
>
> "Truth, charity, forgiveness, good conduct, gentleness, austerity and mercy, where these are seen, O King of the Serpents, there is a Brahmin. If these marks exist in a Shudra and are not in a *Dvija*, the Shudra is not a Shudra, nor the Brahmin a Brahmin."
>
> And in the *Vishnu-Bhagavata* we read:
>
> "What is said as to the marks of conduct indicative of a man's caste, if those marks are found in another, designate him by the caste of his marks (i.e., not of his body and birth)."
>
> But some of you would prefer *Manusmriti*. Well, here you are. "As a wooden elephant, as a leathern deer, such is an unlearned Brahmin; these three bear only names. The Brahmin, who, not having studied the Vedas, labours elsewhere, becomes a Shudra in that very life together with his descendants."

These and numerous other verses from the Shastras unmistakably show that mere birth counts for nothing. A person must show corresponding works and character to establish his claim by birth. Such verses also enforce the argument that

(a) a person loses varna by failing to exhibit its peculiar characteristics,

(b) inter-varna marriage or inter-dining, whatever virtue the restrictions on them may have, does not affect a person's varna, at least not so much as the failing to live up to one's varna,

(c) birth, while it gives a start and enables the parents to determine the training and occupation of their children, does not perpetuate the varna of one's birth, if it is not fulfilled by works.

Harijan, 15-4-1933

457. SECOND HARIJAN DAY

The first Harijan Day was observed on 18th December last. Sjt. Amritlal Thakkar has been most anxious for the fixing of another Harijan Day, but I have been putting it off because of my want of faith. Thakkar Bapa was satisfied with the work done on 18th December. I was not. The fixing of a special day can only be warranted by extraordinary effort. In a sacred cause like the Harijan cause, a special day should be one of greater dedication, prayer and intensive work. Consultation with Thakkar Bapa has infected me with his hope. The last Sunday of this month has been chosen as the day of observance.

I should divide the day somewhat after this style:

1. I should begin the day from 5 a.m. with prayer and set apart for the cause some money or cloth or grain according to my means. The poorest can do this by denying themselves a meal or meals or a portion thereof without feeling the slightest deprivation. Preferably donations in kind should be converted into cash. Where this is not possible, they should be given to the most deserving and needy Harijans.

2. The work of the family Bhangi, if there is any, should be wholly done by the family or at least shared with him. This will enableone to understand the nature of the service that the Bhangi performs and may also lead to an improved method of performing such services. Not many persons have any consideration for the

‘knight of the broom’ at the time of using the sanitary conveniences. If we had no untouchability in us and if we even occasionally shared the work with the Bhangis, we would have a different method of working the home sanitary system.

3. Having done these two things, we are ready for the corporate effort for the day, which should open with house-to-house collection of donations in cash or kind. This work should be finished by a given hour. The donations should be handed to the local committee, which will in its turn hand the collection to the superior committee till it reaches the headquarters of the Province. Collectors should take with them a judicious selection of literature including leaflets, pamphlets, books and even copies of *Harijan*, English or vernacular edition as may be required. The literature should be sold or given away as the exigency of the moment may require. But each committee should bear the cost of the literature ordered by it. If extra copies of the *Harijan* are required, previous advice should be given to the publishers so as to enable them to print extra copies.

4. Harijan quarters should be visited in each place and they should be cleaned wherever necessary. Meetings of Harijans should be held and their wants noted. They should be advised as to the part they have to play in the removal of untouchability. Dr. Deshmukh’s authoritative opinion should be used in support of the plea for the giving up of carrion-eating. Children can arrange meetings and excursions for Harijan children. Possibilities of an inauguration of improved methods of sanitation should be explored and wherever possible, the scheme of Sjt. Hiralal Shah should be given effect to. It is neither difficult nor expensive if the people will shoulder the burden willingly. In the end it means a visible addition to the health and wealth of the community.

5. The day should be wound up by a general meeting of both *savarnas* and Harijans to pass resolutions, pledging the meeting to the removal of untouchability and emphasizing the desirability of permissive legislation regarding temple-entry.

6. Where public opinion is favourable, public wells and private temples should be opened to Harijans.

An accurate report of the work done should be sent to the Central Committee and, if possible, a copy to me to avoid delay in publication. Press messages may be sent to the Editor at press rates.

Harijan, 15-4-1933

458. THINKING ALOUD

Both C. F. Andrews and I have the habit of thinking aloud. Here is a sample from one of his letters:

> I have enclosed . . . 's[1] letter because I hardly think you realize how very strong here is the moral repulsion against 'fasting unto death'. I confess, as a Christian I share it and it is only with the greatest difficulty that I find myself able to justify it under any circumstances. I was convinced at the time last year when in desperation the way seemed open for nothing else and only this one door seemed unclosed. But even then it was an agony to me. I know also that I must bow to God's will even when it comes in very strange forms. Also I know that it has had its place in the past in Hindu religion and I have to try to understand exactly what it means to a Hindu. All this I am trying very hard to think out. But it has not come out all clear yet.
>
> I felt that it would be good to tell you all this at a time when there is no immediate prospect of such a thing happening. Meanwhile, I am trying to think out the whole matter. I have again and again defended over here your last fast and pointed to its results and to the fact that such a tender conscience as Gurudev's could see in it only what was great and noble. But in the great effort that you yourself are making (and we are interpreting to the very best of our power) to convert the hearts of Englishmen, whom you love and respect, to side with you and not against you in freeing your country, the following is true:
>
> 1. It *is* easy to get their sympathy with the removal of untouchability. Their hearts are truly touched.
>
> 2. It is *not* easy to get sympathy with the idea of committing suicide by fasting unto death. The horror and repulsion are too great, and the mere threat of such a thing benumbs instead of awakening the conscience.
>
> I know you would love me to tell you all this just now, if I have not told it to you already, because while it is not an immediate issue, I can write calmly.

I publish this letter because it deserves a public reply. I do want every ounce of real sympathy from every part of the world in the very difficult and anxious work of the purification of Hinduism, which, as I have claimed, is in a way purification of the whole human family.

I know the English repulsion to fasting for religious ends and especially 'fasting unto death'. I should like to own also that even the

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

fast which Deenabandhu Andrews reconciled himself to, though very reluctantly, has had untoward results in India, as I have discovered to my sorrow. Hindus had become delirious and done acts which, when they became sober, they undid. They opened temples and wells to Harijans freely during the fast. Some of these were closed soon after the end of the fast. A very large number of educated caste Hindus in Bengal do sincerely feel that, in the midst of the excitement caused by the fast, a grave injustice was done to Bengal in the allotment of seats to Harijans. I know, too, that in some other Provinces the Yeravda Pact was assented to under the pressure of the fast. All this was bad. I certainly had not anticipated it all when I embarked on the fast. But I do not repent of it. In the first place, the fast was not of my doing. Secondly, though the respective acts were done under the pressure of the fast, they were not in themselves evil. Were they evil, I should move heaven and earth to undo the evil.

But my purpose just now is to examine, not the effects of the fast, but the fast itself as a necessary part of the Divine scheme. If it is a part of it, it ought not to need elaborate explanations each time it is undertaken.

Although the sanatanists swear at me for the fast, and Hindu co-workers may deplore it, they know that fasting is an integral part of even the present-day Hinduism. They cannot long affect to be horrified at it. Hindu religious literature is replete with instances of fasting, and thousands of Hindus fast even today on the slightest pretext. It is the one thing that does the least harm. There is no doubt that, like everything that is good, fasts are abused. That is inevitable. One cannot forbear to do good because sometimes evil is done under its cover.

My real difficulty is with my Christian Protestant friends, of whom I have so many and whose friendship I value beyond measure. Let me confess to them that, though from my very first contact with them I have known their dislike for fasts, I have never been able to understand it.

Mortification of the flesh has been held all the world over as a condition of spiritual progress. There is no prayer without fasting, taking fasting in its widest sense. A complete fast is a complete and literal denial of self. It is the truest prayer. “Take my life and let it be, always only all for Thee” is not, should be, a mere lip or figurative expression. It has to be a wreckless and joyous giving without the least reservation. Abstention from food and even water is but the mere

beginning, the least part of the surrender.

Whilst I was putting together my thoughts for this article, a pamphlet written by Christians came into my hands wherein was a chapter on the necessity of example rather than precept. In this occurs a quotation from the 3rd chapter of Jonah. The Prophet had foretold that Nineveh, the great city, was to be destroyed on the fortieth day of his entering it.

> So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them. For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, 'Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything: let them not feed, nor drink water: but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn everyone from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?' And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that He had said that He would do unto them; and He did it not.

Thus this was a 'fast unto death'. But every fast unto death is not suicide. This fast of the king and the people of Nineveh was a great and humble prayer to God for deliverance. It was to be either deliverance or death. Even so was my fast, if I may compare it to the Biblical fast. This chapter from the book of Jonah reads like an incident in the *Ramayana*.

It is only proper that friends should know my fundamental position. I have a profound belief in the method of the fast, both private and public. It may come again any day without any warning even to me. If it comes, I shall welcome it as a great privilege and a joy.

Untouchability is a big sin. It may not be washed without the blood of many servants. But they will have to be fit instruments. The occasion will come to me if I am found worthy for the sacrifice. I would like my friends to rejoice in it, if it comes. They should neither be repelled nor unnerved.

Harijan, 15-4-1933

459. AN IMPATIENT WORKER

An earnest but impatient worker has been trying to have temples and public places thrown open to Harijans. He had some success but nothing to be proud of. In his impatience, therefore, he writes:

> It is no use waiting for these orthodox men to make a beginning. They will never move unless compelled to do so. Drastic steps are required to wipe of untouchability. I therefore beg you to kindly favour me with your opinion if satyagraha at the entrance of the temples by workers and Harijans preventing orthodox persons from entering the temples will be an effective method. Appeals and entreaties have produced no effect, and to lose more time on these will, in my humble opinion, be sheer waste of valuable time.

Such blocking the way will be sheer compulsion. And there should be no compulsion in religion or in matters of any reform. The movement for the removal of untouchability is one of self-purification. No man can be purified against his will. Therefore, there can be no force directly or indirectly used against the orthodox. It should be remembered that many of us were like the orthodox people before our recognition of the necessity of the removal of untouchability. We would not then have liked anybody to block our way to the temples, because we in those days believed, no doubt wrongly as we now think, that Harijans should not be allowed to enter temples. Even so may we not block the way of the orthodox to the temples.

I should also remind correspondents that the word 'satyagraha' is often most loosely used and is made to cover veiled violence. But as the author of the word I may be allowed to say that it excludes every form of violence, direct or indirect, veiled or unveiled, and whether in though, word or deed. It is breach of satyagraha to wish ill to an opponent or to say a harsh word to him or of him with the intention of harming him. And often the evil thought or the evil word may, in terms of satyagraha, be more dangerous than actual violence used in the heat of the moment and perhaps repented and forgotten the next moment. Satyagraha is gentle, it never wounds. It is never fussy, never impatient, never vociferous. It is the direct opposite of compulsion. It was conceived as a complete substitute for violence.

Nevertheless, I fully agree with the correspondent that 'most drastic steps are required to wipe off untouchability'. But these steps have to be taken against ourselves. The orthodox people sincerely believe that untouchability, as they practise it, is enjoined by the

Shastras and that great evil will befall them and Hinduism if it was removed. How is one to cope with this belief ? It is clear that they will never change their belief by being compelled to admit Harijans to their temples. What is required is not so much the entry of Harijans to the temples as the conversion of the orthodox to the belief that it is wrong to prevent Harijans from entering the temples. This conversion can only be brought about by an appeal to their hearts, i.e., by evoking the best that is in them. Such an appeal can be made by the appellants' prayers, fasting other suffering in their own persons, in other words, by their ever-increasing purity. It has never yet been known to fail. For it is its own end. The reformer must have consciousness of the truth of his cause. He will not then be impatient with the opponent, he will be impatient with himself. He must be prepared even to fast unto death. Not everyone has the right or the capacity to do so. God is most exacting. He exacts humility from His votaries. Even fasts may take the form of coercion. But there is nothing in the world that in human hands does not lend itself to abuse. The human being is a mixture of good and evil, Jekyll and Hyde. But there is the least likelihood of abuse when it is a matter of self-suffering.

Harijan, 15-4-1933

460. Rs. 5,000/- FOR DAVID SCHEME

The reader will be glad to learn that Shrimati Suvta Devi, the widow of the late Sheth Ramnarayanji, has sent a cheque for Rs. 2,500/- for the David Scheme. The donor desires that preference should be given to Harijan student from Rajputana, if one possessing the necessary qualifications can be found.

Another cheque for Rs. 2,500/- has been received from Shrimati Janaki Devi, the wife of Sheth Jamnalalji. Her preference is for a Harijan student from C.P., Marathi, failing that, from C P., Hindustani.

I tender my congratulations to the donors for their donation and hope that their example will be followed by other wealthy persons.[1]

I may state that a selection Board is in process of being formed.

Harijan, 15-4-1933

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to G.D. Birla", 10-4-1933.

461. LETTER TO V. S. R. SASTRI

April 15, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I went through your letter very carefully as soon as I got it. You should accept my assurance that I want to be convinced. I have no axe to grind on this earth except to find Truth. You insist upon your own interpretation, or call it the orthodox interpretation, and you swear by it. That is quite natural. Others whose learning I do not doubt for one moment swear by their own interpretation. You are doing them an injustice when you say that they do so to please me. I can only tell you what I do know and what I alone can know, and that is this: They are independent men. They are scholars known to fame. They have a character to keep. And many of them were accepted as authority on Shastras before I returned to India from my long exile. It is between these two interpretations that I have to make my choice, guided by such knowledge as I have of the Shastras, both in the original and in translations.

You suggest a meeting of the Pandits representing different schools of thought. Perhaps you do not know that I had such a meeting. I listened to their arguments with the greatest patience and with the utmost respect. I approached my task without any bias. I resist untouchability because I regard it as a great lie. If somebody convinced me that it was a great truth, I would repent of my folly and swear by untouchability. Beyond this I cannot argue.

But before closing I must answer one pointed question that you have put to me. It is only in God that everything melts into one and there is neither virtue nor vice, neither good nor evil, neither sin nor merit, neither happiness nor unhappiness, and if you will, neither truth nor untruth. That is indefinable. But so long as I am in a body I must continue to experience the duality. The obliteration of duality can only exist in my imagination as an intellectual grasp. And if any person were to put forth an opposite claim, I should have no right to question his claim, and I would gladly admit the inferiority of my position. The inferiority would not worry me because it would be in accordance with the Truth as I see it.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20948

462. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

April 15, 1933

CHI. MANILAL,

I have to answer two letters of yours. I had intended to reply to your previous letter, but somehow failed to do so.

I have heard that Pragji has landed in Bombay. But there is no news from him yet.

You have written to Narandas asking him to pay the bills for the press equipment, but how can it be done?[1] It is altogether improper to use Trust funds in such a manner. It would be another thing if Narandas could make some private arrangement. You should have such dealings with the traders directly, or order the goods through traders there or remit the money in advance. I understand your difficulty, but you ought not to adopt an improper course to solve it. Otherwise you will come to grief some day. One should stretch one's legs according to the covering. It is better to draw in our knees, rather than borrow a covering from somebody else.

I hope all of you have emerged safe from the epidemic of fever there.

Do Pathar and others who come there for change of air meet their own expenses or does the burden fall on you? If it falls on you and if you can shoulder it, of course nothing like it. But if you cannot shoulder it, you should humbly tell them that everybody will have to meet his own expenses. Please know that it is against dharma to do anything beyond one's means out of a false sense of prestige. We should let ourselves be seen as we are.

I don't like at all your request to be allowed to shift the press to a city. That will mean that all my ideals are wrong, or that you do not believe in them or cannot live up to them. If any of these alternatives is correct, you should not remain a trustee and should leave Phoenix. You seem even to have forgotten how quickly and with what difficulties I turned my back on city life and established Phoenix. You grew up in Phoenix. It was there you atoned for your errors, lived an independent life. Sita was born there too. That you should forget all this in a moment and think of leaving Phoenix for ever—imagine the weakness and the pitiable condition of mind it

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 14-4-1933.

reveals.

I supported you in one wrong step that you took and invited West's criticism. That criticism was deserved to some extent. This error was about the insertion of advertisements. I did not like your action, but I did not have the courage to tell you that you could close down *Indian Opinion* if you wished. I don't want you to fall further and drag me down with you. I will not let myself be dragged down. If you cannot settle in Phoenix with single-minded devotion and cannot live up to its ideals you should wind up the work. Or you and Sushila should dedicate yourselves exclusively to Phoenix. Instead of being forced to close down the settlement, I should like you to give your resignation to the Trustees and hand over the place to them and then do what you like. I will welcome your leaving Phoenix with your reputation unsullied. I shall not be pained if you do so. But I shall feel deeply pained if you are forced to leave the place in disgrace. Please remember that only recently you borrowed Rs. 10,000 from a public body here and took the money with you. Forget the past completely. Wake up from your slumber. Don't think that I say all this merely in reply to one suggestion by you and feel hurt. That suggestion reveals your attitude of mind. It is a dangerous one and that is why I caution you against it.

There is Miss Schlesin entertaining beautiful dreams about you, and you are thinking of filthy Durban. You must have sufficient pride in you to be determined that, if you cannot bring glory to your father's legacy, you will at any rate not disgrace it. Do you know the objects of Phoenix, or have you forgotten them as well? Read them again.

Miss Schlesin's suggestion is certainly admirable. But I don't think you will be able to act upon it. Kallenbach will not agree to meet the expenses of a visit to America, and you will not be able to get the money from any other source. And I also think it difficult, if not impossible, that *I. O.* can be kept up meanwhile. Even if you go to America and return after getting trained, I don't think patients from all communities will come to Phoenix for nature-cure treatment. All the same, if you have self-confidence and if everything can be arranged, I would certainly like you to act upon the suggestion, for the aim behind it is noble.

I hope Sita has completely recovered now. Take the utmost care of your health.

Read this letter three or four times and then decide your future

course. Think over the following questions:

(1) What is the aim in life of you both?

(2) Do you wish to live up to the ideals of Phoenix? Do you have the necessary strength for it?

(3) Can *I. O*. be made self-supporting?

You may take one thing as certain: We don't wish to run Phoenix while abandoning its ideals, and *I. O*. must not be shifted to any other place.

Please don't take this letter as a rebuke to you, I have written to wake up both of you. Indecision is a very bad thing.

We are quite well. The letter has become too long and I have no time either. So I cannot give any news about things here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4806

463. LETTER TO SUSHILABEHN GANDHI

April 15, 1933

CHI. SUSHILA,

Since the letter[1] to Manilal is intended for you both, what more can I write in this letter?

You may teach Sita only as much as you can while playing with her and without scolding or beating her. She will imbibe very little from what both of you tell her, but she will certainly follow the example which you set.

Ramdas has not been released yet. He will be released in the beginning of May.

The only change in my diet is that I do not at present take bread and vegetables. Fruit and milk suffice for me. I do not heat the milk. The pain in the elbow persists, but it seems to be only a sign of old age.

I get letters from Ba. She keeps fairly good health.

Of course I have plenty of work every day. I get up at 3 o'clock daily. To make up, I take a nap during the day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4807

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

464. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

April 15, 1933

BHAI MUNSHI,

You seem to have decided to write by turns.

How can a Gujarati who does not know about Narmadashankar[1] be called a Gujarati? It was as early as in my childhood that I first came to know about him. I am never tired of singing his poem: "The bugles blow: Let us all go to battle and victory." The fascination which began then deepened in South Africa. I had by then become a devoted lover of the *Gita*. Narmadashankar's preface to his translation of the *Gita* deepened my love for it and increased my respect for him. My only regret is that my numerous activities did not permit me to acquire as much knowledge of a writer and poet like Narmadashankar as I should have liked to do.

I hope you don't expect from me more than this just now. Even this little I have been able to write to you because I got up at 3 o'clock in the morning.

To dedicate one's life to the service of Harijans is indeed difficult; it is still more difficult to become fit to die for them. How demanding is Satyanarayana[2] ! How finicky He is. He would have spotlessly pure sheep, the very best pumpkin, the heads of sinless men, and how are we to get them for Him? For, He would reject one for a single impure thought that might cross one's mind ! ! Still it is impossible to leave Him. So jealous is that Poet of poets that He simply would not let me worship any other poet. To whom may I complain about this?

I assume that your pain has completely disappeared.

I hope Jagadish is improving.

Now about the Kabibai Trust.[3] I have gone through all the papers relating to it. My reading of it is that there can be no objection to taking in Harijans if room is left after the so-called "high class" Hindus have been fully provided for. The Trust does not exclude Harijans. However, if all you lawyers so interpret the terms that Harijans should have no place at all even if pupils from "high-class" Hindus do not seek admission to the school in sufficient number and

[1] (1833-88); a Gujarati poet

[2] The Lord ill the form of Truth

[3] *Vide* "Letter to K.M. Munshi", 30-1-1933.

some benches or seats are left vacant, I have nothing to say.

The next issue is a purely educational question. On what type of education is the Trust money to be spent? This is not a subject which can be discussed through letters. I have not been able to convince many people of the correctness of my views on education. On the one hand I want selfless teachers of the type dreamt of by Gokhale and, on the other, a system of education from which the dying villagers can derive benefit. This country cannot afford to imitate any other country, and so we have got to think independently about our educational problem and devise a plan of our own. However for the present all this is only a fond dream of mine. And you also have no time just now to think about this subject.

I am progressing in your books only at a snail's pace. But I have kept up my reading. Have you seen the tiny cart driven by the tiny Ahmedabad bullock? The speed of that bullock would put the Aga Khan's race horse to shame, and it is at that speed that Sardar has been reading your books. Let me admit that we have a motive behind all this, as we wish to take plenty of services from both of you. Shouldn't we fully know those from whom we expect so much?

You can know from this that we often think and talk about you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7528. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

465. INTERVIEW TO KIKABHAI AND DUDABHAI[1]

[On or before *April 16, 1933*][2]

I will fast again if the Hindu community does not do justice to you.[3] As you are backward in education, you might avail [yourselves] of any school including Government which is open to you.

After long discussion of several subjects Gandhiji concluded by saying that after all untouchability was fast disappearing, and would be a thing of the past shortly.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-4-1933

[1] Harijan leaders of Ahmedabad

[2] The newspaper report carries the date April 16.

[3] The interviewer had suggested that Gandhiji should not again fast unto death as it reflected discredit on Harijans.

466. TWO SAMPLES

Shri Chhotalal Pandit, representative of the Harijan Sevak Sangh of Kadi area, writes:[1]

There is also another letter of this type. Its writer is a public worker but is not at present connected with Harijan work. I give the following extract from his letter:[2]

These two are but samples of the letters I receive from British Gujarat. I get accounts of similar experiences from Kathiawar too. After returning from her tour of Kathiawar, Smt. Vijayalakshmibehn[3] called on me and gave me an account of her experiences. These too had the dark side in good measure. She could do some work because of her ability. But there was no end of difficulties. Nobody, therefore, should believe that the foregoing letters are exceptions. Gujaratis alone will read the *Harijanbandhu*, hence, apart from a handful of Gujaratis outside Gujarat, the rest of the country will believe that the description given in the two letters is mild compared to the true position.

Nevertheless, I refuse to believe that these pictures are without a silver-lining. God never created a cloud without a silver-lining. Darkness only means absence of life. In a vast, clear, diamond-studded sky, the clouds are no bigger than an atom as it were. And yet these clouds almost spell death to creatures extremely smaller than themselves living below on the earth. This is the condition of Harijan work at present. It seems that the clouds of their bitter experiences fill Harijan workers with despair. But says Narasinh Mehta:

When the gods were in trouble,

They remembered Him who dwells in us all,

Shri Krishna came to their rescue,

[1]&[2] The letters are not translated here. The first correspondent had stated that sometimes the activities of Harijan workers themselves resulted in hardships to the Harijans. For example three Harijan children were admitted to a school for caste Hindus, on the correspondent's initiative. For this the caste Hindus took the Harijans to task and made them give an undertaking that they would not thereafter send their children to such schools, and the teacher who had admitted the *Antyaja* children was fined.

The second correspondent had said that despite all the efforts of Gandhiji and the Servants of Untouchables Society, little progress was made in the removal of untouchability.

[3] Vijayalakshmi Pandit

Narasinh Mehta's Lord.

This also is a statment of experience. All who read this *bhajan* can see that the poet did not write this simply to make a good song, but that he could not help singing the truth which he wished to describe. Moreover, such experience was not Narasinh's alone. It has been the experience of all the world's saints. That is why one of the descriptions of God is *Bhidabhanjan*[1]. This is a fight for dharma. We have staked our very lives on it. Hence the first thing I want to say is that workers should not lose heart but rest confident that at the critical moment God will definitely help them.

But this faith should not be weak or ignorant. Out of it must spring tremendous energy. Where a thinking man's reason is paralysed, he who has faith can see the path through it. Where others' eyes see nothing, the eyes of faith see as clearly as in daylight. Such a person never admits defeat, and even his resting will be for strength. It will be a sign that he will resume work with much greater energy than before. His fast will not be an expression of despair, but a sacred means of being able to live more fruitfully.

Hence my request to all men and women workers is this: Do not get angry with sanatanists and do not goad frightened Harijans. Fire-fighters do not direct water at a house which they think cannot be saved but they direct it at neighbouring buildings within the range of the flames so as to prevent the fire from spreading and thus to check its fury. It cannot live on without food from the neighbourhood, and so as soon as the area around is rendered safe, the fire dies out by itself. Similarly where the Harijans have some strength at least and are ready to accept direct help they should be given such help. One should not work where they are not so ready, but should work in nearby areas where the Harijans are more or less ready. The work done among them cannot but have effect in the other place where the Harijans seem to have no life in them.

Even in that place, however, one should certainly try to plead with the sanatanists. There will hardly be a single village which will not have even one person who loves Harijans. One can establish contact with that village through him.

Let us take the case of the school mentioned above. That the Harijan children left it, does not worry me. It was necessary that they

[1] One who saves his devotees from insurmountable difficulties

should have joined it. If their parents are willing to entrust the children to us, we should take charge of them and educate them elsewhere. If the teacher is courageous, he should face boycott, if beaten he should put up with the beating, and bring back the Harijan children at the first opportunity. He should reason with the sanatanists. If the teacher has regard for his dharma, he should lay down his life for the sake of those three children who were under his charge. But supposing the teacher does not have so much spirit, then Shri Chhotalal should keep this village in mind and seek opportunities of once again establishing good relations with its sanatanists or Harijans or both. Those opportunities should be sought through service of both. He should seek out their friends and make use of those who carry weight with the respective parties, to awaken the sense of justice of one and removing the fear of the other. In short, while serving in other places, he should not forget either those three children or that village. He should make it his chief aim to protect the former.

Two points emerge from these letters. We have very few men and women workers who are sincere, single-minded and ready even to lay down their lives. A person who has dedicated himself to one task may be said to have dedicated himself to all. He who addressee himself to all tasks is not dedicated even to one. His condition is like that of a man living with a woman without marrying her. We have not properly understood this great truth. If we understand it, much of our work would become easy. Without dedicated workers who are ready to sacrifice their all for the cause of Harijans the blot of untouchability cannot be removed.

The second point is this. I must do what I ask others to do. That is in my nature. I started serving the country by serving Gujarat. I make no distinction among Gujarat, India, and the world. I live my life on the principle that by paying single-minded attention to one we pay attention to all. Non-violent work cannot be opposed to public good. That is the point of view from which this *yajna* of removal of untouchability is being carried on. When I recount the errors of the sanatanists, they are mine too. I do not regard myself as separate from them. I am impatient to do atonement, but impatience will not help. If I have in me the required purity for such atonement, God will certainly command me to undertake it. I daily pray to God to grant me such purity and the strength to obey His command.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 16-4-1933

467. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 16, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter.

Send Ramabehn to Baroda to be examined by Manekrao. If he undertakes to treat her, let him. If Manekrao does not know what to do in her case, she should come to Poona. There is a vaid here who is a specialist about diseases affecting bones. I will get Ramabehn examined by him and do whatever is necessary. Even ordinary medical help will be available here. If ultimately an operation is found necessary, I will consider whether it should be performed in Ahmedabad or at some other place. It will be better if the children remain there. If they cannot, they may accompany her. Najuklal[1] and others are there in Baroda and I believe that they will look after them. I don't know what facilities he has in his house. She will be able to stay even at Abbas Saheb's house. The place is not full just now. I don't know whether Deshpande Saheb's house has sufficient accommodation. Ramabehn should go to Baroda after you have written to Manekrao and received his reply. If he is not in Baroda or if he is not ready to undertake the case, she may come to Poona. Here in Poona Prof. Trivedi's house is open to every visitor. Don't mind if our debt to him goes on mounting. He likes to be troubled. His house does not seem to be full just now.

My opinion is definitely in favour of giving the machine to Keshu. I haven't thought about how much he should be charged. You and Keshu alone can know that. I think that breakages and other charges also should be debited.

Madhavji's letter is excellent. He, too, has written to Calcutta and asked them to send the children to the Ashram.

I follow what you say regarding Jeki's sons. I have got the impression that they are well-behaved.

And now your problem. Our ideal is Rama. There were people who criticized him too. How, then, can you or I hope to be spared? We should learn from the criticism. Chhaganlal's criticism and suggestions are enclosed with this. Most of the suggestions are old. If you think Premabehn will be able to read without being upset what he has written about her, let her read it.

[1] Najuklal Choksi, son-in-law of Lakshmidas P. Asar

I think that his suggestion about . . .[1] is improper. Nobody can tell a father how he should treat his daughter. I have sent Chhaganlal's criticism as it is without making any corrections because I thought it would be better for you to know what is in his mind. There are other things which seem to me to need correction but the letter would become too long if I did so. I did not know Chhaganlal outside jail as closely as I have come to know him here. I am sure that he is a man of transparent sincerity and tries to cultivate the spirit of renunciation, but he is a child. His intellect is not well developed. His power of observation is very imperfect, he does not possess a methodical mind, his memory, too, is weak, and his mind wanders after too many things so that his capacity for concentration is limited. And he is not aware of all these limitations of his. All the same, he is very eager to improve himself and to grow. He has no ill-will against anybody, but because of an imperfectly developed intellect his conclusions are one-sided and erroneous. I don't think this analysis is mine only, though I have not discussed these impressions with anybody, except a little with Kaka. I have not told Chhaganlal what I think about him. He will know that for the first time from this letter. It became necessary to say it today because I don't want you to form a wrong opinion about him. You may detect ill will in his remarks. But if you can you may trust that my observation of him is correct. If you do so, you will be able to see something in his criticism and suggestions which is worth accepting. In any case do give me your replies to his criticisms and suggestions. If you wish to show them to other co-workers, I will not object, though I don't see any need for that.

You are working as a secretary because I believe that you possess many of the virtues, and possess them in good measure, which you would like to have. I am not in the least dissatisfied with your work. My opinion about you remains unchanged, and I would be surprised if others have not formed the same impression that I have. N. says in his letter that he has not. Chhaganlal thinks that others, too, have not. But nobody has complained to me.

However, as I write this, I think of Bhagwanji. His complaint had produced no effect on me. I know his nature very well. But we should listen to persons on whom we have produced an unfavourable impression. We may find it easy to secure the co-operation of those who think well of us, but we learn nothing from them. Only our critics

[1] The name has been omitted.

serve us as sentinels. You may, therefore, learn as much from N. as you wish to.

If you think it proper, you may show . . . 's[1] and . . . 's[2] letters to Totaramji, Panditji, Narahari, Lakshmidas and Mathuradas, and hear them if they have anything to say. If Totaramji and Panditji offer to take charge, hand it over to them and, if they wish, work under them and look after the accounts. I look upon Totaramji as the fittest person to be regarded as father of the Ashram. We need somebody as a father. We regard the Ashram as a family. If I stayed there, I would consider myself as father of the Ashram. Even if Totaramji does not accept that place, I would not think it improper at all to treat him as one and unhesitatingly follow his advice whenever a difficult problem arises. Lakshmidas possesses all the virtues necessary in a secretary of the Ashram, but I do not know whether at present he can live there. Narahari certainly cannot do so, since he is not free, so far as I know. Chimanlal's health is much too poor for the task. Mathuradas has still to acquire experience. These are my views about all the co-workers whom I can think of. Vinoba cannot be shifted from Wardha. His responsibility is confined to Wardha. In fact he has left even Wardha and lives in a hamlet of Harijans.[3] He had my full consent for doing that. He may ultimately go and live in a hamlet still more exclusively inhabited by Harijans. You must, therefore, carry on as you are.

I have written all this merely for you to think over. In entrusting the welfare of the Ashram to your care when leaving it, I did not offer you a place of authority but burdened you with responsibility, and the position is still the same. I have observed nothing to persuade me to take away the responsibility from you. Nor can you give it up. You should, therefore, implement only those suggestions of mine which you find acceptable, having due regard to your responsibility. I cannot express any definite opinion from here. Whatever happens to the Ashram, good or ill, you will be the means. We should be thankful that I am permitted to write to you. If I was not permitted, wouldn't you act according to your own judgment? Therefore always do what seems best to you, regarding my letters and views as of no consequence. My duty is over when I have put before you what I hear and think. I want you to remain unaffected in the midst of all this, in

[1] The names have been omitted.

[2] *ibid*

[3] In 1932 he had shifted to Nalwadi about 1 mile from Wardha.

the sense explained in the *Gita*.

Let this period not be one of worries for you, though it is certainly a time of test for equanimity. See that you never lose it.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8356. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

468. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

April 16, 1933

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. I do not have much faith in Homoeopathy. But for that you should not postpone your going to a hill-station. I like your idea of going to Almora. There is a good Homoeopath even there. For your ailment, other than the mountain air, milk, butter, fruit, wheat *roti* and vegetables, you will hardly need any medicine. Having gone to Almora, you should not get involved with too much work. Take Chhotalal if he can come. I will try for that Harijan friend.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 108

469. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

April 16, 1933

BOYS AND GIRLS,

You have of late become irregular in writing to me. You must by now have learnt everything or something about . . .[1]. You must know something. Did you learn any lesson from it?

All the persons living in the Ashram are like blood brothers and sisters. If anyone feels even slightly lustful they should immediately confess before their elders. They should take all necessary steps to get rid of the passion.

No one should have any secrets. No one should live in privacy.

[1] The name has been omitted.

No one should dress himself up. One should be simple in body and mind as far as possible. No one should cross the bounds in any way. Only limited liberties should be taken with each other.

I would be glad if you would all write to me your opinions on these things . There is no harm if I have already written this before . It is good to have the memory of such things kept fresh.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

470. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 16, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I dispatched a letter to you this morning. I have heard from Gaur Gopal. As he got my letter late, he has decided to go to Puri. I have written to him again and asked him to go to Almora.

I have had no letter at all from Prabhudas. Hasn't he written to you also? Where is he at present?

Mahadev tells me that Poore's book is in Maganlal's collection. I suppose you know that all those books belong to the Ashram. If you find Poore's book among them, send it to me. The book was also included in the list sent by Purushottam.

If Purushottam has not left for Rajkot and if he can stay on, ask him to do so. Jamna's treatment is not over and Amina also may need his advice. But you will be better able to decide about this.

Though I did write to you this morning and sent you Chhaganlal's criticism, I did all that with some hesitation. I felt that your, Chhaganlal's, mine and the Ashram's good required that. I thought it desirable that you should know even Chhaganlal's views in their naked truth, and also that you should know my view of how his intellect works. The verse in the *Ishopanishad* which tells us that the face of Truth is hidden by a-golden lid echoes in my ears all the time. I feel its truth every moment of my life. We must open that lid. Anyone who can bear that being done will be affected by little else. What anyone believes about us is absolute truth to him. We must have the strength to understand it and face it. This is a form of non-violence.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8357. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

471. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

April 16, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

What an innocent girl you are! Because you have Mahadev now you do not write out of pity for me.

I hope Anand is well. Ask him to write to me. Now he will be able to write in Hindi, won't he? Tell him to make the effort.

I do feel that Mahadev will feel much better if he is given ten drops of castor-oil every day. If you have tried olive oil you may continue that. I hope you are keeping well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

472. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

April 16, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

I got your letter. I have written[1] to Narandas in detail. I have written to him to consult Prof. Manekrao immediately and, if that is not possible, to send you to Poona. There is a bone-setter here too. If he does not succeed, we shall see later about an operation. There is no cause for worry. If it is convenient, you may keep the children in the Ashram, otherwise you may take them with you. We will find some remedy to help Dhiru to grow. I hope there is no burden of work or study on him. Have you ever considered that he may be suffering from . . . ?[2]

As regards your expenses, Narandas says that, excluding the expenditure on travelling, they work out at the rate of Rs. 16 per month. Probably you do not even know this fact. Eleven rupees are credited to everybody, and there is generally no ground for increasing that figure in a particular case. I see that the expenses of some inmates

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 16-4-1933.

[2] The rest of the sentence has been omitted.

like you are borne by the Ashram, whether they come to eleven rupees or twenty-one rupees. You are, therefore, not concerned with the figure of eleven. It only reminds us that it is our aim not to exceed it. If you need more ghee or anything else and do not get it, you would certainly be justified in complaining about that. I would, however, request you not to keep back anything but complain frankly to anybody whom you regard as a friend . You will have to deal with Narandas till the end of your life. How can you have reserves with him? We wish to cultivate unity of heart with the whole world. Shall we, then, live with reserves among ourselves who are but a small band?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5348

473. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

April 16, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

I have already written one letter to you. While things on every side are getting confused, I often think of you. I don't wish to advise you, nor have I the courage now to argue with you. My condition is like that of the Elephant King. Only a little portion of the trunk is now left above the water. If that also sinks, I would be choked to death. I can, therefore, do nothing but pray for all those about whom I keep worrying. But to whom should I pray? He who is ever awake, who never rests even for a moment, who is nearer to us even than our nails and who bears and sees everything, already knows what my prayers are.

My trust in Him still keeps the little portion of the trunk above the water. He may do as He wills, keep me in what condition He wills.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10341. Also C.W. 6780. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

474. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

April 16, 1933

CHI. NARAHARI,

I got both your letter and the postcard on the same day (yesterday). It was of course good that you got the tonsils of both your son and daughter removed; but we should realize from this what care we should take of children to keep them healthy. They need:

fresh air as much as possible;

correct *paranayam* exercises;

regular and moderate exercise;

clean teeth and gums;

for food, chiefly milk, curds, fruit, vegetables and bread in right quantities;

exclusion, at least, of rice, pulses and sugar.

Many bodily troubles result from want of care in these respects.

I have followed what you write about Narandas. Let me know, in a separately enclosed letter if you like, the shortcomings which you have observed in Narandas. I would even advise you to tell him about them. If you don't wish to do that, it is your duty at any rate to place them before me. I find it unbearable that there should be estrangement among the handful of co-workers I have. Kaka has gone up to Sinhagad. We hope that his health will improve there.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I think it is better to allow children an hour's sleep during the day rather than permit them to sleep at a stretch for 9 hours. In England they regularly put children to sleep [during day-time.]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9060

475. LETTER TO TOTARAM SANADHYA

April 16, 1933

BHAI TOTARAMJI,

I liked your description[1], as also the *bhajan* you sent for Mahadev and the combination of the two was even more to my liking. Every act of ours should be the glorification of God.

I shall re-read the account. My desire is that we should produce enough fruit and vegetables to meet our needs. If we can also produce fodder for the cows and grain for the Ashram we shall achieve the highest ideal of farming. Even if this involves some increases in expenditure I shall regard it as justified. But I am aware that this is merely fool's babbling. I have worked the least at farming and talked the most about it. What to do? Farming is one of those things that I thought of doing when half my life was over.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2526

476. LETTER TO AMINA QURESHI

April 16, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER AMINA,

I must have your letters by every post. How are you? What do you eat? How do the bowels work? How are the cuts left from the piles operation? How is Qureshi? Give all such details.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10799. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

[1] Of his farming activities. Gandhiji had asked for this in his letter of January 5, 1933.

477. LETTER TO S. DHAVLE

April 18, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your postcard of the 13th April. I have had no letter before this regarding your activity. Surely you need no message from me.[1] Your work must be your message. It is wrong for workers to ask for messages for their new ventures. They should seek to justify them by reason of substantial service.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. DHAVLE

134 HARRISON ROAD

CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 20986

478. LETTER TO KRISHNA CHANDRA MUKHERJI

April 18, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The problem you have raised is not new, and because we are surrounded by death and destruction on all sides we have the positive word "*himsa*", and yet every religion that is known to mankind insists upon life as the law, but conduct prescribed has been designated by a negative word, that is, "ahimsa" or non-violence. That can only exist for a bodied life as an ideal to be reached, not to be realized in action in physical existence. Nevertheless if we recognize the law of ahimsa we would always shape our conduct so as to approach it as near as possible and therefore we would resort to as little violence as it is humanly possible, whereas if *himsa* was the law of our being, we would naturally do as much destruction as we could and rejoice in it. But we do not find many people rejoicing in doing violence, whereas we do find many people apologizing for what violence they did. To say that there is double law

[1] The addressee had asked for a message for the opening ceremony of the "Navajivan Library and Reading Room" and amalgamation of "Navajivan Pustakalaya" with it for the special benefit of Harijans.

working, namely, violence and non-violence, would be to argue that two contrary laws can co-exist. This is hardly the right thing.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KRISHNA CHANDRA MUKHERJI

MAGURA P. O. (JESSORE)

BENGAL

From a microfilm: S.N. 20982

479. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

April 18, 1933

MY DEAR C. R.,

I have your letter after long waiting. Of course I saw what Natarajan had written. Have not seen what Kodanda Rao has written. I do not know that anything can be done beyond writing to these friends. I often do with more or less success. I commend the prescription to you. Try it with Natarajan to commence with. He is slow to perceive flaws in his argument, but he is always open to conviction. I therefore never regard him as hopeless.

Jamnalalji will be going to a hill-station for his own treatment. I do not know whom he will be taking with him. In his latest letter he was thinking of going to Almora.

I would advise you to send Narasinham[1] and Papa[2] by themselves to a quiet place so that they would be sure of perfect rest, that is to say, if Narasinham is able to take care of himself and Papa. Why not take them yourself to Nandi? And if you don't want to stay there the whole of the time, you may come away earlier. You can still have at least five weeks there. But of course you know better. It may be that they will profit most by being with Jamnalalji.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 20972

[1] Addressee's son

[2] Addressee's daughter

480. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRAN

April 18, 1933

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRAN,

I had your telegram. You will find my note[1] in the *Harijan* on the Nattar-Harijan conflict, and you will report to me what is being done to bring the two together.

I have a letter from P. N. Sankaranarayana Iyer in which he tells me that before the 10th of February he wrote offering the services and co-operation of his institution on behalf of the cause, but he tells me he received no reply.[2] I do not know whether he wrote to someone in Madras. Perhaps you know this gentleman. His address is: No. 1, 3rd Street, Gopalapuram, Cathedral Post, Madras, and he and his sister, G. Visalakshi, are connected with slum work in Madras.

I sent to Dr. Rajan some time ago a letter[3] enclosing Rao Bahadur Rajah's letter to me asking for help for a Harijan Library. I have not had any reply to that letter. Please enquire and see what has happened.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20971

481. LETTER TO N.

April 18, 1933

MY DEAR N.,

I have your letter and I had a letter from Sjt. B. K. Ramachandra Rao, and I came to the conclusion that there was no use your living there. Neither R.[4] nor G.[5] can be of any use there. You have broken with the past altogether and I wish you will not recall it on any account whatsoever. If you have not therefore left, I would strongly advise you to leave for Poona at once, and if R.[6] will not give you enough for bringing yourself and S.[7] to Poona, I have asked Sjt.

[1] *Vide* "What it Means to be a Harijan", 22-4-1933.
[2] For Gandhiji's reply to Sankaranarayana Iyer's letter, *vide* 19-4-1933.
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. T. S. S. Rajan", 22-3-1933.
[4] The names have been omitted.
[5] *ibid*
[6] *ibid*
[7] *ibid*

Ramachandra Rao to advance 3rd class fare for you and S. You will telegraph to me and I shall arrange about your lodgings.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 29084

482. LETTER TO B. K. RAMACHANDRA RAO

April 18, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

It was good of you to have seen N. and to have written to me about her. I heard from her also at the same time that I heard from you and I decided at once to ask her to come away to Poona. I can see that she won't be able to do the Harijan service there all alone. The companions[1] whom you name cannot be called in to help her. Perhaps you do not know all about her life. Her past life has not been quite straight. She has turned over, I hope, a new leaf. She is under that definite promise. It is therefore better for her not to have any of her old companions, however good workers they might have been. There is nothing secret about this. She has owned up her past to all who should have known it. Probably she will have left by the time this reaches you. If she has not, you will kindly hand the accompanying letter[2] to her, and, if she will leave for Poona, but R.[3] cannot and does not advance 3rd class fare for her and her boy, you will kindly do it for me and I will see that you are repaid the loan.

Yours sincerely,

B. K. RAMACHANDRA RAO

PLEADER

CHITALDRUG

From a microfilm: S.N. 20983

[1] Two former co-workers of N.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] The name has been omitted.

483. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

April 18, 1933

DEAR MOTIBABU,

I have your letter and I am glad you have written to me so exhaustively.

In thinking of temple-entry, we must not think of what the Harijans want, but what is due by us to them and what was promised so solemnly at the Bombay meeting[1] under the Presidentship of Malaviyaji. Temple-entry was there promised and that promise has to be fulfilled at the sacrifice of life itself. Remember the words of the *Mahabharata*, "Truth in one scale and all the other sacrifices in the opposite scale: the scale holding Truth will outweigh the other scale." Breach of promise to the Harijans and to God is unthinkable. We may be as patient as possible with the sanatanists, but those who have any regard for that solemn promise must ceaseless]y pursue temple-entry. I do not therefore need to examine the other part of your argument about temple-entry. Of course education has to be an active programme. Education in the widest sense of the term is wanted, not merely for the Harijans but also for the *savarna* Hindus. What we are today suffering from is not so much the want of education as too much of mis-education. Irreligion and hypocrisy has been taught us in the place of religion and honesty, superstition in the place of true knowledge, intolerance in the place of charity, incontinence in the place of chastity, distortion of the Shastras in the place of a true and simple interpretation thereof woven round the central truth.

I note what you say about the activities of the Sangh, and I hope that your efforts will be crowned with full success. If you will keep the central fact of hand-spinning intact, you will not yield to the temptation of taking the fine yarn from the indigenous mills. I do not know whether you have traced the history of Harijans being driven from weaving to scavenging simply because the natural cord between hand-spun and hand-woven has been broken. If you will have fine cloth, you should teach the men and women how to spin fine yarn. Out of good slivers I spin 70 counts. Mahadev has gone as much as 110 counts. This is finer than the finest spun by any mill in India, and

[1] Held on September 25, 1932. For the text of the resolution.

you will be surprised to learn that a Harijan weaver at the Ashram has woven Mahadev's 40 counts. Finer than 40 we began to spin only during this incarceration, but I have no doubt that when our stock of fine yarn can be given for spinning, the same weaver will be able to handle it. We must face the difficulty, cost what it may, in this movement of regeneration.

Much as I would like to discuss the question of my coming out for the sake of the Harijan cause, prison restrictions would not admit of any such discussion.

I did not know that Arun had purposely sent the *Message and Mission* of the Prabartak Sangh for my opinion. I must now look it up if I can lay my hands on it and read it critically.

I think that your medical adviser is quite right. Your eyes need rest.[1] With all the devoted workers that surround you, why should you use your eyes at all ? I do not know whether you know that there is in vogue a new and strikingly convincing method of treating the eyesight. It is called Bates's method, and there is a physician in India who knows this method. His name and address are: Dr. Agrawal [Ram Eye Hospital, Bulandshahr].

I do not know the gentleman at all. He corresponded with me and brought this method first to my notice. Since then American friends have written to me and sent literature also.[2] If you at all feel like it, you should correspond with Dr. Agrawal.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20968

484. LETTER TO CHAVALI SATYANARAYANA

April 18, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter marked 30th (?) February has lain with me all this long time. I was unable to reach it earlier. I went through your letter but I am sorry to have to say that I found no argument to appeal to me. Untouchability is in my opinion undoubtedly indefensible,

[1] The addressee was suffering from glaucoma.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Harry J. Ehrlich", 24-3-1933.

nevertheless I have found better, though unconvincing, argument than what you have led.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. CHAVALI SATYANARAYANA
KOTHAPETA
GUNTUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 20978

485. LETTER TO N. V. THADANI

April 18, 1933

MY DEAR THADANI,

I had time today to go through the correspondence[1] between yourself and the Jagatguru and I was delighted with your terse, firm but restrained and courteous letters and I was filled with humiliation, sorrow and disappointment over the rambling, utterly illogical and undignified letters of the Jagatguru. I have therefore resisted the temptation of referring to this correspondence in the columns of the *Harijan*. If I do I should have to criticize the Jagatguru. This I do not want to do. It cannot help the struggle in any way, yet I do not want to miss your argument. Therefore I would like you to write a letter[2] to the *Harijan*, putting your case in the briefest manner possible and asking the readers of the *Harijan* to point out, if they can, from the Vedas any reference to the fifth caste. You know exactly what I mean.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20979

[1] *Vide* "Letter to N. V. Thadani", 8-4-1933.
[2] This appeared in *Harijan*, 13-5-1933.

486. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

[*April 18, 1933*][1]

CHI. KAKA,

I have your letter. The book on milk-diet lays great stress on rest. If, therefore, Dinshawji also insists on that, follow his advice and take complete rest. You should build a completely new body. The author forbids even reading, etc. Maruti and Lakshmi came and saw me. I hope Karsandas has met you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Give my blessings to Allabehn. I am waiting for a letter from Dinshawji.

SHRI KAKASAHEB

C/O DR. DINSHAW MEHTA

SINHAGAD

NEAR POONA

From Gujarati: C.W. 9497. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

487. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

April 18, 1933

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Shri Bahadurji is coming to me on the 25th. You should go and meet him before that and place before him the questions arising out of Dr. Solanki's case, so that you can know what needs to be known about it. I have written to him that you will be meeting him. Since he is coming here, I am not writing to him asking him questions about the matter, as I had intended.

If you can decide quickly about Taramati do so. If you wish, I shall write to her. It is very necessary that you should go at once to

[1] From the postmark

Deolali or whichever place you have chosen. You may be sure that you will teach Dilip more than any school can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

488. TELEGRAM TO DR. PURUSHOTTAM PATEL

[*April 19, 1933*][1]

DR. PATEL
POLYCLINIC
BOMBAY

PLEASE WIRE VITHALBHAI'S CONDITION AND VIENNA ADDRESS.[2]

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 20028

489. LETTER TO RASH BEHARY CHATTERJEE

April 19, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your long letter which I have read carefully. I do not know what I can do, placed as I am, but I would suggest your seeing Satisbabu and being guided by him. I would love to help you. I simply do not know how I can do it.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RASH BEHARY CHATTERJEE
P. O. BARINPOOR
VILL. SHASON
(DIST. 24 PARAGANAS)

From a microfilm: S.N. 20987

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", 19-4-1933.

[2] In his reply dated April 20, the addressee said: "Vithalbhai has abdominal complaint. No anxiety. Cable address Travenex Vienna."

490. LETTER TO P. N. SANKARANARAYANA IYER

April 19, 1933

MY DEAR SANKARANARAYANA,

You will please forgive me for not attending to your pamphlet before this. I was helpless. As soon as I had a few moments to spare I took up your pamphlet.

You have asked me to offer remarks, suggestions, guidance and to give you my blessings. Blessings you have if you deserve them. Whether you do or not I cannot judge, because I have no personal knowledge of your activity. But I can certainly see your earnestness in your report.[1]

I have gone through all the passages that you have specially marked. It is difficult for me to offer useful criticism.

Your hit at the turmoil of the temple-entry movement and at the great national leaders betrays somewhere irritation, impatience and ignorance of facts. If you had simply said that the Harijans that have come under your notice do not care for temple-entry, that would have been quite a fair statement to make; but to belittle a great religious movement without even studying it was not right. Just see what it is. In September last, representative Hindus in a public meeting entered into a solemn pledge that among other things temples should be thrown open to Harijans. From that moment it became their duty to strain every nerve to secure the opening of Hindu temples to Harijans. It is irrelevant whether Harijans want to make use of these temples or not, just as it would be irrelevant to the question of opening public schools, public wells and giving them all the other rights hitherto denied to them whether they want or do not want these rights. It is the simple duty of the suppressors to remove the weight of suppression from the heads of the suppressed. The suppressed may have become so stunted that in spite of the lifting of the weight they might not even appreciate the fact that it was lifted. But that would be no excuse for the suppressors to continue the suppression.

If you admit the justice of the argument you should have no hesitation in owning your mistake. More than this I think I need not say. Every little thing done for the sake of Harijans cannot but be welcome to me, and I think that the field of service is so vast that

[1] His activities were mentioned in *Harijan*, 29-4-1933.

workers can well afford to do that service without criticizing or belittling the efforts of others except of course where the other effort is mischievous, immoral or selfish.

In the 6th paragraph of your letter you tell me that you wrote to the local Seva Sangh offering your co-operation and service but that you had received no reply. I have now written[1] to them.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. P. N. SANKARANARAYANA IYER

NO. 1 3RD STREET, GOPALAPURAM

CATHEDRAL POST

MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 20969. Also C.W. 9677. Courtesy: P. N. Sankaranarayana Iyer

491. LETTER TO NEPAUL CHANDRA

April 19, 1933

DEAR NEPAUL BABU,

We have at the Ashram a lad brought up from infancy. He has a passion for painting, not that he knows much or perhaps anything of the art, but he cannot think of anything else. We have found him to be a straight, hard-working boy, amenable to discipline. But he has a grievance against the Ashram that he is not being given facilities for developing the special faculty that he has. I have therefore offered to send him to Santiniketan for the purpose of receiving training in painting. Will you please tell me whether this young man (Dhirendra[2] is his name) can be admitted. He is a strict vegetarian. I believe that he will pick up Bengali without difficulty. Gujarati is his mother tongue. He knows Hindi fairly well. He is an expert spinner. If he can be taken, please tell me whether he has to fill in a form of admission, when he could be sent there, what would be the fees. Please let me have any further instructions and guidance that you may think necessary. I do not know whether you are the right person to approach. If you are not, you will perhaps pass this on to the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. Ramachandran", 18-4-1933.

[2] Son of Vrajlal Gandhi

responsible authority with the request on my behalf that this letter may receive early attention.

I hope you are keeping well. My regards to all the friends.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20994

492. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

April 19, 1933

THE SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT

HOME DEPARTMENT

BOMBAY

DEAR SIR,

The enclosed cable[1] was sent by me on the 13th instant to the Superintendent for despatch. On the 17th I learnt on inquiry that it was sent to the Inspector-General. On the same day I complained to the Superintendent about the delay in sending the message. I have now at 2.20 p.m. 19th instant learnt that orders have been received that "there is no objection to the despatch of the cable".

Happily Sjt. V. J. Patel seems to be in no immediate danger. I have no desire to send the cable now as it is. Nor have I got the patient's address in Vienna where he has been sent for treatment. I am inquiring about the address.[2]

But I cannot help protesting against the delay in a matter involving the life of a human being, this time not a prisoner. One matter of delay in the case of a prisoner whose life is in danger is pending before Government.

Cables such as the one to Sjt. V. J. Patel, the Government will admit, are of use only if they are sent in time. I have known such cables to have given great consolation to their receivers. I cannot allow myself to think that in such a matter the Government have no regard for the feelings of persons in their custody. Was it necessary to detain

[1] *Vide* "Cable to Vithalbhai J. Patel", 14-4-1933.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Dr. Purushottam Patel", 19-4-1933.

the cable for seven days? I should like to have my position defined. If I have the liberty to send such cables, the Government should empower the authority in immediate custody to handle them. I venture to suggest that the present procedure is unfair and unnecessary. I need hardly point out that the cable was meant to be as well from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the patient's brother, as from me.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. IV, 329; also G.N. 3889

493. LETTER TO DR. HIRALAL SHARMA

April 19, 1933

DEAR DR. SHARMA,

I like your letter very much.[1] It does you great credit. You have pictured to me the ideal physician. Yes, by all means wash Amtussalaam's clothes, if necessary. Though in the Ashram, she is solely under your care. Do please insist on taking proper rest and the prescribed diet.

I would like you critically to examine everything in the Ashram and give me your impressions. Study the health of every inmate who will let you examine him or her. Of course you will frankly tell me of cases that may be beyond your skill. I would like you to examine Kusumbehn. She is today under Dr. Talwalkar's treatment. But I would like you to tell [me] what you would have her to do, if she puts herself under you. Then there is Jamnabehn. She is a chronic asthmatic. She can be treated by you now if she will put herself under your care. Then there is Ramabehn. She has an enlarged shoulder-bone. I do not yet visualize her trouble. Possibly her case is beyond your province. If it is not, please tell me what you would have her do. Lastly, there is Anandi who has just had an operation for appendicitis. She is having my treatment only, as the others do more or less. These are the special cases I would like you to see as soon as you can and tell me all about them. There are others, too, who require attention.

Now about yourself. While I would like you to throw yourself

[1] The addressee had written to Gandhiji on reaching the Ashram.

into the Ashram routine, you must not go beyond your strength and [you] will take everything easy. Have your special needs supplied. I would feel deeply hurt if, for want of care, your own health was endangered. You will make me feel at ease, if you will treat the Ashram as your home and express your needs.

I would like you to accompany Bhagwanji once and see Harijan quarters and examine the ailing ones there and their sanitation.

I wish your children had both accompanied you. But that now later, if all goes well.

Yours,

BAPU

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, pp. 30-2

494. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

April 19, 1933

CHI. JAMNA,

I have your letter. One does not have to worry about a person who, though her weight be 69 lb., can joke.

Yes, I remember very well the letters concerning enema, etc. I have an impression that I had replied to the questions in a letter to Purushottam. But it is also likely that I forgot to do so.

You can eat tomatoes, . . . [1], salt and papaw. But according to the system followed in the institution where Purushottam learnt the science, nothing but unboiled milk is permitted. Besides, you have to take bed-rest. However, Dr. Sharma is there now. Get yourself examined by him, and follow his advice if it is fully compatible with what you are doing now. I am writing to him. I don't know him personally. I have known him only through correspondence. He does seem to have had experience in his field. Now that Purushottam, who was your vaid, has left, I will write to you more regularly. You must increase your weight.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 876. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] A word is illegible.

495. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

April 19, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

I have your letter. I have already written to you and explained what to do regarding the arm. The arrival of Dr. Sharma makes no difference to my advice. If he can understand the real nature of the trouble and is ready to treat it, by all means let him try. Otherwise you should adhere to the line I have suggested. You should do no work which causes pain to the arm. You may give it only such exercise as will cause no pain. But now there will be no need for me to give any advice. He, to whose care you must leave the arm, will put everything right.

Amina seems to be in a bad plight. Give her courage and sustain her faith. If she is not careful about food, she will again harm her health.

BAPU

[PS.]

An increase of five pounds in your weight is certainly good. But it seems to have had no effect on the condition of the arm.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5349

496. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

April 19, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

Why did you beat that girl? A teacher does not lose her self-respect by apologizing to her pupil. On the contrary, it is enhanced. The pupils also will love her better. If, therefore, you have not already apologized and if you think that it was wrong on your part to have beaten her, you should apologize to her. You may be sure that will be for your good.

Your diet is all right. If you continue it your throat is bound to improve. Consult Dr. Sharma. If he can think of anything, he will suggest it.

Why do you get impatient in your work? If you are content

with what you can do slowly, the work will be faster and the result will be neater. I have had this experience thousands of times.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10337. Also C.W. 6777. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

497. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

April 19, 1933

BHAI RAJBHOJ,

Your Hindi letter is extremely good.

I trust you are comfortable in the Ashram.

I shall make an effort to answer your questions in the *Harijan Sevak*.[1] Nevertheless I may state this.

Here is one way of eliminating caste distinctions among Harijans—the caste considered higher should establish all social relations with the castes considered lower.

Wherever underground drainage is installed the Harijans should master the craft of weaving. There is no harm in seeking the assistance of the police wherever Harijans are prevented from using the *palki*. There are other ways also which I shall mention in the *Harijan Sevak*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 784

498. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

April 19, 1933

DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

It is good that you have returned to the Ashram. As regards coming here you should do only what Dr. Sharma permits. No one has any business to say anything about you now that he is there. The doctor writes that you are to take complete rest. If he allows, you may come on Saturday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 284

[1] *Vide* "A Harijan's Questions", 5-5-1933.

499. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 19, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your big packet. It is really big this time.

Nobody should copy my bad habits. I can even give reasons to excuse them. All the same everybody should know that they are bad habits and avoid them.

1. Nobody should read a book or a newspaper while eating. The best thing is to have in one serving as much as one wants and to eat the meal in complete silence. If one cannot do this, one may talk to one's neighbour in whispers. It is a bad habit to do two things simultaneously.

2. Nobody should do any other work while spinning, should neither dictate letters nor teach as I do.

3. It is a bad habit to read in the lavatory.

4. It is unbearable to clean the teeth in the lavatory. The habit is unhygienic and dirty. I have never been guilty of this bad habit.

But I do the first three things. However, a person's bad habits should not be copied. I never defend these habits as good. Moreover, I live in complete privacy. I have a separate room for lavatory and can keep books in that room. I may die any time, and cannot overcome the temptation to do as much work as I can while I live. I am not eager to overcome it either. I have these and many other reasons or excuses. But nobody else should use them to defend his bad habits. Show this to all the inmates. All these habits are also responsible for constipation and other troubles. We attach great importance to bodily labour and work in the Ashram. But there should be no impatience or excessive eagerness in doing even these. Whenever anybody feels that his work is too heavy, he should reduce it. Nobody is required to work beyond his capacity. The inmates of the Ashram do not live in it under compulsion. Nobody, therefore, should feel the burden of work there.

Read my letter to Dr. Sharma. Talk to him. Do also give him whatever facilities he wants. Let him examine all the patients I have mentioned and others who may be ill. Let me know the results and your views. You will find in my letter to him that I have written at sufficient length, and I, therefore, don't repeat all that here.

With all my efforts I could not find Valji's article. But he came and gave me a copy.

Did I give you the address to which the Gandiva spinning-wheels should be despatched? There is a slight change in it now: Shri Haribhau Phatak, Pioneer Dyeing Works, Sadashiv Peth, Poona City.

Lakshmibehn, Narmada, Bhuskute and Amtussalaam—the last if she is permitted by Dr. Sharma and if she is very keen— may come next Saturday. I am sending a wire[1] today, for you may not get this letter in time.

Ramji has asked for permission to put his grievances before Rajbhoj. If you think it desirable, you yourself may talk to the latter. He is a man of a suspicious nature and may misinterpret even your doing that. In view of this possibility, think independently and do what seems best to you.

BAPU

[PS.]

I was forgetting one thing. You have heard about N. She came and saw me some time ago. She has a son who lives with her. I had heard reports against her and so had invited her here. She was doing Harijan work in Bangalore. She is a capable lady, and is an American married to a Greek. Her father was a theatre designer. She herself can act and knows dancing, etc. You must have read about three years ago that she had become a Hindu in Kashmir and was thinking of coming to the Ashram. The report was true. But she was also living an ignorant life. She has freely led an immoral life and even accepted money from people. When she came to me, she confessed to me all her errors one after another and gave her solemn word that she would devote the rest of her life to Harijan work. She says she is 24 years old. She left the hotel where she was staying and went to live among Harijans. At present she is living in a Harijan hamlet at some distance from Bangalore. She writes to me from time to time. I think she has changed and is on the right path now. I have wired to her and asked her to come here. I intend to send her ultimately to the Ashram. I don't see any risk in taking her in. She will stay if she can observe the rules. Let all of you think about this and then communicate your view to me. If you wish to ask me anything more, you may do so. You

[1] *Vide* the following item.

need not send Poore's book to her just now. She has not yet arrived here.

BAPU

[PS.]

[Letters for] Sharma, Chhotubhai, Kusum, Rama, Anand, Lilavati, Mani, Dhiru, Jamna, Rajbhoj, Amtul, Prema, Amina, Dhananjaybabu.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8358. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

500. LETTER TO AMINA QURESHI

April 19, 1933

CHI. AMINA,

Do you know the meaning of Aamina? Why Aamina and not Amina? Why did you hide the fact from me out of a false sense of shame? You must not lose faith in fasting. If after ending a fast one eats what one likes one is bound to suffer a relapse. Rice is taboo; so are potatoes and chillies and other spices. You may eat onion. You should eat bread, chapatis, vegetables (green), milk and curd. And fruit when you get it. If you do this, you are bound to be cured. Keep up your courage. Why be a slave to tobacco? You will feel restless for a few days but will feel all right by and by. If you must rub the teeth with something, use charcoal powder and salt. Does Qureshi not get milk?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10800. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

501. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 19, 1933

ASHRAM
SABARMATI

LAKSHMIBEHN, NARMADA, DOCTOR PERMITTING AMTUSSALAAM, MAY COME SATURDAY ONE O'CLOCK.

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8400. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

502. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[After *April 19, 1933*][1]

DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I had sent a telegram regarding your coming but it was good that the doctor did not allow you to leave. Travelling in a feeble condition is not advisable. Do what the doctor says. God will make you well. Do not worry about serving. There shall be occasion enough for service when you are all right again.

Blessings from

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 282

503. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 20, 1933

Begun at 3 finished at 4 a.m.

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter containing your views of the conduct of the Ashram came in yesterday, i.e., Wednesday.

There is a difference in our ideal[s] perhaps. I contemplate a composite society at any rate for some long time to come. The ideal should be what it is. Some will reach it more and some less. You will find that the only ideal that can be fully reached according to the definition is that of Truth. For Truth is what everyone for the moment feels it to be as such, there being no room left for deception. It will always be non-physical, whereas every other vow has its direct physical aspect and therefore necessarily has grades. Take ahimsa. One person will be satisfied with its mere observance with the non-killing of man and beast. Another will extend it to the insect life, yet others to the vegetable and so on. We do not consider it an unpardonable crime to kill a snake or a scorpion. Take non-possession. Even you and I have no common line. I may possess a fountain pen, you may discard it. I may possess ten yards of khadi, you may have twenty. There is no such thing as full and equal observance of these other vows which admit of a physical expression. They subserve

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 19-4-1933.

the one and only grand purpose and ideal, Truth. Kusum lying on her deathbed (maybe) and requiring hundreds of things I may not want, as fully lives up to the Ashram ideal as I, if both of us think, speak and act truthfully.

If you have followed me hitherto, you must at once perceive that we do not need, we must not have bifurcation. Living the composite life, each must grow to his or her full height. If I cannot even at the age of 64 live up to the life of *brahmacharya*, I must humbly own it and retire from the Ashram without the finger of scorn being pointed at me. I must get credit for having courage to think, speak and act the truth. There is then hope for my *brahmacharya* but none for say . . .[1] if he has outwardly quite correctly lived a life of physical *brahmacharya* but has lusted after a girl or girls....[2] has disgraced the Ashram, not I.

Therefore if we will practise charity and Truth we can only have one institution wherein you must have the fullest scope for your growth and Kusum the invalid for hers or . . .[3] the butterfly for hers, provided that none of you deceives for one single moment and each believes in and strives to reach the Ashram ideal.

Now comes in, in a different or modified form, your proposal. A separate institution or institutions. There is one at Wardha with Vinoba at its head. He is part of the parent institution and is working out the ideals to the best of his capacity. Did I tell you that with my full consent, he had run away from Wardha and settled in a Harijan village hardly two miles from Wardha? He may leave a landmark there and go fifty miles or more away from any railway line with or without a companion still in fulfilment of the ideal of the parent [institution] and being an integral part of it. He is in no way superior to . . .[4], assuming always that. . . [4] is as truthful as Vinoba and is as much carrying out the Ashram ideal as Vinoba. Are you able to perceive this fully?

There is another branch shooting out in Almora far away from the haunts of men and a long way from a railway line. Struggling Prabhudas is today in physical charge of it. But how ultimately it will

[1] The name has been omitted.
[2] The names have been omitted.
[3] *ibid*
[4] *ibid*

shape, I do not know. It may become a sanatorium for the invalids or may become a retreat, permanent or temporary, for those who want isolation for their growth. And if we succeed in continually throwing out untruth from the Ashram and learn to live only truth and for it and nothing else, we may have a million branches, none superior, none inferior, all being an expression of the hardy parent and required for it. I do not know whether I have expressed myself so as to enable you to understand me. Follow it up as much as you like. No letter going to Ba this week.

Love from us all to all.

BAPU

[PS.]

Last week's post was handed in on Friday and sacred cards were sent by registered book packet.

C.W. 9675. Courtesy: Mirabehn

504. LETTER TO P. H. GADRE

April 20, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and your notes on the Harijan quarters in Nasik.[1]

What help do you want from Seth Mathuradas Vasanji? If I knew definitely, I might be able to do something.

I note what you say about the quotations from the other saints:[2]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. H. GADRE
PLEADER
NASIK

From a microfilm: S.N. 20997

[1] Gandhiji had invited from the addressee a report on the Bhangis and Mahars of Nasik; *Vide* "Letter to P.H. Gadre", 4-4-1933.

[2] As the addressee had been busy with the preparation of the report, he was unable to send Gandhiji further quotations on Harijans from the saints of Maharashtra.

505. LETTER TO D. G. JADHAV

April 20, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 17th instant.[1] I think that the Mahar friends who are boycotted should stick to their resolve without entering into any argument or quarrel with the Mahar Panchayat that has excommunicated them and if they suffer in dignified silence you will find that the excommunication will be ineffective. The very reason why educated Mahars are not under the ban of excommunication shows that there is no strength in it. I think that you should quietly and persistently work in their midst and try to serve those who are instrumental in excommunicating the reformers and if you will continue to serve both the parties you might form the connecting link between the two.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. DAULAT GULAJI JADHAV

VAGHLI

CHALISGAON (E. KHANDESH)

From a microfilm: S.N. 21093

506. LETTER TO KAMALA DEVI

April 20, 1933

DEAR KAMALA DEVI,

I have your letter. Do please come on Monday next at 2 o'clock.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 21008

[1] The addressee had informed Gandhiji that many Mahars were excommunicated for taking tea in the company of Mangs, a supposedly inferior community. He, however, being an educated man was exempted.

507. LETTER TO R. MAGUDESWARAN

April 20, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your postcard. You can see me on Monday, the 1st of May, at 3 p.m. You will please not take more than half an hour at the outside. But I would dissuade you from coming all the way from the South unless you have some definite and very important questions about untouchability.[1]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. MAGUDESWARAN

C/O RAJANGA SWAMINATHA AIYAR

TIRUVADI

(TANJORE DIST.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 21001

508. LETTER TO G. V. MODAK

April 20, 1933

DEAR CAPT. MODAK,

I have your letter. Your book[2] has been kept by the Superintendent, for, in his opinion, it is not contemplated that such books should be given to me. Unless therefore you get the permission from the Government, the book cannot be delivered to me.

Yours sincerely,

CAPT. G. V. MODAK

C/O S. I. SOCIETY

POONA

From a microfilm: S.N. 21007

[1] The addressee had some doubts concerning the problem of untouchability which could in his opinion be resolved only by a discussion with Gandhiji.

[2] About the Royal Indian Army

509. LETTER TO NARAYANA[1]

April 20, !933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Whether you have an idol or whether you are in a temple or a church or a mosque or out in the open air, you pray only to one God who is in everything and who is all-eyes and all-ears.

The wearing of the yellow robe I do not consider to be at all necessary for a *brahmachari*. In ancient times it was undoubtedly a symbol that distinguished the *brahmachari* from the householder, and members of a particular institution may, if they wish to, adopt a particular costume for themselves.

I think that you did well in not observing any distinction between your fellow-students or workers, whether Harijans or others, at the time of *shraddha* ceremony[2].

Yours sincerely,

DR. NARAYANA

GURUKULA SEVA SANGH

P.O. KENGERI

BANGALORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 20995

510. LETTER TO DR. M. A. NARAYANA

April 20, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I must not be expected to decide upon the private character of people whom I do not know. The method of working out the programme of untouchability is before the public. It

[1] The addressee, a youth, had four years earlier joined a residential institution the aim of which was rural reconstruction and free medical relief. An account was published in *Harijan*, 22-4-1933.

[2] Of his father

is generally known now that only those with pure character and a religious spirit should enter upon this service, and no others.

Yours sincerely,

DR. M. A. NARAYANA
C/O THE NEW PHARMACY
23 44TH STREET
RANGOON

From a microfilm: S.N. 21005

511. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

April 20, 1933

MY DEAR PRAKASAM,

I sent the enclosed papers[1] to the Provincial Board of the S.U.S.[2] They have returned the papers saying that the matter is outside their jurisdiction and that I should forward them to you, and so you have the papers and you will tell me what you can do in the matter.

I hope you are keeping well.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 21004

512. LETTER TO M. SESHAGIRI RAO

April 20, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is wrong for you to ask the detailed questions that you have, and it would be wrong on my part, because it would be presumptuous, to answer all those questions. Having known the broad principle that truth must be followed at all costs, the details must be worked out by everyone for himself, regard being had to one's own capacity for following out the principle.

From your letter it does appear to me that you are a weak man, not sure of yourself, and it may be just as well for you to remain under your father's roof and make sure of your own personal purity and personal honesty. It may be that if you succeed in doing this your

[1] These are not available.
[2] Servants of Untouchables Society

father himself will be converted.

As to your wife, I think that you are quite wrong in sitting in judgment upon her. If you are wiser than she is, you would become her teacher and lead her gently on to the right way.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. SESHAGIRI RAO
C/O B. SURYANARAYANA
POSTMAN
TEKKALI (GANJAM DT.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 21006

513. LETTER TO S. SWAMINATHAN

April 20, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[1] All I can do is to commend to your attention the weekly *Harijan* and you will find in the issues my position clearly stated. There is no question whatsoever of compulsion in connection with temple-entry.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. SWAMINATHAN
1146 ANDIAPILLAI AGRAHARAM
KARUNATTAMKUDI
TANJORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 20996

[1] The addressee had supported the caste system and said in his letter that the temple-entry of the Harijans would hurt the feelings of the caste Hindus.

514. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[*April 20, 1933*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

Some of the points in your letter in the big mail received yesterday require immediate reply, and I am, therefore, writing this letter today without delay.

I am glad that Lakshmibehn has agreed to go[2] for one year. I will now get into correspondence with the people concerned. I think whatever is done will be done after Jamnalalji's release. Probably it will not be necessary for two women to go at the same time.

What shall we do if Chimanlal loses heart?

After reading Dr. Talwalkar's letter, I feel that it will be best for Kusum to remain under his treatment.

Keep the letter for Pannalal with you and give it to him at the appropriate time.

The changes which you have made seem to be all right. The burden of work on Prema ought to be reduced. If she does not stop speaking for the present, I see a grave risk. Be strict with her in this matter.

Let Parachure Shastri conduct as many classes as he can. If people can be taught to recite the *Gita* verses with correct pronunciation, I will regard that as a great thing.

Do give him all the books which we have. I have explained in my letter how they should be used. Kaka tells me that the other four books which he requires are there in the Vidyapith. If Panditji asks for them or if Narahari Parikh permits, we may have them transferred to the Ashram.

We have, in any case, to ask for the transfer of some manuscripts. It is only a question of time. Ask Shastri to be patient.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8360. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine*, Pt. II, gives 'about April 22' as the date of this letter which however does not appear to be correct. In his letter of April 22 to the addressee, Gandhiji complains of not having received any letters for three days "after the big packet". Gandhiji wrote this letter the day following the receipt of the big packet, which must have been on the 19th and hence presumably this letter was written on the 20th.

[2] As matron of the women's Ashram at Wardha

515. LETTER TO RAMESHWARLAL BAZAJ

April 20, 1933

BHAI RAMESHWARLAL,

I got a letter from you after so many months. You do not write how your business is going on. Describe how you live. I hope your mind is at peace. What happened about your establishment in London? One can solve all problems if one is patient.

Rukmini[1] is in Deolali at present. She is all right.

We are all well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9064

516. LETTER TO FULCHAND B. SHAH

April 20, 1933

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

At last I got a letter from you after waiting for one for a long time. All of us were wondering why there was no letter and were, therefore, very much pleased when we got it.

I cannot understand what happened to my letter. My atitude in the matter is that we should write what we wish to, and not worry whether or not the letter reaches the addressee.

Our life goes on from day to day.

We often think about your enlarged family there, but feel sure that, since you are quite a few veterans there, things are going on without friction. If an accident occurs to a railway train, a good many people will die. If, on the other hand, anything happens to an old-fashioned cart, at the most the riders feel a jerk. They do a few repairs to the cart and jump on to it again. Before the age of the railway, the pace of things was slow. But we rarely find this from reading history. But we do hear about the increase in accidents and lunatic asylums. However, sanatanist friends argue that I have no right at all to talk about these things, since, though I write against trains, doctors, etc., I am eager enough to travel by train whenever I get an opportunity and a bicycle runs down to Dr. Kanuga's dispensary the

[1] Addressee's daughter-in-law and Maganlal Gandhi's daughter

moment I have an inflammation in one of the eyes. This is quite true. But poor sanatanists, do they know that during the last fifteen months I have not stepped into a train even once nor sent anybody bicycling to Dr. Kanuga?

Tell Surendra that to get cough and low fever is against the rules of the Ashram. How did he get them? He should write to me in detail or someone else should, whose turn it may be to write. Darbari may not have used many of his turns; if so, let him use one of them for writing to me. I hope Surendra gets regulation food for a sick prisoner. I suppose Vithal knows that his father and sisters have returned to the Ashram.

I have one golden suggestion for safeguarding health. Anybody who finds that a certain item of food does not agree with him should leave it. Nobody dies for remaining hungry, whereas it can be proved that 999 people out of a thousand fall ill through over-eating or eating wrong things. I can say much else, but it will serve no purpose.

If you or any other friends wish to discuss with me any questions in connection with the movement against untouchability, you will be permitted to see me. Of course you should not ask for such permission if you have nothing to discuss with me about that subject.

And now the replies to the questions asked by Mohanlal, the school-teacher from Bavla:

1. By *abhyasa*[1] the *Gita* means regular reading of something which is worth pondering over, though one may not feel interested in it. Such regular study enables one to maintain the current of one's thoughts in the right direction. The Lord has coupled *vairagya*[2] with *abhyasa*. But the two things are practically the same. Fixing one's mind in *abhyasa* necessarily means withdrawing it from other things, and that is *vairagya*.

2. *Prasad* may be described as serene contentment. We feel contented when we get the things of the world which we desire, but such contentment is useless and springs from the satisfaction of the senses. Since the goods of the world are short-lived, the contentment which they bring is also short-lived. The goods of spiritual life are eternal possessions, and so the contentment produced by them is also

[1] Practice
[2] Renunciation

abiding. It is an experience beyond the grasp of the senses, an experience of the mind and the heart. One can, therefore, feel true contentment only when one becomes indifferent to the happiness of the senses. This is the contentment that the *Gita* talks about.

Regards from us all to everybody there. I got Raojibhai's letter. I will reply to him by and by.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9651. Courtesy: Chandrakant F. Shah

517. CABLE TO VITHALBHAI J. PATEL

[On or after *April 20, 1933*][1]

PATEL
CARE TRAVENEX
VIENNA

MAY GOD SPARE YOU. WIRE PROGRESS.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 21000

518. HOW DOES THE STREAM OF BHAKTI FLOW?

[*April 21, 1933*][2]

A lover of the Bhagavata dharma writes:[3]

The stream of *bhakti* does not flow from the pen. It is not a matter pertaining to the intellect. That stream can only flow from the cavern of the heart; and when it does flow, no power will be able to stop its current. Who can stop the current of the Ganga?

I am indeed trying for such *bhakti* but the effort cannot succeed through any verbal grandeur. The only way to it is karmayoga. A

[1] This cable was drafted on a telegram received on April 20, 1933 from Dr. Purushottam Patel in reply to Gandhiji's to him dated April 19, 1933; *Vide* "Telegram to Purushottam Patel", 19-4-1933.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Viyogi Hari", 21-4-1933.

[3] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had requested Gandhiji to write one article on *bhakti* in each *Harijan* issue so that people would not indulge in unnecessary discussions but follow the path of pure *bhakti*. It was his firm belief that only Gandhiji could do this in an age of atheism.

total indifference towards the result is necessary for that yoga. Karmayoga is but another name for action which is wholly devoid of any desire for results.

Hence, I do not see the need to write any article specially in order to make the stream of devotion flow. If every word of the *Harijan*—whether it is in English, Hindi or Gujarati—is an echo of the devotion which is within, it will automatically make an impression.

I have grasped the intention of the lover of the Bhagavata dharma. If there is devotion within me, and, to the extent that it is there, that devotion will not fail to touch others. This is because I believe that a change of heart can be brought about through the Bhagavata dharma alone. That dharma is contagious. Once it is revealed, it does not leave anyone untouched. When it is truly revealed in any of us, the Harijans and the sanatanists will automatically become aware of it. This at least I can say for myself that all my actions—writing, speaking, walking—are undertaken with the object of generating devotion within me. It is my confirmed belief that if Hinduism is to be saved, there is no other way to do so.

Religion has never been, and can never be, saved through hooliganism or hypocrisy, through rhetoric or beautiful articles. Religion can be saved only through the purification and penance professing it. And, the author of the *Bhagavata* has clearly stated that in this age the path of *bhakti* alone can be pursued of those without difficulty; perhaps it is the sole path.

The question may then arise why I write or speak. The answer is contained in what I have stated above regarding my actions. That activity itself shows that even if there has been any flowering of the Bhagavata dharma in me, it can in no way be said to have attained perfection; and my activity in that direction is for that very development. And, if that is really so, others will catch a glimpse of devotion in one or the other of these activities.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 30-4-1933

519. FIVE QUESTIONS ON VARNADHARMA

A gentleman has sent me the following questions:

1. What work should the Brahmin, the Kshatriya, the Vaishya and the Shudra do to earn their livelihood?
2. In what way should the four varnas serve?
3. Can work for livelihood be the same as work for service? Or are the two different?
4. You have written that "in order to revive varnashrama it is necessary that all should voluntarily become Shudras". If the other three varnas (the Brahmin, the Kshatriya, the Vaishya) embrace the Shudra varna, will they not be guilty of the sin of giving up their dharma and adopting another?
5. You have written, "A small varna aspiring to *Brahmajnana* fortunately exists today through which sanatana dharma will again shine in its purity and show the world the path to happiness." What is that varna?

I seek to prevent no one from asking questions. But I must say that if my writings were read carefully many questions that are asked would be answered of themselves. An article in which questions raised in it are not answered is considered useless. Articles treating of moral questions should not be read only once. If such an article is read over and over again with concentration, then the questions included in them solve themselves easily. I should therefore request the correspondent to reread my article on varnashrama. He will then find that what I am going to say here is already contained in it. I address this suggestion to the readers in general. Let not the correspondent think that it applies only to him. The habit of reading is increasing in us, but the habit of pondering is diminishing and therefore we have become somewhat helpless. On everything we want to know another's opinion. We have lost the power of original thinking which comes from constant pondering. It is truly pitiable that things have come to such a pass. Once a principle is understood we should have the capacity to understand its corrolaries. With just a little practice this power can be developed.

I shall now answer the questions:

1. The Brahmin will impart to society knowledge of the Brahman. The Kshatriya will protect the country. The Vaishya will earn wealth through trade and commerce. The Shudra will do service.

All these will earn their livelihood each by doing the work of his own varna. That will be enough.

2. Varna, strictly speaking, is a duty not a right. Hence the existence of varna can only be for service, not for self. For this reason there is no one high and no one low. A man who considers himself above others, is worse than a fool despite all his wisdom. Because of his arrogance or superiority he falls from varna. Here, it is also necessary to understand that there is nothing in varnashrama to prevent a Shudra from acquiring learning or defending his country; yes, the Shudra may not barter his knowledge or take to defending his country for purposes of livelihood. It is also not enjoined that the Brahmin or the Kshatriya may not do menial work. But they must not earn their livelihood from such work. If this simple dharma were scrupulously followed, all the disorders that face society today, all the jealousies and rivalries that are rampant, all this craze to amass wealth, all the falsehood that is prevalent, all this production of weapons of war would vanish. Whether the whole world follows this principle or not, whether all Hindus do so or not, even if some follow this, the world will gain by so much. My faith that the salvation of the world lies in following varnadharma grows stronger each day. The true meaning of varnadharma is service. Whatever is done should be done in the spirit of service. Where is bargaining in service?

Now comes the question of manual labour. As far as I understand the *Gita*, it mentions many kinds of *yajnas*. One of them is manual labour. It is the duty of all the castes to do manual labour as *yajna* for the preservation of the world. No one can escape this *yajna*. Without body labour the journey of life itself is impossible. He who does not perform this *yajna* of labour is truly a thief. To say that manual labour is meant for Shudras only shows ignorance of dharma. Work of service does not necessarily mean manual work. He who washes his own dishes is doing manual work but not work of service. A watchman who earns his livelihood by standing at the gate does no manual work; but he certainly does work of service.

3. There is no need now to answer this question.

4. In asking this question, my correspondent has perhaps forgotten that in my opinion varnadharma today is all but destroyed. Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas have long since given up their varna duties and arrogated rights. The sin has been committed. Now the Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas, who have fallen from

varnadharma can by voluntarily embracing Shudradharma absolve themselves of the sin. They never had any right to treat the Shudras as low-born.

5. Those who follow the Bhagavata dharma and, for love of God, barely earning their livelihood, always serve their fellow-beings, impart divine knowledge to the world. There is no doubt about this. There are among them men of learning as well as without learning. They do not make a show of their work. I do not know them all by their names. But I know that there are such people even though their number is very small.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 21-4-1933

520. HOW CAN THE BIRTHLESS BE BORN?

The teacher with whose conundrums relating to temples I dealt in an earlier article[1] again writes:[2]

There are many principles in Hinduism which are comprehensible to reason and many others that transcend reason. The doctrine of incarnation is a matter of reason as well as of faith. In so far as it is a matter of faith, I do not think that there will be books explaining it as there are books explaining material things. There are some books on this subject in English, but even they do not fully satisfy the mind. Possibly there are works on this subject in Sanskrit but I do not know about them. I owe my faith in incarnation to Tulsidas. I would advise seekers after truth like this teacher to study the works of Tulsidas. If anyone knows any work on this subject, I would request him to inform me about it, so that I can write to the teacher. But what is needed in matters such as incarnation is not books so much as reflection.

Now let us consider the matter on the plane of reason. Whatever qualities are attributed to God, are also attributed to the *atman*. Just as God is unborn, unageing and undying, so is the *atman*. The *atman* is an eternal part of God, and that is why it possesses the attributes of God. The *atman* is birthless and yet is born in body and therefore it

[1] *Vide* "Posers", 18-3-1933.

[2] The extract quoted is not translated here. The correspondent had questioned the doctrine of incarnation, calling it un-Vedic and asked: "How can One birthless and deathless be born?"

must be considered as a partial incarnation of God. If we take this view, there should be no difficulty in considering one in whom many qualities of God are present, an incarnation of God. Full incarnation cannot be understood through the intellect. This is a matter of imagination as well as of faith. The Hindu, from the circumstances of his past births and his present birth, will consider Rama, Krishna and others as incarnations of God. One who sees God in the whole universe, should be accepted as an incarnation of God. Just as we see a mass of water as the sea, in the same way why can we not see the world of living things as an incarnation of God? Whether we call this an incarnation or not is a different matter. We are not concerned with name. This world is pervaded by God. Wherever we look there is only God. That which has name and form is an incarnation of God; so much should be clear to the eyes of faith. If we can but have this much of faith in our hearts, it is very possible that we would keep clear of sins. Knowing well that God dwells in every heart, why should we follow the path of falsehood and why should we sin?

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 21-4-1933

521. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

April 21, 1933

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your long letter giving me your views about the proposed visit to British Guiana, South Africa, etc. I think that these outposts have come to abide with you. I do not need any elaborate argument to convince me of it. Now and again you are bound to receive a call from them and it is best to respond to such calls. You should therefore undoubtedly go to British Guiana, and then to South Africa, then to East Africa and return via India. That will give you mental satisfaction, keep you up to date with the things for which you have qualified yourself and it will give satisfaction to the people concerned, and the work that you can do in these several parts, you alone can do. It does not matter a bit whether it appears today substantial or insubstantial, and whilst you are absent on duty from England you will believe, I shall certainly believe, that it will not suffer because you will be absent, not for your pleasure, but on duty.

I hope that the care about your brother has not proved too great for you and that his removal to a hospital has benefited him.

Love from us all.

MOHAN

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(3), Pt. IV, p. 313; also G.N. 1303

522. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

April 21, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. Copies of the *Harijan* will be sent to the six gentlemen named by you.[1] The first copy will go under a covering letter from Sastri. Lord Reading and Lothian are being sent a copy of *Harijan* under instruction from Agatha Harrison.

I had a surprise visit from your father.[2] It gave me great joy to meet him with his Shastri. We had a long and interesting discussion on untouchability. He told me that he was meeting you in Gwalior. I do hope that your daughter-in-law has already gone to Sinhagad. Of course I will see your son when he comes. I did not know that he also was not keeping good health.

I shall take note of the two donations[3] in the *Harijan*. Viyogi Hari also writes to me expressing the hope that *Harijan Sevak* will be self-supporting within a short time. I see you have ceased to write for it altogether. That's wrong. You ought to make it a point to send something every week.

I hope you will undergo the necessary operation[4] at Calcutta.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 21011

[1] These were: Private Secretary to Governor of Bengal, Sir Edward Benthall, Calcutta, Sir Walter Layton, Sir Henry Strackosch, Lord Reading and Lord Lothian, London.

[2] Raja Baldevdas Birla visited Gandhiji in jail on April 18, 1933.

[3] From Kamlapat Singhania and Rameshwar Prasad Bagla of Kanpur; *Vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 14-4-1933.

[4] Of the nose

523. LETTER TO K. ISWARA DUTTA[1]

April 21, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Apart from the fact that I have not a moment to spare for the article you will want me to write for you, I may not contribute such articles under the restrictions governing my incarceration.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. ISWARA DUTTA
" THE SWADESH BHAGTA"
ALLAHABAD

From a microfilm: S.N. 21027

524. LETTER TO GOSWAMI SATRADHIKAR OF GARAMUR

April 21, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am quite sure that those who are excommunicated for doing Harijan service should bear the suffering meekly and you will find that the opposition Will subside.[2] I have already dealt with the subject fairly fully in the pages of the *Harijan* which you should read.

Yours sincerely,

HIS HOLINESS SRI SRI GOSWAMI
SATRADHIKAR OF GARAMUR
CAMP, NORTH GAUHATI, ASSAM

From a microfilm: S.N. 21021

[1] The addressee, an assistant editor of *The Leader*, was to edit the annual number of *The Swadeshi Bhagta*, an illustrated monthly in English and Hindi. He wanted an article on the ways in which Harijans could advance the cause of swadeshi and *vice versa*.

[2] The addressee was the president of the Assam Servants of Untouchables Society and had asked for guidance in the face of a social boycott.,

525. LETTER TO E. HILLIARD

April 21, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 18th instant. I have glanced through the interesting article[1] you have sent me. The quotations given in it are very appropriate.

Yours sincerely,

E. HILLIARD, ESQ
4 HARRIS ROAD
BENSON TOWN, BANGALORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 21026

526. LETTER TO D. C. PARVATE[2]

April 21, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter.[3] Do please tell Deshdas Paisa Fund Ranade that so far as my views are concerned, they are well known. I am wholly against coercive satyagraha for anything whatsoever, least of all for temple-entry. So far, therefore, as I am concerned, I will certainly discountenance any method of coercion and our friend should know that I have successfully prevented people from offering coercive satyagraha for temple-entry. I do hope that the Deshdas is doing well. I suppose it is no use my even suggesting the dropping of a fast undertaken with a sacred determination. I hope that at the end of it he will not be over-weak.

Yours sincerely,

D. C. PARVATE
POONA

From a microfilm: S.N. 21019

[1] "Examining the Universe". The addressee had sent it on learning of Gandhiji's active interest in astronomy.

[2] A worker of the Govardhak Sangh

[3] The addressee had said in it that Deshdas Ranade who had gone on fast along with Gandhiji in September 1932 had again undertaken a fast to protest against the use of satyagraha for obtaining temple-entry for the Harijans as it amounted to coercion.

527. LETTER TO JAMATMAL RAMCHAND

April 21, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is difficult to know whether there were or there were not quarrels of some kind or other in respect of temple-entry in the days of Buddha and Guru Nanak.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. JHAMATMAL RAMCHAND
C/O R. HASSARAM & SONS
145 MAIN STREET, COLOMBO

From a microfilm: S.N. 21018

528. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA

April 21, 1933

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRA[1],

I have your letter of the 18th April. After full consideration and a knowledge of how utterly neglected N. is by R., I have come to the conclusion that she should come over to Poona. There is plenty of Harijan work for her in this part of the country. I have therefore telegraphed to her to come. I have not heard from her. I wrote[2] to a local pleader in Chitaldrug who had commenced correspondence with me to advance the necessary fare to her if R. did not give it to her. I have undertaken to refund the fare. I am now waiting to see what N. does. I shall deal with your question about the Hindu temple. Your previous letter had escaped me.

I am glad you had a visit from the Yuvaraja and a donation[3] and that you had a donation from Shri Purusottamdas Thakurdas also.

I had a letter from Brother Narayana himself. I have already written to him.

In due course I shall receive from Delhi a copy of your detailed

[1] Joint Secretary, The Mysore State Anti-Untouchability League, Bangalore

[2] *Vide* "Letter to B. K. Ramachandra Rao", 18-4-1933.

[3] Yuvaraja of Mysore had visited the Deena Sangh schools and had given a donation of Rs. 500. A full report by the addressee was published in *Harijan*, 13-5-1933.

report which I shall read with attention, and I shall glance through the report of the Gurukul Seva Sangh also.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 21015

529. LETTER TO DR. ARTHUR SAUNDERS

April 21, 1933

DEAR DR. SAUNDERS,

I thank you for your prompt reply to my letter[1] about Mira Bai. It gives me great relief.

Yours sincerely,

DR. ARTHUR SAUNDERS
37 HARLEY STREET
LONDON W. 1

From a microfilm: S.N. 21025

530. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

April 21, 1933

MY DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

I have your several letters. I had seen Chintamani's caution about the Pact.

The Bengal Census Report I shall send for and see at once and let you know the impression the reading of the portion referred to by you leaves on me.

As to the Nattar-Harijan conflict, you will see my article in this week's *Harijan*.[2] I have now your additional report[3]. I shall keep it in my file, but I am not going to deal with it next week. I shall watch developments and deal with the situation as occasion may arise.

Yours sincerely

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1119; also S.N. 21022

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Arthur Saunders", 5-3-1933.
[2] *Vide* "What It Means To Be A Harijan", 22-4-1933.
[3] On conflict in Ramnad District

531. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

April 21, 1933

MY DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

I have your letter of 17th instant enclosing the bill from Kodanda Rao. You can check the bill far better than I can. I can only say that he came promptly whenever I sent him a message to come during the days when I used to issue statements, and I suppose that is what you want me to state. The dates given by him I have no doubt are in perfect order.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 21023

532. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

April 21, 1933

CHI. KAKA,

I got your letter after three days of waiting. It seems that you are able to digest milk well. I need not, therefore, say anything more, though that book on milk diet lays great stress on rest and on hipbath in hot water. Get as strong as a horse and bring the *Autobiography* up to date. To expect me to do that will be a vain hope.

I did learn that Anandi had fever for a day, but I did not know about the x-ray photograph. However cheap such photographs may become, it will never be possible for the tens of millions of our countrymen to have the benefit, and I feel, therefore, that we should not go in for them. But I know quite well that such ideas of mine cannot be put into practice. How much can a broken vessel, which is me, contain? And can one offer anything from a vessel that is empty?

I did not know anything about Gangabehn. Please send me Khambhatta's address. I shall try to spot Mercury. I had just looked a little into Golikere's book when the book on milk diet arrived. I am glad that Bal came and saw you. Has Ghanshyamdas's daughter-in-law arrived?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9499. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

533. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

April 21, 1933

CHI. KAKA,

I got your letter.

There is no harm in your keeping the book. You should read only that which is good. Learn the eye exercises from Allabehn and straightway start doing them. If you can dispense with the glasses, nothing like it.

Observe fully all the rules regarding milk diet. What more could we desire if it improves our health permanently? We shall also be able to know more about Dinshaw's treatment.

You should not ask me anything further about . . .[1]. You may now do as you think fit.

I got your questions about *Harijan*. I will reply to them.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9498. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

534. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

April 21, 1933

CHI. PANDITJI,

I got your letter.

We should not give up the struggle against the Chharas. Don't mind if they have cut some babul trees. We should go on reasoning with them without making them shy. If our work for them is sincere, it will bear fruit some day. Somebody must go among them regularly.

I understand what you say about Dattatreya. You may write to me whenever necessary.

Keep Mathuri[2] there only if you are sure that you can take care of her and if she herself is willing to stay. For the sake of music, remove the other restriction from her. She can learn some music even with Balkrishna's help. We should, however, carry out whatever decision Lakshmibehn[3] arrives at. I will discuss the matter with her

[1] The name was scored out by the jail authorities.
[2] Addressee's daughter
[3] Addressee's wife

when I meet her tomorrow. But it seems from your letter that she will not be able to come tomorrow. If so, I think we shall be able to meet next week.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 246. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

535. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

April 21, 1933

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

I have your letter and also the old articles which will be returned. It appears that with the cessation of intensive propaganda activity the work on the eradication of untouchability has slackened. But I like it. This work does not require rushing, there should be no rush in religious matters. Only what is done in a calm manner proves to be true and solid work. I think it is necessary to take a consensus of opinion, but I have some doubt about its being performed in a true spirit. Discuss this with Thakkar Bapa and Ghanshyamdas and then let me know. Only a truly religious person can take up the responsibility of this job. Have you any such person in mind?

I would prefer that even others devoted to Harijan service do not enter the temples where Harijans are not allowed. This is more difficult than the former undertaking, it may involve breach of peace and some propaganda ought to precede picketing. Talk over this matter too and write to me again. Also, who can organize this work? We must first have a picture of it before I start writing about it in the papers.

As regards the article on *bhakti*, one is being sent with this letter.[1] The second article is based on some questions asked by a Harijan.[2]

Kakasaheb is at Sinhagad taking nature-cure treatment for his digestion trouble. If possible, I shall certainly get him to write something when he comes down.

[1] *Vide* "How Does the Stream of *Bhakti* Flow", 21-4-1933.

[2] *Vide* "A Harijan's Questions", 5-5-1933 and, also "Letter to P. N. Rajbhoj", 19-4-1933.

It is gratifying that the number of subscribers to *Harijan Sevak* is increasing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1074

536. TELEGRAM TO B. R. AMBEDKAR

[On or before *April 22, 1933*][1]

YOURS. COME SUNDAY BETWEEN NINE TEN.[2]

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 20993

537. REMEMBER 30TH APRIL[3]

Those who would organize a proper concentrated programme for 30th instant, the day fixed as Harijan Day, would do well to take time by the forelock and make all preparations in a methodical manner. Every Committee is free to add to or subtract from the items I have suggested.

I hope it is clearly understood that, where no other work is at all possible, there will be at least substantial collections made. I know that collectors often despise copper collections. Let me remind them of the English proverb: "Take care of your pennies, and the pounds will take care of themselves." And let me give a tit-bit from my own experience as an expert collector. Among the masses I remember having collected not pice, i.e., quarteranna pieces, but pies, in Orissa, and when the collections were counted, the total was a respectable amount. We are a country of many millions and, therefore, in my opinion, the copper pies of the millions have, when put together, an infinitely greater value than the rupees of a few thousand middle-class men or a few lakhs from half a dozen millionaires. If the collectors

[1] This telegram was in reply to Ambedkar's letter of April 19, 1933 and they met on Sunday, April 23, 1933. This telegram, therefore, must have been sent on or before April 22.

[2] Ambedkar discussed with Gandhiji the possibilities of the revision of the Poona Pact and particularly the panel system.

[3] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

will have faith in themselves, in their cause and in the masses, they will go from door to door and collect whatever coppers are given. A pie given with a full heart will be to me a token that the giver wants untouchability to go and that he or she has contributed his or her mite towards the movement. If the Committees will make a faithful report of the results of their collections and show not only how much they have collected but also from how many people, it will give one a fair index of the strength of the movement. Needless to say, the work must be done quietly and as gently as possible, and when it is done without fuss by door-to-door visits, there need be no opposition from any quarter. Where householders are unwilling to give anything, there should be no argument with them, no ill will shown towards them. The donations must be free-will offerings.

One thing I would suggest to the medical fraternity. I have just had a report from the schoolmaster whose doings I am noting in these columns from time to time, showing the need Harijans have of medical assistance. In the case I have in mind, a physician, immediately a case of pneumonia was reported to him, went free of charge to the Harijan quarters and not only gave relief in this particular case, but, much to the delight of the Harijans, examined the other cases and offered to go freely whenever his assistance was needed. It will be a striking demonstration if the medical men in every part of India met together and appointed visitors from among themselves to go to the Harijan quarters, speak to the inmates on the necessity of observing the laws of hygiene and sanitation and offer medical relief wherever it was required. Naturally, this work to be done on an ambitious scale can only be done without expectation of any fees. No organization can undertake the task of rewarding the services that the medical men might render to Harijans; whereas, if the medical men took this burden upon themselves, there are so many now in India that by a judicious distribution of work no pressure will be felt by any single physician.

The third thing that occurs to me is for the women workers all over the country to combine in order to do away with the inhuman practice of giving to Harijans the leavings of food. I have a letter[1] from a Harijan in Karachi who asks in piteous terms that the women might at least shoulder the burden of having this reform accomplished at once. He says that they think nothing of giving to Harijans food

[1] *Vide* "Complaint against Women", 23-4-1933.

that is rotten and unfit for human consumption, food that is stinking, that is dirty beyond description, and this too, lest they might be polluted, they throw from their balconies or from their verandahs into the laps of debased Harijans; and he adds in agony, "The pity of it is that the Harijans would feel it a deprivation if these leavings were not given to them." It would certainly be a grand thing if earnest women all over banded themselves together and made it a point of seeing their sisters and weaning them from the practice. I have every hope that in this mission of mercy and humanity even the sanatanists will co-operate; but whether they do or not, the duty before the women who realize the abomination of the practice is to bestir themselves and quicken the conscience of their sisters who do not even perhaps know that they are offending humanity by making themselves responsible for the degradation of those who are, after all, their own kith and kin. And in this connection, I would invite the attention of workers to the concrete suggestions I made the other day in answer to a Dehra Dun student.[1]

Harijan, 22-4-1933

538. WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A HARIJAN

Elsewhere[2] the reader will find how the Harijans fare in the city of Allahabad in the north, known to the millions of Hindus as Prayag, one of the most noted among the places of Hindu pilgrimage and situated at the confluence of the Ganges and the Jumna.

Let him turn also to the extreme south. There he will find a cluster of villages inhabited by the land-owning ryots known as Nattars and their landless 'semi-slaves', the Harijans. There was a conflict between these two during May, June and July last year. There was also a resolution in the Madras Council, carried by 44 votes against 22, recommending to the Government the appointment of a committee to inquire into and report on the alleged atrocities committed by the Nattars on the Harijans. Nothing is said as yet to have been done by the Government on the recommendation.

Sjt. Amritlal Thakkar has, however, sent me a fairly full report.

[1] *Vide* "Students and Vacation", 1-4-1933.

[2] *Vide* the following item.

The subject is still topical, inasmuch as the trouble is by no means over and may burst forth any moment. The two sections are living, as it were, in a state of armed neutrality. The inquiry was conducted by Sjt. A. Rangaswami Iyengar, Advocate, and President of the District Harijan Committee, Sjt. Lakshmiratan Bharati, Advocate, and Secretary of the District Committee, Sjt. V. E. Eapen, Advocate, and Sjt. Ramachandran, the Secretary of the Tamilnad Board, S.U.S. They visited Devakottah, Pavanakottah, Paramakkudi, Eluvankottah and Chittanur. The trouble began during the temple festival at Eluvankottah. The Harijans "till recently had to work for the Nattars on conditions prescribed by the latter".

> During the trouble the Nattars raided the village (Pavanakottah) and looted the Harijan houses. They tied some of the Harijans, who wanted to resist, to a tree.... The little schoolhouse in the Harijan quarter was burnt down. The little granaries made of cow-dung and hay in front of most Harijan houses were broken to bits and the grain looted. These granaries look more like huge jars than like rooms. We saw the ruins of a schoolhouse and the grain jars.

The report proceeds:

> The Harijans themselves include two divisions—Pallas and Pariahs. The Pallas ran away at the first sign of trouble to Devakottah, leaving their women and children in the village, who were considerably harassed by the raiders. Quite a number of these Pallas were Christians even before. The Pariahs met with more trouble. The Christian pastor who did the conversion now pays a weekly visit for prayer meetings and general propaganda. He has also consented to give them a new school of their own. The Pallas returned to their homes earlier and the Pariahs a little later.
>
> Four families consisting of 14 members embraced Christianity 3 months ago. It is expected more families will follow suit. As far as we could ascertain, there is no trouble between the converts and the Harijans. In answer to our questions, one of the converted men said that they had become Christians because the missionaries promised them protection and care.

The Harijans told the Committee:

> The Nattars want us to observe exactly old customs and manners. They do not like our men to wear shirts or upper clothes as we like, or our women to put on frocks and saris. The old custom was that our clothes should not go below the knee and any upper cloth should be tied round the loins only. The women were not allowed to cover their bodies above the waist, except with their hands. In the old times, in religious processions, we had to go doing a

particular dance. Even today, the Harijans on meeting a Nattar has to say "*sevakam*" meaning "at your service". They do not allow us to work where we like or for whom we like. We have to work for them for what wages they give and wherever they order. They do not like us to use brass vessels and are angry when our women put on ornaments. Only two weeks ago, in a near village, Paramakkudi, a woman who went with a frock was spat upon by a Nattar and asked not to be arrogant in the Nattar street.

A Nattar Headman stated as follows:

> We have no quarrel with the Harijans. Only we do not want him to go against old customs and conventions. He now refuses to work for us. He asks for high wages. We don't much mind his putting on shirt or his women having ornaments or frocks in his own village. We only object to his parading them in our village and during the temple festival, when there are large crowds of all kinds of people. If their men and women dress as the rest of us, how can we differentiate them among the festival crowds? This results in a general mix-up and consequent pollution. We have no objection to their dress, as they want it, but our difficulty is: how are we to distinguish them in a crowd? We don't object to their going to schools, but if they come to a common school, they must sit separate. We know very well that they cannot remain exactly where they were in old times. But we are bound to resist arrogance and revolt.

The agony need not be protracted. Instances elsewhere of resentment of and assault on Harijans dressing well or Harijan brides and bridegrooms carried in palanquins in their marriage procession have come to light.[1] It is up to sanatanists to join hands with reformers and put an end to the arrogation of superiority by one caste over another in the name of religion.

The reader will be glad to know that the Committee do not propose to be satisfied with the mere investigation they have made, important as it is. They have followed it up by a visit to the sub-collector, who has promised protection, should there be trouble, which is said to be impending in a village called Uruvatti during a coming festival. The members are also seeking the assistance of influential Nattars and other well-known men living in the neighbourhood in bringing about honourable peace between the Nattars and the Harijans.

They feel, too, that "nothing but education will finally solve the difficulty". They have, therefore, proposed that a string of schools

[1] *Vide* "What Harijans Think", 18-3-1933.

should be opened throughout the districts, both day and night schools. Let us wish success to the laudable efforts of the Committee in both the directions.

Harijan, 22-4-1933

539. IMMEDIATE DUTY

The Allahabad branch of the Servants of Untouchables Society (U.P. Provincial Board) had appointed a committee consisting of Sjts. P. N. Sapru, Bisheshwar Prasad and Ramnath Dar to report upon the condition of the Harijans of that city and to recommend measures for its amelioration. The Committee has presented an elaborate report covering fifty-eight pages of typed matter, excluding appendices. The Committee is to be congratulated on its production. One misses in the report the number of the Harijan population. The city excluding the cantonment has a population of only 1,73,895.

I do not propose to deal with the whole of this important document. Those who would study it should procure a copy from the Allahabad Office.

The Mehtars and the Doms are by far the most ill-treated and uncared for? not only by the *savarna* Hindus but also by all the citizens represented by the cosmopolitan municipality.

This is what the Committee says about their condition:

> The very approach to depressed-class quarters has a most depressing effect upon one's mind. Some of the quarters in which they live, particularly those in the heart of the city, are literally unfit for human habitation. The houses are dark, dreary and damp. They do not look like places of human habitation. Their houses generally consist of one room of 5 square yards, in which a whole family of four to six has to live. There is no light and air in these houses, no verandah or open space in front and no arrangement for latrine, kitchen or bath. The lanes in front of these houses are extremely narrow, kutcha, muddy, without any drain or light. The whole atmosphere of these localities is foul; there are hardly any arrangements for sanitation; and the sights one sees there are disgusting and loathsome. Not much can be expected of human beings who have to live not more than seven feet from scandalously dirty public lavatories. We have found taps attached to these lavatories for the domestic and bathing purposes of the sweepers living in the vicinity. One is filled with shame and horror at the discovery that there are places (in the twentieth century) in a city, which claims to be the capital of a

big Province and which has a developed public life, where large groups of men, women and children lead a paralysed existence in the midst of all this filth and dirt. Who can belittle the importance of physical surroundings upon man's character? Little wonder, then, that the "untouchable" is now lost to all sense of the clean and the beautiful in life. The tyranny of society sits tight upon him; he has little initiative and less independence left. It is hard to write with restraint about the conditions in which the Mehtar is compelled to live, and we would request earnestly all those who are interested in social welfare work to verify for themselves the accuracy of our statements by visits to, say, the Phul Talab, Bhainsa Godown or the Kali Mai-ka-Than in Allahabad.

Of Kali Mai-ka-Than the report says:

According to Municipal estimates, 1192 men and 1220 women visit these latrines daily. There is no light in these latrines, with the result that men have to ease themselves in the evening in the open space outside. The inmates of the houses facing the latrine use the space between the latrines and their houses as their courtyard and playground for their children. There is no wall round the latrine, with the result that the lower part of the person using them can be seen from the houses of sweepers. There are separate blocks for men and women in this latrine, but the wall dividing the blocks is low and a man who stands on the *khuddi* can see the women on the other side. There is only one tap and that, too, near the latrine and quite close to a cesspool. The water supply is irregular and wholly inadequate. The tap is used both for cleaning the latrines and bathing and domestic purposes. The cesspools attached to the latrines often overflow with urine and are in a most insanitary condition. Sweepers have to go down into the cesspools barefooted for the purpose of cleaning them thoroughly. Both the land lying about the locality and the main lane are kutcha and get muddy in the rainy season. There is no platform for transferring night-soil from the public and private latrines into the night-soil carts. Sweepers have to mount the cart with heavy loads of dirt in order to place the night-soil into the carts. Most of the receptacles in the latrines are in a damaged condition. Being also small, they get filled up soon and filth overflows them and passes along with urine and water into the cesspools.

The number of night-soil carts is four only. We have seen sweepers throwing the contents of their tokras containing human excreta on the ground on account of the carts being too full. We claim that the facts stated above cannot be challenged.

In my estimation, everything else in the report pales into in significance compared to this. That the other cities, if there was the same investigation as at Allahabad, are likely to show the same woeful

state of things or that the latter has gone on for years would be no excuse for continuing the condition revealed by the report. When a snake is discovered in a house, one does not delay its removal because it is also discovered that it had been there for years. The plague spot of Allahabad is worse than the imagined snake in the imagined house. I hope that the members of the committee and the Allahabad Branch of the Society will not rest nor give rest to the Municipality of Allahabad, till the disgraceful condition is radically altered and these most useful members of society are decently housed in a decent spot. I know a case in which fifteen hundred inhabitants of a plague spot were removed within twenty-four hours of the outbreak of plague in their midst and housed in tents till permanent quarters were found elsewhere.[1] This case demands no less summary measures. And if Allahabad leads the way, I have little doubt that the other cities will follow.

Harijan, 22-4-1933

540. A HARIJAN SEVAK'S DIFFICULTY

A Harijan sevak writes:

> You know that the anti-untouchability worker has to suffer at the hands of the orthodox priests. They refuse to officiate at religious ceremonies at the homes of such workers. You have stated[2] in the *Harijan* No. 4 that the reformers should learn to dispense with the outward form. Will you not dispense with the priest altogether? The latter works only for money. Many priests to my knowledge do not even pronounce the *mantras* accurately; still fewer know their meaning. They trade on the gullibility of the public. What merit can such officiating carry with it? Such humbug is more rampant at places of pilgrimage than elsewhere. I am myself a Brahmin. The *upanayanam* ceremony was performed upon me when I was 13 years old. At the end of the ceremony, the priest said I was a Shudra up to the time that I was without the sacred thread, but that, having put on the sacred thread, I became a Brahmin. I had to repeat this formula before my parents when I went to make obeisance to

[1] *Vide* "An Autobiography—Part IV, Chapter XVII", Location in Flames.
[2] *Vide* "What should Harijans Do?", 5-3-1933.

them. Here the idea given to me was that after having taken the sacred thread I had risen to a higher status. How do you reconcile this with your claim that there is no high-and-low status in Hinduism?

I want to tell you another thing. When I was at school, our class had a debate on untouchability. An orthodox teacher presided on the occasion. I remember his having said something like this: Our womenfolk become untouchable every month and are treated like any other untouchable. Then, why should we not observe such untouchability regarding those who are called untouchables?

I have considerably abridged what is a long letter from this correspondent. What he says about the ignorance of many priests and the show that they make of learning is unfortunately only too true. The remedy for it is a general levelling up of the character of the people and the spread of the right stamp of education, including a workable knowledge of Sanskrit. I believe in the great power which Vivekananda used to ascribe to Sanskrit. We are unnecessarily frightened by the difficulty of learning Sanskrit. For a persevering student it is no more difficult than any of the other languages. I do not mean that we can easily gain a knowledge of Sanskrit that would enable us to understand the intricacies of ancient texts, but I do suggest that to gain a workable knowledge of Sanskrit, to acquire the correct pronunciation, so as to be able to know whether the priest is performing his task correctly or whether a pandit is misleading us, is not a difficult task, certainly not one-tenth as difficult as it is to acquire an equivalent knowledge of English. And then it must not be forgotten that such a knowledge of Sanskrit gives one a master-key to the knowledge of the majority of Indian languages, not excluding the Southern group.

But I must not stray away from my subject. Till this happy day arrives, we have to do the best we can with the tools at our disposal. And if we cannot get a trustworthy Brahmin priest to officiate, the *Bhagavata* and the later saints have supplied us with an incredibly simple solution. At every ceremony, whether it is in connection with marriage, birth or death or any other religious function, the uttering of the sacred name from the heart is enough to ensure the presence and benediction of God at the ceremony. The fact is that God is there all the time, only we do not realize it. The recitation of the sacred

name, hallowed by the practice of an unbroken line of saints, wakes us from our ignorance and works as infallibly as an electric spark, and immediately makes the presence of God felt in our midst. I say this only for those who have faith. Those who have none should dismiss it from their minds altogether. For them, even the presence of the orthodox priest is a mere mechanical act, an ignorant obedience to custom. They derive no advantage, no merit from the act. An honest orthodox priest has a place in the Hindu family. He is fast losing it by his own folly. He may be safe if he sheds his laziness, his ignorance, and, what is worse, his dishonesty. The present movement is indirectly intended to effect that reform. Seeing that the movement is one of internal purification, we shall never achieve it, unless there is a general sweeping up of all that is evil. Who can make the real beginning, if not he who calls himself a Brahmin?

As for the *upanayanam* ceremony, though I have discarded it myself, it has, there is no doubt, a deep meaning. The sacred thread is a sign of new birth, a regeneration. Before the adoption of the thread, there is but one birth, that is the physical. The adoption of the thread is a sign of the second birth, that is the spiritual. It is a sign of initiation—of a new life of dedication to God. It is, therefore, a higher life in the sense of greater responsibility in relation to oneself, but it gives one no greater status in relation to his neighbour. Indeed, at the time of initiation, there ought to be a definite realization that from that date one becomes a servant of the poorest and the lowliest. And to my mind, the thought that all are Shudras till the ceremony of initiation and dedication is a beautiful and ennobling thought. Unfortunately, these rites which were intended to emphasize human duties have been abused for the sake of exploitation and usurpation.

As to the comparison of the untouchability of the womenfolk with the untouchability that we observe today in respect of nearly 40 million human beings, it is a violence done to truth. The temporary untouchability of the womenfolk attaches to a temporary condition of the body. The untouchability of the untouchable millions is a hallmark of suppressed humanity and it attaches to birth, irrespective of a change in their condition. The one has in its reasonable form a rational basis for it, the other is wholly irrational and based upon an ignorant and selfish interpretation of the Shastras.

Harijan, 22-4-1933

541. A FRIEND'S WARNING[1]

When you embarked on the great struggle for the liberation of the suppressed classes, I was exhilarated for the time being, but my difficulty began soon after. All these days I was debating whether to write you or not, but now the thing haunts me during my sleep and disturbs my meals. Hence this letter.

Years ago my friends and I began work for the untouchables in the hope that they and we and all would forget the very name 'untouchable'. We dreamt that we would do away with separate schools, separate wells, separate sports and the like. When, therefore, you began your crusade, I was elated with hope that untouchability would be banished from India and that untouchables would be absorbed in the Hindu mass.

But I am stunned by what you and others are doing now. It is bound to widen the gulf—separate schools, separate scholarships, everything separate for Harijans—and you seem to delight in these things. They pain me. The 5 crores of Harijans will now become 10 crores. Some so-called sadhus or sannyasis will become their high-priests and there will come into being a new sect in a century or two hence. You will be regarded as the founder of that sect. Statues will be erected in your memory and it will be said of you that you had separated the Harijans from the Hindus. From the way things are going, it would look as if you were making them feel that they were a class apart. For they fancy that they gain by being separated from the rest of the Hindus. You have made the path of Dr. Ambedkar and Rao Bahadur Srinivasan easy and you have strengthened their hands. They will not be absorbed in Hinduism, but there will be cries of "Long live untouchables", "Long live Harijans".

I have not said all these things thoughtlessly, but what I see happening around me pains me. You have been trapped and if you do not courageously come out of it, you will harm the very cause for which you were prepared to lay down your life. You

[1] A Gujarati article on this subject appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 23-4-1933; *Vide* "Warning to Me", 23-4-1933.

had intended one thing, quite the contrary has happened, let alone getting them considered as part and parcel of Hinduism. You have, instead of saving them, differentiated them by giving them a tempting name. They are not going to be Hindus by such temptation. Selfish and self-seeking preceptors will establish a new religion, a new sect, and you will be their instrument. Today Hindus, Mussalmans and Sikhs are fighting against one another. You will have added one more unit to the fighting forces. They have separate temples and more will be built, and even now different sects are fighting with one another to take possession of these. But the burden of my sorrow is this: All that in your name, with *"Mahatma Gandhiki Jai"* on their lips! Oh, the pity of it!!

Thus writes in effect an esteemed friend and fellow-worker. The original is in Gujarati. He is one among the very best of India's servants. He is spending himself in her service. There is no mistaking the laceration of his heart, but I believe that his affection for me has led him astray and coloured his judgment. If untouchables are not absorbed in the Hindu mass and do not become one with the rest of the Hindus, the responsibility will not lie on my shoulders. It will lie on those of the so-called high-class Hindus who are resisting the absorption. According to them, the so-called untouchable classes have been untouchable from the beginning of time, and will, if they can help it, remain so to the end of time. Some of them have gone so far as to say that they will sacrifice themselves in the attempt to perpetuate this untouchability. What I have done is not merely to unfurl the banner of revolt against the perpetuation of what I hold to be a monstrous wrong, but I am constantly praying that I may be considered a fit sacrifice for the cause of liberation. I am inviting others to join in the prayer that they might also be deemed worthy to offer themselves as a sacrifice in this sacred cause. If, therefore, untouchability remains, it will do so, not because of what I have done, but in spite of what I have done and am doing. But that will be no new experience. Do we not know that God often upsets the plans of human beings? And it may be that His purpose demands that the so-called high-caste Hindus should harden their hearts, that they should refuse to listen to dictates of reason and justice and that Hinduism should become an extinct religion. For, refusal on the part of high-caste Hindus to regard the Harijans in every sense as equal members with the other Hindus will not now mean perpetuation of untouchability. I

am quite clear in my mind that untouchability is gone. The untouchables will not remain slaves for ever. Thank God, they are being surely, if slowly, awakened. The pace is daily increasing. There are limits even to the patience of God Almighty. He gives a long rope to untruth and irreligion. But in the end, only Truth remains and nothing else. Hence Hinduism can only live minus untouchability, which is an untruth.

Whilst, therefore, I am thankful to this true friend for his warning voice and whilst I promise that I shall be more and more on the alert, I feel quite sure that the struggle was not begun a moment too soon and that it must go on against all odds,

Harijan, 22-4-1933

542. CABLE TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

April 22, 1933

SIR PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI
ADEN

GOD SPARE YOU. WIRE CONDITION.

GANDHI

VALLABHBHAI

From a photostat: G.N. 5929. Also C.W. 3245. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

543. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 22, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have had no letter from you for three days, that is, after the big packet and that makes me feel a little worried.

Kaka has heard that Anandi is having fever. Is that true? How is Kusum? I have sent a wire to you in regard to Lakshmibehn. I had a letter here from Narmada. I can't tell whether anybody will come today. Probably I shall get a letter today. I am writing this before the prayer.

I worry about you also. I always send you others' views about you. I do hope that they do not upset you. Anybody who undertakes an important responsibility should expect to be criticized. He will

benefit by the criticism if he can hear it without being upset, but it would kill him if he takes it to heart. We have in the Ashram a *bhajan* about "Nindakababa"[1]. I would not say that it is a very good one. That is, the author has not treated the detractor with generosity. But the lesson which it teaches is right. Anyway, whether you are calm or upset, I shall not feel worried if I regularly hear from you. For some time, therefore, you should drop me a postcard every day.

I have asked for your opinion regarding N. She will arrive there today. Her self-sacrifice seems just now to be as great as her former self-indulgence. On my suggesting to her to-get her hair cut in order to save expense on soap and hair oil, she did so. I have had many such experiences, but I have no time just now to write about them.

I am enclosing a letter from Kanumurti Ramamurti. He seems to have written to you about something. He wants to join the Ashram and has expressed his desire to see me. Till now I tried to dissuade him, but I will permit him now to come and see me. Meanwhile, if you have had any experience about him, let me know.

I have received an angry letter from Sitla Sahay. I have had a letter from Prabhudas too. Nothing is certain about his engagement.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8359. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

544. LETTER TO K. KELAPPAN

April 22, 1933

MY DEAR KELAPPAN,

I have your letter. That the paper is being regularly sent to you, there is absolutely no doubt. How it miscarries I do not know. The change of address was made as per your instructions. I will enquire again. You must get the paper regularly. Several others in Calicut are getting the paper. Therefore I hope that you have at least read all the numbers of the *Harijan*.

I have gone through the names of the Committee. I hope that it is not over-manned[2], and it will not be over-manned if everyone is a

[1] Literally, 'detractor'

[2] The addressee had given a list of 16 members.

worker. You do not want any ornaments, you want useful workers, everyone having his work allotted to him.

Remember that Guruvayur is still the goal. It is not abandoned, it is merely extended. You will keep me in touch with your movement from time to time.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 21036

545. LETTER TO A. G. MULGAOKER

April 22, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I have not yet got the papers[1] you refer to. As soon as I do, I shall try to find a little time to look at them, and if there is anything useful I can say about them I shall certainly write to you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. A. G. MULGAOKER
JT. HON. SECRETARY
THE ALL-INDIA H. L. R. & R. A.
POPATWADI, KALBADEVI ROAD, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 21029

[1] Literature of the All-India Hindu Law Research and Reform Association of which the addressee was the Joint Secretary

546. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

April 22, 1933

MY DEAR C. R.,

Your letter of 11th April was received by me only yesterday. Unfortunate, but there it is.

There is a delicacy about writing on the fate of the Bills.[1] I would be prepared to write to the Viceroy and also to the Secretary of State, if you think it worth while, but I do not feel inclined to write about them publicly. It is hardly a dignified spectacle, a prisoner publicly criticizing a Government holding him under its custody. You will observe that I have scrupulously steered clear of any public criticism of the Government and I think that I should retain that detachment.

I would love to put Narasimhan under Dinshaw Mehta's care, but I know that you do not believe, as much as I do, if at all, in nature-cure. Kaka is taking that cure at Sinhagad at present and Sinhagad is a very fine secluded sanatorium. It is only a few miles from Poona. If you will not send him to Sinhagad you should send him to the Mysore sanatorium.

Papa was bound to improve on your reaching there. I have made my suggestion about her also.

I make one more suggestion. It is quite likely that the Bjerrums[2] have gone to a hill-station. They are very fine people and they will gladly take Papa. Papa knows sufficient English to be able to make herself at home with the Bjerrums. Of course you know that they are stationed at Pudukottah. If you want me to, I would gladly write to them.

Love from us all.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. IV, p. 373; also S.N. 21037

[1] The addressee had informed Gandhiji that the Government had by an executive order rejected Shri Harbilas Sarda's request to circulate the untouchability abolition and temple-entry Bills or to allot an additional non-official day in the current session of the Assembly for a discussion on them.

[2] Formerly of Technological College, Bangalore

547. LETTER TO N.

April [*22*][1]*, 1933*

MY DEAR N.,

Shastri has been going to the station every morning since Wednesday and returning disappointed. Such was my anxiety about you. I am glad you have come at last and I hope that you are better. You will go straight to the Servants of India Society's guest house and be there and come at the latest with Shastri, the editor, or 'Harijan Shastri' as he is called. If you do not feel hungry, you will not take even milk but simply fruit juice. If you do not feel like taking anything at all, drink only water, and come here and have the fruit juice I may provide for you. You do exactly as you feel before coming to me. It will be best not to take anything beyond fruit and milk. I hope you will be in a fit condition to come to me. If medical assistance is required before then, Shastri will see to its being procured. To S. you will give whatever food is available at the Society's place. You will bring him with you when you come. Of course you cannot expose your bare head just now. I think I told you that you will have to tie a wet rag just as I do, and you will find that it is perfectly comfortable.

I got today your letter of 18th instant. The letter of the 17th I have not yet received.

Yours sincerely

From a microfilm: S.N. 21024

548. LETTER TO P. S. RUDRAMUNI

April 22, 1933

MY DEAR RUDRAMUNI,

N. arrived safely with S. this morning. I thank you for the telegram. I have not met them as yet.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. S. RUDRAMUNI
CHITALDRUG

From a microfilm: S.N. 21028

[1] The source has "21", which seems to be a slip. The addressee arrived in Poona on April 22; *Vide* the following item.

549. LETTER TO K. C. SURYANARAYANA

April 22, 1933

MY DEAR SURYANARAYANA,

I have your letter, but I am wholly unable to help you. You should write to the Secretary, A.I.S.A., and put all your arguments before him.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. C. SURYANARAYANA
KHADDAR MERCHANT
PITHAPURAM

From a microfilm: S.N. 21030

550. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM D. SARAIYA

April 22, 1933

CHI. KAKU,

I hope you understand why your marriage is taking place at such a time. All will be well if you and Lakshmi[1] have understood that not enjoyment but self-sacrifice is the aim of marriage. After the marriage both of you should do public service with redoubled zeal, and be more vigilant in doing your duty. Both of you should perform on the marriage day the five *yajnas* that we have been performing.

May you both live long and be good servants of the country.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I do not remember to have received any letter from you. A letter received by me seldom remains unanswered.

From Gujarati: C.W. 2815. Courtesy: Purushottam D. Saraiya

[1] Niece of Vithaldas Jerajani, a khadi worker of Bombay

551. LETTER TO LAKSHMI JERAJANI

April 22, 1933

CHI. LAKSHMI,

The letter[1] that I have written to Kaku is intended for you also. See that I do not lose you. You started the correspondence of your own free will, so do not stop now. Strengthen your qualities of self-sacrifice, simplicity, etc. Husband and wife are one another's friends. The duty of friends is to help each other to rise higher and to cure each other's weaknesses. You should protect Kaku's purity and Kaku should protect yours. Go on rising with one another's help in this manner. Live long and serve well. Write to me regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2816. Courtesy: Purushottam D. Saraiya

552. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

April 22, 1933

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter.

You have asked my blessings for Kaku and Lakshmi, but do you know that you have not given the date of the wedding? But Chandrashankar[2] has given it. I, therefore, send the letters with this.

Kaka tells me in his letter that you fasted for three days. What was the cause? If anything happens for which you should think it necessary to fast, you should inform me about it.

. . .[3] obtained five rupees to buy a Gandiva spinning-wheel, from which he gave three to . . .[4] and the latter gave them to you. What is this story? Let me know. It is your duty to write to me even about such small things.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Chandrashankar Pranshankar Shukla, then editor of *Harijanbandhu*
[3] The names have been omitted.
[4] *ibid*

You have not said anything in your letter about your sister.

I have not got even one letter from Kaku.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: G. S. Gangabehnane, pp. 71-2. Also C.W. 8801. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

553. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

April 22, 1933

CHI. SHARDA,

How do you spend your day? What medicine do you take? What do you eat and drink? Who are your friends? How far is the sea from the house? Is it possible to go for a walk there? Do you go there? Who accompanies you? Do you write at the Ashram? To whom do you write? Answer these questions.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9963. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokha-wala

554. LETTER TO VISHVAMBHAR SAHAY

April 22, 1933

BHAI VISHVAMBHAR SAHAY,

I have your letter. What more can I write on untouchability than what I am writing in the *Harijan*? And how shall I find the time? It is not a religious duty for anyone to eat with anyone in particular but it would be irreligious to hold that one must avoid accepting foodstuffs touched by someone on the ground of his belonging to a certain caste. But we may certainly refrain from drinking water offered by an unclean person.

Yours

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[PS.]

Do send me the address to which I should send the article I have written.

From Hindi: C.W. 9667. Courtesy: Parashuram Mehrotra

555. ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS[1]

MORE ABOUT TEMPLE ENTRY[2]

There is no doubt whatever that anyone who has no faith in image-worship is not entitled to participate in the movement for temple entry. No purpose would be served by allowing Harijans a right to have *darshan*[3] from the spots you have indicated in the maps. only those restrictions should be applied to Harijans as are applied to the other Hindus. If the public has any objection to it, it would be better not to permit Harijans to enter the temples just now. If the trustees are keen on performing *shuddhi*[4] of the images, they are entitled to do so. Before Harijans enter a temple they should of course be instructed about the general restrictions. In brief, I am clearly of the view that in the matter of temple entry coercion has no place at all. It is improper to force entry of Harijans into a temple where a majority of the worshippers are opposed to it. If the worshippers approve of it, Harijans may certainly visit it. In any case, only those Harijans who abide by the rules applied to the general public are entitled to temple entry.

TRUE MAJORITY[5]

I had recognized the difficulty about the majority at the very time the Bill was placed before me. I had told Rajaji that 51 per cent would not be proper. I had even suggested an amendment to it, for, I am clearly of the view that the great reform we are trying to bring about cannot become universal so long as there is no clear majority. And all of you would have noticed that for that very reason I have tried to accommodate the sentiments of even a lone opponent. For,

[1] This appeared under the title "From the Mail-bag".

[2] A correspondent had asked several questions regarding temple entry, and had offered some suggestions.

[3] Sight of a parson, place or thing

[4] Purification

[5] The correspondent, C. F. Andrews, had proposed a 66 per cent majority for the Temple entry Bill. For Gandhiji's original letter, *Vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 13-4-1933.

what looks like a superstition to me may be a matter of life and death to him. His temple may be so dear to him that he regards it his all and it may be his honest belief that the *darshan* might have no efficacy if he were to have it standing by the side of a Harijan. Hence my suggestion that he may be given a separate time and the temple may undergo *shuddhi* for his sake.

TRUE MAJORITY[1]

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I have made this and many other suggestions, but I do not wish to discuss them any more just now. When the Bill comes before the committee, no reformer would hesitate to accept the amendment regarding the strength of majority and any others that deserve to be introduced. Of course, he would not compromise on principles on any account.

INTER-DINING AND INTER-CASTE MARRIAGES[2]

These two measures are not at all related to untouchability.No one is an untouchable in my eyes. But, for that reason, is there any justice in suggesting that I should either sit down for a meal with one whom I do not regard as untouchable or marry my son or daughter to such a one ? Both these things are a matter of personal preference and individual right.But it is not a matter of right to regard any man as un-

[1] The correspondent, C. F. Andrews, had proposed a 66 per cent majority for the Temple entry Bill. For Gandhiji's original letter, *Vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 13-4-1933.

[2] A correspondent had suggested that inter-dining and inter-caste marriages would remove untouchability.

touchable because of his birth.That is a gross injustice and heinous sin.

HARIJANS DON'T CARE[1]

The question is not what they demand. The point is what we owe to them and what we have promised them in the open convention[2]of the Hindu world in Bombay held under the presidentship of Malaviyaji. We have made a promise to admit Harijans into temples and Hindus have pledged to lay down their lives to that end, if necessary. Do you remember the statement in *Mahabharata*?" "Placetruth in one scale and a thousand *yajnas* in the other. The scale of truth will always be lower." It is unbearable that we should break our promises to the Harijans and to God. I shudder at the mere thought. We can be patient with the sanatanists, we can plead with them, implore them, but how can we give up the matter of temple entry?

You say that things would sort themselves out once we educate the Harijans. But then caste Hindus themselves need to be educated as much. Not that there is no education today. But the great misfortune is that it is wrong education that is being given. The wrong education has given us wrong lessons. It teaches us that *adharma* is dharma, that sanctimoniousness is religion, that superstition is knowledge, that intolerance is kindness, that indulgence is restraint. And that the interpretation of the Shastras consists not in understanding their simple and straightforward meaning but in arbitrarily forcing on them a far-fetched and perverse meaning. First of all this wrong education will have to be wiped out.

THE SAME THING OVER AGAIN[3]

Have you forgotten that at Bombay we made a promise to the Harijans without their asking for it? And what is the sense in saying that Harijans have not demanded? In many places, the poor, downtrodden, crushed Harijans do not ask for schools, they have no

[1] The correspondent, Moti Lal Roy, had argued that Harijans did not care for temple entry. For Gandhiji's original letter, *Vide* "Letter to Motilal Roy", 18-4-1933.

[2] Held on September 25, 1932; *Vide* "Telegram to Dr. Nilrajan Ray and Dr. B.C. Roy", 25-9-1932.

[3] The correspondent, P. N. Sankaranarayana Iyer, had stated that Harijans were not bothered about temple entry at all and that he was only concentrating on educating them. For Gandhiji's original letter, *Vide* "Letter to P.n. Sankaranarayana Iyer", 19-4-1933.

courage to ask for wells; nor do they demand any other rights. And so, does it behove us to say that we will grant them nothing till they ask for it. We have been riding on their shoulders. It would be enough if we got off. These poor creatures have been so oppressed that even if we got off they would not find the burden gone. But is it any justification to continue to ride on them?

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 23-4-1933

556. WARNING TO ME

I do not wish to give the name of the author of this[1]. But everybody knows him. He is one of the sincere servants of the country and has rendered exceptional service to the cause of Harijans. I, therefore, wish that everybody should read this letter carefully. I read it twice over, and pondered over it. The correspondent's warning is justified, and timely. The fear he has expressed may even prove true.

If that happens, I will not repent. It will not be the first time that "Man proposes, God disposes" will have been proved true. God, though He ordains everything, takes responsibility for nothing; otherwise I would throw all responsibility on Him and disclaim any for myself. At the most I would accept responsibility only for approving of a suggestion made by an *Antyaja* friend to substitute the word *'Antyaja'* by the sweeter one 'Harijan'. I will not mind if the slogan 'Jai to *Antyajas*' is replaced by 'Jai to Harijans'.

The sanatanists assert that the *Antyajas* have been a distinct class from time immemorial and say that they will sacrifice their lives to keep them so. I have been praying to God, and persuading others also to pray, to grant me the strength to sacrifice my life to secure their assimilation into the Hindu fold and end their separation. The sanatanist friends have been striving to perpetuate the separation of *Antyajas* and are prepared to accept responsibility for the consequences. The question of responsibility, therefore, does not arise.

[1] The extracts from the correspondent's letter preceding Gandhiji's comments are not translated here. The author had stated that the anti-untouchability movement being carried on in Gandhiji's name was in effect perpetuating the Harijans' separation from the Hindu fold.

It would be far better that Harijans should fight *savarna* Hindus than that they should for ever remain wretched slaves and dependent on *savarna* Hindus, living on their goodwill and eating their leftovers. Neither Dr. Ambedkar nor Rao Bahadur Srinivasan needs my help to prepare for such a fight. Time has been doing its work. It has brought forth these two friends and will bring forth many more like them, if, that is, *savarna* Hindus do not do their duty.

What had been happening before our eyes would not have ceased to happen by our pretending that it was not happening. A snake in the house will not run away by our pretending that it was not there. A disease does not get cured by our ignoring it. I look upon myself as a wise vaid in this matter. My diagnosis is quite correct, and the remedy I have prescribed is also the most appropriate for this particular disease. I have no doubt at all that if it is applied the disease is bound to be cured. What can the vaid do, however, if the patient does not apply the remedy? At the most he may start an indefinite fast at the patient's residence. Indeed the vaid is getting ready to do so. Only, he must make himself fit to undertake such a fast. The moment he becomes so he will . not be held back by anybody.

It is not the Harijans who have got the disease; if they have got any, the cause of it is the *savarna* Hindus. It is the latter who have got the disease. But they deny that they have and threaten the vaid for his diagnosis. But the vaid will not hold his tongue. He has been shouting at the top of his voice, 'Take care, the house is on fire.'

What is ordained, however, cannot be prevented. Nobody has been able to do so. If Hinduism is ordained to perish, what can anybody do? One's sense of right and wrong is conditioned by one's past karmas. And past karmas mean the future. *savarna* Hindus will he prompted to do what is in keeping with the future that is ordained for them. How can one, therefore, blame them either?

I would, therefore, suggest to this servant of the country that he should not lose patience, nor his appetite or sleep, but should go on doing his duty with single-minded devotion. He will probably say, and rightly, that he felt it was his duty to warn me and that having discharged it, he felt relieved. In that case there is no need for me to console him. He has done well indeed to warn me I will be and remain more vigilant. As to my path, I see it clear before me and will take care not to stray from it. My aim is the same as that of this servant of the country. Like him, I, too, do not want the Harijans to become a

separate sect. I do not wish even in my dreams to be the Acharya of such a new sect. I wish to become and die as a true servant of the Hindus and, therefore, of the Harijans, of India and, therefore, of Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians, Jews and all others.

The warning, however, given by this servant of the country is as much for the sanatanists as it is for me. Will they heed it?

[From Gujarati]

Harjanbandhu, 23-4-1933

557. HARIJAN SCHOOLS IN KATHIAWAR

Shri Mulchand Parekh, secretary of Kathiawar Harijan Committee, had suggested to me that I should write something about Harijan schools, etc., in the *Harijanbandhu*. Thereupon I asked for a report of their activities. He has sent the following report[1]:

I have already expressed my opinion. Not a single one of those schools and ashrams which already exist should close down for want of funds. If there are only a handful of workers, they should sell their property and sell themselves even to keep the institutions going. If there are such financial difficulties, they indicate that the people of Kathiawar have no interest in Harijan welfare or they do not trust the workers. Whatever the truth, the only way to create such interest or trust is the workers self-sacrifice.

I hear sugestions of collecting funds from outside Kathiawar, from a place as far off as Africa. It is shameful if we have to do that. Those Kathiawaris who reside abroad should keep themselves informed of such philanthropic organizations and they should send contributions without being asked. Organizations like Kathiawar Harijan Samiti can easily subsist if every rich Kathiawari puts aside 10 per cent or whatever portion of his earnings he thinks proper for rendering such help.

The proper thing is that the local Kathiawaris should take

[1] Not translated here. Under the auspices of the Kathiawar Harijan Samiti, 23 Harijan schools were functioning at various places in Kathiawar and giving education to 1648 Harijan pupils. But due to paucity of funds, the Samiti had decided to close down the schools. Gandhiji had then instructed them not to do so and on his advice the Samiti had issued a public appeal for funds. They had collected Rs. 7,000, but still needed another Rs. 3,000, to run the schools for a year.

interest in such organizations and identify themselves with them. It is really shameful on our part to have to trouble an old man like Abbas Saheb to help us collect funds. I, therefore, hope that after reading Shri Mulchand Parekh's statement people will send their donations unasked and ensure the survival of the organizations.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 23-4-1933

558. COMPLAINT AGAINST WOMEN

I give below the gist of what a Harijan from Karachi has written to me, retaining his broken language as far as possible:

> The sense of pollution through touch is much stronger among women. More so against the Dhed Harijans. They throw down to them stale, dirty, rotten left-over food. The women believe that only stale and rotten food should be given to the Bhangis. They are convinced that this is proper. The Bhangi men and women as a matter of course believe that they are getting their morning meal in return for their scavenging work. If they Hindu society stops giving rotten food to the Bhangi and the other communities, I can humbly say that pollution will disappear from the women. Youwill have to plead further with women to shed the superstitious notion of pollution through touch.

I have given the above as the substance of along letter. Untouchability will not be eradicated merely by women giving good food to the Harijan brethren instead of left-overs, but if they did that, certainly it would be said that they women had some compassion in their hearts. The complaint against women is a genuine one. If they wish, they can forthwith effect this reform. This does not involve a question of money but only a change of heart. The woman in whose heart God dwells can readily accept a harijan as a fellow-being. The students of Dehra Dun had raised the same question and what I wrote[1] in reply to it applies here also. By controlling their palate, the women can give a clean share of food to the Harijans without adding to the expense by a single pie. I have a childhood memory. Many times my mother ate after feeding a sadhu. She would serve out lovingly what shee herself was to eat and having fed him thus she would take here

[1] *Vide* "Students and Vacation", 1-4-1933.

meal and feel rewarded. Similarly, how nice it would be if women took out the share for the Harijans first and then served the other! In this case, a Harijans ceases to be a beggar but becomes a family member or a guest. She would feed him lovingly and merely by doing this she would make that Harijan clean. Instead of proudly throwing food from upstairs, she would hand over the food herself to the Bhangi and, if she found his hands dirty, she would ask him to clean them. If he does not have clean clothes, she would provide them. She would buy utensils for him or would given him only dry and uncooked food or would increase his wages. When a Bhangi develops self-respect he will, others, accept payment only. Before such a time comes, I have suggested only interim reforms. Many reforms will occur to women themselves when they have had a change of heart, when the ghost of untouchability has been exorcized and when the feeling that Harijans are inferior is removed. Without waiting for anyone to take up this work on a large scale, a woman who feels the need for this reform should make a beginning with herself and then invite her neighbours to join her.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 23-4-1933

559. LETTER TO M. V. S. RAMAN

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON[1],
April 23, 1933,

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter together with your Pamphlet. It is a most difficult thing for me to apply my mind to anything outside my present work which takes up the whole of my time. You will therefore please forgive me, if I cannot give you any opinion about your project.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. M. V. S. RAMAN
DIRECTOR, UNIVERSAL U. UNIFORMITY
30 KAMAKSHIJOSYAR STREET, KUMBHAKONAM

From a photostat: C.W. 9678. Courtesy: M. V. S. Raman

[1] Also called by Gandhiji Yeravda. Mandir, that is, Yeravda Temple. This place-name is not reproduced in subsequent items.

560. LETTER TO B.[1]

April 23, 1933

MY DEAR . . . ,

Your letter of 18th April. It is utterly unworthy of belief. N.[2] was with me when I read your letter and I asked her whether in her opinion when she was playing with fire you were untouched by it and she said point blank 'No'. I know of no young man—and I have known hundreds, if not thousands—who having strayed had not deceived himself as you seem to have. For I gather from your letter that all the time you were with N. you were unmoved by any animal passion whatsoever. This is impossible for any person who is not utterly impotent or who is not a God, and I suppose that you are neither the one nor the other. You should get rid of this self-deception altogether, if you will be a true man. You were no baby, nor was N. playing the part of mother when she forgot herself and the limitations of sex that God has imposed upon us human beings.

I would therefore strongly advise you to give up all sentimentality, to become a practical man and give yourself truly to Harijan service, whereas you were before now merely playing at it.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: S.N. 19035

561. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

April 23, 1933

DEAR SATISBABU,

I have your postcard and your letter, both received the same day. What correction would you send me now about your wire?[3] I think the thing is all forgotten, and for the sake of truth what is now necessary is not a correction which is unwanted, but mental alertness which will not be satisfied with unsifted facts or loose arguments or

[1] The name has been omitted.

[2] An American woman who later stayed at Sabarmati Ashram for some time; the name in this-and the subsequent items, however, has been omitted.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 18-3-1933.

expressions based upon those facts. It is not possible for me to prove with perfect logic that the extent of untouchability in Madras is much greater than in Bengal. But for our purpose, i.e., for the reformer who wants to get at the root of the evil and to serve only truth, it is a completely proved proposition that untouchability is by far the greatest in the South, because there it is not the caste Hindus on the one side and untouchables on the other, but Brahmins on the one side and non-Brahmins on the other. Non-Brahmins include all Hindus and all the non-Brahmins are undoubtedly untouchables, not perhaps in accordance with the definition of the Franchise Committee or the Census Commissioner, but most decidedly according to our definition. There is untouchability as to water, as to food and as to temple-going between Brahmins and non-Brahmins. But there are grades of untouchability, the bottom list containing the unseeable, who not only must not be seen but whose voice even must not be heard by the Brahmins. The temples are not arranged in the South as in the North. There, there are barriers for all the divisions. I do not even know the actual barriers created, but there they are, and what you and I want to remove is those barriers. I am just now to go through the illuminating chapter on untouchability in the Bengal Census Report, but you see now my point. No correction that you may make will answer the purpose, but let us understand the position thoroughly for ourselves and I would just now suggest to you: 'Dismiss the South from you mind altogether. Don't go by the mental state, then perhaps the comparatively more sensitive namasudra feels the comparatively lighter untouchability much more than the comparatively less sensitive unseeable feels the grossest form of untouchability. Therefore irrespective of what the South does or does not do, your own work is cut out for you. you have to get rid of the untouchability of Bengal, whether it affect 50 per cent of the Hindu population or 5 per cent.

I understand what you say about Dr. P. C. Ray and Gurudev.[1] I think that the more you study the situation the more you will find, as I have found already, that educated Bengal does want a revision of the

[1] The addressee had mentioned that though Dr. P. C. Ray was earlier in favour of the Poona Pact, he had now grown a verse to it. as for Gurudev, the addressee had invited him to preside over a meeting on the Yeravda Pact or to send a message. But Rabindranath Tagore had replied that he was surveying things from a higher level and did not like to be mixed up in current politics.

Yeravda Pact[1] and so far as I am concerned it may have that revision if it can conciliate the Bengal Harijans and all the other parties interested, provided of course that there is no tampering with the joint system. that they are going about it the wrong way is true and unfortunate. It is equally unfortunate that non-Bengalis are being blamed for what happened. Bengalis should have come in their numbers to the meeting in Bombay. There is a very fine legal maxim in Latin which says: 'Equity serves the vigilant, not the dormant.' But you cannot say anything to a person who is oppressed with grievances and is angry. Therefore I have adopted complete silence. That by itself will produce a reasonable spirit, and I would advise you too to observe absolute silence. You have said enough and you have given your word to the Harijans of Bengal that so far as you are concerned the Pact is a sacred thing, not to be altered without the unanimous consent of all parties. Have I made myself quite clear to you?

I see that you are now having a proper ebb in the circulation of *Harijan*. But I do hope that you will not have to run it at a loss, and it comes to the losing point, you will stop publication. If bengal does not want 'Bengali Harijan', we may not force it upon it. The circulation of Hindi, Gujarati and English editions is steadily increasing. The English has been self-supporting almost from the beginning, and it is expected that the Gujarati and the Hindi will be, perhaps, inside of a month. Did I tell you that there was also a Tamil edition published by Ganesan? He is a very energetic worker and had given himself entirely to such causes.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19036

[1] Between the leaders acting on behalf of the Depressed Classes and of the rest of the Hindu community regarding the representation of the Depressed Classes in legislatures and certain other matters affecting their welfare. For the text of the agreement, *Vide* Appendix Agreement between depressed classes leaders and caste hindu leaders". *Vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 23-3-1933 and ; 30-3-1933.

562. LETTER TO P. S. RUDRAMANI

April 23, 1933

DEAR RUDRAMUNI,

I thank you for you letter. It is because you belong to the priesthood of the Harijan community that I have flet so sore about you. I cannot help feeling that you have neglected N. You should not have taken here there. You did nothing in the shape of putting her to the work for which you took her to you village and, if N. is right in what she says, you would not condescend to do any physical work. How I wish you would be an ideal priest to the Harijan and labour with them and for them, avoiding all the weaknesses and vices of the caste Hindu priests! How I wish you, by the strength of you character and learning, command respect from the most fastidious caste Hindus!

So far as I can understand, you never refunded to Ramachandra the money for the ticket that you should have purchased for N. but for which you were too late. And then N. tells me that you resented here cropping her hair. Surely, it was a matter for you to welcome when a sister who had but till yesterday been leading an unclean life suddenly resolves to throw off all uncleanliness and adopt a life of renunciation, apart from the economic and the hygienic necessity of removing the hair. Do you not understand, as a Hindu, that as a sannyasini, which according to our notion she had become, she cannot keep hair or any ornamentation that would tempt base human nature?

Lastly, you have not told me that the ticket for her to come to Poona was kindly paid for by a Parsi gentleman. Please let me have his full name and address. You will understand that I have not written this letter to rebuke you. I have no right to do so. I have not known you except through N. But because I consider you to be one of my own and because I feel for you I have written this in the hope that it may serve as a warning for the future. If I have unconsciously done an injustice to you, you will please correct me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. S. RUDRAMUNI
CHITALDRUG

From a microfilm: S.N. 21038

563. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA

April 23, 1933

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRA,

I have your letter with N.'s letter. She and your letter came by the same mail. So you see that I anticipated you.[1] was anxiously watching her progress at Chitaldrug and I saw that having been instrumental in the sudden revolution in her life it would have been sinful on my part to have allowed her to pine away in Chitaldrug without the Harijans benefiting by her presence. I have therefore no alternative but to have her directly under my care. I know that the experiment is not free from danger. I do not know, I suppose she herself does not know, whether the revolution has come to stay in her life. The break with the past is too sudden and yet I have known people to undergo such apparently sudden transformation. Looking back upon her letters I can trace the invisible working of her mind and the unconscious war between the forces of evil and forces of good that was going on within her. Let us hope that the forces of good have triumphed over those of evil.

Please tell me if you are out of pocket on her behalf and if so let me have your account. Did Rudramuni ever refund the money you paid for her ticket to Chitaldrug?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RAMACHANDRA

DEENA SEVA SANGH

MALLESWARAM, BANGALORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 21042

564. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

April 23, 1933

CHI. BHAU,

You should write to me about your experiences in the villages. Mix with the village people as if you are one of them and talk to them in their own way. You can ask them what work they do, what food

[1] *Vide* "Letter to N.", 22-4-1933.

they eat, what crops they grow, what manures they use, where they have their pit-latrines and whether they use them, how many heads of cattle they tend and in what condition the cattle are, whether they have any fruit trees or other trees, what facilities they have for water, and so on. You may speak to the village children and mix with them. In short, we should take interest in their lives as if they were our relations and inquire after their conditions with the same curiosity with which we do about our relations,. This is the way to cultivate and strengthen the feeling of oneness with people.

I hope you enjoy excellent health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6756. Also C.W. 6756. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

565. LETTER TO PRAGJI K. DESAI

April 23, 1933

CHI. PRAGJI,

I got your letter after craving for one for a long time. I pary that you brother may get well.

Parvati seems to have forgotten me completely. Her sending messages has no value for me. Has she ever written to me even under some pretext? She should not talk about past times. You must have received my letter. If you *really* wish to talk about untouchability, then only can you meet me, otherwise be content with my letter. My advice is that you should be satisfied with the letter.

I still have to reply to you about your complaint against Manilal. I will do that after you have settled down.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PRAGJI KHANDUBHAI DESAI

C/O DR. N. D. PATEL

SEA VIEW BUILDING, QUEEN'S ROAD, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5034

566. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

April 23, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

The right hand is sufficiently tired. I, therefore, wish to preserve all my strength for writing articles for *Harijan.* I don't think it will require complete rest.

I wrote one letter[1] to you a few days ago. This letter, therefore, can be brief.

I will inquire about books for parachure Shastri.

Maitri will give you trouble. If she is at all likely to improve, she will do so only if we tolerate her and treat her with love. She should not feel the absence of her mother. Women may be exempted during their monthly periods from rules of work as may be thought necessary. If some or most of them abuse this freedom, the Ashram will not be responsible for that. If somebody misuses the time set apart for sleep, we cannot reduce that period on that account.

Do not lose you patience. You must always remember that a reformer a servant of the people can do no useful work unless he or she is patient. Let this be written in bold letters on you wall; inscribe it in an amulet and wear it on you arm.

If she receives permission from the Ashram, N. will come there in a very few day. She has openly led an immoral life, borrowed money and told lies. But now she has become almost a nun. I have not felt any insincerity in this. After she had realized her errors, she has done whatever I advised her to do. If she is likely to get an opportunity to adhere to here praise-worthy resolution, it is only in the Ashram that she will do. Anywhere else, she will either wither away or relapse into here old ways. she has great ability and wide knowledge. She has read the *Mahabharata*. If she come there, cultivate here acquaintance and introduce her to other women. Don't ask here anything about her past. She herself will be ready to talk about it, but it would be undesirable to talk about it or make her talk about it. It is harmful to recall memories of sinful pleasures. if she takes interest in talking about her immoral past, you mayconclude that she is still not free from such desires. Regard her as you your younger

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 19-4-1933.

sister and point out her faults to her with love. You can ask me whatever you like about her past life. I have written all this today because I may not get time to write much later when she is asked to go there. Her son is a fine boy.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10338. Also C.W. 6778. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

567. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. DESAI

April 23, 1933

CHI. NARAYANRAO ALIAS BABLO[1],

Before I can answer your question, you should tell me that, when Premabehn asked you, you told her that you were not playing but were trying to save the drowning ant. Reply to this letter and tell me exactly what happened. You and Dhiru[2] spun a large quantity of yarn indeed. Did you not feel tired afterwards? For how many hours did you spin at a stretch?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gajarati: S.N. 9481

568. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

April 23, 1933

DEAR HEMPRABHA,

I got your letter.

Your resolve to write to me every Sunday has brought me immense relief. Fixing a time for a job that needs to be done saves time and energy and promotes peace of mind.

The news about Arun gave me pleasure. From what I am thinking and observing, I feel that you and Arun should give up rice and subsist on milk, curds, juicy fruits and salad. Rice is superfluous.

Write to me about the problems that crop up at the Pratishthan. Do not take them as a misfortune. “That which goes by the name of

[1] Son of Mahadev Desai
[2] Son of Chhaganlal Joshi

adversity is not such; nor is that prosperity which goes by that name. To forget God is adversity; ever to think of Him is prosperity."[1] You need no comforting but being a self appointed father I cannot help it. God is your companion; friend, playmate, father and everything else and we identify Him with Ramanama. It so happened last night that I found sleep eluding me but it came to me as soon as I started repeating Ramanama.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1700

569. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[2]

April 23, 1933

Dr. Ambedkar[3] having received several communications from Harijan friends as to the desirability of altering the panel system in the Poona Pact[4] came to sound my views about the proposal. The substitute suggested is that only those Harijan candidates should be declared elected who succeed in getting a fixed minimum of the votes of Harijans from among the joint electorates. Not having ever applied my mind to this formula, I was unable to give him any answer. I simply told him that he should first see the different Harijan Associations and others interested, and then let me know their views. He asked me, however, to consider the proposal independently, and write to him at London my opinion which I shall try to do.[5]

Asked why Dr. Ambedkar wanted a change, Mr. Gandhi replied that Dr. Ambedkar stated that so far as he was concerned he was quite satisfied with the panel system, and he would not go back on the Poona Pact. But pressure was being brought to bear upon him for securing the above change.

[1] *Vide* "Ashram Bhajanavali", 27-5-1930.

[2] According to the source, "Dr. Ambedkar had a forty-five-minute interview with Mr. Gandhi this morning. Messrs K. O. Chitre, K. G. Shinde and other local non-Brahmin leaders were also present. The interview was specially arranged, as Gandhiji did not see Visitors on Sundays."

[3] Leader of Depressed Classes

[4] Also known as Yeravda Pact; *Vide*; 2nd footnote of Letter to Y. R. Date", 8-3-1933.

[5] For Gandhiji's opinion, *Vide* "Letter to E. Lindsay", 10-3-1933 to "Letter to Samanera Sangharatna", 10-3-1933.

Asked for his views on the panel system, Mr. Gandhi said:

Personally, my opinion is that the panel system is perfectly harmless so long as Harijans do not distrust caste Hindus.

Will you be prepared to accept the alteration if the others also agree?

I would not easily accept the change. I have not yet considered it. Because everybody agrees, it does not follow that I should accept it. I would examine every such proposal solely from the Harijan point of view, because it never crossed my mind that there can ever be a conflict of interest between the Harijans and the caste Hindus. My confirmed opinion is that whatever is in the real interest of the Harijans must necessarily be in the interest of the caste Hindus. As I believe I have the capacity of examining such questions from the Harijan point of view, I should not mind standing alone, and defending my position if unfortunately things came to such a pass that, for my opinion, I could not secure a single supporter.

The Hindu, 24-4-1933

570. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 23/24, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I was relieved to get you postcard. You must have received the letter which I wrote to you yesterday. Narmada came and saw me yesterday. She seemed to be a very good girl. She is very eager to work. I have asked her to come again with Lakshmibehn.

I will be very glad if the doctor[1] fulfils our expectations of him.

N. has arrived here with her son. At present she seems to be carrying out all my instructions with wonderful promptness. If you have not written and communicated you decision before you get this letter, and if you have arrived at a decision now, send me a wire. if you have not consulted the others, please do so.

If you have copies of the Ashram rules, send a copy each in whatever languages you have them. If you remember the circumstances in which Godavari and Pandurang Choudhari had to levave, let me know. Prema is likely to know more about Godavari.

During a discussion among us about N., Chhaganlal[2] expressed a view against her being admitted. I, therefore, asked him to write

[1] Dr. Hiralal Sharma, a naturopath and chromopath

[2] Chhaganlal Joshi

down his view and also to say what precautions should be taken if she was admitted. I have just read his note after finishing the other letters. If you decide to take her in, we cannot put on her the restrictions which Chhaganlal suggests. They will not be for her good or that of the Ashram. We must utilize her abilities in whatever way we can, conforming to Ashram discipline. We. should not send a new entrant outside the Ashram for work, But I would certainly put Hrijan children in her hands. We should admit her, assuming that she has turned a new leaf in her life, otherwise we ought not to take her in at all. But I should like to explain this point at greater length. if you consent is received, I will certainly send all necessary instructions. It will be enough for the present if you understand that she is not to be admitted as a sinner.

BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev's opinion also is enclosed.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

571. LETTER TO RAMANANDA CHATTERJEE

April 24, 1933

DEAR RAMANANDBABU,

I must trouble you once more. You must have seen Dr. Ambedkar's alternative[1] to the panel system in the Yeravda Pact. I should esteem you opinion on his suggestion, if not for public at least for my private use.[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. RAMANAND CHATTERJEE

"[THE] MODERN REVIEW", CHITPUR ROAD

CALCUTTA

From the original: C.W. 9503. Courtesy: Santa Devi. Also S.N. 21046

[1] *Vide* "Draft Constitution of the Harijan Sevak Sangh", 9-3-1933.

[2] In his letter dated May 3, Ramananda Chatterjee wrote: "I ought to have stated in my yesterday's letter that, thought I prefer Dr. Ambedkar's suggestion to the panel system, I like neither. Joint electorate with reservation of seats in proportion to the numerical strength of the Depressed Castes, would be preferable to both" (S.N. 21149). On May 2, he had written: "Before giving my opinion on it, I may be permitted to say that as I am opposed to the Communal Award, so I am opposed to the Poona Pact to the extent that it has or aggravates the harmful features of that Award" (S.N. 21145).

572. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

April 24, 1933

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

I am going to deal with Dr. Ambedkar's suggestion for the revision of the Yeravda Pact in the ensuing number of *Harijan.*[1] You must have seen it and given your thought to it. Please let me know what you think about it. Please share this letter with Ghanshyamdas[2] and let me have his opinion also, or, you may give me your joint opinion.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1120; also S.N. 21052

573. LETTER TO C. Y. CHINTAMANI

April 24, 1933

DEAR MR. CHINTAMANI,

You know by now Dr. Ambedkar's suggestion for revising the Yeravda Pact in so far as the panel system is concerned. I would like you to give me your opinion about the alternative he suggests. If you have discussed it publicly in *The Leader,* do not please trouble to answer this letter. If you have not, I would esteem your opinion. I am discussing the alternative publicly in the succeeding issues of *Harijan.*[3]

Yours sincerely,

[PS.]

This is the exploit of my new typist. Please have mercy on him and me. I hope you are well.

From a photostat: S.N. 21051

[1] *Vide* "The Yeravada Pact"27-4-1933.

[2] G. D. Birla

[3] In his letter dated April 29, the addressee wrote: "Apart from one's opinion on the merits, it is clear to my mind on the ground of expediency that the Pact should not be reopened" (S.N. 21083).

574. A LETTER

April 24, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

My *Guide* to *Health*[1] requires amendment in several places. I would therefore ask you not to translate it just now. If I succeed in revising the present edition it would be a good thing to translate the edition instead of a book which in some material respects is not a good guide.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19037

575. LETTER TO MOHAN AND VANAMALA PARIKH

April 24, 1933

CHI. MOHAN AND VANAMALA,

I don't remember who is the elder of you two. If Vanamala is elder, then she should excuse me for putting her name second. We do not follow the rule of the West. There, even if the girl is younger, her name would be put before that of her elder brother. We always respect seniority in age.

I wanted to write about your health but I have written something else. Never mind. Write to me, both of you, how you keep.

Vanamala has done very good spinning indeed.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5781. Also C.W. 3004. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

[1] Published in July 1921 by S. Ganesan, Madras. *Vide* 1st footnote of "General Knowledge about Health [—XIV]", 5-4-1913.

576. LETTER TO NARANADAS GANDHI

April 25, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I can see-from your language that you are unhappy. I am sure your replies[1] are not addressed to me, for I did not want them. I assume that they are addressed to Chhaganlal.

My view about your honesty and your efficiency has not changed. When it changes, I shall not be able to protect you. You should not feel concerned till it changes. I have found your reply to Chhaganlal's complaint convincing; but I feel hidden anger in your language. There is no reason at all for you to be angry. Chhaganlal wrote down what he thought. There was no malice in it, but only his inability to see the truth. You will be able to see this inability in his letter about N. He can have no reason for malice towards her, but he was frightened by her immoral life in the past, could not overcome that fear and so thought as he did. His deficiency, therefore, is of the intellect and not of the heart. However that may be, you should learn to adopt a calm attitude towards such criticism and accept whatever may be worth accepting in it. Such strength cannot be acquired in a day. It will be enough if you keep on trying.

BAPU

[PS.]

Whether or not it is improper for Prema or other girls to walk with their arms round each other's neck, I cannot say unless I see myself what they do. If their behaviour is immodest, it is of course improper, but there can be no harm if it is within limits of modesty. I have discussed this point in my letter to Lakshmidas. Read that letter if you have not done so. If, after reading it, you wish to ask further questions, you may.

I may have to burden you with one more guest. You know Margarete Spiegel who stayed in the Ashram for some time and worked among Harijans. She will probably land in Bombay tomorrow. Will you let her stay in the Ashram? I need not say anything about her. She is a very good woman. She has been writing

[1] Presumably to Chhaganlal Joshi's criticism of him; *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 16-4-1933.

to me here.

If the sum of Rs. 2,5000 has been received from Soniramji, send it to Ghanshyamdas. Add five . more to the 25 spinning-wheels [which I have asked you to send]. We shall get Rs. 1_ for each.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8362. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

577. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

April 25, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. You have imagined too much in my letter[1]. It did not contain any such thing. In my letter to Narandas, I had referred to the complaints against you. With them in my mind, I had said how fine it would be if, among your many virtues, you added the ability to tolerate the defects of other people generous]y. I had to ask Narandas not to show that letter to you. I felt unhappy when doing so and made those remarks. I did not intend to admonish you. Since there is a limit beyond which human nature cannot be changed, I did not think it proper to write anything to you.

I hope you will be satisfied with this explanation. You may now read that letter if you wish.

You yourself may decide whether or not you should go on a month's leave. If N. goes there, I should like you to be there when she arrives. But ask Narandas and follow his advice.

I do worry about your throat. But I am helpless. If its condition worsens, I will blame you. I would be happy if you decide to stop speaking altogether. That will not come in the way of your work. Trappist monks and nuns observe complete silence and still work the whole day. You may eat uncooked vegetables, but you should crush them before eating. If you take unboiled milk and fruits, probably you can do without vegetables.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10339. Also C.W. 6779. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 2-4-1933.

578. LETTER TO NANALAL K. JASANI

April 25,1933

BHAI NANALAL,

I have your letter. Tell Prabhashankar[1] that he may certainly come to Poona. I have no grudge against him. I have explained my own position. I wish that I could trust him. But he should not care whether I trust him or not. He should come for. the sake of Champa's and Ratilal's good. What more does he expect from me? or what would you suggest?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9632

579. LETTER TO VERRIER ELWIN

April 26, 1933

MY DEAR VERRIER,

I was wondering why I had not heard from you for a long time. I am glad Shamrao is much better and that you were both overhauled by a first class doctor. of course I shall trust you to give me faithful reports about health and I am so glad that the intestinal ulcer and the enlarged spleen were pure inventions. I hope that your chicken-pox never became 'small, and that it is now entirely a thing of the past. I hope too that you found Mary[2] quite happy and cheerful.

Love to you all from us all.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. IV' p. 343; also S. N. 19046

[1] Prabhashankar Parekh, Ratilal Mehta's father-in-law

[2] Mary Gillett

580. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

April 26, 1933

CHI. MARY,

I was-wondering what had happened to you not having heard from you after your departure from the Ashram. I was therefore delighted to have your letter. I am sorry that Maria[1] had such a breakdown. The fact is that she postponed her rest too long. I hope however that she is now benefiting by the relaxation. For it is not so much the bracing air as the relaxation of mind and body that she needs. She must therefore give herself as much rest as she can both to body and mind, and as a quack doctor I suggest to her that she must eat sparingly restricting herself as much as it is possible to milk and fruit of which there is so much to be had. She may take salad vegetables but she does not need them. If she carries out these very simple instructions to the letter she will find that she will derive the greatest benefit from the change. She must not at present think of writing her book. She may write it when she has completely recovered her vitality and lost the haggard pensive look that she had about her when I met her. I must not omit to add that she ought not to take those two poisons, tea[2] and coffee, so bad for nerves. I suggest a home-made substitute, hot water, Kashmir honey and a few drops of lemon. She will find this to be a complete, effective substitute for milk or coffee or cocoa.

I suggest a novel recreation for both of you. In going about for your walks, make a search for all the Harijans you can find and add to your knowledge of Hindi by trying to make yourselves understood by them and in understanding them. And do not forget the prescription for avoiding cold. Keep yourselves moving as much as possible in the open air.

Mahadev had your letter. We are all doing well and send love to you.

BAPU

C/O POSTMASTER

SRINAGAR

From a photostat G.N. 6001. Also C.W. 3326. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] Anne Marie Petersen

[2] The source, however, has “ghee”.

581. LETTER TO MESSRS DAMODAR SANTIRAM GANDE[1]

April 26, 1933

GENTLEMEN,

Sjt. P. H. Gadre, pleader, Nasik, is interesting himself in Harijan welfare. He is badly in need of cheap Marathi literature regarding the saints of Maharashtra and the like for distribution among Harijans. He tells me that if I wrote to you, you are likely to send him a small parcel of such literature as a present. I shall be obliged if you could kindly send some books of the type Sjt. Gadre wants. If there is any difficulty about making a selection, I would suggest your entering into correspondence With Sjt. Gadre asking him to let you have a list of the books he desires.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19044

582. LETTER TO P. H. GADRE

April 26, 1933

DEAR GADRE,

I have your letter[2]. Please tell me the exact amount of material you require with the purpose indicated so that I can approach people for donations in kind or cash. Do I understand that if the material is supplied, the Municipality will carry out specified improvement at its expense?

I have also your letter giving me quotations from *Narad Bhakti Sutra*, for which I thank you.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19049

[1] Booksellers, Bombay

[2] Dated April 25 (S.N. 21058). The addressee had requested Gandhiji to arrange for supply of corrugated iron sheets to be used in schools and lavatories for Harijans.

583. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

April 26, 1933

DEAR MOTIBABU,

I have your letter. I quite understand the difficulty you have in coping with your correspondence whilst your eyes give you trouble. I am therefore not going to put any strain whatsoever on your limited bodily resources. Therefore please do not answer this letter. I shall read your translation when it comes into my possession, but I am not going to say anything about it just now. Of course I know that even though your writing may at times appear to be at variance with the inner harmony, the letter will in the end remain untouched by it. I shall not therefore worry over such things if anyone brings them to my notice.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 11044

584. LETTER TO HARIBHAU PHATAK

April 26, 1933

MR DEAR HARIBHAU,

I have your postcard. I have ordered five more wheels.[1] They are all being specially made in Bardoli. Therefore it is likely they will take a little time.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19048

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 25-4-1933.

585. LETTER TO S. PONNAMMAL

April 26, 1933

MY DEAR PONNAMMAL,

I have your letter. You do not need a formal note of introduction to Sjt. Kelappan. You can simply present this note to him and tell him the whole of your story. I know that he will make the fullest use of your services and do whatever is possible to help you in your work.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19050

586. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

April 26, 1933

DEAR SIR PURUSHOTTAMDAS,

As you were actively connected with the Yeravda Pact, I would like you to let me have your opinion on Dr. Ambedkar's . suggestion for the amendment of the Yeravda Pact. I hope you are keeping well.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 21062

587. LETTER TO H. N. KUNZRU

April 26, 1933

DEAR HARIJI,

I wonder if you have applied your mind to the amendment Dr. Ambedkar has suggested of the Yeravda Pact. If you have, please let me have your opinion.[1]

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 21066

[1] In his letter dated May 6, 1933, the addressee wrote: "As regards Dr. Ambedkar's suggestion, it was evident to me that if it was entertained, it would reopen the entire question dealt with by the Poona Pact. Being convinced of the absolute undesirability of such a course, I did not examine his proposal on its merit" (S.N. 21203).

588. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

April 26, 1933

CHI. JAMNA,

I very much liked the letter you wrote to me. Whenever we see a wrong being done, one may caution and restrain the husband, the father and even the king. If the person does not listen to one immediately, one may repeat the caution again and again. But this is for the future.

I do not believe that girls who are kept under strict restraint do not feel passion. On the contrary they lose all self-control and when the parents learn the fact they too cover it up. We should try to discover the middle way. We should give freedom to boys and girls and also teach them self-restraint. Do uncovered heads arouse passion where it is not the custom to cover the head? What do you think happens in the Madras Presidency where the girls wear their hair loose? The seat of the passions is not outside oneself, but inside—in one's eyes. The impure eye will see impurity everywhere.

Nevertheless, it is the duty of the senior women to sit together and think about the problem of the girls and draw up instructions for them, which should then be put before the girls and even before the men. I have stated above my own point of view so that all of you may think about the problem. I should like you to call a meeting of all the women and discuss it. Will you take the initiative?

I have written to Purushottam asking him not to go to Rajkot. He should stay on for your sake at least.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 877. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

589. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

April 26, 1933

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

There is no harm in your having gone to Rajkot. Keep me informed about the progress. I have received a copy of the book which first advocated treatment by milk-diet. Its author has laid more stress on hip-bath in warm water than later writers on the subject. He

also advises the patient in some cases to live on fresh butter-milk. However-, you should follow Gaurishankar's view. There is bound to have been further progress in the science after this book was written.

Let me know about Bhau's health.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 911. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

590. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 26, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

You must have received the letter[1] which I wrote to you yesterday. I forgot to enclose in it a newspaper cutting to be shown to Dr. Sharma. I send it with this letter. These days I have to write with the left hand and so could not write yesterday all that I wished to. I hope to do so today. I felt that it would be better if Chhaganlal replied to your comments on his criticisms of you, and so pressed him to do that. Accordingly, he has given me his reply. After careful thinking I felt that I ought to send it to you, and am doing so. I don't think it proves the necessity of your reforming your method of work in any respect, but I do see in his note his honesty of purpose. I have never felt any malice in him. But he is suspicious by nature and cannot easily put a straightforward interpretation on things. He does not readily see the virtues of the other party, and magnifies the defects. This gives an impression to other people that he lacks generosity of heart. He does not wish to be ungenerous nor is he ungenerous by nature. But people who do not understand him can easily see ungenerosity in him. If I have succeeded in convincing you of this, the anger and intolerance which are present in your reply would not be there. Your charge that some inmates of the Ashram realized the necessity of better educational facilities for children after they themselves had children, is unworthy of you. And it is not true, either. It is utterly wrong to believe that Narahari, Chhaganlal and others who subscribe to this criticism are as selfish as that. They also are loyal inmates of the Ashram and are good men. They a]so care for the good of the Ashram as much as we do. They may be—they are—less efficient, but you ought not to be conscious in the slightest degree of

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 25-4-1933.

your greater efficiency or be proud of it. Even a mention of somebody else's inefficiency is an indirect form of self-praise. I want you to avoid even that, And suppose that children are born to inmates of the Ashram and some new ideas occur to the parents when the children grow up a little, we should not detect in that their selfishness as parents. This thing is part of human nature and criticism of it is not just. All that we should expect from people is this. one should desire for others, children what one desires for one's own and should make no distinction between one's children and other's children under one's charge. We may say that in the measure that this attitude is absent in the Ashram we are imperfect. However, no inmate of the Ashram should say that the shortcomings are those of others and not his. It is as difficult to know one's shortcomings fully as it is to attain self-realization. And I believe that for a person who can see his shortcomings fully and who ceaselessly strives to overcome them to the best of his ability, self-realization is no difficult task. I, therefore, certainly desire that, if you fed that it was improper for you to make such a statement and that it cannot be proved, you should withdraw it and apologize to your co-workers. However, I don't want you to withdraw it only to please me if you yourself are not convinced of its impropriety. If you sincerely believe that the reason why people make this criticism against you is that they have children now, let your charge remain till in course of time you learn from experience that it is not true. In the Ashram nobody should be asked to apologize merely for the sake of form. Such apology would benefit no one. For us apology can have only one meaning; namely, that it is sincere admission of one's error. All of us must tolerate the charges which our co-workers-make against us. I don't ask those who make charges against you to apologize to you, because they sincerely believe what they say. I can advise them to apologize only when I can change their belief. The same rule applies to you.

Chhaganlal's second objection is against your criticism of him for occasionally requiring food to be sent to his room. Maybe when he had a guest he found it necessary to ask for a *thali* for him in his room. I see nothing wrong in that. If a guest turna up unexpectedly, what else can a person who does not cook in his own house do ? And if a guest has turned up just at mealtime, I can understand that one might not like to bring him to the common kitchen, for it might be possible to talk to him only during the meal. I do not know whether or not Chhaganlal had these legitimate reasons, but I do not expect

criticism for such things from you. Need there be any limit to generosity ? Our ideal examples of generosity are king Bali, Yudhishthira and others like them. The former lost his whole kingdom through his generosity and Yudhishthira stopped the blood from flowing out of his wound in order to save king Virat from Arjuna's wrath and, before the latter arrived, got it all cleaned by Draupadi and waited as if nothing had happened. our aspiration is that we should be able to do easily in this age all that they could do in ancient times.

I did not read any complaint on your part in your references to Purushottam[1] and Kanu[2], but saw in them only an acknowledgment that things could not be otherwise in the Ashram. Mahadev, on the other hand, supports Chhaganlal's interpretation and says that you nurse a grievance about Purushottam and Kanu having remained without a knowledge of history, geography, etc. Whether it is that or whether it is an acknowledgment on your part of what is inevitable in the Ashram, your own interpretation should be accepted as the only right one. Let me, therefore, know what the truth is. My own view is that we should not regret any boy having not learnt what passes today as history and geography. on the contrary, I believe that the boys could, not have acquired anywhere else what they have in the Ashram. Moreover, they have learnt history and geography, too, of the kind to which we attach value. I do feel unhappy, but not by way of complaint against anybody. I feel unhappy about the interpretation of the Ashram itself. I know that we have not been able to give the children all that we were eager to give them. Isn't that my own shortcoming? That people do not regard it as such is another matter. But when we try to draw up a balance-sheet and examine the credit and the debit columns, a shortcoming must be recognized as a shortcoming. The Ashram has grown according to the capacities of the persons whom I could attract and the ideas which I could implement. I can enumerate no end of shortcomings to be found in the Ashram. And still I love it, for it is chiefly my handiwork. If I had greater ability and the circumstances had been more favourable, the Ashram would be a more attractive place and there would have been no ground for the criticism which it deserves in some respects. My purpose, however, in stating all this is to persuade you not to see the shortcomings of others

[1] Sons of the addressee
[2] *ibid*

and not to criticize people who might criticize you, only to point out the error in their criticism and accept whatever is acceptable in it and act upon it. This will save you from many problems.

And now a few words about Chhaganlal's note. Like his previous note, I didn't like this one either. If I wish, Chhaganlal would readily amend it. But in that case you would not be able to know what he really thinks. What is necessary is that you and I should love him despite our knowledge of what he thinks. If we fail to do that, we cannot prove that the Ashram is a large family. And, moreover, if we cut ourselves off from everybody, one after another, for small defects, we would be left alone in the world. Nobody except God can afford that. This is why I have often stated that one should forget oneself completely and become a cypher. Nothing can equal the joy of that state. As for Chhaganlal's note, I see an error in almost every sentence of it,

Chhaganlal's language is offensive and betrays his thoughtlessness and intolerance. Leaving aside your anger and your charges, he has not been able to see at all the effectiveness of your reply. Even in regard to points on which you have given a convincing reply, he has again offered advice.

In writing about Chhaganlal, I have been completely frank. I know that there was no need to advise you. I have explained this to him. I had also let him read what I wrote to you; even then he has written what he has. If I did not know him, his remarks would have seemed utterly mean to me too. But I should like even you not to see meanness in them but only his lack of intelligence. I am sending such a note to you hoping that you will be able to ignore even such criticism like that with a generous heart. I believe that since I am forwarding the note to you, you are completely safe and so is Chhaganlal. It is a great good fortune of the Ashram that we are trying to tell, without any fear; even the unpleasant thoughts which we think about one another.

I will now end this letter. It is I who am loading heavier burdens on you. I don't hesitate to put before you even criticism in which I do not believe and, by doing so, I waste your, and therefore the Ashram's, time. But I think it was absolutey necessary to do this. But now it is enough. You need not at all reply to the accompanying note. If you understand the few point: which I have tried to explain to you, you may write a line or two accordingly. This letter, too, contains

some good ideas. Do therefore, show it to others but don't think that it is necessary for you to discuss any point with anybody. Keep on trying to do the best you can. As desired by you, I am also returning your letter.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 836. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

591. LETTER TO GANGABEHN B. JHAVERI

April 26, 1933

CHI. GANGABEHN JHAVERI,

I have your letter. You should experiment under Gaurishankar's guidance. You are taking a long time to get well. You should experiment under some expert's guidance. If not Gaurishankar, let it be somebody else.

I will not forgive you if you do not write to me. An error committed unknowingly can be pardoned. Should negligence or lethargy be forgiven?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3953

592. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

April 26, 1933

CHI. MANI,

I got your letter only two or three days ago. Your letters, no matter how long, will never be too long for us. If, however, you expect Father or me to write very long letters, we cannot satisfy you. But I can understand your desire for such letters. We enjoy quite a number of amenities and even luxuries to which you in Belgaum are perfect strangers. But we would prove ourselves unworthy servants of the nation and unworthy parents if we used them or asked them for any but public purposes. Nobody would think well of a person who claims to be a father of hundreds of children and lets his mind soar in the clouds. So, then, we enjoy all these luxuries to the full and you or Mridula may envy our good fortune as much as you like. You had already passed a sarcastic remark in regard to Mirabehn, and have withdrawn it also. What is a father's duty? Should he give his children

what each needs, or should he give the same to all and thus not only do great injustice but, maybe, make himself responsible for the death of one of the children through his attempt to prove himself just in the eyes of the world or to his immature child? If, suppose, you are suffering from a disease and have to be given *bajra* bread and skimmed buttermilk, does that mean that a girl like Bharati[1], who would require to be nourished on butter, honey and light chapatis, should be given the same food as you? A father is bound to provide al! that is necessary for a child's welfare. He is free to indulge the child and give it more in so far as it is consistent with such welfare, but is not bound to do so. It should not be necessary to explain this to you after all these years. But I have to produce a long letter somehow, and so am indulging in all this philosophizing. If you were not at all angry with us, why were you making yourself miserable? Why did you show such lack of faith? Why didn't you rest assured that one of us must have written to you? I agree that both should write if possible. But no one would be eager to write if he found that L the fate of his letters was so uncertain. One letter [a week] is regularly sent to you, and, you may rest assured, will continue to be sent in the hope that you will somehow get at least one. Father has undertaken to give a detailed reply to your letter. He will, therefore, give you the replies to your messages, and also give the replies to your queries in detail. I should certainly like to reply to some of them myself, but I resist the temptation. Anandi's operation is an old story now. She left for the Ashram long ago and she is quite well there. She got cold and fever some time ago, but that was only for a few days. . . .[2] came and saw us, . . . 's hands are swollen and looked like pillars. . . . is taking tender care of her. He is a husband, a friend, a teacher and a servant in one. At present at any rate it seems that even her Creator could not have found a better husband for her. Whether . . . deserves him or not, God alone knows. But I myself had pointed out her weaknesses to . . . before the marriage, and had written to him and said that he could break off the engagement without any hesitation if he did not like it. But, trained under . . ., how would . . . go back on his decision? Everyone had showered love on her at the time of her marriage. Everyone gave her some present or the other. They will not have to spend for quite a long time anything on household requirements or

[1] Bharati Sarabhai
[2] Omissions as in the source

clothes. Be contented with this. Our warder is standing before me ready to take me back to my ward. It will soon be eleven and so I am returning to my cage. After I have bathed and lunched' I shall be brought back to the Harijan ward at twelve.[1]

SHRI MANIBEHN PATEL

P.R. NO. 10249

BELGAUM CENTRAL PRISON

POST HINDALAGA

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 100-2

593. THE YERAVDA PACT

[*April 27, 1933*][2]

Though an agitation has been going on in Bengal for some time for securing a revision of the Yeravda Pact, I have not felt called upon to take part in the discussion, if only not to embarrass the Bengal friends. The Pact is safe so long as even one party interested in it opposes any change. At the same time, any opposition for the sake of it would be foolish, if it could be demonstrated that a particular change was necessary. I do not pretend to understand the local situation in Bengal. Therefore, I felt that it would be presumptuous on my part to take part in the Bengal controversy, till it became absolutely necessary for me to do so and till all the material required for forming a judgment upon it was before me. But I assured the Harijan friends who referred to me for my opinion that I would not do anything without consultation with them and that I had till now seen nothing to alter my view.

Generally I have a]ways held the opinion that, when the principle of reservation is accepted, not imposed, the party in whose interest the reservation is accepted should determine the quantum. In the case of Harijans, I have felt further that they could not have too many seats reserved for them, especially if the criterion were not mere untouchability but backwardness. Indeed, if I could have my way, I would throw open the list of untouchable voters to all backward

[1] The letter was completed by Vallabhbhai Patel.

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 23-5-1933; *vide* also "Letter to B. R. Ambedkar", 27-4-1933.

classes under one generic name and permit every Hindu who chose to come under that list. That would at once correct the atmosphere, and untouchability will be banished at least from politics. To this perhaps the sanatanists, too, would have no objection. They have never, so far as I am aware, demurred to the representation of Harijans in the legislatures and they can have no objection to anyone classifying himself as a Harijan. But all this is merely by way of introduction to what I want to say.

Dr. Ambedkar's sudden visit to me has rendered it necessary for me to discuss the Pact. At the pressure and invitation of his friends, he suggested[1] that the panel system provided in the Yeravda Pact should be altered to a single election by the joint electorate providing that the Harijan candidate should secure a fixed minimum of Harijan votes. I was not prepared to give any opinion during the Doctor's visit. I had not applied my mind to the question at all. Moreover, I suggested that he should first secure the opinion of different schools of thought among Harijans and of caste Hindus interested in the question and then ask me for my opinion. He said he would do that, but he made me promise that I should consider his proposal independently and give my opinion on it. The matter being too important for a private discussion, I propose to fulfil my promise by publicly stating my opinion.

The new proposal seems to me to be in no way to the advantage of Harijans. The only objection to the panel system I have heard is that it is costly. This presupposes that there would be a contest almost in every case for coming into the panel. It would have been so if the panel was confined to only two, instead of four, candidates. Selection of four candidates for contesting each seat would make it unnecessary in most cases to have the primary election. Except where Harijan parties are many and are sharply divided, there cannot be more than four candidates for one seat. Indeed, for some time to come it will be difficult even to have candidates enough to fill all the reserved seats and, in the majority of cases, there will be no contests whatsoever. It would be up to Harijan associations not to have bitter rivalries at the very threshold of their political career and it will be the duty of caste Hindus not to foment divisions in the Harijan ranks. I am hoping that the interests of Harijans and other Hindus will never clash. But should they do so, the panel system amply provides for the selection in the

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Associated Press of India", 23-4-1933.

first instance of the right kind of the Harijan candidate—right, I mean, from the purely Harijan point of view. And yet so long as there is no bitter strife among Harijans themselves, there never need be any primary election, or, for that matter, even a joint final election.

But the alternative seems to be fraught with grave danger. As the very first choice will be general, unscrupulous political parties will put their own Harijan candidates and create divisions among the Harijan ranks with the greatest ease and demoralize the candidates and the Harijan electorate. So far as I can see and so long as the system of reservation prevails, the panel system is the best adopted for securing the selection only of those candidates who in the Harijan opinion are best fitted to serve their special interests. Whereas I can see nothing but seeds of strife and bitterness in the alternative proposal.

Though I have written decisively, I am open to reason. The argument of expense makes no appeal to me. I hope I have shown that, if anything, the panel system is calculated to avoid all needless expense. I was amazed, however, to see an interview in the Press in which Dr. Ambedkar is reported to have said his proposal made no alteration whatsoever in the substance of the Pact. I venture to dicer from this view. Whereas the panel system gives an opportunity to the caste Hindus to have some say in the election of Harijan candidates, Dr. Ambedkar's alternative may well deprive the caste Hindus of any say whatsoever in the election of Harijan candidates and thus create an effectual bar between caste Hindus and Harijan Hindus. It was just to prevent that calamity that I put forth all the force that I could command, and looking back upon the past, I do not regret having done so. I put my difficulty very mildly before Dr. Ambedkar at the Sunday interview. As I think over the difficulty, it appears to me to be insurmountable, and it is this: The candidate who gets the minimum of Harijan votes provided under the alternative need never have a single vote from the caste voters, for any Harijan candidate getting just the number of Harijan votes required under the proposal will defeat his rival even though he may otherwise top the whole of the list of candidates, Harijan and non-Harijan, if he gets just one vote less than the minimum required from the Harijans. This would ,amount to an utter negation of the Yeravda Pact.

It is open to Dr. Ambedkar, as it is to the Bengal friends and any other person, to say that the Yeravda Pact was arrived at under the coercion of the fast. I have no sense of shame about it. If they accepted the Pact in order to save my life, surely, they had their

consideration, and it comes with ill-grace from them now to repudiate a completed bargain. The use they can make of their mistake, if such it was, is never to repeat it and not to swerve from the path of duty for fear of sacrificing the life of a person, however dear that life may be. I had staked my life not to coerce anybody to do what to them appeared to be wrong. I had staked it for achieving a purpose which I thought was altogether noble. The way to approach the question, therefore, is not to bring in the fast in the controversy but in cold blood to show to the public that the Pact is inherently bad, either on moral or public grounds. It will be time enough to seriously examine the question of reopening the Pact when such a case is satisfactorily made out in the first instance.

Harijan, 29-4-1933

594. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April [*27*][1], *1933*

SATYAGRAHAASHRAM

SABARMATI

WIRE IF I MAY SEND N. AND DOCTOR SPIEGEL WHO WAS THERE LAST YEAR.

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./I

595. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 27, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

This is Thursday morning before prayer. Your letter came in yesterday with Ba's.

A book on Astronomy is being sent to you. I enclose also a map for the month. You will find herewith so Dr. Saunders's[2] letter. It is satisfactory on the whole.

Letter for Ba will also accompany this.

[1] The source has "28". The telegram, however, was drafted on this date; *Vide* "Letter to D. B. Kalelkar", 27-4-1933.

[2] The specialist at London who had treated Mirabehn for tubercular glands in 1907. *Vide* "Letter to Dr. B.C. Roy", 5-3-1933.

You may pursue the conduct of the Ashram as much as you like. It won't tire me. It will assist me. It will enable you to understand my viewpoint better. You must not accuse yourself of want of faith in me or my wisdom because you do not see a point of mine at once or because having seen it you cannot agree with me. I am not a perfect being. Why should you see eye to eye with me in my errors? That would be blind faith. Your faith in me should enable you to detect my true error much quicker than a fault-finder. What I would like your faith to do is that when you cannot convince me of my error you should think that it is likely that I see more clearly than you do in matters where I have thought and experienced more. That would give you peace of mind. Therefore you should not paralyse your thought by suppressing your doubts and torturing yourself that you do not agree with my view in particular things. You should therefore pursue the discussion of the Ashram till you have the clearest possible grasp of all my ideas about it.

You need not have argued about the man being the worse sinner of the two. I have always held that view against most, if not all, of my male friends who have expressed their opinion on the point. of course I agree with you also that man's superiority, if it is that, over the brute creation, consists in his capacity for observing *brahmacharya.* It must therefore be an Ashram ideal to be attained immediately if that were possible.

There is therefore complete agreement. between us so far as the fundamental thing is concerned. The difficulty or the difference comes in when we begin to devise ways and means of encompassing the ideal.

I am becoming more and more confirmed in the view that it must go on as it is now doing, with ample liberty to the manager to regulate fresh admissions. Our life should become daily simpler and not more complex. We should be progressively more self-restrained. But we should remain a composite family that we now are.

The present composition is not the hindrance. The hindrance is that we have so few real complete *brahmacharis.* All were broken vessels, all had their own individual passions to conquer. But I hold that most of them were and are sincere strivers. Therefore we are blind leaders of the blind and ever stumbling. When some of us have, by constant striving, become at least matriculates in the effort, we shall certainly do better. Therefore the problem resolves itself into each one

of us striving to the utmost to approach the ideal. Remember my definition of *brahmacharya*. It means not suppression of one or more senses but complete mastery over them all. The two states are fundamentally different. I can suppress all my senses today but it may take aeons to conquer them. Conquest means using them as my willing slaves. I can prick the ear-drum and suppress the sense of hearing by a simple, painless operation. This is worthless. I must train the ear so that it refuses to hear gossip, lewd talk, blasphemy, but it. is open to the celestial music, it will hear the most distant cry for succour from thousands of miles. Saint Ramdas is said to have done so. Then how [to] use the organs of generation? By transmuting the most creative energy that we possess from creating counterparts of our flesh into creating constructive work for the whole of life, i.e., for the soul. We have to rein in the animal passion and change it into celestial passion. Read here Chapter II, Verse 64, of the *Gita.* The burden of the Divine Song is not "fly from the battle but face it without attachment". Therefore you and I and every one of us have to stand unmoved in the midst of all kinds of men and women. There is no physical seclusion except temporarily for some. The Ashram is all right where it is but we must branch out for larger growth. But that would be a natural evolution coming in its own time.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W, 6269. Courtesy: Mirabehn

596. LETTER TO HARRY BOWMAN

April 27, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your long letter[1].

I had one visit from Miss Mayo when she was in India. I have read her book and I wrote also a review[2] on it which at that time had attracted considerable attention. It is my firm conviction that the book

[1] Dated March 12, 1933 (S.N. 19009), expressing his indignation at Katherine Mayo's *Mother India.* The addressee had written: ". . . advise me if Miss Mayo sticks to truth in this deplorable bool or is she only after publicity money. . . ."

[2] *Vide* "Drain Inspector's Report", 15-9-1927.

is filled with half-truths, innuendos and deductions drawn from stray facts as if they represented a universal situation.

Yours sincerely,

HARRY BOWMAN, ESQ.

BEATRICE, NEBRASKA [U.S.A.]

From a photostat: S.N. 19055; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. IV, p. 379

597. LETTER TO YVONNE PRIVAT

April 27, 1933

MY DEAR BHAKTI,

I was delighted to have your letter which you consider is long and which for us is too short. I see that you are one in your happiness. You are one also in your erosion though you tell me that both of you had the 'flu, at the same time. You still remain the strangest pair I have ever had the good fortune to meet. one reads of such couples in Persian poetry but does not meet them in flesh and blood. May you for ever remain inseparables.

Yes, I know, you in Europe are going through very hard tinues, both economically and spiritually. But I believe literally in the Biblical saying that "God would not destroy Sodom and Gomorrah so long as there is one good man the" I know that you have in Europe true men and women in all the odd nooks and corners of the Continent. I, therefore, feel that-in the end all will be well.

I am glad you have got a copy of my little book, *Guide to Health.* It is an indifferent translation and then there are some chapters I would like to revise, and if at all I get the time and permission, I would certainly do so.

Nature cure has made great strides since Kuhne's time, and I should like to incorporate the results of new experiments. We are all keeping well, and all of us send you and Anand[1] our love. I do hear from Mira every week and write to her in return. To correspond with

[1] Edmond Privat, husband of the addressee

[2] Son and daughter of the addressee

me every week she forgoes the pleasure of writing to and meeting other friends. I will certainly convey your love to her. A letter is going to her today.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

[PS.]

Love from Mahadev who is being released on the 19th May.

From a photostat: G.N. 2336

598. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

April 27, 1933

MY DEAR C. R.,

I wish that under the coloured chart you had given the figures for the population of the respective castes and divisions and as there is no hurry of publishing the chart, I would like you to give me that information. I could find it myself but I do not know your own figures. They may not be quite what I would find.

In your letter you have said nothing about Narasimhan[2] or Papa[3]. I expect to see Devdas tomorrow.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR

From a photostat: S.N. 19052

599. LETTER TO G. R. KHAN

April 27, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1] together with the enclosures. I send you herewith a letter to my son. I have written to him already directly, You will see that in my letter to my son I have asked him to introduce you to Messrs Sorabji & Pather. I am not therefore sending you separate

[1] Dated April 25, 1933, in which the addressee had asked Gandhiji to write to Manilal Gandhi to obtain legal opinion on "whether a Mahomedan making a will against Islamic Law can be held valid in the Supreme Court at Durban" (S.N. 19039).

letters of introduction. In my letter to my son I have also mentioned Seth Omer Jhaveri.

Yours sincerely,

MR. G. R. KHAN

H. H. THE AGA KHAN,S BUNGALOW

NESBIT ROAD, MAZAGAON, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. I 9054

600. LETTER TO HARKISENDAS

April 27, 1933

MY DEAR HARKISENDAS,

Sjt. Sastri, whom the office sent me as shorthand assistant is leaving me at the end of this month. Having got from Advocate Bhulabhai's son his typist, I am disengaging Sastri two or three days earlier so that he can attend to what little things he has to in Bombay, but you will please pay him his pay to the end of the month.

I have-not yet heard from Sjt. Dhirubhai how he has sent his typist to me. I shall therefore write to you later about the terms under which the new stenographer is to work. Of course in no case will he cost the Board more than Sastri, but I am expecting that he will cost less.

Sastri is leaving me only because he wants to attend to his old father and family affairs, not having gone there for some years. Latterly, he lost a brother-in-law. But he would gladly like to be able to return if he fails to get something better inside of four months. His wants are much larger than Rs. 100 but he knows that at the present moment even Rs. 100 is. a considerable sum. This is merely for your information.

If at the end of four months or earlier I cannot keep the present typist on any account and if Sastri is free to come, I would naturally take him back. He has given me full satisfaction.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19056

601. LETTER TO J. D. JENKINS

April 27, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for an inscribed copy of Jeans's *The Stars in Their Courses.* I had a glance at it before, but of course I shall prize the book you have sent me. I see it is interspersed with marginal pencil lines. The passage that you have marked at page 152 had, when I first read the book, made a good impression on me.

As I was finishing your letter and leaving aside the book for the moment, I saw that the copy comes out of your own collection. I shall prize the book all the more for that knowledge.

Yours sincerely,

J. D. JENKINS, ESQ.
HAMMERTON HOUSE
23 KAHUN ROAD
POONA

From a photostat: S.N. 19057

602. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

April 27, 1933

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

I enclose herewith my opinion[1] on Dr. Ambedkar's proposal to revise the Yeravda Pact in so far as the panel system is concerned. I hope you will agree with me that Dr. Ambedkar's proposal is no substitute for the panel system, and that under the guise of joint electorate it sets up an effective separate electorate. The proposal copies in my opinion all the worst features of the late Maulana Mahomed Ali's formula leaving out all its relieving features. In my opinion so long as the Harijans are filled with suspicion, and they have every reason to entertain suspicion, as to the conduct towards them of caste Hindus, they have a perfect right to have the first say in the choice of candidates, and for that, the panel system, in my opinion, cannot be excelled.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure
Copy to Dr. Sapru also

From a photostat: S.N. 21072

[1] *Vide* "The Yeravada Pact", 27-4-1933.

603. LETTER TO B. R. AMBEDKAR

April 27, 1933

DEAR DR, AMBEDKAR,

In accordance with my promise I send you herewith my opinion[2] on your proposal. I hope you do not mind my having dealt with the matter publicly. I thought that the issue raised by you was of such momentous importance that if I discussed it at all, I should do so publicly.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure

From a photostat: S.N. 21074

604. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

April 27, 1933

CHI. KAKA,

I heard the same news from Chandrashankar[1].I am happy to know that you are not permitted to read. Let them prevent you from reading, talking and dictating. Dr. Porter has emphasized this to a great extent and I feel there is a lot of truth in it.

You must be knowing that N. is here. Today one German lady Dr. Spiegel has arrived. I have asked for permission to send both of them to the Ashram. Today I sent a wire[2] to the Ashram. Chandrashankar will give you the details about the German lady and N.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9476. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

[1] Chandrashankar Pranshankar Shukla, Editor, *Horijanbandhu*

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Narandas Gandhi", 27-4-1933.

605. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

April 27, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I got your letter just now. N. Devi and her son are having their meal with me, and there will be some delay in their reaching your place. Kindly forgive me for that. I am asking Dr. Spiegel also to accompany them. I was very glad to read your letter. If you can be frank like this with me, I would feel no hesitation any time. on the one hand, there would be no limit to my begging as I am admittedly a beggar. But, while making immediate demands, I should also like to respect fully the donor's own inclination. I, therefore, always try to put the prospective donor at ease whenever I hold out my begging bowl.

I am first sending Shri Nair to the Servants of India Society and inquiring of them. If they can accommodate him, I will keep him there. In any case a car does have to come daily from there. This will mean only one trip more, and I don't think there will be any difficulty about that. I will not fail to avail myself of your offer if there is any difficulty.

I did not know about the mangoes. I do not eat them regularly, but generally depend on papaya. I will ask Sardar and let you know how the mangoes were. However, I do not want you to worry about such small matters. None of us has a delicate palate. We eat what we get and offer thanks to God.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4829. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

606. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 27, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got the big post yesterday. You must have received the long letter which I dictated for you yesterday. I very much liked your letter which arrived in the big post. You have exercised good restraint in your language. There are signs of impatience here and there, but not much to speak of. Your reply is pointed and brief. I did not require it at all, but, since I have received it, it will help me to pacify Chhaganlal. It will not be necessary for me now to send his complaints to you. I will struggle with him in my own way, and try to remove his error. I will not waste your time, I have wasted enough of it.

I suppose you have read Shri Rajbhoj's[1] letter. I liked it very much. He says in it that we have used more logic than the heart in dealing with Ramji[2]. Since you have welcomed his suggestion, the problem is over. Rajbhoj may be mistaken in his view. But it is also possible that we have been at fault. We should be able to prove to an inpartial Harijan the correctness of our treatment of Ramji in all respects. I am writing this not to find fault with anybody, but only to suggest how we should behave in future. How can I blame anybody without knowing all the facts? Read the letter[3] to Rajbhoj which I am going to write. He has suggested a change in the hour for the prayer.

That suggestion also deserves careful consideration. His argument is that everybody should get time to answer the call of nature immediately after getting up. He has, therefore, suggested that 45 minutes should be set apart for this purpose instead of 20 as at present. This is what he says:

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This suggestion was made even before. But Rajbhoj has put it in

[1] P. N. Rajbhoj, a Harijan leader

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[3] *Vide* "Letter to P.N. Rajbhoj", 27-4-1933.

a new way. He seems to be a thoughtful man. He is a fresh worker and is alert, and I also see in him good power of observation. He has discrimination, too. You should, therefore, have a long talk with him first and if you see some point in his suggestion, make the change suggested by him. It was I who insisted on the prayer being kept at 4.20—and I still insist on it—but the lesson of experience should prevail. If so many persons require to answer the call of nature before coming to the prayer, 45 minutes should be allowed for the purpose. Anyone who does not feel the need may use the time in any way he likes. If you decide to make the change, I will make some suggestions about the prayer. The chief thing is that you should have a detailed discussion with Rajbhoj.

His other suggestion is as follows:

> A meeting of all new workers should be held at least twice in a month. In these meetings there should be discussions as to how they should work, how they should serve meals, what the *Mangalprabhat* discourses are about, the significance of the vow of silence, etc. I have often observed that the volunteers who serve meals do not do their work courteously and patiently, they throw the vegetables down so carelessly that they fall outside the plate and they let the milk spill over, or serve these items in more than, or even less than, the required quantity. Those who are entrusted with washing the floor are so impatient to finish their work that they show no regard for slow-eaters and drops of water splash on the latter. It is the duty of the chief of this section to explain to the-volunteers from time to time how they should work.

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observed *rotlis* being thrown into the plate as if at a beggar, and milk being spilled on the floor. And even while a fairly good number of people were still eating, the volunteers used to start washing the floor.

Inquire about this and do whatever is possible. I had a letter from . . .[1] and I have replied to him. He is not likely to come round as quickly as I had thought. He also feels troubled about . . .[2] and I have, therefore, replied to him that all of them have decided to leave the Ashram of their own accord. Even now they can stay on if they are ready to observe the Ashram rules. I have even advised that . . . should come and stay in the Ashram for some time. Have a talk with . . . . The key is held by him. If he comes, I will be relieved. But I certainly wish that, if he comes, he should do so with a full sense of his responsibility.

I am eagerly awaiting your reply regarding N. If she is to come to the Ashram, I don't wish to detain her here longer. If you have not written to me about this before you get this letter, send me a wire.

You say in your letter that Narahari has written to me. But the post received from you did not contain any letter from him. Did he post his letter separately? or is it that he intended' to write but forgot to do so?

I have found Narahari's letter in the post received today after I had written this letter.

I am sending a wire[3] about N. and Dr. Margaret Spiel.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8364. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] The names have been omitted.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Narandas Gandhi", 27-4-1933.

APPENDIX

EXTRACTS FROM DR. G. V. DESHMUKH'S LETTER TO GANDHIJI[1]

Between carrion of an healthy animal and slaughtered meat there is no chemical or physiological difference. . . .

In the slaughter of animals, the animal bleeds and nearly all the blood being drained away, the slaughtered meat contains less blood. In the case of carrion, all the blood remains in the tissues of the animal and consequently the meat contains more blood.

Decomposition sets in in every dead animal, whether killed or dead naturally. This decomposition is liable to set in earlier in moist tissues and tissues containing more blood. Carrion, therefore, is liable to decompose earlier than slaughtered meat . . . .

You might possibly think that meat, when it starts decomposing, is universally rejected by human beings as food. It is not only the depressed classes of our country who partake of decomposing meat, but this practice is not uncommon in other parts of the world. Gypsies in Europe have been known to be fond of this practice; they go to the extent of even disinterring the dead carcasses of buried animals for food purposes. Decomposing fish is estimated to be an article of diet of more than three hundred millions of human beings in the world. . . .

DISEASED MEAT: But all this is in the case of healthy animals. This cannot hold good in the case of diseased animals. Many epidemics of meat poisoning have occurred in the West which have been proved to be due to eating of meat from diseased animals, and the diseases in animals which lead to poisoning are not the prominent diseases in cattle which kill them, such as Anthrax and Glanders, but common, pus-producing diseases which do not attract so much attention in life. Hence the necessity of meat inspection in all civilized countries. In Indian villages where this practice of eating carcasses is more common, it will be seen how dangerous this practice is likely to be, on account of animals dying of diseases to which no importance is attached but which are particularly dangerous to human beings. . . .

The meat of poisoned cattle is not poisonous to eat. . . . Poison is used by the Red Indians of America, also the Akas Tribe near Brahmaputra, in hunting for food with poisoned arrows, but the meat of this poisoned animal is eaten by them without any detriment to health.

Probably the poison used in India is strychnine (*kuchala*) for killing cattle, but the meat of the dead animal is not poisonous to eat. Experiments have been carried on animals, such as dogs, by feeding them on poisoned meat of the animals killed by vegetable poison such as strychnine, escerine, pilocarpine, veratrine and

[1] *Vide* " Letter to Dr. G.V. Deshmikh", Before 7-4-1933

mineral poisons such as arsenic and antimony; and meat in all these cases has proved to be harmless. The explanation is that, although the poison is strong enough to kill the animal, the poison is further oxidised into a harmless product and the meat, therefore, remains harmless. In the case of mineral poisons and caustics, very little is absorbed into the system of animals and the meat, therefore, contains very little of the mineral poison. Meat of poisoned animals, therefore, is harmless for eating purposes.

Harijan, 8-4-1933

1. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 27, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

This is Thursday morning before prayer. Your letter came in yesterday with Ba's.

A book on Astronomy is being sent to you. I enclose also a map for the month. You will find herewith so Dr. Saunders's[1] letter. It is satisfactory on the whole.

Letter for Ba will also accompany this.

You may pursue the conduct of the Ashram as much as you like. It won't tire me. It will assist me. It will enable you to understand my viewpoint better. You must not accuse yourself of want of faith in me or my wisdom because you do not see a point of mine at once or because having seen it you cannot agree with me. I am not a perfect being. Why should you see eye to eye with me in my errors? That would be blind faith. Your faith in me should enable you to detect my true error much quicker than a fault-finder. What I would like your faith to do is that when you cannot convince me of my error you should think that it is likely that I see more clearly than you do in matters where I have thought and experienced more. That would give you peace of mind. Therefore you should not paralyse your thought by suppressing your doubts and torturing yourself that you do not agree with my view in particular things. You should therefore pursue the discussion of the Ashram till you have the clearest possible grasp of all my ideas about it.

You need not have argued about the man being the worse sinner of the two. I have always held that view against most, if not all, of my male friends who have expressed their opinion on the point. of course I agree with you also that man's superiority, if it is that, over the brute creation, consists in his capacity for observing *brahmacharya.* It must therefore be an Ashram ideal to be attained immediately if that were possible.

There is therefore complete agreement. between us so far as the fundamental thing is concerned. The difficulty or the difference

[1] The specialist at London who had treated Mirabehn for tubercular glands in 1907. *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Arthur Saunders", 5-3-1933.

comes in when we begin to devise ways and means of encompassing the ideal.

I am becoming more and more confirmed in the view that it must go on as it is now doing, with ample liberty to the manager to regulate fresh admissions. Our life should become daily simpler and not more complex. We should be progressively more self-restrained. But we should remain a composite family that we now are.

The present composition is not the hindrance. The hindrance is that we have so few real complete *brahmacharis.* All were broken vessels, all had their own individual passions to conquer. But I hold that most of them were and are sincere strivers. Therefore we are blind leaders of the blind and ever stumbling. When some of us have, by constant striving, become at least matriculates in the effort, we shall certainly do better. Therefore the problem resolves itself into each one of us striving to the utmost to approach the ideal. Remember my definition of *brahmacharya.* It means not suppression of one or more senses but complete mastery over them all. The two states are fundamentally different. I can suppress all my senses today but it may take aeons to conquer them. Conquest means using them as my willing slaves. I can prick the ear-drum and suppress the sense of hearing by a simple, painless operation. This is worthless. I must train the ear so that it refuses to hear gossip, lewd talk, blasphemy, but it. is open to the celestial music, it will hear the most distant cry for succour from thousands of miles. Saint Ramdas is said to have done so. Then how [to] use the organs of generation? By transmuting the most creative energy that we possess from creating counterparts of our flesh into creating constructive work for the whole of life, i.e., for the soul. We have to rein in the animal passion and change it into celestial passion. Read here Chapter II, Verse 64, of the *Gita.* The burden of the Divine Song is not "fly from the battle but face it without attachment". Therefore you and I and every one of us have to stand unmoved in the midst of all kinds of men and women. There is no physical seclusion except temporarily for some. The Ashram is all right where it is but we must branch out for larger growth. But that would be a natural evolution coming in its own time.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W, 6269. Courtesy: Mirabehn

2. LETTER TO HARRY BOWMAN

April 27, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your long letter[1].

I had one visit from Miss Mayo when she was in India. I have read her book and I wrote also a review[2] on it which at that time had attracted considerable attention. It is my firm conviction that the book is filled with half-truths, innuendos and deductions drawn from stray facts as if they represented a universal situation.

Yours sincerely,

HARRY BOWMAN, ESQ.

BEATRICE, NEBRASKA [U.S.A.]

From a photostat: S.N. 19055; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. IV, p. 379

3. LETTER TO YVONNE PRIVAT

April 27, 1933

MY DEAR BHAKTI,

I was delighted to have your letter which you consider is long and which for us is too short. I see that you are one in your happiness. You are one also in your erosion though you tell me that both of you had the 'flu, at the same time. You still remain the strangest pair I have ever had the good fortune to meet. one reads of such couples in Persian poetry but does not meet them in flesh and blood. May you for ever remain inseparables.

Yes, I know, you in Europe are going through very hard tinues, both economically and spiritually. But I believe literally in the Biblical saying that "God would not destroy Sodom and Gomorrah so long as there is one good man the" I know that you have in Europe true men and women in all the odd nooks and corners of the Continent. I, therefore, feel that-in the end all will be well.

[1] Dated March 12, 1933 (S.N. 19009), expressing his indignation at Katherine Mayo's *Mother India.* The addressee had written: ". . . advise me if Miss Mayo sticks to truth in this deplorable bool or is she only after publicity money. . . ."

[2] *Vide* "Drain Inspector's Report", 15-9-1927.

I am glad you have got a copy of my little book, *Guide to Health.* It is an indifferent translation and then there are some chapters I would like to revise, and if at all I get the time and permission, I would certainly do so.

Nature cure has made great strides since Kuhne's time, and I should like to incorporate the results of new experiments. We are all keeping well, and all of us send you and Anand[1] our love. I do hear from Mira every week and write to her in return. To correspond with me every week she forgoes the pleasure of writing to and meeting other friends. I will certainly convey your love to her. A letter is going to her today.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

[PS.]

Love from Mahadev who is being released on the 19th May.

From a photostat: G.N. 2336

4. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

April 27, 1933

MY DEAR C. R.,

I wish that under the coloured chart you had given the figures for the population of the respective castes and divisions and as there is no hurry of publishing the chart, I would like you to give me that information. I could find it myself but I do not know your own figures. They may not be quite what I would find.

In your letter you have said nothing about Narasimhan[2] or Papa[3]. I expect to see Devdas tomorrow.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR

From a photostat: S.N. 19052

[1] Son and daughter of the addressee
[2] Edmond Privat, husband of the addressee
[3] *ibid*

5. LETTER TO G. R. KHAN

April 27, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1] together with the enclosures. I send you herewith a letter to my son. I have written to him already directly, You will see that in my letter to my son I have asked him to introduce you to Messrs Sorabji & Pather. I am not therefore sending you separate letters of introduction. In my letter to my son I have also mentioned Seth Omer Jhaveri.

Yours sincerely,

MR. G. R. KHAN

H. H. THE AGA KHAN,S BUNGALOW

NESBIT ROAD, MAZAGAON, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. I 9054

6. LETTER TO HARKISENDAS

April 27, 1933

MY DEAR HARKISENDAS,

Sjt. Sastri, whom the office sent me as shorthand assistant is leaving me at the end of this month. Having got from Advocate Bhulabhai's son his typist, I am disengaging Sastri two or three days earlier so that he can attend to what little things he has to in Bombay, but you will please pay him his pay to the end of the month.

I have-not yet heard from Sjt. Dhirubhai how he has sent his typist to me. I shall therefore write to you later about the terms under which the new stenographer is to work. Of course in no case will he cost the Board more than Sastri, but I am expecting that he will cost less.

Sastri is leaving me only because he wants to attend to his old father and family affairs, not having gone there for some years. Latterly, he lost a brother-in-law. But he would gladly like to be able

[1] Dated April 25, 1933, in which the addressee had asked Gandhiji to write to Manilal Gandhi to obtain legal opinion on "whether a Mahomedan making a will against Islamic Law can be held valid in the Supreme Court at Duraban" (S.N. 19039).

to return if he fails to get something better inside of four months. His wants are much larger than Rs. 100 but he knows that at the present moment even Rs. 100 is. a considerable sum. This is merely for your information.

If at the end of four months or earlier I cannot keep the present typist on any account and if Sastri is free to come, I would naturally take him back. He has given me full satisfaction.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19056

7. LETTER TO J. D. JENKINS

April 27, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for an inscribed copy of Jeans's *The Stars in Their Courses.* I had a glance at it before, but of course I shall prize the book you have sent me. I see it is interspersed with marginal pencil lines. The passage that you have marked at page 152 had, when I first read the book, made a good impression on me.

As I was finishing your letter and leaving aside the book for the moment, I saw that the copy comes out of your own collection. I shall prize the book all the more for that knowledge.

Yours sincerely,

J. D. JENKINS, ESQ.
HAMMERTON HOUSE
23 KAHUN ROAD
POONA

From a photostat: S.N. 19057

8. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

April 27, 1933

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

I enclose herewith my opinion[1] on Dr. Ambedkar's proposal to revise the Yeravda Pact in so far as the panel system is concerned. I

[1] *Vide* "The Yeravda Pact", 27-4-1933.

hope you will agree with me that Dr. Ambedkar's proposal is no substitute for the panel system, and that under the guise of joint electorate it sets up an effective separate electorate. The proposal copies in my opinion all the worst features of the late Maulana Mahomed Ali's formula leaving out all its relieving features. In my opinion so long as the Harijans are filled with suspicion, and they have every reason to entertain suspicion, as to the conduct towards them of caste Hindus, they have a perfect right to have the first say in the choice of candidates, and for that, the panel system, in my opinion, cannot be excelled.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure

Copy to Dr. Sapru also

From a photostat: S.N. 21072

9. LETTER TO B. R. AMBEDKAR

April 27, 1933

DEAR DR, AMBEDKAR,

In accordance with my promise I send you herewith my opinion[1] on your proposal. I hope you do not mind my having dealt with the matter publicly. I thought that the issue raised by you was of such momentous importance that if I discussed it at all, I should do so publicly.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure

From a photostat: S.N. 21074

10. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

April 27, 1933

CHI. KAKA,

I heard the same news from Chandrashankar[2].I am happy to know that you are not permitted to read. Let them prevent you from reading, talking and dictating. Dr. Porter has emphasized this to a

[1] *Vide* "The Yeravda Pact", 27-4-1933.

[2] Chandrashankar Pranshankar Shukla, Editor, *Horijanbandhu*

great extent and I feel there is a lot of truth in it.

You must be knowing that N. is here. Today one German lady Dr. Spiegel has arrived. I have asked for permission to send both of them to the Ashram. Today I sent a wire[1] to the Ashram. Chandrashankar will give you the details about the German lady and N.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9476. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

11. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

April 27, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I got your letter just now. N. Devi and her son are having their meal with me, and there will be some delay in their reaching your place. Kindly forgive me for that. I am asking Dr. Spiegel also to accompany them. I was very glad to read your letter. If you can be frank like this with me, I would feel no hesitation any time. on the one hand, there would be no limit to my begging as I am admittedly a beggar. But, while making immediate demands, I should also like to respect fully the donor's own inclination. I, therefore, always try to put the prospective donor at ease whenever I hold out my begging bowl.

I am first sending Shri Nair to the Servants of India Society and inquiring of them. If they can accommodate him, I will keep him there. In any case a car does have to come daily from there. This will mean only one trip more, and I don't think there will be any difficulty about that. I will not fail to avail myself of your offer if there is any difficulty.

I did not know about the mangoes. I do not eat them regularly, but generally depend on papaya. I will ask Sardar and let you know how the mangoes were. However, I do not want you to worry about such small matters. None of us has a delicate palate. We eat what we get and offer thanks to God.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4829. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Narandas Gandhi", 27-4-1933.

12. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 27, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got the big post yesterday. You must have received the long letter which I dictated for you yesterday. I very much liked your letter which arrived in the big post. You have exercised good restraint in your language. There are signs of impatience here and there, but not much to speak of. Your reply is pointed and brief. I did not require it at all, but, since I have received it, it will help me to pacify Chhaganlal. It will not be necessary for me now to send his complaints to you. I will struggle with him in my own way, and try to remove his error. I will not waste your time, I have wasted enough of it.

I suppose you have read Shri Rajbhoj's[1] letter. I liked it very much. He says in it that we have used more logic than the heart in dealing with Ramji[2]. Since you have welcomed his suggestion, the problem is over. Rajbhoj may be mistaken in his view. But it is also possible that we have been at fault. We should be able to prove to an inpartial Harijan the correctness of our treatment of Ramji in all respects. I am writing this not to find fault with anybody, but only to suggest how we should behave in future. How can I blame anybody without knowing all the facts? Read the letter[3] to Rajbhoj which I am going to write. He has suggested a change in the hour for the prayer.

That suggestion also deserves careful consideration. His argument is that everybody should get time to answer the call of nature immediately after getting up. He has, therefore, suggested that 45 minutes should be set apart for this purpose instead of 20 as at present. This is what he says:

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[2] A Harijan weaver in the Ashram

[3] *Vide* "Letter to P.N. Rajbhoj", 27-4-1933.

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observed *rotlis* being thrown into the plate as if at a beggar, and milk being spilled on the floor. And even while a fairly good number of people were still eating, the volunteers used to start washing the floor.

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I am eagerly awaiting your reply regarding N. If she is to come to the Ashram, I don't wish to detain her here longer. If you have not written to me about this before you get this letter, send me a wire.

You say in your letter that Narahari has written to me. But the post received from you did not contain any letter from him. Did he post his letter separately? or is it that he intended' to write but forgot to do so?

I have found Narahari's letter in the post received today after I had written this letter.

I am sending a wire[3] about N. and Dr. Margaret Spiel.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8364. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] The names have been omitted.

[2] *Vide*"Telegram to Narandas Gandhi", 27-4-1933.

13. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

April [*27*][1]*, 1933*

CHI. NARAHARI,

What is the matter with Mohan? What is wrong with his hands? What is the cause, according to the doctor, of their becoming powerless? I did not worry about him so far, thinking that he suffered from ordinary fever; but now I feel a little worried and want to understand what exactly is the trouble with his hands.

I have read your letter to Narandas. I liked some of the suggestions you have made in it. I suggest that you should discuss the subject with Narandas. It was of course good that a meeting was held, but the person who is expected to execute them should understand them fully. I should like unity of hearts between you, if that is possible. I fail to notice it at present. Try your best to bring it about. Do not give up the attempt in despair.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9059

14. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

April 27, 1933

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

You kept me waiting a long time for your letter which I have now received.

You do not seem to have had any letter from Satyavati. Do not be impatient. I hope you have realized that even if your parents give their consent to your proposal for marriage I will have to obtain permission. If I do not get such permission, the wedding ceremony cannot be performed here. But you may of course come to ask for my blessings. If Chaturbhai comes along, I will certainly see him.

If Devidutt etc. are there, they as well as you should tell any guests who may arrive that no provision has been made by the Ashram for the necessary expenditure on the facilities to be provided

[1] From the reference to addressee's letter to Narandas Gandhi; *vide* the preceding item.

to guests. So, everyone who comes will have to meet his or her own expense of staying, or will have to get the required amount from the Ashram. We have no right to stay in any way other than that. We cannot lead a pure life in any other way. Even if a person like Pantji sends anyone, you may ask him, too, whether or not he or she will bear his or her own expense. Just now, you have to learn the art of living within the limit of your estimated expense and cultivate the habit of plain speaking for that purpose. We are beggars and not rich people; servants and not masters.

The Devidutt Brothers have no right to ask for Rs. 60 from us if they cannot get that much from elsewhere. The people who live with us should be persons of abstemious habits. They should, therefore, be content with less from us than what they would get elsewhere. If they get more elsewhere, by all means they should go there. You see the truth of this, don't you? You will certainly get servants to help you in your work. They will look after the Ashram and also cultivate the land.

It is necessary to be moderate in spending money even in the field of service. I think you are not at present keeping good health to be able to take up the secretaryship of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. Be content with what you can do without taking it up. Let me know how you are keeping. We will consider other things later. It will also have to be seen how you keep after your marriage. For the present, it is advisable that you have all your time to yourself.

I have not the least desire to dispose off the Ashram lands. However, if the Ashram buildings become too costly to keep, we may sell them off and put up huts on the remaining land. Jamnalalji is now out of prison. Do as he advises.

Give up your rather fond desire to call over Ramdas there. If he comes of his own accord, it would be a different matter.

Does the Bengali gentleman live there at his own expense? It is good that Navin feels at home there. He does not work beyond his strength, does he? I do have a machine for shredding vegetables in mind. As for a machine for grinding groundnut, we do have one. However, I would not think of spending money on buying such things. If, however, the expense can be incurred without inconvenience, I would not deliberately avoid buying them.

Inter-dining and inter-marriage is not an essential part of *varnashrama.* It is and has always been a subject unconnected with

varnashrama. One is not bound to eat or marry where one does not wish to. However, one does not violate one's dharma merely by eating where it is convenient for him or her to do so or by entering into a marriage relationship which he or she chooses as suitable for himself or herself; nor does he or she violate the principle of the *varna* system. This is all that I mean. There is no doubt that in practice more people limit themselves to eating and entering into marriage relationship with persons belonging to the same *varna*. It is quite right to say that *varna* has no place in a *sannyasi's* dharma.

Do not be tardy in writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33024

15. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

April 27, 1933

BHAI RAJBHOJ,

Your letter I find is very much to my liking. I have written[1] today to Narandas about this matter. Enquire from him fully and then write to me. It is bound to pain me if Ramji has not been treated generously. Do make yourself well acquainted with Mathuradas[2]. Mathuradas is gifted with great tolerance, he does not at all believe in untouchability. If in spite of this there has been some shortcoming in the treatment meted out to Ramji it shall of course be rectified. Mathuradas is a gentle, sacrificing and sensible man. He is quite capable of realizing his own mistakes; open out your heart to him too.

Now let me give you my experience of R.[3] I was responsible to a great extent in bringing him to the Ashram. I am very fond of him and Gangabehn; he has earned well in the Ashram. To my knowledge he has been paid adequately for his living. I have always instructed that people like R. should be paid liberally; but R. is greedy, hot-tempered and suspicious. It is extremely difficult to disabuse him of a notion once it gets into his head. You may take it that Lakshmidas[4] has become a Harijan. Someone asked his daughter Anandi as to her

[1] *Vide* "Leter to Narandas Gandhi", 27-4-1933.

[2] Mathuradas P. Asar

[3] The name has been omitted.

[4] Lakshmidas P. Asar

identity and she called herself a Harijan girl. This happened only recently. I know it that R. harassed Lakshmidas badly. I am not writing this to point out R.'s faults. He is just like a son to me. But you have evinced such interest in the well being of the Ashram and because I have found you to be simple-hearted, I am writing all this so that you may reach the correct conclusion and guide me.

I have replied[1] to several of your questions in *Harijan* [Sevak], which you must have seen. I now answer the rest of your questions. Spiritual progress is possible only through incessant effort. The study of philosophical works is helpful in the endeavour but I do not regard it essential because spiritual progress does not depend on the intellect but on the heart. The people were unlettered in ancient times but nobody holds the view that none of them could be spiritually advanced. We have had hundreds of saints, they were not all learned men. Jesus, Mahomed and others were unlettered. It should not at all be taken to imply that I am opposed to formal learning but the importance given to it today is beyond proportion. Hence I express my opinion whenever questions about learning are asked.

In my opinion Malaviyaji's and Dr. Moonje's aim in teaching the *mantras* and so on is the same as that of the Arya Samajists, but untouchability has become so deep-rooted in the Hindu world that mere teaching of the *mantras* would not suffice. They may teach the *mantras*, or do whatever they please, but who can bring round the Hindus? We have not yet reached the stage when this act will necessarily carry conviction with the public. Even the *shuddhi* performed by the Arya Samaj does not go very far although there is certainly some effect. Now we notice that the poison of untouchability has spread among the Indian Christians too. God willing, we shall, by strenuous effort and even more strenuous penance, remove this widespread poison. The *yajna* started in September last[2] has not come to an end but is still continuing, it can end only when untouchability is eradicated and no one is considered touchable or untouchable, high or low by birth.

It is good that letters from Thakkar Bapa and Kakasaheb keep coming. Do ask unhesitatingly whatever doubts arise in your mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 785

[1] *Vide* "Five Questions on Varnadharma", 21-4-1933.

[2] The reference is to the fast which Gandhiji began on September 20, 1932.

16. WHY NOT `ARYA'?

A friend writes:[1]

Perhaps the correspondent does not know about the origin of the term 'Harijan'. I must ask him to go through the first number[2] of *Harijan Sevak* and see how the term originated. The term 'Harijan' was suggested by a friend who is a Harijan himself and I accepted it. The term has not been coined with a view to perpetuating the separate identity of Harijans. They have a separate identity today and a separate label to describe them. The term 'untouchable' savours of contempt. We wish to eradicate untouchability and it is not right to go on using the term 'untouchable'. But in so far as untouchables have a distinct identity we must have a name by which to call them. Having accepted the necessity for such a name, what name to choose? In my view we can find no better name than 'Harijan'. 'Arya' will not do because it is the name of a sect. A general name 'Hindu' is already there. The pity is that today a separate identity of the so-called untouchables is necessary. In Government offices they have a separate list. Everywhere they are kept separate. Let us pray that this separateness may be done away with so that all of us may become fit to be called 'Harijans'— men of God. A friend rightly said that today caste Hindus have become 'Arijans'—enemies of Hinduism.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 28-4-1933

17. FIVE QUESTIONS BY A YOUTH

A youth asks the following five questions:

1. When it is our claim that there is no caste among the Hindus which can be called untouchables, why should we fight unnecessarily over this word?

2. When it is our contention that varna is determined by the nature of work, why should we not reform the work of the so-called untouchables? When their work is degrading, what is the point in fighting with the higher varnas by taking sides with the untouchables?

3. When untouchability can be abolished through inter-dining and intermarriage, why should we not resort to these too?

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had suggested that it would be more appropriate to call the untouchables 'Arya' rather than 'Harijans'.

[2] Dated February 23, *vide* Why *Harijan*", 23-2-1933.

4. Can the question of temple-entry by Harijans be not solved by building separate temples for them?

5. Will the orthodox allow Harijans to enter temples when the temple-entry Bills are passed?

I hope you will be able to set my doubts at rest.

Whether I shall succeed or not, I do not know. But I shall certainly try to satisfy that youth and others like him. Success lies in the hands of God.

1. The claim that there is no such caste as untouchables is made by the reformers, not by the sanatanists. Unfortunately, the caste Hindus have dubbed several Hindu castes as untouchables. And today in Government offices also these castes are entered as untouchables. Therefore, so long as we are not able to convince our sanatanist brothers, it becomes the duty of the reformers to fight for the abolition of this caste-born untouchability.

2. Whether varna is determined by work or otherwise, is a question which does not arise here. Therefore I am leaving it. Those who wish to know my opinion in this matter should please read the previous issue[1] of *Harijan Sevak*. So far as the work of the so-called untouchables is concerned, if by reform of their work it is meant that they should give up their trades, it is not only unnecessary but also harmful, because these trades are of the nature of public service. The washerman, the barber, the cobbler, the Dom[2], the scavenger are all true servants of the people. If they were to give up their work, the people would be doomed. The reformers believe that in treating these people as untouchables, caste Hindus have made a mistake. It is the firm conviction of the reformer that the work of the scavenger and the Dom is sacred. It is the duty of the caste Hindus to improve their work. The mother removes the excrement and does the washing. The doctor cuts flesh, bone and skin. But the mother and the doctor do their work neatly and wash themselves afterwards. While doing their work they become untouchable. We should treat scavengers, etc., in exactly the same way. Just as mothers and the doctors are not untouchables by birth, so also the sweeper and others are not born untouchables, even though while doing their work they may be untouchable. When we look upon the sweeper and others as our

[1] *Vide* "Five Questions on Varnadharma", 21-4-1933.

[2] The lowest among Harijans working at cremation-grounds

equals, we will not segregate them from ourselves; on the other hand we shall embrace them with love and we will endeavour to improve their work and their condition. Today, in segregating them we perpetrate tyranny on them. We do commit violence against them, offend society and bring into contempt the fundamental principles of Hinduism. Therefore, it becomes our sacred duty to work for the cause of the Harijans.

3. I do not agree that inter-dining and intermarriage can bring emancipation to anyone. Inter-dining and intermarriage are a separate question. It has no connection with caste or untouchability. It has a separate code. In any case, removal of untouchability as we have defined it today does not include inter-dining and intermarriage.

4. When we consider it our duty to remove untouchability, why should we build separate temples for Harijans? They have as much right to worship in common temples as others have.

5. No one ever said that with the mere passing of the Bills the orthodox will permit the Harijans to enter temples. But the existing law is such that even if one Hindu among the orthodox raises an objection, no public temple can be thrown open to the Harijans. When the Bill is passed this obstruction can certainly disappear.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 28-4-1933

18. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

April 28, 1933

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

I have several applications for financial assistance from Harijan students but I feel perplexed without an Education Board whose formation I have suggested. Will you please set up one as quickly as possible and announce the appointment, constitution and rules?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19059

19. LETTER TO T. TITUS

April 28, 1933

MY DEAR TITUS,

I cannot recall any letter of yours remaining unanswered. You must, therefore, repeat your questions and I shall gladly answer. I shall search my file and if I discover any letters I shall give my reply without waiting for a copy of your previous questions.

You have missed my point about 'Allopathic' and 'Homoeopathic'. Personally I would prefer Homoeopathy any day to Allopathy. Only I have no personal experience of its efficacy and I have told you so. Perhaps if you-have confidence in yourself, and if you can really spare time from the daily work for attending to Homoeopathic remedies, so far as I am concerned I do not mind your trying them. You may discuss this thing with Narandas and if you are interested in the simple treatment of diseases I would like you to understand Dr. Sharma's system. He has great confidence in his own method and if his experiments in the Ashram succeed it will be a great gain.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19060

20. LETTER TO MRS. A. S. CHAUDHARY [1]

April 28, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

It is very difficult for me to say anything on the strength of the scrappy letter that you have sent me. I would, therefore, advise you to see Seth Jajuji of Wardha and secure his recommendation. Then I will have to send your papers to the Central Board and your application

[1] Presumably in reply to the addressee's letter (S.N. 21061) dated April 25, 1933, requesting grant for higher studies at Delhi

will be considered by them. You will give Seth Jajuji as much information as you can about yourself.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. A. S. CHAUDHARY
NAWI WASTI, NAGPUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 19061

21. LETTER TO RAMCHANDRA

April 28, 1933

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRA,

I have your letter of the 25th instant.

You are asking me to do something which I cannot do at the moment. I would ask you, therefore, to study carefully the pages of the *Harijan* and I think you will understand from them my idea of 'Reformed Hinduism'. I always believe in a concrete programme. We have this in the big untouchability work. If we succeed in tackling that root of all evil in Hinduism, the rest will be incredibly simple and easy The work of reformation will proceed apace as soon as many of us realize that we must concentrate our energy on that single reform. You will see how I have dealt with your question about a model temple[1].

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19062

22. LETTER TO DUNCAN GREENLEES

April 28, 1933

I have your letter.

I understand and appreciate all you say. I shall look forward to the report of your impressions. Let it be as critical and exhaustive as you can make it. So far as I am concerned there is no limit to your stay there. Indeed the longer you stay the better for the work that I would have from you whether under my direct guidance or in association with me.

[1] *Vide* "A Model Temple", 29-4-1933.

I do not mind that you are not likely to go to Madanapalli. As you have reduced your wants to uttermost simplicity, there can be no dearth of work for you to your liking.

I am glad you visited the Harijan quarters with Bhagwanji[1]. I have seen many. No description, therefore, staggers me. I know how Herculean the task is before me but then I have an excuse because I am one of the many tools in the hands of God. My concern is, therefore, to keep myself a fit instrument to be found ready to do His command at a moment's call. Dr. Sharma's idea always has been mine and that is why I took charge of Lakshmi[2] so many years ago, almost inside of an year of my arrival here,[3] and I have been teaching as many Harijans as I could lay my hands on. Several have been already fixed up in life but that too is a big job. It is so difficult to keep them even though they are given to you by their parents. I am not surprised at all these untoward results in several cases and, as you very properly say, it is all due to the sin of the caste Hindus.

Of course it does not do to go for the dirty boys. Neither they nor their parents know any better and those that have some notion of hygiene and cleanliness have no convenience for conforming to the laws of hygiene. I am glad you are there during Dr. Sharma's visit. I would like you to know him and his message. If it is substantial it would be a great thing fox serving public institutions. I am a fanatical believer in nature's methods and I never missed an opportunity of having a training. Whatever I know has been picked up from books. I was never able to read from page to page but I made copious experiments on myself and my companions, and have very much benefited from those methods. I have been always anxious to secure someone who would share my idea and develop the method in the interest of the poor. Dr. Sharma is reported to be the man and so he is at the Ashram. I would therefore like you to study the method in so far as he would let you do so.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 21078

[1] Bhagwanji P. Pandya
[2] Daughter of Dudabhai Dafda
[3] In October 1920; *vide* "Speech to Students and Teachers, Surat", 6-10-1920.

23. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 28, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I do not have time just now to write a long letter. I got your postcard. N.'s son is five years old and is mischievous. Were he not so, he is capable of looking after himself. If, therefore, you hesitate to admit her because of him you need not hesitate. Personally I hope that both the mother and the son will be able to adapt themselves to the condition there very well. If N.'s sinful life in the past has a share in your hesitation, have no fear in taking her in. Vallabhbhai has interpreted your postcard to mean that you are not against admitting her but have merely expressed your fear. I have interpreted it to mean that you do not wish to take her in. However that may be, I must be cautious. If, therefore, I do not receive a clear reply to my yesterday's wire[1], I will await the reply to this letter. Reply by wire. Read all the accompanying letters before passing them on.

BAPU

[PS.]

Letters for Kusum, Parachure, Duncan and Titus.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8365. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

24. NOTES

INCONSISTENCIES?

A correspondent who is a diligent student of my writings finds it difficult to reconcile my recent writings about inter-caste dining and inter-caste marriage and corresponding writings of some years ago.

He quotes from my article[2] on "Hinduisum" contributed to *Young India* of 6th October 1921. I give the quotation below with his omissions:

> Though, therefore, varnashrama is not affected by inter-dining and intermarriage, Hinduism does most emphatically discourage inter-dining and

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Narandas Gandhi", 27-4-1933.
[2] *Vide* "Notes", 6-10-1921.

> intermarriage between divisions. Hinduism reached the highest limit of self-restraint. It is undoubtedly a religion of renunciation of the flesh, so that the spirit may be set free. . . . By restricting his choice of a bride to a particular group, he exercises rare self-restraint. . . . Prohibition against intermarriage and inter-dining is essential for a rapid evolution of the soul.

And then he quotes from my statement[1] dated the 4th November last year, which was circulated to the Press. I give the quotation again with his omissions:

> Restriction on inter-caste dining and inter-caste marriage is no part of Hindu religion. It is a social custom which crept into Hinduism when perhaps it was in its decline.... Today these two prohibitions are weakening Hindu society, and emphasis on them has turned the attention of mass mind from the fundamentals which are vital to life's growth.... Dining and marriage restrictions stunt Hindu society.

As I read them with a detached mind, I find no contradiction between the two statements, especially if they are read in their full context. In the statement of 1921, I wrote on Hinduism and gave the briefest outline of it. On the 4th of November, I had to apply myself to the innumerable castes and caste restrictions. The mode of life in the Ashram in 1921 was absolutely the same as it is now. Therefore my practice has undergone no change. I still believe that restriction imposed by oneself upon inter-dining and intermarriage is an act of renunciation of the flesh. There is one word that perhaps I would change if I was writing the article of 1921 today. Instead of 'prohibition', I should repeat the expression used in the same article just a few lines before and say 'self-imposed restriction against intermarriage and inter-dining is essential for a rapid evolution of the soul'.

In spite of my statement of 4th November last, I would say that inter-dining and inter-caste marriage are in no way essential for the promotion of the spirit of brotherhood or for the removal of untouchability. At the same time, a super-imposed restriction would undoubtedly stunt the growth of any society, and to link these restrictions to varnadharma or caste is undoubtedly prejudicial to the freedom of the spirit and would make varna a drag upon religion. But having said this, I would like to say to this diligent reader of my writings and to others who are interested in them that I am not at all

[1] *Vide* "Statement on Untouchability-I", 4-11-1932.

concerned with appearing to be consistent. In my search after Truth I have discarded many ideas and learnt many new things. Old as I am in age, I have no feeling that I have ceased to grow inwardly or that my growth will stop at the dissolution of the flesh. What I am concerned with is my readiness to obey the call of Truth,' my God, from moment to moment, and therefore, when anybody finds any inconsistency between any two writings of mine, if he has still faith in my sanity, he would do well to choose the later of the two on the same subject.

Harijan, 29-4-1933

25. NOTES

CARRION-EATING

Sjt. Hiralal Shah has collected writings from different sources condemnatory of carrion-eating and showing how carrion-eating has repelled people.

His first text is from *Bhavprakash*, Part II, verse 88:

स्वयं मृतस्य चाबल्यमतीसारकरं गुरू

> The flesh of an animal dead from natural causes is debilitating, heavy and liable to cause diarrhoea.

From Kautilaya he sends me many elaborate rules from which I take the following:

> The flesh of animals which have been killed outside slaughter-houses . . . and the flesh of animals which have suddenly died shall not be sold.

From the *Ain-i-Akbari* Sjt. Shah sends me several texts recounting ten divisions among Hindus. The last division is classed as that of *Chandalas*, being 'low caste, eating carrion'.

The other quotations are from James Forbes's *Oriental Memoirs.* From these, I take the following:

> From the religious order of Brahmins, I descend to the caste of *Chandalas* or Pariahs. These people are considered so abject as to be employed in the vilest offices, and held in such detestation that no other tribe will touch them; and those Hindus who commit enormous crimes are excommunicated into this caste, which is considered to be a punishment worse than death.

Describing the Pulaiyas the author says:

> Constant poverty and accumulated misery have entirely debased the human form, and given a squalid and savage appearance to these unhappy beings. Yet debased and oppressed as the Pulaiyas are, there exists throughout

India a caste called Pariahs, still more abject and wretched. If a Pulaiya by any accident touches a Pariah, he must perform a variety of ceremonies and go through many ablutions, before he can be cleansed from the impurity . . . nor do they eat together; although the only difference in their epicurean banquet is that the Pulaiyas eat of all animal food, exceptbeef, and sometimes of that which dies of itself, the Pariahs not only feast upon dead carcasses, but eat beef and carrion of every kind.

Harijan, 29-4-1933

26. A MODEL TEMPLE

It was impossible that side by side with the-movement for temple-entry by Harijans there should not be a demand for temple reform. The modern Hindu temple is a hot-bed of superstition, as are more or less other 'Houses of God'. I published[1] the other day a letter from an American friend, gently pleading with me not to have anything to do with the temple-entry movement. A friend who is a devout follower of Islam has carried on a long correspondence with me, trying to do with me in his own way what the American friend did in his own. There is undoubtedly a great deal of substance in what they have said. But I have not been able to subscribe to their corollarythat the remedy for the abuse lies in the destruction of temples.

But by far the largest number of persons believe in the reform, not destruction, of' temples. I mentioned only the other day an ambitious scheme set on foot for a model temple in Rajkot.[2] Several correspondents have taken me to task for advocating temple-entry for Harijans without emphasizing the necessity of temple reform. There is no doubt that temple reform is necessary. But here, again, there is need for caution. Some of them think that it is possible to replace all the existing temples with new ones. I do not share that view. All temples will never be alike. They will always vary, as they have done in the past, with the varying human needs. What the reformer should be concerned with is a radical change more in the inward spirit than in the outward form If' the first is changed the second will take care of' itself: If' the first remains unchanged, the second, no matter how

[1] *Vide* "Are Temples Necessary?", 11-3-1933.
[2] *Vide* also "A Model Temple", 29-4-1933.

radically changed, will be like a whited sepulchre. A mausoleum, however beautiful, is a tomb and not a mosque, and a bare plot of consecrated ground may be a real Temple of God.

Therefore the first desideratum is the priest. My ideal priest must be a man of God. He must be a true servant of the people. He should have the qualifications of a guide, friend and philosopher to those among whom he is officiating. He must be a whole-timer with the least possible needs and personal ties.

He should be versed in the Shastras. His whole concern will be to look after the welfare of his people. I have not drawn a fanciful picture. It is almost true to life. It is based on the recollection of my childhood. The priest I am recalling was looked up to by the prince and the people. They flocked round him for advice and guidance in the time of their need.

If the sceptic says such a priest is hard to find nowadays, he would be partly right. But I would ask the reformer to wait for building the temple of his ideal till he finds his priest.

Meanwhile let him cultivate in himself the virtues he will have in the priest of his imagination. Let him expect these from the priests of existing temples. In other words, by his gentle and correct conduct, let him expect his immediate surroundings with the need of the times and let him have faith that his thought, surcharged with his own correct conduct, will act more powerfully than the mightiest dynamo. Let him not be impatient to see the result in a day. A thought may take years of conduct to evolve the requisite power. What are years or generations in the life of a great reform?

Now, perhaps, the reader will follow my view of a model temple. I can present him with no architect's plan and specification. Time is not ripe for it. But that does not baffle me and it need not baffle the reformer. He can choose the site for his future temple. It must be as extensive as he can get it. It need not be in the heart of a village or a city. It should be easily accessible to the Harijans and the other poor and yet it must not be in insanitary surroundings. If possible, it should be higher than its surroundings. In any case, I would aim at making the plinth of the actual temple as high as possible. And on this site I should select my plot for daily worship. Round this will come into being a school, a dispensary, a library, secular and religious. The school may serve also as a meeting or debating hall. I should have a dharmsala or guest house connected with the temple. Each one of

these will be a separate institution and yet subordinate to the temple and may be built simultaneously or one after another as circumstances and funds may permit. The buildings may or may not be substantial. If labour is voluntary, as it well may be, with mud and straw a beginning may be made at once. But the temple is not yet built. The foundation was laid when the site was procured, the plot for the temple was selected and the first prayer was offered. For the *Bhagavata* says, "Wherever people meet and utter His name from their hearts, there God dwells, there is His temple." The building, the deity, the consecration, is the province of the priest. When he is found, he will set about his task, but the temple began its existence from the time of the first prayer. And if it was the prayer of true men and women, its continuous progress was assured.

So much for the temple of the future. The reader who cares to study the Rajkot scheme will find that the outward form of my model temple materially corresponds to that in the scheme. Indeed, there is nothing new in my idea or the Rajkot scheme. The village temples of yore had almost all the adjuncts suggested by me.

But we must also deal with the existing temples. They can become real Houses of God today, if the worshippers will insist on the priests conforming to the ideal presented by me.

Harijan, 29-4-1933

27. HUMAN MANUFACTURE [*-I*]

The section regarding Depressed Classes in the Bengal Census Report, Part I, is an illuminating document, from which at the moment I reproduce only paragraphs 2 and 3 below, and I hope to occupy the reader's attention over this portion of the report for a week or two longer.

MEANING OF THE TERM 'DEPRESSED CLASSES'

> The expression 'Depressed Classes' is of comparatively recent coinage and is in many respects unfortunate. It does not translate an-y actual vernacular term in common use in Bengal, nor does it describe any class the members of which can be defined with accuracy. It is a term in itself indefinite. In European countries it is applied to the chronically indigent portion of the population and connotes an economic condition. It can be applied anthropologically in a psychological sense to describe that state of mind engendered in a primitive

people when it finds itself in contact with a dominant society based upon principles entirely different from and disregarding the traditionally accepted sactions of tribal life. This psychological condition has been convincingly put forward as one at least of the elements leading to the depopulation of Melenesia and it has an interesting counterpart in the 'discouragement' from which Mr. George Bernard Shaw makes visitors to the island die off in contact with the civilization of the ancients in "Back to Methuselah". In general use, however, the term in India, though not applying to exactly similar strata of population in different parts, is used to describe those members of the community who in common social estimation are considered to be inferior, degraded, outcaste, or not fit in any way for social and religious intercourse on reasonably equal terms with members of the clean or higher castes. It represents a problem which arises only within the fold of Hinduism, namely, the problem of those Hindu groups who by the accident of birth are denied and never can by any individual merit achieve social consideration or spiritual benefits which are the birth-right without consideration of personal merit equally of all persons born into the higher castes.

THE CRITERION OF THE DEPRESSED CLASSES

It is, however, by no means a simple matter to devise a satisfactory criterion by which to distinguish the Depressed Classes. The problem itself being essentially social and religious, the criteria, which have been at various times suggested, themselves depend upon social observance or social precedence. During the census of 1901 the castes in Bengal were distinguished into Seven groups upon an elaborate classification. The first group contained Brahmins only as the acknowledged superiors of all other classes in the caste hierarchy. In the second group were placed castes whose respectability was never in question and who are either twice-born or were held to be superior to all other Shudra castes. A third group consisted of the so-callcd *navashakha*, or nine branches, now indeed containing more than nine groups but all characterized by being held worthy to offer water the drinking of which would not pollute the higher classes. Below this third group were distinguished a fourth containing clean castes with degraded Brahmins; a fifth containing castes lower than group four whose water is not usually accepted, a sixth comprised low castes abstaining from beef, pork and fowls, and seventh embracing castes by whom forbidden food were eaten and who pursue the most degraded occupation as scavengers, etc. In 1911 the Census Commissioner for India directed provincial superintendents to enumerate castes and tribes returned as Hindus who do not conform to certain standards or are subject to certain disabilities, "leaving the reader to draw his own inferences". They were

asked to prepare a list of all but the minor castes which qua castes:

1. deny the supremacy of the Brahmins;
2. do not receive the mantra from a Brahmin or other recognized Hindu guru;
3. deny the authority of the Vedas;
4. do not worship the great Hindu gods;
5. are not served by good Brahmins as family priests;
6. have no Brahmin priests at all;
7. are denied access to the interior of Hindu temples;
8. cause pollution (a,) by touch, (b) within a certain distance;
9. bury their dead; or
10. eat beef and do not do reverence to cow.

The enquiry was intended to furnish material, if possible, from which an answer could be given to the difficult question: `Who is a Hindu?' Up to 1916 in Bengal at least the expression 'Depressed Classes' was unknown. In 1916 however the Bengal Government was invited to prepare a list of the Depressed Classes and submitted a list including certain criminal tribes and aboriginals and amounting in all to 31 groups This list was used by the Commissioner for Education in writing his quinquennial report on the progress of education in India for the years 1912-17. The term thusintroduced remained and both the Calcutta University Commission (1917-19) and the Census Report for 1921 contained lists of the Depressed Classes. In neither of these last instances, however, was any clear criterion set forth to show on what grounds the groups were included. The Indian Statutory Commission, without giving any definite criterion, referred to them as the "lowest castes recognized as being within the Hindu religious and social system . . . . Their essential characteristics is that according to the tenets of orthodox Hinduism, they are, though within the Hindu system, untouchable—that is to say, that for all other Hindus they cause pollution by touch and defile food and water. They are denied access to the interior of an ordinary Hindu temple (though this is also true of some who would not be classed as 'untouchable'). They are not only the lowest in the Hindu social and religious system, but with few individual exceptions are also at the bottom of the economic scale and are generally quite uneducated. In the villages they are normally segregated in a Separate quarter and not infrequently eat food which would not be touched by any section of the Hindu community."

At a later date the Franchise Committee, driven to lay down simple criteria, adopted No. 7 and 8 of the distinctions made in the Census Report of 1911. For Bengal these distinctions have been elaborated on behalf of the Depressed Classes Association as follows:

(a) castes from whose hands the three high castes or even the *navashakha* (that is, the caste Hindus) would not accept water and whose presence either in the kitchen or in the room where water and cooked food are kept would pollute the same according to their estimation;

(b) castes who would not be allowed into any public temple and whose presence there would defile articles of worship;

(c) castes who would not be allowed to enter or to have their meals inside the dining room of an hotel or eating-house run by caste Hindus;

(d) castes at whose socio-religious functions Shrotriya Brahmins (that is, the priests) officiating in such functions in the house of the caste Hindus would not officiate; and

(e) castes who would not be served by the Shrotriya Napit (that is, the barber) whose services are necessary in various socio-religious functions of the Hindus.

Harijan, *29-4-1 933*

28. MORE DONATIONS

Seth Ghanshyamdas Birla writes to me saying that he has received from Lala Kamalapat a donation of Rs. 3,000 and a donation of Rs. 2,000 from Seth Rameshwar Prasad Bagla, both of Cawnpore. These can be utilized for the David Scheme or general education work, the only condition being that the donations will be utilized for the Harijans of that Province.

A sum of Rs. 2,500 has been received from Seth Soniram Poddar of Rangoon to be used at my discretion for education work amongst Harijans. This amount also is available for the David Scheme or for general education work amongst the Harijans, no matter in what part of India.

There is not, therefore, any dearth, at least for the present, of scholarships for suitable Harijans, and Seth Ghanshyamdas is bringing into being a special educational board for the examination and selection of Harijan candidates for scholarship, more especially of those coming under the David Scheme.

From Europe £8 have been received from the same friend whose letter I published in the *Harijan* a month ago. The letter bringing the notes says:

I am enclosing with my loving Easter wishes £8 that I have saved to send you at Easter for the Harijans. I am not sending them directly to Delhi as it is not worth while, and I would rather you disposed of them where you thought best. I scarcely dare send you such a small sum, but you know I have saved it with my deepest prayers and love for the holy cause that I have made my own. You know this now. All my prayers and penances are to try to help you, and I can so well feel all the difficulties and disappointments you have to live through. Last Monday on receiving *Harijan* of 18th March, I had the feeling so deeply that I was overwhelmed with emotion that I could not explain. I have read the issue through and through and thank you for it. What you say of the Ramji Mandir of your childhood is very beautiful. I know so well that feeling myself. It carries one through life.

Harijan, 29-4-1933

29. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

April 29, 1933

BHAI KHAMBHATTA,

I got your letter. I hope you are better now. It will help you if you live only on milk. You may certainly drink fruit juices with it. If the milkman brings the animal to your house and milks her in your presence, you should drink such fresh unboiled milk without heating it. Keep me informed.

Why were you upset about that one rupee? It was a mistake on Chandrashankar's part to have mentioned it, but you should not pay any attention to the matter. There is no reference to the sum of Rs. 500. Never mind if anybody who reads about that one rupee says that Khambhatta has now become a miser or beggar. On the contrary, wouldn't it be a good thing?

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

KEKUSHRU COTTAGE

LORDWICK PARK, MAHABALESSWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6604. Also C.W. 4394. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

30. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 29, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your postcard. I will ask Devdas about Manilal's bill Panditji and Lakshmibehn came and saw me. Narmada also was with them. I was pained to hear about Amina. I will write to her. Read that letter and give it to her if you approve of it. If I cannot write today, I will write later when I get time. Meanwhile, manage as you think best. They told me about Ramabehn also. I intend to write[1] to her too. Show as much love as you can. But human love must have some limit also, for how can we know when love may become *moha*[2]? One's love, therefore, should never be at the cost of one's duty, no matter even if such conduct seems cruel. If anybody who looks at the matter superficially were to believe that I am being cruel to . . .[3], I would not blame him. At present . . .[4] is bound to think me cruel. But what can I do? My regard for dharma will not let me adopt any other course. What is true of me is also true of you. You should, therefore, follow what seems to you to be your dharma even at the risk of being accused of cruelty or inviting my criticism.

I got yesterday your letter about N. It proved that Vallabhbhai's interpretation was correct. I am, therefore, making preparations for sending her. I shall probably be able to send her on Monday. Assuming that she will arrive on that day, send a cart to the station. Probably Dr. Margarete Spiegel also will accompany her. Even if I don't receive your consent about her, I will assume it. At the [Ahmedabad] station they will get into the metre gauge train which connects with the Gujarat Mail. You should remember that both the ladies are to be trained for Harijan work. You must strictly follow the rule that neither they nor any other European whom we may admit should be permitted to have any connection with the civil disobedience movement. I am specially writing to the Government about those two women. They and others who may join the Ashram should I strictly follow the Ashram rules and you should see that they do so. If they do not observe the rules or become a source of trouble

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Ramabehn Joshi", 1-5-1933.
[2] Ignorant attachment
[3] The names have been omitted.
[4] *ibid.*

to you, I don't at all intend that you should still let them remain. If that happens, inform me immediately. The food requirement of both is simple. I very much doubt if they will be able to digest *jowar* and *bajri*. You will have to provide fruit and milk to both in fairly good quantities, otherwise they will not be able to keep up their strength. N. does not include milk and ghee in her diet at present. Both cat with relish thick wheat *rotlas* without ghee or butter, nine inches in diameter and baked twice till they are crisp and without ghee or butter. They eat these *rotlas* and chew them without the help of any liquid. N. does not drink milk or eat ghee at present. Her food is such *rotlas*, papaw, oranges, and uncooked vegetables like cucumber, tomatoes, cabbage, carrots, etc. She will, however, drink milk there if necessary. Her son gets three pounds of milk daily. He also eats toasted *rotli* and fruits. If we coax him very much, he eats a little uncooked vegetable. He doesn't care for sweets at all, but greatly enjoys drinking fresh unboiled milk. He eats every article one by one. I hope nobody will spoil this child by teaching him to drink tea or coffee or eat sweets. His energy is boundless. We have in the Ashram other children who are as self-willed as he is, but he does not cling to his mother all the time. He has produced on me the impression that he can live with anybody. It is very desirable that nobody there should, out of false love, tempt him to eat unwholesome things. For the rest, we should trust to his and our fate. I am sending N. there with great hopes. I have cherished her like a daughter for the last three or four months. I have preserved many of her letters. There is nothing in her life which she wishes to hide. I have advised her to bury the memory of all persons who had fallen under her spell. But she has assured me that she does not wish to hide from me a single guilty action or thought of hers, and thereby won my initial confidence. But I can give no guarantee about her future conduct. I am acting on the basis of complete trust in her. Give her suitable work from time to time within her capacity. She has great ability. She is extremely active and wants to do good. If she can reduce herself to a cypher, she will be able to do much. If she becomes proud of her ability or her noble intentions or good work, she will fall. For the present give her such manual work as she can do. Make arrangements to help her to pick up Hindi quickly. Her power of grasping is very good. She already knows a little Hindi.

Margarete is of a different type. She is 35 years old and, therefore, her character is practically formed. She is a woman of great

learning and is quick in learning things by heart, but she is not very intelligent. She is obstinate, but her motives are pure. I think her life has been blameless. She has great love for the Ashram. But she has no sense of proportion when she speaks. Ever since she has been here, she has been talking about the Ashram in season and out of season. She has left the country and come to India because of the movement in Germany against her but she has no plan before her. I-am sending N. there willingly and with great joy. I don't feel such joy in sending Margarete, but we cannot turn her away. She has come merely with the intention of living in the Ashram. What can we say to her? She will of course do whatever work she is physically capable of. She has been a teacher for some years and so you can immediately give her the work of teaching English. She is eager to do teaching. Even as a teacher, however, N. is more capable. But since she is joining the Ashram to atone for her past life, I feel slightly doubtful whether you should immediately give her such work. If you do wish to give it, you may certainly do so.

No other instructions seem necessary.

I have become fairly frightened about Kusum[1]. They are now talking about tuberculosis of the intestines. I can put no faith in these amateurs. I cannot guide you or Kusum very much from here. At present you are her guardian for every thing. Kashi cannot take any decision, and I am afraid Kusum is not fit now to decide for herself. Even as her relation, therefore, you are in the place of her father. Personally I think that, both from the point of view of our ideals in the Ashram and from a practical point of view, we should not think of taking Kusum somewhere else. We should do whatever is possible in the Ashram itself. Carry out without any hesitation whatever decision you come to, after discussing the matter with Kusum and Kashi. I can make one suggestion from here. Tell Talwalkar that he should now obtain the opinion of some other doctor. He should have a joint consultation with Haribhai[2] and Kanuga and prescribe treatment according to the opinion of all three of them. If he does not agree to do this, have a talk with Dr. Kanuga and Dr. Haribhai and, with Dr. Talwalkar's permission, get their advice and follow the treatment which they suggest. If, after the experience that you have had about Dr. Sharma, you think favourably of him and if he agrees, put Kusum

[1] Daughter of Vrajlal Gandhi
[2] Dr. Haribhai Desai

in his hands. If he agrees, however, he should not leave the Ashram till Kusum begins to respond to his treatment. My first suggestion is such as will meet the approval of practical people. The second will not, but it is consistent with my attitude in such matters. You probably remember that when Manu was practically on death-bed, ignoring the advice of doctors I put her under the treatment of "Ice Doctor"[1]. I have experimented with such impractical treatments on many others, so I don't hesitate to make the foregoing suggestion in this case. However, since I am not on the spot, you should not attach any weight to my opinion. You should decide independently. I will accept any decision which you arrive at. I will have no objection at all if you decide to cling to Dr. Talwalkar's treatment and trust Kusum's life completely to him. I have no doubt at all about his goodness of heart, nor about his careful attention. Only, he has not been able to impress me by his methods of treatment and other doctors also do not follow these. However, we are dealing with the human body which is a thing as brittle as a glass bangle. Its fate is not in the hands of any doctor, but rests on the will of one Power alone, so that there is no harm in believing that ultimately medical treatment is for our satisfaction only and makes little difference to the result. Don't we, moreover, sing every week?—

> Lukman[2] on being asked, "How many days he had lived",
> Wringing his hand sorrowfully answered, "A few".

And the Muslim world believes that there has been no hakim in the world the equal of Lukman, but even he could not save himself. If that is so, what can Talwalkar or other doctors do?

This part of the letter is positively not for Kusum. It is only for you to think over. Even if Kashi and others read it, they will unnecessarily become nervous and get frightened to death. I have written such alarming things in the full confidence that not a hair on your body will turn.

The two European ladies will hardly have any letters to write. Dr. Spiegel will drop a postcard to her mother. N. is not likely to have any person to whom she might want to write. All the same, you should personally help them in all such matters.

BAPU

[1] Dr. M. S. Kelkar
[2] Unani physician

[PS.]

[Letters for] Dr. Sharma, Keshu[1] and Parnerkar enclosed.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8367. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

31. A SACRED ACTIVITY

I give below an interesting but touching account[2] from a Harijan worker's experiences which I have been giving from time to time in these columns.

I will not spoil the picture by writing more on it. It is possible that because of a long-standing bad habit some may feel disgust on reading this. Medical books are full of such descriptions. He who does not read them will not master the science of biology. Moreover, no one should be shocked because I have described the activity as a sacred one. That activity itself may appear dirty like that of removing filth. But just as removal of filth is for purposes of purification, this activity is meant for cleaning or purifying society. Innocent city dwellers do not realize that they won't be able to live for a moment if these workers do not perform many activities which we despise.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 30-4-1933

32. A MODEL TEMPLE

When Smt. Vijayalakshmi Pandit set foot in Kathiawar for Harijan welfare work, a scheme to build a model temple in Rajkot was discussed. I have already made a reference to this. Shri Parashuram Gopal Masurekar, the well-known lawyer of the place, had taken a leading part in the deliberations. Under his signature a public appeal has been issued in connection with the scheme. The following point[3] claims our attention.

[1] Keshav Gandhi, son of Maganlal Gandhi

[2] This is not translated here. The correspondent had described the process of skinning animals.

[3] This is not translated here. The scheme proposed a temple devoid of any decorations or jewellery and one which was meant for the entire Hindu population, irrespective of caste or community. The priest would be a person who did not believe in untouchability. And as the aim of the temple was to be service, there should be a night school for adults, a library, a free dispensary, and a religious school attached to it.

It is mentioned in the statement that even some from among those who believe in untouchability have welcomed the scheme and have also agreed to give financial help. Shri Masurekar deserves congratulations on this scheme. I hope that he will translate it into reality. It should not be that the beginning would be made only when many people join the scheme. To my mind, a model temple means an ideal priest. Bricks and mortar do not make a model temple. If the priest is good, even a rough hut will shine forth and earnest devotees will find solace there. And when there is no such priest, even a marble temple inlaid with mosaic would be a desolate structure. There are today a number of such famous ruins in India. There are such ancient places in Mysore which at one time must have been great temples. The caves of Karla, Ajanta and Gharapuri were temples once. God has disappeared from there because of want of the priest and instead of devotees connoisseurs of art go there to see the works of art. Hence I hope: that the proposed temple at Rajkot will get a good priest.

But whether such a priest is available or not, the scheme for the temple can be taken up for execution from today. The first task is to obtain a vast plot of land in the open. I would regard it as advantageous if it is at a little distance from the village. After selecting a plot for the temple, other institutions mentioned in the scheme can be constructed there. To my mind, the foundation-stone of the temple will have been laid if the people working in this institution get together in the plot reserved for the temple and repeat the name of God, because there is a dictum in the *Bhagavata* that God dwells where five people get together and repeat the name of Vasudeva. And where He dwells, there the temple stands.

The Rajkot scheme for the temple is an excellent one whether it materializes or not, whether it materializes early or late. Everyone can help implement it to a certain extent. The existing temples can come alive if the devotees and the priests are in harmony. These days most Of the temples arc lifeless. Other institutions can be started around them. The foundation-stone can be laid of the new kinds of temples suggested by me for the villages. Ancient temples appear to have come into existence in this very way. Each temple embodies the conception of a devotee. They built the temples in accordance with their faiths. The history of some of the temples of Madras is available today. These temples have *Agamas* of their own in which we can find the plan of the temple, the shape of the idol, its size, the ritual of

worship and rules of purification. And the faith of the Hindus recognizes these books or pamphlets as divine scriptures.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 30-4-1933

33. STATEMENT ON FAST [1]

[*April 30, 1933*][2]

A tempest has been raging within me for some days. I have been struggling against it. On the eve of the 'Harijan Day' the voice became insistent, and said, 'why don't you do it?' I resisted it. But the resistance was vain. And the resolution was made to go on an unconditional and irrevocable fast for twentyone days, commencing from Monday noon the 8th May and ending on Monday noon the 29th May.

As I look back upon the immediate past, many are the causes too sacred to mention that must have precipitated the fast. But they are all connected with the great Harijan cause. The fast is against nobody in particular and against everybody who wants to participate in the joy of it, without for the time-being having to fast himself or herself. But it is particularly against myself. It is a heart-prayer for the purification of self and associates, for greater vigilance and watchfulness. But nobody who appreciates the step about to be taken is to join me. Any such fast will be a torture of themselves and of me.

Let this fast, however, be a preparation for many such fasts to be taken by purer and more deserving persons than myself. During all these months since September last, I have been studying the correspondence and literature and holding prolonged discussions with men and women, learned and ignorant, Harijans and non-Harijans. The evil is far greater than even I had thought it to be. It will not be eradicated by money, external organization and even political power for Harijans, though all these three are necessary. But to be effective, they must follow or at least accompany inward wealth, inward organization and inward power, in other words, self-purification. This can only come by fasting and prayer. We may not approach the God of Truth in the arrogance of strength, but in the meekness of the weak and the helpless.

[1] This was published under the title, "Fast for Purification".

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 1-5-1933; also A.I.C.C. File No. 429

But the mere fast of the body is nothing without the will behind it. It must be a genuine confession of the inner fast, an irrepressible longing to express truth and nothing but truth. therefore, those only are privileged to fast for the cause of truth who have worked for it and who have love in them even for opponents, who are free from animal passion and who have abjured earthly possessions and ambition. No one, therefore, may undertake, without previous preparation and discipline, the fast I have foreshadowed.

Let there be no misunderstanding about the impending fast. I have no desire to die. I want to live for the cause, though I hope I am equally prepared to die for it. But I need for me and my fellow-workers greater purity, greater application and dedication. I want more workers of unassailable purity. Shocking cases of impurity have come under my notice. I would like my fast to be an urgent appeal to such people to leave the cause alone.

I know that many of my sanatanist friends and others think that the movement is a deep political game. How I wish this fast would convince them that it is purely religious.

If God has more service to take from this body, He will hold it together despite deprivation of earthly food. He will send me spiritual food. But He works through earthly agents, and everyone who believes in the imperative necessity of removing untouchability will send me the food I need, by working to the best of his or her ability for the due and complete fulfilment of the pledge given to Harijans in the name of caste Hindus.

Let co-workers not get agitated over the coming fast. They should feel strengthened by it. They must not leave their post of duty; and those who have temporarily retired for much needed rest or for being cured of ailments are as much at the post as healthy workers serving in their respective quarters. No one should come to me unless it be for necessary consultation on matters connected with the movement.

It is, I hope, needless for me to pray to friends that they will not ask me to postpone, abandon or vary the approaching fast in any way whatsoever. I ask them to believe me that the fast has come to me literally as described above. I, therefore, ask friends in India and all the world over to pray for me and with me that I may safely pass through the ordeal and that, whether I live or die, the cause for which the fast is to be undertaken may prosper.

And may I ask my sanatanist friends to pray that, whatever be the result of the fast for me, the golden lid that hides Truth may be removed?

Harijan, 6-5-1933

34. DISCUSSION WITH VALLABHBHAI PATEL[1]

April 30, 1933

For some time now, I have been vacillating between twentyone days and forty days. After all, does one express, can one express, all one's thoughts to others? Three days have passed since I lost my sleep. Could it be that I cannot sleep? But, for the last three days I have not been getting any sleep for hours at a stretch; I might get up at two in the morning and start work but not once would I doze while I dictated in the morning, nor even would I want to stretch my limbs, as if for the last three days I were preparing myself for the great deluge! It is difficult to say since when the excitement started. On many occasions, however, thought of a fast would repeatedly come to my mind and I would drive it away. In the night when I retired I had no idea that something was coming up today. But after eleven I woke up, I watched the stars, repeated Ramanama but the same thought would persistently come to my mind: 'If you have grown so restless, why don't you undertake the fast? Do it.' The inner dialogue went on for quite some time. At half past twelve came the clear, unmistakable voice: 'You must undertake the fast.' That was all. Now having resolved to make it a twenty-one days' fast, I took no time in deciding that as a prisoner I should undertake it after eight days' [notice]. Without it the task of Harijan service is just impossible. If I don't do this much the rot in Harijan work will reach the heart and destroy it altogether. I, therefore, got up and immediately began to write out the statement[2] and I, had just finished the last sentence when you came up for the prayers.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 7-5-1933

[1] Extracted from the Gujarati "Sparks from the Sacred Fire''

[2] *Vide* "Statement on Fast", 30-4-1933.

35. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

April 30, 1933

SECRETARY
HOME DEPARTMENT
SIMLA

FOR REASONS WHOLLY UNCONNECTED WITH GOVERNMENT AND SOLELY CONNECTED WITH HARIJAN MOVEMENT AND OBEDIENCE PEREMPTORY CALL FROM WITHIN RECEIVED ABOUT MIDNIGHT I HAVE TO TAKE TWENTY-ONE DAYS' UNCONDITIONAL IRREVOCABLE FAST WITH WATER SODA AND SALT BEGINNING FROM NOON EIGHTH MAY NEXT ENDING NOON TWENTY-NINTH MAY. FAST MIGHT HAVE COMMENCED AT ONCE BUT FOR MY BEING PRISONER AND MY ANXIETY TO ENABLE LOCAL AUTHORITY RECEIVE NECESSARY INSTRUCTIONS FOR ARRANGEMENTS DURING FAST AND AVOID ALL POSSIBLE EMBARRASSMENT TO GOVERNMENT.

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-X

36. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

May 1, I933

SATIS DAS GUPTA
15 COLLEGE SQUARE, CALCUTTA

YOU HEMPRABHA CONTINUE PROGRAMME WITHOUT INTERRUPTION. GOD MY COMPANION DURING FAST.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. IV, p. 387

37. TELEGRAM TO URMILA DEVI

May 1, 1933

URMILA DEVI
24 RAMESH MITTER ROAD, BHAWANIPUR
CALCUTTA

YOU MUST NOT WORRY OVER IMPENDING FAST. WHY NO LETTER?

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. IV, p. 389

38. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

May 1, 1933

SHETH JAMNALALJI
SHAILA ASHRAM, ALMORA

YOU MUST NOT DISTURB PROGRAMME REST FOR IMPENDING FAST. HOPE PROGRESSING.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. IV, p. 391

39. LETTER T0 RAOJIBHAI PATEL

May I, 1933

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

The fast which commences from Monday is intended as punishment for those also who believe that they are too weak to fulfil the vow they have taken—not to reproach them but to help them.

Lakshmibehn has complained against you that you have been talking ill about the Ashram. I am sure there must be some error in this.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9000

40. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

May 1, 1933

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your letter. Be happy instead of being sad at the news of my fast. If you have Narandas's permission for whatever you do in the Ashram, you need not fear any criticism. Do not listen to any criticism. If you hear any against your wish, immediately tell Narandas about it. That will give vent to your anger. Try to overcome during the fast whatever shortcomings you have. The fast is being

undertaken to help everyone to overcome his or her shortcomings.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9573. Also C.W. 6545. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

41. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

May 1, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

I got your letter. If you think that Dr. Sharma's treatment worsens the condition of the arm, you should give it up.

I understand about Dhiru.

From my talk with Panditji and Lakshmibehn, I see that they believe that you have a good deal of stiffness in you, that you are not sufficiently frank, that you have a fairly good measure of pride and that you enjoy harassing, and if possible, humiliating Narandas. I have stated all this in my own words. But this is the impression I formed from what they said. If there is any truth in this, you should get rid of that weakness. We may endure that disease of the bone from which you are suffering, but we ought not to tolerate such weaknesses in ourselves. For the bone disease, we require the services of a doctor other than ourselves; for an internal disease, however, we should be our own doctor. In other words, we have to depend upon our own resources. I certainly wish that my intended fast should produce this result, namely, that all the impurity in the Ashram may he washed clean.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5350

42. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

May 1, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

My fast will be for all the inmates of the Ashram, including you. You should, therefore, get rid of all your diseases.

I assume that you have kept a copy of your questions[1] and so I give here only brief replies to them. I am hard pressed for time today.

1. If persuasion does not succeed, you may become silent and pray in your heart for that person, whether she is a girl or a grown-up woman. This will help you to overcome your impatience.

2. We should know what is meant by 'necessity' in this question. Suppose that I am reciting Sanskrit verses and leading a prayer, and just then I see a snake. It is necessary that I should catch it, and I may, therefore, stop reciting the verses and violate a rule. I may also do that if I feel an immediate call of nature at that time. If, however, I feel thirsty, I should control my desire for some time and go on reciting the verses. You felt something in the throat and yet continued. That was worse than foolishness.

3. We may disregard any social practice or custom which obstructs our quest for truth.

4. If you have absolute faith in me, you should believe that what you regard as the voice of your conscience may not be so. If, however, that voice is so direct as to be more powerful even than your faith in me, you should follow it whatever the cost.

5. It is not possible to reply to this question categorically.

6. I do not follow this question.

7. If a person is often found telling lies or shirking work, even a

[1] Which read: (I) What should one do and how should one overcome one's impatience if someone older, younger or of the same age misbehaves despite persuasion and thereby creates a bad impression on others and time is wasted and work delayed? (2) How would it affect others if a person violated Ashram rule or discipline under some necessity while doing one's duty? (3) How far should we pay regard to social practice or custom in the path of satyagraha? (4) What would be my duty as a satyagrahi when I disagree with a renowned mahatma like you on a certain step which I find to be right according to the voice of my conscience and which might violate the rules of the institution? (5) Should one love the individual for the sake of the institution or the institution for the individual? (6) By what test can one find out that one has bad thoughts about others? (7) If a person is found on every occasion telling lies, or shirking work or being selfish, and others too have complained about it, would it be proper for a satyagrahi to have doubts about him? (8) What is the limit for simple living? To embroider one's sari, to wear fashionable blouses, to adorn the hands and neck with flowers, wear chappals —should this be considered as love for art or breaking the Ashram principles? (9) Would it be slander or violence if in the Ashram one person finds fault with another and commits the same fault himself, i.e., indulges in mutual fault-finding? (10) As those who join the Ashram do so with different motives, should we judge each of them from his own standpoint?

lover of truth will suspect him of doing the same on another occasion, but will, despite his suspicion, love him and continue to give him opportunities.

8. There can be no one rule for all people in this matter. It depends on one's attitude. However, simplicity should not be sacrificed for the sake of art.

9. Mutual fault-finding is always bad. It is petty-mindedness to retort, 'You are no better.'

10. This is implied in ahimsa.

Thinking that you may have had no time to keep a copy of your questions, I return them with this.

I am sending two women[1] to the Ashram. I hesitate very much to do so, but I send them because I feel that I ought to. I do hope that they will not increase your work but will help you. Make some arrangement to help them to learn Hindi.

I should like Sushila[2] to spend this vacation in the Ashram. That is likely to give rest to both of you. I hope you know the English saying that change of occupation is rest. There is a good deal of truth in it. Treat this only as brain-wave which I got while writing this letter. If Sushila has made some other plan, I certainly don't want her to abandon it to please me.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10342. Also C.W. 6781. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

43. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

May 1, 1933

CHI. JAMNA,

You have completely relieved me by your excellent letter. After your giving a certificate to Narandas, I don't require one from anybody else. But I hope you know who can give a certificate. Can a person who does not know how to cook give a certificate to a cook? Looking at the matter from that point of view, you should have a

[1] Margarete Spiegel and N.; "*vide* also "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 29-4-1933.

[2] Sushila Pai

higher degree of yoga, equanimity and concentration, than Narandas. If it is so, it means I have two persons instead of one who may be described as *sthitaprajnas*[1].

If Dr. Purushottam has left, haven't I sent you Dr. Sharma? He seems to have filled you with colours indeed. Even if you do pot benefit from his treatment, it will certainly do no harm. Continue it with complete faith. Try whatever changes in diet he may suggest. If the result is not satisfactory, he himself' will ask you to give them up. Try to win over Keshu if you can.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 878. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

44. LETTER TO AMINA QURESHI

May 1, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER AMINA,

I hear from Panditji that you do not keep or show accounts, and spend too much. As you know I have given you full liberty. I shall be greatly pained if you misuse it.

The doctor writes that you have lost all that you had gained by the fast. Do not behave thus. Give up tobacco. Give up rice. If you control the craving for some time, you will feel you are all the better for having given up those things. Remember whose daughter you are and where you were brought up. You are not one of those modern girls. You have been with me since the Phoenix days. I have dandled you on my knees. Do not disappoint me.

A thousand blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10778. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

45. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS [2]

May 1, 1933

Almost the first question asked by the Pressmen was, whether it was possible for him under any circumstances to abandon his fast. Gandhiji replied:

[1] Literally, 'of steady intellect'. For the full meaning of the phrase.

[2] The source had reported: "Gandhiji received Pressmen inside the jail cell, where, for the past few days, he has been holding his office. The mango tree is not providing the requisite protection against the increasing heat."

Humanly speaking, there is absolutely no possibility of my abandoning the fast.

This was followed by more questions on his statement. Asked, if he could throw light on the "shocking cases of impurity" referred to in his statement, Gandhiji said that it was not possible for him to do that; but he had no grievance against anybody in particular and, if he had any grievance at all, it was against himself. Gandhiji proceeded:

I went to bed that night without the slightest feeling that I would take such a step. No single event can be held responsible for this decision, but-it undoubtedly is the result of the accumulation of a long series of events extending over a fairly long period. It is not that I was blind to them before. They were producing their silent and unconscious effect on my mind.

Replying to another question, the Mahatma said:

I do expect that my fast is merely a precursor of many such fasts, and if I survive this, I may feel called upon to undertake another fast.[1]

All these twenty-one days I will be sipping *Ramarasa*[2]. If it does not sustain me, how is the juice of *mosambis* going to help? One who wants to destroy the Ravana of untouchability must partake of *Ramarasa* every now and then. And if my devotion to Rama is sincere—and it certainly is—He will not let my body drop for I still wish that Rama will sustain this body dedicated to Him. You Harijans, however, must remember one thing. You should be amenable to the infallible remedy which I have adopted. Realize that for you too there is no other way. And let the 'touchable' Hindus say and do what they like; you on your part should cleanse your body and soul and become true Harijans. Your saviour as well as mine is the Lord above.[3] It would be blasphemy to regard me as your saviour. And I said to you that the love of God is life-sustaining, but then, if you would allow me to say it, what does it matter if the body withers away? Do not dead men continue to do work?

[1] The following paragraph is extracted from *Harijanbandhu*, 7-5-1933, which had reported that Gandhiji was replying to some of the questions put by Harijans.

[2] Literally, 'juice of God's name or God's love'. This was in response to a suggestion from a Harijan that during the fast Gandhiji should allow him. self the juice of two *mosambis* daily.

[3] This was in reference to a fear expressed in the Harijan's statement that with Gandhiji's death the Harijans would have no protector.

At this stage, it is necessary for the public to understand the very vital difference between the September fast and the impending one. The September fast was a conditional one, made for a particular purpose. But in this case, it is not directed to any concrete purpose at all.

Therefore, this fast can be undertaken at any moment and it is after the manner, common enough in Hinduism. Whenever a great reformation and revival is going on, people in order to ensure purity and acceleration of their object, undertake a fast. Such a fast is universally acknowledged to be a good thing in itself. It is its own justification and my fast claims no more merit. I might have undertaken it without the tussle I was engaged in, but perhaps, I had no courage.

I was weighed down with the tremendous responsibility and, therefore, though the prompting came to me more than once, I resisted it. A religious movement does not depend for its success on the intellectual or material resources of its sponsors, but it depends solely upon the spiritual resources, and fasting is the best known method of adding to these resources. Not every fast brings about the desired result.

I have given some of the conditions in my statement, and it is claimed in my statement, and it is claimed by those who have conducted religious movements that intellectual, material and other things follow spiritual capital but should never be independent of it.

Asked, if he hoped to survive the 21 days' fast, Gandhiji reassuringly said:

Oh! I survived the twenty-one days' fast[1] that was undertaken ten years ago. Weaker men than myself have undertaken longer fasts and survived. Spiritual sustenance has great possibilities.

At this stage, Gandhiji was reminded of his condition during the September fast when six days' fasting brought him almost to the verge of collapse, but he humorously replied:

The age of miracles is not yet over.

He felt more than optimistic about his ability to go through the ordeal. Asked whether he would remain in Poona in case Government released him, Gandhiji replied that it was very difficult for him to say that, because he did not contemplate any release.

To a suggestion that his fast, which coincided with the sitting of the Joint Select Committee, would be taken as an act dictated by political motives, Gandhiji replied that he had not embarked on the fast voluntarily. It had not been in his plan.

[1] From September 18 to October 8, 1924.

He had not compassed it. He tried to resist it even that night, but he could not and for three days before taking the decision, he could not sleep properly. He did not know what was happening to him. Surely, it was not indigestion. But after he took the decision on Saturday night, he slept well.[1]

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-5-1933; also *Harijanbandhu*, 7-5-193S

46. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN [2]

[*May 2, 1933*][3]

TELL BA HER FATHER IMPOSED ON HER A COMPANION WHOSE WEIGHT WOULD HAVE KILLED ANY OTHER WOMAN. I TREASURE HER LOVE. SHE MUST REMAIN COURAGEOUS TO END. FOR YOU I HAVE NOTHING BUT ONLY THANKS TO, GOD FOR GIVING YOU TO ME. YOU MUST PROVE YOUR BRAVERY BY SUSTAINED JOY OVER THIS NEWEST OF GOD'S MISSIONS FOR ME. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6271. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9737

47. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 2, 1933

SATYAGRAHAASHRAM

SABARMATI

HOPE N. REACHED. PARASHURAM SHOULD LEAVE NEXT TRAIN WITH CHILDREN SEE ME. GIVE HIM FARE FOR POONA AND FOUR RUPEES EXTRA. NONE SHOULD BE DISTURBED OVER FAST BUT ALL SHOULD DERIVE STRENGTH FOR PURIFICATION GREATER RENUNCIATION AND DEDICATIONTION.

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./I; also S.N. 21132

[1] For Gandhiji's talk with the *Times of India* representative, *vide* Appendix "Interview to the *Times of India*", 2-5-1933.

[2] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram dated May 2, 1933, which read: "Got news of fast only today. Ba wishes me say she greatly shocked. Feels decision very wrong but you have not listened to any others so will not hear her. She sends her heartfelt prayers. I am stunned but know it is the voice of God and in that sense rejoice even in midst of anguish. Deepest prayers. Love. Writing" (S.N. 21110).

[3] From S.N. 21110; the original, as delivered, bears the date "May 4, 1933".

48. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

[*May 2, 1933*][1]

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA

GWALIOR

DELIGHTED YOUR TELEGRAM[2]. STRONGLY ADVISE YOU PROCEED CALCUTTA FOR TREATMENT. LET THAKKAR COME IF THOUGHT NECESSARY.

From a copy: C.W. 7936. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also S.N. 21113

49. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 1/2,1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got a letter from you today also, along with Duncan's. He should have taken your permission, but how could he know that it was necessary to do so? The best thing would be to have a complete list of the rules to be observed both by newcomers and the old inmates, so that a copy of the rules could be given to every newcomer as soon as he joins. If you draft the rules in Gujarati, I will translate them into English. Or Duncan himself may do that. He is certainly a capable man.

It was very bad indeed for so many persons to harass one person. Since you have already explained that to the people, I will not write anything concerning it. However, read my letter to Duncan and explain its substance to everybody.

I have gone through Titus's report. I like his suggestions. I think it would be better if the accounts relating to his work were kept separately, though under your supervision.

[1] From S.N. 21113; the original, as delivered, bears the date "May 3, 1933".

[2] Dated May 2 from Delhi which read: "Have just received news. I fully believe with God's blessings you are sure to survive the ordeal successfully. I assure you, since the September fast there has been wonderful awakening all round which should have given you nothing but immense satisfaction. Yet, I feel nothing but undiluted good will come out of the present fast, although on personal grounds am somewhat nervous. Hope you will write me special information, if any. Am thinking of cancelling Calcutta programme and reaching Poona about eighth. Thakkar Bapa is here."

Titus should be given one assistant to help him.

It would not be a bad idea to buy a mule or pony for carrying milk. So far as I can see, ultimately there will be a motor-van.

I also approve of his suggestion for buying two machines.

I had never approved of the business in Bidaj. I, therefore, fully approve of his suggestion.

Is cows' urine being utilized now? There ought to be a hut for storing milk as suggested by him. Think over all these suggestions and implement as many of them as seem good to you. Jekibehn's sons will not come to the Ashram. They are studying. I had a postcard today from Mahalakshmi. She says that she will arrange after she is released in two months' time.

My hand has got tired with the effort of writing this much, and so I must be brief with the rest.

I had a long discussion with Panditji and Lakshmibehn. From among the suggestions discussed, the following should be carried if they are not already being followed. If the bread generally remains half-baked, the bakery should be closed. The persons who work in it should not keep changing. If it gets too hot near the furnace, there must be some defect in it. There should be no emission of heat at all. The use of potatoes and other tubers as vegetables should be stopped. They may be served as substitutes for *rotli.*

We must grow the required vegetables in the Ashram even if it is more expensive to do so than to buy them. Tomatoes and one *bhaji* should grow in the Ashram all the year round. Ultimately we shall not incur any loss by doing this. We must buy no vegetables from outside except for persons who are ill. In my view, unboiled milk and wheat is a complete diet. Nothing else is necessary. It is not necessary to have all the items in one's food every day. Sometimes one may have only milk and sometimes only *rotlas.* And it is also essential for physical and spiritual health to eat only one thing during the whole day occasionally. I would not fix any particular days for such monodiet, but serve it according to convenience. If a large quantity of milk happens to be left over, I would keep the kitchen closed on that day. And if a large stock of potatoes has accumulated, I would not serve *rotlas* on that day.

When no vegetable can be served, I would have tamarind fruits plucked from the trees and serve chutney prepared from their pulp crushed with salt. Eating tamarind daily may be harmful, but eating it occasionally can do nothing but good. However, nobody ought to pluck even one tamarind fruit to gratify his or her palate.

I will write more about prayers after I get your opinion.

It would be more convenient if diners sit in the kitchen in rows according to the items to be served. There should be one row of people who want rice and another for those who are to be served the normal menu. You may ask a guest in advance what food he will have. Or he should be offered all the items at the time of the meal, and he may accept whatever he likes. I know that this would be a little too complicated.

The news that my fast of 21 days will commence from the 8th will have become old by the time you get this letter. Let nobody be upset by it. On the contrary, all should wake up.

I expect most from the Ashram. There is plenty of impurity in it. This impurity must be banished. This fast is addressed to all co-workers, and the Ashram is naturally included. If we had as much of the spirit of dedicated service in the Ashram as we need, I would be dancing with joy today and be sure that, when the time comes, all the inmates would go and plant themselves on the sands of the Sabarmati with unshakable determination of fast unto death. My impending fast is preliminary to similar fasts by other people.

Everybody should do the following:

The people should either concentrate completely on the prayer or not attend it at all. Those who bring only their bodies to the prayer and leave their minds behind violate truth. Instead of doing that, let them follow their own inclination. The best thing, of course, would be for such persons to leave the Ashram. Nobody should talk ill about others behind their backs. If impure thoughts disturb anybody, he should confess them to you at least if to nobody else. Or he may write a note and inform you. If he cannot control such thoughts and remains pure only outwardly, he should leave the Ashram Those who do not like any of the Ashram rules must leave. If, moreover, we can fix a code of conduct during this period of self-purification, it should be accepted. An inmate of the Ashram who is ill should be satisfied with whatever treatment is possible in the Ashram itself. At the most he or she may be sent to one of the branches of the Ashram if absolutely necessary.

Nobody should shirk work or steal anything or hide anything. Everybody should be content to eat the food that is served, and should eat all food as medicine and not for the pleasure of the palate. It should be remembered that pulses, rice and tubers are not essential. Spices, sugar and jaggery also are unnecessary. Wheat or *bajri* or *jowar* and unboiled milk constitute complete food. It will be enough if vegetables and fruits are occasionally included.

Envy or malicious criticism of one another should be regarded as sin. Everybody should do some Harijan work. In short, I will expect the Ashram to get rid of all spiritual maladies during this fast. If it cannot do this, I have no right to expect anything from other people. Show this portion to all the inmates. I have decided to send N. and Margarete. But I will reconsider the matter if I get a letter from you tomorrow conveying your decision against such a step. Give the ladies the clothes, utensils and other things which they may require. And see also that satisfactory toilet arrangements are made for them. In regard to their food, it is not necessary to do anything more than prepare one or two things specially for them in addition to the normal menu. I have already explained other things. The child will easily mix with the other children. It will be enough if he does not learn any bad habit.

Since Jamna herself has given you a testimonial, I am sure you will not worry. Don't let anybody run down here.

BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Duncan the history of both the ladies and take whatever help you require from him.

May 2, 1933

I wrote the foregoing yesterday, but could not dispatch the letter owing to heavy pressure-of other work. N. will have reached the Ashram before you get this letter. I got your letter yesterday too. I have started writing this before the prayer. I got up at a quarter past one.

Your letter is heart-rending. There is no limit to my hard heartedness. You will have received the wire[1] which I sent today. I have asked you to send Parashuram here immediately on receipt of it. You must have done that. I have called the children too. I have also asked you to give him the railway fare from Ahmedabad to Poona plus four

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Narandas Gandhi", 2-5-1933.

rupees. We need not tolerate such persons in the Ashram, for it is beyond our capacity to reform them. If they are with me, I can get some work out of them' too. But that would serve no useful purpose. If there are others like him, ask them all to leave. You may clean up everything. Henceforth, only those who willingly and scrupulously observe the rules may stay in the Ashram. My hope is that in the Ashram itself there will be persons who will have cultivated sufficient fitness and will undertake an indefinite fast when the time comes. I see that time drawing near. Such is the nature of my intended fast. It is the first step in self-purification. If the Ashram will not be the first to bring that self-purification, whom else can we expect to do so? This is a much more difficult task than fighting for salt. Only those who are eager to cultivate fitness for offering themselves as sacrifice may stay in the Ashram.

You will have to think about the old families in the Ashram who may not be ready to join in this. You can stop admitting newcomers. Those persons who joined the Ashram for the specific purpose of learning some work may be asked to leave if they are not without other means of support. Persons who have beers living in the Ashram because they have no other means of support may remain, namely, Narmada Rana. But please treat all these as passing thoughts which occur to me in my solitude here. Do only what you think proper and what appeals to you and is within your capacity. I have given you complete freedom. I don't want you to be burdened with too heavy responsibility for the affairs of the Ashram during the 21 days of the fast. Nobody should expect you to humour him or her. If any of the old families living there do not wish to join in this work of self-purification, you may permit them to cook their own meals. An allowance should be fixed for them after careful calculation and they should live within that sum. Any saving they make will be theirs, and, if they overspend during one month, they should meet the balance from the allowance for the next month. If you cannot get a full-time worker for the departments, such as the dairy, which must be continued, engage paid workers and maintain them. Or you may reduce the work in these departments to the extent necessary. Personally, I don't think that will be necessary. However, I cannot dictate the final decision in this matter. Call all the people together and think over these suggestions with them. There should be no coercion in regard to anything. From the very beginning it has been

assumed that the Ashram may have to sacrifice itself one day in this manner. Probably some of the inmates will remember that I have often explained this possibility. I am not, therefore, putting forward an altogether new suggestion. Even those who agree to join should knowthat, though they may be ready to undertake an indefinite fast with irrevocable determination, they must go on with their work for the time being as if they expected to live for ever. As we always go on working even though we know that one day we shall receive the summons from Death, so should we do now, and with all the greater devotion now since we should be prepared to die of our own free will.

Duncan, being a guest, may be exempted from many things, but that certainly does not mean that he should be free to approach me directly. Tilakam is an unhappy man, and, moreover, he is a Harijan and a worthy man in other respects. I think highly of both these persons. If your experience is different, please let me know.

I feel confused in my mind regarding . . .[1]. I don't like his venture. It is certainly a violation of his pledge. You may give him the capital that he wants, but I suppose it will be on personal security. That doesn't seem to me proper. We cannot assume that he will necessarily succeed in his enterprise. He doesn't seem to have learnt any humility. If he has done so, he should accept a job anywhere. Ambalalbhai[2] would certainly offer him one as fitter. If there is nobody in the Ashram now to utilize the equipment which we have, Ranchhodbhai or Ambalalbhai can remove it to his factory. They will at least keep it safe, if they do not buy it up. But I may be mistaken even in assuming this. I have written this only for your information You are free to ignore the suggestion completely. It is possible that you have understood . . . better and that I am doing injustice because I am disillusioned with him. If, however, I am right in my view, it is possible that . . . will not immediately be able to earn enough to support the whole family. If so, the Ashram must meet the balance of his expenses. We certainly cannot leave him on the street. I am thinking only of our dharma in this matter. After all, doesn't that family mean . . .[3] himself? Of course I will not abandon it because . . is no more with us, but I would certainly make it submit to as much hardship as it can endure.

[1] The name has been omitted.
[2] Ambalal Sarabhai
[3] The names have been omitted.

Have I forgotten about Joshi completely? This is known to happen to persons who are nearing their death.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8369. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

50. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

May 2, 1933

DEAR GURUDEV,

It is just now 1.45 a.m. and I think of you and some other friends. If your heart endorses contemplated fast, I want you blessings again.[1]

My love and respects.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4638

51. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

May 2, 1933

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Dare I ask for your blessings for the coming *yajna*[2]? It is now nearing 2 a.m. I have left my bed among other things to write this begging letter. If the fast does not meet with your approval, I know you are too true a brother to grant my request merely to please me.[3]

With love,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, p.,252

[1] In his reply, Rabindranath Tagore had written: "It is not unlikely that you are mistaken about the imperative necessity of your present vow, and when we realize that there is a grave risk of its fatal termination, we shudder at the possibility of the tremendous mistake never having the opportunity of being rectified. I cannot help beseeching you not to offer such an ultimatum' of mortification to God for His scheme of things and almost refuse the gift of life with all its opportunities to hold up to its last moment the ideal of perfection which justifies humanity. My misgivings may be the outcome of a timidity of ignorance" (*Mahatma*, Vol. III, pp. 247-8).

[2] The proposed 21-day fast

[3] For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix "Letter from V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 7-5-1933.

52. LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

May 2, 1933

BHAI SAHEB,

It is getting on to 2 in the morning. Do send me your blessings for the coming *yajna* if you can. I am only trying to do what I learnt from my parents since childhood. Mother spent almost half her life in fasting. What can I do? I am unable to serve the cause of the Harijans through intellect alone.[1]

Your younger brother,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 9668

53. LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI[2]

Between 1-4 at Night, May 2, 1933

None of you should get upset by the news about my fast. The strength of the Ashram lies in it and it protects dharma. Fasting is an essential feature of Hinduism. I would not be surprised if thousands like me sacrifice themselves in this great *yajna* for the uplift of Harijans. Even if I cannot write again, you should know that none of you will be out of my thoughts even for a moment.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9535. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

[1] The addressee's telegram in reply to this read: "God bless you. As I have said in my fast-day public speech, I am fully convinced that He has guided you in your decision. I have been praying that He may grant you strength to go successfully through your great *vrata* and have faith that He will. Pray become *ananyabhava*. Shut out, as much as you can, all thought except of Him, who is our sole shelter and support. In addition to *japa* or *Dwadashakshar Mantra,* please practise during part of the day *'soham'* with every inhalation and exhalation. This will help to keep up the stream of life within. Some great *tapasvis* are watching you with tender care, and vast millions are praying for you. Please let the atmosphere about you be disturbed as little as possible by any talk except of 'Vasudeva' who dwells in all sentient beings. Remember His injunction and promise: *Matchittah sarva durgani matprasadat tarishyasi* (Fixing thy thought on Me, thou shall surmount every difficulty by My grace). Will meet you as soon as health permits" (*The Hindu,* 11-5-1933).

[2] Daughter of Maganlal Gandhi, married to Deepak Dutt Chowdhri

54. LETTER TO NANIBEHN P. JHAVERI

Between 1-4 at Night, May 2, 1933

I hold neither life nor death dearer than each other. Whatever happens will be for good. Be more alert.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9536. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

55. LETTER TO KUSUMBEHN DESAI

Between 1-4 at Night, May 2, 1933

If I survive the fast, I will write to you as I have been doing. Do not be upset by the fast. Life and death are in God's hand. If He does not want to take more work from me, then He will not and the body will perish. Have you understood Chapter XI [of the *Gita*]? How God devours human beings and destroys them? Sooner or later that will be the fate of us all. Let mine be so for the cause of Harijans.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9537. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

56. LETTER TO RAMJI

Between 1-4 at:Night, May 2, 1933

I felt very much pained on reading a summary of the letters. It is difficult to believe their contents. Is this the result of my labour of all these years? I feel pained if all this, or even a part of it only, is true. It would mean that persons like Mathuradas[1] and Narandas are utterly worthless; on the other hand, if these allegations are false, it is a pity that Ramji has not softened in spite of so much having been done for him. However, if your heart does not soften, the fault must be mine and not yours. Was I not born in a community which is among those that have suppressed the Harijans? Let my fast do what I could not do otherwise.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9538. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

[1] Mathuradas P. Asar

57. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

Between 1-4 at Night, May 2, 1933

If your betrothal with S.[1] has not been broken off, you may certainly marry. I will approve of your doing so even during the fast. You will continue to serve even after you get married. After marriage try to observe as much self-control as you can. Continue to write to me. You should not grieve if I die. The 'I' will not die. What will it matter if the body perishes?

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9540. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

58. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

Between 1-4 at Night, May 2,1933

I hope you have fully understood the significance of my fast. Go on working without worrying about me. Request Father and Mother to send their blessings to me.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9541. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

59. LETTER TO N.

May 2, 1933

May this fast strengthen you. You will entrust to N.[2], even an evil thought if it comes to you. But it won't come if you will lose yourself in Him, the Truth and in His work as it may be pointed out to you by N.

From a copy: C.W. 9767. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

60. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

May 2, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

As I was struggling against the coming fast, you were before me as it were in flesh and blood. But it was no use. How I wish I could

[1] The name has been omitted.

[2] Narandas Gandhi

feel that you had understood the absolute necessity of it. The Harijan movement is too big for mere intellectual effort. There is nothing so bad in all the world. And yet I cannot leave religion and therefore Hinduism. My life would be a burden to me, if Hinduism failed me. I love Christianity, Islam and many other faiths through Hinduism. Take if away and nothing remains for me. But then I cannot tolerate it with untouchability—the high-and-low belief. Fortunately Hinduism contains a sovereign remedy for the evil. I have applied the remedy. I want you to feel, if you can, that it is well if I survive the fast and well also if the body dissolves in spite of the effort to live. What is it after all—more perishable than a brittle chimney piece. You can preserve the latter intact for ten thousand years, but you may fail to keep the body intact even for a minute. And surely death is not an end to all effort. Rightly faced, it may be but the beginning of a nobler effort. But I won't convince you by argument, if you did not see the truth intuitively. I know that even if I do not carry your approval with me, I shall retain your precious love during all those days of ordeal.

I had your letter which I had thought I would answer at leisure. Well, God had willed otherwise. I had talks with Krishna. Of Sarup's work in Kathiawar I think I wrote to you. Kamala has not even sent me her address. There has been no letter from her for many days now. When you see her please give her and Indu my love. Kamala must not worry over the fast. If possible send me a wire.[1]

Love from us all.

BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, pp. 110-l

61. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

May 2, 1933

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I cannot write a long letter today. Your letter requires no reply. I hope the news about my intended fast has made you happy. Your turn

[1] Dated May 5, the addressee's telegram read: "Your letter. What can I say about matters 1 do not understand? I feel lost in strange country where you are the only familiar landmark and I try to grope my way in dark but I stumble. Whatever happens my love and thoughts will be with you" (Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933). For Jawaharlal Nehru's letter of the same date, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Jawaharlal Nehru", 5-5-1933.

also will come. But that will be after some time. This fast is of a different character from all the previous ones. Our forefathers used to fast without much ado, to remove the cause of external troubles or for self-purification. This fast is exactly of the same kind. Just now I feel that, if people come forward to fast, I should ask them to do that one after another. Now you can certainly come to see me. Come whenever you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8803. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

62. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

May 2, 1933

CHI. SHARDA,

Your letter. Being very sensible, you must have felt happy reading about the fast. Should we not feel happy when anyone does something in the spirit of religion? Consider it an act aimed also at your purification.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9966. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

63. LETTER TO NANIBEHN JHAVERI

May 2, 1933

CHI. NANIBEHN JAHVERI,

Because I am not writing 'blessings', do not think you do not have my blessings. I said once that the inmates of the Ashram should take my blessings for granted. Hence, they should not mind if I do not put it in writing. If I avoid writing that in some letters, it is merely because it saves me the effort.

Do not be frightened by the fast.[1]

There is nothing small or great about life or death. Whatever

[1] Gandhiji was to commence the fast for purification of himself and his associates on the noon of May 8 and end it on the noon of May 29; *vide* "Statement on Fast", 30-4-1933

happens is only for the good. You must become more enlightened.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari—Pannalal Jhaveri, p. 28

64. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

May 2, 1933

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

You should be happy about my fast. Keep on doing your work. If your betrothal with S[atyavati] has not been broken off, you may certainly marry. I will approve of your doing so even during the fast. You will continue to serve even after you get married. After marriage, try to observe as much self-control as you can. Continue to write to me. You should not grieve if I die. The 'I' will not die. What will it matter if the body perishes?

BAPU

SHRI PRABHUDAS GANDHI
SHAIL ASHRAM
ALMORA, U.P.

[PS.]

My blessings to Janakibehn and Jamnalalji. I am waiting for their wire.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33045

65. LETTER TO P.N. RAJBHOJ

May 2, 1933

BHAI RAJBHOJ,

You must not get agitated over my fast. Remain there and be prepared for intelligent service. If I survive I shall attempt to use this body for further service but will consider it a blessing of God even if I succumb. My mission will not end with death. The *yajna* of Harijan service that has been commenced can never end. Even the death from fasting of thousands of *savarna* Hindus will not be too much in my

opinion. There is little possibility of my writing but you may continue to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 780 ‘

66. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHARMA

May 2, 1933

BHAI HIRALAL SHARMA,

Your Hindi letter made me extremely happy. It is astonishing that your first letter in Hindi is in such a clear hand. And your Hindi too is quite good; how is it so? I have read your letter and the prescriptions with care.[1]

The Gandhi family is not unacquainted with nature cure. But this is only a polite statement. Their faith is not much, but that too cannot be said of all. What can they and other poor fellows do? Whatever knowledge and love of nature cure they possess is only because of me. But my knowledge is so incomplete that I become helpless in emergency cases. I have never had the time to make a systematic study of the science. But I have acquired a smattering of it because of my interest in it. Owing to my deficiency I have ever been in search of an expert in nature cure. One such doctor was Hanumanta Rao, a devoted and a good man. He died a victim of his own cures. His knowledge was insufficient but his faith was unique. Next came Gopala Rao. He has established a clinic and settled at Rajahmundry. Pinning my faith on him I conducted a foolish experiment. I gave an account of it in the newspapers too.[2] The acquaintance with Gopala Rao has disheartened me. Gopala Rao is a man of conviction but his knowledge is very limited, and the pity of it is that he is not fully conscious of his limitations. Now I have found you. I do not want you to leave me. I want you to stay on in the Ashram and recognize with humility the extent of your knowledge. First win the confidence of the

[1] The addressee had under Gandhiji’s instruction sent a report ailing Ashram inmates. He had also expressed surprise over the sceptical attitude of the members of Gandhiji’s family towards nature cure.

[2] Gandhiji’s experiment of subsisting on raw and uncooked food war conducted during the summer of 1929. He frequently wrote about it in *Young India*.

Ashram inmates and then invite the public for your cures. If you are not urgently required to return, you can cure a few patients at any rate before going away. But you can certainly stay on if you like the Ashram and Narandas takes a liking to you. I am not concerned whether your understanding of nature cure is perfect or incomplete. What I want is Truth. There is no harm if we proceed only to the point within our reach, and remain content with that. There is no reason why your wife should not come and live at the Ashram if she is prepared to abide by its rules. I shall write a letter to her too and enclose it with this.

You did well in going to the Harijans with Bhagwanji. If possible, you should come to see me at the earliest possible opportunity before you leave the Ashram. We can then discuss what should be done about the health problems of the Harijans You may come on any day except Sunday. We can meet in the afternoon.

I am awaiting your suggestions regarding the Ashram diet. I want to make the diet there complete in respect of health requirements. The idea of keeping Harijan children in the Ashram has always been there but not many such children can be found You can advise those who conceal their ailments to bring it to light; and those who cannot subdue their passions may leave for good.

I am considering what to do about Kusum. As regards Ramabehn[1] you can prescribe the treatment you choose if you have no doubts as to the diagnosis and the cure of her trouble. The same applies to Jamnabehn[2]. It will be excellent if you can induce Amina[3] to give up rice and other starchy foods and tobacco. She uses it in the morning to clean her teeth. What you did about the report in Bombay newspapers of your arrival was all right and quite fitting.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, pp. 39-41

[1] Ramabehn Joshi
[2] Jamnabehn Gandhi
[3] Amina G. Qureshi

67. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

May 2, 1933

MY GOOD DAUGHTER,

Though you have sent a new *bhajan* for the second fast, it cannot be sung. You know that such *bhajans*, unless they are sung well, fail to make any impression on my heart. I shall sing the same old one[1]. Well, you can now send me the good wishes from Father, Mother, and you girls and boys.

BAPU

From the Urdu original. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also from a photostat: S.N. 9657

68. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[On or after *May 2, 1933*][2]

DAUGHTER, AMTUSSALAAM,

I have your letter. You should not be perturbed on hearing of my fast. Now I will be unable to write letters but my heart will be with you. Keep writing to me. May God make you well. Great service is to be taken from you. But God knows better about everything. Whatever He does will be for our good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 283

[1] Beginning "*Uth jag musafir bhor bhai*"; "arise, awake, O traveller, it is morning now."

[2] From the similarity in contents of this and the other letters of May 2, it appears that this was written some time between May 2 and May 8.

69. LETTER TO K. NATARAJAN

May 3, 1933

DEAR MR. NATARAJAN,

I thank you for your letter.

The fast was a call I could not resist. I remember your warning against over-emphasis upon the material considerations.[1] Do please come with Kamakoti before your departure for America where I hope you will have great success. I am glad Kamakoti is to accompany you. It will be good in every way.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. NATARAJAN
KAMAKSHI HOUSE
BANDRA, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 19073

70. LETTER TO J. D. JENKINS [2]

May 3, 1933

DEAR MR. JENKINS,

I thank you for your kind letter.

It requires a political argument to show you why I cannot take the step you advise and, as a prisoner, I may not enter into any political discussion. You will, therefore, forgive me.

I hope you received my previous letter[3].

Thanking you for the book you sent me,

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 19074

[1] The addressee had pointed out at the Bombay Conference that the workers for anti-untouchability could accomplish more by welcoming Harijans to their houses than by collecting or giving donations for the fund. This remark followed the announcement of Madan Mohan Malaviya to collect Rs. 25 lacs for the anti-untouchability fund.

[2] This was in reply to the addressee's letter (S.N. 21088) dated April 30, 1933, appealing to Gandhiji to give up civil disobedience and to co-operate with the Government in order to work out the constitution outlined in the White Paper published on March 17, 1933.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to J. D. Jenkins", 27-4-1933.

71. LETTER TO P. R. LELE

May 3, 1933

MY DEAR LELE,

I thank you for your postcard and your good wishes. I know that you will throw yourself heart and soul into the drive against the monster.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. R. LELE
WADEKAR BUILDING,
BOMBAY 4

From a microfilm: S.N. 19075

72. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

May 3, 1933

CHI. MAHAVIR,

I was very glad to get your letter. I hope you will write like this from time to time.

I am making inquiries regarding the luggage. I can't understand why you did not get it. A letter is going to the Ashram today itself.

If you work honestly, I am sure you will go forward.

When you say that milk and ghee are not available, do you mean that all of you do without them? What do you eat?

Does Dharma Kumar do anything? Does he play much mischief?

It is very good indeed that Mother works.

You will be happy if you observe the rules.

I suppose Maitri and Durga write to you. They do write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6239

73. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

May 3, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

I got your heart-rending letter. How shall I calm you? It is extremely difficult for me to let you go. I have built high hopes on you. But it would be selfish on my part and harm the ideals of the Ashram if I pressed anybody to stay on in it when it was not for his or her good to do so. The Ashram represents the sum of the good of all its inmates and the means of its achievement, hence your good and that of the Ashram cannot be mutually contradictory. If, however, you feel that this is not so in so far as I am concerned, I have no doubt at all that you should leave the Ashram. If your fast is still continuing, I want that you should give it up. I will accept whatever decision you arrive at. I will not make the final decision; it will have to be made by you.

As I have loaded Narandas with excessive responsibility, he has loaded you. He has not broken down. If you break down, I would be unhappy, for I, too, would be as much responsible for that result as anybody else. Narandas was helpless.

Even if you decide to stay on, you ought to reduce the burden on yourself. It is contrary to dharma to accept more work than one can do; there is pride, too, in doing so. There is greater harm in doing that than in eating more than one can digest. There is of course this difference between the two: 99 out of every 100 persons eat excessively, whereas 99_ per cent people do much less work than they can. Hence one does not always know whether one has taken upon oneself more work or less than one can do. All the same, the ultimate result will be as I have stated. If I eat excessively, I alone would suffer. If, on the contrary, I take upon myself more Harijan work than I can do, not only the four crore Harijans but probably the whole world would suffer.

May God give you peace of mind and show you the right path.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10343. Also C.W. 6782. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

74. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 3, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I hope you will get without delay the big packet of letters which I dispatched yesterday.

Read the letter that I have written to Prema. In view of what I have written in it I will not say anything about the matter in this letter.

Just now I am thinking about the changes which I suggested in my letter[1] yesterday. I have discussed them with Panditji. Even apart from the question whether the Ashram has the capacity or is fit to keep up a chain of fasts, my view expressed in yesterday's letter remains unchanged. The burden on you must be lightened. If that is not done, we shall not be able to cultivate even the fitness that we hope to do. You should, therefore, stop admitting newcomers, ask those who cannot observe the rules to leave the Ashram if they are recent entrants or to cook in their own kitchens if they are old inmates. I don't like separate kitchens at all. But I feel that we have no option but to tolerate the old families.

The view which I have expressed about Keshu also remains unchanged. If you feel that it is your duty, as his guardian-father, to help him from your personal money, I think that that money should not be treated as part of Ashram funds just now. I feel, too, that the money which you possess should be treated as reserved for one single purpose, namely, for the support of your parents, and should be earmarked as gift to the Ashram after their death. It should not become the property either of Jamna or Purushottam and others. If you have not made this resolution till now, you should do so at the commencement of the *yajna* of purification that is about to begin. You should discuss the matter with Jamna. You may consult Purushottam, too, if you think it necessary. But the chief thing is that you yourself should sincerely desire this. Your ability to give private help to any relation of yours will be harmful to the Ashram, to you and to the person whom you may help. I don't see anybody else in the Ashram, besides you, who possesses all the other requisite qualities in the degree required. The fact that, though you have money of your own, you have not misused it and have remained unaffected by it

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 1/2-5-1933.

shows your fine sense of justice and your impartiality. But even God will fall if He regards anything as His personal possession. The vows of non-possession and non-stealing seem trivial outwardly but they are as important as the other three vows. The entire plan of [Patanjali's] *Yogasutras* seems wonderful to me. I do not understand its later portion. But it seems likely that every aphorism of his is based on long experience. If God had not ordained my duty in another field, I would have closely studied and memorized such holy books of Hinduism. But who can say what would have been better for me? Even such a thought betrays lack of faith in God. I must be perfectly contented with the ability that God has given me. But all this is beside the point. I am convinced that Keshu's good does not lie in starting an independent factory just now with the help from the Ashram.

What can be done about Kusum? How can I call her over here? If she is eager let her go to Almora. I have stated my own view, and I cling to it. Dr. Spiegel may come there. I am watching her. She is very sincere, but has strong likes and dislikes. We should, however, support her as long as she observes the rules. If she shapes well, she will do very well indeed. Both these ladies are certainly instrumental in persuading me to undertake the proposed fast. Among them N.'s share is probably greater. But all this is my fancy. Who can know beyond doubt whether a certain step is inspired by God or the Devil? I only give probable causes of what is past and over.

I expect Parashuram to arrive here today.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8370. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

75. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

May 3, 1933

I am looking forward to the fast in the happiest frame of mind and with the greatest of confidence in the necessity for it.

Asked what he would have his associates to do during the fast, Gandhiji said:

They should simply conduct the drive against untouchability and that in the gentlest manner possible so that the heart of the sanatanists may be won over.

Asked if he was making his own arrangements for medical and other help during the fast, he said that everything depended on the authorities, nor had he any idea what arrangements he would make if he was released.

The Bombay Chronicle, 4-5-1933

76. TELEGRAM TO DR. M. A. ANSARI [1]

[*May 4, 1933*][2]

DR. ANSARI

DELHI

YOU ARE MAN OF FAITH. I WANT YOU TO BELIEVE ME WHEN I SAY THIS FAST IS NOT OF MY WILL. IT IS GOD'S PEREMPTORY COMMAND. THEREFORE HE WILL BE MY INVISIBLE MEDICAL ATTENDANT AND IF HIS ATTENDANCE DOES NOT SAVE ME WHAT WILL EVEN YOU A GOOD PHYSICIAN AND DESCENDANT OF THOSE WHO HELPED THE PROPHET[3] IN HOUR OF HIS NEED DO? LOVE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 21128 a

77. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 4, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

So you could secure the permission to send me that loving wire[4]. I did not even try. I thought it was better that you suffered in silence than that I should secure special permission to send you a soothing message. Later I shall hope to have the permission to send you and

[1] The telegram was in reply to the addressee's, which read: "As old friend, fellow-worker and medical man your grave decision has shaken me deeply. Having read statement my difference with you on moral issue persists but you are best judge of it. I do not ask you give up decision but consider unfit to bear strain. Your statement refers to your desire not to die and on basis of its implication I want your promise to break your fast if and when medical attendants regard your life in danger."

[2] From *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. III, p. 284

[3] Ansaris are the descendants of the Sheikhs who succoured the Prophet in Medina after his flight from Mecca.

[4] *Vide* 1st footnote to "Telegram to Mirabehn", 2-5-1933.

some others daily messages.

You have understood the sacred necessity of the step. Ba has responded magnificently. Her courage has been a source of the greatest strength to me.

Your letter is before me. Though written before you had any knowledge of the step, I trace in it a sorrowing mood. You have to surmount it. If you have a living faith in a living God, you would feel His never-failing presence protecting you. Till that state is reached, even faith in an individual clothed in flesh and bone is not of any avail. It is relying on a broken reed. You should first think this out clearly and then get the heart to co-operate with the intellect.

When your time comes, you will certainly throw yourself heart and soul into the movement. Whilst I would call you a Christian you are sufficiently Hindu to render you eligible for full service of the Harijans. You need not worry about this.

I wish I had time to tell you something about N. and Margarete Spiegel. But I must economize my time and also energy. Naturally the Ashram will undergo thorough cleansing. I have sent proposals[1] to Narandas.

Tell Ba not to worry about me at all. She and I and all of us are in His hands. It is well if we live and it is equally well if we die. We are born only to die and we die only to be born again. This is all old argument. Yet it needs to be driven home. Somehow or other we refuse to welcome death as we welcome birth. We refuse to believe even the evidence of our senses that we could not possibly have any attachment for the body without the soul and that we have no evidence whatsoever that the soul perishes with the body.

I can go on no longer. Visitors have come in.

I hope you received the book on astronomy.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6270. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9736

[1]*Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 1/2-5-1933 and "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 3-5-1933..

78. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

May 4, 1933

CHI. MANUDI, .

I don't mind your having left school. Since you survived a serious illness, you have lost your power of memory. I don't set much store by your studying. I shall be satisfied if you remain good and pure and maintain good health.

Nobody should be upset by my fast.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1521. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

79. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

[*May 4, 1933*][1]

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I shall be in God's hand during the fast and, therefore, nobody should worry. It would be excellent if you can arrange to get a cow milked in your presence in a dean utensil after washing the udders. Do not take anything except milk and fruit juice. My blessings to you and Tehmina.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6605

80. LETTER TO BALIBEHN M. ADALJA

May 4, 1933

CHI. BALI,

I got your letter. I am writing this only to reassure you that I cannot forget you. I have no time at all to write more. I have written a letter to Kumi at Bombay. You are a brave woman. Always remain so.

[1] From the postmark

I do hope you will get all right. Manu's betrothal is out of the question just now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gajarati: C.W. 5056. Courtesy: Surendra Mashruwala

81. LETTER TO AMINA AND GULAM RASUL QURESHI

YERAVDA,
May 4, 1933

CHI. AMINA,

I have your letter. It is surprising that the children are not recovering. I will definitely make some arrangement for you after *Ramzan.* Where would you yourself prefer to go? Would you prefer to go to the Sharada Mandir if it can be arranged? And will the children go back to Noor Banu in that case? Consider these things and write to me.

CHI. QURESHI,

You must keep me informed about your experiences with the doctors. I am always curious to know these things. In any case I should not be ignorant of the experiences of the Ashram inmates, happy or unhappy. And you should also know that God always grants a person the strength that he needs to bear the burden which it is his duty to bear. Both the children should have recovered by now.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10782. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

82. A HARIJAN'S QUESTIONS

1. What should be done to unite the sub-castes which exist among Harijans ?

2. Wherever, in big cities, sewerages is introduced, the livelihood of Harijans is jeopardized. What should they do in such a situation?

3. In some towns caste Hindus object to Harijans going riding on such occasions as weddings. You have written about what caste Hindus should do. Please be so kind as to say also what the Harijans should do.

The above questions have been sent by a Harijan correspondent. They are all three difficult questions to answer.

So long as caste Hindus remain divided in hundreds of sub-castes, as they are today, it seems unlikely that caste distinctions among Harijans can be done away with. Of course if there is a sudden awakening among the Harijans and they show a marked advance, that would be a different matter. I long to see such an awakening and when it comes they will be far in advance of the caste Hindus. But the question applies to the present context.

In the existing conditions all that can be said is that Harijans belonging to the castes that are considered superior should try to come closer to those belonging to lower castes. Mahars, for instance, should try to draw closer to Mangs, to inter-dine and intermarry with them. A Mahar thus mixing with Mangs should be fearless and should be ready to face any hardship that this course may entail.

The second question is a public question. In this transitional period a number of trades are bound to die out. A number of new trades are bound to be born. This has always been going on. This question of sewerage cannot apply to villages. Sewerage is peculiar to the city. It is in cities that Bhangis in any number are to be found. I believe that wherever sewerage is introduced some employment or other is found for the Bhangis. It becomes the responsibility of the municipality to find employment for the Bhangis thrown out of work. My advice also is that Bhangis should train themselves in some other arts, for instance, weaving. In Gujarat I notice that Bhangis, wherever they lost their traditional occupation, have taken up weaving. But there can be no uniform answer for all. Much depends on individual aptitudes.

The third question is a particularly difficult one. The underlying idea behind the question is that Harijans are wholly in the power of others and living in fear. If this is the case the only advice that may be given is that they should seek police help. Dr. Ambedkar told me that the police, coming as they do from caste Hindu communities, often do not help, which is likely to be true. Under the circumstances all that one could say is that where the police are hostile or apathetic, where no one from among the caste Hindus is ready to help, and where the Harijans themselves have not generated enough strength in themselves, the only thing possible is for the Harijans to have patience. The only

consolation which can be offered is that for every individual and society a time comes when no alternative is left but to be patient. Otherwise man would become an atheist and forget God. Therefore, where there is no non-violent recourse possible the Harijans should pray to Hari.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 5-5-1933

83. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 5, 1933

SATYAGRAHAASHRAM

SABARMATI

SHARMA'S EXPLANATION COMPLETELY SATISFACTORY. ADVISE HIS STAY ASHRAM DURING FAST. HOPE PREMA COMPLETED FAST. REPORT N.'S CONDITION.

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8373. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

84. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

May 5, 1933

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

I would like, if you can give permission today, to write daily to and hear from Mrs. Gandhi, Shrimati Mirabehn (Slade, Sabarmati), Shrimati Manibehn Patel, (Belgaum), Shrimati Vasumatibehn Pandit (Thana), Sjt. Pyarelal[1] (Nasik) and Sjt. Surendraji? (Visapur), as I used to during the September fast. I have restrained myself up to now. But I know how anxious friends must be as Monday approaches.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 10, 1933

[1] Pyarelal Nayyar

85. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI [1]

May 5, 1933

MY DEAR C. R.,

You are dearer to me than life itself. I wounded you[2] and Shankerlal deeply yesterday. It is no use my saying "Forgive me". Your forgiveness I have before the asking. But I will do the very thing that I resisted like an ass. I will submit to the examination now and any time you like by any doctor, provided, of course, the Government permit it. I feel that the result of such examination should not be published for fear of political use being made of it. I must say, too, that the medical examination, if it comes, is not likely to affect the commencement of the fast.

More when we meet. This is just to relieve my soul of the impurity that crept in yesterday.

Love to you and Shankerlal.

BAPU[3]

Harijan, 13-5-1933

86. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

May 5, 1933

CHI. JAMNA,

Your impatience for my letters pleases me very much. God willing, I will satisfy your desire fully after the fast. Stick to the doctor's treatment and cure your disease. Let my fast redouble your efforts to cure it. Whether I live or die, you will have to continue to serve. I hope Purushottam writes to you.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gajarati: C.W. 880. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] This appeared under the title, "Sparks from the Sacred Fire-II (Another Interview with Mahadev Desai)".

[2] For Gandhiji's talk with C. Rajagopalachari, *vide* Appendix "Talk with C. Rajagopalachari", 4-5-1933.

[3] The report in *Harijan* adds: "The next day, however, C. R. came laughing and said 'there was no occasion for the apology, the irritation was more on our side than yours, and we have now decided to have no examination' "

87. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[*May 5, 1933*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I wanted to but could not write to you yesterday. I understand what you say regarding Chhaganlal's criticism. Though you have replied as I desired you to do, I see that some of his remarks have hurt you. They were in the nature of allegations and were prompted by anger. But how can I advise you or anybody else? What right have I to do so? Yesterday, while talking to a friend like Rajaji whom I love so much, I became impatient and lost my temper with him and with Shankerlal. I see now that the matter was of little importance, and that it was I who was foolish. What they said or advised was prompted by their love for me. They had no other thought but my own good. If I lose my temper with them, how can my words of advice to you, when you get angry at Chhaganlal's thoughtless allegations, have any effect on you? It was seen yesterday that the serpent of anger is alive in me and is aroused whenever it is provoked. That is why you have not been able to see the anger in your words which I pointed out.[2] Your faith that it must be there since I say so does credit to your love for me, but it also proves that I do not deserve it. I will not lose heart. I will strive to deserve the love of my co-workers. The forthcoming *yajna* is a part of such striving. I see every moment that this *yajna* is absolutely necessary for my own purification. I cannot forget that the imperfection of the Ashram is a faithful reflection of my own imperfection. If I do not know how to take the Ashram forward, there is no meaning in my living on. To leave the Asham or to close it down would be nothing but cowardice. I must learn the wisdom how to take the Ashram forward. I cherish the hope that I shall acquire that strength by the proposed *yajna*. If I succeed in this aim, I may hope to succeed in the other things. If I fail in this, I cannot hope to succeed in anything else. That will be the meaning of this *yajna*. I should like you to make your full contribution to it. You need not get ready just now for a fast, but should only cultivate the fitness to undertake one when the time comes. I think you are doing that.

[1] As given in *Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine,* Pt. II. Also from the reference in the letter to Gandhiji's talks with C. Rajagopalachari and Shankerlal Banker on May 4, 1933.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 26-4-1933..

Wherever you see your shortcoming, attack it and get rid of it. Do not worry about me. A daily report about what happens there will give me great peace of mind. Such reports will be my food during the days of the fast.

I think Duncan and Sharma have something in their minds which they wish to discuss. Have a talk with them.

Margarete Spiegel may leave for Ahmedabad on Monday. She is a good woman, but not very intelligent. She is very obstinate. She has very little khadi with her. Give her what she needs. She will have to think what dress to wear. At present she wears a sari. If she is not eager to start wearing khadi immediately, you also should not insist that she should do so. Personally I like N.'s dress. I myself had suggested it to her. She knows sewing very well. If she can take interest in it, she can do much useful work in that field.

Margarete does not like that dress. For the present, let her borrow a thick sari from one of the women there and try it. Such sari will not require a skirt. If there is an underwear with it like the one I use, it will be enough. Or she may wear, like Mirabehn, a skirt, blouse and a thick scarf as upper garment. Mirabehn is very economical indeed in using khadi. A skirt is certainly not a complete dress. Anybody who wears it should also use an undergarment. You will now be able to guide Margarete.

She had some money with her, which I have taken away. I have taken away one chain, too. I have handed over both to *Harijan* Shastri[1]. If she comes, she will travel by the same train by which N. travelled. If Ramji wants to leave the Ashram, let him go. If he remains, he must behave properly. Don't press Kusum at all in regard to her hair. Getting it cut will be for her good only if she does that willingly.

I trust Shanti is well now.

BAPU

[PS.]

Parashuram arrived yesterday. There is no sense in what he talks. I have been disccussing things with him. If there is anything to write about, I will do so.

[1] R. V. Shastri, Editor, *Harijan*

I am sending a wire[1] today regarding Sharma. Keep me informed about how N. behaves.

What do you propose to do about the teaching of Hindi? There ought to be some provision for it in the Ashram. N. will have to be taught Hindi.

Letters for Jamnabehn, Dr. Sharma, N. (2) and Shanti are enclosed.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8371. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

88. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHARMA

May 5, 1933

BHAI SHARMA,

I have your letter. I am sending a wire today.

I would advise you to stay on at the Ashram during the fast and overcome lethargy. Activity is the only remedy for that. The Ashram can provide enough work.

Acquaint Narandas with all that you observe in the Ashram.

I heard of your fast;[2] it was all right but discipline requires that the manager be consulted in such matters.

My faith in nature-cure goes back to forty years ago. What I meant[3] was that my faith in your cure will be strengthened by its success in the Ashram. Do write the pamphlet for the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, p. 44

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Narandas Gandhi", 5-5-1933..

[2] The addressee was planning to go back to Delhi and had undertaken a fast in accordance with his practice to fast for a day or two before commencing a journey which involved change of climate.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Hiralal Sharma", 2-5-1933.

89. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

[*May 5, 1933*][1]

BHAI RAJBHOJ,

I have your letter[2]. You are doing good work.

If the question of the Poona Pact comes up, I shall certainly obtain the opinion of other Harijan leaders.

I like your suggestion about the temples that have been thrown open. I will refer to it in *Harijan Sevak.*

There is no point in publicizing the Sarada Act among the Harijans at present. We shall be able to do that only when we have done some more work.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You must not worry over my fast. Remain absorbed in your duty.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 794

90. MESSAGE TO ARYA SAMAJ CONFERENCE[3]

[On or before *May 6, 1933*][4]

I sincerely hope that God will guide your conference to devise means for banishing untouchability from India.

The Hindu, 8-5-1933

[1] As given in an unknown hand at the end of the letter in the source

[2] The addressee had requested Gandhiji to call a meeting of Harijan leaders to. consider Ambedkar's proposals regarding the Poona Pact and had suggested that joint meetings and *bhajans* by caste Hindus and Harijans should be held in temples thrown open to Harijans.

[3] Held in Delhi under the presidentship of Dr. B. S. Moonje. Among others, the conference passed a resolution expressing concern over Gandhiji's proposed fast and appealed to every individual to eradicate untouchability.

[4] The massage was reported under the date-line: "New Delhi, May 6, 1933".

91. HUMAN MANUFACTURE [*-II*]

I am sorry I shall not be able to analyse, as fully as I had intended to, the able monograph on 'Depressed Classes, in the Bengal and Sikkim Census Report by Mr. A. E. Porter of the Indian Civil Service, from which I reproduced two sections last week.[1] In Section 4 the author points out the defects of the criteria suggested on different occasions by different Census Commissioners and others. Says Mr. Porter:

> They reduce themselves naturally to religious or social disabilities and in not a single instance is there any criterion put forward which *prima facie* ought to attract the attention of the administration.

For they "are entirely matters of social and religious consideration" and, therefore, "they would be entirely irrelevant to any consideration by Government of the problem of the Depressed Classes". He then goes on to the consideration of some of the criteria. Temple entry occupies the first place. The whole of the Section is interesting. It ends with this significant conclusion:

> Disabilities regarding the right to worship or enter into temples are largely conventional or not immune from change, and in any case do not properly constitute a title to special consideration in the body politic, so long as they are confined purely to the social and religious life of the community.

I must skip over the Section regarding the service of Brahmins and barbers. Even there the author shows that the practice is erratic, in no sense universal and subject to constant change.

Then comes the Section regarding pollution by touch. Says the author:

> There is a similar conventionality and flexibility about the idea of uncleanliness and pollution.

The extent to which members of the higher caste feel themselves polluted differs in respect of the same group from place to place. The same thing is applicable to food and drink taboos.

It should be borne in mind that Mr. Porter has considered the question purely with a view to examining the vexatious question as to who should be included among the 'Depressed Classes'. He, therefore, says:

[1] *Vide* "Human Manufacture [-I]", 29-4-1933.

As a social question, therefore, the problem of the Depressed Classes is primarily one for Hindu society to tackle for itself. As an administrative problem demanding the cognizance of Government, social and religious disabilities are unsatisfactory as a test of the classes to be included, whilst the extent to which the Depressed Classes are denied participation in the advantages and conveniences maintained by the administration is so small as to be negligible. For the administration, in fact, the problem of the Depressed Classes in Bengal practically does not exist, save in so far as special measures are necessary to improve their economic condition and standard of education. The prominence which it acquires-is largely due to the questions raised in comparatively recent years as regards separate representation in the Legislatures for members of the Classes. For Bengal at least, therefore, the attempt to treat any social usage or any civic disability as a clear criterion[1] by which to distinguish the Depressed Classes is bound to fail and some other distinction must be sought. It is necessary to retain the untouchables since the Census Commissioner has explained Depressed Classes as "castes contact with whom entails purification on the part of the high-caste Hindus".

He added:

It is not intended that the term should have any reference to occupation as such but to those castes which by reason of their traditional position in Hindu society are denied access to temples, for instance, or have to use separate wells or are not allowed to sit in schools but have to remain outside or have to suffer similar social disabilities.

The question of preparing a list of the Depressed Classes for each Province was discussed at a meeting of the Superintendents of Census operations in January 1931. As a result of this discussion the Census Commissioner announced:

"For the purposes of the census of India I propose at present to retain the term 'Depressed Classes' to indicate untouchables, whether of the milder or of the more severe degree of untouchability."

It was decided also that Muslims and Christians should be excluded and that generally speaking the hill and forest tribes who had not become Hindu but whose religion was returned as 'tribal' should also be excluded.

He then goes on to show why the expression 'Depressed Classes' should include not only the untouchables conforming to the various social and religious tests examined by him, but all those of whom

[1] The source has "contention".

in the terms of His Majesty's Instrument of Instructions to the Governor of the Province it would still be true that from their lack of educational and material advantages they rely specially upon the protection of Government and cannot as yet fully rely for their welfare upon joint political action.

Section 17 contains a most informing comparison between the lists of Depressed Classes in 1921 and 1931. In the British districts only of Bengal, l,801,7l2 persons who are included in the list of 1921 have been excluded from that of 1931 and the number belongs to eight castes, the largest being Rajbangshi. Similarly there are some groups who have been for the first time included in the list of 1931. In the group 'A' alone of the 'Depressed Classes', with which for the moment we are concerned, there are 48 castes in the Census Report of 1931 as against only 19 in 1921. The comparison covers other reports also, but I have confined myself to the Census reports only. A careful perusal of the whole of this report dealing with Depressed Classes is necessary for the diligent student. He will be amply repaid for his trouble.

But what I have given is, I hope, sufficient to show that the untouchables are a human manufacture and that, too, by census enumerators, who have nothing to do with religious untouchability, and in accordance with instructions, which were received from their superiors and which varied from time to time, so that an untouchable of yesterday ceases to be an untouchable of today and he who was not an untouchable yesterday through these census operations finds himself to be an untouchable of today. I commend this information to honest sanatanists and ask them whether they are satisfied with this state of things or whether they are satisfied with the varying definitions of untouchability or with the fact that the untouchability, in accordance with a particular definition, varies from place to place even regarding the same persons. Can all this be enjoined by the Shastras? It is possible to multiply this suggestive and awkward question, but I forbear.

The one thing that should force itself upon the attention of every thoughtful reader is that the State or the Law should have nothing to do with untouchability and that, therefore, the Abolition of Untouchability Bill is a peremptory necessity. A custom that is repugnant to the moral sense of mankind, that varies from place to place, from time to time, both in its incidence and in its application to individuals, cannot and ought not to have the sanction of the law of a

secular State representing those who at the one end believe in untouchability, no matter how capricious, and, at the other, regard it as a negation of religion. Withdrawal of State recognition of such a custom in no way interferes with the personal belief of any single. individual or his social practice. It will still be open to a person to regard his fellow as an untouchable at religious and social functions without any interference from law. That should satisfy the most orthodox of people, and the reformer would be crossing the limits of justice if he asks for more.

Another thing that clearly comes out of Mr. Porter's monograph is that the disabilities for inclusion in the term 'Depressed Classes' should not include untouchability. They should be disabilities of a civic, political, economic and non-religious character, of which the State can and should take notice and for which it is not only possible but it is also the duty of the State to find a remedy. That would purge the Depressed Classes list of untouchability and yet enable the State to deal with its incidences that are common to people other than untouchables.

If the Census operations ignored untouchability, as they should, the wind will be taken out of the sanatanists' sail. Happily for them and for mankind, nature has no indelible mark whereby an untouchable can be detected from the rest of his fellows. So far as I can see from my study of various Census Reports and of the general law of the country, there is absolutely no legal difficulty in achieving this end so ably put forth by the author in the monograph under discussion. It should be remembered too, that the definition of 'Depressed Classes' contemplated in the Yeravda Pact has not yet been arrived at.

Harijan, 6-5- 1933

92. HIS WILL BE DONE

General Smuts is reported to have made a pathetic appeal to me to desist from the impending fast. Kunwar Maharaj Singh is said to have backed it. I have not yet received the telegram.[1] But there seems to be no doubt about the authenticity of the report.

[1] For the telegram from Kunwar Maharaj Singh, India's Agent General on South Africa, *vide* "A Confession and a Warning", 6-5-1933.

Dr. Ansari binds me with a tie of love capable of standing the severest strain.[1] When I seemed to be forsaken by the 'Siamese Twins'[2], through whom I came to know the great and good Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan and then Dr. Ansari, the latter never wavered in his faith in my supreme regard for Mussalmans of India as if they were my blood-brothers, as in fact they are, born of the same *Madar-i-Hind*. He as "an old friend, fellow-worker and medical man" makes a pathetic appeal to me to vary my vow.

Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, the keeper of my conscience, sends me a long telegram attacking the very basis of the fast.

Add to these the fervent personal appeal, strengthened by a copious flow of tears, of Devdas, my youngest son and valued comrade.

If these typical appeals have left me unmoved, the reader should have no difficulty in perceiving that there must be a force which has overpowered me and prevents me from responding to these and such other appeals.

Underlying them is undoubtedly a distrust in my claim that this fast is prompted by God.[3] I do not suggest that they do not believe in my word. But they believe me to be under selfdelusion—a prey to my own heated imagination made hotter by the suffocation produced by the cramping walls of a prison. I cannot deny the possibility of such a thing. But it can make no appeal to me whilst I believe to the contrary. I am a habitual prisoner. Prison walls have never been known to have warped my judgment or induced in me a habit of brooding. All my imprisonments have been periods of intense activity leaving me no time for brooding. I have undoubtedly brooded over the wrongs of Harijans. But such brooding has always resulted in definite action on my part. The action that I was contemplating on the day preceding that fateful night was certainly not any fast.

My claim to hear the voice of God is no new claim. Unfortunately there is no way that I know of proving the claim except through results. God will not be God if He allowed Himself to be an object of proof by His creatures. But He does give His willing slave the power to pass through the fiercest of ordeals. I have been a willing

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Dr. M. A. Ansari", 4-5-1933.
[2] Shaukat Ali and Mahomed Ali
[3] *Vide* "Statement on Fast", 30-4-1933.

slave to this most exacting Master for more than half a century. His voice has been increasingly audible as years have rolled by. He has never forsaken me even in my darkest hour. He has saved me often against myself and left me not a vestige of independence. The greater the surrender to Him, the greater has been my joy.

I, therefore, feel confident that in the end these kindest of friends will recognize-the correctness of the action I am about to take. And this whether I die or live. God's ways are inscrutable. And who knows that He may not want my death during the fast to be more fruitful of beneficial results than my life? Surely it is highly depressing to think that a man's ability to serve dies with the dissolution of the body which for the moment he is inhabiting. Who doubts that the spirits of Ramakrishna and Dayananda, Vivekananda and Ramtirth are today working in our midst? It may be that they are more potent today than when they were in our midst in the flesh. It is not true that 'the good that men do is oft buried with them'. We burn the evil that men do with their mortal remains. We treasure the memory of the good they do, and distance only magnifies it.

And why should exaggerated importance be given to the services of one single person, however good or able he may be? The cause of Harijans is God's cause. He will throw up men and women as they may be required to do His will.

I, therefore, invite General Smuts and all other friends to believe with me that I am not acting under hallucination and beseech them to send up their prayer to the Almighty that He may give me the strength to pass safely through the ordeal. I feel sure that, if I am wanted on this earth yet for a while for any service whatsoever, He will spare me notwithstanding the fears of medical friends.

Since the above was in type, the cable from Sir Kunwar Maharaj Singh has been received. The Press version omits some words. Here is the text:

> The following telegram has been sent to me by General Smuts, in his private capacity, for transmission to you:
>
> "May I appeal to you most earnestly to delay your announced fast? Your work for removal of untouchability has already achieved a measure of success which exceeds highest expectations. With patience you may yet carry complete accomplishment of the greatest reform of our time. Moreover, India stands on the threshold of a new period which makes your wise guidance in future more essential than ever before. Endangering your life might lead to a

dreadful calamity and an irreparable setback at the most critical moment. I appeal for old friendship's sake and for the great causes you have championed so successfully."

In forwarding this telegram I wish on my own behalf and, I feel sure, on behalf of the Indian community in South Africa, to endorse the sentiment expressed by General Smuts.

MAHARAJ SINGH
AGENT OF GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Harijan, 6-5-1933

93. A CONFESSION AND A WARNING

Though I had read about the coming of this lady[1] to India and her acceptance of Hinduism and yearning to go to the Ashram at Sabarmati, she had never corresponded with me till after the September fast. When the possibility of the second fast to start on the 2nd of January last was announced, she wrote to me a long letter telling me that she would join me in the fast. I wrote to her, strongly dissuading her from the course and inviting her to see me, if she was not convinced. I asked her in one of my letters to let me know something about her past. She wrote a long letter in reply. Meanwhile she had started Harijan work in Bangalore with some young men to help her. She wrote to me about it. This interested me more in her. And I wrote back in praise of her work. Thus our correspondence grew.

Suddenly a friend who had just returned from Mysore warned me that my letters were being exploited and that N. was a mere adventures of doubtful character. Thereupon I wrote to her an urgent letter telling her of the report and asking her to come at once to Poona. I felt that the Harijan work was in danger by her association, if the report was true. She came promptly in answer to my letter. Her behaviour was strange as she came in. I straightaway told her what I had heard about her character. She repudiated all the charges. I thought there was an end to the matter and began to enquire more about her work. But as the conversations grew, my suspicion was roused and I frankly told her about it. That led to most painful revelations one after another. Her life was one of lewdness, untruth

[1] Gandhiji's comments were preceded by a letter from her intended for publication in newspapers.

and extravagance. The lewdness did not seem to repel her. She was brought up in a Bohemian family, where the very name Jesus was taboo. (N. is only 24, was married in Greece at the age of 17 and has a son who is with her.) She seemed now to realize the amazing contradictions of her life. I put it to her that she was doing an irreparable damage to the faith of her adoption, injuring the Harijan cause and corrupting the morals of the youths who had gathered round her. I believe that she saw the force of what I urged. She decided at once to break with the past, run the risk of being prosecuted by her creditors and to live among Harijans for their service and bring up her boy for the same work. She went back to Bangalore. She wrote a brief letter of confession for the Press, which the latter would not publish. She removed to Harijan quarters in Bangalore and, coming under the spell of a vicious man, fell again. She then went to a Harijan village near Chitaldrug. She was neglected by the person who took her there. She very nearly collapsed. During this period she was keeping up regular correspondence with me. She saw that it was impossible to serve Harijans or to hold herself together without proper guidance. I felt that it was my clear duty to work out the logical extent of the advice I had given and that if she was to live the life of service to the lowliest, she must go to the Ashram, where she had dreamt of going long ago. I could not possibly ask any friend or other institution to run the risk of taking a foreign young emotional girl with a black past hardly yet out of sight. With the consent of the manager of the Ashram, therefore, I have sent her there, though not without hesitation. Nor is it without hesitation that I am sharing her letter with the public. It is difficult to believe that all her terrible past is dead for ever. But sudden changes have happened in men's lives before. Let us hope that N. will prove to be one more such case. What is impossible for man is possible for God.

Needless to say that she goes to the Ashram without the slightest intention of taking part directly or indirectly in the civil disobedience movement. one word to the young men who fell under N.'s spell. She has given me the naked details of her past life. Youth will be emotional all the world over. Hence the utter necessity of preconceived and deliberate *brahmacharya* during the study period, i.e., at least 25 years. Let the youth of the country know that this Harijan service is the most difficult of all humane services. I do not publish one-tenth of what comes under my notice of the moral degradation to which the criminal neglect of caste Hindus has reduced

them. The work, therefore, demands the highest purity and the greatest simplicity on the part of the workers. Let the young men and women who are working for the cause take heed from the example of N.

Harijan, 6-5-1933

94. FOR A HEART AWAKENING

I am writing this on the morning of Saturday[1]. I have heard counsel of a number of friends. Through attachment or love they want me not to undertake the *mahayajna* that is in the offing. The inner voice says: 'It will be a sin to draw back. God, in whose name the resolve was taken will fulfil everything according to His wish.'

Outwardly what I see convinces me that I must fast, come what may. Pandit Santhanam has sent me a report of the work in the Punjab. It contains three points which Lala Mohanlal has made. These, in brief, are as follows:

l. In the Punjab the Arya Samaj, the Sanatana Dharmis, the Sikhs, the Mussalmans and the Christians all want to draw Harijans into their respective folds.

2. Harijans have produced leaders who are so covetous that, it is impossible to satisfy them.

3. There are rival organizations in the Punjab working for the same cause.

It may occasion some surprise among readers that my proposed fast is an answer to the above situation. The Harijan Sevak Sangh must understand that this work is purely religious and must be carried on in a religious spirit. Once this is granted the above three points are automatically answered. I do not consider as religious the work that people of other communities and sects are doing. If Harijan sevaks work with religious spirit they will see the fruit of service in service itself. They can weigh themselves only in the scales of justice. If therefore Harijan leaders or others use pressure they will not be affected by it. Work done in a religious spirit cannot but have an effect on the rival organizations. What is the definition of such wonderful religion ? Religion is what purifies the soul, in which there is no hankering for fruits of action, which generates indomitable faith,

[1] May 6, 1933

and in which there is not an iota of selfishness. Only activities conforming to such religion can be said to be religious. In activities of this kind the service of Harijans takes on the character of purification of the caste Hindus, an expression of their repentance. If this is clearly understood there remains nothing further to ask. Let every individual and organization become pure through the service of Harijans; let no one speak ill of others or bear malice towards others. There can be no place here for considerations of political profit.

But this is easier said than done. It means that religion is to be grasped not by the intellect but by the heart. For an awakening of the heart the only effective means is *tapasya. Tapasya* is the extreme form of renunciation. *Tapasya* begins with fasting. *Tapasya* means to take on suffering. Only those who fast know the suffering of fasting. I hope to teach through *tapasya,* that is, fasting, what I cannot teach through arguments.

But whether I succeed or not I see no peace for myself except in fasting. I am convinced that that is what God wills me to do. If in the course of the *tapasya* I succumb I shall understand—and so must people understand—that my work is finished, and my responsibility is over. That will be no occasion for grief and sorrowing. And what can be more fortunate for me as well as for the cause of Harijan service if I give up my life in that cause? If the *tapasya* is consummated without any obstacle it will add to my self-confidence and give me further strength for service. In either case it will become clear that the work of Harijan Sevak Sangh is a religious one, that for caste Hindus it is in the nature of repentance and that those who are not pure have no place in this work.

Let no one think that there is any strength to be derived from merely abstaining from food. Thought and word should collaborate in fasting. only a fast undertaken in thought, word and deed can be an effective means of self-purification. That is why I have been explaining in a number of articles that everyone does not have the right to fast.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 12-5-1933

95. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 5/6, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I had a fairly long discussion with Parashuram. Before explaining the conclusion to which I have arrived as a result of it, I will narrate to you a shocking thing which he told me. I told him that I did not believe him at all, but asked him to give his story in writing if he wished to do so. He did that. What he says is that Dr. Sharma is more busy in criticizing the Ashram than with treating the patients, and that too in talking unclean things about it. Parashuram says that Dr. Sharma had come with certain fixed prejudices against the Ashram and that he had been talking with several people there and trying to induce them to tell him things by talking to them against other inmates or coaxing them in other ways. According to Dr. Sharma, slave mentality prevails in the Ashram and all of you are deceiving an 'old fool' like me by nodding 'yes' to everything I say. You are, he says, under Prema's influence and are guided by her in all things. He calls Prema "Her Excellency" and always uses that phrase when talking about her in her absence. I didn't have time to talk more about this with Parashuram, but I have given you the substance of what he said.

All this has had no effect on me whatsoever. But I have mentioned it because I thought it necessary that you should know. Dr. Sharma has not given me the slightest impression of being a man of this type. In the letters which he wrote to me from Delhi, I saw his humility and his sincerity, and I have always believed that he has come to the Ashram prompted by a spirit of service. I would be very much shocked if what Parashuram says is found to be true, though of course there is little room for being more shocked than I have already been. And from Monday in any case I shall be enjoying supreme peace.

About you and Prema, Parashuram has nothing to say except that there is temperamental incompatibility between him and you two. At any rate that is what he says just now. The word in his diary is not *rakshasi*[1] but *rajasi*[2] and you seem to have read it wrongly. Nor has he

[1] Monster-like
[2] Imperious

charged you with wickedness. He keeps saying that he has got fed up with Prema's temper. However that may be, I have told him that he should exercise the utmost control on his pen and tongue and stop writing such a rotten diary, and that he can return to the Ashram if he is ready to throw himself on your goodwill and promise unreserved co-operation with you in future. I have also advised him to write one letter to you. I have not yet received any such letter.

May 6, 1933

Parashuram says that he does not wish to leave the Ashram with the stigma of failure. He seems to be coming round completely now. Moreover, the fast also is approaching and so he is eager to secure a testimonial from you and return to the Ashram. I am writing this early in the morning. Parashuram will see me in the course of the day. If I think it advisable to send him back, I will do so. Have a talk with him and take him in again if he satisfies you. You are, of course, not bound to do so at all. Take him in only if you yourself feel that his heart has become completely clean. If, moreover, what he says about Dr. Sharma is nothing but a fabrication by him or a complete misreading of the facts on his part, you may think whether it would be advisable to take in again a man of such a confused mind.

If, however, what he says about Dr. Sharma is found to be true, you will have to think a great deal. Whether or not you take Parashuram back, give him enough time and listen to all that he has to say. If he is a good man, we should not let him go. But I also know that, though good, if he is utterly confused in mind, we cannot keep him in the Ashram. You are, therefore, completely free not to take him back again. I am permitting him to come to you only because I don't wish to reject his eager entreaties to do so. But I have made my condition clear to him. He can stay only if he satisfies you.

I continue to get letters from Dr. Sharma and see from them that several people have indeed talked to him and told him many things. He says that he has found some persons to be suffering from even venereal diseases. He should give the names of such persons to you. I also was going to ask for them, but meanwhile came this fast. Hence I leave that job to you. Read the letter which I am writing to him.

Panditji is returning there. Narmada does not intend to return at all. Lakshmibehn has taken a vow, when leaving the Ashram, that she

will not return for one year. Hence she will not return before that period is over.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8372. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

96. TELEGRAM TO HARILAL GANDHI[1]

May 6, 1933

HARILAL
NIZAMIAH HOTEL
225/26 HARBOUR BUILDING, FRERE ROAD, BOMBAY

YOUR LETTER TOUCHES ME. IF THIS FAST MEANS YOUR RETURN TO PURE LIFE IT WOULD BE DOUBLY BLESSED. SEE ME. I SHALL TRY GUIDE YOU. GOD BLESS YOU.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 21200

97. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

POONA,
May 6, 1933

STRONGLY DISSUADE MR. RAJBHOJ AND OTHERS FROM FASTING. THEY AND ALL SHOULD CLEANSE THEMSELVES IN SPEECH AND DEED. THEY WILL FAST WHEN THEIR TURN COMES.

The Hindu, 8-5-1933

98. LETTER TO SURENDRAJI

May 6, 1933

DEAR SURENDRAJI,

Ramdas told me that you had tears in your eyes when he conveyed my message to you. I am sure that in your eyes there cannot be any tears but of joy. There was no way out of this fast and this was the auspicious occasion. It seems to me impossible to destroy

[1] In reply to his letter dated May 5, 1933, which read: "Your fast has posed a question for all, 'what is my dharma?' I undertake to do anything you would ask me to, but please do give up the fast" (S.N. 21175).

a hydra-headed demon like the untouchability by any other means. Ravana had ten heads only but this demon has a thousand. It is not necessary to explain to you what these thousand heads are. It is impossible to bring about its permanent destruction by ordinary, time-honoured means. We must, therefore, perforce, resort to ancient, valuable weapons. This is as clear to me as a mathematical axiom. Is it possible to change the heart of sanatanists by collecting a crore of rupees? Only a true votary can bring about this reform and not hundreds of so-called ones. The Ashram through which I am hoping to overcome this evil must not stand divided on this question. Harijans are in mortal dread at present. Those who have given up fear have become shameless. If these latter run into a fury, it would be no surprise. To destroy all these evils we cannot too often and too determinedly draw on our spiritual possessions. If it is God's pleasure that I alone can bring about this desired end, I shall only be too pleased for such a sacrifice. But I am not sure that I have so much of purity in me. If hundreds and thousands of persons like me can undertake as many fasts, then alone we can bury the sin that has accumulated through centuries.

I expect a lot from you and people like you. But I must make one thing clear that no one must follow me during my fast. Your duty is to remain peaceful and try to be as pure as possible in mind, deed and word. This letter has been written by Mahadev and he will continue to do so everyday. I shall sign it as long as it is possible for me to do so. I have obtained Government's permission that I can write to you everyday and so also you can.

My blessings to all.

BAPU

Government of Bombay Home Department I.G.P. File No. 10, 1933

99. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Special letter for Mirabehn *May 6, 1933*

CHI. MIRA,

Mahadev is writing this for me, as he will do everyday from now, and whenever possible take my signature. You can also write daily and Ba too. I am enclosing a letter for Ba.

You don't need any argument from me. If any is needed you

will read it[1] all in today's *Harijan*. It is clear to me as daylight that the fast had to come. I am only surprised that I did not take the decision earlier. I wrestled with myself all these days. The struggle grew acute during the last three days and a little after midnight the voice came clear to me that I must take the plunge. I see what agony you are going through. I knew Ba would be brave. But your joint telegram and your letters have already begun to provide me spiritual sustenance for the pilgrimage. If you want me to come out victorious in the struggle of the spirit with the flesh, you too have to share in the struggle. I know how agonizing the effort is for you but I know too you will come out triumphant and help me to be triumphant too. But what is *our* triumph? As you have rightly begun your letter and perhaps I wrote the heading of my article just when you wrote those words there—not our will but His will be done.

Let me have a line from you both everyday.

Love.

BAPU[2]

From the original: C.W. 6272. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9738

100. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 6, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter.

The absence of any letter from N. worries me. She was to write to me daily. I very much hope she will acquit herself well. Keep an eye on her. Send me reports about her even during the fast. I want her also to send a slip to me occasionally. If you find that she is not behaving properly, let me know immediately. You may even ask her to leave the Ashram if you think it necessary to do so. You must have read the letter which I wrote to her yesterday. I hope you have supplied her ink, pen, paper and other things which she will need.

You ask me what I desire during the period of the fast. our outward activities may go on as usual, but I see the need for inner purification by all. All our activities directly or indirectly bear on the

[1] *Vide* "Statement on Fast", 30-4-1933 and "His Will be Done", 6-5-1933.

[2] For letters to Gomatibehn Mashruwala, Ramji G. Badhia, Anasuyabehn Sarabhai and Lakshmibehn M. Sharma, presumably written on May 6, 1933.

welfare of the Harijans. But see if you can think of a concrete field of work for their service.

But my chief desire is to see the reforms which I have suggested in the Ashram carried out. You should think over my suggestions about persons who do not observe the Ashram rules being asked to leave, etc., and take the necessary steps to implement them. If as a consequence of such action the physical activities of the Ashram have to be reduced to some extent, never mind. Discuss, calmly, the problems a little more still and make the Ashram safe from the point of view of purity of standards. Think over the suggestions[1] made by Rajbhoj and persuade the inmates of the Ashram to get ready to sacrifice themselves by fasting indefinitely.

I cannot think of anything more to say.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8374. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

101. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

May 6, 1933

CHI. MANI,

Like last time, this time too, I am permitted to send you a letter every day during the fast and you too can write to me daily. I may be unable to write or dictate a letter daily but Mahadev will write and, if possible, get it signed by me. Every such letter will be for both you and Mridula[2]. This letter also is being taken down by Mahadev.

Both of you are brave girls. I am sure you will not be unnerved. You need not worry at all on my account. I think that I am fresher and stronger this time than I was at the time of the previous fast. Raja strove hard with me. He is calm now and is leaving today. But he will return in a few days' time. Vallabhbhai is bearing it all very calmly and has promised to Mahadev that he will co-operate with me—maybe by keeping silent— without entering into any argument. I like this attitude of his. For a few days he carried his silence too far. Even the fountain of his humour seemed to have dried up. But it has welled up

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi",27-4-1933.

[2] Mridula Sarabhai

again.

The fast was absolutely necessary. I have no doubt that this was the best time for it. I have thought about the matter from every point of view and am fully convinced of the correctness of my decision. The fast is not directed against anybody. I do not even know what event pained me and precipitated the fast. Many things had their felt or unfelt influence on me. The point is that if the workers doing Harijan work under my guidance are not perfectly sincere, the cause must be some impurity in me. Moreover, the monster of untouchability is more frightful than Ravana. The latter had only ten heads, but this one has hundreds of them. They cannot all be cast off by any number of organizations or any amount of money collected for the purpose. It is not enough to secure rights for Harijans. What is wanted is a change of heart among caste Hindus if they and Harijans are to embrace one another as blood-brothers. This great spiritual task can be accomplished only if we spend all the spiritual strength we possess. This is an ancient and well-trodden path. The wonder is that I did not think of it before.

Remain calm both of you and contribute your share when the time comes. A fast in sympathy with me is out of question.

Blessings to both from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 105-7

102. LETTER TO GOMTIBEHN MASHRUWALA

[May *6, l 933*][1]

I hope you have understood the significance of the proposed fast.[2] What is Nathji's[3] view? He did not approve of my last fast. I don't know if he approved of it afterwards. The proposed fast is of a different kind. If you know Kishorelal's view, write to me about that too.

[1] As given in the source. However there appears to be some doubt as to its correctness. According to *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. III, p. 255 the idea of the fast mentioned in the letter came to Gandhiji on April 30.

[2] This was to commence on May 8, 1933

[3] Kedarnath Kulkarni, Kishorelal Mashruwala's guru

You should not get nervous. Try to purify yourself as much as you can. Do some work of service. Do not get upset at all. Take care of your health. If I die, you will have to complete this *yajna*. How you may do that, I myself don't know very well. I have explained to Kaka. I have also written about this to the inmates of the Ashram. I have explained to Mahadev and Chhaganlal, too, as much as I understand. I don't have time to write more.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9530. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

103. LETTER TO RAMJI G. BADHIA

May 6, 1933

Your fast will not do any good either to you or to anyone else, and it cannot but cause pain to me. Even fasting has its rules. If I have any influence with you, give up the idea of fasting and do as I have advised. Banish suspicion and anger from your mind and understand Mathuradas and others. One who fails to understand his well-wishers cannot be happy. If you have so much faith in me, why should you not have equal faith in Narandas, Mathuradas and others? I hope you have faith in Rajbhoj at any rate. If you have, you should follow his advice at least. It will definitely sustain me in my fast if your mind is at peace.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9533. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

104. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

[*May 6, 1933*][1]

I understand your feelings. Association with me can be very painful. I myself am not a free agent. I am never sure of what will happen the next moment. My very freedom seems bondage to me, whereas slavery to the God of Truth seems freedom to me. Though I didn't at all wish to undertake a fast, I had to do so. But the lightness of heart which I felt after I had taken the decision is beyond words. You should, therefore, rejoice at the fast. I am sure, nothing will happen to my body. But what even if my expectation proves false? In that case, you should think that God had no more service to take through this body. Please, therefore, do not feel unhappy. The human

[1] *Vide* 1st footnote to "An Example to Copy", 29-7-1933.

body is a thing more brittle even than a glass bangle, and the *atman* that dwells in it is the only imperishable reality. Keep this thought constantly in your mind and go on doing what service you can. You and Shankerlal should take rest just now. Come during the last days.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9531. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

105. LETTER TO LAKSHMIBEHN M. SHARMA

[*May 6, 1933*][1]

CHI. LAKSHMI,

I get several complaints against you. You spent Rs. 40 on saris and have bought so many bangles that you would not be able to wear them even in your whole lifetime. You forget that you are married to a poor man and are a poor father's daughter. I am poorer than even Dudhabhai. You should know that my proposed fast will be for you also. I will be fasting for all who are connected with me. Moreover, you are a Harijan girl. You ought to understand your duty. You will cause me much pain if you tell lies or learn extravagance. Wake up. Do write to me.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9532. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

106. MESSAGE ON DECISION TO FAST [2]

May 6, 1933

I am not anxious to die. I will not die. Don't worry yourself about me.

The Hindustan Times, 7-5-1933

107. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS [3]

[*May 6, 1933*][4]

Unfortunately for me, God or Truth has sent me this fast, as it

[1] *Vide* 1st footnote to "An Example to Copy", 29-7-1933.

[2] To numerous friends and admirers who called on him from 8 a.m. till sunset

[3] Extracted from "Sparks from the Sacred Fire-II (Another Interview with Mahadev Desai)". On being asked how far this fast inaugurated "a new era in the socio-religious movement'" Mahadev Desai explained that he would only repeat "what Gandhiji said in a compact little Press interview".

[4] From *Mahadevbhaini Diary,* Vol. III, PP. 293-4

appears to me, much later than it should have come. But as I cannot be the judge of God Himself, I have submitted to His peremptory injunctions. In my opinion, however, I should have undergone a fast like this at the time of the inauguration of the Harijan movement after the sealing of the Yeravda Pact. But that was not to be and it came now. It is undoubtedly a preparatory *yajna* (sacrifice) *after* the fact, it is also a purificatory *yajna* and it had to be so because it was overdue. You should understand that all this is argument after the fact. When I felt that I had received a peremptory call, I had no such reasoning in front of me. The call simply came and overpowered me. 'Is it not rather an explosion of grief ?'—you ask. The answer is quite simple and easy. Most emphatically it is not an explosion of grief. Penance it undoubtedly is, for in impurities as I call them, improprieties as you call them, but it is included in the purificatory part of it. This, too, was inevitable because of the absence of the inaugurative fast. 'Have not the shocking cases of impurity you have referred to in your statement led to the fast?' This is your last rider. I tell you it is absolutely incorrect and I can say this with the greatest assurance, because I can give you the dates on which the shocking incidents came to my notice and at that time I felt there was no warrant for me to fast on account of those individual cases. There were decisive reasons why as a prisoner I should not take up the fast for individual cases, as I have done before now. But in a great movement like the Harijan movement, it would be beyond the power of a single human being to cope with individual cases by fasting in each case. There is, therefore, no doubt in my mind that, whilst these cases must have subconsciously prepared the ground for the fast, I am unable to lay my finger on any one of those single incidents as having been wholly or principally responsible for this sacrifice. It is predominantly an inaugurative fast overdue, and subordinately, because it is overdue by way of purification of self and associates. I commence the fast at 12 noon Monday, if Monday sees me alive.[1]

Harijan, 13-5-1933

108. THE BEGINNING OF THE YAJNA

From my childhood I have been taught that good deeds — religious acts—must begin with the purification of the body and the

[1] This sentence is translated from the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary.

soul. The fast of September last cannot be described as a *yajna* of this kind. The purpose of that fast was to bring about a change in the Government's scheme. Other service to the Harijans necessarily flowed from it. There was no alternative for me but to undertake it. The purpose was fulfilled with the alteration in the scheme and the fast too was terminated. That fast had a condition attached to it and was, to that extent, inferior to the present one.

The work of Harijan service began later. I now feel that it was a poor beginning. There was no *shuddhi-yajna* behind it. It is possible that owing to lack of that *yajna*, the war against untouchabilily did not take on a wholly religious form.

I was not aware of this when the call to fast came. It is difficult to name any one thing which was the cause of the fast. This fast of mine is distinct from all my other well-known fasts. Its only object is self-purification. If I die during this fast, I would regard it as a welcome, though unforeseen, consequence. And I would like everyone else to regard it as such. If I give up my life thinking of Harijans and with the idea in my mind of doing pure service to them, I would regard it as a good beginning of the work of service. However, in this *yajna*, it is not my intention to render service by dying but by living. If God has willed otherwise, who can prevail against Him? Just as I have the courage to serve in life, so also have I in death. We should therefore look upon life and death as one and the same thing.

Those who tremble at this fast should give up their attachment to the body. Giving up the body does not mean giving up the work. If that were the case, what would be the good of living? The body perishes but the *atman* does not. It is the *atman* which acts or does not act. It lives for ever; it is immortal. Whether we are aware of it or not, whether we wish it or not, all effort is related to the soul—whether it may be uplifting or degrading. At the moment, I have only one burning desire, viz., that we should all realize that this task of abolishing untouchability is a religious one and cannot be achieved except through religious means. The purification of all other Hindus lies in the service of Harijans. Hinduism will not be purified, notwithstanding the improvement in the economic and political condition of the Harijans, if other Hindus are not rendered pure. If the filth of untouchability is not swept away, it will devour Hinduism. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to bring about a change of heart among the countless Hindus.

It should be clear as daylight to everyone that this filth cannot be got rid of except through self-purification. The best way to make this clear is to take up the *yajna* of fasting in thought, word and deed. Mere bodily fasting is suffering in vain. It may be mere hypocrisy. Anyone who does not mentally crave for cereals or fruit, finds that his body readily gives up this craving. Anyone who does not actually partake of these, but who mentally thinks of nothing but these, may be said to be constantly eating despite the fact that his body is fasting. Many fasts are of this nature. From the standpoint of dharma, these are futile and there is every likelihood of their being harmful. Hence, it is absolutely essential that the mind should be fully prepared when undertaking a religious fast. My soul is witness that I am prepared in this manner. It is possible that many persons may perish during such *yajnas*. Nevertheless, without many such *yajnas*, the abolition of untouchability cannot be accomplished, the filth that has become embedded through centuries cannot be removed. It is only right that I should make a beginning in this *yajna*.

If my physical self does not survive the twenty-one days' fast, the reader must conclude that it was useless for this or any other service. Faith is of the utmost importance here. Blind faith is of course to be found in plenty and, as a result, faith itself has become an object of criticism. But just as a person with sight is not useless merely because he is amidst many who are blind, but rather becomes the guide of the latter, similarly, the clear-sighted faith of one individual can overcome the blind faith of millions. I wish to acquire such faith. Other men and women should also make that effort. In order to do so one or more fasts involving thought, word and deed will be useful.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 7-5-1933

109. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

May 7, 1933

CHI. MARY, [1]

You do not expect or want a long letter. This will be my last for four or at least three weeks. Let not the fast disturb your well-earned

[1] In the source, the superscription is in Devanagari.

rest. I expect you to return to the Ashram refreshed for much concentrated work.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3329. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr. Also G.N. 6003

110. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO PRINCESS EFY ARISTARCHI

May 7, 1933

. . . So you could not help yourself. But I forgive that long cable. Poor Harijans. They say your love for them is not as great as it is for one among many of their servants. Is not their complaint just? I shall tell them that you will do better next time.

I know I have your prayers with me. Such prayers will sustain me. I shall be more than half through by the time this reaches you, if such is His will. If He has willed otherwise, it is also equally well. This body will then cease to function, not the spirit. This fast is God's will, gift. I want you to share the joy of it. May God's peace be with you.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

111. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

May 7, 1933

I treasure your loving message.[1] I seem to have more than enough food to last me during the ordeal. Man does not live by bread alone.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

112. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

May 7, 1933

MY DEAR CHILD,

I know what you are passing through. I look upon the coming fast as the richest gift God has yet blessed me with. I must not write more. You should know that it is well whatever the result.

[1] Polak and his wife had sent their prayers.

Love for you both and kisses for the children.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 122. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child, p.* 101

113. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

May 7, 1933

MY DEAR MURIEL,

Just to ask you to be with me in spirit to sustain me during the forthcoming ordeal. This will be in your hands after I am more than half through. That does not matter when spirit speaks to spirit. Then it is a question of asking and receiving in the same breath. My love to you all.

BAPU

MISS MURIEL LESTER
KINGSLEY HALL, BOW
LONDON

From a photostat: G.N. 1016

114. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

May 7, 1933

MY DEAR HORACE,

I know I have the prayers of all of you in the ensuing ordeal. I look upon it as a great gift from God.

My love to you all. I must not attempt a separate letter to Hoyland.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1421

115. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

May 7, 1933

MY DEAR AGATHA,

You do not expect a long letter from me. I know that I shall

have your spiritual co-operation during the coming ordeal.

With love from us all,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1465

116. LETTER TO VERRIER ELWIN

May 7, 1933

MY DEAR VERRIER,

I cannot enter upon the ordeal without talking to you. It is a matter of great joy to me that I have the prayers of many true friends to speed me on—Truth is God and He will give me all the food I shall need during the fast. I wish I had time to talk more to you.

I must not write separately to Mary.

I hope you are all well.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 8929; also *The Tribal World of Verrier Elwin,* p. 83

117. LETTER TO BHUJANGILAL CHHAYA

May 7, 1933

CHI. BHUJANGILAL,

I got your letter. Do not worry about me. Cultivate increasing purity and be a true servant.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI BHUJANGILAL CHHAYA
PORBANDAR STATE VAKIL
RAJKOT
KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2601

118. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

May 7, 1933

There are more verses than one in the *Gita* which imply that

God always helps us to complete whatever work is undertaken in His name and at His prompting. He is the sole author of everything. We, therefore, are responsible for nothing.

If somebody assaults another with a stick, it is the person using the stick and not the stick that does so. Similarly, if we put our body in God's hands and if He uses it to get some work done, it is God who does the work and not the body. Credit for success and discredit for failure will be His.

You should, therefore, understand that He who has prompted me to undertake this fast will enable me to complete it.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 295

119. LETTER TO NIRMALABEHN B. MASHRUWALA

May 7, 1933

I know that countless men and women are unhappy. But can there ever be a birth without agony? We are struggling for a new birth. I, therefore, expect nothing but good from this great agony. Remain patient and do whatever service you can.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 294-5

120. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

May 7, 1933

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your two letters at the same time. I got the wire too. I am very glad that you are staying on there. You should always live like this without worrying. I am confident that I shall come through the fast safely.

It also seems advisable that you should consult some vaid or hakim for your complaint. Many persons get discharge from the ear for some time and then it stops of its own. It is nothing to be afraid of. It will be enough if you are careful about your food. If a cow is brought in your presence and milked after washing the udders, you should drink fresh, unboiled milk. Take care about food and eat nothing between meals. Avoid dal and spices, and always include

some uncooked vegetable in your food. Tomatoes and salad are good. Dr. Deshmukh strongly advises the consumption of uncooked onions.

How does Janakibehn[1] spend her time? Does she move about? Does Om[2] learn anything? What is Prabhudas doing?

I have written a letter of condolence to Shanti Ruia. Radhakrishna gave me the sad news.

Somebody will write to you regularly and send reports.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2915

121. LETTER TO GANGABEHN B. JHAVERI

May 7, 1933

CHI. GANGABEHN JHAVERI,

I got your letter.

If you observe proper rules about eating and remain calm, your health must improve.

It is very necessary that you should be consistent in any treatment which you try.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3954

122. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

May 7, 1933

BHAI NANABHAI,

I got your letter. No one should be upset by my fast. Try to do as much more service as you can.

Should my friends wish me to refuse a God-given gift or to welcome it?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6687

[1] Wife and daughter of the addressee

[2] *ibid.*

123. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

May 7, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

You must have got my letters. I hope you have given up your fast and calmed down. But I expect a still better result of your fast. You know what it is.

Cultivate close contact with N. I believe that sincere love will reform her and keep her on the right path. There was no limit to her sins. Likewise, there is no limit to her good aspirations. But she has lost everything as a result of her immorality. She has lost control over her mind. I am responsible for having brought about this great and sudden change in her life, hence I do wish that she should be able to bear it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10344. Also C.W. 6783. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

124. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

May 7, 1933

CHI. JAMNA,

Your letters are worthy of a woman of understanding and please me very much. Now make a determined effort to improve your health. I will then give you plenty of work. I have no doubt that you can improve your health.

You have convinced Keshu thoroughly well. I never knew that he was so immature. I did discuss with him the question of marriage. I am surprised to hear that he says I didn't. I had even placed before him Sardar's opinion. But he himself refused.

You should continue to write to me even during the fast.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 879. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

125. LETTER TO VINOBA BHAVE

May 7, 1933

Every moment I receive proof of the propriety of my fast. I have already hinted in my article[1] about the necessity of another such

[1] *Vide* "The Beginning of the Yajna", 7-5-1933.

fast. That idea is becoming stronger. I feel that an unbroken chain of such fasts should be maintained till untouchability is completely abolished. As soon as one man or woman ends his or her fast, another should start and thus a chain should be kept up. Write to me and let me know what you think about this plan. I see the absolute necessity of such a living flame so that a religious movement may be carried on in a religious spirit. Who else if not the inmates of the Ashram, should shoulder the responsibility of keeping such a flame alive? We must make a beginning in this matter. If I survive the fast, I will join you and others in discussing this plan. If I die, however, you, Kaka and others who are out of jail will have to think at that time. If you feel that you should see me, you may come.

From a copy of the Gajarati: C.W. 9543. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

126. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

May 7, 1933

CHI. NARMADA,

See that you work properly during the fast, and do not let any evil thought enter your mind.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2777. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

127. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS AND KRISHNA KAPADIA[1]

May 7, 1933

Even if I never fast, I am bound to die one day. And why should we assume that I shall die during the fast? Have faith that whether I live or die, it will be for our good. Is it not better to die performing a *yajna* than to die of a disease? Have courage, lead a pure life and do what service you can.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9549. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

[1] Brother and sister-in-law of Kasturba Gandhi

128. LETTER TO SHAMAL R. RAVAL

May 7, 1933

CHI. SHAMAL,

I got your letter. You should not worry about me. Be good yourself and serve people. That will assuredly help the Harijans. If God wishes to save me, who can destroy my life?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarat: G.N. 3147

129. LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI

May 7, 1933

During this fast I have decided not to worry about outside affairs, but I will certainly continue to inquire after the health of those who are sick.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9548. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

130. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL AND KASHI GANDHI

May 7, 1933

CHI. CHHAGANLAL AND KASHI,

I couldn't write to you for want of time, but soon I got your reminder. You have my blessings, of course. Your contribution at present is to go on doing your duty devotedly. I am discussing more detailed plans with Narandas. I will write to him and tell him to send you all the information.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9223. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

131. LETTER TO D. V. PARACHURE

May 7, 1933

You cannot fast on my behalf. The person who has started a *yajna* should himself undertake self-purification. It was I who started the *yajna* for the abolition of untouchability and, therefore, it is my

duty to make myself fit for it by a fast.

But a time will come when I will welcome your fast. For the present, examine yourself more closely and get a little more settled in the Ashram. Then you may certainly fast. I will help you in taking the decision if I survive this fast. If I don't, then Kaka, Vinoba, etc., will be there to help you. Take the decision with their help. I have already written to Narandas about this. I shall be happy if the inmates of the Ashram carry on the fast in an unbroken chain, one at a time at least. Just now, however, you should only prepare your mind for this *yajna*.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9547. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

132. LETTER TO ANANDI L. ASAR

May 7, 1933

The fast is certainly for you, but it is for myself too. Why should you die? Live and demonstrate your purity and strength of mind. I am confident that you will do so. My fast will help you in that effort. You also will have to fast when you have become fit for doing so. Our aim will not be realized by my fasting alone. You should, therefore, start working after you have improved.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9546. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

133. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE

May 7, 1933

Go on doing as much service as you can. I am planning for all the co-workers to join in the *yajna* of fasts.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9544. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

134. LETTER TO SULOCHANA A. SHAH

May 7, 1933

CHI. SULOCHANA,

I got your letter. Go on working hard and doing good service, and observe the rules strictly.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 23369

135. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

May 7, l 933

BHAI RAJBHOJ,

Ramji suggested that you two should go round among the Harijans in the countryside. I do not like it. In my opinion you should stay at the Ashram, learn whatever is worth learning and immerse yourself completely in the Ashram life. Ramji is in a very unhealthy state, he has no confidence in anyone, and does not want to observe discipline. What good will his touring bring ?

Talk him out of it and persuade him to do peacefully what he can in the Ashram. You may do whatever is possible in this matter.

If, in spite of all this, you are set on touring you may do so but on your own, not as representing the Ashram. Speech-making does not fall within Ashram activities at the moment.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 793

136. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 7, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I wrote one letter to you yesterday. Afterwards Ramji and Dr. Sharma came and saw me. Amtussalaam and Duncan are in Bombay.

Ramji insists that, if he is not permitted to fast, he may be permitted to tour villages and also wants that Rajbhoj should accompany him.

I have asked him to obtain your permission. If you approve, let them both go. But nobody should go in the name of the Ashram. On behalf of the Ashram only what is arranged by you should be done. However, I will respect your experience more than my reason. You may, therefore, do what you think best. Read the accompanying letters and pass them on to the persons concerned. You will have to send a wire, of course.

I knew that N. had fallen in Bangalore. She had written about that, but I grasped the full meaning of her remarks only the day previous to the day on which I sent her there. If she is really pregnant,

I will welcome that. That will test her and us too. If her heart has become pure, it is our duty to shelter her. Read my letter to her. Open all letters addressed to her and read them before giving them to her. The letters written by her may be passed and posted only if they are absolutely necessary. Reduce your other work and do some work regularly in a Harijan locality.

The meeting with Dr. Sharma was not a happy one. I did not like the way in which he talked. I found that there was much truth in what Parashuram had said.[1] I see that he had come with a strong prejudice against the Ashram. I could not have a sufficiently long talk with him. I will have a little more discussion with him again tomorrow. He will not return there now. Bhagwanji has praised his work in his letters to me. The letters which Dr. Sharma wrote from there also seemed good. Have you not been able to judge him? Did he come here with your permission? It seems useless now to ask these questions. I will not worry about the Ashram during the fast. You will have to do that. Do what you think best. If you want help, you can call Kaka or Vinoba. You may introduce any changes that you like. If you don't get much time to think, find some. I should like to hear about Kusum, Anandi and N. Give me other news, too. Mahadev will reply as he thinks fit. Do what you wish. You know what I desire.

Even if Parashuram comes there, ask him to leave if you don't want him. Perhaps he may not come. All kinds of unexpected things keep happening here. Nobody, therefore, can foresee what will happen after two hours. That lady, Spiegel, has gone away to Madras. May God give you equanimity and the strength which you require. He who has equanimity will get the strength. That is the Lord's assurance. You may expect one more letter still in my handwriting. And then, if it is God's will, I will write to you after the 29th.

BAPU

[PS.]

N. says in her letter that she is not able to go to the lavatory when she gets up at three. If the gates of the hostel are kept closed at night, there must be some arrangement inside. A removable commode can be kept in a corner of the yard or in a room.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 5/6-5-1933..

It would be desirable to supply to everybody who wants the green vegetables which can be eaten uncooked.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8374. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

137. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

May 7, 1933

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I can understand your suffering. Keeping my company is disastrous. I myself am wholly in other hands, not knowing what will happen the next moment. I feel my freedom as slavery and slavery to the God of Truth as freedom. I did not have the slightest desire to undertake a fast, and yet I have had to do so. But now that I have undertaken one, the load that weighed on my mind is lifted in a way that defies description. You should therefore rejoice at the fast. Nothing untoward will happen to my body, but what even if my faith proves misplaced? In that case you may know that there was not further service to be taken from this body. Do not therefore feel troubled. Keep your mind fixed on the thought that the body is more fragile than a glass bangle and the *atman* which inhabits it is the only reality, and go on doing whatever service you can. Just now Shankerlal and you should rest. Come during the last days of the fast.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G. N. 11560

138. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

May 7, 1933

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have received two letters from you. Do not be afraid. Find strength from my fast. This fast will be for the welfare of all of you. It is my wish that all of you may qualify yourselves for this fast.

Steady your mind and do whatever you can.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

139. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 8, 1933

SATYAGRAHAASHRAM

SABARMATI

STRONGLY DISSUADE RAJBHOJ RAMJI GO PROPAGANDA TOUR. RAMJI SHOULD CLEAR HIMSELF OF SUSPICIPON.[1]

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8377. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

140. CABLE TO "INDIAN OPINION"[2]

[*May 8, 1933*]

"INDIAN OPINION"

PHOENIX (NATAL)

REJOICE. DO DUTY THERE .

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 19084

141. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

May [*8,*][3] *1933*

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

This is Monday morning. It is not yet 3 a.m. Yours is the first letter I commence. This has come naturally and it pleases me. I treasure the telegram you sent me.[4] I was wondering how the decision would react upon you. I was thankful to God that you had understood it. I did not know except vaguely why I was being made to take the fast. But as time passes, more and more proof is coming to me in justification. I stand or seem to stand calm in the midst of the events that would but for the approaching fast have rent me in twain. I am

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 7-5-1933.

[2] In the source, this and the preceding telegram have been drafted on the same sheet.

[3] The source has "7", but the letter was written on "Monday", which was May 8, 1933. *Vide* also the following item.

[4] The cable from London read: "Accept your decision. Understand. Lone. Charlie."

now able with much greater assurance than before to lay them all at the feet of the great white throne.

I know you and our many friends are praying for me. These prayers will be my food during these days.

I hope your brother is better. Whether he is or not, it must be a great relief to the members of the family that you are so near.

With my love to you and all the friends to whom I cannot write.

Yours,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 985

142. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 8, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

It is now 3.10 a.m. and I have finished my first letter. That is to Andrews. Not only I but we are all thinking of you. People write to me or speak to me about you suggesting that I should abandon the fast for your sake. It is a great tribute to your love for me but also an unintended reflection. I want myself and everyone who knows you to feel that your love is so deeply true and knowing that it can stand the strain of physical separation no matter of what duration. I know that this will come, is coming. It cannot come through reason. It will come through the heart. Essential love depends wholly on the spiritual part, though it at first comes through the sense perception. I want you to feel with me. that this fast is a gift greater than God has ever made to me. That I approach it in fear and trembling is a sign of my weak faith. But this time there is in me a joy which I have not known before. I want you to share that joy with *me.*

Do not therefore deprive yourself of any food. Eat your food thankfully and keep yourself fit for service. Time for you may come when you might have to take up a similar fast. Under certain circumstances it is the one weapon which God has given us for use in times of utter helplessness. We do not know its use or fancy that it begins and ends with mere deprivation of physical food. It is nothing of the kind. Absence of food is an indispensable but not the largest part of it. The largest part is the prayer—communion with God. It more than adequately replaces physical food.

Mahadev will drop you a line, as far as possible, daily.

May God give you strength.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Letter[1] for Ba herewith.

[PPS.]

I hope you got my letter[2] written on Saturday. One was sent to Ba also.

From a photostat: C.W. 9690. Courtesy: Mirabehn

143. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

May 8, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I got your letter. It overflows with your love. If such a time comes, at the moment I can think only of your house, though as I have already told you I should like a Harijan locality best.[3] But I see many difficulties in that.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 78. Also C.W. 4830. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

144. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

[*May 8, 1933*][4]

CHI. MANI,

I wrote to you on Saturday.[5] You and Mridula too, can write to me everyday if you wish. Let none of the women feel unhappy about the fast. Everybody should try to wash off whatever impurity may be

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Kasturba Gandhi", 7-5-1933.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 6-5-1933.

[3] The addressee had invited Gandhiji to stay in her bungalow in the event of his release, *Vide* also "Interview to Associated Press of India", 8-5-1933.

[4] As in the source

[5] *Vide* "Letter to Manibehn Patel", 6-5-1933.

lurking in herself. Someone or other will be writing to you everyday. I enjoy complete peace of mind. We are all well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 107

145. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

May 8, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

Need I write anything more to you? You should defy the whole world and do what you think is for your good. According to me, it will be easy for you to pursue your good in the Ashram. However, that alone which seems right to you will be the best course for you.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10345. Also C.W. 6784. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

146. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 8, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

If you have not been sending to Chhaganlal and others summaries or copies of my important letters, please send them. I see that Chhaganlal doesn't know anything. Probably it must be the same with Vinoba. Make some arrangement for copies being made.

You will find enclosed a letter from Mary Barr. If she returns there, welcome her.

The other letter is from Nandlal Bose regarding Dhiru. It seems from it that Dhiru will not be able to go before July. In July he may certainly go. The letter refers to Rs. 15 as boarding charge. I couldn't understand exactly what it means. However, nothing need be done just now. If I come through the fast and if it is necessary, I will write and get a clarification. Otherwise you may do so. I am sending the letter so that Dhiru may have patience. For the time being, let him do what he can in the Ashram. He should purify himself during these three weeks.

You will have to give more time to N. Try and understand what is in her heart. If any letters are received for her, open and read them. She is not likely to hide anything deliberately. But she has little control over her mind. I see that she has had a large share in persuading me to undertake this fast. I did not know this. If there is anything which can give her strength, it will be this fast, and, if I have made any mistake in sending her there, the fast is the only thing which can undo it. I think that it will save many young men. If she is pregnant, the cause is one Harijan priest named . . .[1]. It is difficult to judge as to who tempted whom. According to me, if she is pregnant and if she can accept the prospect calmly, the experience will or can change her life and save her. Shower on her as much love as you can and rear the plant.

Margarete has left and gone away to Madras. She has held out a threat that she will go on a fast there. If she fasts, that will certainly do her health good. She will lose some of the excessive fat on her body.

Duncan's belief is completely mistaken. I will explain the matter to him.

Please carry out my suggestions about the kitchen and the dairy if they have appealed to you.

Even if you don't make changes in the prayer, you should divide it into three parts, namely, the recitation from the *Gita,* the Sanskrit verses and *bhajans*. Only those may attend the recitation from the *Gita* who are ready to join in it. There is no moral obligation at all on the others to attend. However, those who wish to attend should give their names. The *Gita* should be followed by the Sanskrit verses. In this also only those who wish to join and who can recite the verses may attend. Then should follow the *bhajans* and *Ramdhun*. Each of these three things, if done properly, will take ten minutes. Thus the only part of the prayers which all should attend is the last one. If all the persons give their names for the parts which they wish to attend, you will know who keep their resolutions. A lamp, a tall desk and a register should be placed near the gate and everybody who comes should put a cross or sign his name if that is preferred, in the appropriate column. Those who do not have sufficient faith in prayer to join even in the last item should not be eager to remain in the Ashram. Anybody who lacks faith in what is an inseparable part of the

[1] The name has been omitted.

Ashram will get no benefit from the Ashram and will be able to contribute nothing to it.

Nobody should stay merely from a wish to be useful to the Ashram. A son or daughter who consciously thinks 'I may be useful to my mother' will not serve her. only those who look upon the Ashram as their mother or their all in all, should stay in it. If everybody in the Ashram reflects sincerely in this manner and decides to stay, the coming three weeks will be well spent there. It is the Ashram which can make the best use of this period and benefit from it, and it ought to do so. I want everybody to maintain perfect truth. If you feel short of workers for carrying on the activities of the Ashram, you may engage paid men and women, look upon them as your own brothers and sisters, share their joys and sorrows and be one with them. Probably such a relationship will be more natural. Any activity which can be dispensed with may be stopped. However, the cultivation of fruits and vegetables, as also the dairy and the agricultural work connected with it, ought not to be stopped. All the processes relating to spinning are forms of *yajna*. You may stop admitting children. The entire Ashram is a school. I, therefore, cling to the view which I have expressed before. We should be able, and we are able, to give the necessary training required for living as a labourer. It should be enough to make sufficient provision for this. It is because we have not understood the full significance of this idea that we remain discontented and all the difficulties arise. If we but realize that our children are labourers and that it is our aim that they should grow up as such, I believe many of our problems would disappear. The training imparted for this purpose is bound to be different form the ordinary type of education. This is enough for the present. Even from this, accept only as much as you can and throw away the rest.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Guajrati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8378. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

147. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

May 8, 1933

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

The letter and telegram form Ghanshyamdas said that you were coming.[1] Hence I did not write. I got your letter now. Get the substance form newspapers, you are not likely to get much in them. At least 75 per cent of the newspaper reports should be discounted. The news in the papers should be corroborated by local informantes. If we have trustworthy informants at various places and if they send us reports, I would like you to send me the gist. Anyway carry on you own experiments. You will yourself realize that it does not yield any fruit. Since you are there, I am easy in my mind. Rama, Rama, Rama.

BAPU

SHRI A. V. THAKKAR

SERVANTS OF UNTOUCHABLES' SOCIETY

BIRLA MILLS

DELHI

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10449. Courtesy: Harijan Sevak Sangh. Also from a photostat: G.N. 1121

148. STATEMENT EXPLAINING OBJECT OF FAST [2]

May 8, 1933

Every day brings me fresh justification for the ordeal that God the Truth has sent me. The discoveries I am making would have paralysed me, but for the fast. Whatever it may mean for the cause, it will certainly be my saving. Whether I survive the fast or not, is a matter of little moment. Without it I would, in all probability, have been useless for further service of Harijans, and for that matter, any other service.

Those friends who have sent me urgent wires dissuading me from the step will, I hope, appreciate the fact that for a person built as

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to G. D. Birla", 2-5-1933.

[2] The statement was issued at 12 noon, soon after Gandhiji had commenced his fast.

I am, such fasts are indispensable. This I say apart from my claim, by which I stand, that it was God's call.

The senders of wires will forgive me for not sending individual acknowledgments. The pressure upon my time has been so great that it has been physically impossible for me to cope with all wires that poured in upon me.

Now that the fast will begin within two hours of writing this, I invite all friends and well-wishers to pray for strength for enabling me to go through the ordeal without weakening. I confess that I have no strength except what God may give me. That He has never failed me hitherto gives me the confidence that He will not fail me now.

A telegram was received by me from a Harijan Association that my fast was unnecessary, as the Harijans do not stand in need of assistance from the caste Hindus. From its own standpoint, the Association is right. Only it should be clearly understood that the fast is taken not to oblige the Harijans, but for purification of self and associates.

Harijan service is a duty the caste Hindus owe to themselves. It is a part of the penance they must do for the wrongs they have done to their own kith and kin. I can well understand the indignantrepudiation by some of the Harijans. Let me hope that it is not yet too late for the vast majority to accept the penance. The numerous messages I have received from them leave no room for doubting such an acceptance.

Sanatanist Hindus scent further coercion in this fast. When they realize that it cannot be broken before its period, even if every temple was opened and untouchability wholly removed from the heart, they will perhaps admit that it cannot be regarded as in any way coercive. The fast is intended to remove bitterness, to purify hearts and to make it clear that the movement is wholly moral, to be prosecuted by wholly moral persons. May God bless the ordeal and fulfil its purpose.

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-5-1933

149. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[1]

May 8, 1933

It came upon me suddenly and therefore I was not prepared.

Having seen the *Weekly Times* yesterday, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and I discussed for a moment where I should stay, if I was suddenly discharged. My first thought was to go to Sabarmati and live near the Ashram, and if that was not feasible or advisable then to accept Lady Thackersey's invitation. Of course the invitation of the Servants of India Society is there, as also from the Depressed Classes Mission, but when Col. Doyle gave me the information I felt that the best thing would be to go to Lady Thackersey's, and here I am.

The Bombay Chronicle, 10-5-1933

150. STATEMENT SUSPENDING CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT

May 8, 1933

I cannot regard this release with any degree of pleasure. As Sardar Vallabhbhai rightly remarked to me yesterday, how can I take advantage of this release in order to prosecute the civil disobedience campaign or to guide it? This release, therefore, puts upon me, as a seeker after Truth and a man of honour, a tremendous burden and strain. This fast has to continue. I had hoped, and I still hope, not to excite myself over anything and not to take part in discussions of any nature whatsoever. The whole purpose of the fast will be frustrated if I allowed my brain to be occupied by any extraneous matter, that is, any matter outside the Harijan work. At the same time, having been released, I should be bound to give a little of my energies to a study of the civil disobedience movement.

Of course, for the moment, I can only say that my views about civil disobedience have undergone no change whatsoever. I have nothing but praise for the bravery and self-sacrifice of the numerous civil resisters, but having said that, I cannot help saying that the

[1] The source had reported: "At Lady Thackersey's house, Gandhiji told the Associated Press representative that he was informed of his release only at quarter to seven by Col. Doyle, Inspector-General of Prisons. Asked if he will be staying at Lady Vithaldas Thackersey's house throughout the fast, Gandhiji said that he was not now sure about this."

secrecy that has attended the movement is fatal to its success. If, therefore, the movement must be continued, I would urge those who are guiding the movement in different parts of the country to discard all secrecy. I do not care if, thereby, it becomes difficult to secure a single civil resister.

There can be no doubt that fear has seized the common mass. The ordinances have cowed them down, and I am inclined to think that the secret methods are largely responsible for the demoralization. The movement of civil disobedience does not depend so much upon the quantity as on the quality of men and women taking part in it, and if I were leading the movement, I should sacrifice quantity and insist on quality. If this could be done, it would immediately raise the level of the movement. Mass instruction on any other terms is an impossibility.

I can say nothing as to the actual campaign. The reflections I have given, I had bottled up all these many months, and I can say that Sardar Vallabhbhai is one with me in what I have said. One word I would say. Whether I like it or not, during these three weeks, all civil resisters will be in a state of terrible suspense. It would be better if the President of the Congress, Bapuji Madhavrao Aney, were to officially declare suspension for one full month or even six weeks.

Now, I would make an appeal to the Government. If they want real peace in the land, and if they feel that there is no real peace, if they feel that Ordinance Rule is no rule, they should take advantage of this suspension, and unconditionally discharge all the civil resisters. If I survive the ordeal, it will give me time to survey the situation, and to tender advice both to the Con-gress leaders and if I may venture to do so, to the Government. I would like to take up the thread at the point where I was interrupted on my return from England.

If no understanding is arrived at between the Government and the Congress as a result of my effort, and civil disobedience is resumed, it will be open to the Government, if they so choose, to revive the Ordinance Rule.

If there is the will on the part of the Government, I have no doubt that a *modus operandi* can be found. Of this, so far as I am concerned, I am absolutely certain that civil disobedience cannot be withdrawn so long as so many civil resisters are imprisoned. No settlement can be arrived at so long as Sardar Vallabhbhai, Khan Saheb, Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and others

are buried alive. Indeed, to call off civil resistance is not within the power of any of the men who are out of prison. It is possible only for the Working Committee to do so. I refer to the Working Committee that was in existence at the time I was arrested.

I shall say no more on the civil disobedience movement. Perhaps, I have already said too much, but if I was to say anything, I could say so only whilst I have strength left in me. I would urge Pressmen not to worry me any more. I would urge also would-be visitors once more to restrain themselves. Let them regard me as being still in prison. I shall be unfit for holding political discussions or any other discussions.

I would like to be left in perfect peace, and I would like to tell the Government that I shall not abuse the release. If I come safely through the ordeal, and if I find the political atmosphere as murky as it is today, without taking a single step secretly or openly in furtherance of civil disobedience, I shall invite them to take me back to Yeravda to join the companions whom I almost seem to have deserted.

It was a great privilege for me to have been with Sardar Vallabhbhai. I was well aware of his matchless bravery and his burning love for the country, but I had never lived with him as I had the good fortune to do during the last sixteen months. The affection with which he covered me recalls to me that of my own dear mother. I neverknew him to possess motherly qualities. If the slightest thing happened to me, he would be out of his bed. He superintended every little detail in connection with my comforts. He and my other associates had conspired to let me do nothing, and I hope that the Government will believe me when I say that he always showed a remarkable compreh-ension of the difficulties of the Government, whenever we discussed any political problem. His solicitude for the farmers of Bardoli and Kaira I can never forget.[1]

A.I.C.C. File No. 429, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The statement, as desired by Gandhiji, was released at 11.30 p.m. after its approval by M. S. Aney, Acting President of the Indian National Congress. For Aney's statement suspending the civil disobedience movement, *vide* Appendix "M. S. Aney's Statement on Suspending Civil Disobedience", 9-5-1933.

151. TELEGRAM TO VIJAYALAKSHMI PANDIT [1]

[*May 9, 1933*][2]

I NEED YOUR PRAYERS BLESSINGS. I WOULD LIKE YOU AND RANJIT STAY THERE AND WORK FOR HARIJANS DURING SUSPENSION JUST ANNOUNCED.

From a photostat: S.N. 21228

152. LETTER TO DUNCAN GREENLEES

May 9, 1933

I was sorry that I could not talk with you longer than I did.

This morning I read your report carefully. I do not mind it at all. I like the frankness about it. Some of your suggestions are also valuable, but can you grow in it? In spite of all the good that can be said about the Ashram it strikes me that if the evil described by you is as extensive as you suggest you can only freeze there. If Narandas is a mere business man or even predominantly so, he is like salt that has no savour. If he has not, the Ashram is undoubtedly dead. But my reading of him is wholly different from yours. He has the rare talent of combining business with spirituality. This, however, is one instance out of the many in which your reaction is so hostile that the sum total of the effect left on one's mind is that it is an institution where one's growth is stunted. But you know best your own feeling in spite of your report. If, therefore, you feel that you can remain in the Ashram and grow, by all means it is good. Discuss the whole of your report with Narandas and let him make what changes you can persuade him to make. My faith in him remains unabated. But if you remain there you must go through the discipline consistently with your health before you earn the right to demand a change. Today you can only recommend it as a result of first impression and your experience elsewhere. I wish I had time to correct many of your statements which are not true to fact, but that would be more strain on me. If you have

[1] The telegram was in reply to the addressee's received on May 8, 1933, which read: "Long to be with you. Will await your message. Love from me and Ranjit".

[2] From the reference to the suspension of civil disobedience, which was announced on this date

faith in Narandas's *bona fides*, you should exhaustively discuss all those points about which you may feel keenly.

Love.

BAPU

MR. DUNCAN

From a microfilm: S.N. 21260

153. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

C/O LADY VITHALDAS THACKERSEY,
'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
May 9, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have been released a little unexpectedly, otherwise Mahadev would have written a letter and a long one. But now I myself must dictate one. I got your letter. Please go on writing to me daily. Anybody who has something special to write about may also write. I welcome the changes which you say have been introduced, but there is one danger. Read about it in my letter to the women. If all the people have accepted them willingly, there will be no difficulty at all and their health will soon improve. Everybody should eat as one takes medicine, and be fully satisfied with the type and the quantity of the food that he gets. Any item which one does not like should be declined. It is not likely that one will not like anything from among milk, wheat, fruit and uncooked vegetable. If that happens, the only remedy for such a person is a fast. I have not known any person who did not like fruits. Let everybody start drinking fresh, unboiled milk without any fear. The person who is in charge of cooking should take care that every item is well cooked. If anything is not cooked sufficiently well, it should be thrown away. You should make it a general rule to serve only the vegetables which grow in the Ashram itself. Totaramji[1] should know that he must supply tomatoes, salad, etc., all the year round. I will not mind if this means more expense just now. Similarly, fruit-trees also should be planted. While everybody should realize the necessity of learning self-control, care should also be taken to see that the fruittrees are not raided.

[1] Totaram Sanadhya, an Ashram inmate

I have sent you a wire regarding Parashuram. As he was very keen, I have permitted him to go there. If he does not abide by the conditions which you impose and gives you the least trouble, ask him immediately to leave. He need not come to me again. Give him the railway fare for Delhi or Kanpur or any other place where he may wish to go. Nobody should stay if he cannot feel happy in the Ashram. You should not have the responsibility at such a time of pleasing anybody so that he might stay. It is, of course, your duty to see that everybody receives love and courtesy. However, those who cannot be pleased should be permitted to leave. This rule applies to Dr. Sharma and Duncan also. I have not been satisfied with the former. He has not impressed me as being truthful or polite. 1 had written a note to him asking him to leave and go to Delhi. But he seems to have returned there. I have expressed my dissatisfaction in my note to him. Even if he remains there, he should not treat N., should not touch her or talk with her. If I get time, I will write to Sharma also and tell him this plainly. Read that letter[1]. I will mention it in my letter[2] to N., too.

Duncan seems to be a really good man, but I have found that he is not very intelligent. I am afraid only of Sharma. I am returning today by registered post the report about cowprotection. Don't let anybody give up milk or ghee. The truth is that those who can willingly accept the changes which I have suggested need not give up anything. It is not a great thing to give up this or that thing. What is necessary is to train one's mind so that one learns to eat as one takes medicine, to eat only to keep the body alive. Moreover, when we give up every article of food which is unnecessary for health, there is no need to practise further self-denial. What I have been begging from the Ashram just now is a big thing. I want inner purity, control of the mind itself. Explain fully to everybody the sixth verse of Chapter III [of the *Gita*].

Those who restrain the sense-organs but dwell in their minds on sense-pleasures are hypocrites. The seventh verse, on the other hand, says that those who keep their minds under control and let the limbs and organs of the body function without attachment, are hailed as karmayogis. These two verses explain the secret of how we should live. If, while fasting, I dwell in my mind on the pleasures of the palate

[1] *Vide* the following two items.
[2] *ibid*

and keep thinking when the 21 days will be over, my fast will be only the outward show of an ignorant man. It would not benefit the world and earn for me a sinful existence in my next life. What is true, in the wider context, about my fast, is also true, in a limited context, about the rules of self-control being introduced and followed in the Ashram. Anybody who stops eating rice and dal but dwells on their pleasure in his thoughts does not practise self-control by refraining from eating them. Such exclusion may be beneficial physically, that is, from the point of view of health. But the various forms of self-denial which are being practised in the Ashram just now are intended as a preparation for undertaking indefinite fasts. Those who cannot join in that need not take their meals in the common kitchen. If anybody who does not eat in the common kitchen but observes as much self-control as he can in his own home in the matter of food, I will regard him as bringing honour to the Ashram. For, his conduct will be truthful and not unnatural. There will be humble confession of his weakness in it. It should be remembered that the self-control which I have advised does not apply to anybody who is ill.

Explain this repeatedly to the women on my behalf. No woman should undertake anything beyond her strength. The women, and others too, should understand that what we are doing at present is to try to prepare the ground for a chain of indefinite fasts. If anybody practises self-control for my sake for a short time and gives it up afterwards when somebody else in the Ashram may be fasting, how bad would that seem! I am far away, but fasts following mine will be going on in the Ashram. Everybody, therefore, should practise only such self-control as he can keep up. Nobody should go further than that at all. I don't expect more from anybody. Let us not attempt too much and fail. It would be better to rise step by step. I don't insist any more now that the old families ought to take their meals in the common kitchen. My fast ought not to result in any kind of coercion on anybody. On my behalf, you should see that it does not. Tell Ramdas that gradually he will understand the complete propriety of this fast. Even if the fast is like a pistol, it is worth firing. I believe that dharma cannot be saved in any other way.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8379. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

154. LETTER TO N.

May 9, 1933

MY DEAR N.,

I can't put you out of my mind. I do not want to repeat what I have said in my previous letters.

Dr. Sharma is there. I have asked[1] Narandas not to ask him to treat you at all. If it does become necessary to procure medical advice a doctor will be called in, but you will tell if his presence and sight excite the emotion you describe. If they do I will have to see what can be done. But I am writing to him about this emotion so that he can be on his guard. I hope you do not mind this. I am interpreting you literally. You have not a single thought in your mind which you want to keep not only from me but from the whole world including about whom you may harbour a thought. However distasteful it may be, I know that that is the only way for a truthful person.[2]

Your letter written in ink has arrived. You should treat poor mother at least as well as strangers. But, of course, children sometimes write to their parents with their fingers, using their blood as ink.

God be with you.

Love to you and kisses to S.

BAPU

SMT. N.
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI

From a microfilm: S.N. 21257

155. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHARMA

May 9, 1933

BHAI SHARMA,[3]

I was surprised when Devdas told me you had gone to the Ashram.[4] I gave Devdas a letter for you, which he had to post. I hope you got the letter. In that letter I told you I had deliberately omitted to say one thing. It has now become my duty to say that to you.

You know N.'s life. I have sent her to the Ashram so that she

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] In the source, what follows is in Gandhiji's hand.

[3] In the source, the superscription is in Devanagari.

[4] Gandhiji had sent him a note suggesting that he should return to Delhi; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 9-5-1933..

can be, if at all possible, protected against herself. In her letter received day before yesterday she told me that when she met you, you excited in her the animal passion. This need not mean any condemnation of you at all. How can a man help himself if a woman on seeing him have her lustfulness excited? It is given only to the rarest human beings to possess such innate purity that they would never be the occasion for exciting the lust of even the most depraved women. I write this, therefore, not to blame you but to warn you against having anything whatsoever to do with N.

I hope you will take my letter that Devdas had posted to you in the right light. Your letter which you left to be given to me confirms the opinion I formed of you after our meeting[1]. Let me add that somehow or other you created a bad impression on everybody you met here. But all that may be utterly unjust to you, so long as Narandas truthfully guides you and you him and the Ashram in general. If, on the other hand, he does not like you or you do not like him or the Ashram in general, you should shun it, even though you are treating some patients there. If you have developed a dislike for the Ashram, the whole purpose of your being there is frustrated. It would be too selfish for me to have you there for the sake of a few patients.

There was no time to write in Hindi.[2]

From a microfilm: S.N. 21258

156. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

May 9, 1933

SARDARJI,

I slept well last night. This place is much breezier and cooler than Yeravda. I slept out in the open. Work has accumulated. I shall have to work for two days or so. After that, I have decided, I will not even work. I don't feel any weakness as yet worth speaking of.

Please do not worry about me in the least.

You gave me a mother's love.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 17

[1] On May 6; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 7-5-1933..

[2] In the source, this sentence is in Hindi.

157. TELEGRAM TO KASTURBA GANDHI [1]

Express [*May 10, 1933*]

READ YOUR WIRE. HAVING LIVED WITH ME OVER FIFTY YEARS YOU SHOULD BE BRAVE AND NOT APPLY. AM QUITE WELL HAPPY. MAY GOD GIVE YOU COURAGE FAITH PEACE. GLAD MIRA HAPPY. LOVE.[2]

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 21269

158. LETTER TO MIRABEHN [3]

May 10, 1933

You and Ba will get such reports daily. I hope you are bearing up well.

BAPU

MISS SLADE
SABARMATI PRISON

From the original: C.W. 6274. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9740

[1] The telegram was in reply to the addressee's from Sabarmati Jail received on this date. It read: "It appears from papers prisoners not to be released. I therefore ask your permission to apply Government for two months leave that I may come to you. Very anxious. Wire reply. Mira sends love. She is finding peace courage in prayer."

[2] In the source, the sheet containing the draft of Gandhiji's telegram bears also the following remark in Gujarati: "Do not now stoop to cracking coal with the mouth which you have always used for chewing pan. Have trust in God. Overcome your delusion that we are the body. Repeat Ramanama. Bapu."

[3] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, Mirabehn explains that this was "written by Bapu himself on the letters reporting the progress of his fast". This was added to a letter of even date from Mathuradas Trikumji from "'Parnakuti', Poona", which read: "Bapuji enters today the third day of his fast. on the first day after his release towards night, he dictated his statement on the situation which meant a considerable expenditure of energy but it was inevitable. Yesterday he worked less and today I hope he will exert still less. The relieving feature is that he himself has made up his mind to conserve energy as much as possible. He sleeps well and remains in bed. Devdas, Brijkishan and myself and other friends do our best to lighten his ordeal as much as is possible for us. I am fully confident that he will successfully go through the ordeal."

159. LETTER TO N.

May 10, 1933

I see that there is more effort in dictating than in writing. As days proceed I may not be able to write or dictate. Then you will know that my thoughts are speaking to you.

But you must write a detailed letter daily giving your bodily and mental condition, your food and S.'s food.

I hope you have understood the moral necessity of avoiding abortion.

Have sun-bath daily on the terrace of your sleeping quarters. And there you can take sewing work for the Ashram. Also do *takli* spinning.

I wish you will forget Pythagoras, Bacchus and *Mahabharata.* Why should you brood over the past when you have to re-enact the *Mahabharata* at the Ashram? Do please fill your mind with the task before you i.e., to become an ideal member of the Ashram, no matter what the others are.

Love to you and S.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 82

160. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 10, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

You must have received my letter[1] regarding Duncan's criticism. His criticism proceeds from complete ignorance, but has no malice in it. Though it proceeds from utter ignorance, there are some good points in it. I will send you his report. If he has a copy of it, get it from him and discuss the matter calmly with him. Devote some of your time to such discussions.

I shall not be able to write or dictate a letter every day. But you should go on writing in detail about everybody, particularly about N.,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 8-5-1933.

Parashuram, Duncan and Sharma. You have not written anything about Kusum.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8380. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

161. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

May 10, 1933

CHI. BHAU,

Put your trust in God and have no worry for anything.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 9686. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

162. TO THE READER[1]

All should know that, even though I am supposed to be a free man, the *Harijan* will continue to be edited just as if I was in prison. It will still be solely devoted to the Harijan cause and will scrupulously exclude all politics. It is a matter of regret to me that for three weeks I shall not be able to write anything for the *Harijan.* But, if God spares me, I hope to write for the *Harijan* with better qualifications. I hope, further, that in the mean while the Harijan cause will make rapid progress, that reformers and sanatanists will combine, wherever possible, to serve Harijans, that reformers will work the rest of the programme without wounding the susceptibilities of the sanatanists and that the Harijans themselves will, by vigorously prosecuting internal reforms to which I have drawn attention so often in these columns, make it easier for sanatanists and reformers to recognize that Harijans are truly 'Harijans' and that they are capable of responding to love precisely in the same manner and to the same degree as others.

Harijan, 13-5-1933

[1] According to *The Bombay Chronicle*, 13-5-1933, this was "dictated" by Gandhiji on May 11, 1933.

163. TELEGRAM TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

May 11, 1933

DR. ANSARI

DELHI

SAROJINI MENTIONED YOUR PRESS STATEMENT.[1] DREAD TROUBLE YOU BUT IT IS YOUR RIGHT AND DUTY COME WHEN YOU FEEL LIKE IT. YOU KNOW MY FAITH IN YOU. LOVE TO YOU ALL.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 19085

164. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

May 11, 1933

YOUR BLESSINGS[2] COMFORT ME. HAVE BEEN CARRYING OUT YOUR ADVICE IN SPIRIT. FROM CHILDHOOD RAMANAMA HAS BEEN MY TALISMAN. AM WELL AND AT PEACE. PRAY DO NOT TROUBLE COME.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 19085

165. NOTES[3]

Untouchability is against reason. It is opposed to truth, non-violence and dharma and hence is *adharma*. The underlying assumption is that we are high while others are low. The Brahmin who does not have the attribute of the Shudra—that is, service, is no Brahmin. A true Brahmin is one who possesses the attributes of a Kshatriya, a Vaishya and a Shudra, and has in addition learning. Shudras are not of course wholly devoid of learning, but service is their chief characteristic. In varnashramadharma there is to place for

[1] Under the date-line "Poona, May 11, 1933", *The Bombay Chronicle*, 12-5-1933, had reported: " 'I would love to tie with my head on the lap of Doctor Ansari', said Gandhiji, who, though in weak condition, felt extremely happy when he was told by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu of Dr. Ansari's willingness to come over to Poona and asked whether Dr. Ansari should be sent for. When he was informed of the above, Dr. Ansari replied from Delhi on phone: 'I will never allow Bapu to die on my lap. I will never allow him to die at all. I will be with Bapu as soon as possible.' "

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Madan Mohan Malaviya", 2-5-1933.

[3] These were published under the title "Swarna-Sutra", that is, golden sayings.

the distinctions of high and low. In the Vaishnava cult even Bhangis and *Chandalas* have attained *moksha*. How can a religion that sees the whole universe as a manifestation of Vishnu treat the Harijans as apart from Vishnu?

* * *

If anyone says that his belief in untouchability is prompted by love I just cannot agree with him. I can see nothing of love in this attitude. If we have love for the untouchables we will not make them eat our left-overs. If we have love for them we will worship them as we worship our mother and father. If we have love for them we will dig for them better wells, build for them schools and admit them into our temples. These are the signs of love. Love is made ofinnumerable suns. When one small sun cannot remain hidden, how can love? Does a mother ever have to go about saying that she loves her child? A child who cannot yet speak looks into the eyes of his mother. When their eyes meet we can tell from their looks that they are in communion with something divine.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 12-5-1933

166. LETTER TO MIRABEHN [1]

[*May 12, 1933*][2]

CHI. MIRA,

You will be brave to the end. No joke to be my daughter. Being there you have to pass through a more searching ordeal than [I.][3] But then my children to be worthy have to do better than I. Have they not? God be with you.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 9691. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's (S.N. 21231) dated May 8, 1933.

[2] As supplied by the addressee

[3] Mirabehn explains: "In the letter reporting the progress of the fast which accompanied this, the following is written by Mathuradas: 'The lines at the back Bapu penned at about 2 p.m. on Friday. He wrote them without using specs, and hence that incomplete sentence.' "

167. NOT BY BIRTH BUT BY MERIT

The reader may not know that among the many devotees of the Harijan cause are two lepers. One is a Kshatriya who has caught the infection through service among the poor with whom some years ago he cast in his lot, taking with him almost all his wealth. His leprosy has not deterred him from the self-chosen service. Another is a Brahmin pundit well versed in Sanskrit. He often sends me selections from the Shastras in support of the reformer's position on untouchability. Below is the translation of his latest collection:

> l. "one who has purified himself by pure deeds and who has restrained his senses deserves to be treated as a Brah-min even though he may be a Shudra", said God Brahma himself.
>
> 2. Even though a Shudra, one who is noble of nature and deed should be regarded as the best among the twice-born.
>
> 3. Neither birth nor lineage, neither culture nor knowledge of the Vedas, can render one a twice-born. Good conduct is the only deciding cause.
>
> 4. It is good conduct alone which makes one a Brahmin. A person of good conduct, even though a Shudra, acquires Brahminhood.
>
> 5. He who lives for the performance of dharma (duty), whose dharma is consecrated to God and whose day and night are devoted to good deeds—he is declared by Gods to be a Brahmin.
>
> 6. He who is content with whatever food and clothes and bed are offered to him is declared by Gods to be a Brahmin.
>
> —*Mahabharata:* "Shanti-Parva"
>
> Commenting on this, the compiler truly exclaims: "Surely the Harijans of India today fulfil this test."
>
> 7. For a Brahmin truth is Brahman; austerity is Brahman; control of the senses is Brahman; compassion for the whole creation is Brahman. . . .
>
> —*Parashara Smriti*
>
> 8. A Brahmin is one possessed of self-restraint, austerity, self-control, charity, truth, purity, compassion, knowledge of the Vedas, learning, wisdom, faith. . . .
>
> —*Vasishtha*

9. Only those Brahmins are capable of saving (mankind) who are completely self-controlled, whose ears are full of the music of Vedic chants, who have conquered their senses, who have abjured injury to all sentient beings and who shrink from possession.

(Source unknown)

Harijan, 13-5-1933

168. LETTER TO MIRABEHN [1]

May 14, 1933

So you have no Ba to look after or to keep company.[2] God is trying you through and through. He will give you strength.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6275. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9741

169. WHAT TO DO?

A Harijan sevak writes:[3]

Obviously even to serve water to Harijans in their *lotas* was considered a sin on the part of the Harijan sevaks though the poor sevaks had cleaned the *lotas* after they had been used. When we buy

[1] This was added to a letter of even date from Mathuradas Trikumji to Mirabehn, which read: "Bapuji gets your letter regularly. He completes today six days of his fast during which time his condition on the whole has been satisfactory. Yesterday was held a consultation of doctors who have issued their bulletin which must have appeared in today's Press. They are not pessimistic. A very useful suggestion came from Dr. Deshmukh; he recommended the Vichy water in lieu of ordinary water. Bapuji after ascertaining facts about it readily agreed to take it and it has wonderfully suited him. It is expected to keep acidity under check. From yesterday the full text of the *Gita* is being recited to him. In the evening he has music. He remains cheerful."

[2] Kasturba Gandhi was released from Sabarmati Jail on May 13, 1933.

[3] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had reported that three Harijan sevaks of his village had invited Harijans to dinner on the Ramanavami Day and served them drinking water in their own *lotas*. As a result of this the orthodox sections of the village had ostracized them and the barber and the washerman had refused to serve them. He hat sought Gandhiji's advice about taking the matter to the court.

lotas in the market we do not stop to ask as to who might have used them. What peculiar quality does a *lota* come to possess as soon as it falls into our hands so that it becomes useless to us if a Harijan happens to use it? The villagers in question have given their answer. They have declared it a sin to lend the *lotas* to Harijans for drinking water and they are meting out rough treatment to the three young Harijan sevaks for having committed this sin. What should they do? What the villagers have condemned as a sin I consider a meritorious deed. They must therefore suffer in patience even if corporal punishment were to be meted out to them, to say nothing of denying them the services of the washerman and the barber. They may wash their own clothes and cut their own hair. If they cannot do the latter they may let their hair grow. But they must never give up.

One must not however under any condition be angry with the villagers. What after all can they do? They have been taught *adharma* in the name of dharma They are, if anything, to be pitied. That the removal of untouchability is a religious act has been realized by no more than three young men there. The rest of the villagers continue to languish in the well of ignorance. Under the circumstances, it becomes the duty of the three young men by their firmness, purity, *tapasya*, sacrifice, patience and generosity to change the hearts of these villagers lost in darkness and at the same time to teach the Harijans the habits of cleanliness. They can under no circumstance take the matter to a court of law.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 19-5-1933

170. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

May 19, 1933

PANDIT MALAVIYAJI

JUST FINISHED GUJARATI TRANSLATION OF "BHAGAVATA" PORTIONS PRESCRIBED BY YOU.[1] MISSING YOUR VOICE AND

[1] Malaviyaji in his telegram (S.N. 21302) of May 15 to Devdas Gandhi had suggested that "'Dhruva Katha' (*Bhagavata*: fourth *skandha*-eighth, ninth *adhyayas*) also 'Gajendra Stuti' (*Bhagavata*: eighth *skandha*-second, third, fourth adhyayas)" should be read out to Gandhiji.

RUNNING COMMENTARY. YOU ARE EVER WITH ME. AM QUITE AT PEACE.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 19085

171. TELEGRAM TO KHAN SAHEB AND ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

May 19, 1933

KHAN SAHEB [AND] ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN
HAZARIBAG CENTRAL JAIL

DEEPLY TOUCHED BY YOUR WIRE.[1] GOD IS GREAT AND MERCIFUL.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 19085

172. TELEGRAM TO BAPAT

[*May 20, 1933*][2]

JUST HEARD ABOUT YOUR FAST. DEEPLY TOUCHED BUT PLEAD WITH YOU TO DISCONTINUE THE FAST. LET GOD HAVE HIS WILL WITH ME. IT WILL BE A GREAT COMFORT TO ME IF YOU WILL LISTEN TO ME. PLEASE REPLY.[3]

The Hindu, 21-5-1933 (Special Supplement)

[1] Dated May 19, it read: "We both brothers congratulate you Mahatmaji on your noble fast for a noble cause. Our daily prayers for your long life to ever serve the depressed of India."

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 22-5-1933

[3] Bapat who was on a sympathetic fast from May 8 in Ratnagiri Jail had replied: "Deeply grateful. I am in God's hands as you are. Please don't worry. Death or life, let God decide."

173. LETTER TO MIRABEHN [1]

POONA,
[*May 21, 1933*]

CHI. MIRA,

You are showing wonderful bravery. There is no true bravery to be had apart from complete reliance on God.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6276. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9742

174. TALK WITH DEVDAS GANDHI

POONA,
May 27, 1933

If God desires to take me away on the twenty-first day of the fast, even after keeping me alive for all these twenty days, this will be my last sacrifice. But if God gives me a further lease of life and desires me to work more, a new epoch will begin in my life.

My future plan lies in God's hands. I have driven away all thoughts from my mind except of Ramanama. What God wills will be just and reasonable. When Mr. Devdas thanked God for His mercy in sparing his father, the Mahatma remarked:

[1] Gandhiji had added this to the letter dated May 21, 1933, from Mathuradas Trikumji to Mirabehn which read: ". . . It is not yet 7 a.m. Bapu is fast asleep in the porch facing the Yeravda Central Prison. And I am writing these lines from a corner from where I constantly have a look at him. He lies in his cot like a sweet child; beaming with brightness. None who looks merely at his face can believe that he has not touched food all these 13 days. All is going on smoothly. He is now taking Sinhagad water—a place famous in the history of Maharashtra. He himself stayed for a few days in that fortress in 1920. He likes it very much and the historic associations of the place have drawn him towards it and its water. Dr. Dinshaw Mehta who nurses him has a branch of his clinic there and it is he who is responsible for securing water from there. He with his fiancee is rendering splendid service to Bapu. Bapu enjoys peace of mind and is attaining more and more the spirit of detachment. Mahadevbhai has gone yesterday to the Ashram. Bapu has added himself these lines without specs and hence duplication of letters. The letter was about to be posted when he asked for it. N.B. I am writing you daily without fail, and Mahadev wrote to you yesterday. Your last letter is dated May 19, 1933."

Yes, that is so. It is due to God's mercy that I am living, but I don't think that God's mission is so circumscribed as to only save me. Even His taking me away must be regarded as an act of mercy.

The Hindu, 29-5-1933

175. NOTE TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

May 28, 1933

Ishavasya will not do tomorrow. Instead, *shuddhoyam buddhothava* should be recited, and Amiya or Mahadev should sing something from Tagore. The former is a verse in the *Bhajanavali*. Mahadev knows it. I need not tell what song from Tagore should be sung.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 127

176. MESSAGE BEFORE BREAKING 21-DAY FAST[2]

May 29, 1933

Within a minute or two I am going to break the fast. In His name and with faith in Him was it taken, in His name it terminates. My faith is not less today, but more.

You will not expect me to make a speech on this occasion. It is an occasion for taking the name and singing the glory of God. But I may not forget the doctors and other friends who have poured their affection on me during these days of privilege and grace. I cannot help referring to their service because it is part of God's mercy. I have nothing but thanks to give them. God alone can give them a fitting reward.

I am glad that Harijans are here with us today. I do not know exactly what work God expects from me now. But whatever it may be, I know that He will give me the strength for it.

Harijan, 3-6-1933

[1] For Mahadev Desai's account describing the breaking of the 21-day fast, *vide* Appendix "Breaking the Fast", 3-6-1933.

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Sparks from the Sacred Fire-IV". Gandhiji had dictated the message to Mahadev Desai, who read it out.

177. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 29, 1933

CHI. MIRA,[1]

I have just broken the fast. The next task commences. He will find the ways and means.[2]

From a photostat: C.W. 9692. Courtesy: Mirabehn

178. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

[Before *June 1933*][3]

CHI. KAKA,

I got your two letters at the same time. You have gained good weight. Milk is bound to increase it. The idea of making you fast for some days in between is good. There is a difference between the method described in the book which you have given me and the treatment that is being given to you there. This indicates that Dinshawji[4] has taken some suggestion from other books or introduced changes on his own. For you, however, he is the final authority.

I am aware that massage of the back is highly recommended. I shall see what can be done.

Can Bal[5] and others stay with you all the time? I got Bal's letter. I will write to him later. If I get time, I may write even today.

I don't feel happy that those who come to see me stay at Trivedi's. In doing so, they do not consider his circumstances. Such persons must stop staying with Trivedi, nor should they visit you. And, besides, see how much they spend in coming. Last week there was a whole army of visitors. I think that was absolutely unnecessary. . . .[6] Don't think of coming down at present at all. It is desirable that you should derive the utmost benefit from the treatment there. It will be wise to do so. We shall certainly meet when you come down, that is, in

[1] In the source, the superscription is in Devanagari.

[2] This was supplemented by an account by Mahadev Desai of the breaking of the fast; *vide* Appendix "Breaking the Fast", 3-6-1933.

[3] From the reference to the milk treatment *(vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 21-6-1933) and the proposal to meet the addressee in June

[4] Dinshaw Mehta, a well-known naturopath of Poona

[5] Bal Kalelkar, addressee's son

[6] In the source some portion is scored out.

June. Don't be in haste to come down. If your health improves completely and you learn something about these methods of treatment, that will be a great advantage.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9474. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

179. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

PARNAKUTI, POONA 6,
June 3, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

Mahadev must give you all the news and I shall just add a line or two at the end.

I ought to have written to you, but could not for heavy pressure of other work. Bapu is steadily progressing and gradually adding to his nourishment. He took milk for the first time yesterday, having taken 14 oz. during the day. In all he takes about six feeds during the day composed of fruit juices and honey and now milk. Yesterday over and above the milk, he took eight spoons of honey, four oranges, one grape fruit and a pound of mango juice. This is quite good and if he continues to add to this nourishment the doctors expect that he will regain his normal weight and strength in about two weeks' time. But their instructions are very strict and Bapu has promised to observe them. This means that until the fourteenth of this month he should not do any writing, should not be worried about problems, should take part in no discussion, etc. Bapu's weight taken on the morning of the 1st was 84 lb.

The future is in the lap of gods. He was just asking me this morning about the date of your release. I confessed I did not know it, but that I was told at the Ashram that you had still two and a half months to do. Please let me know if I am correct, and now do let Bapu have one of your usual full, long, detailed letters so that he may know everything about you. He was practically under a vow of silence but if his thoughts were with any of us, they were most with you.

Rajaji[1] left last evening and expects to be back by the 11th or 12th. Jamnalalji was here, but saw Bapu only for a second and refused to engage him in a conversation until he was quite well. No one from the Ashram came

[1] For his talks with Gandhiji on June I and 2, *vide* Appendix "Talks with C. Rajagopalachari", 1-6-1933.

excepting little Babla[1] who wanted to have the most out of me, lest I should go back to my haunts very soon!

Mathuradas has occupied my *gadi* during these days and is likely to continue for some time. Devdas has been ill due to strain of work and exhaustion but is now convalescing. Among the 'nurses', good Brijkrishna[2] is still there, also Bal, and Harihar Sharma[3] who will now be going. Ramdas might take his place. He is here. Ba is quite happy and giving all her time to Bapu nursing him and massaging him and preparing his feeds with all her devoted and loving care. I have left space enough for Bapu to write a line.

CHI. MIRA,

You must try to wean yourself from this longing for physical meeting. I hope the fever is off.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6277. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9743

180. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

June 4, 1933

MY DEAR AMALA,

You should be patient and take part in all the Ashram activities.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegl Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

181. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 4, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

From today I have started writing a little. The burden on you seems to have proved unbearably heavy, but I hope that it will become somewhat lighter now. I myself shall not be able to write much, but I

[1] Narayan Desai, Mahadev Desai's son
[2] Brijkrishna Chandiwala, a Congress worker of Delhi
[3] Secretary, Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha, Madras

will dictate. You may, therefore, write to me now about important matters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8381. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

182. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

June 4, 1933

Are you undergoing the same treatment yet? Write to me regularly now. How is Purushottam?

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 881. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

183. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

June 4, 1933

DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I have written some letters today, hence one for you. Now give me all the news. How are you keeping?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 285

184. CABLE TO C. F. ANDREWS [1]

June 5, 1933

PRECIPITATE ACTION WILL BE SCRUPULOUSLY A VOIDED.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 21442

[1] The cable was in reply to the addressee's received on June 4, 1933, which read: "My dearest love Ansari. Take absolute rest. Doing utmost obtain release prisoners. Hope issue remains unprecipitated. Time essential this end."

185. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 5, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

This recurrence of fever disturbs me. You ought to learn real self-control. It does not come by reading. It comes only by definite realization that God is with us and looks after us as if He had no other care besides. How this happens, I do not know. That it does happen I do know. Those who have faith have all their cares lifted from off their shoulders. You cannot have faith and tension at the same time. Do relax your mind.

Love.

BAPU[1]

From the original: C.W. 6278. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9744

186. LETTER TO DUNCAN GREENLEES

June 6, 1933

MY DEAR DUNCAN,

It was only yesterday that I was able to see your letters to Mahadev. Of course, when your time comes, you will certainly take part in the sacrificial and purificatory fast. Whether it should be 21 days or less or even more, need not be determined now. You seem to have fixed up your mind on 21 days. But you should dismiss that from your mind. I would urge you also not to be in a hurry. The first thing that is needful in your case is to see whether, as a whole, the Ashram has a message for you and in considering this, you will please not separate the Ashram from its ideal. It is the easiest possible thing in the world to set forth on a piece of paper the highest ideal. But if there is no living representative of that ideal it is worthless. Therefore,

[1] In the source, this was followed by Mahadev Desai's note, which read: "Bapu is getting on very well indeed. The weight accurate to an ounce taken today was 88 Ib. 26 *tolas*. That is very good. He looks very bright and quite ready to take up 'problems' and thrash them out. But the doctors will not allow him to do anything of the kind and have ordered him to take complete rest until the 14th. He can just sit up and stand up for a second on the weighing machine (of course, if supported). Otherwise everything is all right. He is worried that you have brought on the fever by constantly think[ing] of and worrying about him and sleeplessness and irregularity. Do get well soon for Bapu's sake."

I have always insisted that those who know me and my interpretation of life should do so through the Ashram, and if the latter makes no appeal to the examiner he should unhesitatingly reject me. I do not know whether I have made myself clear to you. So far as I am concerned, I want you to the extent of your ability to share the life I am living and the sacrifice I am endeavouring to perform.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19089

187. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

PARNAKUTI, POONA 6,
June 6, 1933

MY DEAR AMALA,

I have your letter. You are with me when you are at the Ashram doing the Ashram work. I am sure you understand this very simple truth. There were many prisoners occupying the same yard, sharing the same verandah. Do you suppose that they were living with me?

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also S.N. 19090

188. LETTER TO N.

June 6, 1933

MY DEAR N.,

I was able only yesterday to read your letters which were with Mahadev. Surely there must be some misunderstanding about white flour. There is no white flour used in the Ashram. All the flour that is used in the Ashram is specially ground and it is always wholemeal. Sometimes it is sifted after it is ground and sometimes it is not. You should, therefore, enquire and then let me know. What I told you about food applies merely not to you, but certainly to all. That all may not follow that dietary, is a different question. But in the common kitchen in the Ashram, generally that method is followed with more or less the same exactness. It is not possible to do away with rice and dal altogether. But every encouragement has been given to

those who avoid rice and pulses. I do hope you are finding more and more peace at the Ashram and that both you and S. are keeping well.

From a microfilm: S.N. 19091

189. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

June 6, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

You may write to me now. How is the condition of the arm? Is the pain still as bad as it has been? How is your study going on? What is the condition of your mind?

How are the children? How is Dhiru's health?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5351

190. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 6, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I see that not only will it be some time before I am able to move about, but also before I can work with my hands. I heard from Mahadev yesterday the report of developments there. I have also read the letters which he gave to me. There seems to have been some misunderstanding. What I meant was that the ultimate stage, whether in the quest of truth or in the path of ahimsa, must be a fast by every seeker, and that the changes about food, etc., which were introduced in the Ashram in connection with my fast should be understood as a preparation for this. It is necessary to understand this. Those who do not see the truth of this need not adopt those changes. I did not intend that everybody should join in the chain of fasts or leave the Ashram. I welcome your intention to come here as soon as I pick up a little strength. You can come on any day during the next week. I will not talk much, but I shall be strong enough to explain my ideas and answer your doubts. Nobody need feel troubled. My dharma is limited to explaining truth as I understand it. All of you may accept what you can from my suggestions. I don't wish to create a new world. You may ask me any questions you like from there. When

you decide to come, you may also bring with you any others whom you wish to.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8382. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

191. LETTER TO AMINA QURESHI

POONA,
June 6, 1933

CHI. AMINA,

You may now write to me. I thought that my hand had become strong enough to write, but I see from experience that it has not and so I content myself with dictating. How is your health? How are the children? Are you making any progress in studies? What is the news about Qureshi? Has he regained his former weight? Or is it within limits?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10779. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qurehsi

192. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

POONA
June 6, 1933

CHI. NIMU,

When Ramdas is out of jail you would not be expecting letters from me, would you? I am writing this for a specific purpose. I have seen what Ramdas wrote to you. I have also had a long discussion with Jamnalalji. You should boldly let me know what you yourself would like to do. Personally, I like the idea of your going to Wardha. May you both live there in good health and devote yourselves to God, that is , to service.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Nirmala Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

193. TELEGRAM TO SITLA SAHAI

June 7, 1933

SITLA SAHAI

16 LATOUCHE ROAD, LUCKNOW

YOU MAY COME WITH PADMA[1] AFTER 15TH BUT DISSUADE THAKURSAHEB FROM COMING JUST FOR DARSHAN. BESIDES NO MORE GUEST-ROOM ACCOMMODATION BUT IF HE MUST HE SHOULD BE PREPARED STAY HOTEL.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 21456

194. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

PARNAKUTI, POONA 6,
June 7, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

I must not write. The last letter that I wrote to you caused much strain upon the hand. I am, therefore, dictating this letter, in reply to yours of the 5th instant.

You say that the brief sentence[2] I wrote at the end of the letter written by Mahadev, gave you pangs. It is wonderful how we create misery for ourselves where there is not even the slightest cause. My sentence had reference to your fever, which you yourself had said was due to over-anxiety on your part. You had explicitly mentioned that you were ill able to bear the separation. It was in answer to this that I wrote that sentence. It had reference only to enforced separation. There was no thought whatsoever that you should live out of sight even when it was possible for you to be with me, that is, if we were both not imprisoned. Of course, in that case, you would be most naturally with me, But to be out of prison is not my natural life. My natural life is that of a prisoner and therefore I suggest that you should learn to do without my physical presence. Is not this as clear as daylight?

I do not like this loss of weight by you. There is something radically wrong in your carrying this load of anxiety on your

[1] Addressee's daughter

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 3-6-1933.

shoulders. It is incompatible with a living faith in a living God. As days pass I feel this living presence in every fibre of my vein. Without that feeling I should be demented. There are so many things that are calculated to disturb my peace of mind. So many events happened that would, without the realization of that presence, shake me to the very foundation. But they pass me by leaving me practically untouched. I want you to share that reality with me. Then you would not be disturbed because you cannot be physically near me. Remember that no heroic effort is necessary in order to be able to bear such enforced separation, as you and I have to put up with. Millions of human beings do so without any effort. Do not make the mistake of thinking that they bear such separation because their nature is not sensitive to such things. If we would examine them we would find that they are just as sensitive as you and I are likely to be. Only they have a natural faith in God of which they have not even the knowledge. Ours is, beside theirs, a laboured faith. Hence we have to put forth a Herculean effort to bear separation. Anyway that is my analysis of your mentality. If it is not true you will make your own analysis and somehow or other cure yourself of the terrible anxiety. Carefully ponder over Krishna's discourses in the second chapter of the *Gita.* Then go to the twelfth chapter, and see whether you cannot find real peace and calmness of mind. Do not try to give me a detailed reply to this argument of mine. I do not want you to go through that strain. I have advanced the argument simply to soothe you, if at all I can. I know that argument is vain when one's whole being is in rebellion against itself. Perhaps the painful process through which you are passing is preliminary to the coming realization of the living presence of God. May it be so. Anyway do not again allow the thought to cross your mind that there is any question whatsoever of your having to live in separation from me when we both find ourselves out of prison.

Now about myself. I am flourishing. Rebuilding the body at the age of 64 must be a slow process, and I see that it will be slower than I had expected. Yet recovery is steady. I am taking easily 24 oz. of milk. I am trying to go to 2 lb. and may, under Dr. Dinshaw Mehta's care, do even better. I am entirely satisfied with the way I am progressing. Besides milk I take oranges and juice of three to four pomegranate[s]. I am taking also a fair quantity of honey, perhaps 4 oz. Up to yesterday, I was taking vegetable soup. Dr. Mehta has

stopped it from today in order to increase the quantity of milk. So you see that there is nothing to grumble about my food, and the way I am progressing.

You complain of sultry weather there. Here we have delicious cool weather. Of course, Poona is ideal in the rainy season.

Devdas will be married to Lakshmi on the 16th; that is the date when the religious ceremony will be gone through. But as this will be a marriage in breach of the present Hindu usage, there will be also a civil registration on the 21st. Jamnalalji is trying to fix up a match for Prabhudas also. If it comes off, he too would be married about the same date. Ramdas is here; not at all keeping well. His body largely depends upon his mental state and he has not yet found his peace of mind. Jamnalalji is going to mother him. Probably that will pull him through. He will be living in Wardha with his wife.

N. seems to be shaping well. Margarete Spiegel, who is named Amala, is as mad as a mad-hatter. But what was one to do? She simply came and one had to take her. She is a good woman. But it remains to be seen how she shapes. Both N. and Amala are to do Harijan work.

I think I have now given you enough for the week.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6279. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9745

195. LETTER TO VERRIER ELWIN

June 7, 1933

MY DEAR VERRIER,

Of course I have been having news about you and now I have your letter before me of the 31st ultimo.

Yes, God has been good to me. He has been a friend in need. He never forsook me during all those very wonderful 21 days. But I must not dictate a long letter, after having dictated one long letter to Mira who stood in need of one. I do not want you to come here merely for the purpose of meeting me. The temptation to say ‘come’ is there but I know that I must resist it. You have your work cut out for you and you must not be disturbed.

I am glad you all seem to be keeping well. I hope Mary is quite

at peace with herself. Do send my love to Mother, Eldyth and the Italian sisters when you write to them. I am flourishing.

Yours sincerely,[1]

From a microfilm: S.N. 19092; also *The Tribal World of Verrier Elwin*, pp. 83-4

196. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

June 7, 1933

CHI. MANUDI,

I was happy to learn that you had gone to the Ashram. Do you feel happy there? Your tonsils must have been removed now. I suppose you do know that after the operation one must not speak for a few days. Even the food should be liquid for some days. It is only if these post-operation rules are carefully observed that one can derive the utmost benefit from the removal of tonsils. Write to me a detailed letter.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1522. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwa1a

197. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 7, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I had wanted to post this letter today before the clearance, but after writing a long letter[2] to Mirabehn I had no energy left to write another immediately. Thus the improvement is rather slow, but it is satisfactory.

Let me know how you find N. and Amala. You must have read N.'s complaint concerning white flour. Personally I think that there has been some misunderstanding about the matter.

I will call Parachure Shastri's son here when I get Parachure Shastri's letter. I will not let that burden remain on you.

I have not been satisfied about Kusum. Does she want now to

[1] The printed source has "Love. Bapu".
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 7-6-1933.

find a vaid or another doctor? Please explain to me how the matter stands.

It is also necessary to do something about Ramabehn's shoulder. Either show it to Manekrao[1], or let her come here so that something may be done here. Please think what would be the best course. As regards the other matters, Mahadev must have written to you and so I don't write anything.

How is Amtussalaam? She seems to be exercising strict self-control about writing to me.

Let me know what your experience of Dr. Sharma was. Does he write to you? Did you ask him to leave or did he leave of his own accord?

I assume that Prema will come and see me.

How is Kanu's health now? What is the news about Purushottam?

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8383. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

198. TELEGRAM TO GIRIJA SHANKER ROY CHOWDHURY

[On or after *June 8, 1933*][2]

GIRIJA SHANKER ROY CHOWDHURY
253 BALLYGUNGE AVENUE, CALCUTTA

THANKS. D[EATH] ANNIVERSARY NO BAR TO MARRIAGE. CONTRARY-[WI]SE REGARD HAPPY COINCIDENCE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 21458

[1] Professor Manekrao, well-known bone-setter and founder of a gymnasium at Baroda

[2] The telegram was in reply to the addressee's received on June 8, 1933, which read: "I beg to bring to your notice that your son's marriage comes on sixteenth June which is Deshbandhu's death anniversary day."

199. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

June 9, 1933

MY DEAR AMALA,

I have your letters. Do become steady. It is not good to be constantly thinking of being with me. On the contrary you will be constantly thinking of the duty in front of you. Do become a wise woman of 35 instead of being a child of 5 years.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also from a microfilm: S.N. 19094

200. LETTER TO N.

June 9, 1933

MY DEAR N.,

You must not expect from me just now any reply to your letters. Strength is not coming to me as rapidly as I had expected. But my expectation had no justification. The regaining of strength is really as rapid as is possible for an old man of 64. When I built my castle of expectation I had forgotten that I was 64 and not 46.

What you say about the monthly business is quite true. But it is not likely to be true of you. To reach the state you have described, you need to attain perfect purity not merely in act but in thought also. Then undoubtedly the sex symptom goes, mere form remains. I do fervently hope that you will soon reach that state, but you have not yet done so. That you can do so, I have not a shadow of doubt. You have in you the making of such a woman. I know your aspirations and I know that you want to be true through and through. You are, so far as I can read your letters, making a Herculean effort. May you succeed soon. Meanwhile, I am not just now building any high hope upon the scarcity of the monthly symptom. I have not, therefore, lost all fear of conception. [If] it is there, I want you not to mind it but to regard it as a blessing of God. Whereas if there is no conception we would regard that too as equally a blessing and a narrow escape. Either way let it serve as a warning, final and unforgettable.

I am glad you like Abbas and Govindji as tutors. I know that they are all very fine workers. They have their hearts in their work. Of course, Lakshmidas you will look up to both as your first teacher and in the place of a parent. He is one of the staunchest of men in the Ashram. I want you to pick out all that you may find to be good in the Ashram and cling to it.

As to the name, you will see that I have adopted your suggestion. You may ask everybody in the Ashram to cut out Devi in any case. And let them address you as N. or N. behn just as they wish. But having done this forget all about the name, and its meaning and significance. After all nothing hangs by it. Everything is based upon what we think and what we do.

From a microfilm: S.N. 19095

201. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

June 9, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

I took no time in coming to a decision after hearing Mahadev's report of his conversation with Dr. Patel[1]. You should now get yourself operated upon as quickly as possible. From what has been told me, I clearly understand that the operation is neither very painful nor risky in any way. It would be wise, therefore, to get the operation performed without delay. You need not have any fear. I have expressed this view after the most careful thought. Write to me.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5352

202. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

June 9, 1933

CHI. JAMNA,

I got your letter. I did not read your previous letters. It is only since a few days that I have been having letters fully read out to me. One day I actually read them myself, but the doctors advised me against doing so and, therefore, they are now read out to me by somebody else.

[1] Dr. Motibhai D. Patel, an eminent surgeon of Ahmedabad

If you send me the substance of your previous letters, I will dictate a reply.

Have faith that your health will definitely improve if you patiently cling to nature-cure treatment. I was over-hopeful when I wrote in my previous letter that I would soon be able to write letters without any difficulty, but I find that, leave alone writing, I am not even able to dictate as much as I should like to do. It will take some time before I can dictate or write without difficulty.

I am following the same regimen as Purushottam did, that is, complete rest and nothing but milk in food. If this agrees with me, I shall soon get stronger.

You need feel no hesitation at all in writing to me.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 882. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

203. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

June 9, 1933

CHI. MANUDI,

I have heard that the operation for the removal of tonsils was very painful. But I am sure that by the time you get this letter you will be completely all right. You must have got my previous letter[1].

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati C.W. 1523. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

204. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

POONA,
June 9, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

In his letter of yesterday, Mahadev did suggest an operation for Ramabehn. 1 learnt about the discussion with Dr. Patel only yesterday. Now get the operation done as soon as possible. I have already written to you about the question of your coming here.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Manu Gandhi", 7-6-1933

Devdas's marriage[1] is fixed for the 16th. It would perhaps be better if you come on a date later than that. The general rule that nobody need come from there to attend a wedding may as well be observed on this occasion. And so we may deliberately not let the saying 'accomplish two objects in one journey' apply in this case. This does seem a little unnatural, but perhaps it is more desirable.

For myself, I have been dissuading everyone from coming. Supposing Prabhudas's marriage takes place about the same time and in my presence, I would, if I could, stop even Chhaganlal and Kashi from coming to attend it. If we really believe that the marriage ceremony is a religious rite we cannot avoid having performed, there should be no need for anyone to come here. On such occasions, we should be quite content with the company of those in whose midst we happen to be at the time, and the presence of some others who can attend. It is from this point of view that it has been considered desirable to be content with [the services of] Lakshman Shastri [as priest] who is quite near Poona and without those of Panditji. Combined with all these considerations, there is of course the desire to save expense. Though enjoying royal facilities myself,[2] I just cannot forget our poverty. Maybe these royal facilities are not unpleasing to me, but they are certainly not pleasing either. My conscience bears witness to the fact that seen from the point of view of truth, they are more unpleasing than pleasing.

Before fixing the date of your coming here, I have indulged in all this philosophizing. About my health and my experiment regarding milk, either Mathuradas or Mahadev must have written to you.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33500

[1] With Lakshmi, daughter of C. Rajagopalachari

[2] Gandhiji was at this time staying at Lady Premlila Thakersey's residence 'Parnakuti'.

205. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

June 10, 1933

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I had put your letter under my mattress. I could reach it only today. If you can come away and if Narandas permits to do so, do come, so that we can talk and understand each other's point of view. If you cannot come, you may ask me whatever questions you may wish. But assuming that you will come, I don't write anything in this letter.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 358. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

206. CABLE TO A. FENNER BROCKWAY AND OTHERS [1]

June 12, 1933

THANKS. MAKING STEADY PROGRESS.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 21464

207. LETTER TO BHULABHAI J. DESAI

'PARNAKUTI', POONA 6,
June 12, 1933

BHAISHRI BHULABHAI,

Only today I heard that you were quite ill. Get well soon. Do write to me or get someone to write for you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bhulabhai Desai Papers, File No. 1. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The cable was in reply to the addressees' received on June 10, 1933, which read: "Rejoice you have been spared to continue work for Indian untouchables and social and national freedom. Fenner Brockway, James Maxton, John McGovern, Members Parliament, Girdharilal Puri, Gurditsingh Dara, Secretary, 33 Staldates oxford."

208. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA [1]

June 14, 1933

GLAD COLIC SHORT LIVED. DELIGHTED YOU WILL COME 22ND. DEVDAS LAKSHMI WEDDING FRIDAY. WANT YOUR BLESSINGS IF YOU CAN CONSCIENTIOUSLY GIVE .[2]

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 21470

209. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA[3]

June 14, 1933

RELIGIOUS CEREMONY DEVDAS MARRIAGE FRIDAY. REGISTRATION NECESSARY FOR UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 21473

210. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

'PARNAKUTI', POONA 6,
June 14, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter has just arrived. I shall have to be very brief this week, because from 8 o'clock what is called the milk diet commences and lasts till half past three or four. During this period perfect bodily and mental rest is required. Yet if I must write this letter in time I must do so during this milk feed. What this feed is will be described later on

[1] The telegram was in reply to the addressee's dated June 13, 1933, which read: "Thanks attack short lived. Am quite well. Only weak. Hope to meet you twenty-second. Praying you may soon regain full strength."

[2] Malaviya had sent a telegraphic reply which read: "Though I do not approve the *sambandh*, I wish Devdas and his spouse all happiness."

[3] The telegram was in reply to the addressee's to Devdas which read: "Papers say your marriage to be registered civil marriage. Can it be correct? Wire."

by Mahadev.[1] Under it, though I cannot be said to be yet putting on weight, my energy is distinctly on the increase. There is therefore no cause whatsoever for worrying on my account. As far as I can see I may be said to be making steady progress.

I understand what you say about your own health, and about the mistake you made in reading my letter. I do hope that your weakness has left you and that there is no fever now left. I am assuming that you will not stint yourself for fruit. Whatever the body needs you should procure and get well and strong.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6280. Courtesy Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9746

211. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

'PARNAKUTI', POONA 6,
June 15, 1933

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

As soon as I was able I wanted to deal with two of your important letters. Your telegram and your letters[2] have helped me greatly, but I must not deal with the past for I have still to be miserly in the expenditure of my energy. I am glad you are there able to look after your brother to a certain extent.

You were quite right[3] in thinking that, if I thought that your presence was necessary here, I would at once write or cable as the occasion required. But I am more than convinced that your place is essentially there. I am not so sanguine as you are, as to your influence. The meaning I put upon the India Office listening to you is that they are much more courteous than they used to be. I want you

[1] Mahadev Desai's postscript to this letter read "There is just a minute to add a postscript. The milk treatment consists of feeds of 6 to 8 ounces every three quarters of an hour. The milk is unboiled. Goats are milked early morning after the udders are properly washed with permanganate of potash and the milkman's hands washed with hot water. The milk is then kept in a nice refrigerator and keeps wonderfully cool and tastes very nice. From today Bapu has been allowed to add two dates to each feet. 6 Ib. each day."

[2] *Vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 8-5-1933 and "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 5-6-1933.

[3] The source has "write".

there for a higher purpose and a higher influence.You being there are able to hold together all those who are friendly to the cause and what is more you must be silently and imperceptibly permeating the best English mind with the truth that is in you. All this will tell in the end. Whilst God is great and omnipotent and works in mysterious ways and therefore all things are possible for Him, humanly speaking I see not the slightest immediate cause for hope of improvement in the present position which so far as I can see is as bad as it can possibly be. This Ordinance rule has struck the people dumb. The ignorant mass have become terror-struck. They do not know what is in store for them on the morrow. The well-to-do are trembling in their shoes simply through a vague fear of their being overtaken by some Governmental Act. They feel that their only safety lies in an abject surrender to the will of what to them is a power which seems even to override Providence itself—a power that will compel subjection to its will at any cost. And so there is a kind of dead calm which even in my bed, isolated though I am from contact with people through the orders of doctors, I can't help sensing. It is the peace of the cemetery as Lord Irwin once or twice said in 1930 when he refused to make further use of the terrible powers which it was possible for the Government of India to use whenever they liked. Though therefore I see no hope in the near future, whilst you and I do not ignore it, we have in view the distances in working for and at truth. Time does not count, or if it does, it counts in our favour. For here there is all hope, no cause for despair, for there is a certainty of the final triumph of truth, so long as there is some living representative of it. Thanks be to God, so far as I can see there are certainly several, if not many, representatives of truth today in India who will count no cost too great for the vindication of truth.

Having got this immovable faith in me in the rightness of the cause, there is no danger on this side of any precipitate action. Every step that is necessary will be taken with the greatest deliberation. I shall personally leave no stone unturned to secure an honourable peace. So far as I can judge I shall fail, but that does not worry me. The harder General Smuts became the harder and the oftener I knocked at his door till it was banged in my face, but patience was rewarded and so it will be in this case. Abdul Ghaffar Khan cannot be sacrificed. Khorshed Naoroji over 30 years in age, a woman free of hysterics, full of faith and spirituality, went to the Frontier, lived with Abdul Ghaffar Khan, came in intimate touch with people. Devdas next went and both these told me that they were convinced that there was

no guile about Abdul Ghaffar Khan, that he always said what he meant and meant what he said. They admit that he is hot-tempered, hasty in action, but has no belief in violence, is in secret league with neither Amanullah nor anybody else. His sole ambition is to see his people happy and free from terrorism. My own personal experience is that he is amenable to control and discipline. I do not remember his having ever refused to carry out his promises. He has come to me whenever I have wanted him. My own firm opinion is that he is much misrepresented in the official circles and that what they do not want is his influence among his people. This he undoubtedly has, because he is self-sacrificing, simple and brave. It is once more a repetition of the old policy of cutting off tall poppies. If what is insinuated about Abdul Ghaffar Khan is true, that must be proved by an impartial tribunal and neither the Congress nor I personally would have anything to say if the charges against him are true. But the tribunal must be an acceptable tribunal. I do not want a second edition of the Meerut Case[1]. As you know full well I have no sympathy with Communism, most of the Meerut prisoners were daggers at me. They missed no occasion to vilify or insult me. But that is of no consequence. They have been punished for holding particular opinions, not for any act that they have done! And what a punishment! But that is merely symptomatic of the deep-seated disease. There is no intention whatsoever on the part of the Indian Civil Service to give up power and all it means, nor for that matter is there any intention on the part of Mr. Baldwin or Sir Samuel Hoare to do otherwise.

Now for your important argument about untouchability. But there is this initial flaw about it. My life is one indivisible whole. It is not built after the compartmental system—satyagraha, civil resistance, untouchability, Hindu-Muslim unity and several other things I could name are not different things to be taken and handled. They are indivisible parts of a whole which is truth. I can't devote myself entirely to untouchability and say: 'Neglect Hindu-Muslim unity or

[1] Meerut Conspiracy Case, in which Justice Yorke found the Communist lnternational in Russia responsible for armed risings with a view to overthrowing existing Governments for establishing Soviet Republics by means of inciting antagonism between capital and labour, conducting strikes, etc. The judgment pronounced the accused guilty of taking part in this conspiracy, which aimed at depriving the King of the Sovereignty of British India and convicted 27 out of the 30 accused to sentences ranging from transportation for life to rigorous imprisonment for three years.

swaraj.' All these things run into one another and are inter-dependent. You will find at one time in my life an emphasis on one thing, at another time on other. But that is just like a pianist, now emphasizing one note and now other. But they are all related to one another. Therefore you see how it is utterly impossible for me to say: 'I have now nothing to do with civil disobedience or swaraj!' Not only so, if I attempted any such thing, I could not do it. Full and final removal of untouchability I can show you to your satisfaction, is utterly impossible without swaraj. This letter will be too long and unnecessarily so, if I gave you chapter and verse to prove my statement.

Love.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 1300; also S.N. 19097

212. TELEGRAM TO SHEWAKRAM KARAMCHAND

June 16, 1933

SHEWAKRAM KARAMCHAND
SERVANTS UNTOUCHABLES SOCIETY, OLD SUKKUR

PLEASE TELL NEVANDRAM MY BEHALF NOT FAST REGARDING SADHU BELLA TEMPLE.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 21478

213. TELEGRAM TO RAMAKRISHNADAS CHANDIWALA

June 16, 1933

RAMAKRISHNADAS CHANDIWALA
KATRA KHUSHAL, DELHI

READ YOUR WIRE BRIJKISHAN. HE IS MAKING DAILY PROGRESS. NO FEVER SINCE YESTERDAY. I WANT HIM TAKE FULL TREATMENT FOR HABITUAL CONSTIPATION. NEITHER YOU NOR MOTHER SHOULD COME. I SHALL KEEP YOU INFORMED.

BAPU

From a microfilm; S. N. 21478 a

214. SPEECH AT DEVDAS-LAKSHMI WEDDING[1]

POONA,
June 16, 1933

You have just heard our familiar hymn of "The True Vaishnava". I hope you both will ponder over it, and try to live as the true Vaishnava described by the poet-saint Narasinh Mehta.

Devdas, you know my expectations about you. May you fulfil them, and I assure you that if you do so all the objections raised against the match will melt away. Since I reached the age of discretion, I have tried to understand the meaning of dharma and live up to it as best as I could. I do not think that in celebrating this marriage anything has been done against the dictates of dharma. Had it been so, you should not have had my blessings and presence at the ceremony.

You are taking upon yourself a grave responsibility, which is proportionate to the great good fortune that has fallen to your lot. Who knew that your wedding would take place under the roof of the pure-souled Lady Thackersey? Who knew that a man of great learning and spotless character like Lakshman Shastri would be found to act as priest? Perhaps, at some future and convenient date, the ceremony would have taken place at the Ashram. But the fast has brought this about. Let the fruit of what was an essentially religious act be also religious. Let the memory of it inspire you to take every step with a full sense of dharma. You know dharma is Truth, and if you keep it as your pole star, it is sure to protect you. What a piece of good fortune for you that you should have so many friends and elders to bless you on the occasion! May you prove worthy of all these blessings! You have today robbed Rajagopalachari of a cherished gem. May you be worthy of it! May you treasure it! She is real Lakshmi. Guard her, protect her as you would Lakshmi, the goddess of the good and beautiful. May you both live long and tread the path of dharma ! May you live for dharma and have the courage to lay down your lives, when the occasion comes, for dharma! Let your life from today be a further dedication to service of the country, and may you never give yourselves to idle pleasure. This is my blessing and my cherished hope and desire.

[1] This appeared as reported by Mahadev Desai, who had stated: "Gandhiji addressed a few words to the bride and bridegroom. He took over five minutes to gather sufficient strength to speak. The part addressed to Mr. Devdas was in Gujarati, and that addressed to the bride was in Hindi. I summarize the substance below."

Devdas, you have always looked upon Rajagopalachari as a respected elder. From today, he is as good as your father. Tender to him the same loyalty and obedient devotion that you have been tendering to me.

To you, Lakshmi, I need not say much. I believe that Devdas will prove himself a worthy husband to you. Ever since I have seen and known you, I have felt that you have justified your name. Let your marriage strengthen, if possible, the bond of affection that has ever been growing between Rajagopalachari and me. I need not emphasize the unique auspices under which the wedding is being celebrated. It is essentially a religious thing, and may it prove to you both a means for the better performance of your duty! I should have had nothing to do with the marriage, had I not known it to be in consonance with religion, and the fruit of the pure *tapasya* undergone by both of you in order to gain our sanction and blessings, which you have now amply deserved.[1]

It has been a great effort on my part to say these few words. But I thought it was essential for me to bless you, and warn you of the great responsibility you are taking upon yourselves. May God protect you! Only He protects, for He is the father, mother, and friend, everything rolled into one. Let your life be a dedication to the service of the motherland, and of humanity. May you both ever be humble, and may you both walk in fear of God always!

The Hindu, 17-6-1933; also *The Hindustan Times*, 17-6-1933

215. CABLE TO AGATHA HARRISON [2]

June 17, 1933

AGATHA HARRISON

119 GOWER STREET, LONDON

WHEN HEALTH PERMITS COURTING INTERVIEW FOR MY PART THERE WILL BE NO CONDITION.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1466

[1] This sentence is reproduced from *The Hindustan Times*, 17-6-1933

[2] The cable was in reply to the addressee's (S.N. 19096), received on June 15, 1933, which read: "If two men meet without conditions might not a way of peace be found?"

216. MESSAGE TO SOUTH INDIANS

June 17, 1933

One should feel pleased to hear Pandit Harihar Sharma's[1] report about the Hindi work in the Provinces of the South. But I shall get real pleasure only when Hindi is spread in every village. I would wish all those who can to contribute their maximum to help this sacred work.

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 24-6-1933

217. MESSAGE TO ASHRAM INMATES

[Before *June 18, 1933*][2]

Mr. Narandas Gandhi, manager of the Satyagraha Ashram, who had gone to Poona to see Gandhiji, returned this morning. With the Mahatma he had discussion on the significance of his fast which, according to the Mahatma, was the last resort in pursuit of truth and non-violence.

Gandhiji is understood to have told Mr. Narandas that his last fast had convinced him that thousands of similar ordeals would be necessary, and the inmates of the Ashram should as on previous occasions, take the lead in observing fasts. They should, therefore, prepare themselves for the purpose by leading purer lives than heretofore.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-6-1933

218. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

While observing silence

'PARNAKUTI' POONA,
4 a.m., Sunday [*June 18, 1933*][3]

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Soon after I wrote that letter to you, I had to stop writing letters with my own hand. I saw that I had not regained enough strength for that. I feel like trying whether I have it now, and I think I can't do better than try to write a letter to you to find that out.

[1] One of Gandhiji, a four 'nurses, during the fast
[2] The message was reported under the date-line: "Ahmedabad, June 18, 1933."
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 19-6-1933.

Please do not get frightened by the doctors' reports or by the delay in the recovery of strength. "God's will prevails", as the poet says. I had thought that I would be on my feet in three weeks' time. But my expectation has been belied. However, there is no cause at all for worry. Except for the delay in regaining strength, there is nothing else. Really speaking, what else could I have expected at the age of sixty-four? Please rest assured that I am perfectly all right. I am bathing in Premlilabehn's love. I have turned her home into a dharmashala. She herself made arrangements for the marriage of Devdas and Lakshmi, and with what love she did that! God's kindness is boundless. Do we deserve it? May He make us worthy of it.

What has been done regarding your nose?

Tell Joshi that I have given instructions that the operation on Ramabehn should be performed. But Dr. Patel himself has asked her to wait till the rains come and the weather is cooler. It is he who has been insisting on the operation and he is positive that it involves no risk at all. He thinks the operation is absolutely necessary. Chhaganlal should not worry. The matter has not been out of my mind even for a moment.

Writing this much has not tired me. All the same, I don't wish to uproot a tree which bears sweet fruit and will not, therefore, write any other letter today.

Prabhavati has arrived here today. I suppose somebody must have written to you about that.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

YERAVDA JAIL, POONA

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 17-9

219. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 19, 1933

SATYAGRAHAASHRAM

AHMEDABAD

RAMNARAYAN CHAUDHRY SAYS JNANADEVI GIVES FULL CONSENT

MARRIAGE PRABHUDAS. CONFIRM THIS AND LET JNANADEVI WRITE ME FULLY STATING HER POSITION.

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./I; also S.N. 21485

220. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

June 19, 1933

SHREE

BOMBAY

RAMNARAYAN CHAUDHRY WIRES JNANADEVI AFTER TALK WITH HER FATHER GIVES FULL CONSENT. HAVE ASKED NARANDAS CONFIRM STATEMENT AND ASKED AND JNANADEVI'S LETTER.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 21486

221. LETTER TO DUNCAN GREENLEES[1]

'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
June 19, 1933

All these days I have kept your letter of 8th instant under my mattress in the hope of either writing myself or at least dictating. But I found myself too weak to do it before today. There are yet 55 minutes for the silence to break. I am utilizing what I can of these minutes to reply to your letter. I like it very much. I understand all you say and it satisfies me also. No one can banish you from the Ashram but yourself. So long as it gives you satisfaction and you think that you can grow there, you will stay. If the purificatory fast is resumed[2] as it will be some time or other, your place will undoubtedly be in it without the taint of publication and tomtoming that unfortunately and inevitably accompanied mine. Everyone will judge for himself or herself whether he or she has the qualifications. In theory no one is truly qualified for every one of us has more or less sin in us. Hence I have called it primarily for self-purification. It is

[1] Addressee's name has been inferred from the following item.

[2] Gandhiji was contemplating a relay of self-purificatory fasts by Harijan sevaks.

enough if one has the inner urge for service, greater dedication and greater purification and confidence in one's ability to go through the ordeal. The ability comes from the intensity of the urge and (which is the same thing) the deep and ever deepening conviction of the necessity of the penance. A seeker after Truth has no strength he can call his own. The necessary strength (and no more) is given or rather sent to him for the moment and for the mission to which he is called.

If the chain is begun whilst I am alive, your turn as everybody else's will be determined by me or in case of death someone whom I may have named. If I have failed to do so the participants will elect the leader from among themselves.

This is as far as I have thought the thing out.

This letter has turned out to be rather important. I am therefore having it multiplied on the typewriter without your name.

I hope you are keeping well both in mind and body.

Love.

From a photostat: S.N. 19100; also S.N. 21488

222. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 19, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I made another attempt yesterday to write letters. I wrote one to Vallabhbhai, and today I started with Duncan. After that I am writing this to you. Duncan's original letter also is enclosed. As I find that I have expressed my ideas rather clearly in the letter to Duncan, I got copies of it made. I have removed his name from them. If there is time, I will enclose one copy along with the original. If there is no time, a copy will be dispatched tomorrow. As regards changes in my diet, anybody who writes to you from here will mention them, and so I don't write anything about them in this letter.

I now expect from you detailed news concerning Deolali. How has Jamna's and Kusum's condition been? Have you had any news about Maitri? If you have decided to consult a vaid for Kusum, let me know his name.

What has been done about Ramabehn? When will Dr. Patel think it is cool enough? How is Amina? She has not replied to my letter.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8384. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

223. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

June 19, 1933

BHAI RAJBHOJ,

I have three letters from you, one of May 10, another of June 8, and yet another of May 16. Till now I was not told of all the letters that arrived; even now only a few are shown to me. As full energy has not been regained, my letter-writing is even more uncertain than reading the letters or having them read out. I have been able to write very few letters till today. I often thought of writing to you but it is only today that I have succeeded in doing so. What you have written about Shri Daphtari is correct. Only a Harijan has the right to ask the Harijans to take such a vow, other Hindus can only make a suggestion. The problem of drinking and leading an unclean life is common for the world at large, it does not concern the Harijans alone. I shall write to Bhai Daphtari and also in *Harijan* on this subject when I gain some strength. You can certainly leave the Ashram at the end of three months if you feel confident of having gained what you came for. I would advise you to consult Narandas regarding this, it is all right if he too feels the same. There is no cause at present for you or other Harijans to fast. The penance has to be done by other Hindus, not the Harijans. The occasion for them for atonement and fasting will certainly arise but it will take some time. I believe this answers the main part of your queries.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 792

224. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

June 19, 1933

CHI. BRAJKISAN,

Your letter. Do send for Keshu. Your mother must not be troubled. I have despatched a wire today. Anyway we shall see later on. Yes, the treatment must not be given up now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2400

225. LETTER TO ARUN DAS GUPTA

'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
June 20, 1933

MY DEAR ARUN,

I was delighted to have your note after such a long time. Hardly any letter was read to me during my fast. I was glad that Father and Mother restrained themselves from running down to Poona during the fast and are still exercising restraint and sticking to their respective posts. If I were to travel as I used to before, I would love to take you with me during one of the travels, if you were physically fit to undertake the fatigue of the journey. You have said nothing about your health and your activities. You must tell me something about both in your reply to this letter.

Have you seen Abdul Halim lately?

From a microfilm: S.N. 19101

226. LETTER TO N.

June 20, 1933

MY DEAR N.

I have kept under my mattress three of your letters among others. But it is only now that I am able to dictate my reply. I take the latest, just handed to me, first. Your letter to the Governor of Madras is being posted today. It might have been worded slightly differently but

the change is not important enough to warrant the delay in sending the letter. You need neither worry nor be disgusted with yourself for being late at prayers three or four times in two days. There is such a thing as being disgusted with oneself and yet continuing the wrong. I have seen so many such cases. Therefore, what I suggest to you is to calmly analyse the reason for being late and to avoid it. You have given the reason in these cases yourself for not leaving your work in time for prayer. Therefore you should now be careful and leave the work in time to reach the prayer ground in peace. Constant watch over one's minutes guards one from all such difficulties.

Your long letter of 13th instant is too imaginative and too poetic for me. You have plenty of poetry in you. Your imagination knows no bounds. I want you to transmute these into an inexhaustible power for real service. We have all to aspire after being childlike. We cannot become children because that is impossible. But we can all become like children. In spite of the knowledge gained, we can become simple, guileless, candid and natural like them. Here the word 'natural' has a definite meaning. All the virtues that we may prize should not be an artificial growth, possible only in a hothouse, but they must be as natural to us as perhaps mischief is natural to children. We love their mischief because it is so natural to them. The mischief of grown-up ones lies in their being naturally good, restrained, humble and proof against temptation.

I want to warn you against putting the construction you have put upon the scarcity of the monthly flow. My fear is that the decrease is not, in you, a healthy sign. You are not yet free from the sex emotion, and unless you are entirely from it in thought, word and deed, irregularity on scarcity in your monthly condition must be regarded as a sign of some internal derangement. I am afraid that ordinarily speaking, you will take a long time to reach that condition, unless you and I and the Ashram are so blessed that you suddenly reach the requisite condition of natural purity that would stop the monthly flow and be a sign of perfect health. When you reach that state you will have no boils, etc., and no other bodily or mental ailment. You will be the happy possessor of the qualities that we pray for every evening at the prayer time. I refer you to the last verses of the second chapter of the *Gita*.

Pray, do not disturb yourself over the milk treatment though I know that 10 lb. of milk is an unnatural diet. As a medicinal treatment

it might have great potentialities. These are certainly claimed for it by many people. Dr. Mehta, who is treating me, swears by it. Anyway, for the time being it is suspended, and it may have to be given up altogether. You must trust me to act cautiously and with sufficient restraint. Though slow, my progress is steady. I am just now taking my ordinary quantity of three to four lb. milk a day and a liberal supply of fruit, consisting of oranges, pomegranate juice and grapes. This is meant for both you and Amala who also is disturbed over my diet.

I see that you swear by Kashmir, but let me tell you that it is not the climate that suits every constitution and in any case I cannot go to Kashmir in search of health. I must find my health where my work lies. That is what I did before also and that, too, was after a fast. I happened to be in the Ashram and in spite of importunities of friends I would not stir out of the Ashram. The same God who saw me through 21 days will see me through this convalescence, if such is His will, and the best thing that you, Amala and others can do to quicken the progress is by discharging your respective duties as fully as is possible for you to do.

In your last letter you had said nothing about your boils and nothing about my suggestion as to the ways and means of restoring S. to his normal weight. After all he is not only to reach his normal weight but he is to show an increase in his weight and height, in general development both physical and mental.

I think this answers all your questions.

From a microfilm: S.N. 19102

227. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

June. 20, 1933

MY DEAR AMALA,

I have your letter.

I see that you will worry about me. As I had to write fairly fully to N. on several matters arising out of her letter I have asked her to share my letter[1] with you, at least so far as my food question is

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

concerned. I am glad you too are getting on well. I shall certainly forget your madness, if I find that you are consistently simple and reasonable.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Who has your passport? Please send me a copy of the main part. Then I shall tell you what to do.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also S.N. 19103

228. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

June 20, 1933

MY DEAR SATISBABU,

I have been pining to write to you but have not been able to do so. You should now write to me fully about your activities, about the Bengali *Harijan* and all that you know you should tell me about, and how you are keeping your health. I am still obliged to be in bed. I have been permitted to walk a few steps daily in the big room which had been placed at my disposal by Lady Thackersey. I am taking nearly four Ib. of milk and plenty of oranges, pomegranate juice and grapes. That is my staple food. Progress is slow but certainly steady.

I sent you a telegraphic reply[1] to your question about the civil registration of Devdas-Lakshmi marriage. So far as we are concerned the religious bond and the religious ceremony was all-sufficing. So far as the outside world is concerned and the social and civil consequences are concerned, the religious tie in what are known as *pratiloma* marriages[2], as this one, is of no consequences and is held to be invalid. In order to avoid these consequences the Civil Marriage Act was passed, I believe, at the instance of Sir Hari Singh Gour, whereby a Hindu is not obliged to declare that he is not a Hindu, but on the contrary he can, as he does, declare himself a Hindu and still

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 14-6-1933.

[2] In which the bride belongs to a higher varna

claim registration of such marriage. Then it is recognized in law. I had, personally, not thought of this registration, but Rajaji considered it to be the duty of parents in such marriages to clothe their children with as much protection as was possible in the circumstance so as to avoid untoward consequences. I at once agreed with him. If you still discover any flaw in this you will please not hesitate to bring it to my notice.

From a photostat: S.N. 21492

229. LETTER TO JAIKRISHNA P. BHANSALI

June 20, 1933

CHI. BHANSALI,

I was delighted to see a letter from you after so many days, I mean so many months, but I was also pained to read it. I hold that the remedies you are adopting for attaining self-realization are not right. If anybody stitches up his lips in order to observe silence, his silence would not be the real thing. One can observe silence even by cutting off one's tongue, but that also will not be real silence. He is truly silent, who, having the capacity to speak, utters no idle word. The type of *tapas* which you are practising is described by the author of the *Gita as tamasi tapas,* and I think that is correct. You eat uncooked flour, but that is against medical science. Shastras never enjoin anybody to do so. If you have decided to eat nothing but uncooked things, you can eat only fruits, etc. You may add milk or curds, that would be complete food. I think it would be better if you gave up this unnatural effort completely. Reflect over the *bhajan* given below:

> Oh good man! Natural communion is best. Ever since by the Grace of God it was achieved, it has been growing. Wherever I wander it is a circuit round the Deity, whatever I do is an act of service, every lying down of mine is an act of prostration before God. Every utterance of mine is God's name—1 worship no other God—and all hearing is a remembrance of God. Eating and drinking are acts of worship and living in a house or in the wilderness are the same to me. I shut not my eyes, neither do I stuff my ears; to no torture do I subject myself. I open my eyes to find nothing but the beautiful manifestation of God everywhere to greet and delight me. My mind ever intent on Him, all corrupt thought has left me; so very much I am engrossed in contemplation of Him that there is no room in me for aught else. Kabir says—This is a state to

be silently enjoyed but I have dared to sing about it. It is a state beyond misery and bliss, I am merged in it.[1]

You should live in peace in the Ashram or anywhere else that you like and go on doing some work of service. You may then, in the course of time, attain self-realization if you are fortunate enough. Probably you know that I completed a 21-day fast three weeks ago. I had a special reason for undertaking the fast. I am still confined to bed, but am gaining strength day by day.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 21491; also *Harijanbandhu*, 25-6-1933

230. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

June 20, 1933

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I got your letter. Only since yesterday have I made some attempts of writing a few letters. Ten copies of the *Ramayana* have reached. I shall go through it after gaining more strength. I am somewhat worried on account of your health but what can I say to you? You have left everything to God. He alone will protect you. Khadi work at present is becoming somewhat difficult day by day. But I have found from experience that even a difficult task becomes easy if one works within one's limits, and the devout never go beyond it.

The attempt to convert Sodepur into an Ashram can be made only by keeping the original aim of Khadi Pratishthan in mind. The following *shloka* is to be considered in this context:

"Better ones own duty, bereft of merit, than another's well performed."[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1701

[1] This translation of the song *'Sadho Sahaja Samadh Bhali'* is reproduced from *Harijan*, 24-6-1933.

[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 35; *vide* also "Discourses on the *Gita*", 27-11-1926.

231. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
June 21, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter of 18th came into my hands this morning. I have given up the milk treatment as it is called. But I am taking, after my own fashion, four lb. of milk at intervals of three hours commencing from six o'clock and juicy fruits (oranges, grapes, and pomegranate juice). This is likely to suit me better for the time being. My weight has gone up to 93_ lb. It is a good increase, and I am allowed to walk a few steps daily, three or four times. I had, for the first time after six weeks, a tub-bath. It was very refreshing. So you see that there is nothing to worry about so far as my health is concerned. In the milk treatment, so called, and in accordance with my height I should be able to take 12 lb. of milk per day without discomfort. It is a special method and in many eases it is very efficacious. In my case too, ultimately it was expected to succeed, but I did not want to engage myself in arguing over it, and therefore, for the moment I have dropped it. You will be surprised to know that Kakasaheb is undergoing that treatment and is now taking 10 lb. per day and has to come up to 12 lb. His weight has gone up to 120 Ib. Brijkrishna, who has been suffering, as you know, for years from habitual constipation, is also undergoing that treatment. He is taking 12 lb. per day without any difficulty in quantities of 1 lb. per hour. It is a well-tried method. The central point of this method is that whilst you are taking the milk treatment you have got to lie in bed and take perfect rest. You can take plenty of exercise in the morning before commencing the milk feed.

Nothing is certain as to where Devdas is to stay in future or what he is to do. It is enough that both he and Lakshmi are very happy and so is Rajaji, who is both father and mother to his children. He loves them, and he would be satisfied to lose himself in them if he had no other call upon his time. Prabhudas's turn comes next. It is likely that he will be married to a girl who is just now living in the Ashram. She belongs to United Provinces. But nothing is yet certain. Ramdas has gone to Sabarmati and with his wife he will be presently going to Wardha. Verrier continues to suffer from one thing or another. He is

now ready for an operation for hernia from which he has been suffering for a long time. As a matter of fact the operation seems to me to be overdue. Radha is still lingering at Deolali where Rukhi has given birth to another son. She is having her treatment at Deolali. Keshu is staying there still uncertain as to what he is to do. Chhotalal is now free from his eczema. Balkrishna is just as weak as before. He too is in Wardha. Santibehn is here with Om[1] for reasons of health. She is not keeping well. Jamnalalji has just left for Wardha in connection with an old business case. His ear trouble is just now under control, but only under control. It has made him very weak. He becomes easily fatigued both in body and mind. N. seems to be shaping well. Duncan, of course, is quite happy and evidently retaining his health. It is not so with N. She has rash and boils. I think I have given you a fairly full budget of family news. I dare say I have forgotten many names, and the little ailments from which the large family is suffering, but the sample I have given you tells its own tale.

The news about your own health is cheerful. I wish and hope that you will now continue to improve steadily without interruption. You will not over-tax yourself by insisting upon going through the daily programme. Take it easily and go through whatever you can without difficulty or strain. Then you will be quite all right.[2]

What you say about boys and girls learning astronomy and the like is of course very true.

Did I tell you that Prabhavati is with me and is standing by my bedside whilst I am writing this?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6281. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9747

[1] Uma Agrawal; Jamnalal Bajaj's daughter

[2] In the source, what follows is in Gandhiji's hand.

232. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
June 22, 1933

MY DEAR AMALA,

I have your two stupid and silly letters.

I never knew that you were so unbalanced, suspicious and hypersensitive. What led you to think that I regarded you as a stranger? Or that you were less than a daughter to me? You, nowadays, sign yourself as a disciple. But do you not know that I claim nobody as my disciple? I have one disciple, too many, and that is myself. You suppose I would take additional burden and make my life a misery? I delight in owning sons and daughters, sisters and brothers. Therefore, you are either a daughter or nothing; certainly not a disciple, and what a disciple suspecting her own master at every step! Are you now surprised that I called you mad! And why do you worry about my food? Can you not have trust enough in me and feel that I would not take any risk with myself? In any case, now that I am taking milk and fruit, after my own style, perhaps you will cease to worry. Anyway I am flourishing, gaining weight and strength. Are you flourishing as well as I am?

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also S.N. 19105

233. TELEGRAM TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

POONA,
June 22, 1933

PRABHUDAS GANDHI
ALMORA

PROCEED WARDHA. SETTLED ABOUT YOUR MARRIAGE. WIRE JAMNALALJI THERE.

BAPU

From the original: S.N. 32991

234. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 25, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letters. Keshu and Radha came yesterday. Radha stayed with me, and Keshu with Brijkrishna. I had talked things over with Keshu last evening. Radha has gone away to Brijkrishna today, who is taking treatment in Dinshawji's nursing home. Radha is thinking whether she also should try that treatment. It is certain that neither Keshu nor Radha will return to the Ashram. Jamnalalji met them in Deolali and then went to Wardha.

Jnana must have left for Wardha. Prabhudas should see her, then hear your, Kashi's and Ramdas's views and then decide.

Write to me in detail what your experience of Rajbhoj was. I suppose you read all the letters addressed to N. How is Ramji?

What do you think may have been the cause of Kusum's fever?

I hope Jamna is better now. I have received a postcard from Purushottam. I will send him a wire after I have a talk with Dinshaw. Most probably there will be no difficulty.

Has there been any rain there?

BAPU

[PS.]

I seem to be gaining strength every day. The weight, too, has gone up to 95. That is certainly good.

All of you know about Bhansali's and Chaitanya's letters. You will read my reply[1] in *Harijanbandhu*.

Letters enclosed for: N., Amala, Anandi, Rama, Amina, Kusum, Jamna, Amtussalaam, Champa and Ramdas (the last is sealed in a separate envelope.).

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8386. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

235. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

June 26, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

There are two ways of doing reparation to your injured mother.

[1] To J. P. Bhansali; *vide* "Letter to Jaikrishna P. Bhansali", 20-6-1933.

The most natural (i.e., return to her) you reject. The other is to lose yourself in the service you have chosen. Then every grown-up woman is mother to you. You should regularly write to her and give an account of your work. That will console her.

Wear that costume which pleases you best and is easily washable. That means a . . .[1] like mine, a petticoat three inches above the ankles and a free blouse reaching the knees. Mira has chosen a labouring woman's costume plus the . . .[2].

You need not copy her outward form. Do copy, if you can, her inner beauty of soul. But why think even of her. You have the Ashram ideal before you. Try to realize it to the utmost of your capacity and it will be well with you. And do not try to go beyond your depth.

Please do not worry about my health. God will take care of it, so long as He needs my service in this tabernacle.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

236. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
June 26, 1933

DEAR DR. MAHMUD,

Domestic sorrow dogs your footsteps, no matter wherever you go. I see now that Begum Mahmud is probably suffering from typhoid and that you have taken her to Delhi. A big risk, but I suppose it was worth taking in order to put her under Dr. Ansari's care. I hope that she is making steady progress.

Devdas showed me the presents that you had brought. Whilst I appreciated your and Jalbhai's[3] affection underlying those presents, I felt that silk things ought not to be accepted because consistently with the past profession and practice, Lakshmi could not, if she can help it, wear silken things. Having given that opinion, I left the decision to Lakshmi, Rajaji and Devdas. They all felt like me, as to the use of silken things, but they had some delicacy about returning such gifts to

[1] Illegible
[2] *ibid.*
[3] Grandson of Dadabhoy Naoroji

friends who had presented them out of affection. I undertook to perform the task if they agreed that such gifts should be returned. When Mrs. Naidu heard all this discussion, she said that if perchance your gift was not accepted she should take charge of it. I, therefore, took the liberty of returning your sari to her. Jalbhai's sari is being returned to him. Mathuradas is presently going to Bombay for a day or so when he will take it. But the bag and the other contents have been retained and I hope that you will be satisfied that they would be a constant reminder to Devdas and Lakshmi of your affection. The third friend, who sent silken saris, was Ghanshyamdas Birla. I spoke to him about them. He appreciated our difficulty and gladly took them back. The moral of this, I would like to point out. Next time you happen to make presents to friends you should make yourself acquainted with their capacity for taking and using them. Romain Rolland thought that he should give each of us a memento of our visit to his hermitage, and he seems to have passed an anxious night discussing with his sister what he should give me. He could not think of books, or any other useful articles. Therefore, he parted with a trifling but a most artistic box, meant possibly to be a snuff box. Even that is too valuable a treasure for me. It will, therefore, go to the Vidyapith Museum. Of course, I had no compunction about accepting that little box. I have mentioned this very beautiful incident as it is so relevant and as I know it would please you and at the same time emphasize what I want to say.

I do not know as to what your movement will be. If you are not able to come this way and that pretty soon, I would like you to give me your views on the political situation. What will you have me to do and what should be done by Congressmen in general? Where is Sherwani? If this reaches you in Delhi, I would like you to, at least, share this part of the letter with Dr. Ansari and if he is not likely to see me early next month, I would like him to give me his opinion.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. SYED MAHMUD
C/O DR. M. A. ANSARI
1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5089; also S.N. 19106

237. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

June 26, 1933

DEAR MOTIBABU,

You will pardon me for not replying to your letter earlier. The fact is that I am still confined to bed and have only limited energy for dictating letters. Much of my time is passed in attending to the bodily needs.

As you will see from the current issue of the *Harijan*[1] a portion of your letter dealing with the opening of temples had already been reproduced[2]. Extraordinary care has been taken to publish only verifiable statements and yet errors will creep in. Thank God, there are watchmen like you who do not fail to draw attention to any error that might creep into the columns of the *Harijan.* It is difficult, in human affairs, to ensure cent per cent accuracy and it is equally difficult to keep out reports of relevant events for fear of inaccuracy creeping in. All, therefore, that we fallible human beings can do, is to be over-cautious about all our speech, action and thought and ever be ready to retrace our steps and confess our errors whenever we meet them.

As soon as I am in a fit state, I propose to write in the *Harijan* on the fast.[3] I, therefore, say nothing about it here. I am glad the affairs with you are shaping well. The doctor about whom I wrote to you, just now happens to be here. As soon as I have had sufficient experience of him I will write to you. You ought to attend to your eye trouble without delay.

Yours,

BAPU

SJT. MOTILAL ROY

PRAVARTAK SANGH, CHANDRANAGORE

From a photostat: G.N. 11045

[1] Of June 24, 1933

[2] Under the title "Save Us from Our Friends"

[3] *Vide* "All about the Fast", 8-7-1933.

238. LETTER TO M. ASAF ALI [1]

June 26, 1933

MY DEAR ASAF ALI,

I have your long letter for which I thank you. I do not at all mind your having sent it to the Press. You had a perfect right to send me that letter and I appreciate the frankness with which you have expressed your views.

I am, as yet, unable to say anything on the present situation because I am still bed-ridden and have not been able to make an analytical study of it. I want you, however, to understand my fundamental difficulty which constitutes also my limitation. Non-violence for me is not a mere experiment. It is part of my life and the whole of the creed of satyagraha, non-co-operation, civil disobedience, and the like are necessary deductions from the fundamental proposition that non-violence is the law of life for human beings. For me it is both a means and an end and I am more than ever convinced that in the complex situation that faces India, there is no other way of gaining real freedom. In applying my mind to the present situation I must, therefore, test everything in terms of non-violence.

Yours sincerely

M. ASAF ALI, ESQ., BAR-AT-LAW
KUCHA CHELAN, DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 19108

239. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

June 26, 1933

CHI. JAMNALAL,

If Keshu works under your control, he will certainly have my blessings in that. The arrangement will also lessen my worry on his account. He is here at present, as also Radha. Mathuradas will write to you about this. It is not necessary for you to come here for the sake of Kamala. You need not think of joining the chain of fasts.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2916

[1] This appeared in *The Hindu*, 4-7-1933, as Gandhiji's "reply to *the open* letter of Mr. Asaf Ali demanding suspension of civil disobedience and fundamental changes in the Congress policy".

240. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

June 26, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

Have you vowed not to write to me? If anybody who is strong and healthy in body and mind takes such a vow, I would not mind. But is that true about you?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5353

241. LETTER TO AMINA G. QURESHI

June 26, 1933

CHI. AMINA,

How is it that you did not even reply to my letter? I often think about you.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6667. Also C.W. 4312. Courtesy: Hamid G. Qureshi

242. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

June 26, 1933

CHI. JAMNA,

How is it that you fell ill again?

I will discuss with Dinshawji about Purushottam after the period of silence ends, and then send a wire[1] to you. I remember about him.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 883. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

243. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

June 26, 1933

DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

How is it that the girl who had been writing regularly does not

[1] Gandhiji, however, sent a telegram to Khushalchand Gandhi, addressee's father-in-law; *vide* "Telegram to Khushalchand Gandhi", 29-6-1933.

write at all now? Did you get the letter I wrote to you or not? Tell me about your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 286

244. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

PARNAKUTI, POONA,
June 27, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter after a long time. I have the impression that I had also received a letter from Lakshmi long ago. I can understand what you say. It is a matter neither for sorrow nor shame. There is no doubt that in your present condition it is difficult strictly to follow the rules. But with effort this can be managed. Therefore rather than feel unhappy you should try to make such effort as you can. I am regaining my strength day by day. I expect in two or three weeks, I shall be quite fit again.

How is your health these days? Tell Lakshmi to write to me. Tara should never give up her studies. You are perhaps aware that after her release Prabhavati has come here and will be staying on. Jayaprakash is also in the nearby prison.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

245. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 28, 1933

NARANDAS GANDHI
SABARMATI ASHRAM

CONSULT KANUGA REGARDING S. AND REPORT.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 21500

246. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

June 28, 1933

JAMNALAL BAJAJ

WARDHA

JNANADEVI HAS WRITTEN FIRM LETTER ASKING PROTECTION FROM MARRIAGE PRABHUDAS. YOU WILL DEFEND HER INDEPENDENCE ALL COST. POSTING HER LETTER.[1]

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 21501

247. LETTER TO BALIBEHN M. ADALAJA

June 28, 1933

CHI. BALI,

I got your letter on Manudi. Who can answer either your tongue or your pen? You know very well how to exaggerate. Probably you don't know that I had dissuaded everybody from coming. I dissuaded Nimu[2] too. Those who cannot restrain themselves despite my persuasion come. I had dissuaded Aunt[3] also. Rami ought not to come. Where can she spare the money from? Kunvarji is barely able to meet his expenses. You, of course, have an inexhaustible mine and know to waste it over the children. If, however, you would listen to my advice, you should overcome your desire to come to me and persuade Rami to do the same. I know your love. If you use it for doing my work, that will be more than coming to see me. What you write is perfectly correct. You two sisters are as near to me as Ramdas and Devdas are. You certainly have a right to come running to me at any time you like without waiting for my permission. It is because you have that right, I can ask you to exercise self-control. If you cannot do so, you may come. I have written the same thing to Ramdas. Kamu's[4] letter is lying before me. I will not write separately to her. I have not regained full strength yet. I hope Kamu is well.

Harilal's letter is enclosed. There is no hope about him at

[1] *Vide* also "Telegram to Jamnalal Bajaj", 19-6-1933 and "Letter to Mirabehn", 21-6-1933.

[2] Nirmala, wife of Ramdas Gandhi

[3] Sarojini Naidu

[4] Kamala Patel

present. Manu ought not to be betrothed as yet. She is a mere child. She has no capacity at all for running a home.

I don't think Harilal is in this place just now. He may be somewhere on that side.

Write to me from time to time.

Manu's weight is increasing. Let her stay here as long as she wishes. 1 also won't be here for long now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5054. Courtesy: Surendra Mashruwala

248. TELEGRAM TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

June 29, 1933

KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

RAJKOT

ARRANGED FOR PURUSHOTTAM. SENDED HIM. AM KEEPING WELL.

MOHANDAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 2l503

249. CABLE TO FRANCIS J. MCCONNELL

June 29, 1933

BISHOP MCCONNELL

HOTEL MORRISON, CHICAGO

THANKS. REGRET INABILITY ATTEND.[1]

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 21504

[1] Addressee communication inviting Gandhiji to the Parliament of Religions to be held at Chicago in September 1933 is not available; but a letter (S.N. 21502) dated June 28, 1933 from C. F. Weller provides the relevant detail.

250. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 29, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

It is now 5.30 a.m. Thursday. Your letter is before me.

It makes me glad to think that you are well again and daily gaining strength. We have to acquire the faculty for keeping well under all weathers—a difficult task I know. But it is not beyond human reach. The mind plays a great part in it. If we can completely detach ourselves from the externals in terms of the 6th chapter, we can attain that state. That it appears to be beyond our reach for the present need not baffle us. The author of the *Gita* invites us to the effort and says from his abundant experience that it never fails. It may take long but success is a certainty.

Yes, I did not take salt during the fast. It was a virtue of necessity. I simply could not take it. I never attempted it because there was repugnance towards it and there was no necessity for it as there was about soda which therefore I took willynilly.

My weight yesterday was 97_ and I walked altogether 44 minutes in three periods without feeling fatigued. It was therefore a good record. Nor is there difficulty about some conversation.

Radha and Keshu are with me just now. Radha is somewhat better. She goes back to Deolali today. Keshu will be with me for a few days to finish his conversations.

Poor Prabhudas ! The contemplated tie is off. Therefore there has to be a further search.[1]

Devdas and Lakshmi and Rajaji with his widowed daughter[2] and his son are still here and are likely to be for some time.

As for the *Mahabharata* reading, you should take down the names of all the persons with their short history and their connection with one another and have an alphabetical index to enable you at once to find the history of any name in your note book. The preparation of such a book will clear your mind and be of great use to others too, if it is accurately prepared.

You are quite right when you say that a Hindi translation reads

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Jamnalal Bajaj", 28-6-1933.

[2] Namagiri Varadachari

better than English however well made. This is natural because Hindi is akin to Sanskrit.

Prabhavati is by me and sends you her love. Radha has today left for Deolali.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6282. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9748

251. TELEGRAM TO PRAFULLA GHOSH

June 30, 1933

PRAFULLA GHOSH
39 CREEK ROW, CALCUTTA

WELCOME ANY DAY.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 21505

252. TELEGRAM TO NEVANDRAM

June 30, 1933

NEVANDRAM
SIROO'S CHOWK, SUKKUR

STRONGLY DISSUADE YOU FROM FASTING.[1]

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 21506

253. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
June 30, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

In spite of your grandmotherly advice I must persist in the course I have adopted about my diet. Most grandmothers, when they give advice, at least make themselves sure of their facts before they begin their unsolicited work but you are a curious grandmother. You begin your sermons not caring whether you base them on facts or

[1] For securing temple-entry for Harijans; *vide* "Letter to Shewakram Karamchand", 16-3-1933.

affection, and I like your authoritative "we in Europe". Unfortunately for you what is good for Europe may not always be good for India, and do you not see that "we of Europe" means only a few cranks like yourself? The real "we of Europe" believe in live oysters, lobsters, high game, crawling cheese, fiery champagne, and stout beer. You have begun with carrot juice. I hope you will not end with Port Wine. Both are no doubt juices, but there is a little difference between the two. God forbid that you should ever become a nature cure Miss. It is quite enough and it will be excellent when you can become a proper full-fledged Harijan servant and if you will be that, nature cure will take care of itself.

Do you know that you do not yet know your Hindi letters properly? I hope you did not teach your pupils in the manner you seem to be teaching yourself. You must not satisfy yourself with faulty letters. Do you know that your 'k's are like 'f 's, your 'r' is like the numeral number '2', and your 't' is like 'dh'? There is hardly a letter which I should say is perfectly drawn. In the beginning stages I was not inclined to be critical but really there is no change for the better from the time when you first began to write a few words in Hindi. You should condescend to have your letters corrected before you trace the few words you do in every letter. You will admit that this task is not as heavy as that of washing your needlessly heavy garments. The heaviness of your garments is your own creation, but somewhat pardonable. The faulty lettering, you should regard as utterly unpardonable.

I observe that your passport, according to the copy you say, expires on the 15th March 1935. If that is so, need anything be done now and if it requires to be extended now I take it that it is the German Consul who has to do it. If you do not know this I must enquire.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also S.N. 19109

254. LETTER TO N.

June 30, 1933

N.,

I have your letters by me. I deal with the last first.

You are going through a terrible but wonderful trial and I hope that God will give you the strength to stand it. If you will but realize that we are an utterly poor family, that we are far away from the ideal of poverty, you will find the burden easy to bear and the illness of S. an ordinary occurrence in the lives of poor people. You will have a doctor, not so the *bona-fide* poor. They do not even know what a doctor can be. They have the utterly incompetent village physician and they have to be satisfied with what services his often selfish nature would permit him to render. You will, therefore, be quite content with whatever relief can be afforded to S. in the Ashram itself. You will not compare yourself to some of the pampered Ashramites whom your keen faculty for observation could not have missed. But when you have a feeling of irritation over this knowledge and resentment that neither you nor S. can be pampered, recall the fact that one whom you have adopted as your father is the first among the pampered Ashramites and if you are prepared to suffer my being pampered, then you will find it easy to tolerate the pampering of others and then, perhaps, you will find why they are pampered, if they are pampered, and then you will make the further discovery that compared to yet others you yourself might also be ranked amongst the pampered for there are degrees in pampering. Anyway, I want you to be happy, calm, and contented in the face of S.'s illness and your own boils.

You and I sail in the same boat in the distrust of doctors, but that distrust has to *have* its recognized limitations and must be based upon enlightenment. You are wholly unjust to the doctors who are attending upon me. They have been most careful, conscientious and helpful. They have not stopped oranges as you imagine. What they have said is according to the latest natural healing methods. They know that I am not likely to accept any of their nostrums and therefore they are making an honest effort to suit my peculiarities. I can describe to you what they have prescribed, what exactly I am doing and perhaps you will feel that they have said or done nothing that should offend against the laws of natural healing. The use that I want to make of

doctor's presence at the Ashram for S., is to know exactly what is wrong with S. and why he has lost weight. The doctor there would not easily prescribe any medicine but he will give general guidance for which you and I and the Ashram as a whole must be thankful. Then we may or may not accept his advice. But nonetheless it is necessary to have a proper diagnosis of the boy's illness.

As for your boils, you are quite right in giving up even milk for the time being. Take plenty of juicy fruit, hot water and lemon and salt or hot water, lemon and *goor*[1] or honey. If it is *goor*, the water should be strained. The best thing is to dissolve it in cold water and then put the strained *goor*-water on the stove.

It is as well that you have recalled some of the instances of your violent nature. I had detected it and therefore your letter has caused me no surprise, but you are not to get rid of that violence by making a brave effort. Nor must you wreak it on S. and don't insist upon S. eating this thing or that thing. After all he has got to like the things he eats, and remember that we are all largely a mixture of our parents. You may not, therefore, resent S. being a second edition of yourself in many respects.

Tell me whether S. has made friends with anybody else in the Ashram, whether amongst grown-up people or children.

Now for the dogs. You are quite right we ought to be able to find a solution. The European countries have found it by killing the dogs beyond their wants. India would not tolerate that solution and yet has not found an ideal solution in terms of ahimsa. The society for the care of animals takes charge of stray dogs, etc. Unfortunately, these societies are not well-organized. However, the Ashram is in touch with one such society and very often there is a clearance. Ask Narandas how it is that dogs have not been cleared by the society. N.

From a microfilm: S.N. 19110

[1] Jaggery

255. LETTER TO B. S. RAO

June 30, 1933

MY DEAR GOPALA RAO,

I was glad to receive your letter, but I was pained over your persistence in the advice that you have repeated in spite of the very bitter experience of your experiment[1] at the Ashram amongst 40 people under the best of auspices. Have you forgotten the complete failure of your experiment? Have you forgotten that Mirabai was at death's door because of her valiant continuance of your experiment in spite of her being deathpale, and in spite of my having almost fallen prostrate with weakness? I had warned you against your failure and ignorant persistence in your prescribing uncooked starch. I also drew your attention to the fact that you had no scientific mind and that you were utterly indifferent to the well-being of those who had the misfortune to be under your care. Your vegetable substitute for milk is poison for babies, and I would plead with you to desist from a practice which you must know to have failed. That in some cases you might have achieved temporary success only shows how kind and forbearing Nature is. She suffers her children to break her laws for a long time and you are taking an undue advantage of Nature's kindness. You will be, perhaps, sorry to learn that I am flourishing on goat's milk and fruit and there is no prospect of my taking the substitute that you would have me to take. I would only plead with you to desist from further endangering the health of simple people who may, trusting you, come to you to have themselves cured. I have written strongly because I know the danger with which your ill-conceived dietary is fraught, and I shall be happy if you could tell me that you would no longer persist in your experiment which has proved to be wrong.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. BOLLAPRAGUDU SUNDARAGOPALA RAO

From a photostat: S.N. 19111

[1] Of eating uncooked food in the summer months of 1929.

256. LETTER TO M. S. WAJID HUSAIN

June 30, 1933

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for the shoes and the chappals you have sent and I am glad that although your descent is high you have taken up the useful calling of a shoe-maker.

Yours sincerely,

M. S. WAJID HUSAIN
SHOES CURIO CHAMBER, VICTORIA STREET, LUCKNOW

From a microfilm: S.N. 19112

257. LETTER TO HILDA WOOD

June 30, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter.

I am transferring it to Sjt. Amritlal Thakkar, the General Secretary of the Central Board of the Servants of Untouchables' Society. I do not think that there will be any difficulty about granting the scholarships for the pupils you have referred to. It will be necessary, however, to forward to Sjt. Thakkar the details of the boys or girls for whom the scholarships may be required.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. HILDA WOOD
WOOD BUNGALOW, AOYAR, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 19113

258. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

June 30, 1933

CHI. JAMNA,

I hope you got my letter. Since I wanted to call Purushottam here, what I wrote to him was different from what I did to you. I have now sent a wire[1] and am waiting for him.

To whom else did I say I would write? I have forgotten.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 884. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Khushalchand Gandhi", 29-6-1933.

259. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

June 30, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

Why is there no letter from you? How is your health? And the condition of your mind? How is your throat?

What is the news about Sushila?

Dhurandhar had come again to see me.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 6785. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

260. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 30, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I hear that Mahalakshmi was released and came there three weeks ago. It was only by chance that I came to know this yesterday evening. It is possible that you mentioned the fact in one of your letters, but that the letter was not shown to me. I am now sending a wire today asking you to send her here. It seems that she is worried about her children.

I have already sent a wire[1] regarding S. You are right in thinking that it was a mistake to force him to eat. I had written against that being done.[2] The fact that he is losing weight requires serious thinking. He has been accustomed to butter and may, therefore, improve if he is given it. Have you been able to do anything regarding the suggestion I made in a letter and also orally concerning wheat flour? I don't know what happened regarding Jnana. You must have read her last letter. Her father seems to have exercised pressure on her. Find out the cause of the opposition of Kashi, Jamna and others to the proposal of marriage with her. Jnana's own opposition may be one thing, but the opposition of Kashi and others is another matter. I think it absolutely necessary to know the cause behind all this.

I am very eager to see Bhagwanji. I think it will be best to let him come. Mahalakshmi also may come with him.

BAPU

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Narandas Gandhi", 28-6-1933.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 29-4-1933.

[PS.]

Letters enclosed: Bhagwanji, Ramdas, Jamna, Mathew, Prema, Jnana.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8387. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

261. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 30, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

Dr. Aggrawal is an eye-specialist. He has specialized in teaching people how to improve eye-sight and do without glasses. He is coming there to see the Ashram. If he wants to examine the children's eyes, let him do so. Bhagwanji may accompany him when he visits the Harijan children. Request the doctor to explain to the people who wear glasses how they can dispense with them. If he wants a letter of recommendation to anybody outside the Ashram, please do not give any. I don't know anything about his abilities. He seems to be a good mans but he did not succeed in his experiment on me. He will stay there for three or four days.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8388. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

262. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

July 1, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

Our letters crossed each other. I wrote yesterday and so did you.

The years of all of us are flying quickly one after another. Would it not be truer to say that we grow younger? Our destined life-span is shortened by each year that passes. Do we not grow correspondingly younger? The lesson which I want you to draw from this is that we should become more vigilant in our lives. The capital given to us is being slowly eaten away. We should learn to make the fullest use of what remains. I pray that you may do so.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10347. Also C.W. 6786. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

263. A CIRCULAR LETTER [1]

July 2, 1933

DEAR BROTHER,

As you know Sjt. Aney has invited a few Congressmen for 12th instant[2]. If your health permits, I would like you to come for those two or three days. They will be most eventful for me and possibly for the nation. And I would like you to be present.

Yours ever,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19114

264. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

July 2, 1933

MY DEAR AMALA,

You have done well in reminding me of my two promises. The letter to your mother I had in mind but I could not reach it when I had it in mind. Then it slipped my memory. I knew that I had to send you something. Herewith you will find that letter.

As to the yarn necklace I thought that Mahadev had given it to you. You will find it herewith. It is made out of my own yarn.

If you are wearing what Mira wears, surely it is a petticoat. Is it not the petticoat the Ashram women wear? You should remember that Mira's sari is a mere scarf thrown round her body. It is perhaps not even three yards in length. It simply covers her naked back and head and abdomen.

If your Ashram ideal is not there, you are doomed to disappointment some day. Better watch yourself. Your letters betray lack of ballast and responsibility. Take care and be humble.

I have already written[3] to you about your passport.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] According to S.N. Register, this was sent to various persons.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Leaders' Conference, Poona-I" 12-7-1933 and "Speech at Leaders' Conference, Poona-II" 14-7-1933.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Margarete Spiegel", 30-6-1933.

265. LETTER TO ABHAYDEV SHARMA

July 2, 1933

BHAI ABHAY,

I read your letter addressed to Rajendra Babu. It seemed to me good and appropriate. The sentiment is beautiful. The occasion does not appear to have arisen so far for a fast unto death which may yet have to be undertaken one day.

There is no doubt that only harm has resulted from underground activity. Let us see what is possible. It all rests with Rama.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9662

266. DISCUSSION WITH HARIJAN WORKERS, POONA[1]

[*July 2, 1933*][2]

I am not against propaganda of the right kind on the right lines. Temperance propaganda among Harijans would certainly be welfare work, but it should be done with the minimum of expense. If Harijans of spotless character could be found to go to Harijan areas to carry on this propaganda, all the money would go into Harijans' pockets, and propaganda, too, would be most effectively done. A question is asked whether I would prefer an inefficient Harijan teacher to an efficient *savarna* Hindu teacher of character. Here, as on all questions of the character, I would say I would endeavour to secure a Harijan teacher of character and then try to bring him up to the mark, so far as educational qualifications are concerned. I would no doubt think of

[1] Extracted from "Sparks from the Sacred Fire-IX" by Mahadev Desai who had reported "For the first time after the fast, Gandhiji met a fairly large gathering of workers and talked to them. The Servants of Untouchables Society had its General Board meeting in the Servants of India Society, but the members came in a body to 'Parnakuti' to ascertain Gandhiji's views on certain questions. Was it to be propaganda *v*. welfare work, or propaganda *cum* welfare work, or no propaganda and only welfare work? Gandhiji had insisted on strictly limiting 'overhead charges' and administration expenditure. But many points werer aised Interpreting this rule. For instance, would expenses on village propaganda, say, against the drink evil among Harijans, be considered to be money well spent? I shall try to summarize Gandhiji's views on this question."

[2] *Vide* the postscript to the following item.

the children's own good rather than of accommodating a particular Harijan candidate, but all questions would have to be decided on merits. All that I would say is: 'Don't make a fetish of efficiency.'

But we can make one general rule as regards propaganda: Let propaganda charges be voted each time. The more I think the more convinced I feel that, if our work is to abide, we shall have to cut down mere propaganda expenses to a minimum. Where there is the possibility of recurring expenditure on propaganda, let our expenses be divided into three parts: 20 per cent administration charges; 20 per cent propaganda; 60 per cent welfare work.

You ask whether a Harijan Day should be observed as we have been doing. I would say: observe it, but if it is properly observed, no expense need be incurred. The Harijan Day should not mean carving a slice out of the little balance you may have. In the same way, I should not spend Rs. 75 to get a donation of Rs. 100, i.e., a net donation of Rs. 25. I do not say that propaganda is bad; propaganda wisely directed is necessary. But I would say that propaganda could be made selfsupporting. Do not touch your funds for, say, a reception or a procession; recover the charges from sympathetic local friends and don't burden your accounts with them.

Let us always remember that severe critics are watching us If we do everything in a religious spirit, without any reward, our work is bound to tell.

Harijan, 8-7-1933

267. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

July 2, 1933

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I hope you got my wire[1] regarding Jnana. Chhaganlal's letter is enclosed. I infer from it that Jnana has not arrived there. If you have been able to know how Jnana had agreed, please let me know.

I don't see any necessity at all for you to put yourself to trouble for attending the meeting on the 12th.[2] You may communicate your views, if you wish to. If I think it necessary, I will read it out. The better course would be to send it to Aneyji.

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Jamnalal Bajaj", 28-6-1933.
[2] *Vide* "A Circular Letter", p. 235.

You need not come for Kamala either. Everything possible will be done. I have been making inquiries. Kamalnayan pays frequent visits. I saw Janakidevi also. Kamala, too, came and saw me. She is still a child. She has grown up in an atmosphere of loving indulgence and, therefore, has not developed a proper sense of responsibility. That is not her fault. Our children naturally take after us. We may change as we grow older, but our children cannot adopt all the changes which take place in us. Harilal is a convincing example of this. He has crossed all limits, and that, too, openly. I craved inwardly for pleasures of the senses but gradually acquired outward self-control. If I had not succeeded in the end in controlling my mind, too, I would have been rightly counted a hypocrite. But how can we expect that the changes which took place in me would have any effect on Harilal? I am afraid I have strayed from the subject and inflicted a sermon on you.

Take care of your health in everything you do. If Prabhudas has come there, let me know what his condition of mind is. What does he intend to do now?

How is the health of Vinoba, Balkrishna and Chhotelal?

Radhika was here for some time. She is in Deolali now. Keshu is still here. He is calm. He has not been able to come to a decision yet. I think he will by and by. I have given him plenty of time for the purpose.

What have you decided to do about the sum of Rs. 5,000 which Sushila, Lakshminivas's wife, has donated for Harijan work?

Devdas and Lakshmi live in Ranchhoddas's bungalow. Rajaji lives with Ghanashyamdas. My health is steadily improving. I walk three times a day and for 45 minutes in all. The weight has reached 97 pounds. It will increase still further. There is no cause now for worrying about me.

Most probably, Narandas's Purushottam will come here and receive training under Dinshawji in nature-cure methods.

When do you expect your work there to be finished? Giridhari will be re-arrested today. He was released yesterday. He was ordered to go to Hyderabad, but he has not obeyed the order.

I hope you are being careful about food, etc. Write to me in detail.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I discussed today problems with Harijan workers from 10 to 11.30.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2917

268. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

July 3, 1933

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

Both of you have been regular in writing to me. I did read all your letters, but I could not reply. Now that I have gained some strength, I try to write a few letters every day. My weight also is increasing. I eat fairly well. I am on milk and fruit just now. There is no cause for worrying about me. Only God knows where I shall be when you get this letter. Perhaps with Vallabhbhai. We must accept whatever is ordained for us. Can we alter anything even if we wish?

It will be enough if you go on doing your duty devotedly. I like that Sushila helps you. If both of you lead a life of self-control, Sushila will be able to do a lot. The arrangement you have made for Sita[1] seems good. I see that Shanti cannot be trusted. He is extremely unsteady.

Jalbhai had come and seen me. I understand what you say regarding his daughter.

What you have done regarding Sorabji[2] seems all right. If we adhere to principles, sometimes friends desert us. We need not worry about that. It is, of course, necessary to be sure in all cases that what we believe to be moral is not in fact immoral and that there is no consideration of self-interest in our motives. More immorality is practised in the world in the name of morality than is done openly. Immorality can flourish only under the cloak of morality. This is the reason why so often moral dilemmas arise. In order to learn to distinguish rightly between morality and immorality, the observance of *yamaniyamas*[3] is essential.

Devdas and Lakshmi are here. They are quite happy. I am sure someone must have given you an account of the wedding. Both seem

[1] Addressees' daughter
[2] Son of Parsi Rustomji, a co-worker of Gandhiji in South Africa
[3] Rules of moral discipline and religious observances

to be fortunate. They have been receiving blessings from unexpected quarters. Ramdas is unfortunate. He cannot be either happy or at peace, and his health is deteriorating. Nimu also keeps poor health. And the same is the case with the children. She now seems to have developed some complaint of the vaginal tract and even an operation may be necessary. But Ramdas is a *bhakta* and of a trustful nature. He is always anxious to know what his duty is and tries his best to do it. I believe, therefore, that ultimately he will be happy. However, it is a fact that God does test his *bhaktas* severely. Ramdas knows that, and so, even if he remains unhappy all his life, he will not cease to be a *bhakta*. Both of you should write to him from time to time. Ramdas and Nimu have placed their lives in the hands of Jamnalalji. But they have not been able to go to Wardha as yet, for meanwhile Nimu's ailments were detected. It will, therefore, be some time before they can go to Wardha. I hope you write to Jamnalalji occasionally. Janakidevi and the children are here. Only Madalasa[1] is at Wardha with Vinoba. Ba is here, of course. Mahadev and Mathuradas also are here. Manu has come and will stay for some time. Harilal remains drowned in casks of liquor, or say rather that his belly is always full of them. Thanks to their weight, how can he shoulder any other burden? I am not complaining against him. I believe that his conduct must be the bitter fruit of my own sins and endure it in silence.

I understand what you say regarding West. Finally, do what seems best to you. If you form an unfavourable impression about him, I cannot remove it. I read West's letters to Devibehn when I was in England. It seemed to me after reading them that he had not changed. Tulsidas has taught us that we should see the good in men and remember that only. We also may have our weaknesses. If people boycott us because of them we pull a long face. We forget that people keep good relations with us despite our weaknesses. I hope this will be enough by way of advice.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4810. Also C.W. 1222. Courtesy: Sushila Gandhi

[1] Daughter of Jamnalal Bajaj

269. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

July 3, 1933

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your letter. Your resolution is good. Cling to it now with complete faith. Do not attempt anything beyond your capacity. One should not obstinately persist in doing a thing which is beyond the capacity of one's body. If you remain humble, everything will be all right. Write to me regularly. God will give you peace of mind.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9326; also C.W. 6601

270. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 3, I933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I assume that Jnana has not left for Wardha. I have sent a wire to Purushottam, but have received no reply from him so far. I have not written any letter to him, but assume that he must have received the wire. If you have not heard from him anything, please write to him immediately after you get this letter. That will save time. Ask him to come here as soon as possible. I can't say how long I shall remain free.

Keshu is still here. He has been talking things over with me. He seems to be calm. I asked him what remains to be decided regarding carding, but he didn't seem to know. I also don't understand.

I have sent a wire asking you to send Mahalakshmi here. If you have not done so, please send her immediately. About Bhagwanjij too, I have suggested that he may come.[1] If he does, I shall be able to pacify him.

Brijkrishna is receiving treatment in Dr. Mehta's nursing home. He is improving. He consumes ten to twelve pounds of milk daily. Krishnan Nair also is here at present. I will suggest to him that he should pay a visit to the Ashram.

We should not mind some of the women having started separate kitchens. I think that is for the good of us all. Rice is not the only

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 30-6-1933.

reason for their decision, though it is certainly one of them. They cannot do without rice, and will want other things also from time to time. Let not the other inmates grudge them their freedom. We should not criticize what others do. We can cling to our chosen path only if we feel that we follow it for our own good. Nobody should do anything simply because others do it. Acting in that manner does one no good at all. I think that, except for milk and ghee, the food served in the Ashram should resemble as far as possible the food served in jails. Our test is still to come. I don't know when it will come, but I have no doubt at all that it is coming and must come. Those who have trained their bodies and minds for it will come out of it victorious, and those who have not done so will fall on the way. This is what has always happened. Nobody should criticize, or has a right to criticize, the women who have started separate kitchens. There is no ground at all for such criticism. Who can do more than what he or she is capable of? Moreover, nothing is more reprehensible than criticizing other people's food-habits. Nobody can exercise enough self-control in one's own habits, but no person has the right to pass judgment on the measure of such self-control exercised by others. He has no means for passing such judgment, either. I don't set great store by my ability to refrain from chillies and spices. If, however, Harilal could give up drink, I would admire his self-control. For some, giving up spices might be as difficult as giving up liquor would be for Harilal. Revashankerbhai[1] found it a hard task to give up smoking. It is mostly such matters that call for the exercise of non-violence. Explain all this to everybody when you find it convenient.

My dissatisfaction regarding Kusum persists. Will a vaidya never get a chance of treating her? However, as long as she herself is satisfied I need not worry about her.

I suppose Dhiru and Balbhadra[2] have had their lungs examined. Personally, I have no faith in such methods at all. Even after an x-ray is taken, only an expert can read it correctly. You or I can judge nothing. I look upon these things as the luxuries of the rich. They are certainly not within the means of the poor. However, as long as people give us money and we have faith in these methods, we may avail ourselves of them.

[1] Revashanker Jagjivan Zaveri, brother of Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta and father-in-law of Shri Rajachandra

[2] Raojibhai Nathabhai Patel's younger brother, a student of the Ashram

I think I have now replied to all your questions.

You will be able to judge about the state of my health from this letter itself.

Purushottam has arrived. I have had a letter from Jamnalal and it seems from it that Jnana had reached there before he wrote it. I am enclosing that letter for you to read.

[PS.]

NARANDAS,

After I had finished the letter above, I received a letter from Kanhaiyalal and one from Maganlal, both of which are enclosed. I don't know anything about the matter in question. Do you? Have you received any letters from Jivaram[1]? How is his health? I have replied to Kanhaiyalal and Maganlal that I can advise only after I hear from Jivaram. It is probable that both have left Bhadrak by now. I got the letters only today. They are dated June 20, and the gentlemen had hoped to get my reply before the end of the month.

I have written to Wai regarding Parachure Shastri's son. I will let you know when I get a reply.

I had a letter from Harakhaji. Perhaps you have read it. He wants to fix up somewhere else. Can you suggest anything?

Letters for: Amala, her mother, Gajra's mother, Valji, Ramji, Kusum, Harakhaji, Lilavati, and the letters of Kanhaiyalal and Maganlal.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: Si.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8389. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

271. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
July 4, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

I have your letter. There is no occasion to stop writing to me. But I would like you always, whether I am busy or otherwise, to write sense and not nonsense, as you almost invariably do. But when you

[1] Jivaram Kothari from Kutch who, after giving away one lakh of rupees—all his wealth—to Gandhiji, went to Orissa to work for the poor

write sensibly and have to say much, I do not mind how long your letters are. But a senseless letter is too long even when it contains only one sentence or one word. Do you know how much senseless stuff you have written in your letter under reply? That is why I called you a baby, 35 years old.[1]

Your question about your future is too curious. You have hardly yet commenced your training, in my opinion. After all it is the trainers who have to give the certificate that you have been sufficiently trained. You would not give it yourself. When you are sufficiently trained you will find your work cut out for you, and of course you are being trained for Harijan service. What shape that service will take, it is difficult to say now, but before you can do that you have got to be well-versed in Hindi, well-versed in all the processes through which cotton goes before being turned into cloth. I have mentioned only two things, but there are many other things which you should know in order to be able to render Harijan service efficiently.

I hope you received my letter[2] of yesterday together with the chain and my letter to your mother.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also S.N. 19115

272. LETTER TO N.

July 4, 1933

I hope S. has not typhoid. There is no reason for him to have that. But it does seem to me that the food you gave him should not have been given, and I am not quite sure that Lakshmidas wanted him to have all the food you have described. It is always best to treat every fever as incipient typhoid. In other words the main treatment for all fevers is the same, namely, nothing but fruit juices and boiled water, and, after the fever is gone, diluted milk, that is, milk to which water is added before it is boiled. If you are quite composed and clear in your mind, I do not want any change for S. He will come through all right

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Margarete Spiegel", 9-6-1933.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Margarete Spiegel", 2-7-1933.. It was sent on July 3, with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi"; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 3-7-1933.

in the Ashram if he gets proper nursing and a typhoid patient needs nothing more than most careful nursing and fruit juices, principally orange juice and, under certain circumstances, diluted milk. Do not be obstinate about medical assistance. The doctors who come to the Ashram are very fine men. They know the Ashram dislike for too much medicine. If you can possibly do, it would be much better for you to detach yourself from personal affection and treat S. as an Ashram child whom you have been set to nurse. But I know that this is a condition which cannot be forced and if it does not come to you, you will not hesitate to say so plainly. Not everyone in the Ashram has that detachment. Perhaps no one has, but much is expected of you. What is more, you have set before yourself nothing short of the highest ideal, and I want you to realize it. Maybe the illness of S. is one of the many ordeals you have to pass through. May God be your guide, strength and shield.

From a microfilm: S.N. 19116

273. DISCUSSION WITH A FRIEND[1]

July 4, 1933

If there is truth in the epigram that in the midst of life we are in death, is not the converse true also that in the midst of death we are in life? That at any rate was my feeling during a friend's interview with Gandhiji the other day.

He had waited some days to tell me that he wanted a few minutes with Gandhiji before he returned to his place. But when the time was given to him, his courage failed him. For a couple of minutes he was speechless.

[GANDHIJI:] Come along, out with it. Mahadev has told me that you wanted to tell me something about the vow or vows you had taken some years ago. I now forget that you took any vow, but come along, speak out.

This was just enough to help him utter a broken sentence: "Five years ago, I wrote down a few words, and—

G. And you have failed to keep your word.

"No, on the contrary", I put in.

G. (Coaxingly) Then, it is tears of joy?

But he was silent and the tears rolled down his cheeks. Gandhiji said:

But perhaps what Mahadev says is not quite right. Then do what

[1] Extracted from "Sparks from the Sacred Fire-IX" by Mahadev Desai

I did. I could not open my lips before my father when I made my first confession to him. So I wrote it down. You can write what you want to say.

But the friend was still speechless and signed to me to allow him to go. After a few more tears he pulled himself together.

[FRIEND:] Bapu, a little over five years ago, I wrote down what I solemnly wanted to promise to do, and you corrected one word.

[G.] Yes, but I have forgotten it altogether.

After reminding Gandhiji about the matter, the young man said:

Well, Bapu, it has been a terrible struggle, but by the grace of God I have fulfilled the letter of the vow and to a very great extent the spirit of it too.

[G.] That is good. I understand the tears. One is overwhelmed with thankfulness when God helps one to fulfil a vow.

[F.] But now is the question.

[G.] Why? The mother, I suppose, is impatient, as every mother is.

[F.] Oh yes. That vow signed and sealed by you is in her safe custody, and she often has reminded [me] of the termination of the period. But the father and the mother don't worry me. It is myself. Once I make up my mind, there will be no difficulty. But, Bapu, is the struggle worth while?

[G.] Ah sure enough. Is not struggle the law in the natural world? If it is, much more so is it the law in the spiritual world. There is a spiritual law in the natural world and a natural law in the spiritual world. Life is a perpetual striving. There is always a tempest raging in us, and struggle against temptation is a perpetual duty. The *Gita* says this at not less than three places. I dare say there are many more places, but I remember only three. One needs must have the will and then, you know the English proverb, there's the way. And there are those Biblical sayings, "Ask and it shall be given", "Seek and you shall find", "Knock and it shall be open".

[F.] Bapu, bless me.

[G.] Well, you write down what you want and if it is all right, I shall sign it.

He took out his diary and wrote down on the leaf bearing date 4th of July: "Remember the spirit of all that you have said. My blessings are that you might triumph through the struggle." And this he handed me for getting the priceless *imprimatur* 'Bapu'.

And Bapu read the words once, twice and then said:

Shall I just add a word?

He added in his own hand the word ‘inevitable’ before ‘struggle’ and signed ‘Bapu,’ his hand shaking. He added:

How I wish the hand was a little more firm. But that’s all right. The word ‘inevitable’ is quite necessary there. Read the end of the 6th chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita* in this connection.

He bowed in gratitude and slipped quietly away. His tears were infectious. I mingled mine with his, as I realized the truth of what Gandhiji had said only two days ago:

Somehow my faith is ascending every day, in spite of the darkness that surrounds me.

Harijan, 8-7-1933

274. LETTER TO N.

July 5, 1933

N.,

I have your long letter. It does not appeal to me. You are again dominated by emotion. The golden lid hides the truth. If you will dispossess yourself of S., you must possess all the children of the world. Your world just now is the Ashram. If all the children had come from the hills, as poor people’s do very often, they flourish in the best manner they can on the plains. It is altogether wrong to think that by suitable changes even little children cannot accommodate themselves to the varying climatic conditions. I do not deny the possibility of S. responding to the hills. But your *tapasya* lies in remaining where you are and risking his life. That is the price that faith has to pay. It is no faith that demands complete insurance against risk. S. will be all right if you will cease to worry about him and will simply do the nursing.

If my argument or opinion does not appeal to you, you will not hesitate to tell me so. I do not want you to feel helpless or under any sort of compulsion. I want you to feel freer than you ever were. The only thing that binds you to me and the Ashram is love and acceptance of the common ideal. I guide you so long as you have confidence in my judgment. I have played sufficiently with the lives of the dearest ones on more occasions than one. But if you are to do likewise, you should do so [only] if you feel the truth of it. You must

act out of strength, never out of helplessness. Therefore, you will not hesitate to tell me truly what you feel. I am hoping however that S. has no fever and that he is out of all immediate danger. For his rash he needs a wet-sheet pack.

Love.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 19117

275. TELEGRAM TO BHULABHAI J. DESAI

July 6, 1933

BHULABHAI DESAI
CIVIL HOSPITAL, NASIK

JUST UNDERSTOOD YOU WERE RELEASED BEING SERIOUSLY ILL. PLEASE WIRE TRUE CONDITION, HOPE SPEEDY RECOVERY.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 21509

276. TELEGRAM TO N.

July 6, 1933

N.
SATYAGRAHAASHRAM, SABARMATI

YOUR LETTER. HOPE S. BETTER. AM CONVINCED YOU SHOULD NOT GO ALMORA. LOVE.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 21508

277. TELEGRAM TO URMILA DEVI

July 6, 1933

URMILA DEVI
24 RAMESH MITTER ROAD, BHOWANIPUR, CALCUTTA

YOUR LETTER. AM WELL. YOU MAY COME IF YOU MUST. PERSONALLY I REGARD COMING WASTE MONEY TIME ENERGY. SEND VIEWS REGISTERED POST.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 21510

278. TELEGRAM TO BHULABHAI J. DESAI

July 6, 1933

BHULABHAI DESAI

BOMBAY

WIRED NASIK EARLY MORNING. DO COME IF YOU ARE WELL ENOUGH. WIRE CONDITION.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 21511

279. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 6, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter.

My progress is steady. I am now over 98 lb., food continuing as before. I am able to walk three times daily taking altogether one hour 20 minutes—not bad! This gives me no fatigue. I hope you will beat me in competing for good health. No doubt the heat there is against you. But you must have the rains now. And in any case, if you will take the wet-sheet pack when the heat is oppressive, you will at once be cool. You know how the pack is taken. Take your bed-sheet. Dip it in cold water. Wring it well so that no water is left. Spread it on a blanket. Lie naked on the sheet, wrap yourself in the pack. The blanket will cover you from neck to foot. Remain in it for five minutes or longer if you feel comfortable. There should be no chill felt. If there is, you should get out of it at once. This is most refreshing and cooling. You can take this pack frequently if necessary. Try and test it for yourself.

As for the notes suggested by me,[1] it is not so difficult as yet seem to imagine. When it becomes a habit, it becomes quite simple and deeply interesting. Do not forget to take down references as you proceed so that through your index and notes you can find out in a moment where a particular name occurs, These notes may prove of great general use, if they are brief and yet to the point.

Your description of the monkeys is entertaining. Have they not yet snatched your food from you? Of course you know that when

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 29-6-1933.

they are enraged, they can inflict great injury on you.

Purushottam is here and is learning nature-cure methods und[er] Mehta who has been nursing me with exquisite devotion. Mahadev is down with fever. He will be all right in a day or two.

Gangabehn Jhaveri and Nanibehn Jhaveri are here for the sake of the former's health. Gangabehn elder is at the Ashram. She reached there only two days ago.

Lakshmi seems to be supremely happy with Devdas. Keshu is still here and will be for some time. He will then go to Wardha and work in Jamnalalji's gin. Prabhavati insists on sending special love.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the original: G. W. 6283. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9749

280. LETTER TO VINOBA BHAVE

July 7, 1933

CHI. VINOBA,

I have put a heavy responsibility on you, but you have the strength to shoulder the burden of any responsibility which may be thrust on you, or, in the words of the *Gita*, can pass on such responsibility to God. It hope all the persons whom I have sent to the Ashram have settled down there properly. Just now, however, I wish to write to you about four European men and women. All the four are to be trained for Harijan work and as long as they maintain connection with us, should keep away from politics completely. Cultivate close relations with all of them and appoint somebody who knows English to look after their needs. Marybehn and Duncan are straightforward persons and are not likely to create any difficulties for you. But that cannot be saidabout N. and Amalabehn (i.e., Dr. Spiegel). If N. maintains good health, she is likely to be very useful. I am not sure about Amalabehn. She is rather obstinate and her capacity is limited. Her intentions are very good but she is very slow in acting on them. She goes on making all kinds of plans. All four will require milk in their diet. I think oil will not agree with them. Ask them and ascertain their requirements. Tell them and others, too, that just now I cannot write to them. Whether or not I shall be able to write after some time,

God alone knows. Write or dictate a thoughtful letter to . . .[1]. I hope you keep good health. I also hope that Manu is not ill. Balkrishna's and Chhotelal's health does not seem to be satisfactory. I hope Ramdas has settled down there, and that the climate there agrees with Nimu and the children. Vidya Hingorani, who has come there, has delicate health and is rather of a sensitive nature, but she is a woman of very pure character. She has cultivated *bhakti* of a very high order. I am sure Lakshmibehn is looking after her properly, and so I don't write more about her. I hope Vatsala has got over her fear, and that Madalasa is progressing. I also hope your contacts with the Harijans are becoming closer day by day. I have not forgotten the idea of chain-fasts. It is still in my mind. I constantly feel that our atonement will not be complete without such a step. I don't mean to say that it will be complete even with it, but I do believe that, if the right type of men and women join in the fasts, the movement for the removal of untouchability will make rapid progress.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3085

281. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

July 7, 1933

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

Your letter. I hope you are all right by now. God is testing you from all sides. That your mind is at peace is a great thing. What solace can I offer you? Keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1702

282. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 7, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I have received your letter after a long interval; it gave me

[1] The name is not legible in the source.

immense pleasure. If the word ‘dear’ has been missed in some letters, it does not mean that you are no longer dear to me.

I was very happy to learn that all is well with you. No other letter from you has reached me. You are, of course, getting all the news about me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 287

283. ALL ABOUT THE FAST[1]

It is, perhaps, meet that the very first writing for the Press I should attempt after the fast should be for the *Harijan*, and that in connection with the fast. God willing, I hope now to contribute my weekly quota to the *Harijan* as before the fast. Let no one, however, run away with the idea that I have regained my pre-fast capacity for work. I have still to be very careful how I work. Correspondents will, therefore, have mercy on me. They should know that for a while yet I shall be unable to cope with all their letters. Whatever they may have for my special attention will have still to wait for some time, probably yet another month. Who knows what will happen a month hence? We are short-lived and do not know even what will happen the next moment. Then what can one say about the ambitions of a Harijan worker like myself? To those who buy and read *Harijanbandhu* in a spirit of service, my advice is that they should not wait for my writings and opinions. The way for rendering service to Harijans is quite clear. The field is vast. *Harijanbandhu* endeavours to give an idea of the week’s activities. It also attempts to indicate what needs to be done, what can be done and how it is to be done. From that all could find one or the other way of service. Then where is the need of my writing or opinion? If I am tempted to write about it, it is only for my own satisfaction. I have to write only when I have something to say or explain to the readers. I hope readers won’t be disheartened and will maintain their relations with *Harijanbandhu* irrespective of whether I have something to write or not and whether I have the strength and the leisure.

[1] This item has been collated with the Gujarati version published in *Harijanbandhu*, 9-7-1933.

Now for the fast.

The first question that has puzzled many is about the Voice of God. What was it? What did I hear? Was there any person I saw? Ifnot, how was the Voice conveyed to me? These are pertinent questions.

For me the voice of God, of Conscience, of Truth or the Inner Voice or 'the still small Voice' mean one and the same thing. I saw no form. I have never tried, for I have always believed God to be without form. One who realizes God is freed from sin for ever. He has no desire to be fulfilled. Not even in his thoughts will he suffer from faults, imperfections or impurities. Whatever he does will be perfect because he does nothing himself but the God within him does everything. He is completely merged in Him. Such realization comes to one among tens of millions. That it can come I have no doubt at all. I yearn to have such realization but I have not got it yet and I know that I am yet very far from it. The inspiration I had was quite a different thing. Moreover, many get such inspiration quite often or at some time. There is certainly need for a particular type of *sadhana*[1] to obtain such inspiration. If some efforts and some *sadhana* are necessary even to acquire the ability to have the commonest thing, what wonder if efforts and *sadhana* are needed to get divine inspiration? The inspiration I got was this: The night I got the inspiration, I had a terrible inner struggle. My mind was restless. I could see no way. The burden of my responsibility was crushing me. But what I did hear was like a Voice from afar and yet quite near. It was as unmistakable as some human voice definitely speaking to me, and irresistible. I was not dreaming at the time I heard the Voice. The hearing of the Voice was preceded by a terrific struggle within me. Suddenly the Voice came upon me. I listened, made certain that it was the Voice, and the struggle ceased. I was calm. The determination was made accordingly, the date and the hour of the fast were fixed. Joy came over me. This was between 11 and 12 midnight. I felt refreshed and began to write the note[2] about it which the reader must have seen.

Could I give any further evidence that it was truly the Voice that I heard and that it was not an echo of my own heated imagination? I have no further evidence to convince the sceptic. He is free to say that it was all self-delusion or hallucination. It may well have been so. I can offer no proof to the contrary. But I can say this—that not the

[1] Spiritual effort

[2] *Vide* "Statement on Fast", 30-4-1933.

unanimous verdict of the whole world against me could shake me from the belief that what I heard was the true voice of God.

But some think that God Himself is a creation of our own imagination. If that view holds good, then nothing is real, everything is of our own imagination. Even so, whilst my imagination dominates me, I can only act under its spell. Realest things are only relatively so. For me the Voice was more real than my own existence. It has never failed me, and for that matter, anyone else.

And everyone who wills can hear the Voice. It is within everyone. But like everything else, it requires previous and definite preparation.

The second question that has puzzled many is whether a fast in which an army of doctors watch and guide the fasting person, as they undoubtedly and with extraordinary care and attention watched and guided me, when he is coddled in various other ways as I was, could be described as a fast in answer to the call of the Inner Voice. Put thus, the objection seems valid. It would undoubtedly have been more in keeping with the high claim made for the fast, if it had been unattended with all the extraordinary, external aids that it was my good fortune or misfortune to receive.

But I do not repent of having gratefully accepted the generous help that kind friends extended to me. I was battling against death. I accepted all the help that came to me as godsend, when it did not in any way affect my vow.

As I think over the past, I am not sorry for having taken the fast. Though I suffered bodily pain and discomfort, there was indescribable peace within. I have enjoyed peace during all my fasts but never so much as in this. Perhaps, the reason was that there was nothing to look forward to. In the previous fasts there was some tangible expectation. In this there was nothing tangible to expect. There was undoubtedly faith that it must lead to purification of self and others and that workers would know that true Harijan service was impossible without inward purity. This, however, is a result that could not be measured or known in a tangible manner. I had, therefore, withdrawn within myself.

The nature of the fast deserves some more consideration. Was it mere mortification of the flesh? I firmly believe that a fast taken for mortification of the flesh does some good from the medical point of view; apart from that it produces no particular effect. I know my fast

was not at all meant for the mortification of the flesh. Nor was I ready for it. The time of the fast was beyond my imagination. From the letters then written to friends it is clear that I did not foresee any immediate fast. For me, this fast was a supplication or prayer to God coming from the depth of my heart. The fast was an uninterrupted twenty-one days, prayer whose effect I can feel even now. I know now more fully than ever that there is no prayer without fasting, be the latter ever so little. And this fasting relates not merely to the palate, but all the senses and organs. Complete absorption in prayer must mean complete exclusion of physical activities till prayer possesses the whole of our being and we rise superior to, and are completely detached from, all physical functions. That state can only be reached after continual and voluntary crucifixion of the flesh. Thus all fasting, if it is a spiritual act, is an intense prayer or a preparation for it. It is a yearning of the soul to merge in the divine essence. My last fast was intended to be such a preparation. How far I have succeeded, how far I am in tune with the Infinite, I do not know. But I do know that the fast has made the passion for such a state intenser than ever.

Looking back upon the fast, I fed it to have been as necessary as I felt it was when I entered upon it. It has resulted in some revelations of impurities among workers of which I had no knowledge whatsoever, and but for the fast I would never have gained that knowledge. All the letters that have come under my notice go to show that it has led to greater purification among the workers. The fast was meant not for the purification of known workers only who had been found wanting, but for all the workers, known and unknown, in the Harijan cause. Nothing probably could have brought home to the workers so well as this fast the fact that the movement is purely religious in the highest sense of the term, to be handled in a religious spirit by workers of character above reproach.

The work of removal of untouchability is not merely a social or economic reform whose extent can be measured by so much social amenities or economic relief provided in so much time. Its goal is to touch the hearts of the millions of Hindus who honestly believe in the present-day untouchability as a God-made institution, as old as the human race itself. This, it will be admitted, is a task infinitely higher than mere social and economic reform. Its accomplishment undoubtedly includes all these and much more. For it means nothing short of a complete revolution in the Hindu thought and the disappearance of

the horrible and terrible doctrine of inborn inequality and high-and-lowness, which has poisoned Hinduism and is slowly undermining its very existence. Such a change can only be brought about by an appeal to the highest in man. And I am more than ever convinced that that appeal can be made effective only by self-purification, i.e., by fasting conceived as the deepest prayer coming from a lacerated heart.

I believe that the invisible effect of such fasting is far greater and far more extensive than the visible effect. The conviction has, therefore, gone deeper in me that my fast is but the beginning of a chain of true voluntary fasts by men and women who have qualified themselves by previous preparation for them and who believe in prayer as the most effective method of reaching the heart of things. How that chain can be established I do not know as yet. But I am striving after it. If it can be established, I know that it will touch, as nothing else will, the hearts of Hindus, both the opponents of reform and the Harijans. For the Harijans have also to play their part in the movement no less than the reformers and the opponents. And I am glad to be able to inform the reader that the Harijans have not been untouched by the fast. A number of letters received from abroad suggest that even there many hearts have awakened. If an imperfect fast by a man like me could create such awakening, who could then estimate how great and far-reaching the result would be if innocent men and women unassumingly, without any hope of medical or other aid and without one or the other concession, sacrifice their lives in an unbroken chain of fasts?

Harijan, 8-7-1933

284. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

July 8, 1933

DEAR "GRAND MOTHER",

Your old age does not permit you to master the simple Hindi alphabet.

For your sake I have looked up the word 'petticoat' in the Oxford Dictionary and it was properly used by me.[1] The Indian woman's skirt is part of her sari which hangs from the waist and covers the petticoat.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Margarete Spiegel", 2-7-1933.

The word ballast was properly used. Look up the dictionary. I have not the time just now to give you instances of what I mean. It would be better if you will discover them yourself.

The necklace sent to you is strong enough to last for months. Another can be easily made. Do you want me to send you a spare one?

Love.

BAPU

AMALABEHN[1]

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

285. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

July 8, 1933

DEAR SATISBABU,

* * *[2]

If the Bengali *Harijan* does not pay itself you will not hesitate to withdraw it. It should be issued only if it is wanted by the public. You may reduce the cost of production to the lowest limit possible but if even then you cannot get enough subscribers it is clear that there is no demand for it. Harijan service does not depend upon such propaganda. This work has to be deeper and intenser rather than extensive. The intensity will insure the extent.

Mail time is up. Therefore no more.

Love.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 19119

[1] In Devanagari in Gandhiji's hand

[2] As in the source

286. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

July 8, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

Let me know what is your experience of . . .[1]. Many persons say that she is not worthy of. . [2].. That is Narandas's view also. Give me your opinion.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10348. Also C.W. 6787. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

287. LETTER TO ALASTAIR MACRAE

'PARNAKUTI', POONA 6,
July 9, 1933

DEAR MR. MACRAE,

I thank you for sending me the first page of your father's letter containing his reference to my fast.

My position in regard to the principal religions of the world has been explained fairly often in the pages of *Young India* and elsewhere. I believe in the truth of them all and I have studied them to the best of my ability, not as a critic but as a seeker after Truth and therefore have received much assistance from their study. So far as I know it, a change in the fundamental position that I hold today is not likely. Whilst I regard Jesus to be one of the greatest religious teachers, I do not believe in His exclusive divinity. You will be surprised to know that my belief in fasting, as a form of intense prayer, began before I knew anything of the teachings of Jesus. But when I came to read the Bible, the Koran and the other scriptures, my position was further fortified by the knowledge that they advocated fasting as a help to heartfelt prayer and communion with God.

I return the page from your father's letter.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure

From a photostat: S. N. 19121

[1] The names have been omitted.
[2] *ibid*

288. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

July 9, 1933

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I suggested that Prabhudas and Gyan should meet only after I came to know that you approved of their union. I fear that some injustice has been done to Gyan. We may not get for Prabhudas an ideal girl, but if we find a girl who is of good character and healthy, we should accept her. We should examine Gyan from this point of view. If she were to ask us to find a husband for her, what would we tell her? I do not know Gyan personally at all but I think it is my duty now to have an acquaintance with her if possible. I have fully talked the matter over with Prabhudas. He will explain things further. Impatience will be of no avail. We should do what is right, with due regard for dharma.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33064

289. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

July 10, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

Do not be in a hurry to know all your limitations. I want your letters giving me your natural state. When I get the time I shall analyse some of them. Meanwhile know that all my criticism is charged with love. And I am hoping that you have sense of humour.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

290. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 10, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. Purushottam has resumed work, but his mind is still not at peace.

Keshu is still here. He is calm. I feel that our duty towards Jnana requires us to do something more for her.

Tell Panditji[1] that I understand what he says regarding Gajanan and Dhiru. Ramdas and Nimu are here. Kano[2] has taken ill and sothey have had to stay on. Mahadev is completely free. Babla has an attack of fever, but today it is very slight. There is no cause for worry at all.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8390. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

291. SPEECH AT LEADERS' CONFERENCE, POONA-1

July 12, 1933

Gandhiji, speaking next,[3] is reported to have narrated to the conference as to why he undertook the fast. After the fast he had received several suggestions regarding the position of the movement in the country. Severa1 Congressmen had urged him to call off the movement and in order to ascertain their views, this Workers' Conference had been called. He said that it had been suggested that Messrs Shastri and Birla should also be invited to the conference but he was of opinion, that if Messrs Shastri and Birla were invited, others of similar views should not be left uninvited. The Conference being of the Congressmen, Gandhiji advised that no invitation should be sent to non-Congressmen.[4]

That he was very keen about establishing peace in the country, and that he would certainly try his but to secure it, Mr. Gandhi is reported to have remarked in the course of his speech.

Mr. Gandhi stated that the necessity for calling the conference had arisen not because circumstances had altered or that the Government had offered terms, but because of the peculiar circumstances created by his fast and his consequent release. He felt ashamed that one man should have been responsible for this, but he could not help it.

Asking the delegates to express their views freely and frankly, Mr. Gandhi stated that he would like to have their views whether they wanted suspension of the civil disobedience movement indefinitely or for a definite period with conditions, as he had gathered that some were of opinion that it should be an unconditional calling off, while others thought it should be a kind of truce and some conditions should be laid down for acceptance by the Government. After hearing their views, Mr. Gandhi

[1] Narayan Moreshwar Khare
[2] Son of Ramdas Gandhi
[3] M. S. Aney, President of the Conference, spoke first.
[4] What follows is reproduced from *The Hindu*, 13-7-1933.

said he would give his own considered opinion the next day and advise the Congress as to what action it should take.[1]

The Bombay Chronicle, 13-7-1933; also *The Hindu*, 13-7-l933

292. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 13, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter has come. You can imagine the pressure I am working under. I have taken silence to write this and one or two other important letters and to write for the *Harijan*. I have but a few minutes left to keep an appointment for 7 a.m. God is good to me and Hegives me just enough strength to pull through the work before me.

The weight fluctuates. Under the pressure of work it has dropped from over 101 to under 99. So it would continue to fluctuate for some time. I am keeping quite fit.

I want you to beat me in competition for health of mind and body without being anxious about it. What is the use of your adopting me as father and mother and not adding to the heritage you may have received from a double parent? I really believe that such should be the case where there is reciprocity. And where it is a case of adoption, you do not adopt a parent for his vices or limitations but the virtues you impute to him. Therefore you not only try to imbibe the imaginary or real virtues but add to them. I would like you to prove the law. And I have faith that you will.

Do you know the notable instance of Gorakhnath having outdone his Guru Machhendranath?

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Prabhavati is standing by me whilst I am writing this and of course sends you her love.

From a photostat: C.W. 9680. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] The report had added: "Except one or two, the rest of the speakers were unanimous in their view that civil disobedience should be called off, and that it should be done without regard to what the Government may or may not do regarding the question of the release of politicals. . ."

293. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY[1]

July 14, 1933[2]

PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

VICEROY'S CAMP

WILL HIS EXCELLENCY GRANT INTERVIEW WITH A VIEW TO EXPLORING POSSIBILITIES OF PEACE. KINDLY WIRE.[3]

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40) (14), p. 42; also S.N. 21526

294. SPEECH AT LEADERS' CONFERENCE, POONA-II

July 14, 1933

Gandhiji began his speech after referring to the events since September last. He is stated to have said:

I am accused of having committed three sins. They are (1) my fast with regard to the change in the communal award, (2) my

[1] The draft in Gandhiji's hand read: "Will His Excellency grant me interview exploring possibilities of peace. Kindly wire."

[2] From the S.N. source

[3] The addressee's telegram dated July 17, in reply to this read: "In reply to your telegram asking for an interview His Excellency has directed me to say that if the circumstances were different he would gladly have seen you. But it would seem that you are opposed to withdrawing civil disobedience except on conditions and that the interview you seek with His Excellency is for the purpose of initiating negotiations with Government regarding these conditions. It also appears to have been decided that unless Congress reaches a settlement with Government as a result of such discussions civil disobedience will be resumed on first August. It is hardly necessary to remind you that the position of Government is that the civil disobedience movement is wholly unconstitutional that there can be no compromise with it and that Government cannot enter into any negotiations for its withdrawal. On April twenty-ninth nineteen hundred and thirty two the Secretary of State stated in the House of Commons that there would be no question of making a bargain with Congress as a condition of its co-operation. The same position has been consistently maintained by Government in numerous subsequent statements. If the Congress desires to resume its position as a consitutional party and to put an end to a movement which has brought grave injury and suffering to the country the way is open to it as it always has been. It is within the power of the Congress to restore peace by withdrawing on its own initiative the civil disobedience movement. As however the Congress is not willing to take that action an interview with His Excellency would be to no purpose."

acceptance of conditional freedom to carry on propaganda regarding untouchability, and (3) suspension of civil disobedience movement.

As regards change in the communal award I had stated at the Round Table Conference that I would perish in fighting against separate electorates for untouchables.

Consistent with that statement he had to get the communal award changed, and hence had to carry on correspondence with Government. Fast and further propaganda from inside the jail were the natural consequences.

Answering the third charge, Gandhiji is reported to have stated that as soon as jail gates were banged behind him he thought he would not be able to sustain during the fast ale hearing of reports of arrests, lathi charges, etc., and hence requested Mr. Aney to suspend the movement.

Speaking about civil disobedience movement Gandhiji is stated to have spoken in the following strain:

I have carefully heard the speeches of everyone, the more so of those speaking for withdrawal; I have heard their arguments, but I am still unconvinced. I would use the very same arguments in favour of continuation of the movement. I was sorry to hear several speakers say that workers were tired and wanted rest. I would have appreciated if they had said they themselves were tired. The workers were not tired. The country was not tired. The country was prepared to continue.

I am sorry at the lack of confidence of certain leaders. I am definite that withdrawal of the movement without an honourable settlement would be a false and fatal [step], attended by deadly consequences. We should be betraying the confidence of the nation reposed in us. The Government wants complete surrender. I would rather be reduced to dust than surrender. How can we call off the movement when Government had not granted the national demand? It is a mistake to say that the movement began in 1930. The real movement began in 1920, and the fight is being continued, though there was a lull of a few years.

It cannot be withdrawn now. A true satyagrahi will go on fighting till the end, till he got what he had aimed at. I have heard several speakers referring to lack of numbers. Those who say this do not know the A.B.C. of satyagraha. I do not mind numbers. I can quote historical facts where a handful have fought against heavy odds, and won.

The speaker felt sorry at the attitude taken by people who stood for withdrawal. He said the country was not tired but a few leaders were. He gave an

example of Kathiawar bullocks. When one of the two bullocks sat down the other also was forced to sit down, but if the one that was standing was strong enough, the other that was sitting would be made to stand up. Gandhiji is stated to have said that due to repression it was not possible to carry on mass civil disobedience, and hence he had prepared a scheme for individual satyagraha, where every worker was his own leader.

Referring to the constructive programme suggested by several speakers, Gandhiji is said to have stated that it was a delusion. It was impossible to carry on any constructive programme in the country if the movement was withdrawn.

Referring to another speaker's suggestion that one crore of Congress members should be enrolled, Gandhiji said that it was an impossible programme. Not even six members could be enrolled in Bardoli if the movement were to be withdrawn.

Concluding, Gandhiji said that he was hankering for peace and he would explore all avenues to arrive at an honourable settlement, before resuming civil disobedience. Certain friends had objected to his writing to the Viceroy. He said a true satyagrahi should not be ashamed to make overtures. He must try his best to arrive at an honourable settlement. Overture was not being made due to weakness, but with a feeling of full strength. He appealed to the Conference that if they thought necessary, he should be authorized to seek unconditional interview from the Viceroy and try to arrive at an honourable settlement.

Gandhiji who opposed unconditional withdrawal of the movement said that the demand of Government for unconditional withdrawal before negotiations was a trap into which he asked members not to fall. After his speech he called upon different members to express their views on his statement. He wanted speakers to be frank, and not support him due to personal loyalty to himself.[1]

The Bombay Chronicle, 15-7-1933

295. THE WRONG WAY

The following extracts from the letter of a professor who claims to be a sanatanist will be read with interest:

> I am an orthodox sanatanist Brahmin. I have rendered my humble services to the cause of sanatana dharma in various capacities. I have even written books and published articles concerning sanatana dharma. Various

[1] After Gandhiji's speech the conference was adjourned for one hour to allow members to discuss and express their opinions. When the conference reassembled, Gandhiji answered several questions put by the delegates; *vide* Appendix "Answers to Questions", 14-7-1933. The Conference authorized Gandhiji to seek unconditional interview with the Viceroy; *vide* the preceding item.

orthodox sanatanist organizations and leaders will bear me out in my statement. So I have proved my *bona fides* to speak for sanatana dharma. Up till now, I was also an opponent of temple-entry by Harijans but my inner voice today, all of a sudden, spoke to me that, unless the so-called untouchables are given the right of having *darshan* of *patitapavana* Bhagavan in temples, Hinduism is doomed. Bitter experiences of past months have compelled me to revolutionize my views now. 1 know my statement will surprise many. Most of them may even call me a renegade now, but to me safety of Hindus and of Hinduism is a sacred religious duty for which I will not mind vilification. . . . The plight of Hindus in these days is very pathetic. They have now become a constant prey to untold sufferings and agonies. Whenever I see a Hindu in distress, tears flood my eyes and I try my best to relieve him or her of it. . . . I rather prefer death to seeing Hindus in such a melancholy condition. . . . But, in order to persuade orthodox sanatanists to agree with me, I request you with all the emphasis at my command to accept a condition that only those Harijans may be freely allowed to enter a temple who have taken a solemn vow to bathe daily, to wear clean clothes, and to discard beef and carrion. Poor sanatanists are also not to be blamed. It is these unclean habits that are really responsible for the practice of untouchability itself. Harijans are themselves to be blamed to a great extent for the disabilities under which they are groaning. To ask sanatanists to allow Harijans to enter temples without, at the same time, rebuking them for their evil habits is, I fear, tantamount to putting a premium on them (habits).

So I entreat you to accept my suggestion, and I assure you that I shall leave no stone unturned to see that it is consented to by my orthodox sanatanist friends too. I will also carry on intense propaganda in its favour, and I am confident by grace of Providence I will attain succes.

Let not the reader think that the reference to the Inner Voice has any connection with my claim regarding the fast. It is an independent thought. For the letter is dated 25th April last. The Editor has unearthed old undisposed of correspondence which was to receive attention. I do not know whether the learned professor retains the views expressed in his letter or whether he has modified the position taken up by him as to the conditional temple-entry by Harijans. But the position taken up by him is typical. It is, therefore, necessary to show the fallacy underlying it. Whilst I appreciate the conversion of the writer on the temple-entry question, I cannot help saying that the condition he seeks to impose upon the Harijans will frustrate the very end he has in view. He forgets that caste Hindus are responsible for the present condition of the Harijans. We have, therefore, to receive

them as they are and have faith that our contact and love will, if we are true, make them shed all those habits that may be repugnant to decent society. To blame the Harijans for their present condition is like a slave-holder blaming his slave for the misery and squalor the latter may be living in. We would ridicule the slave-holder, perhaps even accuse him of insincerity, if he made the removal of squalor by the slave as a condition precedent to the grant of freedom. It should also be borne in mind that the Harijans will enter temples subject to the same condition that is applicable to the rest of Hindus. Nature has not made of Harijans a separate species distinguished from caste Hindus by definite unmistakable signs. Hundreds, if not thousands, of Harijans enter temples without being detected. The studies of census reports published in these columns[1] must make it clear to anybody that those who were not classified as untouchables must have entered temples without let or hindrance. The mere fact of a new enumeration, for the first time including certain classes and excluding certain other classes from the Harijan list, surely cannot be used as any test of untouchability or touchability. Only Hindus can claim no merit for the undetected entry of the so-called State-made untouchables into temples. What is now claimed is that caste Hindus should seek merit, in other words, purify themselves, by deliberately banishing untouchability from their midst as a sin. I cannot repeat too often that by untouchability I mean the thing as it is practised today. Let the professor and those who think like him remember that [what] the reform, the anti-untouchability campaign, stands for is no mere make-shift for placating Harijans. I tstands for a fundamental change in Hindu practice, it stands for the total abolition of the practice of high-and-lowness that has crept into Hinduism in spite of its lofty and unequivocal declaration that all life is one and that differentiation is *maya*, is false. Practice of equal treatment of all human beings should be the least direct outcome of that belief not reserved for sannyasis but for the ordinary man in his ordinary dealings with fellowmen.

Harijan, 15-7-1933

[1] *Vide* "Human Manufacture [-I]", 29-4-1933 and "Human Manufacture [-II]", 29-4-1933.

296. CABLE TO C. F. ANDREWS[1]

July 15, 1933

ANDREWS
ISUHOST
LONDON

INFORMAL CONFERENCE[2] FINISHED LAST NIGHT. IN ACCORDANCE CONSENSUS OPINION WIRED[3] VICEROY SEEKING INTERVIEW EXPLORE POSSIBILITY PEACE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 21527

297. LETTER TO KRISHNASWAMI

'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
July 16, 1933

BHAI KRISHNASWAMI,

I have your letter. I have also learnt from Rajaji of your acquaintance with him. My blessings on your marriage.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

SJT. KRISHNASWAMI
DAKSHINA BHARAT HINDI PRACHAR
TRIPLICANE
MADRAS[4]

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6580; also C.W. 4405

[1] The cable Was in reply to the addressee's dated July 14, 1933, from London, which read: "Please cable immediately your own language exact present situation", (S.N. 21527).

[2] Of leading Congressmen held at Poona from July 12 to 14; *vide* "Speech at Leaders' Conference, Poona-I", 12-7-1933 and "Speech at Leaders' Conference, Poona-II", 12-7-1933.

[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to Viceroy", 14-7-1933.

[4] The address is reproduced from the C. W. source.

298. TESTIMONIAL TO PARASHURAM MEHROTRA

July 16, 1933

Shri Parashuram Mehrotra has been known to me for several years. I have found him to be an enthusiastic, industrious and reliable young man. His bent is towards editorial work. I hope he will soon secure such work and achieve success in it.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 5848. Also C. W. 3071. Courtesy: Parashuram Mehrotra

299. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

[*July 17, 1933*][1]

PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY
SIMLA

YOUR WIRE EVEN DATE HAS COME UPON ME AS A PAINFUL SURPRISE. I HAD NOT EXPECTED THAT GOVERNMENT WOULD TAKE OFFICIAL NOTICE OF UNAUTHORIZED PUBLICATION OF CONFIDENTIAL PROCEEDINGS OF AN INFORMAL CONFERENCE AND ON BASIS THEREOF REJECT REQUEST FOR INTERVIEW. IF INTERVIEW WERE GRANTED I COULD SHOW THAT PROCEEDINGS TAKEN AS A WHOLE WERE CALCULATED TO BRING ABOUT AN HONOURABLE PEACE. CONFERENCE UNDOUBTEDLY FAVOURABLE TO PEACE IF IT CAN BE ATTAINED WITHOUT HUMILIATION. IF HOWEVER GOVERNMENT HOLD THAT THEY CANNOT HAVE ANY CONVERSATION EVEN FOR PROMOTING PEACE WITH REPRESENTATIVE OF AN ASSOCIATION ENGAGED IN ACTIVITIES IN BREACH OF STATE LAWS HOWEVER REPRESSIVE THEY MAY BE UNTIL THAT ASSOCIATION FIRST DISCONTINUES SUCH ACTIVITIES WHICH IT BELIEVES TO BE IN PURSUANCE OF INHERENT RIGHT BELONGING TO HUMAN FAMILY I CAN HAVE NOTHING TO SAY. NEVERTHELESS I WOULD LIKE TO ADD A PERSONAL NOTE. MY LIFE IS REGULATED BY PEACEFUL MOTIVES. I HANKER FOR REAL PEACE BUT I MUST CONFESS THAT I CANNOT BE SATISFIE WITH MAKESHIFT. IF I RESORT TO NON-CO-OPERATION OR CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IT IS FOR ESTABLISHING TRUE AND VOLUNTARY

[1] From the reference to the addressee's telegram, *vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to Viceroy", 14-7-1933..

CO-OPERATION AND OBEDIENCE TO LAWS IN PLACE OF FORCED CO-OPERATION AND FORCED OBEDIENCE. I THEREFORE HOPE THAT MY REQUEST FOR INTERVIEW WILL BE GRANTED. [1]

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 21526; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14), p. 42

300. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

July 17, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

I shall try to send another chain.[2] Do not worry about anything, not even for me. After all God keeps us all and He is an all-sufficing Protector.

Your Hindi letter was quite nice for you. The alphabet is not yet correctly traced. You should compare it with the original.

You are not going to be unnerved on hearing that I am taken to Yeravda or some such prison.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

301. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

July 17, 1933

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I don't get a single moment free, and, therefore, cannot write to you even though I wish to do so. A copy of my letter to the Ashram is enclosed. My ideas are thus changing fast. I don't know where they will stop. If I am fixed up [in jail] in a day or two I shall not be able to discuss such ideas with you. But you yourself should start thinking.

[1] The addressee's telegram of even date in reply to this read: "His Excellency had hoped that position of Government was plain. It is that civil disobedience is a movement intended to coerce the Government by means of unlawful activities and that there can be no question of Government holding conversation with a representative of an Association which has not abandoned that movement" (S.N. 21526).

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Margarete Spiegel", 8-7-1933.

Give to Narandas whatever advice you think fit. Vinoba also will read my letter. I have had no time to write to him, and cannot get any even today.

Kamala's[1] fast has been going on. Perhaps she may end it today. Mehta is taking proper care of her. He gives me a report every day. She started the fast with great courage.

I hope you keep good health.

You will certainly have to join. But don't be in a hurry. Improve your health a little before joining.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 2918

302. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

July 17, 1933

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I got your letter. There has been no letter from Satara. I quite forgot to write to Narandas about you. I remembered today and wrote immediately. He will now discuss the matter with you. The rest you will know from my letter to him.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 360. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

303. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

July 17, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

You must have received my letter. You know my expectations. My letter to Narandas need not make you impatient. At present what is necessary is to be ready for such a step. Nobody knows when the time to take it will come.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10349. Also C.W. 6788. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] Addressee's daughter

304. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 17, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

A negative reply[1] has come from the Viceroy. So consider me out [of jail only] for a short while. I am getting ready [for jail again]. It is my keen desire that the whole Ashram is surrendered in this final sacrifice. I wish that Ambalalbhai or some such friend looks after the movable property of the Ashram as a trustee. I am thinking of handing over the immovable property to the Government.[2] Those who wish to leave may do so after that. Those who remain may accommodate themselves where they wish to. I don't want to force you if you do not approve of this. The responsibility of protecting the Ashram and its ideals rests with A those who stay behind. Let them do as much as they can. I can only guide them. If this happens we have to think where we can put N. and Amala. If Amala wishes to do some Harijan service, she may do so. If Jamnalalji agrees to take responsibility for N., she may go to Wardha. I cannot think of the other problems that may be there just now. I don't say anything about Duncan because he is after all a man. Moreover he belongs to this place. He can easily be accommodated for Harijan service.[3]

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 371-2

305. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

KIRKEE,
July 18, 1933

JAMNALAL BAJAJ
WARDHA

REACHING ASHRAM TOMORROW. REVA LEAVING TOMORROW. GANGADHARRAO WILL BE BOMBAY TWO DAYS.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 111

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to Viceroy", 14-7-1933..

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", 26-7-1933 and "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", 30-7-1933.

[3] *Vide* "Appeal to People of Gujatrat", 30-7-1933.

306. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

POONA,
July 18, 1933

Asked about his immediate programme, he stated that he was going to the Sabarmati Ashram simply for the sake of visiting the people at the Ashram.

It would be a matter of regret for me if I did not go to the Ashram before being imprisoned. Imprisonment is a certainty whether it comes today or in a few days.

What do you think of the Viceroy's reply[1]?

In my opinion, the Viceregal reply has created a regret- table situation fraught with grave danger. The doctrine laid down in that reply, in my opinion, is altogether new. I do not know that civilized States have refused to carry on conversations with their rebellious subjects for the sake of peace. Whilst hitherto they have parleyed with rebels, who have been armed from top to toe, in the present instance the civil resisters are admittedly non-violent.[2] It is also a matter of deep regret that His Excellency should have taken any notice whatsoever of unauthorized Press reports of confidential proceedings in answering a simple request for an interview for the promotion of peace. This again, in my opinion, is a dangerous doctrine. I am not aware of heads of States having taken notice of Press reports in situations such as this. The duty, therefore, before self-respecting Indians is perfectly plain. I cannot imagine greater degradation or humiliation than for one to deny his faith.

Questioned regarding the exact purpose of the conference Gandhiji said it was an informal conference.

Without fear of any contradiction I can say that it was convened solely for the purpose of ascertaining whether Congressmen desired peace or not. I would not have been a party to convening this informal conference had I not been in utter ignorance of the situation in the country. It was, therefore, convened for the sake of guiding me. Having found myself outside the jail, naturally, co-workers expected me to advise them regarding the course of action to be adopted. I could give no decisive advice without knowing the state of affairs in the country. The conference therefore was the only method whereby I could do so and I am glad to be able to say today that, whilst the

[1] *Vide* 3rd footnote "Telegram to Private Secreary to Viceroy", 14-7-1933.
[2] This sentence is reproduced from *The Hindu*, 19-7-1933.

conference as a whole was not prepared to give up or call off civil disobedience, undoubtedly there was every desire to withdraw the movement on honourable terms. But the Viceregal telegrams are clear proof of the fact that, what the Government desires is not an honourable settlement, but a complete and humiliating surrender on the part of the Congress.

I prophesy that what has been impossible today will be possible tomorrow. When that tomorrow will come, I do not know. That it is coming and sooner than men expect, is to me, as much a certainty as the fact of my giving this interview.

Asked whether the majority of the conference favoured withdrawal, and the present decision was forced on the conference, Gandhiji said:

It is not right, and if it had been right, I would not be guilty of forcing my opinion. But I freely admit that there was at the conference a fair body of opinion that favoured complete withdrawal but not in the sense that the Government would have it.

Asked about the future of Congress policy, Gandhiji stated:

Mr. Aney will be issuing a statement, and I betray no secret when I say that his statement will be found to advise the country to suspend mass movement for the time being. There are causes for this step into which I need not go presently. He will also be advising the cessation of all Congress organizations and secret methods which alone made their functioning possible.

The movement remains under suspension up to the end of this month as announced by Mr. Aney for my sake; and, though the Viceregal refusal has considerably altered the situation, in view of my having regained sufficient, strength to do a moderate amount of work, and in order to avoid all possibilities of any misunderstanding, it has been decided to continue the suspension.

Asked if he would be the All-India Dictator, he said:

I am just now in the role of a humble adviser. I do not regard myself as really fully out of Yeravda. My discharge was due to unforeseen circumstances. I have no desire whatsoever to take undue advantage of that circumstance. I am not going to do any act of civil disobedience till after the suspension period, without telling the Government previously about it.

Asked about what would happen to the Harijan movement, he said:

Many people had expected that I would devote the whole of my

time to the Harijan movement. These do not understand me and without any disparagement to any of them I would say that they do not understand all the implications of what they thought. In the first instance, my life is not divided into watertight compartments but is one indivisible whole and therefore I could not possibly give up the activities of a lifetime which are as dear to me as the Harijan movement itself. My activities react upon one another. Therefore if I excluded other activities my Harijan service would itself suffer. Then again I could not all the twenty-four hours of the day be doing Harijan work. That is an impossible thing; and if it was suggested that I could give up prison life which the civil disobedience movement implied, for the sake of Harijan work, it means that I should give up a life principle. Therefore I can only render this service to the best of my ability and consistently with the principles that govern my life.

Lastly, as I have already stated, Harijan work requires tremendous individual efforts for self-purification. In that respect, perhaps, it may be distinguished from other movements—social, political or semi-political. The recent fast perhaps best illustrates my point. Therefore I am certain that my attention to other activities does not in any way affect my capacity for serving the Harijan cause.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-7-1933; also *The Hindu*, 19-7-1933

307. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"[1]

BOMBAY
July 18, 1933

Since the Viceroy has turned down my very simple request, not accompanied by any conditions, there is no present prospect of peace. I made every effort that was humanly possible, but when the door was banged in my face, I became helpless.

The informal conference was favourable to peace. It is difficult to say what would have been the basis of an honourable peace, but it would certainly have been reinstatement, at the very least, of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, in so far as it was possible, for I could show that there was a breach of that Pact not by the Congress, but by the Government.

[1] *The Bombay Chronicle*, 21-7-1933, published this as Gandhiji's "reply to certain questions asked by the London *Daily Harald*".

The White Paper has satisfied no party. It will never satisfy the Congress, but I would not have even discussed the White Paper at the interview. I had a wholly different scheme in view, which could have been acceptable both to the Government and the Congress.

Civil disobedience will certainly be renewed, after the suspension period, unless it is anticipated by the Government taking any precipitate action. But the acting President of the Congress is stopping mass civil disobedience including the no tax campaign. He is also tabooing secret methods, and since Congress organizations can only function through secret methods, he is scrapping all Congress organizations for the time being. Civil disobedience will, therefore, be confined to individual effort. Individuals will offer disobedience on their own responsibility, without the expectation of financial or other help.

You ask what I should do if the movement became violent. I can only say that it had remained non-violent under the gravest provocation. It is not likely now to become violent, but if it does, I know that I have a prompt remedy for it.

The Hindu, 19-7-1933

308. TELEGRAM TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

SABARMATI,
July 19, 1933

SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT
HOME DEPARTMENT, POONA

WOULD LIKE WHILST HERE SEE MIRABAI SLADE PRISONER SABARMATI INSTEAD WEEKLY LETTER SHE IS PERMITTED WRITE AND RECEIVE REPLY. KINDLY WIRE REPLY.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(11), Pt. II, p. 29

309. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

WARDHA,
July 19, 1933

CHI. AMBUJAM[1],

Your letters cannot tire me, for I am interested in your true happiness.

You may send the little bigger-size cooker through someone coming. There is no immediate hurry.

I am glad you have a good daugher-in-law.

I shall be relieved when I hear that Kichi's[2] finger is completely healed.

I hope Father is keeping good health.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

310. DISCUSSION WITH HARIJANS, AHMEDABAD[3]

[*July 19, 1933*][4]

It is for you to suggest improvements in the present methods of your work. It should be done in the cleanest and most hygienic way. I know it. I have done it in South African jails. Baskets are no good for the disposal of the night-soil. You should have

[1] Daughter of S. Srinivasa Iyengar. The superscription is in the Devanagari script.

[2] Krishnaswamy, addressee's son

[3] This is extracted from "Ahmedabad Letter" by Mahadev Desai, who had reported: "About a hundred of them, many of them in spotless white khadi, gathered round Gandhiji in Sheth Ranchhodbhai's courtyard. The questions that they asked were eloquent proof of the awakening that had come over them and of the intelligence and fearlessness with which they could discuss their problems. Gandhiji addressed himself to the Bhangis' questions first, as the poor Bhangi is the most unfortunate among the unfortunates."

[4] From a report in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 20-7-1933, published under the date-line "Ahmedabad, July 19" which read: "Earlier in the day Gandhiji received a deputation of the local Depressed-Class People."

strong buckets to be carried by a couple of men. You are so conservative in your ways that you may not like the innovation but I suggest to you that buckets are far more convenient, clean and effective. If you like my suggestion, I am prepared to broach the matter to the local Municipal Councillors. You want public baths. I am glad you do, but I may warn you that some of your people have not been ready to avail themselves of the facilities provided in other places. You must bestir yourselves and strengthen the hands of those who are working for your welfare.

Addressing next all the Harijans, he said:

The apathy of the high-caste Hindus seems to worry you. I am dealing with them as best I can, but this is not the occasion to give them a message. How can I convey them a message through you? I would ask you not to think of them, but to think of yourselves. This is a movement for the purification of Hinduism. Think what contribution *you* can make to it. If you bestir yourselves, if you shed your unclean habits, if you reform your way of living, irrespective of what the high-caste Hindus do, I assure you their superiority of birth will automatically disappear. Superiority consists in clean and pure living and I assure you that in spite of your unclean occupations you can live cleaner and purer lives than the rest of us. Yours is a service without which the community cannot do. I want you to be conscious of the dignity of your profession, to learn to practise it in a clean manner and I am sure you will be able to dictate your terms. Depend on yourselves, stand on your own legs and work your own salvation.

But, you complain that your own people are not being made members of the Servants of Untouchability Boards, and you suggest that they should be given a larger share in the administration. If the caste Hindus were over-lords or a bureaucracy ruling over you, I could understand the suggestion. I would then ask them to surrender all power. But they are no overlords, they are servants pledged to atone for the wrongs their forefathers have committed for ages. How can you share in the atonement? They are doing what they are by way of penance. You have no penance to perform. Rest assured that the moment you claim a share in the administration the burden will be shifted on to you and the caste Hindus will declare themselves free of all responsibility. There is no power or pride of possession in the responsibility to collect funds and administer relief. I have made drastic suggestions for cutting down the administrative expenses and

they are being carried out. In stead of asking to be appointed on the Executive of the Anti-untouchability Board, you can form your own advisory boards to help the Anti-untouchability Board with suggestions every now and then. That is how you can make yourselves most useful.

You have asked me why instead of staying with you I have accepted the hospitality of Sheth Ranchhodlal. Will you believe me when I say that I am staying with him in your own interest? You do not want me to make a demonstration of my affection for you? If staying in your midst was the only test, I should not hesitate to do so, but I want you to believe me when I say that I can do your work better by living here than amongst you. If Sheth Ranchhodlal was harbouring untouchability it would have been a different matter. I should then have not thought of staying with him. But you can see that he has turned his house into a Harijans' home for me.

A VOICE: We do not mind your staying with Sheth Ranchhodbhai. It is the sanatanists who are twitting us, saying, 'Look even your Gandhi avoids you and stays with mill-owners.'

Well, if you listen to the sanatanists in these matters, you are done for!

Harijan, 29-7-1933

311. DISCUSSION WITH ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY WORKERS, AHMEDABAD[1]

[*July 19, 1933*][2]

Gandhiji also took an opportunity of meeting the anti-untouchability workers in Gujarat and helping them with suggestions. They narrated the difficulties of work in villages. He said he was aware of them, and suggested that work in villages will for some time to come have to be predominantly welfare work. Thus they would have to have schools for Harijan children, wells and temples for Harijans, and so on, the thing to be borne in mind being that they should try to enlist the sympathy of the caste Hindus who may be in favour of reform by asking them to send their children to these schools, and to use the Harijan wells and visit the Harijan temples in preference to those exclusively used by the caste Hindus. Necessarily therefore the schools and wells and temples would have to be better in every way than the corresponding exclusive ones.

[1] Extracted from "Ahmedabad Letter" by Mahadev Desai

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 20-7-1933; *vide* also the preceding item.

The task in the towns and cities was comparatively easier. In Ahmedabad they were getting anti-untouchability pledges signed by caste Hindus. The workers must now ask those who sign these pledges to give concrete form to their sympathy for Harijans. To this end they should pay house-to-house visits and collect subscriptions, no matter however small, from each house which may not definitely be opposed to the reform. The coppers thus collected from thousands of homes would be much more valuable than the rupees collected from a handful of wealthy people.

There was a Harijan girls' hostel opened by the local branch of the Servants of Untouchables Society, but the workers were hard put to it in inducing Bhangi girls to enter the hostel. There was also the fear that the girls belonging to other sections of Harijans would go away if Bhangi girls came. Gandhiji's advice was emphatic on this matter. Even at the risk of scaring away other Harijan girls, Bhangi girls should be induced to come.

Gandhiji himself carried out his suggestion for house-to-house collection by appealing to people coming to the evening prayers for giving their coppers for Harijan work. The response was spontaneous.

Harijan, 29-7-1933

312. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

July 19, 1933

I have seen a report of Sir Samuel Hoare's speech in the House of Commons on the India estimates debate. It is another surprise equally painful like the Viceregal telegram.

I may say that since the fast I have not been able to read newspapers regularly, and, during the fast, for ten or twelve days I have not even looked at the newspapers for the simple reason that I have had no time. I, therefore, cannot say whether reports in newspapers are truly reflective of the proceedings of the informal conference. My point, however, was not that the reports are necessarily untrue, but it was that no notice should have been taken of unauthorized reports of confidential proceedings. Surely, it ought not to have mattered to the Viceroy what I or anybody had said at the informal conference. The Viceroy could have judged for himself what I might have said at the interview, had it been granted. The proceedings were kept confidential purposely, in order not to prejudice my request for an interview,

I have been asked even now to deny the accuracy of the reports. How am I to do so without going through the files of newspapers, and

how many newspapers am I to read? I venture to suggest that it is not a business proposition. It ought to be sufficient that my request was not fettered by any conditions. It was a mere request for an interview to explore possibilities of peace, and I think that it should have been considered on its merits. But perhaps the proper question to put to me at this stage is whether I personally repent having advised the country to take up civil disobedience and whether I would still advise withdrawal. That question I have already answered[1] before now.

The interviewer then asked if the door for negotiation had been finally closed. Gandhiji readily replied:

Not for me. So far as I am concerned, the door will never be closed, and whenever I see the slightest opportunity, I would not hesitate to knock at the Viceregal door. But I suppose that so far as authorities are concerned, they have finally closed the door, unless the Congress will call off civil disobedience altogether which, I hope, the Congress will never do.

Asked if he was likely to do anything to promote civil disobedience before 31st July, Gandhiji said:

I shall do nothing overt before the end of the month during which civil disobedience stands suspended.

The Bombay Chronicle, 20-7-1933

313. INTERVIEW TO REPRESENTATIVE OF "THE TIMES OF INDIA"

July 20, 1933

In mass civil disobedience a large number of people act like sheep, therefore fact under leadership and sink or swim together. In individual civil disobedience everyone is his own leader and the weakening of one cannot affect any other person. One million individuals may offer individual civil disobedience but that would mean that each one of them has acted independently of others and on his own responsibility. This again does not mean that the people do not have one mind and that they pull in opposite directions and, on the contrary, if individuals act with one aim and under one banner although they may act independently of one another, they will pull in same direction. The beauty of individual

[1] *Vide* "Interview to the Press", 18-7-1933.

satyagraha lies in the fact that in it there is no such thing as defeat and it can never be circumvented by an earthly power, no matter how great it is.

Individual civil disobedience includes anything and everything that an individual conceives as proper and is permitted by Congress under the creed of non-violence and truth.

Q. Prison bar helpful country [*sic*]?

A. If I did not think so I would cease to offer civil disobedience. The truth lying behind civil disobedience is that under an unjust system a freedom-loving man considers himself to be freer in a prison than outside.

Q. As a result of Poona Conference don't you feel [that there will be a] split into two or more parties?

A. I do not anticipate any such result at all. Whilst there were sharp differences of opinion among Congressmen, I have never known more cordiality and less acrimony and prompter obedience to the chair as at Poona Conference. Indeed I believe that there will be no split in Congress ranks and it will be found that the revised scheme when it is published by the acting President, accomm[odates] almost it every shade of opinion in Congress.

Q. Call off civil disobedience by instalments [*sic*]?

A. would never consider admissions of a setback in a movement either as humi[liation] or as weakness and It is for that reason that I have advised cessation of mass civil disobedience which is clearly an admission of setback, and if I had felt that there was no other form of civil disobedience, I would have advised complete withdrawal, had I been the sole representative of that opinion; but in satyagraha individual civil disobedience is the final factor, it is indefensible [*sic*] and it's for that reason that I have contended that it is an invincible force. So far as interview with Viceroy was concerned, it was because I was anxious as was the conference that even individual civil disobedience should be stopped if any honourable settlement could be secured had I got the interview. You will therefore see that there was, behind request for interview, no obstinate refusal to call off even individual civil disobedience under any circumstances whatsoever.

I am here during the pleasure of Government, but otherwise at least up to the end of suspension period [that is] 31st July.

In my opinion, friends in England can do very little at present. I

am clear—Viceroy's position [is] wholly untenable. There seems to be no way out but greater, purer suffering by people.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

314. TELEGRAM TO HOME SECRETARYARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

AHMEDABAD
July 21, 1933

SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT
HOME DEPARTMENT, POONA

GRATEFUL PROMPT PERMISSION SEE MIRABAI.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(11), Pt. II, p. 37

315. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

'AMRIT BHUVAN', ELLIS BRIDGE,
July 21, 1933

CHI. JAMNALALJI,

I have had no letter from you recently. I had hoped for one. You must have received the letter[1] which I wrote to you from Poona. I am discussing with co-workers a proposal for sacrificing the Ashram in this *yajna*. It is almost certain now. We shall decide finally today. The example of the Ashram's sacrifice need not be copied. Anybody who wishes to regard it as an ideal and act accordingly may certainly do so. It is not necessary just now even in regard to the Ashram at Wardha to copy the example of Sabarmati. If I get time, I will write more.

Abdul Ghaffar Khan's son, who was in England and had gone to the U.S.A. from there, came and saw me in Poona. He is in Bombay at present. He has had training in a sugar factory in the U.S.A. I don't know, though, how much he has learnt. Khurshedbehn and others advise that he should work for some time in a sugar factory. Try him in your factory. He has not impressed me as being a very intelligent person, but has impressed me as being a good man. Just now at any rate he says that he will do as I advise. You need not pay him

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 17-7-1933.

immediately. You may fix the pay after one month if he shows proficiency in his work. For the present, you will have only to provide for his boarding and lodging.

My health is fairly good. I am staying with Ranchhodbhai. I go to the Ashram daily. I hope to see Mirabehn today. I had wired to the Government seeking permission to do so, and I have got it

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 2919

316. AN AMERICAN CRITICISM[1]

The vast majority of letters received from the West on the recent fast have been full of goodwill and appreciation of it and the motive lying behind it. The following letter balances the opinion reflected in the friendly letters and probably represents the majority opinion:

> Now that your twenty-one day fast is ended, as announced in small notices in the daily Press, what did it avail? The world was told that it was for the benefit of the untouchables so called. Just what did it do for them?
>
> (The Mahatma Gandhi is no longer front page news; we must search the inside pages to find him in the daily Press.)
>
> India, whose culture and civilization goes back far beyond record, which was given the new tongue of Christ Jesus by Thomas, the disciple, in the first century, and in the centuries just past has been given many opportunities to face the light, still remains in pagan darkness, its caste system of society the greatest sore spot on the modern world.
>
> What is the answer? Certainly not a fast, of whatever duration, by a lone man, of whatever sincerity, a man who late in life took off his clothes, and walked barefoot through the streets of London. That smacks too much of some of the grosser forms of American publicity methods to be effective.
>
> No one thing can raise the lower classes of India out of their poverty and degradation; if it is ever accomplished, it must be the workingof many influences, each contributing to the one end. And the start must be from within themseles.
>
> It must be a mental urge for something better.

[1] A summary of the article had appeared in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 22-7-1933 under the date-line, "Poona, July 21, 1933".

No race whose women are subservient—or "without a soul" as you have it—has ever risen high in the scale of human progress.

Cleanliness is next to Godliness; and the nauseating filth in which the millions of your people live would preclude a start upward, until they begin to emerge from this mire.

A clean mind and a clean body will begin to turn their thought to a new life, which can have in it none of the 'persecution of the body' for the 'sake of the spirit'. For instance, your 'Holy Men', Sitting for years in some deformed position, publicly torturing the body to liberate the soul, are no longer taken seriously by any enlightened person; I doubt if by themselves. Do they sit and think; or do they just sit?

The pagan religious rites, of sticking the body full of nails, spears through the tongue, and other revolting tortures, now widely known in America and throughout the world, bring nothing but disgust, and the feeling that they are, indeed, 'untouchable'.

I have not read *Mother India* by Katherine Mayo, but am told on good authority (India's resentment to the contrary notwithstanding, that it is a compilation of facts—so horrible that I have known cases of extreme illness from reading it.

If you really want to do something for the unfortunates of India, whose cause you have so nobly championed, why not cease your attempts at cheap publicity, found an educational system, work out a method by which large and increasing numbers may be enabled to take advantage of it; then see the support the enlightened nations of the world, especially America, would give you. It is a big job, with sixty millions to reach, and it is increasing so rapidly because of unwholesome social conditions which education would correct, and tradition of many hundreds of years to overcome. It will take generations but it will work, and this would be a substantial foundation upon which to build your future greatness.

And a united nation of sixty million people, united in knowledge, in progress, in ambition, in spiritu1 desire for self-government, cannot be held in bondage, either by a minority of their own countrymen, or by another powerful nation.

After all people who are hostile to certain steps taken by a public man do not trouble themselves to express their disapprobation to him. They ventilate it in the local Press. And since in the great Harijan movement I would love to retain the friendliness of the world, it is well to reply to the letter.

But it is a difficult letter to notice. For it starts with a bias and ends with it. The caste system does not become "the greatest sore spot on the modern world". He does not even seem to know what that system is. I have myself raised my voice against the evil that has crept into the system, but the evil of it is foreign to the original, and can be removed as it is being removed, Untouchability is the greatest excrescence, and the world knows what Herculean efforts are being made to combat the evil. The fast which the writer belittles was intended to help the movement. I must be unmoved by the writer's mixing up the fast and my mode of dress with "the grosser forms of American publicity methods". The proof of the pudding will be in the eating.

But one can heartily endorse the opinion that "no one thing can raise the lower classes of India out of their poverty and degradation" and that "the start must be from within themselves".

Almost the very next sentence repeats the exploded libel about the women of India being "without a soul". It is, perhaps, useless to tell the correspondent that many foreign writers of note have marvelled at the comparative freedom enjoyed by the women of India. This is not to say that there is not much to be done for the amelioration of their condition. But this can be said without fear of contradiction that whilst the betterment of the condition of women of the West is of recent growth, the women of India have from ancient times enjoyed in essential matters a freedom which has not escaped foreign observers.

The correspondent has evidently read literature containing ignorant and interested distortions about Indian habits and customs. No one, perhaps, has written more severely than I have done about our insanitation. But to describe it as "nauseating filth" is a gross libel. It betrays violent intolerance of habits other than one's own.

The correspondent would not have been betrayed into the wild generalization he has indulged in about the tortures which so-called yogis undergo, if instead of relying upon ignorant and sensational literature he had seen things with his own eyes. Just as one swallow does not make a summer, so cannot one yogi so-called resorting to self-tortures warrant the libel that self-torture is the general practice of those who seek liberation of the soul through crucifixion of the flesh, a practice general to mankind and indispensable for the subjugation of the body to the soul.

I must pass by Miss Catherine Mayo and "the unknown cases of extreme illness" from the reading of her libellous production *Mother India.* One can but pity the readers, if there were any such, who made themselves sick by reading a book which opened the drains of India and made the readers believe that they were India.

In the concluding sentences, the correspondent advises the course to be adopted for the amelioration of the lot of the "untouchables". The pages of *Harijan* can tell him what constructive work is being attempted all over India by the Servants of Untouchables Society. It is up to American friends who are giving moral support to the movement to put before the American public a digest of the work reported in these pages from week to week.

Harijan, 22-7-1933

317. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

July 22, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have often wished to write to you but I have been helpless. Every ounce of the energy newly acquired has been spent in attending to the pressing work before me.

I had a nice time with Mother and Kamala. I was not able to see much of Sarup and Ranjit.

Mother is anxious about Krishna. She had long talks with me about her future. If you have any suggestions for me in the matter please let me have them. Of course my movements are uncertain. But that does not matter.

Devdas and Lakshmi, I left in Poona. They are due to come here now. Devdas will most probably settle down in Delhi for the time being. Mahadev, Ba and Prabhavati are with me. They are all soon to disperse, I expect.

I have been slow in regaining pre-fast strength. But I am slowly improving.

Love.

BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, P. lll

318. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

July 22, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I simply cannot forget your wonderful love. I had never thought I would be the cause of so much trouble to you, but I was helpless. I know that expressing one's feelings in words reduces their value, but I cannot help doing so. Hence this brief note. My health is good. My blessings to all, the grown-ups and the young, and to the servants too. Their service left nothing to be desired. A poor human, what return can I make?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 79. Also G. W. 4831. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

319. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

July 22, 1933

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letter. All your questions are all right. I will reply to them as well as I can. The reason for handing over control of the Ashram is that it is better to hand over ourselves what the Government is sure to take by force in due course. Instead of carrying away our belongings one after another against land revenue, let them take the entire land. Moreover, when thousands of people have been ruined forcibly, it seems desirable, and even necessary from the point of view of dharma, that an ashram which bears the name of Satyagraha Ashram should voluntarily sacrifice itself. But this does not mean that the Ashram there should follow suit immediately. On the contrary, I feel that we should be satisfied with as many inmates as can leaving it and courting arrest. Vinoba, however, must not do so. He should remain outside for Harijan work. I wish to make the fullest use of the Mahila Ashram. Can children also be sent there? Some of the women at any rate will go. I have to solve the problem of N. and Amalabehn. I see no alternative to sending them there. Both of them should be given Harijan work. For the present, they are to be trained for the work. N. should have as few contacts with men as possible. If the Government does not take possession of movable property, we will

keep it somewhere here publicly. The problem of cows is a rather difficult one. I have been thinking what to do about it.

You need not be in a hurry to come out and join. You may do so when the time comes. I hope these details will satisfy you for the present. I am writing under great pressure for time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 2920

320. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

July 22, 1933

CHI. DEVDAS,

I got your postcard. The decision to sacrifice the Ashram has been made. I think we did have a discussion whether or not you should come here. You may now do what you think best. If you think it necessary to go to Delhi immediately, you may certainly do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 2019

321. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

Saturday [On or after *July 22,*] *1933*[1]

CHI. PREMA,

If nothing unforeseen prevents me, I shall arrive there at three o'clock today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10350. Also C.W. 6789. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] In *Bapuna Patro-5: Ku. Premabehn Kantakne,* the addressee explains that it was "probably in July 1933", during Gandhiji's stay at Ranchhodlal's bungalow, that she invited him to visit the Ashram library. In 1933 Gandhiji was in Ahmedabad from July 20 to 31.

322. TELEGRAM TO MRS. SENGUPTA

July 23, 1933

MRS. SENGUPTA
CARE "ADVANCE", CALCUTTA

JUST HEARD SENGUPTA'S SUDDEN DEATH.[1] YOUR LOSS IS ALSO NATION'S. PRAY COUNT ME AS ONE OF COUNTLESS SHARERS YOUR GRIEF.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 21530

323. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

July 23, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

I get news about your improvement every day. You will soon be completely all right now. I hope to meet you once more before I am arrested.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5354

324. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

Copy *July 24, 1933*

DEAR SATISBABU,

I have your short, sweet and significant letter. I wish I could send you a long love-letter in reply. But that I cannot do; no time.

Yes, I shall go, and many Ashram inmates. The Ashram is being disbanded and handed over to the Government or left for the dumb creation to occupy. The movables will be entrusted to friends, unless the Government want them. In due course, you will have the papers. This was the only course open to me. It is surprising, however, children at the Ashram appreciated the propriety of the step suggested

[1] Jatindra Mohan Sengupta, a prisoner at Ranchi, died suddenly of apoplectic stroke on the night of July 22, 1933.

by me. This step does not affect you, the Pratishthan or any other institution managed after the Sabarmati pattern. Their time is not yet; it may never come. You personally are wholly dedicated to the Harijan cause and Hemprabha to khadi. No matter what criticism is levelled at you, there is to be for the time being at any rate no departure from this. You may use this letter if you need to do so. I have not the time, nor is it necessary, to argue why I do not apply the rule that is being applied to Sabarmati, to you and others also.

I hope you will unhesitatingly stop Bengali *Harijan* if its sale does not pay the expenses. Your unique work in *bastis* really leaves you no time for anything else. You should make use of the English edition and of the vernacular Press in Bengal.

I have no doubt that I shall do the Harijan work even when I am locked. But God knows better.

Love.

From a photostat: G. N. 9071

325. LETTER TO A. V. THAKKAR

July 24, 1933

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

Harijan Shastri has broken down. He is laid down with fever. The food at Poona did not agree with me. I am carrying on somehow. If you can send Malkani, I will get some help. But don't worry if you cannot send him. I don't wish the work there to suffer.

What has been decided about Malkani's salary? I am certain that he is being paid from the Ashram funds. But the Ashram is being disbanded now. You will read about this in the papers. You should, therefore, arrange to pay him from there. Even from jail I will continue Harijan work. Good-bye.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 1123

326. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

July 24, 1933

BHAI NANABHAI,

I got your letter. I also hear from Phoenix from time to time. Sushila and Manilal have become very much devoted to each other

and are happy.

I have decided to disband the Ashram. You will read more details about this in the papers. I do not have time to write more.

Take care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 6688. Also C. W. 4333. Courtesy: Kanubhai Mashruwala

327. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

July 24, 1933

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I got your letter. I have no time to answer letters. I have regained considerable strength but not enough to permit me to do unlimited work. Whatever be my lot, yours is the khadi work. I have explained everything in the letter[1] to Satisbabu and so I am not repeating that here. I trust Arun is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1703

328. INTERVIEW ON M. S. ANEY'S STATEMENT [2]

AHMEDABAD,
July 24, 1933

I can say that in some places there is misrepresentation and some material portions have altogether been omitted. I have a copy of Mr. Aney's statement in my possession. It was drafted in Poona, and I am quite sure that Mr. Aney has not altered the statement, as the mutilated version would lead one to suppose.

Asked how Mr. Aney's statement had affected the position regarding Council-entry, Gandhiji said that the position regarding Council-entry remained just

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 24-7-1933.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "M. S. Aney's Statement Discontinuing Mass Civil Disobedience", 22-7-1933.

the same as it was before Mr. Aney's statement. If Congressmen wanted Council-cntry no single individual could prevent it.

The Bombay Chronicle, 25-7-1933

329. LETTER TO A. I. S. A.

AHMEDABAD,
July 25, 1933

THE HONORARY SECRETARY
ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION
MIRZAPUR, AHMEDABAD

DEAR SIR,

With reference to your letter of 20th instant I have to state that, in my opinion, 'handling' means portable and capable of being housed in a tiny hut, and easily movable by one person from place to place.

With reference to the 5th condition, the price includes the carding attachment of the machine, if special slivers are necessary. But I must state that the meaning I give to the conditions cannot be allowed to weigh with the judges. They must be left wholly uninfluenced by any opinion that I may have on the conditions. This is, therefore, purely for your guidance, in the choice of machines and in directing the inventors as to what they should do.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19122

330. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

July 25, 1933

Mahatma Gandhi announced to the representative of the Associated Press today that he had decided to disband his Sabarmati Ashram which had been in existence for nearly 18 years. Asked his reasons for taking such a serious step, Mahatma Gandhi said:

The reason is quite obvious for me. Hundreds or thousands who took part in the struggle have lost their all. Having heard the story of the brave suffering of the villagers, I felt that some drastic action was necessary on my part. What was it that I could sacrifice? I have

nothing on this earth which I can call my own; but I have some things which are more precious than what might be considered to be mine, and among these precious things, the Ashram is perhaps the most precious and I felt that on the eve of my embarking upon what is to me a fresh and sacred mission in life, I should invite fellow workers of the Ashram to join me and give up for the time being the activities in which they have been engaged all these precious years, and I am glad to be able to say that not one of them had the slightest hesitation in believing that the time had come for the Ashram to make the sacrifice.

Asked what would happen to the many activities of the Ashram, Gandhiji said:

This is a question somewhat difficult to answer; but I can say generally that if the activities were true and fulfilled some of the real wants of India, they will live in spite of the disbandment of the Ashram. For example, the whole of the khadi activity will certainly survive the disbandment. Indeed, the only thing that the Ashram was doing was to make experiments in khadi manufacture by devising new types of spinning-wheels and perfecting those that are in existence, supporting many Harijan families and teaching candidates all the hand processes that cotton goes through before it comes out as khadi. This is undoubtedly an essential work and very important, but I have faith that the work will be continued even after the Ashram ceases to exist as an institution and this may be said more or less of all other activities of the Ashram.

Asked what he was going to do now, Gandhiji said:

I am afraid I must not at the present moment go beyond what I have stated. I hope to make a further statement[1] in the course of the next few days.[2]

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-7-1933; also *The Hindu*, 25-7-1933

331. STATEMENT ON M. S. ANEY'S STATEMENT

[*July 26, 1933*][3]

The statement issued by Sjt. Aney closely follows the advice tendered by me at the informal conference. It does not give any

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] This sentence is reproduced from *The Hindu*, 25-7-1933.

[3] From contemporary Press reports and *The Indian Annual Register*, Vol. II, P. 333

reasons for the decision taken. It was left to me to give them. This does not mean that they are necessarily the reasons that guided Sjt. Aney and all those friends who accepted my advice. They must be taken, therefore to be solely mine.

In my opinion, it would have been disastrous if, in the existing circumstance, civil disobedience had been altogether withdrawn. The technique of satyagraha, as I have known it, requires continuance even by one person so long as such continuance does not defeat the ends of truth and ahimsa. It may not be given up either because of the weakness of the people taking part in it or (which is the same thing) the seeming victory of the opponent. The greater the repression the greater the strength of a true civil resister. The continuance of civil resistance, even by one person, insures its revival by those who might have given it up through despair or weakness.

But radical changes in the programme were absolutely necessary.

Sjt. Aney's instructions taboo secret methods. There is nothing inherently wrong in them. I fully admit the purity of purpose and the great cleverness of the workers in conducting the campaign by secret methods, devised to meet the situation created by repressive measures of the Government. But secrecy is repugnant to satyagraha and hampers its progress. It has undoubtedly contributed in a great measure to the present demoralization of the people. I know that a ban on secrecy will stop some of the activities which appeared to keep the Congress before the public eye. But this doubtful benefit will be outweighed by the certain elimination of a method which is foreign to the spirit of satyagraha and which interferes with its efficacy.

Another change made is the stoppage of the mass movement. The masses have acted bravely and suffered much wherever they have responded to the national call. But ample evidence is forthcoming to show that they are not able any longer to suffer the prolonged torture of the Ordinance Rule now crystallized into statute by the so-called legislatures. The Congress as an organization finds it increasingly difficult day by day to render them effective aid. The stoppage of secrecy would prevent even the little relief that it was possible to give them. The masses have not yet learnt to act as one man and without direction. They need more training and experience through the example of individuals.

Civil disobedience is, therefore, to be confined to individuals on their own responsibility although they would be acting on behalf of and in the name of the Congress. Those who will so act may expect no financial or other assistance from the Congress. They should be prepared for indefinite incarceration whether ill or well. They may not come out of jails except by termination of their sentences in due course or through the strength of the people. on termination of their sentences they should seek re-imprisonment on the first opportunity. They should be prepared to brave all the risks attendant upon their action including uttermost penury and the loss of all their possessions, movable or immovable, or physical torture such as lathi blows.

Naturally such action can only be expected from a small number, especially in the beginning. The very enumeration of the hardships is likely to frighten many people. But experience of patriots and reformers all the world over shows that Nature provides us with the capacity for suffering when it is taken up in the true spirit.

It follows that such response, if it comes at all, must come in the first instance from the intelligentsia. Their example will prove infectious in the long run and pervade the whole nation resulting in a mass awakening that cannot possibly be crushed by any repression, be it ever so ferocious. Moreover, individuals from among the masses can certainly act even now. Only they must understand the implications of individual civil disobedience.

I am convinced that these men and women will represent the national spirit and the nation's determination to win independence in every sense of the term. It may be objected that the heroic suffering of a few individuals, however praiseworthy in itself, is of no practical value and cannot affect British policy. I differ from such a view. In my opinion, the seemingly long or almost interminable process adumbrated by me will in practice be found to be the shortest. For I hold that true independence, i.e., independence in terms of and on behalf of the masses, can be proved in India's case to be unattainable by any other method. The method of non-violence which is an integral part of the Congress constitution demands the course suggested by me.

It must be clear to the dullest intellect that British policy cannot change through a constitution which registers the British will and ignores the wish or the welfare of the nation. Any constitution imposed upon India by the British will, unaffected by anything done in and by India, must in the nature of things harden and perpetuate

the British policy. It can and will be changed by adequate action taken by India in the face of British repression. In other words, Britain cannot work out our salvation. We must work it out ourselves. Our independence should mean the registration not of Britain's will but of our will. I have suggested the only way that will forge the necessary sanction for the registration of our will, that is, the will of the dumb millions. For individual action must, in the long run, affect the masses.

Let us not forget the uniqueness of India's case. I know of no parallel in history. In India British will is enforced through India's own men and, shall I say, even women. India supplies the civilian and the soldier, India supplies money and other resources for the subjugation and exploitation of the masses. If this terribly immoral state of things is not altered in a day or even in a century, it need cause no surprise.

But our success is ensured the moment we take the right route to our goal. I claim that we took it in 1920. And though it cannot be visibly demonstrated, we have since then taken long strides toward *purna* swaraj. We could not have gone nearer the goal by any other way. Who can deny that during the past thirteen years we have seen an awakening among the masses, never witnessed during the hundred years preceding September 1920.

My advice does not proceed from a sense of despair, or defeat; I have neither. I am filled with joy that the national response has been so great as it has been. The greatest cause for joy is that the individuals as well as the masses have observed non-violellce in action, in spite of themselves and in the face of almost inconceivable provocation. We are too near the time to judge the merit of the non-violence observed by the Frontier Pathans. They might have used violent language. But they have refrained from violent action in a way they have never done before within living memory. Such is the testimony of several sober independent witnesses. If non-violence becomes rooted in the Pathan heart, it will solve several difficult problems for us. What is true of the Frontier Pathan is largely true of the civil resisters throughout India.

I must not he misunderstood. My claim is humble. Danger of a sudden outburst of Violence is always present so long as the violence of the heart is not eradicated. I am sorry to say that there is ample violence in our breasts. We have acted non-violently out of policy, out of helplessness. We would inflict violence if we could do so with

effect. I would have India to abjure violence even if it had the power to wield it. I would have it appreciate the fact that if the masses are to work out their own independence, they are so numerous us that if they achieved anything through violent means, it would not be independence but a fiendish thing that would devour them and perhaps bring ruination to the whole world. The one lesson that the Western nations teach the world in flaming letters, is that violence is not the way to peace and happiness. The cult of violence has not made them or those who have contact with them any the happier or better. If ever we, as a nation, reach that living faith in non-violence and banish violence from our hearts we would not even need resort to civil disobedience. The latter is required whilst we are trying non-violence as a mere policy or expedient. Even as a policy it is any day far more effective than violence. Under the Dictator's instructions secret organizations naturally disappear. Every civil resister will be his or her own leader. He or she will carry the burden of the Congress on his or her own shoulders. Such civil resisters will be trustees of national honour.

Whilst Congressmen may be counted by the crore, civil resistance, under the new scheme, will be represented only by a few thousand or even less. If these few are true men and women, I am certain that they will multiply into millions. Meanwhile the remaining Congressmen will engage in various other constructive activities of the Congress such as Harijan service, communal unity, khadi production and distribution, total prohibition, boycott of foreign cloth and other goods that compete with indigenous manufactures or are otherwise detrimental to the interests of the nation, the manufacture of new goods, the improvement of the methods of indigenous manufacture, and in this connection development or resuscitation of village industries, improvement of agriculture and cattle-breeding, organization of labour unions, not for political exploitation but for the betterment of the condition of workers and improvement in the relations between capital and labour. In fact, no branch of national activity may be left untouched by the Congress. This will be possible if we will get rid of the very wrong idea that there is no other Congress activity save that of civil resistance or that the latter blocks all other activities. This will be true, perhaps when there is mass civil disobedience and the campaign has to be swift and sharp. But till that time is reached, due importance must be given to every one of nation-building activities and none should be neglected. Civil resisters represent the non-violent army of the nation. And just as every citizen

cannot be a soldier on the active list, every citizen cannot be a civil resister on the active list. And if a soldier may not consider himself a superior being because he fights at the risk of his life for his nation much less may a civil resister will undergoes sufferings for the sake of his nation. Those outside the rank of fighters are equally important limbs of their nation if they regard themselves as national servants dedicating their talents for the nation's welfare, and not engaging in any activity, private or public, that may be in conflict with the national interest.

Moreover, whilst the Congress as an organization cannot openly help civil resisters, and must under my plan avoid all secret methods, it will be the duty of Congressmen and even others who sympathize with the Congress methods and aim, wherever possible to give relief to the indigent families of civil resisters especially to the utterly destitute peasantry who joined the no-tax campaign. For they must be assured that every inch of the land confiscated during the campaign (I think lawlessly and wrongly) will be returned to them or their progeny when the nation comes to her own as it must some day. I have learnt that at great personal risk to the workers engaged in the task the Congress has successfully administered secret relief to the peasants who have chosen for the sake of national freedom to risk their all. Such relief will be impossible of administration in the future, not merely because of the contemplated stoppage of secret methods but also because the Congress has no ceaseless source of income. The burden of reaching relief openly to such families must on pure humanitarian grounds, if no other, fall on the shoulders of those who are not engaged in civil resistance. The Government cannot have it both ways. If they will slop even private and open relief, they must imprison the dependants of civil resisters or otherwise maintain them. The world would be staggered to know the number of those who once in fair circumstances have courted ruination and are living on doles of three or four rupees per head, per month. I understand that even their houses are in danger of being attached.

I have left the Council programme untouched. To think now of working the reforms to come is, in my opinion, altogether premature. We do not know what they are to be, when they are to come, if at all. It would behove those who are inclined to participate, to wait for the reforms before they commit themselves to a policy. Then there remain the existing Legislatures. I can give no decisive opinion on this

question as I can on civil disobedience. My head reels at the very thought of entering Councils for the sake of winning independence. They may give some relief in specific cases but that is the miasma to keep the nation from its goal. They have no temptation for me in spite of my having sought through Sjt. Rajagopalachari and others the co-operation of the Legislatures and the Government in the matter of the untouchability Bills. The primary responsibility for seeking it lies not on his shoulders but mine. I offer no apology for having sought it. It is wholly consistent with the doctrine of non-co-operation.

There is one thing on which Sjt. Aney has differed from me and some other friends. I have felt strongly that the office of All-India Dictator and Provincial Dictators should also be abolished. But he felt equally strongly that the office should be retained if only as a symbol. But I see grave difficulties in our way. Dictators under the new scheme must, like others, offer civil resistance as soon as they are appointed. All the best men and women must quickly find their way to prison. Therefore a time must soon come when men and women who can really dictate will not be available. Then there could only be dummy Dictators as they have been before. These may easily produce embarrassing situations. Lastly, when every civil resister is expected to be his own leader, there seems to be no warrant for having Dictators. Indeed their mere existence may well stop the flow of individual civil resisters. For they may wait for Dictators' instructions whereas the new scheme provides for no further instructions. The Congress as an organization should live in its ideal in the final instructions issued by Sjt. Aney. I, there- fore, still feel that Dictators should abolish themselves, if my argument appeals to them.

The Viceroy's refusal to see me even for the sake of exploring possibilities of peace, renders it unnecessary to examine the conditions under which even without *purna* swaraj but in furtherance of it, civil disobedience may be discontinued. But I may repeat what I have said so often that all non-co-operation is undertaken to ensure real co-operation in the place of forced one and all civil disobedience of laws is resorted to for the sake of rendering voluntary obedience instead of forced obedience. Therefore, I have no doubt that the Congress would be ever ready for honourable peace.

From a microfilm: S.N. 20025

332. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

AHMEDABAD,
July 26, 1933

TO
THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY
(HOME DEPARTMENT)
POONA

DEAR SIR,

My first constructive act on return to India in 1915 was to found the Satyagraha Ashram for the purpose of serving Truth. The inmates are under the vows of truth, ahimsa, celibacy, control of palate, poverty, fearlessness, removal of untouchability, swadeshi with khadi as the centre, equal respect for all religions and bread-labour. The present site for the Ashram was bought in 1916. It conducts today certain activities mostly through the labour of inmates. But it does need to supplement that labour with ordinary paid labour. Its principal activities are: khadi production as a village industry without the aid of power-driven machinery, dairy, agriculture, scientific scavenging and literary education. The Ashram has 107 inmates at present (men 42, women 31, boys 12 and girls 22). This number excludes those who are in prison and those who are otherwise engaged outside. Up to now it has trained nearly 1,000 persons in the manufacture of khadi. Most of these, so far as my knowledge goes, are doing useful constructive work and earning an honest livelihood.

The Ashram is a registered trust. The funds at its disposal are ear-marked. Whilst the aim has been to make every department self-supporting, it has hitherto been obliged to receive donations from friends to meet all the obligations. Experience has shown that so long as it remains a predominantly educational service (using the term in the widest sense) and not only charges no fees but actually feeds and clothes the learners, it cannot be wholly self-supporting.

The Ashram owns immovable property estimated at about Rs. 3,60,000 and movables including cash estimated at over Rs. 3,00,000[1].

[1] "Over Rs. 3,00,000" was later on corrected as "nearly Rs. 2,00,000"; *vide* the following item.

The Ashram takes no part in politics so-called. But it does believe in non-co-operation and civil disobedience as indispensable, under certain circumstances, for the observance of truth and non-violence. Hence, the civil disobedience campaign of 1930 was started by the march to Dandi of nearly eighty inmates of the Ashram.

Time has now arrived for the Ashram to make a greater sacrifice in the face of the existing situation—on the one hand the growing terrorism by the Government and on the other the equally growing demoralization among the people.

The statements that have come under my observation since the breaking of my fast show that

1. methods of torture have been adopted by the police in various parts of India in order to cow down individual civil resisters,

2. women have been insulted,

3. free movement of people has become almost impossible,

4. in many parts of India, village work by Congressmen has become all but impossible,

5. civil resistance prisoners have been subjected to humiliations and bodily injury in many lock-ups and prisons,

6. unconscionably heavy fines have been imposed and gross irregularities committed for their recovery,

7. peasants withholding revenue or rent have been punished in a manner out of all proportion to their offence, obviously with a view to terrifying them and their neighbours into subjection[1],

8. the public Press has been gagged,

9. in short, freedom with self-respect has become impossible throughout the length and breadth of the land.

I have no doubt that these statements will be denied or explainedaway in official circles. It may be that they are not free from exaggerations. But in common with many Congressmen I believe in them and therefore they are able to arouse us to action.

Hence, mere incarceration can bring little satisfaction. Moreover, I quite clearly see that the vast constructive programme of the Ashram cannot be carried on with safety, unless the Ashram ceases entirely to have anything to do with the campaign. To accept such a position will

[1] The two words "into subjection" are reproduced from Bombay Secret Abstracts.

be to deny the creed. Up to now I had hoped that the existence of the Ashram side by side with the civil resistance of its individual members was possible and that there was bound to be an honourable peace between Government and the Congress in the near future even though the Congress goal might not be immediately realized. The unfortunate rejection by His Excellency the Viceroy of the honest advance of the Congress through me, in the interest of peace, shows clearly that the Government do not seek or desire peace, they want an abject surrender by the largest and the admittedly most, if not the only, popular political organization in the country. This is impossible so long as the Congress continues to repose confidence in its present advisers. The struggle therefore is bound to be prolonged and calls for much greater sacrifice than the people have hitherto undergone. It follows that the greatest measure of sacrifice is to be expected of me as the author of the movement. I can therefore only offer that which is nearest and dearest to me and for the building of which I and many other members of the Ashram have laboured with infinite patience and care all these eighteen years. Every head of cattle and every tree has its history and sacred associations. They are all members of a big family. What was once a barren plot of land has been turned by human endeavour into a fair-sized model garden colony. It will not be without a tear that we shall break up the family and its activities. I have had many and prayerful conversations with the inmates and they have, men and women, unanimously approved of the proposal to give up the present activities. Those who are at all able have decided to offer individual civil disobedience after the suspension period is over.

It may not be superfluous to mention that the Ashram has for the past two years refused to pay revenue dues and consequently goods of considerable value have been seized and sold in respect of them. I make no complaint of the procedure. But it cannot be a matter of pleasure or profit to carry on a great institution in such precarious circumstances. I fully realize that whether a State is just or unjust and whether it is under popular or Foreign control, the citizen's possessions may at any time be forcibly taken away from him by the State, if he comes in conflict with it. In the circumstances, it seems to me to be simple prudence to anticipate the inevitable in a conflict which promises to be indefinitely prolonged.

But whilst it has been decided to break up the Ashram we want everything to be used for public purpose. Therefore, unless the

Government for any reason desire to take charge of any or all of the movables including cash, l propose to hand them over to those friends who will take them and use them for public benefit and in accordance with the earmarking. Thus the khadi stock and contents of the workshop and the weaving sheds will be handed over to the All-India Spinners' Association on whose behalf that activity has been carried on. The cows and other cattle will be handed to a representative of the Goseva Sangh on whose behalf the dairy has been conducted. The library will be handed probably to an institution that will take care of it. The moneys and articles belonging to the various parties will be returned [to] them or kept for them by friends who will care to take charge of them.

Then there remain the land, the buildings and the crops. I suggest that the Government take possession of these and do what they like with them. I would gladly have handed these also to friends but I cannot be party to their paying the revenue dues. And naturally I may not hand them to fellow resisters. All, therefore, I wish is that beneficial use be made of the land, buildings and the valuable trees and crops instead of being allowed to run to waste as I see has been done in many cases.

There is a plot of land with buildings occupied by Harijan families. They have hitherto paid no rent. I have no desire to invite them to take part in civil resistance. They will now pay the nominal rent of one rupee per year to the trustees of the Ashram and be responsible for the revenue due on that portion.

If for any reason, the Government decline to take of the property mentioned, the Ashram will still be vacated by the inmates as soon as may be after the expiry of the suspension period, viz., 31st instant unless the date is anticipated by the Government. I request a telegraphic reply to this letter, at least, I so far as the Government's wishes regarding the movables are concerned so as to enable me to remove them in due time if I am to remove them at all.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

From a microfilm: S.N. 21535; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40), Pt. II, pp. 171-81

333. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

July 26, 1933

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

(HOME DEPARTMENT)

POONA

DEAR SIR,

I have to correct a statement in my letter addressed to you today. On page 2, line 3, instead of "at over Rs. 3,00,000" please read "at nearly, Rs. 2,00,000".

Yours faithfully,

From a photostat: S.N. 19123; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40), Pt. II, p. 183

334. LETTER TO SYED MAHMUD

July 26, 1933

DEAR DR. MAHMUD,

I have your two letters.

I must not make the declaration that you suggest. No declarations unaccompanied by immediate action are of any value at the present moment. Even action taken under a sense of duty and with the purest of motives is wholly misinterpreted. But I can repeat my conviction to you that I would not care to go to heaven without taking the Mussalman friends with me. The fact is, the more I examine myself the more I fed that deep down in me there is no distinction between Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians and others. I would disdain to thrive at their expense.

As to your other suggestion about the Benares Hindu University, whilst Malaviyaji is capable of immense sacrifice, he will not sacrifice the University. He is philosophic enough to let it go, if he could not retain it, consistently with his notion of self-respect. But, if I know him rightly, he would consider it a great mistake deliberately to sacrifice the University. What is more, those who are its co-trustees would never allow him to take that step and what is still more is that

the students have no desire whatsoever to suspend their training. Whatever, therefore, you and I may desire, the step suggested by you seems to me to be incapable of being taken.

With reference to your second letter, what you say may be half true, namely that I want some individuals to go to prison in order to keep up the attitude of defiance. But I want them to go to prison in order that out of the imprisonment of a few pure civil resisters may rise a manifestation which would be unmistakable and irresistible.

I am glad Begum Mahmud is better and I hope she will be thoroughly restored. For your own health, how I wish you could take nature cure at Dr. Mehta's sanatorium. I have no doubt that you can be thoroughly restored.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Salaams from Mahadev.

DR. SYED MAHMUD

FARIDI MANZIL

DARGAHASHARIF

AJMER

From a photostat: G.N. 5090; also S.N. 19124

335. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

July 26, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I hope you got the postcard which I wrote to you. You must have read the news about the Ashram I being disbanded. I shall have to put some of the girls somewhere. You know Anandi and Mani. I wish to put them and three other girls in your school. One of the latter is Mahadev's sister, another is Sharda, daughter of the Assistant Secretary of the Ashram, and the third is Narahari's daughter Vanamala. You have seen the last one too. If you think you can take them in without any trouble and if Lilabehn also is willing, please let me know. If I receive your permission, I shall have to send them immediately. I cannot say what will-happen to me on the 1st. If possible, please reply by wire. If you send the wire to the Ashram

address, it is likely to reach me earlier. A letter will reach me earlier in Amrit Bhuvan, as I go to the Ashram at 1 p.m.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4832. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

336. LETTER TO AMRITLAL NANAVATI

July 26, 1933

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I read your letter to Kakasaheb and laughed. You lack sense of humour. If I were in your place, I would have simply laughed at the reply. You should have good-humouredly told Mathuradas that, if he recognized you, he would say that you had as much right as he himself. Mathuradas did not recognize you as a *snataka*[1] and, taking you to be a gentleman from North India, started talking to you in Hindi. You could have ignored him and come to me. I also did not recognize you, but you should not have punished me for that mistake.

It is I who should complain. Your complaining is like a thief punishing a constable.

What is the good of harbouring resentment now?[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9652. Courtesy: Amritlal Nanavati

337. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

July 26, 1933

CHI. KAKA,

I have your letter.

Many others may have had to suffer what Amritlal had to. It was certainly a painful affair, but nobody can be blamed, or if at all it was Bal[3] who should be blamed. And next to him, or even more than he, Amritlal himself should be blamed. Mathuradas gave the reply that he

[1] A graduate

[2] *Vide* also the following item.

[3] Addressee's son

did only to protect me from unnecessary trouble. I didn't know anything about the incident at all. I saw that Mathuradas was asking somebody to go away. But how was I to recognize Amritlal? If he gave your name, I don't know that at all. However, had he taken the incident in good humour, everybody would have laughed at the error. I myself treated Kanu in a similar way here. I did not recognize him and pushed him away when he was trying to touch my feet. Amritlal was not treated as he was knowingly. If you ask why nobody recognized him, I don't see how a person can be blamed for that. Amritlal should have laughed at the error and replied in Gujarati instead of in Hindi.

Bal may not have been able to tell Mathuradas anything, but he should have told me. I am not sending the letter to Mathuradas. Sending it to him will only keep alive the incident.

I had no choice but to put you in charge of *Harijan*. Now Anand[1] has been sent. When he is ready you may leave it off. A person like you who has the gift of writing can easily get his English corrected. You do not have a good style in English, but it is not as if your thoughts do not flow in it at all.

I will certainly like it if you can come here. I have asked Bal to write a long letter to you, but seeing the place for yourself will be a different experience altogether.

The pessimism expressed by Mahadev in his letter is unjustified. But I understand your attitude and what you say about staying with me. It is a complete error to believe that you were a burden on me. However, why do you believe that we can do anything that we may wish to? I am indifferent as to who will come and stay with me. I do believe that the Government will send Mahadev. They know [that I need him].

If you can come, do come please.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9477. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

[1] Anand Hingorani

338. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[1]

July 26, 1933

I thought that my words were quite clear and explicit. I had simply said that had the interview been granted, I would have been able to put forth something that would have been acceptable both to the Government and the people. If you ask me what I would have put before the Viceroy, I cannot tell you, not because it is a secret but because I do not know. When I made that statement, I relied upon my resourcefulness, which has up to now not failed me in putting forth acceptable proposals for a compromise.

I did not go to Lord Irwin with any preconceived proposals but in the course of the conversation, I put them before him, as they came to me, and as both the parties had a will for peace, a way was found and so would it have been with Lord Willingdon, if he had shown the will. Thus there is no mystery about any scheme which I had up my sleeve. If I had it, I should have no hesitation in sharing it with the public.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-7-1933

339. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

July 26, 1933

The disbandment of the Ashram would mean that every inmate would constitute a walking ashram, carrying with him or her the responsibility for realizing the Ashram ideal, no matter where situated, whether in prison or outside.

Mr. Gandhi added that the impending disbandment would not mean loss or diminution of incentive, but it would be a greater incentive to greater effort, greater dedication and greater sacrifice. He would disband the Ashram as early as possible after the end of the month. He declared:

Every step regarding the Ashram will be taken with the full knowledge of the authorities.

Asked if he was closing the Ashram for want of funds, Mr. Gandhi said:

[1] The source had reported that Gandhiji was asked as to "what scheme he had in view to unfold to the Viceroy if the latter had granted him an interview".

It is malicious and baseless to say so. The Ashram has plenty of friends who have never kept it in want.

Asked if he was closing the Ashram because of disappointment, Mr. Gandhi said that it was also equally baseless to say so. He declared:

I am not only not seriously disappointed, but I am convinced that the majority of the inmates have made all endeavours, humanly possible to come up to the ideal. This much, however, is true that though the inmates, including myself, have made an honest endeavour to come up to the principles, we have all failed. But that is no cause for disappointment. It is a cause for greater effort.

Asked if the suspension of all Congress organizations would mean the prevailing of anarchy in India, Mr. Gandhi replied:

No. Anarchy means want of rule and discipline. The Congress would be under rigid discipline. Individuals' activities will be within the limits prescribed by the Congress resolution.

Regarding the suggestion to hold a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee, Mr. Gandhi said:

I would not mind, but personally I think it is impossible unless the step is taken to give up civil disobedience altogether. Such an intention should be made known to the Government. Whether it would he advisable or not, is a question the answer to which will depend upon the temperament of each member.

The Hindu, 27-7-1933

340. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

AHMEDABAD,
July 27, 1933

DEAR GURUDEV,

I have read your Press message[1] regarding the Yeravda Pact, in so far as it applies to Bengal. It caused me deep grief to find that you were misled by very deep affection for me and by your confidence in my judgment into approving of a Pact which was discovered to have

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Cable from Rabindranath Tagore to Sir Nripendranath Sircar", after 22-7-1933. Rabindranath Tagore had forwarded a copy of this message along with his letter dated July 28, 1933 to Gandhiji; *vide* 1st footnote to "Letter to Rabindranath Tagore", 7-8-1933.

done a grave injustice to Bengal. It is now no use my saying that affection for me should not have affected your judgment, or that confidence in my judgment ought not to have made you accept a Pact about which you had ample means for coming to an independent judgment. Knowing as I do your very generous nature, you could not have acted otherwise than you did and in spite of the discovery made by you that you have committed a grave error you would continue to repeat such errors if the occasions too were repeated.

But I am not at all convinced that there was any error made. As soon as the agitation for an amendment of the Pact arose, I applied my mind to it, discussed it with friends who ought to know and I was satisfied that there was no injustice done to Bengal. I corresponded with those who complained of injustice. But they, too, including Ramanandbabu, could not convince me of any injustice. Of course, our points of view were different. In my opinion, the approach to the question was also wrong.

A Pact arrived at by mutual arrangement cannot possibly be altered by the British Government except through the consent of the parties to the Pact. But no serious attempt seems to have been made to secure any such agreement. Your appearance, therefore, on the same platform as the complainants, I, for one, welcome, in the hope that it would lead to a mutual discussion, instead of a futile appeal to the British Government. If, therefore, you have, for your own part, studied the subject and have arrived at the opinion that you have now pronounced, I would like you to convene a meeting of the principal parties and convince them that a grave injustice has been done to Bengal. If it can be proved, I have no doubt that the Pact will be re-considered and amended so as to undo the wrong said to have been done to Bengal. If I felt convinced that there was an error of judgment, so far as Bengal was concerned, I would strain every nerve to see that the error was rectified. You may know that up to now I have studiously refrained from saying anything in public in defence of the Pact, save by way of reiterating my opinion accompanied by the statement that if injustice could be proved, redress would be given. I am, therefore, entirely at your service.

Just now, I am absorbed in disbanding the Ashram and devising means of saving as much as can be for public use. My service will, therefore, be available after I am imprisoned, which event may take

place any day after the end of this month. I hope you are keeping good health.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. RABINDRANATH TAGORE

From a photostat: G.N. 4639

341. LETTER TO R. V. SASTRI

July 27, 1933

MY DEAR SASTRI,

I wanted to dictate something for you as soon as I heard of your fever, but it was no use. I have just now a few moments, and I am taking advantage of them to dictate these few lines.

Of course you are bound to go to Madras for recuperation. I hope that, like Mrs. Sastri and her mother, mere change to Madras will produce a miraculous effect upon you and this will find you free of fever. But you ought to make use of the time now yielded to you to learn from Mrs. Sastri the art of simple cookery and return to Poona with a proper quality of rice as part of your luggage. You cannot give up the struggle to live in Poona and to live in perfect health. What hundreds of Tamilians have been able to do you must be able also to do. You should write to me regularly. Mahadev must have written to you already that Anand Hingorani has been sent to fill in the gap. But you have to return as soon as you have regained your strength and yet there should be no premature return. You should not only regain your strength but learn the art of retaining it. Of course, you will take without reservation from the *Harijan* coffers whatever you need, and if you want me to write to Patwardhan[1] about it I would gladly do so, or to save time you can make use of this letter or the relevant part of it.

Give my love to Mrs. Sastri and the children.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. V. SASTRI

From a photostat: S.N. 19125

[1] Anant Vinayak Patwardhan, printer and publisher of *Harijan*

342. LETTER TO S. SADANAND

July 27, 1933

MY DEAR SADANAND,

I have had rough notes for the last two days from Maganbhai whom I had asked to read the file left by you. He says that the headlines often give an impression wholly different from the contents which they describe. Often events appear which have no basis in fact. Just now I have been reading the *Free Press* during the few moments that I have allowed myself for newspaper reading and I want to tell you that I am not happy over my reading. Your reporters seem to thrive more on gossip than on actualities. Therefore, many things reported do not inspire belief. What I would like you to do is to give the public only such news that have a good foundation and when the news consist of a forecast of events to come, the reporters should have substantial grounds for giving their forecast. I have one forecast in my mind. If it comes to pass I shall certainly congratulate you and your reporters. In any case, you know that the ban no longer exists.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. SADANAND
EDITOR, "FREE PRESS JOURNAL"
DALAL STREET, FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 19126

343. A TESTIMONIAL

July 27, 1933

Abbas's work in the Ashram was appreciated by everybody. He taught me many useful things about carding. He has done service in other ways too. It is my hope and my blessing that, wherever he lives, he will observe the Ashram rules and devote himself to service.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6308

344. LETTER TO BALIBEHN M. ADALAJA

July 27, 1933

CHI. BALI[1],

I have your letter.

I tried hard to persuade Manu[2], but she is very eager to go to Poona and does not wish to return to you. She now wants to study, and wishes to go to Poona because there are better facilities for study in that place. I should, therefore, like you to give your willing permission to her. I don't have the courage to send her to Poona unless you give your consent. Come and see me, if you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1524. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

345. INTERVIEW TO "THE DAILY HERALD"[3]

July 27, 1933

My merely going to jail is not sufficient sacrifice in the face of the sacrifices and sufferings of thousands of men and women of which I have had knowledge since the breaking of the fast. The Ashram has three lakhs worth of immovable property, that is, land and buildings, and movable property worth nearly two lakhs, including a rich library containing 11,000 volumes. We estimate the value of the books at least at Rs. 40,000. The members of the Ashram and I came to the conclusion that we should no longer enjoy these things when others have been deprived of what was just as precious as the, things of the Ashram to the Ashram people. Moreover, many members of the Ashram having decided to offer individual civil disobedience, it would be wrong to expect the Government to treat the Ashram differently from other properties similarly affected. Of course, there is a fundamental difference. The Ashram is a public trust, with well-defined objects; and if the members of such a public institution adopt an

[1] Harilal Gandhi's sister-in-law

[2] Harilal Gandhi's daughter

[3] This was reported as "from a special correspondent".

attitude which brings upon them the heavy hand of the law, good or bad, the property which is the subject-matter of the trust might not be easily affected. It is for this reason that we have decided that we should voluntarily give up possession of the properties to the Government. Hence this step to be taken of disbanding the Ashram.

Replying to supplementary questions, the Mahatma said:

The immovable property will revert to the Government. The movable property, subject to what the Government have to say, will be given to public institutions.

Gandhiji said that he had not finally decided on his method of individual civil disobedience. He added:

I shall resort to no overt act of disobedience without first informing the Government. I shall be ready with my plan on the 1st August.

Asked about the reports current that he is contemplating another march, Gandhiji said:

That is all bazaar gossip. I have not decided on anything yet. It might be another march or might not be. I cannot say yet.

The Hindu, 28-7-1933

346. INTERVIEW TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"

July 27, 1933

In an exclusive interview today, Mr. Gandhi told me that N., Dr. Spiegel and another Englishman, Duncan Greenlees, who was also in the Ashram, were bound not to take part in politics in general and civil disobedience in particular. Mr. Gandhi said:

They are all qualifying themselves for Harijan service. I am, therefore, arranging, if possible, to send them to Wardha, where they will continue their work.

The other inmates, who may not take part in the civil resistance movement, will go to their homes and some old workers and their children will be sent wherever it is most convenient for them to reside or train as the case may be. The disposal of the land, building and movable property of the Ashram will depend largely upon the intentions of Government.

Asked how he would first break the law after the period of the suspension of civil disobedience had expired, MY. Gandhi continued:

No steps will be taken without first intimating Government. What definite steps will be taken, I have not yet been able to decide upon. Of course, Government may frustrate all my plans by anticipating them but that has been my life since the discovery of satyagraha in 1906.

The Times of India, 28-7-1933

347. MESSAGE ON CENTENARY OF ABOLITION OF SLAVERY [1]

[Before *July 28, 1933*][2]

INDIA HAS MUCH TO LEARN FROM THE HEROES OF THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY FOR WE HAVE SLAVERY BASED UPON SUPPOSED. RELIGIOUS SANCTION AND MORE POISONOUS THAN ITS WESTERN FELLOW.

GANDHI

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 29-7-1933

348. A STATEMENT

[*July 28, 1933*]

Mr. Duncan Greenlees, who is now staying in the Ashram, tells me that in bracketing him, a Britisher, with two foreigners, N. and Dr. Spiegel, I did not accurately represent his position. While in accordance with my request under Ashram discipline he does not propose to take part in the present civil disobedience movement, he naturally cannot bind himself in advance to a particular future course of conduct. A time may come, he says, for him to take his due share as a citizen in politics.

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 21544

[1] Reported under the date-line, "Calcutta, July 28, 1933", this and a message from Rabindranath Tagore appeared in the source as "released by Kalidas Nag, Editor, *India and the World*". he. report added that July 29 had been fixed for international celebration in Hull, England, Wilberforce's native town, "in commemoration of the event which synchronized with *the* death anniversary of Wilberforce".

[2] *ibid.*

349. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

July 28, 1933

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your letter. What more can you gain by meeting me? If we adopt poverty in earnest we must not possess even a farthing. What should we do under such circumstances? Our dharma lies only in following our duty to the utmost. Your work lies in khadi service and to turn Sodepur into an ashram is a part of that. Your achievement will be complete if you can bring about all this and can find God in this alone.

Can you not keep Arun at some place other than Sodepur? Or are you and Arun content with remaining at Sodepur and taking whatever treatment is available there?

I trust you have understood all the changes I am making. 1 do not find time to write at length on this matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1704

350. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD,
July 28, 1933

Asked by a representative of the Associated Press as to how he would vacate the Ashram and who would take charge of it, Mr. Gandhi said that it was a question which could be better answered by the Government than by him, for the simple reason that when the members of the Ashram vacated the property, it naturally would become Government's care, but the question was somewhat premature. They would all know in a few days, what would happen to the Ashram property.

Asked if this referred to the movable property also, Mr. Gandhi said he hoped not. That question too would be decided inside two or three days.

It is understood that Mr. Gandhi has written a letter[1] to the Government of Bombay in this connection, a reply to which is awaited by him.

Asked what he thought of the rumours published in the Press that the Government would not give him this time, if he went to jail, the facility for Harijan work that was given to him before, Mr. Gandhi stated that he did not believe the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of India", 26-7-1933.

rumour at all. He had not a shadow of doubt that the Government would not go back upon the policy deliberately adopted by them—a policy which was implied in Yeravda Pact—and for which he had never given, so far as he was aware, the slightest reason.

The Hindu, 28-7-1933

351. NOTES

A NOTEWORTHY DONATION

A Brahmin, who has lost his sister and sister's daughter, sends me a cheque for Rs. 1,750 to be invested and the interest to be used for the benefit of Harijans, in any manner that may commend itself to me. In the course of his letter he says:

> I had set apart Rs. 2,000 for charity in connection with the death of my dear sister and daughter. I have used Rs. 250 out of the sum so far for the local charities and I am sending you the balance for Harijan uplift. My own suggestion is that this money should be invested to form the nucleus of a permanent fund whose interest only should be used for the benefit of Harijans. But you are at liberty, if you think it more advisable, to use the capital in any manner you like in connection with the Harijan service. I would like you not to disclose my name.

I respect both the wishes of the donor and I am handing the cheque to the Gujarat Branch of the Servants of Untouchables Society with instructions to invest it and to use the interest for the benefit of Harijans, with my approval, wherever such approval can be easily procured. I hope that this example will be followed by others.

AN OVERSEER'S CONFESSION

Letters continue still to come as evidence of the indirect influence that the fast had on several workers. One such worker from Gujarat writes a pathetic letter in Gujarati which I condense below:

> When you were in Poona, I often took up the pen to write to you, but my courage failed me. But today, early in the morning, I said to myself that whilst you were so near me I should disburden myself of my sin and tell you how I had robbed poor people. It happened this way: In 1900, you may remember, there was a big famine. I was in charge oflabourers who were employed at some famine work. I was then a mere lad, and I saw nothing wrong in helping myself out of the wages that

were paid to the labourers under my charge. It is likely that I must have taken nothing less than Rs. 100 in this fashion. I was engaged for nearly eight months. The saddest part of the story is that the labourers were all Harijans, whom I was instrumental in engaging. I was otherwise kind to them and they always seemed to be pleased with me. But I helped myself with one pice per head, out of eight to be paid to the full-day labourer. I was so mean that I could not help taking away one pice from the wages of a boy of about 6 years old. The fact that this boy helped me considerably at the time of distribution of wages enhances my guilt. I drowned my conscience and flattered myself with the belief that I could safely steal the money I did from these poor people, because I was instrumental in finding them employment. I had under me non-Harijan labourers also. They did not always relish my taking one pice per head from their wages and I had to threaten them with dismissal if they did not let me steal the pice from them. But the poor Harijans never said a word in protest when I helped myself regularly every day in the manner I have described.

Nor does the recital of misdeeds stop here. I could not even keep my relations with women labourers quite pure.

Though I may not say anything in self-defence I must inform you that the whole atmosphere around me was soul-killing. There was only one Parsi Engineer who, I believe, was incorruptible.

As some penance for my misdeeds I enclose herewith notes for Rs. 250 of which Rs. 50 are marked for the use of Harijans to be distributed as follows:

Rs. 28 towards education.

Rs. 20 towards supply of water to them and Rs. 10 for propaganda.

The other Rs. 200 you can use as you like.

What this young man did in 1900 was undoubtedly the common practice amongst overseers and I fear very much that it still continues. Poor Harijans, unable to find work, otherwise make a virtue of necessity and even feel thankful to those who rob them. They feel that if they resisted the robbery they were in danger of losing the only means of earning a miserable pittance. But such regular robbery of a portion of their hard-earned daily wage cannot

but leave an unpleasant memory behind. I congratulate the writer of the letter on his frankness and his penance. Let this letter be a warning to all Harijan workers and let it serve the purpose of making them clean.

Harijan, 29-7-1933

352. SOME DANGEROUS BELIEFS

A professor of English writes as follows:[1]

My reading of the situation in Cochin and Travancore is that there will be a most unhappy split if temple-entry for Harijans is your next step, unless people are convinced that the *tapasya* you have performed has endowed you with the power to understand our temples. Even non-caste Hindus are not convinced that you are completing the work of Shri Narayana Guru, because he built them separate temples. I humbly beg you to visit personally a temple or two in Kerala with Malaviyaji, if possible.

My own orthodoxy borders on superstition. Your fast perplexed me, I fasted and prayed for guidance, and then I felt I must go to Chottanikary temple to pray for your life. There I met the Brahmin devotee about whom I have written once, and after days of discussion we found we could not agree. On the seventh day I had a feeling that you would successfully terminate the fast.

At the temple I witnessed two cures of what new psychology would call hysteria or multiple personality. The cure of mental and nervous disease is common in many temples. . . .

The orthodox people fear that any departure from usage may lessen the sanctity of temples. The Catholic Church at Ettumanur was once noted for such cures. The slackening of caste rules among Catholics is believed to be the cause of the partial disappearance of the power. It is almost impossible to convince people that such explanations are absurd. They live in a narrow static universe....

I am not so much concerned over the feared unhappy split on the temple-entry question as over the dangerous beliefs to which the professor refers. Suffice it to say that I shall leave no stone unturned to avoid a split. But my goal is quite clear. It is not to have Harijans regarded as a separate body in Hinduism or outside it. I shall be satisfied with nothing less than complete removal of untouchability as it is known to us today. The beliefs, however, to which the professor refers seem to me to be most dangerous. No

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

doubt imagination goes a long way in making us do certain things and to refrain from doing certain other things. People have been known to die of fright because they have mistaken a rope for a snake. But it would be highly improper to cultivate the habit of entertaining such imaginary beliefs.

Therefore, in spite of the professor's testimony about the cures, I am unable to endorse the deduction the professor draws from these cures that the extraordinary beliefs, entertained by people in Malabar about the curative powers of certain idols in certain temples in Malabar, are justified. I feel that it is necessary to educate the people out of such beliefs. They cannot promote healthy thinking. And in any case I do not see how the entry of 'untouchables' can pollute temples or deities installed therein. And it is clear from the very nature of things that the powers, curative or any other, come not from deities but from the imaginary imputing of those powers to the temples or their deities. Surely many 'untouchables' must have entered these temples without being detected and without the efficacy of the deities being in any way affected. In my humble opinion, therefore, it is up to every educated man and woman in Malabar to make a serious effort to rid Hinduism of the beliefs described by the correspondent. Surely it is no matter for joy or congratulation that even the Catholic Church has been affected by the virus of untouchability.

Harijan, 29-7-1933

353. AN EXAMPLE TO COPY

A European correspondent writes:[1]

> . . . My object in writing this letter is not to deal with points in *Harijan* but to draw your attention to (or rather to remind you of—you have surely heard of it) the work being done at Hampton Institute, Hampton, Virginia, and at Tuskegee Institute, Alabama, U.S. for the American Negroes. To some extent the problem of the masses of the Harijans of today is the problem of the American slaves on their emancipation in 1865 (I think that was the date). In the *Story of Hampton* . . . is unfolded the story of how noble white American men and women tackled this problem. Again in *Up from Slavery*, *My Larger Education* and *Tuskegee and Its People* by Booker T. Washington . . . is revealed the story of what noble *black* Americans (many of them graduates of

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

Hampton Institute) have done and are doing for their people and not only for their own people but for others. The scientific experiments in farming carried on at Tuskegee, for example, have benefited the country all round. Might I also suggest that it might not be amiss if some of those in charge of Harijan education paid a visit to these American institutions. The advance of American Negro reads like a wonder-tale. Of course, in no case must manual training be emphasized at the expense of higher literary and artistic training. The two should go hand in hand. My ideal is that every shoemaker should have a University degree and that every University graduate should be skilled in some form of manual work. Thus and thus only would varnashrama become without offence to any, but thus also would the whole point of varnashrama fall away.

I note that you suggest that wealthy people might build new temples, but does it require *wealthy* people to do that? Should not the great feature of such new temples be their simplicity? Are not the reformers, the puritans of Hinduism? Cannot Harijans and reformers, with their own hands, build these temples?

Neither the Hampton Institute nor the Tuskegee are unfamiliar to me, but they cannot be familiar to the Indian readers of the *Harijan*. There is no doubt that the work of Armstrong at the Hampton Institute and of Booker T. Washington at the Tuskegee is worth studying by all Harijan workers and Harijans. The analogy, however, does not hold good in all respects. The work of the white men at Hampton Institute corresponds to some of the work being done by the so-called high-caste Hindus among Harijans. But I feel sure that the duty owing by the former to Harijans, is far more imperative than that of white men towards American Negroes. For we have made of the artificial and assumed superiority of so-called high-castes over Harijans a matter of religion and therefore the work of the Hindu reformer in India is more urgent than that of the white reformer in America, as it also becomes far more difficult. And yet I have no doubt that we have nothing corresponding to Hampton Institute in India. That Institute is a very great enterprise and a noble monument of the industrious and exceedingly well-informed zeal of a handful of white reformers. The Tuskegee Institute is a model for Harijans. Booker Washington has shown to the world what a man of a despised race can do in the teeth of enormous odds. He was able to build that noble edifice at Tuskegee because of his limitless faith and equally limitless application. Indeed, both the Institutes, apart from their special usefulness for Harijans and Harijan sevaks, have a very high value from the general educationist's point of view. I hope some

day, therefore, to give in these pages a gist of the work done by and in both the Institutes. Meanwhile, let it be noted that in both, great stress is laid upon the dignity of manual labour and the endeavour in both is to draw out the best in the students that flock to them.

As to my correspondent's reference to varnashrama, evidently the whole point of it has been missed, for, as I have interpreted varnadharma, there is no bar in any shape or form to the highest mental development. The bar altogether moral is against change of hereditary occupation for the sake of bettering one's material condition, and thus setting up a system of unhealthy and ruinous competition which is today robbing life of all its joy and beauty.

As to the temples, I refer to my description of the model temple! I am trying to think that my model temple more than fulfill the requirements of my correspondent. But my reason for reproducing from the letter the reference to new temples is to emphasize the fact that Western thinkers are watching this movement for the removal of untouchability and that they would have us not merely to be satisfied with the mere destruction of the outward form, but they would have us to carry out a thorough-going reform so as to revolutionize many old-rooted ideas and so to purify Hindu society as to affect the whole of mankind.

Harijan, 29-7-1933

354. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD,
July 29, 1933

Asked by a representative of the Associated Press what he had to say regarding the fears entertained in some quarters that the suspension of the Congress Committees would plunge the country into chaos, Mr. Gandhi stated that behind the question there lay a grave misconception of the situation. The question presupposed that there were lawfully working Congress organizations all over the country, which the acting Congress President had dissolved. The fact was that all such organizations had been declared illegal. What was therefore working were secret organizations, and shadow cabinets, and this was calculated to lead to chaos. That condition had been anticipated, and stopped by the action of the acting President. If there was any chaos now, it would be confined to individuals.

The more he read the criticism levelled at Mr. M. S. Alley's action, Mr. Gandhi said, the more convinced he felt that, as time passed, people would understand the necessity for his action, as also its beauty. It was the only action possible in order to save the Congress and the national honour and the national spirit that had been awakened among the masses.

Asked if it was true as hinted in the Press report that he had offered to Government to take possession of his Ashram in anticipation of confiscation, Mahatma Gandhi said: "No." He asked the people patiently to await events, instead of anticipating them.[1]

Asked whether he had decided his plan of civil disobedience, Mr. Gandhi said there were undoubtedly many schemes floating in his brain, which it would be purposeless to recount, but as soon as anything took a definite shape, he would gladly share it with the public. But he would share it first with the Government. He said the Harijans were more than friends to him and he might not invite them to joint him.

Asked whether he would launch his civil disobedience on the 1st August and call upon anybody to join him, Mr. Gandhi said that, whether it would be 1st August or when, he was unable to say.

The Hindustan Times, 30-7-1933; also *The Hindu*, 31-7-1933

355. STATEMENT ON SENGUPTA DAY

AHMEDABAD,
July 30, 1933

I have received a message from Mr. Santosh Basu, Mayor of Calcutta, and others asking me to announce 6th August as the All-India Sengupta Day. I also have seen Mr. Aney's appeal in the same connection. I associate myself heartily with the appeal made by the acting President of the Congress and I hope that at public meetings that may be convened, striking features of the departed patriot's life will be recalled and endeavour will be made by all to reproduce them in their own lives.

The Hindustan Times, 1-8-1933

[1] This paragraph and the last sentence of the succeeding one are reproduced from *The Hindustan Times*, 30-7-1933.

356. STATEMENT TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[1]

July 30, 1933

On the eve of what is to me an act of greater dedication than perhaps ever before, I would like to urge all Congressmen not to fritter away their energy in debating over the decision of the acting President regarding individual civil disobedience. As an expert I reiterate my opinion that the decision was the only right course to take. In my opinion it is also constitutional. I would urge every Congressman to study my statement[2] carefully and it will be found that if the programme is zealously worked out the Congress will become a much more powerful organization than it has ever been. Without civil disobedience there is no safety and no freedom. Civil disobedience can become impregnable only in the manner pointed out by me.

To non-Congressmen I would say: Help the largest organization in the country in every way you can. It is not a sectional body. It is national in every sense of the term.

To the Englishmen, whether belonging to the services or others, I would say: If you want peace in the land and real friendship with India, Ordinance Rule is not the way, that of the Congress is the only way. I say this as a friend of the English people. Some of you may regard me today as your enemy. I make bold to prophesy that a day will come when the mists will have rolled away and you will admit my claim.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 21541

[1] This was published in *The Hindu,* 31-7-1933, and *The Hindustan Times,* 1-8-1933.

[2] *Vide* "Statement on M. S. Aney's Statement", 26-7-1933.

357. TELEGRAM TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

July 30, 1933

SECRETARY
HOME DEPARTMENT
POONA

HOPE VACATE ASHRAM TUESDAY MORNING AND IF FREE MARCH WITH COMPANIONS IN EASY STAGES IMMEDIATE DESTINATION BEING RAS WITH VIEW TENDER SYMPATHY VILLAGERS MOST HIT. NO DESIRE INVITE VILLAGERS MASS CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE BUT INDIVIDUALS WILL BE INVITED OFFER CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE TERMS CONGRESS RESOLUTION. WILL GIVE TALKS VILLAGERS ON TEETOTALISM LIQUOR DEALERS LEAVE LIQUOR TRADE FOREIGN CLOTH DEALERS DEAL EXCLUSIVELY KHADDAR AND ALL OTHERWISE GO THROUGH CONGRESS CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME. HINDUS WILL BE ASKED SHED UNTOUCHABILITY. SELF AND COMPANIONS WILL MARCH PICELESS AND DEPEND ON VILLAGERS FEEDING US. IN EVENT MY EARLIER ARREST COMPANIONS THIRTYTWO IN NUMBER INCLUDING SIXTEEN WOMEN WILL TAKE UP MARCH.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 21542

358. APPEAL TO PEOPLE OF GUJARAT [1]

July 30, 1933

It was no easy thing to decide to sacrifice the Ashram, but it was very clear to every inmate of the Ashram that the sacrifice was inevitable. This sacrifice is nothing before the suffering and sacrifice that has been gone through by the peasants of Karnatak, Midnapore and Kaira, the U. P. and of the Frontier. They have been so far given secret relief which has now been stopped or will be stopped, and should be stopped. But that does not mean that those who are starving should be deprived of public relief simply because they were satyagrahis. I hope that all the peasants who are in distress will receive

[1] The first and the third paragraphs of this were omitted in the Press reports.

the needed relief from the public and, should Government prohibit the distribution of such relief, those who give the relief will have the ability to resist it and take the consequences. But whether they have the ability or not, the way is clear for me. I have sacrificed my all.

On Tuesday morning I propose, God willing, to march from the Ashram with 33 companions. Some of these will be even physically weaker than I, for there are nearly as many women with me this time as men. But I could not resist their desire to sacrifice themselves. It was to them a call they could not resist. We hope and pray that God will help us to carry out our pledge. Our immediate destination is Ras. In case we are allowed to reach there, we shall proceed further. But it is quite likely that we may all be arrested as we proceed on the march. If we are not so arrested, it is our plan to carry the message of fearlessness to every village home.

We will not invite them to offer mass civil disobedience, but we will certainly ask such as may be ready to offer individual civil disobedience, we will ask those who drink to refrain from it, the liquor-dealer to give up his trade, the foreign cloth dealer to deal exclusively in khaddar and we shall carry the message of hand-spinning to every home. We shall ask the so-called high-class Hindus to wash themselves clean of untouchability and to befriend the Harijans. We shall ask the Harijans to observe the rules of hygiene and abjure carrion, and we shall call upon all the communities to achieve communal unity, thus fulfilling the whole of the constructive programme of the Congress.[1]

Let me set out in brief what we shall expect of the villages we visit. We will not have a copper on us, we shall cheerfully and thankfully accept what humble fare the villagers may offer us. The coarsest fare lovingly served will mean to us the choicest treat. As this is the rainy season, we shall be thankful to be put up in a cottage having a roof and we shall march by easy stages, as many amongst us are not physically strong, and our programme will not be rigid. We shall halt whenever our legs cannot carry us further but we don't propose to spend more than a single night at one place.

It is possible that the Government may take me before Tuesday. Even then the march will continue so long as there is any marcher left free. I am confident that if the sacrifice that we are offering is pure, it

[1] What follows is taken from the photostat source.

will generate a power of non-violence that will put us in reach of the swaraj that millions of us are pining for.

From a microfilm: S.N. 21549; also photostat: S.N. 21416

359. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

July 30, 1933

MY DEAR ANAND,

Just a line to acknowledge your letter. I have come very near Vidya[1]. She knows her course of action but has not enough courage to take it cheerfully. But she is struggling most bravely and I think successfully. She sits by me all the time I am at the Ashram. But she is not likely to see me tomorrow. And she will probably leave for Wardha tomorrow night. You need not worry about her.

I do not know what can be sent you next week. If it is at all possible, I shall certainly send something.

Love.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

360. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

July 30, 1933

BHAI MAVALANKAR,

I think about you every day, but get no time at all to write to you. Today I decided to write this anyhow. I get reports about you from time to time and hear that you are all right. I approve of your self-exile. Without it, you would not have got the rest which you are now getting. As for the world, it will go on without caring for us. Make good use of this opportunity which you have got and improve your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1237

[1] Vidya Hingorani, addressee's wife

361. LETTER TO MAITRI GIRI

July 30, 1933

CHI. MAITRI,

I was pleased to get your letter. Work well now and bring great credit to the Ashram. Bachubhai[1] is a selfless worker. There is very much indeed which you can learn from him. Learn as much as you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6241

362. LETTER TO KRISHNAMAIYADEVI GIRI

July 30, 1933

CHI. KRISHNAMAIYADEVI,

I have your letter. I was glad. Your having taken up work there will certainly benefit you. We are now disbanding the Ashram, and so it has now become the responsibility of you all to keep up its good name. Observe its rules now and do so.

I am sending Durga and Satyavati there. Take care of them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6214

363. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

July 30, 1933

RESPECTED BROTHER,

I request my sister-in-law and you and others to rejoice, instead of being unhappy, that Narandas is joining the movement. In my eyes, this is highly sacred work. I have no doubt at all in my mind that it is your great good fortune that all your sons are taking part in this sacrifice. Have faith that wherever Narandas may go he will come to no harm. Moreover he is not alone; there are many. Women, of whom

[1] Bachubhai Ramdas, nephew of Gangabehn Vaidya

some are even physically weak, have joined this pilgrimage. Please believe with me that by all of us taking up this work we shall wipe the tears of many and bring some happiness to thousands of homes, and let both of you give your blessings to Narandas and the whole party. Humble greetings to both.

Regards to both of you

from

MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

364. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

July 30, 1933

CHI. MAHAVIR,

You seem to be working well. Go on improving your efficiency in the same manner and produce a fine impression on everybody with your sincere work. Bring credit to the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6240

365. LETTER TO TOTARAM SANADHYA

July 30, 1933

BHAI TOTARAMJI,

I have received the letter from you and Chi. Hariprasad. I am fully confident that you will live in accordance with the Ashram rules wherever you might be.

Continue looking after the Ashram lands until the Government takes possession, and utilize the fruit and other produce. Also share them with the weaver brethren.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2536

366. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

SABARMATI,
July 30, 1933

BHAISHRI SHANKERLAL,

Since the Ashram has been disbanded[1] it has been decided by the inmates to hand over the dairy and the cattle at the Ashram to the Goseva Sangh. Hence, on behalf of the Ashram and the Goseva Sangh, since I am its president, I am entrusting the dairy and the cattle to you. You should manage these as a public undertaking. It should largely be self-sufficient. But if the need arises for funds to be raised for it, you may do so. There is some money kept at the Ashram for this work. Arrangement has been made for this to be paid to you as early as possible. The amount is. . .[2]. Bhai Titus[3] will be working as manager of the dairy and as secretary. He should be paid a monthly allowance of Rs. 75. If possible, keep the cowherds who are already employed. I am giving you all the powers in connection with this dairy.[4]

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32726

367. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

July 30, 1933

Interviewed by Pressmen, Gandhiji said that there was no truth in the Press report that he had drafted a letter to the Viceroy. He said he knew only one fetish in life and that was Truth, and he was not sorry for having made of it a fetish.

In his opinion, prestige came unasked and unsought from right conduct, right speech and right thought. His endeavour ever since he entered public life was to regulate it by those three golden rules.

Replying to a question whether his request to the Viceroy for an interview was accompanied by a threat of revival of civil disobedience, Gandhiji declared that in no

[1] In July 1933, Gandhiji had offered to hand over the Sabarmati Ashram to the Government; *vide* also "Interview to Associated Press of India", 25-7-1933 and 301-4. However, the Ashram was finally given over to the Harijan Sevak Sangh; *vide* also "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 24-9-1933.

[2] The figure has been struck off in the source.

[3] T. Titus

[4] *Vide* also "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 24-9-1933.

sense was the request for an interview accompanied by threat of any kind whatsoever, whether direct or indirect, open or veiled.

It was for the sake of avoiding the slightest suspicion of threat that the proceedings of the informal conference were made confidential. It was a public misfortune that the present code of conduct of newspapers not only permitted, but seemed even to applaud the gaining of confidential information by hook or crook, and gave it publicity.

That at an informal conference many things were said in connection with the possibilities that might arise if the interview was not granted or if granted, proved infructuous, could not in any way be interpreted as threat. The relevant fact was that his request for interview carried with it no condition.

The Bombay Chronicle, 31-7-1933

368. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 30, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

I am writing this at the Ashram. It is now 8.45 p.m. I hope you were not over-excited after the interview.[1] You have to put on more weight if you can do so without being ill.

Now that the Ashram is disbanded, you will fall back upon Ranchhodbhai for your needs. I have spoken to him.

I must not[2] write more as I have little time at my disposal and my fingers won't give me much more work for the night.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6284. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9750

369. TELEGRAM TO SILAM

[Before *July* 31, I933][3]

MR. SILAM
SECRETARY, LOKAMANYA MEMORIAL COMMITTEE

DEEPEST REGRET UNABLE UNVEIL STATUE MYSELF. NO HOMAGE TOO GREAT AT THIS JUNCTURE FOR ONE WHO GAVE US SWARAJYA MANTRA.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 21417

[1] Gandhiji had met Mirabehn at Sabarmati Jail earlier.
[2] The source has "now".
[3] The telegram appeared in *Gujarat Samachar*, 31-7-1933.

370. LETTER TO COLLECTOR OF AHMEDABAD[1]

July 14, 1933

You had already given me permission to take away such books as I wanted. Would it be in order for me to take away all the books from the Vidyapith building including the bookshelves in which they are kept? As you know, it has been decided to hand over the books in the Sabarmati Ashram for public use. It is the intention of the trustees of the Vidyapith to hand over the Vidyapith library also in a like manner. Hence my question.[2]

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Vol. Il, p. 161

371. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

July 31, 1933

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I can say neither yes nor no off-hand. You will have to judge for yourself when you cannot help plunging into the fire. You should therefore always prepare a safe substitute for yourself. Am I clear?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 899

372. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

July 31, 1933

DEAR BH-R-R-R[3],

What nonsense! You had a perfect right to explode as you did. The prolonged discussions were enough to try anybody's nerves. But I never doubted your capacity and willingness for suffering when the occasion arose. Do take full rest and plunge when the time comes. This time it is going to be a long-drawn-out affair. That does not

[1] In the source, Narahari Parikh explains that this letter was drafted for D. B. Kalelkar who had sent it "after arriving in Ahmedabad on July 31".

[2] According to Narahari Parikh, the Collector had said in his reply "that there was no objection to the books and such shelves as are not fixtures in the building being removed".

[3] This was a form of greeting between Gandhiji and the addressee.

matter. But it gives one breathing time. Once in, however, there should be no rest after. That is the ideal.

Love to you all.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Good-bye. I expect to find myself H.M.'s guest before tomorrow dawns on me.

From a photostat: S.N. 9585

373. LETTER TO PREMI JAIRAMDAS

July 31, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

I do not get letters from you these days. Tell your father[1] that if Shri Aney goes to jail and he becomes the president and if he accepts my views about dictators, he should abolish the post of Dictator and those of Provincial Dictators.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C. W. 11041. Courtesy: Arjun Jairamdas

374. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[*July 31, 1933*][2]

CHI. NARANDAS,

Your responsibilities are heavy indeed. But I see that God gives you the strength to meet them.

Bhai Apte's letter is enclosed. I knew that some correspondence was going on with Sharja. She has asked for freedom. Have a talk with her and see if you can take the responsibility. If she observes discipline, I don't see any harm in accepting responsibility for her.

Mahadev is likely to be arrested at the same time as I am. Even if that happens, the programme should remain unchanged. Anybody

[1] Jairamdas Doulatram

[2] According to *Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine,* Pt. II, the letter was written before Gandhiji's arrest at midnight on this date.

who is free tomorrow should discuss all the matters with Jamnalalji. He is not to court arrest just now. He should take possession of the Ashram funds. Any secret funds which he finds should be kept openly. I have looked into the accounts and find that there are no sums which the Government can confiscate. All such sums which we had have already been spent. They represented the contributions for satyagrahis. All the same, the Government is welcome to confiscate whatever there is. All sums are earmarked for specific purposes.

If Bali comes there, have a talk with her and come to a clear understanding. If Anasuyabehn shows the slightest reluctance, Manu should go to Wardha. If she is very eager to go to Rajkot, let her do so.

So far as I know, Keshu will definitely go to Wardha. Santok also wants to go there. She wants to take Radha with her and hopes to do to the best of her ability any work which Jamnalalji might give her. Discuss this with her fully.

Send away Balbhadra to Da[kshina] Mu[rti]. Since Rama Joshi has forbidden Dhiru Joshi, make what arrangements you think proper for him. Probably Ramnarayan will keep him till you decide finally. Rama Joshi will have to be given fare to Poona and back. Ask her. See that she is not displeased. Totaramji should look after the Ashram for some time. After that, even if the Government does not take possession of it he should abandon it.

Prabhavati should be given what she requires for going to Banaras or Bihar.

I don't remember anything more just now. If you wish to ask about anything, you may.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8391. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

375. STATEMENT BEFORE DISTRICT MAGISTRATE [1], AHMEDABAD

August 1, 1933

There has never been the slightest desire on my part to disturb the public peace, as I think. In my opinion, I have never done a single thing consciously to disturb the public peace. On the contrary, I make bold to say that I have made the best endeavour possible to promote public peace and I can show several instances in which I have attained very considerable success in preserving and promoting public peace. Being a lover of peace all my life, nothing can be remoter from my thought than to disturb public peace.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(11), Pt. II, pp. 263-5

376. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

CENTRAL PRISON,
SABARMATI,
August 1, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

You must shed your strange and embarrassing manners. Effusiveness is no mark of true devotion. True devotion works stealthily. You will not be fit for Harijan work if you do not concentrate and learn to use your hands well. Your spinning is most clumsy. I hope you do not mind my speaking or writing as I feel. Pure love has to feel harsh at times.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] J. B. Irwin; the statement was made under section 3(2) of the Bombay Act XVI of 1932.

377. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

August 1, 1933

I hope you have settled down to work.[1] You will not wait for approach from but you yourself will approach the members of the family and make yourself at home with everybody. I would like you to express your wants to Nalinibehn. You will not on any account endanger your health.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Please share this with Duncan.

From a photostat: G.N. 6004. Also C.W. 3330. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

378. LETTER TO ADVANI[2]

August 1, 1933

DEAR MAJOR ADVANI,

You might know that before my discharge, owing to my fast, from the Yeravda Central Prison in May last, I was permitted to do Harijan work and thereanent to see freely visitors and equally freely to receive and send letters, to have a typist and to receive newspapers, magazines and other literature. I hope that I would be given the same facilities now. I may state that a weekly newspaper called *Harijan* is issued at Poona and it is necessary for me to send matter for the paper and otherwise instruct the Editor. I have detained in Ahmedabad the typist I brought from Poona. I have understood from you that you have received no instructions from the Government as yet in this matter. Will you please obtain the necessary instructions by wire?[3]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3893; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (14), Pt. V, p. 85

[1] After the disbandment of the Sabarmati Ashram the addressee had gone to the Ashram at Wardha.

[2] Superintendent of Ahmedabad Central Prison

[3] This and the correspondence which followed up to August 16, 1933 were published in The Hindu, 19-8-1933.

379. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

August 1, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

I still feel sorry that I could not meet you a second time. Since there are no women in the Ashram, I have asked Vinabehn[1] to make careful arrangements for looking after you. I hope, therefore, that everything is all right. Your reply to me may be dictated. I am afraid that the message which I sent regarding Dhiru was rather harsh, but I had no option. About your travelling expenses, ask Chimanlal. I don't expect any difficulty.

Dhiru and Balbhadra have gone to Bhavnagar. I certainly hope that they will behave well there.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have also sent messages to Anandi, Bachu, Sharda and Vanamala and asked them to go and inquire after you.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5355

380. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
August 3, 1933

SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

HOME DEPARTMENT

DEAR SIR,

What purports to be an authentic report in *The Times of India* dated the 2nd instant, says that I am to be released after being served with an order[2] which will restrict my movements to Poona and preclude any activities connected with the civil disobedience movement. It then goes on: "Should he ignore this order he will be re-arrested." If the report be true, I would like to say, in order to save

[1] A German lady who was working as a nurse in V. S. Hospital, Ahmedabad

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Order Restraining Gandhiji's Movements", before 18-8-1933; also the following item.

Government possible, unnecessary embarrassment, and to conserve my energy, which I am still regaining since the breaking of the fast, that in accordance with my belief in civil disobedience, I shall be unable to conform to the order reported to be under contemplation. If the object be to secure my conviction I have no doubt that the sweeping powers possessed by Government enable them to do so without going through the vexatious procedure described in the above-mentioned report.

I gratefully observe that Government have kept Sjt. Mahadev Desai with me. He therefore desires me to say that civil disobedience is as much a life-principle with him as with me, and that he can no more refrain than I can from preaching or practising it.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3894; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (14), Pt. V, p. 37

381. STATEMENT BEFORE DISTRICT MAGISTRATE POONA[1]

August 3, 1933

I have already this morning handed to Col. Martin, Superintendent, Yeravda Central Prison, a letter[2] addressed to the Secretary, Home Department, on this subject. This gives my view on the subject and I have nothing further to add.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9724; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14), Pt. V, p. 75

[1] After hearing the directions proposed to be issued under Section 4 of Act XVI of 1932 which was read out to him by D. Maclachlan, District Magistrate, Poona

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

382. STATEMENT[1] *DISOBEYING RESTRAINT ORDER*

August 4, 1933

I have received copy of this order[2]. I regret to have to say that I shall be unable to conform to it.

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14), Pt. V, p. 67

383. TRIAL AT POONA[3]

August 4, 1933

After the Magistrate had explained the circumstances under which the trial was taking place, Gandhiji suggested that as he intended to plead guilty to the charge, witnesses might not be examined. But the Magistrate informed Gandhiji that the procedure required him to record some evidence.

GANDHIJI: I think in 1922, when I pleaded guilty all evidence was dispensed with.

MAGISTRATE: It is very kind of you. I understand what you say. It will of course simplify matters, but it is my duty to record some evidence. But I shall reduce it as much as possible. . . .[4]

Asked by the Court if he wished to cross examine the witness, Gandhiji

[1] Given before R. V. Martin, the Superintendent, Yeravda Central Prison

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Order Restraining Gandhiji's Movements", before 18-8-1933. Gandhiji broke the order forthwith and was re-arrested and taken back to Yeravda Jail for trial; *vide* the following item.

[3] Gandhiji, on his release at 9 a.m., was served with an order to remain within Poona city limits. He was, within an hour, re-arrested for disobeying the order and taken to Yeravda Jail for trial, which began at 3.15 p.m. before Hyam S. Israel, Additional District Magistrate, Poona.

[4] Then, F.W.O'gorman, District Superintendent of Police, the first prosecution witness, narrated the events which led to Gandhiji's arrest.

replied in the negative. . . .[1]

Gandhiji declined to cross-examine this witness also saying:

No, thanks.[2]

To a question put by the Court, Gandhiji stated that his age was 64, and that he was a Hindu by caste.

M. What is your occupation?

G. (Hesitatingly) I am by occupation a spinner, a weaver and a farmer.

M. Your residence?

G. Yeravda Jail now. (Laughter)

M. Now, of course, but otherwise?

G. Otherwise, Sabarmati in Ahmedabad district.

M. Have you anything to say regarding the prosecution evidence recorded?

G. I think that the statements that several prosecution witnesses have made are quite correct.

Gandhiji, proceeding, stated that he desired to make a brief statement as to why he had committed a breach of the order. The court consenting, he dictated off-hand a brief statement in slow and measured tones. He stated:

I would like to make a brief statement as to why I have committed what must be described as a wilful and deliberate breach of orders of the Government of Bombay. It cannot be a matter of pleasure to me to commit a breach of orders of a constituted authority. I am a lover of peace, and I regard myself a good citizen voluntarily tendering obedience to the laws of the State to which I may belong. But there are occasions in the lifetime of a citizen when it becomes his painful duty to disobey laws and orders of his State. As is well known, such a painful duty came upon me in 1919 and I have not only regarded it as my duty to offer civil disobedience but also to preach it to others.

[1] Lt.-Col. Martin, Superintendent, Yeravda Jail, the second witness to be examined, stated that it was he who served the order on Gandhiji. Then, Assistant Superintendent of Police, the third witness, deposed that Gandhiji and Mahadev Desai were found at 9.40 a.m. still within Yeravda limits having gone out of the jail in a private taxi. On being told to quit the place at once, they refused to do so. After ten minutes, they were reminded of the order, and on their refusal to comply with it, they were both re-arrested by the witness and brought back to Yeravda Jail.

[2] The taxi driver in whose taxi Gandhiji drove to Golf Iinks was the last witness. He corroborated the other witnesses.

This law or Act under which I have been tried, is a glaring instance in proof of my contention that the system under which India is being governed today is not merely unjust, but is dragging her down economically and morally.

I have had recently a spell of freedom and was in the midst of people and had an opportunity of coming into contact with a very large number of men and women. I made what was to me a most painful discovery, that men high and low, educated and uneducated, rich and poor, were demoralized, and were living in a perpetual fear of loss of liberty and their possessions.

It was a trial for me to live in the midst of that atmosphere. Being by nature from my childhood a confirmed believer in the methods of non-violence, I sought shelter in self-suffering such as might fall to my lot. That was the only way in which I could relieve myself of some of the agony that was burning in me.

It is for reasons such as this that I am offering all resistance to this system of Government—a resistance that is within my capacity and resistance that a peaceful man like me could offer.

One word more. I think, you, Sir, or Government would, after sentencing me, classify me. I must state that I intensely dislike the procedure of classification of prisoners into A, B and C classes. I have no desire whatsoever to enjoy the special comforts to which other fellow-prisoners might not be entitled. I would like to be classified amongst those whom the Government may consider to be the lowest. I would like, in conclusion, to state that the authorities with whom I had come in contact during these few days have treated me with courtesy and consideration for which I am thankful to them.

After making the above statement, Gandhiji read through it as recorded by the Magistrate and stated that it was all right.

The Magistrate then framed a charge under Section 14 of the Bombay Special Powers Act 1932, for intentionally disobeying an order of the Government under Section 4 of the same Act requiring him among other things to remove himself before 9.30 a.m. outside Yeravda village limits. Asked if he pleaded guilty, Gandhiji replied in the affirmative.

Gandhiji also stated that he did not want to call defence witnesses. At this stage the police prosecutor said that considering Gandhiji's age he did not press for a deterrent sentence.

The Magistrate delivered judgment and observed that it had been proved that Gandhiji disobeyed an order of the Government. As such he convicted him under

Section 14 of the Bombay Special Powers Act of 1932 and sentenced him to one year's simple imprisonment....

M. I am passing a light sentence considering your age and the present state of your health and also because the prosecution has not pressed for a deterrent sentence.

This concluded the trial and Gandhiji rose after bowing to the Magistrate and was taken by the jailor to his cell. Gandhiji has been placed in 'A' class.[1]

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-8-1933

384. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
August 4, 1933

SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT
HOME DEPARTMENT

DEAR SIR,

On the day of my admission to the Ahmedabad Central Prison, I applied through its Superintendent for permission to resume anti-untouchability work as before my late fast. There is no reply to it as yet. Government know that I have been controlling the policy of the weekly newspaper *Harijan* and its Gujarati edition, and partly also the Hindi edition. This is only part of the anti-untouchability work I am doing in fulfilment of my promise to myself and the Harijans as an integral part of the Yeravda Pact. This work may not be interrupted except at the peril of my life. I would therefore esteem a reply by Monday next, so as to enable me to attend to next week's *Harijan* and to deal with certain important matters that were left pending at the time of my arrest.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3895

[1] Mahadev Desai was then brought before the Magistrate. He was sentenced to one year's simple imprisonment and was placed in 'B' class.

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", 6-8-1933.

385. ETHICS OF FASTING

A learned correspondent from the West thus writes about my late fast:

> I have read your reply[1] to a correspondent querying the ethics of your fast. I don't quite see your point. You seem to think that the fact of your suffering removes all offence from such a deed; but every man who does wrong suffers—according to your reasoning, then, there is no such thing as wrongdoing. If, instead of identifying yourself with your body, you, for a moment, regard your body objectively, is it not then clear to you that violence to or unnatural treatment of that body is as much an infringement of the law of ahimsa as such unnatural or violent treatment of any other extraneous object? The fact that good men in other ages have contemplated and even perpetrated such fasts is no argument.

This argument has been advanced before, but not so seriously as has been done by my correspondent. As I hold that fasting as a powerful means of purification ought to occupy an important part in the life of the human family, it is best to examine the argument.

The fact of a fast even by the offender does not remove the offence from his deed, much less can it do so when it is vicarious. What the fast does is to prevent repetition of evil. Most, if not all, evil comes from attachment to the flesh. If, therefore, the flesh is mortified, attachment to it is likely to decrease. No doubt this is dependent on the motive with which a fast is undertaken. There is a great deal of truth in the saying that man becomes what he eats. The grosser the food, the grosser the body. Plain living is said to go hand in hand with high thinking. But plain living is only a few steps removed from fasting. Plain living may itself be said to be a mode of fasting. Complete fasting is a forcible reminder of the fact that 'man does not live by bread alone'.

'But assume that there is some force in the argument you advance for the offender's fast, what about vicarious fasting?' might say the correspondent. The answer is that just as there is identity of spirit, so is there identity of matter and in essence the two are inseparable. Spirit is matter rarefied to the utmost limit. Hence, whatever happens to the body must affect the whole of matter and the whole of spirit. It is within the experience of us all that often wrongdoers are touched by the loving acts of their friends and

[1] *Vide* "An American Criticism", 22-7-1933.

relatives especially when they consider the latter to be better than they. Fasting for the sake of loved ones is a forcible and unmistakable expression of love and therefore affects those for whose sake it is undertaken. Those whose love encircles the whole of life cannot but affect the whole creation by a supreme act of love.

If the necessity of fasting is admitted, the argument that it is unnatural or an act of violence to one's own body falls to pieces. Just as a fast for regaining lost health is neither unnatural nor criminal self-torture, so is not a fast for purification of self or others.

But all my argument is useless if it cannot be sustained by practice. And if there is any soundness in it, the unbroken practice of all the sages and others from time immemorial clinches the argument. Sceptics, however, need not rely either upon argument or past testimony. Let them acquaint themselves with the rules and the science of fasting for purification and then test its efficacy themselves. That fasting does not appeal to people brought up in the midst of the dazzling materialism is an additional reason for people like my correspondent not to reject summarily one of the most potent methods of purification and penance.

Harijan, 5-8-1933

386. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

August 5, 1933

DEAR COL. MARTIN,

You were good enough this morning to tell me that according to rules I had to pay for any rations I needed outside the scale ordinarily provided for prisoners and that therefore I should tell you what I considered to be my minimum wants. I may say in the first instance that I do not desire to pay for any extra food that I may need. I was admitted as a convict in 1922 and I was not called upon to pay for anything in the shape of food or otherwise, but I recognize that Government may adopt a different policy this time, and if they do, that would be no cause for complaint by me. I should be satisfied with whatever food was provided so long as it did not interfere with the restrictions that I have observed now for many years. The food that I need and has been provided hitherto by the prison authorities is goat's milk, fresh and dried fruit, fresh vegetables, and, whenever I have needed it, bread.

You have asked me also to tell you what facilities I should like in the shape of newspapers, etc. I do not know that I have any choice in the matter. I must therefore leave it to the Government to decide what they would allow. As to correspondence and visits however, I have to write some business letters in connection with the disbandment of the Ashram, the affairs of the estate of the late Dr. P. J. Mehta and other social and religious obligations and to have visits thereanent. I would like the Government to extend to me the same facilities that they have given me hitherto.

There are however two things which are vital needs, just as much as food for the body. One of these is the conduct of the anti-untouchability movement on which I have already addressed the Government. The second is humanitarian contact with companions who are fellow prisoners. This last was recognized even during myfirst incarceration as a convict and has continued ever since. I hope that the practice will be so continued during the present incarceration.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3896; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14, 1, Pt. V, pp. 87-9

387. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

August 6, 1933

SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT
HOME DEPARTMENT
POONA

DEAR SIR,

Government's reply that my request for permission to resume anti-untouchability work is under consideration but that decision cannot be given by Monday next has been just conveyed to me (10 a.m.).

In thanking Government for the reply, I would like to state that there are three matters which do not admit of delay if my work is not to suffer seriously.

The Editor-in-Chief, Sjt. Sastri, of *Harijan* is bed-ridden and on sick leave in Madras. The paper is in charge of two men untrained for

the work. For last week's issue, I had made arrangements beforehand and sent some manuscripts from Sabarmati last Monday. Whilst therefore Government are considering my request, I should be permitted to see Sjt. Anand Hingorani or Kaka Kalelkar two persons in charge, and to send manuscripts for next week's issue.

The second is a letter[1] from Dr. Tagore which was given to me on Friday last. I enclose it herewith. It demands an immediate reply.

The third is this: I have four Europeans under training for Harijan service. They were at the Sabarmati Ashram. They are Miss Mary Barr, N. Devi, Dr. Margarete Spiegel and Mr. Duncan Greenlees. They have been sent to Wardha where they would be in unfamiliar surroundings. N. Devi and Dr. Spiegel are comparative strangers to India and otherwise require delicate attention. I should like to be able to write to them and to Sjt. Vinoba who is in charge of Wardha Ashram and who is to look after them.

There are other matters no less important, but which can await a few days' delay. I venture to hope therefore that pending their decision, Government will grant me by tomorrow the facilities requested about the three matters I have mentioned.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3897; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(0)(14), Pt. V, pp. 89-91

[1] Dated *July* 28, 1933; *vide* 1st footnote to "Letter to Rabindranath Tagore", 7-8-1933.

388. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
August 7, 1933

DEAR COL. MARTIN,

Will you kindly let me have a copy of the Government's reply read to me last night or let me make a copy?

In accordance with the reply to the first-request, I am now ready with the manuscript for the *Harijan*. Will you kindly therefore ring up Sjt. Kodandarao, Servants of India Society, and ask him to send Kakasaheb Kalelkar, and if he is not available, Sjt. Anand Hingorani, at 3 o'clock today, so as to enable me to hand over the manuscript and give instructions?

Yours sincerely,

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-XIII, 1933

389. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

August 7, 1933

DEAR GURUDEV,

Your letter[1] of the 28th July enclosing copy of your cable to Sir Nripen Sarkar on the Yeravda Pact was handed to me here on the 4th instant. Evidently your letter crossed mine which I wrote[2] whilst I was in Ahmedabad. For the time being I am unable however to send you anything but this bare acknowledgement.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4640

[1] Rabindranath Tagore had written: "This is the copy of the message which, with very great pain and reluctance, I cabled to Sir Ripen and from which you will know how I feel about this Poona Pact. I am fully convinced that if it is accepted without modification it will be a source of perpetual communal jealousy leading to constant disturbance of peace and a fatal break in the spirit of mutual co-operation in our province" (Home Department, Printed Political File No. 3/17/33, 1933, pp. 16-7. Courtesy: National Archives of India). For the cable sent by Rabindranath Tagore to Sir Nripendranath Sircar, *vide* Appendix "Cable from Rabindranath Tagore to Sir Nripendranath Sircar", after 22-7-1933.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Rabundranath Tagore", 27-7-1933.

390. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

August 8, 1933

SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT

HOME DEPARTMENT, POONA

DEAR SIR,

I have to thank you for the very prompt reply to my letter of the 6th containing three requests. I have thankfully taken advantage, pending orders on my general request about Harijan work, of the permission granted on the first request, and of the very limited permission granted on the second and the third requests. I may however state that in making my requests I have not been influenced by the fact of my being classified as an 'A' class prisoner. Having lodged my protest at my trial against classification, I did not and do not want to make unnecessary fuss about it, and I know that it is open to me not to avail myself of any of the privileges allowed to 'A'-class prisoners. Moreover, I am quite aware that I allow myself to enjoy physical facilities not granted by Government to other prisoners of even 'A' class. I do so not because I have been classified 'A', but because those facilities are of physical or medical necessity for me. But I need other facilities which are higher than these and without which life itself becomes an intolerable burden. They arise from the cravings of the soul. But I am anxious as a prisoner to avoid all controversy with Government. I would ask them therefore to be as considerate in regard to my supra-physical needs, as they have been in regard to my physical needs.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3898; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14), Pt. V, p. 93

391. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

August 10, 1933

SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT

HOME DEPARTMENT1

POONA,

DEAR SIR,

I regret to have to remind you of my letters regarding Harijan work. Kakasaheb Kalelkar whom I met on Monday last told me that there were urgent letters in the matter awaiting me in the post. There are pressing Harijan problems demanding my immediate attention. I do hope therefore that I shall be favoured with the final decision before or on Monday next at the latest.

I attach hereto a copy[1] of the Government of India's orders in the matter. In my humble opinion they are unequivocal.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3899; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14), Pt. V, p. 95

392. TRUE INWARDNESS

An Arya Samajist writes a long letter in Hindi. Here is the gist:

1. Should Harijans in order to rise in the social scale remain Hindus or will it serve the same purpose if they became Christians or Mussalmans?

2. Is not untouchability determined merely by the name of the caste to which one may belong?

3. If untouchability is to be removed from Hinduism, why not invite untouchables to join the Arya Samaj?

4. What is the speciality of Hinduism for which a Hindu need cling to it?

In my opinion these questions betray the ignorance of the questioner about the true scope of the reform that is being attempted.

[1] Received by Gandhiji on November 3, 1932.

The pages of the *Harijan* make it clear from week to week that it is the so-called higher classes that have to reform themselves by getting rid of untouchability, of high-and-lowness. It is they who have to repent and purify themselves. They have to come in contact with Harijans not for the sake of the latter, not as their patrons but for the sake of themselves and as the servants of Harijans. Therefore the object is not served by Harijans forsaking Hinduism.

And in my opinion religion is a much deeper thing than the questioner would allow. It is not a matter of convenience or of bettering one's social or material condition. People have been known to cling to their religion although they have had to face social ostracism, material ruin and much worse. One's religion keeps one true in the face of the greatest adversity. It is the sheet-anchor of one's hope in this world and even after. It binds one to one's God, to Truth as to nothing else. Therefore, whilst Harijans must know best what is good for them, I, in their place, could not be satisfied by change of religion. From the practical point of view, they seem to me to be so inextricably mixed up with the so-called higher classes that the vast majority simply cannot help remaining Hindus. It is this helplessness which lays a double burden upon 'the higher classes' of doing the much belated reparation by regarding them as respected members of the Hindu family in spite of some of their habits. Indeed, whatever is evil in their habits is due to the criminal neglect of 'the higher classes'. The quickest way to remove the evil is to remove untouchability and receive them as they are as full-fledged Hindus.

The answer to the second question is in the affirmative. That just shows how precarious untouchability is. If the Harijans would conceal their caste name and simply declare themselves as Hindus they will, as in many cases they do, pass muster except in their immediate neighbourhood. But from the standpoint that I have suggested, such subterfuge can only protract the agony. It cannot cure 'the high classes' of the taint of superiority and touch-me-notism .

As to the third question, what I have said above makes it clear that the admission of Harijans to the Arya Samaj does not solve the difficulty. The hearts of millions of non-Arya Samajists will not be touched by the Harijans' acceptance of the Arya Samaj. It is the 'superior' Hindu heart that has to melt. It is the whole of Hinduism that has to be purified and purged. What I am aiming at, what I hope the Servants of Untouchables Society is aiming at, is the greatest

reform of the age. That it may take time to achieve it, does not much matter. The reform is assured, if there are reformers enough who will not be baffled by any difficulty and will not lower the flag on any account whatsoever. They will not, if the conviction has gone home that for Hinduism to live, untouchability has got to go.

The fourth is an invidious question. Perhaps it is also profitless. But I must answer it, if only to show what I mean by religion. The closest, though very incomplete, analogy for religion I can find is marriage. It is or used to be an indissoluble tie. Much more so is the tie of religion. And just as a husband does not remain faithful to his wife, or wife to her husband, because either is conscious of some exclusive superiority of the other over the rest of his or her sex but because of some indefinable but irresistible attraction, so does one remain irresistibly faithful to one's own religion and find full satisfaction in such adhesion. And just as a faithful husband does not need, in order to sustain his faithfulness, to consider other women as inferior to his wife, so does not a person belonging to one religion need to consider others to be inferior to his own. To pursue the analogy still further, even as faithfulness to one's wife does not presuppose blindness to her shortcomings, so does not faithfulness to one's religion presuppose blindness to the shortcomings of that religion. Indeed faithfulness, not blind adherence, demands a keener perception of shortcomings and therefore a livelier sense of the proper remedy for their removal. Taking the view I do of religion, it is unnecessary for me to examine the beauties of Hinduism. The reader may rest assured that I am not likely to remain Hindu, if I was not conscious of its many beauties. Only for my purpose they need not be exclusive. My approach to other religions, therefore, is never as a fault-finding critic but as a devotee hoping to find the like beauties in the other religions and wishing to incorporate in my own the good I may find in them and miss in mine.

Harijan, 12-8-1933

393. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

August 14, 1933

SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT

HOME DEPARTMENT

POONA

DEAR SIR,

It is now noon of Monday, and I am yet without any answer to my request for resumption of Harijan work on the same terms as before my fast. This request was first conveyed on the 1st instant from the Central Prison at Ahmedabad and has since been thrice repeated.[1]

The strain of deprivation of this work is becoming unbearable. If therefore I cannot have the permission by noon next Wednesday, I must deny myself all nourishment from that time, save water and salts. That is the only way I can fulfil my vow and also relieve myself somewhat of the strain mentioned above. I do not want the proposed suspension of nourishment in any way to act as a pressure on the Government. Life ceases to interest me if I may not do Harijan service without let or hindrance. As I have made it clear in my previous correspondence, and as the Government of India have admitted permission to render that service is implied in the Yeravda Pact to which the British Government is a consenting party, in so far as its consent was necessary. Therefore I do indeed want the permission, but only if the Government believe that justice demands it and not because I propose to deprive myself of food if it is not granted. That deprivation is intended purely for my consolation.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3901; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, *File* No. 800(40)(14), Pt. V, p. 97

[1] On August 4, 6, 8 and 10.

394. LETTER TO R.. V. MARTIN

August 14, 1933

DEAR COL. MARTIN,

Will you please read the enclosed[1] and forward it as early as you can to the proper quarters? That is of course if no reply has been received to my request regarding Harijan work.

Yours sincerely,

Home Department, Government of Bombay, I.G.P. File No. 20-XIII, 1933

395. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

August 15, 1933

DEAR COL. MARTIN,

With reference to the two communications received by you from Government, I beg to state as follows:

1. As to the reply to my letter[2] of the 10th instant addressed to the Government, whilst I am thankful for the permission to hand over the *Harijan* manuscript to the acting Editor and give instructions, this permission does not meet immediate requirements. It is difficult without being in touch with correspondence from day to day to write usefully for the *Harijan.* Again, to be in touch with the correspondents on untouchability is just as urgent as editing the *Harijan.* For instance a difficult experiment under my supervision is being carried on in connection with a Harijan school. I have to be in contact withthe teacher if the school is to be a success. I have put some Ashram girls and boys in a Harijan boarding house, an experiment probably the first of its kind. It cannot go on without my constant attention. This was started on the eve of my arrest. These are but two out of the many instances I can cite, of matters demanding my personal attention.

The least therefore that I require at once is:

(a) the delivery of all the correspondence in your possession with permission to reply to so much of it as may have any connection with untouchability;

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", 10-8-1933.

(b) access to, and disposal of, all correspondence received at the *Harijan* office;

(c) access to newspapers received by you or the *Harijan* office so as to enable me to deal with points on untouchability that may have been discussed in those papers.

If the permission is given on these three matters, pending final orders on my request, I shall not need to fast from tomorrow noon, as stated in my letter[1] to Government yesterday. If it can be obtained in the course of the day, I would like to see Kakasaheb Kalelkar or Sjt. Anand Hingorani today. I should be able then to hand over some manuscript to go on with.

2. What I have said above perhaps answers the Government's letter regarding the disposal of my correspondence in your possession. I have no desire to receive a fortnightly letter under the classification rules. The bulk of my correspondence is likely to have a bearing on untouchability and would demand my personal attention or instructions. If the correspondence is handed to me I would gladly return that which may not pertain to untouchability. There are likely to be letters concerning business affairs. I should take the Government instructions regarding such letters. The fact of the matter is that I have many public activities besides the political, and as I told you personally this morning, in my opinion the just way to deal with me is, after insuring my strict abstention from participation directly or indirectly in civil disobedience, to give me the facilities mentioned in my letter[2] to you of the 5th instant.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 3902 also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14), Pt. V, pp. 99-101

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", 14-8-1933.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to R. V. Martin", 5-8-1933.

396. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

August 16, 1933

DEAR COL. MARTIN,

Since there is no reply to the request contained in my letter[1] of yesterday, my fast begins from noon today as already intimated in my letter. Will you therefore kindly give the necessary orders for not sending the goats to be milked, and not sending to the market for sweet and sour limes?

Though the fast begins, if there is no objection kindly telephone to Kakasaheb Kalelkar to come to the prison today as early as he can, so as to enable me to hand him the manuscript for *Harijan,* which is already prepared and to give him instructions.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3903; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14), Pt. V, p. 101

397. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

August 16, 1933

DEAR COL. MARTIN,

I see that I have hastily and stupidly told you to restore the goats to me. It shows how disinclined I am to starve. But on reading the notes of the orders[2] you have left with me, they are so far short of the original orders of the Government of India and of my requirements that I must not be precipitate in breaking the fast. If the Government wish to go back upon those orders I shall be sorry, but It may not

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] "On August 16, Gandhiji was informed that it had been decided that he would be granted the following special facilities for purposes of work strictly confined to anti-untouchability: (1) to receive newspapers and periodicals, but not to be allowed interviews for publication in the Press, whether with Press correspondents or others; (2) to see not more than two visitors a day; (3) to send instructions or contributions to the Editor of *Harijan* three times a week, and a limited number of letters to other correspondents and (4) to have at his disposal a convict-typist, books and newspapers, needed for Harijan *work*" (*The Hindu*; 19-8-1933). *Vide* also the following item.

work under the new orders which are a manifest departure from the original and which seem to me to be grudgingly given. I observe that you cannot even let me have the letters already in your possession and to hand the manuscript to the acting Editor for this week's *Harijan.* It pains me to have to write this letter, but it will give much greater pain if I break the fast now and have to enter upon a prolonged controversy with the Government on many matters that need elucidation. I miss Government response to the meticulous care with which I am endeavouring to observe jail discipline and as a prisoner tender co-operation which as a citizen outside prison walls I consider it a religious duty to withhold. I have read your notes three times and each reading has increased my grief to discover that Gover-nment cannot appreciate the desperate need there is for me to do Har-ijan work without let or hindrance. Much therefore as I am disinclined to continue the fast, I feel that I must go through the agony if I cannot serve the Harijan cause without the tremendous handicap which it seems to me the orders conveyed by you put upon it.

Will you therefore please withdraw the milk and the fruit already received by me, and accept my apology for having hurriedly told you that I would break the fast?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3904; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14), Pt. V, p. 103

398. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

August 17, 1933

DEAR COL. MARTIN,

With reference to our conversation of this morning, before I can break my fast the following points require to be settled:

l. I should see Kakasaheb Kalelkar or Sjt. Anand Hingorani before 12 o'clock today for handling manuscript and giving. instructions.

2. All the letters and newspapers in your possession should be handed to me, subject to the condition mentioned in my letter[1] of 15th instant.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to R. V. Martin", 15-8-1933..

3. The notes[1] you showed me bind me to the non-publication of interviews in the Press. This is a physical impossibility as I can have no control over persons who would see me. It is not contemplated that I would only see those who would be subject to my discipline. I would be seeing hot opponents, perhaps more often, than friends.

4. The notes contemplate two visitors a day. I can never conduct the movement if I am thus restricted. I have to see visitors as they come if I am to influence them.

5. As a journalist of 29 years' standing I can say that restriction as to the sending of instructions to the Editor three times per week is wholly unworkable, and it is not clear whether the Editor or Editors are to see me personally or not.

6. The notes contemplate a limited number of letters to other correspondents. I do not know what the Government have in mind by the term 'limited'. I had to send, during the last dispensation, on an average something like thirty letters a day.

7. There is no mention in the notes about letters. I take it that it is an unintended omission and that I shall have all the letters and newspapers, whether received by you or the *Harijan* office, my work on them being strictly confined to untouchability.

You will now see what a gulf exists between my requirements and the concessions the Government are prepared to grant. If the Government would permit me to handle the tremendous movement of anti-untouchability affecting millions of human beings, they should give full effect to the Government of India orders under the last dispensation. There was in them a frank recognition of my submission and therefore a full response to it. I miss it altogether in the notes. So far as I am aware I have given no cause whatever for change of policy. If permission is given as requested by me, I can give my absolute assurance that I shall take no undue advantage of it, I shall confine myself strictly to anti-untouchability work and shall endeavour to the best of my ability to consult the convenience of the prison staff.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[PS.]

I take it that the convict-typist is also a shorthand typist, and that, if everything is satisfactorily settled, I shall have the assistance as before of Sjt. Mahadev Desai and Chhaganlal Joshi.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: G.N. 3905; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14), Pt. V, pp. 105-7

399. QUANTITY v. *QUALITY*

There is no doubt that workers in a cause are as a rule tempted more by quantitative than by qualitative results of their labours. And though the volume of work done throughout India, as a result of anti-untouchability movement represented by the Servants of Untouchables Society, is not by any means unsatisfactory as a whole, it looks insignificant when it is distributed over the respective provinces and when it is considered relatively to the goal which is complete removal of untouchability, that is, of the high-and-lowness mentality that pervades Hinduism. There was, therefore, despondence markedly reflected at the meetings of anti-untouchability workers that were called during my convalescence after the recent fast. I did not share the despondence myself. For, I had only quality in mind whereas I saw that the co-workers had consciously or unconsciously quantity in mind.

I would have one good teacher in preference to fifty indifferent ones, I would be satisfied with the constant attendance of five children instead of the sporadic attendance of fifty. I would have five workers concentrating their attention on compact, small, selected areas rather than having them to cover large areas to which they could never give concentrated attention.

If this preference for quality is good, as it is for any movement, it is especially so for an essentially religious movement like that of anti-untouchability. In religion, indifference to quality may even lead to disaster. If teachers are a stop-gap, if school children come when they like and workers go about from place to place without establishing personal contact with Harijans, it may be found that both the Harijans and the caste men may have their hearts untouched at the end, say, of ten years' labours, and the result may be a reaction against the movement on the part both of Harijans and caste men.

In a religious movement faith plays an important part. Therefore many factors are necessarily unknown and unknowable. No one can fathom the movement from time to time as we can most secular movements in which most factors are known and under control. If I want to manufacture one million yards of khadi, given the hands and cotton I would be able to say when I can. But if I have to touch the hearts of five Hindus and wean them from untouchability, I should not know when, if at all, I could accomplish the task. I have simply to work in the belief that my cause being just, if I am a pure enough person to handle it, I must touch the hearts of the five Hindus amongst whom I have been called upon to work. I may not, therefore, have any despondence over my mission nor may I change the venue of my work, nor ambitiously extend its scope beyond my capacity. On the contrary, I must believe that not only shall I be able by gentleness and patience to affect the five fellow Hindus, but that when I have succeeded with them I shall not be long in succeeding with five millions. This, and no other, is the meaning of the saying, "Faith can move mountains" or "To those who work assiduously and in My name I always grant success".

Therefore, what we need is boundless faith backed by perfect purity of character. An impure mind and a religious spirit go ill together. By purity of character is here meant truth, love and chastity in thought, word and deed. If we have not these we shall neither move the caste men nor the Harijans. If we have not this triple purity, not only shall we fail to steal the hearts of either, but by our failure we shall discredit not merely ourselves but the great cause we represent.

Hence, I have no hesitation in saying that in our campaign against untouchability, if we will take care of quality, quantity will take care of itself. It is hardly necessary to point out that what is said here about quality applies as well to Harijan workers as to caste workers. If the former are to carry out an internal moral reformation, I was going to say, revolution among Harijans, they will do so only by producing workers of unimpeachable purity and integrity, working with single-mindedness in limited areas where they can establish personal contacts.

Harijan, 19-8-1933

400. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

August 19, 1933

THE SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT
HOME DEPARTMENT
POONA

DEAR SIR,

Col. Martin has kindly given me a copy of your reply[1] to my letter[2] of the 17th instant addressed to him. I regret to observe that your reply realizes my worst fears. Where I thought there was a possibility of a more favourable construction on some of the points, your reply now makes it clear that there was no warrant for any such construction. It therefore becomes unnecessary for me to take up the various points in your letter.

But I have now understood through Mr. Andrews that the difficulty in the way of Government carrying out the orders of the Government of India to which I have already referred is that instead of being a State prisoner I am now a convicted prisoner. If that be the cause for a radical departure from a policy explicitly laid down by the Government, not by way of concession, but as the Government of India have admitted, ''because it is necessary that he (I) should have freedom in regard to visitors and correspondence on matters strictly limited to removal of untouchability", ''there being no restrictions on publicity", I cannot understand how what was considered to be necessary for me becomes any the less necessary now, by reason of my being a convicted prisoner. Just as Government have recognized my physical wants and satisfied them in spite of my being a convict, even so, I venture to submit, do my spiritual wants regarding untouchability demand full recognition from Government.

The last paragraph of your letter grieves me. The reminder contained in it comes as an added injury to my wounded soul, for I have stated to Government more than once that civil disobedience under circumstances like the present is a part of my creed. But I recognize that what I consider as a perfectly lawful and moral activity,

[1] For a summary of this in a cable dated August 18 from Viceroy to Secretary of State, London, *vide* Appendix "Excerpts from Viceroy's Cable to Secretary of State", 18-8-1933.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to R. V. Martin", 17-8-1933.

Government consider as unlawful and probably even immoral. I must therefore be content to be their prisoner not merely for the natural term of the present confinement, but for such time as India comes to her own if I live long enough to see that day—if, that is to say, there is any possibility still left of Government fulfilling their solemn obligation and my coming safely out of the ordeal through which I am going.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3906; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(l4), Pt. V, pp. 109-11

401. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN.

August 19, 1933

DEAR COL. MARTIN,

For the last three or four days you have been sending me mutilated copies of *The Times of India*. I have surmised that the mutilations are due to references to my fast. If my surmise is correct, I venture to think the mutilation is not fair to me. If anything has been said by or on behalf of Government, I should at least know what it is, so that I could make my submission to the Government if there was anything that I might consider unfair in the statements appearing in the Press. In fairness to all concerned, I would suggest that the full text of the correspondence beginning from my letter of the 29th September 1932 addressed to Major Bhandari, with reference to my request for doing Harijan work, should be published, if it has not already been done.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3907; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14), Pt. V, p. 113

402. A SILENT WORKER IN THE HARIJAN CAUSE

In the year 1919 when I lay ill in Mani Bhuvan, a well-built gentleman came to see me. I have a faint recollection that he had brought along some money too. I asked him whose son he was. He

replied that he was the son of Hariprasad Desai of Bhavnagar. Hearing this, I was reminded of the days when my father was alive. Even in my childhood, I had heard of this well-known family of Bhavnagar. Hence I said to Bhai Yashwant prasad that our friendship was old enough to entitle me to exploit him, to which he readily agreed saying that all that he had was available for my work. I had come to know about his Barsi mill and other enterprises. The contact then established became increasingly closer and in the end we became like father and son. His contribution was always there in all my activities. Whether for the sake of khadi or any other activities, he always allowed himself to be exploited. I have never had to beg from him. Time and again, of his own accord he put sums of money into my hands.

He was a sincere worker for the Harijan cause. He made no difference between himself and Harijans. When khadi work had just begun, he first thought of Harijans and he had thought of going to Bhavnagar to revive the craft of weaving with the help of Harijans. 'He was aware that the Harijans of Kathiawar were looking around for a living in Bombay, their craft of weaving having almost died. Here I have spoken of the time when he had just begun serving Harijans. And the end of his career was worthy of this beginning. He has never recognized untouchability. He never had the vanity or the *moha* that he belonged to one of the highest ranking and well-known Nagar[1] families. He never indulged in long arguments, his motto was to quietly render whatever service came his way. I have just received the news of his passing away. His death is certainly a loss to his family, but I myself have lost a true comrade. And Harijans have lost a sincere and silent worker. May God bless his soul and may He give his children and the other members of the family the wisdom to follow in his footsteps and carry on his beneficent work.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 20-8-1933

403. TO THE HARIJANS OF GUJARAT

During my last visit to Ahmedabad, I had a good opportunity to meet Harijan brothers and sisters. I was able to speak to them quite freely. I repeat here what I expect from them.

[1] A sub-caste of Brahmins

1. The so-called caste Hindus have a personal obligation to fulfil towards you which they must do unconditionally; it is their atonement. But, whether or not they atone for their deeds you will still have much work to do independently and unconditionally. One does not go to heaven without first dying. Whether in this world or the next, it is for each one to free oneself from bondage by one's own effort. Harijans should not look upon themselves as lowly, weak or crippled.

2. The atonement by caste Hindus is not for your salvation but for their own and it involves service to you. You should be liberal in accepting their services. In this way, you will readily overlook any shortcomings in it. If you are not large-hearted, you will only see their failings. But I am confident you will never be mean.

3. Magnify your own faults so that they appear to be as big as mountains and then make constant efforts to overcome them. In it lies the key to obtaining the rights which you want. Never believe that since others have the same faults we need not mind our own. No matter what others do, it is your dharma to overcome the failings which you find in yourselves. I see no need to recount them all here. I have often shown them to you, but it should not be necessary for me or anybody to do so. You will not be able, at the behest of others, to overcome what you yourselves do not look upon as failings. Hence, it should suffice to say that you should shake off whatever faults you can find in yourselves.

I do not write all this as a caste Hindu; as I see it, varnadharma no longer exists and it cannot be revived by keeping you out of its fold. However, if varnadharma is to be reprieved in my lifetime, know my varna to be the same in which you would be placed, because I claim to have voluntarily become a Harijan. It is by virtue of this relationship that I entertain the above expectation of you. Please do fulfil it. I share your misery and, believe me, I shall be happy [only] when you become happy.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 20-8-1933

404. TO KATHIAWARIS

Generally speaking one province should not be burdened with the work of another, just as in a well-organized society the burden of one family's needs is not borne by another. In accordance with this

principle, the needs of Kathiawar should be met by Kathiawaris, whether they happen to live in Kathiawar or elsewhere. Hence the burden of Harijan work in Kathiawar should be borne by Kathiawaris. When I visited Ahmedabad for a few days, I met workers connected with the Harijan Schools and ashrams functioning in Kathiawar. Not a single school or ashram should be obliged to close down solely for want of funds. It is a different matter altogether if an institution were to be closed for the sake of better organization, for the conservation of our energies, or, for the prevention of unnecessary expenditure. I have often spoken of my experience that no benevolent work, in fact, stops for lack of funds. Any work which enlists workers willing to serve by offering their all, will find money readily coming its way. I hope workers will regard the service of Harijans in this spirit. It is universal experience that, in the last analysis, every institution and every work depends upon the devoted efforts of one individual. This does not imply that such a person can work single-handed. To entertain such a thought is only a sign of arrogance, but the world is so ordered that there can be only one organizer. The world is not governed by many. The Governor or the Lord of the world, whatever you call Him, is only one. He has countless men and women workers, but He calls Himself a servant of servants and does the work of one. Similarly, it can be said that there can be only one president, secretary or manager for any work. And, if he does not consider himself the master but rather the humblest of servants, the work which he has taken up will make progress. And he should have steadfast devotion to the work. I know there are such devoted workers in Kathiawar and that there is no dearth of money there. Among the Kathiawaris spread all over the country, I see men and women who can, if they would, individually bear the expenditure on service of Harijans in Kathiawar. So I fail to understand the reason why even a single institution serving Harijans should have to close down for want of funds.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 20-8-1933

405. THE BREATH OF MY LIFE

God's ways are inscrutable! The most unexpected event of my life has happened.[1] I have been used to the most unexpected things in the course of a very long public life, but this is the most unexpected of all. What is now in store for me? How I shall use this life out of prison, I do not know. But I must say this that whether in prison or outside prison, Harijan service will be always after my heart and will be the breath of life for me, more precious than the daily bread. I can live for some days at least without the daily bread, but I cannot live without Harijan service for one single minute. It is a constant prayer to the Almighty that this blot of untouchability may be removed in its entirety foam Hinduism and that the millions of caste Hindus may see the Sun of Truth which shines upon us, if we would only remove the scales from our eyes, as I have repeatedly said in these columns. My life is a dedication to this cause and I shall consider no penance too great for the vindication of this Truth.

'Parnakuti' August 23, 1933, 5.30 p.m.

Harijan, 26-8-1933

406. TELEGRAM TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

POONA,
August 23, 1933

GURUDEV
SHANTINIKETAN

GOD'S GRACE AM WELL. TOOK ORANGE.[2]

GANDHI

Visva-bharti News, September 1933, p. 17

[1] On the eight day of his fast, which began on August 16, Gandhiji was released unconditionally.

[2] Addressee's reply dated August 24 read: ''Greatly relieved. God be praised. Love to Charlie."

407. TELEGRAM TO PADMAJA NAIDU

POONA,
August 23, 1933

PADMAJA NAIDU
GOLDEN THRESHOLD
HYDERABAD
DECCAN

GOD'S GRACE AM WELL. TOOK ORANGES.

BAPU

From the original; Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru memorial Museum and Library

408. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

POONA,
August 24, 1933

JAMNALAL BAJAJ
WARDHA

KEEPING VERY WELL. NO NURSING ASSISTANCE REQUIRED.[1]

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 113

409. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

August 24, 1933

DEAR COL. MARTIN,

When you sent me to Sassoon Hospital I took with me my clothes and certain other things, but not my books, spinning-wheels, etc. Will you kindly hand these to Kakasaheb Kalelkar, as also books

[1] Gandhiji had received a wire from the addressee saying that he had sent Chhotelal Jain, an Ashram inmate, to look after him; *vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 24-8-1933.

that you might have received whilst I was under your custody and which were not given to me?

Yours sincerely,

LT. COL. R. V. MARTIN, I.M.S.
SUPERINTENDENT, CENTRAL PRISON, YERAVDA

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-XIII, 1933

410. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

August 24, 1933

MY DEAR BH-R-R-R,

Well, many strange things have happened in my life, but this discharge is the strangest. However, there it is and I must take it as it comes; only I do not know what to do with myself. God will clear the way for me. Till then I wait on Him. I am as strong as I can be expected in the circumstances and, in a few days' time, I have no doubt, I shall regain my strength, lost during the eight days. I am here for a few days and, then hope to go to Bombay and be there for a few days. I must not write to Raihana separately. Tell her that I entered upon my fast with the *bhajan* that she sent to me.

Love to all.

BH-R-R-R

SJT. ABBAS TYABJI
CAMP, BARODA

From a photostat: S.N. 9586

411. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

August 24, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

I hope you have not gone mad over my fast and that you have been giving full satisfaction to everybody there and working in full speed. As I am dictating this letter I have your letter, written in Hindi, today. Your handwriting leaves still much to be desired. However, I

was delighted to have your letter after such a long time. I have not got any of the letters sent to the jail. I may get them now. I must not give you a long letter today.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial .Musuem and Library

412. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

August 24, 1933

CHI. MARY,

I was sorry to part with you without having much of a chat and then not to be able to write to you all these days was a matter of grief to me. Now that I am able to write again I am dictating as many letters as I can. I hope you are feeling quite at home there. I want you to tell me everything about your at Wardha and the people there. Of me, you will have gleaned from so many sources. So I need not say anything.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6005. Also C.W. 3331. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

413. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

August 24, 1933

CHI. MANU,

Write to me regularly. I hope you keep good health there and are quite happy. What arrangement has been made for your study?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 1525. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

414. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

For Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel *August 24, 1933*
by kind favour of Superintendent[1]

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

My health is not so bad that I cannot write with my own hand, but I don't wish to exert myself today. You must have read all the news and known what has happened. It has all been like a dream. But I will live as God ordains. I wish to take only one step at a time. Why should I, therefore, worry? Apart from that, however, this time I don't think I shall be able to see my way easily. In Yeravda, I kept thinking of you all the time. I had not expected to be separated from you in this manner. We remembered you daily on several occasions. We missed your dictatorial orders.

I had carefully selected the best bottles[2] and sent them to you. I hope they reached you safely. The rest of your things were packed separately. If you want any other books or things, let me know. Mathuradas is here with me. Chandrashankar, Ba, Mirabehn and Nair[3] stay with me all the time. Brijkrishna spends the whole day here. Today is Ganesh Chaturthi and so there is a holiday atmosphere. Kaka is here. I have just received a wire from Jamnalal saying that he has sent Chhotelal to look after me. But I am sure I will speedily regain my strength. I experience no difficulty in sitting up in the bed without help. I have eaten fruit in plenty today. I have also had some juice of *tandalja*[4], and that has given me some strength. Dr. Gilder[5] and Dr. Patel[6] came and examined me. They have found nothing wrong. There is, therefore, no cause for worry regarding my health. What about your nose? What is its condition? Write to me what you

[1] The source has this in English. Gandhiji continued to write this in all his letters to Vallabhbhai Patel, who was in Nasik Jail.

[2] Out of the empty bottles which contained honey, etc., used by Gandhiji and Vallabhbhai Patel in Yeravda Jail

[3] Gandhiji's typist

[4] Amaranth

[5] Dr. D. D. Gilder, heart specialist; later, Minister of Health, Bombay

[6] Dr. P. T. Patel

are permitted to. I shall be in 'Parnakuti' for a few days. Then I intend to spend a few days in Bombay. After that, Rama alone knows.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
NASIK

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: *Sardar Vallabhbhaine*, PP. 20-2

415. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

August 24, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

I got news of you from Anand. I hope you are all right in body and mind. I hope Mahadev is keeping well. How are the others? Write to me in detail.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

416. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

POONA
[After *August 24, 1933*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your wire. You probably believe that I require careful looking after. But the truth is that except for serving meals to me I hardly require any other service. This time I have not lost all my energy. That cannot happen in eight days. Whatever energy I have lost, I shall soon recover. It was, therefore, not at all necessary to send Chhotelal. But now that he is coming, he will feel happy, and that is enough for me. Probably you also know that Mirabehn is with me. Brijkrishna always runs up from wherever he may be, and so he, too, is here. There are many others besides

[1] From the reference to the receipt of the addressee's wire about Chhotelal. The source bears a note that the letter was received on August 26, 1933.

them. I hope you keep good health. Let me know your experiences of the newcomers. Is your case over? How is Ramdas succeeding?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Chhotelal arrived just now.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2922

417. LETTER TO MADELEINE ROLLAND[1]

August 25, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

Just a word to send my have to you and to the Rishi[2]. Mira will tell you all about the latest astonishing event[3]. I hope that you are both well. Andrews too is here now.

Ever yours,

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 10582. Courtesy: Madeleine Rolland

418. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

August 25, 1933

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I could not write to you earlier. I tried yesterday but did not succeed. You must certainly have been much worried on my account but why should you be worried now? You must accept by now that fasting has become a part of my life and you should therefore give up your attachment for my body.

I learn that Anandi[4] and others are not there. Give me news of them. I do not write to them thinking they are not there. If they are with you, tell them to write to me. How is Bablo[5] faring? Has Sharda[6]

[1] The English original is not available. This is a retranslation of a rendering in French.

[2] Romain Rolland

[3] The reference is to Gandhiji's fast and the unexpected release.

[4] Daugher of Lakshmidas Asar

[5] Narayan, son of Mahadev Desai

[6] Daughter of Chimanlal Shah

gone too? Does she still suffer from attacks of asthma? You are not pampering her, I hope. If they have left station who is paying their expenses? Have the Harijan children adjusted themselves [to the new surroundings?] Do they respect the rules of the Ashram[1]? How are Amina's children? Do they learn Urdu and read the Koran?

I am regaining my strength. Shankerlal should write to me regarding the movable property of the Ashram and the dairy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32801

419. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS [2]

August 25, 1933

Gandhiji commenced by expressing his thanks to Col. Candy, Civil Surgeon, Poona, his staff and nurses for the very great care with which they had looked after him and also to Lt. Col. Martin, Superintendent of Yeravda Prison and his staff for their kind treatment during the early stages of his fast. Gandhiji said:

I would like the public to be assured about my condition. Generally a week's fast is nothing for me, and though this time the fast, whilst it lasted, caused terrible physical agony because of my inability to take the necessary quantity of water, I feel on the second day after the breaking of the fast that I shall be able to regain my lost strength within a reasonable time. There need be, therefore, no cause for any anxiety.

This time my discharge having come upon me absolutely unexpectedly, I confess I have no knowledge whatsoever of how I would shape my movements, after my convalescence is over. So I must repeat what I have said so often before, but this time with much greater force than before, that I shall be constantly praying for light and guidance.

[1] The Harijan Children's Ashram at Ahmedabad being run by the addressee

[2] *The Bombay Chronicle* had reported: "Looking remarkably well, Gandhiji received a group of journalists at 10 a.m. today in the spacious hall of Lady Thackersey's bungalow. Gandhiji spoke very clearly and often with emotion. Towards the end of the interview which lasted nearly an hour, signs of exhaustion were however perceptible, and at Mrs. Naidu's suggestion Press representatives stopped asking more questions.

I shall seek peace much more eagerly than imprisonment and a possible repetition of fast. I shall therefore again use this unexpected freedom from imprisonment for the sake of exploring avenues of peace.

One thing, however, I do want to make clear. This discharge is a matter of no joy for me; possibly it is a matter of shame that I took my comrades to prison and came out of it by fasting. The statement made on behalf of the Government in connection with the fast, I have not had time to study at all fully. During the fast and a few days previous to it, I was deprived of all news that was published in the Press[1] in connection with it.

In reply to a question, Gandhiji explained this point further and said that *the Times of India* given to him during this period was mutilated, portions bearing on the fast having been cut out of it.[2] Gandhiji proceeded:

Therefore I do not know all that has been stated in the Press regarding the fast But what little I had the energy to read yesterday shows that Government have not done me justice.

It should be remembered that when I took my fast in Yeravda in September last, Government gave me fullest facilities for seeing people, giving interviews and writing letters in the matter of anti-untouchability work, not because I was a State prisoner, but because they recognized it was justly due to me to give me those facilities, if they held me in their custody. If, therefore, a mistake was made by them, it was made at that very first fast. Had they chosen, they could have unconditionally discharged me as they did at the time of the 21 days' fast or this time. The question of jail discipline was just as pertinent then as now, but they did not do so. They thought it a better policy for them to keep me in custody and give me the facilities I have referred to.

Within two days after the Poona Pact was made, facilities for doing Harijan work were suddenly stopped to my surprise and I immediately sent in a respectful protest; but that protest having

[1] *The Times of India*, 26-8-1933, had reported that while answering questions on Gandhiji's fast in Legislative Assembly at Simla on August 24, it was stated that "decision to release Gandhiji" was taken as "Mr. Gandhi was apparently determined to commit suicide. Government were not prepared to allow him to die in jail nor to order forcible feeding to save his life"

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to R. V. Martin", 19-8-1933.

evoked no satisfactory response, I had perforce to send a letter[1] saying that unless Government gave me facilities for Harijan work without let or hindrance, life would not be worth living for me and in reply to that on November 3 last the following orders[2] were conveyed to me:

These orders were passed with the full knowledge of my requirements and with full knowledge of what they meant in September.

I say once more that when Government arrested me again after the 21 days' fast, they had to face my request for doing Harijan work without let or hindrance, whether they took me in as a State prisoner or any other. In my opinion, classification is wholly irrelevant to the issue. The sole issue was in September, in November and today is this, namely, my life and the Harijan work in jail or no Harijan work in jail and my death; and so long as I live that will be the issue that will face me, face the Government and face the public. If I am wrong in thinking that, whether outside or inside the prison, I should have the fullest liberty to carry on the programme of anti-untouchability which I have undertaken as a solemn obligation, then my fast should be considered impertinent and should not count either with the Government or the public; but if I am right, then my fast should be treated as a sacrificial seal.

One thing more. It has been said on behalf of the Government that when, owing to the 21 days' fast I was discharged, I gave more attention to political than Harijan work. I cannot imagine a grosser misrepresentation of facts, which are all capable of being proved today. But I will give a few outstanding instances. The whole of the 21 days and the subsequent days, during which I was unable to do anything at all, I could only pray and think and not do writing or talking; and I can say that during this period I thought of nothing else but God and God's children, the Harijans. Then when I was at all able to carry on sustained conversation with a group of men, my first act was to address[3] a meeting of Harijan workers in this very hall, whilst I was lying in bed. When I was able to do any public writing, my first writing[4] was for the *Harijan.*

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. E. Doyle", 25-10-1932.

[2] *Vide* footnote to "Telegram to Home Secretary, Govewrnment of India", 3-11-1932.

[3] *Vide* "Discussion with Harijan Workers, Poona", 2-7-1933.

[4] *Vide* "All About the Fast", 8-7-1933.

True, while I was in Poona I did attend the informal conference[1] and held frequent conversations with political co-workers on the subject of civil disobedience. There was no secret about it and I am not ashamed of it. Civil disobedience is an integral part of my life. But the fact is that the bulk of my time was not given to civil disobedience work. As a matter of fact, in view of the advice I tendered to the conference, it was not necessary. Then when I went to Ahmedabad, people may think that the sacrificing of the Ashram must have occupied a tremendous amount of my time, but I am again able to say that tremendous amount of my time was taken up with Harijan service.

Thousands gathered at prayer time and every time, if I spoke at all to these crowds, I spoke on untouchability and I collected funds at every one of these meetings with more or less generous response, every pice of which went to the Harijan Fund. If challenged, I would multiply instances of this character. It, therefore, in my opinion, ill becomes all body much more a Government official, to recklessly charge me with having done a thing which I have not done and then to justify the procedure which, to a simple mind like mine, appears to be a manifest and gross breach of promise, deliberately made to a prisoner in their custody.

When Gandhiji's attention was drawn to the Home Member's statement in the Assembly that Gandhiji wished to combine simultaneously two incompatible policies, deliberate incarceration and complete freedom to carry on social work as an ordinary man, Gandhiji replied:

I do not consider that there is anything incompatible in it. I would be asking for incompatible things if I had asked for conducting civil disobedience campaign from inside the prison walls.

Mahatma Gandhi was then asked if in his opinion his political campaign during the last few months had done the country any good.[2]

Gandhiji replied that he was unable to reply to the question as he had no opportunity to gauge the reaction of his movement on the people. But it was his firm conviction that the movement which was the cleanest weapon possible in the hands of self-respecting people to resist injustice could not but have done good.

Asked whether the concessions given by the Government were not adequate enough, Gandhiji replied in the negative and said there still remained tremendous work to be done in connection with the anti-untouchability work. The political part

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Leaders' Conference, Poona-I", 12-7-1933 and "Speech at Leaders' Conference, Poona-II",.

[2] This and the fallowing paragraph are reproduced from *The Tribune.*

of it formed only very little. The task before the reformers was to bring about a change of heart on the part of the Hindus.

Gandhiji, continuing, said that he could not describe the grief it caused him when on a matter of this character where Government orders had been so explicit in November last, the same officials should have been responsible for goading him on to a fast and then to say that he wanted to become a dictator. This was the unkindest cut of all.

Asked if Mr. Rajagopalachari, for example, who had been a party to the Poona Pact and who was now in jail, could not seek permission for doing Harijan work like himself, Gandhiji replied in the negative and added:

I will side with the Government in resisting Mr. Rajagopalachari because Mr. Rajagopalachari was not present at the Round Table Conference. I was there as the sole representative of Mr. Rajagopalachari and other Congressmen and I made a declaration that I shall resist with my life separate electorates for the Depressed Classes and therefore it became a matter of sacred obligation to me to conduct this campaign even from inside the jail.

Regarding political situation, Gandhiji was asked what form his efforts for peace would take. Gandhiji replied that he did not know what it would be at the present moment. It was still in the lap of future. It was all impenetrable darkness for him just now. But if Government had the will for peace—and he knew that the Congress had the will—then peace could be had. But on what terms, he could not say at the present moment, not having all the strings in his hand today.

Asked if he would be approaching the Viceroy again for an interview, he replied that he could not say definitely, but it was quite on the cards.

Gandhiji concluded by saying that he hoped to be restored to health in the course of a week or more and he was now on milk diet and free from pain or discomfort.

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-8-1933; also *The Tribune*, 27-8-1933

420. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
August 26, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

I have now got all the letters from the jail.

Yes, you may write as often as you like, only handing your letters to someone who is writing to me so that the postage may be saved. As a rule, there is a regular post from Wardha for me. The best

thing for you, therefore, is to hand over your letters to Dwarkanathji[1] or Lakshmibehn[2].

I wonder what you mean when you say you read the *Gita* every day. You read it to understand and act accordingly. You must now forget the past and look after the present, never mind how you behaved. I have forgotten all about it and I know that it was all out of excess of love. There was nothing immoral about it.

Your letter to Mira has not been received. Vinoba is quite right in asking you to learn cooking, Hindi, and cotton processes well, if you are to do real work amongst Harijans.

I hope you are keeping quite well and fit.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

421. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

August 26, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

I got your letter, as also Nirmala's. I am not writing a separate letter to Nirmala. I was happy to learn that you did not worry. Vinabehn gave me news about your health. Dhiru wrote to me from Bhavnagar. He seems to be quite happy. I could not see Chhaganlal this time at all. This time the conditions were completely different. I was not permitted to write to anybody. My health is improving rapidly. Gradually I am recovering strength. Chhaganlal has been removed to Thana. If you have received any letter from him from there, please give me news about him. Also give me news about Vimu[3], if you have any.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5356

[1] Dwarkanath Harkare, an Ashram inmate
[2] Laksmibehn N. Khare
[3] Addressee's daughter

422. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

August 26, 1933

CHI. MITHUBEHN,

I have your letter. Please do not worry about me. I am steadily regaining strength. I can digest milk.

I trust you are in good health. I need not enquire about your work; it must be going on as usual.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRIMATI MITHUBEHN PETIT

COLABA, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2705

423. I SHALL DANCE TO HIS TUNE

No one can understand God's ways. I did not even dream that after my twenty-one days' fast, I would have to go on another fast within three months and, as a result, I would be out of jail. Who knows what God meant by this play. I, for one, do not know it. But I know this much that whether in jail or outside, I shall not fail to make any effort, of which I am capable in thought, speech and act, to wash Hinduism of the dross of untouchability. When an attempt was made to thwart the effort, I gave up food. I shall not allow a thing bought so dearly to slip out of my hands. But God knows how I can make that effort. I shall dance to His tune. I shall be guided by Him. I have every hope that all men and women will help me in this attempt.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 27-8-1933

424. LETTER TO VITHALDAS V. JERAJANI [1]

August 27, 1933

MY DEAR VITHALDAS,

You want a message from me on khadi. What message may I send? When I hear that the love of people for khadi and the spinning-wheel is diminishing, my love for these things is getting stronger.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9784

425. LETTER TO GULAB A. SHAH

August 27, 1933

CHI. GULAB,

I hope you don't feel a stranger there. Write to me regularly. Do you keep a diary? Have you made any friends?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1736

426. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

August 27, 1933

CHI. MANUDI,

I hope you are now completely free from fever and are quite well. Write to me a detailed letter, giving your daily routine.

Ba is quite well. Prabhavatibehn has arrived here today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 1526. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

[1] In *The Bombay Chronicle*, 16-9-1933, this appeared under the title "Mahatmaji's Message" with the following introductory note: "On the special occasion of the Gandhi Jayanti, Sjt. V. V. Jerajani, Agent, All-India Spinners' Association, requested Mahatma Gandhi for a message. This he sent in Gujarati which is translated below."

427. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHARMA

August 27, 1933

BHAI SHARMA,

Do come after ten days. I have no idea where I shall be. You will learn from the newspapers. Make independent arrangements for your stay. I hope your problems have been resolved.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh* (1932-48), between pp. 52 and 53

428. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

August 28, 1933

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I am regaining strength fairly rapidly. I am very eager to see Jnana. I shall be happy if she comes and sees me. Let me know her address.

Kamala seems to have benefited very well indeed. I have advised Janakibehn to stay on here for the present without being afraid of the plague.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2922

429. LETTER TO DR. MANORAMABAI THATTE [1]

August 29, 1933

Take With you only that which is good in us and bring with you only that which is good in the foreign lands you may go to. May God bless you and make you a fitter instrument of service.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 8680

[1] The letter was written on the eve of the addresseee's departure for England.

430. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

POONA,
August 30, 1933

JAMNALAL BAJAJ
WARDHAGANJ

AM ANXIOUS VISIT WARDHA BUT NOT POSSIBLE REACH BEFORE LAST WEEK SEPTEMBER.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 114

431. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

August 30, 1933

DEAR BROTHER,

I treasure your letter[1].

I do not mind anything you have said. On the contrary, I appreciate all you have said. Having said this, I must say that I utterly dissent from your interpretation of Government orders. If you saw all the correspondence, perhaps you will revise your judgment. I am not given to special pleading consciously. You may not have noticed that the Government have themselves dropped the idea of 'another set of conditions'. On the contrary, they said that they made a mistake in making what you call 'concession in the first instance', and the mistake made was not one on merits but had reference to their own convenience.

However, I shall not strive with you in connection with your pronouncement upon my statement, but if you will care to study the whole question I would gladly send you the whole of the correspondence. I hope that you yourself do not consider me to be capable of desiring to blame the Government for the sake of doing so or that that performance would be dearer to me than Harijan uplift. I consider myself capable of a just discrimination and therefore of knowing when the Government is in the right. But this is all beside the point. I have taken so much space with what is now immaterial, in order to tell you that I do not plead guilty to the charge you have

[1] Dated August 27; *vide* Appendix "Letter from V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 27-8-1933.

made against me.

Now for the central point of your letter. I quite agree with you that I am wholly unfit for the constitution building at the present stage. In my opinion that time is not yet. It will come only when the nation has developed a sanction for itself. I would therefore gladly retire from the Congress and devote myself to the development of civil disobedience outside the Congress and to Harijan work. The difficulty is, how to do it? Can I do it by seceding from the Congress? That was the question that troubled me at the time of the informal conference and that is the question that confronts me again. I am seeking light. As soon as I have regained sufficient strength, I shall again sound the mind of Congressmen and if I can possibly retire from the Congress I shall gladly do so. My impression, however, is that the Congress mentality has not changed. Whilst it is true that a large number of Congressmen have got tired, very few would care to subscribe to the White Paper or work for securing certain improvements in it. They want a radical change. But I am in no hurry to come to any final decision. I can give you this assurance that nothing will deter me from taking any steps that might be in the best interests of the nation. There is no question even of self-effacement. Performance of duty I have held always to be a thing of beauty and a joy for ever. The awful fact, however, has often been to know where duty lies.

You won't give me up, but continue to guide me and you will not hesitate to come if you felt like coming. I am not going to hesitate to ask you to come when I feel that I need your personal contact and a constant exchange of thoughts.

Love.

M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, pp. 260-2

432. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

August 30, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

I have your letters. I am glad you have taken to Jamnalalji. You should accept his guidance and do as he says. Take gratefully all the nursing that may be offered to you and that may be necessary for the

healing of your body. I hope you have now got rid of all your boils and eruptions.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

433. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

August 30, 1933

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have sent a reply[1] to your wire. I should like very much to go there immediately, but I can't do that. I think it will be better to pay a visit to Bombay first and then to Wardha. I wish to acquaint myself with the atmosphere in Bombay. The Harijan work there also seems to have become slack and, if possible, I wish to infuse some life into it.

My health is steadily improving. I can eat with appetite. Take care of your health. Letters for N. and Amala are enclosed. The former seems to have become a little unsettled.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2923

434. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

August 31, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

So you are out before your time. I hope you got my wire. I had thought that Mother was going back to Allahabad. I expect full report from you.

Indu has been with me fairly often. She is to come again this evening.

If it is at all possible, we must meet soon. But of course you will be held up there if Mother remains bad. I shall expect a full letter from you. It would be as well to send it by registered post.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 30-8-1933.

I am slowly regaining lost strength. I say nothing about the fast as I expect you now know all about it. More when we meet.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

435. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI

August 31, 1933

CHI. KASHI,

I have your letter. We have to forget all talk about Satyavati for Prabhudas. I am looking for some other girl. It will be as his fate decides for him. I do not think lack of money comes in Prabhudas's way. What comes in his way is his age and the ill reputation he has for his health. Another reason is that as Prabhudas has always lived by himself, he has not come into contact with anybody. Whatever the reason, we have to make the effort and then acquiese in whatever result God brings about. I am all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: . S.N. 33073

436. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

August 31, 1933

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. You should give up worrying. What is in your fate will happen. I will certainly give it a thought. I have not given up Gyan as yet. She writes to say that I have not been just to her. I am therefore keen on seeing her. I do not want to do anything in a hurry. Nor do I want do impose Gyan on you. However, I consider it your duty as an elder person to make acquaintance with Gyan.

Rest assured that you need not worry about your engagement. I intend to go to Wardha, too. Something will occur to me when I reach there.

If your health remains good in the plains and if Jamnalalji allows it, it will no doubt be better if you postpone going to the hills.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am not writing separately to Chhaganlal. I have received his previous letter. He is longing to go to Sabarmati. That is all right.

From the Gujarati original: . S.N. 32970

437. LETTER TO TOTARAM SANADHYA

'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
August 31, 1933

BHAI TOTARAM,

I have your letter. It is our duty to endure even when we see the ruination of the Ashram. God willing, we shall regain its possession and shall reside in whatever structures then remain. I hope the Ashram will certainly serve some purpose or other. You and Hariprasad must be keeping good health. I am regaining strength, there is no cause for anxiety.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2528

438. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO H. K. HALES

[After *August 31, I933*][1]

I assure you that I have no desire to court imprisonment for the sake of it, but if imprisonment comes in my way even whilst I am seeking for peace, I will accept it cheerfully.[2]

The Hindustan Times, 17-9-1933

[1] The addressee's letter under reply was dated August 31, 1933.

[2] Hales, a Conservative member of British Parliament, had written: "It is imperative that you should, at all costs, preserve your freedom in the evening of your life. Every hour is of supreme value and for you, of all men, to be incarcerated for months, at a time when your counsel and advice are so necessary, seems to me almost a crime." He had concluded the letter with a request to "resist the inclination this time for the sake of your friends, if not for yourself ."

439. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

September 1, 1933

MY DEAR AGATHA,

C. F. Andrews has shared with me your letters to him. This is just to press upon you the necessity of taking fair rest for the sake of putting in more work. 'A stitch in time saves nine' has much truth in it.

I need say nothing about my body or the situation created by my unexpected discharge. Deenabandhu has, I know, written to you fully about it.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Poor Mahadev! He is alone now in Belgaum prison. But this isolation will do him good.

From a photostat: G.N, 1467

440. LETTER TO EDMOND AND YVONNE PRIVAT

September 1, 1933

DEAR ANAND AND BHAKTI,

This is just to acknowledge your love letter and to tell you that I am keeping as well as I can. The rest you will have from Mira's letter.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 8796

441. NOTE

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE TWO

Deenabandhu Andrews wrote last week on the untouchability of South Africa and showed how there was the temple-entry question even there. It is, however, worth noting the distinction between the two untouchabilities. In South Africa, it is based upon colour prejudice and has no sanction either in religion or in law. In India,

unfortunately, it is claimed by a large number of Hindus to have religious sanction and we know that it has also the sanction of law. The Indian untouchability is, therefore, much worse than the South African. Both are, no doubt, equally mischievous, so far as the victims are concerned. Both deserve equal condemnation. Only, in India it seems that the fight is likely to be much harder than in South Africa.

Harijan, 2-9-1933

442. THE TEMPLE-ENTRY BILL[1]

It is sad to think that the anti-untouchability measure has been hung up for one year by the Legislative Assembly and that the amendment to hang it up received the support of the Government. But the reformers may not rest till untouchability is blotted out of the Statute Book. Meanwhile, the process of having temples opened by consent of trustees and temple-goers and the general propaganda in favour of opening temples should continue.

But I observe that a Harijan Conference at Agra has passed the following resolution:[2]

> This Jatav Conference . . . considers that the methods and system of work of the movement is not satisfactory. Harijan movement lays stress on the temple-entry problem more than on economic and educational problems. The former . . . will produce slave mentality, ... Hence . . . great emphasis must be laid on the educational and economic aspect of the progress. Inter-caste marriage and inter-dining must be on the programme of the movement. . . .

The economic and educational uplift is no doubt an essential part of true repentance by caste Hindus. It is a test of the sincerity of their professions. But the uplift will not be complete without the throwing open of temples. The throwing open of temples will be an admission of the religious equality of Harijans. It will be the surest sign of their ceasing to be the outcastes of Hinduism, which they are today.

It is beside the point that tens of thousands of Harijans do not want to enter temples. If it were properly probed, the fact would be

[1] Untouchability Abolition Bill. It was introduced by C. S. Ranga Iyer on March 24, 1933; *vide* 6th footnote to "Letter to ranchhoddas Patwari", 11-1-1933.

[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

found to be quite otherwise. Thousands of Harijans do want to enter temples. Only they have been so accustomed to the prohibition that the very hope of entering temples had dried up in them. They believe that admission to temples on a par with the other Hindus is an impossibility.

But whether Harijans desire the consolation of temple-entry or not, whether, if temples are thrown open to them, they will make use of them or not, caste Hindus have to perform their simple duty. They have to open their temples for Harijans to offer worship in, precisely on, the same terms as for themselves. A debtor is not absolved from the duty of payment because his creditor does not care for the payment, or has forgotten the debt altogether.

And when temples are thrown open to Harijans, schools, wells and many similar facilities will be automatically open to Harijans. It is surely easy enough to realize that untouchability may subsist side by side with economic uplift. Many Ezhawas in Travancore and Namashudras in Bengal possess decent fortunes and are yet treated as pariahs of society. The bar sinister is all the more galling to them by reason of their flourishing condition. Dr. Ambedkar suffers from the curse in spite of his high educational attainments and his superior economic condition. He is naturally more sensitive to the insult of untouchability. But the reproach will be automatically removed, immediately caste Hindus proclaim the banishment of untouchability by admitting Harijans to their temples on terms of absolute equality with themselves. It will not then become necessary for any Harijan individually to go to temples, if he does not desire to do so. The declaration of the opening of temples will cover him with the rest. It will be like the abolition of slavery. It will be a vast and glorious step in the much-needed and overdue purification of Hinduism.

Temple-entry permission, to be of use, has naturally to be a voluntary act on the part of Hindus. It has to be, therefore, a genuine change of heart in the caste Hindus. Legislation is nevertheless necessary because of the fact that in law the entry of Harijans into caste-Hindu temples is said to be prohibited. Legislation will constitute the seal of approval of the vast mass of Hindus. I personally should not want, that legislation in the teeth of universal caste-Hindu opposition. My own belief is that caste Hindus as a whole do not oppose temple-entry by Harijans. I should abide by the result of an honestly conducted referendum. Anyway, let the reformers realize that, whatever happens in the Legislature at Delhi, the movement for temple-entry and the necessary legislation must continue.

There are other things in the resolution quoted above which call for explanation or criticism. This must be postponed for a future issue of the *Harijan.*

Harijan, 2-9-1933

443. LETTER TO DR. MOHAMMAD ALAM

'PARNAKUTI' POONA,
September 2, 1933

DEAR DR. ALAM,

God is great. He often confounds us. I little knew that I would have to be discharged in the manner I have been. I am now praying for light as to the next step I am to take. I am sorry I have not read your paper, but I must now do it. You must quickly undergo an examination and ensure good health. I am making steady progress towards regaining lost strength.

Letter for Begum Alam.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. S. MOHAMMAD ALAM
1 LYTTON ROADS
LAHORE

From a photostat: G.N. 31

444. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

September 2, 1933

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I had your letter of 11th instant.

Lakshmi had already told me how you and your wife were looking after her, and when I heard that she was under your roof I was perfectly at ease. I now see that she has gone to Wardha; I have not quite understood why before Devdas was removed from Delhi. Her first letter had told me that she would be in Delhi so long as Devdas was there. I have written to Rajaji. I can understand his consolation because he has to be both father and mother to his children, and specially to his daughters. But I know also that deep down in him there is dignified peace.

I hope the work there is flourishing. If you have any suggestions to make either regarding the Harijan work or regarding the editing of the *Harijan*, you must not hesitate to pass them on to me whilst I am yet in a position to receive them.

Love.

BAPU

SJT. N. R. MALKANI
SERVANTS OF UNTOUCHABLES SOCIETY, BIRLA MILLS
DELHI

From a photostat: G.N. 901

445. LETTER TO CHARU PROVA SEN

September 2, 1933

MY DEAR CHARU PROVA,

I was delighted to have your brief note.

I think you are quite right. It is no joke for anybody to be my co-worker. But I know that God gives all the co-workers and me the strength they and I may need. Therefore, you will get no pity or sympathy from me, but you will have to render a true account of your stewardship.

I hope you are doing well. I am slowly but steadily regaining strength.

Love.

BAPU

SMT. CHARU PROVA SEN
RAJBARI, FARIDPUR DISTRICT
(BENGAL)

From a photostat: G.N. 8702

446. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

September 2, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

I have your letters. You should not expect frequent replies from me. Whenever I can I will certainly write to you.

I had said nothing to you about my health because I had referred to it in some other letters.[1] I am getting on as well as possible. I am regaining strength steadily. Therefore, there is no cause for anxiety. I am taking milk, fruit and vegetables.

I hope that you are steadily qualifying yourself.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

447. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

September 2, 1933

BHAI BENARSIDAS,

I was happy to get your letter. Proficient and paid teachers should be employed for propagation of Hindi in Bengal. There is no doubt that Ramanandbabu has done immense service to Hindi. Please accept my felicitations on making *Vishal Bharat*[2] self-supporting. I have seen the account of the Madras tour, it is good. I hope you are keeping well.

Blessings from

BAPU

PANDIT BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI
EDITOR, "VISHAL BHARAT"
120/2 UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD, CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2564

448. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

September 2, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. I feel that for the time being you should stay there. Later on we shall see. Anand will stay here for the present. I will try and go over to Wardha by the end of this month. Keep mind and body fit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jamanalal Bajaj", 30-8-1933.

[2] A Hindi monthly published from Calcutta

449. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[1]

September 2, 1933

I am unconscious of any error in giving my previous advice. However, I admit that this unexpected release has produced a situation that demands special treatment. At this stage I can only say that I am giving the matter my earnest and prayerful consideration. I have no ready-made plan before me. I shall consult all friends, listen to all advice and come to no hasty decision. I reiterate my earnest desire for peace. Therefore I shall leave no stone unturned to bring it about in so far as it lies within my power.

Home Department, Political, File No. 4/11/33, 1933, p. 4. Courtesy: National Archives of India

450. ADVICE TO FRIENDS [2]

[Before *September 3, 1933*]

It is nothing less than a new life for me. On my part I had given up all hope. On the 23rd[3] night after the nausea, I felt I would not survive for long, that I could no longer battle with death. On the afternoon of the 24th I even gave away whatever I had with me.

Things which are more or less routine for us neither fascinate nor pain us, however they may be, pleasant or unpleasant. And whether or not I wish, fasts have become almost a daily occurrence for me. Why should they pain you? You should understand that fasts have become a part of my life and for this reason ought to give up the ignorant attachment to my body. No doubt I had to undergo some privation, but then who has attained Krishna without great suffering?

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu 3-9-1933

[1] The source had this extract from the *National Call,* 3-9-1933, which had reported: "Interviewed by the Associated Press, Mahatma Gandhi replied to the comments of the National Labour Party's fortnightly organ, the *News Letter,* which hoped that he would respond to the Government of India's conciliatory action."

[2] This and the following three items are extracted from Chandrashankar Shukla's "Weekly Letter". This appeared under the sub-title, "New Life".

[3] Of August

451. DISCUSSION WITH A PARSI GENTLEMAN [1]

[Before *September 3, 1933*]

Q. I am very much pained to see that in many places Harijan work is carried on with a feeling of obliging the Harijans rather than in a spirit of service.

A. That is true. That is why I go on telling the caste Hindus that whatever they do, they must do for their own sake. That is their atonement, their purification.

Q. But the work is not being done in the manner you desire. The feeling of high and low pervades every vein.

A. I admit it. Untouchability cannot be said to have disappeared so long as this feeling persists. It is not enough to ''touch" Harijans.

Q. Such a feeling of high and low prevails even among us, Parsis. We have amongst us the first, the second and the third which do not mix with one another.

A. You are bound to be influenced by us since you have lived with us for so many years. Once a Parsi gentleman came to me and told me that the differences of high and low were created by God. I told him: "You are a Parsi and yet talk like this. But you have been influenced by us and now you have come to repeat it."

Q. This feeling prevails among Muslims too.

A. The same is true of Christians as well. Recently, there was a conference of Christian untouchables in Madras. Has the world ever heard of anything like this?

Q. I think the feeling of untouchability has to be banished from our hearts, is it not?

A. Everything would be incomplete without it. If untouchability disappears from Hindu religion, many other problems will be solved. I also expect the Hindu-Muslim problem to solve itself, because it also has its root in the feeling of high and low.

Q. As a matter of fact, Zoroaster himself never intended to establish a religion. The religion came to be established later. Now the feeling of distinction between themselves and others has gone deep in the minds of Parsis.

A. It has been taken from the Hindu religion. It comes from the Indian atmosphere. If it disappears from the Hindu religion, it will

[1] This appeared under the sub-title, "For the Whole World".

disappear from elsewhere too. Do you think that I would be convinced that untouchability was wiped out just because some wells had been dug for them or some temples had been thrown open to them? These are only indications. If even this much does not happen, all our talking would be in vain. But we shall have to go much further.

Q. For Harijan work, do you have only Hindus in mind or the other people as well?

A. The thought of others is of course implied—in the same way as India's independence is for the good of the entire world. But I do not go on harping on that point; I talk only about swaraj for India. Similarly, I am absolutely confident that there are going to be widespread consequences of the solution of the Harijan problem. It would affect the whole world. Unless I had that hope, why should I get involved in Harijan work? It is already implied in my writings. I have asserted that I wish to serve the whole world through it.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 3-9-1933

452. ADVICE TO A HARIJAN WORKER [1]

[Before *September 3, I933*]

I do not need any scheme. I want a person who would act. What purpose would a scheme serve without a person to carry it out? What can we do with a scheme if we did not have the capacity to implement it? You are planning to take up leather work. I like leather work very much. But you have not learnt it. It is not enough that you can make slippers. We have also to take up the work of tanning. If you have that ability, your work and mine would become easy. We do not want to set up big factories. Wee have to see how better tanning of leather could be done in the villages. What did Madhusudan Das do? He gathered the tanners of Utkal and studied how they did their tanning. He was not satisfied with it, and he went to Germany and learnt leather work there. He brought a German [expert] with him and set up a factory. It is in Cuttack. It is no longer under him. I do not know its present condition. Many Harijans learnt the work during the days of Madhusudan Das. Like Madhusudan Das you too should first master

[1] This appeared under the sub-title, "Training for Service".

the craft. It cannot be done in one month's time. You can do very well, if you learn it properly. I can make arrangements for your training.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 3-9-1933

453. DISCUSSION ON FASTING[1]

[Before *September 3, 1933*]

What we regard as dharma, they [the orthodox] regard as *adharma*. It is ignorance; but you cannot undertake a fast unto death to counter it. It is not a matter for fasting unto death. Such a fast can be undertaken on very rare occasions. It is a very strong measure. This problem is very complex. A conditional fast can be undertaken only in exceptional circumstances. That is why I thought of an unconditional fast[2], a fast without any conditions, for the purification of the Hindu religion. It would be good to have a relay fast just as Ganga-water *kavad*[3]. If the right persons undertook a right fast for the purification of religion, it is bound to have its impact on the people. It is not an *asuri*[4] act, but a purely *daivi*[5] act. No one can call it coercion if somebody resorted to a 21-day or a 50-day fast for ridding the Hindu religion of the evil that has entered into it, because that fast would not to be broken, whatever the people might do.

Q. How do you see coercion in my proposed fast unto death?

A. You are not concerned with the trustees of the temple. What appears *adharma* to you is regarded as dharma by them. How can you undertake a fast in protest against it? Can you make anyone give up his dharma by resorting to a fast? Let me explain to you when a conditional fast can be undertaken. Suppose my brother is a drunkard. He considers drinking an evil but is not able to give it up. It would be justifiable if I went on a fast till he gave up drinking. But when he declares his intention of renouncing his Hindu faith and

[1] This appeared under the sub-title, ''Limitations of Fasting".

[2] From May 8 to 29, 1933

[3] Ganga water used to be transported by a relay of runners in a kavad, i.e., a pole carried on the shoulder with pots at the ends.

[4] Demoniacal

[5] Godly

embracing Christianity, my fast to prevent him from doing it would be coercion. So, for the time being, your duty is to meet the trustees, argue your point with them, convey your stand through their friends, create public opinion. If public opinion is favourable it must be demonstrated to the trustees, as was done in Guruvayur referendum[1]. If public opinion is found to be favourable, maybe the trustees might agree. Such a poll cannot be conducted by just asking people to raise their hands at a public meeting; you should go from door to door to collect the votes.

Q. In spite of all this, if they are not convinced, what should I do except going on a fast unto death?

A. Even then it cannot be said that a fast unto death may be undertaken. This is not going to purify the Hindu religion. There are many features of the Hindu religion that call for reform, but people are still not agreeable to it. I have said that the Hindu religion would be wiped out unless untouchability is removed. And it is literally true. But what are we going to do if God Himself has willed that the Hindu religion should perish? We must be prepared to lay down our lives; but there should be an occasion for it.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 3-9-1933

454. NO EXAGGERATION [2]

The following is the gist of a letter from a Gujarati correspondent:

> I have read in the *Harijanbandhu* of the 27th August an article[3] by you in which you say, "I can live some days atleast without the daily bread, but I cannot live without Harijan service for one single minute." I have observed an exaggeration of expression in many of your writings. People are often confused by utterances like this. If every moment of your life is occupied in Harijan service, how can you find time for other activities? You cannot serve two masters at one and the same time. I realize that for you life is an indivisible whole and your various

[1] In December 1932.

[2] The original Gujarati appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 3-9-1933. This was published as "condensed from Gujarati".

[3] *Vide* "The Breath of My Life", 23-8-1933.

activities are only different phases of it. But the masses cannot comprehend this thing. They would naturally infer from the foregoing sentence that you are going to devote the rest of your life to Harijan service. But that is incorrect, for you will no doubt take up other activities also as occasion arises. This exaggeration of expression has, I believe, even in the past created a confusion in people's minds. Therefore, if you keep more sense of proportion in your speech and writing, chances of misunderstanding could be reduced to a minimum. I have written this out of regard for you and ask to be forgiven if I am found guilty of presumption.

It is not clear to me whether the correspondent is himself confounded by my 'exaggeration' or whether he represents the confusion of others only. I should be pained, if it is true that many are confounded by my writings. For I believe I have a keen sense of proportion. As a worshipper of Truth I must eschew all exaggeration. What I have written about Harijan service is, I believe, literally true. But Harijan service does not exclude all other service. One can devote oneself simultaneously to several things which are connected with one another. What I have said of Harijan service can, for instance, with equal truth be said of the service of *Daridranarayana*[1] also, for that service is not inconsistent with the service of the Harijans. Human life is not mechanical. To every one of us there are things as dear as life itself, and one can say that life would be impossible without them. The measure of the truthfulness of such statements would depend on the intensity of one's devotion to the causes espoused. While in the case of some people separation from a cause claimed to be dear as life itself will not kill them, with others such a separation will be nothing less than a sentence of death.

But it would be wrong to take such devotion to imply that outward activity connected with the object of devotion must go on from moment to moment. It certainly does imply that outward action must be taken whenever occasion demands it. The seed we sow in the ground does not sprout immediately, but if it is not dead, it grows every minute, though we see it as a plant or tree only after many days or months. The process of growth we see in the physical world we should expect to see in the mental and spiritual world also.

[1] God in the form of the poor

The truth of my statement about Harijan service can be measured, if at all, only after my death. The full measure is known only to the all-knowing God. For He alone knows our intentions. it can, therefore, try to satisfy the correspondent, and others who think like him, only by repeating that there is no exaggeration in my claim that Harijan service is the breath of my life and that, therefore, I cannot live for one moment without it.

Harijan, 30-9-1933

455. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS [1]

September 3, 1933

It is needless for me to redeclare my absolute faith in non-violence and[2] utter disbelief in violence as a means of[3] gaining political rights or political freedom. I deeply deplore the assassination of the Midnapore Magistrate[4]. But at the same time it is impossible not to regret that the rulers will not only not redress the wrongs which lead to such assassinations but[5] insist on ruling by counter-terrorism, which the Ordinances undoubtedly mean.[6]

The Hindu, 4-9-1933; also G.N. 1469

456. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

September 3, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter. Evidently your presence has served as a tonic for Mother. If she remains free from fever, you should be free to move out for a few days. If so, you should come to me as early as you can. I am anxious to leave here on Friday or Saturday next for Bombay and be there for about a week and then go to Wardha.

[1] According to G.N. version, a copy of this statement with slight verbal variations was sent to Agatha Harrison.

[2] The G.N. version here adds "my".

[3] The G.N. version has "method for" instead of "means of ".

[4] B. E. G. Burge, who was assassinated by three Bengali youths on September 2. The sentence in the G.N. version reads: "I therefore cannot but deeply deplore the assassination of the District Magistrate of Midnapore."

[5] The G.N. version here adds "will".

[6] The G.N. version here reads: "which the Ordinance Rule undoubtedly means".

I do not know the young man[1] you mention. I know the family well. I must have met him too. But I could not identify him, if I saw him. The family has liberal traditions. Krishna is therefore likely to be quite happy with them. I have written to Anasuyabehn about him. She of course knows all these people intimately. But meanwhile I see no harm in your sending for him and seeing him and presenting him to Mother if you find him acceptable. On hearing from Anasuyabehn, I shall wire to you, if necessary. Of course, I am otherwise keeping the matter quite secret. I take it that you have not minded my writing to Anasuyabehn.

Kamala needs freedom from excitement and worry. I am inclined to think that she is the least unhappy in Bombay with Naoroji sisters. I therefore feel that you should bring her when you come here and then leave her here.

In the expectation that we must meet soon, I say nothing of the political situation or of my fasting exploits. I am 'steadily regaining lost strength.

Poor Mahadev is in Belgaum. It is good to go through the fire.

Do please tell Mother that she is continually in my thoughts. She has to live long enough to see the clouds lifting.

My love to you all.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

457. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAJAJ

September 3, 1933

CHI. RUKMINI[2],

I was wondering whether you would even write to me, when I got your letter. I do get reports about you from time to time. You have given a rather big name to the child. Before him, poor Madhav[3] will seem plebeian. I hope you and Devendra keep good health. I am fairly well. Mirabehn, Brijkrishna and Prabhavati look after me. Most

[1] Gunottam Hutheesing

[2] Daughter of Maganlal Gandhi

[3] Gandhiji had suggested Madhavdas and Gopaldas as names for the addressee's son, Devendra, which means 'the Lord of gods'.

probably I will go to Bombay on Friday and from there to Wardha.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

SHRI BENARSIDAS BAZAJ
THATHERI BAZAAR, BENARES CITY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9154

458. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

September 3, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I shall be in a position to see you on Wednesday. Do come with Bharati[1] and Suhrid[2]. Whatever may be my ideas on education, the brother and sister will definitely have my blessings. I know that for you, going to England at this time is a tribulation. I have known for many years that whatever you do is with a sense of duty.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11138. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

459. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[Before *September 4, 1933*][3]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

N. is off the rails again. I can see signs of her unsettled mind in her letters. Till now she was all for Hinduism, and now it is Christianity. That also will be good if she is serious about it. But it doesn't seem to me that she is. Her imagination tosses her from one thing to another. The vow of silence seems to have unsettled her mind all the more. Read the accompanying letter and then give it to her. If you can find time, also have a talk with her. Or Vinoba may do so. If Dwarakanath can do anything let him try to calm her.

[1] Addressee's daughter and son
[2] *ibid*
[3] According to the source, the letter was received on September 4, 1933.

You must have received my wire[1]. I certainly have many things to discuss with you, but I don't wish to drag you here. At first I felt that I should pay a visit to Bombay for a few days and then go to Wardha. But for the last two or three days I have become a little undecided. Perhaps it may be better to go to Wardha first and then to Bombay. But I am thinking. Since Jawaharlal has been released, it is necessary that I should see him also. I can do that even in Wardha, However. Ultimately, what is decreed will happen. I, therefore, don't make any plans.

My health is improving day by day. I can drink two pounds of milk and eat vegetables and fruit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2924

460. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 4, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I had your postcard. There has been no letter after that. I wrote one postcard to you. I hope you have been able to keep up your health. I have made you all prisoners and escaped myself. How strange!

I don't worry about you, for I believe that your equanimity will help you to remain unaffected by anything.

I am improving now. I intend to leave for Bombay next Friday. I shall probably stay there for about a week. After that, I intend to go to Wardha.

I had Jamna's letter. Let me know your plans. I had a long letter from Chimanlal[2].

At present, Ba, Mira, Prabhavati, Mathuradas, Chandrashankar and Nair are with me. Brijkrishna spends the whole day with me. I get more service than I need.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8392. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Dated August 30; *vide* "Telegram to Jamnalal Bajaj", 30-8-1933.

[2] Chimanlal Shah

461. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

September 4, 1933

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I have read your letter to Chandrashankar. If you have come to know what made the Hindus of Vina abandon their boycott unconditionally, please let me know. Have they realized their folly?

I hope necessary steps are being taken regarding the problem in Bhalada. If the caste Hindus do not change their attitude, and if it is possible, the Harijans may even have to be removed from such a village. If there is anything else which is worth knowing, please let me know.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3997

462. LETTER TO SHOORJI VALLABHDAS

September 4, 1933

BHAI SHOORJI,

I was thinking of writing to you, when I got your letter. I hope to reach Bombay on Friday. I will not, therefore, give you trouble by asking you to come here. I am certainly eager to see you, but I will have patience for a few days. I hope the girl's health is improving, and that you are well, too.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4095

[1] *Vide* "Congratulations", 10-9-1933.

463. A LETTER

Silence Day, September 4, 1933

CHI. . . .[1]

I got your letter three or four days ago and felt pity for you. I am observing silence today and so I have found the time to write this.

You cannot ride two horses at a time. If you wish to observe the vow of *brahmacharya,* you should never be alone with your wife or any other woman, leave alone sharing the same bed. If you cannot control yourself and avoid being alone with her or stop sleeping in the same bed with her, you should give up the vow of *brahmacharya.* You should leave the Ashram, too, and lead an honest householder's life as others do. There is no disgrace in doing so. Everybody should live with due regard to his strength. If anybody attempts more than that, hypocrisy is bound to creep in. I would, therefore, advise you to reflect carefully and come to a definite decision. Your present way does not do justice to your wife either. She cannot satisfy passion when she feels it, but you satisfy yours whenever you please and, thereby, increase her suffering. We accept the women's independence, but your conduct does not show that you know it. Think carefully about this and then do what seems best to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9511

464. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

September 4, 1933

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

I got your letter. I had been waiting for one. Do write to me occasionally. If you have any problem, let me know about it. Don't worry about me. I am regaining my strength now. I don't know how long I shall be out. I intend to go to Bombay on Friday, and from

[1] The name has been omitted.

there hope to go to Wardha after a week. Ba, Mirabehn and Prabhavati are with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. DUDHIBEHN VALJI DESAI

C/O DAKSHINAMURTI, BHAVNAGAR, KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3134. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

465. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 4, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

How are you now? Ba told me that you were not well but I hope you must have recovered by now. There is nothing to worry about me. So long as God wishes to protect me nothing will happen to me. And when He wishes to take me away no one here can keep me back. Give up, therefore, all fear for me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 288

466. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

POONA,
September 5, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

I have your letter together with the one from your mother. You do not want me to write to her again, do you? If you wish me to, I will write with pleasure.

The date of my reaching Wardha is not yet fixed, but it would not be before the last week of the month.

While you say that chapatis are a nuisance and while you consider them to be unwholesome, chapatis take no time in preparation and are quite wholesome if they are made with whole wheatmeal.

You say that Hindi is the first language you will know. Give me the list of the 11 languages.

I am getting on well.

Give me your day's diary.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

467. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

POONA,
September 6, 1933

JAMNALAL BAJAJ

WARDHA

GOING LUCKNOW BENARES UNNECESSARY. DO TAKE TEN DAYS HILL STATION AT ONCE. JAWAHARLAL REACHING HERE PROBABLY SATURDAY. I GO BOMBAY NEXT WEEK. STAYING ONE WEEK. REACHING WARDHA NOT EARLIER TWENTY-THIRD. AM KEEPING QUITE WELL. DISTRUST NEWSPAPER REPORT.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 116

468. STATEMENT ON HARIJAN DAY[1]

[*September 7, 1933*][2]

The Servants of Untouchables Society has declared 24th of this month to be the Harijan Day. It is the anniversary of the Yeravda Pact, miscalled Poona Pact. It is a happy coincidence that 24th is a Sunday. It is to be hoped that the day will be celebrated in a manner befitting the occasion. Each person, each Harijan organization, should take stock of his or its year's activity and contribution to the removal of the canker of untouchability. Societies and individuals can make a budget or resolution for the year to follow. Subscriptions can be collected from door to door for the work to be done. All the various activities that have hitherto been followed on Harijan Days will,

[1] This appeared under the tide "Harijan Day".
[2] From *The Bombay Chornicle*, 9-9-1933

I have no doubt, be taken up with greater emphasis on the 24th instant.

I hope that Harijans will also take stock of their contribution towards their own purification and, therefore, the purification of Hinduism. But there is no doubt that by far the greatest responsibility rests on the shoulders of caste Hindus. Reformers should make it a point of winning over the orthodox people to the movement by gentleness, humility, self-sacrifice, and increasing purity of character.

M. K. GANDHI

Harijan, 9-9-1933

469. INTERVIEW ON GOSEVA[1]

September 8, 1933[2]

GANDHIJI: I don't have sufficient enthusiasm to give a message,[3] because nobody does *goseva* in accordance with my views. I had explained these views to your President. I had also suggested the lines along which improvements could be made in the present movement. The President had agreed to implement my suggestions and had even assured me that he would do so. But he didn't keep his promise. What is the use, then, of my giving a message?

INTERVIEWER: This refers to only some of the workers engaged in *goseva*. Many other persons and goshalas are doing this work. They all can know your views on this movement only through a message. If you wish you can in the same message point out the shortcomings and suggest improvements.

G. I may dispose of you with an ordinary message in the same way as when a *goseva* worker approaches one for contribution; one usually disposes of him by paying him a few coins. But I don't think that any useful purpose will be served by such a message.

I. Well, leaving aside the subject of message, may I ask you whether you would like, after all these years, to revise any of your views on *goseva* expressed earlier? What you had said was: '(I) *goseva* alone will bring swaraj nearer. (2) As long as cows are being slaughtered, I feel myself being slaughtered. My efforts to save cows are

[1] This is published as "Introduction" in the source.

[2] The interview was concluded on a subsequent date, which is not ascertainable.

[3] The interviewer, a representative of an institution, had asked Gandhiji for a message for his monthly.

going on uninterruptedly. All my efforts are directed to stopping cow-slaughter. Anyone who is not ready to give his life to save the cow is not a Hindu. (3) My deepest aspirations are, eradication of untouchability and service of the cow. We shall achieve swaraj only when we succeed in these two tasks. I see *moksha* lies in their achievement.'

G. I wish to make no change in this statement of my views. But in interpreting them, the context of the circumstances in which I expressed them and the wide meaning which I give to *goseva* should be kept in mind. In *goseva* of my conception, I include all living creatures. Probably you do not know that I have said much more than the remarks you have quoted. For instance, I had also said that the ideal of cow-protection was the most important gift of Hinduism to mankind. But this remark of mine referred only to *goseva* of my peculiar conception.

I. I see what you mean. I will now ask one more question relating to the same aspect. Some people say that while doing cow-protection work in a disinterested spirit, one need not make any distinction between truth and untruth, and that any means can be adopted for cow-protection. What is your view in this regard?

G. To sacrifice truth for the sake of cow-protection would amount to sacrificing the cow herself. Similarly to betray truth for the sake of a public cause is to betray that cause itself. These peculiar views of mine have not commended themselves to the people, and they are not convinced by them. I have, therefore, no desire to interest myself in the present cow-protection movement. In fact, even today I am doing my utmost for cow-protection. How that is so is a riddle. What appears in newspapers will not help you to solve it. But I myself am convinced about it. Maybe you have found the solution.

I. Yes Sir, I understand what you mean.

G. I have made a deep study of the problem of *goseva*. Very few would have visited as many goshalas as I have. I have carefully studied the working of every institution I visited and have even written down my opinion of them in the visitors' books.

I. Will you then describe the defects that you have noticed in the present cow-protection work?

G. Those are mostly of the nature described in what you read out.

I. Well, then, according to you how can the cow be protected?

G. I will explain all that, but now the time allotted for this

interview is over. So please come once again after fixing an appointment. I will certainly grant an interview. We will discuss the problem further then, and if you are really enthusiastic about this work, then either I will co-operate with you or you will co-operate with me and we will do this work together.

II

[After *September 8, 1933*]

I. If I have properly understood you, then the distinctive feature of your idea of cow-protection is complete adherence to truth and non-violence, absence of communal ill will, utmost forbearance and love, and attention to the economic aspect, that is, increasing the number of dairies and tanneries and thereby the value of cows. Isn't this your particular point of view regarding *goseva?*

G. Perfectly true. Those who slaughter cows are ignorant people. Their ignorance cannot be removed by killing them. To remove their ignorance efforts of a different kind, love and sympathy, are required. And from the economic point of view also, there is no other way but to increase the value of cows.

I. Surely it is not your view that, while doing all this, we need not share or try to preserve the peculiar religious sentiment, that is, the feeling of reverence for cows?

G. No, no. on the contrary, this sentiment or feeling of reverence will be kept alive and preserved only by implementing all the items in my plan of *goseva*.

I. If we accept your idea, what should we do in future for the progress of the work? Would you suggest a yearly or three-yearly plan?

G. Whether you have a yearly or a three-yearly plan, you must do these things:

1. Stress should be laid on consumption of cow's milk and consumption of other milk should be stopped;

2. efforts should be made to utilize all the parts of the dead body of a cow and to see that no part is wasted, and propaganda should be carried on in this regard;

3. efforts should be made to improve the breed of cows;

4. the cow's yield of milk should be improved, etc.

I. Do you expect *goseva* workers who are engaged in these activities to work also for removal of untouchability and for Hindu-Muslim unity?

G. Not at all. It would be enough if they realize the wider

significance of *goseva*. Much can be done through such awareness itself. It would only mean that you had taken up one special aspect of *goseva*. It is in this sense that I claim to be doing *goseva* work while working for the removal of untouchability.

I. If we wish to work in the manner suggested by you, what help or co-operation from you can we expect?

G. I believe that certain virtues are essential for public workers. If you or anybody from among you pass that test, then I can free them from financial worries.

I. Do you think it necessary that a paper like *Harijan should* be started for this work?

G. To start a newspaper is the next step, or rather the last step. First of all an organization should start functioning, inspired by a particular ideal. Only then would it be proper to start a paper. That has been my attitude in regard to *Harijan*.

I. At present we lay great stress on the unification of all institutions engaged in *goseva*. How far do you approve of this?

G. It is a very difficult task, but I totally approve of it. If you succeed in it, I will congratulate you.

[From Gujarati]

Goseva, pp. 5-9

470. WAS IT COERCIVE?

In the current number of *The Modern Review*, amongst the notes which are always worth reading, there are some paragraphs on my most recent fast[1]. The writer of these notes quotes the following from my letter[2] to the authorities dated 14th August last and then remarks[3]:

> . . . But we . . . are constrained to observe that, though fasts undertaken solely for one's own purification and consolation are the exclusive concern of the individual fasting, fasts undertaken directly or indirectly to bring about political or social changes have coercive effect, even though coercion may not be intended. Like other coercion, this sort of unintended coercion . . . does not lead to universally sincere conduct and lasting reform.

[1] From August 16 to 23, 1933

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", 14-8-1933.

[3] Only extracts are reproduced here.

I propose to deal with this criticism because it affects a matter that is by no means closed. Fasting has been for years past an integral part of my life and I may have to resume it whether outside or inside prison walls. I cannot, therefore, write too often on the science of fasting, if I may use the sacred word 'science' in connection with my fasts. It is necessary to write on this matter as well for those who would thoughtlessly imitate me, as for those who criticize me sometimes without being in possession of full data.

With much of what the writer says I can readily agree. I do admit that my fast of September[1] did unfortunately coerce some people into action which they would not have endorsed without my fast. I do admit also that my last fast coerced the Government into releasing me. I admit, too, that such coercion can and does sometimes lead to insincere conduct. This is about the extent of my agreement.

These admissions do not cut at the very root of fasts. They only show that there is great need for caution and that special qualifications are necessary for those who would resort to fasting as a method of reform or securing justice.

In any examination of moral conduct, the intention is the chief ingredient. Being concerned with the morality of my action, I asserted that the intention behind the fast was not to exert coercion or pressure upon the Government. I wanted the Government to take me at my word and let me die in peace, if they could not see the justice of granting me the facilities I desired. The production of my letter would have absolved them from the charge of heartlessness, if I had died in prison. I did, indeed, know that my fast was likely, in spite of the declaration of my intention to the contrary, to influence Government to some extent. But one may not be deflected from the right course for fear of possible but unintended consequences. If one were to be so deterred it could be shown that hardly any great action could be undertaken.

To make my meaning clearer, let me take the September fast. It is a better illustration for examination seeing that it was unconnected with the Government. It was *intended* to influence both the caste and the Harijan Hindus. But there the intention was most decidedly not to induce, irrespective of merits, the decision I desired, but it was to stir

[1] September 20 to 26. 1932.

the Hindus to action on my submission. The intention was completely fulfilled and to that extent the fast was not, therefore, from the practical standpoint, open to objection. That it went beyond the intention and coerced some people into giving a decision against their conviction was unfortunate. But such conduct is of daily occurrence in the ordinary affairs of life. People do not always act independently of others or of surrounding circumstances. But I am able to say that vast majority of people concerned with the Pact would not accept it without a full and free discussion, and that what they accepted was accepted because they considered it to be on the whole just and fair. They did not sacrifice principle for saving my life.

And now whilst I am on the Pact I may observe parenthetically that, if any injustice was done, it is not yet beyond repair. If injustice can be proved to the satisfaction of the parties concerned, it is not too late to redress it. And I need hardly give the assurance that I should regard it as my sacred duty to exert myself to the best of my ability in helping to secure redress of any real injustice.

To revert to the issue under examination, I may say that I began my experiments in fasting on any large scale as an instrument of reform in 1913.[1] I had fasted often enough before, but not in the manner of 1913. My definite opinion is that the general result of my numerous fasts was without doubt beneficial. They invariably quickened the conscience of the people interested in and sought to be influenced by those fasts. I am not aware of any injustice having been perpetrated through those fasts. If Bengal proves injustice, it will be an exception. In no case was there any idea of exercising coercion on anyone. Indeed, I think that the word coercion would be a misnomer for the influence that was exerted by the fasts under criticism. Coercion means some harmful force used *against* a person who is expected to do something desired by the user of the force. In the fasts in question, the force used was against myself. Surely, force of self-suffering cannot be put in the same category as the force of suffering caused to the party sought to be influenced. If I fast in order to awaken the conscience of an erring friend whose error is beyond question, I am not coercing him in the ordinary sense of the word.

The writer of the notes says that there can be fasts that have no "coercive effect", but if the expression 'coercive effect' can be

[1] The reference is to the fast undertaken to atone for the moral lapse on the part of an inmate of the Phoenix Ashram.

lawfully used for my fasts, then in that sense, all fasts can be proved to have that effect to a greater or less extent. The fact is that all spiritual fasts always influence those who come within the zone of their influence. That is why spiritual fasting is described as *tapas*. And all *tapas* invariably exerts purifying influence on those in whose behalf it is undertaken.

Of course, it is not to be denied that fasts can be really coercive. Such are fasts to attain a selfish object. A fast undertaken to wring money from a person or for fulfilling some such personal end would amount to the exercise of coercion or undue influence. I would unhesitatingly advocate resistance of such undue influence. I have myself successfully resisted it in the fasts that have been undertaken or threatened against me. And if it is argued that the dividing line between a selfish and an unselfish end is often very thin, I would urge that a person who regards the end of a fast to be selfish or otherwise base should resolutely refuse to yield to it, even though the refusal may result in the death of the fasting person. If people will cultivate the habit of disregarding fasts which in their opinion are taken for unworthy ends, such fasts will be robbed of the taint of coercion and undue influence. Like all human institutions, fasting can be both legitimately and illegitimately used. But as a great weapon in the armoury of satyagraha, it cannot be given up because of its possible abuse. Satyagraha has been designed as an effective substitute for violence. This use is in its infancy and, therefore, not yet perfected. But as the author of modern satyagraha I cannot give up any of its manifold uses without forfeiting my claim to handle it in the spirit of a humble seeker.

Harijan, 9-9-1933

471. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

'PARNAKUTI',
September 9, 1933

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I like your letter.[1]

[1] On September 4, the addressee had among other things written: "I was touched by your reply. It was full and reasoned. Neither of us forms an opinion in a hurry or drops it in a hurry. But there is a satisfaction in knowing the other side. In all circumstances, we shall carefully understand and make allowances for each other. . . . I plead for Congress being freed from your rule. If you wait for its consent to the course, a very long delay is inevitable. Grant the freedom immediately. Must you, like the British Raj, put off the consummation till it becomes inevitable?"

I want you to continue to strive with me and believe, as Gokhale used to believe of me, that whilst I often appeared to be uncompromising, I had a compromising and accommodating nature. I have always prized the certificate that he gave me and have endeavoured to live up to it. If the freedom that you desire for the Congress was in my giving, I assure you that I would give it today, but it is not such a simple performance. When at Patna I surrendered all powers to the Swaraj Party,[1] Motilalji handsomely admitted that, though I was always ready to give, the party was only then to take them. The fact is that I do not want power. I look upon it as a privileged service. The moment I feel that I can get out of it to the benefit of the Congress, I will not fail. However, you may depend upon me that I shall strain every nerve to adopt your advice. A great deal will depend upon Jawaharlal, whom I expect here on Saturday.

Love.

M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, pp. 264-5

472. LETTER TO DHIRU C. JOSHI

September 9, 1933

CHI. DHIRU,

I would be happier if you write with ink and improve your handwriting. Pay careful attention to your studies. Write a letter to Chhaganlal[2] and send it to Rama[3] who will pass it on to him along with her own.

Take plenty of exercise. Write to me regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5813

[1] At the All-India Congress Committee meeting held in September 1925.

[2] Addressee's father and mother

[3] *ibid.*

473. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

September 9, 1933

BHAISHRI BHAGWANJI,

You have done well in going to Rangoon. I hope your trip will bear fruit and there will be complete understanding among the brothers.[1]

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5818. Also C.W. 3041. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

474. LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

September 9, 1933

CHI. MAGANLAL[2],

I had hoped to get a letter from you and Manjula[3]. She must have got my previous letter. I had written it to the Mogul Street address.

I enclose Jakibeans'[4] letter, which I received today. Think over it and reply to her.

Write to me a detailed letter. I can work well enough now. How is your business? Do you continue your study? Do you go out for walks? Urmila[5] must have grown quite a bit now. I would be very happy indeed if an understanding is reached.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5819. Also C.W. 3042. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] The reference is to the dispute among the sons of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta over their ancestral property; *vide* also the following item.

[2] Youngest son of Dr. Pranjivan J. Mehta

[3] Addressee's wife

[4] Jayakunwar Doctor, addressee's sister

[5] Addressee's daughter

475. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

Saturday, September 9, 1933

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I had both your letters. You do not seem to have received mine. I am sure by and by you will decide to stay permanently in Vadaj. For the present, if you find it convenient you may stay in the Parsi bungalow and cook your own meals. If you find a Harijan who can cook to your taste, train him. Do your work with due regard for your health. I have also explained to Chimanlal that it should not be at the cost of health. If Liladhar himself treats Shanti, I am helpless. There will be no harm, however, if he has the necessary knowledge. Write to me regularly. I shall be leaving for Bombay next Thursday or Friday.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI BHAGWANJI

C/O DR. LILADHAR DHARAMSHI

OLD VADAJ, AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 362. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

476. LETTER TO MAHENDRA V. DESAI

September 9, 1933

CHI. MANU[1],

I got your letter. It is better to use pen for writing. I think I owed you a letter. And now you will owe me one. You seem to be making good progress in your study.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 3159. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

477. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

September 9, 1933

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

I got your letter. I am all right. I will go to Bombay next week. You will find herewith letters for the five boys. I hope when Kusum

[1] Eldest son of Valji G. Desai

comes over there she will keep good health. You are doing right in looking after all our children [of the Ashram]. That is just the right thing for us to do.

Valji is in Nasik Road Central Jail. He keeps good health. I have heard that all the prisoners are well. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3135. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

478. LETTER TO MADALASA BAJAJ

September 9, 1933

CHI. MADALASA,

I got your letter. You should not be afraid that you will be a burden on Vinoba. It is a teacher's duty that he should help a pupil to overcome his or her shortcomings. If you were perfect, why would you require a teacher's help?

Why are you so much afraid of getting your hair cut? Like grass it will grow again. I have seen the hair of many girls, who had it cut, grow even longer than it was before. If, therefore, you are not very much in love with your hair, get it cut. As for your dress, you don't require much change except that you should wear shorts. The dress for a girl like you can easily be made comfortable. But we shall meet shortly now.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 315

479. LETTER TO BIPIN BIHARI VARMA

September 9, 1933

BHAI BIPIN,

I have your letter. I am pained to learn of your illness. May God grant you quick recovery. As for the money, talk over with

Brijkishorebabu. I have not yet made up my mind. Write to me again if I am still out. I am sending your letter to Brijkishorebabu.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. BIPIN BIHARI VARMA, BAR-AT-LAW
SHAKARPUR P.O. NARKATIA GANJ
CHAMPARAN

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9669

480. DISCUSSION WITH A FRIEND[1]

[Before *September 10, 1933*]

Don't lose heart. Of course I can understand your deep sentiment.

But how much you suffered!

Oh, it was the body that suffered, besides I had invited the suffering myself. When God creates for us a situation involving suffering He also gives us the strength to bear it. It would surely be painful for me if I did not act on His prompting to undertake a fast. This is not a new thing in my life.

But what about [the risk to] your life?

The path of life is not straight and smooth. It has so many turns and twists, so many ups and downs. It is not like a railway track on which, once released, the train simply goes on.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 10-9-1933

[1] This and the following two items are extracted from Chandrashankar Shukla's "Weekly Letter". This appeared under the sub-title, "God's Insurance".

481. ADVICE TO GIRLS, PARNAKUTI KANYASHALA[1]

[Before *September 10, 1933*]

GANDHIJI: If in order to keep up and strengthen one's faith in God man is called upon to undergo this much trouble, he should be prepared to do so.

A GIRL: Should prayers be compulsory or voluntary?

G. Is eating compulsory or voluntary?

A GIRL: one cannot do without it.

G. In that case, we should not be able to do without prayer too. Just as our body cannot grow without food, our *atman* cannot grow without prayer. Just as food is the nourishment for our body, prayer is the nourishment for our *atman.* Without prayer the *atman* becomes lustreless. How can we say that it is killed? For, the *Bhagavad Gita* tells us that the *atman is* deathless. But *atman* may be deluded. There are countless people in the world who do not pray, they are as good as lost. He who is not conscious of the *atman is* only an ignorant fool. Prayer can never be said to be compulsory. It can be only voluntary. If anyone insists on making prayer compulsory, it will result in hypocrisy. But we must make it compulsory of our own accord. It is not one's duty to eat. One can do without eating for a while. One can never eat when one has already eaten too much. But one can never have too much of prayers. We must make prayer so obligatory for ourselves that we can never do without it. If you girls resolve that you would not tell a lie even if you get a kingdom in return, would it be called compulsory or voluntary? What if you have decided on your own and made it a rule to offer your prayers at 4 o'clock in the morning and at 7.30 in the evening —even at the instance of the elders? In such matters we must be hard on ourselves. You can pray only if you have made such a rule. Nothing in the world happens without a law of its own.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 10-9-1933

[1] This appeared under the sub-title, "Should Prayers be Compulsory or Voluntary?" C. S. Shukla had reported that in answer to a question put by one of the girls as to why he went on fast, Gandhiji was explaining the significance of his recent three fasts.

482. ADVICE TO A STUDENT [1]

[Before *September 10, 1933*]

I am asking you to spin for half an hour every day. Do you think it is too much? Suppose you spin only enough to bring you one pice. If you multiply it by 30 crores it would mean 30 crore pice. How much would it amount to in terms of rupees in a year? The national wealth of this poor country would increase to that extent and the problem of poverty would be largely solved. This is not asking too much from you.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 10-9-1933

483. WHAT SHOULD A BRAHMIN DO?

A Maharashtrian writes:[2]

I hope not many persons have had the experience that this Brahmin has had. Of course, no one should have it. Anyone who is qualified for a job should get one. There should be no discrimination in this regard, on the basis of caste, varna or religion. It should be easy for any person belonging to this country to find himself a job, or practise a profession here.

This represents the ideal. Ideas of 'high' and 'low' are deep-rooted in our country and hence caste, varna and religion are given greater attention than merit or demerits. Hence it is not surprising that Brahmins are not given employment where there is a ban on their recruitment. Unfortunate incidents will persist, because of our sins and the rot that has entered our religion. We should, therefore, suffer them in a spirit of atonement.

But then, why should one who wishes to observe the dharma ordained for a Brahmin look for employment? Those who profess to be Brahmins, should spread *Brahmavidya*[3] amongst the people and for livelihood depend upon religiously-inclined patrons. A Brahmin

[1] Who had approached Gandhiji after the evening prayers. This appeared under the sub-title, "The Price of an Autograph".

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had pointed out that an educated gentleman had failed to obtain employment because of his being a Brahmin.

[3] Knowledge of Brahman

who is out to seek employment should find true consolation in the practice of his own dharma, so that he will have no cause for despair.

I hope I will not be criticized on the ground that I who assert that varnadharma has ceased to exist, take refuge in this system when faced with a difficult situation. This is because, to say that varnadharma has disappeared does not imply that no one should observe it. Anyone who believes in it ought to observe it studiously as far as he is personally involved. The. fact that this Brahmin claims to be one suggests that he believes in varnadharma. Hence, I would advise him to observe it and give up the lure of employment,

Even in these difficult times, individual Brahmins have rendered no mean service to the country. Compared with others, the sacrifice of Brahmins is indeed greater. However, the supreme sacrifice on the part of Brahmins will be to give up all pursuit of wealth such as employment, etc. The Brahmin's dharma could shine only by *paramartha*[1]. If the Brahmins understood the idea behind varnadharma and acted accordingly, it could easily be revived. Hence my advice to this Brahmin and to those in a similar plight is that they should become worthy of practising their Brahmin dharma, act accordingly and give up the lure of wealth.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 10-9-1933

484. CONGRATULATIONS

Both caste Hindus and Harijans of Vina deserve to be congratulated on having resolved the differences and the internal disputes which had arisen between them and on having ended the boycott of Harijans. I hope the harmonious relationship will endure. I also compliment the Harijan Sevak Sangh on its successful efforts.

A similar atmosphere of tension and bitterness seems to have been generated in Bhalada. As I write this, I have no information whether or not a settlement has been reached there. I hope the people have been reconciled there too.

Such quarrels are a disgrace to us. In every village the number of our Harijan brothers and sisters is very small compared to the rest of the population. To persecute them is like engaging an army to

[1] Pursuit of the the highest values

fight ants. To suspect Harijans or to implicate them in the death or disease of cattle, is nothing but superstition. It might be that some Harijans were involved, but beating or boycotting them will not make them give up the practice, but by having love for them, by spreading knowledge amongst them, by treating them well and by regarding them as our brothers and sisters, it is likely that they will overcome the habit. In other words, the only royal road to make Harijans real children of God (Hari) is by abolishing untouchability wholly.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 10-9-1933

485. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS AND KRISHNA KAPADIA

September 10, 1933

CHI. MADHAVDAS AND KRISHNA,

I got the letters of you both. Happiness and unhappiness are a part of our lot, as heat and cold are. One day we may be owning a motor-car and the next day we may have to go walking on foot. Why need that make us unhappy? Never lose courage and patience. They are one's real wealth. We hope to arrive in Mani Bhavan on Friday evening.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MADHAVDAS GOKULDAS
SHAMJI SAVAJI'S CHAWL
MANORDAS STREET
FORT, BOMBAY

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII

486. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

September 10, 1933

CHI. KANTA,

I have written to Brother about you. I can understand your thirst for learning. But the question before me is where and how to find the money for such a purpose at the present time?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

487. MESSAGE TO WORLD FELLOWSHIP OF FAITHS

[Before *September 11, 1933*][1]

What message can I send through the pen if I am not sending any through the life I am living?

The Hindu, 12-9-1933

488. MESSAGE TO SWADESHI EXHIBITION AND BAZAAR [2]

[Before *September 11, 1933*][3]

If women do not uphold the cause of swadeshi, what can men alone do? your exhibition is organized by women. It must therefore be well ordered and well decorated.

The Hindu, 12-9-1933

[1] This message was reported under the date-line: "Chicago, September 11, 1933".

[2] Organised by the Gujarat and Broach branches of All-India Women's Conference

[3] The message was published under the date-line: "Ahmedabad, September 11, 1933".

489. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

September 11, 1933

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I had written you a letter specially but you have not acknowledged it so far. I hope it has not gone astray. In it I had asked you about Shrimati's brother[1], a barrister. Send me a telegram if you have not got the letter. This should reach you tomorrow morning.

I have received Gulazarilal's[2] letters. Since I shall be seeing him in Bombay I have not answered. I had earlier written to him to come over if the matter was urgent. Ohterwise Bombay seemed a suitable place in all respects.

Pass on the enclosed letter to the children.

I am well.

I hope to reach Bombay on Friday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32798

490. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

September 11, 1933

BHAI VIYOGI HARI[3],

Your letter. We must, first of all, find out the rules of the tramway. The problem is quite simple if it is only a matter of clothing. Even otherwise we have to teach Harijans the rules of cleanliness. The tramway authorities have no right to ask anyone to disclose his identity, hence neither a Harijan nor anyone else is obliged to answer the question. I shall certainly write for *Harijan Sevak* when I have the time.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VIYOGI HARI
SERVANTS OF UNTOUCHABLES SOCIETY
BIRLA MILLS, DELHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1094

[1] Gunottam Hutheesingh, *vide* also "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 3-9-1933.
[2] Gulzarilal Nanda, Secretary of the Ahmedabad Labour Association
[3] Hindi poet and editor of *Harijan Sevak*

491. LETTER TO RAMA DEVI CHOWDHARY [1]

September 11, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

Your letter to hand. Your work seems to be proceeding well. May it progress thus. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RAMA DEVI
SERVANTS OF UNTOUCHABLES SOCIETY
CUTTACK

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2783

492. TALK WITH A JAPANESE MONK [2]

[*September 12, 1933*][3]

You can help in several ways.[4] Every country must attain its own freedom. But those who are indebted to India can do her service in many ways.

I am not a preacher. Rather, I am a man of action. I can only show you how to work. This spinning-wheel is a wheel of *upasana*[5] and also a wheel of action. When you ply this wheel, you work and pray at one and the same time. Here is work for you. This I recommend to you. Look at the yarn it spins. When you have mastered this, I shall show you some other work. I teach only action. And there is no doubt about this. Learning to spin also means that you should know cleaning and carding cotton. Then you can claim to have joined the charkha movement. This is enough for the time being.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 17-9-1933

[1] Wife of Gopabandhu Chowdhary
[2] This appeared under the title ‘‘Charkha—the wheel of Action”.
[3] From *Gandhi:1915-1948——A Detailed Chronology*
[4] The Japanese monk was eager to serve India and had asked for instruction.
[5] Prayer

493. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

September 14, 1933

As a rule, during my long course of public service, the next moment's step has been clear before me, but since my unexpected release from prison on August 23 last, darkness has surrounded me. The path of duly has, therefore, not been clear to me. My present state of health is such that it may yet take several weeks for me to regain my lost strength.

To seek imprisonment as soon as I was physically fit, or to restrain myself for the interrupted year of imprisonment was the question before me.

After hard praying and thinking, I have come to the conclusion that up to the termination of the period of my sentence, that is, up to August 3 next, I must not court imprisonment by offering aggressive civil resistance. This, however, in no way affects the advice given in the statement issued by me after the informal conference[1] at Poona. That I have to suspend action for myself is unfortunate but inevitable.

My release has placed me in a most embarrassing position, but as a satyagrahi, that is, as a humble seeker of Truth, somehow or other it offends my sense of propriety to court imprisonment in the circumstances created by my discharge. Whatever the motive behind it, I may not quarrel with my release. I must example examine act on its merits. It appears to me to be petty to force the Government to re-arrest me by taking aggressive action during the unexpired term of imprisonment, unless extraordinary circumstances, which I cannot foresee, arise compelling me to revise my decision. There is no room for smallness in civil resistance.

This self-imposed restraint is a bitter cup. When I said at my trial[2] after arrest that to remain outside and be a helpless witness of the devastating and demoralizing effect of the Ordinance Rule was an unbearable agony, I stated a simple and unvarnished fact. That agony is no less today than it was on August 4. But I must bear it.

I cannot be a willing party to an undignified cat-and-mouse game if Government have any such thing in contemplation. Therefore, when and if I am arrested again and denied Harijan service,

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Leaders' Conference, Poona-I", 12-7-1933 and "Speech at Leaders' Conference, Poona-II", 12-7-1933.

[2] On. August 4; *vide* "Trial at Poona", 4-8-1933.

I would not hesitate, if I had the inner urge, to undertake a fast to the finish which would not be broken even if Government released me, as they did on August 23 last, when the danger point had been reached.

I must state the limitations of my self-restraint in clear terms. Whilst I can refrain from aggressive civil resistance, I cannot, so long as I am free, help guiding those who will seek my advice, and preventing national movement from running into wrong channels. It is an ever-growing belief with me that truth cannot be found by violent means.

The attainment of national independence is to me a search after truth. Terrorist methods, whether adopted by an oppressor or his victim can, I am convinced, never be effectively answered by violent resistance but only by civil resistance.

I would, therefore, be guilty of disloyalty to my creed, if I attempted to put greater restraint on myself than I have adumbrated in this statement. If then Government leave me free, I propose to devote this period to Harijan service and if possible to such constructive activities as my health may permit.

It is needless to repeat here that peace is as much a part of my being as civil resistance. Indeed a civil resister offers resistance only when peace becomes impossible. Therefore, so far as I am concerned and so long as I am free, I shall make all endeavours in my power to explore every possible avenue of an honourable peace.

The Bombay Chronicle, 15-9-1933

494. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
September 14, 1933

MY. DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I am glad you have written so fully and frankly.

When, on my return from London at the end of 1931, I found you to have been suddenly snatched away from me,[1] I felt the separation keenly. I was, therefore, most anxious to meet you and exchange views.[2]

[1] The addressee was arrested on December 26, 1931, while on his way to see Gandhiji.

[2] Gandhiji and Jawaharlal Nehru met and had long discussions from september 10.

With much of what you have said in your letter I am in complete agreement. The experience gained after the karachi Congress has, if possible, strengthened my faith in the main resolution and the economic programme referred to by you. I have no doubt in my mind that our goal can be no less than 'Complete Independence'. I am also in whole-hearted agreement with you when you say that without a material revision of vested interests the condition of the masses can never be improved. I believe, too, though I may not go as far as you do, that before India can become one homogeneous entity, the princes will have to part with much of their power and become popular representatives of the people over whom they are ruling today. I can corroborate from first-hand experience much of what you say about the Round Table Conference. Nor have I the slightest difficulty in agreeing with you that in these days of rapid intercommunication and a growing consciousness of the oneness of all mankind, we must recognize that our nationalism must not be inconsistent with progressive internationalism. India cannot stand in isolation and unaffected by what is going on in other parts of the world. I can, therefore, go the whole length with you and say that 'we should range ourselves with the progressive forces of the world'. But I know that though there is such an agreement between you and me in the enunciation of ideals, there are temperamental differences between us. Thus you have emphasized the necessity of a clear statement of the goal, but having once determined it, I have never attached importance to the repetition. The clearest possible definition of the goal and its appreciation would fail to take us there if we do not know and utilize the means of achieving it. I have, therefore, concerned myself principally with the conservation of the means and their progressive use. I know that if we can take care of them, attainment of the goal is assured. I feel too that our progress towards the goal will be in exact proportion to the purity of our means. If we can give an ocular demonstration of our uttermost truthfulness and non-violence, I am convinced that our statement of the national goal cannot long offend the interests which your letter would appear to attack. We know that the princes, the zamindars, and those who depend for their existence upon the exploitation of the masses, would cease to fear and distrust us, if we could but ensure the innocence of our methods. We do not seek to coerce any. We seek to convert them. This method may appear to be long, perhaps too long, but I am convinced that it is the shortest.

In the main I agree with your interpretation of Sjt. Aney's instructions and my note upon them. I am quite clear in my mind that had those instructions not been issued, the whole movement of civil resistance would have collapsed through growing internal weakness; for Congressmen were deluding themselves into the belief that there were organizations effectively functioning to which they could look for guidance, when, as a matter of fact, under the organized terrorism which the Ordinance Rule means, organized functioning of Congress Committees had become impossible. A false belief in the functioning of organizations, rendered illegal and largely impotent, was fast producing a demoralization which had to be arrested. There is no such thing as demoralization in civil resistance properly applied. You have said rightly that after all "civil disobe-dience is essentially an individual affair". I go a step further and say that so long as there is one civil resister offering resistance, the move-ment cannot die and must succeed in the end. Individual civil resisters do not need the aid of an organization. After all an organization is nothing without the individuals composing it. Sjt. Aney's instructions were, therefore, I hold, an affective answer to the Ordinances and if only men and women belonging to the Congress will appreciate the necessity of those instructions with all their implications, the Ordinances will be rendered nugatory, at least so far as the resisters are concerned. They can form a nucleus around which an army of invincible civil resisters can be built up. Nothing ill Sjt. Aney's instructions or in my note would warrant the supposition that they preclude organized action by Congressmen in any shape or form.

I would like to warn you against thinking that there is no fundamental difference between individual cavil resistance and mass civil resistance. I think that the fundamental difference is implied in your own admission that "it is essentially an individual affair". The chief distinction between mass civil resistance and individual civil resistance is that in the latter everyone is a complete independent unit and his fall does not affect the others; in mass civil resistance the fall of one generally adversely affects the rest. Again, in mass civil resistance leadership is essential, in individual civil resistance every resister is his own leader. Then again, in mass civil resistance, there is a possibility of failure; in individual civil resistance failure is an impossibility. Finally, a State may cope with mass civil resistance; no State has yet been found able to cope with individual civil resistance.

Nor may much be made of my statement that an organization which feels its own strength can at its own risk adopt mass civil resistance. While, as an opinion, it is unexceptionable, I know that at the present moment there is no organization that can shoulder the burden. I do not want to raise false hopes.

Now about the secret methods. I am as firm as ever that they must be tabooed. I am myself unable to make any exceptions. Secrecy has caused much mischief and if it is not put down with a firm hand, it may ruin the movement. There may be exceptional circumstances that may warrant secret methods. I would forgo that advantage for the sake of the masses whom we want to educate in fearlessness. I will not confuse their minds by leading them to think that under certain circumstances, they may resort to secret methods. Secrecy is inimical to the growth of the spirit of civil resistance. If Congressmen will realize that all property is liable to be confiscated at any moment, they will learn to be utterly independent of it.

I quite agree with you that it is ludicrous for individuals to send notices to the local authorities of their intention to offer a particular form of civil disobedience. We do not want to make a great movement ridiculous. Therefore when civil resistance is offered it should be offered seriously and in an effective manner, in so far as this is possible, in furtherance of the Congress programme.

I notice one gap in your letter. You make no mention of the various constructive activities of the Congress. They became an integral part of the Congress programme that was framed after mature deliberations in 1920. With civil resistance as the background we cannot possibly do without the constructive activities such as communal unity, removal of untouchability and universalization of the spinning-wheel and khaddar. I am as strong as ever about these. We must recognize that whilst the Congressmen can be counted by hundreds of thousands, civil resisters imprisoned have never amounted to more than one lakh at the outside. I feel that there is something radically wrong if paralysis has overtaken the remaining lakhs. There is nothing to be ashamed of in an open confession by those who for any reason whatsoever are unable to join the civil resisters' ranks. They are also serving the cause of the country and bringing it nearer to the goal who are engaged in any of the constructive activities I have named and several other kindred activities I can add to the list.

Ordinance or no Ordinance, if individual Congressmen and Congress-women will learn the art of contributing their share to the work of building of the house of independence and realize their own importance, dark as the horizon seems to us, there is absolutely no cause for despair or disappointment.

Finally, if I can say so without incurring the risk of your accusing me of egotism, I would like to say that I have no sense of defeat in me and the hope in me that this country of ours is fast marching towards its goal is burning as bright as it did in 1920; for I have an undying faith in the efficacy of civil resistance. But as you are aware, after full and prayerful consideration, I have decided not to take the offensive during the unexpired period of the sentence of imprisonment that was pronounced against me on the 4th of August last by the court that met in Yeravda Jail. I need not go into the reasons as I have already issued a separate statement about it. This personal suspension, although it may be misunderstood for a while, will show how and when it may become a duty. And if it is a duty, it cannot possibly injure the cause.

Yours,

BAPU

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

POONA

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch File No. 800(40)(14), pp. 153-61; also *Mahatma*, Vol. III, pp. 308-11

495. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

'PARNAKUTI', POONA,

September 15, 1933

CHI. MANI,

Since you must be getting letters from Nasik[1] regularly, I did not write any. Now I see that if I had written, you would have got my letters. But let that be. If I am out of prison, I am sure, you will come and see me wherever I may be. I know you will stay in Belgaum for a

[1] Vallabhbhai Patel was then in Nasik Jail.

couple of days and then go to Nasik. I hope you keep good health. I am well. I am leaving for Bombay today. 21st Ahmedabad, 23rd Wardha.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. MANIBEHN PATEL
CENTRAL PRISON, HINDALAGA
BELGAUM

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 107-8

496. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

ON THE TRAIN FROM POONA TO BOMBAY,

September 15, 1933

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter in the train and I am writing this reply immediately. I am going to Bombay. On Wednesday I will go to Ahmedabad. I have to perform two ceremonies[1] there on Thursday. You must have read about that. I expect to reach Wardha on the 23rd. The programme after that will be decided there.

Don't worry at all about my health. I do take, and will continue to take, the utmost care. I can drink two pounds of milk and eat fruit and vegetables. My weight is 100 pounds. The body is massaged daily. Dr. Dinshaw takes great care of my health. He will come to Bombay also. Premlilabehn literally bathed me in her love. 'Parnakuti' has practically become a second home to me. I am very glad that you have continued honey. Should I ask her to send you some? She will be coming to Bombay tomorrow. She frequently visits the place. Aunt[2] was with me all the time. She is an amazing mixture. There is no doubt about her love, but she always creates difficulties. Jawaharlal's health is excellent. He has still preserved the qualities of

[1] Unveiling a statue of Chinubhai Madhavlal and laying the foundation stone of the Sheth Maneklal Jethalal Library; *vide* "Speech at Ahmedabad-I & II", 21-9-1933.

[2] Sarojini Naidu

character which his name[1] connotes. He will now go to Lucknow. He stayed in 'Parnakuti' with me. He was accompanied by Upadhyaya[2]. Manzar Ali[3] and Professor[4] also were there. Professor had fever, but there is no cause for anxiety. Andrews has remained behind in Poona for two days to have some rest. Devdhar[5] has become very weak. Write a letter inquiring after his health. Shastri[6] is all right now and has returned to Poona. Most probably Chandrashankar will accopany me on my visits. The only difficulty is about his health. Mathuradas[7] also is accompanying. But it is not certain whether he will come to Wardha. Most probably he will accompany up to there. Mirabehn, of course, will be in the party. Prabhavati also is with me up to now. I had a long letter from Mahadev. He is fairly well. He reads and spins. Pannalal[8] was in Poona and will now go to Bombay. Kaka also will come to Bombay in two or three days. Ba is quite well. Do the needful about your tooth. Have you kept up the study of Sanskrit? Don't worry about anything. I have written[9] to Mani and told her that, when she is released, she should go and see you and then see me wherever I am. Kamala Nehru has a cardiac ailment. She is in Lucknow.

Why should we care whether or not we get any company?[10] Why should one who feels the presence of God need other company? However, you have done right in writing about that, as also about visits.

I have to draw up a tour programme for Harijan work in consultation with Ghanshyamdas (Birla) and Thakkar Bapa.

Anandi is well on the whole. Narahari's children have been ill for some time. They are being properly looked after and treated. Bablo has gone to live with his aunt. He went on crying till he had his way. Nirmala[11] is all right, and so also Sharda[12]. I get letters from

[1] 'Jawahar', literally means a jewel.
[2] Nehru's Private Secretary
[3] Manzar Ali Sokata, a Muslim leader
[4] J. B. Kripalani
[5] G. K. Devdhar
[6] R. V. Sastri
[7] Mathuradas Trikumji
[8] Pannalal Jhaveri
[9] *Vide* the preceding item.
[10] The addressee was kept alone and the Government had been requested for a companion.
[11] Mahadev Desai's sister
[12] Daughter of Chimanlal Shah

Anandi. In Bombay I shall be staying in Mani Bhavan, and in Ahmedabad at Ranchhodbhai's[1] place.

Send for anything you want. Mahadev has taken over charge of making envelopes[2].

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 22-5

497. SOME QUESTIONS

I have several letters from Harijans, lying in my file, putting a number of questions. I take up the most important. Before answering them, I would like to warn correspondents against putting questions for the sake of putting them, or what is worse, of advertising themselves. I would beseech them to avoid the vices or shortcomings of the so-called superior classes or the so-called caste Hindus. I would like the yet very few Harijan workers to be above board, incorruptible and selfless, for they have to shoulder a tremendous burden. Whilst, as I have repeatedly said in these columns, it is the duty of caste Hindus to rid themselves of the curse of untouchability, ultimately the salvation of Harijans will have to come from within. In pursuance of the advice tendered by me, I withhold the names of my correspondents in anticipation of their approval of my action.

The first question I pick up is as follows:

> Generally social work is being done in town areas, but practically nothing is being done in the villages, though the latter are admittedly more in need. What is to be done?

I am afraid that what the correspondent says is very largely true. Unfortunately, workers are very few compared to the magnitude of the task before the reformer, and, the majority of workers being town-bred, they are disinclined to go to the villages and settle there.

[1] Ranchhodlal Amritlal Shodhan, a mill-owner

[2] The addressee used to make envelopes out of waste paper as a hobby.

The Central Board[1] is quite alive to the problem, and effort is being made of penetrate the villages, not without some success. The answer, therefore, to the question, 'what is to be done', is that the effort has to be intensified. Village workers have to be found or made and, when once the fear of settling in villages is overcome, the response to the demand for a large number of workers will be much greater than it is today. Given continuance of the effort, success is bound to attend it.

The second question is:

> Will it not hasten the removal of untouchability if caste Hindus took Harijans as domestic servants?

This is no new advice. Swami Shraddhanandji used to lay very great emphasis on the necessity of caste Hindus employing Harijans as domestic servants precisely on the same terms as any other. But I fear that receiving Harijans as domestic servants will be, when it becomes at all general, not a spur to the removal of untouchability, but a sign of removal. Nevertheless, it is the duty of every reformer who has got rid of untouchability from his own household to have a Harijan domestic servant. No doubt, for the reformer it would be better still if he would take a Harijan boy or girl, not as a servant, but as a member of his family.

The third question is:

> What should Harijans do in the present drive against untouch-ability?

I can only repeat the answer I have given so often before. They should carry on vigorous internal reform among themselves and remove every cause of reproach.

The fourth question is:

> In two villages of Kaira, Harijans have been boycotted by caste Hindus because they asked for adequate remuneration for carrying carcasses. What should the Harijans do in such cases?

I am happy to be able to say that in one of these villages, owing to the efforts of workers of the local Society, the boycott was lifted, and the information as to the other village, at the time of writing this, is that there is every probability of a similar amicable settlement. But assuming that in some villages caste Hindus remain obstinate and persist in boycotting Harijans, if the latter have any self-consciousness they would persist in their refusal to render service without adequate

[1] Of the Harijan Sevak Sangh.

remuneration, and, if the boycott proves to be too hot for them, they would quietly vacate the offending village. I know that this is easier said than done. And I know also that there is not sufficient awakening among the Harijans to induce them to adopt the method suggested by me. But I have also no doubt that the time is coming soon when caste Hindus will have to think a hundred times before resorting to such boycotts.

The fifth question is:

> What has come out of your proposal that there should be an all-India advisory board of Harijans to advise the Servants of Untouchables Society?

The proposal referred to was made by me in Ahmedabad. It had reference to the Provincial Board, but what is true of the Provincial Board is also true of the Central Board. It should be remembered that the advice was given to the Harijans and it is for them to make a move and appoint such committees. I have no doubt that the Central Board and the Provincial organizations will function in a proper manner. Much good can be done through them.

The sixth question is:

> Do you know that some temples which had been opened to Harijans were subsequently closed against them? What is your solution?

For the time being, we have to assume that such temples were opened under some sort of coercion or that the trustees have been since coercd into closing them against Harijans. I know one or two instances of the latter kind. My solution in either case is that for the time being we should suffer this deprivation.

The seventh question is:

> The temple-entry movement seems to have come to a dead stop. Do you contemplate any move?

I do not think that the temple-entry movement has suffered any such stop as the correspondent suggests. The spectacular part of it is, no doubt, under check, but the effort for opening new temples and re-opening old temples is steadily going forward, as the pages of the *Harijan* can show.

The eighth question is:

> Will you be a party to a modification of the Yeravda Pact, if all the parties to it come to a common understanding?

Naturally the Pact would be modified, but, so far as I am concerned, it can never be modified to the detriment of Harijans.

The ninth question is:

> Neither the Bombay Government nor the public are giving effect to the Council resolution as to the opening of public wells to Harijans. Will you advise satyagraha on their part?

In the first place, I have no definite information in the matter. Secondly, I am unable to advise satyagraha, at the present stage at any rate.

The tenth and last question is:

> Do you favour the idea of an all-India conference of Harijan leaders for dealing with the question of untouchability?

A thoroughly representative conference cannot fail to be helpful. I should, therefore, welcome the holding of such a conference.

Harijan, 16-9-1933

498. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

September 16, 1933

CHI. AMALA[1],

I have your several letters. You must shed this wretched fear of me. Whatever I said and did at the Ashram was said and done in pure love and for your good. Why should you fear me, if you believe what I say? You have therefore no need to avoid me or fear me. I am keeping well in spite of blood-pressure.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

[1] A German lady who was taking training at the Ashram for Harijan work. Gandhiji later gave her the Indian name Amala.

499. TALK WITH WOMEN WORKERS [1]

[*September 16, 1933*][2]

I have been saying for years now that those who understand must participate in the production of khadi. But the suggestion has not been taken up. Had it been adopted, khadi activity would have now become widespread and we would not have had to face a difficult situation. What would we lose if we span for half an hour every day? But today it seems as though it were a mere waste. Weavers who are willing to use hand-spun yarn do not get it. I had to tell some of them that I would arrange to get some for them. But if they could not get it, they may use mill yarn. I did not want them to lose their trade. This half an hour of spinning demanded of you should be regarded as easy. If people do not talk flatteringly when you go to sell them khadi, you should put up with their harshness. You deserve it. But if you do as I say, there would be no question of having to hear harsh things from them.

Q. When women used to spin, there was no arrangement for weaving.

That is true. It was brought to my notice. But what the women used to spin was no yarn at all—what about that? If women were to spin ropes, what should the weavers do? We have so many weaving centres. So, the women themselves are to blame since they did not attempt to learn spinning.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 24-9-1933

500. ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS [3]

[Before *September 16, 1933*]

Happiness and unhappiness always follow us like cold and sunshine.[4] What is there to be happy or unhappy about having a

[1] This appeared in Chandrashankar Shukla's "Weekly Letter" under the title "The Easy Way". Two women workers had come to greet Gandhiji on his 65th birthday which, according to the Vikram calendar, fell on September 16. One of them had complained about the fall in khadi sales.

[2] *ibid.*

[3] Addressed to different correspondents, these appeared under the subtitle "Some Letters'. This and the following four items are translated from Chandrashankar Shukla's weekly letter in *Harijanbandhu*, 17-9-1933.

[4] The correspondent had written about his financial difficulties.

motor-car one day and having to go on foot the next day? Never give up courage and patience. They are the real wealth.

One's dharma is to serve in whatever way one can. Happiness and unhappiness are only attitudes of the mind. But what unhappiness can you have? Unhappiness lies in forgetting Ramanama, and you never forget it.

There is no doubt that God has saved you. He wants you to render more service.

What can we do if some shortcomings[1] come to stay in the body, which in any case is surely going to drop some time? But how can we bestow that power of endurance on all young men? The hope of life does not leave even the old, not to speak of poor little children. God is, of course, the saviour of all.

We cannot insist on applying to Harijans what applies to you and me. We have excluded Harijans from our society. Moreover, we should also look to the situation as it obtains today. Barring a few individuals, where is the boycott of schools and colleges to be found? It would, therefore, be gross injustice if we told Harijans that they would get no help if they went to the common schools and colleges.[2]

I am already devoting a major portion of my energy to Harijan work. And whether I am in prison or outside, I shall of course continue to do Harijan work till the last moment of my life.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 17-9-1933

501. A LETTER [3]

[Before *September 17, 1933*]

To a certain extent self-criticism is necessary. But I have noticed that some people get into this habit and then they can make no progress.[4] Self-criticism can be useful only in so far as it helps progress. If we are not committing now all the heinous crimes that we

[1] The correspondent had fractured his arm.

[2] This was in reply to a Harijan worker who had asked why Gandhiji helped Harijans secure scholarships for attending schools and colleges which, at one time, he wanted to be boycotted. What follows is the reply to another correspondent, a Harijan leader, who had requested Gandhiji to concentrate his energy on Harijan work.

[3] This appeared under the title "The Mark of *Bhakti*".

[4] This was in reply to a Harijan worker who was obsessed with his own shortcomings.

may have committed in the past it would be as good as piling up those crimes if we wrung our soul by brooding over them. I agree that we must publicly acknowledge a major crime. A votary of truth can do nothing less. But owning up of the crime should not leave any burden on one's mind. Having once washed off the accumulated dross, does one burden oneself with it? But you seem to be doing something of the sort. It is only when truth reveals itself through us that untruth cannot remain hidden from us. But we cannot always find out what untruth is hidden in which part of our being. My sole purpose in writing this is that you must cast off this burden from your mind. That is the mark of *bhakti*.[1] After having sought protection from God a *bhakta*[2] would never feel choked. He would not weep over the thought of his past. He would have no worry about the future. He is master of the present; let him mind it. And God has provided him with the key. "Whatever thou doest……dedicate all to me."[3] If a *bhakta* could do this much, he can dance with abandon. If you can thus free your mind, all diseases of body and mind will disappear, and we will take service from you to our heart's content. Please unburden your mind.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 17-9-1933

502. TALK WITH A HARIJAN WORKER [4]

[Before *September 17, 1933*]

My way of service is altogether different. Anyone who wishes to do first-class work, anyone who wishes to be a pure, true servant, needs must acquire the ability. Ordinarily one may do any work one chooses. Who is there to stop him? But the reason why our work does not make rapid progress is that the workers take it up without training themselves for it.[5]

I am willing to go abroad for training.

[1] Devotion.
[2] Devotee
[3] Bhagavad Gita, IX. 27
[4] This appeared under the title "Be Like Nanda".
[5] The Harijan worker was not content with serving through the charkha and wanted to know how he could render immediate service without prior training.

So much expenditure for so little work ! Take whatever vocational training is available here. Then we may think of going abroad. And, anyway, how many persons can be sent abroad?

Please let me know what social service I can do.

This includes everything. Cannot one serve while learning to do it? You must acquire the ability. You will not have what you want unless you are worthy of it. There are any number of people rushing about in the name of service; but have they been doing any good to the community? Anyone who wishes to do constructive work, to render true pure service to his community, acts in a different way altogether. If you want people to build up their character, you must acquire the necessary strength. If you cannot settle down to business, take up some employment and do your job honestly. You can serve the community in this manner also. You would have served your community even by creating an impression that no one can be purer than you. Is it a small matter if people could say about a person that his honesty is unlimited? I can cite some instances of honest servants who have been in charge of the management of their employers' establishments. Employers worship such servants.

I do not want to earn money.

It is not a question of earning money. If you acquire so much prestige that the Hindu community can look upon you as the ideal of an honest Harijan, it will not be a matter of small importance. I have got to say that there have been saints like Nanda[1] among Harijans. Four or five centuries have passed since Nanda's time, but they still sing his praise. Why can such a person not be born among Harijans today? If it could happen in his age, it can as well happen now. We can attain the goal we seek only if Harijans become like Nanda. As for me, I am carrying on the campaign among caste Hindus for the eradication of untouchability and at the same time telling Harijans what their dharma is.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 17-9-1933

[1] Nandanar of Chidambaram, one of the 63 Saivite saints of Tamil Nadu

503. ADVICE TO A WORKER [1]

[Before *September 17, 1933*]

Workers should be like Malaviyaji, like Narayanshastri[2], Lakshmanshastri[3], or Shridharshastri Pathak. They should be men whose character is as pure as gold. How can we find workers by publishing advertisements? Such people would memorize and reel off speeches. What use could they be to us? And, should we carry on with counterfeit coins because we cannot have mohurs? It is like building castles in the air. I do not approve of it all. I have never worked in this manner.

Now, how can I all of a sudden assure you that I am going to produce workers?

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 17-9-1933

504. TALK TO STUDENTS OF GURUKUL KANGRI [4]

[Before *September 17, 1933*]

We can serve Harijans only by purifying our character. True purity is required for it. It means that you must do penance. I undertook fasts by way of such penance. It did have some immediate effect. And it should continue for many years. Although generally we should keep purifying our *atman* the service of Harijans needs special purification on our part. The purer we are, the better we shall serve the Harijans. Even if there is just one pure man he would have an impact. Such a man would be able to work if he goes among the Harijans, and to melt the hearts of even the sanatanists if he were to go to them. I have no doubt at all that more than Harijans, the sanatanists need to be

[1] This appeared under the title "Qualities of a Worker". It had been suggested that some paid workers be sent for fighting untouchability through propaganda. Chandrashankar Shukla prefaced the report with the following: "Gandhiji expects the propagators to have certain qualification, such as religious knowledge and purity of character. He said, 'Propaganda cannot be a business. It should be a religious mission'. He disapproved the proposal to have paid workers."

[2] Narayanshastri Marathe, popularly known as Swami Kevalananda

[3] Tarkateertha,Lakshmanshastri Joshi

[4] This appeared under the title "Purity, a worker's Capital".

purified. But who can convince an arrogant man? We would go among the sanatanists and persuade them. If they abuse us, we would not abuse them back. We would not retaliate if they resort to violence. We would nurse them if they were ill; if they are strict about observing rules of conduct, we would be stricter. We would acquire a greater knowledge of the scriptures than they may be having. And then we would be able to make an impression upon them. Wiping out untouchability is a hard task. It cannot be achieved while remaining selfish. We have to work with a benevolent outlook. For that purpose we must purify ourselves day after day.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 17-9-1933

505. WHAT SHOULD A BRAHMIN DO?

In response to my article[1] under the above heading, the same correspondent who hails from Maharashtra writes again as follows.[2]

Many questions arise out of this letter. It is not that the others do not have to suffer the inconveniences which Brahmins do suffer. Nowadays everyone finds it more or less difficult to get employment. Till now, Brahmins could easily find jobs. That is not the case now. There is no doubt that the others faced earlier the same situation which the Brahmins are or appear to be facing now. Where castes prevail, such rise and fall will always be. Hence it is difficult to satisfy everyone.

At the root of this difficulty lies something, which deserves consideration. The number of jobs will always be limited. The number of candidates will go on increasing with time. Hence the right way seems to be to learn to turn away from jobs, turn towards othere occupations and qualify ourselves for these. In attempting such changes, difficulties will certainly be experienced during the transit-ional period, but the result can only be good. Other countries have had similar experiences and, those who were hitherto confined to jobs have taken to professions.

[1] *Vide* "What should a Brahmin do?", 10-9-1933

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had argued that Brahmins could not earn livelihood by imparting the knowledge of Brahman as the general public was not interested in it; the only alternative was employment. Brahmins did not expect any privileges while seeking jobs but at the same time they expected that they would not be penalized for being Brahmins.

Another noteworthy point is to cut down our expenses, reduce our family's as well as our own wants. The need to make our lives simple is becoming more and more obvious to the whole world. There is an English adage recommending 'plain living and high thinking'. In India, simplicity is not just a virtue, it is part of dharma.

It is imperative that the women in the family also contribute towards the household expenditure to the best of their abilities. Women of the working class, in addition to housekeeping,earn a little bit by their own labour; why should not other women do likewise? If there is a lone earning member in a family and many mouths to feed, the burden on him cannot but be too much. Hence, those Brahmins who find it difficult to secure employment should consider this suggestion also.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 17-9-1933

506. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

September 17, 1933

CHI. JAMNALAL,

You must have read everything in newspapers. I deliberately omitted to give details in my letters. I hesitate these days to put any burden on you. I did not feel happy, either, that you had to come down from Chikhalda so soon. We will talk now when we meet. I too shall require plenty of rest. Gopi, Gajanan's[1] wife, will most probably accompany me, and I have also invited one Kisan[2], who is a very good woman. She used to enjoy good health, but recently it has gone down a little. I know that, true to your nature, you will willingly shoulder all this burden, but I will try to see that we become no burden to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Jawaharlal is leaving tonight for Lucknow. He may perhaps come to Wardha later. Jnana must have arrived there now.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2925

[1] Son of Rameshwardas Birla.
[2] Kisan Ghumatkar

507. TRIBUTE TO ANNIE BESANT

[*September 20, 1933*][1]

Whilst the people will thank the Almighty for relieving Dr. Besant from lingering illness by sending to her the Angel of Death, thousands will, at the same time, mourn the event. So long as India lives, the memory of the magnificent services rendered by Dr. Besant will also live. She had endeared herself to India by making it the country of her adoption and dedicating her all to her.

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-9-1933

508. LETTER TO TOTARAM SANADHYA

RANCHHOD NIVAS, AHMEDABAD,
[*September 21, 1933*][2]

DEAR TOTARAMJI,

I have you letter. Do go to Wardha and before that anywhere else you think necessary. We shall be meeting at Wardha this month. There is no cause to worry about Hariprasad[3].

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Banarsidas Chaturvedi papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

509. SPEECH AT AHMEDABAD-I [4]

September 21, 1933

You have obliged me by asking me to perform this noble ceremony. I feel highly honoured in doing it. The President[5] has left little for me to say. We heard from him the long list of donations by Sir Chinubhai. While listening to it, it struck me that Sir Chinubhai's donations match the world-famous Parsi donations. Sir Girijaprasad

[1] Dr. Annie Besant died on September 20,1933.

[2] The addressee has supplied the date "September 28". However, Gandhiji was at Ranchhod Nivas only on September 21.

[3] Adopted son of addressee

[4] On unveiling the statue of Sir Chinubhai Madhavlal, Baronet

[5] Manibhai Chaturbhai Shah, President, Ahmedabad Municipality

said that Sir Chinubhai's donations were not meant for the members of one community or religion, but for all. Their benefit was available to all the citizens of Ahmedabad. Sir Chinubhai did all he could to encourage the education which he himself had and which helped him rise in life. The President reminded me that it was Sir Chinubhai who had presented me the address when I first arrived in Ahmedabad.[1] The picture is still vivid before my eyes. In donating this statue to the citizens of Ahmedabad, Sir Girijaprasad has given us a glimpse of his filial devotion. I only say "a glimpse" because, as Sir Girijaprasad has rightly observed, one can never completely discharge one's debt to one's parents. Let us all hope—and he has certainly given us reason to hope—that the illustrious son of Sir Chinubhai earns as much as the father and equally liberally gives it away.

Once on an important occasion I had said that the rich have right to earn and accumulate wealth. This world will always call some to adventure. It cannot be stopped. I say then, let these people earn much but let them spend it as if it belonged to the people and give of it generously to others. One of my cherished hopes is that in our country there should be no ill will, no conflict, between the rich and the poor, that both may realize their own dharma and adhere to it. In the world a fierce battle is going on between capital and labour, between the rich and the poor. May our country be saved from this strife. One man's wish cannot achieve it. But if many cherished the wish we could achieve this ideal. Through Sir Girijaprasad, I wish to convey to the rich people of Ahmedabad—and by the grace of God there are many here— that they should enhance the legacy left by Sir Chinubhai. It is up to the rich to reach the ideal which I have placed before them. It is my ambition that Ahmedabad may set an example for India, in fact for the whole world.

Before performing the noble ceremony of unveiling the statue, I may say one thing. This statue was long ago but because of your desire that it should be unveiled either by Sardar or by me, its installation has had to wait.[2] I was released unexpectedly and when the request came to me, I could not turn it down. I think it is by the grace of God that I have the opportunity to perform this good deed. How

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Reception by Ahmedabad Citizens", 2-2-1915.

[2] *The Bombay Chronicle*, 22-9-1933, here reports: Mahatmaji felt acutely for the absence of Sardar Vallabhbhai and said it would have been more desirable if this grand and important ceremony had been performed by his hands.

can I thank you all—men and women who have come here to demonstrate your respect for Sir Chinubhai? You should show due regard for your fellow citizens who have rendered service to the city. May all the citizens of Ahmedabad, rich as well as poor, live in happiness. This is my prayer to God.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 1-10-1933

510. SPEECH AT AHMEDABAD-II [1]

September 21, 1933

You honoured me by asking me to perform a noble ceremony the first thing in the morning.[2] And now you are asking me to perform another such ceremony. I thank the Municipality as well as the citizens of Ahmedabad for the double honour they have conferred on me. My task has now become a little difficult. In the first place, I would like to express my opinion about the suggestion made by Bhai Rasiklal. I heard only this morning about the proposal to associate my name with this library. There is, I think, no institution with which I have allowed my name to be associated. I have decided to allow nothing of the kind. With apologies to the donors, and without hurting their feelings, I would like to say that ever since I entered public life, or rather I was fortunately thrown into it, I have always either prevented or tried to prevent, whom-ever I could so advise, from associating their or their elders' names with the donations. I do not mean to say that it is a sin to associate one's or one's elder's name with a donation. But such a tendency prevails among people and I have seen this temptation leading to ridiculous results. I have therefore been dissuading all whom I could. I have succeeded in some cases, and where I have failed I have accommodated myself and have also accepted such donations. When I do this I don't mean to sing my own praise or to point out other people's shortcomings. I only wish you would not press me to act contrary to what I have been doing and advocating. I have no false modesty. I cannot have it while adhering to my principles.

There is another potent reason. I am only instrumental in having these books donated. I did not own them. There is not a single thing

[1] While laying the foundation-stone of the Maneklal Jethalal Library.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

in the Ashram which exclusively belongs to me. Nor am I a trustee. There is another practice I have adhered to, viz., I should not be a trustee for anything that once belonged to me. I had no right to donate these books. But I exercised the moral right that I enjoyed to persuade the trustees and the Ashramites. Hence I am only a medium or say a post office. I delivered the Ashram's letter to the Municipality. The same is true in the case of the Vidyapith. I cannot give away its books. Kakasaheb and the Vidyapith Committee have the right. I had proposed to amalgamate the Ashram library with the Vidyapith's so that the former could be better utilized. The Ashram is after all a place for manual labour. Moreover we cannot afford a paid librarian there. My idea therefore was to combine the two libraries when eventually peace would return and the library too. Now when the Ashram library has been transferred to the Municipality, I received a letter from Kakasaheb telling me that the Vidyapith library and the building were not in our custody and that if the Government returned the books they too should be handed over to the Municipality. In this way the Vidyapith books also came to the Municipality. I am therefore not responsible for the twin gifts and cannot claim credit for them.

I shall give you the third reason. How can learning be associated with my name? Only manual labour can be associated with my name. So please spare me this burden. I do not want to say just now what is more befitting for me to do. I had a talk with the President and Balubhai in the morning and if they like my suggestion they will put it before you. In any case please do spare me.

Now I come to a different subject. In the morning also I made a reference to Sardar's absence. We have been working together for about eighteen years, and with the passage of time we have been coming closer. The Shastras tell us that husband and wife are two persons but their souls are one. The same applies to the relationship between Sardar and I. I will not ask you to decide who is the wife and who is the husband. We came very close only this time. In spite of working together we never had the time for a heart-to-heart talk. Vallabhbhai stayed with me in Kaira for months but I don't remember if he ever came to see me except on business. During the other struggles too we had only short business-like meetings. Only this time in jail we stayed together. Since there was no work we opened out to each other. At night too we used to draw our cots side by side and talk of the joys and sorrows of life. I say joys and sorrows

because it is customary to put it that way; in fact there was no sorrow to speak of, we only spoke of our moments of joy; sorrows we had left behind for you! If asleep Sardar would dream of India. He is a clever man so he believes what applies to him applies to the universe. He has come to the general conclusion that what is true of Ahmedabad is true of Gujarat and what is true of Gujarat is true of India and what is true of India is true of the world. He often dreamt about Ahmedabad. All the time he thought of 'my waterworks', and 'my municipality'. It is true that Ranchhodbhai had the waterworks installed but isn't Sardar his heir? Can Girijaprasad say that the waterworks belong to him? When Ranchhodbhai gave up his ownership it went to the city of Ahmedabad, i.e., to Sardar. You will thus see how fond Sardar is of Ahmedabad. I would know nothing about the Vadilal Hospital[1]. I have never interfered in Vallabhbhai's special activities. I was confident that Vallabhbhai managed them excellently. I came to know a good deal about the hospital while in jail. Although it is presumptuous—since one cannot compare a human being to God—but as Kalapi[2] would put it, I say, wherever I look, I find evidence of Sardar's performance. Sardar, therefore, can well carry the burden. He is a capable person. I cannot carry it.

I congratulate the Municipality too on having had Sardar as its president. This Municipality came into existence with a rich man [as its president]. Then it had a fakir as its president. I wanted Ahmedabad to be a city beautiful. But beautiful in my own sense of the word. Of course it should have good looking men and women, gardens and scenic beauty but I expect it to have inner beauty as well. Sardar dreams of making Ahmedabad an ideal city and its civic body too an ideal municipality. And he has worked to achieve it. I too share his dreams. When I decided to settle in Ahmedabad I had cherished the dream of beginning my public life here because I saw that this city had wealth and wisdom, it was the capital of Gujarat, the State in which I was born. Ever since then it has been my fond desire to have in Ahmedabad the best library and also other institutions which could draw many people to it. Do not think that the climate of the place is bad. Once there was a proposal that I should go to Mussoorie. Dr. Kanuga said to me that Ahmedabad was as good as Mussoorie. Soon after I gave up the idea of going there. If anything is bad here we are

[1] Vadilal Sarabhai Hospital.
[2] Sursinhji Takhtsinhji Gohil, a poet.

to blame for it. We have made Ahmedabad dirty. Dr. Hariprasad[1] tried hard to make it clean. Yet to this day I cannot certify that Ahmedabad is a clean city. There is no fragrance, the whole city stinks. The neighbourhoods could be cleaned if Dr. Hariprasad could again rally men and women volunteers to do it.

Before I stop, let me set out the ideals I cherish about the library. Have the building of the library planned in such a way that when it expands into new departments, new structures could be annexed to the parent building without their looking hemmed in or without reducing the architecture to a monstrosity. While planning the building see that it can serve as a public lecture hall, a quiet place for students to read and study as also for research scholars. Our ideal should be to make it the largest and the best library in the world. God will grant us the necessary strength. Kakasaheb has suggested that the Vidyapith museum should also be housed in the library. There is no dearth of art in Gujarat. The like of the stone screen of Bhadra is not to be found in the whole world. The crafts of Ahmedabad can hardly be matched. I have been amazed by the skill of the Ahmedabad craftsmen. I have seen them working in the slums. Masters of art do not wait for encouragement. If someone donates Rs. 50,000 to have the museum here itself, it can be done.

Please see that the library makes progress day by day. It would be better if you get one or two persons who could give most of their time to the library. Do not have as your librarian a merchant who can only preserve your books but have someone who appreciates them and can select them. If no one volunteers for the task, offer higher remuneration. Allow the Harijans free use of the library and let them take books home. Please bear the loss if they soil or steal the books. They are lowest even among the poor. Allow this concession to all the poor if you can. That will bring credit to you.

My appeal is the same as that of Bhai Rasiklal that you should select the members of the library committee carefully. It should comprise men of letters. They will help keep the library alive. Do not think of having only the worldly-wise on the committee. Only the learned will know what a good library is and how it can shine forth. Carnegie gave donations to many libraries and many scholars accepted the onerous conditions. But the scholars of Scotland told Carnegie plainly that they did not care for his donations if he were to

[1] Dr. Hariprasad Desai.

stipulate such conditions. How would you know what books ought to be had? Masters do not set out to hawk their art. In Gujarat a priceless collection of books lies in the coustody of the merchant class. Beautiful collections of Jain literature are wrapped up in their silk cloths. My heart is sore at the sight of these books. What use can these books be when they have fallen into the hands of the ignorant merchants who can only pile up wealth? The Jain religion, too, is withering in their hands because they have reduced dharma to a formal business. Indeed, can dharma adjust itself to the ways of commerce? It is for commerce to adjust itself to the claims of dharma. I therefore appeal to you to have, as far as you can, learned men as members of your committee. May this library prosper.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 1-10-1933

511. A BELATED ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Sir Lallubhai Samaldas brought from Japan Rs. 1,699-11-0 for Harijan work. This amount was received in Yeravda, but the letter with names accompanying it was given to me only after my release. I was, therefore, unable to acknowledge the donation before now. It comes from the Indian Silk Merchants' Association of Kobe and the letter giving cover to the cheque contains the names of forty-two subscribers. The majority are Sindhi merchants. Whilst I thank them for their donations, I warn them that I had expected much more than what they have sent. I knew the generosity of my Sindhi friends in South Africa. They cannot be different in Japan. I, therefore, regard their cheque as an earnest of more to come.

Harijan, 23-9-1933

512. ANOTHER PLAGUE SPOT

The reader may remember that some months ago I drew public attention to the disgraceful condition of the *bastis* of Allahabad.[1] Professor Malkani[2] has now sent me his impressions of the Delhi *bastis*. They are published in *The Hindustan Times*. These impressions show that the Delhi *bastis* are not much better than the Allahabad

[1] *Vide* "Immediate Duty", 22-4-1933

[2] N. R. Malkani

ones. There is the same tale of indescribable filth and consequent degradation. The scavengers, on whose careful labour largely depends the health of the inhabitants of Delhi, are housed in cells which are windowless and lightless holes. I cannot do better than reproduce Professor Malkani's closing sentences[1]:

So long as we tolerate such plague spots and so long as we continue to treat most useful servants of society as if they were beyond the pale of humanity, there need be no wonder that we have more than our fair share of diseases which are due to filth and insanitation. Even as a rotten limb affects and corrupts the whole body, so does the condition of scavengers, representing a rotten limb of society, corrupt the whole of it. Unless, therefore, we wake up betimes and adopt summary measures to improve the condition of the scavengers, God's judgment must overtake us. This question of providing decent habitations for the scavengers is not merely for Hindus to tackle but it is for the society at large to deal with. In this matter, therefore, there need be no distinction between reformers and the orthodox, or between Hindus and non-Hindus. Let us hope that the Delhi Municipality, now that its attention is drawn to the disgraceful condition of its *bastis*, will waste no time in taking energetic measures and removing the disgrace.

Harijan, 23-9-1933

513. SHOCKING, IF TRUE

Dayananda Dalitoddhar Sabha had its conference at Chamba. I take the following from its resolutions:[2]

It is difficult to believe that any State in India considers the refusal by a class of people to do particular work a crime. I hope that the Chamba State authorities have a convincing reply to the charges embodied in the resolutions, or that the practices referred to by the conference will be given up by the State in response to the respectful request of the conference. I notice that those who took part in the conference were educated and responsible men.

Harijan, 23-9-1933

[1] Not reproduced here. The extract described the filthy and unhygienic condition of the slums in which Harijans lived.

[2] Not reproduced here. The Aryas had protested against the illegal prosecution of Halies and other communities for refusing to handle carcasses or do other kinds of forced labour and for declining to offer animal sacrifice to a deity.

514. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Unrevised *September 23, 1933*

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I was ready to write to you only yesterday. My inquiry was completed at 1 p.m. I have now met Kasturbhai, Mrs. Hathisingh and Shankerlal who knows the family well. I am not quite satisfied with my experiences. I have missed straightforwardness. And yet I have nothing to say against the proposed match. Krishna[1] will be happy enough in the new surroundings. What is more, she seems to have set her heart upon the match. She has been corresponding with Raja's mother. Rajababu is the pet name of her chosen one. There is no question of their leaving anything in Krishna's name. Of course I made it perfectly clear to them that the suggestion as to leaving something in Krishna's name was purely mine, and that even so, I had no intention of making it a condition of marriage. I made the proposal, I told them, because I believe in such arrangement for all girls wherever it was possible. If the match is to be finally fixed up, you have to write to Mrs. Hathisingh, Ahmedabad, making the proposal definitely and she will send you her acceptance. She is quite ready for the marriage to take place as early as Krishna wishes. She is desirous (and I concur) that the betrothal and marriage should take place simultaneously. You may now write to young Hathisingh and send for him when you like.

I hope Mother is better as also Kamala[2].

I reached Wardha this morning. Except for the high blood pressure which the doctors register, there is nothing wrong with me. Nevertheless I am not to move about for at least three weeks from today, i.e., up to 15th October next.

Mathuradas[3] is in Bombay. Chandrashankar[4] and Nayar are with me of course, apart from Ba, Mirabehn and Prabhavati. Prabhudas[5] is also with me.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

[1] Addressee's younger sister.
[2] Addressee's wife
[3] Mathuradas Trikumji
[4] Chandrashankar Pranshankar Shukla, Editor, *Harijanbandh*
[5] Son of Chhaganlal Gandhi

515. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHAGANJ,
September 23, 1933

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
LUCKNOW

YOUR WIRE, POSTED LETTER[1] TODAY. COMPLETED INQUIRY YESTERDAY. RESULT ON WHOLE SATISFACTORY. YOU WILL WRITE MRS. HATHISINGH FORMALLY OFFERING HAND. GLAD MOTHER BETTER.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

516. TALK WITH HARIJAN WORKERS [2]

[Before *September 24, 1933*][3]

Many people feel that their value in the field of service would not be fully recognized till they could earn money themselves. I would tell these people that they would be well protected if they accepted less than what they may be able to earn elsewhere. They run a risk if they received more than what they may be able to get elsewhere. And why should a public servant accumulate any money at all?

If I fall ill I will have to go to a hospital.

And there you would receive right royal treatment.

I never feel that I have lost what I have given away. I have said that I am the richest man in the world. I have never experienced want of money.

I have kept aside some money for spending it in public service.

If you have the money, you would feel like spending it when it seems necessary. But who are you to spend it?

The subtle pride corrodes man. One can over come the pride that is apparent. But one can do nothing about the subtlepride. It has brought about the miserable downfall of many a man. From the popular point of view the man who has money and yet does not spend

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The talk appeared under the title "Reliance on God or on Money". This and the following item are translated from the weekly letter in *Harijanbandhu,* 24-9-1933.

[3] *ibid.*

it for himself is a saint. It can be said of him that he spends the money for the people. In that case, why should he not hand it over to the people? I say this because I have acted on this principle. I used to think that I had been practising law for the sake of the people. But then I wondered why I should not devote to the service of the people the time I spent in practising law. That is why I gave up my practice. Whatever money I had in reserve, I used to spend for the people. Then I thought, "Why not hand over to the people what is to be used for them?" Again, I thought why I should not form a trust for the use of money if it was to be given away. I formed a trust but I was not one of the trustees. Nor was I on [the board of] the Phoenix Trust. I am not associated with the Ashram Trust either. I exercise only moral authority. The trustees can drive me out any time they want. After all, I judge others as I would myself. I have been watching one thing after another. Ever since I came to India I have been telling you that it is unbearable that you should have so much money with you.

I feel ashamed of going abegging.

You should not find it difficult. It hurts me to know that you find it difficult to ask for money. What could be done about it? Either you must live in such a way that you would need no money at all, or if you do need it, you should not feel ashamed to ask for it. There are 56 lakhs of vagrants in India and they get their food. And when you are devoting all your twenty- four hours to the country you do have a right to get your food. We have two alternatives: either we go and ask for it when there is the need, or we do not move out even when the need is there. What would be the result? We would be in great trouble at the most, wouldn't we? God does not ask of us more than that. This is true freedom. Why should we rely so much on money? Why not seek the help of God instead of relying on the money lying with us? That at least is the test I would propose. Years ago I had taken out an insurance policy in Bombay at the instance of my brother. Then from Africa I wrote to Revashankarbhai that the policy should be cancelled.[1] I let go the amount I had been paying for seven years. I asked why not trust God instead of trusting the money? I asked myself whether I wanted to serve the people or myself. If I wanted to serve the peole, what need did I have for money? At least a few people must come forward who would voluntarily accept poverty.

Please forgive me for talking to you in such plain words. But

[1] *Vide* "An Autobiography—Part IV, Chapter IV" 3-2-1929.

who else would talk that way if not I?

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 24-9-1933

517. APPEAL AT PRAYER MEETING [1]

[Before *September 24, 1933*]

I would like to tell all the men and women who have come to attend the prayer that if the Government allows me to remain free, I would devote myself mainly to Harijan work. And so, it is my duty to beg for the sake of the Harijans. Men and women who come to attend the prayers may bring with them whatever they feel like and whatever they can afford. It serves two purposes: some amount is collected for Harijans, and then, we have an idea as to how many persons give for the service of Harijans and how many approve of the work. I do not want a single pie from those who do not approve of this work. If anyone gave for my sake, it would be meaningless. Hence, I wish that only those people who have faith in this work should donate money.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 24-9-1933

518. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

September 24, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I had a talk today with Jamnalalji about the proposed match. He seems to know the family well. He is decidedly of opinion that the family, apart from Kasturbhai of course, is not as well off as they would appear to be. He is even of opinion that they may be actually in want. I thought I should pass this news on to you. He too is anxious that I should let you have his opinion. Personally I remain unaffected by it. But he thinks that Krishna should know it. So far as I can judge, nothing will affect Krishna's choice unless she has something definite against the young man. And she would be quite right. Kasturbhai is strongly of opinion that Krishna's choice is good.

Love to you all.

BAPU

[1] This appeared under the title "The Begging Bowl".

[PS.]

You may succeed in making persons like me not addressing you as Pundit but I see that the adjective with abide with you.

[PPS.]

What I wanted to suggest was that if this if this marriage comes off and if Mother agrees, the religious ceremony may be performed at Wardha. I know the difficulty. I am thinking selfishly I know. I have simply thrown out the suggestion. Let us see what happens. I am likely to see Kasturbhai.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

519. LETTER TO NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
September 24, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

As Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta is well acquainted with my writings I would like you to show your collection[1] to him, and, if he approves, I have no objection to your printing the book. You may show this postcard to him.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 10522

520. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

WARDHA,
September 24, 1933

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter of the 19th in Bombay and of the 21st today in Wardha after I had entered upon my weekly silence.

* * *[2]

I understand what you say regarding your teeth. I think you should be able to carry on with them for some time.

[1] *Selections from Gandhi*
[2] Omission as in the source

With me are Ba, Mirabehn, Chandrashankar, Prabhudas, Nayar, Anandi[1], Nirmala (Mahadev's), Sharada (Chimanlal's) and Prabhavati. Brijkishan also is here. He will return home on Tuesday. I met Radha[2] and Santok[3] on the way. Radha keeps good health these days. She is your neighbour. Write to her. Lilavati[4] is in a sanatorium at Deolali. Keshu[5] is here. He is working in Jamnalalji's gin. I have got his pay fixed at Rs. 50 per month. The nature of his work is good. If he is steady, he will go forward. Jamnalalji seems to be satisfied with him. N.[6] and Amala are problems. The former is an emotional type, and the latter has no sense. She can't do any work. Both are something of a burden here. I will try to see if the burden can be lightened. Duncan and Mary Barr are doing very well. Both are hard-working and upright. Narahari's children, Vanamala and Mohan, don't keep good health and have gone to Kathlal. I met them in Ahmedabad. They were to leave for Kathlal on Friday. Amina's[7] children feel perfectly happy with the other children. They will stay during the vacation in the red bungalow[8]. Sirius was ill. He is all right now. He was in a hospital. I met Rama Joshi. She was quite well. Her health is improving rapidly indeed. She could raise her arm fairly well. Mani came to Bombay on the very day I left it. She spent most of the time with me. I took her with me even when I called on Elwin[9]. I have advised her to see you and then come to me after getting her teeth and eyes treated. Aunt is still in Bombay, and so also Mathuradas. He feels very much tired. He had shouldered a fairly heavy rsponsibility. Sastri (of *Harijan*) is doing well. Chandrashankar will accompany me and send all the Gujarati material from where we are. I have written to Prithuraj[10] to stay on in Calicut. Indu[11] is in Bhavnagar. He is doing fairly well there. Jayaprakash must have returned to his father. He was

[1] Daughter of Lakshmidas Asar
[2] Daughter of Maganlal Gandhi
[3] Widow of Maganlal Gandhi
[4] Lilavati Asar
[5] Keshav, Maganlal Gandhi's son
[6] An American woman. The name is omitted in this and subsequent times.
[7] Amina Qureshi, wife of Gulam Rasool Qureshi
[8] Dr. Pranjivan Mehha's house near the Ashram
[9] Verrier Elwin
[10] Son of Lakshmidas Asar
[11] Indu Parekh, an Ashram student

in Bombay till I left. He used to come and see me. He saw Prabhavati daily. I know his charge against me. But I am helpless. He seems to have calmed down a little now. Ramdas's own mind is his enemy. And so I can't say anything about him. When will he become really calm? Nimu[1] keeps indifferent health. The Bengal problem[2] is in my mind. I will see what I can do. Jamnalal will not go again to a hill station just now. He had been to one and stayed there for ten days. I will try to persuade him, though he feels better these days.

Anandi and the other girls and Qureshi's children are in Anasuyabehn's Harijan Boarding. I thought that was the proper place for our children. They are very happy there. Narandas's Purushottam is engaged to the daughter of Harakhchand[3], the brother of Jivanlal[4]. I didn't like the engagement because both the parties belong to the same caste. But they say that she is a good girl, and so Narandas also gave his consent. Jamna[5] is in Rajkot. Kanu[6] also is there. He studies what he can in Jamnadas's[7] school. Mahadev's Babu[8] is with his mother's sister in Bulsar. he has written to me that he will go and stay with Anandi after Diwali. I get reports about Rajenbabu every other day. His health is improving very well. Lakshmi[9] is here. She was to go to Jullundur. On second thoughts, Devdas got the plan abandoned. It is still not finally decided what should be done. Prabhudas's problem is still not solved. That is why he has come with me. . . .[10] has as good as become a sadhu. He is all the time discontented.

Even if you stop after completing the *Gita*, you will have made fairly good progress.

The Ashram dairy is being run near Kankaria. Titus is in charge of it and Shankerlal Banker exercises general supervision. It is

[1] Nirmala, wife of Ramdas Gandhi

[2] The reference is to the agitation of the caste Hindus of Bengal against the Yeravda Pact.

[3] a social worker from Chorwad

[4] Jivanlal Motichand Shah

[5] Wife of Narandas Gandhi

[6] Son of Narandas Gandhi

[7] Jamnadas Gandhi of the National School, Rajkot

[8] Narayan Desai, usually referred to as Bablo

[9] Wife of Devdas Gandhi.

[10] The name is omitted in the source.

running fairly well. Jawaharlal's Krishnakumari will most probably be engaged to the son of Kasturbhai's sister, who has just returned from England after qualifying for the Bar. I met Kasturbhai, his sister and her son. It was the parties' own choice. They had met in Bombay twice or thrice at Rao's place. Saruprani[1] has given her consent. The formal betrothal will take place in a few days. If it does, a big load will be off Saruprani's head.

I am fairly well. I don't know whether or not the bloodpressure remains high here. The doctors here are not of that level. Nor is there the need. I drink one pound of milk at present and eat green vegetables twice every day. The latter include gourd, ridge gourd, etc. The weight was 99 lb. when I was weighed on my arrival here. I will weigh myself again after a few days. Ba is fine, and so is Mira. Jamnalalji's Kamala[2] was in Dinshaw Mehta's sanatorium. She seems to have benefited a little. She has come with me here. Kamalnayan[3] also is here. Vakil's school is closed at present because of the plague. It will be shifted to Vile Parle now.

My programme, up to October 15, is to rest here itself.

Since the Government has not taken possession of the Ashram[4], it is now being converted permanently into a Harijan colony. Jamnalal has approved of the idea. Friends in Ahmedabad, Ranchhodbhai and others have also approved of it. It is planned to have some Harijan quarters, a tannery, a Harijan hostel and an office of the Harijan Seva Sangh there. I am thinking of handing over the land and the buildings to the All-India Harijan Seva Sangh. If you wish to offer any comments about this, please write to me. I think I have written a fairly long letter.

Are you satisfied now?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 26-30

[1] Mother of Jawaharlal Nehru

[2] Kamala Nevatia, wife of Rameshwardas

[3] Son of Jamnala Bajaj

[4] In July 1933, Gandhiji had offered to hand over the Ashram to the Govermment; *Vide* "Letter to Hoome Secretary, Government of Bombay", 26-7-1933.

521. APPEAL FOR FLOOD RELIEF IN ORISSA

September 24, 1933

Appealing for funds for the relief of flood-stricken Orissa, Mr. Gandhi says that the affected area covers two thousand miles. The people affected number three lakhs. One thousand five hundred villages have been destroyed. Twenty thousand houses have collapsed and the damage is estimated at Rs. 15,00,000. Mr. Gandhi says that it would be necessary to provide relief to people actually in want of food and clothing for twelve months, for they will not have, till the next year's crops are ready, the wherewithal to keep body and soul together. At least, five lakhs of rupees will be required to help those who can be proved to be clearly indigent.

The Indian Annual Register, July-December 1933, Vol. II, p. 10

522. MESSAGE FOR HARIJAN DAY

[*September 24, 1933*][1]

On the occasion of the Harijan Day, I sincerely hope that pure love will be roused in the hearts of caste Hindus towards their Harijan brothers and sisters, and that every Hindu, man or woman, will be convinced of the need for the eradication of untouchability.

The Hindu, 25-9-1933

523. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
[*September*][2] *26, 1933*

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter of 8th inst. in rely to mine of the 2nd inst. I was not able to acknowlege that letter earlier, and now I have your latest letter enclosing your report on the *bastis.* I have already tackled the first portion of the report[3]. But I shall write to you later on it, after I have finished reading the whole.

Your suggestions about Harijan work are good. I can be of little help to you,expecially at the present moment. But you must discuss them with Thakkar Bapa. You will presently hear something about industrial schools. I quite agree with you as to the importance of the

[1] The message was read at the third Harijan Day meeting held at Wardha on September 24, under the presidentship of Jamnalal Bajaj. The first and the second Harijan Day were observed on December 18, 1932 and April 30, 1933.

[2] Illegible in the source

[3] *Vide* "Another Plague Spot", 23-9-1933.

tanning industry. I am working at the problem even now.

The work among Bhangis is certainly essential, if it is also uphill.

I endorse your suggestion that you should be offered facilities for travelling and studying the various organizations.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. N. R. MALKANI
SERVANTS OF THE UNTOUCHABLES SOCIETY
BIRLA MILLS, DELHI

From a photostat: G.N. 900

524. LETTER TO V. RAGHAVIAH [1]

September 26, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

In coming to the various decisions I had all the agruments before me. You will not, therefore, expect me, especially in the present state of my health, to cover the same ground again in defence of what I have done. But the time will certainly show which way truth lay.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. VENNELAKANTI RAGHAVIAH
NELLORE
(SOUTH INDIA)

From a copy: C. W. 10448. Courtsey: K. Lingaraju

525. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

September 28, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your several letters. I had a long chat with Rafi[2]. He will tell you all about it. I adhere to the opinion that it will do no good to

[1] The addressee, a congressman and tribal welfare worker, had protested against Gandhiji's fast in connection with the Harijan problem and wrote that he was side-tracking the economic issue.

[2] Rafi Ahmed Kidwai.

have the A.I.C.C. meeting. But that does not mean that it will deeply hurt me if such a meeting was held. On the contrary if a sufficient number desire it, it is their duty to send a requisition for the meeting. What I feel is that we may not take the initiative. If you personally feel that it is better to hold the meeting even though there is no requisition, you should hold it. I know that I am not in touch even with the opinion of workers. Therefore my opinion may safely be discounted by those who have a decided opinion the other way.

The other point I would like to clear apart from the impression that Rafi may give you of my talks is about the workers. Whilst I shall try to do what I can, I am firmly of opinion that every province should support its own workers and that every district or tehsil should support its. Unless we reach that state, ours must remain a house of cards. I think that you should take up the begging bowl in the province and set the pace and the example. My ideal is that every worker should find his maintenance from the area he may serve and feel proud of it. Every labourer is worthy of his hire.

The rest from Rafi.

I hope both Ma and Kamala are better. You will tell me in due course what Dr. Bidhan has to say.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Of the personal letters I need say nothing. I hope you had my two letters[1] written . . . [2]

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

526. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

September 28, 1933

CHI. MARY[3],

I am delighted you are normal today. I think that it is better for you to take the orthodox medical treatment and get well. Injections

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 23-9-1933 and ; 24-9-1933.

[2] The source is illegible here.

[3] The superscription in this and other letters to the addressee is in Devanagari script.

are the order of the day nowadays. You had better take them. And take what food they permit. If you do not need N's help, let her come away. I know that the introduction of strangers disturbs doctors in a well-managed hospital.

My God be with you

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6007. Also C.W. 3333. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

527. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

WARDHA,
September 28, 1933

BHAI BHAGWANJI,

I got your letter . . . .[1] May your efforts succeed. Leave nothing undone . . . . [2]If they cannot live together in perfect harmony, do not hesitate to separate the shares.[3]

I am not writing a separate letter to Ratubhai[4].

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5820. Also C.W. 3043. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

528. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

WARDHA,
September 28, 1933

BHAI NANABHAI[5],

I got your letter. You ought not to come here despite your weak health. I am quite well. When I have regained complete strength and

[1] The source is damaged here.
[2] *ibid.*
[3] This was regarding the property of Pranjivandas Mehta.
[4] Ratilal Sheth, father-in-law of Chhaganlal Mehta.
[5] Father-in-law of Manilal Gandhi

can travel, your love will certainly draw me to Akola. Manilal[1] seems quite busy. He has undertaken a big responsibility.

Jamnalalji gave me a report about Tara[2].

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. NANABHAI MASHRUWALA

AKOLA, BERAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 6689. Also C.W. 4334. Courtesy: Kanubhai Mashruwala

529. LETTER TO NALINIKANT SHETH

WARDHA,

September 28, 1933

CHI. NALINIKANT,

I got the letters sent by you. I have sent a reply to Rangoon. I am quite well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7174. Also C.W. 4670. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

530. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI [3]

September 28, 1933

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I had been awaiting your letter today when I got it. We shall use the Rs. 250 for aid to be given to the farmers. Amalabehn's[4] money should be deposited in a savings account if there is no alternative. Can it be deposited there in her name? If you can think of any other way you may let me know.

[1] Manilal Gandhi

[2] Addressee's daughter

[3] An extract from this letter appears in"Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", 28-9-1933.

[4] Name given by Gandhiji to Margarete Spiegel, a German lady who was taking training at the Ashram for Harijan work

Has any amount been collected for Utkal? Did you see anybody? You must not exert yourself at the cost of your health. In fact you should stay out of prison for some time and take complete rest. Can you do that?

We have a lot of company here. Rafi[1] has come. He will go tomorrow. There is no special reason; he came merely to have a talk with me.

I have perfect peace here. No one is allowed to visit me before four o'clock. The visiting time is restricted to between 4 and 5, in case anyone comes. I do my spinning at this hour. I sleep on the terrace. I take a fair quantity of milk. Since yesterday I have started taking 3 lb. of it. If I cannot go on I shall reduce the quantity. So do not go by whatever Jamnalalji might report. The blood pressure will go on its own. It is only now that I shall be gaining some weight.

Now for some time Lakshmi[2] will stay here. The Jullunder programme is now being pursued for the present.

I have written to Premlilabehn[3] at the Parnakuti address. She should be getting the letter. Please dispel her worry.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

531. TELEGRAM TO "MATHRUBHUMI"

September 29, 1933

MR. MADHAVAN NAIR'S DEATH IS A GREAT NATIONAL LOSS.[4] CONVEY CONDOLENCE TO THE FAMILY ON BEHALF OF JAMNALALJI AND SELF.

The Hindu, 30-9-1933

[1] Rafi Ahmed Kidwai
[2] Wife of Devdas Gandhi
[3] Lady Premlila Thackersey; *Vide* also"Letter to F. Marry Barr", 2-10-1933.
[4] *Vide* also "Speech at Public Meeting, Calicut", 13-1-1934

532. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHA,
September 29, 1933

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
53 MINT ROAD
BOMBAY

HEALTH EXCELLENT. ASSURE PREMLILABEHN.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

533. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
September 29, 1933

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I know I have not been fair to you. You have been pouring letters on me, and I have been satisfied with merely sending you a line. The fact is that I have not yet regained all the lost energy, and what there is of it has to be devoted to the immediate work at hand. Hence, I have to neglect many things that I would otherwise have done. Your letters have come under the category of neglected ones. I have relied upon Andrews and Mira for writing to you. But your two letters, those of 9th and 16th inst., demand a fairly full answer from me.

I understand all that you say and that you have omitted to say about the Midnapore incident. I hope that you got copies of all the statements made by me. I offer no apology for what I have said about Midnapore.[1] I could say nothing less and nothing more; for that statement contained cent per cent truth. But how is one to overtake the deliberate campaign of misrepresentation? Every word that I say is distorted. Where distortion is not possible they do not hesitate to cut out sentences from my statements, which would make them read differently from what they would if they were read in conjunction with the sentences cut out. But I remain unmoved by these tactics.

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 3-9-1933.

They are not new to me. I have boundless faith in my mission and in my own truth. The only thing, therefore, to do is not to enter into an elaborate explanation, for it means nothing, but on due occasion to repeat the same truth with added emphasis.

The position of friends in England is somewhat different. They are naturally anxious to show some result. I would, however, ask friends on such occasions to remain unperturbed, because at the present moment yours will be a voice in the wilderness, and if you attempted to be apologetic about what I might have said, you would be doing an injury to the cause. I am trying a tremendous experiment. Non-violence regulates every breath of my life. I do not embellish what I write. I conceal nothing. Therefore, I would not like friends excusing any action or word of mine. When they do not understand it they may remain silent. When they disagree, after having all the facts and after having weighed them, I would not mind their open disapproval. It would really serve the cause. Take this Midnapore statement. I know that terrorism is taking a deeper root owing to the counterterrorism of the Government. The counter-terrorism is much more mischievous in its effect, because it is organized and corrupts a whole people. Instead of rooting out terrorism it creates an atmosphere for the approval of terrorist methods and thus gives them an artificial stimulus. It may not show immediate results, but it certainly prepares the future for wider activities along those lines. Hence, it is necessary to bring out this point forcibly when any eruption takes place as that of Midnapore, and if the truth cannot be said forcibly, it is obvious that silence is the only alternative. A half-hearted operation is much more dangerous than no operation. I say all this with my knowledge of non-violence and of ascertained facts.

Then take my fast, or rather all the recent fasts. If friends over there have not understood them to the extent of being able to justify them, they could ignore them, or, having procured all the materials for a judgment, if the judgment went against me, they should not hesitate to pronounce it, and if they endorse them, then their approval should be unequivocal. You are there in a hopeless minority. All I wish, therefore, for you is to be firm in whatever action you take, that is, if you have faith in yourselves, in the Indian cause and in me through whom today the cause is represented to you. I shall never misunderstand you. I know that whatever you, a mere handful, do you will do whole heartedly. More than that I do not expect, no one can or should.

I do not know whether I have made myself clearly understood by you. If I have failed, you should dismiss this letter from your mind and tell me where you have not understood me.

As for my health I am slowly regaining strength. I am supposed to have quiet and rest at least up to the 23rd October after which, if all goes well, a touring programme will be fixed up. Andrews is in Orissa. Mahadev is in the Belgaum Jail, Devdas in Multan Jail. His wife is here. Pyarelal is in the Nasik Jail. His mother and brother are here, on their way to Nasik. Mira is here, of course.

Love.

BAPU

MISS AGATHA HARRISON
2 CRANBOURNE COURT
ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD
LONDON S.W. 11

From a photostat: G.N. 1468

534. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

September 29, 1933

CHI. MARY,

Your love note to hand. One may not whim patients beyond a point. I made a stupid mistake in sending N. in the very first instance with you. Please do not ask for her. When you are restored and come back to me, I shall be able to convince you that I was right. I am detaining her for her sake. I now understand that Duncan will stay with you. I am glad. I cannot trace Saraswati. As soon as I do, I shall speak to her. If she consents, she will be sent. You must forgive the changes for the time being. If N. had not been withdrawn, no changes would have been necessary. As soon as you are suited there will be no change. I hope however that the nursing staff there is quite suitable and adequate.

May God restore you soon.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I am not sending Mira because she has to give nearly four hours daily to Amala. She is wasting her time.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 6008. Also C.W. 3334. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

535. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

September 29, 1933

CHI. RAMESHWARDAS,

There can be no doubt at all that Ramanama is the most effective remedy for you, me and everybody else who has the faith. It is not for the blameless and the healthy, but for people like us who are sinful and full of disease. We should, therefore, go on repeating it with unwavering faith whether or not we see any result.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. RAMESHWARDAS [C/O] BHOLARAM JOHARMAL
DHULIA, DIST. KHANDESH

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 209

536. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

September 29, 1933

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I got your letter. Jivanlalbhai and Nanabhai[1] will try about the Ashram in Kathiawar after Diwali. We will give them whatever help we can in their efforts. If they can do nothing, I think it will not be possible for us to maintain the Ashram. But I am sure that they will not let it die. Whether the ashrams at Bhavnagar and Vartej should be combined, requires to be considered.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3996

537. LETTER TO JASHBHAI

September 29, 1933

BHAI JASHBHAI

I got your letter. I cannot guide you from here. Do as Chimanlal advises. If necessary, he will consult me. Don't yield to anything helplessness.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a Photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 23173

[1] Nrisimhaprasad Kalidas Bhatt

538. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

September 29, 1933

CHI. MANI,

I got your postcard. Stay there as long as necessary and get well, and then come. I also had a letter from Father, from which I have come to know that now Chandubhai[1] is with him. I am very glad. Continue to write to me. Inform Dahyabhai[2] that I have written to Karamchand and replied to the questions. I am well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MANIBEHN PATEL
PAREKH STREET
SANDHURST ROAD
BOMBAY 4

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 108

539. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

[Before *September 30, 1933*][3]

CHI. KAKA,

. . .[4]

I have been thinking of handing over the Ashram permanently to the All-India Harijan Sevak Sangh for use as a Harijan settlement, a Harijan hostel, office of the Harijan Sevak Sangh and a tannery. What do you think about it? Jamnalalji liked the idea very much. Chhaganlal, Chimanlal and Maganbhai also have liked it.

Let me know your plans.

I am fixed here up to October 15 for reasons of health.

I am well on the whole. I have brought a large army with me.

[1] Dr. Chandubhai Desai

[2] Addressee's brother

[3] From the reference to Gandhiji's intention of handing over the Satyagraha Ashram to the Harijan Sevak Sangh; *vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 30-9-1933.

[4] Some portion has been scored out here.

Anandi, Bachu[1] and Babu[2] have accompanied me, as also Prabhudas. Mohan[3] and Vanamala[4] have gone to Kathlal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 9478. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

540. NEED FOR A DEFINITION

A curious case was filed in the Court of the Munsif of Orai. The suit was in respect of the official nomination of a Mussalman as a representative of the Harijans of Konch and was brought by three Harijans against the Secretary of State for India in Council and others, for unseating the nominated member and for a declaration that, under the Municipalities Act, only a Hindu Harijan could be nominated. The judgment of the Court went against the plaintiff, owing to the proverbial uncertainty of law. I do not propose to examine the merits of the judgment. I simply want the public to know and realize that the law is not only uncertain about the definition of the Harijan class, described in the judgment as 'depressed classes', but there is as yet, if the judgment is correct, no legal definition at all of the term. If such is the case, it is not difficult to understand that this want of definition may easily lead to gross injustice or even more deplorable results. It can be a fruitful source of irritation and internal quarrels; quarrels between caste Hindus and Harijans, between Harijans and Harijans, and between Hindus and non-Hindus. If untouchability is not to be clothed with statutory sanction, it is surely necessary for the public to concentrate their attention on arriving at a proper defintition. The reader will understand my meaning more fully,if he carefully studies the following extract[5] from the judgment I have referred to.

Harijan, 30-9-1933

[1] Nirmala, step-sister of Mahadev Desai

[2] Sharda, daughter of Chimanlal Shah

[3] Son and daughter of Narhari Parikh

[4] *ibid.*

[5] Not reproduced here. It was stated in the judgment: "The phrase 'depressed classes' is nowhere defined in the body of the Municipalities Act. The court is not aware that there exists any legal definition of this phrase as yet recognized by law... "

541. HARIJAN BOARDING HOUSES

The manager of a Harijan boarding house writes:[1]

This is an old tale. I have no doubt that in every boarding house for students, all labour, including scavenging, should be performed by the boarders. Such a plan does not interfere with the boarders' studies. Indeed, it adds reality to them and promotes the health of the students,and saves money into the bargain. Those managers, therefore, who, for the sake of gaining cheap popularity, or, being too lazy to discuss such matters with their students, will not induce the latter to perform all the necessary labour for their homes, will be doing a distinct disservice to their wards. Such labour should be regarded as part of the students' education. But there is one condition attached to the demand upon students to do the daily labour. Then there will be no danger of "the low mentality worsening".

Harijan, 30-9-1933

542. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
September 30, 1933

DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

As you are aware, the 'Satyagraha Ashram' grounds with the buildings in Sabarmati were abandoned on the 1st of August last by the Ashram people. I had expected that the Government would, in view of my letter[2] addressed to them take charge of this abandoned property, but they did not do so. It then became a question with me as to what was my duty in the circumstances. I felt that it was wrong altogether to allow the valuable buildings to waste. I consulted friends and co-workers and came to the conclusion that the best use to make of the Ashram was to dedicate it once for all for the service of the Harijans. I placed my proposal before the trustees[3] of the Ashram who are out, as also fellow members. They have, I am happy to say, whole-heartedly approved of it. When the property was abandoned there certainly was the expectation that some day, whether through an

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had asked if Gandhiji considered it objectionable "to ask the inmates to clean the vessels".

[2] Dated July 26, *Vide* "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay" 26-7-1933.

[3] Jamnala Bajaj and Chhaganlal Gandhi

honourable settlement or India coming to her own, the trustees would resume possession. Under the new proposal, the trustees divest themselves entirely of the property. This procedure is permissible under the Trust-deed[1], service of the Harijans being one of the objects of the trust. Therefore, the new proposal is wholly in keeping with the letter and spirit of the constitution[2] of the Ashram, as also of the Trust.

The question that the trustees and I had to consider was, to whom was the property to be tansferred for the specific use I have mentioned; and we came unanimously to the conclusion that it should be transferred to the all-India Harijan organization for all-India use. The objects of the Trust are: (i) to settle on the Ashram ground approved Harijan families subject to regulations to be framed; (ii) to open a hostel for Harijan boys and girls with liberty to take non-Harijans; (iii) to conduct a technological department for teaching the art of skinning carcasses, tanning the hide so obtained, curing it and mnufacturing leather so prepared into shoes, sandals and other articles of daily use; and lastly to use the premises as offices for the Central Board or the Gujarat provincial organization or both, and such other allied uses that the committee, referred to in the following paragraph, may think proper.

On behalf of the trustees, I suggest that the Servants of Untouchables Society should appoint a special committee with yourself and the Secretary as ex-officio members, and three Ahmedabad citizens, with power to this committee to add to their number to take over this Trust and to give effect to its objects.

Two friends who have been always associated with the Ashram, viz, Sjts. Budhabhai and Juthabhai, have offered to reside on the premises as honorary managers. They have their own means and have been devoted to the service of the Harijans for a long time. There is also an inmate[3] of the Ashram, who has dedicated his life to Harijan service, and who will gladly stay on the premises. He has almost become a specialist as a teacher of Harijan boys and girls. The committee I have suggested, therefore, should have no difficulty in managing the Trust; nor is it necessary that all the activities I have mentioned should be simultaneously and immediately undertaken.

[1] *Vide* "Ashram Trust-Deed", 2-2-1926.
[2] *Vide* "Satyagraha Ashram", 14-6-1928.
[3] Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya who had left Burma to settle in the Ashram

Some Harijan families, as you are aware, are already living there. It has long been a dream of the members of the ashram to establish a colony of Harijan families, but beyond having a few of them we were not able to make further progress. Experiments in tanning were also conducted there. Manufacture of sandals was going on up to the time of disbandment. The buildings contain a spacious hostel easily accommodating 100 boarders. It has a fairly big weaving shed and other buildings exceptionally fitted for the uses I have named. The property contains 100 acres. I venture to say, therefore, that the site is none too large for the fulfilment of the objects mentioned, but it is large enough for the response that may be reasonably expected for some time to come. I hope that the Society will have no objection to accept the offer of the trustees and to take over the responsibility implied in the acceptance.[1]

Your sincerely,

M.K. GANDHI

SJT. GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
PRESIDENT
SERVANTS OF UNTOUCHABLES SOCIETY
BIRLA MILLS, DELHI

C.W. 7937. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

543. LETTER TO ATMA S. KAMALANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
September 30, 1933

MY DEAR KAMALANI,

I have your letter.

You have not given me any alternative to fasts. But you need not be agitated over my prospective fasts. They are not lightly undertaken and for the most part they are inspired and therefore I may not be held responsible for them. The inspiration may be a hallucination. Whilst the hallucination lasts, reason is suspended and all appeal to it

[1] In his reply dated October 4, 1933, the addressee accepted Gandhiji's offer and requested him to ask those who were already there to continue to stay and look after the estate as before.

becomes vain. Do you not see this insurmountable difficulty in the way of myself or friends dissuading me for a fast so undertaken?

Yours sincerely,
M.K. GANDHI

SJT. ATMA S. KAMALANI
JT. HON. SECRETARY
'FRIENDS OF INDIA'
46 LANCASTER GATE
LONDON W. 2

From a photostat: G. N. 1531

544. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

WARDHA,
September 30, 1933

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

The pot is calling the kettle black ! I see that anxiety complex is again on you? Have I not said 'Do not trust newspaper reports'? I am not going out touring till doctors pronounce me as fit and in no case before 23rd October. I assure you that nothing will be done in a hurry. And why will you not trust the man on the spot? Surely Jamnalalji won't let me stir out till he is quite satisfied as to my fitness for doing so.

After all I was able to spare a few minutes to peep into Verrier's room. He was looking fit. He is making very steady progress.

My weight has gone up and the blood-pressure is decidedly less than at Bombay.

Love.

MOHAN

[PS.]

What about Amiyo?

From a photostat: G. N. 3795

545. LETTER TO TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
September 30, 1933

DEAR DR. SAPRU,

I was delighted to receive your letter. Of course, I knew why you were not writing to me. I could never be guilty of thinking that the absence of my letter from you was due to want of affection or courtesy.

I am still trying to regain my lost strength. It is slowly coming to me. I am trying all I can to overtake the orthodox prejudices against harijans. I quite agree with you that "our attitude towards them is the darkest blot on our character". I know that in this matter I can rely upon your whole-hearted assistance, but in writing to me I don't like your confining yourself merely to the Harijan question. You may not take any active part in politics or political discussions, but surely you will not debar friends from the benefit of your advice, guidance and ripe experience. Whatever may be the differences between us in our outlook, you know that I have very high regard for you and your opinions. I would, therefore, like you to give me briefly your London experiences[1] and the opinion you have formed upon them.

Seth Jamnalalji joins me in sending you regards.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR. TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU
19 ALBERT ROAD, ALLAHABAD

Gandhi-Sapru correspondence: G. 26. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta

546. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

WARDHA,
September 30, 1933

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter of the 26th.

I had a letter from Mani yesterday. It appears she has an enlarged spleen. She is, therefore, under treatment for it and will take

[1] The addressee had gone to England in April to attend the meetings of the Joint Parliamentary Committee.

some time before she comes here. Budhabhai, Juthabhai and Bhagwanji at any rate will be there to run the Ashram as a Harijan colony. All three of them are honest, hard-working and efficient. We shall not have to pay anything to the first two.

Ramdas will settle down by and by. There is no cause for worry.

Anandi keeps fairly well. Prithuraj is in Calicut. Indu writes to me occasionally from Bhavnagar . . . .[1]

I hope you are well. I hope Chandubhai also is all right. Lakshmi will probably go to Madras in a few days.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 31

547. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI [2]

September 30, 1933

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have you letter. It is long, yet short, because you could not have expressed yourself in fewer words.

I can give my opinion if I have with me copies of the letters I wrote to Gokhale and Bapa Sola. You must meet Gokhale. He is an honest man. Whatever opinion I may have expressed must have been only after hearing him. My impression was that Gokhale was not merely a banker. Now who is asking for money and for what purpose? It is not likely to be such a simple question as you think. But hear Gokhale's version and write to me. Sarojini Devi said she would write to me about it. She has not written as yet.

Let Purushottamdas not be on the Orissa Committee[3]. Would he not even give the money? Have you received any money? from any where?

Do meet Hasanbhai in connection with the market. Meet Lalji Sheth also. You can write to Mathuradas Vasanji and ask him. Even if the present owner gives a satisfactory answer we cannot know the real

[1] Omission as in the source.

[2] An extract from this letter appears in "Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", 30-9-1933

[3] The Orissa Flood Relief Committee

reason for the boycott. We cannot ask Tersey right now. Send the enclosed letter to him.

What has appeared in the Press about me is correct and yet not correct. Doctors will always write in that way. But anyone who knows will not be scared by that because my blood pressure was definitely higher there than what it is here. Increase or decrease in weight cannot have much to do with my health. But now 101 lb. is the very minimum. I am having sufficient rest. I take 3 lb. of milk. I may have to reduce the quantity now.

I am returning your letter. If you are not keeping good health there, you may as well stay at Singhadh when Mehta goes there. Or you may come here for a few day.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushial Nayyar

548. A NOTE [1]

WARDHA,
September 30, 1933

This money is to be sent to the Servants of Untouchables Society, Delhi, as contribution to the Harijan Fund.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of Gujarati: G. N. 3071

549. VARNADHARMA OF THE FUTURE

A "Sanatani"[2] Writes:[3]

It is difficult to give a straight answer to the question posed here. Only a prophet could do it. Others can only hazard a guess. For me. awareness of the present and conduct in accordance with it, are sufficient. Theists as well as atheists can honestly sing: Enjoy who you

[1] This presumably is the note referred to by Gandhiji in "Letter to Amrital V. Thakkar", 14-10-1933.

[2] A pen name

[3] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent, referring to the article "To The Harijans of Gujarat" (*vide* "To the Harijans of Gujarat"20-8-1933) had expressed his doubts about the revival of varnadharma in its true spirit.

get today, for who knows about tomorrow?" Whereas the atheist's pleasure merely consists of eating, drinking and enjoying himself, the theist would be pleased to forget himself in devotion to the Lord, that is, in the duty which falls to his lot. I regard myself as a theist and find fulfilment in making the best of what I can do today. As we sow, so shall we reap,that is, the future will follow the present— that is a certainty. Hence, I am not worried about the future of varnadharma. I would also ask "Sanatani" not to worry about it. Those like me who believe in varnadharma and accept my definition of it should think and act accordingly, and they would be said to have observed their dharma in respect of varna.

Moreover, there is another thing which also deserves to be borne in mind. The basic tenets of any religion should be such as could be applied universally. Those which do not fulfil this condition cannot be regarded as the basic tenets. If varnadharma is not such a principle, it owes its origin to certain time, place and circumstances, and, if one of them should change, it must itself change. If the varna is a device which is so short-lived, no thought need be given to whether it should continue to exist or not but I regard the varnadharma as defined by me as a universal principle. The existence of human society depends upon it. If my viewpoint is based on facts, varnadharma will certainly become universal in future, although it may then be called by some other name. Varnadharma implies that everyone must ramain content with his hereditary means of livelihood. At the root of this scheme of things there is non-violence, the Divine law, simple economics and human reason. If it is not followed, a civil war, the like of which as never been seen, is bound to overtake us. As millions of people awaken, they will all want to become rich, they will all want to attain greatness, no one will want to take up professions which are regarded as low and class feelings will intensify. I for one feel that this could lead to no result other than fratricidal conflicts.

However, as the instinct for self-preservation is ingrained in human nature, man will escape this fate by taking recourse to varnadharma. Everyone will live practising the profession to which he is born, without regarding any profession as high or low. In that case it would matter little if people were to be known not as Brahmins or Kshatriyas but by some other names. Instead of four, there may be only two varnas, or, even more than four. One thing is obvious—that by observing the great law of varna, we guard ourselves against conflicts arising out of capitalism communism, etc, In such a structure,

there would not be, on the one hand, excessive greed, concentration of wealth or arrogance and, on the other helplessness, destitution or poverty. All would live in harmony and no one would regard anyone else as high or low.

Having written this, let my fancy range a little farther. If anyone entrusted me with reconstructing a varna system and I happened to be in India, I would start with the Brahmins. If they become the custodians of knowledge derived from experience and of the code of conduct to be based on it, the other varnas would automatically fall into position. The Brahmins' knowledge being self-evident and themselves being free from selfish motives, others will readily follow them. Besides, they will also have the power to influence others. The question as to who should be called a Brahmin will not arise. The so-called Harijan of today may become a Brahmin respected by all and the so-called Brahmin may not shrink from calling himself a Shudra. I shall encounter no obstacle in this age of my fancy, because the feeling of 'high' and 'low' will then have been wholly uprooted and as all will be following their hereditary professions, they will soon take their own places. There is not much point in prolonging the flight of my fancy. Hence, I conclude after thus indicating the way. However, this article of mine should mean that, since varnadharma has been accepted as a non-violent institution, there is no room in it for penal measures or for the use of force. If varnadharma is ingrained in human nature, it will revive spontaneously. If it runs contrary to human nature, it is in the fitness of things that it has disappeared now. Here we are talking of man, not as a certain species of animals, but as one that is progressively shedding the animal qualities and who, having come out of his delusion, is directing all efforts towards the realization of *atman.* Man is an animal created to discover his *atman*, and as *atman* all men are one. Hence, at some time or the other, man will rid himself of the mire of high and low and, of his own accord, accept varnadharma which fosters unity.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 1-10-1933

550. LETTER TO PADMA

October 1, 1933

CHI. PADMA[1],

You will forgive me, won't you? Daily I wanted to write to you but could not for want of time. I hope you and Sarojinidevi[2] are all right now. Let me know your daily time-table of work. I will write more in reply to your next letter. Anandi, Babu, Bachu, Prabhavati, Mirabehn and Ba are with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 6144. Also C. W. 3499. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

551. LETTER TO SUDARSHAN V. DESAI

October 1, 1933

CHI. MAVO,

Are you as sweet as *mavo*[3] is? If not, be. Try every day to improve your handwriting. Are you very happy there?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 5763. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

552. LETTER TO DHIRU C. JOSHI

October 1, 1933

CHI. DHIRU,

I hope the fever has left you now. Spend the vacation there and rest. Gijubhai[4] says that you can stay there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5316

[1] Daughter of Sitla Sahai, a Congress worker from U.P.
[2] Addressee's mother
[3] Dehydrated milk
[4] Gijubhai Badheka, author and educationist

553. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

WARDHA,
October 1, 1933

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

I often wanted to write to you but could get no time. It seems you feel quite at home there. I think Kusum's[1] dharma is, if she understands it, to stay in Ranavav and improve her health. I hope you are in the best of spirits. If there is anything interesting in Valji's letters, please let me know. I enclose letters for all, Kusum, Balbhadra[2], Indu, Nanu[3], Mavo[4] and Dhiru.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7453. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

554. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

October 1, 1933

CHI. KAKA,

I got your letter. You kept me waiting for a long time. I understand the reason now.

You need not get Jamnalalji's permission, since you are an inmate of the Ashram. . . .[5]

I have dispatched today to Ghanhyamdas the letter[6] regarding the handing over of the Ashram. Personally I liked your letter to Vallabhabhai.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 9479. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

[1] Kusum Gandhi, who suffered from tuberculosis
[2] Balbhadra N. Patel
[3] Addressee's sons Vimalchandra Desai and Sudarshan Desai
[4] *ibid*
[5] Some portion has been scored out here.
[6] *Vide* "Letter tto G.D. Birla", 30-9-1933.

555. LETTER TO JAISHREE RAIJI

October 1, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

You have sought may blessings in the work that you have undertaken. You have them because it is no trouble giving blessings. You have not expressed a desire for anything more. Please do correct me if I am making a mistake in understanding you. And I shall certainly do whatever I can after you have put in plain words what you want.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a facsimile of the Gujarati in *Bapujini Sheetal Chhayaman*, facing p. 8

556. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

October 2, 1933

CHI. MARY,

Duncan brings me your and his love as I am walking on the terrace. I shall treasure that love. But I want you to be free from your weakness and be up and doing as early as possible. May God restore you soon. Of course I keep myself informed of your progress.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 6006. Also C. W. 3332. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

557. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

October 2, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I got your letter. Mathuradas also says in his letter that you worry about me. But I am quite happy here. I eat with appetite, the weight is increasing and the blood-pressure is coming down. There is, therefore, no cause for worry, nor is it necessary to go to Mahabaleshwar. I don't think I would be able to do as much work there as I can here. Besides, I don't see any immediate need for

incurring so much expenditure.

I hope your cold has left you completely.

Ba has gone to Nagpur today for khadi work.

My blessings to the girls.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 4833. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

558. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

Unrevised SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,

October 3, 1933

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letter.

I understand what you say about the better and responsive atmosphere is Orissa and I am glad of it. Thakkar Bapa cannot possibly go to Orissa at least just now, but the next best man will be there within a short time.

I corrected your use of the expression 'fast unto death', but I see that you have returned to it again. I told you that hitherto all my fasts have been conditional; even the last one[1] was conditional. I can well understand anybody being repelled by an unconditional fast unto death, though I have told you that in my scheme of life even an unconditional fast, under very extraordinary circumstances, has a place, but I don't need to argue out that extreme position. All I want to say is that in your discussion with Gurudev you should take care to avoid arguments around a 'fast unto death', taking the expression literally. Therefore, the best thing would be to centre your discussion around all my fasts which Gurudev has not been able to reconcile himself to, as perhaps the last one, and there too it would be one thing to say that the facts hitherto known will not justify the fast, and another thing to say that under no circumstances could a fast over the Harijan issue, such as I raised at Yeravda, be justified. I have before me a most painful but interesting case in which I have invited a worker to take a penitential fast for the sake of truth and invited a worker to take a penitential fast for the sake of truth and honour. I have

[1] From August 16 to 23.

discussed it in the pages of the Gujarati *Harijan*.[1] You will find it also discussed in the English *Harijan* next week.[2]

I hope you are not overworking yourself. I am getting on famously. I wroteto you day before yesterday setting you at ease over my prospective tour.

Love.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G. N. 3796

559. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

Unrevised *October 3, 1933*

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

Your letter has come exactly at the time I expected it. When you acknowledge this you must tell me all about your physical condition. You can come here whenever you like and can any time before the 23rd inst. I may begin the tour after that if the doctors give me a certifcate of discharge.

I am doing a fair amount of work and seeing visitors at least for one hour during the day. This is always exceeded. Therefore, you need not worry and I know that you would not tax me.

I hope that your sister is bravely putting up the domesitc sorrow that God has sent her. I have come to see that such sorrows are sometimes more real gifts from God than unbroken happiness which is dependent upon external circumstances.

Chandrashanker who is helping me wishes specially to be remembered to you. I expect Kakasahab to be here any time during the week, and he may remain here a little while.

Love.

BAPU

SJT. J. C. KUMARAPPA
C/O C. V. NARASIAH, ESQ.
COIMBATORE (S. INDIA)

From a photostat: G.N. 10100

[1] *Vide* "A case for Fasting". 27-10-1933.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to C.F. Andrews", 30-9-1933.

560. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

October 3, 1933

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter.

* * * [1]

You will read in one of the papers my letter[2] regarding the Ashram. If necessary, I will send Totaramji[3]. Parikshitlal also will stay there. There will be no difficulty.

I have written to Mani and told her that she should come here only after getting herself the right treatment.

. . .[4] will always go on like that. To try to reform him is like trying to straighten a dog's tail by tying it to a stone. You must have read the news about Krishna Nehru.

I wish to attend to some other work now, and so I will stop here today. Jamnalal, who is sitting near me, asks you not to worry about him. If necessary, he will go to a hill station. His weight has gone up to 190.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 32

561. ADVICE TO JAPANESE BUDDHIST PRIESTS [5]

October 4, 1933

I was glad to be able to see you and have interesting conversations. I have carefully gone through your long letter to me.

I can fully appreciate your desire to see that Buddhism is revived in India; only, I would like to point out to you that whatever Buddhism may mean, the substance of the teaching of Gautama, the

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] *Vide* "letter to G. D. Birla", 30-9-1933, which appeared in *Harijan*, 7-10-1993.

[3] Totaram Sanadhya, an Ashram inmate

[4] The name is omitted in the source.

[5] Rev. Fuji and Rev. Okitsu met Gandhiji on October 4. A brief report of the interview appeared in *The Hindu*, 5-10-1933.

Enlightened One, has been incorporated in Hinduism, and in my opinion, comparatively speaking, the purity of the teaching of that great reformer has been best preserved in India. In the countries of its adoption it has, as it seems to me, deteriorated: as for instance, Buddha's teaching essentially was not merely Brotherhood of Man but the Brotherhood of all Life. Nor is this to be wondered at. In my opinion, Buddha did not found a new religion. As a Hindu of Hindus, he gave a new orientation to Hinduism. I would, therefore, suggest to you that you should amplify your knowlege of that teaching by studying Sanskrit and Pali. A study of Sanskrit is necessary for knowing the setting in which the teaching was fitted and from which it was derived, and it is obvious that a study of Pali is necessary because the original scriptures are to be found in that language. And, since you have decided to cast in your lot with the Indian people, I would commend to your attention the necessity of learning Hindi or Hindustani.

Lastly, may I suggest to you that whatever religious revival may be necessary, it can only be done not by eloquence, not by learning, but by daily increase in the purity of one's life and a prayerful reliance upon the Great Intelligence, the Living Truth that animates, illumines and sustains the universe.

The Hindu, 12-10-1933

562. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

WARDHA,
October 5, 1933

CHI. MRIDULA,

I have you letter. Do stay on for your treatment and to see about the preparations for Mani and then come[1]. I am here only till November 7. I shall give whatever time you want. I may not be able to spare all the time at once. Surely you will be here for a few days? The climate is beautiful.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11184. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

[1] The addressee and Manibehn Patel reached Wardha on October 25.

563. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

WARDHA,
October 6, 1933

BHAISHRI THAKKAR BAPA,

I got both your letters. I am glad you reminded me about Bidhan Roy. My memory seems to be slumbering. If you had not reminded me, I would have cleanly forgotten about the matter. Now a letter will go immediately tomorrow.

And now about the tour. Ghanshyamdas writes and tells me that I should not start before November 15. Dr. Khare[1] also has been insisting that I should take rest for at least six weeks. I, therefore, have agreed not to start before November 8. I will start on Wednesday, the 8th. This has satisfied Jamnalalji. I also feel that there will be no harm if I rest till the 8th. Meanwhile, I will be able to attend to some work which has been pending with me. I shall also have to think about the Harijan settlement. Then there is the problem of the workers in Ahmedabad, and some matters here, too, which require my attention. If, therefore, you think that this delay is justified, please make the necessary changes in the programme. Draw up the entire programme of the tour as follows. Let Jamnalalji draw up model programme for the Central Provinces in consultation with the local workers. Assign to the other provinces their respective weeks and ask them to draw up their own programmes. If this is done, it will not be necessary to make changes afterwards. When the programme is ready, we need not publish the whole programme for nine months at a time but publish in advance the programme for one province only, so that, if we find it necessary to make minor changes, there may be no difficulty. If we follow this method, we may publish the programme for just two provinces together and afterwards the programme for the next province as soon as we have finished one. This will also make the work easier. I will write more after Jamnalalji is ready with his suggestions.

And now about the Harijan settlement, namely, what name we should give to it. I feel that we should not use the word Harijan, but that our aim should be clear in the name that we select. Our ultimate aim is that we should stop using the name Harijan, or that all of us

[1] Dr. N. B. Khare

should become Harijans. Hence Vinoba has suggested the name Sarvodaya[1] Mandir, or Samabhava[1] Mandir. I naturally like the first name, for I called Ruskin's famous book[2] by the name Sarvodaya as far back as 20 years ago. That name, therefore, will include Harijans. Discuss the suggestion with Ghanshyamdas and let me know. Explain to him the other thing, too, which I have mentioned in this letter.

I am very happy that Bhai Babal[3] listened to your advice and mine. If he had not withdrawn his name, a very embarrassing situation would have arisen.

BAPU

[PS.]

We need not make any provision for Delhi, as we need not make any for Kathiawar. I had heard all about Shrivastavaji's performance long ago. But to whom can we complain when our own people turn against us?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 1124

564. LETTER TO MANEKLAL

October 6, 1933

CHI. MANEKLAL,

You did well in writing to me. What is your present job ? What is your pay? The other things you will know from my letter to Radha.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIII, 369

565. LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI

October 6, 1933

CHI. RADHA,

I plead guilty. I remain so busy that sometimes I forget the dear

[1] Welfare of all
[1] Equality of all
[2] *Unto This Last.*
[3] Babalbhai Mehta

ones like you and leave them without [letters]. I remember you all but writing letters to you continues to be postponed on and on. I am content to know that you are all happy and find pleasure in your own respective fields. I would only hope you served as much as you can and bless you for a long life. Whether I write or not I do like your writing to me. I see your face always before me. I am all right. Ba is here. Ramdas and his wife are also here. Devdas is in jail.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIII

566. LETTER TO SULTANA, WAHEED AND HAMEED QURESHI

October 6, 1933

DEAR SULTANA, WAHEED AND HAMEED,

I should have letters from you. I am glad to know that you are happy there. Anandibehn, etc., will be going there in a few days. What have you learnt from the Koran?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11273. Courtesy: Gulam Rasul Qureshi

567. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

October 6, 1933

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have not been able to reply to your letters on time. I have already written to you about the moneys of the Swaraj Party. Your last letter is yet to come. Till then I have nothing to write.

I have received a long and amusing letter in English from Tersey. I am glad that I wrote. Tell him that I shall not burden him by writing to him again. His health must have improved. If the doctor thinks that it is necessary for him to rest for more than 20 days he should do so. He can do a certain amount of service even while taking rest.

Send the money for Utkal when the new treasurer is appointed or when you are reinstated in your position. Do not worry if that takes

some time. In the meantime Harakhchand[1] will be ready to go. Have you heard that Andrews has been made president? I met Sahu. He seems to be a nice man.

I am also returning herewith another letter which you may consider important.

Did you like my letter to Ghanshyamdas? Did you like the step taken? Can you suggest another name for the Ashram?

My health is steadily improving. It was never really bad.

Lakshmi will leave for Madras tomorrow. You would be in touch with the ladies.

Let me know if you think it is necessary that I should write to someone about Orissa.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

568. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

October 6, 1933

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

Anandi and others are getting on well. Anandi is a devoted worker and so when she read the news of Nimu's going there, she at once said: "Do not send me to Sharda Mandir. Make arrangements for my being taught English, Gujarati and arithmetic, so that I can learn something of these and also serve others." This pleased me much and I promised her that I would write to you to that effect. Ramnarayan Pathak and Maganbhai[2] are there in the Ashram. One of them can arrange for her to be taught. Following Anandi, Bachu[3], Babu[4] and Vanamala[5] may also want to do the same. Should they so decide a small class can be formed. Either the girls or I should go

[1] Harakhchand Motichand Shah, who had been sent to Orissa in order to help the local Flood Relief Committee

[2] Maganbhai P. Desai

[3] Nirmala, sister of Mahadev Desai

[4] Sharda C. Shah

[5] Vanamala Parikh

there. I shall say nothing about myself as Gulzarilal is himself coming to oversee my work.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Tell the girls' teacher to write and tell me what he teaches.

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32792

569. NOTES

HOW TO COLLECT FUNDS

Many workers of institutions think that they can get funds for their institutions for the mere issuing of appeals. But that is true only of very few well-known and tried workers. A Muller or a Ramakrishna has been known to get funds even for the silent praying. Mere mute wishes of such rare saints reach people like irresistible wireless messages. But the majority have to plod before they can get any response. And the best way of plodding is to pay house-to-house visits. When a cause is just, as ours undoubtedly is, and the worker is known for his or her integrity, response is assured. Such house-to-house begging is also the best propaganda. Donors are, and should be always exacting. They want to know, or ought to want to know, all the needs of the institution they are called upon to support. Therefore, workers who go on begging expeditions have to be well armed with facts and figures. What is, however, most needed is patience. They must be prepared even to put up with insults. In the end they will find that funds cause the least difficulty when honesty and ability are assured. In the absence of these two qualities, funds are a burden as we find today regarding many so-called religious institutions which are decaying, though they have ample funds.

Unscrupulous and indolent trustees are ill able to discharge their trust, and the moneys in their hands are either locked up profitlessly or wasted on irreligious orgies or other superstitious practices.

A SUGGESTION FROM AMERICA

An American friend, who knows Indian conditions somewhat and is deeply interested in Harijan work, writes in reply to a letter from me:[1]

[1] Only extract from the letter are reproduced here.

> . . . I feel that where there is room the reports would be more effective if, in addition to telling what has been done, they would also compare it with the previous conditions. . . . Also to tell the approximate number of Harijans in each such locality, so as to show how many people the new facilities will serve and how adequate or inadequate even the improvement is. Also to contrast it with corresponding facilities for upper caste people in the same place. . . .

The underlying note of the American friend's suggestion is a plea for more truth. The reports of our work can never be too accurate. They must be mirrors both of our strength and our weakness. We may not, therefore, embellish them. Too often reports are made attractive by rosy pictures of institutions to which they refer. But not being true to life, they share the fate of ordinary newspaper paragraphs or advertisements. Readers simply do not read them or, when they do, they distrust them. Comparative statements, such as the writer suggests, will better enable the reader to grasp the meaning of figures and facts. Reports should never contain declamations or writers' opinions, except when the latter are relevant. They should be brief and to the point. When there is no apparent progress, workers very often say they have nothing to report. Such men forget that waht is wanted is a truthful record of their activities. if, therefore, systematic work has been done, a correct record of it cannot fail to be of great value to other workers. We may not always command success, but we can always show increasing effort and concentration which are forerunners of success.

VALUE OF REPORTS

Thakkar Bapa has often complained to me that the various organizations do not send prompt periodical reports and those that are sent often contain opinions and declamations rather than facts and figures. Secretaries and workers do not always realize that reports are required, not for the pleasure of the central organization, but for the guidance of the centre in framing its policy from day to day, for checking and co-ordinating the work of the different organizations and for informing the public from time to time of the progress of the movement. The duty, faithfully performed, of drawing up reports will automatically stimulate the activity of workers all round, and keep organizations up to the mark. Thus, if all workers sent in their reports of work done on the Harijan Day (24th Septemeber last), it would be possible to have an idea of the successes and failures in the various

provinces. It would also be possible then to know what instructions to issue for the next Harijan Day. I hope, therefore, that, if such reports have not already been, they will be, sent at once to the headquarters in Delhi. And if any reader has anything striking to report about his experiences, I would ask him to send them directly to me. I hope that all the reports would contain accurate account of takings and expenditure incurred in making preparations for the observance of the Day.

Harijan, 7-10-1933

570. WHAT THEY BELIEVE

Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah sent me some time ago a copy of his speech, delivered at the Legislative Assembly on 24th August last, in connection with the Temple-entry Bill[1]. The reader will find below copious extracts[2] from that speech, which interruptions, his repartees and some other non-historical portions omitted.

The value of the speech consists, not so much in the accuracy of his historical statements, as in the fact that many people actually believe in them with as much tenacity as the so-called sanatanists, who credit Harijans with hardly any human rights, believe in statements supporting untouchability. The issue will ultimately be decided, not by historical evidence or by interpretation of Sanskrit texts of doubtful religious value, but by the prayerful and incessant labours of reformers of sinless purity. No religion has ever lived on its past achievements. It dies unless it is nourished and sustained by the continuing *tapas*[3] of its votaries. Not by learning but by right conduct can religions flourish. Untouchabilty, as we practise it today, crept in when watchfulness of pure custodians waned. It will only go when an unbroken and unbreakable chain of continuing *tapas* is established. Not even a unanimous verdict of all the pundits and *shastris* will remove the idea of high and low which has been dragged into the minds of the masses since generations past. The latter will want the evidence of the practice of those whom they believe to be pureminded representatives of their religion.

[1] Introduced by Ranga Iyer.
[2] Not reproduced here
[3] Austere effort

Nevertheless, I commend Rao Bahadur Rajah's speech to the students of Hinduism form the historical standpoint. It is of some importance to have it indubitably proved that the Harijans of the South, at any rate, represented a civilization which was destroyed by a conquering race, calling itself Aryan (noble) in contempt of the original inhabitants, whom it used for its own selfish ends and reduced to slavery. I must confess that I have always entertained grave doubts as to the truth of the story. I should refuse to credit such claimants of superiority with being repositories of a noble religion. If the historical evidence is beyond question, one is forced to the conclusion that all that is noble in Hinduism came, not from the conquerors, but from the conquered and that untouchablitiy is a corruption which the conquerors superimposed upon it, whilst they adopted the religion and culture of the conquered. Whichever way the truth lies between the two schools of thought, untouchability is a recognized evil that has to be removed if Hinduism is to live. It is further clear that, according to the two schools, Hinduism,whether it is indigenous or imported, did not, in its orginal state, have any taint of untouchability about it. And in any case, now that there is no distinction between the non-Aryan and the Aryan, who is said to have come from outside India and has fused with the original inhabitants of the country, it is not of much, if any, practical importance to decide or even know who was truly *Arya* or noble. What is of tremendous importance is the fact that the monster of untouchability will tax the resources of all Hindus before it receives its death-blow.

Harijan, 7-10-1993

571. LETTER TO KRISHNA NEHRU

[*October 7, 1933*][1]

CHI. KRISHNA,

You are now going to be reborn, for marriage is a sort of rebirth, is it not?

Swarup[2] came as a bride to Kathiawar but persuaded her husband to go and settle down in her old province—U.P. Ranjit claims to be a Kathiawari as well as a Maharashtrian. Gunottam is only a Gujarati, and I do not think you will try to take him away to

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] Vijaylakshmi Pandit, addressee's elder sister

Allahabad. You will have to make Gujarat your home, or may be Bombay. My only wish is that wherever you are, may you be happy and add lustre to the already bright name of your illustrious parents. May God help you and Gunottam. I am unable to attend your marriage, so I shall have to content myself with sending you my blessings.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Koi Shikayat Nahin, pp. 113-4

572. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

October 7, 1993

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your two letters. The first did not call for a reply.

I see that Krishna's marriage comes off on 20th inst. I am glad. I must not attempt to come to Allahabad. It is much better for me to remain in the *purdah* till the medical men declare me to be quite fit. Herewith a letter[1] for Krishna.

I see Mother is not yet quite out of the wood. Let us hope she will be fit enough to attend the wedding.

Your article[2] for the D. H. I like very much. I am sending it to Agatha for such use as she can make of it. She is a wounderful worker.

Mira had forgotten all about the note of her prison experiences. Her draft is now ready. It will be sent to you to be handed to Andrews and such other use that you may wish.

I am thinking out what is possible to do for the workers.

What is this I read about Tandon's differences? Have you seen the paragraph?

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] This is not available.

573. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

WARDHA,
October 7, 1933

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. See all the people whom you wish to see and then come. But please do not take this to mean that you may come in the next millennium. Do bring along Baba[1]. He will like this place. I am improving, that is, regaining my strength. I shall be here till November 7.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIMATI MANIBEHN PATEL
RAMNIVAS, PAREKH STREET
BOMBAY 4

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 109

574. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

October 7, 1933

BHAISHRI JIVANJI,

I got both your letters. I had read your notice. It is all right. Arrange to send Bablo here after Diwali. He has promised to come. He has, therefore, bound himself. I hope he will keep his promise. I have not received the list yet.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I will write the preface[2] to 'Varnadharma' as early as I can.

SJT. JIVANJI DESAI
NAVAJIVAN PRAKASHAN MANDIR
GANDHI ROAD
AHMEDABAD, B.B.&.C.I.RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9931. Also C.W. 6906. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

[1] Dahyabhi Patel's son

[2] A collection of Gandhiji's views published under the title *Varnavyavastha.* For the preface.

575. LETTER TO BIPIN PATEL

WARDHA,
October 7, 1933

CHI. BABA,[1]

I have your letter. Learn to make each letter as beautiful as a pearl. Do come along with Aunt.[2] I would like it. You will certainly get opportunities to play; there are children of your age. Do you write to Grandfather?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 163

576. SURRENDER OF THE ASHRAM [3]

[Before *October 8, 1933*]

We have given up the trusteeship [of the Ashram]. We have given it up not out of rancour but out of a feeling of oneness with it, because we saw that while keeping it under our control we could not observe our dharma. The Government may take it over, but are not doing so. I do not want it to be ruined . . . . Giving up control of the Ashram does not mean that we would never be staying there. I do hope we could stay there. Even if the Government sells it away, I hope that the inmates of the Ashram would settle nowhere but on that land. . . . may it become a place of pilgrimage for Harijans. May it be for them a temple. May it also be a place which would remind the caste Hindus of their own dharma. The caste Hindus should know that they have reason for atonement and that this will also mean service to themselves.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 8-10-1933

[1] Eldest son of Dahyabhai Patel
[2] Manibehn Patel; *vide* "Letter to Manibehn Patel", 7-10-1933.
[3] This and the following three items have been translated from Chandrashankar Shukla's weekly letter.

577. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

[Before *October 8, 1933*][1]

DEAR HARIBHAU,

Received your letter. I shall find time and discuss with Ramnarayan. You must be keeping good health. Jamnalalji tells me that you are preparing for the *yatra*. I am trying to be an ideal prisoner even here. The ethical codes prescribed by you for Chaitanya Muni appear to be correct. But if he does not have a spontaneous desire and depends on my advice, my duty is to prevent him from changing the dress, because the fault is not in that dress but in its misuse. Chaitanya Muni can become a thorough scholar and render great service by pointing out his religion without fear and following it in practice. He must endeavour to study in depth Sanskrit and Magadhi. This is of primary importance in the dress of a Jain *muni*. But the *munis* hardly follow it in practice. Untouchability or what is today known as *varnashramadharma* has no place at all in the Jain philosophy. They must vehemently point it out, and before they talk about it, they must be fully convinced about it. There is no restriction on a Jain *muni* teaching anyone. Hence, he must get around at least a few Harijan children and educate them. If he has been convinced that Jainism is not different from Hinduism, he must establish it. If this leads to boycott, he must lovingly face it and continue in his path of service. I think this includes everything.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

578. DISCUSSION ON DANGER OF CIVIL STRIFE

[Before *October 8, 1933*]

Q. Do you think this problem is so important that it must be tackled just now? Many people are afraid that this work will lead to fighting and civil strife among Hindus.

[1] This letter appears in "Answers to Correspondents", Before 8-10-1933 as a reply to a correspondent under "Answer to Correspondents". The whole letter, with the exception of the first few sentences, has been Reproduced in *Harijanbandhu*, 8-10-1933.

A. Without doing this work we cannot reach the road to swaraj. And even supposing we did, that swaraj would not be true swaraj, but the reign of blind superstition and irreligion. Today many Hindus believe that Hinduism would perish with the eradication of untouchability. But I see the end of Hinduism unless untouchability is wiped out. In this age people do not fight with swords for the sake of religion. Religious awakening is not and should not be brought about nor religion protected at the point of the sword. But religions will be compared and judged by our reasons and hearts. Untouchability is opposed to reason and sentiment. It is a great crime. As Congressmen we must accept this. If in consequence only a handful of Hindus remain in the Congress, let it be so. The Congress will then be come a powerful organization. Today there is only a risk of civil strife. If, however, untouchability is not wiped out, civil strife is a certainty. Unless we take bold measures against untouchability, civil strife is bound to follow.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 8-10-1933

579. TALK WITH A WORKER [1]

[Before *October 8, 1933*]

Q. Since removal of untouchability is included in the Congress programme, why should we not do this work as a political activity?

A. The movement will fizzle out if it is carried on as a political activity. It has political implications, and nobody can prevent them from following. But the work itslef cannot be considered a political acitivity. if it is so considered, it will not last, for, it is a pure religious cause. Hence, to those who suggest that it should be restricted to a purely political aim and that such a difficult item like temple-entry should be omitted from the programme, I would say that if this is done, the movement will lose its very life.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 8-10-1933

[1] This appeared under the title "Purely Religious Work".

580. TALK ON NEED FOR HUMILITY

[Before *October 8, 1933*]

After taking a vow, do not start soaring in the sky but remain on the earth. We are but grains of sand, we are like particles of dust. I truly believe the saying, "For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." We are born out of dust, we are mere images of clay. What should we be proud of? We are not capable even of building anything like the artistic anthill that ants can build. Sparrows, ants, etc., have attained perfection, which we have not. We are imperfect. We are not perfect even physically. That is why we seek perfection elsewhere. We are never content to be what we are. This "divine discontent" is put in us by God. Because of it, we keep on saying "not this, not this", and endeavour to go further and further. An ant is perfect, because it does not wish to become better. But we have got to progress. We should, therefore, be humble and live as particles of dust, be ciphers. Modern physicists and astronomers tell us that each atom contains the entire universe within itself. The seers of the Upanishads had known this truth thousands of yers ago. That is why they said: "As in the individual so in the universe." We can become part of the Divine when we become like an atom, become a mere cipher, for the atom is universal, imperishable. We must, therefore, learn not to soar in the sky, but to become like a particle of dust.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 8-10-1933

581. ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS [1]

[Before *October 8, 1933*]

I believe in the system of the four varnas.[2] But the aim of the varna system was to determine and limit the field of occupations. Restrictions about marriage and dining were never regarded as part of the varnadharma., Ordinarily, people will naturally marry within their own varna but we know from historical evidence that there have always been inter-varna marriages in certain circumstances. I have

[1] The report, which appeared under the title "From the Mail Bag", gives only a gist of Gandhiji's answers to the correspondents.

[2] A gentleman had asked why, since Gandhiji belived in the system of the four varnas, he approved of inter-varna marriages.

gradually come to the firm conclusion that as a result of complete confusion in the matter of the choice of occupations there is a total chaos in the functioning of the varna system as well. Today varnadharma exists only in name; the beautiful varna system has been abused to spread the degrading notion of high and low. I have no ready solution to the problem how true varnadharma can be established. But I have no doubt at all that its reival will depend on the present generation following the right path. Its outward form will perhaps have changed a little. In religious matters it should be remembered that we have to seek the spirit behind the outward form, that mere form without spirit is of no use.

Thank you for your frank letter.[1] No person can absolve another from the moral consequences of breach of vow. God alone can do that. But I do not know that God does. However, I can understand your difficulty. But I hope you will wear khadi as far as possible. You need not return the autograph.

(1) God is Truth.[2]

(2) Hence, for realizing God one should follow truth in thought, word and deed.

(3) Constant repetition of Ramanama from the heart is a sure means of realizing the self.

(4) Realization of self means realization of Truth.

Where there is a clash between sanatanists and Harijans, we should do our best to pacify the parties. We cannot accept foreign cloth, etc., that may be offered as gifts for Harijans.[3]

The ethical principles which you have explained to the *muni* seem all right.[4] If, however, he does not feel a spontaneous call from within and depends on my advice, my duty is to dissuade him from giving up his holy dress. For, the fault is not in the dress itself but in

[1] This was in reply to a student from Poona who had obtained Gandhiji's autograph by promising that he would spin for half an hour daily, but had subsequently written to Gandhiji saying that he could not keep his promise and requested him to absolve him from it. he had also offered to return the autograph. *vide*, "Advice to a student", Before 10-9-1933.

[2] This and the following three replies are to questions about methods of realizing God.

[3] This was addressed to a "Worker".

[4] This was in reply to a common friend who had sought Gandhiji's advice on behalf of a Jain monk who wished to give up his holy dress which he regarded as an obstacle to public service.

its abuse. The *muni* can render great service by becoming a perfect scholar and fearlessly pointing out the path of dharma and following it himself. He should strive hard and make a deep study of Sankrit and Magadhi. This is the primary duty of those who accept the holy dress of a Jain *muni,* but few of them do it. They must emphatically tell the people that untouchability and the present-day varnadharma have no place in Jainism, after first convincing themselves about it. There is no restriction on a Jain *muni* teaching anybody. Hence, he should gather at least a few Harijan children and teach them. If they are convinced that Jainism is not different from Hinduism, they should explain that to the people. If in consequence they have to face boycott, they should do so with love and continue their service. I think this fully answers your question.

I see that you have become impatient.[1] There is nothing wrong in being impatient in a good cause. Your ambition is good; I should like you to give it another and a better direction. I have always believed that young people wrongly entertain the ambition of going to England for study. It is a very expensive hobby. It is possible to have in India most of what you can get in England. I believe that it is wrong for us to entertain an ambition which only a handful of persons can realize. If anybody does want to realize such an ambition, he should do it with his own resources, not with the aid of a public organization or even with private help. If you do depend on outside help, you should ask for such help as others also in your position would be able to get.

As far as I can see, your aim in going to England is to earn more so that you can give more money for Harijan work. But you will have to admit that, no matter how much you give, your contribution will be a mere drop in the ocean. Hence, instead of following the tortuous path of earning more in order to give more, why should you not adopt a better way? That way is to dedicate yourself to Harijan work. That would not be like a drop in the ocean, but it would be a glowing example for countless others to follow. I want to impress upon you that education of the heart is infinitely more important than education of the head. And education of the heart can be had here in the same measure as anywhere else in the world. Moreover, it will cost you nothing.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 8-10-1933

[1] This was in reply to a Harijan teacher's request for help from the Harijan Sevak Sangh to enable him to go abroad for advanced studies.

582. SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM IN NEW FORM[1]

[Before October 8, 1933]

The responsibility of the caste Hindus of Ahmedabad as also of the Harijans has increased as a result of the donation of the land and buildings of the Satyagraha Ashram for the service of Harijans. Very few institutions own so many buildings and so much land; I do not know of any Harijan institution as big as this one. However, land and buildings without men are no better than ruins. They have no independent value of their own. The big place is not going to justify itself if just any Harijans go and live there, nor is the object behind it going to be fulfilled. The Ashram can become an ideal institution and a place of pilgrimage only when worthy Harijans live there observing all the rules, and caste Hindus take interest in their progress, devoting their time and applying their talents, etc., to it. It is obvious that the caste Hindus and Harijans living in and around Ahmedabad alone can do all this. I hope both will do their duty.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 8-10-1933

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA[1]

May 2, 1933

I have received messages from dear friends in England, which make me happy. They seem to have been convinced in their hearts about the propriety of the step I am going to take. They have not said this in so many words but that is how I interpret their messages. I was afraid that they might not be able to understand the uniqueness of this fast. But my fear has been proved to be baseless. Mr. Andrews has sent a message on his own behalf and on behalf of friends. Another message is from Mr. and Mrs. Polak. They have never hesitated to criticize me whenever they have not understood any of my actions. I had a vague fear that they might not approve of my present step. I have been receiving messages from friends in India too and I hope that in a few days' time they will understand the propriety of my step. Whatever it be, I am becoming more and more convinced that it was not possible for me to avoid this fast. There was no other way if this movement was to be kept on a purely moral plane and saved from being besmirched by selfish and impure elements that have infiltrated into it. Now I hope that those engaged in it will start working with redoubled zest and fulfil the various tasks connected with the removal of untouchability, including the task of educating public opinion in favour of the Bill for the abolition of untouchability. I am convinced that the progress would have stopped if I had not taken the step. I wish that the sanatanists and reformers should work in co-operation during the coming weeks and remove whatever defects they find in the existing laws and come to a settlement.

You ask me [what I will do] if I am released. This is a question I really cannot at the moment consider.

[From Gujarati]

Mahade vbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 279-80

[1] *Vide* "Interview to the press", 1-5-1933.

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI[1]

Private

MYLAPORE,
May 7, 1933

DEAREST BROTHER,

After much thought and destruction of several drafts, I have decided that the best reply to your 'begging' and most touching letter of the 2nd instant is the enclosed extract. I trust it will sustain you ever so little in the ordeal which will have begun when it reaches Yeravda. It would have been useless and, as you said in your first statement, embarrassing for me to try to dissuade. What remains for your friends and associates is to wish that you may come out of the ordeal not merely unscathed, but armed afresh with the strength of *tapas* for the struggle that seems without end.

I will not pretend for a moment that I approve of your fast. To one like me, born in Hinduism and bred up in it for long years, the arguments pro and con are thoroughly familiar. From sacred texts one might confute most of the reasoning in your statements. But beyond texts and mere authority is reason and humanity, on which you habitually fall back. Even in that ultimate court I fear we shall not be found on the same side. Our values are different fandamentally. The difference is radical, no sophistry can abolish it.

In spite of what you have said in the last revelation of your heart, I believe that too much self-communion and internal debate have undermined your judgment. The state of ecstasy when values are reversed, when day becomes night and night day, when pleasure becomes pain and pain pleasure, is rare even in the experience of mystics. The attempt to make it habitual and to adopt the language appropriate to that state as the language of everyday speech is, if I may use the expression, to walk on moral stilts. On occasions you appear to me, in strange contrast to your realism, to impose that mode of movement on the common men and women around you. The atmosphere in such circumstances if apt to be thick with disappointment and grievous failure. And if the only correction possible were self-correction, the master must needs find himself doomed to the cell of penitence, which is next door to suicide. You have enough philosophy to understand that to claim divine sanction for a course of conduct is to withdraw it from the field of discussion and deprive it of direct validity to other minds. Whenever I come across the claim in your writing I cannot help quoting to myself the famous line of Kalidasa:

[1] *Vide* "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 2-5-1933.

वितारमूढः प्रतिभासि मे त्वम् ।

''You appear to me to be confounded by anxious thought."

Yours always,

V. S. SRINIVASAN

ENCLOSURE

'Revolution and Religion' is a review by John Middleton Murry of a book called *Moral Man and Immoral Society* by Reinhold Neibuhr. The review appears in the Aryan *Path* of this month. Below are transcribed the concluding paragraphs in which reference is made to Gandhi.

'What then are those who are convinced alike of the material and spiritual necessity . . . for the social struggle in the Western world? There is our tragedy. It is a most significant tribute to Gandhi that he should be the figure in whom the rigorous yet imaginative arguments of Neibuhr's book inevitably culminate. Of the book itself, I can only say that it seems to be of an altogether higher order than any other examination of the menacing problem of Western civilization with which I am acquainted. It is a prophetic book; and I do not believe I shall be found the victim of romantic illusionism when I say that I believe it will prove to be the forerunner of a new and enduring political movement in the English-speaking world.'

Letter s of Sriniv asa Sastri, pp. 252-4

APPENDIX III

LETTER FROM JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

DEHRADUN JAIL,

May 5, 1933

MY DEAR BAPU,

Your letter came today. I was half expecting it for your large heart never permits you to forget anyone. I have sent you a telegram already.

As my telegram will indicate, I feel utterly at a loss and do not know what I can say to you. Religion is not familiar ground for me, and as I have grown older I have definitely drifted away from it. I suppose I have something else in its place, something other than just intellect, reason, which gives me strength and hope. Apart from this undefinable and indefinite urge, which may have just a tinge of religion in it but is wholly different from it, I have grown to rely entirely on the workings of the mind. Perhaps they are weak supports to rely upon, but, search as I will, I can see no better ones. Religion seems to me to lead to emotion and

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 2-5-1933.

sentimentality and they are still more unreliable guides. Intuition—undoubtedly there is such a thing, though where it comes from I cannot say! Perhaps from the stored up experiences at the back of the mind, the sub-conscious self.

The Harijan question is bad, very bad, but it seems to me incorrect to say that there is nothing so bad in all the world. I think I could point to much that was equally bad and even worse. All over the world there is this same Harijan question in various forms. Is it not the outcome of special causes ? Surely it is due to something more than mere ignorance and ill will. To remove those causes or to neutralize their effect appears to be the only way to deal with the roots of the matter. But why should I write of these matters now! I do not want to argue in this letter as the stage for argument seems to be past.

It is hard to be so far from you, and yet it would be harder to be near you. This crowded world is a very lonely place, and you want to make it still lonelier. Life and death matter little, or should matter little. The only thing that matters is the cause that one works for, and if one could be sure that the best service to it is to die for it, then death would seem simpler. I have loved life—the mountains and the sea, the sun and rain and storm and snow, and animals, and books and art, and even human beings—and life has been good to me. But the idea of death has never frightened me, from a distance it seems fitting enough as the crown of one's endeavour. But at close quarters, it is not pleasant to contemplate.

The last fourteen or fifteen years have been a wonderful time for me, ever since I had the good fortune to be associated with you in various activities. Life became fuller and richer and more worthwhile, and that is a dear and precious memory which nothing can take from me. And whenever the future happens to be dark, this vision of the past will relieve the gloom and give strength.

All my love to you.

Yours affectionately,

J

[PS.]

Kamala is staying in Dehradun. I shall communicate your message to her.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru. Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX IV

TALK WITH C. RAJAGOPALACHARI [1]

May 4, 1933

GANDHIJI: Even jurisprudence admits the right of self-destruction. You will ask me whether Ramatirtha, Ramakrishna, Vivekananda did this sort of *tapasya*, whether the suicide of Ramatirtha—deliberate or resulting from a trance—produced any results, whether Jesus mounting the cross left any impact.

C. R. But Hinduism does not sanction suicide.

G. I don't know. But Mahadev was telling me that there is a practice of drowning oneself in the Ganga.

C. R. That is to purify oneself with the water of the Ganga. I do admit that if you are the cause of all these sins you may commit suicide. Logically it would be your victory, but then you do not seek such a victory, do you ?

G. I want to atone for the sins. Moral ends require moral means. Cardinal Manning was kept on three biscuits and water. It is easier to undertake twenty-one days' fast than to die the kind of slow death as Cardinal Manning is said to have died. A moral reform can be brought about only through *tapashcharya* and self-purification. We should learn from the experience of scientists who have gone through this. My mother and I were born in families where such fasts were an everyday affair. They were a part of their experience. It is probable that my father did not approve of the severe fasts my mother used to undertake but she showed no ill-effects from the fasting and they made us respect her all the more.

C.R. This is only an instance of association of ideas. Can you defend your case by saying that just because your mother fasted you also must? If someone pierces himself with a needle, how will that convince people that it is sinful to regard a person as an untouchable?

G. Then supposing I fast only for a few days? Supposing I don't die at the end of the fast?

C.R. The two things are not related at all. You seem to believe that there is a secret connection between self-mortification and people's convictions. Buddha was the first to raise his voice against such self-mortification.

G. In a true fast the mind and the soul co-operate with the body. Buddha was against purely physical fasting.

C.R. Will you have the strength to think clearly after ten days?

[1] *Vide* "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 5-5-1933.

G. On former occasions I did have it. Thoughts become purer during a pure fast even though there may not be any outward sign of that. A co-worker undertook a fast for fifty-five days, still his thoughts have not become pure because his mind was not pure. The very first day he started discussing with me what he would do after the fast. Even now his mind is not steady. He wrote me a letter in which he described the impurity of his mind. But to a man who has his mind fixed on God or on some noble act things that were obscure at first gradually become clearer and clearer.

C. R. This can be true only to a certain extent.

G. In saying this you tread on dangerous ground. You must accept the conclusion of a scientist. One who is pure, who adheres to truth and wants to cling to it is as much a scientist as a physicists.

C. R. But this is an unnatural situation.

G. It may be unnatural for animals, not for human beings. If you wish to see the unseeable you have to become unseeable.

C.R. Do you wish to see the unseeable?

G. Yes, because I want to serve the Harijans in the best way possible. If untouchability is to be eradicated we must touch the hearts of 160 million people.

C. R. There is a superstition of touching wood to save oneself from ghosts and spirits and God is brought into it. But there must be a limit to such beliefs in the occult.

G. I am not ashamed of the occult element. You seem to say that it is harmful to believe in the occult.

C. R. Yes, if it results in death.

G. You want to have the cake and eat it, too. For the sake of argument I shall grant that fasts which end in death are wrong. Your argument implies that mortification of the flesh can never do good.

C. R. It may sometimes.

G. From the medical point of view?

C. R. No. Even from the spiritual point of view.

G. Then you have lost. If that is the case it should be left to the person who wishes to undertake a fast. I did not undertake this fast of my own free will. I was commanded.

C.R. All right. Can friends advise on this?

G. Certainly.

C. R. If there is an eighty per cent chance of death resulting from this, it is a gamble. You will say that it is a good gamble. I feel that you have been brooding over the same thing in jail and so you have lost your sense of proportion. You have a great fondness for conducting experiments. You are now experimenting with death and you are misguided in it. Can you show me even one person who approves of your step? G. Duncan, Andrews.

C. R. What could be the value of their opinion ? My opinion has greater weight. Andrews does not even know how to lock a room and he is talking about locking up one's life. And how can you claim fully to know God's law? I tell you, you should be more cautious. It is possible to get inspiration from God sometimes but not always.

G. Then you accept the possibility of inspiration from God? If you accept this you have lost your case.

C. R. But the inspiration may be wrong in this instance. It is rashness to close one's mind to reason. Sometimes God appears in the form of rashness, sometimes of the wicked, sometimes of the fish and sometimes of a tortoise. I just want you to realize that sometimes even you can be wrong. In this case I want you to realize that.

G. But how can I accept my mistake unless the result shows it? I have decided to undertake the fast in spite of myself. Mahadev will tell you from my letters how my mind has been working.

C. R. You are deliberately suppressing your thoughts.

G. If I accept your argument I should stop working altogether.

C. R. But there can be no such inspiration which is against reason.

G. It may not be against my reason . . . .[1]

There is only one aim, that of purification. My own purification as well as my co-workers'. Other effects will also flow from it. I see that impurity can exist in my presence. That means there is impurity in me.

I have not attained complete freedom from unwanted thoughts.

Suppose the things I consider impure are proved to be pure, I must still undertake the fast. There are impurities and I feel I am responsible for them. Moreover, it is a mistake to regard this as a political issue. The main thing is that this movement should be conducted in a purely religious spirit.

Religion is concerned with the inner self. It is a matter of the heart, of faith and of eternal verities. The body has no lasting value. God says that everything that has name and form shall perish. Even the sun is not eternal. Science also proves this. But our activities are concerned with material things. My fast is for a wholly spiritual purpose. How can I stand in argument with those who are intellectually much superior to me? But when it comes to what the heart says, I am able to hold my own against them because it does not require any knowledge of Sanskrit. It is a blessing that God dwells in the hearts of the poor and my fast is for heart-searching. There certainly is a tradition of undertaking fasts for rains and other material things. . . . You must respect my convictions. You are telling me to dismiss them summarily. You may strive with me, argue with me. It is possible that I am mistaken but you are telling me to accept the possibility as a certainty. I should be a liar if I undertake the fast with

[1] Omissions are as in the source.

the certainty that it would end in my death. So long as you cannot convince me, by quoting my own statements, that I am mistaken you should not undermine my faith. Nobody can attain to a certitude like God's. But after all, am I not myself the captain of my ship?

[From Gujarati]

Mahade vbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 284-9

APPENDIX V

M. S. ANEY'S STATEMENT SUSPENDING CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE [1]

POONA,

May 9, 1933

I feel sure that although the news of the fast of Mahatma Gandhi is bound to cast a dark shadow of anxiety and gloom throughout the country, it will be some relief to his countrymen as well as to his friends and followers throughout the world to know that Government has, at any rate, released him unconditionally and allowed him to observe his vow and practise his great penance as a free citizen. In a statement issued to the Press last night, after his release, he has expressed his views on the conduct of the civil disobedience movement which, I have no doubt, will receive the consideration they deserve from every civil resister. It is perfectly true that during the period of fast, the civil resisters will be in a state of suspense and as a consequence he has advised me to declare officially and suspend the civil disobedience campaign for one month or even six weeks.

In his statement he has emphatically stated what I have been saying more than once during the last four months in reply to various critics of the civil disobedience movement that the civil disobedience cannot be withdrawn so long as many civil resisters are imprisoned, and no settlement can be arrived at so long as Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and others are in jail.

'Indeed the withdrawal of the civil disobedience movement is not within the power of men who are out of prison. It is possible only for the original Working Committee to do so.' I repeat the position so lucidly and emphatically enumerated by Mahatma Gandhi above, which is the only rational an constitutional position for the Congressmen to take on the point of withdrawal of the civil disobedience campaign. But the question of suspending the campaign to serve any definite object of a limited period undoubtedly stands on a different footing. It is no doubt a serious responsibility which I have been called to shoulder. But I am armed with a weapon—it

[1] *Vide* "Statement suspending Civil Disobedience Movement", 8-5-1933.

is an advice that comes from one who is not only the author of the present civil disobedience campaign but the originator and sole authority on the science and practice of civil disobedience itself. In response to his suggestion which also strikes me as a proper thing to do at this time in order to eliminate from the atmosphere all The elements of excitement and render it pure for all of us to inhale, to be in a prayerful mood to invoke the blessings of the Almighty on the great cause for which Mahatma Gandhi is undergoing this penance and supply him with an abundance of spiritual food so necessary for him to sustain through this ordeal, I declare officially that civil disobedience shall be suspended for six weeks beginning with Tuesday the 9th of May.

In conclusion I repeat my appeal to every man and woman to utilize this period to the best of his or her ability and energy in the service of such work for the uplift of Harijans as may be most commending itself to him or her.

The Hindustan Times, 10-5-1933

APPENDIX VI

BREAKING OF THE FAST [1]

So *The Day* arrived for which hundreds and thousands had prayed for. The scenes were as solemn as on the 8th May. Men and women of all faiths were represented there by those who were present on the occasion in response to the invitation of the door-keeper, Shrimati Sarojini Naidu, who for once in her life had forsaken her extravagant generosity and become niggardly in the interest of the patient, for whom she had kept tireless vigil. On any other occasion of rejoicing, she might have invited the whole city of Poona, but not that day. I had been expecting the Harijan boy who had entered into that contract with Gandhiji on the 8th of May to appear punctually on the noon of the 29th. I had entreated the door-keeper to find him out and allow him in. Unfortunately, I did not know his address; otherwise, I should have fetched him myself. He did not turn up, and the orange juice was supplied not by him but by the kind hostess, Lady Thackersey, who perhaps felt the luckiest woman that day, as Dr. Ansari, the proudest man. The Harijan boy was not there, but the door-keeper had flung the doors open to all Harijans, and the first and only garland offered to Gandhiji before the break of the fast was that of a Harijan girl, who then sat in the midst of her sisters of rank and station. In the centre and with Sjt. Amritlal Thakkar and Seth Jamnalal Bajaj, sat the Harijans among whom there were some who had come from far off Ahmedabad. With the name of Rama on our lips we began the

[1] *Vide* "Note to Mathuradas Trikumji", 28-5-1933. This was extracted from "Sparks from the Sacred Fire-VI by Mahadev Desai.

function, which was inaugurated by Dr. Ansari with texts from the Koran on the spiritual meaning of fasting, during which the aspirant after grace had to feast himself on good and fast from all evil. Brothers from the Christ Seva Sangha sang Gandhiji's favourite: "When I survey the Wondrous Cross." Prof. Wadia sang the Parsi prayer which, as he said, could be the universal prayer; and Kakasaheb sang the verse in which the devotee offers his prayers to the embodiment of all good, of all freedom from passion and hatred, of all love and compassion, whatever be the name by which men call Him. Then came the Poet's song wherein he invokes the Almighty to come with a torrent of mercy when the springs of life dry up and with nectared music when all the sweetness is missing. The Poet could not be there, as at the break of the September Fast, to sing it and so I sang it in his name. Last came the hymn of 'the true Vaishnava', which is almost as life-breath to Gandhiji and is sung on all occasions when we are called upon to face sorrow and joy with equanimity.

Harijan, 3-6-1933

APPENDIX VII

TALKS WITH C. RAJAGOPALACHARI [1]

June 1, 1933

GANDHIJI: It is difficult for either party to retreat after having taken such a stand. The position of each is absolutely clear. I can very well imagine that Government wants ruthlessly to implement the policy they have adopted. I can understand its attitude. I am also absolutely clear in my mind as to our reply to it. We should not involve the peasantry and the masses in this struggle. We should not put any burden on them. We should depend only on such people from the educated or enlightened class who are willing to join our party. They also should not depend on any financial assistance from the Congress. Those who need it may secure it from friends, neighbours or others. They should uninterruptedly go to jail. There is no need for demonstrations. For instance, Congress meetings should stop. If necessary, a nominal dictator may be appointed. But I see that there will be difficulty in doing so; it will be as well not to appoint any dictator.

There should be no secrecy in the struggle. And no no-tax programme either. I have always felt that a no-tax campaign for swaraj will be a difficult thing. It is of course important but we have never been adequately prepared for it. The no-tax campaigns we have conducted so far have been necessarily limited in their aims. But conducting a no-tax campaign for attaining swaraj is no joke. Let us make it clear to the public through our statements that in restricting the movement we are not giving

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 3-6-1933.

it up, or deserting those who have suffered but are taking the struggle to a higher plane. People should have faith that one day we are bound to get back all the land which had been confiscated. Those who do not have this faith may take it that they have lost their land. In wars people lost their lives as well as property.

We should once again let the people know our demands and our ideals. Let us put forward our programmes before the nation unhesitatingly and do whatever has to be done to bring the nation nearer the goal. I have discussed this with Vallabhbhai. I have thought much over this and have arrived at these broad conclusions.

C.R. But what about the people who have already lost their land, etc.? It is only this thought that confiscated properties will be returned that tempts me to secure power. I see from the constitution they are framing that it would not be difficult to get back the properties. I do not know whether I have this feeling because I am weak or because I understand the mind of the British.

G. There is no question of weakness at all. I have also thought of taking power in our hands on account of this and other such things. And Vallabhbhai has also agreed to it. But today we should not think of taking power in our hands at all. At the moment we should think only of keeping up the struggle on the highest level of intensity. It does not worry me if only half a dozen of we are left to do that.

C.R. 1. Can we do anything more on an organized basis in addition to what we can do as individual?

2. In this scheme it is impossible to keep up contacts and maintain organization.

G. Personally I would be satisfied with whatever I can do as an individual.

C.R. Since you forbid secrecy, plans of certain type become absolutely impossible.

G. I want to inspire the finest spirit of self-sacrifice in a few. For that the pure gold of patriotism is necessary. We will be able to build a beautiful edifice over it. If we are not able to do this the whole thing will fall like a house of cards. Let us manifest true satyagraha through this. One pure thing is much better than many which are not completely pure.

Morning, 6 a.m., June 2, 1933

C.R. Is there anything that needs to be done after your statement on the conclusion of the fast?

G. We should renew the plea I had made earlier for a meeting with the Viceroy. I will again ask for the Gandhi-Irwin Pact to be implemented, people to be allowed to collect salt and do peaceful picketing of foreign-cloth shops and liquor shops.

C. R. They have already sent a reply to your statement. Do you think we should write anything more?

G. I feel that we should scrupulously keep to the word I gave that negotiations would be resumed from the point at which they were broken off.

C. R. But they say we should go to them only after first completely withdrawing civil disobedience.

G. They can say this only after the negotiations start and the conditions for settlement are discussed. Where is today the agency that will withdraw civil disobedience? Who-will withdraw it? So there can be no condition of withdrawal of civil disobedience till the prisoners are released. I do not at all feel defeated. We just cannot admit having done something wrong or having committed breach of the Pact. No settlement is possible on the basis of such a condition. If we agree to any such condition we would lose the game and will be ruined. Our claim is that there has been no breach of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact from our side. If they think otherwise, they can appoint an enquiry committee. I am ready to abide by the decision of an impartial enquiry committee. But they are not ready to accept any such suggestion. I feel this time also we will get the same reply from the Viceroy as we got on the previous occasion. He would say that, if we wanted to discuss anything without unconditionally and completely giving up civil disobedience, in his view there was no point in my meeting him. Still I feel it is necessary to write a letter not suggesting a way out but asking for an interview.

C. R. Do you not want to write anything to the Secretary of State?

G. I already know his views. Rangaswami had told me that Hoare had written to him a friendly letter saying that there was nothing in the White Paper that could not be changed and so he should go and see him. So Rangaswami went and saw him. Hoare thinks that it is his job to polish off rough edges and show to the world that he is getting co-operation from all the parties, even from the Moderates and the Congress. 'It would be a good thing if Rangaswami could be persuaded to say something in favour of the reform. It would be equally well if he does not'. That seems to be Hoare's attitude. Moreover, he runs the administration at Simla too. He is behind all this and not the Viceroy. He is carrying on Birkenhead's policy in a more gentle way. I am not saying anything new in this because I returned from London with all this information. And all of them in England—Irwin, Baldwin, Archbishop of Canterbury—are defending his policy.

C. R. Irwin seems to think that there has been so much breach of the Settlement that it cannot be revived and so it is altogether unnecessary to refer to it.

G. We can raise the issue provided the discussion reaches that stage. But even if we meet, ultimately nothing will come out of all that. Birkenhead and [Lord] Reading also said: 'If you do not want war you should accept what the Parliament offers you. Parliament will give reforms gradually. You should be satisfied with that. But at the moment there is no mutual faith or mutual respect at all.'

C. R. This whole chapter has been fully discussed by Sastri. shall we ask him his opinion today?

G. If you want to see him you may. He will of course not come here. At the annual function of the Servants of India Society he did not say anything special or make his policy known.

C. R. The policy you recommend can be followed only by a few as it is very revolutionary. But it will have no effect on either the Government or the people.

G. I don't care. It is possible what you say is true but I am prepared for it. I am hurt by these pin-pricks. Only those who willingly set out will have to suffer.

C. R. Then the mass struggle comes to an end.

G. That exactly is going to be the key to the whole affair. We have made a mistake in letting the mass struggle go on without any plan. Only when the people have understood a definite plan from the beginning to the end, will a mass straggle come. When responsible persons feel that people are prepared to lose their property and are ready for even greater hardships, they will start the struggle.

C. R. Don't you think that the call for a no-tax campaign in January 1932 was premature?

G. Of course it was. I had told Tandon and others in 1931 that I did not have faith in our strength to carry on a no-tax campaign for attaining swaraj.

C. R. If it was a mistake, should we not rectify it?

G. I will not say that the struggle should be called off even for that purpose.

C. R. Government will not return all the properties even if we withdraw the struggle.

G. Government will not hear of any such thing.

[From Gujarati]

Mahade vbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 296-301

APPENDIX VIII

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

July 14, 1933

I have been asked whether I will again start Harijan work after going to jail. In answer to this I can only say that I will have to see what kind of imprisonment it is. No matter what it is, I will try to see whether it is possible to continue Harijan work. Our struggle was started in 1920. We have expanded its scope through the Lahore and Karachi resolutions. I hope that the struggle will continue till we attain independence. I have one foot in Yeravda and one here. It is for you to see that our

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Leaders' Conference, Poona-II", 14-7-1933.

struggle continues. This is an informal meeting. Here nobody, not even the Acting President, has the right to call off the movement. Whatever I say here is also by way of advice. If you want to withdraw the struggle you should call the Congress Committee. If you allow me to write to the Viceroy my role will be that of a negotiator. I will have to get the approval of the Congress for whatever conditions I wish to propose. Independence will be a long way from any settlement that may be reached. It is not in the hands of the British to give us freedom. We will have to achieve it with our own strength. At the moment those who know are of the view that reforms will be introduced by the end of 1935. But before we attain independence we will have to fight and risk our lives for it. Every satyagrahi will have to chalk out his own programme for civil disobedience. Even thirty crores can offer individual civil disobedience, each one being his own leader. Or under the leadership of one person, a hundred men can get together and offer individual civil disobedience. In individual civil disobedience a man's strength or enthusiasm can never be curbed. It is irrelevant what my position is. Under the constitution I have the full right to carry on civil disobedience. It is possible that I may be jailed before the All-India Congress Committee meets. Will it befit me or any one of you to obey the order when I come to know that I cannot talk with you more freely or an order is passed imposing some sort of ban on me? That is what I meant when I said in my speech that we are under constant restraint.

QUESTION: What is the position of the dictator of the Congress in individual civil disobedience?

ANSWER: One who offers individual civil disobedience need not ask permission from any dictator. Everyone becomes his own leader. There is no need for any head in individual civil disobedience. There is no need for any orders either.

Q. If any taluka wishes to sacrifice itself, can it do so?

A. Certainly. I wish that every taluka would do so. There is no need for any orders from the Congress for it. But that taluka should do so in the name and under the patronage of the Congress. . . [1] I am not itching to write to the Viceroy. If you do not permit me I will not do so. . . . The condition of releasing the prisoners of Garhwal and Meerut is not essential for a settlement.

Q. Can a person who is going to offer civil disobedience after a few months give his approval to your Suggestion of individual civil disobedience?

A. This is a delicate question. A person can give his assent but he should be faithful to the country and himself. . . . From their childhood I have taught my children to rebel against myself. . . . I don't expect that one who gives his vote today will be in jail the next day. . . . As long as he lives it is not proper for a satyagrahi to say that the organization is without a guide. . . . Anyone who tries to appear brave is usually not truly brave. . . . I don't consider as honourable conditions which do not protect the common public. . . . The Congress will not order any farmer to pay land

[1] Omissions are as in the source.

revenue. It will of course commend those who will go to jail or suffer other hardships.

[From Gujarati]

Mahade vbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 315-7

APPENDIX IX

M. S. ANEY'S STATEMENT DISCONTINUING MASS CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE[1]

July 22, 1933

Having considered very carefully the recommendations of the informal conference recently held at Poona and the discussions among Congressmen in the Conference and outside, and the advice tendered by Mr. Gandhi, I have come to the conclusion that the country's best interest will be served by the following instructions being carried out:

Firstly, the civil disobedience campaign should not be unconditionally withdrawn in the existing circumstances..

Secondly, mass civil disobedience, including no-tax and no-rent campaign, should be discontinued for the time being, the right of individuals who may be ready for every suffering, and are prepared at their own responsibilities to continue civil disobedience being reserved.

Thirdly, all those able and willing to offer individual civil disobedience on their own responsibilities without expectation of any help from the Congress organization are expected to do so.

Fourthly, secret methods followed hitherto should be abandoned. Fifthly, all Congress organizations, including the All-India Congress Committee office, should cease to exist for the time being, provided however that wherever possible dictators in the provinces and all-India dictators should continue.

Sixthly, all the Congressmen unable for any reason whatsoever to offer civil disobedience are expected to carry on individually or corporately such constructive activities of the Congress for which they are fitted.

I regret it has not been possible to call off the movement, and it has become necessary for me to issue these instructions. I share with many others, Congressmen or others, the disappointment that Mahatma Gandhi's very simple request, unaccompanied by any condition, for an interview with the Viceroy in order to explore peace possibilities, was summarily rejected. His Excellency has very wrongly allowed himself to be influenced by unauthorized reports of confidential proceedings of the informal conference which for the sake of furthering peace efforts

[1] *Vide* "Interview on M. S. Aney's statement", 24-7-1933.

were purposely held back from publication. His Excellency should know that at the conference overwhelming opinion favoured seeking such an interview for honourable peace. I hold it impossible for any Congress organization or its representative to accept the terms peremptorily laid down by His Excellency as a condition precedent to peace conversation. I hope the nation will compel revision of this attitude by developing requisite strength, whatever the cost be.

Despite the instructions, suspension of the campaign till the end of this month stands.

The Indian Annual Regist er, 1933, Vol. II, PP. 332-3

APPENDIX X

CABLE FROM RABINDRANATH TAGORE TO SIR NRIPENDRANATH SIRCAR[1]

I REMEMBER TO HAVE SENT A CABLE TO THE PRIME MINISTER REQUESTING HIM NOT SO DELAY IN ACCEPTING THE PROPOSAL ABOUT COMMUNAL AWARDS SUBMITTED TO HIM BY MAHATMAJI. AT THAT MOMENT A SITUATION HAD BEEN CREATED WHICH WAS EXTREMELY PAINFUL NOT AFFORDING US THE LEAST TIME OR PEACE OF MIND TO ENABLE US TO THINK QUIETLY ABOUT THE POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF THE POONA PACT WHICH HAD BEEN EFFECTED BEFORE MY ARRIVAL, WHEN SAPRU AND JAYAKAR HAD ALREADY LEFT, WITH THE HELP OF MEMBERS AMONG WHOM THERE WAS NOT A SIN SINGLE RESPONSIBLE REPRESENTATIVE FROM BENGAL. UPON THE IMMEDIATE SETTLEMENT OF THIS QUESTION MAHATMAJI'S LIFE DEPENDED AND THE INTOLERABLE ANXIETY CAUSED BY SUCH A CRISIS DROVE ME PRECIPITATELY TO THE COMMITMENT WHICH I NOW REALIZE AS A WRONG DONE AGAINST OUR COUNTRY'S PERMANENT INTEREST. NEVER HAVING EXPERIENCE IN POLITICAL DEALINGS WHILE ENTERTAINING A GREAT LOVE FOR MAHATMAJI AND A COMPLETE FAITH IN HIS WISDOM IN INDIAN POLITICS I DARE NOT WAIT FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION NOT HEEDING THAT JUSTICE HAD BEEN SACRIFICED IN CASE OF BENGAL. I HAVE NOT THE LEAST DOUBT NOW THAT SUCH AN INJUSTICE WILL CONTINUE TO CAUSE MISCHIEF FOR ALL PARTIES CONCERNED KEEPING ALIVE THE SPIRIT OF COMMUNAL CONFLICT IN OUR PROVINCE IN AN INTENSE FORM MAKING PEACEFUL GOVERNMENT PERPETUALLY DIFFICULT. THAT THE MINISTERS OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT SHOULD BRUSQUELY REFUSE TO RECONSIDER THIS SUBJECT OF A VITAL IMPORTANCE TO US WHILE ALL OTHER PROPOSALS CONTAINED IN THE WHITE PAPER ARE BEING FREELY REHANDLED DOES NOT SURPRISE OR HURT ME TOO MUCH. FOR HAVE THEY NOT OFTEN

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Rabindranath Tagore", 27-7-1933 and 7-8-1933.

EXULTANGLY PROPHESIED OF THE EVIL DAYS WHEN WE MIGHT BE LEFT TO FIGHT THE FRATRICIDAL TURBULENCE WITHOUT THEIR AID AND FAIL? AND NATURALLY THEY MAY LACK TODAY ENTHUSIASM TO HELP US IN MAKING OUR PATH TOO SMOOTH TOWARDS COMMUNAL RECONCILIATION. BUT THAT THE INDIAN MEMBERS OF THE CONFERENCE BELONGING TO PROVINCES OTHER THAN OURS SHOULD NOT ONLY REMAIN APATHETIC BUT ACTIVELY TAKE PART IN AGGRAVATING BENGAL'S MISFORTUNE IS TERRIBLY OMINOUS PRESAGING NO GOOD FOR OUR FUTURE HISTORY.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Home Department, Political File No. 3/17/33, pp. 16-7. Courtesy: National Archives of India

APPENDIX XI

ORDER RESTRAINING GANDHIJI'S MOVEMENTS[1]

ORDER NO. S. D. 3806

TO

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

Whereas the Governor-in-Council is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for believing that you, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, have acted and are about to act in a manner prejudicial to the public Safety and peace and in furtherance of a movement prejudicial to the public safety and peace and whereas the Governor-in-Council has taken into his consideration the record in writing made by the District Magistrate, Poona, of the Statement made by you; now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by Sub-section (1) of Section 4 of the Bombay Special (Emergency) Powers Act, 1932, the Governor-in-Council is hereby pleased by order in writing to direct:

1. that you shall remove yourself from the village of Yeravda before 9.30 a.m. of this day; that you shall not enter Poona Cantonment area; that you shall reside and remain in Poona City municipal limits from 10.30 a.m. of this day; and that you shall not depart from the said municipal limits;

2. that you shall abstain from every act in furtherance of the civil disobedience movement or of any movement prejudicial to the public safety or peace;

3. that you shall abstain from encouraging or inciting any person to interfere with the administration of the law or with the maintenance of law and order or to commit any offence or to refuse or to defer payment of any land revenue, tax, rate,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", 3-8-1933 and "Statement disobeying restraint order", 4-8-1933.

cess or other due or amount payable to Government;

4. that except with the previous per permission of the District Magistrate of Poona you shall abstain from being present at or addressing or participating in any meeting of twelve or more persons or any public demonstration or procession.

The Governor-in-Council is pleased under Sub-section(2) of Section 4 to direct that this order shall remain in force for more than one month from the making thereof and until further orders.

By order of the Governor-in-Council, dated at Poona, this 4th day of August, 1933.

R. M. MAXWELL
SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF
BOMBAY, HOME DEPARTMENT

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(4), Pt. V, p. 67

APPENDIX XII

EXCERPTS FROM VICEROY'S CABLE TO SECRETARY OF STATE[1]

August 13, 1933

5. IT HAS BEEN EXPLAINED TO MR. GANDHI THAT THE ORDERS PERMITTED HIM TO INTERVIEW THE EDITOR OF THE "HARIJAN" AS ONE OF HIS DAILY VISITORS AND TO HAND HIM HIS MANUSCRIPT, AND THAT LETTERS SO FAR AS THEY DEALT WITH HARIJAN MATTERS WOULD BE DELIVERED TO MR. GANDHI.

6. GOVERNMENT ARE NOT AWARE WHAT MR. GANDHI MEANS BY SAYING THAT THEY HAVE ADMITTED PERMISSION TO DO HARIJAN WORK IN PRISON IS IMPLIED IN THE YERAVDA PACT, THOUGH IT IS TRUE THAT IN THE EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES PREVAILING IMMEDIATELY AFTER THAT PACT THE GOVERNMENT DID PERMIT MR. GANDHI AS A STATE PRISONER TO INAUGURATE THE MOVEMENT TO WHICH HE APPEARED TO BE DEVOTING HIS WHOLE ATTENTION. PROTESTS WERE MADE AT THE TIME ON BEHALF OF THE ORTHODOX HINDU COMMUNITY, WHO DID NOT AGREE WITH MR. GANDHI'S POLICY IN THIS MATTER, AGAINST HIS BEING ALLOWED FACILITIES TO CONDUCT PUBLIC CAMPAIGN FROM JAIL, AND IT MIGHT WELL BE ARGUED THAT MR. GANDHI, HAVING NOW AFTER A PERIOD OF FREEDOM COURTED IMPRISONMENT AGAIN ON A PURELY POLITICAL ISSUE, SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED ANY SPECIAL TREATMENT THAT. IS NOT GIVEN TO OTHER A-CLASS PRISONERS. NEVERTHELESS THE GOVERNMENT HAVE BEEN RELUCTANT TO TAKE ACTION WHICH COULD BE REGARDED AS UNREASONABLE

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", 19-8-1933.

INTERFERENCE WITH A WORK OF SOCIAL REFORM OR TO TAKE THEIR STAND TOO RIGIDLY ON THE FACT THAT MR. GANDHI IS BY HIS OWN DELIBERATE ACT A PRISONER CONVICTED FOR A BREACH OF THE LAW. IN SPITE OF THE INCONVENIENCE TO JAIL DISCIPLINE AND THE ANOMALY OF THE POSITION, THEY HAVE ALLOWED MR. GANDHI FACILITIES FOR PURSUING HIS WORK ON ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY WHICH WILL ENABLE HIM TO MAKE AN IMPORTANT AND EFFECTIVE CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS IT. IT WAS NOTICEABLE THAT WHEN MR. GANDHI WAS AT LIBERTY HE DID NOT APPEAR TO DEVOTE THE MAJOR PART OF HIS TIME OR ATTENTION TO THIS MOVEMENT. HIS MAIN ENERGIES WERE EMPLOYED ON POLITICS AND ON THE CONTINUANCE IN WHATEVER FROM MIGHT BE POSSIBLE OF THE MOVEMENT OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE. HIS PRESENT CLAIM THAT HE SHOULD BE ALLOWED FROM PRISON TO CARRY ON HIS HARIJAN WORK " WITHOUT LET OR HINDRANCE", AMOUNTS TO A REFUSAL TO ACCEPT FOR HIMSELF THE NORMAL CONCOMITANTS OF IMPRISONMENT, EXCEPT RESTRICTION ON HIS ACTUAL PHYSICAL LIBERTY, AND IN EFFECT IS A CLAIM TO DICTATE THE TERMS OF HIS IMPRISONMENT.

THE GOVERNMENT ARE SATISFIED THAT THE FACILITIES THEY HAVE ALLOWED ARE AMPLE TO ENABLE MR. GANDHI TO CONDUCT SUCH WORK IN FAVOUR OF THE REMOVAL OF UNTOUCHABILITY AS IS IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES REASONABLE. IF MR. GANDHI NOW FEELS HOWEVER THAT LIFE CEASES TO INTEREST HIM IF HE MAY NOT DO HARIJAN SERVICE WITHOUT LET OR HINDRANCE, THE GOVERNMENT ARE PREPARED, PROVIDED MR. GANDHI IS WILLING TO ABANDON ALL CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE ACTIVITIES AND INCITEMENTS, TO SET HIM AT LIBERTY AT ONCE SO THAT HE CAN DEVOTE HIMSELF WHOLLY AND WITHOUT RESTRICTION TO THE CAUSE OF SOCIAL REFORM MR. GANDHI HAS BEEN INFORMED ACCORDINGLY.

Home Department, Political File No. 3/l7/33, 1933, pp. 38-9. Courtesy: Notional Archives of India

APPENDIX XIII

LETTER FROM V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI[1]

COIMBATORE,
August 27, 1933

DEAREST BROTHER,

Government might well have given you the old facilities. A curse has disabled them from generous or timely action.

But they haven't conferred a right on you or made you a promise. What they conceded to you at one time and in one set of conditions they are not bound to

[1] *Vide* "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 30-8-1933.

concede to you at another time and in another set of conditions. The order made after the Poona Pact, from which you quote, does not amount to an irrevocable or unconditional promise. You indulge in special pleading of a bad type when you charge them with a breach of promise. The addition of the words 'made to a prisoner in their custody' loses the point it might have had otherwise.

It might be said by an observer who wasn't prejudiced against Government that, while Harijan uplift was dear to you, putting blame on Government was dearer. It has been said in my hearing by well-disposed persons that you would love nothing so much as to die in gaol and leave Government burdened with the responsibility.

Behind and beyond your present tussle with Government lies the future of the country. How can Congress best secure that future? Your answer is clear. But another answer is taking shape in people's minds. It is that civil disobedience, both mass and individual, must be given up. A new policy, aiming at constructive national good in legislation, finance and administration all round has long been overdue and must be tried, over and above what is now called the constructive programme of Congress. I believe this feeling is common outside Congress, and is gaining ground inside Congress. How can this orientation be brought about?

It is so different from your present policy, in look so opposed to it, that one doubts whether you can undertake it. Perhaps your whole preparation and equipment lie in a different direction. It is no disparagement to anyone that he is not fitted to lead the nation in all contingencies and in all directions. Unfortunately no man, however big, can be always trusted to know his limitations and make room when the cause to which he is devoted requires it. His very greatness stands in the way of change. And as I have told you more than once, you have out-topped all other leaders so long and so decisively that there is no man in sight to take your place at once. What a blessing it would be if you could be transformed and re-made, as it were, for the fresh era! But you are too good, too true to yourself to pretend you are the same teacher when the creed is no longer yours and the ritual is something you have never conducted.

In this sore strait, the country looks to you to play a greater part than you have ever played. (Pardon me: what I mean is the greater part of the country as I figure out the parties.) Save your individual conscience, pursue civil disobedience, seek the gaol and embarrass Government as you like; but leave Congress free to evolve a new programme. It simply cannot do so, while it has to give authority and countenance to individual disobedience. You remember I begged you to adopt this course when I was last with you at Parnakuti. You told me you put it to the Working Committee, but they would have none of it. Naturally and in a way properly too. The Committee couldn't face the odium of abandoning you. I don't wonder the thought was abhorrent to them. The moment is come—in my opinion it came long ago— for you to say, 'I set

Congress free to try other methods. I have plenty of God's work to do, for the nation's welfare, with Harijans.'

There, then, I have told you the truth as it seems to me. May one hope that you will see the problem from a new angle? I know one thing. There is no self-effacement to which you are not equal. The only thing is, it must seem to you to be called for.

All that a friend and brother can do is to give an indication.

Yours affectionately,

V. S. SRINIVASAN

Letter s of Sriniv asa Sastri, pp. 258-60

APPENDIX XIV

LETTER FROM JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

'PARNAKUTI',

September 13, 1933

MY DEAR BAPU,

In our recent conversation you will remember that I laid stress on the reiteration and clearer definition of our national objective. The objective of political independence has been finally laid down by the Congress and there is nothing to add to it or take away from it. We stand for complete independence. Sometimes a little confusion arises because of vague phraseology and misleading propaganda and it is therefore as well to remove this confusion by a reiteration of our political demand. Even the word 'independence' is used with a variety of meanings. Obviously it must include, as the Congress has clearly and definitely laid down, full control of the army and of foreign relations, as well as financial and economic control.

In regard to economic matters, the Karachi Congress by passing the important resolution on 'Fundamental Rights and Economic Policy' gave a lead and pointed out the direction in which we should move. I attach great importance to that resolution but I would personally like to go much further and to clarify the position still more.

It seems to me that if we are to improve the condition of the masses, to raise them economically and give them freedom, it is inevitable that vested interests in India will have to give up their special position and many of their privileges. It is inconceivable to me how else the masses can rise. Therefore the problem of achieving freedom becomes one of revising vested interests in favour of the masses. To the extent this is done, to that extent only will freedom come. The biggest vested interest in India is that of the British Government next come the Indian Princes; and

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 14-9-1933.

others follow. We do not wish to injure any class or group and the divesting should be done as gently as possible and with every effort to avoid injury. But it is obvious that the divesting is bound to cause loss to the classes or groups which enjoy special privileges at the expense of the masses. It is also obvious that the process of divesting must be as speedy as possible to bring relief to the masses whose condition, as you know, is as bad as it can well be. Indeed economic forces themselves are acting with amazing rapidity today and breaking up the old order. The big zamindari and taluqdari system in the United Provinces has largely collapsed, though it may be kept up for some time longer by outside agencies. Even the condition of the zamindars is very bad and the peasantry of course are in a far worse position.

We are all agreed that the Round Table Conference and its various productions are utterly useless to solve even one of India's many problems. As I conceive it, the Round Table Conference was an effort to consolidate the vested interests of India behind the British Government so as to face the rising and powerful national and economic movements in the country which threaten these interests. Essentially, in international parlance, it was a fascist grouping of vested and possessing interests, and fascist methods were adopted in India to suppress the national movement. And because the mere preservation of all these vested interests in India cannot possibly solve our economic ills, whether those of the masses or even of the middle classes, the effort is foredoomed to inevitable failure. Even from the point of view of a democratic nationalism, as you yourself stated at the Round Table Conference, democracy and autocracy can ill go together.

Another aspect has to be borne in mind. The problem of Indian freedom cannot be separated from the vital international problems of the world. The present crisis in the world's affairs is having its repercussions in India. At any moment it may result in a complete breakdown or in a violent international conflagration. Everywhere there is a conflict and a contest between the forces of progress and betterment of the masses and the forces of reaction and vested interests. We cannot remain silent witnesses to this titanic struggle for it affects us intimately. Both on the narrower ground of our own interests and the wider ground of international welfare and human progress, we must, I feel, range ourselves with the progressive forces of the world. This ranging ourselves at present can of course be ideological only.

These are some of the larger issues that fill my mind and I am convinced, not only that we ignore them at our peril, but that a true appreciation of them will vitalize and give new meaning to our struggle for freedom which we must continue till the full objective is achieved.

These wider issues are of great importance but at present, as you know, the minds of large numbers of our countrymen are greatly exercised over immediate national problems and especially the question of carrying on the struggle. The

statements that you and Sjt. M. S. Aney issued some time ago to guide the country have, I am afraid, produced some confusion and there has even been some resentment in regard to particular directions contained in them. There is a vague talk, in quarters which ought to know better, that the Congress has been dissolved. It is obvious that nothing of the kind has been done or could be done under the constitution. Your directions and those of Mr. Aney were, I take it, in the nature of advice or suggestions to meet a certain position that had arisen. The Congress continues as before but it is clear that it cannot function normally when Government declare its committees to be illegal. There can be no regular offices or open activity. To recognize this fact and to adapt ourselves to it is not to wind up any Congress Committee, much less the Congress organization as a whole.

A necessary consequence from this was to avoid the possibility of a few newcomers who formed committees, when the old members and other reliable workers went to prison, or even individuals, committing the Congress to an undesirable course of action. As is known, we have had to face this risk in The past and unreliable persons have come to the helm of affairs in some local areas with the intention of obstructing and even stopping the very activities they were supposed to further. It thus becomes desirable to prevent such unreliable persons from exploiting the name of the Congress Committee. This of course does not prevent Congress workers in any area from co-operating together in an organized way for the furtherance of our programme.

Confusion has also arisen in the country about the implications of individual and mass civil disobedience. I appreciate to some extent the difference but this difference does not appear to me to be a fundamental one, as, in any event, civil disobedience is essentially an individual affair. Individual civil disobedience can develop into mass civil disobedience. Besides, you told me that if an organization felt strong enough to undertake the responsibility and the risk, it could, of its own initiative, take up mass civil disobedience. Indeed you were of opinion that a local organization could, in this manner go ahead in any direction which was not contrary to Congress methods or policy.

Stress was laid in your previous statement on the undesirability of secrecy, although you pointed out that there was nothing inherently illegitimate in secret methods. I think that most of us agree, and certainly I am of that opinion, that our movement is essentially an open one and secret methods do not fit in with it. Such methods, if indulged in to any large extent, are likely to change the whole character of the movement, as it has been conceived, and produce a certain amount of demoralization. Agreeing with this, some of us feel that, to some extent as for instance in communicating with each other or sending directions or keeping contacts, a measure of secrecy may be necessary. Perhaps secrecy is hardly the word for those activities and privacy would suit them better. Privacy of course is always

open to all groups and individuals. Secrecy or the avoidance of it, as you said, cannot be made into a fetish.

But secrecy is certainly involved in the production of printed or duplicated news-sheets and bulletins. These bulletins have often served a useful purpose in the past in keeping contact between headquarters and districts and in sending information or directions. You pointed out to me the difficulties and undesirable consequences of running these secret presses and duplicating machines. Many good workers are tied up and have to avoid aggressive action; money has to be invested in such machines and frequently they are taken away by the police. Even from the practical point of view this continuous rain and tying up of workers is not desirable, and undoubtedly it sometimes results in demoralization. You suggested that the best way was to have hand written copies of bulletins, etc., containing the name of the publisher. Generally, I agree with all this and appreciate the force of your argument. But I do feel that under certain circumstances it may be desirable for a local or Provincial committee or group to issue bulletins of directions, etc., secretly. This must not be encouraged; indeed it should be discouraged, but a certain latitude in exceptional circumstances might be permitted.

There is one other small matter which seems to me rather ridiculous. It was right and proper, if I may say so, for you to court imprisonment by giving previous intimation of your intention to do so to the authorities. But it seems to me to be perfectly absurd for others, and even Congress volunteers, to send such notices or communications to the authorities. Any person desiring to offer civil resistance should openly carry on activities which further our cause and thus court arrest. He must not forget or ignore these activities and merely ask to be arrested.

This letter has become long enough. I do not mention here the many other matters which I had the privilege of discussing with you.

Yours affectionately,

JAWAHAR

MAHATMA GANDHI

POONA

Bombay Secret Abstra cts, Home Depart ment, Specia l Branch , File No. 800(40) (11)-C; also *Mahatm a,* Vol. III, pp. 305-8

1. A CASE FOR FASTING [1]

One who describes himself as a Harjian worker writes a long letter of which I give the following substance:

With the Chairman of the local Harijan Seva Sangh and a sister I went the other day to a village. We were in a bullock-cart. On the way the Chairman and the sister were engaged in conver-sation exch-anging jokes. The sister seemed to be fatigued and lay in the Chair-man's lap. This familiarity somewhat startled me. On returning we were to take the train to the city from which we had started. We had to wait for a few hours at the station. The Chairman and the sister occu-pied a bench. I sat on the platform ground. It was a moonlight night. I had a mind to test them, for I thought that there was some-thing wrong with them. I, therefore, pretended that I would sleep and told the Chairman: 'We have yet to wait for some time. If you don't mind I would sleep for a while. I am tired. Will you wake me up when the train arrives?' Hearing this, the Chairman seemed to be delighted over my proposal and he readily permitted me to sleep. I lay down and pretended that I was in deep sleep. In order to make sure that I was asleep he called out. Not having any response from me he felt free to take what liberties he liked with the sister. They quietly went into a cluster of trees near by. After some time they returned and when the time for the train drew near, he woke me up. I did not like this indecency between the Chairman and the sister. I recalled your 21 days' fast and the rea-sons which you had given for it. I took some of the co-workers into confidence. They tackled the Chairman, but he put on a bold front and not only denied the charge of indecency but charged me with jealousy and designs upon the Chairmanship of the local organi-zation. What am I to do in the circumstance ?

I have omitted unnecessary details from the letter. let not the reader try to guess the names of the actors and the scene of the tra-gedy. Idle curiosity should be avoided. I am drawing public atten-tion to my correspondent's letter to serve as a warning to all Harijan workers. Let us, therefore, examine it.

In the first instance, the correspondent did wrong in wishing to test his companions and exposing them to temptation. It is always a bad business to become detectives over co-workers; and if, without

[1] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 8-10-1933.

wishing it, we discover any moral or other lapses on their part, our business should be not to gossip about them, but immediately to draw, in a gentle manner, the companions' attention to them. Had my correspondent, when he first scented danger, put the Chairman on his guard, he would have saved him from the lapse, assuming, of course, that the correspondent has given a true version of the tragedy. But, instead of taking the straight course, he adopted the crooked course of testing the couple. We are all fallible human beings ever exposed to temptations. Fortunately for us, 'there's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip'. Very few are saved from succumbing to temptations, if there is no external interruption. There is no certainty that the correspondent himself, exposed to the same temptation, might not have fallen as the Chairman is said by him to have fallen. Indeed, had he been a little thoughtful, a little considerate towards his companions, he could have prevented their complete fall, by giving up the pretence of sleeping and gently pulling them up. I know cases in which such warnings have proved the saving of people. Thus, it seems to me that this Harijan worker signally failed in his duty towards his friends and fellow-workers. He has, however, asked the question, what he could do. I do not propose to answer the question from his standpoint. Evidently he is anxious to know, not how the parties can be brought to repentance, but how they can be exposed, and the charges against him disproved. It is none of his business to expose his companions, as it was none of his business to tempt them to fall but his business now is undoubtedly to give a private notice to the chairman that he would have to undertake a fast till the Chairman confesses his guilt, or if that is beyond his capacity, to undertake a fairly prolonged fast, so as to bring home the guilt to the parties. Such a fast cannot be taken publicly. It is highly likely that the Chairman and the sister will realize the grievousness of their guilt, but it is not at all unlikely that they might harden their hearts and ignore the fast. That ought not to be a matter of any concern for my correspondent. He will have done his penance for having made himself a detective over his friend and it will be some relief to him from the oppression of the charge brought against him of jealousy and ambition to become the Chairman of the local Seva Sangh. It is hardly necessary to emphasize the obvious truth that the fast, if it is at all taken, should be taken only if the Harijan worker believes in its necessity and efficacy and if he can take it with a clean heart.

It may be that the parties charged by my correspondent have

not erred. Let us hope that they have not. But I know that such errors have occurred before now. Let the incident described here serve as a warning to all workers. It furnishes, in my opinion, a clear case for fasting. Harijan service is no sinecure; it is a movement for bringing about a revolutionary change in the mentality of millions of human beings. It is like walking on the edge of a sword and, therefore, requires the greatest vigilance over self on the part of the workers.

Harijan, 27-10-1933

2. PREFACE TO "GITAPRAVESHIKA" [1]

WARDHA,

October 8, 1933

This selection[2] of *shlokas* for the *Gitapraveshika* was made last year (1932) in Yeravda Mandir. My third son Ramdas was in the same jail. The authorities permitted me to meet or write to him occasionally. Ramadas used to read the *Gita* but could not understand it fully. Ramdas does not lack *bhaktibhava*[3]; he has the *shraddha*[4] too. I selected simple and devotional verses from the *Gita* and sent them over to him so as to help him. Ramdas liked the collection. I further encouraged him by calling the selection "Ramagita"[5].

Baba Raghavdas[6] happened to see the collection when it was with Kakasaheb; he went through it and felt it would prove useful to Harijan workers. With that in view he asked for my permission to haveit published. Being no pundit myself I could not decide if the collection was worthy of publication. Sjt. Vinoba, Kakasaheb and Balakrishna[7] of the Ashram were all here. All the three are devoted students of the *Gita.* I told the Baba that I had no objection to the collection being published provided the three Ashram inmates

[1] The original in Hindi, published with the text by the Calcutta Shuddha Khadi Bhandar, is not available.

[2] In the following order : VI. 5, 6, 14, 29 to 32 and 47; VII. 7 and 10; VIII. 14; IX. 22, 26, 27, 29 to 31, and 34; X. 8 to 10; XI. 53 to 55; XII. 15; XIII. 27; XVIII. 46, 61, 62, 66, 78; XI. 15, 16, 18 to 20, 38 to 40, 43 and 44

[3] Attitude of devotion

[4] Faith

[5] *Vide* "Letter to Ramdas Gandhi", 7-11-1932

[6] A *kisan* leader of U.P.

[7] Vinoba Bhave's younger brother

approved of it. All the three had consultation among themselves and advised me, with a view to increasing its utility, to omit three of the verses and to add four new ones. The collection thus revised is now presented to men and women workers as well as to other lovers of the *Gita.* I hope—and it is also my intention—that the collection will be read as an introduction and nothing more and that a study of the *Gita* as a whole will be undertaken only after it had been fairly digested. All the same it should be remembered that merely memorizing or knowing the meaning of the *Praveshika* or [even] the whole of the *Gita* is not going to help realize the *atman.* The *Gita* is to be put into practice. When one has knowledge of its techincal phraseology and has taken to heart its central idea of non-attachment, it becomes easier to understand the *Gita.*

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 9-9-1934

3. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

Unrevised *October 8, 1933*

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

I have your letter about the amounts of Harijan fund received by me. I have the account from Mathuradas. I am simply waiting for Chimanlal who is expected to reach here shortly. As soon as he comes I shall attend to the matter.

I have also your letter about the tour. Your second letter has crossed mine. I am quite clear in my mind that the whole of the Central Provinces should be finished at once. I do not mind the cold weather of the Punjab. Therefore it does not matter where I am during the cold weather. Nor do I mind the hot weather. What you have to guard against is the rainy season. Therefore, June and July should be given to those provinces where the rains do not set in early.

I was considerably relieved as you must have been to find Bakhale withdrawing from the Municipal contest. We will now discuss with Mr. Kodanda Rao the principle underlying the advice that you and I tendered. I have told him that I would welcome the discussion.

BAPU

SJT. AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR
GENERAL SECRETARY, S. U. S.
BIRLA MILLS, DELHI

From a photostat : G. N. 1125

4. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

October 8, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter[1].

The difficulty you raise is there and it was in anticipation of it that I suggested the formation of a trust board. My idea is that the property should be held by these trustees permanently, under very defined conditions, with the right even to sell. You and Thakkar Bapa should be permanent members, irrespective of what happens to the popular organization. This proposal disposes of the question from which has arisen the larger one that I am not prepared to discuss in this letter for want of time. Meanwhile I would ask you to study the constitution of the All-India Spinners' Association. We may postpone the discussion till we meet, and seeing that I am here up to the 7th of Novemeber, it might be possible for you to come, even if it be for that one question.

You have referred to the proposed hostel in Delhi. In view of our possessing the Ashram ground and buildings, do you think there is any urgency for the Delhi proposal? Should we not wait and see how the Sabarmati plan progresses before venturing upon another big scheme? I am inclined to think that we ought to concentrate our attention upon making the Sabarmati scheme a thorough success and it will tax the energy of many of us to make it so.

I hope you are keeping well. What about the nose? Weather in Delhi ought to be very fine at this time of the year.

BAPU

C.W. 7938 and 7939. Courtesy : G. D. Birla. Also *In the Shadow of the Mahatma*, pp. 126-7

[1] Dated october 5, which, *inter alia*, read : So far we have no property. But by the acceptance of your offer we will shortly be in possession of a valuable peroperty. The question will thus immediately arise as to who will be the owner of this property. Will it be the Harijan Mandal ? If so, then the Harijan Mandal would for all practical purposes mean the persons by whose sufferance it exists and there is no such thing as sufferance in our socitey so far. Therefore, we have to decide what sort of constitution we are to have in future.

5. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

October 8, 1933

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Gopi is doing quite well. She is cheerful. I have written to Gajanan.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original : C. W. 7939. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

6. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, WARDHA[1]

October 8, 1933

Till yesterday I had no idea that I would have to face a large assembly like this, nor did I imagine that I would have to make a speech. I cannot speak very loudly. Doctor friends have advised me not to try it. That is why I have jotted down a few points. You are aware that till the 3rd of August next year I wish to engage myself mainly in Harijan work. I have tried to study Hinduism since my youth and have endeavoured to shape my conduct according to what I was taught in my childhood. I have studied the Hindu scriptures to the best fo my ability. I have studied the sacred books of other religions also with reverence. Right from my childhood I have believed that untouchability as we know it today has no place in Hinduism and that it is a great evil which has somehow entered it. Study and experience have confirmed me in this view. I am convinced that Hinduism will perish if we do not get rid of this evil of untouchability.

Removal of untouchability does not mean merely that we should touch the people whom we regard as untouchables. Of course we should touch them, whenever necessary, with love. But removal of untouchability means much more than that. It means that we should give up the feeling of high and low. In a sense the feeling of high and low is found prevailing in all countries. But is cannot be said that this

[1] Owing to his weak state of health Gandhiji himself did not speak. The speech, which was in Hindi, was read out at the meeting. No Hindi report being available, this has been translated from Chandrashankar Shukla's weekly letter.

feeling is part of any religion. It is asserted that it is part of Hindusm; but if we examine objectively the fundamental principles of Hinduism, we can see that it too does not sanction such a feeling. It is true, of course, that our daily conduct is strongly influenced by this notion, and we have been taught to believe that it is a special feature of Hinduism. One of the principles of Hinduism is that we should not do to others what we would not like to be done to ourselves. In another verse having the same meaning, it is stated that we should regard all living creatures as we regard ourselves. How the feeling of high and low crept into such a religion is beyond my understanding.

In other words, it is the duty of every Hindu to fulfil completely the pledge that the leaders had taken on behalf of the Hindu community on 25th[1] September last year at a meeting in Bombay presided over by Malaviyaji Maharaj. I hope that all of you who have come here will keep that pledge. It was categorically stated in that Resolution that the Harijans have the same right as the other Hindus to the use of public temples, public wells and public schools. When vast numbers of caste Hindus undergo change of heart and we fully appreciate and follow the dharma of compassion, not only will there be unity between them and Harijans but we shall also live in amity with followers of other faiths and the present antagonisms will completely disappear. I pray to God that He grant us enough strength to purify ourselves thus and that the evil of untouchability that has crept into Hinduism be completely abolished.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 15-10-1933

[1] The source has "24th". The resolution drafted by Gandhiji and agreed upon by other leaders at Poona on Spetember 24, 1932, was formally adopted at Bombay the following day. *Vide*, "Resolution at the Hindu Leaders' Conference, Bombay", 25-9-1932

7. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

[Before *October 9, 1933*][1]

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter only today. You will know from the papers that my work is increasing. The blood-pressure has come down. It remains 160-100. And the weight has gone up to 103 pounds.

Raja is in Coimbatore. He keeps fairly good health. Lakshmi left on Saturday. Krishnadas[2] has accompanied her. While in Madras, he will inspect the khadi work there. Lakshmi will pay a visit to Coimbatore. Devdas writes to me regularly. He seems to be doing well. He does some reading.

Krishna (Nehru) will be married to Gunottam Hutheesing on the 20th in Allahabad. I am not attending the wedding. They don't expect me to do so, either. I have already written a letter giving my blessings. You also should write.

Kishorelal will come here in two or three days.

Jamnalalji is of the opinion that Anandi should be betrothed. I also feel that that should be done . . . .[3] She says, however, that she does not wish to get married just now. But I think she will marry if I advise her to do so. Let me have your views. If you can, see Lakshmidas and ask him his views. I am writing to him.

. . [4]I have already written to Mani. Perhaps she may not come even with Mridu[5].

Jamnalal is going to Bombay today for two or three days for private work.

My tour will probably commence on November 8. I shall probably be accompanied by Thakkar Bapa, Chandrashankar, Mira, Nayar, and Ramnarayan Choudhri.

Blessings to you and Chandubhai from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 33-4

[1] The date has been inferred from the reference to Krishna Nehru's marriage and Jamnalal's visit to Bombay; *vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi",18-9-1932

[2] Chhaganlal Gandhi's son

[3] Ommissions as in the source

[4] *ibid*

[5] Mridula Sarabhai

8. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
October 1, 1933

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
ANAND BHAWAN, ALLAHABAD

THANK GOD. HOPE MOTHER WILL BE WELL ENOUGH ATTEND FORTHCOMING WEDDING IN GOOD HEALTH.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

9. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
October 9, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I had your wire to which I sent a reply in the afternoon. I do hope Mother will be strong enough to attend to the wedding.

I got today the accompanying from Saraladevi[1]. I have told her Indu[2] is left free to do as she chooses and that she is not likely to entertain any marrigae proposal as she is still studying. I have told her too that I am forwarding the letter to you. If Indu was at all prepared to consider a marriage proposal, I do regard Dipak[3] to be a good match.

Hardikar[4] and Kamala Chattopadhyay came in today. Hardikar is suffering from fistula and would need an operation. I shall know more tomorrow. Jamnalalji has gone to Bombay for helping a friend who is in financial trouble. He will be back in four days.

My tour commences on 8th November, all being otherwise well. I am having fair rest.

Kamala never writes nowadays.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Saraladevi Chowdhrani
[2] Indira Nehru, addressee's daughter
[3] Son of saraladevi Chowdharani
[4] N. S. Hardikar, founder and Secretary-General of the Hindustani Seva Dal

10. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

October 9, 1933

CHI. MARY,

I had full report yeaterday of your misbehaviour. The doctors say you have a spleen. It points to a diet of milk and fruit and greens. You are doomed to a course of quinine pills. I trust you will be all right again in a day or two.

The Swami's name is Shri Kuvalayanand, Santa Cruz, Bombay.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G. N. 6009. Also. C. W. 3336. Courtesy : F. Mary Barr

11. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

October 10, 1933

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

I have your letter.

Of course, you will take your time and put the affairs of your sister in good order. I am here till the 7th of November. You have, therfore, ample time.

Veena is expecting you in Ahmedabad so as to be able to give you the treatment that you will need.

You will get the full hour for all that you might have to say when you come here. Kakasaheb will be here for some days yet, but may not be when you come.

Yours sincerely

BAPU

SJT. J. C. KUMARAPPA

"MANORAMA"

PALLAMCOTTAH, (TINNEVELLY DIST.)

From the original : G.N. 10101

12. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

October 10, 1933

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

I also had a letter about Rohtak, and had read about the matter in the papers too. Lala Sham Lal, thought he is in L$\frac{1}{2}$ahore, has assured me that he will look into the matter on behalf of Rohtak, expecially as he is minting money in Lahore.

We have no choice but to put up with Mr. Young's antics. After all, the axe can strike at the tree only if a wooden handle helps it.

You seem to have upset Mathuradas. I read a copy of his letter to you. I wonder what you could have written. Whatever that was, I know that Mathuradas is not at fault in the least. He is always very careful about things. But he easily gets angry. Nobody should get angry with old men like us who have grown up as slaves, even if they blurt out anything thoughtless. But can we expect young people to bear with old men ? Please, therefore, apply some balm. I shall of course write to Mathuradas.[1] A copy of the letter[2] to Dr. Bidhan is enclosed. I have sent a copy of it to Devi Babu and also written to him in Hindi.

I enclose the letter received frm Assam, and also a copy of my reply.[3]

I see that I shall be confined here till November 7 at any rate. In a way I like that, because slowly I am disposing of the work which has accumulated and can give time to the visitors. Probably I shall also regain more strength during the time. Jamnalalji had unexpectedly to go to Bombay to help a friend, and so he might not have been able to send you a draft of the programme here.

He will return within four days. If you leave out the C.P.[4] and draw up another programme as I have suggested, you will be ready with it sooner. The entire C.P. must be covered at one time. Our party will include (1) you, (2) I, (3) Mirabehn, (4) Chandrashankar, (5) Ramnarayan, (6) Nayar and anybody else whom you might bring with

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", 11-10-1933

[2] These are not available.

[3] *Ibid*

[4] Central Provinces

you.

Sastri wants to shift *Harijan* to Madras. His argument seems convincing. He is rusting in Poona. It is, therefore, likely to be shifted in about 15 days.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 1126

13. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[1]

WARDHA,
October 10, 1933

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have received your letters.

I can see that you do not want me to write anything to Gokhale right now. I have seen Gokhale's letter in the *Chronicle* today.

Your letter to Thakkar Bapa is full of anger. You seem to have lost sight of one rule. You ought not to read in letters what isscored off. And if you happen to read it, you ought not to read any meaning in it. A person should be given a chance to modify his views. It is sheer ignorance to attribute wickedness even to the most wicked thought once it has been modified. The world would not go on in peace even for a minute if we started throwing our views at one another. I think you have been unnecessarily angry. Thakkar Bapa deserves to be complimented on his alertness. Moreover, his age and his dedicated service of so many years give him a right to say a great deal. When he says something, there is no sting behind it. If there is anybody's mistake in this, one might say it is on my part. I have written at this length because I would not like even a trace of anger in you.[2]

Now for the Ashram. I think you are mistaken in the matter. If the Government does not take possession and we allow the land to remain untended it means we are harbouring a feeling of revenge. It would be an unnatural situation. There was nothing to prevent the Government from taking possession of the land and letting it lie fallow. But on what ground can we allow the land to remain fallow if the government does not take it over? In that case, why should we not burn down our movable property? According to what you are saying,

[1] Extracts from this letter appear in "Letter to Mathurdas Trikumji", 11-10-1933

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar", 10-10-1933

those who burnt their crops acted wisely. I am convinced that the Satyagraha Ashram will fulfil its purpose if the land is donated to Harijans. This is of greater moment than if the land was to remain with the Government. Even if it should go to the Government, we would always want to claim it back in the end. But in this case, the Ashram inmates gave it up for good and placed themselves in the hands of God. If we examine the problem from this point of view, it would be clear that the path adopted alone does credit to a satyagrahi. There has been no place here for greed for money. It was merely a matter of what was right, that is, of non-violence. The Government may well want to turn this land into a wilderness, but we should not let that happen if we can help it. If you are not convinced by these two arguments, write to me again. It should not be difficult to convince you in this matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

14. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL PAREKH[1]

[Before *October 11, 1933*]

I am grieved to learn that you have not succeeded in bringing about conciliation. I am more grieved that the conciliation was obstructed by preliminary difficulties. I cannot decide, without hearing both the sides, what information could be asked and what information the mill-owners could not supply.

It is not necessary to refer such a question to arbitration. Mr. Gulzarilal Nanda, Secretary of the Labour Association, saw me and [I] told him that if I am asked to give my decision, I must have the arguments of both the sides before me. This can be done by written statements.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-10-1933

[1] President, Ahmedabad Mill-owners' Association. He had informed Gandhiji about his resignation from the Conciliation Board.

15. LETTER TO PADMA

WARDHA,
October 11, 1933

CHI. PADMA,

I got your letter. I hope all of you are all right now. Give me a description of the accomodation. My weight has now gone up to 103 pounds. My diet includes milk, fruit and vegetables such as gourd, snake gourd, tomatoes, etc.

After a few days Anandi, Babu and Nirmala will leave for Ahmedabad. At present there are about 40 girls here. The girls under 12 willingly got their hair cut yesterday. I have been trying to persuade the rest.

You cannot be blamed for the doctor having given you an injection of brandy. You did not drink the thing for pleasure. Moreover, an injection of brandy is not as objectionable as a vaccine. I don't know any remedy for your complaint of the ear-drum. You should show it to a doctor, or a vaid who knows the remedy that can help you.

My tour will commence on November 8. Till then I shall remain here. I hope Sheela is enjoying her time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6145. Also C.W. 3500. Courtesy : Prabhudas Gandhi

16. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

October 11, 1933

And now regarding the Ashram. You are completely on the wrong track in this matter. To let the buildings and the land fall into ruins if the Government does not take possession of them would be vindictive and unnatural. If the Government had taken over the Ashram and then let it fall into ruin, we would have had nothing to say against it. But on what principle can we let the land be ruined if the Government does not take over? If we do that, why should we also not

burn the movable property? According to the principle which you apply, those who burnt their crops acted wisely. I am convinced that by offering the Ashram land to the cause of Harijans, we shall have completely fulfilled the aim for which the Ashram existed. Its aim will have been fulfilled better in this manner than by its remaining in the possession of the Government. In handing over the Ashram to the Government, we secretly hoped that one day we would get back its possesion. But by taking the step that we have taken, the inmates of the Ashram have given up their claim permanently and trusted their future wholly to God. From whatever point of view we look at the matter, we find that the course we have adopted is the only right one for satyagrahis. The desire to save property has been no motive at all in this transaction. It was only a question of what was right and consistent with ahimsa. The Government may let the whole country be ruined, but we should not if we can help. If this does not satisfy you, you may ask me again. It shouldn't be difficult to satisfy your doubts in this matter.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p.137

17. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

October 11, 1933

You seem to have forgotten one rule, namely, that one should never read what has been scored out by the writer of a letter. If one reads it by chance, one should not pay any attention to it. A person must be permitted to revise his ideas. It is lack of understanding to think ill of a person for even the most wicked thought, after he has corrected himself. If all of us revealed all our thoughts to one another, people wouldn't be happy even for a minute. I think you unnecessarily got angry.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 138

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar",10-10-1933

18. LETTER TO H. K. HALES

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
October 12, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

You will pardon me for being a little late in acknowledging your letter of 6th inst. The fact is that my capacity for dealing with the increasing correspondence is limited.

With reference to the suggestion made by you, evidently you do not recognize my limitations. In the first instance, I am not at all sure whether the Government would favour the idea of my visiting Midnapore and if it did, whether it would give me a free hand to work in the manner I might think best. Above all, you know the view that I have expressed.[1] Even a confirmed peace-maker like me can have no chance whatsoever if I have to address only one party of violence. I regard both the Government and the terrorists as representing violence; that of the terrorists is unorganized, insane and wholly ineffective from my standpoint, and that of the Government is orga-nized, deliberate and blasting though also wholly ineffective again from my standpoint. I should have short shrift from the terrorists if I could have no influence with the superior party of violence. Even so, do not for one moment believe that because I do not go to Midnapore I exert no influence over the terrorists. It may be a negative kind. I know what handicap I am working under. But I have boundless confidence in my creed of non-violence and in the end, not so distant as many people may imagine, non-violence will visibly succeed.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. K. HALES, ESQ., M. P.
53 GALSTAUN BLDGS
RUSSEL STREET, CALCUTTA

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide*, "Statement to the Press"

19. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
October 12, 1933

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

Herewith letters with copies of the correspondence with the authorities from Sahu and a copy of my reply to him. It might be as well for you to address a formal letter to the Collector or to the Home Member, Bihar and Orissa, just setting forth the difficulties unnecessarily created in the way of the prosecution of the movement.

I have your wire about N. Three days ago, just after the prayer meeting, she suddenly disappeared. Of late, her behaviour had been very strange. Her brain has, undoubtedly, softened. I have sent you a telegram in reply which, I hope, you have received. You need not waste any time over her and if she presses herself on your attention she may be reported to the police, though I hardly think that she will do that. Dr. Sharma has telegraphed me and I have advised him not to take any notice of her at all.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 1127

20. LETTER TO MAHENDA V. DESAI

WARDHA,
October 12, 1933

CHI. MANU,

I got your letter written with red and green inks. The whiskers with which you have tried to beautify the letters don't look well. You can do that after you have learnt drawing. Just now it would be better to write legible, clean and simple letters.

Children should have plenty of things to write about.

My blessings to you all for the New Year[1]. May you live long, be great scholars and be very good men.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 3160. Courtesy : Valji G. Desai

[1]*Kartak Sud* 1, New Year day, according to the Vikram Era, which fell on October 20, 1933

21. LETTER TO JAISHREE RAIJI

October 12, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

You are not a good business woman. To expect me to commit myself to promise specific help is to expect to produce butter by churning sand. I don't have even a pie of my own. If, however, I know any specific need of yours which you cannot meet in any other way, and if by chance I come across a likely victim, I may beg some help from him. The fact is that at present my sole interest is in Harijan work.

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Bapujini Shital Chhayaman, p. 107

22. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

October 13, 1933

CHI. MARY,

I am glad you have been free from fever. If it is not inconvenient, you should come at 4 p.m. and I will see you in your car—you won't come up.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 6010. Also C.W. 3335. Courtesy : F. Mary Barr

23. NOTES

MANY THANKS

From friends all over India and from the West I have had many telegrams of the birthday greetings. I am deeply thankful to them for these. They will excuse me for my inability to send personal acknowledgements. I would have these friends to pray that God may make me worthy of their greetings. I know that the senders expect that I should be rendering some service to humanity. The wish is always persent. God alone knows how far I succeed in the effort.

FORTHCOMING TOUR

If all goes well, my forthcoming tour for the Harijan cause should commence as from 8th November. I am said to be making substantial progress and Dr. Khare, who is just now in charge, is of opinion that I could safely commence the tour from the date mentioned. But this does not mean that I can cope with crowded programmes as I used to before. It is proposed to avoid travelling for two consecutive days, preferably Sundays and Mondays, in the week, to enable me to deal with *Harijan* editing and correspondence. As usual I shall make collections wherever I am taken. I should like to meet sanatanists at all places. I have no doubt that much opposition to the movement is due to misunderstanding. Naturally I must meet Harijans everywhere and there must be on the programme visits to Harijan quarters. Late hours should be avoided. Those places that feel tempted, in spite of the handicaps suggested here, to send invitations should send them to Thakkar Bapa as early as possible, so as to avoid alterations in the programme and disappointment. All spectacular demonstrations, not required for the cause itself, should be avoided. Every pice should be economized. If addresses are to be presented at all, they should contain a brief description of the work done and statistics regarding Harijans, their occupations and economic condition, instead of a recital of my many excellences, which may be expected to take care of themselves, if there are any.

WILL OTHER UNIVERSITIES FOLLOW?

Sjt. N. K. Behere, a member of the Nagpur University and C.P. High School Board, writes to say that he moved a resolution that "students belonging to the Depressed Classes and the aboriginal tribes

should not be charged examination fees", that he is glad to say that it was passed, with the addition of the clause—"up to the year 1940"—by the University and with a time-limit of five years by the High School Board, and that, therefore, no examination fees will be charged against these students from the Matriculation to the M.A. or L.L.B. examinations for these periods, as far as the Central Provinces are concerned.

I congratulate the Nagpur University, the High School Board and the mover on the passing of the resolution. The addition of the time-limit does not detract anything from the resolution. It is a token of the optimism of the members of the respective bodies. They evidently think that in five to seven years the economic status of the classes exempted will have so improved that they will not need the exemption any longer. May that optimism be justified ! Will the other Indian Univversities and Boards copy the excellent example set by those of the Central provinces ?

Harijan, 14-10-1933

24. SLAVERY V. UNTOUCHABILITY

Deenabandhu Andrews writes :[1]

> A century ago a far more terrible form of 'man's inhumanity to man' that 'untouchability' was abolished in the West. Slavery made men and women into chattels, to be bought and sold and possessed by their owners. . . . Negroes from Africa were transported on ships like cattle and set to work in the sugar plantations just like beasts of burden . . . . The results of this slave traffic were to create a colour problem in America and elsewhere which has never yet been solved. . . .
>
> It has been doubted whether any great moral reform has ever been carried through from purely humanitarian motives. The nearest to reach the standard was the abolition of slavery. . . . Great Britain paid £ 20,000,000 out of its own revenue in order to get rid of the evil. Therefore, it is not right to say that in politics philanthropy never gains its own victory. In the year 1833, philanthropy won.
>
> What then will happen in 1933 ? . . . Surely if India could abolish altogether, within the present year, 'untouchability', . . . that would be the greatest philanthropic act of all.

Would that Deenabandhu's hope were fulfilled. Unless a miracle happens, the wholesale conversion of millions will not take place

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

during the remaining months of this year and, may be, for many more years to come.

But what is the meaning of the abolition of untouchability and what was the meaning of the abolition of slavery in 1833 ? The abolition of slavery was a legislative act. The slavery of the heart was not abolished then and even the lapse of a century has hardly abolished it altogether. This is written, not to belittle the great act of 1833, but to clear our minds and to understand the limitations of the effort of 1833.

Now, in the sense in which slavery was abolished in 1833, untouchability was abolished in 1932 at that representative meeting of Hindus assembled in Bombay in September 1932,[1] under the Chairmanship of Pandit Malaviyaji. It was no bogus affair. It was signalized by the immediate establishment of the All-India Anti-untouchability Board. There has been an incessant campaign against untouchability going on ever since, throughout the length and breadth of the land as the pages of *Harijan* can amply prove. One life is being definitely held as hostage for the due fulfilment of the solemn pledge of the Hindus.

Let no one underrate the effort of 1932 by saying that, whereas the abolition of 1833 was an act of a legislature, that of 1932 was an act of a voluntary association and, therefore, lacking sanction. In the nature of things the act of 1932 could not well be otherwise. Slavery was a matter of contract enforceable at law, Untouchability as a religious institution is, as Deenabandhu Andrews rightly says, "moral slavery". This could not be abolished by law. The only way in which it could be formally abolished was adopted in Bombay. Nor, as I have already shown, does the act lack sanction. The sanction, it is true, is moral. But moral sanctions are in the end far more potent than legal sanctions. Let the reader note that the Bills sought to be passed by the Central Legislature are not intended to be acts of abolition at all. One is meant to regulate temple-entry by Harijans and the other to withdraw legal recognition of untouchability. Neither affects the religious recognition and social practice. That is the function of the religious and social reformer. The Bills are very much needed to expedite reform; they cannot abolish untouchability. Untouchability is not a matter of contract. 'Untouchables' cannot be bought or sold.

Thus, I hope, it is clear that the abolition of untouchability analogous to that of slavery in 1833 definitely took place on 24th

[1] *Vide* "Resolution at the Hindu Leaders Conference, Bombay", 25-9-1932

September 1932. Its anniversary was duly celebrated on the 24th day of last September. When the whole mass of Hindus will respond to the Resolution of Bombay will largely depend upon the earnestness of those who passed it and those who are now seeking to enforce it. But that is a process of which it will not be possible to say it took place on a particular day.

And I know that Deenabandhu is not looking forward to any such definite day when the mass manifestation will be a single act for mankind to see. What he wants, what I want and what every reformer is striving after is such a manifestation of the combined energy of Hindus as would show unmistakably to any passerby that Hinduism has shed the distinction between high and low and that there is in it neither high caste nor low caste nor outcaste, whether by birth or in fact. A sinner is equal to the saint in the eye of God. Both will have equal justice, and both an equal opportunity either to go forward or to go backward. Both are His children, His creation. A saint who considers himself superior to a sinner forfeits his sainthood and becomes worse than the sinner who, unlike the proud saint, knows not what he is doing.

The mission of anti-untouchability organizations is perhaps the noblest of any that can be conceived. Let us, therefore, pray with Deenabandhu Andrews that they may be blessed with enough spiritual power to melt the age-long superstition that has corrupted Hindu society and that threatens to destroy Hinduism, if it does not react to the spirit of the times.

Harijan, 14-10-1933

25. WHAT ONE MAN CAN DO

A would-be Harijan Sevak writes to the following effect:[1]

I have little doubt that my correspondent missed a golden opportunity of serving both the poor sweeper and the 'orthodox' family. He should have gently remonstrated with the mother of the 'polluted' girl and he would have drawn her wrath towards himself, even if he had not shamed her into repentance. The sweeper would have felt the warmth of a friend in her need. The mother and the other relatives of the girl would at least have been set athinking. He would probably have been drawn into an argument. Perhaps the whole village might have interested itself in the matter and if he had risen to the occasion, he would have laid a solid foundation for substantial service in the future. Or he might have had a broken head. That, too, would have been a good passport for further service. It is clear to me that on such occasions, every lover of humanity should consider it his sacred duty to protect the helpless by tactful and gentle, yet courageous, intervention.

Now for the general question. Had we not lost self-confidence, the question, what an insignificant man can do, would never have arisen. No man is too insignificant for rendering personal service to those who may be in distress. The art does not need previous training. The ability to give effective help resides in every human being who has the will and the necessary courage. Thus my correspondent could certainly go to the Harijan quarters of his village and befriend them in a variety of ways. He could teach their children during his stay in the village. He need not fear the interruption due to his absence. For teaching does not mean only a knowledge of the three R's. It means many other things for Harijan humanity. lessons in manners and sanitation are the indispensable preliminaries to the initiation into the three R's. The correspondent could take Harijan children for sight seeing, teach them innocent and even instructive games, could sweep and otherwise keep Harijan quarters clean, could find out cases of

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. It described how a Harijan woman, who had touched a caste-Hindu girl, was subjected to filthy abuse by caste Hindus. He also wanted to know how he could be useful in such a village where superstition reigned supreme and Harijans were treated like beasts.

illness among the Harijans and procure medical aid. He could take careful notes of their economic, social and other wants and transmit them to the Harijan Seva Sangh of his district or province, as the case might be, and thus become an effective link between the Harijans and the Seva Sangh. I have by no means exhausted the list of possibilities of individual effort. Mine is a mere illustrative list. A resourceful sevak can multiply the possibilities endlessly. "Where there's the will, there's the way."

Harijan, 14-10-1933

26. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
October 14, 1933

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your telegram to which I have sent you a reply as follows :

Your wire. Hope Gurudev will be soon restored. My love. Mohan.

Hales wrote to me suggesting that I should at one proceed to Midnapore and I understand that he has published the letter even without waiting for my reply. Here is a copy of my reply[1] to him for your information.

You know that I am taking all the rest that the doctors have advised and not moving out till the 7th of November. My weight has steadily gone forward and blood-pressure has steadily decreased.

I have told the C.U. Press[2] I have no objection to their publishing the passage on ahimsa.

Love.

MOHAN

Encl. 2

REV. C. F. ANDREWS
SANTINIKETAN
(BENGAL)

From a photostat : G. N. 3797

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H. K. Hales",12-10-1933

[2] Presumably, Cambridge University Press

27. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

Saturday, October 14, 1933

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

You know the story of the person who intended to write [“went to] Ajmer” but wrote to the effect “died today”.[1] And those who read his letter must have been as stupid as he was. If such a thing were suspected it would not have been sent away unrevised. I intended to write “Calcutta” and not “Delhi”.[2] I don’t even know that anything has been given to Delhi. N.’s story is a painful one. If the president suggests that the tour should commence on November 15 but I don’t agree, should even that be a ground for complaint ?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 1128

28. MESSAGE ON DAYANANDA SEMI-CENTENARY[3]

October 14, 1933

Rishi Dayananda[4] was one of the greatest reformers in Hinduism. He stimulated Vedic studies, and fearlessly opposed untouchability among other evils.

The Hindu, 15-10-1933

29. TALK WITH A KHADI WORKER [5]

[Before *October 15, 1933*]

We require machinery on a large scale for the industries running on steam power, etc. We do not have such machinery at present; we

[1] Writing *Ajmer gaya* (went to Ajmer), he happened to drop a diacritical mark making it read *aj mar gaya* (died today).

[2] *Vide* “A Note”, 30-9-1933

[3] The message was sent to *Tej*, an Urdu daily published from Delhi.

[4] Dayananda Saraswati, founder of Arya Samaj.

[5] This appeared in chandrashankar Shukla’s weekly letter under the title “ Why the Spinning-wheel Only ?”.

can get it from other countries only on the terms acceptable to them. We would also require experts to run such machines. We do not have enough of them either. At present, therefore, we shall have to import them from outside. Nor do we have the capital required to meet the needs of a population of 30 crores. Hence, even if it is possible to be self-sufficient through industries run on steam power, etc., it would take a long time. Moreover, if this source of tremendous energy is employed on a large scale in the country, it would lead to a great increase in the present unemployment. It is said that in America every man gets the work of 36 slaves with the help of gigantic machines. This means that with the help of these machines each person does the work of 36 persons. If we estimate that the population of India will be 37 crores when it reaches such a stage, it would mean that 36 crores of them would remain unemployed. In other words, to enable one crore of people in this country to be as rich as Americans, 36 crores would have to commit suicide, or else a Chenghiz Khan or a Ravana should wipe out 36 crores and distribute the country among the remaining one crore. The per capita distribution of land in this country is two or three *bighas* only. This much land is certainly not enough for one's maintenance. Everyone, there-fore, must have some other occupation at home. This is naturally the spinning-wheel. We require very little capital to make it universal. Other requirements would be available in every village. All that is necessary is a change of attitude among the people. They must shake off their lethargy. The solution of the economic problem of Harijans also lies in this. If the machine age comes into vogue, all the Harijans would be included among those 36 crores.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 15-10-1933

30. REPERCUSSIONS OF UNTOUCHABILITY

Some idea of the wide repercussions of untouchability can be had from the following letter[1] of Sjt. Mulchand Parekh.

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had described an incident in which a shepherd was considered responsible for bringing about disease and death to cattle because of his association with Harijans and was threatened with ostracism or worse.

Is it any wonder if the cup of sorrow overflows when to such ignorance and resultant superstitions is added the dross of untouchability? There is only one remedy for it and that is that a Harijan worker should tolerantly look upon all these insults as symptoms of the same disease and proceed to find a solution for it. He should gain access to the shepherd's family, explain things to them with patience and remove their ignorance. If any jealous person has taken advantage of their superstitious nature, he should make a peaceful endeavour to persuade him. These experiences suggest that the workers ought to go to the villages and share the people's lives. Moreover, the frightened shepherd needs to be reassured. He sould be convinced about the futility of a boycott and he should be made to feel secure with our readiness to protect him in every way.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 15-10-1933

31. LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
October 15, 1933

As all the energy that I have been able to regain has been given to the immediate work in hand, I have not been able to write to you. There was nothing new I had to say and I knew that you would not misunderstand any action that I took. I, therefore, did not send my explanation believing that, if anything I did required explanation, you would not hesitate to demand it of me.

I have kept myself informed of your health, or rather want of it, and I realized long ago that it was vain to plead with you that you should take this change or that. In this as in other matters you are a law unto yourself. I do, therefore, satisfy myself with praying that God, who has taken care of you all these long years and who has blessed you with energy of which the youth of India may well be jealous, will continue to take care of you, so long as He needs your services.

I write this letter with reference to your latest statement. My own impression is that the All-India Congress Committee, if it meets, will

by an overwhelming majority pass a resolution endorsing continuance of the civil resistance movement. That being my conviction, I see no reason for convening a meeting for such a confirmation, because the confirmation will not accelerate the pace of civil resistance. It has to take its own natural course. But, if you believe that the All-India Congress Committee will adopt a new programme and give up civil resistance, there is absolutely no reason whatsoever why you should not actively canvass for a requisition on receipt of which Jawaharlal is bound to convene a meeting. And I would venture to submit that if you would promote a requisition you should also in consultation with the requisitionists chalk out a definite policy and programme which you will prosecute unflinchingly. If this is not done and a mere requisition is sent the meeting will simply end in a desultory dis-cussion and ill-thought-out resolutions. Whilst I would gladly attend any such meeting and say my say, I am not keen on attending such a meeting and I would gladly refrain from attending it, if my absence was, from the highest motives, desired by you or any body of responsible members.

PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

MUSSOORIE

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933, Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

32. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
October 15, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I had your letter enclosing a copy of your letter to Krishnamurti of Madura.

Here is a copy of my letter[1] to Hales, in reply to his letter which you must have seen in the Press. And here is also a copy of my letter to Malaviyaji.[2] It speaks for itself.

All my good wishes for the wedding. I shall be with you in spirit on that day.

Love.

BAPU

Encl. 2

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933, Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H. K. Hales"
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

33. LETTER TO SARUPRANI NEHRU

October 15, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

You are always in our thoughts though I may not write to you. We receive news of you from Jawaharlal. I hope you will be well enough on the 20th. I regret my inability to be there on that day but my heart will certainly be there. May God grant you quick recovery.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[From Hindi]

Gandhi-Indira Gandhi Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also G.N. 11406

34. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

October 15, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Here is a letter for Mother.[1] Let us all hope that she will be well enough to take part in the ceremony.

Have you introduced the Roman character for writing Hindi ?

A typed letter[2] is going to you [today][3] with a copy of my letter to Malaviyaji.

Love.

BAPU

From a facsimile : C. W. 10108

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Saruprani Nehru", 15-10-1933

[3] Illegible in the source

35. LETTER TO JANAKDHARI PRASAD

October 15, 1933

DEAR JANAKDHARI BABU,

On going through the arrears of my correspondence, I came upon your letter of 28th August last. But, before I came upon your letter I was often thinking of you, and only the other day I discussed about you with Jamnalalji.

Your children are so young that it is very difficult for any institution to take them without you and your wife. That means you must find something there. The first thing is that you must humble yourself and put yourself on a level with the common labourer and bring up your children to become labourers. But even labourers should have education. That education should be given by you. Your wife should also labour. If you will accommodate yourself to this life, a great load will be off your mind, which itself would soothe your nerves and much of the dyspepsia would also go under the stimulating effect of the new life, that is, if you take it joyously. Unless we who have received a fairly liberal education effect a revolution in our life, we would simply remain parasites that we are—living on the sweat of the famishing peasant. You should discuss this matter with Brijkishore Babu and others.

I would like you to be the pioneer of the new thought and the new movement, and yet it is really not new, for, I gave it currency when I returned to India in 1915, and have been trying to live in accordance with it, however imperfectly I might have done it. You have, therefore, to perfect it.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 54

36. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

October 15, 1933

MY DEAR AGATHA,

It was stupid of me not to acknowledge your letter about Vithalbhai Patel by the ocean mail.[1] I am therefore punishing myself by sending this by air mail. I must say I have not taken kindly to it as yet. It is the luxury of the rich and the necessity created by those who would rule the earth, water and air and their inhabitants. You can't understand how deeply I appreciate letters such as you wrote about V. J. Patel. I had cabled to Bose as soon as I got your timely cable and Bose promptly replied.

I am glad you were in Geneva for that meeting. You will not hesitate to ask for any information of explanation you may need. We here may not always anticipate your requirements.

Here is a copy of my letter[2] to Hales, M.P., about Midnapore. You are likely to have a mutilated version by Reuter. The copy is therefore for your information and use if need be. Hales's letter was handed to the Press without his waiting for my reply. You might have seen it.

Mahadev is in Belgaum all alone save a cart-load of books.[3] Devdas in Multan and Pyarelal in Nasik.

I wonder if you are getting any daily or weekly newspapers from here. If you or anyone has time to read them I could easily send a selection, unless you will make it yourself.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 1471

[1] The addressee had noted down on this letter : "When I was in Geneva in October 1933, I went to see Vithalbhai Patel who was dying in a sanatorium in Gland. Subhas Bose was looking after him, and I wrote an account of this visit to Gandhiji."

[2] *Vide* "Letter to H. K. Hales" 12-10-1933

[3] He was preparing to translate *Anasaktiyoga* into English which was later published under the title *The Gita According to Gandhi; vide* Vol XLI.

37. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

October 15, 1933

MY DEAR BHRRR[1],

You must give me your reasons for disliking and distrusting Kamaladevi. I have to advise and I cannot without your assistance.

Rehana[2] has been quite silent of late.

How is Hamida[3] doing ?

Love to you all from,

BHRRR

From a photostat : S.N. 9587

38. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

WARDHA,
October 15, 1933

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter today. I was getting a little worried. You should certainly stay there as long as you find it necessary. On my part, I have given you complete freedom to come away here whenever you wish. But you should stay where your duty requires you to stay. Do call on Mother. Take care of your health. Write to me from time to time. My weight is 103 pounds at present, and the blood-pressure is 160-100. This should be considered very good. I am continuing the same diet. There has been no change. Anandi and Om[4] help Ba. Anandi, Bachu and Babu will leave after the 20th. Gopi certainly misses you. And as long as you were here I also did not worry about her. She will go to Bombay for Diwali. She will start from here on Tuesday[5]. N. has left without telling anybody. When last we heard from her she was in Delhi. Amalabehn is here. Just now at least she is doing good work.

[1] This was how Gandhiji and the addressee greeted each other.
[2] Addressee's daughter
[3] Addressee's grand-daughter
[4] Uma, younger daughter of Jamnalal Bajaj
[5] October 17

Krishna's marriage will take place in Allahabad on the 20th. Prabhudas's marriage will take place here on the 17th. The bride[1] is a fine girl. She is his own choice. I believe that they will be happy. I had a letter from Lakshmi. Write to Gopi from time to time. Write to Prabhudas also. I know that you need no advice in this matter. Make it a rule to read something daily. Read a little English and a little from the *Ramayana*, and study arithmetic a little. And, above everything else, there is the *Gita*. Surendra has been released. He will come here in a few days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 3434

39 LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHA,
October 15, 1933

CHI. MATHURADAS,

My right hand is now tired. Be it so. Now you have become the father of three children. Traramati will be doing well. Who came for her delivery? If enough care is not taken during and after the delivery, the mother has to suffer a lot. Have you studied this science? It is easy.

Herewith the letter from Harakhchand. Act on it. Continue correspondence with him. He is a man of character.

I understand about Thakkar Bapa. I have written to him that it would have been better if he had not offered his criticism. Be that as it may you were not in the least at fault. Still, a public worker like you should show tolerance.

For the present, I do not feel like writing anything to Gokhale. There is a letter from aunt[2] about K. Chattopadhyaya[3]. She saw you and somebody else. Write to me about it.

I have no doubt that in course of time you will understand everything about the Ashram.

[1] Amba Devi, daughter of Lala Lalchand of Bijnor
[2] Sarojini Naidu
[3] Kamaladevi, wife of Harindranath Chattopadhyaya

Prabhudas will be married on 17th. The girl[1] is from the North. She is his own discovery. Krishna[2] will be married on the 20th.

you must be meeting Premlilabehn.

How are you yourself?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal papers. Nehru memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

40. LETTER TO PANNALAL JHAVERI

WARDHA,
October 15, 1933

CHI. PANNALAL,

Chimanlal says that you have given up civil disobedience and now wish to start a dairy. If your faith in civil disobedience is shaken, you can certainly do something else. But I certainly expect that before taking any new step you will consult me.

All the three of you will be doing well.

Prabhudas will be married on the 17th. The bride is from the North.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari—Pannalal Jhaveri, p. 31

41. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
October 16, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Herewith the resignation[3] of Jamnalalji. If you think that it must not be sent in and is likely to cause embarrassment, you need not take any action upon it. You may then return it with your reasons after you are free from the wedding arrangements. If, however, you think that the resignation may be accepted, you may publish it forthwith. I know

[1] Ambadevi, of Lala Lalchand of a Bijnore. However, the marriage took place

[2] Jawaharlal Nehru's sister who was engaged to marry Gunottam Hutheesingh; *vide* also "Letter to Manu Gandhi", 29-12-1933

[3] From the Congress Working Committee

that the Treasurer can only be appointed by the All-India Congress Committee. Therefore, the treasurership may remain in Jamnalalji's hands, for the time being. The chief thing is that he ceases to be a member of the Working Committee. I think that the step is a wise and necessary one. Constituted as he is, it is risky for him to seek imprisonment just now, that is, without taking the rest that the specialist considers necessary. But, ordinarily, fighters can't consult their health to the extent that Jamnalalji's temperament demands and as he shares the same view of a civil resister's duty that I have, he is ill at ease, so long as he holds a responsible office in the Congress Organization.

I have given you my reasoning which decided my acceptance of Jamnalalji's proposal to resign.

Yours,

BAPU

Encl. 1

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

42. STATEMENT TO PRESS

WARDHAGANJ,
October 17, 1933

I regret to have to inform the public that Shrimati N. disappeared suddenly from the Wardha Ashram about ten days ago. She had of late become more than usually unbalanced. All the affec-tion that parents, brothers or sisters could show was shown to her, but evidently her fearful past proved too strong for her. It is likely that she is again leading the old thoughtless, untruthful and unclean life.

I give this information to warn young men against tempting her, or being tempted by her. I would like those who may come in contact with her not to give any financial aid. She is hardly responsible for her actions, and it would be a deliverance for her, if some philanthropic institution would take charge of her. If she sees this notice, I would have her to recall all the promises she made to herself and to me, and in humility to ask God to exorcise the devil that has possessed her. She knows that if she asks truly, her prayer will not go in vain. She had such experiences in her sane moments.

She was last heard of in Delhi.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-10-1933

43. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

October 16, 1933

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I think you told me that you visited the Brooker Washington Institution at Tuskegee. For the sake of Harijans I have been reading literature about that wonderful institute. Does your personal inspection confirm what appears in the books about it ? Will you write a brief account under the title 'What I saw in Tuskegee' ? Did you meet any of the Red Indians ? Can you give me your impression of them? The United States Government seem to be spending large sums on their education and general improvement.

Love.

MOHAN

REV. C. F. ANDREWS
ANAND BHAWAN
ALLAHABAD

From a photostat : G. N. 3798

44. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
[*October 18, 1933*][1]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Despite all intentions of writing to you I have been unable to do so till today. Jamnalal shields me well from the visitors but who can protect me from letters ? Never am I able to clear my desk. Because the order of going to bed early has also to be observed. I am writing this having got up at 3 a.m. The implication is not that this letter is the sole cause for rising early. Even during the time allowed in the evening I am prevented from doing anything substantial by the pestering insects.

I have read your article about Jawaharlal. It is good and you have done no harm by writing it. There could be no need to suppress our opinions about one another. When Truth alone is to be sought, suppression of one's opinion becomes a fault. You must have sent the article to Jawaharlal, if not, do so. He is a very straightforward man

[1] The date is inferred from the reference to Gopi's departure; *vide* "Letter to Prabhavati", 15-10-1933

and corrects his error. I am confident ultimately he is bound to follow the path of Truth. And if his line of thinking proves to be correct, comment would be superfluous. Equality can never mean uniformity. Equality only means uniformity in justice. There is no distinction between an atom and the Himalayas in the eyes of God. He is the same to the atom as to the Himalayas.

Gopi left yesterday. I could not have a long talk with her but she used to come and sit with me every day. She is an extremely simple girl and was very happy here; she mixed with everybody. She went to Bombay on account of Diwali. She was also keen to see the illuminations there. It will be good if she returns after Diwali. I have no doubt that she will be ready. Gajanan has replied to the letter I wrote to him. Gopi too was asked to write a letter. Write to me about your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall get someone to write in English about Harijan. It was very good that .....[1] ultimately did stay .....[1]

From Hindi : C.W. 7940. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

45. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

October 18, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Herewith two garlands made out of yarn specially spun by me today for the bride and the bridegroom charged with my blessings. Will you please put them round their necks on my behalf! I hope they will reach you in time.

I cannot help being sorry that the ceremony has been vetoed by Mrs. Hutheesing. But I suppose in these matters I am a back number.

I understand what you say about Dipak. I would write to Sarala Devi in as gentle a manner as I can.

Love to you all.

BAPU

[1] The source is illegible here.
[1] *ibid*

[PS.]

I would like you to wire to me when all is over that Mother was able to stand the strain.

A Bunch of Old Letters, p. 112

46. SPEECH AT WEDDING OF PRABHUDAS GANDHI

WARDHAGANJ
October 18, 1933

At the conclusion of the ceremony addressing the couple Gandhiji said that this was an inter-provincial marriage and not an inter-caste one. He had no hesitation in advocating inter-caste marriages under well-defined limitations, for he believed that there was no varna or division in the original sense of the term and that limiting marriage to the same division or varna was never its distinguishing feature.

He drew the attention of the couple to the fact that marriage was not intended to indulge in one's passions but to impose a restraint upon them. He hoped that both of them would make service of the country their mission in life and then they would find that their joint life would be one of happiness, contentment and increasing self-restraint.

It gave him much pleasure to find that the bride came from an Arya Samajist family. His relations with the Arya Samajists, he continued, had always been intimate, although they knew that there were honest differences between them. This marriage had brought them nearer.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-10-1933

47. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

WARDHA
October 18, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

If the doctor says that it is not necessary now for you to stay in the hospital, I would advise you to come here. The weather here is very good indeed. There is quite a large number of girls. You will be able to help Lakshibehn a little, and can also have your arm massaged. I shall not be happy if you stay anywhere else, and shall keep on

worrying about the condition of your arm. You should still not use it very freely. You will also get a doctor's services here. If you decide to come here, the earlier you come the better, so that we can be together for some days. The kitchen here runs for about 60 persons, more than 40 of whom are girls. Anandi, Bachu and Babu will start from here today. Tarabehn is expected any day now.

Prabhudas was married today to a girl from North India. She is 24 years of age, and her name is Amba.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 5357

48. LETTER TO PANNALAL JHAVERI

ASHRAM, WARDHA,
October 19, 1933

CHI. PANNALAL,

It seems your letter has crossed my postcard.

Your purity has so impressed me that anything you write or any step you take cannot hurt me. By that I do not mean that I shall always agree with you on the rightness of your step. But the more experience I gain the more I realize that there are as many conceptions of dharma as there are individuals. The deeper I delve the greater is my comprehension of the dictum of the *Gita* : Better to die following one's own faith.

I certainly wish you success in what you have considered your dharma.I personally did wish that when others slackened, you would be able better to understand satyagraha. I hold that satyagraha has not yet manifested itself in India in its true form. The duty of manifesting it devolves on you and me, that is, the inmates of the Ashram. For you, civil disobedience cannot be a political matter. It can only be a matter of dharma. Dharma reveals itself in its true form only when there is despair all around. If we join the crowd in offering prayers, it would not be an indication of our faith. But it would in some measure be a test of our faith if when others lost faith in prayer a handful of us continued to offer prayers and derived joy from so doing. But what is dharma to me may not be dharma to you. Only what you see as dharma will be dharma to you. I have only conveyed my views to you as an elder. If your reason does not accept it, if it does not appeal to your heart, then do not act on it. Individual civil disobedience must

be taken to mean perfection. If you are starting a *goshala,* are you going to do it on your own, or is there any room for suggestions and guidance? If there is such scope, meet me. I shall then send you my suggestions. Do come over if you feel like coming.

What you write about Gangabehn and Nanibehn seems correct. It is your duty to guide the two of them. And it is also your right. I may or may not be able to write letters. But both of them have got to write to me. In fact I have been awaiting their letters. I hope you yourself are in good health.

Prabhudas's marriage was solemnized yesterday. The bride's name is Amba. She is 24 years old. She is competent, and has a deep sense of sacrifice. She has been to jail twice. She had been trying to come and live in the Ashram for several years but there were restrictions from her guardians. Kishorelal and Gomati have gone to Akola today. Anandi, Babu and Bachu have gone in that direction today. Prabhudas will be staying here for some time. Amba is of course with him. I am regaining my strength. I am gaining weight. The blood-pressure is going down. There are more than forty girls here.

I have received your second letter. I am here till the 7th November. I shall leave on the 8th.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari—Pannalal Jhaveri, pp. 31-2

49. A NOTE[1]

[After *October 18, 1933*][2]

For the poor and those with abstemious habits, the only after-meal treat for the mouth is water. And so, it is not necessary to offer guests betel-nut, etc.

One should not put one's hand into the cooked foods. All of them should be served with a spoon or a ladle.

If the guest is an Englishman or Englishwoman, we should place a spoon before them without their asking for it. It is not necessary to cook many articles of food for guests. No special article of food should be cooked for them. If, however, we ourselves are

[1] Gandhiji states at the end of the note that he was sending it for Amba. Evidently the note containing these suggestions was written after Prabhudas's marriage to Amba on October 18, 1933.

[2] *ibid*

addicted to pleasures of the palate, on the day when we have a guest, we should take the occasion to cook only a frugal meal, have it ourselves and serve it to the guest, and humbly and gently mention the fact of the meal being frugal so that we may not seem affected.

We should never let dirt collect in our nails, eyes, ears or nostrils. Even if we are not so on the other days, before guests we should always appear clean and keep the children so, for a cultured guest dislikes dirt and feels repugnant to being served food cooked by persons with dirty hands. The saree is not meant for removing the dirt with, a handkerchief must be used for the purpose.

When eating, one must not make smacking sounds, nor talk while eating. If children have such a habit, we should make them give it up.

We should offer a guest something suitable to sit on. We should have respect for the guest in our mind. If it is there, the guest cannot but see it. We should teach the children always to bow to a guest to greet him.

We should make no distinction between a guest who is an important person and one who is not so, or between a guest whom we know personally and one who is a stranger to us.

Since our aim in the Ahsram is to lead an abstemious life, we should not indulge the palate.

Since we are not to serve a guest relishing dishes, we should not cook sweets, nor season them with condiments, nor make spicy sauces, nor c cook too many vegetables. If we have a number of vege-tables with us, we should mix them together and serve them boiled as far as possible.

We should take care to see that children do no dirty things. We should place a clean handkerchief before the guest at the same time as wegive him a jug of water. We should tell him where he may wash his hands or help him to wash his hands in a utensil.

We should not expect a guest to clean the plates he has used for eating but insist on taking them away from him and clean them ourselves.

We should courteously ask a guest and know from him his needs, and if they are not contrary to our dharma or beyond our means, satisfy them.

I am sending this note for Amba. Preserve it after reading.

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 33080

50. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
October 19/20, 1933[1]

CHI. THAKKAR BAPA,

Everyday I think of writing you a long letter and it is postponed everyday. Jamnalal can help avoid interviews, but who can stem the increasing flow of correspondence ? I have got to go to bed early and so some letters do remain unattended piling the heap of papers up. I carry on in this pitiful state.

What should I write about N.? I have done my best for her. I think she did try honestly to restrain her passions. But she slipped during her attempts and ultimately ran away. If she drowns herself, I would neither be surprised nor sorry. If she is alive, I would not give up hopes for her improvement. I do not at all repent having readmitted her. It was my duty to do so. She was basking in affection not only here but at Sabarmati also. She used to write to me that she never experienced such affection even from her parents. All were content with whatever little restraint she voluntarily accepted. How can one be changed so suddenly, who remained unbridled for several years ? I have not yet judged . . . .[2] I have never noticed any fault on this part in connection with N.

The Agra affair is very sad. We reap what we sow. Let Hinduism perish if the so called sanatanists fail to wake up and, in their vanity resort to goondaism with the help of the masses. It is enough if we continue doing our duty. God's will prevails ultimately. The affairs at Samartha and Dholka are not only sad but shameful for us also. Similar petty cases take place here too. I intend to write something in *Harijan* about this matter.[3]

I think it is good that *Harijan* is shifted to Madras. It was the only way to utilize Sastri fully. Kodand Rao had arranged a small function in honour of Sastri. Deodhar spoke there. He hinted at the

[1] The letter bears the date October 19, 1933, at the end of paragraph 2, but was signed "Wardha, 20-11-1993", which appears to be a slip for "20-10-1933". The letter was evidently written before Gandhiji's tour of the Central Provinces on November 8, 1933.

[2] The name has been omitted.

[3] *Vide* "Two Cruel Cases"

same thing. He said Sastri was withering in Poona and will blossom in Madras. Sastri has gained confidence to run *Harijan*. He will get help from some others. It will be away from Delhi; but that is no inconvenience. The Hindi edition is already based in Delhi. If Sastri could not settle in Poona to devote himself fully to *Harijan* he could do so much less in Delhi. His suffering was mental and genuine. Since we were to bring out *Harijan* with the help of Sastri, it was our duty to look to his convenience. I shall send you Sastri's letter, if I have not destroyed it, which will give you an idea of his mental distress. It has always been my opinion that the English edition can be produced best and cheapest from Madras. However, you may write to and arrange with Sastri directly in case you and Ghanshyamdas are not fully satisfied with my letter.

My mention of rest on Sunday and Monday may be considered an oversight. You are welcome to include Monday and Tuesday in the programme that you may chalk out.

Tour programme for C. P. will be completed within the time prescribed by you. Dr. Khare has already issued the tour programme for C. P. (Marathi). You may have seen it. He wished to write to you also. Satisbabu has written from Bengal. He has also written to you.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 1133. Also C. W. 10489. Courtesy : Harijan Sevak Sangh

51. LETTER TO H. K. HALES [1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
October 20, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I am able this time to send you by return [of post] my reply to your letter of 18th inst.

I have no such modesty as you attribute to me. I meant literally what I said about my limitations. They are abvious. I am dying to co-operate with anybody and everybody and certainly with the Government in restoring peace that is living and real, not the peace of the grave. A living peace cannot be and will never be brought about at the point of the bayonet. The plan of the Government is, at any rate seems to me to be, after that of a physician who seeks to remove a deadly

[1] The letter was published in *The Hindu*, 29-10-1933, with slight verbal variations.

disease without probing and dealing with the causes. I can be no party to any such plan. And I should despair of proving my sincerity about non-violence, if it requires further proof after my having lived a life of non-violence in the face of circumstances often most provoking, for an unbroken period of 40 years and more.

As to your suggestion about an All-Parties meeting[1], judged by the accepted standard I have proved a hopeless failure, as witness1 my last performance at such a meeting[2] convened for the purpose of achieving a communal settlement. I was no less a failure at the[3] various meetings that we held in India for similar purposes.

Your Sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G. N. 1472 a

52. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

Unrevised *October 20, 1933*

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I had your long letter. I do not know whether you had sent copies to my two partners. Anyway I have posted it on to Andrews. You thought that we were all at the same place. But just at present we are not.

Your work in Geneva was great. And I know wherever you are you can give a good account of yourself. But I retain the same opinion that I have you some time ago that if you came as a delegate your expenses should be found by your constituency. But if you come for the purpose of seeing things first hand, your expenses can be found from here. Whether it is worthwhile your coming for that special purpose is solely for you to decide. If you feel the need you should come. If you are a good sailor you can certainly come in the 3rd class without the slightest difficulty and see more of life, because you see more of common humanity as a 3rd class passenger than as a saloon passenger. That is my own experience and that of others who have travelled in all classes.

[1] The source has "Witnessed"

[2] The reference presumably is to one of the informal meetings held in London; *vide* "Speech at Meeting of Friends of India", 7-10-1931 and "Statement to the Press",14-10-1931

[3] The source has "two".

About the ban on Bose's passport, I am quite sure that they would not remove it at present except under humiliating conditions. I entirely agree with you that what he does not know of Bengal is not worth knowing and I know also that he can render the greatest help in the restoration of peace, but his difficulty would be the same as mine.

I send you a copy of another letter[1] which I am obliged to write to Mr. Hales. The fact is that the Government demand co-operation on their own terms, which nobody freely gives and which no self-respecting man can ever give.

I think that this covers all the important points you have raised in your letter.

Yours Sincertly

BAPU

Froma photostat : G. N. 1472

53. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ

October 20, 1933

CHI. RUKMINI,

I heard from you after many days. Today is the first day of the new year. I again advise you to remember that life is well governed by observing rules. It is desirable that you should make a rule to write to me, if not once a week, once a fortnight or at least once a month. Personally, I believe that the ideal thing is to do everything according to a rule. Prabhudas was married the day before yesterday. The bride seems a good girl.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From Gujarati : C. W. 9701. Courtesy : Benarsilal Bazaj

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

54. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHA,
October 20, 1933

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have not received copy of Andrews's letter.

In my opinion, the money should be sent to Harakhchand, for he might be regarded as an agent of the Committee. If the money is sent from Calcutta, commission on the bank draft will be saved. Harakhchand's report can be treated as fully authentic. The Utkal Committee should also know that the money will be sent through Harakhchand.

You do not have to go wandering in the sun to collect the money. If it is necessary to write to anyone, I will do so. I take it you will be publishing reports in the Press from time to time.

There is no alternative but to guide Kamaladevi. One cannot go by rumours. I asked her many frank questions. But she only de-clares her innocence. I am not trying to stop the divorce. It has become necessary.

The wedding of Prabhudas took place the day before yesterday.

I am enclosing Thakkar Bapa's letter. You can see how guileless he was in his previous letter. He was not at all at fault in what he wrote. I have heard many complaints about your temper. But I have always defended you. You should remove the cause for com-plaint. Forgive Kodanda Rao[1] for his jest and write a nice letter to Thakkar Bapa."Caesaer's wife must be above suspicion" does not mean that Caesaer's wife may never be suspected. What it means is that C.'s wife should never give cause for suspicion, and if she is even then suspected, she can afford to remain unconcerned about criticism. It is in man's hands to remain pure. That others should consider him pure is in nobody's hands. Do you know that there are many in the world who find fault with God's creation?

Taramati and the child will be doing well.

Today is the New Year day. May it bring good to you all, that is to say, may the country received greater services from you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] P. Kodanda Rao

[PS.]

Send me Gokhale's address. Then I shall write to him. Surely you do not wish that I should send back all your letters?

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

55. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL AND KASHI GANDHI

WARDHA,
October 20, 1933

CHI. CHHAGANLAL AND KASHI,

I received your postcard. You must have received my telegram sent after the wedding ceremony was over. I can see from your postcard that you have been worrying. Kashi's wish was fully respected. Lakshmibehn sang the women's prayer[1] with the utmost devotion, beginning with the *shloka 'Shantakaram'*[2]. After the ceremony was over, she also sang the *bhajan*[3] *'Vaishnava Jana'*. In Amba, Prabhudas has got exactly the kind of girl suitable for him. She seems to me to have a transparently sincere nature. Brave of course she is. She has twice been to jail and has been yearning for a long time to live in the Ashram. She does not seem to love overmuch any kind of pleasure. She wore no bangles at all at the time of the wedding ceremony. After the ceremony was over, Janakibehn put glass bangles on her wrists. Very likely she will break even these in a short while. Probably you do not know that in the North it is usually customary to wear bangles or put the auspicious red mark on the forehead. It is customary for the bride, after a particular ceremony is over, to wear the garments offered by the father-in-law's family. I had three saris ready with me. One was got woven by Janakibehn, the other was sent by Santok and the third by Gomati. The sari sent by the last was woven from yarn spun by Kishorelal and Gomati themselves. Gomati happened to have it with her by chance and so sent it to me and insisted that I should give that very sari to Amba to wear. I too liked the idea. But was Amba the kind of girl to accept it? She said: "How would I be the better for it. What I am wearing is goodenough.Please let it be". I found all this so pleasing and natural

[1] From the *Ashram Bhajanavali*

[2] A verse in Sanskrit

[3] A devotional song

that I did not at all insist on her accepting the saree. She then wore, during the wedding ceremony, the sari sent by her parents. She had some fever during the ceremony. She had been forbidden to take anything except fruit on the wedding-day. The fever came down in the evening. She passed the whole of yesterday on fruit and milk only. She is now able to move about and is quite happy. For the present, she will stay here. A sari was made for Ba from yarn spun by me. It was neither washed nor dyed. I gave Amba that sari also. A piece of *rejo*[1] *or kokali*[2] khadi with fine needlework on it given by Ba and Mithubehn for Jakir has also been given to Amba. Amba has thus come into possession of a fairly good number of articles. For the present, both wish to stay here. Afterwards, they will come to you for your blessings. My previous letter was not written to rebuke you. It was written to make your dharma clear to you and to strengthen your faith.

Blessings for the New Year[3].

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33070

56. AN M.A. IN A HURRY

An M. A. of Kerala writes a long letter from which I take the following paragraphs[4] of public importance :

I can heartily endorse my correspondent's statement that 'there can be no peace for me or him and his friends, if untouchability continues in our country'. My word also stands. But untouchability will not be removed by force or, which is perhaps the same thing, by law, not will temples be opened by such means. Legislation is badly required to remove legal obstruction which has been created by certain judicial decisions. But if and when the two Bills are passed, untouchability lurking in the Hindu heart will not necessarily be removed

[1] Coarse silk for making blouse

[2] A variety of khadi

[3] This and the subscription is in Gandhiji's own hand.

[4] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had written about the continuing evil of utouchabilty, indifference of khadi workers towards Harijan work and villagers' attitude towards Harijans, and suggested steps to instil courage, self-confidence, etc., into Harijans.

nor will public temples be automatically opened. Untouchability will go when the Hindu heart has melted, and the public temples will be opened when the worshippers have discovered that God is no respector of persons and that He does not reside in temples which man's insolence or ignorance has closed against any body of persons who are desirous of offering worship on the same terms as they.

The correspondent would throw the sole responsibility for opening the Guruvayur temple on me. He should know that it is no one man's work. It will be done in God's good time. Workers can but work to the best of their ability. Let him also know that Kelappan's pledge is not exhausted. His visit to Colombo is temporary. Rajagopalachari works by prayer even though he is in prison. Madhavan Nair, that great and true Kerala servant, is no more. But I have no doubt that his spirit watches over our conduct and misconduct. It will not rest till Hinduism is purified of the evil of untouchability. And the correspondent may rest assured that, when the proper time comes and if God wills it, both Kelappan and I would again stake our lives for the opening, not only of the Guruvayur temple, but many others.

As to the khadi service, the correspondent's complaint is wholly unjustified. Those who are engaged in khadi service may not very well be expected to give their time to Harijan service. But I know that the vast majority of them have no untouchability in their breasts and that they never miss an opportunity of rendering whatever personal service they can to Harijans. There is no bar to taking Harijans in Khadi service. Lastly I may state that several thousand Harijan families are being supported through the khadi organizations dotted over the whole country.

The correspondent is on surer ground in his complaints about villagers' attitude in many parts of India. The ignorance of the villagers is colossal. They are wedded to the idea of high and low. Village workers are far too few for the numerous villages. But there is no cause whatever for despair. Villagers are waking up. They have begun to realize that to deny to fellow beings the same status that they have for themselves is to deny God's equal justice. The correspondent has no notion of the silent but solid work that many workers are doing in and around villages. This Harijan work being purely religious does not lend itself much to the spectacular. It will prosper in exact proportion to the purity and penance of the workers. It will be surely

retarded by the impurity, selfishness or mixed motives of workers.

As to putting life into Harijans, it will be there immediately the crushing dead weight of untouchability is lifted from off the heads of Harijans. They should, of course, have, as they are having, religious and other instruction in the many schools that have been and are being opened. Time is on our side and so is the time spirit. No religion can possibly stand the blazing light of the world's opinion that is being directed towards all religions, and still retain in it proved evils and superstitions.

Harijan, 21-10-1933

57. WHAT OF SWEEPERS IF . . . ?

An English friend referring to two ladies who are coming to India writes :[1]

> They . . . want to do their own "sweeper" work, even though it may get them into trouble with some of the local caste Hindus . . . it may get them into difficulties with the local sweepers, who will complain . . that they are losing good work, and good wages. Now, what is the right reply to that ? Supposing that thousand of millions of caste Hindus and others, up and down India, resolved to do their own "sweeping", as an act of penance and visible proof that they felt themselves no better than sweepers, many sweepers would lose their livelihood . . . It is to some extent the old story (in a different form) of the displacement of labour as a result of social development. I don't remember seeing any comment of yours or anyone's on this point in *Harijan* . . .

It is quite true that I have not discussed this question in these pages as a difficulty, as it has never arisen that way as yet. In several places, including the late Ashram at Sabarmati and its branch at Wardha, the inmates have been doing their own sweeper work without the local sweepers being ruffled. At Sabarmati, in the beginning stages, we had sweepers, who were paid a paltry sum. It was not possible to pay them more for about two hours' work which at best was never satisfactorily done. They did not know the hygienic method. They would not easily take to it Sanitary service is by no means a hereditary occupation of long standing. All the evidence hitherto collected by me goes to show that before the Mohammedan conquest there were no professional sweepers; the Hindu social system, being based on rural conditions, did not necessitate such sanitary service as

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

is indispensable in these days of rapid urban growth. I do not, however, wish to convey the meaning that rural sanitation during the purely Hindu period was by any means perfect or even fairly satisfactory. On the contrary, it seems to have been very crude. The highly scientific methods evolved and still being developed in the West are undoubtedly a recent and very beneficial growth.

Holding these views, I can only welcome the determination of the two English sisters to do their own sweeper work. If I were in their place, I should invite the sweepers in the neighbourhood to give other service, if they were in want of employment, or to learn the hygienic and clean method of doing sanitary work if they were minded so to do. Whether they took up some other work or no, whether they volunteered to learn better methods of sanitation or no, they could not harbour any feeling of being wronged for not being asked to do sanitary service for the sisters, for I would expect them to work for the betterment of Harijans in a hundred ways. The difficulty can only, and must always, arise when things are done in a patronizing or selfish manner. I would, for instance, be patronizing, if I offered now and then to work a little in a touch-me-not fashion, side by side with my sweeper, just in order to be able to declare at public meetings that even I did sweeping alongside my sweeper. I would be acting selfishly if I did my own sweeping for the sake of keeping my closets cleaner than they would otherwise be and did not want to waste my time in teaching my sweeper the modern method or did not want to pay more for more efficient and more intelligent service. But there never can be any offence taken when I serve my sweeper neighbours in a variety of ways and, by doing my own sweeping, teach them by example that sanitary service is not only not a mean occupation, but a perfectly honourable and most useful occupation which everyone should learn and many may follow with great benefit to society, if it is taken up in a humanitarian spirit.

Harijan, 21-10-1933

58. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

WARDHA,
October 21, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

I think I told you in one of my letters that I intentionally did not write to you, so that you might receive all the letters of Dhurandhar[1]. But I gather from Amtul's letter that you expect me to write and that you can get my letters. I was thinking of writing, when I got Sushila's[2] postcard yesterday. I am, therefore, writing this letter before the morning prayer.

I see that you are all right there. If you are permitted to write, give me your daily-time table and any other details about food, etc., which you can.

I have just now Ba, Mira, Chandrashankar and Nayar with me. Kaka is here at present, Kishorelal and Gomati[3] left the day before yesterday. Swami[4] will arrive shortly, and so also will Tarabehn. Pannalal[5] , Nanibehn[6] and Gangabehn[7] are in Ahmedabad. The Ashram will be permanently converted into a hostel for Harijans. The office, etc., will be handed over for that purpose. You must have read all this in papers. I hope you and all the other women liked this idea.

I get long letters from Mahadev. He has collected a library in Belgaum. I hope Durga[8] hears from him. Devdas is happy in Multan, and Pyarelal in Nasik. Ba is getting ready [to go to jail].

There are more than 40 girls now under Lakshmibehn's[9] charge. She is being helped by Dwarkanath[10] . Narmada is with Vinoba in Nalwadi.

Prabhudas's marriage was celebrated on Wednesday. He has got a partner of his choice. She is 24 years old. She has been educated at the Gurukul and seems intelligent.

My tour begins on the 8th. I hope all the women are well and

[1] Addressee's former teacher
[2] Addressee's friend Sushila Pai
[3] Kishorelal Mashruwala's wife
[4] Swami Anandananda
[5] The Jhavris
[6] *ibid*
[7] *ibid*
[8] Mahadev Dedsai's wife
[9] Lakshmibehn Khare
[10] Dwarkanath Harkare

make good use of every moment of their time. More after I hear from you.

Blesssings to you all from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised the letter.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10351. Also C. W. 6790. Courtesy : Premabehn Kantak

59. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

October 21, 1933

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter. I am doing what you wish. There will be no moral difficulty. I should like you to stop worrying.[1] You must have a telescope more powerful than even Premlilabehn's. Through hers a mustard seed will appear as big as a mountain. I hope you remember the planet Uno[2] .

Prabhudas's marriage took place on Wednesday. He got a girl exactly of the type that he wanted, and through his own efforts. She is 24 and is thoroughly simple in habits. Since she is from North India, she cares neither for the vermilion mark nor for bangles. She wasn't wearing bangles even during the marriage ceremony. Janakibehn has forced bangles on her wrists now. She is fairly well educated. She is an Arya Samajist.

I had a long letter from Mahadev (written from Belgaum Jail). It is like a long poem. I send with this a few extracts from it.

Brijkishan[3] got ill after going to Delhi. Ba is getting ready [for courting imprisonment]. Kishorelal and Gomati left the day before yesterday. Anandi, Bachu and Babu also left. Kishorelal went to Akola. Anandi intended to get down on the way to see Lakshmidas. There has been no letter from Lakshmidas yet. Even if she marries, she will continue to enjoy complete freedom in the Ashram.

What is your weight ? What is your food ? How much milk and

[1] The addressee had requested Gandhiji to take rest.

[2] This seems to be an error for Pluto, which was discovered in 1930.

[3] Brjikishan Cahndiwala.

curds do you take ? May I send anything for you ? Remember that even a mother doesn't serve an item during a meal unasked. And in this case the mother is a person like me. What can you expect then ? It is now time to attend the morning prayer. So I stop here.

Blessing from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 34-5

60. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

October 21, 1933

CHI. MARY,

You may take barley not because you have some with you but because you need it. But if you are constipated, it is not barley you need but some green, such as gourd[1] or the like.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G. N. 6011. Also C. W. 3337. Courtesy : F. Mary Barr

61. LETTER TO KOTWAL

October 21, 1933

BHAI KOTWAL,

As a general rule it can be stated that a person who has faith in civil disobedience and has joined it cannot take up any other work. But, on the other hand, a person who has faith in it but has already taken up some responsibility should not join it at the risk of failing in that responsibility. "Better one's duty, bereft of merit ……"[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 3605

[1] The source has *dudhi* in Devanagari script.
[2] *Bhagavad Gita*. III. 35.

62. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIDH

October 21, 1933

CHI. VANAMALA,

I hope you have now completely got over your illness. Now go and join Anandi, Bachu and Babu as soon as possible. If you had been well and had come here, both you and I would have been happy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 5782. Also C. W. 3005. Courtesy : Vanamalabehn M. Desai

63. LETTER TO MOHAN N. PARIKH

October 21, 1933

CHI. MOHAN,

I got your letter. You must have completely recovered now. I will be glad, therefore, if you join Anandi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 9186

64. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

October 21, 1933

CHI. JAISUKHLAL[1] ,

I got your letter.

I had heard about Umiya's[2] illness. I had talked about her with Jamnalalji. You should solve the problem about the charkhas there. One of you should try to gin with the help of one of your charkhas and make the necessary changes in it. Keshu's letter is enclosed.

Vinod and Kusum wrote to me also. I hope you keep good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] Jaisukhlal Amritlal Gandhi a khadi worker.
[2] Addressee's daughter

[PS.]

You must have read everything about Prabhudas's marriage.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M. M. U./III

65. LETTER TO KESHAVRAM S. TRIVEDI

October 21, 1933

BHAI KESHAVRAM,

I have your letter. Please send the khadi to Shri Harakhchand Motichand through the Orissa Flood Relief Committee, Cuttack, Orissa.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KESHAVRAM TRIVEDI
SUDDHA KHADI BHANDAR, NAVSARI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M. M. U./XXII

66. LETTER TO SHANKARLAL D. PARIKH

October 21, 1933

BHAI SHANKARLAL,

I received your letter a few days ago, but could not get time to reply to it. I cannot postpone doing so any longer, and so I write this. I hope Vanamala and Mohan have completely recovered now. I would advise you not to keep either of them in Kathlal. There was a letter from Narahari specially about them, and he also says that both of them must live with Anandi. It is desirable that they should get used to living with other people and have some experience. They will fall ill occasionally, no matter where they are. Of course if neither of them can be persuaded to go, I shall be helpless. But I think you should try and see if you can persuade them to go. So far as I know, Vanamala used to feel very happy with Anandi, but it is possible that Mohan may find it difficult to forget his attachment for Kathlal. But he has a simple heart and I think it will be easy for you to persuade him. If you have recently got any news about Narahari and Mani[1] , please let me know. Also tell me what you are doing at present. You have preserved the love of neatness which I had observed in you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C. W. 2685

[1] Narahai Parikh's wife.

67. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

October 21, 1933

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I got your previous letter, but I simply couldn't find time to reply to it. I had completely forgotten to write to you about the prices of raw and processed yarn. I have sent your letter to Bhai Shankerlal and asked for his comments. Perhaps he will talk with you, too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C. W. 363 : Bhagwanji P. Pandya

68 LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

WARDHA,
October 21, 1933

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

Blessings for the new year. Anandi, Babu and Bachu will have arrived there. As Vimu[1] has not come so far, all the girls will go to Sharda Mandir. So there is nothing to say about their studies.

I find that the girls do not get proper food. They cannot be fed differently from the Harijan girls. Talk to them and if necessary make changes in the menu without increasing the expenditure. I believe that the Harijan girls should get the same food as we normally eat. I know it is difficult. We can think about it only when we meet. I have just told you of the girls' attitude. We should do whatever is possible without doing harm to the Harijan Ashram.

New Year's blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32824

69. INTERVIEW TO "UNATI"

[*Before October 22, 1933*][2]

Q. Inspite of efforts on the part of social reformers, the standard of living of educated communities in Sind has been rising very rapidly; what would you advise under the circumsatnces ?

[1] Vimala, daughter of Chhaganlal Joshi
[2] The report was released to the Press from Hyderabad (Sind) on this date.

A. I would advise those who think this is wrong to set an example by living simply and thinking and acting nobly.

Q. Young men believe that unless they are in a position to earn from Rs. 150 to 200 per month, they cannot even think of marriage. At the same time, an ever-increasing number of them keep on imagining that it is legitimate to satisfy sexual instinct in some way or another without undertaking the obligations of married life; how do you view such a mentality ?

A. I can only look upon it with shame and deep regret. Such mentality can only lead to suicide. The only cure for it is for young men, who realize te enormity of the evil, to set their faces against it by showing the greatest purity in their own lives and correctness of conduct.

Q. What advice would you give to young girls who have perforce to remain unmarried or who are not in a mood to marry ?

A. Such girls should go out of their little communities or even Provinces in search of suitable deserving companions. The sooner we get through the spirit of provincialism and exclusive caste, the better would it be for us. I cannot understand why an educated Amil should be in search of an Amil companion and why he or she should not take a deserving companion from any part of India, the condition being, not selfish gratification of base animal passions, but search after spiritual growth and national advancement.

Q. Would you not advise the Amil girls to break the barriers of Amilism and be prepared to marry any non-Amil—be he a Bhaibund or a Bhatia or any other ? What are your views on inter marriages between Sindhis and Gujaratis, etc. ?

A. Already answered above.

Q. If you hold that "man and woman should be given fullest opportunity for self-expression", would you advise that young girls and young boys should be given unfettered discretion in mixing or associating with each other, irrespective of parents' knowledge or control ? Also, should girls be allowed to move about as freely as boys do?

A. Most decidedly not. I believe in the middle path. Most boys and girls should be guided and allow themselves to be guided by their parents and guardians and the latter on their part should cherish and promote the independence of their boys and girls who may be under their guardianship or supervision. If the youth of the country will remain pure they should avoid all secretiveness.

Q. It is maintained by the old people that in view of the peculiar conditions obtaining in Sind, it is not safe to discard *purdah*, but young men are naturally

against this system which they regard as highly pernicious. What would you suggest to avoid the clash on this point of difference between the young and the old ?

A. I have never believed in the *purdah* system. I think it is fast going and the girls, who dare to tear the *purdah* and demonstrate to their neighbours that no harm has befallen them in any way whatever, will be most potent proofs for removing the prejudice or fear. Tearing down the *purdah* does not mean that girls should wander about anywhere and everywhere. It is the hiding of one' face in the presence of men which I consider to be so highly injurious to one's growth or self-expression. Modesty is the best protection and *purdah*.

Q. What are your views on co-education ?

A. I believe in well-regulated and well-thought-out co-education.

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-10-1933

70. TALK WITH A FRIEND [1]

[*Before October 22, 1933*]

You are aware of the agreement[2] among the so-called minority communities when the Round Table Conference was in progress in London. The Harijans also were included among them. I staked my life for them at that time.[3] Being a far-sighted man I realized that since some sort of a constitution was coming, if the Government acce-pted the scheme contained in that agreement our relations with Harijans would come to an end and Hindu society would be perma-nently divided. Harijans would either separate from the rest of the Hindus and form a new community; or would merge in some other community; but they would not continue to belong to the Hindu fold. I saw that this would mean the destruction of Hinduism. It would be destroyed not because 60 million people would have left it, but because of the reasons driving them to that course. Anyone is free to abandon Hinduism if he so chooses, but we, the caste Hindus, should not be the cause of their doing so. I, therefore, felt that it was my dharma to prevent such a division even at the cost of my life.

Though I was in jail when the Award of the British Cabinet

[1] This and the following item are from Chandrashanker Shukla's weekly letter. This appeared under title "Why Took Up Harijan Work".

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Minorities Committee Meeting", 13-11-1931 and "Speech at Westminster School", 13-11-1931

[3] *ibid*

regar-ding electorates was published,[1] I still felt that I had no choice but to keep my pledge to oppose it. I, therefore, went on a fast unto death in September 1932. People say now that, even if only incidentally, it rendered a great service to Hinduism. If you believe that I had taken the right step in opposing the British Cabinet's Award, all the other steps follow logically from it.

Q. Will you kindly explain that in more detail ? By your fast in 1932 you did succeed in getting the scheme of separate electorates for Harijans altered, but what was the justification of the other steps ?

A. The desire to get the Cabinet Award amended was merely the originating cause of the fast. But with its amendment a duty devolved on the caste Hindus. Hence, when Sir Purushottamdas[1] and Sjt. Ghanshyamdas visited me in jail, I told them that I would not be content merely with the amendment of the Cabinet Award and that the caste Hindus would have to do a great deal. Then I embodied this in the form of a resolution. It was passed at the Bombay Conference on September the 25th in almost the very words of my draft.[3] It was stated therein that from then on no one would be regarded as an untouchable in Hinduism and that all temples and other public places would be accessible to Harijans to the same extent that they were to the other Hindus. When all the leaders came to me after the Resolution was passed, I pledged my life to the Harijan leaders for the implementation of the Resolution. Hence it became incumbent upon me to take steps even in Yeravda jail. I corresponded with the Govern-ment to get the doors of the prison that had closed after that fast opened again, and told it that I would have to keep the caste Hindus awake to their duty, and that, therefore, I should not lose contact with them. As a result of the correspondence, the Government granted me full permission to carry on Harijan work from prison.[4] Then I noticed some impurity among the Harijan workers and in consequence I had to resort to the 21 days' fast. Then I was imprisoned again in August and asked for the same facilities as before. On their being refused, there followed another fast of 8 days.

Q. Can you say more about this impurity among the workers ?

[1] On August 17, 1932; vide "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 8-11-1932

[2] Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas

[3] Vide "Resolution at the Hindu Leaders Conference, Bombay", 25-9-1932

[4] Vide, Footnote I "Telegram to Home Secretary Government of India", 3-11-1932

A. That fast was intended for the purification of the workers. I have given an illustration in *Harijan* to show when a purificatory fast becomes necessary.[1] Please refer to it. If such impurity creeps into us, religious reform would not spread among the crores of people and the irreligious practice of untouchability which has entered deep into our villages cannot be eradicated. I have already described the great conflict in my heart and the terrible storm through which I had to pass before arriving at the decision to fast. I have not cited in *Harijan* all the instances of impurity that have come to my notice. I came to know a great many other things during and even after my fast. Many of the workers woke up and told me that they had considered themselves absolutely pure that they could not see the blemishes in them. I have already published the confession[2] of an overseer who had collected a pice each from the labourers. If I were to publish all such instances the pages of *Harijan* would start stinking. I have, therefore, refrained from doing so. We need not worry about purifying the world. But we can certainly except that those who have dedicated their lives to Harijan work will always remain pure. Fasting is a very common thing in Hinduism,but other religions too have recommended fasting as a means for purification.

Q. Many people feel that your efforts to get the Temple-entry Bill[3] passed in the Assembly and sending Rajaji to Delhi with that aim was a violation of the principle of non-co-operation. Will you kindly explain your point of view ?

A. The Congress principles are intended to facilitate its work. You know that in 1921 when the non-co-operation movement was in full swing a Congressman in Utkal had misappropriated some money, thinking that he would not be taken to a court of law since the Congress had boycotted them. When this thing was brought to my notice. I wired advising that they should have the man arrested. The rules of the Congress should not be such that defeat its own aims. In the matter of temple-entry, I saw that there was a legal impediment, and that if we could not proceed further without getting it removed, we must do so, and bear with any short-sighted person who may see a contradiction in our action. Is there no difference between taking one grain of

[1] Vide "A Case for Fasting"

[2] Vide "Notes" , sub-title "A Noteworthy Donation" , "Some Dangerous Beliefs"

[3] Introduced by Ranga Iyer in the Legislative Assembly; vide also footnote 3, "Letter to Ranchhoddas Patwari", 11-1-1933

arsenic and 30 grains of it ? Medicine should be used to cure a disease and not to commit suicide. It is the moral duty of those who passed the Bombay Resolution to take the help of the law, if necessary, to get the disabilities of Harijans removed. This is clearly stated in the Resolution. How can the supporters of that Resolution oppoe this Bill ? Or, why should they hesitate to take the help of members of the Assembly ? We have not given but accepted co-operation. Supposing that the Government passes legislation enforcing complete prohibition; shall we say then that we do not want it ?

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 22-10-1933

71. SEATS FOR HARIJANS[1]

[Before *October 22, 1933*]

To say that Harijans will not be able to use their franchise properly and will not be able to understand the interests of the country is to lay the axe at the very root of the principles of democracy. It is like the imperialists telling us that we are not fit for democracy and will never learn the proper use of the franchise. Mistakes will always be made. We shall progress only through mistakes. But does it mean that we should not have the right to vote ? Exercise of the right of voting will in itself be an education for Harijans. Nor would it be proper to say that they would not under-stand national interests. Their representatives would be persons elected with our own votes. For every Harijan seat, Harijans would elect four persons, and from among these four we shall have to elect one. Would we not find even one person from among them who would understand the nation's interests ? If we really do not find such a person, then the fault would be ours for having neglected them to that extent. The right way is to embrace them and win over their hearts by serving them. It won't help to distrust them.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 22-10-1933

[1] This was Gandhiji's reply to some critics of the representation given to Harijans under the Yeravda Pact.

72. ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS[1]

[Before *October 22, 1933*]

UNDYING MEMORY OF THE BELOVED[2]

I fully share your grief. Your letter reminds me that several friends of mine have been in the same condition as you. But I have seen from experience that our love for the beloved one is not for his or her body but the immortal spirit dwelling in it. As the years pass, your memory of your wife will not grow dim in your heart, but will become stronger and richer. This thought should dispel your grief and give you deep joy and make you see what is real and what is unreal in life. If one individual can possibly share the experience of another, I wish that you would share my experience as I am sharing your grief.

GIFT OF DEATH[3]

If you have to depart, do so peacefully with the consciousness that you are going to your own home and with the Lord's name inscribed in your heart. If God wills to take some service from you through this very body of yours, He will save your life.

THE BEST USE OF THE ASHRAM

The Satyagraha Ashram has been permanently given away for Harijan work. I feel that this is the best use it can be put to. Since the Government did not take possession of it, there was no other equally good purpose for which it could have been used. This was also the best way of sacrificing the Ashram. Having regard to the ideals of the Ashram, everybody here feels that this is the best purpose for which it could be used. A special committee will be appointed to run it. It will not admit just any Harijan. Whoever is admitted will have to abide by the rules of the place. I see nothing wrong in the Ashram inmates being without a permanent abode and living anywhere contented with whatever comes their way. When everything is over, we may set up another Ashram; that is the only proper course for us.

[1] This appeared under the title "Form the Mail bag".

[2] This was in reply to a correspondent who had described his grief at the death of his wife and asked Gandhiji how he could cherish her memory so that it might be a source of joy without any shadow of grief.

[3] This was addressed to a woman who was on her death-bed.

I do not believe that many Harijan workers are taking more than what they need for their subsistence. Some of them take nothing at all. I do not know what is 'fat salary' according to you. I consider him the best propagandist who takes only enough for his food and clothing. In our poor country we do not have a leisured class which would provide us national workers.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 22-10-1933

73. REGARDING MUNICIPALITIES, ETC.

A gentleman makes the following suggestion[2] regarding municipalities, local boards, etc.

I think this suggestion certainly deserves consideration. The municipalities themselves may not put the scheme into practice but where the local Harijan Sevak Sangh is prepared to take the responsibility, the school buildings should be made over to them outside school hour rent-free but on condition that the buildings and the furniture would be well looked after. This will save rent and Harijans will have the benefit of better accommodation and amenities.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 22-10-1933

74. SOME MORAL POSERS

The gentleman who has made suggestions regarding the municipalities, etc., has asked the following questions which are useful for all workers.[3]

[1] The worker had complained that most of the temples remained closed toHarijans, workers doing Harijan service drew fat salaries, khadi workers took on interest in Harijan work and that villages were steeped in ignorance and superstition.

Paragraphs 1, 3 and 4 of Gandhiji's answers are not translated here as they are covered by "An M.A. in a Hurry'

[2] Not translated here. The suggestion was that civic bodies should run night schools for Harijans and encourage them with financial aid.

[3] The questions are not translated here. The correspondent had asked :

I would answer them in the following order—

(1) Any vow to be taken must be written out in precise terms. It should be done in the presence of a witness , if available at the time. If a doubt arises, it must be interpreted rigidly, not loosely. Nothing should be appended to it, under the excuse of being left out, which would weaken it. For instance, say, I pledge not to touch liquor. No country has been mentioned in this pledge. I then go to England and someone persuades me to take liquor on grounds of health. Now, I cannot argue that since I happened to be in India at the time of taking the pledge it applied only to my stay there and that I was free to take liquor while abroad. Nor can I permit myself to take liquor as a medicine on the ground that there was no mention of medicines in the pledge.

(2) As in the case of other activities, the time for prayer too must be fixed. It matters little what time is fixed for it. It is best to have it just before bed-time and on waking up in the morning after cleaning one's teeth. It is also necessary to have fixed hours of sleep. No one can achieve concentration of mind all at once. As the saying goes, "even hard black rocks can be cut with a rope." So concentration will automatically follow in the wake of regular praying. So long as this is not attained, one should diligently continue to pray every day rather than worry about it. “You should never accept defeat, even if you die.”

(3) Never give up the practice of writing a diary once you have resolved to do so. If not immediately, you will certainly realize its advantages later. This habit itself will guard us against many of our shortcomings as the diary will be a permanent witness to these. All the slips must be noted in the diary. There is no need to condemn them. Criticism is always taken for granted. It is enough to mention, say, ‘Today I was angry with B; today I deceived A.’ There is no need to make observations like, ‘This was very unfortunate, ‘Oh me! I must not repeat it.’ Words in praise of oneself should never be there. It is enough to note down the work done and the slips committed. The diary should not take note of other people’s faults.

(4) This question does not appear to be right. Neither the language of the *Gita*, nor my own, is aphoritics. It is not proper to compare my language with the *Gita’s;* I would be happy if I could

(1) What are the factors to be considered before taking a vow and whether in can be modified afterwards?

(2) Can the fixed times of prayer be immediately after waking and just before

write the language of the *Gita*, but I am far removed from it. Whatever we read on a subject with which we have little familiarity, appears to us aphoristic. Technical language is language which is adequate for the purposes of that subject alone. To those who are not familair with it, it sounds aphoristic. But this is one thing and the *sutras*[1] of Patanjali are another thing. The latter leave many things unsaid. This cannot be said of the *Gita*. But here the author gives a new connotation to familiar expressions, which makes them difficult to understand. My language has one quality, viz. brevity. However, it is imperfect, whereas the *Gita* is perfect. When I say that my language is imperfect I do not imply that I have inadequate command over the language, although that too is true. What is implied here is that my thoughts are imperfect. Hence there is bound to be difficulty in understanding them. As my thoughts mature, they will come to be expressed so as to be easily comprehended. Having admitted this shortcoming in my language, I can still say that some readers do not make the fullest effort and then fail to understand even perfectly expressed ideas. And then they blame me! For example, let us take the instance cited by the correspondent himself. Spinning is a tangible activity; it can therefore be actually demonstrated. Agitation of the mind is intangible. It is quite correct to say that restlessness can be got over by practice. Today, we have no means for actually demonstrating [the truth of] this. If we learn to reduce our thought processes to a visual image we would be able to obtain a picture of this practice too as we do of spinning. At present we can only say that mental restlessness can be got rid of through diligent praying. In this, one has to rely on the truthfulness of the student, i.e., his adherence to truth. Who can know a person who pretends to pray while continuing to be agitated ? Or, who is there to rebuke the individual who deceives himself every day and while praying daily makes many impossible plans ? In other words, the success of practice depends entirely upon the sincerity of the aspirant. If there is insincerity in spinning, it can be pointed out to the spinner, since it can be directly perceived.

(5) “You should be satisfied with whatever little you get” does not imply that a lazy person may rest satisfied with what he gets. The implication is that one should be satisfied with what one gets after making constant and sincere effort. That is to say that in addition to the utmost human effort, God in heaven has His say on the result.

[1] *Yogasutras* enunciated by Patanjanli.

Hence, there is absolutely no need to be despondent if the effort does not appear to bear fruit. This is what the author of the *Gita* suggests.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 22-10-1933

75. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS AND KRISHNA KAPADIA

WARDHA,
October 22, 1933

CHI. MADHAVDAS AND KRISHNA,[1]

I got your letter. My blessings to you both. May you be happy and have peace of mind during this year.

The tour will commence on the 8th.

Ba knows your address, of course.

Ramdas is fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M. M. U./XXII

76. LETTER TO KANTI N. PAREKH

WARDHA,
October 22, 1933

CHI. KANTI,

I was very happy to read your letter. My blessings to you and Jayanti for the new year. May both of you cultivate greater devotion to service and live long.

Parbhudas's marriage was celebrated here on Wednesday. The bride is from Bijnor, and excels even Prabhudas in simplicity. She is hard-working and seems good-natured. She is brave and loves serving people. She has no love for pleasures at all. Ramdas is doing fairly well. Keshu has joined a ginning mill. Krishnadas is in the khadi department. There are more than 40 girls here. The whole burden is being shouldered by Lakshmibehn and Dwarkanath. Things are going fairly well. Anandi, Bachu and Babu left for Ahmedabad only

[1] Kasturba Gandhi's brother and his wife

recently. Balabhadra and Dhiru Joshi are in Bhavnagar and deeply engrossed in the activities there. I think Indu will cling to the place. Dudhibehn lives in Bhavnagar and looks after the children.

I frequently hear from Devdas and Mahadev, and from Sardar also, of course. I had a letter today form . . . [1] too. Prithuraj[2] is at Calicut. He writes to me occasionally. Mani must have gone to Ahmedabad. Swami has come here today. Kishorelal and Gomati have returned to Akola.

My tour will commence on the 8th.

I think I have written enough now, haven't I ? Make the best use of every moment. Write to me again if you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Mirabehn, Chandrashankar and Nayar will accompany me. At present Ba also is here. She leaves for [Yeravda] Mandir after a few days.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 6276.

77. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

October 22, 1933

CHI. MANI,

I got your postcard. I will wait for you there on Wednesday. I do hope Baba will come. I hope you are improving. Swami arrived today. The rest on Wednesday.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna patro-4 : Manibehn Patelne, p. 109

[1] The souree is illegible here.
[2] Son of Lakshmidas Asar.

78. LETTER TO GANGA T. HINGORANI [1]

WARDHA,
October 22, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

Chi. Vidya [2] has read out to me your letter to Anand. You should stop worrying about the two of them. Anand and Vidya are no kids. Their ultimate welfare lies in our letting them do what they wish to. Anand will meet you. Please give him your blessing. Give up un-due attachment. Vidya needs peace. She keeps fit here. She also learns a few things and is in good company. Mahadev too is well. You need not be anxious on his score either. How long can grown up children stay with their parents ? They ought to have their freedom. Since God has endowed you with wealth you need not feel the necessity of phyical service from Anand or Vidya. Moreover, Vidya is incapable of rendering physical service. She herself needs it.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy : National Archieves of India and Anand T. Hingorani.

79. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

October 23, 1933

CHI. MARY,

Great minds think alike. I was wondering why you would not take your meal here last evening. Of course you can take all your meals here. The liquidness has nothing to do with the indigestion. It points to the necessity of less protein. But you should take some time from me when you come.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

If the bowels have been sluggish and you feel any indigestion

[1] Mother of Anand T. Higorani.
[2] Anand T. Hingorani's wife and son

now, you may mix one portion of milk. Yes, three meals will be perhaps quite enough.

From a photostat : G. N. 6012. Also C. W. 3338. Courtesy : F. Mary Barr

80. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
October 23, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I had two wires one from you and the other from Krishna and Raja. Thank God. Mother's bravery commands my worship. I have pictured her to be a personification of quiet, dignified bravery and sacrifice, ever since I have met her.

One thing I have been forgetting to write to you. If ever you feel that you would like to call a meeting of the A. I. C. C., you must not hesitate to call it. You need not mind my disinclination. I am disinclined, because I feel it will make confusion worse confounded and mean waste of energy, time and money. But I may be quite wrong.

Love to you all.

Blessings from

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

81. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

October 23, 1933

CHI. MITHUBEHN,

I have offended you. But I am helpless.

I examined your samples. I will try to find buyers for them. I will also try if somebody agrees to buy up all your stock. You say that you are prepared to sell even at a loss. Let me know what you mean and how much loss you are prepared to put up with.You had asked me for something in the nature of a letter of recommendation. I give it below.

God alone can reward you for the service you have been doing to the poor through khadi work and by running a dispensary. However, the country also will not forget the services of self-sacrificing

women like you. It can show it appreciation of them best by welcoming them, taking up those causes and helping you in doing your work better. The people should know that, even if the khadi manufactured through; your help is costly, every pie paid by them for it goes directly into the pockets of the poor. You don't want even a pie by way of profit. God has given you enough and you are not only satisfied with it but even spend from it for the benefit of the poor.

I hope you keep good health. My tour will commence on the 8th.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Give me news about Jaiji and also her address.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 2706

82. LETTER TO PADMA

October 23, 1933

CHI. PADMA,

I got your letter. I don't wish to take you with me during my tour just now. You should become more mature and settle down to something. After that, I may take you if I get a suitable opportunity. You must have read about Prabhudas's marriage. Several visitors have turned up and so I stop here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 6146. Also C. W. 3501. Courtesy : Prabhudas Gandhi.

83. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

WARDHA,
October 23, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

Have you not received my letters at all? There is no mention of them in your letter which I received today.

Why did you go to Hardoi in spite of the pain? One can be

attached even to service. You can render true service only by giving up attach-ment altogether. Can the cripple not worship? One can also serve through one's mind. Take a couple of Harijan girls into your house and bring them up.

Lakshmi has not been writing at all. How is that? Write to her that I shall be satisfied if I have a postcard from her. Do you receive *Harijan Sevak?*

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers: Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

84. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR[1]

October 24, 1933

CHI. MARY,

If I knew where N. was, I would immediately wire her to return. I am in search but have failed so far.

Love.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat : G. N. 6013. Also C. W. 3339. Courtesy : F. Mary Barr

85. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

October 24, 1933

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

Herewith George Joseph's letter and a copy of my reply[1] to him.

Also herewith a letter of complaint against poor Bapineedu and a copy of my reply.[2]

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's request to be allowed to go and fetch
[1] These are not available.
[2] *ibid*

[PS.]

I got the letters regarding N. [*The National*] *Call* has done great injustice to her and S[1] . I have written to Sahani; I had expected his reply today.[2]

From a photostat : G. N. 1129

86. LETTER TOMATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

October 24, 1933

Why would I refrain from criticizing you for getting angry when I think It necessary to do so ? . . . [3] But I certainly don't want you to apologize against your will. If I wouldn't force anybody else to do anything against his will, why should I force you ? And would you tolerate me even if I tried ? But I certainly have a right, and it is my duty as well, to criticize you whenever I feel it necessary to do so . . . [4]A person apologizes not for the sake of the other party but for his own good. Among persons with equally virtuous character, age is a consideration. I close this chapter here. Forget all that I have written about the matter.

What connection has this affair with your becoming a trustee [5] ? I was a party to the proposal for making you one of the trustees. If I get a person better qualified than you, I would certainly withdraw your name. But I would remain neutral if we could think of another person as well qualified as you but not better.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 138

87. LEETER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL TTER

October 24, 1933

BHAI MOOLCHAND,

I have your letter. Teaching is the right vocation for you. Through it you may do what you can for khadi. But for that a thorough knowledge of the technique of khadi is essential.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 752

[1] The name has been omitted.
[2] The pstscript is in Gujarati.
[3] Omissions as in the source.
[4] *ibid*
[5] Of the Gandhi Seva Sangh

88. LETTER TO RAMA DEVI CHOWDHARY

October 24, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. If your son and daughter are keen on studies it would be the right thing to arrange for that. It would be excellent if they learn some vocation. It is impossible to have your son touring with me. The present tour is rather [difficult].[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. RAMA DEVI CHOWDHARY[2]
CHANDNI CHOWK
CUTTACK, ORISSA

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 2782

89. TRIBUTE TO VITHALBHAI PATEL [3]

October 24, 1933

Mr. Vithalbhai Patel's death[4] removes one of the most painstaking and ablest of politicians. His self-sacrifice and whole hearted application to the work he undertook were beyond praise. His capacityπ for work was amazing. It has been truely said of him that whether as the President of the Bombay Corporation or of the Legislative Assembly, he cleared his desk every day, and never allowed arrears to grow. His death is a distinct loss to the country at this juncture. I cannot close this tribute without placing on record my deep appreciation of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose's magnificent and devoted nursing of Vithalbhai at much risk to his own health.

The Hindu, 24-10-1933

[1] The original is damaged here.
[2] Wife of Gopabandhu Chowdhary
[3] Gandhiji paid this tribute in an interview to the Associated Press.
[4] On October 22

90. LETTER TO JANAKDHARI PRASAD

SATYAGRA

ASHRAM, WARDHA,

October 25, 1933

DEAR JANAKDHARI BABU,

I have your sorrowful letter. You must not give way to grief as you have done. I hope you received my letter written to you on 15th inst. There need be no apology for writing to me. Do please write as often as you wish. You have every right to have my opinion and advice. If you can accept the advice I have given in my previous letter, it will solve all your difficulties.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G. N. 55

91. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

October 25, 1933

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

Here is a letter from Narasimhan[1] about the Southern tour. I do not know why Rajagopalachari wants me to tour in the South as early as possible. You will perhaps know. I am asking Narasimhan to ascertain the reason.

From your letter about N., I suspect that you think that I don't want to do anything with her, but that is not the case. I am anxious to have her. But she is so unhinged that she might not come at all. Anyway, I am telegraphing today to you and to the American Mission. I know that *The National Call's* references to S. are all unmerited and vicious. He has done no wrong to N. N. herself does not know why her passions were excited when she saw him at Sabarmati. In the letter in which she told me this, she had acquitted S. of all blame. Many women, like many men, often get excited over seeing some members of the opposite sex, and N., having led a life of complete abandon would naturally get excited. I am asking S. to see you so that you can make his acquaintance and know him. Now that you are in this case, it is much better for you to understand all the actors. It will help me also to have your estimate of these actors, for I have not seen the last of

[1] Son of C. Rajagopalachari

any of them.

I see that Ramnarayan cannot come for two months as Ramnath 'Suman' was asking to be allowed to replace him for two or three months. And it was a question whether you could agree and whether Ramnarayan would waive his claim in favour of Ramnath. I suppose you know him. He is quite capable and he will do all the work that you expect. Of course, Chandrashankar cannot possibly cope with the correspondence, editing, and drawing up newspaper reports.

I have a copy of your letter to Negi. You seem to have expected a reply from me to your letter about Biharilal, but in your letter enclosing his long letter to you, you told me that you would write further about him. Naturally, therefore, I did not write, but I can now say generally that we may not create work for him. If there is work for which he is fitted, it should undoubtedly be given to him, even though similar work can be done for less wages than what might have to be given to him.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

Encl. One letter[1]

From a photostat : G. N. 1130

92. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

October 25, 1933

CHI. VASUMATI,

I heard about you through Tara. She is expected here now. Surendra is here. He keeps good health, but seems to have lost considerable weight. Swami also is here. Mani and Mridula are expected today. Prabhudas has married a girl from North India. The marriage took place here. The girl's name is Amba. Both are still here. My tour will commence on the 8th. Ba, Mira, Chandrashankar and Nayar are with me. Ba is Preparing to go to Mandir. Nanibehn, Gangabehn and Pannalal are in Ahmedabad. Write to me whenever you can. Do you read anything ?

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. VASUMATIBEHN PANDIT, PRISONER
DISTRICT PRISON, THANA
G. I. P. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 9337. Also C. W. 583. Courtesy : Vasumati Pandit

[1] This is not available.

93. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ [1]

October 25, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I must congratulate you on your proposed visit to Calcutta for the purpose of ending the custom of *purdah* among the sisters there. *Purdah* is not only a superstitious obsession, I feel it also smacks of sin. *Purdah* from whom ? Are all men steeped in lust ? Cannot a women retain her purity without observing *purdah* ? Purity is a state of mind. It ought to come spontaneously to all men. In this age of reason women should serve *Daridranarayana* if they wish to protect their dharma. They should also educate themelves. Service of *Daridranarayana* implies propagation of khadi, spinning, etc. Harijan service implies washing off the stain of untouchability; both of these noble activities are God's work. And education can never be acquired while retaining the *purdah*.

Did Sita observe *purdah* in her wanderings with Rama in the forests ? Has there ever been in the world a women more virtuous than Sita ? Exhort the women to end the custom and preserve dharma.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 118

[1] The addressee was to preside over the All India Marwadi Women's Conference in Calcutta This letter was-message for the delegales and was published in *Vishwamitra* 29-10-1933

94. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

October 26, 1933

CHI. MARY,

A 'tragedy of errors'. The man who brought the first note said no answer was required. Now Madan Mohan sends a reminder.[1] Do please both of you come at 4 p.m.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G. N. 6014. Also C. W. 3340. Courtesy : F. Mary Barr

95. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
October 26, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Herewith resignation from Dr. Alam. I have told him that it should have been sent to you. I advise its acceptance. It arises out of a letter of bitter complaint received against him from Lahore. I sent him a copy of it. He strictly denied some of the charges made therein. But accepted the one about practice.

Jamnalalji is anxious about his resignation. My own opinion is that his too should be accepted. He is anxious to go to prison but it worries him that he does not go at once.

I suppose Krishna is now in Bombay.

I see nothing in the paper about Mother now a days. Is she better ?

Vithalbhai's death was fully expected by me but the actuality is disturbing me. His very opposition I valued. It cleared my mind and enabled me to put my position more clearly before the country than I otherwise could have.

Love.

BAPU

Encl.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

[1] The addresee has prefaced this letter with the following note in her book *Bapu* : "I wrote a note asking Gandhiji if I might bring to see him an English friend, who passing through Wardha, and onec, had received no reply. So I sent a reminder with a man who was going to the Ashram."

96. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

October 26, 1933

MY DEAR OLD BEARD,

Your letter about Kamala does credit to you. As I have to advise her, I was bound to know the reasons for your opinion. You have given me the straightest opinion. Raihana holds the contrary opinion. Yours is based largely on instinct and so is Raihana's. My instinct too has been against her. But I have refused to act on my instinct in the face of her emphatic contradictions. Of course I brought my own suspicions to her notice.

I hope you had a successful time in Amreli. Did it do much good ? Did you sell much khadi ? Were you able to do some substantial Harijan work ?

Love to you all.

Yours,

BHRRR

From a photostat : S. N. 9588

97. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

October 26, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I must dictate in English in answer to your letter written in Hindi.

It was not necessary to write more about the constitution of the Harijan Seva Sangh. Whether we should immediately bring into being a semi-democratic organization is a question for consideration. I do not know whether under the appointment there is the power, but the plan that I have suggested[1] is feasible and can be enforced immediately, that is, to register the Ashram in the names of the trustees that I have suggested. You should discuss your idea with Thakkar Bapa and Hariji.

As to the Spinner's Association, I had an absolutely free hand, and I evolved a plan which enabled it to become an easily operating and sound organization with immense posssibility for democrati-

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla"

zation. I wanted to write to you as soon as the decision for the transfer of the Ashram was taken, that, in view of that acquisition, the ambitious plan for Delhi should be abandoned. But the hostel scheme is quite sound. Of course, we shall want many such hostels; and I can see immense possibilities emerging from them, if they are properly managed. When I am in Delhi you may take any work you like from me.

So far as Biharilal is concerned, if he will serve in connection with the hostel schemes and so on, we can utilize his services. But I am very much against engaging paid preachers, Harijans or otherwise. And in this matter we cannot be too firm.

As to my stay in Delhi, of course, it is to be regulated by you. My own inclination would be to stay at Lakshminarayan's[1] place. I believe in sticking to old places, except on sound reasons for a departure. For my health Parmeshwari's place would be ideal. But I must not be made inaccessible. To do so would defeat the purpose of the tour. My stay should depend upon the work to be taken from me. You will come to wrong decisions, if you always think of my convenience. You can depend upon it that I shall make my own convenience, no matter where you put me. For my stay in Calcutta, you should consult Dr. Bidhan, Satish Babu, etc.

I understand what you say about Mrs. Lahiri. I did not give any opinion, because I had none. As she had mentioned your name and as you know almost everybody in Calcutta, I thought I would forward that letter to you and have your opinion. I have written to Dr. Bidhan also who has issued the certificate. You may dismiss the matter from your mind for the time being at least. If I form any opinion in the execution of which I need your assistance, I shall immediately let you know.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU[2]

[PS.]

Gopi is doing well. She is certainly happy. How is your health ?[3]

C. W. 7938. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

[1] Lakshminaryan Gadodia
[2] The signature is in Devanagari script.
[3] The postscript is in Hindi.

98. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

October 26, 1933

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

I have copies of your two letters to Parikshitlal.[1]

What you have heard is quite true. The grass has been given to a shepherd. I believe that some earnest money has been received, which will have to be transferred to the Society. And nominal rent is to be recovered from Ramji[2] and others who are already residing there.I believe that there is a full map of the Ashram. I am asking Chimanlal to write to you about it. Herewith a letter from Budhabhai as to what he will do. Juthabhai is already, I believe, living in the Ashram and so also Bhagwanji. It must be Juthabhai's business to see to the proper unkeep of the ground and the premises. The trees are a most valuable part of the estate.

You have asked Parikshitlal to give you draft rules. Evidently my letter sending you a copy of these was not received by you when you sent your letter.

I enclose herewith a letter received from Dr. Bidhan in connection with the collections. You may destroy the letter after reading it.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

[PS.]

You have done well in going to N.'s rescue.[3]

Encls. 2 letters

From a photostat : G. N. 1131.

99. "HARIJAN" IN MADRAS

The reader must have been surprised to see the transfer of *Harijan* publication from Poona to Madras. Sjt. R. V. Sastri and Mrs. Sastri have dedicated themselves to Harijan service. Sjt. Sastri felt that in Poona he was not able to give full service to the cause and that in

[1] Parkishitlal L. Majumdar.
[2] A weaver
[3] The postscript is in Gujarati

Madras he would be able to make use of all the talents God had bestowed upon him. The argument went home to me. The result is the transfer of *Harijan* to Madras. What will happen or can happen after 3rd August next need not worry the reader or me. 'One step enough for me' is as true of organizations as of individuals. The additional advantage of the transfer to Madras is that Madras is the most advanced and cheapest city in all India for English printing. And what can be better than that *Harijan* should be published in a Presidency where untouchability flourishes in all its unshapeliness ? I entertain the hope that the transfer will not only be welcomed but appreciated by the reformers, the sanatanists and the Harijans in the South. *Harijan* is designed to serve all these three. An easy test of appreciation will be an increased circulation.

Harijan, 27-10-1933

100. A TRAGEDY

The longer I live the more do I realize that the happiness which I enjoy and which so many friends envy persists inspite of tragedies of which I have always had my due share. The latest is the disappearance of N. I have no doubt that her repentance was sincere. She struggled bravely against her past, but it did appear to me on my coming to Wardha that the struggle was getting too severe for her. She was becoming unhinged and losing control over herself. Previously, in one of her letters from Wardha, she had hinted that she might become insane. All the affection that could be shown to her was shown. She was never insensible to it. She was most responsive. But she was also most impulsive. She has gone away without any money or belongings. The reports published about her in the Delhi Press are sensational manufactures and do her grave injustice. She cannot be held responsible for her actions in her present mental state. Her proper place is in a philanthropic institution or in an asylum. Those who will throw a few silver piecess at her out of false compassion, or in order to get rid of her, will do her no kindness. Being irresponsible, she has been squandering what she has received. I would esteem it a favour if those who may come in contact with her will give me her address and show this writing to her.

Harijan, 27-10-1993

101. KHADI AND HARIJANS

Very few people have any notion of what khadi means to Harijans. Simple weaving is almost an exclusive speciality of Harijans, and even though mill spinning and weaving have deprived many Harijans of a source of livelihood, thousands of them are still dependant upon weaving. But a friend argues : "What is the use of keeping alive a perishing industry ? Why not give them instead an industry that may be growing ? Surely, you do not intend to confine them to worn-out occupations even when you are devising all manner of means for their uplift otherwise." Indeed, I have desire to confine Harijans, or for that matter, anybody, to spinning and weaving or to any one occupation, if they can be more profitably employed in any other; only I do not take the gloomy view of hand-spinning and weaving which the objector takes. I personally believe that hand-ginning, hand-carding, hand-spinning and hand-weaving have a brilliant future, at least in India. If the millions are to live with any degree of comfort, the mills must seek main custom outside India. The villagers must be induced to supplement their scanty resources by hand-spinning, hand-weaving, etc., assuming that millions of villagers could be better employed, for the indigenous mills to supply all the needs of the nation means long delay—several generations—and then, too, it must mean the need of big capital and dependence for machinery and technical skill upon foreign countries. In the abstract, whilst there may be nothing wrong in depending upon foreign machinery and foreign skill, in practice it cannot but be a terrible handicap upon the mill industry. So long as this industry has got to depend upon external help, it would be untrue to call it an indigenous industry.

On the other hand, khadi, as a village industry, requires very little capital. The implements can all be manufactured in the villages them-selves, and there is no lack of indigenous techincal skill. The only thing necessary is to change the mentality of the people. Inspite, therefore, of the most skilful arguments to the contrary, and of imposing statistics with regard to the output of mills, I remain confirmed in my opinion that khadi in India has a very big future. What we may not do voluntarily and out of conviction, we shall be obliged to do through force of circumstances. India has to live, that is, her millions have to live. There is no difference of opinion as to the fact

that they are not living today. They are merely existing. There is no other country in the world where so many million of people have only partial employment and where, inspite of the civilization being predominantly rural, the holdings are rarely two acres per head. To manufacture the whole of her cloth requirements through steam or electricity, or any other than the human power behind the wheel, is still further to deepen the unemployment of the population. An industrialized India must, therefore, mean utter extinction of many millions, including, naturally, Harijans, who occupy, to our utter shame, the lowest strata of society.

It is said that through highly industrialized processes every American owns what is equivalent to 36 slaves. If we use America as our model, and if we allowed only 30 slaves to every Indian instead of 36, out of our 31 crores of human beings, 30 crores must perform *hara-kiri* or be killed off. I know that some enthusiastic patriots will not only not mind such a process, but they will welcome it. They will say that it is better to have one crore of happy, contented, prosperous Indians, armed to the teeth, than to have 30 crores of unarmed creatures who can hardly walk. I have no answer to that philosophy, because, being saturated with the Harijan mentality, I can only think in terms of the millions of villagers and can only make my happiness dependent upon that of the poorest amongst them, and want to live only if they can live.My very simple mind cannot go beyond the little spindle of the little wheel which I can carry about with me from place to place and which I can manufacture without difficulty. In this connection a friend sends me the following paragraph[1] which is going round the Press :

> To relieve unemployment in certain industries the Nazis have ordered the stoppage of the use of machines which were displacing human labour. Commenting on this interdiction the *Manchester Guardian* remarks : "There has been a great deal of discussion about the effects of machinery in aggravating the unemployment crisis, but it has been left to the Nazis to do the logical thing and stop using it. . . . Mr. Gandhi's efforts to replace the spinning frame by the hand-wheel and the mechanical loom by the handloom are being paralleled closely in the German cigar and glass industries."

The *Guardian* concludes its remarks by observing that, if Germany's 'ethics become mediaeval, there is no reason why her economics should not become mediaeval also'.Replying to these

[1] From which only extracts are reproduced here.

comments, a correspondent writes in the *Guardian* :[i]

> Hitler, Gandhi and others who in different ways are endeavouring to slow production to a point at which all goods are consumed may be reverting to mediaeval methods, but handicrafts are neither retrograde nor barbaric. They are taught in every progressive elementary and secondary school . . . So long as machinery promotes the happiness and the prosperity of the masses as well as the classes it is a beneficent agent. But when it leads to the unemployment and starvation of millions, as is happening in the highly industrialized countries of the West, it becomes a curse. Machinery exists for man, and not *vice versa*, and must be made subservient to the well being of the people and should not be allowed to become their master.

That the village industries in Germany are being revived at the point of the sword is not relevant here. What is relevant is that a country, which has shown the highest techincal skill and is amongst the most advanced in the matter of industrialization, is trying to go back to village industries for solving the problem of her terrible unemployment.

Harijan, 27-10-1993

102. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR[1]

WARDHA,
3 a.m., October 27, 1933

Totaramji tells me that you know him. Many Harijans also know him very well. But running the Harijan Ashram or Mandir or Nivas, whatever you call it, is to be your responsibility. You should, therefore, follow your own plan. Treat me as an adviser only. I made the suggestion as is my wont and I may make many more such suggestions. Please remember that you are not bound to accept any of them.

Your going out in search of N. has deeply impressed me. Though I have had sufficient experience of your concern for others, your boundless compassion for N. fills me with the deepest admiration. Other friends have roundly blamed me for going out of my way to help her. You, on the contrary, seem to have got annoyed by my apparent indifference on this occassion. I bow to you in reverence a thousand times. Where my love has failed, may yours succeed in melting her heart. I understood your point in what you said regarding Utkal in your letter to Chandrashankar.

BAPU

[1] Gandhiji added this to the letter written by Chandrashankar Shukla.

[PS.]

I wish you would now finish off the task of selecting a name for the Harijan Ashram in consultation with Ghanshyamdas.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 1132.

103. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

October 27, 1933

DEAR MOTIBABU,

I was wondering why in reply to my postcard I had not heard from anyone about you. The delay has been more than made up for by your long and affectionate letter.

Let us be thankful that one eye remains for the present. But, as you say, if God wills it that the other eye should also go, He shall be praised.

I was sorry to hear of Swami Brahmanand's death. Death is a never failing friend. He comes to our assistance sometimes even when he is least expected. And it is our want of faith that makes us feel sorry when he comes.

I am glad you are prosecuting your khadi programme with an ever increasing faith.

When I travel in Bengal I shall be travelling like a prisoner under custody, going wherever my keepers would take me; and if they take me to your Ashram I should be, of course, delighted. You will, therefore, settle with the Head Jailor, Dr. Bidhan Roy; or you may write to the Asstt. Jailors, Satcowri Babu or Satis Babu.

As to Jawaharlal's views, did you not see the letters we have exchanged ?[1] I have there definately shown where I agree with him and where I disagree. But, if there are any specific points on which you desire my opinion more clearly than I have expressed, do please write to me without the slightest reservation.

Love to you. Mirabehn sends love.

Yours,
BAPU

SJT. MOTILAL ROY
CHANDRANAGAR

From a photostat G. N. 11046

[1] Vide " Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru" , 14-9-1933

104. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

October 27, 1933

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

It is three days since Mani, Mridu, her uncle and Babo arrived. Babo doesn't feel shy with me this time. His health also is fine. He and I play on the Japanese sadhu's drum. The sadhu is a jewel. He is extremely frank humble, cheerful and courteous. He is learning Hindi. He also spins on the charkha and the *takli*. He observes all the rules scrupulously. I have given many hours to both the young women. This morning I gave nearly two hours. I will give more time still at 11.30. They have come in great haste and are in equally great haste to return. They have, therefore, given me notice that they intend to return today by the Mail train. Mani's leg seems to require electric treatment and Mridu has to attend on some women who are ill. The two have formed an excellent pair.

. . .[1] Pattabhi[2] was here. I hardly met him for ten minutes. He had turned up without intimation. Jamnalalji rarely permits any body much time with me. Even to the representatives of mill workers [from Ahmedabad] he permitted one and a half hours in all in three sessions. He guards me with the strictest vigilance.

I was certainly grieved by Vithalbhai's death, though for himself it was a deliverance. We had well known that he would die in a foreign country. He seems to have been looked after very well. Subhas, it seems, was beyond all praise. From all sources I hear reports of his wonderful attention to Vithalbhai. I have written to him. You also should write. My letter was posted before the news of Vithalbhai's death was received.

Swami will remain here for some time yet. Thakkar Bapa has gone to Brindaban in search of N. His compassion has no limit. The woman is out of her mind. She never misbehaved here. She had gone insane. She has still not come out of the woods. If she comes back, I will take her in again. Amala is working hard at present. Duncan has buried himself in a village. Mary Barr is still here. She has recovered from her illness. Vinoba has been doing wonderful work for Harijans in villages Mani has gone with Anandi. Bablo has left too.

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] Pattabhi Sitaramayya

Devdas writes to me regularly. Dr. Datta paid him a visit. Khurshed[1] seems to be a little ill. I have written to Dr. Datta and asked him to see her too. Do not worry about my tour. I will take care of my health. It is Rajaji's wish that I should tour the South first. Anandi went and saw Lakshmidas. She is firm in her resolution not to marry [just now]. Give my blessings to Chandulal.

Blessing from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 36-8

105. TELEGRAM TO ADWAIT KUMAR GOSWAMI

WARDHA,
October 28, 1933

ADWAIT KUMAR
RADHARAMAN MANDIR
BRINDABAN

DO TAKE N. TEMPLE S IF SHE WISHES.

GANDHI

From a photostat : G. N. 806

106. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

October 28, 1933

BHAI MUNNALAL,

I got your letter. If you wished to live with me, why didn't you say so all these days ? It is not proper for you to feel unhappy as you do. You cannot accompany me on my tour. If you sincerely wish to stay in one place and work, you may work under Vinoba or Jamnalalji. But I am afraid you will not be able to stick to any place. If you can disprove my fear, I should like you to do so. I know you very well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8646

[1] Dadabhai Naoroji's grand-daughter

107. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

October 28, 1933

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

There was a wire from Subhas today saying that Vithalbhai's body will reach Bombay on the 9th and that you should perform the cremation rites. I have replied through the Press that I don't believe it likely that you will make a request to be released and that the rites should be performed without you, by Dahyabhai. There was no time to consult you, nor did I think it proper to do so. If you have any-thing to say, please let me know. I am writing to Dahyabhai.

I hope you got the letter which I wrote to you yesterday regarding Kaka's fast. Today is the third day. There has been no loss of weight so far. He continues to work in bed. He is quite cheerful . . . [1] is still here. But I don't think we can expect anything from him.

Prabhudas and Amba seem to be happy.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 38

108. LETTER TO JAISHREE RAIJI

October 28, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

You bring credit to your father.[2] The training you have had in a diplomat's family has not been fruitless. You have remained non-committed till the last. All right, apply to the Harijan Seva Sangh there if you have not done so, and send me a copy of the application. I will then do what I can.

Blessngs from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Gujarati : *Bapujini Shital Chhaayaman*, facing p. 9

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

[2] Sir Manubhai Mehta, Dewan of Baroda State

109. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[1]

WARDHA,
October 28, 1933

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. There is no question at all of asking forgiveness of Thakkar Bapa. But be sure that there was no contempt in Thakkar Bapa's language. His language is not polite. But I see him as the very embodiment of kindness. My close association with him fills me with joy. His love is boundless. I can see it not in his letters but in his work. I have come to believe that no one is lowly in his eyes. How can I convince you of it? You should come here and carry back a little comfort. Why should your mind be in turmoil? What wrong have you committed? What does it matter what others think of you? Why should it disturb you? What is it that troubles you? I can never believe that Thakkar Bapa's letter could have distressed you so much.

Nobody has complained against your nature to make me consider you worthless. And could you ever be worthy or unworthy in my eyes merely because someone says so? Do I have to know you through others? You must shake off your anguish. Come here and lighten your heart. Your misery makes me unhappy.

I am enclosing two letters from Harakhchand. Read them. If you like my suggestion about appointing him agent, and only in that case, you should place before the Committee the separate letter[2] I am enclosing on the subject.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] An extract from the letter appears in "Letter to Mathurdas Trikumji"
[2] Not available

110. A TEACHER'S DOUBTS

A teacher was somewhat puzzled while explaining to his students my writings under *Mangal Prabhat*[1] and he has asked certain questions regarding them. Here is the first one :[2]

My experience to date suggests that one's good lies in following the path which appears right to oneself. One has to discover for oneself the path followed by great men, and find for oneself who are great men. A great man who appears a paragon to one individual may seem worthless to another. There have been cases in which two individuals both regarding the same person as an authority interpret his words and actions in two opposite ways. The story of Virochana and Indra[3] is well known. At every step 'I' comes to the forefront. But the task is not accomplished even by my saying this. It cannot be claimed that what occurs to us is always the truth. What appears to me as truth today, may appear to be untruth after a couple of days. What is regarded as truth by a few has often been denounced by many. Hence we come to this terrible conclusion : Man can have a glimpse of truth only after making mistakes, stumbling on the way and tread-ing dangerous paths.

However, all this perplexity arises from a disregard of the prerequisites for the quest of truth. Entitlement and eligibility are as much essential in the case of truth as in any other. The person who wishes to see Truth in the form of God must observe the *yamaniyamas*[4]. Anyone who has not thus attained eligibility lacks the "insight"; he is as good as blind. Anyone who claims to have seen truth without so much as trying to develop the eye for catching a glimpse of it would look as ludicrous as one who presumes to impart knowledge of astronomy without having studied it.

[1] A collection of Gandhiji's articles on Ashram observances written from the Yeravda Central Prison; *vide* " 1st Footnote Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 18/22-1930

[2] The question, not translated here, was whether the better course was to follow the path of truth according to one' own lights or to follow in the footsteps of great men.

[3] *Chhandogyopanishad,* VIII. 7

[4] Rules and regulations enjoined by Shastras for spiritual aspirants

The teacher's second question is as follows:[1]

In saying "We have come to the border-line, etc.', my only intention was to say that we could now have an easy access to the subject. While discussing truth, we inevitably come to non-violence. That there can be no truth without non-violence has been proved to be as plain as the fact that two and two make four.

The teacher's third question is as follows:[2]

The sentence quoted here is a good example of my inadequate expression. I remember having some difficulty while drafting the article. I could not find the words I was looking for. However, if my condition is pitiable, the teacher's is no less so.

We all go on chanting the word 'non-violence' but little do we inquire into its true nature. We do not act in accordance with what it has been described to be, hence the language used with reference to it seems like a Chinese puzzle. The teacher has used expressions like 'destroying','facing', 'difficulties', 'suffering','winning them over', etc., but they have failed to reveal their full meaning to him. His very language suggests it. I do not regard this as his failing. This imperfection is almost universal.

By saying all this, I have put before the reader my difficulty and our ignorance of the subject. I believe I quite understand what I want to say, but I have not yet struck upon the language which would aptly convey my meaning. But I shall not accept defeat. Success is sure to come with repeated efforts

Non-violence does not destroy, it sustains. Hence it meets 'difficulties' by overcoming them. My yarn often gets entangled. If I cut it off, so much yarn goes waste. Cutting it off is easy and the process is over in no time. But, it does not lead me to truth. I 'face' the knot disentangling it, which is time consuming. But it saves the yarn and I learn a lesson in patience. When the knot is disentangled, my joy knows no bounds. I clear the way for other spinners. I add to my knowledge. I find that the time spent was not wasted, and thus I learn that the apparently easy and quick method of cutting up the knot was

[1] It was: "In the concluding part of your article on 'Truth' you say, 'We have come to the border-line beyond which lies ahimsa.' Do you mean that the former is a means to the latter ?"

[2] It read: "What do you mean when you say that one makes progress by putting up with difficulties, not by counteracting them ? What is your definition of non-violence in the restricted sense ?"

not correct and therefore not quick either. While disen-tangling the knot, not only did I face the difficulty but by living with it after having accepted it as such, I also learnt that I was the author of it. The responsibility for its coming into being rested with me.

I believe I have shown through the above example how many virtues are acquired by suffering in this manner. I think other instances too could be easily interpreted to yield the essence of my writings. Examples will be readly available. But this does not imply that all the problems of non-violence are capable of being solved. Or that somebody has all the keys. This philosophy has not yet reached perfection. Could any be said to have done so ? The knowledge of the scientist seems to be no more than the growing realization of his own ignorance. Non-violence is an abstruse science. We shall have to make many experiments, many people will have to sacrifice themselves. All that can be said with certainty at present is that non-violence appears to be the only straight and the shortest path to realization of God in the form of Truth. For a long time we have been treading the path of violence, but we seem to be going farther away from truth.

The killing of lower animals, small insects and even plants involves violence and is, therefore, sinful too. Nothing that is embodied can continue to do so without committing sin. From the worldly standpoint, however, the minimum inevitable violence committed for preserving the body is not regarded as sin.

We can now define violence in its narrow connotation. The wilful, wanton or arbitrary destruction of any living organism even smaller than an insect, is violence; not wishing, committing or abetting it is non-violence.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 29-10-1933

111. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

WARDHA,
October 29, 1933

MY DEAR ANAND,

You must get rid of this malaria fiend root and branch. I do hope you did not overtax yourself in going to Multan. Vidya is opening out. She is no longer moody; has walks with me. She likes the club arrangement. She is keeping good health and so is Mahadev. You are not to have any anxiety about her. She is absorbing herself in useful service today. She is doing some serving for me. She is having her English lessons regularly. She got me to write to your mother a long letter.[1] She churned her butter for the first time today. Therefore trust her to God.

Love.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy : National Archieves of India and Anand T. Hingorani.

112. LETTER TO KANTI PAREKH AND JAYANTI PARKEH

October 29, 1933

CHI. KANTI, JAYANTI,

I got your postcard. I think both of you have acquired useful capital. Take care of your health. Maintain the utmost purity of character. Write to me whenever you can. Kakasaheb is here. Today is the fourth day of his fast. He has taken a vow for a fast of seven days. He will break the fast at 1.15 on Thursday. His health is good. The fast is for atonement of sin. Surendraji and Durbari look after him. Prabhudas takes down what he dictates. He is extremely cheerful. He can drink sufficient quantity of water and so there is no trouble. Kishorelal and Gomatibehn are at Akola. They will go to Bombay at the end of this month.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Ganga T. Hingorani",22-10-1933

The condition of Ramabehn Joshi's arm can be described as fairly satisfactory now. She will come here tomorrow and then stay here. More and more girls are joining the Ashram here. The daily programme for them is craft for four hours and study for four hours. Marathi is a compulsory subject of study.

Balkrishna is experimenting with milk diet for building up good health. He fasted for four days and lived for another four days only on fruit. Now he only drinks milk, not even water. Today is the third day since he started drinking milk. He increases the quantity daily by half a pound. Today he will drink three pounds. We may not predict the result just now.

Swami Anand is here. All of them will be here only for a few days now. Kumarappa came and went back.

Vinoba has composed the following verse[1] enumerating the eleven vows. It is sung daily once or twice.

> Ahimsa, truth, non-stealing, *brahmacharya*, non-possession;
>
> Body labour, control of the palate and complete freedom from fear :
>
> Equal regard for all religions, swadeshi and looking upon all human beings as touchables :
>
> The eleven vows one should observe, with humility and resolve.

Mani and Bablo left with Anandi. Vanamala and Mohan must have joined them from Kathlal.

Totaramji and Hariprasad[2] are here. They will be sent to Sabarmati for Harijan work.

Vithalbhai's body will reach Bombay on the 9th. It will be carried to the cremation ground with due honours and Dahyabhai will light the funeral pyre. Manibehn and Mridulabehn were here and stayed for three days.

If in giving all this news I have repeated any details, I hope you will remember that I have grown old and forgive me. If I remembered all the letters which I write, I would be crushed by the weight of that memory itself. Just as the power of memory is worth preserving, so also the ability to forget is worth cultivating. If we don't have it, we would always be either laughing or crying. However, this was a little sermon by the way. Instead of omitting any news, would it not be better to take the risk of repeating some details ?

[1] The verse is in Marathi.

[2] Adopted son of Totaram Sanadhya

And now replies to your questions. What you say is perfectly true. "What can physical control avail ?"[1] Can we force anyone to remain unmarried ? Devdas and Prabhudas remained so till the age of 32, and married only when they found that they could no longer control themselves. Is it not better that one should humbly admit one's weakness rather than let the mind run after lustful thoughts ? I can testify that both of them tried hard to remain unmarried.

> He who curbs the organs of action but allows the mind to dwell on the sense-objects-such a one, wholly deluded, is called a hypocrite.[2]

If, then, both of them humbly express their desire to marry, it would be violence on my part to refuse them my blessings. They will continue to cherish the ideal of *brahmacharya.* One should strive hard to live up to an ideal, but if, despite one's best efforts, one cannot control one's mind, it would be better to be content with what one can do rather than live as a hypocrite. Anybody who acts in this manner deserves the blessings of his elders. One should stretch one's limbs, as the saying is, according to the length of the covering. In short, he who does not deceive himself or the world goes forward in the end. If I have not succeeded in explaining this idea, you may put me your questions when you get an opportunity.

I have had no letter from Indu recently, but Keshu had one. He is quite happy. Balbhadra and Dhiru also are with him. Manibhai Kothari is in Wadhwan. He is doing Harijan and khadi work there. My tour will commence on the 8th. I have already given you the names of the persons who will accompany me. The name of Ramnath 'Suman' should be added to the list. He is lover of Hindi literature, and a good writer. He wishes to join the Ashram, ultimately.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 6275

[1] *Bhagavad Gita,* III. 33.*Vide* also "Discources on the "Gita", 29-4-1926
[2] *Bhagavad Gita,* III. 6. *Vide* also "Discources on the Gita", 9-4-1926

113. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

WARDHA,
October 29, 1933

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

I have your letter. Jamnalalji has given me the letter you wrote to him. Jamnalalji is a bit chary of providing assistance to people in this manner. But he wants to help you. He however feels that a loan should be a loan according to proper legal formalities. The interest may well be slight or none at all but the land you finally decide to mortgage should be mortgaged now. That is one thing. The other is:

How much is the debt you have to repay? How did you happen to borrow from the A.I.C.C.? How did you incur the other debts? After you get the sum you want, are you sure you will not need to borrow any more money? What do you intend to do now? If it is necessary for you to come here to clarify all this, you may come, or reply fully through letter.

I hope you are well. There was only one letter for Prabhavati.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Jayaprakash Narayan Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

114. LETTER TO DR. M. S. KELKAR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
October 30, 1933

DEAR DR. KELKAR,

Will you put down as briefly as you can the reasons for your asking patients under milk treatment to drink as much water as milk you prescribe for them? I hope your experiment are prospering there.

Yours sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G. N. 6108. Also C. W. 3301. Courtesy : M. S. Kelkar

115. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

October 30, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter about the Hospital[1]. You ought to be able to say without fear of contradiction that the Swaraj Bhawan Dispensary is a perfect fraud and thoroughly boycotted. Without absolute proof, I am disinclined to believe that they fabricate cases. I am anxious to have this evidence, because it is necessary for framing my opinion about the Congress Hospital, for, I feel that we should be able to take possession of the Swaraj Bhawan strictly for Hospital work, if the Government management has proved to be a fiasco. If you think that the Congress Hospital or Dispensary should be run in the place where it is now being run and that no attempt whatsoever should be made to regain possession of the Swaraj Bhawan, an appeal certainly becomes necessary and then it should be issued in the names of Mohanlal Nehru[2] and Kamala.

I am glad that Mother is making steady progress. Evidently the successful conclusion of the marriage ceremony has also something to do with easing the mental strain she was having.

Andrews is expected here on Wednesday.

I understand what you say about Jamnalalji. When do you think it may be safely announced ?

Thakkar Bapa writes saying that you prohibited Congressmen from working for Harijan cause, even though they may not be offering civil resistence. Where is the truth! I have known nothing about any such embargo.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

[1] A hospital run by the Congress in the Swaraj Bhawan was taken over by the Government in 1931. After some time the British authorities "more for show than for anything else" decided to keep a dispensary open for the public. "But", the addressee wrote, "there is no evidence that even a single member of the public has ever taken advantage of it . . . I am told false entries are made in their books to show that many patients are being treated." After the seizure of this hospital, the Congress had started another which from April, 1932 was being run in a cottage adjoining the Swaraj Bhawan. The resources to run the Congress Hospital had been "almost exhausted."

[2] Addressee's cousin

116. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

WARDHA,
October 30, 1933

CHI. MRIDULA,

I have your letter.

At first I thought of sending you a telegram about my going. But then I had second thoughts. This letter should reach you tomorrow morning so I have not sent the telegram.

I think I will not ask either you or Mani to come here for the time being. Certainly not before the 8th, because, once the travelling begins, I would not like to send for anyone. It is another matter if you find it necessary to meet me and come. You would be free to do that.

That is why I do not wish to stop you from going to Allaha-bad for the sake of keeping you near by. But you have already talked to me and there is no need to go just for that. Still it may be necessary for you to have your case prepared and send it. But if you want to go to understand Jawaharlal's mind do go. You may also place before him all your complaints. Then you may let me know what he feels or ask him to inform me. I have not written anything to him. I have started the work. I have not sent your note, but have conveyed your complaint to Shankerlal. I am required to solve a great many problems within a shore time.

I hope you have had your teeth properly attended to. Illness refuses to take leave of Saralabehn. She keeps having some trouble or other.

Keep writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11185. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

117. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[1]

October 30, 1933

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Here is Tersey's letter. Vithalbhai has to be cremeted.[2] Do you have anything to do with the arrangements? You must have seen my note. If anyone hopes for my presence, disabuse him of the idea if you can. Of course if pressure is brought to bear on me I shall be able to manage, but I would rather that was not done. I do not feel at ease outside. My mind is always in jail. I shall tour for the Harijan cause. I hardly think of anything else.

Do make it a point to meet Hasanbhai regarding the market. If everywhere you find only dirt keep yourself aloof. Personal selfishness appears to be playing a considerable part in this matter.

The money for Utkal does not seem to be coming. Then, Harakhcand's report has come. I shall send it later. The purpose of writing this is not to say that you should work beyond your capacity. As for me, I see the sad state of affairs in Bombay and feel distressed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

118. LETTER TO H. K. HALES

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
October 31, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 25th instant. I would be the first person to congratulate anybody who brings concord out of the present discord, and I would wish you all success in your effort.

Undoubtedly the Hindu-Muslim tension is bad. I simply do not know how it can be removed. I am making all individual effort that I am capable of, but that is saying very little.

[1] An extract from the letter appears in "Letter to Mathurdas Trikumji, 30-10-1933

[2] The body of Vithalbhai Patel who had died in Vienna on October 22, was to be brought to Bombay on November 9.

Of course, my failures do not baffle me. I treat each one of them as a stepping stone to success. But that is different from ven-turing out without the slightest prospect of success. You may, there-fore, depend upon it that, whenever I see the slightest opportunity of pushing through a settlement and of my contributing to it. I would not hesitate to plunge in.

The White Paper, when it first saw the light, did not please me. It does so still less today.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 26-11-1933

119. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

October 31, 1933

MY DEAR ANAND,

I have your letter about Devdas. You have given me a good account. I can see from it how delighted Devdas must have been to receive news from an eye-witness. But I must confine this letter to the bombs which you say have burst upon you.

You must not exaggerate things that come from Father. You have to be prepared for these things, and if you will but keep calm and yet firm, all the clouds will vanish. You should talk gently but firmly to both the parents and tell them that you must be allowed to regulate your future. They have given you a liberal education. They may not now quarrel with the fruits thereof. Having made your position absolutely clear in as humble a manner as possible, you should take your own line of action. You may avoid arrest in Karachi. After all, Hyderabad is your scene of action, and there you will act in consultation with friends. One thing you should avoid as a good satyagrahi. You may not consult your convenience or predilections in choosing the scene of action. You should therefore, dismiss the idea of courting arrest somewhere near Wardha. You may not do it outside Sind. It would be inconsistent with the spirit of satyagraha.

I have discussed the whole situation with Vidya, and I think she agrees with me. I did not have to reason with her, but she volunteered the statement that when she resigned herself to your seeking imprison-ment and her remaining in Wardha, she concurrently resigned herself not to see you during your incarceration. It would be enough, she said,

if you are permitted to write to her as, of course, you would be, and I think that is the correct position even though you may not seek arrest in Karachi. Vidya is really getting on excellently. She does not look moody; she is not morbid and is feeling more and more cheerful. And I expect you too to be cheerful and to write cheerful letters to her.

Love.

From a microfilm. Courtesy; National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani.

120. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

October 31, 1933

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Rama and Vimala[1] arrived yesterday. Since you have seen them only recently, I do not write anything about them. I understand from Rama that you get the letters written to you and that you are eagerly expecting a letter from me. You are certainly entitled to expect one. But I did not write any, thinking that, when Rama herself could write very few letters, it would not be proper on my part to claim a share in the number of letters which you are permitted to receive. However, as Damayanti asked even trees for news of Nala, I used to inquire about you from anybody and everybody whom I met and managed to get some news.

You must, of course, make a return for having stayed with me for such a long time, and you have done so handsomely enough. Mahadev also has done that and is still doing it. But, as the sun always carries its shadow as it moves, so also is the shadow always followed by light. Similarly, Mahadev finds peace of mind through something or the other. That seems to be true about you also. You get the company of good books, and now you have been permitted to get butter from outside. What more could you want to keep you happy ? You have imbibed over the last many years the teachings of the *Gita* that one should remain cheerful in all circumstances. If, when the time to put that teaching into practice comes, we fail to do so, surely we would feel

[1] Addressee's daughter

ashamed of ourselves. I, therefore, don't worry about you, con-fident that you will certainly not fail in the test. I even hope that you will pass with first-class marks.

Kaka has undertaken a fast. His vow was for a seven-day fast. It will end on the day after tomorrow, that is, on Thursday. The fast is for the sake of . . . [1] He is extremely cheerful. The fast seems to have had no adverse effect on him. Of course, there is bound to be some weakness. He sleeps in the open air. He gets good sleep. He can drink plenty of water. In that respect, he can do much better than I. Darbari, who regards himself as Kaka's disciple, and Surendra attend on him. You can, therefore, easily understand that he is being looked after very well. Prabhudas works as his secretary. He takes down a few letters which Kaka may wish to dictate, and reads to him from the *Gita*, the Upanishads, etc. Swami also is here at present. Kishorelal and Gomati arrived today. The weather here is bound to be beautiful at this time of the year. The Wardha Ashram has become a girl's Ashram. There are more than 40 girls staying here just now. Lakshmi-behn has been working extremely hard, and Dwarakanath helps her. Recently, we have engaged a musician, but the prayers are conducted by Lakshmibehn herself. I knew that she possessed a sweet voice, but I did not know that she knew nearly a hundred *bhajans*. Two prayers, the evening prayers on Thursday and Friday, are conducted by Mathuri,[2] and Yoga[3] joins her in singing the *ghazal* on Thursday.

We celebrated Prabhudas's marriage a few days ago. The bride belongs to North India. Her name is Amba. She is in her 25th year. The choice was Prabhudas's own, and the discovery also was his. Amba's simplicity surpasses Prabhudas's. She has plenty of courage, too. Prabhudas is very happy. The two will stay here at least as long as I am here. My tour begins on the 8th. Nobody, neither Kashi[4] nor Chhaganlal[5] nor any other relative or friend from outside, was invited for the marriage. The bride also was accompanied by only six persons. One can, therefore, say that this was the simplest wedding we have celebrated. The marriage ceremony was performed by a priest from Wardha under the guidance of Kaka.

[1] The name has been omitted.
[2] Lakshmibehn Khare's daugher.
[3] Narayan M. Khare's brother's daughter.
[4] Prabhudas Gandhi's parents
[5] *Ibid*

Among the girls whom you know, Chandrakanta[1] also is here, and so is Vidya Hingorani. She will stay here at least for a year. Vinoba, as you know, stays in a village (of Harijans) about a mile from here. But the moral responsibility for this girls' Ashram is his. Anandi, Babu and Bachu had come here with me, but they have returned now. You will be surprised to know that the girls do not like to go to Sharda Mandir for education.They want arrangements to be made at home. I am in search of suitable persons. I don't think there will be any difficulty. Besides them, there are Vanamala, Mohan, Mani and Bablo. All of them live in the Harijan Children's Ashram run by Anasuyabehn. They went to it quite willingly. Of course they find it a little difficult to get used to the food, etc. The food for Harijan girls is bound to be quite simple, and they get very little milk and ghee, too. If we insist on bringing up our children on food like theirs, they would soon grow thin. I am, therefore, thinking what arrangement to make so that the children, even while they stay in that Ashram, may get proper food. In the mean time, they somehow manage to get the food which they require. Amina's children also are staying in this same Ashram. Unlike our children, they feel perfectly at home there. They play and enjoy themselves the whole day. A munshi has been engaged to teach them the Koran and Urdu.

You must have heard that finally the [Sabarmati] Ashram was given over for Harijan work. It has been decided to send Totaramji to the Ashram. Hariprasad also will go there. Both of them are here at present. Pannalal[2] intends to start an independent dairy. I have written to him to come here. At present he is with Nanibehn[3] and Gangabehn[4] in Ahmedabad. Our dairy is being run by Titus near the Kankaria lake under the supervision of Shankerlal[5]. I think it is running very well. We have no responsibility even for that.

I suppose you know that the Ashram and the Vidyapith libraries have been handed over to the Ahmedabad Municipality. Raojibhai[6] and

[1] Sister of Sumangal Prakash

[2] Pannalal Jhaveri

[3] Pannalal's Wife

[4] Pannalal's step-mother

[5] Shankerlal Banker

[6] Raojibhai Nathabhai Patel who had been the head of the Khadi department at the Sabarmati Ahram

Mohanlal Bhatt[1] are expected here in a day or two. Ba is pre-paring to reach the Mandir. Manu is here. Dhiru, Balabhadra and Indu may be said to have decided to stay on in Bhavnagar. Dudhi-behn also has been living there with her children. Nila Nagini's Sirius is in Sharda Mandir. I am sure you recognize this handwriting.[2] I think I have now given you plenty of news. I can give still more, but I have no time. Swami, therefore, will give the rest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 5513

121. TELEGRAM TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

WARDHA,
November1, 1933

ANAND HINGORANI
SAHITIPUR
BUNDER ROAD
KARACHI

YOUR LETTER. SHOULD TAKE ACTION HYDERABAD. UNNECESSARY OUTSIDE SIND.[3]

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy : National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani.

122. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Unrevised *Novermber 1, 1933*

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Your several letters to hand. I see you have handed to the Press the two resignations[4]. They should clear that air a bit.

I do not follow the Hindu Sabha activities. They are vicious. It is

[1] Manager of Navajivan Press
[2] Apparently Gandhiji dictated this to Swami Anand.
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Anand T. Hingorani"
[4] Of Jamnalal Bajaj and Dr. Sheikh Mohammad Alam

most unscrupulous if they are making use of my name in connection with *shuddhi*.[1] If you have any literature please pass it on to me. I think that the nationalist Press so called or real has not welcomed its activities and has been known often to condemn it. I do not know anything about the embargo on M. A. K. Azad's book. As to the Harijan activities, the complaint is wholly unjustified. My conscience is absolutely clear. So far as you and I are concerned, we can clear our minds and hands by exchanging letters, if you like. I do not know what aggressive action is possible or desirable beyond an emphatic condemnation of specific acts.

As to Gorakhpur, I do not see what can be done. I am finding it hard to get funds for your workers and the Dal people. I am still talking about both. Baba Raghavdas told me he was trying grain collections for the peasants in distress. He is under promise to send me authentic details of persecution.

Nariman[2] was here yesterday. I have advised him to see you and told him that you were my political chief! What else could I do ? I stand thoroughly discredited as a religious maniac and predominantly a social worker. I told him that if I felt convinced that the A.I.C.C. members desired discontinuance of C. D. and a council-entry programme, I would at once ask you to convene a meeting of A.I.C.C.I do not do so because I believe that the majority will insist on a C. D. programme and I do not want to invite the ordinance sword for it. I have told him too that I would not resist any programme that the A.I.C.C. might want though I could not give my approval to the suspension of C. D. I believe Kelkar's[3] attitude to be honest and consistent. He frankly dislikes N. C. O. and C. D. He would not join the terrorists or whatever they may be called. Then for a man of political activity, council-entry is the only programme such as it is. Hopeless inactivity is the worst of all and should be discountenanced.

I think I have now covered all the points raised in your letters and even not raised. It is nearing 4 a. m.

Hope Mother's progress continuing. Herewith note[4] for Kamala.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

[1] Literally, 'purificatory rite'. Here reconversion to Hinduism.
[2] K. F. Nariman
[3] N. C. Kelkar
[4] This is not available.

123. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

There is a saying in English that great men think alike, and, since both of us are great, we thought alike regarding the cremation rites for Vithalbhai.[1] I have written to Dahyabhai. I am not likely to publish anything as being your view. With regard to the wires and cables which you have received, after informing the Major[2] write one sentence in your next letter to me to the following effect : "On my behalf please thank through the Press all those who have sent letters and wires or cables of condolence." If the Major cannot pass that on his own, he should write to the I. G. and, if he passes it, we shall publish it . . . [3]

Nariman was here yesterday. He took a fairly long time with me and I readily gave it. My warden[4] let me do that. Just now, however, we may pound any amount of paddy we like but we shall get nothing but chaff.

Deenabandhu is arriving here today. He is returning after an extensive tour, and so I expect that he will want much time with me and I shall have to give it.

Kaka's fast will end tomorrow. He is cheerful. He doesn't seem to have been visibly affected by the fast. He doesn't feel a burning sensation [in passing urine] as I do. He can drink plenty of water, no matter whether it is mixed with salt or soda or is hot or cold. If God would grant me the same ability, I should even at this age like to improve upon Bhansali'[5] performance. I wouldn't mind if, in consequence, I became crazy like him. He wears a codpiece of hessian suspended from a string of coir tied round his waist. He eats moistened flour and wanders about. He reappears sometimes in the form of

[1] In his letter dated October 29, 1933 the addressee had said that he had informed friends that it would be improper for him as a satyagrahi to request Government to release him for performing the rites.

[2] Superintendent of the Nasik Jail

[3] Omission as in the source

[4] Jamnalal Bajaj

[5] Jaikrishnadas Prabhudas Bhansali, noted for his long fasts

a postcard and tells me in it that he is getting real spiritual ex-perience only now.

During the fast, [Kaka] also did some writing through dictation. Prabhudas has become his honorary secretary and also recites from the *Gita* for him. Since Prabhudas has been Kaka's favourite disciple, the arrangement suits the latter very well. Kishorelal and Gomati also arrived yesterday. I was the cause of their coming.

● ● ● [1]

Kaka has done his duty as friend and father to the best of his ability . . . [2] continues to follow his own way in his inordinate pride. But I have not given up hope of him. I do believe, though, that his eyes will not open till he stumbles some day. What you say is quite right. A coward's wisdom won't carry him far. On the contrary, if an insolent boy like . . . [3]who is always flying in the air, became wise, his wisdom would never desert him afterwards and would help him fearlessly to mount the gallows. But that seems too good to come true. I think Kaka will soon regain his strength. Don't worry about him. During the fast, I didn't let my knowledge as a quack rust, so that, over and above the spiritual benefit from the fast, his body has certainly benefited. You did well in administering a powerful dose of medicine[4]. . . and Pandya[5] . But the effect of such medicines does not last long and their reactions are sometimes dangerous. I am not saying this to criticize your medicine. My only purpose is to draw your attention to the truth. Mahadev writes to me regularly. He has been collecting books from all sources. I suppose one day all those books will go to a public library. I hope he doesn't go blind in jail through excessive reading. I do intend to send him a mildly-worded prohibitory order. Dr. Datta visited Devdas [in jail]. The latter seems to be making good use of his time. He reads, teaches, plays games and spins. My programme is as follows : Up to the end of this month, the C. P., then Delhi, then the Punjab, then Sind, then Rajputana, then the U. P., Bengal, Assam, etc. This is the plan at present. But it is not impossible that there may be some change in this programme and I may go to Madras earlier. I shall be leaving this

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] The names are omitted in the source.

[3] *Ibid*

[4] The addressee, in his letter, had called the dose *hiranyagarbha matra* and meant 'suggestion to court imprisonment forthwith'.

[5] Mohanlal Kameshvar Pandya, a worker of Kaira District

place on the 8th. I shall have to come back later for two or three days for a tour of the Wardha taluka. I will write to Deodhar regarding your letter. Rajendrababu has again been removed to a hospital. I think he will now be kept there for some time.

Blessing from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 39-43

124. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[1]

WARDHA,
November 1, 1933

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I had a long talk with Nariman. I let him also have my answer to the question in your last sentence, that my desire to give up leadership has not weakened the least bit. On the contrary, it is becoming stronger and stronger. But it cannot be given up just like that. For I had hardly spoken when Nariman remarked that I was issuing a threat. I have got the impression that Nariman would not like to enter the Municipality by opposing the Bill. We then talked about many other things. I shall not take up your time by going over them. Gosibehn and Jamnabehn are here. Andrews is coming today.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

74 WALKESHWAR ROAD
BOMBAY-6

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] An extract form the letter appears in "Letter to Governor of Bengal", 2-11-1933

125. LETTER TO GOVERNOR OF BENGAL

WARDHA,
November 2, 1933

H. E. THE GOVERNOR OF BENGAL
CALCUTTA

DEAR FRIEND,

Though I have not the honour to enjoy personal acquintance with you, I had the good fortune to know you through Sir Samuel Hoare when I was in London in 1931. On the strength of that introduction, I venture to share the enclosed[1] with you. It is a letter from an esteemed worker. It speaks for itself. I have the hope that proceedings described therein could not possibly meet with your approval. The civil resister of whom mention is made in the letter is the writer's brother. No doubt a civil resister is out for suffering, but I should think that, according to the standard apparently accepted today, all methods of torture would be avoided by Governments claiming to be civilized.

I shall feel thankful to know that you have personally interested yourself in the case I have ventured to bring to your notice.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

126. INTERVIEW WITH DR. CONGER[2]

November 2, 1933

DR. CONGER : Is the hand of God behind good only, or is it behind evil also ?

GANDHIJI : It is behind good, but in God's hand it is not mere good. His hand is behind evil also, but there it is no longer evil. "

[1] In his letters dated October 27 and 28 Satis Chandra Das Gupta had described the inhuman treatment meted out to his brother Kshitish Chandra Das Gupta and other persons in Hijli Jail for their refusal to salaam the jail authorities.

[2] This is reported by Chandrashankar Shukla who was at the time working as Secretary to Gandhiji and had kept notes of the interview which was later reproduced in his book *Conversations with Mahatma Gandhi*

Good" and "evil" are our own imperfect language. God is above both good and evil.

Q. There is God's will behind every one of our action, is it not ?

A. Even allowing that there is His will behind every action, man can say that certain things God allows, wills or prohibits. All this is taken to mean His "will".

Q. You said there was God's inspiration behind your twenty-one days' fast. You have also spoken of "wrestling". What exactly do you mean to convey ?

A. These are the babblings of an imperfect man. Man's wrestling with God is like that of an infant's wrestling with the mother. The infant does wrestle with the mother; and when the mother gives it a feed the infant says : "I wrested it from her."

Here Gandhiji gave the dictionary meanings of the words "wrestle" and "wrest".

Similarly God, when He parts with something, does so with pleasure, if God has pleasure and pain. A man who surrenders everything at His feet says to Him : "I will die, if you don't give me a certain thing.". He defies and challenges God. In millions of examples God lets such men reach the point of death. Then we say that He has thoroughly tested the man. That, however, is our own feeling. If man can somehow know God's way of putting things, I don't know what He would say. We foolish beings think that we have exhausted our strength in wrestling with Him. With God there is neither wrestling nor wresting. If God is just, He would not torture His devotee.

Q. Is God just or not ?

A. God is just. Rather, He is not jut but merciful. He is just because He is merciful.These, however, are echoes of our own weak feeling. Man also sometimes talks of giving God His due. But what can a slave give to the Master ? In relation to God man is always a debtor, and never a creditor.

Q. Is faith necessary or effort ?

A. Really both faith and effort are necessary.

Q. Has man got a choice ?

A. Man has got a choice, but as much of it as a passenger on board a ship has. It is just enough for him. If we don't use it, then we are practically dead.

Q. God has a purpose which He is working out in the world, is it not ?

A. I qualify the statement by saying that this is human speech. I don't know God's purpose, because I am not God. I am a man. I therefore try to comprehend God and His purpose not through speech but through life. I cannot deal with the hundreds of thousands of beings in the universe as a unit. I cannot enter into the heart of every one of them, because they are infinite in number. But God is all powerful. Just as He has a purpose for the universe as a unit, He has a purpose for every particle of life too—for man as well as the ant.

Q. Is it a good purpose ?

A. It is a good purpose—but "good" in the way of our limited human speech.

The Sino-Indian Journal, Gandhi Memorial Number, December 1948.

127. NOTES

DISTRESS IN ROHTAK, PUNJAB[1]

This is a tale of distress that ought to move philanthropists to action. Any contributions sent to the Editor, *Harijan,* 8-c, Pycroft's Road, Triplicane, Madras, will be acknowledged and forwarded the proper quarters.

THE FORTHCOMING TOUR

"How would the collections, made during the forthcoming tour, be distributed ?" is the question put by several workers. They will be handed to the Central Board with instructions to use them as far as may be for the province or the district or the taluk or the town, in which they may be collected. Whilst this will be the general rule, I do contemplate receiving in some places large single donations which will be utilized for the Harijan cause wherever the need is the greatest. It must be obvious that any rigid rule restricting the use of collections to the places where they are collected will defeat the very end of workers or donors for fear of the collections not being used in their districts or in the best manner possible. They should realize that the Central Board has an efficient system of account keeping, that accounts are audited

[1] This was appended to Amritlal V. Thakkar's appeal for contributions to the fund started by the Harijan Sevak Sangh for rehabilitating Harijans of Rohtak District where 21,000 houses were detroyed due to heavy rains in September 1933; *vide* "Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar", 10-10-1933

and, I believe, published regularly.

HIS LOVE FOR HARIJANS[1]

In the hasty tribute[2] I paid to the memory of Vithalbhai Patel, I omitted to mention the unforgettable scene I witnessed at the Harijan quarters in Godhra, which place I visited in 1917[3] for its political conference. There was a Harijan conference, too, held at the time, and I had invited the audience to come to the Harijan quarters and hold the conference there, if they were sincere in their professions.[4] Whom should I see there if not Vithalbhai Patel, who was then a member of the Legislative Council, dressed in the peasant garb with a Sadhu's topi on his head ?[5] He mixed with the Harijans with the greatest free-dom and I know that he evinced the greatest interest in the Harijan cause. With him the sweeper was as good as any other person, no matter what his caste might be. He never concealed his opinion or practice in order to please the orthodox. Let me hope that on the 9th instant, when the last rites are performed, Harijan tears will freely mingle with those of the multitude who will pay homage to the memory of the deceased patriot.

Harijan, 3-11-1933

128. THE CRY OF ORISSA

In the morning of the 17th inst. (October), we went to Khandayta. Here the rushing waters had broken through the banks and for miles and miles a new river had come into being, destroying many a home. Very few houses appeared to be standing. The Marwadi Society has carried on operations here. It

[1] A similar article in Gujarati appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 5-11-1933.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Janakdhari Prasad", 25-10-1933

[3] The source has 1916. Gandhiji had visited Godhra in November 1917; *vide* "Speech at Gujarat Political Conference-I", 3-11-1917

[4] The Gujarati version here has the following additional sentences : "And for the first time in the history of Godhra, the Harijan colony was crowded with caste Hindus. The place overflowed with people. Abbas Saheb and his wife were no doubt there."

[5] The Gujarati version here adds : "As I had never seen Vithalbhai in this dress, I could not recognize him immediately. But when I did, we heartily embraced each other and had a hearty laugh. No doubt Vithalbhai had deliberately donned this dress but it also shows his simplicity and readiness to mix with people."

has been feeding 3,500 persons from 25 villages and doling out 7 seers ($1\frac{1}{2}$ seers of Cuttack is equal to 4 lb.) of rice per month per head and one cotton sheet, and husk for cattle. Thus the Society has distributed Rs. 5,000 among these. At another centre, the Society has been giving relief to 5,700 people from 27 villages; each person gets here 26 tolas of rice. There is a big rush even for this little dole. There are two central depots in Cuttack and two in Puri. Nearly Rs. 15,000 have been spent there. From Khandayta we went to Khadarda. Half the number of houses belonging to Harijans have been razed to the ground. Those that remained have become dilapidated. There we saw a woman only half clad and in perfect destitution. She com-plained of want of work. In a house nearby, we saw a sister lying on the damp floor and suffering from high fever. These people will need clothes against the approaching cold weather. From Khadarda we went to Jharpada. There we saw eight volunteers working under most difficult circumstances. They distributed medical relief among ailing people and they had rigged up a king of accommodation for admitting very bad cases. You can imagine what sort of nursing these poor patients can get. Here 4 lb. of rice (costing six pice) per week are issued to adults. Half the rations are doled out to minors. Those who are able-bodied get nothing. Therefore relief is confined prin-cipally to women and children. I cannot imagine at the present moment a better use for the money of those who are charitably inclined. You should not imagine that anything like adequate relief is being given. More depots could be opened if there was more money. It is possible to make the best use of 40 to 50 thousand rupees per month, for, even at the rate of 8 as. per month, out of half a lakh of rupees only one lakh persons can be reached, and the number affected is surely larger.

I have translated certain extracts from letters received from Sjt. Harak[h] chand Motichand, who has been specially sent to Orissa in order to help the local Flood Relief Committee, of which Deena-bandhu Andrews has accepted the Chairmanship. Thakkar Bapa rebukes me, and he has every right to do so, by saying:

Thakkar Bapa has to be pardoned for forgetting that notice of the marriage was necessary in the interest of the Harijan cause.

How can you close the columns of the *Harijan* to the distress of the

people who are sorely affected by the flood ? They are no better of than Harijans. And if you will plead only for those who are labelled as 'Harijan', even so there are thousands of these labelled ones also. Surely, if you can give some space to a description of the Devdas-Lakshmi marriage, you ought to take notice of the distress amongst the flood-stricken people of Orissa. You have already issued a moving appeal for Orissa. To open the columns of the *Harijan* to periodical descriptions of the effects of the Orissa floods is but a logical extension of what you have done.

But love is blind. And he is a lover of humanity in distress, no matter in what quarter of the globe that humanity is to be found. His love is limited only by the limits that God Almighty has prescribed. Therefore, he exclaims : "See what my workers got the other day for my Bhils in the Panch Mahals. Why can't *you* get much more for the more numerous population of a whole province ?" He is right. And in all humanity I make this appeal to whomsoever may see it. There is no doubt the distress. I have always held that Orissa is the most helpless and the poorest province of India. Thousands of pilgrims visit the ancient temple of Puri for acquiring merit. Hundreds among them are rich enough to satisfy the hunger of the hungry and clothe the naked. Times are not doubt bad. That is just the opportunity for the moneyed people to deny themselves many things they have hither to held necessary for their comfort or enjoyment and establish their right to the wealth God has blessed them with, by unstintingly helping the helpless.

Somehow or other, ever since my return to India in 1915, Orissa has been to me an epitome of India's distressful helplessness. The Bombay Committee is there, but I must tell the citizens that their response is very poor. At the time of writing I find that only Rs. 12,000 have been subscribed by Bombay. I cannot recall an instance when Bombay had pleaded bad times in the face of hunger and nakedness. Bombay has felt uneasy in its cinemas and theatres, with the cry for help ringing in the ears of her citizens. Let them not do less now than they have done before. And why should not wealthy people of the other parts of India wake up and vie with Bombay in catholic charity ? Any money sent to the Editor, *Harijan*, at 8-C, Pycroft's Road, Triplicane, Madras, will be acknowledged in these columns and forwarded to the proper quarters.

Harijan, 3-11-1933

129. TWO CRUEL CASES

The record of steady progress reported from week to week in these pages is perhaps more than balanced by the revelations of inhumanity towards Harijans that come to light from time to time. At a village called Samarkha in the district of Kheda, Gujarat, the caste villagers are reported to have burnt the crops of Christian Harijans because one or more of them had the courage to draw water from a public well. The case is now said to be pending before the Courts.

In the village of Dholka, in Ahmedabad District, caste men are reported to have horsewhipped some Harijans, two of them seriously because one of them had the temerity to bathe in a public tank.

These are not the only cases of their kind. They are serious enough to have seen the light of day. We have no knowledge of the many petty assaults committed upon innocent Harijans for the exercise of human rights recognized by law.

These cases should open the eyes of sanatanists. I have not known a single sanatanist defend such inhumanity. Let them either cooperate with the the reformers or act separately, but effectively, in preventing or dealing with such occurrences.

The duty before workers is clear. They may not hesitate to take such cases to court, when it becomes necessary. But, before so doing, they should make every attempt to bring the wrongdoers to a sense of the wrong done and to induce the to make adequate reparation. I imagine that this can be done, if, for instance in the case of Samarkha, well-known men and women from Nadiad or even Ahmedabad, if necessary, went to the village and reasoned with the wrongdoers who have inherited the habit of thinkng that caste Hindus may deal with Harijans as if they were mere chattels and not human beings. This dark ignorance of the elementary rights of human beings can be dispelled by the light of public opinion playing upon the darkness. I hope no Hindu thinks that he need not concern himself in the case of Christian Harijans. These have surely the same rights with Hindu Harijans to public activities that caste men have. If the latter do not want to make use of public institutions, it is open to them at their own expense to erect others, for their exclusive use. Sects and communities do build separate schools and hospitals for themselves out of funds they themselves subscribe. No one takes exception to these. But no one has the right to prevent anyone else from using what belongs to the general public. And then, it should be remembered that Christian

Harijans are our own creation. The evil of untouchability has spread in quarters wholly unexpected. We may not wince if now we have to pay the penalty for having harboured the evil for untold generations.

Harijan, 3-11-1933

130. NO NEED FOR A TANNERY ?

A correspondent has raised the following question :

> I can understand the removal of the offices of the Provincial or Central Board of the Servants of Untouchables Society to the Ashram donated for Harijan use. I can also understand the hostel scheme and the one for establishing a Harijan colony. But a tannery does not fit in, and if a tannery should be there, why not also a department for teaching scavenging and sanitation; for, it is as much a Harijan work as tanning ?

The fallacy of the argument lies in misunderstanding the purpose of the proposed tannery. It is that tanning should be a great national industry. The leather constitutes an immense business, and instead of exporting raw hide, we should keep it in India and manufacture the various things we need. It must mean a great addition to the wealth of the country. Now tens of thousands of Harijans are engaged in tanning. It is an honourable profession and a lucrative business, and can be much more lucrative if it is well organized. But the tanning done in the villages is of the crudest type. Moreover, all the processes are not performed in a hygienic or scientific manner. If they were performed in a scientific manner, there would be no prejudices against cattle skinning and tanning as they exist today. The idea, therefore, behind having a technological department at the new institution is to give dignity to the occupation, purging it of all crudeness and uncleanness. Then, again, it is not as if only Harijans will be doing the work. They will be doing it side by side with non-Harijans. No one will be forced to learn it and no one can dare suggest that no Harijan tanner would want to learn the scientific or the cleaner method. Lastly, the reference to the technological department is merely by way of illustration. If all goes well, there will be many other departments opened including even one for exploring the best method of rendering sanitary service in which all can take part. Our indifference towards it has resulted in the increase of diseases and in insanitary habits becoming confirmed. I am hoping that there will be no trade or profession neglected which can be of benefit to the Harijans, whether it has been hitherto followed by them or not.

Harijan, 3-11-1933

131. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
November 3, 1933

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I enclose herewith a copy of my letter[1] to the Governor of Bengal. Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta, the author of the enclosures to the Governor's letter, is a valued and well-known co-worker. His non-violence is deep-rooted, not at all superficial, and one of the truest of men it has been my good fortune to meet. He first came to know of the Hijli Jail practice when he understood that his brother who is a civil resister was given standing hand-cuffs. Bar fetters are different from hand-cuffs. Bar fetters are meant for the legs.

At the present moment I am not resorting to any public agita-tion in connection with the things that come under my observation. I pass them on to the authorities. Therefore, unless I tell you to the contrary, all such correspondence should not be published at your end either. Apart from this, there is no restriction upon the use to be made by you of such information.

I send you also a copy of a note received from the Frontier Province. That discloses a tale far worse than the treatment in the Hijli Jail as disclosed in Sjt. Satisbabu's letter to me. Naturally, nobody can vouch for the accuracy of the information from the Frontier Province. But, after the revelations made by Father Elwin, it would not surprise me if the note is found to be an under-statement. The note has just come to me, and I have not yet decided what use I should make of it here.

C. F. Andrews is here.

BAPU

From a photostat : G. N. 1473.

132. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

My own opinion is that the atrocities such as are referred to in the Frontier Province note should first be dealt with privately, and all the

[1] *Vide* " Letter to Governor of Bengal", 2-11-1933

means that we can employ to induce the authorities to adopt less cruel measures should be employed. I am asking Andrews to deal with the Frontier Province note. And if you have no objection I would like you to show the note to Sir Tej Bahadur and see what he has got to say and if he is at all inclined to move.

I enclose herewith a copy of my letter to the Governor of Bengal about what is going on in Hijli.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

133. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

WARDHA,

November 4, 1933

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

Deenabandhu Andrews is here. He will leave today and sail for England on the 11th. You had promised him, while in England, to give or get Rs. 5,000 for Santiniketan. Andrews, of course, didn't like to remind you. If you can send the money, please do so. Gurudev is always in need of money, and so, if he has made any plans on the basis of the sum promised by you, they would have to be abandoned and he would be worried. I hope you keep excellent health. Andrews showed me your letter. Please don't worry about me. If God wants me to complete the tour, He will preserve my good health. Where shall I find a better watchman or doctor than He ?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 5930. Also C. W. 3246. Courtesy : Mahesh P. Pattani.

134. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

November 4, 1933

CHI. MANI,

I got your letter. Dahyabhai is putting up a good fight.[1] Let him

[1] According to the addressee it was in connection with the arrangements etc., for cremation rites of Vithalbhai Patel.

fight wherever he sees unworthy motives and insincerity. I hope you are getting proper treatment. Do write to me regularly. I was very glad that Babo came here. Ba will [court arrest] after I go. Anyway we must keep ourselves ready for that.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gurajati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 110

135. ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS [1]

[Before *November 5, 1933*]

WHAT IS THE LEAST WE CAN DO ?[2]

One can have attachment even for service. True service can be rendered only by giving up all attachments. Cannot the weak and the infirm worship God ? One can serve even mentally. You can take a couple of Harijan girls into your household and bring them up.

INSTRUCTIONS TO A YOUNG MAN[3]

Live on milk, chapati and boiled greens. Give up chillies and spices. Take moderate exercise in the open. Engage yourself in nation-building activities and go on repeating Ramanama. If you do this, you may be able to overcome wet dreams.

HOW TO CURE THIS DISEASE ?

I am sure your disease can be cured. You must give up rich food and medicines. If you spend your time outside the house in the open, live on fresh milk, fresh fruit, greens and chapatis, take moderate exercise within the limit of your strength, avoid reading exciting literature and do not go to films and plays, you can be cured of your disease.

HOW TO CONCENTRATE ?

The best way of acquiring concentration is to be absorbed in whatever physical work you may be engaged in. And one is bound to get absorbed in it if one tries to do it to the best of one's ability.

[1] This appeared under the title "From the Mail-bag".

[2] This was addressed to a woman in poor health who felt unhappy because she wished to but could not serve Harijans.

[3] Who had asked for a remedy for nocturnal discharge.

Among the names of God, that one will be most useful to us to which we are accustomed. I myself love Ramanama.

WHAT IS INNER VOICE ?[1]

What you say is logically correct. But if one does not have a clear idea as to what the inner voice means, the principle cannot be followed in practice. I believe that the inner voice is perfect knowledge or realization of the Truth. And because we do not see perfect Truth, because the truth that we see is imperfect, we look upon the seers of the world as our guides and follow them. Definite rules have been laid down to help us realize truth, and we can know Truth only by following them. Hence, just as we cannot know geometry without studying it , so also it is not possible for anybody to hear the inner voice without the necessary effort and training. Hence, accor-ding to my definition, a murderer cannot cite the inner voice in defence of his act.

LIMITATIONS OF A FAST[2]

I am firmly of the view that no one should resort to a fast for personal benefit. If everyone started fasting against others for redress of his or her grievances, there would be chaos in public life. This friend, therefore, should be persuaded to give up his fast.

THINK OF THE MILLIONS[3]

A person who follows the path of dharma does not feel helpless. One should not incur debt and spend money on medicines. If you compare yourself with the vast millions, you will see that your financial condition is a thousand times better than theirs. If you culti-vate strength to endure your financial hardships, all your sufferings will change into happiness. Of the eight persons, whoever can do physical labour should do it.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 5-11-1933

[1] This was in reply to a correspondent who had asked whether everybody would not follow Gandhiji's example and claim "inner voice" in justification of all his actions, good or bad.

[2] This was addressed to a man whose friend had lost his job and had gone on a fast to get it back.

[1] This was addressed to a correspondent whose financial condition was bad and who had asked for advice.

136. A WORKER'S PROBLEM

A worker serving the Harijan has sent a double-stringed necklace made of gold, *rudraksha* and coral along with Rs. 13-8-0 which he had received on the occasion of his maternal uncle's *shraddha*. In an accompanying note the gentleman says.[1]

The short and the straight reply to this is that one should not in the first place act against one's principles in order to please anybody. Once it becomes clear to us that what we are being persuaded to do is against our principle, there should be no question of giving in to anyone's importunity.

But I know this reply will not satisfy my correspondent. There is only one root cause of all human failings and that is our lack of faith in God. Chanting His name or visiting temples, etc., as a matter of convention is no sign of our faith in God, but rather a symptom of lethargy or mental weakness. Faith in God ought to be a matter of the heart. And one who has it should find no need to satisfy another. He who has satisfied God has triumphed; and, he who has not known him may please thousands, but is lost for ever inasmuch as he has to deny himself in trying to please one person after another. God is the soul within, because He pervades every single atom. And this is not only a belief but an established fact. Some know Him as Nature rather than by the name of God. Some know Him as the great Power. Even modern scientists concede that there is a power hidden in each atom which sustains the universe. Anyone who acts in subservience to this great Power will never be wanting in strength. His will-power will grow day after day. It is well known that those experienced in the ways of the world have shown the means by which this force can be demons-trated. This power cannot but become manifest in anyone who adopts them. As the *Harijanbandhu* has already referred to them[2] they need not be repeated here.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 5-11-1933

[1] The letter is not translate here. The correspondent had asked how one could get over the weakness which obliged one to act contrary to one's principles in order to please others.

[2] *Vide* "Some Moral Posers"

137. KUTCH HARIJAN WORKER BELABOURED

Bhai Gokuldas Khimji of Mandvi, Kutch, is a well-known social and Harijan worker. Writing about him a gentleman says that when I had gone to Kutch I had compared him to the docile cow. I remember that occasion. Gokuldas is indeed humble. He serves wherever he can. he just would not hurt anyone. He has written to Bhai Parikshitlal, Secretary, Gujarat Anti-untouchability League, as follows :[1]

In this case, victory lies with the person who has been beaten up and not with those who beat him up. The beating up of such humble workers as Gokuldas will generate a spiritual energy which will melt the core of caste Hindus and release the Harijans from bondage. The saner sanatanist Hindus of Kutch ought to make efforts to stop such rowdyism. Even if untouchability were dharma, it can be protected by spiritual strength. I do not know if it was ever safeguarded by brute force.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 5-11-1933

138. LETTER TO TOTARAM HINGORANI

WARDHA,
November 5, 1933

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I like your letter. It is full of love for Anand and Vidya. No doubt they are both sentimental. But they are both good as gold. You have every reason to be proud of them. I like, too, your idea of finding constructive service for both of them. But in this desire of yours I detect an excess of affection. I plead for restraint. Anand's soul will be injured, if he is made or induced to break the sacred pro-mise made to God. You do not need my assurance that Anand adores both you and your noble wife. He would love to do anything to win your approbation and blessings. It would be wrong to exploit parent-worship for weakening him. Therefore for the time being let him do the things he has promised to God to do. He will be safe. God will take care of him. As for Vidya, she has been smothered by the blind

[1] The letter is not translated here. He had insisted on taking Harijan children along a certain road. The Rajputs objected to this and beat him up.

affection of fond mother-in-law. She is doing khadi work here. Believe me she is keeping good health and so is Mahadev. She has very good company and lives her own life. She has English tuition and I want to add Hindi, if she will have it and her health stands it. If God wills, in a year's time she will return to you a daughter more lovable and stronger both in body and mind.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm. Courtesy : National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

139. LETTER TO PREMI JAIRAMDAS

November 5, 1933

MY DEAR PREMI[1],

I was glad to have your letter and the news about Father. Of course I have no home in Hyderabad as dear to me as yours. When I come you will keep me there or wherever on your behalf the Committee keeps me and the large company accompanying me. Is Father allowed to receive many letters ? Give him my love and tell him Vidya is flourishing.

Love to you all

BAPU

SMT. PREMIBEHN

CARE SHRI JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

MARKET ROAD, HYDERABAD, SIND

From the original : C.W. 9244. Courtesy : Jairamdas Doulatram

140. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

November 5, 1933

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

I had your note.

I hope you are now properly housed and that the treatment is doing you good.

Ba and Manu are likely to be in Ahmedabad pretty soon.

[1] Daughter of Jairamdas Doulatram

My tour commences properly on 8th inst. You shall have the programme. But regard Wardha as my address.

Many of your companions are here just now—Morarji[1] Swami, Gokulbhai, Divanji. They are dispersing as soon as they come.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From a photostat : G. N. 10102

141. LETTER TO N. S. HARDIKAR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
November 5, 1933

DEAR DR. HARDIKAR[2],

I have read your long letter to Jamnalalji and had a long chat with Sharma.

I have gone into the figures and have shown him how the budget should be reduced. I have no time to reiterate the reasons. In my view at the present moment and for one year your wants should not exceed Rs. 5,000. From Jalbhai's letter it appears that Rs. 4,000 can easily be found. A loan is needed for the balance. But I have advised a donation rather than a loan, and it may be Rs. 2,000. So, if Jalbhai has difficulty in finding Rs. 4,000 and if you regulate your expenditure according to my revision, you should have no difficulty for the current year. Fresh effort will be necessary for the next year. But I think that the workers should be told that they may not expect any guarantee regarding the maintenance money. I have adopted this method for all the workers. I would also warn you against raising loans. That will kill the movement. We should not feel helpless for want of funds. I would also like you not to raise further funds in regard to the budget now provided for the year. You will please show this to Jawaharlal and Jalbhai and get their approval, if you endorse my suggestions. On their approval being secured, the money will at once be handed over.

My personal opinion on the insurance policies is that they should be allowed to lapse. In any case, we may not be responsible for them, unless we deliberately adopt the policy of taking out and providing for the policies of all workers.

[1] Morarji Desai
[2] N. S. Hardikar, founder and Secretary-General of the Hindustani Seva Dal

I hope that the operation[1] has been wholly successful and that you are making rapid progress.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. N. S. HARDIKAR

From the original: N. S. Hardikar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

142. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

[*November 5, 1933*][2]

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter today. I heard about the Vithalbhai Shraddha Committee as much as you did and from the same source. Surely Mani is not your daughter only ?

Swami had shown me . . . 's[3] analysis. Otherwise I would have missed reading that literature. Why don't you say plainly that the real difficulty is that you are not with me ? I feel that as much as you do. I, therefore, follow the example of Ekalavya. Being turned away by Dronacharya, he kept an image of the latter in front of him and learnt archery. I don't want to be an archer, and you do not know how to shoot arrows. You have broken your bow and made it into a plough. I, too, wish to plough in fields.

I daily make a Partheshwar Chintamani[4] and consult him. But how can one be sure that I always get the correct reply ? My point, however, is that I always bear in mind what you would desire.

Ba is getting ready for imprisonment. Charliebhai is leaving on the 11th. He left this place yesterday. He visited all places and met all persons, but to no avail.

The news of Kaka's fast does not seem to have spread. Here also we didn't let it be talked about much. He is regaining strength rapidly.

Ultimately Prabhudas has decided to go to Almora. I want you to

[1] For fistula

[2] The date has been inferred from the reference to C. F. Andrew's departure from Wardha; *vide* "Letter to Prabhashankar Pattani",4-11-1933

[3] The name is omitted in the source.

[4] Gandhiji is apparently referring to the orthodox practice of making a clay *Shivalinga* for worship, which in his case would obviously be the inner voice.

write to me even while I am touring. I, too, will write to you.

Kaka, Swami and company will follow Ba (to jail). Morarji and others are here. They are all right. Don't worry about them. This time you. . . .[1]

Khurshed is improving.

Blessings to you and Chandulal from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 43-4

143. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

November 5, 1933

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. Dahyabhai is fighting hard to purify the atmosphere. I will not be going there. Continue to write to me in detail. Ba may start from here on the 13th. After completing Nagpur I have to return to Wardha and so she feels tempted to stay on here till then. In Ahmedabad I believe she will stay with Ranchhodbhai.[2] Otherwise the Red Bungalow at any rate is there. It will be for me to decide. Do you have any suggestion to make ? Do everything possible about your leg. Do not be in too great a haste.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4 : Manibehn Patelne, p. 111

144. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

November 5, 1933

CHI. PANDITJI,

I manage to get news about you. I see that you have been spending your time well. Here Lakshmibehn has been doing very useful work. She is looking after most of the things. Though a musician has joined, I have requested her to lead the *bhajans*, etc., during the

[1] The rest of the sentence was scored out by the jail authorities.

[2] Ranchhodbhai Sheth

prayers and she does so. On Thursdays and Fridays, Mathuri sings the *bhajans* in her beautiful voice. I didn't know that she could sing with such a full voice. Lakshmibehn is bound to write about the other things, and so I don't mention them here in order to save time. Kaka's seven-day fast ended on Thursday. It was necessary. I assume you have heard everything. Chandrashankar, Mirabehn, Nayar and Jamnalalji's Om will accompany me in my tour. Ramnath 'Suman', a friend of Haribhau's, also will be one of the party. And of course Thakkar Bapa. The tour will last for nine months without a break.

I don't get full reports about what Rambhau[1] does in Ahmedabad. He himself never writes. Probably you get some news. Gajanan[2] and Dhiru are doing fairly well. The former is discontented. He says that he doesn't receive proper education. Yoga[3] seemed to be a fine girl. She is intelligent, too. I didin't know she knew Gujarati so well.

Blessings to all from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C. W. 247. Courtesty: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

145. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHA,
November 5, 1933

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter.

I received Surjibhai's book today. I have not forgotten about the preface though I have not written it yet. I shall try now.

I am fully informed about the Vithalbhai Committee, etc., but I just cannot come.

I understand about Utkal. I do not insist on anything. You continue sending the money as you think fit.

I have instructed Chandrashankar to send more details about the tour as soon as they are finalized.

Get from Hansabehn[4] the correct information about Jivaraj and

[1] Ramachandra Khare, Addressee's son
[2] Addressee's brother's son and daughter.
[3] *Ibid*
[4] Wife of Dr. Jivaraj Mehta

let me know.

As for Utkal I shall be satisfied with whatever you can do and whatever I can do by writing. Harakhchand will try independently at the Calcutta end.

Baban Gokhale has sent many papers. I have not been able to go through them at all. Now I shall attend to them in the course of my tour and send a reply. They contain the lawyer's opinions, etc.

What can be done about Nariman! Even after understanding the situation here he has gone and published his statement. If a meeting of the committee is called, the whole trouble can be put an end to.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Vilap Samiti does not sound good. Would Sharaddha Samiti not be better?

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

146. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHA,
November 5, 1933

CHI. MATHURADAS,

An amount of Rs. 10,000 has come from Kamalabehn Sona-vala towards the aid for Karnataka. You must meet her and collect it. Her address is: Sham Bhuvan Building, opp. Babulnath, 5th floor. When you get the money, credit it to the Karnataka account and inform me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

147. SPEECH TO HARIJANS[1]

NALWADI,
[Before *November 7, 1933*][2]

Vinoba has come here to serve you. The Ashram programme is followed here regularly. I hope you will take full advantage of it. Shethji reminded me just now that no one was prepared to remove the carcass of a bullock, and so the Ashram inmates carried it and buried it. The Harijan friends were displeased by this, for they think that others should not do the work allotted to the lowest even among the untouchables. Vinoba has made a thorough study of the scriptures. He says that nowhere has God enjoined that some are high and others low, some touchable and some untouchable. He has been working among Harijans to wipe out these distinctions. Dr. Ambedkar is pained and enraged by the oppression of Harijans by caste Hindus. Why should he not feel angry at the oppression which caste Hindus have perpetrated on Harijans? Why, then, do you make such distinctions of high and low among you? If the position that only the Bhangis may remove night-soil and dead animals is accepted, the work being done among Harijans will stop Brahmana,Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra were the four varnas and some others were regarded as belonging to the fifth varna, or as falling outside the varna system. These varnas have not retained their original character. What survives is the distinction of high and low. God has not made anybody high or low. If, living here, we serve you as your Bhangis, you should not be angry. How can we serve Harijans ? Should we serve the Mahars but not the Bhangis ? Shoud we make distinctions among Harijans? Hinduism will perish unless these distinctions are wiped out. The majority of the population in India consists of Hindus. If they perish, what would India be left with ? It would of course be a different matter if all Hindus became Muslims or Christians. If, however, we feel that Hinduism is good, we must save it from destruc-tion. It has produced innumerable saints and sages. The *Gita* is one of the greatest scriptures, if not the greatest of all. A religioon which has given such a treatise and which has produced great saints like Jnaneshwar, Tukaram and Samartha Ramdas is certainly not

[1] This has been translated from Chandrashankar Shukla's weekly letter.

[2] This and the following item are from the report date-lined "Wardha, November 7, 1933".

destined to perish. We must realize that it is meant to live for ever, that is is imperishable. We must rid it of any imperfections or evil that may have crept into it. The evil of untouchability that has entered it should be wiped out. Mahar, Mang, Bhangi and similar names came into use to indicate different occupations. But because of that it cannot be said that the Mahars are higher than the Mangs and the Mangs are higher than the Bhangis. Mang, Bhangi, Mahar and other Harijans, all serve society. If they did not do so, society could not survive. The workers who have come here have done so only to serve you, and not for money. They will happy only if they can add to your income be ever so little. Accept their service and thank God for this kindness.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbahdhu, 12-11-1933

148. ADVICE TO A HARIJAN WORKER[1]

[Before *November 7, 1933*]

From experience I have come to the conclusion that while praying we should not worry about unwanted thoughts and should not feel unhappy if they come. If we try to keep them out, they invade us with greater force. Fear haunts the frightened. The same is true about unwanted thoughts. To keep worrying why we get such thoughts, is like devoting oneself to them through enmity. If we get unwanted thoughts, we should know that enemies have arrived, but we should not invite them. Just as an uninvited guest offended and leaves if he is not welcomed, so also unwanted thoughts will go away if we do not bother about them. But at the same time, as we do not neglect the invited guest just becaue some uninvited guest has intruded, so also we should not, just because of the invasion of unwanted thoughts, feel disheartened by them and stop the practice of prayer which we want to keep up. The more these thoughts are ignored, the weaker will they grow and the prayer will engage attention more and more. The argument that we should stop praying because of unwanted thoughts would be correct if we ourselves invited these thoughts. It would be sheer pretence to sit down to pray and invite thoughts at the same time. Our mind should non-co-operate with bad thoughts.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 12-11-1993

[1] This is from Chandrashankar Shukla's weekly letter and appeared under the title "Difficulty in Praying."

149. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

November 7, 1933

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

Dhiru seems to be keeping bad health. Ramabehn—who is here—feels unhappy because of that. Give me a report about him, and write seperately to Ramabehn also. I hope you have taken Dhiru and others under your special care.

You must have received the letter I wrote to you at Rajkot. Write to me from time to time. Whenever you get any news about Valji, let me have it. Ask Manu and Mavo to write to me.

How is Kusum ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 3137. Courtesty : Valji G. Desai

150. LETTER TO DHIRU C. JOSHI

November 7, 1933

CHI. DHIRU,

I got your letter. Your handwriting in your letter to Rama was very bad. One should not write to anyone in such bad handwriting. The lines were not straight. You are no longer a little child. There was some anger, too, in your letter. A child should never be angry with its mother. Don't you admit that we are poor ? How can poor people spare money for visiting one another ?

You should take care of your health. Let me know what your weight is. Be careful about what you eat. It would be better if you do not eat dal for some time. [Be][1] satisfied with rice and milk. Do you get fruit? Do you take cod liver [oil][2] In any case, don't [eat][3] more than you can digest. If you are careful, you can make your body as strong as steel. I will reply to your letter some other time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 5314

[1] The Source is mutilated here.
[2] *Ibid*
[3] *Ibid*

151. LETTER TO MAHENDRA AND SUDARSHAN DESAI

WARDHA,
November 7, 1933

CHI. MANU AND MAVO,

I hope you got my letter[1] of New Year blessings. Write to me occasionally. Study with great care. My tour begins from tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 3161. Courtesty : Valji G. Desai

152. SPEECH AT SELU

November 7, 1933

I believe it to be a happy augury that my tour commences with this sacred act.[2] I do not know if I shall be able to go through the programme that has been chalked out for me for the coming nine months. Whether it is got through or not, my faith tells me that an undertaking which begins under such good auspices must result in good. The idol in the temple is not God. But since God resides in every atom, He resides in an idol. When rites of consecration are per-formed, special sanctitiy is attributed to the idol, and those who believe in temples perform worship by visiting them. I hold it a blasphemy to say that the Creator resides in a temple from which a particular class of His devotees sharing the faith in it are excluded. Ramdeoji has, therefore, well said that this will be a true temple only from today, when it is declared open to Harijans.

Harijan, 17-11-1933

153. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, SELU

November 7, 1933

It has been my firm belief for the last 50 years that there is no place in Hinduism for untouchability as we are observing it today. I have studied to the best of my ability all the religions of the world,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mahendra V. Desai", 12-10-1933

[2] Gandhiji had opened a temple to Harijans.

and it has led me to the same conclusion. I should consider the sacrifice of my life as none too great for the sacred cause of the removal of this curse of untouchability. I have not a shadow of a doubt that, if untouchability is not removed root and branch, Hinduism is bound to perish, for no religion can nurture itself on the degradation of its votaries.

Harijan, 17-11-1933

154. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, WARDHA

November 7, 1933

It is good fortune for me that my tour begins at Wardha, which is the geographical centre of India. I want it also to be the centre of this movement. And I hope that the spirit with which Jamnalalji has opened his temple to Harijans and with which Vinoba and his companions have cast in their lot with Harijans will prove infectious and spread through the whole of the country.

Harijan, 17-11-1933

155. SPEECH AT SWEEPERS MEETING, NAGPUR

November 8, 1933

What Mrs. Abhyankar said on behalf of hundreds of women like her touched me deeply.[1] While she was speaking I looked at Sjt. Abhyankar, and I saw that is eyes had become wet. I have steeled my heart, and I do not shed tears easily; but these words could not but move me. I admit I have been instrumental in making paupers of doctors, lawyers and merchants. I do not repent. On the contrary, I rejoice that many have embraced poverty voluntarily. Why should Mrs. Abhyankar, who is trying to identify herself, alongwith her husband, with the sweepers, put on golden bangles at all ? In a poor country like India, where people walk for miles to get a dole of one pice per day, as they are doing in Orissa today, it does not behove anybody who cares for the poor to wear costly ornaments. In no other way can we identify ourselves with the Harijans. Those who have nothing else have God and are men of God—Harijans. Those who have wealth are men of wealth.

[1] Offering her two golden bangles Mrs. Abhyankar had said, "Nowadays husbands leave little for their wives. I can, therefore, only make this humble offering for the service of Harijans."

All credit, therefore, to Motilalji, Das, Vithalbhai and many others whom I can mention and who parted with their possessions for the sake of the poor.

Harijan, 17-11-1933

156. ADVICE TO HARIJANS

NAGPUR,
November 8, 1933

Of course, I have told caste Hindus that they are responsible for whatever evil habits are to be noticed among the Harijans. But this does not mean that you should hug your evil habits. Harijans should contribute to this movement by cultivating cleanliness, both of mind and body, giving up carrion-eating which is looked upon with abhorrence by the whole of humanity, giving up drink, as also the differences of high and low that they are observing among themselves. When they go to temples, they should observe the rules applicable to all temple-goers.

Harijan, 17-11-1933

157. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, NAGPUR[1]

November 8, 1933

I am deeply grateful to you for the manifestation of this great affection. Thanks be to God that you have assembled in such numbers to listen to my message. The Chairman[2] is right when he says that this Harijan work is essentially religious from my standpoint. That it has many other results is equally true. There never has been a single truly religious activity but has had its influence on many departments of life. That perhaps is one of the tests by which we recognize a great religious movement. I would like to say in all humility, but with perfect confidence, that I have taken up this movement in no spirit of antagonism to any other religion or community. It would be impossible for any person to point to a single act of mine during the past 50 years which could be proved to have been antagonistic to any person or community. I have never believed anyone to be my enemy.

[1] Gandhiji spoke in Hindi.
[2] Dr. N. B. Khare.

My faith demands that I should consider no one as such. I may not wish all to anything that lives. It is my certain conviction that, if the Hindu heart is completely purged of the taint of untouchability, the event will have its inevitable influence not only upon all the communities in India but on the whole world. This belief is daily becoming stronger. I cannot remove from any heart untouchability regarding several millions of human beings and harbour it towards some other millions. The very act of the Hindu heart getting rid of distinctions of high and low must cure us of mutual jealousies and distrust of and among other communities. It is for that reason that I have staked my life on this issue. In fighting this battle against untouchability. I am fighting for unity not only between Hindu touchables and Hindu untouchables but among Hindus, Muslims, Christians and all other different religious communities. Do not for one moment believe that I am interested in the numerical strength of Hindus. I have never throughout my life laid stress upon quantity. I have ever insisted upon quality at the sacrifice of quantity. If I collected a million false coins they would be a worthless burden to me. One true coin would be its value. A religion cannot be sustained by the number of its lipfollowers denying in their lives its tenets. This great Hindu religion itself will perish, in spite of its so called millions of followers, if its votaries persist in harbouring the evil of untouchability. Not because untouchables can be counted by the millions. If would perish even if they were a handful. Milk is poisoned and has to thrown away whether you put a little or much arsenic in it. If we believe that we are all children of one and the same God and that God is Truth and Justice, how can there be untouchability amongst us, His children ? God of Truth and Justice can never create distinctions of high and low among His own children. I, therefore, invite all without distinction of race and religion to assist this movement by praying for its complete success, so that we may all live in peace and friendship.

And if I want concord amongst all the communities professing different faiths, I cannot desire discord between the so-called sanatanists and reformers. I can harbour no ill will against sanatanists. I ask them to extend the same toleration to reformers that they would have the latter extend towards themselves. If they tolerate the faith and practice of others, why will they not tolerate the faith and practice of the reformers ? They may not help so long as they regard untouchability as an integral part of Hinduism. I and fellow reformers firmly

believe that untouchability is an evil; and if it is so and If the reformers will continue to exercise patience and gentleness, the heart of the sanatanists must melt. There can be no room for compulsion or violence in this great movement. I endeavour to place before the vast mass of Hindus the results of a belief derived from such prayerful study of the Hindu scriptures as has been possible for me, and from association with those who are learned in them and, what is more, from my practice based upon that belief. Surely, that cannot promote internal dissensions. I observe that many who oppose this movement have not taken the trouble to understand its implications. The object of this tour is to place the position of the reformers clearly before the public. And I am hoping that, as the scope of the activities of the Servants of Untouchables Society becomes known, the opposition to it will melt away. We want to change the hearts of those who today oppose the movement. We want to remove their distrust. We do not desire to compel them to act against their belief. We want to win them over to the reform by gentlest persuasion, by appealing to their reason and to their hearts. Love can never express itself by imposing sufferings on others. It can only express itself by self-suffering, by self-purfication. I am convinced that, if the reformers will show in their own lives an increasing purity, self-denial, and capacity for suffering, they will be sure to melt the hearts of those who are today saturated with untouchability, believing it to be a desirable part of Hinduism.

Is is said that untouchables are so because of the evil in them. But are the 'touchables' better ? Are they sinless ? Indeed, defenders of untouchability claim that some people are always untouchables and that no amount of pure conduct can pure them of the taint with which they are born. They must remain social lepers for ever. The fact is that whatever weakness we may notice about untouchables are a reflection of our own weaknesses and sins. They are a direct result of the ill-treatment that we have heaped upon their devoted heads. Their real rise, therefore, depends upon te removing of untouchability root and branch and upon showing a growing purity in our own lives. Thus the movement is dependent, not so much upon pecuniary help, as upon correct conduct. Pecuniary help is to be an earnest of our determination to rid ourselves of the evil and to achieve self-purification.

The question is repeatedly asked whether the reform includes

inter-dining. Though I have answered this question repeatedly, I must continue to repeat the answer as long as the question continues to be asked. Everybody knows what my personal views are. Since my youth upward I have consistently dined with all so long as the rules of cleanliness have been observed. But that has nothing to do with the present movement. Interdining and the rest is a question for each individual to determine for himself. The movement organized by the Servants of Untouchables Society stands for simple removal of untouchability in every shape and form, in so far as it is special to the so-called untouchables. They would have the same public rights and facilities as are enjoyed by every other Hindu, that is to say, they should have access to all public institutions, such as wells, schools, roads, temples, etc.

One word as to the objections raised against Anti-untouchability Bill. Sanatanists have contended that they constitute State Interference in matters of religion. I suppose by interference is meant that which is undue. For it is possible to quote instances where State interference has been sought and has been inevitable in matters of religion. What is sought is freedom from external compulsion. I am no more in favour of such compulsion in matters affecting religion, than sanatanists. These Bills involve no such compulsion, no undue interference. The interference sought is beneficial and unavoidable. If the State *compelled* the opening of temples To Harijans, it would without doubt be undue interference, but it cannot be undue when the State is called upon to legalize the voluntary opening by a stated majority of templegoers or the trustees. Not to do so would be compulsion. The Temple-entry Bill merely seeks to legalize the action of a majority. The other Bill has been long overdue. It does not abolish untouch-ability altogether. It seeks to rob it of secular consequences. To clothe it with such consequences is to constitute an intolerable interference with the free exercise of religion. Nobody will deny that to make a religious obligation an obligation in law would be a gross and undue interference by the State. The observance of untouc-hability requires the voluntary recognition of it by both touchables and untouchables. For the State to *compel* observance by untou-chables would be a gross interference in matters of religion. The Bill, therefore, seeks to remove the secular recognition of untouchability, without in any way inter-

fering with the religious observance of it or the religious conse-quences of the breach of it. If the objectors mean, therefore, what they say and on a careful study should find that the Bills involve no compulsion, they should waive their objection.[1]

The poor man perhaps had nothing else to pay and he seems to have paid his all. It is an unsoiled cowrie, as Malaviyaji would call it. We attribute our earnings to fate, but what we give in the name of God, and for the service of His creatures bring us merit. Looking at it as a symbol of sacrifce, it is more precious than gold.

Harijan, 17-11-1933

158. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

NAGPUR,

Before the morning prayer, November 9, 1933

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter. You must not stop writing to me while I am touring. I will also write to you. What happened regarding Vithalbhai has not passed unnoticed by me. I also have been attacked strongly. I have paid no attention at all to these attacks. Even if I did, what could I do! If you stir dirty water, more dirt will come to the surface. I paid attention only to Subhas's services. As for the stories we hear regarding Vithalbhai's last wishes[2] , we can say nothing. I, too, have my doubts as you have.

My work commenced from Tuesday. Wherever I go, large crowds assemble. They don't seem to resent my talking about untouchability. A fine temple near Wardha was thrown open to Harijans.[3]

[1] Gandhiji then auctioned the gifts which included the cowrie given to him at Katol. The remarks that follow are taken from Chandrashankar Shukla's weekly letter entitled "The First Week's Tour".

[2] It was reported that Vithalbhai Patel had bequeathed a large sum to Subhas Chandra Bose to be used at his discretion for propaganda abroad. Later, the Bombay High Court decided that the amount should go to Vithalbhai's legatees. Gandhiji persuaded the family to give it to the Congress for national service.

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Selu", 7-11-1933

There was a large crowd such as had never had never been seen before in this city. My voice met the demand on it fairly well. Nor did I get tired. I have started with my weight 108 or 109. The collection also, I think, was good. After completing the C. P., I have to go to Delhi and from there straight to the South. Raja says that it is necessary to tour the South first. The opposition of the sanatanists comes mainly from there. I have to return to Wardha on Saturday. The Wardha taluka remains to be toured. Meanwhile Jawaharlal and others will come to see me. Ansari[1] has already arrived. Hence he also may join me. With me are Mira, Chandrashankar, Nayar Ramnath (of the Sasta Sahitya of Delhi), Om and the wife of Rameshwar Birla's [2] son. The last will be with me for a few days only. Om has become a strong willed girl. Thakkar Bapa also is in the party. Ba will leave Wardha on the 13th. She will reach Ahmedabad about the 15th or the 16th. This time she is very much agitated. She is restless no doubt. But she will go [to jail]. She is convinced that that is the only right course.

Please continue to write to me at the Wardha address.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 45-6

[1] Dr. M. A. Ansari

[2] G. D. Birla' elder brother

159. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

November 9, 1933

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. You have acted wisely in writing to me frankly. In future also do the same. If not you who else will write ? I was surprised to learn that Dahyabhai misunderstood my action and got angry. But we need not pay attention to that. Perhaps he is not even acquainted with all the facts. I can even understand his being pained. You yourself should try to calm him as much as you an. If you wish, I will write to him and try to soothe him. I will like it better. You may show him this letter if you like.

Ba will leave Wardha on Tuesday. She will halt at Akola for a short while, i..e., for a few hours and then go there. At present she is in a rather confused state of mind. She is worried also. All the same, she herself announced her resolution of going [to jail]. You should try and strengthen it.

Eat well and improve your health as much as you can. Write to me regularly. Do take the rays as long as you can. You can receive the treatment even in Ahmedabad. What did you do regarding your teeth ?

Jawaharlal and others are coming to Wardha on Saturday.

What did Mridu[1] do in Allahabad ? Did she return satisfied ? Ask her to write to me. What did she do about her teeth ? If she has heard more about Saraladevi[2], she should let me have the news.

We had a very good meeting in Nagpur. The tour has started well. Let me know how the funeral went off.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4 : Manibehn Patelne, pp. 111-2

[1] Mridula Sarabhai
[2] Mridula Sarabhai's mother

160. LETTER TO GANGABEHN B. JHAVERI

November 9, 1933

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I got your letter. Serve people as well as you can and be contented. Seeing other men's mansions, we don't demolish our own hut. The happiness which people may enjoy in mansions is possible in huts, too. You are doing good work in running a school for Harijan pupils. If you live exclusively on milk and fruit, that is bound to do you good. You need not, then, eat anything else. Nanibehn should write to me. Write always at Wardha. Ask Mahesh also to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

Form a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3119

161. INTERVIEW TO PRESS

November 9, 1933

Questioned whether he would issue a statement to the Press in connection with the all-India anti-untouchability tour, the Mahatma said that there was nothing to warrant a statement from him. All that he wanted to say in that connection had been said by him in his address at the Nagpur public meeting the previous night. He said he would be prepared to answer questions but warned them not to improvise questions.[1]

Q. How many years do you think it will take for complete removal of untouchability at the present rate of progress ?

A. It is more than I can answer. It is a question of a change of the hearts of millions of human beings.

Q. Will you be prepared to receive swaraj before this curse is removed ?

A. T he question is badly put. There is no meaning in asking whether I shall be prepared to receive swaraj if untouchability is not removed by then. Swaraj in not a matter of receiving or taking. It is one of evolution . We either grow to it from day to day or we go away from it. If we, as a nation, are becoming more and more conscious of ourselves if the fundamental unity of millions, then we

[1] This paragraph is from *Hitavada*.

are certainly progressing towards it. Whereas, if we are dissolving, then we are receding from it.

Q. Do you not realize that the depressed classes have even now got their own superstitions and that they very much hesitate to associate with, for instance, Brahmins, even if the are asked to do so ?

A. No, I do not; because, if what you say is true, it means that they want to remain in their present state of degradation. I cannot understand a social leper glorying in his leprosy. If the so-called depressed classes are so disgusted with the so-called high-class Hindus that they want absolutely to cut themselves adrift from Hinduism and Hindus, then they form a separate entity, which means they establish a new religion, or they accept any of the other prevailing religions of India. That is a thing which can happen, if the so-called higher classes continue to wallow in their imaginary superiority and do not perform the elementary duty of regarding the Harijans as their kith and kin. This anti-untouchability movement is an attempt to do this elementary duty by the Harijans.

Q. Harijans seem to be unwilling to mix with caste-Hindus. Is it not a fact ?

A. My experience is wholly different. I have talked with thousands of Harijans. They are eager to associate with the higher classes, if the latter behave themselves. What is true is that they distrust the higher classes, and where they do not distrust them, they are afraid of them. And there is this unfortunate additonal fact the the notion of inferiority from birth has been so much injected into them that they consider themselves doomed by God to eternal inferiority. This must be a matter of shame and humiliation for every thinking *savarna* Hindu.[1]

The best way for the so-called caste Hindus was to forget that they were higher than anybody else. It was all a reflection of what was today a fact among the higher classes. It ought to cause no surprise to higher classes when they discover that there are differences in untouchability and therefore among untouchables.

Harijan, 1-12-1933, and *Hitavada*, 12-11-1933

[1] The following is from the Hitavada.

162. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, NAGPUR

November 9, 1933

I know this tussle between English and Hindi is almost an eternal tussle.[1] Whenever I have addressed student audiences, I have been surprised by the demand for English. You know, or ought to know, that I am a lover of the English language. But I do believe that the students of India, who are expected to throw in their lot with the teeming millions and to serve them, will be better qualified if they pay more attention to Hindi than to English. I do not say that you should not learn English; learn it by all means. But, so far as I can see, it cannot be the language of the millions of Indian homes. It will be confined to thousands or tens of thousands, but it will not reach the millions. Therefore, I am delighted when the students ask me to speak in Hindi.

You, both the speakers, have spoken of me in terms, which if I believed to be true of myself, I do not know where I would be. But I know my place. I am a humble servant of India, and in trying to serve India, I serve humanity at large. I discovered in my early days that the service of India is not inconsistent with the service of humanity. As I grew older in years, and I hope also in wisdom, I saw that the discovery was well made, and after nearly 50 years of public life, I am able to say today that my faith in the doctrine, that the service of one's nation is not inconsistent with the service of the world, has grown. It is a good doctrine. Its acceptance alone will ease the situation in the world and stop the mutual jealousies between nations inhabiting this globe of ours. You have said truly that in taking up this war against untouchability, I have not confined myself to Hinduism. I have said more than once that, if untouchability is removed in its fulness from the Hindu heart, it will have farreaching consequences, in as much as it touches millions of human beings.

As I said last night to the great meeting in Nagpur, if untouchability is really removed from the Hindu heart, that is, if the high-caste Hindus purge themselves of this terrible taint, we shall soon discover that we are all one and not different peoples, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis, whatever we may call our-selves. We shall

[1] Gandhiji had begun his speech in Hindi. But as there was a cry for English, he spoke in English.

feel the unity, once the barrier of untouchability is removed. As I have often said, untouchability is a hydraheaded monster, appearing in many shapes. Some of them are very subtle. If I have jealousy for any human being that also is a species of untouchability. I do not know if my dream about the removal of untouchability. I do not know if my dream about the removal of untouchability will be fully realized while I am living. All those who are religiously inclined, those who believe not in formal religion but in the essence of religion, cannot but believe in the removal of a subtle type of untouchability that affects the lives of a vast mass of humanity. If Hindu hearts can be purged of this evil, our eyes of understanding will be more and more opened. It is not possible to estimate the gain to humanity when untouchability is really removed. You can now have no difficulty in understanding why I have staked my life for this one thing.

If you, the students who have assembled here, have followed me so far and understood the implications of this mission of mine, you will soon extend the help I want from you. Many students have written to me asking what part they can take in helping this movement. It is a surprise to me that students are obliged to ask this question. The field is so vast and near you that you need not ask the question as to what you may do and what you may not. It is not political question. It may become one, but for you and me, for the time being, it is not connected with politics. My life is governed by religion. I have said that even my politics are derived from my religion. I never lost sight of the principle that governs my life when I began dabbling in politics. As this is a humanitarian campaign, students must devote a part of their spare time, if not the whole, to the service of thousands of Harijans. By giving me this magnificent purse you have certainly equalled the brightest records of students' meetings which I have addressed in my many peregrinations throughout the length and breadth of India. But I want much more from you. I have found that, if I get many helpers who can give their spare time, much work can be done. This work cannot be done by hired labour. With hired labour we cannot go to Harijan quarters and sweep their roads, enter their houses and wash their children. I have described in the columns of the *Harijan* What students can do.[1] A Harijan teacher has shown what a Herculean task it is for him to tackle. Even wild children are better than Harijan children. Wild children are not sunk in utter degradation,

[1] *Vide* "Students and Vacation"

as the Harjian children are, nor do they live in such filthy surroundings. This problem cannot be tackled by hired labour. No amount of money can enable me to do hired labour. No amount of money can enabel me to do this. It must be your prerogative. It is an acid test of the education received by you in schools and colleges. Your worth will not be measured by your ability to make faultless English speeches. Your worth will be measured by the service you render to the poor and not by Government posts worth Rs. 60 or Rs. 600 that you may have got. I wish you would do this work in the spirit I suggest. I have not met a single student who has said that he cannot spare one hour per day. If you write your diary from day to day, you will find that you waste many a precious hour in the 365 days of the year. If you want to turn your education to good account, you will turn your attention to this work while this hurricane campaign lasts. Erstwhile students are serving Harijans whithin a radius of 5 miles round about Wardha. They are doing good silent work; therefore, you do not know them. I invite you to see their work. It is hard but pleasurable. It will give you joy, greater than your cricket or tennis. I have repeatedly said that money will come if I have real, intelligent, honest workers. As a boy of 18 I began my education in begging. I have seen that money can be found easily if we have the right kind of workers. Money alone will never satisfy me. I would ask you to pledge yourselves to devote a definite number of spare hours to Harijan service. As you, Mr. President, have said, I am a dreamer. I am indeed a practical dreamer. My dreams are not airy nothings. I want to convert my dreams into realities as far as possible. Therefore, I must hasten to auction the gifts I have received from you.

Harijan, 17-11-1933

163. EXTRACTS FROM SPEECHES [1]

[Before *November 10, 1933*][2]

For me the money you give is a token of your identification with the cause. Mere money will not avail; I must have your heart also with your money.[3]

You may not think that you have lost your money. Those who have given have gained it, and those who, though able, have refrained have in reality lost it. The money spent in gambling, drink and lust is a double loss, for you lose your money and lose also your reputation and health. Whereas those who give even a pice for the service of humanity gain more than they give. Untouchability is a blot on Hinduism. It is a canker eating into its vitals. I see with my eyes and smell with my nose that the body of Hinduism is in the process of destruction. If you think with me, you should contribute your mite to this cause. Once we lose the spiritual power of Hinduism I do not know where we should be. A man without religion is like a ship without a rudder. The money, therefore, that you give is to my mind a token of your desire to save Hinduism from spiritual destruction.

Harijan, 17-11-1933

164. NOTES

TRUE AHIMSA

Jamshed Mehta, a true servant of humanity, sends me a rendering, received by him from a friend, of a discourse on ahimsa in *Jnaneshwari Gita*[4]. Chapter XIII. I have taken the liberty of further condensing it and putting it in a form perhaps more easily to be understood, without in any way marring the sense of the original. Those who still harbour untouchability in their bosoms will do well to

[1] These are reproduced from Chandrashankar Shukla's "Weekly Letter" which says the speeches were delivered before Gandhiji visited Gondia, which he did on November 10.

[2] *Ibid*

[3] What follows was spoken at a wayside meeting of villagers who made an on-the-spot collection.

[4] Jnaneshwar's Marathi commentaryon the *Bhagavad Gita.*

test it on the touchstone provided by the great saint of Maharashtra. Is untouchability compatible with his definition of ahimsa ? Let the extract speak for itself :

> Before considering what is real ahimsa, it is necessary to see what it is not. In order to secure a good rainfall, people perform what they call sacrifices in which they kill animals. This is not ahimsa. Is it not like cutting off one's own hands so that they may be cooked and served as food ? Is it wise to cut off all the branches of a tree, in order to put a fence round it, with those branches? Then, again, to save many people from diseases, people cut away whole trees, or take out all the bark, or make extracts of living animals and take out secretions from other creatures. Is it not like pulling down a house in order to build a verandah or shed for the house, and burning your clothes in order to have a fire to warm yourself ?
>
> Real ahimsa or love originates in one's heart and is known by one's conduct even as gold is known by its qualities. A man who is full of love never forgets that the world is full of life like his and takes great care that he does not harm any living thing. He sees his love reflected in the eyes of those whom he meets. He is the friend of all. As a cat holds her kittens between her teeth without hurting them, so does a man of love deal with all with whom he comes in contact. He walks gently and noiselessly lest his footsteps may disturb the sleep of others. He always makes room for those who need it. He so regulates his voice as not to jar on others. He is silent when he need not speak. His speech is never intended to offend anyone. He does not want to up-set other people's plans or to frighten them. He never utters words which lead to discussions and disputations, or which hurt the feelings of others. There is no deceit in his talk, nor doubt not ambiguity. He never stares lest his stare may offend people. He does not move his hands aimlessly as he has no desire to harm even a mosquito. He does not carry even a stick, not to speak of other weapons. His hands are used only for salutation or service.
>
> These are but the outward signs of the inner abiding love as a plant is of the seed that has borne it. His mind is the Master of all the organs. Thus, real ahimsa is an attitude of the mind expressed through the different sense organs. He alone who is

filled with love for all that lives and whose mind, speech and action are in full union is truly noble.

Harijan, 10-11-1933

165. A COMMON PLATFORM

A correspondent sends me an essay by Sir C. V. Kumaraswamy Sastriar, ex-High Court Judge, Madras. It occupies three sides of a foolscap in print. It is written on behalf of 'Sanatanists'. It is an attempt to show that untouchability has existed from time immemorial and that the legislation such as is contemplated is futile. It, however, concludes with this significant paragraph :

> Several social inequalities and exclusive outlooks are being softened or removed by time and education. The old order is changing, and with it the older conception of humanity. Several communities once considered depressed or servile have, owing to rise in education and material well-being, become possessed of rights and privileges. No lover of India would claim that communties and castes should be in a state of antagonism, or that social injustice and inequalities should not be adjusted. But nobody can view without pain and alarm the methods adopted and the aids sought, which will only accentuate the ill-feeling between the caste Hindus and the depressed classes, without any considerable material advntage to the latter. Their state of depression lies in other and deeper causes and its removal lies in combined effort by the caste Hindus to improve their material and educational state.

This paragraph, in my humble opinion, vitiates the prior reasoning in support of untouchability as a sacrosanct religious instituion, It seems to admit that it is a social evil which the learned ex-Judge will gladly see uprooted. And every reformer will agree with him when he says "nobody can view without pain and alarm the methods adpoted and the aids sought, which will only accentuate the ill-feeling between the caste Hindus and the depressed classes, without any considerable material advantage to the latter." Only, the reformer must add that Sir Kumaraswamy's fears are imaginary. Reformers have adopted no method and sought no aid so as to accentuate ill-feeling. Sir Kumaraswamy has not given himself time to study what the reformers are doing and how they are doing it. Indeed, I can show him that they are even postponing the material advantage to the Harijans where ill-feeling, already existing, is likely to grow into a fight with blows. Thus, for instance, reformers have been postponing summary action even regarding the use of certain public wells to

which Harijans are beyond doubt entitled in law. As for the aids sought, reformers will readily agree that social prejudices cannot be removed by summoning the assistance of law. But they do invoke and insist on legal and legislative aid when the law is interpreted to uphold untouchability. No reform in respect of an evil can succeed in the teeth of legal protection thereof. It is hardly necessary to state the legislative obstacles can only be removed by legislative hindrance and nothing more. What they desire is that untouchability should have no legal sanction. They recognize that, even when that is withdrawn, as a social evil it will demand attention for a long time to come.

I welcome the last sentence of the paragraph. When there is "a combined effort by the caste Hindus to improve their (the Harijans') material and educational state",untouchability will not be long indis-appearing from the land. If the sanatanists distrust the reformers, let them work independently. Will Sir Kumaraswamy move the 'sanata-nists' to action ?If he succeeds, there will be no ill-feeling left. Does he know that in the name of sanatana dharma its so-called represen-tatives have burned the crops of innocent Harijans, assaulted them and otherwise molested them when in the exercise of their just and legal rights ?

Harijan, 10-11-1933

166. FOR HARIJAN TEACHERS

One who is responsible for the management of over twenty five Harijan schools writes a long letter stating the difficulties experienced in the management of the school and asks how I would conduct them if I had the direct management thereof. I need not recount his difficulties which he has described carefully. What I am about to say is an attempt to answer them.

While we are bound to give scholarships and other help to those Harijan boys and girls who attend the established schools, there is no reason whatever slavishly to reproduce the mode and methods of those schools in the ones under our own management.

We have to recognize that we get Harijan children with great difficulty to attend any school at all. We cannot expect any degree of regularity in them and, thanks to our past criminal neglect, they are so unkempt that we have, in the beginning stages, to handle them in a manner wholly different from the ordinary.

On first adimission their bodies have to be minutely examined and thoroughly cleaned. Their clothes might have to be cleaned and patched. The first daily lesson, therefore, will for some time consist of applied hygiene and sanitation and simple needle-work. I should use no books probably for the whole of the first year. I should talk to them about things with which they are familiar and, doing so, correct their pronunciation and grammar and teach them new words. I should note all the new words they may learn from day to day so as to enable me to use them frequently till they have them fixed in the their minds regularly. The teacher will not give discourses but adopt the conversational method. Through conversations he will give his pupils progressive instruction in history, geography and arithmetic. History will begin with that of our own times, and then, too, of events and of persons nearest us, and geography will begin with that of the neighbourhood of the school. Arithmetic will begin with the sums applicable of the pupil's homes. Having tried the method myself, I know that infinitely more knowledge can be given to the pupils through it, and without strain on them, than can be given through the orthodox method, within a given time. Knowledge of the alphabet should be treated as a separate subject altogether. The letters should be treated as pictures which the children will first be taught to recognize and name. Writing will follow as part of the drawing lesson. Instead of making daubs of their letters, pupils should be able to make perfect copies of the models placed before them. They would not, therefore, be called upon to draw the letters till they had acquired control over their fingers and the pen. It is criminal to stunt the mental growth of a child by letting him know as much only as he can get through a book he can incoherently read in a year. We do not realize that, if a child was cut of from the home life and was merely doomed to the school, he would be a perfect dunce for several years. He picks up information and language unconsciously through his home, not in the schoolroom. Hence do we experience the immense difference between pupils belonging to cultured homes and those belonging to uncouth homes, which are no homes in reality.

In the scheme I have adumbrated, the schoolmaster is expected to treat his occupation seriously and feel one with his pupils. I know that, in putting the scheme into operation, the want of schoolmasters of the right type is the greatest difficulty. But we shall not get the right type till we have made the right beginning.

I must postpone the consideration of the stage when we have to arm the pupils with books.[1]

Harijan, 10-11-1933

167. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

November 10, 1933

CHI. MANU,

You did well in seeing the Princess[2] . Now tell her the whole thing yourself. I could barely write a short letter to her. I didn't discuss all the details. Write to me. Elizabeth[2] also may write if she wishes. You must have heard about Kakasaheb's sevenday fast. . . . [3] has disappointed me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Address Wardha.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 22621

[1] *Vide* "School Books", 1-12-1933.

[2] Efy Aristarchi

[2] A Roman Catholic whom Gandhiji gave the name Vimala. The addressee intended to marry her.

[3] The name has been omitted.

168. INTERVIEW TO PRESS

NAGPUR,
[*November 10, 1933*][1]

Four days is too little time compared to the nine months in front of me.Therefore, I cannot say whether I shall be able to bear its strain. I can only say that, If God wills that I should finish this tour, then, in spite of all this strain, He will give me the strength to finish it.

Harijan, 17-11-1933

169. SPEECH AT GONDIA

November 10, 1933

Gandhiji deprecated the attitude of the higher castes if the allegations[2] made by the Harijans were true. He wanted a cleansing of the hearts and not a mere show. If, however, they wanted to keep them separate still, they must declare so openly and be prepared to meet the consequences. He could not reply to the other charge against the *bidi* merchants, as he had no knowledge of the same. He pointed out how both depended on the co-operation of each other and asked them to give up aloofness. The term Harijan which the previous speaker resented as showing separateness, Mahatmaji said, had been chosen by a Harijan and not invented by him. He said he preferred to call himself a Haijan. He asked the *bidi* merchants to give fair treatment to their labourers, and thanked them for the donations they freely gave to the cause taken up by him. Mahatmaji then referred to the sales of khadi in the local Bhandar which he said were very poor. For a town like Gondia, only Rs. 1,000 worth of khadi was sold per month. He showed how the Harijans stood to gain by people espousing the cause of khadi.

Hitavada, 16-11-1933

[1] The interview was given on the fourth day of the tour which commenced on November 7, 1933.

[2] A Harijan boy had compained against the caste Hindus who made a show of unity and sympathy and aganist the *bidi* factory owners who did not treat their Harijan employees well.

170. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

[*November 11, 1933*][1]

FIND UNABLE GIVE TWO DAYS. CAN GIVE THREE HOURS ANY MONDAY AFTERNOON. TWENTY-SEVENTH INSTANT RAIPUR. FOURTH DECEMBER JUBBULPORE.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

171. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
November 11, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have just returned from a heavy tour programme and having read your letter telegraphed as follows:[2]

It is impossible to give more than one day and more then three hours. It is difficult enough even to give three hours. The programme is so packed that hardly any time is given for rest. Four hours for rest, bath and dinner, have hitherto dwindled down to two. A programme in which tens of thousands of people are concerned cannot easily be postponed or disturbed. The enclosed copy[3] will give you an idea of the work, and where you find hours of rest, except for Friday afternoon, they have been encroached upon, changing the time from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. to 12 o'clock to 2 p.m.

I entirely agree with you that the proposed conversation will not clarify matters to any satisfactory extent. If the A.I.C.C. meeting is held, I do not know how I shall be able to attend the sittings. Will it not be better for me to abstain from attending? If it is desirable, I will send my views in writing. The opinion I have expressed in my public letter[4]to you is becoming more and more confirmed.

[1] *Vide* the following item.
[2] *Vide* the preceeding item.
[3] *Vide* Appendix " Tour Programme", 7-11-1933
[4] *Vide* Vol. " Letter to Jawahar Lal Nehru 14-9-1933

You must have seen Lahiri's statement about the Hijli Prison. It more than confirms Satisbabu's letter. I have heard from the Governor.[1] His Secretary says that "His Excellency will look into the matter to which you refer".

I have read the appeal for the Hospital.[2] I hope it will have the response it deserves.

I carefully read your letter about the Government demand. In anything you do about Swaraj Bhawan, do you not think that you should consult the trustees and not merely inform them ? I have not been able even to show your letter to Jamnalalji for sheer want of time. He twits me by saying that as I am in Wardha you are ignoring him entirely, not even acknowledging his letters. I told him that your letters to me are as much for him as for me and that just now the few of us who are out have little time for performing acts of mere courtesy.

You cannot expect rapid progress for an old patient like Mother. The wonder to me is that she has survived the attack she had. I hope the progress though slow continues.

Love.

BAPU

Encl. 1

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

172. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,

November 11, 1933

I do not know what better proof any critic can demand than these meetings and demonstrations that untouchability is rapidly disintegrating. This does not mean that the mass mind has changed altogether. But if the evidence of the last four days is sustained throughout the tour I should feel certain about the cremation of the untouchabiliy monster within a measurable distance of time.

Harijan, 17-11-1933

[1] Gandhiji wrote to the Governor of Bengal on November 2, 1933; *vide* " Letter to Governor of Bengal", 1-11-1933

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 30-10-1933

173. SPEECH AT DEOLI[1]

November 11, 1933[2]

I am essentially a lover of peace. I do not have the slightest wish to create dissensions among the Hindus. It would be best for the sanatanists and reformers to confer among themselves and make an effort to arrive at an understanding. But if that effort fails, both parties should resort to peaceful and honourable methods and both should learn to tolerate one another. I believe myself to be both a sanatanist and a reformer. I have tried to gather in me all the goodwill which caste Hindus can have towards Harijans. God alone knows how far I have succeded in the effort. I am also trying, as best as an imperfect human being like myself can, to see with Harijans' eyes and to realize what is going on in their hearts. It is not given to man to know the whole truth. His duty lies in living up to the truth as he sees it and, in doing so, to resort to the purest means, i.e, to non-violence. I do not want to hurt the feelings of the sanatanists. I want to convert them to my view in the gentlest manner. I want, if I can, to steal into their hearts. I would love to melt their hearts by my suffering. I firmly believe that untouchability as we practise it today has no sanction in the Shastras. But I do not wish to enter into a discussion of what the Shastras support and what they do not. I only put before you, as humbly as I can, the truth as I see it, and am prepared to sacrifice my life, if need be, in an unceasing effort to live up to that truth. It is clear to my mind, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that, if untou-chability is not eradicated, both Hinduism and the Hindus are bound to perish. Ever since I was a child of ten I have considered untouchability as a sin. My heart has never been able to reconcile itself to untouchability based on birth. I tried to study the Shastras to the best of my ability. I consulted as many pundits as I could. And a majority of them have supported my view. But truth is not to be found in books. Truth resides in every human heart, and one has to search for

[1] Gandhiji had gone to Deoli to open a temple to Harijans but some sanatanists opposed the plan. A *shastri* form the South requested him to stop the movement and avoid creating dissensions in Hindu society.

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*

it there, and be guided by truth as one sees it. But no one has a right to coerce others to act according to his own view of truth.

I would appeal to the temple-goers here who are in favour of Harijans' entry into the temple to go into the temple only after the sanatanists, who have blocked the way, leave the place. We do not want to score a victory over them. Do not be angry with them, do not insult them; on the contrary, feed them if they are hungry and would accept your hospitality. We have to win them over by love. We may not ask for police aid against them.[1]

I do not say this because I am a non-co-operator but because I believe in the law of non-retaliation. Again, I believe that religion can never be protected by force or hooliganism, but by penace and suffering. I am, therefore, prepared to give up my life, if need be, as a final act of penance.

He hoped that those who were arrested would be discharged and that the temple would be opened to Harijans without delay and without friction.

Harijan, 24-11-1933

174. A PICE PER HEAD

Shri Harakhchand writes in his letter[2] of October 26.

I hope readers will not be annoyed with me for giving all this description. It is not proper if somemone says that it is an old story or that the floods are a past event. When the floods came, those who were destined to die died. Those who survived immediately got all possible help. But it becomes the moral obligation ot the kind-hearted to look after those who were rendered homeless till the next season is over and the new harvest is ready. Such letters prove that this is the right time for fulfilling this duty.

Readers will find that in some places the rice given per head is less than what even one pice can fetch. If this picture is clearly impressed on his mind, the reader would not be happy to partake of his meal without keeping aside a part of it for such unhappy people. If all contributed according to their capacity, thousands will get en-ough to keep themselves alive. Millowners can send clothes. Khadi lovers can

[1] The following paragraph is from *Harijan*, 17-11-1933.
[2] The letter is not translated here. *Vide* also "Pice Per Day"

send khadi. Only recently Harakhchand received anony-mous *hundi* of Rs. 1,000 for distributing khadi.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 12-11-1933

175. LETTER TO GANGA PODDAR

[*November 12, 1933*][1]

I am writing to Rameshwar. It was of course a grave sin but you can atone for and forget it. Bring back the ornaments and resolve against ever committing such a lapse.

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 216.

176. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

WARDHA,
November 12, 1933

CHI. RAMESHWARDAS,

Ganga has certainly committed a grave lapse but she repents of it now. One who repents deserves to be forgiven. Do not say a word [of reproach] to Ganga; receive her with love. The ornaments have to be brought back, that she will do. You can send her back afterwards. Remain calm, chant Ramanama. We are all prone to errors but those who confess theirs are blessed. Let us all wish that Ganga's repentance proves sincere.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 174.

[1] *Vide* the following item.

177. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

WARDHA,
November 13, 1933

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I cannot reply immediately to your letters. I don't have time even today, but have found some to write this letter as Kishorelal told me the substance of your letter to Nanabhai. If I could, I would certainly have tried to guide you in regard to the dispute among you there.[1] But I really cannot judge in such matters unless I see all the people concerned. However, why do you always feel dependent on me ? Go on doing fearlessly what you feel to be the right thing. Don't mind if you make mistakes. Whenever you realize that you have made a mistake, rectify it unhesitatingly without thinking of the consequences. If you always act thus, you will be able to judge what the right course is in every matter. I shall not live for ever. You should try to swim with your own strength. That is the right thing to do. Don't mind if you drown while trying to swim. If you realize that you have made a mistake in adopting the course which you are following at present, you should abandon it. If you don't see any mistake, you must cling to it no matter even if you die or become a pauper in consequence. But, while doing that, do not get angry with anybody or adopt untruthful means or lose your peace of mind or patience. Bear the hardships which may follow. Instead of seeking the protection of an imperfect father, seek that of the Father of all, of Omnipotent God. That will make you strong. This is the only lesson I wish to teach you. If you have learnt it, you may rest assured that you have received perfect education.

You will read accounts of my tour in papers and elsewhere. I don't have time to give you other news either.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4811

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 25-12-1933.

178. NOTE TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

WARDHA ASHRAM,
November 13, 1933

Hindus are in grave error. They have become cowards. They are not prepared for sacrifice; they do not wish to purify temselves nor do they want to give up their bad habits. What else can you expect ?[1] In these circumstances, those of us who are awakened should do their duty by purifying themselves through sacrifice and have the faith that therein lies the ultimate solution of the problem.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindu. Courtesy : National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani.

179. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

HINGANGHAT,
November 13, 1933

CHI. MARY,

I did not know that you were going to Betul so soon. I am writing this during the few minutes I have at Hinganghat. You will read all the account of my doings in *Harijan.*

I thought Amala might listen if she knew who had made the suggestion. Hers is a difficult case. But God succeeds where and when we fail. Let us trust her to God. I hope you are keeping well body and mind.

You must write often and that to Wardha from where letters will be redirected.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 6015. Also C.W. 3341. Courtesy : F. Mary Barr.

[1] The reference is to the riot in Sind resulting from the marriage of a Hindu girl with a Muslim.

180. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Unrevised CHANDA,

November 13, 1933

CHI. DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have just arrived in Chanda and whilst the others are coming, I have taken up your letter. It is now 9 p.m. The programme is fairly strenuous. I was in Hinganghat at 6 p.m.

Tiwari has handed me your letter. I have also read yours to J[1]. So far as he knows there is probably very little left in A.I.C.C. a/c. The books are not with him. He has sent for the accounts. Meanwhile I have suggested that Rs. 500 might be sent at least on a/c. If the funds are exhausted, I do not know what is to be done. I have an earmarked a/c at my disposal. I am loath to part with that fund. I am drawing upon it for Hardikar and I want to do likewise for the list of workers you have sent me. It too will be soon exhausted. In the circumstances, the office staff has to be reduced if not given up altogether, i.e., if the civil resistance movement is to continue. The more I look about me, the more convinced I feel that those who are in the fight will have to do without funds except such as may remain in hands such as mine. I have just managed for Gujarat and Karnatak. The lady who was to have paid Rs. 50,000 has just sent the message that she would like to pay Rs. 10,000 to you. If she does, I shall expect you to pay the U.P. workers out of this. Anyway I think it is best for you to confer with Jamnalalji and if necessary with me as to the management of the funds that are still available. I have sent notices everywhere that no more help need be expected through me. I am trying to run through whatever is at my disposal.

Now about the informal meeting. You will see from the programme herewith that I am in Delhi between 10 and 14 December. Thakkar Bapa says I can take up the bulk of 14th for our meeting. I am supposed to entrain for Andhra on 14th immediately after 4 p.m. Ansari who was with me on Sunday suggested Delhi. You will now make your choice—24th inst., 4th Dec. or 14th Dec., i.e., if the conference is to come off at all.

[1] Jamnalal Bajaj who was the treasurer of the A.I.C.C. at this time.

As to the Harijan tour, I am not worrying at all over the proposed boycott in U.P. I am finding no difficulty here. Congressmen and non-Congressmen are co-operating in arranging for the tour. You are unnecessarily hard on the liberals whom I would include among non-Congressmen. We have to get work even from them. They work according to their lights. In any case, I do not want a single Congressman to work for this movement who would go to jail. I have said this to everyone who has come to me. I am sending back some of the best workers who have just come out. Ba I hope is going soon and so is Manibehn Patel. Kakasaheb, Swami, Surendra are going. Those Congressmen who are too weak to go or who have lost faith in civil disobedience and who are anxious to work for the Harijan cause I am taking, but not those who want Harijan work as a mere cloak. This movement, if it is to become universal, must be able to continue even if every Congressman is in jail or it must perish. I feel too that congressmen should not handle this movement to strengthen the C. D. movement or the Congress hold on the people. It would be going about it the wrong way. Such an attitude will damage both the Congress and the Harijan cause. Cases of this type have come under my notice. I have expressed strong disapproval of any such work. I think I have now sufficiently answered all your questions. If not, please ask again.

You will have noticed that the Sarkar Salaam[1] in Hijli has stopped. Shall I write to Sir Tej about the Frontier treatment ?

I had a nice letter from Krishna. She seems to be happy in her new home.

I hope Mother's progress continues.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Governor of Bengal", 2-11-1933

181. TELEGRAM TO SHRIKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

CHANDA,
November 14, 1933

SHRIKRISHNA CHANDIWALA
KATRA KHUSHALRAI
CHANDNICHOWK
DELHI

JAMNALALJI REPEATED WIRE BRIJKRISHNA[1] MUST LIVE. MAY GOD SPARE. WIRE CONDITION YEOTMAL.

BAPU

From a photos tat; C. W. 10957

182. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

CHANDA,
November 14, 1933

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

You seem to be worrying about Tara. I hope this is a polite way of saying things. You and I can't afford to worry seriously. If we do, we would discredit the knowledge that we profess. How would it seem if we, who recite the *Gita* daily and read in it that we should not worry, still go on worrying every day about something or the other ? I met Tara. I liked her attitude, etc., very much. About her dental trouble, she is trying some treatment.

Surendra told me everything about you. These days all of us are being tested well. We may call it the primary test.

I am writing this letter while touring. I rose at three in the morning and, after brushing the teeth, the first thing I am doing is this. The prayer will start at 4.20. I am in Chanda just now. We shall leave for Saoli at six. Probably you know that Harijans there spin and weave. The party going to Saoli is a large one. it includes Janakibehn, Radhakishan[2] , Dhotre and others. Those accompanying me on the tour are Thakkar Bapa, Vishwanath, Chandrashankar, Ramnath, Mira-

[1] Brijkrishna Chandiwala, brother of the addressee, who was seriously ill; *vide* "Letter to Mathurdas Trikumji", 15-11-1933

[2] Radhakrishna Bajaj

behn, Nayar and Om. We have to work hard during the tour. The crowds are equally big wherever we go. What else need I write about ? You must have known everything through Tara. If I had the time, I would write a long letter. I do not, cannot, write to you and to many others. I do wish to write, but I have to suppress the wish.

Surendra and Durbari are still in Wardha. A Japanese sadhu has come to live there. His cheerfulness is a joy to see. He is learning Hindi. Ba left yesterday with Swami for Ahmedabad.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4175. Also C.W. 1674. Courtesy : Ramniklal Modi

183. LETTER TO TARABEHN R. MODI

November 14, 1933

CHI. TARA,

I had promised to give you a letter to Ramniklal, but I think I could not do so and I had been feeling unhappy because of that. I had decided to write the letter the first thing this morning. It[1] is enclosed. When will Ramniklal get it now? Write to me always at Wardha. Let me know what you do regarding the teeth. Write about all the thoughts that may come to you, and also describe the experiences that you get from time to time. I hope you have made it a regular practice to read *Harijanbandhu*.

Do you know that Om is accompanying me on the tour? There are many others also just now, up to Saoli. We are learning many things. The body seems to be bearing the burden well enough.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4176. Also C.W. 1675. Courtesy: Ramniklal Modi

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

184. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

CHANDA,
November 14, 1933

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I must have your letters regularly. You have made me grow accustomed to them. We are in Chanda today. it is four o'clock just now. At six we leave for Saoli.

I didn't like the manner in which things were done regarding Vithalbhai. All the same, I have learnt much from here, from the way in which people attended in large crowds. They don't worship the man. They worship, in their own way and on their own terms, the image of the man which they have formed in their minds and which they love. I have not read the accounts in papers and do not know details. But I have got a complete picture in my mind of the whole thing.

I learnt from *The Times* [*of India*] about eggs having been thrown during the students' meeting[1] in Nagpur.I didn't see anything in the hall. I didn't even see any commotion anywhere. Nor do I know anybody else in the hall having noticed anything. Chandrashankar told me only this, that an egg had fallen on Om. Nobody knows whether it was aimed at her or the ex-president sitting by her side or at me. The truth is that the paper has magnified the incident out of all proportion. The students' love was beyond words. They even gave me a purse of Rs. 700. It is the same in the case of U.P.

Ansari came and saw me on Sunday. [His] health is a little better. [He] wished to see Vithalbhai, but could not. During the last days he had become very restless. Ansari had nothing in particular to say. He had come only to pay a formal visit. He has gone to see some patients in princely families. He left the same evening. I w as observing silence then, though not when he arrived. So far I have experienced no difficulty in the tour. It is now time for my meal and then to get into a car. So I must stop here today. Ba and Swami left Wardha yesterday. Ba will go to Ahmedabad *via* Akola. Manu has

[1] Held on November 9, 1933

gone to Rajkot where Rami's[1] daughter is ill. Always write to me at the Wardha address.

Blessings to both from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4 : Manibehn Patelne, pp. 46-7

185. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

CHANDA,

November 14, 1933

CHI. MANI,

I got your long letter. You did well to speak out your mind. You would only harm yourself if you hide your thoughts from me. After a man's death, we must not remember his shortcomings, but should remember only his virtues. My absence had nothing to do with his actions. It is not that I fail to appreciate his virtues. I did not go there because I could not have taken part in anything.[2] I feel that at present I should be either in Yeravda or among Harijans. When I say that I am out of prison only for the sake of Harijans, I do so not only for the benefit of the Government of the world but because that is how I relly feel in my heart. I simply cannot take part in any other activity. People also seem to have understood this. I could not have tolerated the restrictions imposed by the Government and would not have been able to have things according to my own way. I would not have been able to advise you or Dahyabhai. And so I bore the attacks in silence. Apart from this, there is another thing, too, in my life which you should know. Rasik[3] was on his death-bed and he even wished that I should be by his bedside. But I did not go to Delhi, Ba did. Rasik died. I did not shed a single tear. I was taking my meals when I received the wire. I finished my meal and resumed my work. There have been many such incidents in my life. I have formed certain views about death and they are becoming stronger as the years pass. I do

[1] Rami Kunverji Parekh, daughter of Harilal Gandhi

[2] The addressee had asked why Gandhiji did not attend Vithalbhai Patel's funeral.

[3] Harilal Gandhi's son who died on February 8, 1929; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 9-2-1929

not look upon death as a calamity. Marriage may be that, death never is. Does this set your doubt at rest ? If not, ask me again.

You have given a good description of the events there. It was very painful. We should understand the meaning of people's love. That love is not of the individual but of the virtues which they want to see in, and, therefore, attribute to him. Their love, therefore, is a pure thing. It is a sign of the popular awakening and an eye-opener for the world. Nobody can doubt that Vithalbhai was a lover of freedom.

Now about Ba. If I had had time, I would have explained the point more clearly in that letter.[1] Ba's mind has weakened. She wants and yet does not want to court arrest. Deep down in her heart she knows that it is her duty to do so, and cannot forsake that duty, but she does not like to go as I am out. I have not put any pressure. I have left her free to do as she wishes. What I wanted to say was that you should urge her and strengthen her resolution to do her duty, for she believes in you and loves you. Anything I might say is likely to be regarded as an order and might kill her individuality. I, therefore, tell her nothing. But even my silence is interpreted by Ba to mean that I want her to go.

I understand [what you say] about your teeth and legs. Follow the doctor's advice. It is very necessary to wait for a while, you need not insist on immediate action.

I am writing to Dahyabhai.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Write at Wardha only.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4 : Manibehn Patelne, pp. 113-4

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Manibehn Patel", 9-11-1933

186. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

CHANDA,
November 14, 1933

CHI. DAHYABHAI,

I understand your feeling and disappointment. You can know my feelings and mind from my letter to Manibehn.[1] What can I do when I am helpless? Just as a soldier deprived of his sword is no good, so am I without civil disobedience. Moreover my whole life has been pledged. My pledge is either I would be in jail or would be immersed in Harijan work. I cannot even think of any other activity. The faults of Vithalbhai have departed with him. He had many good qualities and it is the memory of these that we have to treasure. You are perhaps not aware that I wrote a letter to him and he sent me an affectionate reply. My personal relations with him were never strained. Differences of opinion never affect personal relations. There is no need to explain all this to you. But Manibehn writes that you and other nephews too are a little hurt; so I am offering this explanation to you. I am very much perturbed as Vallabhbhai is in jail. If he were out I would have left it to him to remove all family misunderstandings. Because he is in jail the task of removing such misunderstandings falls on me all the more heavily. Do not hesitate to write to me frankly if you feel that this explanation is not adequate.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI DAHYABHAI VALLABHBHAI PATEL
RAMNIVAS
PAREKH STREET
BOMBAY 4

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4 : Manibehn Patelne, pp. 115

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

187. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ

November 14, 1933

CHI. RUKMINI,

I had your letter. Keep the rule. I have started writing letters today at three in the morning immediately after rising. These days I get up every day at three and write as many letters as I can in one hour. We are leaving for Saoli today at six. I shall be accompanied in the car up to Saoli by Janakibehn and the other grown-ups. Saoli is a big centre of khadi manufacture, where khadi work is carried on on our behalf. I hope all of you are well. I hear from your father-in-law[1] occasionally. Keshu is quite happy.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

[PS.]

Write always at Wardha.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9702. Courtesy : Benarsilal Bazaj

188. TALK TO KHADI WORKERS, SAOLI

November 14, 1933

Gandhiji exhorted them to introduce improvements in their implements which would give them an increased output and a consequent increase in wages.[2] He said.

Even then if you do not give up your bad habits, an increase in wages would not add to your happiness, for you will squander away what you will get. What is necessary then, above all, is for you to purify your life, give up evil habits, and you will add not only to your resources but also to your well being.

Harijan, 24-11-1933

[1] Rameshwarlal Bazaj

[2] Some of the women workers had complained of scanty wages.

189. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

CHANDA,

November 14, 1933

I should advise you not to put too much strain on your body. It was not at all necessary for you to have run after the bier all the way.[1] It is not an absolute moral duty to do so. I knew that my absence would be misunderstood, but why should I forsake my dharma for fear that others might not understand it ? If I can live mentally outside jail, it can be only for Harijan work. That being so, I can do nothing unconnected with such work. Unable to offer civil disobedience, I am like a bird who has lost its wings. I would not have been able to endure some of the things which happened there. Looking at the matter even from that point of view, therefore, I couldn't have come. Moreover, the date for the commencemnt of the Harijan tour had already been fixed. I didn't go to see Motilalji's widow. I haven't gone to see Rami's daughter, who is on her death-bed. Similarly, I am not going to visit Brijkishan, who is as dear to me as a son and who too is on his death-bed. . . .[2] You should write to him. Perhaps a wire may be necessary . . . .[3] I did not go to see Rasik when he was on his death-bed. I didn't go even after he died. But I needn't tell you all this. I have given a few instances thinking that perhaps you do not know about this aspect of my life. In fact, even you need not reply to such charges against me. Those who have failed to understand me till now will not be convinced by arguments. We must trust to the effect which my life as a whole may produce. Our deeds will have their effect sooner or later. No arguments can prevent them.

Your not coming did not please me. I had thought that you would suddenly turn up on Sunday without previous intimation. It seems that there will be no meeting[4]. If it is held, it will be in Delhi on December 14. Ansari wants it to be on that day. If so, you should attend. . . .[5]

[1] The addressee had attended Vithalbhai Patel's funeral.

[2] Omissions as in the source

[3] Omissions as in the source

[4] Of the A.I.C.C.

[5] Omission as in the source

Do your best regarding Utkal. The article[1] in *Harijan* seems to have brought some money. You need not worry about this problem. There is no necessity at all for you to strain your health. As one should avoid indolence, so also should one avoid excessive work. The verse समत्वं योग उच्यते, etc.,[2] is ever fresh in my mind. The *Gita* is like a living mother to me, like the *Kamadhenu*[3]. There is no exaggeration at all in this statement.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 139-40

190. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

November 15, 1933

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Shri Harkare saw me about a memorial to Salpekarji. If a fund to be called Salpekar Smarak Harijan Seva Nidhi, is started and contributions are collected for it, I have agreed that my name may be used for that purpose. But I have told him that this may be done only if you approve of the plan and agree to help. A sum of not less than Rs. 5,000 should be collected for this fund, and it may be given to me in Chandwara in the form of a purse. A small committee may be formed for the purpose and the money may be spent for Harijan uplift in consultation with me. If you approve of this plan, help and guide Shri Harkare accordingly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 2926

[1] *Vide* "The Cry of Orissa"

[2] Even-mindedness is yoga. *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 48

[3] The cow of Hindu mythology which yielded all desires

191. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, WUN

November 15, 1933

I tell you, if you do not know already, that my friendship with Bapuji Aney has grown with years. I can give you many reminiscences of his sweet manners and brevity pf speech, his resourcefulness and industry. I cannot conceal from you my grief at his enforced absence[1] from our midst today.

I was not prepared to hear this[2] from you, I want an unsoiled cowrie from you, which means, I want you to sacrifice a little of your comforts to spare money for the Harijans. I do not think any one of you denied yourself, out of sympathy with the flood-stricken people, a single meal or a single comfort. If that be true, it does not behove you to plead inability when asked to contribute to this cause, which is one of penance and purification for us, caste Hindus.

Harijan, 24-11-1933

192. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, YEOTMAL

November 15, 1933

This song[3]conveys a message of peace and fearlessness. How can we retain untouchability consistently with our prayer to be at peace with the whole world ? If we want to be just to the whole world we have to be just to the Harijans.

Ever since I set foot on the soil of Berar, the name of Bapuji Aney is reverberating in my ears. After years of comradeship a friendship has grown between us, the measure of which I cannot describe to you adequately. I expect to hear his name being echoed in every nook and corner of Berar.

Harijan, 24-11-1933

[1] M. S. Aney was in prison.

[2] The people of Wun had excused themselves from giving a purse on account of the flood havoc.

[3] The flag song.

193. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

AMRAOTI,
(AS AT WARDHA)
November 16, 1933

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I had your long letter.

I see that you are ever thinking of Andrews as a good mother would think of her son, looking after him and anticipating his wants and protecting him from all harm. You are quite right in saying that without some such care his anxiety complex overtakes him and he then suffers, and his work with him. Nevertheless, if you feel that for more efficient work you should come to India for a month or two, you should not hesitate. In this, both he and I agreed, but he is there on the spot and you will do what you think proper after consultation with him and other friends. Not that at the present moment any substantial work can be done. Sir Samuel Hoare has made up his mind about everything. He believes in his 'mission'. He almost thinks that we are incapable of looking after our own affairs or even knowing what is good for us. He will not let us make mistakes. The immediate needs of the Britishers blind him to the realities. I feel that, in these circumstances, friends over there can do very little beyond watching, waiting and praying. We must look after ourselves, and if we succeed in demonstrably helping ourseleves, you over there will be able to do substantial work.

Hijli affair seems to have been satisfactorily settled. I suppose I am right in presuming that my very simple letter to the Governor of Bengal had its effect.

It may be said that the funeral ceremony over the remains of Vithalbhai Patel passed off fairly well. So far as the public were concerned they demonstrated in an unmistakable manner what they stood for. The procession is described in Anglo-Indian papers to have been at least a mile long. The whole of Bombay turned out to do honour to the memory of the deceased. They identified themselves with the cause for which he stood, viz., India's unadulterated Independence, not of association with Britain but undoubtedly of the slightest con-

trol. That the people are today helpless and unable to help themselves does not affect their mentality. They know what they want and they seize every occasion that offers to them to let the world know their mind.

I wish you would succeed in bringing Subhas Bose to England.

I am dictating this during the few minutes that I have at my disposal before motoring away to the next destination. I know you had last week an accurate letter from Chandrashankar Shukla. I am not going to put the strain on him by sending you another descriptive letter. The same demonstrations and enthusiasm continue unabated. I do feel that untouchability is going much more swiftly than many may imagine. No less than 1,50,000 people must have taken part in the numerous meetings and demonstrations. If they did not want to endorse the movement, one would think that they could not possibly have attended in such large numbers. They know that at the present moment I am touring solely in regard to untouchability, and that no political mission is mixed up with it, and yet they attend, and, in spite of the very hard times we are going through, they give their pices and their rupees. It is, therefore, sad to think that the Anglo-Indian papers are seeking to minimize the importance of the tour and even seeking to discredit it. I wonder if they had telegraphed to you the so-called egg-throwing incident at Nagpur and the preparations for boycott in the U.P. I enclose cuttings about the incident and my very brief reply. Of course, the sanatanists' opposition is undoubtedly there. But, up till now I have not noticed any support being given to them by the public at large. The sanatanists would not have hesitated to damage the movement if they had any public support worth the name. More I have not the time to say. But you must read *Harijan* as part of my weekly lettter. Distribute it as much as you like, and if you want more copies you can have them for the asking. And you may take it that it will hide nothing of the opposition to the movement. I have refrained from dealing with the egg-throwing question and the opposition in the U.P., in the pages of the *Harijan*, first, because I have dealt with the two things in the public press, and secondly, because they have no bearing on the movement. They have a political bearing in the sense that the Anglo-Indian newspapers are resorting to unscrupulous tactics. But I do not want to deal with such things in the pages of the

Harijan. I want it to be free from political controversy even though just now I am out of prison. Immediately I am inside prison walls I may not take notice of any politics even though they may have profound influence upon the Harijan movement. And I am trying as much as it is humanly possible to act as if I was a prisoner. If, however, you find any omissions in the *Harijan* or my letters, you will not hesitate to draw my attention to such omission.

I take it that you will share this letter with the friends who, you think, should see it.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 1474

194. LETTER TO EFY ARISTARCHI

AMRAOTI,
November 16, 1933

MY DEAR EFY,

I have your letter with the very beautiful card which you want me to keep in my copy of the *Bhagavad Gita*. I am not going to carry out your wish literally, for, that will defeat it. I do not read from the *Gita* every day. I listen to its reading in the morning. And since your idea, I take it, is that I should have the picture daily as a book-mark I propose to keep it in the book which I may be reading for the time being and transfer it from book to book.

I see that you are having Gujarati lessons, probably from Manu, for, you have addressed your name in Gujarati.

I am glad that you are coming in close touch with Manu and Elizabeth. You ask me what I wish about this love affair. I regard both as very lovable, very sincere and very earnest, but what I fear is that they do not measure the full consequences of the proposed marriage. I thoroughly appreciate their viewpoint. For them it is enough that they love each other. But I have always held that whilst young people should first make their choice, its finality should be dependent upon the approval and blessings of the elders. I have seen young love so often disappointed in after years. However deliberate the choice, somehow or other later years proved the choice to have been ill made. In this case I see grave danger ahead. The most fatal objection, however, that I can see to this proposed match is that Elizabeth desires,

and from her own standpoint perhaps naturally so, that the progeny should be brought up in the Roman Catholic faith. I do not mind it at all. But, even though Manu may have no objection, his parents and his people whom he loves dearly will never be able to reconcile themselves to their grandchildren being brought up in a faith other than their own.

Then there is the question of the whole Hindu culture. I see, even at the present moment, a conflict going on between Hindu culture and the Christianity of Indians; the latter are being torn between two almost opposite attractions. Somehow or other, Christianity has become synonymous with Western culture. Perhaps rightly so, for, the religion of the Western people is predominantly Christianity and therefore Western culture may be fittingly described as Christaian culture as Indian culture would certainly be described as Hindu culture. The progeny of Elizabeth must be brought up in entirely different surroundings unless Manu decides to tear himself away from his own surroundings and lives an exclusive life or decides to settle down in the West. I think that, spiritually considered, Elizabeth herself should not be a party to the possibility of Manu having to tear himself away.

Then there is the question of Elizabeth herself. She would be hard put to it to accommodate herself to Indian surroundings. Her constitution may be undermined or she would have to live a life out of all correspondence to her surroundings. There is ample justification for Europeans saying that they cannot possibly exist in India without incurring expenses out of all proportion to the Indian average. It is difficult enough even for Mira, in spite of her tremendous love for India, in spite of her iron will, to bend herself to the Indian simplicity, and Mira is the general average. But even she has to be protected against herself and compel [led] to give herself facilities which her associates are not given. She would have become bed-ridden long ago if I had not laid down the law from the very first and I know that she has extraordinarliy accommodated herself to the Indian life. But, even she would have failed completely if she had married an Indian and made the futile attempt of bringing up her children after the Indian style. No-body who has not lived in India like Indians can possibly have a conception of what I am writing. India is the poorest country in the world. And if is a tremendous job for a Western girl to come to India and marry an Indian with a fixed determination of living the essentially Indian life. I do not recall a single Indian who has taken a

European girl for his wife living the life of the average Indian. He simply cannot do it if he will do justice to his wife. And I myself much less . . .[1] reconciled to ourselves to Manu having lower his idea for the sake of Elizabeth.[2] It is for reasons such as this I have cried out for celibacy for those who dedicate themselves completely to God, *i.e.*, to the service of God's creation. There is no difficulty in my treating Mira as my daughter or you, but, imagine me having any European girl as daughter-in-law. I should be frightened. I could not shoulder the burden, because I could not reconcile myself to Devdas, for instance, having to tear himself away from his natural surroundings. I feel it to be premature for Indians to contract marriage relations with Europeans. When India has improved her conditions or when Euorpeans have boys and girls who have become inured to uttermost simplicity and have become domiciled in India I can look forward with happiness to Indo-European marriages.

Now, I think, I have given you a long enough letter and ample matter for thought. You know, at least somewhat, what I would wish, but I do not, in any shape or form, expect you to give effect to my wish, if what I have said does not appeal to you. And, if you think otherwise about the future of Manu and Elizabeth, you will not hesitate to tell me so. Whilst I deeply appreciate your losing yourself in me I would not be guilty of enslaving your reason or your heart. Imperfect as I am, I would not have you to become a partner in my errors. You must, therefore, exercise your full judgment in everything you do in association with me. My love for you will be none the less for your differing with me when you feel the need for difference in thought speech or action.

I have not put before you one more thing that I have stated in my letter to Elizabeth. I would simply state the proposition without arguing it.

I believe that, when husband and wife profess a different faith, the progeny should be brought up in the faith of the husband. There are, to me, sound religious and philosophic reasons for this proposition. If this proposition does not appear to be sound, you should

[1] some words are illegible.

[2] Perhaps the sentence should read : And I [am] myself much less [inclined to] reconcile ourselves ot Manu having [to] lower his ideal for the sake of Elizabeth.

ask Elizabeth to show you my letter to her.

I am working just now under tremendous strain. I get very little time for carrying on correspondence. This letter too, I am dictating under trying circumstances. I would therefore,like you, if you think it wise, to share this letter with Elizabeth as also Manu. But, if you think it wise not [to] do so, please tell both of them that I have their joint letter as also Elizabeth's previous letter, both of which I appreciate and about which I have written to you.

I hope you received my letter wherein the £ 15 sent by you were acknowledged. I cannot warn you too often against unduly denying yourself.

Love.

BAPU

PRINCESS EFY ARISTARCHI
HOTEL SCHOTZKY
FREIBURG 1-B
(GERMANY)

From a facsimile in *Mahatma,* Vol. III, facing p. 344.

195. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

November 16, 1933

CHI. MANUDI,

I got your two letters together today. You did quite right in going there. Now help Kusum to get all right. I suppose you will return to Wardha after she has recovered. Bali[1] also felt happy. I am not writing to her separately. Write to me regularly at Wardha.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. BALIBEHN
C/O VORA HARIDAS VAKHATCHAND
BEHIND HIGH SCHOOL
RAJKOT

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 1662. Courtesy : Manubehn S. Mashruwala.

[1] Balibehn M. Adalaja, Harilal Gandhi's wife's sister.

196. SPEECH AT HANUMAN VYAYAMSHALA, AMRAOTI

November 16, 1933

This vast gathering must have seen that there is no Godmade distinction between caste Hindus and Harijans.[1] The distinction is purely man-made, and is an offence in the eyes of God. If the Harijans are given full opportunities for advancement, they will certainly equal, if they will not beat, others in many a field of life. The sight we have witnessed this evening must be an eye-opener to us and must inspire us to purge our hearts of the taint of untouchability.

Harijan, 24-11-1933

197. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, AMRAOTI

November 16, 1933

I have visited many places throughout the length and breadth of this country and such big meetings are to me the manifestations of the grace of God. I believe that with God's favour only can we conduct such huge assemblies. With His grace also I have taken up the Harijan work. It is a religious work and should therefore be done with truth, peace and sacrifice. It could not be done otherwise. If we want to expiate for the injustice done to the Harijans and if we want to atone for the wrongs we, the *savarna* Hindus, are still doing them, we must treat them as we treat other *savarna* Hindus. I would like to tell you all that, unless we behave with them on equal terms, there is no chance of our improvement also. I visited the Harijan quarters with the help of Dr. Patwardhan, and have also seen other work here, and have now heard the address read out to me by the local Municipal Committee. If the Municipality of this place could not do anything in this matter, it is not to be blamed. I have seen many other municipal committees and the conditions are just the same all over. But I must say that now even the Western scientists after their research have come to the conclusion that if we leave out any particular section of our society

[1] About a hundred Harijan boys had displayed their skill in physical drill before the gathering to the accompaniment of a band.

out of our fold, we are sure to go down economically. After these 25 years of observations, my belief strengthened that wealth should always go hand in hand with religion. There should be harmony between religion and wealth. I have come to realize from my Harijan work that one who tries for wealth in accordance with religion gets both. I believe it to be the duty of every *savarna* Hindu that he should try to take up the Harijan into his fold. If we do our duty towards the Harijans, all of us Hindus, Moslems, Parsis,Christians, will live peacefully. To my mind there is no better way to unity of these people than Harijan work. Now I must tell you what every one of you can do in this respect. The Harijan movement is a great *yajna* and each of you can put his little bit in it. Those who have money can give it for this cause. Those who have the leisure and intelligence to spare can teach the Harijan boys and give them lessons in personal hygiene and cleanliness. The Congressmen are doing this work at present. But I want that non-Congressmen also should undertake this work. It is the religious duty of every one of you to do this work.

I do not value politics as much as I value this work. Politics is nothing to me. It is my belief that if we do this work with religious fervour everything will be obtained. I am not travelling with any other intention in this work. And when I see people assemble in such large numbers to hear me, I hope they will stand by me in this work. In July last the Harijan Sevak Sangh was started and some of you must have taken the vow to wipe out this curse of untouchability. It is the birthright of the Harijans to make use of public institutions and to enter into the temples. But as long as there is a single soul boycotted as being a Harijan, I shall not regard untouchability as being wiped out totally. It is up to you, therefore, to change your hearts and consider the Harijans as your brethren.

The Harijan Sevak Sangh is composed of people of different schools of thought but they can do this work together. The workers in this field should not aspire after any kind of honour or title. They should not have the slightest tinge of personal interest or selfish motive. This work should also be free from any sort of political meaning but I do not value political things as much as this. The Harijan work is for the purification of the Hindu religion. I have great hopes in this matter. I have always been an optimist and my optimism

in this case is increasing every day. But even if I fail it remains my duty to continue this work. Very few sincere workers have so far come forward. I, therefore, pray to God that He should give you all the necessary strength and guidance to do your duty in this respect.[1]

I must remind you of the pledge given last year in your name. You will remember that a meeting of representatives of Hindus was held in Bombay in September last year, Pandit Malaviyaji being in the chair. Among other things they resolved that untouchability, being a blot on the Hindu religion, had to be removed and that Harijans were entitled to the same public utilities, and in the same manner, as caste Hindus. There was in that resolution a special reference to Hindu temples, and legislation was contemplated if it was found to be necessary for attaining the end. It is, therefore, the bounden duty of every caste Hindu to fulfil the pledge by throwing open to the Harijans temples, wells and other institutions precisely on the same terms as they are open to caste Hindus.

We are the cause of the degradation to which the Harijans are reduced. We must spend money if the wrong is to be redressed. He who will give to the cause will gain. We may not be satisfied, therefore, with giving out of superfluous cash, we have to give even if we have to stint ourselves. Some of us will have to give our all for Harijan service.

It gladdens me to find both Congressmen and non-Congressmen working together in this movement. Since questions are being asked as to how far Congressmen can join this movement, I would like to reiterate what I have said before. The Congress adopted removal of untouchability as an integral part of its programme in 1920. It is, therefore, the duty of every Hindu Congressmen to fight untouchability and help Harijans in every way open to him. But, if the movement were confined to Congressmen alone, it could not make the headway we all desire. Every *savarna* Hindu has to do his bit in the movement. But whilst every Congress member is expected to fight the evil, he or she is not expected officially to join the Harijan Seva Sangh. If they are active civil resisters, they ought not to hold office in these organizations. And no Congressmen who believes in and wants to offer civil resistance need in any way feel constrained to suspend or give it up altogether. The case is wholly different with those who feel the call to give up civil resistance for the sake of Harijan service or

[1] The following, except the last paragraph, is from *Harijan*, 1-12-1933.

who have lost faith in the former.

In this movement of self-purification as in satyagraha there is no room for camouflage.

Harijans have complained that some self-seekers have crept into the movement. In a purely religious movement there is no room for such people. Only those can or should take office who have the spirit of service in them.

Some of the ladies of this place have offered me ornaments and the little children have given me a little silver casket which I wish to put for auction. I shall accept money from you all, be it even a cowrie but it should be given with a pure heart. I assure you that it will make you happy and will be helpful to the Harijans.

Hitavada, 23-11-1933, and *Harijan*, 1-12-1933

198. LETTER TO KIKABHAI L. WAGHELA[1]

[Before*November 17, 1933*][2]

The schools I open are not meant solely for Harijans and I certainly do not open schools which are not open to Harijans. What you state about enquiries into the condition of Harijans employed by municipalites will not be overlooked by me.

The Hindu, 18-11-1933

199. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

AKOLA,
[On or before*November 17, 1933*][3]

Gandhiji interviewed by the Associated Press, regarding a private report from America that he was going to New York in the spring season, denied having received any invitation to this effect.

He added that he had only recently declared to a Press correspondent his utter inability to go to America or elsewhere, stating that he would not depart from his vow of devoting his energy solely to the Harijan cause up to the end of next July.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-11-1933

[1] The addressee, a Harijan leader, had requested Gandhiji not to open separate schools for Harijan children.

[2] This appeared under the date-line "Ahmedabad November 17".

[3] The report appeared under the date-line "Akola, November 17".

200. PICE PER DAY

Sjt. Harakhchand, writing on 26th October, says :[1]

Here the reader should stretch his imagination and ask himself what it must mean when people gladly walk miles to secure doles giving them less than one pice worth of rice per day and then search his heart as to whether he can honestly plead hard times when he is called upon to give a donation towards partially feeding the hungry skeletons of Orissa. He must not expect a collector to go to him before he will part with his rupee or whatever sum he can give. He should send his money order without delay. Or he will, to save commission, combine with his neighbours so as to send the maximum amount covered by the minimum commission.

Harijan, 17-11-1933

201. ADMIRABLE

The arrangements made by Dr. Khare and his Harijan Committee for the programme last week were admirable. It could not have been got through even as it was, had not a very large number of willing and able companions helped Dr. Khare who never spared himself or them during those trying and strenuous days, although he has chronic heart trouble. I understand that the heavy expenditure involved in having lofty electric lights and the solid platform at the huge mass meeting was met from voluntary contributions and was in no way a tax upon the purses presented. My host's house was for the time being turned into a dharmashala and Sjts. Tikekar Brothers spared no pains or expenses in making happy and comfortable our large company and others who had come for numerous functions. All Congessmen and non-Congressmen seemed to me to have acted in perfect co-operation for making the visit to Nagpur and the surrounding places the success it undoubtedly was. I tender my

[1] The letter is not repreoduced here. The correspondent, describing the magnitude of the relief work in Orissa, had stressed the urgent need of funds. *Vide* also "A pice Per Head"

congratulations to Dr. Khare and his colleagues for the efforts they unstintingly put forth on the occasion. The great cause of purification deserved all the pains and vigilance given to it.

Harijan, 17-11-1933

202. THE UTILIZATION OF DONATIONS

Workers desire further elucidation than I have already given in these columns as to the mode of using the donations that are being received during the Harijan tour. I have conferred with Thakkar Bapa on the point and I can announce definitely that not less than 75 per cent will be used for Harijan service in the places where they are received, provided that a satisfactory budget is presented and the Central Board approves of it. Indeed, even the full amount will be surrendered wherever it is found necessary to do so. The only thing, therefore, to do is for workers in each centre to prepare businesslike schemes and produce honest and industrious persons for the due execution of the schemes, and the money will be forthwith coming as soon as needed. There is no desire to lock up the donations or to deflect them without cause from the places where they are collected. It is intended to keep a certain portion for the Central Board, but there, too, not for overhead charges, but for constructive work directly handled by it.

Harijan, 17-11-1933

203. SPEECH AT ANJUMAN MUFID-UL-ISLAM, KHAMGAON

November 17, 1933

When I heard that your Anjuman had invited me, I was very glad. I am very thankful to you for your kind address and for the purse you presented to me for Harijan work. I was very glad to read the contents of your address. You very rightly state that so long as untouchability remains there is no hope for Hinduism. I have been with the Mussalmans all my life. The great virtue which I find in Islam is that it teaches equality and brotherhood of man, be he king or slave. Most of you must be *Hafiz* and must have read the Koran. I have also tried to study and learn all the best in it.

What you have said about Hindu-Muslim unity has appealed to me most. I find that there are too many misunderstandings. Still,

Hindus and Muslims cannot remain apart like this. After all how long will this go on ? I have found, however, that at present I have failed to bring unity but I surely see success in this failure. It should also be remembered that unity does not mean joining powers to crush someone else. If this is our idea of unity, we had better remain as we are. At present I am only concentrating on Harijan work and have left this question for a time.

I can quite understand your anxiety to retain your culture. You do not seem to believe in common educational institutions which, in your opinion, are calculated to lead you astray from your religious and cultural wealth. I look on this question of sectarian education differently. Common schools or communal schools do not matter with me. What is the good of the common schools when prejudices create differences of heart ? What harm is there in communal schools when there is purity of heart for all ? So you will see that communal schools or common schools are of little importance. Purity of heart, trust in each other and love for others are things more important than the question of sectarian education.

I really did not expect a purse from you. More than this, I need your blessings to give me strength to fight untouchability. I need your help to rid India of a great curse. It is our common cause, not for India alone but for the whole world. It is the service of humanity. I am very thankful to you for your kind address and the purse presented to me.

The Hindustan Times, 25-11-1933

204. SPEECH AT PUBLC MEETING, KHAMGAON

November 17, 1933

I am grateful to you for the address you have presented and also for the purse and donations. I thank the association of the Muslims for their purse. During my visit to the Chokhamela[1] Harijan Boarding, the brothers gave me cash and the sisters rings. I am thankful for these gifts as well. I appreciate the good work you have done in Khamgaon and its neighbourhood for removing untouchability.

[1] A Harijan saint of Maharashtra

This evening, Thakkar Bapa has thrown open Udasiji's[1] Siva temple to the Harijans in Lasoor. He has performed this sacred task for the sake of our Harijan brethren. I am told no Harijan was present on the occasion. The Harijans are still suspicious because of the treatment we have meted out to them. It is the duty of the Hindus, or of those who consider themselves caste Hindus, to do justice to them, and atone for the atrocities they have heaped on the Harijans in the past, and give up the ignorant belief prevalent today that the temples are meant for caste Hindus alone. Udasiji has done his duty by this act. Whether the Harijans come or not, we should discharge our duty towards them with love and the result is bound to be good. When the Harijans are convinced that our invitation is prompted by love, they will come by themselves.

Here I wish to say one thing, that the law applicable to Hindus applies to Harijans as well. Rules of public conduct and should be applicable to all alike. Harijans should follow the rules for visiting public institutions. They should keep their bodies clothes clean and follow the rule of personal cleanliness. Harijans who eat carrion have no right to enter temples. Having travelled widely, and after studying history, I have found that those who eat carrion are despised everywhere. There is no doubt that those who are godfearing and in whom wisdom and purity have dawned can give it up. Likewise, I request them to give up drinking. I know that it can be argued that there are many among caste Hindus who take alcohol; but it is not right to follow them in their vices. He who takes alcohol loses his humanity. He even forgets the difference between mother, sister, daughter and wife. Although by birth I am a caste Hindu, by choice I am a Harijan. Therefore, from this point of view, considering myself a Harijan, I implore them to give up this vice. I know that alcohol is used even in ther rituals. This is what some pseudo-pundits have taught them and they have believed it. Therefore I beg of you to give up this vice which makes beast of man. In fact, it is this thing which is untouchable. In the same way. Mahars, Chamars, Bhangis and others should do away with the distinctions amongst themselves. This is the Harijans' share of duty in this work of self-purification.

Now, I wish to say something to the caste Hindus. I also want to say what I conclude from this vast congregation that has gathered here

[1] Vishnudas Udasi

to hear my speech. Ever since I returned to India, I do exactly as my conscience dictates. Let no one imagine that I do one thing but have something else in my mind. I claim to believe in God, whether you call him Khuda, Allah, or Ishwar. I stand in awe before Him. He is witness to all my work. I have also taken a vow with Him as my witness that I shall do Harijan service in a truly religious spirit. there are many things I can do, but if I did them it would be my downfall. Out of the prison I wish to do only one thing; otherwise my life is false. I consider myself a layman, but layman or learned, it is the duty of everyone of follow his dharma. I consider this work a religious duty. Whatever I have learnt from my parents and teachers and from my own experience, all this I would like to present before you. I have had the reward of whatever service I have rendered before. God alone can reward my service. At the moment, I wish to work only for the removal of untouchability. If you like my views you can come and if you do not like them you can avoid me. During these days, I have felt your affection and therefore I shall bear it even if you abuse me today and, if you beat me I shall bear that also and shall pray to God to forgive you. But if you do not agree with my views, courtesy demands that you should avoid coming here. I however see that you come here, give money and jewellery gladly; I therefore take it that you are with me. Are you paying my fees for the work I have already done ? I do not require fees. God gives me my reward. But when you come here in such large numbers and help me with money, etc., I conclude that you are with me in whatever task I have undertaken now; that is, this has become the sanatan dharma today. I have met a hundred and fifty thousand people today. Are they all reformers ? No. They are sanatanists and they are doing this work today. If today you do not voluntarily take part in the removal of untouchability, tomorrow you will have to do it against your will. When popular rule is established, do you think the Harijans can be prevented from entering schools or excluded from other rights ? There was a time when people would not travel along with them in trains; why do they do it now ? In the same way, I ask the mill-owners whether they do not touch the untouchables ? They do, but only for pecuniary gain. There is no virtue in this. I say what you are obliged to do for pecuniary gain, could you not do the same out of your own free will and because it is religious?

In the address presented to me on behalf of the Municipality, it is stated that we should give up the move to have the law regarding temple-entry enacted, because many people think that legal inter-

ference is undesirable in religious matters. I wish to tell them that the Harijans have as much right to go to the temples for worship as we have. But the draft of the Bill which has been presented has no element of force at all. On the other hand it seeks to remove the element of coercion which exists in the law as it is today. I myself do not like interference by law in religious matters but how do these Bills interfere with religion ? If any lawyer can prove this, I shall give it up; but I know for certain that this is not the case. After all, I was myself a legal practitioner once upon a time. Lawyers contend that, today even if the public wish to throw open a temple to the Harijans and the majority of the trustees also agrees to it, the temple cannot be thrown open even if a single trustee raises objection. The law does not allow freedom for independent decision, and so it does amount to coercion. The aim of this Bill is to remove this coercion. Whatever fault there is in the law can only be removed by law; there is no other way. It would have been interference with religion if by law all temples were to be thrown open; but there is no such provision in the Bill. There is obviously no compulsion in this. The temples can be thrown open only when the trustees or the public wish to do so. If they do not, there is no compulsion. At the Bombay Conference the Hindu leaders in the name of Hindu society took a pledge to secure for Harijans the right to have *darshan* of the idol. The legal obstruction of fulfilling that vow is to be removed with the help of law. That is all that this Bill means. In this there is no interference by law in religion. Now the members of the Municipality may ponder over my words.

When I visited the Harijans, they made several complaints and asked me whether I considered those who were doing Harijan work as true servants of the Harijans. I replied that I did not know about the local workers but all those who join in any movement cannot be said to be good and truthful. From their complaints I learnt that in Malkapur Harijans are not allowed the use of lavatories. If this is true, what a grave injustice it is that those who clean the lavatories cannot use them. Tomorrow if they stop cleaning them what can you do ? Caste Hindus are not even so organized as to be able to take up mutual scavenging. No good can result from such behaviour. Similar complaints have been made about a place called Monar. All others can bathe in the water that flows there but Harijans are prohibited from doing so. They can bathe only in the unclean water drained after use by us for bathing. I do not know how far this is true, but if it is

true it is a great disgrace. Such water is unfit even for animals. We wash even cattle with clean water. Are these Harijan brethren worse than animals ? What is their fault ? And even if they have been at fault, is this the treatment which should be meted out to them ? This has become our daily conduct. Irreligion we have made our religion. I shall also mention here the sad news from Rajputana that Harijans have to drink from the water stored for cattle. If this is our religion, it is doomed. Where there is so much hatred, so much antipathy, its doom is inevitable. If we say that this has the sanction of the Shastras and call this Hindu religion, I shall say that it is completely at variance with universal experience and it cannot last long. We may deceive ourselves, we may deceive others, too, but we cannot deceive God. In my concept of Hindu religion, as I have learnt it through experience and after deep study, there is no place at all for the present form of untouchability; and therefore I have taken the vow that even at the cost of my life, untouchability must go root and branch. Every single breath of mine all the twenty-four hours seems to say "Remove untouchability". You can serve Harijans only by becoming their servants. We have to become not the masters of Harijans, but their servants. I did not ask you to sit and dine with them; although as is my wont I accept from anywhere the type of food I allow myself if it is cooked clean by anybody. But I must tell you it was wrong to have sent away the Harijans in this contemptuous manner.

Kabir as well as other saints also have said that God lives with him who is forsaken by the world. Whom the world shuns God accepts. Such instances are to be found in all religions. I remember a story of the days of Hazrat Omer. When one of his commanders sent him 5,000 gold coins he started weeping at the sight. When his wife asked him why he was weeping, he replied, "Till today God was with me; today the world has come to me." So, you have disowned our Harijan brothers, but God is in truth with them alone. Therefore you must remove the feeling of abhorrence that has crept into your hearts.

I have heard many people say, "As one sows in the previous birth, so one reaps in this birth." But it is not right to say so; it is *adharma*. There is pride in this statement. When our parents or wife or children are in trouble, do we say that is the fruit of their doings in a previous birth and neglect them ? We then look after them and serve

them. Then why this indifference towards others ? I also believe in re-birth but it cannot be interpreted in this manner. This argument we can apply to ourselves only. To ignore others on finding them in trouble and to laugh at themand to tell them to "pay for the sins" of their previous birth is to turn God, whom we call the Ocean of mercy and justice, into a demon. I do not believe in such previous births. Therefore, I beg you to think deeply over what I have said and, if you are convinced, give up this hatred and contempt and this feeling of high and low. If you are yourself convinced that this is the right thing to do but you are afraid of the public, well, the public is here [with you]. The truth is that the fear is in your own heart. If you give up this fear and hatred, the blot of untouchability will be removed from the Hindu religion and it will be for the good of us all.

Wherever I go, you give me money. Even to give money is to help in the work for Harijans but please do not if you have Rs. 10 throw away a couple of rupees thinking that this is one way among others of spending your money. No, even if you give one pice, give it whole-heartedly, give it with love denying yourself some necessities. He who gives a pice in this spirit will recover a thousandfold. Therefore considering it a sacred cause, please help it as much as you can.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 8-12-1933

205. TELEGRAM TO SHRIKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

AKOLA,
November 18, 1933

SHRIKRISHNA[1]
KATRA KHUSHAL
DELHI

GOD BE THANKED. BLESSINGS. CHIKHALDA TILL MONDAY.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 2401

206. DISCUSSION WITH SWAMI LALNATH

November 18, 1933

[The Swami] said that he wanted Gandhiji to give up his tour or give up talking about the Bills and that, therefore, he was offering satyagraha and paying Gandhiji in his own coin.[2]

But this is not satyagraha but the negation of it. You want me either to get you arrested by the police or to take the car over your bodies. I would do neither. I would go on foot.Then perhaps you would hold my feet and make me your prisoner.

Yes, we would hold your feet and implore you to stop this tour.

That would surely be violence.

I cannot hide our intention from you. We want to be hurt by the police or by your volunteers. When this happens I know that you would give up the tour.

But I have told you that I shall certainly not summon the police

[1] Brother of Brijkrishna Chandiwala, who had been seriously ill; *vid* "Letter to F. Mary Barr", 21-10-1933 and "Letter to Mathurdas Trikumji", 15-11-1933 and "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 4-12-1933, and "Letter to Kasturba Gandhi", 7-12-1933.

[2] Swami Lalnath had at Dhamangaon and Amraoti made abortive attempts to hold up Gandhiji's car by lying prostrate before it.

and I shall not let the volunteers hurt you.

We must then continue to obstuct your passage.

You are very unreasonable. A satyagrahi must not be unreasonable. You want to provoke the public to violence. A satyagrahi never tempts anyone to do wrong. And how can you resort to such unbecoming behaviour, especially in religious matters ? No earthly power can force me to act contrary to me convictions.

Then you should show us the better way.

I can ertainly do that. You should go back to Benares and ask the Lord of the Universe to wean me from my error. You should fast as I did.

That we have not the ability to do.

Then I am very sorry. I do not like this unseemly business. You should go to your advisers and tell them to persuade me by argument or prayer. If they cannot do so, they should tolerate what I am doing, even as I tolerate their opposition. You can see that I am simply putting the case against the evil before the thousands who come to listen to me.[1]

Harijan, 1–12–1933

[1] *Vide* also the following item.

207. SPEECH AT AKOLA

November 18, 1933

Before I come to our main subject today it is necessary to say something about the incident which took place while I was on my way here. Some persons who have come from Kashi are accompanying me. Amongst them is a Swami.They have a right to go with me in this way. My tour is continuing at such a rapid pace that they cannot follow me everywhere, they come where they can and lie down on the road in front of the car in which I travel.Volunteers remove them and the car continues its journey. The gentlemen do not abuse anyone; they do not indulge in violence. And, I trust, the volunteers do not beat them either. Today, too, they came to the gate. This pained me. I have always been pained at the absence of civility in those who come in the name of sanatan dharma. I did not like to continue my journey after having them removed. Hence, I sent for the Swami who is their leader and tried to reason with him.[1] It is because of this that I am late. I told him that it was not proper for those who claimed to safeguard religion to act in this manner. As the author of the modern technique of satyagraha I told him that their action did not amount to satyagraha, that this kind of action would tire them. If they caught hold of me, beat me up or abused me, I would not answer with obscene language, but would tolerate all that with a feeling of love. I would continue on foot, if they obstructed my car from going further. The Swami then replied that in that case they would cling to my feet and that I would have to walk over them. I replied that I would not do so; nor would I seek the assistance of the police. That would not do me credit. I would seek their help if I was afraid, but I have no fear whatever. In my life, I have been beaten up, but I never asked for police protection. Would I then stoop to do so in the evening of my life while working for dharma? Hence, I requested them to give me the way. I told them that they ought to have realized that in sanatan dharma, in Hinduism, there is freedom to express all kinds of opinions. Finally, the Swami went out and returned after consulting his colleagues and said that if, today, I took another route they would not obstruct me again, and their prestige too would be saved. I agreed to it and took another route.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

The persons accompanying the Swami are young men full of enthusiasm. Someone has put the false notion into their heads that I am out to destroy sanatan dharma. They believe that what I say is contrary to the Shastras. They have a right to believe this. If I am mistaken, they should strive hard to convince me. That is the way of Hinduism, and it is a civilized way. But I am not happy because sanatan dharma is degraded by their uncivilized conduct. Hence I would humbly like to say to those who were opposing me in the name of sanatan dharma that they would be able to put a stop to my activities by appealing to my reason, by touching my heart and not through coercion or uncivilized conduct. I am one bound by a pledge. It is my dharma to abide by the pledge I have taken in the evening of my life. To you who come here to listen to me I pour out my heart. It is in your hands whether or not to act in accordance with what I say. God will know whether you put it into action or not; I shall not be here to find it out.

This morning, some persons who were protesting stood in my way with black flags. My dharma is not to be annoyed with them but to have a feeling of love towards them. They may greet me with black flags if they believe that what I am doing is improper. A servant of Harijans should be indifferent to praise or blame. This rule applies not only to me but to people all over the world who are engaged in public life. Anyone who does not follow it is sure to feel miserable. Why should I feel miserable at this ? What difference does it make to me whether they wave black flags at me or white ? My work alone will bring me praise or blame.

I learn that today the sanatanists burned my effigy. What does it matter to me even if crores of my effigies are burnt ? It makes me unhappy because it involves some waste of money. But I stand to lose nothing on that account. If the people do not approve of what I say, if they disregard it, I can exert no pressure upon them. I can hardly force them to listen to me against their will. That is not my way of action; mine is a straight forward path. Even if the Government did not let them burn it,[1] those who wished to do so have as good as accomplished it. If I look at a woman with a lustful eye, I have as much as sinned against her. God is hardly going to forgive me because I could not accomplish my evil desire ! He will argue that it

[1] Someone in the gathering said that the magistrate had not allowed the burning of the effigy.

was He who prevented the sinful act; I on my part had already committed it. Likewise, does it matter if the gentlemen could not actually burn the effigy ? So far as they are concerned, they have as good as burnt it. Anyway it is all right if they burned it. Despite this, for the sake of dharma, I do wish they had not done so.

The sanatanists have brought out a leaflet alleging they were beaten up by the volunteers. If it is true, it was wrong on the part of the latter to have done so. I will not tolerate it. I do not approve of anyone wishing to protect me indulging in abusive language, rudeness or physical violence. Biyaniji[1] says the volunteers did nothing of the kind. I wish only to warn the volunteers. Perhaps my sanatanist brothers are irked by the large audiences at my meetings. Perhaps they may try to prevent the people from attending. They have every right to do so. Let no one obstruct the sanatanists, but we should try to persuade them politely. If they are not convinced, let them do as they wish. No one should inform the police. Let no one do anything to protect me. God has saved me in similar circumstances a number of times. So long as God wishes to take work from me He will keep my body healthy and safe. When my life–span has ended, no power on earth can keep me alive.

Entertain no doubt that the current movement is a test for Hindu society. The whole world is watching whether Hinduism rids itself of the evil of untouchability. If untouchability is wiped out of the hearts of Hindus, a feeling of brotherhood would come to be established between Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Jews. Untouchability has spread its innumerable tentacles far and wide. It has spread even to those whom we regard as belonging to other faiths. I do not regard this as dharma. Hatred or contempt has no place in Hinduism. Many *shastris* have informed me that there is no sign in the law books of untouchability as practised today. However, even if it is there, we shall have to reject it; otherwise we shall have to give up the claim that Hinduism is basically a non–violent and tolerant faith. This movement of ours is being carried on before the eyes of the world, not in seclusion. It is your duty as well as mine to do whatever we do, in a civilized, truthful, peaceful and courteous manner. I request the sanatanists, too, to carry out their task in a similar manner. I find no civility in the attempt to stop me car. They had better give up black flags and the burning of effigies. Nowadays, black flags are used as a

[1] Brijlal Biyani

mark of protest. When the satyagraha movement was on, black flags were sometimes used to express protest, but I had not approved of it. It is not a civilized practice. It bears no mark of satyagraha. A satyagrahi's dharma is to win over through friendship the heart of anyone who has become an enemy and bring about a change of heart in him. The rules of satyagraha do not vary when applied to dealings between one Hindu and another, between Hindus and Muslims or, between Indians and the British. The rules of satyagraha are equally applicable to all. There can be no room in it for breach of the peace, lack of civility, violence or hatred. Hinduism would come out triumphant if both the sanatanists and reformist Hindus acted in accordance with it, regardless of whether untouchability remains or not. Hinduism cannot survive if untouchability continues. However, it would be welcome if both the parties kept to the path of truth. This is a tremendous movement in which twenty-two crores of Hindus are being tested. It is also a test for Harijans. It is the caste Hindus who have sinned, hence, it is they who have to atone for it. Since Harijans are also Hindus, I say that it is a test for them too.

It is worth knowing what these ten or twelve people who have come from Kashi want. They say that I am free to continue the work of abolishing untouchability, I may carry on the work of temple–entry, but that I should not plead with the people in favour of the Bills on these two subjects which are before the Central Legislature, that I should not endeavour to get them passed. Others too claim that legislation will mean interference with religion. For the last two or three days I have been hearing such echoes. I have answered them to the best of my ability. We are bound by a pledge. Last year in September, representatives of the Hindus took a pledge under the chairmanship of Malaviyaji Maharaj in Bombay. I had drafted the original form of the pledge. The resolution which was passed was almost identical with the one proposed by me. I had given my word to Dr. Ambedkar and to Rao Bahadur Rajah that I was offering my life as hostage to see it that the Hindu society abides by the pledge. Hence it is my duty to persuade caste Hindus to do so . Both temple-entry and enabling legislation are part of the pledge. The Temple–entry Bill is harmless. Moreover, they are hardly likely to be passed because I want it. If it were so, they would have been passed long ago. One of the Bills has been published for [eliciting] public opinion. It is your dharma as well as mine to work for its passage. It puts an end to the legal obstacle. Those temples which, under certain circumstances,

could not, till this day, open their doors to Harijans will be permitted to do so. Today, it seems, although many people may be in favour of throwing open the temple doors, a single person can prevent it. This Bill seeks to remove the obstacle. There is no coercion. Those who believe that the image loses its sanctity by Harijans entering the temple may stop going there. But the majority are of the opinion that God does not come to dwell in the image until the Harijans are admitted. What should those who believe this do ? If they did not have the legal obstruction removed, their pledge would be broken. The Bill harms no one. It has not the remotest suggestion of coercion.

The second Bill does not affect religious untouchability. It only says that untouchability has no place in law, in law–courts. On the one hand, we want the law not to interfere with religion and, on the other, we seek to perpetuate untouchability through the civil code. How could it be ? Lawyers point out that today untouchability is sanctioned by law. It will be eradicated by having these two Bills passed ; for that caste Hindus will have to undergo a change of heart. The Bills seek to protect those who disregard untouchability as well as the untouchables who enjoy no such protection today.

If we did not willingly abolish untouchability today, we shall have to give it up under compulsion in the future. We did not willingly let Harijans occupy the railway compartments ; today they sit there in spite of us. Overwhelmed by selfish motives, we employ them in the mills. There is no merit in doing an act grudgingly.

At present, we are perched on their shoulders, we ought to get off. I ask you to contribute money in order to bring them justice. You and I would not want to live in the homes where Harijans live. They do not observe rules of sanitation, as they do not have the necessary facilities. They are illiterate. The task of removing their hardships cannot be accomplished without funds, hence I ask you for funds. Please do not contribute grudgingly. This is not like throwing away money on idle entertainment. This is an act of sacrifice, of dedication. If you contribute in the spirit of sacrifice, I shall be convinced that you have made a significant contribution. Even a cowrie given in a a charitable spirit will suffice, whereas a rupee parted with in a niggardly spirit has no value. The service of Harijans is after all the service of God. But God gets His work done through man. He gets His work done by one who feels His presence and fears Him. Your money by itself is not going to be enough for Harijans. Your real contribution is your sympathy for this cause. In the morning, Shrimati Durgatai placed her gold bangles, silver mug and tumbler before me and said that she had preserved with care these things which were dear to her ;

and that today she was giving them away for the service of Harijans. I ask all men and women to make such a sacrifice.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 3–12–1933

208. LETTER TO GORDHANBHAI PATEL

[*November 19, 1933*][1]

BHAI GORDHANBHAI,

Manibehn writes to me saying that you were grieved at my absence in Bombay at the time of the funeral. In a way I am happy about it. Your grief suggests that you regard me as a member of the family. You have a right to regard me as such. But if you regard me as one of the family you should ask me when you fail to understand my action. My differences with Vithalbhai had absolutely nothing to do with my not going there. My present circumstances were the sole reason behind my not going over. I am out of jail solely for Harijan work. The programme had already been fixed. I would not be willing to submit myself to such Government restrictions as do not deserve to be endured. Besides, I could not see myself likely to be useful in any other way. Again, my view of death as also my attitude towards funeral rites were likely to render me of no use whatever. Therefore, looking at it from any point of view, my attendance was not necessary, nay, it would have been improper. Why, I would not have permitted part of what happened. For me it should suffice to let you know that my differences with Vithalbhai were not in the least instrumental [in my decision]. You may not be aware that on receiving news of his illness I had written to him to which he had promptly sent a long and sweet reply. When his illness had aggravated, I had also wired to him, to which again he had replied. He also asked you to keep me informed about his health. Mistaking your wire to have been from Gordhanbhai, the Secretary of the Mill–owners' Association, I sent a letter of thanks to the latter. He wrote to me that the wire was not from him. I hope this explanation would pacify you. If not, please do ask me again.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4 : Manibehn Patelne, pp. 156-7

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dahyabhai Patel", 19-11-1933

209. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

(CHIKHALDA),
November 19, 1933

CHI. MANI,

You are doing well to give expression to all that you and other relatives feel. I could not bear either Dahyabhai or Gordhanbhai misunderstanding me. If you are in Bombay, I think you will read my letter[1] to Gordhanbhai. If you wish to say anything after reading it, you may do so.

You must have got my letter. I see no need for me to write to the Press. I don't think it always necessary to reply every time I find newspapers misunderstand my actions or deliberately misrepresent them. If, however, you two, brother and sister, so desire, I will certainly do it. My position is quite clear. There is considerable truth in what Dahyabhai says. We can certainly point out blemishes in [C.R.] Das and others. Is there anybody who is blameless ? But my not going there has nothing to do with Vithalbhai's shortcomings. He certainly deserved the same honour that the other leaders got. His self–sacrifice, determination, ability and his loyalty to the Congress were in no way inferior to those of the others.

Your own generosity fills me with admiration. But mind you, it is not peculiar to you. I have seen such generosity in countless women. They are always ready to forget the wrongs done to them. It is this virtue which is their special honour. But men have taken undue advantage of it. But that is a different story. May I take credit for your behaving so admirably in my eyes just now ?

Write to Wardha.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro-4 : Manibehn Patelne, pp. 115-6

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

210. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

November 19, 1933

CHI. DAHYABHAI,

You must have received my earlier letter[1] . Enclosed is a letter to Gordhanbhai. Give it to him after reading it. Do not forget that it is your duty to strive with me if you are not satisfied [with my explanation]. Pass on their letters to Ba and Mani.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4 : Manibehn Patelne, p. 156

211. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

CHIKALDA,
November 19, 1933

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

I have your letter. On reading it I have come to the conclusion that you should now withdraw yourself from the struggle. This struggle will go on for many years. After you have paid all your debts and the burden of earning a livelihood becomes somewhat lighter you can join the struggle. Many people who would have wanted to take part in the struggle have, for similar reasons, withdrawn themselves from the scene. Those who plunge into the fight have to give up attachment to the family. Our family system is in need of much reform. But this is a separate question. You might consult Jawaharlal. I have restrained many people like you. If you feel Prabhavati also should be restrained you may do so. If you consider it necessary you may see me about this. Do not decide in haste.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Jayaprakash Narayan Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dahyabhai Patel",14-11-1933

212. LETTER TO KISAN GHUMATKAR

Unrevised AS AT WARDHA,

November 20, 1933

MY DEAR KISAN,

Have mercy on a poor old man. Why do you doubt me when I say I never was angry with you ? Did you give me any cause for anger ? Even now I do not know anything against you that would make me angry. It is but natural for young people not to understand old people. How should you understand what it is to be without teeth or muscle, or know at 20 what you would yourself feel when you are four times twenty? Old men are not too deep for young people to understand. They may be imbecile. Whatever your own experience in other cases, it is inapplicable in my case.

How nice it would have been if you would have joined me at Wardha. I would love to have you even now. But can you stand the very heavy strain of the tour? Are you strong enough in body and mind to be able to go through the eternal rush?[1] What does Dhurandhar say ?

I do receive news about Prema through the visitors who visit her companions. But you should continue to tell me all you come to know about her.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 9069. Also C.W. 9688

213. LETTER TO MANEKLAL KOTHARI

November 20, 1933

CHI. MANEKLAL,

I liked your long letter. The simpler you grow the better. Vocational training will preserve the children's health, physical as well as mental.

Your comparison between the Indian States and the British

[1] The addressee's health had suffered after imprisonment in Thana jail.

[Government] is correct up to a point. But the reason behind this [difference] is that the States on their part are enslaved. The master's shortcomings are always found doubled in the case of his slaves. Hence what you experienced is due to the influence of the British Government. This does not mean that the States were any better before. But formerly their faults used to be removed jointly by the ruler and his subjects. Today such a phenomenon is well nigh impossible, because there is rot at the root.

The introduction of machines will certainly bring about an improvement in the economic condition of a few. Machines would not provide employment to thirty crores of people. They ought to get some additional work besides agriculture. And it cannot be anything but spinning. It would therefore be better if you start using khadi in your house. It is the experience of many that one can afford khadi if one restrains one's fondness for clothes. If all of you spin for some time daily and have the yarn woven, you will find khadi quite inexpensive. Also, Purushottam, Jamnadas, etc., can help you in this regard.

Ramdas is at Wardha. Keshu, Krishno are also there. Manu has gone to Rajkot because Kusum is ill. May be you know it. Ba has gone to Ahmedabad.

My health continues to be good. If you do not read the *Harijanbandhu*, start reading it now.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Write to me at Wardha.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./XXIII

214. LETTER TO RADHABEHN M. KOTHARI

November 20, 1933

CHI. RADHA,

I have written a long letter[1] to Maneklal, so I will not write a long one to you. It will satisfy me if you serve as much as you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./XXIII

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

215. LETTER TO KOTWAL

November 20, 1933

BHAI KOTWAL,

The work which has come to us unsought is *swadharma*. Anybody who is wedded to an institution should not, as a general rule, join the present battle. One's dharma cannot be pointed out to one by somebody else. He who has seen it adheres to it despite the opposition of the whole world.

We should not sit in judgment over anybody. Every case should ultimately be judged on its own merits. It is therefore dangerous to be guided by solutions of hypothetical cases.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3604

216. LETTER TO VAMANRAO

November 20, 1933

BHAI VAMANRAO,

I have been able to take up your letter only today. What little I have read about Shivaji was as a student at school. It is shameful but true. Afterwards I learnt about him more from the elders. But when I realized that British historians, particularly those belonging to the official community, could not see things from our point of view even if they wanted to, I adopted a yardstick: Without reading up any other material I concluded that just the opposite of whatever I had read must be true and I started believing that Shivaji was really a great king, brave and patriotic. These qualities were more than enough to arouse my feeling of reverence for him.

To expect more from me at this time is to be like a cruel milkman who extracts the last drop of milk from the cow till she starts bleeding.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32846

217. LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

November 20, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

Why don't you write ? What sentence did Anand get ? Are your studies progressing well ? And your cooking ? Don't be disheartened. Know that there is virtue in eating what one has cooked with one's own hands. Have you secured a sewing machine ? Is the [sewing] class going on ? How is Mahadev ?

Blessings from

BAPU

[P.S]

Ask Kanta as also the other girls to write.

From a microfilm of the Hindi : Courtesy : National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

218. LETTER TO DHIRU C. JOSHI

November 21, 1933

CHI. DHIRU,

I hope your anger with Rama has now left you.[1] Take care of your health. Continue to write to me. Whether you are writing to Rama or to me or to somebody else, you must see to it that your handwriting is good. Ask Balabhadra to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5316

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dhiru C. Joshi", 7-11-1933

219. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MORSI

November 21, 1933

These differences[1] are verily offshoots of the curse of untouchability, for they proceed from a sense of superiority and inferiority. The fourfold division of varna is based on duty and not on right. Dharma does not confer rights but lays down obligations. Where all perform the duties that have fallen to their lot, no one is higher than the others. Once we are able to purge ourselves of untouchability, and with it the spirit of high and low, we shall realize the unity underlying all races and religions. In spite of the differences of races and religions, we shall learn to tolerate and respect one another and consider all human beings as children of one God and, therefore, brothers and sisters of one another. God is the Creator of all life; all his creatures are, therefore, equal in His eyes. Humanity is a gigantic tree having innumerable branches and leaves, and the same life throbs through them all. The realization of unity in diversity is implied in the removal of untouchability.

Harijan, 1–12–1933

220. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

IN THE TRAIN,

November 22, 1933

CHI. KAKA,

You must have received the reply which I sent through Kishorelal. It was not right for you to have tried to climb the hill. You cannot get strength so soon. Be careful for some time yet about food and going out.

I have not been able to reply to. . . 's[2] son. Letters are accumulating every day. The programme of the tour has been so fixed that I get time to write letters only on the weekly silence day and between 3 and 4 a.m. every day. I don't see any possibility of being

[1] The reference is to the bitterness between the local Brahmins and non–Brahmins.

[2] The name has been omitted.

able to help. . .'s[1] son just now. Whom can we appeal to for money ? . . .'s[2] difficulty also has not been solved. must, therefore, rely on his own efforts at present. If I can rest peacefully any time in future, I may be able to do something for persons like him. But I am not likely to enjoy such peace in my lifetime. If you think you must write to him yourself, you may do so. I don't know when my teeth will be examined. I have been told that the condition of the teeth may be responsible for the pain in the elbow. It is very unlikely to be so, for there is no other trouble. The blood–pressure has disappeared completely, and the weight is going up. I have already reached 109.

I also had a letter from Soman[3] .

* * * [4]

Chandrashankar is giving perfect satisfaction by his work. He seems to have learnt very well the art of looking after physical health. He is successfully copying Mahadev. I didn't know that he could write English so well. He has considerably lightened my burden. He is always engrossed in work.

I am sure you read the *Harijan* regularly for accounts of the tour.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 9480. Courtesy : D. B. Kalelkar

221. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

IN THE TRAIN,
November 22, 1933

BHAI JIVANJI,

The Preface is not out of my mind. I understand what you say regarding Ratilal. It is not possible to give him any advice. What is destined will happen. If Baburao says anything, let me know. If the previous power [of attorney] cannot be revoked, this one may not be of any use.

Give me a report about S. in every letter. See him sometimes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 9932. Also C.W. 6907. Courtesy : Jivanji D. Desai

[1] The names have been omitted.
[2] *Ibid*
[3] Ramachandra Soman
[4] Some lines have been omitted.

222. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

IN THE TRAIN,
November 22, 1933

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I got your loving letter. I read the verse. Knowing that God is behind all, good and evil, I remain unaffected. If He was behind good only, I would certainly have felt uneasy. He alone is good. If I could persuade you to join me in this tour, your health would automatically improve. But I know that is impossible. I hope you glance through the issues of *Harijan.*

Why doesn't Ramabehn[1] remember me ?

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 5931. Also C.W. 3247. Courtesy : Mahesh P. Pattani

223. LETTER TO DR. JIVARAJ MEHTA

ON TRAIN,
November 22, 1933

DEAR JIVARAJ,

I have your letter. I had got your wire too. Let me know the results of the investigations and when you are restored write and tell me your conclusions. As for myself, I am doing splendidly.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

You may treat Wardha as my address.

DR. JIVARAJ MEHTA
ALEXANDER ROAD
GAMDEVI, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Jivaraj Mehta Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Addressee's wife

224. MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE OF BERAR[1]

November 22, 1933

In his message Mahatmaji says that the people of Berar gave an unlimited response to his call for Harijan service. The organization was most efficient and looked to all the comforts in the tour which has been a pleasant one.

The attendance at public meetings held throughout the tour was the largest ever seen and it gives me cause to hope that untouchability is fast dying.

Hitavada, 26–11–1933

225. LETTER TO N. S. HARDIKAR

AS AT WARDHA,
November 23, 1933

DEAR DR. HARDIKAR,

You promised "more again" in your letter, but the promise has not materialized. Nevertheless, friends have been keeping me informed of your progress, though for the last eight days I have had no news of you. I wonder if you are still in hospital. Wherever you are, I hope you have made steady progress.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. N. S. HARDIKAR
K.E.M. HOSPITAL
PAREL, BOMBAY

From the original: N. S. Hardikar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Given in an interview to *The Times of India*

226. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Unrevised RAIPUR,

November 23, 1933

MY DEAR MAHADEV,

On getting up at 3 a.m. I found your letter to Mira lying on the little stool which is being carried from place to place as a footboard for me to stretch my legs on. It took me nearly 40 minutes to go through it and yet without reading your comments on the translation of the verses specified.[1] It would take me at least twelve hours to read up my translation [of] the original and think out what I should say. It will take at least another three hours to reduce them to writing. That time I cannot give just now. Then there is the question—shall I help you much ? I fear, not. For what you say is quite true. I ought not to have yielded to Swami's demand for my own translation except perhaps for private circulation among friends. I realized my unfitness for the task as I was proceeding but I continued. The defects you have noticed are there. How can I give what I have not—scholarship ? Want of good knowledge of Sanskrit was a great drawback. The remedy is clear. You should go on with your translation taking such help as my translations can give to bring out my thought but not always following my translation. Give that rendering which is acceptable to you. Ignore the notes where they are useless. Give your own where they are necessary. Having done that, take up the Gujarati, correct the translation where it is defective and polish the language where it needs polishing. Re-write and add notes where necessary. That will complete your task. Then when the whole result comes into my hands, I shall work on it and make such changes as I may deem fit in order to bring out my meaning. This I can do easily. We must then bring out a revised version of the Gujarati and publish your translation in English.[2] So doing, you do not need to stop your work for want of my detailed reply to your comments. I shall circulate your comments among friends and get their opinion and let you have it all.

Your other messages will be attended to.

[1] The addressee was translating *Anasaktiyoga* into English. *Vide* footnote 3

[2] The English translation was published in 1946 under the title *The Gospel of Selfless Action* or *The Gita According to Gandhi*

I am glad you are going through the trials of various sorts. Only do not wash yourself out with mere literary work. You should take plenty of exercise and keep the body in a fit condition. You must not damage your eyes on any account whatsoever.

No more today.

Love from all.

BAPU

From a copy : S.N. 26906

227. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

RAIPUR,
November 23, 1933

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter. You have given two addresses. In your previous letter you gave the Siwan address and in this one you have given the Sitabadiara address. I am writing this letter at the latter address.

I have already written to you about Jayaprakash. I addressed that letter at Siwan. The present fight is not for people who have debts to pay and wish to discharge their responsibilities towards their brothers and sisters. This fight requires one to sacrifice one's all. How do a poor man's brothers and sisters get education ? We should adopt such a way that our brothers and sisters grow up in poverty and get educated and start earning as soon as possible. That leaves the problem of Father. The fifty rupees which he gets should suffice. Both of you should renounce your share in his property. Jayaprakash can remain in the present fight only if he is thus prepared to embrace poverty. This is a soldier's dharma. The other dharma is towards one's family. It also is worth following if one wishes to do so . When it becomes an absolute dharma, it is in conflict with the good of society as a whole. That is what we find among us today. It is the aim of satyagraha to remedy this situation. But anybody who does not understand satyagraha and still follows it fails in both dharmas for he will remain discontented. If you do not understand anything in this, you may ask me to explain again. But I don't think you will find any difficulty in understanding it.

I have already sent you the programme of my tour, and do not repeat it here. There is nothing now which you should specially come

here to discuss with me. But I shall be in Jabalpur on Tuesday. Then I go to Delhi.

My weight is 109 and the blood–pressure 155–100. The diet remains the same.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3435

228. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

RAIPUR,
November 23, 1933

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You really seem to have stopped writing to me. It was necessary for Jamnalalji to resign even for his own peace of mind. The resignation was desirable from the point of view of its effect on others, too. It has cleansed the atmosphere completely. A load is off Jamnalalji's mind and he feels much stronger now. I don't wish to write more. Please however have no doubts about the propriety of the step.

I hear that there has been a small breakdown in your health. Let me know if there has been any such thing. If you can tell me your weight, do so. Is there any trouble with your nose ? I hope you wouldn't think it necessary to keep back anything from me.

Mahadev is being tested well. I am glad about it. There are difficulties now regarding Gujarati letters. I intend to write to the Colonel[1] in the matter, though I don't like to do even that.

I have had no letters from Devdas recently. Khurshed is improving. She remained ill for a fairly long time. I can't write more since it is time for the post.

I am going on well enough. The crowds are as large as ever, perhaps larger than before. And they are equally mad with love.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna patro–2 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 48

[1] E. E. Doyle, Inspector–General of Prisons, Bombay

229. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETTING, RAIPUR [1]

November 23, 1933

I have repeatedly said that this work can be done only by those who sincerely believe untouchability to be a stain on Hinduism. This is a movement requiring the change of heart of millions. It cannot be led to success by any political manoeuvres. It can be done only through self–purification. This is a great sacrificial fire in which we have to burn our load of sins and come out purified. Those who do not take to this work with faith and spirit will fail to move the hearts of millions. We shall be nowhere if we deceive ourselves or the Harijans. The success or failure of this movement depends on our getting the right type of workers. We are on our trial today. If we miss today the oppportunity that God has given us, we may never hope to get the opportunity again in this generation. What we refuse to do voluntarily today we shall have to do in future per force, and we shall repent for having lost this opportunity. I pray to God that we may come out successful from this trial and save Hinduism and ourselves from destruction.

Harijan, 1–12–1933

230. SPEECH AT ALL–INDIA SWADESHI EXHIBITION, RAIPUR

November 23, 1933

In a country where 95 per cent of the population live on the land, even if all the processes of cultivation were carried on through machines, there would still be need for a supplementary cottage industry. The spinning-wheel supplied that supplementary industry to the Indian peasant from time immemorial. Many minor industries are nowadays suggested for the purpose, but none of them can be universalized as the production of khadi can be. I consented to open this exhibition, for I know that thousands of Harijans get their living through khadi, which has saved them from destitution. We may revive

[1] According to Chandrashankar Shukla's report, the speech was addressed to Harijan workers. However, according to *The Bombay Chronicle,* 29–11-1933, and *Hitavada,* 3–12–1933, this was in reply to addresses presented by the Municipality, the Local Board and other institutions.

many other indigenous industries, may even start new ones, but we may not lose sight of khadi as the centre of all swadeshi.

Harijan, 1–12–1933

231. EXTRACTS FROM SPEECHES [1]

[Before *November 24, 1933*][2]

Injustice is being done all the world over, but we have given to it the sanction of religion. These distinctions have not been created by God. The Harijans are on the lowest rung of the ladder not because of any inherent defects but only because they have been kept down by the so–called higher castes. God had bestowed on them the same talents that He had given us, but we deny them the opportunities for using them. They should surely have the same rights and privileges and the same opportunities of growth that we enjoy.

We are now awake to the wrong we have done to them, and the least we can do by way of penance now is to contribute money for their uplift and to share with them all the amenities of life that we have created for ourselves. We are all creatures of the same God and, therefore, equal in His eyes.

From the money that you give for this cause, you will reap a hundredfold, for it is like grain sown in good, manured soil. The money spent after luxury and lust is, on the other hand, wasted like grain sown in barren soil.[3]

I am told you have suffered heavily. But you should know that no nation has ever come to its own without having passed through the severest fire of suffering. Voluntary suffering only adds to our strength. I, therefore, congratulate you for having suffered. But I should also like to remind you that one of the causes that add to our sufferings is this curse of untouchability. We have oppressed the weak. We reap as we have sown. It is for us now to undo the wrong we have done to the Harijans and remove the yoke of serfdom from their

[1] Reproduced from Chandrashankar Shukla's "Weekly Letter" which bears the date–line "Raipur, 24–11–1933". The places where Gandhiji spoke have not been indicated.

[2] *Ibid*

[3] What follows was spoken at a village.

shoulders.[1]

Caste Hindus must first ask you to forgive the wrongs they have done to you. But I should also tell you, as a Harijan by choice, that you should give up your evil habits, especially carrion and beef–eating. The whole world looks upon carrion with abhorrence. And beef–eating should be given up because that is a *sine qua non* for a Hindu. The cow is the giver of plenty, and by killing her we kill ourselves. Then, I would urge you not to accept leavings. And, above all, you should abolish the distinctions of high and low that have crept in among yourselves. And these things you should do, not in a bargaining spirit but because they are good in themselves. I would, therefore, ask you also to give up drink, irrespective of the fact that many other Hindus drink.

Harijan, 1–12–1933

232. CIVIL RESISTANCE AND HARIJAN SERVICE

A friend writes :[2]

> I observe that there are some people in the Harijan service organizations not working in the spirit in which you want them to, that is, merely for the sake of serving Harijans. They are seeking its shelter in order to satisfy other ambitions. . .I know that you do not desire civil resistance to be mixed up with Harijan service organizations. If you propose to make any public use of this letter you may emphasize this last point and make it clearer. . .

I am thankful to the friend for giving me the benefit of his experience. It is a most difficult task to keep a big organization like the Servants of Untouchables Society with branches all over India free of all self–seekers and time–servers. I have discussed the subject fully with Seth Ghanshyamdas and Thakkar Bapa. I know that they are both anxious to keep the organization as pure as possible. Personally I can do no more. It was because of my utter helplessness that I undertook the fast of 21 days. On discovering impurities amongst Harijan servants, I saw that it was no use merely writing about impurities. I was searching for a way out of the difficulty. The reader should believe me when I tell him that the fast was the last thing in the world that I was thinking of, but as I have described in these pages, it came to me all of a sudden and gave me great relief. I know that it did much good. But, how far could the fast of a single mortal go ? Hence

[1] What follows was addressed to Harijans.

[2] Only extracts from the letter are reporduced here.

it was that I developed the idea of a chain of such purificatory fasts. The idea has by no means been dropped. It comes to me again and again. But it does not admit of a mechanical organization. Several co–workers are ready to inaugurate or take part in the chain after it is inaugurated, but I have not yet found the way to begin it. The proper way will have to come to me or to the co–workers before the chain can be begun. Meanwhile I can only reiterate my conviction that untouchability will not be removed root and branch except through the service of men and women who take it up for its own sake and in a religious spirit. Unless we have a fair number of such servants throughout the length and breadth of India, we will never succeed in changing the hearts of millions of human beings. The *savarna* Hindus are at one end, Harijans at the other, and the evil custom of ages, which has assumed the dignity of religious tenet, will not be uprooted without penance and purification. Whilst it gladdens my heart that thousands of people flock to the meetings that are being held in towns and villages and that they willingly give their pices as a token of their approval of the movement, I am painfully conscious of the fact that, if the thousands were suddenly called upon to enforce in their own lives what they seem to approve by their attendance at these meetings, they would fail to respond, not from want of will, but from sheer inability. I have discovered this again and again amongst my closest associates who have frankly confessed their inability to enforce immediately in their conduct what they knew was the right thing and what they knew had to be done immediately. They had to put up a brave fight against their traditional repugnance. The mere intellectual grasp that untouchability is an evil, corroding Hinduism, and that belief in it is tantamount to disbelief in God, His goodness and His Fatherhood, is not enough to destroy the monster. The vicarious penance of the comparatively pure is needed to bring about a change in the hearts of both *savarnas* and Harijans.

A movement, so grand and so pure, so religious and so humanitarian, must not be exploited by anybody for his own end. Certainly, not for its political consequences. It will be discovered, as the movement progresses, that the political approach can only end in accentuating the strife. It can only add to the confusion already existing and add one more, if not many more warring parties, to the existing ones. May God save us and save the movement from such a calamity !

So far as the connection of civil resistance with the movement is

concerned, I am as emphatic as ever that Congressmen who desire to offer active civil resistance should not accept office in the various organizations, and much less can they be used for serving the purpose of civil resistance. Civil resistance is a unique weapon, it does not admit of alloy. It is a weapon of the fearless and, therefore, needs no shelter; but it has to be wielded in the open daylight. Therefore, whilst Congressmen who are also civil resisters on active service may do, as they are bound to do, such service to the cause as they can, they may not belong to the Servants of Untouchables Society or any of its branches. By holding office in the organizations they will harm both civil resistance and the Harijan cause. It would be like a man going to a temple to pray and using the act of worship for advancing civil resistance. Neither God nor man will be cheated in that manner and, as I have said often enough in these columns, the great reformation of Hinduism will not be brought about, if it is to depend purely upon Congressmen. For, much as I would like to think that every Indian is Congressman, I know that such is not the case. Nor is every Hindu a Congressman, if only because every Harijan is not a Congressman. Therefore, a Harijan organization must in the very nature of things be strictly non–political and non–party and should contain in it both Congressmen and non–Congressmen, office–holding being restricted to those who are not active civil resisters and who will not exploit the office secretly or openly to advance the cause of civil resistance.

Harijan, 24–11–1933

233. HARIJAN WORKER'S DUTY

A correspondent sends me the following questions for answering :

(1) In the propaganda against untouchability, should a worker make use of the Hindu Shastras and religious texts to show that Hinduism does not sanction untouchability as we practise it today ?

(2) Should a Harijan sevak, even in his private capacity, take part in inter–dining functions ?

(3) Should a Harijan who is employed as a domestic servant sit at meals alongside all the members of the family ?

These three questions, the correspondent says, have been seriously discussed in the columns of a newspaper and the readers have been advised that Harijan workers ought not to make use of religious texts in advocating the abolition of untouchability, and that,

in the larger interest of the movement, the workers should not enforce their views about inter–dining and the rest, even in their private matters. I hold totally different views on these matters. For me, the removal of untouchability is fundamentally a religious question. Hinduism could not hold me if I believed that untouchability, as it is practised today, was an integral part of it. That it has been handed down to us as a custom is an undoubted fact, but so are many other bad customs among which untouchability is the worst. It becomes necessary, therefore, to show that it has no sanction in religion.

Whilst the Servants of Untouchables Society has very wisely limited the scope of its corporate activities, it does not regulate or restrict individual practice about inter–dining. The removal of untouchability does not require inter–dining with Harijans. Inter–dining is not a universal obligation. A Harijan worker must be left free to dine with whomsoever he pleases, and, therefore, with Harijans, without in any way being regarded as being on that account a less effective worker. My own practice is well known, and I should personally feel a hypocrite if I suppressed it 'in the larger interests of the reform'. I should undoubtedly refrain, if inter–dining were a mere matter of convenience or indulgence for me. Far from being either, I regard it as a desirable and an inevitable social reform. But it should not be mixed up with the drive against untouchability. The central point in the untouchability movement is the removal of social and religious injustice towards those who, being regarded as untouchables, are debarred from public utilities and spiritual comfort within the religion to which they belong. I should feel no deprivation if no one in the world took food that might be cooked or touched by me. But it would be a great deprivation to me if I could not send my children to the public school, or could not rent a house in any locality open to the other members of the public, or could not seek spiritual comfort in a temple designed for the other members of my faith.

As to the Harijan employee, if the members of a family employing a Harijan drew a line between him and non–Harijan servants, they would undoubtedly be guilty of observing untouc-hability. But I very much fear that we are a long way from that bright and happy day when we shall be all masters and no servants, or all servants and no masters, all members of the human family, regarding ourselves as blood–brothers and blood–sisters.

Harijan, 24–11–1933

234. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

[AS AT] WARDHA,
November 24, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

I was glad you were doing so well. Did I say I would write twice a week ? I thought I had said you could write twice a week.

Of course you may give as much time to Hindi as you like. Yes, when you are quite fit, you will find your place wherever I put you.

Love.

BAPU

SMT. AMALABEHN
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
WARDHA, C.P.

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

235 LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

November 24, 1933

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have just heard from Sir P. Pattani that he would begin to pay Gurudev Rs. 1,000 per month from December till the Rs. 5,000 are paid out.[1] It will be all right now.

The enthusiasm of the people and the attendance are phenomenal and exceed my expectations which were fairly high. You will find it all faithfully described in the columns of *Harijan* which as you must have observed has been transferred to Madras. The people are paying handsomely. If these crowds are not an indication that untouchability is fast going, I do not know what can prove it. It must take time for the mighty reform to be felt.

Later,

The foregoing was written amid interruptions. Your letter written during the voyage or in Bombay has just been received. About Gurudev's visit to Bombay I have written very little. I do not even know what is going on. I can hardly read papers during this rush. But

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Prabhashankar Pattani", 4-11-1933

of course he would be quite all right in so far as the reception is concerned. Of money he is not likely to get much. My appeal about Orissa is bringing very little.

Of course, Elwin should go his way and be left in God's hands. But friends must issue warnings when they have doubts as to the propriety of actions on merits. It is difficult to say when it is God's voice and when it is not. Strangers have to judge every act on its merits. This is applicable of course to my claim in connection with my fasts. I wrote a long letter to E. on what appeared to me his hasty departure from Matheran and avoidance of Wardha. I have not heard from him at all after his going back to Karanjia.

I hope I shall not have to cable you to return. The Magistrates have not worried me up to now. And when and if they do you would be too late for guidance. You should therefore trust me to God even as Efy is doing, even as you are trusting E. to God. I know that He is guiding me.

Love.

MOHAN

[P.S.]

Send your letters to Wardha.

From a photostat : G.N. 983

236. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

November 24, 1933

MY DEAR AGATHA,

No long letter this week. Here is a letter[1] for C. F. A. The cuttings will give you some indication of the progress of the tour. These of course you will share with friends as you may think necessary.

I do not think of the political atmosphere. It is as bad as ever. It does not worry me much and it will not worry me at all if there was chivalry and gentlemanliness on the part of the officials. The insatiable desire for humiliating everybody and every organization is terrible. But enough of this grumbling.

Love

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 1475

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

237. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

November 24, 1933

CHI. VASUMATI,

I wrote several letters to you. I hope you got them. I got one letter from you. You seem to have done quite good reading. It seems you have given up the study of English. Tara has got one tooth extracted and is suffering extreme pain. She had to be kept under chloroform for one hour. She is a little better now. I have started a long tour. Except for two days [in the week], I have to travel every day. I am accompanied by Mirabehn, Om and Chandrashankar, and of course Thakkar Bapa. There are others too, but you do not know them. So far I have kept good health. Ba and Manibehn have gone to Ahmedabad. Totaramji will take Hariprasad with him and go and live in the Harijan Ashram. The Satyagraha Ashram has now become Harijan Ashram. My weight stands at 108. My normal diet is milk, oranges and one green vegetable.

I have dictated this letter to Om during my meal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9338. Also C.W. 584. Courtesy : Vasumati Pandit

238. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, RAIPUR

November 24, 1933

Ever since I came to your province you have been showering love on me and I am still bathing in it. Here also you have further delighted me by presenting me this purse. You would be right if you believe that you should give me money to please me, and especially so if you fulfil one condition. It is that those who have given money should feel that they have contributed to a *yajna* of self–purification. The money that is given can only be a token of your contribution to that *yajna*. But if they think that they have done all that they need to by giving the money, it would be the worst characteristic of a clever Bania. It would be as if by giving that money they had bought the right to enjoy themselves as they wished. Such charity can be of no

benefit to the Harijans. I do not deny that money is very badly needed for Harijan work; but it is more important for their service that you should accept the Harijans with your heart. The real purpose of this tour is that you should discard the notion of untouchability from your heart and banish feelings of high and low. If you give me no help in realizing that aim and give me only money, it would be difficult even to use that money. If you do not know it, please note that at least 75 per cent of the money collected from this place will be used for the Harijan work here. There are two conditions, however, and they are also meant for the success of this work. In the first place, a good scheme for the use of that amount should come from you, and along with that there should be an indication of the persons who would carry out the scheme. A scheme may be good on paper, but it will be useless and will fail if there was nobody to implement it. That is why I said that, if your heart is not behind your contribution, the money you have given will be as good as useless. And if this happens, it would be diverted to other places where better workers and better schemes are forthcoming. You would not be happy if this happens. We who have come here do not wish to do any such thing. Our intention is to use at least 75 per cent of the money in the place from where it is collected. If, however, you do not give your full co–operation in this work, nothing can be done with the money alone.

It is a matter of joy for the country and for Hindus that at every place people gather in such large numbers. I am working in the faith that all these people come to the meetings to help me in my work of removing untouchability. If they come because they think that I have served the country in the past, and in order to praise my past services, they are guilty of great deception. I think of no other work just now. I have undertaken this tour only for Harijan work, and not to hear my praises. Hence, only those who wish to help me in this work or criticize it should attend the meetings. Those who wish to oppose the work should express their opposition courteously and in a becoming manner. In a religious cause, forgetting courtesy means forsaking dharma itself. Rudeness and lack of courtesy go ill with religion. Religion must be accompanied with gentleness, courtesy, culture and compassion. I do not wish to waste my time.

It would no doubt pain me to know that the Hindu masses are not with me. But it would pain me all the more if they attend the meetings to deceive me and themselves. I have got to follow my dharma even if everybody deserts me. The scriptures say that you

need not have anyone on your side for following dharma, that you need God alone. Following dharma is a matter for each individual himself. One must do one's duty to the best of one's ability. God will look after the rest. The dharma of fighting untouchability is precious like a gem. I have placed it before you. This is no ordinary gem which can be used only by one person or which would wear off by use. Millions can use the gem of dharma ; the more the people use it, the brighter will it shine.

There is no doubt at all that unless we wipe out the blot of untouchability from Hinduism, both Hinduism and Hindu society will perish. Peoples and their religions are being compared and judged all over the world. We are living in an age when we can travel to distant places in a few days by train and go round the world by sea. And now aeroplanes too are coming into use. In an age like this, all religions are exposed to the eyes of the world. If we fail in this scrutiny we may be sure that we are doomed. The world has a right to make such a comparison. That which cannot be placed before the world and which is not acceptable to reason and the heart cannot be sanatana dharma. Sanatana dharma means imperishable Truth.

I was glad when I was told that Bharatdasji intends to throw open his temple to Harijans. The site of the temple is very beautiful. I performed the opening with God as witness. The Harijans had cheerfully come in large numbers. The scriptures have laid down two or three conditions for the Harijans or other people who visit a temple. They must enter the temple with a pure heart and body. Observing rules of personal cleanliness is as necessary in the case of Harijans as in that of the other Hindus, and, therefore, they should be duly observed by them. The second condition is that they should give up eating beef and carrion. The latter is prohibited in every religion. I am not aware of civilized and religious–minded people eating carrion, anywhere in the world. It is abhorred by all mankind. Harijans must give up these two things irrespective of whether or not they are accepted by the caste Hindus. If they consider themselves Hindus, they must give up beef also. Now there is a fourth thing, which I cannot describe as an inseparable part of Hinduism, though it is so according to me. And that is abstention from intoxicating drinks. Other Hindus may or may not give them up, but you should definitely do so. It is a very bad habit. A bad habit should not be copied. Moreover, you want to progress, and so you must give up drinking. Other Hindus will follow your example. Giving up intoxicating drinks

will save the country crores of rupees and change a man from a monster into a human being. You must not consume the thing that makes you forget how you should behave to a mother or a sister. Those who are used to collecting and eating leavings must give up that unclean habit for good. Eating the leavings is not for human beings. It is the fault of the caste Hindus that you have got into this habit. In their ignorance caste Hindu women give leavings to Harijans. Instead of that, they should keep apart a certain portion every day for Harijans from what they may have cooked for themselves. My mother always used to feed us and take her meal only after keeping apart the portions for the guest, the poor and the cow. It is a cultured tradition in a good household that such portions be kept apart. Similarly, you also should take out something for the Bhangi Harijans and give it to them with love. It is not civil to throw food in the fold of the dress or in a vessel from a distance. It is an act of contempt. There is no politeness in it but lack of it. Caste Hindu women should give up throwing leavings to Harijans and the latter should stop accepting them. Harijan men and women who visit temples should observe the rules that may be applicable to all the varnas equally.

The Satnami Harijans at Dhamtari told me the painful story that the barbers and the washermen there do not work for them because they are considered untouchables. Those who told me this were as clean as ourselves. When I visited their dwellings, I found that they were not more unclean than the houses of other Hindus. In the course of my tours in the country, I have got an impression that the houses of Bhangis are cleaner than those of other Hindus. It is tyrannical that washermen and barbers should not serve such peple. It is painful and a matter of shame for us that when such a great movement of self–purification is going on barbers and washermen should refuse to serve these people. I do not blame the washermen and barbers for this. It is the doing of the so–called high–caste Hindus who have misled them. They have put the idea into their minds that they would be incurring sin if they worked for the Harijans. Since they have got such an idea, they hesitate to serve the Harijans. This should not be. Other people who know better should explain this to the barbers and washermen. Educated young men from among the caste Hindus should learn hair–cutting and washing clothes. And they should go to Harijans and tell them that they are ready to cut their hair and wash their clothes. If the educated people do this, the simple–hearted barbers and washermen would do it too. When they find that

even the people who are not bothered about money are doing such work, they also would do it. There is no question of religious degradation in this. No sanatanist has told me that barbers, washermen, doctors, etc., cannot serve Harijans. I do not know how the idea that it is dharma to refuse such service originated. Such barbarism should go forthwith.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 17–12–1933

239. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

[*November 25, 1933*][1]

DEAR SISTER,

I do not read newspapers. But I take it you came back on the date mentioned in Mridu's letter. Let me know about the condition of your health.

I learn from Mahadev's letter that your brother-in-law who was at Belgaum suddenly died. I did not know about it at all. What consolation could one give you?

You will all be well. You can treat Wardha as my permanent address.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11139. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

[1] From the postmark

240. SPEECH AT BALODA BAZAAR[1]

November 25, 1933

Gandhiji declared open to Harijans a private temple, saying that the temple had on that day become a true abode of God with the Harijans' entry into it. Asking Harijans to observe three conditions of temple–entry, which apply equally to all temple–going Hindus, he said :

I request you to contribute your full share to this movement of self–purification, not by money but by a thorough cleansing of the heart and body and by removing the evil habits that have crept in amongst you. Though I admit with shame that the caste Hindus are responsible for many of these evil habits, I should like you to do your own part by giving up carrion and beef–eating and observing the common rules of cleanliness. These three conditions apply equally to all Hindus who want the right of worship in Hindu temples. I should like you to give up drink also, irrespective of the fact that even some caste Hindus indulge in that intoxication. You may not imitate their vices. Drink is one of the most degrading of vices, reducing man to the state of brute. It vitiates both body and soul. It spells utter ruin of the moral and domestic life. I would, therefore, request Harijans in all earnestness to give up that vice and set a noble example of self-purification not only to caste Hindus but perhaps to the whole world.

Harijan, 8–12–1933

241. SPEECH AT BILASPUR[2]

November 25, 1933

You may know, if you do not know already, that I have been closely assoicated with labourers ever since I went to South Africa. Whenever I have gone among labourers, in South Africa, India or whatever part of the world, they have recognized me as a fellow–labourer and received me as one of themselves. You will perhaps be surprised to know that even labourers in Lancashire instinctively

[1] This appeared in *Harijan* under the title "Conditions for Temple–entry".

[2] Delivered at the B. N. Railway Labourers' Federation. This appeared in *Harijan* in two parts under the titles "A Great Equalizer" and "On Behalf of Humanity".

recognized me as one of themselves and flocked around me in hundreds and thousands. The only difference between us is that I have become a labourer by choice whilst you have been made labourers by force of circumstances and would perhaps love to be masters if you could. I early gave up the ambition of becoming the master for I would then have belonged to an inconsiderate class and could not have identified myself, as I do today to the best of my ability, with the penniless pauper, the half–starved and the naked, the lowliest and the lost. I want labourers not to deplore, much less to despise, their lot and to realize the dignity of labour. It is meet that you have come forward with your purse as a token of your sympathy with the Harijans. Who has suffered so much as they ? They are at the lowest rung of the ladder. The terrible hardships and privations they have to undergo can never be imagined by those who have not been victims to them. Other labourers may aspire to a mass wealth and to become masters some day and thus to rise in the scale of social prestige; but the Harijans can never entertain that ambition. The stigma of untouchability attaches to them from the mother's womb. They are born outcastes and remain outcastes till death. They have to live in segregated areas and are denied the amenities of life that the others enjoy. Even water, that free gift of God, is denied to them. I ask the Labour Federation to abolish all distinctions between Harijans and yourselves. I make the appeal deliberately for, being in direct touch with the mill–hands in Ahmedabad, I know that labourers do observe the distinction between Harijans and non–Harijans. I expect labourers, more than all others, to efface these distinctions. It has been my deep faith that we shall some day achieve communal unity through labourers. I consider labour to be a powerful unifying agent. It is a great equalizer. It should be a matter of shame to have communal divisions among labourers, who all earn their bread by the sweat of their brow and, therefore, belong to one vast brotherhood. Let them, therefore, begin with a thorough removal of untouchability. It will be a great step towards communal unity. Once the bar sinister against Harijans is removed, the way will be open for a wider unity among Hindus, Mussalmans and other sister communities.

A Mussalman friend asked why Gandhiji, a national leader, had chosen for the time being to work only among a section of the nation. This question drew the following reply from Gandhiji.

I am trying to serve all communities today through this work. They are branches of one big family. I have found in the Hindu

branch a disease which, if not removed in time, will spread through the whole family and destroy it. The evil of untouchability has travelled far beyond its prescribed limits. In trying to root out untouchability among Hindus, I am trying to serve all the communities. Though the method of achieving communal unity through conferences has failed, I have not despaired of a heart–unity being achieved in the end. God has sent me this work, and I am doing it in the faith that the way to a real communal unity will be paved through it. It is thus to my mind a service of the whole nation. The effort I made in 1920–21 to achieve Hindu–Muslim unity will go down in history and will serve as the foundation of the edifice of communal unity whenever it is achieved. I have never repented for having made that effort. For me it was not a matter of expedience. I am not aware of having done a single thing in my life as a matter of expedience. I have ever held that the highest morality is also the highest expedience. Some European friends assure me that I am waging this war against untouchability on behalf of the whole of humanity. Once this canker is removed from Hinduism, Hindus, Mussalmans and others will sink their differences and will embrace one another as blood–brothers, and all communities will feel that they are all branches of the same tree.

Harijan, 8–12–1933

242. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

RAIPUR,
November 26, 1933

MY DEAR AMALA,

What have you done to your finger ? Dwarakanathji says you have hurt yourself. I hope you are not overstraining yourself. I want you to do everything with joy and infinite patience.

It appears that on the 15th December we shall be passing through Wardha as was originally arranged. The programme was altered so as to omit Wardha and go *via* Calcutta. But now the original programme has been restored. While I admire your self–restraint in not coming to the station last time, I would like you to come on the 15th, if you get Dwarakanathji's permission.

I see that you are spinning much better than you used to, and you have prepared your strand nicely and neatly. I am sure that by proper application you would be able to spin finer, stronger and much

more even. I hope that there is not much waste nowadays and that you know how to mend your wheel if it goes out of order. I hope you are just as happy as our Japanese friend. You will be surprised to know, when years ago in South Africa I first cut my own hair, it looked as if rats had been at it. My lawyer friends cracked jokes at my expense. But I survived their jokes and I was able to do much better next time. The same thing happened with my first trial at ironing shirts and collars. I do not mention this incident to induce you to repeat your experiment. You should get your hair cut by the barber who gets a fixed salary no matter how many heads he treats.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

243. LETTER TO M. BAPI NEEDU

November 26, 1933

MY DEAR BAPI NEEDU,

Please tell all the workers that I expect great things from Andhradesha, not merely fat donations but also many pure–hearted and self–sacrificing servants of Harijans.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

The Hindu, 6–12–1933

244. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

RAIPUR,
November 26, 1933

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letter.

Lakshmidas seems to have written what he did on the basis of what Anandi might have told him. I hope you remember that she had even come to know the name. But we needn't worry about this. Lakshmidas is not likely to misunderstand anything. I am sure that you didn't divulge the name.

I have written to Dwarakanath about the honey. I have asked

him to send a bottle with somebody to whichever place it may be convenient to do so.

Jawaharlal writes and informs me that the Working Committee will be meeting in Jabalpur on the 5th. He seems to be expecting that you will attend. Do you feel inclined to come ? If you don't wish to, I will not mind. Come if you feel like it. This will mean that you will have to leave that place on the 3rd or the 4th instead of on the 7th. I certainly don't like that you should sacrifice so many days from your stay there.

Mathuradas is coming here tomorrow. I don't know what brings him here.

I observe that Om has a sharp intelligence. And she has simple habits, too. She has fine health. She seems to be enjoying everything. I also give her some writing work. She sleeps near me. Her capacity to sleep is quite good ! She has won everybody's love.

Has Janakimaiya recovered some peace of mind ? Is Kamla progressing satisfactorily ? Can she walk ? How do Madalasa[1] and Vatsala[2] spend their time ? I send with this an improtant letter received from Manilal. Keep it in a file. It contains some comments about the Cow–protection Society and a list of the jewellery.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 2927

245. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

November 26, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

You may write to me. How do you feel there now, both physically and mentally ? Is there any difficulty about the arm now ? How is Vimu?[2] Does Dhiru write to you ? I hope you got Nanabhai's letter. There is no cause for anxiety.

What is Nirmala Joshi's[3] address ?

[1] Addressee's daughter, wife of Shriman Narayan
[2] Vatsala Dastane
[2] Addressee's daughter, Vimala
[3] Wife of Kevalram Bhimji Joshi

Did you get a letter from Chhaganlal? I am eager to know whether he got my long letter. Ask Vimu to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5358

246. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

November 26, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

I got news about you from time to time from Sushila, and also from some others. I am glad that you got my letter. Whether you gained or lost, you will be able to judge only after you are released. There is no doubt that the experience is invaluable.

I understood your time–table. I am very happy that you have been able to preserve your health. The key was in your own hands and I see that you have used it well.

What can I write about Harijan work ? It is going on. I have been experiencing people's boundless love. My body also has been giving excellent service. The weight had risen to 110 lb. This is no ordinary improvement. Chandrashankar is trying hard to fill Mahadev's place. Mirabehn also is here. And there is Ramnath, whom you do not know. Besides, there is Janakibehn's Om. She is a brave girl and also has a fine intelligence. God has kept her in excellent health, too.

I don't have time to write more now. I have to write many other letters. It is only during the silence period that I can write most of my letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10352. Also C.W. 6791. Courtesy : Premabehn Kantak

247. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

November 26, 1933

CHI. KAKA,

I never get time to write a sufficiently long letter to you.

I was shocked to read. . .'s[1] letter. Is he really mad ? I hesitate to believe that the lady yielded to force, though it is possible that she was unwilling. Even if, however, it was a case of rape, she ought not to resort to abortion. She should rear the child with love. However, she must live away from her husband.

* * * [2]

What happened about your teeth !

Do you still suffer from backache ?

I received the three books on astronomy.

I suppose Chandrashankar writes to you and gives you other news.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 9475. Courtesy : D.B. Kalelkar

248 LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

November 26, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

How are you now ? Are your monthly periods normal ? Do you pass normal stools ? Do you get any discharges in urine ? Do you hear from Raojibhai ? What is your diet ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 9635. Courtesy : Ravindra R. Patel

[1] The name has been omitted.

[2] A paragraph has been omitted.

249. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

November 26, 1933

CHI. KANTA,

Are you getting well? Are you satisfied? What news about Sumangal? Ask Prabha to write to me. Tell my walking sticks, Yashodhara, Lambus, Jekore[1], Meera, etc., that they should not expect separate letters from me, but that they will get replies from me if they write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

250. LETTER TO JANAKDHARI PRASAD

AS AT WARDHA,
November 26, 1933

DEAR JANAKDHARI BABU,

I have your letter. I wish that I could have a heart-to-heart chat with you. I shall try to write to you at length in spite of the pressure under which I am working. But I know that the letter will never yield the result that a brief conversation can.

From your letter, I had gathered that you were not fit to seek imprisonment, and knowing your domestic difficulties as I now do, I feel that until those difficulties are satisfactorily solved you ought not to think of imprisonment.

By labour I mean any kind of physical labour that you may be able to perform. Such labour for you is tailoring, shoemaking and any other healthy labour that you can think of. Whilst you will not immediately earn much, it will mean a mighty revolution in your life. Your children will then be brought up as labourers.[2] As such they will not have to struggle so much to live, as you do just now. And when your attitude is changed, you will set for yourself and the whole family the labourer's standard of life. Your wife, if she accepts the revolutionary change, will also be doing her share of labour.

[1] Jayakunvar Doctor
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Janakdhari Prasad", 15-10-1933

You will be interested to know that my sister[1], because she will not live in the Ashram, owing to non-observance of untouchability, earns about Rs. 15 per month by grinding. Giri, who with her three daughters and two sons was in the Ashram for seven years and whom I declined to support on the breaking up to the Ashram, but whom I advised to take to some labour is now earning from the labour of her two daughters nearly Rs. 30 per month by preparing sweetmeats and fritters for a hotel-keeper. And her son isearning about the same as a carpenter. Dal Bahadur Giri was not a labourer. He was living an almost aristocratic life. I believe that the widow and her daughters are happy. They have not cut off all connections with me. Two daughters are grown-up girls, marriageable, but have no present intention of marrying. They can read and write but they have learned the dignity of labour, and therefore are not a burden on society. Now I hope you understand what I mean by physical labour.

Now for the education of your children. If you accept the revolution that I have suggested, naturally the children will be brought up by you. You will give them not merely a literary training but you will give them also a training for labour with their hands. Immediately you begin this life you will find it to be a pleasure and all your difficulties will automatically be solved, and you will be rendering a distinct service to society by setting a wise example. I do want you to get out of the mood of despondency and helplessness. Do write again if this does not explain all I mean.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

[From Hindi]
Kuchh Apani Kuchh Deshki, p. 190

251. LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

November 26, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

I got your letter. Anand has escaped with a light sentence. Send him my blessings. Have you received any letter from your father–in–law? If you give up your inhibition, you will need no servant. God has endowed you with money but what should a poor mother do ? Try to stand on your own two feet, albeit gradually. Mahadev is growing in

[1] Raliatbehn

age. He will not need much help for long. Dwarakanathji writes that some arrangement has been made now. Don't you churn butter ? Do render some kind of public service and consider everyone around you as your own. You must not worry at all; write to me at once if there is anything amiss.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy : National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

252. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

November 26, 1933

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Your letter. I sent a wire to Dr. Ansari immediately on getting it. He must have seen you. What a pity that no one can be found in your house or outside to recite the *Gita.* Tulsidasji has offered us a Gita in the form of Ramanama to cope with such a situation. We do not have to commit Ramanama to our memory—it is done no sooner than it is uttered—what we are required to do is to commit it to our hearts. Regard Ramanama as the true medicine for you. If God spares your life, you should teach the small children of your family to recite from the *Gita.*

What more shall I say ? You are with us every moment. You have to course acquitted yourself well in the role of a worthy son. But how shall I become a worthy father?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 2402

253. SPEECH AT RAJKUMAR COLLEGE, RAIPUR [1]

November 27, 1933

When I received your invitation I felt at once that, if the Reception Committee here could make the necessary time, I would love to address this audience of students who, when they have finished

[1] Published in *Harijan* under the title "Princes and Untouchability"

their education, will be called upon to bear a great responsibility and burden. And it was a matter of great pleasure to me that the Reception Committee was able to set apart one hour for this function. I thank you, Sir, for having extended this invitation to me, thereby enabling me to deliver my message to the youths who are at present under your kind care. You were thoughtful enough to send a message to my host, Shuklaji[1] that, whilst I could address this audience in Hindustani if I so chose, you would appreciate it if I addressed them in English; and you were good enough, when I exchanged a letter with you, to tell me that many of the boys under your care did not know Hindustani. I at once decided to address you, in spite of my ordinary practice to the contrary, in English. Your Principal inadvertently supplied me also with a text for my message. I would like you, sons of Chiefs in these territories, to remember that you would be expected not merely to confine yourselves, in these days of progressive enlightenment and rapid inter–communication, to your comparatively very small territories, but you would be expected to extend your horizon; and if you will do so, as I have no doubt you will be obliged to do by force of circumstances, it will be necessary for you not merely to know the languages of the province in which your lot is cast, but you will be expected to know also the language that is most universally used in this country. And you may not know, all of you, I am sure, do not know, that over 22 crores of the people of this country know sufficient Hindi or Hindustani to be able to understand what is spoken to them and to express themselves, however broken their language may be. No Indian having to shoulder the responsibility that you will have to shoulder can possibly afford to ignore such a universal language. There is a method in my mad love of Hindi. I am a lover of the English language, and I would like to speak in the English language as well as is possible for a foreigner to do and compete with Englishmen. I know that I am far away from that consummation. Whatever English I know is due to my having lived for years among Englishmen and English–speaking men. I count hundreds of Englishmen and women as close friends. So you will not misunderstand me when I tell you that it is your duty to understand Hindustani and I will beg the Principal and his staff to realize the special condition of this

[1] Delivered at the B. N. Railway Labourers' Federation. This appeared in *Harijan* in two parts under the titles "A Great Equalizer" and "On Behalf of Humanity".

country and to feel with me that it is desirable for the Chiefs of India to understand Hindustani, through which alone they can know the India of the people.

This brings me to the central point of my message. We have been in the midst of Englishmen in various walks of life. I have had the painful duty very often of criticizing the policy of the rulers. I have not minced words. I have spoken straight from my heart, but as I have told you, I claim the closest friendship with hundreds of Englishmen. I cannot forget some of their priceless virtues. I propose to single out one of them for you. In England there is a living family tie between its noblemen and their domestic servants. It was a matter of joy to me on visiting them in their homes to find that there was a subtle bond of affection between them and their servants. There was no untouchability there. What I have told you is literally true of hundreds of the noblemen of England. Wherever I went, it was an unexpected pleasure to me at the end of the visit ot be introduced to the domestic staff not as inferior beings but as members of the family. I wish that you would copy this virtue in your own lives. There is unfortunately among us a feeling that Chiefs are Chiefs and they can never make common cause with the ordinary people and so you find the tragedy—however necessary it may be today—that special schools and colleges have got to be built for you. You dare not, you will not,go to common schools and colleges.You may not know that King Edward and the present King, I am speaking subject to correction, worked in the Navy as if they were ordinary sailors and that both father and son shared the hardships of a sailor's life. Will you do that ? You are confined as it were to hot houses and are taught to believe that you have been gifted with special divinity by God. Believe me there is absolutely no difference whatsoever between you and the common folk except this that you have opportunities that are denied to them. But if you do not make use of the opportunities God has given you, it will be counted against you in God's book of accounts. Know that the essence of education lies in drawing out the very best that is in you. You and I can take the positive comfort that is in you. You and I can take the positive comfort that all of us have an equal potential capacity for being good or bad. I, therefore, feel that all your education will be vain, if you do not learn the art of feeling one with the poorest in the land.

This brings me in the natural course to untouchability. In no other part of the world has a patent evil like untouchability been claimed to possess religious sanction as it has in Hindu India. But, if you have agreed with me so far, you are bound to regard the Harijan

as an integral part of common humanity. You have to realize your oneness even with him. It may be that your parents will dispute the proposition that untouchability is an unmixed evil. You will then have to show the courage of your conviction even as young Prahlad did. The idea of hereditary superiority and inferiority is, in my opinion, repugnant to the spirit of Hinduism which teaches oneness of all life in unequivocal terms. The religions of mankind are being examined and tested both analytically and synthetically. And I have no doubt that, if Hindus cling to untouchability, Hinduism and Hindus will be swept out of existence. I cling to Hinduism because it gives me all the solace I need and because I have found in it no warrant for untouchability as we know it today.

If I have invited you to copy the virtues of Englishmen, I must with deference to English friends present here warn you against their vices. That immortal poet–saint Tulsidas has left us a verse[1] full of deep truth. He says that we should live even as the fabled swan does, sift virtue from vice and take the former, leaving the latter alone. I would have you, therefore, to leave alone their two national vices, drink and races. Many Englishmen deplore them. I have seen many an English home being ruined by the craving for liquor and gambling at the races. And so have many princes been ruined by them. I hope that you will learn to shun these two evils.

Harijan, 8–12–1933

254. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

November 27, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Here is Gasavi's letter. I am telling him, I see no objection to the Party so long as it is not claimed as the Congress Party and that in any case he should seek your advice.

I note that we are to meet at Jubbulpore on 5th December. I shall try to give more time, if it is at all possible.

Have I not sent you the programme for C.P.? More than that was not ready till now.

So you are being gradually disburdened of shares and the like. I

[1] For the verse from the *Ramacharitmanasa*,

am not sorry. From my point of view the ideal thing would be a voluntary surrender of all the property you have, either to an institution or to those members of the family who do not want to throw themselves into the battle which is bound to be prolonged and perhaps increasingly bitter. In the final heat only those will be able to stand who have no property and nowhere to rest their heads on. But it is no use worrying over the future. Whatever happens you will be found in the front rank.

I am glad that Mother is making steady progress. I wonder if she knows all that is happening.

Yes, I did read your attack on the Hindu Sabha. It might have been less fierce. The summary made you speak like a partisan.

Love.

BAPU

[P.S.]

You will find the dates in the enclosed programme.

Gandhi–Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

255. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

November 27, 1933

Did I tell you Jamnalalji's Om[1] was one of the party? She is a gem—healthy, open, brave, willing and exceedingly intelligent. She is only 15 but looks twenty. All the member of the party are happy but she seems to be the happiest. Of Thakkar Bapa it is difficult to speak in exaggerated language. He is the spirit of service personified. Most methodical in his work, never allowing arrears, most considerate, yet the most exacting. He knows no rest. He reads up correspondence in the car. He has no time for chatter. He could not have made a better secretary I have prized him always as a rare man but I have come ever so much closer to him than before.

But I must stop now, hoping that you are keeping well.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: C. W. 10756. Courtesy: Rajmohan Gandhi

[1] Uma, youngest daughter of Jamnalal Bajaj

256. LETTER TO DUNICHAND

November 27, 1933

DEAR LALA DUNICHAND,

Please excuse the delay in replying. When I tour in your district, I do not know any other house that would harbour me and then you would be your own committee and therefore you will decide my fate for your district.

Let me save a few pice by making this serve for both—you and Mrs. Dunichand. She will be free to travel with me. Let her know that we already make a big party and descend like locusts upon every home we go to.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

LALA DUNICHAND
KRIPA NIWAS
AMBALA CITY
(PUNJAB)

From a photostat : G.N. 5584

257. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

November 28, 1933

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

I got your letter; I was waiting for it. How is your health ? I see that other Ashram girls also are there. Who are they ? Look after all of them.

Do you read or write anything ?

The Wardha address is given on the back.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 3188. Courtesy : Valji G. Desai

258. LETTER TO MAHENDRA AND SUDARSHAN DESAI

November 29, 1933

CHI. MANU AND MAVO,

I got the letters of you both. I am still not satisfied with your handwriting. You should try to improve it. Write to me from time to time. I often feel during the tour how fine it would have been if I were going with you. I always enjoy moving around with children, especially on foot as during the Dandi March.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 3161. Courtesy : Valji G. Desai

259. LETTER TO GORDHANDAS PATEL

WARDHA,
November 29, 1933

DEAR GORDHANBHAI,

It was your duty to write the letter you did; it certainly was your right. Your pain is deep. A letter from me cannot erase it, but time will. It must have been a surprise to you that I did not attend Krishna's wedding. Garlands I send to many girls. On the death of persons who are Hindus I never send wreaths. I did not send wreaths for Motilalji, or Das or Lalaji or Lokamanya and I have never sent wreaths on any occasion of death in India. Nobody felt the need for my presence either. Before I expressed my opinion as to how Vallabhabhi should proceed, he had himself decided along the same lines. I had a letter from him to this effect. But I do not expect to convince you by arguments. Only believe me that the episode you refer to has absolutely no bearing on the way I acted. I have tried to follow to the best of my ability what I considered to be my duty towards Vithalbhai.

I did not come to Wardha for two days for rest. I got two days for silence every week which I naturally spent at Wardha, because the tour that week was to cover the Wardha district and the adjoining areas. But that is not a defence. If I had considered it my duty to go to

Bombay, I would have somehow managed it. But I did not consider it my duty and that incident had nothing to do with it.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Vithalbhai Patel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

260. LET EVERY CASTE HINDU REMEMBER [1]

That the following resolution was unanimously passed on his behalf by the meeting of his representatives held in Bombay on 15th September, 1931, Pandit Malaviyaji being in the Chair :

> This Conference resolves that henceforth, amongst Hindus, no one shall be regarded as an untouchable by reason of his birth, and that those who have been so regarded hitherto will have the same right as other Hindus in regard to the use of public wells, public schools, roads and all other public institutions. This right shall have statutory recognition at the first opportunity and shall be one of the earliest Acts of the Swaraj Parliament, if it shall not have received such recognition before that time.
>
> It is further agreed that it shall be the duty of all Hindu leaders to secure, by every legitimate and peaceful means, an early removal of all social disabilities now imposed by custom upon the so–called untouchable classes, including the bar in respect of admission to temples.

Harijan, 1–12–1933

261. NOTES

THE LATE LALA GANGARAM OF SIALKOT

It was only through the kind offices of a friend that I came to learn of the recent death of Lala Gangaram. He died on the 4th [November] of heart failure, at the age of 60. I had the privilege of meeting him in Lahore at the late Rambhajdutt Chowdhury's house in 1919 when he was introduced to me as a thorough–going Harijan worker. His was a life of dedication to the Harijan cause. He was instrumental in founding Harijan colonies. His death is a distinct loss to the cause. I offer my condolences to the family of the deceased and to the Harijans who were under his special care.

[1] This was repeated in the *Harijan* issues of December 8, 22 and 29 *Vide* also "Resolution at the Hidu Leaders Conference, Bombay",25-9-1932

Reception Committees have been encouraging the habit of presenting flower garlands and bouquets by everyone who will do so. Such presentations are a waste of time and money in a tour undertaken on behalf of the lowliest. If garlands must be presented, let them consist of undamaged strands of yarn which can be used for weaving. There are Harijan weavers who are idle for want of hand–spun yarn. These will not weave mill–spun yarn. The best thing is to avoid all garlanding. And where reception without garlanding is considered impossible, let the garlands be accompained by money. The practice of accompanying garlands with money became a feature after Wun and it has already added a few hundred rupees to the amount of donations received. Let the public note what one pice means in this country and in the hands of the hungry and despised. It makes the dole that charity gives per head to the famishing in flood–stricken Orissa. Let the doubters see the hovels in which the Harijans are living. Let them visit the low–lying Harijan lane of Hinganghat, where in the rainy season it is hardly possible to exist. They will then understand the value of the pice that goes into the pocket of a Harijan. I would like the public to save their pice and give them to me for the sake of Harijans. It will be part payment of the heavy debt caste Hindus owe to Harijans.

Harijan, 1–12–1933

262. SCHOOL BOOKS

There seems to me to be no doubt that in the public schools the books used, especially for children, are for the most part useless when they are not harmful. That many of them are cleverly written cannot be denied. They might even be the best for the people and the environment for which they are written. But they are not written for Indian boys and girls, nor for the Indian environment. When they are so written, they are generally undigested imitations hardly answering the wants of the scholars. In this country, wants vary according to the provinces and the classes of children. For instance, wants of Harijan children are, in the beginning stages at least, different from those of the others.

I have, therefore, come to the conclusion that books are required more for the teachers than for the taught. And every teacher, if he is

to do full justice to his pupils, will have to prepare the daily lesson from the material available to him. This, too, he will have to suit to the special requirements of his class.

Real education has to draw out the best from the boys and girls to be educated. This can never be done by packing ill-assorted and unwanted information into the heads of the pupils. It becomes a dead weight crushing all originality in them and turning them into mere automata. If we were not ourselves victims of the system, we would long ago have realized the mischief wrought by the modern method of giving mass education, especially in a case like India's.

Attempts have undoubtedly been made by many institutions to produce their own text–books with more or less success. But in my opinion they do not answer the vital needs of the country.

I lay no claim to originality for the views I have endeavoured to set forth here. They are repeated here for the benefit of the managers and teachers of Harijan schools, who have a tremendous task before them. They dare not be satisfied with mere mechanical work resulting in simply making the children under their charge indifferently and in a parrot–like manner learn the books chosen anyhow. They have undertaken a great trust wich they must discharge courageously, intelligently and honestly.

The task is difficult enough but not so difficult as one would imagine, provided the teacher or the manager puts his whole heart into the work. If he becomes a parent to his pupils, he will instinctively know what they need and set about giving it to them. If he has it not to give, he will proceed to qualify himself. And seeing that we have started with the idea that the boys and girls have to have instruction in accordance with their wants, no extraordinary cleverness or possession of external knowledge is required in a teacher of Harijan and, for that matter, any other children.

And when it is remembered that the primary aim of all education is, or should be, the moulding of the character of pupils, a teacher who has a character to keep need not lose heart.

Harijan, 1–12–1933

263. A 'DOUBLE HELL'

A Harijan servant in Orissa gives me a graphic description of his visit to some Harijan quarters in Balasore District, near Bhadrak :[1]

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent, describing the waterlogged, stinking Harijan quarters and referring to the article "Another Plague

Is it any wonder that we have malaria, plague, and cholera rampant in our midst ? It is impossible to avoid these diseases so long as we neglect these useful members of society, consign them to the dirtiest places and, because of the monster of untouchability, we would not teach them to do their work in a proper and efficient manner. I suggest to workers all over the country that they must concentrate their effort upon the plague spots which they visit. Let us not be baffled by the vastness of the problem. Things will right themselves if everyone will attend to the work that comes his way. I would, therefore, advise the workers of Bhadrak to go to the merchants, make out a simple plan of improvement, present them with a budget, level up the ground, put up plinths and rebuild the fifteen houses. It cannot be a heavy budget and I doubt not that by sufficient importunity they will be able to raise a fund to reduce that plan to execution. The donors will find that the donations are a sound investment in a health–promoting project. It would be like putting their courtyards in order.

Harijan, 1–11–1933

264. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

ITARSI,

December 1, 1933

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I am writing this letter at 3.15 a.m. in a dharmashala at Itarsi. Mirabehn has gone to wash her face. After that we will pray, and then leave immediately to catch the train to Kareli, from where we have to go to Anantpur. Jethalal[1] is working there. Yesterday we were at Betul, and from there we came here by train, held a meeting and slept in this dharmashala.

I got your letter. How much can we do to counter what is being done by *The Times of India ?* Still I go on doing what I can think of. I get very few opportunities to read newspapers these days. I feel that the Harijan work is being indeed watched by Hari. The power that draws hundreds of thousands of people at every place [that we visit] will also expose the lies. If we remain careful enough and make no mistakes, we shall have done our duty.

Spot" (*vide* p. 18), had written : "I have no doubt that if you could see this quarter. . .you would call it a 'double hell'."

[1] Jethalal Govindji Sampat. *Vide* "What I Saw in Anantpur", 15–12–1933

I know very well that your spirit is following me in my tour. How do you know it is not protecting me ? Didn't I see every moment in Yeravda that you feel a mother's love for me ? The same love is visible in every line of your letters. And it is all–embracing. That is why you are carefully watching every day from there.

Please don't worry about me, nor about what is happening in the country. This is God's work. "Who can repair what has gone amiss, O Lord ?"

We are in the train now. I take it that you will do whatever may be necessary regarding your nose.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-1 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 49–50

265. REMARKS ON DHARMASHALA, ITARSI

December 2, 1933

We were given shelter in this dharmashala for which we are thankful to its managers. I was greatly pleased to learn that Harijans who observe rules of cleanliness are also admitted.

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile of the Hindi : *Madhya Pradesh aur Gandhiji,* p. 117

266. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

December 1, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

I have your letter. I call it good because it is truthful. I knew you were deceiving yourself and me. Will you now tell me what your nature demands? If it demands simply being in my presence, it cannot be satisfied. If it demands more teaching work and a life natural to most Europeans, I shall try to help you with hope of success. You should confer with Jamnalalji when he returns. Meanwhile do so with Dwarakanathji. You ought to be steady and brave. To desire to die is cowardice. There is nobody about you who has any wish to repress you. You have built in front of you a mountain of difficulties. Make your choice resolutely and act.

It is nearing 3.30 a.m. now. I get up always as usual, at 3 a.m.

Just after washing I read your letter and began this. You must be wise and sure.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

267. LETTER TO SURENDRA MASHRUWALA

December 2, 1933

CHI. SURENDRA,

I have your letter.

Yes, for the present you may build up your health. You may go after Jamnalalji returns from the hill-station. There is no doubt that just now there is no other duty for us except that of serving the Harijans and going to jail. Even in respect of these two I see that very few would now remain who would choose the second course. Hardships in jails are likely to increase now. Life in jails requires the utmost degree of physical and psychological *tapascharya.* Only a handful of us, therefore, would be ready for jail-going now. Those who do not understand the religious meaning of suffering in jail have no place in jail at all.

There is no escape from undertaking fasts unto death. Whether it comes today or tomorrow is another question.

The above portion was written at three sittings. This is the fourth. It is 3.30 in the morning. I am with Jethalal in his Ashram at Anantpur. The solitude of the hour is perfect. Mirabehn and Om are sleeping on one side. There is no sound except of their breathing. Now to resume the question of the fasts. They, too, will come by and by. They will commence when we are fit for them. Today foolish people are freely using this most effective weapon, but everywhere I hear stories about their fasts. Fortunately, few people can remain hungry for a long time. Hence the number of those who merely copy the example of others is insignificant. But their cases demonstrate that when used without one's being qualified for it the weapon has no value at all. It is such a wonder weapon that it can never do harm. When an unqualified person resorts to it, it will harm his health a little that is all. Such people cannot even prolong their fast to the point of death. My purpose in writing all this you is that we have nothing to think or do except cultivating fitness. We should not even wish that the fasts

should commence. We should be ready, that is all. While I am alive, no one else need on his own resort to a fast for the service of the Harijansor in connection with satyagraha for any other object. Tell Durbari[1] that he can write whenever he wants. He need have no hesitation at all. If he throws himself into service heart and soul, many of the difficulties will solve themselves.

How do you use your time these days? What is your diet? You must drink milk and eat ghee as you need to build up your helth. Do not count the cost. They will be easily available. Therefore accept them. If we do not get them, we should not feel disappointed. But when they are available, we should regard it our duty to accept them. When you have cultivated indifference to taste, it is unnecessary to feel hesitant in such matter. If you do not get either of the two things in jail, are you not going to do without them? "He whose understanding is secure, who is undeluded, who knows Brahman and who rests in Brahman, will neither be glad to get what is pleasant, nor sad to get what is unpleasant."[2] The body has been rightly compared to *Chintamani*. If we look upon it as an instrument [of service] given by God, we are duty-bound to take proper care of the God-given instrument. Even in jail you should not hesitate to inform the authorities about your physical condition. After thus taking the necessary steps for the protection of the body, we may sing, 'Let this body perish or survive.'

It is now four o'clock and the others have got up. Preparations have started for the prayer and so I must stop.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 10735. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

268. LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

December 2, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

I hope you are in good spirits. Do you go out for walks ? What do you eat ? Give up the craze for examinations; but do not give up the love for learning. Whatever time you can spare, devote it to im-

[1] A Parsi prohibition worker of Surat District

[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, V. 20; for Gandhiji's translation,

proving your Hindi. Once you have mastered Hindi, turn to English. You may devote some time to English even now; but Hindi should have precedence. Did Dr. Choithram get my letter ? Have you any information ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi : Courtesy : National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

269. SPEECH AT SAGAR

December 2, 1933

It is a good omen to me and to my cause and service of Harijans that such a big rush of people has come for me. I believe that they really want to drive out this curse of untouchability from the Hindu society. All are equal in the eyes of God and they have equal right to use public wells, schools and temples. The present movement is directed towards self–purification and one should not think oneself high or low in one's estimation.

The form in which untouchability is practised in India is to be found in no other country and it does not find support in the code of Manu. I am not an atheist. I have fifty years of experience and have not observed such distinction.

Replying to a long letter received from sanatanists, he said he had not practised *adharma.* If he did so he would be guilty in the eyes of God and man alike.

Even if I am left alone, I will preach this very thing.

Continuing, he advised the audience not to insult or injure the sanatanists but to love them as a mother loves her child. He firmly believed that a day would soon come when the sanatanists also would be with him.

Turning to the Harijans, he advised them to cultivate habits of cleanliness and give up carrion–eating and to abstain from drink. He dwelt on the efficacy of prayer and advised the Harijans to pray every morning in Hindi, because no knowledge of Sanskrit was necessary for prayer. He recalled his own 50 years' experience and showed how God had relieved him in moments of difficulties. While going to the temples they should go after a bath and in clean dress.

The Bombay Chronicle, 8–11–1933

270. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, JABALPUR

December 3, 1933

If this effort to abolish root and branch the distinctions of high and low succeeds, it will have a healthy reaction on all spheres of life, and the struggle between capital and labour will cease and give place to co–operation and concord between the two.[1] If we have understood the full implications of this war against untouchability, we should have no difficulty in realizing that untouchability based on birth is only one of the countless phases of that curse. We should thus be better serving the cause of freedom and communal unity that I have at heart. My faith in the movement has grown from day to day. I implicitly believe that, if we succeed in abolishing untouchability from Hinduism, all the quarrels between classes and communities that we see today in India will cease. The differences between Hindus and Mussalmans and between capital and labour will be composed. Once the hearts are purified, it will be found easy to overcome all difficulties in the way of a heart unity. The phase we are at present dealing with does not exhaust all the possibilities of the struggle. The untouchability as practised today in Hinduism is the worst of all the phases. Masquerading under the name of religion, it has contributed most to the degradation of man by man. I have said that untouchability is a many–headed monster and appears in many shapes and forms, some of them so subtle as not to be easily detected. There are many degrees in untouchability. I was conscious of all these implications when I took up this war and made up my mind to devote my full energy, in the evening of my life, to this work.

All true scouts have my blessings.[2] In my many wanderings over many parts of the world, I have come in contact with thousands of boy scouts. True scouts are brave, considerate, courteous, and intelligent. They should have a full sense of their duty. They have been working to preserve order at the numerous fairs in the country where millions gather. I would also like them to give a part of their time to the service of the Harijans. Anyone who sees Harijan quarters with my eye will be convinced that there is ample scope for service for all who have the will and the capacity to do it. It does not require extraordinary intelligence. The only thing required is a sense of identification with the Harijans.

[1] In an address presented by the local labour union, it was asked why Gandhiji did not work for ameliorating the condition of labourers and protecting them against exploitation by capitalists.

[2] The National Boy Scouts had presented an address to Gandhiji.

There is no end of difficulties in the way, but there is not a single difficulty for which there is no remedy. The beauty of a religious movement lies in the fact that all difficulties blocking its progress are automatically solved. God himself clears the way. His is the guiding hand, we are but His instruments. If we gird up our loins to fight this age-old sin against God and man and observe fully the conditions laid down by Shastras and followed by sages of old and humbly seek Divine aid in our undertaking, we are sure to win the grace of God. These conditions require a thorough observance of truth and non-violence and the utmost sacrifices and sufferings. If we have all that and, above all, charity and goodwill for our opponents, the difficulties, howsoever great, will surely melt away.

Harijan, 15-12-1933

271. TELEGRAM TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

JABALPUR,
December 4, 1933

BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA
KATRA KHUSHALRAI
CHANDNI CHOWK, DELHI

YOUR WIRE LETTER. AM CONSULTING ANSARI. GOD BLESS YOU. WIRING LATER. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 2403

272. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

JABALPUR,
December 4, 1933

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

We arrived at Jabalpur last evening. It is 6.30 just now. I got your letter yesterday in Katni. I saw the work being done at Anantpur. It is all solid, but for that very reason it is also slow. Jethalal is an extremely efficient worker.

Gordhanbhai is very much displeased with my conduct. I am of course trying to explain things to him. His idea is to spend the money in foreign countries. I have advised him against doing that. He has not

consulted me yet regarding the will. If he does, I will naturally remember what you have said in your letter. The whole thing seems strange, but I wouldn't be surprised if what we hear were really true. Whatever it is, the truth will come out in time. The big guns are expected today. I see that all will meet tomorrow.[1] We shall be put up at different places. Aunt is coming. Ansari also may come.

Brijkrishna is on his death-bed. You know that during the fast he had looked after me with the utmost devotion. I keep myself informed about his condition. There is a wire from Dr. Ansari saying that there is a possibility that he may survive the crisis.

I learnt only from your letter that Mahadev had been given a companion[2]. Joshi is keeping very well. I heard about Ba only yesterday after we had arrived here. I am glad.

The Harijan work is progressing satisfactorily. So far everything may be said to have gone well.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 50-1

273. LETTER TO GODAVARI

December 4, 1933

CHI. GODAVARI[3],

I am longing to see you ever since I arrived. Rajendra Singh[4] inquired in the morning and I sent a message [for you] to come at 8 o'clock, but you have every right to come whenever you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi : C.W. 9670

[1] An informal meeting of the Congress Working Committee was being held at Jabalpur.

[2] Girdhari, J. B. Kripalani's brother's son

[3] Wife of Seth Govinddas, who had been accepted as daughter by Gandhiji in 1932.

[4] Gandhiji's host at Jabalpur.

274. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

December 5, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

This is being written before morning prayer time. I have your further letter. You must not conceal things from me or act unnaturally to please me. That would be a wrong way to go about it. You will please me most by being quite natural. Your own room is quite untidy. You are not taking care of your finger. It is high time you got well. You should go to a hill, if you cannot be better there.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

275. LETTER TO N. S. HARDIKAR

J[UBBUL] PORE,
December 5, 1933

DEAR HARDIKAR,

What has overcome you has been the fate of many hospital patients. You will soon get over the mental weakness. If the surrounding atmosphere causes mental weakness, you must find your strength from within.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. N. S. HARDIKAR
C/O MR. M. PAI
KRISHNANIVAS
LINKING ROAD
KHAR, B. B. C. I.
BOMBAY SUBURBAN

From the original: N.S. Hardikar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

276. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MANDLA[1]

December 6, 1933

I have said that those who come to these gatherings as an appreciation of my political services and not because they believe in removal of untouchability deceive themselves and me. I invite only sympathizers and opponents to these meetings, the latter if they wish to signify their opposition. I want you to be true to yourselves and reject me if you do not see eye to eye with me in this matter.

There are two sets of pundits who give opposite interpretations of Shastras. The layman then has to make use of his Godgiven reason and choose between the two.[2] Untouchability, I have found, appeals neither to the intellect nor to the heart. The essential urge of the heart is towards compassion and sympathy for the sinner. Temples are meant for sinners, where they can wash away their sins. What is the use of temples to a liberated sinless soul, who sees God everywhere ? If you believe that Harijans are in their present plight today as a result of their past sins, you must concede that they have the first right of worship in temples. God has been described by all the scriptures of the world as a Protector and Saviour of the sinner.

There is untouchability in the Shastras in a particular sense. Anger, lust and other evil passions raging in the heart are the real untouchables. It is a prostitution of Shastras to interpret them as sanctioning the distinctions we observe today. A true man of piety will consider himself a sinner and, therefore, untouchable. We in our haughtiness have hitherto misinterpreted the Shastras and have raised a sin to the status of a religious tenet. I claim to be a true sanatanist, because I make the greatest effort I can to live up to the truth as I see it. Diversity there certainly is in the world, but it means neither inequality nor untouchability. An elephant and an ant are dissimilar. Nevertheless God has said that they are equal in His eyes. The inner

[1] Earlier, the meeting was addressed by a sanatanist Swami with Gandhiji's permission. The burden of his speech was that the large gatherings came to pay homage to Gandhiji as a political leader and not because they accepted his views on untouchability.

[2] In the address presented there was a reference to the debate between Shankara, the reformer, and Mandanmisra, the formalist, which took place in Mahishmati, the ancient seat of learning, now Mandla.

oneness pervades all life. The forms are many, but the informing spirit, is one. How can there be room for distinctions of high and low where there is this all-embracing fundamental unity underlying the outward diversity? For that is a fact meeting you at every step in daily life. The final goal of all religions is to realize this essential oneness.

Harijan, 15-12-1933

277. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

December 7, 1933

FOR SHRIMATI KASTURBA GANDHI
FROM M. K. GANDHI BY KIND PERMISSION OF
SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA GAOL

BA,

You must have got the letter sent with Ranchhodbhai. Take care of your health. Do not worry about anything. You shouldn't go on thinking about things. Trust my life to God. Can there be any better protector than He? There has been no change in my food. Wherever I go, *pendas*[1] are kept ready for me. Generally I accept them, but sometimes I refuse. My personal needs are looked after by Mirabehn and Om. Mirabehn has only one thought day and night. She doesn't attend any meeting, but spends all her time in keeping things ready for me. She keeps well. I had got cold but I am better now. I am in Jabalpur today. Gopi's parents live here. I met them and her younger sister. Govinddas's house also is in this town. Brijkrishna is still seriously ill. Ask somebody to write to him. Prabhavati writes to me. Take proper care about your food. If you need anything, get it through Ranchhodbhai or Chimanlal. How is your mouth and the foot? Who are your companions? Write to me at the Wardha address. I hope all the women are in good health. Tell Amtussalaam that I have written a letter to her. Ask Mani to write to me. I hope she keeps good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 1-2

[1] A sweetmeat

278. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 7, 1933

CHI.. NARANDAS,

I have discussed with Harakhchand and Jivanlal the proposal for Purushottam's betrothal. They are eager to settle another connection and have pressed me not to enter into negotiations with any other party for the time being. Accordingly, I am doing nothing for the present. I feel sure that Harakhchand will offer his daughter. I think you also know this. I think about you every day. I hope all of you are well. As for myself, I am being protected by God.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8393. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi.

279. LETTER TO BHAILAL M. PATEL

December 7, 1933

BHAI BHAILAL,

I got your letter. I am happy to learn that you have been doing Harijan work with single-minded devotion. May your devotion remain the same for ever and your work bear fruit.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N. 3300.

280. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

JABALPUR,
December 7, 1933

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I had a very long letter from Gordhanbhai which of course I didn't preserve. He had pointed out in it all my shortcomings and contrasted them with Vithalbhai's virtues. I had returned a very loving reply to that letter. I have received no acknowledgment. As for the

money[1] which is lying with me, he had sent me an oral message. I told Mathuradas in reply that I would not let it be used in foreign countries. You must have seen that he has now made a public appeal to me. We shall know the whole truth by and by. I hope to be able to manage the situation well enough. You needn't worry.

I will write regularly to Ba. This time she was not very willing to go to jail. But God will see that everything is all right. Thakkar Bapa had shown me your letter. It was not his fault at all. He tries hard indeed to save me from all inconvenience. He doesn't let any troublesome people come near me. He saves me from a great many things, but sometimes he is helpless. I am sure we shall learn from experience and things will keep improving. Don't worry about this either. "God's will be done."

Kishorelal is ill. He is a little better now. He is in Bombay. Write to him.

Jivraj's[2] health seems to have been affected very much. He is in Hotel Rugby in Matheran.

Mathuradas was in the crowd.[3] He is still with me. He will remain with me up to Delhi. His health also seems to have been affected. He suffers from backache. He cannot move freely. If he takes rest I think he will regain strength. It may be said that, at the meeting, they talked a little and then left. Maulana Saheb and the Doctor tried to persuade me not to be uncompromising. On my explaining my conflict of duties, they became silent. The matter was discussed in minute detail. I felt that Nariman had no sense. I told them:"If somebody writes 'Whither India ?' and another writes 'Whither Congress ?', I hope it wouldn't seem too much if I write 'Whither Nariman ?'." Jawahar is indeed a *jawahar*[4]. About Jamnalalji I needn't write anything. He has put on weight. His health is all right, more or less. Chikhalda benefited him very much. The condition of his ear is as bad as that of your nose. One is without nose, and the other is deaf. To whom may I complain about these difficulties ? Please let me know, however, if the injections help you now. I like your idea of trying *neti*[5]But who will

[1] The reference is to the sum accumulated with Gandhiji from the monthly instalments of about half the salary that Vithalbhai used to draw as Speaker, Central Legislative Assembly.

[2] Dr. Jivraj Mehta

[3] He had attended the meeting of the Congress Working Committee.

[4] Literally, 'jewel'.

[5] A yogic practice of cleaning the nasal canal

teach you the method ? I claim to be an expert in it. Can I not be called there as one ? If you don't know the correct way there may be a little bleeding. Generally a straw is used in the beginning. I would advise you not to do so. Fine cloth will suffice. If you do it slowly, there will be no difficulty. Krishanadas[1]Mahadev and Devdas were taught by me. Devdas used to bleed, but the reason for that was different. He had, therefore, to give up the practice.

Janakibehn had accompanied Jamnalal. The two left last evening.

I learnt only from you that Giridhari was placed with Mahadev. Surendra and Dubari[2]are at Wardha. Both of them are well. Madhavji[3] has just been released. He has come here to see me. He will leave for Karadi today. He is all right. Chandrashankar is doing full justice to his work. Kaka and Swami have gone to Matheran for four or five days.

I will reach Delhi on the 10th.

Blessings to both from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 51-3

281. LETTER TO SURENDRA MASHRUWALA

December 7, 1933

CHI. SURENDRA,

I have your letter. We live but for a moment, and live with our labour or at any rate ought to do so. Only so shall we become fully alive.

Do not be obsessed with the idea of the fast. One must be ready for it and cultivate fitness for it, that is all.

I see no harm in both of you entering the temple[4] from there. We have no money and should not have any. For that reason it seems right to me that you should go [to jail] from there. Jamnalalji would

[1] Once Gandhiji's secretary
[2] A Parsi prohibition worker of Surat District
[3] Madhavji V. Thakkar
[4] Meaning jail

not leave you in peace.

Madhavji wishes to go to Karadi. I approve. He is not at Wardha. He has to choose his field of work, and therefore can choose only Karadi. Moreover, it seems but proper that one of you three should go [to jail] from there. Since Madhavji has money, let him go from Karadi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 10734. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

282. LETTER TO DURBARI

December 7, 1933

DEAR DURBARI,

I got your letter. Personally I like the idea of wearing the sacred thread and vest. From your point of view it certainly cannot have any religious significance. But respecting harmless customs is also religion. You should meet members of your family if you can do so without letting it interfere in any way with your mission of service. Serving any of them individually is now outside your field of duty. However, it is not proper for me to confuse your thinking. Your dharma lies in what Surendra advises. He alone will save you. However, you will have to give up the desire of living even with him. It is not at all likely that you will be together in jail. Of course it would be good if that happened of its own.

I am glad that your health has improved.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 10736. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

283. LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

December 7, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

I got your letter. When I advised you to give up inhibition[1] I meant that you should not hesitate to take what help you need from other brothers and sisters. One can get such help through heart-felt humility. If you can't get it, then do engage a maidservant. The

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vidya A. Hingorani", 26-11-1933

attempt should be gradually to do away with the practice of employing servants and do all work by ourselves; but this is possible only when your health improves. Do not think that I am asking you to do everything all at once. Do it as your strength permits.

Have you understood me now ? Do write to me all details.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi . Courtesy : National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani.

284. SPEECH AT LEONARD THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

JABALPUR,

December 7, 1933

I, who believe in the equality of the great religions of the world and from my early days have learnt to honour other re- ligions as my own, have no difficulty in inviting and taking the co-operation to the followers of other religions in this movement. It is part of my nature. This is essentially a matter of repentance on the part of the so-called higher classes. They have to do re- paration for the wrongs they have hitherto done to a portion of themselves on whose backs they have hitherto ridden. It is an effort on the part of Hindu reformers to blot out this shame from the face of Hinduism. I have not hesitated to say that either untouchability lives and Hinduism perishes, or untouchability goes and Hinduism rises purified. It is a life-and-death struggle bet- ween the darkness of superstition and the light of reform. If this reform in Hinduism comes about, I have not the shadow of a doubt that it will be a service not only of all the communities of India but of the whole of humanity. I am not thinking of achieving this reform by any form of compulsion, including legal. It is said that, in trying to seek support for the two Bills now before the Assembly, I am really supporting a policy of legal compulsion. I do not want to repeat here the whole argument against that contention; but I want to assure you that there is no compulsion in the Bills; and those who care to study them will endorse my opinion. This must be a reform from within. It is not a political movement. I do not want to deny that it will have great political results, but I have never for a moment thought of achieving through this movement the political rise of the so-called upper class Hindus. It is to my mind a movement of downright purification.

Having made these introductory remarks, it is easy for me to tell you on what terms you can give your assistance to the movement. You should work in co-operation with and, if I may say it, in subordination to the Society that has been formed for suppression and eradication of untouchability, namely, the Servants of Untouchables Society. That is to say, you should put your talents at the disposal of the Society. I do not mean metallic talents. These have to come from those who have to make repentance and reparation. I have seen during the few days of my tour that millions are ready for the reform. They can tangibly signify their support only by giving their coppers. But men and women of intelligence are wanted to work for the Harijans in a variety of ways. For the so-called caste Hindus to serve the Harijans in a constructive manner is to get off their backs, to go down on their knees to them, to treat Harijan children as their own and Harijan men and women as blood-brothers and sisters. It is almost a superhuman task and cannot be done without Divine aid. But Divine aid comes largely through human agency. I confess that we have too few teachers and other professional men and women in our ranks. We want to cope with the ever increasing demand. I invite the aid of agencies like yours in this work. You will now understand what I mean by subordination. This is the right way.

But there is also the wrong way. You may choose to work independently. You may have the conversion of Harijans to Christianity. You may see in the movement a chance for propaganda. If you work among the Harijans with such an aim, you can see that the very end we have in view will be frustrated. If you believe that Hinduism is a gift, not of God but of Satan, quite clearly you cannot accept my terms. You and I would be dishonest if we did not make clear to one another what we stand for.

Harijan, 15-12-1933

285. A LETTER

[Before *December 8, 1933*][1]

A public servant has no personal feelings to be considered. He mu-st be a cypher. He can have no pride nor power nor prestige except such as service gives him. He must [be] तुल्यनिंदात्मसंस्तुतिः/मानापमानयोस्तुल्य—[2]. Therefore, you may not be ruffled on my behalf or

[1] This was published in a report date-lined "Harda, 8-12-1933".

[2] One "who is evenminded in praise and blame", who "holds alike respect and disrespect". *Bhagavad Gita*, "Discourses on the "Gita"

on behalf of the cause. The cause is not in your or my hands. It is in God's all-powerful hands. You and I are His instruments. You must rejoice in your humiliation and feel strong.

Harijan, 15-12-1933

286. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

December 8, 1933

CHI.. MARY.

We pass through Betul on 15th. I am quite sure that if I carried on a propaganda for selling puff powder you will find me deserted and pieless.

You are right about sword practice.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 6016. Also C.W. 3342. Courtesy : F. Mary Barr

287. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

December 7/9, 1933[1]

CHI. AMALA,

Your letter. My blood-pressure fluctuates between 155 and 168. Are you any the wiser for the information ? Why should you bother about things you cannot understand! Ask me how I am and you will get the answer. Let technical matters be left to the doctors. I have told you that I am not going to drive you from the Ashram. If the life suits you and you can confrom to the discipline, stay there by all means.

You must cook your own simple vegetable if the general thing contains condiments. Or you may ask Dwarakanathji to have plain boiled vegetable for you.

Ba is quite all right.

I hope you are eating fruit.

So you are teaching Sumitra English!

Love.

BAPU

[1] The letter was written on December 7 and the postscript on December 9.

[PS.]

You ought to come to the station on 15th. The finger should be all right.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

288. LETTER TO KISAN GHUMATKAR

December 9, 1933

MY DEAR KISAN,

I had your letter today in the train. Unless you have already left, I suggest your joining the Madras Mail at Wardha on 15th instant. I take the Grand Trunk Mail at Delhi on 14th inst. I am glad you are strong both in body and mind.

Love.

BAPU

SHRIMATI KISANBEHN
GANESH TERRACE
GIRGAUM BACK RD.
BOMBAY

C.W. 9689

289. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ

December 9, 1933

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your postcard. During a tour how can one get time to write letters ? Even today I have got only a few minutes and am using them to write this. It is God's kindness that Devendra is growing so well. I hear occasionally from Radha. I have just heard that Santok's mother passed away.

I hope you get the *Harijan.*

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9155

290 LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

December 9, 1933

BHAI NANABHAI,

I got your letter. I have sent a wire to Vrajlalji. I hope Shanti is recovering. One wishes that the children were as careful about their health as they are about their studies. I had a letter from Gomati regarding Kishorelal. He in not likely to become completely healthy now. I also had a letter form Manilal and Sushila. I have written a long letter to them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6690. Also C.W. 4335. Courtesy : Kanubhai Mashruwala

291. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

December 9, 1933

CHI. MANU,

It seems you have completely forgotten me. You don't even reply to me. Shouldn't you write at least about Kusum's health ? How is she ? I had a letter from Ba from jail. She is worrying about you and Kusum. Write to her. How are you? How is aunt Bali ? I am writing this in a running train.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Write to me at the Wardha address.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 2663. Courtesy : Manubehn S. Mashruwala.

292. SPEECH AT JAMIA MILLIA, DELHI

December 10, 1933

I have learnt enough Urdu while I was in jail and if I happen to go there again I shall come out as an Urdu scholar.

Islam enjoins upon us tolerance towards others' religions. It doesn't say that other religions are false. He alone who does good to others is a true man. This is the principle of the Koran as also the teaching of other religions. The students of the Jamia, I hope, will spread the message of unity and freedom throughout the country.

I do not propose to attend the Hindu-Muslim unity conference. I want unity of hearts among the followers of the two faiths so that Mother India may attain freedom.

[From Hindi]

Gandhijiki Dilli Diary, Vol. I, p. 357.

293. SPEECH AT LABOURERS' MEETING[1]

DELHI,
December 10, 1933

[Gandhiji] congratulated the organizers of his programme on the happy beginning made with a visit to Harijan quarters and followed by the labourers meeting.

Thanking them for the purse, the Mahatma said he knew that half the amount in the purse was contributed by the employer (Mr. G. D. Birla) and half by the labourers from the Labour Welfare Fund. To present such a big sum was the work of rich persons and not of labourers, and besides this, most of them were Harijans and it did not behove him to take money from them to remove the curse of untouchability. It was the duty of high-caste Hindus like Mr. Birla to contribute money to wipe out untouchability,and he hesitated to accept money from Harijans, but all the same he accepted it, since they voulnteered it, but, added the Mahatma, he would have preferred it if the Harijans had given up liquor or smoking and contributed those savings for Harijan work. The money thus contributed would have been more helpful in the noble mission. He recalled, in this connection, the contribution raised by Bhopal students yesterday by raising a pie-fund.

Continuing, the Mahatma said the Hindus, in patronizing the Harijan movement, were really doing a penance (*prayashchitta*) for their age-long sins, and this penance must be sincere. If they failed to do it, God alone knew what their fate would be.

[1] About 5,000 labourers and others attended the meeting held in the Birla Mills. A purse of Rs. 2,000 and an address on a banana leaf were presented to Gandhiji. He remarked : "The idea of presenting the address on a banana leaf is very good, but you should have given me some fruit to eat." Soon after a basket of fruit was brought.

Referring to the Harijan reform work done in the Birla Mills, Mahatmaji said :

It is no news to me that you have wiped out untouchability in the Birla Mills. Ghanshyamdasji has merely paid the debt that he owed as a high-caste Hindu to the Harijans and as a millowner to labourers.

It was the religious duty of every Hindu, be he a mill-owner or poor man, to root out untouchability from this land. In doing so, they were merely doing their duty and did not deserve any thanks.

Continuing, the Mahatma sounded a note of warning in the following words :

Wipe out untouchability or Hinduism will be wiped out from the world.

Referring to some sanatanists, who did not agree with him in this reform movement, Mahatmaji said :

I have tried my best to persuade sanatanists to my view and have given my best attention to their arguments, but they have failed to convince me by a single proof from the Shastras giving sanction to untouchability.

Continuing, the Mahatma appealed to the labourers to give up liquor, smoking and other evil practices and lead a pure life internally as well as externally. He laid stress on God's worship and added that faith in God alone could put an end to their sorrows. He concluded with a prayer for the welfare of labourers, saying that he also regarded himself as a labourer by choice. It was better to be a labourer than to be an employer. (Cheers)

The Mahatma humorously remarked :

I feel very much tempted to finish the fruit, but give it to Harijan children and they will reach me.

The Hindustan Times, 11-12-1933

294. DISCUSSION WITH HARIJANS

DELHI,
December 10, 1933

Q. Do you consider temple-entry as the only way to solve our troubles ?

A. It is my firm belief that caste Hindus will not have fulfilled their obligations till they have opened all their temples to Harijans. It is immaterial to me whether Harijans come to worship in those temples or not. It is a matter of sheer justice and penance for caste Hindus. It is repugnant to my sense of justice that Harijans should be excluded

from places of worship which are open to other Hindus. I would not consider untouchability as having been eradicated, unless and until the bar against Harijans' entry into temples is removed altogether.

Q. Will you not help us in our economic distress ? To us economic uplift is the chief thing.

A. The economic uplift has not been overlooked. But I should not be satisfied if you were given crores of rupees and yet were still considered untouchables, or if palaces were built for you and you were still kept out of the pale of Hindu society. I should be satisfied only when you are put on a par with caste Hindus in every respect. Thus economic uplift is only one of the many items in our programme.

Q. We should not conceal from you our misgivings about the money collected by you being properly used for our welfare. It depends upon your getting honest workers to work out the scheme, of whom there are very few at present. Would you not then put the funds into our hands to be used according to our discretion ? We must tell you frankly we do not trust the present workers.

A. I do not mean to say that no Harijans can take part in the disbursement of the funds. But as the whole reform is conceived as a matter of penance and reparation on the part of caste Hindus, they have to find the best way of using them. They must be guided by the advice of Harijans, but the actual administration of the funds has to rest with them. I may assure you that the least part of these funds will be spent for propaganda. By far the greater part will go directly into the pockets of Harijans. I have no reason to believe that all those who are doing Harijan service today are actuated by selfish motives. There must be a few cases where workers are not as you and I would have them to be, but the majority have taken up this work in the proper spirit. Many of them are of unimpeachable character and would do credit to any movement. Apart from all this, however, I want you to visualize the conditions of thousands of Harijans who are so suppressed that they have fallen below the average standard of humanity. They are voiceless. They consider themselves sub-human. In Orissa, some years back,[1] an old man came to me with a straw in his mouth. I tried to awaken in him the sense that he was my equal as a human being. Another Harijan came to me in Cochin all trembling

[1] In December 1927; *vide* ,"Our Shame and their Shame

with fear. He was considered invisible in those parts and was afraid of coming into the world of touchables. These people are a standing reproach to us. In the work I am doing, I have these in mind. This service, then, has been taken up, not so much to please Harijans as to discharge a peremptory obligation. We want to wipe out our shame and to die in that effort if need be. We are striving to the best of our ability to render you selfless service, but if Harijans do not accept it, I shall know that we are too late. But the month's experience convinces me that the vast majority gladly accept this service. We do not wish to leave a single phase of your life untouched. We approach you as servants and not as patrons.

Q. You have only added a new name 'Harijan' to the many names we already had. Even this new name is significant of our separateness from the others. Unless this sense of separateness goes, in fact as well as in name, how are we to be satisfied ?

A. The name 'Harijan' was suggested by one of your own class. Thousands have welcomed the name as a good substitute for the offensive names 'untouchable' and '*avarna*'. So long as untouchability is not completely removed, a name to distinguish you from others will be required, and an inoffensive name is any day better than one that stinks in the nostrils. When untouchability is gone and Harijans are merged into the Hindus, I do not know by what name—Harijan or Hindu—the whole community will choose to call itself, but till that day comes, distinguishing names will have to be used. You should know that I have become a Harijan by choice and am trying to serve you as one of yourselves; and I am sure that the sevice will, in the end, be accepted by all Harijans, if I have offered it in a selfless spirit. I would plead with you for a little more patience to see what is being done. The Harijan Sevak Sangh has no other end in view but your good.

Harijan, 22-12-1933

295. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

DELHI,
December 10, 1933

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got the letters of you both. Which remarks of mine hurt so much ? I don't remember what I said to Kishorelal, but I have never

thought you timid or cowardly. On the contrary, I have always been proud of your courage.But I do think that you are too dependent on others, that you do not have sufficient capacity to think for yourself. But that is not your fault. Partly it may be mine. You have nothing to feel ashamed about. I wrote a long letter to you by the last mail, from which you will be able to know clearly my views in this regard. Even your seeking my advice from here is a sign of your feeling of dependence.

If you make a mistake, I will not blame you even in my thoughts. I would do that if you betrayed the trust reposed in you. I do wish that you should keep the promises which you may have made to the people or to friends. I am not at all afraid of your present course. At the most the result would be your financial ruin. Let it be so. But don't let people think that you acted foolishly. If you feel that you have made a mistake, admit it and free yourself. It is not as easy for me to give advice in this matter as you seem to think. If it were so, why wouldn't I advise you immediately ?

And now regarding your expenses. My remarks were not meant as criticism nor did they express my pain. I only wished to say that, having lived there in a certain manner, you could not easily change your mode of life here. I don't wish that you should try our manner of life here at the cost of the health of all three of you. You yourself have calculated your monthly requirement at Rs. 150. I have put it at Rs. 200. But now even Rs. 150 can be obtained only as a favour. I would rather that you lived on plain fare than that you should depend on anybody's favour. In short I am not satisfied with your way of life. I know that Sushila is much more careful than you in this matter. After reading your letters, I even felt like sending a cable to you asking you not to worry. But with whose money would that have been ? How can a poor father send a cable to reassure his son? I, therefore, content myself with this letter. Have no fear of me, either of you. Live as both of you may think proper. Even if you cannot continue to live there despite your sincere efforts and come over here, God will provide you means of livelihood. Do whatever you do after independent thinking.

Nimu is pregnant again. Ramdas feels extremely miserable. I have tried to comfort him. A man and a woman cannot succeed in this aim without hard effort. But Ramdas is a weak man and thinks too much, so that even his weakness makes him unhappy.

Probably you know that Lakshmi also is pregnant. I came to know these facts about both of them only recently. I come to know about such things only after some time. Ba is happy in jail. Manibehn is with her. I am all right.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4812

Blessings from

BAPU

296. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

DELHI
December 11, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

I will write a long letter to Joshi. It seems that Dhiru feels weak. If you write to him regularly, I think he will be all right. I am glad that he seems to like the place.

I feel greatly relieved to know that you are happy there. Work hard and serve well. Learn everything you can. Ask Vimu to write a letter to me.

I now get letters from Ba. Her going to jail seems to have pleased the women very much. Mani is still with her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 5360

297. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

DELHI
December 11, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

I got your letter. It is good that you are under the special care of Ramabehn. Obey her. I have advised Dwarakanath that for some time you should be kept on milk, fruit and vegetables. That will improve your blood. You also require steambaths and hip-baths. The eyes should be sprinkled with warm water four or five times daily. The water must be clean.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 9639. Courtesy : Ravindra R. Patel

298. NOTE TO VIDYA. A. HINGORANI

BIRLA HOUSE,
NEW DELHI,
[*December 11, 1933*][1]

What is it you want ? It is a matter of a few days. But I don't wish to keep you if that upsets you or makes you unhappy. After all, later on you have to go to Wardha. But if you want to go to Multan I would not stop you. I want to make you happy and brave somehow. If I send you back to Wardha, I will do so only after making all the arrangements, otherwise we shall see what can be done. I will not send you to Bhavnagar. Dudhibehn's programme is not certain. As long as I am here there is no such hurry. Shall talk tomorrow in the morning after my silence is over.

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy : National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

299. TELEGRAM TO BHULABHAI DESAI

NEW DELHI,
December 12, 1933

BHULABHAI DESAI
WARDEN R [OA]D, BOMBAY 11

JUST HEARD YOUR ARRIVAL. HOPE COMPLETELY CURED.

GANDHI

Bhulabhai Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

300. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

DELHI,
December 12, 1933

BA,

This is the second letter to you in jail. I hope you are getting *Jam-e-Jamshed* [2] and *Harijanbandhu* now. Write to me if you want anything else. Mathuradas is still with me. I arrived in Delhi on the

[1] The source has "December 1934", which seems to be a slip. In December 1933, Gandhiji was in Delhi from 10th to 14th. And his silence day fell on the 11th. *Vide* also "Letter to Vidya A. Hingorani", 25-12-1933.

[2] A Gujarati daily published from Bombay

10th. I shall be leaving for Andhradesh on the14th and Mathuradas will go to Bombay. Do not worry about me in the least. I will write to you regularly and tell you exactly how I am keeping. I take milk, *mavo*, etc., in sufficient quantity. The cold which I had has disappeared. Dr. Ansari is here. I am staying this time with Ghanshyamdasji. Jamnalalji also is likely to arrive here today. Prabhudas and his wife also are here. He will settle and take up some work somewhere on this side. Do not worry about Manilal. I have written to him a long letter. I don't wish to suppress him. Santok's mother has passed away. I have written a letter to her today. Brijkrishna is seriously ill. He is confined to bed. He is being treated by Dr. Ansari. They are hopeful that he will get all right. Radha seems to have fallen ill again. If you or any other women want anything, write to me about it.

I hope your jaws are functioning all right. How is Mani's knee ? Have you with you anything to read ?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 2

301. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

DELHI,

December 12, 1933

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter, as also Jayaprakash's. If both of you come to a firm decision that you would dedicate yourselves to service, I shall have nothing to say. I only explained to you both that it was not morally wrong to do one's duty towards one's own family, but that, if one wished to follow the path of service, one must renounce such private duties.[1]

If you try to do both, you will probably fail in both. There will be no difficulty in sending Rs. 50 every month for Rajeshwar.[2] But that does not satisfy me.What arrangement have you made for your own expenses ? What have you decided regarding the debt ? By solving these problems anyhow, you will not have solved the basic

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Prabhavati", 23-11-1933

[2] Younger brother of Jayaprakash Narayan

problem. But I will not dwell further on this matter. I don't wish to discourage Jayaprakash. We should hope that, since his motive is pure, everything will be all right.

You have not yet gone and seen Mother. You should do so now. Since your visit to me has been delayed so long, I shall now be far away. If you do not wish to get arrested there, you may come and see me during my Andhra tour, and then from Wardha you may go wherever you like. I think it would be best to go to Bihar. If you decide to go to Bihar, it is not very necessary for you to come and see me. If, however, you are very keen to come, by all means do come. I leave it entirely to your own wish. I shall be in Madras on 20, 21 and 22. I will start from here on the 14th. From the 16th to the 19th, I shall be around Bezwada. I shall be back in Andhra from 23rd to 31st, and the headquarters will be at Bezwada. You may now decide as you like.

Vidya felt bored and has come here. She has brought Kanta with her. I have not decided yet whether to let Vidya go to Multan or ask her to return to Wardha.

Om has been with me. I continue the same diet. The quantity of milk varies from three pounds to one pound. The cold which I had has gone. The weight was 108 pounds when I was weighed in Jabalpur. I have not been weighed after that. You need not worry about me at all. God will keep me in whatever condition. He wishes and get work done through me as He wills.

Could you see Rajendrababu ? Did you see Father ? How is he ?

I hear from Ba from time to time. Mani is still with her. Sushila, Pyarelal's sister, is here. Her mother also is here. I have not met her yet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 3436

302. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

DELHI,
December 12, 1933

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

I have your letter. Your debt has thrown a new light on the situation and I have tried to explain to you your duty. Borrowing from another source does not solve the main problem. How will you repay the loan? What has been arranged about your expenses? I am

hoping that it will not be difficult to arrange for Rs. 50 to be paid to Rajeshwar[1] every month. I shall have a talk about it and let you know more definitely.

I hope you are now better. Father too will be well. I have written in detail to Prabhavati. So I stop here. Also I do not have the time for more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Jayaprakash Narayan Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

303. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

DELHI,

December 13, 1933

CHI. KANTI[2] ,

I hear that your teeth have become infected. But generally I feel satisfied with the reports I hear about you. I assume that you will get this letter. I often think of you. Somanji wrote to me about you and your companions and said that you had read and studied well. My tour is a difficult one, but it is progressing satisfactory. People come to the meetings in large numbers.

I am sure you know that Ramibehn's Kusum is ill. Radha is ill again. So far I have been able to bear the strain of the tour.

Blessings to all from

BAPU

From Gujarati : C. W. 7284. Courtesy : Kanti Gandhi

[1] Rajeshwar Narayan, addressee's brother

[2] Son of Harilal Gandhi

304. DISCUSSION WITH SANATANISTS

DELHI,

December 13, 1933

I claim to be a sanatanist as I consider my conduct to be in consonance with the spirit of the scriptures.[1] You may, if you like, reject my claim. I have studied the Shastras to the best of my ability and have arrived at the conclusion that untouchability is repugnant to the spirit of Hinduism.

They, however, contended that no one could be called sanatanist who did not believe in untouchability, *shraddha*, idol-worship and other outward observances. Gandhiji retorted that the only true test of sanatan dharma was the touchstone of truth. He added that the outward observance was nothing if a man lived a crooked life. What did outward form avail to a man who was a drunkard, rake and gambler ?

When he was told that the attempt to have temples opened to Harijans was bound to lead to bloodshed, he said that was practically impossible, as there was no compulsion contemplated by anybody. No temple was to be opened where the overwhelming opinion of temple-goers was not in favour of such opening.

Harijan, 22-12-1933

305. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, ALIPUR

December 13, 1933

I would ask you to believe me when I say that there is no political motive behind my Harijan work. The political consequences of the removal of untouchability have no attraction for me. Indeed, I believe that, if we approached this question with a political motive, we should fail to serve the Harijans and we should damage Hinduism. That real removal of untouchability will have political consequences is true enough. A duty religiously performed carries with it many other important consequences. 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and everything else will be added unto you', is to my mind a scientific truth.

I must remind you of the pledge given last year in your name.

[1] The sanatanists had contended that Gandhiji had no right to call himself a sanatanist.

You will remember that a meeting of representatives of Hinduism was held in Bombay in September last year, Pandit Malaviyaji being in the chair. Among other things they resolved that untouchability, being a blot on the Hindu religion, had to be removed and that Harijans were entitled to the same public utilities, and in the same manner, as caste Hindus. There was in that Resolution a special reference to Hindu temples, and legislation was contemplated if it was found to be necessary for attaining the end. It is, therefore, the bounden duty of every caste Hindu to fulfil the pledge by throwing open to the Harijans temples, well and other institutions precisely on the same terms as they are open to caste Hindus.

The Hindustan Times, 14-12-1933

306. DISCUSSION AT SERVANTS OF UNTOUCHABLES SOCIETY MEETING[1]

DELHI,
December 13, 1933

Regarding the utilization of collections made during the tour Mahatma Gandhi said that 75 percent of these collections would be spent in the locality concerned so far as possible provided a suitable scheme was prepared and approved by the Central Board. The Provincial Boards should, however, not neglect their ordinary collections in the hope of getting money out of his collections. He stressed :

You dare not utilize any part of these collections for propaganda or office administration. They can be utilized to the single pie for constructive work alone. I am not touring India to finance your offices or to help your propaganda but to raise money enough for constructive work alone. You should collect money separately to meet the expenses of your office administration. If you do work out of the funds that I raise, the money paid by the public would be returned to them hundredfold. It should, therefore, be zealously guarded and cautiously spent.

Asked as to what opinion he could express about the work done so far, Mahatma Gandhi replied :

You cannot get any compliments if you want to get them. But I can say that you could have done the work much better and as for the future I can only say that you should do better than in the past.

[1] Gandhiji had addressed the Central Board of the Society.

Regarding the question of democratization of the constitution of the Society, Mahatma Gandhi said that the present constitution should be worked democratically rather than bringing in a constitution demorcratic in form but autocratic in spirit.

His Holiness Garmuria Gosain of Assam and Mr. D. N. Sharma explained that ex-tea-garden coolies belonged to various provincess of India and were mostly Harijans. Their population in Assam was 10,50,000 out of whom only 5,000 were literate. They were commonly addicted to liquor or other such vices. They had been economically exploited by Kabulis and Marwaris.

Mahatma Gandhi said that he knew about this deplorable state.

It is a social problem but to me it seems that the harvest is ready but the labourers are few. We require workers to solve this question. It cannot be solved by law. It requires work in the midst of these people from day to day without expectation of immediate result. It would be better to prepare statistics of these men by provinces so that a way might be found out to invite workers from other provinces to go there and work. Money alone will not give the kind of workers required. If I succeed in reaching Assam I will study the conditions and try to raise some local workers. If I fail in this, I would have no doubt that Assam is the most backward of all provinces. The question is, however, not only of untouchability but of a different type, but if Assam produces the proper type of workers there will be no difficulty in getting funds enough for carrying on that work.

The Hindustan Times, 16-12-1933

307. SPEECH AT STUDENTS ' MEETING, DELHI[1]

December 13, 1933

It is no exaggeration to say that our relations were as intimate as between blood-brothers.[2] His burning patriotism, his great sacrifice and his unsurpassable love for his children, whom also he gave to the service of the motherland, ought to be as patent to you as they were to me. I had the good fortune to be in the closest touch with him ever since I first knew him up to the moment of his death; and I could see that every moment of his life his thoughts were given to the nation he served so singularly. To him swaraj was no distant dream; it was his very life-breath. His hankering after freedom grew in intensity from day to day. It is, therefore, in the fitness of things that you should

[1] The meeting was held in the Hindu College.

[2] Gandhiji had unveiled a portrait of Motilal Nehru.

have before your eyes the portrait of such a great patriot, so that you may be constantly reminded of his sterling qualities and try to assimilate them in your own lives. No lip homage paid to a patriot you admire will be of any use to you, if you do not mean to imitate the virtues that made him great. Your keeping his portrait before you must be significant of your resolve to follow in his footsteps. Remember, too, that he was above all distinctions of high and low. He never gave a place to untouchability in his long and varied life. He had the heart of a prince. He knew how to earn as well as to give away.

He then asked the students to give a more tangible proof than money of their love for the Harijans by clearing the Augean stables, in other words, the Harijan *bastis* of Delhi. He had seen the terrible contrast between the palaces of New Delhi, where money had been poured out like water, and the veritable hells in which the Harijans were forced to live; and he spoke with an agony too deep for words.

I saw three *bastis* out of four, one of them being the worst of all. One cannot imagine, unless one has been with one' own eyes, that there can be such a place for human habitation. I have no words to describe the filth and ugliness I saw there. It is enough to give one a feeling of nausea. You should gird up your loins and clean these plague-spots. I was happy to learn that there are among you students who have a desire to serve the Harijans by physical labour also. When you have removed the filth from the *bastis*, you will discover many other ways of most useful service.

Harijan, 22-12-1933

308. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

DELHI

Wednesday, December 13, 1933

I have just read Sir Mohammed Iqbal's answer[1] to Shri Jawaharlal Nehru's indictment[2] of the communal spirit whether among Muslims of Hindus in so far as they may be represented by their sectarian organizations. Reluctant though I am to intervene in the controversy, I may not leave unchallenged the statements made by Sir. Mohammed Iqbal ragarding me.

[1] *Vide* Appendix " Mohammed Iqbal's Statement", 6-12-1933

[2] For extracts from Jawaharlal Nehru's statement, *vide* Appendix III.

My position in London[1] was clear. I was helpless for effective action on communal matters without Dr. Ansari. I was bound by the Congress mandate and before I could recommend any modification I should need Dr. Ansari's guidance. Having forfeited, for the time being, Maulana Shaukat Ali's confidence, I told Muslim friends that Dr. Ansari held 'my conscience on Muslim matters in his pocket' and that therefore they should co-operate with me in securing his presence at the Conference. To this they would not agree, unless I would first accept their demands. My effort having failed, I tried every other resource at my disposal to achieve real unity and hopelessly failed.

The offer to act as camp-followers to the Congress seemed then, as it has proved since, to be a mockery. Behind the talks, there was an oppressive sense of unreality. What Sir Mohammed Iqbal calls two conditions attached to my personal acceptance of Muslim demands, were no conditions but the necessary consequence of my acceptance. Political unity was desired for a political end which for me, as for any Indian be he Hindu, Muslim, Christian or any other, could only be complete national independence in the fullest sense of the term. Muslim demands were presented for arriving at common action. Muslim friends in London were playing other minorities against the vital national interest. If they accepted me as their ally, as I offered to be in uttermost sincerity, my alliance could only be for combating every force that was inimical to India's freedom. It was, therefore, necessary to fight the spirit of separateness, no matter from what source it arose.

No Muslim had defended separate electorates as a thing good in itself. Even in their case, Muslim friends had admitted it as a necessary evil to be tolerated for a temporary period. The doctrine, therefore, did not admit of indefinite extension. The demand put forth on behalf of the so-called untouchables was clearly anti-national. But if it was consistent with national interest or was necessary for the protection of the Harijan interest, my resistance was truly inhuman as Sir Mohammed Iqbal characterizes it. But in that case, Muslim friends should not even have offered to be neutral if I accepted their demands. But I hold that my resistance was not only not 'inhuman' but it was conceived in the best interests of the Harijans.

I claim to be a Harijan by choice. I do not yield to the tallest

[1] At the Round Table Conference in 1931

Harijan in the desire to conserve the Harijan interest. Evidently Sir Mohammed Iqbal has had no time to follow what I have done or am doing in this behalf. Had he even cursorily followed my doings, he would not have allowed himself to say, as he has said, that "Mr. Gandhi has made it a mission of his life to prevent the fusion of the untouchables with the other communities and to retain them in the fold of Hinduism without any real fusion between them and even the caste Hindus." He should know that the rooting out of untouchability is the aim of my life which I have persued without interruption for the past fifty years and that I have claimed and am fighting for the same rights without reservation for the Harijans that the caste Hindus have in matters religious, social and political.

My work about Harijans is purely religious. It has no political motive behind it. It is essentially humanitarian in the highest sense of the term. It is a movement of internal reform in Hinduism. It is one of expiation and reparation by caste Hindus for inhumanities heaped upon the outcastes of Hindu society. My Hinduism, like my nationalism, is not exclusive or inconsistent with the interest of any portion of humanity. I would refuse to call that freedom which may involve the sacrifice of Muslim or any other interest that is not hostile to the freedom of India. I approached every question in London in that spirit.

My belief in the necessity of communal unity is just as firm as ever before. What could I do now, it may be asked. My position is the same now as before. I would accept any solution that may commend itself to the Muslims as a whole and that is not in conflict with any other national interest. Naturally, I endorse the suggestion made by Shri Jawaharlal Nehru. Nothing can be fairer. As a nationalist I claim to represent all communities equally, the largest as well as the smallest.

The Hindustan Times, 14-12-1933

309. SPEECH AT HARIJANS' MEETING, DELHI[1]

December 14, 1933

It is not to keep you segregated that the schools are being opened and wells are being dug for you. All this is being done because I cannot bear to see you get no water at all. How can I tolerate that the Harijans get water from the same trough from which dogs and cattle drink water ? You belong to the cities and perhaps get water from the taps. But in villages, the caste Hindus are so arrogant that they do not permit the Harijans to go near the wells at all. Even when they give them water, they do so from a distance and with words of abuse. You and I ought not to tolerate such a thing. Wells are being dug for Harijans not to keep them as untouchables, but in order that they may at least get clean water. And these wells are not exclusively for the Harijans. Others too can draw water from them. But the Harijans have a right to use them. They oughts not to have to take water from a trough. The fact is, we have not been able to dig as many wells for them as are needed. And you also see that many caste Hindus are voluntarily opening their wells for the use of Harijans. The same is true about schools. Our efforts to get Harijans admitted to the general schools are continuing. But till such time as we can get Harijans admitted into all general schools, the question is whether we should open separate schools for them or let their children remain without education. That is why we are opening schools for them. Other children also are welcome to join these schools. But the Harijans at any rate have the fullest right to join them.

By calling you Harijans, we have given you a sweet name in place of an offensive one. Many Harijans have accepted it. It is a better name than the offensive word "untouchable". And the name was suggested by a Harijan. It at least avoids the discourtesy involved in addressing somebody by an offensive name. When untouchability has disappeared, either all Hindus would call themselves 'Harijans' or the Harijans would be completely absorbed in the Hindu society. The third alternative is that the Hindu community itself would be wiped out. But it is to avert this danger that a great effort is being made

[1] The address presented by the Harijans of Shraddhananda Nagari suggested that separate wells, temples and schools should not be opened for Harijans as this would mean their separation from the Hindu fold.

today. That is the work being carried on by the Harijan Sevak Sangh for the eradication of untouchability.

I am happy that I have come to the Shraddhananda Colony. Is there any Hindu who is unfamiliar with the name of the late Shraddhanandaji ? There can hardly be anyone who feels the love and kindness for Harijans which Shraddhanandaji did. He was extremely unhappy that the Hindus in their arrogance had created a class of untouchables. The Hindu community will have to wash away that sin or perish. You should help in washing off that sin. Take this message to other Harijans, too. Contribute your mite to this *yajna* of self-purification which is being carried on. Maintain both outer and inner purity. Give up eating carrion and beef. These three things you must definitely do. The fourth thing is that you must give up liquor. Give it up even if other Hindus drink. You have been degraded by others and you have to rise by your own efforts. That is why I appeal to you to give up liquor. Please do this much and persuade other Harijans also to do it. You have presented a purse to me. But I do not want a single pie from the Harijans. It is we who have to give to you. We owe you a debt. However, I have accepted the purse since you have given it. The sum would be returned to you many times over. It is, however, not necessary for you to give anything.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 24-12-1933

310. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, DELHI

December 14, 1933

In the eyes of God who is the Creator of all, His creatures are all equal. Had He made any distinctions of high and low between man and man, they would have been visible as are the distinctions between, say, an elephant and an ant. But he has endowed all human beings impartially with the same shape and the same natural wants. If you consider Harijans untouchables because they perform sanitary service, what mother has not performed such service for her children ? Does she then become an untouchable on that score ? As she can become pure after a wash, sweepers also can come under the same rule.[1] It is the height of in- justice to consider the Harijans, who are the most

[1] These two sentences are from *The Hindustan Times*, 15-12-1933.

useful servants of society, as untouchables and outcastes. I have undertaken this tour to awaken the minds of Hindu sisters to a sense of this sin. It can never be an act of merit to look down upon any human being as inferior to us. We are all worshippers of one God, whom we worship under different names. We must , therefore, realize our essential unity and give up untouchability as well as the spirit of superiority and inferiority between human beings.

Harijan, 22-12-1933

311. WHAT I SAW IN ANANTPUR

Anantpur is a little village in Saugor District, C. P. (Hindi), containing 177 houses with a population, therefore, roughly of 885. It is 35 miles from the nearest railway station. It has no Post or Telegraph Office. There is a weekly service from the nearest Post Office, Relly, 12 miles from Anantpur. It is a typically poor village of poor India. The villagers are occupied not more than four months in the year. There was hardly any supplementary occupation for the villagers as a whole before an event that happened four years ago.

It was in 1929 that a young man, with a single-minded zeal rarely surpassed, chose Anantpur for his experiment, after a year's travelling in search of such a village. He is khaddar mad. He believes in the message of khaddar even as much as perhaps I do. I doubt if he would not replace 'perhaps' by 'if not more than'. I would submit to his correction, if he made it. His faith in himself would put to shame the tallest among us. He believes that the only permanent cure for the enforced idleness of the peasantry of India and their consequent chronic poverty is the universal adoption of the spinning-wheel. His name is Jethalal Govindjee. He does not know English. He is no Gujarati scholar. Himself a town-bred man, by dogged pertinacity he has inured himself to the hardships of village life and lives like, and in the midst of, villagers. He has three companions with him. He is a thorough believer in one thing at a time and, therefore, will not pursue other social service, no matter how tempting it may be. If the spinning-wheel is well-established in every cottage, he thinks that all the other problems that puzzle and drag down villagers will solve themselves. He will say : 'I shan't preach temperance or thrift to the villager, for no drunkard will take to the wheel if he will not give up his drink, and to preach thrift to a pauper is a mockery. It will be time

to preach it, when I have put a few coppers in his pocket. Since I believe that every revolution of the wheel will mean a revolution in his daily life, I am going to be patient with his vices and many drawbacks. And I have faith that, if I am a clean man, my cleanness cannot but touch both the inside and the outside of the villager.' With varying fortunes, but with an unvarying faith, he and his companions have plodded for the past four years. Their formula is Self-dependence writ large. Khadi must support itself. The way to make it do so is for the villagers to spin, and weave too if possible, for their own use. They may sell only the surplus, as they do with the grain they grow. No cloth can be cheaper than that spun and woven in one's home, even as no bread can be cheaper than home-baked from grain grown in one's own field and ground in one's own home. The business of these servants of the villagers is merely to instruct and help. They visit every cottage and offer to teach them ginning, spinning, carding, weaving and dyeing. They improve their wheels and manufacture new ones for sale only from the material available in the village. This has given extra work to the village carpenter and the village blacksmith. Every item is well thought out. They have an almost complete record of the condition of every cottage and its dwellers. They have made a fairly accurate study of the villagers' wants and woes, customs and manners, and have published their report in Hindi. Their workshop is a busy hive. Work is being done in a neat and methodical manner. A common log-book is kept containing a day-to-day summary of the work done by each worker. I have mentioned only four foundation workers. Needless to say they have raised workers in seventeen villages they are serving within a five-mile radius of Anantpur.

A word as to the condition of the cottages I saw. I visited over six, including one belonging to a Harijan. I may not omit to mention that the Harijans have been found to be the readiest to take to the message.

The cottages I saw were low roofed, with walls made of mud. There was no ventilation in them worth mentioning, no boxes, hardly any metal pots. The inmates were in rags, except where they had made khaddar for themselves. The only belonging I saw consisted generally of empty mud granaries to contain grain for the year. One room served as kitchen, dwelling and the rest. Their beds were straw covered with rags, again except where they had woven khaddar for themselves. Their food consists of *jawar* chapatis and a pulse, with or without oil. Of milk and ghee they hardly ever have anything. The Chamar whose

cottage I saw was an exception. He sported two cows. Whether he or his children ever get a drop of milk for themselves is another story. The villagers were poorly fed and worse clothed. Some children go stark naked from year's end to year's end. They warm themselves in the sun by day and before a wretched fire at night. There are families in Anantpur who, I am told, started this khaddar industry literally with an investment of one pice for cotton. This was doubled the next day by the sale of yarn spun from one pice worth of cotton and thus by progressive realization they are able now to have their own clothes.

I translate the following from the leaflet prepared for the occasion of my visit :

The following is the cost of the complete outfit :

Ginning machine	Rs.	0-7-0
Carding bow with gut and striker	’’	0-9-6
Spinning-wheel with spindle	’’	0-6-6
Winding frame	’’	0-1-0
Handloom for 32 inches width with all accessories	’’	3-0-0
Total		4-8-0

We serve seventeen villages lying within a five-mile radius, containing 1,100 cottages with a population of 5,500 in round numbers. As a result of our labours, eighty per cent of the population have learnt spinning, sixty percent have learnt carding.

Over hundred persons have learnt weaving.

The average strength of yarn has now reached fifty-six, the average count ten.

Their average working days are hundred and twenty during the year, the balance of the time lying quite idle. Of the idle hours, now an individual gives on an average five hundred hours during the year to khaddar work. Our ideal is to reach 1,600 hours per year.

The progress of our work now depends upon our ability to raise more workers. We have today three principal workers, three assistants, five sub-assistants, five helpers and four candidates.

Our average monthly expense is Rs. 325 found by the All India Spinners’ Association.

I bring this great experiment to the notice of the public to show not only what it means to Harijans but also to all villagers. The aim of

the experiment is not exclusively Harijan service, it is service of the under-fed and the under-clothed, exclusively through the spinning-wheel. I have known nothing simpler, cheaper and yet more effective than this experiment of village uplift through khaddar. The progress seems to be undoubtedly slow just now, but I expect that it will be found to be the quickest in the end.

Harijan, 15-12-1933

312. THINGS TO REMEMBER

During the past month of touring there has been a great deal of waste of time, a great deal of anxiety to the organizers and a great and unnecessary strain on my very limited physical resources, owing to the mad rush made towards the passing car. I cannot recall occasions when people near me have not trodden on my naked toes or scratched my legs. God has saved me from serious injury hitherto. But the crowds can take no credit for the immunity. Their affection is mad. And madness can do nobody any good. The thing can be easily managed if the volunteers will act in a business-like manner and will not themselves, like crowds, go mad as they often do. People cannot be instructed on anything all of a sudden. Leaflets containing detailed instructions should, therefore, be issued to the public and read and explained to them by volunteers as they come to the venue of meetings. The very best arrangement of the kind was made at Harda. Although the party was taken through a crowded and decorated bazaar, it took no more than ten minutes to pass through. In other places the same distance has often taken more than half an hour. Success at Harda was due not merely to previous preparations, but also to volunteers with one continuous rope held by them being posted at regular intervals, thus making it impossible for anyone to break through the lines. Let me now without further comment tabulate the instructions which I suggest for general adoption.

(1) Leaflets containing detailed instructions should be issued to the villagers in simple language easily to be understood by them. These should be read to the parties as they stream in from villages.

(2) Crowds that gather at stations awaiting my arrival should stand in rows upon rows without causing inconvenience to the passengers and without moving from their places when the train steams in.

(3) A few minutes before the arrival time, volunteers should be posted in front of the crowd with a continuous rope, held waist-high in their hands in order to avoid the people behind unconsciously moving towards me and the train.

(4) Volunteers should on no account fall prostrate before me.

(5) Volunteers should never lead or take part in the various cries. Apart from its interfering with efficient service, their leading or participating in them robs the cries of spontaneity.

(6) Volunteers should not shout their instructions to the public, but should pronounce them with deliberation and gentleness. Only one volunteer detailed for the purpose should pronounce them.

(7) The public should be requested not to crowd round the cars.

(8) Volunteers should not board my or any other car, except when asked to do so by a responsible member of the Reception Committee.

(9) The public should not gather at the stations which I may be passing through between 8 p. m. and 6 a. m., and in no case should they shout the usual cries at night. Such shouting during night betrays want of consideration for the passengers and the party whom they profess to respect.

(10) Those who gather at stations whether by day or night would do well to remember that I am not conducting a tour for receiving addresses. It is intended to be wholly a call for self purification, an invitation to the so-called high class Hindus to repent of the wrong done by them to Harijans and for making collections on behalf of the cause. Therefore, those who gather at the stations are naturally expected to bring or collective donations for Harijan service.

Harijan, 15-12-1933

313. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

Unrevised *December 15, 1933*

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I am writing this in a moving train in the early morning. Mira is just now off writing regular mail letters. She cannot combine nursing, cooking, bottle-washing, proof-reading for *Harijan* and European and American correspondence, without breaking to pieces.

Your letters are valuable.

What you say about Bhulabhai Desai's work does not surprise. I had expected nothing less.

As to the imaginary interview in Rome, of course, I never saw the reaffirmation by the Rome pressman.[1] I was in prison. But if I see the first statement and the reaffirmation, I would be able to throw light on it. That those who won't believe will receive no help is only too true. But that does not matter. I must satisfy honest doubters. The quickest way for you is for yourself or some friend to secure the *Times* file and copy the two statements and send them on to me before 3rd August next[2]. Long enough notice for you!

It will be a good thing if your effort results in Bose being allowed to go to England. Why he is kept out [of] London I cannot understand.

The usual cuttings accompany this. The orthodox opposition to the reform is slowly getting out of the bewilderment in which the phenomenal mass attendances at the meetings found it. Though they are very few so far as I can judge they have money to sustain them. They are therefore trying to create disturbances at meetings. But I hope to be able to cope with the opposition.

The political situation remains much the same as before. The official mind is revealed in the speech of the Commissioner of Burdwan.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 1476

314. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

December 15, 1933

MY DEAR HORACE,

Agatha has sent me your letter to her about that imaginary interview in Rome. It is wonderful how journalim has become degraded. Thank God the bulk of mankind remains unaffected even by the most widely read newspapers. But this reflection in no way absolves me

[1] Signor Gayda; *vide* " Cable to Croft", 17-12-1931 also "Letter to Sir Samuel Hoare", 6-3-1934.

[2] The date on which Gandhiji's term of imprisonment would have expired; *vide*, "Statement to the Press",14-9-1933

from having to deal with the particular allegation. If Agatha can trace the two statements of the Rome journalist, I can deal with the matter at once.

I hope both you and Olive[1] are keeping well.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 1422

315. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

December 15, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

I was desappointed not to see you.[2] I wrote in answer to your fear that I would *not*[3] drive you out. You must compose yourself and live and think and speak naturally. If you love me, you cannot fear me.

I have no blood-pressure. Do write.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

316. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

December 15, 1933

MY DEAR CHILD,

I had your touching letter. Well, you have to rejoice in your suffering both mental and physical. You must now do what satisfies your own inner voice. And the end will be all right. Of course Maria[4] will be cut up. But we are all in God's hands, not a blade moves but by His command. If we had all our own ways, the world will go to pieces. It is perhaps as well that our wishes are often frustrated. It is the test of our loyalty to God that we believe in Him even when He refuses to fulfil our wishes. I want you therefore to enjoy perfect

[1] Addressee's wife
[2] *Vide* "letter to Margarete Spiegel", 7/9-12-1933.
[3] This is underlined in the source.
[4] Anne Marie Petersen

peace even while things seem to you to be all going wrong.

My prayer, my thoughts and my love are with you. For the rest weekly *Harijan* is my weekly letter to you as to many friends and companions.

BAPU

From a photostat No. 123. Courtesy : National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child,* p. 102

317. LETTER TO J. S. HOYLAND

December 15, 1933

MY DEAR HOYLAND,

You asked me some time ago,whether you could publish those hymns. Of course you can, provided that you give me no credit for the composition. You may say in the introduction that I had prepared a rough translation for the use of English friends but principally for Mira and that you had worked upon the translation.[1]

I receive your postcards lovingly signed by so many friends. I know that my work finds a place in your silent prayer meetings.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a photostat : C.W. 4510. Courtesy : Woodbrooke College, Birmingham, and Jessie Hoyland

318. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI M. THAKKAR

WARDHA,
December 15, 1933

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

Do not worry about the children. Nor about Madhavji.

I have had a discussion about the children. If Madhavji wants to do what seems to him his dharma, don't stand in his way. If you wish to come and see me you may come wherever I am.

Blessings to all sisters from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6824

[1] *Vide* 1st footnote of " Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 12-4-1933

319. DISCUSSION WITH A SANATANIST[1]

[Before *December 16, 1933*]

You should realize that there are *shastris* who claim to be sanatanists and who support the reformers' contention. How am I to reject their testimony as false? They fortify me in my opinion that untouchability has no sanction in the shastras. I do believe in the Vedas, the Upanishads, the *Smritis* and the Puranas. But to me the *Gita* is the key to a knowledge of the Shastras. It enunciates the principles on which all conduct must be based. It sums up the whole of the Shastras and, therefore, absolves laymen from having to explore the other books. But I go a step further. The Vedas are not the four books known as such. They contain only fragments of the originals. Eternal truth cannot be buried in or confined to printed books. The Vedas are, therefore, indefinable and unwritten. They reside in one's heart. And our Shastras tell us what discipline and study are necessary for opening out the heart for receiving the truth. One's experience, therefore, must be the final guide. The written word undoubtedly helps, but even that has to be interpreted and, when there are conflicting interpretations, the seeker is the final arbiter. I had to make my choice. Years ago I made it and came to the conclusion that the Shastras did not countenance untouchability as we practise it today.

Harijan, 22-12-1933

320. SPEECH AT HARIJAN WORKERS' MEETING

VIJAYAWADA,
December 16, 1933

It gave him great pleasure, [Gandhiji] said, to have met them all and witnessed the evidences of their literary powers. He had always known, he said, that the people of Andhradesha were good at composing poems and rendering them sweetly and as such he could not help feeling that the recitations witnessed that evening were to some extent useless. Poetry and art should be the vehicle of truth and never be utilized for flattery. For, such a use of poetry would not only make for degeneration of the art but would also be a violation of truth. Now that they were all engaged in a movement for the purification of Hinduism, he expected everyone so engaged to tread the path of

[1] Who met Gandhiji on the way to Vijayawada, formerly known as Bezwada. Gandhiji reached there on December 16.

truth. He had great expectations of Andhradesh and he knew she could rise equal to them.[1]

Be you caste Hindu or Harijan, let what contribution you are making to the Harijan cause be absolutely unalloyed. There can be no room for selfishness, hypocrisy, untruth and violence in such a movement. As a religious movement it ought to touch the hearts of Harijans and *savarnas* alike. For hundreds of years considerations of high and low have gone deep into our hearts. Religious weapons alone kill untouchability.

An array of Hindu saints and sages have taught us that penance was the only way to protect and purify religion. Needless to say that there can be place for selfishness and egoism in a penance. I hope and pray that those engaged in Harijan service will be guided by the purest of motives.[2]

He appealed to all those *savarnas* and *avarnas* who were engaged in this work to realize the paramount importance of self-purification and to look upon this work as a *shuddhiyajna*.[3]

Mr. Shambu Sastri asked if Gandhiji accepted the authority of the Vedas.

Most certainly.

You respect them and abide by them?

Certainly.

The next question was whether he would accept the position that Harijans if admitted to temples should also abide by the injunctions of Shastras by which temples were regulated.

All Shastric rules that apply to *savarnas* when observed by Harijans must enable them to get entry into temples.[4]

All my past and present actions have been in accordance with religion as I have understood it. I have no doubt that the present endeavour for the removal of untouchability has Vedic authority behind it. I must, however, admit that there are two schools of thought on this question. Both claim to be sanatanists and base their opinions on the Hindu scriptures.

I hold that those who are conducting this drive against untouchability as a religious movement must treat their opponents

[1] What follows is from *The Bombay Chronicle.*

[2] What follows is from *The Hindu*.

[3] Gandhiji then invited questions from those present.

[4] What follows is from *The Bombay Chronicle.*

with tolerance give them always a dispassionate and patient hearing and in no case show any anger in word or deed. We are out to convert them. Let us seek their help and co-operation too. I implicitly believe that they will one day join us if only we worked with scrupulous care in a religious spirit. Our hearts should be full of love for them and if we are pure we are sure to win their hearts.

The Hindu, 17-12-1933, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 20-12-1933

321. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, VIJAYAWADA

December 16, 1933

After apologizing for his inability to make himself heard by them all, Gandhiji acknowledged with thanks the several addresses presented to him and their monetary accompaniments.

But would it not have been better if all the purses had been pooled into one ? We could have saved several precious minutes thereby but it is our misfortune that it was not done. People wish to present addresses and purses each in his own name or in the name of his village,although all of us belong to the same country and are in the same condition.

Proceeding, Gandhiji stated that so far Bezwada had contributed in cash about Rs. 3,982-8-0 and he was sure that before he left them, the figure would be rounded off into Rs. 5,000. This he knew would not be a great thing for the town to do. In this connection he could not help feeling the absence of Messrs A. Kaleswara Rao and Pattabhi Sitaramayya. But, they must pursue their path of duty and not drop Harijan work which had now become widespread and was an important item of work. Unless they destroyed the evil of untouchability, Hinduism, he feared, would die out. It was not dharma to consider a fellowman an "untouchable". Harijans must have all rights that *Savarnas* enjoyed. They had committed a great sin by having kept Harijans out of their rights all these ages. *savarnas* must, therefore, he said expiate for the sin by undergoing a *prayashchitta.* Wherever he had gone on this tour he had witnessed huge concourses of people at similar meetings and he took it as a mark of their approval of the work he was carrying on. That people contributed their mite also pleased him. To the Harijans he would appeal for support not in monetary shape but in co-operating in this *shuddhiyajna* by observing external and internal purity. Internal purity could be attained by thinking of God and Ramanama and external purity through bath and other means of clean living. He would appeal to such of the Harijans as were addicted to drink, and eating carrion and cow-flesh, to give up these. No one who was addicted to

these could be considered to be a Hindu and he could not be admitted into temples. Drinking was a heinous sin and a man under its influence could not distinguish between mother and wife.

Before concluding, he referred to the address presented on behalf of the Andhra Hindi Pracharakas' Association and said that he was immensely gratified to see the work carried on in Dakshina Bharat for promoting Hindi. He was also glad to note that in this matter Andhra led the rest of South India. He appealed to them all to help in the propagation of Hindi as it was an effective means of serving their country and their nation.

The Hindu, 17-12-1933

322. SPEECH AT MUDUNURU

December 17, 1933

Addressing the gathering, Gandhiji expressed his regret at not being able to stay in their midst longer than a few minutes or go into the temples for want of time and also the difficulty of getting out of and into the car at every place. He wished to save as much time as posssible as he had to cover a number of villages. If, therefore, he did not enter the temples, let them not go under the impression that he did not wish to enter the shrines of God. He was sure that the work he was doing was his work. he wished to open as many of the temples in this country as possible to Harijans. He hoped that Harijans would offer worship at the temples daily along with their other Hindu bretheren observing all the regulations that applied to *savarnas* and all the rules of cleanliness. By so doing and by giving up (where they were addicted to the habits) drink and carrion or beef-eating Harijans would be promoting real purification to Hinduism.[1]

The Hindu, 18-12-1933

[1] Gandhiji then declared open to Harijans two temples.

323. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU" [1]

SIDDHANTHAM,
December 17, 1933

May I ask a few questions on some points that strike me as worthy of being brought to your notice ?

[GANDHIJI :] Most certainly, I am ready. Go ahead.

In a recent meeting which he addressed in Madras Mr. M. K. Acharya has stated that 95 per cent of the Harijan do not want ' the Gandhian creed'. What is your view on the matter ?

I do not know what 'the Gandhian creed' is. If I do not know it, how do the Harijans know it or Mr. Acharya himself? I do not claim anything special to me. There is no such thing as 'Gandhian creed' so far as I know. I know only this. I am engaged in giving Harijans clean water. I am engaged in giving them facilities for education. I am engaged in finding accommodation for them in public caravanserais where they cannot get it. I am engaged in weaning them from drink and carrion. Do they not like all these? I am engaged in teaching them the elementary rules of hygiene. Do they not want it ? I am engaged in telling them what the fundamentals of Hinduism are and in having public temples thrown open to them. Mark the distinction. They may not want to enter these temples and if somebody said that they do not want to, I will not be able to prove conclusively to the contrary, though the *prima facie* evidence that I have is all in my favour. Whenever they find temples are thrown open to them, they are simply delirious with joy, as I found them to be today when I opened two temples[2] and entered them with them. I do not care whether they want to go to the temples or no. I simply feel that *savarnas* should do their duty. There is nothing 'Gandhian' about it. Every Hindu who believes that untouchability must go must understand this work.

It was observed by another person that Gandhiji being a believer in varnashrama, which was but a graded system of untouchability, he was not qualified to tackle this problem. What do you think of this view ?

For me varnashrama does not mean a graded system of untouchability. I have explained what I mean by varnadharma. It does

[1] Its special correspondent met Gandhiji in the afternoon.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

not mean to me grades at all. It is not a vertical division. It is a horizontal one. In my view, all varnas stand absolutely on the same plane, i.e., of equality. Hence there can be no question of untouchability. Varnadharma is a mighty economic law which, if we subscribe to it, would save us from the catastrophe that is in store for the world. I have sufficient warrant in Hindu scriptures for saying that Brahmins and scavengers are absolutely on a par in the eyes of God.

It has been suggested in some quarters that the Harijan movement is a form of civil resistance propaganda and that by this tour you are promoting civil resistance. What is your opinion on this suggestion ?

Then I am between two crossfires. Congressmen accuse me of having damaged the cause of civil disobedience by taking up this whirlwind campaign. Those who suspect me of ulterior motives accuse me of strengthening civil disobedience. I am unmoved by these charges or insinuations, and can only re-declare that I have absolutely no ulterior motive. It is a peremptory religious call which I am obeying. The tens of thousands who attend the meetings do not even hear the expression 'civil resistance' from my lips. This is purely a religious revival. This does not mean that I have changed my views on civil resistance. The very science of civil resistance demands absolute honesty. If I use this campaign for furthering civil resistance, I should be guilty of dishonesty. Civil disobedience does not need such dubious aids.

What do you think of the progress of Harijan uplift work in the provinces you have toured so far ?

My impressions are altogether happy and, if they are continued in the other provinces, I would have no hesitation in saying that untouchability is fast dying out. On no other basis can I account for the tens of thousands of people who flock to the meetings and give me their coppers, well knowing what these are to be used for.

The Hindu, 18-12-1933

324. SPEECH AT MASULIPATAM

December 17, 1933

Replying to the addresses and acknowledging the purses and other presents, Gandhiji said that on reaching Masulipatam his first thought was of Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya. He was sure the Doctor's spirit was pervading at the meeting though he

was not physically present in their midst. He thanked the District and Taluk Boards and the people of the district for the work they were doing on behalf of the Harijans. But he felt that so long as there was even a single temple which admitted *savarnas* but remained closed to Harijans, which benefited the former but did not equally benefit the latter, there would be no rest for him nor should there be any for them. If distinction of high and low, touchable and untouchable continued amongst Hindus, he was sure Hinduism would slowly die out.[1]

We shall dig our own grave if we do not purge ourselves of this curse of untouchability, we shall have to pay with bitter tears if we in our pride miss the God-given opportunity today. We should have no peace till this monster is buried and those whom we have hitherto kept under our heels are put on a par with us in every respect. Let us awake to the sense of this sin and save, before it is too late, ourselves and our religion from going to perdition.

The Hindu, 18-12-1933, and *Harijan*, 29-12-1933

325. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

AS AT WARDHA,
December 19, 1933

CHI. NARAHARI,

I am starting to write this letter at six in the morning in Masulipatam. I get up daily at three and try to write as many letters as I can. The writing is interrupted at six, and at seven generally travelling is resumed. On Mondays and Tuesdays there is no travelling. Today is Tuesday, and so I have been able to continue to write. (After I had written so far, Malkani and Bapi Needu came up and took half an hour of my time.)

I had preserved your long letter. Your work seems to be going on very well. I hope it will continue in the same manner. There are ebbs and tides in Mahadev's work. He loudly sings "All days are not alike". (Another interruption, and I gave 20 more minutes to Venkatappayya.) Mahadev is now realizing the truth of that line in his own experience. That is how all of us learn and grow.

Anandi and others are fairly well settled. Proper arrangements have been made for their study. Ramanama also is being taught by

[1] The following is from *Harijan*, 29-12-1933.

Shankarbhai and a music teacher. I get letters from Vanamala and Mohan. Mani has joined them. Bablo also is there, and so are Qureshi's children. N. has run away. Her son is in Sharda Mandir. Ba has been taken to Yeravda.

All the questions which you have asked regarding spinning are relevant. But those problems cannot be solved at present. I can't write about them now, either. I have in my mind the solutions of all the problems. Whether they will work or not can be discovered only when they are tried. If I am alive, I will explain them some day and, God willing, we will even try them.

Kaka's health is fairly good. He must have gone to Ahmedabad now. He was happy to stay with Swami for a few days. I have not heard from him recently.

Kishorelal is quite ill. He is confined to bed.

What experiences of the tour should I describe ? The crowds at the meetings are larger even than before and contribute generously to the fund.

Surendra and Durbari are at Wardha. They will probably go to Karadi now. Both are fairly well. A large number of girls have joined at Wardha and requests are still being received. Vinoba continues to live in the hamlet. Balkrishna cannot be described as enjoying normal health. The same is true about Chhotelal.

Blessings to all from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati , S.N. 9061

326. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

December 19, 1933

BA,

I got your letter today. The letter addressed to Sabarmati must have been received. I will continue to write to you regularly. I will write every Monday or Tuesday, for on those two days I get some free time. Take care of your health. I will send the slivers. If I don't have any extra stock with me, I will get them from some source and send you. I have been having some blood pressure. I was examined by Dr. Ansari in Delhi. Do not at all worry about me. I will surely write to

Manilal and Sushila every fortnight. I wrote to them long letters. I will send your blessings to everyone. Do not worry about anybody. I have written to Manu also regarding Kusum. The latter is really ill and may or may not survive. Kishorelal has been having fever intermittently. He is in bed. Brijkrishna also has been bed-ridden for a long time. Devdas is well, and so also Rajaji. Give my blessings to all the women there. I hope all of them are doing physical work and maintaining good health. Ramanama is an unfailing remedy. I had prepared an abridged *Gita* for Ramdas. It is being printed. When it is ready, I will send a few copies there. If you want anything else, write to me. Address your letters always to Wardha. I hope you are supplied newspapers.You have asked for a discourse from me. I will not send one this time. I will see if I can do so next week. It is certainly very good that you read the *Gita* regularly. Who teaches you to read it ? What food do you get there ? You remember don't you, that you can write to Premlilabehn[1] or Trivedi[2] for anything that you may want. You will have fewer visitors there and so the best course will be that you should write one letter to me and receive one from me every week. However, you may do as you like. Om is all right. Premabehn's friend, Kisan, has joined me recently. You remember her, don't you ? She is very hard-working and has been well educated.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 2-3

327. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

MASULIPATAM,
December 19, 1933

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

The accompanying letters are for your information. Bhagwanji's argument is perfectly correct. I will write to him a

[1] Premlila Thackersey
[2] Prof. Jayashankar P. Trivedi of Agriculture College, Poona

suitable reply. Such activities will certainly be undertaken.

I have still not received a copy of the resolution passed by you. Shouldn't you send me one formally ? I shall be able to know about my duties from its wording.

The work here is progressing rapidly. Malkani is fast becoming an accountant. He has also become a newspaper correspondent. If he maintains good health, he will work to the best of his ability.

The crowds at the meetings are as large and the contribution as generous as in the C.P.

I have still not been able to observe the four-hour rule. Nobody, however, is to blame for that. Such a rule can only be an ideal. In any case, God will ordain everything as He wills. I learnt as long ago as my young days to live according to Mira's *bhajan* :

Hari has tied me with a slender thread,

I let Him pull as He wills.

I, therefore, don't experience any difficulty. He who enables us to sit and to walk may also put us to sleep.

I should like you or Ghanshyamdas to see the members of the Delhi Municipality about the quarters of Harijans in Delhi . They must be improved.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 1134

328. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

December 19, 1933

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter written from Patna. Since you have started the injections, it would be better to complete the course. Perhaps you may benefit. I myself, though, have little faith in it. But once we have started a thing we should go to the end.

There will be no difficulty in sending Rs. 50 every month to Rajeshwar. I have discussed the matter.

I have already explained in my previous letter[1] about your coming to see me. If your health has deteriorated, won't you have to pay all your attention just now to proper treatment ?

Do you experience any difficulty in seeing Rajendrababu ?

I have not weighted myself recently, but my health is quite good. The blood pressure has returned to my normal. It is 158-109.

Om is fine. Kisan has joined me now. I am sure you know her. She is the woman who had started crying in Bombay. She is a close friend of Prema. She was also in jail with Mirabehn. She is a Maharashtrian, and is a highly educated lady. She is very eager to serve. She joined me at Wardha. Suman's place is taken by Ramnarayan.[2]

Keep on writing to me.

[PS.]

20-22, Madras,

23-January 3, Andhra Desha, Headquarters Bezwada.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 3437.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lakshmibehn M. Sharma", 6-5-1933

[2] Ramnarayan Chowdhary

329. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

December 19, 1933

CHI. VANAMALA,

Bravo! You have started signing in English now! After some time, I suppose you will even be able to detect mistakes in my English. I hope you are working hard enough to accustom your body to bear strain. What have you been studying ? Ask Mohan to write to me. Sultan[1] Bablo, Hamid[2] and Vahid[3] also should write to me. Do you remember that you did not complete your letter ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : N. G. 5783. Also C. W. 3006. Courtesy : Vanamala Desai

330. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

December 19, 1933

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I am late in replying to your letter, though I had intended to reply quite soon. What you have suggested is right. But carry out your idea tactfully and without using compulsion. Very few non-Harijans will join. For them the rule will be compulsory. For the Harijans, the problem will be one of education. You cannot use compulsion on them. They will gradually learn to use lavatories. In the locality where Ramji lives, we may certainly construct lavatories if it is possible to introduce them there. Parikshital, Jethabhai and you may discuss the matter and do what you think best.

Do not give up your interest in the Vadaj school. The number of children attending it should increase. Don't leave even the grown ups. This will of course require patience on your part. Give up desire for the success of your work. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C. W. 364. Courtesy : Bhagwanji P. Pandya

[1] Children of Gulam Rasul Qureshi
[2] *Ibid*
[3] *Ibid*

331. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

December 19, 1933

CHI. SHARDA *ALIAS* SHARDAGAURI *alias* SHARDAKUMARI,

Why should not my letter to Anandi be considered as addressed to all of you ? Supposing I write all the names in the same letter? Once you all have considered and made her your elder, how can you now complain ? Which question of yours did I leave unanswered ?

I am glad to hear that you are studying well. But what about your frequent illnesses ? Does it mean that you go on forgetting as you go on learning ?

What do you eat ?

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 9965. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala.

332. LETTER TO VIMALCHANDRA V. DESAI

December 19, 1933

CHI. NANU,

I got your letter. Your handwriting still leaves much to be desired. If you realize that one should write every letter in a word as carefully as one draws a picture, you would take pains to write a beautiful hand.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 5757. Courtesy : Valji G. Desai.

333. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

December 19, 1933

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

Your letters are coming infrequently now. I do not worry as I have understood the reason. I hope that you at least have not been hurt over my Bengal tour. How is Arun[1] ? And how are you keeping now ?

[1] Addressee's son

So far my tour can be said to be proceeding very well. Moreover, God is giving me the energy for this hectic travelling.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 1705

334. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA AND RAMAKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

December 19, 1933

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

How is it that I have received so far no letter or wire ? I hope that a suitable house has been found and your health is improving. Send me all the news. It will do if I get a post-card daily and a wire when necessary.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAI RAMAKRISHNA OR SHRIKRISHNA,

Discussions should be avoided in the presence of Brijkrishna. Stick to Doctors Ansari and Sen.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 2404.

335. LETTER TO TOTARAM SANADHYA

December 19, 1933

BHAI TOTARAMJI,

I got your letter. I like the scheme. It must be implemented as far as possible.

I trust the children from Utkal give you satisfaction.

Hariprasad must be engrossed in service.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 2537

336. LETTER TO KALYANJI V. MEHTA

December 20, 1933

BHAI KALYANJI,

I got your letter. I am writing this reply in a running train. I did hear about you from time to time. I hope your health is good. You

have been exercising good self-control in not coming to see me. We can't have any money to waste. How is Kunvarji ? Napoleon has stopped writing to me now. Is Mithubhen all right now. How is the leg ? Write to me from time to time.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 2710.

337. REPLY TO CIVIC ADDRESS, MADRAS

December 20, 1933

MR. MAYOR, COUNCILLORS AND FRIENDS,

I deeply appreciate the honour you have done me this morning by presenting me for the second time with an address.[1] It is always a matter of great pleasure to me to visit the South because, as you know, I have relations with the South of a very long stand-ing. I came in closest touch with the indentured Indian people in Natal as early as 1893 and some of you may recollect that my first contact in Natal was not only with the South Indians but with the Tamil Indians, and the very first case of distress that I had the good fortune to handle was one in connection with a Tamil.[1] Ever since that the South has bound me with ties not to be surpassed by any other part of India.

You, Sir, may not know, but some of the Councillors and some of the other citizens will perhaps recall the fact that when I first had the honour of receiving an address at the hands of this great Corporation, among the several names that I registered for myself was that of an expert scavenger. It was at that time that I referred to the condition of your public streets and how those streets were used for insanitary purposes, even by men who should know better. I expect that there has been a vast improvement in that direction. But today my mission of scavenging is of a special character, a deeper character and, as I found it, of a purely religious character, taking religion in its broadest sense, not in the narrow sectional sense in which we, at the present day, unfortunately use the term.

The reform I am aiming at today concerns a body of scavengers belonging to the Hindu society and does not make it none the less religious in the broadest sense of the term. I feel that it is a deeply humanitarian mission to which I have not hesitated to invite the co-

[1] The Corporation had presented an address to Gandhiji on March 7, 1925; *vide* " Speech in Reply to Corporation Address, Madras", 7-3-1925

[1] Balasundaram; *vide An Autobiography*, Part-II, Ch XIX,

operatioon of non-Hindus within, necessarily, the limits that I had the pleasure of mentioning before a body of mis- sionaries, I believe in Jubalpore.[1] As days advance, you will under-stand what this scavenging mission stands for. It stands for abolishing the distinctions of high and low which untouchability undoubtedly means; but you will not expect that, on my entering the Tamil land, I should give an elaborate view of what I consider is the duty of the Hindu humanity towards useful servants of society. That I must reserve for another occasion.

Be it enough for the present, Mr. Mayor and Councillors, for me to thank you once more for the address that you have been good enough to present to me. I hope that I will carry with me throughout my tour your sincere prayers in the mission that I have undertaken.

The Hindu, 20-11-1933

338. SPEECH AT ALL INDIA SWADESHI EXHIBITION[2] *MADRAS*

December 20, 1933

MR. PRESIDENT AND FRIENDS,

I have started out in Madras under happy and good auspices. I had the honour of receiving an address from the Corporation and now I have the honour of receiving another address from the Southern Indian Chamber of Commerce at the hands of my friend Mr. Jamal Sahib.[3] I have the pleasantest recollection of the long conversations with him in London not more than 18 months ago or something like that. We dicussed then things of interest common to the whole of India and now I find myself again in his company. With your blessings, friends, I look forward to the success of my mission in Madras and later on in the whole of Tamil Nadu.

You have, Sir, asked me to declare the Swadeshi Exhibition open. All of you may not be aware that I am a man who thinks and chooses things. I regard myself somewhat as an expert in matters of swadeshi. I have been instrumental also in organizing more than one exhibition of this kind in India. You cannot have everything that grows or is manufactured in India exhibited. You will naturally have

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Leonard Theological College", 7-12-1933.

[2] Gandhiji opened an exhibition organized by the Madras Mahajan Sabha in the morning.

[3] Jamal Mahomed

to make a definite choice in things if you are to make an exhibition of this character of educative value for the public. For instance, you would not exhibit any seeds that grow in India like grass. You have to pick and choose those seeds and grains which you want to introduce to the public. I have given, friends, only an illustration out of many that crowd my memory now. I have spoken about this in order to introduce to you a very delicate thing.

I do not accept invitations to open all and every swadeshi exhibition. I want to know whether the delicate wines produced in India are exhibited also. If they are, naturally, the fanatical prohibitionist that I am, I will say to you: "Thank you, but I can-not open this exhibition, where wines, which are harmful to the moral and economic well being of the country, sparkling though they may be, are exhibited". Not equally on the same lines, but somewhat on those lines, I object also to open exhibitions where mill cloths, may be hundred percent swadeshi, are exhibited. I do not say it is injurious in the same sense that wines are. But if I am expected to open an exhibition of manufactured mill-cloths—and not things made in cottages in India—you will make a very poor show. I do not want to pit myself against mill-cloth. What I want to say is this. If you go into the history of the mill industry in India, you will discover it does not need a swadeshi exhibition for its distribution. The mills themselves are their own swadeshi exhibition. They have got all the facilities of their own. But what of khadi ?

I do not want to say I have opened a swadeshi exhibition where all sorts of things are exhibited. It must be an exhibition, not only for your edification but of instruction to those to whom it should be useful. I have opened exhibitions in other places and I have been asked to open in a very big city like this a swadeshi exhibition. I had therefore to introduce this word of caution. Now, do you or do you not think of the various needs of the Harijans ? As you know, I am under a self-imposed vow, during seven or eight months that remain for me, to do some kind of propaganda work for Harijans. I have restricted myself predominantly to do Harijan work and no other work. I can talk to many people on varied subjects and there is no end to the varied subjects that do or can interest me. At the present moment, I propose to confine myself to the few things that are necessary for the Harijan cause.

What can a swadeshi exhibition do for Harijans, you may ask. I think khadi has got a great deal to do with it, because the introduction of hand-spinning and hand-weaving of cloth, you will be surprised to know, has brought a ray of comfort and light into the dark homes of thousands of Harijans. I had the good fortune to go to

many Harijan homes even during this brief tour and discovered the potency of khadi for Harijans. You will also be surprised to know that there are many things—I hope those things are exhibited here—at which Harijans have worked for the most part, if not entirely. There is the leather industry. The leather industry will be nowhere in India but for the initial work which the Harijans put into it. You will not expect me to take you into the history of it; my friend, Jamal Sahib, will give you chapter and verse about it. But I can tell the history in terms of rupees, annas and pies. Not less than nine crore rupees worth of hides go out of India which, if we are to deal honourably by Harijans, will all be absorbed in India, or at least not leave the shores in the raw state in which the hides are now sent. I can multiply instances. But I do not want to detain you or detain myself.

I have great pleasure in declaring the Exhibition open and I hope you will take advantage of this Exhibition, make it of educative effect, interest yourself in these things that have been brought to the stalls and trace the history of their manufacture and then you will be surprised at the resources the poorest country in the world has at its disposal if we would only work at them intelligently and also work in co-operation with the downtrodden millions in India. If you would get off their backs and treat the Harijans, the Mahars and the other oppressed and depressed classes as our own comrades entitled to the same privileges and the same honour that we claim for ourselves, then in spite of the tremendous handicaps under which we are working this land of ours can become a land of plenty, a land of prosperity and not of downright pauperism in which the country now is.

I thank you for inviting me to open this Exhibition and I hope the public will generously patronize it.

The Hindu, 20-11-1933

339. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, MADRAS

December 20, 1933

SISTERS,

It gives me great pleasure to be able to renew your acquaintance. This is not the first time that I am addressing a meeting of ladies in Madras. I have before me an extremely heavy programme to be gone through inside of forty minutes. Therefore you will excuse me for being very brief.

I have come here to ask you to do one thing. Forget altogether that some are high and some are low. Forget altogether that some are touchables and some are untouchables. I know that you all believe in

God as I do, and God cannot be so cruel and unjust as to make distinctions of high and low between man and man and woman and woman. This untouchability is the greatest blot on Hinduism. And I have not hesitated to say that, if untouchability lives, Hinduism dies. If only to use man's language, God has been patient with us but I have no hesitation in saying that even God's patience can be exhausted, and He will no longer be patient with this atrocity that man is doing towards man in Hindu India.

Gandhiji made a break in his speech at this juncture and said :

You have not given me the purse.

Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi immediately handed to Gandhiji the purse, saying that it contained cash to the extent of Rs. 430.

You have given me a lean purse. But lean or fat the purse is meant to serve Harijans.

Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi said that many of them had contributed liberally to the purse that was going to be presented to Gandhiji at the public meeting at Tilak Ghat.

That is the excuse you want to give; all right, I see you are all for equality with men.

I regard this purse as token on the part of the donors of their desire to do some slight reparation to those whom we have injured in the name of religion.

Well, anyway, ladies have parted willingly with their jewellery, some with their rings, others with their bangles and necklaces and so on and I invite you to do likewise, but on this understanding, that the jewellery you may part with is not to be replaced and that you should consider the giving as a privilege in connection with the Harijan movement. I conclude with a prayer to God Almighty that He may bless this effort and that He may so change your hearts that you will forget the distinctions between touchables and untouchables.

There is one thing which a sister wants me to say and which I gladly do, namely, to put in a word on behalf of Hindi. I expect that some of you would like to serve in other parts of India, in the northern parts of India. You cannot mix with the masses in the North unless you understand Hindi. Know that 22 crores of the people of India know and understand Hindi. Enlightened sisters of the South cannot neglect the language of the 22 crores.

Well, I have finished, and those who want to part with their jewellery can do so.

The Hindu, 20-11-1933

340. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, MADRAS

December 20, 1933

STUDENTS AND FRIENDS,

You are not new to me nor am I new to you. I remember you well. In 1896 when, of course, many of you were not even born, I made the acquaintance of the students of Madras, when I was an unknown man to you or for that matter to anybody else except those who are called the 'coolies', that is to say, the people of Tamil Nadu. I was even at that time known somewhat amongst them, but I remember what a welcome you gave me at that time. I thank you for the purse that you have given me as also for the address you have presented to me. I do not need to argue with you, and to convince you that untouchability is the greatest blot on Hinduism. I do not need to convince you that after all the education you have received, if you believe in the distinction between man and man, all your education is worthless; but I do want you to realize, if you are convinced, as you state in your address you are convinced, that untouchability is an evil, which we should get rid of. I want you to serve the cause; I want you to serve the Harijans. I had expected you to say in your address in what way you had served them. When I received an address from the students of Delhi, they told me in what way they were serving the Harijans of Delhi, and even the Harijans outside Delhi in the villages. I hope you will follow their example. They did not pretend that they had done wonders. They made some time ago an humble beginning. I wonder if you also had made an humble beginning—I wonder if you know how much you can do in order to ameliorate the conditions of Harijans and how much you can do by silent service to rid ourselves, our society, of this blot. The way to convince the society that untouchability cannot be a part of religion and that it is a hideous error is for you to develop character. You will show it in your own lives that to believe in some people being touchable and some untouchable is not only not religion, but it is the reverse of religion. Whereas, if you had no character to achieve or lose, naturally people are not going to put any faith whatsoever in you. You have got to move the masses. You have got to change the hearts of the masses. Never mind what the orthodox people who claim to have studied the scriptures may have to say; they do not represent the masses nor do they represent the real interpretation of the scriptures as I hold it. It may be that I am in error, but in any case there are a few people who react upon the masses, as you can also react upon the masses. I promise you that in the end only those who are working among the masses will be the

deciding factor. Masses will not argue. They will simply want to know who are the men who go to them and tell them that untouchability in which they have believed for such a long time is an evil,and if they find that those who have approached them, and told them that untouchability is an evil have credentials, they will listen to them, and if they have no credentials they will not listen. This is an incredibly simple proposition that I have been putting before you which each one of you can test for yourself.

How can you serve these men, who are living in your midst? I have shown a way for the many students that I have addressed. Take a broom and a bucket in your hands, not by way of *tamasha,* not by way of a spectacle, but sincerely, and work with the broom and the bucket and clean out all those dirty places of Madras. Go in their midst and wean them from drink, teach them the elementary principles of hygiene and sanitation, to which most of them are utter strangers, be it said to our disgrace. Having considered that they were beneath our attention, that they were the lowest people on earth, untouchable, unseeable and unapproa-chable and so on, we had come to the conclusion that we need not attend to them nor take care of what they were doing. They took us at our word and thought they were not human beings, and that they were hardly animals, and so they neglected themselves. They simply eked out a miserable existence. It is in the midst of these people that you have got to go, and bring to them a ray of light. I hope that you will go to these places, and bend your backs and work in their midst, and assure them that you are there not with any mental reservations, nor with any base motives,but with pure motives and serving them with the motive of taking the message of peace and love in their midst. If you will do that you will imme-diately find that their lives are transformed as also yours. I do not ask you to steal a single moment from the hours that you may need for your studies, but I ask you to utilize your idle moments, and I have no doubt that if each of you will examine yourself, you will find that every day you have so many idle moments. I do not ask you to give all your moments, but if you will combine and will serve the Harijans in Madras, you will find a revolution in their lives as also in your own lives. May God enable you to understand this! May God give you the strength to follow this message.

One thing more I have to tell you. I have lodged a complaint against the students of Madras, namely, that, although they claim to be part of India, and not particularly Madras, how can they neglect, especially I say to my sisters, the language that over 22 crores of

Indians understand, namely, Hindi ? You have got in Madras the Hindi Prachar Sabha giving you all the facilities to learn Hindi. I know that many students have taken advantage of the facilities, but I am sorry to tell you that that is not enough. I had expected that your address this time would be presented written in Hindi, and I had also expected that you would call upon me to speak in Hindi. But I had to give it up at once. I am now engaged in one mission and one mission alone and therefore without taking much of your time and my time on a discourse on Hindi, I began with the burden of my subject. I close with this warning that when you begin to take upon your shoulders the burden of the country, you will find what a great handicap you are labouring under if you do not know Hindi or Hindustani. I thank you once more.

In conclusion, Mahatmaji said that he hoped that the students would relieve him of the burden of the address. He would auction the same. As no bidders were forthcoming, Mahatmaji said that ladies could also bid giving their jewels. He was willing to give away the address for a pair of bangles or a ring. Thereupon two ladies in the gathering sent up one bangle each. Miss Swaminathan gave away a pair and took away the address.

The Hindu, 21-12-1933

341. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, MADRAS[1]

December 20, 1933

DEAR SISTERS,

The Reception Committee of the Harijan Sevak Sangh has left very few minutes for me; hence eager though I am to make your acquaintance more fully than I can during the few minutes, I must restrain myself and run away from you after saying a few words. It gives me great joy to know that many of you are Harijans sisters. If any demonstration was needed, this very meeting is an ocular demonstration; but for the knowledge that some of you are Harijan sisters I at least should not know which are Harijans and which are not. It shows that untouchability cannot be God appoin-ted institution. It is an institution appointed by man at his worst. And it is for *savarna* Hindu men and women to rise in revolt against that institution and blot it out. It, therefore, gives me pleasure to receive for the Harijan cause this

[1] Address on behalf of the Mother's Association and the Harijan women were presented to Gandhiji.

little purse from the Mother's Assocation.

But I want to say one word now to the Harijan sisters. I want them and I want the menfolk among Harijans to play their part nobly in this movement of self-purification. There are three or four things which undoubtedly demand attention. One thing is the observance of the elementary laws of sanitation, purification of the body. Those laws you should conform to. Then there is the question of carrion-eating and beef-eating and I know some Harijans take to these evil habits. These two things must be given up. The fourth thing is not special to Harijans because many so called high class indulge in the bad habit that I am about to mention. And that is the drink evil. No matter what the so called high class Hindus may or may not do, you, at least, should tell the menfolk; and if you are also given to that habit then you yourself give up that habit altogether. Having worked for the last 50 years amongst the poor people and amongst those who are given to drink, I know what I am talking about. I saw in Natal, in South Africa, our own sisters dead drunk and wallowing in the gutters. When they were dead drunk, they did not know the distinction between good and bad. You will, therefore, save yourselves from it if you are addicted to that habit. May God give us all, Harijans or not, the strength to follow the message that I am endeavouring to give throughout the length and breadth of India.

The Hindu, 21-12-1933

342. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MADRAS [1]

December 20, 1933

This is a wonderful demonstration that you have made of your affection. I hope that every one of you realizes the seriousness and magnitude of the mission that I am trying to carry out in the name of God, for His sake and for His forsaken children whom we have come to understand as 'Harijans'. There can be, in God's eyes, no distinction between man and man even as there is no distinction between animal and animal. Had God designed one part of humanity to be lower than the other. He would have put some distinguishing mark upon parts of our bodies whereby these distinctions could have been unmistakbly seen, felt and demonstrated.

Go where you will from end of India to the other, you will fail,

[1] The meeting held at Tilak Ghat on the Triplicane Beach was attended by over one lakh people.

as I have failed, to notice any such distinguishing feature in connection with those who call themselves high caste Hindus and those whom high-caste Hindus describe as 'untouchables', 'invisibles' and what not.

I therefore ask you seriously to consider this urgent question. I have said, and I repeat what I have said from a thousand platforms before this vast audience, that if we do not remove root and branch untouchability from our hearts, we are a doomed race, and Hinduism like many other 'isms', will perish and the discredit will be ours.

In the midst of this din and noise, I must not put before you the implications of this great movement. Suffice it to say that when untouchability is removed from our hearts Harijans will feel the glow of freedom, and then we would treat them as we do ourselves, we would know that they have the same rights absolutely and without exception as we have, and that 'Harijans' would be subject to the same discipline that *savarna* Hindus are. If by God's grace this message reaches your hearts,we shall forget all distinctions of high and low.

Now I would like you kindly to disperse quietly so that I too can go safely to my car. You must kindly go back to your homes. The proceedings are finished.

The Hindu, 21-12-1933

343. SPEECH TO CHILDREN[1]

MADRAS

December 21, 1933

Little children, boys and girls, only one word. Remember that little children also have to play their part in this movement of purification. And the only thing that I want to say is : 'Children, be always good and always remember God in all troubles.'

The Hindu, 21-12-1933

344. SPEECH AT ROBINSON PARK, MADRAS

December 21, 1933

I thank you sincerely for the addresses that you have given me. I thank you equally for the purse and the gifts that you have

[1] Gandhiji visited the Bharat Sabha, Vellala Teynampet, which was running a night school and religious classes for Harijans.

presented to me. All these moneys will be used for the uplift of Harijans. For this great movement of self-purification, I want men and women to take their full share. Let us shed all our vices and bad habits. Let us pray to God that He may give us pure minds. If any one of you is addicted to carrion-eating, give up that bad habit. Observe the rules of hygiene and sanitation. Educate your children, and give up the drink habit, if you are in the habit of drinking. It is one of the greatest enemies of the human race. That many *savarna* Hindu drink spirituous liquors is no reason for Harijans to drink it. It is drink that makes men mad and makes them forget the distinction between wife, mother and sister. May God give strength to you to go through the process of purification. Now, you will excuse me for not giving up more of my time. I have still a big programme to carry through. Finally, I ask you to give me free passage without any noise. I thank you for this magnificent demonstration of your affection and interest that you take in this movement of purification. May God bless you.

The Hindu, 22-12-1933

345. SPEECH AT LABOURERS' MEETING, PERAMBUR[1]

December 21, 1933

FELLOW LABOURERS,

I thank you for the address you have given me.

If you will make common cause with labour all over India, you ought to be able to understand Hindustani. Unless you do that there is no junction between the North and the South. But that is not the burden of my mission tonight. Tonight I want to tell labour that labour at least should have no distinctions of high and low.

Having lived in the midst of labour for the last forty years, I know to my great sorrow that among labourers also there are distinctions. There are Harijan labourers and non-Harijan labourers. Even among non-Harijan labourers there are distinctions. You must forget these distinctions. Harijan labour and non-Harijan labour are all absolutely one. I say to those of you who claim to be Hindus that there is no warrant in religion for untouchability as we observe it today.

It is impossible that God who is the God of justice could possibly make those distinctions that man observes today in the name

[1] In reply to the address presented by the Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway Employees' Union.

of religion. Lastly, those who are given to carrion-eating or beef-eating should give these up and if labour is to come to its own, you must give up the wretched habits of drink and gambling. I know that these two vices have degraded labour and desolated many homes among labourers. I therefore hope that you will give up the evil habits of drink and gambling. May God give you the strength to shed the evil of untouchability, drink and gambling.

The Hindu, 22-12-1933

346. NOTES

GARLANDS

It is devoutly to be wished that organizers will wean people from presenting me with garlands of flowers. If garlands must be presented, they should be of charkha-spun, even, strong and fine yarn, which can be used without difficulty for weaving purposes. Garlands are not produced without money or, which is the same thing, labour. All the money and all the labour available is required for Harijan service. And, in any case, I cannot afford to have labour or money spent for my pleasure, vanity or glorification. The showering of flowers is an injurious custom. The hard stems of yellow flowers, when they are thrown from a distance are calculated to break eye-glasses and injure the eyes. My eyes have, more than once, narrowly escaped damage from these stems.

Let the money thus saved be used for adding to the purses collected. Indeed, I notice that there is room for economy in most arrangements. Motor-cars are used too lavishly. Only those of the local persons whose presence is necessary should accompany me from place to place. Workers are trustees for the Harijan cause, and as such they are expected to guard the Harijan chest with greater care and vigilance than they would bestow upon their own.

AUCTIONS AND JEWELLERY

I have seen a paragraph in a newspaper adversely criticizing my appeal to the women for gifts of jewellery and my auctioning things received as donations. Indeed, I would like the thousands of sisters who attend my meetings to give me most, if not all, of the jewellery they wear. In this country of semi-starvation of millions and insufficient nutrition of practically eighty percent of the people, the wearing of jewellery is an offence to the eye. A woman in India has rarely any

cash which she can call her own. But the jewellery she wears does belong to her, though even that she will not, dare not, give away, without the consent of her lord and master. It ennobles her to part with, for a good cause, something she calls her own. Moreover, most of this jewellery has no pretension to art, some of it is positively ugly and a harbinger of dirt. Such are anklets, heavy necklaces, clasps worn not for adjusting the hair, but purely as a decoration for unkempt, unwashed and often evil-smelling hair, or row upon row of bangles from wrist to elbow. In my opinion, the wearing of expensive jewellery is a distinct loss to the country. It is so much capital locked up or, worse still, allowed to wear away. And in this movement of self-purification, the surrender of jewellery by women or men I hold to be a distinct benefit to society. Those who give do so gladly. My invariable condition is that on no account should the jewellery donated be replaced. Indeed, women have blessed me for inducing them to part with things which had enslaved them. And in not a few cases men have thanked me for being an instrument for bringing simpli-city into their homes.

Now a word about auctions. I have seen nothing wrong about them. They set up a healthy rivalry and are an innocent method of evoking the generous impulse in man or woman for a noble cause. I have resorted to the method now for years without ever noticing the slightest civil effect produced by these auctions. Why is it wrong to pay a price beyond its intrinsic value for an article which one prizes, even though it be as a memento, if it is not wrong to pay fabulous prices for worn-out manuscripts of authors reputed to be great ? Surely, the price of an article is what a man voluntarily pays for it. And let it be remembered that people who bid at my auctions do not pay fancy prices for pleasing me. I know they do not. I can recall occasions when I have not been able to induce bids, even though the audiences have been otherwise as enthusiastic or responsive as anywhere else.

ABUSE OF FASTING

Cases of abuse of fasting have recently come under my observation. One person wrote threatening to fast if I did not send my autograph, three if I did not visit their places during the tour and another if his village did not produce Rs. 5,000 for khadi, Harijan and kindred constructive activities. I have no doubt that all these are instances of abuse of fasting. Why should I give my autograph, or visit

a place or workers find money under threat of a fast ? There should be a moral obligation on the one against whom a fast is taken. Fasts are legitimately taken in the interest of some public good or for doing service to those for whom they are taken. I am well aware that the dividing line between use and abuse is often too thin to be noticeable. The better test, therefore, perhaps is whether the person fasting has undergone the requisite discipline for taking fasts calculated to influence conduct other than his own. In the cases quoted, so far as I can see, there was utter absence of qualification or previous preparation. Moreover, legitimate fasts, even if repeated by many, should be capable of response. In the cases under consideration, if a thousand persons asked for my autograph, or a thousand workers in a thousand village desired my visit to their places or a worker required poor people to pay the money he wanted, it is clear that response might easily be a physical impossibility.

Harijan, 22-12-1933

347. SPEECH AT GEORGE TOWN MEETING, MADRAS

December 22, 1933

FRIENDS,

Up to now we have done no business. What has happened is, the precious few minutes that are at my disposal have been taken away in the reading of addresses. Therefore, before I get the right to speak to you, I must do some business. (Laughter) I must ask you now to dispossess me of all these trinkets that have been given to me and exchange them for pure gold. (Renewed laughter) Then, I cannot be guilty of stealing away this diamond ring; and I shall, therefore, have to offer it to you.

I shall now begin the business portion of the meeting.[1]

Gandhiji then spoke a few words in Hindi, thanking both the donors and the successful bidders for the help they had thus rendered for the cause of the Harijans. This was a great *punyakaryam*[2] , he said; and in such acts of service, they must feel a pride. He exhorted them to remove from their hearts notions of high and low because of birth. Untouchability, he reiterated, was a great sin; and whoever made a resolve to rid his heart of this impurity of treating a certain section of his brothers as untouchables was really a better man. Gandhiji then explained in a few words why he called untouchables Harijans. He had learnt in Tamil a great saying—

[1] Gandhiji then auctioned the articles presented to him. Several ladies offered him jewellery.

[2] Meritorious act

Dikkatravarukku deivametunai [1], and this indeed was the justification for the name 'Harijan' as applied to this class of unfortunate people. It was not his own coining; it was an untouchable who persuaded him to use it. He then concluded with an appeal to their hearts to cleanse their religion by removing the blot of untouchability.

This is a great *yajna*; and and I wish to God that He gives you wisdom to take your proper place therein.

The Hindu, 22-12-1933

348. SPEECH AT JAIN MANDIR, MADRAS [2]

December 22, 1933

Now I proceed to business. You people go to far-off lands exploiting people and amassing wealth. I am now going to exploit you.

The audience greeted this statement with laughter and cheers. Putting up for auction an ivory casket, Gandhiji said :

What will you give for this ?

The first bid for the casket which would be worth roughly Rs. 15, was Rs. 101 by Mr. Ramnath Goenka.

Get along, Rs. 101 is nothing for you, Gujaratis assembled here.

Rs. 201 was the next bid.

Shall I let it go . . . Once, . . . twice, . . . I will not yet say "thrice" . . . . There is yet time. . . . A few hundred is nothing to you.

You know I have come on a mission of reform. It is the cause of Truth, as I see it, and I appeal to you to help in it. The purse you have presented me is a poor one compared to what you can afford.

Proceeding, Gandhiji said that the work of Harijan uplift he was now engaged in was a sacred one. So far as he could understand the spirit of the Vedas, he saw nothing to warrant distinctions of high and low, touchable and untouchable. In the eyes of God, according to true *advaita*[3], all men were equal. It was only *maya* that made them see such distinctions between man and man. They must no longer consider their fellow-men as untouchable or unseeable. Could any man say that his head or eye or ear was superior to his hand or feet or any other part of his body ? All were equally important. Similarly every section of society was important as any other and they must look on all men as equal. He saw nothing in this doctrine that was against the dictates of dharma. He had full confidence that the work he was carrying on was God's

[1] "God is the help of the helpless."

[2] The Gujarati, Marwari and Sindhi residents welcomed Gandhiji at 9.30 a. m.

[3] Non-dualism

work and that it was the path of Truth. He prayed to God to confer prosperity on them and he appealed to them to utilize their wealth in the service of Truth and their fellow-men.

The Hindu, 22-10-1933

349. SPEECH AT VAISHYA ASSOCIATION [1]

MADRAS
December 22, 1933

Since ancient times, we have been taught that before God, elephant and ant, Brahmin and Shudra are alike. So also are they alike before a *samadarshi'*[2] or seer. What a pundit or sage does, a *prakrit* or man of the world should do. Religious injunction is the same for both. You cannot teach truth to a pundit and untruth to a *prakrit* man. Vaishyas believe that untruth will do in business. But this is not what the Shastras or dharma teaches. In the universal religion, there is neither high nor low. The distinction between high and low is the root of all our sorrows. The abolition of untoucha-bility is a *shuddhiyajna*[3] for Hindus. What you gave today is your share in the *shuddhiyajana* and is the earnest money of your *pratijna*.[4]

You ask me whether purification can come from inner or outer forces. The question is well put. Purification by outer means is valueless. If I forced you to bow to me, it would be against dharma. It is only by the inner effort that religious objects can be achieved.

I beseech you to do that willingly today, which you will be compelled to do hereafter.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-12-1933

350. SPEECH AT ANDHRA MAHA SABHA, MADRAS

December 22, 1933

After unveiling the portrait, Gandhiji said that Mr. Nageswara Rao Pantulu in flesh and blood was different from Nageswara Rao Pantulu in canvas. The latter

[1] The Southern India Vaishya Association presented an address to Gandhiji. The speech, delivered in Hindi, was translated into Telugu by K. Nageswara, Rao Pantulu.

[2] One who sees all as equal; *vide* " Discoures on the Gita", 29-9-1926

[3] Purifying sacrifice.

[4] Pledge; the reference is to the pledge taken at Bombay on September 25, 1932; *vide* " Resolution at the Hindu Leaders Conference Bombay", 25-9-1932

became a static personality. Ever since he had known Mr. Pantulu he had one speciality about him and that was that Mr. Pantulu always believed in giving himself away to those who needed him or his help. Mr. Nageswara Rao Pantulu had told him that the bulk of the profits he made from 'Amrutanjan'[1] went to the relief of the distressed, to help those who were in need. Mr. Nageswara Rao Pantulu had absolutely no other purpose. Mahatmaji prayed that Mr. Nageswara Rao Pantulu might continue to evolve from step to step till at last everybody could go to him and get comfort and help. They must all translate in their own lives all the noble qualities that they found in or imputed to Mr. Nageswara Rao Pantulu.

The Hindu, 22-12-1933

351. SPEECH AT HINDI PRACHAR SABHA CONVOCATION [2]

MADRAS,
December 22, 1933

After apologizing to the graduates and *pracharaks*[3] for his inability, due to pressure of time, to hand over to them their respective degrees in person, he assured them of his congratulations and blessings. He had very little by way of advice to give them for what there was to say had already been said by Mr. Tripathi.[4] But one point he would like to emphaize—about the need for following that advice. Hindi *prachar* in South India, and as he had seen, more particularly in Andhradesha, had made steady progress; but he would not be satisfied unless Hindi was understood by everyone to such an extent that not one would desire him to speak in English. His appeal to them was to push on with their work with courage and determination. They had started well and he hoped they would carry it on. It was stated that Hindi presented some peculiar difficulties to people of these parts of India. Perhaps this was true to some extent. But he felt no Indian language would present any insurmountable difficulty to an Indian. There was an element of Sanskrit common to all Indian languages which, so far as he could see, should make it very easy for them to gain at least a working knowledge of any Indian language. They found no difficulty whatever in mastering a foreign language like English or even such difficult languages as Tamil. Why should Hindi, therefore, present any great difficulty to them ? It was the language of 22 out of the 35 crores of India's population, and it was bound to be the common language of India.

It was stated by some, Gandhiji said, that Muslims could not understand Hindi and they understood only Urdu. But he could see no difference between Hindi and Urdu as they obtained among common folk. In Islamic books and a section of Muslims, it was true that a large percentage of Persian and Arabic words were employed thus

[1] Trade name of a balm

[2] Gandhiji presided over the third annual convocation of the Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha held at the Gokhale Hall.

[3] Trained teachers; literally, 'propagators'

[4] Ramnaresh Tripathi, who delivered the convocation address

rendering Urdu difficult for Hindus to understand. Similarly, some Hindus also use a large percentage of Sanskrit words in their books and conversation, making them difficult for Muslims to comprehend. But when he talked of Hindu and Urdu being identical he was not referring to this kind of Hindi or Urdu. He referred to only the language in vogue among common folk in North India, which contained a good mixture of Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic words and still was understood by everyone, Hindu or Muslim. It was this language he wanted every one of them to learn to understand and speak. Unless they did this, he was afraid people from the South could not touch the heart of the masses in the North and *vice versa*.

The Hindi Prachar Sabha, he said, had been working in Dakshin Bharat for over fifteen years and yet, he asked, what had people done to avail themselves of its services and, by learning the language, to promote Indian national unity ? Did they not find time and money to waste on the races, cinemas and amusements ? Could they not spare a part of these for the learning of Hindi ? He had heard the Sabha was in need of adequate accommodation and had been trying to acquire buildings of its own but could not for want of funds. If everyone came forward to learn the language paying a small sum for the Sabha's services the necessary money could easily be found and the Sabha need not continue expecting help from Northern India. It was the duty of South India to make the Sabha self-dependent. He would therefore repeat his appeal that South Indians must one and all avail themselves of the Sabha's services and help in this national work.[1]

The Hindu, 23-12-1933

352. REPLY TO DEPRESSED CLASSES DEPUTATION [2]

MADRAS,
December 22, 1933

Come in Rao Bahadur. Can I give you a chair ? Now, Rao Bahadur, I have got your letter. Shall we begin with it ? Or what shall we do ? Just as you would regulate the proceedings.

"Will you permit its reading ?" Mr. Srinivasan submitted. Gandhiji said :

Yes, you please.

. . . Mr. Bashyam Iyengar threw out a hint that the letter consisted of six typed pages.

It all depends on Mr. Srinivasan, who is the Chairman here. But so far as I am concerned, I have read it from top to bottom.

[1] Gandhiji then auctioned the shawl, the convocation 'robe', which had been presented to him at the beginning of the proceedings.

[2] The executive of the Madras Depressed Classes Federation waited in deputation on Gandhiji in the evening. The deputation consisted of R. Srinivasan, V. Dharmalingam Pillai, Swami Sahajananda, P. V. Rajagopala Pillai and Pushparaj. Others present were; V. Bashyam Iyengar, President of the Provincial Board of Servants of Untouchables Society, K. Nageswara Rao Pantulu, V. Venkatasubbiah, K. Bashyam and R. V. Sastri, Editor, *Harijan*.

Mr. Srinivasan suggested that it might be allowed to be read for the benefit of his colleagues as there was hardly time to circulate it to them. Gandhiji asked Mr. Pushparaj to go ahead.

You will excuse me, If I am not attending to it. Because, I have almost got it by heart. In the mean time, I shall be putting my papers in order.[1]

The best thing would be for me to take up point after point and deal with it. What you say about the Poona Pact is common ground between us; and I entirely endorse the view that if *savarna* Hindus do not work the Pact in the manner it is intended it should be, it can become nugatory and of no benefit whatsoever.[2] I will admit that in its entirety.

How far the Central Board at Delhi or the Provincial Boards will be able directly to affect the elections, I do not know. I think it is a very difficult and delicate subject. Therefore what I have directed is that with these elections generally we should not interfere. But we do interfere where injustice is done to a Harijan candidate. When that happens, as it did in Bombay, we try to set it right.

Gandhiji related the Bombay incident at some length and mentioned his efforts in effecting the withdrawal of the candidate (for election to the Legislative Council) who had ranged himself against one who was a member of the Servants of India Society, uniformly known to be decisively friendly to Harijan interests.

In Delhi there was the danger of the Harijan candidate not being elected to the Municipality. We intervened and room was specially made for the Harijan candidate. In Cawnpore, there was a Harijan candidate and it was wrong for *savarna* Hindus to have opposed him. I came to know about it after the election. The gentleman who was defeated wrote to me; and I replied that it was wrong on the part of the *savarna* rival to have so ranged himself against the Harijan candidate. We tried our best to get this gentleman resign his seat. At that time it was not successful. What has since happened I do not know. There are other instances, as well.

I give these instances to show that where there is a Harijan candidate, whose *bonafides* is not impeached in any manner whatsoever, the Central Board have tried to influence the *savarna* Hindu candidates to withdraw from the contest. But where Harijan candidates are opposed to one another, or when *savarna* Hindus are

[1] The letter was then read out and Gandhiji gave the reply.

[2] The deputationists had apprehended that the Yeravda Pact would not be effective in view of caste Hindus' "tactics and unfair methods" and that they could be prevented from electing men of their choice.

conducting the elections, the Board does not interfere—which you really want the Board to do. You desire that the Board should so regulate the elections or so influence the elections, as to have the right type of men elected. But, I think, the Board will then lose its influence. Today the Board is daily rising in influence, because of its absolute neutrality except where, as I said, a Harijan stands to suffer. That is the line of demarcation we have placed. If you examine the situation, I have no doubt you will agree with me.

If you want to make this Board an effective instrument of service, it must keep itself apart and aloof from politics, and when the level of our character rises and the root that lies at the heart of untouchability is affected and expelled, there would be levelling up of everything all along the line. That is my hope. But with these lapses of mere moral character, the Central Board should not interfere. Once we endeavour to do that, I think, you would find that the whole of the structure will fall to pieces.

The Board is absolutely unaffected by politics; and, as I have so often said, the Harijan movement is purely religious. If I succeed in doing so, and If the Board accepts that policy in all sincerity and works it out earnestly, you will find nothing better for our purpose. The movement will become purer, and the Board would be wiser and achieve its ends quicker for its aloofness and abstention from direct intervention in politics.

Passing on to the next point raised in Mr. Srinivasan's letter, namely, economic condition of Depressed Classes and the removal of untouchability, in general, through the instrumentality of the Government, Mahatma Gandhi said that he totally agreed with them—that the Board should not do a single act which would interfere with the encouragement afforded by the Government; and the Board, he assured, would not do it, no matter what views he held in connection with the Government.

There is no doubt I have been holding very strong views against the present system of government. It is a mischievious system, taking the interests of India as a whole. But I cannot possibly apply that doctrine in connection with Harijans, unless I would so throw myself in the turmoil and resist the Government, there also. I cannot do it.

I say, honestly, I could not possibly resist doing it, if the Harijans were capable of looking after themselves, as you [Mr. Srinivasan] are and as Mr. Pushparaj is. That is, so far as you individuals are concerned. Taken as a mass they are absolutely helpless. When they can help themselves, stand equal to *savarna* Hindus and brush

shoulders with them, I shall be at ease and then say : 'No; I cannot look to your interests.' That I cannot possibly do.

Let them take all the advantage they can from the Govern-ment and let them take all the advantage they can from the *savarna* Hindus. The two mixed together will enable them to redress the balance somewhat. Even then, I do not believe they would be able to redress the balance because this crushing down that has gone on for ages is not going to be lifted off entirely in a few years, no matter what atonement is done by *savarna* Hindus. It would take a long time before the Harijans come to their own and feel they are just as good as they might be.

I can give you this absolute assurance that I shall never interfere with the policy of the Government in so far as the Harijans are concerned. Here also I will say I am conducting this tour in a manner so as to disarm all suspicion; and I will never take advantage of the Harijan movement in order to further the aims of the Civil Disobedience Movement. It would then not be civil but criminal. I do not ask your word of certicate. But I do say that I have never had any criminal intention in all my life. In order to justify that civil nature, I am keeping this Harijan cause apart. If, on the other hand, I wanted to use it for a political purpose, I would not have hesitated to make an open declaration that 'of course, I am going to use the Harijans for conducting the civil resistance movement'. No; emphatically no. On the contrary, those Harijans who are living with me, and who, according to their declarations, owe their all to their association with me, pleaded with me to allow them to join the movement, when I was disbanding the Ashram. 'Why do you keep us aloof ? Are we less patriotic and less capable of offering resistance ?" You dare not do it,' I warned, 'because', I said, 'you, as represen-tatives of Harijans, would be putting yourselves in the wrong.'

The Servants of Untouchables Society is today under the control of men who cannot afford to offer civil resistance. Messrs A. V. Thakkar and G. D. Birla are the moving spirits there. Not only that; all Congressmen, who have got this civil resistance in them and wanted to do so, are also prohibited from taking office in the Central Board, Provincial Boards or any of their branches.

There still remains one question as to the activities of the Society and its relationship with the Government. There again, I would say, 'Do not put that weight on the Board'. If you do that, it would lose its

universal influence. I want the Board to have a universal influence and its influence felt effectively everywhere. In matters you have mentioned, the Board will never interfere with the Government. The government may even adopt measures that may be harmful. Then it will be for you to put your foot down. We should not do it. There again I endorse what you [Mr. Srinivasan] have said in your letter.

In your politics also you say you must be allowed to develop along your own lines. I entirely grant it. There will be no interference on the part of the Board. So then, when the Government's policy is questionable in connection with Harijans' interests, it will be for you and for you alone to decide whether to resist it, even by constitutional and legitimate means. But so far as the Board is concerned, I will say, 'We have drawn the line of demarcation and there we stand.' If they do stand, I know the Board will command the respect of the Government also. So all along the line, they will be acting on the square—all right angles and no acute angle.

Now, to education.[1] On this subject, I think the Central Board can present you with an absolutely good record. Everywhere scholarships are being given freely. So many hundreds of Harijans are now in receipt of scholarships which they cannot get from the Government or any other agency. We never say to a single person : 'Do not go to the Government.' That is not a policy which is applicable to this Board. We encourage them to seek assistance from the Government departments. Where there was not enough, the Board supplemented it, We have done it in so many cases. That is our policy in connection with education.

Then, ah! you say that repatriation is the result of my activities in South Africa.[2] That is a very unkind cut. (Laughter) I say that history will give a different verdict.

When I landed on the South African soil in the year 1893, repatriation was on the anvil. Do you know that a Bill was actually passed in the Natal Legislative whereby every Indian, who after finishing his indenture wanted to settle in Natal, was required—to do what ?

[1] The deputationists had complained that the policy of admitting Harijan children into common schools, where caste Hindus predominated, was not working well and was not conducive to the educational progress of the Depressed Classes. They sought Gandhiji's help in raising funds for scholarships, stipends and for establishing hostels.

[2] The deputationists had stated that those who had been repatriated from South Africa as a result of Gandhiji's work were undergoing great suffering and hardship for want of employment.

MR. R. SRINIVASAN : Pay poll tax.

GANDHIJI : How much ?

MR. SRINIVASAN : £ 1 a head.

No fear. They stipulated £ 25. I resisted it. The original intention was that after indenture had been finished, they must go back. That is to say, indenture should expire in India. I promoted petitions in the Natal Parliament. I did it through the mercantile community, as it was not possible for me to do it through indivi-dual Indians at that time. The provisions were altered in conse-quence; and that is a matter of record. Therefore you will see, historically, repatriation was taking place when I went to South Africa; and on my going there, it became impossible. You then express your fear that this untouchability movement may end as the movement in South Africa ended. I wish it ended like that. (Loud laughter) Repatriation is now voluntary and repatriates get money compensation. In 1893, it was involuntary and compulsory without any compensation whatsoever. If that was the crime I have committed—(Renewed laughter)—I plead guilty.

Winding up this part of the discussion, Gandhiji said that the scheme of repatriation had proved a failure. He knew it was a failure because he was in correspondence with those who could speak with direct knowledge in South Africa. He was guiding Indians there to the extent he could; and warning them against coming to India where they would be outcastes even among outcastes. In these circumstances, he said, he had nothing to repent for, in regard to South Africa.

Let me now come to the temple-entry question; and I will at once say that I accept your point.[1] If you say you do not want it at all, I agree. But it is due to the *savarna* Hindus to say, 'Come to our temples. They are as much open to you as they are to us. It is entirely your choice whether you will enter or not'. I do not invite Harijans to take part in this agitation for temple-entry. But you can signify your approval, if you wanted, that this is also your right, but you may not exercise it. Or you may take a different attitude. That is entirely for you to consider. But so far as I am concerned, it is simply a one-sided thing. It is a matter of repentance for *savarna* Hindus and a change of heart. You are entitled to come to those places which you consider to be our sanctuaries. You have just as much right as any *savarna* Hindu. When that right is recognized, it is for you to exercise that right or not.

About the drink evil, Gandhiji said that he was always circumspect and careful

[1] The deputationists had stated that they were not opposed to temple-entry but it was not advisable for them to take active part in the movement.

in offering advice to this community.[1] He was aware that it was prevalent among other communities. But only the Harijans, who were under the great handicap of having to fight uphill, could not afford it. They had got to be, like Caesar's wife, above suspicion.

The *savarna* Hindus may wallow in lakes of red water; but you must fly away from it. I do not, however, want to wound your susceptibilities. I tell you, gentlemen like you may take it amiss; but the large body of Harijans don't. After all, you and I know that I have been working in their midst for years and years in order to wean them from drink. Therefore, I think you ought not to seek to restrict my freedom. You can certainly warn me; and I accept it—shall shape my language in such a manner that it does not offend any person whatsoever; and you may take it from me that I would not say a single word to offend anybody.

Lastly to the name Harijan. You say that the Depressed Classes were not consulted. They consulted me. That is the point. (Laughter) I have visited all parts of India. 'Why are we called Harijans?' I am asked. Why should they not have a better name ? That is the generality of feeling. 'For Heaven's sake do not call us coolies,' they pleaded. At one time this word had a particular significance. A whole race was called by that name. If it was not now used it does not mean there has come about a change of heart. The offence to the ear has been removed. That is what the new name has achieved. It is not, as I said, my coining. An untouchable pleaded with me not to be known by an expressioon of eternal reproach. 'Depressed' or 'Suppressed' reminded them of slavery, he very rightly said. 'I have no name to suggest; will you suggest?' I asked. Then the man suggested 'Harijan'. He quoted in support from Narasinh Mehta, the Gujarati poet who had used it in his works. I jumped at it. I knew also the Tamil saying *Dikkatravarukku deivame tunai.* Is not 'Harijan' a paraphrase of it ? They are God's chosen, who are outcastes. That is what 'Harijan' signifies as applied to suppressed classes.

The certificate you have given in the last paragraph of your letter[2] is too early for me. You all have listened to what I have had to

[1] The deputationists had complained that there were several communities which were addicted to drink and other evil habits and, therefore, to stigmatize the Depressed Classes alone was unfair and unjust.

[2] The deputationists had thanked Gandhiji for starting an unprecedented movement in the cause of their community which had given 'a great impetus to the caste Hindus to banish untouchability', and wished his mission a successful end.

say to the points raised. We shall all work together with the same end in view. I am sure God is with us; and therefore success is assured. I have no misgivings at all. I know untouchability is dying. To me the monster seems to be still taking a few breaths; but they are last breaths. (Loud applause)

MR. R. SRINIVASAN: I hope so.

Yes; we can honestly hope.

The Hindu, 23-12-1933

353. INTERVIEW TO "MADRAS MAIL"

MADRAS,
December 22, 1933

Asked about his statement[1] that he had given Pandit Jawaharlal a power of attorney to act for him as leader of the Congress. Party, Mr. Gandhi said that he had noted the Pandit's reply and the implication that he was joking when he made the statement.

That is not wholly true. There was and is a serious background to my statement. Having abandoned politics for the present, and decided to devote myself to the elimination of untouchability from Hinduism I cannot govern the Congress Party. When I am asked by individuals to give my views privately on some point at issue I may do so, but I am not in a position to define or discuss policies. This is Pandit Jawaharlal's work. And I have no desire to interfere with his absolute discretion. Hence my remark about power of attorney.

Will not the Pandit's well-known communist leaning mean that Congress policy will be given a communist bias under his guidance ?

No. I do not think so. Jawaharlal is too honest a man for that. I do not think he will depart from the fundamental Congress policy without giving ample notice to his colleagues. I do not think that Jawaharlal's own views are yet sufficiently crystallized to make any fundamental departure from Congress policy likely. He is a firm believer in socialism, but his ideas on how best the socialist principle can be applied to Indian conditions are still in the melting pot. His communist views need not, therefore, frighten anyone.

Reminded that the masses cannot be expected to make fine distinctions between ideological discussions and frank exhortations to pursue certain courses,

[1] According to a report in *The Hindustan Times*, 15-12-1933, concluding the discussion with workers in Delhi on December 14, Gandhiji had said that he "had given general power of attorney to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and asked those present to discuss everything concerning the Congress and other things with Pandit Jawaharlal".

Mr.Gandhi admitted that there was always a danger of the crowd misunderstanding a speaker's purpose but declared that it was not Jawaharlal's intention to inflame crowds.

Conversation then turned on communist opposition to large estates, which, apparently, Jawaharlal shares.

I do not think that the land should be parcelled out. It would be a serious loss if the influence of the big hereditary landholder were wholly destroyed. I do think, however, that the actual cultivator should have a title in the soil, and a larger share of its produce. At present, in many places, he gets far too little. He should get a fair share and not a bare maintenance.

Referring to agrarian movements in various parts of the country, Mr. Gandhi declared :

Whatever the Government do, this tremendous awakening is not going to die out. It has come to stay. What has impressed me most is that it has been accompanied with so little violence, thus constituting an unconscious manifestation of the effectiveness of non-violence.

Asked whether he had contemplated the danger of middlemen, in the shape of money-lenders or marketing agents, etc., acquiring a foothold between the land-owner and the cultivators as a result of recent land legislation, Mr. Gandhi replied :

It would be a deplorable thing if the middlemen got hold of the land. We must safeguard the interests of the actual cutlivator, by which I mean the man who himself tills the land. He may employ many labourers to assist him, but so long as he works on the land himself he fulfils my definition of a cultivating occupant.

My work for the Harijans is purely religious. It has no political motive behind it, and is essentially humanitarian. It is in no sense of the term a political movement.

But you will not deny that the movement must have political consequences ?

That is true. I do say that, though such political consequences will be by-products of the movement, they do not constitute its purpose. Any religious movement must have repercussions on other aspects of life, for religion in its broadest sense governs all departments of life.

Mr. Gandhi admitted that the movement was liable to exploitation for political purposes, and was aware of the assertions, voiced recently by Sir N. N. Sirkar, that its purpose was to consolidate Hinduism againt the other minorities, but he firmly and emphatically denied that he had any such object. In fact he declared that he differed from the Hindu Mahasabha in this regard.

The Hindu Mahasabha's activities are essentially communal, and are designed to further Hindu interests as distinguished from other.

The Harijan movement has no communal bias. It aims at the internal reform of Hinduism, at ridding it of artificial distinctions of high and low. I am fighting for the same rights, without reservation, for the Harijans that caste Hindus have in matters religious, social and political. I am not aiming at increasing the numbers of Hindu voters as such. So far as one single person can, I am trying to keep this movement entirely free from politics.

When the scribe[1] referred to the view held by many members of the minority communities, Muslims, Christians, etc., that the political effect of the movement, and the political end sought by others, whatever Mr. Gandhi's own purpose may be, is to secure the domination of a consolidated Hindu majority, overwhelming all minorities by its numbers, Mr. Gandhi repeated his resolve to keep the movement free from all taint of politics.

I want to absorb Christians, Muslims and others, as one indivisible nation, having common interest, then minorities will not feel themselves to be minorities. If untouchability is abolished, the bar to closer intercourse between Hindus and the minorities will disappear, and with its disappearance will come a new unity of aim and interest, a new oneness. This Harijan movement is in no sense exclusive. It aims at removing untouchability in every shape and form.

Reminded that Dr. Moonje recently declared that Hinduism included all, Muslims, Christians, Parsis, and the rest, Mr. Gandhi replied :

The object of Dr. Moonje differs greatly from mine. They are haggling over seats in the Legislature. That movement is solely political, mine is non-political.

To question whether he approved of the bullying methods of some of his lieutenants in the matter of temple-entry, Mr. Gandhi forcibly replied :

If anybody in the Harijan movement tries to use force he is acting against my wishes. I try to keep the movement from descending to low levels, but there are difficult elements in any move-ment. For myself, I refuse to open a temple unless satisfied that the wish that it should be opened to Harijans is general. Recently I refused to open a temple because the trustees seemed to be sharply divided. Only where temple-entry is approved by an overwhelming majority of the actual worshippers and by the trustees of the temple, will I consent to open it.

Asked for his views on the Temple-entry Bills now before the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Gandhi declared that the Bills were necessary to free the hands of

[1] The correspondent

trustees and worshippers who might be willing to open temples to Harijans but were prevented from doing so by judge-made laws.

Unless we free Hinduism from these restraints it will become stagnant, and perish.

Unless we can root out untouchability from Hinduism it must perish, it will deserve to die, and I will not regret its passing away. Untouchability must go. What I say to Europeans is : 'Come down and work with us as free citizens, rather than as members of the ruling classes.'

Mr. Gandhi said that he was amazed at the warmth of the welcome that Madras had given him, at the size of the crowd on the Triplicane Beach on Wednesday evening.

It took me 30 minutes to reach the platform, and 45 to return from it to my car again. There were over one lakh of people, and it did good to see how Harijans and caste people mixed together in the crowd. That would not have happened a few years ago. Untouchability is going.[1]

Madras Mail, 22-12-1933

354. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"[2]

MADRAS,
December 22, 1933

As usual I have experienced nothing but deep affection from the people wherever I have gone. But I must confess that I was unprepared for the demonstration at the Beach and the demons-trations that I witnessed during the visits to several labour areas. The numbers that attended these demonstrations everywhere exceeded past records.

Whilst there is no doubt that personal affection and attachment had to do a great deal with them, I am convinced that the vast mass of humanity that seemed to cling to me fully understood and appreciated what I stood for and what I had come for. If their religious sense had revolted against the drive against untouchability, the exhibition of their affection, even if I could not have lost it altogether, would have been tempered with moderation and restraint, if not reasonable coolness. I am used to reading the mass mind by taking at a sweep the expression in their eyes and their general demeanour. I could find no

[1] A cutting of this report was enclosed with "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru".
[2] Given on the eve of Gandhiji's departure from Madras.

trace of disapproval of what I have been doing in connection with untouchability. The manner in which they came forward with their contributions when I asked for them was also significant and went to strengthen the impressions I have given. I am, therefore, filled with hope for the future.

I feel that even in the South untouchability is shaken to its very roots. I would like to say to my sanatanist friends that I have no desire whatsoever to wound their susceptibilities. I want to find points of agreement; and I know there are many. The points of disagreement are few. If my approach to them cannot bring about immediate agreement, I know that time will, if I have patience which I feel I have.

I would like to add one word as to the behaviour of the Police. Today was really a trying time for them, as I had to pass through the business parts of George Town; and it gives me pleasure to be able to say that their behaviour was friendly and helpful. They became as it were one of the people and handled them in a gentle manner. I am grateful to them for this exhibition of friendliness.

The Hindu, 23-12-1933

355. MESSAGE TO TAMIL LOVERS' CONFERENCE

December 22, 1933

I hope that the love of Tamil lovers will prove lasting and stand the severest strain. The superficial knowledge that I have of Tamil has enabled me to appreciate the beauty and the richness of the language. To neglect it would appear to me to be criminal.

M. K. GANDHI[1]

The Hindu, 23-12-1933. Also C. W. 9699. Courtesy : Madras Library Association

356. SPEECH AT GUNTUR[2]

December 23, 1933

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Guntur is not new to me. I thank you for your address and the purse you have offered to me. The lawyers of Guntur have subscribed

[1] The signature is in the Tamil script.

[2] Gandhiji's speech in Hindi was translated into Telugu by Konda Venkatappayya.

a sum of Rs. 145. I myself was a lawyer once. I say I cannot accept such a small sum from the lawyers. They are not so poor. I understand from this that the Guntur lawyers have not interested themselves in the Harijan cause. This sum of Rs. 145 can be given by a single vakil. I ask them, 'What are you going to do ?' I know the lawyers of Guntur. That is why I am telling them so. Last time when I was here, they gave me a bag of money. All days are not alike. Then money was plentiful, now a little scarce.

I have just visited Mr. Punna Rao's Gurunatheswara temple at Tilakpet. Because of the name given to the deity, the temple has become unpopular as the deity was named after the paternal uncle of Mr. Punna Rao. In truth, there is nothing wrong in the name 'Gurunatheswara', though the name "Gurunath" may be wrong. In my opinion God should not be named so as to perpetuate the memory of a human being. It is not proper that the name of the donor should go with the charity. This is my personal opinion. The name of the God should not really matter. Mr. Punna Rao, the late Gurnadham's brother's son, has told me that he has no objection to change the name of the deity. The deity will hereafter be called 'Gouri Vishweshwara'. I have signed the paper containing the new name.

Mr. Punna Rao wants to throw open the temple to the Harijans. But I have asked him not to do it now and for this reason. Temple-entry and change of name at one and the same time is not desirable under the peculiar circumstances of the case. I am not against any temple being thrown open to the Harijans. But I am not for compulsion. When the *bhaktas* and the trustees are willing, the temple should be thrown open to the Harijans. Now that the deity's name has been changed, the trustees and myself are anxious to see how many of you will visit the temple. Three months hence from today, i.e., on the 23rd of March next, this temple will be thrown open to Harijans. It cannot be done unless public opinion favours it. If public opinion favours it, the temple will be thrown open on the 23rd of March next, by which time I hope the issue will be settled. I hope you will attend this temple from now on and witness the entry into it by the Harijans on the 23rd of March next.

If the *savarnas* do not do justice to the Harijans the Hindu religion will perish. No religion perishes owing to extraneous causes. It lies in nobody's power to do it. But a religion will perish if those who follow it tread the path of *adharma*.

The Hindu, 24-12-1933

357. SPEECH AT HARIJANS' MEETING, THALLAPALEM

December 23, 1933

It gives me much pleasure to be able to come here. But I must also tell you that it gives me much trouble. The car could not negotiate its road to my satisfaction. Therefore, most of the way I had to walk. Walking itself is no trouble. But the fact is I had no time and yet I have to come here. The promise having been made, I have to fulfil that promise.

By cutting the knot, I have performed the opening ceremony of the Harijan Ayurvedic Kuteeram. I hope it will be a proper institution for healing the ills of those surrounding this place. Though, through the kindness of the organizers of this function, the address has not been read to you, I have read it. The address is a report of your present activities and somewhat your hopes for the future. I do wish that your hopes for the future may be fulfilled, but as a worker of 50 years standing I want to utter a word of caution.

You have a very ambitious programme and if the managers or trustees of your programme are vigilant, painstaking, honest and men of unimpeachable character, it is just possible that you can work up the programme. But if there is want of vigilance, want of care, want of honesty, want of ability, I promise that not even one item of your programme will be fulfilled. For my part, I will appeal to the Harijan Sevak Sangh to give you an equal contribution for the work you might do. Well, I can make this promise on behalf of the Harijan Sevak Sangh, viz., that if you will produce a workable scheme and men of character that will satisfy the Harijaan Sevak Sangh, and if you produce proper accounts which can be inspected from time to time by the Harijan Sevak Sangh, certainly the Harijan Sevak Sangh will be able to render you help, financially. Therefore, if you do not receive help from the Harijan Sevak Sangh you will have to blame yourself and not the Harijan Sevak Sangh. But you will be able to get help from the Harijan Sevak Sangh if you satisfy the conditions I have suggested. As far as I know from the previous history of the Harijan Sevak Sangh it never went back from the promises it made.

The Harijan Sevak Sangh has enough of money to satisfy your wants.

To those who have assembled here I appeal to make use of all the institutions that may rise in your midst in every legitimate way possible. I want to hear of Harijan institutions coming into being here

and everywhere. The object of the Harijan Sevak Sangh is not to displace your labours but to supplement them. The Harijan Sevak Sangh will have more than justified its existence if it will be able to serve Harijans properly. Therefore, you can easily under-stand that the reputation of the Harijan Sevak Sangh depends entirely upon your hands and your own approval.

One thing more I would like to say and that is the same I have been repeating everywhere. That is this. In this movement of purification Harijans will have to play an honourable and valuable part. I repeat that you should all observe, if you have not already been observing, the laws of hygiene and sanitation. It does not mean that all *savarna* Hindus are living in sanitary conditions. As a Harijan by choice, I ask you to rise above these things and purify yourselves, unmindful of what *savarna* Hindus do or what they are. Similarly if there are any Harijans, who are eating carrion and beef, I invite them to give up these habits and, if they have never touched these things, I want them to become missionaries and do propaganda work against such habits. And then comes the drink curse. If you are, or any one of you, addicted to drink, give it up, for drink is a poison. You should not take that poison because many *savarna* Hindus also take poison. You do not want to sink with *savarna* Hindu but you want to swim with them, and if you have developed vigorous arms and can swim well, *savarna* Hindus will also rise; I know for certain that the time is coming in the near future when the Harijans will be able to help *savarna* Hindus out of the mire in which they are falling. Therefore I want every Harijan to work in robust faith.

To *savarna* Hindus I want to say one word. If you do not forget all distinctions of high and low, rid yourselves and your hearts of untouchability altogether, you and I and the Hindu race will perish. I want you to believe this although thousands of persons may say anything to the contrary. What I say is out of rich experience.

The Hindu, 24-12-1933

358. TESTIMONIAL TO P. M. RAO

December 23, 1933

Shri Poovada Mrityunjaya Rao was most attentive during my day's tour through Guntur District.[1]

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 9755. Courtesy : Andhra Pavilion in Gandhi Darshan, Delhi, 1969-70

[1] Gandhiji had covered Guntur District by car on December 23 in one day.

359. SPEECH AT PEDDAPURAM

December 24, 1933

FRIENDS,

Let me tender you my congratulations on the most admirable arrangements made in order to secure a straight passage for me to the meeting place. You can well imagine that I have very limited energy to work my way through pressing crowds. It was therefore most refreshing for me to find here that I had not to push my way through crowds. I thank you for the several addresses and the purse just presented to me and I thank you also for the restraint with which you have refrained from desiring to read those addresses.

You know the purpose of this tour. I want you to join me in driving out the curse of untouchability. I want you to join with me in whole-heartedly believing that untouchability as we practise it can have no religious sanction. The very thought that any single human being can be born untouchable is most debasing. We are too near our own times to notice how Hinduism is disintegrating under the load of this heavy curse and I must repeat here what I have said from a thousand platforms that if untouchability is not removed, Hinduism dies. It therefore gladdens my heart when I see such a large number of people gathering at this meeting and giving their coppers. But I must not detain you and detain myself discoursing on this problem of untouchability.

I have a heavy programme in front of me for the day. I will therefore close by repeating my thanks to you for the admirable arrangements, the address and the purse, and by the prayer that God may give us sufficient strength to go through this process of purification.

I would like to give a few brief minutes to the sale of these frames containing the address and to the sisters here to discard their precious ornaments. If any of you have not contributed to the purse and desire to pay your share to this purse, you will kindly do so. But now these two frames have suffered a reverse. The glass is broken. Let this be a lesson for the future that no frames are presented to me. I know that Andhra is an artistic province of India. You must therefore discover the artistic and simple method of framing the addresses you present.

The Hindu, 25-12-1993

360. SPEECH AT GOLLAPALEM

December 24, 1933

I first learnt to beg pennies from indentured labourers in South Africa. Such collections have always been charged with refreshing blessings. I cannot recall a single instance of a man or a woman who repented for having given to me. Causes for which I have begged were good. The Harijan cause for which I beg now is undoubtedly the best for which I have begged. I am now inviting *savarna* Hindus to a purificatory rite and to repentance. Whatever little a *savarna* Hindu does for Harijans, he does to uplift himself or herself and Hinduism.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-12-1933

361. SPEECH AT RAMACHANDRAPURAM

December 24, 1933

I am grateful to you for your addresses of welcome[1] and the money you have given me. But what you paid does not satisfy me. I expect more. I am now disposing of the two addresses presented to me in auction.[2]

I congratulate you on the excellent arrangements you have made for holding this meeting. This place is richly endowed by nature; and beautifying things is a special characteristic of nature. By God's grace, you have not spoiled the beauty of nature but maintained it intact. All of you know that you have in your midst an ashram known as the Valmiki Ashram. I have just visited that Ashram, which gives shelter to Harijan boys, and I had the pleasure of hearing the *bhajans* and *keertans* sung by those boys. I was very much impressed by them. They have presented me with a beautiful address in which they ask for your support. The Ashram stands in need of your support—from all of you; it deserves all the support that the people of the taluk give it.

Nature intended all human beings to be equals; but man in his arrogance has created invidious distinctions by classing some as high and some as low. God does not recognize these inequalities. You may

[1] Presented by the Ramachandrapuram Taluk Board and the Hindi Premi Mandali

[2] After the auction, Gandhiji's speech in English was translated into Telugu by B. Sambamurti.

see anywhere or anything in nature, but you cannot see this kind of inequality which man has created. So unless you eradicate the evil of untouchability, you cannot establish equality, which is nature's law. I ask you all to join me in my prayer to Almighty to give you strength and courage to eradicate the curse of untouchability entirely. I do not want to detain you longer. If you succeed in collecting any more money among the ladies, you will please bring it to me.

The Hindu, 26-12-1933

362. SPEECH AT RAJAHMUNDRY [1]

December 24, 1933

I would ask you to kindly listen to me for a few moments. I thank you for all these addresses and several purses. It gave me very great pleasure to be able to renew my acquaintance with Rajahmundry and its citizens. You have taught me to expect great things from you and I hope that you will in this Harijan cause, live up to the expectations that you have raised.

I see here the address pesented by the Hindu Samaj. I have gone through its programme that was sent to me. It is an ambitious programme; but no programme whether ambitious or unambitious can possibly be fulfilled without the necessary change of heart amongst the millions of *savarna* Hindus. Untouchability is like a slow poison killing the Hindu body, and even as you cannot sustain a body that is slowly perishing, you will not be able to sustain this perishing Hinduism unless you remove the curse of untouchability.[2]

I am too sorry to have to inform you that it will be impossible for me to go on with my speech unless I secure complete silence on your part. Now by the time you sit down, I propose to do a little bit of work and therefore I propose to put up this address by the Municipality for auction.

The Hindu, 26-12-1933

[1] The speech was translated into Telugu by B. Sambamurti.

[2] At this stage there was some disturbance and commotion in the gathering.

363. REPLY TO HARIJAN DE`PUTATION[1]

RAJAHMUNDRY,
December 24, 1933

One important question that you have raised is that the Harijan Sevak Sangh should be principally manned and managed by you. That shows that you have not followed the pages of the *Harijan.* That shows also that you have not understood the origin of the Board. The Board has been formed to enable *savarna* Hindus to do repentance and reparation to you. It is thus a Board of debtors and you are the creditors. You owe nothing to the debtors, and therefore, so far as this Board is concerned, the initiative has to come from the debtors. You have to certify whether the debtors discharge their obligation or not. What you have to do is to enable and help them to discharge their obligations; that is to say, you can tell them how they can discharge their obligation, you can tell them what in your opinion will satisfy the great body of Harijans. They may or may not accept your advice. If they do not, naturally they run the risk of incurring your displeasure. A debtor may go to a creditor and say to him, I have brought so much money, will you take it ?' The creditor may say, 'Off you go; I want full payment or none.' Or the creditor may say, 'What you have brought is not part payment, but worse.' All these things you, creditors, can do. And so, when this Board was established and some Harijan friends wrote to me, I told them that Harijans should form themselves into advisory boards or boards of inspection. I want you to understand this distinction thoroughly. You will please see that there is no desire not to accept your advice or co-operation or help. I am only putting before you the true and logical position. This is a period of grace that God has given to caste Hindus, and it is during this period of grace that they have to prove their sincerity. And I am moving heaven and earth and am going about from place to place, simply in order that this obligation on the part of *savarna* Hindus may be fully discharged.

A member of the deputation then suggested that the Board should appoint advisory committees of Harijans of its own selection.

Do not ask the Board to select a committee of Harijans, but select your own committee and say to the Board you have elected

[1] A deputation of Harijans from East Godavari District met Gandhiji at Rajahmundry.

these members and it should carry on correspondence with them. There is another danger in the suggestion. There may be factions and divisions among you. Different committees may be appointed by different factions. The Board may recognize all of them. But that will be unfortunate. Let there be no quarrels among you. Present a united front to the debtors. The debtors may put you against one another, though the Board, if it is worth its name, will not do that. The Congress has been able to present a united front. Today, the Congress is full of simple men like you and me. You should have a body of business-like men who will put down with a strong hand all quarrels among you. Then you will dominate the Board without being on it. Do not be easily satisfied. Tell the debtors you are not going to be satisfied with 5 shillings in the pound but that you must have 20 shillings in the pound. This is not a matter for bargaining.

Harijan, 5-1-1934

364. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

December 25, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

I have your letters. Whatever I did was done out of pure love. That you did not feel the love is my misfortune. Anyway you need not fear a repetition of the performance. You shall develop in your own way. You know what is wanted. You will do it after your style not mine. Only keep your mind and body fit. Do your Hindi in your own fashion. Take care of yourself and your things. Keep your room and yourself tidy. You should select good and easy Hindi books.

Do write fully and freely. Your letters have not hurt me. I am first class.

Love.

Speigel Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

365. LETTER TO TARABEHN R. MODI

RAJAHMUNDRY,
December 25, 1933

CHI. TARA,

It was good news that the trouble about your teeth is over. Your decision to go to Ahmedabad only after seeing Ramniklal is correct. Now that the complaint about your teeth has disappeared, your health should improve still further. Keep Ramniklal informed. I deliberately don't write to him. From the religious point of view, [my tour] is progressing very well. The body also gives excellent work. You must write to me twice or thrice a week.

Blessings to all from

BAPU

CHI. TARABEHN MODI
C/O DR. SHANTILAL
REVASHANKAR JHAVERI'S BUNGALOW
SANTA CRUZ

From a photstat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4178. Also C. W. 1677. Courtesy : Ramniklal Modi

366. LETTER TO KUSUMBEHN DESAI

RAJAHMUNDRY,
December 25, 1933[1]

CHI. KUSUM,

I have replied to your letter by wire. You have woken up too late. You stopped writing to me. Every day I hoped I would get a letter from you, but it seems you have resolved not to write. When I got your letter, I already had a long list of recruits. Among them there are three women; Mira, Kisan and Om. In all we are nine. What work do you do at present ? How do you spend your time ? Does Pyarelal write to you ? How is he ? Do you read *Harijanbandhu* ? My health is fairly good. It can stand travelling all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 1849

[1] The source has "December 26". However, Gandhiji was at Rajahmundry on December 25 in the morning and then left for Sitanagaram.

367. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

December 25, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

I got your letter. It is certainly good that you try to work with the arm only little by little. There is plenty of other kind of work for you to do.

You should not mind if Dhiru feels unhappy at being separated from you. If his health remains good, he will in time become self-reliant in Bhavnagar. Dudhibehn's company is bound to benefit him. Moreover, Kusum also is there. Let him, therefore, stay on there permanently. It will be enough if you continue to write to him regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 5361

368. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

December 25, 1933

BA,

You must have got the long letter which I wrote to you last Monday. This Monday we are in Sitanagaram. It is situated on the banks of the Godavari. It is a small village, in Andhradesha, and has an ashram in it. Being a village, it is completely peaceful. We came here in a boat. The river is quite big and, therefore, small steamers can sail on it. We visited Madras and spent three days there. Sastri was of course there. I met Jethalal. Gangabhabhi lives in the city itself. I met Jethalal's wife, too. Both are in good health. Jethalal gets a pay of Rs. 150 and is, therefore, quite happy. I met Urmiladevi's son also. There was a large number of visitors. Lakshmi is quite well. Papa also is in Madras. Lakshmi stayed with me all the three days. She was happy in the company of Mirabehn, Kisan and Om. We shall be meeting once again, for my tour of that part is incomplete. My health is all right. I was again examined by two doctors. There is, therefore, no reason at all for you to worry about me. Have Dahibhen's teeth improved? Do you get the *Jam-e-Jamshed* ? You asked for something like a

discourse. I think I must give you one today.

The chapters of the Gita recited today were IX, X, XI and XII. In Chapter IX, the Lord says that those who worship Him attain to Him.[1] In Chapter XII, He explains who should be called a *bhakta*.[2] The beauty of the description is that it does not contain any quality which even the most ignorant person cannot cultivate. Any man or woman who strives unaided by another can become a *bhakta* and be one with the Lord. The qualities mentioned are these. The *bhakta* has ill will for nobody but is a friend of all and has compassion for all; he has no feeling of personal attachment towards anything or anybody, is devoid of ego, is equal-minded to happiness and unhappiness and is of a forgiving nature. He is ever contented, is self-controlled and keeps his vows; he has dedicated his mind and reason to God. He causes pain to none and has no fears and worries, desires nothing, is pure in mind and heart and skilful in work, has renounced everything and treats friend and enemy with equal regard, is indifferent to respect and disrespect, bears heat and cold, is unmoved by praise or censure, looks upon wherever he happens to be as his home, that is, has no home of his own, doesn't speak unnecessarily and has a steady mind. Such a person [says the Lord] may be described as my *bhakta*. If all of you reflect over this deeply, you will realize that anybody who wants can become a *bhakta* without help from any other person.

Blesssings to all from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 3-4

[1] IX. 29

[2] XII. 13 to 20

369. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SITANAGARAM,
December 25, 1933

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You waited for a letter from me and I waited for one from you. I was under the impression that I had not received a reply to my letter. We are touring with such speed that I can't remember dates or days. I don't remember, even, to whom I have to write and what. That I am past sixty may also be one reason for this.

Chandrashankar has unnecessarily alarmed you about [my rising] at three. If I did not get up at that hour, I would feel very uneasy. You should insist, rather, on my going to bed early. That rule is certainly not being observed just now. Still, all the doctors tell me that my health has remained very good so far. Nor do I write as many letters as you think I do. I write only such letters as I must. If you were with me, you also would press me to write some of them. I must admit that your complaint that I left you alone [in jail] is just. But the problem will be solved by and by, I am sure. Stop worrying about me completely. I don't overstep the limits of my health. If you saw how I work, you would admit that I was taking very good care of it. Or truly speaking I should say that God has been preserving it. What would He do, however, if I opposed Him ? That He has been saving me from serious dangers is a sign that I have lost myself in Him. In Madras I was in danger every day of getting crushed, but I was saved. That was not man's doing. It was God's will. The rule about five hours has been observed mostly on paper only.

I will certainly write to Ba every week. So far I have not let a single week pass. God will keep her firm. Who else can do that? There is no cause at all for worrying about Mani.

I had sent a wire immediately to Kanjibhai[1] , and I had received a reply both by wire and letter. I have again replied by letter and said that he should not come thus far for my sake. If, however, he himself

[1] Kanhaiyalal Desai of Surat

thought it necessary to come, he might certainly do so. I have even given him [convenient] dates. I forgot to mention all this in my letter to you. His letter was a fine one.

I think it will be difficult to meet Raja, though Lakshmi saw me in Madras. She is running the sixth month and cannot, therefore, move about freely. She keeps good health. Raja wants the delivery to take place under his care. Devdas also will go to Madras. Lakshmi was in good spirits. Raja will be released on 6th February.

. . . 's[1] condition is the same that it has been. He is discontented with himself. He is miserable because. . . . is again pregant. He cannot exercise self-control and afterwards he feels unhappy. I have tried my best to comfort him. But on the whole he is better where he is.

Princess Aristarchi writes to me every week without fail. She sends money too. There is no limit to her kindness. She is now helping Trivedi's Manu . . . . [2] I have written to the Princess and requested her to explain to him his duty. It is true that Manilal and Sorabji[3] are quarrelling with each other. Their quarrel is about the policy to be followed there. I couldn't advise either of them in this quarrel. But I have written to Manilal and told him that he should follow what seems right to him, without departing from civility. I have advised him not to make the quarrel a personal affair. I believe their differences will be resolved.

Gordhanbhai continues to write about Vithalbhai's donation. I have not read all that he has written. I will take a suitable opportunity to reply to him and then keep quiet. I had a very sweet letter from Subhas. I did send it to the Press. I am sure it must have been printed.

The tour is going on very well. There is no heart-burning anywhere. So far I have not met people in the South bent on creating trouble. About the future, God alone knows. The crowds are as large as ever. We are in Sitanagaram today. There is perfect peace here. This is a small village. Today is my silence day. Tomorrow also I shall be here. If I had not got these two days at one place, it would have

[1] The names are omitted in the source.
[2] Omission as in the source
[3] Son of Parsee Rustomji

been difficult for me to go on with the tour.

I met Sastri[1] in Madras for an hour or so. It was just a friendly meeting. Munshi[2] and Lilavati[3] came and saw me there. Munshi seemed to be in good health. There was a wire from Bhulabhai. He has not recovered completely.

Kaka and Surendra Mashruwala are in Gujarat.

Kishorelal has still not recovered. Swami is in a place between Sanoli and Bombay. I suppose you hear about him.

Have I told you that Kisan is in the party with me? She is a very good young woman. Being a friend of Prema, she couldn't but be so.

Blessings to all from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 53-7

[1] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri
[2] K. M. Munshi and his wife
[3] *Ibid*

370. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

December 25, 1933

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I started to write a long letter to you, and dictated a page of this size. That was in Jabalpur. Then I could not proceed further with that letter. And now I am writing this one. It is the night of silence day, in Sitanagaram. The silence is not yet over. I will break it at 9.30 p.m. It is 8.30 p.m. only. It is not incorrect to say that I can write only on Mondays and Tuesdays. I always get up at three in the morning and write what I can between then and prayer-time. I may, of course, be interrupted even during that period. When I am in a train, sometimes, I cannot even get up at three.

I am having a wonderful experience during this tour. The crowds are larger than they used to be in the past. But these numbers may easily deceive us, for we have to reach crores of people. Nor is it that all the people who come immediately change their way of living. The only consolation is the thought that this propaganda does not seem to displease all these hundreds of thousands. We can therefore hope that sooner or later the practice of untouchability will disappear completely.

You should make your study of the *Gita* thorough in every respect. You should master both the grammatical construction and the literal meaning of the verses. I am sure you can recite the verses with correct pronunciation of the words. Again, the other reading may be limited in extent but it should be deep. A person who digests one book knows more than another who reads a thousand without digesting any of them. Do you have a spinning-wheel with you ? Wardha seems to have agreed with Vimu and Rama in every way. Rama's hand may become completely all right. Dhiru seems to be happy in Bhavnagar, but we cannot still feel that the problem about him is solved. He is still weak, but his health is much better than it used to be. Dudhibehn does of course look after him carefully. Kusum also is there. Nanabhai, too, takes care of him. Balabhadra is very happy there.

Appa Patwardhan has come here to see me. He will leave now. Kisan has joined me from Wardha. She is a friend of Prema and is a very good young woman. She has, however, become a little weak physically.

Chandrashankar is carrying the burden of two journals quite well. This time Thakkar Bapa's place is taken by Malkani. The work

is going on well. Ramnarayan also is helping. Kishorelal has been ill and suffering a good deal. He has been getting fever and it does not leave him. Brijkrishna also was seriously ill. He is improving now. His life was actually in danger. But, then, is there anyone of whom that is not true ? However, people who are not so ill that they have to remain in bed do not think that their lives are in danger.

Ba is having a holiday in Yeravda, so to say. Dahibehn's[1] teeth are giving her trouble. Shanta and Lalita are quite well. Dwarkanath seems to be managing the affair at Wardha fairly efficiently. And there is also Lakshmibehn who, as you know, has identified herself with the Ashram. Kaka and Surendra Mashruwala are in Gujarat.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5314

371. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

December 25, 1933

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

I have not heard from you for some time. You should write to me regularly. For my part I may not be able to write to you sometimes in all this rushing about of the tour.

Look after all the children. You should not forsake your duty towards Kusum because of anything that Jamna might say or write to you regarding her. Even if Kusum loves adornment I would not let her satisfy her desire. That is my weakness. As for you I cannot imagine that you could love adornment. Ask the children to write to me. I am not writing separately to them this time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 3190. Courtesy : Valji G. Desai

372. LETTER TO GOVINDBHAI R. PATEL

December 25, 1933

BHAI GOVINDBHAI,

On receipt of your letter I inquired and learnt that an invitation had been received from Pondicherry, and most probably I shall be visiting the place. If I go, I should certainly like to call on Shri

[1] Wife of Raojibhai Nathabhai Patel

Aurobindo. It would be a great disappointment to me if I could not see him. If, therefore, you can arrange for a meeting without much fuss, please do so. After the programme is finalized, I also will write and request for an interview.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI GOVINDBHAI
SHRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM
PONDICHERRY

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 10739. Courtesy : Govindbhai R. Patel

373. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

December 25, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

I got your letter. I am glad that you have improved, even if it was with the help of medicine. What we want is that you should improve, no matter how. Write to Manu from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 9636. Courtesy : Ravindra R. Patel

374. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

December 25, 1933

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have received your letters. But where do I have the leisure to write replies? Today being a silence day, I am scribbling as many letters as possible.

You should take money from the Harijan Fund account with Jamnalalji to meet the cost of the tin sheets sent to Nasik and to make

[1] According to the addressee, the contents of this letter were conveyed to Shri Aurobindo through Mother, and Shri Aurobindo wrote in pencil on the note saying : "You will have to write that I am unable to see him because for a long time past I have made it an absolute rule not to have any interview with anyone—that I do not even speak with my disciples and only give silent blessings to them three times a year. All requests for an interview from others I have been obliged to refuse. The rule has been imposed on me by the necessity of my *sadhana* and is not at all a matter of convenience or anything else. The time has not come when I can depart from it."

up the deficit Gosibehn has in the Harijan budget, then let me know how much money is still left. I think it is only proper that Gosibehn is paid every month. I shall continue my efforts to raise money from Bombay.

In what form a reply should be given about Vithalbhai is a real problem. I shall think over it.

I have not seen Munshi's statement. He has talked to you. He has also told you many other things about himself. I have told him to do what he thinks proper. I also said that I had no intention at the moment of guiding anybody.

The newspapers say that Jivraj has taken charge. If the reports are correct, congratulate him. I was a little worried. Surely he is taking some rest? What does he have to do?

I have not been able to write to Gokhale, Bapa and others. I hope to write to them tomorrow.

I had known about the Orissa Committee at Ahmedabad. It will be good if some money is collected.

Do take rest and get rid of your pain.

Taramati must be doing well.

Brijkrishna seems to have fully recovered. There was a telegram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

375. LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

December 25, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

I got your letter. It is good you have gone to Father's. I shall send you out when you are physically fit. I prefer Wardha but if you would rather go to Bhavnagar, I shall send you there. Now at least you should improve your health, do some physical labour, give up worrying and crying. Learn English and Hindi. Go on writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi : Courtesy : National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

376. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

December 26, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Here is a cutting from the *M. Mail*[1] Though the whole conversation practically referred to you and your views, naturally the interviewer could not reproduce it all. I was shown the proof. It is a fair presentation of the substance of what I said. Please read it carefully and correct me where you find me to have erred about yourself. There is a great deal of misunderstading about you in our circles too. But it does not worry me.

You will find also the programme[2] so far as it goes.

I hope Mother is progressing.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

377. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

December 26, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

I had no idea that you were confined to bed. I thought : 'Raihana has now forgotten Bapu.' As for me I had no time when I could write. It is God's grace that you are now all right.[3]

I had a long letter from Hamida. I have replied to her. Kamaladevi and I talked about many things. I have often thought about you during the tour. I yearned to hear you sing: "Arise, awake, O Traveller", but how could I hope for such good fortune ? I even felt the wish to join your band singing *bhajans.* My party includes Kisan and Jamnalalji's Om. Where has Father gone? Give my sincere greetings, *vandemataram,* love, etc., to him and to Mother. Blessing to Saroj[4] and you, and a kiss to Kamalmian.

BAPU

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Madras Mail"

[2] *Vide* Appendix " Bapu's tour Programmf",

[3] Up to this the letter is in Urdu.

[4] Saroj Nanavati

[PS.]

I hope you read *Harijan* regularly.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9655

378. LETTER TO KALYANJI V. MEHTA

December 26, 1933

BHAI KALYANJI,

Does death spare anybody ? Who knows what our plight would be without that friend ? I want all of you, and particularly Napoleon[1] to console yourself with the thought that her death was release for Gangaba. Who would listen to this philosophy of mine on such an occasion? But my wisdom about death is not derived from Shastras only and, therefore, I offer such consolation on all occasions of death. Soldiers like us ought to know its true nature. There can be no doubt that Gangaba's soul rests in peace. No evil can ever befall one who had struggled even a little to be good while living. Mahalakshmi's malaria can be cured with proper treatment.

Blessings from

BAPU

KALYANJI MEHTA
C/O DR. NATHUBHAI DAYALJI PATEL
BACK VIEW
OPPOSITE CHARNI ROAD STATION GARDEN
BOMBAY

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./XXII

379. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

December 26, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

Your letter has been lying with me for so long, but how to reply? I have to attend to heavy correspondence during travel. There is no other remedy to improve your health.

The work of Harijan service is not difficult for you. Try to improve the conditions of the Harijans right where you are living.

[1] Chhotubhai K. Mehta, son of Kunvarji Mehta

Keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

380. LETTER TO SWARUPRANI NEHRU

December 26, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I was happy to receive your letter. Well, we cannot expect now to regain full strength, but you have no longer any reason for worry. Krishna is happy. Ask Sarup to write to me occasionally, Krishna too should write. Does she plan to stay there for a few months ?

May God give you peace.

My tour is progressing satisfactorily though it is quite taxing. By the grace of God the body has withstood it so far. Ba's letters keep coming. She is cheerful.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[From Hindi]

Indira Gandhi-Gandhi Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also G.N. 11407

381. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, ELLORE

December 27, 1933

I wish to thank you all for this great reception which is an exhibition of your great affection. I thank you for the various purses and addresses including one from the Municipality and another from the District Board. You will not expect me to refer to the details of the various addresses in the too short time before me.

My first and sacred duty is to unveil the portrait of the "Lion of the Punjab", the late Lala Lajpat Rai. You will not expect me to recount before you his many valuable qualities and services. I had the privilege of enjoying his confidence till he died. He was the President of the historic session of the Congress in 1920. Today to me and to you the one outstanding quality of his is his unadulterated love for the untouchables. He has taught Hindu India to keep to its sense of duty to the so-called untouchables, the Harijans. Lajpat Rai always

proclaimed that untouch-ability was the greatest blot on Hinduism. If he had done nothing else, we, Hindus, should revere his sacred memory for his war against untouchability. Who can deny his services to the country, his bravery and his fearlessness ? It was not by an idle epithet that he was called the "Lion of the Punjab".

I must pass on to other things. You will be pleased to know that Mulpuri Chukkamma even from Vellore Jail thought of Harijans and out of her poor belongings she sent me this ring. Her letter bearing the signature of the Superintendent of the Central Jail is here with me. Who can help deriving inspiration from such acts ?[1]

Wherever I go, I find evidence of enthusiasm on the part of the people, readiness on their part to open out their hearts to the so-called untouchables, the Harijans. Wherever I go, I find a readiness on the part of the people to part with their possessions, to part with their coppers, with their silver, with their gold and women are not behind men in making their sacrifices. I know for certain that they know for what purpose they have given their bangles or their rings or whatever they hold very dear. They know that all these moneys and all these ornaments are being given in order that Harijans may be served. This cause, the more I think about it the more I feel, is a cause for all humanity and for all time. If Hindus succeed in exorcizing this devil of untouchability, if they succeed in transforming their hearts and if they succeed in purifying themselves of this blot, I have no doubt whatsoever that we, all the communities belonging to different religions, will live in happiness, contentment, peace and real friendship of the heart. I have no doubt whatsoever that, if we achieve full success in this mission, in this war against untouchability, as I have said, I have no doubt that we shall be able to achieve the heart unity. Suspicions will melt away before the sunshine of mutual trust, mutual affection and mutual respect. Let us, therefore, you and I and all, pray to God Almighty that He may bless us with sufficient strength and wisdom to see this error and correct it, no matter what it was. Let us remember that all these centuries we have suppressed a portion of ourselves and in so doing we have degraded ourselves, and we have depressed ourselves. No power on earth has yet succeeded in suppressing any portion of humanity without degrading itself and without depressing itself. The more I see, the more I feel that, if we do not drive away this untouchability, Hinduism itself will perish and it will be a loss not only

[1] What follows is from *The Hindu,* 29-12-1933

to us but it will be a loss to the world. A religion that owes its inspiration to the Vedas, to the Upanishads, to the Puranas, to *Ramayana*, why should that religion perish—for what purpose, for what reason, except that we did not observe the message of the Upanishads, that we did not observe the grand message, the grand proposition enunciated in the pages of the Vedas, the Upanishads that God alone is and no one else and nothing else ? Do you suppose the preachers of that one God, God of Justice, preached that there could be any divisions of high and low amongst ourselves ? It is an impossible thing. The more one thinks about these things, the more it is surprising that a people so cultured as Hindus are supposed to be, should have hugged untouchability as a part of their religion. And remember lastly that all the religions in the world are today in the melting pot. They are all being critically examined and tested and public opinion will not forgive you and me if we do not energetically drive away this evil from our midst. I must not now take any more of your time on untouchability.[1]

Mr. Gandhi then said that as he was speaking at Ellore, the headquarters of the Andhra Provincial Anti-untouchability Association, he wished to draw attention to the fact that he had received some complaints against some of its office-bearers. Mr. Gandhi said that he and Mr. Thakkar, the vigilant Secretary of the Central Board, found after investigation that there was absolutely no foundation for the charges made. He always kept his eyes and ears open for receiving any *bona-fide* complaints, but he insisted that anybody who complained should do so on two conditions. Firstly, he must announce his name to the public instead of sending anonymous letters and secondly he must substantiate all his allegations by unimpeachable evidence.

Mr. Gandhi delivered his speech in English and before closing he said that it was a great regret to him to have done so, even in Andhradesha where Hindi had progressed very much. He had to speak in English to facilitate translation. It would not at all be difficult for the Andhras to learn Hindi as many of the words were derived from Sanskrit out of which the Telugu language was formed.

The Hindu, 28-12-1933 and 29-12-1933

[1] The following is from *The Hindu*, 28-12-1933.

382. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, VIZAGAPATAM

December 28, 1933

The Harijan cause is like fire. The more ghee you put into fire, the more it requires. So also, the more you give to the Harijan cause, the more it requires. Those who give to the cause gain, they never lose; and those who do not give undoubtedly lose. What you gain by giving is merit. What you lose by not giving is your self. For men and women belonging to *savarna* Hindu castes have been persecuting Harijans now for ages. And if we are just now passing through evil times, I am convinced that our treatment of Harijans has not a little to do with it. I have, therefore, been asking the women of India to drive away the ghost of untouchability from their hearts. It is wrong, it is sinful, to consider some people lower than ourselves. On God's earth nobody is low and nobody is high. We are all His creatures; and just as in the eyes of parents all their children are absolutely equal, so also in God's eyes all His creatures must be equal. Therefore I ask you to believe me when I tell you that there is no sanction in religion for untouchability. I would, therefore, ask you to give a place in your hearts to all the Harijans around you. Welcome Harijan children in your own homes. Go to Harijan quarters and look after their children and their homes; speak to Harijan women as to your own sisters.

This cause of Harijans is essentially for the women of India to tackle; and I hope that you, the Hindu women of this place, will do your duty. I hope those of you, who have the wish and the ability to surrender all or any part of your jewellery, will do so. There is one condition attached to the gift. If you give anything whatsoever, it must not be replaced. I want you to feel that you personally have given something to this cause, which you cannot do when you give rupees or notes. For they come from either your parents or your husbands. But jewellery is your own property. When you surrender your jewellery without any intention of having it replaced by your parents or husbands, it is definitely your own sacrifice. I want you all who have understood the spirit of the message I have delivered to you to make that definite sacrifice.

Harijan, 5-1-1934

383. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, VIZAGAPATAM

December 28, 1933

You drove me today, on my alighting at the station, through a row of Harijans who were being fed at that time through the charity of some townsman. Whilst he may be entitled to thanks for his liberality, I must confess that it was not a soul-stirring scene. I hung my head in shame as the car was driven through the road along which Harijan men and women were feeding. Just imagine how you and I would feel if some insolent person drove his car through the road where we were taking our meals. I know the custom under which caste dinners are given. All traffic along the road on which dinners are given is entirely prohibited, so that it is possible for diners to have their meals and to be served in perfect peace. As I have said repeatedly, this movement of purification goes down to the roots of our hearts. I have not asked *savarna* Hindus to appear as patrons before Harijans and throw the leavings of their dishes to them. But I have invited them to open out their hearts to Harijans and to ind there a sanctuary for them. But what I saw today was like the act of a patron towards his dependents. And do you know, not only my car was driven through the rows of people taking meals, but other cars followed and the crowd also followed these cars. And I noticed that it was a hard thing for those poor people to protect their food from dust blowing on it. It was not, to say the least, a becoming performance. And you can now understand my grief at having been obliged to witness it.

I know there was no evil intention behind this act. I know also that there was not a single person who had any desire to insult these Harijans who were given free meals. I understand also that those who took me through that road thought it would please me to drive through the rows of Harijans taking meals. I know it was nothing but simple thoughtlessness. As we have been told by Shastras, to live a religious life is like walking on the edge of a sword. And in a worldwide movement like this of self-purification among millions of human beings, a single thoughtless act takes the shape of sin. Every act of ours, therefore, in connection with this Harijan movement has to be dictated and dominated by punctiliousness, extreme caution and inward searching. Having witnessed this scene, I thought it would be wrong on my part not to make a public reference to it. By drawing your attention to it, I have endeavoured to warn the public taking part

in this movement of self-purification against a repetition of the scene of this morning.

This brings me to what we are doing today through the length and breadth of India. I have not the shadow of a doubt that untouchability is an unmitigated curse on Hinduism. If the Shastras represent the will and wish of God, there can be no warrant whatsoever in them for untouchability, for which you find no parallel in any part of the world save India. It is bad enough when dictated by selfish motives to consider ourselves high and other people low. But it is not only worse but a double wrong when we tack religion to an evil like untouchability. It, therefore, grieves me when learned pundits come forward and invoke the authority of the Shastras for a patent evil like untouchability. I have said, and I repeat today, that we, Hindus, are undergoing a period of probation. Whether we desire it or not, untouchability is going. But if during this period of probation we repent for the sin, if we reform and purify ourselves, history will record that one act as a supreme act of purification on the part of the Hindus. But if, through the working of the time spirit, we are compelled to do things against our will and Harijans come to their own, it will be no credit to the Hindus or to Hinduism. But I go a step further and say that if we fail in this trial, Hinduism and Hindus will perish.

Harijan, 5-1-1934

384. NOTES

SOME QUESTIONS

It is wonderful how the very same questions are being asked again and again at the different places visited by me and this by those whom one would expect to be readers of *Harijan* or otherwise to be acquainted with what I have said on those questions. But so long as they continue to be asked, I suppose I must deal with them and hope that the readers who are familiar with them will not mind the trespass on these columns. I need not repeat the questions. The following answers will suggest the kind of questions asked.

1. There can be no compulsion in the matter of temple-entry.

2. No temple wil be opened to Harijans without the approval of a clear majority of trustees or an overwhelming majority of persons believing in temple worship and entitled to use the temple in question

for purposes of worship.

3. There is no compulsion whatever in the Temple-entry Bill or the Anti-untouchability Bill. Harijans should be subject to the same rules of admission as are applicable to the other Hindus.

4. If anybody satisfies me that the Shastras enjoin untouchability as it is observed today, I shall at once give up the agitation.

5. But my settled conviction is that modern untouchability is an inhuman institution having its root in selfishness and the desire for exploitation of fellow-beings found to be amenable to suppression.

6. The untouchables are made and unmade by census enumerators and commissioners as has been abundantly proved in these pages.

NO TOYS PLEASE

Andhradesha easily beats other provinces in presenting toys and the like. Some produce little silver cups, some trays, some other fancy things not easily portable. I cannot induce buyers on the spot to bid for numerous things and however tempting they may be for the cause, they become a nuisance to carry and keep count of. I would, therefore, advise organizers to discountenance, if not forbid, such gifts. In several places heavy frames and portraits have been presented. They become a positive burden and are unsalable in the market. On no account should frames be presented. I would like the tour to retain its serious character and be business-like involving little or no waste in any matter. I may mention incidentally that, in presenting purses, bank-notes should be used wherever possible, instead of coins. In swift travelling, covering ten to fifteen places in a day, it is difficult to count all the cash from day to day and keep accurate accounts. In any case, the accountants, devoted though they are, are over-worked and often have to keep late hours in order to keep themselves up to date. Big organizations like the All-India Harijan Sevak Sangh cannot be efficiently and yet cheaply conducted without attention to minutest details and without the intelligent co-operation of the workers and volunteers taking part in it.

*Harijan,*29-12-1933

385. MARWARI RELIEF SOCIETY

This Society was established in Calcutta in1923. In the report on the flood-relief work in Orissa sent by Sjt. Harakhchand and published in the *Harijan Sevak*, there is a mention of this Society's valuable services. On my way to Bezwada from Delhi the other day, some workers of the above Society met me at Palwal station. They are helping the flood victims in the district of Gurgaon. At the station they gave me a report containing a detailed account of their work and told me : 'If you read this, you will know that we made no distinction between untouchables and others; in fact we paid special attention to the poor helpless Harijans.' The account of the services rendered from November 19, 1933 to December 13, 1933 is to be found in this report. The Society's volunteers worked in 144 villages. They distributed 2,809 quilts, 1,846 shirts, 1,256 skirts and 872 maunds, 5 seers of grain among 4,098 flood victims. They distributed medicines to 3,052 patients suffering from itch, cholera, cough and other maladies. Wherever needed, the sick were given milk, barley, sago and other things. Houses damaged by floods are being rebuilt. The Society is working in seven places: Palwal, Dighout, Bannikheda, Banchari, Hodal, Hasanpur and Gulabad. I thank the Society and the young volunteers who are working in the above seven places. The number of Harijans and non-Hindus helped by the Society is also separately given in the report. As long as this pernicious tendency towards discriminating between man and man persists, even in times of common relief operations, so long, unfortunately, separate mention of Hindus, Harijans and non-Hindus is and will continue to be necessary in this unfortunate land.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 29-12-1933

386. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

December 29, 1933

CHI. MANUDI,

I felt happy after reading your long letter. I daily think about you. Tell Kusum that I cannot help her now. What will it avail her to think of me ? Let her go on repeating Ramanama. It will give her

peace of mind. You should teach her to do that. Sing the Ramadhun to her. You can sing many *bhajans*. What can I say to comfort aunt Bali ? If I were free from other duties, I would go to her and help her run her home and free her from her worries. But it is impossible during this life that I can even stand in such relation to her. What you write about death is perfectly true. It will come to all of us sooner or later.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 2664. Courtesy : Manubehn S. Mashruwala

387. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

December 30, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

Let us be natural. You should write when you feel like writing and let me write when I can spare a moment. Not a day passes when I do not think of you. I am glad you are making steady progress. I would like you to feel perfectly safe and free from nervousness. You should tell me all about your pupils. Do you see Ramdas and his wife often ?

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I am keeping excellent health, diet remaining the same.

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

388. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ

December 31, 1933

CHI.RUKMINI,

I got your postcard. You do not seem to have received the postcard I wrote to you on my way here. I have had no letters from Santok for some time. You did well in meeting Jamnalalji. Have you learnt the Marwari speech ? I am sure you have acquired perfect command over Hindi now. Besides Om, Kisanbehn is accompanying me. Has Om written to you about her ? She is a friend of Prema-behn's. I have caught cold.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9156

389. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

December 31, 1933

CHI. KANTA,

I had expected your letter. Write regularly. Give me news about Vidya, Shanti, etc. Om and Kisan are quite happy. Kisan probably does not remember you. What did you do at Banaras? I am sure you will have met Sumangal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

390. LETTER TO JOACHIM ALVA

[*1933*][1]

MY DEAR ALVA,

When I tell you that I am writing this between 3 and 4 a.m., before the morning prayer, you will understand the pressure under which I have to cope with my correspondence. That is the reason for the delay in replying to your letter. It was good of you to let me have that excellent letter. I suppose you do know that I tried to meet you at Yeravda and then you were removed.

I trust you are a regular reader of *Harijan.*

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Permanent address Wardha, C.P.

From a photostat: C. W. 10959. Courtesy: Joachim Alva

[1] This was sent to the addressee after his release from Nasik Jail, where he had been interned in 1933.

391. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

CUDDAPAH STATION,
January 1, 1934

BA,

Send me a copy of the discourse I sent you last time.[1] I got your letter only today. I am writing this letter on my silence day. Do not worry about Manilal. I am sending your letter to him. You need not get alarmed by what Pragji said. Both are mature persons. If they have made a mistake they will correct it. Arrangement has already been made for *jame-e-jamshed.* Mathuradas informs me that this has been done, and so I have done nothing further about it. I hope you get it now. All the same, I am inquiring again. I will try about the *Ramayana* and the *Bhagavata*. Don't feel the slightest hesitation in writing to Premlilabehn for anything you want. After all, what are you likely to want ? What few things you want she will send with great love. But about anything which you do not require immediately, it will be enough if you write to me. I will then make the necessary arrangements. Can you use your dentures ? Do you gargle with potassium permanganate water ? Thakkar Bapa is not in the party with me this time. He will meet me on the 15th. Just now Malkani is with me. He also is working very hard, along with the others. Chandra-shankar keeps fairly good health. Om and Kisan are taking good care of their health. Om works as hard as she can. She is a simple-hearted and straightforward girl. And so is Kisan. Surendra has regained his strength.

The Andhra tour ends on the 3rd. After that we shall go to Mysore. Wherever I go, there is bound to be a lot of activity and some hardships too. But I am carefully protected by everybody and so don't feel the hardships much. As Mirabehn looks after the smallest detail, I don't feel the discomfort of travelling at all. You will be permitted to receive a letter from me every week only if you forgo your right of receiving visitors. I for one will go on sending a discourse every week. Be satisfied with visitors who come to see the other women. However, do as you wish. If you are keen on having visitors, there would be many ready to go. They would even wish to go. We have deliberately made it a practice to receive the fewest

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Kasturba Gandhi", 25-12-1933

possible visitors. But let me know your wish without any hesitation. Janakibehn is all right. I think I have already written to you about her son Ramakrishna's tonsils being removed. Kamala has now resumed solid foods. Kishorelal is still not free from fever. But there is no cause for worry. These days my silence commences on Sunday night. I, therefore, don't speak till Monday night. The silence will be broken today at ten minutes past nine. Hence I shall hardly have to speak to anybody, since soon after it will be time to go to bed. I have to get up at three in the morning. Brijkrishna's fever has come down. But he has yet to regain strength. Hemibehn is no more. Now the discourse.

Last time I wrote about the attributes of a *bhakta*. I also explained that there could be no *bhakti* without service. This time I will write about how one can serve, since people frequently ask me that question. Some say that service is possible only under certain conditions. Some others that it is possible only after certain studies. I explained last week that these were wrong notions. One can serve under any conditions. If we offer up to Shri Krishna all our gifts and possessions, we shall get full marks. Anybody who can give one crore but gives only half a crore, will not get more than 50 marks. But he who has only one pie and gives it will get 100 marks. If, therefore, you and the other women prisoners there behave in this manner towards the women with whom you come into contact or towards the officials, you are fufilling the dharma of service. Behaving towards the officials in the spirit of service means never wishing them ill, showing them due respect and not deceiving them. All the rules should be obeyed and the women undergoing imprisonment for criminal offences should be treated as if they were your blood-sisters. If you let them feel your love and see your purity of heart, that also will mean practising the dharma of service. In both cases one's motives must be clean. If a person behaves in a good way with a selfish motive or through fear, his actions cannot be reckoned as service. We often see one person doing a thing with a selfish motive and another doing the same thing with a benevolent motive. There can be no room for self-interest in anything done as an offering to the Lord. One who serves in this manner daily gains more strength. His studies and his work, both are inspired by the motive of service. Even the laughing or playing,eating or drinking of a person who is thus dedicated to service are informed with the spirit of service. All his actions, therefore, will be innocent. The Lord always gives to such *bhaktas* the strength they need. You probably remember the three verses in the women's prayer

which have a bearing on this. They are as follows :

> As for those who worship Me, thinking on Me alone and nothing else, ever attached to me, I bear the burden of getting them what they need.[1]
>
> With Me in their thoughts, their whole soul devoted to Me, teaching one another, with Me ever on their lips, they live in contentment and joy[2]
>
> To these, ever in tune with Me, worshipping Me with affectionate devotion, I give the power of selfless action, whereby they come to Me ![3]

Refer to the *Anasaktiyog* for the meaning of these verses. You will find them in Chapters 9 and 10. Remember that we read the *Gita* to put its teaching into practice. All that I have said above is, you should know, on the basis of the *Gita.*

Blessings to all from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 4-6

392. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

January 1, 1934

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I could not reply to your letter earlier. I get the time only at 3 a.m. or when I am travelling in a train. This I am writing in a train. There is no question of your doing anything else till you have completely recovered your health. If Father can spare money, you certainly need not hesitate to ask him for help. I don't know how he is financially placed at present. You should ask him and find out. One need not hesitate to ask one's father about his financial condition. If he is not in a position to give you any help, you may let me know. I will make some arrangement immediately.

I wrote the above in the train. I will now complete the reply.

I hope Jayaprakash is benefiting from the treatment. You have not told me in your letter how both of you meet your expenses, nor what steps have been taken regarding the debt.

I am in good health. There has been no change in my diet. I have not been weighed lately but I think the weight must have increased. Mirabehn's health is fairly good. She doesn't do anything

[1] *Bhagavad Gita,* IX. 22, X. 9 and 10 ; *vide* "Discourses on the "Gita", 28-8-1926

[2] *ibid*

[3] *ibid*

except looking after me. She doesn't attend meetings. Om and Kisan help her. They attend meetings sometimes. Kisan's health is improving. Ramnarayan doesn't seem to be keeping well. He will carry on as long as he can.

Ba writes to me from time to time. Rama, Ranchhodbhai's[1] daughter, has got married. She and her husband came to me at Ellore for my blessings. I have not heard from Manibehn at all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3438

393. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

January 1, 1934

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have not yet received the letter which is due from you. I hope you got the long letters which I wrote to you. Ba is worrying about you a great deal in jail. She has been upset by some things that Pragji has said. She believes that you, Manilal, have quarrelled with everybody there. I do not believe this, of course. I merely write what Ba has written to me. She has asked me to convey her exact words. Since she is in jail and can write only one letter, I naturally feel that I should satisfy her wishes, whatever they are. That is the only reason why I have mentioned this.

I keep very good health. The details are always given in *Harijan.*

Nanabhai continues to be in poor health. Kishorelal has been having fever for a long time and it does not go. I inquire and get reports about him regularly. I trust he will be all right in a few days.

Santok's mother has passed away. Kashi's sister, Hemi, is also dead. Devdas is well. After his release, he will go to Madras to be with Lakshmi at the time of her delivery.

I don't think it is necessary for me now to write anything about the differences among you there.

[1] Ranchhodlal Sheth, a mill–owner of Ahmedabad

Om has made a copy of Ba's letter and so I am sending the original to you. Earlier I had intended to send it to Ramdas.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4813

394. LETTER TO PESTONJI

January 1, 1934

BHAI PESTONJI,

Kakasaheb has written a special letter to me about you. I shall certainly be happy if you join me. If you find it convenient, you may complete the whole tour. Our mode of living is, of course, simple. We travel by third class and work hard day and night. We have to do physical work and make do with whatever food and accommodation we get. If you are physically strong and if your mode of living is simple, you will feel no hardship. If you have the courage, come and have this experience. I would certainly welcome a young man of your ability and straightforwardness. Send a wire if you decide to come. We shall be touring in Mysore State for about seven days. If, therefore, you come, buy a ticket for Bangalore. You will know there where I am touring. Send a telegram to me at Bangalore. I will get it wherever I am and will make the necessary arrangements. Someone will meet you at Bangalore station. You will not be stranded even if the telegram does not reach me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8046

395. LETTER TO SURENDRA MASHRUWALA

January 1, 1934

CHI. SURENDRA,

I learn that you started crying and returned to Bombay out of fear of being beaten. There is no reason for you to feel upset or ashamed about it. Have you not read how scared I used to be at the age of seventeen or eighteen ? I would however also advise you not to go to jail out of a false sense of shame. This time a few will have to go to jail repeatedly. If on examining yourself you now wish to return

home, you may do so. Serve there and go to jail when God prompts you and gives you full courage. Remember that God always gives the strength to bear physical pain to those who have surrendered themselves completely to him. But such strength is not acquired by thinking. It is a gift from God, which His devotees invariably receive. Follow the course which you find the easiest for yourself. Write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 1527. Courtesy : Manubehn S. Mashruwala

396. LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

January 1, 1934

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. It is not a reply to my letter. Perhaps you got it late.

I was of course confident that Kakaji would send you a reply and that too a good one.

If you have to go to Karachi, then do travel alone in daytime. Do not fear anyone. Have faith that God is there to protect us. I want to see you fearless, industrious, sociable and physically strong. And I have no doubt that you can be.

How is Mahadev ? How much milk does he take ? Does he trouble you now ? Do you take him for outing ?

What is the news about Anand ? What do you study ? Read Hindi books daily. Study English also as much as possible.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Multan is near to you. It would be good if you meet Devdas. But meet him only when you really wish to. He is in the New Central Jail. Om [and] Kisan are well.

From a microfilm of the Hindi : Courtesy : National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

397. LETTER TO LAKSHMI GANDHI

January 1, 1934

CHI. LAKSHMI,

Though we could not talk much, your three days' stay brought me satisfaction. Your depression ought to disappear. I am enclosing a copy of the letter received from Ba. Read it if you can and send it on to Devdas.

Ask Papa[1] to write to me. A letter for Anna[2] accompanies this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 2003

398. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

January 1, 1934

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

What is this ? I got a wire but no letter followed it. The wire being reassuring I take it that you are now wholly free from fever. But I want a letter with all the facts. Do send me a wire first if you have not written already. It will be all right to address it to Bangalore, rather Bangalore City. We are all well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 2405

399. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

CUDDAPAH (ANDHRA),
January 2, 1934

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

Today I am writing this letter at 3.20 [a.m.]. After cleaning my teeth, I thought of you first. I find this the most quiet time for writing. I will of course have a nap during the day. Today also there will be no touring. Please don't worry about me at all. I really keep good health.

Since you don't write about yourself, I wonder whether you are keeping back anything from me. Please don't.

[1] Addressee's sister

[2] C. Rajagopalachari; the letter is not available.

I have been writing to Ba every week and will continue to do so. As desired by her, I send her some discourses on the *Gita* just as I used to do from Yeravda Mandir.

Mahadev is now permitted to write and receive only one letter. He tries to include several in one. He will get others' letters through Jivanji. He is being tested severely indeed. I am sure he will get an M.A. degree even in this. He is buried in the translation of the *Gita.*

You know Kishorelal's condition. He refuses to part with his fever. He himself has now appointed a committee consisting of Nath[1] Swami and Gomati. He will abide by their advice.

I got a letter from Ba yesterday. Om made copies of it, one of which I am sending to you. Om is a very active girl. Besides, she is eager to learn everything as quickly as she can. Being frank and truthful, she is progressing very well. Kisan's health is not as good as it used to be. Otherwise she also is a hard worker. Both the girls are extremely simple in their habits. They have become intimate friends.

Radhakant Malaviya came yesterday to see me. He has brought with him a scheme for preserving milk in dry ice and wants my help in carrying it out. But to ask for my help in such an enterprise is as futile as to churn sand for butter. Probably you know that he has been to England for practical training.

Malkani has been working very hard. He is filling Thakkar Bapa's place well enough. The entire staff works sincerely and leaves nothing to be desired. So far the work has been progressing very well.

. . .[2] is now showing his teeth. He has . . .[3] under his complete control. He doesn't intend now to give the sisters their share. He got the power of attorney given by . . .[4] to all three revoked and got a new power of attorney executed exclusively in his name. When I wrote to him protesting against all this, he gave me an evasive reply. I have now writen to Nanalal. But I don't think it will have any effect.

Anandi, Bablo. Babu, Mohan, Vanamala, Bachu and Amina's children are making good progress. Ramnarayan Pathak[5] gives three hours every week. Jamnadas [Gandhi] remains what he has been, thin and weak. He seems to be uneasy too. I think I wrote to you about the

[1] Kedarnath Kulkarni, Kishorelal Mashruwala's guru

[2] The names are omitted in the source.

[3] *ibid*

[4] *ibid*

[5] A Gujarati writer, then professor at the Gujarat Vidyapith, 1920-28

death of Santok's mother. Prabhudas will settle down to khadi work in some village near his father-in-law's place. If he continues to be in Almora, the expenses would go up very much.

Having thus remembered the family budget today, I end this letter here. I am writing to Mani, but I hope her plight is not similar to Mahadev's. Let me know if you have any information about it.

To you both or rather to all,

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 57-9

400. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

CUDDAPAH[1]

4 a.m., Before Prayers, January 2, 1934

CHI. MANI,

I do not know whether I shall be able to hear directly from you now. I do get news of you from Father, but that is not enough to satisfy me. I, therefore, write to Dahyabhai for more. Write to me if you can. Keep your body and mind fit. I am doing well enough. I write a long letter to Ba every week as a regular thing. Nothing more today.

Address your letters to Wardha..

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. MANIBEHN PATEL, PRISONER
HINDALGA CENTRAL PRISON
BELGAUM

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2 : Manibehn Patelne, p. 116

401. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 2, 1934

MY DEAR DAUGHTER,

I must write in English as I must write during the few moments I have to spare. You may not blame me if letters I write do not reach

[1] The source has "Kadkha".

you. But you have lost nothing if any letter has not reached you. I am moving about so rapidly that there need be no surprise if some of my letters go astray without anybody's fault. But my not writing does not mean that I do not constantly think of all of you. I do. But I write sparingly for want of time and in order to enable others to have a chance of writing. My letter to any one of you should be regarded as letters to all.

By the time you are discharged I shall be travelling in the extreme south of India. If you think that it is worth while coming all the way merely to see me, you shall come. I would strongly advise you to restrain yourself and do all the talking through corres-pondence.

Of course you should see your mother and also Narandas. They are both within easy reach. But the final decision rests with you. My advice to all the others is just what I am giving to you.

I am glad you have kept so well.

I have heard about Velanbehn and Durgabehn, also Lilavati. They must all write to me when they are discharged. I hope you have all made the best use of your time.

My health is excellent. The last weight was 108 lb. My food is milk and oranges and one green vegetable plain boiled without salt. I take other fruit when it easily comes my way. This is either fresh grapes or pomegranate. Generally speaking I take no dates at present. I do not seem to need them. My work commences at 3 a.m. and ends generally at 9 p.m. Of course I try to get some sleep in the middle of the day.

Your Hindi writing as also your Gujarati is not bad. I hope the Ramadan fast has not weakened you. Has Amina been taking it ? Tell her I often receive news about her children who are getting on nicely. I have just got a report from their Urdu teacher.

Love to you all

BAPU

[PS.]

Om and Kisan are with me, keeping well.

From a photostat : G.N. 289

402. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

January 2, 1934

DEAR SATIS BABU,

Your letter of 30th ultimo has given me much relief. The money you have recieved was meant to ease some pressure. It was the utmost that could be given to you. I hope your workers will succeed. It is most exacting and exasperating work. They must be prepared to take insults as cheerfully as they would take cheques and bank-notes.

I like the idea of Dr. Roy personally fixing the tour programme. I see in the papers received today that he had a serious accident. I hope it is not so serious as reported. I have wired but you will give me full details.

I am glad you have regained your weight. But 128 is not enough for your build. There is no reason why you should not have your fine muscles which you used to have before. Regarding the body as God's instrument, you are bound to keep it as fit as it is possible to keep it consistently with the obvious and necessary limits.

I hope Arun[1] is doing well. He has to attend on me when I tour in Bengal. But he won't be allowed if he is in a weak state of health.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

What about Bengali *Harijan ?*[2]

From a photostat : G.N. 1626

403. LETTER TO DUDHABHAI M. DAFDA

January 2, 1934

BHAI DUDHABHAI,

I got your letter. By God's grace everything will turn out well. I came to know only yesterday that Lakshmi[3] is expecting. I have advised that if Manjukeshabehn offers to shoulder the responsibility,

[1] Addressee's son

[2] Since Bengali *Harijan* could not support itself, Gandhiji had advised the addressee to discontinue its publication

[3] Addressee's daughter who was brought up in the Sabarmati Ashram

Lakshmi may go to Bardoli for her delivery, otherwise she should get herself admitted in the Vadilal Hospital at Ahmedabad. It has all the facilities, and some Ashram women also are working in it and they will be able to look after her. Let me know if you have any suggestion to make in this regard. I will decide finally after I hear from Maruti[1] and Laskhmi. I have made the necessary arrangements for you to get a copy of the *Harijanbandhu*. Let me know if you do not get it. What help did Sunderjibhai give ? Let me have his address. I have forgotten it completely. A girls' hostel is being run in the Sabarmati Harijan Ashram. Are you willing to send the girls there ? If yes, I may inquire. They may admit them there. My blessings to all the children.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. DUDHABAI MALJI
HARIJAN TEACHER
SATHRA
BHAVNAGAR STATE
KATHIAWAR

From a photosatat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3251

404. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

January 2, 1934

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I spoke to Shankaran. I also had a talk with a lawyer who is a good man. We came to the decision that Sasmal's help should be sought. Calling upon the services of a lawyer from outside is correct. There are few lawyers in Madras handling criminal cases, and such as there are, are not of the first rank. That is why people have to look outside. But you have nothing to do right now. If there is anything, I shall let you know. Tell Shankaran that as he has met me, you are not required to do anything.

As for Ba's inquiry, I am not aware of any good books in Gujarati except Tribhuvandas's *Nani Shikhaman.* A book of this kind is needed for Maruti's Lakshmi. Do you know of any such book? Write to me if you know of any. Which is the best book of this kind in English? Consult Jivaraj. It is very good that he is well settled. How is

[1] Lakshmi's husband

his health? Do you meet Kishorelal often? How is your own health? I have written to Jamnalalji in connection with the money to be paid to Gosibehn for the Harijan work.[1] Taramati and the child will be doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

This is Om's effort.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

405. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

January 2, 1934

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your letter. Khadi too is in the hands of Rama. Khadi will flourish if it has Rama in it and that is possible only when we have Rama in us. Let us therefore make all efforts for khadi but let us not worry about it. Rama will do the worrying. The right to worry is His only, our dharma is but to serve. The less you worry, the greater will be the success. But I want to see you cheerful in spite of failures.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 1706

406. LETTER TO HARIJAN WORKERS,

CUDDAPAH,
January 2, 1934[2]

GANDHIJI : The Harijan movement goes to the root of the evil. If untouchability goes, the castes as we know them today go.[3]

HARIJAN WORKERS : Surely not.

G. I talk of the extreme form of untouchability. But the evil is so widespread that in some form or other it runs through the whole Hindu social system and corrupts it. The distinction of high and low is

[1] *Vide*, "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 31-12-1933

[2] Extracted from Chandrashankar Shukla's "Weekly Letter"

[3] A Harijan worker had asked whether Gandhiji wanted the caste system to

at the bottom of untouchability. If the extreme form goes, the rest is bound to go. If it does not, our movement will be a mere camouflage. So long as the idea of high and low is not abolished, untouchability cannot be said to have been abolished.

H. W. What, then, of the varna which you seek to defend ?

G. I do. But you must know my definition of it. It is as different from the present caste system as chalk is from cheese. Varna say I understand it is an economic law which operates, whether we know it or not. Conformation to it will bring happiness to mankind. Disregard for it is disrupting society today all over the world. Varna is the antithesis of the doctrine of 'might is right'. It abolishes all distinctions between high and low.

H. W. But nobody gives the meaning you give to varna.

G. That may be. Evolution of human thought is evolution of the meaning of words. I have no difficulty in seeing my meaning in the original *mantra* from which the theory of varna is derived,[1] nor in the *Gita* verses referring to varna.[2]. Regulations about dining and marriage have no direct connection with varna. The distinguishing feature of varna is occupation.

H. W. Then you will restrict everyone to his father's occupation ?

G. Neither I nor anybody else can impose the restriction on anyone. Varnadharma is not a man-made law to be imposed or relaxed at his will. It is natural to man in his regenerate state. He may disregard it to his cost. Everyone is free to follow or disobey it. It was discovered in India and followed more or less faithfully and knowingly for centuries. It is being followed ignorantly and helplessly even now by the bulk of the people. In the eye of that law, Brahmin and Bhangi are absolutely on an equal footing. A Bhangi who does his work willingly and faithfully will find favour with God. A Brahmin who, no matter how learned he may be, does not follow his calling will incur divine displeasure. The law does not confer privileges, it defines duties. Truest democracy can be evolved only by a due recognition of and obedience to the law. Thus, in my opinion, there is no evil in varna. The evil consists in considering one varna as higher than another.

H. W. Surely, the varna that you describe exists only in your imagination ! What we see around us is the solid fact of hundreds of castes, each claiming to be higher than some other.

[1] Rigveda, x, *Purushasukta*

[2] *Vide,* for instance, *Bhagavad Gita,* IV. 13.

G. That is unfortunately so. I am simply answering your question and showing you the vital difference between caste and varna. Castes are a human manufacture, are daily weakening and have to go. Varna as defined by me may be said to exist in my imagination. Its definition is not imaginary. It is inherent in the *mantra* on which it is based and is given in so many words in the *Bhagavad Gita*.

Harijan, 12-1-1934

407. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CUDDAPAH

January 2, 1934

Replying to the addresses[1] and acknowledging the purse and other presents, Gandhiji said that the Cuddapah Municipality built beautiful houses for the Harijans under their employ. The quarters were kept clean and tidy. He was very glad to find a co-operatvie society and a temple in their midst, and adequate water facilities.[2]

This place is well worth a visit. I congratulate the Municipality on having provided to the most useful servants of the town quarters the like of which I have not so far seen anywhere during the tour. I wish other municipalities would follow your example.

Gandhiji then appealed to the audience to co-operate with him wholeheartedly in ameliorating the conditions of Harijans.

The Hindu, 4-1-1934, and *Harijan*, 12-1-1934

408. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

December 31, 1933/ [*January 3, 1934*][3]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letter written from Calcutta. I could not judge from the letter whether or not you had met Satis Babu during your stay there. I suppose you did meet him. You haven't mentioned anything about your health, either. Write about it in your next letter. The fact that Shivprasad escaped unhurt is indeed a remarkable thing. The tour is progressing very well. My body is standing the strain better than I had expected. There is, therefore, no cause at all for worry. Om is doing well enough. She is not a girl who will let others worry for her. She is slowly getting trained for the position of secretary. She is not

[1] Presented by the Municipality, the Depressed Classes Association and the District Board

[2] The following paragraph is from the *Harijan*.

[3] The postscript was written on Wednesday, which fell on January 3, 1934.

vigilant enough to satisfy me, but I don't wish to goad her to be more sharp at the cost of her health. I ask her to do only as much work as she can do without strain. I am sure you know that Kisan is accompanying me. She is a very good girl. She has become very friendly with Om. Her health went down in jail. Before that she was fairly strong and was quite smart. The tour seems to have benefited her. At present Malkani is with me. I needn't say anything about him. He is working hard. Damodar is working satisfactorily. He has proved his sincerity and capacity. Did you send the sum which was to be sent to Delhi from the Harijan account ? Gosibehn will have to be paid something every month. Pay that also from some account. Pay her what Mathuradas suggests. She should have been given the full amount from Bombay, but the people there are not giving it. I will write now, but while the correspondence is going on she must get the amount from somewhere.

Blessings from

BAPU

PS.

Before Morning Prayer, Wednesday

How is it that Janakibehn complains against your temper ? If there is any truth in her complaint, overcome your weakness. I asked Om and she also tells me that sometimes you make even Madan Mohan weep.

Tara has always been a sincere worker. If she keeps good health she will fully prove her worth. I had a wire from Dr. Sharma (of Delhi). He has sold his property for Rs. 10,000 and paid off his debt. Now he wishes to come and live in the Ashram. He will come with his wife. I have advised him to write to you. I think he should be taken in. If he proves worthy, well and good. Otherwise he will be asked to leave the Ashram.

I hope you work with due regard to your health. Janakibai Soman[1] wishes to stay there. Could she be accommodated where Vidya and the others were ?

From a photost at of the Gujarati: G. N. 2928

409. SPEECH AT PEDDAVADUGURU

January 3, 1934

Mahatmaji thanked the people for the address and the purse and said that he

[1] Ramachandra J. Soman's mother

would not have any objection for earmarking the sum[1] for the Kesava Vidyanilayam—a residential school for Harijans in memory of the late lamented P. Kesava Pillai—provided a workable scheme and workers were forthcoming. The moneys that were collected would of course be spent for imparting education to Harijans and providing other facilities for their uplift. Neither grants of money nor mere removal of physical untouchability were sufficient to complete the process of purification which the *savarna* ought to undergo to atone for their past sins and neglect. What was necessary was to banish the very idea of distinction between high and low, touchable and untouchable from their thought. This was easy if people could control their mind. But generally the reverse was true and hence the difficulty. Hinduism would suffer extinction if untouchability continued to exist. He prayed the Almighty to give them the will and courage to serve the Harijan cause and remove the evil.

The Hindu, 4-1-1934

410. EXTRACTS FROM SPEECHES TO WOMEN[2]

[Before *January 4, 1934*][3]

The real ornament of woman is her character, her purity. Metal and stones can never be real ornaments. The names of women like Sita and Damayanti have become sacred to us for their unsullied virtue, never for their jewellery, if they wore any. My asking from you your jewellery has also a wider significance. Several sisters have told me that they feel all the better for getting rid of their jewels.[4]

I have called this an act of merit in more ways than one. No man or woman is entitled to the possession of wealth, unless he or she has given a fair share of it to the poor and the helpless. It is a social and religious obligation and has been called a sacrifice by the *Bhagavad Gita*. He who does not offer this sacrifice has been called a thief.[5] The *Gita* has enumerated many forms of sacrifice; but what greater sacrifice can there be than to serve the poor and the needy ? For us today there can be no sacrifice higher than to forget the distinctions of high and low and to realize the equality of all men. I also wish to bring home to the women of India that real ornamentation lies, not in loading the body with metal and stones, but in purifying the heart and developing the beauty of the soul.

[1] Of Rs. 1,116

[2] Reproduced from Chandrashankar Shukla's "Weekly Letter"

[3] The source does not mention the dates or the places of the meetings, which were held in Andhra. Gandhiji left Andhra on January 4.

[4] What follows was spoken at another meeting.

[5] III 12

On one occasion he recalled to them the sacrifice of the late Shrimati Annapurna Devi,[1] who was the first in Andhra to set to her sisters a noble example of sacrifice and service, and said:

The very first day she met me she took off her ornaments—not one, but all. The women who witnessed the scene were amazed at what was happening. And then there was a shower of ornaments. And do you think she looked less handsome because of her having given away the ornaments ? Rather she looked to me more handsome. The English language has the proverb, 'Handsome is that handsome does.'

Harijan, 12-1-1934

411. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

TUMKUR,
January 4, 1934

CHI. MARY

No letter from you for a long time. Duncan got on very well. He was with us all the way and I saw him just for a second even in Adyar, for I happened to visit Adyar at the instance of Mrs. Wood. Do tell me how you are getting on. I hope Chandra is flourishing, and causes you no bother. I am sending this to your village address though you should now be in Wardha. I hope your eyes are behaving better.

Love.

BAPU

SHRIMATI MARY BARR
C/O SHETH DEEPCHANDJI
BETUL, C.P.

From a photostat : G.N. 6017

412 SPEECH AT DODDABALLAPUR

January 4, 1934

Gandhiji thanked the citizens for the purse and hoped that every one of them, if they had not already done so, would get rid of untouchability from their hearts. He read in their address that there were 800 Haijans living in Doddaballapur and that fifty per cent of the Harijan children were attending schools. They were entitled to congratulations on this account. But they could not possibly give themselves satisfaction by showing that so many Harijan children attended Harijan school. It was absolutely necessary for them to teach Harijan boys and girls and for this it was

[1] *Vide*, "A Good Servant Gone"

necessary for them to root out untouchability from their heart. It was wrong to consider a single person as untouchable. They should all forget that any single human being was lower than themselves. In conclusion, Gandhiji hoped that God would give them all strength to blot out the curse of untouchablility.

The Hindu, 4-1-1934

413. DISCUSSION WITH WORKERS [1]

TUMKUR,
January 4, 1934

Questions were put to Gandhiji about temple-entry by Harijans. Gandhiji said that the opposition to temple-entry was on the wane and that he found practically no opposition through out his present tour to his work.

Asked what they should do if the majority were in faovur of temple-entry and the State remained neutral, Gandhiji said :

Let the majority and the minority fight it out. The State will not interfere. Only when the majority and the minority come to a clash, will the Government interfere and that too to maintain peace and tranquillity. The majority cannot be obstructed by the minority.

To another question, Mahatma Gandhi replied that there was no such thing as utter majority.

The Hindu, 5-1-1934

414. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, TUMKUR

January 4, 1934

It gives me great pleasure to renew my acquaintance with you. I am not new to you, nor are you new to me. But the mission that brings me here today is different from the mission that had brought me here years ago.[2] Your address itself has made clear what I expect of you. I thank you for the purse that has been presented to me on behalf of the Harijans this afternoon. In your address you have recounted many of the virtues to which I might even be a stranger. You have showered upon me compliments that may be wholly undeserved. You have been good enough to admit that you are getting more and more convinced

[1] These included K. Ranga Iyengar, T. Subramanyam and Narayana Setty.

[2] Gandhiji had visited Mysore State in connection with Deshbandhu Memorial Fund collections and stayed at Nandi Hills from April 19 to the end of August 1927 to recoup his health; *vide* Vol. XXXIX.

that the eradication of untouchability from our society will not only purify Hinduism, but will transmute our national weakness into national strength and bring about greater solidarity among our people professing different religious faiths. After that admission I had expected a recounting on your part of the many things that you might have done on behalf of the Harijans. You express regret that, barring a few individual efforts, you have done little yet for the removal of untouchability. Happily the best of our ability requires the purification of our own hearts. If we really mean that on God's earth there is no one low and no one high, we shall accomplish the mission that has brought me here today. This belief in the distinction between the high and the low has eaten into the very vitals of Hinduism and what I have stated from a thousand platforms is but this simple truth that, if we do not now get rid of this canker, there is the impending danger of Hinduism itself perishing. I therefore hope and pray that every one of those who are here present at this meeting will realize the truth of what I have said and will make the best possible effort to get rid of this curse of untouchability.

Proceeding, Mahatmaji expressed his regret at not being able to visit all parts of the town as he would have wished. Owing to physical weakness, it was not possible for him to visit public institutions doing useful work. He hoped that the people of Tumkur would take the will for the deed.

The Hindu, 5-1-1934

415. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, BANGALORE[1]

January 4, 1934

SISTERS,

It gives me much pleasure to see you again after a lapse of many years. You have in the opening portion of your address expressed anxiety about my health on account of the constant travels. Who would show anxiety, if not you the mothers of India, for your children ? And I am one among the millions of your children. But you should know that the way you can relieve my anxiety is by doing according to the message that I have come to tell you. You can relieve my anxiety by paying handsomely for the mission that I am conducting. Sisters in other parts of India, having felt the same anxiety

[1] The meeting, at which 5,000 ladies were present, was held in the R.B.A.N.M. High School compound.

that you feel, have showered their jewellery, their bangles, their rings, and their necklaces on me. The silver and copper that you may give me is, truly speaking, according to our custom, not your property. That belongs to your parents or to your husbands. But what I want is something that you can definitely call your own and that can only be your jewellery. But the giving up of your jewellery is the least of all the things that I want you to do. It can only be a singing of your determination to carry out the message to its full extent. And that message is that you should consider the Harijans as your own blood brothers and blood-sisters and as your own children. It is wrong and sinful to consider a single human being as an untouchable. God has created all men and women alike. Although our forms may be different and our dispositions may be different we are still, at the bottom, one. Even as the leaves of one tree are one, whether they are small or big, so I want you to have no distinction of untouchable and touchable. And that is what I call purification of the heart.

The Hindu, 5-1-1934

416. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BANGALORE

January 4, 1934

FRIENDS,

I am deeply touched by your welcome. I do not want all this enthusiasm of yours and all this exhibition of affection towards me to waste away without turning them to good use. If you therefore have patience with me for a few brief moments, you will see that I turn all that enthusiasm and affection to good account. What I am about to do will also be a test of the genuineness of your enthusiasm and your affection.

You know the message that I want to tell you. I would like us all, every one of us, to purify our heart of the curse of untouchability. In one of the many addresses that I had the honour and pleasure of receiving today after entering the border of Mysore State, it was truly stated that this curse of untouchability had permeated Hindu society to such an extent that it almost ruled our lives and the signatories to the address were good enough to say that the message I was trying to deliver to the Hindus of India was producing its effect and went on to admit that, if we could but get rid of this poison of untouchability, all our differences even between different communities would vanish.

There you see what I am asking every one of us to do. I am pleading with you that we should get rid of this position of untouchability all along the line, so that we won't have only a particular class labeled as Harijans but we should all become Harijans, namely, and truly, children of God.

Today if we appeared before our Maker with this uncleanliness in our hearts, He will disown us because we have ourselves become disinherited. And this little purse that you have given me, I regard as earnest of your determination that you will henceforth cease to regard any being on earth as lower than yourselves. If among earthly parents there is no grade among their children, do you think that God has grades among His children, the God Whom we consider as the One and only Being, if He may be called a being, Who holds the scales of justice absolutely even ? If you have actually understood the spirit of my message, you will understand when I say to you that those who give to the Harijan cause gain. I go further and contend that you can never give to much too this cause.

The Hindu, 5-1-1934

417. PLEA FOR CATHOLICITY[1]

During my frequent travels I have noticed that the reception committees are not too mindful of expense in catering for the wants of guests. They will insist on producing sweets or other delicacies and a multiplicity of dishes. I have firmly discountenanced these at all times, but this time when I am making collections for the Harijan cause, which I regard as a mission of penance and purification, I feel pained when there is any attempt at lavish hospitality. In two places I observed that Gujarati cooks were brought in to produce Gujarati dishes. I regard this as a wholly unnecessary procedure. I believe that we should be able to accommodate ourselves to the food eaten in the provinces other than our own. I know that this is not so simple a question as it appears. I know southerners who have made a Herculean effort to take to Gujarati food and failed. Gujaratis will not take to the southern mode of cooking. Bengal produces dainties which the other provinces will not easily relish. If we would be national instead of provincial, we would have to have an interchange of habits as to food, simplify our tastes and produce healthy dishes that all can take with impunity. This means a careful study of the foods taken by different

[1] A Gujarati version of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 31-12-1933

provinces, castes and denominations. Unfortunately, or fortunately, there are not only different combinations in different provinces, but there are different styles in the same province, among the different communities. It is necessary, therefore, for national workers to study the foods and the methods of perparing them in the various provinces and discover common, simple and cheap dishes which all can take without upsetting the digestive apparatus. In any case it must be a matter of shame for workers not to know the manners and customs of different provinces and communities. In liberal household cooks ought to be able to cook foods eaten in the various provinces. Why should not a Gujarati be able to produce dishes which a Tamilian or an Andhra or a Bengali ordinarily eats ? I know that we cannot meet at the top. Nor is such a meeting necessary or desirable. Rich people will have not only provincial combinations but specialities designed for their own households. These cannot be universalized. What can be and should be aimed at are common dishes for common people. This I know is easily possible if we have the mind. But to make this possible, volunteers will have to learn the art of cooking and for this purpose they will have also to study the values of different foods and evolve common dishes easily and cheaply prepared.

I have strayed somewhat from my main purpose which is to ask organizers of the tour in the provinces not to pamper us but to be rigorously simple and economical in catering for us. We are or profess to be conducting a mission of self-purification and representing the cause of the outcastes of Hindu humanity. As such we have no right to the satisfaction of any but the barest wants and creature comforts. Fried things and sweets must be strictly eschewed. Ghee ought to be most sparingly used. More than one green vegetable simply boiled would be regarded as unnecessary. Expensive fruit should be always avoided. I know that I am the culprit in the matter of fruit. Friends would pamper me and go out of the way to procure the richest fruit for me. I can only assure them that I do not need any other fruit than oranges, which experience has proved to be necessary for me. In spite to all my vaunted abstinence,I know that of my party I am the costliest member to feed. I am sorry that it should be so, but mother goat to whose milk I owe my bodily strength and sister orange who keeps me fresh cannot compete in cheapness with rice and wheat. Let not my numerous hosts, however add to my indebtedness by importing tempting superfluities. Let them not pander to my weaknesses, if they will help me to do my duty towards Harijans.

Harijan, 5-1-1934

418. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI M. THAKKAR

January 5, 1934

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

Did you get the letter that I wrote to you in jail ? I still do not know what happened to Madhavji finally. You should not worry at all about the children. Please have faith that what Madhavji has done after careful thinking and after consulting me is right. Neverthless, do what you wish. I want complete freedom of thought and action for women. Write to me every thing.Let me know also how you spent the time and what you read in jail. Read the back numbers of *Harijanbandhu.*

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat fo the Gujarati : G.N. 6825

419. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

January 5, 1934

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your two letters on successive days.

I have arranged with Ghanshyamdas about Rajeshwar. Send me his address. Since when has he not been receiving the money ?

To which question about Jayaprakash and you have I not replied ? My impression is that I have replied to all questions arising from your letter. It is possible, though, that you did not get that letter. If that is so, please ask me again.

Since you have started on the medicine, try it out. I also don't have much faith in it. I very much wish that Jayaprakash and you should be all right. I do not think that you are at all ill. But if the doctor says you are, what is one to do ?

I have not been weighed recently. But I keep good health. I also eat well.

Brijkrishna may be said to have recovered completely. He walks about a little now. Devdas was released unexpectedly.[1] I don't know anything more.

Ba writes regularly. Kisan will continue to accompany me for

[1] On January 2, 1934

the present. She is well. She also helps a little in the work. Vidya did not keep good health and the girl with her turned out to be a thief. She has, therefore, left and gone to her father.

I understand about Rajendrababu. Tell him that I have written to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat to the Gujarati : G.N. 3439

420. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE[1]

January 5, 1934

BHAI MAMA,

I have your letter. I have suggested not that the management of the institutions should be handed over to the Harijan Sevak Sangh but that the Harijan Sevak Sangh should provide their expenses. From now on, therefore, it will be necessary to satisfy the Sangh. When somebody provides us funds it is only fair that we satisfy them about the way we spend the funds and the way we run the institutions.

Sardar did not mean by the words used in his letter 'the other world'. He meant 'in jail' or 'outside jail'. Is not that, too, 'the other world' ? We can call it 'the other world' on the earth. But you need not get alarmed or start worrying because of that. For the present, you are expected to devote yourself exclusively to your [work][2]. Those who wish to go to 'the other world' on the earth will certainly get their turn. It is a matter of a few days only. You must be getting the news about me from *Harijanbandhu*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3827

[1] Secretary of Antyaja Seva Mandal and founder of the Harijan Ashram at Godhra

[2] The source is illegible here.

421. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

MYSORE
January 5, 1934

BHAI JIVANJI,

I have gone though the report of the discussion with me about cow-protection. It is accurate. You may, therefore, use it if you wish.

Has the Municipality taken over control of the Vidyapith library or did we ourselves rearrange the books ? Has the construction of the library building started ? If not, ask Balubhai when it will begin and let me know.

Have any machines been left in the press or have they all been confiscated.

Has anything been done about the books to be published ?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The report[1] of the discussion is enclosed.

I hope Kaka got the letter which I wrote to him. In it I have written something for you to convey to Mahadev.

From a photostat of the Gajarati : G.N. 9933. Also C.W. 6908. Courtesy : Jivanji D. Desai

422. LETTER TO CHHOTUBHAI KUNVERJI MEHTA

January 5, 1934

MY DEAR NAPOLEON,

I have your letter. Why do you say you do not know what to write? Smart children like you can write a lot. You can write about your studies, your friends, your experiences.

I hope Gangaba's[2] going has not grieved you. There was a girl called Lucy. She had six brothers and sisters of whom some had died. Still she used to say that they were seven.[3] That implied great wisdom. For, it is not through the body that somebody is a brother or a sister. It is through the soul dwelling in the body that one is a

[1] This is not available.
[2] Addressee's mother
[3] The reference is to William Wordsworth's poem " We Are Seven".

brother or a sister. And the soul does not die. It only changes its abode. Just as man does not live in a useless house, the soul also does not continue to dwell in a useless body. Gangaba will live on in a new body. Why should you grieve for her?

It is our selfishness that makes us cry. But you are brave, and so selfishness will not come near you at all.

Can you understand this? Do write to me from time to time now. Tell Kunverji also that he should write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Motanan Man, p. 65

423. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

MYSORE,
January 5, 1934

CHI, BRIJKISAN,

I wrote you two letters. Your letter does not acknowledge either. There is no village by the name of Srinagar in Andhradesha, so your letter must have been sent to Kashmir. The address I sent you was Sitanagaram. God has been very merciful in making you rise from your death-bed. Now you must be very careful and make your body sturdier than before. You must follow Dr. Ansari's instructions to the letter. Why did Ram Babu leave off ? For how many months have you rented the new house ? What is the rent ? I am taking the touring well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 2406

424. SPEECH AT HARIJANS' MEETING

MYSORE,
January 5, 1934

You should conform to the rules of hygiene and sanitation—internal as well as external. Internal sanitation consists in taking the name of God—the first thing to be done after getting up in the morning. That is the breakfast for the soul.

When he was told that the Harijans of the locality had given up beef-

eating, he added :

It is a matter of deep joy to me and congratulation for you that you have given up beef-eating. I would like you to be able to say the same thing about drink. What is the use of paying for some coloured water which makes us so mad that we forget the distinction between mother, wife and sister ? I have heard Harijans telling me that drink is prescribed for them on occasions of marriage and death. I can tell you, without fear of contradiction, that is a suggestion of the devil. It is nowhere written in scriptures. I would ask you, brothers and sisters, not to go near the devil. I hope you will take my advice to heart and it will give me great joy when you will be able to say that you have given up drink also.

Harijan, 12-1-1934

425. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MYSORE

January 5, 1934

It has given me much pleasure to renew acquaintance after six long years. As you are aware, I came to Mysore State in order to regain my health that I had lost during the tour which I was conducting at that time. And naturally I have the most pleasant recollections of my stay in Mysore. From His Highness the Maharaja Saheb and his Dewan and other officials to the subjects of H.H. the Maharaja Saheb, I experienced nothing but the warmest affection. You can, therefore, understand more fully probably than before how much joy it must have given me to have come in your midst again You have added to the joy and pleasure by asking me to perform the ceremony of unveiling a portrait of the late Sjt. Venkatakrishnayya, the Grand Old Man of Mysore. I congratulate the artist upon his effort, because it is a faithful representation of the figure which was quite famliar to me. Perhaps, all of you do not know that I had the pleasure and privilege of seeing the Grand Old Man of Mysore in flesh and blood during my last visit. I had then become acquainted with his many virtues. I knew than that he occupied a unique place in your hearts. I am quite sure you do not expect me or want me to recount his many virtures. You who were on the spot knew them much better than I could possibly do during a brief visit. I only hope that those of his virtues for which you and I prize his memory will be translated into our lives. We may not flatter ourselves with the belief that we have discharged the obligation to his memory by your inviting me to unveil this

portrait and witnessing the ceremony and by my unveiling it.

I must now pass on to the mission that has brought me here. The Municipal address reminds me that I should see things which are worth seeing, so that I may carry away happy impressions of the effort that has been and is being made here on behalf of the Harijans. The Reception Committee with very great forethought had arranged to take me, before bringing me to this meeting, to various *cheries*[1] and showed me the improvements made during these six years. And you are quite right in thinking that after an examination of these places I should carry away nothing but happy impressions of what has been done on behalf of Harijans. I must congratulate the State and the Municipality of Mysore on the neatness and cleanliness I observed in all the places visited this afternoon. And I am glad for the assurance that the Municipality will not lose any time in looking after the domestic comforts of the Harijans of this city. In my opinion, sweepers in every city are its noblest servants. It must be a matter of humiliation and shame to have the sweepers and scavengers consigned to the dirtiest places and utterly neglected. In my opinion, they hold the key of the health of every city in their pockets. Any city that dares neglect its scavengers and sweepers commits the crime of neglecting the health of its citizens.

But my mission covers a much wider theme than the economic welfare of Harijans. We are, no doubt, bound to jealously guard their economic and educational welfare. But this is not enough, if we are do reparation to Harijans for the untold hardships to which we have subjected them for centuries past. They are entitled to precisely the same rights and privileges as any other citizen. And as Hindus they are entitled to the same social amenities and religious privileges that any other Hindu is entitled to. My mission, therefore, is to invite *savarna* Hindus to wash themselves clean of the guilt of untouchability. And if, during the short period of grace open to *savarna* Hindus, they fail to do this duty, I have not the shadow of a doubt that Hinduism will perish. You can now understand that this cannot be done by a municipality or even the Maharaja Saheb himself. If you and I will not change our hearts, what can even Rajas and Maharajas do ? It is, therefore, my privilege, as it is my duty, to invite you to cleanse your hearts of untouchability, the distinction of high and low. If you understand thoroughly the spirit of this message,

[1] Localities

the change of heart is an incredibly simple performance; and you can see in the twinkling of an eye how, if this change comes about in *savarna* Hindu hearts, the economic, social and religious progress of Harijans must follow. It will then be a sign and seal of this change of heart. All these purses you have been kind enough to give me I consider as an earnest of your determination to make that change of heart. May God give you the strength to do it and save Hinduism from impending doom.

Harijan, 12-1-1934

426. EXTRACTS FROM SPEECHES [1]

[Before *January 6, 1934*]

You should know that our duty to Harijans does not end with giving them good houses or giving them separate wells, schools and so on. If we gave them all these and still kept them untouchables, it would only mean replacing iron chains by golden ones; but the slave would still be a slave. Harijans must have all the amenities that we enjoy. But I go further and say, you must absorb them, you must bridge the gulf that lies today between them and you. The purification we are striving for is not complete till we have purged our hearts of this distinction. You and I may not be satisfied with anything less.[2]

You, mothers, should wash your children every day, and so should you wash yourselves. In the morning you should have what I call internal wash, that is to say, the first thing you should do on getting up is to take Ramanama and then pray to God that you should pass the day in sacredness, so that no wrong word may pass your lips and no wrong act may be done by you. And then you should give yourselves an external wash.

At Anantapur[3], opening a water-tap for them, he said :

May this water be the water of life to you. Water is an emblem of purity. Just as we purify the body by bathing with water, so can we become pure in heart by a morning wash, *i.e.*, by taking the name of God.

I am trying every moment of my life to be guided by ahimsa,

[1] Reproduced from Chandrashankar Shukla's "Weekly Letter", which bears the date-line "Bangalore, 6-1-1934"

[2] What follows was addressed to Harijan women at another meeting.

[3] On January 3.

by love. I am essentially a lover of peace. I do not want to create dissensions. And I assure those who oppose me that I shall not do a single thing which I know may be contrary to truth and love.[1]

But we have created a hope in the hearts of Harijans. They have begun to feel that they are going to be freed from this serfdom. I expect of you that you will fulfil it. It is said in all religions of the world that, if the poor are deceived, if the hopes given to them are not fulfilled, they heave a sigh of despair, a curse. And I have no doubt that, if, after all that we have said and promised, we play false, the curse of these poor people is bound to descend on us and we shall perish.

Harijan, 12-1-1934

427. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

January 6, 1934

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

At the moment I cannot think of anything that I can do from here about the laws regarding Bhundi Bhunchhi[2]. You have done the right thing in writing to the Dewan. Please let me know if there has been any reply from him. If I get an authoritative report on the subject from a newspaper correspondent in Kutch, I would publish it in *Harijan*. Is the report that you have received authentic ? Please inquire and let me know. Try and get a copy of the legislation. Most probably it was published in *Navajivan*. The cheque which Chhaganlal Joshi has sent to you is an instalment of that sum of Rs. 5,700. I had made arrangements for it before I got your letter regar-ding the use of a disinfectant. Hence the cheque. I will discuss the matter further when I meet Thakkar Bapa on the 16th.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. PARIKSHITLAL MAJMUDAR
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI
GUJARAT

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3999

[1] This was said at a meeting held in Nellore on December 30. What follows was said at another meeting.

[2] A tax impossed by the Kutch State on members of the Meghaval caste who were parties to a widow-marriage; *vide* , "'Bhundi Bhunchhi'"

428. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, BANGALORE

January 6, 1934

A servant of Harijans must be above suspicion like Caesar's wife. He must have a character above reproach. His eyes must be clean so that they may not offend. His hands also must be clean and his touch must be pure and gentle. His heart will not harbour a single impure thought. His ears must be turned to listen to the music of the spheres, his feet will take him to the purest work, never to dens of evil and he will give his ear to all he hears but will spare his voice.

In the end Gandhiji exhorted them to join one of the greatest of reform movements in modern times.

429. LETTER TO GOVINDBHAI R. PATEL

January 7, 1934

BHAISHRI GOVINDBHAI,

I have your letter. I had received the postcard, too. I wrote a long letter to Shri Aurobindo four days ago asking for an interview. I am now awaiting a reply. You may, if you wish, send me any literature which you think I should read.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 10740. Courtesy : Govindbhai R. Patel

430. SPEECH AT APEX BANK HALL, BANGALORE [1]

January 7, 1934

My connection with the co-operative movement is of a perfunctory character. I tried to understand it as interpreted by Sir Daniel Hamilton I know what boon it can become to agriculturists. I wish to tell you what I said long ago at a co-operatives' meeting at Bombay, when I had the honour of being invited by Lord Willingdon . . . . It is necessary for co-operative societiesto trace the course of every pice lent. Find out what the borrower is doing with his money. This thought has never left me.[2]

[1] An address was presented to Gandhiji at the Provincial Co-operative Apex Bank Hall.

[2] What follows is from *The Hindu.*

Gandhiji made a touching reference to the late Mr. K. H. Ramayya, Registrar of Co-operative Societies. He said that while he was in Bangalore six years ago, he used to meet the late Mr. Ramayya often and used to cut jokes with him. It was only yesterday that he had learnt of the passing away of Mr. Ramayya. Mahatma was really sorry for this. The great work that he had done for the cause of Co-operation in the State was too well-known to need repetition by him.

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-1-1934, and *The Hindu* 8-1-1934

431. SPEECH AT CIVIC RECEPTION, BANGALORE

January 7, 1934

I am deeply grateful to the Bangalore City Municipality for presenting me with this address. You have reminded me in your address that you were good enough to do me the honour of giving me such an address when I was in your midst last time. And it flatters me to see that I still retain a corner of your hearts. I tender you my congratulations upon all the things that you have done and are doing on behalf of the Harijans whose cause has brought me here. I tender also my respectful congratulations to His Highness for the liberality with which his Government has been dealing with this problem. You have admitted in your address that, while so much is being done by the Municipality for the Harijans, much more yet remains to be done. It would be wrong on my part if I did not re-echo that sentiment expressed in your address. During the morning peregrinations, I had the painful duty of witnessing some of the habitations occupied by the Harijans. It is difficult to call them even huts. I had, therefore, not hesitated to describe them as 'holes'. These holes are no protection whatever to the Harijans against wind, rain and sun. These dwellings are built of debris, which the Harijans could lay their hands upon.

You have every right to pride yourselves upon the beauty of Bangalore. I am free to confess that Bombay cannot be described as 'Bombay, the beautiful'. There are such hideous and ugly spots in Bombay that it is a misnomer to call that city 'beautiful'. Comparative speaking, therefore, I have no hesitatio whatever in giving Bangalore the first prize for a beautiful city. But I would like you not to be satisfied with the comparative merit. I would like you to set before yourselves a minimum standard of comfort for the poorest of your citizens.

Proceeding, Mahatmaji thanked the citizens for the kind invitation extended to him to come over to Bangalore and stay for a short time after his all-India tour.

I have experienced so much kindness and so much attention that I assure you that I need no temptation whatever to bring me here if only the call of duty enables me to take advantage of your hospitality and your climate.

Mahatma Gandhi next said that the touching reference in the address to the absence of his wife had moved him deeply. They had taken the way that duty had shown them. Her duty had taken her away to Yeravda and his duty had him in their midst. He assured them that nothing would give them both greater pleasure than to enjoy their hospitality once more.

The Hindu, 8-1-1934

432. SPEECH AT TEMPERANCE ASSOCIATION, BANGALORE

January 7, 1934

It is a matter of pleasure to me that you have invited me to meet you and say a few words on the subject of temperance. Some of you perhaps know that this is one of the matters that I took up before I was known to anybody and before I had conceived the thought of entering the political arena. When as a young man I went to South Africa, I observed that the coolies, indentured Indians, were fast going down owing to the drink habit. The law in South Africa made it a crime for indentured Indians to carry drink home. They could drink as much as they liked at the canteen. The result was that many women were found literally lying in gutters. It was not a thing of which any Indian could be proud. I pleaded with the Government, but mine was a voice in the wilderness. So the thing went on. But it made a lasting impression on my mind. I knew what I had to do when I came to India after a long exile.

I am not a temperance man. I am a prohibition man. I fought with my countrymen in South Africa and said, "We should not fight for an equal right to drink." I could not persuade them for a long time, but I did succeed in persuading a majority of them that to fight for rights was one thing and to fight for indulgence in vice was another. If the whites were not punished by the State for drinking, we could not plead for the same exemption. Here, in India, the Government are trading in liquor. I know from bitter experience of Harijans that they drink in spite of themselves. I have in mind an esteemed co-worker in Calcutta, namely, Satis Chandra Das Gupta. He

gave up a remunerative job. He was and is still considered the right-hand man of Dr. Roy. He gave up his chemical work and today he lives near *bastis.* He administered pledges to Harijans not to drink. These they broke again and again. That broke his heart and he fasted for 15 days. It had a marvellous effect on the Harijans. They said they would not now go back on their pledges. Satis Babu had to go through that agony. It was a joy for him. A worker who fights drink tooth and nail has to go through this. Many Harijans have said to me, "Take away this temptation from us and we shall be all right. Do not put it in our way." When we are not able to control ourselves in so many things, how much less can the Harijans and the labourers control themselves ? I have lived, eaten and drunk with them. They have no places of recreation. They live in wretched holes. They have no money to spend for creature comforts. What little they get, therefore, goes to canteens. I only give you the description to show you how keenly and bitterly I feel in connection with the drink evil. I have not the shadow of a doubt that we shall not be able to combat this evil successfully till prohibition comes. I have fixed views about prohibition. I have given you the result of my experience that, without prohibition, it is impossible to bring about sober habits among the labouring population in India. And I have observed that the Harijans are most addicted to this vice. India is a country in which total prohibition can succeed. People are not habitually given to drink. It is not a fashionable vice. The climate does not demand its use. But government revenue is touched by prohibition. Therefore they say, "Find other sources of income before you ask us for total prohibition." I say, "If you get revenue from impure sources and then say, 'Replace this revenue,' you cannot be heard. There should be no bargaining about it."

Harijan, 19-1-1934

433. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BANGALORE[1]

January 7, 1934

It gives me very great pleasure to see Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao[2] present here. I had the pleasure of meeting him six years ago when I was in your midst. That, in spite of his advanced age, he should have come here to give me his blessings must move the hardest heart. I regard it as a blessing for the Harijan work I am doing and it is a matter of great joy and solace that such a great gathering of learned men of Mysore who have seen so much life should be here to bless his movement. But, I miss the presence, at this meeting, of Mr. Humza Hussain, who was the Chairman of the Reception Committee when I came here six years ago. I have a vivid recollection of his many kindnesses and how I wish he had been here at this meeting to greet me as on old friend. May God give his soul peace.

I am very grateful to you for the purse that you have presented me. I was almost going to say a "good purse", but I have hesitated to use this adjective, because I know that the citizens of Bangalore are quite able to put together a larger purse and I know that by the time I say goodbye to you, I shall have many generous contributions to the cause of Harijans. After all, it is the least reparation that we can do to these brothers and sisters whom Hindus have systematically suppressed.

I have read your address from top to bottom. And I congratulate you and the Maharaja Saheb's Government on the many things that you have been able to recite in that address. But, neither the State nor the people of Mysore nor I can find any cause for satisfaction unless untouchability is entirely rooted out from our hearts. While I gratefully acknowledge all that you have done for Harijans, I ask you not to rest content till all Harijans enjoy all the rights that *savarna* Hindus enjoy in all walks of life. Let us undergo this necessary purification, while there is this brief moment of probation still left to us by God. Be sure, if you fail in this hour, God's wrath will swiftly descend on the Hindus.

But, one word to Harijan brothers and sisters. You cannot be free from this self-purification. You too have to make your sacrifices at the common altar. And that consists in the strict observance of

[1] Held at the National High School in the evening, the meeting was largely attended

[2] Retired Dewan of Mysore, Travancore and Baroda, chairman of the Mysore State Harijan Sevak Sangh.

sanitation, internal and external. Secondly, in giving up carrion and beef-eating wherever that habit still persists. In every part of the civilized world, carrion is abhorred with detestation. It is considered unfit for human consumption. And no one can call himself a Hindu and partake of beef. The sacredness of the cow and her worship is an integral part of Hinduism. Thirdly, I would ask every Harijan man and woman present here to give up the habit of drink. Let no Harijan say that *savarna* Hindus also drink. It is no answer. I would beseech you, as a fellow Harijan by calling, to shun all the vices of *savarna* Hindus. In spite of all the reparations that *savarna* Hindus make to you, in the presence of God after all, in the ultimate end, your salvation rests in your own hands. It was therefore a matter of great joy when day before yesterday[1] Harijans gave me their assurance that they had given up beef-eating and would try to give up drink. Let us all pray to God that He may give strength to the Harijans to carry out their resolve to leave off drink.

The Hindu, 8-1-1934

434. TALK WITH HARIJAN WORKERS[2]

BANGALORE,
January 7, 1934

It is for you to supplement the work done by the State.[3] You may find workers to go and live in the midst of Harijans. This is merely all illustration. The rule is, you begin where the State ends. The State cannot attend to individuals. That is the prerogative of private persons. Each worker should measure his own capacity. We must not do anything for spectacular effect. Our work may not be pretentious, but it must be solid. We have to come in intimate touch with the people—*savarnas* as well as Harijans. Such contact with the people can never be established by the State. That is essentially the work of the Social reformer. Temple-entry work is to be done by workers specially qualified for that work. If they show character, it will move the Harijan mass. The workers must not go in the midst of Harijans as strangers or patrons but go as friends and servants. Such work is being done in Wardha. If there is one true worker, he will mutiply himself.

Harijan, 19-1-1934

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Harijans' Meeting"

[2] Extracted from Chandrashankar Shukla's "Weekly Letter"

[3] Gandhiji had been asked, "When the State is doing so much, what are we to do ?"

435. NOTE TO N. R. MALKANI

January 8, 1934

MY DEAR MALKANI,

Here is some solid work for you. Prepare a statement about the two untouchability Bills, give the text of the two Bills, procure Government circulars and keep with the statement all the literature available.

BAPU

From a photostat : G. N. 904

436. LETTER TO PARVATIBEHN P. DESAI

BANGALORE,
January 8, 1934

CHI. PARVATI,[1]

I have your letter. I had news of Pragji for the first time from you. Do you have any friends in Dharwar ? Let me know whenever you get a letter from there. When was he taken to Dharwar ? Keep me informed about yourself and the children. Address your letters to Wardha. Did you write the letter yourself or did you get it written by somebody else ?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 5036

437. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

BANGALORE,
January 8, 1934

BA,

I have still not received your letter, but I believe it will reach me after some wandering. I hope you are getting the newspaper now. You must have received the *Bhagavat* and the *Ramayana*. Write for anything else you may wish to have. I had a letter from Manilal, as also one from Sushila. They are both well. Manilal is unperturbed and asks you not to worry about him. Sita is growing up fast. She is always playing about. Devdas has been released earlier than expected. He has gone to Ahmedabad. I had a wire from him. Perhaps he will visit you.

[1] Wife of Pragji Desai

There were letters from Ramdas and Nimu too. I keep on writing to Manu, but again there has been no letter from her. Kishorelal's fever has come down a little and so it can be hoped that he will have fully recovered in a few days. There is nothing but good news about Mani. Om, Kisan, Chandrashankar, etc., are all well. I am in Bangalore today. Everyone has been inquiring after you. Shankerlal and Gulzarilal have come here. There is to be a meeting of the *Panch* regarding the workers' wages. Tomorrow is Tuesday, and so it will meet tomorrow. Afterwards I have to go to Malabar. I will be going to the area which you once visited. Urmila Devi's[1] son has a job in Madras now. I keep good health. There is no cause at all for worry. At every place people come in large crowds and give me purses, jewellery, etc. Kanti is better now. I see that Bal will be seeing me in a few days. His health also is quite good. I hope all of you there are well. What progress have Shanta and Lalita made in their studies ? And now the discourse.

Today I will write something about what the *Gita* says concerning *yajna*. The subject is introduced in Chapter III. In that chapter the Lord says that he who eats without performing *yajna* eats stolen food[2]. This is a very serious statement indeed, for eating stolen food is like swallowing raw mercury. Nobody can digest it and, if anyone eats it, he will get eruptions all over the body. Hence Akho Bhagat has said : "Eating stolen food is like swallowing raw mercury." If, therefore, a person stops performing *yajna* even for a while, he becomes a thief. All of us should know that this *yajna* means. Fortunately for us, it is easy for all whose heart is in the right place. It requires no wealth, no intellect nor education. *Yajna* means any act of service. Only about a person whose whole life is a ceaseless *yajna* can it be said that he does not eat stolen food. Hence those who do just a little work as *yajna* may be said to be not guilty of theft to that extent. Looking at the matter from this point of view, we see that all of us are guilty of theft more or less. Our *yajna* can be said to be perfect only when we have shed all selfishness. To do this means to give up the sense of 'I' and 'mine', to cease feeling that this belongs to me and that to somebody else, that this is my son and that somebody else's. There should not be even a trace of such a feeling in one's heart. He alone can do this who offers up his all to Shri Krishna. He who has done that does everything with God as witness, as

[1] Sister of C. R. Das
[2] III. 12

His servant and in a spirit of service. Such a person is always happy and peaceful in mind. Happiness and sufferring are the same to him. He uses his body, mind, intellect, possessions—all that is his—for the service of others. All of us cannot do such perfect *yajna*. If, however, we have the aspiration in our heart to serve the whole world, what work is there which most people can do and which would include service to the whole world ? Asking this question, we found that the answer was spinning, which is the work that countless people can do in the spirit of service. One who spins will have done that much labour for the service of the world. But I mention this only as an example. What I wished to explain was the meaning and importance of *yajna*. I shall be satisfied if I have been able to explain it.

Blessings to all sisters from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 7-8

438. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

BANGALORE,
January 8, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

After completing a letter to Ba, I am writing this to you. It is now past four in the afternoon. It is my weekly Silence Day. We are in Bangalore today. Tomorrow there is a meeting of the *Panch* to consider the demand of the [Ahmedabad] mills for a reduction in the workers wages. Shankerlal [Banker], Gulzarilal and others have already arrived. The mill-owners will arrive tomorrow. I have told them that I would be able to give five hours for the meeting. We are leaving for Malabar tomorrow night.

The pressure of work remains heavy. But I keep good health. Subba Rao[1] came and examined me yesterday. He was pleased. The blood pressure was 155-100. This is excellent. At the moment it is expected that Thakkar Bapa will meet me in Calicut on the 16th.

I am staying here in a State building[2] , the same where I had put up before. The people's enthusiasm is great. The Dewan came and saw me. He talked a great deal about you. He has sent his salaams to you. He shows very great love.

[1] A noted physician of Bangalore
[2] Kumara Park

I had a letter from . . . [1]He wanted my permission to sell off his car. Soon after, I got a wire from Thakkar Bapa, informing me that he was really willing to sell it. I, therefore, gave my consent, although I didn't understand the position at all. In such matters I depend entirely on you. I, therefore, often follow the example of Ekalavya. He made a clay image of Dronacharya and learnt archery by practising before it so that he could become Arjuna's equal. I form a mental image of you and consult it. Assuming that you would advise me to give my consent in this matter, I sent a wire saying yes.

Napoleon[2] has been very much affected by the death of Kunvarji's wife. I see this from his loving reply to my letter of condolence. I have written to him again. I see from . . . 's[3] letter that he is not happy. I have asked him what the reason is.

Munshi has resumed practice. You must have read about Jivraj.

Dr. Bidhan may be said to have returned from the jaws of death. He tells me so in reply to a wire which I had sent to him. A bone is fractured. He will have to be in bed for some 15 days at least.

I had a letter from Mama in which he has referred to a letter of yours. He says that it is not practicable now to collect separate contributions and keep separate accounts for the Harijan work, nor will the people give such contributions. Hence, for Navasari, Godhra and other centres for which separate funds and accounts were being maintained, budgets within our means have been passed and it has been decided to obtain the money from the funds of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. The control of the institutions concerned will not be changed. The only change will be that they will receive reasonable grants and will run under the supervision of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. Their independent existence will in no way be endangered. Mama has volunteered to devote himself wholly to this work for the present. I plainly refuse to guide anbody. I don't feel inclined in my heart to do so. If you have any questions to ask or wish to know more about the Harijan Sevak Sangh, you can write to me. I don't know what I should tell you. If, however, you give me the slightest indication as to what you want, I will give, that is, send all the required information. You need have no fear that I myself will write out the reply. I spare my hand and brain unnecessary exertion and economize time in

[1] The name is omitted in the source

[2] Chhotubhai K. Mehta

[3] The name is omitted in the source.

doing my work.

Devdas has been released before his time. There was a wire from him. He will of course come and see me. The wire was sent from Ahmedabad. Most probably he will pay a visit to Ba.

Manilal and Sushila write to me. His affairs are all right. Keshu also has got a good job. Ramdas is very much upset. He can enjoy no peace of mind at all.

It seems that Kishorelal is steadily improving. Brijkrishna has survived. He can walk a little now. Jamnalal has a cold and so on. Shankerlal thinks that his health is certainly not too good. But his weight has increased and he has now reached about 200 lb.

Om and Kisan are quite well. And so is Mirabehn, of course.

Blessings to both from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 59-61

439. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

January 8, 1934

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I am often hoping for a letter from you and when I don't get any I take it that you have refrained from writing out of consideration for me.

I hope the operation[1] went off well. Please write or get someone to write to me sometimes. Normally, I am told, it is a simple operation.

I suppose you do read *Harijan.* God is protecting my health.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

[PS.]

It is safer to write at the Wardha address.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 4721. Courtesy : Shantikumar Morarjee.

[1] The addressee had been operated upon for hernia.

440. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

January 8, 1934

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

I have your letter. I have not received Lilavati's so far.

I will send you the literature on the Bills regarding untouchability. If I cannot get a whole loaf of bread I shall be willing to accept even a quarter. It is only when I am offered instead of bread a stone purporting to be bread that I refuse to accept it. But I have no fear that you will ever give me a stone instead of bread. Please, therefore, continue to give me whatever you can.

I see no harm if a party like the one you suggest comes into existence. Please go through the changes that I have made in your draft.[1] The reference to civil disobedience is not proper. An element of corruption had certainly crept into it. But even a reference to that is completely out of place in this draft. Our opponents are bound to take advantage of it. We might even take that risk if such reference were relevant. Nor was corruption the cause of my suspending that part of civil disobedience which I have done.

This party is not being formed in order to attract other parties to it. The reason for forming it is that those Cogressmen who do not or cannot take part in the civil disobedience movement desire to ensure their continued [political] existence and to do some service. I, therefore, consider any reference to other parties as unnecessary. After the party is formed, it may start negotiations with other parties for any purpose. What its name will be will have to be thought over. Just as you thought it proper to consult me, I would advise you to consult Jawaharlal too. If you endanger your health by running about too much, you are going to hear from me.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From Gujarati : C. W. 7530. Courtesy : K. M. Munshi

[1] The addressee, along with Rangaswamy Ayyangar, had prepared a draft scheme to revive the Swaraj Party as the constitutional wing of the Congress and had submitted it to Gandhiji.

441. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

BANGALORE,
January 8, 1934

CHI. RAMDAS,

I got both your letters. Do not worry about your having opened Manilal's letter. You are free to open any letter. How can I possibly keep anything secret from you all. You fear your own shadow, fancying a whole lot of misfortunes. Both of you have resolved to stay on there and have the necessary experience. You should therefore stick to the place now. Go on cheerfully doing what you can and be happy. If you do that, you will certainly get over your diffidence.

I may say I have now begun to understand why you suffer. Without knowing it, you are trying to appear better than you are, wish to do so, but you should check such a wish. One should not feel miserable at what one is. One should try to improve oneself but should not worry ifone fails. That is the essence of the *Bhagavad Gita's* teaching and therein lies true. Humility you have in ample measure but you feel sore in your mind fancying that you lack something. To do so is the very opposite of humility. Humility always makes one contented with what one is. Why should you, seeing someone's palace, pull down your little hut? Why should you not think of your hut as much better than a palace? It is not true that those who live in palaces are happier than those who live in huts. Happiness consists in being contented.

Why need you feel sore over your inability to overcome your impure thoughts? Everyone in this humility world is full of blemishes. Out of countless persons who try to overcome their impure thoughts, only one succeeds in doing so. The vast majority should be satisfied with doing the best they can and leave the result to God.

You need not feel the least constraint in writing anything to me. You should make it a rule to write to me at least once a week. You will feel light in your heart if you do so. Never entertain such futile thoughts that you could not write to me because you were unworthy. Should you on your own think yourself unworthy, or feel so only if I thought you unworthy? Will you try to curb my thoughts? If God thinks me worthy, why should I think myself to be unworthy? God never regards anyone as unworthy. How, then, could parents with feet of clay think their offspring unworthy? Are they themselves likely to be so perfect that they can claim the right to judge their offspring and

think them unworthy? No one is competent to judge who in this world is worthy and who is not. All of us being imperfect, we should bear with one another and do the best we can and purify ourselves. Parents have no right to sit in judgment over their offspring, nor has a husband the right to sit in judgment over his wife. This is implicit in ahimsa. Therefore overcome your sense of frustration and take heart.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

442. MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE OF MYSORE

January 9, 1934

I carry with me very pleasant recollections of my brief stay in the State. I hope the people of Mysore will keep up their reputation for being enlightened by removing untouchability root and branch.

The Hindu, 10-1-1934

443. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, PALGHAT [1]

January 10, 1934

Early in the morning, I entered Malabar—with due deference to our friends who call themselves sanatanists—the land of inequalities. As I was passing by familiar places the face of a solitary Nayadi, whom I had seen during the previous visit, rose before my eyes.[2] It was about ten or eleven in the morning when, in the midst of a discussion about untouchability, unapproachability and invisibility, all forms of which are found in no part of the world except in Malabar, a shrill voice was heard. Those who were talking to me said, 'We can show you a live Nayadi.' The public road was not for him. Unshod, he was walking across the fields with a noiseless tread. I went out with the friends and saw the Nayadi. I asked him to come and talk to me. Evidently he was frightened and he did not know when a blow would descend upon him. Trembling he talked to me. I told him that the public road was a much for him as for me. He said, 'It cannot be so. I

[1] The meeting, held at 8.15 in the morning, was attended by about 4,000 persons. Addresses of welcome were presented to Gandhiji by the Municipality and the Taluk Board.

[2] *Vide,* "Speech at Public Meeting, Palghat,15-10-1927

may not walk on the public road'. I close that scene and ask the sanatanists or anybody else to show me the authority in defence of this inhuman conduct. You will find me smiling with you, laughing with you, and cracking jokes with you, but you may also know that behind all those jokes and smiles and laughs, the face of the Nayadi and that scene will keep haunting me throughout my tour in Malabar.

As I was coming here, I was greeted by black flag demonstrators mixed with national flag demonstrators. I tell you that I appreciated the black flag demonstrators more than the national flag demonstrators because I could see untruth in its nakedness behind the black flag. What if those who had black flags had smeared themselves as Brahmins do ? He is no Brahmin merely because he carries a black flag or red flag and has marks on his forehead. Brahminhood is not known by external marks. The scriptures I swear by and in whose defence I would love to die tell me that he alone is a Brahmin who knows Brahman. Brahminhood is the essence of humanity, self-effacement, pity. All those virtues which our ancestors have taught us to prize have to incarnate themselves in a Brahmin. He is a Brahmin who is a living treasure of scriptures, but not he who makes a demonstration of untruth by carrying a black flag.

I have come to Malabar to speak out of the very depths of my soul. There are many things in Malabar over which, as you know, I have gone into raptures. You have scenery which is second to none in the world. Man, if he behaves himself, can live an easy life in Malabar. Woman in Malabar is the freest in India. All the women I have seen in Malabar have a majesty which has always commanded my respect. As you know, I had the pleasure of meeting the ex-Maharani of Travancore. Her simplicity commanded my admiration and at first sight I fell in love with her. But there is nothing to be proud of in the Malabar untouchability. It is the vilest thing on earth. I want you to wipe out this shame of untouchability from Malabar; and if you can do it, the whole of India naturally will follow; and you can do it if you will. I have entered Malabar in high hopes. It is for you to fulfil it or frustrate it. Only write down this prophecy in your hearts that, if untouchability as we practise it today lives, Hinduism perishes. I ask you to believe in what I am saying and to save Hinduism from impending doom. You have the opportunity of making your choice. Make it now or never.

Harijan, 19-1-1934

444. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, PALGHAT[1]

January 10, 1934

Do you know why I have come here ? I have come here to ask you to do penance. I have come here to ask you to forget that there can be a single human being who can be called 'untouchable'. You, the women of Malabar, are freer than any women in any other part of India. And if you choose to, you can save Hinduism from peril. Even if millions of people came and said that untouchability was a divine institution, I will repeat it is an institution of the devil. I have just now come from a little settlement where I saw Nayadi brethren and some sisters. It is your shame and my shame that they have got to live on a little rice thrown at them from a distance. I have nothing more to say to you. And if you want to commence by doing penance, then you will commence by discarding your ornaments and silver to contribute funds to help these helpless human beings.

The Hindu, 12-1-1934

445. SPEECH AT MEETING OF NAYADIS, KUZHALMANNAM

January 10, 1934

Well, I have received this address, which I suppose you have not read. Therefore whatever is written in the address will have very little value and this I regard as a breach of truth. As a matter of fact, if you would have read this address to me in Malayalam, then I might have known that you represented your own feelings and it would have some educative value. Also, your lot was not unknown to me. I have just now come to Malabar, as I am touring in other parts of India for one purpose only, namely, to abolish distinction between Nayadis and non-Nayadis. There is no sin as great as unapproachability or untouchability. So long as Harijans are crushed by that devil called untouchability, we have to work to crush that devil. I want that untouchability must be wiped out of Hinduism, or Hinduism would perish. I would like you to take part in the movement for purification in the best manner possible, taking advantage of every other facility that might be offered, in the way of education, to your children and yourself. If you are given to the habit of drinking, you must give it

[1] The meeting, held at Gowder Picture Palace, was attended by about 1,000 women.

up; if you do not observe the simple laws of hygiene you must observe them. You must also observe sanitation and must be clean both externally and internally.

The Hindu, 11-1-1934

446. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, GURUVAYUR

January 10, 1934

FRIENDS,

I thank you for the address presented to me and the purse. This is the first place in Malabar where an address has been presented by women. By that if you mean that you represent the women of the taluk, then it means that men have no addresses to present to me. It may be that you are not touched by the spirit of self-purification. I see that the women of Malabar have not summoned sufficient strength to present an address both on behalf of men and women. The women must lead the battle against untouchability. In point of education, Malabar women are much more advanced than their sisters in other presidencies. I want you to turn this to the best possible advantage. When I put to auction articles presented to me I hope that women would put to shame men by taking them for higher prices. I can point out that you can commence this today by offering one bangle, necklace, etc. But you are smiling or laughing. I take it seriously. Women in less advanced parts of India like Madras and Andhra commenced to bid by offering two or three bangles. I shall be presently putting the women's spirit to rest as soon as I finish a few remarks. I want to tell the sisters who have gathered here that after I entered into Malabar this morning I have been considering what special message I can deliver, because Malabar shows this disease of untouchability in a most aggravated form.

I feel that if the women of Malabar determine to work for this cause with redoubled energy, this devil can be wiped out. In others parts of the world, women won their rights by making sacrifices and suffering. But for Malabar women it should be a double speciality, and that for the simple reason that the women of Malabar occupy in India a most unique position. Therefore, if the women of Malabar led a battle against the devil of untouchability, it would be wiped out soon. It is only in Malabar, I discovered on entering, that they are dressed in spotless white garments. It is only of late that the fashion has grown among women of wearing variegated colour garments. Yet, I have noticed that colours are not so much loved in these parts as one

would find in other parts of India. I do not know the secret of your domestic life. But I have flattered myself with the belief that this white garment of women of Malabar represents their internal purity. I hope that my belief would be well-placed if untouchability is removed root and branch in Malabar. I suppose, in point of education, the women of Malabar will carry the palm. What I want the women of Malabar to do is to save Hinduism from impending danger. I would like you to throw over board your laziness and indifference whatever it may be. I would like you to keep watch very vigilantly as you would do over babies. You will treat your babies with affection. It is not so with your religion. The more vigilant you are, the more scientifically precise you would be. Before you, the women of Malabar, lies a mission. Will you try to abolish the distinction between high and low ? Believe me, those whom we are considering as lower than ourselves are not lower in the estimation of God. The prevalence of untouchability is due to insolence which leads to devilish interpretation of religious books. I have never been in the habit of using exaggerated language and if I may seem to be using strong language, I feel that this conviction of mine is a very fundamental one. What I have stated in addressing women applies to men also. You are not free from disbelief. Religion requires more men and women to guard it. To put it briefly, the present movement stands for self-purification.

The Hindu, 12-1-1934

447. LETTER TO YVONNE PRIVAT

AS AT WARDHA, C.P.
January 11, 1934

MY DEAR BHAKTI,

It is just 3.20 a. m. and I have finished reading your letter undated. Women will not think of dates! They work for eternity and therefore they disregard human divisions of time!

Your accusation is, from your point of view, justified. We have been rushing at such a speed that it has become impossible to keep pace with the correspondence. Your letter (previous) is lying with me somewhere but I had no time.Today for very shame I take your letter first in order that it may not go into a bottomless file. Though neither Mira nor I have written to you for some time, you are ever before the mind's eye. Your inseparableness, your ever genial faces and your

readiness for sacrifice—these and many such things are a perpetual reminder to me of the times we had together.

I know you are doing good work there. I did read about the church people's revolt against Hitler.

I expect to hear more about the result of Ceresole's[1] visit to Germany. Do please give my love to him.

I am surprised to learn that you are not getting *Harijan* regularly. I am writing to the Editor at once.

I hope both of you are prospering in every sense of the term.

I say nothing about me, as you will learn all about me from *Harijan.*

With our love to both of you.

BAPU

[PS.]

Devdas has just come out of prison. Ba, Pyarelal and Mahadev are still in jail.

BAPU

From a photostat : G. N. 2337

448 SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, GURUVAYUR[2]

January 11, 1934

FRIENDS,

I would like you all to give me perfect silence.[3]

We have here a forcible illustration of the age-old truth that 'Man proposes but God disposes'. I had hoped to be able to speak to you on subjects of the greatest importance to you, to me and to the whole of the Hindu world. Instead of being able to do that, I have been obliged to devote precious forty minutes to a scene that I witnessed this morning.[4] I found two fellow countrymen lying here, stretched on the platform, one of them bleeding through the mouth and both of them apparently senseless. The first thing, therefore, that

[1] Pierre Ceresole, a Swiss conscientious objector to war, who founded the International Service.

[2] The meeting was attended by about 2,000 people.

[3] This sentence has been taken from the *Hindu* report.

[4] Just before the meeting started there had been a scuffle between the volunteers and two sanatanists, Radheswara Sastri and Kalpanathji, resulting in serious injuries to both.

fell to me to do was to give the best attention that was possible for me to these fellow countrymen. And so they have been sent under the charge of Prof. Malkani to the dispensary here for medical attention. In so far as a lay nurse like me can judge, I do not think that their lives are in any way in danger. And let us all pray that they may soon be up and doing.

I understand from the two other friends who have come here on behalf of the All-India Varnashrama Swarajya Sangh that they had all come here on behalf on this Sangh. They had as perfect a right to attend this meeting as any single one of you. They had a perfect right to stage a hostile demonstration, if they intended to, on a peaceful footing. However repugnant it might appear to me that those who represent sanatan dharma should resort to such demonstration, I perfectly recognized their right to make such a demonstration yesterday at Palghat, and I had no hesitation in making public refe-rence at the meeting there to their demonstration more than to the demonstration of those who had come to greet me out of affection for me and sympathy for the cause. And I gave then and there the reason for my saying that I appreciated this black flag demonstration more than the demonstration of affection. I must not repeat the reason here, but I must refer you to the public speech[1] , if at all it finds publication in any of the local journals. Here I want only to say that it was a matter of deep grief to me to find that these two countrymen were hurt, no matter for what cause, no matter by whom. If any single volunteer or any single person connected with the organization of this meeting had any hand in assaulting these friends, I have no hesitation in saying that he has disgraced the cause and has hurt Hinduism, which he thought he was serving.

I have said repeatedly that this cause of Hinduism can only be served by men and women who are above suspicion and who have a character to keep and to lose. In a movement of self-purification there is no room for a hasty word, for a hasty action, for abuse, certainly not for bodily harm. And if there are any persons here present who were instrumental in causing hurt to these countrymen of ours, whose lives should be as dear to you and to me as our own blood relations', then I invite them to purge themselves of that guilt by making a public declaration of their having done this injury and taking the pledge never to repeat such a dishonourable act.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Palghat"

Keenly and deeply as I feel the taint of untouchability and deeply as I feel convinced that, if this untouchability is not removed root and branch from Hinduism, Hinduism is bound to perish, I would not have untouchability removed by force or show of force or compulsion of any kind whatsoever. Removal of untouchability is not a matter of law or of compulsion. Removal of untouchability is a matter of change of heart, perfect purification on the part of millions of Hindus. And that can only be brought about by the sacrifice of thousands of workers themselves, and not by causing injury to other people. Hence has every scripture that I have read pronounced from the house-tops that religion can only be defended by *tapascharya*. I will, therefore, beseech every one of you, who crowd round me wherever I go, to remember that this movement is a movement of personal, individual self-purification and self-conviction. And if you cannot approach this question from that point of view, I would far rather that I was deserted by you and that all the meetings were deserted by you. And if any man or woman is eager to come and listen to me or to give me an ounce of milk, he or she should do so, provided he or she has got that complete identification with the cause and a perfect spirit of self-purification.

Having said this and having made this declaration of my faith under the shadow of the great temple of Guruvayur, I would like to make this appeal from the bottom of my heart to those who are organizing the activities of the Varnashrama Swarajya Sangh, and kindred bodies also, to understand that they will not defend what they call sanatan dharma by staging demonstrations of the character that they have been doing. They sent a body of men throughout the tour in C. P. who wanted to fall prostrate before the car and impede my progress at every stage. There were often clashes between volunteers who were looking after me and this body of six or seven young men. Fortunately, no serious or untoward event happened, though scratches certainly were inflicted on either side even during the C. P. tour, I quickly made friends with those people who were staging those obstructive demonstrations and told them as earnestly as I could that that was not the way to protect Hinduism.[1] Some of them were youngsters who did not even know what they were doing. With the exception of one, I doubt if any of them had any idea of the elements of Hinduism. And I had hoped here also that, if there were such men

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with Swami Lalnath"

who wanted to stage demonstrations, I should come in touch with them, discuss with them, understand them and know who they were. But I was sorry that hardly had I put my foot in Malabar when I was faced with the scene that I witnessed here. It would have been better if I had been able to make their acquaintance before and ascertained what they wanted to do. But they chose to take a different course. I still invite them to meet me and tell me what they would exactly want me to do; and, short of stopping this tour, I would make every facility for them, and every convenience for them to express their thoughts or even to make whatever peaceful demonstrations that they might want to stage. But what I am most anxious to avoid is *goondaism* in every shape and form on the part of either party. I give the same credit to those who call themselves sanatanists for honesty of purpose that I would claim for myself, but both must have an equal right to give expression to their views and mould

public opinion. After all, sanatan dharm is not the prerogative of one set of people. I claim myself to be a representative of sanatan dharma in every sense of the term that they claim. I base my vehement oppo-sition to untouchability upon the same Shastras by which they swear, and I should stand by my interpretation of the Shastras even though I were the solitary one amongst the millions of Hindus; because the same Shastras tell me that I may not resist the inner call of my fundamental being. Thank God, however, that I do not stand alone in the interpretation that I have been placing before you. On the contrary, there are learned *shastris* who have just as much right to interpret the Shastras as those who call themselves the exponents of sanatan dharma. And they give precisely the same interpretation that I have placed before tens of thousands of men and women. And it is my settled conviction, based upon an unbroken experience extending over a period of nearly fifty years, that untouchability as we practise it today has absolutely no warrant whatsoever in the Hindu Shastras. I claim that Harijans have precisely the same common rights of worship, of use of public institutions and in all other walks of life that the tallest of Hindus enjoy in common with the rest of Hindu mankind. And, therefore, I have not the shadow of a doubt that caste Hindu will not have performed their elementary duties by Harijans until they have thrown open the gates of Guruvayur and such ancient temples to the Harijans, precisely on the same terms on which they are open to other Hindus.

But I have infinite patience; and, as you know, although

Kelappan's fast had progressed for many days, although many of these reformers were actually in the temple threatening to declare a sym-pathetic fast with Kelappan and although the reformers thought that the prize was almost within their grasp, I sent a peremptory telegram[1] from my own fasting bed, calling upon Kelappan to suspend the fast and to withdraw the men who were inside the Guruvayur temple. And I did so because I felt that the fast was premature and I smelt coercion in it. I mention this in order to show that I will not be guilty of being party to the opening of a single temple under coercion. But I do want temples to be opened where public opinion is absolutely and clearly ripe for the opening of those temples. If there is any legal obstruction in the process, I want that legal obstruction to be removed. That is the meaning, and the only meaning, of the Temple-entry Bill, and no other. This Bill simply removes the powerlessness that many trustees today feel about opening the temples under their charge because of the legal obstruction. There is not the slightest trace of compulsion or coercion about this Temple-entry Bill or the kindred Bill called the Anti-untouchability Bill.

But I heard a whisper this morning that behind this temple-entry agitation there is a nefarious design, if not on my part, on the part of my co-workers, that we should take possession of these temples and own them. I have no hesitation whatsoever in categorically denying this statement. I have certainly no such design whatsoever, and I do not know of a single co-worker who has any such design. And if there is any such co-worker who has such a design, he has no place whatsoever on this platform. The possession will remain undoubtedly in the hands of those who are today lawfully in possession.

A kindred question that was asked was whether behind this there was also a design to undermine Brahminism. I can only tell you that I cannot be guilty of any such design; for, to me to undermine Brahminism is to undermine Hinduism. This does not mean endorsement of the claim that the Brahmins, so called, may put forth today. No man can be accepted as a Brahmin by society merely by reason of his birth. The Shastras themselves say that a born Brahmin who does not act according to the requirements of Brahminism will forfeit his right to be called a Brahmin by the people in general. There are Brahmins themselves today in this very movement who say that they cannot be called Brahmins unless they carry out the precepts of the Shastras

[1] *Vide* ,"Speech at Public Meeting, Coimbatore" ,16-10-1927

referring to them. I believe that the Brahmin is the cornerstone of Hinduism, as of every other religion. But there you must understand the meaning of the word Brahmin. The Brahmin is the person who has realized Brahman. If he has not that realization in every act of his, he shows that he is ever after it and nothing else. Such a Brahmin demands my ten thousand prostrations every morning, but not the Brahmin who is dictated by self, who is multiplying himself[1] day after day and thinks mostly of himself, rarely of others, nor even the Brahmin who smears himself with ashes from top to toe and can punctiliously and correctly recite the Vedas. It may be necessary for him to smear himself with ashes. It is necessary for him to translate the Vedas in his own life. It is necessary for him to exhibit Brahman in every act of his life. It is necessary for him to be pure and to impart that purity to all his surroundings. It is necessary for him to be ever ready to die so that others may live. Now you understand what regard I have for the true Brahmin and Brahminism.

Having heard this probably the writer of a printed letter which was placed in my hands this morning does not want replies to the several questions which he has put me and to which he has expected replies this morning. But I can say this much to him that, if he wants a detailed reply to everyone of the questions that he has raised here, he can get it by turning to the file of *Harijan.* He will there find also that, in putting the interpretations that he has put in his letter on several things, he has undoubtedly misread the message of the *Gita* and the message of Hinduism.

Lastly he has asked for an interview with me. I am sorry that he cannot have it at Guruvayur, but he can have it at Calicut on the 16th instant at ten o'clock in the morning. I had an invitation for a discussion yesterday at Palghat with some learned pundits. I was sorry to have to disappoint them so far as Palghat was concerned, because, when I received their invitation, I was making preparations for leaving Palghat. But I have given them ten o'clock in the morning at Calicut on the 16th instant, and I would be glad to see this friend and any other friends who may wish to converse with me on every one of the points that I have discussed here and any other points that may arise in the course of that discussion. Though the 16th instant is supposed to be an off day, it is not a day of recreation for me. Therefore I was obliged to restrict the interview to half an hour in my letter to the

[1] *The Hindu* report here has; "who has multiplied insults".

pundits. But I propose now to devote one hour for that discussion, so that the pundits may have the whole half hour to themselves, if they chose to take it.[1] I have absolutely nothing to withhold from any single person, nor have I the slightest desire to hide my ignorance. I have already set forth my limits. I do not profess to be a learned man in any sense of the term. I profess to be a humble seeker, ever ready and ever anxious to follow literally every precept of Hindu religion as I know it. I, therefore, freely confess that, if the pundits or anybody else invited me to to a recital of the Vedas or an exposition of the Vedas and so on, they would floor me entirely. But they will not easily dislodge me from the position that I occupy. If a knowledge of God or if a knowledge of the fundamental precepts of Hinduism had depended upon a meticulous knowledge of all the Vedas and a forest of books, then hardly any person would be able to say, 'I know something of God.'. But these scriptures say that to know God is possible for every single human being on earth if he purifies his heart.

I must thank you sincerely for the silence with which you have listened to me. Now I want you to join me in prayer to God Almighty that He may direct our steps in the right direction and that He may give us the strength that is necessary to exorcize this devil of untouchability from our hearts.

Lastly, please remember that those who believe that untouchability is an evil and who believe also that it can be exorcized only by self-purification should never hurt a single hair of those who are opposing this movement. On the contrary, you and I have to see to it that we win them over by our own correct conduct and by gentle persuasion. I, therefore, ask you to treat those two friends, who are now in the dispensary, and those who might be representing the Varnashrama Swarajya Sangh, with respect and affection and as your guests. Irrespective of what they may do, let them experience the warmth of your hospitality and affection and not your bitter reproach.

Harijan, 26-1-1934, and *The Hindu*, 12-1-1934

[1] The pundits did not accept the invitation. Instead they wrote to Gandhiji that they would see him if he was prepared to discuss the Shastras with them not for an hour but for days together and that too in Sanskrit.

449. SPEECH AT PATTAMBI[1]

January 11, 1934

It has given me some surprise that in Malabar, the land of eternal green, you have to use artificial paper flowers. I thought that in Malabar, where Nature has been so beneficent to you, you could avoid all artificiality. But I suppose that in order to appreciate the beauty of this land you require the help of a person who comes from a treeless desert as I do. Just as you have gone in for artificiality in the matter of flowers, you go in for artificiality in the matter of untouchability, and then you think that that artificial product comes from Divinity itself. I have come to warn you against the belief that untouchability, unapproachability or invisibility can have any divine sanction. In my opinion it is one of the greatest sins that we, Hindus, have been committing against man and God. You degrade human beings, as we have been doing in this part of the world, and then to say that they are what they are because of their past deeds is a complete caricature of the law of karma. I claim to know somewhat, from first-hand evidence, of the working of the law of karma, because practically a period of fifty years I have devoted to find out what this law of karma could be. And this much I do know that to apply it to everybody else but ourselves is to distort it altogether; and if I had more time than I have at my disposal, I could show to the satisfaction of every one of you that you can never apply the law of karma as you apply it to the Nayadis and others. If we were to apply the law of karma as I have suggested, that is to say, towards ourselves, you would find the land here and elsewhere transformed. I have, therefore, come to beseech every one of you to exorcize this ghost of untouchability. If you do not, you may be sure that that ghost will eat us up.

Harijan, 19-1-1934

450. NOTES

FRIENDLY DISCUSSION ALWAYS WELCOME

During my brief stay in Madras I saw in the papers that a public appeal signed by certain gentlemen was made to me. In it, I was asked to hold a public discussion about untouchability. Later on I received a printed copy of that appeal, with the following opening words typed at the top :

[1] Extracted from Chandrashankar Shukla's "Weekly Letter"

> As a man posing to know more, please come out and discuss. Don't say, "No time, no time". It is a shame to say so when your very existence is questioned. World will laugh at you and will mock at you.

Then follows this astonishing paragraph :

> Abandoning all his political activities which had really brought him into the limelight of Indian politics, destroying—for all practical purposes—the great Indian National Congress which had made him its virtual dictator and blindly entrusted its destiny into his hands and agonizing not merely the orthodox *sanatanadharmis* but also all lovers of Indian nationalism in the land, Mr. Gandhi has, of late, begun a whirlwind propaganda against untouchability and in favour of temple-entry legislation, whereon he has been putting forth his *ipse dixits* and *obiter dicta* before the public, not as his own individual views or in the name of Rousseau, Tolstoy, Lenin, etc., but under the banner of sanatan dharma, sociology, abstract justice and so on!

I had some such appeal again whilst I was travelling in Nellore District. The telegram inviting me to a discussion says :

> It appears to us that you have not understood the Hindu dharma and have been leading the Hindus astray from the path of true moral and religious life.

I was not able to reply to these invitations there and then : the last invitation was received at Venkatagiri[1] at 10 o'clock at night. The next day I was to reach Tirupati, near which I was to go to the proposed discussion. I had to be content with sending a verbal message to my host at Tirupati. As to the first invitation, I had sent the message that I was ready to hold a friendly discussion with anybody and to be convinced of my error, if it could be brought home to me. I had to say that my time was limited and that the discussion would only take place, at my decision, wherever it might be for the time being. My limitations I had set forth in these columns times without number : I am no Sanskrit scholar, but I know sufficient to detect errors in translations that may be given to me. I claim to have read the Shastras to my satisfaction, and I claim to have endeavoured from my youth upwards to put into practice the fundamental precepts of the Shastras. Thus I have no hesitation in putting before the public, with the utmost confidence, the conclusions I have reached regarding certain fundamentals of Hinduism. One of the conclusions I have reached is

[1] On December 30, 1933

that there is no warrant in the Shastras for untouchability as it is practised today. My conclusion is supported by *shastris* no less learned than those who challenge my conclusion, and the former claim to be just as good sanatanists as those who hold the opposite view, but I always believe in regarding opponents with respect and, therefore, listening to what they might have to say. I have held discussions with them more than once, and these have resulted in strengthening my convictions. Therefore, whilst I feel that myopinion will not be shaken by any such discussions, I am quite willing to find time for those who could be good enough to suit themselves to my daily engagements. I dare not disturb the programme that has been settled in advance for several months to come. I have already had discussions with sanatanists during the tour at several places. If those who write to me directly or indirectly through the Press will observe the laws of common courtesy and if they have the desire to find a basis for common work, I have no doubt that there are many points of agreement, even on the question of temple-entry and the proposed legislation. Much mis-understanding can be removed by mutual and friendly discussion. I may mention for the information of the general reader that, as against sanatanists who are enraged against me and fling all sorts of abuses at me, I frequently meet those who, having understood the central point of my message, have become supporters. I have no weapon with me except the one of an appeal to the reason and heart of the people. The reform that I am advocating can only come through a change of heart on the part of millions of Hindus. Therefore, it is in the interest of my mission that I lose not a single opportunity of meeting my opponent, whenever it is possible for me to do so.

Harijan, 12-1-1934

451. LETTER TO GOVINDBHAI R. PATEL

January 12, 1934

BHAI GOVINDBHAI,

I have written to you saying that I had written a long letter to Shri Aurobindo. I have received no reply till today.

I have written to you in reply to your English letter, too, and

said that you may ask me any questions you wish to when we meet.[1]

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 10744. Courtesy : Govindbhai R. Patel

452. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

January 13, 1934

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got the letters from both of you. I hope you get my letters regularly. Of late I have not missed a single mail. With my last letter I had enclosed a copy of Ba's letter.

Sushila has given sufficiently detailed news about Shanti. If he does not waste money in fanciful ventures, I am satisfied.

Sushila wishes to know who are in my party. I think I have already written about that. Chandrashankar, Mirabehn, Om, Kisanbehn (Premabehn's friend), Professor Malkani (Thakkar Bapa's representative), two accountants—Vishwanath and Damodar—one store-keeper Sharma and one typist—these form the party.

Personally I like Sita being talkative and mischievous. It is for the parents to put these qualities to good use. They can in this way impart a good deal of education. Naughtiness and talkativeness are a kind of energy, like steam. The energy of steam is conserved and used to drive big trains and steamboats. A child's energy can be used in a similar manner. If we understand it and use it wisely, it can produce excellent results. Instead of making Sita write the letters of the alphabet, you should teach her just now to draw geometrical figures. After that you may teach her to draw pictures of objects and last of all to write the letters. But before doing that you should teach her to recognize the letters, and to understand the meaning of words. You can give her some knowledge daily through stories. You can easily teach her some-thing about history, geography, science and tell her

[1] According to the addressee, he communicated the contents of this letter to Mother and inquired if it was true that Gandhiji had "asked for at least a line in Shri Aurobindo's hand; and Shri Aurobindo has written a full letter in his own hand—which he does not usually do". In reply, Shri Aurobindo wrote in pencil on the note : "Yes, I wrote to him a short letter explaining the nature of my retirement and regretting that I could not break my rule as long as the reason for it existed. It was addressed to Bangalore, I believe, and ought to have reached him, unless it has been pocketed by the C.I.D. I suppose even if he had left Banaglore it would have been forwarded to him. You can write and inform him of the fact."

stories from the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. She can learn all these things in play. This will not tire you; on the contrary you will enjoy teaching her in this manner. Through this you yourself will learn something daily and Sita will get the best possible education. She can learn English, Gujarati and also Hindi at the same time. What help do you give to Manilal ?

Did either of you see West ? Please meet him and give me some news of him. I shall be satisfied if he is not unhappy. You should show yourself always ready to help.

Ba seems to be all right. This time she does not appear to enjoy as much freedom as before.

I did not understand Pragji's letter to you. I do not remember in what context we had the talk and what I had said. In any case, what I may have said does not apply to you two. The facts are not the same in all cases. We may have dicussed what his duty was in India. It is of course true in a sense that, if the struggle here succeeds, the solution of the problem in that country will soon follow. But that certainly does not mean that anybody should leave that country and come away to India. The rule that 'better is death in the discharge of one's duty'[1] is perfectly true in this case. You two, therefore, should go on doing the work which is your dharma at present. It will be enough if you do not depart from the path of dharma in doing that work.

Devdas has been released. He will spend his time in Delhi and other places for the present. He will come and see me. He has kept good health. He paid a visit to Kanti. The latter has displayed boundless courage. He doesn't leave jail at all. Let us see how long he keeps it up.

Kishorelal can be said to be a little better. The fever has not yet wholly left him.

Write to Devdas and Lakshmi. And continue to write to Ramdas and Nimu regularly. I hope you are getting *Harijan.*

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I wrote this letter a little after 3 a. m. before prayer time in a town called Tellicherry.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4814

[1] *Bhagavad Gita,* III. 35

453. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

January 13, 1934

CHI. DAHYABHAI,

I have your letter. I got three letters almost simultaneously which may be regarded as an instance of telepathy.

Mahadev is being tested severely. Possibly he might suffer a little loss of health, though no other hardship. I have sent a detailed message in reply to the letter to Jivanji. However, the next time you have a chance write as follows :[1]

"Whilst I need not receive Mahadev's letters, he must not think that I cannot have time to read them. The *Gita* portion was technical and I felt that there was no immediate need for me to give my opinion. And the fact is that I have so little regard for my own technical meaning of the verses. Where the meaning does not fit in with my interpretation as a whole, I should naturally have to examine it but speaking in general terms one meaning would be to me as good as any other and therefore I should readily accept Mahadev's considered interpretation in preference to my own which after all must have been an adoption of some single author's version. He should therefore prosecute his researches and his work of translation without waiting for my opinion. When it is all completed of course I shall have ample time, God willing, to go through it.

I take it that Mahadev has read B. Shaw's *Adventures of the Black Girl in Her Search for God*. I am sending him today, *Adventures of the White Girl in Her Search for God* by Cff. Maxwell. If he gets it safely, he will acknowledge it in his next letter.

When I reach Belgaum I shall try to see Mani and Mahadev.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4 : Manibehn Patelne, pp. 158-9

[1] The two paragraphs that follow are in English.

454. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, TELLICHERRY[1]

January 13, 1934

FRIENDS,

I am very much obliged to you for the addresses and the purse you have presented to me. You know the nature of the mission at the present moment taking me from one end of India to the other. In pursuance of that mission early this morning I have come here to ask you to rid yourselves of the devil of untouchability from your hearts. I see in all your addresses there is one note running, namely, that this monster of untouchability might be laid low. Let us not make the mistake of supposing that this is a work that has got to be done by somebody else. It is essentially a work that has got to be done by everybody—by himself or herself—for it is a matter essentially of a change of heart on the part of the caste Hindus or *savarna* Hindus as they are called. They have to cease to think that they are caste Hindus or that some of them are *savarnas* and others *avarnas*. This distinction of high and low has destroyed society altogether and as we want to save ourselves from impending destruction, we must cease to think that anybody on earth is lower than ourselves. The poison of untouchability has spread so far and so wide that even amongst caste and caste there is a grave degree of untouchabilty. In this distinction of high and low, we have gone further, and the poison has enveloped all the communities. There is untouc-hability not merely amongst Hindus and Hindus, *savarnas* and *avarnas*, *savarnas* and *savarnas*, but there is untouchability also between Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, and Christians. I am convinced that, whilst there may be other reasons for inter-communal quarrels, I have no doubt whatsoever that untouc-hability is the main and deciding reason for the majority of these quarrels. Therefore, if we will exorcize this principal manifestation of the devil of untouchability, I have not even a shadow of doubt that we will be able to right the wrong all along the line. One of your addresses mentions that most of the temples are not open to Harijans and that only one temple, opened by the followers of Shri Narayana Guru, is open to Harijans. I congratula te the trustees of the temple on their liberality and I hope that their example will be followed by other trustees; but it will largely depend upon the temple-going public to bring about that change. If the temple goers are sincerely penitent

[1] The meeting, which was attended by more than 6,000 people, was held at the Tellicherry maidan at 7.30 a. m.

and feel that hitherto they have done serious wrongs to Harijans by prohibiting them from entering the temples, I have no doubt that their expression of opinion cannot be challenged and the temples will be soon opened. I am therefore hoping that you will organize public opinion so that the temples may soon be opened to Harijans precisely on the same terms as they are open to other Hindus. I am surprised to discover that there was in some place near here bad blood between untouchables and untouchables, that is between Pulayas and Thiyyas. I do hope that the Harijans all over will set their house in order and rid themselves of untouchability within untouchability. Now you have given me this purse which I only consider as a token of your determination to deal with this evil in a final manner.

The Hindu, 15-1-1934

455. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MAHE[1]

January 13, 1934

FRIENDS,

I have a peculiar pleasure in being in your midst since you are in a part of French India. I had the pleasure of visiting Chandanagore in Bengal more than once. But this is my first visit to French India in this part of the country. For me whether it is French India or British India it is one and the same country. The same blood flows through my veins that goes through yours, the same soil, the same atmosphere, the same manners and customs and many things too numerous to mention are common to all of us. But for the difference in the uniform of your police and the French language I read here and there I would notice no difference whatsoever. Therefore it is a matter of no surprise to me that you have, whilst I am passing through Malabar, invited me and presented me with a purse for the Harijan cause. Indeed I would have been surprised, and painfully surprised, if I had found that, whilst I was actually passing through this road, you took no notice whatsoever of the self-styled representative of the Harijans. Therefore I am glad to be able to be present in your midst even though it is only for a few minutes. I was glad to discover that an important temple in this place was thrown open to Harijans precisely on the same terms as to other Hindus. I

[1] At the meeting Gandhiji was presented with addresses on behalf of the public and students of Hindi.

congratulate the trustees on having performed this very simple religious duty. Now, I hope you know what I am after in pursuing this mission. I would like you to understand that mere opening of temples, mere opening of schools for Harijans does not constitute the whole of my mission. It means that *savarna* Hindus have got to purify their hearts and, make due reparations to the Harijans whom they have hitherto suppressed. It means that we should abolish all distinctions of high and low and realize that we are children of one country and as such, should realize that, being children of one country, there can be no distinction of high and low. May God help us to realize this very simple idea. I am glad of this Hindi address and I would like every one of you here to appreciate this message of Hindi.

The Hindu, 16-1-1934

456. SPEECH AT OPENING OF DISPENSARY, PAKKANARPURAM

January 13, 1934

I have been invited to open the dispensary that you see in front of you in the name of a young brave worker who sacrificed himself for the sake of his country and died some years ago in about 1921. His name is Balakrishna Menon. And this dispensary will be called after his name. In those days of non-co-operation at its height, he, in common with others, was confined in jail and it is in his memory that this dispensary is to be named. Medical relief has been given to hundreds of Harijans. Within the last four or five months over two thousand patients have been treated free of charge. Let us hope that this dispensary will grow day after day, that is to say, it would be an instrument of ever-increasing service to ailing humanity. I understand that a young medical practioner has offered to give his services free of charge. Let us hope that such self-sacrificing young men will multiply in this land. We do need young medical men who have the requisite spirit of self-sacrifice and who will consent to live in villages. It is absolutely necessary that Harijans should receive medical aid. I know and I am grieved that there are medical practitioners in India who disgrace their profession by refusing to touch Harijans lest the touch might pollute them. Therefore, it fills me with joy whenever I find a medical practitioner who is entirely free from those superstitions and at the same time has the spirit of sacrifice to enable him to give his services free of charge. Whilst giving medical relief, providing for education and arranging for free water supply are

necessary in the interests of Harijans, there is something still more necessary to be done by the *savarna* Hindus. We have to cease to be patrons. We have been oppressing the Harijans for centuries. We have to purify ourselves from this taint of untouchability immediately and take the Harijans to our bosom. We have to consider them as our blood-brothers and sisters. It is a sin to consider any single human being to be lower than ourselves. It is blasphemy to consider that God can have any partiality with regard to His children. I would consider this dispensary a success if it lends itself to eradicate the distinction of high and low to some extent.

The Hindu, 16-1-1934

457. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, CALICUT

January 13, 1934

DEAR SISTERS,

I see that all of you are seized with a peculiar fear lest I might induce you and you might feel irresistibly tempted to part with all your ornaments. Some of you have already begun to give your trinkets. I propose to give you tonight a beautiful story of a girl called Kaumudi. I saw her for the first time this morning at Badagara and in response to an appeal I made to the ladies to give their jewellery, and, if they had the desire, all their jewellery, this little girl Kaumudi—I call her "little" comparatively—I suppose she was about 20 years, probably 21[1] —and she came forward and began with her two beautiful bangles, the only bangles she had on her wrists.

I was more than satisfied but not she. Out she came with her very beautiful necklace. I thought she would stop at that. But she would not. Her hands involuntarily went to her ears and she suddenly thought there was something in her ears also, and was delighted to give her ear-rings. I was very deeply touched,but I suprressed my emotion at that time. Istraightaway enquired whether she was an independent girl or whether she had obtained the consent of her father. And I immediately learnt that she had done this in the presence of her father because he was on the platform helping me to get my addresses and other trinkets. I then learnt that the father was also entirely with his girl in her giving everything that was on her person to

[1] In fact she was 16 years old; *vide* Vol. LVII, "Kaumudi's Renunciation", 19-1-1934.

the Harijan cause. All she wanted was an autograph for her two bangles. Of course I gave her more than my autograph. I wrote there in Hindi that her great sacrifice would be a truer ornament than her gold and jewel things. She went very delighted. And I had her definite promise that she was not going to ask her father to replace those articles of jewellery. She has enough and more articles to wear and jewellery also. Of course for a Malabar girl this is not an amazing performance. Because so far as my knowledge goes, Malabar girls are the simplest of all the girls in the world. Somehow or other they have left on my mind the impression that they have the least desire for jewellery. I may be wholly mistaken. Anyway that is the impression that they have left on my mind.

I must conclude this soul-stirring story by adding another story. Now nearly ten years ago[1] or more there was a girl in Andhradesha who was married and when I made an appeal to the sisters there—it was an imposing meeting of women in a theatre—she was the first to give me her ornaments. Although Sri Annapurnamma's jewels wer comparatively simple, still her necklace or her chain as I might call it was a long heavy chain of pure gold. I must not describe other articles of her jewellery. Alas, she is no more. But let me inform you that she was true to her promise cent percent that she would not replace those rich articles of jewellery. She had very rich parents, who would gladly have given her all their jewellery to replace hers. But from that time up to the time of her death which took place now three years ago[2] she never wore an article of jewellery. It is my certain conviction that Annapurnamma gained by giving and so has Kaumudi. I have lingered on those two very sacred illustrations and I want to tell you that in discarding your jewellery for a cause so sacred as the Harijan cause you will be doing nothing wonderful. [Women have done such things] when they have taken up the defence of a sacred cause like this. I have to ask you, to beseech you, to purify your hearts of the sin of untouchability, to treat Harijan boys and girls as if they are your own children, brothers and sisters. We have for long ages supressed Harijans and today if we sacrifice our all for their sake we shall be only making some slight and tardy reparation for all the wrongs inflicted upon them in the name of religion. Therefore, whatever you give, whether it is a trinket or heavy piece of jewellery or

[1] In April 1921; *vide* , "Orissa and Andhra"

[2] She died in 1927; *vide* ,"A Good Servant Gone"

silver, I want you to give as merely a token of your determination to rid yourselves of this taint of untouchability, the idea that you are high and somebody else is low. May God give you wisdom to see this very simple truth and enforce it in your life. Now you can give the things, whether jewellery, or silver or paper, whatever you want to give.

The Hindu, 15-1-1934

458 SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CALICUT[1]

January 13, 1934

I am much obliged to you for these addresses that have been presented to me this evening and I thank you for the self-restraint you have imposed upon yourselves by not desiring to read these addresses to me. Only you have thereby appreciated the fact that I have been going from one place to another from day to day, now for over two months, and at the end of the day I am therefore fatigued. You, wise men that you are, have appreciated this act and absolved me from the duty of having to listen to these addresses. You having exercised this self-restraint, naturally it was up to me to read those addresses and be prepared. But I must say to you that I had no notion whatsoever that I was to have all these addresses nor have I been given copies of these addresses. Had I been given copies I would certainly have read them. However I have no doubt whatsoever that these addresses contain nothing more than what I have noticed in the numerous addresses that I have been receiving throughout these two months or more. Almost without exception they have expressed to me great joy, not only their sympathy with the cause that I am espousing for the time being but they have in these addresses signified their intention, nay their determination, of doing everythingthat these various bodies of gentlemen or ladies could possibly do in their own sphere to advance the Harijan's cause.

It has given me a great deal of satisfaction and joy to discover that there is consensus of opinion on the part of the intelligentsia. I would have been painfully surprised if it had been otherwise. Not only has it been so with reference to the intelligentsia but as far as mere assent goes, I have found to my great delight the masses also are

[1] The meeting was held at the Town Hall. Addresses were presented to Gandhiji on behalf of the Municipal Council, Malabar Chamber of Commerce, Taluk Board, Harijan Yuvak Sangh and other bodies.

equally with this movement. I am not easily self-deluded. I have no doubt that I have, must have, my due share of self-delusion or else life perhaps would be a positive burden to most of us if not to all of us. But due allowance having been made for self-delusion I can say that all these scenes that I witness every day cannot possibly be a matter of masses or classes coming to me to signify their praise or their satisfaction for services that I might have performed in a previous life or in days gone by. This life has rushed and with me it has rushed with such rapidity that it is impossible for me to have a clear photography of the events that have happened and, that being the case, I should be intensely surprised and also disappointed that these classes and masses had signified not only their satisfaction and their sympathy by their presence at these meetings but also given me donations more or less and had done certain acts also as a consideration for those services. I would let that pass by. I am assuming that all your addresses contain a serious and solemn pledge that you are determined to do everything that is humanly possible for you to do to render the reparation that is overdue to the Harijans. Malabar, if one were to draw the untouchability map of the whole of India, I suppose will easily wear the black crown and Malabar would be the blackest spot so far as untouchability is concerned. It is a matter of regret but it is no use ignoring the fact. I would turn this blackness to good account and I would invite you to gird up your loins and make such Heruclean effort that at the end of the struggle it may be possible to say of Malabar that Malabar had been in the vanguard of progress in this battle against the monster of untouchability. Let it be said of Malabar that Malabar counted no sacrifices too great for removing this evil of untouchability. And what could be a better and more sacred reminder for this meeting than the portrait of Mr. K. Madhavan Nair ?

I had the pleasure of knowing him long ago. When I first visited Calicut I had the honour of being introduced to him but I must confess that I did not know him so intimately as I came to know him when he paid me a visit at Yeravda. I then came into very intimate touch with him, and when Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar was here and the Guruvayur referendum was going on, naturally I was corresponding with him as with other friends almost from day to day. Then Smt. Urmila Devi and my wife came into close contact with Mr. K. Madhavan Nair. My wife is a simple woman. She knows nothing, she does not know the English language, certainly she does not know Malayalam, but she was able to tell me in her very simple language

that she was very much struck by the simplicity of his character. She merely strengthened the impression that Mr. Madhavan had left on my mind and that impression is still indelible. I have the most vivid recollection of my contact with him and what struck me most was his transparent humility. This is his faithful picture and I congratulate the artist on presenting the citizens of Calicut with this picture. I think there you can easily see humility written in his features. I don't think that the artist has enhanced the transparence of his humility. I think the artist is incapable of doing that. To look at Mr. Madhavan Nair and look at the living eye would give you a better illustration of that humility. The whole of his behaviour is on the picture. Mr. Madhavan Nair is in front of me today as I saw him in Yeravda. He stands vividly before me and this is the one peculiar impression that he left on me.

I discovered also that he was a man of very few words. You do not find many people who are economical in the use of language or their words. In his contact with me Mr. Madhavan Nair showed this quality in a supreme degree. His letters were compact, nice, neat and the briefest possible. Whatever he had to say he expressed in a few words and he had finished. That was the man. If you were to recall the men who had died in body but are even now still living, you will discover that they are living not because of their intellectual gifts but because of virtues which you and I and every one of us can cultivate if we have the will and if we will make the necessary effort in order to cultivate them. Therefore I would say you will be doing wrong to the memory of the man whom I have described as I have known him, if you think that you have performed your duty by calling upon me to unveil his portrait and for having witnessed this ceremony and having heard a few words in praise of his memory; nay, you will be doing wrong. But you will be doing the right thing if you will treasure as a perpetual reminder to you that you also would like to be if not wholly at last some what like Mr. Madhavan Nair. At the end, to put a finishing touch, Mr. Madhavan Nair died in harness so far as the Harijan cause is concerned. He was a true co-worker in the Harijan cause which is a matter of self-purification, repentance and reparation. I give you my evidence that Mr. Madhavan Nair, when he took up this cause, had the spirit in him, for every act that he did in connection with the Harijan cause was an act of sacrifice, repentance and reparation. There was no meanness about anything that he did. May his memory ever remain in my heart and in your own hearts.

I thank you once more for having presented me with addresses. Since I think that this is not proper time for auctioning these

addresses, I hope that tomorrow you will help me to realize some money from these addresses because I know that Calicut will not send me away with disappointment.[1]

The Hindu, 15-1-1934

459. SPEECH AT MALABAR CHRISTIAN COLLEGE, CALICUT

January, 13, 1934

It was a great joy to me when I received the invitation to come to you to receive a purse for the Harijan cause and to speak a few words to you. You have naturally expressed your sympathy with the cause. But you boys ought not to be satisfied with the certificate that your Principal has given to the institution and therefore by implication to you also.[2] You are called upon to do something much more vital, to regard untouchability not as an institution descended to us from Divinity but as an institution which has been devised by the devil himself for encompassing our undoing. We, all of us, no matter to what faith we may belong, are children of the same Creator. There is but one Creator. We do say that with our lips, but we deny that profession in every walk of life and in so many of our activities. That lie we ought to get rid of from our lives. And who can do this better than the students? You must therefore make the announcement fearlessly that if we are children of the same God, then we are all equal. Do not in your mind cross-examine and say, 'How can we be equal ?' Some of you are very bright boys, and have received prizes and occupy front ranks in the classes, and how can those who are at the top of the class be on a par with those who are at the bottom of the class ? This is a fine conundrum for you and me and you ought to solve it wisely and not unwisely. Very often we solve these puzzles as we solve puzzles in arithmetic and geometry. If you are able to solve

[1] Gandhiji then unveiled the portrait of K. Madhavan Nair. Later during the day Gandhiji visited the office of the *Mathrubhumi*, a Malayalam daily, and addressing its staff described Mr. Madhavan Nair as the soul of the Trust due to whose ceaseless effort the paper occupied its unique place. It was not too much to say that it had occupied a unique place in Malabar. He appealed to the staff to follow in the steps of the late Mr. Madhavan Nair, who was whole-heartedly in favour of the Harijan movement, without mental reservations or anything of the kind. Pure and simple, it was a religious movement.

[2] The principal of the college had observed that Harijan boys in the institution were treated on a par with others.

these wisely, then I will give you illustrations of earthly parents. Those of you who have brothers will realize that all have not the same degree of intelligence and of virtues. You are not certainly of the same age. You do not enjoy the same vigorous constitution. And yet do you find your parents distinguishing between you and those who are brighter and more diligent ? On the contrary perhaps your parents will give more to those who are helpless and are in need of help than to those who are brighter and well able to take care of themselves. Do you suppose then that the Divine Father, the Father of all fathers that the world has ever seen, will treat some from their very birth to be untouchables and therefore the lowest and others to be the highest at the top of ladder ? I suppose this is a self-proved proposition of untouchability as you are practising it today. The purse will be turned to good account if it is given as an earnest of your determination to change your hearts and to regard no person as untouchable on the face of the earth. Religion teaches us to consider ourselves as the lowest and everybody else as the highest. Do all of you behave like that ? Untouchability has undoubtedly to go. It is eating into the very vitals of our being and it crushes the very soul. If you are able to understand my words then you will so change your hearts and transform them that you will not allow untouchability in any shape or form to find a residence in your hearts. You will not allow untouchability towards boys belonging to other religions. You will go to Harijan quarters, instead of wasting your time, you will go there, serve the Harijan boys, and find out what their wants are. If your parents give you five pies or whatever it is, you must at least spare a portion of that money for the Harijan boys who are in greater need than yourselves. You will give your leisure minutes for the service of Harijan boys and girls. You will go to their quarters and sweep them. You must teach them how to lead a clean life. It is not enough that you clean your body but you must clean your heart and soul. The first thing to do, when you get up from bed, is to ask God to keep you clean in heart and body. If you will do these things, the purse that you have given is a token of your determination to get rid of untouchability.

The Hindu, 15-1-1934

460. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

January 14, 1934

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Malkani has shown me your letter. I have written frankly to Biharilal. I send you a copy of my letter. We have to be outspoken and firm in our dealings with him. It does not seem possible in this tour to achieve all that can be accomplished in a walking tour. But whatever has been achieved appears to be good enough. Public opinion has undergone a great change but not much change is evident in the conduct. Let us see what happens. I can see only God's hand in this work. This is not a trite observation. This task is beyond the power of one lone person or even of thousands. Nothing more can be written or said on this subject. It simply means that my faith in God is growing stronger than ever. I am having a direct experience of the feebleness of my own powers.

I hope you are maintaining good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : C. W. 7943. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

461. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KALPETTA[1]

January 14, 1934

FRIENDS,

It was not a task to me but a real pleasure to be able to drive through this very beautiful tract of the country. I have learnt a great deal of what lies at the back of the addresses to which you have just now listened. The deceased Subbiah Goundan, it seems, has left by his will all the landed property[2] he ever possessed for the Harijan cause. It is a rare gift and a rather rich gift. A great burden rests upon the executors of the will and the Trustees in connection with this Trust. They cannot make of this colony the success that the testator must have desired it to become, unless they devote themselves heart and soul to the scheme which has to be worked under this bequest. Let me hope that the Trustees or the executors are worthy of the trust that has been reposed in them and that they will discharge the

[1] The meeting was held to mark the opening of Muthal Thirunelli Harijan Colony under the auspices of the Sahodara Sangham.

[2] Amounting to 165 acres of land

trust to the entire satisfaction of the public. I deliberately say "the public" because the Trust becomes public property immediately it is devoted to public use. It is under this hope and with this assurance that I gladly declare this colony open and wish it every success. The materials for the experiment or realization of the scheme are in front of us all. We have in front of us not one or two but many Harijan brothers. All of us witnessed the music and the dance that they gave us. It was not a matter of enjoyment or amusement for us but it ought to carry a deep lesson to us. I suppose all of you realized as I did at once that there was no music about their instrument nor was there any charm about the dance. But that was the only thing that they do in order to pass their idle hours. The responsibility for the want of music about their instrument and about their dance lies not upon their shoulders but upon your shoulders and my shoulders. We need not have gone into their dance or their music in order to understand their primitive nature. Their appearance, their dishevelled hair and everything about their person is sufficient to tell us how criminally neglectful we have been to our kith and kin. They wear the same loin cloth or the scarf from year's end to year's end, till it turns into rags. They rarely bathe and when they do bathe, you may take it from me that it will not be in specially clean water. Again the responsibility for this disgraceful state of affairs is yours and mine. And if I had the management of this colony I tell you I would straightaway invite these people to live in the colony, give them decent pay and insist upon their taking regular baths and transform them into presentable human beings. I suppose that is precisely what we would do, each one of us, if we discovered suddenly that nearby was our own blood-brother residing in precisely the same savage condition that these brothers of ours are living in. And if that happy state of things is brought about without any loss of time, you and Iwill have more than well spent our time here. This addresss almost concludes with these words "May your efforts be crowned with success." Well, I can only say that my efforts can never be crowned with success unless your efforts are also crowned with success. For, my efforts merely consist in inviting all the *savarna* Hindus to change of heart by serving Harijans in every way possible. Lastly I ask these Harijan brothers to respond to the call of self-purification.

The Hindu, 16-1-1934

462. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CALICUT[1]

January 14, 1934

FRIENDS,

I have just got several purses on behalf of the citizens of Calicut which amount to Rs. 4,388-5-9. On the principle that you may not look a gift horse in the mouth I must in all courtesy thank you for the gifts that you have given on behalf of the Harijan cause. But as a self-chosen or self-appointed Harijan servant I must lodge my respectful protest against the leanness of the purses from the capital of Malabar. You will be surprised to learn that Bangalore, not the capital of Mysore, but the second city in Mysore, not as big as Malabar, produced much more than you have given this evening. And I am fully aware of the capacity of Calicut to give for the Harijan cause. But nothing is lost yet. You have got here many tempting things, and at the end of a few remarks that I want to make, it is open to you and perfectly possible for you to make up for the deficiency and what is today undoubtedly a lean purse can be turned by you into a fat purse.[2]

As I have said from many a platform after entering Malabar, if there was a map of untouchability made for the whole of India, Malabar would be marked as the blackest spot in all the land; and as matters stand today, I suppose you will admit that you will have to plead guilty to the charge. Then if you are convinced of the sin of Malabar, as confessedly you are convinced by the very fact of your giving me this purse, you will admit that Malabar has to make the greatest reparation in order to rid itself of the greatest sin. It does not matter, and it ought not to matter, the least little bit that some of you who are monied men do not originally come from Malabar. Those who make their livelihood or their fortunes in Malabar should realize that every pie they get is tainted with this sin. Therefore, in the matter reparation and repentance, they stand exactly on the same footing as the original Malayalis.

This morning they took me to a most beautiful bit of Malabar; they took me up the hills with the most romantic scenery. There I was taken to a village called Kalpetta, and I recalled a hymn—I think it was composed by Bishop Heber. But whether it was composed by him

[1] The meeting was held at the beach at 6 p. m. and was attended by 15,000 people.

[2] This paragraph has been taken from *The Hindu.*

or some other bishop, this is the line that I single out from that hymn for your edification. It is said that, as he was approaching this Western coast of India, involuntarily this line came to his lips, or to his pen : "Every prospect pleases, man alone is vile."[1] I have no doubt that he had not this black spot of untouchability in his mind when he wrote this line. The orthodox interpretation of this line is wholly different from the one that I put upon it. But poets can never be confined even in cages of their own construction. Poets write for eternity. Their words are charged with a meaning of which they have no conception when they utter or write them. Scented breezes come from plantations that Nature has designed for man in Malabar. But through untouchability he has violated Nature and thus become vile. We have endeavoured to disfigure God's mightiest creation, namely, man. The soul of man presents a beauty never to be surpassed by any ravishing beauty of vegetation. But the so-called *savarna* Hindus or the so-called high class Hindus arrogated to themselves the right of suppressing a portion of Hindu humanity. They endeavoured, however, vainly, as we shall presently see in a few years, perhaps. But man has left no stone unturned to suppress, in the name of Divinity itself, the soul of man by putting thousands outside the pale of society.

I will tell you what I saw today in Kalpetta in the midst of the ravishing beauty of vegetation. I saw wild specimens of humanity, with a stinking odour. Please do not say hastily that that is why they are untouchables. I want you to think with me a little more deeply than possibly you are prepared to do and realize with me that for this indescribably painful scene you and I are responsible. These very men, in an hour's time, if you desire, can be transformed into beings cleanly and outwardly as respectable as you and I may be. A little hot water, or soap, a little white khaddar, and you will immediately find that they are just as presentable as you and I are. Internally, God alone can be the judge between them and us. It is quite possible, in fact, in my opinion it is quite certain, that we are much more sinful or much viler than they can be. Our slates are sullied with writings not particularly creditable to us. Their slates have still to be written upon. Are you now surprised that, when I saw these countrymen of ours, I involuntarily said in my mind to the poet, 'you were right in saying,

[1] The lines are :

What though the spicy breezes
Blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle,
Though every prospect pleases,
And only man is vile.

"Every prospect pleases, man alone is vile".' Now, put your hand upon your heart and tell me whether, if you gave up all your wealth and all sisters discarded every article of jewellery of which they are possessed, would it be a sufficient reparation for the injuries that you have been partners in inflicting on these countrymen of ours ? I wish to suggest to you that you will be fit servants of Harijans when you have begun the act of reparation by discarding all your possessions for their sake. But I know that is an ideal state of things, and I know also that, if I could possibly carry you along those ideal lines, then India would again be really a land of thirty crores of gods.

But I am labouring under no such delusion. I consider myself a practical idealist. I take from human nature what it yields and go my way. My business is to present to you the realities of the situation, to stimulate your intelligence and your imagination, to touch your hearts and then leave you to do the very best that you can possibly do for a cause so noble and so sacred as that of the Harijans.

I would like you, lastly, to realize that if we, that so-called *savarna* Hindus, failed in this elementary duty by the Harijans during this brief period of probation, Hinduism will be a thing of the past. History teaches us that many a civilization, many a culture perished beyond redemption because of the inherent weakness of the representatives of those bygone civilizations. Do not, therefore, run away with the belief that Hinduism will be an exception and escape the impending doom, if we, Hindus, prove unworthy representatives of the priceless treasures that the *rishis* have left for us.

Harijan 2-2-1934, and *The Hindu*, 16-1-1934

463. LETTER TO NAN AND TANGAI MENON

January 15, 1934

DEAR NAN[1] AND TANGAI[2],

Love and kisses to you. I hope the climate[3] is suiting you and that you are both happy. Are you picking up Malayali tongue ? You would write to me frequently.

Love.

BAPU

My Dear Child, p. 120

[1] Daughters of Esther Menon
[2] *ibid*
[3] Of Kodaikanal in the Palani Hills, South India

464. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

January 15, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

It is four in the afternoon just now. Today is my weekly silence day. I am writing this in Nagji Purushottam's bungalow in Calicut. Devdas and Lakshmi arrived today. Thakkar Bapa and Shankerlal will arrive tomorrow. I will see the Zamorin[1] tomorrow at 2.30 in the afternoon and then will leave for Trichur at five.

The question is whether Lakshmi should go to Delhi for her delivery or remain in Madras. She and Devdas will see Raja in about two days. They will come to a final decision after that. Devdas has got the permission to go to Delhi, but I think he should spend about six months in Madras to gain experience. Lakshmi would not like her delivery to take place in his absence and Raja would not like it in his. Thus there is a problem within a problem. Doesn't the meaning of life consist in solving even such seemingly trivial problems in the right manner ?

I have specially called Shankerlal here for a brief discussion regarding khadi. I observe that perhaps needless expenditure is being incurred in our department. I wish to place before him what I have observed. I think we should stop the needless expenditure on sending khadi from one province to another. I incline finally towards the practice followed in Anantpur. The practice followed at Saoli seems good. Krishnadas [Gandhi] and Jajuji are experts and they complement each other perfectly. Krishnadas is acquitting himself very well. Keshu is quiet. Ramdas is discontented. He also will become calm by and by.

Devdas visited Ba. He is full of praise for her courage. She is of course harassad a little. But without harassment there would be no pleasure in being in jail.

I paid a visit to Guruvayur. There is no resentment there at all. It is true, though, that the Varanashrama Sangh had sent *pahelwans*[2] from North India to demonstrate with black flags and get beaten up a little. Two of them had taken control of the dais. They got hold of a man by his feet, whereupon the young men there asked them to get down. An altercation and fighting followed. The *pahelwans* got beaten up a little. They are quite all right, but they did their play-

[1] Of Calicut, now Kozhikode

[2] Professional wrestlers

acting cleverly. I sent the two to a dispensary and started the meeting and went on with it as if nothing had happened.[1] The crowds continue to be as big as ever. Small and big contributions continue to come in. Another Annapurna, named Kaumudi, came into the limelight. She gave all her ornaments.[2] "Who can harm him whom Rama protects ?" So we will live as He ordains, do His bidding and dance as He wills.

Two Hungarian women, mother and daughter, met me in Bangalore. Both are expert painters. They lead a simple life. Just now they have dedicated themselves to the service of India. *Bhajan* music fills them with ecstasy.

N. seems likely to go to America. S. too may go. I have not written much to you about their doings. What could I write ? Besides, I don't have the time either.

Amala is getting on fairly well.

A letter from Mani is enclosed. I have written to Swami for slivers and the books. Since the books will not be of the same size, I don't know whether he will be able to pack them together. But Swami is resourceful and, if it is possible, he will manage to do that.

Dahyabhai had sent to me Mani's letter to you.

If I go to Belgaum, I will surely try to meet both. But my going there is not certain.

Write to Mani that one need not be with one's elders in order to serve them. If one does their work, one serves them. It is not wrong to wish to be near them. On the contrary, it is natural to do so. But there is no necessary connection between serving them and being near them. Poor girl, she would be thinking that her letter must have been forwarded directly to you. But you must have noticed that it had made a trip to Sabarmati for a dip in the river.[3] It thus got moistened at for or five places. This is of course no new experience to us. But it is our resolve—is it not ?—to remain contented with whatever happens.

I have not been able to satisfy Gordhanbhai. But he doesn't write to me now. Towards him, too, I have done my duty as I saw it. I have asked him to let me know the total sum received from Vithalbhai and also to send me the correspondence between them. If I get it, I think I shall have to publish it.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Guruvayur"

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Women's Meeting, Calicut", also Vol. LVII "Kaumudi's Renunciation"

[3] There being nobody knowing Gujarati on the staff of the Belgaum jail, Gujarati letters written by prisoners were first sent to Sabarmati jail for censoring.

Let him always write to me at Wardha. Even if, however, he writes everything only to you and if I get every such letter, I shall be fully satisfied. I want you yourself to guide him in this matter. I take it that you will write about Ba. I have already written to you about Lakshmi. I am writing to Mridula and Nandubehn.[1] Devdas went and looked up Brijkrishna. He is quite well. He has survived. He needs rest, which he is taking.

It is certain that Raja will be released on 6th February.

You should learn not to go on thinking about things, whatever the cause. For that, you should either memorize the *Gita* or learn Sanskrit or go on reciting the Ramadhun both in the straight and the reverse order.

I get no time at all for worrying, so you needn't advise me not to worry.

Blessings to both from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 62-5

465. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

January 15, 1934

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I did get news of you from time to time. I deliberately refrained from writing to you. As you were permitted to receive only one letter I thought you should be able to get other more important letters.

But, whether I write or not, I always remember all the women workers.

My message to all the women is this : Irrespective of the resolution or promise made or given at the time of the march[2] to Ras, let all the women think again independently and take a fresh decision. I will accept it. I adhere to my previous view. Nobody should persuade anybody else to adopt a particular course. Everyone should decide for herself. It is their religious duty to do so. Each should act according to her capacity and her inclination. It is an accident that I am out of prison. No one should stay in the Red Bungalow. Nobody should stay at any place where he or she is permitted to stay as a matter of favour. A time may come when one may not get a place to

[1] Vijayagauri, wife of Dr. Kanuga

[2] On August 1, 1933; *vide* " Appeal to People of Gujarat" , 30-7-1933

live in or anything to eat. We have learnt that it is our dharma to bear such hardships without grumbling and without feeling unhappy about it. This is the essence of the *Gita*. If other people do not now welcome us, it means that they are not in a position to do so. Why should you be unhappy about it ? However, things have not yet reached that stage. It will indeed be good if they do. It will be a real test for us.

Every one of the women should not expect a separate letter from me for the present, but I expect them all to write to me.

You should, of course, write for all. And you should pour out whatever is in your heart. If you need anybody's help for writing the letter, you may take it. Everyone should tell me in her letter what work she has been doing.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

All letters should be sent to the Wardha address.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6 : G. S. Gangabehnne, pp. 81-2. Also C. W. 8814. Courtesy : Gangabehn Vaidya

466. LETTER TO SULOCHANA A. SHAH

January 15, 1934

CHI. SULOCHANA,

Did you enjoy yourself ? Give me an account of how you spent the six months and let me know what you intend to do now. Be quite frank.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 1750

467. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

January 15, 1934

CHI. PREMA,

I am writing this only to tell you that I will await the long letter which you propose to write.

Kisan is quite well. I cannot give her as much attention as I would like to.

Go through all the issues of *Harijan*, both Gujarati and English.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10353. Also C. W. 6792. Courtesy : Premabehn Kantak

468. LETTER TO AMINA G. QURESHI

January 15, 1934

CHI. AMINA,

Write to me a detailed letter. Let me know your reaction after you have seen the children. Do what you think right for the future. Tell me what you did in the jail, what you read and all other things.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 10622. Courtesy : Amina G. Qureshi

469. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

January 15, 1934

CHI. MRIDU,

It is of course too much to expect a letter from you. When all of you consider me someone to be pitied, how can I expect any letter?

I think it is only due to his attitude that there is no acknowledgement of the letter I had written to Saralabehn. I keep getting some new at least about all of you.

I am writing this letter to pass on Mani's message. She has received Rs. 30 from you. She has received Rs. 25 from Nandubehn[1]. Hence she does not at all need any more money. She has written many other things. But it only implies that she is at peace and her health is good. There are fewer facilities this time. There is no company at all. She is occupying herself in reading and spinning. She has also received the books you had sent for her.

You must be keeping yourself informed about me through the *Harijan.*

[1] Vijayagowri Kanunga

Write to me. Give me news about everyone's health. Write only at the Wardha address.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11186. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

470. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 15, 1934

MY DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,[1]

I must not attempt to write more Urdu. I am really too tired now to write any more. The hand aches and it is past 8.30 p. m., silence day. But I must write some letters. I hope you got my letter in the jail. I have told you that you should not come to me.[2] I am far away from you. But if you cannot resist the wish, you must come. You should of course see your mother and Narandas. In any case write to me fully. I hope you are well in body and mind.

Love.

BAPU[3]

From a photostat : G. N. 290

[1] The superscription is in Urdu.
[2] *Vide* "Ashram Bhajanavali"
[3] The signature is in Urdu.

471. MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE OF MALABAR[1]

[*January 16, 1934*][2]

Having travelled throughout Malabar I have no doubt that the removal of untouchability entirely rests with workers. If they will prove their faith through character that is above reproach and through devotion that counts no sacrifice too great, the hearts of opponents will be melted.

The Bombay Chronicle, 20-1-1934

472. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

January 16, 1934

BA,

There is no letter from you probably because Devdas visited you. But I hope you received my letter. I have been writing every week regularly and also sending the discourses.[3] Devdas came and saw me. He arrived yesterday. Lakshmi also has come. Both are well. We shall part today. I think they will both go to Delhi after meeting Rajaji. But it is not finally decided. Devdas told me everything about you. It is rather strange that they did not permit you to get oil for massage from outside. But I was glad to learn from Devdas that you remain cheerful whether or not you get the oil or whether the food is good or bad. If the reading of the *Gita* and other sacred books did not bear even this fruit, it is the same whether one had read them or not. My discourse this time will therefore be about reading books. We read in many works that reading of holy books by itself earns merit for one. Such statements are intended to encourage us. If we take them literally, we shall benefit nothing by reading them. One should ponder deeply over what one reads. Pondering deeply means thinking how we can apply their teaching in our life. But today I have been having a large number of visitors and so I don't write more. We are in Calicut today. I am sure you remember Shyamjibhai. Vali is doing

[1] This was given to *Mathrubhumi* for publication.

[2] Gandhiji gave this message before he left Calicut for Cochin on January 16, 1934.

[3] The first discourse appeared in the letter dated December 25, 1933;

some public work. Narmada, too, is engaged in the same work. We shall be leaving Calicut this evening. Urmila Devi is here. They all inquire after you.

Blessings to all from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 9

473. LETTER TO MANIBEHN N. PARIKH

January 16, 1934

CHI. MANI[1],

Give me detailed news about yourself. How did you spend your time, what did you read and what did you think about? Write about the children, too, and tell me whatever you wish to.

Everybody may do as he or she wishes. There is no time to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5975. Also C.W. 3292. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

474. LETTER TO GOVINDDAS

January 17, 1934

BHAI GOVINDDAS,

I have your letter. I was delighted. I too wish to meet you. The itinerary is enclosed. The dates for U.P. are not fixed. Utkal is followed by Bengal, Assam and Bihar.

God sustains me.

I trust you are keeping well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 9709. Courtesy: Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi

[1] Wife of Narahari Parikh

475. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, TRICHUR

January 17, 1934

FRIENDS,

It gives me very great pleasure to renew my acquaintance with you after so many years. But that pleasure is not unmixed with pain because of the fact that in an enlightened State like Cochin untouchability is still flourishing. It was perhaps whilst I was driving through the streets of Trichur this morning, to speak a few words to you, that I saw a Nayadi in flesh and blood. He was shivering with fear. It was a sign of humiliation for you, for me and for all Hindus. It is high time that you wipe out that shame. It is also a shame for us that there should be even at this stage men—I don't know anything about women—defending untouchability, unapproachability and invisibility in the name of religion. I venture to suggest to you that throughout the civilized world such a sin cannot possibly be hinted at in the name of religion.

His Highness the Maharaja by himself cannot possibly change your hearts, and I would be wholly wrong were I to go away with the belief that untouchability could be removed by a stroke of the pen. Nor can this change be brought about by any sort of compulsion. Therefore I would say to our sanatanists, or rather those who call themselves 'sanatanists', that they need not fear the propaganda that I am carrying on. I have to appeal to your reason and to your hearts and urge you to do your best. The Hindus claim to be essentially a nation of toleration. And if there is such a thing as untouchability in Hinduism, it will become a religion of intolerance.

I therefore respectfully put to those who are today intending to do this propaganda against untouchability to wipe out this blot on Hinduism. I have received several letters on this matter and most of the pricking letters that I have received on this problem are from Travancore and Cochin.

One word to reformers. If we have sense of our own conviction, if we only understand the sanatanists, we should tolerate what our brethren may say of us. After all it will depend upon the character of the reformers as to what is to be the nature of the reform that they are making. The goal of this campaign against untouchability depends on the purity of the reformers in this campaign. If they stick to their present character and ceaselessly endeavour in their task, then this monster of untouchability will be wiped out. But patience is required

on the part of the reformers. Surely, they must not lose faith though there is no support from the surroundings.

One word to Hindi friends. I really expected that there would be so much atmosphere in Malabar about Hindi and so many Hindi scholars, that it would be easy for me to speak in Hindi altogether. I was astonished, however, to find that there was no translator who would translate my Hindi speech, and there was so much disinclination on the part of the audience to allow a Hindi speech. May I suggest to you that this disinclination also bars our way to progress in the campaign against untouchability? I shall simply put it in one sentence. There must be exchange of workers between North and South. Though we have an inexhaustible supply of workers amongst the Hindi speaking people, if workers from the North cannot possibly come here and explain, it becomes an impossible barrier. You may retort, 'what about you when you go to the North? Why should not they understand our speech?' If you will think a little deeper, you will realize that it is an impossible demand. Among Malayalam, Telugu, Canarese, Tamil, what speech should the Northerner adopt? I am myself a lover of all Indian languages. And I have attempted at the age of sixty-five to learn all these languages. I have become a special lover of Southern languages. But my intimate knowledge of this state of affairs demands that, if we are to work for such reform as [eradication of] untouchability, a common knowledge of Hindi is absolutely indispensable, because it is a language spoken by twenty crores out of thirty crores of people, and since we call ourselves Indians we can expect the thirty crores to try to understand the speech of twenty crores of people.

The Hindu, 19-1-1934

476. SPEECH AT KURUKKANCHERI[1]

January 17, 1934

It is a matter of exceedingly great pleasure for me to renew your acquaintance. The names Ezhavas and Thiyyas are not new to me at all, nor is the name of Shri Narayana Guru new to me. I had the honour of meeting him and having long discussions with him while he was on this earth. It was at that time I came in close contact with many Ezhavas and Thiyyas. I met the leaders and had many friendly discussions with them. 1 have very pleasant recollections of the

[1] This was in reply to the address of welcome by Thiyya Harijans. A report of the speech was also published in *The Hindu*, 19-1-1934.

affection I received from them without exception. Since then constant correspondence has been kept up between them and myself. Whilst some have differed from the view I have expressed, their affection has not suffered in any way. I treasure that affection. Therefore I am glad that I am once more in your midst.

I have carefully read the whole of your address. All the remarks that you have made about the institution of caste, as you have interpreted it, have my fullest sympathy. But you know from your experience that the vast majority of questions in this world have at least two sides. They appear differently and bear different meanings also. Caste, in so far as it is based on untouchability, is an institution of the devil, and we must get rid of it at any cost. But I have explained repeatedly that caste expressed as varnadharma is an eternal law which we may not break except at our own risk. There are many laws of Nature, which are still hidden from us. That does not mean that they are not in existence or that they do not operate in our lives. The law of varna was discovered by our ancestors ages ago; and, as I have understood and interpreted it, it has appeared to me a wholly beneficent law. But like many laws and institutions of Nature this law of varna has been distorted, and we see it today in its hideous form. Man—Hindu man—has disfigured it and made it doubly hideous by tainting it with untouchability. Varnadharma is an economic law. It is my certain conviction that, if the whole world followed that law, the strife that we see around us would cease at once. It is pre-eminently a law of concord, never of discord.

But I have not come here to give you a dissertation on the law of the varna. I simply want to say that I am in full agreement with you in your fight against untouchability. I entirely endorse your remarks that it has corrupted not Hindu society alone, but has affected other societies also. The assumption of superiority of one class over another is a poison slowly killing us. When Narayana Guru Swami enunciated his formula of one caste, one religion and one God, he had, in my opinion, no other meaning in his mind. He said, ‘I will not tolerate this assumption of superiority on the part of anybody.’ I do not recall in my many discussions with him that he had anything to say against the beneficent interpretation of varnadharma that I have given.

Let us not, therefore, destroy the tree for its bad or poisonous branches. If you know anything whatsoever of gardening, you know that a gardener who finds diseased branches prunes them. He deals with the whole tree if he finds the tree rotten at the root. He will be considered a foolish gardener deserving summary dismissal who,

because he sees some diseased branches, lays the axe at the root. In our society let us act as wise gardeners. Let us understand the disease that is corroding Hinduism. Let us get rid of untouchability or, in other words, of the evil of superiority and inferiority. Let us first get rid of this evil and purify our hearts. And when we shall have successfully done so, we shall be able to pronounce opinion on the working of the law of varna as I have explained it. Today we know it chiefly as a species of untouchability. Lastly, it is my conviction, and I want you to be infected with that conviction, that untouchability as I have described it to you is fast going. And if you are fired by that conviction, I want you to put forth your best effort to exorcize that devil.

Harijan, 9-2-1934

477. SPEECH AT UNION CHRISTIAN COLLEGE, ALWAYE

January 17, 1934

It is a matter of great pleasure to me to renew acquaintance with the students and professors of this college. I have very pleasant recollections of my meeting with the students that were in the college at the time of my first visit. It was good of you to think of me while I was passing through this part of the country.

My message is exceedingly simple. It is no new truth that has dawned upon me today. I have to the best of my ability striven to live up to it for the past fifty years. And the more I have succeeded in living up to it, the greater has been my inward joy. Nor is it for the first time that I am delivering this message to India. But because of some incidents in the recent past, it comes to the people as a new thing. My message is simply this that *savarna* Hindus, who have been considering themselves superior to those whom they have called untouchables, unapproachables, invisibles or *avarna* Hindus, should realize that this arrogation of superiority has no sanction whatsoever in the Shastras. If I discovered that those scriptures, which are known as Vedas, Upanishads, *Bhagavad Gita, Smritis*, etc., clearly showed that they claimed divine authority for untouchability as I have described it to you, then nothing on this earth would hold me to Hinduism. I should throw it overboard as I should throw overboard a rotten apple. My reason is offended and my heart is wounded at the

very thought that God Himself, who has created both *savarna* Hindus and *avarna* Hindus, should impose this bar sinister between His children. The very thought that the *rishis*, who gave the Vedas and the Upanishads and who in every *mantra* that they pronounced taught the unity of God, could ever conceive of any such thing as untouchability as it is practised today in Hinduism must be repugnant to every intelligent person. But prejudices and superstitions die hard. They cloud the reason, befog the intellect and harden the heart. And so you find learned men defending this untouchability.

But you, students, should know that behind this message there lurks also a much greater message. This monster of untouchability has invaded every form of society in India; and the idea behind this message is that there should be not only no untouchability as between Hindus and Hindus, but that there should be no untouchability whatsoever between Hindus, Christians, Mussalmans, Parsis and the rest. I am convinced that, if this great change of heart can be brought about among millions of *savarna* Hindus and their hearts can be purified—as certainly they will be purified—we should live in India as people trusting each other and without any mutual distrust or suspicion. It is untouchability with all its subtle forms that separates us from one another and makes life itself unlovely and difficult to live.

You can now, therefore, understand why I am drawing upon the sympathy of all Indians, to whatever faith they may belong. Indeed I have not hesitated to ask the support of the whole world, not by way of pecuniary offering but by their sympathy, their prayers and their study of the question with all its implications. I want their heart sympathy, which is infinitely greater than any pecuniary offering. I do not stretch out my hand before them for money because they are not debtors to Harijans. It is for *savarna* Hindus to discharge this debt.

To conclude, this prayerful support and sympathy can only be given by non-Hindus, if they have no distrust of this movement and if they are satisfied that this is a movement of inward purification and deeply religious. Remember that I have not idly given this message which has come straight from the heart. I have gladly taken your purse which is a spontaneous offering from you. But I have accepted it as a bond between you and myself and as a token of your

determination to give me the fullest support you are capable of giving. And since I am a good accountant, I shall ask an account from you and shall want to know from time to time what part you have played in this movement.

Harijan, 26-1-1934

478. LETTER TO HARIJAN WORKERS OF KUPPAM[1]

[Before *January 18, 1934*][2]

DEAR FRIENDS,

It is altogether wrong and reprehensible for people to threaten to fast if I do not go to a particular place. You can easily see that if many people issued such threats they can make it impossible for me to go anywhere. I hope, therefore, that you will apologize and withdraw your threat.

The Hindu, 18-1-1934

[1] Sundarraya Iyengar and other Harijan workers in a letter had informed Gandhiji of Iyengar's intention to go on a fast from February 8, in case Gandhiji did not visit Kuppam during his forthcoming visit to Tiruppattur.

[2] The newspaper report is dated January 18.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

(A) TOUR PROGRAMME[1]

FROM 7 TH NOVEMBER 1933 TO 15TH NOVEMBER 1933

7th November

Selu : Open [ing] of a temple and a public meeting, etc., (morning 9 a.m.)

8th November

6-0 a.m.	Departure from Wardha
7-0 a.m.	Halt at Bori
7-40 a.m.	Arrival at Nagpur
7-40 to 8	Reception at Dhantoli
8-0 to 8-30	Visit to sweepers' quarters, opening of a well recently constructed by the M.C.
8-30 to 8-45	Khalasi Line Untouchable Girls' School
8-45 to 9-0	Sadar Bazar D.C.A. Girls' School
9-0 to 9-15	Chokhamela Hostel
9-15 to 9-30	Pachpaoli D. C. M. School and Mang Boarding
9–30 to 10-0	Mahar Students' Boarding, Untkhana
10-0 to 1 p.m.	Rest
1 to 5-0	Katol public meeting, etc.
5-0 to 6-0	Rest
6-0 to 7-0 p.m.	Public meeting

9th November

6-0 a.m. to 6-30	Visit to Anath Vidyarthi Graha
6-30 to 10 a.m.	Ramtek
10-0 a.m. to 2-0 p.m.	Rest
2-0 p.m.	Departure for Saoner
3-0 to 4-0	Public meeting, etc.
4-0 to 5	Back to Nagpur
5-0 to 6-0 p.m.	Rest
6-0 to 7-0 p.m.	Meeting with workers
7-0 to 8-0 p.m.	Students' meeting

10th November

6-0 a.m.	Departure for Tumser
8-0	Public meeting, etc., at Tumser

[1] *Vide* " Leaves From a Diary", 25-2-1934

9-0 a.m.	Departure for Bhandara
10-0 to 11-0	Opening of a temple, presentation of addresses
11-0 to 2-0 p.m.	Rest
2-0 p.m.	Departure for Gondia
5-0 to 6-0 p.m.	Rest
6-0 to 8-0 p.m.	Public meeting, etc.

11th November

1-20 a.m.	Departure by train, change at Nagpur at 5-0
8-0 a.m. to 9-0 a.m.	Deoli, in Wardha District

12th to 13th November

Rest at Wardha

13th November

4-0 p.m.	Hinganghat
8-30 p.m.	Chanda

14th November

6-0 a.m. to 3-0 p.m.	Halt at Saoli
6-0 p.m.	Public meeting at Chanda

15th November

5-20 a.m.	Departure from Chanda
6-30 a.m.	Arrival at Warora. Departure for Wani

(The above programme is subject to alteration by Dr. Khare if Mahatmaji's health is unable to stand the strain of the tour.)

(B) CIRCULAR RE : CHANGE IN TOUR PROGRAMME

CAMP WARDHA,
November 7, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

RE: CHANGE IN GANDHIJI'S PROGRAMME

It has been found necessary, quite unavoidable, to make a substantial alteration in the order of the programme of Mahatmaji's proposed tour, extending over 9 months—November 1933 to July 1934. After touring in the Central Provinces, where the tour has commenced from today, and after attending the Central Board meeting at Delhi—December 10 to 14—he will go directly to Andhra, and the rest of the Madras Presidency, instead of going up to the Punjab, Sind, etc., and will thereafter work his way to Bengal and Assam and then westward. The new order will, therefore, be as follows :

C. P., Delhi, Andhra, Madras City, Mysore States and Malabar District, Cochin and Travancore, Tamil Nadu, Orissa, Calcutta, Bengal, Assam, Bihar, U.P., Punjab, Sind and Rajputana, Gujarat and Kathiawar, Bombay City, Maharashtra and Hyderabad Dn., and Karanataka at the end of July 1934.

The dates of the tour in the various provinces and other details are given in the sub–joined table. The details of the tour in each province will be settled and filled up by the Provincial Secretaries in consultation with their Presidents in accordance with detailed instructions already issued. But the four elementary rules to be observed are mentioned below :

(1)There should be full four hours cessation of public work for meals and correspondence in the middle of the day, preferably from 10.0 a.m. to 2.0 p.m.

(2)The day's work should not begin earlier than 6.30 a.m. and not [continue] later than 8.0 p.m.

(3)Railway journey is any day preferable to motor journey, but where the latter is unavoidable, it should not exceed 75 miles in one day.

(4)Mondays and Tuesdays in every week are non–working days and should be kept free of any travelling or public engagement. To be accurate, the period from 8 p.m. on Sunday to 8 p.m. on Tuesday is reserved, 24 hours for silence and 24 hours for correspondence and other work.

A. V. THAKKAR,
GENERAL SECRETARY,
SERVANTS OF THE UNTOUCHABLES SOCIETY

(C) TOUR PROGRAMME PROVINCEWISE

THE PROGRAMME OF GANDHIJI'S HARIJAN TOUR

Two days per week, preferably Monday and Tuesday, will be free from travelling and appointments to give Gandhiji time for correspondence and writing for the *Harijan.* Thus there will be five working days per week so far as the tour programme is concerned.

PROVINCE	TOTAL DAYS	DATES (BOTH DAYS INCLUSIVE)	WORKING DAYS
C.P.	318th Nov. to 8 Dec.	23	
9TH DECEMBER IN TRAIN AND AT JHANSI			
Delhi	510th Dec. to 14th Dec.	3	
15TH DECEMBER IN TRAIN DELHI TO BEZWADA			
Andhra	1416th Dec. to 29th Dec.	10	
Madras City	5	30th Dec. to 3rd Jan. 1934	3
Mysore–Malabar	10	4th Jan. to 13th Jan.	8
Cochin–Travancore	7	14th Jan. to 20th Jan.	5
Tamil Nadu	20	21st Jan. to 9th Feb.	10
(INCLUDING 6 DAYS' FULLL REST)			
10TH FEBRUARY IN TRAIN—MADRAS TO ORISSA			
Orissa	711th Feb. to 17th Feb.	5	
Bengal	2818th Feb. to 17th March	20	

Assam	718th March to 24th March		5
Bihar	1425th March to 7th April		10
U.P.	358th April to 12th May		20
	(INCLUDING 7 DAYS' FULL REST)		
Punjab	1413th May to 26th May		10
Sind	727th May to 2nd June		5
Rajputana	7	3rd June to 9th June	5
Rest at Ahmedabad	7	10th June to 16th June	0
Gujarat–Kathiawar	14	17th June to 30th June	10
Bombay City	7	1st July to 7th July	5
Maharashtra–Hyderabad Dn	17	8th July to 24th July	11
Karanataka	7	25th July to 31st July	5

This programme must be regarded as tentative and is subject to change, but only when required for the sake of the cause itself.

A. V. THAKKAR

Gandhi–Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX II

MOHAMMED IQBAL'S STATEMENT[1]

LAHORE,

December 6, 1933

"The offer made by the Aga Khan to Mr. Gandhi in London in 1931 still holds good. If under Pandit Jawaharlal's leadership, the Hindus and the Congress agree to the safeguards which the Muslims think necessary for their protection as an all–India minority, the Muslim community will still be ready to serve as camp–followers of the majority community in India's political struggle" says Sir Mohammed Iqbal in a statement issued today referring to Pandit Jawaharlal's charges against the communalist Muslim leaders.

Sir Mohammed Iqbal observes that the Aga Khan made a similar offer to Mr. Gandhi in 1932 but Mr. Gandhi would not guarantee acceptance of his position by the Congress and also the Hindu and Sikh delegates did not endorse Mr. Gandhi's position and further Mr. Gandhi wanted the Muslims not to support the untouchables' claims. After explaining the Muslim attitude towards nationalism and democracy, Sir Mohammed Iqbal puts the straight question to Pandit Jawaharlal, "How is India's problem to be solved if the majority community neither concedes the minimum necessary safeguards to the minority community, nor accepts a third party's award ? The position can admit of two alternatives only. Either, India's majority community must accept for

[1] *Vide* " Wanted a Manifestation of Christ in Daily Life" , 30-3-1934

itself the permanent position of an agent of British imperialism in the East or India should be redistributed on the basis of religious, historical and cultural affinities so as to do away with the question of electorates and the communal problems in its present form."

The Bombay Chronicle, 7–12–1933

APPENDIX III

EXTRACTS FROM JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S STATEMENT[1]

. . . I do not think that the Muslim communal organizations, chief of whom are the Muslim All–Parties Conference and the Muslim League, represent any large group of Muslims in India except in the sense that they exploit the prevailing communal sentiment. But the fact remains that they claim to speak for Muslims, and no other organization has so far risen which can successfully challenge that claim. Their aggressively communal character gives them a pull over the large number of nationalist Muslims who merge themselves in the Congress. The leaders of these organizations are patently and intensely communal. That, from the very nature of things, one can understand.

But it is equally obvious that most of them are definitely anti–national and political reactionaries of the worst kind. Apparently they do not even look forward to any common nation developing in India.

At a meeting in the British House of Commons last year the Aga Khan, Sir Mohammed Iqbal and Dr. Shafaat Ahmad Khan are reported (in *The Statesman* of December 31, 1932) to have laid stress on "the inherent impossibility of securing any merger of Hindu and Moslem, political, or indeed, social, interests". The speakers further pointed out "the impracticability of ever governing India through anything but a British agency". These statements leave no loophole for nationalism or for Indian freedom, now or even in the remote future.

I do not think that these statements represent the views of Muslims generally or even of most of the communally inclined Muslims. But they are undoubtedly the views of the dominant and politically clamorous group among the Muslims. It is an insult to one's intelligence to link these views with those of nationalism and freedom, and of course any measure of real economic freedom is still further away from them. Essentially, this is an attitude of pure reaction—political, cultural, national, social. And it is not surprising that this should be so if one examines the membership of these organizations. Most of the leading members are Government officials, ex–officials, ministers, would–be ministers, knights and title–holders, big landlords, etc. Their leader is the Aga Khan, the head of a wealthy religious group, who combines in himself, most remarkably, the feudal order and the politics and habits of the British ruling class, with which he has been intimately associated for many years.

Such being the leadership of the Muslims in India and at the Round Table

[1] *Vide* " Wanted a Manifestation of Christ in Daily Life" , 30-3-1934

Conference it is no wonder that their attitude should be reactionary. This reactionary policy went so far as to lead many of the Muslim delegates in London to seek an alliance with the most reactionary elements in British public life—Lord Lloyd and company. And the final touch was given to it when Gandhiji offered personally to accept every single one of their communal demands, however illogical and exaggerated they might be, on condition that they assured him of their full support in the political struggle for independence. That condition and offer were not accepted and it became clear that what stood in the way was not even communalism but political reaction.

Personally I think that it is generally possible to co–operate with communalists provided the political objective is the same. But between progress and reaction, between those who struggle for freedom and those who are content with servitude, and even wish to prolong it, there is no meeting ground. And it is this political reaction which has stalked the land under cover of communalism and taken advantage of the fear of each community of the other. It is the fear complex that we have to deal with in these communal problems. Honest communalism is fear; false communalism is political reaction.

To some extent this fear is justified, or is at least understandable, in a minority community. We see this fear overshadowing the communal sky in India as a whole so far as Muslims are concerned; we see it as an equally potent force in the Punjab and Sind so far as the Hindus are concerned, and in the Punjab the Sikhs.

It was natural for the British Government to support and push on the reactionary leaders of the Muslims and to try to ignore the nationalist ones. It was also natural for them to accede to most of their demands in order to strengthen their position in their own community and weaken the national struggle. A very little knowledge of history will show that this has always been done by ruling powers. The Muslim demands did not in any way lessen the control of the British in India. To some extent they helped the British to add to their proposed special powers and to show to the world how necessary their continued presence in India was.

I have written all this about the attitude of the Muslim communalist leaders not only to complete the picture but because it is a necessary preliminary to the understanding of the Hindu communal attitude. There is no essential difference between the two. But there was this difference that the Congress drew into its ranks most of the vital elements of Hindu society and it dominated the situation and thus circumstances did not permit the Hindu communalists to play an important role in politics. The Hindu Mahasabha leaders largely confined themselves to criticizing the Congress. When however there was a lull in Congress activities, automatically the Hindu communalists came more to the front and their attitude was frankly reactionary.

It must be remembered that the communalism of a majority community must of

necessity bear a closer resemblance to nationalism than the communalism of a minority group. One of the best tests of its true nature is what relation it bears to the national struggle. If it is politically reactionary or lays stress on communal problems rather than national ones, then it is obviously anti–national. . ..

I cannot hold the Mahasabha responsible for these statements[1] but as a matter of fact they fit in with, and are only a slight elaboration of, the Mahasabha attitude. And they bear out that many Hindu communalists are definitely thinking on the lines of co–operation with British imperialism in the hope of getting favours. It requires little argument to show that this attitude is not only narrowly communal but also anti–national and intensely reactionary. . . .

It is perfectly true that Hindu Mahasabha has stood for joint electorates right through its career and this is obviously the only national solution of the problem. It is also true that the Communal Award is an utter negation of nationalism and is meant to separate India into communal compartments and give strength to disruptive tendencies and thus to strengthen the hold of British imperialism. But it must be borne in mind that nationalism cannot be accepted only when it profits the majority community. The test comes in the provinces where there is a Muslim majority and in that test the Hindu Mahasabha has failed.

Nor is it enough to blame Muslim communalists. It is easy enough to do so for Indian Muslims as a whole are unhappily very backward and compare unfavourably with Muslims in all other countries. The point is that a special responsibility does attach to the Hindus in India both because they are the majority community and because economically and educationally they are more advanced. The Mahasabha, instead of discharging that responsibility, has acted in a manner which has undoubtedly increased the communalism of the Muslims and made them distrust the Hindus all the more. The only way it has tried to meet their communalism is by its own variety of communalism. One communalism does not end the other; each feeds on the other and both fatten. . .

I cannot say what following the Hindu or Muslim communal organizations have. It is possible that in a moment of communal excitement each side may command the allegience of considerable numbers. But I do submit that on both sides these organizations represent the rich upper class groups and the struggle for communal advantages is really an attempt of these groups to take as big a share of power and privilege for themselves as possible. At the most, it means jobs for a few of our unemployed intellectuals. How do these communal demands meet the needs of the masses ? What is the programme of the Hindu Mahasabha or the Muslim League for the workers, the peasants and the lower middle classes, which form the great bulk of the nation ? They have no programme except a negative one, as the Mahasabha hinted at Ajmer, of not disturbing the present social order. This in itself shows that the controlling

[1] Made by Bhai Parmanand, Dr. Moonje and others

forces of these communal organizations are the upper class possessing social groups today. The Muslim communalists tell us a great deal about the democracy of Islam but are afraid of democracy in practice; the Hindu communalists talk of nationalism and think in terms of a "Hindu Nationalism".

Personally I an convinced that Nationalism can only come out of the ideological fusion of Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and other groups in India. That does not and need not mean the extinction of any real culture of any group, but it does mean a common national outlook, to which other matters are subordinated. I do not think that Hindu–Muslim or other unity will come merely by reciting [it][1] like a *mantra.* That it will come I have no doubt, but it will come from below, not above, for many of those above are too much interested in British domination and hope to preserve their special privileges through it. Social and economic forces will inevitably bring other problems to the front. They will create cleavages along different lines, but the communal cleavage will go.

I have been warned by friends, whose opinion I value, that my attitude towards communal organizations will result in antagonizing many people against me. That is indeed probable. I have no desire to antagonize any countryman of mine for we are in the midst of a mighty struggle against a powerful opponent. But that very struggle demands that we must check harmful tendencies and always keep the goal before us. I would be false to myself, to my friends and comrades, so many of whom have sacrificed their all at the altar of freedom and even to those who disapprove of what I say, if I remained a silent witness to an attempt to weaken and check our great struggle for freedom. Those, who, in my opinion, are helping in this attempt may be perfectly honest in the beliefs they hold. I do not challenge their *bona fides.* But none the less, the beliefs may be wrong, anti–national and reactionary.

I write as an individual, and, in this matter, I claim to represent no one but myself. Many may agree with me; I hope they do. But whether they do so or do not, I must say frankly what I have in my mind. That is not perhaps the way of politicians, for, in politics, people are very careful of what they say and do not say lest they offend some group or individual and lose support. But I am not a politician by choice; forces stronger than me have driven me to this field and, it may be, that I have yet to learn the ways of politicians.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2–12–1933

[1] Illegible

APPENDIX IV

BAPU'S TOUR PROGRAMME[1]

DATE	MORNING	AFTERNOON	NIGHT
Dec. 28	Train	Vizagapatam	*Vizianagaram
Dec. 29	Anakapalli		
	(till 3 p.m.)	Train	Train
Dec. 30	Buchireddipalem	*Nellore	Venkatagiri
Dec. 31	Renigunta	*Cuddapah	Cuddapah
Jan. 1–2	Rest days at	*Cuddapah	
Jan. 3	Vuravakonda	*Anantapur	Train
Jan. 4	* Bangalore		
Jan. 5	*Mysore		

Letters for the day may be sent to place marked with*.

Gandhi–Nehru Papers 1933. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* " Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel" , 18-4-1934

1. MAY THE OLD MAN LIVE FOR A HUNDRED YEARS[1]

[*January 18, 1934*][2]

You would add to the glory of Gujarat and its people by celebrating the eighty-first birthday of Abbas Saheb. No one can compete with Abbas Saheb in zeal, self-sacrifice and generosity. I came in contact with him during the inquiry regarding the Punjab Martial Law. Knowing that he belonged to the Tyabji family and had been a Congress worker for a long time, I suggested his name for the Committee. Though a staunch Mussalman, he can live with a staunch Hindu like his own bloodbrother. Among such Hindus I am as one of his family. His secrets are not unknown to me. Everyone in his family contributes to the national service according to his or her capacity. May the old man live for a hundred years!

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 28-1-1934

2. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

January 18, 1934

PS.

I was forgetting one thing completely. I cannot give the right decision on the question of closing of the Prakashan Mandir. The matter was discussed in my presence. I had expressed the view that, if some people took up the task of propagating Gandhi literature, we could leave it to them and let those who wished to court arrest do so. We do not wish to stop anyone from courting arrest so that we can carry on the work of publication. But the converse of this also may be worth considering. We can decide about that only after taking into account all the relevant factors. I cannot judge about them from this distance. You should, therefore, pay no attention to my opinion but do what all of you think is best. If there are strong differences of opinion among you, send me the views of all together with their reasons. I shall then be able to give the final decision. There is no

[1] The message also appeared in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 25-1-1934.

[2] The date is from Chandulal Dalal's *Gandhijini Dinvari*.

need to do anything in a hurry. But I have no doubt about one thing. No one should give up his responsibility and court arrest. The view which Mahadev has expressed from jail could not be different from what it is. It should, therefore, be ignored and everybody should think for himself or herself. Mahadev may not have the necessary data to enable him to form the right view.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9934. Also C.W. 6909. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

3. SPEECH AT PALLURUTHY[1]

January 18, 1934

I am thankful to the organizers for having taken me through the school building and the temple. I am thankful also for the frankness with which your opinion is expressed in this address. I am glad that this address is really more in the nature of advice to me than anything else. The best way to reciprocate is to tell you frankly what views I hold. You have advised me not to conduct this campaign in the name of Hindu religion. I am very sorry I cannot endorse your advice. It is wholly wrong to say or even think that this movement is conducted in order to consolidate Hindu religion or consolidate anything. If I commit sin and want to do penance, I do it not to consolidate myself but to purify myself. For me, this untouch-ability is a sin that Hinduism commits against the untouchables. It becomes and remains a sin inasmuch as the *savarna* Hindus consider the untouchables, whom I now call Harijans, as untouchable Hindus. Therefore I can only call this a movement of reformation and purifi-cation in Hinduism. I become a debtor only to those who call them-selves Hindus. I do not become a debtor to those who have nothing to do with Hinduism. You just now took me to the temple and there showed me everything including the worship that is done according to the Hindu traditions. If your form of worship is the same as mine, my heart naturally goes out to you. But if you say you are no longer Hindus and you have adopted some other faith, my obligation to you as Hindus ceases. My obligation to you as fellow-beings, of course,

[1] This was in reply to the address presented on behalf of Shri Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam. The speech was also reported in brief in *The Hindu*, 20-1-1934.

does not cease.

There is that fine and necessary distinction which you cannot get over. God has made Nature so that we are one in many. There are different faiths in this world. I believe them all to be true. But so long as there are different faiths and we belong to one faith, there are special obligations attached to that faith. That does not mean that I would not work for Mussalman fellow-men or Christian fellow-men or Parsis or Jews or any other. But I can realize unity with no one if I loose my foot from the platform on which I am standing. I believe in God much more than I believe in the fact that you and I are alive and that I am speaking to you. I may give you an illustration of what I mean. In appearance, I am speaking to you and you are listening to me. In reality, your hearts and minds may be somewhere else. My heart also may be somewhere else and my mind may be in something else. Then my speaking or your listening would be a deception. Therefore my speaking and your listening, though they are an appearance, may not be a reality. But my heart, word and deed are pledged to the Being called God, Allah, Rama or Krishna. You will now easily recognize that it is true when I say that my belief in God is far more a reality to me than this meeting which I am addressing.

But I must not take you into deeper waters. The sum and substance of what I say is this. If I appear to you as a Hindu, I do so in order to discharge an obligation I owe to you. I am supposed to have been born in a *savarna* family. As a *savarna* Hindu, when I see that there are some Hindus called *avarnas*, it offends my sense of justice and truth, and it cuts me to the quick. It is an abhorrent thought to me that in the faith in which I was born and nurtured there should be a single human being considered lower than myself. Therefore I have become an untouchable by choice, and if I discover that Hindu Shastras really countenance untouchability as it is seen today, I will renounce and denounce Hinduism. As a student of Hindu religion and of comparative religions, I see no such warrant in Hindu Shastras. But Hindus today practise untouchability. Therefore it becomes my duty to warn them against that evil. If, however, you embrace any other faith, or have no faith whatsoever, I can have no appeal for you. You cease to be untouchable Hindus. If you want to cut adrift from Hinduism, you are absolutely free to do so. I cannot hold you to Hinduism by force. I can only hold you by the force of love. I may so endear myself to you by my service that you may feel that,

although you have been classed as untouchables by certain Hindus, there is no untouchability in Hinduism. It may be in God's dispensation that I have come to you too late. But God will not punish me for that, because He knows that for the last fifty years I have rebelled against untouchability. Now, I think, you fairly understand what I stand for. The movement is not anti-Mussalman, anti-Christian or anti-Jew. It is anti-humbug. That is what I stand for.

A concluding remark as to the use of the word 'Harijan'. It is not a word of my coinage. It was suggested by an untouchable. Untouchability is a hateful and detestable thing; but, so long as one has to talk of those who are considered today untouchables, it is surely better to use an unoffending name than an offending one. I give you an illustration from life. In South Africa, Indians were not called Indians but coolies. I was called not an Indian lawyer but a coolie lawyer. To the Whites, the words coolie and Indian were synonymous. I protested against the word coolie, just as this untouchable brother protested against the word untouchable, and I suggested that the word Indians should be used to designate the inhabitants of India. So long as men were known by their countries, some name was necessary to signify the inhabitants of India 'Indians' was an unoffending designation. Precisely in the same manner the word 'Harijan' is used.

Lastly, let me in all humility tell you that I have not come to help those who feel their strength. I know that no word of offence which you use against the *savarna* Hindus will be too strong. I know also that, if your resentment expresses itself in acts, *savarna* Hindus will deserve those acts. But I know infinitely more than you do what Harijans are, where they live, what their number is and to what condition they have been reduced. You can speak of this place, possibly of the whole of Cochin, possibly of Cochin and Travancore, still more possibly of Malabar. But I claim to be able to speak of Harijans from the North to the South, the East and the West of India, and I know their abject position. My only business is, if it is at all possible, to lift those who are in the mire. I want to do it because I want to lift myself. With their abjectness I feel myself also abject. I know that, if Hindus were freed from the coil of untouchability, you would find that all the corroding distinctions, not between Hindus and Hindus only, but also between Hindus and non-Hindus, will disappear as if by a magic touch. I have delivered during the brief period at my disposal the whole of my message. The choice is entirely yours. You may accept

this reparation or it is perfectly open to you to reject it.

If you still fail to understand me, I can only pray in the lines of a celebrated English hymn:

We shall know each other better

When the mists have rolled away.

Harijan, 2-2-1934

4. SPEECH AT THURAVUR[1]

January 18, 1934

In the course of his reply, he asked the audience if they knew anything about the story of the purse presented to him then. The real collection, he said, was Rs. 420, out of which a sum of Rs. 195 was reported to him to be expenses for the reception. The purse was only the balance of the collection. That meant that nearly 50 per cent of the collection was devoted to expenses in feeding him and entertaining him otherwise. Neither they nor he could justify those expenses. The Reception Committee should have spent the amount they collected as a miser. They should render to him an account of their expenses. Till recently, he was not able to go through the accounts of each of the districts on account of great pressure of work he was in. But immediately he got the time, he began to enquire. He had received a rough account of the expenses of this place. They collected Rs. 420 and spent Rs. 159 out of it for his reception. At this rate, he would have to tour with his food in his pocket as had been his wont some time ago. The cost of that pandal came up to Rs. 80. Of course, a portion of that amount could be realized by the sale proceeds of the pandal after the function was over. The pandal was an avoidable item. There was no justification whatever to spend a single pie from the Harijan purse for the pandal and other reception luxuries. Another item was Rs. 25 spent for volunteers. Another item was Rs. 20 spent on printing. The last two items of expenditure were Rs. 35 for conveyance and Rs. 35 for miscellaneous. The last item was the last straw to break the camel's back. It may be that all these amounts were spent legitimately. He meant no reflection at all on the integrity of the workers, but it reflected indeed on the want of forethought or want of consideration for the cause on their part. They had not thought of the religious nature of the programme, they had not thought of the reparation to be made to the Harijans. Reparation meant reparation and nothing else. The *savarna* Hindus should consider themselves as the debtors of the Harijans; those who did not feel as debtors should be deemed to be not in sympathy with the cause. He did not wish to receive anything from those who had no sympathy for this cause.

The Hindu, 21-1-1934

[1] This was in reply to addresses of welcome and a purse of Rs. 225.

5. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, ERNAKULAM

January 18, 1934

Mahatmaji, replying to the address[1], said that he saw the destruction of Hindu religion and Hindu dharma in the custom of untouchability. The Hindus brought into being the untouchable Harijans and later proclaimed they were created by God. The Shastras did not sanction caste or untouchability which was the root cause of all the evils the country was subject to. He did not want to fight with the Christians or Muslims for greater rights for the Hindus. It was a movement of self-purification for the Hindus. Cochin could be converted to a *punyakshetra*. They had the seashore on one side and the *rishis* had proclaimed such tracts to be holy. *Suryanarayan* was shedding his radiance from above, and that was the best time for them to take a vow that they would consider no one inferior to them. He felt deeply grieved that in such States like Cochin and Travancore ruled by far-seeing, enlightened and benevolent Hindu rulers, whose ideals and simplicity of life were remarkable, untouchability should have found a place. It was not the duty of rulers alone to get rid of the evil. As long as they had in their hearts the thought of untouchability, the rulers were helpless. He did not care very much for their addresses and presents. What was required was their wholehearted co-operation in the removal of the curse of untouchability.

The Hindu, 20-1-1934

6. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, ALLEPPEY[2]

January 18, 1934

In the course of his reply, Gandhiji thanked the temple authorities for placing the temple premises at the disposal of the Reception Committee and he was thankful that the temple premises being in the possession of the Thiyyas or the Ezhavas of the locality, there was no trouble on that score. Then about the preference of a reply in English, Gandhiji opined that the Alleppey public was not singular in the choice of that language. He added:

You want to examine me and know how well or ill I speak in English. I do not pretend to be a scholar of the English language. In

[1] Presented by the Municipality

[2] The meeting, according to *The Hindu* which also published a brief report, was held at the Kidangamparambu Maidan. Addresses of welcome on behalf of the public of Alleppey, Hindi Premi Mandal and Kudumbi Association were presented to Gandhiji. Gandhiji began the speech in Hindi but had to switch over to English on public demand.

spite of my great love for the English tongue and English people, I have failed to master that language up to now. I commit mistakes in spelling the English words and my English idioms have often been inaccurate, the English words I use are not always appropriate. How can I do otherwise? I learnt the English language not to become a scholar but to convey my thoughts. I consider myself to be a practical man and use the English language as occasion arises to serve my purpose. If I speak in Hindustani, the audience will appreciate my speeches more. Anyhow, often I yield to the wishes of the English-educated people since I want them to work for me. If I were to take a referendum to know the mind of the audience, I know they would record a thumping majority for the Hindi language. Hundreds of words are common to Malayalam and Hindi. I follow my Malayalam translators rather closely and correct them, if they committed mistakes. Even today, I had to do this correction business more than twice, because the translator did not get at the spirit of my speeches. One point I have to bring home to you, i.e., please pick up at least an elementary knowledge of the Hindi language so that you may be enabled to get into the hearts of the twenty crores of your brethren in India. Maybe, it is not a substitute for either English or Malayalam. Malayalam is your mother tongue. It is a sin not to know it and not to know it well. Only, if you have an all-India heart or an all-India will, Hindi could be learnt. English helps us to become internationalists for that is the language of the international commerce of the day. Each is good in its own place and will serve its purpose accordingly. May I illustrate this point ? Malayalam in the Punjab is useless, so is English for a Punjabi farmer. But if you speak to the Punjabi in Hindi, e.g., *Salamalikum'*, he will smile at you and he will say, 'I know him'.[1]

Instead of dealing with the several addresses presented here, I deal with the addresses or letters not presented here but showered on me from outside this audience. I hold two letters in my hand. One is a printed letter written from Shertalai, the other, a typewritten one, from Alleppey. Now this is how the printed letter starts: "We beg to state that your present attempt to strengthen the Hindu religion by removing the evil of untouchability will end in utter failure." Then follows the advice after this introduction. The second letter has this: "You are well aware of the fact that the greatest obstacle in the way of the creation of a united Indian nation is religion." I am not a stranger

[1] This has been taken from the report published in *The Hindu,* 21-1-1934.

to this kind of advice. I had had letters from Travancore and Cochin even when I was in Poona, ailing. They were all nicely and courteously worded, but strong in their emphasis on their belief that religion was the greatest obstacle in the way of the country's progress. Ever since I have set foot on the Cochin-Travancore soil, I have been flooded with communications of this sort. I cannot possibly disregard all these letters. I know that for this belief, which is evidently growing upon some young men in Cochin and Travancore, the *savarna* Hindus are primarily responsible. They have dignified irreligion in the name of religion. They have defended sin as if it was virtue with divine sanction. These young men have felt, in their impatience, that, if religion is as *savarna* Hindus describe it to be and practise it, religion is an evil. Having become impatient and angered, they have not stopped to think out the question and have condemned religion wholesale. If I have real religion in me, I have got to be patient and gentle to these brethren of mine. I have reasoned with them by correspondence, and reasoned with them today at Palluruthy.[1]

I must tell these friends that my present attempt has nothing to do with the strengthening of Hinduism. I ask you to take me at my word when I say that I am wholly indifferent whether Hindu religion is strengthened or weakened or perishes; that is to say, I have so much faith in the correctness of the position I have taken up that, if my taking up that position results in weakening Hinduism, I cannot help it and I must not care. I tell you what I want to do with Hindu religion. I want to purify it of the sin of untouchability. I want to exorcize the devil of untouchability which has today distorted and disfigured Hinduism out of all recognition. I know that, if this evil can be removed root and branch, those very friends who say religion is the greatest obstacle to the progress of India will immediately change their minds. But if it is any consolation to these friends, I tell them that, if I came to the conclusion that Hinduism sanctioned untouchability, I should denounce it. But even then I would not go so far with them as to say that religion itself is useless and that God is not God but devil. For me the result will be that I shall lose faith in Hindus and Hinduism, but my faith in God will be strengthened. And I want to tell you why it will be strengthened. Faith is not a delicate flower which would wither under the slightest stormy weather. Faith is like the Himalaya mountains which cannot possibly change. No storm can possibly remove the Himalaya mountains from their foundations. I am daily praying for strength from God to be able to say to God,

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Palluruthy", 18-1-1934.

when Hindus disappoint me, 'Although Thy own creation has disappointed me, I still cling to Thee as a babe clings to the mother's breast.' And I want every one of you to cultivate that faith in God and religion. It is my conviction that all the great faiths of the world are true, are God-ordained and that they serve the purpose of God and of those who have been brought up in those surroundings and those faiths. I do not believe that the time will ever come when we shall be able to say there is only one religion in the world. In a sense, even today there is one fundamental religion in the world. But there is no such thing as a straight line in Nature. Religion is one tree with many branches. As branches you may say religions are many; as tree Religion is one.

What is at the bottom of this movement for purification in Hinduism? It is not designed as a movement hostile to any religion. It is designed to bring all faiths nearer together. Do you for one moment suppose that, if *savarna* Hindus make reparation in the terms that I have suggested and if they forget the distinctions of high and low, they will forget those distinctions only in regard to Harijans and not in regard to others? Today this poison of untouchability has overtaken the whole of Indian society. Harijans are not the only untouchables. They are on the extreme fringe. But all Hindus are untouchables to themselves, and all Hindus to non-Hindus. Non-Hindus have noted this fact; and I suggest to you that our differences and quarrels today have their main root in this canker of untouchability. I ask you to believe me implicity when I say that, if untouchability is removed, it must result in bringing all Indians together and, if I may say in all humility, all humanity nearer. It is not a small movement, but a big movement fraught with great conse-quences. Can you imagine that, if it were otherwise, as a wise man, which I consider myself to be, I would ceaselessly wander from place to place in the evening of my life to deliver a message which has the consequence of strengthening Hindus for fighting against Mussal-mans, Christians, Jews and Parsis, among whom I have friends as dear as blood-brothers? I have that implicit faith in my mission that, if it succeeds—as it will succeed, it is bound to succeed—history will record it as a movement designed to knit all people in the world to-gether, not as hostile to one another but as parts of one whole.

I think I have given sufficient answer to those who have sent me these letters.

Harijan, 26-1-1934, and *The Hindu*, 21-1-1934

7. KAUMUDI'S RENUNCIATION

It has been my privilege to witness many touching and soulstirring scenes during a busy life packed with a variety of rich experiences. But at the moment of writing this, I cannot recall a scene more touching than that of the Harijan cause. I had just finished my speech at Badagara. In it I had made a reasoned appeal to the women present for jewellery. I had finished speaking and was selling the presents received when gently walked up to the platform Kaumudi, a girl 16 years old. She took out one bangle and asked me if I would give my autograph. I was preparing to give it, when off came the other bangle. She had only one on each hand. I said, "You need not give me both, I shall give you the autograph for one bangle only." She replied by taking off her golden necklace. This was no easy performance. It had to be disengaged from her long plait of hair. But the Malabar girl that she is, she had no false modesty about performing the whole process before a wondering public counting several thousands of men and women. "But have you the permission of your parents ?" I asked. There was no answer. She had not yet completed her renunciation. Her hands automatically went to her ears and out came her jewelled ear-rings amid the ringing cheers of the public, whose expression of joy was no longer to be suppressed. I asked her again whether she had her parents' consent to the sacrifice. Before I could extract any answer from the shy girl, someone told me that her father was present at the meeting, that he was himself helping me by bidding for the addresses I was auctioning and that he was as generous as his daughter in giving to worthy causes. I reminded Kaumudi that she was not to have the ornaments replaced. She resolutely assented to the condition. As I handed her the autograph, I could not help prefacing it with the remark,"Your renunciation is a truer ornament than the jewellery you have discarded." May her renunciation prove to have been an earnest of her being a true Harijan *sevika*.

Harijan, 19-1-1934

8. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

January 19, 1934

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

You do not receive my letters at all. What does that mean? I wrote three letters to you which you have not acknowledged. I have written to Jayaprakash also. I shall now be going there in a short time. We shall meet then. I am well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3441

9. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KOTTAYAM[1]

January 19, 1934

Gandhiji, in the course of his reply, said that the organizers should produce a certificate from the Harijans before he could believe whatever they had stated in the address. The address attempted to show that the Harijans were perfectly all right. But the case of Harijans was not really so. He warned the *savarnas* against entertaining any false belief. Things were not as rosy as had been depicted. He had received bitter complaints from the Ezhavas and Thiyyas. Some of them wanted to destroy God from their and others' religion. He did not blame them for entertaining such a misconception. Gandhiji emphasized the need for the economic uplift of the Harijans and pointed out that temple-entry would not solve their problems. Economic uplift alone would make the Harijans conscious of their degraded position. He expressed his belief that the address was not a true expression of the feeling of the public that had assembled.

Continuing, Gandhiji said that the campaigning against untouchability was not an easy job. Its virus had upset the whole society. He had received piteous wails from Christian Harijans. If Christians had grades of untouchability, even for that sin *savarnas* were responsible. There was no use in reminding him that there was in Kottayam a church, a mosque, and a temple existing side by side. They existed in many other parts of India and even outside India. He made an earnest plea for the removal of untouchability from "this land of Dharma Rajya". He had heard with considerable strain that there was a Christian party and a Nayar party in the State that

[1] The meeting, which was held at the Municipal Maidan, was attended by about 2,500 people. An address of welcome was presented to Gandhiji along with a purse of Rs 30.

did not work for the common end. People had been repeatedly dinning into his ears that there were mutual jealousies and rivalries in their midst. The Maharaja and the officials would be unable to remove those evils. The people themselves had to remove them root and branch. If untouchability was removed from the heart, all other ills would also be removed. He would not go away satisfied if the opening of the roads and temples were not a token of the heart-unity among them.

Gandhiji said that he had received from Travancore the most hair-splitting letters on untouchability. It was not a matter for surprise that religious faiths of the Ezhavas were being rudely shaken. He did not want them to surrender reason and import interpretation. A reproduction of the Vedic life of old on the part of the *savarnas* was necessary before they could impart religion to others. He asked them to pray to God to give them the strength to confess their guilt, purify their heart and discharge the duty they owed to the Harijans.

The Hindu, 21-1-1934

10. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

January 20, 1934

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I got your letter. You must have left the hospital now and are probably able to walk about. I have come to such a distant place that letters take four days to reach me.

I have heard about Dr. Mulgaonkar, but I don't know him much personally. Please give him my compliments for wearing khadi. Ask Gokibehn to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4722. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarjee

11. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, PONMANA[1]

January 20, 1934

Speaking in Hindi, Gandhiji expressed pleasure at having received a Hindi address. That was an oasis in a desert. He was glad to note that five private temples in the State had been thrown open to Harijans. The temple and the Ashram, under whose shadow they were sitting, were also open to all castes. The address had stated that

[1] The meeting was held in the morning in the Chatambi Swami Ashram.

many people had taken to khaddar. He doubted if the people in Travancore had heard of that word when he visited them last time. It was the hope of the Harijan Seva Sangh to save Hinduism from ruin. Purification of the heart was all that was needed. The *savarnas* were one in the matter of extending every help to the Harijans except temple-entry. That indicated that the *savarnas* did not want to remove the distinction of high and low. If Harijans were Hindus, as they considered them to be, it was necessary to give them also admission to the temples.

Referring to a charkha that was placed on the platform, Gandhiji remarked that the charkha was still capable of improvement. If everyone would introduce and popularize the charkha in his home, then it would go a great way to solve India's problems. Every endeavour was being made to uplift Harijans. In that endeavour the Harijans had also to co-operate. The Harijans had to give up habits of drinking and eating carrion.

The Hindu, 22-1-1934

12. SPEECH AT QUILON

January 20, 1934

Gandhiji expressed his gratification to the Government for throwing open all public roads, tanks, etc. It was most appropriate on the part of H. H. the Maharaja. But much more remained to be done by the people themselves. He, however, pointed out that, if the hearts of the people were not pure, the orders of kings would be of no avail.

He felt obliged to the organizers of the meeting for the honest statement that they had not made much progress in the removal of untouchability. The reason ascribed was lack of funds. Before untouchability could be removed, the hearts had to be purified. For the purification of the heart no money was needed. True, the funds made available were not proportionate to the magnitude of the task. The duty of the *savarnas* was to teach the Harijans and give them free education. Harijan *seva* was *atmashuddhi*. Removal of untouchability ought to be the ultimate goal of all. The Shastras did not sanction untouchability. It was necessary to open temples. But more important than that was the removal of untouchability.

The Hindu, 22-1-1934

13. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, TRIVANDRUM[1]

January 20, 1934

I am no stranger to Travancore or Trivandrum. If you will permit me, I should say I am with you a fellow citizen of Travancore. And I shall tell you why I would love to become a citizen of Travancore. I have had the audacity, if you like to call it, or courage as I would call it, to say that Malabar, which includes Travancore and Cochin, was the blackest spot in the untouchability map of India. The worst forms of untouchability are to be found in Malabar. And Malabar is the home of Shankaracharya, the teacher of the *advaita* doctrine. How untouchability of the worst type can be consistent with the teaching of Shankara passes my comprehension. But, since I have become a Harijan by choice, I should love to suffer with the Harijans who are supposed to occupy the lowest rung of the ladder even in the Harijan scale. I cannot possibly do so unless I could take out a naturalization certificate and become a citizen of Travancore. For, do you know what I saw this morning when I went to a Harijan school? There I saw two Harijan boys, belonging to what are called the Vetas. One lives and learns on this earth. I learnt then and there that Vetas are invisible like the Nayadis—synonymous terms. In the note that was passed to me, it was stated that Vetas had the greatest difficulty in finding pure drinking water. Once during the Boer War, as a humble member of the Ambulance Corps that I was, I found myself in the position of the Vetas. Not that there was any prohibition against the soldiers and ambulance men who were marching through that scorching country, but it happened to be a waterless desert; it was a decree of prohibition from Providence itself. The midday sun shone scorching overhead. We were all—white soldiers and brown ambulance men—parched with thirst. Suddenly we came upon a little pool filled with dirty water. That was to serve as drinking water for us. This morning I immediately recalled that scene and said to myself how infinitely worse the Vetas must feel when day in and day out they are consigned to dirty pools for drinking water, not in a waterless desert,

[1] Over ten thousand people were present at the meeting which was held at the Municipal Maidan. Addresses of welcome on behalf of the public and the Hindi Prachar Sabha were presented to Gandhiji together with a purse of Rs. 1001. A report of the speech also appeared in *The Hindu*, 23-1-1934.

but in a place where ample fresh water is perennial. Are you now surprised that I should love to identify myself with a Veta and feel with him by living with him and seeing what you feel when you see fresh water all around and are debarred from using it? If God wills it, He will give me the strength and the will to go through the fire. You now understand the nature of the message that I want to deliver to you this evening.

But there is always a ray of light even through apparently impenetrable darkness. The communique of the Maharaja's Government in connection with this untouchability business was this morning placed in my hands. I was able, at the meeting, where I saw the order of His Highness the Maharaja's Government, to tender my congratlations. As I then read this order, it seemed to me in short that there would be no State recognition for those public institutions which debarred untouch- ables from their use. Whilst it was possible for me to tender my congratulations, you must not run away with the belief that such relief of a very modified type can give me satisfaction. This deep-seated disease requires not a temporizing but a drastic remedy. If the Hindu patient is to live, then this disease has to be removed root and branch. I wish that the young Maharaja and his advisers may take courage into their hands and apply the only remedy that can undo this mischief. The remedy is incredibly simple. They have simply to say that there will be no State recognition in any shape or form of untouchability, unapproachability or invisibility. As an ex-lawyer, who still has some memory of legal lore, I make bold to say that such a legislation or such a proclamation will not amount to any interference with any single individual's religious belief or practice. It is the bounden duty of a State which has subjects entertaining different faiths to take an impartial and detached view in matters of religion. By identifying itself with practices prevalent among a section of its subjects and by giving legal protection to those practices, the State interferes with the progress of reform and interferes with the free play of people's conscience. All that the State has got to do is to say to its subject, 'The State has nothing to do with your religious beliefs and practices. We will interfere when you, in prosecuting your religious practices, interfere with common law rights or with the peace of the State.' But the existing State-recognition of untouchability makes it a current coin.

I feel that an extremely heavy responsibility rests upon Hindu

princes when, as I feel, the very Hindu religion runs the risk of being utterly destroyed if this virus of untouchability is not expelled from the Hindu body. Those who feel as deeply as I do about this matter cannot possibly rest until the socalled Harijans are clothed with precisely the same rights as nonHarijan Hindus possess today.

Now one or two words only with reference to the individual duty of everyone in this audience, man or woman. This is a movement essentially of self-purification, of *savarna* Hindus frankly acknowledging the debt that they owe to Harijans, and rendering full reparation to them. This can only be brought about by a complete change of heart on our part. As I have already described to you, the State aid can only be of a negative character. The State cannot possibly change the individual heart. That can only be made by prayer to Almighty. It is not possible for a single human being to change the heart of a fellow being. I know that I cannot do it. I can only make an appeal to your reason and to your heart. But it is God alone who can arm the word that I speak to you with the power to shoot like an arrow and make a lodgment in your heart. If you can believe the word of a man who is perpetually seeking after truth, believe me that throughout all my waking hours, and if I can say so, during my sleep also, my one constant prayer to God is that He may give that power to my words, so that the Hindu heart can be touched and it may be purged of the virus of untouchability and Hindus and Hinduism may be saved from this impending doom.

Please remember that your duty and my duty does not end with merely recognizing the Harijans as blood-brothers and bloodsisters. That is the beginning of the end. The end is that we should rid ourselves of every form of untouchability that is eating into the vitals of Hindu society. As an address reminded me only this morning, it was not enough to treat Pulayas, Nayadis and others as blood-brothers; for, untouchability existed among *savarna* Hindus themselves, caste against caste. It is true that the poison has gone so deep that it has corrupted the whole of our society. It has even affected our fellow-countrymen—Mussalmans, Christians, and others. What, therefore, you and I have to do is to forget that there is anybody high or low on this earth. Then, being the children of the same Creator, the same God, no matter to what faith we may belong, no matter what hue we may have, we are all equal in the eyes of our Maker. Do you not see that, when we have been able to purge ourselves of this virus, not

only shall we, Hindus, be able to look the world in the face but we shall also be able to live in peace with our neighbours, be they Mussalmans, be they Christians, Jews, Parsis or others?

Now you will understand why I consider insignificant the purse you have been good enough to give me, considering that Trivandrum is the capital of a great State of India. Do you know that both Bangalore and Calicut have given no less than six or seven thousand rupees to the Harijan purse? If you were to tell me that poverty had hit Travancore harder than Calicut or Bangalore, I must refuse to believe it. Bangalore at least is not a land flowing with milk and honey as Travancore is. As somebody was saying, no man need die of positive hunger in Kerala. You have got the richest milk that mother coconut can yield, and you can have all the sweetness you desire from the banana, which is very cheap here. When I was travelling through the South in 1915, I lived for days together on bananas and coconuts; and as an expert diet reformer, I can tell you that you can well hold body and soul together for many days, indeed many years, on bananas and coconuts. So if you were to advance the plea of poverty as against Harijans, you would be absolutely out of court. While, therefore, I am in Trivandrum, I expect all of you, who are here and who have listened to me, to make up for this very serious defect in your purse. Sisters can copy little Kaumudi,[1] who lives not very many miles from you, and discard all the jewellery that they wear. And you, the citizens of Travancore, can put your heads together and decide that your purse should be the richest, because you represent the blackest spot, and you can undertake to make up for the defect I have shown to you.

But you will permit me to point out another serious defect. Since I have been travelling in Travancore, I have discovered that the people have paid like misers, but the organizers have spent money like spendthrifts. Therefore, as it has astounded me, it will astound you to learn that the feeding charges of my party, which certainly descends like locusts on a field, and such other expenses which should never be deducted from purses given for the Harijan cause, have been deducted. You will be astonished to know that in many cases more than 50 per cent has been spent. What would God tell me when I say to Him that in the name of Harijans so many thousand rupees were collected and 50 per cent were deducted for feeding and entertaining

[1] *Vide* "Kaumudi's Renunciation", 19-1-1934.

me? I know that, if I did not protest against such expenses my claim to represent the Harijans would be summarily dismissed by Divinity. The fact of the matter is that you have not treated this Harijan question as seriously as it should have been treated. It is a deeply religious question. It affects the well-being of the poorest in the land. It affects the well-being of those who are despised by society.

I wish you and I and every one of us would hang down our heads in shame, if we were guilty of misusing or using improperly a single pie collected on behalf of the Harijans. I assure you that I do not want a single convenience which cannot be cheaply supplied. One little flickering light will suffice for my purpose. I want no flags or buntings for me and my party. If you gave me the open sky and the velvety sand of Travancore to lie upon, I should never utter a single word of reproach. But I will reproach everyone connected with this cause who misspends a single pie when it might have been saved for the Harijan cause. I want you all to understand the seriousness of this mission. I want you then to bestir yourselves, put your shoulders to the wheel and make a Herculean effort, whilst there is yet time, to save ourselves and the ancient faith from the impending doom. I do not wish to convey the meaning that only the Committees in Travancore have been guilty of useless expenditure. God alone knows how many other Committees have been guilty of this. But this I can tell you that, ever since this tour began, I have been cross-questioning every Committee, and I have called for accounts of receipts and expenditure from every Committee and am awaiting accounts from them. There is no reflection here on the honesty of a single person. But those of you, who are studying law or who are lawyers, will at once understand when I say that neglect or carelessness on the part of a trustee, which everyone connected with this movement is, amounts to a crime. A trustee is expected to give greater attention and care to the protection of his ward than he would bestow on his own protection.

Harijan, 2-2-1934

14. INTERVIEW ON TRAVANCORE GOVERNMENT COMMUNIQUE[1]

TRIVANDRUM,
January 20, 1934

Interviewed on the communique of the Travancore Government, declaring public tanks and wells open to all castes, Gandhiji said:

I have already tendered my congratulations to His Highness and Government on the communique but I have also said that it cannot possibly satisfy me, much less the Harijans. There can be neither satisfaction nor rest until the States refuse to recognize untouchability in any shape or form. That will not interfere with anybody's personal or religious freedom. But today untouchability receives State protection. I venture therefore to hope that H. H. the Maharaja and his advisers will at least take up an impartial attitude by withholding State recognition of untouchability.

[1] The communique read:

"In their report, the Temple-entry Enquiry Committee have recommended, *inter alia*, prompt action on the following lines:

'Distance-pollution or *theendal* should be removed by appropriate legislative measures subject to reservations in the matter of entry into temples and into their adjuncts like temple tanks, temple wells, *homapuras*, *anakottils*, etc., and subject to the following provisoes:

'(a) Public tanks used for bathing purposes should be thrown open, after separate cisterns are attached to them or portions of them are walled off, where people could wash their clothes, etc., before getting into the tanks for bath.

'(b) Public wells should be thrown open after they are provided with cisterns in which water should be stored from the wells by Municipal or Health Department employees and from which water should be drawn through taps.

'(c) Government *satrams* should be thrown open after they are provided with separate kitchens, as in the case of such as are already open to all classes. '

"Government share the view of the Committee that distance-pollution or *theendal* must cease and are of opinion that no general public funds should be spent by Government in the maintenance of public tanks, public wells, *satrams*, etc., admission to which is denied to any person by reason of his belonging to a *theendal* caste. They have resolved, therefore, that all public roads, public tanks, public wells, *satrams*, etc., maintained by them out of their general public funds shall be thrown open to all classes of people irrespective of the caste to which they belong. Measures to carry out these objects soon are being considered.

"[2]. The other recommendations of the Committee are under the consideration of Government."

With regard to one of the recommendations of the Travancore Temple-entry Enquiry Committee, relating to a reference to a *parishad* of learned men, Gandhiji said:

In my opinion, this is not a question to be decided by a *parishad* merely of learned men. Such *parishad*, if it is composed of men who are not merely learned but are also holy and wise, can guide the people but not the State, for in a composite society, such as ours is, a State has to adopt an attitude of perfect neutrality. Supposing that *parishad* gave it as its opinion that untouchability, such as we know it, is a Hindu religious obligation, then the State cannot clothe it with legal protection. Those who believe in it will observe it, but they shall not compel non-believers to do so. But the state of law today is such, that men who do not believe in untouchability are compelled to submit to it.

In reply to the question whether the temples in Travancore did not stand on a different footing from most in British India, and whether they were not really a trust property in the hands of Government, Gandhiji said:

Trustees are bound, so long as they retain that office, to carry out faithfully the conditions of the trust. All therefore that they can do is to resign their office, if they regard untouchability as a sinful practice.

Asked if Government in that case should give up the wardenship of temples, Mahatma Gandhiji said:

Most decidedly, Government should certainly give up their custodianship of temples.

The Hindu, 22-1-1934

15. NOTE

IS THE BULSAR MUNICIPALITY FAILING IN ITS DUTY?[1]

Nowadays I seldom see *Harijanbandhu*. But this issue happened to fall into my hands. It would be regrettable if the Bulsar Municipality has broken its pledge. If they have anything to say in their defence I shall publish it in these columns. I hope that a public institution will not ignore our scavenger brothers who cannot make their voice heard.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 21-1-1934

16. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

January 21, 1934

DEAR GURUDEV,

The news about the Government me measures[2] in Midnapur has dazed me. They appear to me to be worse than the Martial Law measures of the Punjab in 1919. I get here only *The Hindu*. Are you doing anything? Is Bengal doing anything? Our cowardice chokes me. Or do I see cowardice where there is none? Can you give me any solace?

I hope you are keeping well.

With deep love,

Ever yours,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I am in Coonoor between 29th January and 5th February.

From a photostat: G.N. 4641

[1] A correspondent had stated that the Bulsar Municipality had done nothing towards the construction of a night school in spite of the resolution passed by it to that effect, and that it was delaying the implementation of another resolution regarding the construction of tenements for Harijans.

[2] Ordinances promulgated consequent upon the assassination of B.E.G. Burge, the District Magistrate, Midnapur, by three Bengali youths on September 2, 1933

17. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

THE CAPE,
January 21, 1934

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your three letters before me. As to the money, I thought you had it already. I had issued instructions. I am sending a reminder.

I hope the consultation in Calcutta has resulted in some good to Kamala.

I had no desire to apologize for you. The interview[1] represents the interviewer's impressions. But there is no apology there. I have given my full interpretation of your mind and actions. I do feel that your concrete programme is still in the melting pot. You are too honest to say: "I know the whole of my programme today." You have no uncertainty about the science of socialism but you do not know in full how you will apply it when you have the power.

You have unnecessarily raised the question of your place in the Congress. So far as I am concerned, you do not disturb me at all. I should be myself in a wilderness without you in the Congress.

More I need not say now. I have not the time either to give you a longer letter.

I have received your notice about 26th. I could not have issued it unless I was in a position to say definitely what to do. But I do not mind it.

A brief telegram in *The Hindu* about Government measures in Midnapur has however dazed me. The measures appear to be worse than the Punjab measures of 1919. The shock is almost unbearable. Our cowardice disconcerts me. Not knowing what the papers are saying, if anything at all, I may be wrong in my analysis. I have never felt so helpless as I do at the present moment.

I have written to Dr. Bidhan and to Gurudev.[2]

I hope Mother is better.

What about Rafi?

Love.

BAPU

[1] *Vide* "Interview to the *Madras Mail*",22-12-1933.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[PS.]

Jayaprakash had written to me about his affair and I wrote to him at length. His brother will have the scholarship. With the burdens he has, he should really begin to earn. But he won't. I am keeping in touch with him.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1934. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

18. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ

January 21, 1934

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your letter. This postcard is just to let you know that all of you are constantly in my thoughts.

You must have completely recovered from the effects of your fever.

It is warm here but over there all of you must be freezing in the cold. Were any earthquake[1] shocks felt there?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Do you get *Harijanbandhu* or [*Harijan*] *Sevak*?

SHRI BENARSILAL BAZAJ
THATHERI BAZAR
BENARES CITY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9157

19. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

January 21, 1934

BHAI JIVANJI,

Don't be in a hurry to spend that sum of Rs. 150. Please ask Miss Agatha Harrison, 2 Cranbourne Court, Albert Bridge Road., London S. W., whether she wants copies of the book for free distribution and, if yes, how many copies she requires. Then send them. It appears that I shall not be going to Belgaum after all. I don't at all

[1] An earthquake had rocked Bihar on January 15 and resulted in largescale loss of life and property.

feel like writing to the authorities for employing a Gujarati. You want me, don't you, to go through the articles written from Yeravda Mandir about untouchability and equal regard for all religions.

Please take proper care of Hamid. See that the others do not get the infection.

I am quite well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. JIVANJI
NAVAJIVAN KARYALAYA
AHMEDABAD
B.B.&.C.I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9935. Also C.W. 6910. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

20. LETTER TO GOVINDBHAI R. PATEL

January 21, 1934

BHAI GOVINDBHAI,

It seems my stay in Pondicherry will be a very brief one. But if I can, I should very much like to see Mother and to go round the Ashram. Sri Aurobindo's letter reached me yesterday after a good deal of wandering. I cannot follow all that you say in your letters. I may say this for myself, that nothing is dearer to me in this world than the seareh for truth.

MOHANDAS

SHRI GOVINDBHAI
THE ASHRAM
PONDICHERRY

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10741. Courtesy: Govindbhai R. Patel

21. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

[On or before *January 22, 1934*][1]

YOUR WIRE HEART-RENDING. WISH I COULD BE WITH YOU AIDING DISTRESSED PEOPLE. HOPE YOU WILL GET ADEQUATE HELP FROM PUBLIC. KEEP ME INFORMED. HOPE YOU ARE BETTER.

The Searchlight, 24-1-1934

22. LETTER TO SRI PRAKASA

Unrevised *January 22, 1934*

MY DEAR SRI PRAKASA,

I am glad that you could not follow my article[2] on ornaments. That has enabled me to get a letter from you and also to have a confession from you that you do not read *Harijan*. I had thought that you would insist on reading it as a general weekly letter from me. It is never too late to mend. I recommend your getting it regularly and reading it.

Now for your argument. I never said that foreign cloth was in itself an evil. I did say and say it even now that the use of foreign cloth in India by Indians is an evil.

I do not put the use of ornaments in the same category as foreign cloth. But I do preach disuse of ornaments. Not having fundamental objection to the use of ornaments as to the use of foreign cloth, I do not mind selling ornaments to those who would wear them. It is enough for me if I get one woman to discard ornaments. You may not know that one-hundredth part of them are sold as ornaments, ninety-nine parts are melted and turned into gold and sold as currency. The other parts of your argument touch upon a wider field and involve a discussion of capital and labour, poverty and riches, etc. These I omit for want of time.

May I take your letter to mean that you are now quite restored

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 22-1-1934.
[2] *Vide* "Notes", 22-12-1933

and have got over the Slough of Despond? I hope Bapuji[1] is keeping well.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

Sri Prakasa Papers, File No. G-2. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

23. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

January 22, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letter.

A wire has been sent to Devi Prasad. I have also written to him. I have called Lester only to meet her.

I have written to Satisbabu that he should go to Puri. You must improve your health.

I am very much disturbed by the happenings in Midnapur.

Om[2] and Kisan[3] have become a wonderful pair. Om is always cheerful. She does not even know what it is to feel depressed. She can sleep for twelve hours, but I see nothing to object to in that. She does not seem to have any special likings. She eats whatever is served. Let us see how she shapes.

I am getting on quite well.

Please send Rs. 4,000 to Jawaharlal for the support of coworkers if you have not already done so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2929

[1] Dr. Bhagwandas, addressee's father.
[2] Uma, the youngest daughter of the addressee
[3] Kisan Ghumatkar

24. LETTER TO MADALASA BAJAJ

January 22, 1934

CHI. MADALASA,

Have you resolved not to write to me till I write to you? Are you testing me in this way or sparing me out of pity for me?

Tell me how you are in mind and body. Ask Vatsala to write to me. What are you studying? Do you take your meals at regular hours?

Om is quite happy. She is getting fatter.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 315

25. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

KUMARIKA, TRAVANCORE,
January 22, 1934

BA,

We are in Kumarika today. I got your letter. You have visited this place once in Urmila Devi's company. This is the farthest end of India. The Himalayas represent her head. We may, therefore, call this place Mother India's feet, which are daily washed by the sea. Since nobody lives here, perfect silence reigns. I bathed in the sea, and so did Om, Kisan and Chandrashankar[2]. There is no danger of cold here. Devdas and Lakshmi will most probably have gone to Delhi now. They went and met Rajaji. There has been no change in my diet and I keep very good health. I have secured a typist from Madras. He has been loaned to me by Anna[3]. He is good. As Thakkar Bapa has come now, Malkani has gone to Delhi. I have just received a letter from Ramdas and one from Nimu. At present they all seem to be well. Ramdas takes care of Sumitra's eyes. He has not yet recovered his peace of mind, but I think he will do so. There is no cause for anxiety.

[1] The source has these two sentences in the form of questions. Om, however was with Gandhiji at this time.

[2] The source has "Chandrashekhar".

[3] Harihar Sharma

I understand about Dahibehn's health. Let us all remember that the mind has a powerful effect on the body. In jail one is a prey to too many thoughts, which one should learn to control. If one can preserve one's equanimity in all conditions, one can be happy. Shanta should by now have grown very wise. Tell her I want her to live for eighty years more and do service. I hope Lalita also is quite happy. Do not hesitate to request Premlilabehn[1] for any article of food you may require in the interest of your health. Kanti is better now and keeps cheerful. He has lost some weight, though. I will write to Jamnabehn. I have at present no news of Madhavdas[2]. There was a letter from him some days ago. Now that you have specially inquired about him, I will write to him in your name. I have received a letter from Manilal and one from Sushila. There is nothing special in them. Both keep good health. Manilal is perfectly calm now. Surendra is still in Wardha. He is helping Jamnalalji there. All the women prisoners are expected to be released today. I have written a few words to each of them. And now the discourse.

The *Bhagavad Gita* says that the Lord's *bhakta* should cultivate solitude. This requires to be carefully grasped. We came into the world alone and shall leave it alone; why, then, should we yearn for anybody's companionship during the uncertain interval between birth and death? However, though we come alone we also see that we are not altogether alone. We have the company of our parents. Were it not for that, we would not be able to live even for a moment. When we grow up, we generally get married. That also gives us similar company. Then we get the company of friends too. For spiritual pro-gress also we require company to some extent. Why, then, does the *Gita* advise cultivating solitude? Let us try to understand this point. Think of any companions and you will see that the bond is a sign of our dependence. Father, mother, husband, wife, friend, everybody makes us dependent on him or her to some extent. But one who is a *bhakta* of the Lord is full of compassion. He is dependent on God alone. He is the only true friend and, besides, He is our charioteer too.... What else can he want who has His company? Mother *Gita*, therefore, advises us to seek solitude. This does not mean that we should shun the company of fellow beings. It only means that we should not desire it. We should not lose heart when we do not have it and, on the other

[1] Premlila Thackersey
[2] Brother of Kasturba Gandhi

hand, even in the midst of crores of people, should feel mental solitude and nearness to God. I hope you remember the *bhajan*: "Friends of the body are selfish, one and all; they will refuse to accompany one at the end." One who cultivates solitude will never be unhappy anywhere, for he sees only Vishnu in all places. Prahlad, the *bhakta*, saw Vishnu even in a red-hot pillar. With some effort, everybody can cultivate such love of solitude. All of you have got, unsought, an opportunity to do so. Try and cultivate it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 9-11

26. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

KANYAKUMARI,
January 22, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

This time I have not received your letter so far. But I write this as per my rule. We are in Kumarika today. As nobody lives here, the utmost peace reigns. The only sound is of the rupees being counted. The sea is just in front, but it is not roaring.

Devdas and Lakshmi must have reached Delhi now. They visited Raja[1]. He has not written to me after the visit.

Dr. Bidhan is all right now, though the bone has not set completely. He was lying in bed and working.

It seems the Bihar earthquake has completely destroyed Motihari. Rajendrababu seems to have plunged into relief work as soon as he was released. There was a heart-rending wire from him. I have sent him a wire[2] of sympathy. Satisbabu has rushed to Bihar. He informs me that 15,000 people have been hurt. Many people were killed, but their number is not known. A large number of even big houses have been rendered uninhabitable.

Muriel Lester is arriving in February. Most probably she will come and see me in Coonoor. I shall be there from 29th January to 5th February. She is coming from Hong Kong.

[1] C. Rajagopalachari
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Rajendra Prasad", On or before 22-1-1934.

Prithuraj is accompanying me on the tour for a few days. He has joined from Calicut. He will then go to see Velabehn. In other respects his health has improved very much. He has been helping Chandrashankar. He needs help most.

I found no opposition in Travancore. The crowds were as big as at other places. The Ruler showed complete indifference. C. P.[1] did not come to see me at all. Devdhar is in Trivandrum, where he is making some enquiries about the Co-operative Society. His health has been affected, but he can work and is, therefore, satisfied.

Most probably Kelappan will marry a Christian lady. His connection with the Harijan Sevak Sangh will then end. The lady is a good woman. His desire to marry her seems to be six years old. There is nothing immoral in his intention, but I see that his views are not in harmony with the policy of the Sangh.

I got a letter from Ba. There is nothing special in it. All the same, if I can get a copy made I will send it. I hope you got Mani's letter which I had sent to you.

All the women will be released today. I have written to all of them. Kishorelal[2] is still bed-ridden. Jamnalal is going on with his programme energetically. For the present Surendra has been drafted to help in that work.

A German youth named Khuro, has arrived from South Africa. He is in my party at present. He is said to be a correspondent of *The Hindu*. Poor man, he has been robbed of a sum of Rs. 1,000. Thakkar Bapa has fallen in love with him. He cheerfully works as watchman and porter. He is quite robust and never feels fatigued. He is very active and highly educated. He has become a British subject.

S.[3] was taken away by the police. N.[4] must have left by now.

Blessings to both from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 65-7

[1] C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, then Dewan of Travancore
[2] Kishorelal G. Mashruwala
[3] The names have been omitted
[4] *ibid*

27. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

January 22, 1934

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Your letter of December 23 has only now reached me here. Other letters too have reached. Henceforth you have to follow the doctor's instructions and see the result.

The rent of the house is too high but what else can be expected in New Delhi?

Is Krishnan Nair maintaining good health? Is anyone with him?

I am keeping well and so long as God wants to take work from me He will keep me well, since I have made it His responsibility.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2407

28. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

January 22, 1934

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your letter. Though difficult it is our dharma to bear the unbearable. I am myself having tangible experience of the difficulty just now. Only by passing through the ordeal can our study of the *Gita* prove its worth.

Let us see what happens and where God leads us.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am writing this from Kumarika.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1707

[1] A word here is obscured by the postmark.

29. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

January 23, 1934

CHI. AMALA,

I had intended to write to you earlier but had no time to do so. I could not appreciate your not writing to me. It was unnatural for you. You would do so, when you are thoroughly absorbed in the work for its sake and not mine.

I am trying to send you to Sabarmati as early as I can. But I have to obtain the permission of the responsible authorities.[1] I have not the control there that I have at Wardha. It is a voluntary surrender. I would be guilty of untruth, if I now tried to exercise control.

But please do not think that you are not rendering Harijan service there.

Do write and tell me all about your studies, your work and the tuition you are giving. Are you keeping perfect health now?

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

30. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

KANYAKUMARI,
January 23, 1934

CHI. RAMA,

I did get your letter. I am dictating this to Prithuraj. If you train other girls for service and take their help, you will be able to cope with the work. You have done well in starting the study of Hindi. There are so many things which one can learn and all of them may be worth learning. Out of them all one should select the most important subject and concentrate on it to the exclusion of other things. Unless one does this one will learn nothing. Be careful lest, in trying to learn too many things, you endanger your health which has been improving. I am glad that Vimu[2] feels at home where she is. When did you last hear

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Parikshitlal L. Majmudar",23-1-1934.
[2] Vimala, addressee's daughter

from Dhiru[1]? I wrote to him only yesterday. I had a letter from Kusum in which she had given some news about Dhiru. He seems to be keeping well now. I had written to Joshi[2] again, but I couldn't know whether he got the letter. I keep very well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5362

31. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

January 23, 1934

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

You probably know Amalabehn[3], the German lady. She is very eager to serve Harijans personally. She is extremely sincere. She is proficient in languages and knows eleven languages of the West. She can be of use as an English teacher. But she is ready to do any work. No salary is to be paid. Can you absorb her there? She is dying to get to work. Try her for some time. You may retain her if she is useful, otherwise send her back to Wardha. Her food of course will be simple. She has stayed there before. If you are frightened of her, you may refuse. Do not feel the slightest hesitation in saying 'no'.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4000

[1] Addressee's son
[2] Chhaganlal Joshi, addressee's husband
[3] Margarete Spiegel

32. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

January 23, 1934

CHI. BHIAGWANJI,

I got your letter. Can't you get a house in Vadaj even on rent? Is it not possible to get some land near the Harijans' quarters? You can put up a hut there and live in it. I think the Vadaj experiment is one which should not be abandoned. But please don't worry about this. I only mean that you should do your best. In other respects it seems you are spending your time well enough. What do you do for your meals?

Do write to me regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 365. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

33. LETTER TO MULCHAND PAREKH

KANYAKUMARI,
January 23, 1934

BHAISHRI MULCHAND,

I rarely come to know about happenings in Gujarat, being, as it were, an exile. I knew about your fever only when you wrote to me about it. I got the postcard just now, and it is fortunate that today is Tuesday, when I am generally not touring, and so can reply to you immediately. If for none else, at least for the sake of Harijans, do recover soon. For the rest, the body must bear the punishment that it may have earned. You will probably have recovered by the time you get this postcard, for I am only at the feet of Mother India. But you are sitting in her lap.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MULCHAND PAREKH
VARTEJ

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 67

34. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

KANYAKUMARI,
January 23, 1934

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Send me a book of your choice on the subject of child care. It will be very good if your pain goes completely. Ba constantly remembers both of you. There is a reference to you even in her last letter.

My affairs are going on very well.

Persuade Taramati to write.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have just receive your letter of the 18th to Chan-[drashankar][1]. You have forgotten to send the cutting. If a person like you forgets, how can I find fault with others? The danger of Swami's fast has been averted at least for the present. That is why I have not made any noise about it.

BAPU

SHRI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
74 WALKESHWAR ROAD
BOMBAY (B.B. & C.I. RLY.)

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Chandrashankar Prabashankar Shukla, Editor, *Harijanbandhu*

35. LETTER TO GORDHANBHAI L. BHAKTA

January 23, 1934

BHAI GORDHANBHAI,

I had got your letter. Let me know if you have received any further information about Madhavji. I had only the information you gave me. Where is Bhai Durbari? How is he? Where was his case taken up? Write to me all that you know.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI GORDHANBHAI L. BHAKTA
BHAKTA PATIDAR VIDYARTHI ASHRAM
NAVSARI
B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10992. Courtesy: Gordhanbhai L. Bhakta

36. INTERVIEW WITH THE MEMBERS OF SELF-RESPECT PARTY[1]

[*January 23, 1934*][2]

Q. What is your programme with regard to the Harijan work?

A. My programme is to provide for them schools, hostels, medical aid, facilities for water—generally to do everything that would put them on a par with others.

Q. What of Christian and Mussalman untouchables? We want a programme affecting them also.

A. I have no such grand programme applicable to all. Not that I do not like it, but it is beyond my power to handle. It comes under the movement of swaraj. When swaraj comes, it will be applicable to all, to all the poor of India. Swaraj means among other things a redress of their wrongs.

Q. In South India, we know they are paid wages in kind and there are no fixed hours of work. Why do you not try to get for them more wages and fixed hours of work, instead of appealing for temple-entry?

A. These things do not arise out of untouchability, but from

[1] Extracted from Chandrashankar Shukla's "Weekly Letter"
[2] The date is from *Harijan*, 2-2-1934.

other causes.

Q. The two questions are interwoven.

A. I know they overlap each other. If I succeed in solving this question, I solve the rest. As a physician I know what to do. A physician finds the root of the disease and treats it. Similarly I treat the seat of the disease.

Q. Of course you are more experienced than we are. But we feel that the Harijans want food for their stomachs and a social status. You merely harp upon temple-entry.

A. Surely, you are wrong. You will find only a passing reference to it in all my speeches during the tour. But I cannot do without it.

Q. But do you not say this is a movement of self-purification?

A. I do. There is no question about that. I said that at Palluruthy[1] in the plainest terms possible. The Harijans there accused me of pleading for reform as a Hindu. I pleaded guilty. I do not hide my colours. They said that, if they got all economic facilities, everything would follow; I said, it won't. And I can give you many instances in support of what I say. You may revile temples if you like. You may not go to them. But you must have the right to go and worship there. You may or may not use it. Not all the Thiyyas feel as you do. Those very Thiyyas at Palluruthy took me to a temple which was essentially a Hindu temple. They were all young men. And did not Narayana Guru Swami establish temples? I know of thousands of Harijans who, when they hear of a temple being opened, have a new lustre in their eyes. They do not know why, but they feel different men. I have seen them transported with joy on entering a temple. They felt themselves face to face with Deity.

Q. We respect you only as a revolutionary leader of a revolutionary people.

A. Then, say a Hindu revolutionary is appearing on the scene and revolutionizing Hinduism. But if I have done wrong to somebody, who is to do reparation but me? I say to Harijans, you may accept the reparation or reject it.

Q. You gave us the name Harijan. We feel, therefore, as if we are a separate community to be known by a separate name. Are you not wounding our susceptibilities by giving us this name?

A. I may be wounding the susceptibilities of half a dozen, but not of others. No other name has been received all round with so

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Palluruthy", 18-1-1934.

much approbation as this has. You should remember that it is not of my coining. So long as they have to be separately designated, some name is necessary. Then why not one that is inoffensive? I have many rationalist friends. One of them complimented me and said, "You speak like a rationalist!" I said, "What else did you think me to be?" You are rationalists in name; I am a rationalist in spirit. But I tell you this much: Let us agree to differ in the matter of temple-entry, and let us agree to work together where we do not differ.

Harijan, 9-2-1934

37. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, TINNEVELLY[1]

January 24, 1934

Before I refer to the proceedings of this morning, I must take the very first opportunity that has occurred to me of making a reference to a great calamity that has descended upon India, I mean the great earthquake that has desolated fair Bihar. I read yesterday the Viceregal communication. I read also the reports of the Government of Bihar that were published in the papers; and I had a most heart-rending telegram from Babu Rajendra Prasad as soon as he was discharged from his prison. All these communications show what puny mortals we are. We who have faith in God must cherish the belief that behind even this indescribable calamity there is a divine purpose that works for the good of humanity. You may call me superstitious if you like; but a man like me cannot but believe that this earthquake is a divine chastisement sent by God for our sins. Even to avowed scoffers it must be clear that nothing but divine will can explain such a calamity. It is my unmistakable belief that not a blade of grass moves but by the divine will.

What are you and I to do in the face of a calamity of this magnitude? I can only say to you that all of us should contribute our mite to lessen the misery to the best of our ability. But I may not be deflected from the purpose to which, as I believe, by the direction of God, I have dedicated myself for the few months at my disposal; nor have I the authority to turn from their destination the funds that I am just now collecting from you. But with all the earnestness that I can

[1] The meeting was held in the morning at the Municipal Market. The audience numbered about 20,000. Reports of the speech also appeared in *The Hindu*, 24-1-1934, and *The Hindustan Times*, 25-1-1934.

command and in the name of the affection which I know you cherish for me, I must ask you, in spite of your having contributed to this purse, to give all you can save for the sake of those who are today without shelter, food and clothing in the land of Sita. You must show to your brethren and sisters of Bihar, by your sharing your food and clothing with them, that the same blood courses in your veins as in the veins of the Biharis. You can send your contributions to Babu Rajendra Prasad, or you can send them to me and I shall see to it that every pie you give reaches the proper quarters.

For reasons given by the Government and for other reasons best known to them, many persons in their employ are prohibited, or they think they are prohibited, from contributing to the Harijan purse. The orthodox people, who think that I am sinning against them and against the Almighty by engaging in this work, do not give their contributions to this cause. Nor do I expect non-Hindus to contribute to this purse. Therefore, on behalf of afflicted Bihar my appeal is addressed to a much larger audience than those to whom the Harijan appeal is addressed. Here, in the face of this great calamity over which we have no control, let us forget that some of us are Congressmen and others are non-Congressmen, that some of us are Hindus and others are non-Hindus, that some are officials and others non-officials, that some are Englishmen and others are not. Let us remember we are all Indians eating the Indian grain and salt and living on the dumb Indian masses. And as such let us all act and work with one will and absolute unity. Let us supplement in a perfectly unobtrusive manner the measures of relief that may be devised by the official world. Remember that time is the most essential element at the present moment. I shall be glad to know that my appeal has not fallen on deaf ears. I want you to remember that not many years ago, when floods had overtaken this fertile land, the whole of India had come to your succour. Now is your turn to run to the rescue of Bihar.

For me there is a vital connection between the Bihar calamity and the untouchability campaign. The Bihar calamity is a sudden and accidental reminder of what we are and what God is; but untouchability is a calamity handed down to us from century to century. It is a curse brought upon ourselves by our own neglect of a portion of Hindu humanity. Whilst this calamity in Bihar damages the body, the calamity brought about by untouchability corrodes the very soul. Therefore, let this Bihar calamity be a reminder to us that, whilst we

have still a few more breaths left, we should purify ourselves of the taint of untouchability and approach our Maker with clean hearts.

Harijan, 2-2-1934

38. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, TUTICORIN[1]

January 24, 1934

I want you to remember that Province in the north-east of India. It is the place where Sita grew up and Janaka ruled. It is the land where Gautam found divine knowledge. It has many other sacred associations and it is known to you, to me and to every child in India as Bihar and Bihar means "fair land". Today that fair land has become desolate through earthquakes. Several thousands are said to have died. Many more thousands have suffered injuries from which they are even now suffering excruciating pain. Many fair cities have become heaps of ruin. Aid has been coming to them from all parts of the world. The King has sent a message of sympathy. This divine calamity has suddenly reminded us that all humanity is one; and as is but right and proper, in the face of this calamity the Government and the people have become one. For the time being distinctions between Congressmen and non-Congressmen have been abolished, and all parties are supplementing the efforts of one another. I want you to be "superstitious" enough with me to believe that the earthquake is a divine chastisement for the great sin we have committed and are still committing against those whom we describe as untouchables, *Panchamas*, and whom I describe as Harijans. Let us derive the lesson from this calamity that this earthly existence is no more permanent than that of the moths we see every night dancing round lights for a few minutes and then being destroyed. This earthly existence of ours is more brittle than the glass bangles that ladies wear. You can keep glass bangles for thousands of years if you treasure them in a chest and let them remain untouched. But this earthly existence is so fickle that it may be wiped out in the twinkling of an eye. Therefore, whilst we have yet breathing time, let us get rid of the distinctions of high and low, purify our hearts, and be ready to face our Maker when an earthquake or some natural calamity or death in the ordinary course overtakes us.

[1] About 25,000 people attended this meeting and various addresses and purses were presented to Gandhiji. At the end of the meeting the addresses were auctioned.

The electric light company in this town has generously provided this feast of lights and I tender my congratulations to them. I would like them to spare some of the money and send it to afflicted Bihar. There are, I know, in Tuticorin many merchants and others who can pay much more than they have paid now. I know also that, for many reasons, only a limited number of people would contribute to this Harijan purse. But I invite all of them without distinction of age, caste or creed, including Government servants, to give whatever they can to the sufferers in Bihar.[1]

Harijan, 2-2-1934, and *The Hindu*, 26-1-1934

39. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

January 25, 1934

CHI. MARY,

Your letter. I am glad your class and you are getting on. So far as I am concerned, I do not mind your staying there[2] even permanently if thereby you find full self-expression and inward joy. But it is better, I know, to decide in conjunction with Jamnalalji.

Yes, the combination of *takli*-spinning and English is fine.

Have you followed the desolation of Bihar by nature and of Midnapur by man's greed of wealth and power? The two things more than fill my thoughts today and I am constantly seeking God's guidance.

You seem to be keeping well.

I had a firmly written letter from N., as airy as before butfull of love. S. has been taken away by the police. They are being sent to America.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Herewith programme.

From a photostat: G.N. 6018. Also C.W. 3347. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] *The Hindu*, 26-1-1934, carried two reports of the speech, dated January 24 and 25. These have been collated with the *Harijan* version.

[2] Betul. *Vide* also "Letter to F. Marry Barr", 4-1-1934.

40. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

January 25, 1934

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have not heard from you recently. I feel worried because of the terrible earthquake. Where is Jayaprakash? How are you both? Following the earthquake I had expected a detailed letter from you. I take it both of you must be busy with relief work just now. Is Rajeshwar[1] at Kashi? I have asked you in a previous letter to send me his address, etc. I have also inquired from which month I should send him the amounts. I will arrange to send them after I get your reply.

I have also asked you to let me know what you have done regarding other expenses.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3442

41. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, RAJAPALAYAM [2]

January 25, 1934

I thank you for your addresses and purses; but neither your addresses nor your purses will give me any satisfaction whatsoever, unless you have made up your mind that there shall be no untouchability in your hearts. And that means that we have to forget that there are some people who are high and some that are low amongst us. Untouchability as we are practising it today can have no divine sanction. You know what is happening today and what has happened in Bihar. Many of you may not have at all heard the name of Bihar, and yet it is as much a part of India as this Presidency. The people who are living in Bihar are as much our countrymen as people in this part of India, and there, it is said, nearly 20,000 people died in an earthquake. Many thousand more are suffering from injuries sustained and still more are homeless. Now why should this calamity

[1] Younger brother of Jayaprakash Narayan

[2] Over ten thousand people attended the meeting. Purses and addresses of welcome were presented by Gandhi Reception Committee and various other organizations. A gold medal with Gandhiji's figure inscribed on it was also presented. At the end of the meeting the addresses were auctioned.

come upon us? I request you to think with me. Is this great calamity a punishment for our sin? What is the great sin we are committing and have committed? Why should we not take this as a warning to us? The wrong we have done is staring us in the face. We believe, in the name of religion, that thousands of our own countrymen are born 'untouchables'. Is it right? It is an insolence that we must get rid of, at all costs. I would like you, even as you have paid to the Harijan cause, to contribute your mite to the poverty-stricken citizens of Bihar. Do not think that you can give no more because you have given for the Harijan cause. If your neighbours go without food and without cloth, you have got to protect them. I hope therefore that you will all do whatever is possible for them.

The Hindu, 26-1-1934

42. LETTER TO LAKSHMI NARAYAN AGRAWAL

January 26, 1934

BHAI LAKSHMIBABU[1],

Rajendrababu has given me news of your having lost all your nearest and dearest.[2] How can I console you? Where thousands are dead, consolation can hardly mean anything. This is a moment when we must tell ourselves that everyone is a relative. Then no one will feel bereaved. If we can cultivate this attitude of mind, death itself is abolished. For that which lives cannot die. Birth and death are an illusion. Know this to be the truth and, overcomig grief, stick to your duty.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Jivan Sahitya, pp. 256-7

[1] Secretary, All-India Spinners' Association

[2] All members of his family were killed when their house in Muzaffarpur District in Bihar collapsed during the earthquake.

43. SPEECH AT RECEPTION BY MERCHANTS, MADURA[1]

January 26, 1934

Gandhiji addressed the gathering as "Brother Banias" and said that though he began his speech with a smile he knew their hearts were heavy with the Bihar disaster. He wanted them to give not in a miserly manner.

I believe that every pice in the rupee given to the poor Harijans' cause is a pice given for self-purification and for reparation. I must omit the other parts of the interesting address. You have spoken about Hindi and you have spoken about the message of the charkha and if merchants will not be the custodians of the national wealth—and the symbol of our nation's prosperity is the charkha—who will be? Again, if your word is sincere, I should expect you to be able to speak and understand the lingua franca as you call it.

And if you really swear by the charkha, then I should expect you to be dressed in hand-spun and hand-woven khadi. And if you did so, you would only give the poorest of the poor some return for the vast trade you have with the poorest of the poor. Therefore I would ask you to translate your address into action.

Now I must begin speaking straightaway about Bihar. I have just now received a letter written by Babu Rajendra Prasad who was discharged from the jail hospital. The hospital where he was laid up, which is as big as the General Hospital at Madras, shook in the earthquake. You can imagine what the tremor must have been like when a big hospital would have to be emptied. And today that hospital is a howling wilderness. Heaven knows where all the sick men of that hospital are located. That is only about one hospital. In Jubbulpore, in Bihar [*sic*], in Muzaffarpore and Motihari these are practically razed to the ground. Twenty-five thousand people at least are supposed to have died. That means, buried alive. Many more thousands are lying in an injured condition. Still many more are homeless and foodless, and still under fear of the recurrence of the earthquake.

They are all in open spaces, in shivering and bitter cold of which you in Madura can have no notion. You and I can afford to sit in a

[1] The reception, which took place in the morning in the Victoria Edward Hall, was arranged by the Madura Ramnad Chamber of Commerce and the Bombay Hindu Merchants of Madura. Addresses and purses were presented to Gandhiji. A brief report also appeared in *Harijan*, 2-2-1934.

comfortable hall like this. All your enjoyment and my enjoyment will go on uninterrupted. I believe many of you will find yourselves in a theatre or cinema tonight. Well, I want you to think of this that has happened in Bihar and then ask yourselves whatever big or little you can do for those who are suffering. I want you, whilst I am here, to collect a fat purse not in a miserly manner but to divide your spoils with the people who are afflicted in Bihar. I know that you are all believers in God. Our forefathers have taught us to think that whenever a calamity descends upon a people, that calamity comes because of our personal sins. You know that when the rains do not come in time we perform sacrifices and ask gods to send us rains and forgive us our sins owing to which rains are detained. And it is not only here—I have seen it in England and South Africa. When there is a visitation of locusts or the rivers are in flood, they appoint days of humiliation and days of fasting and pray to God to remove the calamity from their midst. And then I want you to believe with me that for this absolutely unthinkable affliction in Bihar your sins and my sins are responsible. And then when I ask myself what can be that atrocious sin that we must have committed to deserve such a calamity which staggers us and which today probably has staggered the whole world,—within living memory there is no record of an earthquake of this magnitude in India— I tell you the conviction is growing on me that this affliction has come to us because of this atrocious sin of untouchability. I beseech you not to laugh within yourself and think I want to appeal to your instinct of superstition. I don't. I am not given to making any appeal to the superstitious fears of people. I may be called superstitious, but I cannot help telling you what I feel deep down in me. I do not propose to take up your time and my time by elaborating this. You are free to believe it or to reject it. If you believe with me, then you will be quick and think there is no such thing as untouchability as we practise it today in the Hindu Shastras. You will think with me that it is a diabolical sin to think of any human being as an untouchable. It is man's insolence that tells him that he is higher than any other. I tell you, the more I think of it the more I feel that there cannot be a greater sin than for a man to consider that he is higher than any single being. All the good men of the world and all the wise men of the world whom I know anything of, and I know a great deal, have all said that they are the lowest of the low. But here unfortunately with us our life is bound up with the idea of high and low. I want you, wise merchants that you are, to realize the truth. If

you realize the truth and forget that there is anyone who can be called an 'untouchable' and lower than ourselves and if you feel that this is the least *prayaschitta* that you ought to make, then of course you will take the earliest step to send succour to Bihar people. I would like you, the Chamber of Commerce and the Gujarati friends, to remember this thing and take some concrete measures today and report to me.

The Hindu, 27-1-1934

44. REPLY TO CIVIC ADDRESS, MADURA[1]

January 26, 1934

MEMBERS OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL AND FRIENDS,

In the first instance I would like to tender my apologies to you for not keeping the appointments in connection with the receipt of your address. But Nature allows no interference with her superior will. So in spite of all the best efforts put forth yesterday, it was not possible to reach Madura before quarter past eleven last night. I thank you for the address that you have given me. I am glad to note that you have made reference to hand-spinning, Hindi and such activities which are dear to me. And since you believe in hand-spinning as a cottage industry essential for the seven hundred thousand villages of India, I should expect that the councillors in their homes and in all manner open to them would insist on the use of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar.

I am glad that you recognize the importance of Hindi as a national language. I have no doubt in my mind that as English is the language highly important for the international and commercial purposes, so is Hindi important for the interprovincial purposes. Yet I wish that it was possible for you to have enabled wanderers like me to speak to you in the national language.

I tender you my sincere congratulations on the absence of the Hindu-Muslim problem here. I wish that your example will prove contagious and infectious and that all over India we shall forget the Hindu-Muslim differences.

You tell me that so far as Harijans are concerned you give them equal opportunity in the matter of education and other civic amenities

[1] This was in reply to the address of welcome by the Chairman of the Municipality.

and privileges. I am sure, at least I hope, that you do not mean all that you have said in this paragraph. For, if you really believe what you say, it means Harijans who are already labouring under a heavy handicap must eternally labour under that handicap because they are to get no more than equal opportunities. You will succeed in giving them equal opportunities only when you have removed the handicap under which they are labouring. I will tell you what I mean. I have come after having visited three *cheries* under the guidance of my friend, the translator—Mr. A. Vaidyanatha Aiyar—and as I claim I have an eye for sanitation, I had no difficulty in discovering that, if you will pardon my saying so, the Municipality has done very little to its most useful servants. You will admit that it will be ludicrous to suggest that the inmates of the *cheries* have equal opportunities to live as they like with the citizens of Madura who may be living in palaces. One *cheri* I visited is surrounded by water and drains on all sides. In the rainy season, it must be a place unfit for human habitation. Another thing is, it is below the road level and all those places are flooded during rains. The cottages in all the three *cheries* are built anyhow. There is no lay-out of streets or lanes and cottages in many places have no vents worth the name. In all cases without exception they are so low that you cannot enter in and get out without bending double. And in all cases the upkeep of the place is certainly not even to the minimum sanitary standard. It gives me comfort that you have resolved to construct model *cheries* with lighting and water facilities. May I suggest to you that in all such matters time is of the essence? I wish that in giving effect to this resolution of yours you have a rigidly fixed time-limit within which you would demolish the present cottages and get these poor people a chance of living somewhat like you and me. And here let me remind you that you are most fortunate in having a band of sisters who are devoting their whole attention to the betterment of these fellow-citizens of ours. You can harness their energy and their effort free of charge. I thank you once again for the address you have given me.

The Hindu, 27-1-1934

45. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, MADURA[1]

January 26, 1934

Gandhiji addressing the ladies said that he was very glad to see such a huge gathering of ladies. Their presence in such large numbers showed not merely the love they had for him, but that they entirely approved of the cause for which he had purposely come there. They must show their affection by removing untouchability. Untouchability was the greatest of the sins. No human being should ever say that he or she was superior to another person whether they be amongst caste Hindus or as between caste Hindus on the one hand and Harijans on the other. He also asked them to show their love by giving monetary help which was the least they could do. That was to be only an earnest of what they had to do. In conclusion, he appealed to them, as he would be leaving the meeting immediately, to give whatever ornaments or money they were willing to part with for the Harijan cause into the hands of Mirabehn.

The Hindu, 28-1-1934

46. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MADURA[2]

January 26, 1934

I am very much obliged to you for all these addresses, purses and gifts. This is not my first visit to Madura, but I think that the crowd that I see now is mightier than what I saw last time. I hope this is a sure sign of your determination to get rid of untouchability. I do not need now to repeat to you that it is a very great sin that *savarna* Hindus are committing against humanity in believing that untouchability has divine sanction. I have not hesitated to say that most probably the calamity which has come to India through the earth-quake in Bihar is a fit punishment awarded to us by God for this great sin of untouchability. But whether it is so or not, it is necessary that you should go to the alleviation of the sufferings of the people of Bihar. I might say that when we have visitations of this character they have not

[1] The meeting held at the West Masi Theatre at 3 p.m. was attended by more than five thousand women. Purses and addresses of welcome were presented by various women's organizations. A few women donated their jewellery also.

[2] The meeting was held at 5.45 p.m. on the grounds near Manal Road and was largely attended. Addresses of welcome and purses, one of them of Rs. 4,944, were presented to Gandhiji on behalf of the public.

only a physical reason, but they carry with them also spiritual consequences; and if it is a superstition, it is a superstition which I share in common with practically all mankind. You may, if you like, reject this belief of mine. But if we would but rise from the inertia which has overtaken us and has paralysed our vision, we would at once see as clearly as daylight that untouchability as it is practised today cannot be defended on any ground whatsoever. And hence it is an evil which is lying in our hearts and has vital connection with every one of us. It does not lend itself to any legal or parliamentary treatment. It depends wholly upon each one of us definitely changing our hearts. This is, as I have always said, an act of self-purification and reparation. The gifts that you have given are merely an earnest of the reparation that you are to make, and it consists in every *savarna* Hindu definitely believing that there is no person who can be regarded as an untouch-able by birth. It means that we must get out of us that unseen and insolent belief that we are superior to some others. On this earth there is no person high and no person low. We are all the children of the same one God and therefore each one of us is undoubtedly equal in God's estimation. And I believe that if you can get rid of the belief of high and low, all the different communities and classes could live in unity and amity.

Continuing, Gandhiji referred to a subject which he said was assuming serious proportions in Madura. It was one touching upon the wellbeing of the Harijans. As he had already demonstrated with facts and figures, several thousands of women belonging to the Harijan class earned a few pice a day by the spinning-wheel. But the practice among some merchants in passing off mill-cloth as hand-spun khaddar was depriving even the few pice that went into the pockets of the Harijans. By this he did not condemn mill-cloth but only wanted that mill-yarn should not be passed as khaddar. And he at the same time asked the purchasers to make sure that the cloth they purchased was genuine khaddar.[1]

The Hindu, 28-1-1934

[1] At the end of the meeting Gandhiji auctioned the gifts and addresses.

47. SPEECH AT HINDI PRACHAR SABHA, MADURA[1]

January 26, 1934

Gandhiji . . . congratulated the certificate-holders and prize-winners and proceeded to speak about the merits of the Hindi language. He pointed out that being akin to all other Indian languages Hindi was the easiest medium for the intercourse of thought among the peoples of India. Further, unlike the English language, it had an atmosphere about it which was thoroughly Indian. In all walks of life in India, Hindi served as a common medium of communication of thoughts and ideas. It was particularly useful for merchants and commercial people. By devoting one hour a day one could get a working knowledge of Hindi in about six months, but more than that one should keep in touch with it so as not to forget what one had learnt. To acquire literary proficiency one will have to devote more time.

The Hindu, 28-1-1934

48. SPEECH AT MEETING OF LABOURERS, MADURA[2]

January 26, 1934

FELLOW LABOURERS,

It has given me very great pleasure to be in your midst. I call you 'fellow labourers', by design. When I was hardly 23 years old, or 24 it might be, I came in touch with Balasundaram[3]. Balasundaram was an indentured labourer. I had the good fortune to handle his case. I then learnt a great deal about the hardships of labour. The bond between the labourers and myself became closer and closer and I threw myself entirely into their hands. If I did not become an indentured labourer myself, they realized that I was one with them myself. That is the reason why I call myself a labourer. Now I want to tell you something of what this self-purification movement is.

I have just heard that when I was fasting in the Yeravda jail you were the first to hold a meeting to show your sympathy. You did then

[1] After the address of welcome, which was in Hindi, was presented, Gandhiji gave away prizes and certificates to the meritorious students. At the end of the meeting Gandhiji auctioned the address and the other presents.

[2] The meeting, arranged by the Madura Mills Labour Union, was held at 7 p.m. in the compound of the Mills school. Over five thousand labourers attended. *Harijan*, 2-2-1934, also carried a report.

[3] *Vide* "An Autobiography—Part II, Chapter XX", 3-2-1929

a great deal of work. But I am not sure that you understand what all that meant. You know that even among the labourers there are vast divisions and one considers the other lower than oneself. Now, so long as you believe that there are some who are lower than yourself or some who are higher than yourself, you have not got the spirit of the movement. Therefore, you must feel in your heart that there is nothing in this difference and abolish it. Among you also I know that there are many caste Hindu labourers and many Harijan labourers. You must forget, if you have understood this movement, that there are any untouchables. And, you must consider every labourer as equal as you and your blood-brother are. If you can rise to that stage, you would immediately understand what happiness there will be for your own good and for the good of the country. Under the circumstances, I would like to tell you, friends, in this self-purification movement you will be expected to discard the intoxicating drink altogether. If there are any amongst you at all who are used to eating carrion and beef, you must leave it. You will give up gambling. Do not incur debts. And, if you have in your midst any Muslim labourers also, you must deal with them and live with them on terms of affection. You ought to take a personal interest in the work that they may be doing.

While you have perfect right to demand good treatment from the employers, adequate wages from them and proper quarters, it is expected of you that you will render proper and honest service for the wages that you get. If you will only consider for a moment, you will find, by reason of your being employed as labourers of a particular concern, you become part proprietors of that concern, in the same way as those who had invested money. Labour, as a matter of fact, is as much money as metallic coin. In the same way as money, labour is also put in a particular concern. Just as without money your labour will be useless, so all the money of the world will be useless if there is no labour. Therefore, you must take a pride in the concern where you are labouring. While on the one hand you will be after your rights as part proprietors, on the other hand, considering that concern as yours, render your honest service for that concern.

Last, I am glad that you have given me a small purse for the Harijan cause and I thank you also for the photo-frames you have given. They will also be sold for the Harijan cause.

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-2-193

49. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

MADURA SOUTH,
January 27, 1934

JAMNALAL BAJAJ
GONDIA

TELEGRAM JUST RECEIVED. IF PATNA REQUIRES YOUR PRESENCE INTERRUPT PROGRAMME NOT OTHERWISE.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapake Ashirvad, p. 122

50. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

January 27, 1934

CHI. AMALA,

I have your postcard. My letter must have crossed it. You will have seen from it that I was actually moving to have you sent to Sabarmati if only by way of trial.[1]

I hope you are keeping well. Did I tell you that that German friend was with us for some days? He has made himself quite useful.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

51. SPEECH AT MUNICIPAL COUNCIL MEETING KARAIKUDI

January 27, 1934

MR. CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL,

You were good enough to supply me with a copy of the translation of your address, for which I thank you and also for the address itself. I thank you also for the purse that you have given me. I suppose this includes the offerings of the public and not merely of the Municipal Corporation.

Now you have said that the Council has under consideration

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Parikshitlal L. Majmudar",23-1-1934.

various ambitious schemes and efforts will be made to carry them out soon after the present depression is got over. I suggest to you that this is hardly enough. Apart from the fact that this is so vague, there is no thought of a definite realization of the object, and that Harijans' uplift cannot wait for better times to come. Better times will follow our proper treatment of the Harijans.

It is not necessary for me to elaborate that which has affected the whole of my fundamental being. If the members of the Council have been at all following what I have been saying at different places or will follow what I shall be saying at the different places I shall be visiting in Chettinad, I think you will find what I am really after and what it is possible for all municipalities to do within their means. What I have suggested is nothing so drastic that it would be beyond the capacity of the municipalities to do. I am fully conscious of the steps you have taken and the enterprise you have shown for the benefits of the citizens here. I thank the gentleman who has contributed Rs. 10,000 for the uplift of the Harijans. I thank you once more for the address.

The Hindu, 29-1-1934

52. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KARAIKUDI[1]

January 27, 1934

It is a matter of great satisfaction to me to renew my acquaintance with you. I thank you for the addresses and the purses that have been presented to me for the Harijan cause. The proprietor of the Anand Bhawan has helped me this afternoon by presenting a donation of Rs. 151 for the Harijan cause and Rs. 151 for the afflicted countrymen in Bihar. I wish you all to follow that example. You must have read today a notice published by Babu Rajendra Prasad and supported by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. The notice invites the whole of India to observe tomorrow as the day for the relief of the Bihar sufferers. It means that the whole of India is invited to contribute its mite towards relieving the material sufferings of our countrymen in Bihar. As you know several big palaces have been desolated by this calamity. I hope therefore that you in Chettinad will not allow tomorrow to pass by, without expressing your tangible sym-

[1] Nearly 15,000 people attended the meeting. Purses and addresses of welcome were presented to Gandhiji. At the end the addresses and presents were auctioned.

pathy towards those who are suffering so terribly in fair Bihar. Let us not delude ourselves into the belief that when we have paid a few rupees or given a few bangles towards alleviating this suffering, we shall have discharged our obligations. I would like you tomorrow to enter into the sanctuary of your hearts and examine the causes of this calamity. Geologists and such other scientists will undoubtedly give us physical and material causes of such calamities. But the belief has been entertained all the world over by religiously minded people, especially by the Hindus, that there are spiritual causes for such visitations. I entertain the honest and deep conviction that such visitations are due to the great sin that we have committed towards humanity and to God. For long, long years, we have not been treating our fellowmen properly as our own brethren and should we not take this as a warning sent to us to correct our way of life? This earthquake has razed big palaces to the ground and has done immense harm to thousands of people, but the great harm caused by the insolence of man to brother man has not only destroyed the body of Harijans, but it has terribly destroyed the Harijans' soul itself. Whilst therefore you are, as I wish you will be, thinking over your duty towards the afflicted people of Bihar, I do hope that you will understand that there is an invariable connection in a way between this untouchability designed by man and this calamity. God could never design that one class of men should suppress another class of men. I would therefore like you tomorrow to send your subscriptions to the afflicted men in Bihar with a determination that henceforth you are not going to maintain untouchability and consider a single human-being lower than yourself. No matter what may be said to the contrary, I maintain that in the books of Hindu Shastras there is no warrant whatsoever for untouchability as we practise it today. You in Chettinad have been blessed with riches. You have enough intelligence to understand the conditions to which these Harijans have been reduced today. I wish you, young men, whom I see around me, and young women also to examine the conditions of these men and devote both your intelli-gence and your material resources to the improvement of their con-ditions. I have called this movement a movement of self-purification and penance. I invite these women and men to take their full share in this movement.

The Hindu, 29-1-1934

53. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, DEVACOTTAH[1]

January 27, 1934

Replying to the address he said that he was not at all surprised with the purse given to him, because he had expected a large amount from Devacottah. He was glad to find himself amongst them to renew old acquaintances. He then appealed for liberal contributions to the earthquake-stricken Bihar. Many thousands were buried alive and many more were injured. Many more thousands were left there homeless, foodless, and clothless, lying in the open and shivering with cold. They needed relief. He appealed to them to observe tomorrow as All-India Bihar Day when liberal contributions should be made to alleviate the sufferings of the afflicted people in Bihar. He hoped that the youths of Devacottah would prove true to their promise contained in their address that they would go from door to door to raise a large sum on behalf of the Bihar sufferers.

The Hindu, 29-1-1934

54. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

MADURA,
[On or before *January 28, 1934*]

I AM DOING EVERYTHING POSSIBLE. WIRE MAGANLAL PRANJIVAN 14 MOGUL STREET RANGOON FOR SUBSCRIPTION. WIRE POSITION.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-1-1934

[1] Over 16,000 people attended this meeting. An address along with a purse was presented to Gandhiji. At the end of the meeting the address and the presents, which included gold and silver articles, were auctioned.

55. LETTER TO PREMI JAIRAMDAS

January 28, 1934

MY DEAR PREMA,

I have your card. Tell Father I shall be touring in Tamil Nad till nearly 23rd February, and then for 10 days in Karnatak. The programme after that is not yet fixed.

Love.

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

Hope Dr. Choithram is keeping well.

SHRI PREMABEHN
PREM BHAVAN, MARKET RD.
HYDERABAD
SIND

From the original: C.W. 9248. Courtesy: Jairamdas Doulatram

56. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

January 28, 1934

CHI. PREMA,

I could only now finish reading your letter. I had to read it in three instalments.

I was certain that you would not desire to come to see me. When I heard, however, that you wanted to come, I advised you to exercise self-control but did not forbid you to come. The resolution which you and others made to return to jail as soon as you were released was the only proper course for you. But how can we force those others who have weakened?

I see from your letter that it is doubtful even whether you will get this letter.

I had indeed preserved, with great love, the yarn spun from the slivers sent by you. Labels in Mahadev's beautiful handwriting were also attached to it. But I don't know what happened to it during my fast. It is possible that Mahadev has preserved it and got it stored away safely somewhere. Mahadev is at present strictly forbidden to write

letters and so it is a little difficult to write to him and inquire.

You should see that the yarn which you spun is woven into khadi without delay. Ramji should be asked to weave it.

I see that you have done a very good amount of reading. If you feel inclined, read carefully Tulsidas's *Ramayana*, the Bible and the Koran. If you can, complete the study of Urdu which you have started. You have made excellent use of your time.

Many things have been left out in your letter. I do hope you have written another after that.

What you write concerning Lilavati is correct. It is difficult to say anything about her future.

I advised[1] you to go through the issues of *Harijan* so that you might know what developments had taken place on that issue during the past few months. If, however, you did not get time, it is natural that you could not read them.

This time you may get 'C'[2] class. I would welcome that.

I see that Kisan's body and mind have improved. She is still weak, though. I don't think we can burden her with any work. She does whatever work she can do, but she soon gets tired. She needs plenty of sleep. The company which she gets here seems to have proved congenial to her. Though she is twice as old as Om, the two have become good friends. It is difficult to say which of the two has the chief share in this. Both seem to be extremely sociable. To me she doesn't seem to be 28 at all.

I didn't get, after all, the letter which you wrote from jail. About myself, what should I write? My health has remained quite good and can stand the strain of work all right. I hardly get time to write letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10354. Also C.W. 6793. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 15-1-1934.

[2] On both the occasions the addressee was given 'B' class.

57. SPEECH AT LAYING OF FOUNDATION-STONE FOR HARIJAN SCHOOL, DEVACOTTAH

January 28, 1934

I am obliged to you for this address and for your determination to help the poor and give them all possible facilities and freedom. I am glad to learn that you have opened a free library to all without caste distinction. It has also given me very great pleasure to lay today the foundation-stone for the school which is designed for the use of all people without distinction including Harijans. I hope that the school will be a prosperous one in the sense that it will be attended by all classes and you will take care to engage such teachers as will give real education, to the boys and girls who enter here, both of the heart and the head.[1]

The Hindu, 30-1-1934

58. SPEECH AT HARIJAN CHERI, CHITHANUR

January 28, 1934

Gandhiji complimented them on their having a progressive school, and referring to the Harijan-Nattar problem, said:

I had known about the trouble between the Harijans and Nattars. It is undoubtedly unfortunate that among the Hindus themselves there should be any such trouble. It is undoubtedly shameful that there should be interference even with your freedom to dress and to move how you like. I have not the shadow of doubt that you have precisely the same rights to the use of temples and roads and to regulate your habits of dress as the so-called *savarna* Hindus have, and I would like you to shed the fear you have of being molested in the exercise of your liberty. I would like you to be brave and courageous and face the sufferings in the exercise of your freedom. You should also remember and know that at the present moment there is a growing body of reformers who are your true friends and servants, and I have no doubt that they will stand by you in your sufferings. But remember in your sufferings let there be no hate.

Continuing, Gandhiji made a forceful appeal for their abstaining from drink and eating carrion.

The Hindu, 30-1-1934

[1] At the conclusion of the meeting the presents were auctioned.

59. INTERVIEW WITH THE NATTARS, DEVACOTTAH

January 28, 1934

Gandhiji spoke at first for fifteen minutes. He said even while in Poona the Nattar-Harijan question had been brought to his notice. He knew what was happening here. Nattars and Harijans had quarrelled and he knew of it. But he wanted to tell them as a Hindu that the Harijans had not asked for anything to which they were not entitled as Hindus and as human beings. The Harijans had every right to wear what dress they pleased or what ornaments. Why should they not? Why should the Nattars have a sense of offence at this? He asked Nattars to understand what was happening in the world today. They could not resist reforms. They should be kind to the Harijans who were their blood-brothers. They were the children of the same great God, 'whose mercy was full to all men alike'; the Nattars and Harijans were members of the same family.

Learned men might hold that untouchability had a sanction in the Hindu Shastras. But he would assure them that he had looked into the question most carefully and would assure them that there were many learned men and many holy men who were Hindus who held that untouchability as practised today had absolutely no sanction in the Shastras. Could untruths be in the Shastras? Untouchability was an untruth. Therefore, they should not debate this question but act in accordance with truth.

One elderly Nattar stood up and stated that they had no quarrel with the Harijans who kept the old order in Hindu society. But now the Harijans were violating established traditions and customs. The Nattars never objected to Harijan women wearing what dress they liked. In regard to the Harijan men it was only on public occasions and in temple festivals that the Nattars insisted on the Harijans observing old customs.

Gandhiji replied that the Nattars should look into the question and decide whether any particular tradition was good or bad and act accordingly. But the Nattar leader continued to insist that established tradition could not be violated.

Gandhiji answered that there were certain laws common to all human society and one of them was that no body of men could force on another body of men particular modes of dress and ornaments, etc. If the Harijans wanted a change in regard to these matters, why should they be prevented? If, on this account, the Nattars molested theHarijans and the matter went to a court of law the Nattars' case would be rejected at once. Religion, dharma and established law alike forbade such interference.

He then made a final appeal to the Nattars and said that they should not allow matters to drift but make up their minds to do justice to the Harijans and treat them kindly and affectionately as brothers. Such a procedure would benefit both the Nattars and the Harijans alike. If he had any doubt that his advice would benefit the Harijans

only and not the Nattars, he would have hesitated to tender this advice. But he was absolutely convinced that his advice would be beneficial and bring lasting good not only to the Harijans but to the Nattars also.

After the Nattar leader garlanded Gandhiji, the function terminated at 5 minutes to 1.45 p.m.

The Hindu, 30-1-1934

60. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"[1]

January 28, 1934

I had an hour's conversation with a very large number of Nattars.[2] Their leaders spoke frankly. I put it to the Nattar representatives present that it was wrong for them to plead the usage of custom in favour of depriving fellow-beings of liberty of action as to their mode of dress or use of ornaments. I am hoping that my conversation will produce the desired effect.

The Nattars were very attentive to what I said to them. What gives me hope however is the fact that there are some Nattars who are earnest about reforms. Besides, there is also an increasing awakening among Harijans themselves regarding their elementary rights. There is no mistaking the fact that the phenomenal awakening that has taken place over the untouchability question is slowly affecting the villagers who were hitherto untouched by anything happening outside their own respective villages.

Answering another question, whether there was any attempt on the part of H. H. Puri Shankarachariar to see him at Devacottah, Gandhiji replied:

His representative did see me and I said I would gladly have friendly discussion with him by appointment, but there was no time left in Devacottah. The letter reached me only a few minutes before 1 o'clock yesterday, when I was to have a conference with the Nattar representatives but as I have said, I would gladly set apart an hour at Coonoor, if that would suit His Holiness. In fact, I have gone out of my way to hold friendly conversations with those who claimed to be sanatanists.

The Hindu, 29-1-1934

[1] The *Hindu* representative had asked Gandhiji to give his impressions of the Nattar-Harijan problem.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item and also "Among the Nattars", 9-2-1934.

61. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

PODANUR,
January 29,1934

SETH JAMNALALJI
WARDHA

SENT REPLY WARDHA. UNNECESSARY INTERRUPT WORK UNLESS RAJENDRAPRASAD REQUIRES YOUR PRESENCE. SPECIALLY SENDING PATNA RELEASED SABARMATI MEN. RAJENDRAPRASAD WANTS THEM.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 122

62. TELEGRAM TO PADMAJA NAIDU

COONOOR,
January 29, 1934

PADMAJA
GOLDEN THRESHOLD
HYD. (DN.)

CERTAINLY ATTEND EXCLUSIVELY BIHAR CALAMITY.[1] LOVE.

GANDHI

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

63. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI N. PATEL

January 28/29, 1934

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

I got your letter. It seems all of you have had invaluable experiences this time. Do come, if you needs must see me. If correspondence will do, then exercise self-control. I am at such a distance that you cannot reach here without spending a large sum. About three weeks more yet will be spent in Tamil Nadu. We shall be able to go to

[1] An earthquake had rocked Bihar on January 15, resulting in largescale loss of life and property.

Karnataka only in the last week of February. It, therefore, seems to me best that everybody who can manage without coming here should do so. If, however, you feel that it is absolutely necessary for you to come, then come without any hesitation.

It is not yet fixed where I shall be on which date.

(I dictated this while eating and had to stop; now I am writing the rest of the letter in the train which is taking me to Coonoor.)

You will know the programme when you reach Madras. You cannot come to meet me anywhere unless you first come to Madras. You must have seen the wire[1] I sent yesterday to Chimanlal. Rajendrababu needs experienced persons. If you can go, do so. It is one's duty at this juncture to suspend the programme of jail-going and rush to Bihar instead.

I am quite well. You will know more if you go through the back issues of *Harijan.*

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have given more details in my letter[2] to Chimanlal. Please read it.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9001

64. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[3]

ON WAY TO COONOOR,
January 29, 1934

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. It was good you talked to Jinnah and others. Of course in my opinion nothing is going to come of it. Nothing will be gained by the Congress becoming a party to it. In my view the British Government's decision should be accepted. Because except for my opposing it on behalf of the Congress, I can recall no one opposing the British decision. And if it is a question of giving Muslims

[1] These are not traceable.

[2] *ibid*

[3] This was in reply to the addressee's suggestion for an appeal to foreign countries for help to the victims of the Bihar earthquake.

what they ask, whyshould the decision be opposed? This of course is true: the White Paper will remain white and its articles will remain unimplemented. If that happens the resolution about policies will remain buried and with it all else.

I have not been able to write to Gokhale and Bapa Sola. Each day I want to write but I am not able to do it. Even this I am writing on the train. Even though I get up at 3 a.m. I cannot attend to all the secretarial work. I hope to do it at Coonoor.

Bihar and Midnapur have raised a storm in my heart. I have written about it to Swami. Read it if you have not done so. Rajendra Babu asks for the help of the Ashram inmates who have been released. I have sent a telegram to Ahmedabad and another to Swami also. I would have suggested that you go, too, if you were fit. If the need arises for you to go even at the obvious risk to your health, you may have to go. I do not see the need at the moment. I have written to Rajendra Babu to write to me if my presence is found necessary in Bihar.

If a party is formed as suggested in Rangaswamy's draft,[1] it can join the convention to oppose the White Paper. It is another question whether or not joining it is proper. I have not given any thought to it. What should one say about a thing which does not yet exist?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

65. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

[On or before *January 30, 1934*]

YOUR TELEGRAM. DOING NEEDFUL.

The Bombay Chronicle, 31-1-1934

[1] Rangaswamy Iyengar, Editor of *The Hindu*, along with K. M. Munshi, had prepared a draft scheme to revive the Swaraj Party as the constitutional wing of the Congress; *vide* "Letter to K.M. Munshi", 8-1-1934.

66. APPEAL TO THE WORLD

[On or before *January 30, 1934*][1]

I have received the following wire from Babu Rajendra Prasad:

Please consider the propriety of appealing to foreign countries, particularly to Indians abroad. The reconstruction of the province requires crores. Several thousands have perished and many times more injured and rendered homeless and resourceless.

The flourishing towns of Monghyr, Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga, Motihari, Samastipur, Sitamarhi and Madhubani are heaps of bricks. Others like Patna, Chhapra and Bhagalpur fared better, but even there, hundreds of houses were demolished and hundreds are standing seriously damaged.

Countryside crops in vast tracts were destroyed or damaged by the flood caused by the eruption of water and sand through fissures in the earth. Extensive areas were rendered a desert by heavy deposits of sand and other extensive areas covered with spouted water.

Wells are choked up and are causing scarcity of drinking water. Many sugarcane factories were disabled and endangering the crop of one lakh acres unless prompt steps are taken to save.

I heartily endorse it and hope that Indians living in different parts of the world will send the utmost they can. I have in mind especially my old friends and fellow-workers in Africa. And merchants and others living in England and on the Continent, Japan and America are also requested to send liberal contributions.

In point of distress nothing perhaps has surpassed the Bihar calamity in India within living memory. Reluctant though I have always been to appeal to non-Indians for pecuniary help, not from any prudery, but out of delicate consideration, I gladly adopt Babu Rajendra Prasad's suggestion and invite numerous non-Indian friends in Europe, America and Africa and other parts of the world to render such help as they can.

Contributions may be sent direct to Babu Rajendra Prasad, Patna; or to my address, Wardha, Central Provinces.

The Hindu, 3-2-1934

[1] *The Bombay Chronicle*, 1-2-1934, published the appeal under the date January 30 and The *Searchlight*, 2-2-1934, under the date January 31.

67. TELEGRAM TO HIRALAL SHARMA[1]

COONOOR,
January 30, 1934

DR. SHARMA
KHURJA

CAN SEE NO DIFFICULTY BUT AWAIT MY LETTER.

GANDHI

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, p. 54

68. LETTER TO HIRALAL TYABJI

January 30, 1934

DEAR DAUGHTER RAIHANA,[2]

I have your letter through the sisters Schill and Boari. Of course you are absolved from the promise. What I said was the general experience of mankind. There was no question whatsoever of your honesty being doubted. But I understand what is weighing on you. That weight must be lifted. I know that you will grow in any event.

I wish I could join your prayer meeting. You are doing better than what I have been able to achieve.

It is quite good news you give me about Gopi's diary.

Father tells me about some yogi treating you with good results and a promise of better. Who is he?

Tell Father I have his long letter. I cannot help him in supplementing his recollections of our first meeting. I have but a faint recollection of meetings prior to the meetings in Godhra. I have a fair recollection of our meetings since then. And the brief meeting at Baroda station when you and Hamida were sitting in my lap I shall never forget. It was all as if I had met members of the same family! Love to you all. I take it you have been collecting for Bihar.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 9654

[1] The addressee had closed down his clinic and sought Gandhiji's permission to stay at the Ashram at Wardha.

[2] The superscription is in Urdu.

69. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

COONOOR,
January 30, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letter. I sent a wire[1] to Gondia and have also sent one[2] to Wardha. Do not leave the work you have taken up unless Rajendra babu specially asks you to go. Rajendrababu will not do so without reason. I also have decided to do the same. I have no doubt that you would not readily leave the work you have taken up. You may leave it and go only where your presence is indispensable. Just now I don't think that is the case. In reply to Rajendrababu's request, I have sent some of the inmates of the Ashram who were recently released. I have received today a wire saying that some of them have proceeded there. I have not included Surendra among them as he is working with you. If you don't need him, you can send him. He should take some woollen clothes if he goes. If you require him, however, he need not go just now. I have sent a wire to Swami asking him to go.

Om is doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gajarati: G.N. 2931

70. LETTER TO JANKIDEVI BAJAJ

January 30, 1934

CHI. JANAKIBEHN,

Is it right to complain if Jamnalal gets excited owing to weakness of the brain? Should we mind the bad temper of a person who is sick? It should be always ignored. Or did you write the letter for my amusement? Tell Madalasa that she seems to have forgotten me completely. That will not do. Om is fine.

How is Ramakrishna? How are you? Take care of Vali.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2930

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Jamnalal Bajaj",27-1-1934.
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Jamnalal Bajaj", 29-1-1934.

71. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

COONOOR,
January 30, 1934

BA,

I have had no letter from you yet. Today we are on a mountain in Madras. Its height is the same as that of Almora. The greenery is probably more beautiful, but we cannot see snowcovered mountains here. The Himalayas are very-very far away. We shall be staying here up to the 5th. Amtussalaam has come here. She wanted to return today, but we have prevailed upon her to stay on up to the 5th. Her health may be said to be fairly good. Kusum (Rami's daughter) has attained the divine feet of Rama. I got the letter only yesterday. Bali is grieving very much. Manju was there and could solace her. I have had no news about Harilal recently. Ramdas writes regularly. Devdas-Lakshmi have gone to Delhi. Devdas may be said to have settled down quite well. Brijkrishna is all right now. As a result of the earthquake in Bihar, between twenty and twenty-five thousand people have died. Hundreds of thousands have become homeless. There has been a loss amounting to crores of rupees. Rajendrababu has just been released and has plunged into relief work. Collections are being raised all over the country. I too have been collecting something. I have been receiving wire after wire. He [Rajendrababu] has asked for Ashram inmates (men) to be sent to Bihar, and I have, therefore, sent a wire. I do not know yet who will go. Lilavati is pretty ill. Velanbehn has lost 25 lb. She has gone to Baroda, taking Anandi and Mani with her. Durga[1] has gone to Bulsar with Bablo[2] and Bachu[3]. Premabehn is back [in jail]. She is quite well. I am not sending a discourse today. You should still have one with you. I am well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 11-2

[1] Wife of Mahadev Desai
[2] Narayan Desai, Mahadev Desai's son
[3] Nirmala Desai, Mahadev Desai's sister

72. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

COONOOR,
January 30, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have still not received your letter this time. I think I shall get it in a day or two. I am writing this in Coonoor, sitting in sunshine. I first wrote the articles for *Harijan.* Then I had my meal. After that I finalized the programme of the Tamil Nadu tour and had a nap. And now I have sat down to write letters.

These days Bihar takes plenty of my time. You know now the extent of the destruction there. I get wires from Rajendrababu almost every day. I do whatever he wants me to do. There is no need for me to go to Bihar just now. He has asked for those inmates of the Ashram who have been released. I have sent a wire to the Ashram accordingly. As many of them as can go will go. I have not received any reply as to who will be able to go. I talk about Bihar at every meeting. I have even collected some jewellery and cash. At the moment I seem to be getting a good response. It remains to be seen how the aid is utilized.

Amtussalaam has come here. She was ready to return immediately today. But I have detained her till the end of my stay in Coonoor. She will descend with me on the 6th and will go back to Gujarat to her work. Gangabehn and other women are resting.

I shall be going to Belgaum towards the end of the next month or in the beginning of March. But the plan may also have to be abandoned if meanwhile I receive a call from Bihar. If finally I do go to Belgaum, I will write for permission to see Mahadev and Mani.

Kanjibhai is expected here in a day or two. Shantikumar[1] has undergone an operation for hernia. He is better now. Shankerlal came and saw me in connection with khadi work. He is at present laid up with influenza in Bombay. Dr. Rajan and Nageshwararao are with me here. We are staying in the latter's bungalow. Kishorelal is still bed-ridden. I have sent a wire to Swami asking him to proceed to Bihar.

Prithuraj has been helping Chandrashankar. Velanbehn has gone to Lakshmidas at Baroda, taking Anandi and Mani with her. She

[1] Shantikumar N. Morarjee.

has lost 25 lb. in jail. Bablo and Durga have gone to Bulsar. Amina will go with her children to Pyare Ali. Mani Parikh has gone to Kathlal just now with the children. Afterwards she will visit Narahari. They will then decide what to do. Prema has gone back to jail. Though Lilavati is ill, she also seems to have insisted on going.

Blessings to both from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbaine, pp. 68-9

73. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD[1]

[Before *January 31, 1934*][2]

BROTHER RAJENDRA PRASAD,

What am I to write? What comfort can I give ? I have been upset. To give up what I am doing looks like *adharma,* but even if I abandon it, what will I be able to do? Since yesterday, I have been narrating the tale of Bihar in every speech. People listen. Some contribute on the spot. I ask everyone to send money to you direct or pay it to me if they think it proper. Be writing or wiring to me. I do not read papers daily. What do you advise me about my tour in Bihar? Would it be proper for me to come there in connection with untouchability? Should I come there in connection with the alleviation of suffering? Will not my not coming there be preferable ? I shall do as you advise.

The Hindu, 1-2-1934

[1] According to the source, the letter was in Hindi. The original, however, not traceable.

[2] The report in the source is dated January 31.

74. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL[1]

January 31, 1934

. . . sent there at once.

My health is quite good. Weight 110, b.p. 155-100, food as before. Mira is also quite well. Do not expect her to write much or at all just now. She is off writing. The rush through space leaves nobody much time for writing. This is being written between 3 and 4 a.m.

You must keep your body fit.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

75. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

January 31, 1934

BHAI JIVANJI,

I got your letter. Please give the accompanying letter to Kakasaheb if he is there.

I understand what you say about Durga. I shall know in a day or two whether I shall be going to Belgaum or not. Even if I go, it will be around February 25 or 26 or even later. Will Durga wait till then? I will certainly try to secure permission if I do go to Belgaum. But it is possible that I may not get it. Such risks have to be taken. If they do give me the permission, probably they will do so even if Durga has seen him in the mean while. But one can't be sure. I stop here as some visitors are coming.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9936. Also C.W. 6911. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

[1] The first two sheets of the letter are missing.

76. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

January 31, 1934

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Your letter. I liked the comparison of the earthquake and the Harijan problem very much because it is the truth. It is self-evident that the poorest have suffered little; but is it not equally true that those in possession of even a little have turned destitute? I am doing from here what is possible.

The Bengal tour has put me in a dilemma. It is good that you are there. I have written a long letter today to Dr. Bidhan. Please see it and take a decision there. On my part, I feel that the only decision open to me is to go unless you people raise an objection.

I keep getting letters from. . .[1]. But this you have to consider. At present . . . cannot fully satisfy. . .[2]. Her physique cannot stand the strain. What is the solution if . . . cannot exercise self-restraint? The problem is complex. I shall write to . . . .

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 7944. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

77. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

February 1, 1934

DEAR AGATHA,

I am writing this between 3 and 4 a.m. Have just finished a note to Henry. Andrews tells me you too have not been overwell. Evidently you in England need more change and rest than we here seem to need. And you must take it if you will get the maximum work from the body. I hope that this letter will find you fully restored.

I do not even look at the letters Chandrashankar has been writing to you. I hope that he has been keeping you fully posted with news from here.

Of the desolation of Bihar you know as much as I do. Rajendra Prasad is making a Herculean effort to relieve suffering. He has

[1] The names have been omitted.

[2] *ibid*

rendered full co-operation to the Government. At this instance I have made an appeal to the non-Indian friends all over the world. You must have seen Reuter's cable. Chandrashankar will be sending you a copy. The male members of the Ashram who have just come out of prison have suspended their civil resistance and gone to Bihar. The calamity is of such magnitude that all the help that the whole world may give will be a drop in the ocean. But I suppose there is a spiritual result seen and unseen of such material help. The stricken people will derive comfort from the thought that the whole world is thinking of them and coming to their assistance. I am presently writing to Andrews and Holmes[1] and Rolland.

Of the gradual but sure dissolution of untouchability you know all from the cuttings that Chandrashankar has been sending you in addition to the copies of *Harijan.*

The measures the Government have adopted to crush the spirit of the people defy description. The gagging of the Press has made it well-nigh impossible to know the news accurately and to publish what little oozes out in spite of the strictest censorship. Copies I am sending you of original documents will give you an inkling of what is happening. I do not want any public propaganda but you may make what use you like among friends and among the official world there. As you are aware, the two attempts I made to gain the ear of the authorities ended in failure. True, I had courteous replies but no admission of error. On the contrary both from Bengal and Bombay I received a blank denial of the charges made including repudiation of the evidence of what Mira had seen with her own eyes. I am trying my best to find a way to honourable peace. But there can be none so long as the Government persist in repression. My fear is that it has been worse in the Frontier Province than in Bengal. But news is more difficult to get from there even than from Bengal. All this, however, does not mean that I have given up all hope. For I can never lose faith in prayer which is the same thing as nonviolence whether it be through letter-writing or civil resistance or mute prayer only. I simply mention the difficulties in the way. Friends in England should have as accurate news as I can gather or rather the news that comes to me unsought. My one preoccupation is war against untouchability. I wonder if you realize that I hardly have time to read the voluminous post that follows me during the tour. I read only the portion that

[1] John Haynes Holmes

Chandrashankar thinks I ought to read. Things are worse than what you saw at Knightsbridge. It is only here in Coonoor where I am resting from incessant travelling that I am able to give you this long letter.

Now a word about an Indian Bureau outside India. I am opposed to the idea. I must not argue. The money given by Vithalbhai Patel cannot be used for that purpose. It can be used only for constructive work in India, e.g., untouchability, khadi, national service. On this point I am perhaps the only "whole-hogger" but there it is. I am convinced that when India as a whole is awakened nothing can stop her march to freedom. She is being awakened. This lull does not affect the march. It is a precursor to the full awakening. Foreign propaganda must be taken up by foreigners. That friends all over are taking up to the best of their ability.

You will share this with friends.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1477

78. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

COONOOR,
February 1, 1934

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letters. Chandrashankar has been sending a regular weekly letter to Agatha. I can hardly cope with the correspondence. Chandrashankar overtakes it and *Harijan* work by dropping out of the tour three days in the week. I am moving more swiftly than before and keeping good health!!!

You will see the long letter[1] I have written to Agatha. I need say nothing therefore in this about public affairs.

You have balanced all the bad news you have given me by telling me that Esther's difficulties are all solved and that Menon has at last decided to come to India. I am sure it is a sound decision, if it is a firm one. I am glad you gave that message to Nellie Ball. She is a brave woman with an unquenchable faith in God. Please repeat my

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

love to her. I must not attempt to send her or the Alexanders or the Hoylands separate letters. Do tell them all that they are constantly in my thoughts. As to your brother and your sister in New Zealand, what can I say? With your nature I know you will be happy if you can be personally by their side. But your preoccupations are far too many to make that possible. I hope you are getting enough from the sale of your books to give them what financial aid you can.

I told you about Sir Prabhashankar's donation to Santiniketan.

Dr. Ambedkar returned to India some time ago. He has not written to me. I shall resist no solution that pleases Harijans and the so-called caste Hindus, provided of course that separate electorates are not revived. What I call the most valuable work done during these three months would have been impossible if politically they had been completely isolated.

Love to all whom you may see.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 984

79. LETTER TO ATMA S. KAMALANI[1]

COONOOR,
February 1, 1934

MY DEAR KAMALANI,

I am very much behindhand in my correspondence. I reach your letter of 29th December only today.

I appreciate the committee's suggestion. It shows their anxiety to show better results. Please assure them that I know they are doing all they can. My own conviction is that a paid Indian mission cannot do better and cannot render them effective help. It will be wrong to deduce necessity for a permanent Indian organization from some good work that a man like Bhulabhai Desai may do. Such men may go to England more frequently than they do. But a permanent organization can do no good and may do harm. People have to work out their salvation here and no amount of misrepresentation or suppression of news will be able to restrain them when mass realization of strength has come to people. What will be effective there is equal mass

[1] Hon. Jt. Secretary, "Friends of India", London

realization there of the consciousness of wrong being done to India in every way. That realization can only come through the persisent efforts of societies like yours, even as here it is our effort that must count. The money that Vithalbhai sent to me was to be used for constructive work here. I propose to publish the correspondence as soon as I can put together the papers. I could not have accepted the purse for any other purpose. I know that in holding the views I have expressed here, I belong to the minority. But the conviction that came to me in 1920 has grown stronger. Even in the heyday of the struggle I never felt the want of an Indian organization in foreign lands. Had there been any, perhaps neither the band of true Englishmen and Englishwomen who are working there now nor the band of true Americans working in America would have come into being.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1530

80. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

February 1, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your touching letter. Did you suppose I was coming to Salem and leaving it without seeing you? You are not to come to the meeting and I will certainly come and hear all you might want to say to me. From your wire I was led to think that you were not bedridden.

I cannot think of my very large party taking meals at your place when you are not well. But in Salem wherever I take my meal, I should still be under your shadow. According to the latest programme, I reach there on 14th at 11 a.m. and be there till 7.20 p.m. I hope you will be much better by that time, if not thoroughly restored.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From C. Vijayaraghavachariar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

81. LETTER TO RAMI AND MANU GANDHI

February 1, 1934

CHI. RAMI AND MANU,[1]

I got your letter. Kusum's[2] withering away is bound to grieve you all. Even I, though my heart is as hard as stone, felt grieved for a moment. Both you sisters will have calmed down when you get this letter. After all, everybody will die sooner or later. Why, then, should one grieve over death ? Keep writing to me. I will expect a letter from Rami. Ba will be very much pained at the news. Probably you know that she receives letters only from me, once a week, and also writes to me only. No other letter, therefore, will be delivered to her. If you wish anything to be conveyed to her, you may write to me.

What is the position regarding Manu's studies?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1528. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

82. LETTER TO PADMA

[*February 1, 1934*][3]

CHI. PADMA,

I got your letter. I do not recollect having received your New Year greetings. On the contrary, I have been harbouring a complaint against you for not writing to me. I have noted the work you are doing there. I hope you will do it with a calm mind. You say nothing about your weight. You don't write even to Sarojini[4]. Write regularly from now on. About Bihar . . .[5]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6147. Also C.W. 3502. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

[1] Daughters of Harilal Gandhi.
[2] Rami's daughter; the name literally means a "flower".
[3] From the postmark
[4] Addressee's mother
[5] The rest of the letter cannot be deciphered

83. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

[*February 1, 1934*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I got your wire. Rajendrababu has asked only for men workers. I therefore sent a wire to Ahmedabad instructing that such workers should be sent. There is not much likelihood of his asking for women workers. You may, therefore, finish as much work there as you wish to and leave for your place. Even those who have gone to Bihar will probably return in two or three months.

I had received your letter also. Let me have some news about Durga, Mahavir, etc. None of them writes to me. But I hear that . . .[2] does not behave properly. Take care and see that he is not spoiled by us. Chandrashankar thinks that Bachu[3], being gentle of nature, gives way in everything.

Who among the women did the most reading and study? Who maintained the best health? What happened regarding Maitri's betrothal? How is Ramibai?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 82. Also C.W. 8815. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

84. LETTER TO BALIBEHN M. ADALAJA

February 1, 1934

CHI. BALI[4],

I can from this distance understand your suffering. Rami will get over the shock but I know you will not. I have fully understood the love in you, and I honour you for that. You have merged your life in the lives of Chanchi's[5] children. You have made yourself a real

[1] Supplied in the source
[2] The name is omitted in the source
[3] Addressee's brother's son
[4] Harilal Gandhi's wife's sister
[5] Chanchal, Harilal's wife

mother to them. In hurting you, I have hurt myself. But if I did hurt you, I did it for the good of the children. What consolation can I offer you in your present sorrow? I would have had a right to do so only if I had nursed Kusum in her illness. And how can I talk philosophy to you? I, therefore, leave you to God's care. He will give you peace of mind. I am sure your love will not go unrewarded. May God lead you to your good and illuminate your love with knowledge. Get rid of the element of ignorant attachment which mingles with your love.

Please write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1529. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

85. LETTER TO AMINA G. QURESHI

February 1, 1934

CHI. AMINA,

I have your letter. We may meet early only if you come over to see me; otherwise we can meet only when I go over there, which does not seem likely before six months.

Since Qureshi has said so, you may wait for him. I certainly do not like the idea of taking the children to Bombay. They are studying all right. The treatment for eczema is continuing. Having once taken the burden off Pyare Ali I do not like thrusting it on him again. But I do not know if I am mistaken in taking this view. You should therefore act as you think proper after considering my opinion.

You have the right to pour out your heart to me; it is also your duty. Hence, be bold and write to me whatever you want to say to me in person. Recover your health. Don't you think it would be necessary for you to regulate your diet for the purpose?

Write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10623. Courtesy: Amina G. Qureshi

86. INTERVIEW TO ADI-DRAVIDA JAN SABHA, COONOOR[1]

February 1, 1934

The first question discussed was that of Harijan unemployment, which is very acute in these parts. The deputation suggested the opening of a leather factory to give employment to Harijans. Mahatmaji replied that such a leather factory in Coonoor could give employment at best only to a few Harijans, and even that would go into the hands of the professional cobblers. The Central Board was engaged in drawing up a comprehensive scheme of economic survey and relief. The suggestions of the deputation should go to the Central Board. He asked the deputationists for statistical information regarding Harijan unemployment in the various occupations.

The second point discussed was the necessity for a special paper for Harijans wherein all the grievances of the Harijans could be legitimately ventilated. The deputation was anxious that the Central Board should assist in financing such a venture. Mahatmaji did not think money should, at this stage, be spent on such a venture. Money was needed for more urgent items of relief. And then he pointed out that there were widely circulated Tamil and English papers which would not cut out representations from the Harijans. The deputation should make the best use of such papers.

The next question discussed was how far Gandhiji felt the *savarna* Hindus were changing their mind in regard to untouchability. Mr. Manickam asked: "So far as the tour has progressed, do you find adequate change of heart among the *savarnas*?" Gandhiji's reply was characteristic.

I have no doubt whatever in my mind that the change of heart is taking place. I do not want to issue a certificate of merit to the *savarna* workers, but the change was phenomenal and even beyond expectations. The Hindus are now forming themselves into two groups—one that of the reformers who consider themselves to be Harijans and not merely patrons of the Harijans, and the other those who refuse to have anything to do with the Harijan movement. I have no doubt whatever that the former will grow and soon absorb the latter.

Mr. Manickam then asked: "But Mahatmaji, we read in the papers that even after your persuasion the Nattars are adamant and swear by old tradition." Mahatmaji

[1] The deputation consisted of 12 persons and was headed by R. T. Kesavalu and R. T. Manickam.

smiled at this and said:

Ah, I do not know what the newspapers have published, but the old Nattar representative who spoke to me seemed as though he had been coached, but what matters is that over a hundred Nattars listened to my advice with goodwill and let me tell you there are important Nattars who agree with me and are helping our workers.

Gandhiji assured the deputationists that they need have no fear, and that the desired change would come soon.

The deputationists observed: "From the very beginning our Sabha has stood out for Joint Electorate with reservation of seats. We are assuring our community that our future is safe in the hands of the reformers. Unless we can carry this conviction to our community, joint effort would be impossible. Hence our anxiety to get your assurance of the coming change." Gandhiji replied:

The proof of the pudding is in the eating, and what should convince you is the work going on before your eyes. Even here in Coonoor in my rest eager crowds surround me and I ask them for money for the Harijan fund. They give me their annas and sometimes their rupee. This movement is a religious movement, and everywhere people are recognizing it now. That is why even here the crowds daily increase in giving me more money.

The next question discussed was regarding the number of seats assigned to the Harijans in the Madras Legislative Council as per the Yeravda Pact. He assured the deputationists that their thirty votes would always help them in turning the corner in regard to their problems as they arose in the Council.

If you realize as I do the value of thirty votes in the Council, you will have no fears. In South Africa, the Indian community with very much less voting strength could turn the scales in their favour at critical junctures. Here your position is absolutely strong unless everyone else in the Council is opposed to you which is impossible. So my word to you is: Have no fear for the future.

The last question was regarding the sweeper Harijans in general. "Because Harijans are sweepers and scavengers, *savarnas* refuse to treat them as social equals." Gandhiji replied:

Not at all. Here it is a question of utter stupidity. We must remove this ignorance. In my Ashram, I myself and all the inmates are sweepers and scavengers. This is no new question to me. The sweeping and scavenging work is first-class social service. With knowledge coming, this superstition will die.

The deputationists fervently prayed that Gandhiji should come again to these

parts soon.

Oh, if you want me to come again, I shall. Only promise me life till my 99th year. I shall be in Coonoor in my 99th year.

The Hindu, 3-2-1934

87. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

[Before *February* 2, 1934][1]

CHI. AMALA,

Do be patient. If I at all can I will come. I hope you have replaced your glasses. Do not worry about money when it is a matter of supplying needs.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

88. BIHAR AND UNTOUCHABILITY

A friendly wire says, "Will you not lay aside untouchability and go to Bihar?" An angry wire says, "Must Mahatma fiddle while Bihar is burning?" Both the wires pay me an undeserved compliment and exaggerate my capacity for service, as they assume that I can do more than my comrades. I have no such hallucination about my capacity. Rajendra Prasad is one of the best among my co-workers. He can command my services whenever he likes. The Harijan cause is as much his as it is mine, even as the cause of Bihar is as much mine as it is his. But God has summoned him to the Bihar relief as He has chosen the Harijan cause for me. When the call comes from Bihar, I hope I shall not be found wanting. Champaran discovered me when I was a mere wanderer. Babu Braj Kishore Prasad and his band of workers gave me their complete allegiance when India was wondering what place I had in her public life. I am tied to Bihar by sacred ties which are indissoluble. Therefore I need no spur to send me to Bihar. Perhaps I am serving her best by remaining at my post for the time being. All the world is directing her attention to the catastrophe. It would be presumption on my part to rush to Bihar when all are ready

[1] In the source the letter has been placed between letters of January 31 and February 2.

to assist her. Those also help who know how and when to wait.

But another wire says I must use the Harijan collections for Bihar relief. I think it would be a clear breach of trust on my part if I listened to the advice. We may not afford to be unnerved in the face of great calamities. Not all the riches of the world would restore Bihar to her original condition. Time must elapse before reconstruction takes place and things become normal. What is necessary is that those who have anything to give are induced to give the most, not the least, they can.

But I make bold to suggest that, in reconstructing life in Bihar, if the wisest use is to be made of the help that is being sent, the organizers would have resolutely to set their faces against reproducing evil customs and habits. They may not encourage untouchability or caste divisions unperceivably based on untouchability. Nature has been impartial in her destruction. Shall we retain our partiality—caste against caste, Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Parsi, Jew, against one another—in reconstruction, or shall we learn from her the lesson that there is no such thing as untouchability as we practise it today?

Tremendous responsibility rests both upon the Government and the unofficial agency as to how reconstruction is to be undertaken. And as both are working in co-operation for this purpose, it ought not to be difficult to rebuild Bihar on human and sanitary lines.

I share the belief with the whole world—civilized and uncivilized—that calamities such as the Bihar one come to mankind as chastisement for their sins. When that conviction comes from the heart, people pray, repent and purify themselves. I regard untouchability as such a grave sin as to warrant divine chastisement. I am not affected by posers such as ‘why punishment for an age-old sin’ or ‘why punishment to Bihar and not to the South’ or ‘why an earthquake and not some other form of punishment’. My answer is: I am not God. Therefore I have but a limited knowledge of His purpose. Such calamities are not a mere caprice of the Deity or Nature. They obey fixed laws as surely as the planets move in obedience to laws governing their movement. Only we do not know the laws governing these events and, therefore, call them calamities or disturbances. Whatever, therefore, may be said about them must be regarded as guess work. But guessing has its definite place in man’s life. It is an ennobling thing for me to guess that the Bihar disturbance is due to the sin of untouchability. It makes me humble, it spurs me to greater effort towards its removal, it

encourages me to purify myself, it brings me nearer to my Maker. That my guess may be wrong does not affect the results named by me. For what is guess to the critic or the sceptic is a living belief with me, and I base my future actions on that belief. Such guesses become superstitions when they lead to no purification and may even lead to feuds. But such misuse of divine events cannot deter men of faith from interpreting them as a call to them for repentance for their sins. I do not interpret this chastisement as an exclusive punishment for the sin of untouchability. It is open to others to read in it divine wrath against many other sins.

Let anti-untouchability reformers regard the earthquake as a Nemesis for the sin of untouchability. They cannot go wrong, if they have the faith that I have. They will help Bihar more and not less for that faith. And they will try to create an atmosphere against reproduction of untouchability in any scheme of reconstruction.

Harijan, 2-2-1934

89. SOME QUESTIONS ANSWERED[1]

I have a collection of questions in front of me. These I have answered during the Kerala tour. Some of the questions being of general interest, I propose to give them below with their answers.

Q. The local support one gets for Harijan work is very poor. People give readily when you come. Will you make an appeal for help to my work?

A. It is no use blaming the people. If they do not give, the fault must lie with you. You have not inspired sufficient confidence in you or your work. You have to be patient and concentrate on producing the best quality of work, and you will find the support coming without fail. I know of no healthy activity failing for want of pecuniary support. But people are like God. They try the patience of workers and answer prayers only when they have proved their sincerity and worth.

Q. Does the pay of Harijan workers at Harijan centres run by the Harijan Sevak Sangh come under welfare work or overhead charges?

A. It depends upon the nature of the work done by the worker. If he is doing constructive work, such as teaching in a Harijan school, it is welfare work. If he is keeping accounts or the like at an office, his

[1] A Gujarati version of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu,* 28-1-1934.

pay would be part of overhead charges.

Q. There is a suggestion made by you that a society which disregards its servants suffers. Do you imply that Harijans are servants?

A. I do. I have stated a fact. Harijans today are as a body servants of the society, and as such they are treated in a disgraceful manner. He who runs may see how the society suffers in a thousand ways for its criminal neglect of its most useful servants. This neglect accounts for a tremendous economic, social, sanitary and moral waste. My statement of fact does not imply that Harijans should be compelled to remain servants for ever.

Q. There is lack of sympathy on the part of khadi workers for the Harijan cause as shown by the absence of Harijan recruits in khadi service.

A. So far as I am aware, the charge is not true. There are many Harijans in the khadi service. Certainly there is no bar anywhere against the employment of Harijans in that service.

Q. A practice is growing up of Harijans adopting caste surnames, e.g., Nambudri, Nambiar, etc. What do you say to this?

A. I know the practice. It is not new. I dislike it. Harijans do not want to steal into the so-called *savarna* society. The latter has openly to admit them as blood-brothers and sisters. The present movement is one of self-purification, penance and reparation by *savarna* Hindus.

Q. You desire ladies to sacrifice their jewels. Why do you not ask the caste man to sacrifice his pride by giving up his thread?

A. There is no parallel between the two cases. The thread is a symbol of consecration for those who believe in it. I do not wear it, because it has no meaning for me and I know that millions go without it. In so far as it is used as a mark of superiority, it is worse than jewellery and the mere discarding of the thread would be valueless if pride, of which it is a symbol, is also not discarded. There is nothing to prevent Harijans from adopting it if they choose. But I should strongly discountenance the practice, as it would be an imitation without the original meaning behind it.

Q. I represent a brotherhood which is out to break caste distinctions and to preach harmony between religions. Sree Narayana Guru advocated one God, one religion, one caste. What is your message for me?

A. I wish you all success. I do believe in harmony between all religions. I have myself worked at it in my humble way. Caste distinctions, in so far as they imply superiority of one over another,

have to be abolished altogether. That is merely a phase or a grade of untouchability. But in so far as caste in the sense of varna fulfils Nature's law of conservation of human energy and true economics, it is good to recognize and obey the law. You may deny the existence of any such law. I can then only refer you to the few proofs I have given in the columns of *Harijan* in support of it. I had the honour of meeting Sree Narayana Guru when he was still in the flesh and had a discussion with him on the point. Belief in one God is the corner-stone of all religions. But I do not foresee a time when there would be only one religion on earth in practice. In theory, since there is one God, there can be only one religion. But in practice, no two persons I have known have had the same and identical conception of God. Therefore, there will, perhaps, always be different religions answering to different temperaments and climatic conditions. But I can clearly see the time coming when people belonging to different faiths will have the same regard for other faiths that they have for their own. I think that we have to find unity in diversity. I need say no more about caste beyond this that, in so far as abolition of distinctions of high and low are concerned, there is but one caste. We are all children of one and the same God and, therefore, absolutely equal.

Harijan, 2-2-1934

90. NOTES

THE CHEAPEST PLATFORM

In discussing the economics of public tours, in which vast crowds have to be considered, workers have suggested that platforms alone cost Rs. 50 at the least computation. This need not be so. Provision for vast crowds presupposes that the cause is popular and that, therefore, there will be voluntary help forthcoming. In such favourable atmosphere it should not be difficult to borrow bricks. Labour should be voluntary. Mud should be used in the place of mortar. A solid platform can thus be made for a rupee or thereabouts. No skilled labour is necessary for erecting such a platform. The only expense to be incurred will be that of carting bricks to and fro. But even such a platform can be dispensed with. If a ring is kept in the middle of the audience, large enough for a motor to turn round comfortably, and a broad passage left for it to pass through to the ring, the motor can be used as a solid platform. This was successfully

tried at Sivaganga and Manamadura. If a higher platform is needed, the top of a motor-lorry makes a platform high enough for the largest audience. This, too, I have tried successfully in previous tours. The fence of the ring should be fairly strong. Strong wooden posts and stout cords can be borrowed for the purpose, and the ring can be erected inside of two hours if sufficient voluntary labour is available. Volunteers worth the name should be able to prepare these things without fuss and without any strain.

"GITA" RECITERS

The readers of *Harijan* know what *Gita* means to me. I have always regarded the learning by heart of such books as the *Gita* a very desirable thing. But I was never able to learn all the chapters of the *Gita* by heart myself though I made several attempts at it. I know I am very stupid at memorizing. So whenever I meet anyone who knows the *Gita* by heart, he or she commands my respect. I have already met two such during the Tamil Nad tour—a gentleman at Madura and a lady at Devacottah. The gentleman at Madura is a merchant unknown to fame; and the lady is Parvatibai, a daughter of the late Justice Sadasiva Iyer, who during his lifetime instituted an annual prize for the person who could best recite the *Gita* from memory. I would like, however, the reciters to realize that the mere recitation is not an end in itself. It should be an aid to the contemplation and assimilation of the meaning and the message of the *Gita.* By patience even a parrot can be taught to recite it by heart. But he would be no wiser for the recitation. The reciter of the *Gita* should be what its author expects him to be—a yogi in its broad sense. It demands from its votaries balance in every thought, word and deed and a perfect correspondence between the three. He whose speech and action do not accord with his thoughts is a humbug or a hypocrite. It is necessary to sound this warning, for, of the people who flock to my prayer meetings, many run away, I am afraid, with the thought that they acquire merit by mere attendance at these prayers. And since the majority of them are undoubtedly sympathizers with the battle against untouchability, it is necessary to warn them that they are expected to act in accordance with their belief and show by their action that there is no untouchability in them and that there is no person lower than themselves.

FOR SANATANISTS

As attempts are being made during the tour to draw me to a

public debate with Shankaracharyas and other learned men and as there is much misrepresentation about my replies to proposals for such interviews, I should like to repeat through these columns what I have said in my letters and verbal messages. I have no desire to engage in a public debate on the origin of untouchability. I do not believe in such debates, nor do I lay any claim to Sanskrit scholarship. But I am ready, nay eager, to hold friendly conversations with any sanatanist for the sake solely of arriving at a mutual understanding, discovering points of contact, and, generally, elucidating truth. For instance, a challenge is often sent to me with reference to my oft-repeated statement that there is no warrant in the Shastras for untouchability as it is practised today and that in the matter of the use of public temples there is no prohibition in the Shastras against those who are today regarded as untouchables. I have explained in these pages more than once what I mean by Shastras and what interpretation I put upon the verses that are commonly cited in support of untouchability in general and temple-entry prohibition in particular. I do not expect all my critics to read the *Harijan. I* would, therefore, gladly explain my meaning to sanatanist friends and in my turn try to understand their objections. Surely it is possible to have much common action, even though there may be differences on some matters. The reader may also know that such friendly discussions have taken place often enough during the tour. But some persons have made it their mission to discredit me anyhow. So they make suggestions for open debates which they know I have refused to adopt, or seek appointments which it is physically impossible for me to make unless I would cancel a whole day's programme and disappoint thousands of men and women. They are not to be placated by anything I may say or do. Time will do what no action of mine can.

Harijan, 2-2-1934

91. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

COONOOR,
February 2, 1934

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
74 WALKESHWAR RD.
BOMBAY

YOU CAN COME COONOOR. HERE TILL TUESDAY MORNING. AWAITING RAJENDRAPRASAD'S INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING BIHAR. NO HARIJAN TOUR THERE.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

92. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

February 2, 1934

DEAR SATISBABU,

I have your letters and wire. You will have seen my long letter to Dr. Bidhan. I would then like your revised opinion. Your acceptance of my argument has produced a revulsion in me. But I must not reargue the point. If we will imbibe the *Gita* spirit, we must have detachment even in the midst of a raging fire. Who knows what God intends by things that baffle us.

You will be well rid of *Harijan*[1], if there is not a natural demand for it. You may issue leaflets now and then. In closing down you should say firmly why you are closing.

You will study my letters to Hemprabha. The letter has become a serious thing without my meaning to write so seriously. It shows how full I am just now of these things.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1625

[1] Bengali *Harijan*, which the addressee had been editing.

93. LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

COONOOR,
February 2, 1934

CHI. VIDYA,

I got your letters. I did not mean that you should not go to Karachi. I had left it to you to decide whether or not to go there. Therefore I wrote: "If you want to go, you should go after Anand's release." There is no doubt about it at all. But it would be quite proper to go even before it if Mother-in-law and Father-in-law send for you. These things you can understand better. I feel very happy to hear about Anand. What is the term of Choithram's imprisonment? You had better look after Mahadev yourself as far as possible. Does Mahadev get oranges or *mosambis?* You must give him juice of *mosambis* and grapes.

Dudhibehn's address: Dudhibehn Desai,

Dakshinamurti, Bhavnagar (Kathiawar).

I have received a letter from Father. I am writing to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

94. LETTER TO K. B. KEWALRAMANI

February 2, 1934

Copy

MY DEAR KEWALRAM,

I was delighted to receive your letter. Vidya is a very good girl of whom you have every reason to be proud. But now I divide the honour with you of being father to her. And often an adoptive father has been found to do better by reason of his having special interest in adopting. But I have a superior reason for possibly doing better than you. Vidya was born to you helplessly. She has deliberately adopted me as father and so she renders willing obedience. If we engage in healthy competition, she will gain.

As you have broken the ice, you will not hesitate to write whenever you feel the urge.

Yours,

SHRI K. B. KEWALRAMANI
S.D.O., WANIVALLA
P.O. MAILSI (PUNJAB)

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

95. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

February 2, 1934

CHI. AMALA,

I have your unbalanced letter. You are morbid. Why should you continually think of yourself and brood over the wrongs done to you by other people? Why can you not think of the wrongs other people are suffering from? Brooding over our own wrongs makes us unbalanced. Identification with other people's wrongs makes us stronger. But now that I have received permission to send you to Sabarmati, I hope your grief will be over. I have sent a wire just now to send you to Sabarmati. It is likely therefore that this will be sent to you there. You will share all your thoughts freely with me and let me know how you feel in the new surroundings. You may choose your work. Do not overstrain yourself and you should take the food that suits you.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

96. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

February 2, 1934

DEAR GURUDEV,

I received your letter only just now. There is a campaign of vilification of me going on. My remarks on the Bihar calamity were a good handle to beat me with. I have spoken about it at many meetings. Enclosed is my considered opinion.[1] I see from your

[1] *Vide* "Bihar and Untouchability", 2-2-1934

statement[1] that we have come upon perhaps a fundamental difference. But I cannot help myself. I do believe that super-physical consequences flow from physical events. How they do so, I do not know.

If after reading my article, you still see the necessity of publishing your statement, it can be at once published either here or there just as you desire. I hope you are keeping well.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

The last lines are disgracefully written but I was tired out and half asleep. Please forgive. If I am to catch the post today, I may not wait to make a fair copy.

From a photostat: G.N. 2289 and 4642

97. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

February 2, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I read the letter about Kamalnayan and also his note. He wants to finish the course here and to pass the Madhyama examination in Hindi. I would suggest this modification. He should finish the entire Hindi course and take the final examination. He should improve his English, learn Sanskrit also and then go, not to England, but to America. It will certainly be possible to make good arrangements for his study there. After spending sometime in the States, he may travel all over the world. The experience he will gain thus will be useful to him. He would learn better after his intellect matures. I am glad that he has no blind love for degrees. In short, I do not wish to curb his desire to see the West. But I think it advisable that he should be better equipped than he is just now.

What work have you entrusted to Surendra?

I have decided to send Amalabehn to Sabarmati. We shall see what to do if the place does not suit her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2932

[1] For the text of the statement, *vide* Appendix "Rabindranath Tagore's Statement".

98. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

February 2, 1934

BHAI JIVANJI,

I got your letter.

Thanks for the information about the books. I get no free time at all. I came to Coonoor but even here it is the same story. Every day there is some programme. I am trying to make up a little for the hours of lost sleep during the last several days and to catch up with the correspondence. Much of the time is spent in this way. I am eager to go through the preface and the matter [sent] from Yeravda Mandir. I will see if I can. If I find the work too much, I shall say no. But I will try not to do that.

I have written to Balubhai today regarding the Library.

The tour programme for Karnataka has been altered. We shall now be going to Belgaum. But that will be at the end of this month. I intend to send a wire[1] tomorrow requesting permission. If I get it, I will wire to you. Up to the 21st, I shall be in Madras. Then I will go to Coorg, then to Mangalore, then to Karwar and after that will come the turn of Belgaum. Will Durga wait till then?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9937. Also C.W. 6912. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

99. LETTER TO DRIVER

February 2, 1934

BHAI DRIVER,

I got your letter all right. I like your sincerity. Many young men have gone through what you have. You need not feel unhappy about it at all.

My feeling after reading your letter is that your duty as yet is neither to come to me nor to go to Father Elwin, but to remain where you are and learn to live in poverty. You should save as much as you

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", 3-2-1934.

can and use the money for helping people. Try to teach students whatever moral values you can. So long as you do not feel *vairagya*[1], you should continue in your present way of life. Renunciation of your present way of life before you have come to feel strong aversion to it will not be proper, nor will it endure. When intense *vairagya* has developed in you, nobody will be able to stop you. Do write to me whenever you wish to. I hope you find no difficulty in deciphering or understanding my Gujarati.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8045

100. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

February 2, 1934

CHI. RAMA,

I have sent a wire today regarding you, saying that you may leave the Ashram[2] if you wish. Personally I do feel that, since both of you keep good health and feel quite happy there, it might be better for you not to leave the place. That Chhaganlal will shortly be released needn't bother you. He can come and see you there. Relations will of course never cease to be relations, but we have loosened that bond.[3] All the same, my present attitude is that everyone may act ashe wishes and try to progress as much as he can. You may, therefore, do as you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2932

[1] Renunciation.

[2] Kanya Ashram, Wardha.

[3] Chhaganlal Joshi had expressed a desire to stay with his sister for some time after his release.

101. LETTER TO KAPILRAI AND SHASHILEKHA MEHTA

February 2, 1934

CHI. KAPIL AND SHASHILEKHA,

I had not received your letter when I got your wire, which was only the day before yesterday. I got the letter to-day. At first I could not understand the wire. If you did tell me about Shashilekha, I must have forgotten it. On my inquiring this afternoon, Prithuraj said he did not know the Kapilrai who had sent the wire. You two have my blessings of course. May you live long and serve the country well. May you help each other in leading a life of self-control.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. KAPILRAI MEHTA
SWADESHI MUSEUM
VALANDA'S HAVELI
AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3970. Also C.W. 1600. Courtesy: Shashilekha Mehta

102. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL[1]

February 2, 1934

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I have both your letters. I could not reply sooner due to lack of time but you are always in my mind.

It is a very good thing that you are reading the *Ramayana,* and that you are doing Harijan service is also to the good.

Did you collect any funds for the Bihar calamity? Did Father give anything?

Continue writing to me; I do attempt to write a legible hand.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9595. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal

[1] Daughter of S. Srinivasa Iyengar

103. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

February 2, 1934

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I get your letters regularly. The earthquake has given me a jolt. But I have learnt that it is madness on our part to regard ourselves as different from others. If we regard all as one, no one dies or lives. "As in the body so in the universe." The body ever dies, yet lives. Similarly the Cosmos as expressed in the creation ever dies yet remains alive. As we are but a mere drop in that scheme, our death is no death. Transformation of the body will go on, so what shall we mourn for? Shall we then become hard-hearted? No, but if all of us living beings are one in spite of the seeming difference, we should die for one another, in other words make sacrifices to our utmost. This same idea has been expressed wonderfully in the first *mantra* of the *Ishopanishad.* If you are not familiar with it tell me and I shall send it to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1708

104. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KOTAGIRI[1]

February 2, 1934

FRIENDS,

It is a matter of great joy to me to be able to see you this afternoon. I was looking forward to coming to this beautiful hill. I know that some of my co-workers have been zealously working in the midst of hillmen. I know, too, that you have not that vicious kind of untouchability amongst you that we have on the plains. Nevertheless, no one, in India, can be absolutely free from that virus. Even you have distinctions of high and low. And so long as we have got that habit of considering ourselves higher than somebody else, we have not got rid of untouchability, and so long as we have got that distinction in our midst, remember we have not got rid of untouchability. Therefore, I

[1] This was attended by about 6,000 people, mostly Badagas, a hill tribe. They presented to Gandhiji a purse and an address of welcome. A part of the speech was also published in *Harijan*, 9-2-1934.

would like all to consider and to know and realize that we are all children of the same God, and that therefore among us, His children, there can be nothing like some being high and some being low, and that all should have the same rights as everyone else.

And then, I want to draw your attention to one thing, of which I have just heard, that hillmen are very much given to the habit of drinking intoxicating liquors. Those who are given to that habit should realize that it is drink which makes man thoroughly mad. Intoxicating liquors are in no way necessary for retaining ourselves. Not only so, a man who drinks, very often, more often than not, forgets the distinction between his own wife and his own mother. Drunken men and drunken women also have been known all the world over to do things of which they would be ashamed if they were sober. Only yesterday, I heard as I was driving that two drunken men were quarrelling amongst themselves, with the result that one died on the spot, and the other is now lying in the hospital. As this is a movement of self-purification, I would like every one of those who are given to this vicious habit to come to a firm resolution never more to touch fiery liquors. It will be a matter of very great joy to me if my fellow-workers are able to report to me that many of you have given up drink altogether.

Now, whilst I thank you for these coppers and silver pieces that you have given me for the Harijan cause, I have to ask you to give some more coppers and some more silver for another cause which is as sacred as the Harijan cause. In the north of India, there is one of our fairest provinces. The name of that province is Bihar, the birth-place of Sita. It was there that only a few days ago, a terrible earthquake took place. Several thousands of men died. Many more thousands of men and women are lying in hospitals. The whole world is directing its atten-tion to the afflicted people of Bihar. Thousands upon thousands of men and women are homeless, shelterless and clothless. Many palace-like buildings are now simply heaps of broken bricks. It is for these that I would like you to give the most, and not the least, that you can. If you have not got sufficient money on your persons, make collections after I am gone; you can make them tomorrow and send them either to Patna to Babu Rajendra Prasad, who is in charge of the relief work, or you can bring them to me whilst I am still in Coonoor. In many places, remember, men and women have denied themselves their food, their clothes, and shared them with those

who are suffering that terrible affliction.

For me, personally, this earthquake has a much deeper lesson than that it has brought physical ruin to thousands of homes. It is my firm conviction that such calamities descend upon mankind from time to time as a fit punishment for its sins. I love to think that it is a punishment awarded to us for the great sin of untouchability. If you cherish that belief with me, you will take care to remove the least taint of untouchability from your midst. May God help you and me to realize this dream that India should be free once more from all kinds of impurities.

The Hindu, 4-2-1934

105. TELEGRAM TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

COONOOR ,
[*February 3, 1934*]

SECRETARY
HOME DEPARTMENT
BOMBAY

I EXPECT BE BELGAUM ON SIXTH MARCH. COULD I SEE MANIBEHN PATEL AND MAHADEV DESAI PRISONERS CENTRAL PRISON HINDALGA. GOVERNMENT KNOW MY INTIMATE CONNECTION WITH BOTH. [1]

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts. Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(16)C, p. 11

[1] The addressee's reply read: "With reference to your telegram dated the 3rd February 1934, I am directed to inform you that Government regret that they cannot allow you to interview prisoners Mahadev Desai and Manibehn Patel at present confined in the Belgaum Central Prison." *Vide* "Letter to Jivanji D. Desai", 2-2-1934.

106. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

COONOOR,
February 3, 1934

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
74 WALKESHWAR RD.
BOMBAY

WEEKEND TWELFTH THIRTEENTH GANDHI ASHRAM TIRUCHENGODU.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

107. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

February 3, 1934

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

You have complained that I have not acknowledged your cables and letters. It is not so. But if my letter has miscarried I cannot help. Anyway you are always before my mind's eye and I do expect some day to greet you here. When are you coming?

Love.

UPPER HOUSE

From the original : Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy : National Archives of India

108. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

February [*3*][1], *1934*

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

Father's letter in English was delivered to me yesterday and I have already replied to it.[2] I got your letter today.

I have advised that you should pass the Uttama examination in Hindi and acquire a good command of English. If you thus let your intellect mature first and learn good habits of study and then go to the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 2-2-1934.
[2] *ibid*

West, you will derive the most benefit from your visit. When the time for going comes, I would advise you first to go to the U.S.A. After that you may go to England and then to the other countries of Europe. And last Japan and China.

I am glad that you are not eager to take a degree. You should stay in America for one year, observe things carefully, and improve your English through study. After that you may visit other countries and stay in them according as you feel inclined. In all you should spend two years abroad. This will give you plenty of experience and you will be able to plan your future. We can make any changes in this plan that you deem desirable from experience. The chief thing is that you should give up for the present the idea of going to the West. I think you will require four years for completing the course in Hindi and acquiring the requisite proficiency in English. I see the necessity for the study of Sanskrit for the sake of Hindi itself. I don't believe four years to be too long a period for you to wait. Convey my blessings to Ramakrishna. I hope you often think of him.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 278

109. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESA1

COONOOR,
February 3, 1934

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

I don't remember not having replied to any letter of yours. But I wouldn't be surprised if in all this wandering about some letter had remained unanswered. I don't find your letter in my files. Generally no letters are destroyed before I have replied to them.

Ask Motibehn to write to me.

I have asked Valji to come here. I will see about his health when he comes. I am hopeful that he will get all right.

Irrespective of whether I write or not you must continue to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7463. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

110. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

February 3, 1934

CHI. VALJI,

Having sent a wire to you, I didn't write. After reading your letter I see that your coming may even be delayed. But I assume that it will not be and, therefore, do not send the issues of *Harijan*. My programme is enclosed. The earlier you come, the sooner can your illness be tackled. You will find the work ready for you. I had arranged to send you to Bihar, but now I will not do that. With your present health it will be difficult for you to work there.

The rest when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7462. Courtesy: Valji G;. Desai

111. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

February 3, 1934

CHI. MITHUBEHN,

I could take up your letter only today. Just now I stay so far out of the way that the post takes some time to reach me. Moreover, I cannot attend to letters immediately they are received. My replies, therefore, are very much delayed. I can't judge about the question which you have asked. I am frightened by the very description that you have given. How will you be able to do justice to your present work in Bombay and to this additional responsibility? All the same, if you can see your way and are confident, how can I discourage you? I would, therefore, say only this. Do what you think right and may God prosper you in your undertaking. Chunilal had put to me the very same question that you have. I told him that I could not guide him, that he should do what he thought right and that I would not blame him whatever decision he took. I say the same thing to you. You should not expect from me a categorical opinion in such matters. Are you all right now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2702

112. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

February 3, 1934

CHI. MANU,

I got your letter. Since you remain as straightforward as you used to be I have no fear on your account. Your assurance that you will not marry without my blessings will protect you. I have written to Father not to hurt your feelings in any way. In your letters to him, see that you never forsake civility. If he appears to you to use harsh language just now, there is nothing behind it but love for you and concern for your future born of that love.

There is an error in your belief concerning one matter. I do not have with me a copy of the letter to the Princess. I don't think there will be any in the office either. You say in your letter that it is your belief that, provided the children remain Hindu by culture, I wouldn't mind in what faith they were brought up. I am not likely to have written anything to that effect, since for a Hindu, culture and religion are one and the same thing. Is there any Hindu culture apart from the Upanishads, the *Gita*, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*? I must have said in my letter that, if Elizabeth could adopt Hindu culture in her life, I wouldn't mind her remaining a Roman Catholic in religion. This is very different from saying that the children may be brought up as Roman Catholics. I want you to understand this difference. I have no quarrel with you. I do not distrust you or Elizabeth in the least. But I want to correct a misunderstanding under which you seem to be labouring. To me all religions are alike. But since religions are many, there is diversity even in their oneness. All living beings are one in essence, but as embodied creatures they are infinite in number and diverse. To realize the unity of all life in spite of our having different bodies is the supreme end of human endeavour. If the bodies were not different, there would have been no need to realize the unity of life. The fact that you are a Hindu and other people are Muslims or Christians does have some meaning. That meaning must be respected in the case of your children. I am convinced that if you two wish to live happily and in peace after marriage, your children ought to be brought up as Hindus, and Elizabeth, or rather Vimala—I had forgotten her new name— should adopt Hindu culture. If she cannot forget Europe, you must live in Europe. If she wishes to serve India,

she must become an Indian at heart. Without doing that, she may certainly be able to serve the country although with a superior attitude, but you believe her to be a true servant at heart. As she has changed her name, she must change her heart too. But she cannot do that by force. She will succeed in being an Indian at heart only if she is born with such a predisposition. You also must have in your mind a clear picture of the future. If you wish to dedicate yourself to the service of Mother India, you will have to imbibe in your life what I have explained to you in my letters. If, therefore, you have any doubts on that, you should ask me to explain again and again till you are satisfied. Don't hesitate to write to me. I don't know whether I shall be able to write to you after July. You should, therefore, put to me during the months which remain whatever questions you wish to and have your doubts cleared and get from me whatever help you want.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1010

113. LETTER TO GOVINDBAHI R. PATEL

February 3, 1934

BHAI GOVINDBHAI,

I have your letter. A new programme has been drawn up, in which the visit to Pondicherry has been dropped. I must confess that I do not have the same curiosity that you have. I have respect for all individuals. I have known about Sri Aurobindo since a long time. You have many Gujaratis there. There are others, too. I would want to know something of an ashram which shelters so many people. It was in order to satisfy this desire that I made the attempt. But that is over now. It would have given me some satisfaction if I could have at least met you all.

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10742. Courtesy: Govindbhai R. Patel

114. LETTER TO DR. JIVARAJ MEHTA

COONOOR,
February 3, 1934

BHAI JIVARAJ,

I have your pathetic letter. That is the way of the world. Attachment and hatred ever pursue us. But your mind is strong and I therefore hope that you will have got over your feelings. I am writing this letter merely as a consolation and to let you know that I often think of you. I expcet many services from you. There is no need at all to reply to this letter.

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: Jivaraj Mehta Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

115. SPEECH AT OTTUPATRAI[1]

February 3, 1934

FRIENDS,

I am very much pleased to have come here and to have met you. You know that this movement that is now going on is a movement for self-purification. Those who call themselves *savarna* Hindus have to purify themselves by fraternizing with Harijans and ceasing to consider them as untouchables, or lower than themselves. Harijans have to do certain things, not by way of exchange but because they also have to purify themselves; they should conform to the laws of clean life and cleanliness, both internally and externally, giving up carrion, beef, liquor and drugs. I understand that here you offer as sacrifice to your God buffaloes or other animals in order to appease Kali. You must not, for one moment, imagine that God can ever be pleased by sacrifice of animals. There are *savarna* Hindus, so called, who also resort to this barbarous practice. But, all the world over, it is now recognized that there can be no religion in sacrificing animals. I should like you, therefore, to think that there can be no virtue in offering animals as sacrifices to appease Kali, or any other goddess or

[1] This was one of the Harijan *cheries* Gandhiji visited during the day. About 200 inhabitants accorded him a warm welcome.

god. After all, there is but one God, whether you worship Him as Kali or whether you worship Him as Vishnu or Shiva or Brahma, no matter by what name, but, there is only one God, and that God is the God of Truth and Love, not of vengeance. Therefore, I hope that, henceforth, there will be no two parties amongst you, but that you will all unite in order to stop this animal sacrifice in the name of God.

The Hindu, 7-2-1934

116. SPEECH AT THANDAKARANCHERI[1]

February 3, 1934

FRIENDS,

It gives me much pleasure to be in your midst. You should know that I am a scavenger myself by choice, and you must take me literally when I tell you that I have cleaned hundreds of commodes in my life. Everyone in the Ashram which I was conducting—and I have over one hundred men and women there— had to do this work every day. I call scavenging one of the most honourable among the occupations to which mankind is called. I do not consider it an unclean occupation by any means. That in performing the cleaning operation you have to handle dirt is true. But, that every mother has to do, every doctor does. But, nobody says that a mother's occupation when she cleans her children, or a doctor's occupation when he cleans his patients, is an unclean occupation. And therefore I consider that those who call themselves superior class of Hindus commit a grave sin when they consider scavengers as untouchables. I am travelling up and down in order to convince these so-called superior Hindus that it is a sin to consider any human being as untouchable. But, I am travelling also to tell fellow-scavengers that whilst we may handle dirt, we must ourselves be clean inwardly and outwardly. After we have done the work of cleaning, we must clean ourselves and wear clean clothes. I know that many scavengers eat carrion or beef. Those who are doing this should abstain from that, and then I know that many of them are given to the evil habit of drink. Drink is a bad, filthy, unclean, degrading habit.

The Hindu, 7-2-1934

[1] This was another *cheri* which Gandhiji visited. Here the inhabitants were mostly municipal scavengers and about 300 of them had gathered to hear Gandhiji.

117. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, COONOOR[1]

February 3, 1934

FRIENDS,

It is a matter of keen pleasure to me that I have been able to live in your beautiful climate all these few days, and this meeting this afternoon adds to that pleasure. The address, presented on behalf of Harijans, tells me that I am rendering a great service by awakening the conscience of the so-called *savarna* Hindus. I do not believe that I am rendering any service to anybody but myself. I called this a movement of self-purification and penance, which it undoubtedly is, and what I am trying to do, from day to day, is nothing but going through a process of self-purification myself. I could not live at peace with myself if I did not declare the truth as I see it in connection with untouchability. I have no doubt whatsoever that, if the so-called *savarna* Hindus do not cleanse themselves of the sin of untouchability Hinduism and Hindus must perish. We proudly call overselves children of God, and yet, in the name of God and religion, deny to our own brethren, the children of God, those rights and privileges which we enjoy. I have not a shadow of doubt in my mind that such belief constitutes a great sin. This sin of untouchability does not confine itself merely to those who are called Harijans or Adi-Dravidas or untouchables, but it has taken in its snaky coil all the communities of India. And so, in a way Christians, Mussalmans, Parsis, Jews and Hindus have all become untouchables to one another. My great hope therefore is that when we have cleansed ourselves of untouchability all these offshoots of untouchability will be demolished.

Gandhiji then made a fervent appeal on behalf of Bihar earthquake victims.

The Hindu, 7-2-1934

[1] At this meeting Gandhiji was presented with a purse and three addresses of welcome which included one from the Adi-Dravida Jana Sabha and a Tamil verse specially composed in his honour. A brief report of the meeting was also published in *Harijan*, 16-2-1934.

118. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI[1]

Februery 4, 1934

Why have you not given me the full details of the earthquake? Did you get the letter I sent through Rajendrababu? You should now give me all the news. You will learn more from the letter to Jayaprakash.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3440

119. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

February 4, 1934

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

I have your letter. You had written that some arrangement had been made about your own expenses and that only Rajeshwar needed a monthly sum of Rs. 50. On the strength of that letter I arranged for the remittance to Rajeshwar. Does the Rs. 125 you now mention include the allowance to Rajeshwar or is it in addition? If it is in addition it is too much. Then you say in your letter that you will manage about the loan somehow. This does not seem to me quite right. You must make arrangements for everything right now. A public servant must not leave undecided anything that can be immediately decided. Write to me everything in detail. I do want to help you out of your difficulties. But there is a limit to what I can do. You must therefore help me to help you.

Where were you two during the earthquake? What did you feel? Has the earthquake made any change in your situation? You must both be engaged now in providing help to the victims.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Jayaprakash Narayan Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] This note was a postscript to the letter from Uma Bajaj to the addressee.

120. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, OOTACAMUND[1]

February 4, 1934

FRIENDS,

It is a matter of great pleasure to me to be able to visit this beautiful place. I thank you for the addresses you have presented and the purses that you have given on behalf of Harijans. You have in your general address apologized for the leanness of your purse, although this place is inhabited by very rich people. You need not have rendered any apology whatsoever, because this is essentially a move-ment in which the co-operation, not of the few rich but of the millions of poor people, is asked for and invited. As I have claimed, this is a movement of self-purification. It is not an article of commerce which can be bought and sold on the market. Whilst therefore I welcome the coppers of even thousands of rich men, I welcome still more the coppers of millions. Even these offerings would be valueless unless they were a token of the change of heart on the part of the giver. The evil of untouchability cannot be driven out from our midst even if some persons were to offer one crore of rupees or more. It can only be brought about by individual efforts on the part of millions of self-styled *savarna* Hindus. It is they who have to exorcize the devil of untouchability from their hearts. It is they who have to do reparation to Harijans, untouchables, whom they have systematically suppressed for centuries in the name of religion. What is required is not a superficial makeshift but a fixed determination to rid ourselves of untouchability in every shape and form. This great change can only be brought about by an effective appeal to the hearts of the millions of *savarna* Hindus. Conviction has to be brought home to them that hitherto, in considering a portion of Hindu society as untouchables, we have committed a great sin against God and humanity inasmuch as this taint of untouchability has travelled far beyond the limits that were prescribed by Hindus. So far as untouchables are concerned, we have to put our house in order so that we may forget all distinction of high and low among mankind. It is a matter therefore of great joy and

[1] More than 10,000 people attended the meeting, which was held in the Municipal Maidan. At the end of the meeting Gandhiji auctioned the presents received from the public. A brief report of the speech was also published in *Harijan*, 16-2-1934.

thankfulness that, wherever I go, crowds of people come and give their coppers in order to signify the determination that untouchability shall no more rule their hearts.

The Harijan address rightly lays stress upon the desirability that the Harijan purses collected in different parts of Tamil Nad and elsewhere should be utilized for Harijan uplift and that alone. A statement has already been made from more than one platform that not only will the bulk of money collected in districts or provinces be utilized in those provinces or districts, but that the bulk of that money will be utilized only for constructive purposes. And naturally, workers will be expected all over to keep themselves in touch with the opinion and the sentiments of Harijans as to the best manner of using the money for Harijan service.

The Jain address lays stress upon the fact that, alike in my speech and in my action, I represent the best that is to be found in Jainism. I accept the compliment in all humility. I believe in the truth of all religions of the world. And since my youth upward, it has been a humble but persistent effort on my part to understand the truth of all the religions of the world, and adopt and assimilate in my own thought, word and deed all that I have found to be best in those religions. The faith that I profess not only permits me to do so, but it renders it obligatory for me to take the best from whatsoever source I may find it. It is in that spirit that this movement or campaign against untouchability is conceived. For this "touch-me-notism" has not been confined to Harijans, but it has affected caste against caste and religion against religion. I for one shall not be satisfied until, as the result of this movement, we have arrived at heart-unity amongst all the different races and communities inhabiting this land, and it is for that reason that I have invited the co-operation of all the people living in India and even outside.

Now, a word about the land of Sita. You know how nearly 25,000 died in the twinkling of an eye through that terrible earthquake. Tens of thousands of people are living homeless and clothless. Rich people suddenly find themselves reduced to pauperism. Palaces have been desolated, and thousands of homes are nothing but a mass of debris. I would like you therefore to tender your tangible sympathy to those afflicted people in Bihar. Whilst I shall be selling these addresses, I shall request the volunteers to spread themselves out in your midst, and receive from you what you think you can spare for

your afflicted brethren in Bihar. I hope that you will give not the least you can, but the best you wish to.

The Hindu, 7-2-1934

121. SPEECH AT OM PRAKASH MUTT, OOTACAMUND[1]

February 4, 1934

I am very much obliged to you for giving me this opportunity of visiting this Mutt and the extraordinary neatness and cleanliness have certainly impressed me very greatly. I wish this Mutt every prosperity in the spiritual sense of the term, and I hope that it will be a source of inspiration to those who live in the Mutt. Having visited it, I shall naturally be interested in its future career, and it will give me very great pleasure to find that it is making a steady progress and is, as it will be, an asylum for those who want to seek spiritual comfort and guidance.

The Hindu, 7-2-1934

122. INTERVIEW WITH ADI-HINDU DEPUTATION[2]

February 4, 1934

In replying to the deputation Gandhiji said that the document presented to him was an ably-drawn-up document. But there was nothing new in it. He had seen the disabilities mentioned in it and where he had not seen them, he knew of them. He agreed with the deputation that most systematic effort alone could remove the disabilities. He was himself a Harijan. He had said so twenty-five years ago. He had said repeatedly that if he were to be born again he would like to be born a Harijan.

Referring to the name "Harijan" he said that while some objected to it there were other Harijans who were delighted with it. He himself would not insist upon it but would call them by any name they liked. He realized that without their assistance this reform movement could not go on quickly. That was why he asked for it and liked to meet and discuss with friends like them wherever possible.

Turning to the question of elections, Gandhiji said that he would share the

[1] Gandhiji was taken round the Mutt which was maintained for Harijans and a report of the working of the Mutt and the inspection note of the President of Hindu Religious Board, Madras, were read out to him.

[2] The deputation represented Harijans of Tamil-speaking areas. They submitted a printed memorandum detailing the Various hardships to which they were subjected. *Vide* also "Our Shame", 9-3.1934.

fears of the deputation only if the Harijans were at the mercy of the caste Hindus or in case the Harijan candidates had sold themselves to the caste Hindus, but surely such a contingency could be prevented under the new scheme. Under the panel system the first choice belonged to the Harijans exclusively. Whoever was chosen by the Harijans would alone have the chance ultimately in the election. There need be no fear that the caste-Hindu nominee would have the better chance because the Harijans would have to do the original nomination. He added that his whole effort was to see that the vast majority of the caste Hindus put their weight in favour of Harijans. When that happened, as he was convinced it would, the position of the Harijans would be unassailable. He invited the deputation to share this conviction with him.

You hold me as a hostage for the due fulfilment of the Yeravda Pact. As a hostage I am travelling from one end of India to the other, leaving the comparative peace of Yeravda.[1]

The Hindu, 7-2-1934, and *Harijan*, 16-2-1934

123. TELEGRAM TO K. SRINIVASAN

February 5, 1934

JUST LEARNT OF MR. RANGASWAMY'S[2] DEATH. DEEPEST SYMPATHY WITH HIS FAMILY AND STAFF OF "THE HINDU".

The Bombay Chronicle, 6-2-1934

124. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

COONOOR,
February 5, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I am writing this letter in the morning after cleaning my teeth. I have already written to you regarding . . . 's[3] address. You must have received it through Om. Kanjibhai was to come here, but he has had to remain behind because of the earthquake in Bihar. But he definitely wants to come, and so does Bhulabhai.

The attempt which I made to see Shri Aurobindo was for the

[1] This paragraph is extracted from Chandrashankar Shukla's "Weekly Letter" published in *Harijan.*

[2] Rangaswamy Iyengar, editor of *The Hindu*, had died in the early morning of February 5.

[3] The names are omitted in the source.

sake of the Gujaratis [in Pondicherry]. His refusal was courteous. He said that he saw nobody. The Revered Mother did not reply at all. My visit to that town has been dropped now. In a way I am glad that it has been. But I intend to send Chandrashankar and Bapathere. Let them see and observe as much as they can. We lose nothing by addressing 'Mother' as 'Mother'. The etiquette of addressing a person by the name which has been bestowed on him was observed even at the Round Table Conference. You will probably say that it would be ruinous to follow the example of the Round Table Conference. But my point is that even there people were obliged to observe this etiquette.

Your guess as to Raojibhai's reason for going to . . .[1] is correct . . . .[2] also has gone there now and Ramdas tells me that ourHarilal, too, has been there. He who has many sons and daughters should have a mother as well, shouldn't he!

I think I have already written to you about the Zamorin. He lives in utmost simplicity. There is no ostentation at all. His palace too is a palace only in name, and there is hardly any furniture. He showed me the utmost courtesy. I was introduced to his son. He offered me coconut water and gave me fruit when I left. He was very pleased that I confined the conversation to formal courtesies. He is old and said that his memory was becoming weak. He is a good man. I am glad I called on him.

Coonoor is a beautiful place. If one can get accommodation here, the daily necessities are cheap. It is very cold in winter though not extremely so. Our workers have been doing good work among the hill people. I had received an invitation from them, and so I suggested that, if they wished to give me eight days' rest, they should let me have it in Coonoor so that I could work among the hill people and also dispose of the papers which had accumulated. I am staying in Nagesvara Rao's bungalow here. I am lodged above the garage. It is a small but good room. The garage can be used as a room. My room above it is a clean one. I am glad I came here. The hill people come to see me every day. In Ooty, on the nearby hill of Kotagiri, and here, we had large meetings such as had never taken place in these parts. Deputations of Harijans came and met me. There is a fine *mutt* exclusively for Harijans, which I visited. The hill people are much addicted to drinking. Our workers have been doing good work among them. Raja

[1] The names are omitted in the source.

[2] *ibid*

will see me tomorrow.

Bihar has been receiving good help; people from all over the country have been sending money and clothes. From the Ashram, Panditji[1], Parnerkar[2], Raojibhai[3], Bal[4] and others have gone there. Swami[5] and Dhotre also have gone. Mathuradas has been planning to go and may go any day. Others also are ready, but I have kept them back. I will follow Rajendrababu's instructions. Whether or not I should go, that also I have left to him. I have told him that he may call me there whenever he wants me. My own inclination is to go there after covering Karnataka and Orissa. That will mean I shall reach there about 20th March. I have been collecting money at every place I visit. This time I come into contact only with people who give me coppers. I do meet, of course, a few who belong to the middle class. They give what they can. But there is no limit to the generosity of the poor. Every day hill women come and give me a few coins tied up in a corner of their saris. Ramachandran of the Ashram is with me at present. I am sure you know him. He is a scholar and a fine man. Jivaraj's health has been very much affected. But he is a brave man and continues to look after the hospital. At intervals he pays visits to Matheran and takes rest for a few days.

You must have heard about Perin[6] and Jamnabehn. Prema and Lilavati (Asar) went back [to jail] as soon as they were released. Lilavati is an obstinate girl. Perhaps she will die in jail. Amtussalaam is here. She has taken ill. Her loyalty is wonderful. I am sending Amala just now to Sabarmati for Harijan work. We will watch how she behaves there.

Bidaj also has been handed over to the Harijan Sevak Sangh. It is intended to take the dairy back to the Harijan Ashram. That will enable us to give training to some Harijans and ensure that the dairy is run well.

A copy of Ba's letter is enclosed. Please convey to Mani whatever you can from this. I have asked for permission to see her

[1] Narayan Moreshwar Khare
[2] Y. M. Parnerkar who managed the Ashram dairy
[3] Raojibhai Nathabhai Patel
[4] Bal Kalelkar
[5] Swami Anandananda
[6] Dadabhai Naoroji's grand-daughter

and Mahadev. I have sent a wire. A reply is expected in a day or two. I will go there on the 6th March. I also have heard about . . .[1]. Tell Mani that Mridu has sent a long message for her: 'She still suffers from her disease. She remembers Mani every day. She expects to be free in March. If Mani wants any other books, she may call for them. She has had letters from Durga, Mani Parikh, Velanbehn and others. After resting for some time, she hopes to return to jail.' Abbas Saheb's 80th birthday seems to have been celebrated with enthusiasm. Kaka worked hard for that. The old man was very much pleased. Kalyanji[2] is writing a short biography of him. All our men of letters visited him in this connection and refreshed the memory of half-forgotten old days.

I am glad that you are experimenting with *neti*[3]. A wick made with hand from a piece of fine cloth may be found more useful. It can suck up harmful matter. You can make such a wick from your worn-out dhoti. It is necessary to do *pranayama* exercises along with it. *Neti* and *pranayama* will certainly help to keep the nostrils open. I am glad that your constipation has disappeared. I am sure the change which you have made in your food will benefit you.

Kelappan did not intentionally hide the fact of his relations with that lady. He didn't think there was anything improper in it. He also was influenced by "Self-respect"[4]and"Jatpattod"[5]. Nor is there anything against the lady. Kelappan is not a bad man. He is only simple-minded and also obstinate. I wish to put Rajaji in charge of the work in Malabar. I have not made up my mind finally, though. I may also appoint Ramachandran instead.

Your plan for Aunt seems a good one. Let her remain where she is. Hasn't she been indiscreet enough? But your fear is baseless. The refreshment[6] served by Sir Chimanlal is not likely to contain much. If most people don't relish what he serves, what can the poor man do?

The visit to Bengal is still undecided. I can't say what will finally happen.

I had a wire from Muriel [Lester]. I have asked her to come and

[1] The name is omitted in the source
[2] Kalyanji V. Mehta, a well-known Congress worker
[3] A Hathayoga practice for cleaning the nasal passage
[4] Name of a social reform body
[5] Jatpant Todak Mandal, another social reform body
[6] In the form of his writings

see me near Coimbatore, and also suggested that she should tour with me for some time. Amritlal Sheth[1] has not written to me recently. He served an ultimatum on me too. I don't mind, let the truth come out even from the bowels of the earth. Isn't even man's body a piece of earth?

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

[PS.]

The frost has ruined crops all over the country this year. In some parts it has been frost and in some other parts it has been unseasonable rains. These things seem to have a direct connection with the earthquake.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 70-5

125. MESSAGE TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

February 5, 1934

I am filled with sadness over Mr. Rangaswamy's death. I had the privilege to enjoy close relations with him. He was the right-hand man of Pandit Motilalji. His counsels were valued in Congress circles. He was one of the soberest among journalists. He was upholding the tradition left by Mr. Kasturiranga Iyengar, the tradition which has given the influence which *The Hindu* had. I had intimate conversations with him when I was in Madras recently. His death is a loss to *The Hindu*, the Congress and the country.

The Bombay Chronicle, 6-2-1934

[1] Former editor of *Janmabhumi*

126. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

February 5, 1934

CHI. MARY,

I hope you got my letter[1] at your Betul[2] address.

The Hyderabad visit has been put off by nearly 20 days. I do not go there before 10th I think. Even that is not quite certain. And then I am not supposed to stay there for more than 4 hours.

We are all doing well. No time to say more.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6019. Also C.W. 3348. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

127. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS AND KRISHNA KAPADIA

February 5, 1934

CHI. MADHAVDAS AND KRISHNA,

How is it that there is no letter from either of you? Ba frequently remembers you in her letters. Nobody can write to her directly. She can write and receive only one letter every week. And if she has had a visitor during a week, she can't receive a letter during that week. Hence all news should be conveyed through me. So write a detailed letter to me. If you address it to Wardha, it is bound to reach me. How is Krishna? How is business? I receive Manilal's letters regularly. Both are well. About me, you must be reading everything in *Harijan-bandhu*.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MADHAVDAS GOKULDAS
SHAMJI SHIVJI BUILDING
MANORDAS STREET
FORT, BOMBAY

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII

[1] *Vide* "Letter to F. Marry Barr", 25-1-1934
[2] The source has "Bethel".

128. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

COONOOR,
February 5, 1934

BA,

I have your letter. What you say about Bihar is correct. Large numbers were killed and now in this cold thousands have become homeless. Much help is being sent from all parts of the country. From among the Ashram inmates, Panditji, Parnerkar, Raojibhai, Soman, Bal, Swami and Dhotre have gone there. Dhotre is the gentleman from Wardha. If more workers are required, I will send some others. I have had letters from all the women. All except Velanbehn are well. Velanbehn has gone to Baroda, taking Anandi and Mani with her If necessary, she will go and consult a doctor in Bombay. She has lost weight considerably. It will take her some months to be restored. Durga has gone to Bulsar. From there she will go to Belgaum. I also will be there on March 6. Lilavati was having fever, but she has returned to jail along with Premabehn. Devdas has not gone to Patna. There is no need, even, for him to do so. Tara is fairly seriously ill. She is in Ahmedabad at present. Mani Parikh is at her maternal uncle's. Afterwards she will go to Kathlal. I shall meet Rajaji tomorrow. Amtussalaam is here. She has taken ill, but is better today. It seems she will go to Kashi and stay with Krishnakumari. Muriel Lester, in whose Ashram I stayed in England, will meet me tomorrow—Gangabehn has gone to Wardha to see Surendra. He is working there with Jamnalalji. Mahalakshmi is in Bombay with her children. I had letters from Manilal and Sushila. Both say that you should not worry about him. Sita is happy. Kallenbach was on a visit to Phoenix for two days. There has been frost in Gujarat and other parts of the country and most of the crops have been completely destroyed. The frost was severe and lasted many days. We must submit to God's will. Vallabhbhai is fairly well. There was a letter from Mridula. She also is well. I have inquired about Madhavdas.[1] I will most certainly let you know. I have not forgotten about it. There was a long letter from Ramdas. He and Nimu and the children are in good health. Keshu and Krishna are still in Wardha and are quite well.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

There have been no letters from Radha recently. Brijkrishna is fairly well. He is slowly regaining strength. There is a well-known paper named *The Hindu* published from Madras. There was a wire today saying that its Editor had died. I have sent a wire of condolence.[1] Prabhavati is well. She is still in Patna. I hope you and the other women are in good health. I will start from here tomorrow morning and go to see Raja. And now the discourse.

There is a saying among us: "One road, two purposes." What road is that following which will always serve "two purposes"? "Two purposes" should not, either, be understood to mean only two. Here "two" means more than one. One may, therefore, also say: "One road and a hundred purposes." In Bihar thousands of people were buried alive in the matter of a minute. This cannot but make us think that one should not waste a single moment. "Make the best of today, for who has seen tomorrow?" —sang Mira. We don't know what will happen even after a minute or a second. One may pass away even in the act of yawning. What, then, is that golden road following which would serve all purposes? There is only one, viz., helping others. That means service of the neighbour. Another name for it is *paramartha.* The word means 'supreme purpose'. A third name for it is *Hari-bhakti*[2]. We sing in the *prabhatiyan*[3] of Narasinh Mehta that such *bhakti* is not practised by telling beads or putting marks on the forehead or bathing in the Ganga. *Bhaktas* tell us that it means pledging one's head. We should, therefore, always wish the world's good all the hours of the day whether in jail or outside, and do whatever service may fall to our lot in order to advance it. I hope this will be enough for today's discourse.

Blessings to all from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 12-3

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to K. Srinivasan", 5-2-1934

[2] Devotion to God

[3] Devotional hymns for early morning

129. LETTER TO MATHURI N. KHARE

February 5, 1934

CHI. MATHURI,

I was very happy to see your handwriting after a long time. You have improved your handwriting, too, a good deal. I am also very happy that you find everything there congenial. I hope you do sing *bhajans.* Write to me from time to time. I am glad that you write to Rambhau.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 270. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

130. LETTER TO MANIBEHN N. PARIKH

February 5, 1934

CHI. MANI,

I got your letter. You women may be said to have made excellent use of your time in jail. Amtussalaam told me everything. I have no doubt at all that the children have benefited too. It would be advisable to show your eyes to Dr. Haribhai. He is a specialist in eye diseases.

I have no time to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. MANIBEHN PARIKH
BHAISHRI RAMANBHAI LULLUBHAI SHAH
KATAKIA POLE, KALUPUR
AHMEDABAD, B.B. & C.I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5976. Also C.W. 3293. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

131. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

February 5, 1934

CHI. VIDYA[1],

I got your letter. I hear that you now wish to marry. If that is true, you should tell me without any hesitation or false sense of shame. If you do wish to marry, let me know when. Should your elders find a partner from the Patidar community or may they select any suitable and virtuous young man? Tell me your views frankly. Don't consider what I would like. In such matters the young man or woman must have sufficient freedom. The elders can only guide them.

I am glad that you help Vali. You must have heard that Kusum has died. I hope you wrote to Manu. She has felt it very much.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9584. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

132. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CHOKKAMPALAYAM[2]

February 6, 1934

I thank you for the address and the purse presented for the cause of the Harijans. I have understood that in this centre and round about it you have done much work for the spread of khaddar, removal of untouchability and the abolition of drink. I congratulate you on your achievement of these measures as all these evils run into one another. If we have driven out untouchability altogether we will be in a brotherhood. The message of untouchability is nothing less than real brotherhood union. It is not a brotherhood of merely Hindus but a brotherhood of all— Muslims, Christians and others. That is the full message of anti-untouchability. Now I have a heavy programme. Therefore I cannot remain here any longer. I hope you have made

[1] Daughter of Raojibhai Manibhai Patel

[2] The meeting, held at 8.30 a.m., was attended by about 4,000 men and women. Purses and addresses of welcome were presented on behalf of the village and Avanashi Taluk Board. At the end of the meeting the addresses and the jewellery were auctioned.

collections for the sufferers in Bihar. If you have not done so you should forthwith make collections and remit the same to Mr. Rajendra Prasad or to me. Within two or three minutes you must help me in auctioning these things.

The Hindu, 7-2-1934

133. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, TIRUPUR[1]

February 6, 1934

FRIENDS,

I am very much obliged to you all for the addresses and the different purses. I have already gone through a fairly long programme and I have once more to tax my mind in this assembly and I know that you have been waiting patiently for some time. I shall therefore be very brief. I have gone through the English translation of the addresses you have presented to me. I tender my congratulations to the Municipal Council for all that has been done by it for the Harijan cause. But neither the Councillors nor the people can rest satisfied until untouchability in every shape and form is removed. I know that it is not within the province of the Municipal Council to throw open the temples. But it is up to the so-called *savarna* Hindus to formulate public opinion to such an extent that every temple in Tirupur is opened to the Harijans. I am quite convinced in my own mind that until all the public temples are open to the Harijans precisely on the same terms as to the other caste Hindus, we shall not have got rid of untouchability. The so-called untouchables must have absolutely the same rights and facilities that are enjoyed by the so-called *savarna* Hindus. I have gone through the address presented by the khadi merchants. I know what khadi means for the Harijans. Throughout the length and breadth of India, tens of thousands of men and women who belong to the Harijan class and who have no other employment are getting a few pies now. It is therefore a matter for shame that spurious khadi should have sprung up in our midst and since we have no legal protection for khadi the only thing that we can do is to take care to strengthen the public opinion. The same complaint was

[1] At the meeting, purses and addresses of welcome were presented on behalf of the Tirupur Municipal Council and the khadi workers. At the end of the meeting Gandhiji auctioned the addresses. A part of the speech was also published in *Harijan*, 16-2-1934.

brought to me in Madura and the only thing for the time being that I was able to suggest was that the public should be warned against taking any khadi that was not certified by the All-India Spinners' Association. I also heard a rumour that I have changed my opinion about the absolute necessity of khadi. I can give my assurance that my opinion has not undergone any changes whatsoever. On the contrary, the opinion that I expressed in the year 1919[1] has become strengthened by experience. And I am convinced that khadi is the only solution for the deep and deepening distress of the untouchables. Khadi is cheap at any price, for every pie that you spend in buying khadi goes directly into the pocket of the poor people. But I must not tire you with the arguments that I have advanced so often from the various platforms. I am only hoping that in this great movement of self-purification we shall not only get rid of untouchability but many other impurities from which our society is suffering. And I hope that those Harijans who are present at this meeting will fully bear in mind that they have also to contribute their share in this movement.

Lastly, I cannot help expressing myself about the land of Sita in the north-east of India. Many cities have been swallowed up by the hungry Mother Earth. Palaces are now mere heaps of bricks. Nearly 25,000 people are said to have perished. And almost in the twinkling of an eye thousands of people were rendered homeless. And in the sharp, severe wintry weather of the north of India these people are living without any shelter and without food. I request you to share in every way their suffering. And I would like to hear in the course of the day that you have gathered together the funds to be sent to Mr. Rajendra Prasad.

The Hindu, 7-2-1934

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting, Ahmedabad", 14-4-1919.

134. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, COIMBATORE[1]

February 6, 1934

I am glad to visit your city a second time. You have prepared for me a very heavy programme tonight. You have presented so many addresses and given me so many purses that it will take some time before I can dispose of them all. I must therefore ask you kindly to be patient with me for some time. And those who have got tired should retire without making any noise. I would like those who have already become restless kindly to be still so that I may follow the proceedings. You have presented so many addresses that you do not expect me to give a detailed reply to all of them. You will please accept my consolidated thanks for all those addresses and the purses presented. You know from your addresses the purpose of my mission. We must, if we are to live, get rid of this virus of untouchability. I have not the least doubt that if *savarna* Hindus will not purify their hearts of this taint of untouchability, Hinduism and Hindus must perish. That there is a ferment in Hindu society is evidenced by the meetings of this character wherever I had come. All these crowds have been there before whenever I have toured throughout India. So far as I am aware, invariably this time crowds have been larger still. Every attempt that was humanly possible has been made to make clear the purpose of my mission to the crowds. Their presence coupled with their copper and silver pieces are to my mind an unmistakable sign that they are ready for the great reform that I have placed before them. And if untouchability is not removed root and branch I have no doubt that it would not be the fault of the masses but that it would be entirely due to the fault of the workers and the leaders who are today leading the movement. I would, therefore, like all the co-workers and the leaders to realize the significance of this movement. I would like them clearly to see that this is a movement of self-purification, self-sacrifice and reparation to those whom the so-called *savarna* Hindus have suppressed for centuries. I was therefore considerably disturbed this afternoon when on my coming to Coimbatore I saw a few Harijan friends

[1] The meeting, held in the Gandhi-Irwin Stadium, was attended by about thirty to forty thousand people. Besides the municipal address, several other addresses were presented to Gandhiji which at the end of the meeting were auctioned. The speech was translated into Tamil.

who complained to me of the ill-treatment meted out to them in a village not three or four miles from here. They tell me that on the part of *savarna* Hindus there is a deadset against them. They tell me that even their labour is boycotted. I have assured them that so far as it is possible for me during the brief hours that I am here I shall try to understand the situation. But it seems to me that with so much life in Coimbatore, with this demonstration of so much sympathy for the Harijan cause, it ought of be a very simple matter for some of the leaders here to go to this little village and understand the situation and patch up the quarrel between *savarna* Hindus so called and the Harijans. Whether here the complaint made by these Harijan friends is justified or exaggerated or it is absolutely true is not just now relevant to what I was saying. I bring this complaint to your notice not only that you may bestir yourselves and get redressed but also to illustrate forcibly what I am advocating. If we were not being eaten up by this canker of superiority and inferiority there never would be any occasion for such quarrels and disturbances. I therefore pray to God and I want you to join me in the prayer that He may give us discretion, wisdom and strength to understand the implications of this campaign against untouchability and to exorcize this evil from our midst.

Now before I proceed to the sale of the articles that you have given me, I would like to say one word in connection with our suffering countrymen and countrywomen in Bihar. And in recalling to your mind the desolation that has overtaken that fair land, I cannot possibly forget the name of Rangaswamy Iyengar who is no more. The columns of *The Hindu* have shown what wide sympathy he had for the suffering Bihar and how his appeal was supported by the many subscribers to *The Hindu.* I have no doubt that his place whether as a journalist or as a servant of the nation is not easy to fill. He had, as I know, an amazing industry and wisdom which stood well for the Congress at critical times. I would like you to associate yourselves with me in tendering our sympathy and respect for the bereaved family and in doing so I would ask you to respond to the appeal that he made on behalf of the sufferers of Bihar. I have been latterly at the end of these meetings collecting subscriptions from all and sundry for Bihar. In front of this vast crowd I have not the courage to suggest that the volunteers should spread themselves in the midst of the audience and make collections for Bihar. But if you will consent to it and if the volunteers themselves have got the courage I would suggest

to them that they spread themselves in the midst of the audience and collect for Bihar before disposing of the articles.

The Hindu, 8-2-1934

135. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

POLLACHI JN.,
February 7, [*1934*][1]

AMTUSSALAAM
CARE ASAR MERCHANT
TIRUPUR

HOPE ARE WELL CHEERFUL. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 291

136. LETTER TO KUSUMBEHN DESAI

February 7, 1934

CHI. KUSUM,

Vallabhbhai writes to tell me that some relation[2] of yours— was it a brother?—died recently in Zanzibar. Who could the person be? Give me details and whatever other information you think may interest me. If you have not met the women who have been released, try to meet them. I hope you read *Harijanbandhu*. You can know all about me from it.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. KUSUMBEHN DESAI
DR. CHANDULAL'S CLINIC
BROACH, B.B.& C.I.RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1850

[1] Gandhiji was in Pollachi on February 7 of 1934.

[2] The addressee's younger brother Harishchandra had died of black fever in South Africa.

137. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, POLLACHI[1]

February 7, 1934

I wish you would all keep perfect silence. You have given me sufficient material to speak for one full hour, but the Reception Committee has given me only 20 minutes. Twenty minutes have already elapsed. The train has come late and I know you were all waiting for a very long time. If you help me, I would finish sooner. You all know for what purpose I have come. You have presented me with addresses and you have shown therein the need and importance of removing untouchability. Those whom you consider untouchables are your brothers and sisters. Untouchability exists between caste and caste and between Hindus and Mohammedans, Christians and Jews. These defects should be removed from our land. We should forget the feeling of high and low and consider that we are all sons of one God. I need not impress upon you the importance of contributing for the Bihar earthquake relief fund and there is no necessity for speaking on one and the same subject very often. The charkha before me is a very attractive one and the workmanship deserves much praise. I do not consider that we can spin much yarn on it, but in value it is made up of silver. It weighs nearly 40 *tolas* and I wish to auction the same for a decent sum.

The Hindu, 9-2-1934

138. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, PALNI[2]

February 7, 1934

I thank you for the addresses and the numerous presents that you have presented. Now you know what I want to say. You are near God and you must forget the distinctions of high and low. We are all children of the same God. No one should be considered as untouchable. You have given me many things and the very fact of your piling up many gifts on me shows that you are absolutely in sympathy

[1] At the meeting addresses of welcome were presented to Gandhiji by the Municipal Council, the Taluk Board and the Harijan Seva Sangham.

[2] The meeting, held near the hill temple, was largely attended. Besides various addresses and a purse, individual offerings were made which included a silver charkha, cups and coins all of which were auctioned at the close of the meeting.

with this movement of self-purification. We are under the shadow of the sacred hill of Palni. And we know to our shame that the temple on the sacred hill is not open to the Harijans precisely on the same terms that it is open to every other Hindu. Why should it be so? Did this God in this sacred temple tell you that there are people who must not enter His temple and that they are untouchables. In my opinion God cannot reside in a temple which prohibits the entry of the meanest of His creatures. How could He be so unkind when you know and I know He is all mercy and kindness?

The Hindu, 9-2-1934

139. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, DINDIGUL[1]

February 7, 1934

FRIENDS,

I am sorry that you have been put to a great deal of trouble. We tried our utmost to reach here in time, but the car could not bring us here earlier than we have come. It was a heavy day and to add to our and your weariness and trouble we missed the way.

I thank you for all the addresses that have been presented and the purses and I thank those who have presented the purse for the sufferers in Bihar. I hope that before you send me away from Dindigul tomorrow morning, you will collect some more money for Bihar. If you know the nature of the calamity that has descended on that land of Sita, any relief sent for Bihar would not be enough. I am sure you are aware of the purpose of the commission that has brought me here, and I hope that all of you are acting according to the professions made in these addresses. To my mind, it is a wicked thing—one of the most wicked of things to make distinctions between man and man and regard some as untouchables by birth and deny them chances of improvement. Had God designed any persons to be untouchables, surely He would have attached some visible sign whereby we could have distinguished them from ourselves; we do not see any such sign whatsoever. Why should some of our own brethren be treated as worse than some animals so that they have to undergo life-long misery on account of their birth? The sooner, therefore, we

[1] The meeting, held at the Rock Fort Maidan, was attended by more than 20,000 people. Various addresses of welcome and presents were given to Gandhiji. At the end of the meeting all those things were auctioned.

get rid of this taint of untouchability the better it is for us and let us ask God to give us sufficient strength to cleanse ourselves of that sin. I must not detain you any longer than is absolutely necessary. I must therefore try to dispose of these numerous things that have been given to me and I begin with this silver statue.

The Hindu, 9-2-1934

140. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

February 8, 1934

CHI. NARMADA,

I got your letter. I was happy to read it. I did hear about you, though I did not know all the details about your reading.

Since Amtussalaam was with me, all the women here had learnt about it.

Your handwriting has certainly improved a little, but I want it to be as neat as pearls. Make it so during your next term of imprisonment.

I was glad to read Kastur's handwriting at the end of your letter.

I am very glad indeed that she will keep you company this time. I don't have time to write separately to her.

Do you read *Harijanbandhu* regularly?

Blessings from

BAPU

KUMARI NARMADA ABHESING RANA
JIJINU VALUKAD
Via BHAVNAGAR
KATHIAWAD

From Gujarati: G.W. 2778. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

141. TO SUBSCRIBERS

The *Harijan* finishes one year of its existence with this issue. The subscribers and readers know the limits within which it is working. It devotes itself solely to the Harijan cause. Even so it eschews all matters which may be calculated to bring it in conflict with the Government. It eschews politics altogether. These limitations were essential, if it was to be a paper controlled by a prisoner. For reasons

which I need not repeat here, though I am not a prisoner in law, I am conducting the paper as if I was one in fact. It can, therefore, naturally draw only those men and women who are interested in the campaign against untouchability and who would help the cause even if it is only to the extent of subscribing to the paper and thus helping the only paper that is solely devoted to the cause of anti-untouchability and is the mouthpiece of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. The subscribers know that it will not be continued at a loss. I believe that the paper, in order to justify its existence, must be a felt want, and it must, therefore, have the minimum number of subscribers to pay its way. The readers know also that, as it avoids all advertisements, it has no other source of income. Therefore, subscribers whose subscriptions are due are requested to send their subscriptions promptly to the Manager, *Harijan*, Triplicane, Madras. The despatch of the paper will be automatically discontinued for those inland subscribers who fail to send their subscriptions after the receipt of two issues after this. Those who had constituted themselves as voluntary agents will kindly perform that office for the next year, if they are satisfied that the paper has justified its existence.

The rates of subscription are: Inland Rs. 4, Foreign Rs. 5/8.

Harijan, 9-2-1934

142. IS IT CRIMINAL?

Nowhere have the reception committees been so extravagant as in Travancore in the matter of reception expenses. In some places, it seems the expenses have been almost half of the purses collected. I had a memo of expenses already from two places. The former included motor hire, printing and feeding charges. As usual I have asked for detailed and audited account of expenses. I have the fear that even the cost of printing addresses has been set against the purses. If so, it amounts in my opinion to criminal misappropriation of purse funds. The purses belong to Harijans. The cost of collection may be a proper charge against them where the committees are composed of poor people. In every case the purses should be handed intact. The expenses that may be passed will be refunded to the committees concerned. This was the practice followed in Andhra. In C.P., so far as I am aware, entertainment expenses were in every case borne by private persons. The following rules should be borne in mind by the commit-

tees in future.

1. The fewest number of volunteers should be employed.

2. Motor hire for local purposes should be minimized.

3. Motor hire for the party should be separately shown, so as to enable one to collect from those who are travelling at their own expense.

4. Printing charges should be incurred only when absolutely necessary.

5. No decoration charges can be allowed to be debited against the purse.

6. On no account can address expenses be paid out of the purse fund. I have repeatedly said that addresses need not be presented at all. I know that they have, when they are spontaneous, a propaganda value of the right sort. But if addresses continue to be presented thoughtlessly, the sacrifice of propaganda value may have to be made. The burden, therefore, rests upon reception committees of permitting only those addresses that are spontaneous and have a value in terms of the Harijan cause.

7. Accounts for feeding the party should be separately rendered when they are meant to be a charge against the purse. I must say in fairness to the committees that outside Travancore I have not known committees having to defray the feeding expenses. And seeing that my party is very big, consisting of 15 persons, even providing one meal is no light task in a poor country like India. Travancore is still a comparatively new field and, being the home of orthodoxy, I and my party naturally became untouchables among orthodox people, who were before good enough to have me in their homes. Add to this the fact that the Government circulars, warning their servants against their countenancing me or the movement, and possibly similar instructions from the Travancore authorities, frightened even moneyed laymen from having any dealings with me. The wonder to me is that, in spite of the vague or justified fear of the high-placed, the common people flocked to the meetings even in Travancore, as never before. I am not, therefore, surprised that the poor members of reception committees in some places in Travancore had to find feeding expenses from the purse. But, in every such case I must scrutinize the bill of fare as I would if it was rendered by a hotel-keeper. The committees know by this time that the simplest food only is expected. No sweets, no elaborate dishes, no spices are required. The largest item, I fear, is

goat's milk and fruit. These ought not to be provided at every place. As usually the three meals are taken at three different places, milk and fruit may be provided once for all at the morning meal. Fruit should be only local season's fruit and oranges. Fruit is unfortunately a medical necessity for several members of the party. Reception committees are not to be expected to provide these through private individuals, nor may they be allowed to spend what they like from the purses. Thakkar Bapa, who is in charge of the party, should be left to decide what the bill of fare should be. Local committees would be expected to see that honest dealers provide the necessaries at market prices.

The thing to remember is that all of us working for the cause are trustees for the moneys collected and, therefore, have to spend like misers, taking greater care of the trust funds than we would of our own. If, as against this, it is said that without spectacular displays and demonstrations no money is to be got, my answer without hesitation would be that we must do without it. Either the moneys given are an earnest of reparation or they are not. If they are such an earnest, they will come spontaneously after conviction is brought home to the would-be donor. My experience of begging for public causes covers a period of now over 40 years. I cannot recall a single occasion when I have had to resort to spectacular displays. It was done by hard work, con- centrated, patient and gentle arguments and unshaken faith in the cause. And of all the causes for which I had the privilege of collecting, the Harijan cause undoubtedly is the noblest, because it affects the most suppressed part of humanity on the face of this globe. It will prosper if it had true men and women behind it. The needed money will come without much effort. Honest and selfless work is the truest prayer. And no such prayer has ever gone unanswered.

Harijan, 9-2-1934

143. KHADI AND HARIJANS

Those who, apart from the whole programme of anti-untouchability, are interested in the economic betterment of Harijans should know that khadi gives employment to thousands of Harijan men, women and children who otherwise had no employment. It entirely supports some families and supplements the slender resources of many more and keeps the wolf from the door. Its capacity to be the only universal source of employment to the starving millions is not

now seriously questioned. It is this poor man's stay which is being undermined by unscrupulous methods. I learnt in Madura that some dealers in cloth were palming off khadi cloth woven from mill-spun yarn as hand-spun and handwoven. I was shown specimens which were exact copies of special khadi varieties. Lovers of khadi and Harijan servants who believe in the potency of khadi to serve Harijans are requested not to buy khadi which does not bear the hallmark of the All-lndia Spinners' Association. I heard also that mill-cloth, too, both foreign and indigenous, is largely sold in the market as khadi. And to fill my cup of woe, I am being represented as having changed my views on khadi and having put indigenous mill-cloth on a par with khadi. This is a misrepresentation of my view of khadi. My faith in khadi is, if possible, stronger than ever from the moral, economic and national (in its widest sense) standpoint; there is no comparison between khadi and mill-cloth, even indigenous. Exploitation of the poor through mill-cloth or mill-yarn is an impossibility in the case of khadi. Exploitation of the poor through mill-cloth and mill-yarn is inevitable in some shape or form, be it ever so mild. The use of genuine khadi constitutes some (be it ever so small) automatic return to the poor for their continuous exploitation by the comparatively rich and can in the aggregate become a mighty return, though never adequate, to the masses living in the villages. None of these functions can ever be performed by mill-cloth even if every mill was nationalized. In the mill industry, even if it was conducted purely as a trust for the nation and ably managed, there could never be automatic distribution and there must be displacement of a vast amount of labour, In khadi, with the spinning-wheel in every cottage, there can be no displacement of labour and there is always automatic distribution of the product of labour. Hence for me there can be no comparison between khadi and mill-cloth, there can be no juxtaposition. For, the two are not of the same kind. Khadi may never reach the finish of the mill-cloth, nor its variety nor yet its cheapness in terms of the market. The measurement for each is different. Khadi represents human values, mill-cloth represents mere metallic value. A yard of khadi is cheap for me at 4 annas per yard. Mill-cloth of the same count and texture is too dear for me at 2 annas per yard. My plea, therefore, is for discrimination and avoidance of confusion of thought. Let each stand on its own platform. Let mill managers not grudge khadi the place it occupies. It ill becomes them to produce cloth that looks like khadi and thus cheat the buyers into the belief that it is khadi.

Harijan, 9-2-1 934

144. AMONG THE NATTARS

Two events in Chettinad deserve special notice. One was a visit to a Harijan village, Chittannoor, near Devacottah. It has a caste Hindu as a teacher living in it with his family. Both are devoted workers attached to Harijans. They are conducting a little school and are giving the Harijans medical and such other aid as is within their power to give. The school is being conducted on behalf of the local Sangh. I had a long chat with the Harijans. Their spokesman read to me a statement of the hardships inflicted on them by Nattars. The readers of *Harijan* are familiar with them. On my way back, I saw a deputation of Nattars who waylaid me with garlands and coconut. I told the leader about the Harijan complaints. He gave clever and evasive answers. This was a foretaste of what was in store for me at Devacottah, where I was to meet a party of Nattars by appointment. They were over one hundred. I gave them an hour and had an exhaustive, interesting and illuminating conversation."Custom" was the only justification for the inhuman treatment that is being meted out to the Harijans, though in a less cruel form than before. "Nowa-days we don't interfere with their manner of dressing, except for certain festival days", replied the old leader of the party quite courte-ously but equally firmly.

"But what right you have to dictate their dress for any day at all?"

"It is the custom handed down by our forefathers", the old man replied.

"Supposing someone regulated your dress?" I interposed,

"Why not? We have to submit to many things that the higher castes prescribe for us, and the Harijans have to submit to us."

"You need not submit to anybody's dictation. There is no higher and no lower", I replied.

"How can that be? The Harijans cannot be allowed to cross the limits prescribed by custom", the old man persisted.

"But, surely, you won't adhere to a custom which is manifestly bad", I gently remonstrated.

Prompt came the reply, "Who is to judge what is bad for me? All custom must be good, because it comes from our forefathers."

I had no argument against this. I accepted my defeat. But I warned the old man and my other hearers that many customs had gone and what they refused to do now voluntarily and gracefully they would be obliged reluctantly to do later by pressure of circumstances. In spite of the persistence of the old leader, the conversation was carried on with good humour and ended with a collection for the sufferers of Bihar.

There is much and glorious work for the young worker to do. The old man knew that he had no case. But he evidently thought that he must defend the indefensible.

Harijan, 9-2-1934

145. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

AS AT GANDHI ASHRAM,
TIRUCHENGODU,
February 9, 1934

MY DEAR PLAYMATE,

I do not write to the Old Lady because one never knows where she is from day to day. I had your joint love wire and your own letter regarding Bihar. I gave you my hearty consent the moment I got your wire. But that raises the question whether I should come just now to Hyderabad at all. I have just now been going only to those places which want me in spite of the Bihar calamity. No doubt wherever I go I make Bihar's wail heard and even collect. But when one flies through space, collections can't be fat. But it is a sight to see how the poor vie with one another in pressing their coppers into my hands for a province whose name many of them hear from me for the first time.

I have been in correspondence with Vaman Joshi[1] on the subject. Please see him and advise by wire what you all want me to do. If you want me to come to Hyderabad now it will be only four hours. What is possible later I do not know. And if I am to come Vaman Joshi wants me to stay with him. I have told him my permanent abode there is Golden Threshold and if I am to stay elsewhere it can only be subject to the consent of the family. So after due consultation you will advise me on both the matters.

[1] Vaman Gopal Joshi alias Veer Vamanrao, Marathi Play-writer and President of Berar Pradesh Congress Committee

And now the last question. How are you? And how are the others? I can almost answer the question about yourself. But it is better to know the answer from you.

The Hungarian painters have been meeting me often and telling me a lot about you.

I hope you read *Harijan.*

Love to you all.

BAPU

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

146. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ

February 9, 1934

CHI . RUKMINI,

I got your postcard. I am writing this letter before the morning prayer. I rise daily at three.

The line "Who can harm him whom Rama protects?" is constantly in my mind. But sometimes I also feel that after all nobody is immortal. Doesn't everybody die sooner or later? The only question is when. Why, then, grieve over or rejoice at it? In the final reckoning, are not night and day the same?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9158

147. LETTER TO S. R. NARAYANA IYER

February 9, 1934

Please tell all Badaga brothers and sisters that it was a daily pleasure to me whilst I was at Coonoor to see the white-clad men and women. How I wish they would give up the drink habit, and in order to retain for ever the whiteness of their garments they would take to khadi and hand-spinning. The latter will keep them occupied, still their minds and wean the drinkers from drink. It will also add something to their tender resources or enable them to have khadi woven from yarn spun by them.

The Hindu, 13-2-1934

148. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

KUMBAM,
February 9, 1934

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I am in Dindigul. We resume travelling in a little while at seven. It is 6.40 just now. I will try to write as much as I can. We get our morning, midday and evening meals at different places. God has kept me in health so far. He will pull back the thread of life when He wills. "The Lord has bound me with a slender thread, I turn as He pulls."

I got Ratubhai Desai's letter yesterday. He has given a full description. You have really used your time well for reading and studying. I regard it as God's kindness that prisoners are not permitted to read at night. If you think it necessary to see me after your release, do come over. I shall probably be in Utkal about the time you will be released. Muriel Lester is touring with me these days. I suppose you remember that I had stayed with her. She has been to China and Japan. Most probably she will remain with me till the 21st. (At this point we had to leave and resume the tour.)

We are now in a place called Kumbam situated in a valley between the Eastern and the Western Ghats. We held a meeting here at the end of day-long wandering and, after dinner, I received some visitors and am now writing this. It is past 7.30 p.m. Thakkar Bapa and others are having their dinner. After they have finished we shall have prayers. These days the prayers consist only of the Sanskrit verses and the Ramdhun. The recitation of the verses is led by me and the *dhun is* led by Mirabehn. She can sing a few *bhajans,* but I myself prevailed upon her not to take all that trouble. In the morning we recite verses from the *Gita,* completing all the chapters in a week so that we have enough verses to recite. The *bhajans,* therefore, have been omitted. Prithuraj has joined me from Calicut. He gives good help to Chandrashankar. And now another friend, selected by Swami, will be joining us. Perhaps Valji also may join us. He has made the request because of his poor health. The other members of the party remain the same.

My body is in excellent condition and gives very good service. Recently I have even stopped drinking warm water with honey in the morning. I am living on milk, fruit and one boiled and unsalted

vegetable. I don't feel the need for anything else.

You must have heard that some of the towns in Bihar have been razed to the ground by the earthquake. Because of that, I have sent some of the inmates of the Ashram, who had been released, to Bihar to help Rajendrababu. For the present, Panditji, Parnerkar, Bal, Soman, Maganbhai and Raojibhai gone there. Swami and Dhotre have gone from Bombay. Most probably Lakshmidas also will go. He has stayed back because Velanbehn is ill. She is suffering from some vaginal disorder. Did I write to you that Dudhabhai's Lakshmi is pregnant? Radha is so so. She is still at Deolali. Keshu may be said to have settled down finally. Ramdas is comfortable where he is, but is restless all the time as is his nature. Prabhudas is likely to settle in a village near his father-in-law's place. He and his Amba are very happy indeed. Devdas has joined *The Hindustan Times* on a pay of Rs. 250. Lakshmi is expecting a child. She is with him in Delhi. The delivery will take place there.

Pyarelal's time to be released is drawing near. Mahadev is being tested well, And so is Manibehn.

(I was again interrupted at this point.) I am now completing the rest of the letter at three in the morning after cleaning my teeth.

Rama has expressed a desire to leave the Ashram and go to live with her relations. I have told her that I do not approve of her intention, but I have permitted her to do as she pleases. I did not approve because Wardha suited both mother and daughter and they kept good health there. It is not necessary that she should stay with you when you are released. But you can go and see them and also take that opportunity to observe how things are at Wardha. You don't have to make a journey to see your family. That they may require you to do so is another matter. My present attitude is that everybody should choose his own way and progress along that way, and that nobody should copy me or anyone else. Ba is all right. It is a rather different tale this time. Be it so. If all the castles we build in our fancy were to materialize, the earth would soon be destroyed.

Amina must have gone by now to live with Pyare Ali. Her children seem to be quite at home in Anasuyabehn's home. But I have heard that Qureshi has other views on the subject. Even if that is so, there will be no harm whatever. Gangabehn has gone on a pilgrimage to Wardha. Everybody writes and tells me that all of them will settle down in a short time.

Sardar is enjoying himself. Chandrashankar and Mira are quite well. Chandrashankar continues to acquit himself well in Mahadev's place.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5515

149. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

February 9, 1934

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

I got your letter and the copy of *Narasaiyo—Bhakta Harino.* I will await your and Lilavati's letters, which may be sent with Mathuradas or anybody else who may be coming this side. I hope all of you are well. Jagadish[1] must have completely recovered from his illness now.

Malkani is preparing a note for you concerning those Bills. I read *Narasaiyo* whenever I can snatch a few minutes and I enjoy it immensely. I like the book. If I had time, I would go through all your books, as Vallabhbhai does.

Even if nobody is coming this side, do let me have your letters by registered post.

Work for Bihar relief is going on all over the country. I am not surprised that it has been taken up there too. I would certainly be surprised if it were not.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7531. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

[1] K. M. Munshi's son by his first wife

150. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, THEVARAM

February 9, 1934

Gandhiji, addressing the gathering, said that it was not without difficulty that Thevaram was included in the programme of his visit. At one time, it seemed as if he would not go over there, but the workers who invited him to Madura would not take 'no' for an answer.

I am glad indeed that I have come here to see your beautiful place which is at the foot of the hills and it did my heart good to see so many enthusiastic volunteers from Combai to Thevaram which seemed to be like an unbroken line of volunteers on either side. I wish that all that man power and all that energy was utilized for at least retaining if not adding to the beauty of this valley. Let it not be said that what nature had so lavishly beautified man had dirtied. I could see that, all along the broken road, volunteers had worked somewhat to make it passable for the cars. But I would like the volunteers to copy the Harijans who worked for two months in order to make a proper passable road at Vannivalasi.[1] These Harijans were a mere handful. You are at least hundred times as many as they are and therefore I would suggest to you that you make a proper road between Combai and Thevararn. It is not necessary for us always to look to Taluk Boards and District Boards to make roads for us. And don't for one moment deceive yourselves into the belief that Taluk Boards and District Boards make roads for you for nothing. Every road so made is made out of your own money. How much better then would it be if you made your own roads directly not out of your money but out of your labour which is much better than money.

And then as I passed through the little town streets, I could not help regretting that it was not kept in perfectly sanitary and hygienic condition. I could see at once as I was driving through this valley that the valley, though very picturesque, must be malarial. But I have no doubt that by judicious labour well spent you can make this valley free from malaria. If the volunteers whom I have seen this morning were to devote a little of their time every day to making this valley malaria-free, they could do so without much difficulty, certainly without much expense. I saw that you had covered up the dirt in your drains with dry earth. Deeply as I appreciate the consideration that

[1] *Vide* "Leaves from a Diary", 25-2-1934.

you have shown to me, I would appreciate it much more if you made your drains dry for all time. And I can tell you as an expert in village sanitation, having done some practical work myself, that all these things can be done if there is voluntary labour, without practically any expense whatsoever. But it cannot be done, will not be done, so long as the curse of untouchability remains in our midst and eats into the very vitals of the community.[1]

The Hindu, 12-2-1934

151. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

February 10, 1934

CHI. MARY

Your letter. It is perhaps as well you are having more of khadi and that you are to have Narmada with you.

Love and kisses to Chandra.

My going to Hyderabad on 8th or 9th March seems to be a certainty. It will be only for a few hours.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6020. Also C.W. 3349. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

152. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, SRIRANGAM[2]

February 10, 1934

I am not new to this holy city.[3] I well remember the occasion when I had a very friendly and sincere discussion with some *shastris* about the temple. I remember that we had at that time a general discussion about untouchability, and although the *shastris* had held to their own throughout the discussion, there was a courtesy and friendliness observed which were very pleasant to me. So, today as I was coming here, I found occasion to congratulate both the reception

[1] After this meeting Gandhiji drove to the Zamorin's Palace where a women's meeting was held. Besides an address of welcome, several women presented to him their jewellery. Gandhiji urged them to banish untouchability.

[2] The meeting, held in the High School playground, was largely attended. *Harijan*, 23-2-1934, also gave a summary of the speech.

[3] Gandhiji had visited Srirangam on September 20, 1921.

committee and those who have organized black flag demonstration. The reception committee, I congratulate because of their wisdom in saving every pie for the Harijan cause instead of wasting on decorations, and the black flag demonstrators for the reason that there was nothing but the black flag decorations; no vociferous shout or anything that would appear discourteous. Indeed, it was a remarkable surprise to me that those urchins who were holding the black flags were all smiling and even joined in shouts of joy.

Before I deal with the subject of untouchability somewhat more fully than I do at most places, I should like to refer to the personal loss that I feel in not having by my side Mr. Rangaswamy. I can never forget the warm affection that he retained up to the end of his days for me.

I have already, when the occasion arose for the very first time, referred to Mr. Rangaswamy Iyengar of *The Hindu* and therefore omitted "Iyengar" on this occasion.[1] For me both the losses are great, but here in Srirangam I naturally recall the name of Mr. Rangaswamy Iyengar who belonged to this place. As I told you, when I was here last time, I had that discussion with some *shastris* in connection with untouchability.

I have no doubt in my mind that the views I expressed at that time were absolutely correct. Since then I have had many discussions with many learned *shastris*, I had occasion also to study, as far as a layman like me can do, Shastras which have any bearing upon untouchability and I came to the definite conclusion that there was no warrant whatsoever in the Shastras for untouchability, as we practise it today. There is no warrant whatsoever for prohibiting the entry of any single Hindu, be he called untouchable or otherwise, to public temples. I do not propose to go into the discussion of the whole subject, but I want to give this absolute assurance on my behalf to those who are opposed to temple-entry by Harijans that there shall never be any force or compulsion used in this agitation for temple-entry. You have been kind enough in your address to refer to me as a true and sincere sanatanist. I think, in all humility and truthfulness, I can accept that description. I have claimed to be a sanatanist myself for the simple reason that from my youth up I have endeavoured to the best of my ability and knowledge to live up to the Shastras, as I have understood

[1] Someone in the audience had asked if he was referring to A. Rangaswamy Iyengar or K. V. Rangaswamy Iyengar.

them, and, as such, I feel that it is the duty of every true sanatanist to do repentance in connection with untouchability, to purify himself and get rid of this taint. It is his bounden duty to admit Harijans to the same rights and privileges that he himself possesses, but he may not be satisfied till he has endeavoured his utmost to secure temple-entry for Harijans on the same terms that he enjoys. What is more, at Bombay, in the month of September, when the fast was going on, representative Hindus met there in an assembly and came to a solemn resolution[1] in the name of Hindus[2] in general to the effect that Harijans had the same right of temple-entry as the *savarna* Hindus, and if in order to attain to that state, if there was any legal obstacle, means would be adopted to remove that legal obstacle also. Therefore, for a man like me, it becomes a double duty to prosecute the claim of Harijans to temple-entry on the same terms as caste Hindus, but that ought not to frighten a single person for the simple reason that it merely amounts to a determination to educate Hindu public opinion along proper lines. Whilst I deplore that this great temple of Srirangam is not open to Harijans precisely in the same manner that it is open to caste Hindus, I have absolutely no desire that that temple should be opened to Harijans until the caste Hindu opinion in general is ripe for such opening.

It is not a question of Harijans asserting their right of temple-entry or claiming it. They may or may not want to enter that temple, even when it is declared open to them. But it is the bounden duty of every caste Hindu to secure that opening, but it cannot be opened because a humble individual like me thinks that it should be opened. It can only be opened when there is a consensus of opinion on the part of caste Hindus. The difficulty therefore comes in only when a single Hindu says, 'so long as I am opposed to it, Srirangam temple should not be opened.' If such an impossible doctrine were to be accepted, we can never think of any progress in Hindu religion. We should never be able to deal with so many social abuses on these terms, and I do not know the history of a single Hindu temple, or for that matter any mosque or church, which has remained prohibited to a class of people because of the opposition of one single solitary worshipper.

Having made my position, therefore, with reference to temple-

[1] *Vide* "Resolution at the Hindu Leaders' Conference, Bombay, 25-9-1932.

[2] The source has "Harijans", evidently a slip.

entry so absolutely clear, I would like all those who are opposed to this movement to consider whether they will not recognize the time spirit and recognize that all the disabilities that are imposed upon Harijans can never be enforced.

I want to give my evidence before you that throughout this tour I had the privilege of seeing tens of thousands of caste Hindus in these three provinces that I had visited, namely, C.P., Andhradesha, Tamil Nad, and if you can say, the fourth, Malabar. I have not a shadow of doubt that unsophisticated caste-Hindu mind is today ready to recognize the right of Harijans to enter temples and to enjoy all the other privileges that caste-Hindus enjoy. Therefore, I suggest to those who are opposed to the movement that they should not confuse the issue. If they do not like the temple-entry question, let them leave that alone, but let them give their perfect co-operation on several things that are being done today in the country. I am supposed to meet a deputation of sanatanists this afternoon. I invite the hottest sanatanist to that discussion. It is intended to be a purely friendly discussion and I have no doubt that there are many points of agreement between them and those who are called reformers. There, I should like to leave this question.

The Hindu, 12-2-1934

153. INTERVIEW TO HARIJANS, SRIRANGAM

February 10, 1934

If it is a fact that 98 per cent of the staff of the Sangh are Brahmins,[1] it is the most creditable performance, showing that all Brahmins are not bad and that those who work in the Sangh are repentant and are in earnest about this reform. My own conviction is that real Brahmins have nothing to do with untouchability.

Q. Can you not make it a rule that half the members should be Harijans ?

A. In the Sangh, it is not possible to have 50 per cent Harijans as members, for the simple reason that Harijans are not debtors but creditors. This is a debtors' association. The fear that underlies your question is wholly unjustified, because the members of the local Sangh have no authority to spend money without the sanction of the

[1] Gandhiji had been asked why it was that 98 per cent of the staff of Harijan Seva Sangh were Brahmins.

Central Board. You will find the bulk of the money collected spent among Harijans. The idea is to spend as little as possible on administration. And you should know that members are volunteers getting nothing.

Q. Do your workers deserve our confidence ?

A. Yes, those who work in the Sangh do deserve your confidence. If you examine their administration of funds, you will find it quite satisfactory. Because you have seen some Brahmins acting badly, selfishly, you think that all Brahmins are bad. It may be that Brahmins as a class are bad though I have no proof whatsoever to confirm that charge. But I have proof to show that Brahmins connected with this movement are in an overwhelming number of cases honest men and have joined this Sangh, because they are re-pentant and because they feel that untouchability is a hideous wrong.

Harijan, 23-2-1934

154. SPEECH AT THE NATIONAL COLLEGE, TRICHINOPOLY

February 10, 1934

I thank you for the address and the purse that you have presented me. For the number of students that I see before me, I do not consider your purse to be big enough. The students in several other parts of India during this very tour have subscribed far more liberally than you have, but I am not here to criticize the slenderness of your purse. Whether whatever you have given is little or much depends upon the condition of your hearts. If, whatever you have given comes out of the fulness of your hearts, surely it must be enough. In any case, I trust that it is but an earnest determination to get rid of untouchability; for students, as I have said so often, it is not enough that they merely satisfy themselves by presenting purses to me. They have to give their leisure hours to serving Harijans and there are many ways of rendering their service most effectively. I may also tell you that in any part of India students are rendering service. I suggest to you that you appoint certain corporations amongst yourselves who will devote themselves to this service during a particular week or a day as the case may be. You can visit Harijan quarters, take charge of Harijan children, and treat them as if they were your own blood-brothers and sisters, and you can give them education that

they are so much in need of. You can take them to see different places of interest, you can give them elementary lessons in hygiene, you can sweep their quarters, and secure their co-operation in doing so. These are however only some illustrations of the many ways in which you can render service. I have no doubt that earnest students will find out several ways of rendering service. I hope that you will set about rendering this service without further delay. May God give you strength for it.

The Hindu, 12-2-1934

155. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, TRICHINOPOLY[1]

[*February 10, 1934*][2]

This is not my very first visit to Trichinopoly. I have many pleasant recollections of previous meetings; but the numbers present tonight beat all previous records. And it is a matter of joy to me that this movement of self-purification can attract crowds so large as this. I do, however, hope that you, who have attended this meeting in such large numbers, have not done so in order to look at a *tamasha.* Mine is a definite invitation to all caste Hindus to purify themselves of the taint of untouchability. I invite you to give your money also for the same purpose, and you give me liberally of your coppers, of your silver coins and even of your jewellery. It is difficult to believe that all this you do, although you are not in the movement. And if, as a matter of fact, such large numbers of people all over India support the movement, I think it is indicative of a very great reformation in Hinduism.

But among the addresses that I have received here I find one from my Mussalman friends. After saying many complimentary things about me, the address thus concludes:

> A soul (who is) more devoted to public cause and who always considers the good of others better than his own, cannot be found than in you. You are the only leader now and there is no one else. Hence we pray that you give us on this occasion the consolation of our realizing our cherished hopes of your taking up the work of uplifting, not only the cause of all the Hindus and

[1] The meeting, held in the Puthur Maidan, was according to *The Hindu,* 12-2-1934, attended by 30,000 people. At the end of the meeting a collection was made for the Bihar Earthquake Relief Fund.

[2] From Gandhiji's itinerary published in the *Harijan,* 23-2-1934

Christians, but also of us, Mohammedans, in a word, the public cause, i.e., of our people getting their rights of citizenship and of their being saved from their economic bondage.

I may, in answer, give this absolute assurance not only to these Mussalman friends, but through them to all whom it may concern, that in the evening of my life I am not likely to take up a sectional cause to the injury of the public cause. And if at the present moment I appear to be advocating a sectional cause, you may depend upon it that behind that sectional cause lies deep down the desire that the whole of the public may benefit by it. For I do not believe that life is divided into separate air-tight compartments. On the contrary it is an undivided and indivisible whole; and, therefore, what is or may be good for one must be good for all. Whatever activity fails to stand that unmistakable test is an activity that must be abjured by all who have the public weal at heart.

Having throughout my life believed in this doctrine of universal good, never have I taken up any activity—be it sectional or national—which would be detrimental to the good of humanity as a whole. And in pursuing that universal goal, I discovered years ago that untouchability, as it is practised today among Hindus, is a hindrance not only to the march of Hindus towards their own good, but also a hindrance to the general good of all. He who runs may discover for himself how this untouchability has taken in its snaky coil not merely caste Hindus but all other communities representing different faiths in India, that is to say, Mussalmans, Christians and others. In dealing with the monster of untouchability my own innermost desire is not that the brotherhood of Hindus only may be achieved, but it essentially is that the brotherhood of man—be he Hindu, Mussalman, Christian, Parsi or Jew—may be realized. For I believe in the fundamental truth of all great religions of the world. I believe that they are all God-given, and I believe that they were necessary for the people to whom these religions were revealed. And I believe that, if only we could all of us read the scriptures of the different faiths from the standpoint of the followers of those faiths we should find that they were at bottom all one and were all helpful to one another.

Hence it is that I have not hesitated to ask all non-Hindus to help me with their prayer in this mission, and it is because I have a living faith in my mission and because that faith is based on an extensive experience that I have not hesitated to say with the greatest delibera-

tion that, if we, Hindus, do not destroy this monster of untouchability, it will devour both Hindus and Hinduism. And when I ask you to purify your hearts of untouchability, I ask of you nothing less than this—that you should believe in the fundamental unity and equality of man. I invite you all to forget that there are any distinctions of high and low among the children of one and the same God.

And therefore it is that I have not hesitated to plead on bended knees before those caste Hindus who call themselves sanatanists that they should join hands with me in this movement of self-purification. If they would only patiently study it and its implications, they would discover that there are more points of contact than of difference between them and the reformers. They cannot possibly, if they will study the movement, justify themselves in subjecting to indignities all those who are considered untouchables. Not far from Trichinopoly there is a place called Mel-Arasur. There the Harijans have claimed to use public tanks in common with the others. Law permits the use of these tanks by Harijans. Nevertheless caste Hindus have taken the law into their own hands: and I understand that in a variety of ways they have persecuted these brethren of ours. This is but one illustration out of many that I could give you of the ill-treatment of Harijans. No religious sophistry can possibly justify conduct such as this.

Harijan, 16-2-1934

156. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

February 11, 1934

CHI. AMALA,

I have your three letters at the same time. I am glad you are happy. You may certainly learn Gujarati. You must not play with your body. Keep it in good order by taking proper food and do not neglect your health on any account. Do not imagine all sorts of evil. It is wrong to fear me.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI AMALABEHN
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI
B.B.&.C.I.RLY.

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum And Library

157. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KARUR[1]

[*February 11, 1934*][2]

I must not take many minutes. You cannot be comfortably sitting in the sun as you must have been for a few hours, and I have yet to cover a distance of 76 miles, nor is it necessary for me to say much, for your purses and addresses show that you are alive to the object of the mission. I appreciate the message that some sanatanists have sent through the members of the Reception Committee. Some of them, I understand from your address, have been good enough to give their own mite towards Harijan uplift, but they have sent me their advice that I ought to drop the claim that I am putting forth for temple-entry on behalf of Harijans. Claiming as I do to be a sanatanist as they themselves are, I cannot give up the claim on behalf of Harijans to enter our temples precisely on the same terms as sanatanist Hindus do, but I can give them this absolute assurance that so far as I am concerned, and so far as Harijan Sevak Sangh is concerned, there never shall be a single Harijan entering a single Hindu temple unless there is a clear or rather clearest possible consensus of opinion of temple-goers to that particular temple that Harijans should enter. My prosecution of the claim therefore ought not to affect a single opponent of temple-entry, for temple-entry will surely depend upon their being converted to my view. So long as they remain opposed to temple-entry, it is quite clear, from what I have told you, that there can be no temple-entry by Harijans, but I do want to give this warning that, so far as I can judge, public opinion is daily veering round to the fact that *savarna* Hindus will fail in their elementary duty to Harijans if they prevent them from making use of public temples precisely on the same terms as caste Hindus do. Remember please, that the reformer and the sanatanist base their interpretation of the duty of caste Hindus upon identical Shastras. Their interpretations differ undoubtedly. Society can only gain by both parties courteously, gently and honourably putting their own interpretations before the public.

The Hindu, 12-2-1934

[1] This was a huge meeting. Addresses of welcome were presented on behalf of the Karur Municipality and the public.

[2] From Gandhiji's itinerary published in the *Harijan*, 23-2-1934

158. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, ERODE[1]

February 11, 1934

Gandhiji thanked them for the addresses and purses and said that they would not expect him to speak for long at that time of the evening, knowing that he left Trichinopoly that day very early in the morning and that he had to go another 42 miles by motor to the place of his night halt. He was glad that he was allowed to take all addresses as read, as he was in receipt of copies of them in advance. He was glad to know of the Harijan work done by the local Municipal Council and he asked them not to be satisfied with the work already done but to continue their work till untouchability was rooted out from their hearts. In the eyes of God there was no difference between man and man and it was a sin to hold any difference. The Hindu religion was in danger and removal of untouchability would certainly avert it. He knew that sanatanists did not agree with him. But if they had rightly understood the Harijan movement, its principles and work, they would have no grievance against him. He was trying to meet sanatanists wherever possible in his tour, and to convince them to have a change of heart.

The Hindu, 13-2-1934

159. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, TIRUCHENGODU[2]

February 11, 1934

FRIENDS,

I thank you for these addresses and your purses. You do not expect me at this late hour of the night to make a long speech. I must also confess that I am fairly tired; nor perhaps is it necessary that I must say much to you. You know the burden of my message and it is in a few sentences. It is high time that we changed our hearts and got rid of untouchability altogether. And that means, we must abolish all distinctions of high and low. We are children of one and the same God and God could not possibly do anything worse with

[1] About ten thousand people attended the meeting. Besides the civic address, various other institutions presented addresses of welcome along with purses. At the end of the meeting the addresses were auctioned and a collection was made for the victims of the Bihar earthquake.

[2] About 5,000 people attended the meeting. At the end of the meeting the addresses were auctioned and a collection was made for the victims of the Bihar earthquake.

his own creation. It is your own experience as parents that you do not observe distinctions among your own children. It is therefore that I have been always saying that it is a great sin to have untouchability among us. It is not a divine institution. It is man-made and if Hinduism and Hindus are to live, it must now be unmade. Let caste Hindus pray to God that this curse of untouchability be removed from their hearts. Let us say with one voice that Harijans are entitled to the same privileges and rights as caste Hindus are.

I hope you have not forgotten the sufferers in Bihar. Although it is so very late, I would gladly give some minutes for collections for Bihar. And while the volunteers collect money, I propose to sell these addresses.

The Hindu, 13-2-1934

160. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[On or after *February 11, 1934*][1]

DEAR DAUGHTER,

You are stupid. Who told you I was displeased? Do you not see I have put myself in front of you? I came up to you twice and you were asleep. I do not come to you often, for I am busy. But I direct everything from here. But you are stupid, obstinate and sensitive. No silence today or tomorrow. You must learn to obey cheerfully. Your peace lies in obedience not in wilful silence or anything else. That is the meaning of discipline and faith.

Did you understand?

BAPU

From a photos tat: G.N. 292; also Bapune Patra-8: *Bibi Amtuss alaam Ke Nam*, p. 44

[1] According to the addressee, this letter was written by Gandhiji on his reaching Rajaji's Ashram where she was lying ill; Gandhiji had reached the Ashram on the evening of February 11.

161. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

February 12, 1934

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I had a talk with Miss Lester about Midnapore and asked her to see the Governor. She wrote a letter to him to which he replied by wire. She is now going. You should read the letter I have given to her. I have asked her to see you and learn all the facts. Give her all the information. If it is necessary, arrange for her to meet Dr. Bidhan and Satisbabu. She will leave on Friday to be back here with me. She has been given some money for the expenses and her ticket has been paid for. Shall I charge it to you? Of course, Jamnalalji is always there. I do not quite know what would be the correct thing to do.

I have written this in great haste. Your letters have been received. I shall answer them by and by. I do not get the time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 7945. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

162. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, PUDUPALAYAM

February 12, 1934

FRIENDS,

You know that here I am not supposed to have come to visit the village really but to visit the Ashram.[1] It is highly unlikely that I would have come to Pudupalayam but for the Ashram. That does not mean that I do not want the change of heart here also that I am asking for from all caste Hindus. But it means this, that I have come to see what service the Ashram has been rendering to you. The Ashram being in your midst, my visit to you should be considered as superfluous. If I discovered that in spite of the Ashram being in your midst for so many years, you have not yet got rid of the taint of untouchability, I should very nearly despair. As a matter of fact, places like Pudupalayam ought to serve as a proper test in order to know how far the caste-Hindu mind has been touched on the matter of untouchability.

[1] The Ashram was started by C. Rajagopalachari in 1926 for constructive work among the villagers. Removal of untouchability was one of its aims.

For you have in your midst a body of the servants of the people who in their own life have no taint of untouchability about them at all. They are all pledged to regard Harijans as their own blood-brothers and sisters. I would certainly like to think that you are also treating the Harijans in the same manner. But I know that it is not your position today. Though you have made considerable headway in that direction you have still your doubts about the necessity of removing untouchability altogether. You still like the distinction of high and low. You still feel, some of you at any rate, that if Harijans came into their own they will not give you the same service that they are giving today. I think that it is wrong; it is sinful to keep persons under suppression simply because, if their suppression was removed, they might not render us the service that they have been rendering hitherto.

We have no right whatsoever to force service from fellow human beings. I can therefore only hope and pray that you will get rid of whatever untouchability there is still left in you. Believe with me that untouchability has no divine sanction, but that it is a positive sin. I did not expect the purse you have given me. Your purse I consider to be a handsome purse. I have no doubt that you have heard of the province of Bihar and you must have heard about the earthquake that has desolated many of its fair and rich cities.

I understand that the purse you have presented is just now collected and it is absolutely a spontaneous offering. Therefore I dare not suggest that you should make collections for Bihar at this very moment; but I would like you to think of your suffering countrymen in Bihar and put together whatever money you can and send that money to Rajendrababu. You should know that nearly 25,000 people have died and many more thousands are today homeless and without clothing and living on doles supplied to them.

The Hindu, 14-2-1934

163. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

PUDUPALAYAM,
February 13, 1934

BA,

We are in Rajaji's Ashram today. Nearly 250 persons must have dined here. The same number slept in the place last night. Mathuradas was among them. *Harijan* Sastri and his wife also have come along. Valjibhai is in the party. His health cannot be described as good. I got your letter. You remember Asharbhai of Tirupur, don't you? He and his wife Padmavati had got ill after they were released from jail. They are somewhat better now. There was a long letter from Bal today. He and Raojibhai are working together and looking after the store. Soman and Parnerkar are in Patna. Maganbhai looks after the journals. Bhansali is living in a cave near Than. He has got his lips stitched up, but an opening has been left through which a tube can be inserted. He drinks through it flour mixed in water. He eats nothing else. He wears a loin-cloth made of bark. I had a letter from Chhaganlal Joshi. He is all right. These days he gets milk, etc., in his food and so keeps good health. He reads a lot. There was a letter from Pyarelal in which he has described his progress in the study of the *Gita*. His health is fairly good. Gangabehn has left Wardha and returned to Borivli. From there she will go to the Ashram. There was a letter from Devdas. He is quite well. Amtussalaam is lying in bed in front of me. She has been having fever, but is better today. She will go to Sabarmati when she is all right. Krishnakumari is in Kashi and lying ill at her paternal uncle's. Velanbehn is being looked after in her illness. I have written to Madhavdas. There has been no reply. I will let you know when I get one. I am sending copies of your letter to Ramdas, Devdas, etc.

Blessings to all sisters from

BAPU

[PS.]

I omit the discourse today. I hope you will not mind if I do that sometimes? I have no time at all and, therefore, cannot write it well. I will send you the slivers.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 13-4

164. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

PUDUPALAYAM,
February 13, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

It is in Raja's Ashram, and it is Tuesday morning. About 50 people have joined it, but he is able to manage them all. The climate is so fine that there can be no difficulty on its account.

Muriel Lester and her friend joined us at Coimbatore. They left yesterday to see the Governor of Bengal. The suggestion was made by me. The subject of discussion will be exclusively Midnapur. I don't think anything will come out of the effort, but it was our duty to do this much. The two ladies will return on Sunday.

Amtussalaam is laid up in bed. She is lying just in front of me. Her heart is gold, but her body is brass.

You must have read the Poet's attack[1]. I am replying to it in *Harijan.*[2] He of course made amends afterwards. He gets excited and writes, and then corrects himself. This is what he does every time.

Bhansali has got his lips stitched up. He mixes flour and water and drinks the liquid with a straw. He gays he got a tailor to stitch up his lips. And he adds that he enjoys complete peace of mind. He intends to wear a loin-cloth or a shirt. He is somewhere near Than in Kathiawar.

There was a very good letter from Chhaganlal [Joshi]. He has read a good deal. His mental condition also is good. His health is good. It seems he has also been getting milk, etc., in sufficient quantity. The date of his release is drawing near.

I have permitted Amala to go to Sabarmati. Just now she feels quite happy.

Valji has come here. His health is so so. Swami's friend, Himmatlal Khira, has come. His health has not been fully restored. I, therefore, don't think that he can stay here. Mathuradas has come for a few days. There is nothing special behind the visit.

I have received Rajendrababu's call. I shall have, therefore, to

[1] *Vide* "Rabindranath Tagore's Statement".
[2] *Vide* "Superstition *v*. Faith", 16-2-1934.

break off the tour somewhere and go. I have sent a wire and am awaiting a reply by wire. I have informed him that I cannot go before the 24th at the earliest.

Ba's letter is enclosed.

Devdas is happy in Delhi. Prithuraj is carrying on well. His work is satisfactory.

Lakshmidas must have gone to Patna now. I am not thinking just now of sending any more workers.

I have just received a letter from Bal. The Ashram batch is working hard. It seems to be giving a good account of itself. Bal and Raojibhai are in joint control of the store. Parnerkar and Soman[1] are in Patna. Maganbhai[2] is in the publicity department.

A copy of Ba's letter is enclosed.

Please be satisfied with this much today.

Blessings to both from

BAPU

[PS.]

There is a letter from Kusum from Broach. She has been to Africa in connection with her brother. She had a long letter from Pyarelal. But its contents are meant for me. He has written in it about the *Gita* and about his studies. I was forgetting an important thing. I have just received the Government's reply[3] to the effect that I cannot see Mani and Mahadev.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 76-8

[1] Ramachandra J. Soman

[2] Maganbhai Prabhudas Desai, joint editor of *Harijanbandhu*

[3] *Vide* 1st footnote of "Telegram to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", 3-2-1934.

165. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, NAMAKKAL[1]

February 14, 1934

FRIENDS,

You have brought me to one of the most picturesque sights in all India and an ideal place for holding a meeting such as this. You have pre-sented me with a number of addresses and purses and made different other gifts. The movement which is now going on is one of religious self-purification. Through this we must endeavour to attain a status of absolute equality for Harijans, whom caste Hindus have suppressed for centuries. I regard your monetary offering as a token of whole- hearted support for this movement. I see from the Taluk Board address that you have been endeavouring, in whatever way you can, to help the Harijan cause. I hope, however, that you will not cease your efforts until Harijans attain perfect equality with the caste Hindus to which I have just now adverted. I have here an address from the Harijans. They say that they have built a temple by the public subscription of philanthropic men. But, evidently, it is unfinished and they need financial help to complete it. I hope that leaders here will go into the matter and do whatever is necessary. The Harijans would like me to visit the *cheries* and the temple site. I wish I could go and see them. But it is hardly possible now, seeing that I have a heavy programme in front of me for the day. Now I must proceed to the disposing of these addresses and these articles you have given me.

I see you have not yet made any collections for the stricken people of Bihar. I would, therefore, like volunteers to spread themselves among the crowd and collect what they can. I take it that you know 25,000 people have been swallowed up by mother earth in a second. And while we here are enjoying ourselves, more or less, thousands of our countrymen in Bihar are shivering from cold and are shelterless. I would, therefore, like you to subscribe liberally for the Bihar Relief Fund.

The Hindu, 16-2-1934

[1] The meeting was held at 7.50 a.m. and was attended by over fifteen thousand people. Addresses of welcome were presented to Gandhiji on behalf of the Taluk Board, the local Harijans and others.

166. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, SALEM[1]

February 14, 1934

I have had to carry out a strenuous programme today and you have given me a heavy agenda with little time to speak after it. I have to catch the train to Tanjore at 7.20 p.m. and so I wish to finish this work soon. Nor is it necessary for me to speak to you now, about the messageof my tour. In one sentence I will say that all castes must have equal rights. When we feel that we are all God's creatures, there can be no untouchability in our midst. We are all Harijans, I think that caste Hindus are not acceptable to God because we have not done our duty to the Harijans. If we are to get God's blessings, we must elevate the Harijans. They must be given the same privileges as are enjoyed by caste Hindus. This great crowd prevents me from speaking further. I would remind you of Bihar and the sufferings of the people of that province from the earthquake. I shall speak about it if you will allow me that pleasure. If you have not helped your brothers in Bihar, I will like you to help them as much as you can. You do not allow me to speak now.[2] I shall now auction these things and then finish this work.

The Hindu, 16-2-1934

[1] Over fifty thousand people attended the meeting. Twelve addresses of welcome and as many purses, including those from the Municipality, citizens, District Board and various other organizations, were presented to Gandhiji, as also many valuable gifts of silver and gold.

[2] The audience had become noisy.

167. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHARMA

February 15, 1934

BHAI SHARMA,

I have your telegram. I am writing this in a moving train. There does not seem to be any hitch now in your leaving for Wardha.

Amtussalaam has well and truly fallen sick. I shall meet her on Monday. Could you possibly come to Madras before going to Wardha if she has not recovered by then? Send me a wire if you can come. I do not wish to inconvenience you for nothing. She has an amazing faith in you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha*, between pp. 54-5.

168. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

February 15, 1934

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

You must be better now. I have sent a letter to Dr. Sharma. I hope to find you fully recovered when we meet in Madras.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 293

169. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

NEGAPATAM,
February [*15*][1], *1934*

BHAI JIVANJI,

I got your letter. You must have read in Chandrashankar's letter that I did not get the permission.[2] I shall be in Belgaum most probably on March 5/6. I would be happy if Durga and you could see me there.

[1] Gandhiji was at Negapatam on 15th February.

[2] To see Manibehn Patel and Mahadev Desai in the Belgaum Prison, *vide* "Telegram to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", 3-2-1934.

You may see Mahadev earlier. I certainly have something to write in reply to Mahadev's letter, but since we shall be meeting in a few days, I don't write anything just now. Tell him I am well. He ought not to take it to heart that I shall not be able to see him. Inquire and find out how Girdhari is doing. I am keeping excellent health. Raja is with me. It is not certain how long he will stay. I am likely to have to go to Bihar earlier than expected. I shall know more on the 20th. Ask Mahadev not to worry about anything.

Give the accompanying papers to Kakasaheb.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9938. Also C.W. 6913. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

170. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

NAGAPATTAM,
[*February 15, 1934*][1]

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

I have your letter.

I have read Dinshaw's letter and your note. It seems to me that now there is no point in my giving my opinion in the matter. Those mill-owners who hold independent views with regard to artificial silk can follow their own course. Many mills have not kept the pledge at all. Actually, there is no effective organization of the mills. I do not find that they are bound by any moral obligations. Hence, we should be content with whatever work can be got out of them through entreaty.

I do not approve of everybody rushing to Britain, though occasionally I may be of assistance in that. But that even people like you should go there in search of peace and physical comfort is too much. Are there not enough number of places in India? If not Mahabaleshwar, go and stay at Abu or Coonoor. Go to Mussoorie. Go to Darjeeling. Almora is the best, where, in the distance, is the beautiful Ramakrishna Math. There is one at Ooty too. It is a beautiful place.

[1] From the contents and from 'Nagapattam' in the date-line where Gandhiji had been on February 15, 1934.

Even a person used to the western style of living can stay there. Go to the mountain resorts in Burma. There are beautiful places in Ceylon also. But if you find comfort only in Britain, what is wrong with the British rule? You have taken to legal practice out of necessity. I would expect you to spend the minimum not the maximum of the money you earn out of the profession. Remember that Britain means the West.

Moreover, do you know what kind of fire is raging in India? On the one side is Bihar, on the other side is Bengal and on the third side is the Frontier Province. When there are such cataclysmicdisturbances, how can you think of going out? Even if one cannot do anything, one can at least be present here and write? Once when someone was flogged, Ramdas Swami could not protect him. But for every weal made by the cane on the victim's back, Ramdas Swami showed one on his own back. This may be a legend, but I have seen with my own eyes the father who collapsed and died on hearing about the death of his only son. If our love has extended outside, when our own people are burning why should we also not burn at least a little? I have said what I wanted to say. What use is showing one's wisdom to a person who is already wise? After all, you are your own master. Do what you think is your duty.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 7529. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

171. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, TANJORE[1]

February 15, 1934

I do not know whether you enjoy it or not, but I must confess to you that the scene presented before me is a magnificient scene; not because of the crowd that surrounds me but because of the sun just rising over our head. For delivering my message I cannot conceive a more auspicious occasion than early morning. How I wish that my message should enter straight into your heart and you felt as repentant as I do, that we and our forefathers suppressed a large part of Hindu humanity and that, in the name of religion. I have been told not once

[1] A summary of this speech was published in *Harijan*, 23-2-1934, in the usual "Weekly Letter".

but repeatedly that our sanatanist friends would associate with all other reforms with reference to untouchability, if only I would surrender the claim of temple-entry on behalf of the Harijans. They little know that that advice is tantamount to asking me to surrender the force which sustains me.

I looked at the Tanjore temple and then within probably a few seconds or a few minutes of passing by the temple, I saw the sun rising above the horizon. I asked myself whether he rose only for caste Hindus or whether he rose for Harijans as well. I discovered at once that he was absolutely impartial and had probably to rise more for the Harijans than for the caste Hindus, who had plenty of wealth and who had shut themselves in their palaces, shutting out light even beyond the rise of the sun. Poor Harijans, they do not sleep after sunrise; on the contrary, being a labourer the Harijan has to get up even before sunrise. And therefore whilst many of us may be still sleeping on our cots and on our mattresses, the Harijans get a proper sun-bath. If that temple designed by God opens out to the whole world, shall a man-built temple open less for Harijans? Not one of these temples can be opened without the free consent of those who are in the habit of going to these temples or who believe in these temples. Why should therefore the sanatanists or any other person worry about my conviction about temple-entry, when the matter was purely a voluntary thing? But what grieves me is this, that under the excuse of this temple-entry question, in many other things where the sanatanists say there is a perfect agreement they are not moving their little finger. Let them treat Harijans on terms of absolute equality in all other matters. They will then have done something to retrieve the great blunder. There I must leave my message. I can only hope and pray that all of you will recognize the simple truth and you will have sufficient strength to act according to it.

The Hindu, 16-2-1934

172. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KUMBAKONAM[1]

February 15, 1934[2]

I deeply appreciate the honour you have done me by inviting me and presenting this address to me. I appreciate it more because you have expressed your opinion in a frank and courageous manner. I must say that one expression that you have used is enough warrant for me to continue my mission. You have said I should concentrate on cultivation of intensive public opinion. I am doing absolutely nothing more than cultivating public opinion in favour of justice being done to Harijans. I know the difference on the question of temple-entry. That is my only point of difference with sanatanist opinion. Nothing is going to be done, so far as I can prevent it, or so far as the Central Board of the Harijan Sevak Sangh can prevent it, to force temple-entry. Temple-entry is a question purely for the caste Hindus to solve. If caste Hindus say as a body that Harijans shall not enter the temples, I shall say it will be unfortunate, it will be marching against the spirit of the times; but, so long as that opinion persists, no Harijan will enter any temple. My duty is merely to confine myself to the cultivation of public opinion in the direction. I come to the parting of the ways when I am told that I should not whisper a word about the subject. I cannot do that. For I feel, as a lover of my faith, to say that caste Hindus will not be doing their elementary duty so long as they prohibit temple-entry to Harijans. I hold it to be impossible for a man who has studied Hindu Shastras with an unbiased mind to feel otherwise. When an overwhelming majority favours the entry of Harijans into a particular temple, it should be opened.

Wherever I have gone and opened temples to Harijans, I have done so in the presence of thousands of caste Hindus and with their consent: the thousands of caste Hindus who were most concerned about the temple said, "We want the temples to be opened."

But if you say that no temples should be opened so long as there is one caste Hindu who says, 'No, the temple should not be opened,' then, I would say that that is coercion with a vengeance. I

[1] The meeting was held in the Municipal Council Hall. This version of the speech has been collated with that of *The Hindu*, 16-2-1934.

[2] *Harijan* gives the date as February 16, which is evidently a slip as Gandhiji was in Kumbakonam only on the 15th.

would call it exercise of force when one man says, 'My ideas ought to prevail against the idea of 9,999.' The majority should no doubt consist of Hindus who believe in temple—not scoffers.[1] Therefore without the overwhelming opinion of caste Hindus, temple-entry is an impossibility. But where there is such a majority, I should never give up my attempt to veer round others to my way of thinking. I deliberately feel that it is an insult to prohibit Harijans who conform to all the laws that are laid down for the entry of caste Hindus to temples. In justice you should not adopt that method. I say there is no sanction in Hinduism as I have been able to study it all these years for the prohibition of Harijans into temples. Nevertheless, I deeply appreciate the candid expression of your opinion. I do not think that it is proper for anybody to accept one's opinion because he has got some merit or enthusiasm for the cause. Therefore I appreciate your opinion all the more.

Harijan, 23-2-1934, and *The Hindu*, 16-2-1934

173. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KUMBAKONAM[2]

February 15, 1934

I thank you very much for the addresses you have presented to me. I have been asked in an address before me purporting to be from the Reception Committee to open a day school for the Harijans at Koranatukaruppu but I am sorry I will not be able to do so. There is no time left for me to visit that school. . . . Co-workers should not put the strain upon me of doing the work which they themselves should undertake. They may take me to *cheries* and show me the work they have done. It is their duty to keep the *cheries* clean and to open and conduct schools. In a hurricane and intensive tour my energy and time should be reserved to the chief object of my mission. And therefore I was deeply grieved when I received an anonymous telegram that I should not receive reception at the hands of those to whom the function was entrusted.

A staunch Congressman as I am, for me, in connection with this

[1] The following lines have been taken from *The Hindu*, 16-2-1934.

[2] According to *The Hindu* two addresses of welcome along with purses on behalf of the Reception Committee and the local Harijan Seva Sangam were presented to Gandhiji. This speech has been collated with the report published in *The Hindu*, 16-2-1934.

Harijan service, there is no Congressman or non-Congressman; and if there is a non-Congressman who is a lover of Harijans and a lover of his religion and has capacity to work, it is the duty of Congressmen to work under him and take directions from him. If Congressmen were to limit Harijan service to themselves, it is easy enough to see that Hinduism will not be able to purge itself of the taint of untouchability, because thousands who don't consider themselves Congressmen will remain outside the orbit of that service. Let it, therefore, be remembered by all those who have this cause at heart that, in a movement deeply religious, in a movement of self-purification, there is no room whatsoever for divisions. This movement has no political motive behind it, and the very best manner of our being able to show that there is no political motive behind it is to conserve our energy, bring on the same platform the energy of all those who consider it necessary to purge Hinduism of this sin of untouchability[1].

Harijan, 23-2-1934, and *The Hindu*, 16-2-1934

174. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, NEGAPATAM[2]

February 15, 1934

You have overloaded me with these frames containing addresses. I have been pleading for no addresses, no frames. I laugh but what counts behind that laughter is that absolute sincere conviction that those addresses and frames are wholly unnecessary in connection with a movement like this which is absolutely and purely for self-purification. But since you will insist upon presenting so many addresses, I will endeavour to turn them to Harijan account by selling them. And those who will present such addresses should take care that they help in taking to Harijan service and I wish that those who contribute either their money or their labour or their lot to this noble cause will share with me the belief that they are not only purifying themselves but raising the status of the whole of India with their purification, for seemingly though my message is addressed to caste Hindus—the so-called *savarna* Hindus—it is a message, I venture to think,

[1] The preceding paragraph has been taken from *Harijan*, 23-2-1934.

[2] Gandhiji arrived at Negapatam at 7.30 p.m. Addresses of welcome and purses were presented by the Municipality, the Charkha Sangh, Harijan Seva Sangam and Negapatam Taluk Board. At the end there was a collection for the Bihar Earthquake Relief Fund.

addressed to all mankind. If I can but succeed in persuading the caste Hindus to wipe out this curse of untouchability, I believe that Hindus would have taken a long step towards the realization of brotherhood for which the whole world knowingly or unknowingly is aspiring. I would have you believe me when I say that there is absolutely no warrant for untouchability, as we practise it, in the Shastras and I want to suggest to all who would study the Shastras the golden rule of interpretation. If you take an isolated text from the Shastras it is possible to prove in them anything that you may wish to prove. Therefore in order to save ourselves from falling into death-traps it is necessary to understand the drift of the Shastras and I make bold to say that the drift of the Shastras can only point to brotherhood and not to distinction between man and man.

The Hindu, 17-2-1934

175. SUPERSTITION v. FAITH

The Bard of Santiniketan is Gurudev for me as he is for the inmates of that great institution. I and mine had found our shelter there when we returned from our long self-imposed exile in South Africa. But Gurudev and I early discovered certain differences of outlook between us. Our mutual affection has, however, never suffered by reason of our differences, and it cannot suffer by Gurudev's latest utterance on my linking the Bihar calamity with the sin of untouchability. He had a perfect right to utter his protest when he believed that I was in error. My profound regard for him would make me listen to him more readily than to any other critic. But in spite of my having read the statement three times, I adhere to what I have written in these columns.

When at Tinnevelly I first linked the event with untouchability,[1] I spoke with the greatest deliberation and out of the fulness of my heart. I spoke as I believed. I have long believed that physical phenomena produce results both physical and spiritual. The converse I hold to be equally true.

To me the earthquake was no caprice of God nor a result of a meeting of mere blind forces. We do not know all the laws of God nor their working. Knowledge of the tallest scientist or the greatest

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Tinnevelly", 24-1-1934.

spiritualist is like a particle of dust. If God is not a personal being for me like my earthly father, He is infinitely more. He rules me in the tiniest detail of my life. I believe literally that not a leaf moves but by His will. Every breath I take depends upon His sufferance.

He and His Law are one. The Law is God. Anything attributed to Him is not a mere attribute. He is the Attribute. He is Truth, Love, Law, and a million things that human ingenuity can name. I do believe with Gurudev in "the inexorableness of the universal law in the working of which God Himself never interferes". For God is the Law. But I submit that we do not know the Law or the laws fully, and what appear to us as catastrophes are so only because we do not know the universal laws sufficiently.

Visitations like droughts, floods, earthquakes and the like, though they seem to have only physical origins, are, for me, somehow connected with man's morals. Therefore, I instinctively felt that the earthquake was a visitation for the sin of untouchability. Of course, sanatanists have a perfect right to say that it was due to my crime of preaching against untouchability. My belief is a call to repentance and self-purification. I admit my utter ignorance of the working of the laws of Nature. But, even as I cannot help believing in God though I am unable to prove His existence to the sceptics, in like manner I cannot prove the connection of the sin of untouchability with the Bihar visitation even though the connection is instinctively felt by me. If my belief turns out to be ill-founded, it will still have done good to me and those who believe with me. For we shall have been spurred to more vigorous efforts towards self-purification, assuming, of course, that untouchability is a deadly sin. I know fully well the danger of such speculation. But I would be untruthful and cowardly if, for fear of ridicule, when those that are nearest and dearest to me are suffering, I did not proclaim my belief from the house-top. The physical effect of the earthquake will be soon forgotten and even partially repaired. But it would be terrible if it is an expression of the Divine wrath for the sin of untouchability and we did not learn the moral lesson from the event and repent of that sin. I have not the faith which Gurudev has that "our own sins and errors, however enormous, have not got enough force to drag down the structure of creation to ruins". On the contrary, I have the faith that our own sins have more force to ruin that structure than any mere physical phenomenon. There is an indissoluble marriage between matter and spirit. Our ignorance of the results of the union makes it a profound mystery and inspires awe in us, but it cannot undo them. But a living recognition of the union has enabled many to use every physical catastrophe for their own moral

uplifting.

With me the connection between cosmic phenomena and human behaviour is a living faith that draws me nearer to my God, humbles me and makes me readier for facing Him. Such a belief would be a degrading superstition, if out of the depth of my ignorance I used it for castigating my opponents.

Harijan, 16-2-1934

176. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

CUDDALORE,
February 16, 1934

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got the letters from both of you. I am writing this letter before the morning prayer in Cuddalore near Pondicherry. If you can prevent personal estrangement with Sorabji, try to do so. You shouldn't mind his having withdrawn the advertisement. It is desirable that there should be no bitterness between you two. I have already started receiving letters on this subject. Bhavani Dayal has published an open letter against you. There was a letter in *The Times* [*of India*] on the opposite side too. If I can find it, I will ask them to enclose a cutting. I only tell you about the reports which reach here. Whether or not there is any truth in them, you two alone can say. Some of these reports may also be inspired by selfish motives. I send you whatever falls into my hands. Maybe these reports also affect the collections for the Bihar fund. What is the circulation of I.O. now?

Devdas and Lakshmi are in Delhi. He has been appointed on a salary of Rs. 250. Rajaji has joined me now. My health continues to be good. I enclose with this some letters from Ba.

I had asked for permission to see Mahadev and Mani, but it has been refused, I had asked for it because I am to go to Belgaum. Kishorelal has gone to Deolali. His health is fairly good. Many of the inmates of the Ashram who have been released have gone to Bihar. Kakasaheb will get imprisonment at last. They have arrested and set him free several times. They have arrested him again but this time will not set him free.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4815

177. LETTER TO GOVINDBHAI R. PATEL

February 17, 1934

BHAI GOVINDBHAI,

I have your letter. Where can I see you? Your condition is difficult to fulfil. If you get into the car with me, it might be possible. Or you may tell Chandrashankar, who will be staying behind in Pondicherry. My efforts must necessarily be limited by my capacity.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10743. Courtesy: Govindbhai R. Patel

178. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KARAIKAL[1]

February 16, 1934

It is a matter of very great pleasure to me during this tour to enter the French territory for the second time. I had the pleasure of entering the French territory for the first time in India in Malabar, in Mahe. It was a great joy for me to meet both the officials and the people there. It does not surprise me today that you have given me this purse. It can be said that it was France that first gave the world the three significant words, "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity". But it is not given to all to enforce the three things in practice and I am ashamed that Hindus have been the worst criminals in this respect. It was reserved for them to invoke the name of God for untouchability. But after having studied the Hindu Shastras for a number of years to the extent that a layman could do, I have come to the definite conclusion that there is no warrant for untouchability in the Hindu Shastras. Historians have testified from the dawn of human wisdom to the unity of God; and the unity of all life in God was taught in the earliest hymns that the world first knew—the *Rigveda*. They first taught that God was one and all; life was created by Him and born in Him. Untouchability that we practise today is the very negation of this

[1] Gandhiji reached Karaikal, a French territory, at 8.45 a.m. A huge crowd had gathered at the place of the meeting. Addresses of welcome were presented to Gandhiji on behalf of the public and Harijan Seva Sangam. Besides that a purse was also presented by the Vice-President of the Consulate General. At the end of the meeting Gandhiji auctioned the gifts.

magnificent truth. I am, therefore, glad to see this crowd of men and women and the purse and gifts they have offered testify to the fact that they at least do not believe in untouchability. You will not consider yourselves discharged from the duty that every one owesto Harijan brothers and sisters by merely paying contributions to the purse. But I flatter myself with the hope that your money and your presence here are an earnest of your determination to treat the Harijans as brothers and sisters of the same blood. I hope that you have already subscribed and, if not, you will now subscribe, to the Bihar Earthquake Relief Fund now being collected. That Divine visitation which within the twinkling of an eye destroyed over 25,000 souls, shows in a striking manner that we are all one. Let us be one in life as on the dreadful day they were one in death.

The Hindu, 17-2-1934

179. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, SHIYALI[1]

February 16, 1934

I see that some people are waving black flags on the fringe of the meeting. I congratulate them on their courteous behaviour even as they are waving their black flags. They have a perfect right to exhibit their feeling in the manner they are doing. I know that they have deep down in them the suspicion that the money that is being collected will not be used in the manner it has been proclaimed. Those that are at the back of these black flags are also under the impression that I am purely a tool in the hands of the capitalists and rich men. Whether I am a tool in their hands or not is not a relevant matter. It is enough that there is a belief that I am their tool. But I can give them this assurance that, so far as I am aware, I am no tool in the hands of anybody but God Almighty.

There are so many things, as I said yesterday, in common between those that call themselves "self-respecters" and myself. "Self-respecters" say there is no God of Justice on this earth and, therefore, they say, if they have to believe in a God, it is humanity. I confess I am superstitious enough to believe in God. But I do not propose to quarrel with them about the use of words, and if the word humanity will please them, I shall call my God by that word. They say their motto is love and sympathy. I congratulated them upon their

[1] Extracted from Chandrashankar Shukla's ''Weekly Letter"

motto and told them I could subscribe to their motto to the fullest extent. Then they said they wanted equal distribution of the riches of the world. As an ideal, I had no difficulty in subscribing to their creed. I gently suggested to them that, while they were talking about the ideal, I was endeavouring to approach the ideal by lovingly dispossessing the rich men of India of as much as they would give me, whether it is for the Harijan cause or for the sufferers of Bihar or some such cause of the poor. I am glad to be able to inform those who are waving the black flags or who are at the back of these black flags and you, the audience in general, that several thousands of fairly well-to-do men and women have gladly shared their possessions with the poor.

Harijan, 23-2-1934

180. SPEECH AT ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY, CHIDAMBARAM[1]

February 16, 1934[2]

You have in your address told me that you are conducting a night school and that some of you are interesting yourselves in the education of Harijans and rendering other kinds of service. Whatever good and useful work has to be taken up it can much more readily and much more easily be taken up by the younger generation than by the older. I have said that this is a movement of self-purification and self-humiliation. You do not need to be told that untouchability has come to us as a blighting curse. That it should have come to us in the name of religion is really sad. Yet untouchability has crept into the Hindu religion.[3]

I do not know when untouchability crept into Hindu religion. But after studying Hindu Shastras, or the books that go by that name, as carefully as a layman having no axes to grind and having no preconceptions of any kind whatsoever should, I came to the conclusion that there was no warrant in the Shastras considered as a whole for untouchability as it is practised today. There are undoub-

[1] According to The *Hindu* report, Gandhiji was received by the Vice- Chancellor of the University. An address of welcome along with a purse was presented to him. He was given some other gifts also.

[2] *Harijan* gives the date as February 17, which is evidently a slip.

[3] The preceding lines have been taken from *The Hindu.* What follows is from *Harijan.*

tedly some passages—not a single passage in the Vedas, but some passages of doubtful authenticity in the *Smritis*— which bear the interpretation that there is some kind of untouchability countenanced by them. But there is nothing whatsoever in those passages to warrant the belief that untouchability of today is a Divine institution. There is nothing in them to enable us to identify the body of men who are today described as untouchables with those referred to in those passages. I have talked to learned *shastris* who swear by untoucha-bility and asked them to show me passages enabling them to regard the present Harijans to be the ones contemplated by them. They say they rely on the census reports. You know how these reports are prepared. No student of history can wholly rely on census reports. It is not the function of census enumerators to decide who should be considered untouchables. They but give us roughly the numbers of inhabitants of various places. They give us several other statistics which cannot be considered conclusive. If you study the different census reports, you will be astounded to see that the same men who are classed as touchable in one census report are classed as untouch-able in another report, and *vice versa*. Can you imagine that on such flimsy evidence human beings can be deprived of their elementary rights? Had we not been wanting in fellowfeeling, we would not have countenanced this for a moment. It is up to every one of you to study this question; and if you come to the conclusion that it is an atrocious injury to our brethren, you will do all in your power to undo the mischief. For, if untouchability persists, Hinduism and Hindus will perish. What are the qualifications, then, required of a Harijan servant? A character that is above suspicion, boundless patience and a faith which will not be shaken by the rudest shock given to it—these are the qualifications indispensable for one who wants to serve Harijans. This is an effort to save the ancient faith of ours from disintegration. If you will work at it, it will be your real education. You may read books, but they cannot carry you far. Real education consists in drawing the best out of yourselves. What better book can there be than the book of humanity? What better education can there be than to go, day in and day out, to Harijan quarters and to regard Harijans as members of one human family? It would be an uplifting, ennobling study. Mine is no narrow creed. It is one of realizing the essential brotherhood of man. To my mind, the message of the Vedas is unity of God and unity of all life in one God. How can Harijans be left out of that unity?

Harijan, 30-3-1933, and *The Hindu*, 18-2-1934

181. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CUDDALORE[1]

February 16, 1934

I am sorry that I have not been able to come to you at a better time than this, what might be called, unearthly hour. But in order to finish the Tamil Nad tour on the appointed date and in order to accommodate Pondicherry friends at the eleventh hour, there was not any other hour possible except this. I am sure that you do not mind this accommodation for your neighbours and it was only while I was assured that you would not mind this hour that I consented to go to Pondicherry tomorrow morning. While I thank you for your purse, you will allow me to say that you could have done much better than you have done. We have no greater cause than the cause of the Harijans. Every pice or every rupee that we may pay for the Harijan cause, is merely part payment of an obligation that we have owed to them for centuries past and yet no financial compensation that we may make to our Harijan brothers and sisters can possibly undo the wrong that we have done to them and are still doing, unless we raise the bar sinister. Every pice or every rupee that I therefore get for the Harijan cause, I interpret it to mean the determination on the part of the givers that they have abolished from their own hearts distinctions of high and low. I hope therefore that, in your present life, each man and woman in this audience is showing to Harijan brothers and sisters that they are, so far as they are concerned, in every way their equals and in no way their inferiors. I hope that you have collected funds for the sufferers of Bihar.

The Hindu, 18-2-1934

[1] The meeting in the *maidan* at Manjakuppam was held late at night. An address of welcome along with a purse was presented to Gandhiji.

182. APPEAL TO ORGANIZERS AND CO-WORKERS, CUDDALORE

[*February 16, 1934*][1]

You should understand my limitations. You should also understand the object of my mission. My limitations are prescribed by my physical capacity or incapacity. They are also prescribed by Father Time. Everywhere, organizers draw up for me a programme which taxes all my energy and resources to go through from day to day. My mission today is primarily to appeal to the *savarna* Hindus and call upon them to repent for the injustice that has been done for centuries past to Harijans, to tell them in language as precise as I can command that, so far as my study of Hindu Shastras goes, Harijans are entitled to the same rights and privileges as non-Harijan Hindus enjoy, to tell them with all the emphasis at my command that, if this elementary justice is not rendered to Harijans, Hinduism must perish. Co-workers, therefore, should not put a strain upon me to do work which is their primary duty to perform. They may, when I have time, take me to *cheries* to admire the work they have done, but it is their business to sweep them clean; it is their business to open schools and conduct them. It is their business to take a ray of hope to Harijan cottages from day to day. In my present intensive hurricane tour, my energy and my time should be reserved for the chief object of my mission.

Harijan, 23-2-1934

183. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, PONDICHERRY[2]

February 17, 1934

FRIENDS,

I have great pleasure in visiting your town. You do not expect me to make a long speech; I have a very heavy programme in front of me. This message of untouchability [*sic*] is a message in which all can take part with pleasure. The removal of this curse is primary means to realize the brotherhood of man in the place of suppression and subjection in the name of religion by caste Hindus. You, who have

[1] Gandhiji was in Cuddalore on February 16, 1934.

[2] Nearly ten thousand people had gathered in the Odianchalai ground, where the meeting was held. A part of the speech was also published in *Harijan*, 2-3-1934.

come under direct French influence should have no difficulty in understanding what that means. Equality and brotherhood were brought into France several hundred years before people began to realize that there was any such thing as brotherhood of man. The bravest of them fought and bled for that realization. The aspiration for which so many heroic souls fought and bled is an aspiration that is a universal treasure. The present attempt is essentially an appeal to convert the stony hearts. And let those here understand that it is not through suppression but through full expression that divinity can be realized. I have therefore every hope that you, in Pondicherry, have no untouchability in your midst. And if you have it I hope that you will remove that blot from your midst. You have given me a purse for the sufferers of Bihar also. I wish that you could have collected more for these sufferers. You should know that nearly twenty-five thousand people were swallowed up in the bowels of the earth in the twinkling of an eye. Tens of thousands have been rendered absolutely homeless. Palaces have been razed to the ground. It does appear to me that in the light of this calamity the paltry sum of Rs. 57 is nothing. I invite you therefore to make an honest effort and send a good sum worthy of you to Babu Rajendra Prasad. And now I must hasten away and I ask you to help me in the disposal of these few things.

The Hindu, 18-2-1934

184. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR H. PAREKH

February 18, 1934

BHAISHRI PRABHASHANKAR[1],

I got your letter. I am returning the letter which you sent with it. You have not understood rightly the reason for my not mentioning your mother. Why need I be angry with you? Moreover, it would be against my nature to vent my anger against you on an ailing person. There is no question at all of my cooling off towards you. The truth is that even in personal letters I don't always make formal inquiries about others in the family, old or young. My letters to you were on business, and since your writing about your mother in your letters seemed to me in keeping with your nature, I didn't think it necessary to say anything in reply. Of course I wish her and your wife the best of health. My good wishes for their health would not be any stronger

[1] Father-in-law of Ratilal, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's second son.

if I expressed them in words. I daily recite a sincere prayer wishing good health to the whole world, and I strive ceaselessly to live fully in the spirit of that prayer. You will be surprised to know that even in my letters to Ba or to Manilal far away in Africa, I make few inquiries of this kind. Please tell Mother all this. I cannot say whether or not I shall be going to Rajkot. As I shall have to go to Bihar, perhaps I may get no time to go to Rajkot.

Though you have sent Bhagwanji's certificate, how can I disregard my own experience or change my view based on that experience? Why should you fail to do your duty because Chhaganlal[1] fails to do his? If the Doctor's intention to give the daughters a share each is clear, that should be enough for you. Ratilal can never suffer by giving the sisters their share. He himself is in no condition to look after his own affairs. I believe that you, as his guar-dian, should not permit his money to be squandered away. I don't wish to say anything to Ratilal himself in this matter, as he is incapable of thinking. Champa[2] would naturally be under your influence. Hence all the responsibility rests on you. But I see that you are not discharging it properly. What is the use, then, of your sending me a certificate from Bhagwanji or certificates from any number of other people? Manibehn[3] can afford to forgo her share and Jekibehn[4] feels utterly weak and helpless. I am sorry, but I see no justice in Ratilal refusing his own sisters their share of the property.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Bhai Bhagwanji's letter is enclosed.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8767

[1]Eldest son of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta
[2] Wife of Ratilal
[3] Daughters of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta
[4] *ibid*

185. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, VELLORE[1]

February 18, 1934

FRIENDS,

Time is short, and you have given me much work to do. Therefore, I would like you to help me to shorten the proceedings. There are two things that I want to say. Whilst I am deeply grateful to the Municipal Council and the District Board for their addresses, and to individual members for the purses that they have given me, I would like to utter a word of request through these two bodies, to other bodies, that they will conserve my energies and time, just now, when I am going through a hurricane tour, by presenting me addresses, if they mean presenting them, on the common platform. Most bodies have very kindly and generously presented addresses on the common platform. I have no difficulty in understanding, and even appreciating the natural desire of local bodies to present their addresses in their own offices. But when they are concerned with a person like me, a humble servant of the nation, trying to utilize every moment of his life for the service of the nation, they might waive their undoubted right of taking me to their own offices and make common cause with others who might present their addresses. In the midst of this noise,[2] I do not propose to mention the second thing that happened at the station last night. So far as the immediate objective of the mission is concerned, I deeply appreciate all these addresses, purses and gifts, as, to me, they are a token of your desire to help the Harijan cause and to get rid of the evil of untouchability. I hope that you will not be satisfied until the disease of untouchability is rooted out from our midst in its entirety, for, at the bottom of this movement, there is no less a desire than the realization of the Brotherhood of Man. Now I must ask you to take these things from me and give fat prices.

The Hindu, 19-2-1934

[1] The meeting, held in the Gandhi Maidan, was largely attended. Gandhiji made the speech in English and it was translated into Tamil by Dr. Rajan.

[2] The audience had at this stage become noisy.

186. SPEECH AT CHRISTKULA ASHRAM[1]*, TIRUPPATTUR*

February 18, 1934

FRIENDS,

It seems that I have come to one of my homes in coming here. I have been wanting to come to this place for—I might also say—several years, and when the tour programme in the Southern Presidency was being arranged by Dr. Rajan, I had told him that if it was at all possible, he ought to include this Ashram in the programme. But I do not want to waste many words this evening.

The whole of my party are absolutely tired out. I will therefore just give you the gist of my message, and it is this: Untouchability is the greatest sin that Hindus, the so-called caste Hindus, have committed against God and man, and I have felt the enormity of the crime so deeply that I have stated from many a platform that either untouchability goes, or Hindus and Hinduism go. And let me say what I mean by it. It is not enough that caste Hindus begin to touch Harijans. Mere touch can give me no satisfaction whatsoever. Their hearts must be touched and they must necessarily believe that it is an affront to their own dignity to consider a single human being as lower than themselves. And in that sense, you could easily understand that it is an attempt to realize the Brotherhood of Man, not merely Hindu man but man in general, no matter to what part of the world he belongs or to what race he belongs, or to what faith he belongs. And, for the caste Hindus to change their hearts, in connection with those who are regarded by them as untouchables by birth, it is merely a stepping-stone to this grand realization. Therefore, all those who are caste Hindus naturally can take part in this movement. It is their duty to do so. They have tomake the beginning. But I have invited the whole world to take part in this movement and the whole world can take part in this movement by sympathizing with and understanding the movement and by prayer to God. Repentance and reparation have naturally to be done only by the caste Hindus.

What are the Harijans to do? Since this is a movement of self-purification, they also have to play their part. And that is to examine themselves and get rid of the vices, the bad habits, for which,

[1] A summary of the speech was also published in *Harijan*, 2-3-1934.

undoubtedly, originally they probably were not responsible. Whoever was responsible, is just now irrelevant to consider. Somehow or other, these bad habits, or vices, have got to be got rid of. For instance, the laws of hygiene, personal cleanliness, they should understand and they should conform to them. If they are given to carrion-eating, they should give it up. In no part of the civilized world is carrion ever eaten, and so far as my knowledge of all the other races of the earth is concerned, there are very few races outside India who are given to carrion-eating. And since Harijans consider themselves to be Hindus, it is necessary for them to give up beef-eating, if they are given to beef-eating. Personally, I am of opinion that in a country like India, where there are millions of human beings who have to depend upon cow's milk, where they can at all get that, it is a proper thing for anybody to abstain from eating beef. The third thing is to give up drink. I know that many Harijans are addicted to drink. Some of them have told me that they should not be asked to give up the habit before the caste Hindus, who also, many of them, are given to the habit of drinking, are asked to give it up. The logic of this argument may be admitted. But there is no moral justification for saying that if one man commits a vice, others also should do likewise, or may do likewise. Why should I tell a lie because tens of thousands of my neighbours may be telling lies? If thousands commit suicide, why should I commit suicide? And I want to say that taking intoxicating liquors is almost like committing suicide, because a man or a woman who takes intoxicating liquors and gets mad, kills his or her soul, for the time being. Surely, death of the soul is far worse than death of the body. I will ask all those Harijans who are given to the drink habit to give it up.

Lastly, I do not know whether you have been told anything about the sufferers of Bihar. Bihar is the land where Sitadevi was born, and it is one of the fairest provinces of India. In the twinkling of an eye, almost twenty thousand people have been swallowed by mother earth. Tens of thousands of people are homeless, and for them not only all over India but also all over the world subscriptions are being collected. I do not care how poor you may be, I want you to give your coppers, or your silver pieces, or whatever you can, for the sufferers in Bihar.

The Hindu, 20-2-1934

187. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

MADRAS,
February 19, 1934

JAMNALALJI
WARDHA

HOPE YOU QUITE WELL. DATE MY REACHING BIHAR UNCERTAIN BUT NOT LIKELY BEFORE FOURTEENTH MARCH.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 124

188. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

February 19, 1934

CHI. AMALA,

Your two letters came the same time. I am glad you like the place and the people. You should arrange your hours as you think proper in consultation with the manager. For the girls, you should do as the manager advises. When you have acquired sufficient control you may make drastic changes. For the lice, rub spirit into the roots of the hair and wash them with carbolic soap and the lice will disappear. The hair should be combed daily with a clean comb. Let the girls take for the time being the food that is cooked for them.

There can be no harm whatsoever in your being interested in natural scenery and Islamic architecture.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

189. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

MADRAS,
Monday, February 19, 1934

I understand everything. Keep up your effort. You are bound to succeed soon. But as a result of independent thinking, I have come to the following conclusions. They may be modified with further experience. For the present think over them.

1. We must sell unbleached khadi, though we may get it bleached on special request from anybody.

2. We must now try to spread khadi in villages. We should assume that the age of cities for this work is over.

3. We must refuse to be satisfied that khadi has spread till all khadi produced in an area can be sold locally.

4. Concentrating our efforts in cities has done untold harm to our aim of making khadi a permanent feature.

5. It clearly follows from this that there should be no need to send the khadi produced in one province to other provinces. If we create several Manchesters in India, we shall kill khadi with our own hands.

6. We should apply this rule to Bihar right now and decide that it should consume all the khadi which it produces. This will be the best way of using the fund.

7. If this line of reasoning is correct, we should pay more or all our attention to the strength, evenness of texture and appearance of khadi at the production stage itself.

Please don't use all this as a reason for slackening your own effort. Sale, and that in cities, is your special field of work. If, however, you remember our original aim, it is desirable that you should plan your efforts in keeping with that aim.

(Send a copy of this to Shankerlal and get it translated into English for Rajaji. Get the translation done by Valjibhai.)[1]

How is Lakshmi? How can I expect her to write to me now?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9808

[1] This paragraph was apparently meant for someone handling Gandhiji's correspondence.

190. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

February 19, 1934

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

Ramji's letter is enclosed. You can get work from him only with the utmost gentleness coupled with equal firmness. Read my letters to him before passing them on to him.

If you experience any difficulty on account of Amalabehn, let me know.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4021

191. LETTER TO TARABEHN R . MODI

February 19, 1934

CHI. TARA,

I got your letter. I often wonder why people fall ill so often. I have finally come to the conclusion that illness is a kind of death. Death is the result of violation of Nature's laws by us, and, therefore, is a blessing. Similarly, illness also is the result of violation of Nature's laws and should be regarded as a blessing. Death and illness both give us pain because we don't look upon them as Nature's kindness to us. If we understand this truth, we would spare ourselves all the trouble which we take now to cure illness. May be we succeed in our efforts, but they seem to make our minds more sensitive and even weaker. Please do not understand from this that you should stop the treatment which you are taking. But it certainly means that you should take it with a detached mind and remain unconcerned whether the disease is cured or not. I am trying here to explain the teaching of the *Gita* in a new way.

You may convey the foregoing to Ramniklal[1] and add this: I have read your letter. You have been making good use of your time. If you didn't do that, who else may be expected to do so? When you are released, you will see many changes. But the original determination remains unchanged behind them all. If we understand it, we

[1] Ramniklal Modi, addressee's husband

shall win everything, otherwise we shall lose all. All things with name and form are bound to perish; the essence behind them never perishes. That is the case with our goal too. I realize this more and more clearly with each passing day. Give me a detailed description after you are released. I wish to write about many other things, but I am surrounded by a big crowd. It is nearing the time for the evening prayer. Hence I stop here.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

If Nanibehn can write, ask her to do so. Otherwise give me a report about her.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4179. Also C. W. 1678. Courtesy: Ramniklal Modi

192. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

VELLORE,
February 19, 1934

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your postcard. I am dictating this letter in the hope that it will reach you. I have kept excellent health, though the travelling has been quite hard. Valjibhai has joined me now. He was not keeping good health and has joined in the hope that touring in my company will improve it. Harjivan also is with me at present. He will leave for Kashmir on the 24th. The tour of Tamil Nadu will end on the 21st. After that, we have to visit Rohini and Poviya's Coorg and shall spend two days there. Then we shall be in Karnataka for ten days and after that most probably I shall have to go to Bihar. Rajendrababu wants me there. Ramdas and Nimu are in Wardha. Ramdas's mind doesn't seem to have become steady yet. Nimu is again pregnant. Devdas and Lakshmi are in Delhi. Lakshmi also is pregnant and this is the eighth month. Maruti's Lakshmi also is in the same stage. Radha is fairly well. She is still at Deolali. Keshu is in Wardha. He seems to have settled down there. Kishorelal was seriously ill. He was in bed for a long time. He has now gone to Deolali. The place will probably do him good. Brijkrishna is fairly well. He has risen from his death-bed, so to say.

I did not criticize your desire to learn English, but wrote to strengthen it. I want you and all other women to learn English. Madhavji and Mahalakshmi have arrived here today (the 19th). They wish to discuss and solve the problem of their children.

Kaka is in jail for two years, and so also is Jawaharlal. Bal is in Patna. Ba is all right. Shanta and Lalita also are with her. You may read what you like in Gujarati, I have nothing to say about it. I understand that *Anasaktiyoga* alone cannot satisfy your hunger. It would not satisfy mine, too. I may mention a few books. All books written by your father-in-law[1], all works of Ramanbhai[2], the poems of Dalpatram[3], the four parts of *Kavyadohan*[4], *Vanaraj Chavdo*[5], *Forbes's Rasamala*[6], some of the books of Manibhai[7], *Chandra-kant*[8], *Maniratnamala,* a translation of the *Mahabharata,* all works of Anandshankarbhai[9]. Is this enough to satisfy your hunger?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9382. Also C.W. 627. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

193. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

February 19, 1934

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I got your letter. Please remember that whatever they are, they are Harijans. Bear with them, for they are but a reflection of ourselves, and go on serving them with single-minded devotion, unmindful of the result. They are not even aware that the words we regard as obscene are such.

[1] Navalram Lakshmiram Pandya, a Gujarati man of letters
[2] Ramanbhai Nilkanth
[3] Dalpatram Dahyabhai Trivedi (1820-98)
[4] Anthology of poetry edited by Dalpatram
[5] By Mahipatram Roopram Nilkanth, father of Ramanbhai Nilkanth
[6] By Sir Kinlock Forbes
[7] Manibhai Nabhubhai Dwivedi
[8] By Ichchharam Suryaram Desai
[9] Anandshankar B. Dhruv

I have received the papers regarding Bidaj.

I have also heard from Chhotubhai's father.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 366. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

194. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

KODAMBAKKAM,
MADRAS,
February 19, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Today is my silence day. Preparations for the evening prayer are going on. I am surrounded by people, among whom is Muriel Lester. We are in a poor suburb of Madras today. Ganesan has found a new place. There will be a tannery, etc., here. A dispensary is already in existence. This place is like the walled enclosure of a mahajan or a dharmashala, but it is in a dilapidated condition just now. There is a verandah on four sides enclosing a big open space, in which grow three or four trees. They have had even to fetch water from a distant spot.

Miss Lester has been to Bengal. The Governor gave her three hours and even invited her to dinner. She was treated with the utmost courtesy. He assured her of his determination to tolerate no excesses, but in the end nothing came of the visit.

I must now prepare to leave for Bihar. It seems I shall have to go immediately after finishing with Karnataka. Let us see what happens. We visited the Christkula Ashram yesterday. Dr. Paton lives there. His superior is an Indian named Jesudasan. He is a good man. He is a friend of Kumarappa[1]. It is a fine place. They have built a church there and spent a large sum on it. One may say that Christianity has been given an Indian garb.

Durga and Mani Parikh have been to see Mahadev. But I have not heard from them as yet.

Nanibehn Jhaveri has been operated upon in Ahmedabad for bleeding. Tarabehn Modi is also in Ahmedabad. She is in pain.

[1] J. C. Kumarappa

I got your letter regarding Bihar. What you say is perfectly correct. I will certainly make an effort when I go there. Kripalani is likely to come tomorrow.

I am enclosing with this a letter from Kusum regarding her brother. It is heart-rending. Kusum is very careful about propriety and never crosses its limits. You must have come to know about Kaka. His efforts have borne fruit. He will now take rest for two years. You must have read about Jawaharlal, too.[1]

Srinivasa Sastri's wife is ill and is in a hospital. I had sent Mathuradas to inquire after her. I shall see what I can do tomorrow. There is a heap of papers which require to be attended to, and I have still not been able to write a single line for *Harijan.* I will do as God commands.

The frost in Gujarat seems to have damaged the crops much more than I had thought. But who is likely to listen today to the woes of cultivators?

I visited Pondicherry. I could see nobody there. Mother didn't reply at all. But Govindbhai came and saw[2] me when I was in another place. He told me the whole story. The Ashram is being watched, and so there was some risk even in letting me visit the place. Half the number of the inmates are Gujaratis. Govindbhai was also in the Ashram formerly. The daily routine in this Ashram is as follows: They get up at five in the morning. Every *sadhaka* has a separate room for himself. There are about 150 *sadhakas.* They come from everywhere. Among them are Dilip[3] and Harin[4] Chattopadhyaya, the husband of Kamaladevi. The Ashram has rented about 40 houses. The food is similar to that provided in our Ashram. Shri Aurobindo comes out only on three days in the year. Shri Aurobindo and Mother don't sleep at all. Shri does recline in an armchair between 3.30 a.m. and 4.30 a.m., but he does not sleep. The *sadhakas* have to send up their diary every day. They can ask questions. Letters from Shri and Mother are delivered to them four times a day. Between them, they write about 200 letters daily. No letter remains unattended to. Shri knows innumerable languages. He reforms *sadhakas* through secret

[1] On February 16, Jawaharlal Nehru was sentenced to two years' imprisonment for sedition.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Govindbhai R. Patel", 17-2-1934, Addenda.

[3] Dilip Kumar Roy, a musician

[4] The source has Hiren which is obviously a slip

influence on their minds. Harin Chattopadhyaya has given up drinking, etc. Liquor and meat are forbidden in the Ashram. This is the description given by Govindbhai, and he has invited me to join the Ashram. I hope you will be satisfied with this.

Blessings to both from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have received a postcard from Tulsi Maher. He is safe. He has not given more details.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 78-80

195. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

February 19, 1934

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Your letter. I am considering whether I should write to the Governor or not. The [compulsory] saluting in Midnapore has been stopped but there has been no admission of the error. Miss Lester has now asked the Viceroy for an interview. But these things can bring about no result at the moment. Still, we do not want to miss any opportunity of compromise.

Whatever the Congressmen may say Bidhan Roy should make full effort to seek an interview.

My Bengal tour is postponed at least till I have done with Bihar. We shall see about it later.

You will try to see Jawaharlal, won't you?

I send you the letters from . . .[1] and . . .[2] They came only yesterday. I now feel that . . . should be advised to remarry; and this time I consider his own choice essential though ultimately what is in his destiny has to happen. It is now useless for ... to continue to live with .... Arrangements should be made for . . . to live separately and continue further her education; and should she want to remarry she should be allowed to do so.

It might be good to send her to Wardha Mahila Ashram or some such place. I am aware of the difficulties involved in all this but such

[1] The names have been omitted.

[2] *ibid*

is our dharma, I have no doubt.

Miss Harrison will leave England on March 2. Her coming is all to the good. Haven't I written about this already?

From Hindi: C.W. 7946. Country: G.D. Birla

Blessings from

BAPU

196. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

February 19, 1934

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have been unable of late to write to you. I have now reached Madras on the morning of the silence day. I got your postcard. It would appear you are progressing. Do what Dr. Ansari says. I am going on well. Now it will be the Karnataka tour. After that probably Bihar.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2408

197. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

February 19, 1934

BHAI BENARSIDAS,

I got your letter. I have gone through the rules. My visit to Calcutta now has become most uncertain. But if I do go there I shall certainly try to find some time for you.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI
VISHAL BHARAT KARYALAY
120/2 UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD
CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2569

198. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

[Before *February 20, 1934*][1]

MET PROFESSOR[2]. LEAVING HYDERABAD 9TH EVENING. REACHING PATNA 11TH NIGHT.

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-2-1934

199. TELEGRAM TO HIRALAL SHARMA[3]

MADRAS,
February 20, 1934

DR. SHARMA
KHURJA

HOPE FAST ENDS WELL. AMTUL FREE. WILL REMAIN SOME DAYS. NO ANXIETY. PROCEED WARDHA SOON AFTER FAST.

BAPU

Bapuki Chayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, p. 55

[1] The report in the source is dated February 20, 1934.

[2] J. B. Kripalani

[3] In his Hindi letter dated 15-2-1934 Gandhiji had enquired from the addressee whether he would be able to go to Madras to see Amtussalaam before going over to Wardha (*vide* "Letter to Hiralal Sharma", 15-2-1934) . Sharma had agreed to go as regained the strength lost during his last fast.

200. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

February 20, 1934

MY DEAR CHILD,

I hope Tangai is completely out of fever now. After all you could not get honey at Pondicherry. A basket of fruit with honey was sent yesterday. Miss Lester is with me now. Agatha Harrison leaves on March 2nd.

Love to you all.

BAPU

SHRI ESTHER MENON
ANNE MARIA SCHOOL
PORTO NOVO

From a photostat: No. 124. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child*, p. 102

201. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

February 20, 1934

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

What is this? Why only a few words on a postcard? Why have you not given me all the news? How much loss has been incurred there? What is the State doing in the matter? Give me all details. I shall be leaving for Patna in a few days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6545

202. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

February 20, 1934

Two achievements stand out prominently in my Tamil Nad tour. In spite of the hard times, people have given freely; and in spite of prognostication to the contrary, tens of thousands of people, including a very large number of women flocked to our meetings, although they knew for what purpose the meetings were held.

Q. How is it proposed to harness such enthusiasm as you have aroused in the

present tour for constructive effort?

A. In order to make sure that the work will be continued, the Central Board is allowing 75 per cent of the collections to each province to be used for constructive schemes, to be produced by them. If they succeed in doing so, naturally the work done now will be all properly garnered. Constructive work will consist of conducting schools, hostels and, wherever necessary, digging wells and doing work that would tend towards the social, moral and economic uplift of the suppressed classes.

Gandhiji gave the information that total collections, including value of jewellery presented up to Sunday last, amounted to Rs. 1,06,491-1-5 in Tamil Nad.

A couple of questions were then put regarding the temple-entry movement. Gandhiji said:

While I have purposely kept the temple-entry question in the background, the sanatanists have always been keeping it before the public. My own impression is that the public mind is overwhelmingly in favour of entry of Harijans into temples on the same terms as other Hindus. But I have no desire whatsoever to force the issue. For me the acid test is of a change of heart on the part of the caste Hindus; and temple-entry unaccompanied by that change of heart is to me of no consequence. I am, therefore, concentrating my efforts on educating public opinion on the question.

Q. Have you been able to effect any change in the attitude of the sanatanists?

A. I am sure that the rank and file of sanatanists have been visibly affected by the manifestation of the mass mind. After all those who flocked to our meetings were the sanatanists of yesterday. So far as sanatanists are concerned, I cannot say that their attitude has changed, although I have noticed that they have begun to realize that the public are not with them.

Q. Are you satisfied with the provisions of the Temple-entry Bill in the Assembly? Opinion, even among those friendly to the cause, does not seem to be quite favourable to the Bill in its present form, owing to legal difficulties.

A. The Bill in the Assembly is certainly capable of improvement. When the proper time comes, I would be prepared to offer suggestions. Those who oppose the Bill are so prejudiced against it that they are not disposed even to consider improvements.

Q. Opinion among sanatanists being favourable to the uplift of Harijans, it is suggested that you can enlist their support for social uplift and leave the temple-entry

question, which is only one aspect of the big problem, to solve itself?

A. I have never been able to understand the attitude of those sanatanists who propose in a bargaining spirit that on my abandoning the temple-entry movement, they would co-operate with me on the social, moral and economic uplift of Harijans. They must respect the conscience of reformers who believe that temple-entry is an integral part of the Yeravda Pact.

When next the interviewer sought for an expression of his views on one or two political questions, Gandhiji's curt reply was that he could not answer them.

Asked about his further programme, Gandhiji said that as soon as he finished the Karnataka tour, he proposed to go to Bihar in response to Babu Rajendra Prasad's invitation.

The Hindu, 21-2-1934

203. A TESTIMONIAL

February 21, 1934

Kaimal has been a very skilful and attentive driver throughout the exacting tour in Tamil Nadu.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 798

204. LETTER TO DILIP KUMAR ROY

WARDHA,
February 21, 1934

DEAR DILIP,

It was a great grief to me that though I was in Pondicherry, I was not able to see any of you.

Ambalal Sarabhai gave me your letter of October only yesterday. It had gone with Bharati[1] to Oxford. I wrote to you about your book when I received it. I hope you got that letter.

Do write to me whenever you feel like writing. I am glad H.[2] is there. Has he given up drink altogether? Tell him he owes me a letter. I would like to hear from him.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Golden Book of Dilip Kumar Roy, p. 122

205. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

February 21, 1934

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

I got a letter from you after many days. I didn't know at all that you had been so ill. I hope you will get well soon. Now that you have been engaged, your duty towards your body has increased. Get married only after you have set your health right again. The idea of trying Sharma's treatment appeals to me, too. He is at Khurja just now, and will probably go to Wardha in a few days. If he does so, do certainly go there. His treatment too is not always effective. He himself admits that. All the same, I am personally convinced that your deliverance will come only through some such remedy as his. Write to me and keep me informed about your health and also your general progress.

I had heard about Kanu having been assaulted. But he is a brave boy and I don't worry about him. I had received Jamna's letter. Show this letter to her. I am not writing to her separately. I have written even

[1] Daughter of Ambalal Sarabhai
[2] Harindranath Chattopadhyaya, husband of Kamaladevi

this under much pressure of other work.

Give my respectful greetings to elders.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Jamnadas that I had received his letter. Ask him to write again.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

206. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CONJEEVARAM

February 21, 1934

FRIENDS,

This is about the last city that I shall have visited in Tamil Nad during this tour. It is true that on my way to Arkonam, in order to catch the train, I have to pass through Arni and one or two other places. But this is the most important place of the day. This is the peak of Sanskrit learning. There is a great temple in your midst, and therefore I should imagine that this place should be prepared to come forward to do reparation to Harijans. But such good luck is not in store for us. Sanskrit learning is still being used by some who know Sanskrit against Harijans. Your great temple still bars its gates in the face of Harijans, and I am convinced that the God of Truth and Justice cannot preside in a temple where access is denied to Harijans, and the sin of this denial falls not only on those who are versed in Sanskrit, but on you and me, and all those who call themselves caste Hindus. But I know that public opinion is rising fast in favour of opening temples to Harijans, and I would like you to persevere in formulating public opinion till it becomes so irresistible that pandits and trustees of temples notwithstanding, temples will be opened to Harijans. In one of your addresses mention is made that in this place not much work for Harijans has been done for want of workers. Surely, out of this vast assemblage there must be sufficient number of workers forthcoming who will work for Harijans. There must be students enough in Conjeevaram who would give their leisure hours to this precious service. I do hope you will make every effort to establish in this city a centre of activity for Harijans, and please remember that this is a penance of self-purification and that every one of you can purify himself by eradicating untouchability from his heart. You can, if you feel the

inward urge, demolish all distinctions of high and low, and I hope that God will inspire you to work in this great cause of humanity. Lastly, I would like you to remember the sufferers of Bihar, and while I am disposing of these addresses and other things you have given me, I will like volunteers to collect for the Bihar sufferers.

The Hindu, 23-2-1934

207. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, ARNI[1]

February 21, 1934

I thank you for your addresses and the purse. The message on the eve of leaving Tamil Nadu is that every one of us should cleanse our hearts of the sin of untouchability. We must regard all Harijans as our own blood-brothers and sisters. That means that we must forget all distinctions of high and low. We are all children of one and the same God, and, as such there can be no distinctions of high and low amongst us. Harijans should have the same rights and privileges that other Hindus have. Their children must have access to public schools. They must have access to all public wells, tanks and such other places of utility. All public temples should be flung open to them precisely on the same terms that they are open for Hindus, and if we succeed in doing these things, the natural result will be that we shall realize the essential brotherhood of man. For, removal of untouchability does not merely mean restoration of the privileges and rights of Harijans, but it means the removal of distinctions between man and man, no matter where they exist. I would like you to justify the spirit of brotherliness towards the sufferings of Bihar. I know that collections have been made amongst you, but they were only for Harijans. I hope that you will, all of you, do whatever you can towards the relief of the distress of tens of thousands of people who are homeless and foodless.

The Hindu, 23-2-1934

[1] About 15,000 people had gathered to attend the meeting. Three addresses of welcome and a purse of Rs. 801 on behalf of the general public were presented to Gandhiji.

208. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, ARKONAM[1]

[*February 21, 1934*][2]

FRIENDS,

Tonight, and at this meeting, finishes the long Tamil Nad tour. At the outset I would like to say, as I would be leaving this province presently, how thankful I feel to the police and the railway administration in the South for the help rendered to me on all the occasions throughout the province. It is a great pleasure to me to say that they were acting, the police I mean, as if they were, as they undoubtedly are, or should be, servants of the people. As I am saying this, I am reminded of a conversation I had with two gentlemanly detectives who were appointed in London to look after me. They told me that the constables in London, as the police there are called, before being detailed off for duty for the day, had to go through a rehearsal every morning, at which they had to declare, "We are the servants ofthe people and we shall act as such." Whatever my difference with the English official world, I claim to understand the virtues of my opponents. And so, I have ever recognized in the London constable an ideal policeman. I dare say as a human being he also has his limitations. But knowing, as I do, the police at close quarters in several parts of the world, I can say truthfully that my recollections of con-duct of the London constables are altogether pleasant. Therefore, it is no mean compliment that I am paying to the police from my expe-rience of them throughout the tour, when I recall the London constable.

I must not omit to mention also the volunteers, who have done duty in all parts of the South. Many of them are often untrained. In spite of their embarrassing fussiness, I would be ungrateful if I did not mention that they were, in every case, indispensable for the success of the tour. They were obliged to work under most trying circumstances, because nobody expected the unprecedented crowds which were witnessed at every place. My thanks are, therefore, due to all these parties who have enabled the tour to become the success which in my humble opinion it has been. I can only hope that my co-workers and others who are identified with the Harijan cause will reap the fullest benefit out of the tremendous awakening that one has seen through-

[1] The report of the speech in Chandrashankar Shukla's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan* has been collated with the report published in *The Hindu.*

[2] From the report of the speech in *The Hindu*

out the province. Unless the workers set themselves to their tasks immediately, there is every danger of this awakening, or the energy created by it, being frittered away. It would be a great tragedy if such a thing happened in a movement of self-purification, which this is. I hope, therefore, that all those who are connected with the Harijan cause will ever remain on the watch-tower and not only watch themselves, but watch also what the public is doing in connection with the cause.

And remember, too, the magnificent result that we intend, or we expect, to achieve from this removal of untouchability—it is no less than the realization of the Brotherhood of Man. You cannot—millions of caste Hindus cannot—do reparation to several million Harijans, whom they have suppressed for centuries, without setting free a power, a force, that will envelop the whole of the human family and knit all its members together into one. And it is because I have never lost sight of this goal that I have called this movement a deeply spiritual and exclusively religious movement. And it is because I realize to the fullest extent how untouchability, as we practise it today in the name of religion, is a stumblingblock in the realization of this brotherhood that I have not hesitated to say that, if we do not cleanse ourselves of this cursed untouchability, Hinduism and Hindus are bound to perish. As I, therefore, leave you tonight, I should like to leave you with the full hope that you will endeavour to realize to the fullest extent the ideal that I have sketched before you. It is easy enough to do so, if we will but change our hearts. May God help you to do so! I know that there are people among us who still cling to the belief that untouchability is not only not a sin, but is an obligation imposed upon us by the Shastras. As against that, I can but give you my own personal experience based upon uniform conduct for the past fifty years, and that experience is backed by a study of our Shastras such as is possible for a layman, and at that, a busy man like myself. After that prayerful study, after discussion with learned *shastris* who believe in untouchability, I have come to the deliberate conclusion that untouchability has no warrant whatsoever in the Hindu Shastras. It is a sin before God and man. The sooner we get rid of this sin, the better it is for us, for the whole world.

Now I must commence business. Whilst I am conducting auction sales, I would like volunteers to be in your midst and collect for the sufferers of Bihar.[1]

Harijan, 2-3-1934, and *The Hindu*, 23-2-1934

[1] This paragraph has been reproduced from *The Hindu.*

209. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

February 22, 1934

MY DEAR CHILD,

Two baskets were sent to you. The first one contained honey and Tamil-Hindi books I got on the way. The books might be of use there.

I hope Tangai is now quite restored.

Maria has a grievance against you. I have asked her to talk about it to you freely.

I have read the certificates. They are good. You will tell me of the result of Menon's effort.

Kisses to the children and love to you all.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 125. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child,* p. 103.

210. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

PANNAMPET,
February 22, 1934

MY DEAR SINGER,

I have your long letter through Mathuradas. Yes, I think that it lies ill with Hindus to object to the communal award whatever it may be. But the All Parties meeting has no appeal for me. I would do anything to achieve heart unity. But I see no atmosphere just yet. It will come and that sooner than many expect. I am biding my opportunity and waiting on God.

At Midnapore I am doing what I can. But what is it you suggest?

As for Bihar, I had put myself at Rajenbabu's disposal. I now leave Hyderabad on 9th for Bihar. I shall be in Hyderabad for nearly 12 hours, this time on Padmaja's permission staying with Naik. I wonder if you will be there.

Love.

SPINNER

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

211. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

MYSORE,
February 22, 1934

BA,

I am writing this letter in a train. I got your letter. I had so much work to do that I could not write on Tuesday. Today is Thursday. You can ask me to do anything for you or put me any question that you may wish. I will attend to it or reply to it. At least I will try. You have asked me about Harilal. He had gone to Pondicherry. There also he begged for money and indulged in drinking. He even got some money. I do not know where he is now. I think he will now remain what he is. We must wait till God gives him wisdom. Will not our good and evil actions, too, have their effect in this? How sunk in passion I was when he was conceived! You and I must reap as we sowed. Parents are in this way undoubtedly responsible for the character of their offspring. Now there is only one thing we can do, namely, purify ourselves. Let us be content with the effort that we are making for that. Our purification is bound to have a conscious or unconscious effect on Harilal. There has been no letter from Manu recently, but Jamnadas gave me news about her. I will write to Sushila. Purushottam has been betrothed to Harakhchand's daughter. His health cannot yet be considered as good. The wife of Ranchhodbhai's brother has died, and Motibehn remains depressed because of that. Her responsibility has increased now. Ambalalbhai and Mridula came and saw me. He and Saralabehn are going to England. They will stay there for three or four months. Devdas-Lakshmi are all right. Lakshmi does feel the burden of the pregnancy. Ramdas-Nimu are well. I am sending a copy of your letter to them. The original letter I am sending to Manilal. I have sent a copy to Vallabhbhai too. He also worries about you. There has been no reply yet from Madhavdas. Mathuradas is with me. He will stay for a day or two more and then return to Bombay. Esther Menon has returned from England. She came and saw me. Miss Lester has gone to Ceylon. Rajaji parted from us yesterday at the end of the Madras tour. It seems he will go to Delhi. Amtussalaam is still weak, and so I have kept her in Madras. Rajaji will look after her. You must have received the slivers. Write to me again when they are exhausted. I will send some more. Kusum has been

very much affected by the death of her brother in Zanzibar. Pyarelal was released yesterday. Kishorelal is at Deolali. He is somewhat better now. Lakshmi will have her baby at Bardoli. Manjukesha will look after her. Moti or Lakshmi also will be there at that time. Nanibehn Jhaveri has been operated upon for the trouble in her joints. I think I have given sufficient news. I will leave Hyderabad on the 9th and go to Patna. Rajendrababu has called me there. Prabhavati also is there. It seems I shall have to stay in Bihar for quite a while. And now the discourse.

If you do not remember the *bhajan* "The Name is my support, Your Name is my support", look it up. These days I keep thinking about the idea. Tulsidasji has sung a great deal of the power of the Name. The Name means Ramanama or any name of God. Tulsidas has said that the name Rama is more powerful than Rama himself. In other words, the man called Rama who lived in the past was subject to limitations. His body was perishable but his name is immortal. The qualities of the man who bore that name had limitations, but the attributes of God signified by Ramanama have no limit. We may imagine in Him any attributes that we like. Because His attributes are infinite, God transcends all attributes. That is, He is above all attributes. Since we cannot exhaust the attributes of God by any enumeration of them, cannot we say that He is above attributes? If we inscribe in our hearts the name of God which has such power, there can be no doubt that we shall cross this sea of life and reach the other shore. Repeating that name will drive away all miseries. That is, we shall endure whatever suffering falls to our lot. If such repetition becomes automatic with us, we would need nothing else. That is why the poet wrote and sang that song:"My only support is Rama's name," all else is false. "All friends of the body are selfish and will refuse to accompany us at the end." If we have learnt to repeat Ramanama, it alone will go with us.

Blessings to all women from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 14-6

212. SPEECH AT HUDEKERI[1]

[*February 22, 1934*][2]

It is a matter of very great joy to me that God has enabled me to come to this beautiful land of Coorg. Ever since I have come here, I have been simply drinking in the natural beauty of the place; and I presume your hearts are as beautiful as your scenery. And yet there is lurking in my mind a doubt as to the beauty of your hearts; for I see that, though there is not that poisonous untouchability here that is found in the plains, there is still some of it in your midst. For, in your address you have said that temples are not open to Harijans. It is just like a father saying to some of his children, 'I give you food, clothing, housing but I won't let you come to the sanctuary of my heart.' Imagine what those children would feel. So long as you do not allow Harijans to enter temples on the same terms as you do, I cannot say your hearts are beautiful. I wish, therefore, that you will take a lesson from Nature and wash out that black spot on your hearts.

Harijan, 2-3-1934

213. SPEECH AT PANAMPET[3]

[*February 22, 1934*][4]

A moment's reflection will show you that it cannot but be a religious question, because we have been told by those who claim to understand Shastras that untouchability is a divine institution. When it comes to me in the garb of religion, I can only meet it by showing that religion has nothing to do with it as we practise it today. Then, take the temple-entry question. What is it if it is not a religious question? In order to have temples opened, I have got to touch your hearts; and anything that touches one's heart, touches one's faith, immediately becomes a religious thing. Indeed, those sanatanists who claim that un-touchability is of divine origin fling the taunt in my face that I know nothing of religion. Of course, I cannot endorse that taunt, for the simple reason that the whole of my life is saturated with the

[1] This has been taken from Chandrashankar Shukla's "Weekly Letter".
[2] From Gandhiji's itinerary
[3] Extracted from Chandrashankar Shukla's "Weekly Letter"
[4] From Gandhiji's itinerary

religious spirit. I could not live for a single second without religion. Many of my political friends despair of me because they say that even my politics are derived from my religion. And they are right. My politics and all other activities of mine are derived from my religion. I go further and say that every activity of a man of religion must be derived from his religion, because religion means being bound to God, that is to say, God rules your every breath. If you recognize that truth, naturally God regulates every activity of yours. But, then, it is as a man of religion who is trying to live up to it every moment that I am here to tell you that untouchability is not of divine origin. I am here to tell you, after having searched the Shastras in the manner in which a layman like myself can do, that untouchability is a sin against God and man. I am here to tell you that there is no warrant in the Shastras for untouchability as we practise it today and that, therefore, it is sinful to deny entrance into our temples to Harijans.

Harijan, 2-3-1934

214. NOTES

FOR BIHAR'S SAKE

Hardly a meeting has been addressed by me since the calamity of Bihar without reference to it. It must gladden Babu Rajendra Prasad's and every Bihari's heart to know that I have had the most generous response even from the poorest in the most distant villages. Harijans have vied with non-Harijans in giving their coppers. Where they have not given anything at the meetings, they have been able to say, 'I have already sent my mite to Rajendrababu.' At these meetings women have given their bracelets and men their rings, young students their fountain pens because they had nothing else to give. All together, up to now, the Bihar collections made at the meetings have amounted to Rs. 5135-4-1. Of course, this is nothing compared to the amount required for the relief. But the value of the gifts of the poor lies not in their metallic content, but in their being evidence of genuine sympathy. Man does not live by bread alone. Fellow feeling is often more precious than bread.

And whilst I am writing about the villagers' contributions, I am glad to be able to announce the receipt of a cable remittance of Rs.1,969-3-2 from the Yokohama Indian merchants. The amount has been duly forwarded to Babu Rajendra Prasad at Patna. There is no

doubt that the Bihar calamity has stirred the hearts of men and women all over the world.

GOKHALE AND HARIJANS

Several young men have, during the tour in the South, written to me attributing to Brahmins untouchability and other evils from which Hindu society is suffering. I am writing this note the day after the 19th anniversary of Gokhale's death. I am, therefore, naturally reminded of his love of Harijans. It is not possible to imagine a man freer from the taint of untouchability than he. With him there was no inequality between man and man. Once, in South Africa, a man had come to him, asking him to attend a meeting of a sectional character. He was disinclined. An appeal was made to his Hinduism. He was indignant over what he felt to be a reproach and said with a warmth which astonished the hearers, "If that is Hinduism, I am not a Hindu." He could not stand the assumption of superiority by any person or community. In his dealings with fellow men, he exemplified in his own life the spirit of universal brotherhood. He mixed with the greatest freedom with the so-called Pariahs. There was no patronizing air about him. He evolved the ideal of service. Public men and women were not leaders but servants. For him the greatest leader was the greatest servant. And Gokhale was a born Brahmin in every sense of the term. He was a born teacher. He loved to be called Professor. He was humility personified. He surrendered his all to the nation. He might have amassed a fortune, but he deliberately chose a life of poverty. Will not the haters of Brahmins be proud of a servant like Gokhale? And Gokhale was not the only one of his kind. It is possible to make out a long list of Brahmins who have stood up for equality between man and man. To decry the Brahmins as a class is to deny ourselves the benefit of the selfless service for which many of them have specially fitted themselves. They stand in no need of certificates. Their service is its own reward. In the words of Gokhale written on a momentous occasion in his life, "Service undertaken at the bidding of no one cannot be given up at the bidding of anyone." The safest rule, therefore, is to take a man at his present worth, irrespective of his birth, or race or colour. In the campaign against untouchability, we may despise no service, be it ever so small, so long as it is service and and not patronage.

In response to my speech to the students of the Trichy National College, I got the following letter, signed by thirteen students, on the day of my departure from Trichy:

We, the following students of the National College, paying our respects to you, Sir, express our desire to work for the cause of the Harijans and other schemes like child-welfare scheme. But students as we are, our time is not wholly ours. We are willingly prepared to devote our leisure hours for such holy duties.

We humbly request you, Revered Mahatmaji, to be kind enough to give us instructions for our future guidance and bestow on us your sacred blessings.

The signatories are to be congratulated on their decision. Let us hope that they will carry it out with unflagging zeal. The signatories want guidance. The only guidance I can give is to ask them to do to the Harijans as they would have the Harijans do to them if they were untouchables. In other words, they should regard Harijans as their blood-brothers and sisters. If they will visit Harijan quarters in that spirit, they will always find the right word and the right action.

Harijan, 23-2-1934

215. 'AN APPEAL FOR PEACE'

A correspondent from Bengal writes:

The present quarrel between the reformers and the sanatanists is causing much bitterness on both sides. It is desirable that the quarrel should be stopped at an early date. I would, therefore, appeal to both the parties to show mutual tolerance. India is a country of many races and creeds, and it is essential for the peace and progress of the country that there should be tolerance between different creeds and races. Tolerance has been one of the most beautiful features in the history of India. There is no reason why there should be quarrel and bitterness when Gandhiji carries on a reform movement against untouchability. But it is necessary for Gandhiji and his followers to show some tolerance while carrying on their movement. The reformers might think that untouchability is bad. But they should not try to deprive orthodox people of the right to worship as they like in their own temples.

If the Anti-untouchability Bill and the Temple-entry Bill are passed, will not orthodox Hindus be deprived of this right? Suppose an orthodox Hindu builds and endows a temple and allows all *savarna* Hindus to enter the temple and worship the deity, but excludes Harijans whom he considers untouchable. According to the Anti-untouchability Bill, his desire to exclude the Harijans will not be respected, because the law will not recognize any person as untouchable. According to the Temple-entry Bill, if the majority of the upper caste Hindus desire to admit the Harijans, they will be able to override the desire of the donor. That would be obviously unfair.

I believe that among the reformers there would be many who would not like to deprive orthodox Hindus of reasonable facilities in the matter of conducting religious ceremonies. Such liberal reformers should not support these Bills which would deprive the orthodox people of their legitimate rights as explained above. Difference of opinion should not cause bitterness, if there is no attempt on the part of either party to deprive the other of its reasonable privileges.

As regards existing temples, it is necessary to consider the interests of three parties: (I) reformers, (2) sanatanists and (3) Harijans. At present Harijans do not enjoy the right to worship in the temples. It is proposed that they should be allowed to worship in the temples. The sanatanists believe that they cannot worship properly if Harijans are admitted. The sanatanists may be wrong in thinking so, but there is no doubt that they do think so. Is it not natural that they should feel sorely aggrieved, if a privilege which they have enjoyed long is taken away? Will it not be the most peaceful way of introducing the reforms to build new temples where reformers and Harijans may worship together? The reformers may, of course, boycott orthodox temples. If (as the reformers claim) a great majority of the countrymen are against untouchability, the orthodox temples will be deserted and the reformers will be able to demonstrate that untouchability has left the country. Gandhiji is collecting lakhs of rupees in his tour and should have no difficulty in building new temples for reformers and Harijans if he likes. The money is worth spending, if it can save a split among the Hindus.

At Trichy, the other day, a pleader, describing himself as a liberal sanatanist brought a written statement from which I extract the following:

We believe that the item relating to temple-entry may be

dropped for the present and the resources of all Hindus including the sanatanists may be pooled together for promoting the material, moral, educational and spiritual welfare of Harijans in consonance with the tradition of Hindu religion, so that the Harijans may become the equals of *savarnas* in every respect and there will not be any curse of untouchability, if they are treated as our kith and kin. No impartial observer will fail to recognize that the removal of the customary social disabilities effecting the Harijans is absolutely necessary. The reform must proceed gradually step by step. Our Harijans should be admitted to our homes just as Europeans and Muslims are admitted. Our Harijans should be admitted to the several callings or professions open to *savarnas* and ought not to be segregated, and they should be taught to assert their rights of elementary citizenship. It is likely that, in the course of fifty years, our Harijans will be admitted into the temples.

These are two typical statements. Both want the temple-entry question to be dropped. The first letter makes an "appeal to both parties to show mutual tolerance" but in effect insists on even one sanatanist excluding Harijans from temples, even though all the rest may be prepared to admit them. In naked terms, this is coercion of the worst type—a minority of one bending the will of the majority to its will. None but tyrants are reported by history to have succeeded in enforcing their will against all others, and that they did to their own utter destruction. So far as I can speak for the reformers, their position is plain. They do not wish to see a single temple opened to Harijans until there is an overwhelming majority of existing temple goers in favour of such entry. There is, therefore, no question of compulsion or coercion, unless the enforcement of the will of an overwhelming majority may be so called. The majority may be, ought to be, expected to be forbearing and accommodating towards a minority. How that can be done I have already shown in these columns. But the minority wants no accommodation, it insists on the present position remaining intact. This would mean stagnation and ultimate death. Hence it is that I have been saying: either we kill untouchability or it will kill us as surely as the rising of the sun on the morrow.

There is no question of mutual bitterness or quarrel. Reformers have no bitterness on account of the sanatanists' opposition, for they give to them the same credit for honesty of purpose as they claim for themselves. The reformers are showing exemplary toleration in that they refrain from opening temples where there is a fair division of

opinion, even though a clear majority may be in favour of reform. The reformers' task is, therefore, confined to the conversion of popular opinion to their side. And if the sanatanists will but recognize this undoubted right, there need be no friction whatsoever.

Whilst the first writer asks nothing from the sanatanists and wants everything from the reformers, the second recognizes that the temples will have to be opened some day to Harijans. But he pleads for time and recommends common work in all other matters. The only amendment I would suggest is that, whilst the temple-entry question may not be given up altogether, the agitation should be carried on with the greatest consideration for the orthodox sentiment. If the sanatanists would respect this very moderate position, instead of staging opposi-tion, sometimes not quite wisely, and would make common cause in all other matters, the whole movement could be carried on with the greatest decorum and without wounding any-body's susceptibilities.

As for the proposed legislation, it is necessary for the sake of removing the obstacle that is said to exist at present in the way of reform. There is no compulsion in it, unless the prevalence of the will of one person against any number, be it ever so large, is insisted on. And in no case have I any desire to see the Bills passed in the teeth of the opposition of a majority of Hindu members. I should wait till the majority of Hindus of the existing or any future legislature or legislatures are ready for the long overdue reform.

Harijan, 23-2-1934

216. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

February 23, 1934

DEAR SISTER,

I had received your long letter. But I did not reply to it thinking that perhaps you would be above to come. But you did well in not coming. I notice that your body has become weaker than I had thought. You seem to be more worried than you describe. That should not be the case. I have imparted knowledge to you. It is no bookish knowledge but the knowledge of heart. Even if we wished that all our family members live in financial comfort, it would not always be so. We have seen kings being reduced to paupers. But that which is really important anyone who desires can learn and retain. Why then should you be perturbed if somebody in the family loses money? Does real

happiness depend on money? But why need I dwell on all this before you? You are already aware of it. That is why I have only to ask you to practise what you already know. Make conscious efforts to forget family troubles.

I have explained to Mridu that she should go with you. Whether she doe so or not, if an operation is advised, you should return only after undergoing it. Ask the children to write to me some time. Let them remember what I have told them. I cherish great hopes of them. My blessings to them.

May God grant you peace.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11140. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

217. SPEECH AT VIRAJPET[1]

February 23, 1934

It was an agreeable surprise to me to receive an address in very choice, correct Hindustani. I am a lover of Urdu and Urdu literature. But I have noticed that down South it is rare to find an Urdu scholar; and I was not prepared to find good Urdu writing and speaking in Coorg.This address asks me to do whatever is possible in order to unite Hindus and Mussalmans throughout India as you are united here. Of certain things which I hold as dear as life itself, Hindu-Muslim unity, i.e., unity among all the races in India, is one; and as I did some years ago in Delhi, I should be prepared, given the occasion and the inspiration, to stake my life again for the same cause. My life is one indivisible whole, and all my activities run into one another; and they all have their rise in my insatiable love of mankind. Seeking to realize oneness of life in practice, I cannot be happy if I see communities quarrelling with one another or men suppressing fellowmen. I am, therefore, glad that this address admits that this Harijan movement is one for realizing the substantial oneness of man. And if I have thrown myself heart and soul in the campaign against untouchability, it is because I know that untouchability is the greatest stumbling-block in this realization.

Harijan, 2-3-1934

[1] Extracted from Chandrashankar Shukla's "Weekly Letter", dated February 23

218. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING MERCARA[1]

February 23, 1934

I finish this evening this all too short visit to your beautiful province. Though the two days, or almost two days, have been strenuous, they have been most agreeable to me—agreeable not merely because of the magnificent scenery that surrounds you, but also because untouchability has such a slight hold on you. In your address, you have confined yourselves to facts and figures in connection with Harijans. I appreciate the manner in which you have prepared your address, which in fact is a report. It gives me illuminating and exhaustive information about Harijans. It is a matter of regret that Harijans here are daily becoming landless. I see that what little land they still possess is lying fallow. It is up to the local Harijan Sevak Sangh to examine critically this situation and see what it is possible to do to prevent the Harijans from losing their lands. It may be that there are economic causes applicable to all which it is not in your power to prevent. It, therefore, becomes necessary for the Harijan Sevak Sangh to understand the economic condition of Harijans who have become landless. It may be that as a result of the investigation it will be found that, though they have lost their land they are not the poorer. But, should it be otherwise—as I fear it is—it will be up to the Harijan Sevak Sangh to apply the necessary remedy in order to improve their economic condition.

But, in my opinion, the greatest question with you, so far as Harijans are concerned, is the temple-entry question. It seems to be monstrous that public opinion here should not be able to open temples to Harijans. I see that you have no fixed prejudices such as are to be seen on the plains. I would, therefore, ask all workers who have the Harijan cause at heart to apply themselves to the solution of this problem; and I would like you to cherish the ambition that you may give the lead to India in this respect.

I would like also to mention to you the sufferers of Bihar. You are living somewhat in isolation from the rest of India. You seem also to be mostly self-contained. I hope that has not hardened your hearts.

[1] According to *The Hindu*, 25-2-1934, the meeting was held at Raja's Seat Maidan at 6.30 in the evening. About 15,000 attended. At the end of the meeting a collection was made for Bihar relief.

After all, you are but a part of the whole of India; and the sufferings of Indians in the extreme North should be shared by you as by others. You may know that Bihar is a sacred land because of the birth of both Sita and Gautama Buddha. Our countrymen in Bihar believe that every particle of the soil in that land is sacred. And to a man like me, it would almost appear that God has selected that sacred land for castigation for the sin of untouchability. It does not matter to me in the least degree that my imagination may be wrong. But let us cherish the thought and make greater effort to purify ourselves. After all, if we will feel that all mankind is one, the distress of one single man on any part of the earth should be shared by us. How much more so, then, when it is in connection with those whom we consider as our kith and kin! And after all, that to me is one of the implications of the removal of untouchability. If we believe that all mankind are touchable, it necessarily follows that we should share the sufferings of all mankind. Therefore, whilst I conduct the auction, volunteers will go amongst you, and you will give to them whatever you can. It is not that you will thereby give much material help to the sufferers. But in the face of a calamity so great as has befallen Bihar, every copper given is a token of tangible sympathy with the sufferers. And do we not all know that sympathy in distress often goes much further than material help brought to us?

Harijan, 2-3-1934

219. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

February 24, 1934

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

Miss Schlesin has complained bitterly against the article on Thambi Naidoo which appeared in *Indian Opinion*. I think her complaint is justified. The criticism of Thambi is altogether improper. There is a saying in English to the effect that one must speak nothing but good about the dead. Miss Schlesin even says that the criticism is not just either. Please write to her. And explain the matter to me too. Besides, take whatever steps may be necessary to perpetuate Thambi's memory.

We are in Coorg today. It is a small hilly tract below Mysore. It is a very beautiful region, quite small in size. The population must be at the most a hundred and fifty thousand. It is 6 a.m. just now. I rose

at 2.45. At seven we descend from here and go to Mangalore.

I shall be going to Bihar from Hyderabad on the 9th. I don't know how long I shall have to remain there. I hope Sorab is helping you in the Bihar collection.

I stop here today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4816

220. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, PUTTUR[1]

February 24, 1934

FRIENDS,

It is a matter of great pleasure to me to be able to come to your taluk. I thank you for all these numerous addresses, purses and ornaments. Karnataka is always used to receiving me with many ornaments and many purses. I do not think any province has beaten Karnataka in the giving of Jewellery. I think that you have made a good beginning. In your principal address you tell me that suffering as you do from malaria and general depression you cannot present a substantial purse. I do not know what you call a substantial purse. But I can tell you that the purse you have given me is substantial enough from my standpoint. I know that you are none too rich and you tell me that because you cannot present a substantial purse you will lay your hearts at my feet. Well, that is an expression which is merely courteous. But instead of putting your hearts at my feet, if you will lay them on my head, I should be more than satisfied. If your hearts are at my feet, I can make no use of them. But if you will put them on my head, I can do without any purse and any ornaments and make of them the fullest use possible. I propose to take you at your word and take your hearts away with me and hold you to account, if you dare to neglect Harijan service hence-forth, and the way to do it is simple. You can all, men, women and children treat Harijans as if they were our own blood-brothers and sisters. When I have said that, I think, I have said all.

I was to have gone to the Harijan *cheri* in the afternoon but

[1] The meeting was held at the Travellers' Bungalow and was attended by more than four thousand people.

having come here half an hour in advance of time we were taken to the *cheri* just now. If we treated them as our brothers and sisters, we would certainly not have neglected them to an isolated spot as these Harijans are, and it cannot be a matter of congratulations to you that they are cut off from you by a ditch, so that in the monsoon season the Harijan *cheri* must be almost inaccessible. Then on going to the *cheri*, what do I see? The children are absolutely unkempt. I do not know that their hair has ever been washed. I suggest to all these sisters and these young men who have Harijan service at heart to go to the *cheri* and transform it. It will cost you nothing but a little time. And that will be one test of your word that you have given your heart to the work.

Lastly I hope that you have collected funds for the sufferers of Bihar. I hardly think I need describe the sufferings of Bihar to you. But this you should know that the sufferings of Bihar are going to last for some time. Therefore as Rajendrababu has suggested, you can make your payments to Bihar in instalments. I am supposed to leave for Bihar on the 9th March. And I should like to be able to tell the Biharis on your behalf that you are fellow-sufferers with them. Now I must hurry forward.

The Hindu, 26-2-1934

221. SPEECH AT BANTWAL

February 24, 1934

There is really no message[1] to deliver to you who have produced so many purses and made so many presents. But if you will have a message you must realize that your duty is not finished with giving presents and purses. But your duty commences with the realization that this is a movement for self-purification. Therefore, I expect you to wash yourselves of the sin of untouchability. And that means that you will forget all distinctions of high and low. It is not elevating, but only degrading, to imagine that a single human being can be inferior to oneself.

Harijan, 9-3-1934

[1] Gandhiji was asked to deliver a message after he had received a length of cloth woven from yarn spun by a person in the spinning *yajna*.

222. SPEECH AT JNANODAYA SAMAJ, MANGALORE[1]

February 24, 1934

I thank you for the purse and for your address. I am glad that you have frankly admitted the existence of the drink evil amongst fishermen here. I myself belong to a fishermen's village. And therefore I know what fishermen do. And I suppose, it is from their habits that we have got the phrase, ''He drinks like a fish." I am glad, however, that your Sabha has been tackling this drink evil. I am glad that your effort is being crowned with some measure of success. Having worked at prohibition, I know how difficult it is to deal with this drink curse. I hope, however, that you will not relax your effort because you may not see full success. I would leave with you one suggestion: that you must not be satisfied with merely asking the people not to drink. I have found that many people drink because they have nothing else to do. Therefore you must find out a variety of ways whereby you may occupy their attention, their minds, their hands and their feet. You must study what other people have done wherever this drink habit has been tackled.

What you say about the necessity of salt for fishermen is but too true. I have certainly every hope that some day or other we shall tackle this salt problem. I have absolutely no sense of despair about it. It is a humane cause. And no humane cause, if it is backed by proper effort, has ever suffered reverse.

The Hindu, 26-2-1934

223. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, MANGALORE[2]

February 24, 1934

In the course of his reply, Gandhiji said that this was not the first time he had met the women of Mangalore. He remembered at least two occasions when they had tired him out by their gifts of jewellery. He would now see what they would do for Harijans. He could not be satisfied with a couple of hundreds of rupees. If the Hindu

[1] Gandhiji was presented an address by the Jnanodaya Samaj, a body engaged in temperance work among Moghaviras, a community of fishermen. The speech was also reported in *Harjan*, 9-3-1934.

[2] Extracted from Valji Desai's "Weekly Letter". The meeting, which was held at the National Girls' School, was attended by about 1,500 ladies.

heart was to be cured of the taint of untouchability, women must do the lion's share of the work. It was a movement of purification, in which women were any day more efficient than men, for women had been the guardians of religion all the world over, owing to their superior capacity for renunciation and penance. He hoped, therefore, that women would remain in the forefront of the Harijan movement and fulfil all his expectations. He did not think there was a single mother present who discriminated between her children. If human beings made of clay were rarely guilty of such discrimination, how could God, Whose progeny all of us are, classify one class of men as touchable and another as untouchable? He was certain that there was no warrant in the Shastras for untouchability. A religious book could never teach irreligion. *Advaita* (oneness) was the fundamental principle of the Vedas, which ruled out all distinctions between man and man. He, therefore, hoped they would not consider anybody as untouchable and would look upon Harijans as their blood-brothers and sisters. He has just been to Sjt. Rangarao's Harijan School. If he had not been told that the children were Harijans, he would never have discovered it, as he noticed no difference between them and the children he now saw before him. The Harijan boys had sung as sweetly as the girls sang here. To consider anyone as inferior to oneself was a heinous sin, and he prayed to God that they would not fall victims to it. Gandhiji then appealed to them on behalf of the suffering people of Bihar, whose very dust, as the Biharis said, had been sanctified by the footfalls of Sita and Buddha.

Harijan, 9-3-1934

224. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MANGALORE[1]

February 24, 1934

FRIENDS,

I am grateful to you for all these addresses, purses and various presents including caskets. I am not a stranger to you, nor you to me. I have therefore no hesitation in endorsing the opinion expressed by the giver of purses that it was a very poor purse. But I appreciate your difficulty. You have already sent a good sum for the relief of distressed Bihar, and you are no exception to the general rule that prevails all over India, perhaps all over the world, the deep depression that has overtaken it. I am therefore not surprised at the leanness of your purse. I know that untouchability is not a cause which can be

[1] A summary of the speech was also published in Valji Desai's "Weekly Letter", *Harijan*, 9-3-1934. About 10,000people attended the meeting. A purse of Rs. 1,001 and several addresses of welcome were presented to Gandhiji.

advanced by mere purses however fat they may be. Not even a crore of rupees subscribed by a few millionaires can remove the stain of untouchability, unless the hearts of caste Hindus are changed. Therefore, as I have said at many meetings, I would like to repeat here also that every rupee that comes to the Harijan cause is of no value unless it is backed by a change of heart on the part of the donors. Throughout the Central Provinces, Andhradesha, Malabar, and Tamil Nad, it has gladdened my heart to see tens and thousands of people, giving their coppers for me in spite of the warning given to them by me that they must be a token of their determination to get rid of untouchability. I therefore rejoice to see in the municipal address that there is a change of heart on the part of the citizens of Mangalore in connection with untouchability and, as their address says very properly, without the opening up of temples to Harijans removal of untouchability cannot be said to be complete. If Harijans are an integral part of Hinduism, they must have the same rights and privileges as to temple-entry as the caste Hindus enjoy. No amount of economic betterment can possibly bring Harijans on the same platform as caste Hindus without the same rights and privileges for temple-entry as caste Hindus. But temple-entry is not a matter that can be forced. It can only be brought about by educating caste Hindu opinion. I hope therefore that you will make ceaseless efforts to educate caste Hindu opinion in the right direction. You have saved my time considerably by giving me the information that you have understood your duties by the sufferings of Bihar. But I would like the volunteers to spread in the midst of the audience and if those who have not given at all to the Harijan purse will kindly give their coppers or whatever they would like to give, it would be indication to me of your own wishes in the matter. Meanwhile I shall conduct a sale of all the numerous things on behalf of the Harijans.

The Hindu, 26-2-1934

225. LEAVES FROM A DIARY[1]

February 25, 1934

There is a little place called Vannivalasi, about 10 miles from Udumalpet in Dindigul District, which was one of the places I had to visit on my way to Dindigul. It may be called a model hamlet, having

[1] The Gujarati translation of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 25-2-1934.

become one inside of a few months through the earnest labour of a few staunch workers in the Harijan cause.[1] The Secretary of the local Sangh is an enthusiast. He has prepared a diary of the work done and he presented me with an English rendering of it. I condense it below:

The condition of the village before the starting of this Sangham.

POPULATION

(1)	Harijans	185
(2)	Others	125

HARIJANS' HABITS

1. Almost all the adults were in the habit of drinking.
2. They lived on thieving.
3. Morals loose.
4. They used to go to the surrounding villages for taking part in riots on receipt of money.
5. There were no literates in this village.
6. They were very lazy.
7. Sanitation bad.

OTHER HINDUS' HABITS

1. They were also all illiterates.
2. Several of them were leading the lives of thieves.
3. Addicted to drink.
4. Laziness was not uncommon among them.
5. Morals not so bad. 4-4-'33

On 29-5-'33 sixteen people of a hill tribe, by name Koottathar, inhabited this village. Their main occupation is begging.

Only 20 people (belonging to 3 families) are living on their hereditary properties. All the others of the village are chiefly coolies or something equivalent to that.

This was the condition of the village and its people before the starting of the Sangham in this village.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Thevaram", 9-2-1934

	CONDITION AFTER
5-4-33	The cleaning of *cheries* and bathing of Harijan children, youths and old people were begun.
27-5-33	Entered Harijans' houses, removed the filth inside them and completely whitewashed them.
29-5-33	We began to fetch the Harijan children to the river Amaravati and induce them to bathe.
,,	Public meeting. Asked the Harijans to live pure and be busy.
,,	Allotted a separate quarter for the homeless Kootta-thar tribe, who were alien to the village.
2-6-33	Three houses belonging to the Harijans were reconstructed.
,,	Reconstructed the road running from east to west. Reconstructed the village bathing-ghat. Streets were reconstructed. A house that stood in the middle of the road was demolished and a new one was built in a good quarter of the village.
9-6-33	It was made a rule that all Harijans must begin their daily work only after prayer in their houses.
13-6-33	The Harijans promised that they would not touch pork.
17-6-33	The public promised to do away with the evil of untouchability.
25-6-33	Began to look after the profession of the Thotti (scavengers).
1-7-33	The workers of this Sangham began to visit the Harijan houses daily and clean them.
9-7-33	A separate quarter outside the village was allotted for latrines.
17-7-33	The streets were reconstructed.
8-8-33	Four new houses were built.
18-8-33	A new house was built by a caste Hindu for Harijans' use.
7-11-33	The villagers began to reconstruct the road running westwards.
30-11-33	A street was reconstructed.
12-12-33	Light posts were removed to the bathing-ghat.

14-1-34 A separate road was constructed for the arrival of the Mahatma to the village. Two hundred people worked to construct the same.

The neat appearance of every cottage and the lay [out] of streets furnished an ocular demonstration of the solidity of the work. The workers' daily routine is also interesting and worth copying.

Morning:	5 to 6	...	Prayer
	6 to 7	...	Cleaning streets
	7 to 8	...	Bathing of Harijan children
	8.30 to 9	...	Breakfast
	9 to 11.30	...	School hours
	11.30 to 12	...	Rest
Evening:	12 to 1.30	...	Cooking and taking meals
	1.30 to 2	...	Rest
	2 to 4.30	...	School hours
	4.30 to 5.30	...	Reading newspapers and telling villagers the important news of the day
	5.30 to 6.30	...	Going to the *cheries* and giving talks about sanitation
Night:	6.30 to 7.30	...	Cooking and taking meals
	7.30 to 8	...	Rest
	8 to 10	...	School for adults

This is one of the rare examples of what earnest, persistent work can bring about.

Harijan, 16-3-1934

226. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

February 25, 1934

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your letter. I am glad fruit reached you safe.

Another basket was sent. Do not hesitate to ask for more when you have the need.

I don't wonder at Maria's dragging my name with your alleged breach of promise. My conscience is clear. I would not have tolerated

your remaining with me if a breach of promise to the children had been involved. But from Maria's letter I gather that her complaint against me is deeper and wider. I wish she would discuss the whole thing with you. And if she does not, you need not worry. I have written to her at length and invited her to unburden herself completely.

Yes, I would like Menon to get the Bangalore job. I have gone through the certificates. They are good and should procure Menon a good job. Do you want the certificates back?

I leave for Patna on 9th March from Hyderabad (Deccan).

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 126. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child*, p. 103

227. LETTER TO NAN MENON

February 25, 1934

MY DEAR NAN,

I have your very good letter. I am glad you are spinning every day. You know the golden rule: whatever you do, do well and with your whole heart in it.

Love and kisses.

BAPU

My Dear child, p. 120

228. LETTER TO TANGAI MENON

February 25, 1934

MY DEAR TANGAI,

I hope you are quite well. Never wander in the hot sun. Eat plenty of fruit and avoid starchy things.

Love and kisses.

BAPU

My Dear Child, p. 120

229. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

February 25, 1934

MY DEAR PLAYMATE,

Can't give you a love letter. Whether I am to plant your stolen tree or do some other thing depends upon you and not me, for you will be pulling the strings. Only don't you tax me overmuch—and then you can't brave the sun. More when we meet. You must be fit.

Love.

SLAVE-DRIVER

SHRI PADMAJA NAIDU
GOLDEN THRESHOLD
HYDERABAD
DECCAN

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Muse-um and Library

230. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

February 25, 1934

CHI. MRIDU,

I received your letter. I have destroyed it. You should not have stretched the meaning of what I said. I merely warned you. Ultimately only your decision matters. In such matters anybody else's opinion should be considered as of no value; because the same act can uplift one person and degrade another. It depends on one's mental state. Neither Mummy and Papa nor I would wish you to be weak in the least. I am certain that none of us could wish that your progress should be stopped. I would not even give any advice that would inspire doubt in your mind on this score. So your decision is of course acceptable to me. Besides, I would not even know all the details.

I do not feel that you have in any way shown disrespect to me, or are doing so by your decision not to go to England. Have no fear. I am not going to stop guiding you or advising you when it is necessary. This is because I have great expectations of you. In every way only good is in store for you. I did not think either that you had got excited. My blessings are ever with you.

Your earlier letter is lying with me. I have had a long discussion with Bhai about the definition of swadeshi. The Swadeshi Board cannot be of much use right now. Even so, the Board should issue certificates if only to establish its control. I am beginning to feel convinced that no certificates can be issued in regard to products of mills which cannot ensure control on the prices of these products or on the working conditions of the labourers or on other managerial matters. Therefore, the swadeshi propaganda body should only concern itself with popularizing such goods as are not in demand but on whose production and consumption it can have some control. In other words, such a body can and should have control only on small-scale and cottage industries. It would have been well if we could have discussed this matter. But we had very little time to talk. Only for this reason, you may come to Patna if you want. Before that there is onlyone Tuesday when I shall be at Belgaum. You may come over there if you wish.

One question in your last letter has remained unanswered. Seeking release on parole cannot be permitted. Maybe there are conditions under which this would be proper but I cannot imagine them. Vallabhbhai did not consider it even when Dahyabhai was on his death-bed. He was under a lot of pressure, too. That is why what you write is correct.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11187. Courtesy: Sarbahai Foundation

231. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, MANGALORE[1]

February 25, 1934

MR. PRINCIPAL, BOYS AND GIRLS,

It is a matter of great pleasure to me that early in the morning I was able to see two beautifully kept clean *cheries* in which the scavengers of Mangalore are living, and then the sacred function of laying the foundation-stone of a common temple organized by the Old Boys' Association and now I find myself in the company of the

[1] The meeting was held in the Kanara High School compound. Gandhiji delivered the speech after unveiling the portrait of Vithalbhai J. Patel. A summary of the speech was also published in Valji Desai's "Weekly Letter", *Harijan*, 9-3-1934.

students. You have given me a small purse. I call it a small purse because in several places students have given me much more than you have done. I do not want to draw distinctions and cavil at the smallness of your purse because I have no recollection of Mangalore, and for that matter Karnataka, having ever proved stingy or miserly. All the recollections that I have of Karnataka are very pleasant, so far as subscriptions and collections are concerned. I do not think that throughout my various tours, Karnataka has come second best. It has always occupied the first position, that is, it has been amongst the first to subscribe. Therefore, I have no doubt that this time also you have done your best. I know how depression has overtaken our entire land.

You have told me that you have got now two or three Harijan students and, circumstances being as they are, you have taken some pride in informing me of this fact, and it gives me some pleasure, but it gives me also considerable food for thought that we should be able to congratulate ourselves that there are even two boys belonging to the Harijan community in this big High School, because you are numerous and your High School, as you very properly say, ranks very high and in a High School of this nature there are only two Harijan boys. Well, that is like an oasis in the desert of Sahara, very pleasant and very nice when you are walking through a desert. But the question is why we should find ourselves in a desert at all and why this school should not have hundreds of Harijan boys here. No matter where I go, I discover the same capacity to draw the best out of you and amongst Harijans also. I was talking to an elderly lady, who has got a house, a princely house. It has got a beautiful fence, very nice large rooms, absolutely no dust anywhere, fit enough for a prince to live in. When I compare it with the palace of the old Maharani of Travancore, I tell you, there is not much distinction between this house and the palace which I had the pleasure of seeing in Travancore. When I talked to the old lady who is the owner of the house, she was able to anticipate what I was driving at and therefore able to give me a smart reply. I was struck with the intelligence of this old lady.[1] Therefore, it seemed as if these Harijan boys are not behindhand in intelligence or in capacity. They are not backward. It is our backwardness. It is the caste Hindus who have descended upon them like a blight and have suppressed them. So, as we have kept them and still keep them under suppression, we find it worth while to

[1] From the *Harijan* report it seems that the lady was a Harijan.

congratulate ourselves when we have two boys. I have taken a long time in describing this thing but I want to drive a lesson home to you. I know that you have a principal and a staff of teachers, who are exceedingly interested in the welfare of Harijans. They want to do as much reparation as it is within their power to the Harijans. I suggest to them and to you, the student world, that you will not rest satisfied until you have got the numerical strength of depressed class boys or Harijan boys and girls in the High School increased. You have no prejudices, because you have got three Harijan boys now. You must set to work. Go to the *cheries*, and to the other places where these people are living, and find out every boy and every girl who can study and see to it that they are on a par with you. That is what I would like to leave with you this morning. And who can work more efficiently than the student world? That is what I have been saying everywhere. If the students desire to do so they can really change the condition of things so far as Harijans are concerned and that without any undue strain upon their time or upon their mind. They can do it during their recreation hours. It will really stimulate their minds, their curiosity and fill them with the spirit of service and with the spirit of love.

The Hindu, 28-2-1934

232. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MULKI[1]

February 25, 1934

I am obliged to you for this address and the purse. I must congratulate you on your being able to recite the many things you have done in connection with the removal of untouchability and I hope that your belief that sanatanists' opposition against temple-entry is dying down is well based. There is the last sentence in your address which requires explanation. You have prayed to God Almighty that by the power of Harijans, the Hindu society may be strengthened. If thereby you mean that justice having been rendered to Harijans and reparation having been made to them by caste Hindus, Hindu society will be purified and therefore by reason of this purity it will gain moral height, I can join in that prayer whole-heartedly. Whereas if this prayer means that because caste Hindus who by reason of their being pampered and degraded have become infirm in bodies will receive

[1] A brief report of this was also published in Valji Desai's "Weekly Letter", *Harijan*, 9-3-1934.

access to physical strength from the able-bodied Harijans, it is impossible to join in that prayer. I must tell you that thought has never crossed my mind. And I shall never allow myself to be associated with a movement which is based upon physical strength. It is my conviction that no religion on earth can be sustained by brute strength. On the contrary, "those who rely on the sword shall perish by the sword" is an eternal truth. Religion is a mighty tree which derives all its sap from the moral height of those who profess that religion. Hence I have repeated from a thousand meetings that this is essentially a movement of self-purification and repentance. You will be glad to know that this purse of Rs. 501 contains Rs. 200 given by the fishermen. I congratulate them on their handsome donation. I know that they are a flourishing community. And I know also that if they got rid of the drink habit and if they had the free supply of salt they could do much better. Free supply of salt depends upon circumstances over which we have no control. But upon the liquor habit, we have full control. And I would like my fishermen friends to carry on this reform which they have well begun in Mangalore. It is a habit that destroys the soul.[1]

The Hindu, 28-2-1934

233. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, UDIPI[2]

February 25, 1934

FRIENDS,

Udipi has been on my brain for many-many days. Of course the fame of Udipi has really preceded you, for so many people have explained to me the beauty of Udipi. And then there is your famous temple, where God himself turned away from the Brahmins, because they would not allow Harijans to approach Him.[3] And then I was promised all sorts of things if I came to Udipi, including, of course, jewellery and rich ornaments from ladies. Well, now you have begun redeeming the promise by giving me a purse containing Rs. 1,240. I have just now come after opening a khadi store and in order to open it

[1] At the end of the meeting the presents were auctioned and fetched Rs. 312.

[2] A brief report of the speech was also published in Valji Desai's "Weekly Letter", *Harijan*, 9-3-1934.

[3] According to a legend the image of Krishna in the temple had turned round to give *darshan* to Harijans.

I had to cut a cord with silver scissors. But I must take you into my confidence and tell you that the scissors were not required to cut the cord, which was slender. Well, I am expecting now that you will create such public opinion in this place that the temple, which is now not open to Harijans, will be presently opened to them. That opinion can only be formulated by the gentlest of means. Since opening of temples is part of self-purification and reparation to Harijans, no temple is worth opening except when the temple-goers desire by a majority of opinion that those temples should be opened to Harijans. If you will be true to your promise, I expect to see Harijan activity redoubled in Udipi so that you will become an example to the other places in Karnataka. I cannot imagine a nobler task for citizens of any place in India than that they should remove the sin of untouchability from their midst. We are all children of one and the same God and God would not be God of justice if He discriminated between His children. Therefore the message of anti-untouchability is the message of realization of brotherhood of man. Therefore I hope that we will all cleanse our hearts of untouchability, that is, distinction of high and low.[1]

The Hindu, 28-2-1934

234. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KUNDAPUR[2]

February 25, 1934

FRIENDS,

I thank you for your addresses and your purse. It is a matter of great joy as also a good omen that we have as our chairman a gentleman eighty years old.[3] That shows that old men are not behind hand in appreciating the necessity of the reform. You know what we are aiming at. Untouchability has got to be removed root and branch. This is a very simple proposition. But, as I have said elsewhere, untouchability is a hydraheaded monster and it has affected every branch of society and therefore we have become untouchables one to the other, and one community has become untouchable to another

[1] At the end of the meeting Gandhiji auctioned the presents which fetched Rs. 400.

[2] A brief report of the speech was also published in Valji Desai's "Weekly Letter", *Harijan*, 9-3-1934.

[3] This was Savarkar Manjaya Sherigara.

community, till at last there is absolutely no caste, no section, which does not consider itself superior to some other section or caste. There may be and there are many other causes but I am convinced that this superiority and inferiority complex is at the bottom of many of our communal troubles. Therefore the implication of this cam-paign against untouchability is that we want to achieve brotherhood of man. And that essential brotherhood of man is unattainable so long as we believe that untouchability has Divine sanction. It is therefore up to the caste Hindus to consider and make their choice. They perpetuate untouchability and they and Hinduism die. If they will kill untouchability altogether, that is the only way to live. I have therefore called it a movement of self-purification, a movement of repentance and reparation to Harijans. For centuries past caste Hindus have suppressed Harijans and, in suppressing them, we have degraded ourselves. Let us now learn the lesson before it is too late and root out untouchability from our hearts. I see that you have a Hindi class conducted here. I congratulate you on it. I wish that you will popularize this national language much more than you have done hitherto. Hindi or Hindustani is the language spoken and understood by nearly twenty crores of Hindus and Mussalmans. It is a language in which you have a mixture of Sanskrit words, Persian, Arabic and what not, so simple, that either party understands it. It is an incredibly simple language to learn and you ought to take sufficient trouble to master the elements of that language.[1]

The Hindu, 28-2-1934

235. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

February 26, 1934

CHI. AMALA,

Am I not right in calling you idiotic? Instead of appreciating a postcard from one of the best of ashramites when I do not write myself, you write a peevish postcard and harp on the badness of the people in Wardha ! Do you not owe an apology? And what shall I do with your apology? You will do the same thing again and again. Therefore I shall bear your idiocy. I must take you as you are and hope to see you as you ought to be even as you have to take me as I

[1] At the end of the meeting Gandhiji made an appeal for the Bihar Earthquake Relief Fund.

am and hope for the best. So we may be quits and get to business. I am glad you are getting on. Remember I need more than 6 hours' sleep during 24 hours. And so do you. You can take more without difficulty. Therefore you ought to. Keep yourself in good order and condition. Mind the hot weather. Don't wait till you collapse. Keeping good health in all weathers is an art.

Do you know that on the address part of a postcard nothing but name and address should be put. You put more and I had to pay a fine of 1_ as. Next time beware.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

On 9th I leave Hyderabad for Patna and reach there on 11th.

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

236. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

February 26, 1934

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

I had your letter. If you are afraid of the children getting smallpox and if you have no religious objection to vaccination, I think it would be best to get them vaccinated. I oppose vaccination because I disapprove of it from every point of view and have little fear of death, but you or others certainly need not object to it because I object to it. Dharma is a matter of each individual's own conscience. It is not a rule that all who get smallpox die. Show this portion to Motibehn too—she has asked me about this.

I am writing today to Mavo[1].

I hope you don't worry about Valji. He keeps fairly good health. He has certainly been helping me. Thanks to his being with us, Chandrashankar gets plenty of free time. He could even go on leave.

I hope you keep good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7464. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1] Sudarshan Desai, son of Valji Desai; *vide* the following item.

237. LETTER TO SUDARSHAN V. DESAI

February 26, 1934

CHI. SUIDARSHAN,

You have ceased to be Mavo and have now become Sudarshan. I hope you will forgive me for not writing to you in time for your birthday on your completing six years. May you live long and serve the country well. Your handwriting cannot still be said to have improved. It is too early yet to take you with me on my tours. I can't say whether you can stand the strain of touring with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5742. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

238. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

KUNDAPUR,
February 26, 1934

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your message through Lakshmidas[1]. The description is good, the whole of it. You seem to have done very good reading.

My mental condition at present is such that I don't feel happy when somebody asks me for my decision on any matter and I hesitate even to offer advice. Since, obeying my nature, I regard myself as released only for Harijan work, I feel very reluctant to offer advice to or guide anybody. Moreover, in individual civil disobedience where is the need for advising anybody? My attitude, therefore, is that you should follow your own inclination. Don't think what would please me. You may assume that your wish will be mine.

Having said this, I will now say what I think. I think it would be better not to remove Dhiru from Bhavnagar. You may go and see him. I think it would be advisable to let Rama stay in Wardha. You should, therefore, go and see her too. If you are very eager to see me, you can do so in Belgaum on the 5th and the 6th. How can they let you come to Belgaum without permitting you to cross into British

[1] Lakshmidas Gandhi, a satyagrahi of Bombay, who was in Thana Jail with the addressee

territory once? If they do permit you and if you very much wish, don't have the slightest hesitation in coming. You need not go anywhere to attend a wedding. It may perhaps be your duty to satisfy your wish to see your brother. I have said all this without taking into account your feelings or those of Rama, Dhiru and Kalyanrai. Not only are you free but it is your moral duty to make whatever changes may be dictated by those feelings. Reflect over verses 6 and 7 in Chapter III [of the *Gita*]. "What then will constraint avail?"[1] applies in circumstances like these. We can control our feelings only up to a certain point. If we repress them beyond that limit, they poison the system and erupt like raw mercury. Everybody, therefore, should fix his or her own limit.

Pyarelal has been released. He is in Wardha. Chandrashankar has gone somewhere there for 15 days. I therefore wonder if they will meet at some place. I don't write anything about myself, as I wish to save time. If I had sufficient time, I would fill pages.

I have just received a wire informing me that Lakshmidas[2] has been having enteric fever for the last eight days. The mercury shoots up very high. Swami is with him. He is in Patna.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5516

239. LETTER TO DHIRU JOSHI

February 26, 1934

CHI. DHIRU,

It seems you have completely forgotten me now. Do you still get fever?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5317

[1] *Bhagavad Gita.* III. 33

[2] Lakshmidas Asar. He had gone for relief work to Bihar, where he fell ill.

240. LETTER TO NANIBEHN JHAVERI

February 26, 1934

CHI. NANIBEHN,

I have been expecting your letter, but it has not yet arrived. Gangabehn too has lapsed into silence, no doubt because she wants to be kind to me. But what if I did not care for such kindness? What is the result of your operation? Who did it?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari—Pannalal Jhaveri, p. 28

241. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

February 27, 1934

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I had your letter. I have written to you regularly. It was you who wrote your last letter after keeping me waiting for a long time.

To save time, I am not writing separately to Jayaprakash this time. It is 3 a.m. just now. I will ask for the money for Rajeshwar after I arrive there. About the other money we shall talk when I am there. I had read all the letters from Jayaprakash. But I don't have all the letters with me when I am replying to the last one. The previous letters may have been left behind. I may also forget what I had said in reply to a letter. Hence I may have to ask again sometimes. After I had been told that some other arrangement had been made, there was nothing for me to do. When I remembered about the difficulty, I asked you again. We shall now discuss the matter when we meet there. My question regarding the earthquake was about you both. It was whether the earthquake had affected you two mentally and economically as it has done many others. But we shall discuss this also when we meet. I hope both of you are well. If necessary, when I arrive there we shall also discuss where you should live. For the present I hope both of you keep yourselves occupied in some public work there.

I am in excellent health.

BAPU

From photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3443

242. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

February 27, 1934

BA,

I have not yet received your letter this time. I also am wandering about in a part where the post is very irregular, because there is no railway. I am touring small villages on the coast and there are so many streams and rivulets that building a railway would be too expensive. At the foot of the hills is the sea. The rivers flowing from the hills form a big estuary which can be crossed only in a boat. In a region like this, it is not possible to travel fast and, therefore, letters take very long to reach. This morning we boarded a steamer at a place called Kundapur, and it will bring us to Karwar at night. We shall be on the sea for twelve hours. You have been to Mangalore. We were there yesterday. From there we reached Kundapur at night, crossing many rivers on the way, and at that place we boarded the steamer. The people here speak Kannada. All these places are in the region from where Gangadharrao hails. The province is called Karnataka. On the 5th and the 6th I shall be in Belgaum. Since we are on the sea-coast, the air is cool. It has been decided that, after completing Karnataka, I should go to Patna. I shall be in Hyderabad on the 9th, from where I will board a train for Patna. I will most probably meet Sarojini devi in Hyderabad. Padma at any rate is there. In Wardha, which is on the way to Patna, Pyarelal is likely to meet me. He has just been released and after his release he has gone to Wardha. Most probably Jamnalaji also will go to Patna. Thakkar Bapa will not come with me to Patna but will go to Delhi instead. He will have to work there. Lakshmidas is in Patna. He is quite ill. He has got typhoid. There was a wire from Swami to that effect. Chandrashankar has taken leave for 15 days and gone to see his wife. I have written to him and asked him to call on Madhavdas. I have received no reply to my letter to Madhavdas. Narandas will be released on the 9th and Chhaganlal on the 3rd. There was news of Vasumati having been released. I have not heard from her. Prithuraj is still with me. At the moment he does not wish to go to Patna. Poor Velanbehn must be pining to see him. I have not received Manilal's letter as yet. Mahadev keeps good health. Durga has been to visit him. She was accompanied by Jivanji. Prabhavati and Jayaprakash are in Patna. They are doing relief work. And now the discourse.

Last week I wrote about the power of the Name. But the question arises: how should one repeat the Name? What good does it do to keep repeating it when thousands of idle thoughts distract the mind? Either one should repeat the Name from the heart, or not at all. This is partly right and partly not. If one repeats the Name for outward show, it has no meaning. On the contrary it is a sin to do so since it amounts to deception. But a person may wish sincerely to repeat the Name, and yet his mind may be continually distracted by other thoughts when he is repeating it. He should not lose heart, however. He should go on repeating the Name in spite of the distraction of thoughts. If he keeps up the practice, some day the Name will get inscribed in his heart. This is the reason why the power of the Name has been glorified. Even an illiterate or dull person can repeat the Lord's name. One can learn to do so in one second. After that one has merely to keep repeating it. By and by this becomes so much a habit that one does not feel happy unless one is going on with it. When the habit becomes so strong that one goes on repeating the Name at all hours of the day, whether eating or drinking or working or resting, then it may be said that the Name has sunk in one's heart. Such persons are rare, but they rise above all suffering. An interesting story about Hanuman illustrating this was told in the Ashram once by Panditji's guru. I will narrate it next week.

Blessings to all from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 16-7

243. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

February 27, 1934

BHAL VALLABHBHAI,

I am writing this letter on Tuesday on board the *Dayavati*. We are going from Kundapur to Karwar. Chandrashankar has gone home. Since Valji is with me, there was no inconvenience in letting him go. I have to leave Hyderabad on the 9th and reach Patna on the 11th. Soon after reaching there, I shall be entering upon my weekly silence, but it seems necessary that I should reach Patna on that date. It was difficult to leave earlier. All Preparations had been made in Karnataka and it would have been difficult to return to Karnataka from Bihar. Ambalal and Mridula came and saw me. They had just

come to see me through their love for me. Ambalal and Saraladevi are going to England. So long as Bharati[1] and Suhrid[2] are there, the two can not feel easy in mind. On the one hand, they give complete freedom to all their sons and daughters and, on the other, there is a strong bond of love. I have found them a wonderful couple.

I have already written to you about the Professor's[3] visit. He also had nothing particular to discuss.

Miss Lester has gone to Ceylon. Agatha Harrison will leave London on March 2 and come to India.

Lakshmidas has been suffering from enteric fever for the last eight days. There was a wire about him from Swami yesterday. I have asked him to wire to me every day. Prithuraj is with me. So far he has not expressed a desire to go. But I have given him my permission. Velanbehn must be very unhappy. Swami informs me that Lakshmidas is being properly looked after.

Enclosed are a letter from Ba and Bhansali's postcard which I had preserved for you. I have already given you the contents.

You must have read in *The Times* [*of India*] about me. It is all poison. Even if I make a joke, it is described as my belief. Could I do anything except joke with that "self-respect"? But even that has been misrepresented. How can one counter such propaganda? This is only the poison that comes into the open. There is plenty being poured out behind the scenes. How can one reply to it? I am firm in my faith that this falsehood will not succeed against truth. So far I have not found that faith to have been proved false in any instance.

Chhaganlal (Joshi) will be released on the 3rd. I have written to him. Pyarelal is in Wardha. Chhaganlal seems to have done good reading while in jail. He has acquired some proficiency in Marathi also. He seems to have read a good deal on other subjects, too. I have told him in my letter that he may come and see me in Belgaum if he wishes. Kanjibhai did not come after all.

Thakkar Bapa will part company with me at Itarsi. He need not come to Patna just now. I have not yet been able to decide what Pyarelal should do. In the last resort he can of course resume the work which he was doing. The prevailing atmosphere is such as would

[1] Daughter of Ambalal Sarabhai
[2] Son of Ambalal Sarabhai
[3] J. B. Kripalani

confuse anybody.

I have had no letter from Devdas.

Raja left our party at Arkonam. Amtussalaam must still be at Tiruchengodu. I have had no letter from her after leaving Arkonam. I shall reach Karwar tonight. I would not be surprised if I got a letter from her there.

Jamnalal was to go to Patna, but has postponed doing so because of cough.

I have not heard from Dahyabhai recently. When you write to Mani, please tell her how my attempt failed. How painful it would be not to be able to see her or Mahadev though I would be in Belgaum for two days? But we are helpless.

The dairy, which was being run separately, has been made a part of the Harijan Ashram. It has been decided to make a separate trust for it.

. . .[1] has been released. He was fined, and he paid up the fine. Such things go on. He was not keeping good health.

You must have come to know that Vinabehn[2] is no longer in your hospital[3] now. She has taken a separate house in Bombay and is living there. She has got custody of her daughters and intends to file a suit against her husband for their expenses. She will probably get them. I met Kamaladevi's son and mother in Mangalore. The son was dressed in U.P. style. I called on Sadasiva Rao's mother and mother-in-law. Kamaladevi's mother and son had called on me. A case is going on against Sadasiva Rao. Today was the last hearing. We shall know the outcome in Karwar. If I get time I will let you know about it.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 81-3

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

[2] Mrs. Lazarus. Kumarappa introduced her to Gandhiji.

[3] Vadilal Sarabhai Hospital run by the Ahmedabad Municipality

244. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

February 27, 1934

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

Every day I have been intending to write to you but where was I to find the time? I am writing this on finding just a few minutes to spare. I hope you are doing well. I have heard nothing so far from Sharma. I do not know if some information has come your way. I am in a region where letters, etc., reach very late. We are all doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 294

245. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

February [*27*][1] */28, 1934*

CHI. NARANDAS,

The date of your release is approaching.[2]

I didn't wish to write to you in jail. What could I write about? There was no need to express sympathy and no special news to give. You would hear the ordinary news from others. And so I did not write. But I did inquire and get news about you from time to time. Pyarelal has given a more detailed report about you. You should now narrate all your experiences.

Dharma requires that you should return to jail as soon as you are released. That is what Prema did. I would not suggest that you must necessarily do so. It may even be your duty to remain outside for some time and observe things. If your health has suffered, it may be necessary to recover it first. Or it may be your duty to go to Bihar. I will not think about all these points and decide. You should do that yourself. I am sure that whatever decision you come to will be in accordance with dharma. If you remain outside, you may come and see me at Wardha. If you wish to go to Rajkot first, you may do that and then see everybody in Ahmedabad, discuss all matters with them

[1] As Gandhiji says in the last paragraph, he started writing this letter on the previous day.

[2] The addressee was in the Nasik Jail.

and then come to see me at Patna. I will reach Patna on the 11th.

Chimanlal will explain to you the reason why the dairy has been sent back to the Ashram. It has been decided to make a new trust, but that will be done after I know your views in the matter. It has also been decided to hand over the land at Bidaj to the Harijan Sevak Sangh. But I will change my mind if you have some other plan.

Chhaganlal will be released on the 3rd. See him if you can.

We have stopped using the Red Bungalow, because Champa has changed her colour. She does not want to do even her clear duty to Jeki and others. We cannot, therefore, live in her bungalow as her dependents.

Lakshmidas is seriously ill in Patna. He is suffering from typhoid. There was a wire from Swami to this effect the day before yesterday. Prithuraj is with me. He joined me at Calicut. Velanbehn also is very ill. It seems an operation will be necessary.

Devdas's Lakshmi, Maruti's Lakshmi and Ramdas's Nimu are pregnant. The time for all three confinements is almost the same. It is approaching now.

I was glad to know about Purushottam's engagement. The marriage should take place after some time. He is not yet fully restored to health. If, however, Purushottam himself desires that the marriage should take place immediately and the girl also is of the same mind, we are helpless. Purushottam intends to undergo Dr. Sharma's treatment. Sharma will most probably come and stay in Wardha. If he does so, Purushottam may certainly get himself treated by him. But what can we do if Dr. Sharma doesn't come over?

If you have not heard about N.[1] you will hear it from somebody. Amala is at Sabarmati. Mary Barr is at Wardha, or under the charge of the Ashram at Wardha. Duncan is living in a jungle. His *tapascharya is* hard indeed. He lives on a hill near Betul. He recovered from a serious illness and went back to the same place.

Amtussalaam came to see me but fell ill. She must be in Rajaji's Ashram now. I have had no news about her after leaving Arkonam, i.e., after the 22nd.

I finished this letter in three parts in the midst of loud noises. I began writing this yesterday. I get up at 2.45 every day, and only then can I write fairly detailed letters. If anything is left out, then

[1] The name has been omitted.

sometimes it is completely forgotten afterwards. You should write to me regularly—if you do not come to see me immediately.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Kanu is displaying great courage.[1]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8394. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

246. LETTER TO KSHITISH CHANDR DAS GUPTA

Unrevised *February* 28, 1934

DEAR KSHITISHBABU[2],

Hemprabha has described to me how you and your wife are ailing. My whole heart goes out to you. Have I not seen you as one with a strong wiry constitution? It is difficult for me to imagine you as ailing. But there it is. A satyagrahi's reward is his suffering in which he is expected to rejoice. Sudhanva is depicted as dancing in the frying pan. Therefore whilst as a frail being I grieve over your illnesses, as a satyagrahi I congratulate you on your suffering. Do please drop me a line when you can and tell me all about your experiences and, if your wife can write in Hindi or English, I must have a line from her too.

May God bless you both.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 9070

[1] He had gone to jail at the age of thirteen.

[2] Brother of Satis Chandra Das Gupta.

247. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

February 28, 1934

CHI. AMALA,

Your Gujarati is good. Your letter is undated. If you have malaria, you ought to take quinine. In all illness please do as the doctors there may advise. You cannot mechanically follow me and seek my permission about taking medicine. In such matters everyone must be a law unto himself or herself.

If you do not believe in God as a permanent, living and the only Reality pervading all, naturally you cannot feel Him while praying or in the earthquake. The belief comes to a certain extent through reason and finally through faith. As children we derive belief from parents, as grown-ups we reason and then we have faith or become sceptics. You will grow to faith in time because I believe you to be a seeker and because you have faith in one who believes in God.

I wrote to you yesterday.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

248. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

February 28, 1934

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

Thakkar Bapa has replied to your letter.

There will be no difficulty about providing your monthly expenses. Please send a detailed budget to Thakkar Bapa as desired by him. Ambalalbhai has undertaken to make up the deficit. You need not spend time in collecting funds.

If Amalabehn gives you any trouble, please let me know. She is very good at heart, possesses great purity of character and is very eager to serve. But she lacks imagination and is obstinate. Nevertheless she yields to love.

You must have now got the cow. Train as many Harijans as possible in that work.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Enclosed is a letter for Amalabehn. Read it and pass it on to her. If she is having fever, call in a doctor.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4025

249. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

February 28, 1934

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

What can I write to you?

The devotion of Tulsidas will help you, it will give you tranquillity. Is it a complete translation of the *Ramayana?* What is the price? I shall be content if even 1,000 copies are sold in Bengal.

That such a strong constitution as that of Kshitishbabu has been afflicted with illness pains me. His wife too has followed suit. But all this is part of satyagraha. Whatever may happen to the body the soul must remain shining bright.

I reach Patna on March 11. Perhaps we shall meet there one day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1709

250. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, SIRSI[1]

February 28, 1934

Gandhiji said the name Sirsi was not unfamiliar to him. When his Karnataka programme was arranged, Sirsi was bound to be included, as so many of his comrades lived in it, and if he could not exact Harijan service from comrades, he had little right to expect it of others. It was his constant experience that untouchability was vanishing from places where his comrades were to be found in large numbers. And who were his comrades? They only were his comrades who looked upon the entire people of India, Muslims, Christians, Jews, etc., no less than Hindus, as brothers and sisters, who, while holding India dearer than life itself, did not wish ill to any other country on earth, who did not despise or hate anyone even in a dream, who were ready to lay down their lives in the quest of truth. Such comrades could never consider

[1] Extracted from Valji Desai's "Weekly Letter"

anybody as untouchable or inferior to themselves. He was, therefore, confident that in Sirsi at any rate he would not meet anyone capable of upholding untouchability, and he was, therefore, not surprised to hear that its Municipality had accorded assistance to the local sangh and given free studentships to Harijan boys. Indeed, it would have been a painful surprise to him if it had been otherwise. The Municipal address admitted that they had "not yet been able entirely to throw off notions of superiority". That admission was creditable to them, for consciousness of imperfection is the first step in the march towards perfection. However, he hoped they would surmount the superiority complex, which was at the root, not only of untouchability, but also of communal bitterness. Removal of untouchability would go a long way in bringing about universal brotherhood. . . .

Gandhiji congratulated the trustees of the temple[1] for flinging it open to Harijans, but he was deeply pained to hear that animals were offered at that shrine. He would not consider any place holy where animals were slaughtered for sacrifice. Millions killed animals in other countries for food, but did not pretend that they did so to propitiate God. It was an insult to human intelligence and an outrage on the human heart to imagine that one could propitiate the deity by sacrificing animals. One can please God only by self-sacrifice and self-denial. He, therefore, hoped that the trustees of the temple would take a strong line and put an end to the evil practice in question. He would go so far as to say that Harijans ought not to be encouraged to visit any temple where animal sacrifice was offered.

Harijan, 9-3-1934

251. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

March 1, 1934

DEAR ANAND,

I got both your letters at the same time, i.e., last night. I am glad of your closer bond with Jairamdas. May it ever grow closer.

It gives me great joy to find Jairamdas agreeing with me. He never agrees except through his whole heart. I know that I retain Dr. Choithram's devotion even when I cannot secure his agreement with my views. And I do not want his or anybody's mere mechanical assent to my proposals.

Vidya will have to be both gentle and firm with Mahadev whilst he is growing. To bring up children is a great art. Vidya must master it.

[1] Marikamba Temple

For the time being you should both be in Karachi. After I reach Patna, I shall know whether you are wanted. If you are, I shall send for you. If not, what to do will be considered.

A paper which requires security to be given is no good. I am quite clear that no paper is wanted today.

I think I have answered all your questions.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI ANAND HINGORANI
C|O R. B. TOTARAM HINGORANI
SAHITIPUR
BUNDER ROAD, EXTENSION
KARACHI

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

252. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

March 1, 1934

CHI. RAMA,

I have your letter. Joshi will soon be released now. You two, therefore, may discuss and decide the matter. I will approve of whatever decision you arrive at. I have written to Joshi in detail. I thought both of you, mother and daughter, were quite happy there. I also believe that it can do no good to continue to stay in a place where one feels ill at ease.

Write to me from time to time.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5364. Also *Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*, p. 299

[1] This sentence is to be found only in *Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*.

253. LETTER TO VIDYA ANAND HINGORANI

March 1, 1934

CHI. VIDYA,

You have spoilt your handwriting. Don't be lazy in writing to me.

I have written to Anand about Mahadev. If Anand goes to Patna, you will have to stay in Karachi or Multan. No time to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

254. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, SIDDAPUR[1]

March 1, 1934

Gandhiji said that the complaint[2] was perhaps rather exaggerated, but he had no doubt that it was substantially true. He, therefore, hoped that the *savarna* Hindus of Siddapur would remove the disabilities of Harijans. Or else it was no use their contributing to the Harijan fund. No one should regard such donations as a licence for the sins for the removal of which they were made. Donations intended as atonement for sin should be a token of future abstinence from it. In future, therefore, they should treat Harijans as blood brothers and sisters. Oppression of Harijans was a potent factor in our present degradation and India could never expect to be happy so long as Harijans were in chains. . . . A peasant presented Gandhiji with samples of arecanuts, cardamoms and pepper, on which he had marked the comparative prices of these products in 1929 and 1933.

Adverting to this, Gandhiji said he would point out a remedy which they might apply if they chose. That remedy was spinning. They must grow profitable crops and utilize their leisure fully. They must not sit idle because spinning did not promise any large returns. Something was better than nothing. They must produce strong and uniform yarn, get it woven and wear the cloth themselves, or sell it if not required for personal use.

Gandhiji did not wish to suggest that there were not many other measures necessary for a radical cure of the depressions, but that was a larger question to be

[1] Extracted from Valji Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] Of the local Harijans that they were treated as slaves

dealt with by statesmen and politicians. His appeal was directly to the men in distress, and he was trying to show what each individual could do for himself to alleviate the distress. And that was obviously to make use of enforced idleness further intensified by the distress. It was open to others o suggest more remunerative occupations. He could find no other that would apply to millions of men and women.

Harijan, 9-3-1934

255. OPINION INVITED

DRAFT RULES FOR THE DISBURSEMENT OF GANDHIJI'S HARIJAN PURSE TOUR FUND[1]

(1) About a month or two after the collections of the purse fund of each province, the existing financial relations between the Central Office and the Provincial Office may cease in favour of the new financial relations arising out of the new Purse Fund, which are described below. The fund is called the Gandhi Harijan Purse Fund.

(2) The money for all welfare work expenses incurred after the passing of the welfare schemes should be charged to the Purse Fund, that is, it will come out of the 75 per cent quota of the Purse Fund, or out of the 50 per cent in the case of principal cities. Grants for administrative and propaganda expenses will be continued to be paid according to the existing system, that is, one half or two-thirds, or whatever the ratio may be, of such expenditure, out of the central fund, from which the Purse Fund will be kept separate.

(3) Except for Bombay, Calcutta, Karachi and similarly circumstanced cities, at least 75 per cent of the money collected in each town, district or province will be spent in that place, or area or province, if the following two conditions are satisfied:

(a) A scheme, including all the old commitments, of welfare work for utilizing the quota of the Purse Fund money is proposed, submitted and approved by the Central Office.

(b) Whole-time, honorary or part-time workers are forthcoming for working out the approved scheme or schemes, and their names approved. In appointing permanent workers, care should be taken to see that they have had at least 2 years' continued service.

(4) The Purse Fund should be spread out over a period of not less than two years, according to circumstances, at the discretion of the workers of the locality concerned, with the approval of the provincial workers.

[1] These were framed by Harijan Sevak Sangh, Delhi.

(5) The money will be forthcoming by instalments, as may be required, on presentation of monthly bills of expenditure incurred on welfare schemes. Reasonable advances, however, will be made to keep the work going.

It is the special desire of Mahatma Gandhi that out of the Purse Fund not a single rupee should be spent for administration and propaganda of the provincial, district or other offices and that the purse money cash should be utilized for no other purpose than the execution of schemes for Harijan welfare work.

(6) The earmarking of donations should be done at the time of the donation and not after. And in each case, when earmarking is done, it will be accepted only if Gandhiji approves.

(7) Special cases of districts requiring extra help over 75 per cent would be considered only on the grounds of the poverty of the district, or the extraordinary scope for work in the district or the unusually large number of Harijans in the district.

(8) In regard to taluk organizations and their finances, schemes from the taluks which have paid money to the Fund will receive due consideration in relation to such schemes. There need be no paid secretary or office in the taluks.

(9) The Provincial Secretary as also District Secretaries, should cease to be office men, but should become necessary parts of the welfare schemes. The charges of the provincial staff needed for supervising schemes in the districts will thus be met from the 75 per cent quota and taken from the districts in proportion to their budgets. Workers necessary for supervising welfare schemes may be treated as part of the constructive expenses.

All those who belong to various Harijan Sevak organizations or are otherwise interested in the cause are invited to send to the Secretary, Central Board, as early as possible their suggestions on the foregoing draft rules. The object is to incorporate in the final rules the wisdom of those who have helpful suggestions to make. Perhaps it is more difficult to spend the money wisely than it was to collect it. The chief difficulty will be to find whole-time, trustworthy and otherwise competent workers. In making their recommendations, therefore, local sanghs and individuals will bear in mind the difficulty about workers. Schemes, moreover, which would admit of employing Harijans by preference must be more acceptable than those in which such special qualifications may be required as to make it impossible to employ Harijans. Suffice it to say that the aim of every scheme should be the greatest and the quickest amelioration of the educational and the economic condition of Harijans with the funds available. Thus the general rules can only be indicative and elastic, so as to cover as wide a range of schemes as might be formulated by the provincial and district sanghs.

Harijan, 2-3-1934

256. NOTE

FOR BIHAR

From far-off New Zealand, the Wellington Indian Association has cabled £93 for Bihar relief. The amount has been transferred to Babu Rajendra Prasad.

Harijan, 2-3-1934

257. A WAIL FROM MELA-ARASUR

I cannot recall a place where I have not received addresses from Harijans. Most of them have dealt with general grievances, but in two or three cases I can recall having had instances of specific complaints against the tyranny of caste Hindus. Mela-Arasur is a village in Lalgudi taluk, not far from Trichinopoly. After the usual complimentary paragraph, the appeal proceeds:[1]

> We, the inhabitants of the village of Mela-Arasur, have got two tanks of drinking-water, one of which is big and the other small, but both of which are being utilized by the *savarnas* to our exclusion. We are debarred from touching the waters of the tanks. . . . We are about eighty families. . . . Our petition to the Government to remove this ostracism . . . resulted in the putting up of notification that nobody should be obstructed from using the waters of the tank, but did not succeed in removing the ban, for the *savarnas* would take our attempts to heart and would not employ us in their fields. . . . Thus, in this poor condition, we are undergoing a lot of inexpressible difficulties for the past nine months. . . .
>
> . . . We take this opportunity of presenting to you . . . knowing that you alone will be able to relieve us of it. . . . Furthermore, we request you to be kind enough to relieve us from poverty and suffering by giving to each family some donation at least for sustaining three months, in such manner as you think it best.

This was received at Trichy and I made public reference to it in my speech.[2] If the statements made are true, the position reflects no credit on the *savarna* Hindus of Mela-Arasur. It is to be hoped that the provincial Harijan sevak sangh will use all its efforts to secure justice for the helpless Harijans who are so dependent upon the caste Hindus. It is relevant to know whether the Harijans have facilities for

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Trichinopoly", 10-2-1934.

getting pure water apart from the tanks in question. If they have not, humanity demands that the supply of pure water is guaranteed to them by those who deny the use of public tanks to which the Harijans are entitled in law. The boycott of Harijans for their having dared to enforce their right to the use of the tanks is adding insult to injury. I hope, however, that the good offices of the local Harijan sevak sangh will result in justice being done to the Harijans and in the restoration of good relations between the two divisions of the same family.

The last sentence of the appeal demands an answer. Even if I had the ability, I would not have the wish to satisfy the signatories in their appeal for a "donation" that would sustain them for at least three months. Such donations are a waste of public money. They degrade those who receive them and put a premium on laziness. The able-bodied should ask for work, never charity. I know that in these days of scarcity even work is difficult to find in the case of the general body and more so in that of Harijans. But I believe that a person who is ready for any honourable labour will not have much difficulty in finding some work. I would, therefore, urge all friends of Harijans to discourage appeals for doles and endeavour to find employment for the unemployed who would not refuse to do any honourable labour.

Harijan, 2-3-1934

258. TO THE SUBSCRIBERS OF "HARIJAN SEVAK"

Harijan Sevak has completed its first year. Subscribers know the policy of this journal. Political questions are not even touched upon. It exists solely for the service of Harijans, and the attempt is as far as possible to make it self-supporting, which it is in a way, since any deficit that occurs is not made up by the Harijan Sevak Sangh. But looked at from another angle, it is far from self-supporting for the number of subscribers so far is far below the mark. There are at present roughly 1,600 subscribers. To make the journal self-supporting we need at least another 800. But if even the present number is further reduced, then there would be no justification left for continuing the paper. Subscribers are therefore requested to send in their subscriptions as soon as they get this issue. Readers who fail to send the subscription will not be sentcopies of *Harijan Sevak.* The annual subscription of the paper is Rs. 3-8-0 and half-yearly Rs. 2. Friends who have helped the paper by finding subscribers or in any

other way are requested to continue their help in the current year also. Let everyone remember that news items of a general interest are not published in *Harijan Sevak* and also that it is the sole organ of the Harijan Sevak Sangh brought out in Hindi.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]
Harijan Sevak, 2-3-1934

259. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

March 2, 1934

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I got your letter yesterday and read it fully. My being pained does not mean that I was displeased with you. And now I have forgotten even the cause. There was no question of forgiving, you had committed no grave error. What more do you want? Stay there as long as Rajaji wants you to.

There is no hurry about going to jail. You have admitted that you will not even talk about going to jail till you are perfectly fit. You may be sure, too, that you will benefit by Rajaji's company as long as you can have it. So stay on and take what service you can. I have not received any letter or wire from Dr. Sharma. Now, don't be crazy. Be cheerful and keep writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 295

260. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BELLARY[1]

March 3, 1934

Gandhiji congratulated the Chairman on his frankness and said that it was for the first time that he had heard of such dissociation. He had also learnt that the sanatanists resented his attempt to procure legislation on temple-entry. He assured them that there was no question of compulsion in the proposed Bill. On the other hand, it was designed to remove the legal compulsion that was then existing. He, therefore, appealed to the Bellary sanatanists to help where there was no difference of opinion. He pleaded for mutual toleration. Surely they could have no ground for complaint if they accepted the assurance that no temple would be opened without the express consent of an overwhelming majority of *bona-fide* temple-goers. The Bill therefore, even if it was passed, would not be sufficient automatically to open a single temple. It was designed to authorize the opening of temples to Harijans when a clear majority desired it. This was not possible under the existing law. Apart from this question, surely they could have no objection to the education of Harijan children, the opening to Harijans of public wells or tanks, or their general economic betterment. He could say without hesitation that the moneys that were being collected were not to be used for building temples. They were to be used soley for constructive work of the kind mentioned above. Whilst, therefore, he made this appeal to the sanatanists, he said, he would like to test the feelings of the vast gathering in front of him. He, therefore, asked the volunteers to go amidst the men and women present and collect whatever they might give for the Harijan cause, knowing what it was to be used for.

Harijan, 23-3-1934

261. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[After *March 3,*][2] *1934*

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter. You must have received mine in jail. You may stay in Dwarka and Rama may also join you there. But a player would always know better than a spectator. In all cases my views follow the basic principle, but they are of little value because of my ignorance of

[1] Extracted from Valji Desai's "Weekly Letter". While presenting the purse the Chairman of the Reception Committee mentioned that there were some *savarna* Hindus who did not contribute to the fund. But there were others, too, who dissociated themselves from the presentation of the purse.

[2] The addressee was released on March 3.

the facts. The sun is said to be a source of life and energy. As a general principle this is true. But it would make one who is burning with heat feel much hotter. That is the fault not of the sun, but of that person. Such a person would want the sun to be hidden. It is thus for you to determine how far you would follow general principles. It is not for me to forgive or not to forgive you for what you decide to do. I shall have to approve of it as being the best course for you.

Your duty towards your mother is included in your duty towards Mother India. Or you can include the latter in the former. If you did that, however, you should adopt a different way of life. Both the duties are right and each proper in its place. But you cannot combine the two. That is also true regarding your duty to your brother's wife. However, we shall discuss all this if and when we meet. Meanwhile keep me informed about developments there. I shall be there on the 11th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5527

262. LETTER TO W. H. BROWN

DHARWAR,
March 4, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

Sjt. A. V. Thakkar has shown me your letter of even date in connection with the flying of the national flag on the bonnet of the car that drove me from Hubli to Dharwar. You are right in surmising that the flag could not have been put up with my consent. It was put up only in Dharwar at the instance of Sjt. A. V. Thakkar who, noticing the absence of it on our car, said to the responsible workers that if it was omitted by design, there was no occasion for the omission, as to his knowledge the flying of the flag was not declared illegal. I overheard the conversation, but I expressed no disapproval of the attitude taken up by Sjt. Thakkar. My position has been one of absolute neutrality. I have not asked for the flying of the flag, nor have I discouraged it anywhere. Indeed at least at one place I recollect having been called upon publicly to unfurl the flag in the Central Pro-vinces, and I did so without any hesitation. I have scrupulously abstained from taking part in any political agitation directly or indirectly ever since

my premature discharge, and in the prosecution of the self-imposed vow I propose to do so up to the end of 3rd August next, so far as it is humanly possible. But this abstention does not in any way mean that I have ceased to be a Congressman, or that I should hide my colours. My abstention means that I would not offer civil resistance myself, nor incite others to do so during the period named. I take it that Sjt. Thakkar is right in his interpretation of the law as it stands that the flying of the national flag is not an offence.

I may add that throughout the tour in the C.P. and the Madras Presidency, I have often driven in Cars flying the national flag.

I am due to leave Belgaum at 3 p.m.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

W. H. BROWN, ESQ., I.C.S.
DISTRICT MAGISTRATE
DHARWAR

From a photostat: G.N. 1019. Also C.W. 7777. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

263. SPEECH AT RAILWAYMEN'S MEETING, HUBLI[1]

March 4, 1934

Gandhiji claimed to be a fellow-labourer, as he had lived in the midst of labour from his youth upwards. He asked the workmen not to be disheartened or lose faith in themselves or feel helpless before those whom they called capitalists. Labour itself was a form of capital. It was not necessary that a man's capital should be measured in coins. In ancient times it was described in terms of the cattle possessed by him. Capital owned by a working man was his labour. The difference, therefore, was not in kind or quality, but it was purely in quantity. Capitalists might possess thousands of rupees, whereas a labourer or a working man possessed labour which might represent only 8 annas per day. But the combined labour of 50,000 working men would represent capital earned in one day of Rs. 25,000. Instances could be given to show that under certain circumstances the golden coins of the capitalists had proved valueless when they could not command labour, whereas the labour of one single labourer had proved invaluable. If, therefore, the labourers acted as one man they could be as good capitalists as their employers. Employers and employed were, therefore, interdependent. And no cause for complaint need ever arise if each party recognized its limitations. What he had said, Gandhiji proceeded, applied to Harijans

[1] Extracted from Valji Desai's "Weekly Letter"

with double force. When they had become conscious of their own strength, no power on earth would be able to check their economic progress.

Harijan, 23-3-1934

264. A LETTER[1]

[Before *March 5, 1934*][2]

As you may have known, I am not now coming to Orissa soon.. I go to Bihar first. I do want to finish Orissa before July. I shall be able to know my way clear after reaching Bihar which I do on 11th March.

New Orissa, 7-3-1934

265. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

BELGAUM,
March 5, 1934

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your postcard on my arrival here last evening. I find it difficult to guide you or anybody else, for my mind is still in Yeravda. I take interest in things outside only in connection with Harijian work. I also feel that all of you should act as you wish. Wasn't our last decision to the effect that everybody should act on his own responsibility and according to his own inclination? Isn't this the only way in which everybody would be tested? Nevertheless, I realize that I am in duty bound to advise a person like you. I advise according to my lights anybody who consults me.

I am as eager to see you as you are to see me. But I suppress my wish. My immediate reaction is that you should go to Wardha, and observe things there. I shall be passing through it on the 10th. You can join me a few stations before Wardha or at Wardha and travel with me for a few stations beyond it, and discuss your problems with me. Stay at Wardha and have some experience of the work there. If you don't like this plan, you may stay in Borivli. I would not advise you to go to Ahmedabad. There are few places there where you can stay. The Red Bungalow must be avoided. Nor can you stay in the Harijan

[1] The addressee is not identified in the source.
[2] The news item reporting the letter is dated March 5.

Ashram. Thus Wardha is the only place where you can live peacefully.

I understand what you say regarding your study. Reading books is not enough. You should reflect over them. For that you should read some of them over again. If you wish I would make another list and send it to you. You should also study a book on grammar. The *Gujarati Vanchanmala* series also is not bad.

Probably you will wonder why I don't call you to Patna. Just now the conditions are very difficult there. I don't even know what kind of accommodation we might get. People have no peace of mind at all. There are fears of more tremors still. In such conditions, I don't feel inclined to ask anybody to come there to see me. But I shall be able to write to you more after reaching Patna.

Durga is coming here today to see Mahadev. Probably she also wants to take this opportunity to see me. It was only yesterday that I came to know about her coming. Dahyabhai and Chandubhai of Broach also are coming. I really feel how pleasant it would have been if you had come, too, along with them. Perhaps I shall find that you have indeed come. I am writing this early in the morning after the prayer. My health is excellent. From here we go to Nipani on Wednesday, thence to Bijapur and then take a train to Hyderabad.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Where is Gangabehn? If she is there, please tell her that she had promised to write to me again but has not done so.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9383. Also C.W. 628. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit.

266. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

March 5, 1934

CHI. AMALA,

I have your letter. My weight is 107. Food as usual. B. P. not taken for some time. Health quite up to the mark.

Yes I had your Gujarati letter. It was quite good. By all means learn Sanskrit.

I wish I knew German grammar. I am sorry I was never able to learn German.

I can suggest no reason for the change of 'ઉં' into 'વા' when it is joined on to 'મારું ઘું' except that it is easier to pronounce.

I am glad you went to Sharda Mandir.

I cannot believe R. approving of the persecution of the Jews in Germany.

Of course I want you to attain perfection. Nothing like trying for it.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

267. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

BELGAUM,
March 5, 1934

CHI. MATHURADAS,

You must have received a letter I had sent for Pyarelal.

I have had two letters from you. From Mercara to Mysore has been a good experience for you. I think it was worth it. Life would not be interesting without such experiences. When the thornless 'cultured' roses start growing, they will never have the glow of the roses of today. The beauty of the rose is as much in the thorn as in the flower. Thorns enhance the beauty of the flower.

It is very good that you went to Madhavdas. I did not have any special message for him. I had written a letter to him because Ba was worried. As there was no reply from him I felt like taking advantage of Chandrashankar's presence there. If he had not been there, I would have sent it only to you. Now I have received the letter from Madhavdas. He seems to have exercised great restraint. He never informed anyone. You should visit him occasionally.

Continue to enquire at the Red Cross.

I would be surprised if I was allowed to go to Midnapore. I am not surprised by the prohibitory order.

Durga, Jivanji, Mohanlal, Dahyabhai and Dr. Chandulal have arrived today. It is my silence day. Therefore, I have not been able to talk to anyone.

Muriel Lester has gone straight to Delhi as she had no time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

268. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

March 5, 1934

We had a good experience during the tour from Mercara to Mysore. I am glad we had it. Without such experience life would be uninteresting. When they are able to grow "cultured" roses which have no thorns, such roses will not have the bloom which the roses have now. The value of the rose lies as much in its thorns as in the flower itself. The thorns even increase the value of the flower.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi. p. 143

269. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

March 5, 1934

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

The tour this time is proving so demanding that I am unable to write letters to my satisfaction. So you have entered your thirty-fifth year! My blessings are ever with you. God will see to your well-being and take further services from you. As for the treatment, you must implicitly follow Dr. Ansari's directions.

Mother, I trust, has recovered.

I reach Patna on the 11th instant.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2409

270. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

March 5, 1934

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

Your letter. You have my orders to remain there till you have gained sufficient strength.

Blessings from

BAPU

AMTUSSALAAM

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 296

271. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

BELGAUM,
March 5, 1934

There was a meeting of Harijan workers at Belgaum, when Gandhiji had his silence and *Harijan*-editing days there. One of the workers had brought typed questions from which the most useful may be culled.

Q. Is your Harijan work based purely on religious or political grounds?

A. Purely on religious grounds.

Q. When you know that there are pandits and sanatanists who derive untouchability from Shastras, why do you take the opinion from those who hold the contrary view?

A. I have taken my opinion from nobody. My opinion on untouchability was formed many years before I had discussed the question with a single pandit. But when I began to preach against untouchability, and more especially when, owing to my first fast, the question attracted world-wide attention, I had to study the position of those who defended untouchability as having its origin in the Shastras. And in doing so, if I found pandits who defended untouchability, I

[1] Extracted from Valji Desai's "Weekly Letter". The questions were put to Gandhiji at a meeting of Harijan workers. Since it was a silence day the questions had been typed out.

also found men who held strongly that the Shastras did not warrant any untouchability as it was practised today, and I found also that they were just as learned as the others. Surely, I was entitled to use in support of my opinion the authority of these pandits. But supposing these pandits came to hold a different view, I believe that my conviction is strong enough to stand without the support of any pandit.

Q. You have said times without number that you have committed Himalayan blunders. Are you quite sure that you are not committing another such blunder again?

A. I am not sure at all, for I do not profess to be omniscient. But if I discover that I have made a mistake, I should have no hesitation in retracing my step. And I know that God will forgive all errors committed unconsciously, as He has done in the past.

Q. Some say that there should be no separate schools for Harijans at all, whereas others say that separate schools are absolutely necessary.

A. My opinion is that, whilst every facility should be provided for the admission of Harijans to public schools, for some time to come preparatory schools will be absolutely necessary for preparing Harijan children for the primary schools. It is futile to expect Harijan children all at once to flood public primary schools. There is also a possibility of opposition to wholesale admission. Hence preparatory schools are necessary if we honestly want to foster the education of Harijan children.

Harijan, 23-3-1934

272. LETTER TO SIR SAMUEL HOARE

AS AT WARDHA, (C.P.),
INDIA,
March 6, 1934

DEAR SIR SAMUEL,

You will recollect that whilst I was returning to India in December of 1931 you had a cable caused to be sent to me in regard to an interview alleged to have been given by me to a journalist in Rome and that I had sent a categorical denial.[1] To this there was a counter-denial which I had not seen till recently, being in jail within less than one week of my landing in Bombay.

After my discharge from the last imprisonment in August last, I was told by Mirabai Slade that an English friend—Prof. Maclean of Wilson College, Bombay—had thought that although the matter was stale, it was worth while my clearing it up, as the denial by the Rome journalist had created a profound impression at the time of its publication and had probably precipitated the Viceregal action against me in 1932. Agreeing with Prof. Maclean, I at once asked Mirabai to write to Miss Agatha Harrison to procure the relevant newspaper cuttings. After much search she was able to get them. The last and the most important I received from her last month in the midst of my hurricane tour in the cause of the anti-untouchability campaign. For ready reference, I send you copies of the three cuttings marked 'A', 'B' and 'C' respectively.

It should be noted that these cuttings were for the first time seen by me on their being received from Miss Harrison. I have now read and reread them several times, and I have no hesitation in saying that 'A' and 'C' are a caricature of what took place. 'A' professes to be a summary of a long statement said to have been made by me to an Italian journalist. In 'C' *The Times* correspondent, on seeing my denial regarding the alleged interview, makes a halting admission that I might be correct in so far as Signor Gayda did not "request any formal interview and no such interview was granted," but insists that the statements attributed to me were substantially correct. But truth will perhaps be better served by my simply stating what I do know than by analysing 'A' and 'C'.

1. I never made any statement, much less a long one, to Signor

[1] *Vide* "Cable to Croft", 17-12-1931.

Gayda as suggested in ‘A’.

2. I was never invited to meet Signor Gayda at any place. But I was invited by an Italian friend to meet some Italian citizens at an informal drawing-room meeting at a private house. At this meeting I was introduced to several friends whose names I cannot now recall and could not have recalled even the day after the meeting. The introductions were merely formal.

3. At this meeting the conversation was general, and not addressed to any particular individual. Questions were put by several friends and there was a random conversation as at all drawing-room meetings.

4. It was therefore wrong for Signor Gayda or *The Times* correspondent to reproduce my remarks as if they were one connected statement to one particular person.

5. Signor Gayda never showed to me for verification anything he might have taken down.

6. The conversation, among other things, referred to the Round Table Conference, my impression of it and my possible future action. Many of the things that have been put into my mouth in ‘A’ I had never said. All my hopes, fears and future intentions were expressed in as precise a language as it was possible for me to command and use in my speech at the close of the Round Table Conference. Whatever I said in private conversation was but a paraphrase of the sentiments expressed in that speech. I am not given to saying one thing in public and another in private, or to saying one thing to one friend and something else to another. I could not have said that there was a definite rupture between the Indian nation and the British Government, for I had said to several friends about the same time that I was determined to strain every nerve to prevent a rupture and to continue the peaceful relations established by the Irwin-Gandhi Pact. Being an optimist, I do not believe in a final rupture between human beings.

7. I never said that I was returning to India in order to restart the struggle against England. Certain possibilities about which I was questioned at the informal meeting have been so described in ‘A’ as if I was actually going to India to bring them about if I could.

I would add that the public had neither the original notes supposed to have been made by Signor Gayda nor the latter’s own version wherever published. In ‘A’ and ‘C’ they had only the impressions of *The Times* correspondent about what Signor Gayda wrote or said.

I do not know how you were affected by ‘C’. If your faith in my denial was shaken, perhaps in any case I should have been

acquainted with the rejoinder to my denial as you had kindly brought to my notice the first report. I do not know how you will take this letter. If you have any doubt about my *bonafides,* I would like to clear it, if it is at all possible for me to do so.

Miss Slade was the "follower" referred to in 'C'. I enclose herewith her recollections of the conversation.[1]

I am not publishing this letter. I am sending copies to several friends for their private use. But I would like you, if you could, to give it publicity, or to ask Prof. C. F. Andrews,Woodbrooke, Selly Oak, Birmingham, to make such public use of the letter as he might wish.[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 7942. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also *In the Shadow of the Mahatma,* pp. 130-3

273. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHARMA

BELGAUM,
March 6, 1934

BHAI SHARMA,

Your letter is good.

My advice to you is to use the house Jamnalalji suggests. You should take the children too. Your duty is to look after them. You should use the tent if one is provided. Your day must be spent wholly in the Ashram. I find your temperament is such that you can adjust anywhere. I want you to reach the Ashram soon. I have to take plenty of service from you. I want to know your wife too. I pass through Wardha on the 10th instant. You can try to arrive there by that date. I wish to send Amtus salaam when you are at Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivan ke Solah Varsha,* between pp. 56-7

[1] For the texts of enclosures 'A', 'B' and 'C' and Mirabehn's recollections, *vide* Appendix "Background to "Letter to Sir Samuel Hoare" with Extracts from and introduction by Horace Alexander".

[2] Sir Samuel Hoare in his reply dated April 7 said that he did not propose himself to send Gandhiji's letter to the Press, but that he had no objection to Andrews doing whatever he thought desirable in regard to it.

274. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

BELGAUM,
March 7, 1934

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Herewith a copy of the letter to Sir Samuel Hoare[1]. You can make whatever private use of it you wish. There should be no mention of it in the Press. In case you do not know what it is all about, you do not have to be exercised over it. Pyarelal knows and will understand at once.

Miss Agatha Harrison will be arriving on the 16th by a tourist steamer. Bhulabhai knows her well. She and Pyarelal are as sister and brother. If you can manage to see her on board the steamer you should take Pyarelal with you; Bhulabhai too, if he can go. Her needs will be of an Englishwoman; so she should be provided Western style toilet facilities. She should therefore be put up at Bhulabhai's or at Jalbhai's. If neither of them is prepared to have her and if you cannot think of any other place, let her for the present stay at the Y. W. C. A. as she suggests in her letter. I shall write to her. If possible I shall send the letter along with this. I am enclosing the latest letter from her. You can get the name of her steamer at Grindlay's. After you have read her letter send it on to Ghanshaymdas. He is at the moment in Calcutta. I shall write or wire to her from Patna advising what she should do. In the meanwhile you may introduce her to a few people in Bombay. Introduce her to Munshi, to Shah or, if you like, to one of the Liberals. Pyarelal can think on the matter more fully. I have no further guidance to offer. You may ask me anything you want to. If Aunt[2] is there she will certainly meet her. Give Miss Harrison the copy you have of my letter to Sir Samuel.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

275. SPEECH AT MERCANTILE ASSOCIATION, NIPANI[3]

March 7, 1934

I speak as a merchant to fellow-merchants. The difference is that you are doing business for your respective families, perhaps not ex-

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Samuel Hoare", 6-3-1934.
[2] Sarojini Naidu
[3] Extracted from Valji Desai's "Weekly Letter"

ceeding more than 100 members in each case at the outside, whereas I do business on behalf of a family consisting of several crores of people, called Harijans. I have found that mercantile credit does not depend upon the cash that merchants can produce, but upon the prestige they have for redemption of their promises. A bank having hoards of gold in its coffers would lose credit in a moment if it dishonoured a cheque drawn upon it, that is to say, if it did not redeem the promise underlying the cheque that it would be honoured on presentation, if there was a credit balance in favour of the drawer. I, therefore, hope that you will not fail to redeem the promise which you are reported to have made in respect of crores of Harijans.[1]

Harijan, 23-3-1934

276. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

ROADBELL,
March 8, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have not heard from you recently. I am writing this letter before the prayer. We left Belgaum yesterday. This place is a small town but there is a railway station.

I am writing this letter after a longer interval than usual as Dahyabhai, Chandubhai, Durga and Jivanji had come to see me in Belgaum. Dahyabhai saw Mani. Durga, Jivanji and Bablo saw Mahadev. One may say that Mani and Mahadev are all right. Mahadev is engrossed in his work. I heard everything from Chandubhai. Kanjibhai has still not come to see me. Please take care of your nostrils. Keep up the practice of *neti.* And remember that the correct way of doing it is with a piece of fine cloth.

Miss Lester has gone to Delhi. Harrison is arriving on the 16th. Ba's letter is enclosed. Her brother has passed through a severe illness. Lakshmidas is out of danger now. Tarabehn Modi is very ill. She has developed a tumour in the throat and it has burst. Her teeth have been giving her much pain. Kishorelal's fever has still not left him.

I will reach Patna on the 11th. Thakkar Bapa and his retinue will go to Delhi. If after going to Patna I find it possible to continue the

[1] Gandhiji had been told that there was some disinclination on the part of the merchants to redeem the promise. However the Chairman assured him that there was no basis for such apprehension.

Harijan tour, I will ask him to join me.

Lilavati (Asar) is pretty ill. I don't worry, however, since Prema is with her. Amtussalaam may still be described as ill. Brijkrishna is improving. I suppose you know that there is an epidemic of a children's disease in Ahmedabad. Please be satisfied with this much today. It is now time to see visitors.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 84-5

277. LETTER TO TARABEHN R. MODI

March 8, 1934

CHI. TARA,

It is 3.30 a.m. just now. This is a small village. We reached the place at 9 last night after travelling the whole day. I was given your letter immediately on arrival and am writing this reply now.

Five systems of treatment are current in India at present: (1) allopathy, (2) ayurveda, (3) unani, (4) homoeopathy and (5) nature cure. I leave out the use of *mantras* and magic. Of these, allopathy is the most widely in use. I am inclined towards nature cure and, if further help is needed, I would have recourse to allopathy, but within limits. In certain cases surgery is indispensable and some of the drugs, like quinine, are very effective. I would put you under nature-cure treatment and, for the trouble you are having with your teeth, etc., I would advise you to take help from allopathy. But I am not with you just now and don't wish to offer guidance from this distance. I, therefore, feel inclined to let things go on as at present. Allopathic practitioners are comparatively more honest. In the West, they are continually experimenting. Their treatments, therefore, are often found to succeed. But I would say this even from here. After commencing a treatment, one should think no more about it and watch the effect patiently. One should not feel impatient for the result. Let it be what it will, good or bad. After all, how do we know what result is good and what bad? "What we regard as misery is not misery, nor what we regard as happiness happiness. The only misery is forgetfulness of Narayana's name and the only happiness is constant memory of Him." Let the attachment to the body fall away slowly. Keep on writing to me. I will then write if I have any suggestion to make.

Don't think about anything till the body is completely restored

to health and you can work. There will be plenty of time to serve after you have recovered.

Kishorelal is at Deolali. Fever does not leave him completely. Going to Deolali does not seem to have made much difference. I had a letter from Vasumati. Pyarelal is in Bombay.

You have done well in renting a separate room there. But who is with you to help you? Who does your cleaning, sweeping, cooking and other chores? I am sure you must be realizing the usefulness of the Ashram in your present circumstances. The test for us consists in creating the atmosphere of the Ashram even when there is no Ashram now.

The noise has started now. The hands of the clock are moving to 4.20. Wherever I go, a thousand or two thousand persons attend the morning and evening prayers. Since it is a new place every day, people don't feel it a hardship to forgo one night's sleep. They come to the morning prayer even from great distances.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4180. Also C.W. 1679. Courtesy: Ramniklal Modi

278. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

March 8, 1934

CHI. LILAVATI,

Please believe me you are as much in my thoughts as I seem to be in yours. I didn't write to you after you had been imprisoned because I didn't think you would get my letter. But I see now that you can get letters, and so I am writing this. You don't seem to have received the letter which I wrote to you after you were released. You were rather hasty in returning to jail, but I have no doubt that you have proved your courage by doing so. I am sure all will be well with you. Now exercise strict self-control and get rid of your fever. Don't worry about anything. Don't think about events outside. If you are permitted to write to me, write as long a letter as you would like to. I am fine. I hope to reach Patna on the 11th. Is Prema permitted to look after you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9327. Also C.W. 6602. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

279. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

BIJAPUR,
[*March 8*][1], *1934*

BA,

I got your letter. Since, even after much waiting, I didn't hear from Madhavdas, I wrote to Mathuradas and asked him to look him up. He did so, and the letters received from Madhavdas and Krishna are enclosed. A letter from Manilal also is enclosed. Apart from what you will read in these letters, there is nothing more to write about these persons. You should now stop worrying about Manilal. I hope you do remember that he is past forty now. He is able to look after himself and doesn't worry about anything. He does his work and shoulders his expenses. Manilal is quite happy. You, therefore, ought not to worry about him. From Belgaum I have come to Bijapur. At Belgaum Durga, Jivanji, Dahyabhai, Bablo, Chandubhai and Mohanlal came and saw me. Durga and Jivanji visited Mahadev and Dahyabhai saw Mani. They are all quite well. Siddhimati also came and saw me. She must have gone to Ahmedabad with Durga. Pyarelal writes to me from time to time. Jamnalalji has gone to Patna. I will reach there on the 11th. Thakkar Bapa will separate from the rest of the party. Valjibhai has been with me and will accompany me to Patna. Kisan and Om also are with me. I have dictated this letter to Om while eating my meal.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 8-9

280. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

March 8, 1934

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Herewith the second letter from Agatha Harrison. As she says in the letter, let her carry out her programme in Bombay at her ease and then go to Poona. I suppose she will be putting up at the Servants [of India Society] at Poona.

I sent yesterday a copy of my letter to Hoare. I am sending another copy now. Yesterday's copy is meant for Agatha and today's

[1] January 8 in the source. However, Gandhiji was in Bijapur on March 8.

copy is for you.

It seems Faiba is coming to Hyderabad. It is good. A lot of work has cropped up for me in Hyderabad.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The monthly expenses of Agatha are Birla's responsibility. She estimated £200 for this visit. Of this, £100 was arranged in England and £100 will have to be found here. See if Bhulabhai can take that burden.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

281. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

[Before *March 9, 1934*][1]

CHI. MARY,

Your letter. As I am in Hyderabad for 12 hours, do come and then you will travel back with me.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Your fast is good. You must describe it more fully when we meet. Kisses to Chandra.

From the original: C.W. 3350. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

282 OUR SHAME

Reference has already been made in these columns to a memorandum which was received by me at Coonoor on behalf of 'Adi-Hindus of Tamil Districts'. It is signed by thirty-six representatives some of whom are members of municipal councils or taluq boards. From this, I condense below the catalogue of their disabilities. In condensing it I have not materially changed their language. Criticism interspersed with the recital has been removed as being superfluous. The list is otherwise untouched.

[1] This letter was written before Gandhiji reached Hyderabad on March 9.

1. We have no access to eating-houses, laundries, shaving saloons, coffee and tea clubs, restaurants, choultries, schools, *agraharams*, wells, tanks, water-taps, springs, post offices (located in villages) and other places of public resort, not to speak of temples in several places.

2. In some places, holding umbrellas, wearing sandals, wearing dhotis below the knees are considered as a great crime. Wearing jewels made of gold by our women-folk and using clean cloth over their body would be regarded as an ill omen by some caste Hindus.

3. We are not allowed to carry our dead within particular union board areas alongside the highway, simply because there is a temple of a deity on the road-side. We are compelled it carry the dead body through a paddy field even when there is knee-deep mire during rainy season.

4. The Headman of the so-called untouchables within a particular union board area is not allowed by the caste Hindus to get on horseback and pass along the highway during his investiture ceremony as Headman of the said classes.

5. In some village bazaars, bleached cloth cannot be touched by us when we are desirous of buying it for festivals.

6. If cooked bread or other eatables are touched in bazaars knowingly or unknowingly, the whole cost of the food-stuff will be extracted from our people for the sin of touching them.

7. Since a very high percentage of our people living in rural areas have no habitation of their own in most of the districts of the presidency, but are allowed by sufferance to live on the lands of the land-owning classes, any demand for wages for work contributed by our people in their lands is highly resented by their masters. They do not get living wages and the hours of work are unlimited. These are often paid in unwholesome grain in short measures.

8. For marriage occasions or processions of our deity, we cannot get the services of caste Hindu musicians when we cannot find some among us.

9. Young men of our community riding on bicycles are being regarded with severe displeasure. In remotest villages, *jutkas* (horse cabs) cannot ply for us, as the caste Hindu owners refuse to take us. The same is the case with motor buses.

10. In public latrines, built out of public funds in a particular municipal area, the so-called untouchables are actively prevented from using them. After a good deal of assertion, they were provided with separate latrines.

11. In some of the dispensaries run under the control of particular local bodies, our people do not get proper treatment at the hands of caste Hindus employed there.

12. In the temporary water-sheds erected by caste Hindus during the hot season, the distinction made by them in pouring water to the Adi-Hindus for drinking purpose is highly intolerable and offensive.

13. When our people get into local bodies and panchayats the orthodox caste Hindus resign their seats by way of protest, and in some cases our people are given

separate seats.

14. When an Adi-Hindu rests on the *pial* in front of his house, he should get up and bow his head before a caste Hindu and worship him with due veneration when the caste Hindu happens to pass that way. If this custom is neglected by the Adi-Hindus, they will be taken to task severely by the caste Hindus.

We are often asked to set our own house in order. This is simply begging the question. Where the Hindu society is one vast system of gradations and degradations based on caste and birth, there is no use in accusing the so-called untouchables of being divided among themselves. After all, the so-called untouchables are themselves victims of circumstances.

15. In municipal areas, separate water-taps are maintained wherever caste Hindus object.

16. To rural elementary schools maintained out of public funds our children have no free access. When they are admitted, they are given separate seats, or they are asked to sit on the floor. If the pupils approach the caste Hindu orthodox teachers employed there, knowingly or unknowingly, to clear some doubts, they are pushed back by the teachers with the help of slates or sticks for fear of pollution. In some cases, our children are made to stand outside the main school premises in all seasons, in order to receive instruction through the window, and hence our children cannot even see the blackboard. When the lower elementary course is completed in the separate schools established for our children, we are not admitted in the higher elementary schools run under the public management in the same village. Even trained teachers belonging to Adi-Hindu community are not appointed in such higher elementary schools. Our children cannot use the common latrine. It is a great pity that even our representatives serving on different local bodies do not pay surprise visits to such schools, where caste Hindus predominate, for fear of molestation and endless trouble. Singanallore and Irugur villages near Coimbatore have become famous in this respect. The elementary schools in urban areas are not free from such defects.

In high schools our students cannot take drinking water from the pots used there during hot season; but they must depend upon some caste Hindu students to pour water for our young men and girls. Even vessels are not given to our students, but the students have to use only their hands as vessels for drinking. To the common tiffin rooms our students have no free access.

17. In post offices located in inaccessible places, we cannot post letters straightaway or transact any other business. Even for buying post cards, covers or stamps, we will have to stand at a great distance from such post offices and beg some caste Hindu passers-by to comply with our request. There are two things involved in this. Firstly, we cannot pass through the public pathway. Secondly, we are prevented from transacting business straightaway in the post office.

18. We feel sorry that your august person has not taken birth in the Adi-Hindu community to realize our practical difficulties.

This is a formidable catalogue. There is no exaggeration in it, if one or two mental reservations are understood. Every statement is true of some place. No disability is universal. Some are rare. And all are being abated by voluntary effort. These reservations should be known in order to get the proper perspective. They do not in any way reduce caste Hindus' shame or warrant inaction on the part of reformers. The shame of caste Hindus will continue so long as these disabilities are practised in the name of religion, no matter to how little or great an extent. It is the clear duty of sanatanists so called to denounce the disabilities in the severest possible language and join hands with the reformers in protecting Harijans from humiliation heaped upon them under the sanction of religious custom. The eighteenth grievance which the signatories have specially underlined I regard as a compliment paid by them to me. Yes, it is quite possible that I would have felt the force of these terrible grievances much more, had I been born an Adi-Hindu. Not having had that luck, I have become one by adoption. There will be no rest for me nor society, so long as untouchability persists.

Harijan, 9-3-1934

283. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

March 9, 1934

BHAISHRI MAVALANKAR,

Thakkar Bapa is going there specially to see you. He wants to discuss with you the position about the Relief Fund, of which he is one of the Trustees—what the total amount is and where the sums have been deposited. If you send me particulars of where other funds, too, are deposited and of withdrawals from them, I can think further about them. If you wish to make any suggestions, kindly send them in writing.

I hope you keep good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1238

284. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, HYDERABAD

March 9, 1934

As you women are the housekeepers I expect that much reform and good work can be done by you. By their very instinct women are

more patient and can better bear suffering than men, and therefore, any work that is undertaken by women is sure to be successful. It is inhuman not to recognize one section of our own people whose religion is the same as ours. It is indeed very pleasing to me to see a very large crowd of people all eager to work for the betterment of a section of our people. I am thankful to you all for the money and the jewels that you are giving me today out of free love and love for the work that I have undertaken. It is not these which matter but it is the practical work that leads to the salvation of those in suffering. I hope that the ladies of Hyderabad will devote their time and do as much work as possible, for which money will be forthcoming if good service is rendered.

The Hindu, 13-3-1934

285. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, HYDERABAD[1]

March 9, 1934

He thanked the public for their addresses and purses. He was speaking to them in a language which was partly Urdu and partly Hindi because he considered both the languages to be one and the same. The distinctions between higher and lower classes should not be perpetuated, for all were one in the service of the country. He had given his thought to the question for the last 50 years and he felt that there should be no distinctions drawn between the Harijans and the other classes. In fact, there should also be no distinctions between Hindus and others like Muslims, Christians and Parsis; they should all be united, like the five fingers on one hand. Hindus owed a special responsibility for removing the blot of untouchability. Friends from America, Japan and other countries were writing to him, saying that there was no untouchability in those countries.

Replying to orthodox opposition, Gandhiji said that his critics alleged that he was out to destroy Hinduism. The charge was not at all true; he was only trying to remove a stigma from it. In conclusion, Gandhiji made a fervent appeal to all to help him in the work of ameliorating the condition of Harijans.

The Hindu, 13-3-1934

286. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, SECUNDERABAD

March 9, 1934

Gandhiji began his speech with the remark that until he was told to that effect he did not know that the girls were Harijans. There was no means of distinguishing

[1] Held in the V. V. School premises, the meeting was attended by about 10,000 people. Many officials also attended the meeting.

them from the caste Hindus, although the latter might think it a sin to sit next to them. He had come to Hyderabad in the course of his work for Harijans and he appealed for help. The public were quite welcome to give him whatever gifts they liked but it must be distinctly understood that the money would be spent for Harijans. Harijan work was for the purification of the soul and the age-long curse was fortunately fast disappearing. There was no room in the movement for hatred or selfishness. Gandhiji appealed to the orthodox also to help him in removing the obstacles in the way of the Harijan community, such as want of educational facilities, disabilities as regards water, etc. It was doubtful whether a high-class Hindu would care to treat a patient of the Harijan community. There would be no end to the tale of sorrow and shame, concluded Gandhiji, if he wished to recount the sufferings of Harijans, and he appealed to all to help him.

The Hindu, 13-3-1934

287. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[1]

HYDERABAD,
March 9, 1934

I have not the faculty of others for looking ahead, much less across three months.[1] When the period of my self-imposed inactivity for the moment ends on 31st July there will be time enough to consider the position. Till then, I have my hands full with anti untouchability work and the Bihar programme.

Questioned about the duration of his stay in Bihar, he said he was entirely in the hands of Babu Rajendra Prasad in that regard but hoped to take advantage of his present visit to tour Orissa and Assam in connection with anti-untouchability work. Gandhiji emphatically denied the report that his visit to Hyderabad marked the end of his tours for the uplift of Harijans. He said he was only suspending his programme on account of the emergency in Bihar. He added while much had been achieved in the past few months a great deal still remained to be accomplished.

Asked about the results of his recent tour in South India, Gandhiji said it was an unqualified success. He found nothing throughout his visits in those parts to support the suggestion that South Indians were less disposed than people in other parts of India to help in the eradication of untouchability. On the contrary, he declared, everywhere he observed as much enthusiasm over his campaign as elsewhere while in throwing open the temples and contributing to anti-untouchability fund South Indians were second to none. Guruvayur was an exception which bore out his experience in South India. Even here he was confident that popular opinion would prevail.

The Hindu, 10-3-1934

[1] Gandhiji had been asked what the future programme of the Congress would be.

288. A WAIL FROM UDUMALPET[1]

Udumalpet is a township between Podanur and Dindigul. Among the addresses received there was one from its Harijans. I extract the following from their long and bitter address.

> In this town we are not allowed to draw water from any of the common fresh water wells. Our females and children have to depend upon the mercy of caste Hindus for a pot of drinking water. We have to be waiting for hours and hours together and put up with all abuses the caste Hindu showers upon us before we can get a pot of water.
>
> Owing to extreme poverty many of us are homeless and shelterless. We are exposed to the sun and rain and are suffering from innumerable difficulties. In our *cheries* the huts are so closely situated that very often we meet with fire accidents which cause loss of life and property. The town municipality is not attending to the sanitation of our *cheries*. They never clean our *cheries*.
>
> There is no proper drainage, no regular cleaning of night-soil, no facilities for the hygienic living of our men. No street light is found in our *cheries* and there is no regular street for us to walk on. The town municipality confers so much benefit on all other portions of the town, but won't attend to our *cheries*.

If the complaints are true, they require immediate attention from the Municipal Council, the public and the Local and Provincial Harijan Sevak Sanghs. I shall be glad to publish a refutation, if there is any exaggeration in the complaints. Meanwhile I defer further criticism.

Harijan, 16-3-1934

289. TO AFFLICTED BIHAR[2]

PATNA,
Silence Day, March 12, 1934

This is just to report myself to you. I have placed myself at Rajendrababu's disposal. Though I was at land's end when the calamity descended upon you, my heart was with you. Rajendrababu knew that he could call me when he desired. I would like you to remember that the quake of untouchability is much worse than that of Mother Earth.

[1] The Gujarati translation of this was published under "Notes" in *Harijanbandhu*, 11-3-1934.

[2] This is the message Gandhiji had written in the Earthquake Bulletin.

Let this reflection chasten us and make the calamity more bearable.

M. K. GANDHI

The Searchlight, 14-3-1934

290. LETTER TO GANGABEHN MAJMUDAR

March 12, 1934

CHI. GANGABEHN,

You have many times promised to Chhaganlal that you will go to Vijapur, but you have never kept the promise. I wouldn't have felt it if the land at Vijapur were mine. But it belongs to the poor and your failure to do your duty[1] of ensuring its proper management hurts me. You look upon me as your father. I didn't seek that honour. Now do your duty as a daughter and do the work for the sake of which you adopted me as a father and end my pain. I hope you and Kiki are all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9583. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

291. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

PATNA,
March 12, 1934

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter. I am enclosing a letter to Gangabehn. You may use it if necessary. Let me know if there is anybody else who can persuade her. Would you say that we can pay for weaving a higher rate of wage than that fixed by Shankerlal? I hear from Prabhudas from time to time. I reached Patna last night. For the present I have decided to stay in Bihar. I shall be able to arrive at a definite decision after I have been here for some time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9582. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] The land at the Vijapur Ashram was purchased in the addressee's name. Chhaganlal Gandhi had tried to persuade her to transfer the documents in favour of the Ashram trustees.

292. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

PATNA,
March 12, 1934

CHI. MANUDI,

You wrote after keeping me waiting for quite a long time. I understand the reason now. Bali writes and tells me that you did not listen to her advice. You should avoid pickles and oil. You should live only on milk, unspiced vegetables, fruit and *rotli.* If you do so, you will not fall ill. One should learn to relish food that is good for one's health.

I will convey to Ba the contents of the letters from all of you. She will feel very happy. I hope you have all completely recovered now.

Write to me regularly. Obey Bali's instructions. Write to your friends at Wardha.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1530. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

293. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

PATNA,
March 12, 1934

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

It is only today that I am able to answer your letter. To me, at this juncture, your letter is like a lake of fresh water to a traveller in a desert. I thank you both. Your decision is perfectly correct. If you are forbidden to go to a hill-station, why don't you go to Hajira? I, of course, have never been there. But all those who have been there have praised it very much. Is Sinhagad also considered a hill-station? Take treatment for whatever disease there may appear to be in the intestines or any other part of the body, but do it in a spirit of detachment. Thinking constantly about a disease only aggravates it. *Dhyayato vishayanpunsah,*[1] etc., applies in this case too.

Sarojinidevi tells me that you have started visiting astrologers. Even if there be truth in their predictions, they ought to be shunned. She told me about the new party also. If a party of Congressmen is formed with a definite programme, I would certainly welcome it. Even

[1] *Bhagavad Gita,* II. 62.

if it makes some honest mistakes I would tolerate it. The members will learn from mistakes. If, however, they refuse to learn, the party will only be a burden.

At present I desire two things from you. First, consider yourself as a trustee and earn as much money as you reasonably can. You should regard even such indulgences as you think necessary for your happiness as a trust. Secondly, I should like you to build up your body. For that purpose, you may try nature cure methods if they appeal to you. Not far from where you live are Mehta of Poona and Kuvalayananda of Lonavala[1]. Both the institutions have branches here.

Sarojinidevi told me about the Socialist Party also. I read its manifesto. I did not like it. I think I should write about it. I will do so when I get the time. Purushottam has asked my opinion. If from the very start they think what the Government will do, how will the Party be able to go ahead with its programme?

I can definitely say that I shall be here for one month at least. I will await Lilavati's letter. She still does not seem to have discovered the best way of using her abilities.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Will you make a list of Gujarati books specially suitable for women and send it to me? Of course I do not want you to give too much time to it.

From Gujarati: C.W. 7533. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

294. LETTER TO RAMIBEHN K. PAREKH

PATNA ,
March 12, 1934

CHI. RAMI,

I saw your handwriting after many months. Please write to me from time to time. Ba is always inquiring about you all. She would feel happy if I could give her some news about you. Take care of yourself. Ask Kunverji to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9720

[1] This word is not clear in the source.

295. LETTER TO BALIBEHN M. ADALAJA

PATNA ,
March 12, 1934

CHI. BALI,

I have been writing the whole day and feel so tired now that I cannot write any more with the right hand. I am, therefore, writing with the left. Your letters sometimes bring tears to my eyes. You, who are like a tigress, behave like a slave towards children whom you regard as your own. This seems to be the fruit of your and your parents' virtuous deeds in past lives. You say that Manu is not your daughter. If so, she is a daughter to nobody now. She used to be one to Ba. Since, however, Ba started going to jail, their bond is no longer what it used to be. You seem to be living only for Chanchi's[1] children. It cannot but hurt me to remove Manu from your charge. I must admit that I did not always feel thus. But your love for the children has won my heart. I am father or grandfather in name only. In trying to be father and mother to countless children, I have remained so to none. My only consolation is that all of you tolerate me. Don't let your love for me diminish and continue to regard me as your father.

God will surely lead all of you to your good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5052. Courtesy: Surendra N. Mashruwala

296. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

March 12, 1934

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

Your letter. Make yourself comfortable there, and go to Wardha on getting well. Dr. Sharma's wire has been received just now; he is going to Wardha. I shall tell you when it is time for you to go to jail. That is my worry. You have to concern yourself only with getting completely well. I cannot have you here because of the difficulty of accommodation, food, etc. We shall see later on. Send the letter to Krishna[2] and let me have her address.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 297

[1] Chanchal, also known as Gulab, wife of Harilal Gandhi

[2] Krishnakumari, an Ashram inmate who had been in jail with the addressee

297. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

PATNA,
March 13, 1934

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I am sending with this the secondletter received from . . .[1] The girl is unhappy. I have consoled her. I do not know to what extent what I am doing will be agreeable to you brothers and to . . .'s father and other people. I suppose I shall continue writing to her till you people wish me not to. . . . has, in my opinion, as much right as . . . . If. . . is inclined to remarry, it is our dharma to encourage her. I am sure she will not want to, still, she must have the freedom. Be frank with me in this matter. You may certainly restrain me, though . . . has now become like a daughter to me.

I enclose with this a copy of a letter I have written to Sir Samuel.[2] I also enclose a copy of another[3] I have written to the magistrate of Dharwar. The latter is merely for your information. As regards Sir Samuel there is something I want you to do. Ask Scarpa, if he is here, what happened at that meeting. He was present there, and even if he was not, the meeting had been arranged through him. It will be good if he can provide the names and addresses of the people who were present. I want to collect whatever facts I can. So far this affair has been discussed only in English. The whole thing is a fabrication. It is like "Ajmer" being twisted into "*Aj mara*"[4].

You want to come to see me. I shall call you after a short while for Harijan work. I have let Thakkar Bapa go to Delhi. He was not needed here. Of course a worker like him is useful everywhere. There was no special need . . .. But you wish to discuss about . . . and . . ., or Bihar or the correspondence taken up with Sir Samuel. You may come whenever you want to. I shall be in the Motihari region from Wednesday to Friday, returning here on Friday evening.

Agatha Harrison will arrive in Bombay on the 16th. Lester has seen the Viceroy. She will be here tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 7947. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] The names have been omitted.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Samuel Hoare", 6-3-1934

[3] *Vide* "Letter to W. H. Brown", 4-3-1934

[4] Literally, 'died today'. Gandhiji is referring to a joke involving the misreading of the word 'Ajmer' in the Persian script.

298. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

March 13/14, 1934

BA,

You must have received my letter of last week. It was dictated to Om. Today is Tuesday. I am writing this after brushing my teeth. It is not yet four. I am in Patna. The Relief Committee has rented a building. In the compound they have put up tents. Some persons are staying in these tents, too. Rajendrababu, his sister, Prabhavati and her husband, all of them are here. Jamnalal also is here. Bal, Maganbhai, Swami, Kripalani, Somanji and the others are here, too. Tomorrow I shall be visiting the part which has been worst hit. Lakshmidas is better now. He can even walk about a little. He is regaining strength. Velanbehn is trying hard to come, but has not come so far. I had letters from Manu, Bali and Rami this time. All of them had fallen ill together, so that none of them could write. Manu and Bali say that in their illness all of them forgot the grief of Kusum's death. They are all better now. Rami must have gone to Bombay or will go now. Manu has been able to make no progress in her study. She started eating pickles, etc., as a result of which she got fever and also sore throat. They all send their *pranams* to you. In fact in every letter there are *pranams* for you. Kaka is happy in Hyderabad. Chhaganlal Joshi is in Dwarka and so Ramabehn also has gone there with Vishnu. Vasumati is in Borivli. Gangabehn had gone to Kutch, from where she has returned and gone to Ahmedabad. Krishnakumari is ill. Amtussalaam is still with Rajaji. Pyarelal is in Bombay. Kusum Desai had come to meet me at Wardha Station. The station was on the way when I came here. I came in Hyderabad. Sarojinidevi had come there. She also is quite happy. Thakkar Bapa has gone to Delhi and Mama has accompanied him for keeping accounts. We are, therefore, only seven now. Before that we were sixteen. Ramdas met me. He travelled with me for one or two stations. He is all right. And now the discourse:

As I wrote in my last letter, I will narrate the story told by Vishnu Digambar Shastri. It has been devised to explain the meaning of *bhakti*. When Rama returned with Sita to Ayodhya in the flying-chariot Pushpak, he was accompanied by Hanuman and others. It was time now to bid them farewell, and so a durbar was held. Rama embraced all and Sita blessed them by putting her hands on their heads. The eyes of all were moist with tears. Rewards were distributed to all. It was Hanuman's turn to receive his. Sita took off the necklace of precious jewels which she was wearing, put it round Hanuman's neck and embraced him. But what could Hanuman have to do with a necklace of jewels? He snapped it into two and started opening up

each bead with his teeth and, not seeing Ramanama inside, would throw it away. Everybody was stunned. The necklace which Sita had given from off her neck to be thus treated! Sita asked Hanuman why he was acting in that manner. Hanuman replied: "Mother, what shall I do wearing a necklace consisting of jewels which do not contain Ramanama? I want to have nothing but that." The reply increased their amazement. Somebody said: "If that is so, Ramanama cannot be seen in your body either; what about it?" Hanuman burst out laughing and said: "All right. Look." He then tore open his chest and there flowed out a stream of blood in every drop of which they saw Ramanama. They all shouted: "Enough, enough. We have seen it. Please forgive us." Hanuman closed the cut and the court was filled with shouts of victory to him. Sita embraced him and bathed him in tears of joy.

This is an invented story. It is not found even in the *Ramayana*. There was no need for Hanuman to tear open his chest in order to show his *bhakti*. But we have to learn something from this story. Hanuman did not care for a reward. To him his service was its own reward. His *bhakti* was not for show. Nor did it require expression in words. Service itself constituted *bhakti* for him. Rama filled his whole being and accompanied every breath of his. He thought of nothing but Rama whether working or resting, eating or drinking, waking or asleep. He had put himself, mind, speech and body, in the hands of Rama. His heroism was dependent on his *bhakti*. It sprang from it. If we try, we can attain to *bhakti* like Hanuman's. If Ramanama is on our lips all the hours of the day, some day it will sink into our heart; and once it has sunk into the heart it is bound to fill the whole being.

Prabhavati specially sends her *pranams* to you. She has inquired after everybody. I started writing this letter yesterday and have finished it today, Wednesday. It is still not four.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 17-9

299. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

PATNA,
March 14, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You must have received the letter which I wrote from Belgaum. It was posted only on Thursday.

I am writing this letter on Wednesday morning. It is not yet four. Having finished a letter to Ba, I have taken up this. I arrived in Patna on Sunday night. Today at 6 I am leaving for Motihari. I spent the whole of yesterday in discussions with co-workers. We are getting a good amount of money. But the need is equally great. We shall have to see to it that every pie is put to good use. Jamnalalji is here. Lakshmidas is recovering. He can now walk about in the house. Rajendrababu's health may be described as completely all right. He has forgotten his complaint under the load of the work which has fallen on him. I visited the city yesterday. Many Government buildings have been rendered unserviceable. In Patna alone there has been an estimated loss of about a crore and a half. Eighty persons were killed and 400 injured. But the destruction in Patna is nothing compared to that in the other parts. Committees administering the Viceroy's fund and Rajendrababu's fund are separate. We have to see now what we can do.

Miss Lester and her friend returned from Delhi yesterday. Both of them will accompany me. The friend will shortly have to return to England. Miss Lester will remain in India. She wants to study the whole situation. Agatha Harrison is arriving on the 16th. She also will come here.

Thakkar Bapa and party separated themselves at Hyderabad. He will rejoin me later when I am able to take up the tour of Orissa. I see that I shall have to remain here for about a month. It will probably not be necessary to stay longer.

We passed through Allahabad on our way. As we had to wait there for three hours, I called at Anand Bhavan. Swaruprani (Nehru) felt comforted. I was with her for a long time. I spent some time with Kamala (Nehru) too. She is ill. The mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law, both were confined to bed. Kamala was waiting for Dr. Bidhan.

Shastri (of *Harijan*) had two fine boys, to both of whom he and his wife were devoted. The younger boy was five years old. He is dead. The parents are now disconsolate. The boys were both extremely intelligent. They could follow Tamil, Hindi and Bengali and could dance and sing. The parents had given them the best kind of training.

I cannot write more today. My eyes are too tired. It will soon be time for prayer. I cannot go to sleep again.

There is no letter from you even this time. For my part, I shall go on writing.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 85-6

300. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

PATNA,
March 14, 1934

CHI. VASUMATI

I have your letter. For the present you should go to Wardha. I do not call you here right now because I shall be touring the area affected by the earthquake. I do not intend to take anyone with me there. It will be easy for you to come here from Wardha, and in any case you have to get some experience of that place.

Tell Durga that I have written to her and that, after consulting Anasuyabehn, she can certainly go to Ahmedabad.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You may address your letters to Patna.

SMT. VASUMATIBEHN
C|O SMT. GANGABEHN VAIDYA, RAMBAUG
BORIVLI, *via* BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9384. Also C.W. 629. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

301. LETTER TO GORDHANBHAI L. BHAKTA

PATNA,
March 1[*4*][1]*, 1934*

BHAI GORDHANBHAI,

I have your letter. You have given much information. Let me know if you come to know more about Durbari. You should stick to

[1] The source bears the date "15", evidently a slip, for the postal stamp reads "Motihari, March 14, 1934", the day when Gandhiji was at Motihari and Patna.

the Ashram for the time being. God will clear the way for you when the moment comes. It is enough that you keep yourself ready.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10993. Courtesy: Gordhanbhai L. Bhakta

302. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

PATNA,
March 14, 1934

CHI. VIDYAVATI,

I have your two letters. There is nothing definite about my tour of U. P. If it does take place, I shall be certainly coming to your area. Write to Hridaynathji and Thakkar Bapa. If I come, whatever money is collected will remain with me, It will not be given to any local man. It will be spent only after consultation with the All India Spinners' Association and therefore with me. Hence, have no worry with regard to the money.

Blessings to you and Laxmi from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

303. REMARK IN THE VISITORS' BOOK OF SHARDA SADAN LIBRARY, LALGANJ

March 14, 1934

Though the building has collapsed, learning cannot be destroyed. Let the people therefore acquire the wealth of learning from the library.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10502

304. SPEECH TO VILLAGERS[1]

March 14, 1934

There is one thing I want to say to you. Those of you who are getting work from the Central Relief Committee are in honour bound

[1] This was while Gandhiji was on his way from Lalganj to Motihari. The source does not identify the village where Gandhiji spoke.

to work well. Do good honest work; and you who are not already working should do so. To give money for bad work or for no work, is to make beggars. And you must put away untouchability from your hearts and lives.

Mahatma, Vol. III, pp. 253-4

305. INTERVIEW TO UNITED PRESS[1]

[Before *March 15, 1934*][2]

The report is entirely misleading. What I said was: "If the Harijan sufferers in Bihar needed special help, apart from others, the Central Board of the Servants of Untouchables Society would have to consider how it could be rendered."

But that would mean that the Bihar Central Relief Committee had neglected the Harijan sufferers in the affected areas.

I am quite sure that such an occasion would never arise, because the Central Relief Committee, as at present reconstituted, is well able to take care of the Harijan sufferers in Bihar.

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-3-1934

306. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

[*March 15, 1934*][3]

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your two letters. I am writing this at 12.15 a.m. in Motihari thinking it was 3 a.m. I got up and found it was 12 midnight. But I had no desire to sleep with the correspondence in front of me.

I see what you say about Menon. I must not write to the Diwan of Mysore in a personal matter. Menon should apply to all the possible hospitals and go where he may be wanted irrespective of climate. You will have to be where the climate and other considerations suit you and the children for the time being. Like the legal profession, the medical is crowded at the top. Anyway you must keep me informed of what is happening. You should tell Menon that he is

[1] The United Press correspondent drew Gandhiji's attention to the report published in *The Statesman* that he intended to spend part of the Harijan Fund for Harijan earthquake victims in Bihar.

[2] The report in the source is dated March 15.

[3] From the reference in the letter to Motihari where Gandhiji reached on this date.

at liberty to write to me whenever he likes.

I hope the children are faring well. Yes, you will have to take them to a hill-station during the hot weather.

I understand what you say about the promise. Whether there was a breach or not you alone can judge. I am sorry that Maria was angry over my not going to Porto Novo. She gave me to understand that she had caught the spirit of my selfdenial. It was as much a deprivation to me as it was to her. But self-denial to be true has to bring joy not sorrow, never anger.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 127. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child,* p. 104

307. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

March 15, 1934

CHI. AMALA,

It is just now 12.40 a.m. The alarm that should have gone off at 2.30 a.m. went off at 12 midnight. Having got up, I am attending to arrears at an affected place in Bihar.

That many Hindus are callous to the sufferings of animals is but too true. It is a mark of degradation and lifelessness of the religious spirit. You do not need to be a Hindu but a true Jewess. If Judaism does not satisfy you, no other faith will give you satisfaction for any length of time. I would advise you to remain a Jewess and appropriate the good of the other faiths.

My weight is 107; the b.p. has not been taken for days now.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

308. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

March 15, 1934

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

The enclosed was sent by Dr. Ambedkar. Please go through it and let me have your opinion.

I hope you have written to Venkatasubbiah[1] in connection with the demand for a separate plot for Harijans in Porto Novo.

I have started touring the affected areas here. It seems it will easily take one month at the least. After that it may be possible to tour Orissa and Assam. Hariji[2] is pressing me to visit the U.P. at an early date. Please consider all this.

I am writing this at 1 a.m. in Motihari. The alarm which was set for 2.30 rang at 12. I cleaned my teeth without having looked at the clock. And then the heap of letters would not let me go to sleep again. I have brought along with me here only Mirabehn, Lester and Hogg and no one else from the party. There is not such an abundance here of transport and other facilities.

Having grown used to your company, I rather miss it. But what can one do?

I also used to get dreams.

BAPU

[PS.]

You should continue to write at the Patna address.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1136

309. LETTER TO LORD WILLINGDON

AS FROM PATNA,
MOTIHARI,
March 15, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

Miss Lester has described to me, under your permission, the conversation she had with you. The impression left on her mind is that you consider me to be insincere. That I am mistaken about the many views I hold may be found to be true. But I know that I am not insincere. Beyond giving you my assurance that I have never in my life been insincere to anybody on earth, I do not know how to prove my sincerity. I should be glad to explain whatever in me might have appeared to you to be insincere. I have felt called upon to write to you because any doubt about my *bona fides* in a person occupying the very high position you do must postpone the peace between England

[1] Of the Servants of India Society, Madras
[2] H. N. Kunzru

and India, which I am working for and praying for all these long years. I would like you to believe me when I tell you that I am your and England's sincere friend.

To

HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY

From a photostat: G.N. 6564

310. LETTER TO AMINA G. QURESHI

March 15, 1934

CHI. AMINA,

I had your letter. Aren't you yourself also to blame for your persistent ill health? You just don't take care of your diet. You must have spices, you cannot do without rice and you also want this and that. You ought to live on milk and fruit. Your body too is bulging out of shape. Hamid must be allowed to stay in the hospital and get rid of his eczema. You and the children must regain your health somehow.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Write to me at Patna address.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10624. courtesy: Amina G. Qureshi

311. LETTER TO PARVATI P. DESAI

March 15, 1934

CHI. PARVATI,

You have been to see Pragji and still given me no news of him. Why? How is Pragji? What does he read and what physical work does he do? What is his food? Is he happy? Who are his companions? Why is he silent? How are you and the children?

. . .[1] write. . .[2] to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5037

[1] Not decipherable in the source
[2] *ibid*

312. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

March 15, 1934

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I got your letter. You have done well in buying a clipper and scissors. One must become one's own barber.

Galiharilal will not come.

I understand about Manibehn. Forget her if you can. . . .[1]

Blessings from

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 367. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

313. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

PATNA,
March 15, 1934

CHI. BABU,

How very sad that I receive news about you but you do not give any news yourself! It means that you people would write letters to me when I provoke you to do so, not otherwise. Isn't that so? I would certainly expect that you would not behave in that manner. I have always thought that you were a wise and sensible girl. I hope you remember that your health is in your hands. Do you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9968. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

314. FRAGMENT OF STATEMENT[2]

March 15, 1934

Precis of Mr. Gandhi's statement made on Thursday 15th March, in North Bihar, when I asked him to give half an hour to concentrate on his memories of the tea party in Rome [in] Dec. 1931.

I was asked to go to some lady's house to tea. I went, not know-

[1] The sentence that follows seems to make no sense. For Gandhiji's comment when asked by the addressee to explain it, *vide* 'Letter to Bhagwanji P. Pandya", 9-4-1934.

[2] On the so-called interview given to Signor Gayda of *Giornale d'Italia* in December 1931. The statement was presumably made to Mirabehn, who was with Gandhiji at the time as also during his tour of Bihar in March 1934.

ing that a specially invited set of people would be present. I do not remember nor did I take particular notice at the time of the names of any of them.

They asked me more questions than I cared for as I had made it clear in Italy that I would give no interviews. They pressed me a good deal.

As I was giving my usual answers to the usual stock questions, one of them asked for a pencil and paper and began taking notes. Mahadev Desai generally takes notes of what I say, but as it happened to be, Devdas and Pyarelal all arrived later on— you also stayed away that afternoon.

I should like to see the original of the notes that the Italian caller took, for I cannot even imagine that I said what *The Times* reports. If I did, I must have been intoxicated or in some other . . . .

India Office Library, London

315. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MOTIHARI

[*March 15, 1934*][1]

This is no time for talking. I have come to see and help you, and not to talk. But there are just two things I want to say to you. The first is this. The relief committees have the money, and either beggars or workers will take it. And I want no beggars. It would be deplorable if this earthquake turned us into mendicants. Only those without eyes, or hands, or feet, or otherwise unfit for work, may ask for alms. For the able bodied to beg is, in the language of the *Gita,* to become thieves.

The second thing is this, that God had Himself sent us this gift. We must accept it as a gift from Him, and then we shall understand its meaning. What is the meaning? It is this, that untouchability must go, that is to say, nobody must consider himself higher than another.

If we can understand these two things, this earthquake will be turned into a blessing. At present we count it as a sorrow, and no wonder when we see these fair fields and lands devastated. But I pray to God that He may give us strength to make a blessing out of this destruction.

Mahatma, Vol. III. pp. 254-5

[1] From the report of the speech in *The Searchlight,* 18-3-1934

316. INTERVIEW TO MIDDLE-CLASS DEPUTATION, MOTIHARI

March 15, 1934

Mahatmaji told the deputationists that it was no use calling the help solicited by the name of loans.[1] His experience of Gujarat famine was that such loans were never returned. To call any help given by the relief organizations by the name of loans served only one purpose. It saved the face of the middle-class people and it also gave the relief committees the consolation that the money given would be returned, but as a matter of fact this money was never returned. Mahatmaji saw no difficulty in giving gifts to the middle class people on a higher scale according to their needs, though, at the same time, he said while considering the cases of the middle-class people the cases of those who were dying of starvation could never be ignored. He enquired from the representatives what would be the minimum and maximum requirement of a middle-class man, upon which one of the deputationists said that it was no use fixing a figure when no help was to be given. Mahatmaji thereupon told him that that was not the correct attitude to adopt. The committee of the middle classes should be prepared with their case to be placed before any organization—private or Government—and it would be for the relief organization to decide what help and in what form they could give to the middle-class people whose sufferings were certainly great and needed redress.

The Searchlight, 18-3-1934

317. INTERVIEW TO RELIEF WORKERS OF CHAMPARAN

MOTIHARI,
March 15, 1934

Mahatma Gandhi tendered some valuable advice to the relief workers of Champaran District who met him on the eve of his departure from Motihari.

Regarding the problem of reclamation of land Gandhiji said that it was a difficult problem for the Central Relief Committee. He thought that the Central Committee should take up only such programme of work as they could do full justice to.

It was true, further stated Gandhiji, that the people looked up to them for redress of all difficulties due to land problem, but he thought that beyond representing their case to the authorities concerned the Relief Committee should not take upon themselves any responsibility.

Neither the Government nor the zamindars, further said he, could be unmindful to this question for they were vitally interested in the reclamation of lands or else it would affect their revenue and rent.

Asked how he liked the idea of loans being advanced by the Bihar Central Relief Committee to the affected cultivators for reclamation of their lands, Gandhiji

[1] The deputationists had told Gandhiji that they badly needed loans and not gifts for rebuilding their fallen houses and restarting their businesses.

said that the question of granting loans to the cultivators was the question of granting loans to the middle-class people also in the towns and loans in neither case could be realized by a private agency like the Central Relief Committee.

Any monetary help in this direction, said he, could only be in the nature of free gifts. But he was doubtful if the Central Relief Committee had ample means at their disposal to meet the requirements of a large number of people who stood in need of such help.

Concluding, Gandhiji said that they should not court popularity, but conserve all energies in order to utilize them when other agencies had failed and need of rendering help became very acute.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-3-1934

318. TEMPLE-ENTRY V. ECONOMIC UPLIFT

One sees sometimes in the public Press criticism on the temple-entry question. It is double-barrelled, being directed on the one hand by Harijans and on the other by sanatanists. Some of the Harijans say, "We do not want temple-entry; do not build temples, but use all you receive for economic uplift." Some sanatanists say, "Give up the temple-entry question altogether. You are hurting our feelings by forcing Harijans into temples." Both are wrong in substance. Not one single pice out of the purse has been or will be spent for building temples. Attempt is being made only to have public temples opened to Harijans on the same terms on which they are open to the other Hindus. It is a matter of choice for the Harijans to visit or not to visit them; *savarna* Hindus have to lift the bar against Harijans. For those millions who regard temples as treasure-chests of spiritual wealth, they are living realities which they hold dear as life itself. If they are truly repentant towards Harijans, they must share these treasures with the latter. I know what the opening of temples means to Harijans. Only last week, between Dharwar and Belgaum, I opened three temples to Harijans in the presence of crowds of *savarna* Hindus and Harijans. If critics had been present at the opening and noticed the pleasure on the countenances of the Harijans present as they bowed before the image and received the *prasad*, their criticism would have been silenced. Harijan critics would have realized that, apart from themselves, Harijans at large did desire temple-entry. Sanatanist critics would have realized that temples, wherever they were opened, were being opened with the fullest concurrence of the temple-goers concerned and in the presence of crowds of them. No hole-and-corner opening can do any good whatsoever to Hinduism. To be of spiritual or any value at all, the opening has to be performed with due publicity, solemnity and the willing consent of the existing temple-goers, and not of such

self-styled reformers as have no faith or interest in temples and for whom temples may even be a superstition. Temple-entry agitation requires no financial outlay, it does not lend itself to agitation except by a few workers who have faith in temples and whose word would command attention from the mass *savarna* mind. It is, therefore, a question that can only be and is being gently and cautiously handled. The only insistence is on the right and the duty of the believing reformer advocating temple-entry and showing that without it the reformation will not only be incomplete but fruitless. For, without temples being freely open to Harijans, untouchability could not be said to have been removed root and branch.

As for the economic uplift, it is altogether wrong to put it in opposition to temple-entry. Temple-entry can only help such uplift. For, when Harijans are freely admitted to temples, all the avenues to economic betterment must be automatically open to Harijans as to others. So far as the moneys received are concerned, they will *all* be used *only* for economic uplift, if it is admitted that educational uplift also means economic, in that it makes the educated Harijan fitter for running life's race. I am aware that education among the *savarnas* has often rendered them less fit for the race. But that has been so, because their education has meant contempt for labour. There is not much danger of such a mishap with the general body of Harijans for some time to come at least. And the danger can be averted altogether, if those who are in charge of the movement will take care to purge Harijan education of the evils of the current method, which ignores the technical side for the most part, if not altogether.

Harijan, 16-3-1934

319. HARIJAN FINANCE

Correspondents sometimes ask why the public do not know what moneys are being received during the tour and how they are being spent. Those who thus ask or write in the columns of the Press evidently do not care to look at the *Harijan.* Accounts have been and are being published from time to time in these columns giving as full details as possible of the receipts. The reader will find therein all the purses, individual donations and prices realized for jewellery. Three account-keepers travel with the party and work day and night under the direct control of Thakkar Bapa, the ever vigilant secretary of the Central Board. More often than not, they have to burn midnight oil in order to cope with thousands of copper and silver pieces and to tally cash from day to day. These moneys are all sent to the Central Board at Delhi and there safely banked. Of course, an accurate system of

account-keeping has been devised at Delhi and every pice received or spent is to be found in the account books. Accounts are audited and produced before the Board meetings from time to time. All the transactions of the Board are public and duly recorded. In other words, the Board follows the accurate methods of banks and regards itself as a public institution responsible to the public regarding its financial and other management.

The public will be interested to know that up to 2nd March Rs. 3,52,130-9-7 had been received during the tour.

As to expenses, they will be largely regulated by the provinces which have produced the moneys, subject to sanction by the Central Board. The draft rules[1] for the disposal of the funds were published the week before last and criticism has been invited. More than this it is humanly impossible, and even unnecessary, to do.

Harijan, 16-3-1934

320. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MUZAFFARPUR[2]

March 16, 1934

Gandhiji said that was not the time to speak to them at any length. It might be possible to do so next time, if he found time and if Rajendrababu thought it desirable to bring him to Muzaffarpur. But at the present moment he would like to tell them that it was not at all desirable for any able-bodied man or woman to take advantage of the present situation and benefit himself or herself by begging. Begging was against one's self-respect and according to the *Gita*, an able-bodied man or woman, capable of earning his or her living, if he or she begged, committed the sin of thieving. Gandhiji desired that none of them should be held guilty of having committed that sin. Secondly, they must bow to the will of God and see to it that even out of this calamity came some good by their doing away once for all with the curse of untouchability. They must realize that the distinction of high and low between one man and another, or between one woman and another—who were all equally the creatures of one God—which this curse of untouchability involved was a great sin and could never be enjoined by the Vedas, for nothing that was not based on truth could be a *vedavakya*. He, therefore, wanted all of them to realize the true significance of the great calamity that providence had chosen to inflict on them and profit by it.

The Searchlight, 18-3-1934

[1] *Vide* "Opinion Invited", 2-3-1934.

[2] The meeting was held in the Darbhanga Raj compound and was largely attended.

321. INTERVIEW TO "THE SEARCHLIGHT"

PATNA,
[*March 16, 1934*][1]

My impressions are that what used to be for me a fair land I witnessed as a land of desolation. Motihari, Haripore, Lalganj and Muzaffarpore are places which I had visited before. Other places, which I visited this time I have no recollection of having visited before. In Motihari I lived for several months, that being my head-quarters during my stay in Champaran in 1917. To see in these places house after house, some of which I knew so well, in a dilapidated condition or a heap of ruins was a heart-rending sight to me. Field after field covered with sand showed how difficult life must have become for the peasantry of several thousand acres of land. The problem of restoring conditions to anything like pre-earthquake days is calculated to baffle the combined efforts of the best workers in the land. In the midst, however, of this desert, it was a matter of joy to me to meet representatives of different relief societies, including those representing the Government Relief Department, and to find that they were working more or less in consultation with one another, all having one end in view, namely, relief to the distressed people to the best of their ability.

The Searchlight, 18-3-1934

322. SPEECH AT BIHAR CENTRAL RELIEF COMMITTEE, PATNA[2]

March 18, 1934

I must tell you that this resolution[3] has been drafted by me. The author of non-co-operation as I am, I have recommended cooperation in the task before us without the slightest hesitation. On the very first occasion when I spoke on the earthquake disaster in Tinnevelly,[4] I said that such a catastrophe imperatively demanded the co-operation of India as a whole and that we must offer our co-operation to Government. The whole country has evinced its sympathy with

[1] The date is taken from *The Hindu* report.

[2] Among those who attended the meeting were Madan Mohan Malaviya, Jamnalal Bajaj and Rajendra Prasad.

[3] The resolution tendered "respectful co-operation to the Government in the prosecution of the common object of relieving the unparalleled distress that has overtaken Bihar".

[4] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Tinnevelly", 24-1-1934.

Bihar in its unforeseen affliction, and it would be highly improper to make any distinction between the various agencies that are out to assist Bihar to stand on its legs again.

When a death occurs, we forget all dissensions for the moment, apply ourselves to the reverential performance of the last rites and follow the bier as a mark of respect. But thousands have died in Bihar and many cities and villages have been razed to the ground. The earthquake has taken a toll of about 25,000 lives according to our records, while the Government figure is about 10,000. Whatever may be the correct figure, the need of the hour undoubtedly is that we should try our utmost to succour the distressed people of Bihar, and while doing so put all distinctions out of the account. The disaster is so tremendous that the wounds it has inflicted cannot be healed by the mere collection and distribution of funds; it is only the consciousness of the world's sympathy that can carry comfort to the lacerated hearts of the sufferers.

Let us, in the face of this calamity, forget the distinction between Hindus and Mussalmans as well as between Indians and Englishmen. And the same principle should impel us to cooperation between the Government and the people and, therefore, it is our duty to offer our respectful co-operation to Government in the prosecution of the common object. The Government has a number of experts and has control over lands and other facilities; while our resources are insignificant in these respects. In such circumstances it would be impossible to make the best use of the funds at our disposal in the absence of co-operation between Government and ourselves and I am certain that Government would equally fail to render full assistance to the sufferers without the whole-hearted co-operation of the people. Let us not be afraid of the bogey that we would be strengthening the hands of the Government by our co-operation. If the Government has an accession of strength through the common attempt to succour the distressed, it is entitled to it. We are offering to co-operate with a view to the protection and relief of the people, and not to their injury.

I have been to Motihari, where I met and learnt a good deal from the representatives of a number of relief organizations as well as two Government officers. The latter showed me the plans of new houses in contemplation and explained to me how Government was going to help, with the result that I had a clearer idea of the scope of our activities. I also met some members of the middle classes whose problem is so much more difficult of solution and who could not receive the assistance they require without co-operation between the

Government and the people.[1]

If the Congressmen fear that the prestige of the Congress will suffer through such co-operation, I submit that the fear is purely imaginary. The thing is that we are going to work not as Congressmen but as humanitarians. The question, therefore, of Congress prestige being enhanced or diminished does not arise. The prestige of the Con-gress must depend upon the Congressmen's purity and capacity for service. We do not cease to be Congressmen because we co-operate with the Government in a humane task. Has Rajendrababu ceased to be a Congressman? Or have I ceased to be one because I am sponsoring this resolution?

It would be sinful on our part to import any other extraneous considerations into the all-important question of alleviating human suffering. When in Champaran I did not need to name and did not name the Congress even once. The country has contributed over 20 lakhs of rupees today at Rajendrababu's call. The people know Rajendrababu alone and rely upon his sincerity. They remember the great sacrifices he has made for the country. It is now our duty to ensure that these funds are utilized in the purest possible way. It was with this end in view that Rajendrababu constituted a mixed committee, and wrote to the Government offering his co-operation.

I would therefore adjure Congressmen to decide in the first instance whether or not we should take up this task of reconstructing Bihar. If yes, we ought to sincerely co-operate with all workers in the field, including the Government. And we should do so whole-heartedly. In prosecuting the common object, we must forget non-co-operation, or else leave Bihar relief severely alone. Therefore, if you adopt this resolution you must adopt it in all sincerity on its merits, not for my sake but certainly for the sake of the millions who are in distress and expect your help. The servant must think only of his master, and the millions of afflicted people are our masters today.

Of course the resolution must not be supposed to imply that we may not criticize the Government where, in our opinion, its policy is wrong or measures inadequate.

Finally, not as president[2] but as an old fellow-worker and servant, I would request you, if possible, not to raise discussion on this resolution.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-3-1934

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Middle-class Deputation, Motihari", 15-3-1934

[2] Gandhiji was elected president of the Bihar Central Relief Committee, Rajendra Prasad having resigned.

323. LETTER TO GANGAMA

PATNA,
March 20, 1934

DEAR GANGAMA,

Thanks for your Rs. 5 note for Bihar. No apology needed for what you call a little . . .[1] from your heart.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRIMATHY GANGAMA
C/O SHRI B. B. MURNAD
COORG

Gandhiji's papers received from outside Agencies, File No. 1. Courtesy: National Archives of India

324. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, PATNA[2]

March 20, 1934

Gandhiji said he had no doubt in his mind that they must regard the calamity as in the nature of a gift from God and as punishment for their sins. It would be true to say that these cataclysms visited as a result of their own actions and they would be wise if they took the right lessons to be drawn from the disaster to their heart. Which action of theirs had brought on their heads the dire calamity he would not specify but he wished them to remember that the people in this country constituted one large human family so that the evil acts of any section profoundly acted and reacted on the whole. The eyes not only of India but of the world were for the moment focussed on Bihar and contribution to the relief funds had poured in from far and near. Many people had sent small sums and he had received from a sympathizer a shilling but it was of far greater value as it represented all that the sender had. It was not unlikely, he felt, that the collections might reach a crore of rupees.

This response, however, made their responsibility greater and more onerous. The more support they had from the country and outside, the greater became their responsibility and the greater the challenge to their own sense of duty. He therefore wished them to consider what their duty was in the crisis they were in. Their first duty was to see to it that proper account was kept of every cowrie contributed to their funds and, what is more, they should see to it that every cowrie so contributed reached the

[1] A word here is illegible.

[2] Newspaper reports stated that this was the largest meeting ever seen in Patna. About thirty to fifty thousand people attended the meeting. Other speakers were M. M. Malaviya and Maulana Azad.

hands of the suffering people for whom it was meant. It was their duty to work in a spirit of service and to beware lest a single pie was wasted. Secondly, proceeded Mahatmaji, those who had escaped damage or had suffered less must do their duty by those who had suffered more. Bihar must not depend entirely on outside help. Those who had suffered must have all the aid they were entitled to but large parts of the province had either not suffered at all or very partially. Those present that evening could not pretend that they had all suffered so badly as not to be able to contribute their mite to the relief of the suffering people. It was incumbent on each one of them to consider their duty and their means in that light before God as witness. He appealed to them not as a stranger hailing from Bombay. He was of Bihar or, more correctly speaking, of Champaran. Champaran was the first to recognize him on his return to his country from South Africa. He owed the same duty to Bihar as to Gujarat. For him there were no geographical demarcations in India. In appealing to them to do their duty he addressed them as one of them. He was aware that Patna had suffered severely. Eighty-four men had lost their lives and many times more had been injured. Yet they had on the whole escaped lightly as compared to the other devastated parts and it behoved all of them to search their hearts and consider what was obligatory on them to do for their suffering brethren.

In the third place Gandhiji asked them to consider if untouchability should not go even now. God had made no distinctions between the *savarna* or the *avarna*, between the Hindu and the Mussalman, in respect of the sweep of the havoc. For Hindus there was no crime more hideous than that of untouchability. If they did not give up this age-old sin, blot out all distinctions between the high and the low, and thereby purify themselves, he for one had no doubt that worse disaster was in store for them in the future. The sin of untouchability had corroded their entire social system. It was the spirit and the mentality behind this curse of untouchability that was responsible for the countless divisions that divided them and separated them into so many warring groups. To root out this sense of high and low and universalize the principle of human brotherhood was their solemn duty in the crisis that confronted them. If they did that they would have truly learnt from the earthquake.

Lastly, Gandhiji warned the suffering people against demoralizing themselves by begging in this hour of their destitution. Those who were helpless could not but depend on gratuitous relief. In their case it would not be begging just as a true sannyasi did not beg in the real sense of the term, for he gave back in other ways what he took by asking. But those who were able to work must earn the relief they sought by working for it. Let each suffering individual earn his relief by working for it. In proportion to the work they put forth in lieu of what they received, they would vindicate the dignity of human labour and enhance their reputation in the eyes of the country and the world.

The Searchlight, 23-3-1934

325. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

PATNA,
March 20/21, 1934

BA,

I have still not received your letter this time. I am writing this on Tuesday after morning prayer. I am in Patna. By my side is Satisbabu, spinning on the *takli.* There is Rajendrababu's sister. Prabhavati too. Om and Kisan are preparing to go to bed. Swami also is sitting near me. Mirabehn has gone to get the milk ready. Malaviyaji, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Dr. Mahmud, etc., are here just now. There was a meeting of all of them on Sunday. At that meeting a new committee was appointed for relief work in Bihar. Jamnalalji also is a member of it. The work is progressing well. I visited Motihari and other places. Even big mansions have been reduced to heaps of brick and mortar. Everywhere in the streets we saw heaps of bricks and ruins of buildings. The fields are covered with sand ejected with water from the bowels of the earth. Till this sand is removed, no crops can grow, and removing it is no easy work. For it is not only one or two *bighas* that are so covered. Thousands of *bighas* have been covered and in some places the layers are six inches thick or even thicker. The people's misery, therefore, is beyond measure. But even then life is so dear that people, dizzy with the thought of having escaped death, can forget their hardships and keep smiling faces. They have no food in their homes and no clothes to wear, but they do not seem to worry much about that. Such is the scene here. What can we do to help them? Those who are working in the midst of the people may serve them humbly and unostentatiously. They may plead with the idle to start working, and teach sensualists self-control by their own example. They may teach people *Ramadhun* and turn them Godward. There are such silent workers, too, at many places. God's ways are beyond our understanding. He erased the difference between birth and death in a matter of two minutes. Who was born and who is dead? Whether human beings are born or die, His play goes on. Why then rejoice and grieve? The Lord's name is the only truth. He who is aware of Him and serves Him, that is, His creation, as well as he may, lives. Those who do not do this are as good as dead, though living. Well, having started to write a letter I have given you this week's discourse. There may be a few words which you may not understand. But Dahibehn or Shanta or Lalita, one of them will surely be able to understand them.

If, however, there is any word which none of you can understand, ask me its meaning.

After writing the above yesterday, I could not go on further. I have resumed the letter today, Wednesday, in the morning (8.45). I shall soon be called to a meeting. There was another letter from Madhavdas. His health has improved so much that he sees no need now to go to Porbandar. He will remain in Bombay and start some business. Devdas and Lakshmi are quite happy. Rajaji has still not gone to Delhi. Most probably he will come here and meet me before going there.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 19-20

326. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

PATNA,
March 21, 1934

AMTUSSALAAM
GANDHI ASHRAM
TIRUCHENGODU

STAY. DO AS RAJAJI SAYS. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 615

327. LETTER TO SAM HIGGINBOTTOM

PATNA,
March 21, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter has given me great joy. I take you at your word. Come, see the afflicted area and tell us:

(1) how best and cheaply we can clean our choked wells;

(2) how we can house the homeless;

(3) how drain water-logged areas;

(4) how remove the sand which covers our fair fields.

These are but samples of the work in front of us. Of course the Government and the people are working in unison. But you know my

regard for your expert knowledge. Even if you do not show us anything new, I personally will have the satisfaction of knowing that you have seen the area. If you come please let the Central Relief office, Patna, know in time. Someone will meet you at the station and arrange a tour programme of five days after your reaching here.

I leave tomorrow morning with Rajendrababu to visit balance of the area yet unseen by me. But you may come independently of me. You will cross me at some point. I return to Patna on 4th proximo evening and leave for Purnea and thence for Assam on 7th proximo.

My regards to you and Mrs. Higginbottom.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

PROF. SAM HIGGINBOTTOM
AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTE
ALLAHABAD, U.P.

From A Photostat: G.N. 8936

328. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

March 21, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I suppose I shouldn't expect any letter from you just now. It is 9 o'clock now on Wednesday morning. A meeting of the Bihar Committee is going on in the adjoining room. I may be called any time. If I don't write just now, I can't finish this letter today. Everything seems to be going well. You must have read the resolutions in the papers. Maulana, Malaviyaji and Bidhan were present. I have put Jamnalalji exclusively on this work. If I didn't do that, I myself would have to stay on here. Personally I wish to complete as much of the Harijan tour as I can. Raja is ill. He has got an attack of asthma. He will go to Delhi in the beginning of April. Lakshmi will not feel easy in mind without him. Since the meeting of the Spinners' Association is to be held here, he will go to Delhi *via* this place. I will leave here on the 7th and go to Assam. I shall be there for about two weeks. From there I will come back to this place and, after spending a few days here, proceed to Utkal. I will again return here. The programme after that has not been fixed. But I still wish to give a few days to every province.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallbhbhaine, p. 87

329. SPEECH AT THE MEETING OF THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE RELIEF SOCIETIES, PATNA

March 21, 1934

Gandhiji addressed them at length, emphasizing at the outset the absolute necessity of all societies working in co-operation in deciding upon a plan of action, in consultation with the Central Relief Committee. He deprecated strongly any distinction of class, sect or religion being introduced or maintained in the matter of relief. Gandhiji insisted that the construction of huts and semi-permanent houses should not be undertaken on any haphazard plan. They should be prepared to accept the advice of Government experts and should refrain from building houses on condemned lands. It was really a very difficult question and the advice of experts must be scrupulously followed. In Motihari and Muzaffarpur, he would advise people not to build on those sites which had been declared unsafe and would ask them to wait until the monsoon was over. He appealed to them to alleviate suffering, even where the sufferer was unwilling to ask for help. Relief should reach the old, the destitute and the lame at their places and the ant and elephant should not be judged by the same measure of relief. Workers should not be guided by any other test but that of pure sufferings.

The Hindu, 24-3-1934

330. LETTER TO RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR

PATNA,
March 22, 1934

DEAR SISTER,

I thank you for your cheque for 38-7-0 and your letter. I am writing to Dr. Royden[1]. Of course the contribution is handsome from her poor congregation.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
JULLUNDUR CITY
PUNJAB

From a photostat: G.N. 6318. Also C.W. 3509. Courtesy: Rajkumari Amrit Kaur

[1] Dr. Maude Royden of the Guild House Church, London.

331. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

March 22, 1934

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

I got your letters. I sent a wire to you yesterday. I started working at 2 this morning, and that is why I am able to take up this letter at 3. There was no other way. I wanted to write to you yesterday but could not find the time for it.

I will give you the 5th and 6th. I hope Ghanshyamdas will be able to come.

I must go to Purnea in connection with the Bihar tour. Rajendrababu has fixed a programme according to which the visit to Purnea would be postponed for the present and I would spend one day there on my way to Assam. You can go to Assam a day earlier. We may start together from here and I would get down at Purnea, spend Monday there and, leaving the place on Tuesday, reach Gauhati on Wednesday. My plan is that after finishing the Assam trip we should return to Bihar, spend a week here, during which we should complete the Harijan tour in Chhota Nagpur, and then go to Orissa. From there we should return to Bihar again. After spending a few days here, we should draw up another programme. This is how my mind is working. We should give some time to every province. By doing so we shall be able to do something at least, if not much. We shall be able to meet the local workers. But we can plan all this only when we meet.

I will start from here on the 27th to go to the North, and return on the 4th. You can come here on the 4th if you wish. Ramnarayan complains that he has not heard from you. He is pressing me to tour Rajputana.

Lakshmidas Shrikant has asked for help for the Bhil Seva Mandal. What reply can we give to him? We shall discuss the matter when you come here. Please note down all such points in your diary. Otherwise we might forget about them.

Please send the two hundred rupees to Chidambaram.

BAPU

[PS.]

We must pay the railway fare to Bijapur. We can't spend a single pie from the Harijan Fund. If we spend any money from it, we would be stealing it from the Fund. I am returning the letter concerning Assam as also the one concerning Chidambaram.

[PPS.]

Lakshman Shastri's letter is enclosed. I think we should give him the help which he has asked for. If you also feel that way, send him what you think right for that purpose. Bring the letter with you and note down the point in your diary.[1]

Vamanrao's letter is enclosed.

Please read the portion which I have scored out. I scored it out because, when sealing the letter, I remembered that I had already written to you about that matter.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1135

332. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

PATNA,
March 22, 1934

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

You may certainly go to Wardha. It is no use coming here. I am going to Assam in a few days. I shall write to you at Wardha. Sharma should be there by now. You have only to build up your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 298

333. TALK WITH ASHRAM INMATES[2]

PATNA,
March 22, 1934

I have called you all here today particularly to tell you something about not courting imprisonment. Many of you may be having many questions and doubts on that point to be solved. Only those people should now court imprisonment who feel independently that they would not be at peace without going to jail. And those who go to

[1] This is the paragraph scored out, but was to be read.

[2] The following inmates of the Ashram were present: Jamnalal Bajaj, Lakshmidas Asar, Kedarnath Kulkarni, Swami Anandanand, Narayan Moreshwar Khare, Valji Govindji Desai, Harivadan, Chimanlal Bhatt, Raojibhai Nathabhai Patel, Maganbhai P. Desai, Ramachandra J. Soman, Madhav Savant, Himmatlal Khira and Prithuraj L. Asar.

prison must be sure that they are leaving everything behind. I have felt from the beginning that this would go on for long. Now my belief is confirmed that it is bound to be a prolonged affair. Hence, only those who are willing to die and get buried in jail should go there. Otherwise they should start earning. This point should be well understood. I had a letter from Godse[1]. He wrote saying that Narandas had, stopped, the money he had been sending to his mother and asked, instead, why she needed so much money. He wanted to know why he should be questioned on this point. He found it very humiliating. I myself did not think so. But I wrote to him: "You can never benefit by doing something which you feel is humiliating". Self-respect is an imaginary thing, but for a person living in the world of imagination that alone is the real thing. Man rises and falls in the world of imagination. When one feels that one has been humiliated, one's soul is, as it were, crushed. And so it is only here that one can rise and fall. It is one's ladder. Once one has ascended or descended it, the ladder collapses by itself. That is why I wrote to him:

"Your duty lies in finding some occupation suited to you and making a living. For that purpose, enter the market and know your worth. You are a capable man. You would find some work. Your expectation would not be fulfilled if you want me to look out for work for you. You may get Rs. 20 or 30 at the most. You must completely give up the idea of going to jail. I shall not blame you for it. That is the path Devdas and Ramdas have taken. You too must follow their example and achieve success."

JAMNALALJI: But it involves the question of breaking a vow. What about it?

GANDHIJI: Without understanding the full implications people decide impulsively to join the struggle and court imprisonment. It is not as if the struggle would go on for ten or twenty years ! I do not insist that one who has taken the vow under such an impression should honour the vow. For he has not taken it in full knowledge. If such persons do not go to jail, they will not go down in my estimate. A man has to decide for himself the importance of a vow. If he faces a situation which he had not dreamt of at the time he took the vow, how can I hold him bound by it?

But do not be under the impression that the people who are out today, earning money and living a life of indulgence will for ever remain in that condition and that their turn will not come. Their opportunity will surely come and then they will plunge into it of their own accord. After all, how long can one indulge in worldly pleasures?

[1] Ganpat Vasudeo Godse, an ashram inmate.

Say for one, two or at the most next five years. Ultimately one is bound to flee, saying 'Oh, what is it I am doing'. Mrityunjaya met me only yesterday. He said his feeling was increasing day by day that he was slipping away from me. I however said to him, "The very fact that you have such a feeling shows that you are coming closer to me. In a few years your father, I and every-body will be dead and you and others will succeed us. Today I feel as if I had lost the three of you: Devdas, Govind [Malaviya] and you." I do not say that what you have been doing is the right thing. But I do not blame you even in my thoughts. For were it not so you would become conceited. I am sure that ultimately you are going to take the plunge by yourselves. And only then would your taking the plunge do you credit. Who else have I except persons like you? Surely, I am not going to produce new workers. Those who are in touch with me and have faith in me are carrying on the struggle with my attitudes and ideas in view. They will carry on the struggle independently when I am gone. Today I do not find them acting spontaneously. They have to depend ultimately on my judgment at some point or the other.

Today I wish to prevent you from doing what you do not on your own feel inclined to do. That is why those who say they want to go to jail, those who even show a certain amount of enthusiasm, should not even think of going to jail. Yes, anyone who has in addition to enthusiasm, such zeal and faith and passion, who feels that he would go mad if he did not go to jail should certainly go to jail and remain sane. You may find this condition strict, but it is not so. Only the rupee which fetches sixteen annas is a real rupee. If a rupee worth fourteen annas mixes with it, the value of the real rupee also declines. Therefore, anyone who has the slightest doubt about himself or is slack about observing the rules of satyagraha, should give up the idea of going to jail. That is why I am beginning to feel that I am sufficient by myself.

Satyagraha is a complete dharma. I have acquired that science from family relationships. As I see it more and more, I see with the heart what I formerly saw with the mind. Satyagraha is a beautiful word. A satyagrahi does not claim to do more than hold fast to Truth. Satyagraha is a matter of religion. And if that is so, it should be sufficient even if one person resorts to it. But satyagraha is so much mixed up with *asatyagraha*[1] that it does not make an impact. Satyagraha cannot be a matter of politics as far as you are concerned. It can only be a matter of religion. The true face of religion is revealed only when there is despair everywhere. But what appeals to

[1] Opposite of satyagraha

me may not be your religion. Only what appeals to you can be your religion. Anyone who is permeated by satyagraha filled with religious emotion would melt the hearts of people even in jail. If we are thus made, the closer we come to the British, the more we would be able to persuade them. This is self-evident.

Kevalram is pure-hearted but he has not yet overcome his desire for indulgence. He had not yet fully recovered from illness and suddenly felt that he should positively go to prison. But his friends told him that if he went to jail in his state of health, he should know that he would die in jail, and, in that case, his going to jail would amount to suicide. They asked him to consult me and so he came to me. He said he had not come to ask me whether he should or should not go to jail. But would it be suicide if he died there? I said: "Not at all!" Living or dying is in the hands of God. If one went to prison with the intention of dying, it would be suicide. Whoever goes to prison should do it intending to live. As for me I would say even from my death-bed that I am alive and I do not wish to die. If anyone says that he wishes to go to jail but adds that it is only so long as Bapu wants it, it has no meaning. What matters is what one feels from within. This is not the time to go to jail just because Bapu says so. Anyone who has the slightest doubt, who has still something to ask me, whose faith depends on my faith should not go to jail. I have no intention of sending those people to jail who feel that they should do it for the welfare of the country. For such persons may not be able to stand satyagraha or bring any credit to it. I am covering such persons for the time being. Such people should not go to jail on my responsibility for the present. Let them also not go to prison thinking that they cannot stay out so long as Sardar is in prison. Nor should they think that because they are the colleagues of Jugatram it would be improper for them to stay out while he is in prison. It is enough if I alone uphold this kind of friendly sentiment. I represent all of them. All of you must be kept out even for the release of Sardar and others. Welfare of the country is certainly included in the welfare of the world, and individual welfare is included in the welfare of the country. On the other hand, individual welfare should include the welfare of the world. I start with myself. Individual welfare is no welfare at all. If you start with your own self, you would never make a mistake anywhere. Let people who understand this go to jail. Satyagraha has not really entered our hearts so that we would always say that we recognized only the welfare of the country. We desire to achieve the general welfare through the welfare of an individual.

SWAMI: Should not a striving satyagrahi endeavour to be a more perfect satyagrahi by going to jail?

BAPU: I do not wish to suggest that the endeavour should consist only in going to jail. He will even mount the gallows when the time comes. I would expect total sacrifice from such persons. But those satyagrahis who feel that they would go mad if they remained out may as well go to jail.

SWAMI: It is known from experience that the courage and faith of a striving satyagrahi are strengthened by going to prison. It does not happen in the case of every one. But how can we stop the few who have had this experience from going to jail?

BAPU: I am not stopping such people. There are two kinds of people: those who can do introspection only when in jail, and others for whom the test they have already undergone is sufficient. People of the first type go to jail of their own free will for the sake of spiritual uplift, where as the second type of people have no such independent will. When they have reached their limit, one cannot insist on their going to jail. A satyagrahi would strengthen his faith in satyagraha by going to jail only if he has spiritual confidence. The question of course arises as to what you should do after I have gone to prison. I had publicly stated that no one should follow me. Sardar followed the instruction to the letter and I saw salvation only in that. An English newspaper commented that when Gandhi was arrested not even a dog barked. I consider it a compliment. Had it been just a question of making dogs bark or of raising a din, Sardar alone and many others would have been able to do that to a certain extent. Still, they realized the situation and swallowed the bitter pill. The result was that people did not volunteer to go to prison. But it was a good thing that happened. I do not know what the situation would be when I go to jail again this time. I would be going to jail after four months. Some adjustment may have to be made if something happens at that time. For instance, there may be another such earthquake right at that moment, or the Viceroy may call me for negotiations on the 2nd of August. This is just a possibility. And I am merely talking to you of a hypothetical situation, that some such development may lead to my reconsidering courting imprisonment. It is not possible to stay out any more on the ground of the Harijan work. I can do that work even if I am in prison. Then supposing I am gone to jail; your duty would occur to you when the time comes.

SWAMI: If you go to jail now after doing Harijan work for a year, it is probably not necessary to fight for the old permission for the work. You even stated once that you felt that whatever was necessary had been done. Is this not right?

BAPU: No. If I did say anything like that it must have been in my sleep. Even this time I am going to ask for permission to continue

Harijan work and the Government will have to grant the permission. Having brought the work to this point, it cannot be abandoned. Today untouchability has become weak and limp. So much material is now ready as a result of my tours that I must continue to work from prison in order to give a final burial to untouchability. So it is unthinkable that the work should come to a halt and the campaign should become slack by my disappearance from the Hindu world.

Questioned what should be done in the event of his having to fast to secure permission for working in jail, Gandhiji said:

Even if I am released, the fast would continue, for it would be an unconditional fast unto death. I would no doubt meet you if I am released. And I would continue to say something or the other during the period I should be alive. And you would be a witness to it. And at that moment, if I am in the right, I would be repeating only Truth as the *Gita* enjoins. This would show you the way. If not, you would follow the dictates of your own hearts. You would get together and interpret my words. But I would not be present at the time.

In reply to a question from Jamnalal, Gandhiji said:

If I am in prison and my fast is continued, I would say that your task would be to go from house to house, explain things to the people and do whatever you think proper.

Pointing out the difference between 1922 and 1934, he said:

From the political point of view and in view of a blunder like Chauri Chaura it was necessary in 1922 that we should refrain from fighting. It would have been a mistake to fight when we were not prepared. Today only the spiritual view-point is left. If satyagraha is carried on from a spiritual point of view, it will be pure and if it is carried on with purity, you can rest assured that it will become widespread. Even a single pure-hearted satyagrahi would be sufficient for this purpose. A satyagrahi should observe complete discipline in jail. If he does not, his purity will suffer and satyagraha will decline in value.

When asked what a person should do who believed in civil disobedience as the only appropriate political programme, as it was the only effective policy, he said:

This is citing the example of Jawaharlal. But I am not talking about that point of view just now. However, I would ask even such persons to stay out. Just as I was the only representative at the R.T.C, it is enough if I am the only one in the present political programme. It would be fully accomplished thereby.

Q. Why, in that case, should the Congress adhere to the satyagraha programme?

Yes, it should, because without it the Congress would be wiped out of existence. Externally, the Congress has no organization at all today. It is in a state of anarchy. Hence, this is the only way if the light of the Congress is to continue to shine. Those who have no faith in C. D., may do any other work for the national uplift, but not in the name of the Congress. They may do it as individual Congressmen.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9130

334. HARIJAN TOUR AND BIHAR

It was a matter of sorrow to me to interrupt the Harijan tour. It had to be, because it was a clear duty to answer the call from Shri Rajendra Prasad, who had postponed it as long as he could. Whilst anti-untouchability work is undoubtedly greater and its message of a permanent character, like all chronic diseases it can dispense with personal attention in the face of an acute case, which that of Bihar is. He who is called by Rajendrababu, the physician in charge, has to answer the call when made or not at all. When, therefore, the call came, I had to suspend the tour. But I want to assure anti-untouchability workers in the provinces not visited that I hope to resume the tour as soon as circumstances will permit and that Rajendrababu feels about untouchability no less keenly than I do. He will disengage me at the earliest possible moment. I hope to take Utkal and Assam first, and of these two that will have preference which for climatic reasons demands it. Let the workers beware!

Harijan, 23-3-1 934

335. IMPLICATIONS OF ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY

A Hubli correspondent asks the following questions:

Is untouchability natural or artificial? Does it not depend upon the moral and intellectual development, mode of life, etc., of the people composing the society? Can you give a picture of a society where untouchability is completely removed?

In my opinion, untouchability is a wholly artificial product. It has no connection with moral or intellectual development of people, for the simple reason that in Hindu society there are to be seen men described as untouchable who are in every way equal in moral and intellectual development to the highest among caste Hindus and yet who are treated as untouchables. My picture of a society free from untouchability is one in which no one will consider himself superior to another. It is obvious that in a society so composed there will be no

unseemly rivalry or quarrelling.

The correspondent next asks:

Are inter-dining and intermarriage necessary for the removal of untouchability?

My answer is no and yes. No, because it is no part of the programme of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. Generally, too, marrying and dining are matters of individual concern. No one has a right to ask another to choose a girl for wife or to dine with anybody against his will. But my answer is at the same time yes, because if a person refuses to take food touched by another person on the ground of untouchability or inferiority, he is observing untouchability. In other words, untouch-ability cannot constitute any ground for restraint on inter-dining or intermarriage.

The correspondent next asks:

Can an imperfect person be a competent authority for introducing changes in the religious observances or customs?

Imperfection is a relative term. All mortals are more or less imperfect. But an imperfect person may not be so imperfect regarding a particular change as to be incompetent to make it. A person, however imperfect otherwise, may have fairly fixed notions about the use of intoxicating drugs and liquors. He has then every right to pro-pose and bring about changes in the drink habits of people, although they may be based on religious grounds.

Harijan, 23-3-1934

336. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

PATNA,
March 23, 1934

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
74 WALKESHWAR ROAD
BY H.

CHANDRASHANKER SHOULD STAY BOMBAY COLLECTING MATERIAL TWO FASTS.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

337. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

PATNA,
March 23, 1934

MY DEAR ANAND,

I hope you have got the telegram I sent to Jamshed Mehta. There was no work for you here. I could not therefore send for you. Write to me regularly how you and Vidya are doing.

Love to you both.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

338. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

[*March 23, 1934*][1]

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your letter. What shall I write to you? How can it be that you don't get my letters? You should not harass Prema in that manner. You may try to copy her self-sacrifice and her hard work. If she wants any personal service from you, by all means render it. But how can you insist on giving such service if she doesn't want it? Now that Narandas is there, follow his advice. Get well anyhow and become steady in mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9328. Also C.W. 6603. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

339. LETTER TO NARASINHARAO B. DIVATIA

PATNA,
March 23, 1934

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

It is my misfortune that I have to write only letters of condolence to you.

I have just received a letter from Gokulbhai from which I learn

[1] From the G.N. Register

that your daughter's son, Premal, has passed away and left you to a lonely existence. Poor boy, how was he to know that you could not be lonely? Anybody who has a living faith in God, who can call him lonely? Gokulbhai writes that both of you comfort those who come to comfort you. I was filled with joy and pride to read it. May your faith in God increase. Premal himself has passed to a blessed state. Perhaps you remember that I met him once in the blue bungalow.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Narasinharaoni Rojnishi, p. 58

340. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

March 23, 1934

BHAISHRI BHAGWANJI,

I have always welcomed your letter. Your frank words always please me.

You have mixed up two or three issues.

My own experience of Prabhashankar has been different from yours. But I needn't dwell on that, since my experience doesn't count.

I agree with your views about Wills. According to the rule that one can be certain only of that which is in one's hands, I think it best for parents to make in their own lifetime any arrangements that they wish. But in this case I must consider the situation as it exists. From a moral point of view, I look upon the document drawn up by Doctor as a Will. Everybody who wants to accept a legacy should also observe its conditions. One of the two sisters is in such a condition that it would have been the duty of the brothers to support her even if there had been no Will. Ratilal himself is not capable of looking after himself. Hence, if my voice could have any effect, I would see that his sister, who is more incapable of looking after herself than Ratilal is of looking after himself, got some share. Who knows, such a noble act may bring greater benefit to Ratilal. In any case it cannot harm his interests. Whether or not the sister gets a regular share, my sense of duty to the departed friend and to his family, and especially to Ratilal and Champa with whom I have maintained a special relation, will urge me to insist that the sisters should get a proportionate share each from Ratilal's share, even if he pays it in instalments. You are not right when you generalize from Narbheram's case. I am sure you know the

saying in English "Hard cases make bad law." I hope you also know that Narbheram does not accept your charge as true.

The resort to civil marriage in the case of Devdas and Lakshmi was to satisfy Rajaji. All of us wanted a religious ceremony. But there was no difference between civil marriage and religious ceremony as we understood its significance. According to the meaning which we attach to religious ceremony, its purpose was served by civil marriage. According to me the Hindu law requires many reforms.

I think I have now replied to all your questions. I am doing what I can about Bihar. I think you have sent a handsome amount.

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5821. Also C.W. 3044. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

341. MESSAGE TO THE PRESS

PATNA,
March 23, 1934

In the course of a special message to *Amrita Bazar Patrika*,[1] Gandhiji lays down the following rules for the guidance of the relief workers:

(1) Overlapping should be scrupulously avoided.

(2) Not an anna should be spent for advertisement or to produce any spectacular effect.

(3) There should be no unseemly rivalry between relief organizations, whether Government or popular. There should be rivalry in doing silent timely service.

(4) Every organization should know what others are doing.

(5) Expenses of management should be minimized as much as possible, consistently with efficiency and accurate account-keeping.

(6) All distinctions of high and low should be altogether abolished.

(7) Those in receipt of relief should be induced to do some productive work.

(8) Relief centres should be kept in perfect sanitary condition.

(9) All volunteers should know how to render first aid and teach the villagers the rules of elementary sanitation.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 24-3-1934

[1] *The Hindu* says that it was a special message for *The Searchlight*.

342. INTERVIEW TO UNITED PRESS[1]

PATNA,
March 23, 1934

I flatly deny having favoured Council-entry.

The Hindustan Times, 24-3-1934

343. LETTER TO TOTARAM SANADHYA

March 24 [*1934*][2]

BHAI TOTARAMJI,

I received your letter. You may certainly go to Wardha but you can come here on your way if you feel it is necessary. We met at Wardha during this month[3]. There is no reason to worry about Hariprasad.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2527

344. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

March 24, 1934

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I have just read your article on non-violence. It is good that you think that way. But the article is not worth publishing. You should go still deeper. Non-violence is not such a simple thing as it would appear. Instead of writing an article about it, it would be better to note down the thoughts that come to you and the difficulties you face while practising it. Your statement that non-violence is universally accepted as a religious principle is not quite correct either. It has been so accepted only to a certain extent. Some people consider it right to kill wild animals. Others consider it right to kill evil-doers.

Of course there can be no harm in writing such articles again and again in order to clarify your own thoughts.

[1] Gandhiji made the statement in connection with a report published in some Madras and Bombay papers that Mahatma Gandhi favoured Council entry.

[2] The document having been overwritten by someone, the year and contents are not clear.

[3] Gandhiji probably meant that he had met Hariprasad during his halt at Wardha *en route* to Allahabad.

How is your health now? I am returning the article.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

345. SPEECH AT DANAPORE

[*March 24, 1934*][1]

This is my second visit to Danapore. In your address you have remarked that on account of the havoc caused by the recent earthquake the Harijan uplift movement has been thrown into the background. This is all right. Whatever I told you during the course of my speech at Patna, I will again say that almost everybody in this world has suffered and even then the public will soon forget this great disaster caused by it. As we have completely forgotten the previous earthquakes in the history of this old world and consider them as historical incidents, we will hold the same view about this earthquake also after due course of time. But so long as untouch-ability exists, we are reminded of our miseries. Some people consider untouchability as their religion and if it disappears it would be some sort of calamity to them. But if you look at it dispassionately it cannot be defended. Those also who call themselves sanatanists understand that untouchability is indefensible, and I think it is the staunchest class among sanatanists who hold this view. After this earthquake we ought to be more humble, as death is inevitable. Therefore those who feel sorry for this disaster may become humbler. God has warned us in this manner and if we do not pay heed to this warning some greater disaster is in store for us. Shastras lay down that complete destruction will overtake the whole creation some time. In the light of all these divine lessons we ought to become more humble and do away with this sin of untouchability.

Those affected by the earthquake are more than a crore but there are others in this province who have escaped this disaster, and who have lost nothing. Therefore they should subscribe as generously as people from outside the province have done. In fact it is your duty as neighbours to subscribe to the relief funds.

[1] From Chandulal Dalal's *Gandhijini Dinwari*

Yesterday we were discussing the budget of the Relief Committee. The whole sum amounted to forty lakhs and yet certain things were left out. The total collection up to date is just about 20 lakhs. The distressed must get help from the people and you must give your proper share by subscribing generously. Another thing I would draw your attention to is that workers are to be brought from outside. In my opinion that is not the proper course. Biharis must supply enough number of workers. Only if it is impossible shall we call outside workers to assist us.

Making an earnest appeal to the Bihar students, Mahatmaji said:

I have to say few words to the students also. They have not come forward as they ought to do. This has really grieved me. If you can show cause why students are unable to come forward I shall understand it. But in fact there is little cause why they should not come. In my Harijan tour I had many opportunities to come into contact with students. They have expressed their intention to give their spare time to whatever humanitarian [work] may be shown to them. The student community is everywhere alike. Therefore, I hope that they will even now come forward and give their names to Rajendrababu. There are students from Calcutta who have come here after leaving their own work simply to help us in this disaster.

Now as regards the relief problem. It is our determination to help those who have been struck hard but you may remember that we are not out to make beggars of them. Those who will work will get help in return. This is all that I have to say. The purse which has been given to me I think does not contain subscription from all those who are present here. Therefore I would appeal to them to pay their share also. I may make it clear that half of the entire money collected on the spot and given to me in the shape of a purse will go to the Harijan movement and half of it for Bihar Relief.[1]

The Indian Nation, 28-3-1934

[1] At the end of the meeting, in response to Gandhiji's appeal Rs. 252 was collected and the address, which was auctioned, fetched Rs. 401.

346. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

March 25, 1934

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have just finished studying your memorandum[1] on the two Bills. You are prolix. The note is not revised. The argument is weak in places. You have not before your mind's eye the audience whom you are addressing. The Speaker's rulings have no validity in law or before the knowing public. We have to convince the opponent—our friend the sanatanist. If I was one, you would not convince me. But that is neither here nor there. What you want is some lead to our Sanghs. In this I have anticipated you. If that is not enough you must tell me.

Your note may help Munshi[2]. But it is not a brief. A brief would contain a chronology of events and no argument.

I hope you got my programme.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 905

347. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

PATNA,
March 26, 1934

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

After careful thinking and for more reasons than one, I have come to the conclusion that it is best that Valji should tour with me at present, that it is his dharma to do so. I know that you and the children will feel the separation from him. But you should derive joy from such separation. If Valji did not keep good health with me, I would not let him accompany me. He certainly keeps good health. And he is also useful to me. You need not, therefore, think more about him. The present programme is up to the end of July. After that, God will lead us as He wills. I hope that you and the children will take the same view as I do and remain happy.

I hope the weather there has now improved.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7465. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1] Not available
[2] K. M. Munshi

348. LETTER TO VIMALCHANDRA V. DESAI

PATNA,
March 26, 1934

CHI. NANU,

All of you should hold a meeting and pass a unanimous resolution saying that Valji should continue to tour with me at present, and send the resolution to me. I have an excellent reason for asking you to pass such a resolution, namely, that he keeps fine health on this tour. A further advantage will be that, after seeing everything, he will teach you many new things.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5738. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

349. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

PATNA,
March 26, 1934

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got the letters from you both. Give up all hopes about Shanti. If Sushila steadily improves her efficiency, she will be able to shoulder more responsibility. Satisbabu's wife does not know English, but she shoulders the whole burden of Khadi Pratishthan and its Prakashan Mandir and has released Satisbabu for Harijan work. The truth of the matter is that both of them think only of service.

I understand what you say regarding West[1]. I think his services have been so valuable that, even if he has come to feel aversion now towards us, we should not forget all that he has done in the past. However, you may act as you like. I don't want you to do anything which does not appeal to your heart. I don't wish to write more today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4817

350. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

March 26, 1934

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have sent you a wire today, and am waiting for a reply. I hope

[1] A. H. West

you were able to complete your fast[1] successfully. A seven-day fast should not be hard for anybody. It can do nothing but good. But one must know how to end it. Food must be light and should be increased gradually. One must pass stools regularly. Let me know what effect the fast has had on your body and mind.

Please don't expect frequent letters from me these days. I can with great difficulty write any. The letters which my companions may write are all that are possible. The companions are constantly changing, and that is another reason why I can't dictate many letters. Though I know your keen desire for letters from me, I am not able to satisfy it.

I don't wish to ask you to come over—it wouldn't be proper for me to do that. But if you can't restrain your desire to come, then do come. I have written to Narandas and Vasumati, and said the same to them. I wrote the same thing to Gangabehn too. She didn't come. But you need not follow anybody's example. Follow the promptings of your own heart. One may not obey one's nature for committing a sin, but it will not be a sin to come to see me.

Chimanlal[2] had written to me about your request for money. Since you had made the request, I have asked him to send you the sum. What remains does not belong to any one person; it belongs to all of us. If it was in your charge and if I was in jail, would you not have used it according to your discretion? It is only by accident that I am outside. My being outside makes no difference to our intention at the time of taking the decision to sacrifice the Ashram. It was indeed a difficult one to act upon: "Nobody should draw any money from the Ashram funds; everybody should return to jail as soon as he is released and should do without money even in jail." But this has remained so only in theory. Thanks to my coming out of jail, the thing broke down still further. But the fact remains that that was the intention. All of us should adhere to it to the best of our ability. It will be enough if we bear this in mind. No other check on you is necessary. Please let me know if you see any error in this reasoning.

Miss Harrison has joined us. Pyarelal came with her. Miss Lester also has been with me. I am going out again tomorrow to visit the affected areas. Don't read too much meaning in Miss Harrison's

[1] Undertaken after his release from jail

[2] Chimanlal Shah, then manager of the Ashram

coming. She has come only to acquaint herself with the present situation.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5517

351. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

March 26, 1934

CHI. RAMA,

I got your letters. If you have not taken your decision to go to jail as a matter of dharma, you should revise it. We have discussed the issue at great length here. As a result of the discussions, some have changed their minds. A summary of the discussions[1] will probably be sent to everybody. If you two wish, you may wait till you have read it. Apart from this, however, jail is our home. To be out of jail is to be homeless. But this is so only for those who regard going to jail as their dharma. To such persons, the hardships of jail life are a source of joy whereas comforts outside jail give pain. If you clearly understand this and the reasons behind it, you may by all means go to jail. If not, you ought not to go. Your not going will not displease me. I would love to write more, but I cannot do so for want of time. I hope Vimu is all right. Dhiru must have gone to Bhavnagar.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5517

352. LETTER TO AMBUJAMMAL

PATNA,
March 26, 1934

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I was glad to know that you too are accompanying the Hindi squad, along with Gomati and Sarasvati. You must have received both my letters. I hope you are tranquil and that the climate suits you. I also hope that you will meet me some day somewhere. Do write to me all your experiences.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* "Talk with Ashram Inmates", 22-3-1934.

353. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

PATNA,
March 27, 1934

CHI. AMALA,

Your letter is before me. Do not try to do too many things at a time. If you will serve Harijans, then do not think of the meningitis patients. They will be nursed otherwise. Whatever is needed to qualify you for your task, you will certainly do. You must not fear me. I am not going to drive you out unless you drive yourself out. You have need to fear yourself rather than any other person. I am well.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Why do you not write in Gujarati any more?[1]

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

354. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CHAPRA[2]

March 27, 1934

Today a terrible calamity has overwhelmed us all alike Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians and the rest, the so-called highborn and the low-born, without favour or distinction. If even this terrible blow does not enable us to purge ourselves of 'pride of place and blood', to obliterate all arbitrary, man-made distinctions between man and man, then I would only say that there is none so ill-fated as we. The conviction is growing upon me day after day that human intellect is incapable of fully understanding God's ways. God in His wisdom has circumscribed man's vision, and rightly too, for, otherwise man's conceit would know no bounds. But whilst I believe that God's ways cannot be comprehended fully by man, I have firm faith that not a leaf falls without His will, and not a leaf falls but it subserves His purpose. If only we had enough humility, we would have no hesitation in accepting the recent earthquake as a just retribution for our sins. This is not to say that we can with certainty attribute a particular calamity to a particular human action. Very often we are unconscious of our worst sins. All that I mean to say is that every visitation of

[1] This sentence is in Gujarati.

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal Nayyar's "Weekly Letter". About thirty thousand people attended the meeting. Gandhiji spoke in Hindi.

Nature does and should mean to us Nature's call to introspection, repentance and self-purification. Today, more than ever, our hearts need a thorough cleansing and I would go so far as to say that even the recent earthquake would not be too great a price to pay, if it enabled India to cast out the canker of untouchability.

Harijan, 6-4-1934

355. SPEECH AT MEETING OF RELIEF WORKERS, CHAPRA[1]

March 27, 1934

Gandhiji said he had offered his respectful co-operation to the authorities on the present occasion. He explained that there was no other way of saving the masses from the overwhelming calamity that had befallen them. The issue before them was not of co-operation *versus* non-co-operation or Congress *versus* Government, but simply of how best to serve the suffering masses in the face of an unparalleled calamity. What was really needed was food, clothing, shelter and above all water. Mr. Gandhi warned the residents against feeling sore because they found that adequate relief was not forthcoming or justice was not done in individual cases. They should cease to think in personal terms and learn to think impersonally in terms of collective good. They should not forget that the extent of the calamity was so great that Government or any other agency, however well inclined, could not afford complete relief. He would therefore reiterate to them what he had previously said that the healing balm that could cure Nature's wound like the present one must come not from without but from within themselves. That saving sovereign balm was human sympathy and human love, which would enable them to forget their misfortune in a glow of mutual co-operation and service.

The Hindu, 29-3-1934

[1] Almost identical versions were also published in *The Indian Nation*, 30-3-1934, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 30-3-1934.

356. LETTER TO SIR GEORGE SCHUSTER[1]

PATNA,
March 28, 1934

DEAR SIR GEORGE,

Nothing, in the wreckage of Irwin-Gandhi contract, has pained me so much as the wreckage of the free salt for the poor. A friend reminds me that the notifications about it have never been withdrawn. Is this true? You know the history of the adoption of that clause. It was inserted on purely humanitarian grounds. Can salt be salved? Can it be removed from the purview of civil resistance and ordinances? I had no difficulty in tendering co-operation in combating the Bihar disaster. There was something to tender in that matter. In the matter of the poor man's salt I can but invite co-operation. Can you help me? No, not me, the poor man?[2]

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 9706. Courtesy: Andhra Pradesh Government. Also Home Department, Political, File No. 89/34. Courtesy: National Archives of India and *Harijan*, 30-11-1934

357. SPEECH AT SONEPUR[3]

March 28, 1934

I know what this part of Bihar has gone through. The sufferings of the people have drawn the attention and sympathy of the whole world. In spite of the liberal response to the Viceregal appeal and that of Babu Rajendra Prasad, it will be impossible to make good the tremendous losses suffered by North Bihar. But even if they were made good, it would be a very poor result of Nature's terrible warning, if nothing more substantial were to come out of it. The donors of the two funds and the numerous other societies have perhaps satisfied

[1] Finance Member of the Viceregal Council

[2] Officials saw in this letter "another attempt by Mr. Gandhi to establish relations with Government", a policy which they thought they had "got very definitely to discourage". Schuster accordingly wrote to Gandhiji on April 6, saying there was no change in "the Government's decision to give concessions about the collection and manufacture of salt to local residents" but that there was such abuse of the concession in some areas "that it became necessary to withdraw it." For further correspondence on the subject.

[3] Extracted from Pyarelal Nayyar's "Weekly Letter". Gandhiji delivered this speech at Sonepur station standing in the doorway of the train.

their consciences by sending in their donations. Will the recipients be satisfied with merely receiving their share of the timely gifts? What is your reaction to the Divine wrath? If you and I do not learn the moral lesson which the calamity teaches us, then, that neglect will be worse than the calamity itself. Yesterday, as the motor was passing along the Gandak embankment, I received a note from the Doms of a village close by, telling me that they were suffering terribly from want of water, as the villagers would not allow them to take water from the common well. I drew the attention of the Headman to the note and he promised to put the thing right, if it was found that the Doms' complaint was justified. God's wrath was felt equally by the rich and the poor, the Hindu and the Mussalman, the caste man and the outcaste. Shall we not learn God's terrible impartiality that it is criminal to consider any human being untouchable or lower than ourselves? If a single Dom or any other human being is denied the use of village wells, surely, the lesson of the fifteenth of January will have been lost upon us. I want to test you this very minute. I know you are all poor, earning your bread by the sweat of your brow, but I know that there is in this vast crowd none so poor as not to be able to afford a pice. I want every one of you to contribute your coppers as a sign that you have repented of the sin of untouchability, that you do not consider anyone lower than yourselves and that in your own persons you are determined to abolish all distinctions of high and low. I do not want any of you to give me anything except on the condition I have made.[1]

Harijan, 6-4-1934

358. SPEECH AT HAJIPUR[2]

March 28, 1934

I have been visiting the quake-affected areas. This is for the second time that I have come to Hajipur after the terrible catastrophe. The houses have been seriously damaged and people have been beset by untold miseries. It is indeed very gratifying to see that the Government is giving relief to the affected persons. Attempts are also being made for giving relief from other agencies. The people have been involved in trouble no doubt, but all of us should face them with courage. Do not be professional beggars. Relief is intended for needy

[1] Immediately after the speech was over, the audience began to put silver and copper coins in Gandhiji's hands. This continued till the train started to move.

[2] This was delivered at the station where Gandhiji and party made a brief halt on their way to Muzaffarpur.

persons. So help should be given only to those who are badly in need of it. Healthy persons should earn their wages instead of begging. Up till now, as I learn, the Bihar Central Relief Committee has been able to collect about twenty-five lacs of rupees while thirty-two lacs of rupees have been deposited with the Viceroy's Earthquake Relief Fund. The volunteers and workers of the relief agencies should give a correct estimate of the losses. Exaggerated reports should not be given.

We are committing sin. Throw off the shackles of untouchability. Our body is impure. We should try to be pure. No body should be looked down upon, since all are creatures of God. I am a Bihari, since I have lived for many months in Bihar. The Biharis should do away with untouchability. It is folly to consider oneself to be exalted in rank or dignity. We should have pity for all human beings.

I have learnt from the Chapra Collectorate that about two thousand wells are badly needed in Saran District. I think the most important problem is that of water supply. Nobody can live without water. I would therefore lay special stress on the necessity of wells in the affected areas. Wells should be sunk so that people may drink water without any distinction of caste or creed.

Finally, I appeal to the audience for giving their contributions to the Harijan fund. Any amount, however trifling it may be, will be welcome. If people will not give contributions, I will think that they are not ready to support the cause of Harijans. The people at Sonepur gave some contributions. I have been favourably impressed with the people for being quiet all along and I thank you all for the patient hearing you gave me. But I would yet request you to be quiet and avoid demonstrations.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 1-4-1934

359. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

MUZAFFARPUR,
March 29, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Please don't get angry with me. I am writing this letter at 2.45 a.m. I had set the alarm for 3 a.m. It went off before 12 and I got up. I cleaned my teeth and sat down to write. After a while my eyes fell on the clock and I saw that it was only twelve. So much work had accumulated that I didn't have the courage to go back to sleep, and so I decided to finish as much as I could. I have almost finished the articles for *Harijan* and am writing this letter to you. After finishing this I will write a letter to Ba. I will send you her letter the next time. I

have yet to get a copy made.

You made me wait a long time for your last letter. I hope you will write regularly now. Miss Harrison is a strong-willed woman, and so is Miss Lester. The former is maturer. Her sincerity and humility are boundless. Miss Lester is slightly ill and has stayed on in Patna. Miss Harrison has come along with me, We are in Muzaffarpur just now. In the morning we shall leave for Belsand. Some Ashram workers are camping there. Pyarelal is with me. He will remain with me for a few days only. I shall see. Valji and Himmatlal are attending on Miss Lester. We were in Chapra yesterday. We stayed there with Dr. Mahmud[1]. We find everywhere houses which have been completely destroyed. Dr. Mahmud is doing good relief work in co-operation with the Collector. I met the head of the Relief Department. What you were able to do (at the time of the Gujarat floods) is not possible here at all. Even so, the work will be done well. Whatever money is given will reach the right people.

Jamnalal will remain in Bihar for the present. Lakshmidas has practically recovered. He also will remain here and look after the manufacture of khadi. Jamnalal will fix up the others, too, in suitable work. Bhulabhai came and saw me. He had gone to Gaya in connection with some case. From there he came to see me. He could discuss a few things only.

It seems Mani is being tested fairly severely (in the Belgaum jail). That is as it should be. God will protect her.

Ba will be released in May.

I shall be able to go to Gujarat only in July. Chandrashankar will come on the 3rd or the 4th. Don't worry about me or about the developments outside. Our faith in God is not merely an intellectual pastime. He really exists. Rather, He alone exists. We think of Him before taking any step. We should, therefore, let Him lead us as He wills. I hope I am not assuming too much in thus including you also.

Have you got any company?[2]

I will not write more now.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 88-9

[1] Dr. Syed Mahmud.

[2] The addressee's jail companion Dr. Chandulal Desai had been released.

360. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

March 29, 1934

BA,

It is 3.30 in the morning, and Thursday. I got your letter only yesterday evening. We are in Muzaffarpur today. Panditji, Swami and Kripalani are here. Madhavdas also is here. I shall meet Bal at 11. I am going to visit the place where Maganbhai, Raojibhai, Soman and others are working. I will ask Raojibhai to write to you. I will try to give you all the news that you want from me. But if anything is left out, ask me again. Prabhavati accompanies me these days wherever I go. Kunvarji is in Bombay. Rami also has gone there. Manu is better now. Madhavdas also is better. Vasumati has gone to Wardha. Chhaganlal and Rama have gone to Dwarka. Chhaganlal fasted for seven days just for self-purification. The fast ended on Monday. He is all right. Dudhibehn and Junior Kusum are in Bhavnagar. Kusum Desai has gone on a visit to Santiniketan. Her problem is not yet wholly solved. She is in search of suitable work. There was a letter from Manilal and Sushila. They are quite well. Chandrashankar will be returning in four days now. In Ahmedabad children get headaches, lose power of thinking, get fever and die. It is on the decline now. The disease is caused by going to cinemas, etc. Bad air is the chief cause. Yes, they have started a hospital in the Vidyapith building. I do not know where Kanti will go or stay after his release. I am going to write to him. Anandi and the other children are with Anasuyabehn and are quite happy. Anandi had mild fever. She is better now. Lakshmidas also is better. He is in Patna. Parvati visited Pragji. The latter is quite well. Devdas and Lakshmi are still in Delhi. Rajagopalachari will go there in a few days' time. Manibehn seems to be doing fairly well. I have had no letter from her. Nagini has gone to America and Amala is quite happy at Sabarmati. Janakibehn, Madalasa and others are in Wardha. Raojibhai's Vidya is in Wardha. She has grown up and wishes to marry. They are in search of a suitable young man for her. Laksh-mibehn Khare is looking after the work at Wardha. The number of girls has gone up very much. It has exceeded fifty. Dwarkanathji also is there. Brijkrishna is in Delhi. He is better now. Pyarelal is with me.

The lady who was helping me in England is with me just now. It has not been decided what to do about the person who has come with her. It will be decided now. For the present she is here. Padmaja is all right. Mrs. Naidu did come to see me at Hyderabad. Panditji was not present on the Ramanavami day. The *bhajan "Jaya Rama Rama"* was sung by Somanji. We shall be leaving Bihar on the 10th to go to

Assam. I will spend ten days in Assam and then return to Bihar. From there I will go to orissa. I will reach that province in May. Yesterday I met Rajendrababu's wife and Vidyavati. I am not sending a discourse this time. It is nearing prayer time now.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 21-2

361. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

March 29, 1934

CHI. AMALA,

I have been trying to write to you in reply to your letters but of late I have had no time.

I shall not drive you away when your year is over. Why should I do so? Can you not see that when I call you an idiot, I do so out of affection. And why should you worry how I describe you? You ought to restrain yourself. Can you not see that it is impossible for all who love me to be physically with me? But all can be with me through my work. You are doing my work. You should find satisfaction in that. When God wills it we shall meet.

I have told you that you need not think of nursing meningitis patients.

My weight is 108 and b.p. 160/120.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

362. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BHARTHUA CHAUR[1]

March 29, 1934

Bapu, replying, mentioned Dr. Soft and Satyadevaji as workers who had worked strenuously for draining out the Chaur that was destroying the villages and 48 thousand *bighas* of land which the inhabitants possessed. Money could not help in removing the decaying inhabitants to other areas. Government and Rajendrababu were trying to find an outlet for draining out the water which would save lives and

[1] The meeting, which was held on the banks of the lake, was attended by 15,000 people. An address of welcome was presented to Gandhiji.

property worth lacs but they did not know what engineers, who were making contour survey, would advise; nothing possible would be left undone. Rajendrababu had decided to move the Committee for spending funds for this work.

If with all this, success is not ours, God only knows what is best. During rains there will be floods and houses will collapse, lives may be lost. So something must be done without delay. Your distress is some years old. The earthquake has multiplied it greatly. Have courage and faith. The matter is in good and capable hands. Remove the curse of untouchability. Love Harijans. Remove the distinction between high and low, touchable and untouchable. Why treat Doms as out castes when they do work like your mothers in childhood.

To women Bapu said:

Ply the charkha, *takli,* and spin to drive away poverty, idleness and misery of misfortune.

The Searchlight, 1-4-1934

363. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, SITAMARHI[1]

[*March 29, 1934*][2]

Is it not shocking to regard the touch of a Mussalman or a Christian as unclean,[3] even though he may be truthful, godfearing, pure, brave and self-sacrificing as any? God has created different faiths just as he has the votaries thereof. How can I even secretly harbour the thought that my neighbour's faith is inferior to mine and wish that he should give up his faith and embrace mine? As a true and loyal friend, I can only wish and pray that he may live and grow perfect in his own faith. In God's house there are many mansions and they are all equally holy. All the great religions of the world inculcate the equality and brotherhood of mankind and the virtue of toleration. The 'touch-me-not'ism that disfigures the present-day Hinduism is a morbid growth. It only betrays a woodenness of the mind, a blind selfconceit. It is abhorrent alike to the spirit of religion and morality. The real untouchables were the impure thoughts that lurked in the mind: the lying, the covetousness and the deceit which marred our daily dealings. It was these whose contact was contaminating and ought to be shunned.

Harijan, 20-4-1934

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal Nayyar's "Weekly Letter"

[2] Gandhiji was in Sitamarhi on this date.

[3] A Muslim relief worker had brought to the notice of Gandhiji the difficulty he was facing because of the custom prevalent among the Hindus of considering food or water touched by any non-Hindu as polluted.

364. WANTED A MANIFESTATION OF CHRIST IN DAILY LIFE

I have no hesitation whatsoever in publishing this talk[1] by Miss Lester with missionaries. She handed it to me apologetically, asking me whether I would publish it as a supplement to *Harijan*, so that she could have a few copies for distribution among her friends, and, I suppose, at the same time give a few coppers in an enterprise devoted solely to the Harijan cause. When she put this talk among my papers with the introductory remark I have referred to, I had decided that I would either print it in the body of the paper or not at all. Let not the non-Christian readers be afraid of "a manifestation of Christ" in daily life. Whatever it may mean to Miss Lester, the word Christ is a common name, an attribute not to be attached merely to one single historical person. Each one, therefore, according to his taste may think of his own beloved teacher and guide, or, better, of the only infallible teacher and guide—Truth—and call it Christ. Let him read the conversation in the light of my interpretation and I promise the reader that he will profit by the reading. Many persons have written like Miss Lester before now. The value of her conversation lies in the fact that she endeavours every moment of her life to practise what she professes and preaches in her writing.

. . . Language is the means by which human beings misunderstand one another. Words are inadequate as vehicles for the conveyance of spiritual truth. . . .

Neither can men be argued into Christianity.

What was it that converted the adulteress, who a few minutes before had been doggedly facing her judges, despising them but hardening herself to accept her fate at their hands? . . .

Her conversion was the result of Jesus' way of looking at things. His way of looking at people, at sinners....

Is it likely that this infectious thing, this knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ can be communicated academically?

By all means let us train the mind; let us dig deeper and ever deeper into all branches of knowledge, science and philosophy; let us bend our energies to exploring the whole realm of truth. But let us always remember how easily knowledge can be perverted to base uses. What mankind needs is to know how to live, what is the perennial source of joy, the peace that the world can't give and can't take away. . . .

Jesus propounded His ideas in maxims such as the Beatitudes. Then He would re-clothe the same idea in a tale, knowing that thus it would stick in our minds better. But even thus, well-taught doctrines would not have moulded men's lives, made and remade institutions and become the way of health and joy for millions, if He had not also embodied it in life, in His own life.

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

Following the usual rough and ready method of punishing those who have harmed us, we do not pay overmuch attention to Jesus' clearly enunciated maxim "Love your enemies." But we are haunted by the memory of His attitude towards His executioners and His words: "Father, they don't understand. Forgive them."

"He that would be great, let him be the servant of all." In clear enough words He proclaimed this rather startling doctrine. Throughout the centuries, its meaning has been distorted and explained away successfully enough. But its power to make us increasingly uncomfortable and at length to thrust us out from the narrowness of our privileged, selfish lives lies in the picture that lovers of Christ have enshrined in their minds, the scene where He took a bowl of water, knelt before each of His men—workmen some of them—and performed for them the servants' work of washing the feet. . . .The Ashram set up by Verrier Elwin among Gonds has a special significance. The inmates live and work with the people, relying on their service alone whereby to commend to them the person and the power of Jesus Christ. . . .

I know nothing that brings me closer to reality, closer to God, than to be among a crowd of my neighbours in Bow at the end of a party, which perhaps they have organized for themselves instead of going round the corner to the Rose and Crown public house. . . .

Compromises have so dulled the sensibilities of Christians that young people often find little or nothing to challenge them in the religion presented to them. Their tendency is to turn either to money-making, sport or the barren habit of criticizing—none of them very creative activities.

The world cannot go on very long as it is now. A precarious balance is being sustained, certainly, but over an abyss. War can only be averted if peace lovers adopt as much vigour and earnestness as is shown by armament firms. We, Christians, can only overcome what is regarded as communist materialism, if our efforts to set up an equitable social order entail as much service and sacrifice as party members have to render as a matter of course in Russia.

As the love that incites us to serve our fellows is a part of the love we feel towards God, how can we shrink from suffering?

When God in man was manifest

He bowed beneath the rod;

The felon's death, the lonely quest

Was good enough for God.

Perhaps it is good enough for any of us . . . to have the honour of living in a poor district, where people have that toleration that comes from facing day after day the stark-naked realities of life, death and hunger; where astounding generosity is scarcely noticed because it is so natural . . . where Christ is daily manifested through suffering, love and service.

Harijan, 30-3-1934

365. THE TEMPLE-ENTRY BILL

The Hon. Secretary, Harijan Sevak Sangh, Bombay Provincial Board, has addressed the Secretary to the Government of India, Legis-

lative Department, New Delhi, as follows:

I have the honour to communicate hereunder the views of the Bombay Provincial Board of the Harijan Sevak Sangh on the Temple-entry Disabilities Removal Bill, which has been circulated for public opinion under the orders of the Legislative Assembly.

At the outset I have the honour to observe that my Board are entirely in sympathy with the aims and objects of the Bill and are of opinion that it should be passed into law at the earliest opportunity. It is our firm belief that legislation of the type contemplated in the Bill is essential, if Government and Legislature desire to implement the pledges which have been held out, on more occasions than one, that all possible steps will be taken to remove the disabilities under which Harijans labour at present.

One of the main objections that has been taken against the proposed legislation is that it involves an element of compulsion and that it is proposed that either Government or the Legislature should not compel any individual or individuals or a religious organization to act in a manner which is opposed to so-called religious customs and usages. It is pertinent here to examine what these customs are and how they have developed in Hindu society.

At some time beyond living memory, a custom grew up of treating certain sections of the Hindu community as the excluded classes, and in the development of that custom certain rights as Hindus were denied to the members of such excluded classes. Objection was taken if they entered the temples on the ground that they were unclean and their touch or mere shadow would pollute the devout Hindus who were visiting the temples for *darshan.* Gradually, the members of the excluded classes were thus completely debarred from entering the temples. This has, in the course of time, come to be recognized as custom and usage, and this having obtained legal sanction, the Hindu community is obliged, whatever its present views may be, to exclude the untouchables from the temples.

The real position, therefore, is that compulsion is already there in the shape of the recognition given by British Courts of Justice to the custom and usage by which members of the excluded classes have been treated as untouchables and denied the rights of temple-entry. In Madras, such custom and usage has been specifically recognized by the Madras Religious Endowments Act II of 1927, Section 40 of which accords full legal sanction to it.

With the change of times and circumstances and with ideas developing from day to day, several customs and usages have undergone material changes. In some cases, the Government, relying on the opinion of leading Hindus, have thought fit to legislate against well-established and well-recognized customs and usages in face of the opposition of a majority of Hindus, with a view to bring the state of Hindu society in line with modern ideas. In other cases, the opinion of the majority of Hindus has either thrown custom overboard, where the sanction of law was not necessary for such action, or got the Government to pass legislation to set aside such custom.

Apart from the strictly legal and technical attitude, to argue, therefore, that the Bill involves an element of compulsion, without considering what that compulsion consists of and how such compulsion is for the removal of a greater compulsion

which already exists, would not be correct. The Trustees and beneficiaries are now by law compelled to exclude the Harijans from *darshan* at Hindu temples. If the prevalent opinion amongst the Hindus of today is that this element of compulsion should be done away with and it be left open to the Hindus to decide for themselves as to how far the excluded classes should be allowed to be treated as members of the Hindu community and to enjoy the rights or privileges of *darshan*, a state of circumstances must be brought into existence which would leave the door open for necessary action in that behalf. It does not necessarily follow that, on the passing of the Bill, a rush will be made at all the temples by the excluded classes to assert their rights of *darshan*. The disqualification being removed, it will then be a matter for adjustment between Hindus and the members of the excluded classes to adjust affairs without friction and without bringing themselves under the provisions of the criminal law of the land. The view that the passing of the Bill would upset all principles and tenets of the Hindu religion would be erroneous. In fact, even after the passing of the Bill, the excluded classes will not be able to have *darshan* at the temples without the goodwill and the tacit consent of the Hindus. That the entry of the excluded classes into the temples for *darshan* is not so abhorrent to the mind of the Hindus is apparent from the fact that on certain days of the year some very important temples observing the most orthodox and rigid rules are thrown open to all classes of Hindus, including the excluded classes. At all events, going to a temple for *darshan is* entirely voluntary. In certain circumstances and on certain occasions, even members of the so-called high-class Hindus are prohibited entry into certain parts of the temples. In certain cases, such Hindus themselves observing certain rules refrain from going to temple, believing themselves to be in a state in which their attendance at the temples would pollute the temples as well as those attending there for *darshan*. The degree of compulsion, therefore, so far as this Bill is concerned, is infinitesimal as compared to the existing compulsion, which has already been imposed by reason of the recognition granted to custom and usage which had grown under circumstances which no longer exist.

The difficulty as regards the removal of custom and usage is all the greater, because in most of the cases there are no specific Trusts. Ordinarily, the Trustees would have the power to exercise their discretion, as prudent men of the world, in considering who should be admitted and to what right. But here the sanction obtained by custom and usage comes in the way. New Trusts cannot be declared. There are no specific Trusts and reliance is placed on custom and usage to shut out the discretion of the Trustees or even the beneficiaries, meaning the Hindus. With the passing of the Bill, the result will be that the power to exercise such discretion is restored to the Trustees and, where necessary, to the beneficiaries, who can by an express vote of majority decide how far the classes of beneficiaries should be extended and, that, too, without in any way interfering with the existing rights, so that it comes to this—that the compulsion and the consequent disability from which those in control of temples are at present suffering is sought to be removed and the door thrown open and the power of discretion restored to them to act according to the circumstances and according to the wishes of those immediately concerned. It does not, as is apprehended in some quarters, direct the Trustees to commit breaches of Trust. In fact, the whole difficulty is created by the absence of specific Trusts. It only creates a situation where the Trustees, as prudent men and with the sanction of the majority,

can extend the privilege of *darshan*, etc., to the members of the excluded classes on such terms and under circumstances which may be acceptable to Hindus.

Under these circumstances, the element of compulsion, if any, involved in the Bill is really and substantively to eliminate the greater degree of compulsion which is at present extant.

The second objection is (as to) whether the Bill seeks to interfere with any person's religious practice or conscience. My Board hold the view that, having regard to the fact that the entry of members of the excluded classes on certain days of festival during the year in the most orthodox Hindu temples is not objected to by the Hindus and is not considered as interference with the religious practice or conscience of a high-class Hindu, the extending of that privilege to members of the excluded classes on other days in the year cannot, in substance, amount to any interference with the religious practice or conscience of a highcaste Hindu. Apart from this, every Hindu in going to temples submits to various customary restrictions and interference, and no pious Hindu complains, as his sole aim and object in attending the temple on any particular occasion is to have *darshan* and perform puja and that aim and object is not in any way interfered with by the permissive legislation now sought to be put on the Statute-Book. The statutory recognition of the existing custom and usage in this respect serves, however, as a solid obstacle or bar against any modification of the existing state of things, and this is what makes legislation necessary, not with a view to hit or counter the religious practice or conscience of Hindus but to give those in authority over Hindu temples a right to give the members of the excluded classes their due status as Hindus and thereby prevent a cleavage in the community.

In effect, therefore, it merely amounts to a variation in the practice of worship hitherto observed, but such variation cannot be regarded as interference with the inherent or vested right of persons. In fact, the right is one which, in the ordinary course, would have been modified in the larger interests of Hindu society or in the interests of certain classes but for the legal sanction accorded to custom and usage. Interference, therefore, as used, does not amount to or mean an objectionable tampering with the vested rights of any person or persons, but is a mere statement of fact that, in the existing conditions as compared to what is proposed to be done, there would be a variation which may technically be called interference.

Experience shows that, in spite of the willingness of the Trustees as well as the worshippers of a particular Hindu temple, it is well-nigh impossible for a public Hindu temple to throw its doors open to Harijans, in view of the English Law of Trusts and the known decisions of the High Courts in India. It is for this reason that my Board hold that the recognition of the custom and usage by the High Courts of India and the Privy Council makes legislation absolutely necessary, as the effect of the decisions of these Tribunals cannot be overcome in any other manner. The legislation now sought to be enacted is permissive, and with the provisions of criminal law now in force, it cannot be actively enforced without the goodwill of those vitally concerned, namely, the caste Hindus.

The foregoing views are expressed purely from a legal point of view. The question of throwing open a temple to excluded classes is one of great public and practical importance. If a substantial majority of Hindus at a particular centre are in favour of admitting the excluded classes to the local public temples, the element of

compulsion mentioned above need not stand in the way of the proposed legislation, as such element of compulsion would be found in the conduct of all human affairs.

But the compulsion involved in the Bill is, as above indicated, of a type which may be described as *vox populi, vox Dei,* and to ask a body of people to act according to the opinion of the majority of that body cannot truly or partly be said to be compulsion. The effect of the Bill is actually to *remove* the compulsion resting on the Trustees to act according to a custom or usage, even if it has received judicial recognition, if such custom or usage does not find favour with the majority of the people any longer. The law, as it stands at present, may be utilized as an engine of oppression even by a single caste-Hindu worshipper at a temple to impose his will, not only on the Trustees of that temple, but on all the other worshippers at that temple who may be willing to allow a Harijan to worship at that temple. The real effect of the Bill is to deprive a caste Hindu of the engine of oppression which judicial decisions have provided him with. To put it in another form, it will deprive the caste Hindu of the power given to him by judicial decisions to compel the Harijans to submit for all time to the disabilities imposed on him. Though the proposed legislation involves compulsion in theory, in practice, if the proposed Bill becomes law, it will give liberty to the worshippers at a temple to conduct their worship in accordance with the prevailing views and wishes of the majority.

On the grounds set forth above, my Board are emphatically of opinion that not only are the aims and objects of the proposed measure unexceptionable, but the method by which it seeks to achieve them are such as to cause the minimum extent of inconvenience, hardship or social disturbances.

They, therefore, request that the Legislative Assembly will enact legislation on the lines proposed at an early date in the interest of the Hindu community as a whole, apart from the duty that Government and Legislature themselves owe to the depressed classes.

I disclose no secret when I inform the reader that this representation has been drawn up by an eminent lawyer of Bombay. It is an able and dispassionate examination of the legal position. But like all documents drawn up purely from the legal standpoint, this suffers from the usual limitations.

It was open to the Board to combine with the legal, the moral and religious argument. For, the representation is addressed not to a court of law but to a Government and through it, to a Legislative Assembly, both of which are bound to take note, as they have done, of extra-legal matters. These often become decisive factors with bodies that are not hidebound by legal procedure and other legal limitations.

Thus, in my opinion, the Board might have embodied in their document their composition and their capacity to voice Hindu public opinion. It might have told the Assembly that the Bill was necessary, both in fulfilment of the Yeravda Pact and of the broad policy of the Government in respect of Harijans.

The Bombay lead can be well followed by the other provincial

boards. They may examine the question with particular reference to their provinces, taking care always to understate rather than overstate the evidence as to Hindu public opinion.

The question might be asked why during the Harijan tour I did not myself take the vote of the public on the question of the proposed legislation. It presented itself to me in the beginning stages of the tour, and I came to the conclusion that, if I took the vote, it was highly likely that the people would give their votes because I was asking for it. I should not mind receiving co-operation of people in simple faith, where faith could be legitimately exercised. In this instance, faith had no play. People had to decide on a highly technical issue in which knowledge of parliamentary procedure and function would be presumed. I had no time nor inclination to give that kind of training to the vast mass of mankind that appeared at meetings. And if I had attempted any such thing, I would have strayed far away from my mission, which I had claimed to be purely spiritual. Then, if I had begun to take votes on the propriety or otherwise of temple-entry legislation, there would have been danger of my being engaged in a hot controversy with sanatanists. This was the last thing in the world that I would do. I, therefore, deliberately refrained from putting the question of legislation to the vote of my audiences.

Whenever, therefore, I spoke on the question, I contented myself with giving my opinion that it was the duty of every Hindu reformer to press for legislation, if the pledge given at Bombay in 1932 was to be redeemed. But if the vote of the *savarna* Hindus in general was not to be taken, what was to be done? I came to the conclusion that those only could properly have any opinion on the question who were conversant with parliamentary procedure and functions. They could appreciate how, under certain circumstances, for the very preservation of religious neutrality and freedom of conscience, on which sanatanists very properly insist, legislation might be imperatively necessary. Such bodies were, first of all, lawyers' associations and, then, societies of Shastris, Harijan Sevak Boards and other representative bodies who could claim to have a say in such matters. I hope, there-fore, that all associations who are interested in the removal of untouchability and who have a right to be heard will make their opinion known to the public and the authorities concerned.

But I have no desire to force legislation upon an unwilling public. Nevertheless, it cannot be educated nor its opinion ascertained, without reasoned public discussion and legitimate canvassing. If in the end it is found that enlightened caste-Hindu opinion is against legislation, I, for one, would not desire to see it carried by a mixed majority vote. All that I contend is that Hindus who have faith in

temples have the right and owe it as a duty to enforce their opinion, wherever an overwhelming majority wants to open public Hindu temples to Harijans. And if there is a legal hindrance, as lawyers say there is, it can only be, and therefore should be, removed by law.

Harijan, 30-3-1934

366. SPEECH AT WORKERS' MEETING, SITAMARHI

March 30, 1934

Gandhiji said that he wanted to tell them that they should mind the work before them. If they wanted *seva* they should forget politics. For a while they should forget the name of the Congress which had got work to do and not to earn name. The waving of flags or raising of cries did not bring name or fame. Work alone could give prestige and prestige had got to be maintained. Government, he said, had got to help people in distress.

But we cannot compel Government to do so. Neither should we stand in the way of help. The hungry will eat and the thirsty will drink from whatever hands they get it. Let them receive help from all. We must co-operate with Government in our work of relief. It is our dharma to see that things are given and taken. We have to clean and dig as many wells as we can immediately, but the number of workers is small.

The population here is large and everybody has not got sufficient work on his hands. We have to take workers from the ranks. Thousands of workers from outside can do nothing. Work in the wells is full of danger and involves labour. Workers must be local. If they want wages or pay, we have to give them. If this work is neglected by anybody, even Rajendrababu, who is my fellow-worker, it is no good. If we are unable to do this, we cannot ask people to contribute to our funds. Money will flow in only if Bihar is efficient in duty. He who does not command confidence and respect cannot get anything, not even a cowrie. Rajendrababu's reputation is established in the country and every part of India has sent money to him, for they have full confidence in him. Rajendrababu has got a fine band of workers which ensures the right use of the people's money. So they pay. You have got to prepare more and more workers. Prepare the figures of wells damaged and we shall settle how many we can restore or give. It will be very painful if even one man suffers and remains thirsty through our neglect. People can go on for some time without food, but want of drinking water kills soon. I have experience of the Boer War, where people drank any water they could get hold of. I have seen the water of the Bharthua Chaur. It is poisonous. I was trying to go over the water in a boat, so dirty and poisonous it was. How could

people drink that? The question of medical relief is also now before them. Outside doctors cannot avail. You have to organize medical relief locally. Get together workers, work efficiently in co-operation with other societies, associations and the Administration. Consult local Government officers. They can help greatly if they take up work openly like what they are doing in Chapra, where there is co-operation between the District Magistrate and our workers and all are working together and very well.

The Searchlight, 4-4-1934

367. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, SITAMARHI

[*March 30, 1934*][1]

This is a terrible earthquake, perhaps, the most extensive in its destruction of any known to us in history. We must strive to overcome the devastation. But if we merely build up our fallen houses, dig out our blocked up wells, and clean our sanded fields, we shall not have done enough, if we do not learn and benefit by the moral (spiritual) lesson of the earthquake. It will be of no use even if we repair all the material damage and even if we get all the crores of rupees needed. Matter is nothing; spirit is all that lasts. The bodies of Sita-Rama, Radha-Krishna have all gone long ago. Nobody knows now even what they were like, but their spirit remains even now. We, in Bihar, have got to build up out of this disaster not merely material structures but a spiritual structure which will live through the centuries to come.

We have to realize how God made no distinction in his destruction between the high and the low, between the Hindu and the Muslim and so on and in the work of reparation we too must forget all distinctions. We must build up a unity and brotherhood amongst ourselves, which will purify and strengthen us. We must also remember that the whole world is looking at us and is watching to see what we shall do, and how we shall use the money collected from all over the world. Shall we eat it up like beggars without trying to help ourselves? No, we must not let this sacred land of Sita become a beggar-land, but we must work to earn money collected and must help one another. I know, the old sin of untouchability has been deep-rooted in Bihar. But it has now got to go for ever, if we are to be able to say that we have learnt the lesson of the earthquake.

Proceeding, he said that he was now going to ask them to give him a pice or even a cowrie and he would accept that pice or cowrie as a token of the removal of

[1] Gandhiji was in Sitamarhi on 29 and 30-3-1934.

untouchability from their hearts and then he could find that untouchability was leaving Bihar.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 5-4-1934

368. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

[Before *March 31, 1934*][1]

My emphatic opinion is that the paralysis of the intelligentsia must be removed. However much, therefore, I may differ as to the Council-entry programme, I would welcome a party of Congressmen pursuing that programme rather than [that they] should be made sullen, discontented and utterly inactive. I still retain the view that the Congress cannot, without committing suicide, give up the Poona resolution[2], but, if the majority of the Congressmen do not feel like carrying on this, I would welcome a meeting of the A.I.C.C. at which it should express its opinion and withdraw the Poona resolution. I am sure that the country would agree with their courageous behaviour.

The Hindustan Times, 5-4-1934

369. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

DARBHANGA,
March 31, 1934

NARANDAS GANDHI
OPPOSITE MIDDLE SCHOOL
RAJKOT

WIRE CONDITION NOSE BASU MADHUBANI.

BAPU

From a microfilm M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8396. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Dr. Ansari, at a conference of Congress leaders held on March 31, while referring to Gandhiji's views on Council-entry mentioned a letter he had received from Gandhiji. Presumably this is the letter.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Leadeers' Conference, Poona—I", 12-7-1933 and Speech at Leadeers' Conference, Poona—II", 14-7-1933.

370. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

DARBHANGA,
March 31, 1934

MATHURADAS
74 WALKESHWAR ROAD
BOMBAY

INQUIRING ABOUT TITHAL. OTHERS UNAVAILABLE. WILL YOU GO SINGHAGADH OR NASIK?

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

371. LETTER TO F. MARY-BARR

AS AT PATNA,
March 31, 1934

CHI. MARY,

I was wondering why you had not written earlier. I was agreeably surprised when Narmada agreed to put herself under your charge. I know that it would have been her making if she could have held on. But it was too great a change for her. Without any company, without a knowledge of English and finding herself in a hut instead of a palatial house, she will collapse. But I quite agree with you that you have unexpectedly an opportunity of being all by yourself. I have no doubt that you will make the best use possible of it. I am glad to find that Duncan is getting on.

I have undoubtedly thought often of living with Harijans. But it is no easy matter without injuring the cause. To live with them is certainly not a troublesome thing, but it is a matter of joy. But living with them would shut out the sanatanists. And my purpose today is to work on the latter rather than the former, because my mission just now is to call caste Hindus to repentance. I have therefore left the matter in the hands of local men. In a place in C.P. I was able thus to stay in a Harijan boarding [house]. I think that the velocity with which the Hindus are responding to the call for repentance is satisfactory. The progress will be still greater when caste Hindus have realized the enormity of the sin of untouchability.

The tamarind water you mention is quite all right. It does not give you any rheumatism. In order to counteract any such effect it might possibly have I would suggest your adding 10 grains of soda to every drink of tamarind water. I hope that you are keeping good

health.

I am just now touring the affected areas. Some of the destructions wrought by Nature defy description. For instance I cannot give you an adequate picture of a house whose walls have sunk actually three feet deep in the ground. There are cracks everywhere in its massive walls which could not be less than 18 in. in width. Most of the fair lands are covered with two or three feet of sand where it was impossible to get any sand at all before the earthquake. How far will the twenty lakhs of the Committee and the 30 lakhs of the Viceroy take the people? The damage is so enormous.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6022. Also C.W. 3351. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

372. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 30/31, 1934

CHI. NARANDAS,

I didn't get any letter from you from Wardha. I received the first one from Rajkot yesterday evening. I am writing this letter before the morning prayer.

The calamity in Bihar is too awful for words. I feel like asking you to come over, but I have been exercising control over myself. This does not mean that I don't want you to come. If you wish to come or have anything special to discuss, you may certainly come. I have merely left the decision to you.

I was surprised to read about your nose trouble. You should draw in cold water through the nostrils. Take complete rest in bed and get the head massaged with oil. Put a mud pack on the head at noon and drink as much milk and eat as much fruit as you can. For fruits, you may eat oranges, fresh grapes or raisins, and also pomegranates, if good ones are available. There is a good variety from Kathiawar. I expect to receive at Madhubani a reply to my wire.

The idea of bringing the children to Rajkot seems good. However, if Jamnadas does not keep good health and Purushottam's condition is no better, nor Jamna very strong, it doesn't seem proper to keep the boys and girls there. If the plan is carried out, it means that I will have to keep you in Rajkot. If the children cannot be kept in Ahmedabad, why cannot they be kept at Wardha? Is language the reason?

A churning is going on in my heart at present.[1] But I have come to no conclusion so far. I shall know in a day or two what the result is.

March 31, 1934

I was interrupted yesterday after I had written so far. I am now writing this while preparations for leaving are under way.

It is God's kindness that Father and Mother are well. Is Jamnadas resolved not to take rest? Neither Chimanlal, nor anybody else for that matter, should interfere with Titus's work. When we have handed over a thing to somebody to manage, we may give only as much help as he may ask for. To take interest in what we have given away is like sacrificing oneself for the sake of the dead. You have still not given me your opinion about whom we should appoint as the new trustees of the dairy. I have thought of Ambalalbhai, Shankerlal, Ranchhodbhai and Parikshitlal. Shankerlal knows the Ashram rules and observes them to the best of his ability. Chimanlal has suggested the addition of Pannalal's name. If, however, Pannalal's is included, he will have to give sufficient time to the dairy. Will he do so?

Regarding Lilavati, it is as you say.

I can't write more now. My respectful greetings to Father and Mother.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8395. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

373. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, DARBHANGA[2]

March 31, 1934

Gandhiji said that he had seen sands on lands that used to smile with plenty; he had seen wells destroyed or filled with sand and rivers dried up. None, however hard-hearted he might be, can remain unmoved at the sight that he saw. Not to speak of the palaces of the Maharajadhiraj, which were smashed to pieces, even the poor man's dwellings had been reduced to heaps of ruins. What could he do? What could the whole world do? The situation presented a hard problem. They could get some relief; they could get money but the real thing needed was sympathy. Monetary help was only a token of such sympathy. Their duty at this juncture was clear. They should

[1] About whether the civil disobedience should be withdrawn

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal Nayyar's "Weekly Letter"

strive for internal purity.[1]

Gandhiji made a fervent appeal for the abolition of the bar sinister, as a measure of self-purification and reform. Referring to the allegorical story of the elephant and the alligator, he reminded the audience that the visitations of Nature were the inevitable—however long delayed they may be—consequence of our sins and were intended to rouse us from our spiritual slumber. The elephant and the alligator, the legend goes, were in their previous birth brothers. But, instead of loving each other like brothers, they hated each other and so were condemned to be born as natural enemies. Still they refused to reform. One day, when the elephant visited the lake, the alligator seized his leg and tried to drag him under water. The deadly struggle lasted for "a thousand aeons". Finally, when the elephant found his strength failing and only the tip of his trunk remained above the surface of the water, he called upon God and God came to his rescue. His delusion left him and he again loved his brother, both of them being restored to their human form through God's grace.

Nature utters its warning to us in a voice of thunder. It flashes it before our eyes in letters of flame. But seeing, we see not, and hearing, we do not understand.

He warned the people that, if they failed to pay heed to Nature's signals, Nature would exact her due with compound interest.

Harijan, 20-4-1934, and *The Searchlight*, 4-4-1934

374. TALK TO RELIEF WORKERS, DARBHANGA

March 31, 1934

Gandhiji referring to the problem of middle-class relief, said that he was not unaware of their distress. He did not want them to be neglected. He only wanted the right thing to be done in the right way and in the right order. The question of urban house reconstruction and re-establishing petty crafts, avocations that had been crippled, was a stupendous task, involving expenditure of crores. Only an agency like Government with adequate resources could properly take it up. But the question of water supply in the villages for the time being must wholly engage the attention of the Relief Committee. That alone might take away 20 lakhs of the Committee. He warned them against penny-wise policy in matters of necessary expenditure. They must quickly disburse the funds and complete the programme of well reconstruction before the commencement of the rains. They could then be in a position, with that achievement to their credit, to approach the public for further funds for other work. In the mean time the middle class must not despond but should co-operate with the Relief

[1] This paragraph has been taken from *The Searchlight*.

Committee in the preparation of statistical survey of the extent of disorganization and damage done, the estimate of relief required and a list of deserving incumbents. The Committee could then with their data go to Government and with its help take concerted measures for relief ofthe middle class. Above all, they should remember that clear thinking, careful planning and energetic and quick execution alone would save the situation. The policy of carelessness, hesitation or doubt would spell disaster.

The Searchlight, 4-4-1934

375. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MADHUBANI[1]

March 31, 1934

Gandhiji expressed his deep sense of distress at the disaster and the havoc visible on all sides. It looked as if some powerful enemy had bombed towns, villages, palaces and mud houses but no bombs could shatter the firm surface of the earth like what he saw now. Houses had been swallowed up by yawning chasms. It was terrible. He observed:

As I viewed the picture of ruin spread out before me at Rajnagar, I felt overwhelmed and crushed by the weight of human misery. But then I remembered Kunti's prayer, 'O Lord, send me misery and misfortune always, lest I forget Thee!' It may not be given to us to have Kunti's Himalayan faith to utter that prayer. But may we not at least learn from it the lesson of using our calamities as a means of self-purification and turning the mind Godward?[2]

Continuing, he said he felt the irony of the situation when man attached himself heart and soul to such ephemeral objects as had been destroyed in a few moments. He could very well understand why *rishis* and *munis* advocated renunciation and rejected all attachment, all ease and luxury. The episode of Gajendra Moksha came vividly to him now. It was like the whole elephant being immersed in water drawn in by the Graha, only the tip of the trunk remaining out and enabling the struggling Gaj to invoke the aid of Lord Vishnu by presenting lotus held in that remaining portion of the trunk. They, the sufferers, had likewise to invoke the Lord, to become humble, to look inward so that hope may dawn . . .[3]

Look, there the black-flagwallas are come and they are waving black umbrellas too. Well, let them come and have their say, if they like. I have got to speak in their presence about removal of *chhuachoot* (untouchability). The demon of untouchability has got to be driven away.

[1] The meeting was attended by more than 25,000 people. A summary of the speech was also given in Pyarelal Nayyar's "Weekly Letter", *Harijan*, 21-4- 1934.

[2] This paragraph is taken from *Harijan*, 20-4-1934.

[3] At this stage some black flags were demonstrated at the meeting.

Gandhiji categorically reiterated his view on untouchability, which he characterized as contrary to the teachings of the Shastras and abhorrent to the spirit of sanatana dharma, which was the most catholic and tolerant of all religions in the world. He asked:

Is it not ridiculous to regard a Dom as untouchable, when for performing the same function we honour and worship our mother?

While Gandhiji's speech was in progress, the intruders disappeared as mysteriously as they had come.[1]

The Searchlight, 6-4-1934

376. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

AS AT PATNA,
3.45 a.m. April 1, 1934

MY DEAR CHILD,

I had your long letter after keeping me waiting for a long time. There is not in your letter enough search for truth that is, the hidden purpose of God. When we know that God Himself is the mystery of mysteries, why should anything that He does perplex us? If He acted as we would have Him do or if He acted exactly like us, we would not be His creatures and He our Creator. The impenetrable darkness that surrounds us is not a curse but a blessing. He has given us power to see the steps in front of us and it would be enough if Heavenly Light reveals that step to us. We can then sing with Newman, 'One step enough for me.' And we may be sure from our past experience that the next step will always be in view. In other words, the impenetrable darkness is nothing so impenetrable as we may imagine. But it seems impenetrable when in our impatience we want to look beyond that one step. And since God is love, we can say definitely that even the physical catastrophes that He sends now and then must be a blessing in disguise and they can be so only to those who regard them as a warning for introspection and self-purification.

I understand what you say about the children. I am glad that you are in Kodaikanal with the children. You will let me know when Menon gets something. Agatha Harrison is with me. It is rather a trying time for her, not being used to the Indian life. But she is standing it bravely because she wants to learn everything that she can in the shortest time possible. Muriel Lester, I left at Patna. She was not doing well. I return to Patna on the 4th April to leave it on the 7th for Assam. I return again to Bihar about the 25th, pass about a week and

[1] This and the preceding two praagraphs are from *Harijan*, 20-4-1934.

then go to Orissa once more returning to Bihar. You will continue to use the Wardha address.

Love to you and kisses to the children to whom I may not write today.

BAPU

MRS. ESTHER MENON
BOURNE END
KODAIKANAL

From a photostat: No. 128. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child*, pp. 104-5

377. LETTER TO CHARUPROBHA SEN GUPTA

AS AT PATNA,
April 1, 1934

DEAR CHARU PROBHA,

I have your letter.

Why should you lose faith? We do not always get things to happen as we want them to. But we can always look at them with detachment. What we have to do is to do our allotted task from day to day and find joy in the doing of it. There is no other way to peace.

I do not know when the visit to Bengal will come off. Presently I shall be going to Assam and in the first week of May commence the tour in Orissa. I do not yet know when I reach Puri.

You must write again and tell me more definitely what worries you.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 8703. Also C.W. 1489. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

378. LETTER TO ABHAYDEV SHARMA

April 1, 1934

BHAI ABHAY,

I congratulate you on your being relieved from the Gurukul. I somehow had a feeling that to appoint you Acharya of the Gurukul might be harmful both to the Gurukul and to you. But it was your dharma to stay on there as long as the Sabha was not willing to relieve you. Now your relations with the Sabha and the Gurukul will be on a

pure spiritual level, as they ought to be.

Unless there are other reasons for it you should not be hasty in courting imprisonment on account of the inner conflict I am going through. You should await my decision.

I knew nothing about the gut used in carding. I had believed Maganlal was our surety in the matter. Anyway, I shall now enquire. And this is of course true that I had made no special effort in this direction. Animals are not slaughtered for the guts. We use the gut in the same way as innumerable people use shoes made from the hide of slaughtered animals in spite of their devotion to cow-protection. When gut is taken from naturally dead animals we shall use that gut. But for the time being, I do not see any harm in using the gut that is available. So far I have not found any string which can satisfactorily replace catgut. You should keep an open mind on the subject of gut and go on using it considering that it is indispensable.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Please write to Patna.

From Hindi: C.W. 9710

379. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

April 2, 1934

CHI. MRIDU,

I had told you I would send the definition of swadeshi[1]. Here it is. You may offer your comments on it if you want. I hope you are keeping fit. How was Mummy's health? She must have gone. Write to me occasionally. There is a heart-searching going on within me at the moment. You will see the result.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Show the definition to Shankerlal if he is there. Thinking he may not be there, I am not sending it to him.

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11188. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

[1] *Vide* "Some Questions Answered", 2-2-1934.

380. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

April 2, 1934

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I am now in the midst of heart-searching. Maybe before you get this letter, I shall have arrived at a decision. I have received your telegrams. I am trying. I have stopped trying for Panchgani and Matheran. Nasik seems easier to me. I have received your telegram. Hence, I shall try for Nasik.

Miss Harrison is with me, She is a very good lady. Tell the doctor that I have no trouble at all. Doctors had been unduly scared. I am of course taking care. I had sent you a telegram. You must have received it.

I am sending herewith my definition of swadeshi. It can be put into practice if you are in the field. I have sent it to Jalbhai and Lilavati.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

381. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

[*Monday, April 2, 1934*][1]

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I am writing this at 3.30 on Monday morning from a small village. I had seen the letter about you addressed to Jamnalalji. Your duty is to go and stay in the Ashram. But just now it is almost impossible for you to do so. There is no necessity for you just now to seek imprisonment. I am stopping others too. Write so to Krishna Nair. I am thinking hard. More you will learn later.

It is a good course for you to take up some work of service and your expenses to be borne by your brothers. I see dharma in their continuing to pay you a small sum regularly as long as they are earning even a little. It is also right for the family to spare one brother for the service of the country. Business will be beyond you. In a way service too is business. But all this should be taken up only after you

[1] The original bears April 4, 1934 as the date of receipt.

have fully recovered.

You should make up your mind to follow the course I have suggested and be tranquil. You should also, without stirring from your seat, study the *Gita* and the *Ramayana*.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am keeping well. I shall leave Patna on the 7th for Assam.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2410

382. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

April 2, 1934

Question: Is it not the duty of every Congressman and particularly an inmate of the Ashram to participate in the individual satyagraha?

ANSWER: Not at all, if they do not feel it from within.

Q. Won't you like those workers to take part in civil disobedience who have dropped out from the movement for some reason or other but are always inclined to associate themselves with it?

A. I would like them to do so if they have understood the full significance of the religion of satyagraha, and they follow the path even at the cost of their life.

Q. Would you accept like Pt. Jawaharlal that the country stands to benefit by resorting to civil disobedience for winning political independence?

A. I would certainly accept it if the civil disobedience is pure.

Q. Is it not desirable that those who have been resorting to satyagraha against the Government with a political motive rather than as a matter of dharma should continue to participate in the civil disobedience movement with the same attitude?

A. I really doubt it.

Q. When on my return from here I meet Kalyanjibhai, Keshavbhai, Khushalbhai, Chunibhai and other workers of the Bardoli Sangh—would it be proper if I convey to them as a gist of my conversation with you on March 22, 1934 that they should join the struggle not for the sake of prestige, not for the sake of following any one of their colleagues but only if they have faith in satyagraha as a

[1] The questions, submitted to Gandhiji in writing by Chimanlal Bhatt, arose from his meeting with Gandhiji on March 22. Gandhiji wrote down the answers. *Vide* "Talk with Ashram Inmates", 22-3-1934.

weapon and if they fully know the advantages and disadvantages of joining such a struggle?

A. It would be proper.

These replies reflect my mental state on that day. Right now there is conflict in my mind and it remains to be seen what comes out of it.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9131

383. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

SAHARSA,
April 2, 1934

This statement owes its inspiration to a personal chat with the inmates and associates of the Satyagraha Ashram who had just come out of prison and whom at Rajendrababu's instance I had sent to Bihar. More especially it is due to a revealing information I got in the course of conversation about a valued companion of long standing who was found reluctant to perform the full prison task and preferring his private studies to the allotted task. This was undoubtedly contrary to the rules of satyagraha. More than the imperfection of the friend, whom I love more than ever, it brought home to me my own imperfection. The friend said he had thought that I was aware of his weakness. I was blind. Blindness in a leader is unpardonable. I saw at once that I must for the time being remain the sole representative of civil resistance in action.

During the informal conference week at Poona in July last I had stated that while many individual civil resisters would be welcome, even one was sufficient to keep alive the message of satyagraha. Now after much searching of the heart I have arrived at the conclusion that in the present circumstances only one, and that myself and no other, should for the time being bear the responsibility of civil resistance if it is to succeed as a means of achieving *purna* swaraj.

I feel that the masses have not received the full message of satyagraha owing to its adulteration in the process of transmission. It has become clear to me that spiritual instruments suffer in their potency when their use is taught through non-spiritual media. Spiritual messages are self-propagating. The reaction of the masses throu-

[1] This was released to the Press on April *7; vide* "Statement to the Press",

ghout the Harijan tour has been the latest forcible illustration of what I mean. The splendid response of the masses has been spontaneous. The workers themselves were amazed at the attention and the fervour of vast masses whom they had never reached.

Satyagraha is a purely spiritual weapon. It may be used for what may appear to be mundane ends and through men and women who do not understand its spirituality provided the director knows that the weapon is spiritual. Everyone cannot use surgical instruments. Many may use them if there is an expert behind them directing their use. I claim to be a satyagraha expert in the making. I have need to be far more careful than the expert surgeon who is complete master of his science. I am still a humble searcher. The very nature of the science of satyagraha precludes the student from seeing more than the step immediately in front of him.

The introspection prompted by the conversation with the Ashram inmates has led me to the conclusion that I must advise all Congressmen to suspend civil resistance for swaraj as distinguished from specific grievances. They should leave it to me alone. It should be resumed by others in my lifetime only under my direction unless one arises claiming to know the science better than I do and inspires confidence. I give this opinion as the author and initiator of satyagraha. Henceforth, therefore, all who have been impelled to civil resistance for swaraj under my advice directly given or indirectly inferred will please desist from civil resistance. I am quite convinced that this is the best course in the interests of India's fight for freedom.

I am in dead earnest about this greatest of weapons at the disposal of mankind. It is claimed for satyagraha that it is a complete substitute for violence or war. It is designed, therefore, to reach the hearts both of the so-called "terrorists" and the rulers who seek to root out the "terrorists" by emasculating a whole nation. But the indifferent civil resistance of many, grand as it has been in its results, has not touched the hearts of either the "terrorists" or the rulers as a class. Unadulterated satyagraha must touch the hearts of both. To test the truth of the proposition, satyagraha needs to be confined to one qualified person at a time. The trial has never been made. It must be made now.

Let me caution the reader against mistaking satyagraha for mere

civil resistance. It covers much more than civil resistance. It means relentless search for truth and the power that such a search gives to the searcher. The search can only be pursued by strictly non-violent means.

What are the civil resisters, thus freed, to do? If they are to be ready for the call whenever it comes, they must learn the art and the beauty of self-denial and voluntary poverty. They must engage themselves in nation-building activities, the spread of khaddar through personal hand-spinning and hand-weaving, the spread of communal unity of hearts by irreproachable personal conduct towards one another in every walk of life, the banishing of untouchability in every shape or form in one's own person, the spread of total abstinence from intoxicating drinks and drugs by personal contact with individual addicts and generally by cultivating personal purity. These are services which provide maintenance on a poor man's scale. Those for whom the poor man's scale is not feasible should find a place in small unorganized industries of national importance which give a better wage. Let it be understood that civil resistance is for those who know and perform the duty of voluntary obedience to law and authority.

It is hardly necessary to say that in issuing this statement I am in no way usurping the function of the Congress. Mine is mere advice to those who look to me for guidance in matters of satyagraha.

From a copy: C.W. 9137

384. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BHAGALPUR

April 2, 1934

I have been touring in Bihar for the last several days. I have already seen the areas greatly affected by the earthquake. This tour will be over tomorrow evening. The scene was horrible. I can only imagine the actual scene which you all have seen. Palaces and big houses collapsed within a minute or two. Water came out. I do not know what was then the scene at Bhagalpur.

The Central Relief Committee and the Government are co-operating to remove your distress but the relief is for those who have actually suffered. The *Gita* says that to eat without doing work is to commit theft. If money is to come from Government we should not sit idle. The Government and the Relief Committee should help the deserving people. What help can be given to the Maharaja of Darbhanga and Deep Babu[1] for their losses? It is also not possible to help all persons. No matter whether help is given or not, people must do their duty. The complaint on behalf of the middle class has been received, but there are representatives of the middle class in the Central Relief Committee. I pray the middle class should forget their position as such and think that all are equal. All are human beings, God is the same for all. The Central Relief Committee has forgotten the difference but the middle class ought also to be helped. Suppose there are men who are thirsty, hungry, who want cloth, and who want houses to live in, whom to help first? Nobody can take the share of the thirsty. The thirsty ought to be helped first. Let the thirst of the men and animals be quenched first, then help the hungry, then let cloth be given an lastly the houses constructed. We shall forget the earthquake in four months or in a year or two. If I come again I shall be gettingmoney from you all. Even today you give money to me. The people of Bihpur brought money. I told them only if they believed untouchability to be a sin of the Hindu society, should they subscribe for the funds I am raising. They subscribed. Even the women touched my feet and offered subscription. Purify yourselves. Untouchability is a social sin. Nobody is born untouchable. If you want to remove your distress remove untouchability. No Viceroy's fund, no Central Committee, can help you in this work. This is all that I have to say.

History of the Freedom Movement in Bihar, Vol. II (1928-1941), pp. 221-2 and *The Indian Nation,* 6-4-1934

[1] Deepnarayan Singh

385. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MONGHYR[1]

[*April 3, 1934*][2]

After so many lives were lost and so many houses destroyed, God has roused us from our slumber. All the religions say that when sin accumulates upon the earth, a total cataclysm follows. Untouchability is a great sin. Are we prepared to get rid of it or not is the great question. Someone has said that that sin is not confined only to the fifteen millions of Biharis.[3]

Nothing can be more absurd than to suppose that the Biharis were specially marked by nature for its attention because they are more wicked than the rest.[4] Misfortune is not a proof of an individual's wickedness. All the same, there is an indissoluble connection between natural calamities and man's sin. You cannot have an interruption of the moral law in one part without producing a reaction in the entire system. When one limb is afflicted, through it the entire body is punished. Every calamity should, therefore, lead to a thorough cleansing of individual as well as social life.

What sin have the Muslims committed? Shall I tell you their sin? Their sin is that they have kept up the relationship with us in spite of the fact that we observe untouchability. Can it be a divine law that some persons are born untouchables and remain so for generations? Even men do not have such a law. It does not exist anywhere in this world. The plight of Negroes in America is very bad. They are untouchables but they are not considered to have been born so. Treating them as untouchables is not considered a dharma. There are a vast number of people who treat Negroes as untouchables but such behaviour is not considered a part of religion. It is not that Bihar has incurred this punishment because it is more wicked. Bihar is a part of India. It is a part of the world. God alone knows His ways. We only know that God is full of compassion, love and kindness, so the punishment he metes out must have been based on justice. It is beyond my

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". A short version of the speech was also published in English in *Harijan,* 20-4-1934.

[2] From Chandulal Dalal's *Gandhijini Dinvari*

[3] The following paragraph has been taken from *Harijan,* 20-4-1934.

[4] In Monghyr, two thousand houses had been razed to the ground and ten thousand people had been killed in the earthquake.

power to comprehend how. It is beyond the power of anyone. We should consider the calamity as an outcome of our sins—not your sins but mine. Everyone should consider Bihar's calamity as his own and should feel as sad for those who died there as he might have felt at the death of his own relatives. One would be called a human being only if he did that and only then could he claim to know God. We should try to wash off our sins—individual and social—while this tragedy is fresh in our minds. The Earthquake Relief Committee won't tell you how to do that. I have been a reformer from my childhood. I began that work with children and women. It is therefore not my dharma to ply you with sweet words and then leave you. So wake up if you have not woken up—and ask of God the strength to wash off your sins. The world is watching what the Biharis do in this hour of calamity. You must pass the test. May God give you the strength to grasp what I have said and to accept and implement what is worth accepting and implementing.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 29-4-1934 and *Harijan*, 20-4-1934

386. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

PATNA,
April 5, 1934

MATHURADAS
74 WALKESHWAR ROAD
BOMBAY

AWAITING BIRLA'S REPLY REGARDING NASIK. DONT UNDERSTAND YOUR PROPOSAL WRITING BOOK ON FAST. WRITE FULLY.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

387. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI[1]

April 5, 1934

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

It was good of you, Bhulabhai and Dr. Bidhan Roy to come all the way to Patna to discuss the resolutions arrived at recently at an informal meeting[2] of some Congressmen and ascertain my opinion on them. I have no hesitation in welcoming the revival of the Swarajya Party and the decision of the meeting to take part in the forth coming elections to the Assembly, which you tell me is about to be dissolved. My views on the utility of legislatures in the present state are well known. They remain on the whole what they were in 1920, but I feel that it is not only right, but it is the duty of every Congressman, who for some reason or other does not want to or cannot take part in the Poona programme and who has faith in entry into the legislatures to seek entry and form combinations in order to prosecute the programme which he or they believe to be in the interest of the country. Consistently with my view above mentioned, I shall be at the disposal of the Party at all times and render such assistance as it is in my power to give.[3]

Yours sincerely,

The Hindustan Times, 6-4-193

[1] The letter was released to the Press with the following statement by Dr. Ansari, Dr. B. C. Roy and Bhulabhai Desai: "We arrived at Patna on the morning of the 4th instant and were able to confer with Mahatma Gandhi as regards the conclusions arrived at by the Delhi Conference. Notwithstanding the strain he had gone through, considering the importance of the matter he discussed with us for over three hours the various aspects of the revival of the Swarajya Party. The matter was again discussed today with Mahatmaji in the morning and in the afternoon, and the result of discussions is now embodied in the following letter addressed by Mahatmaji to Dr. Ansari. . ."

[2] The meeting, which was held in Delhi on March 31, 1934, was attended by Madan Mohan Malaviya, Dr. B. C. Roy, Khaliquzzaman, G. B. Pant and other Congress leaders. The meeting decided to form a Swarajya Party and take part in the elections for the Central Assembly.

[3] For Pyarelal's note on Gandhiji's views on the subject, *vide* "Pyarelal's note on Gandhiji's view".

388. NOTES

HOW DO YOU PRAY?

God has blessed me with numerous friends belonging to different faiths. Some of these are anxious to help me in the movement against untouchability. The question is assuming a concrete form and requires a definite answer. My own position is very clear and precise. I need the co-operation of the whole world in this purity movement of gigantic internal reform. I have asked for the prayers of the whole world. But some non-Hindus want to translate their prayer into action, and that they would do, if they could, in co-operation with me. I would love to have it in the closest manner possible. But there is a limitation. Suppose I hand a Harijan child to a Christian or a Muslim friend or institution. What will they do? Will they bring it up as a Hindu or in their own faith? For me all the principal religions are equal in the sense that they are all true. They are supplying a felt want in the spiritual progress of humanity. Hence I have had no difficulty in bringing up Muslim, Parsi and Christian children under my care in their own faith. Indeed, I had to study some literature for their sake when their parents wanted me to teach them particular forms of worship according to special books. The easiest way to find out a man's position is perhaps through his prayer. I suggest the following two forms:

I

O God ! give all Thy creation wisdom, so that each may worship and follow Thee according to his light and grow in his own faith.

II

O God! give Thy creation wisdom, so that each may worship and follow Thee even as I try to do.

It is clear that the first form is all-inclusive and that, therefore, a person or institution that will subscribe to it can conscientiously bring up Hindu wards as Hindus, Muslim as Muslims, etc., whereas one subscribing to the second form can conscientiously take in only those who belong to his denomination, unless he takes others with the declared intention of converting them to his own denomination.

Will friends who read these lines and care write to me for my information which prayer they subscribe to and offer every day?

Harijan, 6-4-1934

389. AN ADI-DRAVIDA'S DIFFICULTIES

A correspondent writes:

(1) Are you really interested in the welfare of Harijans or are you actuated by any ulterior motive so as to show an increase in the population of Hindus?

(2) If you really think that untouchables form a part and parcel of Hindus, will you kindly throw light on the following *shlokas* of *Manusmriti* considered holy by the Hindus:

"If any *Panchama* carries on any trade which a respectable man conducts, and then grows rich, he should be deprived of his wealth and driven out of the country." *(Manusmriti*, x. 96)

"Whosoever that affords tuition to a Shudra, will enter Hell along with him (Shudra). Any Shudra endeavouring to impart religious instruction to a Brahmin should be inflicted with the punishment of hot oil being poured into his mouth and ears." (XIV. 89).

"Any Shudra found talking with a loud voice should be branded with red hot iron bars. Any Shudra occupying an equal seat with a Brahmin, Kshatriya and Vaishya should be burnt with a red hot iron." (VIII. 276, VIII. 271)

Hindus are commanded to observe this book as holy and act according to the injunctions contained therein. If you consider this as unholy, why should you not declare it as such and instead issue a new decree of your own called "Gandhismriti"?

(3) Even Arya Samajists are removing this untouchability, and their novel procedure in carrying out this task is to perform the ritual of *shuddhi* and then to admit the individual into the fold. If the untouchable is really a Hindu, how does this necessity arise? Do you agree with them in this respect?

The correspondent claims to be an Adi-Dravida and, therefore, he has every right to suspect my motive. The best answer, therefore, I can return to his first question is that he should await my death for forming a final judgment. Meanwhile, if he is prepared to accept my word, I would assure him that I set no value upon an increase in the number of Hindus so called. False professors of a creed not only do no service to it but may kill it. The only motive, therefore, that guides me in working for the Harijan cause is to see Hinduism purified of the curse of untouchability. And if, in so becoming, it is represented only by one Hindu, I would have no repentance but real joy that it was not

dead.

The correspondent's second question is very pertinent, only he would not have put that question to me if he had been a constant reader of *Harijan* and had, therefore, known my definition of Shastras. I hold *Manusmriti* as part of the Shastras. But that does not mean that I swear by every verse that is printed in the book described as *Manusmriti*. There are so many contradictions in the printed volume that, if you accept one part, you are bound to reject those parts that are wholly inconsistent with it. I hold *Manusmriti* as a religious book because of the lofty teachings contained in it. The verses quoted by the correspondent are flatly contradictory to the spirit of its main theme. The correspondent should know that nobody is in possession of the original text. In fact, there is no evidence to prove that a *rishi* named Manu ever lived. Somehow or other, the genius of Hinduism has made the writers or the givers of the grandest truths efface themselves. Therefore I have suggested to seekers after Truth the only safe rule for their guidance in studying Shastras, namely, that they should reject whatever is contrary to truth and ahimsa, the true foundations of all religions.

The correspondent's third question should rightly be addressed to Arya Samajists. It is news to me that Harijans are required by the Arya Samajists to perform the ritual of *shuddhi* before being admitted to the Arya Samaj. But I have seen the *shuddhi* ceremony performed in order to strengthen the Harijans in the due fulfilment of the vow that they take as to abstention from beef, carrion-eating, drinking intoxicating liquors, etc. The correspondent quite rightly says that, if an untouchable is really a Hindu, no *shuddhi* is required of him. If any is required, it is required of the caste Hindu who has committed the sin of believing in untouchability.

Harijan, 6-4-1934

390. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

PATNA,
April 6, 1934

MATHURADAS

74 WALKESHWAR RD.

BOMBAY

GHANSHYAMDAS SAYS YOU CAN GO NASIK HOME IF UNOCCUPIED. ASK RAMESHWARDAS. BHULABHAI SAYS YOU CAN GO HIS TITHAL HOUSE. WILL SEE YOU ON REACHING BOMBAY.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

391. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

PATNA,
April 6, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

It is about 2.30 a.m. just now. The National Week commences today. This has now become the usual time when I get up. I take a nap during the day. I had your wire inquiring after my health and I replied to it. Ansari saw me. He examined me. The gist of his report was that there was nothing particularly wrong. Everybody of course advises me to take rest. You may be sure that I take as much rest as I can. But the result is in God's hands.

Ansari, Dr. Bidhan and Bhulabhai have now met me. I have told them in writing that it is the duty of those who have faith in the Councils to enter them. They may, however, do so in their individual capacity and not in the name of the Congress. I think it will not do any good to restrain them. Ansari will go to England in May—for his health and for the Nawab Saheb. Bhulabhai will take charge of the whole work.

I hope you will approve of the step which I have taken after much thinking. I didn't think it advisable that individuals should offer civil disobedience on their own responsibility and, therefore, I have told co-workers that they also should suspend it. I alone may offer it and I will invite others to do the same when I think it right. If anybody is drawn by my example to court arrest, he will not be regarded to have offered civil disobedience on his own and senior co-workers cannot be prevented from doing that. You will see a statement by me on this subject in two or three days. If you don't understand my step, please don't worry. I am sure that you will approve of it on further reflection.

I have read Vithalbhai's will. Everything seems to be in order. My own attitude is that, if Bose gets the money, we shouldn't mind. Who is your companion? This is enough for today.

I am asking Swami to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 90-1

392. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

April 6, 1934

BA,

Today is Friday. I have not received your letter yet. It is about 3 in the morning. I had fully replied to your previous letter. You must have received Raojibhai's letter. Vasumati has come here. I have not had any talk with her till now. Hemprabhadevi also has come here to discuss with me matters about khadi. Rukhi came here yesterday evening for her eyes. They are watering all the time. I had a letter from Madhavdas. He says that he is completely all right now. There was a letter from Manu. She is all right. I hope you did not worry in the least about me. I am all right. I am being regularly examined by Dr. Ansari. He was here only yesterday. He fears nothing. He does advise me to take rest, of course. I take as much as I can. Ultimately everything depends on God's will. I have now decided to stop all others from going to jail. I alone should offer satyagraha. Hence, when all of you are released you will not have to offer satyagraha again for the present. You should go on doing khadi work, etc. I will not write more today. You do remember, I hope, that today is a day of fasting. I am starting for Assam tomorrow. Bal will accompany me. Prithuraj also will of course be there.

Blessings to all from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 22

393. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

[*About April 6, 1934*][1]

CHI. DAHYABHAI,

I had your letter, but owing to other preoccupations could not reply sooner. For the time being it is better to visit Manibehn every time. When you do, tell her that not a day passes when I do not thinkof her. But I am not worried, for I have full faith in her power of endurance and firmness.

When you meet Father, tell him that I have written to him every week without fail.

I have read Uncle's[2] will. There is sure to be difficulty in getting a probate for it in Bombay. But I am of opinion that we should not do anything in the matter at all and we should let go anything that passes into Subhas Bose's hands. I believe he will use it for only public purposes.

Let me have news of Baba's health. I am fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI DAHYABHAI VALLABHBHAI PATEL
RAMNIVAS PARIKH STREET, BOMBAY 4

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 157

394. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

PATNA,
April 6, 1934

Although I have been credited with a very vivid imagination and although, having known fair Bihar intimately, I had a good mental picture of the havoc caused by the earthquake, the reality went far beyond the imaginary picture I had formed from descriptions received from Rajendrababu.

Although Rajendrababu is a word-painter, he had failed to convey an adequate impression of the ruin that has overtaken Bihar.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 6-4-1934
[2] Vithalbhai Patel

I have now covered almost all areas of destruction barring Purnea. Practically everywhere, owing to the scarcity of water, there is a real danger of famine.

The rich fields covered with sand, rows upon rows of houses in towns and villages utterly destroyed, water and sand shooting up through stone of cement floors, walls and pillars waist-deep, palaces a heap of bricks, solitary walls or pillars standing as a mournful reminder of the glory that was, improvised huts every moment in danger of catching fire, old sites not capable of being built upon for fear of a subsidence during rains, cattle starving for want of fodder and some dying for want of water, add to this the very real danger of floods reaching areas hitherto untouched by them.

The middle classes have been perhaps the hardest hit. Some of them have lost their all and are reduced to beggary. Those, therefore, who are least able to bear the burden have been the hardest hit.

The combined efforts of the Bihar Central Relief Committee assisted by other organizations will fail to give anything like full relief to these middle-class men.

Nearly twenty lakhs subscribed to the Central Relief and nearly forty lakhs subscribed to the Viceroy's Fund are utterly inadequate for the minimum requirements. I hope therefore that the public will realize the immensity of the task before the Government and the people and will not in any way relax their efforts to send their donations as liberally as they can to the Central Relief Committee.

I am unable to say how many lakhs will be required to ensure just sufficient supply of water for thirsty men and cattle, let alone the supply of food, medical necessaries and house accommodation, temporary or semi-permanent.

The reclamation of devastated fields has not been altogether overlooked. The Government are engaged in conducting a survey of the devastated area. They have issued elaborate instructions to the peasantry to show how they can renovate their fields for the approaching monsoons.

The latest estimate made by the Government of the area under earthquake sands is over 500,000 acres. The average cost of reclaiming one acre is, at the lowest estimate, calculated at twenty per acre. That means one crore. What relief it would be possible to give the owners of these fields is more than I can say at present. But I think I have given what is undoubtedly an underestimate of the needs one

and a half crores of people living in the affected area require. Needless to say all these are not all equally affected. Some have escaped direct loss altogether. But none has escaped the indirect effect of the devastation.

CORRESPONDENT: Why, you have presented such a doleful picture of the Bihar situation and asked for more money, that I should be less than human were I to treat this as an exclusive interview. Should I do so, I shall be denying Bihar all available sources of help.

GANDHIJI: What are you driving at?

CORRESPONDENT: I propose to share this interview with all newspaper men for obvious reasons.

The Hindu, 7-4-1934

395. OBSERVATIONS AT MEETING OF BIHAR ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY BOARD

April 5/6, 1934

Asked regarding the ways to secure entry for Harijans into temples of all-India importance, such as the Vaidyanath Temple at Deoghar and Vishnupur Temple at Gaya, Gandhiji emphasized the importance of winning the heart of caste Hindus by peaceful propaganda without coercion or compulsion of any kind whatsoever. ln that way he thought untouchability was bound to disappear in course of time.

Regarding the desirability of persuading Harijans to enter Hindu temples, Gandhiji thought that caste Hindus should throw open the temples, but it was for the Harijans to enter or not. They should create in them a desire to lead pure lives and merely entering the temples will not lead to purity of life.

Asked regarding touchability in the matter of food and water, Gandhiji said that water and food did not necessarily become polluted by touch and it was only impure hands that caused pollution.

Asked whether secondary education alone was desirable for Harijans or whether it should be supplemented by vocational or industrial education, Gandhiji said that all kinds of education should be provided for the Harijans and arrangements should be made for vocational training.

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-4-1934

396. LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

April 7, 1934

BHAI SAHEB,[1]

I had a long chat with Dr. Mahmood. He is most anxious to work for and to achieve communal unity. I have given it as my opinion that there is no escape from the communal award if we are to secure Mussalman co-operation and if we are to secure any advantage for the nation. The other alternative is retention of the status quo. Then the question of award does not arise at all. There seems to me to be no *via media.* There are difficulties in our way in every case. But I do think that we have to take up a decisive attitude one way or the other.

Yours,

MOHANDAS[2]

From a photostat: G.N. 5070

397. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

April 7, 1934

This statement[3] was drafted by me on my day of silence at Saharsa, that is Easter Monday, 2nd inst. I passed it on to Rajendra-babu and then it was circulated among the friends who were present. The original draft has undergone considerable revision. It is also abridged. But in essence it remains the same as it was on Monday. I regret that I have not been able to show it to all friends and colleagues with whom I would have been delighted to share it. But as I had no doubt whatsoever about the soundness of my decision and as I knew that the civil resistance of some friends was imminent, I was not prepared to take the risk of delaying publication by waiting for the opinion of friends. The decision and every word of the statement are in answer to intense introspection, searching of the heart and waiting upon God. The decision carries with it reflection upon no single

[1] The superscription is in Hindi.
[2] The subscription is in Hindi.
[3] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 2-4-1934.

individual. It is a humble admission of my own limitations and a due sense of the tremendous responsibility that I have carried on my shoulders all these long years.

From a copy: C.W. 9137

398. INTERVIEW TO THE "HINDU"

PATNA,
April 7, 1934

CORRESPONDENT: Your statement is all too brief for the general reader and is likely to be mistaken by some as a desertion on your part of your fellow prisoners.

GANDHIJI: I knew that I laid myself open to such a charge when I deliberately decided to omit all references to them, for my decision had nothing to do with securing a release of the prisoners. Civil resisters do not march to the prison in order to get out of it the next day. They will come out in their own good time.

My only aim in coming to this decision was to purge the movement of any possibility of internal decay. Such a possibility must always be there when an imperfect man handles imperfect instruments. I therefore felt that the time had come for me to reduce the possibility of decay to the minimum. That could only be secured if civil resistance was confined to one person only, that one being the most versed in the science.

In my opinion the decision will make the movement stronger than before and capable of being easily handled both by the people and by the Government.

Hence the possibility of an early discharge of prisoners is really greater now than before, especially if the Government believe in the sincerity of my decision.

Replying to the question why, having confined civil resistance to himself, he should not go to the whole hog and suspend it altogether, Gandhiji declared:

That is undoubtedly a very proper question. All I can say in answer is that, as the author of satyagraha and as a staunch believer in its efficacy, I may not suspend it in my own person except under circumstances which will discredit the movement itself, as for instance violence by satyagrahis themselves.

Asked how far his decision was prompted by the Delhi decisions, the Mahatma replied:

Not in the slightest degree. It was taken definitely on Easter Monday at Saharsa. I had no knowledge that the Delhi Conference had finished its deliberations and that it had come to a definite conclusion. I came to know on Tuesday that the Conference had concluded its deliberations. What is more, the decision had come to me vaguely some days before it was finally taken when I knew nothing of the Delhi proposals. Therefore, in point of time and fact, my decision to confine civil resistance only to me had no connection whatsoever with the Delhi Conference resolutions. Long before the Delhi Conference took a concrete form I had said in conversations and in letters to friends that it was the duty of Congressmen who believed in Council-entry, and could not or would not offer civil resistance, to form a party and prosecute the Council-entry programme. Thus and only thus, in my opinion, could the situation be clarified and the paralysis of Congressmen removed. Indeed, even when the Poona Conference was meeting I suggested to Messrs Asaf Ali and Satyamurti that if they believed in the Council programme they should follow it and canvass public opinion in its favour.

The decision about civil resistance is only based on ethical grounds and, so far as I know, has no connection whatsoever with external circumstances. I can also tell you that, in the statement as it was drafted on Easter Monday, there was a paragraph regarding Council-entry for those who would not take up the constructive activities mentioned in my statement. I removed that paragraph because I had, before the statement was given to the Press, seen the Delhi friends and given them the letter which is already before the public.

The Hindu, 8-4-1934

399. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

PATNA,
April 7, 1934

Asked what would be the extent of his co-operation with the Swaraj Party, Gandhiji said:

Consistently with my views on Council-entry I will render them all the assistance I can.

Asked if he would assist them in securing election, Gandhiji stated:

I will certainly not interfere in an election, but the electors will be guided, so far as my opinion counts with them, by the knowledge that I would like them to vote for Swarajist candidates if they are otherwise qualified.

Asked as to what extent it will be the duty of Congressmen as a body to help in the elections, Gandhiji said:

Those Congressmen who believe in Council-entry will certainly consider it their duty to take part in the elections.

Q. What will be the position of men like Babu Rajendra Prasad, who do not believe in Council-entry, but whose assistance will be necessary for success at the election?

A. If Rajendrababu does not believe in Council-entry he will not seek election, but there will be nothing to prevent him from advising those Congressmen who may desire to enter the Assembly and guide them.

Asked how far his assistance would be available to the Party, Gandhiji replied:

Whenever they seek assistance and I can legitimately give them, it will be always at their disposal—so long as I am out.

Asked if he would assist the Party in drawing up the Constitution and programme, Gandhiji replied:

If I can spare time and can usefully advise them, 1 shall certainly do so. But this must not on any account be interpreted as an invitation to come to me for advice on all occasions. For one thing, I shall have no time left to me for shouldering such a burden.

The Hindu, 8-4-1934

400. LETTER TO DILIP KUMAR ROY

PATNA,
April 8, 1934

MY DEAR DILIP,

I am surprised that you have not received my letter. I wrote to you almost immediately after hearing from you and it was a fairly long letter that I sent you.[1] Your *Anami* I did glance through but the best use I thought I could make of it was to send it to Mahadev who knows Bengali and who is himself a poet. I am not. But that does not prevent me from reading whatever you write. What you told me about the activity there interested me deeply and the information that H. has become a changed man in Pondicherry. I hope you are keeping well and still singing. I often meet your pupils who sing to me and who always remind me of the beautiful *bhajans* you used to sing for me.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Golden Book of Dilip Kumar Roy, p. 122

401. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

ABARIA,
April 9, 1934

NARANDAS GANDHI
NEW PARA
RAJKOT

IF NOSE STILL BLEEDING GO BOMBAY CONSULT JIVARAJ MEHTA.

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8397. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 3-5-1934.

402. LETTER TO B. R. AMBEDKAR

AS AT PATNA,
April 9, 1934

DEAR DR. AMBEDKAR,

Pray excuse me for the delay in replying to your letter of 29-3-1934. It was not possible to reply earlier owing to incessant travelling.

Whilst I should fall in with your scheme if it was accepted by the provinces, I could not shoulder the burden of pressing the other provinces to reopen the Pact in respect of the number of seats allotted in their cases.

I have been trying to do what I can to placate Bengal, but so far without success. If the Harijan population in Bengal is as was believed at the time of the Pact they have nothing to complain of. If as a matter of fact it is much less than the figure on whose basis the number was fixed, I should think there would be no objection on your part to an amendment bringing the number to the figure required.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C. W. 7949. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

403. LETTER TO J. S. HOYLAND

April 9, 1934

DEAR HOYLAND,

I have been having your notes of affection with due regularity. These I do not acknowledge to save time and money. The postage is a considerable item. At the end of the month I find that it is more than enough to conduct a village school for Harijans or any others. It is enough to provide 1,000 meals for the famine-stricken areas of India.

I am glad you have come to terms with Allen & Unwin about the translations[1]. I hope you are not calling them my translations. They are your adaptations from my translations.

Agatha and Muriel passed many useful days with me. I expect

[1] Of the *Ashram Bhajanavali.* An adaptation by J. S. Hoyland was brought out by George Allen & Unwin in 1934 under the title *Songs from Prison.*

to meet them again.

My love to all those who join the silent prayer meetings.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 4511. Courtesy: Woodbrooke College, Birmingham and Mrs. Jessie Hoyland

404. LETTER TO PREMI JAIRAMDAS

BIHAR CENTRAL RELIEF COMMITTEE,
EXHIBITION ROAD,
PATNA,
[*April 9, 1934*][1]

MY DEAR PREMI,

What food is Father taking? He ought to take plenty of fruit fresh and dried and leafy vegetables plain-boiled and he will get rid of piles. How has he taken my new decision? Do you like it? The Sind tour will not come off before June. Hope Dr. Choithram is better. Hyderabad won't have more than a day, I fear. I go to Assam tomorrow and return on 24th to Patna.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI PREMIBEHN JAIRAMDAS
PREM BHAVAN
HYDERABAD
SIND

From the original: C.W. 9245. Courtesy: Jairamdas Doulatram

[1] From the postmark.

405. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

April 9, 1934

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

I read Dr. Jesudasan's letter only yesterday. He should certainly describe to American audiences the condition of Bihar and appeal for help. You will please send him the literature we have published.

From the Doctor's letter it is clear, I suppose, that he cannot subscribe to the 1st prayer[1] I showed you and that therefore he could not conscientiously bring up a Hindu boy under his charge as a Hindu. I wonder if you are reading *Harijan* regularly. I sent the two prayers to *Harijan* with comments for publication. I would like Dr. Jesudasan to deal with the note in *Harijan* not for publication but for my private information.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI KUMARAPPA
CENTRAL RELIEF CAMP
EXHIBITION ROAD
PATNA

From a photostat: G.N. 10104 and 10105

406. LETTER TO CHARU PROBHA SEN GUPTA

AS AT PATNA,
April 9, 1934

MY DEAR CHARU PROBHA,

Nonsense, you must not give way to despair like this. Sadhus will only put one interpretation on the *Gita.* It is an interpretation born of laziness of mind. You should read the 3rd chapter of the *Gita* again and again. There Krishna says, "I do not stop working for one single moment. If I did, the whole world would perish." He says again, "No one stops work for a moment, only everyone but the knowing one works helplessly." Let us work knowingly and voluntarily, not for self but for the whole of humanity and we shall surely see God face to face. Our humanity is India. We may not serve her so

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 6-4-1934

as to injure others and [then] it becomes service of God. We must learn to see God in such service. This is the yoga of the *Gita* and no other.

Don't you write doleful letters to me. Just begin the service that easily comes to you and you will soon expand and find joy.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 8704. Also C. W. 1490. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

407. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 9, 1934

CHI. NARANDAS,

Today is silence day. But by some chance we are required to spend two hours in a train. I am, therefore, writing this while waiting at a station.

I have sent you a wire regarding the bleeding from your nose. I hope you have acted upon it. The climate of Bombay is beneficial for such a condition. That of Rajkot, on the other hand, is hot and dry. Also the doctors in Bombay are better.

In view of my decision regarding civil disobedience, you must come and see me once. If you come, we can discuss plans for the future. I have many ideas, but they will require a long time to put in writing and even then I cannot explain them properly.

After I have come to some decision regarding all the arrangements to be made, I will write them down.

I hope you have been able to understand the necessity and propriety from a spiritual point of view, of the latest decision. If you have not been able to understand it, I shall have to explain it. As for myself, the decision has filled me with bliss.

A letter for Vijaya is enclosed. You will also find enclosed a copy of my programme, in case Chandrashankar has not already sent one.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8398. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

408. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

April 9, 1934

BHAISHRI BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. If you permit me, I intend to send your letter to Narbheram. If you permit, let me have Narbheram's address.

If you think Ratilal is mad, what value can be attached to any letter he may write? Either Prabhashankar as Champa's guardian or Champa herself should decide the matter.

After coming to know Ratilal, I had told Prabhashankar before the marriage that he should break off the engagement. I had even obtained Revashankarbhai's consent for this being done. But Bhai Prabhashankar and his sister and mother insisted on the marriage taking place. I consented to and helped in the money being deposited in Champa's name.

You seem to think that Maganlal is at fault. I don't. Maganlal agreed to the property being kept in the joint names of all. But how can the fact of the change effected by the brothers by agreement among themselves be cited as a ground for refusing to give the sisters the money set apart for them, unless they agree to it? If Maganlal pays by instalments, let the other two brothers also pay by instalments. Even if Chhaganlal refuses to pay, why should Champa, who is, and ought to be, eager to do justice, hesitate to do that to the sisters? And Champa means Prabhashankar. I feel most for Jayakunvar, who is reduced to a miserable state.

In case I tour Kathiawar for Harijan work, I shall be content with whatever Rajkot gives me.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5822. Also C.W. 3045. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

409. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

April 9, 1934

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

I received your letter. I have had a discussion with Bhulabhai. He will bear the burden. If good and dedicated men are available, I am sure it will be possible to achieve something. I have prepared a draft according to my lights. I can't think of any alternative. You must have seen the draft. You will have to take interest in this matter.

There was no option but to make this experiment. The clouds will now clear up. Had that resolution not been passed, the confusion would have continued. Even if the ship founders, the experiment will have served its purpose. But the ship is not likely to be wrecked, for the Congress will always have a Council party. If so, let them enter the Councils. I have given up even mental opposition to it. I have drawn whatever lesson I could from my opposition. 1 don't regret it. It was necessary at that time. Today such opposition seems foolish.

I hope you have approved of my decision regarding civil disobedience. You at any rate should not find it difficult to understand its significance. But let me know if you had any difficulty.

Please take care of your health and get well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The Assam tour starts tomorrow. If you write to the Patna address, the letter will reach me.

From Gujarati: C.W. 7536. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

410. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

PURNEA,
April 9, 1934

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I got your letter. Cling to your duty with unswerving faith without thinking of the fruit of your work.

I, too, could not understand the sentence which you have quoted from my letter[1] regarding Manibehn. Either a word has been left out by me, or you have not been able to decipher the sentence correctly. May be I scribbled something while dozing. It does happen sometimes that I am extremely tired and sleepy when writing letters. If you send me the letter and if the sentence can have any meaning, I will explain it. Since you have understood what you should do, the rest does not matter.

The change in the hours of going to bed and rising was unavoidable.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 368. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Bhagwanji P. Pandya", 15-3-1934.

411. LETTER TO DRAUPADI SHARMA

April 9, 1934

CHI. DRAUPADI[1],

Your coming to the Ashram is very much to my liking. The programme you have now prepared for learning things seems to be good. I hope that you will all maintain good health in Wardha. You must make an earnest effort to understand the Ashram life. Get acquainted with all the women in the Ashram and help them in whatever way you can. I have built many hopes on bringing you to the Ashram.

Do write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha,* between pp. 58-9.

412. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHARMA

April 9, 1934

BHAI SHARMA,

I have your two letters. How shall I write a long letter?

Where is the time for it?

Give the enclosed letter[2] to Draupadi Devi. The boy and the girl will receive true education from the self-control of the two of you. They will get enough education by living with you. It does not imply that they should not get such education as they can in the Ashram. But that should supplement your efforts.

You must treat the sick you find in the Ashram. I want to utilize your skill fully. Your work will increase as you gain the confidence of the people there.

You both have to learn all the processes of the charkha. My book on nature cure has been received at the Ashram. You may, if you want to, make use of any treatment prescribed therein.

It will be good to send for Krishna.

[1] Wife of Hiralal Sharma

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

Let us see how the events shape in August. If convenient I shall summon you to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha*, between pp. 58-9

413. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

April 9, 1934

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I had your letters but where was the time to reply? Now that you have reached the Doctor you should no longer be in much need of my letters. You must have seen my statement[1]. There is no question of your going to jail now. For the time being your staying in the Ashram seems best. Later we shall see.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 299

414. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, PURNEA

April 9, 1934

Mahatmaji replied[2] in suitable terms expressing heart-felt sympathy with the sufferers in their dire calamity. He said:

God alone can set things right.

To the Municipal Chairman he said that he had as much access to Government as the Central Committee and so the Municipality should approach the Government direct and assured that the Central Relief Committee would do all it can. As regards opening a branch of the Bihar Central Relief Committee he said that it was a matter which should be talked over with Babu Rajendra Prasad and he would certainly do the needful. The subsidence of land was a matter of great danger. The situation must be accurately ascertained and the Government was in the best position to do so with the aid of experts.

You should be forewarned against the dangers of flood and all preparations must be made beforehand to meet the situation in Purnea

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 2-4-1934.

[2] To the address of welcome presented to him.

as elsewhere in other districts. The next rains are sure to bring about a terrible situation and it is the duty of the Government, the Central Relief Committee and the people to make adequate provision to save people from disaster. As to helping people in the present distress, Government and the Central Relief Committee will do all they can but it will not be much. People themselves should gird up their loins and, with faith in God, should work on and fight the calamity that has befallen them. They are sure to succeed. Calamities are a warning against prevalence of sinfulness and people have to purge themselves of their sins, individual and social. This occasion has been furnished for scrutiny of our sins and not for finding fault with others. Untouchability must go.

The Searchlight, 13-4-1934

415. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

[On or before *April 10, 1934*][1]

Besides Assam I have to visit Chotanagpore, Orissa, the United Provinces, the Punjab, Sind, Rajputana, Maharashtra, Bombay and Gujarat apart from Bengal and all these are to be visited by the end of July next.

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-4-1934

416. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

ON WAY TO ASSAM,
April 10, 1934

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Two letters from you are lying before me. I have read them again. I am writing this in a train which is taking me to Assam. The train has halted at Parvatipur station. The people are shouting outside. (Here I became busy with the collection) My carriage is the last and that makes it difficult to write. Moreover, it has started raining.

You must have read in the papers that you need not go to jail just now. Nor need Rama. This decision I have taken after much thinking and anguish of mind. But I have no doubt that the decision is right and was absolutely necessary. There is bound to be criticism, and even harsh criticism. Let there be. It is a big question now what you,

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's tour of Assam; *vide* the following item.

Rama and the other inmates of the Ashram should do. I have asked Narandas to come over. We can meet in Orissa. Alternatively, I am also trying to go to Bombay. It would be good if you also come at that time. Or you may write and let me have your views from there. In any case we don't wish to build another Ashram along the same lines as the old one. The struggle is going on still. It has not stopped merely because I am the only one left to carry it on. Nor has it slackened. It has assumed a new and purer form. If you read my statement, everything will be as clear to you as daylight.

For Rama and Vimu I still think that Wardha is the best place. But we should not force them to go there. It is best that they follow their own inclination.

I hope you have regained strength now. There are many other things I can write about, but how can I spare time to do so? Swami writes to you. I hope he gives you plenty of news. Rajendrababu has requisitioned Pyarelal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5518

417. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, RUPSI[1]

April 11, 1934

I am glad to be again in Assam after a very long period. This time my mission is in connection with the Harijan movement. Untouchability is a great blot on Hinduism, and if we do not efface it in time, we shall ourselves be effaced from the face of the earth. I congratulate you for your purse and address, for both are a promise of your determination to root out untouchability in your daily lives. It is said that there is no considerable untouchability in Assam and Bengal. But I do not think that statement squares with facts. We are guilty of untouchability as soon as we make distinctions between man and man and have grades of high and low. Surely there are distinctions enough in Assam. And those against whom distinctions are drawn feel them just as keenly as any in the other parts of India. Then you look down upon Doms, Bhangis and Chamars, who come here from other provinces, as lowest among the low. And it is a common thing for

[1] Extracted from Valji Desai's "Weekly Letter"

almost all castes to consider themselves superior to some other castes and to treat Mussalmans, Christians and others as untouchables in some way or other. Removal of untouchability implies that we shall get rid of all this high-and-lowness and accord equal treatment to all human beings as children of one and the same God, and thus have a real brotherhood of man. I have no hesitation in saying that there is no warrant in our Shastras for the untouchability that I have described to you and that we are practising more or less all over India. I ask your blessings and co-operation in this one of the noblest of all causes.

Harijan, 27-4-1934

418. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, RANGIYA[1]

April 12, 1934

I should not as a rule have liked to speak after the morning prayer. But as the mission that has brought me to Assam is for me of a deeply religious character, I have no hesitation in combining the meeting with the prayer. But before I speak on the mission, I should like to ask you all who have gathered here in such large numbers to take to the practice of rising early in the morning and commencing the day with prayer and finishing the day with prayer before retiring. Do it with the members of your family, if you cannot get your neighbours to join, and if you cannot get the members of your family to do so, do it alone. If you will cultivate the practice, you will find for yourselves what a peace giving thing a prayer from the heart is, and you will find that it will steady you. And a day begun under such happy auspices will invariably end well. One of the verses we sang this morning paraphrased means this: "O God, I desire no earthly riches, nor heaven, not even salvation. I desire the alleviation of the sufferings of all Thy creatures." This is not a verse of modern coinage. It is an ancient orthodox prayer. Do you think that you can truthfully utter that prayer from day to day and yet treat crores of fellow-beings as untouchables, whose very life is crushed out of them and who are treated as less than domestic cattle? You have, therefore, to choose between untouchability and the prayer which is enjoined upon every good Hindu. I suggest that you choose the prayer and banish

[1] Extracted from Valji Desai's "Weekly Letter". Gandhiji passed Rangiya in the morning on his way from Barpeta to Tejpur.

untouchability from your hearts. Regard untouchability as a heinous sin. But whilst it is sinful to regard a single human being as an untouchable, I can introduce you to some untouchables whom you have to shun at any cost, and these are the evil thoughts which make us do all sorts of evil things from day to day. They need to be banished. And then in Assam, more than in any other part of India, you have the opium curse, a true untouchable. The opium habit dulls the intellect and promotes laziness. I do not believe that it does any good whatever. If, therefore, you will take my advice, I would ask you every day to pray that God may give you strength to remove the untouchability of human beings from your breasts and give you the wisdom to regard every evil thought as an untouchable and to give you strength to exorcize it. If you are an opium addict, ask God's help to give up the habit.

Harijan, 27-4-1934

419. NOTES

LET RECEPTION COMMITTEES BEWARE

In pursuance of a circular letter addressed by Thakkar Bapa to the Provincial Harijan Sevak Sanghs, we have been receiving memoranda of expenses from the respective places visited by me during the Harijan tour in connection with the reception given to me in each place. In a memorandum from Khandwa, where a purse of over RS. 3,000 was presented, I find nearly Rs. 40 shown as the charges for printing the address presented to me and a certain sum for dresses for volunteers. There are other items about which I say nothing, although they appear to me extravagant. But to think that the expenses of the addresses, uniform for volunteers and the like should be debited against the purse makes the reception not only farcical but demoralizing. If a reception has to be given, money for printed or illuminated addresses should be collected separately as such, and that after the purse has been collected. A costly reception should never mar a Harijan tour. It is wholly unnecessary. Some kind of a demonstration, I suppose, is inevitable and necessary. But when it is spontaneous, it ought not to cost a single pice, or if it must, every pice should be separately collected and in such a manner that it in no way affects the collection for the purse. Caskets are unbecoming, addresses are unnecessary. A brief report on their Harijan activities should take

the place of the addresses and it should be written in a clear hand-writing and handed to me to enable me to deal with it. This mention of the Khandwa expenses is not intended to cast any reflection upon the Reception Committee. Probably many of the Committees have done what the Khandwa Committee has done. They have evidently not realized the impropriety of making the Harijan purse pay for addresses and caskets presented to one who claims to be a true servant of Harijans.

ALL ABOUT A LOST CHAIN

The reader will appreciate the following account of the discovery of a lost chain, which ultimately came to the Harijan cause, and that through the honesty of a Harijan. Sjt. R. M. Kumaraswami of Palla-dam, Tamil Nad, writes:

REVERED MAHATMAJI,

On your way to Coimbatore from Tirupur during your recent visit, a purse of Rs. 450 was given at Palladam. There my sister's daughter aged four wanted to give her gold chain to you. But my aunt did not like to give the chain. So she took it and kept it with her. When you arrived at Palladam, somehow my aunt lost the chain in the crowd. I told her that the loss was a fine for her refusing the child's wish.

After two weeks we got the clue about the chain. A Harijan boy about 10 years old was fortunate enough to get that lost chain. He was from a neighbouring village. After a fortnight, when we approached the boy's father who was in possession of the chain, he at first denied any knowledge of it. He was under a false fear of his being taken to task. When I explained to him what the object of your tour was and also that there was absolutely nothing wrong in possessing lost property found by his son, he gladly took us into his confidence and willingly returned the chain. I gave him Rs. 25 as a present, which he accepted with gratitude, and he has promised to give up his evil habit of drinking. He is considered to be one of the sincere and trustworthy men among the Harijans here.

All the members of my family wish to send you this chain according to the child's wish. I also wish, if you would kindly permit, to have the proceeds of the chain earmarked for Harijan work at Palladam. I will consider this a good beginning for doing Harijan uplift work in these parts.

I have assured my correspondent that the proceeds of the chain will be earmarked as he wishes.[1] He is, of course, wrong in thinking that lost property belongs to the finder. It belongs to the state, if the owner cannot be traced. I congratulate the Harijan who restored the chain to the owner, the four-year-old girl for her determination and her relatives on their ultimately respecting the little donor's wish. Let her, however, know that she is not the first girl of her age to have parted with her chain for the Harijan cause.

THEIR PLIGHT

Sjt. P. Majmudar writes:

> For want of work, or more truly speaking, because of untouchability, which debars them from avenues of employment open to the rest, Harijans were reported to be living on the undigested grains picked out from droppings of cattle. I had the pain of recently witnessing such a disgusting scene in Gujarat. I was visiting a village in Bhal district. In the Bhangi quarter, I saw everywhere cattle dung spread for drying. On enquiry into the cause of this, the Harijans residing in the quarters told me that they had so little employment that they had to maintain themselves on grains picked out from cattle dung collected by them. After the dung was dried, they separated the undigested, halfchewed grains from the dung, washed them, dried them and ground them into powder which they eat in the form of chapatis.

I have not seen nor heard of such a practice amongst *savarna* Hindus anywhere. It is impossible to question the evidence given by Sjt. P. Majmudar of what he has seen through his own eyes. Let caste Hindus understand what untouchability is doing to a portion of Hindu humanity.

Harijan, 13-4-1934

[1] This letter is not traceable.

420. A REFORMER'S DIFFICULTY

A correspondent writes:

> In the course of your drive against untouchability you make some remarks which seem to be inconsistent with your previous writings in the columns of *Young India*. For instance, you wrote some years ago that the rule about restraint of inter-dining was intended for the evolution of the soul but was no part of varnadharma. Now, if you grant the necessity or the advisability of restraint upon inter-dining for the evolution of the soul, how can you say, as you have now a days been saying, that for anyone to object to dine with an 'untouchable' on the ground of untouchability is a sin? I agree with you that restraint upon inter-dining is no part of varnadharma; but I do not understand why inter-dining retards the evolution of the soul.

Here there is a double confusion. In the first instance, restraint upon inter-dining on the ground of untouchability is wholly different from the restraint based on the ground of the evolution of the soul. The first restraint excludes a whole class whose very existence is challenged, the second excludes nobody on the ground of his birth in a particular class, but it may exclude those individuals who are addicted to particular habits. Thus, restraint on the ground of untouchability will persist without reference to the person's habits, while that on the ground of evolution of the soul will abate immediately the person excluded shedshis objectionable habits. There is, therefore, no inconsistency between the *Young India* writing referred to and my present position. Secondly, even if my opinion as expressed in *Young India* is indefensible, the correspondent's doubt is solved by my showing, as I have shown, that my condemnation of objection to inter-dining on the ground of untouchability has nothing to do with the restraint referred to in *Young India*, of which I have approved.

The correspondent further asks how I reconcile my attitude with the peremptory restrictions laid down in Vaishnavite literature. The question is pertinent. I must, however, confess my inability to reconcile the two positions. Though I take pride in belonging to the Vaishn-avite faith, my pride does not require my adherence to all the ceremonial observances prescribed in Vaishnavite literature. I cling to the Vaishnavite faith because it inculcates universal love and, therefore, brotherhood; it lays the greatest emphasis on meticulous observance of truth and non-violence and insists on unselfish devotion

to God. In Hindu literature, religious and secular, the unadulterated condemna-tion of narrowness, intolerance and bigotry by Vaishnavite saints and other writers is not to be beaten by any other writing. I need not be disturbed, therefore, by ceremonial observances which are manifestly contrary to the spirit of Vaishnavism.

The correspondent concludes:

> We cannot resolve our doubts ourselves. We yield to your better judgment. But when we follow your teaching, we run the risk of being boycotted even by those who are near and dear to us. What is to be done under such circumstances?

This is a difficult question to answer and can only be determined by each one according to his or her individual ability to suffer. Those who feel that untouchability is an evil cannot practise it in any shape or form. In a matter of such grave importance, I should expect every reformer to have the courage of his or her convictions and the ability to brave all the social persecution that they may have to suffer. Such has been the lot of reformers all the world over.

Harijan, 13-4-1934

421.THE WRONG WAY

A friend who is interested in the Harijan cause sends me a collection of clippings from sanatanist writings which attribute to me all kinds of opinions and some of which even contain quotations from my writings mutilated in order to prejudice the masses against me. He asks me to reply to this indictment. It is not new to me. Some of the counts in it I have answered from time to time. Those who are prejudiced will not listen to any defence I may offer. Those who are friendly are unaffected by charges, especially when they are wild as those in question undoubtedly are. But, between the critics who will not be convinced and supporters who will not be seduced, there is always a middle class that would be swayed one way or the other. The friend who has sent me the clippings probably belongs to that middle class. His letter, therefore, is such as to demand a reply in these columns. Some of the clippings are as follows:

> 1. “The Mahabharata is a mass of rubbish from beginning to end.”
>
> 2. “I do not regard Shri Krishna as an ‘avatar’ (incarnation) but as an ordinary man.”
>
> 3. “I do not believe in morals. I am a breaker of idols.”

4. "The Dharma of Hindus is devilish, the Shastras are godless and rishis and munis are devils."

The inverted commas are in the original sanatanist writings. There is no reference to *Young India* or *Navajivan* writings at the end of any of the quotations. I have not the files of *Young India* or *Navajivan* with me. I have, therefore, to rely upon memory.

What I have said of the *Mahabharata* before and what I believe of it today is that it is like a rich diamond mine from which the deeper you dig the more diamonds you find.

What I have said of Krishna and what I believe of him today is that he is one of the many avatars.

I have never said that Hindu temples are brothels, but I have said and repeat now that some of them are like brothels. I could never say 'I do not believe in morals', for with me religion and morality are convertible terms, as can be evidenced by all my writings.

I am, indeed, a breaker of idols, if I am also a worshipper of them. I do not bow my head to false gods.

Quotation 4 is a blasphemy I am incapable of uttering. If I had believed the dharma of the Hindus to be devilish, I should have said good-bye to it long ago.

Sanatana Dharma can gain nothing by distortions or reckless writing in the pages of publications brought out by those who call themselves sanatanists.

Harijan, 13-4-1934

422. SOME AMENDMENTS[1]

The following three amendments have been received from the head office of the Harijan Sevak Sangh.

I

A rider clause may be added to Rule (5), para 2:—To fulfil this desire, the 25% quota and 50% quota of the principal cities appropriated by the Central Board will also be devoted to direct welfare work only. A sum of Rs. 25,000 now donated by Mr. Birla shall be earmarked for meeting the establishment and travelling charges of the Central Board and office. The

[1] For the text of the Draft Rules to which these are amendments, *vide* "Opinion Invited",2-3-1934.

Central Board will make special efforts to take separate collections for paying its share of administrative and propaganda expenses incurred by Provincial Boards now and hereafter.[1]

II

The following be substituted for Rule (9): (9) In view of the difficulty of raising additional funds in the provinces soon after the tour, the Provincial Secretary, as also District Secretaries, should cease to be officemen, but should become necessary parts of the welfare schemes. The charges of the provincial staff needed for supervising schemes in the districts will thus be met from the 75% quota and taken from the districts in proportion to their budgets. This rule, however, will operate only for one year from the date when new financial relations arising out of the Purse Fund are established.

III

The following be added as Rule (10):

Welfare schemes must be submitted by Provincial Boards within two months after the expiry of the tour in their respective provinces. Failing this, the grants under the old arrangement will be stopped. Grants under the new arrangement will be paid only after the welfare scheme submitted by the province is approved of by the Central Board.

These amendments should be carefully considered by all concerned, especially Provincial Boards, and their comments sent to the head office without delay. It will be observed that the rider to Rule (5), para 2, carried out to greater perfection the original intention that donations received for Harijan service should be as far as possible devoted solely to welfare work. And this object can be easily fulfilled, if Provincial Boards will heartily co-operate and realize that the most expeditious way of driving out untouchability is to be prepared for, and render, silent, selfless service to Harijans. Such work serves a threefold purpose. Requiring, as it does, purity among the workers, it constitutes the best propaganda amongst the sanatanists. No amount of intellectual argument will ever convince those in whom a false religious belief is deeply seated. But the purity and gentleness of the reformer will undoubtedly do so. Secondly, selfless work amongst Harijans will not only enable the reformers to overcome some, if not all, of the bad customs and habits that are to be seen among them but

[1] The reference is to the special desire of Gandhiji that not a single rupee out of the Purse Fund should be spent on administration and propaganda but that it should be utilized for the execution of schemes for Harijan welfare work.

will also strengthen their faith in Hinduism, which they have hitherto known only as a means of their degradation. Thirdly, the high standard of character required of those who render personal service to Harijans cannot but be a matter of inward joy to the workers.

The second and third amendments do not deserve any comment, except this—that the third has evidently been found necessary because of the negligence on the part of Boards of the Provinces in sending up their schemes of constructive work. I am fully aware that, strange as it may seem, to produce a good constructive scheme and equally good workers who would faithfully carry it out is far more difficult than to collect funds.

Harijan, 13-4-1934

423. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

April 13, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Today is a day of fasting; we are on the deck of a ship sailing from Tezpur to Gauhati. On one side of me is Thakkar Bapa, on the other is Om and all around are sitting the rest of the party. In front is the lavatory. It is not very dirty. The rains have already set in here. There was a heavy downpour yesterday and so it is stuffy today. Deck journey, therefore, is bearable. It is nine in the morning now. We shall reach Gauhati at about twelve. Mirabehn will have arrived there. She had taken ill and so we had left her behind in Patna. My health is good. I allow myself sufficient rest. I don't over strain the body. If one were to listen to all the advice that doctors give, one would never leave one's bed.

In the dispute between the workers and the mill-owners in Ahmedabad, in my view the latter are more at fault. They themselves admit this. The part which Kasturbhai[1] has played this time does him no credit. The mill-owners' resolution was so utterly absurd that I thought I must write something. I wrote to Kasturbhai and remonstrated with him gently. The resolution was nothing but a threat. But there was a risk of the system [of arbitration] built up through twleve years' labour breaking down. My letter had an effect. It may be said, rather, that differences arose among the mill-owners themselves.

[1] Mill-owners of Ahmedabad

Chimanbhai[1] and Sakarlal[2], therefore, came to see me. Kastur-bhai did not come as he was preparing to go to Geneva. I told them that wages could not be reduced without evidence to justify such a step; but that, if they were ready to link wages to profits and fix minimum wages, I would agree to whatever relief such an arrangement might give them. They liked this suggestion but told me that it would be difficult to persuade other mill-owners to implement it. That is true, of course. I will see now what can be done.

You must have read about my decision. I am eager to know your view. I have assumed that you will understand without explanation both decisions of mine. I have no doubt at all that both are correct. There will be no danger to satyagraha now, and the party favouring Council-entry will no longer be forced to remain inactive. Their inactivity was painful to them. Let them go ahead. If they maintain purity in their methods of work, they can do some useful work even in the legislature.

Devdas is taking rest in Delhi. Lakshmi is in the last stages of her pregnancy. Raja is in Delhi and will remain there till Lakshmi's delivery at any rate.

The senior leaders will certainly come and see me again. I am surprised to learn that you do not get *Harijan*. I am inquiring how this happens.

The trouble in your nostrils is certainly difficult to treat. But it must be cured though I don't know what should be done to cure it. Ultimately you yourself will have to think about it, for I have seen that in such cases even doctors feel helpless. Improvement takes place only if the patient himself discovers some method. I believe that *pranayama* and some of the *asanas* are bound to have an effect. Since in *pranayama* one inhales twice as much oxygen as in normal breathing, or even more, I believe that the extra oxygen which the affected part will get is bound to have an effect. If you try to do the whole process of *pranayama* and observe the effect, you will also realize that it has an intimate connection with the functioning of the nostrils. Hence *pranayama* must have some effect, good or bad, on them. But there is no possibility of a bad effect and so it can only be good. *Pranayama* must be done in a place where the air is pure. It would be desirable,

[1] Mill-owners of Ahmedabad
[2] *ibid*

therefore, to do it in an open plot of ground. I have never asked you where you sleep. But I assume that the doors of your room are kept open.

Dahyabhai had sent me Mani's letter. It was a brave one, though also painful. I have met Aminbhai. How long will he be there?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 91-3

424. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, GAUHATI[1]

April 13, 1934

Gandhiji said he could not congratulate Gauhati Municipality on the condition of the Harijan quarters, which were unfit for human habitation. It was no use saying that Harijans were dirty people. It was up to the Municipality to educate them out of their dirty habits. It was all very well for them to state that the famous Kamakhya temple as well as several others had been flung open to Harijans. But they must not rest content until they had broken down the barrier which now divides Harijans from the rest of the community and brought the former in a line with the latter. It was with this spiritual aim in view that at the age of 64, when he might well claim to rest from his labours, he was wandering from place to place in order to deliver his message. It was impossible for him to be at peace so long as the monster of untouchability prevailed in our holy land.

Harijan, 27-4-1934

425. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

GAUHATI,
April 14, 1934

NARANDAS GANDHI
NEW PARA
RAJKOT

WIRE RECEIVED. IF POSSIBLE COME RANCHI THIRTIETH.

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8399. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Extracted from Valji Desai's "Weekly Letter"

426. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

April 14, 1934

DEAR SATISBABU,

Your letter.

You will on no account overdo things and overtax your energy. I have the evil habit of putting burdens on willing shoulders which they are often ill able to bear. I expect truth from you and truth demands that you give me notice when I expect too much from you.

You are wrong in thinking that my decision on C. D. is in any way a reflection on any single one of you. If it is a reflection it is on me. But I need not plead guilty. I am but a coseeker with you all—*primus inter pares.* We have lost nothing by the past doings. We would have lost, if I had not had the courage to halt when I saw the clear necessity for it. There was no warrant for a fast. It would have been simple coercion if I had gone for it.

The Mayoral election is an indication. We must go through the fire. The Council-entry decision is sound. We must have a parliamentary party of Congressmen and perhaps part of the Congress machinery when the latter can function legally. Now that Congressmen will act as councilwallas, things will presently shape themselves. We must mount to truth through mistakes.

I shall watch your Bengal programme.

Hemprabha has written to me. No time to write to her separately. She will feel her way and do about khadi what she feels after weighing what I have said. No heroic measure is necessary. And we shall discuss the thing more fully when we meet.

I had Arun's note. I must not write to him separately. He must build up a strong body.

Love to you all.

From a copy: C.W. 7950b. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

427. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

GAUHATI,
April 14, 1934

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I got up this morning at 12.15 in order to overtake arrears.

You have been ever in my mind. I hope you will be permitted to receive this letter. I would like a line from you to tell me how you are keeping and what you are doing.

You must have seen my two decisions. That they are almost simultaneous is a mere coincidence. The revival of the Swarajya Party is a right step. There is no doubt that we have in the Congress a body of men who believe in Council-entry and who will do nothing else if they cannot have that programme. Their ambition must be satisfied. The other decision about confining C. R. to myself so far as the goal is concerned is much the most important. It was inevitable. Having arrived at it, I can see the rightness of the decision for a thousand reasons. I have given the precipitating cause. But the decision was slowly coming to me. I do hope that you have not been upset by it. You were before my mind's eye the whole time the decision was taking shape. I concluded that, though it might produce a momentary shock, you would ultimately see the truth of it and be glad. I wonder!

We all often talk about you. We are a large party. I was with Mother and the members of the family for nearly two hours when I passed through Allahabad.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1934. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also C.W. 7950. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] He was in Alipore Central Jail at this time.

428. LETTER TO SIR GEORGE SCHUSTER[1]

AS AT PATNA,
April 14, 1934

DEAR SIR GEORGE SCHUSTER,

I thank you for your letter of 6th April just received during my Harijan tour in Assam.

I am glad to learn that by reason of the re-starting of civil disobedience no change was made in the Government decision of 1931 about salt. Am I free to advise workers accordingly? Will you kindly let me know in which areas it was found necessary to withdraw the concession and how the concession can be restored?[2]

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 9707. Courtesy: Andhra Pradesh Government. Also *Harijan*, 30-11-1934

429. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

April 14, 1934

MY DEAR C. R.,

I have many things to write but Father Time is a cruel parent. Here is a copy of correspondence between Sir George Schuster and me.

I do not see how the Swarajists are to be bound to our programme. We shall have to suggest these things. Our democracy will follow the ways of all the other democracies that are nurtured on Parliament traditions. A parliamentary party is as inevitable as a khaddar party or prohibition party. All parliamentarians won't be of the same hue in the Congress. It may be, indeed it is certain, there will be Congressmen fighting Congressmen on different policies. We shall have to do our part in shaping the policy of Congress parliamentarians.

This is written in the midst of disturbances.

Love.

From a copy: C.W. 7950a. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Sir George Schuster", 28-3-1934

[2] Schuster, writing on April 22, enclosed a list of such areas, saying at the same time that villagers concerned could make applications for the restoration of the concession.

430. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHARMA

April 14, 1934

BHAI SHARMA,

I have your letter. I shall of course keep writing to Amtussalaam. But I am now relieved of anxiety for her. Prescribe for her the treatment you think best. The whole problem will be solved if she is cured.

Keep writing to me as to how you are getting on.

I did write a long letter to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

As regards diet Kuhne, Juste, Kellogg and Carrington are good but none of them is perfect. The conclusion I have arrived at is this:

(1) Juicy fruit is the most faultless diet.

(2) Milk products are most essential for energy. Fresh, unboiled milk is best.

(3) Too many articles of food should not be eaten in a day. Each article should be eaten separately.

(4) Among the cereals wheat is good.

(5) Rice is unnecessary.

(6) Pulses are unnecessary.

This much in brief.

BAPU

From the facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuke Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha*, between pp. 60-1

431. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

GAUHATI,
April 14, 1934

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I have your letters. Now that Dr. Sharma is with you I am not worried on your account. No one among you is required now to court imprisonment. Once you have completely recovered we shall consider

what course to follow. You must do what the Doctor says.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The Doctor's daughter should be called to the Ashram.

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 301

432. WHY ONLY BIHAR?

A student writes.[1]

A science student has no right to disbelieve what is beyond his comprehension. A science student should be humble. Instead of brushing aside whatever he hears, he must give it some thought. There are very few things in this world which we are able to understand. Many things are beyond our understanding. That is exactly why the learned become more humble as they acquire more knowledge, for the knowledge of the learned man consists in realizing his immense ignorance. The deeper he goes, the more he realizes that he knows nothing. Moreover, most of what he knows is just surmise. I have no intention of running down science by writing this. Though infinitesimal, the knowledge we acquire has its uses. But compared to what remains to be acquired, what is already acquired is less than a drop in the ocean.

All life in this world originates from the same root. Hence all are fundamentally one. These include all things from vegetable life to human life. For one who understands, the misery of one living creature is the misery of all, and the happiness of one is the happiness of all. Hence it is sacrifice that has always contained and still contains true happiness. We see this rule working in a family. Everyone is unhappy if the father is unhappy. And everyone is affected by his sinful ways. Hence, if this student accepts the oneness of all living creatures, everyone would be included in the punishment of Bihar. Those who have not felt the earthquake have not remained untouched. If they do not directly experience, they should be considered ignorant to that extent. So, the science student would probably agree that there

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent, a science student, could not accept Gandhiji's view that untouchability was one of the causes of the Bihar earthquake.

is not much sense in asking: "Why only Bihar?" Why only Bihar and no other province? Who are we to put this question to God? His ways are inscrutable. Hence, where reason cannot function, it is faith that works.

We can prove with the help of several illustrations that physical events are related to things spiritual. Physical things originate from the same source of energy as spiritual, and so there is no impassable gulf between physical and spiritual things. Rain is a physical phenomenon; it is no doubt related to human happiness and unhappiness; if so, how could it fail to be related to his good and bad deeds? We know of no period in world history when countless people have not related events like earthquakes to sinful deeds of man. Even today, religious-minded people everywhere believe in such a relationship.

It can never be known for which sins of ours such calamities overtake us. The golden rule is for each one of us to regard them as punishment for one's individual and social sins. It is pride and ignorance if one says, 'This happened because of your sins'; but it is humility, it is wisdom, if one says, 'It happened because of my sins.' I have never tried to convince those who do not consider untouchability a sin that the earthquake is the result[1] of it. They may well believe that it is the result of my sin. Imperfect man can never finally determine what is right and what is wrong in such matters. My job is over if I could convince the reader that the earthquake is the result of our sins. Then the people who regard untouchability as a great sin are bound to connect it with the earthquake and endeavour to expiate and wipe out the blot as soon as possible.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 15-4-1934

433. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, GOLAGHAT[2]

April 15, 1934

Gandhiji reiterated the conditions of Harijan service. He said what he particularly wanted of them was a concise and business-like report of Harijan service; addresses were unnecessary, and no expense should be incurred on that account. And if they must present an address, it should be written in a fine hand on good paper and given to him along with a translation into Hindi or English. If it was printed, the

[1] The original has: "that the earthquake is the cause of the sin".

[2] Extracted from Valji Desai's "Weekly Letter"

printing charges should be privately met and, in any case, should not be charged against the Harijan purse. To recover printing charges from the purse would be nothing short of theft or misappropriation. Conveyance and feeding charges, too, must not be deducted from the purse; if no one came forward to bear the cost of feeding him and his party, he would indent upon friends for it but never touch the Harijan funds. If it was necessary to make some propaganda through hand-bills, etc., workers should not spend upon it more than five per cent of the total collections. The collections should be handed over intact and bills presented to the General Secretary for the expenditure incurred, which should not go beyond the limit of five per cent. He was touring not to have receptions, but to do business on behalf of Harijans, to wake up the people, talk with workers and collect as much money as he could.

Harijan, 4-5-1934

434. LETTER TO SRI PRAKASA

April 16, 1934

MY DEAR SRI PRAKASA,

In coming to the decision, I have not judged a single follower or co-worker. I have judged myself, if I have judged at all. I am freer for the decision. It will do us all good if I remain true to myself. Satyagraha is a unique weapon. You have therefore no need to reproach yourself. But I do want you to be found ready when the time comes.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI SRI PRAKASA
SEVASHRAMA,
BENARES CANTT.

Sri Prakasa Papers, File No. G-2. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also C.W. 7951. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

435. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

April 16, 1934

CHI. AMALA,

I have your letter. Mira has been keeping you in touch with things concerning me.

You may take the vows, if you feel the confidence. Your things will be disposed of. Why do you think I doubt you or that you are less than Mira? Mira has come in for rebukes and reproaches to which

you are an utter stranger. But that is nothing. You should simply lose yourself in your work and you will find me truly.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

436. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

April 16, 1934

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letters.

The amount for the earthquake relief must have been sent to Bihar.

I understand about Sorabji, and also about Bhawani Dayal. Solve your problems with patience and a detached mind. Sorabji will see reason some day. I don't understand about Kunvar Maharaj. But you must be guided by your own impression. I do not know him at all. We must take care that no one is attacked personally. Nothing should be done in anger.

You must have learnt about my decision from the cable. That will lighten your burden. But it means that I expect more from you now. Both of you must be ready when the tide comes again. After my death, it is only the handful of workers like you who will have to shoulder the burden.

Ba should now be released in about a month. Her letter is enclosed. The time for the two, Lakshmi's and Nimu's, deliveries is approaching.

I stop here as I am pressed for time. I hope you receive my letters regularly. I tell others also that they should write to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4818

437. LETTER TO SHANTILAL J. MEHTA

April 16, 1934

CHI. SHANTI,

I have received your letter, the *hundi* and Rs.15. I am using all the amounts exclusively for Bihar.

Inform Mohanlal and Umiashankar.

If you live worthily in every way, your aspirations are bound to be fulfilled.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII

438. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

JORHAT,
April 16, 1934

BHAI MUNSHI,

I have your letter. It has helped me. Your criticism of the definition is correct. You have shown how the certificates which I have been receiving for the draft are superficial. At present I am working in such a hurry that I get no time for second thoughts. The mistake which you have discovered should have been evident to me. I am returning the draft to you so that it may help you in further scrutiny, and I am also sending a copy of the revised draft. If you notice any mistake in that too, do point it out.

If Lilavati can devote herself blindly to small industries without thinking about other things, the venture may succeed, otherwise they will be going round and round like the bullock at the oilpress. The only difference will be that there is an observant oilman following the blind bullock and so some oil is extracted. But in this case the oil-press of swadeshi will go on working and there will be no result at the end.

Mill-cloth, sugar mills, etc., are excluded from my definition, and khadi, jaggery, etc., are protected. We can, and should, manage only these. It is not a small field. Small industries would be crushed if mixed up with big ones. Some change in the definition occurred to me even as I was writing this. I have made it by adding an adjective, intended to exclude intoxicating substances. I do not know whether or not you smoke. My son Harilal does. One day when the matter came up for discussion, he said: "I smoke Madras cheroots, not foreign cigars." In spite of his generous encouragement, the Madras cheroot would be excluded from my definition. The cheroot will find its way out, as today it is doing.

I too entertain the fear which you do regarding Council-entry. I have other fears too. But I think that the thing has come to stay. The Congress will always have in it a party favouring it. I have come to

believe that it would be impossible and improper to ignore it. I, therefore, have made up my mind to give all possible help in strengthening it. But this will not go well with civil disobedience. From prison, I can give little direct help. The strength which it may receive from the fact of my imprisonment itself will be another matter. My hopes are pinned on you and Bhulabhai. I do not know who else might go. I don't feel inclined to press anybody. Hence, Rajagopalachari, Rajendrababu, Jairamdas, etc., will probably stay out. I have not discussed the subject with anyone. As a result of my decision regarding civil disobedience, they are free for the time being to do as they like. Possibly Jawaharlal also may be tempted. If firm-minded, capable, selfless and devoted workers join, Council-entry may do some good. But most of such people would not be interested in the goings-on of legislatures. The democracy of my conception is a different thing altogether. It can be moulded outside, not inside the legislatures. The latter will take the right shape when such democracy has come into existence outside them. Today everywhere democracy waits on legislatures and nothing is done. I want to have legislatures that will follow the wishes of the people. I do not see at present the right atmosphere for such legislatures. I think that it is being created. Civil disobedience has succeeded in no small measure. I do not regret a single step taken in connection with it. Every step has been taken at the right time for it is my firm conviction that it was not I that took the decision every time but that it was *Satyanarayana*[1] who prompted my decisions. I let myself be led by Him.

Council-entry will remain a permanent feature of the Congress like civil disobedience and constructive work. It will not receive step-motherly treatment. But I do not know just now how far I shall be able to interest myself in it. Constructive work has already become part of civil disobedience. I can see my way clearly in that sphere. But it is the love of friends and circumstances that has dragged me into the Council-entry programme. I regard myself qualified for the first two. Not for this. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

My address is still Patna.

From Gujarati: C.W. 7537. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

[1] God in the form of Truth

439. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI N. PATEL

JORHAT (ASSAM),
April 16, 1934

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

I have just received your letter. There is nothing to say about the expenditure once we accept the necessity of your meeting Lalita, Balbhadra and Nathabhai. You are the sole judge of that necessity. The decisions of others in matters that concern us should be rejected if they do not appeal to our hearts, though they may to our reason. Chimanlal's criticism should be considered, but you need not be in the least upset by it. We should not do anything which may seem blameworthy to us. But how can we take into account if it seems so to others? This is indeed one of the meanings of the passage, "Better is death in the discharge of one's duty."[1] What appeals to oneself is one's dharma.

If you have some time, write a letter to Chimanlal to placate him or to humour him. Don't be shocked by the verb 'humour'.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9002

440. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[2]

JORHAT,
April 16, 1934

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I never find time to write at length, whether to you or anyone else. Even now I am scribbling this important letter before it is time for the morning prayer. It being my silence-day, I have got to write myself. Enclosed is a copy of Ceresole's[3] letter. One of the most ardently devoted men of service in Europe, he is an accomplished engineer. Find out the name of his steamer and meet him. Send him

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 35

[2] This letter carrying only the second paragraph appears in "Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", 16-4-1934.

[3] Pierre ceresole, a Swiss engineer, who had come to India in connection with the Bihar earthquake relief work

straight to me at Patna. He can meet me at Ranchi. He can spend a few hours there with Bhulabhai or Jalbhai. He is coming for relief work in Bihar. A letter for him is enclosed. Read it.

You seem to have understood most of the implications. I see that my decision has taken the load off the heads of many. Were it not for that decision, they would have gone crazy, that is, broken down completely. Blind faith would not have helped them in the least. My decision is ethically the purest. It would perhaps be better still if the Congress were to expel me. But I have no wishes of my own. I shall let Him pull the string and make me dance as He wills and I shall be happy. You may come to Ranchi if you wish.

Anyone who says that Nasik is too hot knows nothing. Nasik can be considered hot if Deolali is hot. The nights are cool in any case. The air is pure and so is the water. But you may go even to Tithal.

I am sending now the previous letter[1] about salt which had not been sent.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

441. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

JORHAT,
April 16, 1934

You seem to have understood most of the implications. I see that my decision has taken the load off many persons' heads. Were it not for that decision, they would have gone crazy, that is, broken down completely. Blind faith would not have helped them in the least. My decision is ethically the purest. It would perhaps be better still if the Congress were to expel me. But I have no wishes of my own. I shall let Him pull the string and make me dance as He wills and I shall be happy. You may come to Ranchi if you wish.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 144

[1] Not available

442. LETTER TO R. SHANKARAN

JORHAT,
April 16, 1934

BHAI SHANKARAN,

I have your letter.

The fact is that the work of popularizing the national language must be carried on even in Bombay and Gujarat. And for this the teachers have to come from U.P. and Bihar. This is not a job for you.

The language in which we may converse with the villagers or write ordinary letters may be called workable Hindi.

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI R. SHANKARAN
HINDI PRACHAR SABHA
NAPOO HALL
MATUNGA
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 9715

443. LETTER TO SANTOSH KUMAR BASU

[Before *April 17, 1934*]

DEAR SANTOSHBABU,

I congratulate you and your Corporation[1] upon the passing of the Harijan budget. But that is merely a beginning. To pass the budget is one thing, to actually spend the money is another. I hope that you will personally see to it that, however poor your purse may be, the Harijan will be a first charge on it. Please do not forget water taps in the *bastis.*

Yours sincerely,

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 17-4-1934

[1] The addressee was the Mayor of the Calcutta Corporation.

444. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

JORHAT,
April 17, 1934

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter. Have you regained full strength? You have not sent me your comments on my decision.[1] Do send them. You have done right in deciding to stay on where you are for the present. Study the problems of khadi and Harijan work. See what Ramjibhai and Jivanlal are doing. Give them whatever help you can. Also see how the children fare there. How are Dudhibehn and Kusum? If you add up all these things, you will have sufficient work for the present. I shall be in Bihar up to the 3rd. I shall reach there on the 24th. As you will understand, I cannot spare more time to write about other things.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5519

445. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI M. PATEL

JORHAT,
April 17, 1934

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

I wish success to the Patidar Yuvak Parishad and the Mahila Parishad. When Dr. Bhaskar is in charge, the Parishad cannot but be a glorious success. Let the Patidars know that I expect much from them. From the women I expect twice as much. Let them realize that this expectation is all the greater because of Sardar's absence.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 9590

[1] Suspending satyagraha

446. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI N. PATEL

JORHAT,
April 17, 1934

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

Please go through my statement again. You don't seem to have understood it fully. I have said that for the present no one should resort, without my consent, to civil disobedience as a means of achieving swaraj. There are many other causes for which people who know how to use this weapon may do so. Mass civil disobedience for swaraj creates difficulties. You may say that my capacity to lead such a movement is limited.

You must have received my letter[1]. Once you have fulfilled your obligations, work is waiting for you—either khadi or Harijan work. If you cannot choose between these two, I shall do it for you.

If you don't understand my statement even after reading it again, have patience. You will understand it by and by.

I got your letter only today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9591

447. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[2]

JORHAT,
April 17, 1934

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. It is good you sent a copy of the resolution. The grumbling is only momentary. It will calm down. My decision is so good that nothing objectionable can be found in it[3]. It is a different matter if the Congress allows them to carry on under its auspices. The full mean-ing of the satyagraha could not have been shown without this deci-sion. That even now it may not be shown is possible. But that will be my failing, notthe failing of satyagraha. Some of the good

[1] *Vide* "Letter to K.M. Munshi", 16-4-1934.

[2] Extracts from the letter appear in "Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", 17-4-1934.

[3] *Ibid*

effects of my decision can be seen even now. But why should I narrate all this to you? You seem to have understood. Let Nariman go on talking if he wants.

What has appeared in *The Sun*[1] is wicked. But what can one do? Nothing can be kept a secret. Miss Lester will be distressed. But that does not matter. I have sent copies to you and others with her permission. Who brings out *The Sun*?

Your letter will be returned.

It seems you will come to Ranchi bringing Ceresole with you. I have written about Ceresole in my letter of yesterday. That is all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

448. LETTER TO DILIP MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

JORHAT,
April 17, 1934

CHI. DILIP,

Your letter this time can be called good. Continue to work hard like this and write.

Do you know geography? You must have heard the name of Assam. We are touring in that area at present. It is raining very heavily here. It has started from today. Therefore the air now is cool. There are lots of trees here. So the place is all green. The great river Brahmaputra flows through Assam. It is very big. Steamers can ply on it. It flows from Tibet.

Most of the women here know weaving. They wear clothes woven by themselves. Some women also sell these clothes.

Assam being in the far east, the sun rises and sets early. There is a difference of one-and-a-quarter hours between the (local) time there and here. Here it is dusk by 5 p.m.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Then published from Bombay; *vide* also "Letter to Vallbhbhai Patel", 23-4-1934.

449. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

JORHAT,
April 17, 1934

. . .[1] The resentment that we see is temporary. It will subside. My decision is so good that nobody can find anything to say against it. Whether the Congress will let me offer satyagraha in its name is a different question. Without taking the decision which I have done, I would not have been able to demonstrate the real value of satyagraha. It is possible that I have still not been able to demonstrate it. That will be my deficiency, not that of satyagraha. We can see even today some of the good effects of the decision. But why need I explain all this to you? You seem to have understood its full significance.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 144

450. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

April 17, 1934

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

You have forgotten about going to jail, have you not? Remember that dharma does not consist in jail-going alone. Remaining out of it and calmly doing one's duties can also be a great dharma. This is your dharma at present. First of all remain there and get well. I like your living at Wardha also for the sake of Dr. Sharma.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 300

451. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

April 18, 1934

BA,

I got your letter, even though late. It is 3.15 just now. I have taken up your letter after cleaning my teeth. This place is called

[1] As in the source

[2] The addressee was undergoing nature-cure treatment under the guidance of Hiralal Sharma.

Jorhat. It is in Assam. Two days remain now for the tour here to end. After that I will spend a little more than a week in South Bihar and then I will go to Utkal, i.e., Orissa. I see that I shall be in Bengal when you are released. If the date of your release has been fixed, let me know it. There was a letter from Manilal specially meant for you. He writes in it about your inquiring after everybody. I have replied saying that I send your original letters to Phoenix, and copies to Ramdas, Devdas and Sardar. I have already written to you about Kanti having been released. He is all right. Since there is to be no jail-going now, it will shortly be decided where he will stay. He will come and meet me somewhere. Jamnalalji is now expected in Bihar. Satisbabu is all right. He is in Calcutta. Raojibhai, Panditji, Parnerkar and others are all working together in Bihar. Madhavdas also is with them. Bal and Prithuraj are with me. Narandas's nostrils bleed and so he is still at Rajkot. Perhaps he may come and see me at Ranchi. Chhaganlal is in Bhavnagar. He has almost regained the weight which he had lost. He visited Bhansali. There is something the matter with Bhansali's legs. He cannot move them or walk. He has got his lips stitched up. He drinks flour mixed with water through a tube. He also drinks gram or *mung* flour mixed with water. He drops me a postcard now and then. Despite the pain, he remains cheerful. Rajendrababu keeps excellent health. Prabhavati and Jayaprakash are better now. My weight is 108. Mirabehn doesn't make speeches. Sometimes she goes to open khadi exhibitions. I myself am not able to attend such functions. While opening the exhibitions, she says a few words. You see them reported in newspapers. I rarely get time to read newspapers. Ramdas's mother-in-law and Navanit have gone to Wardha. The epidemic in Ahmedabad has spread to other places too. I had written to Allahabad regarding Shyamlal Nehru. Umabehn has borne the separation from her husband with fortitude. Her daughter wrote a long letter to me. You must have received the slivers. Let me know when you want more. Where do you intend to break the semi-fast of the *Purushottam*[1] month? I hope you get enough milk and fruit. Ranchhodbhai and others are in Ahmedabad, of course. They did not go out anywhere. Chimanlal has been having fever, and so he has gone to Veraval. Sharda has accompanied him. Mithubehn stays on in Bombay. Kalyanji and Kunvarji also are there. I did write a letter of condolence to Kunvarji on the death of his wife. Chandrashankar had returned, but he fell ill again and so went back. I will write to Premlilabehn on your behalf. Kishorelal is still ill. He is at Deolali. Radha of course is there. Santok and Gomati also are there. Velanbehn is in Baroda. Om

[1] The intercalary month in the Hindu calendar occurring once in four years.

and Kisan go back to sleep after the morning prayer whenever they have no work. The constitutions of both need more sleep. I think this is enough for this time.

These days I am not able to send a discourse.

Blessings to all from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 22-4

452. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

JORHAT, ASSAM,
April 18, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

It will soon be time for the prayers. I am in Jorhat just now. The birds are singing. Here the dawn breaks earlier. It is daylight by five.

A copy of Ba's letter is enclosed.

I hope you have fully understood my decision. I see that it is having a good effect. After observing it, I feel that the decision was absolutely correct. It has been taken neither too late nor too early. I think it has been made at the right time. But why should we think about results? How can one claim to be a student of the *Gita* and at the same time be concerned with results? Let the results be what they will. A seemingly good result may be a snare and a seemingly bad result may befor one's good. How can we know? Daily we sing, too, "Miseries are not what we regard as miseries."

All will meet in Ranchi. I shall guide them according to my lights. I think it is our duty to give full freedom to Congressmen who favour entering the legislatures. It is but right that those who daily attend legislatures in their thoughts should do so physically as well. Then alone will they be able to judge the relative advantages and disadvantages of that policy. Is it not better that one who daily eats *jalebi* in his imagination should eat the real thing and know the wisdom or folly of doing so? Most probably Mathuradas also will attend, and so will Perin and others. The company will be in Ranchi for four days. I hope Raja also will come. I see that Raja fully approves of the move. And so does Mathuradas. Rajendrababu has been in favour of it from the beginning. Pyarelal is with him just now.

Pierre Ceresole, a man devoted to social service, is coming here from Geneva. One may say that it is his occupation to go and help wherever there is a natural calamity like an earthquake. He is an

expert engineer. He is coming to give help in Bihar and will land in Bombay on the 25th. Mathuradas will bring him or send him to Ranchi. Higginbottom also came and saw me. He also has promised to help. Harrison and Lester will meet me in Patna. I will know from them what they have been able to achieve. Both of them had gone to Calcutta. They have been working very hard indeed. They are sincere and brave. But theirs is a cry in the wilderness.

Bal is still with me. Kaka is fairly well in Hyderabad [jail]. He has been collecting a lot of books there. Mahadev is already buried in books and now Kaka too will get so buried.

I have worked very hard for Obedullah[1] behind the scenes. I think my efforts are bearing fruit now. Probably he will be saved.

The epidemic of children's disease in Ahmedabad has become fairly widespread. Some say that the cause of the epidemic is the cinema. I wouldn't be surprised if it was so. Those who see pictures tell me that there is considerable strain on the brain and the eyes.

Chandrashankar had gone [home] and fallen ill. He returned too soon and fell ill again. And so he has gone back. I saw that he could not stand travelling.

Kamala Nehru and Sarup Rani have gone to Calcutta for treatment. It has been decided that I should tour Bengal, too.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 94-5

453. INTERVIEW TO HARIJAN LEADERS[2]

JORHAT,

[*April 18, l934*][3]

Gandhiji, being asked if the present movement would benefit backward classes other than Harijans, replied that they would certainly be benefited indirectly. When law ceased to recognize untouchability, there would be only backward classes, whether touchables or untouchables, to demand state protection. In answer to another question, he said that inter-dining and intermarriage were matters of individual choice, not susceptible of social regulation. These constituted a reform by them-

[1] Second son of Dr. Khan Saheb. After 78 days' fast in protest against his being lodged in the uncongenial Multan jail he was transferred to Sialkot Jail.

[2] Extracted from Valji Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[3] From the itinerary of Gandhiji's tour in the "Weekly Letter"

selves, which had nothing to do with untouchability. A worker asked if the present movement would not lead to internecine strife among Hindus. Gandhiji replied in the negative, for, he said, it took two to make a quarrel and he himself was working on the lines of least resistance and waiting for public opinion to be ripe on the subject. But they must work away with a will while there was still time. Otherwise, there would be a terrible upheaval, a human earthquake, due not to the present movement, but to the natural effect of the sin of untouchability which it was designed to counteract. Asked if he was not sorry for the part he played in the Khilafat movement, Gandhiji said he was as proud of it as of any event in his life, and it would go down in history as an outstanding instance of unselfish co-operation.

Harijan, 4-5-1934

454. INTERVIEW TO AMERICAN MISSIONARY[1]

JORHAT,
[*April 18, 1934*][2]

Gandhiji had an interesting talk with an American missionary who asked for his views about conversion. He repeated the opinion he has often given that he did not believe in conversion by human agency. Seekers after Truth were in the same position as the blind men in the Indian parable who went to see an elephant, or rather in a worse position. For, if the physically blind lacked in sight, they were compensated for it to some extent by the enhanced power of other organs of sense. But seekers after Truth could only see as through a glass, darkly, so far as inward sight was concerned. It would, therefore, be sheer presumption on their part to seek to "convert" others to their own faith. God had as many ways of approaching Him as there were human beings.

Upon the missionary friend attempting a comparison between Jesus and other men revered by humanity, Gandhiji said that such comparison was fruitless. Jesus of history was not the same as the Jesus whom Christians adored. For them He was the living God of their conception. Similarly he himself believed in the Krishna of his own imagination, who was identical with God and had not much to do with the historic Krishna about whom there was a mass of conflicting evidence. Historical persons were dead. The mystical incarnations were living ideas—more real than earthly existences. Religion could never be based on history, for, if it was so based, faith would be undermined. Tulsidas therefore clinched the point by saying that *nama* (the name) was greater than Rama.

Harijan, 4-5-1934

[1] Extracted from Valji Desai's "Weekly Letter". Desai does not identify the missionary.

[2] The report of the interview in the source is placed after a report on throwing open a temple to Harijans on April 18.

455. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

April 18, 1934

That there can be, and should be, co-operation with the Government in the legislatures was the opinion expressed by Mr. Gandhi in an interview today.

Asked whether, in giving his blessing to the formation of the Swaraj Party, he meant that Congressmen should enter the legislatures for the specific purpose of getting "repressive" laws repealed and the White Paper Constitution rejected, Mr. Gandhi said that he could not define the policy of Congress parliamentarians just as he did not define the policy followed by Pandit Malaviya and the late Mr. C. R. Das although he was instrumental in handing the reins of the Congress to the Swaraj Party. If the Swaraj Party was revived and they asked him for advice as to their line of action in the legislatures, he would advise them according to the circumstances that might present themselves at the time his advice was asked for.

Asked whether he did not think that there could be occasions for cooperation with the Government in the legislatures, Mr. Gandhi replied:

Certainly I can conceive many instances in which there can be, and should be, co-operation.

Asked whether members of the old Swaraj Party now in the legislatures, Provincial and Central, should be allowed to rejoin the new Swaraj Party, Mr. Gandhi said:

They will be members for the asking.

Replying to further questions he said:

I am sure the fact that they did not resign their seats in obedience to the Lahore resolution will make no difference. Anyone that adopts the policy of the Swaraj Party will be entitled to membership no matter what his past views may have been. Suppose I become a Congressman now and adopt the programme of the Swaraj Party, I should be entitled to membership.

In reply to another question Mr. Gandhi said:

If the All-India Congress Committee endorse the revival of the Swaraj Party, the party will occupy the same place that it did when a resolution was adopted at Patna just after Mr. C. R. Das's death.

Q. It would seem from your Patna statement[1] that the suspension of civil disobedience is only temporary. Do you mean that it will have to be resorted to at least by those who are sufficiently skilled in it in the near or distant future?

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 2-4-1934

A. I have not the vaguest idea of what would happen in the future, for a satyagrahi has no such settled plan. He lives, metaphorically speaking, but quite truly, from hand to mouth, day by day. Therefore, I have no notion when the call will come to me to ask my co-workers to resume the struggle.

Asked what he thought about Mr. Sampurnanand's remarks[1] appearing in *The Statesman* of April 14, Mr. Gandhi said:

I fully sympathize with Mr. Sampurnanand in his anger, but when he has read my statement in calmness, I have no doubt he will see I have cast no reflection upon any of my co-workers. I have no regret for all past steps taken in satyagraha. But I have no doubt whatsoever that, in the extraordinary situation the country is facing, it was the wisest thing for me to advise Congressmen to suspend satyagraha, confining it only to me.

With regard to the passage: "Physical non-violence combined with boycott and disobedience is only a mask for spiritual violence and, in depriving it of its outlet and condemning it to use ethical language, it intensified the inward passion of hate" in *The Statesman's* editorial on the Patna statement, Mr. Gandhi observed:

If the writer of the editorial had used the expression, "might only be a mask for spiritual violence" instead of saying "is only a mask for spiritual violence", I should have taken no exception to it. But if my evidence and that of many comrades whom I can name is of any value, I can say with confidence that boycott and disobedience were never a mask for spiritual violence. We never had any hate for a single Briton, not even those like General Dyer who in our opinion had done grave wrong to thousands of innocent men and women. When a dispassionate history of the past fourteen years is written I have no doubt whatsoever that the historian will testify to the fact that physical non-violence coupled with boycott, as defined by the Congress, and civil disobedience did materially check the outbreak of

[1] Sampurnanand, in his statement, had said: "only a short time back Mr. Gandhi destroyed all vestige of organized Congress life in the country but advocated a truncated variety of satyagraha. Next he extended his blessings to the rejuvenated Swaraj Party, notwithstanding the Lahore Congress resolution.... when he seeks to inject into us the virus of inferiority complex by saying that we as a people, with all our sufferings, have proved ourselves unworthy of satyagraha, we cannot let this statement go unchallenged.... We are neither prepared to appoint Mr. Gandhi our sole champion nor promise not to resume the fight without his bidding. If this particular weapon is unfit for us, we shall simply have to find out another...."

violence and taught people the value of self-restraint. Forces of violence, when they are once let loose, instead of spending themselves continue to grow and with them the underlying hate, whereas civil disobedience, when it is honestly pursued, has been known to transform the passion for hate into a passion for friendship, and this I can say with perfect confidence from personal experience dating back from 1906.

The Statesman, 19-4-1934

456. LETTER TO S. K. DATTA

AS AT PATNA,
April 19, 1934

DEAR DR. DATTA,

Many thanks for your letter and telegrams. All I can suggest is that you should ask the Bishop not to be satisfied till the Khan is released or at least those who have influence with him are permitted to see him without let or hindrance.

Yes, indeed. For me the present is merged in eternity. I may not sacrifice the latter for the present. And that has driven me logically to the statement[1]. But I am hoping that this latest decision will bring swaraj nearer than it ever was so long as the people retain the view that it can be had only through nonviolent means. What can be obtained through violence won't be swaraj of my dream.

Love to you both.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 7950c. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

457. LETTER TO HARI SINGH GOUR

April 19, 1934

DEAR SIR HARI SINGH GOUR,

I thank you for your letter.

I have not even thought of the way you have looked at the revival of the Swaraj Party. I have simply looked at it from the Congress view-point which has been hitherto opposed to Council-entry altogether. Is there anything to prevent you from being a member of

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 2-4-1934

that party? Must your nationalism differ from theirs?

I did indeed read your book on Buddhism with great interest. I do not remember that I had to write to you after my having read it. Your novel I never reached. My views on social reform remain as they were and they have taken active shape in the present campaign against untouchability.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 7950d. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

458. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

[DIBRUGARH,
April 19, 1934][1]

MY DEAR ANAND,

I have your letters and Vidya's. I do not know that I owe any letters to you. I would love to have you with me, but you must bide your time. In the first place you must not come to me till your health is proof against disease in this trying tour. Chandrashankar got ill twice and he had finally to go for recuperation. Therefore get well and report. Meanwhile do what khadi and Harijan work you can there and make your knowledge of Hindi better than it is.

The more you read my statement the more you will like it. It is no reflection on anybody. The step was inherent in satyagraha at this stage. More when we meet.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

You know I expect to be in Sind some time in June. The newspaper is of course out of the question.

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

459. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

April 19, 1934

BHAI DAHYABHAI,

I don't remember having left any letter of yours unanswered. I did make use of the book you sent. For the present, go on doing whatever service you think proper. I don't remember any request for

[1] From the post mark.

volunteers either. Chandrashankar may know. He is not here at the moment.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2702. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

460. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR TRIVEDI

April 19, 1934

CHI. MANU,

Cheerfully accept Father's final decision. If your and Vimala's[1] love is pure, you should be able to exercise sufficient self-control to discontinue meeting each other socially. If you do not regard it as your moral duty to exercise such self-control, you should not mind financial help being stopped. No son is entitled to receive help from his father after he has become a major. Any help that the father may give should be regarded as a kindness. Other parents rarely do what yours have done for you. Even now your father has taken the decision in your interest. You should not argue whether it is really in your interest. Even if it does not seem so, it would do you no harm to accept it, for the motive behind Jayashankar's decision is pure. And in any case it is certainly not against dharma. It will not be a violation of dharma to discontinue social relations with Vimala for the present.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1012

461. LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

April 19, 1934

CHI. VIDYA,

I do not remember whether I have replied to your letter or not. Yes, in June the climate of Wardha will be fine. But as long as Anand is there, it is not necessary for you to go to Wardha. Where Mahadev has to stay will be decided soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] Elizabeth

462. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

DIBRUGARH,
April 19, 1934

Interviewed this morning by the Associated Press regarding the Home Member's statement[1] in the Assembly, Mr. Gandhi, who is staying at Gosala Ashram, Dibrugarh said:

I have no views on the Home Member's statement because, being continuously travelling, I have not been able to see it. It has just come to me, but I have not yet read it. It is, therefore, impossible for me to pronounce an opinion as to whether the statement is cautious or halting or magnanimous.

He added that it was doubtful whether he could make any comment on the statement while he would be touring, having the whole of his mind concentrated upon Harijan work.

Replying to a question whether he suggested that Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru should be allowed to participate in the deliberations of the Ranchi Conference, Mr. Gandhi said:

I can only say that any conclusions that any conference may arrive at can only be inconclusive without the presence of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 20-4-1934

463. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

DIBRUGARH,
[On or after *April 19, 1934*][2]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have all your letters. What reply can we make to *Amrita Bazar Patrika?* The articles it carries are heavily spiced. And it is not that one always writes what one believes. If you want to write in order to explain things to friends it can be done in some other way.

The Award problem is very tough indeed. Something is possible

[1] Sir Harry Haig, making a statement in the Assembly on the Government's attitude towards the Congress and the release of civil disobedience prisoners, had said that there would be no obstacle to the meeting of the A.I.C.C. or the Congress.

[2] Gandhiji was in Dibrugarh on April 19 and 20.

if the Mussalmans accept the way I have shown. Even if they do not, the path is quite straight. But I am afraid the Swarajists will not approve of it. I do not find today an atmosphere conducive to the achieving of Hindu-Muslim-Sikh unity.

I have independently examined the question of Council-entry. I feel that the Congress will always have in it a group favouring Council-entry. It is this group which should have the reins of the Congress, for it alone needs the label of the Congress. This fact I have accepted for all time. Those very people will boycott the Councils when they find it necessary.

There are many difficulties connected with Council-entry. Decisions on these will be taken when the time comes, mistakes will be committed, some will be rectified, some will not be and things will go on like that.

I for one prefer Ranchi to Calcutta. That it is not convenient for other people is another matter. The peace Ranchi offers is an impossibility in Calcutta. But I have left it to Rajendrababu.

I shall read your address to the Federation and communicate to you my opinion.

If the meeting is held in Ranchi and if you can come, do. It might be for the good though I cannot say definitely. I hope Gopi and Gajanan are getting along well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Babu Raghavdas gave the enclosed. There is certainly need for training Hindi instructors. The scheme seems good on the face of it. If with the expenditure suggested Hindi-Prachar workers can be trained it is all to the good.

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 6120. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

464. A HARIJAN'S QUESTIONS ANSWERED

A Harijan sends the following questions for me to answer.

1. Mahatmaji, why are you so much interested in our cause?

2. If all religions are one in your consideration, are the Christians not entitled to combat untouchability?

3. In what way will our people be benefited if untouchability is removed?

4. Why should we enter Hindu temples?

5. Did not the Hindu deities that were incarnated oppress us?

6. Arya and un-Arya are the divisions created for us. What harm is there if we remain separated?

7. Even in untouchables there are many sub-castes. What do you propose to do with this problem?

8. Once you said that swaraj can be attained the day untouchability is removed. Is this present propaganda directed to that end?

9. If so, are you going to give equivalent rights with other Hindus to our crores of untouchables?

10. Instead of opening temples and eradicating untouchability, suffice it if you make provision for our livelihood.

They are good questions. My answers are:

1. I am interested in the Harijan cause for the sake of purifying myself of the taint of untouchability and doing penance for the sin; and, being jealous of the reputation of the faith I profess, I am anxious that fellow-members of the faith should also purge themselves of the same.

2. Not only are the Christians entitled, but it is their duty, to combat untouchability in their own midst. But if the question is that Christians should combat untouchability in Hinduism, my answer is that they simply cannot do it, because untouchables of Hinduism should not be untouchables to Christians. The antiuntouchability movement means weaning Hindus from their error. This cannot be effectively done by non-Hindus, even as Hindus cannot bring about religious reform among Christians or Mussalmans. If the question means that Christians should combat untouchability among Hindus by converting untouchables to Christianity, they do not advance the cause in any shape or form, the cause being reformation among caste Hindus. If the latter repented of their sin, the Harijans would be delivered from the yoke of untouchability in a moment. Conversion can never do it. It can only add to the prevailing bitterness and introduce a disturbing factor in a situation which is already bad but which, owing to the work of the Harijan Sevak Sanghs and other movements of internal reform in Hinduism, is steadily improving, untouchability being daily undermined.

3. In many ways. I enumerate some below:

(i) Caste Hindus will be purified by their repentance.

(ii) The economic, moral, social and political status of Harijans will be improved at a bound by the removal of an artificial barrier which has been stunting their growth all along.

(iii) Untouchability that is imposed on untouchables is such a poison that it has overtaken those living within its zone. And therefore, Hindus, Christians, Mussalmans and others have become untouchables to one another. Real removal of untouchability must bring us all together and thus promote a heart-unity of the different communities of India.

(iv) Removal of untouchability with all its implications must mean a great contribution to the promotion of universal brotherhood.

4. Harijans need not enter Hindu temples, if they do not wish it. But they should, if they have faith in them. The temple-entry movement has for its object, not the entering by Harijans into Hindu temples, but the opening of these temples to all those Harijans who wish to enter them for worship. In other words, it is a movement of repentance and change of heart in caste Hindus.

5. I should be sorry if I found that the Hindu deities oppressed Harijans, and if they did, they were certainly not beneficent deities, but evil ones to be shunned.

6. He would be a bold man who is able to say today with any degree of success who is Arya and who is un-Arya. Historians tell us that a blending of the two took place centuries ago. If now a sharp division is attempted, it will harm not only Hindus, both caste and outcaste, but it will harm the whole of India and, by implication, the whole of humanity.

7. When untouchability practised by caste Hindus is radically removed, its offshoot among untouchables will automatically wither.

8. I should assert the statement again. But the present propaganda is directed only to the purification of caste Hindus and, therefore, of Hindus. And when that purification is demonstrably attained, not only swaraj but many other desirable results will follow, as day follows night. The word “swaraj” as here used does not mean a mere legal status but something far better and more lasting. I would call it an organic status evolved from within.

9. Whatever meaning may be given to the word “swaraj”, re-

moval of untouchability will be a fraud if it does not carry with it the enjoyment by the freed Hindus of precisely the same rights as the other Hindus and all other communities may enjoy under it.

10. It is beyond me, a single, poor mortal, to make provision for the livelihood of millions. That can only be achieved by their whole effort and God's grace. But, if temples are flung open to Harijans and untouchability is eradicated, the dead weight that is grinding them down will have lifted, and they will have an equal opportunity with the rest of their fellow-men for earning an honest livelihood.

Harijan, 20-4-1934

465. HOW THEY SHOULD ACT

The reader is aware that I have dissuaded Harijans from pressing for representation on Harijan boards, for the very simple and complete reason that these boards are meant to be composed of *savarna* Hindus who regard untouchability as a sin and who would do reparation to Harijans for past wrongs done to them. *Savarna* Hindus are, therefore, debtors and Harijans creditors. When debtors consider the ways and means of discharging their obligations, it is they alone who have to frame their proposals for the acceptance of creditors, who have their own boards which consider such proposals and accept or reject them or advise amendments before acceptance. I have, therefore, suggested the formation of advisory committees of Harijans to assist Harijan Seva Sangh boards.

Writing on my suggestion, a Harijan correspondent says:

> If you will kindly paint a picture of an ideal Harijan advisory committee, what it should do, how it should act and how it should assert itself, I shall certainly be able to have a clear-cut idea of what it should be. I feel also this to be essential, in view of the necessity of establishing such committees.

These are pertinent questions. I should suggest the formation of compact, small representative committees who would truly represent the opinion of local Harijans. They would frame rules for the conduct of their proceedings and formulate their expectations of *savarna* Hindus and generally watch the proceedings of Harijan boards. These advisory committees, wherever they are formed, would advise Harijan boards of their existence and show their preparedness to help the latter. If the boards are sincere in their desire to discharge their debt, that is, to serve Harijans, they will establish the friendliest contact with

the advisory committees, and perfect co-operation and harmony will prevail.

There may be friction in the beginning because of mutual suspicion. Harijan boards, being naturally better organized and better off in every respect, will have to exercise tact in handling what may appear to be extravagant demands. Advisory committees would endeavour to be considerate. The more considerate they are, the better able they will be to help themselves. From their ability to conduct themselves in a dignified manner, they will learn the art of asserting themselves if the occasion ever arises. For they should know that *savarna* Hindus will never be able to discharge their debt except with the co-operation of Harijans. But the question of asserting themselves does not arise just yet, because the vast mass of Harijans have been rendered so completely helpless that they have no power of resisting injustice, even if they wanted to. Let me explain what I mean. Harijan boards have three functions, to raise the economic, social and religious status of Harijans, or to put it in another way, to remove the difficulties that *savarna* Hindus have for centuries put in the way of Harijans raising their heads in any department of life. Thus the Harijan boards have to provide wells, scholarships, boarding houses, schools and social amenities, wherever the need arises. In all these, the general body of Harijans simply take the help wherever it is offered. Advisory committees can, therefore, help the cause and themselves by making useful suggestions to the boards and also rendering such help as they themselves can to those whom they represent. Thus only will they acquire the power of asserting themselves. In short, advisory committees will best help the cause by taking up internal reform and causing an awakening among the Harijan masses, so that they may begin to realize that they are men and women entitled to the same rights as are enjoyed by the other members of the society to which they belong.

Harijan, 20-4-1934

466. LETTER TO PREMI JAIRAMDAS

April 20, 1934

MY DEAR PREMI,

Your letter. The provisional date fixed for Hyderabad is 7th July. Only 3 days have been allowed for Sind. There is ample time for

you to prepare. We are a party of 12 to 16. By that time Father should be out. I do hope Dr. Choithram is better. Give my love to Father and Dr. Choithram.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 9246. Courtesy: Jairamdas Doulatram

467. LETTER TO KOTWAL

April 20, 1934

BHAI KOTWAL,

I have your letter. In course of time you will realize more clearly the correctness of my decision. Be patient. Everybody will get an opportunity to do what he or she is eager to do. Civil disobedience does not consist in courting imprisonment or mounting the gallows anyhow. Civil disobedience has been completely abused in its spirit. One must cultivate fitness for civil disobedience. It has great destructive power. To cultivate such fitness, one must have voluntarily and scrupulously obeyed all laws and rules. How many people can we find who have done so? Are you one of them? Were you? Would you be now? Don't send me your replies to these questions. Reply to them to yourself and you will understand my statement rightly and also see your path. Moreover, please remember that I have not suspended civil disobedience in all matters. Apart from the fight for swaraj, there may be countless other situations in which individuals and groups may be required to resort to civil disobedience. Have patience.

Await my call for joining the fight for swaraj. Make yourself fit for it. If you wish to do so, free yourself from all personal bonds. Follow the way of "I left my friends and kinsmen, and my husband as well"[1] and engage yourself in khadi work and in the service of Harijans, Muslims and drink addicts. Be content with what you can earn from such work for your livelihood. You may then be sure that everything will be well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3608

[1] A bhajan by Mira

468. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

April 20, 1934

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have fully read your letter to *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. I liked it immensely. It should be sent privately to the editor. If he so wishes he may publish only the relevant portion withholding your name and the personal element in it. If he does not want to, he may withhold it altogether.

I hope you are keeping well and taking proper exercise.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 7952. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

469. STATEMENT TO ASSOCIATED PRESS[1]

TINSUKHIA,
April 20, 1934

I have not noticed any active opposition from conservative upper classes as you call it and I have certainly had considerable active support in the shape of money, as also promises of constructive work. Strange as it may appear, even in Assam, whilst the Harijans have naturally laid stress upon the necessity of educational and economic betterment, they have bitterly complained of social dis-abilities and bar against entry into temples and Namghars (places of worship). They feel the sting of inferiority underlying the social and religious restrictions. I believe, however, that these are fast melting away and public opinion is gathering in favour of the removal of such restrictions.

I said the problem in Assam was complex, because indigenous Harijans and coolies from provinces are all regarded as Harijans, whether they were so regarded in the provinces or not. Theirs is, therefore, not an enviable lot. They present a problem of peculiar difficulty, because they are settlers in Assam, holding land in their own right and if they are not well looked after, they must present increasingly greater difficulties; but I am hoping that the Assam leaders, as a result of the anti-untouchability campaign, will seriously

[1] The statement was made in answer to questions from an Associated Press correspondent.

deal with the problem and help these coolies to become honourable citizens.

The Hindu, 21-4-1934

470. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, TINSUKHIA[1]

April 20, 1934

Alluding to the incident[2], Gandhiji said that if anybody had insulted these friends, it was wrong. But those who wanted to serve the cause of religion must learn to rise above all petty considerations of courtesy and discourtesy. Those who could not surmount their pride and become as humble as the very dust under their feet would not be able to render Harijan service.

Proceeding further, Gandhiji said he did not set much store by money as such. It was, therefore, perhaps, that he had the reputation of being an expert beggar. He wanted money only if he could carry with it the hearts of the donors. If a single donor gave him one crore of rupees, he could not abolish untouchability; but he could undertake the task without a single pie, if he could carry with him the hearts of one crore of caste Hindus. Let them know what he meant by the removal of untouchability. It meant complete removal of all distinctions of high and low, not only as to Harijans, but also among caste Hindus themselves. That was sure to lead to heartunity among Hindus, Muslims, Christians and others, for the political causes, for the disunion were superficial. The root cause was the distinction of high and low, i.e., untouchability. They must, in the language of the *Gita*, learn to treat the Brahmin and the Bhangi with equal regard. No human being could be unclean by birth. If they would search for unclean things, they had only to dive into their own minds, where they would find a multitude of evil thoughts worthy of being treated as outcastes. Bathing was all very well, but even buffaloes had long daily baths. He only was pure who walked in the fear of God and served His creatures.

Then they had a special untouchable in Assam. That was opium. They must get rid of the curse. It was stunting their growth. Medical evidence went to show that, if the opium habit was not given up, it would extinguish the Assamese. Harijans were a prey to the habit just as much as the others. He implored the cultured men and women of Assam to deal with the curse.

The condition of the labourers from other provinces demanded the special attention of the Assamese, who must devise measures for their uplift and fusion with Assamese society.

In appealing to the Marwaris, of whom there was a fair number in the meeting and whom he described as the bankers of India, Gandhiji said he well knew their

[1] Extracted from Valji Desai's "Weekly Letter".

[2] Some people had complained of having been insulted when they went to the platform.

humanitarian work. They were ready to find money for the cow, for Hindi propaganda, for relief of the distressed. He wanted them to take their full share in the task of serving the indigenous Harijans and the industrious labourers from the other provinces, who were miscalled coolies and who were treated as worse than Harijans.

Assam was a beautiful country, from whose natural scenery he could not bear to withdraw his eyes. Thanks to the noble Brahmaputra and timely and sufficient rains, Assam was a veritable land of gold. But it required sustained human endeavour to extract the gold. If all the limbs of society were worked efficiently, Assam would be as prosperous and happy as it was beautiful to look at.

Harijan, 4-5-1934

471. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

April 22, 1934

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

Read the accompanying letter[1]. It seems he has written to you also. I think he should have a place.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4022

472. LETTER TO NANALAL I. MASHRUWALA

April 22, 1934

BHAI NANABHAI,

I have your letters. Courting imprisonment is not by itself a dharma. One may have to go to jail for the sake of dharma. We are keeping ourselves ready for that. If going to jail were by itself a dharma, one could do that even by committing theft. But you are right in your statement that the present atmosphere is such that going to jail seems to be the only dharma.

Enclosed is a letter from Manilal. Pass it on to Sushila after reading it. I am not writing her a separate letter. There is no time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7523. Also C.W. 4999. Courtesy: Kanubhai Mashruwala

[1] This is not traceable.

473. LETTER TO KARUNA BAI

April 22, 1934

Shri Shukdevji has given me the invitation for your wedding. I hope you and Narmada Prasad will lead a happy married life devoted to service.

Blessings from

M. K.GANDHI

SHRI KARUNA BAI
C/O SHRI SHUKDEV PRASAD TIWARI
SUHAGPUR

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8681

474. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KATIHAR

April 22, 1934

Bapu spoke very touchingly about Gokulbabu's[1] sudden death. He said that man proposed but the disposal lay in the hands of God. He had not dreamed that he would have to speak about Gokulbabu's death at Katihar when he toured with him in Forbesganj and mofussil, Gokulbabu driving the car all hale and hearty, with so much enthusiasm and energy. He got acquainted intimately with him at Purnea. In his house, he had become acquainted with Satyavati, alas! now a widow, whose courage and devotion to duty were noticed when she begged for pice in a meeting as a volunteer and tried to protect Mahatmaji in the rush that followed the break-up of a meeting and tried to force a passage through the struggling mass of humanity. But what could physical force avail? Of course the strength of spirit helps and protects. Bapu paid a tribute to her pluck:

She is a virtuous lady and tries with success to follow the footsteps of her lamented husband.

He hoped she would continue the work left by her husband. He had received Rajendrababu's and Mritunjay's telegram and had replied that as she had been devoted heart and soul to her dear husband she must follow in his footsteps in the service of the country and tread the path he had shown. Just now Rajendrababu had assured him that she was now taking food.[2] That was well. It was wrong for a loyal wife to immolate herself with her departed husband. Such a death was not fulfilling a duty. The real discharge of duty lay in carrying on the work dear to the heart of the departed

[1] Gokul Krishna Roy

[2] Telegrams sent to Gandhiji had informed him that she had given up food from grief.

and dying in the course of doing it. All die—old, young and child. All of them will travel the same path. Why then mourn for Gokulbabu who, though delicate and nourished in ease, worked like a mazdoor. He had been for three days with him and bore all the dust and the strain courageously and did not think of hardships.

All happens as God wills. They are contemplating an Ashram to be named after Gokulbabu, who had cherished that desire.

All collections at the meeting would be made over to the proposed Ashram. It is said that Gokulbabu was the soul of Purnea. He hoped the Purnea people would show that that was their feeling. Two points were noticeable in Gokulbabu—the absence of untouchability and the absence of distinction between high and low, rich and poor.

The Searchlight, 29-4-1934

475. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

MUZAFFARPUR,
April 23, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got both your letters. I have just sat down to write letters after cleaning my teeth. It is 3.40 a.m. now. I hope you will look upon this as an improvement as regards my hour of rising. We are in Gokhale-puri in Muzaffarpur. We arrived here from Assam at 10.30 last night. A small suburb, named after Gokhale, has been built here by Bajpai of the Gokhale Institute. I have to perform its inauguration ceremony today after the period of silence ends. Rajendrababu saw me in Katihar yesterday.

As Valji felt a little ill, instead of going to bed immediately on arrival here I sent for a doctor and could sleep only after twelve.

Please do not worry about me. I am taking the utmost care of my health. I somehow manage to get my full quota of sleep.

Narandas (Gandhi) has been quite ill after his release. There is profuse bleeding from his nose. But he is a little better now. He will see me in Ranchi.

It seems strange that you feel perplexed. I had told everybody that you would immediately understand my step. But your letters show your pain. Nobody among those who are outside seems to have felt as you do. Jawahar did so, of course, but I thought that he would understand the step after a while. I wonder whether my belief that a person who is in jail cannot correctly understand the situation outside is being proved true in your case also, or whether I am following a

completely wrong path. I still don't feel that I am doing that. To me it is as clear as daylight that the decision I have taken is correct. It is useless to ask me also why I didn't think of this in Poona. I couldn't have thought of it then. The right solution occurs only at the right time, and then alone does it work. The decision taken in Poona was the right one at that time and this one is right at the present time. One shouldn't mind what Aunt[1] says. If we had not taken this decision, we would have invited untold harm.

There are difficulties of course. Not a single one of them was out of my mind. We will overcome them. This step has raised the morale of the people. It will rise still further. We can give a reply to the cultivators, and will do so. We couldn't have done that if I also had given up civil disobedience. I hope it will not occur to you even in your dream that this is my pride speaking. Since I cannot explain all the reasons to you, who are a prisoner, I leave the matter here. The fruits of patience are sweet. Have patience. Everything will be well.

About the Swaraj Party being revived, the reply is quite simple. It was absolutely necessary that it should be revived. I feel that a party which has survived so many bitter experiences must have a place in the Congress. I don't think this is a temporary phase; it has come to stay. I know that there are difficulties in that policy too. Personal aspirations and ambitions also are playing a part. And ability is limited. You may say what else you will. But realities cannot be wished away. At the most we can improve them a little. We may exercise control. We can do neither more nor less. You may even say that I have forced them to take courage in both hands. They wanted to take this course but did not have the courage to do so. The suggestion which I had made in Poona is now bearing fruit. It would have been a different matter if we could have kept the Congress completely away from the legislatures. But that would have been coercion. You were the first to show me *The Sun*[2]. Are the reports in it always of that kind? There is some truth in that one. Poor Lester. She and Agatha will meet me in Patna tomorrow. Both of them liked my decision very much. They are trying hard and doing their best. But nobody is likely to listen to them just now. All the same, it is good that they are trying so hard to understand the situation. Both are sincere and brave. One Ceresole is coming from Switzerland. He is an expert engineer. He is

[1] Presumably Sarojini Naidu

[2] Then published from Bombay

coming to give help in Bihar. He is a lover of peace. I had met him in Villeneuve. He is a good man. If he keeps good health, he will be able to do much useful work. Let us see what he can do.

I got a wire only yesterday about Fulchand Bapuji's death. A good worker has passed away. It was an excellent death. The accompanying note was published by Narasinhbhai[1]. You will like it. He says that Fulchand went to bed that evening as usual. He was working till the last day. There was no trouble. Naturally, there was nobody by his side when he passed away. The clock stopped during the night. Chandrashankar Pandya has sent a wire and asked my advice as to what should be done. What do you think can be done? This is no time to think about a memorial. Do you have any suggestion to make?

Thakkar Bapa had called on Dada[2] in connection with collections for relief work. Dada is all right. His health is improving fast. He seems to be in no hurry. Be it so. That also is good.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 96-8

476. LETTER TO AMRITLAL CHATTERJEE

April 23, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your two letters. Yes, I would like you to furnish me with all the facts within your knowledge about civil resisters and Harijan *sevaks.*[3]

Your second letter seems to contradict your first letter. Your first letter shows conclusively why even individual civil disobedience must be, for the time being, simply confined to me.

In coming to the decision, I have no more suppressed private judgment than does a surgeon who instructs laymen to do or not to do certain things. Naturally those who do not believe in the surgeon

[1] Narasinhbhai Ishvarbhai Patel

[2] G. V. Mavalankar.

[3] The addressee had complained of 'un-satyagrahic' conduct of civil resisters inside jail and also about the unbecoming conduct of some Harijan *sevaks*.

won't follow his instructions.

If many people disregard my advice, it would show that I have very few instruments to work with.

The experiments hitherto made had to be made before I could come to the conclusion I have.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 1446. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

477. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

April 23, 1934

CHI. AMALA,

I hope you have the letter I wrote to you. Your Gujarati is indeed good. It would be excellent progress if you could make out my letters. It is only for you that I am trying to improve my handwriting.

It is good that you liked my decision. There is nothing more you could do. What you have done should be enough. Why do you divorce politics from religion?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

478. LETTER TO KALYANJI V. MEHTA

MUZAFFARPUR,
April 23, 1934

BHAI KALYANJI,

I have your letter.

I have no doubt at all that the revenue dues on account of the Ashram must be paid. That no one except me should offer civil disobedience does not mean that the strong must become weak. It means that the strong should become stronger and make up for the weak and the latter should try to overcome their weakness. It, therefore, does not at all mean that anyone should through flattery or through humbling himself try to get back what he has lost. The time to get back what has been lost is bound to come, but that will be when

we have acquired real strength. Meanwhile we should adjust our policies to the realities of the situation. No one need be frightened. Everything will settle down after some time and our path will become clear by itself. Let everyone cultivate the utmost selflessness and engage himself in work which he can do best.

You have given detailed news about the family. The body is from its very nature subject to illness and death. One person may be more ill or die earlier than another. Let us employ all possible remedies within certain limits. It would be good if Mithubehn went somewhere for rest as Sardar has suggested. How can Napoleon[1], a brave boy, afford to show weakness?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2709

479. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

MUZAFFARPUR,
April 23, 1934

CHI BHAGWANJI,

I feel ashamed of my letter. Neither I nor anyone else can derive any sense from it. It is sheer violence to write letters in such bad handwriting. However, I continue to write them because all of you want them. In this particular letter, however, there are other blemishes too. I think I must have written that letter when I was extremely tired or was dozing. Some unconnected sentences, therefore, have crept in. Read it as if the sentences underlined by you were not there. You will then find that both the ideas are complete. Probably I didn't write that letter with sufficient concentration and so some thoughts then floating in my mind got into it. Your letter will have served its purpose if it makes me more alert. What trouble you must have taken, according to your nature, to read some meaning in sentences which have no meaning!

I got your letter. Do please continue to write to me. But do not expect replies to all letters. Some may not require a reply and to some others I may not get time to reply.

You did well in giving me the information about your spinning. There is no egotism behind it; the information is correct and worth

[1] Chhotubhai, son of addressee's brother Kunvarji

giving, and, therefore, it ought to be given.

Even if our work progresses at a snail's pace, it will have progressed fast enough, because only what is genuine will endure. All the rest will be sheer waste of energy. Our test lies in being happy even in progressing at such a slow pace.

I shall write to Balram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 369. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

480. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

April 23, 1934

CHI. RAMDAS,

I received your letter. If you resolutely observe the rules of diet, the body will get properly built up. If necessary, undertake another fast. I have found from my experience of all my fasts, except one, that the body must get stronger after a fast. If my health suffered after my 14-days' fast, the cause was purely my ignorance. Even today, I suffer the ill-effects of that deterioration in health. If my health had not suffered then, today my body would have been much stronger than it is. But that is a past story. My subsequent fasts have wiped out some of those ill-effects. But then, this is looking at my fasts purely from the point of view of their effect on health. What the man in the street or the Government would think about the matter should be irrelevant. Religious decisions should be made independently of all other considerations. The ultimate result of such decisions cannot but be good. However, this is a matter of faith. It is my duty to induce you to think for yourself. Thus, our experience in the individual satyagraha was that one after another the fighters began to weaken. Physically, almost all of them got tired. In that individual satyagraha, all or most of those who took part in it were induced to do so by their faith in me.

Since I myself am imperfect, no other result was possible. If the foregoing reasoning is correct, after knowing all that had happened I ought to have woken up. I did that and braving all risks announced my decision.[1]

For the present, digest what I have said here. If you have not

[1] On April 6 of the year, to the effect that in future, individual satyagraha should be left to be offered by him alone.

understood this reasoning, ask me again. More some other time.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

How is Balkrishna? Do you meet Vinoba? Discuss my decision with both of them. Read the letters which I am enclosing.

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy,: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

481. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

April 23, 1934

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Your letter. It is not good for you to accompany me on the tour or to come here all the way for a couple of days. Travelling with me is a tough proposition. Almost all fall ill. You cannot even take the trip to Badrinath[1] and Kedarnath[1] but, if you can, you may go to Mussoorie or Dalhousie. There is also not any more that urgency about going to the Ashram as existed before my decision. Now Krishna Nair will be able to stay on. I hope you have understood my decision.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2411

482. SPEECH AT OPENING OF GOKHALEPURI, MUZAFFARPUR [3]

April 23, 1934

Gandhiji said Mr. Kunzru had spoken about why he was asked to perform the opening ceremony. He considered it a pleasant duty considering the relations existing between Gokhale and himself. Gokhale, said Gandhiji, was his political guru and continued to be so. Gandhiji considered himself an undeclared member of the Servants of India Society. These cottages, said Gandhiji, were built for housing earthquake sufferers as danger to life and property was absent therein. He knew of the

[1] Places of pilgrimage in the Himalayas

[1] *ibid*

[3] The ceremony was performed in Rajendra Vyayamshala. Among those present were Rajendra Prasad, Dr.Syed Mahmud and H.N.Kunzru.

Assam earthquake of 1879 during his recent tour. The area affected was not as large as here but the loss was appalling. Assam possessed small quake-proof houses which were not dangerous to life and property and were less expensive. Gandhiji asked Babu Rajendra Prasad to go to Assam and see designs for construction there. Gandhiji said he could not thank the Chairman of the Muzaffarpur Municipality as Gandhiji being a Bihari he could not thank another Bihari.

Referring to two years' lease of municipal land for the cottages, Gandhiji said the municipality had acted in a miserly manner in giving two years' lease only. He asked the municipality to make the lease permanent.

The Library and the Aushadhalaya attached to the cottages would be used by all.

Concluding, he asked all to see that Gokhalepuri became a permanent ideal colony.

The Searchlight, 25-4-1934

483. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

[After *April 23, 1934*][1]

CHI. BRIJKRISHAN,

I was wondering why there was no letter from you so far, but I got your letter today. You should not have the diet you are taking at all the four meals. There is no gain from having too great a variety in your food. It would be better to have plain *roti.* Going out for walks and the hip-bath are absolutely essential in my opinion. You must in consultation with your elder brother chalk out a regular routine for yourself. I do not see any harm in taking the trip to Badrinath and Kedarnath if your strength is up to it. But I do wish you to get well somehow and have peace of mind.

Tell your mother that I shall have a standing complaint against her. There can be no dharma in refusing to take food at the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2390

[1] The text suggests that this letter was written some time after the letter of April 23, 1934; *Vide*"Letter to Brijkrishna Chandiwala", 23-4-1934.

484. LETTER TO NARGIS CAPTAIN

April 24, 1934

Your letter. I must not exchange my rupees for one-anna pieces. Satyagraha is not at a discount. It commands for me a premium. Therefore the true ones are reserved. On due occasion they will give a good account of themselves. Therefore I want you to rejoice over my decision.

Love.

SHRI NARGISBEHN CAPTAIN
COMARA HALL
PANCHGANI
Via POONA

From a copy: C.W. 7953. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

485. LETTER TO CHATURBHUJ

April 24, 1934

BHAI CHATURBHUJ,

I wish success to your Youth Conference. Let the young men remember one thing, namely, that service can be done through self-control. A person of self-restraint does not consider anybody lower than himself and should, therefore, free himself from all sense of high and low. Let the young realize clearly that a practice like untouchability can never be part of religion.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4134

486. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

April 24, 1934

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I trust you are cheerful. You may render there whatever service you can. Ask Dr. Sharma to write to me. Ask Draupadi Devi too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 303

487. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

April 25, 1934

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your letter. It is all right that you have sent a wire to Ba. Nimu and the child must be prospering. I am preparing to rush to the station[1] and so do not write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

488. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BUXAR

[*April 25, 1934*][2]

Mahatma Gandhi referred to the unfortunate incident[3] and offered apology to sanatanists for indiscretion on the part of the Harijan workers.

Religion, the Mahatma continued, had nowhere been promoted by violence and he appealed to the Harijan workers not to take any step hereafter to protect him from violence.

I am prepared to walk alone any distance from this place so that sanatanists may kill me, if they like. I am alone responsible for carrying on the Harijan uplift movement and if any head should be broken it ought to be mine before anybody else's. I have sufficient faith in God and that is enough protection for my physical body. I need no other protection. I have so far survived five or six attacks on my life. I do not forget for a single moment that everybody has to walk about with death in his pocket consciously or unconsciously. And I would gladly lay down my head on the lap of anybody who may be intent on killing me rather than give up my conviction regarding the Harijan uplift movement under threat from any quarter. I have no quarrel with a single sanatanist. Every sanatanist is free to propagate his own

[1] In the course of his country-wide tour as part of the untouchability campaign which Gandhiji began on November 7, 1933

[2] Gandhiji was at Buxar on the afternoon of the 25th.

[3] Some sanatanists had held a demonstration against Gandhiji. Three reformer volunteers were injured in the fracas as also some sanatanists.

conviction according to his own reading of the Shastras. I am always open to conviction and would be glad if any sanatanist could convince me that there is sanction against untouchability in the Hindu Shastras. God created all men equal and as such every Harijan is entitled as a matter of right to enter the temples. But he should not seek to do it by force as I do not believe in force or violence in such matters.[1]

The Hindustan Times, 27-4-1934

489. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[2]

April 25, 1934

It grieves me to have to state that sanatanist friends have given up all sense of self-restraint whether in language or in action. This morning when I alighted at a quarter past two at Jashidih, black flags were being waved prominently with all kinds of shouts. It was with difficulty that I was taken to a car. Lathis rained upon the hood of the car. One lathi or stone, I cannot definitely say which—Shashibabu, who was occupying the same car, is positive that it was a stone—was aimed at the pane at the back of the car. Fortunately I was the only occupant in the back seat and was sitting in a corner when the pane fell just on my side. I would certainly have been seriously hurt if I had been sitting in the centre. And if there had been more occupants, one of us would have been hurt without doubt. That the hood was not broken to pieces was no fault of those who wielded heavy lathis. I was not prepared for this wild demonstration. I would like to appeal to the best minds among sanatanists and suggest that sanatana dharma will be ill served by vulgarity and violence.

In Buxar, though there was a boisterous demonstration, nothing happened to cars but there was a row between sanatanists and reformers. As soon as I saw three broken heads and one injured arm among reformist volunteers and on learning that sanatanists were also hurt, I sent Thakkar Bapa to see how they were and went to hospital myself where injuries were being examined. There were broken heads among them also. I am investigating the Buxar incident and if I find that the reformer volunteers were guilty, I should most decidedly do such penance as lies within my power, for in a struggle essentially

[1] After the meeting Gandhiji paid a visit to the hospital where the injured volunteers had been admitted.

[2] The statement was issued through the Associated Press.

religious, there can be no violence on the part of those who want to be guardians of the purity of their faiths. The pity of it all, however, is that demonstration on the part of sanatanists should be at all necessary. They must know that I have no violence in me and I want no compulsion in any shape or form. They know that even with reference to the Temple-entry Bill I have declared in emphatic terms that I should not be guilty of advocating the passage of this Bill if the Hindu majority was against it. This is a movement purely and simply for changing of hearts on the part of caste Hindus. I know that hearts cannot be changed by legislation. Not one single temple, so far as I am aware, has been opened by compulsion or show of it. If any temple can be proved to have been so opened I would move heaven and earth to right the wrong. The whole of this agitation against reformers managed by a few hotheaded men, I fear, and backed by influence behind curtain is wholly unnecessary.

The Hindustan Times, 27-4-1934

490. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, DEOGHAR[1]

April 26, 1934

It is a matter of great pleasure to me to have been able to revisit this holy place. My ancestors had visited it. But I admit that I was not fired with the same kind of motive that they had. You may not also know that this was one of the places where, on my return from South Africa to India in 1915, I was invited to open the Ashram. During my last visit, practically all the *Pandas* (priests) were volunteers, lavishing their affectionate services on me and my party. They knew that I had the same convictions about untouchability that I have today. They knew, too, that there was hardly a meeting at which I did not speak on untouchability in those days. But, alas! on this occasion they are divided into two camps; one serving me and my party and the other, be it ever so small, resisting me. I know that it is not given to man to retain the affection of all men for all time. I know of myself that such a possibility has existed for me, a very imperfect man, only in imagination. It is, therefore, neither a matter for surprise nor sorrow that some of my old friends, the *Pandas*, I find in the opposite camp. But the manner of resistance is a matter for deep grief to me. I suppose they

[1]Gandhiji spoke in Hindi. This summary of the speech was prepared by Gandhij himself.

are responsible for the circulation of leaflets full of untruths and half-truths about myself designed to wean the people from me. Decency of language has been thrown to the winds. One of the leaflets is supposed to have been issued under the instructions of the Maharaja Saheb of Gidhaur. But unless I had authentic proof, I should refuse to believe that he had lent his name to it.

Black-flag demonstrations took place also at some places during my tour in the South. But they were carried out gracefully. It was merely a demonstration that those who held the black flags were opposed to the movement. Many of them were urchins who did not hesitate to return my greetings, which invariably went to the black-flaggers as to the others, and even to take part in the shouts of joy. And I have little doubt that they should have said with their distinguished ancestors, Drona and Bhishma, that they were doing it for the sake of their bellies. Here, alas! not only has decency of language been thrown away, they have resorted to violence. Early in the morning, at half past two, when I alighted at Jashidih, they filled the air with yells of denunciation. They even became violent. If they could have done so, they would certainly have smashed the hood of the car to pieces. Heavy blows descended on it. The pane at the back was smashed and I had a providential escape from being seriously hurt. I believe that they do not want to do me bodily injury, and by landing lathi blows on the hood and breaking the pane, they had intended merely to make a demonstration of their anger against me. But whatever their intention, their action was undoubtedly violent. It might have ended in a manner which they would themselves have deplored. I should like to contrast the behaviour of [some people] this morning with the very correct behaviour of the Zamorin of Calicut I went to Guruvayur. The Zamorin had certainly some cause for indignation when the battle was raging round that famous temple of the South, and yet he had prohibited any demonstration even the black flags, against me, and he received me with marked cordiality in his palace. He frankly recognized that on each side it was a battle of principle against principle. The *Pandas* of Deoghar and the local Varnashram Swaraj Sangh have not had even a pretext, which the Zamorin would have had, for making a demonstration against me. And what is this opposition for and why this arrogation of possession of sanatana truth by the self styled sanatanists? I have put forth the same claim that they have of trying to follow sanatana dharma. They have as much or as little right as I have to the exclusive interpretation

of what it is. I swear by the same Shastras that they do. There undoubtedly is a difference between them and me. But that is purely in the matter of interpretation. Such differences there always will be. Surely they should be satisfied with the assurance that I do not seek to impose my views on anybody. I utterly disbelieve in methods of compulsion. I seek to bring people round to my view of truth by an appeal to their reason and to their hearts.

Take, for instance, the temple-entry question. In the course of my tour, I have had the privilege of declaring open many temples amidst the acclamations of thousands of people, practically without a dissentient voice. In the single instance where there was an appreciable minority against the opening, I refused to open the temple till the minority was won over or it had at least ample time to act upon the majority. If I discovered that a single temple was opened without such consent or by compulsion in any form, I should move heaven and earth to have the temple re-closed to Harijans. Then, take the Temple-entry Bill. I do believe that it is the bounden duty of every caste Hindu to adopt every legitimate means to redeem the pledge given to Harijans in Bombay during my fast in 1932. That pledge included resort to legislation when it was necessary. I may be allowed to say that the Temple-entry Bill or an equivalent is absolutely necessary if the will of the majority is to prevail. Today, according to legal opinion, even one dissentient voice is enough to keep a temple closed to Harijans. But I would be no party even to such enabling legislation being passed, if there is not a clear majority of caste Hindus in favour of it. What, therefore, the sanatanist opposition means is that I must not even cultivate public opinion in favour of such legislation under self-imposed restriction, which several of my friends and co-workers consider to be ludicrous. For I do not even take the votes at public meetings. Though I know that the majority will vote in favour of such legislation, I refrain, because I believe that it will be wrong to take the votes of the general body of people in technical matters. The question of necessity or advisability of such a law as the Temple-entry Bill is one to be decided by technical experts, that is, in this instance, lawyers. I have said repeatedly that the votes of only caste Hindus should count in the matter of opening temples. For, if they are unwilling to open their temples to Harijans, it shows that they have not cleansed themselves of untouchatility. And it would be of little avail to me if all the temples were opened but caste Hindus were against such opening. There is no such thing as bringing about purity by compulsion. I have

tried, therefore, to discover the cause of the opposition, and I have failed unless it be that public opinion is fast changing and untouchability is on its last lap and that, therefore, by hook or by crook my tour should be brought to a standstill, no matter how scru-pulously fair my means may be of converting Hindu opinion. I have, therefore, no hesitation in saying that by this morning's behaviour the sanatanists lowered the sanatanist flag in this sacred place, even as the great Yudhishthira lowered it by uttering a half-truth. For, has not the reputed author of the *Mahabharata* told us that, when Yudhishthira uttered the fateful half-truth, the wheel of his chariot sank some feet into the ground and that he had to make amends even after death? I, therefore, implore the sanatanist friends to repent of their behaviour in the sanctuary of their hearts and resolve never to repeat the violence of this morning. To the reformers I say, you are in an overwhelming majority. Those who are organizing the opposition are to be counted on one's fingers. You should try to win them over by your patience, gentleness and personal purity. This movement is one of self purification, and only the pure of heart can have place in it. There ought to be no interference with the demons-trators. They have every right to express their resentment by carrying flags, if they like, so that I may know how many are opposed to this movement. The difficulty comes in only when they obstruct my passage or show their resentment by resorting to other species of violence. In any case you must, especially as you are in an over-whel-ming majority, be gentle and patient with the sanatanist friends, seek to win them over by persuasion and trust that, even if persuasion fails, time will bring them round to the truth if you are really representing it. There should be no retaliation on the part of reformers. You should know that in this movement of self-purification any violence done by the reformers may involve serious penance on my part.

Now, a word to the audience. I understand that there are several lakhs of Santhals, who call themselves Hindus, observe Hindu customs and manners, worship the Hindu deities and yet are regarded as untouchables to all intents and purposes. Those of them who do not call themselves Hindus are not regarded by you as untouchables; but those who do call themselves Hindus are almost punished for doing so. What is the wrong they have done? They have given up intoxicating liquors. They worship the cow as you do and I do or should do. They have even adopted vegetarianism. They utter Ramanama with perhaps greater zest and certainly greater faith than you or I do. They

utilize their idle hours by spinning and weaving and thus add to the wealth of the country. They deserve to be treated with affectionate consideration, instead of as pariahs of society. There is no warrant in the Shastras for regarding them as untouchables. If there is, the sooner we perish the better it will be for us and the world. And to the Santhals I would say, "If you have faith in Ramanama you will have it in spite of your being rejected by your fellows. That sacred name, and not they, will save you and give you peace and joy, of which no one can rob you."

Harijan, 4-5-1934

491. WHOSE OPINION CAN COUNT?

A sanatanist pandit complained to me the other day that in the matter of the untouchability Bills the opinion of non-Hindus, Arya Samajists, Sikhs and others who did not believe in temples and idol-worship was being taken by magistrates in Benares. If that is so, it is surprising. I have always held the view, and have expressed it in these columns, that, if opinion must be taken, that of non-Hindus, nay even of Hindu Harijans, cannot count either way. For, untouchability is a doctrine with which the caste Hindus alone are concerned, and the Bills have been designed to reflect their opinion. To hold otherwise would be to introduce coercion of caste Hindus by non-caste Hindus and others. The anti-untouchability movement is a movement of internal reform among caste Hindus. It is one of repentance and self-purification. These cannot be imposed from without. If, therefore, I had any influence with the Government and if the sanatanist pandit had given me correct information, I should advise the Government to revise their instructions so as to confine the taking of opinion to caste Hindus only on the question of approval of the Bills.

My fear, however, is not that the Bills are likely to be passed by reason of non-Hindu opinion being given in their favour. My belief is that the so-called sanatanist opinion is not truly representative. For, so far as I am aware, caste Hindu opinion is overwhelmingly in favour of the temples being thrown open to Harijans. As to the advisability of passing the Bills in question, the masses, I hold, are incapable of pronouncing judgment. It is purely a question of law to be decided by lawyers. If caste-Hindu opinion is overwhelmingly in favour of the opening of temples to Harijans, they have to be opened, notwithstan-

ding the opposition of pandits, however eminent they might be. If the existing law is powerless to give effect to that opinion, as lawyers say it is, the legislature ought to correct the existing practice so as to enable caste-Hindu opinion to operate freely.

Indeed, viewed in the light here suggested, the Bills should never have been circulated for opinion. They cannot themselves throw open a single temple to Harijans. They are enabling Bills. The oppositionists hold that, even if there is one caste Hindu against the opening of a single Hindu temple, indeed, even if no one is against the opening, no temple can be opened. The position is no doubt absurd, but such in theory is the opinion held and expressed by those who claim to speak for sanatana dharma. I hold that it is the duty of the Government to hold the scales even and remove the admitted legal obstacle in the way of reform. The Bills are designed to do that and no more. The opening of temples would depend wholly on the will of caste Hindus who are entitled to worship in the existing temples.

Harijan, 27-4-1934

492. NOTES

SHAMEFUL, IF TRUE

The same pandit who complained to me about the taking of opinion by magistrates in Benares on the anti-untouchability Bills also complained that some temples had been forcibly opened at the instance of reformers. If that is so, it is certainly shameful and contrary to the wishes of those who, like me, view the movement from the purely religious standpoint and regard it as one of self-purification. Even if all the temples could be compulsorily opened to Harijans, I should not regard it as a welcome event in Hinduism. It would contribute nothing to the promotion of the spirit of brotherhood of man at which the movement aims. Indeed, the compulsory opening of even a single temple to Harijans can only retard the movement in that it must accentuate opposition, instead of weakening it. A change of heart is possible only in a free atmosphere.

The pandit produced no proof in support of his allegation that certain two temples [*sic*] in the North were forcibly opened. I have asked for proof and referred the allegation to friends for verification. I thought, however, that I should not wait for verification before referring to the subject. If it is true, the sooner the mischief is mended

the better it is for the cause itself. Such temples should be closed to Harijans till a better day dawns. If the allegation proves to be false or exaggerated nothing will have been lost by the superfluous warning given by me.

Harijan, 27-4-1934

493. HARIJANS' HANDICAP

One of the addresses presented to me at Gauhati by the Harijans has the following recital of their grievances:

> 1. We are not allowed entrance into the great Hajo temple and many other devalayas for purposes of worship, nor are we allowed admission into namghars belonging to Mahapurushiya or Damodhoria sects;
>
> 2. We are subjected to persecution by the higher castes, if we want to make use of elephants and dolas in marriages;
>
> 3. At the time of giving diksha, we have to be satisfied with touching the footprints of our Dharma Gurus, but are never allowed to touch their feet;
>
> 4. In some places, people of higher castes prevent us from using public wells, although the local authorities themselves maintain no discriminatory rules regarding them;
>
> 5. No Pujari Brahmin would touch us to put sacrificial tilak on our foreheads, and the idols made by us are considered polluted;
>
> 6. Oftentimes we cannot perform shraddha for want of priests; and some Brahmins would not perform any pooja for us even in their own houses;
>
> 7. In villages the higher-caste Hindus would be polluted if they happen to touch us after their daily bath;
>
> 8. Excepting in the Gauhati College hostels, we are not allowed into the common dining-room.

In spite of the galling social persecution, the signatory was able to say on behalf of those whom he represented:

> From the enumeration of grievances you must not think that we do this with a view to spite, or out of ill will towards, our more fortunate brethren of the higher castes. We venture to assure you that we have tried to realize the significance of your great doctrine of nonviolence and that we believe that in course of time the more advanced sections of the Hindu community will embrace us as their fellow brethren.

In Assam I noticed no settled conviction about untouchability even among those who might be considered orthodox. A little hard work put in by cultured men and women of purity can bring about a

healthy and silent revolution in the unholy custom of untouchability.

I would like to complete the list of the grievances enumerated above by adding those of the so-called 'coolie' population imported from the other provinces. The scavengers of Assam are mostly drawn from the neighbouring provinces. These are consigned to ghettos where they have, as they complained, no lights and most inadequate sanitary conveniences. Their plight in the rains must be infinitely worse than I found it to be when everything was comparatively dry. With but a little consideration and very little expense, the grievous defects can be immediately remedied.

Harijan, 27-4-1934

494. SPINNING AND WEAVING FOR HARIJANS

During my peregrinations I have observed that spinning and weaving are among the industries that are supporting thousands of Harijans and, if properly organized, can support many more. Indeed, in some places, there are to be found weavers who are classed as untouchables on account of their occupation. They are mostly weavers of coarsest khadi without any pattern. This class was fast dying out when khadi came to the rescue and there was created a demand for their coarse manufacture. It was then discovered that there were numerous Harijan families that even subsisted on spinning. Thus khadi is doubly the poor man's staff of life. It helps the poorest, including the Harijans, who are the most helpless among the poorest. They are so because many occupations which are available to the others are not available to the Harijans.

Apart from its great value from the Harijan standpoint, I have not omitted, to the extent I have been able during the Harijan tour, to study the whole problem of khadi. And I have found that the time has come for khadi workers to emphasize more than ever before the necessity of greater concentration on the observance of the laws of khadi economics. Some of them are essentially different from those that govern the general economics. Thus as a rule, articles manufactured in one place are sent or attempted to be sent to all parts of the world. Those who manufacture the articles need not use them at all. Not so with khadi. Its peculiarity is that it has to be used where it is produced and preferably by the spinners and weavers themselves. Thus, the demand for khadi when thus used is automatically assured. No doubt this ideal will never be reached. But the worth of khadi will

always be measured by the extent to which the ideal is reached. Khadi is a cottage industry in this special sense in which no other industry is or can be, except agriculture in a restricted sense, if agriculture may be regarded as an industry. Therefore it is necessary to educate the spinners and weavers to appreciate the simple economics of khadi. Where cloth is spun and woven by the spinners and weavers for their own use, it is naturally cheapest for them.

It follows that we must not seek to send khadi for sale far away from its place of manufacture. The surplus khadi should be sold in the village where it is manufactured. If there is still a surplus, it should be sold in the district of its manufacture. Special varieties will no doubt continue to be manufactured by those families which have woven artistic patterns from time immemorial. That sort of khadi will live, no matter what befalls the villagers' khadi, which is meant as a perennial source of labour and income for them.

The foregoing does not mean a revolution in the immediate administration of the A.I.S.A. Its depots will go on as usual. But it does mean a revolution in the thought world. The best mind of khadi workers will concentrate itself upon the village khadi, upon its style and durability, to suit the taste of the villagers. There will thus have to be a better and more real bond between ginners, carders, spinners and weavers, on the one hand, and the khadi workers on the other. There will be no feverish anxiety to increase the sales in towns. These sales will be regulated according to the demand of town-dwellers and the propaganda conducted by khadi lovers who will not or cannot directly reach the villagers but who will not be satisfied till they have sold some khadi on behalf of the poor spinners and weavers. Let this be borne in mind that khadi can be permanent only when it has obtained a permanent footing as village wear.

Harijan, 27-4-1934

495. A GREAT HARIJAN OF ASSAM

The acting Principal of Cotton College, Assam, thus writes to Thakkar Bapa:

> The enclosure will speak for itself. Dr. S. B. Mali has left behind him a helpless widow and two sons of the age of 7 and 5 years, respectively. As they belong to the depressed classes (practically untouchables to the orthodox Hindus of higher castes), it will be earning the gratitude of the public of Assam if your Society could sanction an allowance for the widow for the education of her small boys. On receipt of your favourable reply I shall ask the widow to

send a formal application to you.

Thakkar Bapa is attending to the widow's welfare and has sent me the character sketch of the late Dr. B. Mali, which I share with the readers of *Harijan.*[1] Had Dr. Mali not been an 'untouchable', it is difficult to say how high he would have soared. We are so stupid that we do not know even our own interest. In consigning crores of people to untouchability, we criminally waste some of the finest human material we have in our midst, and the pity of it is that we do all that in the sacred name of religion and make religion itself hateful to those whose humane instinct is wounded and who in their wrath are unable to distinguish between religion and its false votaries.

Harijan, 27-4-1934

496. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

April 27, 1934

CHI. MANILAL,

Read the accompanying letter from Miss Schlesin. I have replied to her that I could not guide you from here, and that she and Kallenbach should do that. I do hold that, if you have been making racial attacks, you should desist. But I don't feel inclined to criticize you from this distance.

Two letters from Ba are enclosed.

I feel completely tired as I write this letter at 3.45 a.m. Hence I will not add anything more. Ramdas and Devdas have got daughters. All the four are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4819

497. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

April 27, 1934

BA,

It is nearing four in the morning. My eyes feel heavy. I got your letter. Nimu and Lakshmi have given birth to daughters. The

[1] This is not reproduced here.

mothers and the daughters are quite well. Now the delivery of Bardoli Lakshmi is awaited. Some news about her also is expected in a few days. It seems Kanti will meet me in Ranchi on the 30th. Narandas also will meet me there. I get news about Rami and Kunvarji. They are both well. Since Madhavdas is all right now, why need I ask him to go to Porbandar? He is eager to start earning. I write to Bhansali from time to time. He is still in Than. His health is not at all good, but he is cheerful. Chhaganlal Joshi went and saw him. Since Bhansali's legs are not all right, he has stopped travelling. Santok and Radha are all right. Rukhi had been to see me. She had come for treatment of her eyes. Prabhavati, Kisan and Om are with me. Miss Lester also is with me. There is Rajendrababu's sister too. I don't remember anything about Lakshmibehn of Shikarpur. Sometimes it does happen that a few lines are scored out in your letters. I suppose I needn't do anything now about Lakshmibai. Jamnalalji is in Patna. Pyarelal also is there. Vasumati has gone to Wardha. She is better. Vallabhbhai is quite well. Yes, Durga and others have again settled down. I thought I had written to you about that. My health is good. There is no cause at all for worry. I am glad that you liked the slivers. They were made with Keshu's carding-bow, but were sent by Mirabehn. Assam is a small province where there is a large number of tea gardens. Most of them are owned by Englishmen. The labourers in them come from Bihar. Since the rainfall there is heavy, there is greenery everywhere all through the year. Besides, the Brahmaputra flows through the province and so the region is fertile and beautiful. The people there eat too much opium and, therefore, seem lethargic. All the women know how to weave and they weave the clothfor their own requirements. Many of them also spin.

Blessings to all the women from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 24

498. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, GUMIA[1]

[*April 28, 1934*][2]

Gandhiji said that it gave him great joy to meet them[3]. Referring to the groups of spinners, he said it was a fine thing that they should be producing yarn in large quantities and wearing the cloth woven from it. But this did not fully satisfy him. He wanted all the Santhals to take to it. If they all span, wove and wore their own cloth, they would fulfil the great ideal of khadi and they would be infinitely the better off themselves.

What mothers or sisters are there who would think of giving up making their *rotis* at home and getting them from the bazaar? Just as we eat our home-made chapatis, so should we wear our homespun cloth. And remember this, too, that our mothers and sisters, who make our chapatis in the home, take care not to give us badly mixed and under-baked bread. They know that, for the good of the family, the bread must be well made. That is exactly how we must regard khadi. We must not be satisfied till we can card, spin and weave well, thus producing good, lasting cloth for the home.

I must confess that the quality of carding and spinning is not half good enough to satisfy me. Your implements are also unwieldy, but could easily be improved if you had the technical knowledge. The rough quality of your khadi and the slowness of your production are simply due to want of knowledge. It is clear that those who have been working amongst you to serve and help you have not been able to impart the full skill of khadi production because they themselves are perhaps not in possession of the art. It is necessary for an instructor to have full mastery over the technique himself.

Gandhiji then went on to explain to them how, if their instruments were improved, they would be able to get the same output as at present in half the time each day. That would give them leisure for other things, or if they needed more cloth, they would produce double the quantity.

Gandhiji then spoke of the curse of drink, describing its awful effect on man's morality, and urged those of them who were addicted to the habit of drinking this poison to abjure it henceforth.

He then referred to the complaint that they had voiced in their welcome address

[1] Extracted from Mirabehn's report "Gandhiji with Nature's Children" .
[2] From the itinerary in Valji Desai's "Weekly Letter", *Harijan*, 11-5-1934.
[3] The Santhals.

about the hardships they were suffering from. He said:

You must have patience and you must acquire knowledge—the knowledge gained through a pure and devotional life. That spare time which you will gain when you improve your spinning methods can be devoted to the study of the *Ramayana* and other religious books, to improving your Hindi, to learning Bengali or anything else you like of that kind. If you gain purity and knowledge in this way, your hardships will melt.

Gandhiji then spoke to them of the beauty and power of the name of God:

You must learn to take the name of Rama with full devotion and faith. When you study the *Ramayana*, you will learn from Tulsidas the divine power of that blessed name.

You might ask me why I tell you to use the word Rama and not one of the many other names of the Creator. True, His names are as many as and more than the leaves on a tree, and I might, for instance, ask you to use the word God. But what meaning, what associations would it have for you here? In order to enable you to feel anything when repeating the word God, I should have to teach you some English. I should have to explain to you the foreign people's thoughts and associations.

But in telling you to repeat the name of Rama, I am giving you a name worshipped since countless generations by the people of this land—a name familiar to the very animals and birds, the very trees and stones of Hindustan through many thousand years. You know the story of Ahalya? No, I see you don't. But you will soon learn it when you study the *Ramayana*—learn how a stone by the road side sprung to life at the touch of Rama's foot as he passed by. You must learn to repeat the blessed name of Rama with such sweetness and such devotion that the birds will pause in their singing to listen to you—that the very trees will bend their leaves towards you, stirred by the divine melody of that Name.

And when you are able to do this, I tell you I will come all the way on foot from Bombay, as on a pilgrimage, to hear you. In His sweet name lies a power which can cure all our ills.

Harijan, 11-5- 193

499. LETTER TO M. S. ANEY

RANCHI,
April 30, 1934

DEAR BAPUJI ANEY,

I have gone through your letter to Nariman.

I agree with you entirely that the A.I.C.C. had to be held at a place and date firstly convenient to the members at large and then to me so long as my presence was necessary.

I also agree that the co-operation of Sjts. Kelkar, Jamnadas and others should be invited.

Of course there can be no settled programme. It will vary with the circumstances as they may arise from time to time.

I am quite clear that it will be wrong for the Congress to abandon C. D. altogether. I would have the Congress an illegal body so long as even the C. D. as restricted by me is objected to by the Government.

But that is my personal view. If the majority do not want it as restricted by me it should be definitely abandoned.

Yours sincerely

From a copy: C.W. 7955. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

500. LETTER TO CHUNILAL

RANCHI,
April 30, 1934

BHAI CHUNILAL,

I received your letter today. It is beyond my power to understand your step. Still, I wish that you should complete your fast safely.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 105

501. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

April 30, 1934

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

Your slow fever ought not to persist. Limit your work. Take hip-baths. Live only on milk and fruit. If fruit is too expensive, eat ripe tomatoes, uncooked. You should be able to get fruit in the Ashram itself.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. BHAGWANJI
HARIJAN ASHRAM, SABARMATI
B.B.&C.I.RLY.

From Gujarati: C.W. 370. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

502. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

April 30, 1934

BHAI MOOLCHAND,

I have found Swami Dayanand quite different from his writing. The work he did has great value for me. I stick to my views about *Satyarthaprakash.*[1] I have read it from a religious viewpoint. It shows an imperfect knowledge of other religions, which have not been seen with the eyes of their votaries. But I do not wish to enter into a discussion on this. I hold the Arya Samaj in great esteem.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 840

[1] For Gandhiji's views on *Satyarthaprakash, vide* "Hindu -Muslim Tension: its cause and Cure", 29-5-1924.

503. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

May 1, 1934

BA,

I got your letter addressed to Ramdas. I am writing this from Ranchi. We arrived here last evening. At the moment a good many people are here. Sushila from Rajkot also has come. Jamnalalji, Pyarelal, Rajaji, Dr. Ansari, Narandas, Kanti, Lilavati Munshi, Sarojini devi, etc., have all come. Dr. Roy is coming today. We shall be staying here up to Thursday. After that we shall go to Jamshedpur, and from there to Utkal. A son has been born to Maruti and Lakshmi. I keep good health. Please do not worry in the least. I shall be in Patna when you are released and from there I shall be going to Calcutta. Ramdas is pining for you. So go and see him first. From there go to Delhi. You should go to Bardoli too, and from there you may go to Ahmedabad for a few days. About that time I may also go there, in which case you can join me. This is only what occurs to me. Do what you yourself like. Yes, if you go to Wardha, Deolali will be on the way. Therefore break journey there and see Radha, and Kishorelal too. This must be done in any case. I had long talks with Raojibhai about Shanta, Lalita, etc. I will try to send a copy of the *Ramagita*.

Blessings to all women from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 25

504. CONFERENCE WITH SWARAJIST LEADERS[1]

RANCHI,

May 1,1934

GANDHIJI: Sarojini Devi told me that it was generally understood that I had advised the complete suspension of civil disobedience on the part of the Congress. Then I would say it is not so. If this is the interpretation put upon my statement, it is the imperfection of my

[1] Among those present were Asaf Ali, C. Rajagopalachari, Dr. Ansari, Rajendra Prasad, Sarojini Naidu, Dr. B. C. Roy, Bhulabhai Desai, Jamnalal Bajaj, K. M. Munshi, Deepnarayan Singh, Mathuradas Trikumji and K. F. Nariman.

language, but this is not what I have sought to convey. Dr. Ansari, Bhulabhai and Bidhan know what is at the back of my mind.

BHULABHAI: They do not mean to say that this is what the statement conveys, but that this is what it ought to be.

G. Sarojini Devi observed that the interpretation put upon my statement in Bombay was that there would be a suspension of civil disobedience on behalf of the Congress, and that my civil disobedience would be quite individual. It is not so.

B. The wish is father to the thought. Many people read into it that meaning. The two conceptions are quite distinct. They read that meaning in hope. Please see if it may be possible to remove the wrong impression by another statement.

G. Is it the impression also among those that are here? And is it your desire that the Congress should wash its hands of civil disobedience as restricted to me?

B. Will you offer it in the name of the Congress?

G. Yes.

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI: Is the Congress going to disown him?

B. There is a third, middle course. It may be possible to persuade Gandhiji not to treat it as the Congress disowning him but as his releasing the Congress from it.

G. It would be possible if it was my advice that civil disobedience should be undertaken by me not on behalf of the Congress but on my own account.

B. It may be possible to put it to Gandhiji as the desire of the Congress, 'Will you please relieve us? We are unable to bear the burden.'

ASAF ALI: I have understood your statement to mean that you have relieved the Congressmen; and since you say that civil disobedience should be according to your own conception, you have confined it to yourself. The Congress has faith in civil disobedience, but we cannot say so about the modification of it.

G. Under these circumstances the Congress should free itself altogether from this.

A. A. The civil disobedience must remain in our armoury. But the present is not the time to use it, nor does it seem likely to come in the near future. You should not use that weapon now.

DEEPNARAYAN SINGH: The Congress would wish not to reject it, but to suspend it.

G. I will explain later why I have given this advice. But what I wish to know just now is whether my language is capable of bearing

the interpretation I am now putting on it.

D. S. We have taken it to mean complete suspension of civil disobedience.

G. If the people have interpreted it in this way, then it would be a different matter altogether. A sense of relief there is, because they have come to know that they have no longer to offer civil disobedience. 'He will go to prison. It is enough if one man goes to jail on our behalf.' If the sense of relief is due to this feeling, it is one thing. But it would be quite a different thing if the sense of relief is due to the feeling that, 'He will go on offering it himself; but we are free from it.' After Sarojini Devi spoke to me, I asked myself if there was anything in my statement to justify this interpretation. I read the statement once again at three o'clock last night. I have nowhere said in the statement that the Congress should suspend civil disobedience. In fact, I have assumed that the Congress is not prepared for complete suspension. In Poona it was definitely against it. If the Congressmen wish to get out of it altogether, I must respect their wish, and you may disown me. It would, in my opinion, be detrimental to Congress prestige. I said so at Poona also. If there is violence and it goes on increasing, we can suspend civil disobedience; but we cannot suspend it because our number is small. We should carry on civil disobedience, even if there is one satyagrahi left. If the adviser says, 'I have nothing left now and even I am unable to offer civil disobedience', then we can do something else. But I do not feel that I cannot offer civil disobedience. I feel no despondency in me. I do feel that it can be still more powerful in certain circumstances. One of them is that civil disobedience is confined to me. I want to do this as the Congress expert on this subject. The Congress is responsible for civil disobedience. But finally I am responsible. I am not feeling helpless. I cannot suspend it in my own person, nor can the Congress. The Congress dare not suspend it. The Congress must not suspend it, because thousands of persons have ruined themselves in this movement. What answer shall we give to them? And what reward? Are you afraid that the Congress will still be treated as illegal? But there is something much more powerful.

D. S. They will not like to disown you, and yet they want to suspend this civil disobedience for a time.

G. You can't have both the things together. If the Congressmen have that desire and yet do not want to disown me, I may withdraw from the Congress. There are two instances of a similar nature. I

might have become a member of the Servants of India Society. But it came to votes and I withdrew. I said, 'I don't want to divide the house.' The second instance refers to the Gujarati Sahitya Parishad. Some people wanted to elect me as the president of the Parishad in 1926, and there was the controversy over the proposal. Munshi brought the matter to me. I said, 'I don't want to enter into any rivalry. It is unthinkable.'

B. Government did not put the two propositions together; it was the newspapers that did so.

MUNSHI: My impression is that they want the A.I.C.C. to do nothing more than endorsing Gandhiji's statement. If you don't do so, it will be a vote of censure, whether you wish it or not.

G. There are some Congressmen who want to go further. I have, in my statement, advised the Congress to restrict civil disobedience to me. Now the suggestion is that I should practise it in my own person but not in the name of the Congress. If that is the desire of the bulk of the Congressmen then I would give that advice, without dividing the A.I.C.C. on the question.

B. That is precisely what I want to say.

G. I want to know two things: first, whether I am misunderstood; secondly, whether it is the desire of the bulk of the Congressmen that I should go further than this.

B. If the word 'effectively' means endorsing your statement, Congressmen would be too glad.

C. R. 'Effective' means something more.

G. It is quite likely that the Government may say that this is not enough.

C. R. They had a doubt as to whether a majority of the Congressmen would accept the advice. Let us only think whether we want to disown Gandhiji.

G. The Congressmen don't want to disown me. They want this accommodation from me. If that is so, I must give them that accommodation. If there is such a desire on the part of a majority of Congressmen, I must do so.

C. R. Does it not mean that they don't want civil disobedience?

G. No, I won't go so far as to say that. An honest man would say, 'I cannot understand one man doing it. If you have invincible faith, you may do it. If you show results, we shall come to it!' That many can't understand it I can see. But my hope is that many don't

have that feeling. Having seen brilliant results, they would say, 'We can't possibly give it up.' If I give up civil disobedience, I would be denying myself. There are some Congressmen who wish to tell me, 'You should not isolate yourself from the nation; therefore, you too should give up civil disobedience.' The U.P. Congressmen have said this.

DR. ANSARI: They prohibit you just now, but they say, 'When you go forward, take us with you.

JAMNALAL BAJAJ: In any case he is not going to jail just now—at least not till August.

G. The resolution in effect means to say, 'Your advice is good, but you should go one step further and suspend civil disobedience completely. When in future we go that way, we will all go together.' Grannie[1], you were right about those two women, and I was staggered.

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[1] Gandhiji was addressing Sarojini Naidu.

left now and even I am unable to offer civil disobedience', then we can do something else. But I do not feel that I cannot offer civil disobedience. I feel no despondency in me. I do feel that it can be still more powerful in certain circumstances. One of them is that civil disobedience is confined to me. I want to do this as the Congress expert on this subject. The Congress is responsible for civil disobedience. But finally I am responsible. I am not feeling helpless. I cannot suspend it in my own person, nor can the Congress. The Congress dare not suspend it. The Congress must not suspend it, because thousands of persons have ruined themselves in this movement. What answer shall we give to them? And what reward? Are you afraid that the Congress will still be treated as illegal? But there is something much more powerful.

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NARIMAN: I want civil disobedience to be given up as the official programme of the Congress.

BIDHAN ROY: Nariman says that in accordance with your statement, it will be the official programme of the Congress.

G. Civil disobedience is still the official programme of the Congress.

N. Can you please give us the formula you will place before the A.I.C.C.?

G. My formula will be: 'Having read Gandhi's statement carefully, and having heard his explanation, the A.I.C.C. endorses the advice tendered by him to restrict civil disobedience to himself, provided that when and if he has the proposal for the extension of the programme of civil disobedience, the A.I.C.C. reserves the right of

[1] Gandhiji was addressing Sarojini Naidu.

accepting it or not. The A.I.C.C. asks all other Congressmen to follow his advice and suspend civil disobedience.' It will not be a blank card given to me. Every time I have something, I shall come to the Congress. You don't pledge yourselves as to the future. You reserve your right to accept my advice or reject it. The Congress has a perfect right to offer civil disobedience. I say that you should not do so just now. The Congress may not do so till the expert does not advise. All energy will thus be husbanded, instead of being frittered away and wasted. The nation has got energy of which you have no conception but I have. I do not want to put an undue strain on the energy. Those who want to go to jail may retain the desire and prepare; and if and when I am ready, I shall come to the Congress, if I am alive. Civil disobedience will be wholly unnecessary, if the constructive programme is followed out. The parliamentary programme will also form part of the Congress programme, supposing the members of the Congress who go to the Councils are not going there for their personal ends. If a communal settlement is achieved, if untouchability is removed, if there is an Indian sober instead of an Indian drunk, and if we build up universal cottage industries in India, then there will be no occasion for civil disobedience. My civil disobedience will cover everything. My civil disobedience will be enough even after swaraj is achieved. The only difficulty lies in convincing the people that this way lies swaraj. And your parliamentary programme will be nugatory, if Hindu-Muslim unity is not achieved. You will be in a turmoil.

N. But how will this decision contribute to the parliamentary programme?

G. It will contribute by releasing your energy. I cannot go into the Councils. I am a red rag to the bull. My silence has contributed more than my words. My words have lost their power. I know that I shall give a good account of myself when the time comes.

N. Is this dual programme not inconsistent—civil disobedience confined to one individual on the one hand, and the parliamentary work on the other?

G. It is absolutely consistent. The law-maker is no good, if he is not also a law-breaker.

N. I can understand the same individual doing the two things at different times. But how can an organization do both the things at the same time?

G. Yes, it would be very difficult, but not impossible. If the Congress does not endorse my statement, you will be rendered impotent, and you will be asked to give up position after position. If you say, with your back to the wall, 'Thus far and no further', no Government can defy you.

B. You can make a good law and can break a bad one. This distinction is unnecessarily verbal.

N. Are we to have a dual programme with two parts opposite to one another?

G. Are they really opposite?

N. We then shall have two sections—one making and the other breaking laws. Why should there be hurry for Council-entry at this stage?

G. If I were in your place, as lover of the country I would say, 'We do believe in Council-entry.' I tried to see if we could have such a strong mentality in the Congress that no one would think of the Councils. But I find that we have a large body of men looking to the Councils. I will not call it a weakness. It is a felt want in the country, I called it a weakness while I was hoping about keeping out this mentality from the Congress. But I could not keep it out. Every time it erupts. I realized the situation. I goaded Dr. Bidhan Roy. I said, 'I advise you to form a party.' And I gave similar advice to Asaf Ali, Satyamurti and Abhyankar. I said to them, 'In the Councils you will be able to swear at the Government.' 'But we are swearing at the Government', they said, 'when we are in jail.' 'But you can't go to jail', I answered, 'because you don't believe in individual civil disobedience. When mass action comes, you will, of course, be there.' I am for prosecuting the constructive programme. I am not a believer in Councils. But if I were, I would be the first member of the Swaraj Party.

Mahatma, Vol. III, pp. 261-6

505. LETTER TO ROMAIN ROLLAND

RANCHI,
May 3, 1934

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your two searching letters which Mira has translated for me. Your letter about your personal affairs has touched me deeply. Your utter frankness and your endeavour to let me understand your action as fully as was possible endeared you all the more.

Your exposition of the Soviet system I appreciate. I shall try to find time to understand it more fully from Ceresole.

My love to you and yours.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 10585. Courtesy: Madeleine Rolland

506. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

RANCHI,
May 3, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your two letters. I have no remedy for your distress. Time alone can cure it. It shouldn't be made easy for people to go to jail and enjoy themselves there. What will it avail to run away from difficulties? What is the alternative? I have not snatched away the weapon which I had put into people's hands. I have suspended its use in order to demonstrate its effectiveness. This can be realized only through experience. Whoever lives will see it.

Chandulal, Kanjibhai, Chhotubhai[1] and Ravishankar[2] have arrived here. Mridula also has come, and so have Gosibehn[3] and Perinbehn. But I have no time to give you all the news. I am writing this letter only to soothe your feelings. Since others have been regularly writing to you, there will be no harm if I stop here. Velanbehn is still there. Kanti and Narandas are here. The latter seems to have grown thin.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 99

507. THREE UNHAPPY INCIDENTS

On the 25th April I commenced the Harijan tour in South Bihar. The first place to be visited was Arrah. On the way I had to motor to visit the temple of a zamindar, who had opened it to Harijans, and to receive a purse from him. As the Reception Committee had feared obstruction by black-flag sanatanists, they suggested that I should go in a lorry, in the hope that it might escape molestation, the sanatanists not suspecting that I would be thus stolen away. But, unfortunately for the members and for me, the black-flaggers had anticipated the ruse, and as soon as the lorry entered the dense crowd which contained them, they made a dash for it. They were but a drop in the ocean and were soon overpowered and torn away bodily from the lorry wheels to which they were clinging. I could not bear the sight. That nobody was

[1] Chhotubhai Purani, pioneer of physical culture activities in Gujarat
[2] Ravishankar Vyas, popularly known as Ravishankar Maharaj
[3] Dadabhai Naoroji's granddaughter

seriously hurt was mere good luck. The crowd was certainly in no mood to tolerate the obstruction. Terrific shouts of "पकड़ो पकड़ो" (seize, seize)" filled the air. The handling was none too gentle. The black-flaggers were determined to court injury, as the leader had assured me even when his party had begun the plan of obstruction. They were, therefore, resisting the seizure of their persons.

I was the helpless onlooker of the wretched scene. I had no present method of dealing with the situation, unless I was to turn back from my mission. I had, therefore, to allow the black-flaggers to be bodily removed. The police were on the spot and they, too, were trying to remove the obstructionists without hurting them. But though there was no serious hurt caused to anybody, the sight was enough to move me to the marrow. An indescribable sensation crept over me and I felt like swooning. I began the conscious recital of Ramanama, which unconsciously goes on continually in me. It steadied me. I was able to go through the day's work without anybody knowing what had happened to me or what was going on in my heart.

We reached the temple, received the purse and motored to Arrah to attend its meeting which, owing to the din and noise, it was impossible to address beyond saying a few words in response to the address and the purse. From Arrah we took the train for Buxar, which we reached at noon. There was a black-flag demonstration at Buxar. My car passed safely, but Mirabehn came in for a lathi blow on the hood of her car. Within 15 minutes of my arrival, I heard that there was a scuffle between the reception volunteers and the black-flaggers, who must have numbered not more than thirty in a vast crowd. This news was followed by three volunteers walking in, two with broken heads. The third had a swollen arm. They told me that they were injured while they were averting the blows of the sanatanists and pacifying the infuriated crowd, which was angry over the boisterous behaviour of the demonstrators. They told me also that some sanatanists were undoubtedly injured.

The time for attending the public meeting was approaching. I was ill at ease. The Arrah incident was still fresh in my mind. In consultation with Thakkar Bapa and Vindhyababu, I decided to walk to the meeting. I felt that the car was a red rag to the bull and that my walking would perhaps disarm the black-flaggers' anger and sober the crowd of sympathizers and admirers. Vindhyababu went in advance to tell the crowds that I proposed to walk to the meeting and that they should neither shout, nor attempt to touch my feet, nor molest the black-flaggers if they wished to demonstrate. The whole route, less than a mile, was lined on either side by a dense row of people, leaving a clear broad passage for me. The walk for me was a

pilgrimage. Thakkar Bapa and Vindhyababu had accompanied me. The meeting was most successful. The enormous crowd listened to me in perfect silence. I described what I had heard and seen and said that my apology was due to the demonstrators if any injury was done to them by the reception volunteers, and gave my assurance that I would inquire further into the happenings.

The meeting over, I walked back to the residence. Immediately on my reaching there, I found a sanatanist volunteer, who showed an injury in his head and told me that there were others hurt, of whom one would surely die. They were all at the hospital. I sent Thakkar Bapa to the hospital, whilst I was preparing for going to the station. On finishing the preparation, I followed him to the hospital and saw the injured men. I saw four in all, of whom the one who was reported to be dying was certainly not in any such condition. He was injured in the head. He was awaiting examination. He was able to carry on a sustained conversation with me and was quite in his senses. I should not describe his injuries as serious. The medical officer entertained no fear about his condition. The other three were not much hurt. All said they could recognize one of their assailants who had the reception committee ribbon. As I was unable to make a detailed enquiry, I asked them to send me the names or description of their assailant and a full account of what had happened. I told them what the injured volunteers had told me and assured them that I would do such penance as was possible for me if I found that the volunteers had assaulted them or had incited others to do so, and that for me they were just as dear as the volunteers. It was a hurried visit to the hospital. I had to hasten to the station to catch the train for Jashidih, the junction for Deoghar, which I was to reach at 2.10 a.m. the next day, i.e., 26th.

The night was disturbed by Pandit Lalnath and his party, who were travelling with us, getting out at every station and vigorously singing out "We shall not let him proceed on his mission" and other slogans. To my knowledge, they were in no way molested whilst they were going through the performance. Indeed, the crowds who had come to greet me, as they did practically at every station, remained still whilst the sanatanists were trying to provoke me into stopping the tour or the public into seriously molesting him and his party. Thus we reached Jashidih which was a seething mass of humanity. The station was ill-lighted. I therefore could not see faces. The police were certainly there. They took part side by side with the volunteers in escorting me.

After we had arrived with difficulty at the station gate where tickets were collected, we passed through a suffocating crowd inter-

spersed with numerous black-flag demonstrators. With the greatest difficulty the police officials and the volunteers showed me into the car. Thakkar Bapa, who was to have got into it with me, simply could not do so, and it was considered dangerous to detain the car for him. So the car proceeded, making its way very slowly through the crowd. Heavy blows descended on the hood of the car. I momentarily expected it to break to pieces. Meanwhile came a blow on the pane at the back of the hood. The broken bits fell at my side. Shashibabu, who was occupying the front seat, was sure it was a stone that was aimed at the pane. I was not sure. But I knew that I had escaped serious hurt if not worse.[1]

I felt sorry and humiliated to find sanatana dharma so vulgarly and violently represented. I can find no justification for the conduct of the few men who are organizing these demonstrations in the name of Varnashrama Swaraj Sangh.

Harijan, 4-5-1934

508. LETTER TO CHANDULAL DESAI[2]

RANCHI,
May 4, 1934

It is undoubtedly true that the temporary suspension of civil disobedience raises in an acute form the problem of the cultivators who have suffered and lost their farms and homes. Nor is there any doubt that it is the duty of every Gujarati to give whatever help he can to enable those cultivators to stand on their feet again. But it is necessary to remember that in giving them help we do not make them permanently dependent. Great battles have never been fought, and will never be fought, without some individuals suffering. Please also remember that there is no question of compensating the cultivators for their losses. It is a question of rehabilitating them. Those who have lost their lands should have faith that, if not they themselves in their lifetime, their heirs will surely get back one day the lands which they have lost. According to me, this is only one sign, and that too a small one, that we shall get swaraj.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2712

[1] For incidents at Jashidih and Deoghar, *vide* also "Statement to the Press", 25-4-1934 and "Speech at Public Meeting, Deoghar",26-4-1934.

[2] The addressee later released the letter to the Press along with a public appeal for relief of the farmers.

509. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, JAMSHEDPUR[1]

May 4, 1934

Gandhiji said . . . that in a newly-built city like Jamshedpur, taking its name after one of the greatest and the wisest philanthropists of his age, it was a pity that the hovels occupied by its Harijans were not changed into decent tenements. He added that in that cosmopolitan city it was hardly creditable to its population that there had to be separate Harijan *bastis* at all. It was essentially a labourers' city. Labour at least should be free from the taint of untouchability.

The speech also dealt with the drink evil which, he had learnt at Jharia, was on the increase. Claiming himself to be a labourer by choice, Gandhiji warned his fellow-labourers that their greatest enemy was not capital but drink and other bad habits. If they did not give up drink, it might finally prove their undoing.

Gandhiji also adverted to goondaism, which was reported to be growing in their midst. It was a disgrace that barbarous methods were employed, no matter by whom. He had heard that ex-labourers were employed in this nefarious traffic. It was a shame if such was the case.

Gandhiji deplored the fact that the labourers could not trust themselves to part with their money[2] for sacred causes when once the cash came into their hands. He, therefore, asked the labourers and their advisers to arrange for payment of their donations on the next pay day. He did not mind how small the donation was, but he wanted to feel that labour was solidly for the removal of untouchability. He cited the example of labour in all the other labour areas he had visited—the last being Chakradharpur—that very day. Labourers there had paid their own quota.

Harijan, 11-5-1934

510. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

JAMSHEDPUR,
May 4, 1934

Asked as to the results of his Harijan campaign, Mr. Gandhi smilingly said:

Ask Lord Willingdon.

He then added that it had gone forward by leaps and bounds and that there had been a marked mental revolution. It was only a question of when it would be translated into action in every caste-Hindu household.

Asked about the advisability of reconverting the aboriginal Christians, Mr. Gandhi said he could not think of such a course. He, however, thought that there were many among the aborigines who were Christians nominally and would gradually

[1] Extracted from Valji Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] Gandhiji had been told that the purse presented to him contained very little from the labourers.

gravitate towards Hinduism without anybody's efforts. Those who had become sincere converts to Christianity should be allowed to grow in that faith.

The Searehlight, 9-5-1934

511. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

AS AT PATNA,
May 5, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

Of course the hooliganism at Deoghar was confined only to a few people miscalled sanatanists. I await your letter on the political situation.

I hope the change to the mild summer in Bangalore is doingyou good. I wish you will go to the Nandi Hill, only 36 miles from Bangalore.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR
NO. 18 THIRD CROSS ROAD
BASAVANGUDY
BANGALORE

From C. Vijayaraghavachariar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

512. ENTRY IN VISITORS' BOOK[1]

May 5, 1934

I was glad to be able to visit this deserving institution.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1991

[1] Of the Sambalpur Sudder Leprosy Clinic

513. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 5, 1934

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I had your letters. You may go to Bombay and get yourself operated upon.[1] Tell me if you need a letter to some doctor. Be happy and content.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 302

514. A FRAGRANT FLOWER

Fulchand Bapuji Shah was a lovely flower in the garden of Gujarat. It has dropped but left its fragrance behind. I had come in intimate contact with Bhai Fulchand at the time of the Kheda Satyagraha. Ever since I knew him as a silent worker, he was always ready to serve in whatever way the call came to him. Being an honest servant of the Harijans, he had become a Harijan himself. He was a brave man. I have not known of any occasion when he hesitated to make a sacrifice. God has granted him a death worthy of a brave worker. He took this great journey without accepting any service from others. We shall not grieve over his death. Let not the members of his family grieve. Fulchand had a large family. He considered all of us as the members of his family. To emulate his silent service is the true memorial for such a servant. At this moment of selfpurification, let us remember Fulchand and cleanse ourselves of all impurities.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 6-5-1934

515. LETTER TO SRI PRAKASA

AS AT PATNA,
May 6, 1934

MY DEAR SRI PRAKASA,

I have your long letter followed by a short one. I note the pains you have taken over giving me accurate information about Markandeya temple. If your meaning of sanatana dharma was accepted, there would of course be no difficulty.

[1] For piles

If I had seen eye to eye with the members of the Servants of India Society I would not be merely an unrecognized member. I claim to be a member because the same spirit that fired Gokhale is the spirit that fires me. And who knows in what scales he would have thrown his weight if the events of 1919 and after had taken place in his lifetime?

You must not be a literalist. "The letter killeth, the spirit giveth life" is not only true for Christians, but it is true for the whole world. See how the letter is killing the self-styled sanatanists!

Yours,
BAPU

SHRI SRI PRAKASA
SEVASHRAM
SIGRA, BENARES

Sri Prakasa Papers, File No. G-2. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

516. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, ANGULI[1]

May 6, 1934

I am very glad to see you all. You all know that I never came to this part of Orissa. Railway communication to this place is not sufficient. For this and for other reasons I had not come to this place. It is a good thing that I get an opportunity of speaking about removal of untouchability here as I do elsewhere.

I wish to say that untouchability as we observe it nowadays has no mention in our religious Shastras. The *Dharmashastras* do not mention the names of people whom we call untouchables. We cannot show any reason why we call them untouchables.

In matters of religion which concerns crores of people such ignorance is unpardonable. It is a pity that for so long we have been taking darkness for light and ignorance for knowledge. So I ask you all—the old, the young, male and female, who have assembled here—to save yourselves from the darkness of ignorance. If we do not save ourselves from this ignorance, we are sure to lose our existence and our dharma will be wiped out. We are all sons of one Father. God makes no distinction among His own sons. Ordinary parents do not make any distinction among their children and so in the case of God difference is not possible. We should wash off the idea of untouchability. It is not desirable to treat anyone as untouchable. We should have self-purification by forgetting considerations of great and

[1] Gandhiji spoke in Hindi and the speech was translated into Oriya.

small and high and low.

There have been divisions high and low even among the *savarna* Hindus. This is the consequence of untouchability. It is also a sin to find differences among the untouchables as high-class and low-class. Parents teach us that there is no difference between a Brahmin and a *Chandala* and that they can serve each other. I cannot find any difference between them. The Shastras never teach that illiterate people should be shunned. It is our duty to impart knowledge to the ignorant. To cure the diseased is a good service. Ignorance is a sort of disease. We are establishing schools at places to remove ignorance of people. When we go to school we never think that we are low and the teachers are high. One who thinks himself high and his pupils low is not fit to be a teacher. You should learn from this that to think anyone low is meanness and sin. There is a kind of untouchability in the world; it is evil thought. Removal of real untouchability consists in dismissing all the evil thoughts from our minds. We should all pray to God in the morning daily that He will give us strength to overcome all the evil thoughts that come to our mind. Another kind of untouchability is drinking liquor. Wine is the great untouchability. Those who drink wine should give it up believing that it is a sin. Idleness is an untouchability. It is our great enemy. I know Orissa occupies a prominent place in idleness. It has various reasons and I am not going to make an exposition of them. But I say that whatever be the reason all should give up idleness. We cannot be industrious throughout the year by taking recourse to cultivation only. My advice to Orissa people is that when they have no work in hand they should pick cotton, spin and weave khaddar for their own use. This will not only make you self-dependent but crores of rupees will be saved.

Instruction on spinning-wheel is the best instruction that can be given to our boys. They will learn to earn their livelihood by means of spinning-wheel. I know that thousands of Harijans of Orissa do not get any work in the year. If we want to make the Harijans our own we should train them in cotton cultivation, picking cotton, spinning thread and weaving cloth.

If you realize that it is necessary to remove untouchability then you can contribute a pice or two or whatever you can. Those who contribute and those who do not, should all be peaceful.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 8-5-1934

517. LETTER TO DRAUPADI SHARMA

May 7, 1934

CHI. DRAUPADI DEVI,

I have your letter. It is good. Parents should not regard their children a burden even though they may have decided to observe *brahmacharya*. Their care is essential as a part of one's accepted duty. Other tasks of service may be undertaken side by side. It will result in the children turning out to be true servants. This is my opinion but if you are still unsatisfied you can follow your inclination. Do write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha*, between pp. 66-7

518. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHARMA

May 7, 1934

BHAI SHARMA,

I instructed Narandas to send a reply to your letter. You should certainly treat Ramdas as you think best. Keep writing to me. Your sacrifice should be only within your capacity. You can assuredly come to me when I am settled somewhere for a certain length of time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha*, facing p. 66

519. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

PURI,
May 8, 1934

The idea is growing on me that I should finish the balance of the Harijan tour by walking as far as it may be possible. When the Tamil Nadu tour was being settled by Mr. Thakkar, and pressure was being put upon him and Dr. Rajan to include places which could not

[1] The statement was issued through the United Press. It was also published in *Harijan*, 11-5-1934, under the title "Shall it be on Foot?"

possibly be done during the time allotted to Tamil Nadu, I suggested to Mr. Thakkar that if he could share my faith, I would gladly cancel the elaborate programme that was then being drawn up and finish the tour by walking from village to village. Latterly, the idea has been revised and it has gripped me especially after the Deoghar incident. I know that those who are resorting to the violent method are to be counted on one's finger's ends. But even the fewest can disturb meetings. I would love to demonstrate to them in every way I can that the movement is essentially religious in conception and execution. If the motive is religious, so is the end sought. I am anxious too to show that it does not depend for its spread upon swift locomotion. A suggestion that I should use the aeroplane was dismissed as soon as it was made. Nor need anyone run away with the idea that the tour has been undertaken for the sole purpose of collecting funds. I am sure that both the men, women and money that may be necessary for the cause will be forthcoming even though I may be walking. It is likely that if my message comes from the heart, it will travel faster on foot than by rail or motor. And then I am tired of the terrific noises. Though they are an expression of people's affection and joy at seeing me, they jar on my nerves which have now become too weak to bear them. I am equally tired of the hustling that has become my daily lot. The pressing towards me of vast crowds and the frantic efforts of volunteers to protect me from these crowds are proving too much for my weak body and I see no use in these shouts and this pressure. The mania for touching my feet is a source of danger to my body. Hardly a day passes when I do not get light scratches from the nails of the merit-seekers. I have made little lasting impression in spite of having strongly disapproved of the shouts, the pressings and the touching of feet. I do produce a local impression when I succeed in being heard. This opportunity cannot occur to me often when I have to rush through space as I have been doing and have to take, during the day, three places far apart from one another. For the essential truth of the message to soak into the people, it has to be delivered to silent and listening crowds. Religious truth, or for that matter any truth, requires a calm and meditative atmosphere for its percolation. I have therefore three suggestions to make to my co-workers for the balance of the tour. I give them in their order of merit:

(1) I should begin the tour on foot wherever I may be on the day the resolution is made, interrupting it for attending the A.I.C.C. meeting at Patna or the like and returning for resumption to the point where the interruption may take place, or choosing a fresh start after interruption.

(2) Choosing a new province after finishing Orissa and finish-

ing the tour in that province or taking as many provinces as possible on foot.

(3) Drawing up a new programme to cover not all as arranged at present but as many provinces as possible and using the railway for going from province to province.

I am sure that if the workers have faith in the spiritual nature of the message, they will not hesitate to adopt the first suggestion. In no case may the workers come to a mechanical decision. Theirs must not be a borrowed faith. If none of my suggestions appeals to their hearts, they must reject them summarily and I shall go through the balance of the tour in the best manner I can. The question may be asked if I am sure of my ground why I do not act independently of the co-workers as I have been known to have done before. The question is appropriate. I do not so act because my own faith is not quite as strong as I would like it to be. I perceive the truth of it but dimly. Then the tour is not of my seeking. It was suggested by Mr. Thakkar and Sheth Ghanshyamdas Birla. It was planned too by them. I have not mooted my suggestion to the latter. The former is not enthusiastic about it. He dreads what he thinks might be a breach of promise to the provinces and in no case will he act without the consent of the provinces concerned. Of course he is right after his own manner.

Will the Chairmen or Secretaries of the remaining provinces after consultation with their co-workers wire briefly their views to me?

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 8-5-1934

520. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

May 8, 1934

CHI. AMALA,

It is just now 2.25 a.m. The ink in the pen has run out. Hence the pencil writing. I hope you are at peace with yourself now. You have evidently little faith in the ultimate rightness of things or the victory of truth. If you have, you ought not to worry as you do over my safety. If you will obey, you will go on with your work without brooding over me or my doings. I am quite well and happy. And so should you be. I hope the heat there is not too trying for you.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

521. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 8, 1934

CHI. AMTUSSALAAM,

I hope you will stop worrying now. You are free to go to Bombay. You should get the piles removed. If you wish, I would send a note of recommendation to the doctor. Follow Sharma's advice. Don't attempt anything beyond your strength. Write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 304

522. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, PURI[1]

May 8, 1934

Gandhiji gave the citizens an idea of the new dispensation. He was glad that his walking tour[2] would commence from Jagannathpuri, the Eastern shrine *par excellence*, where all Hindus received the *prasad* of the Lord of the Universe on a footing of perfect equality. The walking pilgrimage emphasized the spiritual nature of the Harijan movement. His own experience, fortified by a study of history, had convinced him that all conveyances, even bullock-carts, not only did not help but hampered the free operation of spiritual forces. The work before them was so arduous, and the canker of untouchability had taken such a deep root in their body politic, that all the renunciation and *tapas* that they were capable of were required for its removal. Hence did the idea grow upon him from day to day that he must give up railway trains and motor-cars and content himself with what he could do on foot, so far as the delivery of the message was concerned. But at Vaidyanath the idea simply gripped him. He had long realized that his body must ever be resigned to the tender mercies of the people, and he also felt that, if God still intended his body as an instrument of service, His arm was long enough to defend it against all designs upon it. It would be painful to him if he had to have resort to conveyances in order to save his skin. Whilst the police did their duty, he could not help feeling ashamed that they had to defend him against possible mischief. All these considerations had weighed with him in coming to the present decision. If there was vital truth in the message he was delivering, it should be self-luminous and selfpropagating and reach millions by the sheer force of thought. If, therefore, the results were not what he expected, he would

[1] Extracted from Valji Desai's "Weekly Letter". Gandhiji walked to the place of the meeting. Before the speech Gandhiji unveiled a bust of Gopabandhu Das.

[2] From here onwards Gandhiji renounced the use of conveyances for the duration of the Orissa tour.

question his own worthiness for the mission, rather than question the truth of the mission. He would start for the villages on the Puri-Cuttack road the next day, and he asked them to bless the effort.

To the *sanatani* oppositionists he would give the assurance in sight of the great temple that, so far as he could help it, temples would be thrown open to Harijans only with the consent of the temple-goers and never by force.

People were welcome to join him in his pilgrimage, but they must not try to touch his feet or crowd round him. They must walk behind the pilgrims, never ahead or abreast of them, and obey their instructions. They must not make noises, but march in peace, and they must make their own arrangements for food and shelter. There must not be any burden to the villagers.

Harijan, 18-5-1934

523. LETTER TO UTTAMCHAND SHAH

PURI,
May 9, 1934

CHI. UTTAMCHAND,

My Harijan tour on foot will commence tomorrow[1]. But that will be from the city. Today we are visiting a village. It is three in the morning just now and I am trying to dispose of as many letters as I can. Your letter was expected. Many other co-workers have felt as you have done. My decision has certainly shocked everybody. But they also feel that their burden has been lightened. The co-workers will be tested more severely now. They should silently go on doing constructive work along scientific lines, cultivate greater simplicity, truthfulness and patience and get to know villages more closely. I want both of you to build up good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have no time to write about other things.

UTTAMCHAND
KASTURBA VANASTHALA
MAROLI, B.B. & C. I. RLY., *via* NAVSARI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9441

[1] The walking tour actually commenced on May 9.

524. LETTER TO RAMANANDAN

May 9, 1934

BHAI RAMANANDAN,

I wish you success in your enterprise and may your *sadhana* for service ever increase.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 96

525. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

May 9, 1934

BHAI BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter. You will by and by realize the correctness of my decision. There were quite a few simple satyagrahis like you who offered civil disobedience. But there were spiritual reasons too for the decision apart from the shortcomings of co-workers. Experience is confirming every day that the decision was absolutely right. Now more responsibility has fallen on you. You will be tested well in your constructive capabilities, your faith and steadfastness. Do as Narandas says.

You may reply if someone obstructs you in your constructive activity. But endure imprisonment if it comes your way.

Civil disobedience will be the right thing and even a duty if the situation demands it.

Those who are outside should act according to their judgment in the event of my arrest. In this too you have to do as Narandas bids. Remember that in itself going to jail is no dharma and that one has to qualify for it.

I am keeping well but of my weight I am ignorant. The subject of my touring on foot is quite old by now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1870

526. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

May 9, 1934

I am glad to be able to say that when I discussed the proposal[1] this morning with Utkal workers they readily accepted it and realized the spiritual significance of the proposed step. Of course, they had difficulties about the severe disappointment that would be caused to local workers and people in general in places to be omitted but I suggested to them that the disappointment would turn to joy when they would see that the reality of the message dawned upon them more quickly than now.

I hope that co-workers will spread the news in villages and instruct villagers about the solemnity of the mission. All cries should be abandoned. No hustling should take place, and whenever meetings are held people should be prepared to receive my message in perfect silence. The habit of touching my feet should be discountenanced. It would be most embarrassing to me if whilst I was walking people insisted on touching my feet. To workers in places that were to be visited I would suggest that they should bring their purses if they are so inclined to any of the villages I would visit.

Indeed, if the full significance of the pilgrimage is realized I should expect purses from all parts of Orissa if not India. If provincial workers have understood the significance of this step they would absolve me from having to travel in their provinces and let me take the tour as it has come to me in Orissa itself after finishing the A.I.C.C. meeting at Patna. I feel that my touring in Orissa is equal to touring in the whole of India. The effect of the pilgrimage will be marred by constant interruptions. I am quite clear in my mind that continuous walking is far more effective than frequent interruptions followed by a few days' tour on foot in the remaining provinces. Workers should give up the idea for the sake of the mission itself of having me in their midst. I would like workers in the provinces to consider my proposal and wire their opinion as early as they can.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-5-1934

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 8-5-1934.

527. SPEECH AT HAREKRISHNAPUR

May 9, 1934

Today is a very auspicious day. Up till now the Harijan movement was being carried on by going in motors and vehicles. Thus I had travelled thousands and thousands of miles. Still I am not satisfied with the movement. With much deliberation and thought I have decided to walk on foot and deliver my message as was formerly done by our *rishis.* This method I have had recourse to consequent upon some medieval [*sic*] developments. Through experience I have learnt that an atmosphere created by going in motors and vehicles is quite different from the atmosphere made by going on foot. I see that Brahmins and higher-caste Hindus live separately from the Harijans. I also see here distinctions of high and low. It has wounded my feelings. The Brahmins have a pride and they feel that their lineage is the foremost of all the Hindus. It is our duty to look to cleaning of their houses. I have come here for service of the Harijans which we had long neglected. If you have thoroughly understood my teachings, go over to them, call them your brothers and devote yourselves to the service of the Harijans.

As Hindi is our lingua franca, try to learn Hindi as much as possible. It has many advantages. As some of your time is wasted without labour you should take to some other callings, be it hand-spinning, carding and ginning cotton or weaving.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 9-5-1934

528. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[After *May 9, 1934*][1]

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I have read all your letters carefully. You are grieved over nothing. On the one hand you await my orders, on the other you imagine all sorts of things. The obedient never indulge in melancholy. You must not even think of undertaking jobs which your health cannot stand. You must visit your mother. You have also to undergo the operation for piles. You must relinquish the temptation of coming to me. Travelling on foot is beyond you. Even the requisite food is

[1] According to the editorial note in *Bapuke Patra-8: Bibi Amtussalaam ke Nam*, this was written during Gandhiji's walking tour in Orissa which commenced on this date.

not available in the villages. Doing work is as good as living with me. Patience is indispensable for you and your place is in the Ashram. Why do you take it that going to jail has been totally put off? You have to prepare for it. And the preparation consists in being calm, giving up temptation, refraining from obstinacy, etc. Your worrying the doctor is also not good. What more can I write now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu : G.N. 305

529. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

CHANDANPUR,
May, 10,1934

BA,

I have still not received your letter this time. The above place, where I am writing this, is ten miles from Puri. It is one o'clock after midnight just now. After cleaning my teeth, I wrote one postcard and have now taken up this letter for you. We decided the day before yesterday that from now on I should tour on foot. One cannot propagate dharma by travelling in trains or cars, nor in bullock-carts. That can be done only on foot. The local leaders and Thakkar Bapa finally agreed. We started the tour on foot the very same day. This has given me new strength. Yesterday we covered more than eight miles, but I felt no fatigue. I have got up quite fresh at this odd hour. People came in huge crowds, but there was complete peace. The pushing and jostling had stopped. Comparatively more work was done. The composition of the party remains the same. Among the women, Sushila, Prabhavati, Om and Mira are there of course. Besides them there are Purbai[1], Sonamani who was in the Ashram, and Ramabai, Gopabandhubabu's wife. Jivrambhai[2] also is in the party. And so also are Harakhchand, Purushottam's father-in-law. All of them will part form us at Cuttack. From there I shall have to go to Patna for three days. The All-India Congress Committee is meeting there. Personally I want to return from there to Orissa and complete the tour. But that will be finally decided when I meet the other co-workers.

Kusum Desai had met me in Puri. She has gone to her relations in Calcutta. She is likely to see me again in Patna. Vasumati is in Wardha. Ramdas, Nimu and the child are quite happy, as also Devdas, Lakshmi and her baby; also Hariji, Lakshmi and her baby. Pyarelal is

[1] Co-worker of Jivram Kothari

[2] Jivram Kothari of Kutch

still with Rajendrababu. Valjibhai, Bal and Prithuraj are with me. Chandrashankar is not in the party. He is still ill. I send with this a copy of the *Gita Praveshika* or *Ramagita*. You will have no difficulty in understanding it. If you want another copy, let me know. Leave this one behind you. I have already written to you suggesting what you should do after you are released. However, do what you like. There was a letter from Uttamchand. He has gone to Maroli. His wife too has gone with him.

Blessings to all from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 25-6

530. LETTER TO JITENDRANATH KUSARI

AS AT PATNA,
May l0, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Whilst I do not mind at all inter-dining and intermarriage on the part of individuals, I am quite sure that for the sake of the cause itself these two things ought not to be included in the movement's programme. These two things stand on a different foot-ing from the atrocious disabilities under which Harijans are today labouring.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI JITENDRANATH KUSARI
NASANKAR P.O.
DT. DACCA
BENGAL

From a photostat: G.N. 7191

531. LETTER TO BHAI PARMANAND

May I0, 1934

DEAR BHAI PARMANAND,

I have your personal letter. I have indeed been exercising my mind on the question of a communal settlement. I have expressed nothing publicly, but I do feel that the Communal Award[1] can never

[1] This fixed the number of seats in each of the various Provincial Legislative Councils for the various minority communities. Elections to these were to be by voters voting in separate communal electorates.

be unsettled except by agreement, and an agreement is impossible without large-heartedness on our part.

The Hindu, 6-8-1934

532. LETTER TO N. VENKATAKRISHNAYYA

AS AT WARDHA,
May 10, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

Through Shri Sitaram Sastry I am following your interesting experiment. Please give (1) number of workers men and women, (2) monthly production of various things, (3) what is the method of exchange, how much vegetable or grain would you give for [a] pair of shoes or a *lota*? (4) number of counts of yarn, (5) is cotton grown on the farm? (6) yield of yarn, carding, ginning, weaving per hour.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI N. VENKATAKRISHNAYYA
KHADDAR SANSTHANAM
BEZWADA
ANDHRA

From a photostat: G.N. 9241

533. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

May 10, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I left the bed at one in the morning and feel quite fresh. Please do not get alarmed or angry or start worrying. This is simply God's greatness. I am sitting on a bed of straw spread on the ground in a small village. On one side are sleeping Mira and others, and on the other Thakkar Bapa and other men. This is a village named Chandanpur. Today is the third day since we started walking. We are ten miles from Puri. Or it may be eight. We started from Puri yesterday in the morning. Thakkar Bapa has planned this march as you had planned the Dandi March.

I got thoroughly upset in Puri. I was tired of travelling by rail and car. I put my difficulties before Bapa and other companions. Everybody recognized the need for doing what I was suggesting, but they were afraid. They got over their fears and we took the decision in

Puri itself and implemented it immediately. I went to the Puri meeting on foot. The sanatanists seemed subdued and there was less of noise and other disturbances at the meeting. When we started yesterday in the morning, the news had not spread, but in the first village where we halted more and more people came as the day advanced. When we walked to Chandanpur in the afternoon, the road overflowed with people and the meeting which was held immediately on arrival here was attended by crowds which had poured in from all sides. We are camping in the open air on the outskirts of the village. A hut-like structure has been put up for me, but the thing only looks like a hut. The companions are the same. Harakhchand, Jivram and Purbai have joined the party. The local leaders also have come. With them are the wife of Gopabandhu Chowdhari and Sonamani, who once stayed in the Ashram. This is how we intend to tour Orissa. I have appealed to the other provinces, too, that they should permit me to complete the our of the tour in the same manner and that, if I continue the tour on foot, I should not be pressed to visit them. If they agree, I would complete the remaining period of the tour in Orissa itself. However, when the rains set in we shall have to consider whether this way of touring is possible. If we cannot continue touring on foot, then I personally would prefer to camp in one place. I will see how things shape. I shall be meeting all the co-workers in Patna. I shall have a clearer picture there. I will try my best to persuade them to fall in with me. I hope you will have no difficulty in understanding this step. You know that whenever you approve of a step of mine I feel pleased. But I would not like you to give your approval just to please me.

You must have read about the serious accident to the car soon after we had left Ranchi. "Who can harm him whom Rama guards?" Thus sang Dhiro Bhagat. How well-founded on experience !

Who can persuade the terrorists? And the Government? See to what mad lengths they went in Darjeeling.

Did not I send you a copy of the accompanying *Gita Praveshika*?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 100-1

534. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

May 10, 1934

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I am writing this letter from the village Chandanpur, some ten miles from Puri. I am sure you will like the idea of my walking tour. I had had it in mind for a long time but the feeling was never so strong as now. Buxar and Deoghar would appear to have contributed much towards it. There is no doubt that a scholar like Panchanan Tarkaratna was also involved in the Deoghar incident. How can such darkness be dispelled by travelling by train? The very idea of collecting funds has left my mind. This work can hardly be accomplished by money. I find that the change of heart can be brought about more by touring on foot. Now I would like to confine my tour to Utkal if I can persuade the co-workers in other provinces to accept it. I would not like to go even to Patna.

You must have agreed with my opinion about "National Call". Sahni has addressed a long letter to Rajendrababu assuring that he would act in accordance with the wishes of the latter or of myself. You will have received Rajendrababu's letter. Ansari too fully concurred.

I have gone through your prosperity plan. The idea is good. But I do not find it as attractive as your other schemes. It contains much material on the necessity of a plan but it is not a plan. A plan should be so devised that it can be put into effect by the Government and the people right from today. That they may not implement it is another matter. Such a plan is not beyond you. Think it over and if possible do something on these lines. In my view charkha should be at the centre of it. If you do not think so, you should produce the arguments against. It should not be left hanging in mid air. Crores of rupees will be saved at one stroke if Government, i.e., State-aid, is forthcoming. It is not necessary that all planning should be on the Western pattern. You know that I hold strong views on the subject. These have become strengthened. You can see that people are becoming lethargic in the absence of the charkha. Our cattle have become a liability owing to our ignorance of animal husbandry. India can beat any other country in prosperity by the study and practice of the charkha and animal husbandry and by solving the problem of small holdings. We shall discuss this when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope you are well. If you find it difficult to read my handwriting I can write in English, i.e., have the letters typed.

From the Hindi: C.W. 7959. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

535. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

KADUA,
May 10, 1934

This attempt at the murder of Sir John Anderson[1] is undoubtedly most deplorable.

Every minute of life's experience further confirms me in the belief which I hold that non-violence is the only remedy for all the ills of life to deal with which violence is practised today. It is a great tragedy that some young men will not see that there is no short cut to deliverance from evils. I am not thinking of non-violence as a mere passive state. I do not know a more active force than the force released by the vital adoption of non-violence.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-5-1934

536. SPEECH AT SHIVALICHAK

[*May 10, 1934*][2]

Why do I use the expression "Harijan"? Whom man disowns God owns. All religious books teach us this. Mother *Gita* tells us the same thing. Ahalya was changed into a stone. Society had repudiated her. Rama touched the stone and she revived and found refuge in Him. Caste Hindus have disowned Harijans. God has therefore taken them under His protection. For this reason they are Harijans, Hari's people. It is only after we have willingly taken the untouchables to our hearts that we shall all become Hari's people.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 3-6-1934

[1] Governor of Bengal. On April 8, two young men had fired revolver shots at him.

[2] According to the source, from Shivlichak Gandhiji went on to Virpurushottampur to spend the night. Gandhiji was at the latter place on May 10.

537. SPEECH AT VIRPURUSHOTTAMPUR[1]

May 10, 1934

Gandhiji said that, according to the Shastras, Brahmins[2] were expected to spend themselves in the service of religion by *tapas*, social service and the quest of *Brahma* or truth. It was a pity that modern Brahmins not only paid no attention to the duties which had been laid upon them and did not serve religion, but followed all manner of professions to enrich themselves. A true Brahmin should be the very image of humility, and not be proud of his knowledge or wisdom. A Brahmin would cease to be a Brahmin if he considered himself superior to others, as it was his duty to teach people to look upon a Brahmin and a Bhangi with an equal eye. Again, a Brahmin was hardly worth the name if he did not have the courage of his own convictions. We must fear the Lord and none else. Cowardice was incompatible with divine wisdom.

It would not do to say that sinful people could not be allowed to enter temples. Temples were like spiritual hospitals, and the sinful, who were spiritually diseased, had the first right to be ministered unto by them. Temples were for sinners, not for saints. And who was to judge where no man was without sin? They declared every day in their prayers: पापोऽहं पापकर्माहम् (I am sinful, I am a doer of sinful deeds). So, if the temples were intended only for the sinless, they would have to bar their doors in the face of all mankind.

Harijan, 18-5-1934

538. NOTES

DISOWNING RESPONSIBILITY

In a letter dated 2nd inst., the Maharaja Bahadur of Gidhour writes to me as follows:

> A Press copy of your speech at Deoghar having just been put into my hands, I hasten to inform you that you were right in doubting if the leaflets alleged to have been issued under my instructions were so at all and that I have no knowledge of such leaflets.[3] Certainly there is not the least foundation of truth in the statement that I had lent my name to it in any way.
>
> This is to make my position perfectly clear, and, without troubling to have to let you know my individual views as regards the proposed Temple-entry Bill, I must share with you in expressing regret at the spread of untruths as well as the unseemly demonstrations at Deoghar.
>
> You may publish the letter for the Press if it is worthy of release.

[1] Extracted from Valji Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] The village was inhabited solely by Brahmins.

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Deoghar," 26-4-1934.

I am glad of this disclaimer. It would have been regrettable if the Maharaja Bahadur had lent his name to palpable falsehoods.

Harijan, 11-5-1934

539. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

May 11, 1934

DEAR ANAND,

Your letter. You see what I am doing. When you are well and can walk easily 10 miles per day and rough it in the villages you will come. Meanwhile you must assiduously study Hindi and card and spin.

Vidya may go to Multan if she likes.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

This for both of you.

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

540. LETTER TO S. K. DAS

May 11, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

Concentration is attained by repeated failures and equally repeated effort to achieve it.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 10982. Courtesy: S. K. Das

541. LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

May 11, 1934

CHI. VIDYA,

No time to write separately.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

542. LETTER TO DEWAN CHAND RATTI

May 11, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

The only thing I can advise is to ignore the man. After all if your wife is firm, nothing can happen.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI DEWAN CHAND RATTI
KATRA BIHARILAL
GALI QASIMJAN
NEAR LALL KUAN
DELHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3778

543. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

May 11, 1934

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I get some time now after we started touring on foot. I got your postcard today. You do not seem to have received my last one. You can write to the Government immediately,[1] if you wish, and say: "I have read Gandhiji's statement. Since I was an inmate of the Ashram, I am bound to obey his instructions. Till I get fresh instructions from him, therefore, my civil disobedience will remain suspended. In these circumstances I request you to withdraw the order served on me prohibiting me from entering British territory." On receiving the reply to this request you may enter British territory. Or you may wait for some time.

I would like it if Rama agreed to go to Wardha. If she does not wish to do that, she may do whatever service she likes at any place selected by her. Discuss the matter further with Narandas. How do you like my decision to tour on foot?

BAPU

SJT. CHHAGANLAL JOSHI
RASHTRIYA SHALA
RAJKOT, KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5521

[1] The addressee had been declared an alien subject and ordered to stay in Dwarka and not enter British territory.

544. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

May 11, 1934

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your letter. I am sure you liked my walking tour.[1] I am writing this in the early morning in a small village. You may give the baby girl whatever name you like. I have no preference in the matter. Vasumati keeps writing to me. I will send the news to Ba. You should also write to Lady Thakersey at her home address. You must have received my previous letter. You have rightly seen what Dr. Sharma is. Surendra too must have received my letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RAMDAS GANDHI
CHARKHA SANGH KARYALAYA
WARDHA, C.P.

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

545. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[After *May 11, 1934*][2]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter.

I can understand your hesitation in making an application for the lifting of the ban on you. But I don't see any harm in your writing as follows:[3]

"Being a member of the S. Ashram and therefore subject to G'.s discipline, I have decided to suspend C. R. I was convicted to imprisonment as a C. R. and was deported on . . . from Thana prison. By reason of suspension may I be dispensed from the prohibition to enter British territory?"

One should feel no hesitation in informing the authorities about the decision one has taken as being one's dharma and enjoying the

[1] In the course of his country-wide tour in connection with the anti- untouchability campaign, Gandhiji after visiting Puri on May 9 of the year, started walking from village to village.

[2] From the contents this letter seems to have been written some time after the letter to the addressee dated 11-5-1934 and is placed immediately after it in *Bapuna Patro-7*: *Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*,"Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", After 3-3-1934.

[3] The paragraph that follows is in English.

concessions that one is entitled to in consequence of such decision. If you write such a letter, you would be able to know the Government's attitude. But of course I don't press you to take this step. However, till the ban is officially lifted it would not be proper for you to enter British territory and leave it if expelled. That would certainly involve disobedience of the law, and it would not be civil disobedience. If it can be so described, you should not commit it. Voluntary obedience of the law gives tremendous power to civil disobedience. If the Government displays extreme authoritarianism, it may some day become our moral duty to offer civil disobedience in the interests merely of our self-respect. Meanwhile, isn't there enough work to do in Kathiawar? In doing service, one shouldn't pay too much attention to one's likes and dislikes. One should accept whatever work comes to one unsought and whenever it comes. I hope you fully understand the recent change which I have made. You may put to me any question which you may wish to.

Rama may be said to have settled down for the present. I have agreed to come to Kathiawar to meet co-workers like you. I hope Parikshitlal likes my decision.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5538

546. TELEGRAM TO DR. B. C. ROY

[Before *May 12, 1934*]

THIS PILGRIMAGE CAN BEAR FULL FRUIT ONLY BY CONTINUING IT IN UTKAL AND ALL INDIA PARTAKING AS IF IT WAS IN EVERY VILLAGE. THAT IS A SPIRITUAL TEST. HENCE SUGGEST ABANDONING BENGAL TOUR AS WALKING TOUR IN UTKAL IS IMPRACTICABLE AFTER THE MIDDLE OF JUNE. CAN THEN COME CALCUTTA FOR COLLECTION AND CONFERRING WITH LEADERS. WIRE CONSENT.[1]

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 12-5-1934

[1] The addressee replied: "As physicians Dr. Ansari and myself agreed at Ranchi to your suggestion for a walking tour in Bengal. Appreciating your view-point as explained in the Press and your wire agree to confining walking tour to Utkal."

547. MESSAGE TO PEOPLE OF GANJAM[1]

[Before *May 12, 1934*][2]

I know that the workers and villagers in the place which I was expected to visit will be disappointed by the step that I have taken of carrying on the balance of the Harijan tour on foot. That naturally ruled out all places which could only be reached by rail or road. In order to demonstrate as far as it was possible the religious character of the mission I felt the peremptory necessity of adopting the ancient simple method of walking. There were several other reasons which precipitated the decision. I would like you to appreciate this ancient method and feel that by walking to the few villages I shall be walking spiritually to all the villages of Orissa. Such mental performance was necessary even while I was covering long distances by means of rail or motor. But speed is most probably inimical to spiritual progress. Spiritual messages are better delivered through the natural methods of locomotion. The mental attitude that I have suggested is therefore more easily attainable when a person is walking than when he is speeding through space at the rate of 50 miles per hour.

I am convinced that if I receive the hearty co-operation of the workers and the villagers throughout this province we will see results through this pilgrimage on foot which could not have been attained through the carrying out of the original programme. I would, therefore, ask you to regard this pilgrimage as a greater fulfilment of the programme than its literal carrying out. Some of the co-workers who came from their respective places pressed upon me to alter the decision and to resume the original programme but their argument was wholly unconvincing and the decision taken after incessant prayer and consultation with workers who were available at Puri could not be given up. After all you will not want me to conduct this tour mechanically as I would have been doing after the conviction came clear to me that I should finish this tour on foot. The co-operation that all can give during these precious seven days will be by doing concrete work in Harijan *bastis* in the way of cleaning up tanks, wells, roads, etc., by inducing the different Municipalities to perform their

[1] Sent through Jayamangala Rath, Secretary of the Ganjam Gandhi Reception Committee.

[2] The report in the source is dated May 12.

duties by Harijans, by awakening *savarna* conscience to a sense of its duty towards Harijans; by opening temples to Harijans where there is a practically unanimous wish on the part of *bona fide* temple-goers, by making collections of coppers and silver and sending them to me. I know that monies have been collected in anticipation of my visit to particular places. If the donors want to recall the gifts because I shall not be visiting their places the donations should be refunded and if any monies have been legitimately spent in connection with the tour out of the funds collected and if they desire them to be refunded they will be refunded on receipt of authenticated accounts if the expenses incurred are found to be legitimate. But I do hope that the necessity of the step taken will be recognized by all and that therefore not only will the donations not be recalled but that during the pilgrimage substantial additions will be made.

The Hindu, 14-5-1934

548. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

AS AT PATNA,
May 12, 1934

CHI. MARY,

I have your letter. I have been always thinking of you and Duncan all the time. But I have had no time at all to write to you. I wish I had the time to write to you about the swift and momentous changes that have taken place during the last few days. Each one has given me the keenest satisfaction, and the experience I am daily gaining as a result of these changes proves the correctness of the changes. I hope that you are following whatever I am able to write about them. This walking pilgrimage, if you had been with me, you would have thoroughly enjoyed. I am dictating this after the last march at night. Every time immediately on reaching the village there is a meeting. These meetings are a perfect study—no noise, no stir and every word spoken is certainly heard by the audience. Whether the audience assimilates it or not remains to be seen.

The instance you quote of the Hindu widow nursing a Mussalman sister is certainly very touching. We need have no doubt that they are not only not rare occurrences, but they are frequent in many a place in India. Personal affection overrides all barriers.

You should persistently try to get the weavers to weave the yarn that is spun under your aegis. I am glad the experiment in growing

bhaji is proving successful. I do not mind your having wasted a few annas or even more on getting seeds. Next time you would know that the seeds are obtainable in every bazar. You won't get them by asking for seeds. You have only to get a little local mustard and you will have the mustard leaf growing.

I hope you are getting your *Harijan* regularly.

My correspondence with Margarete continues. Yesterday or the day before I answered her question about the *Gita*.[1]

Love from us all.

BAPU

MISS MARY BARR
KHEDI-SEOLIGARH, BETUL DT. (C. P.)

From a photostat: G.N. 6024. Also C.W. 3353. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

549. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

May 12, 1934

DEAR DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

Now that I am touring on foot I find some time to write to my teacher. I have a letter from you after a long time. You poor thing were so busy that you could not find time even to write a card! Well, you must now write to me and tell me how my two statements impressed you and Father. My mission is progressing well. Why does not Hamida write? My respects to the elders and a slap for you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: S.N. 9652

550. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

May 13, 1934

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I had offered to write to you in English if you had difficulty in deciphering my handwriting. Today I have to dictate if I am to write to you at all, not because I have not got the time to write but because the heat is so terrific and some kind of insects are so pestering me that it is better for me to dictate than to write.

I am anxious to know how you have taken this walking

[1] This letter is not traceable.

pilgrimage and, if you have appreciated the step, I want you to throw yourselves heart and soul into it. If you are in Calcutta, I would like you to collect as if I was in Calcutta and a purse had to be presented to me. That very purse can be sent to me here. I have told Dr. Bidhan that about the middle of June I should come to Calcutta for two purposes: first to talk with those who would wish to about the Poona Pact and secondly for collections. But I am developing a reluctance even for doing that. On the contrary, if nobody would care to come to me to discuss the thing, I need not go to Calcutta for it. It can be attended to in August wherever I may be. There is no hurry about it. As to the collections I should have faith enough that whatever is to come will come whilst I am performing the walking pilgrimage. Every day makes me stake all on this walk. I have discussed the whole thing with Satisbabu. He must give you some of his own experiences. Of course I am having experiences which I would not have on any other account.

I read your letter to Chandrashankar. In the altered circumstances I have given up the idea of having any rest. This easy walk every day obviates the necessity of rest. Therefore we can meet now only at some point in the tour. It is no use thinking of my inviting you to Patna. After finishing Patna, that is on the morning of the 20th or the night of the 19th, I leave for Cuttack or some point in Orissa to resume the walk and to continue it till the middle of June, that is, till the rains set in here. You could easily come and pass one or two days in the pilgrimage or pass a Tuesday with me, because on Mondays there will be no march and on Tuesdays also none except in the evening. The idea is to resume the march at 5.30 on Tuesday.

Here is a letter from Gopi. You can perhaps throw more light upon what she writes.

I have already written to you telling you what action Dr. Ansari and Rajendrababu had taken about the *National Call*. I would like you to furnish me with all the cuttings that you may come across.

In view of Sahni's letter I do not despair of his abiding by the instructions that might be given to him. That should be enough for us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 7958. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

551. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

May 14, 1934

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letters. I went through the Press cuttings. The criticism of Andrews's letter was not convincingly argued. If Manilal says that he had not made any such promise, he should have quoted the exact words. A promise like that couldn't have been merely an oral one. Manilal has quoted from Andrews's letter though it appeared in the same issue, whereas he has [not] quoted the exact words of the promise on which his whole case is based and thus has denied the reader an opportunity to judge for himself. How could a person who has a doubt in the matter merely trust Manilal's word? If, therefore, the promise was in writing, he should even now quote the exact words, so that the charge of violation of pledge may be refuted. If the promise was what Manilal asserts it was, Andrews's statement is plainly unjustified. He must have arrived there now. Manilal should have a talk with him and try to convince him if he can. There is no need for him to satisfy me. You should follow what seems to be truth to you both, and that should be enough for me.

I agree with Miss Schlesin with regard to Thambi. The views expressed in the article are bound to appear as vilification. There is a saying[1] in Latin, to the effect that one must speak nothing but good of the dead. Tulsidas says: **tks lfg nq%[k ijfNnz nqjkokA** This is described as one of the marks of saintly character. nqjkok means to cover up. A good man will himself suffer but will not expose the weaknesses of others. He might say something for the good of such a person, but that would be a different matter. This cannot be applied in Thambi's case, for he is dead now. Try to satisfy Miss Schlesin in this matter if you can.

You know that very important changes are taking place in my life. Learn from them what you can. All this is the result merely of devotion to truth. You know that your duty in regard to civil disobedience has now increased a hundredfold. You have to cultivate the fitness to be ready for it when it comes. The same is true about this tour on foot. It is not unlikely that many more people may have to undertake such tours. Make your life straightforward, simple, tough, truthful and self-controlled so that you may be able to take up such duties.

[1] *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*

Ba will now be released in three or four days. Lakshmi and her daughter and Nimu and her daughter are fine. I have no time to give other news. But I think I have given enough this time. You must have read about my narrow escape.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Today we are camping on the bank of a river near a village in Utkal. It is extremely hot.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4820

552. LETTER TO BALA, JAYA AND OTHERS

May 14, 1934

CHI. BALA, JAYA, BAPU, UMIYA, DAMAYANTI, BALI AND MANEK,

A letter which you get somebody else to write for you cannot be interesting. One written by you yourselves, no matter what its contents, would have given me pleasure. God will protect me as long as He wants me to serve. This is true of everybody else.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Just now I am touring in small villages, like Maroli.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2708

553. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

BALIANTA,
May 14, 1934

CHI. MITHUBEHN,

I got your letter.

So long as God wants me to serve, He will save me through every accident no matter how serious. When He has decided to call me back, a mere yawn will suffice.

I am at present wholly engrossed in this tour on foot and cannot think about Maroli or any other place. Let us see now how things shape. At the moment it seems to me that the period of the tour will

[1] The reference presumably is to the incident at Jashidih; *vide* "Three unhappy incidents", 4-5-1934.

end in Utkal.

I got the annual report which you had sent.

You did right in paying the revenue. Can't you think of some way of proceeding against Sitaram? It is not necessary to put up with his tyranny. You need not go to a court of law immediately. For the present, it will be enough to make a complaint to the local officer.

Ba will soon be released. She has maintained good health.

The box of khadi which you gave is still lying in Wardha. Krishnadas is trying to sell a few things from it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2703

554. LETTER TO MADHAVLAL PATEL

BALIANTA
May 14, 1934

BHAI MADHAVLAL,

I got your letter. Enclosed are one letter for the girls and one for Mithubehn.[1]

I think it will be wise to pay the fine and save the land.

It is not worth while accepting the balance of Rs. 4-10-0. If the lender, however, wants to accept it, he certainly may.

All these are bitter draughts. But they seem the right things to do and it is only by doing the right that we can follow truth.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6109. Also C.W. 3419. Courtesy: Madhavlal Patel

555. MESSAGE TO VILLAGERS[2]

BALIANTA,
May 14, 1934

Lastly, I may state that if I can persuade co-workers in the other provinces to recognize the necessity and importance of pilgrimage on

[1] *Vide* the two preceding items.

[2] This was issued for publication through the United Press. The appeal is largely a repetition of "Message to People of Ganjam", pp. 485-6 except for the last two paragraphs which alone are reproduced here.

foot and if they will disengage me from the obligation of visiting their provinces, I would, after attending the A.I.C.C. meeting at Patna, gladly return to Utkal to resume the pilgrimage; because I feel that if there is truth, as there is, in the original conception, the spiritual value of the tour is enhanced by its continuance at the point where it might be interrupted.

After all, why should not the whole of India identify itself with Utkal and the pilgrimage in Utkal?

The Hindu, 16-5-1934

556. MESSAGE TO UTKAL WORKERS

[Before *May 15, 1934*]

In a statement to Utkal workers Mr. Gandhi hopes that they would appreciate Bengal's magnanimity in giving up the Bengal tour and letting him resume pilgrimage in Orissa after the A.I.C.C. meeting at Patna. This increased the responsibility of the workers. They have to perceive the religious nature of the movement and its implications. Seven days' experience has showed that hundreds of people came daily from surrounding villages. They should have a message given to them in detail. They should be brought in touch with the Harijans, who should be specially looked after. They should be invited to mix freely with crowds and not keep themselves in isolation as they often do. A detailed survey should be made of villages along the route to ascertain the conditions of the Harijans. If people appreciate the superiority of walking pilgrimage over motor and train journey, collections must be much more than they would have been if he had kept to the original programme.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 15-5-1934

557. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

May 15, 1934

CHI. VASUMATI,

Have you resolved never to write to me? I asked Valjibhai to write to you some time ago, but you have not replied even to that letter.

Are you happy there? How do you use your time? What do you do about fruit and other requirements? I hope there are no bickerings among you.

I often remember you all during this tour on foot. All of you will have to undertake such tours by and by.

I am writing this in a village at 3.15 a.m. So far we have experienced no difficulty in touring on foot.

You should write to me regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9385. Also C.W. 630. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

558. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

May 15, 1934

CHI. AMALA,

Your Hindi transcription is quite good. You are certainly making more rapid progress than Mira in Hindi. The latter has never tried Gujarati. Nor was it necessary for her to do so. The accident produced no effect on any of us and there was nothing more to say about it. Of the attack on the car, I had said so much in public. Instead of thinking of me as a god, why not think that I am more man and less beast? We have only the form of the human being but in manners we are often even less than beasts. Hence it is something to be human in substance as we are in form. Are you well?

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

559. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

BALIANTA,
May 15, 1934

BHAI JIVANJI,

I have received your letter. However, it is surprising that there is none from Mahadev. Please let me know immediately when you receive one from him. Your understanding about the books concerning the Bible is correct. But carry out the idea after consulting Balubhai. The expense incurred in getting the books safely transferred should be recovered from the Municipality. Write to Mohanlal that he should get well soon. His fever has lasted too long.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9945

560. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

May 15, 1934

BHAI KHAMBHATTA,

Every day I wait for a letter from you both. I also know that you do not write so as to save my time. Even so, I often long for news about your well-being. My desire was satisfied by chance. I was sorry to learn that you had again developed an ulcer. I am sure it will disappear with proper treatment. Let me know what changes in diet you have made.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6606. Also C.W. 4396. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

561. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

BALIANTA, UTKAL,
May 15, 1934

I hope you have not been alarmed by the changes in my life. They are not the result of my impatience, but are the natural outcome of my quest for Truth. A tour on foot is an old aspiration of mine. I would even like to give up completely travelling by rail or car. That time has not come yet, but my mind is working in that direction. I, therefore, have often declared that I regard railway trains, cars, etc., only as a necessary evil. I have never taken pleasure in travelling by them. Dharma does not use even a bullock-cart. He may only limp, but ever goes forward in his journey. The experience of even these seven days has been wonderful. It is only now that I see villages and can see untouchability as it really is. This will also mollify the wrath of the sanatanists, but even if does not I can retain peace of mind. When travelling by car, I am always afraid that it might get crushed.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 145

562. LETTER TO MADHURI P. KAPADIA

May 15, 1934

CHI. MADHURI,

I got Paramanand's card on the very day of your wedding, i.e., today. May you ever remain as sweet and simple as I saw you in your childhood, and may you both dedicate yourselves to service. That is my wish and my blessings.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. MADHURI
SHRI PARAMANAND KUNVERJI KAPADIA
164 MUMBADEVI
BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: G. N. 11584

563. LETTER TO GOVINDLAL SAHA

May 15, 1934

BHAI GOVINDLAL,

I have received your letter after a long interval. I hope you are keeping well.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. GOVINDLAL SAHA,
ALMORA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10676

564. SPEECH AT OPENING OF TEMPLE[1]

BALIANTA,
May 15, 1934

Temples, Gandhiji said, were a reflection of the state of the society for whose use they were built. Temples of yore were reported to have had such a moral atmosphere round them that the worshippers felt elevated and, for the time being, shed all their evil thoughts. Then, one found on the temple ground primary schools for boys and girls. They had pandits attached to them who imparted Sanskrit learning

[1] Extracted from Valji Desai's "Weekly Letter". The temple was intended for all Hindus, including untouchables

to seekers. They were an abode of refuge for the poor who would always be sure of finding shelter for the night, and they had commodious rooms or open spaces for the assembly of elders. That was the ideal surrounding ancient temples. In his wanderings, he had seen temples where one or more of the institutions he had described were to be found. There was no difficulty about carrying out the programme he had suggested if the trustees put forth their best effort for the realization of the simple ideal. Nor was there a question of large funds. The school might be a palm grove, the assembly hall might consist of mother earth below and open sky above. The question, therefore, was one of will and sufficient men of purity and strength of character. He hoped that such men would be forthcoming.

Harijan, 25-5-1934

565. LETTER TO G. V. GURJALE

May 16, 1934

DEAR GOVINDRAO,

I am glad you have the land now. I hope that the school will flourish.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1382

566. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

CUTTACK,
May 16, 1934

CHI. MANU,

I sent you messages but could not write to you. I read your letter. I have sent it to Father. I don't have the time to explain my letter in detail. My chief argument is clear, that considering all sides of the question your children should be brought up as Hindus—provided you regard yourself as a sincere Hindu who has faith in Hinduism. I can understand Vimala's desire being different, but that fact would be an argument against your marriage. That the children should be brought up in Vimala's religion is not a correct position. Children are bound to be influenced by their mothers, and that is why parents should not belong, and generally do not belong, to different religions. When they do, it is only outwardly so. You will find that one of the two is indifferent to his or her religion. I shouldn't like that in your case. Vimala's insistence that the children should be brought up

as Catholics seems wrong to me. If she marries you, she should merge herself in you. But at present you shouldn't think about this problem. Your immediate duty is to obey Father's instructions to the letter and dispel his fears. I have faith that ultimately what is for your good will be done. I hope you will not expect a longer letter from me during this tour on foot.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1011

567. SPEECH AT KAJIPATNA[1]

May 16, 1934

In replying to the address, Gandhiji said that, if this were true of him,[2] it would be a matter, not of praise but of reproach. He was a follower of Advaita or the theory of oneness of all. East and West, South and North were all one to him. How could he, sworn opponent of untouchability in every shape and form, dare to make an untouchable of the West? What he had really said was that it would be suicidal for them to imitate Western, or properly speaking, modern civilization, which they called Western because it came from the West. Modern civilization stood for indulgence, while ancient or Eastern civilization attached great importance to self-denial and self-restraint. It was, therefore, a conflict, not of East and West, but of two widely divergent philosophies of life. Untouchability was the worst form of exclusiveness. The Harijan movement was really only the first step in his programme of breaking down all barriers whatever which divided man from man.

Harijan, 25-5-1934

568. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

CUTTACK ,
May 16, 1934

Mr. Gandhi said that he did not know whether there was any particular problem concerning the Harijans in Orissa not common to other provinces. He was, however, not concerned with shades of untouchabilities. He did not think that any more tinkering would answer the purpose. He, therefore, looked at the problem as one indivisible whole. It permeated the whole of the society, the extreme form of untouchability being the most hideous expression of it. The arrogation of superiority of one caste over another in the name of religion would have to go. This could be

[1] Extracted from Valji Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] In the address presented to Gandhiji on behalf of four villages, there was a remark that he had shown that the East and the West were incompatibles.

done only by appeal to heart.

Replying to a question as to whether he intended to ask the Working Committee or the A.I.C.C. to take up Harijan work, Mr. Gandhi said that it had alreadybecome one of the chief items in the Congress programme of 1920 and it had since suffered no alteration.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 17-5-1934

569. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CUTTACK[1]

May 16, 1934

Gandhiji congratulated the audience upon their having accorded a patient hearing to the Pandit and observed that such courtesy was the very essence of culture and religion.[2] They should deal gently by their opponents and try to convince and, perhaps, convert them to their own view. The cause of religion could never be advanced by violence or force.

Harijan, 25-5-1934

570. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

May 17, 1934

CHI. PREMA,

Kisan stayed with me for so many months, and now Sushila is with me. It should be enough for you to know how often and what precisely we must have talked about you. That being so, where was the need to send any message to you? There are two reasons why I am writing this letter today. One is that Sushila has been urging me to do so. And the second reason is the news given by her. I am told that you cried for three days because of my decision. I had thought that you would feel unhappy on hearing of it, but I had also expected that you would at the same time dance and sing with joy because you would not fail to see its significance and importance and its absolute conformity with truth. Experience is daily proving the correctness of the decision. There is no question here of the unworthiness of co-workers. Nobody has proved himself unworthy. But the facts which had come to light were significant and prompted me to take the decision which I did. When the time comes— and it will certainly

[1] Extracted from Valji Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] Pandit Lalnath, the sanatanist leader who had been organizing the black-flag demonstrations against Gandhiji, had been allowed upon the dais and even permitted to address the audience.

come—those very co-workers will fight again. The chief thing is to cultivate more strength and self-control.

My weapons cannot be said to be wrong because they are ineffective at present. Maybe they require sharpening or the time is not ripe for their use. I cannot write more on this subject. When you are released, come straight to me and, if you are not convinced even then, contend with me as much as you please and understand my reasons. This decision will test everybody, myself included. With God's grace, I am sure all of us will emerge successful. I think this should be enough.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I wrote this letter in the train which is taking me to Patna. Trains on the E. I. Rly. run so smoothly that one has no difficulty in a moving train.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10355. Also C.W. 6794. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

571. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

IN THE TRAIN,
May 17, 1934

CHI. VIDYA,

I got your letter. What am I to write long letters to you about? I can certainly write such letters if you take interest in other things. I am dictating this letter in a running train. It is, therefore, difficult to hear as also to write. There was nothing particular in Raojibhai's[1] letter. What you imagine is completely wrong. You will know this in a few days. You have done well in giving up rice and dal. If you keep up this self-imposed restriction, you will see in future the great benefit of doing so. Read from *Harijan* the description of my tour on foot. Om is with me so far. Perhaps she will now go to Almora with Janakibehn.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9584. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

[1] Addressee's father, Raojibhai Manibhai Patel .

572. APPEAL TO WORKERS

The day on which I am writing this is the sixth day of the walking pilgrimage.[1] By train and motor I would have covered probably seven hundred and fifty miles and would have nominally seen 1,50,000 people at least. On foot I have covered not more than 40 miles, the sixth day being my silence day, and come in touch with not less than 20,000 men and women.

My innermost feeling is that the work done is in inverse ratio to that between the artificial locomotion and the natural. The contact during the past five days has been more real between the villagers and myself. But, of these experiences, perhaps, some other time. The purpose of this note is to invite the co-operation of the whole of India. It was no small thing for the Utkal leaders all of a sudden to disturb the programme, which they had prepared with elaborate care and from the fulfilment of which they had expected to realize nothing less than Rs. 30,000 even from this the poorest province in all India. I had certainly set my heart on Rs. 50,000. But they had no hesitation, when the truth burst upon them, in sacrificing the pecuniary gain and risking the wrath of their lieutenants. Nor, when I approached Dr. B. C. Roy, had he any difficulty in sacrificing the Bengal programme practically altogether. I expect no difficulty from the other provinces. I must refuse to believe that they will fail to see the superior beauty of the walking tour over that of the train and motor travel.

But I ask for and expect much more than mere passive co-operation. I invite the active co-operation of all India. I expect the all-India workers to arrange simultaneous walking tours in their own provinces for the purpose of delivering the messsage and even collecting coppers and silver pieces from the people by way of purses to be sent to me, as they would have given if I had gone to them. There should be more intimate touch established between the workers and the Harijans and friendlier approach to the sanatanists. There should be a more real appreciation of the difficulties and disa-bilities of the Harijans in the villages visited. There should be more temples opened, more Harijan children brought to public schools. Let the workers and the villagers believe that, in as much as I am walking to the Utkal villages, I am walking to theirs also. If mine is a spiritual act, it should have that value, the people should

[1] Gandhiji renounced the use of conveyances at Puri on May 8, 1934, and on the following day walked to Hastinapur. *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 8-5-1934.

feel impelled to intensify their effort on behalf of the cause. This pilgrimage should result in the discovery of more workers and the increasing dedication of the existing ones.

Harijan, 18-5-1934

573. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

May 18, 1934

BHAI BHAGWANJI[1],

The date on your letter is December 30, 1933, but that must be a mistake, as it came to my hand only yesterday. Never mind. I was glad to read about your happy experiences with Bhai Prabhashankar[2]. But they are irrelevant so far as I am concerned. I believe that one who is responsible for looking after the affairs of Ratilal[3] ought not to create difficulties about giving her share to a helpless sister in Jeki's[4] position. One needn't cite the example of Chhaganlal[5] in this matter. Can a wise man take cover behind the conduct of an ignorant man? All of us know that Chhaganlal is ignorant. I, therefore, don't understand what made you write such a long letter. If you have understood my point, please use your intelligence and your influence to see that the sisters get their share from Ratilal at any rate.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5823. Also C.W. 3046. Courtesy: Bhagwanji A. Mehta

574. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING, PATNA—I

May 18, 1934

Whilst congratulating the movers of the several amendments, I may say that their speeches have only strengthened me in the opinion expressed in my statement. I have found nothing in them to induce me to alter my decision. Indeed I am surprised to see that none of the speakers has taken me to task for advising the suspension of civil resistance for everyone except myself.

On the contrary, all the amendments are unanimous in dema-

[1] A lawyer of Saurashtra

[2] Prabhashankar Parekh, Ratilal's father-in-law

[3] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's second son

[4] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's younger daughter Jayakunvar, wife of Manilal Doctor

[5] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's eldest son

nding the suspension of civil resistance. This fact surprises me, but does not pain me. It only shows that my decision has come not a moment too soon. In asking me, however, to go a step further and give up the idea of offering civil resistance myself, you want to deprive me of my individual liberty of action. It is undoubtedly open to you to repudiate my claim to represent the Congress in my civil resistance. I can understand and even appreciate such a repudiation on behalf of the Congress.

Individual civil resistance as laid down by the Poona Conference[1] was to be offered in the name of the Congress and the proposition before you is but a modification of the Poona decision. Civil resistance was then restricted to an indefinite number; now it is restricted to one single individual. The very fact of my approaching you for approval is evidence of my desire to act in the name of, and with the authority of, the Congress, but in case you do not see your way to giving me that authority, you may not still deprive me of the liberty of individual action, for that would mean wiping me out of existence itself. I would not hesitate even to wipe myself out, if I were convinced that the step would lead to an advance in the progress of India onwards her goal.

My conviction on the contrary is that India will not win swaraj by depriving a single individual of his freedom of action. A speaker has said, I claim to bring swaraj by my single action when he says "swaraj won by one man is no good to the nation". He only quotes from my own words. I have said from a thousand platforms to the school of violence that even if they succeeded in achieving swaraj by taking the lives of some English and Indian officials, it would be swaraj for themselves, but not for the masses of India and one should not know whose lives they would take next.

Civil resistance is a complete substitute for violence. Through it everyone has to achieve his own swaraj. This weapon has given spirit and new strength to the masses. Legislative work cannot rouse the masses. I would like you to come with me for a few days and see the truth of what I say. I have never tried to force my decisions on you. I have no power but that of gentle persuasion. I only urge you not to coerce me to act against my cherished conviction.

Lala Dunichand[2] has asked me not to 'infringe the limits' of the constitution which I had a hand in framing. To him I may say that I am a civil register because I am a constitutionlist by instinct. That is

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Leaders' Conference, Poona—I", 12-7-1933 and Speech at Leaders' Conference, Poona—II", 14-7-1933.

[2] A Congress worker of Ambala

the very reason why I have come to you as your representative. I have no desire to go beyond the four corners of the Congress constitution.

If I have failed to carry conviction to you, you will refuse to me that authority, but I only plead for the liberty of individual action. The decision is not an outcome of despair. I am an optimist and never give way to despair. My desire is born of an unshakable faith in non-violent resistance.

It is surely for the General to decide the time for and the manner of action. The General has to be convinced of the soldiers' capacity to act at a given moment. The conditions of service are to be laid down by the General who has no physical force at his command. He can only appeal to his soldiers' reason and heart. My sole civil resistance is no reflection on any one of you.

All these years I was not unaware of the limitations under which I was working, but the time came when it became necessary to cry a halt if the weapon was not to suffer discredit. It is open to you to accept or reject the advice of your General. In a non-violent struggle it is not the General who can dismiss his soldiers. The latter can dismiss him if his terms do not appeal to them.

This is no threat; in any case, I will continue to be a member of the Congress, but will not claim to be its representative. What would be the matter if a year or two more elapse before your faith in him will be restored. The General in non-violent struggle has no powers of punish- ment. He has no authority to compel obedience to his commands; his authority rests on his power of persuasion. To ask such a General to alter his course of action is to force him to act against his judgment. You are at perfect liberty to dismiss the General if his commands are obnoxious to you.

I do not say it out of anger. If I were to be angry with you for rejecting my advice, I should be unfit to offer civil disobedience. I claim to be amenable to reason. Even children have shed all fear of me and have been able to make me bend to their will. I have not harmed flies even when pestered by them. Why should you be afraid to order such a man to vacate places if that is your desire? I tell you it will not pain me. On the contrary, I will thank you for your frankness, but if you decide to retain your General, you should cease to demur and should follow his discipline.

It is open to you not to accept his discipline, but once you accept it, you should feel yourself bound to obey his command. One of the speakers has told me that spirituality is a thing I have newly introduced in politics on this occasion. A friend here reminds me of

resolution[1] passed by the Working Committee on the eve of the Dandi March in 1930, and the preamble to that resolution contains the same thing as I have said in this statement. It was there with the approval of the late Pandit Motilal Nehru. The preamble lays down in clear terms that the struggle should be started and carried on by those who believed in truth and non-violence not as a policy, but as a creed. Therefore, I was authorized to start and carry on the struggle and Congressmen were ordered to assist in it.

What I say today is not different from what was said in that preamble. Of course, those who look upon civil resistance as a political weapon came to the struggle, but they were expected to be loyal to the creed and to the discipline required of them, while they remained in the struggle. I expected them to be loyal to it in the same way as a jailor protects in thought, word and deed the prisoner, who may by guilty of murder and is in his charge for the time being. If you choose to follow my lead, you have to accept my conditions. If not, you will leave me free to follow the course I consider best, no matter even if I am alone.

The Bardoli decision[2] of 1922, which the late Hakim Saheb and Dr. Ansari could accept with the utmost difficulty, was a step that saved the country from an ignominious defeat and destruction. It brought it sufficiently home to the masses that there was no room for violence in a peaceful struggle. Those who had taken part in the recent struggle have been free from violence in deed. God alone knows how far we were non-violent in thought. It may be admitted that we were not non-violent to the same degree in word.

Our non-violence was for a great part confined to deed. If the country learns the art of going to prison and the art of practising non-violence as the Pathans have done, we should be within easy reach of swaraj. I am unrepentant about the Bardoli decision and consider it to have been an act of wise statesmanship. Even so do I consider the present advice. My heart is supposed to be extremely soft, and I know that it is as hard as steel.

I am helpless if you read into the statement a meaning that is unwarranted. The person whom I have mentioned in the beginning of the statement is to me as dear as a son. I have no charge against him; I found fault not with him, but with myself. He is at present travelling with me. If I have not passed judgement against him, how could I have done so against others? But when I see that our laxity has gone so far

[1] On February 15, 1930, at Ahmedabad; *vide* "Never Faileth", 20-2-1930.

[2] The reference is to the Working Committee's resolution to suspend the mass civil disobedience; *vide* "Working Committee's Resolutions at Bardoli", 12-2-1922.

as to injure the cause, I shall be guilty of breach of trust if I did not cry a halt and warn members that far severer discipline and keener appreciation of the necessity of non-violence in thought, word and deed had to be expected before the people could be called upon to re-engage in the struggle.

I said a few words about the Frontier. I feel with the same acuteness about Bengal. I know what is happening in Bengal today. There are some Bengalis who blame me for what they consider my neglect of the woes of Bengal. Some of them repudiate my claim to represent Bengal. I represent no other province, if I don't represent Bengal. I am an admirer of the poetry and emotion of Bengal. I am tied to my province by silken cords of love, but today I am helpless. My lips have been sealed under my vow[1].

Do not I feel sore about the incarceration of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, whose faith in non-violence is stronger than ours? Both the brothers have assimilated non-violence to an extra-ordinary degree. I understand that they read the message of non-violence in every verse of the Koran. Should I as a General leave them to their fate and look on their incarceration with philosophical indifference? Jawaharlal Nehru has been clapped in jail and Sardar Vallabhbhai who was jocularly called "a blind follower of Gandhiji" as he said ditto to all that I said. Do you think that he had no intelligence? He was a bigger barrister than myself. He had made his name as a criminal lawyer. He said ditto to what I said because he was convinced of the wisdom of my proposal. Shall I leave these men in prison and revert or let you revert to a life of ease and luxury? I ask you to remain out for the same purpose for which they have gone to jail.

I want you to remain outside not to live a life of comfort and luxury. I want you to remain outside to embrace voluntary poverty. In any future struggle none of you will get allowances for dependents who remain behind. There is no want of work outside the prisons. You can offer your lives to the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity. Will you neglect khadi and hope to win freedom for the villagers? Then there is untouchability. For you, who will be outside, there will be neither peace nor rest. I have put before you not a single item that has not been included in the Congress programme ever since 1920. You may

[1] On his unconditional release from Yeravda Prison after being sentenced for one year's simple imprisonment on August 4, 1933; *Vide* "Trial at Poona", 4-8-1933. Gandhiji had resolved not to offer satyagraha but to do Harijan work for the remaining period of the sentence, i.e., up to August 3, 1934.

work out that programme to the full and you will be entitled then and then only, to ask me to refrain from going to jail.

The Bombay Chronicle, 20-5-1934 and 21-5-1934

575. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[Before *May 19, 1934*][1]

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I got your letter and the wire. I am sending a letter to Dr. Jivaraj [Mehta] but I shall not write to Dr. Sharma. It is not right of you to send for him in this way. If need be you can find someone in Bombay.

With reference to your remarks on Dr. Sharma's diet, I shall write to him.[2] I must receive letters from you regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

In Patna till the 19th, afterwards Cuttack.

From a photostat of the Urdu: G. N. 596

576. RESOLUTION ON COUNCIL-ENTRY[3]

PATNA
May 19, 1934

Inasmuch as there exists in the Congress a large body of members who believe in the necessity of entry into the legislatures as a step in the country's progress towards its goal, the All-India Congress Committee hereby appoints Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Dr. M. A. Ansari to form a Board with Dr. M. A. Ansari as president, called the Congress Parliamentary Board, consisting of not more than 25 Congressmen.

The Board shall run to control the elections of members to the legislatures on behalf of the Congress, and shall have the power to raise, possess and administer funds for carrying out its duties. The Board shall be subject to the control of the All-India Congress Committee, and shall have the power to frame its constitution, make

[1] From the postscript

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Hiralal Sharma", 23-5-1934.

[3] Adopted at the Working Committee meeting in the morning; the resolution was moved by Gandhiji at A. I. C. C. meeting held at 3 p.m. in Radhika SinhaInstitute, Patna. Dr. M. A. Ansari seconded it. For Gandhiji's speech on the resolution, *vide* the following item.

rules and regulations from time to time for the management of its affairs.

The constitution and the rules and regulations shall be placed before the Working Committee for approval but shall be in force, pending the approval or otherwise of the Working Committee. The Board shall select only such candidates as will be pledged to carry out in the legislatures the Congress policy as it will be determined from time to time.

The Bombay Chronicle, 20-5-1934

577. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING, PATNA—II[1]

May 19, 1934

It is in the fitness of things that I have been asked to move this resolution[2], for the idea of boycott of legislatures, so far as I know, had originated with me. I fought for years with some of my most valued comrades in the Congress for a rigid observance of that boycott, but an influential minority always thought it to be a mistake.

When, therefore, we met in an informal conference[3] at Poona in July last year and Messrs Satyamurti and Asaf Ali came to me to lift the council-entry boycott, I suggested their forming a council-entry party of Congressmen.

Let us trace the history of the boycott. The country accepted it in 1920, and it gave the country a new life. No one could miss seeing that wonderful manifestation. But when in 1922, civil resistance was suspended, council-entry programme came and crystallized itself in the formation of the Swaraj Party which first received Congress recognition, and in 1926, took charge of the Congress organization.

In 1929, at the instance of Pandit Motilal Nehru, leader of the Congress Party in the Assembly, the boycott of legislatures was resumed. But even then, there remained a body of Congressmen who did not like the resumption of boycott. And now that there is a virtual suspension of civil resistance, the demand for return to legislatures has resulted in the revival of the Swaraj Party under the leadership of no less a veteran 'No-changer' than Dr. Ansari.

I regard myself as a practical idealist. I shall retain my disbelief in legislatures as an instrument for obtaining swaraj in terms of masses. But I see that I have failed to wean some of the Congressmen

[1] Gandhiji spoke in Hindi.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Leaders Conference, Poona—I", 12-7-1933 and"Speech at Leaderonference, Poona—II", 14-7-1933.

from their faith in council-entry. The question therefore is whether they should or should not enforce their desire to enter legislature as Congress representatives. I have no doubt that they must have the recognition they want. Not to give it, will be to refuse to make use of the talents we possess. These patriots, every whit as staunch as any of us, were idle and discontented for want of political work, strictly so-called. Their discontent affected others, and there was a general paralysis. For Congressmen, as a whole, have never taken kindly to purely constructive work, such as the spinning-wheel. I could not look at this state of things with indifference. When therefore Dr. Ansari wrote to me I had no hesitation in encouraging him to form a Parliamentary Party of Congressmen. Now that by Government sufferance we have met as lawful body, it is but meet that we give recognition to Dr. Ansari's effort. Hence the resolution is before you.

The virtual suspension of civil resistance makes the resolution doubly necessary. I call it virtual, because it is now strictly restricted to one individual. By this resolution, we create a Board which will be entrusted with the carrying on of the work inside legislatures. It will be an autonomous body like the All-India Spinners' Association with one difference. The All-India Spinners' Association is subject to no interference from the All-India Congress Committee or the Congress, whilst the Parliamentary Party will be subject to the discipline of the All-India Congress Committee because the latter would, from time to time, have to express its opinion on political questions cropping up in the country. The All-India Congress Committee naturally wants its political opinion reflected through the Parliamentary Board in legislatures, and would, therefore, expect Congressmen in legislatures to voice its opinion. In all other respects, it will be an autonomous body.Some of the Provincial Congress Committees have expressed the view that the All-India Congress Committee, instead of creating a separate Board, should itself undertake council work. The Working Committee considered the suggestion, and rejected it as unworkable.

I have cherished the hope that all Congressmen do not want to enter legislatures and that all of us do not have the faith in the councils that the parliamentary-minded section has. I have tried so far to put before you the view of the council-goers. They hope to reap limited benefit for the nation through the councils. There is no doubt in my mind that the benefit would be insignificant, when compared to the energy that must be spent on it. The All-India Congress Committee must not be an exclusively parliamentary body. It must represent and regulate all the national activities of the Congressmen. It must interest itself in the great constructive programme of 1920

including khadi, Hindu-Muslim unity, untouchability, prohibition, national education, organization of villages, village industries, and industrial labour and the like. The parliamentary work must be left to those who are so inclined. I hope that the majority will always remain untouched by the glamour of council work.

In its own place, it will be useful. But the Congress will commit suicide if its attention is solely devoted to legislative work. Swaraj will never come that way. Swaraj can only come through an all-round consciousness of the masses.

Two of my comrades came to me this afternoon agitated and remonstrated with me. They feared that the present course of action would result ultimately in converting the whole Congress into a council-going party. I said I had no such fear. The 'No-changer' must be weak of faith, if he could not survive the competition of the glittering council programme. I therefore feel that the resolution I have moved exactly meets the case. The Swarajist resolution[1] at Ranchi had to be self-contained, and therefore full. It was taken to meet the remote eventuality of the All-India Congress Committee never being able to meet. Since it has met, the Working Committee resolution is the fittest way of confirming the Ranchi decision. The All-India Congress Committee does not need to reiterate what the Ranchi resolution was bound to do.

The question has been asked why two members have been authorized to appoint other members. I have always seen that in a well-regulated democracy, those who are invested with power are trusted to use that power judiciously. If you believe in the integrity of the two gentlemen named in the resolution, you must also have trust in them that they will appoint fully competent men on the Board. It would be wrong to thrust upon them members who may not co-operate with them to the extent they desire. When we give the reins of a particular administration into the hands of somone, he should be left free to choose his own colleagues. The Congrees, following my advice, has made of it a convention. Regarding the Working Committee, I had not the courage to incorporate the rule into the Constitution, but we have learnt by experience that the convention has worked well. The President chooses his own colleagues. Your sanction to the choice has become a formal affair.

When the Bihar Earthquake Committee met, I went a step

[1] Of the conference of the Swaraj Party held on May 2 and 3, 1934. *Vide* also "Interview to the Hindu", 20-5-1934.

further, and the resolution gave power to the President Rajendrababu to choose his own colleagues. I advise the same course for the formation of the Board.

Now a word as to the competence of the All-India Congress Committee to pass this resolution. The Chairman has given his ruling. I wish to defend the step on its merits. If the Congress were in session today, naturally it alone could undo what it has done. But in an emergency, the All-India Congress Committee is bound to do all that the Congress can do when in session. It may not shirk the duty cast upon it. The Congress can review the doings of the All-India Congress Committee if it wishes. You may not put the nation to the expense of calling a session, when you have the authority and duty of acting.

I do not propose to detain you over an examination of the amendments. It is right for the members to suggest amendments. But when the member in charge of the resolution cannot see his way to accept your amendments, it is better to withdraw them or reject the resolution, if his reasons for not accepting the amendments do not appeal, to you. The ablest painter has not yet produced a painting that has not evoked some cirticism. If he were to incorporate all the criticisms into his picture it would become a daub. The resolution drawn up after much trouble is like a picture to be dropped or taken. It may not be tampered with except when the author is convinced of his error.

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-5-1934

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

RABINDRANATH TAGORE'S STATEMENT[1]

It has caused me painful surprise to find Mahatma Gandhi accusing those who blindly follow their own social custom of untouchability of having brought down God's vengeance upon certain parts of Bihar, evidently specially selected for His desolating displeasure. It is all the more unfortunate because this kind of unscientific view of things is too readily accepted by a large section of our countrymen. I keenly feel the indignity of it when I am compelled to utter a truism in asserting that physical catastrophes have their inevitable and exclusive origin in certain combination of physical facts. Unless we believe in the inexorableness of the universal law in the working of which God Himself never interferes, we find it impossible to justify His ways on occasions like the one which has sorely stricken us in an overwhelming manner and scale.

If we associate ethical principles with cosmic phenomena, we shall have to admit that human nature is morally superior to Providence that preaches its lessons in good behaviour in orgies of the worst behaviour possible. For we can never imagine any civilized ruler of men making indiscriminate examples of casual victims, including children and members of the untouchable community, in order to impress others dwelling at a safe distance who possibly deserve severer condemnation. Though we cannot point out any period of human history that is free from iniquities of the darkest kind, we still find citadels of malevolence yet remain unshaken, that the factories, that cruelly thrive upon abject poverty and the ignorace of the famished cultivators, or prison-houses in all parts of the world where a penal system is pursued which, most often, is a special form of licensed criminality, still stand firm. It only shows that the law of gravitation does not in the least respond to the stupendous load of callousness that accumulates till the moral foundation of our society begins to show dangerous cracks and civilizations are undermined. What is truly tragic about it is the fact that the kind of argument that Mahatmaji used by exploiting an event of cosmic disturbance far better suits the psychology of his opponents than his own, and it would not have surprised me at all if they had taken this opportunity of holding him and his followers responsible for the visitation of Divine anger. As for us, we feel perfectly secure in the faith that our own sins and errors, however enormous, have not enough force to drag down the structure of creation to ruins. We can depend upon it, sinners and saints, bigots and breakers of conventions. We, who are immensely grateful to Mahatmaji for inducing, by his wonder-working inspiration, freedom from fear and feebleness in the minds of his countrymen, feel profoundly hurt when any words from his mouth may emphasize the elements of unreason in those very minds—unreason, which is a fundamental source of all the blind powers that drive us against freedom and self-respect.

Harijan, 16-2-1934

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Rabindranath Tagore", 2-2-1934 and "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 13-2-1934.

APPENDIX II

BACKGROUND TO "LETTER TO SIR SAMUEL HOARE" WITH EXTRACTS FROM AN INRODUCTION BY HORACE ALEXANDER[1]

When Mr. Gandhi was returning to India at the end of the Second Round Table Conference in December 1931, he visited Rome. It may be recalled that, just as he was leaving Italy for India, he was reported by *The Times* correspondent in Rome to have given a sensational interview to the *Giornale d'Italia*. Denials and counter-denials followed, Mr. Gandhi was soon afterwards imprisoned, and the public were left to draw their own conclusions.

In view of all that has happened since, this affair may seem trivial today . . . . But it wrought great mischief at the time, and such mischief may subconsciously continue to affect judgments. Accordingly it seems necessary that now at last . . . an exact statement of the truth should be made available.

In republishing the statements from *The Times* together with Mr. Gandhi's recent letter on the subject to Sir Samuel Hoare, it has seemed desirable to prefix a statement on the circumstances under which Mr. Gandhi left England. For the Rome interview gained credence in England largely because it seemed to fit in with some of the things Mr. Gandhi had said just at the close of the Conference in London. After listening to the Prime Minister's declaration of policy, Mr. Gandhi had questioned whether a new "parting of the ways" had been reached; he had also spoken of the "hidden meanings" in the Prime Minister's statement. What did these phrases indicate? Did the Rome interview provide the answer? (Those who were in Mr. Gandhi's confidence during the last days of his stay in London know that there was no such connection, for certain decisive private conversations had intervened.)

There were in fact two matters that were specially occupying Mr. Gandhi's mind during the last days of the Conference: the question of India's public debt, and the fresh measures just taken by the Govt. of India for destroying terrorism in Bengal. . . .

However, before he left England he had conversations with the Prime Minister and with Sir Samuel Hoare. These conversations reassured him. He understood that if he accepted membership of the small representative working committee to be appointed in India, he could raise the question of India's public debt there. As to Bengal, the Govt. of India was free to decide with whom they would discuss their administrative measures. The India Office was not closing either door.

Finally, on the eve of his departure from England, Mr. Gandhi solemnly assured his friends that he would do all he could to keep the door of negotiation open. Though he admitted that for him the Conference in London had been, indeed, a "long and slow agony" he still hoped to find a peaceful solution of the outstanding problems.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Hiralal Sharma", 6-3-1934.

(A)

THE INTERVIEW

'A NEW TRADE BOYCOTT'

The Rome correspondent of *The Times* writes on December 15, 1931:

Mr. Gandhi, who had refused to make any statements to the many journalists, both Italian and foreign, who had been invited to meet him, has now made a long statement to Signor Gayda of the *Giornale d'Italia*.

Mr. Gandhi said that the Round Table Conference, which "marked the definite rupture of relations between the Indian nation and the British Government" had been for Indians a long and slow agony. It had, however, served to make quite clear to the British authorities the spirit of the Indian nation and its leaders and to test the true intentions of England. He was returning to India in order to restart at once his struggle against England, which was to take the form of passive resistance and the boycott of British goods. He considered that the boycott would now prove a powerful means of rendering more acute the British crisis, already difficult through the devaluation of the currency and unemployment. The closing of the Indian market to all British products would signify substantially a reduction of English industrial activity, an increase of unemployment, and a new depreciation of the pound.

Mr. Gandhi concluded his remarks by lamenting that few European countries had hitherto shown interest in the Indian problem. That was a pity, since an independent and prosperous India would mean a richer market for the products of other nations and Indian freedom would be manifested through commercial and intellectual exchanges with all countries.

(B)

GANDHIJI REFUTES

The Times of December 18, 1931, publishes the following:

Mr. Gandhi has authorized a complete denial of the authenticity of an interview which he was alleged to have given to the *Giornale d'Italia* during his brief stay in Rome, and which was summarized in *The Times* of December 15. The statement attributed to him went so much farther in respect of the prospect of restarting civil disobedience in India than any previous utterance that it was felt necessary to ascertain precisely what he said. Accordingly a telegram was sent from an authoritative quarter to Mr. Gandhi on board the Italian liner *Pilsna* in the Mediterranean in the following terms:

Press reports state that on embarkment, you issued to *Giornale d'Italia* a statement which contained expressions such as following:

(1) Round Table Conference marked a definite rupture of relations between Indian nation and British Government.

(2) You are returning to India in order to restart at once struggle against England.

(3) Boycott would now prove powerful means of rendering more acute British crisis.

(4) We will not pay taxes, we will not work for England in any way, we will

completely isolate British authorities, their politics and their institutions, and we will totally boycott all British goods.

Some of your friends here think you must have been misreported, and, if so, denial desirable.

GANDHIJI'S REPLY

The following telegraphic reply was received from Mr. Gandhi yesterday:

"*Giornale d'Italia* statement is wholly false. I never gave any interview to Pressmen at Rome. Last interview I gave was to Reuter at Villeneuve in Switzerland, where I asked the people of India not to come to hasty decision but to await my statement. I shall take no precipitate action but shall make ample previous entreaty to the authorities should direct action become unfortunately necessary. Please give this statement the widest publicity possible."

SIGNOR GAYDA'S REAFFIRMATION

The following appears in *The Times* of December 21, 1931:

Signor Gayda has resolutely refused to accept Mr. Gandhi's denial of the statements attributed to him in the *Giornale d'Italia*. In a laconic note Signor Gayda has declared that the words attributed by him to the Mahatma were written in his presence as he spoke them and in the presence of other witnesses. So far as I understood the facts of the case, the "demanti" of Mr. Gandhi may be correct in so far as Signor Gayda did not request a formal "interview", and no such "interview" was granted.

According to information given to me, Signor Gayda was introduced to the Mahatma in a private house, and it was made perfectly clear to Mr. Gandhi who Signor Gayda was. When Mr. Gandhi began to make the remarkable statements attributed to him Signor Gayda, realizing their interest and anxious to make no mistake, asked for a pencil and paper, which were given to him. Signor Gayda then wrote down the statements of Mr. Gandhi there and then in his presence and in that of a follower, without any word being spoken by either of them that the remarks were not for publication.

It would appear, therefore, from the version I have received that so far as the substance of the remarks is concerned Signor Gayda, who, as I personally can testify, understands English quite well, took down the utterance of the Mahatma with particular care.

MIRABEHN'S RECOLLECTION

My recollection of the occasion, which occurred now two years and three months ago, is as follows:

Gandhiji with his companions was invited to an informal gathering at the house of an Italian Countess in Rome, friend of the Italian Consul, Bombay (then in Rome). It was a long visit consisting of a drawing-room talk followed by light refreshments and further general conversation. During the beginning of the visit I was the only member of our party with Gandhiji, the others dropping in later one after another. I was with Gandhiji during the whole visit except for 15 or 20 minutes near the end of the time when I went into the dining-room to prepare some fruits, etc., for Gandhiji and to take some refreshment myself.

During the talk as far as I can now remember, the conversation was, to begin with, somewhat social and varied. The Countess was busy introducing people to Gandhiji and leading off conversations on various topics. As the talk warmed up two or three gentlemen from amongst the group became conspicuous by their persistent questioning on the political and economic situation, and I remember one of them asking for a pencil and paper and beginning to make notes. After a little while the rest of our company began to turn up and we soon moved into a bigger room next to the dining-room. Here the conversation again became general except for a little serious talk of Gandhiji with someone, the particulars of which I cannot now remember.

I heard every word that Gandhiji uttered except for the few minutes I had gone out. He was giving his usual replies to political and economic questions with rather extra force and plainness of language because of the difficulty the Italian gentlemen felt in understanding English and because of the persistence of the questioners. If Gandhiji had said some of the things attributed to him by *The Times* correspondent I should have been dumbfounded. It would have meant that he had thrown his ideals and beliefs to the winds, and I could no longer have looked to him as my guide and father.

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-11-1934

APPENDIX-III

PYARELAL'S NOTE ON GANDHIJI'S VIEWS[1]

[On or after *April 4, 1934*][2]

The present step is a logical corollary of the Poona decision. When mass civil disobedience was suspended in August last under the Poona resolution it was expected that all those who could should offer individual resistance. The idea was that they should keep the spark of satyagraha alive till under favourable circumstances the movement could again develop white heat. It was assumed that those who took to it were capable of developing independent inspiration and could go on indefinitely without any outside direction or guidance and in such an ideal manner what was lost in numbers would be more than made up by gain in quality.

Experience, however, has shown that the assumption made was unwarranted. Those who went in had not assimilated the spirit of satyagraha fully. Almost to a man the individual civil resisters who were in the field were fighting because they felt that they ought to, not because they must. Those who came out showed no impatience to rush back. Instead they hesitated and faltered. Even the best ones instead of feeling spiritually exhilarated had experienced mental anguish in prison. No good can come out of sacrifice that is forced instead of being spontaneous and natural.

Under the circumstances Bapu felt that the continuation of *individual* civil resistance would only result in internal decay. For coercive effect it was too insignificant; for spiritual effect too cumbersome and heterogeneous. Because it

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 6-4-1934 Gandhiji expressed the views in talks with Dr. M. A. Ansari, Dr. B. C. Roy and Bhulabhai Desai. The source bears Gandhiji's corrections. A similar report was also made by Raojibhai Patel.

[2] The talks were held on April 4.

proved inadequate for producing immediate political results it failed to satisfy the patriotic instinct of the terrorist, and because its quality was indifferent it failed to touch the spirit of his idealism which craved for intenser and intenser forms of self-expression and self-sacrifice.

The present step is an essay on Bapu's part, to purify and intensify the ideal of satyagraha to the last degree. There was danger of indifferent numbers smothering the flame of his individual satyagraha when it should burn the brightest and of diluting its potency. Unadulterated by numbers it should prove more efficacious.

Even as it is, Bapu feels that it would be possible to put thousands of civil resisters in the field, if not today, in the very near future. Of that his experience of the present Harijan tour has left him in no doubt. But now he has discovered that for a successful fight the plan of civil disobedience as it has been practised so far would have to be radically modified and extended. In what way he cannot say at present. We have not succeeded in harnessing the classes to our cause. They have uniformly failed to rise to the occasion and unsupported by the classes the masses have been overwhelmed. In other words Bapu has suddenly discovered that we were advancing into a blind alley. It was absolutely essential to retrace the steps. Even if all had gone well with the mass movement this reorientation of the strategy should have been inevitable sooner or later. That being so, Bapu is anxious to save to the utmost the remnants of his disorganized force and give the country time to reorganize, rest and recuperate.

He remained the ideal satyagrahi. Because the next fight, as Bapu conceives, must be planned on a different pattern. Bapu would not like even a perfect satyagrahi today to go on. To do so would be wasteful. It would be, to use his own simile, like cashing a good cheque at the wrong bank, at the wrong time.

As far back as August 1933 the feeling had come upon him that there was something internally wrong in the movement somewhere. But at that time, first owing to the quick succession of his fasts and then owing to the Harijan tour, he could not analyse that feeling further. "The step I have taken today ought to have been taken after the Poona Pact. That was the right time for it," he remarked the other day. "The arrest of every worker since then has jarred upon me. But I have ignorantly allowed things to drift like an improvident speculator who fails to pull himself up when every fresh deal would make the chance of his ultimate solvency more and more remote." On another occasion he said, "by allowing my best men to go now I would only be bargaining for the survival of the unfittest. The fittest would be reduced to utter wrecks for want of a proper grounding, leaving the field a barren waste after I am gone". Instead, therefore, of making a holocaust of his old guard he has chosen to release the civil disobedience forces that were lying locked up owing to the present stalemate to combat in whatever ways it might be possible the fresh rivets that are being sought to be fastened upon the country. In the mean time he himself would be active in his laboratory making fresh researches in satyagraha. And given time and God's grace he expects to discover a weapon that would give us what we have lacked so far.

Let it be noted here that what Gandhiji has said about the imperfection of satyagrahis in connection with individual civil resistance does not apply to all that has taken place before the Poona resolution. Perfect satyagraha was essential for individual resistance, not for mass resistance. The mistake lay in sanctioning

individual civil resistance when perfect satyagrahis were not forthcoming. If the mass civil disobedience had to be started tomorrow we would not have to wait for perfect satyagrahis. There is therefore no cause to feel despondent about the future of mass satyagraha; because perfection is not a *sine qua non* of mass civil disobedience.

The freedom to offer civil resistance for specific purposes is there. But an early or extensive exercise of it is not envisaged. The country has to pass through a period of darkness, depression and reaction. But Bapu has faith that there is sufficient vitality in the nation to enable it to pull itself through the morass. The length of the period of recuperation can be curtailed by the civil resisters of today deporting themselves as ideal constructive workers and using all the energy set free from the civil resistance to free the country from the paralysis that has overtaken it, instead of allowing it to be dissipated by despondency or self-indulgence. Here I may add that just now Bapu's mind is teeming with fresh constructive projects. He contemplates covering [the country] with new institutions and organizations that would be based not on ideals adulterated with heavy doses of compromise as was the case with our old institutions but would be erected on pure unwatered principles. The old institutions were good enough for their time but institutions that we now need to carry us over the remaining stage of our journey need to be differently patterned. It is good therefore in a way that old institutions have disappeared leaving the ground clear for the rise of new ones.

Lastly it should be remembered that the fight for independence has not been given up. Civil disobedience has not been suspended. It remains the official programme of the Congress. If the Government will not tolerate the sanction of civil disobedience by the Congress even when it was confined to Bapu alone and foreclosed to everyone else, it would be best for the Congress to remain under suspension. Dr. Ansari, Bhulabhai and Dr. Roy have agreed that the Congress must not repudiate Bapu's civil resistance, come what may. For to do so would spell death to the Congress. If, however, the Government recognizes civil disobedience as a legitimate political weapon by restoring the Congress unconditionally after Bapu's latest statement, it would be open to the Congress to adopt the Council programme while recognizing civil disobedience as an alternative weapon.

The conditions about the resumption of civil disobedience during Gandhiji's lifetime for the attainment of swaraj should not worry an intelligent satyagrahi. It should be realized that owing to the self-imposed restrictions by Gandhiji during the year of grace several things had to be left unsaid in his statement. There is nothing whatever in that statement to prevent the nation from launching upon individual civil resistance of the direct and the most extensive type to secure Gandhiji's release, for instance, if the authorities should choose to indefinitely incarcerate him. Even in 1930 mass fight had that for culminating point.

From a copy: C.W. 9140

1. LETTER TO KASTURBHAI LALBHAI

May 20, 1934

BHAI KASTURBHAI,

I have written to Chamanbhai. I hope that you will prevent implementation of the Mill-Owners' Association's resolution. I will not let the tradition which has been followed for so many years be broken without sufficient reason.

The insistence on paying Mr. Patankar his fee also seems to me to be derogatory to our good name.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33150

2. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

May 20, 1934

Gandhiji left Patna early morning by the Sealdah Express and was seen off by a large number of people. Tired as he was, he hardly failed, except for a brief while when he was asleep, to stretch his hand across the window at every passing station and ask for "coppers" for his Harijan work and got silvers in plenty. This was for *darshan* alone, but if one wanted a brief interview ten rupees cash down was the price. He said :

In trains, I do nothing else except collect funds for Harijans.

At Mokameh station, a Bengali rushed in and told Gandhiji that he had Rs. 1,001 to be given away to the Harijan Fund. The Mahatma was all smiles and stretched out his hand. But the Bengali gentleman said: "But you must come to Calcutta and take it. We shall give you plenty more."

[CORRESPONDENT :] Now that the All-India Congress Committee has passed a resolution accepting your statement of 7th April and making you sole civil resister on behalf of the Congress, can you kindly tell me how and when you propose to give effect to it if at all ?

GANDHIJI: I cannot tell you how, because I myself do not know. So far as the date is concerned, it was fixed when I was put out of the Yeravda Prison. Beyond that all is a perfect blank to me as to anybody else. But I must repeat what I stated at the time I was discharged, that I would strain every nerve to prevent civil resistance from becoming a

necessity.

[C.] Your resolution[1] sanctioning council-entry is different from the Ranchi resolution in so far as yours makes no reference to the White Paper and does not define the Congress attitude towards it. Can you tell me the signifiance of the resolution as apart from the Ranchi resolution and the attitude which in your opinion should be taken by Congressmen in regard to the Ranchi resolution?

[G.] The Ranchi resolution was an independent resolution enabling the Swarajists to know their own mind and to enable them to function if it became impossible, from circumstances beyond the control of their organization, to obtain recognition from the All-India Congress Committee. But the All-India Congress Committee having been allowed to meet, there was no occasion for that body to adopt the resolutions of the Ranchi Conference. It was enough for the All-India Congress Committee to appropriate the Council Party and turn it into its own agency for the purpose of working the political programme of the Congress. And it was unncessary to define the attitude of the Congress towards the White Paper, as that attitude is well known. The Congress can accept nothing that is inconsistent with its objective, namely, the attainment of *purna* swarajya.

Asked whether he intended the Swarajya Party to be dissolved, Mahatma replied :

This question I have already answered in reply to your previous one. The Swarajists have become part of the Congress organization.

By the time the interview concluded, the train had reached Jahajah where, it may be remembered, not long ago an anti-Harijan demonstration pelted stones at Mahatmaji's car smashing the glass window. The demonstration today at this place was of the friendliest nature, more than a thousand people having gathered on the platform and continuously shouted "*Mahatma Gandhi-ki-Jai*" and pelted the author of the Harijan movement with flowers. Gandhiji, however, told the crowds that what he wanted was not flowers, but money.

The Hindu, 21-5-1934

[1] *Vide* "Resolution on Council-Entry", 19-5-1934

3. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDUSTAN TIMES"[1]

May 21, 1934

Q. What are your impressions about the All-India Congress Committee meeting?

A. Considering the revolutionary character of the two resolutions, the criticism was restrained, and the voting showed an extraordinary sense of responsibility and appreciation of facts. The attendance, too, was quite good.

Q. Do you think it will be necessary for you to offer civil disobedience in pursuance of the permission given to you by the All-India Congress Committee?

A. There is the 3rd August next in front of me, but what will happen that day is more than I can say[2]. I have no pre-conceived plans. Sufficient unto the day is the work thereof.

Q. How do you look upon the emergence of the Socialist group within the Congress? Have you any message in this connection?

A. I welcome the emergence. And if it acts, as I am sure it will act, with due restraint and in keeping with the special conditions of the country, it can only do good. I understand that it is pledged to non-violent methods to the exclusion of violent methods.

Q. How do you expect Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai and Abdul Ghaffar Khan to view your advice to the country ?

A. I have no doubt that, if they had been out they would have acted precisely as I have. How, being in jail, that is, being ignorant of the outside world at first hand, they would view its proceedings is surely an illegitimate question.

The Hindustan Times, 22-5-1934

4. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

May 21, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have read Elwin's[3] letter. I return it separately to save postage. After I have seen his institution it seems that we shall have to help him.

[1] Gandhiji got down at Byree and walked to Gandhi Seva Ashram at Champapurhat. It being his day of silence, he wrote down his answers.

[2] *Vide* footnote 2, "Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting, Panta- I".

[3] Verrier Elwin

From where does he get the money at present? How does he teach music? Who else is there with him besides Shamrao?

Non-vegetarian food seems indispensable for him. He has not enough faith [in non-violence] to be able to live on fruit and milk. But he need not be denied help because of his food habits. If, however, he stops spinning or slackens in it, I don't think we should ignore that. He may give up spinning entirely if he has not faith in it. I do not wish to say that he should be helped only if he continues to spin. What I want is that he must be truthful. All that is necessary is that whatever work is done, should be done sincerely. Elwin, being a good and simple-hearted man, may deceive himself. It is therefore necessary that friends should watch him.

Dr. Ansari's plan for a party[1] must have been finalized. You should take enough interest in the matter at least to see that everything goes well. Rajaji also should take interest in it. Having brought in Malaviyaji, we should help him and also see that he does no harm, which he can either by delaying or acting hastily.

Did you see the programme up to July? It will help workers at most places to see me if they wish to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 2933

5. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

CHAMPAPURHAT (UTKAL),
May 22, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter the day before. It is about three o'clock just now. Everybody in the . . .[2] Ashram has fallen. We arrived here yesterday (Monday). Our good friend Masani of the Socialist Party is with us. He is returning to Bombay today. Agatha[3] also is with us. She will leave in about four days. Ceresole[4] will join today. He will remain

[1] The Congress had appointed a Parliamentary Board under the presidentship of Dr. Ansari for contesting elections to the Central Legislative Assembly; *vide* p. 8.

[2] Omission as in the source

[3] Agatha Harrison

[4] Pierre Ceresole, Swiss Engineer, who had come to India in connection with the Bihar earthquake relief work

with me for three or four days. Muriel[1], too, is coming. She will stay for two days. I don't give the names of the other local workers who are accompanying me. This tour on foot will end in Balasore on the 12th. It has been decided that after that we should stop walking and I should spend a few days in each province, doing the work from a fixed place. The programme is as follows: I should reach Bombay on the 14th and from there go to Poona on the 17th. Thereafter I go to Ahmedabad on the 26th and from there proceed to Sind. I will spend three days in Sind and three in Lahore and then go to the U. P. I am enclosing a copy of the programme. It is, however, subject to changes. I had called workers from all provinces to meet me in Patna. They were of the view that I must visit every province. It was finally decided that I should visit every province and stay in one place for a few days. It will be the time of the monsoon then and walking will probably be difficult. You have already read about the decision taken at Patna. Please rest assured that what has happened is the best. That is what the people desired, and they were only waiting for me to agree. But acute differences arose as soon as the first step was taken. There is no limit to the goodness and patience of Ansari and Malaviyaji and to Dr. Roy's overbearing temper. Let us see what happens now. I will send with this a fine word picture drawn by Sushila[2]. Probably Om[3] also will write. I will ask Agatha to write, too.

Ba has been released. She will first go to Wardha and Delhi and then join us somewhere.

I wished to spend Rs. 5,000 from the Flood Relief Fund for Harijan victims of similar calamities but I was told that you had given instructions not to spend any amount from that Fund. I, therefore, got only Rs. 1,000. I thought it necessary to ask you before drawing more. Please write and tell me what instruction you remember to have given or what your wishes are.

Surendra[4] is fasting in Wardha. He is doing so only for the sake of his health. The jail food has broken the health of even stalwarts. Narandas suffered from bleeding nostrils and came out of jail an old man. Swami's iron constitution also has broken down. The same thing happened to Surendra. A diet of pure starch and fat was not adequate.

[1] Muriel Lester

[2] Sushila Pai, then head mistress of the Vanita Vishram, Rajkot, who later became Secretary of the Kasturba Memorial Trust

[3] Umadevi Bajaj

[4] An inmate of the Ashram

I see that milk and curds are essential. Manilal's Sushila has given birth to a son. Manilal hasn't informed me at all about this. I have lost all interest in this growth of the family-tree. My only feeling is one of profound sadness. However, who can thwart Nature? Or we can adopt the European way (birth-control) and sing: "Come, let us enjoy ourselves, Beautiful-eyed One, but prevent the natural consequence of our indulgence." I can't help feeling that we shall not gain spiritual knowledge if we follow that path. So long as Death remains unconquerable, nothing that Man does will avail him. Hence the first verse of the *Ishopanishad.* Do you remember it? I used to recite that Upanishad every day in jail, trying to memorize the verses. If you don't remember them and if you wish, I will send you a copy of the Upanishad. It contains only 18 verses. The author has compressed all knowledge within that short compass. There is no difference between its teaching and the *Gita's.* What is present in it in the form of a seed has become a beautiful tree in the *Gita.* I will stop here now.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 102-3

6. *LETTER TO AMRIT LAL CHATTERJEE*[1]

May 22, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 1447. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

[1] According to the addressee this was an acknowledgment of a report on civil resisters and Harijan sevaks; *vide* "Letter to Amritlal Chatterjee", 23-4-1934

7. LETTER TO LALJI K. PARMAR

May 22, 1934

CHI. LALJI,

I got your letter. I was pleased. My effort will have succeeded if you now remain vigilant and go on improving daily. Write to me from time to time. Do you get any pay? How do you live?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3296

8. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

May 22, 1934

CHI. AMALA,

My condolences on the loss of your companion, the squirrel. You are right in thinking that those round you do not act up to the principle they profess. They do not realize that mere refraining from killing is not enough. It is necessary to show active sympathy for sufferers.

You should not be anxious about me. The march will do me good. I am certainly keeping well.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Enclosed[1] for Lalji living there.

Speigel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

9. LETTER TO N. S. HARDIKAR

May 22, 1934

MY DEAR HARDIKAR,

I have your strange letter twice sent, first without the quotation. It is a favourite saying of mine that you have quoted. There was no anger in the use of that expression. But it should be enough for you to have the admission from me that I am not without anger. It is

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

therefore right for critics to fling it in my face. But friends tolerate my shortcoming, and knowing that, I make a Herculian effort to throw it off. Let me point out to them their shortcomings feeling that among equals perhaps I am the most experienced in these matters. Remember too that two wrongs don't make one right.

If I appeared to be angry, I must have been unconsciously angry. I was certainly not pretending. The question is, can a man be unconsciously angry? He can be unintentionally so.

No anger is permissible, it may be unavoidable through human weakness.

Does this sufficiently answer your questions?

I hope you are well.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: N. S. Hardikar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

10. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHARMA

May [*19* and][1] *23, 1934*

BHAI SHARMA,

Amtussalaam has much praise for you and only one complaint, i. e., you have lost much weight and that you have cut down on your food. I would like to say only this much that exposing the body to unnecessary hardship is as much a crime as the pampering of it. Hence all that is required to conserve the body should be done.

All this was written four days ago.[2] I have your letter now. You can come to me whenever you wish but without deserting the patients there. My intinerary must be with you. My work will keep me here till June 12, after that possibly in Bombay.

It will take some time for your wish to fructify. I want you to gain in steadfastness. But all this can only be talked over. For the time being it is to the good that you are winning the hearts of the people there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, 1932-48,* between pp. 68 and 69

[1] Inferred from the contents

[2] That is, on May 19, 1934

11. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI[1]

LAKHANPUR,
May 23, 1934

I have gone through your Temple-entry Bill and I like its general approach. If you polish it now and make it as short as possible and send it to me, I will publish it in *Harijan.*

SJT. KANAIYALAL MUNSHI
GILBERT BUILDING
BABULNATH ROAD, BOMBAY

From Gujarati: C. W. 7538. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

12. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

[*May 23, 1934*][2]

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I have your letter. I won't be able to come to Bhavnagar. The plan of touring on foot has changed the whole programme. In every province that I visit, I will camp in one town and do what I can from there. Touring on foot cannot be continued in the rainy season, and all the provinces want a share in the programme. I, therefore, have decided on a compromise as above. I hope you are well. I take it that you will send your contribution to the purse to Ahmedabad. It will do even if you send it here.

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5932. Also C. W. 3248. Courtesy: Mahesh P. Pattani

13. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

May 23, 1934

CHI. VASUMATI,

Why do you feel unhappy when you don't receive a letter from me? I have always assumed that I can postpone writing to you to the last. I want you to remain where you are and improve your health. If

[1] The message was conveyed in a letter of even date from Sushila Pai to the addressee.

[2] From the postmark

you have come to have faith in Dr. Sharma, continue his treatment. You should now learn not to be upset by the other troubles.

Tell Surendra that, if Dr. Sharma's treatment continues, he need not come to me just now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9386. Also C. W. 631. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

14. LETTER TO P. NIRUPAMA

May 23, 1934

CHI. NIRUPAMA,

I have your letter. The language is good. Ornaments are unnecessary; they tend to create in the girls fascination for external beauty. There should be much less fondness for ornaments in a poor country. All these reasons go against ornaments.

Blessings from
BAPU

KUMARI P. NIRUPAMA
C/O SHRI P. MANJUNATH NAYAK
SUDAMA KUTEER, UDIPI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9223

15. TELEGRAM TO INSPECTOR GENERAL OF PRISONS

SALIPUR
May 24, 1934

INSPECTOR GENERAL OF PRISONS
POONA

JUST HEAR KAKASAHEB KALELKAR HYDERABAD JAIL LOST WEIGHT SUFFERING. ALSO THAT HE IS NOT ALLOWED SLEEP OPEN AIR. PLEASE WIRE TRUE CONDITION.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, 800 (40) (4), Pt. II, p. 177

16. LETTER TO D. K. KARVE

AS AT CUTTACK,
May 24, 1934

DEAR PROF. KARVE,

I have just received your letter of 15th May last. It will give me great joy if the dispute between you and the executors of the will of the late Sir Vitthaldas is amicably settled. And whether it is amicably settled or not, I would like the appeal that has been made for donations to your University to receive a generous response. It is a tragedy that a man of your amazing industry and great devotion to the ideal that he has set before himself should feel the want of funds for the cause to which he has dedicated his life. If this letter enables you or the organizers of the appeal to get help from quarters which were hitherto closed against you I should feel delighted.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

PROF. D. K. KARVE
SHREEMATI NATHIBAI DAMODHER THACKERSEY
INDIAN WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY
YERANDAWANA, KARVE ROAD, POONA 4

From a facsimile: *Mahatma*, Vol. III, facing p. 344

17. LETTER TO G. V. SUBBA RAO

AS AT CUTTACK,
May 24, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I confess that I have not been able to go through the *Goshti* from page to page, but I have glanced through it. But I am sorry that your argument does not make any appeal to me. I have no repentance over the choice of co-workers. Moreover my decision was not prompted by any sense of repentance or blunder. The decision in Poona was not an error. It could not be otherwise than it was. The experiment of individual civil disobedience had to be made. Confining it to me alone at that time would have been highly improper as not to do so now would have been cowardly on my part. Those who have understood the decision do not feel at all that they allow me to immolate myself whilst they look on unconcerned. Their

immolation would perhaps be far more difficult than mine. Nevertheless you must continue your criticism fearlessly. Who knows some day your criticisms may open my eyes to my many errors of judgment as you conceive them? And then what does it matter if I remain unrepentant so long as your criticism does not appeal to me?

Yes, I glanced through the letter of Gopalakrishnayya.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. G. V. SUBBA RAO
SECRETARY, ANDHRA CONGRESS SWARAJYA PARTY
BEZWADA

From a photostat: G. N. 3627

18. LETTER TO CHARU PROBHA SEN GUPTA

AS AT CUTTACK,
May 24, 1934

MY DEAR CHARU PROBHA,

I am sorry I am not going to Bengal. What can I do? How nice it would have been if you had not gone away from Puri. I would have made you walk at least to the first village, and I know you would have enjoyed it apart from its religious merit.

Love.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 1491. Courtesy: A. K. Sen. Also G. N. 8705

19. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI[1]

May 24, 1934

I have received a wire from Sheth Mathuradas. I will arrive in Bombay about June 14. You may now do what is necessary.

From Gujarati: C. W. 7539. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

[1] The message was conveyed in a letter of even date from Sushila Pai to the addressee.

20. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

May 24, 1934

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Here is another letter from . . .[1]. Nothing will be gained by letting those two remain in the same condition. . . . should be taken on travels. I find it necessary to create new interests for her. . . .'s[2] problem presents more difficulty. What should be done about him? All that I can see is that he will be unable to do anything to help himself. He requires a companion who can influence him to some extent and whose advice he can take.

The idea of taking a trip to Calcutta has come to nothing. Now you can come down only if you have to see me. We shall see after consulting Thakkar Bapa.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C. W. 7960. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

21. NOTE

AVOID EXAGGERATION

Pandit Lalanth draws my attention to the fact that some newspapers which favour removal of untouchability have exaggerated the Deoghar incident and ascribed to those who delivered lathi blows on the hood of my car, designs upon my life. There is no warrant for ascribing any murderous motive to the authors of the demonstration. From the same source comes an unsigned printed leaflet which threatens death to those who might arrange demonstrations against the reformers. I refuse to believe that this anonymous leaflet is the work of any responsible body or person at all. So far as I know, no injury was done and no counter-demonstration was made against sanatanists in Calcutta on the day which they had fixed for anti-Temple-entry Bill demonstration. Neverthless, I cannot be too insistent on reformers being and remaining non-violent in thought, word and deed. Let them ignore these sanatanist demonstrations. So far as I have seen, and I could not help seeing, these sanatanist demonstrations have little, if any, backing from the public. In any case, we have to win them over

[1] The names have been omitted.

[2] *ibid*

by showing regard for their sentiments. We must not repel or acerbate them by making irritating or offensive remarks about their activity.

Harijan, 25-5-1934

22. WILL THEY DO IT?

Since I have taken up the walking pilgrimage, hundreds of villagers have been following the pilgrims. Some even talk about their woes. Thus, whilst I was reaching Sakhigopal, a representative weaver himself told me that the weavers were in great distress as there was no demand for their cloth.[1] I told him I had prophesied fifteen years ago that it would not be possible for them to co-exist with mills, so long as they used mill yarn, and that the natural supplier and sustainer of the handloom was the spinning-wheel. In his reply I heard, to the best of my recollection, for the first time, 'Give us hand-spun and we shall weave it.'

'I will, if you will do as I tell you', said I.

'We will', the old man replied. The weaver was an old man with a bent back.

I was overjoyed at his replies and said, 'That is very good. Then I would teach you, your wife and your children how to gin, card and spin. You will then have enough yarn for your loom. You will spin good, strong, even yarn, you will avoid waste. I shall expect you from your first out-turn to take your khaddar for your own use and then I shall buy all the surplus khaddar you weave. I shall try to become a member of your family and give you the benefit of my experience. Thus, I shall ask you to give up drink and intoxicating drugs if you are addicted to them. I shall go through your family budget and wean you from incurring debts.'

The old man's face lightened up and he said, 'We shallsurely follow your advice. At present, starvation stares us in the face.' I asked him to bring some of his friends to see me at 3 o'clock at the Gopabandhu Ashram in Saikhigopal.

He came with his friends, I repeated much of the morning conversation and said, 'I know you can't spin at once enough yarn to start your looms. I shall, therefore, supply you with enough yarn to

[1] The meeting took place on May 10, 1934.

start with for the most promising families. By the time you have woven it, you will have spun enough to feed your looms. The first khaddar you weave from this supplied yarn will be taken over from you. For the second lot, if you have not yet enough yarn of your own, I will again supply you with some. After that you should become self-supporting and you should make all your own family requirements of cloth and then only sell the surplus.

I regard this as an experiment of the highest importance and potency. There are probably ten million weavers in India. No one has the correct number, to the thousand even. But ten million is a safe guess. If these added all the previous processes to the art of weaving, they would not only ensure their own existence, but cheapen khaddar to the lowest possible limit and turn out much more durable and beautiful khaddar than has yet been produced.

The readers of *Harijan* know that there are in the Central Provinces several Harijan weaver families which do their own carding and spinning. I would add to this ginning. The future of khaddar can be assured if the weavers realize the necessity, for their own sakes, of themselves doing all the processes antecedent to weaving.

Harijan, 25-5-1934

23. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

AS AT CUTTACK,
May 25, 1934

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

I got your letter in Patna. I do not want to say anything about what has already happened. But the question still remains as to what co-workers like you should do. Unless you feel inclined to, there is no obligation on your part to take any interest whatsoever in the election except in the way of giving your vote to the Congress candidate, if he is otherwise a fit person. But if you have the slightest inclination in the direction, there is nothing whatsoever to prevent you from taking full share in the elections. However, I should personally feel deeply grieved if those who were engaged in constructive work such as khadi,

untouchability and the like were to withdraw themselves from it and plunge into the turmoil of elections.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. GOPICHAND
LAHORE

From a copy: Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

24. DISCUSSION WITH M. R. MASANI AND N. R. MALKANI[1]

May 25, 1934

M. Is your main difference as to method or do you suspect that socialism is based on violence?

G. It is not a matter of suspicion but of fact. Violence need not be physical. Your socialistic system is based on coercion.

M. But coercion is used not as an end. It is for the good of the many.

G. Violence is impatience and non-violence is patience. Great reforms cannot be introduced without great patience. In violence lies the germ of future failure. For instance, take 100 persons—5 armed and powerful, who could chop off the heads of the helpless 95 if they would oppose them. That would be complete failure for the five. But suppose that someone of the 95 kills these five and acquires power, without the desire of the remaining 94, you cannot say that the new rule will be good for all. It may only mean one bad rule followed by another bad rule.

M. But one could not snatch power without the desire and active co-operation of the 94.

G. We have assumed absence of desire.

M. But with us the desire exists. The socialistic programme can be understood and accepted by all.

[1] In his introductory note to this, N. R. Malkani, who was Gandhiji's acting secretary, stated that these notes had the "advantage of having been passed by Gandhiji". Malkani wrote : "It was Friday, the 25th of May, 1934, and we had to walk five miles in the morning from Sisua to Patpur. . .Gandhiji walked barefooted with a cloth on his head, the right hand on Masani's shoulder, the left on mine; his words instructing us, his hands now soothing and now restraining us; and 'M' in this talk stands to the credit of both Masani and Malkani indifferently . . . ."

G. Talk to the peasant in Orissa about monopoly of trade and socialization of industry and he will not know what you are talking about.

M. But the Gujarati or Deccani peasant can understand the rationalization of land.

G. Well, I have known Gujarati peasants defending and approving the institution of the Bania in villages. They say the Bania is their benefactor in distress and so forth. These people have to be awakened. It is no use having an over-ambitious programme. I am a practical man. I would cut down your programme to what I actually do.

M. The present tendency is towards decentralization in agriculture. Intensive agriculture can only be on a small scale. But the tendency in industry is towards large-scale production and later large-scale control. In such cases there is bound to be a conflict between labour and capital. There are some industries which always will tend to be on a large scale.

G. Industries like transport, insurance, exchange must be State-owned. But I would not insist that all large industries should be taken over by the State. Suppose there is an intelligent and expert individual who volunteers to run and direct an industry, without much remuneration and only for the good of society, I would keep the system elastic enough to allow such an individual to organize that industry.

M. I too have no objection to such elasticity provided all private profit is eliminated. If any individual promises to work for society, he should be permitted to do so. But I would like to make sure that the industries are run on national lines. I would, therefore, like the industries to be represented on a functional basis in the State, each trade to have its own representation.

G. That would be superfluous in a State which was based on adult franchise. India is mostly agricultural and adult franchise would, therefore, give preponderance to agriculture.

M. In Russia they have a slightly different system. The urban worker's vote is weighted—four agriculture votes are equal to one urban vote. For the rest the system of election is indirect, like our Congress election.

G. Well, I would not give that preference to the urban vote. In the Round Table Conference I urged the adoption of adult franchise and voting by the village community. The proposal was rejected because the Round Table Conference was not representative.

M. But any conference which has representatives of landlords and capitalists

will reject adult franchise. They will say one thing but will do the other.

G. Then they have to be persuaded and converted to your views; I do not believe in the so-called class-conflict.

M. But we can convert individuals, never a system. For instance take the Champaran planters. To the last they were not converted. But for the pressure brought on them by the Governor nothing would have been done.

G. I am not sure. Some planters were converted. What part the Government and planters played in the matter I do not know. But I do know that the Government could have done nothing, if the planters had not stood by them.

M. But if the Governor had been hostile the planters would have resisted to the last.

G. That is shifting the ground. I simply say that some planters were converted. In India Europeans are of four classes—businessmen, soldiers, civilians and ecclesiastics. Surely you do not suggest that individuals from these cannot be converted. You must eliminate violence. And when you do, you will find that there is not much difference between you and me. Both of us desire the welfare of the starving millions.

The Hindustan Times, 4-8-1935

25. SPEECH AT PATPUR

May 25, 1934

Mr. Gandhi reached Patpur this morning at 7. The party halted at Sisua last night.

In a speech at Patpur Mr. Gandhi characterized the locality as a khadi-growing place and exhorted his audience to use khadi instead of mill-made cloth. The Charkha Sangh presented him with some khadi. A purse of Rs. 101 was presented to him on behalf of the people.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 25-5-1934

26. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

KAKTIA,[1]

May 26, 1934

DEAR SATISBABU,

I have your letter. I am glad of the Bengal decision. How I should love to pass three months roaming about Bengal after the rains are over. But though I am not coming to Bengal, not even to Calcutta, I would like those who have understood the meaning of this walking pilgrimage to send their subscriptions to me whilst the pilgrimage is going on in Orissa. You should, therefore, get what copper and silver pieces you can and send them to me. Bhagirathji, who was here, agreed with me that even though I may not come to Calcutta, such subscriptions as could be collected should be sent to me. You have got the tour programme. The purses may be sent to me at any stage, but if nowhere else, let them be sent at least at Balasore which I reach on the 12th proximo and which is the last station. You may therefore choose Balasore for sending purses if you can't anticipate it.

Love.

BAPU

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 26-5-1934

27. LETTER TO KSHIRODE CHANDRA MAITY

May 27, [*1934*][2]

If I feel confident that I could do useful work in the direction indicated by you, I should set aside all other activities and tour in Bengal for several months. But I have no present hope.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI KSHIRODE CHANDRA MAITY

BYBATTARHAT, MIDNAPUR

From a photostat: G. N. 5058

[1] A village in Cuttack District

[2] As given in the G. N. register; it is obliterated in the source.

28. LETTER TO MATHURADAS SHETH[1]

May 27, 1934

Most probably I will arrive there on the 14th and leave for Poona on the 19th. I will decide finally in a few days. You may arrange whatever is possible within that time. Please do not take me to too many places. We should be content with what is possible in one meeting. Personally I should like to keep at one place and explain my views to workers and listen to what they have to say. Untouchability cannot be eradicated merely with the help of money. It will disappear only if the hearts of large numbers can be melted. I would ask you to think about this problem.

From Gujarati: C. W. 7540. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

29. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

May 27, 1934

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

I have written to Gopalan of Cannanore. Chandrashankar or Valji would not have destroyed the letter. Is it certain that you must go over to Kashi? If you have to go there, let the meeting of the Board be held there. Now we have many places for that purpose. I hope your boils have disappeared now. Things here are well enough, though not as good as one would wish. That tireless worker, Ramabehn, too has fallen ill. Neither Harakhchand[2] nor Ishvarlal[3] is here. The brooms are new[4]. But who can harm him whom Rama guards? I have written to Raja about Hildapud.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 1139

[1] The message was conveyed in a letter of even date from Chandrashankar Shukla, Gandhiji's secretary, to K. M. Munshi.

[2] Harakhchand Motichand, a wealthy philanthropist from Kathiawar

[3] An inmate of the Ashram

[4] Gandhiji has used the Gujarati phrase to mean that he was having new people with him.

30. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

May 27, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I assume that you will be able to manage Dr. Suresh Banerji.

I have already replied to your letter and your wire. You have my tour programme. I should very much like to break the journey at Wardha, but I don't think I can do so. The whole programme is fixed and it seems desirable to stick to it.

I hope you are keeping well. You must have received my letter[1] regarding Elwin.

Malaviyaji has written to me and suggested a meeting of the Congress Working Committee at Poona. Both places will suit me equally well if the meeting takes place on a date or dates when I shall be there. If the strike is going on in Bombay at the time, I won't like to stay there at all. But that is beside the point. I shall have to be in Bombay from the 14th to 18th.

Om is going on well enough. She learns a great deal from experience, but she is a bit lazy with her studies.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 2934

31. SPEECH AT KENDRAPARA

[*May 27, 1934*][2]

After the rich experiences I am having in Orissa this programme does not please me at all, but no province save Bengal was willing to forgo my visit altogether. Almost all the provincial workers agreed that the walking tour was better. I urged that a walking tour for three or four days would be a mockery and the spiritual effect would be missed if it was closely intermixed with railway and motor travelling. A compromise was therefore effected and the revised programme was the result. Its peculiarity lies in my being in one and the same place in

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Chittaranjan Seva Sadan, Calcutta", 21-7-1934

[2] From "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*, 8-6-1934

each province during the whole of my stay there. I see that Thakkar Bapa has made an exception in favour of the United Provinces which is not one but many provinces. This obviates the mad rush.

The revised programme becomes a predominantly collecting tour and not one for the delivery of my message. I would, however, like the workers to meet me at these places and gather the results of the past six month's tour and discuss the future plan of work. If I am to do this solid work I must not be taken from place to place to receive purses or address meetings. During my stay in each province there should be no appointments for me to go anywhere. Beyond one public meeting and one women's meeting where desired there should be no other functions. I should like to come in touch with as many Harijans and sanatanists as possible.

The Hindu, 29-5-1934

32. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

May 28, 1934

CHI. VASUMATI,

I hope you are satisfied now with the frequency of my letters. In this tour on foot I could have included all the women workers, but it is extremely doubtful whether any of them would have been able to endure the hardships. Mira will probably arrive there at about the same time that you get this letter. The details of the tour, therefore, will be given by her. If you can stop thinking about your troubles, I shall believe that you have got the reward of pilgrimages to all the shrines.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9387. Also C. W. 632. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

33. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

May 28, 1934

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have gone through your plan. The donkey is missing on page six. The omission is only through oversight, is it not?

The scheme appears somewhat expensive. But what discourages me is the absence of annual results. Isn't it a feature of the Russian plan that it shows yearwise results and ultimately proves its self-sufficiency at least on paper? I do not notice any such attempt in this scheme.

You must have got my letter about. . .[1]. . . . .'s letter received yesterday says that . . . is coming to see me. It will be good indeed if he does come. There is no doubt that . . . is highly perturbed. You are well, I trust. The touring I like very well. The only regret is that physical exhaustion prevents me from moving around the countryside.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The Calcutta mail-bag should reach me at one of the halts here. On tour, I lose contact with the other provinces.

From Hindi: C. W. 7961. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

34. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 28, 1934

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

You are right in saying that only the rich and educated people can live with me. I have to turn the rich into poor and place a broom in the hands of the educated. Why should I have you with me? To make you poorer still or to place a broom in your hands? What was there to do in Patna? Did you have to deliver lectures there?[2] If you wish to serve you must calm yourself. I got your telegram. Why was the operation postponed? I shall learn that from your letter. Yes, the best course for you would be to listen to your mother and get married. Where is the single-mindedness in you that is required for remaining a virgin? You are prone to all kinds of thoughts. You cannot concentrate on any one thing. Therefore attain tranquillity if you wish to remain unmarried. When will you learn Hindi? By now you ought to know Gujarati too. Tell me now your plan. I shall arrive in Bombay on the 14th and remain there till the 18th; afterwards,

[1] The names have been omitted.

[2] The addressee, wishing to be in Gandhiji's company, had said in her letter that he had no place for an uneducated person like herself.

Poona. I shall be in Poona for six days and then on to Ahmedabad. Make yourself well and give up all childishness.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 306

35. OBSERVATIONS ON M. R. MASANI'S SOCIALISTIC PROGRAMME

[*May 29, 1934*][1]

I welcome the rise of the Socialist Party in the Congress. But I can't say that I like the programme as it appears in the printed pamphlet. It seems to me to ignore Indian conditions, and I do not like the assumption underlying many of its propositions which go to show that there is necessarily antagonism between the classes and the masses or between the labourers and the capitalists such that they can never work for mutual good. My own experience convering a fairly long period is to the contrary. What is necessary is that labourers or workers should know their rights and should also know how to assert them.[2]

'Abolition of the rule of Indian princes' is an arrogation of power which does not belong to the party or which belongs as much as the power to abolish Portuguese and French authority in what is called Portuguese and French India would. It may be unfortunate, but the dismemberment of India is a fact which may not be ignored. It is surely enough to concentrate upon what is called British India. It is large enough territory for any party to operate in, and its successful operations in British India cannot but have their effect upon the other parts of India. On principle too I am not for the abolition of the rule of the princes; but I believe in its reformation and modification in consonance with the true spirit of democracy.

'The repudiation of the so-called Public Debt of India incurred by the foreign Government' is too vague and too sweeping a statement in the programme of a progressive and enlightened party. The Congress has suggested the only real and statesmanlike

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] This paragraph was repeated in Gandhiji's letter dated June 14, 1934, to the addressee.

proposition, namely, reference to an impartial tribunal of the whole of the so-called Public Debt before any part can be taken over by the future free Government of India.

'The progressive nationalization of all the instruments of production, distribution and exchange' is too sweeping to be admissible. Rabindranath Tagore is an instrument of marvellous production. I do not know that he will submit to be nationalized.

Regarding 'State monopoly of foreign trade', should not the State be satisfied with all the power it will prossess? Must it also exercise all the powers in one swoop, whether such an exercise is necessary or not?

'Cancellation of debts owing by peasants and workers' is a proposition which the debtors themselves would never subscribe to, for that will be suicidal. What is necessary is an examination of the debts some of which, I know, will not bear scrutiny.

I should educate the masses to cultivate habits of thrift. I should not be guilty of maiming them by letting them think that they have no obligation in the way of taking preventive measures in the matter of old age, sickness, accident and the like.

I do not understand the meaning of the phrase 'the right to strike'. It belongs to everybody who wants to take the risks attendant upon strikes.

Does 'the right of the child to care and maintenance by the State' absolve the parent from the duty of caring for the maintenance of his children?

'The elimination of landlordism' clearly means usurpation of the Zamindari and Talukdari tracts in clause 13. I am not for elimination but for just regulation of the relation between landlords and tenants.

How do you seek to oppose the 'introduction of religious issues into politics' if you regulate and control all religious endowments? What we really want to do is to observe strictest religious neutrality. But when professors of one of the religions in the State desire some kind of internal reform without which progress will be impossible for them, State aid will become inevitable.

These are some of the observations as they occur to me on a cursory glance of your printed programme.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: C. W. 4883. Courtesy: M. R. Masani. Also G. N. 4125

36. LETTER TO M. R. MASANI

(CAMP) KENDRAPARA,
May 29, 1934

MY DEAR MASANI,

Here is my answer[1] to the questions you left with me. You will see my answer covers all the questions. With reference to the resolutions adopted at the First All-India Congress Socialist Conference[2] I should have very little to say against them if your programme was sound which for the reasons I have given does not appear to me to be. The resolution is perhaps bombastic; it is certainly prolix. Do not hesitate to write to me again when necessary.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI M. R. MASANI,
C/O "THE SUN"
139 MEDOWS STREET
POST BOX NO. 62, FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat: C. W. 4883. Courtesy: M. R. Masani. Also G. N. 4125

37. SPEECH AT KENDRAPARA

May 29, 1934

I am out to demolish all manner of inferiority complex from the mind of my Harijan brothers. It is this which is taken advantage of by the opponents to the Harijan uplift movement and also induces the Harijans themselves to take the humiliating and absolutely irrational status assigned to them in society lying down.

Proceeding, Gandhiji ejoined on his audience the need for conducting themselves in their everyday life in such a manner as to deserve treatment as equals with their so-called high-caste fellows. And for this it was essential, said Gandhiji, that the Harijans should scrupulously avoid carrion-eating, uncleanly habits and drunkenness. A touching scene was witnessed in Mahatmaji's camp today, when an inmate was found weeping over the news of the death of a near relation of hers. Gandhiji consoled her saying that the best way to conquer death was to take no notice of it. In this connection he cited the example of Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta of the

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Held at Patna on May 11, under the presidentship of Acharya Narendra Dev

Khadi Pratishthan, Calcutta, who did not give up spinning on his charkha for a moment even when he heard the news of the death of his son. That was an example of real heroism which he would like every servant of the nation to emulate.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 29-5-1934

38. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

May 29, 1934

In an exclusive interview with the 'Associated Press', in the course of which he was asked whether he had definitely abandoned tbe Bengal tour, Mr. Gandhi said :

It is not I who have abandoned the Bengal tour. I put myself at the disposal of the Bengal Board, placing before them my difficulties. They first dispensed me from the tour in the districts. I offered to go to Calcutta for a few days if it was thought at all necessary for me to do so, though I had no mind to go to Calcutta only. The Bengal Board also thought likewise and came to the conclusion that if I went to Bengal I should go there for three months. And since that was impossible Calcutta was abandoned. I should certainly love to go to Bengal for three months or more. But I do not know whether this opportunity will come to me during my lifetime.

To another question whether he contemplated any discussion of the Poona Pact with Bengal Hindu leaders and whether the Pact was still open to discussion and, incidentally, to revision, Mr. Gandhi replied :

I have always been ready and willing to discuss the Poona Pact with the Hindu leaders of Bengal. Anything is possible by agreement of all parties. So far as I am concerned nothing is possible that would not be consistent with justice to Harijans.

Asked whether he would support untouchables if they started satyagraha for the vindication of their right to entry into public temples and whether untouchables had an inalienable right to worship in public temples, Mr. Gandhi said :

I do believe that Harijans have as much right of worship in public temples as any other Hindus. But I could never be a party to the use of force in order to vindicate that right. Satyagraha has come to signify many things. I should therefore want to know the nature of the satyagraha to be offered. And in any case satyagraha by Harijans would not be advisable while reformers were trying their utmost to persuade the orthodox to waive their objections.

Asked whether he would give any lead regarding the entry of untouchables into the Puri Jagannath Temple, Mr. Gandhi replied :

I have known of the importance of the temple at Puri being open to Harijans as it certainly was years ago and, as I know from first-hand evidence, always has been so long as Harijans have gone without asserting their rights. But I have no lead to give about opening the temple beyond this—that public opinion should be cultivated in that behalf.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 30-5-1934

39. LETTER TO CHARU PROBHA SEN GUPTA

May 30, 1934

MY DEAR CHARU PROBHA,

I have your letter. Do by all means join me at any stage you like. You know my programme, don't you? On 6th I reach Bhadrak.

Love.

BAPU

[PROGRAMME][1]

		MORNING	EVENING
		8 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.	5.30 p.m. to 5.30 a.m.
4th	June	Baradeshwar	Baradeshwar
5	’’	Baradeshwar	Nalang
6	’’	Gavadpur	Bhadrak
7	’’	Asura	Sinulia
8	’’	Jamjhari	Sirapur
9	’’	Soro	Barikpurhat
10	’’	Khantapara	
11	’’	’’	Khannagar
12	’’	Balasore	
12	’’	Leave Balasore at 11.0 a.m.	

SHRI CHARU PROBHA SEN
RAJBARI (BENGAL)

From a photostat: C. W. 1492. Courtesy: A. K. Sen. Also G. N. 8706

[1] Written in a handwriting other than Gandhiji's, this is found on the reverse of the postcard containing the letter.

40. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

BERIMUL (UTKAL),
May 30, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

It is already Wednesday but there is no letter from you yet.

The newly built ship has already sprung a leak. It may keep afloat, but one can't say whether it will reach the port. The Four[1] will meet again in Bombay on the 15th.

Mahendrababu, Rajendrababu's elder bother, is seriously ill. It is doubtful if he will survive. If he passes away, Rajendrababu will suddenly find himself burdened with a heavy responsibility. Write to him.

Ceresole, Agatha and Muriel are leaving on the 15th. All three had sufficient experience. Ceresole will come back in October. He will bring with him some other friends too. The Bihar work is progressing quite well, thanks to Jamnalalji's strict supervision. He has taken Muriel to see . . .[2] They will go to Wardha *via* Anantpur.

Bapa's place is taken at present by Malkani. Devdas had come to Patna. He has put on some flesh now. Marriage and Delhi have done him good. Ramdas is the same that he was, though he seems to have improved a little now.

It seems Mani is being tested fairly severely (in Jail). Kaka also is being tested. He was ill. There has been a wire from him saying that he is a little better now.

Since Sushila, Prabhavati and Om write to you, you must be getting plenty of tit-bits from them. It can be said that the heat here is worse than what it is even in Ahmedabad.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 104

[1] Madan Mohan Malaviya, Dr. M. A. Ansari, Dr. B. C. Roy and Bhulabhai Desai of the Congress Parliamentary Board

[2] The name is omitted in the source.

41. INTERVIEW TO UTKAL WORKERS

May 30, 1934

Asked if he was satisfied with the formation of the Swaraj Parliamentary Board in which Utkal was not represented, Mahatma Gandhi said:

I am not particular about it, nor am I at all concerned with the selection of the personnel of the Board. I am mis-represented by the Press as such. Only Malaviyaji and Dr. Ansari have taken all responsibility for it.

As regards the discontent of the Utkal people for being neglected in the matter of representation on the Board, he said :

I am of opinion that those who can do constructive work should not worry about representation on the Board. But if you feel keenly on the matter, you should write asserting your right of representation of at least one seat.

He further advised the Utkal workers that instead of utilizing his services in such matters, they should take his more useful services in solving the flood problem which he was thinking about day and night. Repair of the embankments, which was prohibited by the Government, was the greatest problem which every representative of the people of Utkal must think about. To solve this he was writing to an expert engineer for making a survey. He was confident that if a solution was suggested, the Government would not ignore it.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 1-6-1934

42. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

May 31, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

The burden on Dwarkanath has increased. Please know everything from him and lighten it. Listen to what he may have to say regarding Manohar and Keshu and look into the matter carefully, and do what is necessary. Why did Manohar go away suddenly to live in the orchard? Also inquire and see if Sharma takes too much work on himself. We must find time in Bombay to discuss all this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 2935

43. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

May 31, 1934

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I came to know only just now about your son's death. All of us will have to go that royal road sooner or later. If, however, you two do wish to observe mourning for him, do so by observing complete self-control. Please remember that now we have to observe with all the greater vigilance the strict rules for civil disobedience volunteers.

I had received your letter. What you mean is this that I also should demonstrate my love by giving up civil disobedience. If I think that necessary, I would certainly take that step. But I see no such necessity. What displeased the Government was not civil disobedience itself, but the incivility which was displayed in its name. The party of violence were not, and are not, concerned with demonstration of love. They didn't see our non-violence, but saw the subtle violence behind it and concluded that it was the result of cowardice and that their violence of the brave was far better. Thus, because our disobedience was uncivil, neither of the two parties could understand it. Is this clear?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 6079. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

44.LETTER TO SARITA

May 31, 1934

CHI. SARITA,

I have your letter. It was good that you wrote to me. I am glad you are undergoing Dr. [Hiralal] Sharma's treatment. Stick to it. Don't think there is anything wrong in staying with Nimu. There is no need to believe in that superstition. The custom of not having even water at the daughter's place was good for those parents who threw their daughters in the ditch because of greed. They did not, however, reform their evil practice. Moreover my relations with you are not of today. They go back to Amritlal's time. So you should have no hesitation whatever in staying with Ramdas.

Still, if you can get better treatment by staying with Dr.Sharma, certainly do so.

Now that you have started writing, keep it up.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 11528

45. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHARMA

May 31, 1934

BHAI SHARMA,

Go slow. Dwarkanathji tells me that you have taken up too many burdens. I think the letter from Surendra too contained a similar complaint. To perform service to our utmost and to take it as well is beneficial to all in every way. Keep writing to me. You must regard it as your dharma to take the requisite amount of milk and other articles of food.

Draupadi Devi has not so far replied to my letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jeevanke Solah Varsha, 1932-48*, between pp. 68 and 69

46. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 31, 1934

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

Your letter. How is it that you reached the hospital and yet the operation was not performed? I reach Bombay on June 14. How nice it would be if the operation is performed ! As for your accompanying me, I have already written to you. Why are you scared of the operation? Don't you have enough faith in God?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G. N. 307

47. 'THE COOLIE PROBLEM OF ASSAM'

Whilst I was touring in Assam, a correspondent sent me his outpourings under the above heading. From his letter I take the following :[1]

I can agree from personal experience with much of what the writer has to say. The very word 'coolie' is a misnomer and reminds one of what happens in South Africa. Instead of meaning a labourer or a porter, the word came to be applied in South Africa to designate the bearer's nationality, and became a word of reproach. An Indian merchant, barrister or doctor was known as a coolie merchant, etc. So, in Assam, the Indian who went from another province to work on the tea estates remained a coolie even after the termination of his cotract as a labourer and even though he ceased to be a labourer and became a land-owner. But being industrious, he has multiplied in Assam and yet remains in perfect isolation and ostracism. It is a suicidal policy that keeps him so. He cannot be driven out of Assam. Being grossly neglected, he has become an economic waste. If these men were properly taken care of, they would become an asset of first class importance. It is up to the educated people of Assam to study this problem and solve it to the benefit of all concerned. It does not require an outlay of money so much as it requires an outlay of intelligence and industry.

Harijan, 1-6-1934

48. UNTOUCHABILITY AS IT EXISTS TODAY

The Editor sends me the following from his box. A correspondent who gives his name and address but prefers to remain unknown to the readers of *Harijan* says :

> In the *Harijan* of the 9th March, Gandhiji is reported to have said that 'there was no warrant in the Shastras for untouchability'. One of the most prominent pundits who support Mahatmaji's movement is Mahamahopadhyaya Pramatha Nath Tarkabhushan of Benares Hindu University. He has

[1] The extract is not reproduced here. The correspondent had pointed out the need to remove the indignities suffered by the so-called 'coolies' and those belonging to other Depressed Classes. He had requested Gandhiji to "evolve a scheme of work" to raise their standard of life and to earn them recognition in society.

published the letter which he wrote to Gandhiji last year quoting scriptures in support of Gandhiji. The pundit wrote that, although there are texts in support of untouchability, there are other texts which stated that untouchables could be made pure by *diksha* (initiation) and devotion to God. Thus, according to the pundit, those *chandalas* who were not initiated nor devoted to God were untouchables according to the Shastras. Gandhiji's opinion that there is no sanction for untouchability is, therefore, not supported by this pundit.

Will you kindly state pundits have told Gandhiji that there is no sanction for untouchability in the Shastras?

Gandhiji himself wrote before that sanatanists had supplied him with many texts from the Shastras in support of untouchability, but that he did not accept the authority of such passages as they were against the fundamental principles of morality.

Gandhiji's present statement that there is no sanction for untouchability in the Shastras does not seem to accord with his previous statement which was that there is such sanction but he did not accept the authority of such passages because they were immoral.

Will you kindly explain the apparent inconsistency through the columns of the *Harijan*?

I have not verified the quotation from the *Harijan* of 9th March. But everybody knows by this time that, whenever I speak on untouchability, it has reference to untouchability as it is practised today or known to us today. And I do repeat here, as I have said on a thousand platforms, that there is no warrant in the Shastras for untouchability as we practise it today. I well remember Mahamahopadhyaya Pramatha Nath Tarkabhushan's letter to me. His argument is an enforcing argument combating the doctrine of ineradicable untouchability. That letter not only does not controvert[1] my proposition but supports it in the sense that no single untouchable need always remain untouchable. When once it is admitted that an untouchable can become touchable by simply reciting the *Bhagavata's* twelve-lettered *mantra*, the citadel of untouchability is destroyed. For the support of my position, I cite even the sanatanists themselves, for, they have not as yet produced a single verse in support of untouchability as it is practised today. Innumerable castes are at one time enumerated as untouchables in the census report and

[1] The source has "contraverse".

at another removed from that list and some new ones are enumerated. Surely, there is no warrant in the Shastras for accepting census figures for branding persons as untouchables, and untouchability as we practise it today has reference only to these several crores of men and women who are classified as untouchables in census reports. Nor is there any warrant in the Shastras for the treatment that is meted out to these people in their respective provinces or districts. I have, indeed, said that the verses produced by sanatanists in support of untouchability as they describe it are wholly inconsistent with the fundamental principles of Hinduism. Therefore, under the canons of interpretation laid down in the Shastras themselves, such verses must be repudiated as devoid of authority. There is, therefore, no inconsistency in my writings or sayings, when I say that there is no warrant for untouchability as it is practised today. Of course, there is ample authority in the Shastras for temporary untouchability on sanitary grounds. That is not an untouchability that is contrary to reason or to ethics. The untouchability against which I am carrying on war is an internal taint which is supposed to apply to a man by birth and of which no amount of expiation can purge a man.

Harijan, 1-6-1934

49. LETTER TO TARA JASWANI

June 1, 1934

CHI. TARA,

May I compliment you for writing to me after three years? Though you wrote to me after such a long time, you have not given me an account of the work you did during this period. Have you collected any money for Harijan work, for which I have undertaken this tour? If you have not, please do so now. Add your own contribution to it before sending over the amount. My not going to Calcutta shouldn't be an excuse for forgetting either of these things.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8785

50. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER[1]

[Before *June 2, 1934*]

Why should you feel borken-hearted? Why can't you follow the example of Janakraja? He was indifferent when his capital city was being reduced to ashes, because he had done all he could to save it. Have you yourself failed anywhere? If not, why worry? Give some chance to God who has His finger in every pie. And even if you have failed anywhere, why worry? Like Lacy [*sic*] of old "Try again".

From Gujarati: C. W. 7541. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

51. LETTER TO KAMALA NEHRU

June 2, 1934

CHI. KAMALA,

I always look forward to hearing from you. Your letters can never be a burden to me. My regret is that I am not able to write to you as often. I invited you to come over because in Patna you were having to attend meetings night and day. But I do not wish to put you to the inconvenience of coming here, especially now, when the inconvenience has been even further increased with the onset of the rains.

Prabhavati has conveyed to me your question. Who is the person and from which place? Be that as it may, it is my view that this time we must swallow the bitter pill. But anyone who sincerely cannot put up with such a thing should certainly not obey an order of this kind. But anyone who defies the order must do so on his own responsibility. He must make it clear that the Congress or swaraj has nothing to do with such an action on his part, which for him is purely a matter of self-respect. The same should apply to meetings, etc. I am sure that at the present juncture, obeying even such obnoxious orders will add to our strength provided we do it not for fear of imprison-ment or strength provided we do it not for fear of imprisonment or something else, but out of a sense of duty.

[1] This message was conveyed in a letter dated June 2, 1934 from Chandrashankar Shukla to K. M. Munshi. The addressee's name, however, is not known.

Give me news of mummy. How is Indu? Has she gone to Kashmir? When will she be going to Santiniketan and what will she study?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C. W. 10870. Courtesy: Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

52. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, JAJPUR

June 2, 1934

In the address presented to me you have reminded me that this is a place of pilgrimage. How nice it would have been if you had also added that in this place of pilgrimage all the temples have been thrown open to Harijans. I have repeated several times that in the temples where Harijans have no right of entry, there are idols no doubt, but they have not been consecrated.

We call God the saviour of the fallen; we call him *Daridranarayana*; we call him the Merciful and the Benign. God has thousands of such epithets that go to prove that He does not belong to any particular caste. God belongs neither to the Brahmins nor the Kshatriyas but He belongs to all. But steeped in pride we say,'God is for us only and not for others.' To those who think so I have been crying myself hoarse that if there is any truth in the Shastras, if there is any truth in the tenets of the Shastras, a temple where Harijans are barred entry, has no God but only a stone.

If we fail to see what is obvious and if with the idea of high and low in our hearts, we segregate the Harijans, the Hindu dharma and Hindu society are doomed to perish.

From your address, it would appear that a tremendous propaganda is going on for the removal of untouchability and yet it cannot be uprooted in our time. With my naked eyes I can see clearly that, whether we like it or not, untouchability is destined to disappear. No man, up till now, has succeeded in stopping the wheels of time. If we willingly own our Harijan brothers and give them all the rights we enjoy, this shall be deemed as a blessed act in the kingdom of God

and in the Book of God. I shall explain to you what will be the result if untouchability is abolished against our wishes and also the result if it is removed with our consent. If untouchability is removed against our wishes, it means the destruction of the Hindu dharma. If Hinduism perishes there will certainly be no untouchable left. But that will not be for the good of humanity. If however untouchability is removed with the willing co-operation of the Hindus, with the purification of and atonement by caste Hindus, it will be something to be proud of and will be a blessed act. And the Hindu dharma which is on the decline today will have a renaissance, and it will progress. With the rise of the Hindu community the concept of brotherhood and fraternity will prevail not only in India but in the whole world. I have shown you two ways—one of progress and the other of decline. Now, it is for you to decide which path you should choose.

A Muslim brother has sent me a letter. He wishes me to give a reply here itself. The purport of his letter is that, in all that I have attempted so far, I have only met with failure. He writes, "Then why have you unnecessarily taken another task on your hands?" He cites this example: "You took immense trouble to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity. But it was no use; only there is a little more tension now." In answer to this I wish to say only this: I do not accept that I have failed in my attempts especially for Hindu-Muslim unity. It is my strong belief that as a result of the efforts that have been made, though tension appears to have increased due to the prevailing political conditions unity has on the whole been strengthened. It is also my unshaken faith that the endeavour to unite the Hindus and the Muslims will go down in history as a great and worthy cause. But, even if I concede that all my attempts have failed, still I have no regrets, because I have conducted these experiments all my life as a worshipper of truth. Therefore I have no regrets whatever for what I have done.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 15-6-1934

53. A LETTER[1]

[Before *June 3, 1934*]

If you will regard my walking tour in villages from day to day as walking to all villages of India, then there should be visible participation by all the provinces. There may be walking parties to villages delivering the message of equality and brotherhood, for abolition of untouchability means nothing less. These parties can do the double work, that of speaking in the friendliest manner to the caste Hindus on the evil of untouchability and distinction of high and low, collecting from them *repentance* money and sending this to me in the form of purses even as they would have done if I had travelled to them, and the work of delivering the message of peace and deliverance to the untouchables. What a glorious awakening it would be if a simultaneous response such as I have adumbrated here is made!

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 3-6-1934

54. A LETTER

[Before *June 3, 1934*]

I am glad that you are taking up the walking tour in Bengal, if only for five days. It would be successful if there is a good response. Of course you will explain to the people the cause of the collection of the tour. Let them understand that Orissa was in greater need, and that my tour in Orissa should be taken for touring all over India. At the same time if I had the opportunity I would certainly tour in Bengal for three months or more.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 3-6-1934

55. LETTER TO KOTWAL

June 3, 1934

BHAI KOTWAL,

I got your letter.

I understand [what you say] about your food. I see no harm in your asking for fruit when you are in jail. But I think you cannot go

[1] This and the following item appeared in the source as quoted in a statement by Dr. B. C. Roy and Satis Chandra Das Gupta.

on a fast to press your demand. You have not taken a vow, and cannot take it now. We should accept and be content with any food that is given to us in a manner that does not hurt our self-respect, provided it is such as we can eat. When we go to jail, we entrust our body to the jailor.

About the extracts which you made while in jail, you can go right up to the India Office, and, if you wish, take even legal steps.

It might be wise not to get an operation performed on the nose, unless it seems absolutely necessary, for improvement in eyesight.

The resolution which you intend to move concerning the Indian States seems altogether bad to me. I see nothing but attachment or complete lack of thought behind it. Personally, I wouldn't advise you to move it.

The second resolution is not as bad as the first, but it is bad enough. You do not know the history of how that province was formed. The population also cannot be put as high as you do. The number of delegates which you have assigned to Ajmer-Merwara also seems excessive to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3611

56. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

June 4, 1934

CHI. AMALA,

You did well in writing the letters. I want to know you as you are and not as you would be. I shall love you in spite of your faults. You have no cause to fear me. You must dismiss from your mind the thought that I hate you. I hate nobody in the world. You never gave me any cause for hating you. On the contrary you have given me many reasons for loving you. You must not therefore let your imagination run away with you.

I have read your letter to Mira. I think you should go to a cool place. I could easily send you somewhere. Why should you swear by German medicine? There are competent doctors enough in Ahmedabad. Tell Parikshitlal and he will take you to one. You should be sane in these matters. You will be a cause of great anxiety to me, if

you become ill and your body is undermined.

Why do you want to be like Mira? She is not perfect. No one is perfect. You should strive to be good according to the gifts God has given you. No two persons are alike in the world. But all can be good if they choose to.

We shall soon meet. I would like you to be fit when we meet. And this you will be, if you won't brood over you illness and take the necessary measures for getting well.

I enclose herewith some letters to be handed to those concerned.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

57. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

June 4, 1934

'Civil resistance' is a wider term, and also indicative of respect. Civil disobedience is not necessarily an accurate expression of the attitude indicated in 'civil resistance'. 'Civil disobedience' may also indicate an attitude of the mind. The term 'civil disobedience' was first used by Thoreau. I didn't like it because it didn't suggest all that I had in mind. Looking for a new phrase, I fixed upon 'civil resistance'. The current phrase was 'passive resistance'. But my way of resistance or the force which I had in mind was not passive. It was active, but 'active' might also mean violent. The word 'civil' suggests nothing but non-violence. I, therefore, joined it with 'resistance'.

The pledge taken at the start of the Dandi March certainly did not mean that I would remain in jail till swaraj was won. Nor is it always in our hands to be in jail.

If the Yeravda Pact required a change in the Award[1] by the Government, it also required the people to discharge their debt to Harijans. Because the Government was aware of this condition, it was by implication bound to give me facilities for fulfilling it. The Government had accepted a similar argument during my first term of imprisonment and given me the necessary concession. This correspondence has been published. How can they go back on it now?

I have had no hand in Jamnalalji's appointment. But I approve

[1] Communal Award

of it. The post of secretary was not filled because one secretary is out. If nobody was available, even that post would have had to be filled. There is no principle involved in such matters, the only criterion being propriety. What is wrong in the same person being President and Treasurer?

What you say concerning the Parliamentary Board is correct. The priest ministers at the wedding, but cannot help the partners to run their home. If we let ourselves be seen as we are some day we shall become what we ought to be.

Now nothing till the 14th[1]. However, if there is anything special I will write or ask somebody to write.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 146-7

58. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

June 4, 1934

Though the limited freedom[2] granted to me was conveyed to me orally by the Superintendent, it was actually a telephone message that he read out. At that time I accepted it, but within half an hour after he had left I wrote out and dispatched a letter[3] to the Government.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 132

59. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER[4]

[Before *June 5, 1934*]

I should love to give Bengal three months. That can only be in my next incarnation.

From Gujarati: C. W. 7542. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

[1] When Gandhiji was to reach Bombay

[2] For doing Harijan work

[3] *Vide* "Letter to R. V. Martin", 16-8-1933

[4] The message was conveyed in a letter dated June 5, 1934 from Chandrashankar Shukla to K. M. Munshi. The addressee's name, however, is not known.

60. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

June 4, 1934

BHAI BALVANTSINHA,

I do not see any difference between 'Bhai' or 'Chi.' or any other appellation as long as the sentiment is the same. When I do not know a person well and do not know his age and other particulars I usually address him as 'Bhai'. I would like it if Surendra keeps you with him. Narandas is at Rajkot, you should act as he advises.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1871

61. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

June 4, 1934

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. I feel that you should join the family business. You should earn what you can and enter the field of service only when you are free from attachment to the family and when the desire for money ceases and effortless *brahmacharya* is attained. It is useless to make any sacrifice because I or someone else so advises. Only you can have a measure of your own strength, only you can judge the degree of your attachment. Until you have measured yourself truly it is your dharma to keep up the domestic links and retain the family profession. There is no sin in maintaining family relationship or even in making money. One can also after all render service by keeping the domestic ties within limits. He also serves who observes truth, etc., while remaining in his own sphere of work. One who enters the field of service yet indulges in subtle pleasures, selfishness and the like renders no service, but only harms the cause and turns a hypocrite. It is a grave delusion to say that one cannot preserve truth while earning wealth. There are quite a few people today who adhere to truth while making money. I think your duty lies in this for the present, but the first thing you should do is to make yourself absolutely healthy.

Nothing will be gained by coming to me in my travels. But if you wish you may join me on my reaching Poona or Ahmedabad.

My advice would be against it. It would be better to busy yourself in work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2412

62. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

June 4, 1934

CHI. RAMESHWARDAS,

You are in Jamnalalji's custody and should remain so and do as he bids. The *kandora*[1] can be sent by post or with someone who happens to go there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 168

63. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

June 4, 1934

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

Your letter and the doctor's telegram arrived together. It is excellent that the operation was performed. I think you will have been discharged by the time I reach Bombay. Have no worry about anything. I am writing to Chandrakanta[2] and Raje[3]. It is good that both of them are there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 308

[1] A chain for the waist

[2] Daughter and son of Dr. Jawaharlal Rohatagi, a leading Congressman of Kanpur, who were both working as house-surgeons in the King Edward Memorial Hospital where the addressee was operated upon

[3] *ibid*

64. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD[1]

[On or before *June 5, 1934*][2]

WIRE JUST RECEIVED. TELL HIS WIDOW AND BHAGABATI[3] NOT TO WEEP OVER THE INEVITABLE. YOU HAVE LOST THE MAINSTAY OF THE FAMILY YET YOU HAVE LOST NOTHING. GOD WAS AND IS YOUR INFALLIBLE HELP. MAHENDRABABU WAS HIS INSTRUMENT. GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA AND MISS HARRISON ARE HERE. THEY AND OTHERS JOIN ME IN SENDING CONDOLENCES.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 5-6-1934

65. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 5, 1934

CHI. NARANDAS,

It was a good idea of yours to pay all those visits. I understand what you say regarding Rukhi. City life cannot have any other result than this. Rukhi could have made her way easier, but she did not have enough courage. But that was not her fault. Everybody obeys his or her own nature. One may make whatever changes are possible within its limits. Anybody who attempts more is bound to fall lower than he or she was before.

Prabhudas has got what he wanted. He will make his way in life if his health remains good.

Let Velanbehn follow her own inclination and rise or fall in consequence. She will come to no harm whatever. If Prema is released after I have left, I hope she will follow me. When is Lilavati expected to be released? I feel sometimes that we should now relieve Anasuyabehn of the burden of Anandi and others.[4] Kanu has proved his mettle well indeed. I have written to Amala. You do not seem to have met Amina. Amtussalaam has been operated upon for piles in Bombay. She is in the King Edward [Memorial] Hospital. Write to her. It is a painful state of affairs that weavers do not get yarn.

[1] In reply to the addressee's telegram informing Gandhiji of the death of Mahendra Prasad, addressee's elder brother

[2] The telegram was published under the date-line, "Bhadrak, June 5, 1934".

[3] Addressee's sister

[4] When the Ashram was closed, the younger girls were left in the care of Anasuyabehn Sarabhai.

Think over the problem of the dairy. The work ought not to be neglected. Write to Titus and tell him that he should attend things in right time. He should not spend his time away from the dairy as he likes. A letter for Chhaganlal is enclosed.

Where is Chimanlal at present? I hope you will be in Ahmedabad when I go there. If Jamnadas's health still does not improve I will not mind his resigning. But who will run the school afterwards? Jamnadas rarely writes to me. See that he does not decide anything in haste.

I like Purushottam's idea of going to Wardha. The rains have started here and it is not possible now to continue the tour on foot. I am, therefore, thinking what to do on the remaining days.

It has been decided just now that we should walk more today and reach Bhadrak, and leave it for Wardha on Friday, and proceed from there to Bombay on Wednesday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8401. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

66. LETTER TO DWARKANATH

[*June*][1] *5, 1934*

CHI. DWARKANATH,

The rains have set in here making it impossible to continue the tour on foot. It has therefore been decided to spend three days in Bhadrak before going over to your place. We hope to leave Bhadrak on Friday and reach there on Saturday. We shall leave from there on Wednesday. The party would comprise about ten people. I am not writing separately to Jamnalalji and Ramdas. Please tell Vidya I have her letter; it is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3087

[1] Not decipherable in the source. However, from the context it is clear that the letter was written in June. *Vide* also the preceding item.

67. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

June 5, 1934

CHI. KANTI,

Is it proper that you should never write to me? How are you? What do you read? How do you live? Will you not write to me and tell me all these things? From there you must write to me a beautiful letter every week.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7285. Courtesy: Kanti Gandhi

68. LETTER TO KESHAVJI RAOCHAND AND KANJI MULJI SIKKA

June 5, 1934

BHAI KESHAVJI RAOCHAND AND BHAI KANJI MULJI SIKKA,

My visit to Calcutta has been put off. But I certainly expect a purse from the Gujaratis in Calcutta. A contribution of at least Rs. 20,000 is certain from the Marwaris, it may even go up to Rs. 25,000. I am sending Valjibhai Desai to receive the contribution from the Gujaratis. I have to leave for Wardha by the Friday train. Please, therefore, collect what you can and send the amount with Valjibhai.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7466. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

69. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

GARADPUR (UTKAL),
June 7, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have received no letter from you this time as yet. I myself have written to you regularly, however. The rains have started here, and so all touring has stopped. It will soon be time for the morning prayer. As I am writing this, Satisbabu has arrived with his band of ten, carrying their luggage and walking a distance of two miles from Bhadrak Station to this place. They took an hour and three quarters to walk that distance through the mud.

I am now taking up the letter again after the prayer.

Satisbabu has been touring Bengal on foot. It is too early yet to assess the results of the walking tour. Personally I am fully satisfied. All other things seem pale beside this.

Miss Harrison has gone to Bombay. I shall meet her again there. She is a very good woman indeed. She thinks about nothing else but this problem. Muriel has toured fairly widely in company with Jamnalalji. She also will meet me in Bombay.

I have already sent the tour programme to you. Have faith that what is happening is perfectly all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 105

70. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[1]

June 7, 1934

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have said the correct thing to Nariman. We do not need a hotel that will give shade instead of sunshine. The Reception Committee should not encroach upon the prayer time without consu-lting me. They must take me to the Harijan colony unannounced.

I am returning Nariman's letter. If you are in the Reception Committee, the outside programmes for me should be kept to the minimum. Keep this in mind.

The rains have started here. So, the walking tour has become difficult, and I have had to spend three days in Bhadrak. I shall leave for Wardha tomorrow (Friday). I shall be there for four days after which I shall be in Bombay on the appointed date.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] An extract from this letter appears in " Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", 7-6-1934

71. SPEECH AT GARADPUR ASHRAM, BHADRAK

[*June 7, 1934*][1]

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

It was arranged that there would be a meeting on the public road today at 9 a.m. But I was informed that no meeting could be held on the public road without a license issued from the Superintendent of Police. It was our mistake that we did not obtain a license for the meeting. The S. P. is not here now. He stays at Balasore. His subordinates here are not empowered to issue a license. So I could not go to the place of the meeting. Therefore I called you all to this place. I know law cannot be broken here; because I do not want to break the law and convene a meeting on the public road. I say all of you should give up untouchability. We are all sons of one God, then why should we live aloof from Harijans? We should give all facilities to them which the caste Hindus enjoy. We should not hold out any distinction between high and low. The next thing that I have to say is that we have become idle and idleness should be given up. If we do not give up idleness we will starve. It is for this reason that some sort of work must be done. If no other work is available then charkhas should be plied so that something may be earned. If anyone gets more money by doing any other work, he should engage himself in such work. Thirdly, intoxicants should be given up because intoxicants do harm to us. If you have followed me, then give whatever you can for the service of Harijans.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 7-6-1934

72. SPEECH TO HARIJAN WORKERS, BHADRAK [2]

June 7, 1934

Those who took a direct part in the pilgrimage cannot but have been struck by the fact that real work lies in the villages. The vast mass of Harijans live there. Untouchability has its strongest roots there. Poverty, too, is most rampant in the villages. Therefore the Sangh, while not neglecting the cities, should send its best workers to the villages and there do twofold work—serve the Harijans and the *savarnas*—the former, by procuring for the young and the old

[1] From *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 8-6-1934

[2] Extracted from "Weekly Letter"

educational facilities, clean water-supply, admission to temples, betterment of economic condition, removal of bad habits, e.g., carrion-eating, eating and drinking intoxicating drugs and drinks, and inducing hygienic habits; and the latter, by establishing friendly contact with them and securing their co-operation to the extent they would be prepared to give it. In all things there should be no compulsion or the show of it. Above all, remember that personal purity of the worker is to count in the end. Those, therefore, whose character is not above suspicion and weatherproof should not touch Harijan service, particularly in the villages. The Sangh will have to be most careful in the selection of workers.[1]

Gandhiji expressed his satisfaction at the enthusiasm displayed by all sections of people throughout Utkal including the womenfolk in furtherance of Harijan uplift movement. Mahatmaji said:

I am returning more convinced than ever before that Harijan work is far better done by *padayatra* (tour on foot).

Referring to a query by one among the audience as to whether suspension of civil disobedience should be interpreted as a verdict of its failure, Gandhiji said:

There is no such work as 'failure' in the dictionary of a satyagrahi. He simply prepares himself according to experience gained at every step. The progress of a satyagrahi is similar to that of a mountaineer who has in the course of his march got to retrace his steps several times before he ascends a few steps.

Replying to another question as to how he expected to get swaraj by restricting the practice of civil disobedience only to himself, Gandhiji said:

Wait and you will see.

Harijan, 15-6-1934; also *The Bombay Chronicle,* 7-6-1934

73. NOTES

LIMITATIONS OF PENITENTIAL FASTS

It will be remembered that Shri Sitaram Sastri sometime ago underwent as unconditional fast by way of penance for the weakness of a friend who, having promised to open a temple under his charge, had, under pressure of his friends, gone back upon his promise. Shri Sastri discussed the fast with me. I promised to set forth the argument briefly in these columns.

[1] What follows is reproduced from *The Bombay Chronicle.*

Fasting with a spiritual purpose behind it is praiseworthy only under well-defined conditions. It must not be for a selfish end. It must not be in the nature of violence, as, for instance, it would be, if one fasted against a sanatanist for not opening a temple when it was well known that it was against his religious conviction to do so. The question that Sitaram Sastri had to deal with was of a different nature. He had to deal with a broken promise of an intimate friend. Ordinarily such a breach or its imminence is cured by a fast, and the fast would be advisable, if not obligatory, for those who believe in fasts as a lawful institution in a non-violent crusade against social or religious abuse or evil, both of which untouchability is. But in dealing with the timid, almost emasculated, society such as we have to deal with, even breaches of promise have to be gently dealt with, especially when they are made in connection with social matters as distinguished from individual affairs. Superstition is ingrained in us. Untouchability—itself a poisonous boycott of the extreme type—has filled us with imaginary horrors of an imaginary boycott. Living in such fears, mere threat of a social boycott to one for whom life outside his particular caste is inconceivable is enough to make him withdraw or break a solemn promise. In such cases, a fast is too drastic a remedy. Prudence demands abstention from taking promises from such men and treating lightly promises already made. Such persons require most sympathetic treatment and gentle handling. A drastic treatment like that of fasting may, instead of strengthening, actually weaken a person and, therefore, endanger or injure the very reform for which a fast is undertaken.

Harijan, 8-6-1934

74. A CAREFUL SPINNER

A Harijan sevak, who is working in a Harijan school and trying to introduce hand-spinning amongst his pupils and their parents, in addition to many other things writes:

> During the national week I spun more industriously than hitherto and much more carefully. My speed was 300 yards per hour on an average. Out of 40 *tolas* of cotton I obtained 37 *tolas* of yarn of 16 counts. The output was 9,700 rounds—a round is equal to four feet. In cleaning cotton and carding it, I lost two and a half *tolas*, and another half *tola* was lost in spinning. I have preserved all the waste. This I propose to utilize for filling pillows and the like. I have seen many spinners whose waste sometimes amounts to as much

as the wages obtained from spinning for the amount of cotton on which the waste has been made. You would remember that I spin only during leisure hours. I shall have spun for myself much more khadi than I need for personal use. I propose to sell the Purplus and apply the proceeds towards the expenses of conducting the Harijan school under my charge. My yarn is considered to be so strong and good that the weavers prefer my yarn to any other.

I know this spinner. He has become what he is by his sincerity and application. He was no better than the average spinner. But, today, very few volunteer-spinners would be able to show the record that this Harijan sevak has been able to show. Wandering through the villages of Utkal, speaking to the people and coming in closest touch with them I have a daily demonstration of enormous possibilities of hand-spinning. The idleness that has crept over the poor villagers is a first-class tragedy. I see hundreds, and often thousands, hovering round me all day long doing absolutely nothing. Those who hover round me are not in any shape or form well-to-do. Their food is of the most meagre kind. They hardly get milk or ghee. The food consists chiefly of boiled rice, dhal and oil. The people appear to me to be without ambition and without hope, and yet they show in their own lives a remarkable culture which you cannot help noticing. But all that culture will presently be of no avail to them, if they cannot be induced to learn the art of profitably utilizing every idle hour. And I come irresistibly to the conclusion that there is nothing but the spinning-wheel to present to the millions for their acceptance and use during idle hours. Surely, any industry is remunerative which is designed to give occupation to millions of people.

Harijan, 8-6-1934

75. TELEGRAM TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

BHADRAK,
June 8, 1934

ANAND
CARE KEWALRAMANI
IRRIGATION
JAHANIA

YOU MAY JOIN WARDHA OR BOMBAY. USELESS VIDYA[1] COMING WARDHA TWO WEEKS.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] Addressee's wife

76. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA [1]

June 8, 1934

I have your note of the 4th instant.

You enquire about things here. I shall content myself with giving you just a subjective report of the policy of the management as I expect detailed report of work done to reach you through Pyarelal and others from time to time.

My asking you for the expenses of your party has had a salutary effect and people are more careful in debiting items against the Bihar Central Relief Committee. But still there is a tendency to mix up reconstruction work with relief work. They want bridges built—even pucca ones—out of our funds without first tapping District Boards, the Government and other sources. Even the wells sunk seem excessive and they have not yet got over the idea of free doles. It appears to me,a great deal of the relief work is undertaken with political motives especially after the A.I.C.C. decisions. The Bihar Central Relief Committee does not get the impartial and unadulterated attention of those in charge and the work is not what it should be because of mixed motives. Middle class relief is an answer to pressure.

As an organization our weak point lies in the absolute control and discretion vested in the officers in charge at the districts. True, the Managing Committee sits down in all seriousness to budget. But when the President, out of the goodness of his heart, is persuaded to give blank cheques to officers in charge without consulting the Managing Committee such budgeting becomes a farce and is to no effect. The work merely reflects the imagination or the lack of imagination of one man in each district. Dictatorial powers are good in an emergency but it seems to me in constructive work some control of the executive is important to co-ordinate effort. The Audit Department, in the nature of things, is a day after the fair and is subject to executive discretion generally; while the inspection department becomes an organization for recording pious opinions.

From a photostat: G.N. 10105

[1] Addressee's name as given in the G.N. register

77. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

BALASORE,
June 8, 1934

In the course of an exclusive interview with the Associated Press Mr. Gandhi said that if he had it in his power he would undoubtedly use it in order to bring about a settlement of the labour strike during his visit to Bombay, but he knew that he had none. As regards his impressions on the conclusion of his walking tour in Orissa, he said:

I have always considered Orissa to be the poorest of our provinces. That impression was strengthened by intimate contact with the villages visited during the tour. The enforced idleness among people is appalling. The Harijans in the villages I found to be exceptionally clean in their habits. Indeed, in some of the villages their homes appeared to be cleaner than the homes of their fellow-villagers. Intellectually, too, they appeared to me to be in no way inferior to others in spite of the social handicaps they are living under.

I have nothing but happy memories of the pilgrimage and, due opportunity coming to me, I should repeat it on a much larger scale. Utkal co-workers showed great powers of endurance. Their organizing ability was of no mean order. Twice during nights storms swept over us. Volunteers proved equal to the emergency and we were able to pass the nights in more or less comfort.

Our party included girls from Rama Devi's[1] Ashram. I marvelled at their capacity for walking bare-footed. Every morning, as soon as we reached our destination, these girls went out to Harijan quarters and brought me reports of what they had seen or done. They never knew what fatigue was And though many of them had been brought up in the lap of luxury they put up with all the trials of a march which was by no means a soft job. If the work is continued with the same enthusiasm and earnestness that were exhibited during the march and the workers concentrate upon Harijan service in the villages more than the cities, the result will be startling. I have no doubt that *savarna* Hindus' minds are ready. But, in order to induce action they require the living touch which could only be supplied by pure-minded workers working in the villages, not by fits and starts, but regularly.

[1] Wife of Gopabandhu Babu and Secretary of the Harijan Sevak Sangh

In conclusion, Mr. Gandhi said that these walking tours had not yet taken place in any other province except Bengal. In his opinion such tours would become more and more popular as experience grew.[1]

On Government *communique* lifting the ban on Congress organizations, Gandhiji declined to make any comment at present.

On being told that the whole country was waiting for his lead in this matter, he smilingly replied that the country should know what his lead was.

Amrita Bazar Patrika; also *The Bombay Chronicle,* 9-6-1934

78. SPEECH AT BALASORE

[*June 8, 1934*][2]

Mr. Gandhi spoke for about 15 minutes. He began by explaining the reason for abandoning his tour on foot and said that as he had been drenched by rain for two nights and as it rained the whole day at a place called Turunga he had to abandon his walking tour. He then touched on untouchability and said that we are sons of the same God and as He does not make any distinction between His sons it would be sin for us if we do so. No distinction should be made between the different castes among the Hindus, between the caste Hindus and the Harijans, and also between the Hindus and the non-Hindus, as they are all brothers. It is a sin not to remove this distinction and a religion which does not obliterate this distinction is doomed to extinction as a result of this sin. He asked the audience to remove untouchability.

He then touched on the evil of intoxicants and said that the use of intoxicants deadens one's intellect and might bring on even insanity. He exhorted the audience to give up intoxicants.

Concluding, he said that everyone should do some work, as idleness is alwys bad. He asked the audience to take to spinning by charkha, if they had nothing else to do, as that will remove Orissa's poverty.

He then asked for contributions for the Harijan Fund.

From a copy: C.W. 10619. Courtesy: Government of Orissa

79. LETTER TO TARA JASWANI

June 9, 1934

CHI. TARA,

I am writing this in a running train. I received the sum of Rs. 50. Do what you can there. Sushilabehn spoke to me about you and I was

[1] What follows is reproduced form *The Bombay Chronicle.*
[2] From "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan,* 15-6-1934

glad to hear what she said. Write to me whenever you wish to.

Natvarlal must have left for Rangoon.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI TARABEHN
C/O MESSRS KANTILAL MOHANLAL & CO.
37 BURTTOLA STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8786

80. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

WARDHA,
June 9, 1934

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

I received your letter just now at 10 p. m. There has been a misunderstanding. While you are in Patna the expenses will be negligible. My impression was that you ate at the camp. Your going to Bombay has already been arranged. As to your programme after you are relieved of the Delhi work, I had asked you but you refused to say anything. Prabhavati also was not in a position to tell me clearly. I want to make a villager of you. But today you do not have the necessary strength. Since you want me to have the onus to deciding the matter I shall fix Rs. 20 or Rs. 25 per month to be paid to you. Many co-workers are paid less. I shall allow the same sum for Prabhavati. I would want Prabhavati to live at Wardha. The three of us had agreed on this. If now you feel differently Prabhavati will have no objection if you can let me know what she will be doing in Bihar or anywhere else. It is also not clear to me whether you wish to have her with you or just anywhere in Bihar. All this is very delicate. I do not wish to interfere in any way. When both of you need my advice I like it because I feel that I can share your life. But I would like it more if you could each conduct your life according to the wishes of the other. Only yesterday I was ready to send Prabhavati to you. But she does not wish to go in this way. Madanmohan says you will be going to Madras on the 17th. Prabha says: "What would be the use of my going? Jayaprakash cannot even spare a minute to talk to me." I do

not like all this. I want something definite from both sides. I shall be reaching Bombay on the 24th. I suggest that you come there. Talk to Prabha and let me know your joint decision.

I have talked at length with Masani on communism. I have read your syllabus. I do not like the manifesto that has been issued.[1] I have pointed out its blemishes to Masani. I shall also speak to him when I can spare the time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Jayaprakash Narayan Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

81. SPEECH TO TEXTILE WORKERS, NAGPUR

June 9, 1934

Mahatma Gandhi arrived here by mail *en route* to Wardha and was greeted by a large number of textile workers (on strike) at the railway station.

Gandhiji, addressing the gathering, said that he had invited the labour leaders to Wardha to meet him the next day when he would ascertain the situation from them. He would then give his advice which he hoped would do good to them.

Gandhiji assured them that though they were labourers of today, he was a labourer for the last 20 years. Though he practised as a lawyer he always lived with labourers and lived like them.

Gandhiji was presented with donations amounting to Rs. 50 at the station.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-6-1934

82. TO MAHAGUJARAT

No one has expressed any disapproval of the pilgrimage on foot. But there is some discontent in all the provinces. Everyone wants to take me from one town to another. But I am really tired of travelling by train and car. We are sprawling in a field at the moment. We have the sky above and the earth below. We are about fifty persons here, perhaps more, but not less. We are so far removed from trains and cars that we hear no sound of them at all. It is no small matter to come in contact with the villagers and know the Harijans in the countryside. The Harijans of the village have their meals in our

[1] *Vide* also "Observation on M. R. Masani's Socialstic Programme", 29-5-1934

kitchen every day. At night there are 'magic lantern' lectures by Gopabandhu Babu. Our girls go to the Harijan colony every day. Five girls from Rama Devi's Ashram walk in front. They ask for no amenities. On their own they get up at three in the morning and set out. They work hard throughout the day. If I live like this I feel that untouchability would be soon wiped out. Even if this calculation turns out to be wrong, it can be said about this activity that "no effort undertaken is lost, there is no fear of failure. Even a little of this righteous course delivers one from great fear".[1]

This is a first-hand experience. But how would [our] colleagues in other provinces believe it? How would they be convinced of the maxim that the universe is the reflection of our own selves? Bengal swallowed a bitter pill. It gave all its time to Utkal. And now I hear that our colleagues in Bengal are planning pilgrimages on foot in several places. No such thing is known to be happening anywhere else. Why not? If such pilgrimages are undertaken in good faith and in a spirit of sacrifice, how long can untouchability last? But how can such faith be created among our colleagues ?

Hence, we will have to go round in the other provinces as best as we can. Camping in one place also seems to be a difficult proposition but our colleagues must bear with this much at least. Let people from the whole province come wherever I camp. Let them meet, exchange ideas and bring purses by way of expiation from their places—I want copper coins from many, not silver from a few. Untouchability will not be wiped out with the help of rupees. I have never heard of anyone's heart being melted because of money. If an individual's donation is the token of his change of heart, it would not help the Harijans but will help those who consider themselves caste Hindus. Hence, I expect the people of Gujarat, Kathiawar and Cutch

1. to know that this activity is purely religious;

2. to mix with the people and, facing all opposition, give them the message of removal of untouchability;

3. to collect individual donations if they are offered by way of expiation—and not for my sake;

4. to come and see me after cleansing their heart of all the impurities and freeing yourselves from selfishness and feelings of hatred and jealousy.

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 40

5. Even in Ahmedabad do not insist on taking me round. Let me sit in one place, wherever it may be. There is a telegram from Kathiawar full of woes. They demand two days for Kathiawar. Their demand is justified. Right now I am not able to find any solution. But something would have been decided by the time this is printed. My mind prompts me to keep touring in this very place. But I am aware that it is not neces-

sarily one's duty to follow one's inclination. One has to go against the promptings of the mind too. As Mirabai has said:

By a delicate string the Lord holds me;

He can pull me as He wills.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 10-6-1934

83. MESSAGE TO WAR RESISTERS' INTERNATIONAL

AS AT WARDHA,
June 10, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. Believers in peace and non-violence dare not look for immediate tangible results. Patience—infinite—is the characteristic of non-violence, impatience, of violence. Let them also know that non-violence is not a passive state. Concentration on it sets free the most active forces in the world.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: G.N. 9751. Also C.W. 6285. Courtesy: Mirabehn

84. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

June 10, 1934

BHAI MUNSHI,

Let us see how much so many of you lawyers collect.

I hope the meeting for swadeshi will not clash with the time for the meeting of the Parliamentary Board. I will keep myself ready to answer all the arguments and to explain my plan. But I don't know whether I shall be able to convince the people.

Earn as much as you wish without sacrificing truth, but spend on yourself as if you had nothing of your own.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI K. M. MUNSHI, ADVOCATE
RIDGE ROAD, MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

From Gujarati: C. W. 7543. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

85. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

June 11, 1934

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

My congratulations to you on your being assaulted[1] Go on writing to the officers [about the incident]. Can a protest meeting not be held in Baroda and Navsari? It was not you but the Harijans who were assaulted. You should not, therefore, have the slightest hesitation in taking whatever measures may be necessary.

I understand about Bhavnagar. It must be given two full days, otherwise the work there cannot be completed. In Ahmedabad a car will have to be used for all movement. I have not been able to go as far as renouncing completely the use of a car. But the fact that you had such fear made me happy.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. PARIKSHITLA MAJMUDAR
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 34001. Also C.W. 115. Courtesy: Parikshitlal L. Majmudar

[1] The addressee, Secretary, Gujarat branch of the Harijan Sevak Sangh, was mistaken for a Harijan at a village in Baroda State. He was beaten up for drinking water from a *parab,* a place on public road to supply water to thirsty people.

86. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

June 11, 1934

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Your letter.

Shall I entrust the Harijanshala to you on a salary of Rs. 25? Or shall I send you on the same salary to a village for the charkha work? Will you learn the technique of the charkha? I can also send you to the Sabarmati Harijan Ashram on Rs. 10 a month. Do you feel yourself up to it? In these matters I am growing more exacting. In no other way can untouchability be eradicated or the charkha established. What more? Ponder over it and let me know.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2413

87. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
June 12, 1934

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got all your letters. But I could get no time at all to reply to them. Today I woke up at one and started writing.

You have taken up a good job indeed there. We are faced with such difficult moral problems here that I miss you very much. Since, however, you have undertaken the present work with my consent, I can do nothing for some time. You must be permitted to continue your experiment. I am not quite happy that the place is Rajkot. But since you yourself see no difficulty in that, I don't worry. My faith rests on yours.

I assume that you will see me either in Ahmedabad or Bhavnagar. Would you like to have Prema or Gangabehn with you there?

. . .[1] has fallen once again, and this time very low indeed. He must leave this place now. The final decision will be made today. Some other moral lapses also have been discovered. I don't write about them here for want of time. Vinoba has undertaken a seven-

[1] The name has been omitted.

day fast. It has been decided that Vinoba should live here now, but that will not be enough. He must have somebody like you to help him. Can you make any useful suggestion in this connection?

And now about Jamnadas. His complaint is completely unjustified. But there is no remedy for a suspicious nature. I have always given him help or advice whenever he sought either. I have given him advice even without his seeking it. Jamnadas can say that I have neglected him only if you also can make that complaint. When I have no doubt as to the correctness of the course he is following and no advice to give, why need I write unnecessarily? Whenever he asked me to take him with me on my travels I did so. If he didn't learn anything, how could I help that? What work could I give to anybody who accompanied me only occasionally as he did ?

This time there are so many persons wanting to accompany me that it is a problem how to take them all. I certainly don't require all of them. If, now, Jamnadas also comes, he cannot but be superfluous. And I, too, would be busy with problems connected with my own work. This is the position. If you can understand him. [try to advise him and] guide him properly. If he would let me guide him, I am ready to do so. I would assign him a village and put it under his sole charge. Would he go to Phoenix? Can't he do some work under you? Way can't he run the school after you have put it on a sound foundation? Or why doesn't he go somewhere to improve his health? Would he like to go to Almora? Does he know his own mind? Does he want to marry? You can show this letter to him.

I have been thinking about Sharma. He has decided to adopt a simple life and live with Ramdas. He wants to take the latter to Phoenix. Some decision will be taken today. Jamna owes me one letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8402. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

88. LETTER TO M. R. MASANI

June 14, 1934

MY DEAR MASANI,

I have read the questions you left with me as also the Congress Socialist Party's programme.

I welcome the rise of the Socialist Party in the Congress. But I can't say that I like the programme as it appears in the printed pamphlet. It seems to me to ignore Indian conditions and I do not like the assumption underlying many of its propositions which go to show that there is necessarily antagonism between the classes and the masses or between the labourers and the capitalists, such that they can never work for mutual good. My own experience covering a fairly long period is to the contrary. What is necessary is that labourers or workers should know their rights and should also know how to assert them. And since there never has been any right without a corresponding duty, in my opinion a manifesto is incomplete without emphasizing the necessity of performance of duty and showing what that duty is.

You would not want me at this stage to examine your programme clause by clause, but if you so desire and if you do not mind consulting my convenience, I would appoint for you a time when I could discuss with you, and those whom you may wish, the whole of your programme in detail.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4126. Also C.W. 4884. Courtesy: M. R. Masani

89. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

BOMBAY[1],

June 14, 1934

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I got both your letters. Your convenience and wish will be my wish. I understand your problems. Leave all the arrangements to the Reception Committee and be content with what you may have to do

[1] In the source, this is not in Gandhiji's handwriting.

to facilitate its work. This will not show that your love for me has diminished. One is not always in a position to demonstrate one's love. More when we meet.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5933. Also C.W. 3249. Conrtesy: Mahesh P. Pattani

90. INTERVIEW TO MEMBERS OF HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH[1]

BOMBAY,
June 14, 1934

The first work done by Gandhiji on arrival was to meet the members[2] of the Provincial Sangh. Sheth Mathuradas after introducing the members gave a resume of their work. The Sangh spends well in scholarships and runs three chawls providing accommodation for nearly 200 families. In answer to the question what more was to be done by the Sangh, Gandhiji told the members that, whilst he held temple-entry to be an integral part of the programme, he would like them to concentrate their attention on the education of the *savaarna* Hindus as to the scope of the work and the necessity of removal of the evil. This work should be done by purely voluntary workers of recognized status. The other thing was extension of constructive work. He would like to see a decent eating-house run by the Sangh where Harijans could feel they could go without the slightest restraint. A well-managed eating-house could become a centre of culture for the Harijans and an object lesson to all showing that Harijans had eating habits as clean as those of the average *savarna* Hindus. It was true that some of them were not cleanly dressed. But they were no more likely to visit these places than the numerous equally dirtily dressed *savarna* Hindus. The two things he mentioned were only by way of illustration. If they would have an exhaustive census of all the Harijans in Bombay and have a catalogue of their disabilities due to untouchability, they could prepare a definite programme of work. Gandhiji expected the Sangh to approach the Bombay Corporation in the many matters in which it alone could render effective help.[3]

Mahatma Gandhi, after some discussion, expressed appreciation of the action

[1] This and the following item have been extracted from "Weekly Letter".

[2] Sheth Mathuradas, Dahanukar, Avantikabai Gokhale, Hansa Mehta, V. L. Mehta, P. Baloo, Narayan Kajoolkar, Dr. Solanki, S. K. Bole, J. K. Mehta and K. L. Jhaveri.

[3] What follows is reproduced from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

of the Bombay Board in renting three Improvement Trust chawls and giving them for the use of Harijans. He also desired that the Local Board should exert its influence with Hindu landlords to see that they let out their houses for Harijans, and also persuade Hindu owners of restaurants to remove the bar on Harijans. Mahatmaji asked the Board to persuade individual Hindus to engage Harijans as domestic servants and employees in offices. He impressed upon the Board the fact that while everywhere he found littlle hostility to the cause of removal of untouchability there was everywhere indifference and inertia. He wanted the Harijan Sangh to fight this inertia. He aslo promised to give sympathetic consideration in regard to the allocation of the collections and make his recommendation to the Board.[1]

In answer to a question, Gandhiji said Harijan work had nothing to do with politics. The Sangh approached it purely from the religious and the social standpoint. The Sangh was, therefore, open to all. Indeed, he would like all the offices to be filled by non-Congressmen, if they would come. Congressmen should take pride in working under them. This work of mighty reform in Hinduism could not be a monopoly of any party or group. He was glad to be anble to say that during his tour he had found in many places that Government were working unstintingly under non-Congressmen.

Harijan, 29-6-1934; also *The Bombay Chronicle,* 15-6-1934

91. INTERVIEW TO MEMBERS OF GANDHI SEVA SENA

BOMBAY,
June 14, 1934

The next appointement was with the sisters led by Shrimati Gosibehn Captain. They had a great deal of silent service to their credit. But Gosibehn would not detain Gandhiji with a recital of those services. She wanted him to speak to the lukewarm, of whom she said they had their fair share. That gave Gandhiji the opportunity of speaking to them on the necessity of dealing with the root evil. What were the weak of body to do? Gandhiji said it was easy enough for such to do one thing. They could keep a Harijan boy or girl to serve them. Given the change of heart and willingness to serve, there was limitless scope for all to serve. What were the women to do where the elders were opposed to the reform? For them no doubt the difficulty was great. But so was the opportunity for work. They had to commence with the conversion of their elders, and this they could do by gentleness and firmness. They must be prepared to suffer for their convictions. Character played a great part in every movement of reform. Only the pure of heart could touch the hearts of their neighbours.[2]

[1] The Bombay Provincial Board had requested Gandhiji to get the Central Board to permit them to retain 75 per cent of the collections made in Bombay instead of 50.

[2] What follows is reproduced from *The Bombay Chronicle.*

Mahatma Gandhi in the course of his address advised women ot take an increasing interest in the work for the uplift of Harijans and spread knowledge about health, hygiene and cleanliness among the Harijan womenfolk.

Harijan, 29-6-1934; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 15-6-1934

92. NOTES

THE 'J. K. WELL FUND'[1]

I can easily emphasize the appeal made by Thakkar Bapa, published in the last issue of the *Harijan*, asking for donations to a fund for constructing wells for Harijans. In walking through the Puri and Cuttack Districts, I have observed scarcity of water almost everywhere, and the reader can imagine the plight of Harijans when there is scarcity all over. This is a charity to which all sanatanist reformers and others can subscribe; and let it be remembered that, whilst unreasoned prejudice may prevent Harijans from making use of one of the primary necessities of life, every well constructed for the use of these will relieve not only their distress but will add to the general supply of water. All wells constructed for the sake of Harijans will be available to all who care to make use of them. I hope, therefore, that there will be a generous response to the appeal made by Thakkar Bapa.

A RIGHT STEP

The C. P. Government deserves congratulations for announcing that henceforth the so-called Depressed Classes are to be known as Harijans, and criminal tribes as wandering tribes. Both the names 'Depressed Classes' and 'criminal tribes' were certainly offensive. And let us hope that the other Governments will copy the good example set by the C.P. Government.

Harijan, 15-6-1934

93. HARIJAN V. NON-HARIJAN

"Rather than do constructive work among Harijans, will it not be better to create intense dissatisfaction amongst them with their condition and thus promote such self-helf as they can generate among

[1] A gentleman who wanted to remain anonymous had donated in June 1933 a sum of Rs. 25,000 to be paid in instalments of Rs. 2,000 per month for constructing wells for Harijans all over the country. The amount was called under this name after it was fully paid up.

themselves? It is no use your trying to convert the *savarnas.”* This was one of the questions that was asked at a meeting of workers. As it is an important question, it is as well to give the gist of the answer given by me at the meeting. The question betrays ignorance of the whole scope of the movement. To create dissatisfaction among the Harijans can bring no immediate relief to them and can only tend to perpetuate a vicious division amongst Hindus. The object of the movement is to do away with this utterly unnatural division and to secure for Harijans the simple justice to which they are entitled at the hands of *savarna* Hindus. Thus the movement is one of repentance and reparation. Hence it is confined, on the one hand, to constructive work among Harijans and, on the other, to conversion of *savarnas* by persuasion, arguments and, above all, by correct conduct on the part of the reformers. If the latter have gentleness, forbearance and patience, what is scoffed at as irreligion by sanatanists will presently be regarded as the essence of religion. Has not Manu said, “Know that to be dharma which is generally observed by the learned, the good and those who are free from passion and hate and which is felt in one’s heart”? If, therefore, the reformers possess the qualities insisted upon by Manu, there will be no doubt whatsoever that the hearts of the sanatanists will respond. Whether they do or not, the service rendered to suppressed humanity by reformers will be a substantial contribution to human progress and will be its own reward. It will certainly find honourable mention in God’s eternal book of life.

Another question discussed was, “Do you not think that the improvement of the condition of starving peasants in more important than the service of Harijans? Will you not, therefore, form peasant organizations which will naturally include Harijans in so far as their economic condition is concerned?”

I wish that what the questioner says were true. Unfortunately, the betterment of the economic condition of peasants will not necessarily include the betterment of that of the Harijans. The peasant who is not a Harijan can rise as high as he likes or opportunity permits him, but not so the poor suppressed Harijan. The latter cannot own and use land as freely as the *savarna* peasant. He cannot command the labour that he needs. In many places he cannot even buy the seed he requires. And assume for one moment that the Harijan peasant is able to better his economic condition equally with the non-Harijan. Even so, he will still labour under the numerous social disabilities he was labouring under before. Only, because of the very betterment, he will

feel them much more keenly than when he was a pauper. Therefore, a special organization for the service of Harijans is a peremptory want in order to deal with the special and peculiar disabilities of harijans. Substantial improvement of these, the lowest strata of society, must include that of the whole of society. Moreover, the ordinary peasant is by no means neglected. For instance, the All-India Spinners' Association is solely engaged in bettering the peasant's economic condition by educating him to add a handicraft to husbandry and thus have an automatic insurance against famine and always a substantial addition to his scanty income.

Harijan, 15-6-1934

94. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, BOMBAY [1]

June 15, 1934

Gandhiji, at the outset, asked his audience if he was sufficiently audible and the ladies occupying the balconies replied cheerfully they were able to hear him . . .

In the course of his address to them, Gandhiji said that he was glad he was speaking to women before he would speak to the men, for women were superior to men in faith and love, and his battle would be more than half won if he could enlist their whole-hearted support. He hoped that the women of Bombay would rise to the occasion. Women held the key position in society and it would be a tragedy if they blocked the path of reform.

Untouchability had its origin not in religion, but in mere pride of race and the tendency of the strong to keep down the weak. It had persisted so long because Harijans were cut off from all contact and consigned to the worst places. If, however, they were allowed freely to mix with all classes of society and to practise all professions on a footing of equality, we would in a few years be surprised that they should ever have been looked down upon.

The reformer's was an uphill task, as we had imported religion into untouchability. Sacrifice was essential; but service was impossible without sacrifice, and no sacrifice could be too great to be offered in order to wipe out the deep and long-standing stain of untouchability.

Appealing for funds, Gandhiji hastened to clear any impression in their minds that he was collecting money always. He was there to ask for the support of the women of Bombay for the cause of Harijans, which was dearer to him than anything

[1] The first and last paragraphs are from *The Bombay Chronicle.*

else. Before they paid the money, they should realize that they were paying for what they had done or allowed to be done in the past.

Harijan, 29-6-1934; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 16-6-1934

95. INTERVIEW TO B. R. AMBEDKAR

BOMBAY
June 16, 1934

In the afternoon Dr. Ambedkar interviewed Gandhiji along with Dr. Solanki and other friends[1] of his. Gandhiji asked Dr. Ambedkar for a criticism of the work of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. The worthy Doctor suggested that the Sangh might economize on education and medical relief, as these were attended to by Government and there was a risk of duplication of effort in these matters. Again, education, in the first place, only benefited the individual; whether it would benefit society or not would depend upon what attitude the educated individual took up towards society. He would like the Sangh to concentrate on the primary object of securing full civic rights for Harijans, such as the right to draw water from public wells and to send children to public schools, without any discrimination being exercised against them. As regards cases of maltreatment of Harijans by villagers, such as those adduced by Dr. Ambedkar, Gandhiji said the Sangh was bound to deal with them. In fact, steps had actually been taken in numerous cases with more or less success. But in future Gandhiji would be glad if the Doctor was good enough to send him full facts about every incident of that description. In course of his tour of villages he had noticed that a change for the better was coming over them, but progress in that direction would be accelerated if he had the Doctor's valued co-operation. As regards education, Gandhiji did not think there was overlapping. In fact, the Sangh was unable to cope with the whole demand, as the right type of teachers were not readily available.

Harijan, 29-6-1934

[1] G. V. Naik, Amritrao Khambe and Baburao Gaekwad

96. SPEECH AT MEETING OF CONGRESS PARLIAMENTARY BOARD, BOMBAY

June 16, 1934

After his consultation[1] Gandhiji addressed the Board in a speech which is described as one of the most moving and earnest speeches that he has ever delivered. The main trend of the speech was that the Congress claimed to stand for the Muslims as well as the Hindus and the Sikhs and other communities and that, therefore, nothing should be done that would have the effect of making the Muslims feel that the Congress had departed from that position.

The majority of the Muslims had accepted the Communal Award. It was their duty to bring about such a voluntary settlement of the Communal Award as would satisfy all communities. They should not go to a third party to secure a modification of the Award. So long, however, as a voluntary settlement was not brought about, it would be betrayal of the Muslims to shake their confidence in the Congress by taking up a position of uncompromising opposition to their view of the Communal Award.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-6-1934

97. SPEECH AT AZAD MAIDAN, BOMBAY[2]

June 16, 1934

I am thankful to you who have taken the trouble to attend this meeting, the continuous downpour of rain notwithstanding. But, fortun-ately, it has ceased to rain just at this moment, and let me deliver briefly my message to you before it recommences.

I must confess it was with great hesitation that I decided to come to Bombay. For one thing, the labourers in the local mills are at present on strike. I call myself a labourer and, ever since I was in

[1] With M. M. Malaviya who, along with M. S. Aney and some other members, had been pleading for the rejection of the Communal Award by the Parliamentary Board which met in Mani Bhuvan on June 15 and 16. The nationalist muslims had been supporting the view of the Ranchi Conference, that the Award should be neither accepted nor rejected, until an agreement was brought about between Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. The Board, therefore, sought Gandhiji's advice. The Congress Working Committee, which met in Mani Bhuvan on June 17 at the parliamentary Board's request, accepted Gandhiji's view. For the Working Committee Resolution, *vide* "Letter from N. C. Kelkar", 22-6-1934

[2] This appeared under the title "At the Maidan" with the following introductory note by Valji G. Desai : "On 16th instant, punctually at the advertised time, Gandhiji came in spite of rain to address the public meeting. Sheth Mathuradas [Vissanji, Chairman Harijan Sevak Sangh] presided. The following is the substance of his speech."

South Africa, I have tried to live a labourer's life, with considerable success. You can, therefore, easily realize how deeply I sympathize with workers in their distress. My sympathy is, if possible, all the greater, because there are large numbers of Harijans among them. I believe I have some ability as a peacemaker in industrial disputes, but I am sorry I cannot use it in the present case for reasons I need not explain here. Of course, I have no direct contact with labour here and less, perhaps, with their leaders. Then, again, trade in Bombay has not yet emerged out of the valley of depression, and only recently you have made a handsome contribution to the Bihar Relief Fund.

I cannot set much store by your purse of Rs. 39,000 which, as the Chairman has said, might go up to Rs. 50,000. You have always showered upon me your love as well as your gold. But there is an essential difference between this purse and the funds you have raised on other occasions. Your Harijan purse is part of your penance for our maltreatment of Harijans. If the payment is not a token of such penance, it is absolutely worthless in my estimation. And if it is penance, you give to the utmost of your ability. Indeed, I know of a friend who has given up certain necessary articles of food ever since my fast[1] and has thus been able regularly to remit two rupees and four annas every month. This two rupees is more valuable than Rs. 2,000 of a wealthy person. Even a cowrie honestly acquired and sincerely given is a pearl beyond price.

I am certain that we shall be blotted out of the Book of Life, if we do not completely destroy untouchability while still there is time. I do not know of a sin more heinous than that in the whole catalogue of sins, for it is practised in the name of religion. It is one thing to fall because we are weak; it is another thing altogether to fall and to imagine at the same time that we are rising. How can we dare to treat our brothers, every whit as good as ourselves, as untouchables by birth? You must have heard about Shri Parikshitlal, the indefatigable Harijan servant, who drank water at a *parab* and then went to Harijan quarters. For this he was severely beaten by a Hindu constable in Baroda State.[2] This shows you cannot distinguish between a Harijan and a non-Harijan. It also shows that, if you are a Harijan, you are done for. You may not expect justice. You have no right even to

[1] From May 8 to 29, 1933, undertaken "for the purification of self and associates"; *vide* "Statement of Fast", 30-4-1933

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Parikshitlal L. Majmudar", 11-6-1934

quench your thirst. What a hue and cry would have been raised, if a political worker had been lathi-charged by the police? But neither we here nor the people in Baroda State seem to have raised their voice against the treatment accorded to Shri Parikshitlal.

It will not do to say that Harijans eat carrion, drink liquor and have dirty habits. What else can we expect if we segregate them and kick them at every step? We keep them in places unfit even for cattle, and then affect surprise if they develop any bad habits. But are we prepared to consider them as part and parcel of our society if they shed all evil habits? The fact is we must bear with them and try to improve them. My heart wept within me when I observed the housing conditions of the Harijan employees of Bombay Municipality. Bombay is beautiful, indeed, but wherein does its beauty consist—in Malabar Hill or in the Kachrapatti at Mahalakshmi? I tell you we can live in equanimity on the Ridge only after decent housing conditions have been secured for these Harijans. And the expenditure involved in this modest programme is a mere flea-bite for a Municipality, which counts its income in crores, and for the citizens of no mean city who once gave away 43 lakhs of rupees in a single month. I beseech you to have a look at the plague-spots in Bombay and to move the Municipality to deal with them at once. How would you like to live near a sewer even for a single day?

If you go to Walpakhadi, you will have an opportunity of seeing what a change for the better can be brought about by a handful of workers like Shri Purushottamdas, Shri Morarji Sheth and Shri Sopariwala. Even their work is not perfect, but it looms large in our horizon, as there is little like it besides. It is easy to criticize workers and to say, for instance, that the members of the Provincial Board sit in armchairs all day long and should, therefore, be driven out of office. We love to criticize, but we do not know how to galvanize our organizations to activity. We never offer them our services, and without thus offering our services we have no right to pass mere destructive criticism. I freely admit that there is much room for improvement in the Sangh's work. But they are working honestly and to the best of their capacity. We must appreciate their work, and then suggest fresh lines of activity, such as, for example, establishment of an eating-house where Harijans would be served with respect in common with the rest of the citizens. I may say in passing that for people thus to sit in a line at dinner is not inter-dining. I therefore hope that everyone of you will co-operate with the Sangh and thus

increase its capacity for usefulness. And you must not say that you are unfit to render service. If only you have love for the cause, everything else will be easy.[1]

Harijan, 29-6-1934

98. TELEGRAM TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON[2]

[On or after *June 16, 1934*][3]

IF CONGRESS MEN ELECT YOU KNOWING YOUR VIEWS THERE IS NO LEGAL BAR AGAINST HOLDING OFFICE.

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-6-1934

99. TELEGRAM TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

[On or before *June 17, 1934*][4]

JUST READ SAD NEWS[5]. SUCH WAS GOD'S WILL I KNOW YOU WILL BEAR THE LOSS BRAVELY.

The Hindu, 18-6-1934

100. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

June 17, 1934

CHI. AMTUSSALAAM,

Have patience. If possible, I will certainly take you to Poona with me. But patience you should have.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 309

[1] At the conclusion of the meeting, Gandhiji auctioned several articles which were presented to him.

[2] The telegram was in reply to the addressee's dated June 16, 1934, which read : "Regarding the Working Committee resolution expecting the Congress workers to render assistance to the Parliamentary Board kindly wire opinion whether those Congressmen who refuse to take part in elections should remain on Congress executive bodies."

[3] *ibid*

[4] The telegram was published under the date-line, "Coimbatore, June 17, 1934".

[5] Of the death of addressee's wife

101. INTERVIEW TO ALL-INDIA SWADESHI LEAGUE DEPUTATION [1]

BOMBAY,
[*June 17, 1934*][2]

During the last few months, Mr. Gandhi has been approached by several workers in swadeshi for a comprehensive definition of 'swadeshi' for their guidance. In trying to prepare an exhaustive definition and in the course of discussion with co-workers in the extreme South, he discovered that such a definition was almost impossible—it was a spirit that was growing and undergoing variations daily. He suggested the following workable formula for the guidance of the All-India Swadeshi League and kindred organizations:

"For purposes of the All-India Swadeshi League, swadeshi covers useful articles manufactured in India through small industries which are in need of popular education for their support and which will accept the guidance of the All-India Swadeshi League in regulating prices and in the matter of wages and welfare of labour under their control. Swadeshi will, therefore, exclude articles manufactured through large and organized industries which are in no need of services of the All-India Swadeshi League and which can or do command State aid."

My formula as stated clearly is for the guidance of the Swadeshi League. It does not purport to cover the whole field of swadeshi. It is only by way of suggestion to the League to restrict the scope of its work to the encouragement and propagation of minor, particularly home industries to the exclusion of major organized ones. The object of making this suggestion is not to decry major industries or to ignore the benefit those industries have bestowed and in future may bestow on the country. But a body like the Swadeshi League need not become self-appointed advertising agents of those industries as it has hitherto been. They have ample resources at their command and they are well able to take care of themselves. The spirit of swadeshi has been sufficiently generated and it helps them without any effort of swadeshi organizations. These, if they are to be useful, have to concentrate their attention on the struggling industries. Any attempt to

[1] It consisted of Lalubhai Samaldas, K. M. Munshi, Mrs. Raiji, J. A. D. Naoroji, S. A. Brelvi, Vaikunth L. Mehta, B. G. Kher, Maganlal, Purushottamdas and Dhirajlal Modi.

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*

advertise the wares of large organized industries can only result in sending up the prices. This will be unjust to the consumer. It is a waste of effort to bring into being a philanthropic organization to help a successful business organization. We may not delude ourselves by the wish and belief that our efforts have helped the growth and advancement of those industries. It will be cheap self-satisfaction not substantiated by facts. I recall a conversation I had with Fazalbhai in 1920, when I was on the eve of launching movement for swadeshi. He characteristically said to me: 'If you Congressmen become advertising agents of ours, you will do no good to the country except to put a premium on our wares and raise the prices of our manufacturers.' His argument was sound. But he was nonplussed when I informed him that our object was to encourage hand-spun and hand-woven khadi which had been woefully neglected and which needed to be revived if starving unemployed millions were to be served. But khaddar is not the only such struggling industry. I therefore suggest you direct your attention and efforts to all small-scale minor unorganized industries that are today in need of public support. They may be wiped out if no effort is made in their behalf. Some of these are being pushed back by large-scale industries which flood the markets with their manufactures. It is these that cry for your help.

Take the sugar industry. The largest major industry next to textile is that of the manufacture of sugar. It stands in no need of our assistance. Sugar factories are fast multiplying. Popular agencies have done little to help the growth of this industry. It is indebted for its growth to favourable legislation. And today the industry is so prosperous and expanding that production of jaggery is becoming a thing of the past. It is admittedly superior to refined sugar in its nutritive value. It is this very valuable cottage industry that cries out for your help. This, by itself, furnishes a large scope for research and substantial help. We have to investigate ways and means of keeping it alive. This is but an illustration of what I mean. I have no doubt in my mind that we add to national wealth, if we help small-scale industries. I have no doubt also that true swadeshi consists in encouraging and reviving these home industries. That alone can help the dumb millions. It also provides an outlet for creative faculties and resourcefulness of the people. It can usefully employ hundreds of youths in the country who are in need of employment. It may harness all the energy that at present runs to waste. I do not want anyone of those who are engaged in more remunerative occupations to leave

them and take to minor industries just as I did with regard to the spinning-wheel. I would ask only those who suffer from unemployment and penury to take to some of these industries and add a little to their slender resources.

It will thus be seen that the change in activity that I have suggested to you does in no way conflict with the interests of major industries. I want to say only this much: Treat your national servants well, restrict your activities to minor industries and let major ones help themselves as they are doing today. Minor industries, I conceive, will not replace major ones but will supplement them. Of large industries, I even aspire to induce owners to take interest in this work, which is purely humanitarian. I am a well-wisher of the mill-owners, too, and they will bear me out when I say that I have not failed to help them when I could.

The Hindu, 26-7-1934; also *The Bombay Chronicle,* 18-6-1934

102. LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA[1]

June 18, 1934

BHAI SAHEB,

I was deeply pained by what Jamnalalji told me today. What you have not done throughout your life, how will you do it today? This is not possible. Please give up the idea [of resigning] and listen to your friend. There can be no untoward result at all. Please come over to Poona. We shall talk over the matter there.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[From Hindi]

Reminiscences of Gandhiji, p. 209

[1] Abul Kalam Azad, Dr. B. C. Roy and Jamnalal Bajaj met Gandhiji early in the morning in connection with the reported intention of M. S. Aney and M. M. Malaviya to resign from the Congress as a protest against the Working Committee's resolution on the Communal Award (*vide* Appendix II). Gandhiji, who was observing silence, gave them this and the following letter to be delivered to the addressees.

103. LETTER TO M. S. ANEY

June 18, 1934

DEAR BAPUJI ANEY[1],

You dare not resign. And in any case not without a proper fight with me. I would undertake to prove to you that by remaining in both the Committees you will do no violence to your principle.[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Reminiscences of Gandhiji, p. 209

104. SILENCE DAY NOTES[3]

June 18, 1934

It is painful, but if it must happen it must be endured. The Congress will survive the shock.

I am quite clear in my mind that the elections must be faced. Such a big organization as the Congress cannot allow its fate to be decided by purely personal considerations. I anticipate no untoward results, if we regulate our work resolutely, calmly and honestly.

I am certain that nothing else can be done now. I cannot measure the amount of damage that it will do to the country if we retrace our steps now. Whatever it is, we cannot put a stop to this at this stage.[4]

You, the members of the Parliamentary Board, who are here (in Bombay) may meet once again, and if you arrive at the conclusion that if these two resignations stand, it would be impossible to proceed with the election work, you may advise the Working Committee accordingly. I am firm in my opinion expressed to you; but it has no value, because I have not to run the elections.

Reminiscences of Gandhiji, pp. 209-10

[1] Popularly known as Loknayak Bapuji Aney

[2] *Vide* also the preceding item.

[3] According to the source, these were written after Abul Kalam Azad, Dr. B. C. Roy and Jamnalal Bajaj had reported to Gandhiji at about 10.30 a.m. that Aney and Madan Mohan Malaviya were not prepared to withdraw their resignations; *vide* also the two preceding items.

[4] The source has this paragraph in Hindi. According to Chandrashankar Shukla, what follows was written when "Bhulabhai Desai, who had just dropped in, strongly supported the plea of the other three leaders".

105. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

June 18, 1934

CHI. JAMNA,

I got your letter. I didn't get the previous one. But Prithuraj tells me that it was given to me. You have not said in your letter how you are faring. I cannot write more just now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 885. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

106. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BOMBAY,
June 18, 1934

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letters. But how could I get the time to reply to them immediately?

Jamnalalji's dissatisfaction with Keshu is increasing. The latter has not arrived here yet. I can't say what he will do. Tell Santok as much as you think advisable. I will write more when I get time.

We shall talk about Wardha, etc., when you come and see me at some place. A letter for Jamnadas is enclosed. It is difficult to know how to please him. If you can bring him along with you, do so. I think he will listen to you.

I will have a further talk with Dr. Sharma when he comes to Poona. Amtussalaam has been operated upon for piles. She is in Dr. Mehta's hospital. I met Amina and Qureshi. Qureshi will come to Ahmedabad.

I will speak to Mathuradas Sheth or write to him afterwards. Manilal will not pay the subscription. It is about clearance time now, and so I don't write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8403. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

107. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

June 18, 1934

CHI. VIDYA,

I hope you are keeping your promise. You should never cry but should always be smiling, should work hard and not worry about marrying. You should tell yourself that you will marry when God sends a suitable young man. One who is always absorbed in work is never troubled by other thoughts. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 9586. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

108. TELEGRAM TO HIRALAL SHARMA[1]

POONA,
June 20, 1934

SHARMA
CARE, "SHREE"
BOMBAY
FIVE MORNING PARNAKUTI.

BAPU

From a facsimile: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, 1932-48,* facing p. 73

109. LETTER TO MIRABEHN[2]

June 20, 1934

CHI. MIRA,

What a parting! It was a chilly parting. But I know that I shall

[1] The addressee had sought an appointment with Gandhiji on June 21, 1934, to discuss with him Ramdas's treatment.

[2] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira,* Mirabehn explains : "I accompanied Bapu throughout the whole of the Central and South Indian part of the tour. By the time we had come to North again as far as Bombay, an inner urge came to me that I should go to England and speak of Bapu and his message to the people, specially of the working classes. I went straight to Bapu and told him. He said I should go and, within five days, I was on a ship sailing to Europe. The following letter is the first Bapu wrote to me after my departure."

never have deeper or richer yet unselfish affection bestowed upon me. That very affection has embarrassed me. But that is a passing phase. May God keep you and bless your effort. You will stay out as long as necessary and return as soon as you can.

Give my love to the sage and his sister[1]. You will not fail to see Efy[2]. My love to her and all the other friends.

I hope your things came in quite in time.

Love. BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6286. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9752

110 . LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

June 21, 1934

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I could read your letter only this morning. You may certainly live with Krishnan Nair at the Ashram. One learns by doing. There is no need at present to join Vinoba. No time to write more. Are you keeping well?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2414

111. SPEECH AT MAHILA ASHRAM, POONA [3]

June 21, 1934

At the Ashram Gandhiji was garlanded by Harijan girls and, in the course of his address to the girls, he said that he owed his first acquaintance with Professor Karve and the great work he was doing for the women of India to the late Mr. Gokhale, who desired him to see for himself what one man could do in the cause of women's progress. Since then his ship had long sailed on troubled waters, with the result that he could pay them a second visit only after about 20 years, and that, too, by accident. He did not have enough time even for his immediate work, but still he was glad to be in their midst. He hoped that the girls, when they grew up, would so regulate their lives as to be worthy of the great sacrifices of the Karves in their interest. With such an example before them, they dare not lead lives of luxury and self-indulgence. There

[1] Romain Rolland and Madeleine Rolland

[2] Efy Aristarchi

[3] This and the following item have been extracted from "Weekly Letter".

was an old saying in Sanskrit that learning is not learning, if it does not lead to deliverance from yet become popular, though necessary. They could not serve the nation properly without a working knowledge of the national language. And they could easily acquire a mastery over Hindi, as it was closely akin to Marathi as well as to other languages of North India. He would, therefore, expect the girls to spend themselves in the service of their less fortunate sisters.

He was sorry to note that Hindi was only optional and not compulsory in a national institution such as the Women's University. He would suggest that they should have English optional and Hindi compulsory, for all girls would take up English as a matter of course owing to the prevalent fashion, but they would not so readily take up Hindi. When he himself was a student at school, his head master had made physical culture, which was then unpopular, compulsory, with a penalty of one anna for a day's absence from the gymnasium, which he had once to pay.[1] The same rule applied to Hindi, which had not

112. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, POONA[2]

June 21, 1934

Gandhiji gave them his impressions of the Harijan quarters he had visited and advised them to go there with brooms, baskets and spades and give those places a thorough spring-cleaning. Then, again, they could draw up maps of localities and take a census of the Harijan population. They could help the Harijans to improve their houses by raising the height of the walls where necessary. They could teach the children as well as the adults, not making a fetish of the three R's, but attending to sanitation, hygiene and abstinence from liquor, in the first instance.

Harijan, 6-7-1934

113. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 22, 1934

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter and postcard. God be with you. I am in the midst of appointments without break. God be with you.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6287. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9753

[1] *Vide* "An Autobiography"

[2] In their address the students had expressed their willingness to render Harijan service and asked Gandhiji to guide them in the matter.

114. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

June 22, 1934

BHAI RAJENDRA PRASAD,

I had your letter from Jiradei. Not a day passes when we do not think of you. I hope you are composed now. How much time do you need to resolve your domestic affairs?[1] What about the expenses? Where will Janardan[2] live now? Write to me about all this. I hope the relief work is going on.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C. W. 9716. Courtesy: Dr. Rajendra Prasad

115. INTERVIEW TO NATIONAL EDUCATION WORKERS[3]

POONA,
June 22, 1934

In the course of his conversation Mr. Gandhi said that institutions that are under ban by the Government should not try to get the ban lifted by applying to the Government or by other means. He further emphasized that as municipal and local bodies were semi-Governmental, help from such bodies should not be taken for national education.

Asked if Harijans, while getting the benefits of national education from Congress organization, should also receive education from Government schools, Mr. Gandhi said that as long as we are not considering Harijans as part of our society we cannot apply the same rules of national education to them. They can adopt all means to get education either at national schools or Government schools.

Questioned if the objects of national education should be to produce village workers in contra-distinction to producing self-supporting national-minded workers,

Mr. Gandhi said that the attention of workers should be directed to the creation of village workers as opposed to city workers. That should be the primary object of national education. Mr. Gandhi opined that primary education was most needed in the system of national education. He approved of the ideal of an All-India

[1] The addressee's elder brother Mahendra Prasad who had been in charge of all domestic responsibilities had died earlier in the month; *vide* "Telegram to Rejendra Prasad", 5-6-1934

[2] Son of Mahendra Prasad

[3] Arranged under the auspices of the Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapith; a questionnaire was presented to Gandhiji by the workers.

National Education Board, but said that the time was not yet ripe for such measures, but it depended on workers to prove its utility and for bringing such a proposal before the next Wroking Committee meeting. Mr. Gandhi emphasized the need for public education as part of national education.

The Hindu, 23-6-1934

116. LETTER TO AMBUJAMMAL

June 23, 1934

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I have your two letters. I get very little time for writing letters. Hence I am not able to answer your letters promptly. I hope all after-effects of the fever have disappeared now. I think I have already acknowledged receipt of the *Ramayana*. You should stop worrying. Become an expert in Hindi.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

What is the difference between Amma and Ammal? In Hindi we say Parvatibai, or devi or behn. What is the usage in Tamil?

From the Hindi original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

117. SPEECH AT MEETING TO COMMEMORATE THE PROPHET'S DEATH [1]

POONA,
June 23, 1934

My friendship with the Mussalmans does not date from yesterday but from the time when I was a young man fifty years ago. My first visit to South Africa was in connection with the affairs of a Mussalman firm in that country. And there I had the privilege of coming into intimate touch with Muslim friends, for years together. In India too, you know, what close association there was between the Ali Brothers and myself. And although Maulana Shaukat Ali and I have

[1] Held under the auspices of Anjuman-i-Fide-e-Islam. Gandhiji spoke in Hindi

appeared to have been estranged from each other, he knows that he has me always in his pocket.

Such being my relations with Mussalmans, I felt it to be my duty to study the life of the Prophet. I had tried to do this in South Africa but then I did not know sufficiently. In India imprisonment brought me good luck and thus I had the opportunity to read Maulana Shibli's biography of the Prophet which the late Hakim Saheb Ajmalkhan was good enough to send me at my request. At the same time I also read the volume on companions of the Prophet. I had read English works on Islam and the Prophet.

These studies led me to the conclusion that the Koran and the Bible were sacred books for me and not alone the Vedas and the *Gita*. Hazrat Mahomed was a great Prophet and so was Jesus Christ. From my reading I received the impression that the Prophet was a seeker of Truth. He was godfearing. In this I know I am not telling you anything new. I am only describing to you how I was impressed by his life. He suffered endless persecution. He was brave and feared no man but God alone. He did what he considered to be right in scorn of consequences. He was never found to say one thing and do another. He acted as he felt. If there was a change in his opinion, the next day he responded to the change without counting the cost and regardless of popular censure or opposition.

The Prophet was a Fakir. He had renounced everything. He could have commanded wealth if he had so desired. Even as you would, I shed tears of joy when I read of the privations he, his family and companions suffered voluntarily. How can a Truth-seeker like me help respecting one whose mind was constantly fixed on God, who ever walked in God's fear and who had boundless compassion for mankind ?

You all read the Koran. But how few put into practice what you read? You will perhaps retort that, if you do not live up to the precepts of the Koran, nor do the Hindus act according to the precepts of the *Gita*, and you will be right. It only comes to this that if both the communities followed the teachings of their respective faiths, communal quarrels would be a thing of the past. But at present some men in both communities appear to have taken leave of their senses, and are absorbed in slinging mud at one another. I will not have addressed this meeting in vain, if a single Mussalman will thereby come to a true understanding of the situation, and instead of picking holes learns to love other communities as well as his own.

The Hindu, 29-6-1934

118. LETTER TO CHARU PROBHA SEN GUPTA

June 24, 1934

DEAR CHARU PROBHA,

You should live where you think best. Your son has come to a wise decision. Living honourably is to live on one's own body labour. That is or should be our ideal. We can only go near it as much as we can.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI CHARU PROBHA SEN
RAJBARI, BENGAL

From a photostat: G. N. 8707. Also C. W. 1493. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

119. LETTER TO BEHCHARDAS J. DOSHI

June 24, 1934

BHAI BEHCHARDAS,

I don't remember having received your previous postcard. There is no plan about my staying in Delhi. But do see me when I pass that way.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 1341

120. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[*June 24, 1934*][1]

I should certainly be very happy if Father and Mother come and see me at Wadhwan. But that will be night time. Why should we give them that trouble? I get their blessings whenever I need them, and I am content with that. However, if their love for me draws them to Wadhwan by all means let them come.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8404. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] This message was conveyed in a letter dated June 24, 1934 from Prabhavati to Narandas Gandhi.

121. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS JAJU

June 24, 1934

BHAI JAJUJI,

I have your sweet letter.

In courtship there is necessarily some mental unchastity. In order to avoid this and the risk of an unsuitable choice being made in an impure state of mind, I have been placing on the parents the responsibility of making preliminary enquiries and selection. So far there has been no disadvantage in this method. Two sons of mine got married when they were around thirty. The brides of both were chosen by me in the first instance. And in the case of Devdas the initial choice was certainly his but as soon as the idea came to him he voluntarily confided in [me] and Rajagopalachari and made a proper and successful effort to satisfy us. When marriages are contracted by adults the fear of courtship is always there. This is a part of dharma itself and dharma literally means the choice between good and evil that a man has to make every moment. Your question implies another, that of co-education. I have doubts about girls and boys studying together, I have not yet formed any decisive opinion. As our experiment is only in its primary stage mistakes are bound to occur and imperfections there are. But the experiment is worth a trial. On the whole it appears to be worth while though we have had quite a few bitter experiences too. If you have anything more to ask in this connection, do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 3148

122. SPEECH AT DISTRICT LOCAL BOARD MEETING, POONA[1]

June 24, 1934

Gandhiji congratulated the Board on their work,[2] but wanted them to insist on quality. He was confident that the economic distress among Harijans and insanitation in Harijan quarters would speedily vanish, if only Local Boards and Municipalities satisfactorily discharged their duties towards Harijans. They must see that the Harijan children were properly taught in the preparatory schools, and teaching in their case meant at first not the three R's so much as keeping their persons and clothes clean. They would do well to institute prizes to be won by teachers who best attended to their Harijan pupils. Then, again, Harijans were often not allowed to draw water from public wells, though they were legally entitled to do so. Wherever such was the case, they must help them to exercise their undoubted rights and, in the mean while, not leave them without water but construct special wells for them.

Harijan, 6-7-1934

123. INTERVIEW TO HARIJAN WORKERS

POONA,
June 24, 1934

Gandhiji was with over 100 workers for one and a half hours and answered all sorts of questions with his usual patience. The central point of his answers was that the workers should settle in the villages and work both among *savarna* Hindus and Harijans.

A Harijan asked if it was right to encourage Harijan boys to become B. A. s or M. A.s, when unemployment was rife among graduates, and whether it would not be better if they took to technical education. Gandhiji replied that they could hardly expect Harijans to go in for industrial education before it had successfully appealed to the *savarnas*. And it was possible that, even if mere academic training was now no good for *savarnas*, it had its own value for Harijans. For instance, he had long thought Dr. Ambedkar to be a Brahmin. He was equal in intelligence and ability to the tallest among us. Such distinction had its undoubted use for Harijans. Gandhiji himself fully believed in industrial education and wished the numerous Harijan students would turn their attention to it. Harijan Sevak Sanghs could not force

[1] This and the following two items have been extracted from ''Weekly Letter''.

[2] The District Local Board presented Gandhiji with an address in which they had given an account of the Harijan service they were rendering.

Harijans to such education. They had to encourage the academical side by side with the industrial. It was for the Harijans to preach the gospel of industrial training. He hoped Harijans would study the life and work of Booker T. Washington[1] , whom he looked upon as one of the great men of the world, and draw their inspiration from it.

As regards housing Harijans, Gandhiji said that perhaps there was not much to do in the case of village Harijans, and, as for city-dwelling Harijans, it was the duty of Municipalities to provide housing facilities for them; it was too big a proposition for the Harijan Sevak Sangh. The Municipalities if they were efficient and mindful of their duty, could solve the problem with very little expenditure.

On being asked how Harijans could assert their right to draw water from public wells, Gandhiji said they should, if necessary, seek police aid and the protection of courts of law for the purpose.

Harijan, 6-7-1934

124. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, POONA

June 24, 1934

The public meeting in the evening was a remarkable function. Deputations from the various districts of Maharashtra presented Gandhiji with their respective purses, and then Gandhiji asked Shri Shankarrao Lavate, the well-known veteran public worker of Poona, who had come as a representative of the sanatanist opposition, to address the meeting. Shri Lavate said that he and his sanatanist colleagues desired removal of untouchability no less than Gandhiji himself, but they objected to legislation affecting the Hindu community as a whole being passed with the help of the votes of the Government as well as other communities.

Gandhiji congratulated Shri Lavate on his courtesy and extreme moderation and was sorry that the audience should have betryaed any impatience while he was addressing them, whereas etiquette required that they should hear speakers patiently and not interrupt them while they were speaking. Shri Lavate was a seasoned public worker. When he came to Poona in 1915, he was told that, if there was any true servant of the public in Poona, it was certainly Shri Lavate. When he saw him, he was put in mind of the *rishis* of old. Everyone was aware of his services in the cause of prohibition. His regard for him was as profound as ever, though for the moment he happened to be arrayed in opposition to himself, and he was not so simple as not to give due consideration to the views of men like Shri Lavate. But he was afraid that Shri Lavate was labouring under a misunderstanding. In the course of the present tour, he had not only not canvassed votes for the Temple-entry Bill, but he had hardly ever referred to it at all, for he believed it was a technical problem which should be left for

[1] 1856-1915; American Negro educator who was born a slave; founded the Tuskegee Institute for the training of Negroes in trades and professions.

the lawyers to grapple with. He was certain that it was their duty to secure the passage of the Bill, as untouchability could not be abolished without flinging the temples open to Harijans. But he did not want the Bill to be placed on the statute book, unless a majority of the Hindu members of the Assembly were in favour of it. It would be sheer violence to get the Bill passed with the help of the Muslim or Christian votes. He assured Shri Lavate and the other sanatanist friends that their fears were groundless. He would be very glad, indeed, if the sanatanists in Poona could join the movement. *Savarna* Hindus in villages have been reported to compel Harijans to eat carrion and carry dead cattle against their will, and assault them if they dared to exercise their common right of drawing water from public wells. Why could not all join hands in dealing with such violent conduct? Not one *shastri* had quoted a single verse in support of such untouchability. He claimed to follow the Shastras as he knew them. He ever asked God to give him courage to die for Truth as he knew it. It was, therefore, that he called himself a sanatanist.

Harijan, 6-7-1934

125. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

''PARNAKUTI'', POONA,
[On or before *June 25, 1934*][1]

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I tried my best but couldn't write to you during the whole of the last week. Hoping that I would be able to write, I kept back even the girls' letters.

Even today I am writing under great pressure. If I had sufficient time, I would fill pages. But now please be satisfied with what I can give.

I will go on doing all I can for Chandubhai. I will leave nothing undone. I am going to Gujarat only because it was necessary to tour it. Since I am going, I must collect for the Harijan Fund. You must have read about the decision I have announced. Merely watch for the present what is happening. Who knows what is for good and what for ill? All that we can hope for is that we shall always do what we think is for the best. I think what is happening is really for the best.

I hear that you have not been keeping well for some time, Do everything possible and improve your health. If necessary, ask for outside doctors to be called in. As you know, even a mother doesn't serve unless the child asks for what it wants. Ask for anything which you are entitled to and get the nostrils cured.

I am afraid you may not have liked the resolution which was

[1] The source has ''June 27''. But Gandhiji had left Poona on June 25.

passed this time. I see nothing but good in it. Big Brother[1] came and saw me. Let us see what happens now. There is such an infinite number of dust particles in the air that nobody can cleanse the air of them all. We may do the best we can and not worry about the result. Cling to the principle that it is futile, even harmful, to think from there about what is happening outside and let not your peace of mind be disturbed.

Khurshedbehn and two other ladies are here. The former suffered much (in jail). Her health is better now. She is pining to go to the Frontier Province.

The assault on Parikshit is not a trivial matter for me. That there has been hardly any protest against it seems more terrible to me than the fact of the assault itself.

Ba has joined me. Her health is fairly good. She is quite happy.

Kanti is with Devdas. He is studying. His aspirations are noble indeed.

Velanbehn and Anandi are with me. My party has become quite a large one these days. I am thinking now whom I can send away. Bablo is with Jivanji.

. . . [2] has turned out to be a worthless man. He has again been guilty of the same kind of lapse, but he doesn't seem to have realized its seriousness. I have now advised him to go to Rajkot. Narandas will stay there for the present. . .[3] should stay there and do what he can. He has forfeited Jamnalalji's trust. He doesn't seem even to have kept the accounts properly.

Radha (Gandhi) has joined Prof. Karve's school. I didn't know about this at all. She arranged the business herself. She came and saw me yesterday. I couldn't give her much time, though. Here also I get very little free time.

Swami is here. Rajaji also. Jamnalal left for Bombay only yesterday . . . . was fairly seriously ill in Abu and is here now. He has come to discuss the arrangements with me. Swami will have to return to Bihar.

You must have read the news about Mirabehn. There is nothing more behind it. She suddenly felt that she herself should go and do something. I consented and she left.[4] Her personality had become suppressed under me. I hope she will regain her former independence

[1] Madan Mohan Malaviya

[2] The names are omitted in the source.

[3] *ibid*

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 20-6-1934

of character. She has gone only for three or four months. She had been to [Bombay] to acquaint Maxwell[1] with the condition of ordinary prisoners—to describe her own experiences.

I met Ambalal Sarabhai. Saraladevi has benefited considerably.

This is enough for today. I wrote this letter in the morning in 'Parnakuti'. We are now going to Bhamburda.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarai]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 106-8

126. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

[On before or *June 25*,][3] *1934*

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

What more can I have to write about after such a long letter from Ba? Since you two like the name Arun kumar, my approval also may be assumed. From the long list sent by Nanabhai, Govind' seems worth selecting. I don't have time, either, to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have to reply to one question by you two. My point was that, since civil disobedience has been suspended, you should prepare yourselves for it thoroughly and keep yourselves ready to join it whenever it is revived. You can sacrifice yourselves in it only if you cultivate austerity, simplicity, self-control, etc.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4821

127. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

June 25, 1934

CHI. RAMDAS

Sharma must have arrived there. He will therefore tell you everything. If you wish to leave that place, there is no room for choice. Chorwad is the only choice left. Teethal is out of the question.

[1] Home Secretary, Government of Bombay

[2] A locality in Poona, now known as Shivajinagar

[3] *Vide* ''Letter to Nanabhai I. Mashruwala'', 25-6-1934

By all means call the girl baby 'Usha' You surely know that 'Okha'[1] is the same as 'Usha'. If she brings you luck, we will say a thousand times that it is good she has come. Has Vinoba regained strength? How is Monoharsinh? How is Devaki who was bitten not by a snake but a scorpion? How is Nimu? How is Sarita?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RAMDAS GANDHI
CHARKHA SANGHA OFFICE
WARDHA
C.P.

From the Gujarati original : Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

128. LETTER TO PREMI JAIRAMDAS

June 25, 1934

DEAR PREMI,

If you want congratulations for having passed your examination you can have them. Why will you only see me at the station? Surely Father will go with me to Karachi. Then why not you? What about your Hindi?

Love.

BAPU

SHRI PREMIBEHN JAIRAMDAS
MARKET ROAD, HYDERABAD
SIND

From the original: C. W. 9247. Courtesy: Jairamdas Doulatram

129. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

June 25, 1934

BHAI NANABHAI,

I had received your letter. I selected 'Govind' from the list of names which you had sent. But I cannot press for its acceptance. I

[1] A character in the *Shrimad Bhagavat Puran*, whose name 'Usha' was corrupted into 'Okha" by medieval story tellers. She was a daughter of Banasur and, having seen Shri Krishna's grandson, Aniruddha in a dream, fell in love with him and persuaded her friend Chitralekha, to abduct him from Dwarka and bring him to her palace. Aniruddha was discovered in the palace by Usha's father and in the war which followed, Banasur was defeated by Shri Krishna.

have written to Manilal and Sushila and sent the suggestion to them.

I would be happy to hear that you are improving.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 6691. Also C. W. 4336. Courtesy: Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

130. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

June 25, 1934

CHI. RAIHANA,

I am in a hurry today, and so I am writing in Gujarati. I have taken an extract from your letter for *Harijan.* I hope Harivadan and Hamida have now regained their balance of mind. Jail is not meant for those who find jail life a pleasure. One must be able to live the same kind of life outside also and to devote oneself to constructive work. I hope you are very well. My regards to Father and Mother. Saroj sees me every day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9649

131. LETTER TO KASHI PRASAD DIXIIT

June 25, 1934

BHAI KASHIPRASAD,

I have your letter. How can I pass judgment without hearing the other side? I have never found Tandonji[1] being deliberately unjust to anyone.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 3070. Courtesy: Kashi Prasad Dixit. Also G.N. 5847

[1] Purushottamdas Tandon

132. STATEMENT ON BOMB INCIDENT[1]

POONA,
June 25, 1934

I have had so many narrow escapes in my life that this newest one does not surprise me. God be thanked that no one was fatally injured by the bomb, and I hope that those who were more or less seriously injured, will be soon discharged from hospital.[2]

I cannot believe that any sane sanatanist could ever encourage the insane act that was perpetrated this evening. But I would like sanatanist friends to control the language that is being used by speakers and writers claiming to speak on their behalf. The sorrowful incident has undoubtedly advanced the Harijan cause. It is easy to see that causes prosper by the martyrdom of those who stand for them. I am not aching for martyrdom, but if it comes in my way in the prosecution of what I consider to be the supreme duty in defence of the faith I hold in common with millions of Hindus, I shall have well earned it, and it will be possible for the historian of the future to say that the vow I had taken before Harijans that I would, if need be, die in the attempt to remove untouchability was literally fulfilled.

Let those who grudge me what yet remains to me of this earthly existence know that it is the easiest thing to do away with my body. Why then put in jeopardy many innocent lives in order to take mine which they hold to be sinful? What would the world have said of us if the bomb had dropped on me and the party, which included my wife and three girls, who are as dear to me as daughters and are entrusted to me by their parents? I am sure that no harm to them could have been intended by the bomb-thrower.

I have nothing but deep pity for the unknown thrower of the bomb. If I had my way and if the bomb-thrower was known, I should certainly ask for his discharge, even as I did in South Africa in the case of those who successfully assaulted me.[3] Let the reformers not be incensed against the bomb-thrower or those who may be behind him.

[1] A bomb was thrown on what the assailant believed was the car carrying Gandhiji on his way to the Municipal Building. Gandhiji arrived at 7.30 p.m. little knowing what had occurred. When informed of the incident, he received the news calmly and agreed to the suggestion that the programme should be carried out. Accordingly the address was presented and Gandhiji left the hall at 8.30 p.m. This appeared under the title ''Providence Again''.

[2] This paragraph has been reproduced from *The Hindu*, 26-6-1934.

[3] *Vide* "My Reward"

What I should like them to do is to redouble their efforts to rid the country of the deadly evil of untouchability.

Harijan, 29-6-1934

133. APPEAL FOR FUNDS FOR DR. DINSHAW MEHTA

June 26, 1934

I have had the kindest service from Shri Dinshaw Mehta and his staff during my 21 days' fast[1] and after. It was all voluntary labour. I believe him to be a sincere lover of his profession. He has passion for naturopathy. Being myself a believer in natural and simple remedies I am deeply interested in his experiments. He is at present in financial difficulty. The friend who has hitherto supported him liberally is unable to do so much longer. His minimum expenses are in round figure Rs. 3,000 per month. His loss is half that amount. He therefore wishes to make public appeal for funds. If the help forthcoming is large enough he would use the fund as an endowment. He keeps accounts which are open to inspection.

I gladly support the appeal and hope that it will meet with success.

From a microfilm: Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

134. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[2]

BOMBAY,
June 26, 1934

No amount of violence intended to be done to me can possibly stop me from pursuing action which I consider to be wholly good.

Gandhiji was quite unperturbed by last night's bomb incident in Poona, and dictated the interview to the Associated Press in his usual manner, cracking jokes frequently. He continued :

After all, what is happening in the case of untouchability is but a repetition of history. No reform worth the name has ever been accomplished without the reformer holding his life as a stake for his or her cause. If the Moloch of untouchability takes one life, it may be regarded as easy satisfaction. An agelong evil masquerading in the name of virtue cannot be removed without an adequate measure of

[1] From May 8 to 28, 1933
[2] Held in the morning on his arrival from Poona *en route* to Ahmedabad

sacrifice. I am a believer in the all-powerfulness of God. So long as He wants me in the present body for the cause, He will protect me from all harm, and when it has no use for Him not all the protection that earthly power can give me will be of the slightest avail.

Q. Do you think the opposition of sanatanists put up against the idea of presenting an address to you and the throwing of the bomb are indications that sanatanists are taking to violence?

GANDHIJI: I am not going to say that sanatanists indulge in violence because one person parading in the name of sanatanists wanted to do violence. I am not yet persuaded that sanatanists have organized themselves to oppose my activities by resorting to actual physical violence.

Q. Do you think activities carried on in Poona, Bihar and Orissa are an indication that sanatanist opposition to your anti-untouchability campaign is taking the shape of violence ?

GANDHIJI: I am quite willing to admit that the activities that are carried on in Poona and elsewhere have influenced some excitable youths against me. When I returned to India in 1915, I had prophesied that if the bomb found a habitation in this land, no matter what the cause was, it would not be restricted to that cause alone. That prophecy has more than once proved to be true. I would like further, at this juncture, to drive the truth home that if we are following violence in thought and word, it must some day or other assume concrete form, and it is not capable of being restricted to what one may call a good cause alone.

It is absolutely wrong to say that if the motive is pure, the means are justified whatever they be. For realizing pure end means must be pure too.[1]

Replying to a question as to what he thought was the reaction to the Working Committee resolution on the Communal Award and the subsequent events, he said :

I do not fear any split in Congress ranks.

Beyond this cryptic remark, the Mahatma refused to be drawn into any further discussion about the political situation.

The Hindu, 26-6-1934; also *Harijanbandhu,* 1-7-1934

[1] This paragraph has been translated from *Harijanbandhu,* 1-7-1934.

135. SPEECH AT BARODA[1]

June 26, 1934

Gandhiji, addressing the huge gathering, thanked the public of Baroda for presenting the purse of Rs. 1,000 for Harijan uplift.

I would rather wish that the Baroda people should contribute first to the fund of the distressed peasants of Gujarat started by Dr. Chandulal Desai and others and then as a bounden duty to remove the slur of untouchability, they should contribute to the Harijan Fund. I regret that I cannot stay here, tired and exhausted. The Maharaja Saheb Gaekwar has done a good deal for the uplift of Harijans and it is a slur on the Baroda public that the Secretary of the Gujarat Harijan Sevak Sangh Mr. Parikshitlal Majmudar is roughly handled by the police of a small village of the State. I would urge all present to remove the slur of untouchability.

The Bombay Chronicle, 28-6-1934

136. MESSAGE TO THE PUNJAB

[Before *June 27, 1934*][2]

I hope the people of the Punjab will generously subscribe to the Harijan purse.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-6-1934

137. DISCUSSION WITH HARIJAN WORKERS[3]

AHMEDABAD,
June 27, 1934

Every worker placed before Gandhiji the work done so far in one's own district. They also acquainted Gandhiji with manifold difficulties that beset their path in doing Harijan work, especially in villages. They also told him that digging wells for Harijans was a great problem and suggested that some special fund should be collected for the purpose.

Gandhiji did not like that a special fund should be collected for digging wells. They must scrutinize each application for a well, for it was their duty to give them water and all facilities possible. They must also accept whatever help was given them by sanatanists in any form. Their sole duty ought to make Harijans self-contained. Gandhiji said that they must work in villages and incessant propaganda would remove

[1] Organized by the local Harijan Sevak Sangh, the meeting was held at the railway station.

[2] The message was published under the date-line, ''Lahore, June 27''.

[3] Of Gujarat and Kathiawar

whatever obstacles lay in their way.

In reply to a question Gandhiji said that if the Harijan work of a particular village was not done by the Harijan Sevak Sangh or by its members actively, they must do it themselves, even as Government do the work of a Municipality if the latter does not do its function properly.

The number of reformers is daily increasing and the heart of people is also undergoing change towards their treatment to Harijans.

Sjt. Parikshitlal Majmudar . . . narrated the difficulties they were experiencing in their work of organizing wells for Harijans and the problems of collecting funds.

Gandhiji said that if they were earnest in their work, they could easily get funds.

In replying to a question of Sjt. Thakkar Bapa that organizing separate wells for Harijans was considered by some people as tantamount to perpetuating untouchability, Gandhiji said that it was not necessarily so, but in any case they cannot allow Harijans to die for want of water.

The Bombay Chronicle, 28-6-1934

138. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, AHMEDABAD[1]

June 27, 1934

It is an auspicious thing for me that my public work in Ahmedabad in the Harijan cause begins with a women's meeting. At many women's meetings and some men's meetings I have said, whenever I thought necessary, that not only in India but all over the world, religion has been and will be safeguarded by women. It was not, and is not, my intention to say that women have safeguarded religion by writing big treatises or delivering lectures. They have rather safeguarded religion by their actions. No religion has been propagated through lectures or books. We regard certain books as religious books; but they are a propagation of the thoughts and deeds of virtuous men and women. A work that is not backed by virtuous conduct, however beautiful the thoughts may be, cannot make a religious treatise. Nor can it bring us the peace that the scriptures do. When a confirmed liar says, 'Speak the truth', he fails to make any impression, although no one may have known that he ever uttered a lie. But the act of a person who is persistent in his virtuous ways is bound to bear fruit even if he is completely silent about it. If a live seed is sown in fertile soil, it is bound to sprout. The same is true about the words in religious books. I have said after due thought that

[1] Held in the Krishna Cinema under the auspices of sevn women's associations

women have done most to safeguard religion. Women's capacity for sacrifice, suffering and patience cannot be found in man. This can be attributed to many causes. It is unnecessary to go into them here. But the world believes what I have said. That is why I am happy that my work here has begun with this function.

If you are convinced that untouchability is a social sin, you must strive hard to free yourself from that sin. It is not enough that someone like me should go round and collect funds. Behind my effort is the hope that I should be able to appeal to the hearts of women. It is only when this happens that I would be able to complete my work. The work would be partly done if I can appeal to the hearts of men. I went to give my condolences to Lady Lakshmibai in Bombay. What condolences could I give to her? I stressed only one point. I told her: 'Give up your mourning and come out of the house. Mourning will bring no credit, but Harijan work will bring credit to your widowhood.'

Lakshmibai has worked for the eradication of untouchability. So, she told me: ''You men may say anything. But can you do anything if we are obstinate ?'' I had to plead guilty. ''I know it by experience''—she added: ''What would you do if a woman does not obey you—a husband or father? We women know only to say no. And, are you men going to be in the house for all the twenty-four hours? You may instruct us to do something and go out; but how would you know later if we did not carry it out ?'' What she said was absolutely true. That is why I say that my work can be carried out only if I appeal to the hearts of women. Men tell me: ''We do wish to give up untouchability. But to you wish to create domestic quarrels? We are willing to have Harijans in our houses. But what can we do if those who are in the house for all the twenty-four hours would not allow them ?'' So, if women realize that untouchability is a sin and has to be wiped out, men would not be able to hold fast to it. It is beyond the powers of men. This is the experience of most men.

That is why I want to firmly impress upon you women, that let any number of Brahmins and astrologers talk to you, you should firmly bear in mind that if you are good mothers, you would not discriminate between one child and another. On the contrary, you would shower more affection on a dull, stupid and crippled child. I have never known a mother who would cast off a stupid child and lavish her affection on an intelligent child. Such a mother, if there is one, should be scorned. At least I would do that. A mother is bound to show more affection for her handicapped child. If we men and women who are images of clay have such sense of justice regarding

our children and pay more attention to the crippled, how would God who has created us, who is our Father, who is Father of all fathers, who is the Father of theuniverse, the Creator of the entire living world, have a different sense of justice? My reason does not accept that it is God's will that the Harijans should be boycotted, that they should not be allowed to take water from wells and tanks, that they should not be allowed to enter temples, and that temples would be defiled if they entered them, and any fruit or bread, it touched by them, should be thrown away. This is sheer superstition. We do not find such a thing in Islam or Christianity. Only Hinduism has specialized in regarding these people as worse than animals. We give good water and food to cows and buffaloes, but to these people we give only our left-over food, and that too, we throw at them from a distance for fear of touching them. We do not feel ashamed of doing so. We believe that those people are born to be so treated.

This is such an obvious thing that we can easily see it if we wish to. Those who consider themselves sanatanists do not let us step in at all. They tell us that the untouchables are untouchables by birth and we would incur sin by touching them. I do not wish to say that such a thing is not to be found anywhere else in the world. Such a thing exists even in America; but there is no pretence of religion about it. My complaint against the Hindu men and women is that they indulge in such a thing in the name of religion. If you tell me that it is *adharma* to touch a Harijan, I would ask, 'From where did you get the idea ?' I have not come across a single *shastri* who has established on the testimony of the Shastras that untouchability as practised today ever existed before. I have studied our scriputures fairly well and have found in them no mention of untouchability as it is practised today. I do not wish to discuss what sort of untouchability has a place in the Shastras. I say that this untouchability of today should be wiped out. Once we realize that it is sheer injustice, it is *adharma*, we shall be able to bring about her quickly all the reforms we desire.

I have dealt with these things to indicate what I expect from you. You must study this subject. Do whatever is not beyond your capacity. Serving the Harijan when the time arises is within the capacity of everyone. It is not enough to give money for them. We must believe that they are not untouchables but are just like us. Had they been untouchables by birth, instead of two eyes they would be having three eyes or one ear instead of two, or God would have put some such mark on them. But God has not given them any such mark. If there is

a Harijan girl in our midst, we would not be able to make her out at first sight from others.

Anyone who does not consider untouchability a sin need not put even a cowrie into this bag. He who considers it a sin should give whatever he can and make expiation. We would know that a particular lady has put a coin in the bag and the following day we would take some service from her. You have shown your sympathy by parting with a coin. It may as well be said that you have given your co-operation. Later when you meet women in your neighbourhood they would perhaps abuse you and be rude to you, but face it and tell them that what they are doing is not dharma but *adharma*.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 15-7-1934

139. LETTER TO GULABCHAND JAIN

June 28, 1934

BHAI GULABCHAND,

What you have written is true.

The only remedy is that those who violate the rule should wear khadi or the rule itself should be scrapped.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 7742

140. DISCUSSION WITH GUJARAT SWADESHI SANGH WORKERS[1]

AHMEDABAD,
June 28, 1934

For the purpose of this Institution (All-India Swadeshi Sangh), swadeshi shall cover useful articles wholly manufactured in this country, through small industries which require for their existence continuous education of public opinion in their favour, and which will accept directions issued by the Board of this institution, as to the price of articles manufactured by them, and wages and welfare of the labour under their control. Such swadeshi will, therefore, exclude articles

[1] At the Harijan Ashram (Satyagraha Ashram), Sabarmati

manufactured through large and organized industries which are able to take care of themselves and which can command State protection without popular aid.[1]

Explaining his definition Gandhiji said that his definition was such as required no change. He said that the lines on which swadeshi movement is conducted at present has made us voluntary agents of big manufactures, and this has resulted in their neglecting home industries.

Gandhiji was therefore of the opinion that big manufactures do not require any stimulus from them and his definition was framed with a view to removing unemployment.

In reply to a question whether raw material which could not be procured from India should be imported or not, Gandhiji replied in the affirmative and said he would certainly ask to import such raw materials as are not available in India.

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-6-1934

141. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 29, 1934

CHI. MIRA,

Nothing more beyond sending you a cart-load of love. Butow I am sorry to tell you has just now proved a broken reed.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6288. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9754

142. SPEECH AT MILL-HANDS' MEETING, AHMEDABAD

June 29, 1934

After a long time I have been able to meet you in such large numbers and for this I am grateful to God and consider myself fortunate. I thank you for the address which has just been read out and for the purse of Rs. 5001 for the Harijan work. You have stated the truth [in your address] that you are quite well off compared to

[1] The source had reported : ''This definition was found by some of the workers as not entirely practicable, and the Gujarat Swadeshi Sangh suggest a change in the definition which should be : 'Goods which are manufactured in India in all its stages, and under the direction of the Management with labour and capital 75 per cent Indian, with Indian material as far as possible, shall be considered as swadeshi. But in manufacture of goods, yarn—cotton, silk and woollen—should necessarily be Indian.''' *Vide* also pp. 87-9.

other Harijans. You have some money and gradually you are getting more and more educational facilities. There are other Harijans who are considered lower than those who have contributed to this fund which means that there exists untouchability within untouchability. I congratulate you on admitting that you have given this money as an atonement for that sin. But please do not you believe that having atoned and having given this purse, you have acquired a right to consider yourselves superior and regard other Harijans as lower than you. There are some people who are found atoning for their sins in this manner. There are many who believe that once they visit the temple and offer rice, betel-nut and money, they are entitled to commit sins. There are also people who believe that sins can be committed and atoned for daily just as clothes get dirty every day and are washed daily. It is therefore wrong if you have given these five thousand rupees as a passport for committing sin. One who makes atonement should not consider others lower than himself. I will show you an easy way of putting this in practice. One must consider oneself lowest [in the world], that is to say that there can be no one lower than oneself. We are ultimately bound to suffer degradation if we consider ourselves higher than others and this would mean that we have not done away with untouchability. Those who have given money should make their atonement complete by removing the feeling of high and low among the sub-castes like sweepers, scavengers, tanners, etc. The caste Hindus who consider themselves higher than others, are also responsible. It is because they preached untouchability that it has spread to every home. It is only when we ourselves get rid of the feelings of high and low, that we shall be able to do away with whatever ill-feeling there is between the various communities and religions. The reasons for the bitterness among the Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians, etc., are not to be found outside, but can be traced to the feeling of high and low and the sense of exclusiveness prevailing among them. The leaves of a tree, even though separate, are all the same. They are not different; similarly, even if we differed in our thoughts and beliefs, different views do not matter if there is no exclusiveness, no feeling of high and low. The campaign for the ending of untouchability is intended to bring this home to all.

Here, the trade union workers have been working very hard for your sake. They think about your comforts night and day. I do not find anywhere else the activities which I find in Ahmedabad. It is true that I have not stayed long in other places. No sooner I reach a place

than I leave it for another. I have not been able to identify myself with activities elsewhere as I have been able to do with yours. It is possible that your activities appear great to me because I know all about them. I believe that the labour-welfare activity in Ahmedabad is the best of all. But do you take any advantage of it? If not, it is as good as wasted. I have just returned from Kalyangram. The houses there are beautiful and clean. Their alleys and courtyards are also clean. I have never stayed in a house cleaner than theirs; nor do I stay in one. I had not expected more than what I found. [But if you are not careful] you will undo all that has been done. If, in spite of living in good houses, we neglected our body, our soul which dwells in it for all the twenty-four hours is sure to be ruined. And then, what use can we make of solid brick-houses? For a long time I have had a quarrel with you over giving up liquor. Yet, all of you have not given it up. If we look at the history of the liquor-shops, it would be known that the most frequent visitors are the industrial workers. They spend too much and then face financial difficulties. They spend money to lose their senses. A drunkard behaves like a mad man, he becomes a lunatic. You must therefore get over this thing.

Many Harijans eat carrion. Here you cannot justify it. Here you get ghee, milk and vegetables. In spite of that you eat carrion. How shameful it is ! Nowhere in the world can one eat carrion and yet be considered civilized. You are considered civilized. The ancient Hindu dharma is yours. How can you be so barbaric? It is not proper for you to squander money. You must educate your children. You have a long way to go. You and your children must eat nourishing food. Children cannot do without milk. You should not fee satisfied by giving them gruel. Children can never be brought up that way. Use your money where the need is real. You would be rewarded. The children would be healthy and strong, they would be good and would earn more. They would be happy themselves and so would you be. You would have added to the wealth of India and the world. Learn to make different kinds of [useful] things. Who would then dare to insult you by looking upon you as Harijans, or untouchables? I have said that all troubles would be ended if the Harijans really become men of God, acquire qualities befitting their name. A person like me would have to qualify himself to become a Harijan. Let the caste Hindus also become Harijans. In this *yajna* of purification the caste Hindus have to be reformed. They have to do penance. You too have a contribution to make. You have to get rid of your bad habits. Keep your houses clean. Sunshine and light are necessary both for body and mind. Do not pollute the air. Keep your houses, courtyards and alleys clean. I was glad to see that you have planted trees in front of

your houses. These houses will be yours ultimately. You acquire more and more ownership over the houses with every payment of periodical rent. If you save money and pay rent, the houses will be yours after a specified time—there is a scheme to that effect.

I congratulate you on presenting a hand-written address to me. A printed sheet has been distributed here which you must read. The communist friends have criticized me in it. I can only say that it is written out of misunderstanding. If those on whose behalf this leaflet has been issued examine it, they would find that what is stated there is not correct. It says that I am a friend of capitalists. But my activities do not include the exploitation of labourers by capitalists. I have become a labourer ever since my stay in South Africa . . . .[1]

The first question of this friend is: What did I do when the labourers at Bombay, Sholapur, Kanpur and other places were in trouble? What did I do when there was firing on the workers in Bombay? I must reply to this question. I am not God. I am a labourer like you. Regarding your question as to what I did for the labourers I can only say that I employed a part of my capacity for the benefit of labourers. If I possess greater powers as a human being, I am willing to put them to use. Previously in Bombay I had a talk with the workers. I did that even this time. On the occasion to which this friend has referred, I had prevailed upon the labourers who had come and told me of their requirements that I must at least know why they needed money. I can only advise them. I have no power to carry out all my wishes. I must know the cause of the strike. If the workers are suffering due to some fault of theirs, the remedy is that they should set their own house in order. All my life I have done nothing without knowing why. I do not have any money of my own. I have to ask others for it. Hence, I must know the purpose for which money is needed. I have tried to reach the workers everywhere. I have talked to workers who have come to me. Even at Nagpur where the strike was going on, labour leaders met me.

This friend has asked me what I had done about the Government action in the matter. I do not say anything on the activities of the Government. You would certainly not expect me to break my vow. For this year I have chalked out for myself the

[1] At this point the writer of the leaflet was permitted to speak and he said that Gandhiji had done nothing for the workers when they had gone on strike at Bombay, Sholapur, Kanpur, etc. All that Gandhiji tried to do was to isolate labourers from Harijans.

programme of Harijan work. That is why I talk about the Harijan work, and that too, without criticizing Government policies. I must abide by the pledge I have taken. The pledge has not been taken keeping you or the Government as witness but with God as witness. I am like a person inside a prison. And so, I can pursue one activity alone. Except on this I must observe silence. I am now doing the work which I could have done from the prison. That is the reason why I do not wish to say anything about the Government policies. If I did that I would be violating my pledge.

I cannot spare enough time from Harijan work to read newspapers or study other activities. I have no quarrel with the communists. At the most I can have a difference of opinion. Nevertheless, I wish I can explain to them my view and win them over. Wherever there is a difference of opinion, they are welcome to have their own view. Similarly, they have to permit me to have mine. May be, they will win me over some day. I have been serving the working class for the past fifty years. Throughout I have had only one aim. Though I have associations and friendship with the capitalists, I work in the interest of the working class. I believe the workers would gain nothing by liquidating the capitalists. It is not my intention to persuade the workers to follow the path of the capitalists. In a sense, even the workers are capitalists. Why should they believe that money alone and not labour is an asset. Capital is formed only through the working class. Money has no value in the desert of Sahara. One cannot get water there without one's own labour. There a labourer is a capitalist. The workers are as good as capitalists if they are organized and are intelligent. Capital consists in money for one and labour for the other. People do not know how to use and accumulate capital. Crores of rupees lying scattered in several places will not make capital. It becomes capital only when it is pooled together and invested intelligently. The same applies to labour. A union of a lakh of workers who have intelligently come together can do much than accumulated wealth. Those who realize this, will not be envious of capital in the form of money. They would ensure that the capital is properly utilized. At the moment there is rivalry between the two kinds of capital. Both the workers and the moneyed people are capitalists. Those people have organized themselves, whereas you have not been able to do so. Those people are clever and intelligent. When the workers are better organized and more self-sacrificing, their power would grow. You are not conscious of your strength and therefore you are oppressed. This causes harm to you and to the world at large.

I wish well to the workers. I believe that the workers can gain nothing for themselves by liquidating the capitalists.

If the capitalists are liquidated, we would be liquidated too. Both should unite in amity. We would need gold and silver bricks too. The important thing is that we should know how to put all these to good use. This is the conflict between the proper and the improper use of capital. Both the classes will benefit if we learn how to make good use of capital. I cannot change this view of mine, for it is based on my experience of fifty years. You may do whatever you think is right, and in your interest.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 15-7-1934

143. SPEECH TO JYOTI SANGH[1] MEMBERS, AHMEDABAD

June 29, 1934

Asked for advice as to what the little girls in front of him should do, Gandhiji said that they must see the labourers' chawl in the Gujarat Cotton Mills and understand the life of labourers. They must enter into the Harijans' lives and reject sweets and finery for themselves, at least until the latter had sufficient food and decent clothing. Let the girls go into that dark world as light-bearers.

He would suggest that they must put on khadi, which was the only real swadeshi cloth. They must use things manufactured by millions and not by half a dozen people. And they must take to spinning, for, if millions of girls did it only for half an hour every day, they would add considerably to the wealth of the nation. They need not wait for others to do this service, but must make a beginning themselves, in the faith that their numbers would swell later into thousands and millions.

Harijans constituted the lowest strata or the foundation of society, and if they were neglected, society would topple down like a house of cards. On the other hand, if the foundation was well attended to, they need not worry much about the superstructure.

He was glad to note that the association was mainly run by women, typifying their desire not to accept any inferior or slavish position for women. He hoped they had no intention of importing into India the movement for making women absolutely independent of men, which was out of keeping with Indian culture and was bound to do us untold harm. Socially men and women were inseparable members, one of another, supplying one another's deficiencies. Women were dubbed the 'weaker vessel', being physically weaker than men, but spiritually they were superior to men. Men were proud of their brute force, but women need not mind their inferiority in that respect. A

[1] An association of women started by Mridula Sarabhai and run mainly by women with a view to creating interest in public life among women and giving them training in home industries and crafts so as to increase their earning capacity. The speech is extracted from ''Weekly Letter''.

muscular body and a great soul went ill together. They must not confound real health with crude physical development. Women's inferiority complex only prevented them from going out alone fearlessly even at midnight, which they could do if they had the same fire of purity burning in their hearts as Sita had. If they realized this, they would concerntrate on exercising their souls more than bodies and cultivate soul-force and courage rather than learn to use the dagger or the revolver, which would only furnish their enemy with a weapon. No one on earth could suppress anyone else. Oneself was one's best friend or worst enemy. He would certainly like them to take physical exercise, but his point was that it was useless in the absence of moral courage.

Harijan, 13-7-1934

144. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, AHMEDABAD

June 29, 1934

You have been able to collect from Ahmedabad nearly Rs. 32,000 for Harijan work. Out of this amount you have given me a *hundi* for Rs. 25,000. The accounts of the money received from other parts of Gujarat were read out to me. I have also heard that 1,289 pice have been received from Balubhai's school. The significance of that collection is that one girl student took an independent stand and said, ''I shall not give even a pie.'' No one has spoken ill of that girl, nor criticized her. I would like to send my congratulations to that girl. I would not like to have even a single pice from those people who are not willing to regard untouchability as a sin and end it. Eradication of untouchability means change of heart on the part of the caste Hindus. If we can bring about that change of heart from this place by just praying to God, no money would be needed at all. And if it is needed it should come to us right at our doorstep. That is the law of nature or God. To bring it about we have to strive so hard and a person like me in old age has to go about from place to place—all this means that my capacity to pray is limited. I would have been able sitting at home to convert the hearts of the caste Hindus, had my capacity to pray or in other words my personal purity been so great. But that is a state of perfection. We human beings are all imperfect. Hence, we have got to make efforts according to our capacity. In such an effort lies the key for attaining the state of perfection. We may be eager but not able to reach that state. That is why I have to influence you as best as I can by going round, giving talks and awakening your religious sense. Only that money which you have given under such influence, or by way of expiation, would bear fruit. It would serve no purpose if the caste

Hindus have given the money for my imagined political services or out of a sense of obligation to the fund-raiser. Even a lakh of rupees given that way would bring no result. That is exactly why I congratulated that girl who did not contribute her pice. For the same reason I congratulate those who have not given money. Those who give me money even while cherishing the idea of untouchability in their hearts would be deceiving me. I would expect work from the people who give money and what a sad plight it would be if I don't get it !

This brings me to the contribution for the farmers. When the question came before me I sent word that I must go to Gujarat, and, if I did, I must raise the fund for Harijans. Contributions would be accepted only from those who give in a spirit of atonement. The persons seeking expiation will no doubt fulfil the other moral obligations which may come to them. Funds are urgently needed for the farmers. This obligation will not be always there. It is *apaddharma*[1] and an urgent one. First contribute for them as much as you can and then give to the Harijan fund. Let it be just a pice, I would be satisfied with it. If we covert the pice thus collected into rupees it would be a big amount. Such a contribution would be more valuable than this sum of Rs. 32,000. There is no limit to the Harijan Fund. If given in the spirit of atonement a crore of rupees would be welcome and equally so crores of pice. Otherwise, even a billion of rupees would be of no use.

Why should I not complain against Ahmedabad? I had settled in Ahmedabad. I have drunk deep of the affection of the citizens of Ahmedabad. And so, however much you do, I would always feel it is not enough. How wonderful it would be if all the mill-owners of Ahmedabad consider themselves the insurers for anyhing that may happen in Gujarat and they would donate generously for any worthy cause or institution? From where would they give that money? If they decide to do so out of their earnings, we will never be in difficulty. The well-to-do people should never say that because there are many funds, they could not contribute to all of them. One can only wait for the auspicious day when the call comes. I do not know what is the mill-owners' contribution to this purse. I do not want to run them down. They do give but I want to squeeze more out of them. Though a fallen city now, Bombay has kept its reputation alive. Those who

[1] Duty at the time of an emergency

cannot get money from any place, get it from Bombay. The credit goes mainly to the Parsi community. Why should Ahmedabad not earn such a reputation? Why can't its pursestrings be loosened for the deserving? God will replenish the amount. That is what I wish to tell the mill-owners and the rich.

I cannot help mentioning a couple of things I noticed in the Harijan colony yesterday. What did I see there? On the one side, due to the efforts of the people of Ahmedabad, I saw a good chawl like Pritampara and on the other I saw the slums—which would beat the slums of Bombay and Poona. How strange that these things can persist in Ahmedabad after so much work has been done here? Ahmedabad is the city of Sardar. How can such a thing be allowed in Sardar's Ahmedabad? It is in the hands of the mill-owners. No human being can live in the chawl I visited, even then how do these labourers live? They do not live there like human beings but like animals, and even that at the cost of their health. He who lives at the cost of this health does not lead a human life. One who lives like a human being grows in his mind and soul. Harijans are not doing that. I appeal to the mill-owners, the Municipality and the citizens that they should not tolerate such conditions even for a moment. You will say that it is easier said than done. From the testimony of modern history we can say that there is nothing which cannot be attained by human effort. I cannot cite all the instances, but one I must. In the city of Johannesbeurg in South Africa, the plague broke out in the Location where our people were staying. Promptly the Location was locked up, police watchmen were posted and people were removed to a place thirteen miles away. There in a couple of days they set up a tented village on beautiful land, and all people were accommodated in it. The condition of that Location was better than this chawl. And yet, while describing it, I had called it hell. If that was hell, what I saw yesterday was a greater hell. After removing the people thirteen miles away from that Location, setting up shops there and providing other conveniences, the Location was destroyed and all the things were burnt. Compensation was given to those whose belongings were burnt. I had even complained that the compensation was very little. Please do not tell me, 'Johannesburg is a mine of gold and where does Ahmedabad stand in comparison with it ?' There are so many mills in Ahmedabad and the chawls I am speaking of belong to these mills. Money spent in it would be rewarded. We must resolve that the Harijans by whose labour we are able to maintain cleanliness in the houses and palaces leading a life of luxury should have at least for them not slums but well-ventilated and well-lit houses which are conducive to health. If enough citizens resolve, this work can be done in a week. I have told you how it can be

done. There are so many men and women volunteers here. Doctors like Dr. Hariprasad have worked hard for the Ahmedabad Municipality. Even though he is in Ootacamund, he is thinking of this same problem. Balubhai has already told you this. He wrote to me too: 'I feel sorry that I am not there right now. I am going to do at least this much work.' He has now become the Chairman of the Sanitation Committee. Hence, I have now a right to demand work from him. Ahmedabad would be committing a great crime if we cannot keep the Harijans in good condition in spite of the favourable circumstances. In 1915 I went round with Mr. Ewbank to see these chawls. There is some improvement since then but it is just a drop in the ocean. There should not be a single person in Ahmedabad who would lose his health by living in unhealthy surroundings. If we can reach the most downtrodden classes of the society, we shall be able to reach the others.

There are some here who are considered expert sanatanists. There would be none among them who would say that he hesitates to do this work. I would not ask a single pice for this purse from those sanatanists who do not regard untouchability as a sin. But it does not mean that I would not take their money for the houses of the Harijans. If I take money from the Parsis, Muslims and Christians, why not from the sanatanists? I would not take any money for this purse from those Hindus who do not give it in the spirit of atonement but let them at least build chawls for the Harijans. Our scriptures do not tell us to keep the Harijans in the condition of animals. The scriptures give no evidence of the untouchability we observe today. A certain type of untouchability is observed all over the world. We should not touch a dirty man. But we have turned six crores of men into slaves. We have considered them untouchables by birth. Where is the evidence for it in the sacred books? It is the dharma of all of us, the Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Parsis to see that no one in Ahmedabad is forced to live in unhealthy conditions. Go and visit for yourselves the places which I have seen. You will have to hold your handkerchiefs to your noses. You will have first-hand knowledge of the pitiable conditions in which the Harijans are living. I fail to understand how we have borne it so long. Do take up this matter in right earnest and deal with it immediately.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 15-7-1934

145. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

June 30, 1934

MY DEAR CHILD,

Though I often get up at 2 a.m. I do not overtake my correspondence. There is just time to send you a card of love on your birthday. I know I owe the box spinning-wheel to the children. My love and kisses to them. Mira felt the impulse all of a sudden and went.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI ESTHER MENON
BOURNE END
KODAIKANAL
S. INDIA

From a photostat: No. 129. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child*, p. 106

146. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

SABARMATI,
June 30, 1934

DEAR HARIBHAUJI,

Bapuji has received your letter. He wants me to write: 'Shri Chaitanya Muni will not be able to change his guise before me.'[1]

Yours,

CHANDRASHANKER

From the Hindi original: Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* also "Answers to Correspondents", 8-10-1933,

147. SPEECH AT MEETING OF CONGRESS SOCIALISTS, AHMEDABAD[1]

June 30, 1934

Gandhiji was questioned why he welcomed the formation of the Socialist Party within the Congress while objecting to its programme. Gandhiji replied that on examining the programme he found that certain items of the programme could be modified.

Regarding the question of class struggle, Gandhiji agreed that in the present stage of society class struggle did exist. If class struggle implied violence it was certainly against the Congress creed.

Socialists retorted that they did accept non-violence out of political expediency.

Gandhiji had no objection to such an idea of non-violent class struggle, and he would support Congressmen participating in such a struggle.

Regarding the well-known Gandhiji-Jawahar correspondence[2] they had fundam-ental difference between them. His agreement to a certain extent with the idea of divesting of vested interests did not mean confiscation of property.

Regarding the recent Bombay resolution of the Working Committee, Gandhiji said that it did not refer to *bona-fide* non-violent socialists, but to those who talk about violently overthrowing the present capitalist order and confiscation of property.

Gandhiji admitted that the State must regulate the use of property in a wise and just manner. He visualized a State where such private profiteering inequities could not exist. Their programme should be educative and organizing of masses. Regarding their duties and rights and privileges, if this meant development of class consciousness Gandhiji would not fight shy of the term, if masses organize and take charge of State for the attainment of the socialism he had in view. He would welcome such a consummation.

Gandhiji believed in true democracy based on functional adult franchise.

I would certainly be glad if Congress socialists gather strength and take over charge of the Congress.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-7-1934

[1] At the Harijan Ashram, Sabarmati

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 14-9-1933 and "Letter from Jawaharlal Nehru", 13-9-1933

148. LETTER TO S. D. SAKLATWALA

BHAVNAGAR,
July 1, 1934

DEAR MR. SAKLATWALA,

I thank you for your prompt reply dated 19th ultimo. Constant pressure of work has delayed acknowledgment. In the circumstances you mention, I shall not trouble you for further information at present.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI S. D. SAKLATWALA
C/O MESSRS TATA AND SONS
BOMBAY HOUSE
BOMBAY FORT

Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

149. DISCUSSION WITH KATHIAWAR YOUTHS[1]

BHAVNAGAR,
July 1, 1934

Asked why he had not put up in Harijan Ashram, Gandhiji said he was at present out to convert *savarna* Hindus, and it was his duty not only to accept but even seek their invitations.

One of the young men questioned the propriety of Gandhiji taking such a large party with him on tour. Gandhiji is careful of the pennies and he is still more careful of the pounds. When he throws letters into the waste-paper basket, he is careful to save the pins and the blank half-sheets. And he is naturally still more punctilious when expenditure of large sums of money is in question. He said some members of the party were travelling at their own expense, and the rest had their expenses paid by a friend. No charge whatever was made on the Harijan funds. Being a born teacher, he carried some friends with him to be trained as apprentices. He required the assistance of others in his own work, while still others were like the blind teats of the goat, which also he tried to milk as best he might. A Kathiawari Bania as he was, he might fairly be expected to account to himself for every pie he spent.

Referring to a description of himself in another question as a defeated General, Gandhiji said he did not know what it was to be defeated.

Questioned if he was opposed to *veth* (forced labour) and, if yes, what should be done to get it abolished, Gandhiji said his whole life had been dedicated to the

[1] This and the following item are extracted from ''Weekly Letter''.

purpose of doing away with *veth*—first in the family, then in South Africa and later on in the mother country. If *veth* was imposed on the poor, servants of the public must take it upon themselves.

Another question related to the menace of artificial methods of birth-control which has now invaded India. Gandhiji said that the national physique was half ruined as it was, and its ruin would be complete if they were foolish enough to copy such questionable practices.

Did they stand to lose anything if religion was destroyed, was one more poser. Gandhiji answered that religion was the foundation upon which the world edifice was supported, and it would be dashed to the ground if the foundation was undermined.

The last question was whether they should not abolish the institution of the States. Gandhiji said that as a satyagrahi he sought not to destroy but to transumute them into instruments of service. There was nothing intrinsically bad about the institution itself.[1]

Replying to other questions Gandhiji said that he had already established institutions wherein youths could work, but it was not his fault if they allowed themselves to die and that Kathiawari youths merely wanted to talk and did not want to do serious work. If they were not satisfied with his programme of khadi and untouchability, he said they could better start new programmes and new institutions.

I want to fight a non-violent battle. If you are interested you work with me or else find out a new programme for yourselves.

In answer to other questions, Gandhiji said he never believed that he was defeated in his fight. Had they ever heard a defeated man being welcomed in such a way and travelling at this old age for Harijan work with such zeal?

Harijan, 20-7-1934; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 3-7-1934

150. SPEECH TO HARIJANS, BHAVNAGAR

June 1, 1934

In the afternoon Gandhiji visited the Vankarvas near Ruvapari. This quarter is far from the city, so that the *vankars*[2] do not receive adequate police protection and are put to considerable inconvenience in the pursuit of their occupations, as well as in their dealings with the city. It has long been under contemplation to remove this quarter to a more commodious site, and it may be hoped that the matter would be expedited, and the removal carried out at an early date. The *vankars* should also be invested with occupancy rights in the land they built upon, so that they might no

[1] What follows is reproduced from *The Bombay Chronicle.*

[2] Weavers

longer be liable to be shifted from place to place. If a good locality is selected for Harijan quarters, Harijans will learn to observe the laws of cleanliness, as they will come in close with the *savarnas*. But the Harijans, too, owe a duty to themselves. If they give up liquor and carrion and keep their person, clothes and sorroundings clean, they will help the reformer to break down the barrier which now divides them from the rest of the community.

Harijan, 20-7-1934

151. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BHAVNAGAR[1]

July 1, 1934

I thank you for the purse that you have given for Harijan work on behalf of Kathiawar. We have so very little faith in Harijan work, and especially in such work among Kathiawaris, that even the resolve to collect Rs. 25,000 seemed very big to you. You thought you would hardly be able to collect that much and, if you fell short, a few of you would add three or four thousand each and thus you hoped to collect Rs. 30,000 in all. That seems a very big amount to you and that is why you have applauded it. I am not much impressed. You must have thought poorly of the contributions from other cities of Kathiawar when the figures were read out to you. Only Rs. 203 from Wankaner? And that too was not from all the people. Only two or three persons had contributed that sum. The same is the case with Morvi. There are so many first-class States in Kathiawar, and innumerable other States too. Nor are kathiawaris beggers. They are an enterprising people and are spread out in many parts. But those who approach them for contributions do so with diffidence, and, therefore, the others also feel disinclined to give. We rarely come across people who offer contributions on their own. What is Rs. 30,000 compared to the importance of Harijan work? It is true that even if we had collected three lakhs, money alone would not have been enough for eradicating untouchability. For that the hearts of caste Hindus have to be touched. Only then would that demon perish. Those who look upon untouchability as God cannot but worship it. It will perish in no time if the hearts of such people change. Its end is bound to come even in spite of them, but Hindu dharma or caste Hindus will not get credit for

[1] This a"Notes" sub-title Communal Representation" peared under the title ''Limits of Untouchability''.

it. When Harijans themselves are so awakened that they would not tolerate their present condition even for a moment, untouchability is bound to disappear. But we shall not get credit for that. We have, therefore, to accomplish the Herculean task of humbly reasoning with those who worship untouchability and convincing them that it is no God but a demon. If we can do this much, we shall progress in our aim. Wherever I go, I meet sanatanists and try to reason with them. I know that there are sanatanists in Bhavnagar too. There is nothing surprising in this. Can there be any place without sanatanists? I knew something about the sanatanists of Bhavnagar because a leaflet was published by them and some literature was sent to me too. I always tell the sanatanists to think over what I say. I will come to that point later. At the moment I wish to put forward the sanatanists' case before the reformers. If the latter believe that they are superior to the sanatanists because they had awakened while the sanatanists were still sunk in darkness, they would not be able to melt their hearts. I have good reason for saying this, if or sanatanists have complained to me. They ask me: ''Why should we come to you? If we came, reformist newspapers would hold us up for ridicule. They would distort what we might have said and put into our mouths statements we had never made. And if we do not come, we stand condemned. They will then say: 'See, they did not go. How could they go when they had no case ?'' It is not that all news-papers are doing this, but there is some truth in what these people say. Some newspapers do misrepresent them. Reformers may feel, having cited a few verses from the *Manusmriti,* that they had scored a victory over the sanatanists, but victory cannot be won in this way. As we increasingly realize the greatness of the task, we should become ever more humble and should even feel greater respect for the sanatanists. Why feel respect for them, you will ask. A great many of them are hypocrites, and do evil in the name of religion. I have already referred to this at some places. But hypocrisy will always go on in the world. But neither I nor the reformers believe that every sanatanist is a hypocrite. Many of the sanatanists sincerely believe that untouchability as it is practised today should continue, otherwise there would be confusion of varnas. It is difficult for people to give up things which they have been practising for a long time. This is true of untouchability. Moreover, we have practised it as dharma. Hence I request the reformers not to malign sanatanists. Argue your case with them, but do not forsake gentleness, moderation and humility while doing so.

I want to put one important and simple point before the sanatanists. The sanatanist *shastris* have not been able to reply to my argument that untouchability in its modern form has no sanction in any Hindu Shastra. No one has justified it. Many sanatanists forget this term 'modern'. I had once occasion to discuss the problem with very learned *shastris.* They intentionally asked me about this word 'modern'. I said that some sort of untouchability was practised all the world over and that we, too, had been observing it. We may not touch a dirty person or a man who was smelling of liquor. How can we touch him? If we tried, the foul smell from his mouth would throw us reeling back several feet away. This sort of untouchability can be practised even as between mother and son. But this modern form of untouchability is a demon with not twenty but a thousand arms. It keeps far away from us five to six crores of people. If you ask what this modern untouchability is, I would reply, if the President of your Municipality and Pattanisaheb would forgive me, that it is what we see in the Bhangi quarters of Bhavnagar. New quarters for them were to be built within three years. But Pattanisaheb told the Municipality today to demolish the old quarters and build new ones immediately, and offered Rs. 30,000 for the purpose. The President has agreed. I should not, therefore, criticize them. If, however, you wish to see modern untouchability, visit those quarters tomorrow morning. Go a little further also. You need not go anywhere outside Bhavnagar. Visit the weavers' quarters and see how they live. They were born untouchables and will remain so till their death ! If in this State a weaver's son wants to study, he can do so and join a school or college. The State may even give him free education or the Harijan Sevak Sangh may help him, and after completing his studies he may be appointed a judge. But he would still remain an untouchable ! We would go to him for justice, but we would take a bath if he happened to touch us. We deal out such perverted justice to six crores in the name of untouchability. Shall I show you still further what modern untouchability means? The *Manusmriti* does not define an 'untouchable'. Or let us say the Government's Census Report is our *Manusmriti* in this respect. You have decided those born untouchables will remain so all their life. But the Census Report says that there can be a change in their status. Every ten years when the census is made, a great many people cease to be untouchables and many others become untouchables. This is modern untouchability!

There may be some sanatanists here in this meeting. If they do

not know the Shastras, let them go to others learned in them and tell them that I want them to show me if there is any sanction for modern untouchability in the Shastras. I do not say this out of pride. I have studied the Shastras and have found in them no sanction for untouchability. I am not a pandit. My knowledge of Sanskrit is very limited. I have to take the help of translations and commentaries. I, therefore, do not claim to be learned in the Shastras. I cannot argue about their meanings. When I was asked to do so, I replied that I was a simple man and could not argue about the meanings of the Shastras, and that it was for them to explain them to me. I claim to be a votary of truth, and I wish to die trying to discover it, and pray to God to give me such strength. Such a man is telling you that you have no sanction for this modern form of untouchability in the Shastras. If anyone can show the contrary and if I feel that it is true, then I would readily admit it. I have written and explained a number of times how I interpret the meaning of the Shastras. If a teacher is not able to know the limitations of a student, or a man of knowledge those of an inquirer, then no heartbond can be established between them. Sanatanists, therefore, should understand my limitations.

I have explained to the reformers how they should be gentle and humble towards the sanatanists, and I have asked the latter to understand what I am doing. There is also the bug-bear of temple-entry. I have not thrown open any temple without the consent of the public, and that too of the temple-going public. I did not include the votes of Arya Samajists, Harijans and those who did not believe in temples. I counted the votes only of those who visited temples with sincere faith and threw open the temples only after ascertaining their support. I have thrown open many temples in that manner and have received no complaints for having done so. I see nothing wrong in throwing open temples thus. So far as it lies in my power, I would not let a temple be thrown open if people going to that particular temple did not wish it and at present reformers do listen to me. I do not want even the Temple-entry Bill which has been introduced in the Central Legislative Assembly if the Hindu members of the Assembly do not accept it. I do not want the Bill to be passed forcibly. I consider myself a sanatanists. I want to get the Bill passed in a manner consistent with this claim. I do not take votes about the Bill in public meetings because it involves subtleties of Shastras and law. The common man cannot understand them. It is such a complicated matter that only lawyers and *shastris* can understand it. I believe I possess the ability to simplify a complicated problem and explain it to the

common man, but I do not find it possible to do so in the case of this Bill. That is why I have not taken votes in any meeting regarding the pros and cons of the Bill. Of course the common man can decide whether or not such a Bill should be passed. Representatives of the Hindu community had, on behalf of the community, taken a pledge in Bombay in September 1932 that henceforth they would not recognize the practice of untouchability in Hindu society. It was also stated in that resolution that Harijans had equal rights with the caste Hindus in regard to the use of wells and dharmashalas and access to public institutions, including public temples. It was further stated in it that when we got power in our hands we would pass legislation to this effect and would do so even now if it was possible. The reference to legislation was made because it is not possible to progress in this matter without changing the law. We have got to remove the obstacle that is lying like a mountain in our way. Still I want to clear the misunderstanding that prevails regarding this Bill. A charge has been levelled against me concerning it and by no less a person than Lavate, a public worker and yogi has been serving the people for many years. He said in a public meeting in Poona that I wanted to get the Bill passed with the help of the votes of Muslims and Christians. I laughed at this and wondered how a man like Lavate could believe such a thing. He had just believed what he was told. I opened his eyes and told him that what he believed was not true, and that the conditions regarding the Bill had been published in *Harijan.*[1]

And now one last point. You have recounted in your statement what work you had done. It is all right so long as we do not go too closely into it. There is nothing to feel proud of, if we take all the work done in Kathiawar into account. If you want compliments for the work done, I will pay them, but with reservation. You have achieved nothing great. How is it that an enterprising people like the Kathiawaris are so lethargic in this work? the enterprising among you do not observe untouchability. Then why are they so negligent about this work? I saw today a woman who was walking with the help of crutches in place of one leg. In reply to my question, she said that the leg had got a gangrene and had to be amputated, and that if that had not been done the gangrene would have spread to the whole body. Untouchability is a gangrenous limb of Hindu society and if measures are not taken to remove it the society would become crippled. And a crippled society cannot go on like that, so that it will ultimately perish.

[1] *Vide* "Notes" sub-title Communal Representation"

Can dharma be preserved if we cut off one of its limbs? All the limbs of dharma are inseparable from one another. Just as, if one brick is removed from an arch, the whole of it will collapse, so also if one limb of dharma perishes, if one brick from the structure gets loose and falls, the whole will collapse. We are so much engrossed in other things that we do not see how backward our Hindu society is. I for one see that. But let no one deduce from this that I want Hindus to become superior to Muslims. I have said several times that if the Hindus do this much self-purification, then they will get whatever they want and we will be able to end the enmity which exists between Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Parsis. So wonderful a thing is this. It is life-giving and not life-destroying. But this will be possible only if all Harijan workers are pure. If their hearts have not become pure and they have not become selfless, they will not be able to serve dharma. If such workers arise in Kathiawar, the tiger or, say, the demon of untouchability that flourishes here, is bound to perish.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 8-7-1934

152. LETTER TO N. C. KELKAR[1]

July 2, 1934

DEAR MR. KELKAR[2],

The unusual demand upon my time is my excuse for delay in replying to your letter of 22nd June last.

Instead of dealing directly with the points raised by you I propose to define my own policy regarding the Indian States.

The policy of non-interference in the affairs of the States that the Congress has followed is wise and sound.

The States are independent entities under the British law. That part of India which is described as British has no more power to shape the policy of the States than it has, say, that of Afghanistan or Ceylon.

I wish it were otherwise but I recognize my importance in the matter. India of the States is undoubtedly an integral part of geographical India. But that carries us no further than where we stand today. Portuguese and French India are also an integral part of geographical India but we are powerless to shape the course of events there. We enrol members from the States in the Congress. We receive

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's dated June 22, 1934; *vide* "Resolution on White Paper and Communal Award"

[2] President, All-India States' People's Conference

considerable assistance from them. It is not want of appreciation or will that compels our non-interference. It is our helplessness.

It is my conviction that any attempt on the part of the Congress at interference can only damage the cause of the people in the States.

But there is nothing to prevent us from urging the States to adopt a certain policy.

I am of opinion that whatever we are able to accomplish in British India is bound to affect the States.

I would like the States to grant autonomy to their subjects and would like the Princes to regard themselves as, and be in fact, trustees for the people over whom they rule, drawing for themselves only a small and definite percentage of the income. I have certainly not lost hope that the Princes will deem it a pride to become real trustees of their people. I do not seek to destroy their status. I believe in the conversion of individuals and societies.

What I said at the Round Table was in the nature of an appeal made to the Princes. It certainly did not imply that whether they listened to the appeal or not, the Congress would enter the federation. I had no authority to bind the Congress to any such thing. The Congress entering the federation had to depend upon many other circumstances beyond the attitude of the Princes. If ever federation comes, it will surely depend on mutual adjustment.

I hope I have covered all the points you have raised. If I have not, please write to me again. I have written this under great pressure of work.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI N. C. KELKAR
''KESARI'' OFFICE
POONA CITY

From a photostat: C. W. 3118. Courtesy: Kashinath N. Kelkar

153. LETTER TO D. V. GOKHALE

July 2, 1934

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

I thank you for your letter. I do hope that Mr. Bhopatkar[1] has no trace left of the scratches and other injuries received by him.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MR. D. V. GOKHALE
568 NARAYAN PETH
POONA 2

From a photostat: G. N. 6105; also C. W. 9713

154. LETTER TO A. S. M. MOFAKHER

AS AT WARDHA,
July 2, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

Intense pressure of work has prevented me from replying earlier to your letter of 17th ultimo.

I have carefully read the articles of association. I have grave doubts as to the success of the movement. It will not touch the terrorists nor those who are in silent sympathy with them. General principles of non-violence have no appeal for them. We must not expect to succeed without probing and dealing with the cause of terrorism.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI A. S. M. MOFAKHER, B. L.
B. A. T. V. HEADQUARTERS
21 TANTI BAGAN ROAD
CALCUTTA

Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Lakshman Balwant Bhopatkar, Advocate and Municipal Councillor, Poona, who had sustained injuries during the bomb explosion at Poona on June 25, 1934; *vide* "Statement on Bomb Incident", 25-6-1934

155. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

BHAVNAGAR,
July 2, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

For the first time, I saw signs of some erasures in your letter. These are found in your list of visitors.

There was a wire today saying that the women prisoners in Sabarmati jail have been released. Mani, therefore, must have been released. Some men prisoners also have been released from that jail. Some still remain behind.

As for the attempt on my life, I don't think it is worth writing about. Something of the sort was bound to happen for one cause or another. I am glad that it happened on account of my Harijan work. When some means have been used for one end, it is bound to be used for another end also. unconnected with the first. But, then, does anything happen unless God wills it?

I am writing this letter from Bhavnagar. You know the state of affairs here. One great difficulty is that the workers cannot work as a team. But the collection will be quite good, about Rs. 30,000.

Durga and others are coming to see me tomorrow.

I don't think there will be any difficulty regarding the cultivators. Please don't worry in the least.

Being hard pressed for time, I can't write long letters to you. But I have asked others in the party to write to you.

Did I write to you about Amtussalaam having been operated upon for piles? She has now been discharged from the hospital. Meherally[1] is in a hospital. How is your health?

Ramdas has been suffering. He needs a lot of money for medicines, etc. How can I let him accept such a large amount as gift? I hardened my heart, therefore, and wrote to him today saying that he must not accept more than Rs. 100 every month, no matter whether he lived or died in consequence. Keshu is in Rajkot for the present.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 108-9

[1] Yusuf Meherally, socialist leader of Bombay

156. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

July 2, 1934

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. I will inquire about the ink. I have not been able to get it so far. Anyone can make ink, but there are many difficulties in making ink of good quality. Hardly anybody succeeds. You may go to the Harijan Ashram whenever you like after discussing the matter with Parikshitlal. Remember October, however. Don't go even during the last week of that month.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VASUMATIBEHN
DAULATRAM KASHIRAM CO.
KHAN MAHOMAD KASAMBHAI BUILDING
KARLEWADI, THAKURDWAR, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9388. Also C. W. 633. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

157. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHARMA

July 2, 1934

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your clear letter. I have no objection to your going to Khurja. I understand now your remark to Ramdas that you would look after the expenses. I suppose it meant that I had undertaken the responsibility of that expense. Quite correct if it did. There should be one more proviso that the expenditure should be within limits.The letter from Ramdas gives me to understand that the minimum amount required would be Rs. 300 a month. The expenditure is too high in my view. After all we have to take the requisite sum from Jamnalalji. How can I burden him or anyone else to this extent? It would be better that Ramdas goes away to South Africa. He will, somehow or other, get well there. You too may go if you can obtain the passport. It should also be understood about nature cure that it is practicable even for the poor. It is very painful for me to write all this but I see no alternative. The affection between you and Ramdas is a test for you too, while I am of course not exempt from. it.

My opinion is crystallizing into this, that you should remain at Wardha and manage everything within a limited amount. The expenses on Ramdas and Nirmala should not exceed Rs. 100 and the

same goes for you too. Whatever is possible within this limit should be done. Do not do anything through ignorant attachment. Ramdas will become all right when his future is settled. Others in similar circumstances have been cured thus; Ramdas too will be cured. In all this your decision and judgement are essential as Ramdas is placing more and more confidence in you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, 1932-48,* between pp. 76 and 77

158. LETTER TO U. RAJAGOPALA KRISHNAIYYA

July 2, 1934

BHAI KRISHNAIYYA,

Here are the replies to your queries :

1. There is no doubt that a union of dharma and *artha* is possible for an individual, the society and the nation. But it is almost impossible to say when it might be achieved.

2. My writings about non-attachment to the result are an outcome of personal experience not on one occasion but many. Even a hard-working yet hungry farmer can attain self-realization. The wise men go to the length of saying that self-realization though not impossible is certainly very hard to achieve for the man endowed with the three assets, that of wealth, health and intellect.

3. An all-pervading, conscious Power fills our universe which we call God. We have to offer to it worship. Even the fact that that power does not fulfil all our desires should cause us no concern.

4. The *Gita* cannot be interpreted as one pleases, it has to be interpreted in accordance with rules of grammar, etc.

5. The meaning of being transformed into God is clear enough. It means a son is not content till he becomes like his father.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From Hindi: C. W. 9238. Courtesy: U. Rajagopala Krishnaiyya

159. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BHAVNAGAR[1]

July 3, 1934

Kathiawar should be ashamed, if foreign cloth entered its limits. If you sincerely work, you can supply khaddar not only to Kathiawar but to the whole of India. It is a shame, that possessing excellent opportunity of growing cotton, you give two crores to foreign countries for your clothing.

The Bombay Chronicle, 4-7-1934

160. SPEECH ON STATE GOSHALA, BHAVNAGAR[2]

July 3, 1934

Before taking leave of Bhavnagar I cannot but make a passing reference to the State goshala, which I had the privilege to visit in company with my old friend, Swami Anand. The goshala has a fine herd of Gir cattle, and it has a four-year-old bull which, according to the Maharajasaheb, no mean judge of cattle, is the finest animal of the kind he had seen in Kathiawar. The State is doing very good service by maintaining this farm, but I hope it will not rest content with it, but also chalk out and work out a policy of cattle improvement in villages by placing a studbull in each village, castrating all other bulls whatever and, in the case of people letting loose a bull on religious grounds, insisting that it shall be first-class animal and, if it is not, stopping the dedication altogether.

Harijan, 20-7-1934

161. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

July 5, 1934

CHI. AMALA,

This is just to send you my love. I hope you are well and cheerful.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI AMALABEHN
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI

Spiegal Papers: Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum

[1] The meeting was held in the morning. Ramjibhai of the Khadi Department, Kathiawar, submitted a report on progress of khadi in Kathiawar.

[2] This speech is extracted from ''Weekly Letter''

162. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

July 5, 1934

CHI. MRIDULA,

I had received your letter. I am surprised that even you have been led into an error. You must have read the letter addressed to Bhogilal. To say that swadeshi today is a fraud is not to condemn the people engaged in that work. It is a warning to them. I had even given the history of swadeshi in that conversation. I have often said that cow-protection today is a fraud and that is my belief. And yet many pure-hearted persons are engaged in that activity. Even my colleagues in the field are in it. I do not consider them knaves. I have shown the way to genuine cow-protection as against spurious cow-protection. You must be aware of it. I have referred to the cow-protection societies as cow-devouring societies in *Hind Swaraj*. Today also I think the same about them. But I know that many men and women engaged in that fraudulent activity are extremely purehearted. It is the same about the swadeshi fraud of today. You and other colleagues are not knaves but have been innocently entangled in it. It is my attempt to redeem them from it. The result is my new concept of swadeshi.

Have you understood the point now? If you have understood, remove the pain of those who have been hurt by my words.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11190. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

163. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, AJMER[1]

July 5, 1934

Gandhiji reached Ajmer at night on the 4th, and on the 5th he addressed a women's meeting the first thing in the morning. He said he would not make any elaborate argument before them. Everyone would agree that we are subject to the law of love. As Tulsidas put it, mercy is the root of religion. Untouchability must be abolished if only because it was opposed to the law of love and to the spirit of mercy. How could they swear by love and at the sametime consign a large class of their fellowmen to insanitary surroundings, prevent them from drawing water at wells, compel them to drink water spoilt by cattle and assault them if they tried to assert their common right over public wells? So also, if quite a number of dirty *savarna* children could attend the public schools with impunity, was it right to exclude

[1] This and the two following items are extracted from ''Weekly Letter''.

Harijans even when they were clean? To consider others as lower than ourselves was a species of pride, which Tulsidas called the root of sin, and pride goes before destruction.

Harijan, 20-7-1934

164. INTERVIEW TO HARIJAN SEVAKS

AJMER,
July 5, 1934

In the course of his conversation with Harijan servants, Gandhiji carefully defined the conditions of Harijan service. He wanted the workers to serve the Harijans in all sincerity. This service was its own reward, and it had no selfish or political motive behind it whatever. Their sole aim was the purification of religion. There was no room in the movement for those who approached the question from a political standpoint, and they must leave it at the earliest opportunity, as their continuance in it was fraught with great injury to the cause. They could never hope to convert *savarna* Hindus, if they cherished any political aims. They alone should participate in the movement who accepted the principles of truth and non-violence and who believed in temples as in integral feature of Hinduism.

Harijan, 20-7-1934

165. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, AJMER

July 5, 1934

Gandhiji said that the Pandit was perfectly entitled to attend the meeting with the black-flaggers and record his protest against the movement.[1] Whoever had assaulted him had exhibited gross incivility. Black flags could do them no harm, but the assault on the Pandit had certainly damaged the cause they had all at heart. The Pandit's assailant had committed a great sin in the eyes of God as well as man. Sanatanists and reformers had occasionally come to blows before, but the Ajmer assault was unpardonable, as he had made himself responsible for the Pandit's safety. Untouchability could never be abolished by violent methods, which would only recoil on their own heads. He would consider what penance he should undergo as reparation for the untoward incident,[2] for people ought to know the conditions on which he could invite their co-operation. Reformers might no assault others, but should suffer assaults without retaliation, as thus only could hearts be moved and

[1] Lalnath had met Gandhiji in the afternoon and took his permission to speak at the meeting. He, however, reached the place before Gandhiji had arrived there and staged a black-flag demonstration, which led to a scuffle and assault on the sanatanist leader.

[2] Gandhiji decided to undergo a week's fast from August 7; *vide* ''Statement on Fast'', 6-8-1934

untouchability abolished. He was confident that religion could not be served or saved by violence, untruth or anger, but only by self-denial, self-restraint and self-suffering. He could not bear with violence even in politics; much less could be brook it in religion.

Gandhiji then called upon the Pandit to speak and asked the audience to accord him a patient hearing. When he had spoken for a couple of minutes, members of the public interrupted him. Upon this Gandhiji said that it was an exhibition of gross discourtesy. Some of them and already committed one incivility in molesting him, and they were committing another in refusing to hear him. If they were not here prepared to hear the Pandit, it meant that they were not prepared to hear him either. He never claimed infallibility for himself. On the other hand, he had confessed to Himalayan blunders. If he could say with impunity that untouchability was a sin, the Pandit had an equal right to assert that the movement directed against untouchability was irreligious in his opinion. If they cried 'shame' when the Pandit expressed his honest opinion, the shame was not his but theirs. They must not thus betray intolerance, which was but a form of violence. A man who did not listen to opponents could never be capable of truly religious conduct. Harijan service was a religious movement in which there was no room for intolerance or physical violence. Supposing some violence was offered to him and it was even of a fatal character, would they lose their senses and indulge in orgies of violence? If so, he would have lived his life before them in vain. They would kill the great movement, whereas if they restrained themselves untouchability would die with him.

Harijan, 20-7-1934.

166. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

AJMER,
July 5, 1934

CHI. MIRA,

I am still working against time. Therefore you may not expect a long letter from me. Chandrashankar is writing to you fully. He will describe to you the sad incident[1] that took place today.

I have several statements about prison treatment. But I have not been able to examine them. Hence there is delay in sending them to Mr. Maxwell.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6289. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9755

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

167. LETTER TO G. G. JOG

[On or before *July 6, 1934*][1]

Gandhiji in the course of a communication to Mr. G. G. Jog[2], regarding khadi *hundi* and Gandhi Purse controversy started in the Press,[3] says that he feels that he cannot issue any statement without knowing the full facts and the local circumstances.

The statement[4] issued by you explaining the facts seems to be enough. It may sometimes be good to pay attention to what appears in the newspapers.

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-7-1934

168. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

July 6, 1934

MY DEAR MALKANI,

You should pardon me. Though I met Jamnalalji, I forgot all about you. I must now write to him. This I am doing.

I hope to write about the J. K. fund.

You are wrong in resenting Thakkar Bapa's wire or letter whatever it was. If he thought that you and he could not be spared from the office at the same time, he should have the right to do so without incurring the risk of being misunderstood. There is no question here of ordering one about. As to his travelling with me and thus making it impossible for you to do so, except for Sind, it is inevitable. For the Punjab, U. P. or Bengal his presence is necessary. I should have been at sea in Gujarat without his[5] preceding me. He was

[1] The letter was published under the date-line, ''Cawnpore, July 6'' 1934.

[2] A prominent Congress Worker of Kanpur

[3] Various newspapers referring to Gandhiji's visit to Kanpur had stated that Kanpur workers resented the action of the All-India Spinners' Association in selling khadi *hundis*, as it was apprehended that it would injure the cause of collection of Harijan Fund.

[4] The source had reported that according to D. Majumdar, Secretary of the U. P. Congress, a statement was issued by the Kanpur Spinners' Association, which *inter alia* read : ''. . . khadi work is not against Harijan work. . . .In the case of organizing the sale of khadi by means of khadi *hundis* the question of raising funds does not arise at all. The Spinner's Association has not appealed for any subscription from the people of Kanpur. They have only been approached to purchase khadi and show respect to Gandhiji. . . .''

[5] The source has ''him''.

equally necessary in Kathiawar. We workers must have a tough hide.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 906

169. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

AJMER,
July 6, 1934

CHI. MAHADEV,

I rose at 2.30 today. After writing the diary, I am writing this. I am fairly exhausted now. I don't like the discussions and the meetings. I feel the lack of sleep all the time. The correspondence has piled up. I attend to as many letter as I can.

Durga and the other women came and saw me at Bhavnagar. She and Velanbehn are waiting for you. It will be better, therefore, to go and see them before joining me. Bablo is at Dihan. I can't think what should be done about all of them. But come to a decision only after meeting me.

As we shall be meeting in a very few days now, I don't write more. What Chandrashankar has written to you is enough.

Take care of your health after you leave.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

170. SPEECH AT HYDERABAD[1]

July 7, 1934

I see more ladies here, and I know they are religious. My message to you is that if you want to protect your religion, you should discard untouchability, clean your minds and take all human beings as equal. If it is not done you will be sinners and will destroy your religion.

[1] At Homestead Hall, which was mainly occupied by women while the rest remained outside the hall. A purse of Rs. 3,188 was presented by Jairamdas Doulatram. Gandhiji could not address the people outside the hall due to noise and rush.

I got one gold bangle from a lady at Mirani.[1] Now you also show your sign of love for the movement, by giving ornaments and money. I have finished my work and now you should do yours.

The Hindustan Times, 8-7-1934

171. SPEECH IN REPLY TO MUNICIPAL ADDRESS[2], KARACHI

[*July 7, 1934*][3]

In his speeches here, Mahatmaji congratulated the Karachi city on maintaining cordial relations between Hindus and Muslims and also for having done a lot for the uplift of Harijans, but he hoped that the Karachi Municipality will still do its best for Harijans and set an example in this respect to other municipalities of India. He was, however, not satisfied with the unhealthy quarters in which at some places Harijans were living and he urged the city fathers and the people to see that not a single Harijan was housed in Karachi in any quarters in which they themselves would not consent to live.

He also urged them to purge their hearts of distinctions of high and low, untouchable and touchable, or of their being Hindus, Mahomedans, Christians or Parsis, etc., and until that was done India would not attain her salvation. By doing this, not only India but the whole world would be benefited.

Mahatmaji also emphasized that a noble cause like that of the removal of untouchability would not be carried out by the use of force. It could only be achieved by self-purification and penance and he urged the Harijan workers to realize their responsibilities in this direction. He also urged people to show respect towards sanatanists who might differ from them.

The Bombay Chronicle, 13-7-1934

172. LETTER TO BALUKAKA KANITKAR

July 8, 1934

DEAR BALUKAKA,

I have gone through your letter. You won't find me talking about civil disobedience. I am occupied in talking about the

[1] Gandhiji had alighted at Mirani, five miles from Hyderabad station.
[2] Presented by Jamshed Mehta, Mayor of Karachi
[3] The speech is extacted from ''Weekly Letter'' in *Harijan,* 27-7-1934.

constructive programme you like so much. Do therefore work away at it for all you are worth.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI BALUKAKA KANITKAR
341 SADASHIV PETH
POONA CITY 2

From a photostat: C. W. 962. Courtesy: G. N. Kanitkar

173. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 8, 1934

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,[1]

I have your letter. Coming to me for improving your health may not be practicable, but you can certainly come after you get all right. Write to me what the Doctor says. Come when you are able to move about and can have normal food. The earliest you can come is at Kanpur, but the best course would be to come to Wardha on the 5th. I shall be reaching Kanpur on the 23rd, Benares on the 26th and Wardha on the 5th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 310

174. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKERS' MEETING, KARACHI

July 8, 1934

On Sunday morning Mahatma Gandhi had a heart-to-heart talk with the Sind Congressites in Khaliqdina Hall. Gandhiji referred to the socialists' allegations that the programme chalked out by the Working Committee was mild and ineffective. He rebutted it saying that khadi, Hindu-Muslim unity, untouchability, and peasants' re-organization were sufficiently dynamic work. If the workers took them in right earnest there could be no need for civil resistance and going to jail. He advised the people not to change the programme which was sufficiently dynamic and truly socialistic.

Speaking on Communal Award, he said the Congress could neither accept it, as

[1] The superscription is in Urdu in the source.

the Muslims desired, nor reject as Hindus and Sikhs wanted. He felt, therefore, the Working Committee's resolution was the wisest.

The Tribune, 11-7-1934

175. SPEECH TO SIND HARIJAN WORKERS, KARACHI[1]

July 8, 1934

At Karachi, on the 8th instant, Gandhiji met the Harijan workers of Sind, who complained that Kabulis who had lent money to Harijans harassed them a good deal and refused to accept payment even when their exorbitant claim as regards the principal and the interest was admitted in full. Gandhiji advised that, in dealing with these money-lenders, they should seek the good offices of godfearing Mussalmans in the first instance. But their main work lay in so educating the Harijans that they would cease to borrow money altogether for unproductive purposes and give up vices like drink and gambling. And when they did borrow, six per cent was the maximum interest they should pay. In Tharparkar, there are about 5,000 Bhils and Meghwads, the original inhabitants and peasant proprietors of the district, who are fast losing their lands and being reduced to the status of landless labourers and stand badly in need of legislative protection. Gandhiji said they might try to get such legislation passed, but meanwhile a band of earnest workers must bury themselves in the heart of this backward tract and dedicate their lives to its service.

Harijan, 27-7-1934

176. SPEECH TO BUSINESSMEN, KARACHI[2]

July 8, 1934

The Chariman has rightly observed that of late I have very little time for activities not directly connected with Harijan work; or, I may be said to have no time at all. It is also ture that after such an extensive tour and the experience of walking in Utkal, I find myself rather exhausted mentally. Now I am only hoping that the month of July will pass off without trouble so that I can rest my mind a little. In this frame of mind I was not inclined in the beginning to accept the Chairman's invitation to visit this place. But I could not decline the invitation when I came to know that the Chairman of this Association is also the Chairman of the Harijan Sevak Sangh here, and carries on the Sangh's activities admirably well.

[1] The speech is extracted from ''Weekly Letter".

[2] This appeared under the title "To the Businessmen of Karachi".

As it is, I have always had good relations with everyone in India, including businessmen and other rich people. I have been constantly receiving financial help from them for the poor in the country, for *Daridranarayana*, for Harijans and others. But I feel it is necessary to make it clear that although I am friendly with the princes, officers, business men and the rich, I never forget that I am a representative of the workers. It is my constant prayer to God that I may not, in any way disgrace myself as representative of workers, and, I may not ask anything for myself from the rich class. I believe that I have led fifty years of my public life in this spirit.

I do believe that businessmen, the wealthy men and princes are inseparable limbs of India. My duty does not demand that I should destroy one of these limbs in order to serve *Daridranarayana*. My experience of many years has strengthened my belief that even if it is possible to liquidate these classes, *Daridranarayana* is not going to benefit by it. What I desire and what is uppermost in my thoughts and dreams is that I should help as much as is possible in bringing about unity among all these classes, and devote my utmost energy to this cause. It is also my experience that so far I have not by such activities harmed *Daridranarayana*. I have seen that when I approach the poor, they accept me as one of them and shower affection on me. And even now, I shall do for them whatever is possible.

Having laid the foundation-stone of this building[1], I take it that you would not turn me away empty-handed whenever I approach you for the much needed help for the *Daridranarayana*. I presume that, as representatives of the Indian business community, you would not resort to dubious trade practices, would not exploit *Daridranarayana* and would see that their rights are not violated at your hands. I expect that you would not indulge in any trade which may harm *Daridranarayana*. I know that all businessmen in India do not carry on their business in this spirit. I also knowthat all the rich people do not use their wealth as if it really belonged to the poor. In spite of that I am sure the number of rich persons who desire to be the trustees of their wealth is increasing. They are striving hard and also succeeding in their efforts. If we treat these rich people with decency, they would fulfil the expectations we have of them. What benevolence would not teach them today, selfishness would teach them tomorrow. Experience shows that altruism and self-interest can be blended in trade. Genuine

[1] For the Karachi Indian Merchants' Association

artha[1] is that alone which includes *paramartha*[2]. This is the teaching of all the religions of the world. Religion has only come into existence to teach us that we human beings who are eddying in life's current should find solace in serving each other and while doing so satisfy our physical needs within limits. I know of no religion which says that God has given right to man to indulge in physical pleasure in utter selfishness. History reveals that any individual or society that lives only for indulging in pleasure in destroyed. The world does not even remember them. But it constantly remembers, exalts and immortalizes those who devote their lives to the service of humanity.

In conclusion, I pray to God that this Merchants' Association may continue to do such noble deeds which would serve the best interest of every Indian. It would do good not only to Hindus and Muslims but the whole of India which includes the *Daridranar-ayana* as well as others. You have pledged that this Association is open to everyone who calls himself an Indian and accepts India as his country. I hope that this beautiful city which is small but well on the way to becoming another Bombay and may compete with Bombay in the near future—will have no place for jealousy and enmity. Competition is not a bad thing by itself. That is the basis of trade. It is all right to progress through competition, but there should not be mutual jealousy and quarrels.If you succeed in avoiding these things, I am sure that your Association would become an ideal organization for the country.

You have yourself mentioned that because of the efforts of your Mayor you have received land and other help. He is the son of a wealthy man, but an outsider who comes to Karachi and meets him would regard him not as a rich man but a fakir. In the entire history of municipalities I have never come across an instance where one person is elected Mayor year after year. It is not too much to entertain great hopes from a city who has a fakir for its Mayor.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 29-7-1934

[1] Wealth

[2] The supreme good

177. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KARACHI

July 8, 1934

At the public meeting in the evening, 30,000 people, including 5,000 ladies, had turned up to hear Gandhiji, but they were rather disappointed, as the loudspeakers failed and Swami Krishnanand[1] had to take their place as a human substitute. Referring to the Harijan quarters he had inspected, Gandhiji said he was deeply pained to see the *chawls* in Ranchhod lines, and he expected the Municipality to see that they no longer disfigured the fair face of the city of Karachi. Besides this, there were three more places which peremptorily demanded improvement. It did not redound to Karachi's credit that a single Harijan within its limits should be compelled to live in a house which the tallest of its citizens would not gladly occupy. The citizens, therefore, should continuously press this matter upon the Municipality's attention until the remedy suited to each case was applied.[2]

A band of sincere workers armed with prayer and purity as weapons was what was needed for the work. No caste distinctions should ever exist. He desired unity between communities wherein lay India's salvation. He requested the public to nurse no grievance against sanatanists. Love, persuasion and no force should be applied in converting them to his viewpoint. He expressed his inability to make a long speech amidst the din of the unruly mob.

Harijan, 27-7-1934; also *The Tribune,* 11-7-1934

[1] Secretary, Karachi District Congress Committee

[2] This paragraph is extracted from "Weekly Letter". What follows is reproduced from *The Tribune. The Bombay Chronicle,* 9-7-1934, had reported : "Coaxing a small child. . .Gandhiji quietly removed its ornaments from its neck, while he struggled with an old woman. . . to part with her ring when one of the bidders. . . gave a fifty-rupee note towards the price of an article which was . . .for Rs. 15. . .Gandhiji. . .resolutely refused to part with the balance much to the merriment of the crowd."

178. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

KARACHI,

July 9, 1934

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA

NEW DELHI

ALARM UNJUSTIFIED. TAKING EVERY CARE. PROPOSE TAKING SEVEN DAYS FAST FROM FIFTH OR SIXTH AUGUST DATE AFTER REACHED WARDHA REGARDING ASSAULT LALNATH. HOLD THIS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. ANNOUNCEMENT SHOULD BE MADE NOW. WIRE APPROVAL.[1]

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 7962. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

179. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

July 9, 1934

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. You can certainly help Butow if you feel impelled thereto. He is not likely to get any money from his people. I wonder if he has told you that he has been taking money from friends at different places. He does not seem to regret what he has done. After all there is no moral obligation to support him. He should be told to leave India if he cannot find an honourable livelihood. But you may take a different view. You should then enforce it. I must not stand between you and your generosity.

If you do not mind Thakkar Bapa's decision[2], you should not mind his mannerism. It should be enough for you and me to know that he has a heart of gold and is always actuated by the best of motives. He felt that either you or he had to be at the centre.

We meet soon even though for a few brief moments.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 907

[1] The addressee's reply telegram read : "Personally hold such a long fast unwarranted. Will give unnecessary shock to country which hope Lalnath does not desire. Request showing this telegram to Lalnath. Hope you will agree reducing period of fast. Step rather drastic. Finally your discretion" (Birla Papers).

[2] *Vide* "Letter to N. R. Malkani", 6-7-1934

180. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

July 9, 1934

CHI. AMALA,

I have your letter. You must not be so thin-skinned. And why should you mind what a mere youngster says? He may say what he likes. You should simply ignore what is useless and take in what is useful. Puratan is a good young man. You should take in good part what he says.[1] In one thing you are decidedly wrong, i.e., in imposing your will upon the children. You can only make them do things that they do willingly. Your ten years' bad practice cannot become good by prescription. But I cannot have you to impose things on children, nor will I impose anything on you. If you are finding life irksome there, tell me what you will have me to do. You have to settle down to something. Think hard and guide me.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Yes, I have been taking milk for the last four days.

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

181. LETTER TO PURATAN J. BUCH

July 9, 1934

CHI. PURATAN,

What did you find in Amalabehn's letter which seemed shameful to you? Whenever you see any cause, you should tell and correct her. When you think it your duty to intervene, you should do so. If you are convinced that she is a good lady, you should bear with her and use her services. She has many good qualities, which you should make use of. She is foolish, of course. If she were not, she would not cling to me, for she has had to bear many hard blows from me.

Write to me in detail.

How is Totaramji? Has Hariprasad left? Exert your best to see that the atmosphere there does not become impure.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9170

[1] *Vide* also the following item.

182. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

July 9, 1934

BHAI FULCHAND,

It is good that you reminded me. I had completely forgotten about the matter and would have done nothing about it. I am writing today, right now.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am not replying separately to Mistry.

SJT. FULCHAND KASTURCHAND SHAH
KELVANI MANDAL
WADHWAN CITY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9196. Also C.W. 2849. Courtesy: Fulchand K. Shah

183. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

July 9, 1934

CHI. KANTI,

I had your two letters. I would certainly wish to give you whatever help I can in your studies. But I think it would be advisable to wait and see what Rajaji does from Madras. I shall be meeting him in Benares at any rate. I will have a talk with him then. But I am also writing to him today. If you wish to join the Jamia, you may do even that. You will get there the subjects which you wish to study and also come into contact with Muslim students. Or you can stay in Kashi. Anandshankarbhai[1] is there, as also 'Sundaram'[2]. There is Nagardas, too, besides many others. The equipment is all that can be desired. At least I have these two institutions in my mind. If you wish to stay at

[1] Anandshankar Bapubhai Dhruva (1869-1942), Sanskrit scholar and Gujarati writer; Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Benares Hindu University

[2] Tribhuvan Purushotamdas Luhar, a Gujarati poet

Rajkot under Narandas's care, that also will be possible. I have no fear about you. I don't look upon yu as a mere child. If you wish to discuss the problem with me, you can travel with me for a few stations from Delhi. That may perhaps be the best opportunity for talking the matter over. But it is possible that somebody else may join from Delhi with whom it may be necessary [for me] to engage in conversation. Think over it. Ba certainly worries about you.

Yes, Ramdas, one may say, is fairly ill.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7286. Courtesy: Kanti Gandhi

184. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

July 9, 1934

DEAR DAUGHTER RAIHANA, [1]

I got your letter. I have replied to Dahyabhai. Since he is your brother, wouldn't I have forfeited my privilege of being a father to you if I didn't see him even when I went to Mehsana? A letter for Hamida is enclosed. Since you will be reading it, I don't write anything about the matter here.

I felt unhappy that you could not come to Mehsana, but your reason for not coming was correct.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9648

185. LETTER TO RAMA DEVI CHOWDHRY

July 9, 1934

CHI. RAMA DEVI,

I have your letter. The scheme you have sent me about village activities is good. It will be fine if it is put into practice. I may state only this much for daughter, mother and elder sisters[2] that instruction

[1] The superscription is in Urdu in the source.

[2] Presumably addressee's daughter, herself and other women working for Harijan uplift

should be imparted in the following order, firstly hygiene, secondly manual labour, then cottage industry followed by Hindi alphabet. Teaching of mother tongue is not essential. Annapurna[1] and others are well, I trust.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RAMA DEVI
CHANDNI CHOWK
CUTTACK, ORISSA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2788

186. LETTER TO AMBUJAMMAL

July 9, 1934

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I have your letter. Today is my silence-day. We are all in Karachi, in a house facing the sea. The air is very good.

Bombs and other things are only apparent causes of death. Death must arrive at the appointed hour. And I am convinced that no man will ever die until he has played his allotted part in the world. Why then should we be distressed over a bomb-throwing? Yes, we should have compassion for the person who throws the bomb and we should try to reform him.[2]

I hope your health is perfecly normal now. Harijan welfare, Hindi and khadi are the three activities open to you and nobody can have any objection to that.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Addressee's daughter

[2] For Gandhiji's statement on the bomb incident of June 25, *vide* "Statement on bomb Incident", 25-6-1934

187. STATEMENT ON FAST [1]

[*July 10, 1934*][2]

Inquiry made by me into the unfortunate incident at Ajmer resulting in the cut received by Pandit Lalnath on the head shows that the black-flag demonstration enraged those who saw the processionists, and, according to Pandit Lalnath, the public, which included volunteers, seized the flags and trampled them under foot. A scuffle ensued in which Pandit Lalnath received the injury mentioned. Happily, none of the other demonstrators received injuries worth the name. But the guilt is enhanced by the fact that those in charge of the volunteers had specific insturctions to see that the black-flag demonstrators were fully protected from molestation by the public. It is no answer in defence that Pandit Lalnath and his party came in advance of the time appointed. In my opinion, responsible men should have been posted at all points to afford protection to the demonstrators, and notices should have been put up at the meeting ground, warning the public against interfering with them in any shape or form.

That precaution was not taken and the pledge given to Pandit Lalnath, that he and his party would be free from molestation when they made the demonstration, was broken. The pledge was given by me in the full faith that the captain of the volunteers was willing and able to carry it out. I have no doubt he was a willing partner to the pledge. That he was unable to redeem the pledge was quite clear. But there can be no doubt that the final responsibility rests with me. Indeed, no pledge was necessary. In a movement claimed to be purely religious, non-violence on the part of the public sympathizing with the movement must be presumed. If I mentioned the pledge, I have done so to enhance the magnitude of the guilt and demonstrate the greater necessity of public penance on my part. Pandit Lalnath always warned me that my persistence in the movement must result in widespread violence on the part of the symapthizing public. I did not share his fear, nor do I share it now, in spite of his ability to show stray cases of violence done to black-flag demonstrators.

But it is necessary for me to emphasize the fact that the movement, which is purely religious, admits of no violence on the part

[1] This appeared under the title "Gandhiji's Impending Fast".

[2] Associated Press of India released the statement from Karachi on this date.

of reformers even in spite of provocations. The movement can only succeed by appealing to reason and touching the hearts of the opponents. This is possible only through the purity and penance of reformers. After much searching of the heart, I have decided to impose upon myself a fast of seven days, to commence on Tuesday noon August 7th, i.e., two days after my reaching Wardha, which I expect to do on the 5th of August next. This is the least penance I owe to Pandit Lalnath and those sanatanists whom he represents. God willing, the Harijan tour will finish at Benares on the 2nd of August next. It is, perhaps, fitting that the end will be signalized by a penitential fast. May it cover all errors, conscious or unconscious, of omission or commission, of me and my co-workers. The movement will not end with the fast. Let it open a new and cleaner chapter in this struggle for the emancipation of nearly fifty million human beings from thraldom imposed in the sacred name of religion. Let it also be a warning to those who are in, or will join, the movement that they must approach it with clean hands and hearts free from untruth and violence in thought, word and deed. I hope no one will feel tempted to imitate the fast. The cause will be best served by greater dedication.

Harijan, 13-7-1934

188. TELEGRAM TO NATARAJAN

July 10, 1934

NATARAJAN

BANDRA (BOMBAY)

THANKS WIRE. READ STATEMENT[1]. CAUSE TOO GREAT FOR OVERLOOKING AJMER NEGLECT DUTY.

GANDHI

Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

189. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

July 10, 1934

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA

NEW DELHI

YOUR DEVDAS WIRES.[1] READ STATEMENT. NOTHING LESS THAN SEVEN DAYS MEETS CASE. FRIENDS HERE AGREE.

BAPU

Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

190. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

KARACHI,
July 10, 1934

DECISION ALREADY MADE BECAUSE INEVITABLE. READ STATEMENT[2] .

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 147

191. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 10, 1934

CHI. MIRA,

You will understand the coming fast. The incident calls for the penance becuase there was a clear breach of pledge.[3] Nothing on earth is so serious perhaps as breach of safety. If I had greater capacity I would have taken a longer fast. You must not be disturbed. You should go on with your appointed task[4] , unmoved. Share this with the other friends.

Love to all.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6290. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9756

[1] For the addressee's telegram, *vide* "Telegram to G. D. Birla", 9-7-1934

[2] *Vide* "Statement on Fast", 10-7-1934

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Ajmer", 5-7-1934 and, "Statement on Fast", 10-7-1934

[4] *Vide* footnote 1, "Letter to Mirabehn", 20-6-1934

192. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

July 10, 1934

I see nothing wrong in Rajaji's standing on the same platform with Bhulabhai. But it is best that, even though doing all this, he should not join the Board or enter the Assembly. I would dissuade even those who are not confirmed non-co-operators from entering the Assembly. There will be too many who will be wanting to go. All of them will not make a good show there, nor can all get elected.

We may assume that Rajaji and Rajendrababu, when they consider it desirable to join the Board or enter the Assembly, will [surely] do so. They are always free to do it. On the other hand, those like you who wish to keep themselves completely out are free to do that too. [You may be sure that] nobody will be criticized on that ground. And even if there is some criticism, you should not mind it. In this age now, we ought to shed all fear and not to pay too much attention to what others do or think. People may follow me in my intellectual experiments as long as they appeal to them. My spiritual experiments require faith. People may follow them, as far as their faith can lead them. Let nobody force his reason or his heart to follow me.

As you will be reading in the papers about my impending fast, I don't write more about it here. Its necessity should be self-evident.

I got your wire. My health will survive the ordeal. I will come through if I don't have to carry too heavy a burden from day to day. Having reached dinner time, why should I have a breakfast ?[1] Have faith.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 148-9

193. INTERVIEW TO HARIJAN LEADERS[2]

KARACHI,
July 10, 1934

Early in the morning on the 10th, a number of prominent Harijans met Gandhiji, represented their grievances to him and sought his advice on many points. As regards Municipal and other elections, Gandhiji said that there never should be a

[1] A Gujarati saying which means : 'Having reached the goal, why should I go back ?'

[2] This is extracted from "Weekly Letter".

contest between one Harijan and another. Harijans should consult among themselves and select as many worthy candidates as there were seats, and these should have a walk-over. It would do them no good if these seats, instead of furnishing opportunities for service, were looked upon as conferring privilege.

With reference to the demand put forward by some Hairjans for the reservation of a certain percentage of posts in services, Gandhiji said they would perhaps be surprised to hear that there were hardly a few lakhs of Government posts in the whole of India. Out of these few how many could after all be held by Harijans, and what would that mean to five crores of Harijans? Gandhiji, therefore, advised the Harijans to leave these percentages severely alone and trust merit to command attention.

Harijan, 27-7-1934

194. SPEECH AT DAYARAM JETHAMAL SIND COLLEGE, KARACHI[1]

July 10, 1934

This is not my first contact with you. My contact with students has always been intimate whether they are students of Sind or any other province. This kind of relationship exists since I returned from South Africa. Therefore I have confidence, based on my experience, that I have a place in the hearts of the students. Whenever I am asked, 'How many children do you have?' I reply, "Innumerable, and they keep on increasing daily"; there is no fall in the number. Some of them die; but many more are born. Some betray me and some even run away from me. If I count the number of those who are born, it will outnumber the total of those who have run away from me, who have betrayed me and who are dead. Such boys and girls are first born out of their mothers' wombs and as they have faith come to me and, having transformed their lives, are reborn.

It was for this reason that I could not decline your invitation. You should know that at the moment my mental and physical condition is such that I would not accept any invitation. A girl in this city is on her death-bed. She wished that I should call on her. To her grandmother, who came with the request, I had to say "If I come to see your child, [I must go and see other] sons and daughters of mine who are ill; how can I manage to see all of them? If I call on one, how

[1] This appeared under the title : "To the Students of Karachi".

can I turn down the request of another ?" I have still not been able to find a way out of this dilemma. I hardened my heart and argued to myself, 'After all I would not be able to save her by going there. And so I will not go.' Nursing the sick has been my habit but I hardened my feelings and restrained myself. If it was difficult for me to call on that girl, then it was equally difficult to come here. It is beyond my physical and mental strength these days to go about from place to place. Normally money tempts me; but lately I have become free to great extent even from that temptation. I am indifferent whether I get money or not. I shall certainly carry on this work even if I do not get money. For, this activity is after all carried on not by me but by God. It is beyond the power of a single individual to bring about a change of heart in millions of caste Hindus. Man cannot acquire such power even by self-purification or penance. By these means he merely becomes an instrument in the hands of God. He can do nothing more. I am experiencing this every day and every moment, and that makes me more and more humble. The world alone can say whether or not there is humility in my words and actions. But I am humble and my humility goes on increasing, because I know and realize my mental, physical and spiritual limitations.

With this introduction I would like to tell the students, boys and girls, that humility is the primary thing to be acquired. One who is not humble cannot put one's learning to proper use. What does it matter if he has obtained double first class or has stood first? One does not achieve everything by just passing an examination. It is possible that it may help in securing a good job or a good marriage alliance. But, if learning is to be put to proper use, if it is to be used only for the sake of service, one should acquire more and more humility every day. No service is possible without it. I know quite a few students who are proud of their B. A. Hons. or engineering degrees. The villagers would not even bother to look at them. They would say: "How are we concerned with degrees? How are you going to share our troubles ?" Nowhere in the 7,00,000 Indian villages would one find an instance of someone winning the affection of the villagers because he possessed high academic degrees. Man should not use his intelligence and spiritual power to earn his livelihood and sustain himself. For that purpose God has provided him with hands and legs, and with these he should do some common labour and earn his bread. Can learning be used for earning thousands of rupees? In the past even lawyers rendered their services free of charge. This practice is prevalent even

today. A barrister cannot file a suit for his fees, for, his is supposed to be a profession of service. The same is true of vaids. To which student, boy or girl, can I say that the wealth of learning is meant for service? And that too in Sind? Here they try to imitate the Sahibs and the Parsis. When I saw the girls during my first visit to Sind I wondered how there were so many Parsi girls around. Later on I came to know that they belonged to the Amil class. I had come in contact with the Sindhis in South Africa. But I had no occasion to know Sindhi women since they never brought their women with them. I saw Sindhi women only when I came to Sind. I was familiar with the name 'bhai-bandh'. But I was rather scared by the name 'Amil'. I wondered what kind of people they would be. When I saw the Amils I found them exactly like the Sahibs. Let no one be under the impression that I am running down the Sahibs. It is only proper Sahibs should appear like Sahibs. If others try to imitate the Sahibs they would meet the fate of the jackdaw who posed as a peacock in *Aesop's Fables*. A crow is all right as it is but appears ridiculous when it forgets itself and imitates someone else. Thus, how nice would it be if we confine ourselves to the Indian way of living. It was not Dadabhai but Lord Curzon who said that the annual per capita income in India was Rs. 40. This average includes the income of the millionaires also. This means that 30 million have no income at all. They sustain themselves by begging and eat only the crumbs of bread they get. How should we live in a country which is so poor? We will find that we are not wealthy enough to live like Sahibs if we look at our average per capita income. We must realize that we can look well-clad only if we wear khadi. If the girls are keen on silk saris and laces they would be at the mercy of the boys. Here, the boys accept the brides only if they bring thousands of rupees and with this money they want to go to Oxford to get degrees.

The very fact that you have invited me and are presenting me a purse implies your pledge that you would work for the Harijans. If that is not true and you want to exonerate yourselves by giving money, then that money is worthless. This work cannot be accomplished by money alone. You must give your heart along with money. Money alone will achieve nothing if your heart is not willing. Have you taken a vow of such service? If you have done so, I will tell you what to do. You would become humble and simple. And you would go to the Harijan children and treat them as your own. These children, their bodies, their noses and their mouths are so full of dirt and they stink so much that you can go to them only in simple dress.

If you wish to work in India and among the Harijans, you have to do it with humility and without being proud of your learning—only then can you succeed. I have visited seven or eight Harijan colonies in Karachi. Two or three of these places were quite good. I would like to congratulate the people of Karachi on that. But there are two or three other places where you would never stay. The huts there are on the point of collapsing. There is no light and no sun. The sun can be rarely seen from there. People are living under great hardships. Those people approached me and requested me to arrange for houses for them. You can do a lot of work if you go among such people. I do not suggest that you should give up your studies and go there. You should do this work in your spare time. Dr. Dutt, the Principal of the Forman Christian College of Lahore, has written to me that some boys from his college go and do Harijan work every day. I was delighted to read the report of the work done by the students of the Agra College. The Principal of that college also does the same work and sends me a report. The students of the Dehra Dun College devote their vacation to this work. Those boys asked me as to what they should do about the problem of the left-over food. I wrote[1] to them it was a sin to give our left-over food to the sweepers and it should be stopped and they stopped it. The sweepers then said that they must have the left-overs. Just money would not be enough. We have got to serve the sweepers even if they persist in bad habits.

How is such service possible? Only a person with a pure heart and good faith can take up this work. It cannot be done by merely making the Harijans conscious of their economic conditions. Dr. Ambedkar is such an intelligent and clever lawyer that he puts to shame many others. He is able to touch the hearts of many people by his sharp intelligence. The magnitude of his sacrifice is great. He is absorbed in his own work. He leads a simple life. He is capable of earning one to two thousand rupees every month. He is also in a position to settle down in Europe if he so desires. But he doesn't want to stay there. He is only concerned about the welfare of the Harijans. But what is the condition of even a man like him in our society today? He says: "If I go to Poona to attend the Assembly session, I have to stay in a hotel and spend the entire amount of the daily allowance of Rs. 10, whereas the others can stay with their friends and save that money. There is no Hindu family in Poona which would accept me as

[1] *Vide* "Students and Vacation"

a colleague or a friend." Whose shame is this? How can one who has been put to such treatment be won over? At the same time we have to touch the heart of Shankaracharya. Those two are poles apart. How can they be brought together? We stand between these two. Would we be able to impress them by our learning? What would I do if Ambedkar says, 'You are traitors; I shall follow the path of violence'? I would have to bend my head and say: 'Here is my neck for your sword. I must expiate for the sins of my ancestors.' Again, should I go before Shankaracharya and recite the Vedas? He would say: 'You have no right to recite the Vedas.' But, surely, he cannot say that I am not entitled to make any sacrifice, or be humble? Hence, we have to win over both of them with our sacrifice and tolerance.

You had the portrait of the late Vithalbhai unveiled by me. But what good has it done to you? Your Principal said that Vithalbhai was one of the greatest servants of India. There is no doubt about it. No one can deny the work he did in the Bombay Municipal Corporation, the Bombay Legislative Assembly and the Central Legislative Assembly. His courage, his ability, his sacrifice were second to none. Moreover, he presided over the [Central] Legislative Assembly like a *rishi.* No one could surpass him in simplicity. He was a scholar and a great barrister. Had he been corrupt, he would have made lakhs of rupees. But he did not have much money. He used to send me a large portion of the salary he received as the President of the Central Legislative Assembly. It was a fairly large sum and the interest from it is added to it. I have not yet been able to decide how best I can use it. You have made me unveil today the portrait of such a person. But having done that you cannot claim that you have, thereby, discharged your debt to Vithalbhai. He had accepted the Harijans as his own people and used to mix with them. He was present in the Harijan colony at Godhra when the first Harijan meeting was held there. I did not recognize him at first, because he was dressed like an ascetic. He did not feel that being a barrister it was beneath his dignity to visit the Harijan colony.

I have laid down for you the conditions for doing Harijan work. I suggested to you how to put your education to the best use. I also told you that you must keep away from the evil custom of taking and giving [dowry]. No matter how many progressive boys and girls there may be in Sind, I would say that that is meaningless and the dust

would remain dust[1] so long as there is a single young man who is a victim of this bad custom. You have to wear khadi if you wish to serve *Daridranarayana*. May God grant you good sense and may you turn out to be worthy servants of India.[2]

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 22-7-1934

195. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

KARACHI,
July 11, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

These days I cannot write to you when I propose to do so. I commenced this letter at 5.30 a.m. after breakfast. Just then a Parsi lady came in with her 15-year-old daughter. The latter has won the first place in tennis in the whole of India, but she has now lost interest in worldly things. Her interest now is all in religion. She, therefore, urged her mother to bring her to see me. She gave ten rupees for the Harijan Fund and has now left after obtaining my autograph.

Please do not be unhappy at the news of my fast. It is absolutely necessary. Large crowds come to the meetings and sanatanists are on the war-path. People do not tolerate their conduct and, therefore, trouble is bound to follow. People will not listen to mere exhortations. One can convey one's message to vast masses of people only by fasting. Crowds at the meetings are larger than ever before and it is very difficult to control them. Seven days will pass without any difficulty. Please don't worry in the least. My health is perfectly all right. In spite of heavy pressure of work, the blood-pressure remains round about 150. That should be considered very good. The weight is 104. I shall be happy if the rest of the tour is completed without further trouble. August will be taken up by the fast and the gradual return to normal diet. After that as God wills.

I must get a detailed report about your health. I am writing to Dahyabhai to send me one.[3]

[1] A Gujarati saying which means : 'There will be no improvement.'

[2] After the speech, an auction of rings and bangles given by women students of the college fetched a considerable amount.

[3] *Vide* the following item.

I learnt yesterday about Mani having been released. Mahadev and Pyarelal will join me at Lahore. That will increase the size of the party. Kakasaheb has joined it at Hyderabad. It is quite desirable that all three of them should be with me at present. Narahari will not be coming. If I can stay at a fixed place, I can meet everybody. Let God's will prevail.

Ba keeps good health. She manages to secure the food that she needs. At any rate, in such matters nothing is likely to escape Thakkar Bapa's attention.

Ramadas's trouble is mental, and mental illness cannot but have an effect on the body. At present he is following. . . 's[1] advice. He has been considerably reduced. The fact that he has three children also worries him. What is ordained will happen. Devdas's Lakshmi keeps fairly good health.

I had long discussion with . . .[2] and others. Just now they are not likely to listen to any advice. The new wind is intoxicating beyond measure. They will come to their senses only when that intoxication has subsided. Swami parted from us at Viramgam. He will now take up constructive work in the suburbs.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 110-1

196. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

KARACHI,
July 11, 1934

CHI. DAHYABHAI,

Let me have detailed news about Vallabhbhai's health[3] by return of post.

[1] The names are omitted in the source.
[2] *ibid*
[3] He was released from the Nasik Jail on July 14, 1934 on grounds of health.

Ask Manibehn to write to me in detail about her health.[1] Mahadev of course will bring all news.[2]

I hope you are doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

DAHYABHAI VALLABHBHAI PATEL
RAMNIVAS, PAREKH STREET, BOMBAY 4

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 160

197. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

July 11, 1934

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

I got your letter[3]. I went through your article[4] with as much attention as I could command in this excitement. I found the last paragraph against the spirit of peace. I have, therefore, omitted it and concluded thearticle with two new sentences. [The new sentences are :]

Whether this consummation can be reached through the Parliam-entary effort remains to be seen. Its success will largely

[1] Manibehn Patel was released from the Belgaum Jail on July 8, 1934.

[2] Mahadev Desai was released from the Belgaum Jail on July 9, 1934.

[3] Dated July 7, 1934

[4] This was entitled, "Our objective : A Constituent Assembly". The last two paragraphs of the article read : "Thus the Constituent Assembly has come to play an important part in modern political life. The Congress stands for such an Assembly, for, it alone can be the symbol of India's freedom and the source of her people's strength. Through it India hopes to attain the dignity of an enfranchised nation, fashion its will to self-determination and find its own soul to express it through fundamental laws.

"Congressmen will fight the forthcoming elections to the Legislative Assembly on the issue of Constituent Assembly. They will have nothing to do with Simon Commission pretending to sit in judgment over our ability to govern ourselves. They will have no more to do with Round Tables where nominees of Government speak the language of patriots and follow in the footsteps of flunkeys. They will aim at educating public opinion on the question of the Constituent Assembly. And in the Assembly they will solely work to create a situation whereby an Indian Constituent Assembly would become an accomplished fact. The path to such a goal does not necessarily lie through bloodshed. It often lies through a determined bloodless con-flict leading to a treaty between two nations which have learnt to respect each other."

depend on the verdict of the voters.[1]

If you approve of these changes, you may adopt them and use the article.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 7546. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi. Also *Pilgrimage to Freedom,* p. 376

198. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

KARACHI,
July 11, 1944

MATHURADAS
74 WALKESHWAR RD.
BOMBAY

APPEAL BAPA AND IMPLIED CONDEMNATION WHOLLY UNJUSTIFIED. BAPA DOING EVERYTHING HUMANLY POSSIBLE.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

199. INTERVIEW TO SIND JOURNALISTS[2]

KARACHI,
July 11, 1934

Mr. Punniah[3] at the outset said that the reasons adduced for embarking on his new fast were not convincing and that he should not undertake another fiery ordeal close on the heels of a strenous Harijan tour. Gandhiji replied :

The movement is of tremendous importance. Nothing but a drastic measure like fasting can meet the situation. You can influence the mass mind not through speeches or writings but only by something which is most well understood by the masses, that is suffering, and the most acceptable method is that of fasting. My

[1] These two sentences are reproduced from *Pilgrimage to Freedom.*
[2] The source had reproduced the interview from *Sind Observer.*
[3] Editor, *Sind Observer,* and President of Sind Journalists' Association

repeated experience here and in South Africa has been that, when well applied, it has been the most infallible remedy. My lot has been cast with the masses, and I have always to take work from and through them. The only language they understand is the language of the heart, and fasting when it is utterly unselfish is the language of the heart.

Gandhiji was acquainted with the news that the Bombay Congress circles viewed with alarm his contemplated fast and Congress friends were of opinion that the strain would be too much. Gandhiji smilingly answered :

I have no such fears, and physically speaking a fast after an exhaustive tour can only benefit the person who has undertaken the tour.

But then there is the risk.

Of course, I am risking. I am not taking this fast for its physical effect. Physically speaking, there is some kind of risk, because my body does not require a fasting cure. Any fast must require some risk, otherwise it has no meaning. It must involve torture of the flesh.

The decision is irrevocable. I announced[1] at the Ajmer meeting that I would undertake some sort of penance. The announcement was long overdue. I reasoned with myself and with my friends and then came to the deliberate conclusion that fasting was the only penance that I should make. Then the question was that of duration. I would have undertaken a longer fast. I do not want to produce any unnecessary shocks, and therefore I did not undertake the maximum period. Friends who at the present moment are physically near me have realized the necessity of the fast.

Does it include also Kasturba ?

Yes. It has been my rare fortune that in all such matters she has never worried me, never argued with me, and has allowed me to have my own way, although she has felt the distress. Therefore although she is my wife, I have not hesitated to say that she is one of the bravest women I have ever met in this respect.

Mr. Punniah then asked him about his views on the Sind separation issue, over which the people of this province were greatly agitated. Gandhiji with a significant laughter and a nod of his head remarked :

Now, you are taking me out of my depths. It is not to be answered before the 3rd of August.

But then you have been participating in political discussions.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Ajmer", 5-7-1934

Yes. But it was not for public consumption. I am glad that a reference has been now made to it, and that I got an opportunity for expressing my sorrow at the breach of confidence indulged in by some young journalists who were permitted to be present at the Congress at the Khalikdina Hall meeting. I told them that the proceedings ought not to be reported. I consider that it is a breach of confidence to have reported unauthorized statements, and I felt that those who broke that promise had not observed the fundamental etiquette of journalism and it was gross impropriety. I have a fairly high notion of the journalistic profession.

Has not the Harijan movement estranged the community for natinal politics ?

No. Not in the slightest degree. Because, some people have used this movement as a cloak to divert the mind of the people from real politics. As it is well known, I don't believe in watertight compartments. Politics, religion, social reform, economic uplift all these form parts of a whole.

Answering critics who are of the view that Council-entry was a concession to weakness and that in his heart of hearts Gandhiji had no faith in such a programme, Gandhiji said;

I have no such superiority complex. It is not a concession to weakness. It is a concession to hard facts. That I have myself no faith in the Council programme in terms of swaraj is a different matter. I should be sorry that those who have faith in council-entry were by any act of mine prevented from acting according to their faith. It was, therefore, a matter of pleasure for me to help those congressmen who had faith in Council-entry programme to follow out their policy.

The talk then turned to the Communal Award. Asked what course he would adopt at the Benares meeting of the Congress Working Committee, Gandhiji said :

Pandit Malaviya, Bapu Aney and others have felt aggrieved over the Working Committee resolution. For my part I have seen nothing to alter my view. But I would, consistently with my belief in the correctness of the Working Committee resolution, go any length to retain the valuable co-operation of Panditji and other friends. The more I think of the Working Committee resolution, the more I think that for the Congress it is the only correct attitude possible.

Mr. Punniah said that the bomb of fast was hurled in a country which was already apprehensive that unless Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel were released he may court jail again after 3rd August. The public wanted an assurance that he would not go to jail again as there was a lot of

important national work to be attended to.

I honestly say that it is a matter not in my hands at all. I don't thereby mean to say that it is in the hands of the Government, though it would be true to a certain extent if I said so. However, at the presentmoment, what I wish to say is that it is surely in the hands of God. I have no fixed notions of what I should do after the fast and the convalescence after it is over. You should believe me implicitly when I say that I should be guided by he inner voice.

To a question from a journalist he replied :

My impressions of the Sind tour have been very happy. I should have been happier if I could beg more money.[1]

I do not want to rob you of what little you get. At least give me your pencils.

The Tribune, 13-7-1934 and 15-7-1934

200. SPEECH AT PARSIS' MEETING, KARACHI[2]

July 11, 1934

Whenever I come to you I do not at all feel that I am a guest, but amidst Parsis I am amidst members of my own family. My close relations with the Parsis are of long standing. It is not as if these relations began with me. I have inherited them from my elders. My father's personal friends included many Parsis. I have accepted money from you. But you have been giving away money to all the world. You are known as donors of the first order. You have received this certificate not from a Parsi but from an English writer. You have fully earned that certificate. But you have given me something more than money. I have been able to steal your hearts. I have always felt that I have a place in the hearts of the Parsis. Even if I am invited to a Parsi meeting or family out of courtesy, I would make it a point to attend it. I am and I have always been confident that any time I want some public service from you, I shall be able to get it. Hence, I could not have declined your invitation this time. Bhai Sidhva[3] has already explained to you that my physical and mental condition does not permit me to attend any meetings. I do not like to go out anywhere. I

[1] What follows is reproduced from *The Tribune*, 13-7-1934, which had reported that a sum of Rs. 30 was collected on the spot and presented to Gandhiji.

[2] The meeting was held at Jahangir Rajkotwala Gardens. This appeared under the title: "To the Parsis of Karachi".

[3] R. K. Sidhva, Secretary, Parsi Rajkiya Mandal. He gave an account of the activites of the Mandal.

prefer to do my work sitting at home. If there is an occasion to go anywhere on foot I would like to walk from village to village spreading my message through conversation and that would give me enough satisfaction. But I could not decline your invitation.

After saying this much, let me come to the work I want you to do. The Chairman has given you some idea about it. The fact that from the activities going on here he selected only two suggests that I am going to ask for those very things from you—khadi and prohibition. You must understand what these two things mean. You have got into the habit of giving away money as donation, and so, you are sure to give it. But when something becomes a matter of habit it loses its virtue. If a man always speaks the truth it is not a trait cultivated in childhood but his inborn nature. It is in your nature to give away money. It would be a novel thing if you do something more. That is why when I came to you last time I told you that if you wished to make some tangible sacrifice, you must give up your fondness for city life. Your population throughout the world is of about one lakh. Out of this the majority is in India and that too mainly in Bombay and Gujarat. You do business worth millions of rupees and naturally you have become one with the cities. One can see your impact very much in Bombay and Karachi. But what about the villages? Your impact does not reach the villages. And it is quite evident that it is not felt there. If the Parsis scatter themselves in seven lakh villages they would be completely lost, for, there would be one Parsi for every seven villages. Moreover, this population of one lakh includes men, women and children. Hence, you cannot reach all the villages. But you can certainly influence them [through supporting khadi].

The khadi which the villagers produce is meant not only for the Hindus and Muslims but also for the Parsis. Hence you can reach and influence the villages by using the khadi produced there. You know that men and women in Utkal walk four to five miles in the hope of obtaining rice worth one pice or some work. Just think of thier plight. I have received a letter from Utkal today in which it is said that it is said that it is possible to do a lot of khadi work there; but from where to get the workers? And, who would use that khadi? I am at least having a loin-cloth. Those men in Utkal do not have even that. What they are wearing cannot be called a loin-cloth. They are merely rags. How can these people bathe? They must at least have a change of clothes after their bath. They have to carry on with just one loin-cloth.

Millions of people live in such conditions. If I can provide them work for a pice, they would be able to get something at any rate. In Utkal I met ten thousand weavers. They told me that nobody bought the cloth they had woven. Those weavers had been weaving mill yarn. I had to tell them that I would become their customer if they would weave khadi out of hand-spun yarn. Moreover they would have to spin themselves. What charity can you give when conditions of such poverty and starvation prevail and where people are ready to work for a pice and ask for so little? They cannot fill their stomachs with cash and they would become invalids. How can one give charity to anyone who is able to work? He can be given charity only in terms of work. Hence I told them that they must work and take their wages and buy cheap rice. We can even give them that rice at subsidized price. So much can be and has been done. Many of them, therefore, have not accepted alms and have taken up work. I want such pure charity from you. You have given money and will give more. But I would not be satisfied with that much. I would be satisfied only if you would serve *Daridranarayana*. They would not come to ask for alms. You should provide them with work.

What work can be provided for millions of men? There should be some home industry for them. That industry can only be the spinning-wheel. And it can thrive on if you would buy the khadi made by the millions. If you visit the local Khadi Bhandar you would get any type of khadi, in any colour and of a fine texture. No Parsi woman would be able to say that she cannot get the type of khadi that she would like to have or would suit her. If you have forgotten or do not know it, let me tell you that there are 75 Parsi women in Bombay who maintain themselves by doing khadi embroidery. Dadabhoy's granddaughters have engaged them for that work. Mithubehn Petit also does similar work. She has gone to the villages. In Bombay the women earn [daliy] wages of one, two and even three rupees out of this kind of work.

These women print designs and embroider khadi and thereby make it acceptable to the women who are fond of these things. You can help these women. Bhai Sidhva has, while talking about khadi, stated that you women buy not foreign cloth but swadeshi mill cloth. You only fill the coffers of the millonaires. I have not come here to beg on behalf of the millionaires, but I ask for donations on behalf of *Daridranarayana*. And that too not donations in the form of money. You must appreciate the craftsmanship of the poor. Adorn yourselves

by wearing the khadi made by them.

Liquor was another thing that Bhai Sidhva mentioned. I was very much delighted when I learnt from your report that 80 per cent of you had given up liquor. But I heard there that this 80 per cent applies to the occasions of marriage and *navjot*[1] when liquor is not served. I had thought that it had stopped even in private homes. I would not be satisfied if it has not gone from homes. Still, whatever has happened is a good thing. But the work would be complete only when the evil of drink has disappeared from homes. Some Parsis tell me that toddy does one good rather than harm. Some may even say that the proportion of alcohol is more in whisky and less in toddy and lesser still if the toddy is fresh. That way even those who take beer fool themselves. I have seen drunkenness among people who take both these. It is not as if those who do not drink toddy are unhealthy and those who take it do not have to go to the doctors. I have seen a whole array of medicine bottles in the houses of some Parsi friends who are habitual toddy drinkers. So I request the Parsis and would go on requesting them till I die that they must give up this evil thing. If the Parsis in general give up liquor, those Parsis who earn their livelihood out of it would also be convinced. You are people with great enterprise. If you realize that this is not a worthy occupation, you would take up something else. I can never persuade myself to believe that the Parsi community lacks the spirit do discovery and adventure and enterprise. You are capable of finding your way where others may not.

You have given me Rs. 352 for Harijan work. In a way, I have no right to ask money from you for that work. I always ask money from you for everything. But when I take money from you for the work which is meant for the Hindus it implies something else. The direct objective of this activity is to wipe out untouchability which involves 50 million people. This is such a great corroding factor in Hinduism that it has penetrated into other fields as well and untouchability has become a widespread thing. A large number of wise Parsis come to me and say that the distinctions of high and low have always existed, and so I need not pursue this activity. I ask them: "Since when have you become such Vedantists? And when did you study the Hindu Shastras?" They might have read a few sacred books;

[1] A Parsi religious ceremony where a boy or a girl is invested with the sacred thread.

and since the Parsis have a custom of consulting astrologers, they might have heard something from them; and from that they might have come to the conclusion that the differences of high and low have existed since time immemorial. Is untouchability something that the prophet Zoroaster preached? The feeling of high and low is something Satanic. It can never be divine. The evil that is going on in the name of Hindu religion has penetrated all religions. The same religions prevailing outside India may not have even the slightest tinge of it; but it has definitely entered those religions as soon as they landed in India. It is such a dark well. The other wide implication of removing untouchability is the feeling of brotherhood amongst all religions. It does not mean doing away with the differences among religions. Just as men have different names and faces, these religions also are different. But just as men are all human in spite of their different names and forms, just as leaves of a tree though different as leaves are the same as leaves of the same tree, all religions though different are the same. We must treat all religions as equal. It is this lofty consequence of this activity that I have in mind. But for it I would not have decided to devote my life to this work. I am not such a fool that I would offer to sacrifice my life for a trifling job, go from village to village at the age of 65 and beg for two pice or even a pice.This work that I have begun not only means the liberation of 50 millions, but I have to melt the hardened hearts of the caste Hindus for their liberation. If those hearts can be melted, untouchability which has gone so deep and whose impact is so widespread can be eradicated. I do not hesitate of feel ashamed to take money from you for such a widespread activity.

I have shown you what the removal of untouchability should mean to you. I am of course taking this money you have offered; but along with it I wish to carry away the hearts of the Parsi men and women, and seek your blessings that God should grant me rapid success in this work.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 22-7-1934

201. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

July 12, 1934

CHI. MRIDULA,

I am replying to your letter in the moving train.

All similes are misleading. They can be carried only up to a point. You should have taken this view of the simile I used. I would not hesitate to admit that the Congress misled the public into a fraudulent activity. To some extent I had a hand in framing those rules. If I can have a say, I shall definitely wind up the fraud of swadeshi through the Congress. Whatever purpose that fraud had to serve has been served. Now I see that it is only doing harm. But it may well be useful to those who still do not see it as a fraudulent activity. It is merely a question of discernment. I have patience.

My blessings to Bharati, Suhrid, Nimubehn and Indu. They must be all doing well. Nothing has gone wrong with me. The body and the mind are terribly fatigued. I need sleep very badly. I am trying to have it.

You need not be alarmed by my coming fast[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11191. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

202. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 12, 1934

CHI. MIRA,

This is being written in a moving train.

I hope you duly received a note of authority on his banker. I do not know for how much it was. You will let me know your requirement in due time.

For the whole of August at least I am free. The way before me after is not at all clear and I do not worry. He will show the next step. Andrews is due on 25th August.

You will keep your health. Please know that I shall not mind if you show no visible result from your visit to England. The experience

[1] Which Gandhiji was to undertake from August 7 to August 13. For his statement on the fast, *vide* "Statement on Fast", 10-7-1934

you will gain is adequate result for me. Therefore you will not be impatient with yourself or your surroundings.

I am keeping quite well. The fatigue is there. But that is inevitable.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6191. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9757

203. INTERVIEW TO "THE TRIBUNE"[1]

July 12, 1934

Gandhiji, who was very tired, first hesitated to give any interview saying that his brain was not working owing to the fatigue from the strain of the journey; but being pressed to give a message to the people of the Punjab he said :

I wish I would get the quiet I am pining for in Lahore. The terrific noises that greeted me at every station have already shattered my nerves, which are now ill-fitted to stand such strain, nor are these noises conducive to the reception of the message of essential brotherhood I am struggling to deliver. I long for a suitable atmosphere for its delivery.

The Tribune, 14-7-1934

204. TELEGRAM TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

[Before *July 13, 1934*][2]

YOUR KIND WIRE. THE CALCUTTA VISIT IS URGENT. FRIENDS ARE ANXIOUS FOR A SETTLEMENT OF DOMESTIC QUARRELS. ALL DATES HAVE BEEN BOOKED, PRAY FORGIVE.

GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-7-1934

[1] Gandhiji was interviewed in the train by the special correspondent who travelled with him from Samasta to Lahore.

[2] The telegram, as received by the addressee, had appeared under the date-line, "Santiniketan, July 13", 1934.

205. LETTER TO UTTAMCHAND SHAH

July 13, 1934

CHI. UTTAMCHAND,

I got your letter. Just now I don't feel like criticizing you or other co-workers for what you or they do. Maybe through the present separation itself the sincere ones will come together. Anybody who earns an honest pie will certainly be doing service thus. Please remain where you are without feeling any regret and see that both of you improve your health. When the time comes, you may return. Why do you worry about my fast?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9442

206. INTERVIEW TO PROVINCIAL CONGRESS LEADERS

LAHORE,
July 13, 1934

Provincial Congress leaders including Lala Dunichand of Ambala, Raizada Hansraj and Lala Sham Lal met Gandhiji. One of the questions discussed was that of the elimination of undesirable elements from the Congress in the new scheme of re-organization. Gandhiji admitted the existence of such elements, but he could not see his way under the present constitution of the Congress to prevent such undesirable elements from becoming members of the Congress. The only way to keep such elements in check was to strengthen the better element in the Congress.

At the same time he pointed out that at the instance of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru a rule had been framed that if an office-bearer of the Congress acted in a manner prejudicial to the discipline of the Congress, he could be dealt with.

The next topic discussed was that of lack of co-operation among Congress workers and leaders. Gandhiji said that the only way in which this could be dealt with was to evolve higher character and a noble spirit of service among Congress workers.

Gandhiji was then asked how power, influence and prestige could be secured for the Congress as that alone could enable the Congress to meet the reactionary and hostile forces in the country. It was pointed out that if the country sent higher type of men to the legislatures, that would give some additional prestige and influence to the Congress. Gandhiji agreed with this, but laid emphasis on the fact that Congressmen should acquire influence and position in the Councils by dint of their service and work.

The question of employing a large contingent of paid workers for every province next came up. Gandhiji agreed with the proposal that a large number of paid workers to carry on the work of the Congress should be employed in every province; and to some extent already there were paid men in the All-India and Provincial Congress organizations, though on a small scale. Gandhiji was requested to remove the idea prevailing among the public regarding paid workers, and he said that he would write on the subject, though he had previously written on the subject.

The question of the Communal Award was also raised. It was pointed out that if the Communal Award became an accomplished fact and a Constitution based on it became legal statute, it would become extremely difficult for any future national Government to undo the mischief that it would have done by that time . Gandhiji replied that he recognized such evils in case of effect being given to the Communal Award but he saw no solution of the problem unless all parties concerned agreed to an equitable scheme.

The Tribune, 15-7-1934

207. INTERVIEW TO HARIJAN DEPUTATION

LAHORE,
July 13, 1934

That he was maturing the scheme to start an Industrial Home at Delhi for the Harijans was the information conveyed by Gandhiji to the Harijan deputation that met him this afternoon.

With reference to the suggestion that the Harijan Sangh should agitate for annulment of the Punjab Land Alienation Act, Gandhiji said that Harijan Sangh being a non-political social reform body, is unable to do anything in this respect and cannot come in conflict with the Government on such political matters.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-7-1934

208. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, LAHORE[1]

July 13, 1934

I am very grateful to all of you who have presented me with the address and the purses. That which I feared has happened. This meeting was arranged exclusively for students but the general public has come in. This is not proper. Even yesterday when I saw the huge crowd I was afraid that my car would break down on the way. On work for which a quarter of an hour was enough you wasted an hour

[1] This appeared under the title : "Knowledge for Service".

and quarter of my time. Therefore, in future, only those for whom a meeting is fixed should attend it. Service to Harijans is a religious undertaking and so it can be accomplished by penance alone. Such tasks can only be performed in a peaceful and quiet atmosphere. Perhaps this is my last tour of the Punjab, because I may not be able to come here again. Therefore, I should like to impress upon you [the importance of my message] as strongly as I can during this tour. I thank all the students who have shown interest in the task of service to Harijans.[1]

In your two addresses you have in all humility acknowledged your shortcomings. And for this I cannot thank you enough, however, much I try. Even in order to acquire knowledge, one must recognize one's ignorance and acknowledge it in all humility. That you have acknowle-dged it is a good sign. Please understand the limitations and conditions of this activity. I congratulate the students of this college who are taking part in it, and hope for their greater participation. As I told[2] the students at Karachi, this work can be carried out only by self-sacrifice, penance and suffering. Moreover, the work is to be carried on not in the cities but mainly in the villages. You say that you wish to treat Harijans as your own and that you do not discriminate against them. If this is true, do your duty towards them. It is not enough that you treat the Harijan boys on equal terms in schools and colleges.Your duty consists in going to the Harijans in the villages, treating them as your own and loving them. You will realize when you go there that they have very little knowledge about rules of sanitation. Some of them are given to drinking and carrion-eating. You have to go and convince them. How can that be done? It is not possible by going there like sahebs. Rather, you would have to go there in simplictiy and humility. In that work college education is of little use. If you carry with you the fragrance of courtesy, religious sentiment, truthfulness and abstinence, you will be able to influence them. Giving orders or feeling superior will serve no purpose. It would be done only by remaining their servants and fulfilling the conditions which I have indicated. It is enough if you can spare some time after studies.

Hinduism and the Hindu community would perish unless

[1] This paragraph is translated from *Harijan Sevak,* 20-7-1934.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Dayaram Jethamal Sind College, Karachi", 10-7-1934

untouchability is eradicated. That *adharma*[1], that blemish, that poison is so widespread and it has been with us for so long that we are not able to feel its poisonous effect. But it is corroding us. A person like me sees with his naked eye that religion is well on the path of destruction. This poison has not remained confined to the Harijans. It has of course affected the 60 millions, but it has spread to the caste Hindus as well. It has also reached the Muslim and Christian communities that come in contact with us. It is most important and essential that we wipe out the difference of high and low among us.

If we want to do that work, we have to fulfil two conditions. You tell me that you indulge in pleasures and think anxiously about examinations day and night. But you are not satisfied with what you get out of it and you are eager to improve this state of affairs. I do not wish to suggest that because you say these things you must leave your schools and colleges. But, while remaining in your schools and colleges, secure that education which is not provided there; and supplement the education imparted there. At present, the minds of the students become dull there. They can only imitate. Instead of this, they must acquire the power of independent thinking. We are born into this world not for indulging in sensuous activities but for sacrifice, for restraint. The purpose of education is that we know God and progress towards the ideal , and get closer to Him. It is the strict law of God that anyone who desires to be close to Him should renounce the world and yet be in it. This is what the first *mantra* of the *Ishopanishad* exhorts us to do. This thing is difficult and yet easy at the same time. It is easy if we believe that we have to live for service. We acquire learning not for sensuous pleasures and for earning but for *mukti*. Education is considered necessary to save ourselves from darkness, sensuous pleasures and capricious behaviour. If we understand this, we can put our learning to good use. If you understand this much, you would not be worried about examinations. You would be calm if you succeed and not be despondent if you fail.

You have said in your address that you are given to sensuous pleasures. This implies that you have given up khadi. The fact that you have given up khadi in the Punjab where it is readily available means that you have given up *Daridranarayana*, the village and the village people. Khadi is produced by the villagers. Millions of unemployed people and those who can find no other occupation are

[1] Opposite of dharma

able to earn a little by it. In my view, you have committed a grave crime by giving up khadi. You are getting education for which the villagers pay. Not every student among you pays for the education he receives. Apart from your tuition fee, there is much other expenditure incurred for you, and that money comes from the villages. You study with the help of the money from the villages, and what do you give them in return? Nothing ! Wearing khadi is the least you should do. Serve *Daridranarayana* to this extent. To label anything else than khadi as swadeshi is a false claim. By calling it swadeshi you are deceiving yourselves and the world. Save yourselves from this deception.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 29-7-1934

209. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL[1]

[*July 14, 1934*]

GET EXAMINED BY DOCTOR AND AFTER TREATMENT JOIN ME AT CAWNPOR E OR BENARES.

The Hindustan Times, 15-7-1934

210. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA[2]

LAHORE,
July 14, 1934

AM FOLLOWING DOCTORS' ADVICE.

BAPU

C. W. 7964. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

211. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

July 14, 1934

CHI. AMALA,

I am sorry you are not at peace now at Sabarmati. Will you tell me what you would like to do? It is a terrible thing for anyone to live

[1] The addressee was released on health grounds form Nasik Jail on July 14, 1934.

[2] The telegram was in reply to the addressee's of even date which read : "Most humbly submit you should not gamble with your health against doctors' advice."

under a sense of humiliation.[1] I would like you therefore to make your choice. I had hoped that you would be happy in Sabarmati. One thing you would make up your mind about. You cannot stay with me, unless I can settle down anywhere for any length of time. And you won't feel happy in Wardha in any case. You should be sure also that I do not want to drive you away from me. On the contrary I want to make you happy in so far as it is within my power.

Please do not worry about my fast. It would be all right. You simply cannot understand it and its value. You will, by and by.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

212. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

July 14, 1934

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

Have Budhabhai [and] Juthabhai taken up some additional work now? Try and remove Amalabehn's difficulties[2] if you can. Let me know if she is harassing you. I suppose you must have asked that girl to leave the Ashram. I hope Ramabehn is staying on there for the present.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4024

[1] *Vide* the following item.
[2] *Vide* also the preceding item.

213. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

July 14, 1934

CHI. RAMA,

I have not yet been able to persuade any woman [worker] to go there[1]. I am still trying. Please regard it as your dharma to stay on till somebody relieves you. Mahadev will arrive here today. I will know more after he comes.

Write to me sometimes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5365

214. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

July 14, 1934

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your letter. I see no need for your coming to Wardha, but you may come if you cannot cantrol your desire. Even if you don't feel inclined to stay in the Harijan Ashram, I think it will be worthwhile to have some experience there. But I don't insist on your adopting any particular course. All I desire is that you should do what appeals to you and that, having made your choice, you should stick to it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9403. Also C. W. 649. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

215. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

July 14, 1934

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Your letter. There is not a trace of anger behind the action taken about Ramnarayan. This affair makes a fast imperative, of this I am fully convinced. Not to undertake one would be only a sign of weakness. There is no other way than fasting to make the public

[1] Wardha Kanya Ashram

understand. I am tangibly experiencing every moment the degree of violence in people's hearts.

I got your wire and have already replied to it.[1] I am treading most carefully. The doctors are fully confident that I am harbouring no disease; and they do not want to restrain me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Dr. Bidhan's resignation may well be accepted. Write to Satisbabu. If you find it inconvenient, don't come to Calcutta. In any case we shall meet at the station.

From Hindi: C.W. 7965. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

216. SPEECH AT WOMEN STUDENTS' MEETING, LAHORE

July 14, 1934

I am grateful to you for the purses you have presented me for the service of the Harijans. One sister has presented me a garland[2] of yarn. I felt very sad when I saw this garland. It seems as if the sister who made this garland had no idea of the science of spinning. This yarn can be put to no use. As soon as yarn is spun it should be made into spools. The state of this yarn is exactly as pitiable as our condition. We are ourselves responsible for it. The self is its own friend and also its own enemy. This applies to girls, women and men equally. I have had the acquaintance of countless girls during my tours. Form the point of view of them all I am not a man but only a woman. When I was in South Africa, I had realized that if I did not serve the cause of women, all my work would remain unfinished. And perhaps this is the reason why when I go to a women's assembly, the women there think that a friend has come in their midst. I consider myself the father of thousands of girls. It has always been my endeavour to be both father and mother to girls. In this capacity I shall mention one thing to you here. Outward show and fashion is increasing among the Punjabi girls. I can see much luxury here. Although this may not be true of all, it is true of most of you. Our land is getting poorer day by day because of this destructive fashion. Our civilization too has been encouraging this luxury. If all of us fell

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to G. D. Birla", 14-7-1934

[2] It was made by stringing the cones of yarn together.

a prey to pleasure, we shall be ruined. History teaches us that nations steeped in luxury and pleasure are destroyed. It is difficult to rise from the depths of luxury. So my entreaty to you is to give up this fashion and not to indulge in luxuries and pleasures. Unfortunately, the literature taught in our schools and colleges is also tending towards these things. But it is gratifying that this literature cannot reach the crores and only a few thousand have access to it. Just as water flows downwards people given to sensual pleasures surely head for a downfall. We do not realize this but it is eating into our vitals. If you wish to save yourselves from such suicidal pleasures, this is the time. I appeal to you to be on your guard immediately.

Now for the subject of service to Harijans. I have told[1] the boys and I say the same thing to you to devote the time you can spare from studies in the service of the Harijans. In this way so much work can be accomplished. You can help a great deal in the work for the abolition of untouchability. Khaddar you must adopt. Along with it be proficient in the art of spinning. When I visited Punjab ten years ago, I saw very fine charkhas here. But I find they are not in good condition today. It is true Orissa Province is much poorer as compared to the Punjab but culture there is better than it is here. If you wish to help a poor province like Orissa please ply the charkha. Thus you will not only spend your leisure usefully but you will be free from sensual pleasures. Do devote your spare time in the service of Harijans and in spinning. You should always wear only khadi.[2]

Concluding, Mahatma Gandhi said that those who had ornaments on their persons should part with them for the Harijan cause. He knew that the Punjabi girls were not very fond of ornaments. He could take ornaments from other parts of India also. But those who wanted to offer their ornaments should send them on to him and those who could make monetary contribution should also give money for the Harijan purse.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 27-7-1934

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Students Meeting, Lahore", 13-7-1934

[2] What follows is reproduced from *The Tribune*, 16-7-1934.

217. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, LAHORE

July 14, 1934

Gandhiji in his speech thanked the women for the addresses and purses presented[3] to him. He asked the women to remove the curse of untouchability, otherwise, he said, Hinduism would die. The women of India, he said, had always protected the religion of this country and they were embodiments of renunciation.

Gandhiji then explained the meaning of untouchability to the women. They had, he said, been cherishing the feeling of high and low amongst them so long. This feeling must be removed. Unless this was removed untouchability could not go. Tulsidas had told them the essence of religion in two words. And that was this: *daya* (charity and pity) was the foundation of all religions and that *abhiman* (pride) made them feel high and low. And when *abhiman* was removed form them and they took resort to *daya,* then *abhiman* was lost and they became truly religious.

In the end Gandhiji appealed to the women to part with their ornaments and make monetary contributions for the Harijan cause. He also asked the women to cultivate the habit of simplicity and serve the *Daridranarayana,* because in that, he said, lay their welfare.

Gandhiji once more thanked the women and concluded his speech amidst constant noise and uproar.

The Tribune, 16-7-1934

218. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

July 15, 1934

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I have your letter.

I shall hold myself in readiness to see the Governor. I shall want also to see the editor of *The Statesman*. I shall therefore ask you to reserve some time for him too.

I suppose a public meeting for men and one for women will be necessary. And then there is the foundation of another wing or is it the opening ?

There is nothing wrong with me, but I have a feeling of intense mental and physical tiredness. I love to sleep whenever I get the

[1] By the members of Rashtriya Stri Samaj and other women's organizations of Lahore.

opportunity. But I do not worry. You will overhaul the system and take from me what work you choose and want.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY

CALCUTTA

Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

219. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

July 15, 1934

CHI. VIDYA

I got your letter. you are unnecessarily worrying. What does it matter if someone reads your letters? Surely you don't write anything of which you need feel ashamed? We should welcome our elders, guardians and teachers to read our letters. Of course we should see that nobody reads them without our knowledge. Since you have forbidden me, henceforward I will not send your letters to Bhai. But you should withdraw your ban.

We shall now be meeting in a few days. Don't get tired of that place.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 9587. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

220. INTERVIEW TO AKALI AND KHALSA DURBAR DEPUTATION[1]

LAHORE,

July 15, 1934

Gandhiji enquired of the deputation the cause of the retirement of Master Tara Singh from Sikh politics. Sardar Mangal Singh briefly explained the facts.

The deputationists then placed their point of view before Gandhiji regarding the Communal Award. They expressed disapproval of the non-committal policy of the Congress in the matter of Communal Award and said that the Sikhs had taken a

[1] According to the source, "About 50 Sikhs representing all progressive elements of the community" met Gandhiji at 9.15 a.m. Sardul Singh Caveeshar was also present.

vow not to submit to it. They, therefore, while supporting the Congress in all other matters, were determined to carry on their fight in the legislatures against the Communal Award and to otherwise safeguard Sikh rights. They informed Gandhiji that the Khalsa Durbar had decided to run their own candidates in the coming Assembly elections.

Gandhiji, who listened to the viewpoint of the Sikhs with attention, replying, explained the Congress position and said that the rejection of the White Paper meant the rejection and the lapse of the Communal Award. He added that no constitution would be acceptable to the Congress which did not satisfy the Sikhs. Similarly the Congress would not reject what the Mussalmans wanted nor could it accept what the Hindus or Sikhs rejected. Therefore if there was no Congress candidate among Sikhs, a Congress voter with conscientious scruples would abstain from voting. But if there was an otherwise safe candidate against a reactionary, he would be free to use his vote to defeat the out-and-out reactionary.

The deputationists at this stage drew the attention of Gandhiji to the necessity of issuing proper instructions to the anti-untouchability workers to restrict themselves to Harijan uplift work and to refrain from making it a religious conversion propaganda. This was needed, they said, because in the Punjab there were so-called untouchables who professed Sikh faith.

Gandhiji said that he had numerous complaints against Sikhs to the effect that they were tempting Hindu Harijans to reject Hinduism and to become Sikhs. If this was the case it was certainly reprehensible. For his part he did not believe in coversion propaganda and it was no part of the Harijan Sevak Sangh's plan.

The Tribune, 18-7-1934

221. INTERVIEW TO DEPUTATION OF PUNJAB HINDUS AND SIKHS [1]

July 15, 1934

It is reported that Mahatma Gandhi admitted that an injustice had been done to the Hindus and the Sikhs, but he wanted to know a practical scheme by which the Communal Award could be scrapped or modified. The present policy of the Congress was something inevitable in the circumstances. The policy of the Congress was to accept any settlement that was agreed by all communities, even if it fell short of the

[1] The source had reported : "The deputation, which was led by Raja Narendranath, waited on Gandhiji in the afternoon to convey to him the resentment of the Hindus and the Sikhs of the Punjab in respect of the non-committal policy of the Congress about the Communal Award."

national ideal.

Mahatma Gandhi assured the deputation that he was thinking of the matter night and day and had come to the conclusion that the only way to modify the Award was to get the White Paper scrapped.

The *Hindustan* Times, 16-7-1934

222. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, LAHORE[1]

July 15, 1934

Ever since I first came to the Punjab, the Punjabis have showered their love on me. They have always met me in their thousands but this time their numbers have been much greater than before, so much so the D. A. V. College Hostel ground in unable to accommodate this vast assembly. To me this phenomenon is very satisfactory; for I have not come today with a political mission but for a mission which is purely religious and which I have been carrying on in a purely religious spirit. The vast numbers that attend the meetings are to me a sign that it will be well with both the country and Hinduism. There is no end to our difficulties but the vast meetings that I have been addressing leave no doubt in my mind that we shall be able to remove untouchability root and branch. I have seen during my tour that thousands have attended the morning prayer; the sight that I witnessed at this morning's prayer would have moved anyone and would have inspired faith even in an atheist. They were about 10,000 in number but pin-drop silence prevailed and they sat with rapt attention for about 25 minutes and I presume they thought of God alone in those moments. All these experiences have deepened my faith in God and I feel that I am but an instrument in His hand. He seems to have ordained that untouchability, which held its sway over Hindu society for hundreds of years, should now be abolished. He seems to be bringing about a transformation in the hearts of *savarna* Hindus. This vast meeting is a testimony to that transformation.

The object of this movement is neither to score a victory over any other community nor to increase the number of Hindus. It is

[1] The source had reported that this was a summary of Gandhiji's speech obtained from his secretary by one of its representatives. Gandhiji was inaudible at the meeting.

essentially a movement of self-purification and of ridding Hinduism of the blot of untouchability. I see that you are unable to sit quiet and probably you are not satisfied with seeing me for these few minutes. I tell you, however, that I am made of common clay as much as you are and you will be able to gain nothing by merely seeing me. You will gain much only if you act up to what I say.

I repeat what I have said from a thousand platforms that, if we did not remove untouchability, both Hinduism and Hindus would perish.

The Tribune, 18-7-1934

223. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

July 16, 1934

DEAR MAULANA SAHEB,

I have your letter. Of course I shall gladly see the Governor during my stay in Calcutta and do whatever is possible. Dr. Bidhan wrote to me two days ago.

The fast had to come. Such was God's will. So long as He desires service from me, I shall be unhurt.

I reach there 19th morning.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD
19-A BALLYGUNJ CIRCULAR ROAD
CALCUTTA

Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

224. LETTER TO BISHOP OF CALCUTTA

LAHORE,
July 16, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your kind letter. So long as He wants me to live, nothing can harm me. This faith has found root firm in me.

Whether I have opposed the Government or the popular will, I have believed in God's guidance.

After all I am going to Calcutta tomorrow. I know I shall miss you there.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

THE METROPOLITAN BISHOP OF CALCUTTA
THE CHURCH IMPERIAL CLUB
75 VICTORIA STREET
WESTMINSTER, LONDON, S. W. 1

Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

225. LETTER TO DILIP KUMAR ROY

July 16, 1934

MY DEAR DILIP,

I have your letter and enclosures. The letter came into my hands only yesterday. It went first to Bombay and then by oversight remained with one of my helpers for some days.

My difficulty is fundamental. I do not believe that my present activity is less conducive to self-realization or merger in the Divine than abstention would be. Sannyasa is not cessation of all physical activity. It means to me cessation of all activity, mental or physical that is selfish. If I could be convinced that cessation is the better way for me, I should adopt it at once.

I am no judge of poetry. Of what use, therefore, can be any opinion of mine on your poems ! I have really no opinion to offer. But now Mahadev is free. He is himself a poet. And he will, I doubt not, give you his opinion after I have explained the thing to him.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SRI DILIP KUMAR ROY
SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM
PONDICHERRY

Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

226. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

LAHORE,
July 16, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I never expected that you would be released. The Government and we both have been following our own ways independently of each other. That is good in a way. People will know what both of us mean. After you have studied the whole situation I will ask for your view as an impartial judge. You may seem to agree out of loyalty as a co-worker, but the truth is that the habit of agreeing with all that I do is not likely to have been cured by a few years of imprisonment.

I like your decision to come only after you have got your nose trouble completely cured. Your presence at Benares is certainly necessary, but we will do without you if the condition of your nose does not permit you to come.

It wouldn't have been advisable to refuse to visit . . .[1]. Our workers also desired that I should go. He will gain nothing by my visit. It is true, however, that the atmosphere at Ajmer and elsewhere is full of violence. You will hear echoes of it even there.

I found Lalnath to be the best man in that part. He is brave, too. He always kept his word. But of course he did criticize and abuse me. Everydbody has a right to do that. This is not the first time that he was assaulted. His men also have been assaulted. But he has never lodged a complaint with the police. Generally he and his men do not even ask for police protection. Moreover, he has good control over his men. If I had not kept strict control over our workers, Lalnath and his men would have sustained serious injuries and our cause would have suffered. Only today I received a letter from somebody who says he had played a part in inciting people against Lalnath. He wants to know what he should do to atone for his lapse. He is one of our best workers. He is a writer and a poet. Tell me now, was I not right in announcing a fast? Whom should I consult in such matters? And where? If a person is bitten by a snake, would a physician who knows the remedy argue about its merits with other people or would he apply it straightaway? Surely it can give me no pleasure to take such steps without consulting co-workers. But I find myself helpless in such cases. Ghanshyamdas had wired to me requesting that he should be

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

consulted before I took any decision. I, therefore, wrote[1] to him. He left the decision to me. Devdas suggested a fourday fast. Jairamdas[2] felt that a fast was necessary, and advised that, if I did fast, it should not be for a period of less than seven days. Bapa[3] did not oppose the idea. As for Chandrashankar, poor man, how could he oppose me? Kaka[4] couldn't find any argument to oppose me. The great task on which we have embarked cannot be accomplished without undertaking such fasts. There is no limit to the awakening among the people.

In Lahore and other places I see crowds such as I have never seen before.

I do feel convinced about one thing. You should force me to stop travelling by rail and car, let me stay at one place and tour on foot—if, that is, I am out of jail—which I shall be during August.[5] After that Rama alone knows.

Andrews will arrive here on the 25th. Swami will give you enough news and Chandrashankar also will write.

I am going to Calcutta, purely for cleaning our house there. But I had a letter from Dr. Bidhan Roy telling me that most probably I would have to see the Governor. That possibility was certainly there. Agatha and others had strongly pressed for a meeting. Now it seems to have become a certainty. The discussion will be exclusively about the terrorism in Bengal. More after the meeting. And since Mahadev is with me now, you will get all the news you want.

Mani[6] should get very strong again. This time, however, her health does seem to have suffered fairly. She is only putting on a brave face. I am not writing to her separately today.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
SHRIRAM MANSION
SANDHURST ROAD, BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 112-4

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 14-7-1934

[2] Jairamdas Doulatram

[3] A. V. Thakkar

[4] D. B. Kalelkar

[5] Gandhiji proposed to go on a week's fast from August 7; *vide* "Statement of Fast", 10-7-1934

[6] Manibehn Patel

227. LETTER TO PADMA

[*July 16, 1934*][1]

CHI. PADMA,

What kind of a girl you are! You are lazy and don't write to me but expect me nevertheless to write to you. Even so, I would have certainly written. But I have no time. I got your letter today and I am replying to you. It is good that you kept good health even in the heat. Don't let your handwriting deteriorate. . .[2].

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 6148. Also C. W. 3504. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

228. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

July 16, 1934

BHAI DAHYABHAI,

I had got your article about impolite names. I have been wanting to write on the subject. At present I don't get even a single moment. I cannot write anything for *Harijan* or *Harijanbandhu*. But I will certai-nly write about impolite names. I hope you do spin.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. DAHAYABHAI MANORDAS PATEL

DHOLKA

From Gujarati: C. W. 2704. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

[1] From the G. N. Register

[2] The rest of the letter is illegible in the source.

229. LETTER TO GOPABANDHU CHOWDHRY

July 16, 1934

BHAI GOPABANDHUBABU,

I have your letters. It is good that you have resolved to go to the countryside. I have not been able to read all about the workers. I shall write when I have done it.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI GOPABANDHU CHOWDHRY
CHANDNI CHOWK
CUTTACK

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2781

230. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

July 17, 1934

DEAR SISTER,

I thank you for your letter enclosing cheque for £ 54-4-3 for the Bihar earthquake relief on behalf of the Indian Medical Association of Great Britain. I am forwarding it to Rajendrababu with instructions to send an acknowledgment to Dr. Bhandari.

I know your concern about me. God will take care of me so long as He wants to use me as His instrument. I had hoped that we would meet in Lahore. We must, some day somewhere.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANOR VILLE
SIMLA W.

From a photostat: G. N. 6319. Also C. W. 3510. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur

231. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

July 17, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. I get frightened when I think of your responsibilities on the one hand and your ear-trouble on the other. Now that Vallabhbhai has been released, I expect that the burden on you will become lighter in a month or so. It will be enough if you do

the best you can without worrying about anything. Do what you can about Bihar. There are things which we cannot improve, do what we will. I will explain this when we meet. Only you can bring about some improvement, if at all, in Mahendrababu's management. I cannot understand the problems. I shall be able to understand the account relating to Bihar.

I read the article criticizing the Ashram. No reply is necessary. If we can safeguard the Ashram, everything will be well. We will solve the problem. You may write to Gangabehn and Prema if you wish. The chances of their coming are remote. The latter has developed new interests now. It can do no good to press anybody to come against her wishes. But now continues to write to me. He is trying to see you.

I am well. You should have no fear regarding my fast. It is clear that it is absolutely necessary.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 2936

232. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

July 17, 1934

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

Please do not worry about the fast I have to tak e up in August. God will see me through it. Don't worry about attempts on my life either. They are nothing new. I have survived such attempts so far and will survive them as long as God wills. When He wills otherwise, a mere yawn will end my life.

Ramdas doesn't keep good health. He will improve if he goes there. Can he and a vaid accompanying him get permission to go there? If it is possible, please secure it and send it here. The companion's name in Raghunandan Sharma.

I am writing this letter from Lahore. We are leaving this place today. Devdas is here. Mahadev, who has been released, Pyarelal and Kakasaheb are with me. It is, therefore, a family gathering, so to say.

I am all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4822

233. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, LAHORE[1]

July 17, 1934

I want you to keep up the practice you have now started of beginning your day's work with early morning prayers as you have been doing with me these few days. You may have them either privately in your own respective homes or congregationally in some central place in your localities. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of this prayer. When one begins the day with a devout prayer all his day's work will be informed with a spirit of purity and prayerfulness. The time for it is the early hour of the dawn when the sun, the most luminous of God's manifestations, reveals to us His witnessing presence in all that we do.

I shall tell you now one or two marks of genuine worshipper of God. One is a spirit of friendliness and brotherhood for the oppressed and the depressed. This cannot express itself better than by be friending the Harijan and you cannot befriend him in a better way than by getting off his back, so that he may no longer remain the beast of burden and the downtrodden creature that we have kept him for ages, and that he may breathe and move free.

The other mark is the service of *Daridranarayana*—India's starving millions among whom are included, of course, the Harijans, but whereas the poorest of the poor, if he is not an untouchable, may move about free wherever he pleases, even the richest Harijan may not enter a Hindu temple and use a public well. Whilst, therefore, the service of the Harijans lies in the eradication of untouchability, the service of the poor lies in enabling him to find work and to add to his scanty income. The best way to do this thing is the habitual use of khaddar and daily sacrificial spinning. If all the women of the Punjab were to make a resolve to give all their spare time to spinning, I am sure they would be able not only to clothe the whole of the Punjab but also to send out cloth to other provinces.

If you do these two things, I should unhesitatingly say that you are going nearer to God every day, provided that all that you do is

[1] The source had reported that this was ''a translation made by Mahadev Desai''.

done not for show or self-advertisement but in a spirit of service and humanity. There is a third thing which also I would declare to be the distinguishing mark of a man of prayer—the spirit of silence. The noise and the din of meetings jar on me wherever I go. You should all make a point of avoiding all bustle and noise and cultivating a spirit of orderliness and discipline. These are three out of the many implications of prayer which I want you all to bear in mind.

The Tribune, 19-7-1934

234. DISCUSSION WITH VOLUNTEERS[1]

July 17, 1934

Gandhiji, in the course of a short speech said that the volunteers spent a lot of their time in looking after his personal comforts wherever he went. They should instead look to their general duty and service of which they had taken a vow to fulfil.

Questioned, Gandhiji said he had no objection to the volunteers taking military training, but they must abstain from violence. He asked them not to use violence even if women were attacked by the mob, because he thought that women were not helpless and they were strong enough to take care of themselves.[2]

The Tribune, 19-7-1934

235. DISCUSSION WITH FRONTIER LEADERS[3]

July 17, 1934

Gandhiji has advised the fullest voluntary obedience of the law in pursuance of the Congress decision.

This, it is understood, has been definitely promised by the Frontier leaders, who are anxious to do nothing to weaken Gandhiji's hands and give Congress prestige a shock.[4]

The delegation conveyed the love and respect of the Frontier people for Mahatma, who also reciprocated his feeling of love for Frontier Pathans.

[1] Gandhiji met the volunteers in the morning at Lajpat Rai Bhavan.

[2] The report concluded : ''The women volunteers who were present supported Gandhiji's view and the meeting came to a close.''

[3] The source had reported that the Frontier Province Congressmen, representing the districts of Peshawar, Bannu, Kohat and Hazara, met Gandhiji in the morning. They were led by Pir Shahen Shah, President, Frontier Congress Committee.

[4] What follows is reproduced from *The Bombay Chronicle.*

Mahatma Gandhi expressed his desire to visit the Frontier Province and told the delegation :

I regard Frontier Gandhi, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, as dear to my heart as Devdas.

Finally, Gandhiji conveyed his message of love to the Frontier people through them and said, he could never forget them in his life and their particular difficulties and troubles were ever in his mind.

The Hindustan Times, 18-7-1934; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 18-7-1934

236. SPEECH TO PUNJAB NATIONALIST WORKERS, LAHORE

July 17, 1934

Gandhiji said it was harder to carry out their programme of work than to go to jail. He himself found it much easier to go to jail and spend a quiet time there reading his books and drinking goat's milk than to carry out a strenuous and taxing programme in the country. Gandhiji added humourously that Mrs. Gandhi had suggested to him to go to jail and have an easier time there than tire himself our with strenuous work outside.

Mahatma Gandhi added that their programme had to be worked out now and it would be wrong to think that they could wait till swaraj was achieved for completing it. He advised the workers to distribute the work among themselves and carry it out sincerely. Let truth be their motto and work would prosper. This was a time of peace and their message should be one of peace. Referring to the reception given to him at Lahore on his arrival, Gandhiji said he was slightly hurt physically by those who wanted to touch his feet. He could well meet crowds of thousands of people if there was no noise. Swaraj could not be attained by noise.

The Hindustan Times, 18-7-1934

237. SPEECH TO KHADI WORKERS,LAHORE

July 17, 1934

Addressing the khadi workers, Gandhiji described khadi as *annapurna* (the butter part of food), for, if our peasants took to spinning, they could have butter to add to their bread or rice. The other cottage industries could support thousands at the most, while khadi was an indispensable cottage industry for crores. Khadi could bring about an automatic adjustment between the supply and the demand, for the peasants would mainly produce it for themselves and their neighbours and but little transportation would be necessary. He had found out that they could have first-class, cheap

khadi, if weaver families spun the yarn to be woven by themselves. Again, if a producer of cotton wanted cloth free of cost, he had only to carry out himself all the processes from picking to cotton to weaving. This would not take the bread out of the weaver's mouth, because, if the whole of India took to khadi, they would need twice as many weavers as there were now. Khadi was the only swadeshi cloth; it was pure humbug to describe Indian mill-cloth as swadeshi in the same breath as khadi.[1]

Till now I have been very lenient but henceforward I cannot but be strict. I recruited to the Charkha Sangh even those who did not know spinning in the hope that good workers would be found only from among such people. I have now come to the conclusion that the latitude shown has been quite enough. Every worker of the Charkha Sangh must learn and become fully proficient in ginning, carding and spinning. He should be well versed in weaving also. This will greatly facilitate our work in the villages and expedite the advent of freedom.

Harijan, 3-8-1934, also *Khadi Jagat*, May 1947

238. INTERVIEW TO JOURNALISTS

LAHORE,
July 17, 1934

The journalists, who numbered between twenty and thirty, desired a message from him but Gandhiji said he was not selling goods gratis and wanted them to pay the price for a message in the shape of a contribution to the Harijan Fund. A ring came forth and then a few rupees and coppers totalling Rs. 16. . . .

Gandhiji said that . . . if they were really serious about the message they should make up Rs. 50 . . . .

A member of the staff of one of the papers present undertook to make up the balance required and remit it in the evening.

Gandhiji responded by saying that of course he did credit business and would give a message on that basis . . . . He said :

The extraordinary enthusiasm with which I was greeted at the Lahore railway station and which has been sustained throughout my five days stay in the Punjab has been a matter of great joy as it has been also a matter equally of great enthusiasm.

How I wish all this enthusiasm turned into the direction of a solid, continuous and constructive work. It behoves the Punjab leaders to harness this enthusiasm, which is running waste. It is a matter of joy also that the people, rich and poor alike,

[1] What follows is translated from the Hindi report in *Khadi Jagat*.

spontaneously came to offer their quota to the Harijan Purse Fund. To me it is sure that the donors believe in the removal of the curse of untouchability from Hinduism. Referring to morning mass prayers, Mahatma Gandhi said that there was complete silence and revered attention. That was evidently observed by vast audiences when verses were chanted. It was to him a sure sign of their heart-felt co-operation in this movement of self-purification.

Concluding, Mahatma Gandhi said that the one thing that saddened him most was the condition of the Harijans in Lahore which he thought testified to the criminal neglect by the Municipality of its most deserving employees and citizens. Mahatma Gandhi referred particularly to lighting and sanitary arrangements and want of tap-water in the Harijan quarters.

I know that Municipal finances all over India are in a bad plight. But surely its effect ought not be visited upon these most deserving and useful employees and citizens. I hope, therefore, that complaints about insufficiency of water, want of light and sanitary conveniences, will receive immediate attention. Whatever be the difficulties in the Munici-pality, surely this essential humanitarian work should not be allowed to suffer.

I have a great deal to say about the manner of living, conditions of work, and economic condition of these people, but I do not want unnecessarily to burden this message and I want the attention of the public and Municipality to be concentrated upon the grievance that is crying and capable of immediate redress.

The Hindustan Times, 18-7-1934

239. SPEECH AT GULABDEVI TUBERCULOSIS HOSPITAL, LAHORE[1]

July 17, 1934

Mahatma Gandhi said that he thanked them for having asked him to perform the ceremonies[2] . He was not surprised, he said, that the late Lalaji had wished him to perform the opening ceremony of this Hospital because of the intimate relations that he had with him. He was delighted that he could come to Lahore and take part in the opening ceremony of this Hospital.

Gandhiji said the present function put him in mind of Deshabandhu Das, who also had expressed a desire in his will that a hospital for women should be established

[1] The first and the last pragraph have been reproduced from *The Tribune*. This and the following item are extracted from ''Weekly Letter'' in *Harijan*.

[2] Of unveiling the portrait of Gulabdevi and opening of the Hospital

in Calcutta. The Chittaranjan Sevasadan was now a flourishing institution under the fostering care of Dr. Bidhan Roy. It was a remarkable coincidence that both these great Indian leaders cherished in their heart the idea of social service, especially service of women. The nation could not achieve greatness, unless our women were fitted to stand shoulder to shoulder with the men. Most of their leading men were social servants by choice and politicians only from necessity. They were powerful advocates of social reform. Everyone knew Lalaji as a great social worker, and he would have chosen social service as his life-work if had the choice. But no true servant of the people could now a days ignore politics. It was remarkable that the last wishes of Chittaranjan Das and Lalaji were centred on social service.

Those who knew Lalaji could not be surprised to learn that Lalaji had desired that preference should be given to Harijan women. There was no greater Harijan servant than Lalaji had been.

Tuberculosis hospitals were unfortunately a necessity, but Gandhiji trusted that the medical men in charge would attend to prevention no less than to the cure of the terrible scourge. The prevalence of tuberculosis in India, which was the land of perpetual sunshine, was rather inexplicable and required investigation. The medical staff of the hospital had the unique opportunity of studying the causes of tuberculosis among their patients and discovering means of prevention.

In the end, Gandhiji congratulated all who had helped to build this Hospital and hoped that they would help it with money.[1]

Harijan, 3-8-1934

240. SPEECH AT MODEL TOWN,[2] LAHORE

July 17, 1934

Referring to the rosy picture of the town drawn in the address, Gandhiji said he was sorry to learn that the picture did not seem to square with facts. A model town hardly deserved the name if it slavishly followed the bad old tradition of segregating Harijans, who did for society what every mother did for her own children. Then, again, he had heard that they lived in bad houses and were put to great hardship with regard to water. He trusted the good people of Model Town would investigate the complaint and fulfil their promise to treat Harijans on a footing of equality with themselves.

Harijan, 3-8-1934

[1] Gandhiji then declared the Hospital open amidst cheers and afterwards inspected some of the buildings.

[2] The source had reported that just before he left Lahore for Calcutta, Gandhiji attended a meeting in this suburb of Lahore and received an address of welcome and a purse from its citizens.

241. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

LAHORE,
July 17, 1934

When he was asked whether there was any hope of his abandoning the seven day's fast he has announced to begin on the 7th August, now that Pandit Lal Nath had made an appeal to him to reconsider his decision, and in the light of the statement recently made by the Secretary, Rajputana Harijan Board, Mahatma Gandhi said :

There is no possibility of abandoning the fast.

Replying to a further enquiry whether he was prescribing any penance for the Secretary of the Rajputana Harijan Board, as he had been asked by the Secretary, Mahatma Gandhi said that no penance save greater watchfulness was necessary on the part of the Secretary.

The next question was whether Mahatma Gandhi thought that his health would not be put to undue strain by this fast, following as it would his strenuous Harijan tour. The Mahatma replied that he did not anticipate any permanent injury.

Replying to an enquiry whether there was any possibility of avoiding an election fight between the Hindu Maha Sabha and the Congress and of retaining Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Aney on the Congress Parliamentary Board, Mahatma Gandhi stated :

I can only say I shall try to avoid a split.

Mahatma Gandhi had no idea of this programme after the Harijan tour and the fast.

The final question was regarding the manner in which the Harijan Fund would be spent. The Mahatma said that three-fourths would return to the source from where it came, provided it could usefully be spent there. The balance would be used for constructive work.

The Tribune, 19-7-1934

242. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[1]

July 18, 1934

With reference to Sir Samuel Hoare's reply in the Commons regarding the non-release of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Gandhiji said :

There is no reason for deferring the question till after the completion of the Harijan tour.

He was already considering it.

[1] At New Delhi station *en route* to Calcutta

Asked what penance he proposed for the volunteer who beat Pandit Lal Nath at Ajmer and who confessed the act in a letter to a newspaper, Gandhiji said that he should put his brain in order.

Replying to another question regarding Doctor Alam's resignation from the Working Committee, he said that it was due to domestic reasons.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-7-1934

243. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 19, 1934

CHI. MIRA,

Again I am writing this on the train. You must not expect long or informing letters from [me][1] . It is enough for me to send you my love from week to week. Chandrashankar does the rest effectively. And now Mahadev is free and so is Vallabhbhai. Pyarelal and Mahadev are with me, also Kaka. Jairamdas too is free but not with me. Now of the principal ones Jawaharlal and Abdul Ghaffar Khan remain.

This train is taking me to Calcutta. I am likely to see the Governor and of course Moore.

The coming fast must not disturb you. You will be surprised to learn that the news of the fast has brought to light the names of men who actually took part in the assault on the black-flag demonstrators.

I have already asked whether you had the credit note I promised.[2]

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6292. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9758

244. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 19, 1934

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got both your letters. I understand your view regarding the dairy, namely, that it should be run indpendently. If so, who should be

[1] The source has ''you''.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn"

its trustees? Shankerlal[1], Ambalalbhai[2] , Ranchhodbhai[3] and Titus? I have left out the names of persons who are likely to be imprisoned any time. We may include Chimanlal[4] also, if you wish.

I don't know what to do regarding Amalabehn. Can you accommodate her in Rajkot? She is not likely to remain even at Wardha for long. I don't know on whom I should place this burden. After all, how long am I likely to remain in Wardha? If I am not arrested, I will live not at Wardha but somewhere in Orissa or Bengal or the Frontier Province. I should be written off now so far as routine work is concerned.

I hope everything is going well. Has Jamnadas's health improved? What is Keshu doing? We have to provide the monthly expenses of Santok, Keshu and Radha. It is for you to decide what they should be paid. Fix any sum that you think proper. Relieve Radha of her worries. Santok should do some work there, either teaching the children or any other work that she can do. Where does she live? Where does Keshu live? I am placing this burden on you, but I am helpless. I can't decide anything from here. You should decide objectively and do what is right with firmness of mind. If you think it necessary, you may consult me.

How is Kusum doing? It is rather strange that Prema has not written a single letter. Sushila was to write to me about herself, but she has not written so far.

I am writing this in the train on my way to Calcutta.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

It may be assumed that the Ashram khadi is given away to the Spinner's Association. Tell Shankerlal this.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U. / I. Also C. W. 8405. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Shankerlal Banker
[2] Ambalal Sarabhai
[3] Ranchhodlal Amritlal Shodhan
[4] Chimanlal Shah

245. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

July 19, 1934

CHI. PREMA,

I am unhappy that, despite your promise, you have not written to me. I had hoped that you would write and let me know what your plans for the future were. May I still hope for it?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10358. Also C. W. 6795. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

246. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

July 19, 1934

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your letter. Please overcome your desire, born of your attachment, to stay with me. Count me as a useless man. The Ashram has been broken up and understand that it cannot be revived now. I shall be wandering from place to place or be in a prison. I shall be staying in Wardha only because of the fast. What will you do there at that time? There you have settled down to some useful work. Stay there and learn and teach what you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9574. Also C. W. 6546. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

247. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

CALCUTTA,
July 19, 1934

It was a matter of great grief to me that I was not able to alight at Howrah Station. I had not understood that the public knew that I would alight at Howrah Station. As a matter of fact, I was to be taken away at Burdwan but finally I was taken away from Belur Station,

[1] The source had reported that Gandhiji made this statement ''immediately after his arrival in Calcutta''.

thanks to the courtesy of the Railway authorities. Had I known that I was expected by the public at Howrah Station I would have insisted on reaching there.

I was also distressed to learn that some people were arrested for fear of their molesting me or causing disturbance. I would request the police authorities to discharge them. My life is held in trust by the public and it is at their disposal and has been since I have entered upon public life. I fully realize that the police have their own duty to perform. Nevertheless I would ask them to release those people who have been arrested, if it is at all possible to do so.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 20-7-1934.

248. IN PRAISE OF WALKING

In the middle of the railway and the motor-car to which fellow-workers have dragged me again from the slow but steady and fruitful quiet walks in Orissa, it is pleasant to receive reflections like the following :

> Your pilgrimage makes my heart sing. It is a *yajna* (sacrifice) worthy of those for whom you perfom it. Forgive my presumption! But I feel all aglow when I think of it. Somehow your rushing about in a motor-car in the cause of Harijans seemed to be queer, incongruous. I see this as a wholly spiritual problem, and that you should approach it *on foot*, as a true pilgrim, satisfies me through and through like perfect music, or a magnificent sunset. So, I feel, should *Daridranarayana* (the starving millions) be approached. Forgive me. My words are an involuntary exclamation of a musician, in ecstasy over a *tambura* flawlessly in tune. People say, 'But how many villages can he cover on foot?' My heart says, 'Yes, but how many *souls* he will touch !' Surely, souls matter more than villages and one pilgrim is worth a thousand propagandists.

How I wish other fellow-workers will realize the beauty and the necessity of pilgrimages on foot for Harijan work. People's hearts cannot be touched by a mad rush through space. They can be by quiet, personal, intimate contact with them. Rushing in motor-cars and railway trains dazes one and makes one powerless for clear thinking for the time being. But hardly has he recovered from the shock when he has to prepare to receive another. And so there is no chance of recovery, either for the occupant or for his victims. I know that the present programme cannot be substantially varied. But the remarks

quoted above should be treasured for any future programme, and the one for the few remaining weeks should be so shaped as to fit in with the idea of no-rush. Let there be as few visits as possibe during my stay in the principal places. My presence ought not to be exploited on behalf of other causes, however meritorious they may be. Let my mind be concentrated, as far as may be, on the Harijan cause.

Harijan, 20-7-1934

249. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

July 20, 1934

CHI. AMALA,

I have your letters. You are unnecessarily alarmed over my fast. Nobody else is. Seven days' fast can't kill me. But if my end is to come, it will come, fast or no fast. Therefore I would ask you to give up all anxiety about me.

It betrays gross neglect of duty to want to come to Wardha. You are living with me when you are doing my work, even though you may be physically miles away from me. And you are not living with me though you may be physically in the same place, if you are not doing my work. When God will it you will be physically near me. But as I have said, if you simply cannot live in the Ashram you must do as you like. In that case there is no question of permission. I cannot surmount my nature and do the impossible. Will you go and live with Narandas in Rajkot?

Dwarkanath has not yet left Wardha. I am quite well. Blood pressure normal.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

250. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

July 20, 1934

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I have your two letters.

Have no anxiety about my fast. God will see it safely through. This body can come to no harm as long as God wants it to render even the least service.

You should tell your parents if it is utterly impossible for you to live with your husband. You must listen calmly to whatever they say and bear it. If you can, you may certainly go to Kumbakonam and live with your husband. If the heart does not accept something, there is no gain but only harm in forcing it, the heart being the means to the deliverance of the soul from bondage. *Gita* declares thus and this is also the experience of all. Do write to me about your activities.

May God give you peace.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 9596. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal

251. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

July 20, 1934

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

I have your letter. It is clear. I now understand your situation clearly. It is natural for you to wish to have Prabhavati with you. Such being the case I do not wish to keep her at Wardha. I am certain that Prabhavati can do some work in Bihar. But Prabhavati does not have that feeling. She has not enough self-confidence. If she could be pursuaded of the virtue of going to Bihar, it would be well. The way is now clear. You can have Prabha anywhere you want. You should both decide something together. I shall have nothing to say about it. I can only give advice when you seek it. Yes, I do want that neither of you should coerce the other. The ideals the two of you pursue are different. No doubt I have had a hand in shaping Prabhavati's ideal and I do not regret it. But if your love draws her to your ideal, it will be all right by me. It will lessen my responsibility and give you satisfaction. It is a matter of sorrow to me that your life is becoming

dreary. Send for Prabha or come and meet her. Take some decision.

To what extent it is right for you, considering your communist beliefs, to accept help from me I cannot say. I cannot also say where we disagree and why. We shall argue about it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Jayaprakash Narayan Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

252. DISCUSSION WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DEPRESSED CLASSED[1]

[On or before *July 21, 1934*][2]

Gandhiji had no difficulty in showing them that the term 'Depressed Classes' had itself a bad odour which the name 'Harijan' had certainly not, but he assured them that he would be the last man to impose even a term of endearment on those who did not like it. Among the other grievances was the one that they were not given a majority of seats on the Harijan Board. Gandhiji explained to them at length the penitential character of the work that the organization of the caste Hindus had set before itself and that, whilst they were in no way called upon to share in the act of penitence, they would do better to form an independent advisory board, in order to inspect and review the work of the Harijan Sevak Sangh Board, and to offer helpful advice and guidance. This was not only their privilege but their duty. Their other duty which they could perform much more effectively than *savarna* reformers was internal reform, *viz.*, weaning from carrion-eating, drink, etc., those Harijans who were addicted to them. Finally he implored them not to be impatient—though they had every right to—as during the last two years a marvellous change had come over the mentality of caste Hindus. For, when action precedes mental change, it may well be mechanical and fruitless, but, when it is the result of a change of mind and heart, it has a vitality of which everyone feels the warmth and glow.

Harijan, 10-8-1934

[1] This is extracted from ''Three Days in Calcutta'' by Mahadev Desai. Gandhiji left Calcutta for Kanpur on July 21, 1934.

[2] *ibid*

253. SPEECH AT CHITTARANJAN SEVA SADAN, CALCUTTA

July 21, 1934

We Indians as a nation are lacking in self-confidence. It is often said against us by our critics that we are deficient in constructive abilities and that we are incapable of running and managing successfully big public institutions. The steady progress that the Seva Sadan has shown under the capable guidance of Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy and Sir Nilratan Sircar constitutes the most effective reply to this charge.

The other day I was called upon to perform the opening ceremony of Gulabdevi Charitable Hospital at Lahore.[1] I want to share with you the reflection which that occasion gave rise to in my mind. Is it not surprising that both the late Lala Lajpat Rai and the late Deshbandhu Das who were the foremost political leaders of their time and who had passed their entire life in political struggles, should at the time of their death assign all their property not for any political object but for purely philanthropic and charitable object? It is a phenomenon for our critics to reflect upon and digest. It shows that our essential talent runs always in the direction of service and philanthropy. But we are forced into politics against our will owing to extraneous circumstances with the result that our innermost urge for constructive work is smothered and remains unfulfilled. This was just what the late Lokamanya lamented also. As the whole world knows, twice he was imprisoned and on both these occasions he utilized his time and talents not for writing any political work but for producing religious and scientific works. On one occasion it was the celebrated *Gita Rahasya* and on the other the monumental work on the antiquity of the Vedas that has since become famous throughout the world. If I repeat what I have already remarked, this again proves the fact that although today politics may seem to engross our entire being, the ideal that our soul craves for is service, our innermost bent is religious not in the narrow or parochial sense but in the broadest sense of the term, and if we are often compelled to engage in politics it is in order to clear the way for the exercise of our constructive talent.

You know how close Deshbandhu and I had come together particularly towards the close of Deshbandhu's life during our stay

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Gulabdevi Tuberculosis Hospital, Lahore", 17-7-1934

together at Darjeeling. I was looking forward to his fullest co-operation in the prosecution of the constructive programme which we had planned together. But God had willed otherwise and within a week of that meeting Deshbandhu passed away. It always gives me supreme pleasure to be able to do anything for the ideal that we held in common. I therefore gladly availed of the invitation of Dr. Bidhan Roy to perform the present ceremony[1] . I would appeal to you to render all help that you are capable of to this institution. This is the least that you owe to the memory of the late Deshbandhu.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 22-7-1934

254. DISCUSSION WITH STUDENTS

[*July 21, 1934*][2]

QUESTION: Believing that mass revolution is the only means to achieve freedom, do you believe it a practical proposition that the mass will and can remain absolutely non-violent in thought and action in spite of all possible provocations in the course of such revolution? It may be possible for an individual to attain that standard but do you think that it is possible for the masses to attain that standard of non-violence in action?

GANDHIJI: This is a strange question coming from you at this time of the day, for the entire course of our non-violent fight bears testimony to the fact that wherever violence has broken out, it has broken out not on the part of the masses but, if I may put it like that, on the part of the classes, that is, it was manipulated by the intellectuals. Even in violent fighting, though the individual sometimes lets himself go and forgets everything the mass of the fighting force dares not and does not. It resorts to arms only under orders and has to suspend fire in response to orders, no matter how great the individual impulse to revenge or retaliation might be. There is no *prima facie* reason why under non-violence the mass, if disciplined, should be incapable of showing the discipline which in organized warfare a fighting force normally does. Besides, a non-violent General has this special advantage: he does not require thousands of leaders to successfully carry on his fight. The non-violent message does not require so many for transmission. The example of a new true men or

[1] Gandhiji laid the foundation-stone of the children's wing of the Seva Sadan.

[2] From *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 22-7-1934. The source has ''July 18, 1934'', which is evidently incorrect.

women if they have fully imbibed the spirit of non-violence is bound to infect the whole mass in the end. This was just what I experienced in the beginning of the movement. I found that people actually believed that in my heart of hearts I favoured violence even when I preached non-violence. That was the way they had been trained to read and interpret the utterances of the leaders. But when they realized that I meant what I said, they did observe non-violence indeed under the most trying circumstances. There has been no repetition of Chauri Chaura. As for non-violence in thought God alone is judge. But this much is certain that non-violence in action cannot be sustained unless it goes hand in hand with non-violence in thought.

Do you think co-operation between the exploited and the exploiters is at all possible to attain the ideals you stand for? Do you not think that time has come when Congress should take a definite stand for the rights of the masses irrespective of the interests of the capitalists and the landlord? Do you not think that it is not possible to organize the masses effectively on nationalistic programme and workers have no need or no other alternative but to array themselves against the capitalists and landlords for the exploited tenants and labour? Do you not think that a class war is inevitable and interested classes must perish for the sake of a greater humanity?

I never said that there should be co-operation between the exploiter and the exploited so long as exploitation and the will to exploit persist. Only I do not believe that the capitalists and landlords are all exploiters by an inherent necessity or that there is a basic or irreconcilable antagonism between their interests and those of the masses. All exploitation is based on the co-operation willing or forced, of the exploited. However much we may detest admitting it, the fact remains that there would be no exploitation if people refuse to obey the exploiter. But self comes in and we hug the chains that bind us. This must cease. What is needed is not the extinction of the landlords and the capitalists but transformation of the existing relationship between them and the masses into something healthier and purer. You ask ‘whether the time has not come when the Congress should stand for the rights of the masses as opposed to the interests of the capitalists and the landlords’. My reply is that ever since the Congress had come on the scene it has done nothing else whether it was dominated by the Moderates or the Extremists. From its very inception under A. O. Hume it has sought to represent the masses. That indeed was its origin, and a study of its history of nearly half a centrury would prove to the hilt that the Congress has been all through progressively representative of the masses.

Do I not think that time has come when Congress should take a definite stand for the rights of the masses irrespective of the interests of the capitalists and the landlords? No, we, the so-called friends of the masses, will only dig our and their graves if we took that stand. I would like to use the landlords and capitalists for the service of the masses as the late Sir Surendranath used to do. We must not sacrifice the interests of the masses to the capitalists. We must not play their game. We must trust them to the measure of their ability to surrender their gains for the service of the masses. Do you think that the so-called privileged classes are altogether devoid of nationalistic sentiments? If you think so, you will be doing grave injustice to them and disservice to the cause of the masses. Are not they too exploited by the rulers? They are not insusceptible to the higher appeal. It has invariably been my experience that a kind word uttered does go home to them. If we win their confidence and put them at their ease we will find that they are not averse to progressively sharing their riches with the masses. Moreover, let us ask ourselves with the masses, have we bridged the gulf between the surging millions and us? Let us who live in glass houses not throw stones. To what extent do you share the life of the masses? I confess that with me it is still an aspiration. We ourselves have not completely shed the habits of living that we say the capitalists are notorious for The idea of class war does not appeal to me. In India class war is not only inevitable but it is avoidable if we have understood the message of non- violence. Those who talk about class war as being inevitable have not understood the implications of non-violence or have understood them only skin-deep.

How can the rich help the poor without the rich being poor themselves? Richness or capitalism is a system which tries to perpetuate the colossal difference between capital and labour in order to maintain its position and status. Is it therefore possible to effect any compromise between them without greatly injuring the interests of either?

The rich can help the poor by using their riches not for selfish pleasure, but so as to subserve the interests of the poor. If they do so there will not be that unbridgeable gulf that today exists between the ‘haves’ and the ‘have-nots’. Class divisions there will be, but they will then be horizontal, not vertical. Let us not be obsessed with catchwords and seductive slogans imported from the West. Have we not our own distinct Eastern traditions? Are we not capable of finding our own solution to the question of capital and labour? What is the system of varnashrama but a means of harmonizing the difference

between high and low, as well as between capital and labour? All that comes from the West on this subject is tarred with the brush of violence. I object to it because I have seen the wreckage that lies at the end of this road. The more thinking set even in the West today stand aghast at the abyss for which their system is heading. And I owe whatever influence I have in the West to my ceaseless endeavour to find a solution which promises an escape from the vicious circle of violence of exploitation. I have been a sympathetic student of the Western social order and I have discovered that underlying the fever that fills the souls of the West there is a restless search for truth. I value that spirit. Let us study our Eastern institutions in that spirit of scientific inquiry and we shall evolve a truer socialism and a truer communism than the world has yet dreamed of. It is surely wrong to presume that Western socialism or communism is the last word on the question of mass poverty.

We want to be precise as to what you mean by non-violence. If by non-violence you mean absence of personal hatred, we have no objection to it. What we object to is your identifying non-violence with non-killing. Wars are waged not on personal lines but to vindicate national honour or interests. Issues have always been fought with the maximum amount of force both moral and physical. When all can successfully use physical force for the triumph of our national ideals and when it is the shortest cut, why do you object to it? Besides, the world is not even now advanced enough to appreciate moral persuasion.

My ahimsa does rule out the use of all force otherwise than moral. But it is one thing to say that physical force has been or is today being used in the world for the settlement of national issues; quite another thing to say that it should continue so to be used. Wecannot afford to blindly imitate the West. In the West, if they do certain things they have antidotes for them too; we have not. Take the instance of birth-control. It may seem to work well there, but if we took to the practice of birth-control as it is being advocated in the West, in ten years there will be a race of eunuchs in India. Similarly, if we take to violence after the West we shall soon be bankrput as the West is fast becoming. Only the other day, I was having a talk with a European friend. He was appalled at the prospect of wholesale exploitation of the coloured races of the world by the highly industrialized nations of the West with which civilization is today confronted. The principle of non-violence is today passing through a period of probation. The forces of the spirit are engaged in life and death grapples with brute force. Let us in this crisis not shrink from the test.

What has the Congress done or what should it do in connection with the young men and women of Bengal detained without trial?

I have given you my solution. If we work the Congress organization non-violently and honsetly we shall be able to purge it of its corruptions today. It is reeking with corruption, and Bengal, I must confess to my sorrow, has been the worst sinner in this respect. I will promise you that every one of these detenus is discharged. But then our non-violence will have to be real in thought, word and deed.

We regard all those elements in our society as Harijans who in one way or other are being exploited or kept suppressed. Your satyagraha movement is always for those who are downtrodden. Why then a separate Harijan movement?

It is not a separate Harijan movement that I am conducting. Its significance is world-wide.

Is it yet time for the youths of India to force a social re-ordering? Should it follow or precede any further political effort towards swaraj?

The two things—the social re-ordering and the fight for political swaraj—must go hand in hand. There can be no question of precedence or division into water-tight compartments here. But a new social order cannot be 'forced'; that would be a remedy worse than the disease. I am an impatient reformer. I am all for thorough-going, radical, social re-ordering; but it must be an organic growth, not a violent super-imposition.

What is the utility of trying to keep a number of pseudo-nationalist Muslims within the Congress fold by allowing them illegitimate and illogical concessions which are only increasing their insatiable hunger?

If the Muslim nationalists are 'pseudo-nationalists', we too are 'pseudo-nationalists'. Let us therefore eradicate that word from our dictionary. I do not know that an 'illogical concession' means, but you will never find me supporting an illegitimate concession. That is common ground between us.

Is not the Congress Party responsible for the embitterment of the communal relations when it brought the Khilafat question on the Congress platform?

It is historically not true that the participation of the Congress in the Khilafat movement is responsible for the embitterment of the communal relations. The fact is just the other way about, and I shall always maintain that the Congress did well in standing by our Mussalman compatriots in their fight for the Khilafat.

To the Students, pp. 204-9

255. SPEECH AT TOWN HALL, CALCUTTA[1]

July 21, 1934

Replying in Hindi, Gandhiji expressed regret for want of knowledge of the Bengali language although it had always been one of the cherished dreams of his life that he should learn his beautiful and sweet language—a language the wealth of which had been immensely increased by the contributions of his Gurudev, Rabindranath Tagore.

He recalled the occasion when he received another civic address from the hands of Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das and made a touching reference to his close and intimate association with Deshpriya Jatindra Mohan Sen Gupta whom he no more found by his side today.

As regards the good words had been said about him in the address, Gandhiji received them as their blessings. What could he say to them in reply? He would only fervently pray to God that this great Corporation become an ideal body, that it could set up such an example as might with profit be emulated by other municipal institutions.

Calcutta with its beautiful parks, big thoroughfares and magnificent buildings was rightly called the City of Palaces but they could not overlook the fact that the picture had its other side too. On the one hand, there were these gorgeous things which the city could be well proud of and on the other, there was the miserable condition of the *bastis* in which the Harijans lived. The contrast distressed him very much. He had an opportunity of visiting some Harijan quarters in the morning and it pained him very much to see the wretched state in which these people lived, without air, without light and without sufficient water for drinking. He was a Harijan himself by adoption and it would be no exaggeration to say that he felt uneasy in that place. They must not forget that it was these scavengers and sweepers of the city who were responsible for the cleanliness and the health of this big city. It was his prayer to the Councillors of the Corporation that they should make provision of some amount of money every year for removing the various grievances of these people. He appealed to them in the name of humanity and justice to devote a little of their time and attention to this noble cause.

Concluding, Gandhiji said that his attention had been drawn to the big headlines in newspapers regarding the dispute over the Mayoral election. He hoped that there would be no repetition of the same, and appealed to the Councillors to see that all sections of the Corporation could work with one common purpose of serving

[1] Nalini Ranjan Sarkar, the Mayor, presented the civic address in the afternoon. The address was printed in Bengali on white khaddar.

the interests of the city, without any distinction of caste, colour and creed. He hoped that this great body would work in a way as could make it the object of pride and admiration to the whole of Hindustan.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 22-7-1934

256. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CALCUTTA[1]

July 21, 1934

He began by expressing regret that he could not make his stay in Calcutta longer, for he was leaving Bengal that very night in connection with the Harijan work. The presence of such a huge gathering, continued Gandhiji, demonstrated that the people of Bengal would not and could not forget their work for Harijans. So far he had collected Rs. 65,000 in Calcutta for that noble work and, before he left that city that night, he hoped to receive further contributions. Even the Bengal Bus Syndicate, he was glad to find, had come forward to identify itself with that cause by contributing Rs. 501. Harijan work was such that it could not but be dear to all classes of people, even to those who called themselves sanatanists. They could not but ignore that cause without ceasing to be human.

Continuing, he said that some *mazdurs* (labourers), who had gathered there in large numbers, asked him as to what he had done for their welfare. To the service of Harijans he had already dedicated his life and thereby he had been doing his service to the labour also.

He was also working for the cause of popularizing charkha and this was a work in which was involved the welfare of millions of poor Harijans. Beause he was serving the cause of these poor labourers, he was himself leading the life of a labourer and had embraced poverty, for their joy was his joy and their sorrow was his sorrow.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 22-7-1934

257. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[2]

July 21, 1934

When I agreed to go to Calcutta for three days in order to try to compose the domestic differences, Dr. B. C. Roy wrote to me inquiring how all the workers could be brought together and whether I considered Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to be a neutral party for issuing invitation to workers. I wrote immediately, saying that the

[1] Held at Deshbandhu Park; Gandhiji spoke in Hindi.

[2] Gandhiji was going to Kanpur. A representative travelled with him up to Asansol.

Maulanasaheb would be the proper man to issue invitations which he did.

On my arrival I found that there was some dissatisfaction that enough invitations had not been issued, and the Maulana Saheb was willing to issue more invitations as soon as names were supplied to him. The names were ultimately supplied. They were too many for issuing cards within the time for the meeting. I, therefore, suggested that workers should be admitted without cards on identification by checkers. It is necessary for me to make this statement in order to make clear what happened in connection with bringing the workers together.

I have had a full and frank discussion with the different groups, and as a result of this discussion I came to the conclusion that, if party feeling was to be avoided, the Congress organization must be freed of manipulation of votes, even what amounts to a purchase of a vote.

It is most essential to avoid such manipulation, especially in Bengal where party feeling runs very high. I am happy to be able to say that nearly 22 out of 48 districts assured me through their representatives that they endorsed my suggestion and also assured me that they would have unopposed elections. If the representatives of the districts named are able to make good their claim, it would be a happy augury for the future, and the example of such a large number of districts was bound to prove infectious.

In any event I have no remedy to suggest for purging the Congress organization in Bengal of all the undesirable elements. It would be impossible to run the Bengal Congress organization, or for that matter any Congress organization, until and unless the vast majority of Congressmen make up their minds to work the Congress with absolute honesty. Let it not be forgotten that my suggestion does not mean in any shape or form the suppression of the Election Board with Mr. M. S. Aney as the final arbitrator. He would still have to scrutinize papers received from districts having unopposed election. A declaration of such elections will have to be made by that Board and in the unfortunate event of any contested elections it would be that Board which would regulate them.

It is to be hoped, therefore, that my suggestion will commend itself to all Congressmen, no matter to which party they belong. I am sure that without purity and honesty in the Congress organization it would not be possible to rid Bengal of the many special ills from which she is suffering.

In conclusion, whatever happens to my advice I would like to state that the workers were throughout courteous and attentive to whatever I had to say to them.[1]

Asked by the Associated Press representative as to the progress made by the Harijan movement in Bengal, Mahatma Gandhi said that he was unable to answer the question until he had studied the situation more thoroughly. He, however, expressed great satisfaction at the generous contribution made by the province to the Harijan Fund.

He declined to say anything with regard to the release of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and the question of Bengal detenus.

The Statesman, 22-7-1934; also *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 22-7-1934

258. LETTER TO SANATANISTS

[*July 22, 1934*][2]

In reply to a letter of an orthodox sanatanist of Benares, Mahatma Gandhi says that he is always prepared to hear the discussion of pundits with a view to obtaining correct interpretation of the Shastras on the subject of untouchability, but if the conclusion arrived at by the President was not convincing to him he will not be bound to accept it.[3]

The Hindustan Times, 24-7-1934

259. REPLY TO CIVIC ADDRESSES, KANPUR[4]

July 22, 1934

Replying to the addresses presented by the Municipal and District Boards, Gandhiji congratulated the Municipal Board on the very good work it had done for the uplift of Harijans. He appealed to the members of the Board to complete the scheme as early as possible. He said that for a big municipality like that of Cawnpore it was not difficult to construct sanitary houses within a short time. He hoped to see these quarters himself. He referred to his visit to the Bhagalpore Municipality and said that there too he had advised the Board to complete the work at once, which they readily accepted to do. He hoped the Cawnpore Municipal Board too would act upon his

[1] What follows is reproduced from *Amrita Bazar Patrika.*

[2] The report was published under the date-line, ‘‘Benares, July 22’’, 1934.

[3] For a discussion with the sanatanists, *vide* “Discussion with Sanatanists”, 24-7-1934

[4] In ‘‘Weekly Letter’’, Valji G. Desai had explained that the civic bodies presented their addresses at ‘‘Dr. Jawaharlal’s bungalow, where Gandhiji had put up’’.

advice. He said that there were many things which they could do without much trouble. Their grievances were not such as would require lakhs of rupees in the budgets. Those who were called the higher class of people could get their work done in so many ways. But how could poor Harijans get their grievances redressed? Gandhiji was pleased to note that in the Cawnpore Municipality, members belonging to all the communities—Hindus,—Muslims and others loved the Harijans alike. As he said, they were not there in the boards as Hindus or Muslims or anybody else but as public servants. He again expressed his gratification at the substantial and solid work done for the welfare of the Harijans by the Cawnpore Municipality.

Turning to the District Board's address, he returned to two points particularly. The address stated that the District Board had resolved that students should be admitted to all their schools without any restriction, but he said that it was a rule like so many others. What he advised the Board was to see whether the rule was observed, as it was well-known that often the rules said something while what was actually done was something quite different. He said that he had seen some sign-boards over wells saying that the wells were for the use of Harijans as well, but still the so-called caste Hindus beat any untouchables that used them and did not let them use them.

We should realize that the Harijans also are men and not beasts. Our Dharmashastras all say that if a man gives water to a thirsty man, he is rewarded manifold for it.

Referring to spinning taught in District Board Girls' Schools, Gandhiji said that his faith in khadi was as bright as ever. It was closely related to the Harijan cause, as they were serving hundreds of Harijan women and weavers through khadi. These, being terribly restricted in the choice of professions, would starve if they did not give them spinning or weaving. Indeed, for that matter, they were similarly serving hundreds of Muslim women and men. The women, as they observed *purdah*, would not earn the few pice they did per day if they were not given the opportunity of spinning. To these they must add the thousands of general spinners among the semi-starved millions of India. Khadi was thus no respecter of persons, and no lover of *Daridranarayana* could afford to go without khadi. He who bought a yard might rest assured that he was giving tangible help to the poor, whether Harijan Hindu, Muslim or *savarna* Hindu.[1]

In the end, he thanked both the Boards for the addresses presented to him.

The Leader, 26-7-1934; also *Harijan,* 10-8-1934

[1] This paragraph is reproduced from *Harijan*.

260. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KANPUR[1]

July 22, 1934

I thank you for your purse of Rs. 11,000, but you will allow me to say that it is not worthy of the open-handedness which you have taught me to associate with Cawnpore. I am certain that you would have given me many times as much, if you had realized the magnitude of the task before us.

There are some people in Cownpore who look upon the Harijan movement as irreligious and have issued a large number of leaflets for public consumption. I was sorry to find that these were full of palpable falsehoods and insidious half-truths, exaggerations and distortions. How I wish that these statements were made unintentionally ! For instance, it is said that reformers in some place slaughtered sanatanists without mercy, but I know nothing about it. If I did, I need scarcely say that I would take strong action to check it. What a deep tragedy it is that these falsehoods are spread in the name of sanatana dharma? I appeal to the sanatanists to stop this campaign of falsehoods.

You would give lakhs where you now give thousands, if you understood the far-reaching character of the Harijan movement. Nevertheless, our goal cannot be achieved by collections, no matter how large they are; it will be achieved only with the melting of *savarna* Hindu hearts. When a gift is token of a change of heart, its value is multiplied a hundredfold. This is a movement of purification. It has nothing to do with the counting of heads. It is not a movement designed to fight Muslims or others. We do not seek to make *goondas* of Harijans. We seek to make them worthy citizens. If we succeed, the world will benefit as well as we. At present the world would be fully justified in despising us and our faith for our maltreatment of five crores of our own kith and kin in the name of religion.

I have regard for the black-flaggers no less than for the reformers and, if it was at all possible, I would gladly go away as they wish me to do. But I consider it my religious duty to bear witness to the truth as I see it, and any number of black flags, or even a bomb or a revolver cannot prevent me from discharging it by such means as are open to me. I am but an imperfect being and not a *tapasvi*[2] who

[1] According to the source, this is ‘‘a substance of Gandhiji’s speech’’. This appeared under the title ‘‘The Cawnpore Speech’’.

[2] One who has acquired spiritual power through austerities

could blow away untouchability with a breath from the Himalayas. I can only speak to such as are inclined to hear me, and for this I am going about from place to place, although I long for rest from the toil of continuous travel.

Let me tell the sanatanists who claim to be monopolists of religious truth that I believe in the same Shastras as they do. I have profound disagreement with them as regards interpretation. These Shastras lay down that, when there is a conflict of interpretation, one must follow the promptings of one's own conscience. And that is exactly what I am doing. I would be the sanatanists.' slave if they could convince me that I was wrong. Meanwhile, I will say even with my last breath that, if we do not wash out the stain of untouchability, Hindus and Hinduism will be wiped out from the face of the earth.

Let me repeat the implications of this movement. It is limited to the removal of the feeling of superiority and inferiority and has nothing to do with inter-dining and intermarriage. I personally inter-dine with Bhangis and Mussalmans. I am not ashamed of this. On the other hand, I think my conduct in this respect is fully in consonance with the Shastras. But it has nothing to do with this movement. Inter-dining and inter-marriage are matters of individual choice. There is no need, nor can I spare time, for such propaganda. I only place the essentials or religion before the people for their acceptance. The movement claims for the Harijans the same social, civic and religious rights as belong to any other Hindu.

As regards temple-entry, you should know that no temple is opened to Harijans except with the full consent of those who attend that temple for worship. Temples must be opened as a part of our penance. Not a single pie from the Harijan Fund is spent on temple-building. Our constant effort is to ensure that as large a part of it as possible finds its way into Harijan pockets in one way or another.

As this is a Harijan tour, I do not often speak about khadi, although my faith in it is as strong as ever. But you must not forget that khadi supports a large number of Harijan spinners and weavers. It will never do for you to give a second place to khadi in your thoughts.

I thank you for the peacefulness of the proceedings, but I can not lose sight of the fact that we are under the shade of the elaborate police precautions we see around us. I would very much wish they were away, but they, too, must discharge their duty. Reformers as well

as sanatanists should be ashamed that the presence of the police should be required for my protection or for ensuring peace during my stay in your midst. Reformers and sanatanists should realize the importance of maintaining self-imposed discipline so as to render police precautions wholly unnecessary. As it is, however distasteful their presence may be to me, I must testify to the exemplary manner in which the police have behaved throughout the trying tour. I must also testify to the facilities that the railway authorities have given from time to time.

Harijan, 3-8-1934

261. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

July 23, 1934

MY DEAR MALKANI,

Your letter. Have read your suggestions which will be discussed in Benares. You have not sent me your franchise proposal though you mention it in your letter.

I heard from Jamnalalji some days ago but forgot to write to you to say that he is revising the whole consititution of the Sangh and thinks that you could not be taken. More in Benares.

Yours,

BAPU

PROF. MALKANI
BIRLA MILLS
DELHI

From a photostat: G. N. 908.

262. LETTER TO SULOCHANA A. SHAH

July 23, 1934

CHI. SULOCHANA,

I got your letter. It was a good one. I have taken some time to reply to it. It is something that I am able to write even today. It was very good that you could preserve your health and maintain your weight even in jail. You did good study, too. Tell me in your next letter what you read and thought about.

Why don't you yourself think what you should do? If you

cannot decide, however, follow Narandas's advice. He knows you better.

Premabehn has not so far gone to Wardha. She doesn't seem to have come to any decision. Lilavati and Siddhimati are at Rajkot.

Kusum must marry if she wishes to do so. If she has no such desire, she must engage herself in some kind of public service. She should know that, if physical desire troubles the mind, it is a sin to hide it. It would be good if she could keep such thoughts out. If, however, she cannot do that despite her best efforts, she should get married at any cost.

I will tell Gulab to write when I meet her in a few days. It is rather surprising that she doesn't write.

There is room for improvement in your handwriting. It wouldn't be bad if you even make the letters a little bigger. What are you reading at present?

Ba is with me, and so are Mahadevbhai, Pyarelal, Valjibhai and Chandrashankar. There are others too, but perhaps you would not know them. Isn't this a sufficiently long letter?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 1751

263. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

July 23, 1934

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I got your letter. I had received your wire too. Amalabehn seems to have given you a lot of trouble. I will not send her to you again. She arrived here yesterday. She seems to be half crazy. She herself does not know what she wants. She appears to stick to her word that she would stay nowhere but with me.

How is your pain which was caused by the beating?

Was the report about that man having been dismissed or demoted found to be true or false? Did the Baroda State take any steps?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostate of the Gujarati: G.N. 4023

264. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

July 23, 1934

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got the letter from you both. I understand [what you say] about West. If finally he does not reply, let it be. It is necessary that you should stay on there till somebody else agrees to take charge of your work. I see no harm in your remaining there so long as you can meet your expenses.

Have quarrels started even on the football ground? So be it. Certainly do what you think best. I have no desire at all to guide you from here, nor wish to criticize your actions. I want nothing but that you should be completely independent. It is not desirable that every day you should have to think what I would say. I want you always to do what seems proper and right to you. Progress for you two lies in your doing so. Who will guide you after my death? God is the only true guide. You should, therefore, pray to Him every day. You should daily pray, "Let Your will be mine", and then act with faith that the Lord dwelling in your heart will guide you rightly without fail.

This answers Sushila's question. It will be enough to maintain courteous relations with Sorabji. If you try to go further, you may have to compromise yourselves.

I hope you have seen about passports for Ramdas and Dr. Sharma.

Would you give Rs. 5 or 10 to Mama[1] every month? I have got Rs. 500 paid to him by Jamnalal. I should like it if you, Devdas and Lakshmi contribute small sums towards that. If you agree, you should pay regularly, remitting the amount to Jamnalal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4834

[1] Madhavdas Kapadia, brother of Kasturba Gandhi

265. LETTER TO SHANTILAL J. MEHTA

July 23, 1934

CHI. SHANTI,

I wish you will get properly settled down.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4823

266. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

July 23, 1934

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter today.

Your analysis is correct. I don't feel disappointed when I find that somebody has not fulfilled my expectation, for I don't see anybody's fault in such failure. I don't blame even myself. I gave according to the best of my lights, and you all received as you could. When all are imperfect, nothing else can happen. At the age of about thirty, I happened to read, "Through hundreds of thousands of disappointments, endures imperishable hope". I had pondered long over this line, memorized it and used to sing it to myself. The *ghazal*[1] was a source of great consolation to me. Now I don't even need its support. How can I spare time even to keep count of the number of disappointments?

The illusory appearance of silver in a mother-of-pearl or of water in the sun's rays,although unreal at all times, cannot be avoided[2].

If you or I feel that Bal is doing wrong, what is that to poor Bal?

I hopee you understand the meaning of these lines. If you don't, ask Devdas. The *doha* is by Tulsidas. It has had a profound effect on my mind. Man cannot but cling to an illusion so long as it seems truth to him. That is why the world has been de-scribed as an illusion and a snare, as *maya*. I will be content if you always do your best. I haven't written to Mr. Cousins, as I couldn't get time to do that. But since Rajaji has now written to me positively,I am waiting till we meet in Benares.

[1] By Manibhai Nabhubhai Dwivedi
[2] *Ramacharitamanas*, Balakanda, 117

If you feel a strong wish to come to Wardha, you may do so. Otherwise, after paying the intended visit to relations, go to the South.

I have not abandoned Harilal, nor given up hope about him. I am serving him by not yielding to him. The saying means "to follow his wishes". I am extremely doubtful about the rightness of the course which has now been adopted. He has always lived thus up to now. He used to be brave, but friends have deprived him of his capacity for self-reliance. And now he has thought of [business in] patent medicines. But as all of you have approved of this solution, I need not criticize it. What seems right to one, that is one's dharma. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7287. Courtesy: Kanti Gandhi

267. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

July 23, 1934

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have been wanting to write to you for a long time, but couldn't do so till today.I felt, too, that since Mahadev had been released, it wouldn't matter if I didn't write. If I expressed disappointment on hearing that you would not be able to go to Wardha, I don't remember why; I didn't feel disappointed. I was afraid that you wouldn't like to go there, and I had expressed my fear to Jamnalalji. The reasons which you have given are sound.The reason about the Vidyapith is not valid. If it is, it is such as can be overcome. But the reasons regarding temperament are so strong that they require no support from others. It is not a small responsibility to take charge of Wardha. An experienced and mature woman is required for that. Perhaps Prema may be such a woman. Gangabehn has no interest in the work. I don't know where Prema is now. She did come and see me, but that's all. Besides these two, I can't think of any other woman in our circle. Can you think of any?

Blessings from

BAPU

Form a photostat of the Gujarati S.N. 9062

268. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

KANPUR,
July 23, 1934

CHI. MANI,

You have been writing quite regularly. Continue to do so. But do not expect any letters from me. Mahadev's being with me relieves me from writing some of the letters. I don't have to write even to Sardarsaheb now. I agree with you that the best medicine for you is to stay on there.

Probably we shall meet very soon now.

Blessings from

BAPU

PS.[1]

I am sending the enclosed letter to you. Please send it on to Father immediately. You have frightened him all right by telling him what I told Bhaskar. I have said the same thing to many others. And, indeed, I am not alone in my view. At least Velanbehn and two girls are with me. Our problem, therefore, is not so easy as all that. Let us hope that everything will be settled in Wardha.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro— 4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 117

269. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

July 23, 1934

CHI, BRIJKRISHNA,

I have both your letters.

Why should it be taken that all those companions of mine are sinners who do not live with me or render personal service to me? What sins could Vinoba, who has ever lived away from me, have committed? Disabuse yourself of this misconception.

It is true that you are suffering from the three delusions you have dwelt on in the second letter. But you have to get rid of all three of them if you wish to render any service to the Ashram and me. As you have renounced everything, you should regard it as wrong to take anything from the brothers to render help to individuals. All that

[1] From the honourific plural used in the Gujarati original, the postscript appears to have been written by Mahadev Desai.

you may save from the subsistence money you receive may be donated to the Ashram but never anything received from personal friends or relatives. To give anything to Damodardas would be disservice to a friend; he will not come out of his stupor. His duty is to perform his labour with humility. If he is not up to it he may well choose his own way of life and provide for himself. My reading is that your financial assistance has been demoralizing him and he makes no progress.

Am I clear? If not, do ask again.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Where is the need for a confidential letter? There is no one here who would harm you or anyone else if he happens to see your letter.

Form a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2415

270. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

KANPUR,
July 24, 1934

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter. I had come to know about Rama's having gone there. It is just her excuse when she says that she doesn't write to me to save my time. Her aversion to writing is an old one. You should not, therefore, readily accept such an excuse. Some habits become part of one's nature. This habit of Rama's, like Devdas's, is of that kind. The only difference is that Devdas would not offer any such excuse for not writing, for he knows that it would not be accepted by me. Rama is not sufficently aware of that. Please go on doing your work. Don't even think about the fast.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. CHHAGANLAL JOSHI
SHRI DAKSHINAMURTI BHAVAN
BHAVNAGAR
KATHIAWAR

Form a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5520

271. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

July 24, 1934

CHI. HARIBHAU,

Jamnalalji's telegram arrived just when I had no time to spare. Martanda and his wife have my blessings of course. May God grant them long lives. Let them both serve the country and meticulously observe the restraints of married life.

I hope eveything went off well there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

272. SPEECH AT OPENING OF TILAK HALL, KANPUR[1]

July 24, 1934

I am thankful to you for inviting me to perform this sacred ceremony this morning. When I learnt early this morning that I had to come here, my memory went beck to the day 20 years ago when I first visited Cawnpore as a stranger. It was the late Babu Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi then a youth unknown to me, who then housed me in his press which was also his residence, for nobody else would dare harbour me. I was then an utter stranger to the bulk of our countrymen. Whatever little was known of me was through my services in South Africa. Neither the people nor the Government knew what I would do here. Nor did I myself know what was in store for me or what part I was to play in the national affairs. It was a happy coincidence that Tilak Maharaj came to this city that very day and was accorded a very hearty reception. To me the association with this city is bound up with the memory of Ganesh Shankar. I came to know him more intimately later on and found in him a simple, straightforward, upright, selfless servant of the nation. You know more than I do of the services he rendered through various channels to this city in particular and the country in general. He was a lover of the Hindi language. The *Pratap* founded by him is a living monument of that

[1] This appeared as "an authorized translation of Gandhiji's speech".

love. As we all know he crowned a life of service with a heroic death. I cannot describe to you how I miss him today on my first visit to this city after his death.

Tilak's vast learning, his immense sacrifice and his life-long service has won for him a unique place in the hearts of the people. He it was who infused life into the nation with the *mantra* of swaraj to the achievement of which his whole life was dedicated. But the thing to which I want to draw your attention today was his outlook and catholicity in matters of religion. He was a live sanatanist. No one in his lifetime nor even now could claim deeper or vaster knowledge of the Shastras than he possessed. His masterwork—the 'commentary on the *Gita*'[1] —is unsurpassed and will remain so for a long time to come. Nobody has yet carried on more elaborate research in questions arising from the *Gita* and the Vedas. It was not without deep study and careful research that he had declared that there was no sanction in the Shastras for untouchability as it is practised today. I can bear witness to the fact that he had eliminated the distinctions of high and low from his own life. He did not believe in untouchability based on birth and never hesitated to mix freely with so-called untouchables. I carried on anti-untouchability work in those days as I do now. I remember my many conversations with him on this subject and I can bear testimony to the fact that he was wholeheartedly with me and keenly desired the abolition of untouch-ability from Hinduism. It is relevant to refer to his opinion today, for it is said in some quarters nowadays that this anti-untouchability movement is subversive of religion.

I can give you many more reminiscences of his liberal outlook in other fields of life also. His contribution of the growth of the political life of the people has been unparalleled. But I believe his commentary on the *Gita* will be a more lasting monument to his memory. It will survive even the successful termination of the struggle for swaraj. Even then his memory will remain as fresh as ever on account of his spotless purity of life and his great commentary on the *Gita.* We owe to the memory of the great leader whom we revere that we should strive ceaselessly for completing the structure of swaraj of which he laid the foundation. Let this hall be but an outward token of our intense desire to make that effort to the best of our ability.

The Leader, 29-7-1934

[1] *Gita Rahasya*

273. DISCUSSION WITH SANATANISTS[1]

KANPUR,
[*July 24, 1934*][2]

QUESTION: How is this temple-entry agitation of yours going to benefit the Harijans materially? Are you sure that they want it?

GANDHIJI: It is for the material benefit of the Harijans. It is for the spiritual benefit of the *savarna* Hindus, who have to purify themselves and who owe a debt to the Harijans, If untouchability is a sin and if the Harijans are as good Hindus as the rest of us, they have as much right to enter the temples as the others. Whether they can get any material benefit from it, or even spiritual benefit or salvation, or whether they themselves want it or not, is beside the point. The point is whoever cares to go to a temple, provided he observes the rules observed by all other Hindus, ought to have the right to do so. He may be a sinner,but it is precisely because we are all sinners that we would like to go to temples to wash out our sins there. A saint need not go there. The sanat-anists may expect him to observe all the rules of outward cleanliness that they themselves observe,but nothing more.

But the Shastras are against temple-entry. Why not frankly say that you want to found a new Shastra?

No. I believe in the same Shastras as you do; only my interpretation is different. I am not a *shastri* myself,but if there is a section which contends that the Shastras enjoin untouchability, there is another equally strong section of pandits and *shastris* who no doubt say that there is no sanction in the Shastras for untouchability as it is practised today.

But if you destroy untouchability, the untouchables will invade our professions and occupations. They will have sweetmeat shops, for instance. All self-restraint in matters of food will be swept away.

You forget that the Harijan campaign has nothing to do with questions of food and drink, it seeks to destroy untouchability as it is

[1] This is extracted from "Some Misconceptions" by Mahadev Desai who explains: "The organizers of the reception in Cawnpore had set apart a certain time exclusively for the sanatanists . . . . There were, however, no opposing pundist there. But there was a young man (who afterwards I found was an oil-dealer) who had a list of several questions…which, naturally, someone more learned had written up for him and which represent the misconceptions that still have possession of the santanist mind."

[2] From *The Leader*

practised today. There are numerous shops being run by non-Hindus and non-Brahmins. No one compels the Hindus or the Brahmins among them to go to these shops. There are orthodox Brahmins who would not touch food cooked by anyone else. They are quite welcome to their self-imposed restrictions, which will remain untouched for all time.

But why do you say untouchability is a sin, when our own mothers and sisters and daughters are treated as untouchables four days in the month?

You must know that some kind of untouchability is practised not only by us, Hindus,but by people of all faiths—Parsis, Mussalmans, Christians. But do we treat our mothers and sisters as untouchables for the rest of the month? Do we spurn them, do we fling our food remains at them even during the period of untouchability? Do we keep them out of our houses? For God's sake, don't forget that you are subjecting the so-called untouchables to insults and outrages that you would not dare to impose on anyone else.

Those insults and outrages are unknown here. You had better go to places where they are practised.

Will you accompany me?

Why should we? It is enough that we are not guilty. We invite them to our caste-dinners.

And fling remains at them, don't you?

But you, reformers, do not so much as fling the remains at them. In your zeal for reform, you starve them. We don't starve them. Whilst we observe untouchability, we have that much sympathy for them. You always say the Harijan campaign has nothing to do with questions of eating and drinking or with the question of marriage. Why, then, did you marry your boy Devdas to a Brahmin girl?

This is an irrelevant question. But I must answer it. The marriage was no part of the Harijan movement. I did not allow the marriage as a leader of the anti-untouchability campaign, but I allowed it as a Hindu reformer. As a reformer of Hinduism, I want to restore the ancient varnashramadharma to its pristine purity. Varnashramadharma lays down the functions and duties of various classes according to their special aptitudes and gifts and has nothing to do with questions of marraige and food and drink. Now that you have raised the question of my son's marriage, I shall summarize the considerations that weighed with me and would weigh with me on all such occasions: (1) The four varnas do not exist today, and, therefore, it is the duty of those who believe in the varnas to restore them by observing the

sovereign principles of purity and self-restraint. Let me tell you that, when I was told that there was mutual attachment between the two young people in question, I asked them to impose self-restraint on themselves for a period of five years—not meet each other, not even to correspond with each other—and thus to prove the purity of their attachment. They fulfilled the conditions and even then would not have the marriage until it was blessed by their parents. (2) Even assuming that varnas exist,instances are not wanting in *Mahabharata* and other work of inter-varna marriages. (3) After all is said and done, the laws and codes governing personal conduct apply to the times in which they were framed. The ruling principle is self- restraint.

There are, besides, numerous texts in our *smritis* which contradict one another, and hence we cannot blindly accept every text as gospel truth. We have to prove them on the touchstone of truth and non-violence. There are things, for instance, in *Manusmriti* which no author believing in ahimsa could ever have written and which run counter to the precepts in the same great work, precepts which would do credit to the spiritual genius of any race or clime. I must expunge those texts as apocryphal, as we do in the case of many verses of doubtful authenticity which have crept into a much more recent work like, for instance, Tulsidas's *Ramayana*. For me, the text of Manu defining sanatana dharma—eternal religion—is all-sufficing :

> That dharma is eternal which is always observed by saintly men of learning, free form ill will and passion, and which appeals to one's *hridaya* or sense of right and justice.

As regards my own practice in matters of food and drink, everyone knows that I eat food from the hands of any human being, provided it is clean and pure. It is a purely personal question and nota social question at all. I am not out for reform in the matter, as I know that it can take care of itself, and I, therefore, do not seek to air my views in public. My own sister would not eat food cooked by many, certainly not food touched by a Harijan, But I would not strive with her. It should be enough for me that she discards untouchability and refuses to regard a human being an untouchable because of his birth.

Harijan, 24-8-1934

274. SPEECH TO U. P. HARIJAN WORKERS, KANPUR[1]

[*July 24, 1934*][2]

As regards the general complaint of municipal neglect, Gandhiji said they must rouse the members from their lethargy by directly approaching them as well as by educating the voters, who could then be expected to keep the members straight. He was glad to learn that the non-Hindu members of Cawnpore Municipality co-operated whole-heartedly with the Hindus as regards the welfare work among its Harijan employees, and he was sure that the Mussalman members of other municipalities, too, would be equally sympathetic when, as guardians of not one section but of the whole body of the public, they realized that ours was a purely humanitarian movement which had nothing to do with politics, that Harijans ministered to non-Hindus no less than to Hindus and that insanitary conditions in Harijan quarters were a potential source of danger ot the whole of the city. It was a notorious fact that Harijans did not enjoy the same amenitites as regards water-supply, light,etc. as the rest of the citizens did.

But irrespective of what the municipalities might do or fail to do, the Sangh must try to secure decent liveing conditions for Harijans. And this could be done with ease and without any heavy expenditure. First, they must see to the proper drainage and cleaning of the Harijan quarters and the making of roads. Slight repairs should be carried out in the houses so as to allow a free passage to light and air. If they placed before municipalities a modest programme of improving the sanitation of Harijan quarters, they would make a small grant of money to the Sangh and make them their agents in carrying it out, for municipalities might not have at hand the worker required, or if the workers were there, they might not have a keen interest in work of this nature.

Secondly, they must obtain for Harijans a good supply of water. Harijans in villages were worse off in this respect than their fellows in cities. They had yet to develop strength enough to assert and maintain their right to draw water from public wells by seeking the protection of courts or otherwise. Meanwhile the Sangh must construct for them good wells from which even the *savarnas* would be tempted to take water for themselves, and during the period that these wells were under construction, reformers, must draw water for the Harijans and pour it into their pots.

Thirdly, the Sangh should establish good perparatory schools for Harijan children, where the teachers would not make a fetish of the 3 R's, but try to teach their pupils to keep their person and clothes clean, so as to enable them at the end of six months to take their place in a line with *savarna* children of the same age. For

[1] This appeared under the title : "Harijan Workers' Guide".

[2] From Valji G. Desai's "Weekly Letter"

this, kindliness was more essential in a teacher then scholarship. The Sangh would do well even to bring out a Harijan preparatory schoolmaster's guide, showing him how he should impart to his charges the cultural training which *savarna* children received in their homes.

Fourthly, as regrads Ashrams, he thought they had better fight shy of that big word and rather call their institutions 'Chhatralayas' (hostels) or 'Udyogalayas'. Personally he did not like that the institution at Sabarmati was called Harijan Ashram. In these hostels they might supplement the ordinary education of the inmates at schools by teaching them some industry and religion, not through text-books but in actual pracitce. The superintendent must see that the members used their hands and feet and told the truth in their actual lives, insteand of merely reading copybook maxims about it. In fact, he should be as father to them. A couple of such institutions in each province should go a long way in the spread of culture and serve the purpose of comprehensive propaganda.

As regards total abstinence, Gandhiji said they could make an impression only if they entered into the drunkards' lives and established an intimate personal relation with them. It was no use merely getting them to sign a pledge. They must find out the reasons why people took to drink. They must devise substitutes for it, such as milk and tea, and organize games, lectures and such other diversions.

Finally, Gandhiji expressed his emphatic opinion that they had hardly touched the fringe of their problem so long as they had not penetrated into the villages, which were the stronghold of untouchability and where alone they could strike it a death-blow.

Harijan, 10-8-1934

275. SPEECH TO STUDENTS AND HARIJANS, KANPUR[1]

July 24, 1934

Mahatma Gandhi, replying, thanked the students for the purse but said that it was too little for Cawnpore students who gave Rs. 1,500 in his last visit but as it was given out of love it was welcome. He was pleased to learn that they regarded him as a votary to true sanatana dharma and that their wish to do Harijan service was a good sign.

At the Harijan workers' meeting[2] it was said that there were not sufficient Harijian workers but here they were. As he did not expect them to give up their studies and devote all their time to this work, but he did expect them to devote their

[1] At Queen's Park; the students of Sanatan Dharma College presented an address.

[2] *Vide* The preceding item.

time to this work along with their studies just as they attended their parents when they fell ill. He wanted the spirit of sacrifice instilled in them. Knowledge did not mean mere book-reading. It included this kind of service also. He wished he could bring home to their hearts how much poor Harijans suffered and students could remove many of their grievances, if not all, and all this could be done while continuing regular studies.

In the end Mahatma Gandhi appealed to students, both male and female, to wear khadi at least if they could not devote much time to Harijan work. This wearing of khadi gives to Harijans much of what we pay for it.[1]

Replying to the Harijans' address, Gandhiji said that sanitary service was a sacred occupation, and scavengers no more deserved to be despised than a nurse, a surgeon or a mother, who had all to handle excreta. But they must observe the rules of cleanliness and give up carrion as well as liquor and gambling. They should refuse to accept leavings of food and ask for monetary equivalent or at least uncooked cereals or pulses in payment of their services. As regards strikes, Gandhiji said, he himself had led several successful strikes in South Africa as well as in the mother country, and as an expert in the science, he would advise them to exhaust all other avenues of settlement of disputes before they downed tools.[2]

The Leader, 27-7-1934; also *Harijan*, 19-8-1934

276. INTERVIEW TO RASHTRIYA BHASHA DEPUTATION[3]

July 24, 1934

He told them to carry on vigorous propaganda, write out literature in Hindi issues and pamphlets, prepare dictionary and books in Hindi on lines adopted in the West, and made various other suggestions for improving and popularizing the Hindi language and literature.

The Hindustan Times, 25-7-1934

[1] Gandhiji then received an address from Harijan sweepers which was read out by Lalloo Ram, a sweeper.

[2] This paragraph is reproduced from Valji G. Desai's "Weekly Letter".

[3] The deputation consisted of Hiralal Khanna, Principal, Bishambarnath Sanatan Dharma Intermediate College, Brij Behari Mehrotra, Balkrishan Sharma, Chail Behari Kantak and others and was led by Baba Raghav Dass.

277. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

ON THE TRAIN,
July 25, 1934

CHI. MIRA,

This is just to tell you, you are constantly with me.

Love.

BAPU

Bapu's Letters to Mira, p. 267

278. ENTRY IN VISITORS' BOOK[1]

July 25, 1934

How can those who do not wear khadi serve *Daridranarayana*?

The Pioneer, 27-7-1934

279. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, LUCKNOW[2]

July 25, 1934

Replying to the addresses Mahatma Gandhi thanked the sanatanists, the Harijans and the other citizens of Lucknow for the reception accorded to him but frankly expressed his dissatisfaction at the small sum contributed by Lucknow to the Harijan Fund. He refused to recognize that there were extenuating circumstances for the paltry contribution. Lucknow had fair notice of his visit and the sum raised for the cause of the Harijans should have been much larger. A few years ago when he had come to Lucknow, the premier city of the United provinces had presented him with a much bigger purse but this time it had disappointed him.

When the women of Lucknow presented[3] him with a purse of Rs.1,500 and ornaments valued at Rs. 500, he hoped that the other citizens would contribute a sum to the Harijan Fund which would be fitting to the city's status but all his expectations had been frustrated. He was, however, prepared to give Lucknow another chance to redeem its honour and hoped that its citizens would send him a substantial sum before his tour in the provinces was concluded.

[1] In the morning, Gandhiji visited the Charkha Sangh Khadi Bhandar, near Aminuddaula Park, Lucknow.

[2] At Aminuddaula Park

[3] At Zenana Park, earlier in the morning, soon after he had reached Lucknow

So far as work for the Harijans was concerned, Mahatma Gandhi invited the pepople to go and see for themselves the plight of the Harijans all over India. Regarded as outcastes they were denied even the elementary rights of human beings in the name of religion. Those who countenanced untouchability were guilty of a grave social sin. To keep more than 6,00,00,000 people outside the pale of the society in the name of religion was an unpardonable act for which there was no justification.

In South Africa and America the whites showed the same aversion and intolerance to the members of the darker races as were being shown in India by the caste people to the members of the Depressed Classes, but in those countries the whites had taken up that attitude as a political weapon for their own aggrandizement. They did not take recourse to religion as was being done by the caste Hindus in India to justify their action.

Due to this impossible attitude, for which there was no justification, people like Dr. Ambedkar, for whose intelligence, sincerity and other sterling qualities he had the highest respect though he differed from him on the Harijan question, were regarded as untouchables by the Hindu society. The Depressed Classes were not born depressed but had been kept oppressed for centuries by the cast Hindus.

There was no justification for the theory advanced by the caste Hindus that the Depressed Classes had been born as untouchables for their sins in their previous lives. It was rank injustice and sin to deny the rights of human beings to the members of the Depressed Classes.

The surest way of serving God, according to all religions, is to serve the poor. By using khadi people could easily do that. If the use of khadi became more popular millions of people in India, who were now starving, would be assured of at least one full meal. A person buying even one rupee worth of khadi could be sure that fifteen annas of it would go to the poor and keep them from starvation.

The Leader, 27-7-1934

280. SPEECH AT ARYA SAMAJ

KANPUR,
July 25, 1934

Gandhiji felt grateful to the Sabha for having invited him to receive the address.[1] Gandhiji agreed with the members of the Sabha that Swami Dayanand had tried to serve the Depressed Classes and that he had taken a great part in the removal of untouchability. Mahatma Gandhi said that his connection with the Arya Samaj was

[1] The source had reported that the address was presented at 5 p.m. by the U.P. Arya Pratinidhi Sabha. It "gave an account of the work which was being done by the Arya Samaj, specially in connection with the antiuntouchability movement".

not recent but dated back to the time when he was is South Africa and he was glad to mention that the connection was getting closer and stronger. In the end, Mahatma Gandhi wished that his connection with the Arya Samaj might get closer still in future and that he and the Arya Samaj might serve their God and country together.

The Leader, 29-7-1934

281. ANSWERS TO ZAMINDARS[1]

July 25, 1934

QUESTION. The karachi Congress passed a resolution laying down the fundamental rights of the people and, since it recognized private property, nationalist zamindars have supported the Congress. But the new Socialist Party in the Congress threatens the extinction of private property. How would it affect the Congress policy? Do you not think that this will precipitate class war? Will you prevent it?

ANSWER. The Karachi resolution can be altered only by an open session of the next Congress, but let me assure you that I shall be no party to dispossessing the propertied classes of their private property without just cause. My object is to reach your hearts and convert you so that you may hold all your private property in trust for your tenants and use it primarily for their welfare.

I am aware of the fact that within the ranks of the Congress a new party called the Socialist Party is coming into being and I cannot say what would happen if that party succeeds in carrying the Congress with it. But I am quite clear that if a strictly honest and unchallengeable referendum of our millions were to be taken, they would not vote for wholesale expropriation of the propertied classes. I am working for the co-operation and co-ordination of capital and labour and of landlords and tenants. It is open to you to join the Congress as much as it is open to the poorest by paying the fee of four annas and subscribing to the Congress creed.

But I must utter a note of warning . I have always told the mill-owners that they are not exclusive owners of the mills. Workmen are equal sharers in the ownership. In the same way, I would tell you that the ownership of your land belongs as much to the ryots as to you and you may not squander your gains in luxurious or extravagant

[1] According to the source, this appeared as "reported by Mahadev Desai" and "revised by Gandhiji". Gandhiji answered the questions which "the zamindars read out to him".

living, but must use them for the wellbeing of the ryots. Once you make your ryots experience a sense of kinship with you and a sense of security that their interests as members of the family will never suffer at your hands, you may be sure that there cannot be a class war between you and them.

Class war is foreign to the essential genius of India which is capable of evolving a form of communism broad based on the fundam-ental rights of all and equal justice to all. The *Ramarajya* of my dream ensures the rights alike of prince and pauper.

You may be sure that I shall throw the whole weight of my influ-ence in preventing class war. I do not know what I am going to do after the termination of my self-imposed restriction on August 3, but I shall try my best to avoid going back to prison. But it is difficult to predict anything with certainty in a situation of which I am unaware today. But supposing that there is an attempt unjustly to deprive you of your property, you will find me fighting on your side.

We propose to support Congress candidates in the next Assembly elections. But we have our misgiving about the policy they will adopt in the Assembly. Could you persuade the Parliamentary Board to dispel our fears?

I invite you to discuss this thing with the members of the Parlia-mentary Board. I know however that no member will talk of expro-priation or extinction of private property. They will certainly insist on a radical reform in your relations with the ryots but that should be no new thing to you. Even Sir Malcolm Hailey[1] and Lord Irwin appealed to you to realize and live up to the spirit of the times., If you will only do this, you may be sure that we shall be able to evolve an indigenous socialism of the purest type.

Socialism and communism of the West are based on certain conceptions which are fundamentally differnt from ours. One such conception is their belief in the essential selfishness of human nature. I do not subscribe to it, for I know that the essential difference between man and brute is that the former can respond to the call of spirit in him and can rise superior to the passions that he owns in common with the brute and therefore superior to selfishness and vilence which belong to brute nature and not to the immortal spirit of man.

[1] Governor of U.P.

That is the fundamental conception of Hinduism, which has years of penance and austerity at the back of the discovery of their truth. That is why whilst we had had saints who have burnt out their bodies and laid down their lives in order to explore the secrets of the soul, we have none as in the West who have laid down their lives in exploring the remotest or highest regions of earth. Our socialism or communism should theref-ore be based on non-violence and on the harmonious co-operation of labour and capital and the landlord and the tenant.

There is nothing in the Congress creed or policy that need frighten you. All your fears and misgivings, permit me to tell you, are those of a guilty conscience. Wipe out the injustice that you may have been consciously or unconsciously guilty of and shed all fear of the Congress and Congressmen.

Once You turn a new leaf in the relations between zamindars and ryots, you will find us on your side jealously guarding your private rights and property. When I say "us", I have Pandit Jawaharlal also in mind, for I am sure that on this essential principle of non-violence there is no differnce between us. He does indeed talk of nationalization of property, but it need not frighten you. The nation cannot own property except by vesting it in individuals. It simply ensures its just and equitable use and prevents all possible misuse, and I do not think you can have any possible objection to holding your property for the benefit of the ryots. The ryots have themselves no greater ambition than to live in peace and freedom and they will never grudge you your possession of property provided you use it for them.

You have been almost avoiding us and the villages. Why not have candidates belonging to the rural classes?

You may be sure that we are going to penetrate the villages and establish healthy relations with you.

The Pioneer, 3-8-1934

282. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 26, 1934

CHI. MIRA,

This is being written with the vegetable in the one hand and pen in the other. The mailing time is near.So I can only send you love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6293. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9759

283. LETTER TO SARITA

July 26, 1934

CHI. SARITA,

I have your letter. I was waiting for it. It is not that you have not seen happiness as well as misery. Mix well with the sisters there. I have no other place in Bombay. My relations with that family are very old. Isn't Nirmala's place a home? It is always crammed. But whether it is crammed or not there is room in that family for everyone. Still if you can manage to stay there, do so. I have written to both the sisters.

Blessings from

BAPU

Form the Gujarati original: G. N. 11529

284. DISCUSSION WITH CONGRESS, HARIJAN AND KHADI WORKERS

KANPUR,
July 26, 1934

Mahatma Gandhi had another busy day in the course of which he held illuminating discussions with Congress, Harijan, and khadi workers. He gave them sound advice on many matters and pointed out that they must develop a very high sense of discipline without which no real advancement was possible. He pointed out that the volunteers like others had their shortcomings but it was neither difficult nor impossible to overcome them. They must keep before themselves the high ideals which impelled them to render service to their fellow-brothers and keep in view that they were servants of the people and as such always prepared to render them help in every possible way. He pointed out that they should be ever ready to suffer for the cause of the country and discharge the duties entrusted to them honestly and faithfully and diligently. Volunteers, he said, had great obligations and it was more difficult to discharge those obligations than it was to speak about their duties.

He exhorted khadi workers to carrty on their work unceasingly and nothing should deter them from carrying on khadi sales, for the use of khadi alone was the surest way of serving God and the service of God was the service of the poor. The use of khadi would provide food to the starving millions . . . Mahatma Gandhi is reported to have pointed our to Congressmen to seek the co-operation of non-Congress workers, give them offices and serve under them. Let them have no distinction between Congress and non- Congressmen, he said, for Harijan work interested everybody alike. He felt that healthy co-operation between Congress and non-

Congressmen in Harijan work would prove very beneficial to the Harijans. He appealed to them to seek the help of non-Congress workers as much as they possibly could.[1]

The Congress workers asked for his views on class war and desired to know if it could be non-violent. He replied that it could not be non-violent in the form in which it was spoken of today. Whenever there came up question of crushing anybody it became violence.

Asked if the present policy of the Congress Socialist Party would injure the Congress cause, he said that he had no complaint if the policy was so outlined in the manifesto issued from Bombay. Asked if socialism was against Congress policy, Gandhiji said that socialism was a good thing. He himself was a socialist. But his definition was always non-violent, and what he really meant was expressed in the Karachi resolution and he still stuck to that and would go no further pointed our to Congressmen to seek the co-operation of non-Congress workers, give them offices and serve under them. Let them have no distinction between Congress and non-Congressmen, he said, for Harijan work interested everybody alike. He felt that healthy co-operation between Congress and non-Congressmen in Harijan work would prove very beneficial to the Harijans. He appealed to them to seek the help of non-Congress workers as much as they possibly could.[2]

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Asked what attitude Congressmen must adopt towards zamindars, he said that there should be a brotherly affection and that our aim must be to end injustice and bring about *samanvaya*[3]. They had to change hearts. He said that a feeling had been created amongst the zamindars that when they got swaraj, zamindars would be robbed of all they had. Supposing Government were pleased to award some land to a man in 1857, how could it be fair to rob his grand-children today of this property? If his land was taken, the State must pay appropriate compensation. Similarly a man who purchased land today and duly paid its price, could not be deprived of it Pandit

[1] What follows is reproduced from *The Hindustan Times*, 27-7-1934.
[2] *ibid*
[3] Harmony

Balkrishna Sharma questioned whether we should ameliorate the tenants' condition while zamindars were there. Out of Rs. 19 crores realized from the peasantry fo the U.P. only Rs. 7 crores went to Government Treasury, the rest Rs. 12 crores being taken by the zamindars.

Gandhiji, replying, said that it was true that Rs. 12 crores should not go to them unless they rendered services to the peasantry of the same value. There had been times when they took Rs. 12 crores and rendered services worth Rs. 24 crores, but today the return was not worth even Rs. 12.

To destroy them would be no solution and violence would creep in. They should not make zamindars another sect of untouchables. They must get the Tenancy Acts enacted on lines different from those of the present Acts. There were no zamindas in Gujarat, still tenantry conditions remained the same.

Asked what work should be done amongst the tenants, Gandhiji said that much of their sufferings resulted from their ignorance, which should be removed. As they remained without work for six months in the year, they could be supplied with some cottage industires. Another thing he emphasized was training in hygiene and health besides education.

Asked what the workers should do in cases where lands had been confiscated during the civil disobedience and where zamindars refused to restore the same, Gandhiji said that the only way open to them was to approach the zamindars and appeal to their sense of justice. He hoped zamindars would be brought round, but if they could not they should approach lawcourts and sue them for justice.

Referring to civil resistance, he said that none should practise it, for he had found after attempting to penetrate into the masses's mind all these years since 1920 that they could not develop a sense of discipline.

In the end, he was asked why the clause of habitual wearer of khadi for purposes of franchise was not deleted when it was found that it was impracticable to get habitual wearers even in small numbers. He referred to the same question when it was raised by Mr. Pranjapay in the same city. His reply then was that if they really desired to be with the masses, they must keep that clause in the franchise rules, but that if they wanted to delete it, he was prepared not to exercise his right of veto when the question came up for voting. He would be quite satisfied if there were only one hundred Congressmen who used khadi rather than a crore who did not.

The Leader, 30-7-1934; also *The Hindustan Times,* 27-7-1934

285. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, KANPUR

July 26, 1934

Gandhiji, replying, said that Rs. 501 was too small an amount from Cawnpore women. They were rich and could give more if they wanted to. He was all the same obliged to them and felt sure, he said, that they would give more. He then emphasized that women had a very important part to play in the Harijan uplift movement. He called upon them to take up uplift work and do their best to improve the social and economic condition of the Harijans who, he said, were as important a unit of human society as the caste Hindus. Women, he said, could do a good deal more than men and therefore women must come out and take up the work in all earnestness, sincerity and devotion which was characteristic of the womenfolk. He appealed to them in strong terms to use khadi for therein, he said, lay the salvation of the struggling and starving millions. By using khadi they could provide them with work and food. Charkha, he said, was the panacea for all ills. Charkha, he said, was remarkable and by the use of charkha women could bring about the economic emancipation of the country. He laid great stress on women's education. No social uplift, he said, was possible unless women were educated. An educated woman was an asset not only to the family but to the country as a whole.

He then exhorted them to give up *purdah*, come out and take up the responsible duties which they had to discharge. *Purdah* killed their independence. It took away their spirit, their very life and the sooner the women-folk gave it up the better for all concerned.

The Leader, 30-7-1934

286. LETTER TO M. S. ANEY

[Before *July 27, 1934*][1]

The moving train is responsible for making my bad writing worse.

Neither Malaviyaji nor you have sent me any suggestions for removing your difficulty. I have been taxing myself for a solution. The more I think about it, the clearer I become that the Working Committee resolution is faultless. Non-committal is the only position the Congress can take up. We must not tease the communal boil. The more we tease it, the worse it becomes. In my opinion it is a fatal blunder to turn our attention from the White Paper. If the reforms are not killed, the Award will stand in spite or agitation. The reforms can

[1] In the source, Chandrashankar Shukla explains that this letter was written before the Congress Working Committee meeting at Benares.

be killed by sustained effort. But I heard you say that the Award was worse than the reforms!

Reminiscences of Gandhiji, p. 211

287. DISCUSSION WITH SOCIALISTS' DEPUTATION[1]

BENARES,
July 27, 1934

The deputationists, who were invited by Gandhiji for a free and open discussion, are reported to have told him that the Congress programme as it stood fell far short of the socialist demand and that he should use his influence with the Congress executive to adopt the socialist programme as envisaged in the Patna resolution of the Socialists' Conference.

Gandhiji is understood to have deprecated frequent and unwarranted socialist attacks on the Congress executive and its programme and plainly told socialists that they should either be prepared to abide by the Congress decision without attempting to create unnecessary splits in Congress ranks or take over charge of the Congress machinery including its executive. He and other members of the executive were prepared to hand over control and make room for them if they so desired.

The socialists, who were evidently taken aback, came out disappointed in the main, but somewhat mollified by the assurance that Gandhiji gave them that he would put their suggestions before the Working Committee and after full consultation with them get the Committee to pass a resolution clearly defining the Congress attitude towards socialism, confiscation of property, etc.

The Bombay Chronicle, 28-7-1934

288. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

July 28, 1934

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

Can you not collect from the public what you have spent for the Congress? But if you must pay, it is better to do so as early as possible and avoid interest. Therefore you must give more attention to practice than you are doing.

I am quite clear that you should keep away from the Congress and the elections.

[1] Led by Narendra Dev

I do not at all appreciate Dr. Kitchlew's fast. I hope it will have ended when this reaches you.

I shall await your letter on khadi.

I am ashamed to have put you to all that taxing trouble during my stay.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

289. MANIFESTO OF CONGRESS PARLIAMENTARY BOARD[1]

BENARES,
July 29, 1934

The Parliamentary Board appointed by the All-India Congress Committee at its meeting at Patna on May 19 appeals to the voters of the Legislative Assembly at the forthcoming elections to record their votes in favour of Congress candidates.

The Congress policy has been declared and the Board has received mandate from the Working Committee in the following resolution[2] passed by that body at Bombay on June 18.

Though much has been written for and against the part of the resolution regarding the so-called Communal Award, the line is absolutely clear so far as Congress candidates are concerned. By common consent it is intrinsically bad. It is anti-national. But the Congress cannot refuse to take into,account the attitude of Mussalmans in general, who seem to want the Award; nor can the Congress accept it as the Hindus and Sikhs reject it. No other policy than that explained above is consistent with the aim and history of the Congress, which has throughout stood for peace and unity and founded all its activities on the firm belief that the various communities of India will act justly and honourably towards one another. The only thing, therefore, that Congress candidates and the Congress can do is to promote and assist in securing an agreed solution. Suffice it to say that we shall never reach such a solution by

[1] The source had reported that the manifesto was drafted by Gandhiji. It was released to the Press after its approval by the Board which met in the morning; *vide* the following item.

[2] *Vide* "Resolution on White Paper and Communal Award"

appealing to a third party or power. Then, again, those who have confidence about successful opposition to the White Paper proposals need not feel concerned about the Award. They should know that if the White Paper lapses, the Award, which was framed for the White Paper, must automatically lapse. If the Award is bad, the White Paper is worse. The Parliamentary Board has, therefore, to concentrate the attention of the voters on the rejection of the White Paper and, as the only alternative to it, upon securing and convening a constituent assembly.

The White Paper is in no way designed to secure complete or even partial independence. It can easily retard the nation's progress towards it. It proposes a costly pretence of representative institutions in India, with all the real control retained abroad. The safeguards wherewith it bristles are not conceived for the protection of the interests of India. On the contrary, they can easily be shown to prevent its economic progress, to deepen the poverty of the masses and to perpetuate the British exploitation of and domination over India. If the proposals contained in the White Paper are carried out, there will be no national control over the army or external affairs, and the burden of military expenditure will remain what it has been, and in effect foreign control will continue over the finance and fiscal and economic policy of India. If it be said that the proposals at least seek to give complete autonomy to the provinces, it is hedged in by restrictions that make it a sham and a shadow. No wonder, almost all parties have more or less condemned the White Paper scheme.

What is the alternative? Though the Congress claims to represent the whole nation, in the opinion of the Government it is only one of the political parties, albeit very powerful. Time will show what the position of the Congress is in the country. The voters at the forthcoming elections also may show it somewhat. But it is clear that the Congress must not frame any constitution only to be rejected by the Government. The Working Committee has, therefore, as stated above, suggested an infallible alternative—a constituent assembly to be elected on the basis of adult suffrage or as near as it may be. We know that such an assembly can be convened only by an agreement between the Governing Powers and the people, unless it is after a successful revolution. We have in contemplation the former. We do not despair of its acceptance if the electors choose their representatives in the forthcoming elections with a clear mandate that a constituent assembly is the only alternative to the White Paper. True, the existing

franchise is narrow and therefore not truly representative of the masses. The constitution of the Assembly is, further, such that the members elected by the people cannot play an effective part in it. Nevertheless, if the verdict of the electorate is unequivocal, it cannot be flouted.

If the voters reject the White Paper and insist on a constituent assembly, it will no longer be said by the British bureaucracy that the people are quite satisfied with the methods and measures of the British Government and whatever they plan for them. It will be no small gain to have the illusion dispelled. Every vote for a Congress candidate, that is, for a constituent assembly in place of the White Paper, will help to clear the atmosphere. We hope all communitites will unite on this simple issue.

This rejection of the White Paper and the acceptance of a constituent assembly is not all that the Congress representatives will attempt. They cannot be unmindful of the reactionary legislation passed during the past few years, unhappily often with elected members' votes. Nor can they be unmindful of the way in which the non-violent struggle for liberty was met by Ordinances of extraordinary severity, and of the great sacrifices of thousands of Congressmen, including many women, who went to prison, suffered privations and lathi charges and submitted to heavy fines and confiscation of property. It will be the duty of those Congress candidates who are elected to press for their restoration wherever possible and the repeal of the repressive laws and of the Ordinances, now called Acts of the legislature. The extraordinarily drastic methods adopted towards Congress organizations in the Frontier Province will demand their special attention. It will also be their duty to demand an impartial scrutiny of the methods adopted by the Government in the Assembly for the purpose of meeting terrorism and to take measures to give effect to public opinion in regard to them.

The Congress Parliamentary Party will miss no opportunity of rendering such national service, be it small or great, as is possible through the legislatures. We are fully aware that the powers of the legislatures, provincial and central, are too small for the effort which the nation must make for the realization of its goal of complete independence. The constructive programme of the Congress, the successful prosecution of which alone can make our demand irresistible, can be most effectively carried on only outside the

legislature. But there are matters which can be dealt with only through the legislatures and which will engage the attention of the Congress Party. In order to end the exploitation of the masses, political freedom must include real economic freedom of the starving millions. The economic policy of the Party will, therefore, be in accordance with the fundamental rights and the economic programme contained in the Karachi resolution of the All-India Congress Committee.

The Board, therefore, appeals to voters to unmistakably show that they stand for the Congress methods and objective and that they condemn the present bureaucratic rule and its methods.

The Leader, 1-8-1934

290. SPEECH ON MANIFESTO OF CONGRESS PARLIAMENTARY BOARD, BENARES

July 29, 1934

It is understood that in the course of discussion on the manifesto of the Parliamentary Board at the joint meeting of the Working Committee and the Parliamentary Board, Mahatma Gandhi made a most powerful and moving speech in support of the manifesto. He wanted to remove one misapprehension about the Congress Parliamentary Board. He had come to the conclusion that parliamentary mentality had come to stay in the Congress. It was no longer a question of the obstructionist policy alone of the old Swaraj Party. The Parliamentary Board's idea was of contesting the elections to go to legislatures and remain there for the rejection of the White Paper, the convening of a constituent assembly, the repeal of repressive laws and the carrying on of a constructive programme and other national activities of the Congress to the extent opportunities were available.

Referring to the work of the old Swaraj Party, Mahatma Gandhi is reported to have said that he felt satisfied that they had rendered a good account of themselves in the legislatures. There was not a single speech of the late Pandit Motilal Nehru of which the nation need be ashamed. They had produced a good moral effect.

Answering a question whether Congressmen may not be in a minority. Mahatma Gandhi said that while hoping for a majority, he was willing to concede that they might be in minority; but all depended on the personnel of the minority.

Referring to Mr. Satyamurti, he said that even if he were in the minority of one, he (Mahatma Gandhi) was confident that he would give a good account of himself. The Congress was also learning by experience as the Government was. Several things in connection with civil disobedience and other matters might not have happened as they had happened, had Congressmen been in the legislatures. He

was confident, of course, that Congressmen would come out of the legislatures if they were called upon to do so by the Working Committee of the Congress, but he did not believe in calling them out unless there was a supreme need for the same and the Congressmen in the legislatures had voluntarily agreed on the course. Even if civil disobedience were to be re-started, the Congress might not call on Congress members in the legislatures to come out, for after all, even if a crore of Indians offered civil disobedience they could easily spare about a thousand Congressmen for work in the legislatures. Today the Government were enacting repressive measure after repressive measure, like the Bengal Act recently passed by the Assembly , and claiming before the world that they had the support of the elected members of the Assembly for the purpose. The Congress would be able to deprive the Government of that excuse.

In conclusion, Gandhiji said that a manifesto was to be issued by the Congress Parliamentary Board for all work in legislatures subject to the control of the Congress in matters of policy which would be laid down from time to time.

The Leader, 1-8-1934

291. SPEECH AT CENTRAL BOARD MEETING OFHARIJAN SEVAK SANGH, BENARES[1]

July 29, 1934

There are two questions on which I have to speak to you —one in connection with the nature of the whole organization and the other in connection with the idea of having a training institution for workers for a period or for life. To take up the first question, I know there is a general desire to introduce an element of democracy—voting, election, etc.—into our organization. I was torn between two opposites; but, after having gone through this nine months' tour, I have come to the conclusion that in an organization like ours there is no room for election, democracy or anything of that sort. Ours is a different kind of institution. It is not a people's organization in the ordinary sense. We handle money merely as self-appointed trustees, using it solely for the benefit of the Harijans, and in such a manner that it finds its way directly into their pockets. Ours is an organization formed with a view to doing our duty by those whom we have

[1] Published under the title "A Talk to the Workers", this appeared as "a condensed summary" of Gandhiji's speech "at the conclusion of the proceedings" at Kashi Vidyapith on July 28 and 29.

despised. We are an organization to give effect to the pledge given to Harijans at Bombay by the great meeting[1] held under the chairmanship of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji. The people who pay to the Harijan Fund do so, we assume, in a penitent spirit, and all we have to do is to utilize it for the Harijans. To run an elective institution means expense and delay. Our aim is to distribute the funds among the Harijans with as little expenditure and delay as possible. We do not want any intervening medium between Harijans and ourselves. We are mere trustees, and the trust descends to those whom we appoint. There are people who say the donors ought to have a voice in the administration. I should say, they do not know. To me, he who pays a pie is as much a donor as, say, Ghanshyamdas Birla, who pays ten to fifty thousand. Maybe, the value of that pie is greater than the ten thousand rupees that Ghanshyamdas may give. I have seen in Orissa poor people untying their knots and parting with their coppers. That has given me more hope and greater pleasure than the thousands, however willingly given. The thousands without the coppers would be of little use in this cause of self-purification. But the thousands of the poor donors will never receive the vote. We do not even know their names. And still we are as much responsible to them as to the big donors, or even more. We are a charitable institution, depending for its existence upon honest and efficient management. And if we are to have the highest amount of efficiency, we have to select the best and the most honest workers.

Having said this, I leave it entirely to you to decide. I look at the movement as purely religious, moral or humanitarian. It is to me purely one of reparation and penitence. I do not know to what extent all the lakhs of donors share with me the belief in the penitential character of the work. But so far as I am concerned, I would declare that there is nothing in my mind save the desire to expiate for sins we have been guilty of all these years. Therefore I cannot think of the movement in terms of any political end. Not that it will not have political results, but we need not give a moment's thought to them. The results will be surer, our relation with Mussalmans and other communities will be infinitely purer, if we keep only the larger end in view, and no other, as a result of this movement. I want everyone to dismiss the thought from his mind that our aim has been to raise an army of six crores of *goondas*. That certainly is not how I would

[1] *Vide* "Resolution at The Hindu Leaders Conference, Bombay", 25-9-1932

think of defending Hinduism. I am sure that it can stand against the whole world, if it is purged of the curse of untouchability. This is no narrow movement; it is, I hope, the broadest of movements of our times.

The second question is easier. As a matter of fact, it follows from what I have said. I believe in the ideal of life-service. I want servants whose sole ambition is to devote themselves body, mind and soul to the Harijan cause. If we had ten thousand such workers—I make bold to say even if we had a thousand,we should have startling results. I would welcome a training institution for such workers. In Pinetown, near Durban in South Africa, there is a Trappist monastery[1]. The rigour observed at the time, now more than thirty years ago, when I visited the place, was very great. They had nothing like privacy for themselves; they had one long hall in which they stretched themselves; they had to get up at 2.30 a.m.; they had purely vegetarian food; they strictly observed the vow of silence. Only two or three who had to go to the market or to speak to visitors could speak. All others had to work silently. They were giving instruction to the Zulus. Their proselytization consisted in working among the Zulus and giving them the best of their life. They were workers for life. They were all learned sannyasins. They added to their learning a calling. They wsere carpenters, smiths, porters, shoemakers. They made all sorts of experiments. Their monastery was a model of beauty, a veritable garden, with not a particle of dust anywhere, and there was a sweet silence pervading the whole atmosphere. Zulu students were taken as raw youths and discharged as accomplished artisans. My idea is to have a training institution of this type. If anything, I would do better. But we are today fallen from grace. We used to have this rigorous discipline in our country but we have not progressed, while they have progressed. They have made researches and increased their heritage. If we can make anything like an approach to them, I should be satisfied. If we can get even five persons who are prepared to forget father, mother and children, and to devote themselves to Harijan service, I would have them. They would form the nucleus. But if we cannot aim so high, we may conduct an industrial home or a Harijan hostel or some other thing. Sheth Shivratan Mohatta has an industrial school in Karachi out of an endowment made by his brother. He had got two teachers from

[1] *Vide* "A Band of Vegetarian Missionaries",

Dayalbagh (Agra), which has its own aroma and its own Western finish. The students are kept well, there is a good boarding-house and a good dormitory. There are two departments—boot-making and tailoring. It is not a training institution but an industrial home. The Harijans there are conscious that they will not be discharged without being taught some handicraft, so that, when they come out, they will not be thrown on the streets. We may multiply such institutions.

We, Harijan workers, have not done justice to ourselves. Many of us are not workers even to a passable type. They have not given their whole time to their work; they do it in a leisurely fashion. I have often asked them, 'Do you read *Harijan*?' They have said, 'No'. Out of the three editions of this weekly—English, Gujarati and Hindi—English and Gujarati are self-supporting; Hindi is not. Sufficient reception has not been given to these journals, though much labour is put forth in the preparation of these. Even in this preparation, sufficient help is not coming forth. Workers do not send information, facts. They do not go in for a discussion of problems as they occur from day to day. For, problems occur to workers and not to thinkers. If our workers were alive to their work, they would flood the editors with matter from which poor editors might find it difficult to make selections. Today they are starved. *Harijan* is a workers' journal, for their guidance and for the interchange of their thoughts. I do not want for it essays. I have been pained to be asked questions by workers who should find the answers in the journal, if they were reading it carefully. But many do not read it at all. If you do not read the budget of news collected in these pages, how are you going to hold the movement together? You must know what is being done by sister organizations. We have not got itinerant messengers who will take the story of the vicissitudes of institutions from place to place. That would be a costly medium. But we have *Harijan*. It is full of inform-ation, but it can still be filled with more accurate information and greater variety.

Please do not run away with the idea that I am not capable of recognizing what little has been done. Nice things are there, but they do not need to be recounted. Virtue is its own reward. But I am an inspector. I must show you the blemishes and not tickle your ears with praise for the good things that you have done.

A word about the Harijan Ashram at Sabarmati. It is a big thing. It is not being made full use of. It is nobody's fault. Poor Parikshitlal

is there, but it is beyond his capacity to conduct it. He has also to look to the work of the whole of Gujarat. To utilize this institution fully would be an immense task for anybody. The burden of conducting and maintaining it will be on trustees specially appointed. Many baffling problems arise there from day to day. You can now understand why we want men of the Trappist type before we can make the fullest use of the big Ashram at Sabarmati.

Harijan, 24-8-1934

292. SPEECH ON NATIONAL EDUCATION[1]

July 29, 1934

Gandhiji dwelt at length on the National education as imparted nowadays and remarked that the Vidyapith up till now confined itself to towns only. He said that the time has come when the National education should be spread in villages and pointed out the necessity for the same.

I am fully aware of the part that Vidyapith played in the national movement. I am ever ready to give any advice on the subject.

The Bombay Chronicle, 31-7-1934

293. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

July 30, 1934

MY DEAR ANAND,

I have your letter. Jeramdas has supplemented it with news about both you and Vidya.

I understand that you need Rs. 50 per month from July to October and thereafter would need Rs. 100 per month. I shall arrange for this sum to be paid to you. I want you to reduce your wants at least to the Ashram standard but not at the sacrifice of your or Vidya's or Mahadev's health.

You should get yourself examined by a competent doctor and put your body in order.

Concentrate on your work to the exclusion of everything else. If you do this you will derive the keenest joy from it and that will be

[1] The source had reported that professors of Kashi Vidyapith and many leading national educationists were present.

itself be a great help towards re-building your body.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

294. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

July 30, 1934

Your letter was all right. I got it only today. It was given to me immediately after the meeting of the Working Committee had ended.

There is an error in your suggestion, namely, that at present we are not offering civil disobedience. Appointing Abdul Ghaffar Khan would violate norms. Nobody has understood the difference between the present programme and the previous one. Our actions and words have become too arrogant. That is a sign of violence. Not only do we lack the regard and courtesy which we should show even towards an enemy, but I feel that falsehood and arrogance, instead of diminishing, are increasing among the workers. This requires further explanation, but I don't have time for that just now. If you wish to know the reasons, when we meet and if I have time, you may ask me.

You also have been appointed one of the Treasurers.[1] See that you don't overtax your health. You can't afford to do that.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 149

[1] According to the source four treasurers of the Reception Committee were appointed for the Congress session which was to be held in October in Bombay.

295. STATEMENT ON FAST

BENARES,
July 30, 1934

It is to be hoped that no one would take the trouble to come to Wardha, i.e., from August 7 to 14 next and during convalescence. I would need perfect rest and quiet during these days. The best way of showing their sympathy and sustaining me would be for every friend to do the utmost he or she can to be friend the Harijans in evey way they can and win over opponents by correct and gentle behaviour. Those who have courageously admitted their error will do their share not by joining in the fast but by making a firm resolve not to repeat the error which has occasioned this fast.

The Leader, 1-8-1934

296. DISCUSSION WITH VALLABHBHAI PATEL[1]

[On or after *July 30, 1934*][2]

GANDHIJI: It is my view that we should now let the library remain with the Municipality and, if possible have a separate trust made for it.[3] I think that we are thus making a good use of the library but, of course, if the other trustees do not like this idea, we should not hesitate to ask for its return. This is not a question of prestige, and therefore whatever is proper should be done. I have no doubt Kakasaheb will be big enough not to mind it. When I think over the matter further, I must admit that even if Kakasaheb overlooked these points, I should have considered whether he had the necessary authority. Rushed as I was, I dealt with many matters hurriedly and this was one of those into

[1] In the source, Narahari Parikh explains that the discussion was carried on through writing on a Silence Day after Vallabhbhai Patel's release on July 14. Vallabhbhai Patel met Gandhiji in Banaras on August 1, 1934; *vide* "Speech at Benares Hindu University", 1-8-1934

[2] Narahari Parikh explains that in july 1933, when Sabarmati Ashram was disbanded, the Ashram Library was entrusted to the Ahmedabad Municipality. Later on the Gujarat Vidyapith Library also was disposed of in like manner, after Gandhiji had a discussion with D. B. Kalelkar. Vallabhbhai Patel and some other trustees of the Vidyapith who were in jail at that time could not be consulted. Vallabhbhai Patel, who did not like the move when he heard of it in jail, sought Gandhiji's guidance after his release. *Vide* also "Letter of Vallabhbhai Patel", 21-8-1934 and "Letter to G.V. Mavalankar", 15-9-1934.

[3] *ibid*

which I did not go fully.

VALLABHBHAI PATEL: According to Kakasaheb, it was you who first suggested that the Vidyapith library might be given to the Municipality.

GANDHIJI: I do not remember making this suggestion, but if he says so, I am prepared to accept that I may have done so. . . .[1]

It is true that they too had no authority. I would only say this much that any bequest made by one who had no authority to make it could always be taken back. If, therefore, it is considered proper to take these books back, they should be taken back. I think, however, that if at that time kakasaheb had aske every body, possibly everyone concerned would have agreed. . . .[2]

You say that the trustees had no right. Very well, if that is so then you must take back the books.[3]

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Vol. II, p. 163

297. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BENARES

July 31, 1934

I am very happy that by God's grace I have had a second opportunity to visit Kashiji. The joy becomes greater when I realize that my Harijan tour will end in this holy place. If there are any who hold a different opinion, please come up to this platform and say something. I do not know why the Pandit[4] of the Varnashrama Swarajya sangh could not be present here. Harijan uplift is a religious upheaval. There is no room for prejudice in this task. However hard I may try, I am also prone to make mistakes and I have committed them. I have never claimed that I have never erred nor that I ever will. What I am admitting today is nothing new. Ever since my childhood I have realized this fact. Even as a child, I followed my own way and

[1] Narahari Parikh infers : "The Sardar must then have spoken about the rights of the trustees. . ."

[2] Narahari Parikh infers : "Vallabhbhai must then have said that the trustees had no right to make such a bequest to a Government-controlled institution."

[3] Subsequently, Vallabhbhai Patel, after obtaining legal opinion from K. M. Munshi and Bhulabhai Desai, moved the Municipality which on its part consulted Bahadurji, another distinguished lawyer, and returned the books to the Vidyapith.

[4] Reference is to Devanayakacharya, who, however, came late. In his "Weekly Letter" (*Harijan*, 17-8-1934), Valji G. Desai had explained that "a representative of Varnashrama Swarajya Sangh and Bharata Dharma Mahamandal" had been invited to "present their standpoint before Gandhiji's speech".

never recognized untouchability. I was taught the Ramanama *mantra* which would always protect me. If I had forgotten to admit this self-evident fact, I shall not in the least be ashamed to admit it in this holy place. Untouchability as it exists today has no place in the Shastras. Untouchability is a blot on Hinduism. So many pundits have come here at my invitation and many of their own accord. They have tried to justify the present form of untouchability by quoting the Shastras; but I respectfully beg to say that while attempting to understand the arguments put forth by the pundits I am in no way convinced of them.

I feel sad to say that according to the census published by the Government, untouchables number about seven crores. The census officers do not take the trouble to find out whether every one of these is an untouchable according to the laws of Manu. They write whatever the census inspectors report. Census is taken every ten years and the population increases or decreases in these ten years. A dog can drink from a reservoir, but a thirsty Harijan boy may not. If he goes, he cannot escape being beaten. Untouchability as practised today considers man worse than a dog.

A Harijan was down with pneumonia. A sanatanist doctor was called on payment. He accepted the fees but how could he touch the patient? He sent for a Muslim, gave him a watch and told him: "Please tell me how many times his pulse beats in a minute." The doctor was given the pulse-count, he wrote the prescription and left. A second doctor was then called. He examined the patient's lungs and heart carefully and then prescribed medicine; the sick man then recovered. Such kind of untouchability practised now has no sanction in the Shastras. In my opinion no *shastri* will be prepared to admit it. Neither my mind nor my heart will admit that such untouchability has sanction of the Shastras.

I shall say nothing more now.[1] It is my first duty to give Panditiji an opportunity to speak. At this time I shall say only one word more. I am very grateful for the address of welcome given to me by the Kashi pundits. I consider it your blessings to me. I am thankful for the money presented to me. Although it is a small sum, I have been promised that efforts will be made to collect more money. Kindly remain quiet and listen to Panditji with attention and follow the dictates of your reason as regards the removal of untouchability. I

[1] Devanavakacharya had just arrived.

hope you will all listen to Panditji's speech with due respect.[1]

After what Pandit Malaviyaji has said from the bottom of his heart, I have nothing more to add. I thank Pandit Devanayakacharya for the valuable advice he gave you in his calm and short speech. I thank you all for having listened to the speeches quietly. But if I do not reply to Devanayakacharyaji it would be considered bad manners. Panditji's chief objection was in connection with the Temple-entry Bill. I shall have no objection if, as Malaviyaji has suggested, there is a talk between us both and some way is found in the future by which with the consent of temple-goers there would be no legal obstruction to temple-entry by Harijans. I have already said that without the consent of the Hindus no law will be made on this subject. Rest assured with this reply. Regarding the Bill, I made no reference to it in my Harijan tour; I did not even mention the name of the Bill. This has to be said about discussion: Today or in the future, discussions can take place anywhere; but religion is not a subject to be understood by the intellect but one that is accepted by the heart. Except the temple-entry question I do not see anyone against any other question. I neither wish to force anyone nor do I wish to quarrel with anyone. None should be afraid of me. I can do no harm nor evil to sanatana dharma. I am also a follower of the same sanatana dharma that you profess.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 10-8-1934

[1] In his speech, Devanayakacharya opposed the Temple-entry Bill and said that Gandhiji was introducing an innovation undermining the importance of sanatana dharma. Madan Mohan Malaviya who spoke next made a forceful appeal in support of the reform.

298. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

August 1, 1934

CHI. PREMA,

I got your fairly long and frank letter.

Parents don't think or talk about their children's good health. They think and talk about their diseases, which are not of the body only. I am not surprised to learn that you are observing the Ashram rules. I would have been surprised indeed had you not observed them.

May you succeed in your noble aims.

Every day is one's birthday. We are born every day and we die every day and are born again. But, following convention, we regard a particular day of the year as our bithday. You certainly have my blessings for that day and for all other days of the year.

I am sending this reply through Narandas and thereby saving five pice. Narandas also will write to you. I have to write to him today and so, instead of sending the letter through Dhurandhar, I am sending it through him.

Please keep writing to me. Your description of that place was good. This letter is being written before the morning prayer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10357. Also C.W. 6796. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

299. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

August 1, 1934

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. It is strange that Santok can do no work. How is it that Baba[1] has been brought up in such a way that he doesn't let her attend to anything else? How do the children of the poor grow?

Ask Kusum, Lilavati and others to write to me when they feel inclined to do so. They should not, however, expect any letter from me, for I shall not be able to write any.

[1] Madhav, son of Rukmini Bazaj

I got Prema's long letter. A reply[1] to her is enclosed.

Amala is extremely frank, but she has no common sense at all. If I sent her to you, she would waste your money. It is better that, so long as I live at one place, I should shoulder her responsibility. When I give up a fixed residence, I will see what to do about her. I will try to fix her permanently at the place where she may be at that time.

What work is Keshu doing? Where does he live? I often meet Rukhi here. Her health cannot be described as very good.

You should keep up the practice of writing to me on a fixed day once every week, whether or not there is any special business. If there is anything particular to write about, you may write as often as necessary. A postcard will do.

I am thinking about the dairy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U/I. Also C.W. 8405. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

300. SPEECH AT BANARES HINDU UNIVERSITY

August 1, 1934

The Hindu University is not new to me. Since its inception[2] Malaviyaji had me associated with it and it remains exactly so to this day. If there has been any change, the association has been strengthened and my regard for this University is increasing. With the progress of this University there should be progress in dharma as well; this is Pandit Malaviyaji's idea. I hope students will acquire learning and will make good use of it and not accept a narrow view of religion. A broad-minded religion accepts all other religions in its fold. This is the auspicious occasion of Lokamanya Tilak's anniversary and I have come to tell you what we should do about one aspect of religion. I shall not speak of Lokamanya's political strength; I have also no freedom to touch upon that subject. I wish to tell you at this time what Tilak Maharaj said about religion. You should know that Lokamanya had great sympathy in his heart for the Harijan brothers. In our exchange of thoughts and ideas with each other, he said that in

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] For Gandhiji speech on the occasion, *vide* "Spech at Benares Hindu University", 6-2-1916

the *dharmashastra* there is no sanction for untouchability and there cannot be because truth ranks highest in the Hindu religion. If truth was put in one scale of the balance and all the rest in the other, even then the scale with truth in it will go down. No pundit can find anywhere in the Vedas, Puranas or history things said contrary to the principles of religion. There is no mention of untouchability in other religions. Hinduism alone seems to have taken a monopoly. There are several things mentioned in our religion which are not found elsewhere. If the varna system is abolished in our country, then Hinduism will also disappear. There is no connection between the varnashrama and the present-day concept of untouchability. My faith in this is growing stronger and after nine months of this tour I can avow it with greater conviction.[1]

I have been asked by Acharya Anandshankar Dhruva to say a few words on the *Gita* to the students of the Kashi Vishvavidyalaya. It is not without hesitation that I have accepted the invitation. What right can a layman like myself have to discourse on a theme like this in the presence of a savant like him? I have neither his profound scholarship, nor the deep study of our ancient religious lore which Pandit Malaviyaji, for instance, has. Sardar Vallabhbhai, in his charcteristic manner, asked me this morning whether scavengers, cultivators, and weavers like him and me were not altogether out of court in a city of pundits like Kashi and in the presence of such learned pundits as Malaviyaji and Acharya Dhruva, and in a way he was right. But I have come here, not with any pretence to learning , but only to tell you what reaction the *Gita* had on lay natures like mine and the Sardar's. I wonder Whether you have even a distant idea of how profoundly it affected the Sardar during his imprisonment. I am here to bear witness to the fact that in the Yeravda Prison it gave him more strength and sustenance than meat and drink. To read the *Gita* in the original he set about learning Sanskrit with the help of Pandit Satavalekar's Sanskrit self-instructor, and once he had started on it, the book seldom left his hands. It occupied him from morning till night. It was not an obsession of an unoccupied mind, as you might be tempted to think, but the result of deep thought. 'Which is the one book that can be to the Hindus what the Bible is to the Christians or the Koran to the Maussalmans?' We asked ourselves. Is it

[1] This paragraph is translated from the Hindi report in *Harijan Sevak.* What follows in reproduced from *Harijan.* It appeared under the title "*Gita*—The Mother".

the Vedas? No. The *Bhagavata?* No. *Devipurana*? No. Early in my childhood I had felt the need of a scripture that would serve me as an unfailing guide through the trials and temptations of life. The Vedas could not supply that need, if only because to learn them would require fifteen to sixteen years of hard study at a place like Kashi, for which I was not ready then. But the *Gita*, I had read somewhere, gave within the compass of its 700 verses the quintessence of all the Shastras and the Upanishads. That decided me. I learnt Sanskrit to enable me to read the *Gita.* Today the *Gita* is not only my Bible or my Koran; it is more than that—it is my mother. I lost my earthly mother who gave me birth long ago; but this eternal Mother has completely filled her place by my side ever since. She has never changed, She has never failed me. When I am in difficulty or distress, I seek refuge in Her bosom. Often in the course of my struggle against untouchability, I am confronted with conflicting opinions delivered by doctors of learning. Some of them tell me that untouchability as it is practised today has no sanction in Hinduism and they bless my efforts to eradicate it; but there are some others who maintain that untouchability has been an essential part of Hinduism from the very beginning. Which authority should I follow under the circumstances? I feel absolutely at sea. The Vedas and the *smritis* are of no avail to me. I then approach the Mother and say, "Mother, these learned pundits have put me in a predicament. Help me out of my perplexity." And the Mother, with a smile, says in reply: "The assurance[1] held out by me in the ninth chapter is not meant for the Brahmins only, but for the sinner and the outcaste, the downtrodden and the disinherited, too.' But in order to be worthy of that promise, we must be obedient and devoted children of the Mother and not disobedient and disloyal children, who only make a pretence of devotion.

It is sometimes alleged against the *Gita* that it is too difficult a work for the man in the street. The criticism, I venture to submit, is ill-founded. The *Gita* enabled the late Lokamanya, out of his encyclopaedic learning and study, to produce a monumental commentary. For him it was a store-house of profound truths to exercise his intellect upon. But that need not scare away a lay reader. If you find all the eighteen chapters too difficult to negotiate, make a careful study of the first three chapters only. They will give you in a

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, IX. 32

nutshell what is propounded in greater detail and from different angles in the remaining fifteen chapters. Even these three chapters can be further epitomized in a few verses that can be selected from these chapters. Add to this the fact that at three distinct[1] places the *Gita* goes even further and exhorts to us to leave alone all 'isms' and take refuge in the Lord alone, and it will be seen how baseless in the charge that the message of the *Gita* is too subtle or complicated for lay minds to understand. The *Gita* is the universal Mother. She turns away nobody. Her door is wide open to anyone who knocks. A true votary of the *Gita* does not know what disappointment is. He ever dwells in perennial joy and peace that passeth understanding. But that peace and joy come not to the sceptic or to him who is proud of his intellect or learning. It is reserved only for the humble in spirit who brings to Her worship a fullness of faith and an undivided singleness of mind. There never was a man who worshipped Her in that spirit and went back disappointed.

Our students are prone to be upset by trifles. A trivial thing like failure in an examination plunges them into the darkest despair. The *Gita* inculcates upon them the duty of perseverance in the face of seeming failure. It teaches us that we have a right to action only but not to the fruit thereof and that success and failure are one and the same thing at bottom.[2] It calls upon us to dedicate ourselves, body, mind and soul, to pure duty, and not to become mental voluptuaries at the mercy of all chance desires and undisciplined impulses. As a satyagrahi, I can declare that the *Gita* is ever presenting me with fresh lessons. If somebody tells me that this is my delusion, my reply to him would be that I shall hug this delusion as my richest treasure.

I would advise the students to begin their day with an early morning recitation of the *Gita.* I am a lover and devotee of Tulsidas. I adore the great spirit that gave to an aching world the allhealing *mantra* of Ramanama. But I am here today, not to present Tulsidas to you, but to ask you to take up the study of the *Gita,* not in a carping or critical spirit, but in a devout and reverent spirit. Thus approached, She will grant your every wish. It is no joke, I admit, remembering by heart all the eighteen chapters but it is worth while to make the attempt. Once you have tasted of its sweet nectar, you attachment to it will grow from day to day. The recitation of the *Gita* verses will

[1] *Bhagavad Gita,* III. 30, VIII. 7 and XVIII. 66
[2] *Bhagavad Gita,* II. 47 and 48

support you in your trials and console you in your distress, even in the darkness of solitary confinement. And, if with these verses on your lips you receive the final summons and deliver up your spirit, you will attain *Brahmanirvana*—the Final Liberation. What that blessed state is, I leave it for your learned Acharyas to explain to you.

Harijan Sevak, 10-8-1934; also *Harijan*, 24-8-1934

301. SPEECH AT HARIJANS' MEETING, BENARES[1]

August 1, 1934

In the course of his address to them, Gandhiji said that the Harijan movement was fraught with immense possibilities and held within it the seeds of reconciliation, not only between the various communities in India, but also the white and the coloured races of the world.

The Municipality and the citizens of Benares should be ashamed of the fact, he said, that Harijan quarters were situated just near public latrines and that Harijans had to live in a place unfit even for cattle. It was up to the Municipality to construct decent houses for them in good and pleasant surroundings.

Harijans must fulfil their part of the programme by giving up beef, carrion, liquor, gambling and the idea of superiority and inferiority even among themselves.[2]

Mahatma Gandhi reiterated his view that anti-untouchability was not against the Shastras. If anyone could convince him that this movement was against the Shastras he would be the first person to give it up.

Harijan, 17-8-1934; also *The Leader*, 2-8-1934

302. LETTER TO NARENDRA DEVA

BENARES,
August 2, 1934

DEAR NARENDRA DEVA,

I was thankful for the two hearty meetings[3] with the socialist friend during the all too few days I have been with you and enjoyed your hospitality.

I promised to study your draft programme and let you have my criticism on it. I cannot say I have studied it as carefully as I would

[1] *The Leader* had reported that the meeting was held at Central Hindu School.
[2] What follows is reproduced from *The Leader*.
[3] *Vide* pp. 253-4.

have liked to. The following therefore is meant as a cursory criticism by no means exhaustive.

I think that it is wrong to call the party 'Congress Socialist Party' unless you apply for permission to make it part of the Congress organization. But it would be quite proper to call it 'All-India Socialist Party of Congressmen'. I am sure you realize the significance of the distinction.

I miss in your draft constitution acceptance of the Congress objective of attainment of *purna* swaraj by legitimate and peaceful means.

If it is an intentional omission I can understand it. For your object seems to be far different from that of the Congress. You perhaps claim that it is far ahead of the object of the Congress. Even so you cannot then call yourself a Congress party.

The object of the Congress is to form an independent State. What that State will be we can but dimly guess. Some of its features we have already determined. Experience teaches us daily new things to add. But your enunciation of the socialist object frightens me. The implications of all the three principles are too vast for my comprehension. They make an intoxicating programme. I fear all intoxicants.

I now take by way of illustration what appear to me to be objectionable items in your programme. Items 7 and 8 are contrary to the present policy of the Congress. Though I have all my life identified myself with the masses and renounced possession of private property, I do not contemplate the elimination of the princes and the landlords nor do I contemplate redistribution of land to peasants. I aim at reformation of the princes and the landlords. It is possible, without a violent redistribution of land, to secure for tenants rights which virtually amount to ownership. I like item 11, which 7 and 8 and some others seem to me to contradict. To everyone "according to his needs" should be, in my opinion, a perfect formula if you can find place for "just" before "needs". That alone sums up all you can wish for for the most helpless and forlorn among the millions of our. . . [1]. Your fifth method, as I conceive it, is a negation of non-violence. I fail to find any justification for refusal to enter at any stage into negotiations on the constitutional issue with the British Government. The Congress did not adopt that policy even in the

[1] The source is illegible here.

heyday of non-co-operation. I am sure this is a hasty interpolation.

Your "general strikes of workers and peasants" without any qualif-ication is too dangerous for a sober, non-violent programme.

Your immediate demands are attractive with the exception of a few items. But I find nothing in your methods to show that you have any hope of immediate attainment.

I draw your attention to glaring omissions:

Removal of untouchability.

Communal unity.

Khaddar as symbol of identity with the masses and immediate occupation till a better is found for the millions who are unemployed for six or four months in the year.

Total prohibition of intoxicating drugs and drinks.

I plead for a drastic revision of the whole constitution. We are both labouring under a heavy handicap in that Jawaharlal, who has given us the *mantra* of socialism, is not in our midst, and I consider him to be the natural wearer of the Congress crown of thorns when I and other elderly men and women have been permitted to take well-deserved rest. I feel sure that if he was in our midst, he would have hastened slowly. I suggest your presenting the country with practical socialism in keeping with Indian conditions instead of scientific socialism as your programme has been called. I am glad that the programme you have given me is but draft though prepared by an influential committee appointed for the purpose. It would be wise, if when you settle your programme finally, you will associate with you men who have socialist leanings and have experience of actual conditions.

Yours sincerely,

From a facsimile: *Mahatma,* Vol. III, between pp. 344 and 345

303. LETTER TO GOVINDDAS

BENARES,
[*August*][1] *2, 1934*

BHAI GOVINDDASJI,

I have gone through your letter. My article or statement did not at all imply that Congress Committees should not or cannot be formed in the Indian States. The Committees already existing such as the Baghelkhand District Congress Committee about which you wrote to me should certainly continue to exist. It will, of course, be a matter of extreme regret if such committees are disallowed in any State.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Madhya Pradesh aur Gandhiji, p. 103

304. LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

BENARES,
August 2, 1934

There are grave objections to organizing things in accordance with your demand. The Congress would, in that case, be charged with complete nullification of its resolution and this it cannot afford. First, only the Parliamentary Board can properly deliberate over this because that alone is in possession of correct information regarding the number and the names of candidates to be put up and their respective constituencies. But the Parliamentary Board itself will find it well-nigh impossible to accept the suggested arrangement. It has already put up candidates at many places and the work too has been started. To withdraw the Congress candidates and put up your candidates instead would have, in view of the Bombay Resolution[2], an extremely adverse effect. It is also very difficult to judge whether candidates whom you want to be put up on your behalf can be found among tried Congressmen in sufficiently large number. What we suggested was that you yourself, Shri Aney and only a few other important persons whose participation you consider most essential should come. They should be confirmed Congressmen and willing to

[1] The source has "2-3-1934", but Gandhiji was in Benares in August 1934.
[2] *Vide* Appendix " Resolution on White Paper and Communal Award"

18-6-1934

co-operate fully with the members of the Parliamentary Board in all other respects except the Communal Award. I feel this would be the proper course and I do not expect good results from any other. My appeal to you even now is to accept this scheme and not to involve yourself in the botheration of forming a new group. It would add to the prestige of both sides if you avoid any contest with the Congress candidates. You have left the Parliamentary Board regarding it as your dharma. If we all work placing this dharma before us we shall all benefit and achieve our objectives. Competition is bound to be very harmful. I am confident that your opposition by itself would suffice as an expression of disapproval of Communal Award. I hope you will respond to my humble appeal.

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

305. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, BENARES [1]

[*August 2, 1934*][2]

It is a tragedy that religion for us means today nothing more than restriction on food and drink, nothing more than adherence to a sense of superiority and inferiority. Let me tell you that there cannot be grosser ignorance than this. Birth and observance of forms cannot determine one's superiority or inferiority. Character is the only determining factor. God did not create men with the badge of superiority or inferiority, and no scripture which labels a human being as inferior or untouchable because of his or her birth can command our allegience; it is a denial of God and Truth which is God. God, who is the embodiment of Truth and Right and Justice, can never have sanctioned a religion or practice which regards a fifth of our vast population as untouchables. I want you, therefore, to rid yourselves of this monstrous notion. Untouchability attaching to unclean work is there, must be there. It applies to every one of us, but the moment we have washed ourselves clean of dirt or filth, we cease to be untouchable. But no work or conduct can render a man or woman untouchables for all time. Sinners we are all to a greater or less extent, and every one of our spiritual books—*Gita, Bhagavata,* and Tulsi

[1] This appeared under the title "Plain Talk to Women". The meeting was held in Harish Chandra School.

[2] From Valji G. Desai's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan,* 17-8-1934

Ramayana—declares in no uncertain terms that whoever seeks refuge in Him, whoever takes His name, shall be free from sin. That covenant is for all mankind.

There is another simple test that I want you to apply to this question. Every species, human and sub-human, has some distinguishing mark, so that you can tell a man from a beast, or a dog from a cow and so on. Have the so-called untouchables any distinguishing mark declaring them to be untouchables? They are as much human as every one of us, and we do not regard even sub-human beings as bearing the mark of untouchability. Why and whence, then, this monstrous injustice? It is not religion, but the grossest species of irreligion. I want you to cast off that sin, if you still happen to have it in you.

The only way in which we can expiate this sin of centuries is to befriend the Harijans by going to their quarters, by hugging their children as you do your own, by interesting yourselves in their welfare, by finding out whether they get enough to eat, whether they get pure water to drink, whether they have the fresh light and air that you enjoy as of right. The other way is for each of you to start the spinning sacrifice and to pledge vourselves to wear khadi, which supports millions of these submerged human beings. The spinning sacrifice will help you in some slight measure to identify yourselves with them, and every yard of khadi you wear will mean some coppers going into the pockets of the Harijans and the poor. The last thing is to contribute your mite to the Harijan Fund, which has no other end but the amelioration of the lot of the Harijans.

Harijan, 31-8-1934

306. THE ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY BILL[1]

August 3, 1934

This interpretation of the Bill is not sustained by lawyers. Harijans will be shut out of temples effectively where *savarna* Hindus are against their entry, though not on the ground of untouchability. If there is any doubt about it, the Bill can be amended; but I hold that in principle it is absolutely necessary, more so than the Temple-entry Bill.

Harijan, 3-8-1934

307. LETTER TO J. C. GUPTA

PATNA,
August 3, 1934

DEAR MR. GUPTA,

Thanks for your letter. I cannot help feeling that your resignation is a mistake. You were at liberty, although a member of Parliamentary Board, to agitate against separate electorates and for any agreed solution that you thought fit. And as a member perhaps you would have been more effective. In any case you will earn universal thanks if you can procure even an agreed solution for Bengal.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] This appeared as reply to a letter to the editor from Basant Kumar Chatterjee, which read : "Gandhiji has often declared that he is not in favour of temple-entry by the Harijans, unless the majority of Hindus of the upper castes are in favour of the innovation. If, however, the Anti-untouchability Bill is passed, it will secure temple-entry to Harijans, even though the majority of Hindus of the higher castes are against such temple-entry. Will Gandhiji kindly state whether he is against the Anti-untouchability Bill ?"

308. LETTER TO SURENDRANATH CHATTERJI

PATNA,
August 3, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 18th ultimo. The question you raised baffles a decisive answer. The vote of a majority cannot bind a minority, in religious matters, but that must surely mean that the minority secedes from the majority. As to legislation, it is necessary when law prevents the growth of religion. Legislation was the rule of the day during the pure Hindu period.

SURENDRANATH CHATTERJI

65 LALIT GHAT, BENARES

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

309. LETTER TO MULKRAJ

PATNA,
August 3, 1934

DEAR LALA MULKRAJ,

I have your wire to which I sent a reply yesterday. Your budget of expenses was signed by Panditji, some days back, but pressure of work prevented my sending it to you.

Panditji has promised to send you the cheque at once on hearing from you. If there is any delay you will please write to me. Meanwhile, I would like a copy of the Congress Resolution, trustdeed, and deed appointing the Committee of manager[s].

Panditji desires that the work should be started forthwith and that a report of the progress with expenses should be sent from month to month.

I leave for Wardha tomorrow morning.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

LALA MULKRAJ
JALLIANWALA BAGH COMMITTEE
AMRITSAR, PUNJAB

From the Manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

310. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

PATNA,
August 3, 1934

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I have your letter. I have given to Mantreswar public answers to your questions. I have come to no agreement with Malaviyaji and I have no authority either, but I have suggested[1] that Malaviyaji should be satisfied if two or three of his nominees, being all Congressmen, are left uncontested. He won't be satisfied with less than 22 seats. I have said that would be impossible. I myself could not agree to any such proposal. I fancy that we could not object to expression of dissent on the part of the members of general committees, but we could and should resist such action on the part of members of Working Committee, or such committees. These latter are the executives pledged to carry out the programme of provincial majorities.

Though I am somewhat broken up since you left us, I share your confidence that I shall pull through the fast. I have no objection to the Parliamentary Board meeting, but Sardar would insist on protecting me from it.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

311. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

August 3, 1934

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your letter. What you say is correct. Follow Narandas-bhai's advice. Sushilabehn also is there now. You may consult her too. Now think over my argument. Do you want a degree or knowledge? Do you want education which brings you knowledge or to work for some sort of degree? Do you know that a degree does not serve the purpose of knowledge[2]? . . .

From Gujarati: C.W. 9873

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Madan Mohan Malaviya", 2-8-1934

[2] The rest of the letter is illegible in the source.

312. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHARMA

August 3, 1934

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. There is no longer any necessity, I suppose, of answering all your letters. But you may send me those you want to be dealt with.[1]

I do not see any impropriety in accepting from one's brothers the financial help they can offer without hesitation. So they may give what help they can.

It is not right that you should feel yourself exiled there. This attitude, if not corrected, is bound to have a bad effect on Ramdas.[2]

Why do you think we have all hampered your work? For myself, I have endeavoured to give you as much encouragement as I could. You must tell me if I have unwittingly done something to the contrary.

How is it that Devi[3] is suffering from typhoid, and, if he is, don't you have any treatment for it? You may treat the children as you think best, I have no wish to interfere unduly.

Blessings to all from

BAPU

[PS.]

Shirshasana or *ardha-sarvangasana* are effective in case of invol-untary emission, so also *siddhasana* and *pranayama*.

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, 1932-48*, between pp. 82 and 83

[1] Hiralal Sharma used to send daily reports to Gandhiji who would return them with his suggestions. On this occasion due to indisposition Gandhiji had returned all the reports without comments.

[2] Ramdas was under the addressee's treatment at Khurja.

[3] Deviprasad, addressee's son

313. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

August 3, 1934

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Your letter. I am unable to draw any conclusions till Damodardas sends a reply to your letter. I must state this much that whatever I say must be regarded only as a suggestion. It should be followed only if acceptable both to the mind and the heart, not otherwise. This being my attitude you are certainly at liberty to follow your own inclination. I am awaiting Damodardas's letter in order to find out if I have to alter my opinion in any way so that I may inform you.

You must be keeping well. It is good that you have reached a compromise at Delhi but nothing should be done at the cost of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2416

314. SPEECH AT BIHAR CENTRAL RELIEF COMMITTEE MEETING, PATNA[1]

August 3, 1934

It is in the fitness of things that we are having a resolution recording confidence and not expressing any elaborate appreciation. There were two reasons, one being that the report is not yet in the hands of the public and, secondly, the general committee in eulogizing the work of its Managing Committee would be eulogizing itself. But the resolution is necessary in order to tell the public that the Managing Committee retains their confidence and that the general committee wants it to go ahead with its work. It is worth nothing that the Committee has expended just little less than half of the funds as its disposal; not that it could not spend it all, but it knew its limitations. Thus it might have attempted to clear the sand-covered areas and sunk

[1] The source had reported that the first general meeting of the Earthquake Relief Committee, after its reconstitution, was held in Wheeler Senate Hall. Rajendra Prasad presided. Gandhiji spoke after moving the following resolution : "The general meeting of the Bihar Central Relief Committee, having received the report of the Managing Committee regarding work done up to the 30th June, records its confidence in the Managing Committee."

the whole of the funds in sand. I am in a position to move this resolution because though I have not been able to go through the report, I have been in constant touch with the actual work of the Committee.

There is a complaint that the Committee has not been mindful of the interests of the middle classes inasmuch as it has spent something like twenty-two thousand rupees for helping the middle classes. The complaint is hardly just because the total amount allotted is Rs. 5 lakhs and I am here to give the assurance that the balance will be spent for the middle classes. The critics must remember that those responsible for distribution of relief themselves belong to the middle classes and could not be accused of neglecting them. Besides, Government has distributed Rs. 22 lakhs for their relief, the Government being in a better position to ascertain the condition of these classes. The Bihar Central Relief Committee had naturally to concentrate its attention to the relief of the poorer classes inasmuch as it knows their condition and their grievances better than any other agency. It was well that there was a natural division of functions between the official agency and our agency. There was also another reason why relief to the middle classes could be deferred for a while, for they had much more staying power than the poor. I can assure you that not only the balance of Rs. 4,80,000 would be expended for the help of the middle classes, but that even more will be voted if it is needed and is available. I would ask everyone, who could afford, to go in for a copy of the report and study it. Every little contribution has been acknowledged. I would invite everyone to study the report critically and pass on his criticism to the Committee.

I am thankful to the railway companies and the Tata Company for the concessions and the help they have extended to the Committee but I associate myself with Babu Rajendra Prasad that they should continue these concessions unless they have strong reasons not to do so.

I am thankful that we had a band of volunteers and workers to help us in the work. Volunteer work is done ever so much efficiently and honestly than paid work. I hope and pray that the presentcalamity will have taught us the lessons of resourcefulness and self-help so that in case of future emergencies we may not be found wanting.

I am sorry that we are not ready with the full audited accounts today. This is a thing that public organizations can illafford to neglect

and we should always be ready to account for our receipts from minute to minute and from day to day. No care in this matter would be too great.

In conclusion, I would ask you to note that the committee is not making a further appeal for funds mainly at my instance. It is not that we don't want more money. The sum of Rs. 83 lakhs received for the Viceroy's Fund and by the Bihar Central Relief Committee is hardly enough for our needs but we cannot appeal for more so long as we have not disbursed all the funds at our disposal. Let the public, however, remember that we may have to make an appeal in future and let them be prepared to pay as generously as they have done especially when they know that all the monies are well spent and every pie is accounted for.

The Searchlight, 5-8-1934

315. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[1]

PATNA,
August 3, 1934

INTERVIEWER: Are you now in a position to say what your programme will be in the very near future ?

GANDHIJI: So far as I am aware this month will be devoted to fasting and convalescence. Thereafter what is in store for me in September I have no notion. But I can say this much. I am in no hurry to find myself in a prison. On the contrary, I shall try to avoid it to the best of my ability. If it becomes possible for me to avoid imprisonment for any length of time, I hope to be able to devote it undoubtedly to the continuation of the Harijan work and the rest of the constructive programme of the Working Committee, for I swear by that programme, and I am positive that if we are to mount to freedom through really non-violent means, the workers will have to qualifythemselves for such constructive work and devote themselves whole-heartedly to it.

Though I am mainly responsible for the coming into being of the Congress Parliamentary Board, I have always insisted that it is the least part of the national programme. It will be useless, in terms of swaraj, without the backing of the constructive programme, not one on

[1] Accorded jointly to *The Hindu* and *The Hindustan Times*

mere paper but in solid substantial Indiawide work. If God enables me to do so I hope to be able to show in its fulness the marvellous potency of the Working Committee's resolution[1] on swadeshi, passed at Benares.

But what about the split between Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Aney on the one hand and the Working Committee and the Parliamentary Board on the other?

You may call it a split if you like. In spite of Herculean efforts on either side to prevent the parting we saw that there were fundamental differences which were not to be overcome and we have parted as friends and hope to remain as such although we might be fighting.

Indeed I am not without hope that the fight could be avoided. How it will be, I do not know. How it can be, I do know. I have submitted my proposal[2] to Pandit Malaviya. If it comes to anything it will have to go to the Working Committee and the Parliamentary Board. I have no power whatsoever to come to any agreement.

But rumour has it that you and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel have agreed to divide half the available seats with Panditji and those who represent his point of view.

I can give you a summary contradiction of that rumour. Indeed, any such division will be a betrayal of trust. After all, the Working Committee's resolution enunciates a very big principle. If the members of the Working Committee had no confidence in the correctness of their position they would have been wrong to lose the co-operation of such men as Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Aney. The Working Committee and the Parliamentary Board have, therefore, to work out the comprehensive resolution on the White Paper and the Communal Award to its full extent and know, as also demonstrate, the efficacy of all its parts. That surely cannot be done by a surrender of half the available seats to the representatives of the view for which Pandit Malaviyaji stands. I would, therefore, urge the public to discount all rumours.

Pandit Malaviya is a seasoned servant of the nation. He is one amongst the very few of the oldest of Congressmen with an unbroken record of brilliant service and sacrifice. I have no manner of doubt that he will do nothing to undermine the Congress influence whether they put up a fight or it becomes possible, as I hope it will be, to come to an honourable understanding. But let me not anticipate.

[1] *Vide* "Resolution on Swadeshi"
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Madan Mohan Malaviya", 2-8-1934

We have read the Working Committee's resolution[1] on discipline. There are Congressmen whose views coincide with those of Pandit Malaviya. In such cases, where they are members of Congress Committees, should they retire, as Mr. Aney has done ?

I personally do not think so. Disciplinary action in such matters can only extend to bodies corresponding to the Central Working Committee. Thus, the Provincial Congress Committees have members who may represent Malaviyaji's point of view and advocate it in the Press or on the platform without being considered guilty of indiscipline, even as members of the All-India Congress Committee expressing views opposed to those held by the Working Committee will not be. But every Provincial Congress Committee has or should have its own Executive Committee corresponding to the Central Working Committee. That is the real Executive which has to carry out loyally and without murmur the whole of the Congress programme. And if any of the members has no faith in the programme he should retire from the Executive. But so long as he is in it, he may not criticize the programme either in the Press or on the platform. This is the view I have always held. Any other attitude will break to pieces any organization.

Is it likely that you will devote any time now or in the near future to a special effort at tackling the terrorist problem? What special methods do you contemplate employing to bring revolutionary young men under control?

Indeed I am a determined opponent of the cult of violence. Not a day passes when I do not do or think something about this question which is one of life and death to me. But I would like to do ever so much more than I am able to at present. For that, however, I need help from outside, both Indian and English, official and non-official. The cult of violence is not going to die easily. I entertain no extravagant dreams about the establishment of the kingdom of non-violence on the earth. If I get the atmosphere for the work that I need, I would love to bury myself for some time in Bengal and see what possibility there is for me to battle with violence. But I have patience. God will open the way for me, if he wants me to work more actively than I am doing in that direction.[2]

It is a matter of great thankfulness for me that the tour was

[1] *Vide* "Resolution on Discipline"

[2] According to the source, Gandhiji was then "asked to give his impressions about the Harijan tour".

finished without interruption and according to the programme that was settled from time to time. The impression left on my mind is that untouchability is on its last legs. Millions who attended the meetings were not all utterly ignorant of all I had to say to them. They were certainly not indifferent. The intensive propaganda carried on by sanatanists had left no room for ignorance or indifference. Nothing was left undone to prejudice the mass mind against the movement. The grossest falsehoods were broadcast. It would be wrong, therefore, to say that the attendance of multitudes at the meetings was purely a personal compliment to me and had no reference to my message. I am quite sure that the message has appealed to the reason of the masses. I am also fully aware that all of them are not yet ready to translate their beliefs into practice. But I consider it a tremendous gain that the masses have begun to believe in the truth of the message. It makes the task of the workers easier than before. To show how heartily the masses have taken part in the movement. I should mention that the eight lakhs of rupees collected during the past nine months represent contributions from the poorest. It has occupied hours, from day to day, of our accountants to count coppers and small coins, whether collected at public meetings or at railway stations. People are not known to contribute to the cause which they have utterly disliked. The third thing I should say about the tour is that a demonstrable awakening, on a large scale, has taken place among the Harijans. Many of them have made unsolicited statements before me that the position had considerably advanced and that they had confidence that untouchability would be a thing of the past in the near future. I share their confidence. If the movement goes on as it is doing at present—and I have no doubt that it will go on—it must cause daily increasing awakening among Harijans and when they fully realize how they can substantially help themselves, and how in many cases the law is with them, whether *savarna* Hindus like it or not, Harijans would make good their position. I would, of course, hope that *savarna* Hindus will realize the wickedness of untouchability as it is practised today and get rid of it themselves rather than that they should be compelled to do so by circumstances beyond their control. Whatever happens, untouchability cannot survive for many years.

Much mischievous agitation has been led on this question in spite of my having cleared the position at the beginning stage of the Harijan tour. No temple was opened where there was not a virtual consensus of opinion, in favour of opening, on the part of those who

were in the habit of visiting those temples. Nobody has ever suggested that when practically the whole congregation is in favour of such opening, the temple should not be opened. As to the Temple-entry Bill, I hold that it is a legal necessity. But I have declared times without number that I would be no party to forcing the Bill through the Assembly by the vote of a mixed majority. It is, therefore, that Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar is ascertaining independently Hindu sentiment in the legislature and if Hindu sentiment is against the Bill, so far as I am concerned, it will be withdrawn. With all these reservations, therefore, all agitation against the measures ought to die, unless I commit a breach of faith. How I wish that the undivided attention of all Hindus was concentrated on the ameliorative measures that have been adopted by the Harijan Sevak Sangh !

Let me finally add that no money has been spent during these nine months in connection with the temple-entry agitation or the Bill. No temple has been built out of Harijan purses.

The Hindu, 3-8-1934

316. TELEGRAM TO HIRALAL SHARMA

MUGHALSARAI,
August 4, 1934

DR. SHARMA

KHURJA

NO TEMPERATURE. BOTH[1] WELL. HOPE RAMDAS STRONG.

BAPU

From a facsimile: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, 1932-48*, facing p. 83

[1] Gandhiji and Kasturba, who had fallen ill at Banaras

317. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

August 4, 1934

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I thought I would write a few lines before the fast which commences in two days' time. We are in a train just now. We shall reach Wardha tomorrow morning. Devdas had come to Kashi. He parted from us at Allahabad.

This time it may be said that I have already begun the fast; but how can I claim merit for it? Not being well during the last two days I have not taken milk for four days. For two days I have been eating only fruit, and that too in small quantity. Even so, my strength and weight have remained satisfactory. That means that the body has lost nothing yet except the toxins. There is, therefore, no cause at all for worry. By the time you get this letter, everything will have been over. Hence it even seems unnecessary to write all this. But I thought you should know my condition as it is today.

Sushila seems to be giving you excellent help. If she had a stronger body, she could have done much more. But what she is able to do is quite satisfactory. You must have received the name selected for Arun and sent to you.

Ramdas's health causes anxiety. He has become very much emaciated. If you can get passes for him and Dr. Sharma, I would send them over there. But don't ask for them as a special favour. If they can be obtained in the natural course, it is all right.

With me are Ba, Mahadev, Prabhavati, Valjibhai, Kakasaheb, Thakkar Bapa and Prithuraj. The others have gone to Wardha in advance.

I hope Manilal has been able to make a good collection.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4824. Also C.W. 1236. Courtesy: Sushila Gandhi

318. TALK ON RAMANAMA[1]

August 4, 1934[2]

Ramanama to me is all-sufficing. There are as many names of God as His manifestations, but sages have, as a result of their lifelong penance, devised names to be uttered by the devotees, in order to be able to commune with the Nameless. There are other *mantras* than Ramanama, but for me that is supreme. It has become part of my life. When [I was] a child, my nurse taught me to repeat Ramanama whenever I felt afraid or miserable and it has been second nature with me with growing knowledge and advancing years. I may even say that the work is in my heart, if not actually on my lips, all the twenty-four hours. It has been my saviour and I am ever stayed on it. In the spiritual literature of the world, the *Ramayana* of Tulsidas takes a foremost place. It has charms that I miss in the *Mahabharata* and even in Valmiki's *Ramayana.*

Harijan, 17-8-1934

319. INTERVIEW AT JABALPUR[3]

August 4, 1934

Mahatma Gandhi, in spite of weakness, appeared cheerful. Interviewed, he said that at present he was quite well and his temperature was normal. He also stated that he would commence his seven days' fast from August 7. He also inquired about the local political atmosphere and party quarrels.

Replying, Seth Govind Das said that though the atmosphere is tense with party feelings, efforts are being made to bring about a satisfactory compromise between the rival groups of the workers, adding that in the event of a satisfactory compromise not being arrived at, he along with his friends had decided to retire from political arena and patiently wait for the time when his service will be required by the motherland.

Mahatma Gandhi expressed approval of Seth Govind Das's views and said that in order to avoid conflict and friction, he had always advised loyal Congressmen to retire from the field of party-feeling and to devote their energies in other constructive and solid programme.

[1] This is extracted from "The Purification Week" by Mahadev Desai, who had explained that "two days before the fast" Gandhiji was talking to a friend who was travelling with him.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Gandhiji was on his way to Wardha.

Mahatma Gandhi also appealed to the public to contribute towards the Harijan Fund and collections were made on the spot.

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-8-1934

320. MESSAGE ON BIRTHDAY[1]

August 5, 1934

I cannot understand how anyone who has even a drop of pity for the semi-starved millions living in seven lakh villages, can oppose spinning or khadi.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7752

321. OF "HARIJAN"

[*August 6, 1934*][2]

With the completion of the tour and the year of probation during which I was to devote myself wholly to the Harijan cause and take no active part in politics, many have begun to speculate about my immediate future activity. Happily, the fast is to predetermine my course during it and for some time after. But, even apart from the fast, I should like to say that, whilst it is open to me to speak and write on politics, I propose to keep myself aloof from them as much as possible. The joy of the past self-restraint is too fresh to fade from the memory and to induce volubility of political speech. My partiality for Harijan and kindered causes persists and will persist, I hope, to the end of my life.

And what is true of my general attitude is truer still of *Harijan.* No doubt I shall have to do more political work. I may be compelled to resort to civil resistance. But the *Harijan* will remain what it has been ever since its inception. It will rigorously eschew all politics. But now that I expect to have some time for them, it will, I hope, deal with constructive causes, more especially those that have direct connection

[1] *The Bombay Chronicle*, 15-8-1934, had reported this under the title, "Mahatma's Birthday". Presumably, the message was given in connection with Gandhi Jayanti Celebration from September 15 to October 7, 1934.

[2] In *Harijan*, 17-8-1934, giving an account of Gandhiji's day-to-day activities in "The Purification Week", Mahadev Desai had explained under this date that "though thoroughly exhausted [Gandhiji] wrote a few letters and the two articles for the last [week's] *Harijan*". The "two articles" referred to are this and the following.

with Harijans. It will, therefore, consistently with the Harijan interest and as time permits and occasion arises, deal with communal unity, khadi and all the processes leading to khadi, other branches of swadeshi, temperance and the constructive side of prohibition and the condition of the so-called criminal or aboriginal tribes, who live on the border-line of untouchability.

Harijan, 10-8-1934

322. SWADESHI

[*August 6, 1934*][1]

Early in the year, if not immediately after my convalescence last year, I was called upon by those who were interested in swadeshi to frame a definition so as to answer the many difficulties that faced them. I had to bear in mind the various shades of swadeshi in textiles. I put together the definitions that were suggested. I had correspondence with Shri Shivarao and Shri Jalbhai Naoroji and well as others. I failed to frame a definition that would suit all cases and found that it was impossible to frame an exhaustive definition . As I was travelling far and wide, I had the opportunity of observing things and of seeing how swadeshi organizations were functioning. I came to the conclusion that the existing practice was an unconscious fraud upon the public and that many workers of ability were wasting their energy in a vain effort. They were practising self-deception. This strong language, whilst it correctly describes my mental attitude, is not intended to cast any reflection whatsoever upon the workers in swadeshi organizations. They were doing their best without realizing that they were moving in a vicious circle and labouring under self-deception.

Let me explain what I mean. We were holding exhibitions of things that were in no need of special help or of advertisement for their sale. In their case, our interposition can either stimulate the prices of their wares or set up unhealthy rivalries between flourishing but competing firms.

We may profess to gratuitously help textile, sugar and rice mills and, respectively, kill the village spinning-wheel, the handloom and their product, khadi, the village cane-crusher and its product, the vitamin-laden and nourishing *gur* or molasses, and the hand-pounder

[1] *Vide* the preceding item, footnote 1.

and its product, unpolished rice, whose pericarp, which holds the vitamins, is left intact by these pounders. Our clear duty is, therefore, to investigate the possibility of keeping in existence the village wheel, the village crusher and the village pounder, and, advertising their products, discovering their qualities, ascertaining the condition of the workers and the number displaced by the power-driven machinery and discovering the methods of improving them, whilst retaining their village character, to enable them to stand the competition of the mills. How terribly and criminally we have neglected them ! Here, there is no antagonism to the textile or the sugar or the rice mills. Their products must be preferred to the corresponding foreign products. If they were in danger of extinction from foreign competition, they should receive the needed support. But they stand in no such need. They are flourishing in spite of foreign competition. What is needed is protection of the village crafts and the wokers behind them from the crushing competition of the power-driven machinery, whether it is worked in India or in foreign lands. It may be that khadi, *gur* and unpolished rice have no intrinsic quality and that they should die. But, except for khadi, not the slightest effort has been made, so far as I am aware, to know anything about the fate of the tens of thousands of villagers who were earning their livelihood through crushing cane and pounding rice. Surely, there is in this work enough for an army of patriots. The reader will say, 'but this is very difficult work'. I admit. But it is most important and equally interesting. I claim that this is true, fruitful and cent per cent swadeshi.

But I have as yet merely touched the fringe of the question. I have merely sampled three big organized industries and shown how voluntary swadeshi agencies need to concentrate their attention solely on the corresponding unorganized village industries that are dying for want of voluntary and intelligent, organized help.

There are numberless other village, and even town, crafts that need public support, if they are to live and thus maintain the thousands of poor artisans depending upon them for their daily bread. Every ounce of work in this direction tells. Every hour given to this work means the sustenance of some deserving workers.

It is my certain conviction that, if work is done on a systematic basis in this direction, the department doing it will become self-supporting, new talent will be stimulated, the educated as well as the uneducated unemployed will find honourable employment without displacing anyone and crores will be added yearly to the wealth of this

country, which is getting progressively impoverished.

Here is enough profitable and entertaining work and to spare for all the swadeshi leagues put together. The recent resolution[1] of the Working Committee on 'swadeshi' means all this and much more. It provides limitless work for the creative genius in the country.

Harijan, 10-8-1934

323. TELEGRAM TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

WARDHA,[2]
August 6, 1934

BRIJKRISHNA
KATRA KHUSHALRAI
DELHI

NOTHING WRONG WITH ME. HAVE FAITH. KEEP WELL. WORK ON.[3]

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2417

324. A LETTER

August 6, 1934

MY DEAR. . . [4] ,

Jamnalal and Swami Anand report that you have made different statements to different persons, that you have not fulfilled many of your promises to Swami Anand and that their strong suspicion almost amounting to belief is that you have made up the story about the girl. This seems to me to be unbelievable. And yet if you cannot give me the name of the girl, I must also reluctantly come to the conclusion that Jamnalal or Swami are fast coming to.

Your concern about the girl is surely needless. You will be surprised to learn that . . . [5] and his wife are sitting by me while I am writing this. It would be a great shock to me if I discover in you a young man in the prime of life capable of connections involving the honour of girls of tender age.

[1] *Vide* "Resolution on Swadeshi"

[2] This place-name is not reproduced in subsequent items.

[3] The addressee was anxious about Gandhiji's intended fast and had desired to join him.

[4] The names have been omitted.

[5] *ibid*

May God be your guide and help.

Love.

BAPU

From the Manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

325. LETTER TO RANCHHODLAL A. SHODHAN

August 6, 1934

CHI. RANCHHODLAL,

I was shocked when I heard about your financial condition from Jamnalalji yesterday. I had never imagined that money deposited with you would be unsafe in any circumstaces. In my view, you credit was higher than that of the Bank of India. Is that true no more? If not, why not? Why did you not even breathe a word to me about the matter? If you wish to be as a son to me, you must always tell me about things like this. In such a situation Jamnalalji would most certainly have told me.

Let me know the details in brief. Do this thing now. Don't keep back a single pie. Hand over even the house and the furniture and the jewellery to the creditors. If anything is held in Motibehn's or Rama's name, they and you should regard that as belonging to the creditors. The gifts given to relations in times of prosperity should be looked upon as deposits on behalf of creditors to be used in the hour of misfortune. Difficult times come to all. He alone will have lived well who preserves his honour even at the cost of his wife and children, as Harishchandra did. I hope that you will not—I bless you that you may not—shrink from heroism such as Harishchandra's.

Do not worry about my fast. Reassure me by giving me proof of your uprightness.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

326. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

August 6, 1934

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I had your telegram, and the letter too. A telegram has been sent in reply[1] to yours. It is regrettable that you show such impatience.

[1] *Vide* "A Letter", 6-8-1934

How can I encourage it? Even in such things you have to exercise self-control. What service can you render? The Ashram is full of people ready to serve. I am keeping out all those who are not here. I have stopped Mehta and Bidhan too. Now, how can I allow you? You can do there what you can. You may clean the Harijan locality and take with you whosoever wishes to join. Has the Municipality done anything? Have you not received Damodardas's reply by now? What does it mean? Tell me promptly. His remarks are such that I cannot leave matters at that.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2418

327. STATEMENT ON FAST [1]

August 6, 1934

As I enter upon the seven days' fast from tomorrow (Tuesday), I would like to re-emphasize the necessity on the part of Harijan workers helping the cause by greater personal purification and greater concentration on the work before them. The monster of untouchability will not be killed without constant and ceaseless effort on the part of workers who have faith in the mission and who have by patient toil built up personal purity and integrity. Let everyone also realize that fasting is not for everyone and for every occasion. Fasting without faith may even lead to disastrous consequences. All such spiritual weapons are dangerous when handled by unqualified persons.

I would like to utter a word of warning to Congressmen and Congress workers. During the coming seven days I shall be filled with thoughts about them as I have been during the past month. The acrimony with which Congress elections have been fought in some places and the unclean methods adopted by Congress workers by manipulating votes and grossly abusing the rule about habitual wearing of khadi have filled me with horror and dismay. The constitution provides for truthful and non-violent methods. In some provinces, at some elections, truth and non-violence have been conspicuous by their absence. Though my fast has nothing to do with these unclean methods, how I wish Congress workers will detect my

[1] Extracted from "The Purification Week". According to Mahadev Desai this was written by Gandhiji "towards the evening".

anguish in the words I have written and lighten it during the purification week by resorting to self-introspection and resolving to make the Congress an organization in keeping with its creed, so that anyone who cares may without difficulty find it to be a living embodiment of its creed. I shall certainly be praying for its purification. Purity of this, the greatest national organization cannot but help the Harijan movement, since the Congress is also pledged to the removal of the curse.

Finally, I ask all friends, whether in India or outside, no matter to what faith or race they may belong, to pray that God may bless the forthcoming little penance.

Harijan, 17-8-1934

328. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

August 7, 1934

CHI. MIRA,

At 6 a.m. I entered upon the fast. It is now 7 a.m. I do hope that you would not be disturbed during the week. There is no cause for uneasiness. But what is the use of my saying all this? Ere this reaches, the fast would have been twice over.

You are quite right in repeating your warning. (At this stage I felt too sleepy to write, so I slept. It is now 7.30 a.m.) So long as you feel like giving the warning, you should go on doing it, in ever so emphatic terms. Some day it may have its full effect. Partial effect there is even now. It keeps me on my guard. If . . . [1] copied me, he had surely a corrupt mind. For there is no warrant for thinking that any other person was similarly affected unless of course I have been kept in the dark or unless you suggest that every fall in the Ashram was due to my practice. So far as. . .[2] is concerned, Jamnalalji and Swami Anand with whom. . .[3] had long talks have almost come to the conclusion that . . .[4] has concocted the whole story for the purpose of blackmail. They are both finishing the chain. But this is all by the way. You should not disturb yourself over this. I don't. I take the necessary steps and forget all about it. You have given a whole

[1] The name has been omitted.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*
[4] *ibid*

paragraph to the matter. Hence this reply.

Many changes are taking place in my mind just now. The corruption in the Congress is preying on me as it has never before done. I am conferring with friends as to the advisability of leaving the Congress and pursuing its ideals outside it.[1] It is good that the corruption agitates me. I shall take no hasty step but there it is. And I feel that the girls' institution here should be closed unless I am prepared to sit down in Wardha or Vinoba takes the sole responsibility of its management. He will think over it during the fast. These are the two things that are uppermost in my mind.

The rest you will have from Mahadev or Pyarelal both of whom and Bal, Bapa, Devraj and Prithuraj are here. I insisted upon Jamnalalji going to Bombay for his ear trouble. Ba, Prabhavati and Om are of course here. And Vasumati and Amtul Salaam have insisted on coming here. The latter is somewhat better but by no means overwell.

Your work there is certainly voluminous. You are putting forth extraordinary energy. What more can you do? Take your time. Do not get ill.

Kamlani's[2] mental derangement is sad news. I hope you had time to be able to go to him. Your very presence may do him good.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not been able to write to Maxwell. Sorry.

From the original: C.W. 6294. Courtesy: Mirabehn . Also G.N. 9760

329. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

Unrevised *August 7, 1934*

DEAR AGATHA,

Your love-letters continue to pour in on me. And as you have been hearing regularly from someone or other of the (now) many companions, I do not write to you. This is to tell you I entered upon the little fast at 6 a.m. today and to ask you not to worry. But where is the meaning in asking you not to worry when I know that this letter

[1] Which he ultimately did on September 17, 1934

[2] A. S. Kamlani, Secretary, Friends of India League, London

would reach you only after the fast will have become a faint memory?

That the fast is a fitting finish to the Harijan tour I have no doubt. It is a great spiritual instrument. That Protestantism has virtually discarded it is a distinct loss to it and the world seeing what a power it is today in the world. However, I must not argue about it. If it is a desideratum of the soul, there are too many seekers after truth among Protestants not to feel the want of it sooner or later.

During this month I shall be resting in Wardha and collecting my thoughts. What is in store for me in September I do not know. But this I do know. To go to the Frontier Province or to Bengal or to both alternately is a craving of the soul. Where to go first I do not know. If the so-called Red Shirts are violent, I must know them and disown them. If they are not, I must defend them against the slur cast on them. Those who are not given to lying and are well able to judge have testified to their non-violence. These are Khurshed Naoroji, a much-travelled woman of exquisite purity and honesty, Elwin whom you know and Devdas whom too you know are the three eye-witneses. And yet the British official testimony is equally emphatic the other way. It cannot be all manufacture. The mystery can only be solved if I am permitted to go and live in their midst. This is a fundamental necessity—greater perhaps than that of going to Bengal from one point of view. I go to the Frontier to find the truth and act accordingly. I go to Bengal not to find any truth but to try to wean terrorists from terrorism. Detention of Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Jawaharlal is a great disturbing factor and a wholly unnecessary irritant. But this detention, while it worries me, does not just now appeal to me as a cause of war. Now you have an analysis of my mind as it is likely to be at the end of the month. What occupies my mind at present is how to achieve the purity of the Congress and to rid the Ashram here of subtle untruth and breaches of *brahmacharya.* Perhaps you are not sufficiently interested in such things. Here I was interrupted by an army of doctors. They have overhauled the system and say I must not do any writing even this first day of the fast. So goodbye and much love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1478

330. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, WARDHA[1]

August 7, 1934

I can say from experience that fasting is an essential part of Ashram life. The assault on Lalnath was certainly the occasion of the fast, but as I have said in my public statement[2], this fast is intended for the purification of many. If I were to have regard to all the incidents and happenings that have prompted me to take such a step, I should have to go on a much longer fast. But I am painfully aware of my own physical and spiritual limitations and hence could not think of a longer fast.

Our Ashram was certainly in my mind when I made the decision to fast. There are two enemies against which we must guard—untruth and impurity. Purity of the mind is essential for the observance of all the vows. If the mind is not pure, no amount of physical restraint would avail. The *Gita* teaches us that the man who restrains the organs of action, whilst he allows the mind to run after the objects of the senses, is a hypocrite.[3] We may fail to restrain the mind, but let us not be hypocrites. If we fail, let us own up, rather than be guilty of the double sin of untruth and want of restraint. For not only telling lies is untruth, but guilty silence or hiding one's state of mind from one's guardians is also untruth. Let my fast spur you on to further self-purification and self introspection.

We have also to remember that one of the objects of the Ashram is the abolition of untouchability, it is one of our eleven vows[4] . Now an effective observance of that vow is impossible without an observance of the other vows, especially of truth and non–violence. In fact, no worker in the cause of removal of untouchability—and we are all workers in the cause—is fitted for it, unless and until he is pledged to observe truth and non-violence in thought, word and deed. In a word, no service is possible without self-purification. If, therefore, we think more and more of self-purification as a result of this fast, we should be able to bring about the proper atmosphere. I shall be constantly thinking of you this whole week and I want you to co-operate with me. I am hoping that God will pull me through this ordeal, and I know that all of you will help me with your prayers.

Harijan, 17-8-1934

[1] This is extracted from "The Purification Week" by Mahadev Desai, who had explained : "Fast began at 6 a.m. after the morning prayers and the last feed at 5.30. At the conclusion of prayer, Gandhiji addressed a few words. . ."

[2] *Vide* "Statement on Fast", 6-8-1934

[3] *Bhagavad Gita,* III. 6

[4] *Vide* "Satyagraha Ashram" 14-6-1928

331. SILENCE-DAY NOTE

[*August 13, 1934*]

Tell Janakibehn not to be so unreasonable. Most probably I will go there at the time of the operation[1]. I shall regain strength in three or four days. Even if I can't go, we must not take the risk of delaying the operation. I wish to send a wire[2] immediately today. God willing, we shall both be present there, but the operation need not be postponed on that account.

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 126

332. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

August 13, 1934

JAMNALALJI

POLYCLINIC, QUEENS ROAD, BOMBAY 8

AM QUITE FIT. LISTENED LETTER REPORTED. AM DEFINITELY OPINION OPERATION SHOULD BE PERFORMED ON DATE FIXED BY DOCTORS IRRESPECTIVE OTHER CONDITIONS. WIRE FIXED DATE.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 126

[1] For Jamnalal Bajaj's ear trouble

[2] *Vide* the following item.

333. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI [1]

August 14, 1934

NARANDAS GANDHI

OPPOSITE MIDDLE SCHOOL

RAJKOT

THANK GOD. BROKE FAST. AM WELL.

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8407. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

334. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

August 14, 1934

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Though you are now under distressing circumstances, your release[2] takes a great load off my mind, as it is three-fourths medicine for Kamala. I have missed you greatly during all the momentous steps I have taken. But of these when we meet.

I am well, though the last day proved the most trying of all the days and washed me out thoroughly. But I have no doubt that I shall pick up quickly.

This is however to suggest to you that you should not make any public political pronouncement. I have felt that in cases of domestic illness or sorrow the Government has acted in a becoming manner. I do feel therefore that we ought to recognize this fact by not using the liberty thus obtained for any other purpose not inconsistent with that of the Government. I feel that this is due to them and to ourselves, especially when civil resistance is suspended. If my argument appeals to your reason, you will announce your self-restraint in a fitting manner. When Kamala is better I expect you to come here. I shall be in Wardha up to the end of the month, except that I might have to go to Bombay to attend the delicate operation that Jamnalalji might have

[1] An identical telegram (C.W. 7968) was sent to G. D. Birla, Birla Mills, Delhi, on the same day.

[2] The addressee had telegraphically informed Gandhiji : "I have been permitted to stay with Kamala. The position is not clear. Hope you are well."

to go through during the month.

I hope Mama is doing well and so Krishna. You will let me know how you have fared this time in jail.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1934. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

335. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHARMA

Unrevised *August 14, 1934*

CHI. SHARMA,

I am sorry for the mistake I made in addressing the letter.[1] It should not have occurred. Send me your views about Ramdas's condition.

Your sending the money to Amtussalaam was not right. No longer do you have any funds to make donations. Moreover Amtussalaam is in no such predicament as to warrant any help. I pointed out to her that she should not have taken money thus and she has understood. Friendship never implies that we pamper our mutual weaknesses. Its aim is to ennoble one another. I regard it as a subject of study for the nature-cure practitioner. The naturopath recognizes physical, mental and spiritual ills and treats them mainly by developing inner powers. He takes the help of earth, water, ether, fire and air. It should be an impossibility for him to be instrumental in spiritual degeneration. Consider the case of Amtussalaam from this viewpoint. She has a weak heart. It is a disease. She has a weakness for squandering money yet feels reluctant in accepting funds from the family. Sending her money is contributing to her downfall, while not sending it will help her progress. So a naturopath would not send money.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, 1932-48,* between pp. 86–7

[1] Gandhiji had wrongly addressed the letter 'Khurda'.

336. DISCUSSION WITH GUJARAT VIDYAPITH TEACHERS [1]

[After*August 14, 1934*][2]

The real work of the Vidyapith lies in the villages. I have been stressing this point ever since the inception of the Vidyapith, but until a couple of years ago, when it was declared an illegal organization and most of our professors and boys were imprisoned, we laboured under the impression that the work could be carried on only through a central institute situated in the capital town of Gujarat. But under the altered conditions, and now that we have some breathing time to put our heads together and to collect our thoughts we shall do well to hark back to the original conception and think of our future work in its terms. Each member of a live institution must be a living embodiment of the ideals of the institution, wherever he may be, and when such a state of things is brought about, it is the same thing whether the institution has a habitation and a corporate existence or not.

I would, therefore, expect every one of you who has cherished the ideals of the Vidyapith and who is pledged to serve it to go straight to the villages and start living those ideals there. Each one of you will thus be a peripatetic Vidyapith, teaching the ideals by means of his own personal example. It is quite conceivable that a host of workers, after having lived the life in the villages according to the ideals of the Vidyapith, re-establish the central institute in a village. But we are not in that position today. We have yet to gain all that experience on which alone you can build the new Vidyapith.

The centre of this village worker's life will be the spinning-wheel. I am sorry I have not been able yet to bring home to anyone the message of the spinning-wheel in all its implications. The reason is that my life itself is not a true echo of the message. But it came home to me again and again during my nine months' peregrinations in India. We have not yet sufficiently realized that hand-spinning is a supplementary industry of universal application and scope in India. The village weaver cannot live but for the spinning-wheel. He gets his yarn no doubt from the mills, but he is doomed to destruction, if he is

[1] The discussion appeared under the title "What Is Village Work" as a summary of Gandhiji's talk, with the following introductory note by Mahadev Desai : "During his convalescence after the fast, Gandhiji has been giving part of his time each day to workers coming with their doubts and difficulties. Among these were some of the professors of the Gujarat Vidyapith." Gandhiji broke his fast on August 14, 1934.

[2] *ibid*

to remain for ever dependent on the mills. Today, the spinning–wheel has established itself in our economic life only to the extent that it is needed to minister to the clothing needs of the new class of khadi weavers that has sprung up during the past decade. But a large body like the Spinners' Association cannot justify its existence to fulfil that limited object. The idea at the back of khadi is that it is an industry supplementary to agriculture and co–extensive with it, that it is the life–breath of millions of Harijan weavers who derive their sustenance from it. The spinning-wheel cannot be said to have been established in its own proper place in our life, until we can banish idleness from our villages and make every villge home a busy hive. Unemployment and idleness of millions must lead to bloody strife. Khadi is the only alternative to this and not the so–called socialism, which presupposes industrialism. The socialism that India can assimilate is the socialism of the spinning–wheel. Let the village worker, therefore, make the wheel the central point of his activities.

The worker will not be spinning regularly but will be working for his bread with the adze or the spade or the last, as the case may be. All his hours minus the eight hours of sleep and rest will be fully occupied with some work. He will have no time to waste. He will allow himself no laziness and allow others none. His life will be a constant lesson to his neighbours in ceaseless and joy–giving industry. Bodily sustenance should come from body labour, and intellectual labour is necessary for the culture of the mind. Division of labour there will necessarily be, but it will be a division into various species of body labour and not a division into intellectual labour to be confined to one class and body labour to be confined to another class. Our compulsory or voluntary idleness has to go. If it does not go, no panacea will be of any avail, and semi–starvation will remain the eternal problem that it is. He who eats two grains must produce four. Unless the law is accepted as universal, no amount of reduction in population would serve to solve the problem. If the law is accepted and observed, we have room enough to accommodate millions more to come.

The village worker will thus be a living embodiment of industry. He will master all the processes of khadi, from cotton–sowing and picking to weaving, and will devote all his thought to perfecting them. If he treats it as a science, it won't jar on him, but he will derive fresh joy from it everyday, as he realizes more and more its great possi-

bilities. If he will go to the village as a teacher, he will go there no less as a learner. He will soon find that he has much to learn from the simple villagers. He will enter into every detail of village life, he will discover the village handicrafts and investigate the possibilities of their growth and their improvement. He may find the villagers completely apathetic to the message of khadi, but he will, by his life of service compel interest and attention. Of course, he will not forget his limitations and will not engage in, for him, the futile task of solving the problem of agricultural indebtedness.

Sanitation and hygiene will engage a good part of his attention. His home and his surroundings will not only be a model of cleanliness, but he will help to promote sanitation in the whole village by taking the broom and the basket round.

He will not attempt to set up a village dispensary or to become the village doctor. These are traps which must be avoided. I happened during my Harijan tour to come across a village where one of our workers who should have known better had build a pretentious building in which he had housed a dispensary and was distributing free medicine to the villages around. In fact, the medicines were being taken from home to home by volunteers and the dispensary was described as boasting a register of 1,200 patients a month! I had naturally to criticize this severely. That was not the way to do village work, I told him. His duty was to inculcate lessons of hygiene and sanitation in the village folk and thus to show them the way of preventing illness, rather than attempt to cure them. I asked him to leave the palace-like building and to hire it out to the Local Board and to settle in thatched huts. All that one need stock in the way of drugs is quinine, castor oil and iodine and the like. The worker should concentrate more on helping people realize the value of personal and village cleanliness and maintaining it at all cost.

Then he will interest himself in the welfare of the village Harijans. His home will be open to them In fact, they will turn to him naturally for help in their troubles and difficulties. If the village folk will not suffer him to have the Harijan friends in his house situated in their midst, he must take up his residence in the Harijan quarters.

A word about the knowledge of the alphabet. It has its place, but I should warn you against a misplaced emphasis on it. Do not proceed on the assumption that you cannot proceed with rural instruction without first teaching the children or adults how to read and write.

Lots of useful information on current affairs, history, geography and elementary arithmetic, can be given by word of mouth before the alphabet is touched. The eyes, the ears and the tongue come before the hand. Reading comes before writing and drawing before tracing the letters of the alphabet. If this natural method is followed, the understanding of the children will have a much better opportunity of development than when it is under check by beginning the children's training with the alphabet.

The worker's life will be in tune with the village life. He will not pose as a litterateur buried in his books, loath to listen to details of humdrum life. On the contrary, the people, whenever they see him, will find him busy with his tools—spinning-wheel, loom, adze, spade, etc.—and always responsive to their meanest inquiries. He will always insist on working for his bread. God has given to everyone the capacity of producing more than his daily needs and, if he will only use his resourcefulness, he will not be in want of an occupation suited to his capacities, however poor they may be. It is more likely than not that the people will gladly maintain him, but it is not improbable that in some places he may be given a cold shoulder. He will still plod on. It is likely that in some villages he may be boycotted for his pro-Harijan pro-clivities. Let him in that case approach the Harijans and look to them to provide him with food. The labourer is always worthy of his hire and, if he conscientiously serves them, let him not hesitate to accept his food from the Harijans always, provided that he gives more than he takes. In the very early stages, of course, he will draw his meagre allowance from a central fund where such is possible.

I have deliberately left out the question of the cow. The village worker will find it difficult to tackle the question and will not attempt it, except to the extent of educating the people in the theory of it. We have not yet hit upon the best way of curing dead cattle's hide and dyeing it, as also the best means of protecting the cow. In Gujarat the buffalo problem complicates the situation. We have got to make people realize that to encourage the buffalo is to allow the cow to die. But more of this some other time.

Remember that our weapons are spiritual. It is a force that works irresistibly, if imperceptibly. Its progress is geometrical rather than arithmetical. It never ceases so long as there is a propeller behind. The background of all your activities has, therefore, to be spiritual. Hence the necessity for the stricktest purity of conduct and character.

You will not tell me that this is an impossible programme, that you have not the qualifications for it. That you have not fulfilled it so far should be no impediment in your way. If it appeals to your reason and your heart, you must not hesitate. Do not fight shy of the experiment. The experiment will itself provide the momentum for more and more effort.

Harijan, 31-8-1934

337. "GOD BE PRAISED"

[*August 15, 1934*][1]

Happily nobody questioned the propriety of the fast just finished. On the contrary, those who have written about it have recognized the necessity of it. Its spiritual value for me has been inestimable. Why, I do not know, but it is a fact that man clings most to God when he is in distress, even as a child clings to its mother when it is in suffering. Though I was cheerful, I had my due share of physical suffering attendant upon all fasts except when required by ill-health.

I was able during the seven days to understand more fully than hitherto the implications of what I had meant when from a hundred platforms I had declared that untouchability was not to be removed without the workers showing in their lives great purity of character. Therefore, so far as the fast was directed towards myself, it has, I hope, served its purpose. That I may fail to come up to the standard I visualized during the fast is possible, nay, probable. But no fast has ever proved an insurance against human frailties. We can only mount to success through failures.

The fast was primarily and nominally intended as a penance for the hurt caused to Swami Lalnath and his friends at Ajmer at the hands of sympathizers with the movement. But in reality, it is a call to all the workers and sympathizers to be most exact and correct in approaching opponents. Utmost consideration and courtesy shown to them is the best propaganda for the movement. The fast was taken to impress upon the workers the truth that we can only win over the opponent by love, never by hate. Hate is the subtlest form of violence. We cannot be really non-violent and yet have hate in us. The dullest brain cannot fail to perceive that it is impossible by violence to wean

[1] *Vide* "Interview to the Press",16-8-1934

millions of caste Hindus from the evil of untouchability, which they have hitherto been taught to regard as an article of faith.

Evidence so far received shows that the fast has operated to quicken the conscience of many workers. Time alone can show the extent of its influence. It is not for me to measure the influence of the fast. It was for me humbly to perform what was a clear duty. God be praised that He permitted me safely to go through the fast. Let the reader join me in the prayer that He may give me greater purity and strength of purpose of fulfil the mission He has entrusted me with.

Harijan, 17-8-1934

338. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

August 15, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

This is my first letter after the fast. I am in very good health. I drank some milk today. Blood-pressure is excellent. Please, therefore, do not worry about me. Let Janakibehn stay there as long as she pleases. But it may not be necessary to keep Om there for a long time. It is good that Mahadev and Madanmohan are going there. I hope you will welcome them. I thought it necessary that they should go. They may, if they can, return immediately tomorrow. There will be no difficulty here. Keep your mind fixed on Rama as they give you chloroform. All are well here. It is God's will that you should be spared for more service and many more sacrifices still.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 2937

339. TELEGRAM TO MOHANLAL SAXENA [1]

[On or before *August 16, 1934*][2]

HOPE ALL CONGRESS MEN WILL RESPECT THE CONGRESS MANDATE.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-8-1934

340. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Not revised *August 16, 1934*

CHI. MIRA,

I wrote[3] to you on Tuesday, 7th, after commencing the fast. Today is Thursday, the third day of the breaking of the fast. The last day was one of physical torture. It was well perhaps it was so. What was the penance worth, if it did not cause me any physical suffering? The phrase joy of suffering has no meaning if there is no suffering felt. I knew on Monday more fully than before the meaning of the phrase joy of suffering. I am the richer for the treasure which I would not have missed for a kingdom.

There it was. As I am writing this I feel the strength slowly coming. I have settled down to this after having walked a few, paces on the terrace with Vasumati's help. She and Amtul Salaam and Amala have been with me all the time. Prabhavati is of course there. She has slaved during these day. I cannot understand where she gets all the strength from. She seems never tired. Amala is as mad as ever. But she is better with me than elsewhere.

Don't be sorry or angry that I have not yet written to Mr. Maxwell about the prisoners. The thing has never been out of my mind but want of time has prevented me from doing it.

You remember the green canvas bag which contained my dictionary, *Gita, Bhajanavali* and such other things. That and the green khadi bag I can't trace anywhere. I thought that you had put them together with the other things in Wardha. The bundle of khadi too which you put at Lady Thakersey's is missing.

[1] The telegram was reported under the date-line "Cawanpore, August 16" as sent by Gandhiji "on the eve of the opening of the election campaign of the Parliamentary Board of U.P.".

[2] *ibid*

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 7-8-1934

It is strange you have not been keeping quite fit there. I do hope you are not denying yourself the fresh fruit and salad which are necessary there to keep oneself in a fit condition for strenuous work.

Your account of your visit to your Oxford cousin[1] is entertaining. Somehow or other the oval Italian face[2] is very attractive to me. Your beautiful description of the baby therefore does not surprise me.

Jamnalalji will be having an operation for his ear trouble today in Bombay. Janakibehn, Om and Mahadev have gone to Bombay for the purpose. This letter will probably contain the result of the operation.[3]

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6295. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9761

341. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

August 16, 1934

JAMNALALJI

SHREE, BOMBAY

THANK GOD. HOPE RESTFUL. LOVE FROM ALL.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 129

[1] In the original the addressee had encircled this word in pencil and written "uncle".

[2] Mirabehn explains : "The 'oval Italian face' refers to my aunt who, though English, has that type of countenance."

[3] Gandhiji had perhaps hoped to include news about the operation. *Vide* also the following four item.

342. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

August 16, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have just received the wire about the operation. A heavy load of anxiety is off Janakimaiya's head. Do not worry about me. I am quite well. I can eat. I won't run up there in undue haste. I won't go anywhere else either, till I have regained full strength. Don't worry, therefore, and get well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 2938

343. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[*August 16, 1934*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

Today is the third day after I broke the fast. Health is satisfactory. I started taking milk only yesterday. I have regained fairly good strength. You must have probably read the details in the papers.

For some time I shall be confined here. It will take sometime before I regain strength fully. Let us see what happens at the end of this month.

I will expect regular letters from you.

How is Jamnadas? I hope Santok has taken up some work.

I have just received a wire informing me that Jamnalalji has been successfully operated upon for his ear trouble. There was some reason for worry. The wound is likely to take about six weeks to heal. Write to him. Mahadev has gone there. He will return in a day or two.

I will not write more today.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] From the reference to the fast and Jamnalal Bajaj

[PS.]

My respectful greetings to Father and Mother. Why has Jamna become silent?

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8408. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

344. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

August 16, 1934

CHI. MARY,

I had your note. Thank God, the fast went off well though not without causing acute discomfort the last day. I am picking up well. Jamnalalji is in Bombay. He underwent the ear operation today quite successfully. I am here for some days. Mira is working away in England. Do write regularly.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MARY BARR

KHEDI, NEAR BETUL, C.P.

From a photostat: G. N. 6025. Also C.W. 3354. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

345. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

August 16, 1934

CHI. RAMA,

Thanks even for your two lines. Are you calm now? How do you spend your time? Read about the rest in the other letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5366

346. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

August 16, 1934

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Your letter. I am doing well. The rest you must have seen from the newspapers. Jamnalalji has undergone in Bombay today a successful operation of the ear.

Without your consent I will not write anything to Keshu and others about Damodardas. His argument is without substance. I find in it neither the dharma of friendship nor any other. My distrust of Damodardas as also of Keshu and others is increasing. That is why unless I am fully confident of the truth I cannot remain perfectly neutral and that undermines my capacity for serving Keshu's people. It is a matter of regret that Damodardas fails to understand this clear-cut dharma. But whether he does or not, you at any rate ought to understand it clearly. You have one more duty. It is not possible for you to hide anything in this world from me. Therefore those who discuss things with you should know that ultimately it will all reach me. How to use that knowledge depends on me. If this is clear you should let me have your opinion. You may acquaint Damodardas with this letter. What more shall I say? I can give you this assurance that I will not write anything to Keshu and others without your consent.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2419

347. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

August 16, 1934

I am all right.

Thus returned Mahatma Gandhi, with a winning smile, my greeting and my query about his progress. . . . He had been reading *What Marx Really Meant* by G. D. H. Cole, which Gandhiji said he had been reading during his fast and he had not yet finished. When asked about his future programme, Gandhiji continued in a low voice:

I have no plans ready. My immediate concern is to pick up strength.

He added he was making satisfactory progress and for the first time after eight days he had been at his charkha yesterday for about half an hour. He also wrote an article[1] yesterday for this week's *Harijan* and did some walking too. He hoped to

[1] *Vide* "God Be Praised", 15-8-1934

regain his energy and strength soon. He said he would continue to stay in Wardha during convalescence unless some pressing engagement took him out of it.

If you ask me whether I thought anything about the Congress during the seven days, I can say as I have stated in the columns of *Harijan* That I constantly thought of Congressmen. I was not thinking in terms of politics and therefore not of what the Congress had to gain in the wake of independence, but I was concentrating on the great necessity of achieving internal purity.

Letters have been coming to me from Congressmen confirming my fears about corrupt methods that have crept into the Congress ranks over Congress elections and the like. How I wished, during all the seven days that I was lying on my bed, that every man and woman belonging to the Congress would realize that he or she was in it, not in order to mount to office and fame, but to render mute service to the country ! I cannot understand the mutual mudslinging and violence of speech toward one another.

Civil disobedience is certainly not for those who have not learnt the art of voluntary obedience to law, even when it is irksome. This elementary principle seems to have been altogether forgotten, or else one could not witness spirit of indiscipline and disobedience to laws and rules which we have ourselves enacted and to which we have voluntarily pledged ourselves to render obedience.

For me, therefore, every other thing has paled into insignificance before this prime necessity of achieving internal purity, for I do feel that just as without the purity of Harijan workers untouchability would not be removed so also do I feel that the Congress, as a powerful national organization, will perish unless it is sustained by internal purity of those who compose that organization. At present, I have no other message to give, for my mind is still preoccupied with this predominant feeling.

The Hindu, 16-8-1934

348. LETTER TO N. C. KELKAR [1]

[On or before *August 17, 1934*][2]

The Congress candidates will be selected by the Parliamentary Board for each consituency wherever Congress wishes to give a fight. If a Congressman wishing to enter the Legislature had conscientious scruples about the acceptance of the resolution[3] of the Congress Working Committee relating to the Communal Award he will so state his objections in his letter or application to the Board and if the Board approves of his nomination as otherwise desirable it will respect hisscruples and nominate him as a candidate. Refusal or acceptance of the application will depend solely upon the discretion of the Board. Mr. Aney knows this position.[4]

The Hindustan Times, 18-8-1934

349. TELEGRAM TO B. C. ROY

WARDHA,
August 17, 1934

DOCTOR BIDHANROY
36 WELLINGTON STREET
CALCUTTA

SHOCKED LEARN FROM SATISBABU YOU HAD HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE. HOPE SPEEDY RECOVERY.

GANDHI

From a copy: B. C. Roy Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The letter was reported under the date-line "Nagpur, August 17" as "a reply to the addressee's telegram urging Gandhiji to bring about a compromise between the Congress and the Nationalists and grant freedom of conscience to the Congress members regarding voting on the Communal Award".

[2] *ibid*

[3] *Vide* Appendix " Resolution on White Paper and Communal Award", 18-6-1934

[4] In *The History of the Indian National Congress*, Vol. I, pp. 576-7, Pattabhi Sitaramayya explains that the compromise was not accepted by M. S. Aney and M. M. Malaviya. Consequently they resigned from the Congress parliamentary Board and summoned a conference of Congressmen and others at Calcutta on August 18 and 19 under the presidentship of Malaviya, which announced the formation of Nationalist Party with the object of carrying on agitation in the Legislatures and outside against the Communal Award and the White Paper, and to put up candidates for the Legislative Assembly to promote that object.

350. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Unrevised *August 17, 1934*

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Your passionate and touching letter[1] deserves a much longer reply than my strength will permit.

I had expected fuller grace from the Government. However your presence has done for Kamala and incidentally for Mama what no drugs or doctors could have done. I hope that you will be allowed to remain longer than the very few days you expect.

I understand your deep sorrow. You are quite right in giving full and free expression to your feelings. But I am quite sure that from our common standpoint a closer study of the written word will show you that there is not enough reason for all the grief and disappointment you have felt. Let me assure you that you have not lost a comrade in me. I am the same as you knew me in 1917 and after. I have the same passion that you knew me to possess for the common goal. I want complete independence for the country in the full English sense of the term. And every resolution that has pained you had been framed with that end in view. I must take full responsibility for the resolutions and the whole conception surrounding them.

But I fancy that I have the knack for knowing the need of the time. And the resolutions are a response thereto. Of course here comes in the difference of our emphasis on the method or the means which to me are just as important as the goal and in a sense more important in that we have some control over them whereas we have none over the goal if we lose control over the means.

Do read the resolution about 'loose talk' dispassionately. There is not a word in it about socialism. Greatest consideration has been paid to the socialists some of whom I know so intimately. Do I not know their sacrifice? But I have found them as a body to be in a hurry. Why should they not be? Only, if I cannot march quite as quick, I must ask them to halt and take me along with them. That is literally my attitude. I have looked up the dictionary meaning of socialism. It takes me no further than where I was before I read the definition. What will you have me to read to know its full content? I

[1] Dated August 13; *vide* "Letter from Jawaharlal Nehru", 13-8-1934

have read one of the books Masani[1] gave me and now I am devoting all my spare time to reading the book recommended by Narendra Deva.

You are hard on the members of the Working Committee. They are our colleagues such as they are. After all we are a free institution. They must be displaced, if they do not deserve confidence. But it is wrong to blame them for their inability to undergo the sufferings that some others have gone through.

After the explosion I want construction. Therefore now, lest we do not meet, tell me exactly what you will have me to do and who you think will best represent your views.

As to the trust[2], I was not present. Vallabhbhai was. Your attitude betrays anger. You should trust the trustees to do their duty. I did not think there was anything wrong. I was too preoccupied to concentrate on it. I shall now study the papers and everything. Of course your feelings will be fully respected by other trustees. Having given you this assurance, I would ask you not to take this matter so personally as you have done. It more becomes you generous nature to give the same credit to your co-trustees for regard for Father's memory that you would take for yourself. Let the nation be the custodian of

Father's memory and you only as one of the nation.

I hope Indu is well and likes her new life. And what about Krishna?

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1934. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A Bunch of Old Letters,* pp. 117-9

[1] M. R. Masani ; the reference is perhaps to *What Marx Really Meant; vide* "Letter to Brijkrishna Chandiwala", 16-8-1934

[2] Trust for Anand Bhawan

351. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

August 18, 1934

JAMNALALJI
SHREE, BOMBAY

MAHADEV GAVE GOOD NEWS ABOUT YOU. NO TALKING ALLOWED. PARLIAMENTARY BOARD MEETING POSTPONED. AM GAINING STRENGTH.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 172

352. TELEGRAM TO HIRALAL SHARMA

August 18, 1934

DR. SHARMA
KHURJA

DO WHAT YOU THINK PROPER ABOUT RAMDAS.[1]

BAPU

From a facsimile: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, 1932-48,* facing p. 88

353. LETTER TO SHERWOOD EDDY

August 18, 1934

DEAR DR. EDDY,

I hope this will be in your hands in due time. If you have to go away without our meeting, I shall be very sorry indeed. During convalescence after the recent fast medical friends would not hear of my leaving Wardha quite so soon, and I do not feel like overriding their advice. If, therefore, we do not meet, you will please put down on paper as much as you can of what you intended to say to me. I know what a poor substitute it would be for a heart-to-heart conversation. But a letter from you will have its own value for me.

[1] Hiralal Sharma explains that Ramdas had made considerable progress in health. He was eager to go back to Wardha. But the addressee did not favour this idea lest he (Ramdas) might impair his health there. Rather, he wished him to be sent abroad and engaged in some different type of work. He had, therefore, written to Gandhiji to advise Ramdas accordingly.

I hope you had a good voyage, and that the same good fortune will accompany you during the balance of your journey.

Yours sincerely,

DR. SHERWOOD EDDY

BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

354. LETTER TO H. A. POPLEY

August 18, 1934

DEAR REV. POPLEY,

I thank you for your letter. I wish it was possible for me to go to Bombay if only to see Dr. Eddy. But medical friends forbid any such movement, and I do not feel the call to override their advice. By as much conservation as possible of the energy being daily gathered I am trying to regain lost strength as quickly as possible.

My fast was a rich experience for me. You have perhaps come across my reflections[1] on it in the current issue of *Harijan.*

REV. H. A. POPLEY

ERODE (S. INDIA)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "God Be Praised",15-8-1934

355. LETTER TO BHASKAR MUKHERJI

August 18, 1934

MY DEAR BHASKAR,

I have read your letter to Mahadev of the 15th instant. I cannot help thinking that you have closed down the scavengers' schools much too hastily. The Section 91 that you quote, I certainly do not read in the manner you do. It does not prohibit the Corporation from using even a part of the lakh of rupees for education among scavenger boys and girls. On the contrary, I should read the Section to compel the Corporation to use a part of the funds amongst the scavengers. The Section to be of any use can only mean that the Corporation will begin by spending the money among the poorest, and surely not among the fashionable suburbs of Calcutta for instance. Has the Corporation taken legal opinion on the interpretation of the Section in question? If, therefore, there is any chance of the Corporation retracing its steps in the matter, I ask for its reconsideration.

With reference to the penultimate paragraph of your letter I would like you to tell me in detail what work the Corporation has done, and is doing, for Harijans and what sum is spent during the past twelve months in their behalf.

That I am dictating this letter shows that I am gaining strength.

Jawaharlal's release has brought relief to poor Kamala and relieved Jawaharlal's many friends of a great burden of anxiety over Kamala's ill-health.

My love to baby and children. I hope you are doing well in every respect.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

356. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHARMA

August 18, 1934

CHI. SHARMA,

Jamnalalji has been operated upon and he is in a Bombay hospital. About Ramdas, I have wired[1] that the proper thing may be done. I do not feel it would be your dharma to come away leaving Devi in this condition but I cannot insist on my view in this matter. Every man forms his own code of conduct as a father. What more can I write? We can continue the discussion in person or through letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, 1932-48,* facing p. 89

357. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

August 19, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

You seem to be progressing satisfactorily. Do not be impatient about the healing of the wound. It will heal in its own time. Do not worry about work at all. You must not talk either. If you wish to say something, you may write it down. If you follow this rule, it will help you very much.

You should not worry about things here at all. Nobody gives me any trouble. I do not exert myself too much. My weight has reached 96 lb. You need not worry about the Ashram. Let Madanmohan stay there.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Hiralal Sharma", 18-8-1934

[PS.]

This was written before 4 a.m., some time after that Kamalnayan came and saw me. If doctors advise you against sleeping on the side on which the operation has been performed, it would be advisable to lie on one side only despite any discomfort that you may experience.

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 130

358. LETTER TO UMADEVI BAJAJ

August 19, 1934

CHI. OM,

I get your letters. Do not be remiss in writing to me. Fix a certain hour daily for writing, so that you will do no other work at that time. Write slowly and in a careful hand. Give me all the details about what Jamnalalji can eat and drink, how he sleeps, what is the condition of the pain, what is the progress of the healing, who are the visitors, etc., etc. You should not make him talk. If any people come to talk to him, you should not let them. If these rules are observed, the healing will be quicker.

Give me an account of how you spend the time. Where do all of you sleep? Give a description of the hospital. Who are the other patients there?

Gopi is still here. Her health is as poor as ever. Write to her. Madalasa comes regularly to do your share of the daily work. I give your letters to her to read.

It is about 4 a.m. just now. I sat down to write this letter after cleaning my teeth.

I felt glad after reading Janakimaiya's letter. She must be feeling happy now.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 336

359. LETTER TO CALCUTTA CONGRESSMEN

August 19, 1934

I am afraid that your optimism is ill-grounded, for I have seen nothing as yet to shake my confidence in the correctness of the Working Committee's resolution. The utmost limit within which accommodation was possible was prescribed in Benares. There it stands. Nobody approves of the Award—much less has anybody acquiesced in it. Everybody condemns it. But a Congressman, because he is a Congressman, can neither accept it nor reject it because if he did one or the other he would be taking sides and therefore not represent the whole nation. I can easily respond to your optimism but if it is based on the belief that I shall any way influence the Working Committee to reconsider the resolution, I am afraid that your optimism is ill-grounded.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 24-8-1934

360. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

August 19, 1934

I have your letter enclosing copy of your letter to the Press in answer to a sanatanist's letter about the elections. I think your reply is perfect. But I do not suppose that it will produce any effect upon the sanatanists who never want to be convinced. But it will steady the waverers.

I suppose you have heard that the Parliamentary Board is not meeting here. They have postponed the meeting indefinitely.

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

361. LETTER TO P. G. DATE AND OTHERS

August 19, 1934

DEAR FRIENDS,

I saw your letter of the 12th August only yesterday. It is certainly regretable if your votes were not registered at the elections referred to by you. But the proper course for you to adopt is to lodge your complaint with the Secretary of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee and, if you fail to get relief, to send your appeal to the Working Committee.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. G. DATE AND OTHERS
C/O THE BOMBAY STUDENTS' BROTHERHOOD
FRENCH BRIDGE, CHOWPATTY
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

362. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

August 19, 1934

DEAR MOTIBABU,

I thank you for your letter. I am slowly regaining lost strength. I would like you to send me a detailed report of your activities, and then if I have any suggestions to make of course I shall do so.

With Love.

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI MOTILAL ROY
PRABARTAK SANGH
CHANRANAGORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy ; Pyarelal

363. LETTER TO N. R. NADIG

August 19, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is beyond my power to give you any help; nor can I make any suggestion as to the way in which you should go about your work.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. N. P. NADIG
W. T. SANITORIUM
MIRAJ

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

364. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

August 19, 1934

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

You may start writing to me now. I am daily increasing the amount of work I do. I write a good many letters. Thakkar Bapa used to read out to me your letters to him. You seem to be succeeding well. You are on the right path. Is Rama calm? Personally I liked Dhiru's going there. Can he think and understand things now? How is Vimu? You may write to me whatever you wish to.

Maganbhai must be giving you other news. I, therefore, don't write about those things here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5524

365. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

August 19, 1934

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I understand what you say regarding Siddhimati. She shouldn't have left like that. I am of the opinion that she should not be re-admitted all too easily.

Has Jamnadas gone out in search of a job? I tried to persuade him to stay with me, but he did not. His anger does not seem to have subsided yet. Didn't he and others read the circular letters which I wrote to you ?

I am glad that Lilavati is doing well. If Kusum is getting fever, wouldn't it be advisable for her to go to Ranavav? She always gets better there. Chimanlal's case also is pitiable. His health doesn't improve at all. Do not put too much trust in Amala's letter. She is very cheerful here. She is even improving a little. So long as I live here, it will not be advisable to shift her from here. Even when I leave this place permanently, I will burden you with the responsibility for her only if I think that she can safely go there. I am sure that, if she is likely to improve under anybody, she would do so under you.

If Keshu succeeds in his experiment regarding the spinning-wheel, it will be a great achievement. He should continue the experiments. The time-limit cannot be extended now, but, if he succeeds in

inventing a spinning-wheel which would have deserved the prize, everybody will welcome it. He should not, therefore, worry. We have not so far received any model which would deserve a prize.

I have still not been able to decide anything about the dairy. I wish to discuss the matter also with Jamnalalji who is in hospital. I gathered your viewpoint to be that it should be run as an independent activity and should not be handed over to the Harijan Ashram. Is this impression of mine correct ?

Has there been any change in Harilal's mod of life? Does he exercise self-control there or does he continue to live in the same manner?

It is exessively humid here. The rainfall has been quite heavy. If possible, I don't wish to shift you from there for the Kanya Ashram. You have been doing excellent work there. It is desirable that you should put everything in perfect order. In case of absolute necessity here, you will of course be available. Vinoba has agreed to take up complete responsibility. I see that I shall have to call you here once before I decide anything. I hope I shall be able to give you fairly long notice.

I am regaining strength fairly well. Even if the progress is rather slow, I am satisfied.

Narahari, Kishorelal, Maganbhai, Soman and Kakasaheb are here at present. I have been discussing[1] with them plans for proper organization of villages.

I hope you read the *Harijan* carefully. I suppose you know that Krishnamachari and Sulochana are here. Amtussalaam and Vasumati are with me, and of course Prabha. Ramdas may come back in three or four days. There is an epidemic of cholera in Khurja.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8409. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with Gujarat Vidyapith Teachers", 14-8-1934

366. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

August 19, 1934

CHI. MANUDI,

You seem to have forgotten Grandma, and me too? Is that proper? Write to me and let me know what you are studying and where. Bhai[1] is there at present. I hope you don't feel afraid. How is aunt's health? Who else are there just now?

Give me all the news. Vidya is still here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1531. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

367. LETTER TO VALLABHABHAI PATEL

August 19, 1934

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your messages. Please see if you can come here after you have got all right. Andrews is coming on the 25th. I think it will be good if you are here then. I do get here as much rest as I need. Nobody bothers me. The chowkidars also follow Jamnalalji's instructions to the letter. I am sure that you, too, will get more peace here than you do there. But you can think of that only after you have completely recovered from fever and regained peace of mind. If you come, Mani will definitely benefit at any rate.

I understand that nothing can be done about your nose trouble just now. If anything can be done by staying on there for some time, I think it will be worth while to do so. Let us see if it helps. There will be no risk at all in getting it done just now. The only thing is that you will have to keep to the bed for some time. That need not matter.

I had a long letter from Jayaprakash yesterday. He is very unhappy. He has read much but does not seem to have digested all that he has read. And he certainly has no experience. But he can pour out in speeches what he has read. That impresses educated people, which fact increases his enthusiaasm and he leaves home and family, neglects his health and does about rousing people. He has, however,

[1] Harilal Gandhi, addressee's father

said in his letter that he will come and see me. Let us see what happens.

There is no possibility of my leaving the Congress immediately. But I share my agony with you.

How can I leave the Congress till you and others permit me to do so. Personally, however, I do feel that there is no other way for me. I seem to be obstructing the growth of the Congress. To cling to the means without faith in it or to fail to act according to one's faith—what a pitiable and frightful conditon to be in ! Is it not your duty to save the Congress from it? There may be no harm [in my remaining in the Congress] so long as I can think of some means of fighting the rot, but what can I do if I cannot think of any way except leaving the Congress? My doing so will rid it of hypocrisy. If the attitude of the ordinary Congressman is that no distinction need be made between truth and falsehood, violence and non-violence, khadi, calico, *jagannathi* [1] and muslin, then it is best that he should act accordingly. But that won't be possible till I leave. These restrictions cannot be removed with my consent, for I would never consent to their removal. If the Congress removes them despite my opposition, would not that amount to expelling me? Would it be desirable to let things go that far? I want to make you, Raja and others think about all these points. If you can come over, we shall discuss them at leisure.

We shall also have to think what I should do in September or after I have regained strength. It is an issue to which we must give thought. The time is drawing near for taking a decision. Jawaharlal's explosion is not as frightening as it seems from the flames. he had a right to let off steam, which he has exercised.[2] I think he has calmed down now.

About the unfortunate cultivators of Gujarat, I will do what you want, but I have definite views of my own in the matter.

What you desired regarding the Parliamentary Board has happened, though the reason for postponment was quite different.

I have written enough, I think, for today.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 115-6

[1] A variety of fine cotton cloth
[2] *Vide* "Letter from Jawaharlal Nehru", 13-8-1934

368. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

August 20, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I forgot to reply to one question of yours. I can reply to. . . 's[1] letter immediately, but then we ought to think about . . . and others also. Moreover, do you fully agree with the views which I hold on this subject? Personally I think they alone are correct. What does it avail a thief's mother to hide her face?[2] If, therefore,. . . and others want us to keep silent, we may do so, or alternatively we may issue statements in keeping with what we regard to be the present policy of the Congress. Or I may publish my personal view on my own responsibility. I will prepare a draft[3] and send it to you after you have called . . . to you and come to some decision and infromed me. Meanwhile I am writing to . . . and informing him that I am in correspondence with you, and that I will reply to him in detail later. He is in needless hurry. I don't think there is any urgency.

I understand about sending Mahadev to Prayag. I am thinking. Shouldn't I wait for a reply to my letter?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 117

369. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

August 20, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

After Vinoba had left yesterday, I received a reassuring wire from Dr. Jivraj, from which I learnt that there was no recurence of bleeding and that the pain also had subsided. Even then I think it is good that Vinoba has gone there for a short visit. You must have learnt that Kamalnayan himself was the cause of Vinoba's going there. He was very much disturbed by what you had to endure on Saturday and, therefore, immediately on arrival here, he sent me a

[1] The names are omitted in the source.

[2] A Gujarati saying, which means : 'to bear one's suffering in silence'

[3] *vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", Before 5-9-1934.

message through Mahadev. I welcomed the suggestion and sent a message to Vinoba who immediately got ready to go. Madalasa also wanted to go but, being obedient, she stayed back on learning that Vinoba wished to go. She will be duly rewarded for her self-control. It is good that she has stayed back. If your pain has subsided now and your mind is at peace, give leave to Vinoba to return soon. But he can stay as long as he is needed. The management of this place is being organized carefully. Vinoba is busy with the task day and night.

Your promise regarding facilities for education will certainly be kept. I write this to reassure you. Do not try to discuss this matter with Vinoba and exert yourself. Just now your chief aim should be to get all right. You need not worry about anything here or elsewhere. And certainly not about me, for my affairs are going on well enough. Radhakisan and Shivaji keep a strict watch over me. I hope you do not talk much. It will be advisable to use with caution any freedom that the doctors may permit. One should follow their advice as long as it is not against dharma. But it is a different matter when they permit any freedom to satisfy us.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Jajuji came and saw me and gave a report. Do not be in a hurry to send back Madanmohan. You may rest assured that ;nobody here is inconvenienced in any way.

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 131

370. LETTER TO UMADEVI BAJAJ

August 20, 1934

CHI. OM,

I don't want you to write to me if you do so merely as a task, writing the letters in a careless hand, just to keep your promise. One should keep one's promise both in spirit as well as letter. If your heart is not in keeping the promise, you cannot earn the merit of keeping it by doing so outwardly. I don't want anybody to keep a promise in such manner. Haven't I taught you to do everything as well and as

neatly as you can? You should not do anything perfunctorily, no matter whether it is an important or an unimportant thing.

Do not waste a single moment of your time.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 336

371. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

CHI. MIRA, *August 21, 1934*

You do not now need to be told how I am getting on. This letter will be enough evidence of the progress made. The food is almost normal.

Your letter is revealing. But I do not want to change my course of action. The cause will be compromised by no one except ourselves. Let them all do their little bit or their utmost there. It is enough for us that they are all well meaning. As you know, I have not set much store by the work that is being done there. Though I do not want to take any action on the strength of what you say, I would like you to have a frank and full discussion with both Agatha and Muriel and hear what they might have to say. So far as the big folk are concerned, I entirely agree with you that you shoudd seek interviews yourself directly. I an quite sure that they will all see you. If they do not, you need not mind.

The question of Dara is different and difficult. One does not know how to help. He has always appeared to me to be mysterious. Brockway[1] is supposed to be the leader. But he did not seem to me to lead. He was apologetic about Dara and in no way enthusiastic. I am afraid we can do very little for him. Of course there is no difficulty about carrying on correspondence with him. We do no more for the friedns or the fellowship group. We pay nothing. Agatha is paid and that is all. It is well to follow Shakespeare's adivce: "Give thy ear to everyone, thy voice to none." You will gather all the information and we shall confer when we meet, if we do at all. 'If' clause is merely precautionary. Nothing hangs by it. I have no present plans except the convalescence. Andrews reaches Bombay on 25th. He should be with

[1] A. Fenner Brockway

me on 26th.

The news about Jawaharlalji and the others you will get from Mahadev and Pyarelal whoever may be writing.

Today is exactly one week after the breaking of the fast.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6296. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9762

372. LETTER TO SISTER AMATA

August 21, 1934

MY DEAR AMATA,

I had your precious letter just after the completion of the fast. God bless you all the larks[1]. I must not try to write too many letters as yet though you will be glad to know that I am slowly but surely regaining the lost strength. Only I have need yet to be careful.

Love to you all.

BAPU

SISTER AMATA
EREMO, FRANCESCANO
TREVI (UMBRIA)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

373. LETTER TO G. R. SAHGAL

August 21, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your offer. What are you doing there? What are you getting there? What are the things you can teach and what is the salary that you would expect? Are you married? What is your age?

[1] Sisters of the Italian Convent of St. Francis; *vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 24-11-1932

Have you dependants? If you have, who are they? What is your father doing?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI G. R. SAHGAL
C/O GURUKULA
SUPA, *via* NAVSARI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

374. LETTER TO S. GANESAN

August 21, 1934

MY DEAR GANESAN,

I am glad that your venture is making steady progress. Don't be in a hurry, but build on a solid foundation.

If the boy in question was merely a nominal convert and knew nothing of Christianity or of any religion in fact, in my opinion he never ceased to belong to the relegion of his birth. And then there is no question of reconversion. If, however, he was a *bona-fide* convert it is none of your business to reconvert him. His faith must be personal to him and he has to be answerable to God for what he actually is. I hope this is quite clear.

There can be no objection to your admitting Christian boys, but they cannot be a charge on the ordinary Harijan Funds. You have to procure scholarships for them from personal friends, if the students are otherwise deserving. It would be a pity if they had to be turned out for want of funds. And yet it would be wrong to disburse their expenses out of the Harijan Funds which are intended solely for Hindus.

Yours,

BAPU

SHRI S. GANESAN
8 PYCROFTS ROAD
TRIPLICANE, MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

375. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

August 21, 1934

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. Your generosity of heart knows no bounds. You would not mind if I don't write. But I don't wish just now to take advantage of your generosity. All the same, you deserve compliments for it. I am glad that you went and saw Jamnalalji and also that you prayed with him. It was very good of him indeed to offer on his own to meet your expenses. May your future be as good as your beginning is. There can be no end, of course.

In saying[1] that we are born every day I didn't wish to show up your childishness. I had no such thought even in my dreams. On the contrary, I tried to express my appreciation of your having asked for my blessings. You may, therefore, continue to ask for my blessings for your birthday.

I feel no pain at all if somebody slanders the Ashram. But I do feel pain if anybody doubts the reason which I have given for offering it as sacrifice. How could I offer as sacrifice something which I did not regard as pure? I hope you have explained this properly. But it is our duty to bear everything serenely.

I am very glad that you met Father and that his anger has left him. I have no doubt that this understanding between you two will endure.

Things are going on all right with me. I am regaining strength. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10358. Also C.W. 6797. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 1-8-1934

376. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

August 21, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Yesterday I got excellent reports about your health the whole day. In the evening I got a joint wire from Dr. Jivraj and Dr. Rajabali. If this progress is maintained, you will get all right soon. But you should not be impatient. Let things go on as they may. Do not be in a hurry to attend to the various problems. Tell Om that there was no letter from there today. Perhaps I may get a wire today.

Convey my *vandemataram* to Dr. Rajabali. His caution is beyond praise. You will find enclosed a cutting meant for Dr. Jivraj.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 2939

377. LETTER TO LILAVATI MUNSHI

August 21, 1934

CHI. LILAVATI,

I did get your letter. I have been trying to give effect to one of your suggestions—about bringing Kumarappa into this. I am afraid it will be difficult for me to write for *Swadeshi.* I cannot ride two horses at the same time. You must have read about my decision to widen the scope of *Harijan.* Whatever ideas occur to me will, therefore, go into it. Since my store is limited, I cannot write the same thing in several journals. For the present, therefore, please be satisfied with what I write in *Harijan.* However, continue to send me copies of *Swadeshi.* Has the new policy been fully accepted there? Lallukaka said that there was no change. Have you fully grasped the new form? Do you feel interested in it? Can you understand it?

Is Jagadish fully ready now? Are both of you fully restored?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7551. Courtesy: Lilavati Munshi

378. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

August 21, 1934

BHAI MUNSHI,

My health is improving so well that my capacity for work is increasing every day. I had glanced through the note you gave to Shankerlal. It need not be used publicly just now. I liked your suggestion regarding the Congress elections. But it is incomplete. Draft whatever improved rules seem necessary to you. Draft the by-rules also. For giving effect to some of the suggestions, it will be necessary to amend the Constitution. Don't hesitate to suggest such changes too. You will have to find time for this. Do so if you can.

If you send me cuttings of what you have been writing in newspapers, I will try to find time and read them. No hour has been fixed when even Mahadev or Pyarelal can give me their substance after reading them. Everybody is so busy with his own work that he can get no free time. And even if one of them can do so, he will not find me free.

The work of the Bombay Congress is certainly difficult. The picture you have drawn is quite correct. It is not an easy job in such circumstances to work so as to enhance the prestige of the Congress. Do the best that you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7552. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

379. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

August 21, 1934

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have received a letter from. . .[1] in which she has poured out her grief. I thought I should send it to you and am, therefore, doing so. A summary by me would not have served the purpose. Try to heal her wound. There seems to have been some misunderstanding. She has become very sensitive. She has suffered a good many blows recently and is likely to have to suffer more still. We don't know when the

[1] The name has been omitted.

problem will be solved. Meanwhile we should try to soothe her as much as we can.

I hope you got my previous letter[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8410. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

380. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

August 21, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter. I understand the need for you to remain there. You alone can judge which need is more important. Whether here or there, we have to do the same sort of work. We should stay where the need is greater. You may, therefore, do what you think proper. About the Congress work in Bombay, my view is that those who have undertaken the responsibility should do the job in their own way or give up control of the organization. How long will they be able to hide the truth ?

The problem of purifying the Congress is a big one. We can discuss it in detail only when we meet. I agree with what you write about. . . [2] . The Congress must decide its policy. Let us send for . . .[32] and discuss the matter with him and have done with the problem. I had a letter from . . .[43], to which I have replied saying that he may come in the first week of September and may fix the date through you. If it is impossible for you to come then, I will argue out the matter with them. I will not give anything in writing without showing it to you.

I fully understand your impatience regarding Gujarat. Do what you think best. We must have our eyes on the future.

When Andrews comes there, have a frank and full discussion with him about everything. I will write to you or ask somebody to write to you about what happens here.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 19-8-1934

[2] The names are omitted in the source.

[3] *ibid*

[4] *ibid*

Mahadev is going to Prayag today. He will return before Saturday.

Please don't overwork and fall ill again.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I forgot to write about Kaka. He had taken the decision[1] with my consent. I liked it. It was not taken in resentment but was inspired by his sense of duty. I myself suggested to him that he should write to you. I didn't even ask myself whether you had a right to be consulted.[2] Kaka felt very unhappy, and rightly, for having written[3] that he had consulted trustees when he had not done so.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 118-9.

381. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA

August 21, 1934

CHI. ANNAPURNA[4],

I have a letter from you after a long time. How much do you spin daily? What speed have they all attained? What is the count ?

I hope all are keeping well.

Some attempt should be made to construct *pucca* roads in the rural areas. Rural development can be brought about at a very low cost if the vilagers lend a helping hand.

Thakkar Bapa must have replied to Father's letter. I have now started writing little by little. You may write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI ANNAPURNA KUMARI

BAREE, CUTTACK

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2786

[1] Of resigning from all trusts

[2] The reference is to the transfer of the Gujarat Vidyapith Library to the Ahmedabad Municipality without consulting Vallabhbhai, who was one of the Trustees; *vide* "Discussion with Vallabhbhai Patel", 30-7-1934

[3] To the Collector of Ahmedabad

[4] Daughter of Gopabandhu Chowdhry

382. TELEGRAM TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

August 22, 1934

SIR PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI
BHAVNAGAR

HOPE YOU ARE DOING NEEDFUL REGARDING ALLEGED ILLTREATMENT HARIJANS TALAJA.[1]

GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 5934. Also C.W. 3250. Courtesy: Mahesh P. Pattani

383. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

August 22, 1934

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I got your wire. As long as God wishes to take some service from this body, He will preserve it. When it is no more needed, would not even a yawn suffice to end life? I am regaining strength. I am gradually returning to work.

Read the accompanying. If the facts stated in it are correct, take whatever measures you would for a friend or relation in a similar plight.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

After I had written the above, I received a wire from Bhavnagar giving more details. I, therefore, sent a wire[2] and post this letter to follow it.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5935. Also C.W. 3251. Courtesy: Mahesh P. Pattani

[1] *Vide* also "Terrible Oppression", 2-9-1934.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

384. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

August 22, 1934

MY DEAR AGATHA,

This is merely to tell you that I am slowly rebuilding the body. The seven days' rest was good at the price of seven or eight pounds of flesh. I knew your anxiety which you showed in your letter and cable. I could not avoid the fast. Friends have to put up with that part of me. For this last may not be the last of my fasts. I can survive discredit by the world and not by myself.

Of the current events you will know from Mahadev and Pyarelal and the cuttings that Chandrashankar may be sending you. These letter(s) are not, I think, duplicated to Mira. Whatever you may consider necessary, you will pass on to Mira. She seems to be going about in a business-like manner. Anyway you must give your own impressions.

Poor Kamlani![1] I expect to have full accounts from you and Polak.

C.F. Andrews reaches Bombay on 25th. He may be here on 26th. Till then do not be anxious about the future. I have no cut and dried plan. Of course Bengal and the Frontier with Abdul Ghaffar Khan as the centre-piece are there. But I see no clear line of action. I want to precipitate nothing. But things may become impossible for me any moment. I must have room to move. The Black Hole will suffocate anybody—much more me, an open-air creature. A most unnatural condition is becoming naturalized in this unhappy land. This is written to give you my mental condition, not to expect more from you than you are doing. What can you the handful do, if we here can do nothing? And I admit that we are doing nothing or not enough. It is in this atmosphere that I have to act when this convalescence in finished. You must not be alarmed. What I have described is nothing new. You know these things. I have put them here in order to show that the things are about the same as when you left India. Not even all the ordinary civil disobedience prisoners have been discharged. And extraordinary treatment is being meted out to Jawaharlal. He may be pounced upon any day. They have put him out. Without seeming indecent he can't find himself in prison and they tell him he may be taken away any moment. This gives no

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Agatha Harrison", 7-8-1934

chance to poor Kamala for whose sake Jawaharlal is discharged. This is cruelty double distilled. And in spite of their declarations, many prisoners are still being detained without the slightest cause. Attachments of land still going on for fines ! My ahimsa is on its mettle. But I do not want to act. I am passive till God wants me to act; not my will but His shall be done.

You should share this with Mira and Muriel without fail. Of course Polak and any other you like.

Love to you and your sister to whom I was unable to wrtie when her little note was received.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1479

385. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

August 22, 1934

MY DEAR MURIEL,

I take this up after a long letter[1] to Agatha. Hence I must be brief now. I am getting on as well as might be after a fast of seven days.

I would like you to give me your experiences of Russia if you can spare the time.

I have never forgotten the commission you gave me about writing out my thoughts on non-violence for Rajkumari Amrit Kaur. But there has been no time left for me to do the work and I do not know whether I shall ever get the time for it. I can only promise to bear the commission in mind.

You remember you were to go specially to Rome in order to unravel the mystery of that interview.[2] You were to meet the Editor of that journal and find out from him what he actually had said and what he had to say to you. This thing may have no value now for the outside world. But it was for you and one who wants merely to serve Truth and nothing but *It.*

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] A fake interview with Gandhiji published in an Italian paper was reported by *The Times* correspondent in Rome. *Vide* "Letter to Sir Samuel hoare" , 6-3-1934 and "Fragment of stattement", 15-3 1934

How has Mira shaped according to your view ?

My love to you and Doris[1] and the rest of the growing family.

MISS MURIEL LESTER

BOW, LONDON

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

386. LETTER TO S. N. GANGULI

August 22, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You are quite right in saying that I have not been able to discover any royal road to physical *brahmacharya*. All that I can say is that you have to persevere along the lines suggested by me. Pure food, fresh air and moderate amount of exercise are to yield the desired result. *Pranayama* and some *asanas* have been reported also to produce good results. Hipbaths are also valuable. Mustard oil is a condiment which should be eschewed. In fact, I would advise you to eschew all oils. Vegetables should be boiled. Starchy vegetables should be avoided, and so should be pulses. You need not worry about milk. Honey is no substitute for milk. You should take a fair quantity everyday. And above all you should persevere in praying and have faith that your prayer will be answered.

SHRI SATYENDRANATH GANGULI

ATHARABARI

MYMENSING DISTRICT

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's sister

387. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

August 22, 1934

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

Here is a problem for you to solve. Kaka wishes to go and work in the South. This has no connection with his resignation as trustee.[1] I have been telling the teachers[2] who have assembled here that they should go and live in villages and, through constructive work, do what they can to organize village life and educate the people. The teachers like this idea and those who can be relieved are ready to take up such work. Kaka is one of them. We of course wish to utilize the Vidyapith buildings for meeting the needs of the city. . . . [3]

Mahadev left yesterday evening. He will reach Prayag tonight.

Mathuradas will certainly go to receive Andrews on Saturday. Send some others, too, who can go. If possible, put him up with you and, if he wishes, let him leave for Wardha on the same day.

I got your letter after I had written the above.

It was good that you could meet. . . [4]. Let him, the *Chronicle, The Free Press,* etc., agitate for the release of prisoners. We may remain silent on minor issues, but why should we do so on an important one? Dahyabhai should ask Natarajan[5] also to attend. According to a wire received from Ghanshyamdas, he intends to leave on Monday for Wardha.

I believe Andrews will stay for three or four days at least. But it is also likely that he might want to leave immediately for Santiniketan. You may yourself ascertain his intention.

I cannot write more today.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 119-20

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 1-8-1934

[2] *Vide* "Discussion With Gujarat Vidyapith Teachers", 14-8-1934

[3] Omissions as in the source

[4] *ibid*

[5] Editor, *The Indian Social Reformer*

388. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

Unrevised *August 22, 1934*

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. You may certainly summon Damodardas if you so wish. It is unnecessary to consult me on such matters; how can I even object to it? I have no desire to curtail your independence in any way. But I do want your consent, if I can have it, to my making use of the remarks made by Damodardas regarding. . .[1] and others in order that I may be able to do them justice. This matter is hurting me like poison because now I am terribly embarrassed while writing to. . . and . . .. This is probably the first occasion in my life that I heard something against them which affects me yet I may not let them know. It will be enough if I am released from this restriction.

I will never involve myself in the Delhi Congress controversy. Such matters are now beyond my strength.

Since I have your permission I am sending your letter to Sardar. The reference to Damodardas is of course there.

By now you must have realized the point about your writing to Prabhavati about the marriage. It was not as if this subject could not have been discussed at all but that it should never have been discussed with Prabhavati. This has never been nor can it ever become her sphere till she has gained some independence in such matters. A discussion about any girl of the Ashram can take place only with Jamnalalji, Vinoba or myself; and in such affairs Vinoba and I give precedence to Jamnalaji. What need was there to write to Prabhavati when the right thing was to contact Jamnalalji?

You may, by all means go to Mussoorie for your health's sake. We shall see afterwards.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2420

[1] The names have been omitted.

389. STATEMENT TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA [1]

[On or before *August 23, 1934*][2]

What was offered was freedom of speech and vote to elect candidates who had real conscientious scruples over the acceptance of the Working Committee's resolution on the Communal award. This would not satisfy Panditji. He desired full freedom of action for all. This amounted to a nullification of the Working Committee's resolution which the Committee could not do. It was a mistake to suppose that the Working Committee's resolution was a virtual acceptance of the Award. The Committee neither accepted nor rejected the Award and thus proved its impartiality and national character. It was the only way to arrive at an agreed solution which was sure to come if Congressmen, Hindus, Mussalmans and others, loyally and seriously worked out the resolution.

Mahatma Gandhi was then asked if Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya's new organization could run the elections in the name of the Congress. He replied that the Parliamentary Board was the only authorized body which could function in the name of the Congress.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 24-8-1934

390. TELEGRAM TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

August 23, 1934

ANAND HINGORANI

SAHITIPUR

KARACHI

HOPE RINGWORM CURED. UNDER SURGICAL ADVICE UNDERGO PILES OPERATION IMMEDIATELY.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] The source had reported : "As some confusion appears to have been created over Gandhiji's offer of compromise regarding the Communal Award Resolution of the Working Committee, he was asked to clear the position."

[2] The statement was reported under the date-line, "Wardha, August 23", 1934. *Vide* also "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel",23-8-1934

391. TELEGRAM TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

WARDHA,
August 23, 1934

ABUL KALAM AZAD
19 A BALLYGANJ
CIRCULAR ROAD
CALCUTTA

AM ISSUING[1] SOMETHING BUT BETTER ASK VALLABHBHAI WHO ALONE CAN ISSUE AUTHORITATIVE REPUDIATION.

GANDHI

From a copy: B. C. Roy Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

392. LETTER TO W. S. BARLINGAY

WARDHA,
August 23, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. If it is merely a matter of resumption of practice, I hardly think you need any interview because I am clearly of opinion that those Congress pleaders who want to resume practice are entirely at liberty to do so. Indeed I have pressed some pleader friends to resume practice rather than suffer pangs of poverty. I hope, therefore, that you do not want me to send you an appointment for this purpose. I still do need to conserve energy, and I am giving interviews only where it is absolutely necessary.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI W. S. BARLINGAY
C/O TILAK VIDYALAYA
NAGPUR

From a copy: W. S. Barlingay Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* "Statement to Associated Press of India", 23-8-1934 and also "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 23-8-1934

393. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

August 23, 1934

MY DEAR ANAND,

You have given me a tragic tale of your woes. That a little ringworm should develop into a frightful thing passes comprehension. Generally speaking it yields to simple treatment inside of two or three days. Have you not placed yourself under a competent doctor? And you ought not to trifle with your piles. It is a very simple operation, and if a competent surgeon advises that you should go through the operation at once you should do so without demur.

I see that your letter is dated the 16th instant. It was received only yesterday. Evidently the letter takes a long time to reach Karachi and therefore I am sending the following telegram:

> Hope ringworm cured. Under surgical advice undergo piles operation immediately.

You can publish the message on God. If you like you can copy the full text from *Young India.* As you know, selections from *Young India* have been published in book form. This message is among the selections.

I am not writing separately to Vidya, but she ought to. I hope she and Mahadev are all right.

Unless you are in a hurry I want to delay sending funds till Jamnalalji is discharged from the hospital or till he is in a position to transact business.

Love to you both.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

394. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

August 23, 1934

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

This is just to greet you.[1] I hope you had a fair voyage. Take the next train if you can.

Love.

MOHAN

C.W. 9683. Courtesy: Viswa Bharati Library, Santiniketan

[1] The addressee was to arrive from England on August 25; *vide* p. 342.

395. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

August 23, 1934

That you need not write to me and I to you is a great deal. Now that I have written to you, you should write to me. Give Mr. Andrews his letter[1] .

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 151

396. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

August 23, 1934

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I remember that letter which, at your instance, I sent to a Sindhi friend. When I receive the draft, I shall send the receipts as suggested by you.

As to the Hampton Institute pamphlets, my own impression is that I passed them on to Thakkar Bapa after I had read them. But in such matters my memory is not to be relied upon at all. I know that I did not destroy them and I must have dealt with them as per your instructions. Nevertheless I have asked Devraj to make a search, and if the pamphlets are traced they will be sent to you.

I hope that you will get a suitable plot of land for the welfare centre. Brijkrishna wrote to me about it.

I am slowly regaining lost strength.

You remember the Agra friend who prepared a note containing hints on tanning. I returned that note for amplification. Whether I sent it to you or to Thakkar Bapa or to Ghanshyamdas I cannot quite recollect. But I would like you to make a search and see whether it was sent to the writer for amplification. If it was, I would ask you to remind him that I am still waiting for that note with the necessary amendments made.

I hope you had a good time in Sindh.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item. The addressee was to receive Andrews; *vide* p. 342.

397. LETTER TO H. A. LALVANI

August 23, 1934

MY DEAR LALVANI,

I have your letter. Why did you not bring the mistake to my notice at once? You can understand the difficulty of making refund in cases of this character. Surely you must have discovered the mistake at once. I would advise you now to forget the 100-rupee note altogether. A big organization like Harijan Sevak Sangh cannot afford to rectify such mistakes. If, however, you are not satisfied with my advice, I would like you to refer to Jairamdas, and if Jairamdas thinks that this is a case in which refund should be granted I will advise him to write on your behalf to Thakkar Bapa. If you propose to approach Jairamdas, you would show this letter to him.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI H. A. LALVANI
HYDERABAD

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

398. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

August 23, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letter and also letters from Om, Janakimaiya and Madanmohan. I got a report about you from Vinoba also and just now I received a wire from Dr. Shah. We can expect now that the wound will have completely healed in a few days. But do not build castles in the air. Be patient and stay there as long as necessary. There is no urgent problem at all which requires your immediate attention and nothing to worry about. Radhakisan[1] is able to look after everything here and he and many others keep guard over me.

Can a remark be called a "joke" if you have to explain that it is written in "joke"? Which is better, Janakimaiya's angry complaints or your suppressing your pain and building castles in the air? When Janakimaiya complains, we know that she suffers. But you keep things

[1] Addressee's nephew

in your own mind and so others are deceived. Tell me now, who deserves to be admired?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 132

399. LETTER TO UMADEVI BAJAJ

August 23, 1934

CHI. OM ALIAS SLEEPING BEAUTY[1],

Your letter was a good one. The handwriting should be better still. Now that you are giving up sleeping for sewing, what will the poor tailors do? But they will have no cause for fear because in a few days you will be found sleeping on the sewing machine itself.

Madalasa continues to do your share of the work daily,and as she has no other work to do, kills flies[2] during the rest of the time.

Continue to write to me regularly. You should not let him[3] talk much yet. When visitors come, Janakibehn should talk with them. She is not happy unless she can talk. You also can join in their talk. Then the visitors will have nothing to talk about with Father.

I was weighed today by Radhakisan. The weight was 98. If it goes on increasing like this, who knows how far it will go up?

Do you recite the *Ramayana* properly? The scene between Sumitra and Lakshmana is very moving indeed. But the *Ramayana* is full of such scenes.

At what hour do you get up?

Gopi has gone to Jabalpur today to celebrate the Balev Day[4]. She has promised to return soon. I regularly hear from Gajanan also.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 337

[1] In 1933 the addressee, who was 13 years, accompanied Gandhiji on his Harijan tour, and whenever she had time, she slept.

[2] A Gujarati saying which means: 'Idling away one's time'.

[3] Jamnalal Bajaj

[4] A Hindu festival celebrated on the full-moon day of *Shravana,* when one changes one's sacred thread. Also known as Rakshabandhan when a girl ties a string (called *rakhi, rakhadi of raksha* round the wrist of her brother and receives from him some gift as a token of his readiness to protect her.

400. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

August 23, 1934

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

Enclosed is a letter from Brijkrishna regarding the dissensions in Delhi. Read it and tear it up. I have categorically stated[1] in my reply that, even if they ask me, I will not intervene in this dispute. Every day I receive nothing but such complaints. Everybody thinks only of himself and nobody thinks of the country. I don't know how, in such circumstances, we can reach our goal.

I have received wires from Bengal, too, against Aney. I have replied in plain words saying that nobody should doubt his impartiality and that he should be fully trusted.

Malaviyaji has ordered *The Hindustan Times* to change its policy on the question of the Award. Ghanshyamdas has resigned because of this, giving reasons in his letter of resignation which reveal his disagree-ment with Malaviyaji's views. Let us see what happens now. I don't know what has happened to these two.

On receiving a wire from Rajendrababu, I have sent a statement[2] to the Associated Press. You will read it in the papers. If a copy has been preserved, they will send it to you. It would help if you also issued such statements from time to time from Bombay. I had a wire from the Maulana asking me what the formation of the Congress Nationalist Party meant. I have wired back saying that it is the President who should reply to his question, and that, though I would write about it to you, he should send a wire to you. If you receive one, give him a suitable reply.

I received a letter from Rajaji today, which you should read. Tear it up after reading it. If you wish, write to him. If you regain sufficient strength to travel to Madras and if you can get time, you may go there. I have not seen the cutting from *The Statesman*. If I find it, I will send it too. Whatever it writes, how can we hide the truth? Prafulla Ghosh has arrived here. He has a painful tale to tell of the rot in Bengal.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 120-1

[1] *Vide* "Statement to Associated Press of India", 23-8-1934

[2] *ibid*

401. INTERVIEW TO KHADI WORKERS[1]

[On or before *August 24, 1934*][2]

Khaddar in a sense is purely an economic proposition. A khaddar organization must be a business concern before everything else. The democratic principle, therefore, cannot apply to it. Democracy necess-arily means a conflict of will and ideas, involving sometimes a war to the knife between these different ideas. There can be no room for such conflict within a business organization. Imagine parties, groups and the like in a business concern. It must break to pieces under their weight. But a khadi organization is more than a business concern. It is a philanthropic institution designed to serve demos. Such an institution cannot be governed by popular fancy. There is no room in it for personal ambition.

"In reorganizing your khadi production, you should not forget that the science of khadi, in some respects, works on diametrically opposite lines to that of ordinary business.You know how Adam Smith in his *Wealth of Nations*, after laying down certain principles according to which economic phenomena are governed, went on to describe certain other things which constituted the "disturbing factor" and prevented economic laws from having free play. Chief among these was the 'human element'. Now, it is this 'human element' on which the entire economics of khadi rests; and human selfishness, Adam Smith's "pure economic motive", constitutes the "disturbing factor" that has got to be overcome. What applies to the production of mill-cltoh, therefore, does not apply to khaddar. Debasing of quality, adulteration, pandering to the baser tastes of humanity, are current staple in commercialized production; they have no place in khadi, nor has the principle of highest profit and lowest wages any place in khadi. On the contrary, there is no such thing as pure profit in khadi. And there should be no loss. Loss there is, because we, the workers, are still incompetent novices. In khadi, the prices realized return to the prime producers, the spinners, the others getting no more than their hire.

[1] This appeared under the title "Khadi—A New Orientation" as a "gist of Gandhiji's remarks" to prominent khadi workers of Andhra, including Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Sitarama Sastri and Narayana Raju, The discussion continued for two days.

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 26-8-1934, which had reported that Pattabhi Sitaramayya left Wardha for Madras on August 24, 1934.

Then, take the question of standardization. You cannot enforce it in khaddar. As Rajagopalachari once remarked, a poor, ordinary spinner cannot always spin thread of a uniform quality. She is not a machine. Today she may be unwell, tomorrow her child may be ill and her mind will be distracted. If you have love for the poor spinner or her child, you will not insist on having smooth, even thread always, but be satisfied with what she can give, so long as she gives her best in the condition in which she finds herself at the moment. The sacred touch of her hand gives life and history to khadi which the machine-made yarn can never give. The art that is in the machine-made article appeals only to the eye, the art in khadi appeals first to the heart and then to the eye. I would, therefore, deprecate the bleaching of khadi. It adds to the cost of production, affects the durability of cloth and makes the detection of fraud ever so much more difficult. We must not pamper the popular fancy, but seek to cultivate a new taste. A few washes in the ordinary course will suffice to make khadi perfectly white and give it a softness which bleaching destroys. We must make everybody contribute his or her mite to reduce all unnecessary cost.

If, then, we treat khadi, not as an article of commerce, but as one necessary for the sustenance of semi-starved millions, we must penetrate the spinner's home had induce her to wear khadi made from her own yarn. This at once reduces the cost of production and ensures automatic distribution. So far, we have simply tried to manufacture khadi for the city people. From insignificant begin-nings, the production of khaddar has grown to several lakhs per year. We have multiplied varieties. But that does not satisfy me now. Khadi was conceived with a much more ambitious object, i.e., to make our villages starvation-proof. This is impossible, unless the villagers will wear khadi themselves, sending only the surplus to the cities. The singular secret of khadi lies in its salability in the place of its production and use by the manufacturers themselves.

Our overhead charges are today much too high for me. If we concentrate attention on the central mission of khadi, they will be consi-derably reduced. The rules governing the reduction of the price of khadi are somewhat, if not wholly, different from those that apply to purely commercial articles produced chiefly for profit. In khadi, there is a limitation to the improvement of tools. But there is no limitation to the improvement fo human intelligence and honesty. If we despair of these two, we must despair of khadi. In khadi, therefore, we reduce cost by eliminating middlemen as far as is

consistent with the smooth running of the organization, which itself will be unnecessary when khadi is self-supporting and self-acting.

The science of khadi is still in its infancy. It is a developing scie-nce. With every new discovery that I make in it, the realization comes to me all the more vividly how little I know of that science. There is no other country in the world , with the possible exception of China, that is potentially so rich as India, with its inexhaustible, untapped reserves of man-power. Tap these reserves, and you at once banish poverty from this country; and hand-spinning is the means by which this could be done. All that we have done so far in khadi was necessary. Without it we could not have reached the present stage. But we have yet only touched the fringe of the problem. We heve now need to take another step. If , therefore, you will have autonomy for Andhra khadi, you can have it for the asking and without much trouble about the discharge of your obligations. There is nothing to prevent you from working along the lines suggested by me.

Harijan, 21-9-1934

402. NOTES

ITS PHYSICAL EFFECT

A few words about the physical effect of the recent fast will not be out of place. No matter how much spiritually inclined a person may be, a physical act cannot but produce its corresponding physical effect. The latter may be regulated or reduced by the spiritual effort, but it can never be completely overcome. And as I have often fasted for health reasons, i.e., for physical effect, I have not failed to study from that standpoint all the fasts that were taken from spiritual motives. During all the four fasts undertaken for the Harijan cause, I have noticed a particular dislike for water, whether wlith or without soda or salt, and whether hot or cold. I have been able to bear, but only just bear, aerated water. This inability to drink water has been the greatest drawback in my fasts. I must mention that, being largely a fruitarian and having abstained from condiments of every description, except salt, practically for the past forty yeras, I rarely drink water even in the ordinary course. All the liquid I need comes from the fresh juicy fruit and the non-starch vegetables and honey and hot-water drinks. I have known many friends who have gone through long fasts, but I do not know anyone who had had the dislike for water

that I had. Medical friends who have kindly helped me during my fasts have not been able to suggest anything within the permissible limits whereby they could make me drink water freely. They have suggested and adopted remedies to reduce the evil effect of inability to drink enough water. My purpose is to compare notes with those who have any knowledge of fasting and to discover a means whereby the dislike of water could be cured. Though I do not know them, surely, there must be people who develop during their fasting periods the same repugnance to water that I do. If any light can be thrown on the question, it will help many persons like me. Much as I should like to avoid having to fast, I cannot make myself believe that the recent fast was the last in my life. It is a matter beyond my control.

THE AJMER INCIDENT

Although Shri Ramnarayan Chaudhri and Shri Durgaprasad Chaudhri, captain of the volunteers in Ajmer, do not in any way wish to be absolved from any blame that may attach to them for forgetfulness or negligence in connection with the Ajmer incident, they are most anxious to have the blame removed from the volunteers who have been condemned in the Press and who they hold to be utterly blameless. They have made careful investigations and find that not a single volunteer was involved in doing injury to Swami Lalnath or his party. The investigation papers have been sent to me. The only deadly piece of evidence in favour of the theory of the gulit of the volunteers has been utterly discredited. The confessor appears to have been altogether a fictitious person, no trace can be found of him. The newspaper that published the confession has failed to produce the name of the writer, and the Editor has made such acknowledgement in his paper and expressed regret for having published an unauthentic letter. All the evidence, therefore, that I have hitherto received goes to show that no volunteer was involved in the affray. My own statement has nothing in it to warrant the inference that the volunteers had actually assaulted Swami Lalnath or any of his party. I had simply said that Swami Lalnath had said that volunteers were involved. But in this belief he was evidently mistaken. No trace was found of the volunteer described by him.Since the Ajmer volunteers have come in for a great deal of public criticism, it was necessary to give my own opinion in the matter. The fact, however, that in my opinion no volunteer seems to have committed the assault does not imply that the fast was in any way unnecessary. That the assault was committed is not

to be denied, nor can it be denied that those who took part in the affray were of the reformer group. The fact also remains that Shri Ramnarayan Chaudhri forgot to give the necessary instructions and take adequate precautions against the mishap. The fast was, therefore, clearly necessary, and I am thankful to God that He gave me the strength to take and go through it. Those who handle purity movements cannot be too vigilant. The legal maxim has it that 'Law', i,e., God, 'helps the wakeful, never the sleepy.'

AN ENGLISH FRIEND'S WARNING

An English friend sends the following message :

> We, English people, do not understand this fasting of yours. We were hardly able to tolerate your previous fasts. But you will be discredited, if you repeat any more of these.

I know that this warning has been sent out of concern for my reputation. I know the Protestant dislike for fasts. But, inspite of all the wish to stand well with my English friends, I am really helpless in this matter. I am not responsible for these fasts. I do not undertake them for my amusement. I would not torture the flesh for the love of fame. Though I bear joyfully the pangs of hunger and many other physical discomforts of fasting, let no one imagine that I do not suffer. These fasts are bearable only because they are imposed upon me by a higher Power and the capacity to bear the pain also comes from that Power. I can only plead with that Power that He may not put me through any more ordeals of that nature. But if my pleading goes in vain and another fast comes my way, I must take it, even though I may have to risk a wreckage of all the reputation I may possess for sanity and what not. 'For, what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?'

Harijan, 24-8-1934

403. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

August 24, 1934

CHI. MARY,

I was glad to hear from you so soon in reply to my postcard[1]. Jamnalalji is doing exceedingly well. The operation itself was a prolonged affair because it had to do with the bony parts of the ear and there were some tough bones to be chiselled and hammered. But the convalescence has been exceptionally easy. He was allowed to walk yesterday and is almost on normal diet. Even the stitches were taken off. That of course does not mean that the bones where cuts were made were healed. That must take some time, but not so much as the doctors had expected. They say that the operation was successful and very cleverly done.

Mira had a sudden call from within. One fine morning she came to me and said that she felt an irresistible call to go to England. I asked her, "when"; and she said, "as soon as I can pack and go". I did not resist her. On the contrary I encouraged her because I felt that it must do her good and be a rich experience, though she might be able to do nothing. I have confidence that she will not make any serious blunder by talking nonsense. She is too well-balanced to do that. She does not expect to be away for more than four months, but I have written to her not to hurry back and that she should stay longer if it was necessary. Her programme is very elaborate. She is leaving practically no friend unvisited and she is booked to go to Scotland also. She has been sending long letters and she herself is more than satisfied with the way she is being received. I fancy that she will return in October. Is it not strange that the English climate is not suiting her as well as the Indian climate ! She told me that she was freezing in Wales ! If you want to see a sample of her very long but interesting letters I will gladly send you a specimen.

I hope you are now thoroughly restored. Do you hear from Duncan?

Love.

BAPU

Form a photostat: G.N. 6026. Also C. W. 3355. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] *Vide* "Letter to F. Mary Barr", 16-8-1934

404. LETTER TO T. M. ZARIF

August 24, 1934

DEAR TAYEBBHAI,

I have your letter. It is difficult for me to give you a firm opinion. I can conceive circumstances under which a Congressman will be justified in accepting appointment as honorary magistrate. Each case has, therefore, to be judged on its own merits. But I would like to state generally that every Congressman should, in such matters, act according to his conscience. More generally still, if he can avoid accepting honours from Government it is well. It will go hard what any person to justify a departure from a very safe road.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI TAYEBBHAI M. ZARIF

14 SUKEAS LANE

CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

405. LETTER TO KSHITISH CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

August 24, 1934

DEAR KSHITISHBABU[1],

I understand that you have difficulty in reconciling yourself to the Working Committee's resolution[2] on the Communal Award as also to the position[3] I have taken up regarding the Parliamentary Board. You have a right to strive with me when you cannot see eye to eye with me. You must not think of sparing me for the sake of my health. I may not be able to straightaway reply to your letters; but it would hurt me to think that you had formed, without arguing with me, an adverse opinion on any step that I might have taken. You know how I have valued your silent service of the country and your equally silent co-opreation. I do not want to forfeit the confidence of valued co-workers like you.[4]

SHRI KSHITISH CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

CALCUTTA

Form a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Brother of Satis Chandra Das Gupta

[2] *Vide* "Resolution on White Paper and Communal Award"

[3] *Vide* "Speech on Manifest of Congress Parlimentary Board, Benares", 29-7-1934

[4] *Vide* also the following item.

406. LETTER TO BIRENDRA NATH GUHA

August 24, 1934

MY DEAR BIRENDRA,

I was glad to have your letter with a copy of the manifesto. You should continue to send me such information as you may thinknecessary for me to possess. I doubt not that Kshitishbabu will, in the end, see what to me is the obvious truth.[1]

SHRI BIRENDRA NATH GUHA

VIDYASHRAM

B-76 COLLEGE STREET MARKET

CALCUTTA

Form a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

407. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

August 24, 1934

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

Since Kaka has resigned his place on the Board of Trustees of the Vidyapith, all of us have come to the decision that you should be the Chairman of the Board.We have already appointed you to the post. I did not remember what my legal position was in the Vidyapith, so I enquired about it and was told that I had none, but that, morally speaking, they regarded me as its Chancellor and all the teachers had agreed among themselves that I should be permitted to intervene in its affairs whenever I wished to do so. But this is no way of running an organization. You are the only person who can be the legal chairman. I am satisfied with whatever moral position I have and have neither the desire nor the strength to shoulder greater responsibility than that.

Another decision which they have arrived at on my advice and subject to your approval is that Narahari should take over management of the Harijan Ashram and that as many teachers from the Vidyapith as he may need should be made available to him. The expenditure over Narahari and other teachers from the Vidyapith who may be assigned to the Ashram should be met from the Vidyapith

[1] *Vide* also the preceding item.

funds as long as they last. I am of the view that this burden should not be put on the Harijan Sevak Sangh for the present, in view of the policy of the Sangh that it should pay caste Hindus from its funds in as few cases as possible. The ideal is that 95 per cent of the receipts should go directly into the pockets of Harijans. If we wish to realize it, we should set an example with our own workers. The third decision we have taken—and this also subject to your approval—is that the remaining teachers should, if they agree, spread out in villages for rural reconstruction work and for service in villages, and start work according to the scheme or plan which I have put forward. Narahari will explain it to you. If you do not approve of any item in it, exclude it unhesitatingly. Kakasaheb, Kishorelalbhai, Maganbhai, Soman and Narahari were present when these decisions were taken and they have agreed with them. About Narahari, I have discussed the idea with Thakkar Bapa also. The Harijan Ashram cannot be run on the best lines unless it gets the services of a person like him. I am sure that , if we run it well, we shall advance the cause of Harijans considerably. Only then will the gift of the Satyagraha Ashram have been justified. Though I know, therefore, that we can take many other services from Narahari, I think this is the best use we can make of him at present, and he himself is interested in this work and is fully confident of being able to make a success of it. Please, therefore, let Narahari be sacrificed for the Harijan Ashram.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 122-3.

408. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

August 24, 1934

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter and wire. I am not sending a wire in reply to your wire, since I have already written to you yesterday on that very subject.[1] If you have not issued any statement as suggested in that letter, you may state as follows :

> I have read the proceedings of the new party formed by Pandit Malaviyaji and Shri M. S. Aney. I have read telegrams and letters asking me to clarify certain points. In my opinion it is not proper to use the Congress name without the Congress authority.The party may be called the National Party of Congressmen if its composition strictly confirmed to Congressmen. But without the authority of the Congress duly received it cannot with propriety be called the Congress National Party especially when it is formed deliberately to propagate a policy in direct contradiction to that which is the official policy of the Congress. The adoption of the Congress name cannot but confuse the popular mind and I would respectfully urge Panditji to reconsider the position and adopt another name for the party which he had a perfect right to form for the education of Congressmen and others. There other point I should like to emphasize is that no one but the Congress Parliamentary Board can run elections in the name of the Congress. Lastly in the midst of the unfortunate differences between Pandit Malaviyaji and Sjt. Aney and the Working Committee I hope that all Congressmen will loyally support the policy enunciated in the resoultion of the Working Committee regarding the Communal Award.[2]

If you wish to make any changes in this, you may do so.

Rejendrababu's letter was rather strange.There can be only one reply to it. The Congress certainly cannot assume responsibility for providing the money and we cannot raise funds at present through private efforts. That is the responsibility of Bhulabhai and others. Discuss this matter with him.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 23-8-1934

[2] This paragraph is in English in the source.

I will write to Bhulabhai regarding the A.I.C.C.

He wants a meeting of the Working Committee to be called. I, therefore, think that it will be best to call it. You may hold it either in Bombay or Wardha, as you wish. He wants it to be called early in September.

Rajaji will arrive here the day after tomorrow or on Sunday.

Pattabhi and others are here . . .[1] and others have arrived. They will leave today.

I understand your view regarding Kaka. Jawaharlal has been arrested. There was a wire from Mahadev to that effect. He could see him. He is arriving here tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 124-6

409. LETTER TO BHULABHAI J. DESAI

August 24, 1934

If you wish to get elected to the All-India Congress Committee, I would advise you to control the desire. You may get elected to it when they all want you there with one voice. You will then be joining it with honour. Even if you are not a member just now, you are as good as one. That is enough for the present and in the prevailing atmosphere.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] The name is omitted in the source

410. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

August 24, 1934

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I was glad to have your letter. Your suspicion about that woman seems to me well-founded. I myself saw her spinning in the presence of many people. No such *purdah* is observed in the Punjab. You did well in cautioning Jamnaprasad. Write to Shankerlal. I think he also is vigilant.

I have written to Balram. I am all right. Ask Surendra to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

Form the Gujarati original: C. W. 372. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

411. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI

August 24, 1934

CHI. KASHI,

In respect of the fast[1], God's grace itself rained on me. I am gaining strength well enough. One just would not believe that you have entered the fifty-second year of your life. Krishna, too, thought it unbelievable. May you live many many more years still. If you two are not worthy of my blessings, who else would be? Convey my greetings to your revered mother. It is good that she is there. About the rest, I think Krishna must be writing to you. During the fast, she of her own accord, asked to be permitted to nurse me and did it extremely well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KASHIBEHN GANDHI
UDYOGALAYA
VIJAPUR
BARODA STATE

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33079

[1] Undertaken by Gandhiji from August 7 to 14, 1934 to mark the end of his Harijan Tour. For Gandhiji's statement on the fast, *vide* "Statement on Fast", 6-8-1934

412. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD[1]

[On or before *August 25, 1934*]

GRIEVED OVER FLOODS. YOU WILL USE EARTHQUAKE FUNDS FOR RELIEF. HOPE FLOODS SUBSIDING.

The Searchlight, 29-8-1934

413. TELEGRAM TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

WARDHA,
August 25, 1934

ABUL KALAM AZAD
19 A BALLYGANJ
CIRCULAR ROAD
CALCUTTA

HOPE YOU HAVE WIRED PRESIDENT AM FORWARDING.

GANDHI

From a copy: B. C. Roy Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The telegram was in reply to the addressee's published under the dateline, "Patna, August 25", 1934, which read: "Simultaneous flood in the Ganges and the Sone causing rush of water between Chapra and Arrah . . . . Great loss of human life and cattle apprehended . . . . Trying to organize relief but realize human helplessness in the face of tremendous on rush of water."

414. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

August 25, 1934

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

Yes, I have recovered from the effects of the fast in the sense that there is no untoward consequence. I am steadily but slowly regaining strength.

I have no desire to have a meeting of the Working Committee. But, if it is needed by the Parliamentary Board, I have no doubt that Sardar Vallabhbhai will call it. But have you need for it? I have a telegram from Maulana Saheb and Sardar sardul Singh who evidently desire a meeting of the Working Committee at the same time as the Parliamentary Board meeting. If such is also your feeling, then of course the Working Committee must meet. I am loath to be dragged to Bombay just now. Jamnalalji from his sick-bed has been warning me not to leave Wardha before I have reached 110 lb. I am now 98 lb. and I am gaining at the rete of less than $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. a day. Supposing that I keep up that pace, it would not be before the 20th September that I can leave Wardha. But of course Jamnalalji is exacting and he can be over-ruled if both the meetings must take place in Bombay, and that in the early part of September and if my presence is a necessity. All these things I leave to you to decide and then move Sardar Vallabhbhai accordingly.

Of course the appropriation of the name 'Congress' by Panditji's party is a bad job. No one can act in the name of the Congress without due authority. I believe Sardar Vallabhbhai would be issuing a statement[1] in the matter. You must have seen the brief statement[2] that I have issued.

I hope you do not want the Working Committee to lay down the procedure at the present stage to be followed by Congressmen in the Assembly. If an amendment of the character you describe is brought before the meeting just now I think it would be better not to say anything. But the Parliamentary Board is the best judge to decide as to what is necessary. But should an amendment be moved, you have correctly interpreted my own opinion as to the clear duty of Congress members. They must vote against a resolution or amendment

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 24-8-1934

[2] *Vide* "Statement to Associated Press of India", 23-8-1934

accepting the Award. And since they cannot vote for rejection, naturally they must abstain from voting in regard to a resolution or amendment rejecting the Award.

I am glad that so many districts had undisputed elections. I wish the rest of the districts would follow the good example set by the overwhelming majority of the districts. But if a fight is inevitable, I think that the decisions of Mr. Aney should be loyally followed.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY

CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

415. LETTER TO MANGHARAM SANTDAS

August 25, 1934

MY DEAR SANTDAS,

I have read your little note to Jairamdas at the back of Will Haye's letter. Though I have not been able to write to you I have been closely following the course that Kamlani's[1] derangement is taking. I have no doubt that he will be himself again, and when he does regain his balance, subject to your approval, I would ask him, if it is only for a time, to come back to India before he resumes his work. Life in England, especially for a man with a tender consciencelike Kamlani, is a very difficult job. I hope you are not worrying. After all Kamlani and all of us are in God's hands. We can but work and pray.

SHRI M. SANTDAS

HYDERABAD

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn",7-8-1934

416. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

August 25, 1934

CHI. NARAHARI,

Since Kakasaheb has resigned from the Board of Trustees of the Vidyapith, the question arises as to what should be done regarding the village improvement scheme of Shri Nagindas Amulakhrai. As desired by Shri Nagindas, I had appointed a committee to implement the scheme. On thinking about it, I now feel that the committee should be made completely independent of the Vidyapith, and that Sardar Vallabhbhai should be appointed its President and Raojibhai its Secretary. The latter should be appointed for one year.

Kakasaheb has rightly deposited the money of the Nagindas Trust with Jamnalalji. After the latter is all right, we may, if necessary, make some other arrangement. I have another fund also under my control. Kakasaheb has deposited that amount, too, with Jamnalalji. For the convenience of keeping accounts and from other points of view I think it would be desirable ot amalgamate this amount with the Nagindas Trust money.

The late Punjabhai had donated an ear-marked sum and, on my advice, entrusted the Vidyapith with the responsibility of editing and publishing Jain literature through a committee. I have a moral responsibility in this matter too. In view of the present circumstances, I would suggest that that work also should be carried on independently of the control of the Vidyapith. I suggest the following names as Trustees of such an independent body:

1. Narahari Parikh	4. Maganbhai Desai
2. Valji Desai	5. Nilkanth Mashruwala
3. Ramniklal Modi	6. Gopaldas Patel

If, besides these, we can get a learned and pious Jain, I think it would be desirable to invite him also to become one of the Trustees. We shall have to look out for such a person. If you can think of any name, please let me know.

In this programme, so far we have paid attention to publication of material from the original sources of the *Agamas* together with a transl-ation. If, instead, we make selections from this vast field of literature which might be useful to the people, or get such selections made, and publish them, I think the late Punjabhai's object would be better fulfilled.

It was always Punjabhai's wish that Shri Rajchandra's birth anniversary should be fittingly celebrated. We should assume the respo-nsibility for this. But whereas in Punjabhai's time people were content with holding meetings on the anniversary day, I think it would do greater credit to the committee and give greater peace to the soul of Shrimad if some constructive work could be done on that day. The committee should consider whether this should be done by publishing some literature or arranging a lecture on the anniversary day or in some other manner. The anniversary falls on the next *Kartik Purnima*. We should, therefore, think and decide in time how it should be celebrated on this occasion.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9063

417 LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

August 25, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You must have received my letter[1] of yesterday. Mathurababu[2] brought your letter today. It was good that he came. I have sent an emphatic message with him to the effect that they should fight the elections only if the Parliamentary Board provides the money, otherwise they should abandon the idea. They should expect no help from you or me. Of course, if they have the courage to fight without spending money they should certainly do so. If, however, that is not possible, they should think twice before deciding to fight. If it is possible anywhere in the country to fight elections without money and solely on the prestige of the Congress, it is in Bihar. However, this problem is outside my sphere. I haven't the slightest idea how elections are fought. If indeed they can be fought without money or with very little money solely in the name of the Congress, there can be nothing more creditable than that.

I have a wire from Bhulabhai saying that he is coming today between 3 and 4. Mahadev is arriving in the evening .

Did I write to you that I had received three wires regarding the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 24-8-1934

[2] Mathuraprasad, Rajendrababu's co-worker in Bihar

Working Committee? I have merely wired back in reply that they should ask you about it.

It will not matter if you find in impossible to come. We shall meet through letters and be satisfied with that. I will keep you informed about anything new which I come to know about.

Mirabehn seems to be doing good work. Probably it will bear no result just now, but her trip [to England] will not have been in vain. If you have not been getting letters regarding such matters, I will arrange, after Mahadev's return, that they are forwarded to you. Muriel met Lloyd George. She talked with him for hours.Thus these few friends have been doing the best they can. Mirabai and Agatha have clashed with each other a bit. Partly Mirabai's impatience and partly her suspicious nature were responsible for this. Mahadev or Pyarelal will give you the details of the incident.

You do not seem to have fully regained your strength. Bhulabhai has arrived. Call the meeting in Bombay. That will drag me there. Bhulabhai will be able to manage the A.I.C.C.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
89 WARDEN ROAD, BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 127-8

418. LETTER TO UMADEVI BAJAJ

August 25, 1934

CHI. OM,

I have your letters. Your handwriting is all right though it is not as good as I should like it to be. Does Kisan meet you often?

Every day you can find many things to write about. Heven't I suggested them? Who visits there? What food is given to you? How much sleep do you get? If it is not enough, are you able to carry on your work? You can certainly write about all this. If you read the *Ramayana* daily, you can also write which [chapter] you are reading.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 337-8

419. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

August 25, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I see that your progress is quite fast. The sick are always cared for like kings. That is the pleasant side of being ill. When, however, the poor have the misfortune to fall ill, they do not get this pleasure.

A letter for Dr. Shah is enclosed. There is also one for Om.

Everything seems to be going on well here.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 132

420. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

August 25, 1934

CHI. MANI,

I read the couple of lines in your hand. You are perfectly right in not writing to me at present. Take good care of your health and get completely all right. When necessary, do write to me at length. You need not now be very anxious to spare me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 117

421. LETTER TO G. R. SAHGAL

August 26, 1934

MY DEAR SAHGAL,

I was glad to receive your very prompt letter giving me all the information I wanted except one. I wonder if with all your attainments it would be proper for you, with wife and children , to give your services to a Harijan institution for Rs. 150. And it is not so much the small maintenance that you require as the fact that I cannot provide, perhaps for some years, the scope that your abilities would need. I have not in mind the bringing into being of a mighty Harijan institution. It would be a small affair with big promise in a somewhat distant future. Will you be content to allow your abilities to lie fallow? You will just tell me what is the urge. And is your wife in hearty co-operation with you in coming down from Rs. 750 per month to Rs. 150, when I suppose even now you could command, if not Rs. 750 per month, something very near it?

Yours sincerely,

SHRI G. R. SAHGAL
C/O GURUKULA
SUPA, *via* NAVSARI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

422. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

August 26/27, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Mahadev must have replied to your letter. Raja arrived suddenly today and was in a great hurry to return. Since I spent a good deal of time with him I am late with the post. Aney also came and saw me. All that I can say about him is that he brought a message of love from Malaviyaji and asked me if I had any reply to give. I told him that if they cared for propriety they should put up their candidates after consulting us and should not put up anybody simply to fight the Congress. He left soon, as he had to catch the train for Nagpur, and said that he would come again. The new Party has confused the situation, but apart from that I don't think it will be able to do much harm.

Bhulabhai came. I had a wire from the Maulana. He will have no objection to the meeting being held in Wardha. He can easily be accommodated here. He says he will not mind if he cannot stay in a hotel. I don't think he will stop for more than two days. To me, Wardha would certainly be more convenient. There will of course be some burden on Radhakisan, but he has kept everything ready. Recently Jamnalalji has added to the buildings. Hence there is sufficient accommodation. I have been assured that all the arrangements are perfect. Jamnalalji's invisible presence has been working behind all this, of course.

Bhulabhai will take care of all the necessary arrangements in consultation with you. You may now do what is most convenient to you. If you fix the meeting here, one advantage at any rate will be that we shall be able to meet.

I have been discussing with Rajaji my intention of leaving the Congress. He has come specially to discuss that. If possible, he wants to run away on Tuesday.

Ramdas is returning from Khurja on Monday. It is because of the cholera there. I shall know more when he comes.

I hope you are recovering your strength.

Mahadev has written to you everything about Jawaharlal. It was very good indeed that he went. Jawaharlal felt much comforted. Moreover, the old lady and Kamala were vere happy.

I have dashed this off in great haste immediately on entering my silence after the evening prayer. If anything is left out, I will supply it tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Morning, August 27, 1934

I have recollected one thing. It is not necessary for me now to write to Ballubhai[1] or anybody else about the matter concerning the Munic-ipality. I should write to you only. Even if you decide to take back the books belonging to the Vidyapith, there must be books worth thirty to fifty thousand belonging to the Ashram, maybe a little less or a little more. These books are lying unused. If they employ a librarian, the books can be catalogued on scientific lines, rules for lending them can be framed and they may then be loaned according to those rules. I very much desire that something should be done.[2]

Andrews and Jones[3] have arrived. I got your letter. Bhulabhai will be seeing you tomorrow. You may certainly have the meeting at Wardha. As regards Mahadev, see him when you come over. Andrews and Raja are here.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 128-30

[1] Balwantrai Thakore, President of Ahmedabad Municipality
[2] *Vide* also "Discussion with Vallabhbhai Patel", 30-7-1934
[3] Stanley Jones

423. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

August 27, 1934

BHAI BAPA,

I got your letter regarding Amalabehn. The Sangh needn't have incurred that expenditure. But I don't write this by way of criticism. Compassion is a wonderful thing. On the one hand, a trust, and, on the other, compassion. Who can solve this conflict? But the expenditure ought not to be borne by the Sangh. I, therefore, assume responsibility for that bill and for the ten rupees spent from Parikshitlal's pocket. I will lay my hand on some other appropriate fund. Please forget about that bill. I will send from here a *hundi* or money order to Parikshitlal in a day or two.

I have asked Prithuraj to write to you and give you plenty of other news. Somebody has given me a *hundi* to be spent as I like. Prithuraj is sending it to you to be spent by you in the manner I have suggested.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1140; also S.N. 22755

424. LETTER TO CHANDULAL MODI

August 27, 1934

BHAI CHANDULAL,

I got your letter. Tell Ramniklal that I have become impatient to see him. Ask him to see me soon. But what would it matter even if we can't meet? After all, everything that we wish doesn't happen. I do get news about you through Tara. I am glad that you keep cheerful. That is what one ought to do. I am regaining strength and weight. I was 94 immediately after the fast. Today it was 100. This gain in 14 days is not bad.

During the fast, I also used to drink boiled water after it had been cooled. The difference between boiled and unboiled does not trouble me. I cannot tolerate water itself. Do you eat oranges during the fast? Write to me about any other symptom that may appear.[1]

Let me know as soon as you have met Ramniklal. Most probably he will be released before his time. I am trying. But we can try only in a manner befitting us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4181. Also C.W. 1680. Courtesy: Ramniklal Modi

425. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

August 27, 1934

CHI. SUSHILA AND MANILAL,

Since Manilal has not written to me but Sushila has, should her name not be put first ?

I am awaiting your reply regarding a permit for Ramdas.[2] Medh has sent nothing as yet to Uncle.[3]. If he does mean to send it, why doesn't he send it directly to Uncle, or to me?

I think I have already written to you about saving at least Rs. 5 and sending it to me for Uncle. I have requested this contribution for

[1] *Vide* also "Notes" sub-title Its Physical Effect

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi", 17-7-1934

[3] Madhavdas Kapadia, Kasturba's brother

repaying the sum that I have got paid to him. I would be glad if he is not given even that much as a gift. I don't think he himself will be able to repay the sum. If you two and Devdas pay every month, you will feel no burden and the sum which I have borrowed from Jamnalalji can be repaid. You should try and do this much.

Andrews has returned. We talked a great deal specially about you. He has been very much disappointed. He complains that Manilal has been writing articles about the Agent which are full of anger and cont-empt. He doesn't say that there should be no criticism of the Agent, but that it should be kept within proper limits. I myself cannot read *Indian Opinion* these days. I rarely see any newspapers. I therefore don't know. If however you have been writing anything in anger or with contempt, you should change that. You should realize that your respons-ibility is great. Since I have not read anything, I am not writing this by way of criticism. I am only letting you know the impression that Andr-ews has formed.

Who is the Swami from Bengal who takes so much of Manilal's time?

Ramdas is coming here tomorrow as cholera is raging in Khurja.

Kishorelal and Gomati are here at present. The former's health cannot be described as too good.

Devdas is all right, more or less. Lakshmi has always beendelicate. Her daughter is doing fine. Andrews was full of praises of Govind alias Arun.

I have regained sufficient strength. But I have still to take some rest.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4825. Also C.W. 1237. Courtesy: Sushila Gandhi

426. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

August 27, 1934

CHI. BRIJKISAN,

I have your two letters.

I can understand your predicament. Everything will turn out all right if one remains patient. As long as I can I shall certainly point out your duty. But I am inclined these days not to order anyone, only to offer advice when solicited.

As you permit, I shall see Damodardas and shall then write to Keshu. I shall ask Damodardas to come over here.

For the time being I am not going to move from here.

Stay on at Mussoorie as long as necessary and come down after making yourself fit, Physically as well as mentally.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2421

427. EXTRACT FROM A LETTER[1]

[Before *August 28, 1934*]

That Mahatma Gandhi will not go to jail at least till the Bombay Congress session is over, is indicated by a letter which he has written in reply to the Congress Reception Committee's query as to where he would like to stay during the forthcoming Congress session. Mahatma Gandhi has stated in his reply that he would like to stay in Congress Nagar together with the incoming and outgoing Presidents.

The Hindustan Times, 29-8-1934

[1] This appeared under the date-line, "Bombay, August 28", 1934, as reported by Associated Press of India.

428. LETTER TO BALIBEHN M. ADALAJA

August 29, 1934

CHI. BALI,

I got your letter. I was pleased. I also believe what you say about Harilal. I had a letter from him written from Porbandar. I heard from him nearly after a year. I have of course cautioned him. I am glad that Manu has shed her fear. How can we cure her irritability ?

Your health seems to have gone down badly. Kusum's also is none too good. But since both of you sisters know the sacredness of service, you will not fail in it.

All are well here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1531. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

429. LETTER TO UMADEVI BAJAJ

August 29, 1934

CHI. OM,

You are an intelligent girl. It seems you write very good Marwari. There is not much difference between Marwari and Gujarati. Some even say that Gujarati is descended from Marwari and has developed so well that now it excels the latter. Isn't that why you look upon me as your adopted father? Madalasa is standing by as I write this and tells me that your Marwari is not very good. But one judges another according to the measure of his or her own ability. Besides, since when has little Madalasi become a teacher of Marwari or an examiner in it? And so you pass in Marwari!

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 338

430. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

August 30, 1934

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I understand that dispensation from adherence to the Working Committee resolution on the Communal Award is being given to Bengal Congress candidates on the ground of conscientious scruples. Can that be so? If it is, I think we have not got the power to give the dispensation. You would have seen my statement[1] to the Press regarding that. I said that such was the offer made and it was rejected; but that if Malaviyaji was disposed to accept it, the Working Committee would probably make the offer again. But until the dispensation becomes part of the Working Committee resolution no one can grant it. And it cannot be granted even by the Working Committee if the Nationalist Party continues to function. Those, therefore, who want dispensation have simply to belong to the Nationalist Party.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY

CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers . Courtesy: Pyarelal

431. LETTER TO HARIBHAU PHATAK

August 30, 1934

MY DEAR HARIBHAU,

I have your letter. My position on the cow is not that the cow might be superior to the buffalo in giving milk. If cow protection is part of Hinduism, then we must abjure buffalo milk even if it is superior to cow's milk. Such is the conception of religion. You cannot apply to it the bare rule of utility. If we would prefer buffalo milk , then by and by the buffalo would become the object of worship and the cow would disappear, as she is fast disappearing. Having said this, I can say that all the information that I possess goes to show that, all things considered, cow's milk is superior to buffalo milk. But it is a question whcih does not much interest me, because I am sure that it would be possible to obtain medical testimony in favour of the superiority of the cow's milk over buffalo milk and *vice versa.*

[1] *Vide* "Statement to Associated Press of India", 23-8-1934

Therefore , in matters of this character, the safest thing is to steer clear of expert opinion. If we worship the cow, we must give her preference over all, irrespective of the quality of the different milk that different animals may give.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

SHRI HARIBHAU PHATAK

SADASIV PETH, POONA

From a photostat: G. N. 1372

432. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

August 30, 1934

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. How can you afford to lose heart? One who becomes a vaid has to talk and listen daily about diseases. It was good that I sent you . . .'s[1] original letter. Your letter throws new light on the matter altogether. In such circumstances, you should, in the first place, acquaint me with all the facts and, secondly, do only what seems right to you. You should follow my advice only if it appeals ot your reason, or when I ask you to follow my instructions even if they do not appeal to your reason. In this case, I hastily expressed my opinion on the basis of . . .'s one-sided letter. You should act upon it only if you also are convinced. But, on the contrary, you repudiate all her allegations. That being so, there is no question of your acting upon my suggestions. First you should discuss. . .'s charges in detail and show that they are unjustified, and afterwards you should tell her firmly what you think regarding money. Personally, I am willing, on the basis of your letter, to write to her and reprimand her. But I am not writing for fear that my doing so might be misunderstood.

I understand what you say concerning the dairy. We shall separate it. Whom do you suggest for its trustees? I think we had thought of some names,but I have forgotten them. Please, therefore, send your suggestions. Ramdas and Dr. Sharma have returned here. They will not have to go back to Khurja, for the house in which they lived had to be vacated and, moreover, there is nothing special in that place.

[1] The name has been omitted.

This place is fairly crowded just now. Andrews and Ghanshyamdas are still here. Sardar and Jairamdas are arriving today. Others keep coming and going.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8411. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

433. LETTER TO VIMALA JOSHI

August 30, 1934

CHI. VIMU,

Why do you write with a pencil? Write with ink and make each letter as beautiful as a carefully drawn picture. Surely you can be in no hurry to finish your letter. It is good that all of you have settled down there for the present.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 302

434. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

August 30, 1934

CHI. MANUDI

I did get your letter. Are you not attending Sushilabehn's school now? I am content with what you are able to study. I am very glad indeed that you have shed fear of Bhai. Take care of your health. Overcome anger, serve aunt and live happily. Ramdas is here now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1533. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala.

435. A LETTER

August 30, 1934

CHI . . .[1],

Maganbhai gave me your message. If you ever had such a thought, you have broken your vow that you would inform me right from the beginning and perhaps your relations with . . .[2] can be considered improper. Yet if both of you are still willing and if the elders bestow their blessings on you both, you will surely have my blessings too. But give up your obstinacy of waiting for five years. I like it. But if you get engaged you both will feel tempted. Understand that it is the worst thing. So if you wish to have any engagement, then get married now, that is as soon as . . . is released.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4070. Also C. W. 21. Courtesy: Shantabehn Patel.

436. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

August 30, 1934

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Here is a letter received from Damodardas. This reveals something altogether different. Now let me know precisely the remarks made to you by Damodardas. I have written to him to come to Wardha if he can. My going to Bombay is most uncertain. I will not be going in September at any rate.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2422

[1] The names have been omitted.
[2] *ibid*

437. THAT ILL-FATED MEASURE

The ill-fated Temple-entry Bill deserved a more decent burial, if it deserved it at all, than it received at the hands of the mover of the Bill. It was not a Bill promoted by an individual for his personal satisfaction. It was a Bill promoted by, and on behalf of, the reformers. The mover should, therefore, have consulted reformers and acted under instructions from them. So far as I am aware, there was hardly any occasion for the anger into which he allowed himself to be betrayed or the displeasure which he expressed towards Congressmen. On the face of it, it was, and was designed to be, a measure pertaining to religion, framed in pursuance of the solemn declaration[1] publicly made in Bombay at a meeting of representative Hindus who met under the chairmanship of Pandit Malaviyaji on 25th September, 1932. The curious may read the declaration printed almost every week on the front page of *Harijan.* Therefore, every Hindu, caste or Harijan, was interested in the measure. It was not a measure in which Congress Hindus were more interested than the other Hindus. To have, therefore, dragged the Congress name into the discussion was unfortunate. The Bill deserved a gentler handling.

Having not a moment to spare myself during the exacting and swift Harijan tour, I had asked Shri Rajagopalachari, in pursuance of the pledge given by me at public meetings and to sanatanist friends in private and in these columns, to ascertain informally (as it could only be done informally) the views of the Hindu members of the Assembly, as, I thought , if it was discovered that the majority was opposed to it, steps should be taken to have the Bill withdrawn. This was the very simple issue on which the Bill could either have been dropped or proceeded with. Both the sanatanists and the reformers would have understood the position. Its fate ought not to have been decided on a side issue. If C. Rajagopalachari or I had committed a mistake, we should have been made to pay for it. But the Bill was above persons. Right or wrong, it enunciated a great principle and, therefore, deserved a more decent treatment than it received.

As for the part played by the Government, this journal's policy is to avoid as much as possible criticism of the Government. But I should like to say that, with the material before it, the Government

[1] *Vide* "Resolution at the Hindu Leaders Conference, Bombay", 25-9-1932

could only have taken the course it did. But the public should know that on behalf of the reformers there was not only no attempt made to canvass public opinion but a decision was deliberately arrived at that no attempt should be made to obtain signatures of the public in general in favour of the Bill, it being left open to expert bodies to send representations if they chose. This was duly announced in these pages. My co-workers and I came to the conclusion that the questions underlying the circulation were too technical for the public to decide. Thus, the question was not whether Harijans should or should not enter public Hindu temples precisely on the same terms as the others. The question was whether there should be any legislation in the matter and, if there should be, whether the Bill was good on its merits . In my opinion, both these questions were too technical to be put before the public. Surely, it is not impossible to conceive occasions when legislative help or interference is indispensable even in matters of religion. As a matter of fact, there are many cases of such legislation. But it was difficult to get an intelligent vote from the public. Then, on the merits, it was equally difficult to show to the public that the Bill was purely of a permissive nature and that no temple could be opened without the consent of the majority of the temple-going public. Such public education is not impossible under congenial circumstances. But it is well-nigh impossible when party feeling runs high and truth is at a discount.

The temple-entry battle has to continue. The promise made to Harijans must be redeemed and the temples have to be flung open. If they can be, without legislative sanction, no one would be more glad than the reformers. Not that they want a single temple to be opened where the majority of *savarna* Hindus who are in the habit of using them are opposed. Law's assistance is invoked because lawyers opine that the law prevents such opening even where an overwhelming majority of temple-goers are agreeable. If such is the case, the permissive legislation is peremptory. Law alone can undo what law has done, whether it is judge-made or statutory or customary. But reformers will wait till such time as the passing of legislation becomes irresistible. But waiting is only for the wakeful. The hasty withdrawal of the Bill teaches its own lesson. There is no cause for disappointment. Redoubled effort is required. It is not necessary to

know or prove that Harijans want temple-entry. Removal of the sin is necessary for the satisfaction of the *savarna* Hindus who have realized that untouchability is a canker eating into the vitals of Hinduism, which, if not removed in time, must kill Hinduism.

M. K. GANDHI

Harijan, 31-8-1934

438. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

August 31, 1934

MY DEAR RAJBHOJ,

Your letter of 25th August astonished me, for you have now taken up a position in connection with the work of the Harijan Sevak Sangh which is contrary to what you had taken up some time ago and in your correspondence and conversations with me. It may be that experience has altered your view. If such is the case, I have nothing to say except that you have based your criticism on insufficient data.

You know that I have repeatedly expressed my opinion that Harijan Sevak Sangh is an organization of penitents. Therefore it cannot be predominantly manned by Harijans. It has got to do the repentance in the manner that the penitent *savarnas* may consider to be the most suitable. It it does not appeal to the Harijans, it would be no doubt unfortunate. Then the penitents must try again. But they have got to learn the art of repentance from bitter experience.

As I have said to you personally so often, and you seemed also to agree, the better and more effective method of influencing the policy of Harijan Sevak Sanghs would be for local Harijans to form representative Advisory Boards to study sympathetically the activities of the local Sanghs, and then advise them, criticize them and make concrete suggestions. If such Advisory Boards are formed everywhere, the work done by the Harijan Boards will be naturally much more effective than it is today. But even as it is, the Boards have nothing to be ashamed of. If you will follow the columns of *Harijan* from week to week, you will surely be astonished at the way the money all over India is being distributed among Harijans. It can be shown from records that many institutions managed by Harijans are being substantially supported from funds collected by Harijan Boards. You

will find also, if you study the figures, that the extent of distribution of funds directly among Harijans and Harijan institutions is progressively increasing. Extraordinary precautions are being taken to ensure the impartial distribution of funds.

You are altogether wrong in thinking that accounts of distributions are not published. Reports by provincial branches are published from time to time. They are available for inspection by the public and you can test the accuracy to my statement by turning over the columns of *Harijan* and even by application of local offices for copies of their reports. I am asking Thakkar Bapa to let me have a consolidated account for publication in *Harijan,* and you will be yourself astonished at the amounts spent for Harijan institutions and students all over India.

As to temple-entry, you will find that practically nothing has been spent either on opening of temples or on the building of new temples, and throughout the nine months' tour, the reports of my speeches in the columns of *Harijan* will show you conclusively that the temple-entry question occupies the least part of them. The Harijan Sevak Sanghs have concentrated on some of the very things that you mention. If they have not tackled all the items, it is not for want of will but for want of capacity to overtake all the items at once.

Your attack upon the Maharashtra Harijan Board comes with ill grace. An out-and-out supporter of the Harijan cause, namely, Mr. Devdhar, is the President of the Provincial Board. He began this long before the Harijan Board came into existence, and probably before the birth of many of us. So far as I am aware, he has never been accused of lukewarmness over this reform. If you have any specific complaints against the locl Board, don't you think that your first duty is to send those complaints to the local Board, and if you do not get relief or satisfaction, to take your appeal to the Central Board? And then if you find that your complaint has gone unheeded, you will be justified in exposing the respective Boards in the public. As it is, you have nothing but a vague allegation against the Maharashtra Board which, in my opinion, has deserved a better treatment.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI P. N. RAJBHOJ

207 GHORPADE PETH, POONA 2

From a photostat: G.N. 786; also *Harijan,* 7-9-1934

439. LETTER TO SITARAMA SASTRY

August 31, 1934

DEAR SITARAMA SASTRY,

I have your letter. Although the matter you mention escaped you, there is nothing new in it. We had the large sum spent on Andhra because Andhra had given its due share during the khadi tour. But that does not entitle Andhra to appropriate the sum for use at will. The sum was given to the All-India Spinners' Association just as Harijan Funds have been given to the Harijan Sevak Sangh. These funds have to be largely used in the province where they were collected. But they are used under instructions of the central organization. Therefore so far as the security is concerned, it has got to be obviously on the same footing for both the funds. And under the proposed autonomy you will be keeping the equivalent of both the funds in the shape of khadi and furnIture. If you issue debentures and offer them as security, that is totally a different proposition. If that kind of security appeals to the Association naturally it will be accepted. I have not visualized the debentures sufficiently to pronounce any opinion upon merits. I hope this is perfectly clear.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI SITARAMA SASTRY

VINAYA ASHRAM

CHANDOL (GUNTUR DT.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

440. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

August 31, 1934

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

You know that Ramdas has become weak. He feels happy in Surendra's company. He wants to try the treatment of Dr. Sharma who employs nature-cure remedies. Because he is weak, Ba wants to stay with him. Hence Ramdas, Ba and Dr. Sharma will leave this place and go there. Take them in some conveyance from Sabarmati and lodge them in any building that may be vacant. You should charge rent at the rate that has been fixed. They will not require any other

attention. You will have no bedsteads there, of course. Beg one for Ramdas from Budhabhai. They will probably get the necessary provisions there. The expenses will be sent from here. If Ramdas stays there for any length of time, the doctor's wife and his two sons will come there. If you encounter any difficulty, let me know. Ba will cook. They will require one servant. If you can find one, do so. Show this letter to Bhai Narahari.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4043

441. TERRIBLE OPPRESSION

I have been receiving reports from several quarters about the oppression of the Harijans in the area surrounding Talaja. Even after assuming an element of exaggeration in them and making allowance for it, what remains is shocking enough. It is difficult to understand how man can be so cruel.

The tragedy of it is that the Harijans were quite innocent. Because there was an epidemic of the plague among cattle and they died, it was supposed that this was the doing of the Harijans. And so the latter were harassed and beaten almost to death, and in some cases actually to death, with the result that, to escape this oppression they left their homes and belongings and took shelter inTalaja.

It is all the more distressing that such things should happen in a model State like Bhavnagar. I do not say this in order to blame the State. I see from the letters and telegrams I have received that the officials are alert, and I hope that these cruel happenings will be fully investigated, the innocent Harijans will get justice and be resettled in their homes, and the guilty will be forced to compensate the Harijans who have been injured and make good the losses of those whose belongings have been destroyed, and steps will be taken to ensure that such things do not happen again.

What is specially lamentable is the fact that even in a progressive State the people are stony-hearted towards the Harijans, treat them as less than animals and do not hesitate to beat them up

half-dead or dead and do not even fear being punished with hanging or rigorous imprisonment. Many people seem to argue that they need fear authority or God in beating or killing a Harijan no more then they need to do so in beating or killing cats and dogs, and their reasoning is not completely unjustified either.

The help that the Government or State can give in such matters is not much. It can punish the guilty after the event and force the guilty village to pay compensation. But where a strong public opinion has not been cultivated against such things, the State cannot produce big results. At the root of the Talaja atrocities are utter ignorance and superstition. It is the duty of Harijan workers to dispel this darkness. They should explain to the people that epidemics of the plague are known to occur occasionally in all countries of the world, and that outside India nobody is suspected when such an epidemic occurs. The people in those countries merely regard it as a natural calamity, employ blameless remedies for eradicating the plague and give medicines to the cattle. This should be done vigorously and ceaselessly in villages sunk in ignorance.

In this connection I have received a heart-rending letter from a Harijan. Since it is worth reading by every caste Hindu, I reproduce below its important part :[1]

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 2-9-1934

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent, who was serving Harijans in as many ways as he could as atonement for the cruel treatment of them by caste Hindus, had described the cruel lot of Harijans in Saurashtra and appealed to Gandhiji to save them.

442. MODEST ATONEMENT

The author of this letter has given his name and address. I do not give them lest doing so might detract from the worth of his silent service. The fact that such service is being done in isolated places all over the country serves partially as an antidote against the painful reports regarding Talaja.[1] It is only through such service that untouchability can be eradicated.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 2-9-1934

443. LETTER TO SAHEBJI MAHARAJ

September 2, 1934

DEAR SAHEBJI MAHARAJ,

It was indeed an agreeable surprise to me to hear from you. But I am afraid that I must not accept your congratulations. I have no talent for reproducing Dayalbagh[2] in the different provinces of India. My reference was to the loan of the excellent men you have sent to Karachi, who are conducting in a methodical manner the Industrial Institute founded by the Mohatta Brothres. Yours is a huge enterprise. I know my limitations. My experience may be extensive in some directions; but I do claim very little experience in the direction in which you have built up Dayalbagh. Nor have I unlimited resources. However, I do expect, when I am ready, to fall back upon you for trained men, to assist the Harijan Sevak Sangh in establishing industrial homes for Harijans. Necessarily therefore they have got to be unambitious.

I am glad you have put up a tannery. Will your expert give me a brief article describing the method of tanning so that an intelligent reader may be able to make his own experiments in tanning? Does your tanning include the treatment of carcasses, flaying them and separating the skin from the bone and the flesh? And if it is, what is being done with the bones, blood, the flesh, the entrails, etc.? For me,

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] A settlement of the Radhaswami sect founded over a century ago near Agra. Covering over 500 acres of land, it was under the personal supervision of Sahebji Maharaj, who was the fifth, head of the sect. *Vide* also "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 18-9-1929

tanning has a most important bearing upon the tremendous question of cattle preservation, consistently with the Hindu belief in the sanctity of the cow. And do you take any leather, or do you confine yourself only to leather of dead cattle as distinguished from slaughtered?

Do I infer from your kind offer to include Dayalbagh in the list of Harijan colonies, that the Harijan Sevak Sangh may send Harijan boys to be trained there in the several departments? And if the Sangh may, on what terms?

Mirabehn will be delighted, as I am, to learn that you have succeeded in producing iridiumtipped gold nibs which are eleven-twelfth swadeshi. I shall inform Mirabehn of the good news you have given.

I thank you for your kind inquiry about my health. I am making as good progress as can be expected after the fast.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SAHEBJI MAHARAJ
SHRI ANAND SARUP, DAYALBAGH, AGRA

From a photostat: G.N. 2159

444. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

September 2, 1934

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

I had just a reminder[1] from Hariji that at Chheoki where he met us, I had approved of his suggestion that the 25% of the U.P. collections should also be sent to the U.P. Board. That is to say, the whole of the collections should be spent by the U.P. Board, naturally subject to the approval of the scheme or schemes that might be submitted by the Board.

SJT. A. V. THAKKAR
DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the following item.

445. LETTER TO H. N. KUNZRU

September 2, 1934

DEAR HARIJI,

I do remember our conversation at Chheoki and I remember also that I entirely approved of your suggestion. But the matter was forgotten entirely, and had it not been for your reminder, I would not have written to Thakkar Bapa. I am now writing[1] to him.

Yours sincerely,

PT. HRIDAY NATH KUNZRU
ALLAHABAD

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

446. LETTER TO BIRENDRA NATH GUHA

September 2, 1934

DEAR BIREN,

I am glad to know that Kshitishbabu has become softened a bit. I wonder if he got my letter.[2]

I was sorry to learn that Dr. Indra Narayan Sen has been lost to us. Let us hope that he has been lost to us only for some time to come.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

447. LETTER TO UMADEVI BAJAJ

September 2, 1934

CHI. PANDITA OM,

You have given excellent advice in your last letter. But do you yourself do what you advise? If I did not take sufficient rest and proper care of my health, would I be gaining weight at the rate of half a pound a day? If you were to compare how I work now with how you saw me working, you would think I was a lazy man or an incurable

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Birendra Nath Guha", 24-8-1934

sleeper. Isn't it better that you are there and taking walks or idling away your time in the Hanging Garden, and, in return for this freedom, doing some nursing for Father? Do you know the story of the Hanging Garden? I believe that it is not a place where poor people like us can enjoy a walk. Only fashionable people go there. When you go there next time, observe and let me know how many poor people you saw. I went there once or twice and had enough of it.

I don't mind your displaying your knowledge before me. An adopted father cannot expect better treatment. But I hope you have not alarmed Father there.

You have made a mistake. You have stated that Father's weight is 104. I shall probably overtake that in four days. Are you sure you don't mean 204? Do you read the *Ramayana* regularly?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 338-9

448. LETTER TO DRAUPADI SHARMA

September 2, 1934

CHI. DRAUPADI,

You must give up this fear of me. I said nothing to scare you, I simply pointed out the parental duty. Nevertheless forget all that now. Write to me without any fear.

Now, news from this end: Sharma, Ramdas, Kanu and Ba left for Sabarmati today. It is all for the best. The account as given to me is still maintained. How have you managed to charm Ramdas? You had already charmed Amtussalaam? Tell me how you do it!

If you are to be called to Sabarmati it will only be after ten or twenty-four days[1] but it will be automatically dropped if Ramdas leaves for South Africa. But in case he does not go you will have to go over to Sabarmati. I say ten or twenty-four days because of the fortnightly shipping service from South Africa. One boat is to reach

[1] The source has "twenty-five".

on Saturday. If no news comes by that mail it is bound to come after fourteen days. And if that too brings no news Ramdas will not go at all. I hope the children are doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, 1932-48,* between pp. 90 and 91

449. LETTER TO AMBUJAMMAL

September 3, 1934

CHI. AMBUJAM,

Your letters come regularly. I have not always been able to acknowledge them. I am recovering fast. There is no cause for anxiety.

Ba has taken Ramdas to Sabarmati.

It seems your Hindi lessons are progressing well.

You should abandon all sorrow. It is our duty to put up with the condition in which God has placed us and to remain contented.

You may come here if you can. For some time now I shall be here. Om is in Bombay with Jamanalalji.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

450. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

3 a.m., September 3, 1934

CHI. PREMA,

Your letter was full of descriptions. It seems your work is going on very well. Continue to send accounts of it in the same manner. There is an article[1] in *Harijan* about the work to be done in villages. Read it. One and the same method will not work everywhere. This is a virgin field of work. Hence there will probably be a great deal of variety in the work to be done. The plan which I have and which I have explained in *Harijan* is based on one line of approach only. But to whom can I explain this, if not to you? Let me see now to how many persons you can explain it.

I am not surprised to learn about your being harassed. I would advise you not to mention the name of the Congress at all, let alone civil disobedience. For the present, only explain to the village people the pros and cons of your programme. Speaking of the Congress serves no purpose if its programme is not carried out. If the programme is carried out, there is no need to speak of it. The real worshippers of Shri Krishna are not those who shout "Krishna, Krishna", but those who do His work. Our hunger is not appeased if we keep shouting "bread, bread". It is appeased by eating bread.

Your assumption is correct. If you receive an order to leave the village, you should readily obey it. Only those who willingly obey laws which they do not like earn the right sometimes to disobey a law. This is rarely remembered by people.

Please do not assume that I shall attend the Congress. Many plans are maturing in my mind. I don't get time to write to you about all of them. Wait and see what happens. You should be satisfied that you have chalked out your work.

Kisan writes to me sometimes. Your letter to Amtussalaam was a good one.

You know that Ramdas does not keep good health. He has gone

[1] *Vide* "Discussion With Gujarat Vidyapith Teachers", 14-8-1934

to Sabarmati along with Sharma. Ba has gone with him to look afrer him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10359. Also C.W. 6798. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

451. LETTER TO S. A. BRELVI

September 3, 1934

DEAR BRELVI,

Mahadev showed me your letter about Shah. I would like him to be elected. He will be a valuable representative. But I doubt the propriety of a socialist standing for an avowedly capitalistic group. To divide on this issue the Chamber which is struggling to make good its position does not appeal to me. Nor does it appeal to me to oppose Mathuradas if he is standing. If Shah cannot stand on behalf of a popular constituency this time, he should wait. But if you and he feel otherwise, of course you will put forth the case before the Parliamentary Board. After all, the decision will rest with it. And I neither attend your meetings nor do I try to influence its decisions in such matters.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. A. BRELVI

BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

452. LETTER TO PARIKSHITL L. MAJMUDAR

September 3, 1934

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I got your letter. We don't want to start a public agitation in newspapers about the Lakhtar[1] matter as yet. After we have tried our best to get the matter settled through somebody who knows the Thakore, and, in csse we fail,we shall have no option but to take the matter to the newspapers. I will see if I can find somebody who knows him. The father of Ramdas's father-in-law was a resident of that place. He had good relations with the Durbar. He is dead now. I don't know if any responsible person is there now. Ask Ramdas. If he knows somebody, he should write. I will ask Ramdas's wife. Today, however, is my silence day.

If Ramdas's being there causes you inconvenience, do not hesitate to let me know. He has gone there to have the benefit of Surendra's company.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4044

453. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

September 3, 1934

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I got your letter only today.

You cannot take too strict measures regarding Talaja. Even after making allowances for exaggeration, what remains is without doubt terrible enough. See that such a thing never happens again in your State. Nanabhai and Chhaganlal Joshi write and tell me that your officers are indeed taking some steps.[2]

I was sorry to learn about the Prince's illness. If my blessings can be of any avail, you always have them for the asking. But it is only the blessings of Harijans that will work. The sincere blessings

[1] Where Harijans were forbidden form using the public reservoir; *vide* also, "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 21-9-1934.

[2] *Vide* also "Terrible Oppression", 2-9-1934

which the poor subjects of a Ruler pronounce on him cannot but bear fruit. It is only the blessings of the unhappy that help a Ruler or his subjects. People like you or me may put their trust in the blessings of the happy and the well-to-do, but you may be sure that they count for nothing.

Please inform me when the Prince is well again.

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I need not come to Bombay.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5936. Also C.W. 3252. Courtesy: Mahesh P. Pattani

454. LETTER TO PRAGJI K. DESAI

September 3, 1934

CHI. PRAGJI,

Nothing has been stopped. What you wish is exactly what has happened. One person at any rate remains. And one is enough. There is no room for disappointment in this struggle, nor for despair. What criticism, then, can you make? If you read my statement again, you will find all this in it. I understand about your troubles. But troubles are part of one's lot in this life.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5039

455. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

September 3, 1934

DEAR SISTER,

Ramdas is ill. Ba has taken him to the Harijan Ashram at Sabarmati. We have hoped that he will improve there. You have kept some honey for me. Just now a friend in Calcutta has been insisting on sending some honey for me, and so I have not given you trouble in that regard. But now please send it to Ramdas, C/o Harijan Ashram, Sabarmati. My blessings to all girls there. I can never forget their services to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am regaining strength fairly rapidly.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI PREMLILABEHN THACKERSEY
PARNAKUTI
YERAVDA, *VIA* POONA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 4834. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

456. LETTER TO MAHENDRA V. DESAI

September 3, 1934

CHI. MANU,

You have indeed taken good pains to improve your handwriting, but there is room for plenty of improvement still. I have accepted Kaka's[1] article. He should, therefore, send the second instalment. How did you get conjunctivitis? Is the eye all right now?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7467. Courtesy: Mahendra V. Desai

[1] The addressee's father

457. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

September 3, 1934

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

Mr. Mung of Burma came and saw me two days ago. He said that to Haji's request he plunged into the Burmese question and carried on such a powerful agitation that it even told on his health. He has incurred, he says, an expense of Rs. 2,000. Since there has been no result, neither the company nor Haji would now accept his demand. They deny any understanding with him. He also expressed a desire to see you. I have replied to him that everybody takes up such work of his own free will and for the good of his people. If somebody refuses to keep his promise, one should blame one's own stupidity. All the same, I have advised him to write to you. If Haji gave a moral undertaking of any kind, I am of the view that Mr. Mung should be reimbursed the expense which he has incurred. Please let me know what the facts of the case are.

I hope you are doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4723. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarjee

458. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

September 3, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Today I have crossed the limits in writing. My back forbids me to go on any more. But I can't obey the prohibitory order immediately. I could read Narahari's letter only today. I think some injustice has been done to him. I see no reason at all why you should have felt displeased with him in this matter. Since he could not put his case before you in Bombay, he has stated it with the utmost humility in his letter. The hope which he has expressed in it, that you would dissuade Kaka and prevail over those who cannot co-opearte with him to try and do so, is no doubt too much. However, it is only a request that he has made. It betrays his ignorance of your nature. He should have taken your letter to me as expressing your final view. It is qutie clear and fully meets the requirements of the situation. I have told Narahari that, if anybody can keep Kaka in Gujarat, it will have your

approval and your blessing. Kishorelal told me that you had written a stiff letter to Narahari. If my argument appeals to you, please write a soothing letter to him. In case you may want to read his letter again, I am returning it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 131

459. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

[On or after] *September* [3][1], *1934*

Send him papers and a brief account of what is going on. The amounts to be sent to Anand I have forgotten. I told him there should be some delay because of Jamnalal's illness.[2] But [if] you remember them tell me.

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani.

460. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

September 4, 1934

CHI. ABBAS,

Write to Jutha Hirani and ask him what connection my not going to the Harijan Ashram has with his self-purification. And tell him that if self-purification could be brought about merely by fasting, it would be as cheap as grass.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 6309

[1] The first Monday of the month was on this date.

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Anand T. Hingorani", 30-7-1934. "Letter to Anand T. Hingorani" 23-8-1934.

461. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

September 4, 1934

I got your letter. I chanced to see your writing on karmayoga only yesterday and glanced through it. I will read it now if I get time.

What is this about music and cinema? Do they wish to turn the Congress session into a Felix Circus or Barnum show? But, then, what can I say in this matter? I do love music, but everything is good in its place. If the three or four days of the Congress session are crowded with such activities, the atmosphere of seriousness will disappear. Even if they wish to arrange such programmes, somebody may be given a contract for them. I am of the view, however, that no such programmes can be arranged at the place where the [nation's] parliament meets. But we have turned the Congress into a *tamasha*. Inclusion of genuine Indian music in a cent per cent swadeshi exhibiton is legitimate. But only traditional instruments should be used in such a programme. I can see no room at all for a band. You may show this to Sardar. But if you wish to maintain discreet silence, you may do so. You must have heard from Sardar about the step I am contemplating. I will not, therefore, waste a few minutes of my time by writing about it here.

Why inquire about my health? It was tested yesterday. I was busy with the pen the whole day. There was no ill effect.

I dont't know, however, if somebody here writes to you and gives you a different report.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 152

462. DISCUSSION WITH DODD[1]

September 4, 1934

DR. DODD: I have come to India[2], 10,000 miles, to see Taj which is a monument of the past and Mahatma Gandhi which is a symbol of the future.

GANDHIJI: But why not become a living Taj than a dead Taj? And why not a monument of the present than of the future ?

Is there any chance of your coming to America? Could we kidnap you to America? We hear, you know, so much of kidnappers nowadays.

No, for the simple reason that I should be of no use there. If I came there, it would be to demonstrate the secret and the beauty and the power of non-violence. I should not be able to do it today. I have not yet carried complete conviction to my own countrymen.

What is your main objective, Mr. Gandhi ?

The main objective is obvious and it is to gain independence, not for the literate and the rich in India, but for the dumb millions.

I know. I have often come across that expression in your writings. What are your methods?

Not many methods, but the one method of unadulterated truth and non-violence. But you might ask me, 'How are non-violence and truth expressed and applied?' I would say at once that the central fact in my programme is the spinning-wheel. I know that Americans are startled when I say this. What can be the meaning of this pet obsession, they ask.

Not all Americans. Our daily paper one day criticized the spinning-wheel programme and in the very next column had an article describing people working with the shovel on a public thoroughfare, forty doing the work of a single machine. In a letter to the editor, I drew his attention to the incongruity and told him that, just as we were fighting unemp-loyment, India, too, was fighting unemployment. But with you, Mr. Gandhi, it is moral and spiritual symbol, too?

Yes, of truth and non-violence. When as a nation we adopt the spinning-wheel, we not only solve the question of unemployment but we declare that we have no intention of exploiting any nation, and we also end the exploitation of the poor by the rich. It is a spiritual force

[1] This appeared as "A Talk with an American Friend" in *Harijan*. The date-line and the first two paragraphs are reproduced from the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary.

[2] Dodd was in charge of a girls' college in America.

which in the initial stages works slowly, but as soon as it gets started, it begins working in geometrical progression, i.e., when it gets into the life of the people.When I say I want independence for the millions, I mean to say not only that the millions may have something to eat and to cover themselves with, but that they will be free from the exploitation of people here and outside. We can never industrialize India, unless, of course, we reduce our population from 350 millions to 35 millions or hit upon markets wider than our own and dependent on us. It is time we realized that, where there is unlimtied human power, complicated machinery on a large scale has no place. An Indian economist told me once that every American had 36 slaves, for, the machine did the work of 36 slaves. Well, Americans may need that, but not we. We cannot industrialize ourselves, unless we make up our minds to enslave humanity.

Then, we have to fight untouchability. Untouchability of a kind is everywhere. A coal porter coming from a coalmine would not stretch out his hand to shake yours. He would say he would wash himself cle clean first. But the moment a man has rendered himself clean, he should cease to be untouchable. Here however we have regarded a part of one population as perpetually untouchable.[1] We are trying to abolish that untouchability. Added to their untouchability is unemployment, which they share in common with a vast number of others. You, too, have got the unemployment problem, but it is of your own creation. Our unemployment is not entirely of our creation, but, however it came about, I am sure that, if my method was universalized in India,we should not onlyfind work for those that exist but for those to come. That is, we should easily be able to tackle our population problem. The problem is to double the penny a day which is the average income of a poor Indian. If we can achieve that, it would be quite enough at least till we find a better method. The spinning-wheel, by utilizing the idle hours of the nation, produces additional wealth; it does not, it was never meant to, displace existing employment. Give me a thing which would increase the daily income of the millions of our impoverished people more than the spinning-wheel, and I should gladly give up the spinning-wheel.

I quite see. We talk of shortening of the hours of work, but as to what they are to do in their spare hours, we do not seem for a moment to trouble ourselves about.

[1] This sentence is reproduced from the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary.

I would ask one more question, Mr. Gandhi. I have the opportunity of speaking to many young men and women and I should like you to tell me what you consider your most satisfactory achievement—I will not say your greatest achievement, lest. I should embarrass you. In other words, what should I put before the young people as a thing that they should aspire after in life?

It is a difficult question. I do not know what to say. I can simply say this: I do not know whether you will call it an achievement or not, but I may say that, in the midst of humiliation and so-called defeat and a tempestuous life, I am able to retain my peace, because of an undying faith in God, translated as Truth. We can describe God as millions of things, but I have for myself adopted the simple formula—"Truth is God''.

I see it, I see it. You have achieved peace in a world of confusion and turmoil.

But several American friends say to me, 'You cannot have peace unless you believe in Jesus.' Well, I tell you I have peace, though I do not believe in Jesus as the only son of God.

I am glad you said this. May I ask you to let me know your conception of Christ ?

I consider him as a historical person—one of the greatest amongst the teachers of mankind. I have studied his teachings as prayerfully as I could, with the reverence of a Christian, in order to discover the Truth that is buried in them. I have done so, just as I have done about the teachings of other teachers.

In this connection, may I ask your opinion on the missionaries' work in India? Have they wronged India ?

I should not say intentionally. They, of course, come here as critics, they exaggerate our social evils, they criticize our religion. But that does not matter. All their criticism has but served to make us more conscious of our weaknesses and more alive to our duties.

But that, I suppose, you say of missionaries as individuals, not of missionary societies as such ?

I should not draw that distinction, for, missionary societies have certain pre-conceived notions of our society and religion which the members propagate. Thirty-five years ago, for instance, as I was passing through Zanzibar, I went to the Bible Society to purchase a copy of the Bible and with that I was given a report of work done by a mission there. I was astounded to find therein that a missionary could

count his work in the terms of £. s. d. A convert meant so many shillings, as to a recruiting agent a recruit means so many rupees. One cannot think of a religion in the terms of the number of its adherents.

What, Mr. Gandhi, has been your greatest disappointment ?

Frankly, I have no sense of disappointment, excepting, perhaps, that sometimes I am disappointed with myself, inasmuch as I cannot control the fleeting thoughts as much as I should like to. That's all.

What is the source of your ideals ?[1]

The source is truth or the uttermost identity with all life. Truth is the realization of God.

One last thing, Mr. Gandhi. I am coming from the Congress of the Baptist Christians in Germany. They took a firm stand on peace and racialism. I spoke there on the 'Gospel of the Day' and spoke 'on strict honesty and integrity in the business of our life' and 'war as the most insane and unchristian thing on earth'. I made, in conclusion, an appeal to all, coupled with my own declaration, that true Christians everywhere should refuse to shoot down their Christian brethren whenever Governments decided to go to war against any other nation. How much does that proposition come near you ?

It would come very near me, if you were to drop out the word 'Christian' and said only 'brethern'. I should refuse to shoot down any human being, black or white, Christian or non-Christian. Your declaration must apply to the whole humanity.

I mean it. I said 'Christian brethren', as I was addressing a group of Christians.

That is all right. I have to give this warning, because sometimes it is thought that there is nothing wrong in shooting down so-called savages.

No, no.

Harijan, 14-9-1934; also from the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] This and the following answer by Gandhiji, are reproduced from the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary.

463. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

[Before] *September[5], 1934*[1]

DEAR VALLABHBHAI,

After much deliberation and discussions with friends who have been to Wardha recently, I have come to the conclusion that the best interests of the Congress and the nation will be served by my completely severing all official or physical connection with the Congress, including the original membership. This does not mean that I cease to take any interest in an organization with which I have been intimately connected since 1920 and which I have worshipped since my youth. In spite of all I have recently said about the corruption that has crept into the organization, it still remains, in my opinion, the most powerful and the most representative nationl organization in the country. It has a history of uninterrupted noble service and sacrifice from its inception. Its progress has been unbroken and steady. It has weathered storms as no other institution in the country has. It has commanded the largest measure of sacrifice of which any country would be proud. It has today the largest number of self-sacrificing men and women of unimpeachable character.

It is not with a light heart that I leave this great organization. But I feel that my remaining in it any longer is likely to do more harm than good. I miss at this juncture the association and advice of Jawaharlal who is bound to be the rightful helmsman of the organization in the near future. I have, therefore, kept before me his great spirit. And I feel that whilst his great affection for me would want to keep me in the Congress, his reason would endorse the step I have taken. And since a great organization cannot be governed by affections but by cold reason, it is better for me to retire from a field where my presence results in arresting full play of reason. Hence in leaving the organization I feel that I am in no sense deserting one who is much more than a comrade and whom no amount of political differences will ever scparate from me.

Nor by retiring at this critical juncture am I less true to Babu Rajendra Prasad who will in all probability be the President to the

[1] Gandhiji had been having discussions on his withdrawal from active leadership of the Congress; *vide* the following item. In his letter dated August 20 to the addressee, Gandhiji had said that he would "prepare a draft" and send it to him. This letter appears to be a draft of his "Statement to the Press" which was finally released on September 17, 1934

forthcoming Congress, and who unlike Jawaharlal shares most of my ideals and whose sacrifice for the nation, judged whether in quality or quantity, is not to be excelled.

Then there is the Congress Parliamentary Board which would perhaps not have come into being, unless I had encouraged its formation with my whole heart. It supplies a want that was felt be many staunch and true Congressmen. It was necessary, therefore, to bring it into being. Such services as I am capable of rendering will still be at its disposal as at any Congressman's. It must command the full support of all Congressmen who have no insuperable objection to the entry of Congressmen into the existing legislatures. I should be sorry if the Board lost a single vote because of my withdrawal.

I fear none of the consequences dreaded by some friends, for I know my ground. A tree is no more hurt by a ripe fruit falling from it than would the Congress be by my going out of it. Indeed the fruit will be dead weight, if it did not fall when it was fully ripe. Mine is that condition. I feel that I am a dead weight on the Congress now.

There is a growing and vital difference of outlook between many Congressmen and myself. My presence more and more estranges the intelligentsia from the Congress. I feel that my policies fail to convince their reason, though strange as it may appear, I do nothing that does not satisfy my own reason. But my reason takes me in a direction just the opposite of what many of the most intellectual Congressmen would gladly and enthusiastically take, if they were not hampered by their unexampled loyalty to me. No leader can expect greater loyalty and devotion than I have received from intellectually-minded Congressmen even when they have protested and signified their disapproval of the policies I have laid before the Congress. I feel that for me any more to draw upon this loyalty and devotion is to put an undue strain upon them. I wish that those who strongly disapprove of my method would outvote me and compel my retirement. I have tried to reach that position but I have failed. They would cling to me till the end. The only way I can requite such loyalty is by voluntary retirement. I cannot work in opposition when ther are some fundamental differences between the Congress intelligentsia and me. Ever since my entry into public life I have never acted in that manner. . . .[1]

Then there is the growing group of socialists. Jawaharlal is their

[1] Omissions as in the source

undisputed leader. I know pretty well what he wants and stands for. He claims to examine everything in a scientific spirit. He is courage personified. He has many years of service in front of him. He has an indomitalble faith in his mission. The socialist group represents his views more or less, though probably their mode of execution is not exactly his. That group is bound to grow in influence and importance. I have welcomed the group. Many of them are respected and self-sacrifcing co-workers. With all this, I have fundamental differences with them on the programme published in their authorized pamphlets. But I would not, by reason of the moral pressure I may be able to exert, suppress the spread of the ideas propounded in their literature. My remaining in the Congress would amount to the exercise of such pressure. I may not interfere with free expression of those ideas, however distasteful some of them may be me. . . .[1]

For me to dominate the Congress in spite of these fundamental differences is almost a species of violence which I must refrain from. Their reason must be set free at any cost. Having discovered this undisputable fact, I would be disloyal to the Congress if, even at the risk of losing all my reputation, I did not leave the Congress.

But there is no danger to my reputation or that of the Congress, if I leave only to serve it better in thought, word and deed. I do not leave in anger or in a huff, nor yet in disappointment. I have no disappointment in me. I see before me a bright future for the country. Everything will go well, if we are true to ourselves. I have no other programme before me save the Congress programme now before the country. . . .[2]

In this and various other ways I would love to serve the Congress in my own humble manner. Thus living in complete detachment, I hope, I shall come closer to the Congress. Congressmen will then accept my services without being embarrassed or oppressed.

One word to those who have given me their whole-hearted devotion in thought, word and deed in the pursuit of the common goal. My physical withdrawal from the Congress is not to be understood to mean an invitation to them to withdraw. They will remain in the Congress fold so long as the Congress needs them and work out such common ideals as they have assimilated.

Yours,
BAPU

Mahatma, Vol. III, pp. 386-8

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] *ibid*

464. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

September 5, 1934

I am surprised that a responsible paper like *The Hindu* should have published, without reference to me, unauthorized news about a serious decision said to have been made by me. Surely the Wardha correspondent could have the news confirmed or denied.[1] It was wrong to disclose incomplete and unauthorized reports of confidential conversa-tions.

I may say that there have been discussions with co-workers in the matter but no final decision have been taken. According to my wont, I am sharing with friends, who happen to come to Wardha, the thoughts that dominate me. Public life will become impossible if exchange of views in the process of formation is at all published, especially if they are reported as if they are decisions.

Whatever the decision that may be arrived at, it has and will have no connection whatsoever with Malaviyaji and Mr. Aney.

Whilst every effort will be made to reconcile differences and conduct the election campaign without friction with the new party that has been created by Malaviyaji, there is no doubt whatsoever in my mind or that of the members of the Working Committee that the Congress Parliamentary Board should, with the full backing of the Working Committee, prosecute the election campaign and in doing so give full effect to the resolution of the Working Committee on the Communal Award, in which it has an abiding faith and which, it believes, is the only effective method of bringing about an agreed solution between the communities concerned.

The Hindu, 5-9-1934

[1] According to *The Hindustan Times*, 5-4-1934, the correspondent had reported: "Mahatma Gandhi has decided to withdraw from the active leadership of the Congress. . . The decision, it is understood, is due to differences with Pandit Malaviya and others." *Vide* also "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 19-8-1934.

465. LETTER TO S. GANESAN

September 5, 1934

MY DEAR GANESAN,

I have your letter. I think it will be wise not to tackle any of the candidates on this question for the simple reason that all Congress members are bound to carry out the instructions issued from time to time by the Congress. And Temple-entry Bill is such a highly technical thing that it would be necessarily exploited by opponents. And the only question that would embarrass would be not of opening of temples but of the so-called legislative interference.

SHRI S. GANESAN

TRIPLICANE

MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

466. LETTER TO S. N. BOSE

September 5, 1934

DEAR SATYANANDA BABU,

I have your letter. You have put me several posers which, of course, I shall bear in mind at the forthcoming meeting. Of course these cession[1] of Malaviyaji and Bapuji Aney complicates the situation. But these are the fortunes of political life.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SATYANANDA BOSE

4 NUNDY STREET

BALLYGUNGE

CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] From the Congress Parliamentary Board

467. LETTER TO DR. N. R. DHARMAVIR

September 5, 1934

DEAR DR. DHARMAVIR[1],

I thank you for your letter. If I could only allow myself lemon-juice, I know there would be no difficulty in drinking sufficient quantity of water with lemon-juice added. But my fasts do not admit of the introduction of lemon-juice, for however low it may be it has a food value apart from such value as water and salts have. The problem before me therefore, is somewhat difficult—how to overcome the disagre-eableness of water without taking anything with it except soda or salt?

Yours sincerely,

DR. N. R. DHARMAVIR
PADIHAM GROVE
DAVIS ROAD, LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

468. LETTER TO MANGHARAM SANTDAS

September 5, 1934

MY DEAR SANTDAS,

I have your letter. You have good news from Atma. The doctor's report does not disturb me at all. Naturally he has to be careful, and he has used an expression which need not frighten us. I am already in correspondence with Polak. Any letter going from me to Atma is likely to excite him. Therefore, for the time being I shall confine myself to writing to Polak. I have already written to Mirabehn or Agatha Harrison, I forget which, that Atma should be induced to return to India[2]. When the proper time comes I shall not fail to write to Atma directly and press him to come back, because I am quite clear in

[1] President, Gulabdevi Hospital Trust, Lahore. Gandhiji had opened the hospital on July 17; *vide* "Speech at Gulabdevi Tuberculosis Hospital Lahore", 17-7-1934

[2] Actually, the reference is in Gandhiji's letter to the addressee, *vide* "Letter to Mangharam santdas" 25-8-1934.

my mind that if he came here he would be quite all right. If he remains unhappy here, he might later on go back.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI MANGHARAM SANTDAS
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

469. LETTER TO G. R. SAHGAL

September 5, 1934

MY DEAR SAHGAL,

I have not been able to reply to you earlier. I am not able yet to tell you definitely what I can do with you.[1] I do want to harness your abilities for the Harijan cause. Would you care to go to Harijan Asrham, Sabarmati, and be there for a few days or longer, and come in contact with the workers there?The manager will then report to me and you will also tell me how you feel there and what use you would make of it if you were placed in charge. I am afraid that if you take me on trust you may have a reaction and may be thoroughly disappointed, or you may not be the man I picture you to be, and then I or the co-workers might be disillusioned. I do not want either tragedy to take place. And then it won't be for me to take you. It would be the Harijan Sevak Sangh which will have finally to decide. But naturally they would be largely guided by me seeing that you will be passed on to them through me. If you feel like going to Sabarmati on a visit of exploration, you will tell me and I shall secure the necessary permission for you. But you may, if you want to save time, correspond directly with Sjt. Parikshitlal, the manager there, mentioning this letter to him and I have no doubt that he will let you go. And then perhaps it will be necessary for you to see me in Wardha before I can finally make up my mind. If you do go to Sabarmati or come to Wardha, you will naturally pay your own fare.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to G. R. Sahgal", 21-8-1934 and "Letter to G. R. Sahgal", 26-8-1934

470. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

September 5, 1934

DEAR DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

What a letter! But the reply will have to be in English.[1]

You are a perfect fraud—a strange mystic who cannot rise above the loving prejudices of parents. Your issue seems to me to be quite correct. But why are you not satisfied with your being in the right ! Must your neighbours, be they parents, also admit your claim to be in the right? Why must not your knowledge that you are in the right be its own satisfaction? Why should disappointments defeat you? Or you must withdraw your claim to be spiritually-minded and mystic. Mystics are made of sterner stuff—they are not ruffled by misery or pain or insult nor elated by happiness, pleasure or praise.

If you say, they interfere with your action, it won't hold water. They do not prevent you bodily from[2] being absorbed in prayer or contemplation for two hours or longer. I think you will find that all your difficulties will dissolve, if without irritation, anger or assertiveness you tell them with the greatest firmness and equal gentleness and with a smile on your lips, that whatever you are doing is a fundamental necessity of your being.

Whilst I say this you should know that my whole heart is with you. You must have freedom of thought, speech and action. You must be treated as a friend, not as a child. I am afraid that in your resentment you have underrated the atmosphere of largeheartedness and tolerance that is the speciality of Tyabjis. If you gave full credit to them for this rare quality you would gladly overlook what appears to be patronizing in their behaviour towards you. Remember that you will not be you but for the training they gave you and the affection with which they have surrounded you all. Do not be little the much they have done for you. Do you know this great *doha* of Tulsida, the mystic?

जड़ चेतन गुण दोषमय विश्व किन्ह करतार
संत हंस गुण गहहि पथ परिहरि वारि विकार[3]

God has endowed His animate and inanimate creation with good and bad qualities. The good man will sift and treasure the

[1] The source has this and the superscription in Urdu.
[2] The source has "for".
[3] *Ramacharitamanasa,* Balakanda

good from the bad even as the fabled swan separates and eats the cream from the water and the milk he sees before him.

I advise you and ask you to follow the advice of your fellow-mystic.

Tell me in reply that you have thrown overboard all your misery and are singing away in praise of Allah the Good and the Benevolent.

My love to you and Saroj. Do you need thanks for Rs. 15 for the Harijans?

BAPU

From a photostat: N. S. 9653. Also manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

471. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

September 5, 1934

CHI. MARY,

I have your two letters. The selections from the Upanishads are prior to the *Gita* and therefore they were written between the tenth and the fifth century (B.C.), if not much earlier. There are others which are comparatively recent; but the Sanskrit selections are very few.

I am sorry for Miss Linforth's loss. If she wants me to replace it, I would gladly do so. But I should have the full text[1].

I hope you are completely restored. I am keeping quite well. I have gained 8 lb. I walk freely, though on the terrace, and go through a fair amount of work.

It is difficult to induce Harijans to spin. In some places we have succeeded.

I send you through separate post one of Mirabehn's letters for you to read, which please return after use. There is no hurry about returning it.

I am also sending you the latest number of *Harijan.*

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 6027. Also C.W. 3356. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] *Vide* "A Prayer", On or before 12-9-1934.

472. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

September 5, 1934

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

I wish you had told me about Surajbehn in Poona itself. I didn't know at all that Deodhar and you had encouraged her to study [the working of] a maternity home. Many women can, and would like to, run such a home. I would never think of engaging Surajbehn in work which many other women can, and would like to, do. Moreover, as Kishorelal says, such work does not seem to be included among our objects. If I can, that is, am free to do so under the trust rules, I will acquiesce in what Deodhar and you have approved, but *if I have* to decide after seeing for myself, Surajbehn must vacate the building.

Read Kishorelal's letter. I was surprised about Swami too. It certainly does not become one who claims to be a satyagrahi to show disrespect to a man or woman simply because he or she did not go to jail. That is why I have given so much time to this matter. Please guide me now.

Ghanshyamdas and I have had discussion, not exhaustive but enough for our purpose. We have had a full discussion about the Ashram. The draft will be dispatched tomorrow.

BAPU

About the remaining letters, some other time.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 1141

473. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

September 6, 1934

MY DEAR CHILD,

I held up your letter all these days in the hope of being able to send the answer myself. But I must deny myself that pleasure and dictate this letter if I am to overtake the arrears.

If proof were needed God is proving for me His greatness and goodness every day. You remember the hymn "Count your many blessings". I think it is in Moody and Sankey's Hymn Book. I can't even count the blessings, they are so many. For even the so-called sorrows and pains He sends descend like blessings. If we knew His love, we should know that He has nothing but blessings—and never curses—for His creation.

I hope Tangai is quite free and both the children are flourishing. You must have now received the spinning-wheel. I hope that Menon is well-settled.

I am flourishing. My weight has gone up from 94 to 101 lb. I am going through a fair amount of work and taking regular exercise.

Mira is doing good work in London. She expects to be back in October. Andrews was here for over a week and he has now gone to Simla. He will come once more to Wardha before sailing, most probably on the 6th October, for London. He was looking quite well. He has brought a Welsh blacksmith with him from South Africa. Mr. Jones, that is his name, has recently joined the Oxford movement and considers himself a changed man. We all liked him very much. When Andrews goes to England, he will go back to South Africa.

Pyarelal and Mahadev are here. Ba has gone with Ramdas to Sabarmati where Ramdas is to have rest and cure for his ailment. Devdas was here for a few days. He left yesterday for Bombay. He is likely to come back for the Working Committee meeting on the 8th. This, you will admit, is a fair family budget of news. You must write more regularly than you have hitherto done. I don't expect to move from Wardha yet for some time.

With love to you all,

BAPU

MRS. ESTHER MENON

TANJORE

From a photostat: No. 20130. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child,* pp. 106-7

474. LETTER TO SURESH CHANDRA BANERJI

September 6, 1934

MY DEAR SURESH,

I have your letter. I was not able to reply to it earlier. I had a chat with Birlaji. He is aggreeable to your spending from Rs. 2,000 to 3,000 on land and buildings, provided of course that they remain his property. But you will be at liberty to inhabit the house free of rent or any other charge so long as your health needs such residence. He does not intend to make private use of such property. He will give it for a charitable purpose, most probably for a Harijan hostel. But that is a thing with which neither you nor I are concerned. I think that then you won't need Rs. 200, but only Rs. 60 per month. Observe too that from October to December you will need not Rs. 200 but ranging from Rs. 125 to 150. You will let me know in time what you would require. And I hope that you will make steady improvement. You must not encourage the thought that the disease is incurable and that you have got to leave within a year or two.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI SURESH CHANDRA BANERJI
11/1 DILKUSHA STREET
PARK CIRCUS, CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

475. LETTER TO B. J. MARATHEY

September 6, 1934

MY DEAR MARATHEY[1],

I have sent[2] you one thing in connection with Rajbhoj's complaint. I am expecting an answer from you. I now send you a letter from Dr. Mulay which please return.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI B. J. MARATHEY
POONA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Secretary, Maharashtra Board, Harijan Sevak Sangh
[2] *Vide* "Letter to P. N. Rajbhoj", 31-8-1934

476. LETTER TO BHASKAR MUKERJI

September 6, 1934

DEAR BHASKAR,

I thank you for your letter and whole statement of the work done by the Corporation. I understand clearly now what you meant when you said that the Corporation had no authority. The statement does not show that the Corporation has done anything heroic. Let us, however, hope that this year will show a marked improvement in the treatment of these the most neglected and yet the most deserving of the citizens of Calcutta.[1]

Love to you, 'Baby' and children.

SHRI BHASKAR MUKERJI

CENTRAL MUNICIPAL OFFICE

CORPORATION OF CALCUTTA

CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

477. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

September 6, 1934

MY DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I have the copy of Satisbabu's letter to you regarding Hussanali who has been recommended by the Maulana for khadi propaganda. I share Satisbabu's fear, but I think that Hussanali should be taken on three month's trial. But the ultimate decision, I should leave to you and Satisbabu.

SHRI SHANKERLAL BANKER

AHMEDABAD

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Bhaskar Mukherji", 18-8-1934

478. VILLAGE TANNING AND ITS POSSIBILITIES

Village tanning is as ancient as India itself. No one can say when tanning became a degraded calling. It could not have been so in ancient times. But we know today that one of the most useful and indispensable industries has consigned probably a million people to hereditary untouchability. An evil day dawned upon this unhappy country when labour began to be despised and, therefore, neglected. Millions of those who were the salt of the earth, on whose industry this country depended for its very existence, came to be regarded as low class and the microscopic leisured few became the privileged classes, with the tragic result that India suffered morally and materially. Which was the greater of the two losses it is difficult, if not impossible, to estimate. But the criminal neglect of the peasants and the artisans has reduced us to pauperism, dulness and habitual idleness. With her magnificent climate, lofty mountains, mighty rivers and an extensive seaboard, India has limitless resources, whose full exploitation in her village should have prevented poverty and disease. But the divorce of the intellect from body-labour has made of us perhaps the shortest-lived, most resourceless and most exploited nation on earth. The state of village tanning is, perhaps, the best proof of my indictment. It was the late Madhusudan Das who opened my eyes to the great crime against a part of humanity. He sought to make reparation by opening what might be called an educational tannery. His enterprise did not come up to his expectations, but he was responsible for the livelihood of hundreds of shoemakers in Cuttack.

It is estimated that rupees nine crores worth of raw hide is annually exported from India and that much of it is returned to her in the shape of manufactured articles. This means not only a material but also an intellectual drain. We miss the training we should receive in tanning and preparing the innumerable articles of leather we need for daily use.

Tanning requires great technical skill. An army of chemists can find scope for their inventive talent in this great industry. There are two ways of developing it. One for the uplift of Harijans living in the villages and eking out a bare sustenance, living in filth and degradation and consigned to the village ghetto, isolated and away from the village proper. This way means in part re-organization of villages and taking art, education, cleanliness, prosperity and dignity to them. This means also the application of chemical talent to village

uplift. Tanning chemists have to discover improved methods of tanning. The village chemist has to stoop to conquer. He has to learn and understand the crude village tanning, which is still in existence but which is fast dying owing to neglect, not to say want of support. But the crude method may not be summarily scrapped, at least not before a sympathetic examination. It has served well for centuries. It could not have done so, if it had no merit. The only research I know in this direction is being carried on in Santiniketan, and then it was started at the now defunct Ashram at Sabarmati. I have not been able to keep myself in touch with the progress of the experiment at Santiniketan. There is every prospect of its revival at the Harijan Ashram, which the Sabarmati Ashram has now become. These experiments are mere drops in the ocean of possible research.

Cow-preservation is an article of faith in Hinduism. No Harijan worth his salt will kill cattle for good. But, having become untouchable, he has learnt the evil habit of eating carrion. He will not kill a cow but will eat with the greatest relish the flesh of a dead cow. It may be physiologically harmless. But psychologically there is nothing, perhaps, so repulsive as carrioneating. And yet, when a dead cow is brought to a Harijan tanner's house, it is a day of rejoicing for the whole household. Children dance round the carcass, and as the animal is flayed, they take hold of bones or pieces of flesh and throw them at one another. As a tanner, who is living at the Harijan Ashram, describing the scenes at his own now forsaken home, tells me, the whole family is drunk with joy at the sight of the dead animal. I know how hard I have found it working among Harijans to wean them from the soul-destroying habit of eating carrion. Reformed tanning means the automatic disappearance of carrion-eating.

Well, here is the use for high intelligence and the art of dissection. Here is also a mighty step in the direction of cow-preservation. The cow must die at the hands of the butcher, unless we learn the art of increasing her capacity of milk-giving, unless we improve her stock and make her male progeny more useful for the field and carrying burdens, unless we make scientific use of all her excreta as manure and unless, when she and hers die, we are prepared to make the wisest use of her hide, bone, flesh, entrails, etc.

I am just now concerned only with the carcass. It is well to remember here that the village tanner, thank God, has to deal only with the carcass, not the slaughtered animal. He has no means of

bringing the dead animal in a decent way. He lifts it, drags it, and this injures the skin and reduces the value of the hide. If the villagers and the public knew the priceless and noble service the tanner renders, they will provide easy and simple methods of carrying it, so as not to injure the skin at all.

The next process is flaying the animal. This requires great skill. I am told that none, not even surgeons, do this work better or more expeditiously than the village tanner does with his village knife. I have inquired of those who should know. They have not been able to show me an improvement upon the village tanner. This is not to say that there is none better. I merely give the reader the benefit of my own very limited experience. The village tanner has no use for the bone. He throws it away. Dogs hover round the carcass, whilst it is flayed, and take away some, if not all, of the bones. This is a dead loss to the country. The bones, if powdered fine, apart from their other uses, make valuable manure. What remains after the dogs have taken away their share is transported to foreign countries and returns to us in the shape of handles, buttons, etc.

The second way is urbanizing this great industry. There are several tanneries in India doing this work. Their examination is outside the scope of this article. This urbanization can do little good to the Harijans, much less to the villages. It is a process of double drain from the villages. Urbanization in India is slow but sure death for her villages and villagers. Urbanization can never support ninety per cent of India's population, which is living in her 7,00,000 villages. To remove from these villages tanning and such other industries is to remove what little opportunity there still is for making skilled use of the hand and the head. And when the village handicrafts disappear, the villagers working only with their cattle on the field, with idleness for six or four months in the year, must, in the words of Madhusudan Das, be reduced to the level of the beast and be without proper nourishment, either of the mind or the body, and, therefore, without joy and without hope.

Here is work for the cent-per-cent swadeshi-lover and scope for the harnessing of technical skill to the solution of a great problem. The work fells three apples with one throw. It serves the Harijans, it serves the villagers and it means honourable employment for the

middle-class intelligentsia who are in search of employment. Add to this the fact that the intelligentsia have a proper opportunity of coming in direct touch with the villagers.

Harijan, 7-9-1934

479. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 7, 1934

Unrevised

CHI. MIRA,

I must not attempt to write to you this week. I have too much to attend to immediately to undertake[1] a long letter to you. Mahadev must have written at least. This is just to tell you that I am getting on quite well and working almost full speed. There is nothing to worry about myself.

I hope the storm about Agatha and Muriel is entirely over and that the associations between them and you are sweeter than ever.

I have the Parliamentary Board and Working Committee meetings before me. Before this reaches you, you will see some startling announcement.[2] You should not worry about it at all there.

Ba has gone to Sabarmati Harijan Ashram in charge of Ramdas who is going to have treatment there under Dr. Sharma. Ramdas's health has broken down completely, though there is nothing organically wrong about him. But Ba was anxious about him and offered to go with Ramdas. I was also pleased. Devdas was here and passed a few days with us. Khan Brothers are here and I am having a very nice time with them. To be with them more, is to love them more. They are so nice, so simple and yet so penetrative. They do not beat about the bush.

Love.

BAPU

SHRIMATI MIRABEHN

LONDON

From the original: C. W. 6297. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9763

[1] The source has ''as to overtake''.

[2] The reference is to his resignation from the Congress; *vide* "Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting, Patna-I", 18-5-1934

480. LETTER TO NURGISBEHN CAPTAIN

September 7, 1934

I have been withholding replies to your letters and Khurshed's as you had expected none from me and as I had wanted to save as much time and energy as I possibly could. But your last letter demands an answer. I must not postpone it for writing the reply myself.

I see no objection to your using swadeshi yarn for embroidery so long as we cannot procure a hand-spun yarn suitable for embroidery work. My justification for this latitude is this: embroidery is no part of original khadi; but embroidery is simply superadded even as we use sewing thread for preparing clothes, or use even foreign dyes in order to enhance the salability of khadi.

I am glad Khurshed is looking better. When are you proposing to do likewise? Khan Brothers are here and I am having a glorious time with them. I am having quiet discussions with them twice daily for about two hours. They are both free and penetrative.

You will be presently seeing another startling announcement from me. Don't you be anxious or inquisitive. It is better not to hawk about the proposed decision so that I can safely make the announcement. There is nothing that I can possibly have to withhold from you, but I do not want to write anything about it.

Love to you all. I suppose I must not expect any letter from Jamnabehn.

SHRI NURGISBEHN CAPTAIN

78 NAPEAN ROAD, BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

481. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

September 7, 1934

DEAR SATISBABU,

I have your several letters as also the ink-bottle. I must report to you on the ink later on. Did you prepare it specially for me, or did you prepare it for the general market ?

What about Kshitishbabu's experiment in dried milk? I wonder if he has received my letter[1] sent through you. So far as I am aware he has been silent.

Have you yet got charge of the Harijan office? You have asked me for suggestions about welfare scheme for Bengal Harijans. I can't think of anything special. You must, therefore, refer to *Harijan* for whatever I had said, and adopt with necessary modifications whatever you may find to be suitable there. Of course your problem is somewhat different from the problem elsewhere. You will carefuly study the article[2] I have sent to *Harijan* on tanning.

Are you making progress with your "Guide for Village Workers" on treatment of simple diseases and accidents?

In *Onward* I see an advertisement on strawboards manufactured by Kuver Board Limited, Mill Department, 84 Clive Street, Calcutta. The advertisement says it is manufactured through Indian capital, Indian labour and Indian material. What are these strawboards? Are they of any use for Yeravda Charkha ?

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy ; Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Kashitish Chandra Das Gupta", 24-8-1934
[2] *Vide* "Village Tanning and its Possibilitites" 7-9-1934

482. LETTER TO PURATAN J. BUCH

September 7, 1934

CHI. PURATAN,

I got your letter. If you were not cheated when you parted with the hundred rupees, what else could it be? If you were not cheated, what mistake did you acknowledge? As for myself, I believe that you have been cheated. Would a poor man give away a hundred rupees for the sake of a joke? I am afraid, I have no hope that you will either get the Rs. 100 or the money for the bill. If this does not happen again, let us take it as an easy atonement.

Have we to debit the money which Parikshitlal gave for his board to the Charkha Sangh? We cannot debit it to the Harijan Fund. Have you taken the right amount of rent for their lodging? What is the rate of rent?

Tell Parikshitlal that I have written a letter to a palace official at Lakhtar. Let us see what happens.

Are you keeping fit?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4046. Also C.W. 160. Courtesy: Parikshitlal L. Majmudar

483. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

September 7, 1934

BHAI BHAGWANJI,

I got both your letters. I have been doing Indian States' work according to my lights and ability. The principle of ahimsa is founded on the assumption that every human being is capable of reform. Since I cannot give up this faith, some difference of opinion between you and me will always remain.

I understand about Prabhashankar. He will be meeting me next week, and I will, then, talk with him about the matter too.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5824. Also C.W. 3047. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

484. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

September 7, 1934

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have your letter. You must have got mine.

I have purposely and after due thought sent Ramdas [to the Ashram]. The result lies in God's hands. Surendra is engrossed in doing his duty there. How could I call him away? Ramdas's illness is more mental than physical. According to me, the good company that he will get there will itself help like medicine.

Give only such help as you easily can without going out of your way. I have not created new work for you in this.

You may go to the Ashram when you are completely free. I am trying to send you the letter which you require. Why should you feel afraid of Thakkar Bapa? All of us have some idiosyncracies and we should tolerate one another's. I am sure you will be able to manage. And in the last resort I am always there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 9064

485. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHARMA

[*September 7, 1934*][1]

CHI. SHARMA,

I did not mind your not visiting me, rather I appreciated it. I took it that you wished to save my time.[2]

I do not see much reason for calling the doctor. You ought to know the processes of examining the urine and the stools. But I am sending a letter, you may certainly use it if you want to.

I shall write to Ba and advise her to express her opinions freely. I had already told her to do so. I shall at once inform you of whatever Ba writes to me.

Enquire into the arrangement[3] at Jamnagar and write to me. I shall find out the details later and write about it. I quite like your intention of cooking for yourself but you must not be adamant about it. What do you cook ?

I shall let you know immediately the news I receive from Phoenix. You can send for Draupadi when it is all fixed up. I had written to her.[4] If you have gained some experience and things are progressing well so that Ramdas need not at all go to South Africa, Draupadi can be immediately sent for. We shall know something definite on Monday.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

It was good that you met Mogheji. The sum of Rs. 152 was deposited in the Ashram that very day. I have enquired about the goods and am awaiting a reply.

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, 1932-48* , between pp. 92-3

[1] As supplied by the addressee

[2] The addressee had gone to Sabarmati without meeting Gandhiji and had apologized for it.

[3] The Ruler of Jamnagar had built a solarium for his personal use.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Draupadi Sharma", 2-9-1934

486. LETTER TO MOTILAL DEEVDA

September 7, 1934

BHAI MOTILAL DEEVDA[1] ,

I had your telegram. Also your letter. I could not reply promptly for lack of time. Please excuse me. It was not possible to send a wire in reply to the wire.

The matter of. . .'s[2] second marriage is being discussed. The future alone can show what the ultimate outcome will be and, whether or not he will get my blessings as well as his elders'. His present wife, although more than 20, has, because of her illness, the appearance of a twelve year old. She is incapable of bearing children. She heartily consents to. . .'s second marriage. For years she will not be able to lead conjugal life, so she wishes to take up a life of service. If he marries again there is a talk of satisfactory maintenance for her by . . . and his father. . . . feels the need for a wife. I believe it is in conformity with dharma to enable him to lead a restrained married life with a suitable wife. And he should be able to get the blessings of all pious men and women. All this, however, depends upon the purity and restraint of. . . .Nothing will be done in haste. All his kith and kin are keen about preservation of dharma. The best thing for. . . would be to exercise total restraint and overcome his passions. But only one among a million young men can do this. We should all pray to God to grant. . . such strength.

In the interest of. . ., I request you not to publish this letter nor to discuss this matter publicly. If you wish to convey something to me, certainly do so.[3]

Yours,

From a copy of the Hindi: G. W. 10220. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] President of the Marwari Sabha

[2] The name has been omitted.

[3] Under Gandhiji's instructions, Prabhavati had sent a copy of this letter to G. D. Birla.

487. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ[1]

September 8, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have been regularly getting your letters and also reports about your health. You seem to enjoy God's kindness in full measure, for the wound is healing more quickly than the doctors had expected. Do not be in the slightest hurry to leave. Leave only after the wound has healed completely. I like your idea of going to Sinhgad. There you will also get Mehta's help whenever needed. The climate is certainly very good. The water is very light. The place, therefore, will do you much good. Nor is it very far.

Do not talk much. Even when necessary, talk in a low voice and not with a full voice. The effort to speak has always some effect on the ear.

Avoid rice and dal. I am sure that will do you much good. Rely more on milk. Curds should not be even slightly sour. Go on gradually increasing exercise as much as the doctors permit from time to time. Do not worry about anything. If you follow this regimen, it will not only be good for the ear but will also refresh the brain.

Malaviyaji came today. He is accompanied by Radhakant. Ali and Khaliq [uz-Zaman] also have come. The others will come tomorrow.

Khanbhai is very happy. He is with me every morning when I go for a walk and also from 4-5 in the evening. We discuss the problems at leisure one by one.

You must have heard Pagali's story regarding myself. I do not want to bother you with it now. You may offer your criticism later when you are completely all right. I think you will approve of everything.

Om stays with me all the time and helps as and when required. Four or rather five girls are doing the work which could be done by one or two girls. Each, therefore, gets very little to do. As you know, Prabhavati will not let the other girls do much. Moreover Madalasa also comes to claim her share.

Radhakisan keeps worrying so much because of your instructions that, though he keeps careful watch over me, he is always

[1] This was written before 3.30 a.m. ; *vide* the following item.

afraid lest he may be blamed. I do get up very early. I do not need more sleep and I feel light during the day if I have finished my work in the morning. Now the weight will increase slowly. The quantity of food cannot be increased, so what I eat now will increase the weight slowly. I think that is better. Strength is growing steadily. I take a short nap during daytime and am in bed at 8.45 p.m., or at the latest by 9 p.m. Thus nobody can blame me for not taking enough care of my health. I shall be here till you come and even after that. I shall not go anywhere unless there is some reason.

Andrews is returning on Sunday. Kumarappa has taken 20 days' leave. I will send him back as soon as the period is over. He will arrive here on Tuesday.

The girls seem to be progressing quite well. Vinoba himself supervises everything. I therefore, don't have to interfere with anything.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I forgot about Assam. If you know the Congressmen there, send the Assam money to them. If you don't know, then send the money to Jwalaprasad. The Marwari Relief Committee is working there. This amount should be added to its funds. Do what you think best.

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 134-5

488. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 8, 1934

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter of the 6th.

I have asked Narahari to inquire into the facts regarding the dairy and let me have his opinion. I will not forget about this matter.

I am still not able to take sufficient rest. I have again started getting up at 2.30. The bed itself pushes me out and I welcome that. It is 3.30 just now. I have started writing this after finishing one to Jamnalal.

I can't think what to do regarding Chimanlal and Sharda. One thing is clear to me. Sharda's living with Chimanlal may not be for

her good. If her devotion to her father has become her sole passion, she may, though ill herself, sacrifice her health in nursing Chimanlal. We come across many such instances in Europe. I don't remember to have seen any among us. But the education which we give is certainly likely to produce girls of this type. Such idealism endures only if it grows spontaneously. If Sharda does not possess this spirit, she should have regard for her health and leave Chimanlal. She may come and live here. There are other girls of her age here, and among them there are ten Gujarati girls even, including Vali. The climate also is excellent. I, too, shall be here for some time. In any case my headquaters will continue to be here. There are good arrangements for study, too. It is desirable that one who is ill should not nurse another sick person. Shakaribehn should undertake to look after Chimanlal. The latter should stop eating solid food and live only on milk and fruit. A pure milk-diet has been found to have beneficial effect, but I think such an experiment is too drastic. A mixed diet of milk and fruit is found best. Even if such a diet brings on weakness, I would advise Chimanlal not to mind it but persevere in the experiment patiently. Sharma is at Sabarmati now. He has renounced everything in order to live with Ramdas. That is why he has taken Ramdas with him and gone to Sabarmati. Ba has gone there to look after Ramdas. You may, if you wish, consult Sharma [regarding Chimanlal]; I have had experience of his goodness. I cannot say, though, anything regarding his competence as a doctor. All the same, there can be no harm in consulting him. Milk and fruit, however, are both food and medicine. Anybody who is not benefited by them is hardly likely to be benefited by anything else. Water and sun treatments also should go on at the same time. The chief thing in my advice is the suggestion regarding Sharda. Both of you should please think over it.

My personal needs are being looked after by Prabhavati, Amtussalaam, Vasumati and Om. Amala also does some work. But I am really afraid that she will go off her head one day. She is hardly in her senses. She is growing thinner everyday. And now she has become impatient to marry. I observe that she is not free from passion. In consequence of her trying to suppress it, it has become uncontrollable. She hopes to be mother of twelve children. She is 37 at present. Let us see what she does. I don't have the courage now to send her to you or somewhere else. She is trying to get a job in some college. I don't mind if she succeeds by her own efforts. But I don't intend to recommend her to anybody. I don't worry, but the fact

remains that the responsibility of looking after her has become more difficult.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

What has been decided regarding Keshu's marriage?

From the microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8412. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

489. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

September 8, 1934

DEAR SATISBABU,

You have given a dismal picture. But it does not disturb me. The atmosphere will undoubtedly clear up presently. You will have seen my counter-statement[1] about retiring from the Congress. Discussions are going on. So far as I am concerned, I am most anxious to leave the Congress and serve it from being out of it. I have drawn up a statement which I propose to discuss with the Working Committee. You will know the result in due time. The thing that is deeper than the corruption is the

fundamental differences between many Congreesmen and myself. But let me not anticipate. Let the constructive workers go on with their work.

Constructive workers must not touch any newspaper enterprise, and certainly not at this time. Nor do I agree with you that a paper with balanced views is required at this time. An outspoken paper in the face of the Press laws is an impossibility unless it eschews politics altogether. But that is not what you mean. You want something to counterbalance the poisons. That means having to deal with politics also.

How much ink have you prepared? What is the use of distributing things gratis unless it is for advertisement?

I hope Hemprabha is going on well.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 5-9-1934

490. LETTER TO NARAYANASWAMY

September 8, 1934

MY DEAR NARAYANASWAMY,

I was delighted to receive your letter. I also got the packet of ashes. They will be consigned to the Ganges in due course.

I hope you have a good wife and that you are happy. If she is educated, if she can write, let her do so.

I understand that you have financial difficulties. The only advice I can give you is: "Do not borrow." What honestly and industriously you find, you will take and keep up father's reputation. The real capital young men need is a good body, a good character and tireless industry.

I shall wait for Parthasarathy's and Sesamae's letters. You should continue to write to me.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI NARAYANASWAMY

174 PRESIDENT STREET

JOHANNESBURG

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

491. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRAN

September 8, 1934

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRAN,

I have not been able to answer your enquiry earlier. Gandhi Seva Sangh is just now undergoing a thorough overhauling and is about to adopt some drastic changes. The allowances made hitherto had been on a liberal scale. But it is being redically revised. And then if these changes are to come into force, Jamnalalji is not taking any part in it. He is still undergoing treatment in Bombay and would not be able to attend to regular work before a few months perhaps. He has got to take rest in a quiet place before he resumes normal activity. Meantime you may tell me what your personal requirements are.

SHRI RAMACHANDRAN

BANGALORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

492. LETTER TO B. J. MARATHEY

September 8, 1934

MY DEAR MARATHEY,

I am glad you have sent me an exhaustive reply, and that too promptly, to my inquiry.[1] I shall now make use of it.[2]

Yours sincerely,

SHRI B. J. MARATHEY
SECRETARY, H.S.S.
MAHARASHTRA BOARD
POONA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

493. LETTER TO GULZARILAL NANDA

September 8, 1934

MY DEAR GULZARILAL,

I am glad you are keeping me informed of what is going on there. It is a fine thing that the proceedings are being conducted in a perfectly orderly manner. That means real solid work.

I am keeping quite well.

SHRI GULZARILAL NANDA
45 CHOWPATTY
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to B. J. Marathey", 6-9-1934

[2] It was published in *Harijan*, 28-9-1934; *vide*, "Maharashtra Harijan Sevak Sangh", 28-9-1934. *vide* also "Letter to Dr. B. V. Mulay", 12-9-1934.

494. LETTER TO LILAVATI

September 8, 1934

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your letter. If you hear from Siddhimati, give me the news about her.

Do all of you eat your meals at different times or together? How many take your meals together? Do you get any fruit there? Do you get good milk?

What books do you read? I should like you to improve your handwriting still further.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujrati: G. N. 9329. Also C.W. 6604. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

495. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA

September 8, 1934

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

I have your letter. My congratulations to Father on leading everyone in speed. Your note does not indicate the count and uniformity of yarn. You must find it. I suppose you know the way of finding it. The method used for villages is very simple. Give me your opinion about the yarn spun on the bamboo spinning-wheel. What is the circumference of the wheel ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2792

496. LETTER TO NIRUPAMA

September 8, 1934

CHI. NIRUPAMA,

I have your letter. It is nice of you to write. I am absolutely all right now. Do keep on writing.

Blessings from

BAPU

KUMARI NIRUPAMA
SUDAMA KUTIR, UDIPI
KARNATAK

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9225

497. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVLEKAR

September 9, 1934

BHAI SATAVLEKAR,

I have your letter. Pre-marital intercourse is ruinous to health, moral as well as physical.

Journals propagating such morality are knowingly or unknowingly the enemies of society. My submission to young men and women is that they will do immense harm to themselves and the nation by such licentious behaviour.

Is Dr. Kelkar there? If not, where is he and what is he doing?

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

PANDIT SHRI SATAVLEKAR
SVADHYAYA MANDAL
AUNDH
SATARA DISTRICT

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. W. 4775. Courtesy: S. D. Satavlekar

498. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 11, 1934

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter.

I knew that the important letter which I worte[1] to you would certainly put you in difficulty. I think what I expected you to do was unreasonable. I was plainly guilty of violence. But I thought it would be a great trouble to re-write such a long letter, and this desire to spare myself increased the magnitude of my violence. God knows how many times I must be committing such violence everyday. The path of renunciation of work was discovered to save us from such dangers. But only one person out of ten million can follow it. Can a person who does nothing outwardly but whose mind is always busy be regarded as observing non-violence? For us, therefore, the only course is to go on working and committing errors and to strive all the time to remain inactive inwardly and reduce the number of our errors from day to day.

I have wired to Kanu and told him that he may come, so that his days may not be wasted. It seems my letters take four days to reach you.

I am sending to you a letter which I have received from the Superintendent at Dhulia. It will be sent by book post. I have just given it to Vinoba to read.

I have still not received Mathuradas's reply. Lilavati may certainly come here in the vacation. I know her very well. Her unsteadiness is incurable.

The women are doing well as teachers. Even if only 50 per cent of them became permanent here, the Bal Mandir will run well.

. . .[2] had started indulging his passion as early as the time when he was at Sabarmati. And he had no scruples in telling lies either. He has now written a letter of repentance to Balkrishna and asked what he should do for atonement.

Amala's case is different. As she has got a job in Santiniketan for teaching French, she is quite cheerful these days. She will go in a few days. She is only waiting for the final reply.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 8-9-1934

[2] The name has been omitted.

I shall be able to decide about the dairy at Sabarmati only after Narahari has gone there.

Sumitra has trouble in one of her eyes, and so Ba is accompanying her to Bombay today for treatment.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M.U./I. Also C.W. 8413. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

499. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[1]

September 11, 1934

CHI. MATHURADAS,

You have completed 40 years. Does it not mean that out of the 100 years 40 years are gone? If we reckon the years in this way, we can also say that as time passes our span of life becomes shorter. Live your remaining 60 years as you did your 40 and add to the sum of your achievements so far.

You must not imagine that I have time to indulge in unnecessary talk with Nariman or anyone else. My time is as occupied as you have so far known it to be. God is sustaining me.

Who can send you letters now? Mahadev is wholly tied up. So is Pyarelal. Nor does Prithuraj find time in the midst of his work. That leaves the young women. Your hunger should be satisfied. Let me see.

You have not sent me your book on *karmayoga.* But I chanced upon it. I read it every day in the library. I shall finish it in a few days. I like the work. You have tried to say a lot in a few pages. This will make it difficult for the uninformed. The binding is bad. What is the demand it has elicited? Does *Vicharsrishti*[2] sell?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Extracts from this letter appear in "Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", 11-9-1934

[2] *Gandhijini Vicharsrishti*, compiled by the addressee

500. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

September 11, 1934

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. The last two letters received from Damodardas have been sent on to you. I find something quite different in them. He says there is some misunderstanding on your part. Or is it mine? You yourself must write to Damodardas, and me, too, what precisely you told me. This, now, cuts the ground away from under any charge against Keshu, Santok and Radha. The words you quoted from the letter of Damodardas also are rendered insignificant. You remember, do you not? I am nervous. I am behaving contrary to my nature. How can I remain at peace while I harbour the least doubt about Santok and others? And how can I disbelieve what you have told me? I have no knowledge at all as to when I shall go to Bombay. Possibly I may go in October during the Congress session. And there will be no time then for talking to Damodardas.

I hope you are keeping well there and there has been no recurrence of fever.

If you have money enough to send to Radha, why can you not send to me? On the one hand your brothers are under debt, it is not known if the house ever will be saved or not, yet you are capable of shouldering the burden of Radha's expenses! Don't you know that Radha is provided for? There has never been any trouble in meeting her expenses. You may certainly help me if you wish to. Are you asking for my permission to send money to Radha over and above her present allowance? If so, why?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2423

501. A PRAYER[1]

[On or before *September 12, 1934*][2]

Lord of humility, dwelling in the little pariah hut, help us to search for Thee throughout that fair land watered by Ganges, Brahmaputra and Jumna. Give us receptiveness, give us openheartedness, give us Thy humility, give us the ability and willingness to identify ourselves with the masses of India.

O God, who does help only when man feels utterly humble, grant that we may not be isolated from the people we would serve as servants and friends. Let us be embodiments of self-sacrifice, embodiments of godliness, humility personified, that we may know the land better and love it more.

Bapu—Conversations and Correspondence, pp. 88-9

502. TELEGRAM TO HIRALAL SHARMA

September 12, 1934

SHARMA
ASHRAM
SABARMATI

NO HURRY GOING HOME.[3] I MUST HOLD YOU YOUR PROMISE. PRODUCE SATISFACTORY CERTIFICATE THERE. WRITING[4] TOMORROW. WIRE RAMDAS DAILY PROGRESS.

BAPU

From a facsimile: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, 1932-48,* facing p. 95

[1] The prayer was an enclosure to "Letter to F. Mary Barr", pp. 437-8. In the source, Mary Barr explains: "Miss Linforth is an Englishwoman who was then working at a Hyderabad Welfare Centre run by an intercommunal committee of Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians and Parsis. She had asked me to get Gandhi to give her a message. So he enclosed in his letter to me this little prayer, which she framed and put in her Centre."

[2] *ibid*

[3] The addressee had sought Gandhiji's permission to go back to Khurja to attend to his ailing son.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Hiralal Sharma", 13-9-1934

503. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

September 12, 1934

MY DEAR BROTHER,

It is just 3 a.m. This is the first letter I take up after mouth wash. My whole heart goes out to you all. Who am I to judge your delicate and domestic affairs? You have granted me the unique privilege of knowing your secrets. I may not abuse it. I do not know the implications of the actualities as they happen. But this mute warfare must cease, if you and Raihana are to have peace. If I were you, I would either let her have her way ungrudgingly and joyously or give her a separate house and maintenance and let her have her way. She is too much of an invalid to be left to her own resources. I should not bother about Hamida, she is no freak like Raihana. Raihana has no marriage in store for her. So far as I am aware she is a stranger to the sensuous passion. I wish I could give you a cheery letter, but I cannot. Having read this you would do as [the] Great Spirit guides[1] you. With deep love to you all.

Yours,

M. K. G.

ABBAS TYABJI

BARODA

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

504. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

September 12, 1934

CHI. MARY,

I have your letter full of information about your activities. Here is a little note[2] for Miss Linforth. It is written on hand-made paper of which I happen to possess a few sheets.

You can certainly send Mira's letter to your sister and when you write to her please give her my love. So far as I am aware she owes me a letter.

I should not consider you to be buried in your books uselessly when you are studying Hindi for the sake of your work.

[1] The source has "guards".
[2] *Vide* "A Prayer", 12-9-1934

You will duly report to me how your cotton seeds have behaved.[1]

The wise use you can make of the flesh of a dead cow is to extract tallow from it which can be used in a variety of ways. The bones can be used as manure.[2]

I am sending your letter to Jamnalalji.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 6028. Also C.W. 3357. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

505. LETTER TO DR. B. V. MULAY

September 12, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

In continuation of my letter to you regarding your complaint about the Sholapur Dispensary, I have now a letter from the Secretary of the Harijan Sevak Sangh, Maharashtra Board, from which I find that the grant was being voted and was given only after Thakkar Bapa had inspected everything and satisfied himself about it. In the circumstances the only thing that I can say to you is that if you are not satisfied with this recommendation, you have to write to the President of the Central Board at Delhi. As you may know, I have no official status in the Sangh. My connection therefore is purely moral. It is only on rare occasions that I tender my advice to the Board. In this connection I don't feel called upon to do anything beyond what I have done.

Yours sincerely,

DR. B. V. MULAY, M.S.

SHOLAPUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In *Bapu—Conversations and Correspondence,* p. 89, the addressee explains : "The reference to cotton seed was concerning some experiments I was making in growing a certain kind of cotton which had not previously been grown in the district."

[2] "The advice about the use of a dead cow must have been for some village man, for I had no cow, either dead or alive" (*ibid).*

506. LETTER TO B. J. MARATHEY

September 12, 1934

DEAR MARATHEY,

I have your prompt letter in reply to mine[1] of 6th instant. I have now written a suitable letter[2] to Dr. Mulay.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

507. LETTER TO SAUDAMINI MEHTA

September 12, 1934

CHI. SAUDAMINI,

I got your letter.

I agree with you that if I knew as much about. . .'s[3] case as I do about. . .'s, my opinion would perhaps soften. I made the remarks in question when I read. . .'s defence and . . .'s outpouring of her grief. However, if I became more intimate with all the persons involved, I would perhaps have a better understanding of their points of view. The conclusion to be drawn from this is that before criticizing anybody's action one must go deep into the matter. Since this is not easy to do, the golden rule is not to criticize anybody. I know how to follow this rule and rarely criticize people, though it is true of course that I occasionally pass hasty criticism on persons with whom I am connected in some way. I am still not free from that measure of attachment. Such subtle attachments cannot be overcome by an act of will. They weaken gradually through prolonged effort.

Let me give you some more information about . . .'s case. Even today all his elders except. . .are against his marrying again. If I had not supported his intention, the idea of second marriage would have been abandoned. I came to know. . .first. The moment I saw her, I felt that a girl like her was unfit for conjugal life and that she would never be able to satisfy . . . sexually. Before I came to know her and take interest in her life, she used to tremble in. . .'s presence, talked with none and always wore an unhappy look. Now she talks frankly with everybody and can even joke. She expresses her views quite freely. She and. . .gave me their letters to each other to read. The sole cause

[1] *Vide* "Letter to B. J. Marathey", 6-9-1934

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] This and other names have been omitted.

of her worry is the fact that . . .has not taken another wife. As long as he has not done so, she does not feel herself safe in her relations with him and with their elders. Other members of the family keep taunting her for her inability to satisfy. . .. She, on her part, being a loving girl, keeps thinking about her inability and feels miserable. I doubt if you have come across any other instance like hers. Being a woman yourself, you can certainly claim to know a woman's heart better than I do. But as against that I can claim many years' longer experience than yours. Though a man, I have been striving for many years to reach women's heart, cultivating and preserving complete passionlessness. As a result, I have had intimate knowledge of the lives of hundreds of women of every class and religion and of different countries of the world. I know of several instances in which women urged their husbands to marry again. This is not a peculiarity of Hindu women. You will perhaps be surprised to know that such instances are to be found in England also.

I have a motive in writing such a long letter to you even under all this pressure of work. I am pleased that you have taken interest in this matter. . . . had been after me. She also had expressed her pain. I have promised her that I would welcome a deputation of women headed by her and put this case before them. For me this is an issue of dharma. It is one of my experiments in truth. I feel no shame about what I am doing. I am not taking interest in this case because of the bond of friendship. This is part of my service of women. I think of. . .as a helpless cow. I should like to protect her as much as I can. I want the help of you women in that task. That is, if in the name of dharma I am in fact yielding to self-delusion of any kind and following a course contrary to dharma, please wake me up and save me. If, therefore, you can keep up your interest in this case, meet. . . and discuss the matter with her and then three or four of you may come and see me. I will put my case before you and listen to what you have to say. I am not concerned with what happens to. . . or . . .as individuals. Such cases will always arise. Ill-matched unions are no rarity in this country. I have told. . .that when her body has developed and grown to the size natural for her age and if she feels sexual desire then and wishes to remarry, I will be ready to help her at any cost to myself. If, however, despite. . .having married a second time she prefers to live with him and if. . .is inclined to agree to that, I shall be helpless . . .'s father would of course desire that she should share his bed even though he might have another wife. My effort is to save both

of them from such a position. This is a very complicated case. In solving it I shall be solving many problems. I, therefore, do not mind giving my time to it.

I don't know if I am imposing an unwelcome burden on you through this letter. If you do not wish to go so deep into the matter, you need not reply to it. Please consider the letter to have been written by me more for my satisfaction than for yours. I seem to feel that I know my dharma, but I am always liable to err in my reasoning. I, therefore, cling to any person who points out my error. This has saved me from many errors.

SAUDAMINI GAGANVIHARI MEHTA

CALCUTTA

[From Gujarati]

From a manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

508. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI[1]

WARDHA,

3.30 a.m., September 12, 1934

CHI. RAMDAS,

Your wire has scared me. I at once wired Dr. Kanuga that he might remove you to whichever hospital he thought best. Vallabhbhai was with me when I sent the wire. I mentioned a hospital at his suggestion.

God will restore you. Keep repeating the name of Him Whose *das*[2] you are considered to be, that is, to Whom your name signifies you are dedicated. Know that Ramanama is the only remedy that never fails. There is no remedy like peace of mind. Who has ever escaped birth, death, old age and disease? They are inseparable from the body. If, however, they are all equal in our eyes, all the four will be the same to us in spite of their being different.

Now that you have started treatment under a doctor continue it. Sharma[3] may give you company and nurse you. But as he has now learnt humility, he will not mind your being looked after by a doctor. He may even welcome it. You cannot go to S. A. till you are fully

[1] A portion of this letter appears in "Letter to Ramdas Gandhi", 12-9-1934

[2] Servant

[3] Hiralal Sharma

recovered. The passport also will take some time. It will be in my hands at the earliest on the 23rd. You will get a boat ten days after that. That is quite a long time by our reckoning. By that time you will have perhaps completely recovered. This fever may eventually remove all the poison from your body. I do not worry as Ba is also there. Had she not been with you, both of us would have been very nervous at a time like this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Ramdas Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

509. LETTER TO RAGHUVIR NARAYAN SINGH

September 12, 1934

BHAI CHOUDHRIJI,

I had your letter. I withheld the reply till the Working Committee had met. In my opinion, we cannot, under any circumstance, apply for the release. But I hear that the application is only a formality and release will be granted for certain. If this is correct and you are so inclined, you may apply. But under no condition should the application be sent up if there is the slightest doubt about its acceptance. It is also implied that in case of rejection of any one application all are to be withdrawn. The announcement of the Provincial Board should be awaited.

CHOUDHRI RAGHUVIR NARAYAN SINGH

HAPUR

[From Hindi]

From a manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

510. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHARMA

September 12, 1934

CHI. SHARMA,

Your letter. I also saw your letter to Prabhavati regarding the keys.

I was already apprehensive about catching fever. Anyway, it is now a fact and I hope it will be only to the good. It was quite right to get him[1] treated by the doctors. You have to be patient. The doctor's instructions must be adhered to, you have only to turn yourself into a nurse and follow them. This augurs well in every way. God alone controls the results. I must get a letter from you daily.

For the time being, how can I even mention south Africa? But I shall keep up the effort of clearing the way and we shall wait and watch.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, 1932-48*, facing p. 93.

511. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHARMA

September 13, 1934

CHI. SHARMA,

I read your letter after cleaning my teeth. I could not go through the whole of it yesterday. Such is my plight these days ! I have replied to your wire of yesterday.[2] The same answer holds for today too. Be patient. If you move from there, Ramdas's health will deteriorate. This is my opinion from a distance. Surendra is there on the spot, his advice must be followed. What I mean is that you should be a silent nurse. As long as Ramdas is happy with you, you must remain at his side even facing the insults of the doctors. Go on informing of all the developments. Tolerate Ba. I had forewarned you about the developments there. It will be good even now to send Kanu here. But in all this you must be guided by Surendra. Being far away, I am in a quandary.

[1] Ramdas Gandhi ; *vide* also the following item.
[2] *Vide* "A Prayer", 12-9-1934

I am aware that people are scared of me. That is why I want to dissociate myself from the Congress and for the same reason I like to live away from people; but all this cannot be forced. Everything will be as God wills. Your last remark is wholly right. Who am I to become responsible for the destiny of India or of any man?

But despite this, my ignorant attachment may be pushing me unwittingly into such illusions.

If, after considering all circumstances, you think you must leave Ramdas, you should visit me on your way. We shall then discuss about Draupadi and the children. I too am concerned with their welfare. But we shall not be hasty in anything, we shall discuss the future too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, 1932-48,* between pp. 96 and 97

512. MORE ON SWADESHI

I would like to resume the thread of my remarks on swadeshi in the *Harijan* of 10th August.[1] Take the special occupations of Harijans. There is a meaning behind the over two thousand Harijan castes. Most of them denote their respective occupations—basket-making, broom-making, rope-weaving, durri-weaving, etc. If a complete list was made of them, they would make an imposing list. They are occupations which either need encouragement, or should be deliberately destroyed if they are useless or unprofitable. But who is to decide whether they are profitable or unprofitable, useless or otherwise? If there was a true swadeshi organization, if would be its duty to find out the turth about all these innumerable handicrafts and interest themselves in these craftsmen. The ink with which I am writing comes from Tenali. It supports about 12 workers. It is making headway against odds. I had three more specimens sent to me by different makers, all no doubt struggling like the Tenali group. They interested me. I entered into correspondence with them. But I could do no more for them. A swadeshi organization will examine the samples of these inks in a scientific manner and guide them and encouage the most promising ones. It is a good and growing industry, requiring expert chemical knowledge.

[1] *Vide* "Swadeshi", 6-8-1934

In Cawnpore, a man sent me samples of the paper his friend was manufacturing in a village nearby. I enquired into the concern. It supports about nine men. The paper was stout and glossy. However, it was not good enough for writing. Men engaged in the manufacture are eking out the barest livelihood. The skill is supplied by an old man nearing the crematorium. The whole concern may perish with him, if it is not properly guided. I was told that, if there were enough orders, the paper could be supplied at the same cost as the mill–made article. I know that hand-made paper can never supply the daily growing demand for paper. But lovers of the seven hundred thousand villages and their handicrafts will always want to use hand-made paper, if it is easily procurable. Those who use hand-made paper know that it has a charm of its own. Who does not know the famous Ahmedabad paper? What mill-made paper can beat it in durability or polish!

The account books of the old style are still made of that paper. But it is probably a perishing industry like many such others. With a little encouragement, it ought never to perish. If there was supervision, the processes might be improved and the defects that are to be noticed with some of this hand-made paper may be easily removed. The economic condition of the numberless people engaged in these little known trades is well worth investigating. They will surely allow themselves to be guided and advised and feel thankful to those who would take interest in them.

I hope I have given enough illustrations to show how vast[1] and uncultivated this field of true swadeshi is. It is capable of limitless expansion and of producing, without any capital outlay, new wealth in the country and providing honourable employment to those who are today starving for want of it.

Harijan, 14-9-1934

[1] The source has “best”.

513. WHY NOT 'HARIJAN' ?

TO

THE EDITOR, "HARIJAN"

SIR,

I was rather pained to find that the keen intellect of Mr. Mahadev Desai missed the real point involved in the representation made by "some friends who met Gandhiji claiming to be representatives of the Harijans or rather 'Depressed Classes' as they preferred to call them" (See *Harijan* of August 10, '34, p. 206, col. 2).[1] The "bad odour" attaching to the term 'Depressed Classes' is a surety of its ultimate extinction and complete disappearance along with the development of consciousness amongst these classes leading to the unification and consequent solidification of the general Hindu community at large, which, we all know, is the aim of Gnadhiji in his great and unique endeavour. But the sweetness of the term "Harijan" is likely to perpetuate the gulf between them and the *savarna* Hindus, which is surely not desired by Gandhiji. This point should have been noticed by Mr. Mahadev Desai, whose use of the adjective 'curious' appears to be remarkable and at the same time regrettable, coming as it does from one of the closest associates of Gandhiji.

I myself feel interested in the matter as one belonging to this great class, but feel indifferent to the appellation that others may choose to give, excepting, of course, the result it is likely to have on the future positon of the great community in the large Hindu fold.

Will you kindly show this to Mr. Mahadev Desai?

I am, etc.,

H. K. MULLICK

Mahadev Desai has passed the foregoing to me. I know Sjt. Mullick, as I had the pleasure of meeting him in Calcutta during the recent visit. I can share his nervousness and his preference for an odious appellation so long as the stigma of untouchability persists. But I invite Sjt. Mullick to enter into the feeling of reformers who have no untouchability in them and who, therefore, have a horror of using an odious name for those whom they love and are eager to serve to the best of their ability. Add to this the fact that tens of thousands of untouchables do not like the words *achhut, asprishya* and the like and that they do like the word 'Harijan'. The aim of us all is the

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with Represent

same—total extinction of untouchability. When that happy day arrives, either the word 'Harijan' will disappear or we shall all be proud to be called Harijans—devotees of God—deserving to be so described, having been free of the virus of high and low.

Harijan, 14-9-1934

514. NOT ARGUMENT, BUT EXPERIENCE

For me non-violence, like Truth, is my eternal creed for every activity. That I often fail to act up to it in many activities in my dealings with the sub-human family proves my weakness; it cannot and does not affect the truth of the creed or my faith in it. I am but a weak aspirant ever failing, ever trying. My failures make me more vigilant than before and intensify my faith. I can see with the eye of faith that the observance of the twin doctrine of Truth and Non-violence has possibilities of which we have but a very inadequate conception. If these two should pervade the whole of our being, how much more in the purely religious war against untouchability? I, therefore, gladly share with Harijan workers the following extracts from an intimate letter received from an American friend who discloses the working of his mind and declares his faith in non-violence achieved, though, perhaps, not yet fully, after laborious search:

You may have gathered from my last conversation with you that I was turning from my faith in the principle of non-violence. I had been troubled by doubts concerning this principle, and that was why I wanted so much to talk with you. I think that was very foolish of me, for, it should be evident that great moral and spiritual truths can never have their validity established through arguments. They have to be tested in the fire of experience, which I have not done in my own life to any large extent. I am persuaded that it would require a much stricter discipline than I have yet known for me to prove by my own experience that non-violence is eternally true.

But I am able to accept it as one of the great fundamentals of my faith by my observation of the fruits it has produced in the lives of others. To associate intimately with such men as Rajendrababu is a privilege for which one may thank God. I have seen that he and several others whom I might mention, who have accepted the principle of non-violence in their own lives, have been able to purify themselves from all the greed, the lust, the self-seeking, the hatred, the fear which obsesses so many who have caught a vision of a glorious future but are obstructed by these

enemies within the gates from fighting successfully with the enemy without. It is not what non-violence has done to those who oppose you that is to me significant, but what it has done for you and that very small minority who have in their hearts become non-violent. Sicne I believe this is a moral universe, it must follow, as night follows day, that such development of character can never arise out of experiments with falsehood, and, by the same token, I believe that Jesus is right, at least in the long run, when he says that "they who take the sword will perish by the sword".

. . .[1] I am certain that the only virtue which you need to exercise for the ultimate success of your struggle is that of patience.

. . . [2] So far as your own leadership in India is concerned, you did not develop your qualities of leadership in a day, nor were you born with tehse qualities. I consider that you are the product of a long discipline of supreme loyalty to truth as you saw it and that you have arrived at your present position through a long and arduous experience. While Europeans may be untrained in the exercise of non-violence, I do not think human nature is essentially different in Europe from that of India, and the only way they can learn non-violence is through practice. There are bound to be many failures, many heart-breaks, many defeats, as has been true and is still true in your case. But If it is truth, it can never be forsaken.

Harijan, 14-9-1934

515. ALMOST LIKE HARIJANS

An Andhra graduate who has married a *devadasi* writes:

I wanted to write to you long ago. But I was awfully shy. Thank God ! I am at last confiding my burden to you.

I come from the *devadasi* community. My life was socially a torture. Gandhiji, do you think there is any other profession worse than that of the dancing girls in the universe? Is it not a blot on India that prostitution should personify in a community?

Andhradesa, I think, is the heart of this evil. Hindu society here engages dancing girls—especially during marriages and festivals of the deity—to sing obscene songs accompanied by obscene gestures before the pious deity and sets a bad example before the newly-wed couple.

The misery of a whole community consigned to a life of prostitution is great. Young men here are trying their best to root out this evil. But they badly need help and guidance. Won't you kindly take up this matter as equally

[1] Omissions as in the source
[2] *ibid*

important and emergent as the Harijan movement? Please have this affair always in a corner of your heart and give it publicity. You have not only the Congress, but the whole public opinion at your back. What the Brothels Bill and the I.P.C. could not do I am confident that a word from your mouth would do.

I am legally and religiously married to a girl of my own community and I am a father of two daughters. My wife is as pious in my eyes as any other Hindu wife. Still society looks down upon us. The sins of our ancestors and wreaking vengeance on us. The stigma of prostitution is attached to us, though both of us are free from the vice.

Harijans and *devadasis* are the only two communities which are almost in the same degree of depravity. Of course, they will have to help themselves to moral elevation. Still a teacher like you would educate them and the society more quickly than they can do it for themselves. These are two sister movements. Please don't forget the sister community in you enthusiasm for the Harijans.

I wish I had the ability he ascribes to me. I am painfully conscious of my limitations. The correspondent is perhaps unaware that, when I was editing *Young India,* I used constantly to refer to the *devadasi* institution and prostitution in general.[1] But my effort did not root out the evil. It would only bring relief in individual cases. If I now refer to the question in the pages of *Harijan*, it is not because I have any hope of faring better than I did during the *Young India* days. I shall be pleased if this fresh effort brings relief in individual cases.

The correspondent is quite right in likening *devadasis* to Harijans. Nevertheless, he will recognize the difference there is between the two. But it is waste of time to measure the degree of difference in wretchedness. Like untouchability, this institution for the perpetuation of vice must go, if Hinduism is to be purified. Those who are engaged in the noble task of ridding society of the evil will have to work in a systematic manner and not become dispirited if they do not find their effort crowned with success at once. Let them concentrate on the evil immediately surrounding them. There are two ways of working at the problem. These should be work amongst those who employ *devadasis* for their base end and the *devadasi* community itself. If the latter will refuse to serve society's vice, the system ends at

[1]*Vide* "Our Fallen Sisters" "Our Unfortunate Sisters", 16-4-1925 and "The Devadasi"

once. But the process is not quite so simple. Hunger knows no sin. Even like Drona and Bhishma, *devadasis* point to their bellies in justification of sin. Habit has dulled their sense of sin regarding their calling. Therefore, they have to be found an innocent source of livelihood in the place of prostitution. Then, there is work in the society. Festival and marriage parties in which *devadasis* are employed have to be sought out and those in charge reasoned with. Reformers may not dictate reform to society. They will have to appeal to its reason and heart. In a way, all reform is a kind of education, just as essential as the education which is commonly known as such. Hence it is a science by itself and yields results only when systematically pursued.

The correspondent who has dared to marry a *devadasi* deserves to be congratulated. He should be satisfied with the approbation of his own conscience and live down the prejudice against him and his wife.

Harijan, 14-9-1934

516. CABLE TO MIRABEHN

September 14, 1934

MIRABEHN
CARE KALOPH[1]
LONDON

IF KAMLANI WILL, BRING HIM WITH YOU. STAY IF POSSIBLE TILL ANDREWS'S ARRIVAL OCTOBER TWENTIETH. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6298. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9764

[1] Anagram for Henry Polak

517. LETTER TO B. C. ROY

WARDHA,
September 14, 1934

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

Here is a telegram from Assam. You will do the needful.

Do not be alarmed at the reported reopening of negotiations with Malaviyaji. At the instance of Pt. Nekiram I wrote to him that if he felt dissatisfied, I was prepared to go through his list myself to examine the chances of success for his candidates. Maulana was anxious I should make the position clear.

When is Satcowri Babu[1] giving over charge of books, etc., to Satis Babu?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: B. C. Roy Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

518. LETTER TO AMULYADHAN ROY[2]

WARDHA,
September 14, 1934

. . . letter of 3rd instant. So far as the Congress Parliamentary Board is concerned you will test its sincerity in the . . . if you insist upon the Depressed Classes candidate . . . selected by the Congress Parliamentary Board will be doing you . . . by selecting Depressed Classes candidates. As you know there is a life-and-death struggle between the Congress and the Government. It is the duty of the Congress at the present juncture to keep Depressed Classes outside the fray which they cannot be, if they are invited to become full-fledged Congressmen determined to carry out the national programme as it may be determined from time to time. The best policy for the Congress, therefore, is to keep Depressed Classes out of the political arena. The Congress can prove its sincerity in a much more tangible form by serving Depressed Classes in many other ways.

[1] Satcowripati Rai, Secretary, Bengal Provincial Board, Harijan Sevak Sangh
[2] Dots in the letter indicate that the source is damaged.

The Pact naturally comes into play when an agreed constitution is set in motion or when a constitution including the Pact is imposed upon a helpless nation.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI AMULYADHAN ROY

CALCUTTA

From a copy: B. C. Roy Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

519. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 14, 1934

. . .[1]

Is that all right?

But I hope to obtain part of this amount from Dhulia. If I succeed, we shall credit it to the Cow-protection Society, but it seems right to me that the Society should meet Parnerkar's requirements. Let me know whether you agree with this view.

I am writing to Sheth Mathuradas.

Read my letter to Lilavati and pass it on to her. I have already made my suggestion regarding Chimanlal. I still adhere to it.

Ramdas had an attack of malaria in Sabarmati. He is better now.

I understood from Kanu's last letter that he was perfectly happy there. If he wishes to come here, send him over as soon as you get this letter. What will he get from me, though? His study will be neglected. There will be nothing but hard work for him here. There is so much work that nobody gets any free time. If he can look upon work itself as study and be content, he may certainly come. Even if he merely wants to have some experience and see for himself how things are, I will not mind. Bal got tired; Kanti was wise and on his own did not come and Prithuraj is getting ready to leave. From all these instances I have come to the conclusion that only a few persons, who have had sufficient education to satisfy their ambition, can stay with me for any length of time. I would be happy if it is different with Kanu. I see my own imperfection in the fact that young people soon get tired of living with me and leave. But I don't know exactly the reason why they do so.

[1] In the source, the first ten lines or so of this letter have faded out, having been written in green ink.

Many many blessings to you on the occasion of yur birthday. Sardar also sends his. He is sitting beside me.

. . .[1] has been found to be a worthless man. He is given to lust. He even tells lies. Much, therefore, of what I credited him with was nothing but show.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8414. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

520. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

September 14, 1934

CHI. JAMNA,

I got your letter. Equanimity of mind cannot be learnt from anybody. One can cultivate it by constantly keeping it before one's mind when acting. Rather than overstrain yourself, you should spend some money in engaging a servant whom you can treat as a member of the family. You ought not to put any burden on Devbhabhi. I see some discontent regarding Santok. You should tell her about it and then suffer it. This, too, you can do by engaging a servant. It is part of the teaching of the *Gita* that one should endure what is inescapable.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

521. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

September 14, 1934

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

I have your telegram. Prabhavati is going but not happily. She has decided that she will cheer you up and come away again soon. When your first telegram came I told her that she should go at once. But she did not agree and wrote to you. She waited a long time for your answer, but there was no answer to the very last moment. Then when your telegram to me arrived, I decided that it was my duty to persuade Prabha to go.

Prabha's difficulty is that she made a promise to Mirabehn that

[1] The name has been omitted.

she would do the work that Mirabehn did till the latter returned. Later Ba also went away after extracting another promise from Prabha—for she knew about your telegram. Prabha told Ba that she could go and promised her that she would not leave till Ba returned. Still, since the work consisted of serving me I told Prabha not to worry about me but go. She is a little troubled as she goes.

Another thing is that you have both decided that Prabha should serve in the Kanya Ashram for five years. She should not get out of this. It is as well that she has not yet taken up this work. But how can she give it up?

However, concerning all these matters I am neutral. I have no right to come between you two. I only regret that the education that Prabha has got from me does not have your entire approval. But that education cannot go waste. What she has assimilated is now part of her. You can now strike at her heart as many blows as you like. I have told Prabha not to pay any heed to my advice but to do as her heart and her reasoning dictate.

I have your sweet and pure-hearted letter. Since I was hoping that you would be coming here I did not answer it. I am conscious of the regard and esteem in which you hold me. We shall talk when we meet.

My commitment for paying you stands. I have made an arrangement about it with Ghanshyamdasji too. It was you who had raised the question of moral dilemma. It is you who must take a decision. We shall do as you say.

I hope you are in good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Jayaprakash Narayan Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

522. LETTER TO ATMARAM

September 14, 1934

BHAI ATMARAM,

This is my reply to your letter. The deeper I go into the matter the more clearly I see Balvantrai's sincerity. Your suspecting your own friend doesn't seem proper. If you still harbour suspicion, you may certainly see Bhai Balvantrai. I will not write to him any more and give him pain. I have seen that you are by nature inclined to suspicion and exaggeration.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

523. LETTER TO . . .[1]

September 14, 1934

CHI. . . .,

I have your letter. You must not give way to despair. You must resolve to exercise self-control till a suitable partner is found. You must not fail.

. . .

CALCUTTA

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] The addressee's name has been omitted.

524. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

September 15, 1934

BHAISHRI MAVALANKAR,

I have your letter.

There is no connection between the Vidyapith library and Kaka's idea of leaving Gujarat. If the original Trustees had no right to hand over the library, its gift would remain illegal even if made at a meeting attended by all. If you think that the Trustees had a right to make the gift, I believe Sardar wishes to take no action regarding Kaka's other error. Being one of the Trustees, he only wants to know what his duty is. I don't think anything can be said about that. But personally I wouldn't blame Kaka for this ignorance of law if it is such.

The serious error committed by Kaka, may be unintentionally, was that, though he had not secured the consent of the Trustees, he allowed a sentence implying that it had been secured to stand in the letter[1] to the Collector. Kaka decided to atone for this carelessness by resigning from all the trusts. Sardar has had nothing to do with this.

However, Kaka's resignation only solved the moral problem and has no connection whatever with the question of whether or not he should remain in Gujarat. He has been waiting for a long time to run away from Gujarat. We need not go into the reasons for that. But the final decision whether he should leave or not rests with me. Sardar will have had no part in it. I will not let Kaka run away. He will leave only if I feel helpless. You and other co-workers, however, should have no worry or fear.

You should merely give your professional opinion as a lawyer as to the legal loophole.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 1239; also S.N. 22855

[1] This was drafted by Gandhiji; *vide* "More Donations",. *Vide* also "Speech at Leaders Conference, Poona-II", 14-7-1933 and "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", 3-8-1933

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

RESOLUTION ON WHITE PAPER AND COMMUNAL AWARD[1]

The following is the authorized report of the Working Committee resolution on the policy of Congress regarding the White Paper proposals and the Communal Award:

The Congress Parliamentary Board having asked the Working Committee to enunciate the Congress policy on the White Paper proposals and the Communal Award, the Working Committee declares the Congress policy on these matters as follows:

The White Paper in no way expresses the will of the people of India, has been more or less condemned by almost all the Indian political parties, and falls far short of the Congress goal, if it does not retard the progress towards it. The only satisfactory alternative to the White Paper is a constitution drawn up by a Constituent Assembly, elected on the basis of adult suffrage or as near it as possible, with the power, if necessary, to the important minorities to have their representatives elected exclusively by the electors belonging to such minorities.

The White Paper lapsing, the Communal Award must lapse automatically. Among other things it will be the duty of the Constituent Assembly to determine the method of representation of important minorities and make provisions for otherwise safeguarding their interests.

Since, however, the different communities in the country are sharply divided on the question of the Communal Award, it is necessary to define the Congress attitude on it. The Congress claims to represent equally all the communities composing the Indian Nation and, therefore, in view of division of opinion it can neither accept nor reject the Communal Award as long as the division of opinion lasts. At the same time it is necessary to redeclare the policy of the Congress on the Communal question.

No solution that is not purely national can be propounded by the Congress. But the Congress is pledged to accept any solution falling short of the national, which is agreed to by all the parties concerned, and, conversely to reject and solution which is not agreed to by any of the said parties.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Meeting of Congress Parliamentary Board, Bombay", 16-6-1934, "Manifesto of Congress Parlimentary Board", 29-7-1934 and "Letter to N. C. Kalkar", 17-8-1934

Judged by the national standard the Communal Award is wholly unsatisfactory besides being open to serious objection on other grounds.

It is, however, obvious that the only way to prevent untoward consequences of the Communal Award is to explore the ways and means of arriving at an agreed solution and not by any appeal on this essentially domestic question to the British Government or any other outside authority.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18–6–1934

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM N. C. KELKAR[1]

"KESARI" OFFICE, POONA 2,
June 22, 1934

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

The people in the Indian States desire to ascertain your individual opinion on certain matters affecting themselves, so that we may move the Congress to consider, in the light of your opinion, the desirability of defining its policy on certain questiions more precisely than at present and modifying it somewhat on certain others.

The first question that we would bring to your notice in this connection is the necessity of the Congress taking up for solution problems pertaining to the States. The Congress has now given up its traditional policy of "keeping itself unspotted" from the States. It recruits members in the States and brings them under the control of its district and provincial committees. The accession of strength that it has thus received from the States is by no means negligible; nor are these members sleeping partners in the Congress activities, although these activities concern mostly British India alone. On the other hand, even in such movements as civil disobedience, they have proved good comrades-in-arms and have cheerfully borne their share of the burden, realizing that British India and Indian India are essentially one and indivisible and that the concerns of one are necessarily the concerns of the other also.

We think that time has now arrived for the Congress to respond to this spirit of good comradeship exhibited by the States' people by putting all its weight and prestige behind their efforts at self-emancipation. At the Madras (1927) and Calcutta (1928) sessions the Congress no doubt pleaded for the establishment of democratic swaraj in the Indian States and extended its sympathy to the inhabitants thereof. The Calcutta resolution is well worth quoting here is exteno.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to N. C. Kelkar", 2-7-1934

The Congress urges no the ruling Princes of the Indian States to introduce responsible government based on representative institutions in the States, and to issue immediately proclamations or enact laws guaranteeing elementary and fundamental rights of citizenship, such as rights of association, free speech, free Press and security of person and property.

This Congress further assures the people of the Indian states of its sympathy with and support in their legitimate and peaceful struggle for the attainment of full responsible government in the States.

We make no doubt that a similar resolution will be reiterated at the sessions that will be held hereafter. But may we not hope that the Congreesmen in British Indian will lend active help to the people in the Indian States in achieving political freedom even as the Congressmen in Indian India gave a measure of help to British Indians in their attempts to realize their destiny? Of the two, British Indians are much the more advanced, but in fact help has flown far more from the States' people to British Indians than from British Indians to the States' people. Do you not think it desirable to advise British Indians, in the name of the Congress to support actively, even by undergoing suffering if necessary, all legitimate movements for the establishment of popular government in the Indian States under the aegis of their rulers? Such comradeship shown on both sides, it appears to us, will cement the two Indians far more firmly than any formal federation can.

Another question, of even greater urgency, on which the Congress must determine its policy is its attitude towards those parts of the White Paper scheme which relate to the Indian States. The authorities of the Congress have declared the scheme to be unacceptable because it does not satisfy the aspirations of the Indian people. May we say that the provisions concerning the States are far from acceptable to the States' people and may we hope that the actual acceptance or otherwise of these provisions will be made to depend upon their wishes? The future constitution of India which, according to the Congress intentions, is to take the place of the White Paper constitution, will be based upon the principle of self-determination given effect to by a Constituent Assembly. Is it implied that the federal scheme that will be evolved by this Assembly will be the result of an agreement between the people in British India on the one hand and those in the Indian States on the other?

While on this subject it would be well to refer to the apprehensions that have arisen in the mind of the Indian States' people by some passages in your speeches at the Round Table Conference. You pleaded earnestly in this Conference with the rulers of the Indian States for allowing the States representatives in the Federal Legislature to be chosen by election and for allowing the fundamental rights of the States' people to be written into the federal constitution and placed under the protection of the Federal Court. But your pledings on this occasion have given rise

to an impression that if the Princes did not agree, as they did not and they do not agree, you would accept a constitution in which provisions of the kind that you suggested did not find a place. If this impression is well-founded, we cannot help saying, and saying it straightout, that you have done a grave wrong to the States' people. If you think that nomination by the Princes, for instance, must be acquiesced in, if necessary, in the existing circumstances, we will only beg you to refer the matter to the States' people themselves in order to ascertain what their wishes are in this respect. The right of self-determination of the Indian States' people is no less sacred than that of British Indians.

But it has been explained to us that in expressing your views in favour of the election of the States' representativs and the protection of the fundamental rights of the States' people in the way you did, you wished it to be understood by the rulers of the States that if they did not agree to do what you urged upon them, you would not admit them into the federation. You meant these to be essential conditions of federation, but you did not express yourself in this categorical manner only because, at the time you spoke, federation was still shrouded in uncertainty. If this be your meaning, we would entreat you to make it clear beyond the possibility of doubt, for we know that the rulers of the States are putting a ditterent interpretation upon what you said. They are representing that you are ready to put up with nomination by the Princes, for instance, for an indefinite length of time. It is necessary that your meaning should be made plain, for the Swarajist Conference at Ranchi made it known that their party (which is now only a wing of the Congress) would follow the lines of your speeches in framing the future constitution. Since, in the final determination of the Congress policy on these points your personal views plays such a decisive part, we are anxious to know whether election of the States' people and Declaration of Rights in their interest are, in your opinion, merely desirable features of a federation or essential conditions thereof. There are various other matters connected with the federal constitution which require careful consideration on the part of the Congress, but we do not wish to trouble you with them at the present moment. We would only beg you to give us an unequivocal statement of your views on the point raised in this letter.

Yours sincerely,

(SD.) N. C. KELKAR AND OTHERS

The Hindu, 10–7–1934

APPENDIX III

RESOLUTION ON SWADESHI[1]

Doubts having arisen on the Congress policy in regard to swadeshi, it has become necessary to reaffirm the Congress position on it in unequivocal terms.

Notwithstanding what was done during the civil resistance struggle, no competition is permissible on Congress platform and in Congress exhibitions between mill-made cloth and hand-spun and hand-woven khadi. Congressmen are expected to use and encourage the use of only hand-spun and hand-woven khadi, to the exclusion of any other cloth.

In regard to articles other than cloth, the Working Committee adopts the following formula for the guidance of all Congress organizations:

The Working Committee is of opinion that the activities of Congress organizations relating to swadeshi shall be restricted to useful articles manufactured in India through cottage and other small industries which are in need of popular education for their support, and which will accept the guidance of the Congress organizations in regulating prices and in the matter of the wages and welfare of labour under their control.

This formula must not be interpreted to mean any modification of the unbroken policy of the Congress to promote the swadeshi spirit in the country and to encourage the personal use of only swadeshi articles. The formula is a recognition of the fact that the large and organized industries which can or do command State aid are in no need of the services of Congress organizations or any Congress effort in their behalf.

The History of the Indian National Congress, Vol. I, pp. 576–7

APPENDIX IV

RESOLUTION ON DISCIPLINE[2]

All Congressmen, whether they believe in the Congress programme and policies or not, are expected, and office-bearers and members of the Executive are in honour bound, to carry them out, and that office-bearers and members of the Executive who carry on propaganda or act against the Congress programme and policies are, in accordance with the rules made by the A.I.C.C. dated May 24, 1929, under Article of the Constitution, clearly guilty of breach of discipline and liable to disciplinary action.

The History of the Indian National Congress, Vol. I, pp. 577

[1] *Vide* "Interview to the Press", 3-8-1934 and "Swadeshi", 6-8-1934

[2] *Vide* "Interview to the Press"

APPENDIX V

LETTER FROM JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

ANAND BHAWAN, ALLAHABAD,
August 13, 1934

MY DEAR BAPU,

After just six months of absolute seclusion and little exercise I have felt rather lost in the anxiety, excitement and activity of the past 27 hours. I feel very tired. I am writing this letter to you at midnight. All day there have been crowds of people coming. If I have the chance I shall write to you again, but I doubt if I shall be able to do so for some months. I am, therefore, going to indicate to you briefly how I have reacted to the various major Congress decisions of the last five months or so. My sources of information have naturally been strictly limited but I think that they were sufficient to enable me to form a fairly correct idea of the general trend of events.

When I heard that you had called off the C. D. movement I felt unhappy. Only the brief announcement reached me at first. Much later I read your statement and this gave me one of the biggest shocks I have ever had. I was prepared to reconcile myself to the withdrawal of C.D. But the reasons you gave for doing so and the suggestions you made for future work astounded me. I had a sudden and intense feeling, that something broke inside me, a bond that I had valued very greatly had snapped. I felt terribly lonely in this wide world. I have always felt a little lonely almost from childhood up. But a few bonds strengthened me, a few strong supports held me up. That loneliness never went, but it was lessened. But now I felt absolutely alone, left high and dry on a desert island.

Human beings have an enormous capacity for adapting themselves and so I too adapted myself to some extent to the new conditions. The keenness of my feelings on the subject, which amounted almost to physical pain, passed off; the edge was dulled. But shock after shcok, a succession of events sharpened that edge to a fine point, and allowed my mind or feelings no peace or rest. Again I felt that sensation of spiritual isolation, of being a perfect stranger out of harmony, not only with the crowds that passed me, but also with those whom I had valued as dear and close comrades. My stay in prison this time became a greater ordeal for my nerves than any previous visit had been. I almost wished that all newspapers might be kept away from me so that I might be spared these repeated shocks.

Physically I kept fairly well. I always do in prison. My body has served me

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 17-8-1934 and"Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 19-8-1934.

well and can stand a great deal of ill-treatment and strain. And being vain enough to imagine that perhaps I might yet do some effective work in this land to which fate had tied me, I looked after it well.

But I wondered often enough if I was not a square peg in a round hole, or a bubble of conceit thrown about hither and thither on an ocean which spurned me. But vanity and conceit triumphed and the intellectual apparatus that functions within me refused to admit defeat. If the ideals that had spurred me to action and had kept me buoyed up through stormy weather were right—and the conviction of their rightness ever grew within me—they were bound to triumph though my generation might not live to witness that triumph.

But what had happened to those ideals during these long and weary months of this year when I was a silent and distant witness, fretting at my helplessness? Setbacks and temporary defeats are common enough in all great struggles. They grieve but one recovers soon enough. One recovers soon if the light of those ideals is not allowed to grow dim and the anchor of principles holds fast. But what I saw was not setback and defeat but that spiritual defeat which is the most terrible of all. Do not imagine that I am referring to the council-entry question. I do not attach vital importance to it. Under certain circumstances I can even imagine entering a legislature myself. But whether I function inside or outside the legislature I function as a revolutionary, meaning thereby a person working for the fundamental and revolutionary changes, political and social, for I am convinced that no other changes can bring peace or satisfaction to India and the world.

So I thought. Not so evidently the leaders who were functioning outside. They began to talk the language of an age gone by before the heady wine of N. C. O. and C. D. had fired our heads. Sometimes they used the same words and phrases but they were dead words without life or real meaning. The leading figures of the Congress suddenly became those people who had obstructed us, held us back, kept aloof from the struggle and even co-operated with the opposite party in the time of our direct need. They became the high priests in our temple of freedom and many a brave soldier who had shouldered the burden in the heat and dust of the fray was not even allowed inside the temple precincts. He had many like him had become untouchables and unapproachables. And if he ventured to raise his voice and criticize the new high priests, he was shouted down and tol that he was a traitor to the cause because he spoilt the harmony of the sacred precincts.

And so the flag of Indian freedom was entrusted with all pomp and circumstance to those who had actually hauled it down at the height of our national struggle at the bidding of the enemy; to those who had proclaimed from the house-tops that they had given up politics—for politics were unsafe then—but who emerged with a jump to the front ranks when politics became safe.

And what of the ideals they set forth before them, speaking as they did on behalf of the Congress and the nation ? A pitiful hotch-potch, avoiding real issues, toning down, as far as they dared, even the political objective of the Congress, expressing a tender solicitude for every vested interest, bowing down to many a declared enemy of freedom, but showing great truculence and courage in facing the advanced and fighting elements in the Congress ranks. Is not the Congress being rapidly reduced to a magnified edition of that shameful spectacle, the Calcutta Corporation during the last few years ? Might not the dominant part of the Bengal Congress be called today ''the society for the advancement of Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sirkar'', a gentleman who rejoiced to entertain Government officials, Home Members and the like, when most of us were in prison and C. D. was supposed to be flourishing ? And the other part probably a similar society for a similar laudable object ? But the fault does not lie with Bengal alone. Almost everywhere there is a similar outlook. The Congress from top to bottom is a caucus and opportunism triumphs.

The Working Committee is not directly responsible for this state of affairs. But none the less the Working Committee must shoulder the responsibility. It is the leaders and their policy that shape the activities of the followers. It is neither fair nor just to throw blame on the followers. Every language has some saying about the workman blaming his tools. The committee had deliberately encouraged vagueness in the definition of our ideals and objectives and this is bound to lead not only to confusion but to demoralization during periods of reaction, and to the emergence of the demagogue and the reactionary.

I am referring especially to the political objectives which are the special province of the Congress. I feel that the time is overdue for the Congress to think clearly on social and economic issues but I recognize that education on these issues takes time and the Congress as a whole may not be able to go as far at present as I would like it to. But it appears that whether the Working Committee knows anything about the subject or not it is perfectly willing to denounce and to excommunicate people who happen to have made a special study of the subject and hold certain views. No attempt is made to understand those views, which, it is notorious, are held by a very large number of the ablest and most self-sacrificing people in the world. Those views may be right or wrong but they deserve at least some understanding before the Working Committee sets out to denounce them. It is hardly becoming for a reasoned argument to be answered by sentimental appeals or by the cheap remark that the condition in India are different and the economic laws that apply elsewhere do not function here. The resolution of the Working Committee on the subject showed such an astounding ignorance of the elements of socialism that it was painful to read it and to realize that it might be read outside India. It seemed that the overmastering desire of the Committee was somehow to assure various vested interests even at the risk of

talking nonsense.

A strange way of dealing with the subject of socialism is to use the word, which has a clearly defined meaning in the English language, in a totally different sense. For individuals to use words in a sense peculiar to themselves is not helpful in the commerce of ideas. A person who declares himself to be an engine-driver and then adds that his engine is of wood and is drawn by bullocks is misusing the word engine-driver.

This letter has become a much longer one than I expected and the night is already far spent. Probably I have written in a confused and scrappy way for my brain is tired. But still it will convey some picture of my mind. The last few months have been very painful ones for me and, I take it, for many others. I have felt sometimes that in the modern world, and perhaps in the ancient world also, it is oft preferred to break some people's hearts rather than touch other's pockets. Pockets are indeed valuable and more cherished than hearts and brains and bodies and human justice and dignity.

There is one other subject I should like to mention. That is the Swaraj Bhawan Trust. I understand that the Working Committee recently considered the question of the unkeep of the Swaraj Bhawan and came to the conclusion that it was not responsible for it. As however it had already made a grant about three years ago and this had not been paid yet, although expenses were incurred on the strength of it, a fresh grant was sanctioned. This will probably be enough for some months. In regard to the future, the Working Committee was evidently anxious not to be saddled with the burden of maintaining the house and grounds. This burden amounts to Rs. 100 a month, which includes taxes, etc. The trustees, I understand, were also a little frightened of the burden and suggested that parts of the house might be let in the ordinary way to raise money for the maintenance. Another suggestion was made that part of the grounds might be sold off for this purpose. I was surprised to learn of these suggestions, as some of them seemed to me to be contrary to the letter of the trust and all of them against its spirit. As an individual trustee I have only one voice in the matter but I should like to say that I have the strongest possible objection to any such misuse of the trust property. The very idea of the wishes of my father being flouted in this way is intolerable to me. The trust represented not only his wishes but also in small way a memorial to him and his wishes and his memory is dearer to me than a hundred rupees a month. I should, therefore, like to assure the Working Committee and the trustees that they need have no anxiety on the score of the money required for maintenance of the property. As soon as the funds, now granted by the Working Committee for some months, are exhausted, I shall make myself personally responsible for the maintenance and no further grant need be made by the Working Committee. I would also beg the trustees to respect my feelings in this matter and not

to break up the property or to hire it for the sake of hiring it out. I shall endeavour to maintain the Swaraj Bhawan property till such time as it is put to some worthy use.

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Perhaps some part of this letter might pain you. But you would not have me hide my heart from you.

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I received your short note in Alipore Jail and I sent an answer. But the Superintendent suppressed that answer.

A Bunch of Old Letters, pp. 112-7.

God Good

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Yours affectionately,

JAWAHAR

[PS.]

I received your short note in Alipore Jail and I sent an answer. But the Superintendent suppressed that answer.

A Bunch of Old Letters, pp. 112-7.

1. LETTER TO DUNICHAND

WARDHA,

September 16, 1934

DEAR LALA DUNICHAND,

You have come to the wrong man. Do you know that I rarely attend the meetings of the Parliamentary Board[1]? In Their selection of individual candidates I have absolutely no part. I have been involved in solving the problem of Malaviyaji's party.[2] You have rightly written exhaustively to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. Let him consider the question. This matter of selection is absolutely beyond me.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

LALA DUNICHAND, B.A.
KRIPA NIVAS
AMBALA CITY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

2. LETTER TO SHANTA PATEL

September 16, 1934

CHI. SHANTA[3],

I am returning your letter with this. I can't understand why you want it back. I have explained all my reasons to Maganbhai. I will not, therefore, spend time in repeating them here. You will get my blessings. Isn't that enough?[4] Have you informed

[1] The Parliamentary Board was formed in May 1934, with Dr. M. A. Ansari as President "to run and control" elections to the Legislative Assembly.

[2] Madan Mohan Malaviya and M. S. Aney had formed a separate party to carry on agitation against the Communal Award.

[3] Daughter of Shankarbhai Patel

[4] The addressee had asked for permission to marry a boy of her own Choice not belonging to her caste.

Lakshmidasbhai? What are you studying at present? I hope you know that Ba is there just now, and also that Ramdas is ill.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. SHANTABEHN SHANKARBHAI PATEL
JAMES VILLA
ELLIS BRIDGE
AHMEDABAD[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4071. Also C.W. 22. Courtesy: Shanta Patel

3. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

[*September 16, 1934*][2]

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter. The Kaka affair has become a painful one. But you should laugh away the thing. It will all subside by and by. I think there is no malice behind the outcry. I am trying to calm it and hope to succeed. There is nothing but simple misunderstanding behind the whole affair. I will not let Kaka go in this manner. I have sent you a copy of the letter[3] I have written to Mavalankar.

Kaka has been laid up with fever from the very next day after he arrived here. The temperature has not come down even once. It was above 100° this morning. It rises to 102°. There are no other symptoms, except cold and a little cough. There is some fear that it may be typhoid. Write a brief note to him.

Jones[4] is better but not quite well. Write a few lines to him also. Dr. Khan Saheb[5] examines him.

Both the brothers went to Akola yesterday. They were dragged to Khamgaon from there. They were to return today, but now they will return tomorrow.

[1] The address is supplied from the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary.

[2] From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary

[3] *Vide* "Letter to G.V.Malvalankar", 15-9-1934.

[4] Stanley Jones, an American missionary

[5] Elder brother of Abdul Ghaffar Khan

I am sending a letter from Lala Sham Lal for you to read. It seems there has been some haste in regard to Dunichand.[1] There was another wire from him.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
89 WARDEN ROAD
BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 132

4. LETTER TO K.

September 16, 1934

CHI. K.[2],

. . . 's[3] is a pathetic tale. . . .[4] has badly deceived us. . . . was simply enticed. Of course, she too was at fault. Ultimately, we may say . . . fled from here. He did not even see me before leaving; he had told many lies too. Even in Sabarmati he had been given to self-indulgence. The whole affair is deplorable. . . . seems to be a simple innocent girl like any other Malabar girl. It seems somewhat risky to keep her here. Anyway her husband must be informed, but I do not wish to take any step without consulting you. You may come over here if that is necessary. There is no cause for panic. . . . is well looked after. I meet her now almost daily. Her letter is enclosed.

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dunichand", 16-9-1934.
[2] The name has been omitted.
[3] *ibid.*
[4] *ibid.*

5. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHAGANJ,
September 17, 1934

The rumour that I had contemplated severing all physical connection with the Congress was true. However, for considerations urged by many friends who had come to Wardha during the meetings of the Working Committee and the Parliamentary Board last week, I agreed with them that it might be safer for me to leave the Congress, if at all, after the forthcoming session. There was an intermediate course suggested by Pandit Govind Vallabh Pant and Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai of remaining in the Congress without participating in the active administration of the organization but both Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad strongly disapproved of that course. Sardar Vallabhbhai had agreed with me that the time had arrived for me to retire from the Congress but many others would not endorse that view.

After due consideration of all the pros and cons 1 have adopted the safe and prudent course of postponing the final step, at least till after the meeting of the Congress session in October.

one tempting idea behind the insistence on postponement was that it would enable me to test the accuracy of my impression that a very large body of Congress intelligentsia were tired of my method and views, and the programme based upon them, that I was a hindrance rather than a help to the natural growth of the Congress, that instead of remaining the most democratic and representative institution in the country, the Congress had degenerated into an organization dominated by my one personality and that in it there was no free play of reason.

If I am to test the truth or otherwise of my impression, naturally I must put before the public the reason on which my impression was based and my own proposals based thereon. Congressmen might vote on them and thus clearly register their opinion. I must try to do this as briefly as I can.

It has appeared to me that there is a growing and vital difference of outlook between many Congressmen and myself.

I seem to be going in a direction just opposite of what many of the most intellectual Congressmen would gladly and enthusiastically

take, if they were not hampered by their unexampled loyalty to me. No leader can expect greater loyalty and devotion than I have received from intellectually-minded Congressmen even when they have protested and signified their disapproval of the policies It have laid before the Congress. For me any more to draw upon this loyalty and devotion is to put undue strain upon them.

Their loyalty cannot blind my eyes to what appears to me to be fundamental differences between the Congress intelligentsia and me.

Let me state them. I put the spinning-wheel and khadi in the forefront. Hand-spinning by the Congress intelligentsia has all but disappeared. The general body of them have no faith in it and yet if I could carry their reason with me, I would substitute the four-anna franchise by personal daily hand-spinning. The khadi clause of the Congress constitution has been almost a dead letter from the beginning and Congressmen have not been wanting who have reminded me that I am responsible for the hypocrisy and evasion about the working of the khadi clause. I ought to have realized that it was not passed out of deep conviction, but largely out of personal loyalty to me. I must own that there is considerable force in the argument.

Nevertheless my conviction is growing that if India is to win complete independence in terms of the toiling millions and through unadulterated non-violence, the spinning-wheel and khadi have to be as natural to the educated few as to the partially unemployed and semi-starved millions, who, for not using their hands for the purpose for which nature has endowed man with them, have become almost like beasts of burden. The spinning-wheel is thus an emblem of human dignity and equality in the truest sense of the term. It is the handmaid of agriculture. It is the nation's second lung. We are perishing because we are using only one lung. Yet only a few Congressmen have a living faith in the Indiawide potency of the wheel.

The removal of the khadi clause in the constitution would mean a removal of the living link between the Congress and the millions whom it has from its inception sought to represent and yet if it remains it has to be rightly enforced; but it cannot be, if a substantial majority of Congressmen have no living faith in it.

Take again the Parliamentary Board. Though the author of non-co-operation I am convinced that in the present circumstances of

the country and in the absence of any general scheme of civil resistance, a Parliamentary Party within the Congress is the necessary part of any programme that may be framed by the Congress but there are sharp differences of opinion among us on that point. The force with which I urged-the programme at the A. I. C. C. meeting in Patna,[1] I know, oppressed many of our best colleagues but they hesitated to act according to their own conviction.

Up to a point suppression of one's views in favour of those of another considered superior in wisdom or experience is virtuous and desirable for healthy growth of an organization. It becomes a terrible oppression when one is called upon to repeat the performance from day to day.

Though I have never wished any such untoward result, I cannot conceal from me or the public the tragic fact that such has been my own experience. Many have despaired of resisting me. This is a humiliating revelation to me, a born democrat. I make that claim if a complete identification with the poorest of mankind, an intense longing to live no better than they and a corresponding conscious effort to approach that level to the best of one's ability can entitle one to make it.

I have welcomed the formation of the Socialist Group.[2] Many of them are respected and self-sacrificing co-workers. With all this, I have fundamental differences with them on the programme published in their authorized pamphlets. But I would not by reason of the moral pressure I may be able to exert suppress the spread of ideas propounded in their literature. I may not interfere with the free expression of those ideas however distasteful some of them may be to me.

If they gain ascendancy in the Congress, as they well may, I cannot remain in the Congress. For me to be in active opposition should be unthinkable. Though I have identified myself with many organizations during a long period of public service I have never accepted that position.

Then there is the policy advocated by some in regard to the States which is wholly different from what I have advised. I have given many an anxious hour to the question but I have not been able to alter my view.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting, Patna-II", 19-5-1934.

[2] The Congress Socialist Party was formed at Patna in May 1934.

Even on untouchability my method of approach is perhaps different from that of many if not most Congressmen. For me, it is a deeply religious and moral issue. Many think that it was a profound error for me to have disturbed the course of the civil resistance struggle by taking up the question in the manner and at the time I did. I feel that I would have been untrue to myself, if I had taken any other course. Last of all take non-violence. After 14 years of trial it still remains a policy with the majority of Congressmen whereas it is a fundamental creed with me. That Congressmen do not still regard non-violence as a creed is no fault of theirs. It is undoubtedly my faulty presentation and still more faulty execution that are responsible for this failure. I have no consciousness of faulty presentation or execution. But it is the only possible inference from the fact that it has not yet become an integral part of the lives of Congressmen.

And if there is uncertainty about non-violence there must be still more about civil resistance. In spite of my 27 years of study and practice of the doctrine, I cannot claim to know all about it. The field of research is necessarily limited as occasions for civil resistance in a man's life must not be frequent. It can only come after voluntary obedience to authority, whether of parents, teachers or other elders, religious or secular. There need be no wonder that as the only expert, however imperfect among us, I should have come to the conclusion that it should for some time to come be limited only to me. This was necessary in order to minimize errors and mischief proceeding from them as also to explore its hidden possibilities. But again for no fault of Congressmen it has been increasingly difficult for me to carry the reason of fellow Congressmen with me in all resolutions[1] recently passed on the subject, while they have generously voted for them.

Even the memory of the sense of opposition which they experienced at the time of voting without an intelligent belief in these resolutions oppresses me just as much as they were oppressed. They and I must be free from this oppression if we are all to grow in pursuit of what we believe to be the common goal. Hence it is necessary for all concerned to act freely and boldly according to their convictions.

I have in my Patna statement[2], recommending the suspension of civil resistance, drawn attention to the failure of civil resistance to achieve two obvious results. If we had the full non-violent spirit in us

[1] *Vide* "Resolution on council-entry", 19-5-1934.
[2] *Vide* "Statement to the press", 2-4-1934.

it should have been self-evident and should not have escaped the notice of the Government that their ordinances were certainly not warranted by any of the 'misdeeds' done by or imputed to us. They were undoubtedly intended to break our spirits anyhow, but it would be wrong if we contended that civil resisters were above reproach. If we were non-violent through and through our non-violence would have been self-evident.

Nor were we able to show to the terrorists that we had greater faith in our non-violence than they in their violence. On the contrary many of us made them feel that we had the same spirit of violence in our breasts that they had. Only we did not believe in deeds of violence.

Terrorists rightly argued that if the spirit of violence was common to both, the policy of doing or not doing violence was a matter of opinion. I need not repeat what I have said before that the country has made great strides towards non-violence indeed and that many have exhibited great courage and self-sacrifice. All I want to say is that ours has not been unadulterated non-violence in thought, word and deed.

It is now my paramount duty to devise ways and means of showing demonstrably to the Government and the terrorists the efficacy of non-violence as a means of achieving the right thing including freedom in every sense of the term.

For this experiment, to which my life is dedicated, I need complete detachment and absolute freedom of action. Satyagraha, of which civil resistance is but a part, is to me the universal law of life. 'Satya', in truth, is my God. I can only search Him through non-violence and in no other way and the freedom of my country as of the world is surely included in the search for truth. I cannot suspend this search for anything in this world or another.

I have entered political-life in pursuit of this search and if it cannot carry reason as well as heart of the educated Congressmen when I say that this search necessarily includes complete independence, and many other things which may be part of truth, it is plain I should work single-handed in implicit faith that what I fail to make clear to my countrymen today shall be clear to them some day of itself or, if God wills it, through some apt word He may put in my mouth or some apt work which He may prompt me to do.

In matters of such tremendous importance a mechanical vote or a grudging assent will be wholly inadequate if not injurious to the cause itself.

I have referred to the common goal, but I have begun to doubt if all Congressmen understand the same thing by the expression complete independence. I want for India complete independence in the full English sense of that English expression. For me *poorna* swaraj has an infinitely larger meaning than complete independence, but even *poorna* swaraj is not self-explained. No one word or compound expression will give us a meaning which all can understand. Hence on several occasions I have given several definitions of swaraj. I hold that they are all true, not at all self-contradictory. They are all hopelessly incomplete even when put. together, but I do not wish to labour this point further.

My mention of the difficulty, if not impossibility, of giving a complete definition leads me to another serious point of difference between many Congressmen and myself.

I have always said since 1908 that means and end are convertible terms and that, therefore, where the means are various and even contradictory the end must be different and even contradictory. We have always control over the means, never on the end, but may not bother about its content if we all em-ploy identical means with identical connotation for them. It will be admitted that many Congressmen do not admit this, to me the obvious truth. They believe that end justifies means whatever they may be.

It is the sum total of these differences which has sterilized the existing Congress programme because members who gave their lip-assent to it, without believing in it, have naturally failed to reduce it to practice and yet I have no other programme save the Congress programme now before the country. Untouchability, Hindu-Muslim unity, total prohibition, hand-spinning with khadi and cent per cent swadeshi in the sense of the revival of village industries and general reorganization of seven lakhs of villages ought to give all satisfaction that one's love of one's country may demand.

Personally I would like to bury myself in an Indian village, preferably in a Frontier village. If the Khudai Khidmatgars are truly non-violent they will contribute the largest share to the promotion of non-violent spirit and of Hindu-Muslim unity, for if they are non-violent in thought, word and deed and are lovers of

Hindu-Muslim unity, surely through them we should see the accomplishment of the two things we need most in this land. The Afghan menace which we dread so much should then be. a thing of the past.

I am, therefore, yearning to test the truth for myself of the claim that they have imbibed the spirit of non-violence and are believers in the heart-unity of Hindus, Mussalmans and others. I should like also personally to deliver the message of the spinning-wheel to them. In this and various such other ways I would love to serve the Congress in my own humble manner, whether I am in it or outside.

I have reserved to the last any reference to the growing corruption in our ranks. I have already said enough about it in public. In spite of all I have said the Congress still remains in my estimation the most powerful and most representative organization in the country. It has a history of uninterrupted noble service and self-sacrifice. From its inception it has weathered storms, as no other institution has done. It has commanded a measure of self-sacrifice of which any country would be proud. It holds today the largest number of devoted men and women of unimpeachable character. If I must leave this organization I shall not do so without a wrench and I should do it only when I am convinced that by being outside I would serve it, that is, the country better than by being in it.

I propose to test the feeling of the Congress on all the points I have touched by placing before the Subjects Committee certain resolutions giving effect to the views enunciated above.

The first amendment I would propose is to replace the words "legitimate and peaceful" by the words 'truthful and non-violent'. I should not have done so but for the purpose of the opposition which was raised against the utterly innocent use by me of the two adjectives in place of "legitimate and peaceful". If Congressmen really believe in the necessity of truthfulness and non-violence for the attainment of our goal they should have no hesitation about accepting the unequivocal adjectives.

The second amendment would be to replace the four-anna franchise by the delivery, by every member to a Congress depot, of 2,000 rounds (one round equal to four feet) per month of well-twisted even yarn of not less than 15 counts spun by himself or herself. On proof of Poverty, with enough cotton for spinning the requisite quantity, the arguments for and against need not be repeated here. If

we are to be a truly democratic body representing even the lowest paid labourer, we cannot do it better than by devising a simple labour franchise.

Hand-spinning is by common consent the lowest paid labour and yet the most dignified. It is the nearest approach to adult franchise, within the means of almost everyone who is willing to labour for the sake of the country for half an hour daily. Is it too much to expect the intelligentsia and propertied classes to recognize the dignity of labour irrespective of the material benefit it brings? Is not labour, like learning, its own reward? If we are true servants of the masses, we would take pride in spinning for their sakes.

I recall what the late Maulana Mahomed Ali used to repeat from many a platform. As the sword was the symbol, he would say, of brute force and might, the wheel or the *takli* was the symbol of non-violence, service and humility. When the wheel was accepted as part of the National Flag it was surely implied that the spinning-wheel would hum in every household. If Congress men do not believe in the message of the wheel, we must remove it from the National Flag and khaddar from the constitution. It is intolerable that there should be unashamed fraud in the observance of the khaddar clause.

The third amendment I should propose would be that no one shall be entitled to vote to any Congress election whose name has not been on the Congress register continuously for six months without default and who has not been a habitual wearer wholly of khaddar for that period. Great difficulty has been experienced in the working of the khaddar clause. It can be easily avoided by giving powers, subject to appeal to the President of the Congress, to the chairmen of the respective committees to decide the question as to whether a particular voter is or is not a habitual wearer wholly of khaddar within the meaning of the constitution. No one is to be considered such a wearer who at the time of voting is not manifestly wholly clad in khaddar. But no rule however carefully and strictly worded can produce satisfactory results if a large number do not voluntarily carry it out.

Experience has shown that the Congress is an unwieldy organization even with 6,000 delegates. In practice the full number has never attended the Congress and when this Congress register nowhere contains a truly representative list the delegation can hardly be claimed to be as reality.

I would, therefore, have an amendment for the purpose of reducing the number to not more than 1,000 delegates, not more than one delegate per every thousand voters. To have full number of delegates would mean one million voters, not an overambitious hope in a country having a population of 315 millions. The Congress would by this amendment gain in substance what it may lose in the show of numbers.

The spectacular part of the session would be kept intact by making ample provision for visitors, but the Reception Committees will be spared the wholly unnecessary anxiety of having to provide accommodation for an unwieldy number of delegates. Let us recognize the fact that the Congress enjoys prestige, democratic character and influence not by the number of the delegates and visitors it has drawn to its annual functions but by the ever increasing amount of service it has rendered.

Western democracy is on its trial, if it has not already proved a failure. May it not be reserved to India to evolve the true science of democracy by giving a visible demonstration of this fitness? Corruption and hypocrisy ought not to be inevitable products of democracy as they undoubtedly are today; nor bulk a true test of democracy. True democracy is not inconsistent with a few persons representing the spirit, the hope and the aspirations of those whom they claim to represent. I hold that democracy cannot be evolved by forcible methods. The spirit of democracy cannot be in posed from without. It has to come from within.

I have mentioned here only the principal amendments I should propose in the constitution. there would be other resolutions bringing out clearly the points I have touched upon in the foregoing paras. I don't need to burden this statement with them.

My fear is that even the amendments I have named will hardly commend themselves to the large number of Congressmen who will attend the Congress. Nevertheless if I am to guide the policy of the Congress I hold them and the resolutions in keeping with the spirit of this statement to be essential for the earliest attainment of our goal.

No voluntary organization can succeed in its purpose without its resolutions and policies being carried out whole-heartedly by its members and no leader can give a good account of himself if his lead

is not faithfully, ungrudgingly and intelligently followed and this is true of a leader who has no resource at his disposal but what truth and non-violence can supply.

It follows, therefore, that there is no room for compromise on the essentials of the programme I have endeavoured to adumbrate in these paras. Let Congressmen, therefore, examine it dispassionately and on its merits. They must eliminate me from their consideration and give effect to the dictates of their reason.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-9-1934

6. LETTER TO TAN YUN-SHAN

September 17, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your two letters. I was unable to overtake yours of 4th September before now. I wish you every success in your mission of love in China. I have no doubt that all individual effort in the direction of mutual understanding will bear fruit in the long run. You shall certainly correspond with me as often as you like, and I shall endeavour to reply to your letters as soon as I can. I hope that it will be possible for you to return to India to continue your work. And when you return, you shall certainly stay with me if I am still free and settled at one place. I had your book which of course is hieroglyphics to me, I am sorry to say.

PROF. TAN YUN-SHAN

SANTINIKETAN

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

7. LETTER TO MAHESH CHARAN MOWAR

September 17, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The way to prove the truth of the statement I have made is not by coining conundrums which cannot be satisfactorily solved, but to see the working of God's will in His helpless creation. Man ever proposes, but God always disposes.

All our best plans are reduced to naught in less than the twinkling of an eye.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI MAHESH CHARAN MOWAR, B.A., LL.B.
PLEADER, MAINPURI (U. P.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

8. LETTER TO L. G. KHARE

September 17, 1934

MY DEAR KHARE,

If you succeed in producing a reliable directory of village industries at the ridiculously low price of one anna, you will help the cause of cent per cent swadeshi and confer a boon on those who want to serve it. You will supply a felt want.

SHRI L. G. KHARE
EDITOR, "SWADESHI"
ALL-INDIA SWADESHI SANGH
SWADESHI MARKET, BOMBAY 2

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

9. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

September 17, 1934

DEAR SATISBABU,

I am sending you a letter received from Dar-ul-Aman by used correspondence post. Herewith enclosed is a copy of my reply[1]. Do you know anything about this association?

I have commenced using your ink. It promises to give satisfaction, but I must gain more experience of it. Mahadev is, however, conducting a more critical examination.

I hope you have now got books and papers from Satcowrie-babu.

Encl. 1

SHRI SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Not available

10. A LETTER

September 17, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have a pathetic letter from your son and he tells me that you refuse to return to India till swaraj is established. Now no one knows what swaraj is. If it is merely usurping power from the present rulers, I for one would not be satisfied that we had swaraj. But in one sense swaraj was established when the Congress adopted the constitution[1] of 1920 and the policy laid down in virtue of it. I do hope, therefore, that for the sake of your wife and your son, you will return as soon as you can and perform your duty by them as a part of the scheme of swaraj.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

11. LETTER TO VIDYA PARKASH

September 17, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 25th ultimo. I well remember your previous letter. But I have been under the impression that I had already sent you my reply enclosing a letter for your father. It is just likely that the letter like many of my letters written during the hurricane tour[2] has gone astray. Here is a letter addressed to your father.[3] You will please send it to him. I take: it that you will treat the letter as confidential.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

SHRI VIDYA PARKASH
LATH BUILDINGS
RISHINAGAR, LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Congress constitution adopted at Nagpur session", december 1920.
[2] Harijan tour which began on November 7, 1933 and concluded on August 2, 1934
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

12. LETTER TO LALCHAND NAVALRAI

September 17, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The way in which Harijan purses collected in different provinces are used is by provinces sending to the Central Board[1] their schemes for approval, and these schemes come to me whenever it is thought necessary by the Central Board. You will have, therefore, to convince the Provincial Board of the soundness of your suggestion, and in doing so you will have to show to the Board that your scheme can be worked with the funds at the Local Board's disposal and consistently with the continuation of the work they have started.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI LALCHAND NAVALRAI, M.L.A.
ADVOCATE, LARKANA (SIND)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

13. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

September 17, 1934

CHI. MARY,[2]

I have your letter. In his letter Rajbhoj has used the expression 'Brahmin' to mean non-Harijan Hindus. The Board does not consist exclusively of Brahmins; it has non-Brahmins also. Nevertheless you should remember that the Board contains only workers and not those who want prominence or cheap credit. Strange as it may appear, the largest amount of sacrifice is still to be found among Brahmins, if it is also true that Brahmins are the stumbling-block in the way of progress of the campaign against untouchability. But no provincial organization is wholly confined to Brahmins.

As to the second objection, you will be glad to know that there is no Harijan Board which does not contain at least one Harijan, and in several organizations there are many. There are hundreds of Harijan Boards affiliated to the Central Board. I can claim no merit or credit

[1] Of the Harijan Sevak Sangh

[2] The superscription in this and other letters addressed to Mary Barr is in the Devanagari script.

for this event. If I could have helped it, I should certainly have confined all these boards exclusively to non-Harijans. In the place of the word 'penitents' read 'debtors'.[1] Harijans are in the place of creditors. Have you ever heard of a board of debtors containing a sprinkling of creditors? Debtors alone know how to discharge their obligations. Creditors will be the judges as to whether they will give them discharge certificates for the payments they will make. But they would not even be bothered about the meetings of the debtors. They will have their own meetings, their own advisers and the like. And I have invited the Harijans to form their own advisory boards which will become irresistible. They will, if they are compact bodies, dictate their own terms. If you are closely following the *Harijan* from week to week you will understand surely the meaning of what I have said. Marvellous work has been done in the shape of distribution of funds. Harijan Boards are intended to be swiftly moving organizations carrying out their operations without fuss. They are not debating societies. To alter their character would be to turn them into debating societies frittering away time, energy and substance, whereas I want to save every ounce of these solely for the benefit of Harijans. Then and then only will there be no 'you' and 'we', but only 'we'.

You have again returned to your proposal about prayer. The proposal does not appear to me to be feasible. The utmost we have been able to attain in this direction is that we have Mussalman hymns or *bhajans* as also Christian. You may perhaps know that every Friday we have a rendering of "Lead, Kindly Light" in the Ashram and every Thursday we have a very popular Islamic *bhajan*. The *Ashram Bhajanavali* contains several *bhajans* from Mussalman sources and you will find also a selection of Christian hymns. On certain occasions we have Christian and Mussalman prayers. But to make these prayers a daily feature would be entirely mechanical, if not also hypocritical. It would be different if we had a large number of Mussalmans and Christians in the different ashrams. And if we had an ashram predominantly Mussalman or Christian, there will naturally be generally only Christian or Islamic prayers. The point I am trying to make is to show that the ashrams are not theosophical organizations, but they are organizations which have equal regard for all the religions. I should expect, therefore, non-Hindus in an ashram predominantly Hindu to pay equal respect to the Hindu form of

[1] *Vide* "Letter to P. N. Rajbhoj". 31-8-1934.

worship. And a predominantly Hindu ashram should never be deliberately exclusive and would be expected to pay particular regard to its few Mussalman or Christian inmates. Ashrams honestly attempt, though they may ever fail, to reach the ideal of equality and growth from within.

Love.

BAPU

MISS MARY BARR
KHEDI SAOLIGARH
BETUL DT.

From a photostat: G.N. 6029. Also C.W. 3358. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

14. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

September 17, 1934

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I had received your letters. I had long discussions with Andrews. The trouble about Sorabji[1] will go on. But it is desirable that no attacks should be made on the Agent. It would be better to write to him confidentially. So far as I can judge from here, attacking him will serve no purpose except giving vent to one's anger. Andrews liked all that you have been doing except the attack on the Agent. Schlesin[2] also didn't like it.

You have suggested that Kanti[3] should be sent over there. But he does not agree to go. He has set his heart on studying.

I believe Ramdas will require a permit. I suspect that they have taken away the rights of even the Colonial-born [Indians]. Ramdas's plans are still uncertain. Just now he has gone to Sabarmati with Ba. He had a fairly serious attack of fever there. It has come down now. He has taken Kanu[4] with him. Since he gets good company at Sabarmati, he feels quite cheerful. Kanti has gone far away to Travancore, where he will do Harijan work and study at the same time.

My future plans are uncertain. I shall not be able to leave the Congress immediately. Let us see what happens in October. I cannot

[1] Son of Parsee Rustomji
[2] Sonja Schlesin
[3] Son of Harilal Gandhi
[4] Son of Narandas Gandhi

say in what direction my dharma will lead me after that. Thus everything regarding me is uncertain. But I don't worry. He who has dedicated his all to Shri Krishna feels at rest in his mind even in the midst of uncertainty. Since I am ceaselessly striving to reach that state, I never suffer from worries. Where there is complete uncertainty about life itself from moment to moment, why worry about other things?

Jalbhai[1] came and saw me. Omar Sheth seems to have lost his all. How did that happen?

Kishorelal[2] and Gomati[3] are here at present. And of course Vasumatibehn too.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

It seems to me all right that Sita[4] should be given whatever [education] is possible there. But if you send her over here I shall certainly make some arrangement.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4826

15. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

September 17, 1934

CHI. SHANTIRUMAR,

I got your letter. I hope you are fully recovered now.

You have solved all the problems well.

It is best that the cart should move with its natural speed. Can we not say now that it is no more the motor-car age but it is the aeroplane age? But all this-rushing about is only for a while. Our legs, however, will remain as long as mankind survives. Those who are content with

[1] Jal Khambhatta
[2] Kishorelal Mashruwala and his wife
[3] *ibid.*
[4] Addressees' daughter

the natural speed of their legs remaining unimpaired will win in the end.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. SHANTIKUMAR NAROTTAM MORARJEE
SUDAMA HOUSE
BALLARD ESTATE
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4724. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarjee

16. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

September 17, 1934

CHI. BRAJKISHAN,

Your letter. What happens after meeting Damodardas is yet to be seen. Till then I shall remain doubt-ridden. I cannot be just either to Damodardas or to Santok[1] and others. And now you too are involved. Damodardas alleges that you have misunderstood him but I have no doubts about you. My fear in respect of you is of a different kind. You have not realized even now the value of money. In spite of your renunciation, your mind is still that of a moneyed man and not averse to possession. An action performed without the prompting of the heart loses all its value.

I trust you maintain good health there. Prabha[2] has gone to Patna; she might return on Friday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2424

[1] Widow of Maganlal Gandhi
[2] Prabhavati, wife of Jayaprakash Narayan

17. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

September 17, 1934

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your Hindi letter today. The English letter should arrive tomorrow. I can certainly read all your letters with ease.

I have nothing to say if Ramdas himself desires to be released from your care. In that case you have to come here. I have no idea what is happening there. What is Ba doing? What is her opinion? It is very good that Surendra is there. Whatever happens, you must not lose your peace of mind. I am always aware of all the trouble you have taken for Ramdas. And, as a matter of fact, Ramdas had not been instrumental in your coming to me. That was on account of your nature-cure. Therefore all that we want to do in that respect still remains to be done. We shall discuss it when we meet.

I am returning your letter but not Jamnalalji's which I am destroying.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am returning Jamnalalji's letter too. Perhaps this is your file copy.

From a facsimil of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha*, facing p. 97

18. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

September 17, 1934

CHI. AMBUJAM[1],

I have your letter. I am sure I have written a letter or two. It cannot be that you have no letter from me.

Gomati has not mentioned anything about Sharma's illness but the information came through Satyanarayana's letter to Kaka. He must be all right by now.

What you write about the *Ramayana* is true.

[1] Daughter of Srinivasa Iyengar.

It would certainly be good if you can come to Wardha even for a few days. I have no objection if you come during the Congress session but then I hardly have time even to look at a person. Ramdas is well. For the time being he will stay at Sabarmati with Ba.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9597. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal

19. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

September 18, 1934

BHAI BENARSIDAS,

While looking for something else which I found I came upon your letter of July 21. This could have reached me only during my travels. I had read it and put it away in a special place in order to answer it, thereby defeating that very purpose.

I hope it is not too late even now to answer. You can come whenever you wish and stay as long as you like. I like your opposition. This has never been a ground for keeping you away and it cannot be such now.

Inform me of the date of your arrival. I take it you only want to be with me, but you must not take much of my time as I can spare very little of that commodity.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2515

20. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM G. PANSE

September 18, 1934

CHI. BHAU,

I like the name *Rentia Baras*[1]. We can eradicate poverty and unemployment with the minimum effort if this *sudarshana chakra*[2] of the modern age is plied in every home. And this is possible only if all the villagers spin and wear clothes made out of the yarn they spin.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6753. Also C.W. 4496. Courtesy: Purushottam G. Panse

21. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

September 18, 1934

BHAI RAJENDRA PRASAD,

I sent through Mahadev the reply to your wire, which Prabhavati must have given you. Later your letter also arrived. I have no recollection whether I replied to your first letter through someone or whether it remained unanswered. These days the work is quite pressing, some rest is also needed. It does not seem proper to make Abdul Ghaffar Khan the President this time. He is a good man and is full of love for the country. He is sincere and self-sacrificing. But he has little experience of the Congress and the session this time involves great responsibility. Among the men devoted to truth and non-violence and commanding popularity I see none but you or Rajagopalachari or Jairamdas. But these two men cannot now be chosen and that leaves only you. Moreover, there is no other choice because of your contribution to the earthquake [relief] work. You have illness in the family as also your financial problem; but are you a family man any more? In other words, you can serve the family only so far as it is a part of the people at large. The financial problem is almost solved. Jamnalalji is still at Bombay but that should cause no worry.

[1] Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram Era, celebrated as Spinning Day

[2] Weapon of Lord Krishna

You should come over here as soon as you can. Come with more time on hand if it is possible to stay over for a few days. Anyway I shall be happy with whatever time you can give me. If the date is fixed for certain I shall try to call Sardar too. You can in no case go to Bombay before October 20. The Khan Brothers will be here during this period and we shall send for any others if their presence is required.

You must have seen my statement[1] in the papers. The relations between Prabhavati and Jayaprakash have to be clarified. Arrangements have been made for her to serve in Wardha but I sent her away on receiving a telegram from Jayaprakash. I have of course told Prabha to discuss everything with you and Brijkishorebabu[2].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 9732. Courtesy: Rajendra Prasad

22. LETTER TO SHAMLAL

September 19, 1934

DEAR LALA SHAM LAL,

I have your letter. I am glad that you have such a brilliant prospect in front of you. There can be no question of my asking you to retire at this stage. Retirement can only be in those places where there is demonstrably no chance of success. And in any case these things are not regulated by me. They are regulated by the Parliamentary Board. You need, therefore, have no fear of being abruptly asked by me to retire. You need not be disturbed by my forthcoming talk with Bapuji Aney.[3]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

LALA SHAM LAL
ADVOCATE, ROHTAK (PUNJAB)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the press", 17-9-1934.
[2] Prabhavati's father
[3] *Vide* "Gandhi-Aney Statement", 20-9-1934.

23. LETTER TO EMMA HARKER

September 19, 1934

DEAR SISTER,

I have your touching letter. If Pierre Ceresole[1] comes from Europe with his contingent, I would certainly like you to join him. I do not like the idea otherwise of your going anywhere, for it will be cruel to expect you to lead the life of the poor, and it will be unfair to the people to put you in a place where they will think that they have to give you more attention than what they are to expect from you. You do not know the difficulties of relief work in the villages of Bihar or Orissa or in any part of the flooded areas. And in the cities hardly any help is required. Therefore I am inclined to think that if Ceresole does not come you should do some service in Karachi itself. Surely Jamshed Mehta can easily inspire you.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

MRS. EMMA HARKER
47 CARLTON HOTEL
KARACHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

24. LETTER TO MATILDA B. KALLON

September 19, 1934

MY DEAR MATTY,

I was talking today with Shyamjibhai about you. He tells me that something would be presently fixed up. But he raises one question. He asked me whether you, though a Christian, would be taking charge of Harijan boys and girls and inculcating in them respect for Hinduism and teaching them the principles regarding Hindu religion to be as true as Christianity. I have told him without any hesitation that you are a liberal-minded Christian and that your Christianity is not exclusive but inclusive of all the other great religions. Am I not right?

[1] A Swiss engineer who founded the International Service

Though I have not written to you for a long time, I suppose you realize that I have not been inactive about you.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI M. B. KALLON
NETTUR, TELLICHERRY
N. MALABAR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

25. LETTER TO PADMA

September 19, 1934

CHI. PADMA[1],

I got your letter. For you I have preserved such coloured sheets. Another such girl is Durga[2]. For her also I preserve coloured sheets. I do not remember to have omitted to reply to any letter of yours.

You will be surprised to know that these days I hardly get time to speak even to the girls here. Girls like you who are away get an occasional letter at least. These girls don't get even that. Do you still envy them?

If your Magan spinning-wheel[3] is out of order, why don't you get it repaired? What has gone wrong? Why can't slivers be made there? You must also pray regularly.

If stray cattle get into our fields, we should inform their owners and ask them to make good the damage. If they don't listen and the cattle come again, we may certainly have them impounded. If this involves the taint of violence, we should not mind being guilty of it. He who is wise will deduce from this that he should own nothing. He will have no need, then, to impound other people's cattle for his own benefit.

If a letter which the writer wishes to be treated as private is

[1] Daughter of Sitla Sahai
[2] Daughter of Dalbahadur Giri of Nepal and Krishnamaiyadevi
[3] A two-spindle wheel plied with foot, invented by Maganlal Gandhi

marked as such, nobody will read it. But what can we have to be kept private?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6149. Also C.W. 3505. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

26. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

September 19, 1934

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

I got your letter regarding. Surajbehn. This whole episode has been a painful one. But I hope the pain will be forgotten by and by. I am writing to Bhai Chitalia[1] that Surajbehn may remove the maternity home to his building and start a Seva Mandir. After she has done so she should hand over the key to Gokulbhai.

I understand about the money believed to be lost.

Give the accompanying letter to Lakshmi.[2] Devdas has left a fairly heavy burden on you.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 22757

27. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

September 19, 1934

CHI. HARILAL,

I got your letter. If there has really been. a change of heart in you such as you describe, my hope has been realized. In that case, I will for my part completely forget your past.

. . .[3] I understand about marrying. If what you want is a companion and that must be a wife, I would not regard it as in the least blameworthy provided you find a suitable widow. There was a

[1] Karsandas Chitalia
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Laksmi Gandhi", 19-9-1934.
[3] Omission as in the source

widow of 60 who married a man of nearly the same age. I knew her. Her only motive was desire for companionship. But perhaps there is no need to think about this just now.

HARILAL GANDHI

PORBANDAR

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

28. LETTER TO ANANDSHANKAR B. DHRUVA[1]

September 19, 1934

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

God has saved you and me from a catastrophe. I had recommended . . .[2] to you. For eight or nine years all of us thought him to be a good man. He hardly talked with anybody. But he has been found to be a man given to lust and a fraud. He has suddenly left the Ashram. I rarely recommend anybody. When even one like . . . is found to be a man of straw, whom can I recommend?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

29. LETTER TO BALVANTRAI P. THAKORE

September 19, 1934

BHAI BALUBHAI,

If it is found that the law does not permit it, we shall bear the criticism that may be made. I was of the view that the Trustees had a right to make such a gift[3]. The right to make a gift which would do the Vidyapith no harm but, having regard to the circumstances then

[1] (1869-1942); Sanskrit scholar and Gujarati man of letters; Pro-Vice, Chancellor, Benares Hindu University

[2] The name has been omitted.

[3] Of the Ashram and the Vidyapith books to the Maneklal Jethalal Municipal Library, Ahmedabad; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 8-3-1933.

prevailing, could only be considered beneficial to it, is implied in the trust ded it self. This is, however, a layman's view. Only a competent lawyer's opinion can be regarded as authoritative.

Nor have I expressed pain to anybody with regard to giving away the books. The only question can be, and is, not to do anything which might be improper. I had no other meaning in what I wrote except that if we were making any mistake we should rectify it. Please, therefore, banish that idea from your mind.

If there is delay in preparing a catalogue of the books or in receiving a list from Jivanji, let me know. Can we not make some arrangement, pending the construction of a building, to see that the books are being used?

BALUBHAI
KHADIA
AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

30. LETTER .TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 19, 1934

CHI. NARANDAS,

I am enclosing copy of a letter from Harilal. Read it and think over it. The letter seems very good to me. If Harilal has changed as much as he seems to have done, it would be a great thing. You may think about it now. Can he be given some work connected with khadi or Harijan uplift? Call him to you or pay a visit to Porbandar. Let me know what you think after making the necessary inquiries. I have written to Harilal and asked him to write to you. He can be given khadi work only after consulting Ramjibhai. Harijan work can be given after consulting Jivanlal or Nanalal. No pressure should be put on anyone. I would prefer an independent experiment for the present. However, think over the whole matter yourself.

What would you advise regarding his eyes and teeth? Is there anybody there who can attend to them? If there is nobody, he can be

looked after and treated in Ahmedabad. There are facilities in regard to both in Ahmedabad.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Read my statement which has appeared in papers and write to me if you have any comments to make.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, Pt. II, pp. 171-2. Also C.W. 84. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

31. LETTER TO LAKSHMI GANDHI

September 19, 1934

CHI. LAKSHMI,

Devdas has gone away but as you have a person like Thakkar Bapa to look after you, I think you do not feel the absence of Devdas over much.

LAKSHMI
DELHI

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

32. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
[After *September 19, 1934*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. May what you believe regarding Harilal come true.

Kanu is fully confident that Jivarambhai's cheque was

[1] The letter was presumably written in reply to the adressee's, replying to Gandhiji's letter to him of September 19, 1934 asking for his opinion as to what should be done for Harilal who seemed to Gandhiji to have changed for the better. The addressee in his reply may have expressed a hopeful opinion about Harilal. *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 19-9-1934.

forwarded to you. He has noted the fact in his diary too. It is not clear why the letter forwarded to you should have been misdirected.

A letter from Harilal is enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33558

33. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

September 20, 1934

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. Today also I am writing this letter before the morning prayer. I am not doing this as a favour to you. I have stated the fact merely to tell you that I get up now at 3 a.m. as usual and start work immediately. I don't get much time during the day for writing letters. Nobody wakes me up, nor do I have an alarm clock. Mostly I wake up myself. There is a terrace here[1] for sleeping. On both sides of me sleep Amtussalaam, Vasumati, Amala[2], Ba when she is here, Om and Prabhavati.

You seem to be widening your field of activities. I would advise you to do little but do it thoroughly well. Impatience will not help you in village uplift work. Read *Harijan* and/or *Harijanbandhu* regularly. Some other subjects are being discussed in them. I think I have already written to you about Ba having gone to Sabarmati to look after Ramdas.

If you want, I will send a copy of *Gitai*[3]. Let me have your reactions to my statement.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10360. Also C.W. 6799. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] Maganwadi
[2] Margarete Spiegel, a German lady
[3] A metrical rendering of the *Gita* into Marathi by Vinoba Bhave

34. LETTER TO VAMAN G. JOSHI

September 20, 1934

DEAR VAMANRAO[1],

I have your letter.

Without entering into the argument, I give you my replies to your questions.

1. When a man wears clothes made of khadi as a matter of habit, he is a habitual wearer. If, therefore, for any just cause he cannot use khadi on some occasions, he does not cease to be a habitual wearer.

2. But if a person appears at Congress functions in clothes not made of khadi, he will be presumed not to be a habitual wearer of khadi.

3. Habitual wear of clothes made of khadi means all clothes from top to toe made of hand-spun and hand-woven khadi.

4. When it is pointed out to the Chair or when the Chairman of a Congress meeting himself knows that a voter or a candidate is not wearing khadi clothes at that meeting, he is bound to rule that the person is not a habitual wearer in spite of his protestation to the contrary.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

35. LETTER TO K. SRINIVASAN

September 20, 1934

DEAR SRINIVASAN[2],

Your letter to Mahadev of 8th instant has been on my file ever since its receipt. Your argument, I am sorry to say, does not appeal to me. Surely absolute reliability of the source of information does not absolve an editor from criticism if the information itself was confidential, especially if he is favourable to the cause to which the information is related. Rangaswamy[3] used to know many most important things contemplated by members of the Working

[1] Vaman Gopal Joshi *alias* Veer Vamanrao, Marathi playwright and President of Berar Pradesh Congress Committee

[2] Editor, *The Hindu*

[3] A. Rangaswami Iyengar, former editor of *The Hindu*

Committee. I am not aware that he ever abused the confidence by publishing anything and saying that the information was absolutely reliable, as it undoubtedly was. Even Salivati[1] who, in Rangaswamy's time, had committed a serious blunder,[2] has very often got from me information and therefore absolutely reliable. But he observed the law of the game by not disclosing it when he knew that I did not want the information to be published.

I should not have asked Mahadev to write to you the letter he did if it was a mere matter of embarrassment to me. There was none. But undoubtedly public cause was damaged by your publication of information that was strictly confidential, more so as it was not even accurate. Had it not been for the dangerous statement that the cause of the contemplated retirement was the formation of the Malaviyaji party, I would not have taken any public notice of your announcement.[3]

I wish I could convince you that you had laid down a most dangerous principle of conduct. You say "in this instance, therefore, our sole anxiety was about the authenticity of the news". Suppose that the Sardar had contemplated some big move on behalf of the Congress whose premature publication would defeat the very end he had in view. Suppose that a very clever correspondent of *The Hindu* was a thought reader, and he had read the Sardar's thought. The news would be authentic. Would you be justified, unless you avowed yourself as an enemy of the Congress, in publishing the authentic information? Don't retort by saying that no such calamity was possible in connection with your publication of the news in question. I am trying to show you the untenability of the position you have taken up. That the publication in the case in point did not result in much damage, you could not plead in self-protection. You will, therefore, please dismiss from your mind the idea that you have done any wrong to me. I have endeavoured to appreciate your point of view. It is unfortunate that I have not been able to appreciate your position. I think that it is wholly indefensible, unless of course you take up the position that, as a newspaper man, you have nothing to do with the nation, your sole concern is to purvey news—no matter how obtained

[1] S. Salivati, correspondent of *The Hindu*

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to S. Salivant", 18-1-1933 and "Letter to A. Rangaswami Iyengar", 21-1-1933.

[3] *Vide* "Statement to the press", 5-9-1934.

and no matter whose cause is damaged so long as the news you publish is authentic wholly or in part.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI K. SRINIVASAN
MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

36. LETTER TO SANTDAS MANGHARAM

September 20, 1934

MY DEAR SANTDAS,

I have your letter. I had your telegram also. Atma's illness would prove a blessing in disguise if he actually comes here, and that with Mirabehn. There is no doubt that he will profit greatly by her company.

Yes, prayer is a mighty power. We do not realize it because we do not see it through our senses.

Yours,
BAPU

SHRI SANTDAS MANGHARAM
ADVOCATE, HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

37. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

September 20, 1934

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Your letter has put heart into me. But if it has done that, it has also led to a discovery. You are all a fraud and Raihana the greatest among you all. I never knew that in writing those long letters she was simply joking and pretending. And instead of remaining a Bhrrr—you a grey bearded young man writes to me a serious letter as if the whole bungalow was flooded with tears. I shall know what to do when next time she sends me a long complaint. Of course she could not write the letter she did if there was all that she said in her letters about your wickednesses. That is the worst of having a mystic-poet as one's

daughter. I hope my statement[1] to the Press gave you a day's work. R.'s letter[2] herewith.

Love to you all.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 9590

38. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 20, 1934

DEAR SISTER[3],

I am grateful to you for the delicious apples and raisins you sent me through Deenabandhu C. F. Andrews.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SMT. RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
SIMLA W.

From the original: C.W. 3511. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6320

39. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

September 20, 1934

BA,

I got your letter yesterday. If you wish you may of course keep Kano[4] with you, what have I to do with him if I bring him here? My only intention was to relieve you and Ramdas of responsibility for him. Nimu[5] was enthusiastic about Kano because Sarita[6] is here. It appears Ramdas is now steadily improving. He must not hasten to resume his food. You must be having mosquito-net with you. How do you pass the day? Ask someone to read to you my statement to the Press. Nimu daily visits the hospital for treatment of Sumitra's[7] eyes.

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the press", 17-9-1934.
[2] The letter is not available.
[3] The source has 'Sir' which is obviously a slip.
[4] Ramdas Gandhi's son
[5] Nirmala Gandhi. Ramdas Gandhi's wife
[6] Ramdas Gandhi's mother-in-law. The source, however, has "Savita", obviously a misprint.
[7] Ramdas Gandhi's daughter

Amalabehn has got a job in Santiniketan; she will therefore go there in a few days. It would be good if she stays there peacefully. Get someone to write to Kamala Nehru who is very ill.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 27

40. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

September 20, 1934

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I have your letter.

It is difficult to give a reply which can be universally applied, to the question what should be done when a Harijan living in the Ashram misbehaves. You yourself will have to decide that. Or Narahari will do so when he comes. How to find a way between the duty of forbearance on the one hand and that of protecting the Ashram on the other can be decided only with reference to each particular incident. Adopt whatever course experience suggests without any fear or hesitation.

Such a rule cannot be applied to a caste Hindu nor to a responsible Harijan living in the Ashram. And I am firmly of the view that nothing can be forgiven those who are responsible for the management of the Ashram. If moral laxity enters their lives, institutions of Harijan service will perish.

I am afraid I have not been able to give a reply which will satisfy you. Find what guidance you can from this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4040

41. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

September 20, 1934

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

Please read the accompanying postcard. Do you think there is any truth in it?

I hope the Kumar Saheb[1] has recovered.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5937. Also C.W. 3255. Courtesy: Mahesh P. Pattani

42. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

September 20, 1934

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter.

Herewith is a draft reply prepared by me. You may make in it such changes as you wish.

What ignorance that Dunichand should be sent a humiliating reply on behalf of the Board![2] It is good that you are keeping a watch.

* * *[3]

I read your remarks about Narahari. Your annoyance is justified. But there has been no deliberate malice behind what has happened. There is nothing but misunderstanding at the bottom of the whole thing. It will disappear in time. I am convinced that there is no malice in anybody's heart. I have decided that, if Kaka can be persuaded, he must not leave Gujarat at present so as to end all this bitterness, if for no other reason. Let him manage or mismanage the education department of the whole country from Gujarat.

There is no necessity at all for you to leave. And if my view has-appealed to you, at present managing the Vidyapith means no

[1] Of the Bhavnagar State

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 16-9-1934.

[3] Omission as in the source

more than disbursing funds to the individuals concerned in terms of the resolutions passed. The Vidyapith will be a movable institution. Everybody will go on doing the work entrusted to him. All decisions about teaching Programmes will be made by Kaka or by the teachers collectively. My view is that everybody will have to shoulder independent responsibility in the place which he has selected. If anybody consults someone whom he admires, it will be only as a friend. This is the plan I have in mind. I have discussed this scheme at length with Kaka, Kishorelal and Narahari. If you approve of it, all that you have to do is to write a letter and put it into operation. About salaries, Narahari and Kaka have decided something. I have not meddled in that. I should like you to free yourself from the burden of this dispute.

I hope you are keeping good health. Rajendrababu is expected here around the 23rd. I do hope you will be here then.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 133-4

43. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

September 20, 1934

CHI. SHARMA,

I had your wire. I acted promptly on it and sent a wire yesterday to Draupadi[1]. If Ramdas has agreed to release you, you can immediately come to Wardha and stay with me for two or three days or even less, after which you must go to Khurja. Draupadi's letter leads me to believe that it would be a sin on your part to stay away from her. Your first duty is to look after Devi[2]. But it might be proper to leave him in Delhi if his care is beyond you. Of course, in my opinion, it would be a sign of your failing. But who am I to define your dharma? After all only your own heart's prompting can be your dharma.

What more can I write?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha*, facing p. 98

[1] Addressee's wife
[2] Addressee's son

44. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

WARDHA,
September 20, 1934

CHI. VIDYA,

I had received your letter.

You will have seen my statement. Remain free from arrogance and do only so much by way of service as you can. I do not see the need of your coming to the Bombay Congress. There will be no chance at all of my being able to see anyone. Those who come will not be coming out of any desire to serve. In such a situation, those who wish to follow the path of service would do well to serve wherever they may be stationed.

If I am not in prison in December and if I am at Wardha, you may certainly spend a couple of months with me. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

45. GANDHI-ANEY STATEMENT[1]

September 20, 1934

As a result of mutual conversation we have come to the conclusion that it should be common cause between the Parliamentary Board and the Nationalist Party[2] that wheresoever between rival candidates it is manifest that one candidate has an overwhelming chance against another the latter should be withdrawn. Not having sufficient material before us, it was not possible to make any recommendation as to the chances of success of rival candidates whose names were before us. Nor had any of us any authority to come to any decision. It was enough for us to be able to enunciate the

[1] After a discussion regarding the selection of candidates by the Parliamentary Board and the Nationalist Party for elections to the Assembly, Gandhiji and M. S. Aney issued this joint statement.

[2] Formed by Madan Mohan Malaviya and M. S. Aney

principle we have done. We may also state that we met together purely as friends and co-workers without being deputed by respective parties. Our purpose was to find ways and means of avoiding a domestic conflict.

The Hindu, 21-9-1934

46. INTERVIEW WITH A HARIJAN WORKER[1]

[Before *September 21, 1934*]

[GANDHIJI:] So you wanted to take the citadel by storm?

[AKARTE:] Yes, rather. But the preacher is a believer in the removal of untouchability, and I had told the Secretary that he should hold the kirtan in a temple which was open to the Harijans.

You did not approach the preacher himself?

No, Sir.

The preacher himself had no prejudice against the Harijans, for, you yourself say he went to the Harijan quarters and gave them a *kirtan*?

True. He had no prejudices, but he should not have yielded to the Secretary.

You know that the temple was not open to the Harijans, and you laid yourself open to the charge that you wanted to go in under cover of the *kirtan*?

But, Mahatmaji, he might have come out and held the *kirtan* outside.

But he did go to the Harijan quarters. Didn't he?

Yes. But the handbills invited all the Hindus.

Quite right. But the preacher had not issued the leaflets, and, then, "all" means, in our present state of unenlightenment, the so-called Hindus, and does not include the Harijans.

No. Mahatmaji, the Hindu Sabha Secretary ought to know better.

[1] Reported by Mahadev Desai, this appeared in *Harijan* under the title "The Wrong Way". The Hindu Sabha of Morsi, in C. P., had arranged with one of its preachers to hold a *kirtan* and issued handbills inviting Hindus. The *kirtan* was held in a temple where Akarte, a Harijan worker, and other Harijans were not allowed. The preacher also declined to hold the *kirtan* outside for the benefit of the Harijans but offered to go to the Harijan quarters and give them a special *kirtan*. Akarte later held a protest meeting and passed a resolution condemning the preacher. Akarte then sought Gandhiji's guidance.

Well, well, no legal quibbles. There ought not to have been a protest meeting, at all. You might have approached the preacher in the first instance, you might have gently asked him to address a meeting of the Hindus for the removal of untouchability or to appeal to the Hindus in the course of his *kirtan* itself to admit the Harijans to a religious function to which they had every right. You might have asked the other Hindus to boycott the function altogether. Even now, if you have sufficient energy in you, you may serve on the temple trustees notice asking them to show cause why they prevented Harijans from entering even the precincts of the temple and thus from listening to a religious sermon. That would be a good test case; whilst temple-entry may be prohibited in law, entry into the precincts may not be. But the protest meeting and the other things you did were, perhaps, an exhibition of excessive zeal. The method of our work is unadulterated non-violence, and non-violence alone will succeed. Force is sure to fail.

I am sorry, Mahatmaji; I must confess I was in a temper. If you like, I can make a public statement to that effect.

That is hardly necessary. Your restraint in action will be more eloquent than any expression of regret.

. . . Though cholera is fast disappearing in Malkapur and Morsi,[1] there are other villages where it has spread and might spread. What precautionary measures would you suggest? Could we take the help of the police in a crisis like this?

Certainly, police help may be taken, as medical help is taken. All drinking water must be boiled (and a grain of potassium permanganate should be added to it. They must be asked not to drink any other water.

But they are ignorant, they don't listen. And how can we expect the poor people to drink boiled water, when they go to the fields.

Now, that's not an active worker speaking! You must carry on vigorous propaganda, provide them with every facility and not rest until they have listened to you. You can provide them with extra fuel to boil the water with, pots in which to carry the boiled water to the fields and potassium permanganate. You can have Harijans whom you have inoculated to accompany you and help in the propaganda. No pains to be spared.

[1] The worker had described the-cholera epidemic in these villages and the steps he had taken to control it.

I quite see. I was tending a Harijan myself yesterday. I had a medical man to treat him; he was worse, I had another doctor called and I am glad he will completely recover. He got a treatment which the richest in our village might envy.

That's vary good. Rest assured that your name has gone down in the book of God, who keeps an accurate record of all things good and bad. There is no better Accountant on earth.

Harijan, 21-9-1934

47. WHY AGAINST VIOLENCE?

A correspondent argues:

> Why are you against violence? Do you think that every act of violence is an expression of *himsa*? Is it not strange that we should feel a kind of horror, pity and disgust when we see a murder or assassination, and silently witness the slow sucking of blood going on every day in the world? If one believes that a successful bloody revolution would ameliorate a good deal of misery in the world, why should he not resort to arms? . . . Don't you realize that the rulers of the world have become so callous that, to understand you or humanity, they must again become children. I don't mean to say they are born bad. But their badness is a physical fact and, in spite of themselves, they cannot alter it.

It is because the rulers, if they are bad, are so, not necessarily or wholly by reason of birth, but largely because of their environment, that I have hopes of their altering their course. It is perfectly true, as the writer says, that the rulers cannot alter their course themselves. If they are dominated by their environment, they do not surely deserve to be killed, but should be changed by a change of environment. But the environment are we—the people who make the rulers what they are. They are thus an exaggerated editon of what we are in the aggregate. If my argument is sound, any violence done to the rulers would be violence done to ourselves. It would be suicide. And since I do not want to commit suicide, nor encourage my neighbours to do so, I become non-violent myself and invite my neighbours to do likewise.

Moreover, violence may destroy one or more bad rulers, but, like Ravana's heads, others will pop up in their places, for, the root lies elsewhere. It lies in us. If we will reform ourselves, the rulers will automatically do so.

The correspondent seems to imagine that a non-violent person

has no feelings and that he is a silent witness to the "slow sucking of blood going on every day in the world". Non-violence is not a passive force nor so helpless as the correspondent will make it out to be. Barring truth, if truth is to be considered apart from non-violence, the latter is the activest force in the world. It never fails. Violence only seemingly succeeds, and nobody has ever claimed uniform success for violence. Non-violence never promises immediate and tangible results. It is not a mango trick. Its failures are, therefore, all seeming. A believer in violence will kill the murderer and boast of his act. But he never killed murder. By murdering the murderer, he added to it and probably invited more. The law of retaliation is the law of multiplying evil.

A non-violent man will act upon the murderer through his love. He cannot, by punishing the murderer, undo the murder already committed. But he hopes by gentleness to get the murderer to repent of his deed and change the whole course of his life. A non-violent man always and automatically turns the searchlight selfward and discovers that the best course of conduct is to do unto others as he would have others to do unto him. If he was the murderer, he would not like to be killed for his madness but would like the opportunity of mending himself. He knows, too, that he must not destroy what he cannot create. God is the sole Judge between man and man.

Harijan, 21-9-1934

48. GOD OR NO GOD

During my visit to the South I met Harijans and others who pretended not to believe in God. At one place where a conference of Harijans was being held, the chairman delivered a harangue on atheism under the very shadow of a temple which Harijans had built for themselves with their own money. But out of the bitterness of his heart for the treatment meted out to fellow Harijans, he had begun to doubt the very existence of a benevolent Power that had allowed such cruelty to flourish. There was, perhaps, some excuse for this disbelief.

But here is a specimen of disbelief of another type from another source:

> Don't you think that a preconceived idea of a God, Truth or Reality

might colour the whole trend of our search and hence be a great impediment and may defeat the very purpose of our life? For example, you take certain moral truths as fundamental. But we are in search and, as long as we have not found the reality, how can we boast or assert that a certain rule of morality is the truth or it alone. is going to help us in our search.

No search is possible without some workable assumptions. If we grant nothing, we find nothing. Ever since its commencement, the world, the wise and the foolish included, has proceeded upon the assumption that, if we are, God is and that, if God is not, we are not. And since belief in God is co-existent with the humankind, existence of God is treated as a fact more definite than the fact that the sun is. This living faith has solved the largest number of puzzles of life. It has alleviated our misery. It sustains us in life, it is our one solace in death. The very search for Truth becomes interesting, worth while, because of this belief. But search for Truth is search for God. Truth is God. God is, because Truth is. We embark upon the search, because we believe that there is Truth and that It can be found by diligent search and meticulous observance of the wellknown and well-tried rules of the search. There is no record in history of the failure of such search. Even the atheists who have pretended to disbelieve in God have believed in Truth. The trick they have performed is that of giving God another, not a new, name. His names are Legion. Truth is the crown of them all.

What is true of God is true, though in a less degree, of the 'assumption of the truth of some fundamental moralities'. As a matter of fact, they are implied in the belief in God or Truth. Departure from these has landed the truants in endless misery. Difficulty of practice should not be confused with disbelief. A Himalayan expedition has its prescribed conditions of success. Difficulty of fulfilling the conditions does not make the expedition impossible. It only adds interest and zest to the search. Well, this expedition in search of God or Truth is infinitely more than numberless Himalayan expeditions and, therefore, much more interesting. If we have no zest for it, it is because of the weakness of our faith. What we see with our physical eyes is more real to us than the only Reality. We know that appearances are deceptive. And yet we treat trivialities as realities. To see the trivialities as such is half the battle won. It constitutes more than half the search after Truth or God. Unless we disengage ourselves

from trivialities, we have not even the leisure for the great search; Or is it to be reserved for our leisure hours?

Let Harijan workers know that the campaign against untouchability is a part of the great search, whether we know it or not. Untouchability is a big falsehood. We have proved it for ourselves, or we should not be devotees of the cause. We can transmit the truth to others only by diligence and due observance of the conditions of success which have been often enough set forth in these columns.

Harijan, 21-9-1934

49. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 21, 1934

NARANDAS[1] GANDHI
NEAR MIDDLE SCHOOL
RAJKOT

SEND KANU.

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./I

50. LETTER TO DAVID B. HART

September 21, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 26th July last. The Indian movement stands for complete independence. That does not exclude an honourable partnership on absolutely equal terms. But there can be no association with imperialist exploitation of India or any other country. Naturally you have heard the opinion that India could not be left on its own. Imperialism has always justified itself in that manner. I believe in the maxim that no greater evil can befall a country than that it should lose its independence.

The caste system, as it exists at present, is certainly the bane of Hindu life. Its rigour is unmitigated by the British rule. On the

[1] The source has "Narayandas".

contrary it gains force because of the so-called neutrality necessarily observed by the ruling power for the sake of itself. The great movement of removal of untouchability is an attack on the evil underlying the caste system.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DAVID B. HART, ESQ.
PIPESTONE
MINNESOTA, U.S.A.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

51. LETTER TO R. V. SASTRI

September 21, 1934

MY DEAR SASTRI[1],

Prithuraj tells me that he wrote to you about some account in connection with *Harijan*. Is Ganesan up to date in his accountkeeping? Are you keeping an eye on it? You know how particular I am about prompt attention to all matters referring to account-keeping.

There is a small subscription received here. Prithuraj will be writing about it. It is a matter of debit and credit entry. I would like you to examine the ledger-keeping and give me your personal assurance that everything is kept in order. Though I like Ganesan for his energy and enthusiasm, I have never been an admirer of his businesslikeness. On the contrary I have had sad experiences. But I have nursed him because I have believed in his integrity.

I hope both you and Visalakshi are doing well and have forgotten your grief.

SHRI R. V. SASTRI
MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Editor, *Harijan*

52. LETTER TO NIRMAL K. BOSE

September 21, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

Khan Saheb was good enough to give me a copy of *Selections from Gandhi* for which I thank you. I have now your essay on "caste". If time permits, I shall gladly go through it and let you have my opinion, if there is anything worth saying.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. NIRMAL K. BOSE
KHADI SANGH
BOLPUR P.O.
BIRBHUM[1]

From a photostat: G.N. 10523

53. LETTER TO K. P. RAMAN VAIDYAR

September 21, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I advise you first of all to approach the local Harijan Sevak Sangh, then the provincial. It is difficult for me to say anything till you have passed through the usual channels.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. P. RAMAN VAIDYAR
P. M. MEDICAL HALL
COIMBATORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The address is from Pyarelal Papers.

54. LETTER TO JUGALKISHORE

September 21, 1934

MY DEAR JUGALKISHORE,

Your letter and statement to hand.

(1) It is no use my making any public statement. If you are not going to rejoin the institution, you and those who hold the same view should publicly announce your intention of not rejoining, in any case stating definitely that you would not because of your past political activity and to save the institution from remaining under the ban if your past activity had any connection with the continuance of the ban. I think too that it is open to the trustees to move the H. C for an order compelling the Government to lift the ban. But that is a purely legal point on which they should take legal advice. The trustees should consult Sir Tej, if they have access to him. He may give legal advice and also move the Government in his capacity as a public man.

(2) You can come whenever you like next month. I am in Wardha till 19th October. I shall give you some time for the discussion of education in general and village education in particular. You may come even earlier, if you want to see Kakasaheb too in the matter. He is here at present. He is laid up with fever which is slowly going down.

Yours,

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

55. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

September 21, 1934

BA,

No letter from you today. You will learn the news about Sumitra from my letter to Ramdas. You must not worry on her account nor on Nimu's. Amtussalaam and Vasumati go there regularly. Radhakisan[1] is there, of course. Amala has secured a job in Santiniketan and will leave in a few days. She is very happy about it. Kakasahep was having a temperature but it is coming down gradually. I daily walk up the

[1] Radhakrishna Bajaj

distance to see him. Nimu of course accompanies me part of the way and again joins me on my return. She is now learning to spin by herself. I have today a letter from Jamnabehn. I hope you write to her. Do write to Mani also.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 27

56. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

September 21, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

As the doctor here confessed his helplessness regarding Sumitra's eyes and advised her to be immediately taken to Bombay, I have sent her with Saritabehn. I have asked her to stay in Mani Bhuvan. The responsibility of finding the doctor rests on Sardar. You will not have to worry. However, they will come and see you.

Let not the repeated postponement of your return worry you. Come only when the doctor declares it safe. Till then let there be no burden on your mind concerning the affairs here.

Most probably Madan Mohan[1] will leave today. The Khan Brothers are quite comfortable. The younger brother is learning hand-spinning and the elder looks after Jones and Kaka. There is no need to worry about them. Radhakisan is an efficient worker.

I hope you follow the rules of diet suggested [by me]. What is your weight? Has Ghanshyamdas's operation been put off?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2941

[1] Madan Mohan Chaturvedi, addressee's secretary

57. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[*September 21, 1934*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

You probably remember a sum of Rs. 500 having been paid to Madhavdas, Ba's brother. He duly got the money. Of the total amount, Rs. 325 was paid at the time through Thakkar Bapa and the balance seems to have been drawn from the firm's office. That sum of Rs. 325 should now be returned to Thakkar Bapa. Send him a *hundi* for this amount. Particulars: 'In repayment of Rs. 325 paid to Gandhi in Bombay.'

And now about Madan Mohan. I thought he would leave today for. Bombay. But now that will not be possible. The Khan Brothers seem to need him here, though they said so only jokingly. They might give Madan Mohan some writing work, and would also like somebody whom they knew to accompany them everywhere. If you don't specially need Madan Mohan there, let him remain here for the present. Or if you can think of somebody else to take his place, let me know. Even if, however, you cannot do that and if you need Madan Mohan, I will send him immediately. In any case I will discuss the matter with them tomorrow.

Radhakisan must have written to you about Manhar Singh.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Rajendrababu is arriving on Monday or Tuesday. Andrews also will be arriving at the same time.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2942

[1] From the reference to the intended departure of Madan Mohan for Bombay. *Vide* the Preceding item.

58. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

September 21, 1934

CHI. GHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter. I should say 'letters' rather.

I got your statement. You have fought well. Try and see if you can fight in Lakhtar[1] now. If you can find anybody there who knows the Lakhtar ruler, use his good offices. Parikshitlal must have written to you about this.

I can understand that you cannot become a permanent secretary till you have come to like the place. Time and circumstances keep doing their work. We are ruled by them. That is why we sing "Thy will be done."

Till a permanent advisory board can be appointed, let things go on as at present. If you keep up the practice of consulting people in matters on which they are qualified to advise, you will be able to form from among them the kind of board you require.

The message which I have sent to workers in Gujarat is meant for all. Whether at present there are only two or three or 20 or 30 workers who can work in that manner doesn't worry me. I have only presented the ideal. We cannot revive the Vidyapith in the same form. Circumstances have changed and we have gone through new experiences. In the causes for despair which you have described, I see rays of hope. What one or two persons are doing today will be taken up tomorrow by ten or twenty and by two hundred or three hundred the day after. If, however, the experiment is not sound or if no worker of the right type has gone to any village, let it fail. If the experiment itself is unsound, it ought to fail or it will seem to have failed for want of the right type of expert workers. Some of us will try to make ourselves such workers. So long as we believe that India lives in her villages and not in her cities, we must go to the villages sooner or later. If so, why not today?

Neither Kaka nor Narahari has left the Vidyapith. If you say that Narahari has not gone to work in a village, that would be partly true. Anybody who lives among Harijans will be living in his mind in

[1] Where Harijans were forbidden the use of the public reservoir

a village. If that is not so, he wouldn't be able to render true service to Harijans. Where do the five or seven crores of Harijans live? You, I, Narahari and all others should have our hearts where they live.

Kaka, too, has not left. Because he has ceased to be a trustee, does that mean that he has left the institution? Why shouldn't we say, rather, that his connection with the institution has become closer? He himself thinks so. If you still do not understand, ask me again without the slightest hesitation. Kaka must be in Ahmedabad at present, and Vallabhbhai in Bombay. Swami, Kishorelal and the rest are here. Just now Devdas too is here.

I intend to take one more step. I am not discussing it here. I will ask Kishorelal to write to you today about it if he can.

Please do not feel disheartened. The examples of Bal and others show that we have to purify and strengthen our faith. Those who desert the cause obey their own nature. We need not lament what they do. I hope Rama[1], Vimu[2] and Dhiru[3] are quite well. Where do you all stay?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5525

59. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

September 21, 1934

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I wish to add one more to your already numerous burdens. You will find with this the opinion of the Civil Surgeon here about Sumitra's condition. In view of it, I am immediately sending her there with her grandmother today. They will stay in Mani Bhuvan, but you may keep them with you if you wish. Get Sumitra examined and treated by an eye-specialist. She has trachoma and also astigmatism. Both the conditions require treatment. Mani may accompany her wherever it may be necessary to take her.

My statement is being widely criticized. Please do create an atmosphere favourable to my leaving the Congress. Nobody is likely

[1] Addressee's wife,
[2] Addressee's daughter
[3] Addressee's son

to be interested in the programme of spinning and weaving khadi, as you have rightly pointed out in your statement[1].

I sent you yesterday a copy of my reply[2] to Vamanrao. Aney came and saw me yesterday. He spent full two hours with me. You must have read our joint statement[3]. There was a wire from Nekiram informing me that Malaviyaji was coming on the 26th. It was received while Aney was here. I have replied to say that Malaviyaji should not be put to the trouble of coming here, and that it would be enough if the two parties realized that whichever was likely to be defeated should withdraw. I should certainly like Chintamani[4] and Kunzru[5] to get elected. They are very useful persons. I don't know, though, how that can be assured. How can we know what the conditions in the U.P. are? Outside the U.P., I don't think they will succeed anywhere. He says that their candidates will win in Bengal. He is also hopeful about Phukan and about a successful tour of Utkal. Most probably they will not put up any candidate against Asaf Ali. He told me that there was complete rot in the affairs of Bengal. That the Congress office should be raided in broad daylight and Congress papers should be carried away was the limit. The raiders, however, did not find the faked receipts for which they had planned the raid. It is said that among them were some well-known Congress volunteers. Kaka's fever has yet left him completely.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar vallabhbhaine, pp. 134-7

[1] Issued to the Press on September 20, 1934
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Vaman G. Joshi", 20-9-1934.
[3] *Vide* "Gandhi-Aney statement", 20-9-1934.
[4] C. Y. Chintamani, Editor, *The Leader*
[5] H. N. Kunzru

60. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI

September 21, 1934

BHAI CHANDRA TYAGI,

Your letter.

Besides the *Gita* it would be good to read the *Ramayana* too.

Faith coupled with knowledge sharpens the intellect which then meekly follows faith.

The letter about Mirabehn was extremely sweet. Mirabehn is touring in the West these days for propaganda work. She will be back by the end of October.

In karmayoga one worships only God and that too through the service of His subjects.

One who remains awake during the best part of the night is entitled to sleep during the day.

It will do if you can spin good yarn of count 20.

I shall try to do something about Rajkishori[1]. At present I am confining myself to Wardha.

If you wish you can come to me in January. I have no programme fixed till then.

Ba is at Sabarmati these days with Ramdas who is unwell. Prabhavati, Amtussalaam, Vasumati and Umiya[2] are with me, also Mahadev, Pyarelal, Raj and Prithuraj.

Amina[3] is living in her husband's village these days.

My diet consists of milk, fruit and a boiled vegetable.

It is good to eat papaw when available. I am keeping well.

Jamnalalji is in Bombay at present having undergone a mastoid operation. He may come back in October.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI CHAND TYAGI
PRISONER
SAHARANPUR

[1] Fiancee of Balbir, addressee's son
[2] Jaisukhlal Gandhi's daughter
[3] Wife of Gulam Rasool Qureshi

[PS.]

I have just learnt from Satyadevji that there is some difficulty about sending for Rajkishori. Sethji's assent is required.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3270

61. LETTER TO RAM SARAN VIDYARTHI

September 22, 1934

DEAR VIDYARTHI,

Khan Saheb is most disinclined to accept public appointments. He does only when there is no escaping from it. He has been turning down proposal after proposal. I would ask you to secure someone else, preferably some local man. We should by this time learn to depend upon intrinsic merit than on extrinsic aid.

Yours sincerely,

MR. RAM SARAN VIDYARTHI, B.A.
PRESIDENTS KHADI AND SWADESHI EXHIBITION
STUDENTS' KHADI LEAGUE, MEERUT

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

62. LETTER TO DR. SATYAPAL

September 22, 1934

DEAR DR. SATYAPAL,

I have your letter about Lala Dunichand. You have written as if I did not know Lala Dunichand and his services. But I do not need to say anything as I understand that the whole thing was due to an error which has been, or is being, rectified.[1]

Yours sincerely,

DR. SATYAPAL, B.A., M.B.
42 NISBET ROAD
LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy. Pyarelal

63. LETTER TO BISHVA NATH GUPTA

September 22, 1934

MY DEAR BISHVA NATH,

I received only today your letter addressed to Deenabandhu Andrews. He had forgotten all about it. I do not know whether your wife has met the expected fate, or whether she is still lingering.

I shall be in Wardha till the middle of October. You are at liberty, therefore, to come to Wardha between now and then. I do hope that you are now in comparatively greater peace than when you wrote your letter to the Deenabandhu.

SHRI BISHVA NATH GUPTA
KUCHA MAIDAN
DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 20-9-1934.

64. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

September 22, 1934

CHI. PANDITJI,

I have read your letter to Kishorelal. Kaka's fever may be said to have come down now. But he will still have to be careful. What you write about him seems perfectly correct. There will be a great deal of misunderstanding if he leaves Gujarat. Probably you do not know the reason for his decision to resign. It is not his failure to consult the other colleagues. That was not a very serious error. And there is also some misunderstanding regarding that. But though he had not consulted the colleagues he stated in his letter to the Collector that the trustees desired to make a gift. A trustee ought not to be guilty of such a lapse. And, therefore, as atonement for it he resigned the trusteeship. This was a correct step. Neither Vallabhbhai nor anybody else had anything to do with it. It was only a question of self-purification or self-awakening. Now Kaka will refrain from leaving Gujarat at least for avoiding a misunderstanding.

No senior woman worker from the Ashram will be attached to Lakshmibehn[1]. All of them are following their own independent paths. I like this very much. We should be satisfied with whatever progress results from this. What Lakshmibehn needs is not company but a co-worker. She seems to feel alone here. Perhaps she will feel like that everywhere and always. I think she would prefer to have three or four or some more girls entrusted to her independent charge and be completely free to manage them as she liked. She would both need and not need an adviser. That is, she would consult him whenever she was in doubt, but act according to her own judgment. This is not a defect, nor may it be a virtue; or it can be either. It can be a shining virtue when it springs solely from the spirit of service. But such is not Lakshmibehn's case. However, she has no clear plan for the future. I, therefore, wish to discuss the problem again with her. I have already discussed it once and this is the impression I have formed. Can she stay with you? Do you desire it? How much do you earn there? For how long do you intend to stay there? You do wish ultimately to bury yourself in a village, don't you?

[1] Addressee's wife

The Kanya Vidyalaya cannot be run today solely by women. We do not yet have a sufficient number of such women workers. A few institutions seem to be run by them, but even in their case men help indirectly. There is no harm in this. Men's help will be needed for some years at least for running institutions in accordance with our ideals. They are part of our experiment also. There must be some men who have something of the woman too in them. If men and women can never live together without getting disturbed by sex attractions, their *brahmacharya* is not *brahmacharya*. Do not mother and son, father and daughter, brother and sister so live? Why, then, cannot men and women who are not so related live likewise? If we are sincere, we shall progress through our mistakes and realize one day that what seemed impossible has become possible.

I hope you don't believe that there was the slightest feeling of despair in my advice to break up the Ashram. If despair was the reason, I would have declared it. The sacrifice of the Ashram was intended to add lustre to the great work it had done. It is a pure thing, not an impure one, that is given as sacrifice. The Ashram had purity enough for the cause for which it was sacrificed.

The reason behind my desire to leave the Congress is not corruption in it, but the increasing differences of principle with the intellectual section in it. We can reform the constitution to deal with corruption, but to deal with differences of opinion one of the two parties should surrender to the other or they should fight it out. The path of surrender is in conformity with ahimsa— in fighting there is mostly *himsa*.

About other things Kishorelal will write.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 248. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

65. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. DESAI

September 22, 1934

CHI. NARAYANRAO,

May I call you Narayanrao[1] now? Should a boy named after Narayana[2] be timid or brave? Why should one be afraid of a minor operation like the removal of tonsils? Even little children, much younger than you, submit to such operation. Mani was brought home immediately after such an operation. Will you be brave now? If you are not, you, I, Mahadev and Durga, all of us, will be disgraced. Even that doesn't matter, though. But the Ashram also will be disgraced. How is it that you, who never tire of singing big *bhajans*, are afraid of a little pain? Come, then, save our honour.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9482

66. LETTER TO SURENDRA

September 22, 1934

CHI. SURENDRA,

I understand what you say about M. I have now received a letter of repentance from him. What pulled him down was his pride and his misplaced confidence about his purity. I see that even in his letter of repentance. We have now made some change in our way of living; still, I would suggest that whenever we suspect anybody we should-caution him and the head of the institution in which he is working. If I had had the faintest suspicion, I could perhaps have done him some good and he would not have been permitted to continue with self-indulgence for years as he did. Sharma says that he had cautioned me. But I don't remember. However, I had no faith at all in his judgment at that time. Even today I don't have much. I had proved to him in two instances that he was too willing to see the evil side of a man. But when you say a thing I will certainly have to think about it.

What you say regarding girls is perfectly right for those who are

[1] Mahadev Desai's son; Gandhiji offers to add the honorific "rao".

[2] Lord Vishnu

vigilant. But this [freedom of] association is implied in our experiment. Because our custom has been different and the present-day ideas of unrestricted freedom are getting mixed up with our experiment, there is an appearance of failure in it. But my impression on the whole is that our experiment has not proved a failure. We should not forget that the experiment is based on the truth that the *atman* is its own friend or enemy. We are trying to teach the girls to learn to protect themselves. Similarly, we can only guide the young men. We may try to frame rules of propriety to serve as hedges. Sometimes our calculations may even go wrong. We should go on correcting such errors. I regard untruth to be a greater sin than sexual immorality. If we don't get tired and don't give up our worship of truth, it will be well with us in the end.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

67. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

September 22, 1934

CHI. NARAHARI,

One must accept water served by anybody, unless, of course, his hand or the utensil is not clean. You may, if you wish, except that worker's mother from this rule, though I wouldn't like even that. If we make such an exception, it is likely to create a good deal of bitterness in the Ashram. I go even further and hold that, though the restrictions about inter-dining and inter-marrying observed outside the Ashram are all right, we should tolerate no restrictions about inter-dining in the Ashram. Hence we shall be justified in accepting anybody as a tenant only if he is ready to go as far as we do in this matter. Sometimes we may have to tolerate a person whose services we need in connection with our work but who sticks to some practices regarding untouchability. For example, an artisan whose help we require for a Harijan may tell us that he will not eat or drink anything touched by the latter, and we are unable to get anybody else; we may tolerate such a person. But your questions are not about such a case.

You have still not been able to satisfy Sardar. Try to do so if you can. The problem of the library has no connection with the question he has raised. You should see that very clearly. Sardar has

not found fault with me, but Kaka's error implies an error on my part. Moreover, even if I am not a trustee, I am looked upon as a very vigilant watchman. Looking at the matter in that light, it can be said that I should have saved Kaka even from writing that letter to the Collector. Why did I at all [allow the] mention of the other Trustees in the letter without verifying the facts? But doesn't the poet's line, "the powerful attract no blame"[1], apply to me also? It is not that I have not borne this in mind. Only, I have not involved myself in this affair. It is enough for me that I have understood the truth. And what more vigilance can I exercise? If I did not act on the assumption that everybody knew his responsibility in what he did, I would not be able to cope with as much work as I do. I have acted in this manner all my life. I have been content to accept moral responsibility.

After writing all this, the conclusion to which I come is this, that though Vallabhbhai has understood all this in his mind he has fearlessly done what he thought right. Even if, therefore, he harboursa prejudice against Kaka, that cannot be deduced from this incident. Hence, if he did anything in the past, that should not be made a reason by Kaka for leaving Gujarat just now and, therefore, not a word should be uttered against Sardar. Kaka has held his view all the time and we ought to try to persuade him to change it. I did that even while I was in jail and am still trying to persuade Kaka to see the matter in that light. And since Vallabhbhai's name has been connected with Kaka's desire to leave Gujarat and his good name has suffered, it has become all the more Kaka's duty not to leave Gujarat. Only then can the wings of slander be clipped. Otherwise this *kabar*[2] will keep on flying.

Does this reasoning appeal to you?

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] *Ramacharitamanasa*, Balakanda

[2] Name of a bird known for chattering incessantly

68. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

September 22, 1934

CHI. SHARMA,

Your letter. . . .[1] I do not recollect what you had written about M. but those days I had little respect for your ability to judge people. Not that I have much even now. I have no dearth of instances when you formed too hasty a judgment, but that does not matter. I read your article on malaria. . . .[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, pp. 106-7

69. INTRODUCTION TO "VARNAVYAVASTHA"[3]

September 23, 1934[4]

This booklet is a collection of all my writings on varnadharma. Its printing was complete some or perhaps many months ago but it remained unpublished in the absence of an introduction. I had agreed to write the introduction but could not do so till now on account of my Harijan tour.[5]

I

I should have loved to go through all my speeches and writings on varnashrama during the past fifteen years before writing this introduction, but it was physically impossible. perhaps it is well that I cannot do so. I have never made a fetish of consistency. I am a votary of truth and I must say what I feel and think at a given moment on the question, without regard to what I may have said before on it. The publisher too wants this.[3] It is for the reader to find out how far my present views coincide with those formerly expressed. Wherever he finds that what I have said or written before runs contrary to what I am writing now, he should without hesitation reject the former. I do not claim omniscience.[4] I claim to be a votary of truth and to follow to the best of my ability what seems to be the truth at a given time. As my vision gets clearer, my views must grow clearer with daily practice. Where I have deliberately altered an opinion, the change should be

[1] Omissions as in the source

[2] *ibid.*

[3] This sentence is from *Harijanbandhu.*

[4] This and the following sentence are from *Harijanbandhu.*

obvious, only a careful eye would notice a gradual and imperceptible evolution.

Varnashramadharma is a compound word known to all our vernaculars, and, though the word dharma (law) is related to both the components, varna and ashrama, the words are rarely used in separation. Hinduism is but another and imperfect name for varnashramadharma. The word 'Hindu' was apparently coined by foreigners and has more geographical than any other content. The dharma (religion or law) that Hindus have professed to observe is varnashramadharma. To say that the dharma of the Hindus is Aryan does not-carry us very far. It simply means that the Hindus, or those who lived in the east of the Indus or believed in the Vedic dharma,[1] called themselves Aryas and others non-Aryas. To give our dharma this kind of ethnic label is in my opinion misleading. It should have a name that declares its predominant characteristic, and everyone will admit that Hinduism is nothing without the law of varna and ashrama. It would be impossible to find any *smriti* of which a large part was not devoted to varnashramadharma. This law of varna and ashrama is to be traced to our most ancient scriptures —the Vedas, and so no one who calls himself a Hindu may ignore it. It is his duty to study it in all its bearings, and to reject it if it is an excrescence, and to foster it and restore it to its pristine purity, if it represents a universal law.

So far as the law of ashrama is concerned, it is extinct, alike in profession and observance. Hinduism lays down four ashramas or stages—the life of a *brahmachari* (continent student), the life of a *grihastha* (householder), the life of a *vanaprastha* (who has retired) and the life of a sannyasi (renunciator)—through which every Hindu has to pass to fulfil his purpose in life. But the first and the third are practically non-existent today, the fourth may be said to be observed in name to a small extent. The second is professed to be observed by all today, but it is observed in name, not in spirit. *Grihasthas* or householders of a kind we all are, inasmuch as we eat and drink and propagate our kind, like all created beings. But in doing so, we fulfil the law of the flesh and not of the spirit. Only those married couples who fulfil the law of the spirit can be said to observe the law of *grihastha-ashrama*. Those who live the mere animal life do not observe the law The life of householders of today is one of indulgence And as the four stages represent a ladder of growth and

[1] The words "or believed in the Vedic dharma" are from *Harijanbandhu*

are interdependent, one cannot leap to the stage of a *vanaprastha* or a sannyasi, unless he or she fulfilled the law of the first two ashramas—*brahmacharya* and *grihastha*. The law of the ashrama, therefore, is a dead letter today. It can be revived only if the law of varna, with which it is intimately interlinked, is revived.

That brings us to a consideration of the law of varna. Varna 'can certainly be said to exist, though in a distorted form. There are four varnas, but the distortion that passes as varna today is divided into countless castes. All the four varnas are divided into numerous castes and sub-castes, but Whilst those who belong to the first three are not ashamed to declare that they belong to them, those who belong to the fourth, viz., Shudra, prefer to declare the sub-caste as their label rather than their varna, which they regard as a badge of humiliation.

But labels never reveal a man's character, nor does the fact that a man clings to a label show that he deserves it. A black man will not be red, no matter how repeatedly he calls himself red. In the same way, one does not become a Brahmin by calling oneself a Brahmin. Not until a man reveals in his life the attributes of a Brahmin can he deserve that name. Considered in this light, varna may be said to be extinct. If we may, indeed, claim a label, we can call ourselves Shudras, though really we are not entitled to that name either, inasmuch as we do not observe the law of that varna. This law is the law of one's being, which one has to fulfil. The fulfilment should be spontaneous and no matter of honour or shame. How many are there who are fulfilling the law as law, i.e, spontaneously? We fulfil it because we cannot help it we are all serfs, whether we will it or no. Let no one contend that varna exists today, because all the functions of the different varnas are being performed by someone or the other and somehow or the other. Varna is intimately, if not indissolubly, connected with birth, and the observance of the law of varna means the following on the part of us all the hereditary and traditional calling of our forefathers in a spirit of duty. Those who thus fulfil the law of their varna can be counted on one's fingers' ends. This performance of one's hereditary function is done as a matter of duty, though it naturally carries with it the earning of one's livelihood. Thus, the function of a Brahmin is to study and to teach the science of Brahman (or spiritual truth). He performs the function, as he cannot do otherwise, as it is the law of his being. That secures him his livelihood, but he will take it as a gift from God. A Kshatriya will

perform the function of protecting the people in the same spirit, accepting for his livelihood whatever the people can afford to give him. A Vaishya will pursue wealth-producing occupations for the welfare of the community, keeping for himself enough for his own maintenance and rendering the balance to the community in one shape or another. A Shudra will perform physical labour in the same spirit of service.

Varna is determined by birth, but can be retained only by observing its obligations. One born of Brahmin parents will be called a Brahmin, but if his life fails to reveal the attributes of a Brahmin when he comes of age, he cannot be called a Brahmin. He will have fallen from Brahminhood. On the other hand, one who is born not a Brahmin but reveals in his conduct the attributes of a Brahmin will be regarded as a Brahmin, though he will himself disclaim the label.

Varna thus conceived is no man-made institution but the law of life universally governing the human family. Fulfilment of the law would make life livable, would spread peace and content, end all clashes and conflicts, put an end to starvation and pauperization, solve the problem of population and even end disease and suffering.

But if varna reveals the law of one's being and thus the duty one has to perform, it confers no right, and the idea of superiority or inferiority is wholly repugnant to it. All varnas are equal, for the community depends no less on one than on another. Today varna means gradations of high and low. It is a hideous travesty of the original. The law of varna was discovered by our ancestors by stern austerities. They sought to live up to the law to the best of their capacity. We have distorted it today and have made ourselves the laughing-stock of the world. No wonder that we have today amongst the Hindus a section which is bending its energies to a destruction of the institution which in their opinion spells the ruin of the Hindus And certainly one need have no mercy for the hideous distortion, which means nothing but destruction of Hinudism.[1]

II

I do not for a moment suggest that there should be no restrictions about food and drink or about marital relations. I do not myself regard it a duty to eat whatever is offered and in whatever

[1] The Gujarati original of what follows appeared in *Harijanbandhu* 23-9-1934.

company I should chance to be, and I regard it as nothing short of self-indulgence to marry according to one's fancy. Strict restraint is the law of life and must, therefore, govern these relations no less than others. I hold that there are rules about diet. Man is not an omnivorous animal, nor may he pick up his mate wherever he likes. But restrictions on marital or social relations have nothing to do with varnadharma, which is a different thing altogether. I can conceive blameless marital relations between different varnas, and people of different varnas seated together to eat food permissible to all. There is evidence enough to show that in ancient times there were no watertight compartments between varnas, so far as marital and social relations went, and I have no doubt that, in making varna a mere matter of restrictions about food and drink and marriage, we have done Hinduism grave harm.

Though the law of varna is a special discovery of some Hindu seer, it has universal application. Every religion has some distinguishing characteristic, but if it expresses a principle or law, it ought to have universal application. That is how I look at the law of varna. The world may ignore it today but it will have to accept it in the time to come.

I would define the law briefly thus: The law of varna means that everyone shall follow as a matter of dharma—duty—the hereditary calling of his forefathers, in so far as it is not inconsistent with fundamental ethics. He will earn his livelihood by following that calling. He may not hoard riches, but devote the balance for the good of the people.

The four varnas have been compared in the Vedas to the four members of the body, and no simile could be happier. If they are members of one body, how can one be superior or inferior to another? If the members of the body had the power of expression and each of them were to say that it was higher and better than the rest, the body would go to pieces. Even so, our body politic, the body of humanity, would go to pieces, if it were to perpetuate the canker of superiority or inferiority. It is this canker that is at the root of the various ills of our time, especially class-wars and civil strife. It should not be difficult for even the meanest understanding to see that these wars and strife could not be ended except by the observance of the law of varna. For it ordains that everyone shall fulfil the law of one's being by doing in a spirit of duty and service that to which one is

born. Earning of livelihood is the necessary result. But the law has to be fulfilled for its own sake. Its due observance by a large part of mankind will end the conflicting inequalities and give place to an equality in diversity. All callings would be equally reputable—whether that of the minister or of the lawyer, of the doctor or the leather-worker, of the carpenter or the scavenger, of the soldier or the trader, of the farmer or the spiritual teacher. In this ideal state of things, there would be no room for the monstrous anomaly of the three varnas lording it over the Shudra, or of the Kshatriya and the Vaishya enjoying themselves in their palaces and the Brahmin contenting himself with a cottage and the Shudra toiling for the rest and living in a hovel. This chaotic state of things indicates that the law of varna has become a dead letter.

When, if ever, the ideal state of things, as indicated above, had been reached in India, I do not know. But I do hold that it is the only ideal state that is easy enough to approach and that it is not only for the Hindus but for the whole of humanity.

Under such dispensation, all property will be held by its respective holders in trust for the community. No one will claim it as his own. The king will hold his palace in trust for his people and will collect the taxes only to be used for the benefit of the people. He has the right to have no more than is enough to keep him, the rest belongs to, and shall be spent only for, the people. Indeed, he will, by virtue of his resourcefulness as a ruler, add to what he collects from the people and return it to them manifold. The Vaishya likewise is such a trustee. The Shudra is made so. Indeed, if one may have preference, the Shudra, who performs body-labour in a spirit of service and duty, who has nothing to' call his own and who has no desire for ownership, is worthy of the world's homage; he is the lord of all because he is the greatest servant. The dutiful Shudra will, of course, repudiate any such claim, but the gods will shower their choicest blessings on him. One may not say this of the proletariat of the present day. They certainly own nothing, but I expect they covet ownership. The calling of labour and service is no pleasant duty to them. It is a painful task, for it does not satisfy even the cravings of the flesh. My praise is for the ideal labourer. It is the estate I have longed to attain.

But this duty of labour cannot be imposed on anybody. In fact, the panegyric may be uttered only by those of the three varnas who fulfil the law themselves, viz., the law of regarding and behaving

themselves as the servants of the community and holding all the property in trust for it. The three varnas exist today only in name, they are supposed to invest one with a higher status than that of the Shudras and have ceased to imply any duty to be performed. There is nothing, therefore, to be surprised at, nor to be sorry for, when in such a state of things the Shudras should be jealous of the others' possessions and their estate and seek to share them. When the law of varna was discovered, there could be no compulsion from without. The world can only be sustained by a willing and dutiful observance of it.

In an age where competition is held to be the law of life, and possession in the largest measure of the world's goods the *summum bonum*, and when everyone counts oneself free to follow any calling one likes, this attempt to hold up varna as the law of life may well be regarded as an idle dream, and an attempt to revive it as childish folly. Be that as it may, it is my firm conviction that it is true socialism. In the language of the *Gita*, it is equality of the spirit, without which no other equality is possible. The performance of it, no matter how slight, bodes well both for him who performs it and for the rest of mankind.

I may add that, though the varnas are to be four, the number is not, in my opinion, unalterable. In the future reconstruction, the number may be more or even less than four. What is essential is that one must seek one's livelihood, and no more, from following the vocation to which one is born.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

Harijan, 28-9-1934, and *Harijanbandhu*, 16-9-1934 and 23-9-1934

70. 'BLESSED POVERTY'[1]

Several years ago, a close friend and associate belonging to a rich prosperous family, who had received a high degree of education and had travelled and seen much in different parts of the world, solemnly-abjured the use of all vehicular and other means of transport and has ever since stuck to his resolve through all vicissitudes of weather and health. He has kept up correspondence with me. I have preserved one of his letters which I received during my Harijan tour,

[1] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 23-9-1934. The text reproduced here, except the last paragraph, is from the abridged version in *Harijan*.

in order to share it with the readers of the *Harijanbandhu*. I am sure the following excerpt from it recounting some of his experiences will be appreciated by them:

> Of the many vows that I took, I have found the one about travelling on foot to be the most beneficial. It has afforded me the richest experience. As a result of it, my faith in God today is much stronger than it was when I set out from Ahmedabad about a couple of years ago.
>
> Having had experience of both riches and poverty, I am in a position to testify today that, whilst I have almost always found pride and licence threatening the life of the rich and whilst those who wielded authority could not without difficulty escape the intoxication of power, poverty alone left enough scope for a spontaneous and natural devotion to God, a spirit of service and the capacity to suffer and to endure. I have now clearly realized that the state of voluntary poverty is really a blessed state and that riches, in the worldly sense, are nothing in comparison. May God always keep me in poverty and keep me free from the slightest desire for possession or from the care for the morrow.
>
> Everywhere I have found that men despise the sinning and the fallen, and yet who amongst us can claim to be immaculate? I have at last grasped the great secret of shunning sin but not the sinner.

This friend has travelled on foot from Gujarat to and beyond Dehra Dun, has passed through hundreds upon hundreds of villages and come in contact with the villagers. His testimony should, therefore, command our respect. Kindred spirits in all climes and ages have borne similar testimony to the joy and beauty of travelling on foot and renouncing all worldly possessions. Thoreau's *Walden* in praise of walking is well known. All the great reformers of the world who have from time to time effected religious revolutions have eschewed the use of vehicles and walked thousands of miles for delivering their mission. Yet, by the intensity of their faith and the strength of their realization, they were able to achieve what we, in our aeroplane age, with all the gee-gaws at our command, could hardly aspire to. Not mad rush, but unperturbed calmness brings wisdom. This maxim holds as true today as when it was first propounded ages ago.[1]

Those who hear of this aspirant's experience will not all take to walking nor will they pray to become poor. Also they may not distinguish between the sin and the sinner and learn to love the sinner

[1] What follows is translated from Gujarati.

and abhor sin. But it will be no mean achievement if we learn the value of this attitude and try to follow it as best as we can. A Harijan worker at any rate ought to do nothing less than this.

Harijan, 12-10-1934, and *Harijanbandhu*, 23-9-1934

71. ROBBERY IN THE NAME OF RELIGION

I give below extracts from a letter[1] which Shri Chhotalal Gandhi of Ankleshwar has written to me regarding the Harijans of Sajod.

While the wound of Talaja is still fresh, here is another. Everywhere it is the same. The law says that Harijan Hindus enjoy equal civil rights with caste Hindus. Even the officials are ready to help. But the fanatic Hindus seem to care little for the law or order of the officers. How to overcome such utter ignorance? Ahimsa seems defeated and love seems to dry up. But I find the pen quoting the lines: "As long as the elephant relied on his own strength, it availed him not" and "Rama is the strength of the weak" and they comfort me. Ahimsa is true ahimsa only if it keeps shining even in the midst of darkness all around. The remedy for *himsa* is ahimsa, for hatred love and for untruth truth, as the remedy for cold is sunshine.

If there are sincere, religious-minded reformers in Sajod, they are sure to win in the end. Let the fanatic caste Hindus do as they please. The reformers should shelter the oppressed Harijans. They should rigidly adhere to the rule that they will refuse to avail themselves of any facility not permitted to the Harijans. They should of course secure for the latter officers' help whenever necessary. They should plead with the caste Hindus to keep within proper limits. Let the orthodox Hindus take bath or do any other expiation if the Harijans exercise their rights and enter a public place. The Shastras do not enjoin punishment of the Harijans. They only say that anybody who regards himself polluted should take a bath. No Shastra suggests that we should harass or beat the person by whom we regard ourselves polluted. This is so simple a thing that the reformers should have confidence in themselves and, keeping within the bounds of ahimsa, go on doing their duty.

The suggestion to send some well-known public worker to Sajod

[1] Not translated here. It described the harassment of Harijans in Sajod, in Ankleshwar taluka, consequent on the insistence of the authorities that the Harijan pupils in the local school should be permitted to sit with the other pupils.

and the nearby places is certainly a good one. But visits by the leaders in Ankleshwar taluka itself are likely to produce better results than a visit by someone sent from a distant place. We cannot always rely on such outside help. Ultimate success will depend on the ceaseless vigilance, ability and capacity for self-restraint of the local workers.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 23-9-1934

72. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

September 23, 1934

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

I have your letter and the important enclosures. I will have to find time to go through them carefully. I cannot bear the thought of your being a puppet agent. Either you must [have] an effective voice or you should not be in it. I will write to Shankerlal about it.

DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA
LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

73. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

September 23, 1934

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your letter and now letters from children. I am glad that they like the place. Of course you cannot give another name to your bungalow, and the expression "Vision Bungalow" is quite good and significant.

Andrews was here a week ago and he would be back on Tuesday from Santiniketan. Mira expects to be in Bombay just in time for the Congress session.

Ramdas had fever and general debility. He is now better.

I understand that the spining-wheel was sent to Porto Novo, and I hope that it has now come to you. I would like to know the progress made upon it

How nice it would be to have you here at this time ! The weather is superb—very cold, [*sic*] not too much sunshine and yet enough of it.

With love to you all and kisses to children,

BAPU

MRS. ESTHER MENON
VISION BUNGALOW
TANJORE

From a photostat: No. 131. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child*, pp. 107-8

74. LETTER TO JHINABHAI JOSHI

September 24, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

With reference to your letter of the 20th instant, received yesterday, it seems to me that your question can be answered in two ways. If the exhibition is to be an exhibition of things that India has been able to produce, exhibits such as you refer to have their proper place in such an exhibition. It however, the exhibition is a purely educational effort made to encourage khadi and swadeshi in terms of the millions, then I should exclude rigorously anything that has no direct bearing on the manufactures made today by the millions of villagers in the villages. I have no right to say anything further, or to give any further guidance. Your Committee are the proper judges to decide what the exhibition is for, or what it should have.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI JHINABHAI JOSHI
CONGRESS HOUSE
A.I. KHADI EXHIBITION AND SWADESHI BAZAR
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal-Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

75. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 24, 1934

MISS MIRA,

Your letter is before me. This will probably be my last letter to you while you are in Europe.

Khan Saheb A. Ghaffar Khan is with me. His daughter is with his brother's wife there. He wants the girl to come back and have her training at the Ashram. He would like her to accompany you. Mahadev will send you the address. If you see her, i.e., if this reaches you in time to see her, you will bring the girl with you.

The Brothers, friendship seems to me to be a gift from God.

Love.

BAPU

Government of Bombay, Home Department, Political, File No. 129/34. Courtesy: National Archives of India

76. LETTER TO KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI

September 24, 1934

DEAR SISTER[1],

Govindbhai,s letter is very strange.[2] If I were you, I should not enter into any argument with him, but simply clear the position. I would still like you to go there—not to find someone else but yourself. Pondicherry is one of the places where such a search may be fruitful. G. has written to me also. I can see no good in complete dissociation from physical human contact. You have to achieve it notwithstanding physical contact. I would like you to go [to] Mayavati or Bellur. You will not dismiss Dayal Bagh from your mind.

Pray do not apologize for writing to me. After all you are a member of the Ashram.

KHURSHEDBEHN
BOMBAY

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan

[1] The superscription is in Gujarati.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Govindbhai R. Patel", 24-9-1934.

77. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

September 24, 1934

CHI. KAKA,

You may either keep this girl with you or go and live wherever she wants you to live. She is sticking here like a fly importuning me to bring you here for treatment.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10890

78. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS AND KRISHNA KAPADIA

September 24, 1934

CHI. MADHAVDAS[1] AND KRISHNA[2],

You will be glad to learn that I had a letter from Medh today in which he has promised to contribute something at any rate. I will let you know as soon as I receive the amount. How much do you owe in all? I hope both of you are well. Do you earn anything?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII

79. LETTER TO JAYA

September 24, 1934

CHI. JAYA,

Bhanu is gradually improving. I have not taken the trouble to know what that welcome gift of a *hundi* is. If you sisters don't like it,

[1] Kasturba Gandhi's brother
[2] Kasturba Gandhi's brother's wife

by all means don,t accept it. Our aim is somehow to propagate khadi by pure means.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. JAYABEHN
NENSHI MORARJEE'S BUNGALOW
SEA VIEW, GHODBUNDER ROAD
VILLE PARLE, B.B.&.C.I. RLY.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIII

80. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

September 24, 1934

CHI. RAMDAS,

I don't like your idea of paying Sharma. His services cannot be rewarded with money. You two have become friends. There can be no giving and receiving money between friends. I think he will feel offended if you offer to pay him. If he does accept, I would be surprised. His needs are being met and I have also been doing whatever else is necessary for him. You need not, therefore, worry about his economic condition. In fact I see from his letters that he would be fully satisfied if you are completely cured physically, mentally and spiritually and if you can testify that you were cured mainly through his instrumentality—and that is as it should be. I would, therefore, advise you to give up the idea of paying him that sum. Having said this, let me repeat that you are a completely free agent and that the money belongs to you. If you think that giving it to him would be the best way of using it, by all means give it. You may rest assured that what pleases you will please me.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

81. LETTER TO GOVINDBHAI R.PATEL

September 24, 1934

BHAI GOVINDBHAI,

I am surprised to see that you can positively state that our paths are different. You also seem to have forgotten the Ashram rules. As

for my aim, you will see even if you read my statement just published that it is the same as yours. It is possible that our paths seem different. How innumerable are the lines which lead from the circumference of a circle to its centre? I suppose you also know that I am all the time in search of a guru. I don,t know when I will meet him, but I am striving to deserve one. The game is in God,s hands. In any case that Guru of all gurus is always there. I dance as He pulls me.

I read your letter to Khurshedbehn. She is about 40. She is a granddaughter of Dadabhai Naoroji and is a learned woman. She has toured Europe. But still she lacks peace of mind. She has read some writings of Shri Aurobindo. I have, therefore, advised her to go there and have some experience of the place.[1] She is not a woman who would go anywhere merely out of curiosity. I found your letter to her very curt. What do you mean when you say that there will be no objection to her staying in a hotel? If now you realize that your letter was discourteous, write her a courteous letter and invite her.

SJT. GOVINDBHAI
AUROBINDO ASHRAM
PONDICHERRY

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

82. LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI

September 24, 1934

CHI. RADHIKA[2],

Krishnadas gave me news about you. There was a letter to Brijkrishnadas from the lady-superintendent of your institution saying that you were having fever with temperature at 100° and have lost ten lb., that you can eat only once a day and felt no appetite in the evening. You occasionally write me a postcard, but it is always practically blank. I think it would be better if, instead, you didn't write at all.

You should understand that, if they say dharma should be practised with proper regard for one,s health, while studying also one should take proper care of one,s health. Even if you were to stand first

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Khurshedbehn Naoroji", 24-9-1934.
[2] Maganlal Gandhi's daughter

in the examination, what good would it do if, in the bargain, you were to become bed-ridden? Why don't you study so as not to endanger your health? Can you not prepare for the same examination in Rajkot? Sushila would certainly help you. You will get-there facility for studying all the subjects which you are studying now. The air and water of Rajkot have also agreed with you. Krishnadas says that you have also not been able to make any friend there. If all this is true, you should write to me so that I might write more. If you are afraid that somebody might read your letters, you should mark them 'Private,. Nobody would then read them.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

83. LETTER TO N. V. MATHANY

WARDHA,
[*September 24, 1934*][1]

BHAI MATHANY,

I have your letter, I do not remember to have received your letter of August 31.

As for Bhavnagar, I wrote what I thought. I know Bhai Balwantrai fairly well. Occasionally I even have personal contact with him. I know his ideas.

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI N. V. MATHANY
C/O MRS. T. P. ALLADEEN
LALBAZAR
CHHAPRA

From the Gujarati original: M. K. Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] From the postmark

84. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

September 25, 1934

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

By all means keep that postcard with you. I don't need it. I pray that Kumarsaheb will soon recover.

As for myself, God helps me to keep working.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5938. Also C.W. 3254. Courtesy: Mahesh P. Pattani

85. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

September 25, 1934

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter. I had already asked [them] to write [to you] before I received it.

Nobody will read your letter, though it contains nothing private and anybody who reads it is likely to learn something from it. I would like it if you send me your articles, etc. I may be able to know your progress from them.

Your time-table is good. Your hours of rising and meals seem to be all right.

I will arrange that a sum of Rs. 5 be sent to you every month as suggested by you. I should like you to let me know your needs without any hesitation. Ramachandran will not accept boarding charges for you. I will respect his wishes.

Your reading is good. Don,t mind if he teaches you poems. One should learn them too. I suppose you are learning short-hand only for my sake. I think you have unnecessarily taken up that burden. But I am not asking you to stop it now. It is certainly a useful thing. I am very glad that you are learning Malayalam. I think it would be very good if you pick it up and also Tamil. It is not difficult for one who loves languages to learn several of them. After you have had some experience there, you may spend some time in Madanapally if you wish to do so. Try to acquaint yourself with the music of that place.

I have not read the book about the renascence. You did well in quoting the passages. Many such things are being written about me. I learn something even from them. At least one learns humility. It is necessary for us to know how others see us. Sometimes they may even be right. For self-examination, such criticism is very useful indeed. Praises are of no help here. One learns very much from criticism.

Write to me regularly.

I receive letters from Harilal regularly. He at any rate says that a very good change has come over him. He is studying the *Gita* fairly well. I have written to him and promised to help him. Let us see what happens. Ba and Ramdas are still at Sabarmati. Ramdas is fairly well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7288. Courtesy: Kanti Gandhi

86. A LETTER

September 25, 1934

Did I write to you about the long letter I received from Dwarkanath? This was as different from his letter to you as an elephant is from a horse. In it he was flying in the air. He had shaken off the bondage of rules and it seemed to him easy to achieve in a matter of days what Vishwamitra had taken years to do.[1]

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

87. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

September 25, 1934

CHI. BRAJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. The last letter I have not sent to Damodardas. If the matter is to be clarified you should write to him direct. I have no idea if I shall have any time to spare in Bombay.

[1] Acquiring complete self-mastery through austerities. *Vide* also "Letter to Dwarkanath", 1-10-1934.

I do not see any harm in accepting a maintenance allowance from your brothers. You cannot but accept it from some source or the other if you devote all your time to serving.

As your brothers cannot render service themselves there is nothing surprising if they supported one who wishes to serve; it will be a noble act. So far you could be said to have been observing *aparigraha*[1]. But accumulating the amount in balance is as good as stealing and outright possession. What can a really poor man do for his friends? Should he steal and give them money? This is not friendship but enmity which you are practising. Why should you not announce to all your friends that you are no more a Chandiwala[2] but only a poor servant. Their friendship will be proved true if they remain your friends even in your poverty. Have you any idea how you and they became friends? You had money and they squandered it right and left. All that you write in this respect is only self-deception. At any rate, this is my reading. But you are not to act upon it till you have truly realized it. Your heart,s bidding should be regarded as the truth though the world may pronounce it false.

What can you possibly do in Bombay during the Congress session? Do you want to fall ill? Why need you leave the quiet of Mussoorie? Stay on and spin more, engage in deeper introspection and make yourself fit. But even in this matter your own inclination must not be repressed. For my part I am keeping everyone away.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am writing to Radha.[3] It might not be advisable to eat *roti* till the digestion has returned to normal. But follow the doctor's advice.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2425

[1] Non-possession

[2] Literally, 'a dealer in silver'

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Radha Gandhi", 24-9-1934.

88. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA

September 25, 1934

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

Your letter. I shall send in a few days a note about testing the strength and the uniformity of yarn.

Tell Father that Deenabandhu Andrews will not be able to go to Utkal. He has to leave Bombay on October 6.

I am pleased that you-all plan to work in a new field. Do tell me all about it.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. ANNAPURNA KUMARI
P. O. BARI CUTTACK
DIST. CUTTACK

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2785

89. LETTER TO V. V. DASTANE

September 25, 1934

The strongest reason for wearing khadi and sacrificial spinning is that we would thus identify ourselves with the poorest. Khadi which at present appears costly to us can in course of time become the cheapest of all cloth and that too with just a little effort on everybody,s part.

DASTANE
BHUSAVAL

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

90. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

September 27, 1934

MY DEAR HORACE,

I love you all the more, if more was possible, for your frank letter. You will be surprised to know that long before I received your

letter I had expressed the opinion that Jawaharlal could present the Indian case more convincingly than I before English audiences. What you have said therefore is not new to me. But even apart from that I am quite sure that I must not leave India for the present at any rate. I can speak to you all more effectively from here. Nor do I think that any purpose can be served by sending Mrs. G.[1] there alone. I am sure that both she. and I must be dismissed from the minds of English friends in so far as our visit is concerned. I want every minute I can have for the things I have said in my recent statement[2].

Love to you and Olive[3].

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1423

91. LETTER TO SITARAM SASTRY

September 27, 1934

DEAR SITARAM SASTRY,

I have your letter enclosing me a report of the Khaddar Samsthan. You give me therein the speed of *takli* spinners. It is very poor compared to the results obtained here. Therefore my opinion is that someone should learn the method of spinning adopted here.

It is a brilliant discovery. The highest speed attained is 400 rounds per hour. It is easily learnt. The average speed attained here is over 200 rounds. Little children learn the method much more quickly than old men like me. I am trying to learn it. I have not mastered it, but I have no doubt that with a little perseverance I shall be able to do well. I am not yet satisfied with the barter method in which paddy has been adopted as the standard. It requires very careful study.

I have not been able to reach your letter received previously with the report. I refer to the letter in connection with the A. I. S. A. I

[1] Kasturba Gandhi
[2] *Vide* "Statement to the press", 17-9-1934.
[3] Addressee's wife

am simply overwhelmed with work, and I have as yet only limited capacity.

SHRI SITARAM SASTRY
CHANDOLE P. O.
GUNTUR DT.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

92. LETTER TO AMRITLAL D. SHETH[1]

September 27, 1934

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

With reference to our conversation of yesterday, I know that my letters and my talks about the Congress attitude in respect of the Princes and the people of the Indian States have given rise to some misunderstanding. It surprises me that anybody should think that I do not consider them to be an integral part of the Indian nation. Of course they are, even as Indians residing in the other parts of geographical India are. Though we are under different systems of Government, surely we are one. I was also surprised to be told by you that some persons attribute to me the opinion that people of the Indian States who are members of the Congress are so by sufference. There is a definite provision in the Congress constitution for their being enrolled as members, and those who subscribe to the Congress objective and carry out the other rules governing the membership have as much right to be enrolled as members as any other Indian.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI AMRITLAL D. SHETH
(CAMP) WARDHA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] A similar letter without the last but one sentence was sent to the addressee on October 9, 1934.

93. LETTER TO C. ABDUL HAKIM

September 27, 1934

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your letter forwarding resolution of the District Board, North Arcot. I am grateful to the Board for the resolution.

Yours sincerely,

JANAB C. ABDUL HAKIM SAHEB BAHADUR
PRESIDENT, DISTRICT BOARD, NORTH ARCOT
ARKONAM

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

94. LETTER TO K. RAMA MENON

September 27, 1934

MY DEAR MENON,

In connection with Shrimati Matilda B. Kallon I am quite satisfied that although she is born a Christian she will have no hesitation in imparting religious instruction to Harijan boys and girls in accordance with the tenets of Hindu faith. There should, therefore, be no difficulty about entrusting the hostel to her care on the ground of her being born a Christian.

Here is a copy of her letter to me.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

SHRI KONGATTIL RAMA MENON,
ADVOCATE
CHALAPURAM (CALICUT)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

95. LETTER TO MATILDA B. KALLON

September 27, 1934

MY DEAR MATILDA,

I have your letter. I have written[1] to K. Rama Menon to the effect that your being a Christian should not be in the way of the hostel being entrusted to your care. Your letter is completely satisfactory.[2]

SHRIMATI MATILDA B. KALLON
NETTUR
TELLICHERRY, N. MALABAR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

96. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

September 27, 1934

BA,

I have replied to your letter. It is not right to ask you both to come over to Wardha just now. Let the treatment at the hospital there also be completed. The climate there leaves nothing to be desired. It is a different thing if Ramdas does not like the place. You should, therefore, have patience. God will see that everything ends well. Rajendrababu is leaving tomorrow, and Sardar too.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 26-7

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Matilda B. Kallon", 19-9-1934.

97. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

September 27, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Vallabhbhai tells me that you are thinking of buying a cloth mill in . . .[1]. By "you" I mean your firm. I was certainly shocked to hear this. I felt that it was wrong for a person like you, who had taken so much interest in khadi, to own a cotton mill; but I could not decide whether I should write to you. Meanwhile, Janakimaiya[2] came here yesterday. She had appeared at the Madhyama examination and was mentally relaxed. She has been upset since she heard this story. She cannot understand for whom you want to burden yourself with this responsibility. The sons also do not like the idea. And the servants say that since you will now have a mill of your own, you will not ask them to wear khadi. Nobody likes your decision. Please, therefore, give up this plan of buying a mill. If you have already bought it, find some means of saving yourself from this evil. Let the partners buy it if they wish. If you want to engage yourself in some business, there are many others. If you wish to earn more money so that you may spend it for public good, we shall do without such contribution. Om[3] asks me whether I have advised you to buy a mill because I need money for the Congress. What answer can I give to such questions? If you can, send a wire giving the happy news that you have abandoned the plan.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2943

98. LETTER TO LILAVATI MUNSHI

September 27, 1934

CHI. LILAVATI[4],

There will be no room for the danger that you envisage. I am planning from right now. As you know, I don't rely on votes in my favour for doing anything. It is enough that I get a measure of what

[1] The name has been omitted.
[2] Addressee's wife
[3] Addressee's daughter
[4] K. M. Munshi,s wife

the politically minded desire. Please have no fear.

My being out [of the Congress] does not mean that I shall be idle. I will continue to ply my charkha, perhaps with increased speed. But surely one hand is not enough for clapping. Hence I shall certainly need whatever help people can give.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

99. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

September 27, 1934

. . .[1] Whatever is happening is for the good. One gains all this by submitting to God's will. Whatever happens, the mind that has offered up all the acts to the Lord never feels discontented. One who is conscious of the "I" is satisfied with nothing. Know that this contains all that is worth knowing. It is true, of course, that it is difficult to cultivate the attitude of offering up all the acts to the Lord. However, if after knowing the truth we ceaselessly strive to follow it in practice our contentment will go on increasing.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

100. DISCUSSION ON SWADESHI[2]

[Before *September 28, 1934*]

Q. How does this new swadeshi differ from the old?

A. The old emphasized the indigenous nature of the products, irrespective of the method or the produce or the prospects of the product. I have ruled out organized industries, not because they are *not* swadeshi, but because they do not need special support. They can stand on their own legs and, in the present state of our awakening, can easily command a market. According to the new orientation, if it is new, I would certainly have our swadeshi organization to seek out all village industries and find how they are faring. We will have experts and chemists who will be prepared to place their knowledge at the disposal of villagers. We will, through our experts, offer to test the

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] This appeared under the title "More Talks on Swadeshi". Mahadev Desai has summarized here the discussion Gandhiji had with a number of persons.

articles manufactured by village handicraftsmen and give them suggestions to improve their wares and would sell them if they would accept our conditions.

Q. Would you take up any and every handicraft?

A. Not necessarily. I should examine each one of them, find out their place in the economy of the village life and, if I see that they must be encouraged because of inherent merit, I should do so. Now, for instance, I should be loath to allow the village broom to be replaced by the modern broomstick or brush. I would ask Mrs. Gandhi and other women of the household to tell me about the relative merits of both. Mind you, I would consider the advantages from all points of view. Thus, the village broom, I should think; must be preferred because it indicates tenderness and kindness to small life, whereas the brush makes a clean sweep of those things. Thus, I should see a whole philosophy behind the broom, for I do not think the Creator makes any distinction between minute insects and (in His estimation) minute men.

Thus I should pick up all kinds of village crafts and industries which are about to die and deserve revival, both because of their intrinsic merit and their other useful aspects, and I should thus go on making discoveries. Take our trifling tooth-sticks, for instance. I am quite sure, if you were to deprive the bulk of the Bombay citizens of their tooth-sticks, their teeth would suffer. I cannot contemplate with equanimity the modern tooth-brush replacing the tooth-stick. These brushes are unhygienic. Once used, they deserve to be thrown away. However much disinfectants you may use to sterilize them, they can never be as good as fresh ones. But the *babul or neem* tooth-stick is used once for all and has highly astringent properties. Again, it serves the purpose of a tongue scraper. The West has yet to discover anything so hygienic as the Indian tooth-stick. You may not know that a doctor in South Africa claimed to have controlled tuberculosis among the Bantu miners by insisting on the regular use by them of these tooth-sticks. I would be no party to the advertisement of modern tooth-brushes even when they are made in India. I should declare my preference for the tooth-stick. This is cent per cent swadeshi. If I take care of it, the rest will take care of itself. Ask me to define the right angle and I should do it easily, but do not ask me to define the angles between the acutest and the most obtuse you can make. If I have the definition of a right angle, I can make whatever angle I need. Though

swadeshi is eloquent enough as its own definition, I have called mine cent per cent swadeshi, because swadeshi is in danger of being watered down. Cent per cent swadeshi gives sufficient scope for the most insatiable ambition for service and can satisfy every kind of talent.

Q. You see swaraj at the end of it?

A. Why not? Once I said in spinning-whcel lies swaraj, next I said in prohibition lies swaraj. In the same way I would say in cent per cent swadeshi lies swaraj. Of course, it is like the blind men describing the elephant. All of them are right and yet not wholly right.

If we tap all our resources, I am quite sure we can be again the richest country in the world, which we were, I suppose, at one time. We can repeat the phenomenon, if we cease to be idle and profitably occupy the idle hours of the millions. All we need is to be industrious, not like a machine, but like the busy bee. You know I am now advertising what I call ''innocent honey"?

Q. What is that?

A. Honey scientifically drawn by scientific bee keepers. They keep the bees and make them collect honey without killing them. That is why I call it innocent or non-violent honey. That is an industry which admits of great expansion.

Q. But can you call it absolutely non-violent? You deprive the bee of its honey, as you deprive the calf of its milk.

A. You are right, but the world is not governed entirely by logic. Life itself involves some kind of violence, and we have to choose the path of least violence. There is violence even in vegetarianism, is there not? Similarly, if I must have honey, I must be friendly to the bee and get it to yield as much honey as it will. Moreover, in the scientific bee culture, the bee is never deprived of its honey altogether.

Harijan, 28-9-1934

101. SOME CONUNDRUMS

A Brahmin of Mithila writes a long letter in Hindi, but wants a reply in the English *Harijan*. From his style I can quite clearly see that he knows English well. His letter contains questions of universal importance. The original is being sent to the editor of *Harijan Sevak*. I gladly give below the substance of the letter.

The correspondent belongs to an orthodox family, but has shed

all prejudice against Harijans and permits all but those who are manifestly unclean, such as unwashed Doms, to draw water from a well which has hitherto been open only to the so-called high-class Hindus. He says:

> 1. Why don't you preach to Harijans cleanliness, abstention from carrion-eating and the like, just as you preach to caste Hindus removal of untouchability?
>
> 2. What is the distinguishing characteristic of a sanatani 'Hindu?, Why do you claim to be a sanatani Hindu?
>
> 3. You have said that, when a man forsakes his hereditary calling, he creates confusion of caste. How far is this consistent with the meaning inferable from the use of the expression[1] in the first chapter of the *Gita*?
>
> 4. What have you to say to the verses in the *smritis* on the marriage of a Brahmin woman with a Shudra man?
>
> 5. You say there is no superiority or inferiority among the four varnas. I believe in what you say, but is it consistent with many texts one can quote from the Shastras which clearly enunciate the opposite? See what the *smritis* have to say of Shudras.
>
> 6. You say that varna or caste is determined generally by birth. You also say that a Brahmin who does not show in his conduct the marks of one falls. To what varna does he belong? What about a Shudra who shows the mark of a Brahmin?
>
> 7. It is said that a man becomes what he eats and that he is corrupted if he takes food or even water prepared or even touched by a corrupt person. And you say that prohibition against inter-dining is not an integral part of varna or caste rule. Is that so?
>
> 8. When workers like me work against untouchability, sanatanist opponents say all sorts of things against you. We combat most things. But your having taken the life of the dying calf in the Ashram we have not been able to explain. Are you able to throw light on this question?

The original letter is well reasoned and is written with a pure motive. I don't know if I have, in the process of condensation, done

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, I. 41

justice to the spirit in which the original has been written. If I have not, the correspondent should know that the injustice is wholly unintended. Now for the reply.

1. I do preach to the Harijans cleanliness, abstention from carrion-eating and intoxicating drinks and drugs, necessity. Of taking education themselves and giving it to their children, also abstention from eating the leavings from caste Hindus' plates, etc. Only, I do not put these before Harijans as condition precedent to the removal of untouchability. On the contrary, I suggest to caste Hindus that the shortcomings are not inherent in Harijans but that they are due to our criminal neglect of—even deliberate suppression of—these brethren of ours. Therefore, the disappearance of these shortcomings will take place sooner for our fraternizing with Harijans even as they are and then helping them to become better men and women. That is the least penance caste Hindus can do for the past wrongs. We must approach Harijans as penitents or debtors, not as their patrons or creditors extending generosity to the undeserving.

2. Belief in, and practice of, varnashrama dharma may be said to be the distinguishing characteristic of Hindu dharma. The translation appearing in this *Harijan* of a Gujarati preface[1] I have written for a collection of my writings on the subject explains what I mean by varnashrama dharma. I regard myself a sanatani Hindu, because I try to the best of my ability to obey the eternal precepts of the faith as embodied in the Shastras as I understand them.

3. That a person creates confusion of caste when he leaves his hereditary calling is obvious. When a Brahmin begins to earn his bread by, say, following the profession of a barber or engineer, he does create confusion of caste, as much as when a barber or an engineer begins to impart religious instruction as a means of livelihood. In the *Gita*, the adjective used in reference to women is 'wicked'. It has, therefore, reference probably to promiscuous intercourse rather than the offspring born of the sacred tie of marriage.

4. I do not regard as revelation the collection of verses printed under one cover as *smritis*. I have no doubt that there are many interpolations in the *smritis* and other scriptural books. As I have said often enough in these columns, I reject as interpolations everything in the *smritis* or other writings that is inconsistent with truth and non-violence or other fundamental and universal principles of ethics.

[1] *Vide* " Introduction to *Varnavyavastha*", 23-9-1934.

There is abundant testimony in the ancient writings to show that such marriages were permitted.

5. This question is answered in the answer to the fourth question. The idea of superiority and inferiority is repugnant to the most elementary principles of morality. A Brahmin who considers himself superior to any single creature of God ceases to be a knower of Brahma. If we are children of the same God, how can there be any rank among us? The very first mention of varna in the Vedas likens the four varnas to the four main parts of the body. Is the head superior to the arms, the belly and the feet, or the feet superior to the other three? What will happen to the body, if these members began a quarrel about rank? The law of varna is one of absolute equality among all the creatures of God. It is the basis of all the religions of the world. The verses in the *smritis* about Shudras deserve to be summarily rejected as being contrary to the spirit of humanity.

6. Both the Brahmin and the Shudra who forsake their *svadharma* are fallen. In their fallen state, they belong to no varna. They can repair their mistake by resuming *svadharma*—their own calling.

7. It is insolence for any person to regard a fellow-being as corrupt and, therefore, untouchable. A man is corrupted by harbouring corrupt thoughts, making corrupt speech and doing corrupt acts, never by taking water or food at the hygienically clean hands of fellow-beings. I do believe that a man has to choose the ingredients of the food he eats.

8. Workers must not seek to defend me against aspersions nor resent them. They are the common lot of reformers. Aspersions have never hurt any person in the world. What hurts is the wicked thing a man does. Workers have enough on their hands in having to defend the cause they have taken up. I have no sense of shame or repentance over the taking of the life of the dying calf, whose agony I could see but could not alleviate in any other manner. I must not dwell here on the ethics of the act. If the correspondent or any reader is curious about it, he must procure the writings[1] in *Young India* and *Navajivan* of the time when the act was performed.

Harijan, 28-9-1934

[1] *Vide* "The Fiery Ordeal", 4-10-1928; "The Tangle of ahimsa", 11-10-1928; "A conundrum", 18-10-1928; "Jain ahimsa",25-10-1928 and "More about ahimsa", 1-11-1928.

102. MAHARASHTRA HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH

I had referred to Shri Rajbhoj's complaint[1] to Shri Marathey, Secretary of the M. P. H. S. S., and he sends the following prompt reply[2].

From the accounts sent to me, I abridge due receipts and give the expenditure in details. The receipts during the period covered amounted to Rs. 15,638-6-0, and the expenditure was:

		Rs.	a.	p.
Administration	..	2,793	7	9
Propaganda	..	577	0	0
Welfare	..	6,772	14	2
Scholarships	..	346	0	0
Wells	..	275	0	0
Advances, grants	..	2,798	1	0

Harijan, 28-9-1934

103. LETTER TO H. G. JAGIRDAR

September 28, 1934

DEAR SIR,

I have your letter. It was with difficulty that I gave a message to the Columbia Company.[3] I am sorry that I could not undertake to give any more messages.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI H. G. JAGIRDAR
RUBY RECORD CO., CHURCHGATE HOUSE
CHURCHGATE STREET, FORT, BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This appeared in *Harijan*, 7-9-1934. *Vide* also "Letter to P. N. Rajbhoj", 31-8-1934 .

[2] Not reproduced here

[3] *Vide* "Broadcast to America", 13-9-1931.

104. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

September 28, 1934

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

Write to the Utkal [office] about the sum of Rs. 500. This matter may be considered to have been settled now. The tour expenditure is in my mind all the time. I am delaying the matter for a few days because Jamnalalji is not here.

About Surajbehn, pressure is being brought to permit her to stay in Seva Mandir for six months. I am thinking what our duty is. Can you suggest a possible line of solution?

I was taken aback by what I learnt about Satcowriebabu. I wonder how that happened. The accompanying papers are for your information. Ghanshyamdas should write to Dr. Bidhan.

If you find any difficulty in deciphering this letter, please let me know.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1143

105. CABLE TO MIRABEHN

September 29, 1934

MIRABAI
CARE ALEXANDER
WOODBROOKE
SELLY OAK, BIRMINGHAM

GOD LIGHT YOUR PATH. BLESSINGS.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6299. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9765

106. LETTER TO AKSHAYA KUMAR ROY

September 29, 1934

DEAR AKSHAYABABU,

I was distressed to hear through Deenabandhu Andrews that you were suffering from leprosy. I was, however, glad to learn that there was every chance of your getting rid of it, as the treatment was begun in the early Stage of the disease. May God give you peace.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI AKSHAYA KUMAR ROY
18 GOBRA HOSPITAL
GOBRA ROAD, CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal.

107. LETTER TO ANANT P. GHURYE

September 29, 1934

MY DEAR GHURYE,

I have seen your letter to Sardar Vallabhbhai, and he has handed me the 10 Rupee *hundi* for which I thank you. I shall use the *hundi* for distributing khadi among deserving Harijans. But I do not like your anxiety for name and fame. Many have laid down their lives for the country. Their names are written in the Book of God, and not in that of men. Whatever is written in the books of men is bound to perish one day, and their merit in God,s books is diminished to the extent that the names appear in men's books. Let the public celebration of such anniversaries and public recognition in other forms be reserved for those who are known to fame. But let the memory of those who are not so known remain for ever unknown. Let us cultivate the virtue of regarding virtue as its own reward.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI ANANT PARASHURAM GHURYE
HANUMAN TERRACE
BLOCK 12 AB, LAMINGTON ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

108. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

September 29, 1934

BA,

You must be getting my letters all right. If Ramdas does not recover his full strength you should cancel your visit to the Congress session. It is not worth attending. Nimu cannot be taken to the session where everything would be crowded. Women with encumbrances must not visit a place where one has to do with what little comfort comes one's way. Should not Ramdas think of a change of climate only after he is perfectly all right? Please do not bother yourself about this. Use the mosquito curtain for yourself.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 27-8

109. LETTER TO SARITA

September 29, 1934

CHI. SARITA,

I read your postcard. You must have received my earlier letter. I have asked Mani to consult a doctor. I think Sumitra ought not to be given cereals. You may give her cucumbers if tender ones are available. Also tomatoes if ripe ones are available.

Cereal food might not agree with her condition. There is no harm in letting her have a few almonds, also raisins. I hope you keep well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 11531

110. LETTER TO SUDARSHAN V. DESAI

September 29, 1934

CHI. MAVO[1],

I got your letter. It would be good if you write your letters with somebody by your side. We must not use toys from England or from any other country. We should be content with whatever Indian toys we can get.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5740. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

111. LETTER TO VIMALCHANDRA V. DESAI

September 29, 1934

CHI. NANU[2],

I got your letter and article. Your handwriting leaves much to be desired. The letters in the same word should not be written apart. It would be good if you showed your letters to somebody after writing them. How long do you intend to stay there?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5739. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

112. LETTER TO JAIKRISHNA P. BHANSALI

September 29, 1934

CHI. BHANSALI,

I get your letters. I like them. I have not replied to them because you didn't give your address. I am writing this because now you have given it. I am very glad to learn that you have removed the stitches from your lips. The natural thing is to speak or remain silent as one

[1] Valji G. Desai's son
[2] Valji G. Desai's son

feels an urge from within. External means produce only a temporary effect.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

113. A LETTER

September 29, 1934

CHI. . . . [1],

I have already told you that I smell impurity in the relation between you and R[2]. I told Kishorelal about this and he told Kaka. The latter wanted to know clearly what I meant. I think it my duty to let you know what I have told him in reply. It seems to me that consciously or unconsciously your attraction for each other is like that which obtains between a man and a woman. That such attraction may exist unconsciously to oneself is proved by experience. It does not necessarily result in action. I have tried to find some other cause for your infatuation, but have not succeeded. I have clearly observed that your relationship has benefited neither you nor R. It is not at all befitting that, because he has served you personally, you want everybody else to admire him. I am doing you no injustice by writing this. Even if there is no impurity in you, I would cease to be your loyal co-worker if I did not put before you the suspicion that might arise in my mind. You should feel neither hurt by what I have written nor get angry. Examine yourself and write to me frankly. I will believe what you state to be perfect truth. I don't believe that you would knowingly hide any blemish in you.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] The names have been omitted.

[2] *ibid.*

114. LETTER TO SURESH SINGH

September 29, 1934

CHI. SURESH[1],

I had your letter. Ranisaheba must have received my telegram. Birth and death are a part of our destiny. Why should we rejoice or grieve? You have to carry on the banner of Dada,s good work and comfort Ranisaheba. I hope that the a Management will remain as before. Do keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8688. Also C.W. 2892. Courtesy: Kumar Suresh Singh

115. THE HARIJANS OF SAJOD

I have already written in the previous issue something about the harassment of the Harijans of Sajod.[2] Now a Harijan from Sajod describes how the Harijan children are being tortured. I am not publishing his letter since it contains nothing new. It is a good sign that the Harijans have now started writing and talking about the tortures they have been undergoing. Right now, I would advise patience to this friend who has written to me and also to other Harijans. Some of the so-called caste Hindus of the place have been trying to protest against these tyrannies. Let the Harijan men and women help them with courage and fearlessness. That would do for the time being. I often hear of cases where Harijans are afraid to do even this much. It happened in Talaja. I have just received a letter from Maharashtra complaining about a girl being bodily tortured, but the girl as well as her relatives are not prepared to give evidence. They apprehend more harassment if they gave evidence. Nor is their apprehension without a ground. That is why those Harijans who are prepared to testify to-harassment deserve to be complimented. It is certain that such harassment is not going to last long, because, on the one hand, caste Hindus are becoming more and more aware of their duty towards Harijans, and, on the other, Harijans are becoming more

[1] Younger brother of Raja Avadhesh Singh of Kalakankar who had just died

[2] *Vide* "Robbery in the Name of Religion", 23-9-1934.

and more conscious about their harassment. God always takes the side of justice. With this faith, let Harijans and caste reformers continue to do their duties.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 30-9-1934

116. SHUDRA BY CHOICE

A co-worker has sent a few questions regarding the varna system out of which I propose to take up only one. The question can be thus put in my own words:

> Since you are running after varnadharma please solve some of my problems if you can. The *Gita* describes agriculture, animal husbandry and commerce as the natural functions of the Vaishyas. Commerce means selling by one person to another goods produced by a third. Or, the seller may produce the goods himself. The number of people engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry runs into crores. Even so Bharwads[1], Mochis[2], Chamars, and [some] peasants are today regarded as Shudras, whereas according to the definition given above they ought to be all regarded as Vaishyas. In my view and yours all the four varnas should be looked upon as equal, living humbly on the same level, not mounted on one another,s shoulders arrogantly crushing those below them. But we know our society has a different opinion. In these circumstances why should not such peasants, Bharwads, Chamars, etc., as are not employed as labourers but earn their liveli hood by their own independent effort be regarded as Vaishyas? The peasant tends his own farm,

Bharwads and Chamars engage in animal husbandry. They are not anybody's servants. If we do not accept them as cattle-breeders, then they are traders, in so far as they themselves sell what they produce. In no way can they be covered by the definition of a Shudra. On the contrary, why isn't anybody who is a servant a Shudra— whether he is judge or governor, soldier or scavenger?

[1] Shepherds
[2] Cobblers

These complications are real. They crop up because the varna system has broken down. The solution does not lie in regarding shepherds, etc., as Vaishyas. Would the proud Vaishyas admit in their supposedly exclusive varna those who are regarded as Shudras? The above argument is no doubt convincing. But justice cannot be administered just by a convincing argument. For administering justice one has to reach the bottom and it can be reached only through experience.

Experience tells us that the varna system has been wiped out. So, for the restoration of varnadharma we must all voluntarily become Shudras. Of course we are Shudras but only because we cannot help it. But-there is no merit in an act done out of helplessness. It is no act of merit, if I give a few coins to somebody out of compulsion. But if I give willingly what I have hitherto given out of compulsion, it would be such an act. The same is true of the Shudra varna. He who realizes this may belong to any so-called higher varna but by considering himself a Shudra he makes a beginning of the restoration of the varna system.

Let us consider its implications. One who has become a Shudra by choice would serve others as a matter of dharma. He may or may not earn his livelihood, but with pure heart would devote himself body and mind to service. He would purposely restrict himself to marrying amongst and dining with such of the so-called Shudras who follow the rules regarding personal cleanliness, etc. He would completely identify himself with the class regarded as Shudra. He would accept their poverty as far as possible. He would try to help them get over their weaknesses. Such a Shudra in spite of his possessing spiritual knowledge of a Brahmin, the fortitude of a Kshatriya and the business acumen of a Vaishya would earn his bread only through his service. In the varna system each varna may follow the good points of all the four varnas. It ought to be so. For instance, the *smriti* enjoins:

"Do not kill. Speak the Truth. Do not steal. Follow the path of sanctity. Control your sense organs. This in brief is the dharma Manu has prescribed for all the four varnas." (1)

Or,

"Do not kill. Speak the Truth. Do not steal. Do not yield to desire, anger, greed and be loving and good for all living creatures. This dharma is common to all the four varnas". (2)

Hence, what distinguishes one varna from another is that its

special characteristics are conspicuously developed in its case and through them alone should the particular varna earn its livelihood.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 30-9-1934

117. NOTES

AN ODIOUS PRACTICE[1]

A friend[2] from Dholka writes:

In the voters' rolls for the Municipal, the Local Boards' and the Councils' elections that are being published at present, the names of franchise-holders, when they happen to be common folk, are, instead of being put down in full, recorded in an abbrevated form. This is, especially in the case of Harijans, an insult to the holders of the names. As I perused these lists in the papers, I felt that this was an uncalled for and gratuitous, though unintended, insult to the Harijans which must be stopped. I discussed this question with the Assistant Collector in charge of Dholka taluka. I understand that instructions have been given to the Talatis in this taluka to reocrd the names of Harijans in full. But in other places the odious practice remains in force. What is wanted is a general declaration of the official policy in this respect.

> This might at first sight appear to be a trifling matter. But it has significance. I have no doubt in my mind that the contemptuous way in which these people are treated in their daily intercourse is in some measure aggravated by this practice.

The correspondent is certainly right. By itself the matter might seem to be trivial, but it is one more instance of arrogation of caste superiority. It does, therefore, call for prompt attention. Apart from injuring Harijan feelings, the use of undignified nicknames in voters' lists scarecely does credit to our good taste. Let us hop that all those who have the service of the Harijans at heart will henceforth scrupulously eschew this objectionable practice and that the authorities will lose no time in taking the necessary steps to discontinue it in the course of administrative routine.

Harijan, 12-10-1934

[1] The gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 30-9-1934.

[2] Dahyabhai M. Patel

118. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 30, 1934

CHI. NARANDAS,

I am observing silence just now. I do this frequently in order to overtake the correspondence. Before I started the silence, I had told Kishorelal to reply to your previous letter. I am now replying to your letter received today.

It seems desirable to me that, before we help Harilal to open a store, he should go round selling khadi and that, too, only in Porbandar. He himself will not find it convenient to travel from place to place just now. Even if you decide to open a store, you should not do that in haste.

A letter for Santok is enclosed.[1] How does she meet her miscellaneous expenses? Solve the problem yourself without reference to me.

Kanaiyo[2] is settling down.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8417. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

119. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

September 30, 1934

BHAI VITHALDAS,

Please go through the accompanying figures and let me know whether they are correct. Swami has studied them and he says that 40 per cent of khadi proceeds is kept by the trader and the producer gets only 60 per cent. If this is correct, we should change it. We don't wish to propagate untruth even unknowingly.

We should also examine how much of the 60 per cent is received each by the cultivator, the ginner, the carder and the weaver, and publish the figures.

[1] This letter is not available.

[2] Addressee's younger son

You have omitted one step in the process. It should be shown how much is received by the handloom worker who weaves millyarn. And the figures relating to Indian mills are certainly not given in the right manner. The payment received by the workers should be shown separately. Also, separate figures should be given for mills which use foreign cotton and those which use indigenous cotton and the cost of machinery should be given.

Moreover, Manibehn told me that an attempt was made once to charge 15 annas a yard for a piece of khadi which was priced at 12 annas a yard. But through oversight the original price-mark on the piece was left intact. The customer noticed it and the dealer, feeling embarrassed, then charged at the rate of 12 annas. What could it mean?

The third complaint is that our prices are the highest.

Please inquire and let me know.

I hope you keep good health.

Lakshmi[1] just seems to have vanished!

Enclosed: A slip

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9786

120. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

September 30, 1934

BHAI SHRI VITHALDAS,

Enclosed is a khadi *hundi* for Rs. 10. Buy with it khadi which may be useful to Harijans and distribute it among Harijans selected by you. Let me know what you do. If you can't decide, consult Nurgisbehn.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9786-a

[1] Addressee's brother's daughter

121. LETTER TO SIDDHIMATI

September 30, 1934

CHI. SIDDHIMATI,

I got your letter. Your handwriting is poor. The lines are not straight. Improve this. If you wish to observe *brahmacharya,* you should live separately from Mahadev, never be alone with any other man or touch him without reason. You should be absorbed in your work and keep Ramanama inscribed in your heart all the twenty-four hours of the day.

SIDDHIMATI
HUBLI

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

122. LETTER TO BEHCHARDAS

September 30, 1934

BHAI BEHCHARDAS,

I got your letter. I showed it to Kakasaheb. He is not satisfied with your work. He also says you have not returned to him Rs. 25 which was paid to you in connection with your work and which you have to return. There are other complaints too. In these circumstances he has no wish or courage to entrust you with any work.

BEHCHARDAS
DELHI

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

123. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

September 30, 1934

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

Your letter.

"The slanderer is our brother." We have no reason to avoid the people who talk ill of us, we have to beware of those who praise us.

I have not seen the articles on Hindi, I shall see them now.

The Hindi article is enclosed.

I did have a letter from Ranisaheba. All that was possible was done. So why need we worry further?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Prithuraj says that he has some dues from *Harijan Sevak* the bill for which has been submitted. Please look into the matter.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1076

124. LETTER TO DUNCAN GREENLEES

October 1, 1934

DEAR DUNCAN,

I have your greetings and your prayer both of which I value. Yes, I do agree that a seeker of Truth can find it when alone. But the word 'alone' does not mean solitary confinement. It means that he must not be clogged in any way.

I hope you are keeping well. You have said that I had not answered some point in your letter. What was it? I hope you are receiving the *Harijan* also.

SHRI DUNCAN GREENLEES

BARALING

KHEDI SAOLIGARH, BETUL DT.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

125. LETTER TO M. TAYABULLA

October 1, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. It is a most difficult thing for me to interfere in the matter you mention. It is essentially a matter for you, local men, to settle. In any case, I must not intervene.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 61

126. A LETTER[1]

October 1, 1934

DEAR FRIENDS,

I have your letter for which I thank you. It is essentially a domestic matter which the local people should settle. In any case, I dare not interfere. You can act up to the formula that I have presented—he who has the least chance should retire.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1

127. LETTER TO DWARKANATH

October 1, 1934

CHI. DWARKANATHJI,

It is surprising that you did not get my letter. I had also returned your long letter with it. I had not shown it to anybody, nor had anybody read the reply, though, according to me, there was no necessity for such secrecy. I see that all your views have changed. What you regarded so long as dharma now seems *adharma* to you. If you are indeed right, maybe all of us are wandering in darkness. This is what Tulsidas has said: How can a man who believes untruth to be

[1] Found among the letters to Gopinath Bardoloi

truth be delivered from his delusion? Who is to decide what is truth? Let us, therefore, bear with each other. Anybody who can do in 14 days what Vishwamitra took 14 years to do, will deserve the humblest reverence from all and his light will not remain hidden. I think, however, that you have fallen into grave error. I have been trying to lead a life in accordance with the ideals of the Ashram for nearly 50 years now. There is likely to be less chance of error in them. Dinkar had shown me your letter to him. What a contrast between that and your letter to me!

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

128. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER[1]

WARDHA,

October 1, 1934

Even so, some of the comforts they enjoy, even the rich do not get. Though we have no right at all to such comforts, we get them and so accept them humbly. I am writing all this to convince your reason. I know of course that by writing the letter you have done, you have only given vent to your pent-up feelings, but in fact you are putting up with everything. You did perfectly well to give vent to your feelings. My duty was to explain to you your duty. I have done that. Now stop even worrying. Let me know if you have any problem. Do not in the least feel sorry for writing what you did.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni; Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Since the letter is incomplete, the addressee's name cannot be ascertained. However, from the contents, the letter appears to have been written to Ramdas.

129. LETTER TO JAIMINI BHUSHEN MITTRA

October 2, 1934

DEAR JAIMINIBABOO,

I am not taking any interest in the individual selections. I have suggested the principle on which both the parties should act. You should convince Dr. Roy that the other candidate is no good.

JAIMINI BHUSHEN MITTRA

MORE STREET

CALCUTTA

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

130. LETTER TO M.[1]

October 2, 1934

MY DEAR M.,

I have your letters. I hope you duly received mine which has . . .[2]

I see from one of your letters that you have again lost the conviction of guilt. You seem to doubt your untruthfulness. Do you not realize that you were regarded by the responsible persons as almost a saint, in purity! But who am I to judge you, if you cannot yourself? God alone is the infallible Judge. May He show the way. I can but pray that you and we may see the Light and follow it.

Fom the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

131. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

October 2, 1934

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

I got your letter regarding your budget. What you write I had never thought of. I don't see the point of Ghanshyamdas and myself

[1] The name has been omitted.

[2] Omission as in the source

sitting together to scrutinize it. Nor does it seem right to me to spare ten days for such scrutiny. I should like merely to glance through it. If you send me copies of the original, together with a note containing your recommendations, I would go through them at leisure and send my suggestions. I don't in the least understand the necessity of spending two or three thousand rupees for scrutinizing budgets.

Yes, if you wish you may call a meeting yourself. And if my presence at the meeting is necessary, it can be held here only. But whatever is to be done can be done only in November. I shall not be able to spare even one minute during this month.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1144

132. LETTER TO AMBA GANDHI

WARDHA,
October 2, 1934

CHI. AMBA,

Your letter is very good.

Could you not understand my reason for stopping you from coming to Kashi?[1] Even as it was, there was quite a large number with me and I had become a burden on others. In such a situation, it was not desirable to add to the number even by one. By stopping you, I could stop Padma, too, as also Sitala Sahay and his wife. If I had taken you along with me, I would have had to take along others as well. To me, all are equal. Do you understand now? If you still have any doubt, ask me. Are you learning Gujarati?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: S.N. 33059

[1] Gandhiji was at Kashi on August 1 and 2, 1934.

133. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

October 3, 1934

CHI. HARILAL,

I have your letter. Narandas has been a little hasty. I am sending a wire to you today as follows:

> "Delay spending money received from Narandas. Await letter. Bapu"[1]

I woke up at 2.30 and started thinking about my dharma towards you. I couldn't go to sleep again and left the bed at 2.45. After cleaning my teeth and drinking warm water with honey, I have set down to write this.

I want the loan which Narandas may give you to be debited to his private account. Till I am quite sure, I do not wish to draw your expenses from a public fund or secure them from friends in public life. It would be compromising dharma to do so.

I do not yet believe in your regeneration. I must have independent proof of that. I, therefore, do not wish to ask you for an assurance to that effect. However, I wish to assure myself through your conduct. If you have produced a good impression on Ishvarlal with whom you are staying, ask him to write to me. And let me have your own replies to the following questions.

1. Have you touched liquor any time after you wrote your first letter to me from there?
2. Have you indulged in sexual pleasure through mind, speech or body?
3. Do you smoke?
4. Have you any other addiction?

Let there be this understanding between you and me. If at any time you break your word to me or if it is proved that you have deceived me, I should fast for at least seven days. I may fast even longer, if I wish and have the strength to do so, in case your breach of promise or misdeed pains me very much.

Though I was still hopeful about you, I had hardened my heart to stone and did not give you any monetary help. But I felt from the

[1] This is in English.

letter which you wrote to me from Porbandar that there had been a change of heart in you and wanted to give you whatever help I could.

If you have come to have trust in my way of life and my understanding of dharma, you will be convinced of the correctness of whatever demands I make or advice I give. Please do not ask me to discuss and explain, but carry out my suggestions as a patient does those of a vaid as so many orders. Do not do anything through a feeling that because I am your father you have a special dharma towards me. You may have such dharma to help me *when I* am completely disabled. But in this matter treat me as a friend, a vaid and a co-worker. Why are you so keen on staying in Porbandar? It would be convenient for me to help you if you stayed in Rajkot.

If, however, you decide to stay in Porbandar, I will have no objection to your staying in our ancestral house. Is any part of it vacant? Does it get good air?

Till I am satisfied, and Ramjibhai also is satisfied, that you have become steady, please give up the idea of starting a store.

With the help of khadi samples, you may secure what orders you can in Porbandar.

If you have come to have the same faith in the spinning-wheel and khadi that I have, you should enthusiastically start learning spinning on the *takli* and the spinning-wheel, and spin daily on the former. Learn all the antecedent processes also. You can do all this more easily in Rajkot. Are you ready to live with me and under my eyes? I may like you to do that after the Congress session is over.

Kakasaheb and Kishorelalbhai are here with me. And Vinoba also, of course.

Whatever you do, do after full deliberation. Do not do anything that is beyond your strength, nor anything that does not appeal to your heart or reason. Do not try to establish good relations with me merely in order that you may be able to live. You have been able to do that somehow all these years. Doesn't God provide for everybody, good or bad, in some manner or other? But imperfect man must continue to discriminate between good and evil till the end of his life. Nobody living in the flesh has become perfect or will ever become, for the marriage of the *atman* with the material body is in itself a limitation of its perfection. Marriage by its very nature is a limitation. When the *atman* becomes a perfect *brahmachari,* it will no longer create new bodies for itself. But why need I take you into all this?

May you attain the highest good. May God dwell in you. He alone is your true Guru. "Friends of the body but care for their own interests; they will keep away at the end." You should, therefore, do as the self within bids you, with God as witness. It will not hurt me in the least if you do not accept my advice. But it will hurt me very much indeed if you deceive me. I am an old man now, and you are not a child.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Dirary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

134. LETTER TO SHAM LAL

October 3, 1934

DEAR LALA SHAMLAL,

Herewith letter from Shri Ramrichhpal Singh. I detained the letter asking the writer for permission to send it to you, as it contained statements that appeared to me to be startling and which I was not prepared to believe until I had referred the letter to you. You would please now let me have your criticism upon the letter and return the letter with it. I have not kept a copy of that letter.

Yours sincerely

Encl. I

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

135. LETTER TO H. P. MODY

October 3, 1934

DEAR MR. MODY,

Here is a copy of the appeal for help from Gorakhpur. The distress is untold. The signatories to the appeal are all wellknown men. Baba Raghavdas, who is in charge of relief operations, tells me that he has sent an appeal to mill-owners for cloth. He has had response from Delhi. But I understand that at the time he wrote to me there was no

response from Bombay or Ahmedabad. I commend this appeal to the attention of the mill-owners of Bombay.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

H. P. MODY, ESQ., BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

136. LETTER TO DR. B. JAYARAM

October 3, 1934

DEAR DR. JAYARAM,

I thank you for your letter of 29th ultimo with reference to Shri Bhole's admission to the Princess Krishnajammanni Tuberculosis Sanatorium, Mysore. I take it that you have advised Brahmachari Ramachandran of Bangalore with whom Shri Bhole is staying and who, I know, is in correspondence with you.

Yours sincerely,

DR. B. JAYARAM, M.B., ETC.
MEDICAL OFFICER
PRINCESS KRISHNAJAMMANNI TUBERCULOSIS
SANATORIUM
MYSORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

137. LETTER TO DR. S. SUBBARAO

October 3, 1934

DEAR DR. SUBBARAO,

It was very kind of you to have sent me a letter showing that you had issued prompt instructions to admit Shri Bhole. I have now heard from the Medical officer in charge of the Sanatorium saying that he was ready to admit Shri Bhole and that he would be treated free of charge.

Yours sincerely,

DR. S. SUBBARAO, B.A., M. B., M. R. C. S.
VISVESVARAPURAM
BANGALORE CITY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

138. LETTER TO MANAGING GOVERNOR, BHARAT STORES

October 3, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your two letters. With reference to the first, you will find the ink referred to by me advertised in the Directory published by the Allahabad Swadeshi League. The Bombay con cern which is new is not to be found in it. Its address is: Dolatram Kashiram & Co., Thakurdwar Road, Bombay 2. with reference to the second letter, I cannot undertake to open your store.

Yours sincerely,

MANAGING GOVERNOR
BHARAT STORES, LTD.
AGRA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

139. LETTER TO NAGENDRANATH SEN

October 3, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I never said to anybody that the chances of the various candidates were to be discussed by me with Shri Aney.[1] All that happened between us was that we confirmed the principle that in order to avoid a domestic quarrel the candidate who had the least chance of success should withdraw.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI NAGENDRANATH SEN, B.L.
KHULNA (BENGAL)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Gandhi-Aney Statement", 20-9-1934.

140. LETTER TO B. SUBBANNA

October 3, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I am grateful to you for the beautiful casket which I have just received. I shall try to get the best price possible for it and use the proceeds for the khadi and Harijan service.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI B. SUBBANNA, RETIRED JUDGE
BASAVANGUDI
BANGALORE CITY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

141. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 3, 1934

CHI. NARANDAS,

You will find with this a letter from Harilal and a copy of my reply[1] to him. You will see from my reply what my advice is. It is true that security will have to be offered for whatever he borrows. It would not be proper to advise him to enter into such transactions [just now]. If you think it necessary that he should be given something for his daily expenses on food, etc., and if you can spare money for that, give him what he needs from your private account. If you cannot, let me know. I will think over the matter.

Jamnadas has come here. He is leaving for Jamshedpur today. We had a long talk.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I got your letter regarding the dairy. I will decide immediately now. About Sankaran in my next letter.

[Encl.] Two sheets

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8418. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Harilal Gandhi", 3-10-1934.

142. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

October 3, 1934

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have just received a letter from Narandas in which he says that the working of the dairy is steadily deteriorating. Therefore we have to settle at once the question in the name of which body its accounts should be kept. I have been putting off a decision in your absence. If you now can examine its working and give your decision, please let me have it soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

About other things Kishorelal is writing.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9065

143. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

October 3, 1934

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

Mama[1] will leave the Ashram on the 9th. As discussed between us two, I had told him that if he could not subordinate himself to your control, he must leave the Ashram. I cannot ask for his expenses from any other source. The Provincial Committee, too, would not support an independent institution. This argument has appealed to Mama. Please, therefore, write to Parikshitlal to pay the expenses up to the date of his handing over control. He has been paying the expenses up to now, but I had written to him and asked him not to pay further.

Though Mama will thus be free from the Ashram, we certainly wish to support him. It would be excellent if he settles down in a village and starts working with Bhangis. If he does so, we shall have to think later how to meet his expenses.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4042

[1] Vitthal L. Phadke

144. LETTER TO VITTHAL L. PHADKE

October 3, 1934

CHI. MAMA,

I got your clean letter. I have already written to you that I will believe what you say. I, therefore, welcome your assurance. But it does not change my view about . . .[1] . If he cannot behave as a soldier, he certainly cannot continue to work in the Sangh.

MAMA PHADKE
GODHRA

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

145. LETTER TO SARITA

October 3, 1934

CHI. SARITA,

I have brought up my sons in the same manner that I was. And when they grew up, I treated them [as I was treated]. When my elders sent me as a guest to their friends in Bhavnagar and Ahmedabad, I had to suffer much more at both places than you have had to. I had somtimes to go hungry, but I did not feel unhappy about it. What else could they have done? Should they have set up a separate establishment for me? I learnt much from that experience.

For Ramdas also, what more should I do? He went to Ahmedabad only to be able to live in the Harijan Ashram. He is being looked after there very well. What did he lack here? What more can be done for Nimu? Moreover, I am a poor man. I beg for whatever I spend. However, I go even one step further. No matter how poor I am, they get some facilities which even the rich do not get. We have no right at all to such facilities, but since we get them we accept them with humility.

[1] The name has been omitted.

You did very well in pouring out your heart. It was my dharma to explain to you your duty, which I have done. Live more peacefully now.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

146. LETTER TO DEVI BABU

October 3, 1934

BHAI DEVI BABU,

You have already heard about the lapse committed by Satcowriebabu. Dr. Bidhan states that he himself undertook no responsibility as regards the money matters. Therefore he acknowledges no moral obligation on his part, which is probably right. But in my view you and Bhagirathji are certainly responsible. If you two feel similarly you should make good the loss of the H. S. S.[1] I think no one could have suspected Satcowriebabu. But when I used to have some money in my possession I had done what I am now suggesting you to do. I have nothing to say if you two do not approve of this proposal.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

147. LETTER TO G. B. PRADHAN

October 4, 1934

DEAR SIR PRADHAN,

I have your letter regarding the appeal made by your Committee for donations to the Indian Women's University. I do hope that the appeal will receive a generous response from the public. Everybody knows the valuable service rendered by Prof. Karve so

[1] Harijan Sevak Sangh

nobly and so selflessly to the cause of women's education, and I have no doubt that the public should set his mind at rest in the evening of his life with regard to the future of an institution to which he and his have dedicated their lives.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHII

SIR G. B. PRADHAN, B.A., LL.B.
MITHABAI'S MANSION, FIRST FLOOR
CHARNI ROAD, BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

148. LETTER TO G. S. NARASIMHACHARI

October 4, 1934

DEAR NARASIMHACHARI,

Here is my message:

"Students can easily spin in the name of and for the sake of *Daridranarayana* for half an hour daily without any interference with their studies and can add something, be it ever so little, to the wealth of the country and establish a living connection with millions of their countrymen who are strangers to education and who never know from year's end to year's end what a full meal is."

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI G. S. NARASIMHACHARI
C|O VICE CHANCELLOR, ANDHRA UNIVERSITY
WALTAIR

From a copy: Pyarclal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

149. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRAN

October 4, 1934

Mahadev has been writing to you about Kanti[1]. If you will feed him and can, I must accept the position. Kanti1 does need some pocket money. He suggests Rs. 5 per month. You should let me find it from some friend here. please therefore pay him at that rate from the

[1] Kanti Gandhi was staying with the addressee; *vide* "Letter to to Kanti Gandhi", 25-9-1934.

date of his arrival there. I shall send you some money later on. Iet Kanti understand how this comes.

Did I ever acknowledge your letter about the Travancore circular on the Congress? Your step was quite good. Was there any result from it?

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

150. LETTTE TO KAMALA NEHRU

October 4, 1934

CHI. KAMALA,

You must have received the letter I wrote to you. I do wish to come to you but also realize that it would not be right. From somewhere or other I manage to get news of you. And Feroz[1] sends a daily Postcard since Prabhavati came away. Keep up your spirits. You should not worry on account of Jawaharlal's absence from your side. It is good that Indu[2] has arrived. Tell her to write to me. Recite Ramanama.

Blessings from

BAPU

KAMALA NEHRU

ALLAHABAD

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

151. LETTER TO KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI

October 4, 1934

It is a great consolation that you are near Kamala. Your letter fills me with hope. I expect to hear from you fuller details about Dr. Bidhan's visit. Of course she is in my mind always which means also in my prayer. I wonder if she received the long letter which I sent her only a few days ago. Prabha writes to her from time to time. Please give her the enclosed.[3] Does she read letters? Naturally I expect no

[1] Feroz Gandhi
[2] Indira, addressee's daughter
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

reply from her. But if she has any message to send me, you are now the living medium. Is fruit being regularly received there?

Encl. I

SHRI KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI

ANAND BHAWAN, ALLAHABAD

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

152. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

October 4, 1934

CHI. HARILAL,

I got your letter. I liked it. I am glad that you have gone to Rajkot. If you continue to accept my advice with more and more conviction, your good will be assured and I shall feel supremely happy. God has given you sufficient ability. It is not too late yet. If the heart has become pure, the body also will regain its light. I will write more in the next letter.

I think Bali[1] should be repaid the money that you have spent.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

153. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 4, 1934

CHI. NARANDAS,

I read Sankaran's letter. What he says is not correct. Malabar was included in the Harijan tour and I had met both Sankaran and Raghavan. I know about Sankaran's school also. He is working with somebody else. It is the duty of the local Harijan Sevak Sangh to run that school. Ramachandran of the Ashram is now working in it, as also Shyamji. There is no reason whatever for Sankaran to leave Malabar. A decision to this effect was taken when I met him. He was getting enough for his needs. In fact there was no need to send him any help.

[1] Addressee's sister-in-law Balibehn Adalja

I did not like Sankaran's letter. I am writing to him. I shall enclose a copy of the letter.

Kanu seems to be doing well. I don't exercise much direct supervision over his work. Mahadev and Pyarelal do that.

What was the cause of so much loss in the dairy? On how much production did this loss occur? What do you think should be done now?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Shankerlal has come here. You should pay a visit to Ahmedabad and see things for yourself. I do hope that the loss was not due to carelessness or dishonesty on anybody's part. Though we do not know yet whether the dairy will be run independently or be handed over to the Ashram, its management must be put on a proper basis.

Harilal has gone there His work seems to be .above board. It; therefore, he stays on there, there would be nothing like it. See about his eyes and teeth, too. A letter for him is enclosed.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8419. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

154. LETTER TO K. SANKARAN

October 4, 1934

MY DEAR SANKARAN,

I have seen your letter to Narandas. I did not like it. I thought that it was agreed between us when we met in Malabar that you were to make your way in Malabar and that you have to be absorbed in the work there. I therefore do not understand this desire to go to Gujarat. Your sphere is Malabar, and now that Ramachandran is in sole charge of the work, your way should be simple and easy. You should get all you need from the Sangh.

BAPU

K. SANKARAN

HARIJAN VIDYALAYAM

MAYANOOR (MALABAR)

From a microfilm: M.M.U./I

155. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

October 4, 1934

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

Herewith a letter from Saranprasad. You had better see him. If all that he says is true, he deserves, I think, to be accepted as a useful man. He can be put in the institution which we intend to start there or at Sabarmati.

It would be worth while if you write one or more articles in *Harijan* about the "aborigines"[1]. But it is for you to consider whether you can get that much free time.

BAPU

Encl. l

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1145

156. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

October 4, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I had received your letter yesterday and, as suggested by you, had asked Kishorelal to write to you. The pressure of work is fairly heavy. I can barely cope with it. Every day something is left over. Aney came and met me yesterday. Nekiram also was here the day before yesterday. I suggested that Aney and you could still get together and have a discussion and in case there was a difference of opinion should refer the matter to an umpire. As umpires I suggested the names of Bahadurji[2] or Tej Bahadur[3]. The suggestion didn't appeal to Aney. He said that the names would go on changing till the scrutiny was over and that, if anything was possible, it could be done only after that. This for your information.

There is one more thing. Aney said he would have preferred the elections to take place in November. I told him that you did not postpone them just for the sake of Malaviyaji and that if he wired to you, you might extend the time. I don't know whether this is possible.

[1] Gandhiji uses the English word.
[2] A Parsi advocate of Bombay
[3] Tej Bahadur Sapru

I advised against postponement for the convenience of Malaviyaji's party. If Malaviyaji himself desires postponement, it will certainly be an advantage to us in other ways. But this matter is beyond me.

You will find with this a letter from Dr. Gopichand. What he says is worth thinking over. I will only tell him in reply that I have passed the letter on to you. Please look into this carefully.

I am sending Devdas's letter also. Tear it up after reading it. Devdas doesn't want the matter to be discussed anywhere.

What has appeared in *The Free Press* about the Vidyapith Library?

I hope Mani visits Sumitra. Ask her to write to me and tell me what the doctor says.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhaine, PP. 137-8

157. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

October 4, 1934

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

I have your letter. I appreciate all the information you are giving me. I am not interesting myself in individual elections. But Lala Sham Lal's case has somewhat involved me. Lala R. P. Singh has sent me a string of complaints against him. So I have after getting permission sent the letter to Lala Sham Lal.[1] That is the extent of my interest. Sardar's case is different. He does interest himself in these things. I have therefore sent your letter to him.[2] You should also write to him. This duel should be prevented if it is at all possible. For you, you should be outside this struggle altogether except when you can effectively intervene to prevent a fight.

The picture you give me of members is sad.

I am attending the Congress, but I am not going to divide it on the questions raised by me.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sham Lal", 3-10-1934.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

158. LETTER TO DWARKANATH

October 4, 1934

CHI. DWARKANATH,

I got your third letter. This is my third reply too. I did not tell Dinkar that you were indolent. After reading your letter to him he asked for monetary help. I refused it and told other friends also not to send a single pie, for in your letter you had explained your unmanly intention of doing nothing and letting yourself die. I described that as sloth and told him that he would be doing an ill turn to a friend if he encouraged such an attitude. You have now entered the third *yuga*[1]. Your letter to Dinkar represented the first, your long letter to me the second and the letter following that the third. There is no independent work for Sharma for this year at any rate. He is at Khurja. . .[2] just now. He will be returning in two or three days. What shall I write to you? Act as God prompts you.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHIMODE'S WADA
VEGETABLE MARKET
AMRAOTI

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

159. NEED FOR EXACTNESS

A correspondent sends a newspaper cutting containing a notice in praise of khadi. From it I take the following relevant paragraphs:

> A rupee spent on foreign cloth means one anna and a half to Indians, while annas fourteen plus half an anna go direct into foreign trade's growth.
>
> A rupee spent on mill-cloth means half the amount for the mill-owner,

[1] Literally, 'age'. The analogy is of the four yugas of Hindu mythology representing progressive physical and moral deterioration in the people during each succeeding age.

[2] Illegible in the source

annas six to instruments of production and two annas into foreigners' pockets.

A rupee spent on khadi means the whole of the amount minus management expenses—one anna—to the producer alone.

The sender asks if it is true that every rupee invested in khadi means fifteen annas going to the producers and only one anna going to the salesmen. I can only answer that the ideal set before the managers in charge of the A. I. S. A. stores is that the prices should be so regulated as to show on the total sales a surplus, in order to cover expenses, of one anna for every fifteen annas worth of khadi received from the producing depot. The fifteen annas will, therefore, include several other items, e.g., freight, etc. Hence it is altogether wrong to say that of every rupee invested in khadi fifteen annas go to the producer.

After khadi leaves the weavers' hands, it undergoes many processes—washing, dyeing, calendaring, storing in intermediate depots and so on. If the term 'producer' is confined to the grower, the picker, the ginner, the carder, the sliver maker, the spinner, the bobbin winder, the warper, the sizer and the weaver, but not the workers of the processes after weaving, the producer gets probably no more than eight annas in the rupee. It is usual and proper to exclude the other processes, as they are not necessary for fulfilling the purpose of khadi and may or may not have been done by villagers or workers properly so called. Washing, dyeing, etc., are often done through organized, i.e., capitalist concerns. Now, all those who contribute to the increase in the selling price of khadi do not divide the wages .with the producer, in other words, do not take the bread out of the mouth of the producer, but help him to find a market for his manufacture, and this they do even when they are capitalist concerns. For, the latter do not at present work for their profit, but work, no matter from what motive, for the sake of the producer. Therefore the whole truth seems to me to be more conducive to the advertisement of khadi than the undoubted, though unconscious or ignorant, exaggeration in the notice under discussion. If I was the draftsman of the notice, I should say:

'When you buy a rupee worth of khadi, know that the producer retains the full fruit of his labour, whereas, when you buy cloth manufactured by indigenous mills, you wholly deprive him of that beneficial labour, without providing him with a substitute. The agency

that sells khadi gets nothing but the bare living expenses and is, therefore, on a par with the therefore,

Thus it will be found that a critical study of the economics of khadi will show that it is a crime against semi-starved humanity for any Indian to use any cloth but khadi. Such a person takes a morsel out of the mouth of some already famishing villager. Khadi suffers, not because of any intrinsic defect; it suffers because of the ignorance of its friends and foes alike.

But it is necessary to examine the buyer's case. The advertisement is misleading from his viewpoint. Khadi will sell at half the present price, if he will revise his taste, i.e., if he will buy unbleached khadi and put all the ornamentation he likes, afterwards. He need not bother his head about it, if the cost is no consideration. But let the buyer to whom cost is a consideration know that he pays much less for unbleached and unadorned khadi than for prepared and bleached khadi. Moreover, unbleached khadi lasts longer than bleached. The public should also know that during the past twelve years khadi has become much cheaper and better in texture. It has put more money into the pockets of the individual spinners by improving their tools and increasing their skill. This could not have happened, if some educated men and women had not dedicated themselves to the task of helping the semi-starved but partially employed millions. The one key industry of India which supplemented the agricultural labour would never have died, if the distorted notion of varna or caste had not regarded these millions almost as untouchables, beneath the notice of the self-styled higher class.

No doubt there are defects in the khadi organizations: there is not complete dedication, there is not enough critical study of every problem that demands a solution. But this is not a matter of surprise. We cannot, in a moment, get rid of habits of a lifetime. We cannot, all of a sudden, develop the cunning of the hands The science of khadi requires technical and mechanical skill of a high order and demands as much concentration as is given by SirJ. C. Bose to the tiny leaves of plants in his laboratory before he wrests from them the secrets of nature held by these fellow creatures of ours.

What is then wrong with the notice complained of is not its over-valuation of khadi but its clumsy and inadequate presentation of its case. And this comes from want of exactness due to inadequate appreciation of truth. Every one of the three paragraphs hopelessly fails when tested on that infallible anvil.

Harijan, 5-10-1934

160. LETTER TO CYRIL J. MODAK

October 5, 1934

DEAR MISS MODAK,

I have your letter. It is a most difficult thing for me just now to spare even a few minutes to read things outside my present beat. You will, therefore, please forgive me for my inability to go through your appeal. In any case, I could not have endorsed your appeal because it is against my practice to identify myself with such appeals.

I remember your having handed me cuttings from the *Social Reformer* containing your articles. I could not undertake to print them in pamphlet form.

Yours sincerely,

MISS CYRIL J. MODAK, M.A.
MISSIONS HIGH SCHOOL
GANJIPURA, JUBBULPORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Gourtesy: Pyarelal

161. LETTER TO GANESH CHANDRA BISWAS

October 5, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

Shri Satis Chandra Das Gupta has forwarded your letter of 28th September, 1934, to me. It was duly received yesterday.

I wish every success to your meeting, and hope that you will impress upon the members present the necessity of taking their full share in the movement of self-purification, which removal of untouchability means.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI GANESH CHANDRA BISWAS
CHAIRMAN OF THE RECEPTION COMMITTEE
BANGIYA RAJBANSHI KSHATRIYA SAMITY
3 GOLAN SASTRI LANE, CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

162. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

October 5, 1934

DEAR SATISBABU,

I have your letter. I have sent a message to the Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Bangiya Rajbanshi Kshatriya Samity.

It was not for me to send the Khan Brothers under care of anybody. I had to respond to the invitation from Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. I was in no mood to send them anywhere, but I could not refuse this invitation. Nevertheless I asked them to visit Khadi Pratishthan and know you, and I wrote to you that you should make their acquaintance.

I await the result of my letters about Satcowriebabu.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

163. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

October 5, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letters. I am glad that you have saved yourself from the unhappy business of buying a mill. The effect which the fear of that tiger had on the minds of Janakimaiya and the children was a fine revelation of their nature. I was very happy to observe that all of them were upset. Let us pray that they may always remain what they are.

You must not leave that place till the doctors discharge you of their own accord.

We shall discuss here as many problems as we can. The rest during the Congress session and later. Immediately after the Congress session, I think I shall have to return to Wardha. I have no plans for anything new soon after the session. I will think only after returning here.

Things are going on well here.

I hope you write to Kamala. Just now Khurshedbehn is there. It will do even if you write to her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2944

164. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

October 5, 1934

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I am taking up your letter of 14th September. The Rs. 6374-8-3 which I paid to you having been spent, Rs. 80-8-6 now remains. If I send that sum, may I take it that no further help will be required?

Cannot the hostel expenses be met from the yearly budget? What suggestion would you make regarding the [estimated] deficit of Rs. 800 at the end of the year? It would be desirable now to find all the expenditure from the same account. Most of what I receive is sent to Delhi According to me, therefore, what Gujarat does not supply should come from Delhi. But that is not necessary with regard to [the needs of] Gujarat. We have a guarantee. It should be availed of judiciously. Meet Narahari and have the position clarified. We should become self-supporting in the Ashram as far as possible.

Have you collected rent from Ramdas and others who stayed there?' Let me know what you got. The Ashram should not be made to bear even one pie by way of expenditure on account of anybody who is not a Harijan. This does not apply to you, Puratan and others who are there. But I suppose your expenditure is being met from the Gujarat Harijan Sevak Sangh. Indeed the Sangh should even pay something by way of rent. This is necessary for proper accounts. However, there can be difference of opinion about this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4041

165. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

October 5, 1934

CHI. PREMA,

I have an impression that I have not replied to your last letter.

I was pleased to learn that you had fully understood my statement. Your work seems to be progressing very weIl. Don't widen its field. See that what you have started strikes deep roots. In this poor

land, people sow grass seeds and live on what grows from them. Wheat and other grains are grass seeds. Since we don't have enough patience to plant fruit trees, the poor never get any fruit to eat. And the rich don't eat enough of them. They eat fruit only as dessert. Being similarly poor in the field of service we are content to sow and reap grass. If even a few of us save ourselves from committing this mistake, the fruit-trees which grow will give shade and generation after generation will eat the fruits. This will do for today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10361. Also C.W. 6800. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

166. LETTER TO LILAVATI MUNSHI

October 5, 1934

CHI. LILAVATI,

Thus is my reply to your letter. I am writing it for Munshi, however.

He who follows many ideals worships several gods. How can he get peace of mind? Gods have been imagined as extremely jealous and quick to take offence. The devotee of one god has only one ideal in life. He wishes to have vision of only one god of truth. Such a man is ever contented and happy. If legal practice helps one to realize that ideal, one must practise as a lawyer despite censure by the whole world. If, on the other hand, practice of law stands in the way of one's progress towards the ideal, one must have nothing whatever to do with it. Legal practice, voluntary poverty, the Congress throne, people's criticism—these and many other such things are but so many forms of trust. The devotee of one god who accepts praise and censure with an equal mind and lives in comfort in Malabar Hill would be equally happy in an ill-lighted chawl in Worli too. This is how Munshi wishes to live. But it is a mental experiment. Why is he, then, afraid about it? What has happend to his penetrating intellect and to all his reading of the Shastras? If one's mind is pure one has the Ganga flowing by one's door-step, as they say. On the other hand, I have seen many a rogue who has been to Kashi and also bathed in the Ganga there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7554. Courtesy: Lilavati Munshi

167. LETTER TO RAMJI

October 5, 1934

BHAI RAMJI,

I have read your letter carefully. I cannot think of any changes in the programme of studies.

The problem of khadi can be solved only by a perfect study of the science of khadi. It cannot be solved by yielding to the fancies of people. Khadi has an important role in times of famine. But the inhabitants of a famine-stricken area should content themselves with the lowest payment. If there is any other occupation through which they can earn more, we should not put the spinning-wheel or the *takli* before them.

The money received for the purpose of self-sufficiency in cloth cannot be given to victims of famine. The State or the rich ought to buy up the khadi produced in famine areas. Till the rich identify themselves with the poor, khadi can have no place as a means of relief in times of famine. Apart from the rich, the other classes cannot consume the khadi produced during famine. The poor would be wearing the khadi produced by themselves and the middle classes would buy their requirements in the market. There has to be, therefore, extra demand for khadi produced during famine.

For further explanation, read what I am going to write in *Harijan* when I get time.

Blessings from

BAPU

RAMJI

AMRELI

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

168. LETTER TO SARITA

Rentia Barash, October 5, 1934

CHI. SARITA,

I got your long letter. I liked it very much indeed. It reveals to me perfectly your purity of heart. You are acting as befits a true daughter, for such a daughter would not hide from her parents even her thoughts. She would frankly tell them what she thought and unburden her heart. This would enable the parents to think what they should do. You should, therefore, always write to me as you have done this time.

I would advise you to have patience. The result of work is not in our hands. What lies in our power is to do our duties. The fruit is in God's hands. We, therefore, do not know whether Sumitra will recover. We can arrange for her treatment as best as we can. It is our dharma to do so.

We are poor people. We should not, therefore, mind suffering what other poor people do. Please put up with a little waiting at the hospital. I do not know personally any eye-specialist there. Sardar would know somebody, and he himself has selected Sardesai. I am, therefore, getting this done through him. I am writing to Swami also and asking him to send me the doctor's report.

Sardesai is reputed to be good among the Indian doctors. There is a European doctor also who is considered to be good. But I don't feel inclined to send Sumitra to him. None of us know him. We should not, therefore, leave Sardesai. If, however, he finds himself: helpless, we should certainly inquire from some other doctor.

If you don't like going to the sea-coast, why don't you take a walk on the terrace? That is what I always do. The terrace is fine.

What should I say about Nimu? How can I help her if she deceives me? If she would speak out frankly as you do, I would be able to do something. If she goes on saying "I am all right and don't worry", what can I do? I even told her yesterday that if she did not want to tell me she could tell Amtussalaam. She has no reason to feel worried. I have not asked her again to show me the accounts. But she should form the habit of keeping accounts. It will do her nothing but good. Even a millionaire would become bankrupt if he did not keep

accounts.

If you are not satisfied with this explanation, write to me again.

Keep an account of what you have to spend there. If you desire, I would arrange that money should be sent to you from here right now.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

169. LETTER TO SURENDRA

October 5, 1934

CHI. SURENDRA,

For your satisfaction I will draw your monthly Rs. 15 from some other account. The matter doesn't seem to me an important one. It may be one's dharma to draw one's subsistence from the source from which one is entitled to do so—there may be greater humility in doing so. It would be but proper that a person like you should be dependent on Harijans even for his subsistence. If, however, you cannot make the service of Harijans the mission of your life and if it cannot give perfect satisfaction to your heart, it is right for you to receive your expenses from some other account.

Your letter to Kishorelalbhai reveals the state of your mind. I still see some confusion lurking secretly in your thoughts. You still feel it necessary to choose and decide among alternative courses. Such a state of mind can be harmful to spiritual progress. He who has offered up everything to Shri Krishna has made his final choice. What scope has he for further choice? Such a person can sing, along with a man of pleasure:

"Enjoy what today brings, for who has seen tomorrow?"

Show this letter to Nath[1] and discuss the matter with him.

Blessings from

BAPU

SURENDRA
SABARMATI

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy; Narayan Desai

[1] Kedarnath Kulkarni, Kishorelal Mashruwala's guru

170. LETTER TO LILAVATI MEHTA

October 5, 1934

CHI. LILAVATI[1],

I have your letter. It seems to me that your life as a wife has proved to be unhappy. What else can you expect when no discrimination is made between moral and immoral? I had good hopes of Chhaganlal. I had taken him to England to be admitted to a school with fond hopes. He had excellent company there. It makes me sad that he is not proving a worthy successor to Doctor. He can be saved only if you try very hard.

Blessings from

BAPU

LILAVATI

RANGOON

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

171. LETTER TO KAKALBHAI KOTHARI

October 5, 1934

BHAI KAKALBHAI,

I have your letter. The mess about the Indian States proves the truth of the ancient saying: Man is his own friend or foe. No outsidepower can harm him. What is happening is all wrong. Each one of us is labouring under his own delusion. Shall we all pray, "O God! save us from our friends—we will offer thanks even if you save us only from ourselves?"

Blessings from

BAPU

KAKALBHAI

SONGADH

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Wife of Chhaganlal Mehta, eldest son of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

172. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

October 5, 1934

CHI. BRAJKRISHNA,

Your letter. There is nothing wrong in carrying over balance left from the allowance of the previous month to the next. And at the end of the year if you find any saving you may ask your brothers to remit so much less. The point is that one who observes non-possession and accepts only a subsistence allowance cannot offer donations out of it. Suppose the brothers were to instruct a grocer to supply all your requirements, how could you make any gifts?

If you are not keeping well there and if the doctors permit, you can come and stay here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2426

173. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

October 6, 1934

As it is not possible for me to send individual acknowledgements to the many senders of telegraphic and other messages on my 66th birthday from several parts of the world, I beg publicly to tender my thanks to all the senders of their good wishes.

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-10-1934

174. LETTER TO K. KRISHNAMOORTHY IYER

October 6, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I received your letter yesterday and now I have the cheque for Rs. 2,000 through Shri C. Rajagopalachari. Herewith receipt in accordance with your requirements. The cheque is being forwarded to Thakkar Bapa with instructions to send it or a fresh cheque for Rs.

2,000 to Shri C. Rajagopalachari with instructions to fulfil the conditions mentioned by you in your letter.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

SHRI K. KRISHNAMOORTHY IYER
106 THAMBU CHETTY STREET
GEORGE TOWN, MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

175. LETTER TO S. D. RAJAGOPALAN

October 6, 1934

MY DEAR RAJAGOPALAN,

I am glad you are conducting experiments with your machine. The kind of cotton used should be noted. All the yarn turned out by the machine should be classified according to the strength, evenness and count. All the waste should be weighed. The names of the spinners, their ages and sex should be given, and against each spinner should be given the total hours of work per day and information as to the continuous time given by each spinner per day. If all these facts are given, they would certainly furnish valuable information. If any [part] of the machine breaks down or requires repair while at work, that also should be noted.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI S. D. RAJAGOPALAN
BANGALORE CITY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

176. LETTER TO B. SRIRANGASAYI

October 6, 1934

MY DEAR SRIRANGASAYI,

I have your letter. It is refreshing to know that the Socialist Party in Andhra appreciates all the amendments suggested by me. I say the Socialist Party because I take it that your letter is representative of the Party's opinion as you have signed it in your capacity as Secretary.

But you know in what unmeasured terms the meeting in Banaras has condemned the amendments. Even when I first conceived spinning franchise as a token of the dignity of labour and its universal recognition, a friend had shown me a booklet containing the constitution of the Soviets and drawn my attention to the fact that in Russia labour franchise had a definite place. But here I do not know whether you represent the general body of Socialists. What about those who have passed the resolutions of condemnation?

You take exception to my wish that the rich should regard themselves as trustees for the whole of society rather than as owners of the wealth they might possess. Of course, it is an uphill task, but by no means impossible. Indeed I see definite signs of that idea spreading and being accepted. You suggest that the poor should be regarded as trustees for the rich. But you forget that it is implied in the proposition I have laid down. Because, have I not said that labour is as much capital as metal? Therefore, workers, instead of regarding themselves as enemies of the rich, or regarding the rich as their natural enemies, should hold their labour in trust for those who are in need of it. This they can do only when, instead of feeling so utterly helpless as they do, they realize their importance in human economy and shed their fear or distrust of the rich. Fear and distrust are twin sisters born of weakness. When labour realizes its strength it won't need to use any force against moneyed people. It will simply command their attention and respect.

The Hindu, 11-10-1934

177. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

October 6, 1934

MY DEAR DR. SAHEB,

Bapu sends you his hearty greetings on your return home. The papers say you are coming here in a couple of days . Bapu says: 'You must come sooner if you can.' We hope you have benefited by the change and are feeling much stronger and fitter. The Khans you should have found here, but they have gone to Bengal and though they were expected to be back by the 7th, their stay is being prolonged and I wonder if they will be back earlier than the 16th.

You have stolen the hearts away of English friends like Agatha, Horace Alexander and others who seem to want you there almost permanently.

With salaams,

Yours affectionately,

MAHADEV

From the original: Ansari Papers: 20/ANS/APP-60-1. Courtesy: Jamia Millia Islamia Library

178. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

WARDHA,

October 6, 1934

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I have your letter written in your old style. I am glad you have given me so much news.

You can certainly return when you like and can, if Father and Mother give you permission. The sooner you can come the better.

All is well here. The rains seem to have stopped entirely.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

179. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

October 6, 1934

CHI. HARILAL,

I wrote a brief reply[1] to your last letter. I said in it that I would write more and here it is.

The nine implications of khadi work which you have explained are correct. We can add some more, but these nine are enough. Let us immediately start putting into practice whichever of them apply to you and me. It was for this reason that I suggested to you to learn Khadi work. That means learning all the operations from the sowing

[1] *Vide* 4-10-1934.

of cotton in the fields to the manufacture of khadi and mastering the processes involved in the latter, as also learning the ways and means of selling the khadi produced. All these things should be studied scientifically.

I am making arrangements for sending the books.

I am glad to learn that you are tired of travelling. I shall prefer your staying at Rajkot instead of at Porbandar, as I think that you will be safer there. Narandas's being in Rajkot is one more reason why I should like you to stay there. Moreover, Bali, Manu[1], etc., are also there. In your awakened state, you can serve Bali, Phuli and Manu in a great many ways. But all this will have meaning only if you can find peace of mind in that way.

HARILAL
RAJKOT

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

180. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 6, 1934

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter.

A letter for Harilal is enclosed. Read it and then pass it on to him. He wants to read some literature about the science of khadi. I am sure you have some there. Give it to him. There are books both in English and Gujarati.

Read the article on the *takli* in *Harijan*[2]. I hope you get those journals regularly now. Kanaiyo has settled down to his work very well. He takes little time to mix among strangers.

Radha seems to have become very thin. She will arrive there in a few days. I hope she will study there as much as she can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8420. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Addressee's daughter
[2] Dated October 5, 1934

181. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

October 6, 1934

BA,

It is not worth while at all for you to come to this year's Congress session. I shall be forced to go, though I do not at all like to go. There will be no free tickets this time. The lowest charge is Rs. 25. Who will pay that much? And how can we permit anybody to pay? I have been urging everybody not to go.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

182. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

October 6, 1934

I got your letter. In trying to raise 100 to 116, we may have to lose; some even out of 100[1]. God never obliges anyone who is excessively greedy. On the contrary, He punishes such a person.

I am more eager to leave the Congress than you are to drive me out of it. AII that we have to do, therefore, is to find a way of doing it smoothly.

I do not know how big the crowd accompanying me will be, but I do like the rule that there will be no free tickets. I have always been opposing the practice of elders bringing their children along with them free of charge. I, therefore, like that rule. But it will be obeyed no better than the rule about khadi. You and I, however, shall have to observe it even if we are the only two doing so. If you push in Dilip[2] as a Press reporter and Taramati[3] as a volunteer, the responsibility will be yours. God will see that one wheel of your chariot gets stuck into the ground completely If I had my way, I would bring along only Mahadev, Pyarelal, Devraj and Kanu. But I shall not be able to have my way. Prithuraj is bound to tell me that a whole year's labour ought to be rewarded. But it is impossible to say what arrangement will be

[1] The addressee had wished Gandhiji a life of 116 years like Mahidasa of the *Chhandogya Upanishad.*

[2] Addressee's son

[3] Addressee's wife

made about the girls. Kaka will be in the party, of course. But none of them will be permitted to enter the pandal. There you will find only persons sporting ruddy mouths and chewing betel-leaves smeared with lime and catechu and folded in silver foil.

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

183. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

October 6, 1934

CHI. NANABHAI[1],

I have your postcard. I got almost all the news about you through Kishorelal. God is helping your cart along. Do not in the least feel unhappy that you are no longer able to do much service with your own body. Your good wishes also are a form of service. By itself, the body is inert matter. As long as your good wishes remain, you are working through numerous other bodies. Tara[2] there, Sushila in Natal and Kishorelal and Gomati here—aren't all these but other selves of you? Suppose you wished to stop them from working?

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

184. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

October 6, 1934

CHI. RAMDAS,

I got your postcard. If you can live only on milk and curds and vegetables and fruit, your body is bound to improve. In any case you must not worry. I have written to you at length regarding cod-liver oil. If you could not follow it, ask me again. Do what you like. When one's body is at stake, even one's parents cannot lay down one's dharma. Nobody can be forced to be good. Dharma is a matter of the

[1] Sushila Gandhi's father
[2] Addressee's daughter

heart. One should not copy anybody else in following it. You may, therefore, do without the least hesitation whatever seems good to you.

Harilal seems to be going on well just now. He has gone to Rajkot. I get two or three letters from him every week.

Sharma has not returned yet. I had told him to stay on as long as he thought necessary.

Nimu has just now handed me your letter. May your prayers on my birthday be fulfilled. I know that I have never withheld my soul from you brothers. I strove to remain pure for your sakes even when I did not do that for anybody else. It was later that I realized that purity was something to be cultivated for its own sake. Even when I had realized that, however, the knowledge was not sufficient to keep me pure. But the sense of my dharma to you and to Ba sustained me in my striving. Your formal education, however, remained deficient. That was unavoidable. I attached little importance to such education in the new experiments I had embarked upon. My attitude remains the same today. You have not lost much through that deficiency. But in the measure that you feel discontented on that account, I also feel unhappy. If you and your brothers did not feel the deficiency, I would count myself blessed as a father.

RAMDAS GANDHI
AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

185. LETTER TO SITARAM

October 6, 1934

BHAI SITARAM,

For my part I love prayers but nowadays Congressmen do not seem to have any faith in prayer and they connect any such thing with politics. As a matter of fact everyone knows of Kamala's illness and those who have faith do offer regular prayers for her. I think this is all the good we can do to her.

ALLAHABAD

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

186. WOMEN AND VARNA[1]

An esteemed friend writes:[2]

> From your recent writing[3] on varna in *Harijan* it seems that the principle of varna adumbrated by you is intended to apply only to men. What, then, about women? What would determine a woman's varna? Perhaps you will answer that before marriage a woman would take her varna from her father; after marriage from her husband. Should one understand that you support Manu's notorious dictum that there can be no independence for woman at any stage of her life, that before marriage she must remain under the tutelage of her parents, after marriage under that of her husband and, in the event of her widowhood, under that of her children? . . . It is . . . the commonest thing nowadays to find a woman serving as a schoolmistress, while her 'husband is doing business as a money-lender. To what varna would the woman under these circumstances belong? . . . To what varna between these would their children belong? . . .

In my opinion, the question raised is irrelevant in the circumstances prevailing today. As I have pointed out in the writing referred to, owing to the confusion of the varnas, today there are in reality no varnas, the varna principle has ceased to operate. The present state of Hindu society may be described as that of anarchy; the four varnas today exist in name only. If we must talk in terms of varna, there is only one varna today for all, whether men or women; we are all Shudras.

In the resuscitated varnadharma, as I conceive it, a girl before her marriage will belong to the varna of her father, just like her brother. Inter-marriages between different varnas will be rare. A girl will, therefore, retain her varna unimpaired even after her marriage. But should the husband belong to a different varna, then, on marriage, she would naturally adopt his varna and relinquish that of her parents. Nor need such a change of varna be understood to imply a slur against anybody or touch anybody's susceptibilities since the institution of varna in the age of resuscitation would imply absolute

[1] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 7-10-1934.
[2] Only extracts are reproduced here.
[3] *Vide* "Introduction to *Varnavyavastha*", 23-9-1934.

social equality of all the four varnas.

I do not envisage the wife, as a rule, following an avocation independently of her husband. The care of the children and the upkeep of the household are quite enough to fully engage all her energy. In a well-ordered society the additional burden of maintaining the family ought not to fall on her. The man should look to the maintenance of the family, the woman to household management; the two thus supplementing and complementing each other's labours.

Nor do I see in this any invasion of woman's rights or suppression of her freedom. The saying attributed to Manu that "For woman there can be no freedom" is not to me sacrosanct. It only shows that probably, at the time when it was promulgated, women were kept in a state of subjection. The epithets used in our literature to describe a wife are *ardhangana*, "the better half", and *sahadharmini*, "the help-mate". The husband addressing the wife as *devi* or ''goddess" does not show any disparagement. But, unfortunately, a time came when the woman was divested of many of her rights and privileges and was reduced to a status of inferiority. But there could be no question of depreciation of her varna. For, varna does not connote a set of rights or privileges; it prescribes duties or obligations only. And no one can divest us of our duty, unless we ourselves choose to shirk it. The woman who knows and fulfils her duty realizes her dignified status. She is the queen, not the slave, of the household over which she presides.

I need hardly say after this that, if the position set forth by me with regard to the role of the woman in society is accepted, the question of the varna of the children will cease to present any problem, as there will be no more any discrepancy as between the varnas of the husband and the wife.

Harijan, 12-10-1934

187. LETTER TO DUNCAN GREENLEES

October 7, 1934

MY DEAR DUNCAN,

I got your book today with your little note. I shall take an early opportunity of reading the book. I shall be interested to know how it sells.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

188. LETTER TO PRAFULLA CHANDRA GHOSH

October 7, 1934

MY DEAR PRAFULLA,

I have your letter. Khan Saheb is all that you describe him to be. You are keeping the Brothers beyond their time. They were to have returned here by the 8th. They have to reach Bombay without fail on the 19th, and they expect to [visit][1] two places on their way back to Wardha. The result would be that they would be with me only for two days after that. I do not know that you are wise in making Khan Saheb work in that debilitating atmosphere when he himself is so much run down. If it is at all possible to cut down the tour, please do so. We must not run a willing horse to death.

SHRI PRAFULLA GHOSH

79/13 B LOWER CIRCULAR ROAD

CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

189. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

October 7, 1934

MY DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

Herewith [a] cheque for Rs. 2,000 and original letters from the donor[2] and another from Rajaji. I suggest your making an entry in your books and forwarding the cheque itself to Rajaji with instructions to utilize it in accordance with the suggestions contained in his letter.

Encl. 1 cheque for Rs. 2,000 and 2 letters

SHRI A. V. THAKKAR, DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This is illegible in the source.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to K. Krishnamoorthy Iyer", 6-10-1934.

190. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

October 7, 1934

I have your letter enclosing a letter from Shri Krishnamoorthy Iyer and [a] cheque for Rs. 2,000. I am sending him a receipt directly, and sending the cheque to Thakkar Bapa with instructions to send it to you to dispose of it in accordance with the suggestion contained in your letter. That seems to be the best way of giving full effect to the intention of the donor.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

191. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

October 7, 1934

CHI. MARY,

The bit of the first fruits of children's spinning is really very good. The khadi is stout and very serviceable.

I hope you are reading the *Harijan* carefully, for there is quite a variety in its columns just now.

Jamnalalji is expected here on the 13th instant. The doctors have said that they would have finished with him on the 12th. There is just a little healing left.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6030. Also C.W. 3359. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

192. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

October 7, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I will be on my guard if Maharaj comes.

If you let me go on feeling suffocated, I shall have to fight.

I am getting the resolutions ready for you. The one about 1000[1] is taxing all my resources. I go on revising it again and again.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 139

[1] The one proposing to reduce the strength of the A. I. C. C. to 1000

193. LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

October 7, 1934

CHI. VIDYA,

At present I am so busy that I am unable to write [even] those letters that ought to be written. I have got your letter. It is good that Anand is going in for the operation. Your decision to stay on is also right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi: Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

194. LETTER TO RHYS JONES

October 8, 1934

MY DEAR RHYS,

I was delighted to have your. letter and to learn that you were keeping first class. I hope that that state will continue till the day of your departure, and that you will reach home hale and hearty.

Yes, it was well that Charlie was able to get away on the 6th. He was going through a terrific strain. You will please continue to write to me from time to time.

The Khan Brothers have not yet arrived. They seem to be doing very well in Bengal.

Love from us all.

BAPU

RHYS JONES

C. M. S. HOUSE

PROCTOR ROAD, GIRGAUM, BOMBAY 4

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

195. LETTER TO B. J. DEORUKHKER[1]

October 8,1934

MY DEAR DEORUKHKER,

So far as the modification of the communal decision is concerned, the Harijan part of it cannot be modified except with the unanimous consent of all the parties concerned, and I shall be certainly no party to any modification which worsens the position of Harijans Or which has not their consent. So far as the elections are concerned, I am quite clear that it would be detrimental to the Harijan cause to involve the Harijans in any shape or form in the fight with the Government in which the Congress is engaged. There are many other and more tangible ways open to caste Hindus to show their sympathy, and more than sympathy, to the Harijans.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI B. J. DEORUKHKER
KRISHNA BUILDING NO. 4
POIBAWADI, PAREL, BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee, a nationalist Harijan leader of Bombay, had in a letter raised doubts about the permanency of the Poona Pact, in view of the agitation for its modification by a section of Hindus particularly of Bengal and the Punjab. He had also requested Gandhiji to reconsider his views on the question of putting up Harijan candidates to contest the Assembly elections.

196. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

October 8, 1934

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

I enclose herewith two letters about Gajbhiye. You seem to know his case. If so, please enlighten me on the matter. In reply to his first letter I asked him to define his requirements before forwarding the correspondence to you. The postcard is the result.

Yours,

BAPU

Encl. 2

[PS.][1]

I have just received your letter. Fix the meeting as early as possible in November. After the Congress session my programme will be uncertain. I will return to Wardha immediately after the session. Show me the accounts then. I am of the view that the rich among the workers should pay off the sum connected with Satcowriebabu. About excusing the members, consult Ghanshyamdas. However gently, they must be informed. I certainly believe that if it is our duty to ask Surajbehn to vacate, there is no room for mercy in performing it.

I wish to return to Wardha on November 1 at the latest. But it will be as Rama wills.

Tour Kathiawar after the meeting here.

Parikshitlal's Rs. 31 were sent by Radhakisan ten days ago. We are inquiring why he did not receive the sum.

BAPU

[PPS.]

I got your letter. We shall send the cheque.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1146

[1] The postscript is in Gujarati.

197. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

October 8, 1934

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I read your letters to Mahadev. If you can come with Dr. Ansari, do come.

I have received numerous wires regarding Ishwar Sharan[1]. I didn't send the others to you, but I am sending Baba Raghavdas's with this.

Ishwar Sharan is opposed by Krishnakant[2]. Aney has suggested that the latter may be replaced by Chintamani[3] and Ishwar Sharan should be asked to withdraw, and that Bhagwandas may not be opposed. This seems to me worth doing if it can be managed. In any case, Ishwar Sharan should withdraw in favour of Chintamani. Opposition to Bhagwandas will create much bitterness. I have sent you a wire[4] regarding this.

Next about Abhyankar. After I had sent that wire, I received the accompanying letter from Bapuji. I, therefore, need not take your time trying to explain the reasoning behind that wire.

I had long wires from Nariman and Mathuradas pleading against postponement of the Congress. The expenditure was unnecessary. I am not at all keen on postponement. I merely acted as a postman. Surely, neither you nor I can be a party to anything that might harm the Congress or the Parliamentary Board. And, moreover, I can't judge about these things from my retreat here.

The Khan Brothers have got stuck in Bengal. It has become extremely difficult now to persuade them to go to Bombay on the 19th. What can we do? I have, of course, written[5].

I am very much afraid that you might fall ill. However, I remember the case of William, the Prince of orange. As long as God wanted him to live and serve, he remained unharmed even in the midst of a shower of bullets.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 139-40

[1] Munshi Ishwar Sharan, a Harijan worker of Allahabad

[2] Krishnakant Malaviya

[3] C. Y. Chintamani, Editor, *The Leader*

[4] This is not available.

[5] *Vide* "Letter to Prafulla Chandra Ghosh", 7-10-1934.

198. LETTER TO M.

October 9, 1934

MY DEAR M.,

I have your letter. Your pride is still speaking in you. You want to repeat the very thing that undid you! Can pride take a man deeper? No, you must not [come] back *here* to take your penance. You will be received with open arms when the sense of sin is self-evident. Your letter is evidence of the contrary. You have not even the honesty to say to those concerned what you have actually done, if only to guide them in future. You must come down [your] pedestal before you can realize the enormity of the treble sin. Remember a fellow sinner is speaking to you. Only I have the sense of sin and I fly from it. You want to come to it.

Love.

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

199. LETTER TO DR. D. S. SARDESAI

October 9, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

Swami Anand has sent me your report upon my grand-daughter's bad eyes. I thank you for all the attention you are giving to the little child.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. D. S. SARDESAI, L. R. C. P & S.
SANDHURST RD.
GIRGAON, BOMBAY

From a photostat: G.N. 8827

200. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

October 9, 1934

CHI. MITHUBEHN,

I see that you have been enlarging your field of service and that you will have the happiness now of naming your weaving school Sevashram. May your labour and that of your men and women helpers bear fruit.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Improve your health and see that it is perfectly all right.

SMT. MITHUBEHN PETIT

PARK HOUSE

COLABA, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2699

201. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

October [9],[1] *1934*

CHI. KANTI,

I got your long letter. Nobody else will read it. I understand your feeling. I have arranged the money for you from Ramachandran. My relations with him are such that I need not hesitate about this and this is quite the right thing to do for you as well as for me. When he is there it does not look nice to send money direct from here. I shall certainly return it to him so you may draw the money without hesitation. If you do not find it enough, write to me. It is very good that you keep account of each and every pie. I understand the state of your mind which you so vividly describe. Don't force yourself to do anything. Place your foot only where you can plant it firmly knowing all that is happening around you. It has been my experience throughout that nothing that is done in an unnatural manner endures, but that instead there is only increase in hypocrisy. That is why I am fighting to get out of the Congress. I shall be

[1] From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary

satisfied if only one quality at any rate endures among you all. Let no one give up worship of truth. He who clings to truth will in time come to see his errors. He will correct them and go ahead.

Nowadays I receive letters from Harilal regularly. I have been trying to help him. He has come to Rajkot. He had asked for your address which I have sent to him. If you wish to read his recent letters to me, I shall send them to you. Contrary to my practice nowadays I am preserving his letters. If the present improvement does not prove temporary it would really be a great thing.

Your decision to do [regular] spinning is no doubt a good one. The new method with the *takli is* very good. 400 rounds can be spun per hour by adopting this method. A speed of 200 rounds per hour is common with this method; do try it. You must have read the article on the subject. That you should ask for slivers from here is contrary to logic. It is like a shave costing more than a head. You ought to do your own carding. All the tools are available in Nagercoil. Perhaps you might get them at your place too. Ramachandran must know because he was connected with khadi work. No doubt good quality cotton is available there. The best cotton is grown in Tinnevelly and it is not far from Nagercoil.

You might have started taking ghee and milk. Let me know what effect it has on you. Let me know also how you find the food and climate of the place.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Ramdas is better now. But he is still in the hospital.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Sabarmati Sangrahalaya

202. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

October 9, 1934

CHI. BRAJKRISHNA,

Your letter.

It would be best for you to come over here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2427

203. MESSAGE TO MADRAS ELECTORS[1]

[Before *October 10, 1934*]

[I] would like electors to consider not persons but the principles which the institutions they represent embody. If Congress had deserved well of the country, they will not hesitate to choose the Congress representative.

The Hindu, 10-10-1934

204. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

October 10, 1934

DEAR SATISBABU,

I have your letter. As to the Ashram at Delhi, the fact that there is the other Central one should not be overemphasized. There should be an ashram or institution at the headquarters, and the idea is that the office should be taken there, with accommodation for the whole of the staff, and provision for a technical institute. If the provinces can raise sufficient money for themselves, each of them can certainly have such training centres. Karachi has almost a model institute where, under first class expert guidance, all kinds of articles are manufactured from leather. Sewing is also done there, and the ground is exceedingly well kept. The whole thing is due to the enterprise of Mohatta Bros. Now it has become so popular that even non-Harijans are applying for admission. Therefore, the idea of the Delhi institute is not in conflict with yours, but on the contrary it is in support of yours—only Delhi can't find the funds for other centres. Bangalore is also developing such things. Kathiawar has three. But they were there prior to the establishment of the Harijan Board, and they have now come under the influence of the Central Board. The establishment of an institute at Delhi was an idea conceived by Ghanshyamdas before Sabarmati was given [over]. It is, and will remain, an all-India concern. Whether it will be so in fact depends largely upon what the management is able to make of it. I do not sup- pose we shall get in the near future over 100 acres of land and buildings worth over two lakhs. In acreage the Delhi plot is nothing, but the situation is very good. And

[1] The message was sent through S. Satyamurthi.

Ghanshyamdas wants to develop the scheme after his own fashion, and to spend a lot of his substance on it.

I do hope that my proposal[1] to Devibabu and Bhagirathji will be accepted and that we shall not have to lose the money Satcowriebabu has taken away. It is an unfortunate incident which should be redressed so far as it is possible.

The paragraph you quote from McCarrison is very interesting. McCarrison I have found to be a reliable writer, but he is somewhat hasty in generalizing. I have had considerable correspondence with him.

Are you not sweeping in your statement that starch is identified with sugar as a food? Now sugar can be given with impunity to babies. I have never heard that starch can be given to them with equal impunity. Then, starch can never be taken without cooking. Sugar requires no cooking. And even if rice is cooked, surely you do not claim the same value for rice as you would for raisins from the point of view of harmlessness.

I am testing just now the effect of unboiled milk, fresh from the udder. I have heard so much in praise of unboiled milk that I want to try its effect myself. The only difficulty is that you can't take all the milk that you want to at one meal. You have to divide it, and you can't get the goats or the cows, as the case may be, to yield the milk whenever you want to milk them. The question then is: Does unboiled milk retain its full quality throughout the day if you stored it in ice or kept in a corked bottle with a wet towel wrapped round it? I have tried it myself. The: milk retains the full flavour. Whether it retains the full quality, I have no knowledge. If you can throw light upon it, please do.

I shall watch the development of your researches about the full use of all the parts of carcasses.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 1626a

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Devibabu", 3-10-1934.

205. LETTER TO MOHANLAL SAXENA

October 11, 1934

MY DEAR MOHANLAL,

I have your telegram. I have now heard from Anand Bhawan about the fruit for Kamala.

You ask me to send my autograph message. It is not quite clear to me to whom to send the autograph message and why. You don't suggest that Babu Bhagawandas wants an autograph, or any other message from me for being elected in his own home. If his name cannot carry the day, I am sure that my pen can do very little.

SHRI MOHANLAL SAXENA
LUCKNOW

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

206. LETTER TO HARI SINGH GAUR

October 11, 1934

DEAR SIR HARI SINGH GOUR,

I have your letter. Whatever my personal opinion may be, so long as I remain a member of the Congress I may not go against the definite policy and programme of the Congress. Therefore, you must excuse me for my utter inability to give you my personal support in your candidature.

Thank you for your inquiry about my health. It is quite good.

Yours sincerely

SIR HARI SINGH GAUR
NAGPUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

207. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

Not revised *October 11, 1934*

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

I am sending your letter to Sastri for his opinion. If it is at all possible I would certainly like to take the burden of a part of his allowance from the Central Board. I have so completely relied upon Sastri that I have not even looked upon the financial position. I know that it is wrong on my part not to do so. But sheer force of circumstances has prevented my doing many things that I would have loved to do. Now I think that you should also formally demand the accounts in order that you can satisfy yourself as to whether the assistance given by the Board is necessary or not. You have every right to do so.

BAPU

Encl. 2

From a photostat: G.N. 1147

208. LETTER TO S. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

October 11, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I prize your letter. All these days I have pined to write to you about Ambujam[1]. But a delicate sense of consideration for you has restrained me. Your letter gives me an opening and much relief.

You know my affection towards Ambujam. If it is not a presumption I may say I have felt towards her even as you have. It has been a rare privilege of my life to be able to occupy a place of confidence in several families. What little influence I have had over Ambujam has been exerted to persuade her to do nothing that could displease either of you. I think she has listened to my advice.

I look forward to reviving old sweet memories when we meet.

With kind regards to both of you.

S. SRINIVASA IYENGAR
MADRAS

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Addressee's daughter, S. Ambujamma1

209. LETTER TO SECRETARY, POONA SARVAJANIK SABHA

October 11, 1934

THE SECRETARY
THE POONA SARVAJANIK SABHA
SHUKRAWAR PETH

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter enclosing resolution of the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha. I am treasuring all the criticism that comes under my notice, and I give you my assurance that I shall take no step without giving the utmost consideration to all this criticism.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

210. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 11, 1934

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. I had received Harilal's before I got yours, that is, yesterday. He says in it that you have lost some money and that you may even have to draw something [from the Ashram funds] to meet your monthly expenses. I shall not be shocked if this is true. I have often sung, "It is a blessing indeed that the snare was destroyed, for I have seen Shri Gopal with little effort." If you find it necessary to draw any money for your expenses, by all means do so.

More in my next letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8421. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

211. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

October 11, 1934

CHI. HARILAL,

I liked your letter very much. I hope the changes in you will endure. You should have patience. Since you have come to trust me, there will be no difficulty.

We shall think before asking Nanalalbhai for help.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

212. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
October 11, 1934

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. I will check the figures and if they are useful, I will publish them in *Harijan.* Is it not true that if we buy the same quantity of Japanese cloth, it will be costlier than khadi? We have to examine our case as critics.

You have given up the Magan spinning-wheel, have you not? I have examined the results of Vinoba's modifications in the method of plying *takli.* In one hour, 500 rounds of yarn on *takli*—is not that wonderful? In competition with it, the charkha will most often lose.

I do not have to say anything if you take care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32977

213. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

October 11, 1934

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I got your postcard. I have written to you to come over. It would be good if you come after visiting Dr. Ansari. I shall leave on the 19th instant and shall return earliest by 1st November. There is no harm in your arriving during my absence. Prabhavati will be here. You need not at all come in the capacity of a delegate.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

GANGA ASHRAM

RISHIKESH, *via* HARDWAR, U. P.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2428

214. LETTER TO KRISHNAKANT MALAVIYA

October 11, 1934

BHAI KRISHNAKANT,

I got your letter just now. Sardar is sitting with me. I read it out to him. We both wonder how Babuji[1] and others told you I was displeased. In Banaras[2] many things came to my notice but I had formed no firm opinion. I had hardly any time. I do not recollect having expressed to anyone any opinion about you or anyone else. And Sardar of course knew nothing.

Here again Sardar disclaims having said anything to anyone. It is true, however, that some friends have said a few things. And it is also true that neither of us is happy about your decision to enter the Assembly. I am returning Jawaharlal's letter.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Dr. Bhagwandas

[2] Gandhiji was in Banaras from July 27 to August 2.

215. A GREAT HARIJAN SEVAK GONE[1]

Rajasaheb Kalakanker, whose untimely death was announced week before last, was a great Harijan *sevak.* He was ailing for nearly a year. I could hardly recognize him when I saw him last in Calcutta, where he was undergoing treatment. He was a most liberal-minded zamindar of U. P. It can be truly said of him that he lived for his ryots to the best of his ability. His tastes were simple. He mixed freely with people. His love for Harijans was no less than for others. He endeavoured by his open example to have caste Hindus of his zamindari abolish untouchability and let Harijans enjoy the same rights as they themselves enjoyed. All schools, wells, temples under his own direct management were freely thrown open to Harijans. Let us hope that the bereaved Ranisaheba and other members of Kalakanker's family will carry out the noble traditions bequeathed by him and thus perpetuate the Rajasaheb's memory.

Harijan, 12-10-1934

216. WHOSE VICTORY?

Harijan servants have need to exercise the greatest forbearance at this time of their trial. The Temple-entry Bill is gone. The sanatanists are jubilant. We must not mind their joy. Only yesterday we were what they are today. We may not hate them. We must love them. Let the reformers treasure the following lines a sister sends me from AE.'s[2] *Interpreters,* which she venerates almost as a devout Christian his Bible. These are the beautiful lines:

> Love and hate have a magical transforming power. They are the great soul-changers. We grow through their exercise into the likeness of what we contemplate. By intensity of hatred, nations create in themselves the character they imagine in their enemies. Hence it comes that all passionate conflicts result in an interchange of characteristics. We might say, with truth, that those who hate open a door by which their enemies enter and make their own the secret place of the heart.

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

[2] George William Russel (1867-1935), Irish poet, philosopher and painter. *The Interpreters* (1920) is a symposium in the Platonic fashion.

Love is the only thing that can transform sanatanists. Let us realize that they are what they are, in spite of themselves. We have no right to judge them or become impatient with them. Surely, it is enough if we are true to ourselves, that is, if we act up to our belief and render full twenty shillings in the pound to the Harijans.

Again, let us realize that in their victory lies their defeat; in our humiliation lies our victory. Sanatanists can no longer plead the Temple-entry Bill in defence of their opposition to the entry of Harijans to our temples by our common consent. Reformers can now prosecute the temple-entry question with re-doubled zeal.

The reformers would sin, if they felt that the burial of the Bill meant the burial of the temple-entry movement. It is not so. Wherever we can, without bitterness, have temples opened by the consent of sanatanists, we must do so. It is possible that those who were holding themselves aloof from the temple-entry movement, on account of the Temple-entry Bill being prosecuted, will, now that it is out of the way, join the movement to have them opened without the aid of the law. For, be it remembered that the Bill is not dead, it is only suspended. Legislation has to come, if sanatanists do not heartily co-operate with the reformers in having temples opened to Harijans precisely on the same terms as to caste Hindus.

Harijan, 12-10-1934

217. INSTRUCTIVE FIGURES

The Maharashtra branch of the A. I. S. A., whose head office is situated in Wardha, has at my request furnished me with some most instructive figures about the incidence of the distribution of every rupee spent on khadi among the various persons engaged in the manufacture and distribution of khadi. The following are the figures for white khadi of 10 to 14 counts of yarn:

	Rs.	A.	P.
Farmer for cotton	0	4	6
Ginning	0	0	6
Carding	0	1	0
Spinning	0	3	6
Weaving	0	4	0
Freight	0	0	8

Bleaching	0 0 8
Management	0 1 2
	1 0 0

This khadi constitutes roughly 50 per cent of the stock. Therefore, on that quantity, the management gets only one anna two pies (0-1-2) in the rupee worth of khadi and workers up to the weaver Rs. 0-13-6 in the rupee. It is satisfactory to note that the farmer, the spinner and the weaver get the largest portion among themselves. In the higher counts, the farmer gets much less and the spinner tops the list. But the incidental charges increase. They go as high as 25 per cent. Then, again, on fancy articles there may be cent per cent increase on khadi. Indeed, in the cost of khadi in a fancy kerchief costing one rupee, the portion going to *Daridranarayana* may be only half an anna or less. For socks or stockings made of hand-spun yarn on tiny hand machines, the cost of yarn would be trifling. The cost of an Andhra sari, as it may come from Andhra, may be Rs. 25, and it may be sold after fancy work done on it at Rs. 150. The moral is obvious: the simpler the khadi, the larger the amount that goes into the pockets of the poorest workers. The fancy work no doubt makes khadi popular in homes which could not otherwise look at it. I may add also that there are some popular varieties of saris and dhotis manufactured for poor people. On these no management charges are at all added. And there is no such thing as net profit in any of the numerous stores managed by the A. I. S. A. The management charges are added in order to make khadi self-supporting. This has not yet happened. The Committee of the A. I. S. A. is constantly taxing itself so as to reduce prices and to make the management so efficient as to bring down the expenses to a minimum.

Harijan, 12-10-1934

218. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Not revised *October 12, 1934*

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. But as you were going to America I knew that it was no use my writing to you, and I hardly think that you expected anything from me or any of us in America. I suppose I had better not say anything now about the scolding that you read in one of my

letters. I had not intended to scold you; I did intend to warn you. But I suppose it is now a forgotten thing. Moreover you are a happy family again. You will be happier for the blowing up, and I see that Agatha has been writing nicely about you all along in her correspondence to the Indian newspapers. I am looking forward to a recital of your experiences in America. It was a good thought on your part to have written to Dr. Holmes and to have gone to America. It was an experience you certainly needed.

I understand your scheme about things in England. We must discuss that when we meet. Therefore *I* do not propose to give any opinion Just now.

Things are shaping themselves here. I do not know what is going to happen. My mind is certainly set on going out of the Congress. I feel quite sure that it will do good to the Congress and to me. I shall better influence the Congress by being outside. I shall cease to be the weight that I am just now, and yet I shall be passing my views on to the Congress whenever occasion demands it. I must not give my time to writing about these things. These have to be attended to by Mahadev and Pyarelal. Every minute just now counts.

Love.

BAPU

SHRIMATI MIRABEHN
LONDON

From the original: C.W. 6300. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9766

219. LETTER TO TITUS

October 12, 1934

MY DEAR TITUS,

I have your long letter. I am glad you have written at Iength. I am in correspondence with Narandas and others regarding the dairy. I would like to study the figures showing how the loss was incurred. Your asking me to make arrangements for you in anticipation of your severing the connection with the dairy is altogether premature. The dairy is not to be given up light-heartedly, and if it has got to be given up, surely there must be something wrong with the management. Therefore, if you have confidence in yourself, you should make it

impossible to give up the dairy. Your suggestions about the rearrangement are worthy of consideration. I must discuss these suggestions with Narandas and Shankerlal, possibly Narahari also. I shall then be better able to form a decisive judgment. I agree with you that you should separate the useless cattle from the useful ones. As soon as I have a definite scheme, I shall approach the pinjrapole people. Indeed Narandas can do so himself, and I may come on the scene later if it becomes at all necessary. The most serious news, however, that I have about the dairy is a letter from Surendraji saying that the cattle are looking most miserable, some of them are skin and bone. It seems to me to be unbelievable. I would like you, therefore, to set my mind at rest on this point, and discuss with Surendraji and know from him the full meaning of his statement.

I am glad that your wife has become acclimatized, and that she is of great assistance to you in your work.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

220. LETTER TO EFY ARISTARCHI

October 12, 1934

You do continue to send me your gifts. Now I have your own precious Cross, and the book written with so much care and your own translation. I could not restrain myself from peeping into the book. I wish I had the time to go through every line of it. It remains in front of me in the little desk which Jamnalalji has provided for me.

I have not yet seen Manu[1] or heard from him again. But I expect a letter from him every day.

I must not give much time to love-letters just now. The time is taken up in connection with the developing situations here and holding discussions.

PRINCESS EFY ARISTARCHI
GERMANY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Manshankar J. Trivedi

221. LETTER TO AMBUJAMMAL

WARDHA,
October 12, 1934

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I have both your letters. Certainly, you may write in English. Your fast does distress me. The fast should not have been undertaken. Your parents will be pained and they will consider it coercion. I hope you will experience perfect peace. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

222. LETTER TO PRAFULLA CHANDRA GHOSH

October 13, 1934

MY DEAR PRAFULLA,

I have read your long letter to Mahadev. In the circumstances narrated by you, of course you were quite right in doing what you did, and arranging the tour for Khan Brothers.[1] It is also well that the balance of the tour has been cancelled, and that they will be with me about the 16th. Then too, there will be only two days left. They must reach Bombay on the 19th.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

223. LETTER TO KUAR SINGH

Octobers 13, 1934

DEAR FRIENDS,

Please tell the Indians in Trinidad that the Motherland expects them to show in that distant foreign land the best of Indian culture. I would like them to send some boys and girls with sufficient scholarships to carry on their studies in India so as to fit them for better service on their return. This means that the boys and girls, who

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Prefulla Chandra Ghosh", 7-10-1934.

are selected, should have good character to their credit, and have the spirit of service in them.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI KUAR SINGH AND ANOTHER
TRINIDAD (W. INDIES)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

224. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

October 14, 1934

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

If you can without much searching give me the number of Harijan members of the various Harijan Boards, provincial and subordinate, I would like to have it.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1148

225. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 14, 1934

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. You were quite right in writing to me as you have done. It may be most difficult to give two hours to the artist friend. But I shall see what is possible. I look forward to your sending me a copy of the photograph of Charlie Andrews's head.

The rumour you have heard is correct. I am trying to retire from the Congress. But that does not mean a life of quiet for me. Indeed I do not know what is to happen to me after the Congress session is over. But I should love to undertake the mission you would like me to. I do not know what is expected of such a mission. As you know, I took up, among several other things, woman's cause also when I began public life. And my love for that service has persisted throughout all these 45 years. I would like you to sketch for me what you would have me do, and if I feel up to it and have the opportunity, you may depend upon my taking up the mission.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
SIMLA

From the original: C.W. 3512. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6321

226. LETTER TO CHANCHALDAS

October 14, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

You sent me a telegram about the murder of Maharaj Nathuram. Though it had cut me to the quick, I have not contemplated any fast. Nevertheless I was looking forward to the full details promised in your telegram. The telegram is dated the 7th instant. I have not heard from you as yet.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI CHANCHALDAS
PRESIDENT, ARYA SAMAJ
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

227. LETTER TO J. N. SAHNI

October 14, 1934

MY DEAR SAHNI[1],

If you can draw blood out of stone, you can draw messages out of me. As for encouragement for yourself, if my life provides none to your liking, then nothing that comes through the pen will be of any use.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI SAHNI
"NATIONAL CALL"
DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Editor, *National Call*

228. LETTER TO S. SUBBA RAO

October 14, 1934

MY DEAR SUBBA RAO,

I have your letter. I very much fear that you will have to find out something for yourself there. Surely this should not be difficult in the surroundings where you are comparatively better known.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI S. SUBBA RAO
MARUTERU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

229. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

October 14, 1934

DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

I hope everything is fixed up for Anand.[1]

If you know anything about the Karachi murder[2], I should like you to write to me.

BAPU

SHRI JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
C/O CONGRESS HOUSE
WARDEN ROAD, BOMBAY

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

230. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

October 14, 1934

I have your two letters before me. You are having a very bad time. But I hope that Nan[3] is getting better. I can understand her

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Anand T. Hingorani", 23-8-1934 and "Silence-day note to Jairamdas Doulatram", 3-9-1934.

[2] Of Maharaj Nathuram

[3] Addressee's daughter

longing for Denmark. This is surely a difficult task.

It is often a dilemma as to which is the best course to adopt. It is a constant spiritual struggle in which, with the godfearing, right triumphs over wrong.

When Maria[1] comes there, give her my love.

Ramdas is better. He is still in a hospital in Ahmedabad. Ba is with him.

MRS. ESTHER MENON
VISION BUNGALOW, TANJORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

231. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

WARDHA,
October 14, 1934

MY DEAR AMBUJAM,

You have filled me with deep anxiety, and I have not known what to do. In my despair I sent a long telegram to Harihara Sharma. At first I thought I would wire to Father. Then I became afraid lest he should be angry and your position should become more awkward than it already is.

Though I have not interfered with your fast, I have not felt happy over it. However, I do hope that it ended without any injury to the body, and that you were enjoying inward happiness during the fast. You must not give way to despair if even the fast has not induced the parents to grant you the permission to come to me. You must try again and again but no more fasting should be undertaken. You should try to deserve their permission by your correct conduct and patient argument with them. I am sure that they will listen to your request when they realize that it is not in a momentary fit that you have desired to come to me, but that it is a longing of the soul which you dare not suppress.[2] I do hope that you will listen to me.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI S. AMBJAMMAL
AMJAD BAGH, LUZ
MADRAS

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Anne Marie Petersen
[2] The source is illegible here and a few other places

232. LETTER TO P. KODANDARAMIAH

October 14, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your letter. I am sorry I was not able to reply earlier. In view of Thakkar Bapa's letter to you, there is nothing more for me to say. If the Aborigines Conference has got to be held, it must be held in a quieter atmosphere, and by men who are earnest about it, know something of the question and have the desire and the leisure to work for the cause.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI P. KODANDARAMIAH
SWARAJ ASHRAM
POLAVARAM *via* KOVVUR (M. S. M. RLY.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

233. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

October 15, 1934

So much has been written in the Press regarding my proposed retirement from the Congress that it has become necessary to state the position as it occurs to me today. No doubt is left on my mind that many Congressmen do not like my proposals[1] to make the Article regarding the habitual wearing of khaddar stiffer and a more workable spinning franchise compulsory and replace by the words "truthful and non-violent" the words "peaceful and legitimate" in the Congress creed.

opinion so far expressed renders it wholly unnecessary for me to put these proposals before fellow delegates, in order to test their feelings on them. I have not and never had any desire to carry them by a mere majority. For their proper working a hearty assent of an overwhelming majority is required, by my test. I cannot be satisfied with any majority, howsoever decisive, given as a price for my remaining in the Congress. Such a position cannot flatter my pride or vanity. It can only humiliate me. I do not want to become a patron of

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 17-9-1934.

the Congress. I regard myself as a humble servant of the nation and a fellow-worker for the sake of service.

My proposed retirement is neither a threat nor an ultimatum. It is a natural consequence of the rejection of amendments, because hearty acceptance of the amendments is necessary to enable me to render efficient service.

It is now as clear as crystal that I cannot secure that hearty assent from the Congress. Subject, therefore, to whatever the informal meeting of the members of the A. I. C. C. may have to say, I propose to retire from the Congress immediately after closing of the session. In this step, I have the fullest concurrence of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Dr. Anrsari. The latter tells me that he had made up his mind at Port Said where he saw my statement that my retirement was in every way in the best interests of the nation. He had no doubt also as to the time for retirement. It is wholly wrong to think, as some have done, that the recent visit of Sardar Patel and Babu Rajendra Prasad was for the purpose of pressing me to remain in the Congress. They had never any doubt as to the correctness of my position. I may also state that many of my most valued co-workers, including the Khan Brothers, have heartily endorsed the contemplated retirement. All these know that my retirement from the Congress does not mean the loss of my services. On the contrary, my services are always at the country's beck and call and may be commanded without any Congressman feeling any the least embarrassment because of my retirement from the Congress. I feel that the presence in the Congress of a man like me, having fundamental differences on many of the most important questions, with many colleagues, must be a source of weakness rather than strength. Hence the decision.

Lest my contemplated retirement should be exploited in order to damage the Parliamentary fight in which the Congress is now engaged, I would like all Congressmen to know that I am firmer than ever in my conviction that notwithstanding whatever I have said before to the contrary, I hold the representation of the Congress on the legislatures to be necessary. Boycott of legislatures was never meant to be a permanent step. Those who have no convictions to the contrary and are otherwise free should hold themselves at the disposal of the Congress to serve the nation through entering the legislatures. The present election campaign is a fight not among men but among political principles represented by men or women professing to

represent them. It is the paramount duty of voters who believe that the Congress stands in the amplest manner for the nation's goal of independence and that it has counted and will count no sacrifice too great to achieve that goal, to give their vote to the Congress candidates.

Having cleared the ground thus for my retirement, I would invite the attention of Congressmen to the amendments appended hereto giving effect to my proposal for reducing the number of delegates from 6,000 to 1,000. At the most, I hold it to be vital for the growth of the Congress. Unwieldy and merely spectacular as the Congress had become in the years before 1920, it has tended more and more again to degenerate into the same spectacular body. Entertainments and exhibitions, good as they are in their places, have overshadowed the business part of the annual session.

My amendments remedy the evil. These amendments are to be regarded solely as my individual view. In order that the change contemplated may not come without due warning to the nation, with the consent of Sardar Vallabhbhai I have taken the liberty of placing the amendments before the public. There is no question of threat or ultimatum behind the amendments. It will be open to the Subjects Committee and then to the Congress to reject the amendments, but I would warn them against so doing without the most careful consideration. Let Congressmen understand that I am the author of the constitution[1], as it is. They will also bear in mind that I have had an exceptional opportunity of carefully studying its working. Experience has revealed several flaws in the constitution. My proposal is devised to remove them. That experience may discover other flaws in my proposal is quite likely. When they are discovered, the Congress will deal with them but so far as I can judge, my proposal meets with the present situation, and makes the whole Congress organization, if it is at all honestly worked, a most efficient body and more truly representative of Congressmen than it has ever been.

Briefly, it amounts to this. The maximum of 1,000 delegates will now be distributed not according to the population of each province but in accordance with the number of Congressmen on the Congress register in each province and there will be one delegate to every 1,000 or more Congressmen. Therefore, in order to have the full quota of 1,000 for all India, we shall need 1,000,000 Congressmen on our

[1] For the constitution as passed at the Nagpur session in 1920, *vide* "Congress constitution adopted at Nagpur session", december 1920.

register. In order to keep up to its level of population, every province will at least have to make an effort to keep its register of members up to the mark. In order to check the tendency that has unfortunately grown up of buying members just for voting purposes at four annas each, the proposed change requires that no one shall be entitled to vote at any election before the expiry of six months after the date of his paying a subscription of four annas. Then again, hitherto, we have had persons in any part of India elected as delegates in any other part of India. The result has been a number of bogus delegates at all Congress sessions. Some Provincial Congress Committees have been known to have offered almost a free run to anybody who has wanted to be elected as a delegate. This is effectively dealt with under the amendments by restricting the election of delegates to only those who might be on the Congress register in the constituency for which they stand. The actual number of delegates to be elected shall depend upon and vary with the total number of Congressmen of six months' standing on the Congress register for the whole of India. In order to ensure the election of delegates who are real representatives, choice is confined to Congressmen on the registers of the different constituencies whose number would vary from year to year with the number of Congressmen on the register. Under this proposal, the expenses of election are reduced to a minimum. The possibility for fraud, too, is reduced, where there is desire for tolerable honesty. No constitution that human intelligence can devise will ever be foolproof or knave-proof.

Another change of importance is that delegates themselves become the A. I. C. C. members for the year, thus obviating the necessity for election of an A. I. C. C. and delegates from their provinces become the Provincial Congress Committee members in their respective provinces. Thus I have combined three elections in one and ensured continuity of work.

Then there is the amendment making Calcutta a separate province When I was in Calcutta, it was suggested to me that I should induce the Working Committee to propose the amendment. If the idea commends itself to Congressmen, the same facility may be extended to some other cities. The experiment has worked well in Bombay.

There is a proposal to replace the new A. I. C. C. by 1,000 members elected by the delegates who will attend the Congress. If this suggestion is fantastic or too hastily conceived, it will have to be

withdrawn. But seeing that we might not have another session of the Congress before the beginning of 1936, I thought that it would be better if the change was inaugurated by a more representative A. I. C. C. delegates assembled will have to divide themselves into provincial blocks and each block will elect, for the present, its quota according to the existing proportion.

Congressmen will note, too, that in the amendment there is no provision for the taluk and district committees. This is a deliberate omission. The duty of creating some organization in taluks and districts devolves upon the Provincial Congress Committees, which will appoint committees or agencies or have committees elected in accordance with the spirit of the amendments, i.e., by dividing districts and taluks into constituencies or circles for the purpose of electing committees, which must necessarily be small. At present, provincial organizations contain an unwieldy number. The result has been much cry and little wool.

I may note two more important changes. The Congress has always insisted, in resolutions, on the use of Hindi in the conduct of its business, but members have not, in any appreciable measure, responded to their own oft-repeated resolutions. I have sought, therefore, to introduce a slight education test by requiring every applicant for membership to sign his or her name in Devanagari or the Urdu script. This much can be learned in one hour. I remember having given no more time to my wife and a 60-year-old client for teaching them to sign their names in English script. Is it too much to expect an aspirant after Congress membership to give one hour for the sake of the nation?

The other change contemplated is to regularize the convention of giving the President power of appointing his own colleagues of the Working Committee, including Secretaries and Treasurer. The idea is to save time and some degree of vexation. Not to accept the recommendation of the President in such a matter would be a vote of no-confidence. No president can work if his colleagues are imposed upon him.

Now I come to two other resolutions. One is to free the Reception Committee from the burden of elaborate arrangements for entertainments and exhibition. These have been, according to the idiosyncrasies of the Reception Committees, entrusted more or less to the All-India Spinners' Association, as they should have been always

entirely left to it. I have held special views about exhibitions which I do not wish to reiterate here. The resolution I have suggested regularizes the usually-held convention. The idea behind my suggestion is that the primary and only function of the Reception Committee should be to make the annual session of the Congress a thorough success from the practical business point of view. The present mode makes it impossible for important village or district centres to invite the Congress. The result has been that its educative influence has never travelled outside the principal cities. There is no reason whatsoever why the Congress should not be able to meet even in a village. If they have business ability, the village that invites the Congress will financially not only not lose but gain. There are many important stations on the railway line throughout India, where the Congress can easily meet without the slightest inconvenience to its members. All this can only happen when we develop the instinct for identifying ourselves with the masses and desire to know them and their wants and to appreciate the beauty of village life, when it is shorn of the squalor and poverty that make it what it is today in India.

That brings me to the last resolution. That resolution seeks to bring into being an association that will look after village industries. I have named the spirit behind it, cent per cent swadeshi. What goes under the name swadeshi is no doubt good enough but that swadeshi is bound to make progress without any effort on the part of the Congress. Special effort was, in the early stages, necessary when the deliberate fashion was to despise everything that was swadeshi, and when it was a mark of civilization, if not also of patriotism, to adopt foreign manners and customs and to use fashionable foreign articles. I well remember my student days when we, the students, used to look with admiration at the fashionable dresses of our teachers which were made of foreign stuff and were looking forward to the day when we should be able to afford the necessary freedom to be dressed even as they were. The Congress can certainly claim to have changed all this and evoked a spirit of swadeshi but it must not rest on its past achievements and move in a circle. It has now to penetrate into the villages and not be satisfied with the ability of the cities to manufacture articles of use and luxury, in imitation of the foreign ones. It has now to understand which village industry has died and why. Whilst the Government has perhaps the largest share in pauperizing the villages, cities, that have developed out of ruin to villages, cannot escape their responsibility for the growing pauperism

of the dumb millions and it is not yet too late to resuscitate villages by organizing their industries as far as possible. By so doing, we can surely put many millions of rupees into the pockets of the villagers without much, if any, capital output.

Let me quote some startling figures. The All-India Spinners' Association is serving over 5,000 villages and through them supporting 220,000 spinners and weavers and 20,000 carders. During the ten years of its existence, over 2_ crores of rupees have been distributed amongst these villagers. In other words, at least that much wealth was produced in the country through the efforts of the Association and the whole of it contributed to the prosperity of villagers, not by destroying any of their industries but by utilizing their idle hours. Out of the two and a quarter crores of rupees, three quarters went into the pockets of spinners alone and 95 lakhs of rupees into the pockets of farmers, for cotton which the Association bought for the spinners. On an average, these three classes of workers, spinners, weavers and carders, added Rs. 12 per year to their earnings.[1] In individual cases, it has been found as much as 43 per cent has been added to the earning of spinners. This is not a fairy tale. These are figures specially prepared at my instance and can be verified by any research scholar who cares to. The figures I have given are an under-estimate, but the A. I. S. A. touches the centre of village life. I admit that its organization presents little attraction to those who are not saturated with the village spirit, but the organization which I have now in view presents varied scope for Indian talent. Some of the perishing industries must be revived, if villagers are to live. I am quite convinced that some of these village industries can be revived and are worth reviving. With a little scientific research and a little organizing ability the proposed new association can do a vast amount of work, if, of course, it has the backing of the people, which will be the main capital it will start with. If such an association is to succeed, it must be in the hands of those who have some knowledge of the work and abundant faith in their mission and have love for the villagers. It must be autonomous like the A. I. S. A. A political, democratic organization like the Congress cannot meddle with the work of experts, without spoiling their work and damaging the prestige of the Congress. I, therefore, strongly recommend the adoption of the

[1] *The Bombay Chronicle*, 16-l0-1934, here adds: "Roughly this means a 20 per cent addition to their annual earning."

resolution for creating an All-India Village Industries Association.

The exhibition that I have referred to in my resolution regarding the Reception Committee contemplates the exhibition of the result of the activities of the All-India Village Industries Association as now contemplated. The two together will bring before the public the marvellous result that can be produced through the industries of villagers in their own homes. It is my certain conviction that if the so-called higher classes will but identify themselves with the so-called lower classes and lend them the support of their intelligence and ability, India can become a land flowing with milk and honey and can also achieve her economic independence without deadly war, either with the Government or with the capitalists. Political independence will follow as a matter of course, without the intervention of civil disobedience.

The vital amendments of the constitution and the two resolutions have all been conveyed in that spirit and no other. For me, complete independence of India is an impossible dream without the higher classes merging themselves in those millions who are miscalled the lower classes. And I would like to examine all the three resolutions in that spirit and no other.

APPENDIX

The following are the proposed amendments to the constitution:

1. Any person over the age of 18 years, who believes in Article I of this constitution, shall, on making a written declaration and presenting an application in the form hereto and on payment of four annas, be entitled to be placed on the register of Congress members, kept at any office duly authorized thereto —within his own district.

1. (a) The application shall be presented in duplicate and may be handed in personally or sent by post or messenger.

2. It shall state in full, name, age, sex, occupation and address (stating distinctly village, taluk, district and province) of the applicant and shall have been duly signed in his own or her handwriting in Devanagari or Urdu character.

3. On receiving the application and on finding it to be in order, the registering officer shall file the application marking on it the date of receipt, serial number and such other particulars as may be prescribed, and shall send one of the duplicates to the Provincial Headquarters.

4. An applicant, on being enrolled, shall receive a certificate of membership as per schedule hereto and printed on durable paper, either in the language of the province in which the applicant resides or in Hindi, in Devanagari or Urdu script.

5. (a) No member shall be entitled to vote at an election of members of any Congress committee, unless he shall have been continuously on the Congress register for six months prior to the date of election.

(b) A member shall be entitled to vote or be eligible for an office only within the registration area mentioned in his certificate.

6. In addition to the existing provinces, the city of Calcutta shall be constituted an independent Congress province.

7. In the case of towns and villages having a population of 2,000 or more inhabitants, the Provincial Congress Committee concerned shall divide it into suitable circles, provided that no circle shall contain less than 1,000 inhabitants. Each such circle shall constitute a village.

8. The delegation to the Congress shall be reduced from 6,000 to not more than 1,000 and shall be in proportion of one to every 1,000 or more members on the Congress rolls, kept in the several provinces.

9. (a) Each Provincial Congress Committee shall report by letter or wire to the Working Committee the total strength of the original members of not less than six months standing, in terms of Article 5(a). Each report must reach the office of the Working Committee on or before the date and time fixed by the Working Committee in that behalf. (b) Only the members so reported shall be entitled to vote at election of delegates in that province and in case of failure to report in time, the province may be disentitled to elect its delegates.

10. On receipt of figures for total number of eligible voters, the Working Committee shall fix dates for the election of delegates and the proportion for each province, in accordance with their strength of membership, and call upon the provincial committees to proceed with the election of their quota of delegates. All elections shall take place according to single transferable vote.

11. Thereupon each province shall be divided into as many constituencies as would give five delegates to each constituency.

12. No village or circle shall have voting unless it has at least ten duly qualified members on its roll.

13. No one, not being a duly qualified voter on any of the registers, in his constituency, shall offer himself for election as delegate.

14. Each province shall complete its elections on or before the time appointed by the Working Committee.

15. A complete certified list of delegates shall reach the office of the Working Committee not later than the date fixed by the Working Committee.

16. Delegates so elected shall constitute a provincial quota of the A. I. C. C. of the Congress, as also the P. C. C. of that province, and shall represent the respective organizations as from the date of the annual session of the Congress till the commencement of the next following session. The whole of the Congress delegates shall constitute the A. I. C. C.

17. The A. I. C. C. shall meet at least once again during the period before the next session and oftener if required by the Working Committee or by a joint requisition addressed to the Working Committee by not less than 100 members.

ELECTION TO A. I. C. C.

18. (a) For the period following the current session of the Congress, an A. I. C. C. containing 1,000 members shall be elected by the existing delegates and they shall replace the existing A. I. C. C. and the several P. C. Cs. The number of delegates allotted to each province shall be according to its existing quota. Delegates shall vote only for representatives of their own provinces.

(b) The Working Committee shall forthwith proceed to form the new province of Calcutta and a Provincial Committee for it out of the Bengal P. C. C.

19. No Provincial Congress Committee and no subordinate Committee shall be reconsidered by the Working Committee, unless it has complied with all the conditions laid down in this constitution or any rules framed thereunder by the Working Committee.

20. On failure on the part of any provincial organization to function in terms of the constitution, the Working Committee may form one to carry on Congress work in that province.

21. The Working Committee shall appoint one or more Inspectors to examine the records, papers and account books of all

Congress organizations which shall furnish all information and give to Inspectors access to offices and records.

22. The Working Committee shall have the power to frame rules and issue instructions in matters not provided for in the constitution and for the proper working of the constitution.

23. The President shall select from among delegates members of the Working Committee including Secretaries and Treasurers for his year of office.

ALL-INDIA VILLAGE INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION

Whereas organizations claiming to be swadeshi have sprung up all over the country with and without the assistance of Congressmen, whereas much confusion has arisen in the public mind as to the true nature of swadeshi, whereas the aim of the Congress has been from its inception progressive identification with the masses, whereas village reorganization and village reconstruction is one of the items in the Congress constructive programme, whereas such reconstruction necessarily implies revival and encouragement of dead or dying village industries, besides the central industry, hand-spinning, and whereas this work is possible only through concentrated special effort unaffected by and independent of the political activities of the Congress, Mr. Kumarappa is hereby authorized to form under the aegis of the Congress and as part of its activities, an autonomous organization under the advice and guidance of Gandhiji called the All-India Village Industries Association with power to frame its own constitution, to raise funds and to perform such acts as may be considered necessary for the advancement of its objects.

FUNCTION OF RECEPTION COMMITTEE

Whereas, under the vital changes made in the constitution, the annual function will be wholly occupied with serious business before it, there shall be no distraction inside the enclosure containing the central pandal and out-houses and whereas it is desirable to free the Reception Committee from the burden of making elaborate arrangements for entertainments and providing spectacular demonstrations, the work of organizing exhibitions and spectacular demonstrations shall be entrusted to the All-India Spinners' Association and the All-India Village Industries' Association, which bodies shall organize them so as to combine instruction with entertainment for the benefit of the people flocking from villages.

The Hindu, 16-10-1934

234. LETTER TO DR. D. S. SARDESAI

October 15, 1934

DEAR DR. SARDESAI,

I thank you for your letter. I have had a talk with Jamnalalji, and he tells me that the Ruiya Charities Trust is not yet in operation. But when it is, Jamnalalji says that he would undoubtedly bear your hospital in mind. But he wants me to warn you against building any hope on it just now.

Little Sumitra[1] is living on milk, fruit and some non-starchy vegetables such as marrow, green leaves and the like. Will you please tell me if it is necessary for her to add anything to this diet? I ask this question because her grandmother wrote to say that you had advised that she should take ordinary food. She was taking that food before, but she has always been constipated. What is more, she has had fever off and on. I then put her on the diet she is now having and it seems to have suited her well. There was an interruption only for one day. She had a little chapati, and the next day she developed high fever. I stopped the chapati and the fever stopped and has not returned since. If you do not hold it absolutely necessary for her to have bread, rice and dal, I would far rather not take the risk and let her go on with as much milk and fruit as she can take.

Once more thanking you for the attention you are giving her,

Yours sincerely,

DR. D. S. SARDESAI, L.R.C.P. & S.
OPHTHALMIC SURGEON
SANDHURST ROAD, GIRGAUM, BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

235. LETTER TO SHAM LAL

October 15, 1934

DEAR LALA SHAM LAL,

I have your letter. I have nothing more to say. I do hope that you will succeed in this struggle.

Yours sincerely

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Ramdas Gandhi's daughter

236. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

October 15, 1934

BA,

I fear you are becoming irregular in your letters. It would be better if you keep writing regularly. Khan Saheb has come over. Other people have also turned up because the Charkha Sangh meets today. Rajendrababu was expected but he has fallen ill. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 28

237. LETTER TO AMBUJAMMAL

WARDHA,
October 15, 1934

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I as very happy to have your letter and Father's. God has been merciful. It is a triumph of parental love and your penance. That is the way man knows God.

I hope to return to Wardha by the 1st of November. You may then reach there with Father. It would be very good if mother also accompanied you. In the meantime, give up all anxiety, repeat Ramanama and render whatever service you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

238. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

[*On or after October 15, 1934*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

You also seem to have become very busy like me. For a few days you wrote daily, and now you don't write at all. How is that? This time I am not bringing any girls with me. Ba also is not coming. I would advise you, too, to remain where you are. These days there is no cooking to be done for me. I shall use the ink.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9389. Also C.W. 634. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

239. TELEGRAM TO DRAUPADI DEVI SHARMA

October 16, 1934

DRAUPADI DEVI

CARE NATHMALDAS BEHARILAL

DANGANJ, KHURJA

WIRE KRISHNA'S[3] HEALTH.

BAPU

From a facsimile: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha,* facing p. 103

240. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

October 16, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

Bapu is in receipt of your p.c. He has approved of your decision to get operated immediate]y. Don't mind your absence from the

[1] The letter was written below Prabhavati's letter to the addressee of this date.
[2] Presumably prepared and sent by the addressee
[3] Addressee's daughter

Congress, or from Bapu's vicinity. His love will be with you always.

Yours sincerely,

K. G. MASHRUWALA

[PS.]

Send a line after your operation reporting the result and health. Bapu leaves for Bombay on the 19th.

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

241. LETTER TO VENILAL A. GANDHI

October 16, 1934

CHI. VENILAL,

Maneklal has been writing to me about you. Harilal also has written. I should certainly like it very much if Harilal and you could work together. But no decision has been taken about him yet. We are carrying on correspondence with each other. I should like you, meanwhile, to continue to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 918. Courtesy: Venilal A. Gandhi

242. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

October 17, 1934

CHI. HARILAL,

You are constantly in my thoughts. If I had time, I would go on inflicting long letters on you. If the change that you have described endures, a painful episode in my life would end and I would be extremely happy in this the last stage of my life.

I do not wish that you should do anything beyond your strength. Only as much as your reason and heart accept will endure and seem natural. I am sure that if you followed rules of diet, etc., you would be completely all right. Do not regard yourself as an old man.

I would not be pained if you could do nothing, but I would certainly be pained if you were to break your word to me or do

anything which might amount to breach of trust with anybody.

At the moment, it is I who trust you most. Others, that is Ba, Ramdas, Devdas, Kanti, etc., are less hopeful for they have memories of bitter experiences. I have them, too, but I had never given up hope about you, and always believed that one day you would be reformed. I believe that that day has come now. May God help you.

Write to me and give me exact details of your debts and the names of the parties to whom you owe them. I wish to help you as much. as I can consistently with my dharma. Do you have to pay interest on the loans?

I see that you have not been able to give up smoking. So long as you find it absolutely necessary to smoke, you may do so as if you were taking medicine. Perhaps you do not know that it is not in the least difficult to give up smoking. It can be done by adopting a simple diet. What do you eat? Are you ready to make changes in your diet?

I had a long letter from Maneklal. He says that you are afraid of temptations in Rajkot. If there is the slightest truth in that, let me know. Have no hesitation at all in telling me the exact truth. Write to me frankly and open out your heart as you would do to a very intimate friend. You made many friends in the past. Forget now the harm that those friendships did you. Now regard me as your only friend. That will certainly do you no harm. And, moreover, there is a Supreme Friend between you and me, who dwells in our hearts and, therefore, knows our thoughts.

I very much wish to send for you here and keep you with me. But my condition is quite peculiar just now. I don't enjoy a moment's leisure. I rise up at 2.30 every morning. Today I rose at 1.45. It is nearing 3.30 now. If I called you, I would feel tempted to talk with you, which, however, I cannot afford to do. I can't stop thinking about you all the times, though. Maybe, father's love doesn't fall away from even a devotee of Mother *Gita,* or perhaps the *Gita* teaches that I should be thus concerned with you. Be that as it may. If you have no fear just now of being overcome by temptations, remain there for the time being and learn spinning on the *takli,* etc., thoroughly.

If you are not keeping a diary, start doing so.

A letter for Manu is enclosed. Ramdas is fairly well. He is still in hospital, though. There is no fever, but he has not regained strength.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

243. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

October 17, 1934

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I thank you for your two telegrams regarding Rajendrababu. It is a great relief to know that he is free from fever and that you are watching his progress.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY 36
WELLINGTON STREET
CALCUTTA

From a copy; Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

244. LETTER TO KALINATH ROY

October 17, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I can think of nothing better to say to Congressmen than this: Be true to yourselves as you will be true to the nation.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI KALINATH ROY
"THE TRIBUNE"
LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

245. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

October 17, 1934

CHI. MANUDI,

You have now become Bhai's[1] instructor, it seems. Teach him spinning on the *takli*, etc., properly. Did you learn the new method of spinning on the *takli* which is being followed here? I am picking it up. I can now spin 40 rounds in half an hour. I hope to be able to spin more. If you know this new method, teach the same to Bhai. Write to me about it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1534. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

[1] Addressee's father, Harilal Gandhi

246. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

October 17, 1934

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Bhai Dinkarrao Pandya is leaving for Delhi today. Give him any work you like. As regards his salary I think he should be paid Rs. 200 a month. He has himself explained the reason for it.

I have received a letter about the sheep; the writer asks a few questions. I shall pass it on after answering the questions.[1] Ask Dinkarrao about his experience in America.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 7998. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

247. LETTER TO ARJUNLAL

October 17, 1934

BHAI ARJUNLAL,

I have your letter which I find difficult to understand. Jamnalalji has no part at all in this matter. I too am totally ignorant. I have never taken interest in such controversies. Sardar is not partial to anyone. He fights with me too. But we are agreed on one thing, that is, to do only what we hold as truth. If your aim is but to serve, what concern can you have for office! He who craves for office can never serve. I had thought you were now free of the fascination for office. Now tell me, what I can do? You must have seen my statement. Please understand that after a short while I shall have nothing to do with these things. And later no one may even consult me on such controversial matters, but my services will certainly be available if needed.

Give up your infatuation, serve with a pure heart and be a silent worker. I had approached you precisely with this hope which again prompted me to write this.

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] *Vide* "Letter to R. A. Richardson", 14-11-1934.

248. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

October 17, 1934

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Dinkar Pandya must have reached there. I have had a talk with Jayaprakash. He has incurred some debt already. Prabhavati's expenses will be met here. I have fixed Rs. 325 a month for Jayaprakash. This time you may send a cheque for Rs. 150 out of which I shall send Rs. 100 to him keeping back Rs. 50 for Prabhavati as it has never been the practice so far to meet her expenses here. This sum of Rs. 50 goes towards the expenditure incurred during her recent visit to Patna.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

How did you like my second statement[1]?

From Hindi: C.W. 7999. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

249. LETTER TO M. V. ABHYANKAR

October 18, 1934

MY DEAR ABHYANKAR[2],

You have read to me a paragraph in the *Maharashtra* of the 17th instant whose purport is that although he was unwilling to sign invitation to the Prime Minister to decide upon the communal question that was before the Round Table Conference, Dr. Moonje, on receiving a message from me that it was advisable for him to sign the invitation, did so. You ask me to give my opinion upon the statement attributed by the *Maharashtra* to Dr. Moonje. I am very sorry to have to tell you that my memory can give me no help in this matter. I have no recollection of having sent any such message to Dr. Moonje but if Dr. Moonje would kindly coax my memory, give me, if he remembers them, the details surrounding the sending of the message and the

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the press", 15-10-1934.

[2] President of the C. P. (Marathi) Congress Committee

names of persons concerned, it is quite possible I might be able to recollect the circumstances.

I cannot help expressing my regret that if Dr. Moonje did make the statement attributed to him, before making public use of a message so important as to make him alter his decision, he should have first had his recollection confirmed by me.

M. K. GANDHI

The Hitavada, 22-10-1934

250. LETTER TO BIRENDRA NATH GUHA

October 18, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I understand all you say. I have had a chat with Sitaramji about the workers whom you mention, and I am writing to Charu Babu.[1]

SHRI BIRENDRA NATH GUHA

VIDYASHRAM

B 76 COLLEGE ST., MARKET, CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

251. LETTER TO CHARU CHANDRA BHANDARY

October 18, 1934

DEAR CHARU BABU,

I have just heard about you from Birendra Nath, and then from Sitaramji who happens to be here. It fills me with pleasure and pride to know of your selfless services. I would like to know still more about your own life and requirements as also of those who are working in co-operation with you.

SHRI CHARU CHANDRA BHANDARY

DIAMOND HARBOUR

24 PARGANAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the following item.

252. LETTER TO R. P. KARANDIKAR

October 18, 1934

DEAR DADASAHEB,

I was delighted to receive your interesting letter. Much more so to think that you were applying yourself, at your time of life, to the Indian problem.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI R. P. KARANDIKAR
SATARA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

253. LETTER TO MEHERBAI F. S. TALYARKHAN

October 18, 1934

DEAR SISTER,

I had your touching letter. I can thoroughly understand your grief. But you must now bravely turn that grief into energy for serving the nation. I know that you have in abundant measure the spirit of service in you. Yet that measure should now be increased, and you will then be able to merge your sorrow in the larger sorrow of the suffering humanity. Of course, my prayers are with you for the departed soul.

MRS. MEHERBAI F. S. TALYARKHAN
29 NEW MARINE LINES
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyalelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

254. FOR HARIJANS' SAKE

A correspondent asks:

> Why do you insist on sacrificial spinning or self-spinning? Sacrificial spinning is spinning to give away. Self-spinning is to convert your own yarn into khadi for personal use. In either case, you take away something from the

mouth of the poor spinner, whom you call the lowliest paid worker. In sacrificial spinning, you do serve the poor a little by assisting to lower the price of khadi. In the other, it is sheer snatching the bread from a poor spinner's mouth.

This would be partly or wholly true, if spinning had become universal. But today there are some Harijans whose wage-earning capacity has been reduced by 50 per cent because they, being weavers, have no hand-spun yarn to weave from. They are now trying to eke out a precarious living anyhow. These would not be reduced to this sad condition, if there was sacrificial spinning going on in the country on any large scale. I have already stated[1] in these columns how in Orissa representatives of nearly ten thousand weavers, who are almost (because unclassified) Harijans, were starving for want of work, which is the same thing as saying want of hand-spun yarn.

It is useless to say that they can weave mill-spun yarn. These ten thousand weavers were doing it. But, owing to Japanese competition, the demand for hand-woven mill-spun cloth has considerably decreased. It is possible for khadi weavers to find a local market for their khadi, not for hand-woven cloth of mill-spun yarn. Time was when there was an abundance of hand-spun yarn because there were hunderds, if not thousands, of sacrificial spinners, and there was a dearth of weavers. Now sacrificial spinning has gone out of vogue, and there is practically a plethora of weavers who would gladly weave hand-spun yarn. Therefore, for a long time to come and so long as there is demand for khadi on the market and until spinning has become so general as to supply the demand, both sacrificial and self-spinning have a definite place in national economy. It means definite, tangible service of the poor and, among them, specially Harijans.

Moreover, such spinning, seeing that it has to be done by intelligent, educated men and women, becomes allied to art and thus admits of great development. The marvellous improvements that have taken place in the wheel and its accessories, the handgin and the carding-bow, are all due to the interest that the educated middle-class men and women have taken in the movement. All the readers of *Harijan* do not know that the Secretary[2] of the A. I. S. A. is an M. A. and the son of a distinguished and successful banker of Bombay, that

[1] *Vide* "Will they do it?", 25-5-1934.

[2] Shankerlal Banker

its President[1] is one of the ablest businessmen India has produced, that the controller of the khadi organization in Tamil Nad is an equally distinguished ex-lawyer[2], that the organizers in Bengal are an able physician[3] and an able chemist[4], and in U. P. an ex-Principal[5] of a national college. These are but a few names, out of many such I can give, who have dedicated themselves to the service of *Daridranarayana*, through khadi. But for this band of devotees, the substantial progress that it has made would have been impossible, and the half crore rupees that have been distributed among, say, two hundred and fifty thousand workers, not as doles but wages for honest labour, during the years that the spinning movement has been going on, would not have been distributed. In no other or better manner could such quick work have been done than through the wheel. It has brought the lowliest in living touch with some of the most cultured men and women in the country, it has brought a ray of light into dark hovels, it has put heart into sinking bodies, it has provided milk for thousands of milkless children, enabled villagers who would care to have automatic famine insurance, reduced idleness and reclaimed thousands from a beggar's life.

And yet the work is only in its beginning stages. The workers are too few. Those that are need more consecration and greater concentration. Many more hundreds can be absorbed by this national and humanitarian effort.

Therefore, it is wrong to say that sacrificial spinning or selfspinning is harmful to the wage-spinners. It is the peremptory duty of all who can to devote at least half an hour daily to spin for the sake of Harijans—the outcastes of India.

Harijan, 19-10-1934

255. NOTES

A SEVAK'S DIFFICULTY

A Lyallpur correspondent asks the following pertinent questions:

[1] G. D. Birla
[2] C. Rajagopalachari
[3] Dr. B. C. Roy
[4] Satis Chandra Das Gupta
[5] Acharya Jugal Kishore

(1) In many chawls where the Harijans are settled, there is a Muslim or a Sikh population. There are practically no Hindus, or if there be two or three Hindu shopkeepers, they are exclusively under the thumb and control of those zamindars, whose orders they cannot disobey or whose displeasure they cannot incur. Thus, those Hindus are incapable of rendering any help to the Harijans in supplying water to them. How to solve this difficulty?

(2) There is an anti-propaganda of 'Adi-Dharmis', who wean them away from the Hindu society. How to meet or counteract that propaganda?

(3) There is an untouchability within several sects of untouchables.

As to the first question, the first obvious step is to plead with the Muslims and Sikhs to permit the Harijans to use the common well. The second is, side by side with the method of persuasion or after its failure, for the caste Hindus themselves to supply the necessary quantity of water to Harijans. Of course, there is the recourse to the law-courts. Harijans are by law entitled to use common wells, roads, etc., in the same manner as the rest of the public. But this remedy has to be used most sparingly.

For the second question, nothing but progressive repentance and consequent change on the part of caste Hindus can prevent the growing estrangement between them and the Harijans. AdiDharmis are themselves Hindus. Their separation is a revolt against caste Hindus for the latter's oppression. They will return to the fold when they see that untouchability has been entirely removed.

As for the third question, the removal of untouchability as between the various sects of untouchables will progress almost, if not entirely, in the same ratio as the removal of untouchability on the part of caste Hindus. For, the observance of untouchability among untouchables is a direct result of its observance by caste Hindus.

"DARIDRANARAYANA" AND HARIJAN

There is a struggle going on between *Daridranarayana* and Harijan: Which includes the other? Thoughtlessly the answer would be, 'of course, Harijan'. But a moment's reflection shows that *Daridranarayana is* the larger form. Harijans are undoubtedly *Daridranarayana* but they are ranked the lowest by the well-to-do.

Hence they are the nearest and dearest to Hara or Hari—God. For, has He not called Himself Servant of His servants? And whom will He serve most, if not those who are the most neglected by the world? *Daridranarayana* however includes, besides Harijans, all those many millions who are not branded outcastes from their birth. Therefore, service of Harijans necessarily includes that of *Daridranarayana,* but that of *Daridranarayana* may not always be also service of Harijans. Writers for *Harijan* will, therefore, do well always to bear this distinction in mind. For they should remember that the *Harijan is* a weekly wholly devoted to the Harijan cause and, therefore, excludes everything that has no bearing on that cause either directly or indirectly. It is necessary to bear this distinction in mind, since I am devoting its columns freely to many matters which I have appeared to have hitherto excluded from them. The fact is that during the hurricane tour I had little leisure to think, as I am now doing, of many efforts at construction, much less to write about them. For their allround amelioration, there is limitless scope. Do they not represent numerically a large part of humanity and, in point of usefulness, rank perhaps the highest in society? Indian humanity would soon disintegrate, if they suddenly ceased to do the work they are doing at present with the brand of the outcaste on their foreheads for reward.

THE REFORMER'S PRAYER

A correspondent sends the following apposite prayer from Tagore's *Gitanjali:*

> Here is Thy footstool and there rest Thy feet, where live the poorest and lowliest and lost.
>
> When I try to bow to Thee, my obeisance cannot reach down to the depth where Thy feet rest among the poorest and lowliest and lost.
>
> Pride can never approach to where Thou walkest in the clothes of the humble among the poorest and lowliest and lost.
>
> My heart can never find its way to where Thou keepest company with the companionless among the poorest, the lowliest and the lost.

Harijan, 19-10-1934

256. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

October 19, 1934

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I got your long letter dictated in the train.

The information that Kumarsaheb had completely recovered was welcome news. On reading that you had fallen ill as a result of your labour for his recovery, I remembered the story of Babar. Didn't Babar die while saving Humayun? You also have taken up the role of a Prince's father and are draining away your health.

Your caution regarding me is justified. But you and I are helpless in the matter. I will go where Rama leads. He has not yet spoken clearly. Everything will be clear in Bombay. I don't even think about what will happen.

Vain is it to lament
What pleases the Master of the world at the moment,
Nothing happens as we wish,
Thus shall we save ourselves from worrying over things.

These lines of Narasinh Mehta I have been chanting to myself since 1893. I have also tried to the best of my ability to live according to them, looking upon them as holy words of the Vedas. Such utterances are included in my definition of the Vedas. My God who inspires the Vedas speaks through all languages.

I hope Ramabehn[1] will remain kind to me. I do trust women like her will carry on the burden when the Congress drops spinning from its programme. I know, however, I cannot ask you also to do that.

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5939. Also C.W. 3255. Courtesy: Mahesh P. Pattani

257. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

October 19, 1934

CHI. RAMDAS,

I got your letter. You must have received my letters. I will take care to write to you even from Bombay. You may take codliver oil and eat eggs if you find it necessary to do so. If the doctor leaves the

[1] Addressee's wife

choice to you, between the two, eggs are preferable. Crores of rupees are spent in the preparation of codliver oil, and I do not know how much cruelty is involved in catching the fish. It seems to me to be a Satanic type of medicine. Eggs matured according to modern methods seem to be quite innocuous. We can see this for ourselves by making experiments, whereas we cannot prepare cod-liver oil ourselves. All the same, you know that I encouraged Prabhudas to take cod-liver oil, as also Radha and others. None of us can overcome the desire to live. There is neither sin nor shame in this desire. Cod-liver oil also is one of the means of keeping oneself alive. Even men who are reputed to be spiritually enlightened use it. Who am I, then, to stop you from taking it? This is a matter in which nobody should interfere in another's case. Ultimately, everyone should be his own judge as to what his dharma is. You practise self-examination and are eager to acquire knowledge from others. I have, therefore, tried to tell you about both things as much as I know. You may now take either of them if and when it may be necessary to do so. Stay in the hospital as long as the doctor wants you to do so. All that experience will be useful to you.

And now about Nimu. I don't write much, or anything, to you regarding her, thinking that she writes to you about everything. I have been giving her fairly detailed guidance in regard to food and have made arrangements for teaching her English. Other subjects she is already learning. I send her milk and fruit in sufficient quantity. Prabhavati and Sharma look after her and she remains quite cheerful. During my absence, these two will look after everything. If you have any suggestion to make, write to me. Do you think that I should go there after the Congress session is over, that is, towards the end of this month? Does Ba want it? When you are able to walk about, I should like you to go to Wadhwan and other places. Maneklal will feel very happy if you go to the new place where he has been transferred. He is very keen that you should go. He praises the air of the place very much. But you will not get fruits there. There is Chorwad too. Stop thinking altogether. If you make your mind light, there will be no danger at all to your life. If you thus go out to these places, Ba may come and stay with me at Wardha for some time. In that case I need not go to Ahmedabad at all. Wherever I go, I am bound to have some public business to attend to. I, therefore, wish to avoid going there. But if you think I must go there I will. Let me know frankly what you wish.

I understand your earnest desire that I should call Ba to Bombay. But I think it will be more proper if she remains there. It will be proper for her to leave only when you can fully look after yourself. I am not taking with me any girl this time. From among the men, too, I will take as few as possible. I shall be accompanied by Kishorelalbhai and Gomatibehn. Kakasaheb and Professor Akshayachandra also will be coming. I don't remember other names at the moment. Let us see what happens in Bombay.

What you say about the danger of my remaining in the Congress being exploited is perfectly correct. It is for such reasons that I am trying to leave it. However, it is not easy to leave such a great institution without doing it harm. There are many pure men, too, in it.

Jamnalalji will remain here. I am not taking even him to the Congress session. I have dissuaded many others, too.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

258. LETTER TO AMBALAL SARABHAI

October 19, 1934

SUJNA BHAI,

I got both your letters. I understand your inability to be one of the Trustees of the Harijan Ashram. I don't wish to press you too hard. But may I assume that, in regard to the Harijan work itself, you will meet the needs of the work in Gujarat from time to time?

I accept your decision regarding the dairy. The loss during the last year was very heavy indeed. I am looking into the matter. I shall be satisfied if you meet the loss up to December. I should, however, like to see you adhere to your original assurance. I will not readily let the burden of even Rs. 4,000 fall on you. If the loss was due to no negligence on our part, I will not hesitate to stretch my hand before you. I don't wish to run the dairy at a loss even for one year. Narandas is going through all the accounts. In the budget for next year prepared three or four months ago, the aim is indeed to balance the two sides. Meanwhile I learnt about the loss of Rs. 4,000. Narandas will now go to Sabarmati and guide me. My intention in writing all this is to assure you that, having secured your support in this scheme

. . . [1], I have not become indifferent to the losses. It would be against my nature to go on burdening you with losses, however big they may be. In all public activities under my charge throughout my life, I have always tried to balance the two sides. I do not hesitate to incur a loss when I think it necessary to do so, but then I do it knowingly. When conducting research in tanning, or when hoping for profit from Ramachandran lift[2], I did foresee the possibility of loss and had put an outer limit to it. I had involved the late Revashankarbhai in the business of the Ramachandran lift and he had to make good Rs. 5,000. The scheme was then withdrawn. In tanning, we may still have to continue to put up with losses. It is an industry in which it is absolutely necessary that we should take interest. Part of the loss in it will be met by Ghanshyamdas. Into this modest venture in the service of the cow, I have drawn you. It will mean loss of my reputation if you now withdraw. I have inflicted this long explanation, which I have done after first accepting your decision, because I do not wish to lose my reputation with you. You know very well that I have the utmost admiration for your frankness. I don't mind your decision at all. All my business ventures rest wholly on my reputation. The paper of bank-notes, worthless in itself, is backed by some gold at least. The paper of my notes is backed by nothing but Ramanama. With whom, therefore, may I plead if not with a man like you?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] The source has the English word 'pump'.

259. A LETTER[1]

ON THE WAY TO BOMBAY,[2]
October 20, 1934[3]

DEAR FRIEND,

This is to introduce to you Sjt. Rodanda Rao, member of the Servants of India Society, and Editor-in-Chief of the Society's weekly called *The Servant of India*.[4] He has gone to America at the invitation of some American friends. Sjt. Kodanda Rao is a great reformer and friend of the Harijan cause. I would like you to bring him in touch with the group of India's friends whom you are leading.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6286

260. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

ON THE TRAIN TO BOMBAY,
October 20, 1934

CHI. MIRA,

This is my last letter to you whilst you are in the West. The train taking me to Bombay is jolting. You will put yourself in communication with Khan Saheb's daughter and bring her with you if she is at all willing to come. I do not know what is going to happen to Kamalani.[5] You will buy the ticket for Khan Saheb's daughter. He has paid in the money here and Ambalal's firm is being instructed to pay you more money than may be required for the passage. Do not be at all disturbed over the events here. Everything is for the sake of God.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6301. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9767

[1] Presumably addressed to Dr. John Haynes Holmes

[2] The date-line is in Gandhi's hand at the end of the letter; at the top, however, is written "Wardha, 19-10-1934" in Mahadev Desai's hand. *Vide* "Cable to Mirabehn", 14-9-1934.

[3] *ibid.*

[4] Up to this the letter is in Mahadev Desai's hand; what follows is in Gandhiji's hand.

[5] *Vide* "Cable to Mirabehn", 14-9-1934.

261. LETTER TO VAMAN G. JOSHI

October 20, 1934

Congress should not on any account vote for non-Congress candidates, much less against Bapuji Aney in spite of his unfortunate anti-Congress attitude on the Communal Award. I call it anti-Congress in the sense that it is against the declared policy of the Congress on the question. I therefore suggest that Congressmen should unreservedly vote for Bapuji Aney as opposed to the non-Congress candidates. But Congressmen ought to make it clear that they do not in any way by their vote identify themselves with Sjt. Aney's attitude on the Communal Award.

Reminiscences of Gandhiji, p. 212

262. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

October 20, 1934

BA,

Know that it is good that I have not called you to Bombay. There is no point in your going where Perinbehn has been insulted. This is one of the main reasons. Another is that it is proper for you to be there as long as Ramdas is [in the hospital]. The third reason is that my heart is no more with the Congress. I have stopped Jamnalalji too. What shall I call you here for when it is certain that I am leaving the Congress? Nimu is keeping fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3081

263. NEW LIFE FOR KHADI[1]

[Before *October 21, 1934*]

Even though khadi is the most powerful means for attaining freedom, our khadi organizations are carrying on the work only as an economic activity. An element of democracy can be introduced in

[1] This is a summary of a discussion with some khadi workers about the need to reorganize khadi work.

these organizations only to a certain extent. Conflict and even competition can have a place in democracy. But these cannot be permitted in an economic organization. Can we think of different or opposing groups in a commercial firm? The whole administration of the firm would be thrown out of gear if such a thing happens. Moreover, the khadi organizations are not merely economic organizations; they are benevolent institutions too. Their aim is not to serve anybody's selfish interests but to promote public welfare. In democracy it is a rule to carry on work by humouring public opinion. The aim of our khadi organizations is to attain not merely *preya*[1] but *sreya*[2] for the people. Hence, at times they may have to carry on their work independently of the ever-shifting public opinion. They cannot be allowed to become the means of nurturing individual ambitions.

While thinking about the reorganization of khadi production you should not forget that in certain matters the economics of khadi and the commonly prevalent economics are poles asunder. I am always reminded of one thing which the well-known British economist Adam Smith has said in his famous treatise *The Wealth of Nations*. In it he has described some economic laws as universal and absolute. Then he has described certain situations which may be an obstacle to the operation of these laws. These disturbing factors are the human nature, the human temperament or altruism inherent in it. Now, the economics of khadi is just the opposite of it. Benevolence which is inherent in human nature is the very foundation of the economics of khadi. What Adam Smith has described as pure economic activity based merely on the calculations of profit and loss is a selfish attitude and it is an obstacle to the development of khadi; and it is the function of a champion of khadi to counteract this tendency. Hence, the;tactics normally adopted in a profiteering business have no place in khadi activity. For instance, cheating, fraud, falsehood, adulteration, exploiting people's addictions or their baser feelings things practised in mill industries and ordinary trade—are to be completely shunned in khadi activity. The policy of paying minimum wages to the weaver or spinner with a view to increasing profits can have no place in khadi activity. At the same time, khadi activity cannot be carried on by incurring losses as a result of unpractical attitudes. The reason why our khadi organizations incur losses today is the inefficiency of our

[1] Material welfare
[2] Spiritual welfare

workers. In khadi activity spinners and other workers get full reward of their labour but the middlemen and organizers get nothing more than their due share.

Now take the case of standardization, i.e., producing khadi with a uniform policy. Such uniformity cannot be expected in khadi. Rajagopalchari had once remarked that a poor woman cannot be expected to spin yarn of uniform quality as in a mill. She is not a lifeless machine, but a human being. She has her own happiness and unhappiness, she has feelings and is subject to illness. Sometimes she may not be well, sometimes her child or some other relative. may be ill and she may be upset and this cannot but affect the quality of her spinning. Unless your heart is made of stone, you must accept her yarn irrespective of its quality provided she does not deliberately spin bad yarn. Her yarn must be dear to us, for it has been sanctified by her honest labour. A mill product does not have that personal touch. Hence, it cannot bring us this spiritual satisfaction. Mechanicaly produced goods can merely please the eye, but the art of khadi appeals to our human feelings. It touches the heart. Outer beauty is a secondary matter in khadi. That is why I have protested against the sale of bleached khadi. Bleaching increases cost of production, weakens the material and it then becomes difficult to detect any malpractice. Our duty is not to indiscriminately pamper the people's taste, but to canalize it in the proper direction. The starch in khadi automatically goes out after two or three washings and it becomes spotlessly white. Not only this, but it also acquires a kind of softness which is destroyed by bleaching. If the khadi-wearer himself undertook these minor processes subsequent to weaving, the cost of khadi would be much less. It is up to the khadi experts to think of the best way of inducing people to take up such processes.

If khadi activity is to be carried on not merely as a business but as a means to uplift the starving masses, we shall have to penetrate the spinner's home. We shall have to persuade him to wear the clothes made from the khadi produced by himself. This no doubt means a great reduction in the cost of khadi production; it is also a total saving of the expenditure on sales. So far we have been producing khadi, keeping the urban people in view. From a negligible beginning khadi sales have reached millions of rupees. We now produce many varieities of khadi. But all this does not satisfy me. My ambition in respect of khadi is very much higher than this. It now extends to completely wiping out conditions of starvation from our villages. It

can be achieved only when the village people themselves produce khadi and send to the cities whatever remains after local consumption. The secret of the power of khadi lies in the fact that it can find customers right in the place of its production. It is not necessary to go out anywhere in search of a market for it.

The proportion of expenditure on management in khadi production pains me. We can reduce this expenditure a lot if all the time we keep in view the main purpose of khadi. As I have stated earlier, the methods of reducing the cost of production of manufactured goods adopted by the industries that are run for profit cannot be applied in the case of khadi. In the case of khadi the use of machinery can be increased only within certain limits. But there is no limit to increasing art, skill, efficiency and honesty. If we have no faith in these we must wash our hands off khadi. If we want to bring down the cost of khadi production, we must retain only the minimum personnel to manage the organization, and these too should be altruistic, and we should dispense with all the intermediaries and brokers. As a matter of fact, when the khadi activity has fully developed it would have no need of an outer organization. Self-sufficiency and self-propaganda are the natural characteristics of khadi.

The science of khadi is still in its infancy. It is making steady progress. As I go deeper into it, and do research on its laws and understand them, I realize my own limited knowledge of the subject. With the exception of China, there is hardly any country in the world having greater resources than ours. For today, no other country except China has man-power greater than we have. But today this wealth of ours is lying unutilized. The spinning-wheel is a means to put this wealth to use.

Hitherto we have been carrying on khadi work along proper lines. Consequently, we have reached so far. Not only was it inevitable, but in the situation that prevailed it alone was relevant and proper. The real uphill task is ahead of us. For traversing the remaining distance we shall have to follow accordingly higher standards and think of appropriate measures. Hence, if Andhradesha aspires to have provincial autonomy in the matter of khadi, it can have it for the asking. It would not be difficult even to pay up the liabilities of your organization. That is why I have no doubt that if you wish to work along the lines I have suggested, you would be able to do it without any hindrance.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 21-10-1934

264. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

CONGRESS CAMP,

October 22, 1934

CHI. AMALA,

I have your letter. You did not offend me by not saying good-bye. I do not need these formalities. I hope you are doing your work well and getting ample tuition work. I hope to be back even before 1st November.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

265. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

October 22, 1934

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I was pained to read your lettter. I stopped you out of regard for your own *sreya.* How very bad it is to desire to come here after having taken up some work there! According to me there is nothing specially attractive here. Please remember this, that out of thirty crores even one lakh people cannot come here. I am sure you didn't wish to come here to see a stage play. Since Om and the other girls have come, it should be all the more plain to you that you cannot come. I shall probably reach there on Tuesday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3444

266. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

BOMBAY,
October 22, 1934

BHAI HARIBHAU,

In view of the atmosphere at Ajmer[1] I feel that you and the office-bearers of your group should quit the office. It does not cast aspersion on any one of you—it is only a matter of sacrifice and restraint.

The task [you mention] can be accomplished if the climate is favourable at the time. The regulations now formed are fully capable of creating the right atmosphere.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 6080. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

267. LETTER TO DRAUPADI DEVI SHARMA

BOMBAY,
October 22, 1934

CHI. DRAUPADI,

I had your telegram but no letter followed. Krishna must be all right. Sharma is somewhat disturbed. He has gone to see Surendraji during my absence and will return to Wardha by the time I reach there. You must be getting letters from him. The letter you wrote about him was excellent.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I may reach Wardha on the 30th instant.

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha*, facing p. 109

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 24-8-1934.

268. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

BOMBAY,
October 22, 1934

CHI. SHARMA,

I have a nagging worry concerning you and the news that Surendra might not be there has added to my anxiety. The more I reflect the more difference I find in our viewpoints. But I do not despair. We must continue our efforts. You must have sent for Surendra.

I am awaiting your letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha,* facing p. 110

269. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

BOMBAY,
October 22, 1934

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I have your letter. Yes, it is quite true that your behaviour has pained me. My expectations could not be fulfilled. But what can you do about it? I reconcile myself thinking that after all you can give only what you have in you. I hope you are keeping well. What shall I say about Sharma? I shall do all that I can. I do hope to reach there on Tuesday.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 311

270. SPEECH AT VITHALBHAI PATEL'S DEATH ANNIVERSARY[1]

BOMBAY,
October 22, 1934

I knew Vithalbhai from the time that I came to India in 1915. You would be surprised to know that when I first met him I had no idea that he was a Hindu. I later came to know that he made no distinctions between Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and Christians. He even dressed like that. He used to grow a beard and wear a Turkish cap and a jacket. I remained under that impression for a long time. Then we met at Godhra in 1917.[2] There I saw him dressed like a fakir. A meeting was arranged in the Harijan colony. At that time very few Hindus had come there. Vithalbhai was one of them. In the mean time I came to know that he was a Hindu and Sardar's elder brother. At that time he had come dressed in short dhoti, a *paheran*[3] and a cap, and so I did not recognize him. He burst out laughing.

After this we came closer day by day. I could see that he was a great servant of the country and that he did not care for money, nor accumulated it for personal pleasure. I used to hear about his brave work in the Bombay Legislative Assembly. After that I also saw his career in the Congress and realized that it was no easy thing to join issue with Vithalbhai. At times Vithalbhai opposed me; but it was a sweet opposition. It never had any bitterness about it. Thus we carried on together.

Vithalbhai was a fighter. The President has described how he fought in the Central Legislative Assembly. From the salary he received as Speaker of the Assembly, he kept a portion for himself and sent the rest to me. That amount of Rs. 40,000 is still lying with me. I have not been able to use it. Then came the weary struggle. I knew his views. His money is lying safe with me. I knew about Vithalbhai's charity. I read in the *Chronicle* this morning that Vithalbhai had property worth Rs. 12 lakhs out of which he had given away. Rs. 1 lakh in charity at the time of his death. I thought that the

[1] The meeting was held at Azad Maidan under the presidentship of Dr. M. A. Ansari.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at *Antyaj* conference, Godhra", 5-11-1917.

[3] A loose shirt without collar and cuffs

Vithalbhai who had Rs. 12 lakhs with him could not be the same. If he had given that money to Vallabhbhai, my hand would certainly delve into the latter's pocket. But Vithalbhai was too shrewd [to make a mistake]. So, I thought the *Chronicle* must have made a mistake. It could not be that Vithalbhai had left behind Rs. 12 lakhs out of which he gave only one lakh in charity and kept 11 lakhs for his relatives. So I thought the compositor must have made some mistake. If the *Chronicle is* right, Vithalbhai must have stolen the money. Vithalbhai must have been a speculator. But the only speculation he ever did was about swaraj.

We have gathered here to remember him on his death anniversary. On my way here I heard in the train that Bhulabhai is the chairman of a committee appointed to erect a memorial to him. It is not enough that you merely hear his praises and go away. If you resolve to give for Vithalbhai's memorial something from what you may be getting, you would have done your bit to repay the debt we owe to Vithalbhai. I remember many instances of Vithalbhai's sharp intelligence and efficiency, but I have no time to narrate them now. I have spoken in brief of his sacrifice and service and of how we can emulate his patriotism.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 28-10-1934

271. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE MEET1NG, A.I.C.C.[1]

October 23, 1934

In the course of his statement Mahatmaji said that he hoped that the members of the Subjects Committee would agree with him in his decision that his retirement was a necessity at the present moment. He would certainly work and help the Congress while remaining outside. The conclusion which he had arrived at after a long deliberation would not be changed. He had already informed[2] the public the reasons that had prompted him to take the decision to retire. He had felt that he had become a drag, a hamper on the natural progress of the Congress. It had been the experience of

[1] Presided over by Rajendra Prasad. Gandhiji spoke in Hindi.

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the press", 17-9-1934 and "Statement to the press", 15-10-1934.

the Mahatma that during the past few years Congressmen had begun to follow and obey his orders and accepted whatever he had told them although they did not believe in what he said. Under the circumstances he felt that if he continued any further it would not be in the interests of the country or of the Congress. He had remained at the helm of affairs for long and had taken the Congress as far as he could and he felt that he could not lead them any further. It would be wrong to say, said the speaker, that Congressmen had not co-operated with him in the progress that has so far been made. According to the speaker certain things were necessary for the attainment of *purna* swaraj and he felt that they would strengthen the Congress.

He was not going out as a protest against anything inside the Congress. He was going out so that Congressmen could think and act for themselves. So far Congressmen had acted like blind men going round and round the same pole. His retirement did not in any way mean that he was not ready to come back whenever his help was needed. He was not going out with any bad intention in his mind. He was not anxious to do any harm to the Congress, nor was he going to form a strong party outside the party. The speaker asked as to what purpose he would be serving if he went out to form a party in his 65th year and what more help and co-operation could he expect to get from those outsiders than what the Congressmen had so far given in trying to achieve the objective.

Continuing, Gandhiji said that he hoped that he would be given permission by the members of the Subjects Committee to retire. Although he had come to the decision to retire, he had felt it his duty to consult the members of the Subjects Committee. It is possible that some might say that they had expressed their opinion on his retirement and amendments in the Press but still Gandhiji felt that he should discuss it with Congressmen.

The members of the Working Committee had discussed the question with him. Some of them thought that his retirement would be a disaster to the cause of the country, while there were others who agreed with him that he should retire, and it would help the country, the Congress and himself. That would help the Congress to get a clear view of things.

He had proposed in his original statement three amendments to the Congress constitution. The first was about the creed and that was not acceptable to many. Let it not be taken for granted that he would remain inside the Congress if all the three amendments, which would be moved by some of the members of the Working Committee, would be accepted. He had come to a decision and would stick to it. Whether the Subjects Committee accepted one or all the three or threw away all of them, it did not alter the decision he had taken. Because even if all the amendments are passed, there are several things which had made him come to the conclusion about

retirement.

If something miraculous happened or if they convinced him that his presence was essential in the interest of the country, he might some day return to them.[1]

Several members from Madras and Bengal supported the suggestion. Mahatma Gandhi was surprised that there were members of the A. I. C. C. who did not know Hindustani. [2]

[GANDHIJI:] This request is a sound reason why I should leave the Congress. (Laughter)

The member concerned, not baffled, said, "We want you here, to be able to learn Hindi", to which Mr. Gandhi retorted:

If you couldn't learn it in the last 15 years, I have proved an indifferent teacher and it is time you changed your teacher. (Laughter)

Addressing the meeting in English, Mr. Gandhi said:

What I said in Hindi is that if I retire from the Congress, I want to retire, if possible, with your blessings. I want you to feel also that I do not retire in a huff and that I strongly desire to go out of the Congress in order that the Congress may flourish and grow to its full height and grow to its natural height. At the present moment, somehow or other, I am weighed down with the feeling that the Congress is being suppressed by my presence and that the Congress is not giving natural expression to its views. Therefore, it has become an artificial body and nothing can be so harmful to the growth of an institution or a nation than that it allows itself to be suppressed even for the sake of love. It is not then love or, even if it is love, it is of a repressive quality. This excess ought to be thrown out.

Take my own position. The feeling has been creeping over me not for a few days but for months past. I do want you to dismiss from your mind the idea that has been expressed in some quarters that certain letters from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had anything whatever to do with this intense yearning for retirement. These letters perhaps hastened the announcement of the decision, but nothing else. This

[1] Sarojini Naidu then suggested that for the sake of those who did not understand Hindustani, Gandhiji might summarize his statement in English.

[2] What follows is from *The Hindu.*

feeling was given expression to by me to friends in Bengal. I told Dr. Roy and others on the railway station platform that if we cannot get rid of artificiality, of corruption and overpowering desire to wrangle, if we cannot possibly cleanse ourselves of these things, I must retire from the Congress. You will find expressions like these uttered even before they were said in Bengal. This idea has been possessing me day after day till the time came when I could restrain it no longer. That is the history of that decision.

There is not the slightest desire on my part to forsake the post of duty or give up Congress work. I am leaving the Congress to lift the weight which has been suppressing it, in order that it may grow and I may grow myself. After all I cannot withhold this much from you, that I am leaving in order to develop the power that non-violence has—non-violence in thought, word and deed, unadulterated non-violence. I borrowed the expression 'Civil Disobedience' and extended its meaning by calling it civil resistance. I have no doubt *purna* swaraj cannot be achieved without civil resistance. We may not offer resistance till I shall feel confident that the spirit permeates not one or two men like myself or even a thousand men like ourselves, but that it permeates the entire society.

Mr. Gandhi added that human nature was pervaded by non-violence and his own researches and experiments had borne that out.

1 do not believe—1 must frankly confess to you—in the socalled constitutional means for giving liberty to any people. I know no historical instance of pure constitutional agitation, as we have been told and as it has been described to us in text books, having ever clothed a nation with liberty. I cannot claim to have read the history of all nations. I have not the historical instinct, but from what I know I can say that constitutional agitation never regained lost liberty. It is in the nature of things impossible. It is not a gift that can be made by one nation to another or by one person to another.

Mr. Gandhi recalled that the use of the expression that there shall be non-violence in thought, word and deed, did not get inserted by accident, but after a big debate, at the Ahmedabad Congress[1], initiated by Mr. Hasrat Mohani. Mr. Gandhi

[1] In December 1921; *vide* "Speech at subjects committee meeting, Ahmedabad", 27-12-1921 and "Speech on Hasrat Mohani's Motion-I", 28-12-1921.

continued:

I tacked civil resistance to the spinning-wheel and to other acts of mine. I consider them all one. I have said that Hindu-Muslim unity is necessary, not unity in the form of patched-up pacts between politicians, but living unity.

Mr. Gandhi said that he had agreed previously to launching the campaign of civil resistance, like a drowning man catching at a straw and added:

I felt if it went wrong, I will have no hesitation in pulling up even at the risk of incurring your strong displeasure. I plunged into these things merely by way of experiment, but if we are to prove it by our experiment, we have to admit that it was civil resistance which was not non-violent in thought, word or deed. Civil Disobedience cannot be taken up until there is the atmosphere for it. If I remain in the Congress, I shall be imposing myself upon you. You may say that I am not imposing myself, but I feel that I am and it is better that I retire. And if you prove that you are non-violent, then whether I am on Mount Everest or have gone down to the bowels of the earth, I shall appear and lead you to your goal and we shall march in perfect safety. If we are non-violent in word, thought and deed, then this ordinance rule would have been utterly impossible.

I cannot change my mind on the cardinal doctrines of the charkha, Hindu-Muslim unity and removal of untouchability, without which you cannot even understand the principles of nonviolence or free the Congress from greed and selfishness. These fundamental things, which are part of our creed, should come naturally to us. I may be told that I am asking human nature to give me too much. That may be so. It does not show that I am wrong in not being able to remain in this institution.

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan told me that he had made up his mind in Hazaribagh that I should retire and he with me. I told him, ‘‘If you are a soldier, you must remain at your post and see whether you cannot take the nation up to the point where you have arrived, in spite of the fact that you have come from a land steeped in violence.” I, therefore, plead with you to let me go with your blessing and not plead with me that ‘if you remain, we shall do this’. I want you to give me nothing as a bargain. I have not come in a bargaining spirit. I have

been struggling with the Working Committee, a majority of whom are in favour of my going out with a blessing. There is a tough minority which says I must not go out, though the minority has also come to the conclusion that if I feel that, even after listening to their argument, I cannot change my view, I must go. I must not be held down by simple force, even the force of love. I must act up to the dictates of my intellect and my faith.

Another point is in connection with the three vital amendments. They have felt so convinced of the necessity of the substance of those three amendments that they will be putting them before you presently in spite of the fact that, as soon as I receive your blessing, I shall retire at the end of the session.[1]

Mahatmaji told the members that they should make no speeches. He would give them only 20 minutes to express their views briefly.

Let me be a dictator for 20 minutes. (Laughter)

In reply to a question, Mahatmaji said like Columbus he would go out of the Congress to discover a method to convince them of the value of nonviolent civil resistance and like all discoverers would return to them triumphantly with his discovery. [2]

Mr. Sri Prakasa said that Mr. Gandhi had stated that wrangles in the Congress organization were responsible for his decision.

MR. GANDHI: No, I said I had become a deadweight on the Congress.

Mr. Sri Prakasa appealed to Mr. Gandhi to help them to set their house in order.[3]

Just after Mr. Sri Prakasa had finished his speech the time-limit was over and Pandit Malaviya wanted to address the House. Gandhiji said that the time-limit was over but if Panditji did want to speak no power on earth could stop him from doing so.

Pandit Malaviya made an impassioned appeal to Mr. Gandhi not to leave the Congress at this juncture, when it was in the midst of its fight for the freedom of the country. . . . He said that, if there were mistakes and shortcomings on the part of the

[1] The following three paragraphs are from *The Bombay Chronicle.* Gandhiji then invited the members to ask questions.

[2] The following three paragraphs are from *The Hindu.*

[3] The following paragraph is from *The Bombay Chronicle.*

Congressmen, he should point them out and see that these were rectified but should not make them the justification for leaving the Congress. He had no right to leave the Congress, after having led it for 13 or 14 years. "Whatever you want to do from outside the Congress you can do from within it," added the Pandit. "The farther away you are from the Congress, the greater will be the sorrow of the country." He asked Mr. Gandhi not to be too strict with the masses in regard to the observance of truth and non-violence in the same degree as he (Mr. Gandhi) himself was observing. "You have a proper cabinet with you. Your soldiers are ready to follow you in the fight. Why do you want to leave all these to themselves and go out of the Congress? I make a personal appeal to you, with all my love and regard for you not to retire at this juncture."[1]

Gandhiji, replying to the several questions that had been raised by the speakers, said that he had considered Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya as his elder brother since 1915. If the speaker could carry out the wishes of the Pandit, he would have very gladly done so, considering his wishes as the command of an elder brother. But he felt that he could not help but leave the Congress under the cricumstances. He was leaving the organization because he was anxious to strengthen it.

He was going out to get *shanti* (peace). He was going out so that he might develop strength to serve the Congress and the country. He said:

I feel today that I have lost the power to presuade you to my view. I have become helpless. It is no use keeping a man like me at the helm of affairs, who has lost his strength. You have said nothing that will make me reconsider my decision. I do not think that it is hasty on my part to do so, but rest assured that even when I go out I will be a humble servant of the Congress.

Mr. Gandhi stated that it was doubly profitable for them to allow him to retire, for thereby they would have his services, whenever they needed them, but at the same time, they would not have to pay a price for it, as they had to do at present. [2]

He would certainly give his opinion, if asked for on any question.

At present, he was leaving the Congress with the main intention of . working for the Congress.

Pandit Malaviya, interrupting, said that it was not fair on the part of the Mahatma to retire without sufficient notice. It was the duty of every servant, whether paid or honorary, to give proper notice of retirement from the work that had been entrusted to him. He said, "It is for 14 years that you have been at the head of the

[1] The following paragraph is from *The Bombay Chronicle.*
[2] The following paragraph is from *The Bombay Chronicle.*

Congress. Do not be in haste to retire. Give these people time to make proper arrangements for the great work of reorganizing the Congress, which is before them. Give them at least four or six months, if not more."

Replying to the charge of being hasty, Mr. Gandhi said he was a fighter and knew his duty as a soldier. The first duty of a satyagrahi was to stick to his post. He felt that he was not leaving his post of duty. If he felt it was a mistake on his part to have retired from the Congress, he would come back without even waiting for an invitation.

But the position at present is that I am absolutely helpless. My mind does not work. I am not a foolish general to continue to be at the head of the force when I feel that no good would come out of it.

A man who gave an ultimatum to Lord Reading, the GovernorGeneral of India, regarding Bardoli[1] cannot be expected to run away from the battle.[2]

Unless a miracle happened there was no possibility of his continuing to lead the Congress. He hoped that God would give strength both to him and Congressmen so that they might come together again soon.

As for the fear that his retirement would create difficulties for the Congress Parliamentary Board, Mr. Gandhi said that he did not believe it.

I am certain that you will not lose one single vote during the coming elections. If I had feared that it would harm your work, I would not have retired. I finally appeal to you to allow me to retire and tolerate me, just as a family willingly tolerates any of its helpless members.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-l0-1934, and *The Hindu*, 24-10-1934

[1] In 1922; *vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 1-2-1922.

[2] This and the following paragraph are from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

272. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

BOMBAY,
October 24, 1934

CHI. SHARMA,

I read your long letter, which both pained and pleased me. I was pained because the letter expresses well the turmoil in your heart and I was pleased because I found your heart to be pure. But I suspect you are suppressing yourself. I do not like your working beyond your strength. Your heart I find is with me but your reason revolts. You doubt my wisdom. You view my associates with suspicion. How can I calm you in such a state? I also feel that you sorely miss Draupadi. You may certainly go to Khurja if that is required. You can take the money from Naraharibhai. But if you do not have to go you should stay on there, wait for Surendra, and come away after seeing him.

Anyhow write another letter to me. I shall be here till Monday if not longer.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha*, between pp.110 and 111

273. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING, A.I.C.C.[1]

October 24, 1934

Whereas organizations claiming to advance swadeshi have sprung up all over the country with and without the assistance of Congressmen and whereas much confusion has arisen in the public mind as to the true nature of swadeshi and whereas the aim of the Congress has been from its inception progressive identification with the masses and whereas village re-organization and reconstruction is one of the items of the constructive programme of the Congress and whereas such reconstruction necessarily implies the revival and

[1] At the request of Rajendra Prasad, who was in the Chair, Gandhiji moved the resolution on the All-India Village Industries Association

encouragement of dead or dying village industries, besides the central industry of hand-spinning, and whereas this work, like the re-organization of hand-spinning, is possible only through concentrated and special effort unaffected by and independent of the political activities of the Congress, Mr. J. C. Kumarappa is. hereby authorized to form under the advice and guidance of Mr. Gandhi an association called the All-India Village Industries Association, as part of the activities of the Congress.[1]

The said Association shall work for the revival and encouragement of the said industries and for the moral and physical advancement of the villages and shall have the power to frame its own constitution, to raise funds and perform such acts as may be necessary for the fulfilment of its objects.

Commending the resolution to the house, Gandhiji said: [2]

During my Harijan tour this year, a large number of people used to come to me to narrate their tales of woe. Never before had I travelled as I did during this tour. And, in Utkal, I had an extraordinary experience since I was touring on foot. There is no limit to the state of unemployment in our seven lac villages. The people subsist on agriculture. And millions of people suffer losses in agriculture. And what can we say about the present state? Today the farmers do not produce enough even for the seeds. You can hardly find such poverty anywhere else. That is also one of the reasons why people disposed of gold worth lacs of rupees. This has of course its political reason. But the helplessness of the people was also one reason. The spinning-wheel has emerged to meet this unemployment. Apart from India there is perhaps no other country where people depend so completely on agriculture. Madhusudan Das had said that village people must be provided with some additional occupation. He had gone to Germany and learnt leather work. I have always remembered his one remark that those who always work with oxen must have bovine intelligence. Our farmers lost their work and became dull-minded.

A friend left a socialist paper with me. It contains a nice article. It says that the people of India are being reduced to subhuman state. Ten years ago there were many industries, but now they have become dependent solely on agriculture, and this has led to increase in

[1] *Vide* also "Statement to the press", 16-10-1934.

[2] What follows is translated from the Gujarati in *Harijanbandhu.*

unemployment. The only point I learnt from it was regarding the remedy for this unemployment. When I thought about it the concept of swadeshi emerged in its precise form. We are able to provide work to 2,20,000 women spinners through khadi alone. We have given them three crores in ten years. There are 1,100 men from the middle class who supervise this work and earn their bread. This amount has been distributed through them. This work is being carried on in five to six thousand villages. The capital involved is not more than 20 lacs.

But this is not enough to solve completely India's problem of unemployment. Let me cite the instance of carpenters. Our carpenters were good craftsmen at one time. Today they have lost the skill. Today the village carpenters cannot make even a spinning-wheel. Take Bihar for instance. There sand has piled up in the fields and tilling has become impossible. Instead of giving free food to the starving people there, it was decided to provide them with spinning-wheels. But from where to find the spinning-wheels? The local carpenters could hardly make them.

In our country the urban population is only 30 million. The remaining 320 million live in the villages with a population of less than ten thousand. We have never cared for them. Rather than being concerned about what they cat, drink and what occupations they follow we have simply got upon their backs. I am asking you to adopt the spinning-wheel for their sake. But you do not like even that. Now the Charkha Sangh is providing the spinning-wheels for them. But the work that remains to be done after that will be undertaken by this new Association. It will be found that other occupations apart from the spinning-wheel can be carried on by people in their homes. They will revive the industries that can be revived. They will devise ways and means of improving the quality of what is already being produced, and find out what new things can be produced. They will thus bring a few more millions to the poor. You have not taken as much interest in the spinning-wheel as I had expected. It was hoped to save through the spinning-wheel and khadi the 600 million rupees going out of the country in the purchase of foreign cloth. But this hope has not been fulfilled.[1]

His proposal did not mean that they should part with their money and gift it to villagers. All he meant was that, instead of spending money on buying other goods, they should buy goods

[1] The following two paragraphs are from *The Hindu.*

manufactured by villagers. Thus they would keep the money in India and distribute among villagers crores of rupees. He appealed to the House to vote on the resolution on its ‘ merits and not because they might persuade him to remain in the Congress. On this latter subject, he would hear what more Mr. Sidhwa had to say, if the President allowed the resolution to be moved.

He also made it clear that he was not setting up an association with a view to using it to rouse political consciousness among the masses. He did not propose even to mention the name of the Congress in the course of this work, in the same way as he had not asked workers in the Spinners’ Association to join the Congress. To him, however, political consciousness had a different meaning. If the Association succeeded in reviving industries and improving the present method of work in villages, that would be enough political consciousness.[1]

This Association will be related to the Congress exactly like the Charkha Sangh. Shankerlal, Jamnalalji and others manage the Charkha Sangh but the Congress can still look into its working. Kumarappa belongs to the Congress. At present he is keeping account of our millions of rupees in Bihar. He was the Secretary of the committee appointed by the Congress to inquire into the liabilities thrust on India by the Government. He is a chartered accountant and he has made a great sacrifice. He does not crave for money. He is interested in this kind of work. I have discussed the matter with him and he has agreed to do this work under my supervision.

I do not wish to take up this work as a political activity, but to help the poor unemployed village people earn a few coins. That is why I wish to keep this work free from politics. You will be surprised to know that not a single person from among the 2,20,000 spinners, 20,000 carders and 20,000 weavers to whom the Charkha Sangh provides work is a member of the Congress. The Congress constitution has accepted spinning franchise. Hence, they can all become members if they want to. But we have made no such effort. Even by not joining the Congress they are not going to remain unacquainted with the political activity in the country. But they must know that we have gone to them to serve them and not with the intention of exploiting them for our political objectives. This resolution involves no financial responsibility for the Congress, only

[1] What follows is translated from the Gujarati in *Harijanbandhu.*

the name of the Congress is required. Accept this resolution if you are in favour of it.[1]

Gandhiji in replying to the several questions that had arisen from the discussions said that the first amendment wanted that the words "dead and dying" should be deleted from the resolution while the second wanted the replacement of certain words.[2] The work of the Association would be to revive the industries that were ruined or dead or were in the state of dying. The work as to which of the industries should be revived and which should be allowed to die away was to be left to the Association. By the revival of the village industries it was the intention of the resolution not only to help the villages financially but improve them morally and physically as well. It was not the intention of the movers of the resolution that the villagers should be exploited, but they wanted to help them.

The Congress was not going to approach the villagers as anybody's agents. It was the intention of the Congress to find out why people were working for 18 hours, if there were any so working. The speaker wanted that everyone would work not more than 9 hours and that could be, done by increasing the earning capacity of the villagers. For this the speaker wanted the help of those who were well off and could sacrifice a little more for the sake of the villagers by paying for the articles manufactured by the village artisans. Today the condition was such that even if they worked for 18 hours they did not get enough to make both ends meet. This could be done by the speaker and others of the Association when they went and mixed with the villagers freely and gained their confidence.

Continuing, Gandhiji said that his report that would be submitted to the Congress at a future date would be to say what the condition of the village industries was when he took up the work and what it had achieved in so many days. For such a work in the seven lacs of villages in India it was necessary that Acharya Kripalanis and Dr. Roys and advocates should work hand in hand.

[1] Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan seconded the resolution. What follows is from *The Bombay Chronicle.*

[2] Dr. Sanyal in his second amendment wanted the words "the said industries and for the moral and physical advancement of the villages" to be replaced by "such village industries as after due enquiry are found to possess sufficient economic vitality and are likely to bring permanent economic relief to the people".

Referring to Mr. Muzumdar's al amendment[1] Gandhiji said that he was bewildered when he found that a man of the type of Mr. T. Prakasam supported the amendment and said that because Congressmen were going to the Assembly the work could be better achieved by them inside the Legislature.

Gandhiji wanted to assure the Subjects Committee that the duty of the Parliamentarians did not end by their entering the Legislature. They would certainly be expected to work for the Industries Association also. But it must be understood that the organization would have no connection with politics.[2]

Explaining why he wanted the organization to be independent of politics, Mr. Gandhi said that if he tried both things at one time, he would not be able to achieve either.[3]

There is a special reason why this Association has been kept out of the Congress politics. This work must continue irrespective of the political situation. We go to the people to serve them. Let us not whisper politics in their ears. We go to them to improve their health, to free them from disease, to raise them from squalor, to reduce unemployment by giving them occupation. We cannot bring in politics if this is our aim. Even when the Congress was banned the Charkha Sangh was not banned and its work went on. That Association belongs to the Congress none the less. But it has kept away from Congress politics. The new Association too will have the same position.

I had said the same thing at Karachi[4]. Those who opposed me at that time told me afterwards that what I had said was correct. My advice was that the Anti-untouchability League and the Prohibition Committee be kept away from politics, and it was sound advice. A friend pointed out that Kumarappa and others would attend to this work; in that case, what work would be left for the Congressmen? It is not so. It will have a place for every Congressman who has faith in this programme. Today, there are 1,100 workers in the Charkha Sangh who are all Congressmen.[5]

[1] Basant Kumar Muzumdar wanted the House to decide whether the activities of the organization should be outside the scope of the Congress.

[2] The following paragraph is from *The Hindu.*

[3] What follows is translated from the Gujarati in *Harijanhandhu.*

[4] The March 1931

[5] The following paragraph is from *The Bombay Chronicle.*

Referring to the suspicion that seems to be entertained in certain quarters against his starting these organizations outside the Congress with little. connection with the parent body, Gandhiji said that it should not be forgotten that even a Mahatma and an economic expert put together could achieve very little, if the whole scheme was not going to be worked out by Congressmen themselves. Though outside help would also be taken, the main help had to come from amongst the tried workers of the Congress.[1]

Bhai Govind Sahai says that I am talking things of the bygone ages and that I am an arch enemy of machines. He has read my writings with a distorted view.[2] Is not this charkha in front of me a machine? We do want machines but do not wish to become their slaves. We should make the machine our slave. 'our slave, means slave not of the rich but of the poor. I accept money from the rich for the sake of the poor, but does it therefore lay me under an obligation to help them if I may collect five thousand rupees from a mill-owner or an iron manufacturer? Those who would give must do it with the idea that they should give something for the benefit of the poor from whom they have taken so much. In this way I plunder the rich [yet] some people say that I am an agent of the rich. I am no more than a labourer. I have laboured with the labourers. I have lived with them. I have shared food with them. I claim to be a representative of the working class for whom I obtain help from the rich. I do not wish to make our 350 million countrymen slaves of the machine. I see no socialism in it. My concept of socialism implies that people should be self reliant. That is the only way they can be prevented from being exploited. I have been trying to persuade the workers that if the capitalists have their gold and silver, we have our hands and feet. These too are assets. A capitalist will never be able to carry on without labour. Let no one misunderstand that the Sangh is going to serve the purpose of the capitalists, thereby making the workers slaves. On the contrary it proposes to release them from slavery, by making them self-reliant. How can this involve enslaving? I have given deep thought to the whole scheme before putting it before you. This is the

[1] The following paragraph is translated from the Gujarati in Harijanbandhu.

[2] Govind Sahai was 'opposed to the principle underlying the resolution" "not because he grudged seven crores of rupees being distributed among the villagers", but because, according to him, real economic freedom for the masses of India could be attained only when they were educated and taught how they were being exploited. He appealed to Gandhiji to change his methods and programme.

only way of reviving the village industries and I am seeking your help for the purpose.[1]

Whatever the fiscal policy of the Government was, nobody could stop the villagers becoming economically independent by developing village industries. Many Congressmen like Mr. Mathuraprasad were asking what they should do after the election campaign was over. Gandhiji said that there was the All-India Spinners' Association and the All-India Village Industries Association where both Dr. Sanyal and Mr. Muthey could work.[2]

The Hindu, 25-10-1934, *The Bombay Chronicle*, 25-10-1934 and *Harijanbandhu*, 28-10-1934

274. POLISHED v. UNPOLISHED

In my writing[3] on cent per cent swadeshi, I have shown how some aspects of it can be tackled immediately with benefit to the starving millions both economically and hygienically. The richest in the land can share the benefit. Thus if rice can be pounded in the villages after the old fashion, the wages will fill the pockets of the rice-pounding sisters and the rice-eating millions will get some sustenance from the unpolished rice instead of pure starch which the polished rice provides. Human greed, which takes no count of the health or the wealth of the people who come under its heels, is responsible for the hideous rice-mills one sees in all the rice-producing tracts. If public opinion was strong, it would make rice-mills an impossibility by simply insisting on unpolished rice and appealing to the owners of rice-mills to stop a traffic that undermines the health of a whole nation and robs the poor people of an honest means of livelihood.

But who will listen to the testimony of a mere layman on the question of food values? I, therefore, give below an extract[4] from *The Newer Knowledge of Nutrition* by Mr. Collum and Simmonds which a medical friend, to whom I had appealed for help, has sent with his approbation.

Harijan, 26-10-1934

[1] The following is from .*The Bombay Chronicle*.

[2] All the amendments were lost and the resolution was passed by an overwhelming majority.

[3] *Vide* "Swadeshi", 6-8-1934.

[4] Not reproduced here

275. 'NOT TO COW BUT TO SCORN?'

A young Englishman who has lived in Madras for two years writes from his home in Essex:[1]

> . . . I believe that, of the Hindu population, untouchables are in the majority. Of course I may be wrong but if correct, then, I consider the most effective measure to adopt in righting and preventing the grievous humiliations put upon this great body of people is not to approach the perpetrators (high castes) but the development of a 'line of defiance' through the untouchables themselves.
>
> The forming of a Brotherhood amongst themselves that will encourage the development of an existence, entirely independent of those to whom they appear to be objectionable, should, by degrees, build up a "strong point" and cause these now humbled folk not to cow, but to scorn and ignore the spurning and lashes now directed at them. . . .

The writer evidently does not know that there is a cult among Harijans which is trying to do exactly what he advises me to do. But that way does not lie the salvation of Harijans, certainly not of caste Hindus. The logical result of what is preached by the correspondent must be another problem akin to the Hindu-Muslim one, only much more intense. That way is the way of hate which is violence. The way I am trying to follow is the way of love which is non-violence. Having belonged to the oppressor class and having by choice made the attempt to become one with the oppressed, I have learnt that the true way of securing justice is to inculcate mutual respect, in other words, to evoke the spirit of equality or brotherhood in the place of that of superiority and inferiority. This can best be done by the 'superior' class being induced to descend from its fancied height. The so-called 'inferior, class has to be taught, not to scorn, but to be induced to shed the fear that is born of a consciousness of inferiority.

Therefore the Harijan Sevak Sangh is performing the double duty of asking the caste Hindus, on the one hand, to repent of the injustice that they have done to the Harijans and is working, on the other hand, among the Harijans by spreading education among them and by bringing to their notice the evils that oppression always breeds

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

among the oppressed. To deprive a man of his natural liberty and to deny to him the ordinary amenities of life is worse than starving the body. It is starvation of the soul—the dweller in the body. Harijans are a powerful illustration of this process of starvation of the soul. No amount of mere literary education or even economic betterment will restore the lost dignity of man. That restoration can only come when self-realization comes. This realization will not come without repentance on the part of the superior class. Superiority complex and inferiority complex are two faces of the same coin. Both are equally bad. Both require treatment. Mere transference of scorn from the 'superior' caste Hindu to the 'inferior' Harijan does not remedy the disease, it only aggravates it. 'Not to cow' is sound advice. But 'to scorn' is as bad as cowing. 'Love one another' is, therefore, the only advice an impartial observer can give. And I hope that the writer of the letter sees the weakness of the formula.

Harijan, 26-10-1934

276. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING, A.I.C.C.

October 26, 1934

You have in your affection misread the whole of my position.[1] If you have given me the position of a general commanding an army, you must allow that general to judge whether he serves the army by being at its head or whether he serves the army by retiring and giving place to lieutenants who have served well.

It is always the wisest thing for the general to swing to power or office or withhold that power that came to him unsought, because there are occasions when generals have been found to consider themselves unequal to hold the reins, and in the interests of the army, the interests of the cause for which the army and its chief are fighting to give up the command. If you believe that I have been a fairly wise general, you must believe in my judgment even now when I seem to be deserting you in the hour of your defeat.

[1] Earlier the Subjects Committee had unanimously passed a resolution expressing the country's confidence in Gandhiji and requesting him to revise his decision to retire

I have said times without number that I myself share no feeling of defeat. I am not deserting the cause for which I live, and for which I love to work. I go away from you in order, as I have said, to discover if there is still greater possibilities in experiments that we have been making, and for which you have given me such a generous support. I must express to you that I seem to have come to the end of my resources. I must confess to you that I have not lost faith in the efficacy of the means that I placed at the disposal of the Congress. But I feel there is a body of opinion rising in the country which has begun to question the efficacy of this means, and it is because they question the efficacy of this means that they have the sense of defeat in them.

In the dictionary of A satyagrahi, there is no such thing as defeat. To him, the very pursuit of his battle is its own reward.[1] But when I find some of my best companions, who have believed in truthfulness and non-violence with all its implications, are filled with doubt and feeling of helplessness, when I find that I am not able to touch them with my faith, I see all around me an impenetrable darkness. I see no ray of light. I see I cannot infect them with the faith that is in me.[2]

Therefore I would like you not to take me literally when I say that I go, if I can get your blessing. I go with your blessing in search of greater power to discover means whereby I can give you the faith that is in me. It may be that the search will be in vain. It may be that my roaming in solitude will be in vain. But depend upon it that I shall not wait a moment longer to be called by you, when I feel the necessity. I shall come to you, and once more come to the Congress to register myself as a primary member, and do whatever I can in the interests of the Congress.

I ask you therefore not to feel dispirited, but to feel that you will be able to discharge your duty, that you will have leaders enough to lead you on to victory. When it becomes necessary for me to come to this House, I will be entirely at your disposal. Therefore, I would simply urge not to press the resolution further. You have unanimously passed that resolution. Let that be enough. Somehow or other I

[1] A report in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 27-10-1934, here has: The very pursuit of truth is its own victory.

[2] *The Bombay Chronicle here* has: I have abundant faith in my programme. In the apparent darkness that envelops us, I see millions of rays of light, but. I cannot show you that light.

believe good, and only good, will come out of this decision. If you yourselves stand for the principle for which I stand, and for which you have given allegiance, which I acknowledge you have given out of your generosity, some of you no doubt blindly, some of you after having considered for yourselves, I have in all humility accepted all these allegiances. Let me now prove to myself, if it is possible, that I am worthy of it, and I invite you to prove it for yourselves also, whether I remain a member of the Congress or not, that the principle that you have more or less followed during all these long or short 14 or 15 years, you have followed because you have believed in it.

I tell you that it gives me still greater joy and pleasure, for I am able to say to myself, and if you are able to say to the world, that although I am gone you believe in the principle that you have fought for and lived for all these years and that you are going to follow them out not loosely, but still more truly and thoroughly than you have done before.

Immediately after his speech dealing with the question of his retirement Gandhiji proceeded to move formally a comprehensive resolution incorporating all the recommendations of the constitution sub-committee and the Congress Working Committee. In commending the whole of the resolution for the acceptance of the House in *toto,* Gandhiji at the outset referred to the previous day's decision of the House turning down the Working Committee's recommendation relating to the change of the Congress creed.[1]

Mahatma Gandhi delivered a stirring address lasting 90 minutes in which he appealed to the Subjects Committee to adopt the revised constitution.

Mahatma Gandhi referred to Thursday's vote and congratulated the House on the frank way in which they had voted in referring the question of change of creed to provincial committees. He said, when he had read the public and Press criticism of his proposals, he had made up his mind not to take up those amendments, but members of the Working Committee had of their own accord unanimously taken the view that the Committee would sponsor those resolutions. Gandhiji added:

I was surprised to find that members of the Committee devoted two hours this morning to deliberating as to what was their duty in

[1] *The Bombay Chronicle* here has: In moving the amendments to the Congress constitution as adumbrated in his Press statements, Gandhiji congratulated the House on its frankness in rejecting the Working Committee's proposal to substitute 'truthful' and 'non-violent' in place of 'peaceful and legitimate' "But I cannot say that you acted wisely," he added.

connection with these amendments. I told the Working Committee to carry out your resolution, but my feeling is that Mr. Sidhwa's amendment was wholly unnecessary. You could have rejected the Working Committee's proposal, but there was no use circulating it.

I listened carefully to Mr. Patwardhan's speech. He argued ably, but either he was deceiving himself or he was acting simply as an advocate. He said that we had descended from ideals to realism. But has not socialism its ideals and if I told him to remove even a comma from their ideals he would reject my proposition. Do you suppose you will realize complete independence at any time even after fifty generations? The socialist creed goes even further. I suggest we must have a measuring rod. The day humanity ceases to believe in ideals, it will descend to the level of the beasts. Today if you believe in truthfulness and non-violence say so. It does not mean you will be cent per cent truthful. I am not cent per cent truthful.[1]

If I were, my words will pierce you like arrows and come out clean, but I must aspire to attain my ideals.[2] Did Marx live to see his ideal realized? Is it not undergoing changes and are not meanings put to it which Marx himself never dreamt of? If you do not mean by "legitimate and peaceful" means that they are "truthful and non-violent", then merely define your creed to be that of attaining your end by whatever means you think legitimate. Then that would be your measuring rod, but you must have a measuring rod. You must be clear about your aims and means. They are convertible terms.

You know that swaraj is your goal. It means "*purna* swaraj" but someone said it did not mean complete independence; so we defined it to mean "*purna* swaraj". Just as you did that you must define your creed so that it may not be open to double interpretation. No one can draw a right angle, yet Euclid drew it up in imagination and gave the engineers a measuring rod by which the world has progressed. There is a right angle which is treasured in the Tower of London.

The Working Committee on Friday asked you to define your measuring rod. You sent it round for circulation. That was not the

[1] *The Bombay Chronicle* here has: I have never dared to make such a claim.

[2] *The Bombay Chronicle* here has: If I was cent per cent truthful, every word of mine would pierce you like an arrow and emerge uncontaminated and fill you with truth, but I aspire to be cent percent truthful. If humanity were to give up its ideals, it would descend to the level of beasts. Ideals we must have and ideals always recede.

right course to take. Let us not tell the world that there is one thing on our lips and another in our thoughts.

Mahatma Gandhi next explained the main purpose of the amendments proposed in the constitution. He said:

Do not pass these changes buoyed up with the hope that I will reconsider my decision. If I began my unofficial leadership of the Congress by the constitution for which I was primarily responsible I am also tendering you a humble gift in the shape of this amended constitution so that you may get the benefit of the judgment and experience of one who has endeavoured to live that constitution in closest communication and communion with you and has discovered its faults. I want you, therefore, to pass these amendments after touching them up.

You can take a day for consideration after hearing me and do whatever lobbying you like and give your verdict. You must first make up your mind to reduce your delegates from 6,000 to 1,000. If you reject that, the entire scheme falls through.

The second point is that the delegates should be real representatives of the people. We are indirectly representative of the nation's dumb millions. We are their mouthpiece, their voice and their thought. That is what the Congress has stood for since 1885, but indirectly we are representatives only of our electors.

Can anyone among us say whom he represents, as to whether he is in living touch with his constituents and knows their feelings? Even the tallest amongst us cannot claim that. Sardar Vallabhbhai is the uncrowned king of Gujarat, but which electorate does he represent, whom do I represent, I do not know. I challenge anyone to produce the Congress register of electors. We must have constituencies and electors and each member shall represent his constituency and be in living touch with it. Then alone you will have your measuring rod.

The third principle I have put forward is that three things be combined in one election. It will not merely mean greater convenience and saving of money, it is rich with promise if you adopt it. Delegates will then be elected by their electorate. They will not assemble as now for three days in a year and then disappear from the horizon. They will remain active Congressmen as members of the A. I. C. C. and will take up work all the year round.

Today only 350 out of 1,530 are members of the A. I. C. C. Then again a body of 1 ,000 can be accommodated in Sardar

Vallabhbhai's Ras or Bardoli. I have got a complete scheme ready for a successful session being held in the village of that character. Those villages can slave for you but they cannot give you money for your Reception Committee. You must have people who know the business of running a Congress meeting and even importing provisions and the Reception Committee shall not waste lakhs on its arrangements.

I question the wisdom of the Reception Committee wasting lakhs on *tamashas* and in building triumphal arches. Where is our triumph? We are a slave nation and all we want the Reception Committee to do is to give us the hospitality, not of pudding and ice-cream, but ordinary food. Our scheme is to relieve the Reception Committees of their heavy burden. If I had been in Nariman's position I would have become a lunatic.

Mahatma Gandhi, reverting to his plea that the matter be not referred to Provincial Committees, said:

Why do you want to refer it to the provinces? Why shirk your duty? You are super-delegates because you are the Subjects Committee. Others are mere delegates, but mere delegates representing 350 millions. Then I say it is for them to hammer out a constitution and not shirk the duty. I promise you fair consideration of every criticism you have made. I am giving you an iron constitution from which not one single man can go away. If there is any corruption you can detect it unless everyone becomes a fraud. No constitution can be robber-proof and thief-proof. I have sufficient faith in my countrymen that they will never betray their country.

Sri Prakasa says our present constitution is rotten. Then are we to waste another year in waiting for what we shall do? I am sure that the position will remain where it is and we will not receive a single report during the next twelve months. Make such use as you can of the wisdom you say is possessed by me whom the world holds as a fool. But wisdom sometimes does come out of the mouth of fools. I would like you to accept my suggestions and I will be ready for compromise. Already, when Mr. Masani came to me, I assured him that I wanted Socialists to be represented. They are the advance wing. There is nothing to be feared from their activity. They call themselves Congressmen and while they are Congressmen they are supposed to believe in the Congress creed and loyally follow the discipline of the Congress. If they fail to follow the Congress discipline, they will fail in their own creed. I have agreed to their suggestion regarding the single

transferable vote. This constitution has been revised by able lawyers like Mr. Bhulabhai Desai and Mr. K. M. Munshi and many others have been consulted. I may also make it clear that there will be plural constituencies in urban areas, but their number is not defined. The Working Committee is entirely in your hands in these matters of detail, but do not postpone these matters.

You are going to have a Parliamentary Board. They will look after the Assembly work. In the Assembly it is not a battle between men, but between principles; our members will go to represent the principles which will not require eloquence, but will be enunciated in unequivocal terms.

Hereafter you will have your register of electors and you will be in living touch with them. Mr. Nageshwara Rao says that there are 7,000 voters for one seat. My scheme is modest. It wants only 1,000 voters for one seat. I will be satisfied if you are the representatives of one million and then we can have more and more. But I do submit that we will lose one precious year in the life of the nation by referring these matters to Provincial Committees.

Proceeding, Mahatma Gandhi referred to the amendments seeking to incorporate the existing convention of allowing the President to select his colleagues of the Working Committee in the Congress constitution. Gandhiji said that there had been no single instance in the past wherein the President's choice in this matter had been overridden by the A. I. C. C. But he thought it would be better to incorporate this convention in the constitution so as to avoid difficulties attendant on selection of candidates. The President under this amendment would not have to stand the fire of cross-examination at the A.I.C.C.

There must be some occasions in the life of the Working Committee when they would have to say: "If you want us to carry on then we ask you to arm us with certain powers and if you cannot trust us then you must look for better men to. fill our place." For the same reason he had sought that the Secretaries and the Treasurer should also be the President's choice.[1]

Home Department, Political, File No. 4/27/36. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] This appeared in *The Bombay Sentinel*, 27-10-1934, extracts from which are found in the National Archives of India.

277. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING, A. I. C. C.

October 27, 1934

When the Subjects Committee met on the morning of the 27th Mr. Gandhi continued his speech on his amendments to the Congress constitution. He said that when they discovered so many breaches in the walls of their house, they should fill them in quickly. There was nothing in the new constitution requiring study or reference to outside authority. If they wanted to circulate it, he would take it to mean that they did not want it. If they were not convinced about the absolute necessity of passing the constitution, he would beseech them to reject it. Referring to the question of reducing the strength of the Provincial Congress Committees, he said that he had had bitter experience of unwieldly bodies losing sight of the work before them. That was why he was desperately in earnest about it. I he essence of democracy did not lie in numerical strength but the spirit behind even one person. Even one man could represent a whole democracy. In England, he said, it was not the House of Commons but it was the Bank of England that dictated policies to the British Ministers. Recently the Bank had finished its business in the record time of 13_ minutes. If the Bank could manage such huge affairs in 13_ minutes, the Congress should be able to manage its affairs in five minutes. Mr. Gandhi then moved that the Subjects Committee should accept the principle underlying the new constitution and appoint a sub-committee to consider the constitution and place their recommendations before the Subjects Committee by 8 a.m. on the 28th.

Replying to the debate, Mr. Gandhi said he had been asked whether he would reconsider his decision if the Committee accepted his amendments without changing a comma. He assured them that there was no "danger" of his remaining in the Congress in any event. He asked them to accept the new constitution only if they had confidence in it.[1]

Bombay Secret Abstracts: Home Department, Special Branch

[1] Gandhiji then accepted M. S. Aney's resolution which read: "The Subjects Committee accepts the principle underlying the proposed amendments to the constitution and appoints a sub-committee of the following 15 members to examine the details thereof and place its recommendations before the Subjects Committee for approval by the morning of the 28th." For the report of the sub-committee, *vide* "Speech at Subjects Committee Meeting, A. I. C. C." , 28-10-1934.

278. SPEECH AT SWADESHI BAZAAR[1]

BOMBAY,
October 28, 1934

Since Sjt. Shoorji Vallabhdas started this Swadeshi Bazaar, it has attracted my attention and I had promised that I would visit the stores at the earliest opportunity. That happy opportunity has been postponed due to various reasons up to this day, and even today I have had to snatch some time from my other engagements to fulfil my promise and as I have to return soon, unfortunately, I will not be able to give you much of my time. I have repeated very often that as long as the charkha does not hum in every village, we will not be able to attain swaraj nor will we be able to safeguard religion. Before our very eyes crores of our own brothers and sisters are not getting sufficient meals even once a day, while we enjoy two square meals. These crores are starving not because they do not wish to work, but because they do not find work. If you would place the charkha in their hands or if you can find out any other work for them superior to the charkha you may give that first and then the charkha. But do give these starving millions some work and then alone you will be able to bring food for their famished bodies.

Suppose you set the charkhas going, what about the khadi that will be manufactured? You all want to put on cheap and good-looking clothes in preference to khaddar, then in what way can you be of help to these poor starving people? Even if khaddar be costly it is your and my duty to use it. In our country millions upon millions have not even the bare loin-cloth to hide their shame, how can you expect them to put on khaddar? It would interest you to know that within ten years two-and-a-quarter crores of rupees have been distributed as wages amongst the spinners. This sum has gone direct into the hands of the poor. By putting on khaddar you can help these people. But to my utter regret I find that in Bombay many of you—both men and women—do not put on khaddar. If you do not wish to put on khaddar, where is the sense in being present at meetings which are addressed by me? I have come here with the hope that you would cast

[1] Gandhiji presided over the third anniversary celebration of the Shoorji Vallabhdas Swadeshi Bazaar in the morning.

aside mill-cloth and use more and more khaddar. I am confident that all the other articles also that are being sold in this Bazaar are completely made in India.

Today, I have not been able to go into the details of all the articles that are exhibited here, but on a future occasion I mean to interest myself in details with regard to each and every article to be found here. That this Bazaar is not making profit has been realized by you and yet whenever it makes profits they will be ours. I would, therefore, urge upon you that whenever you wish to purchase any article please make it a point to visit this Bazaar.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-11-1934

279. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING, A. I. C. C.

October 28, 1934

Mahatma Gandhi formally moving for the acceptance of the report stated that the sub-committee met on Saturday from 2 to 9 p.m. and had prepared their report. He himself sat up till I a.m. and Mr. Kishorelal sat up the whole night drafting the report. After Kishorelal had drafted the report, Messrs Munshi and Bhulabhai Desai sat over it and gave the legal touches to it. The speaker said that he did not want anything to be hurried, so that they might not think of an aftermath change which would have to be incorporated into the report. The members of the sub-committee sat with the determination of bringing out a unanimous report and considered all the recommendations of the Working Committee.[1]

Mahatma Gandhi explained the changes that had been made in the constitution. It had been suggested several times that the name of the United Provinces should be changed to Hind and the name of C. P. (Hindi) as Mahakoshal. The speaker had not the courage himself to suggest the change, but since some of the members of the sub-committee suggested the change, he accepted it.

The Committee also had made a slight verbal change in Article V of the constitution. In that Article, the word "officer" had been restored. Another important clause which had been added at the suggestion of some of the members, whose point the speaker appreciated very much, was regarding no member of the Congress being a member of any communal or anti-national organization. There was some reluctance

[1] At this stage the loudspeakers failed. Gandhiji continued after the current was restored.

on the part of some of the members to introduce this clause, but the opposition was borne down and. the clause was accepted.

Then, regarding the reduction in the Congress delegation, the original proposition wanted that there should be only l,000 delegates and they themselves form the All-India Congress Committee, but it had been suggested by some of the members that the number of delegates should be 2,000, each delegate [representing] 500 Congressmen instead of 1 ,000 as suggested originally. The delegates from the urban constituencies shall in no case be more than 511, while the rural delegation should not be more than 1,489.

For the benefit of many minorities, it had been suggested that there should be multiple constituencies, each constituency consisting of at least five members. The election should take place under the single transferable vote system. This was an intricate subject to understand, said Candhiji, but the system would make it physically impossible to have a constituency of less than five members.

Gandhiji explained in detail the system of' the single transferable vote and multiple constituency. The idea was to make the position of the minorities secure.

Gandhiji continuing said that he would like the House to discuss it without loss of time and accept it as a whole even though the acceptance might be done reluctantly. There could be little ado or difficulty for the Committee to accept the report, which had amended the amendments. The number of delegates allotted to the provinces looked ugly, though it did not read ugly. Bombay had been given the right to send in 21 delegates. This was in recognition of the importance of the city and the part it had taken in the political fight. Including the All-India Congress Committee members today, Bombay was sending 30 delegates to the Congress and that number had been reduced to 21. This was not according to the population system. Bombay had been a veritable gold mine for developing the political conscience of the country. It was only on Bombay that this rare honour had been conferred. According to the system laid down under the constitution-, Bombay would be entitled to send in only six delegates.

Continuing, Gandhiji said that the A. I. C. C. would consist of 166 members as suggested by the sub-committee instead of the present 350. This was in the proportion of one A. I. C. C. member for every twelve delegates. This would be nearly half of the present number. According to Gandhiji, it was not a bad change. The A. I. C. C. became a still more business-like and responsible body. Instead of the suggested A. I. C. C. of l,000 members, the A. I. C. C. had been reduced to 166.

This has been done at the suggestion of many friends on the Committee who wanted that there should be an intermediary body between the Congress and the Working Committee. It has also been

laid down that no person can get into the A. I. C. C. from any other province than his own. If a province does not produce the requisite number of members on the All-India Congress Committee or of Congress delegates, then that province goes only with that number and nothing more. Each province will send at least ten delegates to the Congress.

The new changes had not been thrust on the speaker.

Then Gandhiji referred to the election of the President. He said that since Nagpur he did not like the idea, and it had been decided by the sub-committee that the President should be elected by the delegates of the provinces who would send in their recommendations to the Working Committee who, after receiving all the recommendations, would declare the President of the year. The present system of the Reception Committee electing the President was not understandable. What had the Reception Committee to do with the President of the Congress, while the delegates with whom the President had to confer and decide the future work of the Congress were imposed with a President about whose selection they had nothing to do.

This sort of anachronism ought to go and that is why the sub-committee has decided that the delegates from the provinces should elect their President. The same meeting of the Provincial Congress Committee will elect their nominees on the All-India Congress Committee. The P. C. C. will elect their quota of delegates less the number of the A. I. C. C. members who *ipso facto* become delegates also. The work of the P. C. C. will be to carry out the programme and policy laid down by the Congress.

Gandhiji also discussed the powers of the Working Committee and stated that it was for the Working Committee to carry out the policy and programme enunciated by the Congress. But it was the work of the Working Committee to interpret the decisions of the Congress. The instance of the resolution[1] on the Communal Award and the Congress attitude towards it was one of the extreme cases when the Working Committee expressed the views of the Congress. The Working Committee would be watchdog of the Congress in the country with the right of interpreting, whenever occasion arose, the decisions of the Congress. The Working Committee was not a body of dummies. It was for the All-India Congress Committee to place complete trust in the Working Committee, with amplest discriminatory powers within its jurisdiction. It was for the Working Committee to guide the policy laid down by the

[1] Passed at Bombay on June 17 and 18

Congress and the A. I. C. C. Gandhiji said:

There are times when the Working Committee will have to take bold risks. Since the last many years, they have been taking risks and not an occasion had arisen when the A. I. C. C. passed a vote of no-confidence against the Working Committee. No Working Committee will be worth its salt if it does not take risks.

The sub-committee has recommended that no Provincial Congress Committee shall have more than 100 members and those who have already got more will reduce themselves, while those who have less shall remain so till the next elections. It is necessary under the proposed constitutional changes that 15 signatures should be affixed, if the meeting of the A. I. C. C. has to be called while the quorum would be 25.

After explaining the fundamental changes that had been proposed in the constitution, Gandhiji asked the House to proceed with the discussion of the report.

Mahatma Gandhi submitted the following report to the Subjects Committee:

Pursuant to your yesterday's resolution, we have considered the Working Committee's recommendations for the amendment of the Congress constitution and beg to submit our draft as annexed herewith. We are happy to state that we have been able to achieve complete unanimity.

The main alterations made by us in the Working Committee's draft may be summarized as follows:

1. In Article II instead of the words "subject to the-previous approval of the Working Committee" we have substituted the words, "in accordance with the rules framed by it (as Provincial Congress Committee) in that behalf and approved by the Working Committee".

2. In Article III, we have made minor alterations; such as the change in the names of the provinces U. P. and C. P. (Hindustani) — into Hind and Mahakoshal respectively and the deletion of the last clause in C1. (c) which was superfluous.

3. In Article IV we have incorporated the labour franchise passed by the Subjects Committee with a slight verbal change so as to bring it in harmony with the khadi clause.

We have also added a new and important clause to this Article as

follows:

> No person being a member of any elective Congress Committee shall be a member of any similar committee of a communal organization the object or programme of which involves political activities which are in the opinion of the Working Committee anti-national and in conflict with those of the Congress.

4. In Article V, we have changed the original scheme of delegates in the following manner:

(l) The number of delegates has been increased from l,000 to 2,000, each representing a constituency of not less than 500 instead of l,000 primary members.

(2) The urban area will be entitled to have not more than 511 delegates in the aggregate and the rural area not more than 1,489. No province shall have more than its proportion of delegates that would belong to it, if it was fixed on the population basis as heretofore and every province shall be entitled to not less than ten, even though the number of its primary members may be inadequate to send that number.

(3) The claims of the city of Bombay have been recognized by giving it a maximum of 21 delegates: for providing for this weightage we have been obliged to deprive the rural area of 11 delegates.

(4) Where the delegates of a province exceed 100, the Provincial Congress Committee shall consist of the All-India Congress Committee members for that province plus those elected by the delegates to bring up the total to 100. Where the delegates are less than 100, the whole will constitute the Provincial Congress Committee.

(5) The President of the Congress is to be elected by the delegates for the ensuing session in the following manner.

Soon after the election of delegates they-should meet under the Chairmanship of the President of the Provincial Congress Committee and elect the President, the Chairman registering the number of votes secured by each nominee, where there is more than one, and where there is only one nominee, he will be deemed to have received as

many votes as there are delegates present at the meeting. These elections will take place simultaneously on the date fixed by the Working Committee in that behalf. These results shall be posted to the Working Committee by the Provincial Congress Committee and the nominee securing the highest number of votes shall be declared President for the ensuing year. The same meeting of delegates shall elect its quota of members for the All India Congress Committee.

(6) The number of the members of the All-India Congress Committee has been fixed at l66 as the .maximum, each province having one member to every twelve delegates and every province being entitled to at least one, though it may not have twelve delegates. These members to be elected at the meeting of delegates referred to by the single transferable vote. The same meeting of delegates to elect members of Provincial Congress Committees where necessary.

Regard being had to the fact that the All-India Congress Committee has been considerably reduced, members desire to emphasize the necessity of making it clear in the constitution that the Working Committee should not initiate new policies but should merely be the executive body carrying out the policies laid down from time to time by the All-India Congress Committee.

5. The sub-comrnittee recommends that at least one day should be invariably given for the consideration of proposals made by private members.

6. The sub-committee recommends the deletion of the Article dealing with matters affecting communal interests.

7. During the transitory period, the Provincial Congress Committees are to elect by single transferable vote the reduced quota of members of the All-India Congress Committee, the quota for the transitory period being the full strength of 166 distributed according to the existing proportions.

8. The Provincial Congress Committees to reduce themselves to 100 where they number more than 100. These elections to take place before the 15th of January.

Mr. Mazumdar from Bengal asked if it was not a fact that members were being elected directly under the proposed constitution, while the previous constitution

allowed indirect election.

Gandhiji agreed that it was so, but said that the new A. I. C. C. was not a subordinate body, it was less numerical than originally proposed by him.

Gandhiji appealed to the House not to move amendments, but make suggestion, which, if found feasible, he might accept. But if the House wanted wrangling over the report, then amendments should be moved, and the President would regulate the discussion.

Mr. Babu Purushottamdas Tandon seconded the motion.

Mr. Sampurnanand asked Gandhiji if the members of the sub-committee had freedom to vote on the question of Article I, at the open session, and Gandhiji informed him that they had.

Questioned regarding the elections in Bengal after the new constitution came into existence, Gandhiji said that the present P. C. C. would continue to function with the reduced number till the next elections.

Dr. Choithram Gidwani opposed the amendment regarding U. P. being called Hind, . . . by Hind the whole of India was meant. . . .

Sardar Sardulsingh seconded the amendment.

Mr. C. Rajagopalachari supported Dr. Choithram and said that if Hind was adopted as the name of U. P., then many changes would have to be made both in songs and national cries. . . .

Mahatmaji, at this stage, stated that he accepted the suggestion because many people had complained that they had no name for U. P. at all. But seeing that there were many who were opposed to it, he would withdraw it. He was doing it without conferring with the members of the sub-cornmittee.

On the members saying that they had no objection to calling C. P. (Hindi) Mahakoshal, Mahatmaji, amidst laughter, said:

> You seem to grudge poor Jawaharlal who is inside the Naini Jail. It was he who had suggested that U. P. should be called Hind.

Sardar Sardulsingh then moved an amendment that since Bombay had been given a weightage, the Frontier Province also should be given weightage, because they were more than entitled to it.

Mahatmaji said that he was opposed to weightage, and was prepared to cancel the number allotted to Bombay.

Gandhiji, replying to the several points, said that it was unfortunate that several amendments had been moved to the report. He wanted the House to accept or reject the report as a whole, because the report was an organic whole, and could not be

changed here and there.

The suggestion that the A. I. C. C. membership should remain at 350 made that body a very loose body. It was the aim of the speaker to aim at quality and not at quantity.

Referring to the amendment of Mr. Kaleswarrao, Gandhiji said that the 15th of January had been fixed for the next elections, because many of the Congressmen would be in election fever till then, and when they survived that fever they could get together and hold the elections.

Regarding the Socialists Gandhiji said that there is nothing to be fluttered about. If a certain group cannot work the constitution it was up to that group to hand over the working of the Congress in that part to the group which was creating disturbance, saying that they would surrender everything to them. There need be no suspicion of the Socialist group, continued Gandhiji. They would certainly help all because they were also out to serve the starving humanity. If the Socialists rise in power and capture it, they have a perfect right to do so.

The speaker, referring to the single transferable vote, said. that there were several occasions when he had to dodge himself out of inconvenient corners and every Congressman would have to do the same. It would be difficult as far as the village workers were concerned, but if it were the speaker, he would ask the Socialists either to join him in his work and carry on shoulder to shoulder, or leave the village to that group and go to the next village.

There was some discussion over the time of the year when Congress should be held, and it was decided that it should be held some time in February or March. It was specially being held in February or March, said Gandhiji, because the villagers in their *langotis* could come and the Subjects Committee members could hug them. (Cheers)

Mr. C. Rajagopalachari moved that option should be given to the provinces regarding the appliance of the single transferable vote. Mahatmaji refused to accept the suggestion, and voted against the amendment.

Gandhiji, laughing, said that if the vote had gone against him, he was about to demand a poll. (Laughter)

The sub-committee's report was unanimously passed.

Mahatmaji thanked the Subjects Committee for unanimously approving the report. He announced that Karachi had decided to become a separate province. He also made an announcement that it would not be a surprise if members of the A. I. C. C. were asked to pay Rs. 10 each. The delegates' fee would also be Rs. 5 and not Rs. IO as at present.

When the resolution regarding the Indian States was about to be moved, Mahatmaji stated that the problem of the Indian States was a very delicate one.

Gandhiji has prepared the following draft resolution, indicating the Working Committee's views on the Indian States peoples. Gandhiji, however, advised that this proposal be not adopted by Congress, but that a formula be evolved by a sub-committee, in consultation with States' subjects' representatives. This sub-committee's report would be placed before the next meeting of the A. I. C. C. Gandhiji's draft formula runs:

As numerous resolutions have been received from various groups for adoption by Congress, and urging it to define its policy in regard to Indian States, it is hereby resolved as follows:

Congress adheres to its policy of the internal administration of various States. Congress, however, regards the whole of geographical India as an indivisible whole, notwithstanding the fact that it is cut up into parts governed under different systems and, therefore, expresses its regret over the tendency of some Princes to regard as foreigners Indians from parts of India other than their own, and repeats its appeal, made at the previous sessions of Congress, to establish responsible government within their jurisdiction, and recognize the necessity of guaranteeing civic and political liberty of people living in their territories. This Congress assures the people residing in different States of full sympathy with their just aspirations and for fuller self-expression.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-10-1934

280. CONSTITUTION OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

[*October 28, 1934*][1]

OBJECT

ARTICLE I

The object of the Indian National Congress is the attainment of *poorna* swaraj (Complete Independence) by all legitimate and peaceful means.

THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

ARTICLE II

The Indian National Congress shall comprise:

(1) Members enrolled in primary committees under Article III,

(2) Provincial Congress Committees,

(3) Annual Session,

(4) All-India Congress Committee,

(5) Working Committee,

and may comprise (a) committees or associations directly organized by the A. I. C. C. or the Working Committee, or (b) committees organized by any Provincial Congress Committee in accordance with the rules framed by it in that behalf and approved by the Working Committee.

MEMBERSHIP

ARTICLE III

(a) Any person over the age of 18 years who believes in Article I shall, on making a written declaration to that effect and presenting an application in form A annexed hereto and on payment of four annas, be entitled to be placed on the register of Congress members kept at any office duly authorized in that behalf within the district in which he ordinarily resides or carries on business.

Provided that no person shall be a member of more than one primary committee at the same time.

[1] Gandhiji moved the resolution embodying the amended constitution at the Congress session on this date, *vide* the following item.

(b) The application shall be presented in duplicate and may be handed in personally or sent by post or messenger.

(c) It shall state the full name, age, sex, and occupation of the applicant as also the village, the taluk, the district and the province in which he ordinarily resides or carries on business.

(d) The official receiving the application, after recording on it the date of receipt, serial number and such other particulars as may be prescribed shall send one of the duplicates to the office of the Provincial Congress Committee concerned.

(e) The applicant, on being enrolled, shall receive a certificate of membership as per form B annexed hereto and printed on durable paper, either in the language and script of the province in which he resides or in the Hindustani language written in Devanagari or Urdu script.

(f) Unless otherwise directed by the Working Committee the year of the membership shall be reckoned from April 1st to March 31st and there shall be no reduction in the subscription to be paid by members joining in the middle of the year.

PROVINCES

ARTICLE IV

(a) The following shall be the provinces with the headquarters mentioned against them:

Provinsce		*Language*	*Headquarters*
1.	Ajmer-Merwara	Hindustani	Ajmer
2.	Andhra	Telugu	Bezwada
3.	Assam	Assamese	Gauhati
4.	Behar	Hindustani	Patna
5.	Bengal	Bengali	Calcutta
6.	Berar	Marathi	Amraoti7.
	Bombay (City)	Marathi & Gujarati	Bombay
8.	Burma	Burmese	Rangoon
9.	Central Provinces		
	(Marathi)	[Marathi]	[Nagpur]
10.	Delhi	Hindustani	Delhi
11.	Gujarat	Gujarati	Ahmedabad
12.	Karnatak	Kannada	Dharwar

13.	Kerala	Malayalam	Calicut
14.	Mahakoshal (Central Provinces Hindustani)	Hindustani	Jubbulpore
l 5.	Maharashtra	Marathi	Poona
16.	N. W. F. Province	Hindustani	Peshawar
l 7.	Punjab	Punjabi	Lahore
18.	Sind	Sindhi	Karachi
l9.	Tamil Nadu	Tamil	Madras
20.	United Provinces	Hindustani	Lucknow
21.	Utkal	Oriya	Cuttack

(b) Any Provincial Congress Committee with the previous sanction of the Working Committee shall have the power to alter its headquarters from time to time.

(c) The Working Committee may after ascertaining the wishes of the Provincial Congress Committee or Committees concerned constitute a new province, or assign to a province districts from another province as also assign an Indian State to any province.

QUALIFICATIONS

ARTICLE V

(a) No member shall be entitled to exercise his vote at any election unless he has been continuously on a Congress register for six months prior to the date of the election.

(b) No member even if he is qualified under clause (a) hereof shall be eligible for election to an office or to membership of any Congress Committee unless:

(i) he is a habitual wearer wholly of hand-spun and handwoven khaddar ;

(ii) he has performed some manual labour continuously for six months immediately before the date of nomination for election, on behalf of or for the Congress, equal in value to 500 yards per month of well-spun yarn of over ten counts, and in time to eight hours per month, the forms of acceptable labour alternative to spinning being prescribed from time to time by the Working Committee in consultation with the Provincial Congress Committees concerned and the All-India Village Industries Association or the All-India Spinners, Association;

(iii) at the time of offering himself for such election he is not a

member at the same time of any other parallel committee.

(c) No person who is member of any elected Congress Committee shall be member of any similar committee of a communal organization, the object or programme of which involves political activities which are, in the opinion of the Working Committee anti-national and in conflict with those of the Congress.

ELECTION OF DELEGATES

ARTICLE VI

(a) At the end of every Annual Session the Working Committee shall fix a date and time not earlier than eight months after the date of such decision when every Provincial Congress Committee shall send to the Working Committee a certified list of members of its primary committees qualified to vote. The list must reach the office of the Working Committee on or before the said or any other extended date [or] time.

(b) Members included in the said list shall alone be entitled to vote at the election of delegates in that province.

(c) In the event of a Provincial Congress Committee failing to furnish the list in time, the province concerned may be disentitled to elect its delegates.

(d) On receipt of the aforesaid lists the Working Committee shall fix the date by which the election of delegates must be held and the quota of delegates which each province is entitled to return, and call upon the Provincial Congress Committees to procced with the election of their respective quota.

(c) For the purposes of election the provinces referred to in Article IV hereof shall be divided into rural and urban areas.

NOTE. 'Urban area' means towns which have a population of more than ten thousand persons. 'Rural area' means area other than urban.

(f) The rural area as also every town with a population of more than 10,000 persons in a district shall each be entitled to elect one delegate for every five hundred duly qualified members on the rolls of its primary committees or for such other number as may be fixed by the Working Committee in accordance with clause (h) hereof subject to the following:

(i) The maximum number of delegates shall not exceed two thousand. Out of the said number 511 shall be the maximum for the urban area and 1,489 for the rural area.

(ii) No province shall be entitled to return a larger number of

delegates than a proportion of one delegate; to every 1,50,000 of the inhabitants of such province including the Indian States or agencies therein, or a fraction thereof, in accordance with the census of 1921.

PROVISO I: The maximum number of delegates sent by the urban area in each province shall not exceed 25% of the total number returnable by the province as aforesaid.

PROVISO II: Bombay (City) shall have a maximum quota of 21 elegates.

PROVISO III: Every province shall be entitled to return a minimum of 10 delegates irrespective of the strength of its primary members.

(g) (i) Where the rural area of a district has a sufficient number of duly qualified members on the rolls of its primary committees, the Provincial Congress Committee shall divide such area into suitable circles, so as to include in each circle not less than five hundred duly qualified members and each such circle shall be entitled to elect a delegate.

(ii) On a demand made in writing by 500 duly qualified members enrolled on the primary committees of one or more contiguous circles of a district, the said circles, where possible, shall be combined into a plural-member constituency of not more than five seats.

(iii) Wherever possible, a town with a population of more than 10,000 persons shall be divided into plural-member constituencies of not less than five and not more than ten seats provided the constituency can have at least 500 duly qualified members to every seat. But where the number of duly qualified members is less than 2,500, the town shall be formed into a plural-member constituency with one scat to not less than 500 members each.

(iv) Election in plural-member constituencies shall be by proportional representation by single transferable vote.

(h) If and when necessary, the Working Committee may readjust the proportion of 500 duly qualified members to one delegate and prescribe a higher figure for any urban or rural area so that the total number of urban and rural delegates in each province may be in the proportion of I to 3 and may not in the aggregate exceed the maximum prescribed for it under f (ii).

(i) The province which has not completed its election on or before the date appointed by the Working Committee may at the discretion of the Working Committee be disentitled to be represented at the Annual Session.

(j) A certified list of delegates shall be submitted by the Provincial Congress Committees not later than the date fixed by the Working Committee in that behalf.

(k) Every delegate so elected shall, on payment of a fee of Rs. 5 at the office of the Provincial Congress Committee of his province, receive a certificate in accordance with Form C hereto annexed, duly signed by one of its secretaries. No delegate shall be entitled to exercise any of his functions or powers without such certificate.

ELECTION BY THE DELEGATES

ARTICLE VII

(a) On receipt by the Working Committee of the lists of delegates it shall fix a date on which the delegates in every province shall assemble in a meeting to transact the following business:

(i) to propose the candidate or candidates for the Presidentship of the Congress for the ensuing year and to record the vote of each of the delegates asssembled on the proposals;

(ii) to elect from among themselves one-twelfth of their number as representatives of the province on the All-India Congress Committee;

(iii) in case the number of delegates for the province exceeds 100, to elect from among themselves a number of members which together with the members of the All-India Congress Committee elected under clause (ii) would amount to 100 to constitute the Provincial Congress Committee of the province.

(b) The elections in sub-clauses (ii) and (iii) of clause (a) shall be by proportional representation by single transferable vote.

(c) The Secretaries of the respective Provincial Congress Committees shall issue certificates of membership of the All-India Congress Committee to the persons elected on it.

PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEES

ARTICLE VIII

(a) The delegates elected from a province under Article VI, or where the number of delegates is more than 100, one hundred delegates elected under Article VII(a) (iii), as the case may be, and the President and the ex-Presidents of the Congress, provided they

are duly qualified under Articles III and V, shall form its Provincial Congress Committee.

(b) Every Provincial Congress Committee shall:

(i) subject to the general control and supervision of the A. I. C. C., be in charge of the affairs of the Congress within its own province and to that end frame rules not inconsistent with this constitution, which rules shall come into operation only with the previous sanction of the Working Committee;

(ii) submit an annual report of the work in the province to the Working Committee not later than one month before the commencement of the Annual Session;

G (iii) before the new A. I. C. C. meets as Subjects Committee under Article IX(g), pay to the Working Committee the fees received from the delegates, as also such subscription as may be fixed by the latter, having regard to the population, membership and financial capacity of the province. Delegates and members of the A. I. C. C. from provinces in default shall not be permitted to take part in any of the proceedings of the Congress or any committee thereof.

ANNUAL SESSION

ARTICLE IX

(a) The Annual Session shall be ordinarily held during the month of February or March. The said Session shall be held at the place decided upon at the preceding Session or such other place as may be determined by the Working Committee.

(b) The Annual Session shall consist of:

(i) the President of the Congress;

(ii) the ex-Presidents of the Congress, provided they are duly qualified under Articles III and V;

(iii) the delegates elected under Article VI.

(c) The Provincial Congress Committee concerned shall make such arrangements for holding the Annual Session as may be deemed necessary, and for this purpose shall form a Reception Committee, and may include therein persons who are not its members.

(d) The Reception Committee shall collect funds for the expenses of the Session, make all necessary arrangements for the reception and accommodation of delegates and visitors and for the printing of the report of the proceedings of the Session.

(e) The Reception Committee shall elect its Chairman and other office-bearers from amongst its own members.

(f) (i) As soon as may be, after the receipt of the report by the Working Committee of the names of Presidents proposed by the delegates of various provinces and the number of votes recorded in favour of each, the Working Committee shall announce as President-elect the name of the member obtaining the largest number of votes.

(ii) In the event of an emergency arising by reason of any cause, such as the death or resignation of the President elected in this manner, the Working Committee shall, not later than a fortnight after the emergency, elect as President the person standing next in order.

(g) The new A. I. C. C. shall meet as Subjects Committee at least two days before the Annual Session under the presidentship of the President-elect. The outgoing Working Committee shall submit to it the draft programme of the work for the Session including resolutions recommended by the different Provincial Congress Committees.

(h) The Subjects Committee shall proceed to discuss the programme and shall frame resolutions for being moved in the open Session. At least one day shall be allotted for the consideration of propositions of which due notice has been given by Provincial Congress Committees or members of the A. I. C. C. other than those of the Working Committee in accordance with the rules prescribed in that behalf.

(i) At each sitting of the Congress, the order in which business shall be transacted shall be as follows:

(i) The resolution recommended for adoption by the Subjects Committee.

(ii) Any substantive motion not included in (i) and which 25 delegates request the President in writing, before the commencement of the day's sitting, to be allowed to place before the Congress; provided, however, that no such motion shall be allowed unless it has been previously discussed at a meeting of the Subjects Committee and has received the support of at least a third of the members then present.

(j) The receipts and disbursements of the Reception Committee shall be audited by an auditor or auditors appointed by the Provincial Congress Committee concerned, and the statement of accounts

together with the auditor's report shall be submitted by the Provincial Congress Committee to the Working Committee not later than three months after the termination of the Annual Session.

SPECIAL SESSION

ARTICLE X

(a) The Working Committee may upon its own motion, or shall upon a joint requisition addressed to it, as provided in Article XI (e), convene a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee for considering a resolution for holding a Special Session. Such resolution shall be effective if passed by two-thirds majority of the members present. Thereupon the Working Committee shall summon a Special Session of the Congress at such time and place as it shall determineand the Articles of the constitution shall apply with such modification as the Working Committee may consider necessary, provided that the delegates of the preceding session shall be the delegates for such Special Session.

(b) The President of a Special Session shall be elected by the delegates.

ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

ARTICLE XI

(a) The President of the Annual Session, members of the A.I.C.C. elected under Article VII (ii) and the ex-Presidents referred to in Article IX(b) (ii) shall constitute the A. I. C. C.

(b) The A. I. C. C. shall carry out the programme of work laid down by the Congress from session to session and deal with all new matters that may arise during its term of office.

(c) The A. I. C. C. shall have the power to frame rules, not inconsistent with this constitution, for regulating all matters connected with the Congress.

(d) The President of the Annual Session shall be the Chairman of the A.I.C.C.

(e) The A. I. C. C. shall meet as often as required by the Working Committee, or on a joint requisition addressed to the Working Committee by not less than fifteen members. Such requisition shall specify the purpose for which the requisitionists desire a meeting of the A. I. C. C. At such meeting additional items of business may be brought up for consideration, provided due notice

thereof has been given to the members.

(f) Twenty-five or one-third of the total number of members, whichever is less, shall form the quorum.

(g) The A. I. C. C. shall hold office till the meeting of the new A. I. C. C. as Subjects Committee immediately before the next Annual Session.

(h) The A. I. C. C. shall, at its first meeting every year, nominate a panel of twelve members to enquire into and decide all election disputes coming before it. Each party to the dispute shall nominate one out of this panel to represent itself and the President shall appoint an umpire from the panel.

(i) The A. I. C. C. may from time to time affiliate to the Congress such organizations as it may deem necessary, provided such organizations are calculated to further or assist the object of the Congress.

(j) Every member of the All-India Congress Committee, *ex-officio* or elected, shall pay an annual subscription of Rs. 10 payable at or before the first meeting of the All-India Congress Committee. Members in default will not be permitted to take part in any meeting of the All-India Congress Committee, the Subjects Committee or in any Session.

THE WORKING COMMITTEE

ARTICLE XII

(a) The President of the Annual Session shall for his term of office select fourteen members from among the members of the A. I. C. C. to constitute his Working Committee including not more than three General Secretaries and not more than two Treasurers of the Congress.

(b) The Working Committee shall be the executive authority and as such shall have the power to carry into effect the policy and programme laid down by the A. I. C. C. and the Congress, and shall remain responsible thereto.

(c) The Working Committee shall place before every meeting of the A.I.C.C. the reports of its proceedings and the agenda of the meeting, and shall assign at least one clear day for resolutions of which due notice may have been given by the members of the A. I. C. C. other than those of the Working Committee in accordance with the rules prescribed in that behalf.

(d) The Working Committee shall appoint one or more inspectors to examine the records, papers and account-books of all Congress organizations, which shall furnish all information and give to the inspectors access to all offices and records.

(e) The Working Committee shall have the power:

(i) to frame rules and issue instructions for the proper working of the constitution and in all matters not otherwise provided for;

(ii) to superintend, direct and control all Congress Committees subject to review by the A. I. C. C.;

(iii) to take such disciplinary action as it may deem fit against a committee or individual for misconduct, wilful neglect or default.

(f) The Working Committee shall pay to the Provincial Congress Committee convening the Annual Session one-fifth of the fees recovered from the delegates within a fortnight of its termination.

(g) The Working Committee shall take steps to have a regular audit of the accounts of the Provincial Congress Committees.

FUNDS

ARTICLE XIII

The Treasurers shall be in charge of the funds of the Congress and shall keep proper accounts of all investments, income and expenditure.

GENERAL SECRETARIES

ARTICLE XIV

(a) The General Secretaries shall be in charge of the office of the A. I. C. C. and the Working Committee.

(b) The General Secretaries shall be responsible for the publication of the report of the proceedings of the Annual or Special Session in co-operation with the Provincial Committee concerned. Such report shall be published as soon as possible and not later than four months after the Session.

(c) The General Secretaries shall prepare the report of the work of the A. I. C. C. and the Working Committee during their period of office and submit it, with a full account of the funds which may have come into their hands, to the meeting of the A. I. C. C. immediately before the Annual Session.

VACANCIES

ARTICLE XV

The office of a delegate or a member of the A. I. C. C. or a Provincial Congress Committee shall be vacated by resignation, death or prolonged absence from India and such vacancy shall be filled by the Provincial Congress Committee concerned in the same manner in which the vacating member was chosen. A vacancy on the Working Committee shall be filled by the President.

FRACTIONS

ARTICLE XVI

Where there is a question of considering the value of fractions, a fraction of _ or more shall be treated as one, and less than _ as zero.

LANGUAGE

ARTICLE XVII

(a) The proceedings of the Congress, the All-India Congress Committee and the Working Committee shall ordinarily be conducted in Hindustani; the English language or any provincial language may be used if the speaker is unable to speak in Hindustani or whenever permitted by the President.

(b) The proceedings of the Provincial Congress Committees shall ordinarily be conducted in the language of the province concerned. Hindustani may also be used.

TRANSITORY PROVISIONS

ARTICLE XVIII

(a) on these amendments to the Constitution coming into force the A.I.C.C. shall consist of not more than 166 members apportioned as stated in the Appendix.

(b) The members of the Provincial Congress Committees which are functioning or are about to function shall, from among themselves, elect by single transferable vote the members of the A. I. C. C. mentioned in clause (a).

(c) Where a Provincial Congress Committee at present consists of more than 100 members, the sitting members of such committee shall elect from among themselves by single transferable vote 100 members including the A. I. C. C. members to constitute the new Provincial Congress Committee under the constitution.

(d) The Provincial Congress Committee reconstituted under clause (c) shall elect its office-bearers.

(e) The votes at the elections under clauses (b) and (c) may be recorded either at a meeting held for the purpose or on ballot papers sent by post.

(f) All such elections shall be held and a report thereon submitted to the Working Committee on or before the 15th of January 1935.

(g) Every Provincial Congress Committee shall, before the 28th of February 1935, submit for the approval of the Working Committee a report on the affairs of its province and a draft constitution for the same not inconsistent with this constitution and the rules made thereunder.

(h) The Provincial constitutions shall come into operation on their being approved by the Working Committee.

(i) No Provincial Congress Committee and no subordinate Committee shall be recognized by the Working Committee unless it has complied with the conditions laid down in this constitution or any rules framed thereunder by the Working Committee.

(j) On failure on the part of any Provincial Congress Committee to function in terms of the constitution, the Working Committee may form one to carry on Congress work in that province.

(k) Notwithstanding Articles III and V (a) and (b) (ii), a person otherwise duly qualified shall be eligible for election to an office or to membership of a committee prior to 1st July 1935.

(l) Notwithstanding the provisions relating to the election of the President by the delegates under this constitution, the President of the 48th Session of the Congress, viz, Sjt. Rajendra Prasad, shall continue to hold office as if he was elected hereunder.

(m) The President of the 48th Session of the Congress shall nominate fourteen members of the Working Committee including three General Secretaries and not more than two Treasurers from the members of the present A. I. C. C.

(n) The Working Committee may make such transitory regulations not inconsistent with the foregoing to meet any situation that may arise in the transitional period.

Report of the 48th Annual Session of the Indian National Congress, 1934

281. SPEECH AT CONGRESS SESSION, BOMBAY[1]

October 28, 1934

MR. PRESIDENT, SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

First and foremost, I crave pardon from all sisters and brothers that copies of the resolution proposing changes in the present constitution have not reached you. In spite of the trouble the Reception Committee had taken, there was so much to do that it seemed near impossible to get it done in three days; but they had resolved to complete the work within three days. Today the Subjects Committee also sat for long and therefore copies of this resolution could not be printed. There is much to amend but it is a matter for the legal pundits. I shall explain to you in a few minutes the amendments that have been accepted. We could have asked you to come again tomorrow evening for this same purpose; that means the Reception Committee would have had to spend so much money unnecessarily and your time and money would be wasted. It has never been my intention to have my resolution passed by Unfair means by not letting you see it.

You are already acquainted with the present constitution. Experience has shown that 6,000 delegates were an unwieldy number. At the Nagpur Congress there were 14,000 delegates but they were not elected by any constituencies and represented mostly themselves. Now it is proposed to reduce the number of delegates to 2,000. I wanted only 1,000 delegates but yielded to the opposition and accepted 2,000. I wanted the delegates to agree to this sacrifice in number in the cause of freedom.

There is at present no direct contact between the Congress delegates and electors. This change in the constitution will not get us swaraj but will help the Congress to stand as a rival to the Assembly in showing that the Congress delegates also speak for their electorate. Hereafter, Congress inspectors will look into the registers and only such Congressmen will be allowed to vote as have been on its rolls for at least six months. Unless there are 500 Congressmen, they will not be entitled to elect a delegate to the Congress. This is too poor,

[1] Gandhiji first spoke in Hindi at the 48th session of the Indian National Congress, presided over by Rajendra Prasad

compared to the Assembly where 8,000 voters elect one member, but I am satisfied with such a beginning for the organization representing poor people. As swaraj cannot be attained without roping villages into the Congress scheme, it has been provided that of Congress shall represent rural areas, i.e., places with a population of l0,000 and under.

Representation will be by single transferable vote and there will be plural constituencies. As for the A. I. C. C., it is always difficult to call 350 members who cannot afford the expense of frequent meetings. Thus the A. I. C. C. has been reduced to the maximum of 166. Then again, no democrat would like that the Congress President should be elected by the Reception Committee on recommendations of Provincial Congress Committees but hereafter the delegates themselves will elect the President.

Gandhiji then explained the khadi clause and the spinning franchise and said:

I do not mind if you reject these, but if you adopt them, you should do so with absolute conviction. Please vote not out of regard for me but in the interest of the motherland.

When I read the newspaper and the public comments on my proposals, I gave up the idea of publishing them for general consideration. But members of the Working Committee thought it fit to put them before you. I have listened to the opinions of others on the scheme for change. They have presented their case very ably. But they were either deceiving themselves or they were playing the role of an attorney. And they claimed that they had climbed down from idealism to practicality. But has socialism no ideals? If I told them to give up even a single one of their ideals, they would defeat my resolution. Do you ever realize that *purna* swaraj may come only in the next generation? The socialist ideal is higher than even this. I say we need a measuring rod.

Please [do not] think over this matter with the hope that on this resolution having passed, I may reconsider my retirement. If I began my leadership of the Congress with a constitution for which I am mainly responsible, then, while taking my leave, I wish to present you this amended constitution so that you can gain by the experience of one who tried in collaboration with you to work this constitution and found some defects in it. Therefore I wish you should carry these amendments.

One more thing is that the delegates should be sincere and truly representative of the people. Indirectly we are the representatives of the mute millions. We voice their views. From 1886 this has been the position of the Congress. But we represent the electorate only indirectly. Can any one of us say whose representative he is? Is he in contact with his own constituency and does he reflect their views? Can the biggest among us say what place he represents? Vallabhbhai is the uncrowned king of Gujarat but which constituency does he represent? Whom do I represent? I myself do not know it. I challenge everyone to submit the Congress register of his electorate. We must have a living contact with our constituency and with our voters; only then can we have our measuring rod.

The principle that I am putting before you is that the three elections should all be held simultaneously. This will be economically feasible and save some expenditure. If you accept this principle its future will be unshakable. Then the delegates will be chosen by their electorates. Then they would not, like today, gather for three days only to disappear later. They would be active members of the Congress working all through the year. Today, out of 6,350 delegates only 350 are members of the All-India Congress Committee.

Then, in Madras or Bardoli a Congress session of a hundred delegates can be called. I have made a detailed scheme for organizing such village sessions. The villagers will be at your beck and call but they will not be able to give you money for the Reception Committee. I object to lakhs of rupees being spent on buntings and arches and other fanfare by Reception Committees. Have we attained victory? Some friends even said that this subject should be transferred to the provinces. Why do you want to transfer this to the provinces? Why do you avoid doing your duty? Do not swerve from the path of your duty. I assure you that all your criticism has been duly considered. I am giving you a very complex and strict constitution from which no one can stray. If you find any fault in it, you may drop it. I wish you accept my advice. I wish to say that if you leave this matter to the provinces, you will be wasting one precious year of the nation's life.

The procedure adopted in electing members of the Working Committee has been made part of the Congress constitution. The constitution has been so framed that there would be no difficulty in the election of the President. If you want us to carry on the work, let us have the rights we demand.

In the end, Gandhiji appealed to the representatives to adopt the new constitution with the determination to make it a signal success. (Cheers) Continuing in English, Gandhiji said:

I am now speaking in English, trying to produce the same sentiment which I conveyed in the national language. It is difficult to do that, because you cannot pour your soul twice in two different languages. The soul speaks with the deepest emotion and its sound comes out of the deepest recesses. You don't want to examine the speaker for his ability to make a speech. You want to do national work with him. I simply want to say this that you will kindly forgive me for not giving you as full an explanation of the constitution as is required. The resolution is of a far-reaching character. It calls upon the Congress to repeat the history of self-denial and further reduce the size of the delegates and the A.I.C.C.

In conclusion, I would appeal to the delegates to adopt the new constitution with the desire to make it a glorious success.[1] (Applause)

Report of the 48th Annual Session of the Indian National Congress, 1934, pp. 118-25

282. MESSAGE TO THE NATION[2]

October 28, 1934

I am entirely satisfied with the result of the session.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-10-1934

283. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

BOMBAY,
October 29, 1934

If Congressmen have understood the spirit underlying my retirement from the Congress, it ought to mean the redoubling of honest and persistent effort to return Congress candidates to the Assembly. I have retired not to weaken the national organization, but to strengthen it. I have seen notices from adverse parties which, under

[1] K. M. Munshi seconded the resolution, which was passed by a large majority.

[2] This was given in an exclusive interview to the Associated Press on Sunday night.

the guise of praising me, suggest that I leave the Congress in disgust. This is absolutely untrue. I entertain the highest regard for the Congress. When we achieve our goal, as we will and must, the Congress will be found to have contributed the largest share in the attainment. There is, thus, in the present fight, a battle between measures, not men. Every vote given to a Congress candidate means so much progress towards our goal. An institution that has just passed a self-denying ordinance in the shape of the new rigorous constitution, in my opinion, deserves universal support. That can just now be best expressed by sending as many Congressmen as possible to the Assembly.

The Hindu, 29-10-1934

284. STATEMENT ON SILK YARN

October 29, 1934

I have seen a newspaper paragraph attributing to me the opinion that silk yarn is drawn from some "imported stuff" and that therefore I consider it to be not fit for use. I have never expressed any such opinion. The A. I. S. A. has been for a long time certifying indigenous silk. The policy is now being revised in the interest of khadi made from cotton yarn.

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-10-1934

285. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

October 29, 1934

DEAR ANAND,

I know you are now getting on all right. It is a good idea to come to Wardha when you are discharged.[1]

Love.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Anand T. Hingorani", 16-10-1934.

286. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

October 29, 1934

CHI. SHARMA,

I could not reply to your letter till now.

There is nothing wrong in using mill flour.

It is your duty to accept a coverlet from someone.[1]

You must take ghee; or butter, if that suits you.

Since we are related as patient and doctor you ought to point out my faults.

The permit for Ramdas[2] has not been received so far.

You can come whenever you wish. Never let your health suffer.

Take whatever money needed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha,* facing p. 111

287. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

BOMBAY,
October 29, 1934

DEAR HARIBHAU,

In view of the prevailing atmosphere at Ajmer, I think that you and the other office-bearers belonging to your group should give up your posts. This does not imply any censure against any of you. It is a matter of self-denial and restraint.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The addressee had lost a shawl and was doing without it.
[2] To proceed to South Africa

288. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

October 30, 1934

I received during my silence in Bombay several queries from Pressmen, but I had no time to give written replies then. Visitors continued to pour in for whom I had to scribble out replies practically till the time of my leaving the camp. Now I answer these and some others that have cropped up since.

The first is whether I have already tendered my resignation. Formally, I had not done so till October 28, but it is presently going, in the form of a letter addressed to Rajendrababu and other officials concerned.[1] This does not mean that I cease to take interest in the politics of the country or in its political future. Much less does it mean that I cease to take interest in the welfare of the organization for whose good I have left it. But, what will happen is that I shall cease to be interested in the details of the working of the Congress. And I shall certainly cease to shape the policy of the Congress organization as I had the privilege of doing till the last moment of the session.

Let me give one or two illustrations. Whilst I was observing silence yesterday, Rajendrababu and several members of the Working Committee came to discuss with me the composition of the new Working Committee. Hardly had we proceeded to discuss one or two names when I saw the utter incongruity of what I was doing. I, therefore, immediately wrote out on my scribbling pad, "Surely, I may not discuss these things now." Members present immediately realized the significance of my remark and they very generously removed themselves some distance from me and began to discuss them in whispers and I may state that, up to the time of dictating this at Wardha, I am unaware of the composition of the new Working Committee. I was taking a lively interest, even up to the time of my departure, in the unfortunate Ajmer dispute. But Congressmen may understand from these two illustrations that I can no longer be looked up to for advice or guidance in such matters. If I continue to interest myself in the day-to-day working of the organization or in the domestic quarrels, not only would the whole of the salutary effect of my retirement be undone, but I would become a powerful factor for

[1] *Vide* "Note to Rajendera Prasad", 30-10-1934 and "Letter to Rajendra Prasad", 30-10-1934.

disturbance, not having the grasp of details which alone has hitherto been a predominant factor in enabling me to come to correct judgment in a vast majority of cases.

My interest in the Congress organization will, henceforth, be confined to watching, from at a distance, the enforcement of principles for which the Congress stands. Congressmen may therefore expect, whenever I feel like giving it, a criticism of methods that may be pursued by the organization as a whole or its members as individuals. But this again does not mean that I should be receiving letters as I have hitherto received asking me for guidance in daily transactions in connection with the Congress. This they must henceforth seek from the President whose guidance will, I know, be invaluable or from those in whom they have confidence. I must be left free for the work which I have in mind.

Let it be borne in mind that I do not regard politics as something different in kind from other national activities. The root meaning of politics is the science of citizenship and it has also remote connection with polished manners and since the boundaries of citizenship have been extended to cover continents, the science of politics includes attainment of advancement of humanity along all lines, social, moral, economic and political, using the word 'political' here in the narrow sense in which we are accustomed to use it. Ever since my return to India in 1915, it has been my earnest endeavour to restore the meaning of politics to its root and if we would be truthful through and through, we should recognize that the predominant part of the Congress programme has been progressively social, moral and economic. And it becomes a powerful programme because it is intimately connected with the political, that is, the attainment of freedom of the country from foreign yoke, not from foreign friendship, that is, voluntary intercourse on terms of absolute equality with foreign nations. If Congressmen forget the constructive programme and simply confine Congress activities to winning of Assembly and Council elections and of fruitless debates in the Assembly and the Councils, they will soon find that I have taken with me the kernel of politics and they have kept for themselves only the outermost husk, without even the vitamins. But I have no such fear. Parliamentary Congressmen will advance the Congress programmes and by their votes register the will of the nation.

This session of the Congress has been a revelation to me. I had expected a battle royal with the members of the Working Committee about the vital amendments I had suggested and afterwards withdrawn, and equally vital alterations in the constitution on which I was insistent, but which had no connection whatsoever with my retirement from the Congress. But I found that, apart from my retirement, which they had ascertained was a moral certainty, members of the Working Committee wanted the amendments after their own fashion. Every one of them without exception had come to the conclusion that substitution of the words "legitimate and peaceful" by "truthful and nonviolent" was necessary, because of the ambiguity surrounding the two words. I could not prevent them from enforcing their own independent judgment.

The same revelations awaited me in the Subjects Committee. The alteration of the creed was not carried, but it was not summarily rejected. It was referred to Provincial Congress Committees for opinion. And now that I am out of the way and provinces are in a position to exercise their judgment freely and unfettered, I do hope that in order to be true to themselves and the Congress, their first act will be to pronounce their unequivocal opinion on the proposed amendments. The ambiguity is patent. Many have contested my proposition that "truthful and non-violent" are synonymous with "legitimate and peaceful". If the Congress do not attach that meaning to the two words, they should unhesitatingly recommend their removal altogether. In adopting this recommendation they will not travel outside the terms of reference. Our creed is the measure by which we want mankind to judge us. There should surely be no uncertainty about our measure. What we insist upon in ordinary affairs of life is surely necessary in national affairs, Even as a mason without his square or a tailor without his yardstick is inconceivable, so also we cannot conceive of a big organization like the Congress without its measure. If we have any doubt about the necessity for downright truthfulness and downright non-violence for the attainment of complete independence, we should say so. There will be nothing wrong in it. That would not mean that we have abandoned truth or non-violence. It would mean that we have ceased to connect truthfulness and non-violence with independence, have ceased to see the one as the cause and the other as its inevitable result, have ceased

to think that there is an indissoluble bond between the means and the end.

If there was difficulty about carrying the amendment to the creed, it was plain sailing with reference to other amendments, both in the Subjects Committee and in the open session. What I observed to my delight was also the fact that those who wanted to oppose any of the amendments did so without any hesitation and yet in courteous terms. Obedience was ungrudgingly tendered to the chair at all times, whereas I was prepared for boisterous scenes. And all the amendments were passed although members knew that I was not remaining in the Congress.

The manner in which the 1,500 delegates assembled here waived their undoubted right of having copies of the amended draft constitution was an exhibition of generosity and faith of which any nation would be proud. And yet all amendments were passed by the delegates with overwhelming majorities after they had understood what they were and what were their implications. For they listened for over an hour to my simple unvarnished explanation of all amendments. The cheers that punctuated my remarks on some of the most important amendments showed that they were following my exposition with the utmost attention. All this was possible because of perfect loudspeaker arrangements that were made as well for the Subjects Committee as for the open session.

Now that the new constitution is an established fact, the Provincial Congress Committees should realize the necessity for honestly working it. Although time has been given to them up to January 15 for holding A. I. C. C. elections and for reducing themselves to l00, where they are over 100, wherever it is possible they should at once do these two things.

Let me also utter a warning. I hope no one will think that the khaddar clause and labour franchise clause do not come into immediate operation. They do. Those who do not believe in them, those who do not want to wear khaddar as a habit, to the exclusion of all other cloth, or do not want to do some manual labour for the sake of the country, will, if they are members of any elected organization, at once tender their resignations. And Provincial Congress Committees will not elect as members of the Committees or of A. I. C. C. those who are not habitual wearers of khaddar or who do not want to do manual labour. Spinning is undoubtedly the most natural and the

easiest form of labour and is connected with the khaddar clause. But those who do not believe in spinning can certainly take up any other kind of manual labour. Tailoring is quite easy, whether with the needle or with the sewing-machine. Sewing four caps would be equivalent to more than 500 yards of evenly spun yarn. A day's cleaning of a neighbouring village would undoubtedly be such an equivalent. So would be house-to-house personal distribution for one day of, say, quinine powder or pills in malarial tracts. What is meant by this clause to be symbolical may, in the end, result in many Congressmen becoming experts in the labour they perform and make phenomenal contribution to the economic advancement of the nation. This is all civil resistance of the purest type. I plead guilty of negligence in that I had not in the past insisted on these things so as to make them a condition precedent to launching out any civil disobedience. I had been overborne by the argument that the nation would take up these things in the course of civil disobedience.

That expectation has not been realized. My retirement from the Congress may be regarded as a penance for the negligence although it was wholly unconscious. But calling myself, as I do, an expert in the science of civil resistance, I may not plead ignorance as excuse. I hope, therefore, the vital clauses of the constitution will be immediately put into operation. What I am aiming at is development of capacity for civil resistance so that there never may be any need for civil disobedience. Disobedience that is wholly civil should never provoke retaliation.

The Hindu, 31-10-1934

289. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

October 30, 1934

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I have a bad cold. Therefore, instead of writing this letter, I am driven to dictating. You have let me feel that I must think you as one of my intimate co-workers to whom I could speak and write without reserve. You have even resented my reserve when you have detected it. I am taking the liberty of writing this letter without reserve.

I allowed myself to be party to a discussion over the names of the new Working Committee. Rajendrababu and other members came to me during my silence and opened the discussion. We had come to

two names. I had suggested one name as a substitute for Jawaharlal whilst he was in prison, and when we came to discuss the Bengal representative, I gave my opinion. But I saw that I was doing violence to my pledge that I shall cease to be a member of the Congress after the session. I did not, therefore, attend the meeting of the A. I. C. C. that day nor of the Working Committee. I, therefore, abruptly stopped the discussion and wrote on the scribbling-pad: "Surely I may not discuss these things now." Of course, further discussion was carried on by the members without my listening to it.

The difficulty that they had was to choose as a Bengal representative either you or Prafulla Ghosh. I wrote saying that Maulana Saheb[1] alone should be given the Bengal representation, and that neither you nor Prafulla Ghosh should be in it. I wrote further that if anybody had to be elected, besides the Maulana, it must be you. It was impossible to overlook you without slighting the present Provincial Congress Committee unless you yourself chose to stand aside. It was at this stage that I discovered my error and abruptly stopped taking part in the discussion. But without any compunction, having gone as far as I did, I can write to you that I feel that. the act of self-denial which I have recommended would be the best thing for Bengal politics. You know how I have three times suppressed Rajagopalachari or, rather, how Rajagopalachari has allowed himself to be suppressed. I do not think that the country has lost by that suppression. Rajagopalachari has certainly gained, and if today he is most useful in the parliamentary struggle in the South, I have no doubt that it is due to this self-denial.

But, of course, I may be wholly wrong in my judgment in this case. I felt that I would be untrue to you if I did not pass on the opinion that I formed yesterday, but which I could not express as fully as I have done here. If this letter is not helpful, you will please dismiss it from your mind altogether. But I hope that in no case would you consider it to be an impertinent interference. The fact is that, so far as I am concerned, we have been coming closer day by day. The association with you in Calcutta during my recent visit[2] brought you closer to me. Your help during the strenuous time last week I appreciated very deeply, and I have not hesitated to say so to many friends. Whatever decision you take, I shall be fully satisfied if this

[1] Abul Kalam Azad
[2] In July, 1934

letter does not interfere with the growth of that co-operation. I am desperately anxious for Bengal to have a homogeneous, closelyknit Congress Party without internal divisions.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

A. I. C. C. File No. 628, 1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and library

290. NOTE TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

[*October 30, 1934*][2]

I have received a letter from Dr. Bidhan, as also a copy of the one addressed to you. Hence I send you a copy of my reply to him.

BAPU

[From Hindi]

A. I. C. C. File No. G-30, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

291. LETTER TO SECRETARY, GUJARAT PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE

October 30, 1934

To

THE SECRETARY
[PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE
AHMEDABAD]

SIR,

The crediting of yarn in my name for membership of the Congress may please be discontinued henceforth. My name may also be removed from the register of Congress members in the books of the All-India Spinners' Association.

Yours,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[1] A copy of the letter was sent to Rajendra Prasad; *vide* the following item.

[2] This was written on a copy of the letter to Dr. B. C. Roy dated October 30, 1934; *vide* the preceding item.

In accordance with the decision which I have announced I request you by this postcard to remove my name from your register.

Yours,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

292. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

October 30, 1934

BHAI RAJENDRABABU,

In accordance with my decision I hereby dissociate myself from the All-India Congress Committee. My name may please be removed from the list in the office of the Committee.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI RAJENDRA PRASAD
PRESIDENT, [INDIAN] NATIONAL CONGRESS
C/O BIRLA MILLS, DELHI

[From Hindi]

A.I.C.C. File No. 463, 1934. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

293. LETTER TO P. KODANDARAMIAH

October 31,1934

MY DEAR KODANDARAMIAH,

I have your letter. I have pre-mortgaged my time for things which I may not put off. Therefore I can make no promise nor hold out any hope. I do not know what the future has in store for me. If I can see my way clear for-some months to come I would love to undertake the travel you have suggested. Meanwhile if you have approached this subject as an earnest seeker, give me a vivid description of the six backward tribes. It must be readable, brief and worth publishing in the columns of *Harijan.* You must give me also a little more introduction to yourself. Who are you? What are you doing? What is Swaraj Ashram? What is your contribution to the cause of the aborigines?

Yours sincerely,

SHRI P. KODANDARAMIAH
SWARAJ ASHRAM
POLLAVARAM *via* KOVVUR, M. S. M. RLY.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

294. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

October 31, 1934

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

Jamnalalji will give you the [draft of the] constitution. I have gone through it carefully. The changes which I have suggested should not be difficult to understand. But if I have misunderstood the meaning anywhere, delay of a day or two will not matter. If you write to me in detail, I will try to see my mistake. The copy sent by you did not include the forms. It would be good if the appendix also gives, in addition to [the list of] members of the All-India Congress Committee, the maximum number of members which each province can send. If this cannot be done, however, the printing need not be delayed on that account. The Secretary also can announce these figures.

Let Jairamdas and Kishorelal, if he is all right, go through the changes. I hope they will find no difficulty in deciphering my handwriting. Tell Jairamdas that he should issue some of the notices which have to be issued immediately. Please examine A, F(a) and such other things.

How shall I compliment you on your immense labour?

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7558. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

295. LETTER TO SURENDRA

October 31, 1934

CHI. SURENDRA,

Sharma's problem is a difficult one. Hold him back as long as your influence on him works. See that he doesn't starve or remain unprotected against the cold. His view of people is generally perverted. He regards as good those about whom we are doubtful and as bad those whom we think to be good. This is a difficult disease to cure. How can we help if people misunderstand one another? But I will not give up hope. My diagnosis is that he is deceiving himself and not the world. I see no evil in him but a transparent frankness. However, he is by nature proud and has too much confidence in his

ability to judge people. If those who enjoy his trust can open his eyes, he is capable of rendering very useful service. . . [1]

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

296. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

October 31, 1934

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. I am not tired and I feel no despair. You will stay in the Ashram itself when you come. Vinoba is also agreeable. On your assurance I shall be free of anxiety. You may take it that I shall not worry if you do not strain yourself.

For my part, I want to rope in Draupadi too but that can be done only when you are settled. Your shawl is not to be found. Possibly the boy who was staying here took it away. He is no longer here. But it is not wise to suffer the cold without the shawl.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha,* between pp. 112 and 113

297. LETTER TO DIETRICH BONHOEFFER

November 1, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. If you and your friend have enough money for return passage and can pay your expenses here, say, at the rate of Rs. 100 per month each, you can come whenever you like. The sooner the better so as to get the benefit of such cold weather as we get here. The Rs. 100 per month I have calculated as the outside limit for those who can live simply. It may cost you even half the amount. It all depends upon how the climate here agrees with you.

With reference to your desire to share my daily life, I may say that you will be staying with me if I am out of prison and settled in

[1] Omission as in the source

one place when you come. But otherwise, if I am travelling or if I am in prison, you will have to be satisfied with remaining in or near one of the institutions that are being conducted under my supervision. If you can stay in any of the institutions I have in mind and if you can live on the simple vegetarian food that these institutions can supply you, you will have nothing to pay for your boarding and lodging.

Yours sincerely,

PASTOR LIC. DIETRICH BONHOEFFER, ESQ.
23 MANOR MOUNT, S. E. 23, LONDON

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

298. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

November 1, 1934

BHAISHRI DAHYABHAI,

Pujya Bapuji got your letter of the 29th. He asks me to tell you in reply that he cannot think of anything special for you. He feels that you should remain where you are and do what work you can. If you are content with constructive work and go on doing it, you will one day find through it a coworker with ideals similar to yours.

Yours,
SWAMI ANAND[1]

SJT. DAHYABHAI MANORBHAI PATEL
DHOLKA

From Gujarati: C.W. 2705. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

299. TELEGRAM TO RAMDAS GANDHI[2]

November 2, 1934

RAMDAS GANDHI
ASHRAM
SABARMATI

YOU CAN COME. BRING OR SEND SHARMA.

BAPU

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, p. 112

[1] Swami Anand adds here: "As per instructions from Bapuji".

[2] The addressee, who had been undergoing allopathic treatment at a hospital in Ahmedabad, had returned to the Sabarmati Ashram and sought Gandhiji's permission to go over to Wardha.

300. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

October31/November 2, 1934

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I have been wanting to write to you every week; but it was impossible. You know the situation now. I am free and it is all to the good. Here is a copy of my statement to the Press made immediately after the breaking of silence, that is, made on the 30th. I want to devote next month at least to Harijan work and to launching out the contemplated Village Industries Association. But I want to pave the way for the Frontier even from now. I hope to be able to send my letter to the Government in a day or two. If I do, you will have a copy of it herewith. This is being dictated on 31st. This may be posted from Wardha on the 2nd November.

My desire throughout is so to act as to disarm all suspicion about the character of civil disobedience. At the present moment there is no question of others participating in it. So far as I can see the future, there is no likelihood of my initiating or precipitating mass civil disobedience for some years to come. I want to test the genuineness of public feeling by keeping myself aloof from the Congress and watching from a distance how Congressmen in general take to the constructive programme. Civil resistance can properly culminate in civil disobedience only when people learn the art of civil resistance which is nothing less and nothing more than refraining from doing anything that would keep up a system which you seek to destroy.

I observe that without breaking a single law, villagers can somewhat better their economic condition by reviving their industries. Hence the Village Industries Association. Hindu-Muslim tension also enables the system to live, and so does untouchability, so does the drink evil. People had sufficient experience now in this kind of training. I am, therefore, resisting every temptation to invite civil disobedience by the people. There is temptation enough. Even the prisoners in Bombay who were thought to be discharged are still in the various jails of the Presidency of Bombay. Buildings which have been seized by the Government are not being returned. I can multiply such instances drawn from various provinces. Nevertheless I know that I have to live down these irritations and so have fellow-workers. That

appears to me just now the best form of resistance, if it may be so called. But if I may not go [to] the Frontier, and if there is no just cause for preventing me from going there, it may prove the last straw and I will again find myself utterly incapable of doing constructive work. I must receive this elementary satisfaction of the soul. Let me not anticipate. All I can say is that I shall not rush to the jail. You will have ample notice.

I hope Mira had a successful tour in America. You will share this letter with C. F. Andrews and whomsoever you like.

Did you get the balance paid to you of the expenses incurred here?

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not yet drafted the letter about the Frontier.

Encl. 1

MISS AGATHA HARRISON
LONDON

From a photostat: G.N. 1480

301. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

November 2, 1934

MY DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I enclose herewith a letter from Hiralal M. Garhwal. If the figures of the Hindi-speaking population for the Ahmedabad district are correct, evidently, the arrangements for schooling of Hindi knowing children are inadequate. If what Hiralal says is true, I take it that most of the Hindi-speaking residents of Ahmedabad district are concentrated in the city and that they are mostly millhands. You will, therefore, let me know if you know anything about this and whether the Municipality is doing anything for them.

I enclose herewith also another letter. It is from Annadababu. He was here and in the course of the conversation there was an incidental reference to Dr. Sanyal's behaviour in the Subjects Committee. Apart from his behaviour, if what Annadababu says is correct, I suppose that whoever is responsible for enhancing the rent

of the stalls, after they were given for Rs. 25 each, was wrong. And if there was threat of withdrawal of certificates, the wrong was multiplied. Do you know anything about this? I remember your mentioning to me something about the reshuffling of rent. But I have no recollection of what Annadababu says as having happened.

Encl. 2

SHRI SHANKERLAL BANKER
AHMEDABAD

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

302. LETTER TO HIRALAL M. GARHWAL

November 2, 1934

MY DEAR HIRALAL,

I thank you for your letter of the 30th ultimo giving me figures of the Hindi-speaking population in the district of Ahmedabad.

Yours sincerely

SHRI HIRALAL M. GARHWAL
KOSHTI SAMAJ MANDAL
BOMBAY 11

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

303. LETTER TO S. GANESAN

November 2, 1934

MY DEAR GANESAN,

I was extremely sorry that I was not able to talk to you as much as I would have liked. You are hasty in your judgment about Thakkar Bapa. He is a man with a great heart. You have to win him over by your humility, meekness and precision in work. That you are precise I know to my cost. But I cling to you because I believe you to be hard-working, honest and selfsacrificing. You are taking responsibilities beyond your capacity and then find yourself always in want and distress. I would, therefore, strongly discourage you against taking up more than you can, and then do thoroughly whatever you have. You will then find that you will be able to manage your domestic problem also much more successfully than you are now doing.

You have asked me whether I could let you publish a weekly like *Young India*. For the reasons I have given you I cannot contemplate any such thing. I wish I could trust you to discharge that burden in an efficient manner. And then too we have not enough liberty for conducting a fearless paper of the type of *Young India*. Therefore, I would like you to concentrate upon what you have. You can then think of more, and I should be glad to do what I can.

SHRI S. GANESAN
MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarela

304. LETTER TO G. B. GAJBHIYE

November 2, 1934

MY DEAR GAJBHIYE,

I have now heard from Thakkar Bapa, and he says that it is not possible for him to help you at this stage. All the scholarships were considered and the allotment to the C. P. was exhausted. A stronger case than yours was rejected. Therefore, you must, for the time being, wait and try again.

Yours sincerely

SHRI G. B. GAJBHIYE
MORRIS COLLEGE
NAGPUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers: Courtesy: Pyarelal

305. LETTER TO DOROTHY HOGG

November 2, 1934

DEAR DOROTHY,

I have your letter as also copies of the articles. They were quite serviceable. I suppose you are keeping yourself in touch with Agatha[1]. Therefore, I do not need to say much.

MRS. HOGG
DOVEMOUNT, DOVEDALE, ASHBOURNE
DERBYSHIRE, ENGLAND

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Agatha Harrison

306. LETTER TO DR. K. A. HAMID

November 2, 1934

DEAR DR. HAMID,

I had your letter of 22nd october. Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan does not like travelling for the purpose of giving lectures. I, therefore, do not want to act against his inclinations. You must, therefore, do the best you can. Moreover, as I have retired from the Congress, such commissions ought not to be entrusted to me.

Yours sincerely,

DR. K. A. HAMID
JALGAON
E. KHANDESH

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

307. LETTER TO HAR DAYAL NAG

November 2, 1934

DEAR HAR DAYALBABU,

I had your letter of 18th October last. You know what I have done. Let us hope that the Congress will be cleared of the hypocrisies that you are afraid of.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI HAR DAYAL NAG
CHANDPUR (BENGAL)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

308. LETTER TO SHAH

November 2, 1934

BHAI SHAH,

I had your letter and article. I think you might not like to stay and move with me. It is, therefore, good that you cannot spare the time just now. I would be happy if I am mistaken in my judgment.

I doubt if your son would like it either. What experience will he gain from me? Who knows what I shall be doing by the end of this

month? I shall be free only when I put village industries on their feet. To put them on their feet means only to start an institution for doing the work. Whether I can contribute substantially to it depends upon my going or not going to jail. Of course, I am certainly eager to avoid such an eventuality. If I do not get the necessary freedom, there is no point in staying out of jail.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarclal

309. LETTER TO SURENDRA

November 2, 1934

CHI. SURENDRA,

I have your letter. I understand the position. At present Sharma cannot be sent abroad and since he can go only after he is well settled he has no alternative but to stay on here. It would be best if he lives with his family and takes up some occupation. But neither his family nor Draupadi wants it. They all want him to stay with me. I am aware of his merits. If my analysis of his failings is correct I shall be able to cope with them. But ultimately God's will prevails. We have but to perform whatever duty comes our way.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

310. LETTER TO AMBA GANDHI

November 2, 1934

CHI. AMBA,

I received your letter. There was nothing wrong in that you both came to Kashi afterwards and lived the way you did.

Make some effort and learn Gujarati. I hope you will have a safe delivery. Why does Prabhudas's weight not increase? With you by his side, Prabhudas should have no cause for worry.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: S.N. 33063

311. LETTER TO H. L. SHARAMA

November 2, 1934

CHI. SHARMA,

Your letter. I also read Surendra's letter. You have to come here. After that we shall see what the right course of action is. People will not be reassured simply by your staying away. You have to come even in order to remove their misgivings. Vinoba is of course fully agreeable to your coming. Babaji[1] too will be glad to have you as a guest. I shall of course be happy. We shall see what to do if I find that I cannot bear with you. I have decided on a time limit of one year for you although you may continue to stay indefinitely.[2] Whether you should live with Draupadi, submerge yourself in domestic duties, is for you to consider. Have we not agreed that you will do nothing under compulsion nor go beyond your strength? I want this assurance from you and I shall see to the rest. Forget about Yoganand[3]. Let us not bother about what he is talking outside; he has not impressed anyone here. He did not at all impress me and therefore could not arouse suspicion against you. I stick to my diagnosis: suspicion, pride and fault-finding. Time alone is the antidote for suspicion; reducing oneself to a cipher is the remedy for pride and the cure for finding faults with others is to see one's own faults. If one regards oneself as the worst of all, one will not see faults in others and every fault will seem to be a form of illness. I shall certainly give you part of my day to discuss things but discussions alone will not help. I have plenty of manual work for you and along with it I shall take some other work also from you.

I have today sent a telegram[4] asking you to come over.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha,* facing p. 114

[1] Moghe,. Manager of the Ashram

[2] The addressee was reluctant to stay in the Sabarmati Ashram and had written to Gandhiji, saying that it would be like imprisoning him there, in view of his strained relations with the management.

[3] A sadhu from Khurja, whom some Ashram inmates had invited to seek information about the addressee

[4] *Vide* "Telegram to Ramdas Gandhi", 2-11-1934.

312. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

November 3, 1934

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

You might have seen the resolution[1] on the Village Industries Association and might have seen also that the burden has been put on your broad shoulders. The question is when you can come. I do not want you to neglect your work there, nor do I want you to take up this work before you can be disengaged from the responsibility there. Before you or I can ask Rajendrababu about disengaging you, you have to judge for yourself when you can safely disengage yourself. And if you cannot, you will say so. You will then give me your own views, and I shall see what can be or should be done. If you have any names of those who can form the Board, send me those names and any other suggestions that you have to make. I shall think out the consti- tution. I have no doubt you have the full text of the resolution there. Only so much for the present.

SHRI J. C. KUMARAPPA
BIHAR CENTRAL RELIEF COMMITTEE
EXHIBITION ROAD, PATNA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

313. LETTER TO B. SHIVA RAO

November 3, 1934

MY DEAR SHIVA RAO,

I was glad to receive your letter and I thank you for the gift of the very useful volume on the constitutions of different countries. As you will be coming[2], I do not deal with the different points you have raised in your letter and the questions you have asked. If you can come between the 10th and 15th of this month, it would be very convenient. I shall keep your letter by me, and we shall discuss the points raised by you.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at subjects committee meeting, A.I.C.C", 24-10-1934.

[2] Gandhiji had invited the addressee to discuss ways and means of making the All-India Village Industries Association an effective organization.

Of course the Village Industries Association will be open to all, including Government servants if they will subscribe to the rules of the Association. It is to be purely a non-political organization having no other end in view but the encouragement of village industries and general improvement of the condition of the villagers.

Yours sincerely

SHRI B. SHIVA RAO
5 ALANDUR ROAD
SAIDAPET, MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

314. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI[1]

November 3, 1934

Note 3: In both (a) and (b), the word "member"[2] is used to denote a primary member, whereas whenever the word "membership" occurs the reference is to an elected member. At both places, therefore, you should use either "member" or "person". "Member" at one place and "person" at another will not be correct. The word "member" is not likely to be interpreted to mean a member holding an elective post. All the same, you should use the same word at both places, whichever you prefer.

Note 5: Bapu feels that the words "every district" throughout will serve the purposefully, or that, alternatively, the amendment suggested by him should be retained. Using the word "town" only will not permit the additional members in one town to be "amalgamated" with the additional members in another town in the same district, and will also create difficulties in forming constituencies with a minimum of five members.

Note 6: In clause (h) Bapu suggests the following amendment in place of the one suggested by you: "When the number of duly qualified primary members exceeds the minimum required for electing 2,000 delegates, the Working Committee shall readjust the minimum of 500 duly qualified primary members required per delegate so as to maintain the maximum for all India and the balance between urban and rural areas as per clause f(1) hereof."

Note 8: Bapu did not mean that when a special session was called the "A. I. C.

[1] This was conveyed by Swami Anand in a letter to the addressee in which he wrote: "Bapu has both the drafts of the constitution along with your notes and has gone through the changes suggested by you. He now returns the lot with the following suggestions."

[2] Portions within quotes in this letter are in English.

C.” would stand dissolved and fresh elections would be held. According to the proposed arrangement, the delegates once elected will continue for the whole year and the composition of the “A. I. C. C.” also will remain the same, and the special session will be attended by the same persons, unless of course the delegates as a general body wish to dissolve the “A. I. C. C.” and elect a fresh one in its place. That right belongs to every “bigger body’,. But otherwise there should be no need at all to elect a fresh “A. I. C. C.’, or “W. C.” merely in order that a special session might be held.

Note 11: If an assurance was given to the “A. I. C. C.” on Monday that the conditions mentioned in Article “III” would not, till the 1st of July, be applied to members elected just now, there is nothing to be said about it. Personally, however, Bapu could not reconcile himself to giving members permission to remain idle till then. There was definitely no such understanding when the constitution was passed. If, however, the assurance was given to the “A. I. C. C.” in view of some other difficulties it must be honoured.

From Gujarati: C.W. 7559. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

315. LETTER. TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

November 4, 1934

MY DEAR ANAND,

I was glad to have your little note and to observe that you were making steady, though slow, progress. I am looking forward to seeing you with Jairamdas as soon as you are discharged. But don’t worry the doctors over your discharge. Let there be a complete recovery. I must not attempt to write to Vidya just now as I want every minute that I can spare.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI ANAND T. HINGORANI
K.E. M. HOSPITAL
PAREL, BOMBAY

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

316. LETTER TO V. R. KULKARNI

November 4, 1934

DEAR KULKARNI,

I have your letter. I return herewith your cuttings. The certificates are interesting. Before I can recommend you anywhere I would like you to give me a detailed scheme which any manager of a dairy could understand.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI V. R. KULKARNI
HANUMAN GADA
WARDHA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

317. LETTER TO NILRANJAN PATNAIK

November 4, 1934

MY DEAR NILRANJAN,

I was glad to get your letter. Much of what you say is true. The constitution[1] as amended should enable a good worker to make solid progress in working the Congress along right lines. If you have any suggestions to make in connection with the Village Industries Association, which is in the process of formation, please do.

I hope you are doing well.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI NILRANJAN PATNAIK
ASKA (GANJAM DT.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Constitution of the Indian National Congress", 28-10-1934.

318. LETTER TO MAURICE FRYDMAN

November 4, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I have not yet seen your pamphlet. I am now asking for it if it was enclosed with your letter. I will not trouble you to come to Wardha at this stage. When I have drafted the rules of the Association, you shall have a copy. You will be better able to give me constructive criticism when you have seen the rules.

Yours sincerely,

MAURICE FRYDMAN, ESQ.
RACE VIEW
RACE COURSE ROAD, BANGALORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

319. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

November 5, 1934

CHI. AMALA,

I was happy to have your letter. There are but a few mistakes of language. I am writing this in English lest you should fail to decipher or understand it.[1] I am glad you are happy there. Your train letter was duly received. You have asked for your wheel. Do you really want it? I hope you are keeping yourself and your surroundings tidy. Of course, the more you labour the better you will feel. I hope you will preserve your health. Of course you may come during the Xmas, if you think it worth while. You will send your mother her remittance regularly. Mahadev was detained in Bombay for his son. The latter must have undergone operation yesterday.

Do please write regularly. Do you get papers to read? You should describe your room and the people you meet.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Ba is still in Sabarmati with Ramdas.

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Up to this the letter is in Gujarati.

320. LETTER TO TITUS

November 5, 1934

MY DEAR TITUS,

I have your letter. I quite agree with you that Surendra should have brought the matter to your notice before he wrote to me about the cows. But you need not worry as I am entirely satisfied that our cattle are not in that condition and that you are in no way to blame with reference to their upkeep.

Your scheme about removing the dairy to Biraj attracts me. I would personally like to let you try. But did you not discuss the scheme with Narandas? He had written to me, but he is silent about the scheme. Please collect opinion and let me know.

I am arranging for the prompt payment of. the monies that are lost. I have already asked Narandas as to what I am to do and where it is to be sent. There would be no delay after I receive the answer.

I hope both you and your wife have completely recovered.

Love to you both.

BAPU

SHRI TITUS
SABARMATI

From a copy Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

321. LETTER TO S. GANESAN

November 5, 1934

MY DEAR GANESAN,

I thought that it was understood between you and me that Khan Saheb could not come and that you would ask Kakasaheb to give you a week. I do not know whether you asked him. It is not possible for me to send anyone else.

About the Introduction to Vol. III of *Young India*, I do not know that I shall get the time within the limit fixed by you. Mahadev is not here and he may not be for some time. On his return he will be overwhelmed with arrears.

I have written to you already about turning your bi-weekly

paper into an offlcial organ of the Village Industries Association. So long as you are living on the brink of civil debt, I would not think of putting extra burden on you, or trusting that I would be safe in your hands. Your desire for extension of your activities is wholly inconsistent with the opening of the second paragraph of your letter wherein you say: "I have reached the limit of perfect recovery. Any further delay may mean a breakdown." I do not know who the friend is who has promised to meet all the expenses. If I have a practical, reliable, firm proposition I would be prepared to reconsider my decision.

What will Sastri[1] do as the editor of the Village Industries Association? It requires special knowledge, and so far as I am aware Sastri has absolutely none. I do not know what V. S. V. Chari can do. A man who writes paragraphs for *The Statesman* is probably the last man to handle the village industries question with effect.

But without my identifying myself with your bi-weekly you should devote its columns to the constructive programme of the Congress if you can justify the title of your bi-weekly.

I have read your correspondence with Thakkar Bapa. The only thing I shall be able to discuss with him is the bill for the Supplements to *Harijan.* I might incidentally have to deal with the other things. I shall see.

The enclosed letter might be of interest to you.

Encl. l

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

322. LETTER TO SIR ROBERT MCCARRISON

November 5, 1934

DEAR MAJOR-GENERAL,

I thank you for your letter and the books on food.

Yours sincerely,

MAJOR-GENERAL SIR ROBERT MCCARRISON
KT.C.I.E., K.H.P., I.M.S.
DIRECTOR, NUTRITION RESEARCH
INDIAN RESEARCH FUND ASSOCIATION, COONOOR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] R. V. Sastri

323. LETTER TO BARJUR M. BANU

November 5, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. There is no doubt that any testimonial that can be devised for Jamshed Mehta will not be too much for his unique services. But how is it that you are the only person moving in the matter? I would strongly dissuade you from taking the lead. There should be a Universal appeal from the citizens of Karachi or nothing at all. And if the citizens of Karachi do not move of their own accord, I will be the last person to prompt them.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI MURJOR M. MANA, B.E. (CIVIL) , ETC.
BUNDER ROAD
KARACHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

324. LETTER TO N. SUNDARAM IYER

November 5, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I am afraid I can do nothing for you. Surely your son should be able to support you.

Yours sinceraly,

SJT. N. SUNDARAM IYER
C/O N. R. SWAMY
KIDDERPORE, CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

325. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

November 5, 1934

CHI. RAMDAS,

I dare not send for you. How can I say that my treatment will surely benefit you? How can I experiment with you? Moreover, once you are here you will surely get involved in a number of things. After all, home is home. What one happens to see or hear cannot but affect one. Precisely for this reason I have left the matter entirely to you. At

the moment I find my dharma of not opposing your wishes easy enough. It is the least likely to be wrong. Yet I would suggest this to help you to arrive at a decision. After much thinking I am inclined to select Poona. It has the best climate and good water. Lady Vithaldas[1] has been pressing me for it. Try her treatment and as Ba would be with you, you will find the going easy. If you [decide to] go there you had better send Sumitra here. Nimu also would like to come over but if you want to take her with you, by all means do so. From all this you will see that I am inclined to keep you away [from me]. Make up your mind after considering my inclination for what it is worth. Don't leave it to me. I do feel that you ought to come away from there. You may consult Dr. Jivraj at Bombay if he has the time. I would not mind, though, if you don't. You are not going to come to the slightest harm. Never mind if you take time to recoup your strength. Don't lose heart. Know that I am not at all opposed to your coming here if you like to do so. If you do come over I shall of course guide you as best as I can. But on the whole I like Mehta's treatment. All you need to have is proper diet. The treatment of egg-diet might prove beneficial if started early. Jugatram writes to say that he knows no vegetable product which can fully replace eggs. Milk is inferior to eggs and cannot match them. This had been proved right in Manu's case. She was given only uncooked eggs.

I trust Ba's cold has subsided.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

326. LETTER FO SRIKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

November 5, 1934

MY DEAR SRIKRISHNA[2],

I have your letter. You have become guardian angel to Brijkrishna. I quite agree with you that he ought not to tinker with his health. I would like him to go back to New Delhi and not leave it till he is completely restored. His unsteadiness ruins him. I have not heard from him for some time. You tell me what he is doing. I see that Dr. Ansari is ailing in Hyderabad and therefore can't be in Delhi for some time.

[1] Premlila, wife of Vithaldas Damodar Thackersey
[2] Brijkrishna Chandiwala's brother

I see what you are doing for yourself. I wish you success. I know that you have no lack of self-confidence.

Tell Brijkrishna to write to me. If I get the time, I shall put in a note for him with this.

BAPU

Encl. 1

SHRI SRIKRISHNA
KATRA KHUSHAL RAI
DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

327. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

November 5, 1934

CHI. BRAJKRISHNA,

Why is there no letter from you? I did send a reply[1] asking you to come. It was addressed to Hardwar. Srikrishna's letter gives me to understand that you are not well. If that is so, the right thing for you would be to return to New Delhi. The best thing of course is to follow the doctor's advice.

Damodardas met me and we had a long talk but I was not satisfied. If what he says is true, either you have misunderstood him or he has changed his statement.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am here for this month, if not longer.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2429

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Brijkrishna Chandiwala", 11-10-1934.

328. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

November 6, 1934

CHI. MARY,

I have your letter. The previous one I sent to Chhotalal. I did get your note you left on the table. You were unnecessarily apologetic. You did not disturb my solitude. My solitude is taken in the midst of many. Are you to be held up there till Rangraoji returns? Are you doing your *takli* after the latest style? 'Whatever you do, do in the name of God and therefore in the best style possible' is a good motto.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6032. Also C.W. 3361. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

329. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

November 6, 1934

MY DEAR MUNSHI,

My mind is off the constitution now. Therefore, it is difficult for me to give you a definite opinion on your letter just received. On all the points raised by you, therefore, you should give full effect to that which was clearly understood at the sub-committee's deliberations. I sent you my phraseology[1] to meet what I thought was the prevalent view of the sub-committee. As you know, I was in it the whole of the time, but so was also Kishorelal. I would gladly prefer his memory to mine. Now for the details:

1. What was understood at the sub-committee was that, wherever, whether in rural area or urban area, contiguous places could be combined to form plural-member constituencies they should be so combined. There was no distinction between the urban area and the rural area except that in the urban area the maximum was fixed at ten members and the minimum at five, wherever such a thing [was] possible; for rural area no maximum or minimum was fixed, but wherever possible, by the process of amalgamation suggested above, plural-member constituencies were to be created. The question of

[1] *Vide* "Letter to K.M.Munshi", 3-11-1934.

amalgamating Ahmedabad, Dhanduka and Prantij does not arise at all in my conception. My difficulty arose in your drawing the distinction between the two areas. According to our definition of a town, it must have a population of more than l0,000. Any place having 10,000 or less is not a town and belongs to the rural area. I do not know if I have made my own meaning clear. If it is not clear, and if there is nobody whom you can consult as to the understanding, please enforce your own view. After all if there is any difficulty or difference of opinion among the members of A. I. C. C. it can be removed at the next session of the Congress.

2. The difficulty for Bombay in the matter of readjusting the proportion of 500 to one delegate was not before me, because it has 21 members allotted to it as the maximum. For the other provinces, I understand this to be the position. We have the maximum fixed for them and we have also the maximum fixed for urban and rural areas. Therefore, the distribution or readjustment will be according to provinces and further readjustment according to the areas in the respective provinces. My own interpretation of my draft is that both these are provided for. But if you think otherwise, then your draft should stand or any other you may frame to carry out this meaning. That the meaning is what I have given here I have no doubt whatsoever.

3. As to the special session I have no difficulty. The A. I. C. C., the Working Committee and the President will be at the disposal of the delegates. They will do whatever they like with them and I thought that our draft had so provided.

You may send me that final proof if you like, but I waive that privilege, because the publication of the constitution is overdue. If we have honestly tried to give effect to the views of the sub-committee as adopted by the Subjects Committee, our duty is done and we should stand the fire of criticism.

I hope you are not overworking yourself. I return the draft sent by you.

Blessings from

BAPU[1]

SHRI K. M. MUNSHI

BOMBAY

C.W. 7560. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

[1] The subscription is in Gujarati.

330. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

November 6, 1934

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

I have your letter. What you tell me about the happenings in Lahore makes me sad. But I suppose such things are inevitable. I will expect you to take only such part in the Congress as is to your liking and as enables you to keep it clean.

I hope to be able shortly to issue a statement[1] about the Village Industries Association. I might have issued it earlier, but, in spite of my getting up at half past two in the morning, I have not yet overtaken the arrears. But I shall presently put on speed. Of course, I shall want your assistance and that of all solid workers who would come forward. The resolution aims at moral uplift. Therefore, it includes social work so far as it can be advanced through village industries. If Jagannath offers his services and if he is allowed to do so, he will have to be a whole-timer. Can he be spared by the Society, and has he that inclination himself?

My programme up to the end of this month is that I am here. The future I do not know except that Utmanzai is my Mecca, Jerusalem or Kashi.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

331. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

November 6, 1934

MY DEAR MATHEW ,

I am glad of your decision. Swami Anand will reach there on 9th and will take charge of you. He will put you among a band of workers. Your ultimate destination will be Thana, some miles from Bombay. Meanwhile you [will] be living with the workers in Bombay. You will live with them and board with them. But if you choose to find your own food, you can begin to draw Rs. 15 per month at once, i.e., from the time Swami Anand takes charge of you. Rs. 15 per month will cover your food, clothing, medicine if any and all extras.

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the press", 8-11-1934.

But they will not cover residence which will be found for you free of charge, so long as you are in Thana or Bombay. If you are posted in a village, in which there is not much change just now, Rs. l5 will cover everything including rent. You will give 8 hours' corporate labour and learn Hindi diligently. If you can do all this cheerfully I have no doubt that it will solve your difficulty and by God's grace you will get over the past.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

332. LETTER TO T. K. RAY CHOWDHARY

November 6, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I have nothing for you that I can think of. My ambition about the Village Industries Association is much humbler than what you have evidently imagined.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI T. K. RAY CHOWDHARY, A.M.S.E.
ENGINEER
119 LUKERGANJ
ALLAHABAD

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarclal

333. LETTER TO B. SATYANARAYANA

November 6, 1934

DEAR SATYANARAYANA,

I have your letter. You will please watch whatever I write about the activities of the Association which is in the process of formation.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI B. SATYANARAYANA
HANUMANPET
BEZWADA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

334. LETTER TO AMALI SAID ABDUL HADI

November 6, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. India is a very big place and unless I have much fuller particulars about your father than you have given it is impossible to trace him.

Yours sincerely,

AMALI SAID ABDUL HADI, ESQ.
C/O HAJ BAHA ABDUL HADI
NABLUS, PALESTINE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

335. LETTER TO GOVERNOR OF BASRAH PROVINCE, IRAQ

November 6, 1934

GOVERNOR OF THE BASRAH PROVINCE
IN THE KINGDOM OF IRAQ AND
PRESIDENT OF THE BASRAH DATE ADVISORY BOARD
BASRAH

DEAR GOVERNOR,

I thank you for your kind letter intimating despatch of a consignment of dates. I know by experience the renown of Basrah dates. I am looking forward to the receipt of the consignment.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

336. LETTER TO RAJARAM R. BHOLE

WARDHA,
November 6, 1934

MY DEAR RAJARAM,

I have your letter. You ought not to have gone with the Dasara Procession. You have to concentrate your attention on becoming perfectly well and exclude every activity that may interfere with your progress in that direction.

God won't be just if He was not merciful. Justice and mercy are different terms with us imperfect human beings, not so with God who

is perfection and who knows our hearts and who will rule them if you will let him. His justice is, therefore, never vindictive, never faulty and therefore descends upon us in the form of mercy.

Untouchability is not a divine institution, it is a man-made institution. That God permits evil to exist side by side with good is a mystery which we need not attempt to solve, but which we dare not ignore. Those who believe in God naturally believe also that He presides over our destinies. Even our sorrows turn into joy if we surrender ourselves completely to God.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

RAJARAM R. BHOLE
P.K. T. SANATORIUM
VONTIKOPPAL
MYSORE

From the original: R. R. Bhole Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

337. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

ASHRAM, WARDHA,
November 6, 1934

DEAR HARIBHAUJI,

Poojya Bapuji got your letter of the 3rd. In reply he asks me to write that in the Ajmer affairs you should be guided solely by Shri Jamnalalji's advice, Judging from your description of the situation there, Bapu sees nothing wrong in your contesting election afresh if you decide to do so. Considering your report it seems you ought to contest, but in this matter accept Jamnalalji's advice as the right and final one and act accordingly.

About the meeting of the A. I. V. I. A. Bapu asks me to write that he will decide about it only after consulting everybody concerned. He will do nothing before that. You may certainly suggest any names you like. He will do nothing in a hurry.

Respects from

SWAMI ANAND

From the Gujarati original: Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

338. LETTER TO DRAUPADI SHARMA

November 6, 1934

CHI. DRAUPADI,

Your letter. Amtussalaam is here; she is keeping well and engaged in Ashram work. She was to write to you. Ramdas is at Sabarmati; Kanu and Sumitra are with him. He might come here. Nimu is here. Sharma writes to say that he would reach here on the 8th. Why is Krishna still not well? Who is treating her? Do you want Sharma to go there? Write to me as freely as a daughter to her mother.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha,* facing p. 115

339. LETTER TO RAFI AHMED KIDWAI

November 7, 1934

MY DEAR RAFI,

I have seen your letter to Mahadev. Khan Brothers do not like the idea of going anywhere for making speeches. They love to go to the villagers and talk to them. But at present they are not doing even that. Khan Saheb himself is not keeping excellent either. You should, therefore, dispense with the Brothers' visit. You have now Sardar in your midst, and you should be more than satisfied. But if you must have a Mussalman, why not ask Maulana Saheb to come?

Your wire. What about the Exhibition? Will it satisfy my test?

Yours sincerely,

SHRI RAFI AHMED KIDWAI
MASOULI, BARABANKI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

340. LETTER TO ASAF ALI

November 7, 1934

MY DEAR ASAF ALI,

I have your telegram. The Khan Brothers I find to be of a most retiring nature. They are disinclined to go anywhere for making speeches. What is the [use] then of my pressing them to go anywhere? You should, therefore, do the best you can without them. But Dr. Ansari will be presently in your midst though I do not like the idea of his exerting himself in the present state of his weakness. Why not ask Maulana Abul Kalam Azad? He ought to shoulder this burden and he is an effective speaker. I am glad that the atmosphere is clearing for you. I do hope that you will succeed.

Yours sincerely

SHRI ASAF ALI, BAR-AT-LAW
FAIZ BAZAR
DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

341. LETTER TO EDITOR, "MANJI"

November 7, 1934

EDITOR, "MANJI"
AMRITSAR

DEAR SIR,

I do not know your magazine. I rarely send messages to newspapers, and never to those which I do not know.

Yours sincerely

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

342. LETTER TO JANAMMAL

November 7, 1934

MY DEAR JANAMMAL,

I was glad to hear from you so soon after you reached Madras. If you can come quick, it would be good. But if you take a fortnight you will come when my movement will be uncertain and I may not be

in Wardha. Unless, therefore, you come at once it would be perhaps better for you to wait till you know my future programme about which even if I forget Ambujam will write to you as soon as it is settled.

Did I give you the impression that you were weak-minded? I might have joked, but you never gave me any reason for thinking that you were weak-minded. You belong to a family whose members are known not for weakness but strength of mind.

Ambujam is getting on well, and I think she is perfectly happy here.

SHRI JANAMMAL
MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

343. LETTER TO UMADEVI BAJAJ

November 7, 1934

CHI. UMA,

I suppose I should not expect any letter from you. I have not written to you, but I frequently think about you. I did not at all like your recent behaviour. Nor did I like your letter. You have tried in it to put up a specious defence of your conduct. What have you learnt by accompanying me on my tour for so many months? Will you reflect over it and write to me? During the Congress session, I saw you going from one end to the other. What a dress you were wearing on that day! I can't describe the pain and anger I felt then. Now keep your promise. Never behave in an unnatural manner. Always let yourself be seen as you are. They are thinking about your betrothal. Express your views frankly on that matter. Be truthful always, truthful in thought and speech. If this is beyond your strength, leave me.

I shall wait for a detailed letter from you written in clear handwriting.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 340

344. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

November 7, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I get your notes. We cannot take it that the ear has been completely cured. Give me more details. It was fortunate that you went there in time.

Don't let there be any burden of work on your mind. From the point of view of work, I don't like your staying in Bombay. You must be getting hundreds of visitors. Don't worry about anything whatsoever.

Don't think about the Mahila Ashram. I am thinking about the problem. Radhakrishna also is giving all his time to it. I had a discussion with Bhagirathi. I will again discuss the matter with her. There is no fear of the institution breaking down.

I am worrying a little about Om. Don't take any step without consulting her. A letter to her is enclosed.

Does the meeting of the Gandhi Seva Sangh fixed for the 27th still stand? You may change the date if you wish. If you have to stay there longer and if the doctors permit you to leave the place for a week, you may come here and hold the meeting.

Do you go for walks? Are you careful about diet? If you have the habit of eating between meals, give it up. In digesting such things there is considerable drain on the energy of the brain. Open air and exercise are essential. I hope you are careful about sleep

Ghani, Khan Saheb's son, wishes to work in your sugar factory. I don't want you to pay him anything at present. The idea is merely that he should get some training. If it is possible to give him some experience in a factory, it should be done. Think over this and let me know if this is possible.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.N. 2945

345. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

Diwali, November 7, 1934

CHI. PREMA,

You met me, but the meeting was as good as no meeting. I wanted to give my reply to your last letter when we met, but could not do so. I don't know whether it needs any reply now. I had expected a letter from you. You may, if you wish, ask me the same questions again or any other questions that you like. I shall be here for the whole of this month. I don't know what will be my programme after that. I couldn't have a talk with Sushila[1] either. I was very happy that Kisan[2] came and saw me on the last day, though I couldn't talk even with her.

Lilavati is here at present. She will leave for Rajkot tomorrow. She is very unsteady in mind. Perhaps she is more so than she was. She cannot adhere to one single decision.

Ba is coming back here on Saturday with Ramdas.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10362. Also C.W. 6801. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

346. LETTER TO SHARADA G. CHOKHAWALA

Diwali, [*November 7, 1934*][3]

CHI. SHARADA,

How do you expect a letter from me when you yourself do not write to me? Now see that you turn over a new leaf in the New Year and do not fall ill. Your treatment lies in your own hands.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 9942. Courtesy: Sharadabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] Addressee's friends Sushila Pai

[2] Addressee's friends Kisan Ghumatkar

[3] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Sharda C. Shah", 15-3-1934. The new year, according to the Gujarati Calendar, begins from *Diwali* which in 1934 fell on this date.

347. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

November 8, 1934

I have seen newspaper paragraphs saying that a Delhi millionaire has placed at my disposal 20 lakhs of rupees for the All-India Village Industries Association which is in the process of formation. A later Press report makes me select Ahmedabad as the headquarters of the All-India Village Industries Association. Both these rumours are absolutely without foundation.

I would like the public to discount news about my movement or intention unless they are authorized by me. What is true is that I have promises of Rs. 2,500 per month, and have already received over Rs. 500 in cash. Whilst the Association will undoubtedly need funds, it needs workers more than funds. The latter will come if the former is assured. I, therefore, invite those who would work for the Association to send in their names.

only those will help who will give some time to the village or who are interested in what may at first sight appear to be uninteresting or unattractive village work. The work will be of four kinds: (l) to encourage and improve the known industries that are likely to perish for want of support; (2) to take charge of and sell the products of those industries; (3) to carry on the survey of such village industries as need to be revived and supported; and (4) to attend to village sanitation and hygiene.

Whist the Association is in the process of formation and the scheme of work is being framed, I would ask fellow-workers to set about encouraging hand-pounding of rice, grinding of wholewheat meal by village *chakkis*[1] and popularizing *gur*[2] and study the processes with a view to ensuring the purity of the products.

The workers will collect accurate information about these three things and other village industries that may come under their observation and pass on to me such statistics as they may be able to collect.

[1] Manually operated grinding-stone
[2] Jaggery

I would also like to emphasize the fact that the Association is to be entirely non-political. Its sole object will be the economic, moral and hygienic uplift of the villages of India and it will be open to workers drawn from all parties. The test will be full sympathy with the programme and readiness to help it with money and action wherever possible.

The Bombay Chronicle, 10-11-1934

348. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

November 8, 1934

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

You promised to give me information about certain points I have mentioned. I summarize them below. I would like you to answer them as early as it is possible.

(1) Do you consider that unpolished rice is superior to polished rice from the nutritive standpoint?

(2) If unpolished rice is better than polished rice, is there any difference between unpolished rice turned out from mills and unpolished rice hand-pounded?

(3) Is there any difference in nutritive value between wholewheat meal stone-ground on the indigenous *chakki* and wholewheat meal ground in the ordinary mills?

(4) Is *gur* produced in the village *kolus*[1] superior to the sugar manufactured in the sugar mills? And if it is, what are the contents of *gur* which make it more desirable and nutritious as an article of food than refined sugar manufactured in the sugar mills?

(5) Is oil pressed in the village *kolus* superior to the oil pressed in the oil mills?

DR. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Literally, 'oil-presses', here cane-crushing units

349. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

November 8, 1934

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter. My New Year[1] blessings to both of you and the children.

You should not be impatient. Everything will be all right. Do village [reconstruction] work staying where you are. The work is such that it can be done by everybody anywhere.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5526

350. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 8, 1934

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. You should get the money for the dairy from Ambalalbhai.[2] I will remit the amount. Narahari is here. You must send for the special cot, or buy one, on which Jamna can take sun-bath.

I understand what you say about Harilal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8422. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Kartak Sud* 1 of the Vikram Era
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Ambalal Sarabhai", 19-10-1934.

351. LETTER TO KUSUMBEHN DESAI

November 8, 1934

CHI. KUSUM,

I have your letter. You have now accepted some responsibility at Rajkot. If your health permits and if you can do some work I shall certainly send for you and give you some teaching work. But I am worried about your health.

RAJKOT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy. Pyarelal

352. HARIJAN BOARDS

What should be the qualifications of members of Harijan Boards and what should be the number constituting them, are the questions often asked. I endeavoured to answer[1] them fairly exhaustively at the meeting of the U. P. Provincial Board in Benares the other day. It is necessary, however, to revert to the questions from time to time or till such time as one definite policy has been evolved.

If we remember that members of these Boards are servants and not patrons, much less ornaments, most of the difficulties will be automatically solved. There will then be no question of pleasing or displeasing anybody. Only those will be included who are eager to serve the cause and whose presence will promote the usefulness of the Board to which they belong and whose capacity for service will be increased by their being members of a Board.

No one should allow himself or herself to be a member of a Board, unless he or she

(1) believes in the uttermost removal of untouchability,

(2) pays something to the Board according to his or her capacity,

(3) does some definite Harijan service, e.g., having a Harijan in his or her home as a member of the family, or at least as a domestic servant, or is teaching a Harijan or Harijans, or paying a regular visit to Harijan quarters and cleaning them, or, if he or she is a doctor,

[1] On July 29*; vide* "Speech at central board meeting of Harjan sevak sangh, Benares", 29-7-1934.

treating Harijan patients free of charge, etc.,

(4) sends to the Board a diary containing a record of his or her service from month to month.

If some such conditions are observed, there need be no restriction on the number of members. The more, the merrier. Such Boards will meet to take notes; exchange experiences and solve mutual difficulties. They will never waste time in fruitless discussions.

There may be Advisory Committees attached to the Boards. These will lay down for themselves some minimum qualifications. Naturally the qualifications of advisers will be less stringent than those of members of regular Boards.

What if members with the qualifications I have described cannot be found is the natural question arising from the bare mention of them. I must repeat the answer I have given often enough before now. The persons invited by the Central Board to form Sanghs in their own provinces will, in the absence of members having the necessary qualifications, perform the service through agents. 'Act True' must be the motto of every Harijan Board, and there should never be any departure from the wholesome maxim.

Harijan, 9-11-1 934

353. MR. SUPPOSED INCONSISTENCY

The Editor has sent the following[1] received by him for answer:

> In the *Harijan* of the 9th March Gandhiji is reported to have said that 'there was no warrant in the Shastras for untouchability'[2] . . . [This] does not seem to accord with his previous statement, which was that there is such sanction but he did not accept the authority of such passages because they were immoral.
>
> Will you kindly explain the apparent inconsistency, through the columns of the *Harijan*?

I make no hobgoblin of consistency. If I am true to myself from moment to moment, I do not mind all the inconsistencies that may be flung in my face. But in the letter quoted, there is no inconsistency. If I reject certain texts in the Shastras as interpolations or inconsistent with the fundamental principles they lay down or with universal morality, surely, I am entitled to say that there is no warrant in the Shastras for the practice or belief that the objectionable texts

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at women's meeting, Mangalore", 24-2-1934.

prescribe. I have quoted the opinion of not one but several learned men in support of the contention that the Shastras do not enjoin untouchabilily as it is practised today. Of course, there is untouchability in the Shastras, but it is all curable in accordance with the simple methods prescribed by them. We all become untouchables every day when we attend to natural functions, and our untouchability is cured by simple ablutions. Indeed, even wicked thoughts make us untouchable, but we are cured by resisting them and purifying ourselves by taking the name of God as Rama or Vasudev or Narayan or Shiva and invoking His never-failing protection. Even so is a Harijan, whose occupation may render him untouchable, cured by prescribed purification. And certain sanatanists claim that there is an incurable untouchability which is handed down from father to son for generations and which will live to the end of Time. And what is the saddest of all is that the sanatanists claim that such untouchables are to be counted by the million. Their warrant for the belief in the existence of several million untouchables is not a Shastra, but census reports, which change from time to time and which are prepared by a host of enumerators who have no knowledge of the Hindu Shastras and, in numerous cases. are not themselves Hindus. It is thus a superstitious belief against which every lover of Hinduism should rise in rebellion.

Harijan, 9-11-1934

354. RIGHT OF MINORITY

A sanatanist asks:

As a sanatanist I have a difficulty about temple-entry by Harijans. Supposing among temple-goers of a particular temple there is a majority of 99 to I in favour of Harijans entering the temple and the temple is opened. What about the minority of one who has objection to worshipping in a temple visited by Harijans? If reformers have their way, will it not be an undue interference with the right of worship which belongs to the sanatanists from time immemorial?

There may be a public church of the Roman Catholics as well as a public church of Protestants in an English town. Even if the Protestants be in a majority, they would not interfere with the conduct of affairs in the Roman Catholic church. Why, then, should the reformers (even though in the majority) interfere with the conduct of affairs in a public temple belonging to the sanatanists?

I should answer the questions by putting another. If the one solitary sanatanist has the right, as he undoubtedly has, what about the

majority? Have they no rights? The parallel quoted does not apply. The questioner has imagined the existence side by side of two churches belonging to different denominations. It would be a monstrous impertinence on the part of Protestants to interfere with the rights of Roman Catholics or *vice versa.* But suppose all the Protestants but one decided to admit to their temple persons whom they had excommunicated for ages. Surely, they would have every right to lift the ban. Here there would be no question of changing one's religion, as there is in the case imagined by the questioner. In the temple-entry movement, reformers do not seek to alter their faith. If they did, in theory at least, not even a unanimous decision of temple-goers of a temple should entitle them to use a temple for purposes never intended by the founders. Here the reformers claim that the faith they profess in common with the sanatanists permits the use of their temples by fellow-Hindus, the Harijans. It is, therefore, a question of interpretation, and in such matters, the opinion of a majority must prevail. If it did not, it would amount to the coercion of a majority by a minority, and there would be an end to all progress. Indeed, the doctrine the questioner propounds would mean decay and death to a society that subscribes to it. It should be remembered that the minority is free to build a temple for itself. And so far as I am concerned, I have given my opinion that even a minority of one should have its prejudices so far respected that a special hour may be set apart so as to enable it to offer worship free from the intrusion, whether of reformers or of Harijans.

Harijan, 9-11-1934

355. LETTER TO KEDARNATH SAHA

November 9, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have seen your letter to Sjt. Kumarappa who has not yet been able to take over charge. If you will send me a sample of your knives and *chappals*[1], I will endeavour to find a market for them if they are truly serviceable. Are the *chappals* made of slaughtered hide or dead-cattle hide? You may also send me samples of raw mulberry. I

[1] Slippers

will have experiments made on them, and then it will be possible either to send someone there as an instructor or have someone from there for instruction.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI KEDARNATH SAHA
PLEADER
HAZARIBAGH

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

356. LETTER TO MARIA

November 9, 1934

DEAR LARK,

I have your very carefully written postcard both in Italian and English. I do prize your prayer of which at this moment I am much in need. I cannot forget the Larks and they have always my blessings in so far as I may be fit to give them.

SISTER MARIA
LARK OF ST. FRANCIS
EREMO FRANCISCANO, TREVI (UMBRIA)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

357. LETTER TO E. E. SPEIGHT

November 9, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for sending me six copies of your book *Indian Masters of English*. How I wish I had the time to go through it carefully and give you my considered opinion on it! I could not resist the temptation of turning over the pages of the book, and I was delighted with the careful notes you have given at the end of every selection.

Yours sincerely,

E. E. SPEIGHT, ESQ.
OSMANIA UNIVERSITY
HYDERABAD (DN.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

358. LETTER TO N. A. DRAVID

November 9, 1934

MY DEAR DRAVID,

I was delighted to receive your letter and the cutting. Do by all means come whenever it is convenient for you and pass a half-hour with me.

I am certainly full of plans for village reconstruction which I shall unfold to you far more easily in the course of a conversation than by writing a long letter. You know that when I was in Champaran and when I had the late Dr. Dev with me, I worked in several villages. At that time, the idea was to attend to the schooling of children and adults and to sanitation and hygiene of the villagers. Since then I have added a great deal to my knowledge of the village life. You will see the Press note that I have sent yesterday. It will show you the direction in which my mind is working.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI N. A. DRAVID, M.A.
SENIOR MEMBER
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
NAGPUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

359. LETTER TO BIHARILAL BHETRA

November 9, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I return the enclosures you have asked for. I would not trouble you to come here to discuss things with me. I would like you to follow the development of the Association in the Press and then if you fee that you can usefully offer your services you will please write to me telling me at the same time what your requirement would be. You will see a Press note[1] which I have issued

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the press", 8-11-1934.

yesterday as a preliminary instruction to co-workers. You will glean from that Press note somewhat how the Association will shape itself.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI BIHARILAL BHETRA
C/O THE D. & D. CO. (INDIA) LTD.
ANARKALI BAZAR, LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

360. LETTER TO RAM DASS

November 9, 1934

MY DEAR RAM DASS,

I was wondering how you were doing when I got your postcard today. Khan Saheb is a very correct worker. He never allows grass to grow under his feet and therefore he has been sending your statements all over for investigation. Here is a letter received by him in reply to a letter of his. You will please return that letter with your answer.

If there is something still left in you which is chronic will you be able to keep well in these parts? You should remember that you were to go to Savli to be trained for khadi work. I do not want you to collapse again, for each collapse will leave you weaker than before.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI RAM DASS
C/O DR. M. L. GULATEE
KOHAT (N. W. F. P.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

361. LETTER TO S. GANESAN

November 9, 1934

MY DEAR GANESAN,

With reference to the bill you sent to Thakkar Bapa for Rs. 84-12-0, I have discussed the matter with him and I have suggested that the bill should remain in abeyance. At the present moment we have a bill left. When the time comes for our reviewing the situation, if the life of the *Harijan* has to be prolonged and if the discharge of the Rs. 84-12-0 bill is of any material help to us in keeping that alive, we can take the amount of the bill from them. Otherwise the money

should be written off as if the printing of the Supplement was done in the usual course. I know that I held a different view at one time; but I am overborne by the consideration that so long as we can make the two ends meet, even including this bill, we should not fall back upon the central fund. After all we are drawing upon that fund for a part of Sastri's emolument.

You have asked for a return of Thakkar Bapa's letters to you. Here they are.

I was incidentally discussing your general affairs with him and I can give you this assurance that he has no irritation against you. What he feels is that you overrate your ability to do things and that you are generous at the expense of your trust. As for instance, he related to me the story of outdoor boys whom you are training and for whom you are providing afternoon refreshments although it is no part of your job to do so and although the boys who come are not so poor as not to afford one or two pice for refreshments. This story was told him by one who is in sympathy with you and your work and who appreciates your self-sacrifice. Thakkar Bapa did not mention this with any sense of injustice; but he simply. gave an instance of your generous nature. Generosity is a virtue when we exercise it at our own expense; it is a vice when we exercise it at the expense of the trust that might have been given to us. A trustee has to take the role of a miser in regard to his trust.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

362. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

November 9, 1934

CHI. KANTI,

1 got your letter. May the New Year prove fruitful for your body, mind and soul.

Four hundred rounds is certainly not the average speed of spinning on the *takli.* Bhau and others have reached that figure and are trying to go still farther. Two hundred rounds has become the average speed. One hundred and sixty should be reckoned as the minimum.

Harilal's reformation so far seems to be permanent. Narandas seems to be satisfied.

Do continue milk and ghee.

My health has become excellent now. These days I take only

unboiled milk, fruit and uncooked vegetables, the last not more than one ounce. They include cucumber, radishes, *luni* leaves, tomatoes, etc. My weight was taken only today and it was found to be 107_ lb. This is very good improvement indeed.

Ramdas and Ba are expected to return tomorrow. Kishorelal and Gomati arrived yesterday. Other arrivals and departures continue, as usual.

Have you received the money now?

Have you heard that Kanu is here and that Prithuraj is starting business? Jivandas also has started business.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev will return today from Bombay. Bablo was operated upon for tonsils. Jamnalal has not yet fully recovered and is obliged to remain in Bombay for the present.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7289. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

363. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI

WARDHA,
November 9, 1934

CHI. KASHI,

I got your letter just now and so am able to reply to it. You have done quite well in deciding that the delivery should take place in Guleria. Look after everything there very carefully. I hope you are keeping quite well. Do you get dry fruits there? Do you get good quality milk?

Of course you have my blessings.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Ramdas and Ba are arriving tomorrow. Kishorelal and Gomati arrived yesterday. Kishorelal has brought along fever with him.

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 33090

364. INTERVIEW TO NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE[1]

November 9/10, 1934[2]

QUESTION: . . . Should khadi be merely a sort of humanitarian work or should we use it chiefly as an instrument of political education? Our experience has been that unless the ultimate objective is kept clearly in mind, it degenerates easily into a work of no significance.

ANSWER: The two issues of khadi and political organization should be kept absolutely separate. There must be no confusion. The aim of khadi is humanitarian; but so far as India is concerned, its effect is bound to be immensely political. The Salvation Army wants to teach people about God. But they come with bread. For the poor bread is their God. Similarly we should bring food into the mouths of the people through khadi. If we succeed in breaking the idleness of the people through khadi, they will begin to listen to us. Whatever else the Government might do, it does leave some food for the villagers. Unless we can bring food to them, why should the people listen to us? When we have taught them what they can do through their own efforts, then they will want to listen to us.

That trust can best be generated through khadi. While working out the khadi programme our aim should be purely humanitarian, that is, economic. We should leave out all political considerations whatsoever. But it is bound to produce important political consequences which nobody can prevent and nobody need deplore.

Q. Could we-not start small battles on local and specific issues against capitalism in the villages and use them as a means of strengthening the people or bringing about a sense of co-operation among them, in preference to the khadi method? When we have a choice between the two, which should we prefer? If we have to sacrifice all the work that we have built up in the villages in connection with khadi while fighting against the moneylender or the landed proprietor, for, say, a reduction in the rate of interest or increase in the share of agricultural produce, then what shall we do—provided the latter is more liable to evoke self-confidence among the villagers than the khadi method of organization?

A. It is a big proviso you have added at the end of the question. I cannot say if fights on local and specific issues against capitalists are more likely to generate the kind of determination and courage needed in a non-violent campaign. But if I concede you that point, then khadi

[1] According to the source, Nirmal Kumar Bose met Gandhiji on November 9 and 10. The report was published after correction by Gandhiji.

[2] *ibid.*

would have to be sacrificed under the circumstances you quote. As a practical man, claiming to be an expert in non-violent methods, I should advise you not to go in for that type of work in order to train the masses in self-consciousness and attainment of power.

We are fighting for swaraj in the non-violent way. If many workers in different parts of India engage in local battles of the sort you describe, then, in times of necessity, people all over India will not be able to make a common cause in a fight for swaraj. Before civil disobedience can be practised on a vast scale, people must learn the art of civil or voluntary obedience. Our obedience to the Government is through fear; and the reaction against it is either violence itself or that species of it, which is cowardice. But through khadi we teach people the art of civil obedience to an institution which they have built up for themselves. Only when they have learnt that art can they successfully disobey something which they want to destroy in the non-violent way. This is why I should advise all workers not to fritter their fighting strength in many-sided battles, but to concentrate on peaceful khadi work in order to educate the masses into a condition necessary for a successful practice of non-violent non-co-operation. With their own exploitation, boycott of foreign cloth through picketing may easily be violent; through the use of khadi it is most natural and absolutely non-violent.

Q. Is love or non-violence compatible. with possession or exploitation in any shape or form? If possession and non-violence cannot go together, then do you advocate the maintenance of private ownership of land or factories at an unavoidable evil which will continue so long as individuals are not ripe or educated enough to do without it? If it be such a step, would it not be better to own all the land through the State and place the State under the control of the masses?

A. Love and exclusive possession can never go together. Theoretically when there is perfect love, there must be perfect non-possession. The body is our last possession. So a man can only exercise perfect love and be completely dispossessed, if he is prepared to embrace death and renounce his body for the sake of human service.

But that is true in theory only. In actual life, we can hardly exercise perfect love, for the body as a possession will always remain with us. Man will ever remain imperfect, and it will always be his part to try to be perfect. So that perfection in love or non-possession will remain an unattainable ideal, as long as we are alive, but towards which we must ceaselessly strive.

Those who own money now are asked to behave like trustees holding their riches on behalf of the poor. You may say that trusteeship is a legal fiction. But if people meditate over it constantly and try to act up to it, then life on earth would be governed far more by love than it is at present. Absolute trusteeship is an abstraction like Euclid's definition of a point, and is equally unattainable. But if we strive for it, we shall be able to go further in realizing a state of equality on earth than by any other method.

Q. If you say that private possession is incompatible with non-violence, why do you put up with it?

A. That is a concession one has to make to those who earn money but who would not voluntarily use their earnings for the benefit of mankind.

Q. Why then not have State-ownership in place of private property and thus minimize violence?

A. It is better than private ownership. But that too is objectionable on the ground of violence. It is my firm conviction that if the State suppressed capitalism by violence, it will be caught in the coils of violence itself, and will fail to develop nonviolence at any time. The State represents violence in a concentrated and organized form. The individual has a soul, but as the State is a soulless machine, it can never be weaned from violence to which it owes its very existence. Hence I prefer the doctrine of trusteeship.

Q. Let us come to a specific instance. Supposing an artist leaves certain pictures to a son who does not appreciate their value for the nation and sells them or wastes them, so that the nation stands to lose something precious through one person's folly. If you are assured that the son would never be a trustee in the sense in which you would like him to be, do you not think the State would be justified in taking away those things from him with the minimum use of violence?

A. Yes, the State will, as a matter of fact, take away those things, and I believe it will be justified if it uses the minimum of violence. But the fear is always there that the State may use too much violence against those who differ from it. I would be very happy indeed if the people concerned behaved as trustees; but if they fail, I believe we shall have to deprive them of their possessions through the State with the minimum exercise of violence. That is why I said[1] at the Round Table Conference that every vested interest must be subjected to scrutiny, and confiscation ordered where necessary with or without compensation as the case demanded.

[1] *Vide* "Extract from proceedings of the federal structure committee meeting", 19-11-1931.

What I would personally prefer would be not a centralization of power in the hands of the State, but. an extension of the sense of trusteeship; as in my opinion the violence of private ownership is less injurious than the violence of the State. However, if it is unavoidable, I would support a minimum of State-ownership.

Q. Then, sir, shall we take it that the fundamental difference between you and the Socialists is that you believe that men live more by self-direction or will than by habit, and they believe that men live more by habit than by will; that being the reason why do you strive for self-correction while they try to build up a system under which men will find it impossible to exercise their desire for exploiting others?

A. While admitting that man actually lives by habit, I hold that it is better for him to live by the exercise of will. I also believe that men are capable of developing their will to an extent that will reduce exploitation to a minimum. I look upon an increase of the power of the State with the greatest fear, because although while apparently doing good by minimizing exploitation, it does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality, which lies at the root of all progress. We know of so many cases where men have adopted trusteeship, but none where the State has really lived for the poor.

Q. But have not those cases of trusteeship which you sometimes cite been due to your personal influence rather than to anything else? Teachers like you come infrequently. Would it not be better, therefore, to trust to some organization to effect the necessary changes in man, rather than depend upon the casual advent of men like yourself?

A. Leaving me aside, you must remember that the influence of all great teachers of mankind has outlived their lives. In the teachings of each prophet like Mohammed, Buddha or Jesus, there was a permanent portion and there was another which was suited to the needs and requirements of the times. It is only because we try to keep up the permanent with the impermanent aspects of their teachings that there is so much distortion in religious practice today. But that apart, you can see that the influence of these men has sustained us after they have passed away. Moreover, what I disapprove of is an organization based on force which a State is. Voluntary organization there must be.

Q. What then, sir, is your ideal social order?

A. I believe that every man is born in the world with certain natural tendencies. Every person is born with certain definite limitations which he cannot overcome. From a careful observation of those limitations the law of varna was deduced. It establishes certain

spheres of action of certain people with certain tendencies. This avoided all unworthy competition. Whilst, recognizing limitations, the law of 'varna' admitted of no distinctions of high and low, on the one hand it guaranteed to each the fruits of his labours and on the other it prevented him from pressing upon his neighbour.

This great law has been degraded and [has] fallen into disrepute. But my conviction is that an ideal social order will only be evolved when the implications of this law are fully understood and given effect to.

Q. Do you not think that in ancient India there was much difference in economic status and social privileges between the four varnas?

A. That may be historically true. But misapplication or an imperfect understanding of the law must not lead to the ignoring of the law itself. By constant striving we have to enrich the inheritance left to us. This law determines the duties of man. Rights follow from a due performance of duties. It is the fashion nowadays to ignore duties and assert or rather usurp rights.

Q. If you are so keen upon reviving varnashrama, why do you not favour violence as the quickest means?

A. Surely the question does not arise. Definition and performance of duties rule out violence altogether. Violence becomes imperative when an attempt is made to assert rights without reference to duties.

Q. Should we not confine our pursuit of Truth to ourselves and not press it upon the world because we know that it is ultimately limited in character?

A. You cannot so circumscribe truth even if you try. Every expression of truth has in it the seeds of propagation, even as the sun cannot hide its light.[1]

The Hindustan Times, 17-10-1935

365. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE[2]

November 10, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

Gita and other scriptures you quote undoubtedly discountenance ignorant crucifixion of the body. But all insist upon selfrestraint and sacrifice. These necessarily include fasting

[1] The source reproduced this from *The Modem Review*.

[2] On this the addressee has recorded: "This is a rejoinder to my criticism against 'fast, and the khadi clause in the Congress constitution."

undertaken with deliberation and discretion.

With reference to your second letter, you have to refer to the Secretary of the Working Committee of the Congress for an authentic opinion. In my opinion, the difficulty that you have to face is common to all. But I do not understand your difficulty at all. The primary members are not required to be habitual wearers of khaddar, but primary members who want to be elected as members of Committee have to be habitual wearers of khaddar. If they want to qualify, they can begin to wear khaddar as a habit, and in six months' time they will be fully qualified candidates.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE
SHOLAK (BENGAL)

From a photostat: C.W. 1448. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

366. LETTER TO SURESH CHANDRA BANERJI

November 10, 1934

MY DEAR SURESH,

I have your letter. I do wish you to get on well. I have sent you messages through Prafulla. One thing I want to emphasize. Just as a prisoner has no right to think of the world outside the prison walls, much less to form any opinion about what he may hear of events taking place outside his little universe of the jail, so also should a sick person lying on his bed cease to apply his mind to problems of the world outside the sick room. He is no longer taking an active part in those events; he honestly becomes unfit to give a correct judgment. This is also the ideal put before the sannyasi. Immediately a man takes sannyasa he is supposed to cut himself off from the day-to-day activities of the world. If these very simple obvious facts of life were borne in mind we should be spared so much misery, misunderstanding and so many errors; and prisoners, sick people and sannyasis would lead peaceful lives and do justice to their respective stations. If you are not in pain, I would like you to do one thing: that is, to write out the medical chapters for Satisbabu's book. I want a good guide for village workers. The conception is to produce a book after Moore's *Family Medicine* or *Everybody His Own Doctor.*

SURESH CHANDRA BANERJI
DOW-HILL (BISHOKA)
DT. DARJEELING

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

367. LETTER TO S. R. SUNDARARAJAN

November 10, 1934

DEAR SUNDARARAJAN,

I have your letter. I am afraid you cannot stay with me. My movement is uncertain. Khan Saheb does not keep anybody with him. You should, therefore, create an atmosphere of purity yourself around you, and this you can do by contemplating pure writings of authors of unimpeachable purity as for instance the *Gita, Ramayana* of Tulsidas, portions of *Mahabharata,* etc. I am glad to know that you were the worker who was in charge of my bath-room and did scavenging work.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI S. R. SUNDARARAJAN
"SWATHANTHRA SANGU"
8C PYCROFTS ROAD,
TRIPLICANE, MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

368. LETTER TO CHARU CHANDRA BHANDARI

November 10, 1934

DEAR CHARUBABU,

I was delighted to have your exhaustive letter. I can't give you any guidance just now. But I would like you to keep me in touch with your activities. Follow the development of the Association which is in the process of formation, and I would like you also to confer with Satisbabu and give him such assistance as you can in his Harijan work which he has got to develop being in control of the all-Bengal work. This might enable you to support some of your co-workers, fully or in part. At the same time they will be rendering most useful service.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI CHARU CHANDRA BHANDARI
DIAMOND HARBOUR
(24 PARGANAS)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

369. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

WARDHA,
November 10, 1934

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I have your sweet letter. How can it be acknowledged or answered? It is just by chance that this letter is going by the Mussoorie post. I am aware of your faith. My blessings to all the children.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32778

370. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

WARDHA,
November 10, 1934

DEAR SISTER,

Mridu gave me news of you. You are not still fully cured. Gaurishankar had been trying nature cure. Did it not bring you any result? From my observation I am convinced more and more each day that it is worth giving it a trial. It is an unexplored area. It is a new field, but in the right direction. No matter by what means, I wish to see you enjoying good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11141. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

371. LETTER TO G. S. NARASIMHACHARI

November 11, 1934

DEAR NARASIMHACHARI,

I have your letter. I have no intention of touring in connection with the All-India Village Industries Association just being formed. You will glean from the papers what I am doing. By this time you should know that I have ceased to be even a primary member of the Congress.

I never knew that there was a movement in Andhradesh against Hindi *prachar*[1]. But I would myself resist any attempt to displace the rich vernaculars of the different provinces. Hindi is not intended to take their place, but it is intended to supplement them as a medium of inter-provincial intercourse. Therefore, Hindi propaganda should not only not interfere with the progress of vernaculars, but it must enrich them.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI G. S. NARASIMHACHARI
C/O VICE-CHANCELLOR
WALTAIR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

372. LETTER TO SAM HIGGINBOTTOM

November 11, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I do appreciate your letter of the 8th instant just received. Do please send me all your suggestions. You would have seen the brief statement I had issued. Nevertheless I send you a copy for ready reference. It represents an outline of my mind's working. I do not propose to tour in connection with the work, at least not at the present moment. I am holding informal discussions with friends interested in the project, and I have Prof. Kumarappa with me just now. I would love to meet you in the course of the month after a preliminary exchange of views by correspondence. That will enable us to save our time at the time of discussion.

I am sure you realize one fundamental fact. What applies to America and England does not necessarily apply to India. India has in her teeming millions so many superfluous days that she does not need to free the energy of her sons for superior or more remunerative work through highly developed machinery. In her 350 million children she has so many living ready-made machines, and if she can utilize their labour, half of which is running to waste, the double starvation of the body and the mind will cease. That is the problem that faced me when I returned to India in 1915, and has haunted me ever since.

Yours sincerely,

PROF. SAM HIGGINBOTTOM
ALLAHABAD CHRISTIAN COLLEGE
AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTE, ALLAHABAD

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Propaganda

373. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

WARDHA,

November 11, 1934

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

What about the Nagar ashram? Thakkar Bapa wants me to produce over Rs. 1,000/- for it as I did before. He has a right to do so. But I am trying to discover a way out. Have you any suggestion? And about the future? Bapa wants me to approach Sheth Shivratan. Will you guide me?

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

When do you expect Anand's discharge?

SHRI JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
C/O SIVDASSANI
15 KARMOOCHAL ROAD
OSUR VIRJI BUNGALOW, BOMBAY

From the original: C. W. 11042. Courtesy: Arjun Jairamdas

374. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

November 11, 1934

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I get your letters regularly. So it seems we shouldn't expect a permit for Ramdas after all. He does want to get all right without having to go there. All the same if you can secure a permit do send it. If you cannot, tell me so plainly. We don't want it if you have to flatter anybody to get it. We want it only if you can get it in a straight manner. Ramdas and Ba arrived yesterday. Ramdas has returned a mere skeleton. He will be under my treatment now. I am hopeful that he will be all right.

I understand about the Agent. Do what you think right. I told you what I felt, but finally the pen is in your hands. I would certainly not sit in judgment over you from this distance. I don't wish to teach

you to act unnaturally. Do only that which finds an echo in your heart. If you make a mistake, you will correct it afterwards. Listen to everybody and think over what they say, but in the end do just what seems right to you.

Mirabehn will be returning at the end of this month. She seems to have done excellent work.

Devdas, Lakshmi and Nimu are very well. Narandas's Kanu is with me. Prithuraj has started business. Kishorelal is here. Jamnalalji's ear still gives him trouble and he is, therefore, in Bombay.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

You must have read everything about me in the papers. Hence I don't write anything here. I felt sorry on reading about Omar Sheth.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4827

375. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

November 11, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letter. The ear is . . . [1]. No complaint should remain now.

Visitors must be stopped. You must not tax and tire your brain. If necessary, you should take a vow of silence for that purpose. You may talk only about matters connected with the doctor, or with attendants about your needs. Unless you do something of this sort, it will be difficult for you to remain quiet in Bombay. And treatment is possible only there. I hope you will not forget this fact. . . . Madalasa is all right.

I will explain everything to Ghani before sending him. I had showed your letter to Khan Saheb. He agrees with your view. He will not, therefore, blame you if Ghani fails. I have taken . . . after discussing it with Ghani. . . . He need not be paid just now.

Mirabehn is arriving on the 21st in an Italian steamer. She will arrive here on the 22nd. Khan Saheb's daughter will be accompanying her. Ramdas and Ba are staying in the building

[1] Omissions in this letter are as in the source.

previously occupied by Jajuji[1]. I am hopeful that he will get all right. We have started giving him eggs from today. He has become very thin indeed.

Kumarappa and Shiva Rao are here[2]. We have started the discussions today. I am not calling Mary just now. What is your plan about her?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 140-l

376. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

November 11, 1934

BHAI RAJENDRA PRASAD,

I have your letter but not the copy of the one you addressed to Dr. Roy.

I do not feel like expressing an opinion but to withhold it too does not now seem right. In my opinion no action should be taken for the present. Let there be fresh elections to the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee. After they are over we may see what we can do. If the decision already taken is just and fair, making changes simply on account of the agitation in Bengal does not seem right. But then please do whatever you think right. In that case, my opinion need not be given any weight.

I do not feel I am obliged to make any alteration in what has been submitted in respect of Suresh.

Get back your health and come here soon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: A. I. C. C. file No. G-30/1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Shrikrishnadas Jaju
[2] *Vide* "Lettes to B. Shiva Rao", 3-11-1934.

377. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

[Before *November 12, 1934*][1]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Your two letters are lying in front of me. Regarding rice I have myself observed that only polished rice is available here. A rice-mill owner himself informed me that people preferred polished rice. Anyway enquire in Calcutta and let me know. You say that from the economic point of view our vote ought to be cast in favour of mortar and pestle. But how? It only means, doesn't it, that the villager will save some money? Tell me if it implies anything more.

Write to me after considering the cases of sugar and jaggery from both the viewpoints. What interest will you take in this new institution[2] and have you thought of offering it any aid? Would you in that case make some possible changes in your life? You must be aware of Rameshwardas's decision in this regard. How is Gajanan?

What about your operation? You must decide one way or the other.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I shall be here till the end of this month, if not longer. After that I intend to write about Utmanzai.

From Hindi: C.W. 8000. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

378. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

November 12, 1934

DEAR MOTIBABU,

I have your long letter and the enclosures. About the letter from All-India Spinners' Association I need say nothing as I expect to hear from you again. With reference to the letter from Saratbabu, I have always held the opinion that there is no contradiction between real beauty and truth. Therefore, truth is always beautiful.

[1] The addressee received this letter on November 12, 1934.
[2] All-India Village Industries Association

Truth, therefore, in my opinion, is the whole of art. Art divorced from truth is no art, and beauty divorced from truth is utter ugliness. That in this world many ugly things pass for beauty is too true. That happens because we do not always appreciate truth.

I hope you are keeping well. You will follow the fortunes of the All-India Village Industries Association and take what part you can in it. Please pass on all the suggestions you like.

Yours sincerely.

SHRI MOTILAL ROY
PRABARTAK SANGHA
CHANDRANAGORE

From a photostat: G.N. 11048

379. NOTES TO ANAND T. HINGORANI[1]

November 12, 1934[2]

On the way you will tell me all you have to. Tomorrow morning of course we would talk.

* * *

Are you all right now? How is Vidya and her brother?

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

380. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

November 12, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I am not happy at the delay in the healing of your ear. I have sent letters to the doctors.

Jayaprakash seems to be ill. He wants Prabhavati to go to Ahmednagar. If she goes, it is best from the point of view of the Ashram that she should go just now. If, therefore, Jayaprakash wants

[1] These are written on two slip
[2] Supplied by the addressee

her to go and if you permite I will secure Vinoba's permission and send her away. She is extremely busy even today. . . .[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapake Ashirvad, p. 141

381. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

November 12, 1934[2]

CHI. SHARMA,

I could understand what you say in your letter. It is written in a plain straightforward manner but it is full of your ignorance. If you go to England you must acquire a degree and it takes a minimum of seven years to attain a genuine degree and in no case less than five years. And all that you will get will be what you could have achieved here itself. You have made a grave allegation against British-educated as well as Indian-educated doctors. At present there are doctors of both the types who perform the work of a Bhangi and feel no shame in that. Rupees 3, 000 is not enough these days for seven years. You should have at least Rs. 30,000. And Rs. 60,000 if you take Draupadi along with you. This is the minimum sum needed for seven years. In spite of my simple living it cost me Rs. 13,000 for three years. And the cost of living has now doubled. But the consideration of money may be looked upon as secondary. I am strongly opposed to the very idea of going to England. Going to England might be proper only after one has acquired a basic knowledge of one's subject. I have no doubt that the basic knowledge can be easily acquired in India itself. The notion of going to England is simply mistaken and must be put an end to. If you think that you are not in error you may rebel against me and go in dependently without my blessings. You have the

[1] Omission as in the source. Clarifying this letter Pyarelal wrote another letter to the addressee the same day which read: "Bapuji has written to you today in connection with Prabhavati. What he meant to say was that if Jayaprakash wanted to call over Prabhavati to Bombay and if you agreed she could leave for Bombay with Vinobaji's permission after hearing from you. But this was not so in the case of going to Ahmednagar. If his letter conveys a different meaning it needs to be corrected. His intention is exactly what I have written to you."

[2] The printed source, however, has "12-12-34".

right to rebel as did Prahlad. A revolt is proved right only by its success. I too had defied my brother, who was like a father to me, for thirteen years. It was successful because it proved to be morally correct. You too may take recourse to defiance if you so wish.

If you would listen to me do as I say. Stay on here for the time being. Study anatomy and physiology. I can get the doctor here to help you. Do whatever work I may assign to you. You may if you wish send for Draupadi. I can arrange for some accommodation. I too don't like Draupadi's absence from your side. You may take it that your knowledge of physiology is very imperfect, almost nil. The love of study needed for this, I find, is lacking in you. Tell me if I am mistaken.

If you do not like my proximity you may live at a place of your own choosing and be content with correspondence. But if it comes to that I will take it to mean lack of forbearance in you. 1 know those who cannot live with me. You are not one of those nor should you ever be.

Ask me if all this is not clear. Try to understand it well.

I return your letter so that you may not have to prepare a copy.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha,* between pp. 132 and 133

382. TELEGRAM TO ASAF ALI

[Before *November 13, 1934*]

1 HOPE EVERY DELHI VOTE WILL BE CAST IN YOUR FAVOUR. [1]

The Hindustan Times, 13-11-1934

[1] The addressee was seeking election to the Central Legislative Assembly.

383. LETTER TO SIR JAMES GRIGG

November 13, 1934

DEAR SIR JAMES GRIGG,

There is a humanitarian clause in the now defunct Irwin Gandhi Pact which, as I learnt from your predecessor-in-office, Sir George Schuster, was not withdrawn by the Government. I had fully intended to publish this correspondence[1] between Sir George and myself. But by reason of my preoccupations, it has remained unattended to and unpublished. If the Government policy remains as stated in Sir George's letter to me, I should like to publish the correspondence. I shall esteem a line in reply.[2] Many poor people do not know that the salt concession has not been withdrawn.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR JAMES GRIGG
NEW DELHI

Home Department, Political, File No. 89/34. Courtesy: National Archives of India

384. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 13, 1934

DEAR SISTER

I am trying to form the Executive Board of the All-India Village Industries Association. It is to be a compact board of very few members. If you are sufficiently interested in it and would work on it, I would love to put your name on the Board. Kindly wire your decision. I would like you to say yes, if you have no insuperable objection.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
JULLUNDAR
PUNJAB

From the original: C.W. 3513. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6322

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sir George Schuster", 28-3-1934 and "Letter to Sir George Schuster", 14-4-1934.

[2] The addressee replied on November 22: "There is no objection to the publication of the correspondence. . . ." It was published in *Harijan,* 30-11-1934, under the heading "Free Salt for the Salt of the Earth".

385. LETTER TO C. G. RAMAN

November 13, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I must not trouble you to come to Wardha, for I am not much interested in the invention to which Sjt. Mehta refers in his letter.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI C. G. RAMAN
LINOTYPE AND MACHINERY, LTD.
21 GRAHAM ROAD, BALLARD ESTATE, BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

386. LETTER TO N. S. BENGALI

November 13, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I can see no use in your meeting me, because you seem to hold views wholly different from mine. I would, therefore, invite you to view the village movement with sufficient detachment, and then if you find that you have come to the wrong conclusions, you will naturally write to me, and I would be glad to take from you such service as you are willing to render.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI N. S. BENGALI' B.SC., L.T.
KARANDIKAR'S BUNGALOW
DHANTOLI, NAGPUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

387. LETTER TO BHAU P. PATIL

November 13, 1934

MY DEAR BHAU,

I have your letter. What you say is all good. You should write to Thakkar Bapa. After all he is the keeper of the purse.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI BHAU P. PATIL
SHRI CHHATRAPATI SHAHU BOARDING HOUSE
SATARA CITY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

388. LETTER TO DR. SATHAYE

November 13, 1934

DEAR DR. SATHAYE,

I had your telegram. Since my retirement from the Congress I have refrained from sending special messages. I could not make any exception. I hope, therefore, that you will forgive me for not sending you one.

Yours sincerely,

DR. SATHAYE
GIRGAUM
BOMBAY 4

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

389. LETTER TO J. MACK WILLIAMS

November 13, 1934

DEAR FRIEND ,

I have your letter of 15th ultimo. The rules that my coworkers and myself seek to observe are eleven, not ten. They are as under:

Truth, non-violence, continence, non-possession, non-stealing, removal of untouchability, swadeshi, daily bread-labour, equality of

the principal religions of the world, restraint on the palate, that is, eating to live—not living to eat, and fearlessness.

Yours sincerely,

J. MACK WILLIAMS, ESQ.

VASS, NORTH CAROLINA

U. S. A.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

390. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

November 13, 1934

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

It was a great effort for me to resist the temptation to respond to your telegram as you would have liked me to do. But I felt that I must not respond. I resisted the temptation elsewhere also. I hope, therefore, that you will forgive me.

Could you send me replies to the enclosed questions?

Encl. 1

DR. M. A. ANSARI

DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

391. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

November 13, 1934

DEAR SATISBABU,

I have got the papers about the prize.[1] The very first condition is this: "The spinning-wheel should be handy in size and should be worked by hand or by foot in an ordinary Indian village cottage." The other two conditions that are also worth considering are these: "The machine should be such as can be made available in India at a price not exceeding Rs. 150."

"The construction of the machine should be substantial and capable of being used, say, 20 years, with occasional replacement of

[1] *Vide* "A.I.S.A. Prize", 1-8-1929.

wearing parts. The replacement charges should be reasonable and may not exceed 5% of the cost of the machine per year."

Apart from these two conditions, Kirloskar's machine does not fulfil the first. Do you say otherwise?

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

392. LETTER TO PRAFULLA CHANDRA GHOSH

November 13, 1934

MY DEAR PRAFULLA,

I have your letter. Khan Saheb has seen it. He likes the programme. The second part should not be thought of before the first has been tried and [has] succeeded. But he cannot be in Calcutta by the 25th. He has to keep an engagement in Lucknow for the 1st December. His daughter is coming here on the 22nd from England. He has to fix up something about his son who is studying in Dehra Dun and who will meet him at the end of the month. Therefore he won't be ready to start from here before the 7th or 8th of December. I hope that won't matter.

If the vitamin charts referred to by you are easily available, you may pass on a copy to me. I hope you have received the draft that was promised.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

393. LETTER TO HARIBHAU PHATAK

November 14, 1934

MY DEAR HARIBHAU,

I have your letter. Of course, I shall make full use of your offer. Meanwhile I am passing on your letter to Sjt. Kuma-rappa.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1371

394. LETTER TO G. N KANITKAR

November 14, 1934

DEAR BALUKAKA,

The list you have sent me is interesting. I hope you will take up sustained and silent work with a fixed determination not to give it up.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI G. N. *(alias* BALUKAKA) KANITKAR

SVAVALAMBAN RASHTRIYA PATHSHALA

CHINCHAWAD, POONA DT.

From a photostat: C.W. 965. Courtesy: G. N. Kanitkar. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

395. LETTER TO R. A. RICHARDSON

November 14, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 25th September last. Before I can tell you whether you should send someone out here, I expect, as promised in your letter under reply, a further letter from you. We have an Agricultural Department here and an attempt is being made to ascertain through that Department the possibilities of improvement. The object that we have in view is to get better meat and only secondarily richer and more milk.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

R. A. RICHARDSON ESQ.

FOLESHILL

FRANKLIN P.O.

EAST GRIQUALAND

From a copy: C.W. 7778-b. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] The addressee, referring to Rhys Jones's letter to him written at Gandhiji's request about sheep-breeding in India, had asked whether the object was more milk, more meat or improved wool.

396. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

November 14, 1934

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I thought that I had already sent you the letter received from South Africa. I am sorry that it was overlooked. In clearing the file I came across the letter only last night. Here it is. I send you also [a] copy of my reply[1].

I see from a letter addressed by you to Mahadev that you expect me to pass some time on the new ground at Delhi. I remember having told you that I would love to do so when you were ready to receive me, if at all I was free at that time. Of course, you are not yet ready as I understood from Thakkar Bapa. And it would be useless for me to be in Delhi in your absence. What is in store for me next month I do not know.

I would like you to telegraph when the operation is over.

Blessings from

BAPU[2]

Encl. 2

From the original: C.W. 7778. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

397. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

Unrevised *November 14, 1934*

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your letter. I am glad Nan is restored and no more wants to go to Denmark. Of course, there is no place for any child better than the mother's lap. But that is an ideal state which we may all strive after though we may ever fail to-reach it.

I am sorry to hear about Maria. Who can replace her in her school except you? And just now you are out of the question. I wish a way out was found to enable her to go to Denmark and get the change she so badly needs.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The subscription is in Hindi.

I do not remember having received your letter on the Temple-entry Bill. Was it sent after my returning to Wardha? If you can reproduce the argument please do so and I shall endeavour to reply.

I did hear about the death of Jack Hoyland's son. Andrews was then here. We sent a joint cable[1] of condolence, and I had a full account of the death from Hoyland. It was a sad thing.Mira returns on the 22nd bringing with her Khan Saheb's daughter who was having her education in London. Mary Barr is here from her village home and has brought a friend just arrived from England. Mary has taken wonderfully to the Ashram life. The weather here just now is superb. Ramdas returned with Ba four or five days ago. He is very weak, but I think he will pick up strength here. Andrews is likely to be here in December, for a fortnight or so. How is Menon doing? Love to you all.

BAPU

MRS. ESTHER MENON
TANJORE

From a photostat: No. 132. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child*, pp. 108-9

398. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

November 14, 1934

MY DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I have gone through the papers in connection with the prize competition. Without prejudice to his right to get the prize on fulfilling the conditions laid down, it strikes me that the machine seems to be otherwise useful. We might ask Kirloskar Brothers to let us buy some machines so as to enable us to experiment on them and find out by experience their workability, also defects if any, and determine finally whether we can declare the machine as the prize-winner or whether we can, without giving the prize, provide a market for the machine. From all the descriptions I have received of the machine it appears to me to be complicated and too unworkable to win the prize. But we might be able to make use of the machine in

[1] This is not available.

order to supply the hand-spun yarn to our depots and to those who may desire to take in hand-spun yarn. We might-also by making extensive experiments find out whether the yarn is equal to the mill yarn from the point of view of weavers. If you think that this may be done, I would send for a representative of Kirloskar Brothers and talk to him unless you think that the time is not ripe for such conversation or that if the conversations are carried on they should be carried on by you. Kirloskar Brothers did write to me offering to send a machine and Sjt. Kale so as to enable me to watch its working. I send you a copy of my reply[1] to them. But after having read the papers sent by you I feel that I ought to invite him to send the machine and Sjt. Kale[2] and I must make time to watch the working of the machine and put someone also at the machine.

Encl. 1

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

399. LETTER TO G. SITARAMA SASTRY

Noovember 14, 1934

DEAR SITARAMA SASTRY,

I have gone through your report on hand-pounded rice. I would like you to send me a sample of the rice and corresponding sample of the same quality of milled rice. Have you inquired about the difference in nutritive value between unpolished rice from the mills and unpolished rice pounded by the hand? Will you also describe the village instruments for husking the rice? What use do you make of the husk? What is the daily wage earned for husking for eight hours and the wage for spinning for the same time in the same area? What is the difference between the price of mill-husked rice and that of hand-husked rice? Is there any difference in the quantity eaten by rice-eaters of mill-husked rice and hand-husked rice? Is this activity self-supporting?

SHRI SITARAMA SASTRY
CHANDOLE (GUNTUR DT.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Not available
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Kirloskar Brothers", 24-11-1934.

400. LETTER TO FRANCISCA STANDENANTH

November 14, 1934

I have not been able to reply to your letter of 23rd September up to now, though I often think of you both[1]. Of course, 2nd October was the birthday, as it always is, according to the Christian calendar. How are you both. keeping? I hope you are regularly getting your copy of *Harijan.* Mira is expected here on the 22nd. As you know, she went to America for a fortnight and did very good work there as also in England.

MRS. FRANCISCA STANDENATH
TRAUTMAUSDORFGASSE NO. 1
GRAZ STYRIA, AUSTRIA, EUROPE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

401. LETTER TO HARIDAS T. MUZUMDAR

November 14, 1934

MY DEAR HARIDAS,

Please do not expect me to give you any messages. I have simply run-dry just now, and have no desire to send any messages anywhere.

Yours sincerely,

HARIDAS T. MUZUMDAR, PH.D.
"INDIA TODAY AND TOMORROW"
20 VESEY STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The reference is to the addressee's husband Frederic.

402. LETTER TO KESHAV

November 14, 1934

MY DEAR KESHAV,

I have just seen No. 21 of *The Servant of Ghrist.* It would appear that the Christa Seva Sangh has now altered its scope and has become a proselytizing agent. It seems to me to be unfortunate.

Yours sincerely,

BROTHER KESHAV

CHRISTA SEVA SANGH, AUNDH

KIRKEE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

403. LETTER TO HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB

November 14, 1934

MY DEAR MAHTAB,

I have your letter. I think you have to put up with your wife. You have to take her with you.

With reference to your proposed gift I would like you to think it over well before you do the thing. But if both you and your wife have decided to make the gift, I shall thankfully accept it provided that you would work at the place in conjunction with a committee.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB

KARMA-MANDIR, AGARAPARA

BARHAT-TIRLCHANPUR P. O., *via* BHADRAK (ORISSA)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

404. LETTER TO DR. S. C. ANAND

November 14, 1934

DEAR DR. ANAND,

I appreciate your offer to assist the All-India Village Industries Association that is being formed. I would like you also to tell me what work you and the two friends whom you mention will do. Can Mr. Goyal give me the comparative food values of *gur* and sugar? I am passing on your letter to Sjt. Kumarappa.

Yours sincerely,

DR. S. C. ANAND, M.B.B.S., LIEUT. I.M.S. (RETD.)
DASSAN STREET
DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

405. LETTER TO BISWA MOHAN SANYAL

November 14, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. The Association that is in course of formation will undoubtedly take whatever service you can give. But I would not think of advising you to give up your present occupation in becoming a whole-time worker for the Association. I do not yet know how many and on what scale paid workers would be taken.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI BISWA MOHAN SANYAL (KAVIRAJ)
5/3 A MADHU GUPTO LANE
BOWBAZAR, CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

406. LETTER TO G. MUKERJI

November 14, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter and copies of your prospectus. The prospectus has made no appeal to me. I shall be glad to know what work you can do. I am passing on your letter to Sjt. Kumarappa.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI G. MUKERJI, M.SC. (CALIFORNIA, U. S. A.)
BANSBERIA P. O.
DT. HUGHLY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

407. LETTER .TO C. HANUMANTHA RAO

November 14, 1934

MY DEAR HANUMANTHA RAO,

I have your letter. You Cannot use mill-yarn even for making tapes. Those who want to make tapes may well devote a little time to spinning the yarn required for tape.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI C. HANUMANTHA RAO
GOUTAMI SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SITANAGARAM, *via* KOVVUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

408. LETTER TO PURNA CHANDRA SARMAH

November 14, 1934

MY DEAR PURNA CHANDRA SARMAH,

I have your letter which you did well in writing to me. I would like you to give me your accounts up to date.

I hope that Annadababu has been to you to guide you regarding spinning.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI PURNA CHANDRA SARMAH
SECRETARY
THE CONGRESS RELIEF COMMITTEE
NOWGONG (ASSAM)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

409. LETTER TO V. BHASHYAM IYENGAR

November 14, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. Of course, I shall make full use of your generous offer. I am passing on your letter to Sjt. Kumarappa.

Yours sincerely,

DEWAN BAHADUR V. BHASHYAM IYENGAR
"VARDHANI"
KILPAUK, MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

410. LETTER TO TEJ RAM

November 14, 1934

DEAR RAI BAHADUR,

I have gone through your scheme of improvement of villages. You will pardon me for saying that it does not appeal to me as practical. What are the improved tools that you have made? I would like you to follow the progress of the Association that is being formed and then say whether you can make any contribution to it. I am passing your letter on to Sjt. Kumarappa.

Yours sincerely,

RAI BAHADUR TEJ RAM
RETIRED EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
SANDA ROAD, LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

411. LETTER TO M. D. SHAHANE

November 14, 1934

MY DEAR SHAHANE,

I was delighted to receive your offer on behalf of the Society's C. P. Branch. You may know that I am already in correspondence with Dravid.[1] He will see me at the time that will most suit him. And So far as I am concerned, all the members can join him when. he Comes.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to N. A. Dravid," , 9-11-1934.

The earlier the better. Meanwhile, I am passing your letter on to Sjt. Kumarappa.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI M. D. SHAHANE, B.A.
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
CRADDOCK TOWN, NAGPUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

412. LETTER TO N. R. KOLARKAR

November 14, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Yours is an ambitious programme. It reads well. Of its possibilities, I, as a layman, can say nothing.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI N. R. KOLARKAR
KURLA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

413. LETTER TO DUNCAN GREENLEES

November 18, 1934

DEAR DUNCAN,

I was glad to receive your letter. I shall follow the development of your idea of rural school with great interest. Of course, I know your love for India. You may depend upon my exploiting it as much as I can. At the present moment Frontier is on the horizon. When a corporate fast comes, you will certainly find your name in the list of the Brotherhood. Both the Marys[1] are doing well.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] F. Mary Barr and Mary Chesley

414. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

November 15, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

His Excellency has probably seen the public statement[1] I have made of my intention to visit the Frontier Province as soon as possible consistently with my preoccupations. I am likely to be free after the middle of December. My object in wishing to visit the Frontier Province is to be with its people, to know them at first hand and to understand how far the teaching of non-violence by Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan has permeated his followers. It is also my intention to help them in the development of their village industries. I need hardly say that I have no desire whatsoever to inculcate among the Frontier people the spirit of disobedience (civil or otherwise) of authority.

Though I know that there is no legal bar against my entering the Frontier Province, I have no desire to do anything that may bring me in conflict with the Government. It is my earnest effort to avoid such conflict in so far as it is humanly possible.

Will you kindly ascertain His Excellency's wishes in the matter and let me know them?[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Home Department, Political, File No. 4/8/35, pp. 57-9. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 12-12-1934

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the press", 17-9-1934.

[2] On November 25 E. C. Mieville, Private Secretary to the Viceroy' replied: "His Excellency is glad that you have consulted him in this matter and notes that you have no desire to do anything that may bring you into conflict with the Government. He has discussed the question with the Government of the North West Frontier Province and with his Council and regrets that he and they are unanimously of opinion that it is not desirable for you to pay a visit to the Frontier Province at the present time. He trusts that you will act in accordance with his wishes."

415. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

November 15, 1934

DEAR AGATHA,

I have your letter together with a copy of your letter to Dr. Ansari. I understand all you say. Whatever is possible and desirable shall be done on the publication of the Joint Committee's Report[1].

I have not yet sent my letter about Utmanzai[2]. It is cooking itself, but pressure of work serves as a good excuse for putting it off.

If I don't write a separate letter to C. F. Andrews you please give him my love and tell him I have received his letter. I endorse his plan about coming here on a flying visit. In these days of actual flying, a flying visit through the fastest steamers afloat is, I suppose, a tame affair, though even the tame affair is too fast for me. Here is a copy of my letter to the Viceroy.[3]

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1482

416. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE[4]

November 15, 1934

DEAR GURUDEV,

The All-India Village Industries Association which is being formed under the auspices of the Indian National Congress will need the assistance of expert advisers in the various matters that will engage its attention. It is not intended to trouble them to meet together or even the members of the Association, but merely to advise the Association whenever reference is made to them in matters in which they possess special knowledge, e.g., in chemical analysis, food values, sanitation, distribution of village manufactures, improved methods of

[1] Joint Parliamentary Committee's Report on constitutional reform

[2] Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's village

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

[4] Similar letters were addressed to M. Vishvesvarayya, Purushottamdas Thakurdas, G. D. Birla and others.

developing village industries, co-operation, disposal of village waste as manure, methods of village transport, education (adult and other), care of infants, and many other things too numerous to mention here.

Will you please allow your name to appear among such advisers of the All-India Village Industries Association? Naturally I approach you in the belief that the object of the Association and the method of approach to its task have your approval.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4643

417. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

November 15, 1934

CHI. SHARMA,

I was expecting you to come; Narahari gave [your] message today. I have already answered your letter. How can I say that all are reassured? Vinoba however has no fears and wants you to come over here. You yourself have to put everyone at ease. I have heard of the Surendra episode; it is rather painful. I can understand how the mistake occurred but it is not very significant. Even if you had read the letter I would not have taken it to imply your acceptance of his suggestions. You will see his suggestions when you come here. But of what use could other people's suggestions be to you? only what appeals to your heart is the right thing for you. Come over; pleases do. You should delay no more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha,* facing p. 116

418. INTERVIEW TO "THE MANCHESTER GUARDIAN"

[*November 15, 1934*][1]

[GANDHIJI:] I am ready for your questions.

[CORRESPONDENT:] Does your retirement from the Congress mean that you take no more interest in politics?

[G.] No.

He had no intention of immediately returning to active politics, but it certainly did not mean retirement for the present, he explained, in guiding the new Village Industries Organization, in solving the Hindu-Moslem problem, and continuing the campaign against untouchability. He said:

All these movements will be non-political in the narrow sense of the term.

[C.] Supposing that the Joint Committee's report gives even less than the White Paper, what will be your reaction to it?

He was quite prepared to believe that the forecast was correct, but did not seem willing to commit himself. He contrasted the procedure actually followed by the British Government in regard to the reforms with that outlined by Mr. MacDonald in the House of Commons soon after the termination of the second session of the Round Table Conference.[2] The Prime Minister had spoken of a settlement with India's representatives (though, Mr. Gandhi pointed out with emphasis, the Round Table delegates were only nominees of the British Government) to be initialled by both parties, and that settlement would then be the basis of Parliamentary legislation.

[C.] The same thing had happened in Ireland.

[G.] Yes, the Irish parallel does hold good—but not just yet.

At this point, I drew his attention to a recent statement by General Smuts in Britain. General Smuts had said that it was an act of faith on the part of the British to have conferred self-government on South Africa, and a similar act of faith in regard to India would, in his view, be justified by subsequent results.

[1] In the introductory paragraph the correspondent states that the interview began after Gandhiji signed the letters seeking assistance from "experts" to become advisers of the All-India Village Industries Association. *Vide* "Letter to Rabindranath Tagore", 15-11-1934.

[2] Held in 1931.

[G.] I was in South Africa at the time and can see no similarity between the two cases. In the case of the Boers, it was not an act of faith, but making a virtue of necessity.

[C.] How ?

[G.] The Boer War was a virtual defeat for the British. They were sick and weary of the fight, and their resources were getting exhausted. of course, as an Imperial Power, they could have carried it on; but the tide was rising fast in favour of Campbell-Bannerman. King Edward's instructions to Lord Milner were to conciliate the Boers. I will grant that whatever was done was done not grudging]y but handsomely.

[C.] And so ?

[G.] And so, I go back to the statement[1] I made some weeks ago to the Con,ress in Bombay—that is, no constitutional agitation will ever achieve freedom for a country.

Nothing was ever gained that way, according to his reading of French or British history, and he had put that point to Lord Lothian and a few others with whom he had discussed the Indian problem at oxford three years ago.

Mr. Gandhi made it clear beyond doubt that his conviction was that Britain would never grant to India self-government of the kind South Africa enjoys today so long as she has "nothing to act upon".

She does not feel that civil resistance has been successful; there is a sense of exultation that the movement has been paralysed.

Pursuing the point further, I asked him whether apart from the circumstances under which self-government was granted to South Africa (and which do not, according to him, exist in India), the contents of that measure would satisfy him—in other words, what is the independence he aims at?

He did not seem disposed to discuss the question in detail. But he said the goal, for him, was defined in the concluding portion of his statement[2] at the second Round Table Conference; if membership of the British Common. wealth was forced upon India, he would resist it; but if it was voluntary partnership, terminable at will, he would have no objection to such an association. So far as he was concerned, it was the statement of an "eternal position".

But at present he is " immersed" in the building-up of the Village Industries Organization. His recent walking tour through the villages in connection with the

[1] *Vide* "Speech at subjects committee meeting A.I.C.C.", 23-10-1934.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at plenary session of round table conference", 1-12-1931.

anti-untouchability campaign was a revelation to him. The village people seemed to him "inert and despondent',. Their poverty-stricken conditions have been making "a more and more forcible appeal". The revival of village industries would infuse life into occupations that are now dying out. He remarked

Uninteresting it may be for some people, but it will be most solid work.

He is visualizing to himself the 700,000 villages of India, and his ambition is to spread out his workers in as many as possible.

Spinning, on which he has set his heart for many years, he confessed, is the lowest paid of rural occupations. But that will not come under the new organization, since it is being directed by the All-India Spinners, Association More food for the villagers—and food of the right kind—is his principal aim. He makes no secret of his intention to start a campaign against mill-polished rice and mill-ground wheat. In this, he said, some distinguished research workers in diet problems agree with him. He will also encourage the use of coarse sugar (gur) as against the factory refined article. He will also give rural sanitation and hygiene a prominent place in his programme.

[G.] Again, there must be no exploitation of the movement either by politicians or by anyone else—not even in a distant fashion.

The Hindu, 25-11-l934

419. LETTER TO S. SATYAMURTI

[Before *November 16, 1934*][1]

Your wire. My congratulations. These brilliant Congress victories[2] fill me with delight.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-11-1934

420. LALAJI ANNIVERSARY[3]

When politics so called are forgotten, when many other transitory things which absorb public attention are also forgotten, Lalaji's great love for Harijans and his equally great services born of

[1] The report has the date-line "Madras, November 16".
[2] In elections to the Legislative Assembly
[3] Lajpat Rai died on November 17, 1928.

that love will be remembered, not only by the millions of Harijans, but by the many more millions of caste Hindus—indeed by the whole of India. Lalaji was a great humanitarian, and his humanitarianism covered the whole of humanity. Each succeeding anniversary should make Lalaji live more truly in our lives than the previous. Death for reformers like Lala Lajpat Rai is mere dissolution of the body. Their work and their ideas do not die with the body. Their power grows with time. We feel it mare, as with the march of time it is seen outside of its setting in the weak flesh. The impermanent in man dies with him. The permanent part of him triumphs over the ashes and appears clearer to us for their removal. Let us cherish Lalaji's memory in that light and let Harijan Hindus and caste Hindus make a fresh resolve in Lalaji's memory to cleanse society of the curse of untouchability—the former by ridding themselves of the defects arising out of their suppression, and the latter by shedding the sin of the feeling of superiority, which belief in natal untouchability implies.

Harijan, 16-11-1934

421. VILLAGE INDUSTRIES

As the author of the Congress resolutions[1] on village industries and as the sole guide of the Association that is being formed for their promotion, it is but meet that I should, as far as possible, share with the public the ideas that are uppermost in my mind regarding these industries and the moral and hygienic uplift that is intimately associated with them.

The idea of forming the Association took definite shape during the Harijan tour as early as when I entered Malabar. A casual talk with a khadi worker showed to me how necessary it was to have a body that would make an honest attempt to return to the villagers what has been cruelly and thoughtlessly snatched away from them by the city-dwellers. The hardest hit among the villagers are the Harijans. They have but a limited choice of the industries that are open to the villagers in general. Therefore, when their industries slip away from their hands, they become like the beasts of burden with whom their lot

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Subjects Committee Meeting, A. I. C. C", 24-10-1934.

is cast. Let the doubting reader peruse Prof. Malkani's article reproduced elsewhere[1] and he will realize the truth of my statement.

But the villagers in general are not much better off today. Bit by bit they are being confined only to the hand-to-mouth business of scratching the earth. Few know today that agriculture in the small and irregular holdings of India is not a paying proposition. The villagers live a lifeless life. Their life is a process of slow starvation. They are burdened with debts. The moneylender lends, because he can do no otherwise. He will lose all if he does not. This system of village lending baffles investigation. our knowledge of it is superficial, in spite of elaborate inquiries.

Extinction of village industries would complete the ruin of the 7,00,000 villages of India.

I have seen in the daily Press criticism of the proposals I have adumbrated. Advice has been given to me that I must look for salvation in the direction of using the powers of nature that the inventive brain of man has brought under subjection. The critics say that water, air, oil and electricity should be fully uti

lized as they are being utilized in the go-ahead West. They say that control over these hidden powers of nature enables every American to have 33 slaves.

Repeat the process in India and I dare say that it will thirty-three times enslave every inhabitant of this land, instead of giving everyone thirty-three slaves.

Mechanization is good when the hands are too few for the work intended to be accomplished. It is an evil when there are more hands than required for the work, as is the case in India. I may not use a plough for digging a few square yards of a plot of land. The problem with us is not how to find leisure for the teeming millions inhabiting our villages. The problem is how to utilize their idle hours, which are equal to the working days of six months in the year. Strange as it may appear, every mill generally is a menace to the villagers. I have not worked out the figures, but I am quite safe in saying that every mill-hand does the work of at least ten labourers doing the same work in their villages. In other words he earns more than he did in his village at the expense of ten fellow-villagers. Thus spinning and weaving

[1] It appeared in *Harijan*, 23-11-1934, under the title "The Story of the Desert of Sind".

mills have deprived the villagers of a substantial means of livelihood. It is no answer in reply to say that they turn out cheaper, better cloth, if they do so at all. For, if they have displaced thousands of workers, the cheapest mill cloth is dearer than the dearest khadi woven in the villages. Coal is not dear for the coal-miner who can use it there and then, nor is khadi dear for the villager who manufactures his own khadi. But if the cloth manufactured in mills displaces village hands, rice mills and flour mills not only displace thousands of poor women workers, but damage the health of the whole population in the bargain. Where people have no objection to taking flesh diet and can afford it, white flour and polished rice may do no harm, but in India, where millions can get no flesh diet even where they have no objection to eating it, it they can get it, it is sinful to deprive them of nutritious and vital elements contained in whole-wheat meal and unpolished rice. It is time medical men and others combined to instruct the people on the danger attendant upon the use of white flour and polished rice.

I have drawn attention to some broad glaring facts to show that the way to take work to the villagers is not through mechanization but that it lies through revival of the industries they have hitherto followed.

Hence the function of the All-India Village Industries Association must, in my opinion, be to encourage the existing industries and to revive, where it is possible and desirable, the dying or dead industries of villages according to the village methods, i.e., the villagers working in their own cottages as they have done from times immemorial. These simple methods can be considerably improved as they have been in hand-ginning, hand-carding, hand-spinning and hand-weaving.

A critic objects that the ancient plan is purely individualistic and can never bring about corporate effort. This view appears to me to be very superficial. Though articles may be manufactured by villagers in their cottages, they can be pooled together and profits divided. The villagers may work under supervision and according to plan. The raw material may be supplied from common stock. If the will to co-operative effort is created, there is surely ample opportunity for co-operation, division of labour, saving of time and efficiency of work. All these things are today being done by the All-India Spinners' Association in over 5,000 villages.

But khadi is the sun of the village solar system. The planets are the various industries which can support khadi in return for the heat and the sustenance they derive from it. Without it, the other industries cannot grow. But during my last tour I discovered that, without the revival of the other industries, khadi could not make further progress. For villagers to be able to occupy their spare time profitably, the village life must be touched at all points. That is what the two Associations are expected to do.

Naturally they can have nothing to do with politics or political parties. The Congress, in my opinion, did well in making both the Associations autonomous and wholly non-political. All parties and all communities can combine to uplift the villages economically, morally and hygienically.

I know that there is a school of thought that does not regard khadi as an economic proposition at all. I hope that they will not be scared by my having mentioned khadi as the centre of village activities. I could not complete the picture of my mind without showing the inter-relation between khadi and the other village industries. Those who do not see it are welcome only to concentrate their effort on the other industries. But this, too, they will be able to do through the new Association, if they appreciate the background I have endeavoured to give in this article.

Harijan, 16-11-1934

422. LETTER TO DR. M. S. KELKAR

November 16, 1934

I have your letter. I have already told you that Satavlekar's[1] letters were destroyed by me because I was not interested in them. You are unnecessarily harsh on Satavlekar. He has nothing personal against you. After all, you went to Aundh because of his interest in you. You can't help a man forming honest opinions although they may be baseless. I would, therefore, advise you strongly to dismiss the matter from your mind and simply concentrate on proving your fitness for the job you have undertaken.

[1] Shripad Damodar Satavlekar

Ramdas had lost weight terribly. I have put him on unfertilized eggs obtained from Coimbatore. Do you know where I can get unfertilized eggs without difficulty? I have some addresses in Ahmedabad and Poona. If there is a nearer place that you know, I would like to get them from that place,

I return the correspondence with the Chief of Aundh.

DR. M. S. KELKAR

C/O J. G. GADRE, ESQ.

BHATWADI, BOMBAY 4

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

423. LETTER TO DAMODAR M. DAMLE

November 16, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I do not remember your thesis on "Damage to Crops by Wild Animals in India',. It must have escaped my attention either because I was travelling when your thesis was received or I was fasting. I understand your different experiments. At the present moment my aim is nothing so high as yours. I have no special knowledge of the methods of growing. rich crops and it would be beyond the scope, at the present moment, of the Association which is in the process of formation. As to the destruction of crops by wild beasts it is essentially a matter for the Government and the legislators. This again falls outside the scope of the Association.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI DAMODAR M. DAMLE, B.A., LL.B.

WUN (BERAR)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

424. LETTER TO S. S. PANDE

November 16, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Scheme or no scheme, if you have understood the seriousness of the resolution[1] and appreciate the method of approach to the work, I would like you to tackle the four things that are already before the public: pounding of rice by the hand, grinding of flour through the village *chakkis* purification and popularization of gur and restoration of better processes of tanning of hides in the villages.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI S. S. PANDE, B.A., LL.B., PLEADER

KHANDWA (C. P.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

425. LETTER TO SUDHIR CHANDRA GHOSH

November 16, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

Did I know anything about your Ashram when I was in Orissa? How long have you been working? Are you in touch with Gopabandhubabu? Who are your workers?

Yours sincerely,

SHRI SUDHIR CHANDRA GHOSH

ARILO SEVASHRAM, VILL. USUMA

FULNAKHARA P. O., CUTTACK DT.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Subjects Committee Meeting, A. I. C. C.", 24-10-1934.

426. LETTER TO DR. B. SUBRAHMANYAM

November 16, 1934

DEAR DOCT0R,

I had expected your letter and it has come., of course, I expect you to do a great deal in the direction of village work. Have you already begun the work of re-introducing the *chakki*, the hand-pounding of rice, the village *kolu* for pressing oil, and such other obviously simple things? You should take a census of the industries of villages served by you and make them busy hives of small industries instead of being full of drones as they have become.

Yours sincerely,

DR. B. SUBRAHMANYAM

HARIJANA SEVASRAMAM

SITHANAGARAM, *via* KOVVUR

WEST GODAVARY DT.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

427. LETTER TO HILDA CASHMORE

November 16, 1934

DEAR SISTER,

I have your undated letter. I shall be delighted to see you and Miss Dorothy Hersey on 4th December next at 3.30 p.m. I hope the time will suit you.

Yours sincerely,

MISS HILDA CASHMOER

FRIENDS CENTRE

ITARSI (C. P.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

428. LETTER TO GOVERNING DIRECTOR, PRINCE PEOPLE & CO.

November 16, 1934

GENTLEMEN,

I thank you for your letter of 11th instant. I would like to know what work you have already done and what you think you can do in respect of introducing the use of *chakki*-ground flour, hand-husked rice and village gur in your own lives and in the villages under your care. I would like also to see the constitution of your company.

Yours sincerely,

GOVERNING DIRECTOR

PRINCE PEOPLE & CO.

DARBHANGA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

429. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

WARDHA,
November 16, 1934

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

I shall be obliged if you would kindly answer the following questions:-

(1) Do you consider that unpolished rice is superior to polished rice from the nutritive standpoint?

(2) If unpolished rice is better than polished rice, is there any difference between unpolished rice turned out from mills and unpolished rice hand-pounded?

(3) Is there any difference in nutritive value between stone-ground whole wheatmeal on the indigenous *chakki* and whole wheatmeal ground in the ordinary mills?

(4) Is *gur* produced in the village *kolus* superior to the sugar manufactured in the sugar mills? And if it is, what are the contents of *gur* which make it more desirable and nutritious as an

article of food than refined sugar manufactured in the sugar mills?

(5) Is oil pressed in the village *kolus* superior to the oil pressed in the oil mills?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

430. LETTER TO RAJARAM R. BHOLE

WARDHA,
November 16, 1934

DEAR RAJARAM,

All people have to wander in the jungle some time or other in their lives. You are, therefore, no exception. Truth will dawn on you if you will patiently persevere. If we were God, we would know the ways of God. But we wisely regard them as inscrutable because of our awful limitations. A drop of water partakes of the nature of the ocean, but it is nothing compared to the ocean. If God may be likened to the ocean, we are infinitely less than ocean drops.

Yours,

BAPU

SHRI RAJARAM R. BHOLE
P.K. T. SANATORIUM
VONTIKOPPAL
MYSORE

From the original: R. R. Bhole Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

431. LETTER TO MANEKLAL AND RADHA KOTHARI

November 16, 1934

CHI. MANEKLAL AND RADHA,

I got the letters from both of you. May the New Year prove prosperous for you. Ramdas has returned here. He can be said to be a little better.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. MANEKLAL
KHIRASRA, *VIA* RAJKOT
KATHIAWAR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

432. LETTER TO. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

November 17, 1934

DEAR BROTHER,

Though our hearts are one we seem to be living in different worlds of thought and action. This knowledge has been oppressing me of late. Just now I have an offer from the Servants of India Branch in Nagpur of full co-operation in the village industries work. I do not know how far this will materialize. But the offer is full-hearted and I shall make the most of it if we agree when the time for execution comes. But I am not sure that such co-operation will have your full approval. I do not know how far the movement for return to the village *chakki* and the rice husking mill and the like appeals to you.

This is merely to share my thoughts with you and to tell you how I long for your co-operation at some point of my many activities. And yet I want nothing from you that does not command the full approval of your reason. You are too true to act otherwise than in accordance with your reason. Your truthfulness is far more precious

for me than your mere co-operation in my activities.
With love.[1]

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, p. 272

433. LETTER TO MANZAR ALI

November 17, 1934

DEAR MANZAR ALI,

My postcard and your letter have crossed each other. Very strange! I never dreamt that you had prompted Sundarlal. Do I not know his effusiveness? His letter gave me the impression that he also offered his services together with yours. So I told him that I have no faith in either of you doing plodding manual work, but that if my fear was proved to be baseless I should be delighted. In reply he wrote saying that he had never any intention of offering his services. He simply wanted to come if it was so required to facilitate your approach. So I wrote to you the postcard which I hope you received. I sent it care of Uma Nehru not knowing your Unao address. If you will do plodding work without being fatigued, I would be delighted to inspan you and if you feel the need to come here to understand what is required you can come. If, however, you have understood the thing, begin operations at once as many have done on reading my statement[2]. In the four things I have suggested I have given an ample preliminary preliminary which, if it was taken up enthusiastically,

[1] In his reply dated November 23, the addressee wrote: "I have sent copies of your letter to a few intimate associates. If their replies indicate any more hopeful lines of co-operation than are now perceptible I shall address you again. To my unaided mind, you appear to be opening the first campaign of an endless and quixotic war against modern civilization. Long ago you proclaimed yourself its sleepless enemy, and now you would, if you could, turn it back on the course it has pursued for several millennia. I reel at the mere thought.

A deep-lying *affinity* calls us together occasionally, but life is heedless and draws us apart with no non-violent hands."

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the press", 8-11-1934.

would put a few crore rupees into the pockets of the villagers without any very great effort or spectacular demonstration.

SHRI MANZAR ALI

DOODH KI KOTHI"

GANGAGHAT, (UNAO DT.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

434. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

November 17, 1934

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

I have your letter. I shall await your further letter or your arrival before I write to Seth Shivratan.

From your letter I infer that Santram did not meet Kamalani at all, and he has sailed with Mirabehn before he could meet Kamalani. I am glad Anand is free.

I have bad news about Gidwani[1]. Gangabehn wrote a pathetic letter. I sent a telegram in reply, and I have now full particulars from Gidwani. There seems to be no danger, but he is bed-ridden.

I hope Kumarappa gave you all the particulars about the proposed Board of the Association

I do hope that the publication of the constitution will now be expedited.

SHRI JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

BOMBAY 6

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Choithram Gidwani

435. LETTER TO J. C. PANDIT

November 17, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am afraid I can render no help.

Yours sincerely,

J. C. PANDIT, B.SC., C.E.

EX-ENGINEER, BAREILLY DT. BOARD

DABBI BAZAR, MOHALLA SARIN, KUCHA ZARGRAN

LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

436. LETTER TO TARA SINGH

November 17, 1934

DEAR MASTER TARA SINGH,

I was delighted to have your letter. I am here till 15th December I hope. The earlier you come the better. Khan Saheb, his brother and his son would be leaving here on the 24th for a brief tour in U. P. They may return about the 4th December. Khan Saheb after staying with me for about four days is likely to go to Bengal.

Yours sincerely,

MASTER TARA SINGH

22 ELPHINSTONE CIRCLE

BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

437. LETTER TO PANCHANAN BASU

November 17, 1934

MY DEAR PANCHANAN,

I was glad to have your letter of 13th November. I expect to hear further from you. of course, I shall take from you all the work-that you can give. I am passing your letter on to Sjt. Kumarappa.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI PANCHANAN BASU

KHADI MANDAL

E 75 COLLEGE STREET MARKET, CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

438. LETTER TO S. M. MUNSHI

November 17, 1934

BHAI MUNSHI,

You have spared no effort. See that you do not fall ill. I hope you did not have to spend much. It will be a great achievement if both win. Your victory[1] seems certain.

I am looking forward to Lilavati's visit.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I should like the constitution to be finalized as soon as possible.

SHRI K. M. MUNSHI, ADVOCATE

VASANTVILAS

RIDGE ROAD, BOMBAY

From Gujarati: C.W. 7561. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

[1] In the election to the Central Legislative Assembly

439. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

November 17, 1934

CHI. SHARMA,

You have the following alternatives:

(1) To live at Nimu's place.

(2) To live at Janakibehn's place.

(3) To live in a room on Jamnalalji's farm.

(4) To live in one of the surrounding villages.

(5) To live with Surendra if he agrees.

(6) To live with Narandas.

(7) To live in Khurja with your brothers.

You can choose from amongst these. Possibly the seventh is the best. And it is the most natural of course. But maybe it is in your best interest to live away from your family. Send the enclosed letter[1] to your brother.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha*, between pp. 116 and 1 17

440. LETTER TO BEHARILAL SHARMA

November 17, 1934

BHAI BEHARILAL,

You have sent Rs. 100 telegraphically to Sharma.[2] I totally disapprove of it. There could have been no difficulty in meeting all his expenses from here and there is none even now. But I do not wish to throw away so much money if you can shoulder the burden without being inconvenienced. I want even more funds from those who can give. Have no worry for Sharma though his case

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] Before leaving Sabarmati for Wardha, Hiralal Sharma had requested his brother to send some money to enable him to go to Khurja.

is undoubtedly a difficult one. But it is all right as he is a sincere man. Tell me, why did you have to send the money telegraphically ?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Give me news of Draupadi and the boys.

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha,* between pp. 118 and 119.

441. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

November 17, 1934

CHI. SHARMA,

You may give your answer[1] tomorrow evening or even later.

Where is the figure '8' that you want to be changed to indicate the month '11'? Whatever it is, you may take it as done.[2]

I have added a little more to the letter to your brother and you may do the rest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha,* facing p. 118

442. LETTER TO H. P. MODI

November 18, 1934

DEAR MR. MODY,

Here is another appeal for help which only mills can render. This time it is from afflicted Assam. The enclosed speaks for itself. You will find a summary of the contents attached to the full statement from Assam. I do hope that blankets will be sent on behalf of the Association.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

H. P. MODY, ESQ.

MILL-OWNERS, ASSOCIATION

BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H. L. Sharma", 17-11-1934.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item in which the month '8, was corrected to '11'.

443. LETTER TO J.. L. GOHEEN

November 18, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I have now received the parcel of eggs for which I thank you. Though you have sent me no bill for the eggs, I shall thank you to tell me at what price they are sold. I shall send the container back as soon as possible.

I have your second letter. Please give my regards to your pupils who, I hope, will be discharged as competent workers. If you will render me a regular bill, I should like you to send me eighteen eggs per week till further instructions. You can make the commencement on the receipt of this.

Yours sincerely,

J. L. GOHEEN, ESQ.
SANGLI INDUSTRIAL AND AGRICULTURAL SCHOOL
AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN MISSION
SANGLI (M. S. M. RLY.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

444. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 18, 1934

CHI. NARANDAS,

Read the accompanying letters and give them to Harilal. Give him from time to time what you think proper.

If you have any comments to offer on the new scheme for village industries, please do so. How are things there?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8423. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

445. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

November 18, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Your ear [causes] worry . . . [1]. Something will have to be thought about it. I do not know how this has happened. I am not unhappy, nor do I worry. I see darkness all around. I shall be satisfied if it disappears. Apart from that, I do not worry about what will happen. Though I have had letters sent to both the doctors, how is it that there has been no reply at all from either?

And now about the Industries Association. . . . So far as I remember, I do not know what you desire at present concerning the buildings you had intended for the Maganlal Memorial [*sic*]. . . . I see that the Memorial . . . consistent with this plan. In every village . . . for at many . . . in Wardha . . . only villages in the area, very much. . . . The air also is good. Geographically it is the centre of India. It has the facility of a railway line. From this point of view, I like Wardha. Your being here also is a temptation. I do not wish to involve you in this. All the same, I am acting on the assumption that all of you will be here. Think over the matter from this point of view and let me know how you feel.

There is a wire from Rameshwar regarding Ghani. . . .

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

My letters . . . .

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 142

[1] Omissions in this letter are as in the source.

446. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

November 18, 1939

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I see from your three letters that you have not got a clear picture of the Village Industries Association in your mind. The idea behind it is that we should exclusively buy from villages whatever articles they can produce. We can thereby repay a little of the debt that we owe to them. Whether or not we shall be able to do this is another matter. We need not proceed on the supposition that we shall not. What was started by only six or seven of us has now spread all over the country. If it is our duty to do what I am suggesting, then all of us should use pens, ink, knives, soap, jaggery and sugar manufactured in villages and flour and rice ground or milled in villages. I have mentioned these things only as examples. Maybe we shall not carry out this idea in respect of many of the things enumerated; if, however, we believe that it is our moral duty to use such articles, we shall be putting crores of rupees into the pockets of villagers and the importance of villages will increase. only then shall we be able to establish the swaraj of our dreams, devoted to the welfare of villages, and only then will it be non-violent swaraj. All other things can be deduced from this.

The Association can function only if it gets five or six full-time workers. We are trying to attract for it some Congress-minded persons who are not regular Congressmen. of course some of the workers will have to be Congressmen. I am trying to persuade Jairamdas, hoping that Rajendrababu and you will be able to spare him and that he will agree to be released. If he cannot do this work, he will be of no service. I am discussing the same problem with Khan Saheb. I don't know what Jalbhai's attitude will be. If he refuses, I intend to invite Khurshed. Such at any rate are my dreams. I am indifferent whether or not they are realized. They help to preserve my peace of mind. If you are now free please come over. The treatment of your nose must get priority, of course. How many workers from Gujarat may I engage in this work? Raojibhai has written to me and expressed his willingness. I have replied to him saying that, even if he can be free, he can come only if permitted by you.

We shall also have to think about the headquarters.

The election results were really wonderful.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 141-2

447. NOTE TO H. L. SHARMA

[*November 18, 1934*][1]

CHI. SHARMA,

You should put off going today.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha,* fazing p. 120

448. NOTE TO H. L. SHARMA

[After *November 18, 1934*][3]

I am not angry.[4] So long as I consider you to be my son it is a sin to be angry with you. of course, I was unhappy and realized my responsibility.

As is my wont, [I hold that] for me your case[5] is as important as the question of swaraj.

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha,* between pp. 118 and 119

[1] As indicated by the addressee

[2] The addressee had sought Gandhiji's permission to leave for Khurja.

[3] This was written after the preceding item.

[4] The addressee had asked his brother for money which had made Gandhiji unhappy. *Vide* "Letter to Beharilal Sharma", 17-11-1934.

[5] The addressee had asked what Gandhiji meant by 'case'; *vide* "Letter to Beharilal Sharma" 17-11-1934.

449. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

November 19, 1934

MY DEAR RAJBHOJ,

I have your letter. I have nothing more to add to what I have already written to you. I cannot advise you to enter the Poona Municipality. I repeat what I have told you that you- should do some constructive work yourself and with that end in view master a trade.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI P. N. RAJBHOJ

207 GHORPADE PETH

POONA 2

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

450. LETTER TO K. S. VENKATARAMANI

November 19, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. of course, I had your book *Kandar— the Patriot* in Yeravda. But there was no copy here. All the books received in Yeravda went to the Ahmedabad Municipality. I remember having read several chapters of the book. Is it not the proper thing for you to translate your own convincing argument into action?

Yours sincerely,

SHRI K. S. VENKATARAMANI, M. A., B. L.

ADVOCATE, SANKARAPURAM

MYLAPORE, MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

451. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

November 19, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letter about your birthday. You need fear no ill fortune in your life. You are destined to live long and do much service. I asked Radhakisan and learnt from him about a less expensive place as an alternative to the garden at Wardha[1]. I think it will do.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. JAMNALAL BAJAJ

BIRLA HOUSE, MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD

MALABAR HILL, BOMBAY 6

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 142

452. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

November 19, 1934

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I got your letter. The *pipal* tree will get cut down when the right time arrives. You should go on with your work. Vinoba has carefully gone through the article you sent me. I of course had read it. All of us feel that your figures are exaggerated. You state that foreign cloth costs four *annas* a yard, swadeshi three *annas* a yard and that khadi is even cheaper than that. How can that be? Think over this. Moreover, you say that khadi is more durable. Is this true? Also, is it true that foreign cloth is less durable than the swadeshi mill-cloth? Think over all this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32996

[1] Maganwadi

453. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

November 19, 1934

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter.

How can I say what I need? Whenever there is a question of a hundred or two or a thousand I ask you for it. But by taking up the huge work of village industries I have increased my own commitments. Thus I can only say that you may give me whatever is left after making other essential donations.

The formation of a board for village industries is presenting some difficulties. I want the board to be very small, to consist of a minimum of three members and a maximum of ten. I want men who have full faith in its aims and can devote more or less their full time to it. And this precisely is giving me some trouble. Have you any ideas in this respect ?

Do you know Rajkumari Amrit Kaur?

I have for a long time desired to go and live in Utmanzai, the village of Khan Saheb. I have sent a letter to Delhi on Thursday.[1] I have given the reason for a visit to the Frontier Province and have asked if there is any objection to my going there. Let us see what reply I get.

When is the operation to take place?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C. W. 8001. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

454. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

November 19, 1934

BHAI RAJENDRA BABU,

Your letter. If you can get away from there, do come here without going anywhere else. The weather is fine and you will have rest and of course peace.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Viceroy", 15-11-1934.

The veracity of Agatha Harrison's statement can be determined only when the Report[1] comes in. Satyamurti has wired that the Working Committee should meet somewhere for this very object. It might be good to announce the meeting just now. We too will of course have to say something but I cannot participate in it as I would not like to say anything publicly.

I am sending a wire just now about your coming.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

A. I. C. C. File No. 3-a 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

455. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

November 20, 1934

BHAI MAVALANKAR,

You cannot be permitted to engage yourself exclusively in minting money. I hope you will agree to shoulder the burden of the Harijan Ashram and the dairy. We must find the expenses of the Harijan Ashram and of Harijan work in Gujarat from Gujarat itself. I am sure in my mind that the burden of begging this sum should not have to be borne by Sardar. He will contribute something voluntarily, but refuses to put himself to trouble on that account. My purpose in inviting you, Ranchhodlal and Shankerlal is that either all of you should pay the expenses or beg for them. I hope you will not want me to beg from outside Gujarat. And, besides, how far can I be depended upon? Before long you and I will know where I am. Please, therefore, spare some time from the business of money-making and give a little of it to Harijan work and a little to the service of the cow. If, however, my guess is wrong and if at present you cannot spare a single moment for philanthropic work from the task of earning money to pay off your debt, in case you are in debt, tell me frankly and I will not then pester you. I have now reached my 66th year making people work beyond their capacity. How can the old hardened habit leave completely, although I have now grown somewhat indifferent ? I am leaving the Congress, yielding to the feeling that no one should work

[1] 2 of the Joint Parliamentary Committee

beyond his capacity but I have not yet parted company from my personal co-workers. To achieve this I must stop wielding my pen and resort to silence or I must work only through our journals. But I am not yet powerful enough to work in this manner. I have not yet completely got over my infatuation, and so I am driven to write letters such as this. But I warn you not to have any false sense of shame on my account. I shall be content if you do whatever you can as a matter of dharma. I have written, much to the same effect, to Ranchhodlal and Shankerlal.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N.

456. LETTER TO S. SATYAMURTI

[Before *November 21, 1934*][1]

Your suggestion[2] appeals to me, but am I now any good as an adviser in these matters? My mind is shunted off these things. You have Sjt. Rajagopalachariar nearby. Then you have the President, and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel who is as good. Then, of course, Dr. Ansari too is there. Don't misunderstand. I attach great importance to these. But I am not a man just now. Do save me from having to tax my mind about such political affairs.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-11-1934

457. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

[Before *November 21, 1934*][3]

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Mirabehn will land in Bombay on Wednesday. Please make what arrangements you think proper for her reception. And in any case send her off on the same day. If you can come with her, please do so. The problem of constituting the Board has still not been solved.

[1] The report has the date-line "Madras, November 21".

[2] The addressee, according to the report, had suggested in a telegram that an early meeting of the Congress members of the Assembly be called to consider prompt action on the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report. *Vide* also "Letter to Rajendra Prasad", 19-11-1934.

[3] The source has the date November *29,* 1934 but Mirabehn landed in Bombay on November 21, 1934.

Selection of the President is presenting serious difficulties. As regards the office, I am inclined towards Wardha—I mean the head office. There will have to be many other centres, of course, one for each province or district or even taluk. This will depend on how the work progresses. For Gujarat, the decision will also depend on how far you can go along with the idea. But this when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, P. 142

458. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 21, 1934

DEAR SISTER,

I have your very frank and precise letter. I regret to know that you were in frail health. I want a band of persons who would devote themselves and their time purely to the work, move about and would go to the villages and try progressively to supply their own needs through the villages unlike as we do now. I see that I must not expect these things from you and must therefore deny myself the privilege of your close association. Nevertheless, I will avail myself of your offer to do whatever you can in the Punjab. Do you keep yourself in touch with what is being written in the pages of *Harijan?* If you do not, please let me know and I shall see that you are supplied with copies.

I fear I shall not be in Karachi at the time of your conference[1]. I shall however hope that having come all the way from London Dr. Maude Royden will not leave without seeing me but I wish you could come with her.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: COW. 3514. Courtesy: Emirate Chair. Also G. N. 6323

[1] All-India Women's Conference

459. LETTER TO G. NARASIMHACHARI

November 21, 1934

MY DEAR NARASIMHACHARI,

I have your letter. Students can help by visiting villages in their neighbourhood and studying the industries of those villages, by doing sanitation work themselves, by organizing the industries which they can easily handle, and by using such articles as are manufactured in their villages in the place of articles turned out in cities.

I cannot contemplate degeneration prevailing in the Congress ranks, nor have I the slightest feeling that, if it sets in, I can prevent it.

With reference to your remark on the Norway paper for typing, it was inevitable. When you want multiple copies, we have nothing suitable to be had in the swadeshi line. Therefore, so far as typing is concerned, I freely take the paper that is to be usually had. For writing and other purposes nothing but swadeshi paper is being used, and I am now arranging to get hand-made paper.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

460. LETTER TO G. MUKERJI

November 21, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

You should follow what appears in the Press from time to time and guide yourself accordingly. I would not trouble you to come here, at least for the time being.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI G. MUKERJI, M.SC.

BANSBERIA P. O.

HOOGHLY DT.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

461. LETTER TO BENODE PAUL

November 21, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

The duty of village workers will be to study the industries of the villages they cover and help the villagers to revive or introduce such industries that would utilize their idle hours and put a few coppers in their pockets. of course, part-time workers will be quite welcome, and those who cannot contribute by way of work will contribute cash wherever they can.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI BENODE PAUL

15 BRAJANATH MITTER LANE

CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

462. LETTER TO SATISH MITTER

November 21, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your warm letter and a copy of your book which, I know, I shall read with interest and profit. If you have anything new in the supplement of your book, you will please pass it on to me. I see you have missed the most important conchshell bangles of Bengal.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI SATISH MITTER

2 LOUDON STREET

CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

463. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 21, 1934

CHI. NARANDAS,

I hope you have returned after inspecting the dairy. A letter for Harilal is enclosed.[1] Read it and pass it on to him. Give him a room in the school if you can spare one. Give him enough to meet his needs. We cannot pay more than Rs. 50 a month just now. By and by we want to accustom him to living within even less than that. It is not necessary that he should save anything for repaying his debts. If he overcomes his weakness of mind and you feel that he can be trusted, we will pay off his debts. But that will be after some time. What has been done about his eyes and teeth?

N.[2] has turned out to be a worthless woman. She was begging for help from all sorts of people in Bombay. V She had set herself up as a public worker. I didn't like her ways at all. L.[3] has done the same. There was nothing but show in the whole thing. L.'s aspirations are quite high. But she is unsteady and has a good measure of pride too. She lacks strength of mind to keep her word. She is always full of plans. Now she is eager to stay on here for a month or so. I have categorically refused my consent. She will leave this place on the 7th at the latest and go to Bombay. I shall be here for this month at any rate. I don't know what will happen after that.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8424. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] The letter is not available.

[2] The names have been omitted.

[3] *ibid.*

464. LETTER TO ASAF ALI[1]

[Before *November 22, 1934*][2]

MY DEAR ASAF ALI,

God is great. I can trace nothing but the hand of God in all these successes. May we deserve them! How I-wish your success will lead to heart unity between the two brothers—Hindu and Mussalman.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Hindustan Times, 23-11-1934

465. LETTER TO M. V. ABHYANKAR[3]

[Before *November 22, 1934*]

MY DEAR ABHYANKAR,

Your precious wire. The Congress is not dead. Your trial commences now. You must keep yourself in a fit condition.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Hitavada, 22-11-1934

466. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

November 22, 1934

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I sent you a letter some days ago simply inquiring about your health. Mummy who came in yesterday tells me you do not get letters except what is sent in Kamala's packet. I should like to know the rules regulating your correspondence. Please let me know how you are. doing and how you are passing your time.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1934. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also A *Bunch of old Letters,* p. 119

[1] The addressee had been elected to the Assembly from the Delhi Joint Constituency on the Congress ticket.

[2] The letter was released to the Press at Delhi on Thursday, November 22, 1934.

[3] The addressee had been elected to the Assembly.

467. LETTER TO B. SHIVA RAO

November 22, 1934

MY DEAR SHIVA RAO,

I have your letter and a copy of the *Madras Mail.* I will return the paper to you after I have read it. I think you know the scope of the Association and the v method of achieving its object. Would you care to serve on the Central Board? If you will, have you got a living belief in the formula underlying the object, namely, that we must go to the villages in search of all the articles of daily use, and not make villages look to the cities for the supply of such articles? That is to say, do you recognize the necessity, so far as it is possible, of eliminating the city factories and mills which are fast displacing the village industries, and supplying the daily wants of the villagers thereby confining 90 per cent of the population of India to bare agriculture? Do you consider the realization of this object worthy of your making it the main business of your life, and will you give the Board most of your time? If you will, I would like you to serve on the Board. The idea that we are evolving is to make the Board as small as possible, consistent with its efficient working, and to make it consist of practically whole-timers. Will you please wire your reply to this letter?

SHRI B. SHIVA RAO

MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

468. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

November 22, 1934

MY DEAR AGATHA,

It was quite like you to have put your whole soul into sending little Mehrtaj to Brindisi.[1] It was a fine contribution to Indo-British

[1] At the top of the letter the addressee has noted: "The Frontier Gandhi's daughter Mehrtaj was in London with her aunt. She was to travel from Brindisi with Mirabehn. . . . Mehrtaj lost her passport just before she was due to sail. I went to the India office and asked their swift help in securing another one." (G.N. 1481)

understanding. The Khan Brothers are a rare type of humanity. The more I see them, the more I love them. And inasmuch [as] you have done this little and yet great thing for them, you have done it for all India. That simple bit of service is its own reward. Thanks or any outward expression is a poor substitute. Mira is working well and so is her ward.

Well, the preliminary acknowledgement from Delhi has come.[1] If there is any development I shall use the cable.

About the J[oint] Gommittee's report, you must have seen my opinion.[2] One who has retired from Congress can have no opinion for public consumption. You do not need my private opinion.

I am coming closer to Amrit Kaur.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1481

469. LETTER TO S. RADHAKRISHNAN

November 22, 1934

DEAR SIR RADHAKRISHNAN,

I thank you for your letter and the copy of your Convocation address to the Allahabad University. I have read in the papers your address containing your generous reference to myself.

I had your last letter as also a copy of *Contemporary British Philosophy*. I had hoped to be able to send you something in acknowledgment of your letter and to return your book. But I have not had a moment to spare. Fortunately you have given me ample time, and I expect to send you something by that date.

PROF. SIR S. RADHAKRISHNAN

ANDHRA UNIVERSITY

WALTAIR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Viceroy", 15-11-1934.

[2] *Vide* "Interview to Associated Press", 22-11-1934.

470. LETTER TO SADULLAH KHAN

November 22, 1934

MY DEAR SADULLAH KHAN,

I have your letter. I am looking forward to receiving and testing the *gur* sent by you.

You have all worked wonders in connection with Dr. Khan Saheb's election.

SHRI SADULLAH KHAN
DR. KHAN SAHEB'S ELECTION BOARD OFFICE
QISSAKHANI BAZAR, PESHAWAR CITY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

471. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

November 22, 1934

I haven't read the J. P. C. Report.[1] I hope to be able to read that at an early date, but I don't propose to make any public reference to it.

Having retired from the Congress, it would ill become of me to pronounce any opinion upon it at the present juncture. My opinion on the White Paper is well known and I have seen nothing to change it. Beyond this I may not go.

The Hindustan Times, 23-11-1934

472. IN THE THROES OF BIRTH

The All-India Village Industries Association takes a long time to be born. All the consolation I can give the public is that all the available time at the disposal of J. C. Kumarappa and myself is being devoted to the task. Three questions confront us: location of the Central Office, composition of the Central Board and agencies.

[1] The Joint Parliamentary Committee Report was released to the Press on November 22, 1934.

Though all these questions worry us, that of the composition of the Board causes the greatest trouble. The task is tremendous. The goal is great. Rejuvenation of villages in the face of the current fashion of highly developed mechanization and centralization is no easy job. We have, therefore, come to the conclusion that the Board must be composed of only a few earnest persons who have a living faith in the programme of the Association, who have an aptitude for the task and who will give the Board much, if not the whole, of their time. We are trying to find persons, irrespective of parties, who will shoulder the burden.

So far as branches are concerned, we have tentatively come to the conclusion that the districts should be the units directly responsible for the Central Board. Since the British official districts are not all equal in area or population, we will not hesitate to subdivide them where necessary. The predominant consideration will be decentralization and creation of a living touch with the villagers. There will be direct connection with the States wherever they will permit it. We want to serve all the villages of geographical India.

There is difficulty, too, regarding choice of the Central office. We would gladly establish it in a village, if that is possible. But our choice is limited by two considerations. We do not want to invest the meagre funds, that have been promised or have already come, in land and brick and mortar. We have, therefore; to confine our selection to such places where we can get the required accommodation for the asking. The second limitation is that the Central office should be near the main line of the railways and should be easily accessible from all the parts of India. But let me not anticipate events. I have shared enough with the public to enable those who will to guide us with advice. We invite the prayers of all who are in sympathy with our difficult mission.

Harijan, 23-11-l934

473. VILLAGE INDUSTRIES IN GUNTUR

Sjt. Sitarama Sastry of Vinaya Ashram, Repalle, Guntur District, Andhradesha, in offering the services unreservedly of the whole of his Ashram to the All India Village Industries Association, says:

> The following items of work suggest themselves to me and I commend them to you. (I) Shoe-making, (2) hand-ginning of seed cotton, (3)

preparation of jaggery from the juice of palmyra tree, (4) improved pottery, (5) hand-made paper, (6) stone-dressing, (7) hand-made groundnut kernels, (8) extracting oil and other products from the outer rinds of oranges, (9). preservation of palmyra fruits.

The second item will also help in the khadi industry; the third will help in the solution of the drink problem. Palmyras are grown in large numbers in this district, and the ripe fruit of these trees has been analysed and found to contain valuable elements of food. oranges are also grown on a large scale in this district and are cheap. The outer rind is thrown away as useless,. but it is really useful from the commercial point of view. It contains an inflammable oil and is also sold in the market as orange peel. Kondaveedu is a village in this district which has long been famous for hand-paper. The District Congress Committee tried to revive this industry in 1921 , but the attempt was given up, owing to the indifference of the workmen. A special stone is available in Palnad which is locally dressed and is used for paper weights, for flooring and walls and table slabs. It is ordinarily called Palnad marble. Hand-made groundnut kernels are sold in the South and are cheaper than machine-made kernels. Groundnut crop is raised in several parts of the district. Mr. T. Ramaswamy Gupta of Bezwada, a *vakil* who gave up his profession for spiritual *sadhana, is* responsible for improved pottery, and the earthenware prepared under his directions are far superior to the articles made by the country potter!

This is not the only or the first offer. It is a matter of great joy to me that many such offers have been received from almost all the parts of India. This happens to be the latest and contains the information which other workers would value. I would recommend all the workers who are offering services to commence work without waiting for directions. The idea behind the village industries scheme is that we should look to the villages for the supply of our daily needs and that, when we find that some needs are not so supplied, we should see whether with a little trouble and organization they cannot be profitably supplied by the villagers. In estimating the profit, we should think of the villager, not of ourselves. It may be that in the initial stages, we might have to pay a little more than the ordinary price and get an inferior article in the bargain. Things will improve, if we will interest ourselves in the supplier of our needs and insist on his doing better and take the trouble of helping to do better.

Harijan, 23-11-1934

474. LETTER TO M. VISVESVARAYYA[1]

November 23, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your prompt reply. I see that we hold perhaps diametrically opposite views. My conviction based upon extensive experience of village life is that in India at any rate for generations to come, we shall not be able to make much use of mechanical power for salving the problem of ever-growing poverty of the masses. We are too many and we have so many idle hours at our disposal that it would be suicidal to make use of mechanical power and allow human power to run to waste. The question of leisure after toil comes into being when people learn the art of making effective use of their waste hours. Such being my view the extract that you have sent me from Stalin has no appeal for me at all. The more expressive extract from Lenin makes matters worse for me. It is like much cry and little wool. I could be no party to engaging the villagers in producing army machinery and army stores. If India has no desire to take part in the gory exploitation of unmechanized regions of the earth, she has no need to fear aggression from foreign countries. My dream may remain wholly unrealized and India may become a willing or unwilling partner in the sin of exploitation. Nevertheless I would use the whole of the power that God may vouchsafe to me in stemming the onrush of the violent current. I should take delight in perishing in the attempt.

In spite of the strength of my conviction, I entertain great regard for your fine abilities and love of the country, and that shall be unabated whether I have the good fortune to secure your co-operation or face your honest opposition.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR M. VISVESVARAYYA, K. C. I. E.

46 F WARDEN ROAD

BOMBAY

From a photostat: C.W. 9726. Courtesy: Government of Mysore

[1] This was displayed at the Mysore Pavilion of the Gandhi-Darshan Exhibition held in New Delhi in 1969-70.

475. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 23, 1934

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I have gone through your draft proposal for the training of social service workers. I am inclined to think that the District Boards cannot open the centres you contemplate without the permission of the Government. But that is a legal point on which I cannot write with any confidence. I have, however, a deeper objection to your scheme. District Boards as they are constituted in India have no interest in things of permanent value such as you have proposed. Their very constitution perhaps disables them for taking such interest. What you contemplate is pioneer work. It is essentially meant for reformers. Therefore it has got to be taken up by private agencies, and when they make of such training centres a success? the thing becomes easy for District Boards and the like to take up. If I have understood your object correctly, you want to rejuvenate the villages. The trend is in the opposite direction. Hence neither District Boards nor the Government as such will handle the thing in the manner you and I would have them do. I wish we could meet early.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 3515. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6324

476. LETTER TO C. S. MASEKAR

November 23, 1934

MY DEAR MASEKAR,

I thank you for your letter. The Village Industries Association will not be concerned exclusively with the industries of the depressed classes, but will be concerned with the industries of the villages as a whole. Naturally [the] depressed classes will figure prominently in its scheme; but that will figure among the villagers who have been exploited by the city people. The scheme is still in process of formation. If you have any advice to give, I shall appreciate it. No one will be involved in or committed to any political movement. People belonging to different political schools will be welcome as helpers or

advisers or as associates provided that they fall in with the central idea of encouraging village industries through their own act and propaganda to the exclusion of corresponding mechanized industries, whether in India or outside.

I hope that this answers your questions fully.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI C. S. MASEKAR
HON. SECRETARY
THE GUJARAT DEPRESSED CLASSES ASSOCIATION
31 LAMINGTON ROAD, BOMBAY 7

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

477. LETTER TO DURGABAI JOSHI

November 23, 1934

DEAR DURGABAI,

I see I have put my feet into it. I should have written to you directly. Then there would have been no misunderstanding. But as I knew that you enjoyed intimate relatiions with Jamnalalji and as I was overwhelmed, as I am still, with work, I felt that I was safe in asking Radhakisan to write to you, not at all officially but as a fellow-worker in the cause. But you ave my unreserved apology for unconsciously departing form the proper procedure. My approach to uyou is one more illustration of short-ut being the longest in the end. You will now please excuse me. I understand you explanation and I am happly to be able to inform you that the young man who was reported to have lost his one full year after all did not do so. Fortunately, at the same time that I asked Radhakisan to write you I sent an inquiry to the Secretary of the local Sangh of Vile Parle. He saw the young man and satisfied himself that by a stroke of good fortune, what might have been a loss of one year was averted. All is well that ends well. Therefore I would like you to dismiss from your mind my seeming impertinence.

Yours sincerely

SMT. DURBAGABI JOSHI
BERAR PROVINCIAL HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH
AKOLA (BERAR)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

478. LETTER TO M. S. KELKAR

November 23, 1934

I have your letter. If you know the comparison between milk and eggs, I would like you to inform me about it. When you administer eggs, what is the mode? If I remember right, in the case of Manu you used to dilute the contents of raw eggs with water. What is the effect of eggs on the system? Are they too heating, and what is the quantity?

I am afraid the Harijan Sevak Sangh would not donate Rs. 500 to you.

The paragraph about Satavlekar does not carry weight. Has he any reason for damaging you?

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

479. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

November 23, 1934

MY DEAR VENKATAPPAYYA,

The oranges sent by Mr. Jangiah have already arrived. Please give him many thanks for the parcel. I shall gladly receive fruit from his garden whenever he feels inclined to send it.: As you know, we are here a big family and we can do justice to fruit whenever it comes our way.

Yes, the Assembly elections have been a perfect revelation. The South has easily topped the list with its 100 per cent victories and overwhelming majorities. It is a further demonstration of the unfailing victory of Truth and sacrifice.

I hope you and yours are keeping well.

Since dictating this, I have learnt that. what you call oranges are not oranges but sour limes. These are not of so much value as sweet oranges.

Yours,

BAPU

SHRI KODNA VENKATAPPAYYA
GUNTUR (M.S. M. RLY.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

480. LETTER TO G. D. KULKARNI

November 23, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It seems to me to be self-contradictory. You first of all want me to push further my programme of self control and you want me at the same time to be committed to self-indulgence. Nothing that I have as yet seen has moved me from the view that birth-control methods as at present adopted must ultimately lead to degeneration and inertia. Though I have a very great regard for Upton Sinclair and his philosophy of life I dread his unabashed encouragement of birth-control methods.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI G. D. KULKARNI

HONORARY ORGANIZER

BIRTH-CONTROL LEAGUE, POONA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

481. LETTER TO EASTERN STEAM NAVIGATION CO. LTD.

November 23, 1934

GENTLEMEN,

I am now able to tell you that the forty-two packages of dates sent by goods train were safely received day before yesterday.

Yours sincerely,

THE EASTERN STEAM NAVIGATION CO., LTD.

24 MANGALORE STREET

FORT, BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

482. LETTER TO M. G. DATAR

November 23, 1934

DEAR DATARJI,

Jamnalalji has arrived earlier than was expected. He is most anxious that he should be left undisturbed between the 26th and 1st December as he will be having numerous guests during those days. He wants me not to entertain anybody during those days. Therefore you should either come here before the 26th or after the 1st December.

Yours sincerely,

M. G. DATAR

TILAK VIDYALAYA

NAGPUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

483. LETTER TO D. N. SARMAH

November 23, 1934

MY DEAR SARMAH,

I have your letter. It would be a great thing if you can remove the indebtedness of sweeper families.

The judgment you have sent me in the matter of a sweeper defendant is very interesting.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI D. N. SARMAH

SECRETARY, H. S. S.

JORHAT, ASSAM

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

484. LETTER TO SIR ROBERT MCCARRISON

November 23, 1934

DEAR MAJOR-GENERAL,

I thank you for your letter of 20th instant. As soon as the scheme of the Association is complete a copy shall certainly be sent to you.

I thank you for allowing your name to appear among the advisers of the Association.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

485. LETTER TO PIERRE CERESOLE

November 23, 1934

DEAR CERESOLE,

Enclosed please find Mrs. Emma Harker's letter. She is an elderly widow. She is anxious to do some work. She has her own means. Therefore she will pay her way. Can you take her in as a worker? of course, so far as I can judge, she won't be able to take up the spade and work as a labourer pure and simple.[1] But you shall judge.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

PIERRE CERESOLE, ESQ.

PATNA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Emma Harker", 19-9-1934.

486. LETTER TO EMMA HARKER

November 23, 1934

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I am passing it on to Pierre Ceresole. I will let you have his answer. Copy of my letter[1] to him herewith.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

487. LETTER TO AN ENGLISHMAN

November 23, 1934

You have misunderstood my retirement from the Congress. I have not left it in disgust. Congressmen as individuals are both good and bad. But Congress is uniformly good. God's creatures are both good and bad. Is God therefore less good? I have retired to give it greater strength. I had become a dead weight. Have you ever anywhere seen the wonders it has worked during the elections with the least amount of expenses ? No, in this matter, your prejudice had got the better of your judgment. Remember that Rajendra Prasad, Vallabhbhai, Rajagopalachari, Ansari, Mahadev, and many others, of whom humanity may be proud, are in it, of it, and would die for it.

Incidents of Gandhiji's Life, pp. 324-5

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

488. LETTER TO BALIBEHN M. ADALAJA

November 23, 1934

CHI. BALI[1] ,

I have a letter from you after a long time. When it just seemed possible, against all hope, that Harilal had turned over a new leaf, I didn't think it wise to write to you. I thought that on no account should there be unpleasantness. Why did you take that to mean that you were not a daughter to me? Did you forget that, though Harilal was my son, I did not yield to him for years? But since you have been embittered in many ways, I can understand your feeling hurt by any small thing that somebody may do. Let Harilal live alone and learn from experience.

What shall I say about Kamu[2]? She has suffered much. Fate has not been kind to either of you. You should, therefore, learn the art of finding happiness in suffering. That can be done only by constant repetition of the Lord's name.

Do you have any proposal in view for Manu[3]? I myself am in no hurry of course.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1535. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

489. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

November 23, 1934

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

Do not take it to heart.

I would have sent you my congratulations if you had won. I send them even now, even though you have been defeated. "It is a blessing that the net has snapped, Shri Gopal has now come to me

[1] Harilal Gandhi's wife's sister
[2] Kumibehn Tulsidas Maniar, addressee's sister
[3] Harilal Gandhi's daughter, later married to Surendra Mashruwala

unsought." You have escaped from the net. Now devote your time to earning a little money by honest means. Improve your health. Your coming to the help at a critical time was in itself your victory.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7562. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

490. LETTER TO LILAVATI MUNSHI

November 23, 1934

CHI. LILAVATI,

Remember, no weakness. Labour is its own reward. Victory or defeat is a matter of chance, and very often he who loses wins and he who wins loses. I completely forgot to write to Gosibehn. I am writing now.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7562. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

491. LETTER TO GOSIBEHN CAPTAIN[3]

November 24, 1934

Lilavati was here for two, three days. She discussed village work very thoroughly. She seems to be deeply interested in it. She left on my mind the impression that she would like to work with you and other sisters. Most probably she would talk to you and try to gather together all those who might be interested in the village work. I would like you all sisters to try to produce a harmonious blending if it is at all possible. You know best what to do and how to do it.

Jamnalalji was telling me that Perin[4] was suffering from cold and cough. She ought to give herself rest and get rid of the cough and cold. even if it is to be by going to Panchgani.

SHRI GOSIBEHN CAPTAIN
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee had agreed to contest the election when K. F. Nariman withdrew-his candidature at the last minute.

[2] *Vide* the following item.

[3] Granddaughter of Dadabhai Naoroji

[4] Addressee's sister

492. LETTER TO KIRLOSKAR BROTHERS

November 24, 1934

GENTLEMEN,

You offered to send your machine with Sjt. Kale. I then discountenanced you from sending the machine and Sjt. Kale. But I have been pressed by friends to test the machine myself and under Kale's observation. If, therefore, your offer abides, I would like you to send one machine for me to test. I would also like someone who is an expert in village tools to accompany Sjt. Kale unless the latter is able to attend to such tools himself. I would like to suggest some improvements. If you send the machine and mechanic both should be here as early as possible after the 1st December. 2nd December would be the most suitable day for me.

Yours sincerely,

MESSRS KIRLOSKAR BROTHERS

KIRLOSKARWADI

(SATARA DT.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

493. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

November 25, 1934

CHI. DEVDAS,

Your letters are few and mine almost nil.

I am not sure when I shall read Malkani's articles. You should not- entrust such work to me. Maybe, my capacity to work has decreased or the burden of work has increased. Whatever it is, I Sam writing this after getting up at 2.15 in the morning. I daily get up at this hour and start work. I might be going to sleep at about 9 o' clock.

I do wish to go over there but my going depends upon. the developments in Uttambhai's case. Soon many people will gather here. My work regarding the Association is moving slowly. There is a 99 % possibility of Wardha becoming the headquarters. Vallabh

bhai is arriving; so also Raja. The matter will be decided after their arrival.

Ramdas is recovering-gradually. Let us hope he gets back his health. Ba keeps him company by staying with him. He is at Jamnalalji's bungalow. It may be said that I am treating him; but in fact he is treating himself. He has started taking eggs. They are unfertilized and therefore there is nothing wrong in taking them. I receive letters from Harilal. At present I am meeting his expenses. He is holding out great hopes and I too am hoping. You might be receiving letters from Kanti. You [should write to] Harilal and Ramdas. . . .[1]

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

494. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

November 25, 1934

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

I have both your letters, for Ba and for me. This time again you have been very late. You should write at least once a month. What is the cost of the Nepali Paper? We are all well. Does *Harijan* reach you intact?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6546

495. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS [2]

November 26, 1934

During the Harijan tour I discovered that the salt concession, which was part of the Irwin-Gandhi Pact, was not being availed of by the: people. I observed also how much poor people suffered because of want of salt, although it was lying in front of them in areas adjoining the sea. In Mangalore, the fishermen brought the thing prominently to my notice. I thereupon entered into correspondence with Government as early as last March. The then Finance Member, Sir George Schuster, promptly replied to my query, and I discovered

[1] The letter is incomplete.

[2] This appeared under the title "Free Salt for the Salt of the Earth".

to my joy that the clause had not suffered wreck. I ought to have published the correspondence between Sir George Schuster and myself much earlier than I am now doing. I need not go into the causes for this delay. I now publish the correspondence, together with the clause and the communique[1] based upon it and setting forth the conditions of operating the clause. When the Pact was published, in commenting upon it, I had described this as the humanitarian part of the document. It was the humanitarian appeal that had found ready response from Lord Irwin. Those who now avail themselves of the concession will bear this fact in mind and will, therefore, refrain from making any commercial use of the concession, either directly or indirectly, and work it strictly within the four corners of the communique. All those Congressmen and others who are interested in villagers concerned making full use of the concession will bear in mind the list of areas from which concession for free manufacture and collection of salt has been withdrawn. The workers will also bear in mind that it is open to all concerned to make application to the local officers for the restoration of the concession. In no case should the concession be worked without sanction being previously obtained.

Harijan, 30-11-1934

496. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 26, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

Matriculates and others should labour with their hands and earn an honest livelihood.

A student should refuse to marry and brave all difficulties till he has the urge for marriage.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C. W. 11071. Courtesy: Anand T. Hingorani

[1] Not reproduced here. For letters to Sir George Schuster dated March 28 and April 14, 1934. For the text of clause 20 and the communique, *vide* "Provisional settlement", 12-3-1931 and "Salt", 28-5-1931.

497. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 26, 1934

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. The money belonging to the Cow-protection Society which has been spent may be taken as lost. It will not be proper now to ask for it. Ambalalbhai's attitude has changed. If we can[not] get that amount from any source, I suppose the loss will have to be made good from the funds of the Cow-protection Society. Let us see now what Mavalankar and Ranchhodbhai can do. If they can collect some amount, we shall not have to pay much from the Society's funds.

Aren't the Bal Mandir and Kumar Mandir parts of the school? Don't they meet a need ?

I understand what. you say about Harilal. I don't have independent accommodation for myself here. Nor can we keep him in Jamnalalji's house. It seems proper, therefore, that till he gets properly trained and learns to observe the rules he should continue to stay there.

I am afraid we cannot have a joint office for the Spinners, Association and Village Industries Association. The latter will include a great many small activities, and so it seems to me desirable that the two offices should be separate for the time being. The fields of work of the two bodies will of course be complementary to each other. It seems that the headquarters of the Village Industries Association will be fixed at Wardha. Probably when you wrote your reply you had not received my letter, in which I had asked you whether you can be free from there.

My respectful greetings to Father and Mother. It is good news that they are able to keep good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, Pt. II, p. 117. Also C.W. 8425. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

498. LETTER TO HARIDAS T. MUZUMDAR

November 26, 1934

BHAI HARIDAS,

You have sent a 20-page preface for your ten points; what violence is this! Moreover you have praised Mirabehn; is it for lending respectability to your censure of her? What violence is this too! And you crown both with your violent pride.

You have refuted what you imagine to be my views with the help of your points. But I think between my views. and what you consider to be my views there is as much difference as between a horse and a donkey. How then can I satisfy you?

O God! Save me from my friends, followers and flatterers. Your 26-page letter has made me utter this prayer. I was under the impression that after our meeting in England, your pride would have gone down; but my calculation has gone wrong. But man must err endlessly.

From a copy of the Cujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

499. LETTER TO V. V. GIRI

November 27, 1934

DEAR GIRI,

Your wire. When almost all win[1], who should receive congratulations? The policy of the Congress has been vindicated. Let us deserve the great trust.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

V. V. GIRI

VIZAGAPATNAM

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In the Assembly election held in 1934. The final party-wise position of seats won was: Congress 44, Nationalist Party headed by Madan Mohan Malaviya 11, Independents 22 and the European group 11.

500. LETTER TO K. NAGESWAR RAO

November 27, 1934

MY DEAR NAGESWA RAO,

You have outdone everybody in the race for votes. But even you had to spend money? What a tragedy! How much were you out of pocket? Without his opposition the Congress could not have shown its hold over the people.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

K. NAGESWAR RAO

MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

501. LETTER TO KAMAKOTI NATARAJAN

November 27, 1934

MY DEAR KAMAKOTI,

Singer machine does not replace the needle woman, it gives her a better needle. We have village rice-pounding and flourgrinding machines. If someone were to give me an effective substitute, I will take it today. What I resist is flour and rice mills which put thousands of women out of work and rob them of health. My regards to your sister in Delhi.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

KAMAKOTI NATARAJAN

BANDRA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

502. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

Unrevised *November 27, 1934*

CHI. SHARMA,

Your letter. You have again been hasty. How did you conclude that Mogheji wanted you to go away for good or that he was happy at your leaving thus. This too is mere suspicion. If people are afraid of you it is because you lose no time in making allegations and entertaining all sorts of fanciful ideas. It I were to ask Kamalnayan, he will, I am sure; have a different story to tell. To the best of my knowledge no one doubts your honest desire to serve. But I am myself observing that you are misunderstood. You should stick to your resolution. You belong to the Ashram, you have to return to it and must prepare yourself to do so. Forget about the incident at the station[1] and all that you have written to me.

Dr. Shirlekar has sent nothing. I shall send for [your books]. I shall write to Dr. Ansari and send you a copy of the letter.] am trying to send you the books.

The account of Krishna's health pains me. Now you have to concentrate on her recovery. By all means take a separate house. Do write to me if your brothers are in any way incon-venienced in meeting your expenses.

It cannot be said that Ramdas is all right but he has progressed to the point of taking three eggs. If you have anything to say about him do say it.

My weight is 108 lb. which is good but it may not go up further. I feel I have gained some strength as a result of fresh milk and raw vegetables. A reduced diet [uncooked food] is giving me as much strength as I derived from a larger quantity of milk and vegetables. obviously, the expenditure has considerably gone down and time is saved. I must have more experience to say anything further.

[1] Regarding this the addressee explains that, while bidding him farewell at the Wardha station, theAshram Manager had observed, "You sulked and we are spared!"

Amtussalaam seems to be well enough but she cannot digest milk.

Mirabehn has written to you. A bundle belonging to the office containing some of my very important papers, my spectacles and such other things was placed in the room where your luggage was stored. Some things from it were sent there earlier. Did this bundle reach [you] along with those things? Can it be located? The bundle was tied in a white khadi sheet. Find out and if you can lay your hands on it, send me a wire. I am anxious about the papers.

Draupadi's weight must surely increase.

I shall not worry about you as you have given me an assurance.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Your notice can appear in the coming issue of *Harijan*;[1] your letter was received too late.

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha*, between pp. 122 and 123

503. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

November 28, 1934

DEAR MR. MIEVILLE,

I must thank you for your prompt reply to my letter of the 15th instant. But I cannot help saying that the decision come to in regard to my contemplated visit to the Frontier Province is painful and places me in a very awkward position. In that sense perhaps the decision may be regarded as unfortunate.

The only ray of hope I see in your letter is that the undesirability of my visit refers to "the present time".[2] Could you please give me a definition of the expression? Could you please also tell me, if my enquiry is not inappropriate, why it is considered undesirable for me to visit the. Frontier?

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 14-12-1934.

[2] *Vide* footnote 1, p. 349.

Whilst it is my earnest desire to abide by His Excellency's wishes, I may be pardoned for repeating what I have said in my letter of the 15th instant—that I could do so in so far as it was humanly possible. This is a point which your letter under reply seems to have overlooked.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Home Department, Political, File No. 4/8/35. C:ourtesy: National Archives of India. Also .*The Bombay chronicle,* 12-12-1934

504. LETTER TO S. GANESAN

November 29, 1934

MY DEAR GANESAN,

Before I got your note through H. Sharma, I had intended to tell you on reading your "Congressman', that it was a waste of effort. Your writing was unbalanced and betrayed ignorance and bias. Your attack on Rajaji was ungracious. You will be surprised to know that he had no hand in the drafting of the resolutions. They were my drafts and he had no suggestions on the resolution to which you have so ignorantly referred. You simply judge him from your own unhappy experiences. But otherwise, too, your criticism of men and measures is not of the right type. The majority of journalists spoil things by judging things. They will discharge their function well, if they will give unvarnished versions of events. When they criticize they must base their judgment on facts strictly within their knowledge. If you are going to become a good constructive worker, you must not waste your time after conducting newspapers. Choose one vocation or another. Harihar Sharma will tell you more about my suggestions and so will Kakasaheb who is probably coming there.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] On December 2, the addressee replied: " . . . the expression 'at the present time, implies that His Excellency's decision will hold good till he is satisfied that conditions are such as to render a visit unobjectionable. His Excellency's decision was arrived at after a full consideration of the events of recent years and present conditions."

505. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

November 29, 1934

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

This is about a naturopath named Sharma. He belongs to Khurja. He owned and conducted a sun-treatment hospital in Delhi. Through Amtussalaam whom you met here, I came to know him now three years ago. There was much show about his hospital and more about the books he wrote. Now he has humbled himself. He has given up the hospital and burned his books. He wants at my instance to put his knowledge on a more solid foundation and therefore wants to know things about the [human] body which should be common to all whether they are allopaths or naturopaths or any other. But he cannot afford to go to a medical college and begin studies there. He has sufficient knowledge to be able to pursue private studies, if. he had some guidance. What I would like you to do is to tell me what he should read and what accessories he. should require. And could you lend him one after another the books he should read? If you are sufficiently interested in him he will call on you. I do not want or expect you to give much of your time to this work. If you can easily jot down the books he should read in their order, I should be thankful. I shall procure or buy the books, if you have none to lend. I do want to help Shri Sharma as I believe him to be [an] earnest seeker who wants to dedicate his knowledge and all for the alleviation of human suffering.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

506. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH[1]

[On or before *November 30, 1934*][2]

Some of you here perhaps know how the Village Industries Association came into being. During my extensive Harijan tour last year it was clearly borne in upon me that the way in which we were carrying on our khadi work was hardly enough either to universalize khadi or to rejuvenate the villages. I saw that it was confined to a very few and that even those who used khadi exclusively were under the impression that they need do nothing else and that they might use other things irrespective of how and where they were made. Khadi was thus becoming a lifeless symbol, and I saw that, if the state of things was allowed to go on, khadi might even die of sheer inanition. It is not that a concentrated, intensive effort devoted exclusively to khadi would not be conducive to success, but there was neither that concentration nor intensity. All did not give *all* their spare time to the charkha or the *takli,* and all had not taken to the exclusive use of khadi—though their number was larger than that of the spinners. But the rest were all idle. There were multitudes of men with quantities of enforced leisure on their hands. That I saw was a state which could lead only to our undoing. 'These people" I said to myself, 'could never win swaraj. For, their involuntary and voluntary idleness made them a perpetual prey of exploiters, foreign and indigenous. Whether the exploiter was from outside or from the Indian cities, their state would be the same, they would have no swaraj., So I said to myself, 'Let these people be asked to do something else; if they will not interest themselves in khadi, let them take up some work which used to be done by their ancestors but which has of late died out. There were numerous things of daily use which they used to produce themselves not many years ago, but for which they now depend on the outer world. There were numerous things of daily use to the town-dweller for which he depended on the villagers but which he now imports from cities. The moment the villagers decided to devote all their spare

[1] Published in *Harijan* under the title "A. I. V. I. A. —Its Meaning and Scope". This is a "brief resume" of Gandhiji's "third talk". Reports of the first two speeches are not available.

[2] According to a report in The *Bombay Chronicle* 6-12-1934, the annual session of Gandhi Seva Sangh was held in the last week of November 1934.

time to doing something useful and the town-dwellers to use those village products, the snapped link between the villagers and the towndwellers would be restored. As to which of the extinct or moribund village industries and crafts could be revived, we could not be sure until we sat down in the midst of the villages to investigate, to tabulate and classify. But I picked up two things of the most vital importance: articles of diet and articles of dress. Khadi was there. In the matter of articles of diet, we were fast losing our self-sufficiency. only a few years ago, we pounded our own paddy and ground our own flour. Put aside for the time being the question of health. It is an indisputable fact that the flour-mill and the rice-mill have driven millions of women out of employment and deprived them of the means of eking out their income. Sugar is fast taking the place of jaggery, and ready-made articles of diet like biscuits and sweetmeats are freely being imported into our villages. This means that all the village industries are gradually slipping out of the hands of the villager, who has become producer of raw materials for the exploiter. He continually gives, and gets little in return. Even the little he gets for the raw material he produces he gives back to the sugar merchant and the cloth merchant. His mind and body have become very much like those of the animals, his constant companions. When we come to think of it, we find that the villager of today is not even half so intelligent or resourceful as the villager of fifty years ago. For, whereas the former is reduced to a state of miserable dependence and idleness, the latter used his mind and body for all he needed and produced them at home. Even the village artisan today partakes of the resourcelessness that has overtaken the rest of the village. Go to the village carpenter and ask him to make a spinning-wheel for you go to the village smith and ask him to make a spindle for you,- you will be disappointed. This is a deplorable state of things. It is as a remedy for it that the Village Industries Association has been conceived.

This cry of ‘back to the village” some critics say, is putting back the hands of the clock of progress. But is it really so? Is it going back to the village, or rendering back to it what belongs to it? I am not asking the city-dwellers to go to and live in the villages. But I am asking them to render unto the villagers what is due to them. Is there any single raw material that the city-dwellers can obtain except from the villager? If they cannot, why not teach him to work on it himself, as he used to before and as he would do now but for our exploiting inroads?

But this reinstating the villager in what was once his natural position is no easy task. I had thought that I should be able to frame a constitution and set the Association going with the help of Sjt. Kumarappa within a short time. But the more I dive into it, the more I find myself out of my depth. In a sense, the work is much more difficult than khadi, which does not in any way offer a complicated problem. You have simply to exclude all foreign and machine-made cloth, and you have established khadi on a secure foundation. But here the field is so vast, there is such an infinite variety of industries to handle and organize, that it will tax all our business talent, expert knowledge and scientific training. It cannot be achieved without hard toil, incessant endeavour and application of all our business and scientific abilities to this supreme purpose. Thus, I sent a questionnaire[1] to several of our well-known doctors and chemists, asking them to enlighten me on the chemical analysis and different food values of polished and unpolished rice, jaggery and sugar, and so on. Many friends, I am thankful to say, have immediately responded, but only to confess that there has been no research in some of the directions I had inquired about. Is it not a tragedy that no scientist should be able to give me the chemical analysis of such a simple article as gur? The reason is that we have not thought of the villager. Take the case of honey. I am told that in foreign countries such a careful analysis of honey is made that no sample which fails to satisfy a particular test is bottled for the market. In India we have got vast resources for the production of the finest honey, but we have not much expert knowledge in the matter. An esteemed doctor friend writes to say that in his hospital, at any rate, polished rice is taboo and that it has been proved after experiments on rats and other animals that polished rice is harmful. But why have not all the medical men published the results of their investigation and experiment and joined in declaring the use of such rice as positively harmful?

I have just by one or two instances indicated my difficulty. What sort of an organization should I have? What kinds of laboratory research shall we have to go in for? We shall need a number of scientists and chemists prepared to lay not only their expert knowledge at our disposal, but to sit down in our laboratories and to devote hours of time, free of charge, to experiments in the direction I have indicated. We shall have not only to publish the results from time

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. B. C. Roy", 8-11-1934.

to time, but we shall have to inspect and certify various products. Also we shall have to find out whether the villager who produces an article or foodstuff rests content with exporting it and with using a cheap substitute imported from outside. We shall have to see that the villagers become first of all self-contained and then cater for the needs of the city-dwellers.

For this purpose we shall have to form district organizations, and, where districts are too big to handle, we may have to divide the districts into sub-districts. Each of these—some 250—should have an agent who will carry out a survey and submit a report in the terms of the instructions issued to him from the head office. These agents shall have to be full-timers and whole-hoggers, with a live faith in the programme and prepared immediately to make the necessary adjustment in their daily life. This work will certainly need money, but, more than money, it will need men of strong faith and willing hands.

Q. Will not this programme swamp the khadi programme which has yet to be fulfilled?

A. No. Khadi cannot be moved from its central place. Khadi will be the sun of the whole industrial solar system. All the other industries will receive warmth and sustenance from the khadi industry.

Q. What exactly are the industries we must revive or promote?

A. I have indicated the lines. We must promote every useful industry that was existent a short while ago and the extinction of which has now resulted in unemployment.

Q. Have we to declare a boycott of the rice and the flour mills?

A. We have to declare no boycott, but we shall ask the people to husk their own rice and to grind their own flour, and we shall carry on persistent propaganda in favour of hand-pounded rice and hand-ground flour as better articles of diet from the point of view of health. Let us declare a boycott of idleness.

Q. Shall we use the Congress Committees for this purpose?

A. of course. We shall use and take help from any source. We have no politics as such and no party.

Q. The formation of the Central Board means centralization?

A. Not quite. The districts will be the working centres. The Central office will be only a watch tower for the whole of India issuing

instructions, but not a board of administration. It will be a sort of correspondence school through which the various agents will carry on mutual exchange of thought and compare notes. We want to avoid centralization of administration, we want centralization of thought, ideas and scientific knowledge.

Harijan, 7-12-1934

507. 'WHY NOT LABOUR-SAVING DEVICES'

A fair friend who was enthused over the contemplated formation of the All-India Village Industries Association, on reading my Press message[1] on the preliminary programme, writes:

The very idea of the revival or encouragement of the hand-husking of rice and *chakki* grinding even for villages has scared me from, and abated my enthusiasm for village work. It seems lo me an enormous waste of one's time and energy not to take advantage of labour-saving devices in the uplift scheme. If the villagers, and along with them the-uplift workers, have to husk and grind, there will hardly be leisure left for them to attend to anything else for their improvement. Besides, if the primitive methods were revived, the men will take up the work in the first flush of enthusiasm; but ultimately the brunt of the whole work, I mean husking and grinding, will fall on us, women, and there will be a setback to the little progress we have already made.

Underlying this argument is a fallacy. There is no question of refusing to take advantage of labour-saving devices. If the vilIagers had enough to eat and to clothe themselves with, there would be no cause for home-grinding or home-husking, assuming that the question of health was not of any importance or, if it was, there was no difference between home-ground flour and millground, or home-husked rice and mill-husked. But the problem is that the villagers became idle when they left off husking and grinding even for their own use, and made no good use of their idle hours whether for uplift or otherwise. A starving man or woman who has time on his or her hand will surely be glad to earn an honest anna during that time, for, he or she will resent being advised to save his or her labour when either can turn it into a few pice to alleviate starvation. My

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", pp. 303-4.

correspondent is wrong in thinking that the uplift worker has either to grind or husk. He has certainly to learn the art and know the tools, so that he can suggest improvements and understand the limitations of the tools. She is wrong, again, in thinking that in the first flush of enthusiasm men will be called upon to grind or husk or will perform these tasks of their own accord and ultimately let the brunt fall on the shoulders of women. The fact is that husking and grinding was the prerogative of women, and tens of thousands made a living out of this task, which was both dignified and invigorative. Now they are perforce idle, because the vast majority of them have not been able to find another employment in the place of these two, which we have snatched away from them.

When the fair friend writes about the "little progress" that the women have already made, she has undoubtedly the icitydwellers in mind, for the village life is entirely untouched by uplift workers. The majority of them do not even know how the women or men live in the 7,00,000 villages of this vast land. We little know how they have deteriorated for want of nourishing food and protective clothing. And we little know how, being fed on innutritious rice or flour,which are their staple, they and their children lose stamina and what little vitality they have.

I have no partiality for return to the primitive method of grinding and husking for the sake of them. I suggest the return, because there is no other way of giving employment to the millions of villagers who are living in idleness. In my opinion, village uplift is impossible, unless we solve the pressing economic distress.

Therefore, to induce the villagers to utilize their idle hours is in itself solid uplift work. I invite the fair correspondent and those who feel like her to go to some villages, live there for some time in the midst of the villagers and try to live like them, and they will soon perceive the soundness of my argument.

Harijan, 30-11-1394

508. WHAT IS IT?

An esteemed friend wrote the orher day saying, among other things, that he had not before his mind's eye a full picture of what I meant by village industries work. It was a good question. It must have occurred to many people. This is the purport of what I wrote to him:

In a nutshell, of the things we use, we should restrict our purchases to the articles which villages manufacture. Their manufactures may be crude. We must try to induce them to improve their workmanship, and not dismiss them because foreign articles or even articles produced in cities, that is, big factories, are superior. In other words, we should evoke the artistic talent of-~the villager. In this manner shall we repay somewhat the debt we owe to them. We need not be frightened by the thought whether we shall ever succeed in such an effort. Within our own times we can recall instances where we have not been baffled by the difficulty of our tasks when we have known that they were essential for the nation's progress. If, therefore, we as individuals believe that revivification of India's villages is a necessity of our existence, if we believe-that thereby only can we root out untouchability and feel one with all, no matter to what community or religion they may belong, we must mentally go back to the villages and treat them as our pattern, instead of putting the city life before them for imitation. If this is the correct attitude, then, naturally, we begin with ourselves and thus use, say, handmade paper instead of mill-made, use village reed, wherever possible, instead of the fountain pen or the penholder, ink made in the villages instead of the big factories, etc. I can multiply instances of this nature. There is hardly anything of daily use in the home which the villagers have not made before and cannot make even now. If we perform the mental trick and fix our gaze upon them, we immediately put millions of rupees into the pockets of the villagers, whereas at the present moment we are exploiting the villagers without making any return worth the name. It is time we arrested the progress of the tragedy. To me, the campaign against untouchability has begun to imply ever so much more than the eradication of the ceremonial untouchability of those who are labelled untouchables. For the city-dweller, the villages have become untouchable. He does not know them, he will not live in them. and if

he finds himself in a village, he will want to reproduce the city life there. This would be tolerable, if we could bring into being cities which would accommodate 30 crores of human beings. This is much more impossible than the one of reviving the village industries and stopping the progressive poverty, which is due as much to enforced unemployment as to any other cause.

Hanjan, 30-11-1934

509. TELEGRAM TO H. L. SHARMA[1]

November 30, 1934

SHARMA

CARE NATHMALDAS

DANGANJ, KHURJA

YOUR WIRE. YOUR DUTY THERE FOR PRESENT. WRITE AND GUIDE. CHANGE RESIDENCE FINE FRESH AIR DRAUPADI CHILDREN.

BAPU

From a facsimile: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha,* facing p. 125

510. LETTER TO A GIRL

SEGAON,

November 30, 1934

CHI. LAMBOOS[2],

Lambodar means a large-bellied one. It is a name of Ganapati. I should have named you Lamboos. I suppose I must think it a favour from you that you wrote to me after such a long time.

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram dated November 29, 1934, which read: "Mirabehn's and your letters bear great difference. Papers question increases my anxiety. Perhaps 'R' 'P' or 'G' can honestly trace bundles. Put them directly in my charge then I trace your things. Wire I come otherwise writing tomorrow." Also *vide* "Letter to H. L. Sharma", 27-11-1934.

[2] Nickname for a tall, thin person

Amtussalaam, Lilavati and Sharda are here. They are all quite well.

You girls seem to be doing good work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1752

511. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

November 30, 1934

CHI. SHARMA,

Your letter, the samples[1], the books[2], Rs. 20[3] in notes and the stamps[4] have all been received. I have not understood the account of this sum returned. A copy of my letter[5] to Dr. Ansari is enclosed herewith. I shall write to you when I get his reply, you must not write to him before that. You ought to shift to some other house. The account you have given of the vaids is true enough.[6] If you cannot find a house you can erect a thatched hut on some plot of land that is available. Do away with *purdah* for Draupadi or else leave Khurja.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have your wire.[7] I do agree that your presence will help in locating the papers. But this is not to be. Your duty is to look after Draupadi and the children[8]. Change your residence. I am searching [for the papers].

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, pp. 126-7

[1] On ghee from Khurja

[2] Belonging to the Kanya Ashram

[3] For the Ashram khadi used by the addressee

[4] Borrowed from the Ashram office

[5] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. M. A. Ansari", 29-11-1934.

[6] The addressee had found from experience in the case of his daughter that most of the vaids were quacks.

[7] *Vide* footnote 1, "Telegram to H. L. Sharma", 30-11-1934.

[8] The source has "boys".

512. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

December 2, 1934

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

Your telegrams to Vallabhbhai and to me have been received. Even this minor operation is proving troublesome. I have a letter from Dr. Bidhan too which says that you are improving, though I do not gather the same impression from your wires. I am awaiting a further telegram.

Writing to the Viceroy for an interview does not seem proper just now. I have anyway written to him a second time and asked what he meant by 'not at the present time'.[1] I have also asked for the reason of the refusal. Let us see what happens. Whatsoever happens will be for the good.

If you are well and can go to Delhi I shall try to leave for Delhi by the 20th. I am preparing for it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 8002. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

513. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

WARDHA,

December 2, 1934

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

I have your letter. It pains me that you are distressed. You have misinterpreted my advice about forgetting Prabhavati. All I had meant was that you should forget her for just one year, as you had to do while you were in America. I knew nothing about leave of absence.

Prabhavati is not here for a job. If you cannot feed her and nor can I, Brijkishore Babu certainly can. If she is staying here, it is for future service.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Private Secretary to Viceroy", 28-11-1934.

Maybe I am to blame for Prabha not being free in her thoughts. But our society is more to blame. However, how many people are free in their thinking? The poor Hindu woman never considers herself a free person. I have rarely seen a woman, even an old widow, who thinks of herself as free. Then why do you blame Prabha and why do you blame me?

Since our ideals are different I can understand your finding the Ashram routine repugnant. In fact I am pleasantly surprised that you nevertheless permit Prabha's remaining in the Ashram.

I am in a quandary. Prabha does not wish to leave either me or the Ashram. How then can I push her out? I want that Prabha should follow you about and the differences which have cropped up between you two should be patched up. But if Prabha cherishes certain ideals, those ideals are apparently different from yours. For this I am certainly responsible. Having lived with me, my ideas and my conduct have certainly made an impression on her. Now I do not know what it is right to do.

Swaroopraniji asks for Prabha's services. If Prabha returns there you will have a talk with her. The matter of her returning I have left to her and Jamnalalji. I write this at 3.30 in the morning. In the course of the day Prabha will discuss the issue with Jamnalalji and decide.

Your must understand that I do not consider myself a Mahatma and I do not think of the Ashram as something great. I am fully aware of the faults of the Ashram and of those who reside here. There certainly is some work being done. But it hardly deserves any special acclaim on that account.

It does not seem possible that I shall be able to help you in the matter of your loan. I had thought of engaging you in some activity and thus helping you repay the loan. But it does not appear likely that you will be agreeable to this. It has never seemed to me right for anyone to go begging for loans. I had explained to you certain suggestions I had and also written to you. Please tell me what you would have me do.

It will be good if you can improve your health while you are there. There is someone who practises nature cure there. Would you like to try his treatment? If you are so inclined you may write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Jayaprakash Narayan Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

514. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

December 3, 1934

BHAISHRI MAVALANKAR,

I got your letter. It fully satisfies me and relieves me from worry. If the dairy does not succeed even after we have borne so much loss for five years, it will be wound up. I fully accept what you say regarding Trustees of the Harijan Ashram. They should be completely free to manage it in their own way consistently with the basic principles.

Find some time and discuss all the points with Narahari.

I know I am imposing a burden on you, and that too when your health is not good enough to shoulder it all. But, then, burdens can be imposed only on those who come forward and seek them. But please warn me as soon as you feel that it is becoming too heavy.

You also will be free from the bonds of caste when you become a beggar like me, but won't your capacity for begging also have increased then? Shall I see that happy day in my lifetime? However, I shall die with the faith that one day you will embrace complete poverty.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1241

515. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

December 3, 1934

CHI. NARAHARI,

Give the accompanying letter to Mavalankar. It is in reply to his letter. The latter is for your file. That much assurance should be enough for us. You should continue to make whatever other collections you can. Let me know if you have any suggestion to make regarding either. Increase your work only to the extent of your capacity.

I hope everything else is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9067

516. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA

December 3, 1934

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

I had your letter as well as your mother's, but I could not reply on account of lack of time. Father came hut I could hardly talk to him. I could not even enquire after you all. Tell me now about your activities and how everybody is.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. ANNAPURNA KUMARI
C/O SHRI GOPABANDHU CHOWDHRY
BARI, DIST. CUTTACK

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2780

517. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

Unrevised *December 4, 1934*

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. If I gave wise replies to your questions, would they necessarily be a sign of real wisdom in me?

None of you would know the [strength of] anger in me. I alone can know it. I wouldn't describe as anger what Lilavati or Gangabehn may have observed in me.[1] I suppress most of the anger which I feel. Gangabehn and others could have seen only what remained of it. If I did not let them see even that, I would be a hypocrite or ruin my health and become a mere skeleton. That does not happen because I make a conscious effort to control my anger and tread my way through the problems. Because I don't think it necessary to be careful with people who are intimate with me they occasionally get a glimpse of the anger in me, but, being kind to me, they forget it.

[1] Gandhiji had refused both of them permission to attend the Congress session.

Prabhavati will send to you whatever yarn is still lying with me.[1] My calculation has turned out to be wrong.- Prabhavati is in Bombay at present. She has gone there to be of help to Swaruprani and to meet Jayaprakash.

What you believe about . . .[2] is probably not correct. Be extremely careful about believing any story against a person. It would be better not to listen to such a story at all.

What can be done about a worker like Dr. Hardikar?[3] His views and aims are different from ours. The Government will not permit him to carry on the activity which is dear to his heart, and he cannot take interest in the other activities which are going on. A person can participate in popular activities only if he can adjust himself within their framework. A person like Dr. Hardikar should take up some occupation and do what service he can while engaged in it. I have been advising many people to do this.

People who follow an occupation honestly also serve the country. Those who claim to be servants of the people may in fact be a burden on them whereas people who earn a livelihood by following an occupation may be true servants.

You are right in what you say regarding your letters. You can write "Private" on letters intended exclusively for me. As regards letters which you leave to me to deal with, I shall dispose of them as I like. I rarely preserve the letters which I receive.

You may do what is possible regarding crafts.

I hope Deo will not change your place of work too frequently.[4] You can do some work only if you remain steady in one place. If the place where you are living now is but a suburb of Poona' you will not be able to do much useful work there. However, since you have been working there, I hope you will not be asked to leave it too soon. But

[1] The addressee had asked for yarn spun by Gandhiji in Yeravda Mandir from the slivers supplied by her.

[2] The name has been omitted.

[3] Dr. Hardikar's co-workers who had given up their professions, etc., at the time of the Civil Disobedience Movement were in a miserable plight when the movement was withdrawn and Hardikar himself could be of no help.

[4] Shankarrao Deo wanted to move his Ashram to a small village as Saswad where it was established was the headquarters of a taluk.

don't attach much importance to my advice in this matter. If you think that it was a mistake to have gone there, you certainly need not cling to the place. A mistake must be rectified when it is realized.

Who am I to secure swaraj for the country through ahimsa? If I have real ahimsa in me it cannot but prove infectious. I have little faith in myself, but my faith in ahimsa is unshakable. The world has recognized it as a great principle, but it has rarely been acted upon. I daily get a fresh experience of its sweetness, for to me it is the only wish-fulfilling tree. No other way is possible for me, for I have found no other means of attaining Satyanarayana[1] and life without the prospect of attaining Him has no meaning for me. Hence the path of ahimsa, whether difficult or easy, is the only one that I can follow. If violence breaks out after my death, you may conclude that my ahimsa was very imperfect or was not real at all—but not that the principle of ahimsa was wrong. or it may also be that we shall have to cross the river of blood in which the wicked suffer for their sins before we reach the goal of ahimsa. Ahimsa came into politics in the 1920s. But didn't the Chauri Chaura[2] and other outrages occur after that, and hasn't the Government gone to extreme lengths of repression? I am sure, however, that despite all this violence, ahimsa has had a profound effect on people. But it has been no more than a drop in the ocean. My experiment continues and is ever growing in its scope. May your faith never waver!

Our senses do not always perceive the truth. Very often what they perceive is utterly false. That is why the path of non-attachment was discovered. To cultivate non-attachment means to rise above the senses. one can do that only by overcoming one's attachment to objects of the senses. If we believe the evidence of the eyes, would it not prove that the earth was flat? And doesn't the sun seem to be only a golden disc? If the Prema that my eyes see was the true Prema, what a wretch would I be! And suppose you believed all that you heard against me!

I think I have written enough. Mirabehn's alarm has sounded. The bell for prayer will soon be given. You may draw from this whatever picture you can [of my state of mind]. I am thinking of

[1] God in the form of Truth

[2] *Vide* "The crime of Chauri Chaura", 16-2-1922 and "divine warning", 19-2-1922.

going to Delhi after the 15th. I intend to stay there for a few days in the Harijan Ashram.

So far as I can see at present, I think I shall be in jail at last.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10363. Also C.W. 6802. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

518. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

December 4, 1934

CHI. SHARMA,

I got your letter yesterday. That might possibly help in locating the articles. All that you have written is enough to institute a search. How can I call you here for this task? one strong reason for your going there is to be with and serve Draupadi and the children. This is the beginning of your training and this is how naturopathy starts. And now you write that you would live in a room in Dr. Ansari's house if he agrees to it. That too leaving behind Draupadi and Krishna who is reduced to a mere skeleton ! No, your education, your duty today lies in doing whatever is possible while living with Draupadi and the children.

Take them away to some village near Khurja and live there. If not there then somewhere else in the countryside. Krishnan Nair lives at Narela near Delhi. He is a good man, you can live with him too, i.e., he might keep you with him or find some place for you. In any case you are not going to live with your brothers in Khurja.[1] Your brother who is helping you will continue to do so wherever you might live. Let me know his income.

Amtul wants to undertake some work in collaboration with you. If you can live in a village, this wish of hers can also be fulfilled. She wants to serve Draupadi and the children but this has nothing to do with your living in the countryside.

I hope you will not tell me that your studies have been interrupted because you have not received your anatomy books. No

[1] The family house lacked air ant sunshine.

matter when you get the books, by leading a well regulated life, you are certainly going ahead with your training. Giving up all suspicion also does help. Look, the reason why Jnanoba was not brought before me was to save me [the trouble]. As the shawl was already found, there was no need to see him. I had myself sent Kishorelal down to you. Similarly, the incident involving Kamalnayan and Mogheji. Amtul was present during their conversation, she heard all. She says that Kamalnayan and Mogheji were simply jesting and they did not mean to express pleasure at your departure.[1] Possibly they were neither sorry nor pleased at your leaving. One desirous of becoming a naturopath is not suspicious of anyone, is not hasty and does not brood over another person's fault He should daily ponder over this couplet of Tulsidas:

> God has endowed this world of sentient and insentient beings with good qualities as well as bad. Good men take in only the good qualities leaving behind the impurities like the swan that drinks only milk leaving behind the water mixed with it.

Only then can he treat other people or correctly diagnose their ailments.

If Ramdas comes along he will travel with me. I shall see what happens.

How are you spending your time these days? What are you reading? You have plenty of books, I- suppose.

I have received a prompt refusal from Delhi; now further correspondence is going on. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, pp. 127-9

[1] *Vide* footnote on "Interview to *The Bombay Chronicle*", 15-2-1922.

519. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

December 5, 1934

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your last letter just received. I need say nothing save to welcome you. I expect you here on 7th unless you are wanted there for any peremptory purpose.

The Viceroy's letter[1] has been received asking me not to go to the Frontier. Hoyl[and] comes here on 17th on his way to Bihar. I should like to leave for Delhi on 18th to pass a few days at Harijan Ashram and then . . . [2].

Amrit Kaur comes here on 11th expecting to find you here.

The rest from Mathuradas.

Love from us all.

MOHAN

From the original: C.W. 9685. Courtesy: Viswabharati Library, Santiniketan

520. LETER TO PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

December 5, 1934

DEAR DR. PATTABHI,

I have your letter. I know your hands are fairly full. What I want you to do is without interference with your work to tell me:

(1) What are the capabilities in your part of the world of revival in the direction indicated by me?

(2)Who can, in your opinion, take charge of the various districts? They must be practically wholetimers and yet able, if possible, to pay their way and make the agency self-supporting. This concern should not be run at a loss.

(3) Do you want to take up your own district?

(4) What is your opinion of khadi bhandars or centres taking up

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, "Letter to Private Secretary to Viceroy", 15-11-1934.

[2] Omission as in the source

surplus village goods for sale on credit on terms to be mutually agreed? If the answer be in the affirmative, what should be the terms?

Yours sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

DR. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA
MASULIPATAM

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

521. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

December 5, 1934

I am getting ready for jail. I see that it is difficult to avoid it any longer. "Make the best of today, for who has seen tomorrow ?"

If you have copies of the *Samkshipta Balakanda* which I had brought out in Natal and Gatulalji's *Subhashit Lahari,* send them with Andrews. The latter is needed for Gatulalji's verse translation of the Gita which it contains.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p.154

522. LETTER TO N. R.. MALKANI

Unrevised *December 5, 1934*

MY DEAR MALKANI,

Gandhi Seva Sangh is framing a new constitution. It has decided to incur no fresh obligations. It will enlist workers who hold common ideals without needing to share a common purse. Jamnalalji has taken up burdens which he, the sole collector, cannot hope to discharge for all time. The Sangh itself will crumble to pieces under such a weight. You must therefore draw from the Hariian Sangh so long as you are in it. And there is nothing wrong in it when

you are giving the whole of your time to it. Draw your dependents also in it and what you are taking will never appear heavy. More when we meet, if we do. The 'if, is there, because there is no certainty about Ghanshyamdas's coming there even after 15th. And I do not come if he is not there.

Love.

BAPU

From a photost at: G.N. 903

523. LETTER, TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

December 6, 1934

MY DEAR SHANKERLAL,

If you have got a copy of the Maganlal Memorial appeal[1] and the names of the Trustees that were announced, please send it to me. The idea is to have the Memorial opened here as, you may remember, was the suggestion made by Jamnalalji. There should be a Hall in which all the processes from picking of cotton to ginning would be on view as the centre, and the village industries surrounding these things. The idea would be also to have the office of the Village Industries Association there, and if possible the A. I. S. A. office also on the same ground. How does the whole thing appeal to you?

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

524. LETTER TO CHITRAVSHASTRI

December 6, 1934

DEAR CHITRAVSHASTRI,

I had your telegram. I know nothing of Muslim demonstrations in Sind-extolling Nathuram's murder. My horror of any murder is well known. Undoubtedly the murder of Nathuram was bad, and doubly bad in the manner it was committed. But my disapproval, and for that matter yours, is surely of no consequence, Any disapproval to be effective must surely come from Mussalmans.

Yours sincerely

SHRI CHITRAVSHASTRI

PRESIDENT, MAHARASHTRA HINDU MAHASABHA

PSSOONA CITY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Maganlal Gandhi Memorial", 17-5-1928.

525. LETTER TO NORA MORELL

December 6, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. It was received some time ago, but pressure of work has prevented my replying earlier.

The best way you, living in Germany, can serve India is to befriend those Indians who are living in Germany, and secondly to live up to the doctrines that you approve.

Yours sincerely

MADAME NORA MORELL
BERLIN-WILMERSDORF
RUDESHEIMER PLATZ 6

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

526. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULTRAM

December 6, 1934

I have now come across the letter from the German friend. I have written to her.[1] Here is a copy of it so that you too can send a reply if you like. The reply is belated, but better late than never.

Encl. 1

SHRI JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
MARKET STREET
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

527. LETTER TO UPTON SINCLAIR

December 6, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I was thankful to hear from you after a long time. You have mailed your books to Ahmedabad. My headquarters just now are Ashram, Wardha. Therefore probably the books are still somewhere in transit. I am looking forward to receiving both *The Cry for Justice* and, *Epic Campaign.* If you don't mind, I would like you to send a fresh parcel so that if the parcel already sent miscarries I may not be without the books

Yours sincerely

UPTON SINCLAIR, ESQ. STATION A. PASADENA

CALIFORNIA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

528. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

December 7, 1934

WHILST I AM PRAYERFULLY CONSIDERING MY DUTY REGARDING THE CONTEMPLATED VISIT TO THE FRONTIER, SEEING THAT GARBLED REPORTS OF OUR CORRESPONDENCE HAVE APPEARED IN THE PRESS UNLESS HIS EXCELLENCY HAS OBJECTION I WOULD LIKE TO PUBLISH THE SAME.[1]

GANDHI

Home Department, Political, File No. 4/8/35. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also The Bombay Chronicle, 12-12-1934

[1] On December 10 the addressee replied: "His Excellency has no objection to the publication of the correspondence."

529. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

December 7, 1934

CHI. AMALA,

Your letters have been received. I shall be glad if you get something in Santiniketan. Do not be greedy in stating your terms. The rest through Mahadev.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

530. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

December 7, 1934

CHI. BHAGWAN JI,

I got your letter. From where can I find the cash for Bhai Dhulji? How can I pay it either? I have one foot in jail and one outside. He ought not to have left Vijapur. But since he has left, he should now take up some work somewhere.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You should not obstinately cling to milk and fruit diet. You can try to live on fresh milk and such leaves and tubers as can be eaten uncooked.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 373. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

531. LETTER TO MANUBEHN GANDHI

December 7, 1934

CHI. MANUDI,

Why did you fall ill? Is it to enjoy the privilege of being nursed by your father? But get all right and don't let him nurse you very long.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 1536. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

532. DISCUSSION WITH ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN[1]

December 7, 1934

[GANDHIJI:] Khan Saheb, this is not an occasion when we may not offer defence. We must engage our own lawyer and offer defence.

The Khan Saheb said, "That may be, but I am averse to defending myself in a law-court. Ever since 1919 you have taught us not to recognize the law-courts and I should hate this time to do otherwise."

I quite see, but we do not want to go to jail now if we can help it and hence I would urge you to engage a lawyer.

"Just as you please", said the Khan Saheb, and got ready to accompany the officials.

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-12-1934

[1] This brief discussion took place just as Abdul Ghaffar Khan was leaving after his arrest. *The Bombay Chronicle* reports. ". . . today at about 5.15 p.m. when the D. S. P. of Wardha accompanied by a police officer from Bombay visited the Satyagraha Ashram asking for Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, he was sitting upstairs with Mahatma Gandhi and the arrival of visitors was announced by Mirabehn. Gandhiji asked her to bring them upstairs.

"The D. S. P. came up and told Gandhiji that he had a warrant of arrest for Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan from the Presidency Magistrate of Bombay. Gandhiji asked for the warrant and read it out to Khan Saheb. It was on a charge under Section 124-A, there being no mention of any speech or writing in question. on the D. S. P. asking Khan saheb as to when he would be ready he said he was quite ready. But Gandhiji said that if the D. S. P. did not mind Khan Saheb would see his brother and children at Seth Jamnalal's place. . . ."

533. LETTER TO ABDUL GHAN1

December 7, 1934

MY DEAR GHANI,

I am posting a letter to you [in a] separate cover written by Father. After he had written the letter, he was arrested in my presence and taken to Bombay. There he would be tried under Section 124-A. You would not be disturbed by the news. Prisons are our second or rather real home.

I expect a long letter from you telling me how you are doing there. Did you receive the letter I sent to you at Lucknow?

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

534. LETTER TO CHOITHRAM GIDWANI

December 8, 1934

MY DEAR CHOITHRAM,

I have your letter. I am not sure that any propaganda will be of any service to you. In any case you cannot have Khan Saheb now. He is under arrest. Remember we do not want to court arrest just now. We have to become speechless manual labourers working in the villages. Speech-making must be reserved for the few in the Assembly and therefore it *must* be confined to a few. I hope you are keeping yourself fit.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 85

535. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

December 8, 1934

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. It arrived today. Since it is dated the 6th, I should have got it yesterday. You will probably read what I have written to Mummy[1]. I have told her that she should discuss the matter with you and come to some arrangement convenient to you both. Whatever the circumstances, you ought to be sent for a few days to hand over charge.

The rest when we meet. I hope Jayaprakash is all right:

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Andrews arrived today. Khurshedbehn will arrive on Monday. There was a letter from Gopi for you, saying that she was all right. You must have read about Khan Saheb's arrest.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3445

536. MESSAGE TO PRABHASHANAR PATTANI[2]

December 8, 1934

I understand your difficulties. It will certainly be very good if you censure the Municipality, but even if you supersede the Municipality which does nothing but indulge in speechmaking, nobody will describe that as "fascism".

* * *[3]

Instead of carrying the whole load of worries on your own head, I shall be happy if you send some of it here.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5940. Also C.W. 3257. Courtesy: Mahesh P. Pattani

[1] Swaruprani Nehru; the letter is not available.

[2] The message was conveyed to the addressee by Mahadev Desai in a letter dated December 8, 1934.

[3] Omission as in the source

537. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARISH

December 8, 1934

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have your letter.

The money given by Bhai Mavalankar and Ranchhodbhai for the dairy is welcome. I had a letter from Ambalalbhai saying that he did intend to pay the loss up to December 31. You may, therefore, spend just now from the money received from Mavalankar and Ranchhodbhai, but credit the sum . to next year's account. Similarly, when you get the money from Ambalalbhai, you will have to return to me the Rs. 1,000 which I sent. The account will balance then. Send the figure of the loss up to December end to me first and then to Ambalalbhai. If I am in jail by that time, follow the instructions given in this letter. When drawing up the account to determine the amount of the loss, let me know the sums, if any, that you may have received from other sources. We should not include any of them in the amount to be paid by Ambalalbhai. One such sum, for instance, is that received for the Goseva Sangh and [utilized for the dairy] as suggested by yourself. I have written briefly about this to Narandas also. He doesn't know about your last letter.

Ratilal indeed has had a narrow escape. I hope the thief will be caught. Advise Prabhashankar to strengthen a little the guard at the bungalow. He may ask for legitimate help from the police. If Ratilal feels afraid, spare a room for him in the Ashram. It should be given on rent. If any cash or valuables are being kept in the bungalow, I have already suggested that they should be removed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9066

538. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

December 9, 1934

I regret that Press correspondents have circulated unauthorized reports about the correspondence between the Government and myself regarding my contemplated visit to the Frontier Province. I would caution the public against believing such reports. I expect shortly to make a statement[1].

The Bombay Chronicle, 10-12-1934

539. LETTER TO KIRLOSKAR BROTHERS

December 10, 1934

GENTLEMEN,

I got your letter yesterday afternoon in the midst of an important interview. I was able to read it only at 3 a.m. today. I have taken the deepest interest in your invention. I have great regard for Mr. Kale both as a mechanic and a man. I felt drawn to him when he was at the Ashram. Being a fairly busy man, I had not much time to give to the examination of the machine, but I have kept myself in touch with the progress of the examination by the Judges[2]. When you offered to send it to me I told you of my own difficulty. But I was pressed by a friend to give the machine a trial myself. I, therefore, wrote to you again[3] asking you to send the machine with Mr. Kale and another who might know all about tools in general. I had intended to keep the machine here for some time so that the Director of the Ashram Shri Vinoba might also try it. The prize of Rs. 1,00,000 is at the disposal of him who would earn it. I am personally anxious to give it, if the machine of my dream can be had. The highest speed attained on the ordinary wheel is over 700 yards per hour. Besides yours, there are two machines of promise. They are also undergoing improvements.

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 11-12-1934.

[2] Satis Chandra Das Gupta, Lakshmidas Purushottam Asar and C. Rajagopalachari

[3] *Vide*"Letter to Kirloskar Brothers", 24-11-1934.

I expect to leave for Delhi on or about the 18th inst. My movement becomes uncertain thereafter. I shall gladly try the machine myself if I succeed in returning to Wardha and if you will then entertain my request to send your machine. I intend to interest you in the Village Industries scheme and help it through your organization by suggesting or making improvements in the village tools, especially the indigenous village chakki for grinding wheat, etc., the rice-pounder, the oil-press and the cane-crusher.

If, however, you will entertain my request, I would like you to do so as comrades in a common humanitarian cause and not as commercial men suspecting the *bona fides* of public men who seek to tempt houses like yours to interest yourselves in inventions of benefit to millions of starving villagers.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy. Pyarelal

540. LETTER TO J. N. SAHNI

December 10, 1934

MY DEAR SAHNI,

I wonder how far you have answered the "National Call" and respected private friendship by publishing unfinished and unauthorized garbled version about the correspondence I am carrying on with the authorities. If you think you have advanced the national cause thereby, I have nothing to say. It would have been wise, if you had referred the matter to me as sometimes even strangers do.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI J. N. SAHNI

"NATIONAL CALL"

DELHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

541. LETTER TO M. VISVESVARAYYA[1]

December 10, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. Fortunately I have your book also sent to me for which too, kindly accept my thanks.

Your letter gave me great joy in that there was in it promise of your support to my humble effort on behalf of the villagers. I have no difficulty whatsoever in endorsing your remarks about heavy industries. I know that the heavy industries cannot be organized without power-driven machinery. I can have no quarrel with such use of machinery. My objection comes in when such machinery displaces human labour without providing displaced hands with a substitute at least as good as displaced labour.

Yours sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9727. Courtesy: Government of Mysore

542. LETTER TO CARL HEATH

December 10, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 19th November. I have not been able to understand it, in spite of the help I sought from Charlie Andrews.

I have no hesitation in agreeing with you that any solution of the present deadlock should be just and creative, and that it should be neither imposed nor extorted; in other words, it should be an agreed solution honourable to both the countries. I know too the suffering of India and the suffering of Lancashire. But if the juxtaposition of the two is meant to imply that the cause of the suffering of either is identical I would dissent from any such view. The suffering of India is imposed upon her; the suffering of Lancashire is due partly to world causes and partly to its own shortsightedness and selfishness. So far as it was possible for me to suggest an alleviation of the

[1] This letter was displayed at the Mysore Pavilion of the Gandhi Darshan Exhibition held in New Delhi in 1969-70.

suffering of Lancashire through India's help I had made a definite offer[1] when I was in England in 1931. But my offer proved to be of no avail. The offer was this: If there was a free settlement between England and India, a favoured-nation clause was quite possible, in so far as India might need any foreign cloth in order to supplement her output of cloth, whether through the village spinning-wheel or through her mills. I do not know how far such treatment is possible today for, even during the short period that has elapsed since the meeting of the Round Table Conference, India has become better organized for the manufacture of all her clothing requirements, in spite of the fact that she is importing fine-count calico both from England and Japan. The chief point, however, is not how Lancashire can send its calico to India, but how the whole of England can benefit in every way by the benefit that India must derive from attainment of complete freedom, political and economic. The more I study the villages of India the more intensely do I realize that India has no need to be a pauper country if she can get the chance to grow without the fetters that today prevent hernatural natural growth.

Your last paragraph seems to imply that there is no longer any repression in India. I can only tell you that repression is there to be seen by anyone with the naked eye. I do not know of any single repressive law that has been repealed. The Press is effectively gagged, there is no such thing as freedom of movement in Bengal as also in the Frontier Province. If you hear nothing of imprisonments and lathi charges it is because civil disobedience is suspended and the Congress has resolved, in furtherance of the spirit of non-violence, to submit to repressive laws in so far as it is humanly possible to do so. on the top of all this comes the Parliamentary Committee's proposals for a new constitution. It is, as I read it, a barefaced denial of freedom. I see in it no scope for expansion. I would any day prefer the existing state to the crushing burden that threatens to overwhelm India and tighten the British hold upon her. My own power of endurance is being tested beyond my capacity. My way to the Frontier Province is blocked.

But, in spite of the blackness of the horizon, I have no sense of despair in me. I believe in the existence of a beneficent Power that

[1] *Vide* "Interview to unemployed workers' deputation" and "Statement to the Press", 27-9-1931.

overrides and upsets all human plans. It ever produces order out of chaos, and redresses wrongs in spite of the tyranny of tyrants.

India must come to her own one day. But she will do so chiefly if her own sons and daughters behave themselves and prove worthy of her freedom. We must exert our utmost to prove our worth, and you, friends of the Conciliation Group, will, I know, do your level best according to your lights to help a just solution.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

CARL HEATH, ESQ.

INDIAN CONCLLIATION GROUP

FRIENDS HOUSE

EUSTON ROAD, LONDON, N. W. 1

From a photostat: G.N. 1027

543. LETTER TO STEEN

December 10, 1934

DEAR COL. STEEN,

I was glad to receive your letter. I did indeed collect a fair amount during my Harijan tour. The funds are in the hands of the Harijan Sevak Sangh, I)elhi. The Board considers all applications for grants. My collections are mostly allocated for disbursements in the districts or places in which they were collected. You will be glad to know that several thousand schools and boarding houses are being conducted under the aegis of the Board or supported partly or wholly by it throughout India.

I need hardly tell you that I have known your institution and its work for many years. Shri Shinde was kind enough to interest me in it. Undoubtedly it is much older than the H. S. Sangh.

Wishing you all success,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

544. LETTER TO MASNILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

December 10*, 1934*

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letters. You should not expect any article from me just now. I can't even think what to write. I do not know the situation there. I do believe, however, that the Agent should stay. Whether he is a good or a bad one will depend on our luck. But if there were to be no Agent, nothing could be done. What is to be done if none of you knows the art of using the Agent well? Or probably experience will teach you that art. It will be enough if you yourself keep away from intrigues. Should I take it as certain now that you won't send a permit for Ramdas?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4828

545. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI N. PATEL

December,10 1934

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

This is no time to ask me to send messages. It would be best to let me do my work and deduce what message you can from it. It is better to demonstrate one's message through one's work rather than say it in words Who else will take up the work of reviving village industries if not Patidar young men and women? What can be better education than such work? He is an educated man who multiplies one pie into two by honest means and does for the country work of greater value than the cost of the khadi that he wears. I wish the Conference[1] success.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9592. Courtesy: Raojibhai N. Patel

[1] Patidar Conference

546. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

December 10, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Pass on the accompanying letter[1] to Khan Saheb. The rest Mahadev will write. After receiving Rajendrababu's letter, I was left with no option. I have received no wire from Delhi-so far.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 143

547. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

December 10, 1934

There is no possibility of your finding a copy of my Sam*kshipta Balakanda. You* may find Gatulal's book Send it to me if you do. Perhaps Munshi may have a copy. *Balakanda* may be found only with some Indian who was in South Africa. You may make inquiries.

Why should we waste our time In guessing the reasons for Khan Saheb's arrest? There is one obvious reason. They cannot put up with his dynamism.

My jail-going will be postponed. It seems, however, that ultimately there will be no alternative to it.

I intend to leave Wardha on the 18th or the 19th.

Wherever they lodge me, at the moment I feel that they must give me facilities for Harijan work.

. . .[2] is thinking things out for himself at the moment. I am hopeful, however, that after he has stumbled often enough he will come round. His mind has become extremely unsteady. The Lord will do as He pleases; He knows better. This knowledge relieves me from worry.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 154-5

[1] The letter is not available.

[2] The name is Qmitted in the source.

548. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS NEVATIA

December 10, 1934

CHI. RAMESHWAR,

Let me have a full report about Ghani. Pay him at least Rs. 30. I will write more tomorrow. What arrangements have been made for his meals? Can you not find a Muslim with clean habits ? If you can find even a Christian cook, he will do. If there is a big railway station nearby, Ghani can go there daily for one meal. What is the Cliimate of the place like? What is the size of the population?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3040

549. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

December 10, 1934

BHAI RAJENDRA PRASAD,

Your letter. I have had an exhaustive account from Lakshmidas too. A copy of the letter I sent to Maulana Saheb is enclosed herewith.[1] I expect to reach Delhi during the last week of this month. The. Working Committee will of course meet there and we may defer our decision till then. I hope everything will be settled at that time. We should not be scared into taking a decision contrary to our principles. Whatever step we may take can be taken only on its own merit.

My programme is at the moment fixed only up to my Delhi visit. Correspondence with the Viceroy will continue. So far as is possible I want to avoid going to jail but the future rests with God. May you maintain good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 9733. Courtesy: Rajendra Prasad

[1] The letter is not available.

550. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

December 10, 1934

CHI. SHARMA,

Your letter. It is a pity that no two letters of yours are alike. All are full of your moods. For my part there is no question of any suspicion. For me the foremost task is to see you well-adjusted. You are the one who harbours suspicions. What have I written that you read my suspicion in it? I am in every way trying to arrange for your training. I have already written to Dr. Ansari. Tell me what more I am to do. You are indeed undergoing true training. What does it suggest when you say that you cannot get a house even in a village? What does Krishna's wasting away and your falling ill indicate? What happened to your research talents? Where is your self-control gone? You had written that your presence might cure Krishna. What are you doing now? I had taken it that you would be all right after having gone there. Your last letter pains me; it seems that you are passing the days in great distress. Have you made any arrangements for your children's education?

Give me a clear picture of-what is happening there. As all are now under your control I get no letters either from your brothers or from Draupadi.

Ramdas is not progressing well. He is extremely worried and moreover unsteady. He is assailed by varying moods. God's will prevails, what can we do?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I might reach Delhi about the 20th.

From a facsimile of the Hindi: Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, between pp. 130 and 131

551. LETTER TO T. RAMACHANDRA

[Before *December 11, 1934*][1]

Mahatma Gandhi has addressed a letter to Brahmachari T. Ramachandra[2] asking him to suggest names for occupying the position of agents for pursuing the activities of the All-India Village Industries Association in Mysore for each of the several . districts in the State. Gandhiji has hinted that the workers so selected should be "who e-hoggers".

The Hindu, 12-12-1934

552. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

December 11, 1934

It is unfortunate that Press correspondents have thought fit without reference to the parties thereto to publish garbled reports of the correspondence that has been going on between His Excellency the Viceroy and myself with reference to my contemplated visit to the Frontier Province.

I was pressed by several editors to contradict or confirm the reports.

The best thing I could do was to seek His Excellency's permission to publish the correspondence in so far as it has gone. Having just received this permission,[3] I release the correspondence to the Press.

But I would warn the public against thinking that the correspondence is closed and that I am waiting for the first opportunity to court arrest by proceeding to the Frontier in the teeth of His Excellency's advice to the contrary.

I have no desire to offer civil disobedience at the present moment. My object is as a humble servant of God to meet those in the Frontier who call themselves Servants of God and to know them. The urge has become all the greater now that their brave leader is under

[1] The report has the date-line "Bangalore, December 11, 1934".
[2] M. L. C. and Secretary, Mysore State Harijan Sevak Sangh
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Upton Sinclair", 6-12-1934.

arrest. But my immediate object cannot be served by defiance of authority. Therefore, I propose to try all possible constitutional means to obtain the necessary permission.

If suspicion of my motive is the cause of refusal, I shall try to disarm the suspicion. My endeavour is to avoid every occasion for civil disobedience of authority, in so far as it is humanly possible to do so.

I would therefore ask the public in general, and the friends of the Frontier in particular, to hold themselves in patience. They will know in proper time what is to happen finally. And I would urge the editors of newspapers to respect my wish that they publish nothing concerning my contemplated visit to the Frontier without authority.

Here is the correspondence[1]:

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-12-1934

553. LETTER TO S. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

December 11, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I purposely refrained from sending a reply to your previous letter as it did not call for any. The letter received two days ago did require a reply. But I was waiting for the- arrival of your good wife. It was a privilege for me to meet her here. The advent of Ambujam has been a blessing to me. [She]1 revives old sweet memories and brings me nearer to you as a member of the family. I have not had a long chat with her. I hope to some time today. I have a heavy meeting be[fo]re me [ami]d[st] an otherwise heavy programme for the next two days. Ambujam is well and happy.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original. Courtesy: S. Doraiswami Iyer and Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Not reproduced hare; *vide* "Letter to private secretary to Viceroy", 15-11-1934; 28-11-1934 and "Telegram to private secretary to Viceroy", 7-12-1934.

554. LETTER TO S. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

WARDHA,
December 11, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

I am thankful for your letter. It is a matter of great joy to me that in the opinion of both of you, Ambujam has benefited by her stay with me. Her only ambition in life seems to be to make herself a useful instrument of service. I regard it a privilege to be able to help Ambujam in any way I can. And I shall always welcome any suggestion you may make in furtherance of my effort to guide her.

With my regards to both of you,

M. K. GANDHI

Builders of Modern India, p. 53

555. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

December 11, 1934

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got both your letters together. I will probably leave on the 19th. I had thought that you would arrive here on Sunday. What can my influence avail? You alone can judge how much your presence is necessary there. Is it your job, or mine from this distance, to please Mummy? It is not as easy to send for you here now as it was to relieve you. For myself, I am eagerly awaiting your arrival, and your work also remains unattended to. I shall write to Mummy today again,

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3436

556. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

December 11, 1934

BHAIZ GHANSHYAMDAS,

I see that you are endeavouring to reach Delhi under any circumstances before the 20th. There is no need for all this troubIe if it is only for my sake. You must not rush at the cost of your health. One more point arises about my visit. Would not my staying with you be risky in view of my recent correspondence with the Viceroy, a garbled version of which has appeared in the Press? And the third point: Would you not be subject to pressure of work immediately on your reaching there? If you think I must go to Delhi I can go only after four or five days. As far as I can see now I can set- out on the 19th, reaching there on the 20th. Mahadev is writing to you about the rest.

I have Gopi's letter which I am enclosing with this. Could she benefit from a trip to Europe?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 8003. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

557. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

December 12, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter. I am sending a fresh statement[1] altogether for Khan Saheb. I think it is the on]y proper statement for him to make, and he should make it. I am writing to him. Read that Ietter. I need not write anything more here. The apology offered in the statement seems absolutely essential to me. But you are the final judge about that and about the whole statement. I can say nothing positively from this distance. I also feel that a lawyer should be engaged.

He may read out the statement. He should not plead either guilty or not guilty. The lawyer should not plead for a lighter

[1] To be submitted to the court

sentence, but may, if he wishes, analyse the speech or may only watch the proceedings. There is no need at all to cross-examine the witnesses. But these are my personal views only. The final decision about everything rests with you.

As for me, you know what the position is. Andrews has left for Delhi today on that very business. He has asked me not to proceed further in the matter meanwhile. Details will be given to you by Mathuradas. Nothing more need be done for the present regarding Rajendrababu. I have received a wire from Ghanshyamdas saying that the doctors do not permit him to leave till the '30th. I need not, therefore, reach Delhi on the 20th, unless Andrews advises otherwise. The meeting of the Working Committee can be called now only in January.

If you think it proper to attend Balvantrai's Conference, you may do so. I can't judge about that.

Tell Abhyankar on my behalf, too, that he should get all right.

Pyarelal must have arrived there. If you require more help, please ask for it. If it is possible, send away Prabhavati to Swaruprani. Pyarelal also should pay her a visit.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhohaine, pp. 143-4

558. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

December 13, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter. Manilal's and . . .[1]'s problem seems to have been solved satisfactorily. I feel unhappy about Karnataka. But what can we say to a leader like Gangadharrao? Do what you can.

I am now wholly occupied with the village Industries Association. Rajaji is here. He came the day before yesterday evening and wants to leave today. Jamnalal will go there in a few days. The rest you will know from Mahadev.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati].

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 145

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

559. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

WARDHA,
December 13, 1934

CHI. MRIDULA,

I have your letter. I had been awaiting it. Most probably I shall be here till the 27th. Then in Delhi. I advise you to come and meet me here. Would you be interested in the work of the Village Industries Association? It would be good if you could meet me early for that.

I keep worrying about Saralabehn. Write to me in detail. It would be better if you talked in person.

Ba is here because Ramdas is here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11192. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

560. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

December 13, 1934

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. I have one from Jang Bahadur too. I was sorry. You must have received my telegram. If an operation is necessary, everything can be done at the Seva Sadan at Calcutta. Why should the poor be harassed? It is improper to delay such matters. Keep me informed. You are of course entitled to come to me any time you choose. My staying here or anywhere else has now uncertain. As such, plans are afoot for my Delhi visit.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am not writing separately to Jang Bahadur.

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

561. HARIJAN WORK IN ASSAM

The Secretary, Harijan Sevak Sangh, Assam, has sent me a copy of the report of the Sangh's work during the year. From the report I abstract the following interesting particulars:

The Sangh runs 72 schools for boys and girls with 2,365 pupils on the rolls. of these, 21 are mixed schools and 4 for girls only.

The total amount spent on the schools during the year was Rs. 4,495-1 4-O.

The Sangh recruited 328 boys and girls for the ordinary schools.

Scholarships totalling Rs. 864-9-0 for Middle English and High English schools were given to Harijan students.

The total value of books, slates, soaps, clothes given came to Rs. 206-2-6.

23 *Namghars (prayer* houses) were thrown open to Harijans.

The Jorhat Committee built a common prayer house for Rs. 1,196-9-3.

The Sangh employed 11 Harijan teachers, including two mistresses.

A co-operative society was organized at Dibrugarh for Bhangis. 81 Bhangis have taken up shares. Rs. 920 have already been realized.

The Sangh has organized 9 District Committees. These have organized 22 sub-committees of Harijans.

Free medical relief was given, costing Rs. 16-7-O. 40 spinningwheels and ten maunds of cotton for spinning were distributed among poor Harijans.

132 villages were toured for anti-opium and anti-drink propaganda. As a result, 154 took pledges, giving up drink, and 15 hemp smoking.

Municipal Boards of the Province were requested to make better arrangements of housing, drainage and water supply for their employees, especially the sweepers. But it is sad to note that none of them took up the work. Gauhati and Dibrugarh were the worst offenders.

By way of contrast, it is pleasurable to note that, at the instance of the itinerant workers, some villages constructed their own roads and cleaned their own tanks.

246 villages were surveyed during the year, and statistics of Harijan families as to their condition, professions, disabilities, drinking and opium habits, etc., were collected.

The President, His Holiness the Satradhikar Goswami of Garmur, toured through most of the important places including the ex-tea-garden coolie centres.

In Assam, opium is a very serious problem. It ruins the addict physically, morally and materially. It has been found that, in 8 districts, the average consumption among 64,459 addicts is nearly 1Ω *tolas* per head per month. In Nowgong, excepting the Mikir Hills, the consumption is about 18 Srs. per 10,000, in Lakhimpur it is 62 Srs. per 10,000 In Mikir Hills it is even over 62 Srs. per 10,000. Harijans are the worst sufferers in Lakhimpur, Sibsagar and Nowgong.

The main professions of indigenous Harijans are fishing, pottery and goldsmithy. The revival movement should result in helping these artisans.

This encouraging record is marred by the knowledge that over one-fourth of the expenses were incurred for administrative and propaganda purposes. The total expenditure was Rs. 11,966. of this, Rs. 3,664 represents administration and propaganda, and Rs. 8,302 welfare. Administrative staff absorbs Rs. 1,149 and propagandists Rs. 1,020. I have omitted annas and pies. Now this expense for welfare work of Rs. 8,302 is much too much in my estimation. As I have repeatedly said, constructive work is its own and the best propaganda. Administrative staff should also be reduced to a minimum. I know that Assam is a difficult province to work [in]. Nevertheless, the fact that Harijan Sevak Sanghs are an organization of penitents or debtors should ever be borne in mind.

Harijan, 14-12-1934

562. NOTES

AN ASPIRING NATUROPATH

Being myself a half-baked naturopath, I draw to myself similar cranks, of whom Shri Sharma of Khurja is one. He had to his credit a Sun and Light Hospital and some well advertised books. I had a hand in the disappearance of the Hospital. The sequel is told as follows in his own words:[1]

. . I would like . . . to inform . . . those who may be interested in nature-cure methods that, having become, of late, more acquainted with the

[1] Only extracts are reptoduced here.

ways of Nature, that is of Truth, I have discovered that all my books on sunlight and colour cannot be held to be reliable beyond doubt. . . . I would, therefore, like all those who possess my books, or who might have heard of them, for the time being to dismiss them from their consideration and not to rely upon what I have written therein or upon the invention which I have advertised therein. I hope some day . . . to re-write the books and place them before the public with confidence based upon verifiable experiments.

I wish the other naturopaths will take a lesson from Shri Sharma's example. I have written and spoken much against the modern treatment of diseases. But I have a sneaking regard for the comparative sanity of allopaths. They do not make pretensions. The best among them do not refuse to learn from others, and they are humble enough to own their mistakes among themselves, though not to their patients. They try to know all about the human body and as much as is possible of the drugs they use. Naturopaths use few drugs. But an accurate knowledge of the body is surely essential for all who would tamper with it under the pretence of curing it of the many ailments to which it is a prey. Shri Sharma has a burning passion for becoming a true naturopath. He is, therefore, determined to acquire a working knowledge of anatomy, physiology and whatever is necessary for all who will deal with diseases, whether in the name of allopathy, homoeopathy or naturopathy. His notice is a confession and a warning. Let all concerned take note.

Harijan, 14-12-1934

563. A HARIJAN SEVAK GONE

I trecler my respectful condolences to the family of Shri V. P. Madhava Rao who died the other days[1] at Bangalore at the ripe old age of 85. He was Dewan of Travancore, Baroda and Mysore. After his retirement he used to devote his time to social service. And though so old, he had allowed himself to be nominated as Chairman of the local Harijan Sevak Sangh. His was an influence always-exerted on behalf of the Harijan.

Harijan, 14-12-1 934

[1] On December 1, 1934

564. MOTHER OF INVENTION

Shri J. K. Mehta, Secretary, Indian Merchants, Chamber, Bombay, writes:[1]

> . . . In 1917 my services were borrowed from the Chamber by the Government of India for purposes of the War. .I was at Simla for about a year and a half with the Munitions Board. . . . It was found that horseshoes could not be made available from the United Kingdom. It proved to be a great and complicated problem, as there was no factory in India making horseshoes. . . . Ultimately the solution was found in getting supplies from hundreds of villages. The village smith came to the rescue of the Government of India, . . . who got horseshoes from different villages and sent them up for the Army requirements. . . .

Truly, necessity is the mother of invention. Why should not we be able to accomplish in our war against enforced idleness and unemployment what had become possible in the time of the great War? Instances such as .Shri J. K. Mehta has given can be endlessly multiplied. The whole face of the great continent of Europe was changed during those days of mutual slaughter, and men and women, boys and girls had to work with their hands, in order that they might be able to keep body and soul together.

Harijan, 14-12-1934

565. A. I. F. I. A.—OBJECT AND CONSTITUTION[2]

[WARDHA,
December 14, 1934][3]

As the idea was to form a Board of Administration of the policy and programme of the All-India Village Industries Association of persons who thoroughly believe in its policy and the practicability of its programme and who will, in effect, be wholetimers, both Mr. Kumarappa and I have given considerable time and thought to the formation of the Board.

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

[2] The Association was formed on this date; *vide* Vol. LX, "The New Baby", 21-12-1934. The constitution was released to the Press along with a statement on December 15.

[3] *ibid.*

The Congress resolution[1] in the matter contemplates the question of a self-acting, independent and non-political organization consisting of men and women whose primary aim in life would be identification with the villagers and promotion of their welfare.

The following friends, having understood the implications of their obligation, have consented to form the Association of which they become both the foundation-members and the first Board of Management:

Shri Shrikrishnadas Jajooji, President and Treasurer

[Shri] J. C. Kumarappa, organizer and Secretary

Shrimati Gosibehn Captain

Dr. Khan Saheb

Shri Shoorji Vallabhdas

Dr. Prafulla Ghosh

Shri Lakshmidas Purushottam Asar

Shri Shankerlal Banker

They will have power to add to their number.

The function of the Board will be to define the programme of village reconstruction work from time to time, to co-ordinate the policy followed in different centres, to collect, collate and circulate information gathered from workers or agents as to the actual condition of the existing village industries, both those that may be flourishing and those that may be perishing, also as to the economic, moral and physical condition of villagers, to carry on research work with the help of specialists and experts and to discover and create a market for surplus village manufactures.

The Board will collect such funds as may be required for the due discharge of its functions. As the secret of the success of the policy of this Association will be in making the villagers selfreliant and self-supporting, its programme must not be costly. The idea is, therefore, to work with as little outlay as possible.

It follows, therefore, that decentralization must be the keynote of the Board's policy, and India will be divided into as many areas as there may be workers or agents, who will work, organize and be

[1] *Vide* "Speech at subjects committee meeting, A.I.C.C.", 24-10-1934.

responsible to the Board for the carrying out of its programme in their respective areas.

The workers or agents will be selected from those who, consistently with their preoccupation of earning their livelihood, will give their whole time to the work of the. Association. So tar as possible, the agents will be honorary. They will collect what funds may be necessary for the organization of their areas.It may be that the Board will not get many unpaid agents. It will be satisfied, for a start, even with a few districts which are thoroughly organized and demonstrated to be economically and otherwise successful. A list of agents will be published from time to time.

The Board cannot carry on research work without the help of experts. And since experts cannot be expected to give their whole time and thought to the work of the Association, I have sent requests to several friends if they would allow their names to appear on the Board of Advisers. So far the following friends have- kindly consented to be on it:

Dr. Rabindranath Tagore
Sir J. C. Bose Sir
P. C. Ray
Sir C. V. Raman
Shri Ramdas
Pantulu Jamal Mohamed Sahib
Shri G. D. Birla
Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas
Sir S. Pochkhanawalla
Prof. Sam Higginbottom
Dr. Jivraj Mehta
Dr. M. A. Ansari
Major-General Sir Robert McCarrison
Dr. Rajabally
V. Patel
Dr. S. Subba Rao
Dr. B. C. Roy
Dr. Purushottam Patel

Wardha has been chosen as the Headquarters because of being

centrally situated, being a junction station and being rather a glorified village than a city.

Though I have several names before me of friends who have undertaken to act as agents to the Association, I would request these correspondents as well as others to offer their names to the Organizer and Secretary, Mr. J. C. Kumarappa, Wardha. I have transferred to him all the names and papers received by me.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION

The Association contemplated: by the resolution regarding village industries passed by the Indian National Congress at its session held on the 27th October, 1934, at Bombay, and known as the All-India Village Industries Association, i.e., the Akhil Bharat Gram Udyog Sangh, is hereby formed.

OBJECT

The object of the Association shall be village reorganization and reconstruction, including the revival, encouragement and improvement of village industries, and the moral and physical advancement of the villages of India.

ACTIVITIES

For the due fufilment of its object, the Association shall raise funds to carry on research work, publish literature, organize organic establish agencies, devise measures for the improvement. of village tools, and do everything that may be necessary for the furtherance of its object.

The Association shall work under the guidance and advice of Gandhiji.

The Association shall consist of: (i) A Board of Management, (ii) Members, (iii) Agents, (iv) Honorary workers, (v) Paid, wholetime workers and (vi) Associates, and shall also have a board of advisers.

MEMBERSHIP

Any person who subscribes to the pledge hereto annexed and is recommended by a member, or any one of the duly authorized agents of the Association, and whose admission is approved by the Board of Management shall be a Member.

Any person who sympathizes with the object of the Association and pays an annual subscription of not less than Rs. 100 shall be an Associate, and any person who pays a lump sum of Rs. 1,000 may be enrolled as a Life Associate.

Advisers shall be those who, consistently with their preoccupations, agree to give the free benefit of their special knowledge to the Association whenever they are consulted.

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

The following foundation-members shall be the first Board of Management to hold office for three years:

Shri Shrikrishandas Jajoo

[Shri] J. C. Kumarappa

Shri[mati] Gosibehn Captain

Dr. Khan Saheb

Shoorji Vallabhdas

Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ghosh

Shri Lakshmidas Purushottam Asar

[Shri] Shankerlal Banker

Thereafter the members shall elect the Board of Management to hold office for a period of three years.

The Board of Management shall be in full charge of the affairs of the Association, hold funds and properties for it, and shall have power to add to their number from among the duly enrolled members, provided that the total strength does not exceed twenty.

The Board of Management shall maintain proper books of accounts which shall be duly audited and which shall be open to public inspection.

The Board of Management shall have the power to frame bye-laws for the carrying out of the object clause.

It will be open to the Board of Management to alter or amend or add to this constitution by the consent of three-fourths of the then existing members of the Board of Management.

The Board of Management shall have power to appoint trustees to hold funds and properties on behalf of the Association.

Pledge for Members

Having read the constitution and rules of the All-India Village Industries Association, I offer to be a member thereof and, God helping, promise to devote the best part of my energy and talents to the furtherance of its object, which is the all-round welfare of the villagers of India.

So long as I remain a member of the Association, I shall not take part in any campaign of Civil Disobedience.

In the discharge of my duties, I shall seek the assistance and co-operation of all those who may be willing to give them, irrespective of differences in politics.

To the best of my ability, I shall strive to live up to the ideals of the Association and prefer the use of village manufactures to any other.

In the prosecution of my obligations to the villagers, I shall recognize no distinction between man and man.

Harijan, 21-12-1934

566. LETTER TO J. N. SAHNI

December 14, 1934

MY DEAR SAHNI,

Your letter. I do not read *Hindustan Times.* The cutting you send me I see for the first time. It is just now 3 a.m. Devdas is here but I see him rarely. I am sending the cutting to him with a note of disapprobation. Although it was a Press agency report, he had no right to publish it without reference to me. You or he or anybody would be justified in publishing exclusive news provided it was authorized by the party affected. There are today in India English journalists who, though not well disposed towards me, observe the rule with reference to me, not for my sake but for their own journalistic reputation. I know that you did not err wittingly, but you have erred, now I can say, both as a soldier and [as a] journalist.[1] The injury started with the U. P. wire from Patna. But I have done. I draw the attention of those who, I believe, are amenable to influence from me. You must forget all about it, but learn the lesson that it is better not to print anything about me in which public interest is involved, without reference to me.

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to J.N. Sahni", 10-12-1934.

You shall certainly see me when I come to Delhi and you will incidentally know what injury has been caused by the premature publication of news that was only half true, not by you only but others also. But others, lapse does not excuse yours.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

567. LETTER TO SAHEBJI MAHARAJ

December 15, 1934

DEAR SAHEBJI MAHARAJ[1],

I have kept your previous letter of 6th September by me. I read your "Cows Help Cows" only last week. It is beautifully written. But I want to complain as a humble representative of the cow. Some experts tell me that mixtures such as you contemplate are not wholly successful. What, I find, is needed are experiments that would serve the villagers in their own villages. If we do not find anything in that direction the majority of cows have to die so that the minority in off places like Dayalbagh may live !

I shall want your help in the village industries work.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2161

568. LETTER TO VERRIER ELWIN

December 15, 1934

MY DEAR VERRIER,

I am afraid your undertaking[2] covers my visit. You have to take permission. You have to observe it in the letter and the spirit. When in

[1] Head of the Radhaswami sect in Dayalbagh, Agra

[2] At the time of the renewal of his passport to India, the addressee had to give the following undertaking: "That I would confine myself entirely to work among the Gonds;

"take no part in civil disobedience ox any other political movement;

"refrain, as far as possible, from associating with any persons engaged in political agitation;

"refrain from writing articles against the Government; and would observe the undertaking in the spirit as well as the letter."

doubt, conscience demands reference. If they do not give an unequivocal answer, you may not have me there. So long as the undertaking lasts, the more honourable course is to-refer all doubtful matters to the authorities. If it was well to give the undertaking, it is well also to leave oneself in the hands of those who have taken it.

Andrews was here the other day. He is in Delhi now. I shall meet him again. He will leave for England on 5th January (D.V.).

Love to you all.

BAPU

SHRI VERRIER ELWIN
GOND SEVA MANDAL
KARANJIA (C. P.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

569. LETTER TO H. P. MODY

December 15, 1934

DEAR MR. MODY,

The Assam Relief Committee write to say that they have not received any blankets from you.

Yours Sincerely
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI H. P. MODY
MILL OWNERS ASSOCIATION
BOMBAY FORT

From the original: H. P. Mody Papers. Courstesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX I

TALK WITH MARS CHESLEY

[On or before *December 15, 1934]*[1]

MARY CHESLEY: Do you believe your guidance comes from subconscious reasoning or from God ?

GANDHI: From God—but subconscious reasoning may be the voice of God. often, after seeing the way I consciously reason out why that is the best way. Mahomet was like this, very sure his voices were of God and he was no impostor.

M. C. Then does following conscience lead to mystical experiences?

G. It may or it may not. But one thing is sure that the humility which feels itself nothing before God is necessary for mystical experiences, such as those of Saint Francis and Saint Augustine. on the other hand, a Bradlaw or a Marcus Aurelius, though following conscience, felt themselves to be self-made men and not dependent on God, and so they could get no mystical experiences or joy. To me, following conscience is following a living force, not an ethical code.

M. C. How do you understand what is God's guidance for you when it is a question of choosing between two *good* things?

G. I use my intellect on the subject and if I don't get any strong feeling as to which of the two I should choose, I just leave the matter, and before long I wake up one morning with the perfect assurance that it should be A rather than B. Always, of course, it is necessary to be utterly humble and go wherever the decision should take you, even though it should be to difficulties and suffering.

M. C. Is it not necessary to lead a disciplined life in order to receive these assurances as to what to do and not to do?

G. Yes, of course, one's mind must be attuned to the five necessary rules of love, truth, purity, non-possession and fearlessness.

M. C. Do you include bodily discipline such as fasting?

G. It you follow the five rules already mentioned. you will find that bodily discipline follows automatically. You should read *Rajayokga* by Swami Vivekananda on this point.

[1] According to the source the talk took place at the close of one of the sessions of the All-India Village Industries Association held at Wardha on December 14 and 15, 1934.

Just then word was brought to Gandhi that a certain rich man had donated a large sum of money to the All-India Village Industries Association fund, and joy was expressed by the little group, Gandhi remarking quietly . . . that loving service was receiving its reward. He had been saying previously that we who believed in non-violence should win the rich to serve the poor by our own devoted service and by showing our contentment and happiness in a position of less wealth and prestige than we might demand. He spoke about this again now.

G. If rich people could see us poorer ones really content instead of hankering after wealth, it would become the fashion to dispense with wealth. The fashion for brown bread grew because a few enthusiasts showed that they really believed in it and liked it. Unfortunately the higher castes have failed to identify themselves with their humbler fellows. This is the darkest hour of Hinduism. I have no excuse to offer for it.

M. C. What is your remedy ?

G. Everything I am doing, village industries, khaddar, Harijan work, etc.[1]

M. C. From what sources do you get your conception of God ?

G. From my childhood, remembering my mother's constant visits to the temple. Sometimes these were as many as four or five a day, and never less than two. Also my nurse used to tell me I must repeat the name of God if I felt afraid.

M. C. Are not your own experiences sources of your conception too?

G. Yes, but they did not begin until later, in South Africa. Before that I had a period of doubt and it was during that time that I began to study Islam and Christianity.

M. C. How far have these two religions coloured your conception of God ?

G. I began with a prejudice against Christianity because in my youth it had meant to me drink, eating meat and Western clothes. I had no such prejudice to overcome against Islam. Later when I met some fine Christian people my prejudice went, and for a year I studied Christian books voraciously, attended the Keswick Convention, met famous divines and generally absorbed Christianity, honestly seeking to know if I should do as some of my friends were always begging me to do—become a Christian. But in the end I honestly felt I could not do so. I believe in the historic Jesus, for the four gospels bear the stamp of the real experience of devotees.

M. C. Is the conception of God as Father only to be found in Christianity ?

[1] At this point Kasturba and others came with Gandhiji's food. Mary Chesley left and joined him again during his evening walk.

G. No, it is also to be found in Hinduism. Read the second chapter of the *Gita* in which the conception of God, not only as Father, but also as Mother is to be found. This is not the case with Islam, for among all its ninetynine names for God, .'Father" is not one. Mahomet, like Christ, had the authoritative note of God-consciousness. If you judge a religion by the changed lives of its adherents, Islam seems to me to have as much to show as Christianity. Anyway, two thousand years is a very brief time in which to judge the merits of a religion.

M. C. I know some people who are praying that you may become a Christian .

G. (Laughing) . . . Many are—

M. C. But wait until you hear the reason—it is because they feel that you can give a truer interpretation of Christianity than any yet given to the world.

G. There are others who feel that too. But if they wish me to say that Christianity is the only true religion, I cannot do so. I can truly say, however, that Christianity is a true religion.

M. C. What do you think is the special contribution of Christianity, Islam and Hinduism to the world?

G. I think Christianity's particular contribution is that of active love. No other religion says so firmly that God is love, and the New Testament is full of the word. Christians, however, as a whole have denied this principle with their wars. The ahimsa of Hinduism is a more passive thing than the active Christian love.

The great contribution of Hinduism is its recognition of the unity of all life. Like Christianity, Hinduism has not lived up to its teaching. If either had done so, there would have been no need for Islam, for whatever is fundamentally good in a religion for the part of the world in which it has arisen is certainly good for the whole world.

Islam's contribution has been the brotherhood of all men. Later this idea was limited to the Islamic brotherhood, so Muslims too have failed to live up to the teaching of their religion. Khan Saheb, with his teaching of the service of all humanity, is bringing them back to the original idea.

M. C. You once said that the idea of Jesus as the Son of God was a mystical conception. Would you enlarge upon that, please?

C. I believe that Jesus was a man born in the natural way, and that people, seeing the wonderful things he did, ascribed divinity to him, and then described it mystically by saying that he was the Son of God.

M. C. Do you think such writers were impostors?

G. No. I hey were just expressing their conception mystically. The whole Book of Revelation is a description of mystical experiences. For example, it does not mean literally that streets were to be paved with gold. Many mystical expressions would be gross if they meant literally what they said.

M. C. Have *you* had any mystical experiences?

G. If, by mystical experiences, you mean visions, no. I should be a fraud if I claimed to have had such. But I am very sure of the voice which guides me. Of course, some unbalanced people have claimed to hear voices too—but I do not think anyone has suggested that I am unbalanced.[1]

M. C. You have spoken of your sense of uneasiness which preceded your twenty-one days' fast[2] last year, and also said that generally when obeying your inner voice, you find a reason for your action afterwards. Did you find a reason for the twenty-one days' fast?

G. It is true that a sense of uneasiness drove me to that fast. Usually, even under the greatest strain I can remain quite buoyant but when I lost that buoyancy and could not even sleep, I decided to fast and immediately found peace. Yes, I did discover a reason for it, one which the fast itself brought to light; for several people, both at the time and afterwards, wrote to tell me of sins which they had committed and which they had now put right to the best of their ability. They said that the fast had brought them to a knowledge of the truth about themselves and that they would not allow such faults to occur again.

M. C. You have said sometimes that consciousness of sin brings a feeling of separation from God. Did you feel any such separation before your fast?

G. No. I felt only great uneasiness and restlessness. I could not joke even in my usual way.

During the discussion on the organization of Village Industries' Association Gandhi made it clear that 'rural-mindedness' was to him not a mere detail, but the prime necessity. When the name of a certain woman was suggested as a member of the Board, he remembered that she had, in all seriousness, thought it impossible to use tooth-sticks in a town, because there was nowhere to throw them.

We could not have anyone of such mentality on the Board. To begin with, we do not want in our Village Industries to try to compete with the West in making tooth-powders, etc.

Bapu, pp. 114-22

[1] This remark was said in such a droll way that all burst into laughter.

[2] From May 8 to 28, 1933.

1. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

December 16, 1934

CHI. PREMA,

Your letters I shall send on to Narandas. Today also I got up at 1.45 a.m. and started writing letters. It has become a habit with me now to wake up at about 2. I go to bed before 9 p.m. During the day, I take a nap once or twice and get half an hour to one hour. That seems to be enough for me.

By writing "not revised" I ensure—and do—justice to myself and to the person to whom the letter is addressed. If by chance I have written *"aaj mar gaya"* instead of "Ajmer *gaya*", the other party may correct the mistake or, in case of doubt, ask me. A letter which has not been revised should always be regarded as incomplete. But I would prefer, and so would you, that I write an incomplete letter to you rather than not write any.

Most probably I shall be going to Delhi on or about the 27th. Continue to write to me at the Wardha address till you hear from me or you read in the papers.

The atonement for any violation of a vow in a dream is generally greater vigilance and Ramanama on waking up from the dream. Such violations of vows or moral rules in dreams are signs of our imperfection. Unconsciously we harbour deep in our hearts the desires which we gratify in dreams. We should not despair because of such dreams, but should become more and more vigilant. Despair may be a sign of the person being attached to the senses; it is certainly a sign of his lack of faith. If a person tires of repeating Ramanama—despairs about its usefulness—shouldn't we say that he has lost faith in it? When Columbus's companions lost faith, they wanted to kill him. But with his eyes of faith Columbus could clearly see the coast and he asked his companions to give him some more time, and he reached America! ! ! If a person dreams that he is eating forbidden food, such a dream also means what I have explained above. There may be external causes for such dreams and, whenever we discover any, we should remove them. "I am the spotless Brahman that is witness of all the states." This is what we sing. We can sing thus only if we strive ceaselessly to be that. The dreams that we get are a signthat we have not succeeded in becoming spotless. They are a warning light for us.

Not a leaf can stir without God's grace, but we cannot dispense with human effort either, which is the means through which God's grace works. Realization means nothing but pure and selfless service of all living creatures.

It is very good indeed that Kisan[1] has decided to stay with you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10364. Also C.W. 6803 Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

2. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

December 16, 1934

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I got your letter. Give your wife the freedom that you have reserved for yourself. In matters in which both do not agree, each must be free to go his or her own way. She should, therefore, get training for using her freedom well. I see the good of you both in that.

Take the fullest interest in village industries work. And do not forget that khadi is the center of such work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9513. Also C.W. 429. Courtesy: Shivabhai G. Patel

3. LETTER TO VENILAL A. GANDHI

WARDHA,
December 16, 1934

CHI. VENILAL,

Who are the five members in your family? Give me their ages, etc. I think you should be content with only so much education as the poor can hope to provide their children. Can you do ordinaryreading with your eyes? Do you maintain good health in other ways?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 920. Courtesy: Venilal A. Gandhi

[1] Kisan Ghumatkar

4. LETTER TO LABHUBEHN A. SHETH

December 16, 1934

CHI. LABHU,

If I had included your name in my letter to Amritlal, I would have been made a fool by your letter, wouldn't I? This is the plight of one who leaves the trodden path. Who can tell whether your letter conveys your genuine desire for knowledge or is mere idle prattle? But I want to look great in your eyes, hence I must measure up to your yardstick! If anything, I am at least four times older than you. Am I not?

How can I tell you where you can find steadiness, as though it were some commodity to be bought in a shop? If I were running a grocer's shop here, this being my ancestral business, I would have sent it over to you without your asking for it. You have even sent an advance of one anna. You have wasted your years. Amritlal is no more worthy of being your father because he has failed to show me something that you have within you. But hasn't the poet said, "The dear ones of the embodied soul are all selfish." After all isn't he only your embodied father? The one without a body that is your real Father dwells in your own heart. Know Him and you will not have to spend even an anna. Your learning is illusory if it does not lead you to Him. But if you are learning with this aim, you will be able to secure the release of Khan Saheb[1], Sheikh, Jawahar and the others. But if you want to indulge in idle talk and play as with dolls then you must cast away the idea of greatness you associate with me or humbly confess that you never had genuine thirst for knowledge. Remember in this connection the story of Indra and Virochana. If you don't know it yourself, ask Amritlal and let him also enjoy it and add to your knowledge.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

5. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

December 17, 1934

DEAR SISTER,

I do hope that your meeting in Karachi[2] will be a full success and that the sisters assembled there will rise above the petty quarrels of men by setting the example of refusing to divide themselves into

[1] Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan

[2] The reference is to the All-India Women's Conference.

various groups. Surely religions are not made to set up quarrels among ourselves. I hope too that the meeting will give full support to the activities of the newly-formed Village Industries Association. It is essentially women's work. Let it not be said of the city women that they cared not for their millions of sisters living in the 700,000 villages.

Here is a letter[1] for Dr. Maude Royden.

Your note has just come in. The cutting is interesting. C.F. Andrews comes in today.

It was a great joy to meet you both. I hope you were physically none the worse for your stay.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I find that I shall not be in Delhi on 20th as I had intended to be. I am likely to be there between 27th-29th. Having gone there, I am supposed to stay there two weeks at least and four at the most.

M. K. G.

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
4A STAFF LINES
KARACHI

From the original: C.W. 3516. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6325

6. LETTER TO BARINDRA KUMAR GHOSH

December 17, 1934

I have glanced through your book[2]. It has proved a severe disappointment. You have lost yourself in the exuberance of your own language. You have missed the spirit of non-co-operation and civil resistance. You have glorified slavery; our vice has become virtue in your estimation. I may not argue with you. Time will show us the true way. What does it matter so long as we pursue the path that seems to us to be right?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] The letter is not traceable.

[2] *Wounded Humanity*

7. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

WARDHA,
December 17, 1934

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

Is it not time you gave your decision about yourself and Jagannath? I want the names of the others whom you would recommend as agents.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA
VACHWADI
LAHORE

From the original: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

8. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

December 17, 1934

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

I got your letter. In my wire[1] I only asked you to send Rs. 5,000 for research. Didn't I say in it that the budget itself would be passed in Delhi?

Nrisinhaprasad's example must be said to be an excellent one. How many sanatanists like him did you come across in Kathiawar? I have no time to write about other things.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1149

9. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

December 17, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter. I am not surprised that the lawyers did not like Khan Saheb's statement[2]. We should be satisfied if our lawyers

[1] This is not traceable

[2] In the court during his trial on a charge of sedition; *vide* ,"Letter to Vallabhabhai Patel",12-12-1934

approved of it. It was the only one which could serve our purpose. The Government is not likely to understand anything at present.

Deenabandhu[1] is arriving today and we shall know from him what happened.

I think Jamnalalji will leave here on Thursday. Please do stay on there till then at any rate.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 145-6

10. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 17, 1934

CHI. NARANDAS,

If Keshu succeeds, it will be a great achievement. Jamnalalji can utilize your services in many ways—to control the accounts, to examine things, to think out new ways and so on. The office is not going to be a small one. If you are here, I also can use your services in a good many ways if I am free.

What you say regarding Shankaran is true. What can we do if Vijaya herself has become impatient to get married. According to me, she is not as yet at all fit to get married. Try to dissuade her. Most probably I will be leaving for Delhi on the 27th. Give Rs. 30 to Harilal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33676

[1] C. F. Andrews

11. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

December 17, 1934

CHI. SHARMA,

I feel apprehensive in writing to you. I got your letter just now. I had written nothing that could have provoked you to write such a letter. How can a son suspect his father? Perhaps I am not worthy of being a true father!

If no one is keeping well in Khurja, why do you stay on there? Go to the Harijan Ashram [Delhi] and live in a separate house there. It will not be very expensive. Or stay in a village here. I cannot put up with your falling ill and continuing to be ill.

Ramdas will not stay with me. He no longer has faith in my treatment though he consults me occasionally. He has given up eggs and takes ordinary diet. Since yesterday he has resumed living withNimu. He is preparing to go to Bombay, for which he has my permission. He has gained a fair amount of strength and moves about by himself. I am not worried on his account. In the end it will be all right for him.

Amtul left for Bombay the day before yesterday and will probably reach Delhi by the end of this month.

May be I shall be able to go to Delhi only after the 27th.

Your note appeared in last week's *Harijanbandhu* and in this week's *Harijan*. Owing to an oversight it was delayed for a week. As soon as your letter came I sent instructions for a copy of the *Harijan* to be sent to you.

I got a letter today from Dr. Ansari and among other things he writes this about you:

> As regards Dr. Sharma, I would like to see him and find out his exact requirements and then I may be able to help him.

It would be good if you went to Delhi. If you wish you may go there after my arrival. You yourself told me that you were responsible for your brothers not writing to me. Can they be so lacking in manners as not even to reply to me? If you have not seen them so far, is it not an instance of your haphazard ways? But if you do not yourself realize this, I can hardly make you see it. I see nothing but lack of coherence in your talk, your actions and your letters. I was under the impression that you were conscious of it. Well, we need not

worry about it. All will be well. Your heart is good and my effort is as vigorous as it can be. I always have your good at heart and nothing else. I hope to take much service from you. Ask Draupadi to write to me in detail.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha*, between pp. 136 and 137

12. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

December 18, 1934

CHI. KANTI,

I have had no letter from you for some time. I should like you to observe some rule. I for my part did reply to your last letter. How are things with you? Ramdas is here at present. He is fairly well. Devdas came and stayed for two days. Lakshmi has gone with Rajaji. Kakasaheb is in Madras. He has gone there to help in the Hindi work. Ba is all right. For the rest, read *Harijan*.

Most probably I shall have to go to Delhi at the end of this month.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7291. Courtesy: Kanti Gandhi

13. LETTER TO JUGALKISHORE BIRLA

December 18, 1934

BHAI JUGALKISHOREJI,

The enclosed letter is for your perusal. If the land required by Kshitishbabu is not of use to you and is not too valuable either, you may give it away to him and take back Rs. 1,500. If, however, it is valuable, I have nothing to say.

You must be reading *Harijan* and *Harijansevak*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 8004. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

14. LETTER TO HATIM ALVI[1]

December 19, 1934

Of the many happy memories of the late Maulana, the one that persists most with me, is the gift by him, on the conclusion of my fast of 21 days at Delhi, of a cow as an earnest of his intense desire to see heart-unity among Hindus and Mussalmans.[2] If he had been with us, he would have raised his voice against the recent deliberate murder of the two Hindus[3] who foolishly criticized the Prophet of Islam. Now—alas!—one hears these murders being extolled publicly as if they were meritorious acts.

I wonder whether you and your League have taken any steps to educate the public along the right path.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

15. LETTER TO DR. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

December [*19*][4]*, 1934*

DEAR DR. PATTABHI,

This is village paper. The ink is village-made, and the pen is made of village reed. Do the villagers manufacture paper there? If so, at what price?

I have your full letter. Yes, we must meet. Since you have time, you have to be humble enough to ask for the responsibility you can shoulder — work of the highest order, with or without office, whichever is better for your work. In this service of the destitute, there is no room for ceremony.

And this business of rice, flour, *gur*, oil, ghee, etc., is a vast business. You have to revive your knowledge of medicine.

[1] The addressee had asked Gandhiji to send a few words of tribute to Mahomed Ali.

[2] In 1924; *vide* , " Message to the press on fast ",9-10-1924

[3] At Karachi and Lahore

[4] The source has '29', but in the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary the last paragraph of this letter is entered under December 19, 1934 which appears to be the correct date since Gandhiji left Wardha on December 28.

There are two ways of doing the thing — by compulsion through State organization, or voluntary effort, i.e., organized honesty or non-violence . . .[1].

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Incidents of Gandhiji's Life, p. 224

16. LETTER TO G. SITARAM SASTRY

[*December 19, 1934*][2]

MY DEAR SASTRY,

I do hope that the Jayanti function will be a success and that it will result on the one hand in a greater appreciation of your effort by the public and on the other in a greater devotion to their duty by the workers.

You will see the . . .[3] papers.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SITARAM SASTRY
VINAYA ASHRAM, KALYANAKAVOOR
CHANDOLE P. O., GUNTUR DIST.

From a copy: C.W. 9176. Courtesy: G. Sitaram Sastry

17. BYE-LAWS OF THE ALL-INDIA VILLAGE INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION

[Before *December 20, 1934*][4]

(1) The ordinary general meeting of the Association shall be held once every year, and at any time an extraordinary meeting may be convened by the Secretary with the consent of the President, and shall be convened upon a requisition being received by him from notless than one-sixth of the members on the roll. One-fifth the number of members on the roll, with a minimum of seven, shall form a quorum.

(2) The first financial year of the Association shall be from the 14th December, 1934 to 31st December, 1935, and thereafter the

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] From the postmark
[3] Omission as in the source
[4] The rules framed under bye-law 10 were issued to the Press on this date.

calendar year.

(3) Meetings of the Board of Management may be summoned by the Secretary, as and when necessary, or when required to do so by one-third the number of members on the Board.

The Secretary may circulate a proposition amongst the members of the Board, and when all the members have agreed to it, such shall have the force of a resolution passed at a meeting of the Board.

For a meeting of the Board of Management one-third the number of members, with a minimum of four, shall be the quorum.

Any member of the Board of Management who is absent at three consecutive meetings without leave shall be deemed to have vacated his office.

(4) Proper records shall be kept by the Secretary of all proceedings of the general meetings and the Board meetings, with the attendance of the members there, and such minutes shall be signed by the President at the meeting at which they are confirmed.

(5) This Association shall not be responsible for any obligation, financial or other, entered into by any person without written authority signed by a person duly authorized thereto on behalf of the Association.

(6) The Board of Management shall have power to remove any member from the roll by a resolution of the Board passed by at least three-fourths of the number of members on the Board at a meeting, of which due notice had been given and this matter had been placed on the agenda.

(7) Every member shall send to the Secretary a report of the allotted work done by him for every quarter so as to reach the Central Office not later than one month after the expiry of that quarter.

If no reports are received for three consecutive quarters from any member, such member will cease to be a member and vacate his office, if any.

(8) Institutions which undertake to abide by the rules and regulations laid down by the Board of Management for affiliation may be on application affiliated by the Secretary.

(9) It shall be competent for the Board to issue certificates to persons who may be prepared to deal in village manufactures coming within the province of the Association.

(10) The duties of agents may be prescribed by the Board from time to time.[1]

AGENTS' DUTIES

The Board of Management has framed a set of rules defining the duties of agents under bye-law No. 10. They are as follows:

(1) To begin with, the agent will be expected to attend to the programme already drawn up by the Central Office. After he has made a fair start with the Central Office programme, he will be expected to make a survey of all such industries that may be revived, improved or introduced in his area and shall forthwith report to the Central Office results of his investigations and submit a programme of work based thereon for examination by the Office.

(2) Every agent will be expected to attend to the sanitation and hygiene of the villages within his area.

(3) With a view to finding markets for the surplus products of the villages, he should induce reliable merchants to store village products for sale, at prices mutually fixed between the merchants and the agent and so as to ensure the genuineness of such products.

(4) He should carry on an intensive propaganda to create a favourable public opinion for the programme in his area.

(5) He may invite and receive subscriptions and donations to meet the expenses in connection with his work and should not expect any financial aid from the Central Office. But he shall not utilize any part of the funds so collected by him for his own personal requirements.

(6) He may appoint, whenever necessary, and if funds at his disposal permit, paid workers needed for his work.

(7) He shall keep accurate accounts of all receipts and disbursements, which will be subject to audit by the Central Office.

(8) His work will be subject to the inspection and supervision of the Central Office.

(9) He shall submit a report of his work and an abstract of receipts and payments for every month so as to reach the Central Office not later than the 15th of the month following.

(10) Any neglect in submitting the monthly report and statement of accounts, or in carrying out instructions from the Central

[1] What follows was also issued in a statement to the Press.

Office, will involve cancellation of the agency.

I have the names of some workers who have volunteered to act as agents for the Association. I would like those whose names I have already got and others to send in their names to Sjt. Kumarappa at Wardha, with sufficient details, so as to enable the Board to make its choice. The chief thing to bear in mind is that no one should take charge of more villages than he can manage, with or without the help of co-workers whom he has to find, and that the Board is to undertake no financial responsibility. It is felt that the Board can never cover all the seven hundred thousand villages of India, if it is to employ paid agency. It has started work with the belief that there are self-sacrificing men and women enough who realize the necessity of serving the villages, which have remained long neglected, though everyone knows that city life would be impossible if there were no villages to serve them.

*Harijan, 2*8-12-1934

18. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

December 20, 1934

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I have your doleful letter. The situation does not disturb us here as much as it disturbs you. The thing is you do not know Sir Samuel Hoare. The Indian Government has always been a one-man rule. Sir Samuel Hoare's philosophy demands that Indian wishes should not be consulted, much less respected, except when they reflect those of his advisers. The latter have made up their minds that the White Paper[1], now the J. P. C.[2] Report, is the last word. The Congress has decided that nothing is acceptable unless its wishes are taken into account. The Congress also recognizes that Sir Samuel holds the power and that the Congress must not use the little power that it has got. Therefore you friends on your side should, if you can, resolutely saythat the existing state should remain till time has arrived for a change by consent of the 'governed'. Not that even your effort will succeed. But you will at least have the satisfaction of knowing that you had done the right

[1] Embodying the British Government's proposals for reforms based on the discussions at the Round Table Conferences in 1931-2

[2] Joint Parliamentary Committee which examined the White Paper and endorsed its proposals with some modifications

thing. If, on the other hand, the friends over there think that they cannot conscientiously take up that attitude and that they must accept the Report if it cannot be changed, you must prosecute that plan. If I were they, I should sit silent, since I could not represent the Indian view. The friends at least may be no party directly or indirectly to 'imposing' by force a constitution on India, which would be the case if the constitution is passed. Read Chintamani's warning enclosed. Not that it means much. The Home Member was quite clear on the point. But his being clear was a cruel reminder of India's present helplessness.

My case is pending. There also the story is the same. They have made up their minds. But I may not anticipate. C. F. Andrews is in Calcutta. He is fighting like a Trojan against the heaviest odds and he will presently give you all the latest news. Meanwhile you and other friends should rest assured that I shall take no hasty step. Ample warning will be given of my intentions. But what are my intentions worth! Man proposes, God disposes. Let His will be done, not mine, nor yours.

I have no time to tell you the story about the paper or the ink or the pen in which and with which this is written.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1483

19. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

December 20, 1934

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I have your letter. I see from the newspapers that there is again some trouble. I shall look into the scheme of Hindi Vidyapith when I get it.

Correspondence courses have been introduced in the Mahila Ashram. I wish, if I may, to include your name among the teachers to be appointed for it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 6081. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

20. EXPANSION OF "HARIJAN"

Some readers have taken exception to the way in which the columns of *Harijan* are being occupied with the development of the village industries scheme, and some others have welcomed the change in what they had thought was monotony of presentation. Either opinion is probably hasty. Any problem connected with the welfare of villages as a whole must be intimately related to the Harijans, who represent over a sixth part of India's population. If villages get good rice and flour, Harijans will benefit by the change as much as the rest of the population. But there is a special sense in which Harijans will benefit. Tanning and the whole of the raw hide work is their monopoly, and economically this will occupy perhaps the best part of the new scheme. Indeed, Harijans, in so far as they have given their opinion, have welcomed the expansion. Those who were tired of monotony were also in my opinion wrong. The pages of *Harijan* could not be filled with matters that had no connection, direct or indirect, with those in whose interest it was being published. Those who complained of monotony were perhaps not sufficiently interested in the cause.

No doubt it would be true criticism if I were told that the columns of *Harijan* were not as interesting as they might be made. There are causes for this which are inherent in the movement itself. It must be confessed that removal of untouchability is not a popular cause in the sense in which great political movements have been and become popular all over the world. Removal of untouchability is a mighty social reform. But it cannot furnish sensations. It is a plodder's work. And record of the work of plodders requires editorial gifts of a high order to make it interesting. Plodders can only attract plodding editors. Therefore, the only way before those who are intimately connected with the Harijan movement is to continue to work with an ever increasing faith in the cause and leave the result to take care of itself.

A little time ago there appeared in the Press a paragraph that the Gujarati edition of *Harijan* known as *Harijanbandhu* was about to be stopped, because it was being run at a loss. The news was premature and unauthorized. There was indeed a talk about it. But when Thakkar Bapa heard of it, he soon smashed it by saying that noneof the three editions, Hindi, Gujarati and English, could be stopped. The remedies available for avoiding losses on these weeklies are three:

(1) Raising of subscription;

(2) Voluntary reduction by the printing and editorial staff in the remuneration they receive for their labours;

(3) An appeal for increase in the number of subscribers.

The second remedy has been, and is still being, tried. Reduction in the expense of publishing the papers is being steadily pursued. There is limitless scope for increase in the number of subscribers. And now that village industries and general village uplift is to occupy a fair portion of Harijan, there should be an automatic increase in the number of subscribers.

Harijan, 21-12-1934

21. THE NEW BABY

The much-talked-of All-India Village Industries Association was born amid calm surroundings and without any fuss or ceremony on the 14th instant at Wardha, which will be its headquarters by reason of the munificence of Sheth Jamnalalji, who has set apart ample ground with buildings for the use of the Association. Of this, however, hereafter.

Let us make the acquaintance of the foundation members who are the first Board of Management. Shri Shrikrishnadas Jajooji, the President, is a lawyer who had a distinguished career during his school and college days. He left a lucrative practice long ago. He has been identified with the philanthropic activities of Sheth Jamnalalji and is the President of the All-India Spinners' Association, Maharashtra Branch.

Shri Kumarappa, the Organizer and Secretary, is a Chartered Accountant, who years ago left a growing practice in Bombay and took up under Kakasaheb Kalelkar honorary appointment as Professor at the Gujarat Vidyapith. He served, with Sjts. Bhulabhai Desai and D. N. Bahadurji, ex-Advocate Generals, on the Public Debts Committee appointed by the Congress, and has been the financial adviser of the Bihar Central Relief Committee.

Shri Gosibehn Captain is one of the four indefatigable Naoroji sisters who have for years been completely identified with khadi and been responsible for conducting khadi embroidery classes for poor girls in Bombay started by Shri Mithubehn Petit, who has dedicated herself to the service of the poor in the villages of Gujarat.

Sheth Shoorji Vallabhdas is a well-known merchant of Bombay. He has been organizing khadi centres and has brought into being the Swadeshi Bazaar, of which the dividend, if any, is to be devoted solely to the promotion of village industries.

Dr. Khan Saheb (ex-I. M. S.) is the elder brother of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. He takes the place of his brother who, but for his incarceration, would have been a member of the Board.

Shri Lakshmidas Purushottam was a well-known merchant in Malabar before he gave up his business to join the Satyagraha Ashram at Sabarmati. It was he who organized khadi in Gujarat, became the right-hand man of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel during the terrible floods of Gujarat in the year 1927 and has been likewise to Rajendrababu in the earthquake relief work in Bihar.

Dr. Profulla Ghosh (D. Sc.) is among the favourite early pupils of Dr. P. C. Ray, who, leaving a high post at the Government Mint, has for years been living on a mere pittance and has devoted his life to public service.

Shri Shankerlal Banker (M. A.) studied advanced chemistry in England and on return entered public life in 1916. He is the Secretary and soul of the All-India Spinners' Association and possesses an all-round knowledge of khadi and, therefore, of the condition of villages, possessed, perhaps, by no one in the same extensive manner as he does.

Thus, with the exception of Sheth Shoorjibhai, the Board contains members who have no private finance or business to look after and whose sole concern would be in one way or another to consult the welfare of the villagers in everything they do. They are all on the Board solely to shoulder the tremendous responsibility of striving to carry out the object of the Association. The reader will study the simple constitution of the Association.[1] If it is assisted by the public in a tangible manner, it will give hope to the millions of villagers; it will turn the city-dwellers who are today their exploiters, into real helpers and servants; it will establish a living link between the intelligentsia and the illiterate masses; it will be instrumental in abolishing all distinctions between man and man, and it will turn the villagers from being mere creaters of raw produce, which they have

[1] *Vide* Vol. LIX, "A.I V.I.A.—Object and Constitution", 14-12-1934.

practically become, into self-sustained units and caterers for most of the requirements of city-dwellers. In a task such as this, naturally political differences are sunk, all who will assist are invited to join asmembers, agents, workers, associates or advisers, according to their wishes and capacity.

The task is tremendous. Nothing but Divine Grace can fulfill the expectations raised about the work of the Association. And Divine Grace only attends intelligent, tireless effort. The members of the Board are pledged to such effort. Their past record is an earnest of the future.

The Association, though it is a creation of the Congress, has been deliberately made non-political and autonomous. Its members are pledged, whilst they remain such, to abstain from any campaign of civil disobedience. As its adviser and guide, I can say that the Association has no further aim than that of bringing about the economic, physical and moral betterment of the villagers.

The reader will observe that the work of the Board of Management is to be done through honorary agents, at least in the first instance. The agents have to select their own areas of operation, and they will be expected to confine themselves to, and to concentrate their attention on, those areas only. There may thus be an agent even for one single village. The Association may, therefore, have as many agents as there are villages in India. Therefore, no honest person, however humble, need be deterred from offering his or her services. The idea is to decentralize the work as much as possible. Thus alone can intensive work be done with the utmost economy consistent with efficiency. I hope that willing and honest workers will be found all over the country to take part in this glorious work of voluntary village reconstruction.

Harijan, 21-12-1934

22. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

December 21, 1934

I have your very kind and full letter. Yes, Mirabehn did extraordinarily well both in Great Britain and America. Truth gives a power that nothing else can. And Mira wanted to express through her speech nothing but what she believed to be the whole truth. She will certainly come to you whenever she feels the call.

As for me I have no call at all. I feel that my work lies here and I can best speak to the world through my work in India.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

23. LETTER TO AN ITALIAN

December 21, 1934

The interior signification of truth for me is that it gives me a peace which passeth understanding. The exterior consists in rendering me a fitter instrument of service.

The value of missionary effort lies, in my opinion, in their having roused in us the spirit of inquiry and in inducing heartsearching.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

24. LETTER TO P. V. KRISHNA REDDI

WARDHA,
December 21, 1934

DEAR REDDI,

Your letter to hand. Please tell me what you are getting there and what are your needs. If you leave the business, who will look after it?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

P. V. KRISHNA REDDY
C/O KHADI BHANDAR
SADAR BAZAR
RAIPUR, C. P.

From the original: C. W. 10831. Courtesy: Gandhi Darshan, Rajghat, New Delhi

25. LETTER TO K M. MUNSHI

December 21, 1934

BHAI MUNSHI,

Do take proper rest. In my view Khan Saheb is a real *bhakta*.

I have nearly finished your last chapter[1]. The other chapters I

[1] Of *Gujarat and Its Literature*

will read now. For whose benefit did you write all this in English? I do not know if you have explained your aim in the earlier chapters.

Please do not expect a long foreword from me.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

ADVOCATE K. M. MUNSHI
PANCHGANI

From Gujarati: C.W. 7565. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

26. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA

December 21, 1934

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

I had your letter. Find out the count, evenness and strength of the yarn spun by the villagers. Get the weaving done soon. Do not neglect their other occupations. What kind of rice [polished or unpolished] do they eat? Sow some seeds of cotton and leafy vegetables in your courtyard. It is better for one to do one's own manual work, as far as possible.

All are well, I hope.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2784

27. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

December 21, 1934

CHI. AMBUJAM[1],

I have your letter and also Father's. You have given me no trouble at all. You had and you will always have the right to tell me everything. Indeed how can I help you if you do not tell me all without any reservations?

Now please steady your mind and do what service you can. Some hand-made paper has been sent for you. It is rather expensive; the bill will be sent to you. It will be paid here; some money belonging to you is lying here, is it not?

Do not give up your study of the *Ramayana*.

[1] Daughter of Srinivasa Iyengar

Keep writing to me.
Janammal[1] you had any difficulty in reading this.
Keep your parents happy should write to me.
Let me know if.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9598. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal

28. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

December 22, 1934

DEAR SISTER,

I read your draft resolutions only last night. They were received at noon. I like the first. The last I like the least. I hope you duly received my letter containing my message[2] and a letter to Dr. Maude.

You must not overstrain yourself. I take it the Colonel accompanies you wherever you go. He should receive the reply by now.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3517. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6326

29. LETTER TO HOMI MODY

December 22, 1934

DEAR MR. MODY,

I thank you for your letter of 19th instant about blankets sent to Assam.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 4881. Courtesy: M. R. Masani

[1] Addressee's niece
[2] For the All-India Women's Conference; *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur"

30. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

December 22, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL

Why is there no news from you yet about the condition of your ear? Kishorelal and Gomati are laid up with illness. Gomati is better now. Kishorelal still has a temperature. It is coming down, however. Preparations are under way for shifting the Industries Association to the garden. It has been planned to add two rooms on the top of the building. Radhakisan had suggested one. Now they are thinking of two. The plan involves an expenditure of about Rs. 2,000. It is not absolutely necessary of course to build the rooms. They will be useful mostly during the monsoon. During day-time I can remain on the ground floor. But at night I would certainly go up to sleep. These rooms should be built only in view of their usefulness for the future. Since the suggestion was made, I was tempted to give my consent. If you refuse yours, the matter will end and Rs. 2,000 will be saved. You know that the money is no longer yours. As I write this, I feel that I myself ought to be firm and forbid the construction of the rooms for the present at any rate. I will do so. Please treat as cancelled what I have written above.

Krishna has written again on behalf of Sarup Rani gently requesting that Prabha be sent over. I have replied[1] that she is entrusted with such duties here that she cannot be easily spared, but that some other good woman from there can be sent. I think we can find somebody who will be a suitable companion for her. If you can, help Sarup Rani. Otherwise you may leave the matter to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2947

31. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

December 22, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

It is difficult to restrain brother Charlie[2]. If a person like him does some harm, I think we should suffer it. But I am vigilant. I have spoken frankly to him. Please do not worry on this account. People

[1] This letter is not traceable.

[2] C. F. Andrews

also have realized that his comings and goings signify nothing.

Kripalani's case is different. He didn't do well also in relieving Rajaram.[1] I don't think that Krishnadas will be able to do justice to the work. But I don't know all the facts of the case. Why don't you write to Kripalani? I have not read his statements. Has he said anything indiscreet in them? If he has, I also may write to him. If I write, he will immediately correct himself.

The way you controlled that meeting[2] was perfect. Personally I liked your speech very much. It was very necessary to tell the people all that.

For the present Ramdas will go to Bombay. He will leave with Swami on the 27th or the 28th. He will stay in Manibhuvan.

Why should we feel sorry about what Muslim friends do? We should do our own duty. I wrote to Maulana and to Dr. Ansari[3] about the murders in Sind and Lahore. I have received their replies in which they tell me that they will try to do something. It is an extremely difficult problem. Since our outlooks are completely different, we have no option but to endure things. We should be satisfied if we do the best we can.

I shall leave this place on the 28th for Delhi. At the most I shall stay there one month. The meeting of the Village Industries Association has been fixed for January 31. I am sure you will come to Delhi. It will be convenient if the Working Committee meeting is fixedaround 15th January. I should like to come away from Delhi as early as possible.

How is Abhyankar? What did you do about your nose?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 146-9

[1] From the post of the paid secretary of the A. I. C. C.

[2] To protest against the sentence of two years' imprisonment given to Abdul Ghaffar Khan on a charge of sedition; *vide* ," Discussn with Abdul Ghaffar Khan",7-12-1934

[3] The letters are not traceable.

32. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

December 22, 1934

CHI. SHARMA,

I am not pained by your fast[1]. You will come through it safely. Tell me at Delhi about its conclusion. I shall be there on the 29th. Tell me your experiences too during the fast.

It will be a big achievement if Krishna recovers her health. My papers are still untraced.

I have no knowledge of any newspaper reproducing the notice. Ramdas will write to you. He has no peace of mind here. Now he observes no restrictions on food.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha*, facing p. 138

33. LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL

December 23, 1934

With regard to the visit to the Frontier Province I hope you saw the statement I issued to the Press.[2] I shall strain every nerve to avoid a clash. With me it is not a matter of sacrificing anything for anything else. Is not the vast meaning of sacrifice self-purification? So long as my submission to the Viceregal will does not harm the cause it shall continue. You may depend upon it that I shall take no hasty step.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

34. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 23, 1934

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. Harakhchand and Vijaya passed through here today. Kanu[3] met them at the station.

[1] The addressee had undertaken a fourteen days' fast.

[2] *Vide,* "Statement to the Press",11-12-1934

[3] Addressee's son

You must have observed that Jamna[1] is not happy at the thought of your leaving the place. It is for you to decide. If your presence there is essential, then I would not think at all of drawing you away from there. I once put this question to you. Think over it again if necessary.

Ramdas is very eager that his two children should secure admission to an infant school somewhere. If that is done, Nimu should stay with them. Ramdas thinks that Bhavnagar will suit very well. But, then, where would Nimu stay in Bhavnagar? What would happen if any of them was taken ill? I, therefore, have advised him to send the children to Rajkot and the idea has appealed to Nimu. I have told him that the Bal Mandir there will continue to run whether or not you remain. Am I right? Send me a report about its affairs and let me know whether you would advise Nimu to bring the children there. Address the reply to me at Birla Mills, Delhi. Drop a brief note to Nimu as well. I think Ramdas must have gone to Bombay. He cannot be said to have fully recovered yet. He is following a treatment of his own choice at present. He can move about a little. Nimu also wants to learn. She is taking lessons in playing on the sitar and learning English. I have told her that it can be done even there.

A letter for Aunt[2] is enclosed. She has lived to a ripe old age indeed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8426. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

35. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

December 23, 1934

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You must have seen the mill-owners' resolutions. See that they don't quarrel among themselves. If any of them listen to you, advise them. I have written to Kasturbhai and Chamanbhai.

[1] Addressee's wife .

[2] Raliatbehn, Gandhiji's elder sister; the letter is not available.

I do hope that wherever you go you will tell the people about the Village Industries Association. It has great potentialities.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 150

36. LETTER TO VENILAL A. GANDHI

December 23, 1934

CHI. VENILAL,

I think your problem is a difficult one. Your minimum need will be Rs. 50. I think it will be difficult to pay so much from the funds which are for Harijan work. I am of the view that grown-up children should be permitted to study in accordance with their wishes. You have, therefore, no choice but to find out some business. Please do not expect any help from me.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. VENILAL GANDHI
C/O MANEKLAL AMRITLAL GANDHI
RANAVAV PORBANDAR STATE, KATHIAWAR

From Gujarati: C.W. 921. Courtesy: Venilal A. Gandhi

37. LETTER TO DR. JAMES HENRY COUSINS[1]

December 24, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

Surely the friends have perpetrated a joke. I am no representative of the domain of literature. I have no University qualifica-tions. I cannot write after my name even a "a failed B. A.", having never gone beyond the London Matriculation. Nor can I call myself a literary man by training. I am no judge of prose, much less of poetry. Some of the latter I cannot understand. My ignorance is really appalling in the domain of literature. I had therefore to send you a

[1] The addressee had requested Gandhiji to recommend his name for the Nobel Prize.

negative telegram[1] which I hope you received in time. Though therefore I cannot propose your name, I can at least hope that you will win the prize.

With greetings of the season and regards to you and Mrs. Cousins.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

38. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

December 24, 1934

DEAR SISTER,

I have your several letters. My prayers are certainly with you in your noble endeavour.

C. F. Andrews should be here on 26th.

Here is the message duly signed.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3518. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6327

39. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

December 24, 1934

DEAR DAUGHTER,[2]

You have kept me in great anxiety by not writing earlier. But you will not be you if you did otherwise. Thank God however that I have your card and letter received yesterday. All well here. Lali[3] is playing in Bombay. Mehr[4] is here studying a little and playing. She seems to be happy. We leave for Delhi on 28th.

Hope you are eating well. No more today.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 312

[1] The telegram is not traceable.
[2] This is in Urdu.
[3] Abdul Ghaffar Khan's son
[4] Mehrtaj, Abdul Ghaffar Khan's daughter

40. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

December 24, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letter regarding Gangadharrao. It is a difficult matter. I don't think we can give money in this manner. I can't give my final decision, however, without discussing the matter with Gangadharrao. I am writing to him. I will say this same thing in my letter.

I am returning with this Gangadharrao's letter.

Get your ear completely cured.

I suppose you know about the plan to let Kamalnayan go to Colombo.

I have told Khan Saheb about Abdul Ghani[4]. He will write to the latter. He has offered to pay all the expenses himself. He has called Ghani to Delhi for treatment of his tonsils, but it is not certain whether Khan Saheb himself will be able to go. He has been prohibited from entering even the Punjab. The question is whether hecan pass through the stations inside the Punjab boundary on his way to Delhi. He has sent a wire to the Punjab Government.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

If Madanmohan is there, please ask him to write to me and give me an account of his experiences in the Frontier Province. He could get no opportunity at all to talk with me.

A wire has been received today saying that the order[1] has been withdrawn.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2948

41. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

December 24, 1934

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have had no letter from you, though it is time I had one. I hope all of you are well

[1] Prohibiting Khan Saheb from entering the Punjab

You will now be having a new Agent[1]. Let us wait and see whether he proves his worth.

Did your Diwali number sell more copies?

Ramdas is getting on fairly well. Should I assume that you will not be able to send a permit?

I am going to Delhi for a month at the most. I will leave this place on the 28th. Ba will accompany me.

I am getting ready for jail. But it will be some time yet. It won't happen before February.

Have you met Rees Jones? He is a very good man. He was here for a few days.

Lakshmi has gone to Madras with Rajaji. Devdas is getting along very well.

Kishorelal and Gomati were bed-ridden for two or three days. They are better now. There is nothing to worry about.

I have been keeping good health. For the past three months, I have been taking fresh milk, uncooked vegetables and fruit. Hot drinks include only warm water with honey or heated sugarcane juice. This regimen has had no ill effect at all.

What crops do you currently raise in the fields there? What is the total number of residents? Are all the buildings being used?

How is Sam?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4829

42. LETTER TO SAHEBJI MAHARAJ

December 25, 1934

DEAR SAHEBJI MAHARAJ,

Your prompt and full reply came in yesterday with the stainless steel nibs. They give me pleasure and pride. I shall try them. But my soul just now resides in the villages. The paper on which I am writing is village-made and so is the reed village-grown from which my pen is made. Economic laws like many others appear to be of two kinds, good and bad. Good laws should be good for all. Just now men, like

[1] Syed Raza Ali

the cows, seem to be a burden on the land. Do the majority need to die, so that the few city people may live? My humble attempt is to show that the villagers do not need to die and that they have an inherent capacity to live if they would but shed their laziness and make a corporate effort to live. City people have no such inherent capacity. Hence like Genghis they have to produce human hecatombs.

You will forgive me for arguing with you. I do, because I want to discover the flaw, if there is one, in my method of approaching the common object—all-round happiness.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2160

43. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

December 25, 1934

MY DEAR ANAND,

Father has just seen me. He has decided to work for the A. I. V. I. A. He is full of hope. He offers to build for you a floor over the present house wherein you can live your own independent life, and wishes to support you too. I want you to accept the proposal. I hope you will take care of yourself and be thoroughly restored. Vidya must write. No more just now.

Love to you both.

BAPU

SHRI ANAND HINGORANI
C/O A. S. BHAGCHAND KEWALRAMANI
COSMOPOLITAN VISHIN COTTAGE COLONY
SAROJINI NAIDU ROAD
SUKKUR (SIND)

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

44. LETTER TO F.L. BRAYNE

Wardha, C. P.
December 25, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

For some years I have been a student of your rural reconstruction work. I had occasion to publish a critical study of your Gurgaon

experiment[1]. As I am doing the same kind of work, I would love to profit by your experience, if you will give me the benefit of it. What I should appreciate is a detailed description of your scheme and the result so far attained of its working.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

F. L. BRAYNE, ESQ., I.C.S.
COMMISSIONER, RURAL RECONSTRUCTION
LAHORE
PUNJAB

From a copy: Brayne Collection, MSS. Eur. F 152/36. Courtesy: India Office Records Library

45. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

December 26, 1934

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Please do not insist on the construction of the two rooms just now. I have refused my consent after thinking about the matter very carefully. Isn't all your money a Trust now? It will continue to yield sufficient income only if we save every pie that we can. This is true whether the property belongs to a private firm or to a Trust for the poor. In fact, we should exercise more care in the case of the latter. I have not been able to prepare a draft for the Maganlal Memorial. Most probably I shall draw up one.

I shall be very happy if nothing happens to Abhyankar. Tell him when you meet him that I frequently think of him.

Khan Saheb is going to Delhi with me. Mehr too will be there. She also is doing well. At present Anand's father and Vaikunth Mehta are here. The latter has returned after a world tour. He will take great interest in the Industries Association.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2949

[1] *Vide* ," Village Improvement"
[2] *Vide* ,"Manure Pits"

46. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

December 26, 1934

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter.

I have written to Gangadharrao. Jamnalal had sent me his letter. I was not convinced by his argument. I have, therefore, asked him to come to Delhi. How long can we go on meeting the deficit in this manner? And from whom are we to beg the money?

You must have read Brelvi's article about the murders in Karachi and Lahore. I will see now what can be done in Delhi.

There was a letter from Andrews. He is hopeful. He is expected today. I don't think his being hopeful means anything.

Dr. Khan Saheb was served an order by the Punjab Government too. But he had to go to Delhi. So he asked me what he should do, since he would have to pass through the Punjab on his way. I, therefore, sent a wire to the Punjab Government asking whether the order also covered the railway stations. A reply to that has been received saying that the order was being withdrawn with effect from the 28th. And the Frontier order is expiring on the 29th in the natural course. If, therefore, they don't renew it, Khan Saheb will be able to enter the Frontier Province also. Mehr, as has already been arranged, is coming along with me. She will have no company—except mine, of course.

Vaikunth Mehta is here in connection with the Village Industries Association. He will stay for two more days yet.

I understand what you say regarding the nose. Since the doctors forbid you, we are helpless. Be quite firm about the constructive work. If the people do not overcome their lethargy and attend to the essential tasks, there will be no Satyagraha movement and no swaraj. We must learn mutual co-operation.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 150-l

47. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

December 27, 1934

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I have received your letter. I see from the newspapers that there is some trouble again.

I will go through the scheme of Hindi Vidyapith when I get it.

A scheme for imparting education through correspondence has been introduced in Mahila Ashram. I wish to include your name among the teachers to be appointed for the purpose. Shall I do so?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA
CONGRESS OFFICE
AJMER, RAJPUTANA

From the Hindi: Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

48. VILLAGERS' HANDS

Dr. Ansari's is the latest reasoned opinion received on unpolished rice, whole wheatmeal and *gur*. I share it with the readers. The same kind of categorical replies have been received also from other eminent medical men. A digest of these is being prepared by Sjt. Kumarappa and will be duly published in these columns. Meanwhile let workers and others ponder over the following:[1]

> . . . In the process of polishing rice, all outer coverings of the grain are removed, consisting of the husk as well as the pigmented covering containing Vitamin B, fat and protein, which are necessary for health and growth. It has been proved that the absence of Vitamin B from polished rice has been instrumental in causing beri-beri. Unpolished rice, on the other hand, not being subjected to the boiling process used in polishing rice in the mills, retains Vitamin B as well as the protein, fat and mineral matter. . . .
>
> . . . The wheat grain consists of bran or outer envelope, mainly composed of cellulose, the kernel consisting of starch and the germ consisting of soluble starch, protein and some fat. . . .
>
> In the process of milling, the germ and the bran are rejected, and with it undoubtedly are discarded some of the most useful chemical constituent of the wheat, for with the germ a considerable amount of protein and fat are lost, and with the bran are lost mineral matter as well as some protein. . . .
>
> *Gur*, jaggery or molasses is produced as by-product in the manufacture of crystallized sugar. . . . *Gur*, consisting of cane-sugar and fruitsugar in the

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

proportion of 2 to 1, would be assimilated more rapidly than cane-sugar alone taken in the same quantity. Therefore, the nutritive value of *gur* is at least 33 p.c. superior to refined sugar.

The truth of the opinion can be tested by everybody for himself by trying pure *gur, chakki*-ground whole wheatmeal and hand-pounded unpolished rice.

Harijan, 28-12-1934

49. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

WARDHA,
December 28, 1934

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I got your letter. Tell me what you want. Should I write in English or Hindi? You may write in whichever language you prefer.

Whenever you want slivers, get them from here. But do try to gin the cotton there.

Take curds instead of milk if food produces wind. Take a little rice instead of chapatis. Do not give up leafy vegetables and fruit.

I will see about Dev's Lilavati when the ashram is about to be opened.

We are leaving for Delhi today.

I am writing to Janammal on the back side of this so as to save postage and stationery.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

50. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS AND AMBA GANDHI

WARDHA,
December 28, 1934

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have dictated acknowledgment of your letter long before. The figure of thirteen yards as average consumption per person, is quite correct. That figure certainly includes the consumption by the naked millions. It would not therefore be surprising if in Guleria where persons like you can live, the average figure comes to fifty yards per person. It is possible that the quantity purchased by the families you

surveyed was higher. What surprised all of us was that according to your figures, Japanese calico is dearer than Indian calico and khadi is cheaper than any variety of calico. In the towns and all over Gujarat, the situation is quite the reverse of what your figures suggest. In Ras, khadi will certainly be dearer than mill-cloth. Look further into this matter. After ascertaining what the Harijan Sangh can do for Tikaramji write to me again. I will arrange something for him. Why should not the Harijan Sangh itself give him all he needs? Write to me, after arranging for the agency for that place. We are today leaving for Delhi. We will return any day between the 20th and the 29th. Write to me at Delhi.

If Kashi finds the cold unbearable, send her away soon. If the daughter is to be named with a word beginning with the letter 'I' and if she has not already been given a name, I think 'Indumati' will be quite good. But my choice has no value.

CHI. AMBA,[1]

I got your letter. You have drawn a good picture of the life there. Even in such hard conditions, we have to live cheerfully.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33051

51. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

BIRLA MILLS, DELHI,
December 29, 1934

CHI. SHARMA,

Your fast should be completed today. Give me a full account soon. I reached here this morning.

Ramdas has gone to Deolali with Swami and will proceed from there to Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha,* facing p. 140

[1] This note is in Hindi.

52. A MESSAGE

December 29, 1934

The thought of Hindu-Muslim unity filled the whole being of Hakim Saheb. As we remember him today the best thing would be to cleanse our hearts and make all the effort we can to strengthen this unity.

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Dillika Rajanaitik Itihas*, Part II, p. 213

53. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

December 29, 1934

Mahatma Gandhi said that he hoped to leave Delhi on January 28, 1935, as he must be at Wardha positively on the 29th. His work here is primarily concerned with Harijan uplift in this area, and also the promotion of village industries nearabouts.

He wished to make it perfectly clear that his visit had no connection with the work in the new Assembly, which begins on January 21. It was by pure accident that the Assembly work of Congressmen commences at a time when Mahatma Gandhi is here in connection with Harijan and village uplift work.

Questioned about his proposal to visit the Frontier in view of the Viceroy's advice against it, Mahatma Gandhi said:

It is beyond me and I have nothing to say at present.

The Hindustan Times, 30-12-1934

54. DISCUSSION AT HARIJAN HOME, KINGSWAY CAMP, DELHI[1]

[*December 29, l934*][2]

[GANDHIJI:] Is this the hut that I was told was being hurriedly erected for me? Why this height of 16 feet, and these heavy pillars and this high plinth? A simple cutcha hut with grass-thatched roof was the one I had in mind and had expected to find here. It should not have cost more than Rs. 500, whereas this has cost Rs. 2,500.

[MALKANI:] The thing had to be hurriedly arranged. We have not had more than two rooms, we thought we should have a small terrace where we could have a little

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Not Hut but a Palace"

[2] On this date Gandhiji arrived at the Hariian Home.

shamiana and where you might get plenty of sun and privacy as well. We went in for iron beams and rafters, as wooden ones would have taken much time.

[G.] No excuse at all. If you knew that this thing was going to cost so much, why did you not give up the idea altogether? I should have been perfectly comfortable in a tent. The pity is that you for got that you were the representative of Harijans and villagers. You acted as Sjt. Ghanshyamdas's representative. If you had engaged some villagers to put up a genuine, *bonafide* village hut, you would have had a sample of the work that our villagers can still do, and it would have conformed to our standard. And why this spiral staircase? You might easily have procured a wooden staircase!

[M.] No Bapu, it has been borrowed and will be returned as soon as we do not need it.

. . . In the evening, to cap the tale of our woe, came a newly-bought spittoon, and it was placed on his table by an unwary friend. That was the signal for a final explosion.

[G.] Who ordered this end why was it purchased?

[BRIJKRISHNA:] I had asked for one. I thought it would be borrowed.

[G.] But did you not also know that if it could not be immediately borrowed, the friends in the town were sure to purchase it?

[B.] I knew, but I had not thought that a thing costing a rupee and a half would be purchased. I should have gone in for one costing four annas or so.

[G.] And you would not have minded four annas! Well, send this back at once. I should be satisfied with a small earthen cup which costs almost nothing. I thought you would instinctively understand these things. Well, now let me tell you that if anything is purchased without my permission, I might be driven to non-co-operation with you.

. . . It was bed-time. Beds were being brought, and immediately Gandhiji said:

No bed-stead necessary. The cotton mattress over the mat is quite enough. Not that I should not use it if health made it imperative, but I should do without it as long as I could.

But, Bapu, even the poorest villagers have got their charpais.

[G.] I know, I know. Does that mean that we should imitate them in that convenient matter, when we cannot possibly imitate them in other things? If we cannot live like them, must have better food and better clothing, let us at least have the poor consolation of doing without a bed-stead.

Harijan, 11-1-1935

55. LETTER TO SWAMI ANAND

DELHI,
BIRLA HOUSE,
December 30, 1934

SWAMI ANAND,

l have been able to read your letter only today after I started my silence. You may get the Trust Deed for the Thana land registered in your, Jabirali's and Shrilal's names or in the names of any other persons suggested by you as soon as you are ready with the necessary arrangements. Meanwhile you may use the land for purposes of village industries, khadi, service of Harijans and such other work of public service. Continue to pay the revenue dues of the land. Send copies of this letter to Narandas and Chhaganlal so that they may know what is happening. If you think I should write anything more besides this, ask me. The pit in which water collects should either be filled up or the space surrounding should be dug up and levelled to form a drain. If we work with our own hands, this is an easy and cheap way of doing the thing. But this can be decided only after inspecting the land. This method is not practicable in the case of every type of land.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 33115

56. SPEECH AT HARIJAN INDUSTRIES EXHIBITION, DELHI

December 30, 1934

Crores of women who can spin and weave are starving at present. We should wear khadi so that they may get a piece of bread, if nothing more. We regard it as a matter of dharma to treat crores of Harijans as untouchables. By boycotting Chamars, Dheds, etc. we alienate them from our culture. No industry or profession through which one tries to earn an honest livelihood, can be regarded as degrading. It will be impossible to protect the cow if we do not win over the Harijans. Hides worth crores of rupees are exported from our country. It is our folly that we export more hides than any other

country in the world. By doing that, we deprive the Harijans of a means of livelihood.

It is a great sin, a crime, to consider any human being as inferior to ourselves.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 6-1-1935

57. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

BIRLA MILLS, DELHI,
December 31, 1934

CHI. PREMA,

It is about 6 a.m. now, but it is pitch dark outside. My hands are stiff with cold. It is waste land all around where I am staying. A Harijan Ashram is to be established here. Two rooms have been built for special use. In addition there are three or four tents.

I got your letter. You may go on asking me any questions that you like. I will reply to as many of them as I can when I get time.

How is Kisan? She was to come and stay with you for some time. What happened about that?

I am sure your work will go on and you will receive monetary help as and when needed.

Since you have unshakable faith in the power of Ramanama, you will certainly experience the truth of your faith. Go on repeating it even if you see darkness all around. If you do that, all will be well with you.

The small size of land holdings is a big problem. It will present difficulties even when we have power in our hands. Just now our experiments are intended to find out what we can do without power. Even small plots can be profitable if they are cultivated intelligently. We can demonstrate this only through experiments. But our own superficial knowledge in this field is a handicap. That is why we do not take up directly problems relating to agriculture. Our present aim is to popularize such crafts and industries as we can think of and aswould be easy for the villagers to learn, so that we may teach cultivators to shed their lethargy and may also promote the application of intelligence to crafts. The rest will follow.

I am certain that the people's condition was better formerly than

it is today. This can be proved. In the past, the country drew wealth from outside. Land holdings had not become fragmented to the extent that they have today, and wealth was not drained out of the country as it is today. Nature did her work in her own way. Now we interfere with her work without full knowledge of her laws, and we do this in an organized manner. The result is that we are completely impoverished.

Ramarajya is certainly an imaginary ideal, but it can also be proved that something approximating to it did exist in former times. It is true, however, that at no time in the past were untruth and poverty completely absent and they are not likely to be so at any time in the future.

The practice of retiring into mountain caves was undoubtedly inspired by despair about the world. It may have had some use in the past, but it has none today. To give one's life in the service of one's fellow-beings is as good a thing as living in a cave.

Our attitude towards other people should be the same as towards ourselves. Though we may remain unattached to things concerning ourselves, we shall certainly feel cold and heat and try to relieve cold with heat and heat with cold. If we don't succeed, however, we shall not sit down and start crying. That is non- attachment. Our attitude to others shivering with cold should be the same. We must try to relieve their suffering. Seeing them shivering, we will give them or share with them what we have. If they still continue to shiver, we will suffer with them but will not lose our patience and resort to violence or untruth. That will be non-attachment on our part.

Khadi both is and is not a means of livelihood. It has been described as Annapurna[1].

Excepting violence, I think there are many things in Russia which seem worth accepting. It is possible, however, that the changes which now seem realizable only through force will not be accepted by people voluntarily in the very same form. But, then, it is not right to draw inferences, as all of us do, from what we read. We should think about our problems independently for ourselves. The person who is affected by a problem can solve it best.

It is impossible to eliminate inequality completely. But we can bring about the maximum measure of equality only by following

[1] Goddess Parvati, literally one who overflows with food

the path which I have shown. It is not a new truth I am holding up before the country but an old one (though perhaps in a new manner).

Cultivators can derive great hope from the fact that, by engaging themselves in subsidiary industries in their spare time, they can add considerably to their income.

The economic interests of cultivators should be safeguarded through proper organization. We can explain to them that economic betterment will not be possible unless they learn to organize.

The law of karma is easy to understand. It is similar to the law which we learn in mechanics. When several material forces operate simultaneously, we see only one result of their operation. That is also how karma operates.

You may, if you wish, go to a very small village. But it will be enough if you stick to the present place. If you can achieve complete success in one place, it will have the same effect that a right angle has.[1] At present we have no right angle.

I shall be here up to the 20th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10365. Also C.W. 6804. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

58. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

December 31, 1934

CHI. VIDYA,

I got your letter. You do not seem to be writing to anybody in the Ashram. Have you kept up any study there? If you become lethargic, you will not be able to run your home when you have one. Do not, therefore, remain idle a single minute. You should spend some time in good reading and some in doing useful work.

I shall be pleased if you write to me regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9589

[1] In a parallelogram, where if one angle is made a right angle the remaining angles also will be right angles.

59. LETTER TO RAMESHWARPRASAD NEVATIA

December 31, 1934

CHI. RAMESHWAR,

I had your letter. You did well in writing at length. Keep up the practice. Teach Bhai Ghani to be as simple as possible. Let him come here if he wishes to. We shall have his tonsils examined by Dr. Ansari. I have sent through Swami a letter about the workers of the sugar mill. Send me a reply to it.

I shall be in Delhi till the 20th. Address the letter to Birla Mills though I am staying on the new plot purchased for Harijans.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3041

60. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

December 31, 1934

CHI. AMBUJAM,

Your letter. You should see Kakasaheb from time to time. Krishnan Nair says that both the Devakis can come when the Ashram is opened. There is nothing to say about Lilavati. Inform me when everything is ready.

I expect you got the articles from Bardoli.

The stay in Delhi will extend up to the 20th at least. Keep writing to me. Ba, Mirabehn, Marybehn and Khurshedbehn are with me. Lilavati too is in Delhi. It is pretty cold here. Ramdas has gone to Bombay and Prabhavati is in Wardha. Mehrtaj is here living at Dr. Ansari's.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You can take curds instead of milk and rice instead of wheat; the quantity of milk should be the same.

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9599. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal

61. INTERVIEW T0 "THE HINDUSTAN TIMES"

DELHI,
January 1, 1935

It is true that I enjoy friendly relations with General Smuts.[1] We even met in London during the Second Round Table Conference and had discussions about India's goal. It is true also that he had advised acceptance of the proposals adumbrated in the White Paper, as distinguished from the J. P. C. Report. General Smuts had given that advice with certain reservations. I might state that to General Smuts's letter I had sent no reply. His was an informal private letter calling for no reply.

I would advise the public not to attach any importance to a matter of purely personal concern, carrying no public significance, especially when my opinion[2] on the White Paper proposals remains unchanged.

On his attention being drawn to recent newspaper reports suggesting that Mr. Andrews's recent visit to India was in connection with the J. P. C. Report, Gandhiji emphatically stated that it had nothing to do with the Report, nor was Mr. Andrews the bearer of any letter from General Smuts.

His visit was predominantly in connection with his forthcoming broadcast this month. So far as the J.P.C. Report is concerned, we had the briefest casual conversation, not extending over a few minutes, during which I gathered that Mr. C. F. Andrews was in substantial agreement with my opinion that the proposals are utterly unacceptable.

The Hindustan Times, 2-1-1935

[1] Gandhiji was asked to comment on the report that General Smuts "had impressed on Gandhiji the necessity of co-operating with Government in face of the strong rebellious Tory die-hard group which desires to sabotage and so destroy the whole scheme of constitutional reforms".

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Agatha Harrison"

62. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

DELHI,
January 2, 1935

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letters as also the cable regarding Ramdas and Nimu. I wanted something like this, but I had not asked for a cable. It is difficult to say if Ramdas will go [to South Africa]. At present he is looking for an opening in some business in Bombay. Anyway Manilal has, though belatedly, discharged his obligation.

Harilal has for some time now settled in Rajkot. He seems to have undergone a metamorphosis.

I have noted what Sushila writes about Sita. It will be enough if she is educated as you four brothers were educated by me. I don't repent it. It does not matter that they had no formal schooling. They have lost nothing thereby. Harilal was stubborn and did eventually go to school, doing himself harm. What children get in the loving company of their parents they can get nowhere else. Sita need not be sent here. Know that you have a duty towards Sita as you have your other duties. When you try to discharge this duty you will learn the lesson of pure *brahmacharya*. Just by her trying to pick up your calling she will train herself. She will pick up your speech whether decent or indecent. If you know your grammar she will learn it. If you can keep your accounts, she will learn her arithmetic. She will dust, cook, fetch water, tend the plants, learn press work. In this way by learning yourselves and helping others learn, you will all rise higher and higher. When she grows up you can send her elsewhere where she can learn more. This is the purport of the varnashrama-dharma and there is economics underlying it. This is true education. Give up your fondness for schools. It is my firm belief that although the schools may offer you a free play for the intellect they do little towards character-building. I myself know many who have suffered in character by going to school. I do not know of many people who could add luster to their character by attending schools. I for one believe that those parents who send their children to school do not observe their dharma. Yes, when the children grow up, that is, say, attain the age of sixteen, they can do whatever they like. Hence, let Sitaremain under your personal care till she is sixteen so that she turns

out an accomplished girl and may not suffer any kind of handicap. To achieve this she should participate in all your activities and play her part intelligently. With this you will have observed your dharma.

The purport of all that I have said is only this: Forget for the time being your obsession with schooling for Sita. Let her have as much English, Hindi, Gujarati as you two can give her. Teach her your calling. You can impart to her plenty of knowledge through everyday conversation. In this way she will be making rapid progress. The right thing for her is to stick right there. Teach her the prayers, *bhajans*, etc. She should learn the *Ramayana* and other stories. Let her know about the *Gita* and other books. Some books you and Sushila have to read just for Sita's sake. None of you need think of the country for the time being. When you come you should all come together. Having thought over all this "do as you like"[1].

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4831

63. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

January 2, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. Certainly I am responsible[2] but I had understood that you had nothing to hide. Do not read the letters that you get or don't let them affect you. Amtussalaam has not come here so far, she is probably at Indore. It is a great thing that Krishna has recovered. What is your diet these days?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha*, between pp. 140 and 141

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, XVIII. 63
[2] For other people learning about the addressee's fast

64. DISCUSSION AT CENTRAL BOARD, HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH[1]

[*January 2, 1935*][2]

'Why', some of them asked, 'should this be put into a pledge?'[3] And this pledge seems more sociological than humanitarian. Eradication of untouchability is one thing, but this levelling of status seems to be altogether a different thing. Are we to regard our servants as equal to us in status? You seem to be driving us slowly to social and economic revolution.

[GANDHIJI:] I am surprised that the truth dawns upon you so late. You are very much mistaken if you feel that Harijans expect anything less from you. You may be quite ready to treat a few Harijans on terms of equality, but unless you are prepared to treat *all*—the sweeper and the scavenger—and not merely a Harijan Judge sitting on a Court Bench—you have not rid yourselves of the evil. The very idea of superiority is most loathsome. It is at the back of most of the race feuds in the world. The thing is universal, I am afraid, but among us, it is in its cruellest form, because it is claimed to have got a religious sanction.

'You are right, Mahatmaji,' said one of the members, 'there are some members on our Board who feel that Brahmins are superior to Vaishyas.'

[G.] They have no business to be on our Board. Removal of untouchability means one thing for a Harijan, another thing for a caste Hindu, and quite another for a Harijan Sevak.

'I quite see the thing,' said Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru, 'but how can I sign the pledge when I know that I do not treat my servant as equal to me in status? My peace of mind will go.'

[G.] It need not go. You will treat him as a member of your family.

[R. N.] It is easier said than done, Mahatmaji. How can I claim to treat him as a member of my family when I sleep on a cot or a sofa, and he stands at the door?

[G.] You can, for the simple reason that you will sleep on your feather-bed, not because you are superior to him, but because it has become a need with you. No, no. You are unnecessarily afraid. It is more a mental adjustment than physical. I shall give you just one or

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Self-introspection week"

[2] The pledge which was a part of the constitution was discussed and adopted on January 2.

[3] It read: "I do not consider any human being as inferior to me in status and I shall strive my utmost to live up to that belief."

two instances. When I went to Lady Astor's, she brought out all her servants to shake hands with me. They hesitated, but then they saw that they did not need to do so. Lloyd George, when I was his guest for a few hours, encouraged all his servants, as he would his own children, to hand me their autograph books for my signature.

[R. N.] I know, Mahatmaji, I know. Bertrand Russell also treats his servants as equals.

[G.] Well, then, why should you be any less than Bertrand Russell? You have a father who will place no obstacles in your way and a husband who will go the whole length with you.

No, no. This pledge is absolutely essential. You cut at the root of the movement if you do not have it, and you will justify the attitude of the sanatanists. As you have to discharge the financial obligations, you have to discharge the moral also, and I must say that, just as I should rue the day on which I collected money if I found that the money was ill-spent, in the same way I should feel guilty if I found that I was not discharging the moral obligation. You ought to have realized the implications of the movement when you joined it. I am not after extinguishing all differences. Who can destroy natural differences? Is there no difference between a Brahmin, a dog and a dog-eater? And yet the *Gita* says:

विधाविनयसंपने ब्राहाणे गवि हस्तिनि ।
शुनि चैव श्वपाके च पंडिताः समदर्शिनः ॥[1]

i.e., 'The men who have realized the Truth look with an equal eye on a learned and cultured Brahmin, on a cow, an elephant, a dog and a dog-eater.' There is a difference between them but the man who knows the science of life will say that there is no difference between them in status, as there is none between an elephant and an ant, a savage and a savant. Of course, the savage may be awe-struck before a savant; but the latter should not have any sense of superiority. No, we are all equal in the eyes of the law and God. That is the ideal we have to live up to.

But, then, there should be no master, no servant?

No. There is a beautiful Latin saying—*Primus inter pares*— first among equals, and the Master or the President will be the first among equals. I can see that it is difficult to practise the thing; that is why you will say in your pledge that you will strive your utmost to live up to your belief. That we cannot practise it at once, or fully, does not show that the pledge is wrong; it shows that human nature can be despicable. No, you have got to understand that this is a fundamental

thing of the movement. Otherwise, you will justify the charge that it is a dodge.

Harijan, 11-1-1 935

65. SPEECH AT HARIJAN COLONY, DELHI[1]

January 2, 1935

The whole idea originated with Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla, and he had now donated the grounds for the Colony. As President of the Board and as a moneyed man, he was always thinking of ways and means for the economic uplift of the Harijans, and his ambition was to make this Colony a centre from which would radiate inspiration and all kinds of activity.

However, it is no use talking of one's ambition. Everything will depend on us, workers. No work will suffer for want of money, that much I can say, from my own experience of several institutions. Remember that we are debtors and Harijans are creditors. We have until today delighted in mounting on their backs, like 'the old man of the sea'. We have exacted labour from them and have not scrupled to belabour them, and even to kill them, when they raised a voice of protest. A Meerut zamindar is said to have seriously injured [some Harijans] and one has died. In Kathiawar, a similar thing happened, and there, too a Harijan died. The poor folks would seem to have been born in order to toil and moil for us! We have been guilty of a heinous sin, and it is time we expiated it. It is for that purpose that the Sangh was created. It is a stupendous task, but it has to be done. I have said it several times, and shall repeat it today, that, unless we discharge our debt, Hinduism will perish. Untouchability must be destroyed, or else it will destroy Hinduism. That is why I am giving myself no rest. Not that I do not need it. I may say that I have several years of arrears of rest to cover, but how can I have rest? How can one have rest with a raging fire within? How can any Hindu, knowing that Hinduism is on the brink Of an active volcano, afford to have a moment's rest? Not, surely, until the volcano is extinguished. In a stupendous task of this character, a gift of Rs. 3,500, like the one given by Ghanshyamdasji today, is as a drop in the ocean. Hundreds of millionaires like him will have to empty their treasures for this sacred task. If only you are consumed with a passion for it, the task will be done. There is no lack of money, as Ghanshyamdasji said. There will be none. All that is needed is the will and passion for it. The service of the Harijans is the service of Hinduism, and the service of Hinduism is the service of humanity. Hinduism is no exclusive religion, it tolerates no

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "The Self-introspection Week"

intolerance. Intolerance it holds to be a sin. But unless and until we befriend the Harijan, unless and until we treat him as our own brother, we cannot treat humanity as one brotherhood. The whole movement for the removal of untouchability is a movement for the establishment of universal brotherhood, and nothing less.

Harijan, 11-1-1935

66. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[On or after *January 2, 1935*][1]

ABHYANKAR'S DEATH GREAT TRAGEDY. CONSOLE HIS WIFE AND FAMILY. TELL HER SHE MUST BE BRAVE IF SHE WOULD BE WORTHY OF A BRAVE HUSBAND. I EXPECT HER TO KEEP UP THE TRADITIONS OF SERVICE ABHYANKAR HAS BEQUEATHED.

The Hindustan Times, 4-1-1935

67. LETTER TO CARL HEATH

January 3, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 21st ultimo. Your previous letter was read by Mirabehn, Mahadev and later by Andrews. All of them puts independently of me, the same construction that I had. Of course, I unreservedly accept your correction. I simply want to say that it was after carefully reading your letter more than three times that I sent you the reply[2] I did. Andrews also read my reply to you, and he hadnothing to suggest by way of alteration. Of course, you knew the existence of the repressive laws. But you did not know, nor do you know now, what their continuance meant or means to us here. A strange confirmation of this comes from Dr. Maude Royden who is reported to have said at Karachi that the people in England knew nothing, through the daily Press or otherwise, of the amazing things which she heard during the two or three days she found herself amongst the very sober women of India. Andrews will be able to give you first-hand testimony of what he saw and learnt in Bengal.

You seem to regard the possibility of withdrawal of the

[1] M. V. Abhyankar died on January 2, 1935.

[2] *Vide* , "Letter to Carl Heath", 10-12-1934

forthcoming Bill[1] as a calamity. In my opinion, if the withdrawal comes even at the last moment, it will be a blessing both for England and India, for the simple reason that persistence in the measure in the face of an almost unanimous Indian opposition to it would mean an unbending attitude on the part of the British Parliament and utter contempt for Indian public opinion. I hope you have seen the bitter comment made by Rt. Hon. Sastri, who was at one time a *persona grata* at the India Office whose complete confidence he enjoyed, and the equally bitter comment of Hon. C. Y. Chintamani, who has been regarded as a moderate among moderates and who has, in season and out of season, condemned the Congress attitude in unmeasured language.

Now for the briefest summary of my own personal objections to the J. P. C. Report. I read that Report and the White Paper as one document. Whatever new there is in the former is not regarded at this end as an improvement, but quite the contrary, and it is the last straw which has broken the back of the Liberals. They had cherished the fond hope that the Joint Memorandum signed under the leadership of the Aga Khan would receive the favourable consideration of the Joint Parliamentary Committee and that some, if not all, of its recommendations would be accepted by it. The contemptuous dismissal of that Memorandum, beyond a mere courteous reference to it, has extorted the following remark from Sastri:

> No, Sir, it is impossible for the Liberal Party to give an atom of co-operation. Co-operation with friends that wish well of us will be worth while, but co-operation with those who have displayed the utmost distrust ofus, who do not care for our views and demands, and who enact a constitution in utter disregard of our wishes, what is co-operation with them, I ask? I should call it a suicide.

SUMMARY

1. There is no suggestion in the J. P. C. Report that there should be a clause in the constitution providing for automatic advance to complete independence or whatever the elected representatives of India may decide to have.

2. The contemplated constitution saddles India with a greater financial burden than she is bearing today without any prospect of economic or political betterment.

[1] The Government of India Bill on a new constitution for India. It received Royal assent and became an Act on August 2, 1935.

3. At the centre, 80 per cent of the revenue is reserved out of any popular control.

4. There is no popular control over the military, whether as to policy or as to expenditure.

5. There is no popular control over the currency or the exchange of the country.

6. Even the control over the 20 per cent proposed to be left in the hands of the Finance Minister is subject to suspension by the Governor-General.

7. The provincial autonomy adumbrated in the Report is purely nominal, as the Governors of the provinces have such wide powers that they can, whenever they choose, make an end of responsibility. It would be utterly wrong for any Britisher to infer from Colonial precedents that these powers will be rarely, if ever, exercised. Indian past experience is quite the contrary.

8. Responsible Ministers have no right even to transfer any member, either of the all-India service or of the provincial service.

9. The so-called autonomous legislatures will have no right to amend the Police Acts or even Police Regulations.

10. British exploitation is made firmer than ever.

The overwhelming effect of all the foregoing objections considered together leaves an indelible impression upon the mind that, bad as the existing constitution is, the threatened new one will be infinitely worse. And what is more, if the threatened new constitution is passed, it would be most difficult for years to come to undo the mischief that will be done under it.

To clinch the whole of the objections, it is well to remember that the constitution is sought to be imposed upon the people who are already groaning under repression, such as, perhaps, has not been equalled in British Indian history. I am making this statement with the full sense of my responsibility. I have a vivid memory of Jallianwala Bagh. I have read Kaye and Malleson's volumes on the Sepoy Revolt, as it has been called, of 1857. Both make gruesome reading. Then, it was the naked sword. The repression represents the gloved fist, but deadlier on that account.

You may make whatever private use you wish of this letter. Nobody else is responsible for the opinion I have expressed in this. It has been shown to no friend beyond Mahadev, Mira and the typist.

My writing may seem bitter; but I would like to warn you against putting any such interpretation upon it. The language

represents the truth and nothing but the truth as I have seen and felt it. It does not represent the whole truth. If I had the time and the capacity to give you the whole truth, the version would be even worse than it is.

In spite, however, of the black picture that I see in it, I have no bitterness in me against a single Englishman. I believe that the English Ministers are pursuing what they believe to be an honest policy to be adopted in the interest of India. It is their honest belief that British rule in India has been, on the whole, for her good. They honestly believe that under it India has advanced in economic progress and in political capacity, and that if India received the constitution that the vast number of the intelligentsia wish for, it would be a bad day for her. It is difficult to combat an honest belief, however erroneous it may be, as, in my opinion, it is in this case. But it would also be wrong to be angry over an honest belief of any person. Whilst, therefore, I hold the strong opinion that I have expressed in the foregoing summary I would ask you to believe me implicitly when I give you my assurance that, God helping, I shall take no step in haste or in anger.

I have retired from the Congress because, among other reasons, I want to impose silence upon myself, so far as it is humanly possible, about the political measures of the Government. I want, in my voluntary isolation, to explore the yet hidden possibilities of non-violence. Every action I am taking, no matter in what department of life, is being taken with that end in view. The only axe that I have to grind on this earth is to try to understand the ultimate truth of things which, at present, I seem to see only dimly. And after a laborious search I have come to the conclusion that if I am to see it in any fullness I can only do so by non-violence in thought, word and deed. What this search will lead me to, I really do not know myself, nor have I the slightest desire to see it before its time. For me, therefore, it is an incessant waiting upon God to show me the next step, and I shall be grateful if any of you friends can, with your full hearts, help me in that search.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

CARL HEATH, ESQ.
LONDON

From a photostat: G.N. 1028

nor have I the slightest desire to see it before its time. For me, therefore, it is an incessant waiting upon God to show me the next step, and I shall be grateful if any of you friends can, with your full hearts, help me in that search.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

CARL HEATH, ESQ.
LONDON

From a photostat: G.N. 1028

68. LETTER TO MRS. LINDSAY[1]

January 3, 1935

DEAR SISTER,

A happy New Year to you all. Your letter reached me just in time to enable me to send you this little note.

I often think of you and my Oxford visits but the work in hand crowds out all love letters.

We have very difficult times here in every way. But I don't lose hope. I know that winter must be followed by summer.

It is loving thought to regard one's cats and dogs as members of one's family.

You know that Andrews was in our midst for a few days. He expects to return in April. Dr. Maude Royden is in Karachi. I expect to see her in Delhi where I am just now and where I expect to be for over three weeks.

Mira, Mahadev and Devdas are here. Pyarelal is away near Bombay.

With love to you all from us all,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9743. Courtesy: British High Commission in India

[1] Wife of Dr. Lindsay, Master of Balliol College. A photostat of the original of this letter was displayed at the U. K. pavillion of the Gandhi-Darshan Exhibition held at New Delhi in 1969-70.

69. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

January 3, 1935

In Mr. Abhyankar, a brave and intrepid man has passed away. His death is a distinct loss to the nation. My own relations with him were growing day by day so intimate that his passing away I feel like a personal loss.

The Hindustan Times, 4-1-1935

70. NOTES

A CORRECTION

In reference to the figures of production and sale given by the Secretary, A.I.S.A., in the self-sufficiency report published in our issue of the 9th November, he writes:[1]

> In *Harijan* dated 9-11-34, on page 312, figures of khadi production and sale of A.I.S.A. branches have appeared. Therein, with reference to Karnatak and Utkal Branches, it has been stated in the footnote that 'the production of the branches being inadequate, khadi had to be imported from [other] branches to meet the demand'. This remark does not apply to Utkal. . . . The purchases of the Utkal Branch from other branches during 1933 amounted to only Rs. 557, and not over Rs. 17,000 as would appear from the remark made. We regret the error.

HARIJAN REPRESENTATION

At the request of a correspondent, I had asked Thakkar Bapa to tell me how many Harijans there were in Harijan Sevak Boards in all India. The returns so far received show, for ten provinces, 171 Harijan members against 1,158 non-Harijans. I give the figures by way of information only. It would be wrong to infer that these figures are a sign of solid work. They are undoubtedly evidence of two things:

(1) The Boards have tried to take as their co-members as many Harijans as they could find to help them.

(2) There are enough Hindus of standing who are prepared to lend their names to the Boards, whose avowed object is to seek forHarijans equality with the rest of their fellow Hindus in matters social, economical, political and religious.

I wish it were possible for me to add also that the number of so

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

many caste Hindus and Harijan Hindus on the Boards is a sign of solid progress. Indeed, the large number of members on the Boards adds to the expenses of administration without increasing efficiency or the output of work. Means are being devised to increase efficiency and output, even if it should involve reduction of the number of members. In the service of the poor and the down-trodden, limitation of overhead expenses to a minimum is absolutely necessary. For the helpless can exercise no check on the extravagance, be it unconscious, of their helpers, no matter how benevolent, and the latter, unless they would put checks on their unconscious extravagance in the name of better management, are likely to spend more than they need. A critical examination of the administration of many charitable organizations would either reveal woeful extravagance or hopeless mismanagement and a criminal neglect of their trust by the trustees. Harijan Boards have to escape both misfortunes, if they are to render a good account of themselves to the Harijans, whom it is their sole aim to serve.

Harijan, 4-1-1935

71. NOTES

BENGAL HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH

Here is a summary of the work of the Bengal Provincial Harijan Sevak Sangh for the months of October and November last.

Expenditure in 2 months	Rs. 2,305	
Sangh's branches and organizations exclusively devoted to Harijan *seva* and attached to Provincial Sangh, or aided	9	
Whole-time honorary workers	33	
Hospital	1	with 6 b
Dispensary	1	attended monthly by 1000 patients
Medicines distributed from	6	centres
Schools entirely financed, also partly helped	65	
Number of pupils	1,900	
Scholarships given	36	
Industrial Institute	1	Cottage Tanning

Institute,

Calcutta

I must deal with some of the details of this work in a future issue.

Harijan, 4-1-1935

72. ITS MEANING

> To my unaided mind you appear to be opening the first campaign of an endless and quixotic war against modern civilization. Long ago you proclaimed yourself its sleepless enemy, and now you would, if you could, turn it back on the course it has pursued for some millennia. I reel at the mere thought.[1]

This is from an intimate letter from a dear friend who wrote in reply to my letter, inquiring if he could extend his co-operation in the effort. As the view expressed so frankly by the friend is, I know, shared by quite a number of friends, it is well for me to explain my position. It would be impertinent for me to do so if my position was not also that of the A.I.V.I.A.

In seeking to revive such village industries as are capable of being revived, I am making no such attempt as the friend ascribes to me. I am trying to do what every lover of village life, everyone who realizes the tragic meaning of the disintegration of villages, is doing or trying to do. Why am I turning back the course of modern civilization when I ask the villager to grind his own meal, eat it whole, including the nourishing bran, or when I ask him to turn his sugar-cane into *gur* for his own requirements, if not for sale? Am I turning back the course of modern civilization when I ask the villagers not merely to grow raw produce, but to turn it into marketable products and thereby add a few more pies to their daily income?

And surely modern civilization is not millennia old. We can almost give its birth an exact date. If I could do it, I would most assuredly destroy or radically change much that goes under the name of modern civilization. But that is an old story of life. The attempt is undoubtedly there. Its success depends upon God. But the attempt to revive and encourage the remunerative village industries is not part ofsuch an attempt, except in so far as every one of my activities, including the propagation of non-violence, can be described as such

[1] *Vide* , footnote 1"Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri",17-11-1934

an attempt. The revival of village industries is but an extension of the khadi effort. Hand-spun cloth, hand-made paper, hand-pounded rice, home-made bread and jam, are not uncommon in the West. Only, there they do not have one-hundredth of the importance they have in India. For, with us, their revival means life, their destruction means death, to the villagers, as he who runs may see. Whatever the machine age may do, it will never give employment to the millions whom the wholesale introduction of power machinery must displace.

Harijan, 4-1-1935

73. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

January 4, 1935

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

See the accompanying postcard. Venilal is a fine man. Harilal knows him. It would be a good thing if Jaisukhlal's brother could be drawn into Harijan work.[1] He seems to be more in need of work than of income. Meet him. If you are satisfied with him, if Narandas agrees and if such persons are required near Rajkot, accept him.

Bapa seems to be very much pleased with you. How is Rama? How are Dhiru and Vimu faring?

Ramdas's ship is in mid-ocean. He is in Bombay now.

I am here at any rate up to the 20th. You will know from *Harijan* the activities here.

If any Harijan workers can take up other work besides khadi and arrange it round the latter like the planets revolving round the sun, there could be no objection at all to their doing so. On the contrary, it is desirable. If you have grasped this principle, follow it.

Panditji[2] is here. He is going to Sabarmati and will live there now. Lakshmibehn[3] will stay in Wardha for the present.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5528

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Venilal A. Gandhi", 23-12-1934

[2] Narayan M. Khare

[3] Wife of Narayan M. Khare

74. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

January 4, 1935

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. It is all right if you take boiled milk when fresh milk is not available. You must not discontinue uncooked vegetables or fruit. The menu should also include *bhakhris*[1] of whole wheat flour and roasted wheat. It is very cold here. Yet I have not stopped my morning and evening walks. As usual the whole army moves with me. Amtul came yesterday. Ambujam enquires about you regularly. Her ashram will be ready by the Samkrant[2]. Keep in touch with Ramdas. I shall be here till the 20th if not longer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9390. Also C.W. 635. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

75. INTERVIEW TO DEPUTATIONS

January 4, 1935

The deputation . . . Ied by Mr. Raghubir Narain Singh . . . pointed out to Gandhiji the various difficulties which faced them in reviving village industries and sought his help and guidance, to which Mahatmaji replied:

My first aim is to change the mentality of the people, not to coerce them as Roosevelt, Hitler or Mussolini are doing in their countries. As the mentality of the people has changed today towards khadi, so I hope to turn their mind in favour of indigenous industries.

My efforts are to keep up our civilization, and I will do my best for it.

He advised the deputationists to mobilize public option against mill products, so that the cottage industries might be revived.[3]

Another deputation waited on Mahatmaji consisting of Chamars of the village of Kotana within the Baraut Tahsil in Meerut. . . . They wanted financial assistance from the Harijan Fund for conducting a case which has been instituted by the injured

[1] Thick chapatis of wheat flour

[2] January 14

[3] It was decided that Gandhiji would receive the deputation again on January 11, to discuss the various points raised by them.

Chamars[1]. Gandhiji advised them to effect a compromise and try to raise money locally.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-1-1935

76. MESSAGE TO PUBLIC MEETING, DELHI[2]

[*January 4, 1935*]

The best way wherein his countrymen could respect his memory was to emulate the fearlessness and devotion of the late Mr. Abhyankar whose death was a sad thing for the country.

The Hindustan Times, *5-1-1935*

77. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

DELHI,
January 5, 1935

MY DEAR CHILD,

If this letter can intensify the wishes, then this is to reciprocate your wishes. It is freezingly cold here. The 4 o'clock prayer bell has gone.

Of course, Harijans need ever so much more than mere temple-entry for their spiritual satisfaction. Temple-entry is not so much their spiritual need, as its grant is that of the arrogant caste Hindus. They can have no spiritual grace so long as they deny to their fellows in faith the same right of worship that they claim for themselves. Is not this quite clear?

With love and kisses added for the children,

Yours,
BAPU

[PS]

In Delhi till 20th at least, 28th at the most. Then Wardha.

From a photostat. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child* p. 109

[1] Who were alleged to have been ill-treated by the zamindar of the village

[2] Held on January 4, under the auspices of the District Congress Committee, at which tributes were paid to M. V. Abhyankar. Gandhiji sent this message through Mahadev Desai.

78. SPEECH AT MEETING OF CENTRAL BOARD, HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH[1]

[*January 5, 1935*][2]

It is impossible to over-estimate the value of meticulous detail in your estimates. The path of service to the Harijans is strait and sharp as the razor's edge, simply because the goal is that of complete self-purification. We can never be too critical of ourselves and every pie we get must be received as a dedication to God and used as a sacred trust. Broad heads, therefore, will never do, there is no room in your estimates for 'etceteras' and 'sundries'. For instance, I could not tolerate the item 'books, slates, etc., given free'. Supposing someone gave us a free gift of intoxicating drugs? Would they come under the item? No 'post, telegrams, etc.', either, nor newspapers, nor expenditure on rent. For you should be in a position to say: 'We do not need to spend money on telegrams, we send messages through kind messengers who will take them; we need spend nothing on rent, for we have persuaded some good friends to give us a house.' Expenditure on administration I can tolerate only to a certain extent, and I do not see any need for separate propaganda. Actual solid work is the most eloquent propaganda. I confess I allowed myself to be used for the purpose in that I suffered Thakkar Bapa to carry me about in his circus for about a year; but though I went from place to place under his directions, I must say that the best and the only part I could reconcile myself to was the walking tour in Orissa. Emulate me there if you can. The mutest servant is the most eloquent propagandist. Run a school yourself for Harijans, open a well or temple, help in digging a well or building a village school-house for Harijans. That will be true propaganda. I would ask you to copy the example of Mr. Frazer Hoyland, a schoolmaster from South Wales, who has come to work with his own hands in the Bihar earthquake area under M. Pierre Ceresole. He has worked among the unemployed people in England and Wales, and knows that writing books and pamphlets is no propaganda, but that manual work and sharing in the toil of people one would serve is true propaganda. I should, therefore, not hesitate to drop the column for propaganda. You have a column showing office expenses. I can understand that in our poor country we cannot run our offices free of cost, but even there, run it through Harijans. If we must have peons, have only Harijans for the purpose,

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "The Self-introspection Week"

[2] From *Gandhijini Dinwari*

not treating them as peons but as your sons or members of your family. Expenditure on ashrams is a thing I must strongly warn you against. Let us drop the name of 'ashram' for it cannot be run without a solid fund of moral and spiritual capital. One of the branch Sanghs has budgeted Rs. 8,000 for an ashram. Well, I should rule it out, unless they can show that they are doing work worth 8 lacs. Broadly I might say that you should not spend a rupee until you are sure that you are getting ten rupees' worth of work out of it.

Harijan, 11-1-1935

79. LETTER TO UMADEVI BAJAJ

[Before *January 7, 1935*][1]

CHI. OM,

I write this letter with a pencil since I am writing while having my meal.

It is a bad habit to write while eating and it is equally bad to write with a pencil. Please don't copy my example in these respects.

It seems that your ear is still giving you trouble. You must go to Bombay. I am thinking of sending you a wire.

Write to me about Madalasa[2] also.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 341

80. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

DELHI,
January 7, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM[3],

Your letter. Yes you can start with the girls who may come from Wardha. But all this you should do only if you and Janammal are sure of sticking to your work. You must not rely upon others helping you. They may come and afterwards leave you. Of course if you go in for the ashram you have to adopt the ashram life more or less. You may

[1] *Vide* the following item.
[2] Addressees elder sister
[3] This is in Hindi.

relax some rules to suit local circumstances.

As for your food, you should make such changes as may be necessary. Green leaves, curds and unpolished rice well boiled must suit you. In selecting the diet, the primary consideration with me has been your health. You will therefore unhesitatingly make such changes as your health demands.

Love.

BAPU

From the original. Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

81. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

DELHI,
January 7, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

The Delhi cold, instead of helping me to work harder, makes me do less work when so much work has piled up. What you say about Abhyankar is indeed what has happened. His loss is bound to be felt.

It seems that your ear is taking quite a lot of time to be fully cured. It will not matter at all if you cannot come. Nothing should be done which may interfere with the cure of your ear. Kamalnayan[1] cannot be sent to Ceylon now, not as long as malaria is raging there.

The discharge from Om's ear persists. Last week, I had sent her a wire and asked her to go to Bombay immediately and consult a doctor there. She doesn't seem yet to have done so. I would advise you to call her and get her ear examined by some doctor.

Lali seems to have settled down.

Mehr's case is difficult. She has been staying at Dr. Ansari's place from the day she arrived here. She just dropped in casually once. She has come to develop a feeling of revulsion against the Ashram. We shall have to leave her here. Fortunately, Dr. Khan Saheb's wife is arriving here. Mehr will perhaps stay with her. I wish to return to Wardha on the 22nd, and in any case on the 29th at the latest. Shankerlal[2] and Gulzarilal[3] have arrived here today.

Blessings from
BAPU

[1] Addressee's son
[2] Shankerlal Banker
[3] Gulzarilal Nanda

[PS.]

Ramdas is thinking of going to Bardoli and Lakhtar to bring away his papers, etc., to go through them. Please give him the fare, etc.

BAPU

[PPS.]

Dev Sharma came and saw me. He says that he is prepared to take charge of the Shail Ashram if he is given the entire expenditure that is incurred there at present. Let me know what you think about this.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2950

82. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

January 7, 1935

CHI. VALJI,

I have not yet been able to write about the incidents in the *Ramayana*. In fact I have forgotten all that I was told about them. Now I shall have to write anew. I therefore want to consider some incidents. We must find that essay of Shastri on cow-protection. If you can find another secretary devoted to the cow, l shall entrust this task to him. If you cannot, you should start doing some work yourself instead of being there merely in name. Here again what is required is strength of character, not physical strength. How are your eyes? Try wet-sheet packs soaked in fresh milk when you go to sleep at night—whether or not your eyes are all right—will you? There is no harm in it. I have your *Ramakatha* in front of me and I am going to read it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7468. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

83. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

DELHI,

Id, January 7, 1935

CHI. RAMDAS,

As you addressed your letter *via* Wardha, though dated 1st, it reached me as late as yesterday, the 6th. I will be here upto the 20th at

least. As for the question where you are to stay, it would be highly improper for me to write to Manibhai while you are still there. Ask him yourself. If you see any sign of unwillingness on his part, write to me. Still if you feel that you cannot talk to him, use the accompanying letter.

You may go to Lakhtar or Bardoli whenever you feel you should do so. I am writing to Jamnalalji[1] about the expense.

Since you say nothing about your health, I assume it is good enough. I have had a letter from the Vaidayaraj which is enclosed. As for the particulars about your health, it is for you to supply them. If you do feel the need to put yourself under somebody's treatment, it would be advisable to meet Kuvalaynand or Gaurishanker. You may then go for treatment to whichever of the two places you like. I take it that you will get yourself X-rayed by Dr. Jivraj.

Nimu does not seem inclined to leave Wardha, for the present at any rate. She herself must have written to you about Narandas's letter.

It is quite cold here, so much that one is unable to write as much as one would want to. We are camping in the countryside. The air is pure. Both the place and the air are ideal for physical work. Except for one building, there are only tents for all our needs.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I think the Vaidyaraj's letter has been passed on to you. Still, I am asking them to enquire.

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

84. LETTER TO DUNICHAND

DELHI,
January 8, 1935

DEAR LALA DUNICHAND,

I have your letter. Your suggestions are good but nothing can be done by the Association that will bring it in conflict with the authorities. Relief of the kind you mention is surely political and has to be tackled by political bodies. There are however some items which

[1] *Vide,* "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 7-1-1935

will be taken up as the work progresses.

Surely villages won't require any inducement when they are helped to get some remunerative work for their idle hours. So faras the industries are concerned, they won't be called upon to make any sacrifice.

The difficulty will come in when sanitary work and moral reform commence.

But in any case I take it you are going to do what you can to advance the village industries.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5591

85. LETTER TO VERRIER ELWIN

January 8, 1935

MY DEAR VERRIER,

The two suggestions had come to me before, though not exactly in the form you suggest. I am passing your letter on to Kumarappa. The suggestions coming from you acquire an added significance. Let us see.

Love to you all.

BAPU

[PS.]

Happy New Year.

[PPS.]

Delhi up to 20th.

FATHER ELWIN
GOND S. MANDAL
KARANJIA P.O., MANDLA DIST. (C. P.)

From a photostat: G.N. 8930

86. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

January 8, 1935

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have your separate letters. I understand what you write about Ramdas. I did want a permit issued from there. But never mind if we cannot have it. I shall myself see about it here if Ramdas is willing.

I had a tersely worded letter from Mama about Medh[1], which I am enclosing along with one from Harilal. If you wish, you may let Medh read the letter. There is a great difference between what you recommended and what I find in this letter. Now Pragji alone remains to be consulted.

The new Agent came to see me. He has visited South Africa once. You will surely meet him. Keep me informed about your experience. I have of course asked him to bring about a reconciliation.

I am in Delhi these days. Ba, etc., are with me. We shall be here for a few more days. At any rate we must return by the end of this month. It is pretty cold here.

I hope you are all well.

Sushila seems to have acquired wide knowledge.

What Kallenbach says is on the whole true. Good Jews do not oppose us. Narandas's Kanu is with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Medh I am not writing a separate letter to him.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4830

87. LETTER TO NANDLAL

January 8, 1935

BHAI NANDLAL,

In your poetic fancy, you seem to have been engaged in debunking the Village Industries Association. And yet you sign yourself "Yours faithfully". Only a poet can do that. Do not give any cause to Lilavatibehn for being unhappy. Untruth does certainly follow truth; but ultimately it is left behind. Certainly even indigenous mills will render thousands of people unemployed, so only hand-pounded rice should be used. Your mind is full of so many things that unless you act spiritedly, you won't be able to achieve anything. It is better if you ponder over it and do what you feel is necessary.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Surendra Medh

88. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI

DELHI,
January 8, 1935

BHAI CHAND TYAGI,

Your letter gave me much pleasure. If possible you should come here with Raj Kishori. Only after meeting her can I suggest the right course. You must be keeping well. I am glad to learn that you find Balbir satisfactory.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6630. Also C.W. 4278. Courtesy: Chand Tyagi

89. ADVICE TO AHMEDABAD DEPUTATION[1]

January 8, 1935

Gandhiji advised them to preserve the cordial relations that were existing between Labour and Capital in Ahmedabad for the last 15 years and evolve a permanent scheme for an amicable settlement of all labour disputes in future.[2]

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-1-1935

90. A LETTER

January 8, 1935

DEAR SISTER,

I was glad to hear from you after so many years.

I am keeping myself in touch with Shantilal. I shall do what I can to help him. But to give personal attention to anybody has become almost impossible for me. That chapter of my life seems to have closed altogether.

Khurshedbehn is here. I am afraid she can't go to you. She is

[1] Kasturbhai Lalbhai, Vice-President, Ahmedabad Mill-owners' Association, Shankerlal Banker, Vice-President and Gulzarilal Nanda, Secretary of the Labour Association called on Gandhiji in connection with a wage dispute.

[2] As a result of this meeting it was decided to convene a bigger conference of the representatives of the two Associations.

in . . .[1] with the village work. She has seen your letter. Or course, if you go to the Frontier, you can help the Frontier people in a variety of ways.

I dare not tempt you to come. For I can only give you a few moments if you come.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

91. INTERVIEW TO MRS. C. KUTTAN NAIR[2]

January 8, 1935

MRS. NAIR: It is my feeling, especially after attending the All-India Women's Conference at Karachi, that the women's movement in India is not a representative one. It only represents the aristocracy and upper middle class. Can you suggest practical measures to make it a real mass movement?

GANDHIJI: The obvious remedy would be for the existing members to throw themselves in the khaddar and other village industry movements and thus develop the village instinct and take pride in depending on villages for all their wants.

MRS. N. Do you not think that co-education from very early days till the end of the educational career will help a great deal in removing the sex obsession that we see in our midst today?

G. I cannot definitely state as yet whether it would be successful or not. It does not seem to have succeeded in the West. I tried it myself years ago when I even made boys and girls sleep in the same verandah with no partition between them, Mrs. Gandhi and myself sharing the verandah with them. I must say that it brought about undesirable results.

MRS. N. But do not worse things happen in *purdah*-ridden communities?

G. Yes, of course, but co-education is still in an experimental stage and we cannot definitely say one way or the other as to its results. I think that we should begin with the family first. There, boys and girls should grow together freely and naturally. Then co-education will come by itself.

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] A leading social worker of Cochin. The notes of the interview prepared by the interviewer were revised by Gandhiji.

MRS. N. As a teacher who has moved rather intimately with her students I have had occasion to come across some who, through ignorance and through information gathered from unhealthy sources during the period of adolescence, resorted to practices that were not conducive either to their physical or moral well-being. Will not the teaching of sex hygiene in schools in the most scientific and informal manner be really beneficial to our boys and girls.

G. Yes. And there should be no reason why one should not be able to talk freely on this matter.

MRS. N. On discussing very freely the question of birth-control with many a married woman, I find in many cases, specially in the case of those with large families, that motherhood is often thrust upon them. Woman has no freedom in the real sense of the word if she has no right over her body. So for the sake of the mother, whose health is drained away by the bringing forth of too many children and for the sake of children themselves, who should be a joy to us, but who now come forth unwanted in such large numbers, may not birth-control through contraceptives be resorted to, as the next best thing to self-control, which is too high an ideal for the ordinary man or woman?

G. Do you think that the freedom of the body is obtained by resorting to contraceptives? Women should learn to resist their husbands. If contraceptives are resorted to as in the West, frightful results will follow. Men and women will be living for sex alone. They will become soft-brained, unhinged, in fact mental and moral wrecks, if not also physical. Then, while I believe man to be the worse sinner, woman is not very far behind him. Both sin, on the whole. Woman is not always the victim. She should realize her majesty and train herself to say "No" when she means it.

MRS. N. But is there not too much of sex indulgence even now and is the introduction of contraceptives going to make so much difference in the sex life of the individual?

G. Undoubtedly there is already much of sex indulgence and even sex perversion. But contraceptives would be putting the cap on them. They will give a status to intemperate connection which it does not enjoy now.

MRS. N. Even in exceptional cases where a woman is too weak for child-bearing or where either of the parents is diseased, cannot this method be resorted to?

G. No. One exception will lead to another till it finally becomes general. In the cases stated above, it is better that the husband and the wife live apart. Contraceptives which are being tried in the West are leading to hideous immorality and I am sure after a few years, the Westerners themselves will realize their mistake. Do you not know that Mussolini in Italy is giving donations to parents with large families?

MRS. N. Perhaps Mussolini wants more fodder for cannon.

G. What about the English and the Dutch among whom contraceptives are popular? Are they against war?

MRS. N. Can a poor country like India afford to have its present vast population, which seems to increase at a tremendously rapid pace?

G. Nature will solve the problem for us, if we allow Nature to have free play. Contraceptives are an unnatural interference with her laws. If people want to multiply like rabbits, they will have also to die like rabbits. If we become licentious, there will undoubtedly be Nature's punishment descending upon us. It will be a blessing in disguise.

MRS. N. But is self-control possible for the ordinary man and woman?

G. Yes, under well-regulated conditions. Contraceptives are really for the educated people, who are the "sick" of humanity. I call them "sick" because their food and drink and the exceedingly artificial life that they are leading have made them weak-willed and slaves to their passions.

MRS. N. Do you then suggest, Mahatmaji, as a practical remedy for the over-indulgence in sex today, the releasing of the creative energy in man, through channels other than sex, by concentrating on matters like art, science, literature, etc.?

G. That is true so far as it goes. You have to be very careful in the choice of your food and drink and to keep both mind and body clean. Just as it is important to know what goes to the mind it is equally necessary to know what goes into the body. These are simple things, which will help you a great deal in the matter of self-control.

MRS. N. You know that in India there is no bar for physically unfit people to marry and bring forth children. Moreover, Hindu religion enjoins that none could get salvation without there being some male member to perform *shraddha* ceremony. This in normal circumstances is resulting in degeneration of the Hindu race. Are you, under these conditions, in favour of sterilization as is being done in Germany under Hitler?

G. There are crores of Hindus, especially untouchables who do not perform the *shraddha* ceremony. As regards sterilization I consider it inhuman to impose it as a law on the people. But in the case of individuals with chronic diseases, it is desirable to have them sterilized if they are agreeable to it. Sterilization is a sort of contraceptive and though I am against the use of contraceptives in the case of women, I do not mind voluntary sterilization in the case of

man, since he is the aggressor.

MRS. N. Mahatmaji, you say that a woman should not allow motherhood to be thrust upon herself but that she should be able to assert herself and definitely say "No" to her husband. Have you considered the fact that a Hindu woman especially has no economic status, and her defying her "Lord and Master" may result in disastrous consequences for her, and according to law she may be denied even maintenance, not to speak of a second home?

G. If you study statistics, you will find that what you say about the economic condition of a Hindu woman holds good only in the case of a microscopic minority. Do you not know that in Indian houses it is the woman that is generally the real master?

MRS. N. May I know how far your experiments in self-control in the Sabarmati Ashram have been successful?

G. It is very difficult to say. We have had individual cases of terrible tragedy, but those who visited the Ashram were much impressed by the general atmosphere of freedom, without sex consciousness, that prevailed there.

The Hindustan Times, 11-1-1935

92. INTERVIEW WITH HALIDE EDIB ADIVAR[1]

January 9, 1935[2]

[HALIDE EDIB:] How will you fight the curse of mechanization, Gandhiji? How will you keep human beings human souls?

[GANDHIJI:] It is all implied in my non-violence, Hindu- Muslim unity, the removal of untouchability and giving back to the villagers what belongs to them. The Harijan activity and the movement for the revival of village industries come naturally to me because of non-violence. It is cruel, it is sinful, to think of mechanizationin a country of 350 million human beings. Every human being is a machine, only it should be kept oiled and in proper trim. That is what

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Notes". The interviewer was a Turkish lady who had taken a leading part in the Turkish Revolution. She was visiting India at the invitation of Jamia Millia to deliver a course of lectures. Mahadev Desai reports: "She came and sat down near Gandhiji and said, 'I have come to learn from you and take what I can for my own people'."

[2] From *The Hindustan Times*, 10-1-1935

I am trying to do.

Political freedom, I am sure, you are going to win but mechanization, I am afraid, might get hold of India.

Then, there is no escape from violence. I saw it as long ago as 1908, and ever since I have shaped all my activities in terms of non-violence. Complete mechanization is impossible in India without its resulting in violence in some shape or other.

I know, I know. But it's so difficult. The soul has to be preserved. I have written a play called *Masques and Souls.* There are more masques than souls, but if you will prepare a nursery of souls, it would be all to the good.

Oh yes, if we can find even one true witness to the Truth.

I am not very optimistic, for the opposite side is very strong.

I have never lost my optimism. In the seemingly darkest hours, hope has burnt bright within me.

You cannot kill your own hope, I know.

You are absolutely right. I cannot kill the hope myself. I must say I cannot give an ocular demonstration to justify the hope. But there is no defeat in me.

There will never be, I am sure, there will never be.

Harijan, 25-1-1935

93. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

DELHI,

January 10, 1935

CHI. AMALA,

I had your pencil note. I do not think that you will need another passport from Germany. That would be necessary if you wanted to go back to Germany. I am sure it is unnecessary for remaining here. At the same time, any foreigner is liable to be turned out at any moment without any reason being assigned. And now there is hardly any difference between a foreigner and one born in the country, because any person can be turned out of the country under the Ordinances law.

You must let me know how you are feeling in Santiniketan. We

are here probably till the 28th inst., certainly up to 20th.

Blessings from

BAPU[1]

SMT. AMALABEHN
(DR. MARGARETE SPIEGEL)
SANTINIKETAN

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

94. INTERVIEW TO SOCIALISTS

January 10, 1935

The socialists met him again and discussed the village industries problem from the socialist point of view. They are stated to have said that the first step in village programme should be to improve the condition of *kisans* who were being downtrodden by the zamindars and propaganda should be carried on amongst the *kisans* not to submit to the unfairness they are at present subjected to.

Gandhiji, it is understood, did not agree with this view and opined that attempts should be made to retain cordial relations between the two parties. Any split should be avoided and zamindars' sympathies should not be alienated in order to make the present programme succeed. He said that the time was not ripe to bring about a complete change all of a sudden, though that stage might be reached after some time. He said that the socialists' idea to revolutionize the present state of things might result in the zamindars seeking shelter with the third party.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-1-1935

95. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

January 10, 1935

What do you think about the latest move of the Government regarding your Village Industries scheme?[2]

I should be very glad if Government were to take the wind out of my sails. Much of the work that I propose doing is what Government ought to do. Let Government do whatever they can do, only let not anything be superimposed on the people. If Government helped me, I could produce magical results; but it could be possible

[1] The subscription is in Gujarati.

[2] The Government had proposed allotment of one crore of rupees to the provinces for the economic development and improvement of the rural areas in order to forestall Congress activities in the villages and had issued a confidential circular in this connection.

only if they helped me in the right spirit. In other words, the Government should understand and appreciate the secrets of the programme.[1] There are so many ways in which they could help. They could help with the necessary legislation. But pray don't ask me to express any opinion on what Government are doing. I do not want to criticize their work. If it were necessary, I should write to them. So far as I am concerned my life is an open book, and there is absolutely nothing that I would keep secret from them. I have necessarily chosen items to which nobody's attention has been drawn and where I do not trench on ground covered by others. Thus, in my campaign for unpolished rice, hand-ground flour and village made *gur*, I am simply asking people not to pay for undermining their health. For that is what they are at present doing, and I am thankful to say that I am supported in my view by the highest experts in the land. I dare not think of land improvement and improvement in the methods of agriculture, for I know my limitations, and I want people to do all that they can do without any outside help. My only object is to abolish idleness, to help people to turn their time to good account, to prevent misfeeding and to stop all economic waste. The whole of my campaign for unpolished rice, for hand-ground flour, for *gur*, for hand-pressed oil and for the economic disposal of carcasses should be looked at in that light.[2]

The village uplift programme is not a new idea though the Congress, at its Bombay session recently, adopted it as one of the channels of its constructive programme of work.[3] I have spoken of it to the public during the last eight months.

Gandhiji spoke eloquently on the powers of *takli* and said that recently a spinner from Manchester had examined it and testified to its potentialities. The *takli* which once hardly exceeded the speed of a hundred yards per hour now operated at four hundred yards:

It is a marvellous thing and with intelligence applied to it can produce an enormous change for the better.

Proceeding, Mahatmaji emphasized that the Village Industries Association had excluded politics from its ken.

Questioned as to the progress he had made in his work at Delhi Gandhiji said he was presently going slow in collecting materials and liked to see its great

[1] This sentence is from a report in The *Hindustan Times.*

[2] What follows is from *The Hindustan Times* report.

[3] In the circular the Government had described the Bombay session of the Congress as the greatest personal triumph of Gandhiji.

potentialities. The Spinners' Association had distributed one and a half crores of rupees among 160,000 people of which 120,000 were spinners, 24,000 washermen, and the rest weavers. From the competitive point of view there was no reason why the village industries meant to promote villagers' welfare should not hold their own against mechanized industries, provided it was clearly understood that village production was for its own consumption.

This policy had been recognized as economic even outside India and if followed would do great good to India. It was important not only from the general economic point of view but from other considerations so far as rice, wheat and sugar were concerned, for village products contained more vitamins and proteins whereas in industrialized products these were absent.

Harijan, 25-1-1935, and *The Hindustan Times*, 11-1-1935

96. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

DELHI,
January 11, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM[1],

I have your letter. You must put your body in perfect order by taking the food that suits you best. You should be the best judge of what suits you if you choose your food for health and not for the pleasure of the palate. I have no fear that you will make your choice from the latter standpoint. We have here a good variety of *bhaji*—pea leaves, mustard leaves, carrot leaves, fine radish leaves, *palak*. It is good you are taking butter. Are you taking enough exercise?

It will not do for you to open an ashram without Janammal. If, therefore, she can't come to the village, you should fix your ashram in Madras, unless Father desires otherwise.

I like the idea of Father settling down in a village, even if it be for a time.

We are sleeping in an open verandah with a roof on it. There is danger of morning dew here and there is not convenience enough for me here to try the experiment of sleeping right under the sky.

It is good you saw Kakasaheb and discussed with him the question of the best method of learning Hindi. Do come in close contact with him. He will be a good guide in educational matters.

The bill for the paper and envelopes amounted I think to nearly Rs. 22. I thought it was sent to you. I shall inquire. Do not send me any envelopes. I have some myself. But I am using those made by us out of waste paper so long as it lasts.

[1] This is in Hindi.

Nirmala is in Wardha. Bibi Amtul is with us.

Love.

BAPU

From the original. Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

97. LETTER TO UMADEVI BAJAJ

January 11, 1935

CHI. OM,

When will you shed your lethargy? The handwriting in your letter was not as beautiful as pearls. Though the letter is long, you haven't given much news in it. I still feel that it would be better for you to go to Bombay once and consult an ear specialist. It is very cold here. We seem to be camping in a jungle, but we enjoy our stay. As I have to see many visitors, I cannot cope with my work.

Ask Madalasa to write to me. What does she eat? What is her weight?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Mehrtaj has forgotten you, me and everybody else. She is at Dr. Ansari's and enjoying herself.

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 340-l

98. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

DELHI,
January 12, 1935

JAMNALAL
BIRLA HOUSE
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD
BOMBAY

JUST LEARNT SWARUPRANI UNCONSCIOUS. SEND FULL DETAILS.

GANDHI

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 146

99. TO THE MILL-HANDS

DELHI,
January 13, 1935

I hope you will gladly welcome the compromise arrived at in the dispute that was going on regarding your wages. . . .[1] It will be in your interest to accept willingly the cut in your wages-—that will enhance your credit too, I have no doubt about it. I do not consider it a small matter that the main principle of the policy which we wanted to adopt years ago has been accepted in this compromise. Now we have to make a scheme at our earliest convenience to implement it. I need not tell you that its success mostly depends on your pure intentions and conduct. The welfare of both the employees and the employers lies in the mill continuing to function. He who understands this will never find it difficult to understand this compromise. I have been telling you from the very beginning of our acquaintance that the industry exclusively belongs neither to the mill-owners nor to the labourers. The capital of the owners is money while yours is labour. Both of these are useless unless there is unity between the two. If you have grasped what I am saying you will realize that the good of both lies in this compromise. You will also know how much progress we have made and how near we are towards the realization of the dream that we had been cherishing all along. I therefore hope that all the sisters and brothers will unanimously accept the compromise.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

100. A DISCUSSION

[Before *January 14, 1935*][2]

Your campaign[3] is taking away from the Missionary's popularity.

[GANDHIJI:] I see what you mean but I do not know why it should disturb them. We are not traders trenching on one another's province. If it is a matter of serving oneself, I should understand their attitude, but when it is entirely a matter of serving others, it should not worry them or me as to who serves them.

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Notes", dated January 14, 1935

[3] Against untouchability

But, perhaps, the authorities in charge of a Mission hospital would rightly feel worried if you sent your people to go and open a hospital in the same place.

But they should understand that ours is a different mission. We do not go there to afford them simple medical relief or a knowledge of the three R's; our going to them is a small proof of our repentance and our assurance to them that we will not exploit them any more. I should never think of opening a hospital where there is already one; but if there is a Mission school, I should not mind opening another for Harijan children, and I would even encourage them to prefer our school to the other. Let us frankly understand the position. If the object is purely humanitarian, purely that of carrying education where there is none, they should be thankful that someone whose obvious duty it is to put his own house in order wakes up to a sense of his duty. But my trouble is that the Missionary friends do not bring to bear on their work a purely humanitarian spirit. Their object is to add more members to their fold, and that is why they are disturbed. The complaint which I have been making all these years is more than justified by what you say. Some of the friends of a Mission were the other day in high glee over the conversion to Christianity of a learned pandit. They have been dear friends, and so I told them that it was hardly proper to go into ecstasies over a man forsaking his religion. Today it is the case of a learned Hindu, tomorrow it may be that of an ignorant villager not knowing the principles of his religion. Why should Missionaries complain if I open a school which is more liked by Harijans than theirs? Is it not natural?

But does it mean that you would say the same thing about a Christian who embraces Hinduism?

I would. Here is Mirabehn. I would have her find all the spiritual comfort she needs from Christianity, and I should not dream of converting her to Hinduism, even if she wanted to do so. Today it is the case of a grown-up woman like her, tomorrow it may be that of a European child trusted to my care by a friend. Take the case of Khan Saheb's daughter entrusted to my care by her father. I should jealously educate her in her own faith and should strive my utmost against her being lured away from it if ever she was so inclined. I have had the privilege of having children and grown-up persons of other faiths with me. I was thankful to find them better Christians, Mussalmans, Parsis or Jews by their contact with me.

But if it was a pure case of conscience?

I am no keeper of anybody's conscience, but I do feel that it argues some sort of weakness on the part of a person who easily declares his or her failure to derive comfort from the faith in which he or she is born.

Harijan, 25-1-1935

101. FOREWORD TO "TWO SERVANTS OF GOD"

DELHI,
January 14, 1935

Though I had always longed for it, I was never able to be with Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan for any length of time before the closing months of last year. Good fortune, however, brought me not only the younger brother but also the elder, Dr. Khan Saheb, very soon after their discharge from Hazaribagh prison. As luck would have it, they were under orders not to enter the Frontier Province till 28th December last. They were under discipline not to offer Civil Disobedience. And so they accepted the hospitality of Seth Jamnalal Bajaj in Wardha. I was thus privileged to come in intimate touch with the brothers. The more I knew them the more attracted I felt towards them. I was struck by their transparent sincerity, frankness and utmostsimplicity. I observed, too, that they had come to believe in truth and non-violence, not as a policy but as a creed. The younger brother, I found, was consumed with deep religious fervour. His was not a narrow creed. I found him to be a universalist. His politics, if he had any, were derived from his religion. The Doctor had no politics. This privileged contact led me to the conclusion that the brothers were much misunderstood. I, therefore, asked Mahadev Desai to note all he could from them of their lives and prepare for the public a sketch introducing them as men. He was to leave politics alone and avoid criticism of the Government. The result is this character-sketch. Let the reader judge whether the brothers' claim to be known as simple *Khudai Khidmatgars* (i.e., Servants of God) is vindicated by the following pages, assuming that they give an accurate and truthful recital of the events of their lives as the brothers gave them to Mahadev Desai.

M. K. GANDHI

Two Servants of God

102. LETTER TO NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE

January 14, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

Your article has been simply waiting for my note on it. Your postcard has therefore come in time. I am glad you have reconsidered

your position. You can publish your notes of the interview if you send it to me first for revision.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Delhi till 23rd inst.

SHRI NIRMAL K. BOSE
6/1A BR. INDIAN STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 10518 and 10521

103. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

January 14, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I understand why you will not be able to come. It is desirable that you should stay on there till the doctors permit you to leave. Do not overstrain yourself.

Ramdas feels that Manilal[1] is not very eager that the former should continue to stay at Manibhuvan[2]. It is best, therefore, that he should leave the place. He wishes to rent a separate room for himself and has asked for Rs. 25 as rent for it. I think we should let him have it. I know that all this is wrong. But Ramdas's illness is of such a nature that in his case wrong seems right. I do not know how far a father's love is misleading me in this matter. If you disapprove of this demand of Ramdas, by all means tell him so. You earned the privilege of doing so many years ago. Do what seems proper to you.

I understand what you say about Swaruprani. Sarup wires to me from time to time.

I must stay on here till the 25th at any rate, although we must leave here latest by the 28th.

Rajaji is coming tomorrow with Lakshmi.

Do you see Jayaprakash?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2951

[1] Son of Revashanker Jagjivan Jhaveri
[2] Revashanker Jhaveri's house in Bombay

104. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

January 14, 1935

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. You are economizing very well. You must no more fall ill. Accept Narandas's advice in matters of food, studies, etc. I obviously cannot guide you from this distance. Always remember that fruits of patience are sweet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9330. Also C.W. 6605. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

105. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 14, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your three letters. I had asked Mahadev to reply to the first. I understand about Aunt[1]. I shall be happy if she feels satisfied. It was good that the leg was operated on. Send me separately the figure of the expenditure incurred on this treatment. Pay the money from the balance of the Ashram funds with you. I think the monthly allowance is paid by Behcharlal. Am I right? I have a faint impression that it is so. Inquire and let me know. Is Aunt calm? Does Manu go to help her? Is Phuli[2] there? Does she faithfully follow her dharma? If we understand the real meaning of illness, it is a test of the person who is ill as also of his neighbours and relations. If God had ordered an even life for all, who would have tested whom? Who is Dr. Jadavrai?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

There was nothing serious with my feet. The skin had cracked because I had been careless during the cold. Stopping walks and proper care of the wound have cured it.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8427. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Raliatbehn
[2] Daughter of Raliatbehn

106. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

January 14, 1935

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your letter. One ought not to stay where one feels oneself to be a burden on the hosts. I understand what you say about your having to find a separate room. I see that the Rs. 25 per month shall not now be sufficient to meet your needs. You need not mind that. Your peace of mind is what matters most. I am writing to Jamnalalji[1] but at the same time you also should talk to him frankly. He will immediately understand your need. Pyarelal writes and tells me that you are much better than you were at Wardha. I was pleased indeed to hear that. You must have got my letter in which I mentioned the suggestion made by the Delhi tailor. You need not get agitated by such a letter from me. You may do what you yourself wish to do. I will be perfectly satisfied with that. Your good lies in following the inclination of your own nature. You alone can know what will satisfy your nature. There was really nothing. . . .[2] Does one talk about the chilblains one suffers from in winter? But then, I am a Mahatma as they say, and so I must be an exception. But now there is some relief even from that. I had been somewhat careless and had therefore to stop going out for a walk for about four days. Today I took one.

Your aunt has been ailing rather badly in Rajkot. Harilal looks after the nursing. I will probably be able to leave here[3] on the 25th; if not on 25th, then on the 28th certainly. Do you visit Mathuradas? I am sure you know that you can have a place in Jamnalalji's store.

I should like you to be more regular in writing to me.

I had a letter from Sharma. He is better now. He has arranged for a separate house for himself. He will come over by about the 20th.

I went and saw the school run by Giriraj. It did not appeal to me. He is of course working hard, but how can he show the concern that a mother or a father would?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* ,"Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 14-1-1935

[2] A word here is illegible in the source.

[3] That is, Delhi, which Gandhiji left for Wardha on 28th.

107. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,

February 14, 1935

CHI. RAMDAS,

I got your letter. I too believe that your medicine will be your work. In what direction are you trying these days? Do those on whom you had pinned your hopes fulfil them?

How is Kalyandas faring? At Kevalram's, do they maintain the degree of cleanliness I insist on being maintained? How many customers does he get?

How do you go there and return? The eating house must be quite a distance from Manibhuvan.

I have already written and told you that Kanti[1] is here, haven't I? I have written to Harilal[2] to come over here. Now-a-days I have taken charge of the kitchen at the new quarters. Some new experiments are being tried.

Write to Manilal.

Do you write to Sharma?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Son of Harilal Gandhi

[2] *Vide* , "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 14-2-1935

108. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

January 14, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

We were both awaiting your letter. It has come just in time. You did well in renting a new house. I have seen the account of your expenses. The amount spent on postage is perfectly justified. You need not reply to anyone. Your notice published in *Harijan*[1] has been reproduced in many newspapers. Some have even written to me on the subject.

I cannot say when I shall leave here but I am booked for a three days' tour of the countryside after the 20th. Afterwards I rush off to Wardha.

What is the rent of the new house? Have you taken it on lease? I shall understand things better when you come here. Ramdas and the children too will come, I suppose.

Ramdas is in Bombay.

I have not understood what you say about borrowing Rs. 200 on mortgage. Who has mortgaged whose house, and why?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha,* between pp. 142 and 143

109. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

January 15, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM[2],

I am glad the whole thing went off so well. 1 hope K.'s[3] wound is now completely healed. I have the 3 bottles of good honey and almonds. Just now I have not been eating them. Now I must try. You will come whenever you can. When anybody comes next time, you send me a cooker like the one Janammal had. You should let me pay for it as I want it for Khurshedbehn. I had a sweet letter from Father

[1] Dated December 14, 1934

[2] This is in Hindi.

[3] Krishnasamy, addressee's son

after the marriage. I hope he has gone back to Kodai. You should induce him to do so. Go with him yourself and take K. with you.

Love.

BAPU

From the original. Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

110. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

[About *February 14, 1935*][1]

CHI. RAMDAS,

I got your letter. Personally I like your taking your meals in Kevalram's eating-house. I should like to know what you eat, but I am not particular about it. All that I wish is that you may eat whatever pleases you and agrees with you and build up your body.

Of Dhiru, it is as you write. You may certainly go whenever you wish to. You have kept your bedding at Kalyandas's place, but for sleeping you surely go to Manibhuvan, don't you? How much distance do you cover in your walks every day?

If you like to help Kevalram in his work in the eating-house, doso. I quite understand your being disinclined to go to Natal. You must have written to Manilal accordingly.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Nirmala that she has done well to decide that she and all others should take their meals in the eating-house. It is very good indeed that she makes herself so helpful in the eating-house work. . ..[2]

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] From the contents; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] The rest of the postscript is illegible.

111. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

January, 15, 1935

CHI. GANGABEHN,

This, being hand-made paper, is more expensive than ordinary paper and I, therefore, use it economically. Since I started using it, consumption of paper has gone down to one half, just as consumption of khadi cloth has gone down to one-tenth or even lower than that. Everything indigenous is always cheaper in the end. I am writing with a reed pen.

You are a keen observer. Examine everything in your surroundings carefully. Every article of food and clothing must, as far as possible, be indigenous.

Learn to eat fresh leaves uncooked, to drink milk without boiling it, to use wheat flour without sifting it and rice without polishing it. If you learn only this and no more and teach the villagers to do likewise, crores of rupees will be saved.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 84. Also C.W. 8817. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

112. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

DELHI,
January 16, 1935

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your letter yesterday. I am writing this reply the first thing in the morning, that is at 3.15.

If it is your own wish to help Chandubhai, do so with pleasure. I have no right to stop altruistic actions. Pay him whatever sum you wish to without expecting that it will be returned. No one would be at fault if it is not returned. Business is like that. Sometimes the dice throw is in one's favour and then it goes on; and when it is not, it persists against one. But then can we know what is good and what isbad for us? Don't therefore hesitate to do what your own *atman* bids you do. The inclination to give away is always worth cultivating. Do we really own what we regard as our own?

Don't believe what you might hear regarding my feet or any other newspaper stories. Great men's boils become magnified into tumours. We should therefore give no thought to the boils of mahatmas. I am as well as I was in Wardha. I shall be leaving behind a bad tooth! Or maybe it returns with me. I may leave here on the 25th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9392. Also C.W. 637. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

113. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

January 16, 1935

CHI. AMALA,

I have your letter. The only thing for treating chilblain is to keep the affected parts warm, even to the exclusion of open-air exercise. The newspapers are too amusing. You must not put any faith in what you read in the newspapers, especially about events in the life of mahatmas. Their pimples are turned into carbuncles and a simple headache becomes a sign of hastening end[1]. . . .

I am glad you like Santiniketan so well and the people in it. I am glad too that you are adding Bengali to your knowledge of languages. You should ask Indira to write to me. Get her mother's address in Almora and write to her mother that you are teaching Indira French. How many girls are you nursing? What are they suffering from? What is your time-table? Are you cooking your own food or are you taking only bread, raw vegetables and milk? If you are taking raw vegetables, what are they?

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The letter being damaged here, one sentence following this is illegible.

114. LETTER TO RAJARAM R. BHOLE

DELHI,
January 16, 1935

MY DEAR RAJARAM,

I have your letter. Seeing that you have put on weight I would advise you not to leave the sanatorium if the authorities still want to continue the treatment and do not mind your prolonged stay. It is no use your going to Poona and becoming worse. He who passes time in rendering himself fitter for the service, which he cannot do otherwise, is also doing service. Therefore, staying in Mysore need not be regarded as waste of time.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Shri Rajaram Bhole
P. K. T. SANATORIUM
VONTIKOPPAL
MYSORE

From the original: R. R. Bhole Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

115. LETTER TO MADALASA BAJAJ

January 16, 1935

CHI. MADALASA,

I have your letter. It is surprising that your weight is not increasing. But that does not matter. Since you are all right in other respects, leave things as they are. Milking cows is very good work indeed which you have started. I hope you drink the milk as soon as it is extracted.

Is the vessel kept quite clean? Do you wash the udders first with a solution of potassium permanganate and then with clean water? Do you wash your hands before milking?

Do you rub the cow's body gently with a gunny-bag? Do you feed the cow yourself with your own hands? This is really good work which you have started doing. Write to me again.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 316

116. LETTER TO HARIBHAU PHATAK

DELHI,
[*January 17, 1935*][1]

MY DEAR HARIBHAU,

I have your letter. I can't remember the letter you are referring to. It is just likely that the tremendous pressure at which I am dealing with my correspondence has put your letter out of my mind and it is lying buried in the heap before me.

I have not said that there should be no propaganda. Propaganda there must be. I have said, and I still maintain, that there should be no paid propaganda or if there is, there ought to be a separate collection about it. It is the business of *savarna* Hindus to organize such propaganda. Therefore funds should be raised, if funds are necessary, earmarked for that purpose. My own impression is that paid propaganda creates no effect whatsoever. We conduct schools and hostels with a definite object, which is to discharge the obligation we owe to the Harijans. It is wholly different in scope, therefore, from the establishment of schools, etc., under the old regime. Every school we open is a fresh nail in the coffin of untouchability, and having travelled all over India in that cause you will let me judge the result. It is therefore that I have said that the opening of schools and hostels [is][2] the best propaganda for conducting the campaign against untouchability. We have plenty of money; but where are the schoolmasters to be had? *Savarna* schoolmasters are not to be picked up in the streets. Now, reverse the process. If you utilize 90 per cent of the funds for propaganda and reserve 10 per cent for schools, how will you measure the success you would have attained in the conversion of *savarna* Hindus as we are able to measure the result by the number of schools and hostels that we succeed in opening and conducting? Daily I have letters from Harijans complaining of our spending money for purposes other than opening schools, hostels and the like. I have no letter from anywhere complaining that we do not carry on enough propaganda. Yours is the first letter received by me.

[1] The source has '17-1-1934' which is evidently a slip. In January, 1934 Gandhiji was on tour in the South.

[2] The source has 'are'.

In Maharashtra I do not know what you will do in the matter of propaganda even if the whole of the collections were to be used by you for propaganda work. Show me a programme and I am prepared to examine it on its own merits. I have no bias. One way or the other, my sole concern is to see that untouchability is removed. I wonder if I have made my point perfectly clear. If not, you must write again developing your views.

The complaint you make about the composition of the Maharashtra Provincial Board is, of course, your own speciality. It has nothing to do with propaganda. You have simply to get Deodhar to give you a minimum of time or ask him to retire in favour of one who can give the time, or have him as the ornamental head but have a Vice-Chairman who would conduct the proceedings and actually organize the work from month to month, and even from day to day. If you suggest any such Vice-President, I will discuss the thing with Thakkar Bapa in the first instance.

Now about mill rice and hand-pounded rice. When you say that mill-pounded polished rice is [not] dearer than hand-pounded, I know that there is a flaw in your statement. Hand-pounded rice is as much polished as mill-pounded polished rice. You have to test the thing for yourself. If you will take hand-pounded unpolished rice, it would be any day and everywhere cheaper than mill-polished rice when we compare the prices of unpolished mill-pounded rice and unpolished hand-pounded. But you will never have the mills to produce unpolished rice in large quantities. From the health standpoint, I have universal medical testimony that mill-pounded unpolished rice suffers in vitamin when compared with hand-pounded unpolished rice. To remove the outermost husk is a very simple and expeditious process. It is the polishing process by the hand which sends up the price of labour which I obliterate in my calculation because I do not want to go beyond the process of removing the outermost husk. Make the investigation for yourself and then give me the prices. You are not the only person who have committed the error if you have committed it. It is most natural because we have never investigated these processes nor have we ever troubled to know the distinction between polished and unpolished rice. Unpolished rice is a most beautiful grain. It is either yellow, red or dark white, never white like the polished rice. The red variety is the best, and sweet to taste, and cheaper withal. I opened out one grain from the paddy and showed to those around me the full

unpolished grain. I had not seen it before. But in a heap of half-polished rice I saw a whole paddy grain. I immediately removed the husk with my finger nails. Out came the beautiful red grain from its husk. I would defy anyone to show that such unpolished rice is dearer than mill-polished rice. Test again for your satisfaction and then tell me if you still claim to be right in your supposition that polished rice is cheaper than hand-pounded unpolished rice.

Yours,

BAPU

SHRI HARIBHAU PHATAK
62 SADASHIV PETH
POONA CITY

From a photostat: G.N. 1374

117. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

January 17, 1935

MY DEAR SISTER,

I must dictate if I am to write to you at all today. You must not overwork yourself. You must give yourself proper rest and build up your body to the extent it is possible. As a confirmed believer in the natural mode of living, I think that we can rebuild shattered bodies by conforming to the laws of nature. Very often I have known persons who have succeeded in getting better where medical assistance has failed. This is no reflection on the doctor brother.

I hope you got copies of the A.I.V.I.A. constitution and have sent in your form to Kumarappa.

I would like the Raizada to convince me that it is proper for ourselves to prosecute poor Harijans for breach of the Sarda Act. In the mean time, I am certain, we must not undertake these prosecutions. Prosecutions must be preceded by educative propaganda.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3519. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6328

118. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

January 17, 1935

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your letter and the children's. Tangai[1] is a wise girl and so she has learnt to resign herself to the sorrows that come to her.[2] The spirit of resignation is bad when sorrows come out of our conscious errors; but when they come for reasons we do not know and cannot know, resignation is the proper thing. In other words, constant endeavour and surrender to the will of God have to go hand in hand.

Your description of your visit to Porto Novo and Maria's losing herself in her work is very good.

My feet won't let me walk, because immediately I try, the crack reopens.

C. F. Andrews could not write to you as he had no time whatsoever. It was touch-and-go whether he would be able to catch the steamer he did.

Both A.I.S.A. and A.I.V.I.A. are absolutely non-political associations.

You must come to Wardha some day. Delhi is too far for you. What is Menon being paid for hospital work? We leave here, at the latest, on the 28th instant. We have been passing through a very severe spell of cold weather.

Love.

BAPU

MRS. ESTHER MENON
"THE VISION"
TANJORE (S. INDIA)

From a photostat. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also My *Dear Child, p.* 110

[1] Addressee's daughter
[2] *Vide* the following item.

119. LETTER TO TANGAI MENON

January 17, 1935

MY DEAR TANGAI,

You are a very brave girl cheerfully going through the illness you get from time to time. You must ask Daddy this question: 'Why do I get these sores when you are yourself a doctor? You should find a way of helping me.' I hope you are much better now.

Love and kisses.

BAPU

My Dear Child, p. 121

120. LETTER TO NAN MENON

January 17, 1935

MY DEAR NAN,

You have written a very good letter in good steady hand. You were quite right in wishing me a Happy [New] Year because you wrote your letter on the 27th December. But there is no use now in my returning the wish, for the New Year is well on its way.

You must tell me how you felt when you began your spinning on the new wheel. Do you know how to spin on the *takli?*

Love and kisses.

BAPU

My Dear Child, p. 121

121. WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

[On or before *January 18, 1935*][1]

Official announcement has been made that the Silver Jubilee of His Britannic Majesty's reign is to be celebrated in India. It is necessary for the Working Committee to guide the public as to the attitude to be adopted on the occasion.

[1] The Working Committee of the Congress met on January 16 and 18, 1935, during which time Gandhiji had discussions with the Committee and also drafted this resolution in connection with the Silver Jubilee celebrations of the Coronation of King George V

The Congress has and can have nothing but good wishes for the personal well-being of His Majesty, but the Congress cannot ignore the fact that the rule in India with which His Majesty is naturally identified has been a positive hindrance to the political, moral and material growth of the nation. It now threatens to culminate in a Constitution which, if enforced, promises to exploit the Nation, to drain her of what she still possesses of wealth and to harden her political subjection as has perhaps never been attempted before.

It is, therefore, impossible for the Working Committee to advise any participation in the forthcoming celebrations. At the same time, the Working Committee has no desire by hostile demonstrations to wound the susceptibilities of Englishmen and others who will want to take part in the celebrations. The Working Committee therefore, advises the general public, including Congressmen who may be members of elected bodies, to be satisfied with mere abstention from the events that may be arranged for celebration.

The Working Committee trusts that the authorities and responsible Englishmen will recognize and appreciate the honest and inevitable attitude of the Working Committee and refrain from unnecessarily wounding national self-respect by compelling, directly or indirectly, participation in the forthcoming celebrations.

History of the Indian National Congress, Vol. I, p. 600

122. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

January 18, 1935

MY DEAR MURIEL,

You have been moving from place to place with such rapidity that I have not known where to send you my letters. Hence my silence.

I believe that I have received all the letters you have written — not more than four, not less than three. Of three I have a distinct recollection.

I have forwarded your cheque to Thakkar Bapa for Harijan funds.

I am dictating this letter in Delhi where I have come in order to pass a few days at the Harijan Home for which Shri Ghanshyamdas Birla has donated 20 acres of land costing Rs. 30,000. I am living on

that piece of ground. I expect to return to Wardha on the 28th instant, at the latest.

You see I have not yet gone to jail, and you can depend upon my not forcing the pace. My application for permission to go to the Frontier Province has been turned down. That, of course, is not the last word.

Even if you do not hear from me, you have to continue to write.

Love from us all.

BAPU

MISS MURIEL LESTER
LONDON

From a photostat: G.N. 6562

123. LETTER TO DUNICHAND

DELHI,
January 18, 1935

DEAR LALA DUNICHAND,

I have your letter with the enclosure. I have glanced through it. It was unnecessary, in my opinion, to publish it. Dr. Satyapal needs no defence from you; and if he does, I think your letter has spoiled his case. Public workers have to possess the hide of a rhinoceros. They cannot afford to be sensitive to the extent of being thin-skinned. But I must confess to you that though I have not talked to more than two or three persons and that too when the talk became relevant, I have laid the blame of the Punjab defeats at Dr. Satyapal's door. His inexhaustible energy, courage and suffering are undeniable. But he has a knack of often estranging good people from him. I intended to talk to him about it, but unfortunately he went to jail before I could do so. It is my opinion that if Dr. Satyapal had been wise and judicious, not one of the Punjab seats would have been lost.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

LALA DUNICHAND, B.A.
KRIPA NIVAS
AMBALA CITY

From a photostat: G.N. 5592

124. LETTER TO JAGDISH SHASTRI

January 19, 1935

BHAI JAGDISH SHASTRI,

A list of the chapters of the essay on cow-protection is enclosed herewith. You can add to it, you may even change the order.

1. Origin of cow-protection.

2. The position in the Vedic Age.

3. The position in the Age of the *Smritis.*

4. The position in the Age of the Epics.

5. The attitude of other religions.

6. Origin of dispute with the Muslims.

7. Is cow-protection an essential feature of Hinduism? If it is, then what does it signify? Does the tradition date back to the ancient times? Difference between the attitudes of the Arya Samajists and sanatanists and its critical appreciation.

8. The present position—census of goshalas. Difference between Jain *pinjarapoles* and Marwari goshalas and feasibility of cow-protection through them.

From a Copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

125. SPEECH AT SANSI BASTI, DELHI

January 19, 1935

I had promised to Thakkar Bapa that I would visit this Harijan Colony some time for half an hour. Today I have the opportunity to come here. It is deplorable that first Hindu society has sinned against these Sansi brethren, regarding them as untouchables and then the Government on its part has declared them a criminal tribe. It is a matter of shame for us Hindus that because of negligence on our part these people were left without work, and since they must make a living some of them adopted crime as a profession. But not every one of them is a criminal, nor can it be so. Nevertheless the whole community came to be called a criminal tribe. I would ask the Sansi brethren to eschew the evil that has crept into their midst due to our indifference. You should give up drink and gambling, and carrion too, if anyone takes it. You should also give up stealing, etc., so that you can be recommended for exemption from reporting at police stations. May God grant you the good sense to follow my advice.

[From Hindi]

Harijansevak, 25-1-1935

126. DISCUSSION WITH A DONOR

HARIJAN HOME, DELHI,
January 19, 1935[1]

He was taken upstairs as soon as Gandhiji was free to see him. The neatly dressed old man placed before Gandhiji ten neatly arranged wads of currency notes and said: "This is for the poorest and the most deserving. You know them better than anyone else."

[GANDHIJI:] That's very good. But how many years' savings does this mean?

Many years. But I sent a hundred for the earthquake and a hundred to Assam, and in Allahabad four years ago I gave Rs. 500 for the peasants.

Oh, then tell me what was your salary and what is your pension? And what were you?

I was a schoolmaster. When I retired after many years' service, my salary was Rs. 52 a month. I get no pension, but I was given a gratuity of Rs. 2,700.

And how long ago did you retire?

Five years ago.

And how much do you spend on your own living?

Oh, my living! Hardly much.

But still one has to live. Tell me how much you need.

A little *dal-roti* does not cost much. I can do with Rs. 10 a month. I have no one to take care of. I used to have nephews whom I supported and educated, but now I am free. I have also a Sanskrit school to which I devote most of my time now. It is a free school.

So you saved a few thousands out of your small salary and have been devoting it to the service of the poor. A great thing. How I wish everyone could learn the art from you.

Yes, Mahatmaji, I have spent very little on myself and I have often been able to give away what I had to the poor.

Admiring his padded clothing, which did not need to be supplemented by shawls or blankets, Gandhiji asked: And where did you get this khadi?

It is home-made khadi.

You make me envy you.

"I have still some savings left, Mahatmaji," said the old man, his face suffused

[1] According to Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Notes", from which this has been extracted, the discussion took place on the day on which Gandhiji spoke at Jamia Millia; *vide* the following item.

with the joy of giving. "I shall bring all that, some other time. I do not know where to give the money. I know you, and you know the poorest who deserve help. I am deeply thankful."

Harijan, 1-2-1935

127. SPEECH AT JAMIA MILLIA, DELHI[1]

January 19, 1935[2]

I do not know whether, while you listened to the story unfolded by the Begum Saheba, you were, like me, drawing a comparison between the history of Turkey and India. I could not fail to draw many a parallel between the two stories. No birth comes without agony, and as I listened to the story, not yet finished by the speaker, and not yet finished in action, I found that all is in the melting pot, all is transitory in this transitory world. One could not say what would be the end of the world in which Turkey and India were but insignificant spots. But it is best to know that what matters to India and to everybody is his or her own individual action. For we must know that true history is not the history of kings and dynasties, but of individual men and women in general. Some who died in utter neglect and misery were great heroes and heroines, not great kings, however big the empires they had founded and whatever the destruction they wrought on the face of the earth.[3] The history of man and woman is still in the making. What are a thousand or even a million years in the limitless cycle of time? They are but a speck, and as I listened to the story of Turkey, I derived hope that, if we modelled our action according to the Right and nothing but the Right, there would be nothing but a bright future for us all.

There is an indissoluble tie that binds India to Turkey, not because we have suffered alike, but because Turkey has a Muslim population which has so much in common with India because of her millions of Muslims, who are flesh of our flesh and blood of our blood and bone of our bone. May Begum Saheba's coming in our

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Notes". Gandhiji presided over the lectures delivered by Halid Edib Adivar on January 18 and 19, 1935.

[2] From *Gandhijini Dinwari*

[3] *The Hindustan* Times, 20-1-1935 reports Gandhiji as having said: "Those who die in utter distress and suffering are the real heroes and heroines and not the monarchs and kings, however high their empires might be."

midst result in binding Hindus and Muslims in an indissoluble bond.

Harijan, 1-2-1935

128. LETTER TO ANAND SWARUP GUPTA

DELHI,
January 20, 1935

BHAI ANAND SWARUP[1],

Do come, except on Monday. You will be shown the new way of plying the *takli.* I shall give you a few minutes if possible. It takes half an hour to teach the new way to those who bring their own *takli.* Afterwards it is only a matter of practice. You can come on or before the 27th.

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI ANAND SWARUP
VAISHYA SCHOOL
MEERUT, U. P.

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9744. Courtesy: Anand Swarup Gupta

129. DISCUSSION WITH EDITH HOWE-MARTYN

[Before *January 21, 1935*][2]

She talked of her experience of the British slums and put in a strong plea for the "poor woman" who had to submit to the strong man.

[GANDHIJI:] There is no *poor* woman. Poor woman is mightier than man, and I am quite prepared to demonstrate it to you if you come to the villages of India. Any woman there would tell you that, if she did not want it, there was no man born of woman who could compel her. I can say this from my own experience in relation to my wife, and mine is no solitary instance. If the will to die rather than to yield is there, no monster can make the woman yield. No, it is a mutual affair. Men and women both are a mixture of the brute and the divine, and if we can subdue the brute, it is well and good.

But what is the woman to do, if the man for the sake of not having more children goes to another woman?

So now you are shifting your own ground. If you misconceive

[1] Assistant Director, Purana Department, Ramnagar, Varanasi

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Notes", dated January 21, 1938. The interviewer was a birth-control enthusiast from England.

your premises, you are bound to come to wrong conclusions. Don't assume things and try to unman man and unwoman woman. Let me understand the basis of your gospel. When I said your birth-control propaganda was sufficient introduction, there was some seriousness behind the joke, for I know that there are some men and women who think that in birth control lies our salvation. Let me, therefore, understand the basis from you.

I do not see in it the salvation of the world, but what I say is that without some form of birth-control there is no salvation. You would do it in one way, I would do it in another. I advocate your method as well, but not in all cases. You seem to regard a beautiful function as something objectionable. Two animals are nearest to the divine when they are going to create new life. There is something very beautiful in the act.

Here again you are labouring under a confusion. The creation of a new life is nearest the divine, I agree. All I want is that one shouldapproach that act in a divine way. That is to say, man and woman must come together with no other desire than that of creating a new life. But if they come together merely to have a fond embrace, they are nearest the devil. Man unfortunately forgets that he is nearest the divine, hankers after the brute instinct in himself and becomes less than the brute.

But why must you cast aspersion on the brute?

I do not. The brute fulfils the law of his own nature. The lion in his majesty is a noble creature and he has a perfect right to eat me up, but I have none to develop paws and pounce upon you. Then I lower myself and become worse than the brute.

I am sorry. I have expressed myself very badly. I confess that in a majority of cases it is not going to be their salvation, but a factor which will conduce to higher life. You understand what I mean, though I am afraid I have not been able to make myself quite clear.

Oh, no. I do not want to take any undue advantage of you. But I want you to understand my view-point. Do not run away with misconceptions. Man must choose either of the two courses, the upward or the downward, but as he has the brute in him, he will more easily choose the downward course than the upward, especially when the downward course is presented to him in a beautiful garb. Man easily capitulates when sin is presented in the garb of virtue, and that is what Marie Stopes[1] and others are doing. If I were to popularize the

[1] English advocate of birth-control; author of *Contraception: Its Theory, History and Practice* and various other works on sex and marriage

religion of indulgence, I know that men would simply clutch at it. I know that, if people like you in selfless zeal cried themselves hoarse upholding your doctrine, you might even ride to apparent victory, but I also know that you will ride to certain death, of course totally unconscious of the mischief you are doing. The downward instinct requires no advocacy, no argument. It is there embodied in them, and unless you regulate and control it, there is danger of disease and pestilence.

Mrs. Howe-Martyn, who until now seemed to accept the distinction between the divine and the devilish, contended that there was really none and that they were much more allied than people imagined.

So you think the devil and the divine are the same? Do you believe in the sun? And if you do, don't you think you must believe in the shadow?

Why should you call 'shadow' devil?

You may call it 'no-God', if you like.

I do not think there is no-God in the shadow. There is life everywhere.

There is a thing like absence of life. Do you know that Hindus will reduce the body of the dearest one to ashes as soon as life in it is extinct? There is an essential unity in all life, but there is diversity, too, and one has to penetrate it and find the unity behind—but not by intellect, as you are trying to do. Where there is truth, there must be untruth; where there is light, there must be shadow. You cannot realize the wider consciousness, unless you subordinate completely reason and intellect, and the body, too.

Mrs. Howe-Martyn looked puzzled, and time was fast running against her. But Gandhiji said:

No. I am prepared to give you more time. But for that you must come to Wardha and stay with me. I am as great an enthusiast as you, and you must not leave India until you have converted me or converted yourself.

Harijan, 1-2-1935

130. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

HARIJAN HOME, DELHI,
January 21, 1935

DEAR SISTER,

I have sent in your application to Kumarappa. You shall be your own judge as to the enforcement of rules 9 and 10[1] in your own person. What I expect you to do is not a visit to every village in your district, but acquisition of a right knowledge of the villagers' wants and organization of the effort to meet them. For this you are fully fitted in spite of your dilapidated body of which we must talk when we meet.

I leave on 28th which is my silence day. Come if you easily can between 26 and 27

The cold spell has meant more than the loss of a crore of rupees for the starving millions.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3520. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur

131. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

January 21, 1935

I see no harm in going. I think you should discuss everything but making it clear that you have no mandate[2]. You could only convey the purport of the conversations to the Committee[3] and its decision. It should be strictly understood that though you would meet as representatives, the talks must be regarded as informal till they reach the stage of some concrete proposal to be discussed by the respective committees. At the end of the conversations the agreed

[1] Framed under bye-law 10 of the All-India Village Industries Association; *Vide* Bye-Laws of the All-India Village Industries Association",20-12-1934

[2] As Congress President the addressee was to negotiate with M. A. Jinnah, President of the All-India Muslim League, "for an agreed settlement between the communities which-could replace the so-called Communal Award". The talks started on January 23 and continued with a short break up to March 1, but without any tangible result.

[3] Congress Working Committee

purport should be reduced to writing and no report should be given to the Press of the conversation.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

132. LETTER TO SHUAIB QURESHI

January 21, 1935

Give my kind regards to the Nawab Saheb and tell him that I am still paying the penalty of having said that when I found you in your surroundings I was reminded of the great Omar.[1]

There is talk of communal peace, but I fear there is no time yet. It can come only out of a heart unity and we must wait for it. No patched-up peace can last.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

133. LETTER TO KHALIQ

January 21, 1935

There seems to be nothing in the coming interview[2] between Jinnah and Rajenbabu. Let us have real unity, even if we have to wait. In the Assembly much will depend upon the correct behaviour of Congressmen on every occasion.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

134. A LETTER

AS AT WARDHA,
January 21, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I need not repeat what I have said in my letter to Shri Ranganayaki Ammal.

I hope that you have completely recovered.

Delhi cold does not worry me. Only a chil blain crack prevents me from having my daily walks which I miss.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original. Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] It is not clear whether any portion of the letter has been left out here.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Rajendra Prasad", 21-1-1935

135. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

January 21, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM[1],

Your letter to hand.

I think that the parental affection was there all the while. Only you were not ready to want or receive it. Anyway now that you feel the warmth of it, you should never let it cool down. The best way is not to resist them. Resistance may become a duty when obedience has been implicitly volunteered and cheerfully rendered in a systematic manner. Knowing as I do both Father and Mother I cannot imagine any occasion when you might have to cross their path. Their one concern is to see you and help you to be happy.

I tried to sound Ba. She does not like the idea of leaving me just now even for a few days. But I shall tempt her again, though I do not expect success. You may write to her.

Vasumati can come when you are quite ready.

The name of the ashram may be Sevashramam or Sevikashramam. You know the distinction.

I think you should not worry about your husband. Think of him purely as a friend. Let Father and Mother do what they think is proper. When you know that you can render no help, where is the use of worrying? If you were of any service in bringing him to his senses, it would be your primary duty to look after him and set aside every other task. But I have understood that this is not possible. Hence my advice to you to forget him altogether and devote your whole energy to such service as it is possible for you to render. You should learn to derive joy from service. Universal selfless service absolves one from special service. For the greater includes the less. Of course one has to be careful to see that there is no selfishness behind universal service. It must be self-evident. These are my views. But I advise you to discuss this matter freely with Father and Mother and be guided by them.

You must get rid of constipation. It generally means more proteid than necessary. You may therefore omit dhall and then if necessary reduce the quantity of milk or curds. What *bhaji* are you taking? *Palak* or *luni* is excellent. Even tender cabbage leaf may serve

[1] This is in Hindi.

the purpose.

Love

BAPU

[PS.]

You may now send your letters to Wardha which I hope to reach on 29th.

[PPS.]

You should meet Kakasaheb who can give much help about the ashram.

From the original. Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

136. LETTER TO MRS. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

AS AT WARDHA,
January 21, 1935

DEAR SISTER,

I was delighted to have your letter and to find that Ambujam was giving you both satisfaction and that you were interesting yourselves in her mission of service. If she settles down to it, I am sure her moroseness will go and she will have an ennobling occupation.

Please dismiss from your mind the thought that Ambujam can ever be a burden on my mind. It is a matter of deep joy to me that I enjoy your confidence and her affection. I draw no distinction between such personal service and public service.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original. Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

137. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

January 21, 1935

BHAI MAVALANKAR,

I have your letter and the papers pertaining to the Vidyapith's books. I cannot swallow your opinion. But I regard my opinion as of no worth.

Do invite Sardar to join both the organizations. I shall also speak about it tomorrow, if, that is, I don't forget. Do as you think proper about the finances. On my part I have relieved myself of the worry after I had your letter. By all means do pay from the Gujarat Sabha's funds to compensate for the loss caused by frost. If you still need my sanction, send me a draft.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. GANESH VASUDEV MAVALANKAR
ADVOCATE
BHADRA, AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 1242

138. LETTER TO PADMA

January 21, 1935

CHI. PADMA[1],

I have your letter after many days. You never acknowledge mine. The itch is a disease contracted through carelessness and unhygienic habits. How did you get it and how could it become aggravated in this season?

I have not seen any of Father's articles. He had sent me [some] many months ago. So much frost has since accumulated.

You have not given an account of your activities. Does Father do anything besides writing articles?

We shall leave Delhi on the 28th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6150. Also C.W. 3506. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi*

[1] Daughter of Sitla Sahai, an ashram inmate from U. P. and an active worker of the All-India Spinners' Association

139. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

January 21, 1935

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. You can certainly stay with Gangabehn. I should like it if you settled there. Yes, your visit to Madras is still to come off. Ambujam's Ashram is ready. She expects you there. Go to Bochasan when you return from there. You may like to go to Madras *via* Wardha. I expect to reach Wardha on the 29th.

How did Gangabehn's finger come to have abscess?

I hope Ramniklal[1] has recovered his strength. Let him write to me when he feels impelled. How is Tara[2]?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I just got word about the arrival of the parcel of ink. I shall write about it after examining it.

SMT. VASUMATIBEHN
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9391. Also C.W. 636. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

140. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

January 21, 1935

CHI. JETHALAL,

I disposed of your letter soon. We are bound to have such experiences. When you are all right, write to me from time to time about the developments. For the present at any rate let us not take the matter to the Press. I have suggested to Jamnalalji to solve the question at a domestic level. Let me know if anything has happened since then. Keep Jamnalalji also informed about it. Even if the police do not give us the number, we may answer them as often as they may ask us. In my first year while I was travelling by a train from Delhi to Madras,

[1] Ramniklal Modi, an ashram inmate
[2] Wife of Ramniklal Modi

they came to question me seven or eight times. Since I looked like a fakir, there was no question of their enquiring about my name, although they would persistently ask for my ticket number. When I reached Madras their vehicle would invariably follow mine. Others used to be annoyed; I was only amused. The law says that people are in duty bound to give their name, address, etc., to the police as often as they might ask for them. When we are fighting we may do anything that the rules permit.

How is your work going on otherwise? Have you done anything regarding [village] industries?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am writing this from Delhi. Reply to Wardha.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9848. Courtesy: Narayan J. Sampat

141. INTERVIEW TO UNITED PRESS[1]

January 21, 1935

QUESTION: When do you think you will be able to give an actual start to the work of the Village Industries Association?

GANDHIJI: It is difficult to say what is meant by start. But if by it is meant actual work through different agencies in villages, I am unable to fix the exact date, because we are moving very cautiously—cautiously in the sense that we do not want to make any mistakes so long as it is possible to avoid them—because of the varied nature of the work to be done. This work is like sailing on an uncharted sea.

The Central Board is meeting in Wardha on the 1st of the next month, when perhaps a definite step will be taken. Meanwhile, not a moment has been lost. We have been collecting valuable information, and we are having promises of support from many quarters.

Q. Do you intend to start branches of the Association in all the provinces simultaneously, or do you intend to make a beginning in a few selected places? Which will be the headquarters of the Association? Will a branch be established here before you leave?

G. We aim at having no branches, but agencies all over India, the ideal being to have as many agents as there are villages, so as to ensure

[1] The report of the interview was revised by Gandhiji.

perfect distribution of work. The secret of success of this effort lies in decentralization. I do not know if an agency will be formally established in Delhi before I leave. But I am collecting all the information that is available. The final appointment will be made by the Central Board. The headquarters are in Wardha, where Seth Jamnalalji has given a valuable garden with a large bungalow in it, and he has promised more land, if it is required for subsequent arrangements.

Q. Is the Association likely to depend on its unaided strength for all information, statistical or otherwise, in respect of the dead or dying industries you seek to revive, or will it invite the co-operation of all official and non-official agencies operating in India at Present?

G. The Association will do nothing unaided, so vast is the work to be done. Therefore it will invite and receive co-operation of all agencies, not excluding the official agencies.

Q. Will the Association seek to revive only those industries whose revival is not reasonably calculated to come in conflict with the various world economic and commercial forces now acting and reacting on India; or will the Association try to revive the dead industries irrespective of such considerations and merely because in their ancient flourishing condition they used to give food to millions of villages?

G. The Association will certainly seek to revive and encourage as many industries as are necessary for the moral and material growth of village life. It will not be deterred by the so called conflicting world forces.

Q. It is generally agreed that the cotton mills of India have not taken very kindly to the khadi industry. If the Association attempts to resuscitate those dead, dying or unorganized industries which are likely to clash with the interests of more organized, indigenous industries, is it not your apprehension that the Association will meet with opposition?

G. It is likely that the Association will meet with opposition from mechanized industries, such as sugar mills, rice-mills and flour mills. It is for us to find a way out of the difficulty. I have every hope that we shall be able to overcome these difficulties.

Q. Take, for instance, the question of sugar *versus gur*. Sugar is a protected industry and is now fairly well-organized. It was stated in the Press some time ago that the Association will try to increase the consumption of gur. If it is true, do you not think that by doing so it will evoke the opposition of the sugar industry?

G. That may be so. If the consumption of *gur* increases and the consumption of sugar decreases, it would be a blessing for India, because medical testimony goes to show that *gur* is superior to sugar

in nutritive value; and it is the business of the Association, as also of the public, to see to it that no mechanized industry is allowed to interfere with the health of the people.

Q. May I have your views on whether or not the Association should supplement the existing large-scale industries, without antagonizing them?

G. The answer to it has already been given.

Q. Am I wrong in suggesting that, from the resuscitation of dead village industries, such as you contemplate, to the industrialization of India on human, rational and intelligent lines (as opposed to greedy capitalism), it is but a step?

G. I do not know if a vast country like India, with her millions of people having four months of enforced idleness on their hand, can afford to have large-scale industries and yet live a life of tolerable comfort. . . . Large-scale, centralized industries in India, except such industries as cannot be possibly carried on in villages, must mean starvation of millions, unless honourable employment is found for the displaced millions.

Q. If what the Press says about the Government circulars[1] forestalling the activities of the Village Industries Association is true, do you think there is any chance of the Association coming in conflict with the Government?

G. There is no possibility of the Association coming in conflict with Government, because the ideal that the Association has set before it appears to me to be different from that of the Government effort if I have understood it rightly, except, perhaps, in the matter of sanitation. We should certainly not take up the work of sanitation in villages where the Government agencies might be doing it.

There is no idea whatsoever to supplant the Government agency. It may be to supplement the work.

Q. I suppose you have read the Government circular.

G. Yes.

Q. You must have noticed that the Government suspect that through this Association you will have greater opportunities of coming in closer contact with the villages, which you will utilize to prepare for organizing civil disobedience on a far more gigantic scale.

G. It never crossed my mind; I have never worked it in that indirect fashion. It would defeat the very end that I have in view. I want the material and moral growth of the villages for itself, and if it is achieved, it would be a full satisfaction of my ambition.

[1] *Vide* "Interview to the Press", 10-1-1935

Similarly, if ever I should have to organize civil disobedience, it would be organized independently of any other activity. If full effect is given to the word "civil", all this suspicion should be dispelled. But I have patience enough, and I am convinced that, if what I have said is true, all the suspicion will be dispelled without any further effort on my part.

Q. I. would ask another question. You said that you could show a miracle if Government understood the spirit of your village industries scheme and lent its help to you. What do you mean by help? Is it financial assistance?

G. I simply say that, if Government understand the secret of my methods and give me complete co-operation in the work I am doing, I undertake to show miracles. I do not want financial co- operation. I want moral, enthusiastic endorsement from Government.

The Hindustan Time s, 22-1-1935, and *Harijan,* 8-2-1935

142. LETTER TO R.[1]

January 22, 1935

CHI. R.,

Panditji[2] writes to me that you have exceeded all limits. You have been incurring debts in spite of your good income and you also steal. You behave as it pleases your own sweet will. If all this is true, it is painful. You would remember what I had told you in Bombay. You had taken a pledge before me not to practise deceit—do you remember?

Panditji is likely to reach there in a day or two. Wake up from your swoon and see that you do not tarnish Panditji's reputation and that of the Ashram. Remember your promises. Satisfy Panditji.

Write to me in detail. Wrongdoing is not as great a sin as trying to hide it. We all sin but one who confesses and wipes it away is sure to be blessed. It is enough if one undoes the wrong that one might have committed.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] The name has been omitted.
[2] The addressee's father

143. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS[1]

[About *January 23, 1935*][2]

I have been asked by Sir S. Radhakrishnan to answer the following three questions:

(1) What is your religion?

(2) How are you led to it?

(3) What is its bearing on social life?

My religion is Hinduism which, for me, is religion of humanity and includes the best of all the religions known to me.

I take it that the present tense in the second question has been purposely used instead of the past. I am being led to my religion through Truth and Non-violence, i.e., love in the broadest sense. I often describe my religion as religion of Truth. Of late, instead of saying God is Truth I have been saying Truth is God, in order more fully to define my religion. I used at one time to know by heart the thousand names of God which a booklet in Hinduism gives in verse form and which perhaps tens of thousands recite every morning. But nowadays nothing so completely describes my God as Truth. Denial of God we have known. Denial of Truth we have not known[3]. The most ignorant among mankind have some truth in them. We are all sparks of Truth. The sum total of these sparks is indescribable, as-yet-Unknown Truth, which is God. I am being daily led nearer to it by constant prayer.

The bearing of this religion on social life is, or has to be, seen in one's daily social contact. To be true to such religion one has to lose oneself in continuous and continuing service of all life. Realization of Truth is impossible without a complete merging of oneself in and identification with this limitless ocean of life. Hence, for me, there is no escape from social service; there is no happiness on earth beyond or apart from it. Social service here must be taken to include every department of life. In this scheme there is nothing low, nothing high. For all is[4] one, though we *seem*[5] to be many.

Contemporary Indian Philosophy, p. 21

[1] The questions and answers have also been reproduced in F. Mary Barr's *Bapu,* International Book House, Bombay, 1949, with slight variations.

[2] According to Mary Barr Radhakrishnan's questions came at the time when Gandhiji was about to set out on a village tour from Delhi where he was camping. This Gandhiji did on January 23, 1935.

[3] Mary Barr's version does not include this sentence and the one preceding.

[4] "Are" in Mary Barr's version

[5] Mary Barr has "may *seem*".

144. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

January 23, 1935

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter yesterday evening. Devdas had told me nothing earlier. Yesterday I aked him about it and learnt that he had told me nothing because he had wished to spare me. He had spoken to Mahadev yesterday morning. I have passed on your letter to Devdas so that he can study it in the context of your earlier letters and guide me accordingly. Since Mahadev had come to know everything before I did he will read this. He has not read your letter received yesterday. Have no fears about your letters. No one will read anything surreptitiously without my permission. Nor have I around me anyone who would do such a thing. But I do wish you would learn to shed this reserve soon. This reserve is an obstruction to your progress. But then I would of course not insist on it.

The alliance you contemplate is not a great shock to me. I shall surely not be shocked if you choose your partner from Kerala. I have only to examine the reason for your choice. We have to think whether you can do anything staying in Ramachandran's house. It is not proper to decide this question or your future programme on the basis of your letter. It no doubt involves some expense but I wish you to come to Wardha and see me. I shall arrive there on the 29th evening. It will do if you come on the morning of the same day. This letter will reach you only on Saturday morning, not leaving you much time. You have no reason to be uneasy. I am not likely to forsake you. I trust you. You have found the noble company of Maganbhai, Kaka, etc. You have respect for Devdas. You yearn for my blessings. All will surely be well with you. I am writing this before the prayers.

Blessings from

BAPU[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7292 Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] This is followed by the instructions: "No one but Mahadev may read this. Kaka may."

145. LETTER TO VITHAL L. PHADKE

January 23, 1935

BHAI MAMA,

Shouldn't we say that you are but a luckless fellow? I had your letters all right and I had also replied to them. The answer to your first is Congress; the second I had asked Mahadev to answer. As I am short of time and so that you may have it promptly here is my answer to your third. Your treatment should consist of water-cure, hip-bath, sitz-bath; but in your diet you should have milk, uncooked vegetables and wheat. The sun-bath should be had with full exposure of the body. And rest. Your health must improve. How is Saheb? I discontinued my [daily] walks because I developed cracks on the skin of my feet owing to the cold and partly also owing to carelessness on my part. I am better now and the cold too had abated.

. . .[1] will stay on in Madras for some time now.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MAMASAHEB
[C/O] SJT. DESHPANDESAHEB
AT THE BARRISTER'S, SHANKAR TEKDI, BARODA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3828

146. HOW TO BEGIN?

Correspondents have been writing, and friends have been seeing me, to ask me how to begin the village industries work and what to do first.

The obvious answer is, "Begin with yourself and do first that which is easiest for you to do."

This answer, however, does not satisfy the enquirers. Let me, therefore, be more explicit.

Each person can examine all the articles of food, clothing and other things that he uses from day to day and replace foreign makes or city makes by those produced by the villagers in their homes or

[1] The source is illegible here, but presumably it was "Kaka."; *vide* "Letter to Narahari D. Parikh",26-1-1935

fields with the simple inexpensive tools they can easily handle and mend. This replacement will be itself an education of great value and a solid beginning. The next step will be opened out to him of itself. For instance, say, the beginner has been hitherto using a tooth-brush made in a Bombay factory. He wants to replace it with a village brush.

He is advised to use a *babul* twig. If he has weak teeth or is toothless, he has to crush one end of it, with a rounded stone or a hammer, on a hard surface. The other end he slits with a knife and uses the halves as tongue-scrapers. He will find these brushes to be cheaper and much cleaner than the very unhygienic factory-made tooth-brush. The city-made tooth-powder he naturally replaces with equal parts of clean, finely-ground wood-charcoal and clean salt. He will replace mill cloth with village spun khadi, and mill-husked rice with hand husked, unpolished rice, and white sugar with village-made *gur*. These I have taken merely as samples already mentioned in these columns. I have mentioned them again to deal with the difficulties that have been mentioned by those who have been discussing the question with me. Some say, with reference to rice for instance, 'Hand-husked rice is much dearer than mill husked rice.' Others say, 'The art of hand-husking is forgotten, and there are no huskers to be found.' Yet others say, 'We never get mill-husked rice in our parts. We can supply hand-husked rice at 19 seers to the rupee.' All these are right and all are wrong. They are right so far as their own experience in their own district is concerned. All are wrong because the real truth is unknown to them. I am daily gathering startling experiences. All this comes from beginning with oneself. The following is the result of my observations to date.

Whole unpolished rice is unprocurable in the bazaars. It is beautiful to look at and rich and sweet to the taste. Mills can never compete with this unpolished rice. It is husked in a simple manner. Most of the paddy can be husked in a light *chakki* without difficulty. There are some varieties the husk of which is not separated by grinding. The best way of treating such paddy is to boil it first and then separate the chaff from the grain. This rice, it is said, is most nutritious and, naturally, the cheapest. In the villages, if they husk their own paddy, it must always be cheaper for the peasants than the corresponding mill-husked rice, whether polished or unpolished. The majority of rice found ordinarily in the bazaars is always more or lesspolished, whether hand-husked or mill-husked. Wholly unpolished rice is always hand-husked and is every time cheaper than the

mill-husked rice, the variety being the same.

Subject to further research, the observations so far show that it is because of our criminal negligence that rice-eating millions eat deteriorated rice and pay a heavy price into the bargain. Let the village worker test the truth of these observations for himself. It won't be a bad beginning.

Next week I must take up *gur* and other articles of diet and another part of village work.

Harijan, 25-1-1935

147. HIS ECONOMIC FAITH

Professor Sam Higginbottom, Director of the Agricultural Institute, Allahabad, and a member of the Board of Advisers of the All-India Village Industries Association, writes in the course of a letter:[1]

> I enunciate my economic faith which is at the base of all my economic and spiritual efforts for India.
>
> The two primary factors of production are land and labour. These are united or married, and the offspring is all material things needful and desirable for man's physical well-being. We call it 'capital'.
>
> Capital is the offspring of the union of land and labour. India has land and labour in great abundance. Both need wise use and guidance to be most beneficial to India. This they have lacked very largely up to the present. Hence I stress the training of village workers who will not waste all their time complaining of what they do not have, and, therefore, get discouraged and beaten at the start; but workers who will take the village as it is, with all its resources or lack of them, and, by making better use of the existing resources and the potential resources that are within the present financial grasp of the villager, create, with the land and their labour, the capital within the village suited to the village needs. This is a long, slow, educative process that means hard work, but certain success. . . .
>
> The details of the programme will include proper use of all village wastes for soil enrichment; the prevention of erosion; the right system of rotation of crops; the selection of better seed, methods and implements; cattle improvement through selective breeding and proper feeding; co- operation for purchasing and marketing of village products, for road improvement;

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

development of existing village industries that process village products and, wherever necessary, the introduction of new village industries to round out the village life.

There is a great deal in this with which every lover of the movement for the restoration of village life to its proper status must heartily agree.

Harijan, 25-1-1935

148. NOTES

ANOTHER HARIJAN-SEVAK GONE

Acharya Gidwani was a staunch Harijan-sevak. He was deeply interested in Harijan work. He was bringing up a Harijan girl as a member of his own family. With him there was none low none high. Love of Harijan service was an integral part of his nature. I had known him fight for Harijans when he first came to me. He never hesitated whenever the call to service came. Such servants of humanity never die. They live through their service. The deceased leaves a brave widow and a large family. I tender them my respectful sympathy.

CREDIT *v.* CASH

The question repeatedly arises in the management of the numerous khadi bhandars of the All India Spinners' Association whether khadi should be sold on credit. For years past I have held the opinion that it is a wrong principle to have credit sales in businesses conducted on purely philanthropic lines. Such philanthropic management should be able to teach the public that credit sales mean an advance upon the prices that would be asked for cash sales. Only such sales can become an index of public patronage of a business run on philanthropic lines. I have found in the end that, whilst there may be some heart-burning in the beginning, there is a decided advantage. Philanthropy has to be detached from immediate results. It has got to work on simple, unchallengeable faith. I would, therefore, strongly advise all managers of stalls under the All-India Spinners' Association and allied organizations, and the All-India Village Industries Association, which will be presently at work, to adhere to the principle of cash sales, and elimination of credit altogether.

Harijan, 25-1-1935

149. LETTER TO HALIDE EDIB ADIVAR

DELHI,
January 25, 1935

DEAREST SISTER,

Prof. Malkani just brings me the news of your loss. I know that death has no terror for you. You regard it as a firm friend. I do not therefore send you any condolences. But if you are in need of a companion at this moment, then you know that you are to count me as one among many who would be silently sharing with you whatever it may be called—grief, separation, loss, etc. I do not come to pay a ceremonial visit. Prof. Malkani takes this note and being a valued worker represents me.

Love.

M. K. GANDHI

BEGUM SAHEB HALIDE EDIB
DARYAGANJ

From a photostat: G.N. 911

150. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

January 26, 1935

DEAR KUMARAPPA,

You know that I am bringing w[ith] me a large party. Ba, Mirabehn, Mahadev, Manu, Devraj, Balwantsingh (new), Rajkishori (new), possibly one or two more. We must see how the thing is to be managed. My account must not be mixed up with the Industries Association. It will have to be a separate department so far as the expenses are concerned.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10107

151. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

January 26, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. Khan Saheb is here today. I read out your telegram to him. You must have received the long telegram of blessings which he sent after reading it. You appear to be specializing in arranging marriages. This marriage will be remembered as a historical event. Poor Sophia could never have thought that she would marry a Pathan. Nor could Saadulla have imagined that he would marry a Khoja girl. I like your selection very much. Both will be happy and Sophia will be able to do public work as much as she wishes. All of us will reach Wardha on Tuesday. There will be no new face in our party. A nice girl engaged to Chand Tyagi's Balbir is with us. Both Marys will get down at Betul.

It seems that Sardar, Rajaji and Rajenbabu will have to stay on till February 8. The discussion on the Bill will be over by then.

Kamalnayan has become impatient to go to Ceylon but he should wait for some time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2952

152. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

January 26, 1935

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have not been able to reply to your letters. It would do if Shankerlal collects the sum due from Ambalalbhai under dairy account. Examine carefully how much the dues amount to and let me know the figure too.

You may if you wish start a tannery. Would you like to take on an expert Chamar? I shall see if I can persuade Surendra to take the training. Obtain the Trustees' sanction for the double loss sustained by the dairy.

It would be worth while to have the Trust-deed executed.

I expect to reach Wardha on the 29th.

Kaka[1] is still in Madras and will stay on for two months if not more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9068

[1] D. B. Kalelkar

153. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

January 26, 1935

CHI. VALJI,

I have your letter. Why this distress over your resignation?[1] If we cannot cope with a thing and have to leave it as a matter of dharma, should we be happy or unhappy about it?

Didn't this idea of willingly leaving office come from you? You may, if you wish, continue to hold the office of secretary, such as it is, for the present. Leave it if you feel it is your dharma to do so. I shall not take any steps till your reply comes.

Chitre is still with me and I have a wish to take him to Wardha. His cough persists. He had a temperature too which has since returned to normal. I got your article.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

What you write about Jagadish Shastri is not what happened. I had respected your opinion.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7469. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

154. ACHARYA GIDWANI MEMORIAL

Acharya Gidwani's death has left a void among good workers in the Harijan cause. It is not one which can be easily filled. Acharya Gidwani made no distinction whatever between high and low. He never believed in exclusiveness as between Harijans and non- Harijans. He was a born worker. For the last few years, he had a Harijan girl in his house brought up as his own daughter.

This is not the occasion to describe his other services. His capacity for renunciation was very great. He was the first Principal of the Gujarat Vidyapith. He had the knack of stealing the hearts of his students. In order to perpetuate his sacred memory, the Gidwani Memorial Fund is being instituted under the chairmanship of Shri Parikshitlal Majmudar. Shrimati Indumati Chimanlal, Shri Vadilal Lallubhai Mehta and Shri JethaIal Jivanlal Gandhi are its secretaries. It is my hope that one and all will help to raise a good sum. The fund which was collected when Acharya Gidwani left Gujarat, was used for

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 27-1-1935

the service of Harijans. I hope it will be the same again. I think no other use of the amount would give his soul the same satisfaction.

Contributions should be sent to Harijan Ashram, Sabarmati or Congress House, Bhadra, Ahmedabad, or Navajivan Karyalaya, Gandhi Road, Ahmedabad.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 27-1-1935

155. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

January 27, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. Why is your ear not behaving? What reason does the doctor give? Do you need a change to a dry climate? Are you regular in your food and exercise and rest? Write in detail to me at Wardha. It does not matter if you can not go to Wardha for the present. We shall make do with correspondence.

Vallabhbhai, Raja, etc., will have to stay on here for the time being. Your two meetings will therefore stand postponed. Send for Shankerlal and dispose of the important matters pertaining to the Charkha Sangh.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2953

156. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

January 27, 1935

CHI. VASUMATI,

You will not give me your programme and then throw the responsibility on me. I had sent a reply to your letter at Bochasan all right. For the present you have to go to Madras. After that you can join Gangabehn at your pleasure. You should go to Madras *via* Wardha.

I am writing to Chandubhai about the ink.

Write to me in detail about your experiences.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

We shall reach Wardha on Tuesday.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9393. Also C.W. 638. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

157. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

DELHI,
January 27, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. Read the accompanying letter and give it to Keshu. This match seems good to me if you all approve it. Whatever the final decision, inform me at Wardha immediately.

Let me know what changes you noticed in this year's budget for the dairy.

Valji has sent in his resignation as Secretary because he doesn't have the necessary knowledge for looking after the dairy and the tannery and is not inclined to take the trouble to acquire it.

Kanu is happy here. Panditji is here just now and Kanu is even learning a little music with his help and English with Marybehn's help. Since his needs are few and simple, he gets along all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8428. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

158. SPEECH AT M.L.A.S' MEETING, DELHI[1]

January 27, 1935

Facing the mild afternoon sun, Mahatma Gandhi referred to the twin legislations sought to be promoted in the last Assembly, and said:

As regards the Temple-entry Bill, this need not be pursued at the present moment, because obviously public opinion must be sufficiently cultivated in its favour. The Harijan workers are doing this, the mass mind of the Hindu is passively in favour of it. Yet the intelligentsia among sanatanists, especially the pundits are still against it.

In a matter of this kind, they could not force the pace by a majority of votes alone. Those interested in the subject might meanwhile make a special study of the subject.

As for the Removal of Untouchability Bill, Mahatma Gandhi advised, this could be pursued to the end. It concerned the civic rights of the Harijans and so could

[1] Held in the Harijan Colony, Kingsway Camp. Thirty-five M. L. A.s attended the meeting at the invitation of G. D. Birla.

be taken by all legislators, whether Hindus, Mussalmans or others. Even if the whole body of Hindu opinion were to be against the removal of untouchability, still he would advise a secular legislature like the Assembly not to tolerate that attitude, for in this matter there was no interference with religious rights or religious observance, but simply the removal of untouchability from the statute law of this country. Take for instance the use of public wells which was the sorest point with the Harijans. Cattle could approach these wells and tanks, but not the Harijans. It bordered on inhumanity when it was known that in Rajputana thousands of rupees had to be spent for boring wells, and yet there the Harijans were not allowed to use them. Similarly about schools. He could quote chapter and verse on this matter. There was the Bill promoted by Mr. M. R Jayakar[1] and another Bill recently drafted by Mr. C. Rajagopalachari. Such a Bill could be further elucidated and amended, if necessary, but it should be pursued as quickly as possible. It was the bounden duty of the Hindus after the resolution passed[2] by the Conference in Bombay under the chairmanship of Malaviyaji, to support a Bill of this kind and for the Hindu members of the Assembly to actively pursue it.

The services of Harijan Sevak Sangh would be available to the members in this matter.

There were other directions in which the Assembly could help in the Harijan welfare. No doubt provincial Governments were wide awake and trying to do several things for the Harijans. The activities of the Harijan Sabha perhaps stimulated their efforts. All that was for the good of the Harijans. The Harijans should take aid from whatever quarter it came, provided it in no way compromised their essential interests. But the Government could give only according to regulations and no more. The Harijan Sevak Sangh however was not bound by such restrictions.

The Assembly was a fit enough body for exercising legitimate pressure upon the Government to see that funds were allotted for the purpose of the Harijan uplift. This could be done perhaps by moving a resolution. They could also consult Mr. M. C. Rajah and give him any help he might require.

Lastly, Mahatma Gandhi referred to the cruel treatment of the Harijans in certain parts of India recently. He instanced a case of recent assault by zamindars in Meerut on the Harijans over the *begar* (forced labour) question in which one Harijan was reported to have died. There was yet another report of tragedy from Cawnpore the full facts of which are not known yet. Then there was the ancient quarrel in Chettinad between the Nattars and the Harijans, the latter of whom were not allowed to wear the cloth they liked. Some of the Nattars were very unreasonable and tried to defend their attitude on the ground of custom. On these and other instances of cruel treatment, the Assembly members might put questions and try to do something.[3]

The Hindustan Times, 28-1-1935

[1] Published in *Harijan,* 18-2-1933; *vide* also "Sjt. Jayakar on Untouchability"

[2] On September 25, 1932, *vide* "Resolution at the Hindu Leaders' Conference, Bombay", 25-9-1932

[3] A brief discussion followed in which Asaf Ali, C. Rajagopalachari, S. Satyamurti, K. Nageswara Rao and others took part.

159. ADVICE TO STUDENTS [1]

DELHI,
[Before *January 28, 1935*]

We propose doing medical work there. How shall we go about our business, Mahatmaji? Could you give us some hints?

GANDHIJI: I have experience of this work since my early days in South Africa. Let me then begin with a warning. By taking a littlemedical aid to them, you do not really help them. You must teach them sanitation and hygiene, which alone can prevent malaria. Quinine does seem to subdue malaria, but will not root it out. What is essential is the preventive treatment and the after-care of patients. They do not know that careless diet often prepares the breeding ground for malaria germs. They eat anything and everything. But a malaria patient must eschew starch, too much protein, and live mainly on milk during convalescence. That is what you have to tell them. Teach them how to prevent disease. I will not congratulate you if you tell me that you have distributed a thousand quinine pills. Give them practical lessons in sanitation if you can. Go there with spades and shovels, fill up stagnant pools, see to the drainage, see that their wells are properly dredged and that their tank is not contaminated. The late Principal Rudra, under whose hospitable roof I have had the privilege of living, used to tell me how Delhi had fought a successful battle against the swamps and mosquito-breeding pools around Delhi. We have now to teach the people to do what the municipality or the local boards may not do, for want of funds or any other reason.

Above all, teach them to rid their village of filth and dirt. It is the most difficult part of your work, unless you would be willing scavengers. For days you must sweep the streets and teach them to preserve health and conserve their golden manure at one and the same time. Poore's *Rural Hygiene* used to be a precious little book on this subject. You have to teach them to bury their night-soil in nine-inch deep pits and cover it up with earth, the principle being that such earth is full of life and that the sun's rays penetrate that depth. In a little

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Notes", 28-1-1935. Prof. Winsor of St. Stephen's College along with a dozen students had called on Gandhiji one evening.

while the whole will be converted into rich manure, and you can grow the finest vegetables on this ground.

I had better tell you about internal hygiene, too. You must study the problem of food from the point of view of health; know the foods charged with vitamins and persuade them to eat hand-husked unpolished rice, whole wheatmeal, whole sugar, greens grown on their own patch of ground, and oil fresh-pressed in the village oil-press. Every doctor nowadays insists on prescribing a few green leaves to be eaten raw. Every peasant could grow all kinds of *bhaji* for nothing and eat it raw as part of his normal diet. It was discovered during the War that compressed and dried vegetables were harmful and that, not lime-juice, but the juice pressed out of fresh limes, was the preventive of scurvy.

We are very thankful. Could you tell us what we should teach in a little Harijan school we are running?

All that I have told you. Let me assure you that education in three R's is as nothing compared to a sound grounding in the elements of hygiene and sanitation. I happened to see a number of Harijan girls learning in a Daryaganj school. As soon as I saw them, my eyes caught sight of their dirty nails, dirtier noses and dirt accumulating little trinkets on their noses and their ears. This thing had apparently never struck the good woman who was in charge of them. Teach them first the lessons of cleanliness. Literary training by itself is not of much account. Take care of the essentials I have told you. Remember that unlettered persons have found no difficulty in ruling over large States. President Kruger could hardly sign his own name. Teach them the three R's by all means, but don't make a fetish of them.

One more question. We have a little Cold Weather Fund. How are we to find the most deserving folk for this?

Well, hand it over to me or to the Harijan Sevak Sangh.

No. We would administer it ourselves,

Well, then, go to the slums of the city, seek out the poorest and give them.

To the slums?

Certainly. Surely not the Viceregal quarters, for you will find the stables there warmer and cleaner and more comfortable than our hovels. No, you need not go very far. You will find people around you wanting the things which you can spare and they most need.

Mirabehn, for instance, noticed that the *chowkidar* here was shivering in the cold. She gave him her blanket, as Dr. Ansari had given her his shawl in England.

But, Sir, sometimes these people pretend to be poor when they are not. How are we to find out the *bona-fide* cases?

So you must be God! Pray don't think you have a monopoly of honesty.

Concentrate on one village—Wazirabad;[1] make it a model village and then ask me to come and inspect your work. Take my blessings and come to me later on for my certificate.

Harijan, 8-2-1935

160. DISCUSSION WITH A SHROFF[2]

[Before *January 28, 1935*]

"My heart's desire is fulfilled", he uttered in ecstasy and gave the hundred-rupee note and yarn to Gandhiji. Gandhiji asked him:

What are you doing? I remember to have seen you before. Where have you come from?

[S.] I am coming from Madras. I am doing nothing. I am happy taking your name.

[G.] But if you are doing nothing, where did you get the hundred rupees from?

Oh, Mahatmaji, I have something more.

Then, why not give that, too?

He pulled out another hundred-rupee note and handed it to me.

But let me know what you are doing?

I was a shroff. But I am one no longer. I divided the property between my three sons and am now free, free to do your work. Have me as your scavenger, I want nothing else.

So you divided all the property between your sons and left no share for me?

Oh, no. Everything is yours. I had thought of bringing a thousand rupees for you. My son did give thousand rupees, but he did so reluctantly. He had lost something this year and would not cheerfully part with a big amount. I said: 'Take back half of it, and send it to me when I ask for it.'

[1] Prof. Winsor and the student hat done relief work in Wazirabad after the floods the previous year.

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Notes", 28-1-1935

And with this he took out all the rest of the notes and gave them to me. Laughing heartily Gandhiji said:

But how will you go back? Keep something for your fare.

No. I can send a telegram for money. I do not need anything. Take it all, Mahatmaji, it is all yours.

What do you propose to do now?

Nothing. Have me as your humblest servant. If not, let me stay here a couple of days and then I will go to my home in Rajputana.

Gandhiji gave instructions for putting him up and gently said:

Mahadev, return to him all the notes. How can we take all that? Or have one and return the rest.

"Nonsense," said the proud donor. "I will not touch again what I have given. Mahatmaji, believe me, all is yours. I wanted to bring a thousand, but could not."

If you will give me all I want, give me a crore.

I will, but I must send the *hundi* to God, and if I were saint Narasinha Mehta, God might cash it.

Well, well, I wish all Marwaris were like you. You are giving me *all* you have, whereas millionaires give me a paltry hundred or a thousand.

Gandhiji said, in childlike mirth, which he simply could not repress:

But, why not, why not ask your sons also to give me something? Why must they enjoy their wealth?

They will give, you may be sure. I have still kept some silver. It is yours. Naught is mine. All my desires have had their full fruition today, now that I have seen you and touched your feet.

Harijan, 8-2-1935

161. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

January 28, 1935

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I got your letter. It will satisfy me if you spend three pice[1] once every month. Spend as much time with Nathji as necessary. It will not have been wasted. You are not going to be scared because the work in the villages is new to you, just as we are not to be discouraged whether the eleven vows[2] are new or old. We will not see the shore till we learn to be content with whatever the villages offer to meet our needs Tell

[1] For writing a postcard to Gandhiji

[2] Observed in the Ashram; they were of non-violence, truth, non-stealing, *brahmacharya*, non-possession, body labour, control of the palate, fearlessness, religious tolerance, swadeshi, removal of untouchability *Vide*, "Satyagraha Ashram"

Gangabehn that the work of dispensing medicine is not the end of our journey. Our destination is farther. She should write to me when she is ready.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. RAMNIKLAL MODI
SATYAGRAHA CAMP
BOCHASAN, *via* ANAND
B.B. & C.I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4182

162. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

January 28, 1935

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have your letter. I shall obtain opinions on cow's milk and buffalo's. There is bad news from every place about the damage by frost. Are the papaya trees blighted or have we lost only the season's fruit? Does any one of us know about the kind that can withstand frost? Learn about it from the local agricultural department if it can be done without difficulty.

To what do you attribute the increase in the cow's milk?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9069

163. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

January 28, 1935

CHI. VASUMATI,

My letters appear to trail behind you. I am writing about the ink directly to Chandubhai.

You must get ready by the 10th February to go to Madras. You should earmark five years for Bochasan. I only wish you would settle somewhere.

Today we are leaving for Wardha.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. VASUMATIBEHN
C/O RASIKLAL BHOGILAL
VISNAGAR, *via* MEHSANA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9394. Also C.W, 639. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

164. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

January 28, I935

CHI. VALJI,

As far as I can how far it is effective. The dietetic experiment I mention is quite well-known. In children it is soon cured.

I have come to know Jagadish Shastri intimately. I have gone through the synopsis of the thesis he has written. I spoke to him about the opinions of Anandshankarbhai and Vaidya. The young man is fairly painstaking. I have suggested[1] to him to try to rewrite his thesis with a new approach along the lines suggested by me. I have rearranged the chapters for him, and I hope he will try to conform to the titles. I have also indicated sources from where he could obtain literature on the subject. Now let us see what Fate has in store—for mother cow and for us.

I got your articles. The one about Kagawa's[2] friend I have made shorter. I have pruned down a little the portion relating to the missionaries since that is not the subject of our journal.

I had not carried with me the article on cow-protection during the march[3].

How is your health nowadays? What is the condition of your eyes?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

We take the train to Wardha this evening. Chitre went to Hardwar yesterday.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7470. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

165. LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

January 28, 1935

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. You have not written anything about your health. You both have to live with Father and show him great affection. Is Anand fully restored? Write to Wardha. I shall continue to write to Gangabehn.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] *Vide* , "Letter to Jagdish Shastri",19-1-1935
[2] Joseph Kagawa, a Japanese Christian missionary
[3] The Dandi march in March-April, 1930

166. ADVICE TO CONGRESSMEN[1]

NAGPUR,
January 29, 1935

I insist on the industrial education of girls. That will make them independent. They will not have to depend on others if they are not married. If married, they can lend a helping hand at home. If widows, they can earn their own living.

The Hindu, 30-1-1935

167. LETTER TO DINSHAW MEHTA

January [*29*][2], *1935*

MY DEAR DINSHAW,

I have not been able to reach your letter to Mahadev earlier. I do not know how I can make your appeal bear fruit. The only scheme that I can suggest for the financial management of the institution apart from its trust is your almost cent per cent success. But that does not depend purely upon skill. There must be the hand of God in it also. If He blesses you with success, that would be sufficient scheme. If He does not, nothing that you can do personally will avail. I know that this can give you little satisfaction. But what you call my mature judgment makes me say this without any hesitation.

I was grieved to hear about Khambhatta.[3] I hope that he is gaining ground quickly. Your advice for a radical change is certainly sound. He should surely adopt it. I entirely agree with you that he should leave Bombay at any cost. You can show this letter to him.

Please write to me at Wardha. This is being dictated on the train that is taking us to Wardha.

SHRI D. K. MEHTA
THE NATURE CURE CLINIC
6 TODIWALLA ROAD, POONA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] A large number of Congressmen met Gandhiji at the railway station when he passed through Nagpur *en route* to Wardha.

[2] The source has January 30. Gandhiji however was in the train on the 29th.

[3] Behramji Khambhatta; *vide* "Letter to Behramji Khambhatta", 30-1-1935.

168. LETTER TO HARIBHAU PHATAK

WARDHA,
January 29, 1935

MY DEAR HARIBHAU,

I have your postcard. Evidently you have not been reading *Harijan.* I have reproduced the testimony of Dr. Ansari and other doctors in its pages.[1] Medical testimony in favour of unpolished rice is universal. It is being eaten even now in Sambalpur and many parts of Bengal. Proof of the pudding is in the eating. You should try the thing yourself. You are quite right in saying that unpolished rice is harder to cook. But it is not harder to digest if it is well cooked. It must take longer to cook for the simple reason that unpolished rice contains organic salts and protein. Polished rice is practically starch. Starch always takes less time to cook. Unpolished rice is like unskinned pulses or vegetables. If you skin your dal and your vegetables they are easily cooked, but they are also less nutritious. A nutritious article takes a longer time to digest, as it must, but it is not on that account considered to be indigestible. If you say that you cannot eat the same quantity of unpolished rice as that of polished, you will be quite right. Our object, however, is not to fill the belly with as much as can be put into it, but to take a proper proportion of balanced foods. The habit of eating polished rice is waste of national health and wealth.

You will remember you sent me medical opinion which you thought was in favour of cow's milk in preference to buffalo's milk. I think I showed to you that the authority you sent was not conclusive. The authority in question merely showed that cow's milk was better for infants than buffalo's milk. I want decisive opinion in favour of cow's milk to buffalo's milk even for adults if that opinion can be honestly sustained.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1373

[1] *Vide* "Villagers' Hands"

169. A LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

January 29, 1935

TO MY AMERICAN FRIENDS:

Sjt. Kodanda Rao has been in America for some time. He is a member of the Servants of India Society founded by the late G. K. Gokhale whom I have regarded and often described as my political guru. Sjt. Kodanda Rao was private secretary to the Right Hon. Srinivasa Sastri when he was appointed the Agent-General of Government of India in South Africa. He was editor of the *Servant of India* when he left for America. He is a moderate in politics and an ardent social reformer holding advanced views on many social problems. He rendered me great assistance whilst I was permitted to carry on the anti-untouchability movement from the Yeravda Prison. I have no doubt that he will receive a patient and courteous hearing wherever he goes. Any assistance rendered to him will be deeply appreciated by me.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6299

170. LETTER TO G. SITARAMA SASTRY

January 29, 1935

MY DEAR SITARAMA SASTRY,

I had your three letters, two of which do not call for any answer.

Have you sent Kumarappa your form duly filled in? If the experiment that is being made in the use of groundnut oil for lighting purposes is successful, it will have far-reaching consequences. I hope that whoever is carrying on the experiment will persevere in spite of failures. I am sorry that you could not collect much funds. But the absence of response ought not to cause any worry to you. You should simply cut your coat according to the cloth.

Yours,

BAPU

SHRI G. SITARAMA SASTRY
VINAYA ASHRAM
CHANDOLE P. O., GUNTUR DT.

From a copy: C.W. 9738

171. LETTER TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

January 29, 1935

DEAR KHAN SAHEB,

By the courtesy of the authorities I was able to get your prompt reply. I have now come to Wardha. Here I shall be for some time at least.

I was obliged to leave Mehrtaj with Dr. Khan Saheb in Delhi where he has taken a house for the Assembly session. Mrs. Khan Saheb has arrived. Both she and her daughter are quite well. Your letter was translated to Mehrtaj, but she will not come to Wardha. Her difficulty is this: She is so gentle and wants to be so appropriate that she would not take advantage of the facilities that are offered to her. She wants to live in Wardha as the others are living. She is physically and mentally unable to do so; and she won't live as she would like to although she knows that she has the fullest liberty to do so. In Mariam she has a companion of her age and habits. So she would not leave her. And she had become fast friends with Zohra[1] who has showered all her affection on Mehrtaj. She had under Dr. Ansari's roof all the little things to which she was accustomed and she had no hesitation in taking them, because the whole family also did as she was doing. It was, therefore, impossible for Mehrtaj to tear herself away from the surroundings she liked and return to those which she did not like[2]. We all therefore felt that for the time being it was best to leave Mehrtaj with Dr. Khan Saheb. Urdu tuition will be provided for her. She has promised to write to me regularly. I hope that you will be satisfied with what I have done and that you will not worry about her. Afterall, God acts through children as through grown-up people, and we can but try gently to lead girls like Mehrtaj who are still growing.

Nor need you be anxious about Ghani. We are doing everything that is possible in the circumstances. You will be pleased to know that through Jamnalalji's effort Sadullah Khan was engaged to Sofia Somji.[3] The engagement was announced on the 26th instant. We have all wired our blessings.[4] Sadullah is still in Bombay. Jamnalalji's ear is

[1] Daughter of Dr. M. A. Ansari

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 7-1-1935

[3] *Vide* also "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 26-1-1935

[4] The telegram is not traceable.

not yet quite healed. Granulations continue to form. He will have to be in Bombay yet another month. You will please send me any instructions you wish to about Mehrtaj and Ghani. Lali is also with Dr. Khan Saheb in Delhi. I shall let you know later what is fixed up for Lali.

KHAN SAHEB ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN
B CLASS PRISONER
CENTRAL PRISON, SABARMATI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

172. LETTER TO R. M. MAXWELL

January 29, 1935

DEAR MR. MAXWELL,

By your kindness I have now received a letter from Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan in reply to my letter, which you had kindly forwarded to him. Another letter is necessitated by Khan Saheb's reply, and exchange of letters may have to be continued before the matter of his children can be finally fixed up. I now enclose herewith my reply[1] to Khan Saheb's letter which, I hope, will be delivered to him.

In the letter received from Khan Saheb there occur the following paragraphs:

> The conditions here do not agree with me. If possible, I would like to be transferred to a Frontier Province or Punjab jail. Maybe that my health will improve as a result of the change.
>
> There was a letter from Mrs. Dr. Khan Saheb to the Superintendent of the jail, for an interview with me. I wonder why those peopledid not afterwards turn up here. If Dr. Khan Saheb should come and see me, I shall tell him all about Mehrtaj.

I wonder if Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan will be or can be transferred to a Frontier Province or Punjab jail. May Dr. Khan Saheb or any of his relatives see Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan in the jail?

I am,
Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

R. M. MAXWELL, ESQ.
SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

173. LETTER TO ABDUL GHANI

January 29, 1935

MY DEAR GHANI,

I have your letter. For the time being, you will draw what money you need from Rameshwar.

Here is a free translation of a letter I have received from Father. Just now Father's dream about his children cannot be fully realized. As you will see from a copy of my letter[1] to Father, Mehrtaj won't be educated as Father wants. Dr. Khan Saheb will do the best that is possible. Her natural inclination is to be where Dr. Khan Saheb is. I have, therefore, left her and Lali with the Doctor in Delhi. Lali will probably go to Dehra Dun. You are now the one who can, if you will, carry out Khan Saheb's wishes. But there can be no compulsion, whether for you or for any other. I hope you will do the best you can to come up to Khan Saheb's expectations.

You should send me regular letters, so that when I write business letters to Father, I can incorporate portions from yours.

ABDUL GHANI
HINDUSTAN SUGAR MILLS
GOLA GOKARANNATH

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

174. LETTER TO M. FARZAND ALI KHAN

January 29, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I was pleased to listen to you yesterday during my silence. So far as the Congress constitution is concerned, I can do very little in the matter. But I am of opinion that the Working Committee of the Congress will not favour any scheme of relaxing the constitution. The requirements are surely minimum.

As for the reflection cast upon the Ahmadiya community by Ahrars[2], I have absolutely no knowledge about it. If they have indulged in the language you brought to my notice, it is most

[1] *Vide"*Letter to Abdul Ghaffar Khan", 29-1-1935
[2] Belonging to Majlis-i-Ahrar, a nationalist Muslim party

unfortunate. I exercise no influence over them. Would it not be better for you to mention this matter to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad or to Dr. Ansari?

Yours sincerely,

M. FARZAND ALI KHAN
HOME SECRETARY TO
HIS HOLINESS HAZRAT KHALIFA-TUL-MASIH
QADIAN (PUNJAB)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

175. LETTER TO J. S. NAYAK

January 29, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I wish you could realize that your letter was written in anger. Every consideration was shown to you. Just imagine what would be my fate if everyone was to be allowed to sit near me whenever he liked. There are so many inquisitive souls today that I would not beable to satisfy their desire even if I sat in front of them for twenty-four hours.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI J. S. NAYAK, B.A., B.L.
RAHMAN MANZIL, NICHOLSON ROAD
CASHMERE GATE, DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

176. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

January 29, 1935

DEAR MOTIBABU,

I had your long letter. Surely I did not want you to give so much time to my letter. Of course, I understand you. There was nothing by way of complaint in my letter, and you may be sure that nobody has complained to me about the Prabartak Sangh. If I had written to you on the basis of any such complaint, I would have certainly given you the name or at least told you that I had such a complaint. What I wrote arose solely from your own letter. My view about debts remains unaltered. I think we who are immersed in the service of humanity have got to be more cautious than ordinary

businessmen in dealing with finance. But I must not lengthen out this argument. I know that you will do whatever appeals to your inner self.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI MOTILAL ROY
PRABARTAK BHAVAN
61 BOWBAZAR STREET, CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

177. LETTER TO R. V. SASTRI

January 29, 1935

MY DEAR SASTRI,

I have not read your long report about Ganesan. But Mahadev has given me its contents. I propose to read the whole of it myself. Thakkar Bapa has read it. Here is a copy of my letter[1] to Ganesan. I want you to act with decision and firmness. We have to help Ganesan against himself. I have a very weak corner for him. But he is incorrigible about financial transactions. He must not be supported.

I am anxiously awaiting your letter about *Harijan.* I now find that by re-transferring it to Poona it is possible to save Rs. 2,400 per year—not a small thing; and if the estimate is correct, it will be sinful if we incur the additional expense of Rs. 2,400 per year for the luxury of publishing it in Madras. If you think it worth while to come down to Wardha for this purpose, you could do so. I am writing freely and briefly to you in this matter because I rely upon your capacity to look at things philosophically and detachedly, even where you are yourself concerned.

You should finish-off arrears of matter left over even though you may have to print a double number. We cannot afford to have much arrears. And now that the scope of *Harijan* is extended, demand on the space will be greater than before.

Encl. 1

SHRI R. V. SASTRI
MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This is not traceable.

178. LETTER TO R. S. VIDYARTHI

January 29, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I am not interested in talkies industry. I have never attended a cinema in my life. I know [what] a harm it has done. Many of my friends tell me that it has an educative value. I can neither prove nor disprove that assertion.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI R. S. VIDYARTHI
ANAND MATH
LUCKNOW

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

179. LETTER TO K. KRISHNA MENON

January 29, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter regarding the Panchama Night School in your neighbourhood. You should produce a certificate for efficiency from the Secretary of the Kerala Harijan Sevak Sangh and the Branch's inability to help the School, and then make an application to the Central Board for help. If it is worthy of help, I doubt not that the application will be fully considered by the Board.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI K. KRISHNA MENON, B.A.
COOTIPURAM P. O.
SOUTH MALABAR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy Pyarelal

180. LETTER TO RAYUDU RANGAIAH

January 29, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I do not understand the burden of your complaint. You have made general statements. I would ask you to discuss whatever you have with Sjt. Bapineedu, Secretary of the local Sangh.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI RAYUDU RANGAIAH GARU
PRESIDENT
WEST GODAVARY DISTRICT
ADI-ANDHRA ASSOCIATION, ELLORE (W.GODAVARY DT.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

181. LETTER TO SECRETARY, THE NEW INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL EDUCATION SOCIETY

January 29, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Your scheme does not make any appeal to me.

Yours sincerely,

SECRETARY
THE NEW INDUSTRIAL & COMMERCIAL
EDUCATION SOCIETY
99 LAXMI ROAD, POONA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

182. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

January 29, 1935

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

I could not reach yesterday the letter about Kodanda Rao. I could only therefore dictate it today in the train and get it posted in the train. I was dead busy with visitors coming in even during my silence. All writing, therefore, had to be stopped at 10 o'clock. My consolation, however, lies in the fact that this letter[1] will reach you well in time to catch this week's ocean mail.

I have already written[2] to Ganesan and Sastri. Copies of my letters herewith.

Encl. 3

SJT. A. V. THAKKAR
DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "A Letter of Introduction", 29-1-1935
[2] *Vide*. "Letter to R. V. Sastri", 29-1-1935

183. LETTER TO J. AWASTHI

WARDHA,
January 30, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I like your plain words. Of course, if it is not the same plate that was auctioned by me, you are entirely absolved. I am now asking for the return of the plate to you.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI J. AWASTHI
BRIJ NIVAS
NEW GANESHGANJ, LUCKNOW

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

184. LETTER TO THE EDITOR, "NISPRUHA"

January 30, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your printed appeal. Here is my message.

"I regard Abhyankar's death as a personal loss for the simple reason that I had come to prize his association more and more, and I had great hopes of his rendering some signal service to the country. But God had willed otherwise."

Yours sincerely,

THE EDITOR
"NISPRUHA"
NAGPUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

185. LETTER TO SURENDRANATH MAHEY

January 30, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am for the abolition of all castes as they exist today. I am in favour of abolition of all distinctions of high and low, but I am not in favour of abolition of varnashramadharma which to me is the antithesis of caste. I do believe that Hindu Marriage Law

requires amending. If you can succeed in inducing legislators to interest themselves in the cause, it will be good. I cannot, because I believe that I am attending to things which are of greater moment at present than marriage reforms through legislation.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI SURENDRANATH MAHEY
10 TEMPLE ROAD
LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

186. LETTER TO M. K. PANDURANGA

January 30, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your exhaustive letter. I have handed your book to a friend who is interested in food reform. As soon as it comes back to me, I shall go through the chapters mentioned by you. I understand all that you and your wife have gone through.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI M. K. PANDURANGA
BLISS CULT COLONY, AMBATTUR R. S.
VILLIVAKKAM P. O., MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

187. LETTER TO ACHYUT PATWARDHAN

January 30, 1935

MY DEAR PATWARDHAN,

You have done well in bringing the weavers' case to my notice. I had a similar case in Orissa during the walking tour. It was a question affecting 10,000 weavers. I have resolutely set my face against doing anything for weavers who weave mills-spun yarn, for they cut their own throat by weaving mill-spun yarn, and they know it. But they wrongly plead helplessness. As I told the weavers of Orissa, in a weaving family where there is one weaver, the rest of the members help in attending to the different processes through which yarn has to pass before it comes to the loom. My suggestion then is that every weaver family should spin its own yarn, that is to say, it should do the ginning, carding and spinning. Such a family should use for itself the khadi woven by it and put the surplus on the market. This will ensure spinning of a high order, because all the members of the family would be interested in spinning as strong and even yarn as is possible. Of

course, the income of the weaver would increase in exact proportion to the skill employed in producing good yarn. Withefficient management, I can show that such a family stands to gain by taking up spinning. The gain will be threefold. It will be independent of the middleman who sells yarn and the fluctuations of the yarn market, and save a portion of the money spent in buying cloth required for the family, for, except when the price of cotton goes down very low, the value of cotton required for domestic use will always be less than the price of cloth purchased in the market. Moreover, it has been found by experience that a man and woman use less yards of khadi than of mill-cloth, and less still where khadi and yarn are respectively hand-woven and hand-spun. And it is the universal testimony of practised spinners that when they have khadi woven out of their own yarn it lasts three times as long as manufactured cloth.

If this thing appeals to you, you can organize [the work]. A. I. S. A. can come to the assistance by purchasing the surplus khadi that these families will weave.

I am telling the weaver friend whose letter you have enclosed that you would explain my scheme to him.

If you like the scheme and any of the weavers will take it up under the conditions mentioned by me, you should, in order to save time, place yourself in touch with Gangadharrao, who, officially or unofficially, I do not remember which, represents the Karnatak branch of the A. I. S. A.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI ACHYUT PATWARDHAN
COURT ROAD
AHMEDNAGAR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

188 LETTER TO M. MADIAH

January 30, 1935

MY DEAR MADIAH,

I have your letter. I think you have got to exercise patience. We have made great headway, and we shall do more if there is self-restraint. I do not believe in propaganda through pamphlets or in costly buildings. A Bhajan Mandiram is good. But you should be satisfied with an unpretentious humble building.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI M. MADIAH
ADI-KARNATAKA STREET NO. 1
MALVILLI TOWN, MYSORE DISTRICT

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

189. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRAN

January 30, 1935

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRAN,

I had your letter about Bhole. I see that Bhole has been now discharged. Was he discharged as cured, or because of any complaint in respect of him? I have a suspicion that it might be the other, because of Bhole's letter just received.

I enclose herewith Madiah's letter and copy of my reply[1]. If there is anything for you to say in this matter, you will do so.

SHRI RAMACHANDRAN
DEENA SEVA SANGH
MALLESWARAM P. O., BANGALORE CITY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

190. LETTER TO PURNACHANDRA SARMAH

January 30, 1935

MY DEAR SARMAH,

I have your letter. You have to fix up everything with Annadababu and get him to approach the A.I.S.A. if he has a workable scheme.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI PURNACHANDRA SARMAH
PRESIDENT
DISTRICT CONGRESS COMMITTEE, NOWGONG (ASSAM)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

191. LETTER TO T. T. SHARMAN

January 30, 1935

MY DEAR SHARMAN,

I have forwarded your letter to Kakasaheb Kalelkar who will go into the matter. He is just now in the South principally for the purpose of helping Hindi Prachar work. I would ask you to put yourself in touch with him. His address is: Kakasaheb Kalelkar, C/o Hindi Prachar Sabha, 107 Armenian Street, G.T., Madras.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI T. T. SHARMAN,
EDITOR
"VISWAKARNATAKA DAILY"
BANGALORE CITY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

192. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

January 30, 1935

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

With reference to your question embodied in your letter of 21st instant, the only thing I can recommend is that the local reformers should zealously support persecuted Harijans as if they were their own blood brothers and sisters. If even this much cannot be guaranteed to them, we may not wonder that from motives of self-protection they go over to some other religion where they believe they can get some degree of protection.

Herewith a letter from Pratap Dialdas[1]. Inform Malkani that I have written to him. If the contribution has not been already used for Harijan work in Thar-Parkar District, please do so now.

Encl. 1

SHRI A. V. THAKKAR
GEN. SECRETARY
HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH, BIRLA MILLS, DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

193. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

January 30, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letters on arrival here. Your ear seems to be giving you a good deal of trouble. All of us here feel anxious. Ghanshyamdas also is worried. He has great faith in his Jew doctor in Calcutta. His operation seems to have proved successful. That is another reason why he is pressing that if your ear trouble is not cured soon, you should consult that doctor. I have asked Dr. Jivraj to let me have his opinion in detail. You also may think over this suggestion. I do not like the repeated postponements. Would you like Janakidevi to come overthere? Last evening, it appeared as though she wished to do so. She also felt that perhaps you wanted her there. If that is so, she would certainly want to go. I have suggested that she should wait for your reply to this letter. If you wish you may send a wire in reply to this. Give all details about the pain.

I shall be here for the present. Please drop the idea of coming

[1] A Sindhi philanthropist

here immediately. Come only when the doctors positively permit you to do so.

I do wish you would follow my advice regarding food. Take milk, eat fruit, chapatis made of whole wheatmeal, exclude rice, potatoes, etc., and eat green vegetables regularly. Do not eat anything in between the meals. Scrupulously avoid eating anything except at fixed hours. The load on the stomach at every meal should be as light as possible. You should not go by doctors' advice about food. Their experience, too, is very limited in this matter.

Just now I myself am sending Durgaprasad's money. I had asked them to send it. I had no idea whatsoever that he had no money even to pay the fare to Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Mehrtaj did not come after all. Lali will probably go to Dehra Dun.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2954

194. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

January 30, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

After I wrote you a letter in the morning I met Janakidevi. She is no doubt restless and wants to go to you. Hence do send a wire tomorrow saying yes or no.

The Rs. 900 that Dr. Khan Saheb used to get has stopped. What Khan Saheb used to get has also as good as stopped. Both the brothers are definitely in straitened circumstances. He was telling me that at present you meet the expenses of the Doctor's son. I think no money is likely to come from anywhere for Ghani either. Hence if anything is being given we should not expect it to be returned. Tell me if you want to suggest anything to me in this connection.

There is a letter from Khan Saheb written from jail. A translation of it will of course be enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2955

[1] This is followed by the direction: "The translation of Khan Saheb's letter should accompany this."

195. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

January 30, 1935

BHAI KHAMBHATTA,

I hope you are now improving. You must give up your attachment to Bombay. Be content with what God has given you. Are you likely to find any difficulty in living in Poona? Do let me know.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6607. Also C.W. 4397. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

196. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

January 30, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I forgot to tell you that Shah[1] had been here to see me. He wishes to work for the Board but not like a twelfth man. I do feel that some use should be made of him. Can he not be appointed "Honorary Economic Adviser" or "Consultant"? He is not particular about fees.

I had hoped to be able to travel with you. We could discuss nothing in Delhi. In a way, however, it was good that you stayed back. On my arrival, I received another letter from Andrews. It contains nothing new. He is merely building castles in the air.

What a contrast between the cold there and the comparatively warm weather here!

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
NEW DELHI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 151-2

[1] Prof. K. T. Shah, the economist

197. MESSAGE TO AHMEDABAD MILL-WORKERS

[On or before *January 31, 1935*][1]

Tell workers that they are weakening their cause and that of labour generally by illegitimate strike. Let them not tarnish the good name they have earned for themselves. I hope they will regain balance and resume work.

The Hindustan Times, 1-2-1935

198. LETTER TO BHUJANGILAL CHHAYA

WARDHA,
January 31, 1935

CHI. BHUJANGILAL,

I had your letter. I do not mistrust you. What I wrote to you was in accordance with your nature as I know it. Your intentions are good but you are constantly obstructed in implementing them. Complete your study and do whatever service you can after that. Don't do anything against your inclination. One should discriminate between what is worth while and what is worthless and then do whatever one can to the best of one's ability. You should carefully examine where precisely you stand.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2593

199. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

January 31, 1935

BHAI MOOLCHAND,

Your letter. I hope no one will, in the first instance, bear malice towards the sanatanists and, again, mind the boycott imposed by them. In the event of a boycott we should bear with whatever hardships it brings.

Keep me informed of all the developments.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 767

[1] The report appeared under the date-line "Ahmedabad, January, 31".

200. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

January 31, 1935

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

Herewith a small item for *Harijansevak.* If possible gather some more information about this matter there. I fail to understand this boycott.

What have you done about the Hindi lessons for Prabhavati?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1098

201. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

January 31, 1935

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

You are pardoned—though such errors could have been easily avoided. We are susceptible to subtle faults such as anger and like from which it is not easy to escape. But everything will turn out well as you are ever on the alert.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2441

202. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

January 31, 1935

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. If you want to be treated by a doctor then the Seva Sadan of Calcutta is the place for you. But I always prefer nature cure. There are water-cure experts in Lucknow too. You can seek advice from them and do what you can. I cannot advise you about earth-cure from here. Whatever I or anyone else says in this regard should be considered as of no account. You should do what seems good to you. I can write[1] to Dr. Bidhan Roy if you desire to go to the Seva Sadan. Your doctor in Lucknow can consult him and

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. B. C. Roy", 2-2-1935

then you can go there. If you are planning to go immediately you can send me a telegram and I shall write at once.

There were some complaints against you. These were sent to you yesterday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

203. ESCAPING THE OBVIOUS

When I was addressing a mixed conference of Harijans and non-Harijans the other day, I happened to deplore the fact that at railway stations one heard the cry 'Mussalman milk, Mussalman water'; 'Hindu milk, Hindu water'. 'Hindu chapati' and 'Mussalman chapati' I could bear, though I did not believe in anything like it; but Mussalman and Hindu milk, with the making of which man had nothing to do, I could neither understand nor tolerate. I added that those who believed in the total removal of untouchability had to be free from superstitions like 'Mussalman and Hindu milk and water'.

I have already remarked in these columns that those who refuse to take water and the like touched by Harijans may not claim that they are free from the taint of untouchability. It would be preposterous to justify the practice of differentiating between Mussalman and Hindu water and milk, when we do away with the difference between Harijan water and milk and non-Harijan water and milk. The great movement for the removal of untouchability would lose all its charm if it became a mere salve for conscience without truth behind it. The virus of untouchability is all-pervasive, and those who believe in it cannot be said to be free till they have ceased to regard any single individual as untouchable or in any way inferior in status by reason of his birth, community or faith.

A letter has just come to emphasize the necessity of a proper understanding of the implications of the movement. It describes how there was a public dinner arranged over the celebration of the silver jubilee of a high school in Berar. Harijan students were invited to it. The letter informs me that the Harijan students were provided with separate seats, the guests drawn from all the other castes and communities sitting in one row. Here was a wanton insult needlessly offered to the cultured Harijan students, who could not be recognized

as such from their appearance. Such insults at this time of the day at a high school function show that, though much headway has been made in the campaign against untouchability, the superstition persists even in the least expected quarters and in the least expected manner. It should be borne in mind that here there was no question of inter-dining, there was noquestion of mixed cooking, it was a question merely of sitting in the same row. If sitting on the same bench in the same compartment in a railway train and eating one's food in that condition is not inter-dining, surely this was not. But in the dictionary of untouchability, inter-dining has a specific meaning which excludes sitting at meal-time in the same row with people.

Harijan, 1-2-1935

204. BEE-KEEPING[1]

In answer to an inquiry, Shri J. N. Jayakaran of Y. M. C. A. Rural Reconstruction Centre, Ramnathpuram, Coimbatore, gives the following interesting information:

> Krishnaswami Naidu, a small holder, knows, and demonstrates to his neighbours, that the total outturn from a coriander crop is represented not merely by the usual quantity of coriander which it can produce without the help of bees, but also by the increase in the quantity of production caused by better pollination by these busy insects *plus* 42 pounds of A 1 golden honey, this latter alone bringing to his pocket a decent sum of Rs. 63.
>
> He has but 10 hives of bees, which he has caught from nature and hived in cheap dealwood boxes.

Bee-keeping seems to me to possess immense possibilities. Apart from its village value, it may be cultivated as a hobby by moneyed young men and women. They will add to the wealth of the country and produce the finest health-giving sugar for themselves. If they are philanthropically inclined, they can distribute it as health-giving food among sickly Harijan children. There is no reason why it should be a luxury of the rich or an expensive medicinal vehicle in the hands of the hakims and vaidyas. No doubt, my hope is based on inferences drawn from meagre data. Experiments that may be made in villages and in cities by young men and women should show whether honey can become a common article of food or has to remain an uncommon article, which it is today

Harijan, 1-2-1935

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

205. HOW TO BEGIN?-II[1]

Last week I dealt with rice. Let us now take up wheat. It is the second most important article of diet, if not the first. From the nutritive stand-point, it is the king of cereals. By itself it is more perfect than rice. Flour bereft of the valuable bran is like polished rice. That branless flour is as bad as polished rice is the universal testimony of medical men. Whole-wheat flour ground in one's own *chakki*[2] is any day superior to, and cheaper than, the fine flour to be had in the bazaars. It is cheaper because the cost of grinding is saved. Again, in whole-wheat flour there is no loss of weight. In fine flour there is loss of weight. The richest part of wheat is contained in its bran. There is a terrible loss of nutrition when the bran of wheat is removed. The villagers and others who eat whole-wheat flour ground in their own *chakkis* save their money and, what is more important, their health. A large part of the millions that flour mills make will remain in and circulate among the deserving poor when village grinding is revived.

But the objection is taken that *chakki* grinding is a tedious process, that often wheat is indifferently ground and that it does not pay the villagers to grind wheat themselves. If it paid the villagers formerly to grind their own corn, surely the advent of flour mills should make no difference. They may not plead want of time, and when intelligence is allied to labour, there is every hope of improvement in the *chakki*. The argument of indifferent grinding can have no practical value. If the *chakki* was such an indifferent grinder, it could not have stood the test of time immemorial. But to obviate the risk of using indifferently ground whole-wheat flour, I suggest that, wherever there is suspicion, the flour of uneven grinding may be passed through a sieve and the contents may be turned into thick porridge and eaten with or after chapati. If this plan is followed, grinding becomes incredibly simple, and much time and labour can be saved.

All this change can only be brought about by some previous

[1] For the first instalment, *vide* "How to Begin"

[2] Quern

preparation on the part of workers and instruction of villagers. This isa thankless task. But it is worth doing, if the villagers are to live in health and elementary comfort.

Gur[1] is the next article that demands attention. According to the medical testimony I have reproduced in these columns[2], *gur* is any day superior to refined sugar in food value, and if the villagers cease to make *gur* as they are already beginning to do, they will be deprived of an important food adjunct for their children. They may do without *gur* themselves, but their children cannot without undermining their stamina. *Gur* is superior to bazaar sweets and to refined sugar. Retention of *gur* and its use by the people in general means several crores of rupees retained by the villagers.

But some workers maintain that *gur* does not pay the cost of production. The growers who need money against their crops cannot afford to wait till they have turned cane-juice into *gur* and disposed of it. Though I have testimony to the contrary, too, this argument is not without force. I have no ready-made answer for it. There must be something radically wrong when an article of use, made in the place where also its raw material is grown, does not pay the cost of labour. This is a subject that demands local investigation in each case. Workers must not take the answer of villagers and despair of a remedy. National growth, identification of cities with villages, depend upon the solution of such knotty problems as are presented by *gur*. We must make up our mind that *gur* must not disappear from the villages, even if it means an additional price to be paid for it by city people.

Harijan, 1-2-1935

206. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

WARDHA,
Unrevised *February 1, 1935*

CHI. MARY,

I was expecting your letter today. I am glad Mary Junior had an enema. It must have given her considerable relief. Where have you put up? Are you comfortable there, and are you getting all you need? You will not hesitate to ask me to do anything that may be required

[1] Jaggery
[2] *Vide* "Villagers' Hands"

and that I can do. Mary has got to become strong and fit.

You have well put the result of your stay in Delhi.[1] Blessed are they that expect nothing, but twice blessed are those that feel sure that they have got what they need.

I like the prayer too with which you have ended your letter. Do you remember it? It is: 'May rural-mindedness increase.' When that mindedness takes a firm hold of us we shall be only happy living in the villages and make villages infinitely more habitable than the finest city in the world can ever be.

I have already opened the conversation with the girls as to who is ready to join you for two or three months.

We had a perfect downpour yesterday. It is very fine today. But no such thing as cold here.

Blessings to both of you from

BAPU[2]

MISS MARY BARR
C/O SETH DEEPCHANDJI
BETUL

From a photostat: G.N. 6037. Also C.W. 3367. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

207. LETTER TO B. MADHAVA BALIGA

February 1, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I do not know what I have done with the verse sent by Sastri. Most probably they are still lying in the *Harijan* file. There is a great deal of matter still lying awaiting attention. If you have a copy, you may send it to me. It may be that I might have examined the verse, and not finding it suitable for the columns of *Harijan*, might have destroyed it.

For the answer to your question I would refer you to my Introduction to *Anasaktiyoga*[3] published in Gujarati. I translated the Preface into English for the benefit of the readers of *Young India*. If you get hold of the old file of *Young India*, you will find the translation in it. The answer briefly is this:

[1] The addressee had stayed with Gandhiji during his visit to Delhi in January.
[2] The subscription is in Hindi.
[3] *Vide* "Anasaktiyoga" sub-title "The Message of the "Gita"

The *Gita* was written not to establish ahimsa, but to show a groping world a way of acting truly in every conceivable circumstance. But nevertheless you can gather that the *Gita* leads you infallibly to ahimsa. Remember that Arjuna was not striving to follow ahimsa, but he was struggling to get out of the duty in front of him because of his partiality which he had suddenly developed for his kinsmen. The question before him was not whether to kill or not to kill, but whether to kill one's kinsmen or not to kill them.

Then, again, *nigraha*[1] in the verse quoted by you means a fruitless fight against one's fundamental nature. Fight against one's weakness is repeatedly enjoined in the *Gita*, but where a weakness becomes settled nature with a person all fighting becomes vain. Arjuna's nature was that of a fighter, not because he was born to fight but because his own individual nature loved fighting. When, what may appear to us, weakness in a man becomes part of his being, it ceases to have the quality of weakness with him; and if at the behest of someone such a person begins to fight against his nature, he is bound to fail or else he would become a hypocrite. To ask such a person to go against his nature would be to expect a leopard to change his spots.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI B. MADHAVA BALIGA
VANI VILAS MOHALLA
VONTIKOPPAL P. O., MYSORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

208. LETTER TO FEROZE GANDHI

February 1, 1935

MY DEAR FEROZE,

I have your postcard. I hope that Kamala is now better and has got rid of the effects of the needle. I would like you to write to Poonamchand Ranka. He complains that he never got any acknowledgment of any of the parcels he sent. He tells me too that the oranges are none of the best in Nagpur at the present time. Nevertheless, he will continue to send what he can get. I hope, too, that you are getting vegetables properly packed from Delhi. If not, you will tell me unhesitatingly.

SHRI FEROZE GANDHI
BHOWALI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Restraint, *vide Bhagavat Gita* III. 33.

209. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRAN

February 1, 1935

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRAN,

Herewith is a letter from the office of the Municipal-Commissioner regarding the complaint of Kuppachari. Please see the Chairman of the Reception Committee. The poor man ought to receive some compensation from whoever may be considered primarily liable.

Encl. 1

SHRI RAMACHANDRAN
BANGALORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

210. LETTER TO S. SUNDARESA IYER

February 1, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter with two books for which I thank you. I am conversant with the argument on birth-control. If the statements made are based on incontrovertible experience, the way of control described in the pamphlet is not half as bad as the artificial method. As to the second book, I wouldn't have the time to go through it. The subject does not interest me. If people could change their colour and if the whole world became one colour, I think that we would have a sorry world. What mankind has to conquer is prejudice, whether it is against race or colour.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI S. SUNDARESA IYER, M.A., B.L.
ADVOCATE
MYLAPORE (MADRAS)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

211. LETTER TO MOHANLAL

February 1, 1935

MY DEAR MOHANLAL,

I like your very thorough report on the allegations of the Meghs of the Arya Nagar Colony. Can you now follow it up by seeing the members of the Sabha[1], finding out how the negotiations go and do whatever is possible on behalf of the poor Meghs? I suppose the corresponding Salvation Army Colony is flourishing, well managed and that the Christian settlers or tenants, whatever they be, are quite happy.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI MOHANLAL
HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH
LAJPAT RAI BHAWAN, LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

212. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

February 1, 1935

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

There was a long complaint from the Meghs of the Arya Nagar Colony of the Punjab. I had referred the complaint to Mohanlal. Herewith is his very thoughtful and complete report. You will also find a copy of my reply to Mohanlal.[2] You do whatever you can from your end. Does Ghanshyamdas know the chief people of the Dalit Pratinidhi Sabha? I am speaking to Dr. Gopichand in the matter. He is here in connection with the Village Industries Association.

Encl. 2

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Dalit Pratinidhi Sabha
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

213. LETTER TO MURARILAL

February 1, 1935

DEAR DR. MURARILAL,

Your letter is most businesslike and valuable. It will be very helpful. I am passing it on to Sjt. Kumarappa who will write to you fully about it. Those persons who require monthly assistance can be accommodated by the Agent or Agents who will be appointed. The idea is that the Central Board[1] should have no financial responsibility in respect of paid workers. Agents will be expected to collect what funds they require from local donors and manage their agency. That is the only way in which we shall be able to run this Association efficiently.

Yours sincerely,

DR. MURARILAL, M.B.
UDYOG BHAWAN, CAWNPORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

214. LETTER TO C. SUBRAMANIAM

February 1, 1935

MY DEAR SUBRAMANIAM,

If the teachers are truly repentant, I suppose they must be allowed to remain. It is difficult for me to give you infallible guidance without knowing the parties and knowing the method under which the institution is being run. There can never be too much purity in teachers. And the problem of getting the right type of teachers and managers for institutions where boys or girls receive training is proving more and more baffling.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM
C/O SHRI L. K. MUTHUSWAMI
161 VICTORIA HOSTEL, TRIPLICANE (MADRAS)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Of the A. I. V. I. A.

215. LETTER TO AVINASILINGAM CHETTIYAR

February 1, 1935

MY DEAR AVINASILINGAM,

I enclose herewith a letter received by me from Subramaniam and copy of my reply[1]. If the facts set forth in the letter are correct, I hope you will take energetic steps to overtake the evil.

SHRI AVINASILINGAM CHETTIYAR, M.L.A.
NEW DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

216. LETTER TO SECRETARY, PATIT PAVAN SABHA, BHIWANI

February 1, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I never interfere in Municipal or other elections.

Yours sincerely,

THE SECRETARY
PATIT PAVAN SABHA
BHIWANI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

217. LETTER TO K. RAMAMURTI

February 1, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

If the crucibles you mention are or can be a village industry which the villagers can carry on without power machinery or complicated hand-driven machinery the Agent of the Association, when one is appointed, for Rajahmundry, will be able to attend to your suggestions.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI K. RAMAMURTI
HON. SECRETARY
THE INDIAN INDUSTRIAL SYNDICATE, RAJAHMUNDRY

From a copy: Pyarelal. Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

218. LETTER TO T. L. KANTA RAO

February 1, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 26th ultimo. I would refer you to Shri G. Sitarama Sastry, of Vinay Ashram, Chandole, who will be the Agent in charge of the Guntur District. I have no doubt that he will take all the assistance that medical men can give. Sanitation and hygiene are an integral part of the village uplift programme.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI T. L. KANTA RAO
SECRETARY
THE GUNTUR DT. L. I. M. ASSOCIATION, GUNTUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

219. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

February 1, 1935

CHI. KANTI,

You must have received my letter sent through Kakasaheb. It has neither been answered nor acted upon. It cannot be that you did not receive it. Devdas has forwarded to me your last letter to him. I am waiting for you as eagerly as a thirsty man would wait for water. I wish you would come and stand before me in answer to this letter. I do not want to scold you. I only want to know your heart. Maganbhai is also here. You are therefore bound to find the place convenient in every way. You should know that I do not at all want to take away your freedom.

Come soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7293. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

220. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHA,
February 1, 1935

CHI. MATHURADAS,

You have well discharged the duty of a watchman. I had not known about the demise of Husainbhai's father. I have sent him a letter today.

How did you fare in the election? You have not written anything about it. How much did you have to spend? How is your health? What are your activities? Would you be interested in cottage industries?

Blessings from

BAPU

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
74 WALKESHWAR ROAD
BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

221. LETTER TO JAINENDRA KUMAR

February 1, 1935

BHAI JAINENDRA,

This may be the brief answer to your letter. You yourself have given it. For a belief in rebirth, it is necessary to believe in the existence of 'I'. If I do not exist and God alone exists, then who is to be reborn and how? This realization itself is rebirth, isn't it? The possibility of rebirth is there only as long as the 'I' exists. When you truly believe—merely saying it is not enough—that 'God alone exists', then there is no rebirth for you. The man who becomes one with God is liberated. This much your reason will certainly accept. But it will not be realized in experience. Realization may take even thousands of years. Realization comes through the heart. The head can provide only logic. But what is the worth of logic? Service alone can bring about realization.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

222. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,

Not revised *February 2, 1935*

DEAR AMRIT,

Here is my message for the Harijans who are troubled about child-marriages.

"In these days of self-purification, Harijans ought to know that they are to avoid all the bad customs of caste Hindus. They should therefore avoid child-marriages. But reformers may not be impatient. Sarda Act is, in my opinion, a wise step. But it may not be strictly enforced against Harijans when it is very laxly enforced against caste Hindus. There should be effective enlightened propaganda by Harijans among fellow Harijans on the evil of child-marriages and the bearing of the Sarda Act on them. And then when it is made certain that people wilfully ignore that Act, a few prosecutions may be undertaken. But even then they must be the sole concern of Harijans. They may not ask for or receive even financial assistance in this matter from caste Hindus. In any case at least one year should be given to concentrated propaganda."

If this is not the message you want you may withhold publication and let me know what you want.[1]

There is no cold here. We have been having rains instead.

I hope you are better.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
JULLUNDUR CITY

From the original: C.W. 3521. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6330

[1] For the message as modified, *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 18-2-1935.

223. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

February 2, 1935

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

Rani Vidyavati is the wife of a poor broken-down zamindar in Hardoi district. I have known her for years as a staunch Congress worker. She has been to jail. She is now ailing from some disease which the local doctors opine requires special treatment, probably even an operation. They have advised her to seek the shelter of Chittaranjan Seva Sadan. Naturally the request came to me some months ago that I should write to you and inquire whether you could accommodate her at the Seva Sadan as a poor patient. But later, there seemed to be an improvement in her health, and therefore she postponed her going to Calcutta. Now, evidently, she has to undergo special treatment. If you find that she can be admitted to the Seva Sadan, please write to me and telegraph to her at Barua House, Wazir Hasan Road, Lucknow. It might be as well to telegraph to her directly even if you cannot admit her.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY
36 WELLINGTON STREET
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

224. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

February 2, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter and wire. Janakidevi is leaving today, This letter will be sent with her.

I have explained to her, too, about food. I have no doubt that she will be of great help to you.

Please do not worry about Om. I will keep her with me.

Janakidevi's heart is weak. Get her examined. She will not take any medicine, but still we had better ascertain what the trouble is. We shall also know what treatment they suggest.

Get the receipt for Ranchhodbhai's money issued in the name of Narandas or any other person who is a trustee on behalf of the Udyog Mandir. I have forgotten the names of the trustees.

I shall remain here for the present. I am not at all harassed by mosquitoes. There are none on the terrace. Last night it was raining and so I slept downstairs. There was no trouble even there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2956

225. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

February 2, 1935

CHI. KANTI,

I received your letter just now. I am surprised and pained by it. It gives an entirely different picture of you. But the best thing is to appear what you are. In your last letter to me you had yourself expressed your willingness to come here. Now when I call you here, why do you feel nervous? What would be the plight of a son who is afraid to go near his father? How fearsome his father or grandfather must be! I had called you here out of love. I wanted to guide you after knowing your mind. But I see that I would not be able to give you any consolation. Be at ease. Do not come. Look within yourself, be calm and good. Live independently and rise high. That is my hope and my blessing.

My letter must have reached you. You must have also received my letter sent to you along with Kakasaheb's. I have destroyed your letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7294. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

226. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

February 2, 1935

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I have your letter. It seems that a beginning has been made. In my opinion there is no place for buffaloes or ghee made out of buffalo's milk in our village industries. What shall we gain by interfering in the activities which are going on quite systematically? We do not want to make a business out of it. One who understands the dharma of cow-protection would not speak for the buffalo.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9515

227. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

WARDHA,
February 3, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM[1],

You are being well tried. It is good for you if you will take this trial in good part. You must not be defeated. Shower your affection on Krishnasamy. Do not brood over his melancholia, never mind if he will not study. Give him some occupation. Let him spin, weave or learn carpentry. Walk with him. Play with him. Have joy in your countenance. It will infect him. Put him with Ramachandran for a time. Let him play games. Let him learn Hindi. In other words his mind and body must be joyfully occupied and all would be well.

The two Malayali girls and Silavati will not leave Wardha. I tempted them but they are so happy here just now that they will not move. It is no use my pressing them.

Vasumati will be ready in the middle of this month if you are. You do not want a formal public opening ceremony, do you? It should be a silent prayerful opening. Let it grow naturally and without any flourish of trumpets.

Ba is disinclined to move out just now. I do not want to press her. And since the opening must be strictly private, Ba's presence is wholly unnecessary.

[1] This is in Hindi.

My right hand being tired out, I have written this with the left hand. I hope you have no difficulty in deciphering the writing.

Love.

BAPU[1]

From the original. Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

228. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

February 3, 1935

CHI. PREMA,

I am very late this time in replying to your letter. I get no time at all.

I have been writing so much today that the right hand feels tired and I am now writing with the left hand.

The body must have lost some strength but I have no such feeling. The fast[2] has not in the least led to an increase of weakness. Fasting never does if one knows how to return to normal diet afterwards.

I believe that the effect of my diet on my health has been nothing but beneficial. But I cannot give reasons for this belief.

I am very glad that Father, Mother and others came and saw you.

There is certainly a remedy for the frequent pimples which you get. For a few days live only on fruit and uncooked *bhaji.* Take steam treatment and the pimples will then immediately shrink. Havingdone this, bathe in cold water. The skin will probably clear up in three or four days. Then start taking milk or curd which is not sour along with fruit and uncooked *bhaji.* Among the different *bhajis,* fenugreek leaves, spinach, *luni* and lettuce are the best. I eat even the leaves and twigs of mustard.

To pray to God for anything means to aspire for it intensely. God is both different and not different from us. He is different because He is perfect, and He is not different because we are portion of Him. If a drop of water separated from the sea may not pray to the sea, to whom else may it pray? But does the sea have to do anything to

[1] This is in Hindi.

[2] From August 7 to 13, 1934, undertaken to atone for the beating up of Lalnath, an opponent of Gandhiji's Harijan activities

answer the prayer? Prayer is the anguished cry of one who cannot bear separation. The embodied soul cannot help uttering such a cry.

The key to the nation's progress both is and is not in our hands. We can help in its progress if we reduce ourselves to a cipher. It is in our hands to do that. But the progress itself is not in our hands, because our reducing ourselves to a cipher means leaving ourselves entirely in the hands of God who alone is the digit of unity.

"O Udho, the secret of karma is beyond human understanding" is an absolute truth. We can know that there is a law of karma, but we do not know how it works. That is God's mercy. We do not know the laws of even an earthly king. How then can we know the laws of God who is Law personified?

The appearance of victory in the early part of this struggle was an illusion, and the appearance of defeat also is nothing but an illusion. In the lexicon of one who has unshakable faith in the ultimate victory of truth, there is no such word as "defeat".

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10366

229. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

WARDHA,
February 3, 1935

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I do not see any objection to your wanting to join a school. You alone can say whether you will be able to shoulder the responsibility of that work or not.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9514

230. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

WARDHA,
February 4, 1935

BHAI KHAMBHATTA,

I was very happy to read your letter and equally surprised. One may say you have risen from the death-bed. Your fasts were also very severe. Will the leprosy be cured also? Convey my thanks to Dinshaw. If the remaining troubles are cured as well, the result can be said to be marvellous. I am not at all surprised that Tehmina nurses you like Sita. I should be surprised and pained if it was otherwise. Write to me the details of your treatment when you get time.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA
NATURE CURE CLINIC
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6608. Also C.W. 4398. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

231. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

February 4, 1935

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. Your account of the two interviews[1] is good. I see it all now very clearly. Nothing more remains to be done. But I am toying with the idea of writing to Sir Henry Craik. If I do, of course I shall send the letter on to you. If you don't like it, you need not forward it. Bhulabhai[2] cannot sign his name in the visitors' book. In these matters we gain nothing by swerving from the golden mean. Bhulabhai's courteous rejoinder should be regarded sufficient. Time will do the rest.

[1] With the then Viceroy Lord Willingdon and the Home Member, Sir Henry Craik

[2] Bhulabhai Desai, an eminent lawyer and leader of the Congress Party in the Legislative Assembly.

The courtesy and goodwill of the Home Member are personal. The policy in the report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee is that of the bureaucracy. The policy of the bureaucracy shows no courtesy. There is in it deliberate discourtesy. I expect nothing good to accrue from it. When the policy of the bureaucracy changes, any sort of constitution can be made to do for a long while. Today the question is of a new thing being imposed, and that too by force. No one holds a good opinion of it. You may well stick to your attitude. I am writing at such length only to tell you that I see no ray of hope in the atmosphere. My personal optimism of course remains constant even in the face of darkness. It has no other basis save the truth of our position.

You may get Vallabhbhai to decide as to what attitude Bhulabhai should adopt.

Even as I am writing this, my desire to write to the Home Member is becoming less keen.

The dates must have arrived.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 7970. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

232. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

February 4, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

Being tired I am writing with the left hand. You must have received the dates sent to you. Amtul writes that you are both miserable. It is a matter of regret if it is true. Dr. Ansari had sent a list of Urdu books and some Hindi books too, which I rejected. Now he has promised to send the English. I do not worry except on your account. It is well if you are putting your time to good use. Send me the time table.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha*, facing p. 144

233. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

February 4, 1935

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I was pained to read your letter. What was the point in going to Khurja and rushing back? Anyway I shall reconcile myself to whatever brings you peace. The news about Sharma too makes me unhappy. He alone knows the sacrifices he has made. But it is not a happy state of affairs. I hope your health is better. This letter is written with the left hand as the right hand pains.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 313

234. LETTER TO M. J. KANETKAR

WARDHA,
February 5, 1935

MY DEAR KANETKAR,

It is only when you remind me that I think of the printed card or letter. I hope I have never been found so churlish as to resent printed appeals by throwing at editors contemptible messages. I sent[1] you from the train what I thought was the best I could do in the time at my disposal. If I have repeated myself in my message to your paper, it is again because what I had originally given was of the best. I am sorry I can't give you anything more or better. Better I shall never succeed in giving you; more I could give if I had the leisure to recall the past things between good Abhyankar and myself and weave them into a readable story. For that I have no leisure. Although I have been a journalist, so called, for nearly thirty years I have not acquired the knack of writing long things at will. I am a bad spinner. You should thank me that I have given to this letter so much of my time, every second of which, I assure you, is precious to me. But I have given it for the memory of an old co-worker and for your sake, as in sending the book you had sent me his introduction. I wish I could say even now that I have read your book. I took it up half a dozen times, and

[1] *Vide* "Letter to the Editor, *Nispruha*"

the reading of it had to be interrupted for something more precious.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI M. J. KANETKAR, B.A.
EDITOR, "NISPRUHA"
1056 SITABULDI, NAGPUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

235. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

February 5, 1935

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I send you herewith a questionnaire[1] on milk which you will please answer at your early convenience.

I am now in a position to seek your concrete assistance for the A.I.V.I.A. The Board has been sitting for the last four days continuously and has given instructions to its members to prosecute the programme of inducing the villagers to take to hand-husking of unpolished rice and pressing their own oil and cane, and grinding their own corn wherever these four primary employments have been given up, and to attend to village sanitation and hygiene. Now, in all this work you can give the greatest assistance by securing the co-operation of medical men, medical students and other students. You can cover the whole of Bengal with an army of workers, paid or honorary; and if the workers are good, they will repay tenfold whatever they might get, in a visible and immediate improvement in the economic condition and health of the villagers. You can even produce a village literature that may become the model for the whole of India. I say this deliberately, because no province has so much chemical skill as Bengal; and is it not that which is principally required in the prosecution of this programme?

I have asked Profullababu to see you in this matter. I know you will help him.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the following item.

236. A QUESTIONNAIRE

February 5, 1935

Ayurvedic physicians say that cow's milk is the prince among milks from the health point of view. They give buffalo's milk an inferior place. Does modern medical science sustain that view? If so, in what way?

One hears it stated often that all fats do not act alike on the system. Is there any distinction between butter extracted from cow's milk and that from buffalo's milk? If so, what is it? That pound per pound buffalo's milk yields a larger quantity of fat or butter than cow's milk is irrelevant to the inquiry.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

237. LETTER TO C. MUKERJEE

February 5, 1935

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. The best way you can help the Association is to carry on propaganda amongst the members advocating the use by them of village products and manufactures wherever they are available, and secondly to send out women workers to the villages near their place of residence to do sanitary work amongst the villagers and to induce them to take up hand-husking of rice, etc. If you are not reading or taking *Harijan* which gives information every week about the activities of the All-India Village Industries Association, I would recommend your going in for it. I would also ask you to put yourself in touch with Shrimati Gosibehn Captain who is a member of the A.I.V.I.A. Board. As she happens to be here just now for the Board meetings, I am asking her to write to you.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI C. MUKERJEE
HON. ORGANIZING SECRETARY
9 LOWER RAWDON STREET, CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

238. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

February 5, 1935

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

Here is another questionnaire[1] for you to answer at your early convenience.

Do please send me a list of the English books you want Sharma to read. You need not wait for giving me any exhaustive list. If you give me a preliminary list of the books[2] that he must read in order to qualify himself for making experiments on this very complicated human machine, that is enough.

I hope you are not wearing yourself out with work so as again to necessitate your going to Europe just for a cure.

DR. M. A. ANSARI
1 DARIAGANJ
DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

239. LETTER TO G. G. JADHAV

February 5, 1935

DEAR JADHAV,

I should never have thought that over there people are killing goats in the name of religion. Surely it is bad to have to kill them for food; but I hold it to be a blasphemy to kill any animal in the name of religion. It is bringing down God to our level when we think that He can possibly be pleased by our sacrificing dumb animals for our sins. The only way of pleasing God is, in my opinion, to sacrifice ourselves.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI G. G. JADHAV
EDITOR, "SEVAK"
KOLHAPUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The reference presumably is to "A Questionnaire", 5-2-1935

[2] *Vide* "Letter to H. L. Sharma", 4-2-1935, also "Letter to Dr. M. A. Ansari", 29-11-1934

240. LETTER TO DR. S. SUBBA RAO

February 5, 1935

MY DEAR SUBBA RAO,

Here is another questionnaire[1] for you to answer when you can spare a moment for it.

Yours sincerely,

DR. S. SUBBA RAO
BANGALORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

241. LETTER TO N. R. DHAR

February 5, 1935

DEAR PROF. DHAR,

Dr. Mehta has kindly sent me your letter to him of 12th ultimo.

Your accurate opinion on unpolished rice and the other articles of food has proved of great assistance to me.

Can you throw light on the enclosed questionnaire?

Yours sincerely,

Encl.

PROF. N. R. DHAR
UNIVERSITY OF ALLAHABAD
ALLAHABAD

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

242. LETTER TO MESSRS JAFRI BROTHERS

February 5, 1935

DEAR FRIENDS

I thank you for the copy of the *Life of the Prophet* by Malik Ghulam Sarwar Khan. I have not even a minute to spare for reading literature. But I would love to read Malik Saheb's books and when I have done so I shall gladly give you my opinion on it.

Yours sincerely,

MESSRS JAFRI BROTHERS
ANWAR AHMADI PRESS
287 SHAHGUNJ, ALLAHABAD

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide*"Letter to C. Mukerjee", 5-2-1935

243. LETTER TO S. TIRUVENGADASAMI

February 5, 1935

MY DEAR TIRUVENGADASAMI,

I have your report of the working of your school. I hope that the school will more and more go in for industrial education

Yours sincerely,

SHRI S. TIRUVENGADASAMI
TEACHER, H. S. S. SCHOOL
BAZAR STREET, MANNARGUDI (TANJORE DT.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

244. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

February 5, 1935

MY DEAR MATHEW,

I had already told you that you should not do anything at Thana. You are not built for any physical work. I wish you would stick to the family and serve it by getting an employment, however humble it may be.

SHRI P. G. MATHEW
CHEPPAD
HARIPAD (TRAVANCORE)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

245. LETTER TO M. SUCOSE

February 5, 1935

DEAR FRIENDS

I have your letter. It is not possible for me to send you Rs. 30 per month. I have no such funds to fall back upon. You have to make what effort you can there, or write to the Central office sending all your qualifications.

Yours sincerely,

M. SUCOSE, ESQ.
SAMADANAPURAM
PALAMCOTTAH P. O., TINNEVELLEY DT.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

246. LETTER TO RAJENDRA NATH BARUA

February 5, 1935

MY DEAR BARUA,

I have your letter. If you will carefully follow the instructions given in Kuhne's *Science of Healing*, I have no doubt that both of you will be benefited.

Annadababu is to organize spinning in Assam. I would, therefore, ask you to put yourself in touch with him.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI RAJENDRA NATH BARUA, B.L.
PLEADER
GOLAGHAT (ASSAM)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

247. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

February 5, 1935

BHAI MUNSHI,

I have your letter. It is indeed worth considering to what extent we can participate in swadeshi exhibitions. It may be an act of kindness to give a plate to the bullock-cart in an exhibition of aeroplanes but what would be the purpose of it? What would a giant intend to convey by lifting numerous dwarfs on the nail of his little finger? Considering this you may do whatever you think is in the interest of the villagers.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7567. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

248. LETTER TO M. J. KANETKAR

[After *February 5, 1935*][1]

MY DEAR KANETKAR,

I have just finished reading the chapter on population bogey. I must confess that it is not at all convincing. You have given away the whole of your case by saying that pestilence and other visitations will keep the growth under check. Their case is that modern science reduces the death rate. Every day produces new discoveries for conservation of life. Therefore the increase will be unbearable. This argument seriously brought has to be seriously answered. You have not even studied your subject. Able writers have combated the theory of Malthus and its later developments. If the other chapters are as bad, I can only ask you to study your subject and rewrite the book. I have now passed the book on to Prof. Malkani to read and give me his opinion, He knows nothing of this.

From. a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

249. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

WARDHA,
February 6, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. I am satisfied with Dr. Jivraj's letter. He has suggested some changes in your food. He asks you to increase the quantity of butter in food. Discuss the matter with him and take more butter if necessary. I fear that you talk too much and do very little exercise. If that is true, then you should change in both respects. Write to me in detail.

I had a talk with Kamalnayan. I am firmly of the view that, if he agrees, he should go to England only after getting married. But he should not take his wife with him. It will be almost impossible for him to study if he takes his wife with him. It is also improper for him to lead a family life while abroad. It would be a different matter if theywere going only on a pleasure trip. But that is not so in this case. My opinion is this: he should get engaged just now, go to Colombo

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. J. Kanetkar", 5-2-1935

after the malaria there has subsided, pass at least one examination there and then go to England but get married before leaving. He may enjoy married life for some time if he wishes, but he should go to England alone. If he wants, he may pay short visits to India. I think the experience in Colombo will help him a lot. He has not cultivated studious habits yet. If he does that, there will be no difficulty whatever.

Six permanent trustees have been appointed in the Industries Association. Your name has been included among them, as that was necessary. You will, therefore, have to be enrolled as an ordinary member. The membership form is enclosed herewith. Fill it in and send it by return of post. You need not feel the slightest hesitation in this matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

It is time Krishnadas was engaged. Do you have any girl in view? If you have, please let me know.

BAPU

[PPS.]

The membership form is enclosed.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3035

250. LETTER TO N.[1]

February 6, 1935

CHI. PANDITJI,

R. gives you quite a lot of trouble. But do not worry about it. Do not lend him any money to pay off his debts. He can very well pay them off from his salary. The creditors should get at least Rs. 25 directly from his employer. He must reform himself. Everything will be all right if he gives up his bad habits. The parents' duty toward their grown-up children is limited to being their advisers only, so you do not have any financialresponsibility for G. and Babu. G. has not kept his word. How he is going on with his studies?

[1] The names in this letter have been omitted.

Tell Mridubehn about R. I am writing to her in brief. However, it will be proper if you talk to her. Keep on writing to me.

I have not talked to L. I will give her some hints. However, it is not necessary for you to write. She cannot do anything about it and she will only be made unhappy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 249. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

251. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

February 6, 1935

CHI. NARAHARI,

I received your letter. If unpolished rice is soaked in cold water for three hours as is done in the case of pulses, it will cook in very little time. We make rice poorer in food value by getting it pounded and spending money on it. Unpolished rice should become one mass after being cooked. As long as the grains remain separate, you must know that it is not cooked.

Do try snuff. You will have to inhale it only as a medicine, so take small pinches of it. The snuff for medicinal purposes should be perfectly pure. You may be knowing that the snuff available in the market is very much adulterated.

There is no harm in sending with Surendra one of the two men from Orissa.

Mahadev has gone to Calcutta.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati; S.N. 9070

252. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

February 6, 1935

CHI. GANGABEHN (JHAVERI))

I was waiting for your letter. It is good that you are living the life of a student. Navin and Mahesh are bound to benefit immensely from your diligence.

The two brothers will grow wiser with the passage of time. Do not budge from there for some years to come. Study as much as you want to. Improve your health. Never forsake simplicity. I hope you are keeping up the spinning. Use village-made things as much as you can. Build up your health by keeping strictly to the rules regarding diet and rest. Keep writing to me now and then. And tell Mahesh to write.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3120

253. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

February 6, 1935

CHI. MRIDULA,

You will have learnt that Rambhau[1] has turned out to be worthless. He has been committing petty thefts. So he can be relieved. Or if you want to keep him on, you have to be careful. Talk to himif you want. Try to reform him if you can. What his father or I could not do, you may be able to do.

It was good that you two, father and daughter, came and met me.

I hope Saralabehn is keeping well. I have written this with the left hand as the right hand is tired.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11193. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

254. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

February 6, 1935

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I have your letter. As it takes too long to write with the left hand I am dictating this. What advice shall I give you? You should do whatever brings you peace of mind and it will have my approval.

[1] Ramachandra, son of Narayan Moreshwar Khare; *vide* also "Letter to R.", 22-1-1935

Sharma has written to me. I enclose his letter. I have no objection to his staying with you but I will not order you to let him do so, as I see no need of it. I shall certainly like it if you stay in a Harijan locality. If you live with your brother in Patiala and nurse Kudsia, that too will be good. If you can regain your health by living in Ambala with the Swami[1] and perform whatever tasks of service come your way, though not at the cost of your health, that too will be fine, you will at the same time be of some service to your cousin who lives there. Bear in mind that to those who are keen on serving, the whole world is thefield. They should do any service that falls to their lot anywhere, holding it as a boon from God. You should now resolve on some one thing and settle down somewhere. Taravati's handwriting is good. Convey my blessings to her on the occasion of her wedding. I sent you a postcard at the Patiala address. You will have received it.

Blessings from

BAPU[2]

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 314

255. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

WARDHA,
February 7, 1935

SHRI JAMNALALJI
BOMBAY

IF YOU HAVE CONFIDENCE MAY ACCEPT BANK OFFER.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 152

256. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

February 7, 1935

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letter. I must not write much. I entirely endorse your programme for West Africa.

You have not asked me to make any definite promise. But you may expect me definitely not to seek imprisonment until there is no

[1] Swami Umaprasad, a friend of the addressee's brother
[2] The superscription and subscription are in Urdu.

other course open. Indeed 'seeking imprisonment' here is not the correct term. It will have to force itself upon me. What I am seeking now and shall continue to seek is avoidance of imprisonment. I can't remove this suspicion unless I hasten slowly or not hasten at all. I have taken no further step in the way of sounding the Government as to alternatives. I am taking my own time. Meanwhile I am taking extraordinary precautions to avoid every possibility of a conflict between the Government and myself. Therefore, you will proceed to West Africa without the burden of any anxiety on your mind on this score.

I am glad that your broadcast[1] was received so well. All the other news from the regular letters that are being written from this end by Mahadev and others.

Love.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 1297

257. LETTER TO S. GANESAN

February 7, 1935

MY DEAR GANESAN,

How unbusiness-like you are. You have given me a long letter which you could have finished in four lines, but failed to answer the very relevant question that I put to you in my letter. What is this purchase of a motor-car? Will you answer it now?

I shall be no party to making you stop publication of your newspaper against your will. I can simply say that Kodambakkam is 1mouthful enough. There is no room for any other. But if you think otherwise, you must pursue your own course and take the consequence. I have no desire to rob you of your initiative nor foist a colleague on you whom you do not like. But I am sure that you will not want others to do that which you would not have them to get done by you. Don't you believe in reciprocity?

SHRI S. GANESAN
MADRAS

Form a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In his broadcast over the B.B.C. in January, C. F. Andrews had severely criticized the report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee.

258. LETTER TO EDITH HOWE-MARTYN

February 7, 1935

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter just received. I could give you a walk tomorrow (8th) from 6 to 7 p.m. On the 9th I shall be engaged. On the 10th I am again free for the same walk. On the 9th you can walk out with me at 6.15. From 6.30 to 7.30 I have to attend a meeting on the anniversary of the opening of a private temple which is open to Harijans. We can walk again after 7.30. You have to reach Madras on the 11th. That probably means that we can walk only tomorrow or the day after. But I have given you three days' programme. You can take any day you like.

MRS. EDITH HOWE-MARTYN
C/O DR. MARTIN
MURE HOSPITAL
NAGPUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

259. LETTER TO S. J. DURAISAMY

February 7, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

This is my message:

I am sick of hearing the distinctions between Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Parsi, Jewish students. I have never understood these different species. I have known good students, clever students, bad students, dull students, and so on. They wore the marks of their class in their ways and in their speech. But I have often failed to distinguish a Muslim student from a Christian student. Your readers have a rare opportunity of identifying themselves with Indian humanity that lives in the villages of India by sharing the activities of the All-India Village Industries Association.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI S. J. DURAISAMY
Y. M. C. A., MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

260. LETTER TO DR. N. B. KHARE

February 7, 1935

DEAR DR. KHARE,

I have your letter. I knew you were coming to Delhi and I saw that we would be crossing each other without meeting.

I did send a message to Shri Kanetkar.[1] He complained that it was too brief. Little does he know how hard pressed I am to take any burden beyond the daily routine work. If I go to Nagpur, I shall certainly refer to the proposed memorial.

Yours sincerely,

DR. N. B. KHARE, M.L.A.
3 ELECTRIC LANE
NEW DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

261. LETTER TO GANANATH SEN

February 7, 1935

DEAR KAVIRAJ,

Can you answer the enclosed questionnaire in the light of Ayurveda and interpret it in terms of modern medicine?

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

KAVIRAJ GANANATH SEN
AYURVEDIC HOSPITAL
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to the Editor, *Nispruha*"

262. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

WARDHA,
February 7, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM[1],

I have your Hindi letter quite well written. I hope you had my letter about Krishnasamy redirected to you. You should be jovial with him and infect him with your joy. Put him on some work that he would like.

Vasumati will be here today. You will tell me when you are ready to receive her. I have told you the three girls who are here will not go to Madras. Of late they have made good progress in Hindi.

Love.

BAPU

From the original. Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

263. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

February 7, 1935

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

My point was not that Thar-Parkar had not enough money.[2] But the point was to satisfy the desire of Pratap Dialdas that this money should be spent on Thar-Parkar. All, therefore, that you need do is to make the necessary entry in the books transferring this small amount to Thar-Parkar and restoring the equivalent to the General Fund.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

264. A LETTER

February 7, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have now read your long note dated December 27th last. Are you still rearing sheep which give you the quantity of wool as described by you? If you are, I would like you to correspond with Seth Ghanshyamdas Birla, Albuqurque Road, New Delhi, for he is making experiments in that direction.

[1] This is in Hindi.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar", 30-1-1935

With respect to your desire to have a personal discussion with me, I shall be glad to see you any day during the month except Monday if you could come to Wardha and advise me of the day on which you will be coming.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

265. LETTER TO KHURSHEDBEHN

February 7, 1935

I have your two letters. I am giving rest to the right hand. I can write with the left, but it is a slow process. Therefore I must, in order to catch today's mail, dictate this to you.

I can only say ditto to all the thoughts you have expressed in both your letters. I entirely agree that in an ideal condition there should be perfect correspondence between thought and action. Then and then only is it possible to see truth face to face.

Amtul Salaam is in Patiala. She is tortured by her own mind.

I wish you to overcome your objection to eggs. I think I told you that it was possible now to have sterile eggs. They are to be had from Sangli, Salvation Depot in Bombay, some place in Poona and Salvation Depot in Ahmedabad. These eggs are obtained without the hens having to be mated. As an article of daily food, from the spiritual standpoint, that would be perhaps objectionable. But as a medical agent, sterile eggs might not be objected to.

Perhaps you know that Kamala had a set-back and lost 2 lb. last week.

SHRI KHURSHEDBEHN
78 NAPEAN SEA ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

266. LETTER TO G. S. NARASIMHACHARI

February 7, 1935

DEAR NARASIMHACHARI,

I have your letter of 30th ultimo. I can give you very little help in the matter. You should write to the member yourself Prof. Ranga did see me in the matter. He appreciated my difficulty.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI G. S. NARASIMHACHARI
C/O VICE-CHANCELLOR
ANDHRA UNIVERSITY, WALTAIR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

267. LETTER TO D. N. SARMAH

February 7, 1935

MY DEAR SARMAH,

I have your letters enclosing-opinions on the Modino's treatment. I shall make such use as is possible of these opinions.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI D. N. SARMAH
SECRETARY
HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH JORAHAT (ASSAM)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

268. LETTER TO FEROZE GANDHI

February 7, 1935

MY DEAR FEROZE,

Your postcard of the 2nd instant is somewhat disturbing. Kamala has no weight to lose. Yet I suppose there will be these ups and downs whilst she is still convalescing.

Are you getting the fruit and vegetables in the manner wanted?

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

269. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

WARDHA,
February 7, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your two letters. I hope you will excuse the delay. My time is not my own, and I never knew that there was any hurry.

I hold totally different views from yours. We have not to deal with the family of the great Queen as individuals, but we have to deal with them as representatives of a mighty government. We have to celebrate an event in connection not with the private vitrues of an autocrat, but we have to deal with the events of an empire for a period of twenty-five years during which King George has been the nominal head but which as an individual he has perhaps no more power to influence than you or I, and infinitely less than the Collector of your district in his own district. I, therefore, feel that the resolution of the Working Committee[1] was the only correct thing to do. It preserves the self-respect of the nation without hurting the susceptibilities of anybody. Lastly I have to own to you that the resolution was drafted by me as I happened to be in Delhi at the time, not by design but by accident. They would not deal with such a delicate matter without conferring with me. Possibly, had I not been there the resolution would have been bitter and perhaps offensive. Everybody has owned that the present resolution is purged of any offence.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI G. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR
ARAMA, SALEM (S. INDIA)

From a copy: G. Vijayaraghavachariar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

270. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

February 7, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. Read the accompanying letter to Harilal. If you approve of his coming to me, give it to him and, if he is really willing, send him here. He may now perhaps improve more if he stays with me.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 16-12-1934

I hope Gokibehn is all right.

I am enclosing a letter received from Prema. How is Lilavati? How is Kusum's health?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8429. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

271. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

February 7, 1935

BHAI RAJENDRABABU,

I have your letter. If the kind of compromise you have outlined in your letter can be brought about, I would love it. I see little possibility of that. But an effort can be made. Have you done what was to be done at Chapra?

Mahadev has gone to Calcutta. He will be back by the 9th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 9745. Courtesy: Rajendra Prasad

272. A NOTE[1]

[On or after *February 7, 1935*]

There is no need to send sandals for Raj, they are available here. For you it would be good to work under Jyotiprasad in a village.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6631. Also C.W. 4279. Courtesy: Chand Tyagi

273. ABYSMAL IGNORANCE

A Harijan sevak writes:

> On the occasion of the Jaipur Rajya Sammelan, which was held on 25-12-34, a khadi exhibition stall was set up on the first floor of a building

[1] The note, addressed to the brother of Rajkishori, the widowed daughter-in-law of Chand Tyagi, was written on a letter Rajkishori wrote to her brother on February 7, 1935.

overlooking the chowk, where the Sammelan was held. A Harijan boy was first in charge of the sales, and could be seen sitting in the gallery above by the *savarna* Hindus who were assembled in the *chowk*. The fact that a Harijan boy was allowed to sit at a higher level than themselves was very much resented by the savarna Hindus, who resolved at a *Panchayat* meeting that:

(1) No one from the village should attend the khadi exhibition on pain of excommunication.

(2) No one should send his girls to the local Kanya Pathshala, as it was connected with the Rajya Sammelan people.

(3) No one should permit teachers of the Harijan Pathshala to enter his home.

In spite of this ukase of the *Panchayat*, as many as 28 young men took part in the Sammelan. They were fined Re. 1 each, which they refused to pay. From three to four hundred persons used to dine together in the Sammelan kitchen without any distinction of caste. This fact has been seized upon by the reactionaries, who have raised the usual cry of 'Religion in danger'.

The conduct of the orthodox section in this instance is only a proof of our abysmal ignorance. A religion that cannot get rid of such invidious and inequitous distinctions between man and man is doomed to perish. The fact that the *savarna* reformers have remained undaunted by the threat of the boycott must be regarded as a happy augury. Let not those who may be affected by the boycott harbour any ill-feeling towards the orthodox party. At the same time, let no one be turned away from his duty by the threat of coercion. The reformers must proceed with their work with patient, silent determination, unaffected by anger or fear.

Harijan, 8-2-1935

274. HOW TO BEGIN? —III

I have dealt with some chief articles of food and shown what they mean to the villagers in health and wealth. There is, however, the equally important subject of sanitation and hygiene. Proper attention to these means increase in health, energy and wealth, directly and indirectly.

Some foreign observers have testified that, of all the nations of the earth, India comes, perhaps, to the top in the observance of personal cleanliness. But I fear that it is not possible to say the same of corporate, in other words, village cleanliness. In yet other words, we have not made much advance beyond the family interest. We would

sacrifice everything for the family as distinguished from the village, i e., in a sense, the nation.

Members of a family will keep their own home clean, but they will not be interested in the neighbour's. They will keep their courtyard clean of dirt, insects and reptiles, but will not hesitate to shove all into the neighbour's yard. As a result of this want of corporate responsibility, our villages are dung heaps. Though we are an unshod nation, we so dirty our streets and roads that for a sensitive person it is painful to walk along them barefoot. It is difficult to get clean, drinkable water in village wells, tanks and streams. The approaches to an ordinary village are heaped with muck and rubbish.

Village sanitation is, perhaps, the most difficult task before the All-India Village Industries Association. No Government can change the habits of a people without their hearty co-operation. And if the latter is forthcoming, a Government will have little to do in the matter.

The intelligentsia—medical men and students—can deal with the problem successfully if they would conscientiously, intelligently, jealously and regularly *do the work* in the villages. Attention to personal and corporate hygiene is the beginning of all education.

The things to attend to in the villages are cleaning tanks and wells and keeping them clean, getting rid of dung heaps. If the workers will begin the work themselves, working like paid Bhangis from day to day and always letting the villagers know that they are expected to join them so as ultimately to do the whole work themselves, they may be sure that they will find that the villagers will sooner or later co-operate. At least such is my experience of South Africa and Champaran, and even during the quick walking tour in Orissa last year.

Lanes and streets have to be cleansed of all the rubbish which sould be classified. There are portions which can be turned into manure, portions which have simply to be buried and portions which can be directly turned into wealth. Every bone picked up is valuable raw material from which useful articles can be made or which can be crushed into rich manure. Rags and waste paper can be turned into paper, and excreta picked up are golden manure for the village fields. The way to treat the excreta is to mix them, liquid as well as solid, with superficial earth in soil dug no deeper than one foot at the most. In his book on rural hygiene, Dr. Poore says that excreta should be buried in earth no deeper than nine to twelve inches (I am quoting from memory). The author contends that the superficial earth is charged with minute life, which, together with light and air which

easily penetrate it, turn the excreta into good, soft, sweet-smelling soil within a week. Any villager can test this for himself. The way to do it is either to have fixed latrines, with earthen or iron buckets, and empty the contents in properly prepared places from day to day, or to perform the functions directly on to the ground dug up in squares. The excreta can either be buried in a village common or in individual fields. This can only be done by the co-operation of the villagers. At the worst, an enterprising villager can collect the excreta and turn them into wealth for himself. At present, this rich manure, valued at lakhs of rupees, runs to waste every day, fouls the air and brings disease into the bargain.

Village tanks are promiscuously used for bathing, washing clothes and drinking and cooking purposes. Many village tanks are also used by cattle. Buffaloes are often to be seen wallowing in them. The wonder is that, in spite of this sinful misuse of village tanks, villages have not been destroyed by epidemics. It is the universal medical evidence that this neglect to ensure purity of the water supply of villages is responsible for many of the diseases suffered by the villagers.

This, it will be admitted, is a gloriously interesting and instructive service, fraught with incalculable benefit to the suffering humanity of India. I hope it is clear from my description of the way in which the problem should be tackled, that, given willing workers who will wield the broom and the shovel with the same ease and pride as the pen and the pencil, the question of expense is almost wholly eliminated. All the outlay that will be required is confined to a broom, a basket, a shovel and a pickaxe, and possibly some disinfectant. Dry ashes are, perhaps, as effective a disinfectant as any that a chemist can supply. But here let philanthropic chemists tell us what is the most effective and cheap village disinfectant that villagers can improvise in their villages.

Harijan, 8-2-1935

275. LETTER TO THE SECRETARY, NEW INDUSTRIAL & COMMERCIAL EDUCATION SOCIETY

WARDHA,
February 8, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I should like you to discuss with Shri Haribhau G. Phatak of Poona who knows all about the activities regarding Harijans and village industries in general. His address is: Haribhau G. Phatak, Pioneer Dyeing House, 625, Sadashiv

Peth, Poona 2.

Yours sincerely,

THE SECRETARY
THE NEW INDUSTRIAL & COMMERCIAL EDUCATION SOCIETY
99 LAXMI ROAD, POONA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

276. LETTER TO HARIBHAU PHATAK

February 8, 1935

MY DEAR HARIBHAU,

Herewith correspondence[1] between the New Industrial and Commercial Education Society and myself. If the Secretary writes to you, you will do the needful.

I have your letter enclosing Dr. Sahasrabuddhe's letter and elaborate opinion on comparative study of cow's milk and buffalo'smilk by Dr. Apte. I shall make use of both.[2] I am writing to Dr. Apte.[3]

I hope you had my letter giving you full explanation about rice. Shankerlal Banker, who has already commenced experimenting in unpolished rice, has sent me a valuable record of his experiments which bears out what I have stated to you and which you will see in due course in *Harijan.*[4]

SHRI HARIBHAU G. PHATAK
POONA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

277. LETTER TO DR. N. G. APTE

February 8, 1935

DEAR DR. APTE,

Haribhau Phatak has sent me copy of your comparative study of cow's milk and buffalo's milk which will prove of great value to me. I propose to have the experiment you have suggested with friends who

[1] For Gandhiji's letters, *vide* the preceding item and. "Letter to Secretary, The New Industrial and Commercial Education Society", 29-1-1935

[2] *Vide* "Cow's Milk *v*. Buffalo's", 22-2-1935.

[3] *Vide* the following item.

[4] It was published in the *Harijan* of 15-2-1935 under the title "All About Rice".

have no scruples about taking cow's milk or buffalo's milk and record their experience.

Haribhau tells me that you have sent two books on the subject, for which too I thank you. I shall make good use of those books when they reach me.

Yours sincerely,

DR. APTE
VICE-PRESIDENT
GOPALAK SANGH, SHOLAPUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

278. LETTER TO DR. JAWAHARLAL

February 8, 1935

DEAR DR. JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter enclosing copies of correspondence about Angnu Chamar. I shall await advice of further developments.

Yours sincerely,

DR. JAWAHARLAL
CIVIL LINES
CAWNPORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

279. LETTER TO ADOLPH MYERS

WARDHA,
February 9, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I shall keep the copy of your magazine by me. But it is hopeless for me to attempt to write anything for you. I have not a moment to spare.

Yours sincerely,

ADOLPH MYERS, ESQ.
EDITOR, "SWORDS AND PLOWSHARES"
C/O TIMES OF INDIA PRESS, BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

280. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

February 9, 1935

DEAR SATISBABU,

I have not heard from you for ages as it were. This I write to you to say that in spite of the pressure of work, I could not day after day face the two files of your book and yet pass them by. I have therefore taken up the first part, and I shall religiously devote a few minutes to it till I have finished. As it is unrevised, I see there are many errors. I shall not attempt to correct them all, because that will mean a great deal of time. But I will correct those which I can without having to give more time. I want to open a questions column in *Harijan* if you will answer them regularly yourself or by deputy. You can coin questions yourself, as, for instance, how to make soap out of crude village soda and seed oil. How can you substitute paraffin by some village oil? How can you make good durable ink out of village material? Many such questions will arise as the movement progresses.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

281. LETTER TO SERMA G. SHAPLEIGH

February 9, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 6th instant. I shall be glad to see you whenever you can come.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. SERMA G. SHAPLEIGH
C/O AMERICAN EXPRESS CO.
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

282. LETTER TO APRAKASH CHANDRA MEHTA

February 9, 1935

MY DEAR APRAKASH CHANDRA,

I had your telegram and then your letter. So you have made your final choice. You can come as soon as you can. The sooner the better. Therefore, if Kalibabu relieves you earlier, you should come at once so that I can allot your task whilst we are still settling down. At the same time, however, I would not think of your coming here now if your early disengagement causes any inconvenience to the *Tribune* office.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI APRAKASH CHANDRA MEHTA
C/O "THE TRIBUNE", LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

283. LETTER TO ABDUL ALIM

February 9, 1935

MY DEAR ABDUL ALIM,

I had your letter of 12th December last which was lying hidden in the file of letters left by Satisbabu for me to read. On taking up the file, I found your letter. I hope the effects of famine have lessened.

Though you say that a sound mind cannot be generally in an unsound body, we often see that mind triumphs over the body and becomes sound even though the body may not respond. Therefore you have to strive and achieve your triumph over the diseased body, and it may be that even the body will respond to the mind. But whether it does or not, your mind will be free.

I am glad Satisbabu has been supplying you with a bi-weekly.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI ABDUL ALIM
HAJI VILLA, KAMAURA
TALSHAHAR TIPPORA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

284. LETTER TO JUGATRAM DAVE

February 9, 1935

BHAI JUGATRAM,

Where is the need for me to send a message[1] when Sardar is the President. In spite of his being there, you ask for a message and hope to get it! Then tell the Raniparaj that they are not dependent on cities but cities are dependent on them. If at all they want to preserve their self-respect, they should themselves meet all their requirements and be self-reliant. We rarely need the things which we are not able to produce in the villages.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 3-3-1935

285. LETTER TO TARABEHN N. MASHRUWALA

February 9, 1935

CHI. TARA,

I have your letter. I understand your hesitation in taking the responsibility. However, that hesitation alone will give you the strength to bear it and bring you credit. You did not go in search of the responsibility which has fallen on you. On the contrary it has been thrust upon you. You have modestly accepted it as your duty and your good lies in the fulfilment of it. Moreover the work you have taken up is clearly defined. So you will have no difficulty. Read carefully what I write for *Harijan* and put into practice what you have been able to grasp. If there is any difficulty, ask me without any hesitation.

I hope your parents are well and Nanabhai is not harassed by asthma. Where is Surendra[2]? If he is there, tell him not to give up writing to me. I am often wanting to ask Kishorelal when he comeshere but due to my preoccupation I forget to do so. That is why I have asked you about Surendra.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI TARABEHN NANABHAI MASHRUWALA
AKOLA
BERAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6696. Also G.W. 4341. Courtesy: Kanubhai Mashruwala

[1] For the eighth Raniparaj Conference to be held on February 19, 1935
[2] Addressee's brother

286. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

February 9, 1935

CHI. MADHAVJI,

I was feeling uneasy as there was no letter at all either from you or from Mahalakshmi. But then I received your letter. I hope that both of you bear in mind that your present *sadhana*[1] is for gaining greater ability for service. *Sadhana* can never be service.

How are the children?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MADHAVJI
15 TANGAR, ENTALY
CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6827

287. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI PATEL

Unrevised [Before *February 10, 1935*][2]

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

I understand what you say about Lalita. She can not be forced to do anything against her will. You have done your duty if you do not participate in extravagant and undesirable expenditure.

Send me a sample of the paddy. I want to look at it and examine it after removing the husk. It is not very necessary to have a man for pounding. The husk can be removed by grinding ordinary paddy in a small hand-mill and separating the husk. Anyone can do this. The necessity of a man for pounding arises only for polishing the rice. That needs a little skill. But we do not want to polish the rice.

There is a variety of paddy whose husk is so stuck to the grain that it can only be removed with great difficulty. The husk from such paddy can be easily separated by steaming it first as in the case of whole pulses. This is how it is usually done. For this purpose the

[1] Spiritual discipline

[2] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Raojibhai N. Patel", 10-2-1935 and "Letter to Jethalal G. Sampat", 6-3-1935

paddy is not boiled fully. Rice cooked by fully boiling the paddy tastes the sweetest. That is the experience of those who have tried it.

We involve ourselves in these processes only in order to make our own experiments and to publicize the results.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9014

288. LETTER TO CARL HEATH

WARDHA,
February 10, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your very kind letter. My considered opinion on your suggestion is that if you still think that its publication is required in the common interest, you should refer the question to Sir Samuel Hoare and Lord Halifax. If both of them desire publication, as distinguished from merely permitting it, you may publish it with an adequate preface. At this end, my presentiment tells me that its circulation amongst the politicians whose opinion counts should be enough. Lovers of true peace and brotherhood of the heart have a tough job before them.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

CARL HEATH, ESQ.
LONDON

From a photostat: G.N. 1029

289. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

By Air Mail *February 10, 1935*

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I have just received and read your letter of 29th ultimo. Please send the enclosed[1] to Mr. Heath. I am sending it under the same cover to save a few good annas. This letter will be airmailed to you.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

One part of your letter, therefore, is answered in my letter to Mr. Heath.

Now for the non-attendance at Mr. Raza Ali's tea party. Whenever such invitations have come to me by design, there has been intimation given to me of it. Here it was a most casual invitation. Two days before the receipt of it, Raza Ali himself had seen me and engaged me in a heart-to-heart conversation about his mission in South Africa. He had arranged for the party already before he came to me. But he did not even inquire whether I would attend it. If I had received the invitation when he came, I would have opened the conversation myself. But I knew nothing of the party then, naturally nothing therefore of the invitation. The invitation card was buried in a heap of papers unacknowledged. Suddenly, the evening previous to the function, I thought that I must at least acknowledge it. And so, early in the morning (it was bitterly cold) I sent the note of which you have a copy. It was delivered by Pyarelal personally to Raza Ali. It was so delivered and sent so early in order that if there was any meaning behind the invitation I should know. Pyarelal saw Raza Ali. The latter beyond expressing his regret that I was not going said nothing. I concluded that there was no meaning behind it, and I had no time to waste in going to a function in which I could have no interest, and the like of which I never attend except [those] with some honourable purpose behind them. Here there was none. Indeed I felt that the Viceroy and everybody might even be embarrassed if I responded to a courteous invitation which the sender felt bound to send but would be glad if it was not accepted. This is the whole of the reason behind my non-acceptance.

At the time I wrote the letter, so far as I can now recall, I knew nothing of the invitations to Congress M. L. A. s. In any case, my non-acceptance had no connection with their non-acceptance. For them there was no other way. I was consulted about their attitude and I had given the opinion that they could not accept the invitation. But had I known that I was wanted at the meeting for the purpose of breaking the ice, I would unhesitatingly have gone. I am no longer a Congress member; and whilst I do nothing that would compromise the Congress because of my past connection with it, I would not hesitate to take action that Congressmen could not possibly take without diminishing the prestige of the Congress. I hope this explains to you the whole of my position. I have since learnt that the Viceroy would

have been glad if I had gone. But I do not know whether that was a thought after the event or before. If it was before, a mere hint would have sufficed to send me to the tea party. And previous hints have invariably been given to me on such occasions

I have C. F. Andrew's letter. If he is still there, you will tell him, if not there, you will write to him saying that I shall not act hastily in whatever I may do and that ought to free him from all anxiety complex.

Love.

BAPU

Encl. 1

MISS AGATHA HARRISON
2 CRANBOURNE COURT
ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD, LONDON, S.W. 11

From a photostat: G.N. 1484

290. LETTER TO R. V. SASTRI

February 10, 1935

MY DEAR SASTRI,

I have your long letter, but none too long for your argument. The only argument that will be decisive is about the desirability of publication in Madras from the *Harijan* point of view itself. From your letter I gather that the existence of *Harijan* in Madras is a good thing and has proved its usefulness during the time it has been published there. I would like you to develop the argument further and show me if you can, in a concrete manner, why you think that it would be good to retain it in Madras. You won't say that publication in Poona will not, in any shape or form, influence public opinion. The question, therefore, will be one of degree only. But I would accept the validity of the argument even if you convince me that its usefulness is greater in Madras than in Poona. Since you have raised that question, for which I was not prepared, I am writing[1] to Dewan Bahadur Bhashyam Iyengar and Shri Venkatasubbayya. So far as your own emoluments and your connection with me are concerned, both will be unaffected. Your living connection will remain as it is whilst you are

[1] *Vide* "Letter to V. Bhashyam Iyengar", 11-2-1935

editing *Harijan.* Therefore that consideration has to be eliminated. But if you are to be paid as editor, then your expenses should come from the *Harijan* receipts, and you have to make your editorship a living factor, which, so far as I can see today, it is not.

Please send a bound copy of all the numbers of *Harijan,* if we have copies from the start or from the time that they are procurable, to Prof. Sam Higginbottom and send him the bill, and put him down on the subscribers' list. I enclose herewith his letter.

What terrible suspense the specialists leave one in! Poor Vishalakshi!

Love to you both.

Encl. 1

SHRI R. V. SASTRI
8c PYCROFTS ROAD
TRIPLICANE, MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

291. LETTER TO P. NARAYANA REDDY

February 10, 1935

DEAR NARAYANA REDDY,

I have your letter. I am sorry I can't send your suggestion for publication in *Harijan.* You are altogether wrong in thinking that I have started the village industries work because I believe that Harijan work is finished or because I have now transferred my love to something else. Village industry is a natural consequence of intense Harijan propaganda and complementary of it. You will see from the items that I have taken up that they affect Harijans first and foremost. It is they who live only on rice or *atta* and salt. If they get wholesome *atta* and rice, surely it is good, and if I agitated that they alone should eat unpolished rice and whole ground wheats they won't understand it and the proposition can never be carried. Then again, the majority of those who were engaged in the husking of paddy were Harijans. It is they who have been displaced by the monstrous mills. You ought to under stand that if the movement for better sanitation succeeds, so far as the Harijan scavengers are concerned the problem is solved, as it can be solved in no other fashion. All the four items with which you would start your mission are having attention for over two years. I am loath to believe that up to now you have not been following the

Harijan movement at all; and yet your scheme betrays woeful ignorance of what is going on about you.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI P. NARAYANA REDDY, B.A., B.L.

PEDDATIPPASAMUDRAM. (CHITTOOR DT.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

292. LETTER TO DAMODAR M. DAMLE

February 10, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Agricultural improvement, I am fully aware, is essential for the prosperity of India's millions. But I see many difficulties in our way if there is no active State aid. Nevertheless, if you will send me your first bulletin, I will go through it, and if I find it to be suitable for the pages of *Harijan*, I will gladly publish it. It will have to be authentic, that is, with authority for every assertion made in it.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI DAMODAR M. DAMLE, B.A., LL.B.

WUN (BERAR)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

293. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

February 10, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

In my haste to send you my reply by return post I forgot to refer to one matter which you mentioned in your first letter, namely, your desire to be with me for some time, if not for the balance of the evening of your life. Of course, you will be welcomed, whether you come for a few days or whether you come and take up your abode permanently. As you may know, I am now living with the staff of the All-India Village Industries Association on a site that has been donated by Jamnalalji. We are running a common kitchen. We are trying to reproduce, so far as it is at all possible for us, the village life,

and we content ourselves with what villages can produce. We are altogether far from the ideal, but it is there.

Yours sincerely,

C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR
ARAMA
SALEM (S. INDIA)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

294. LETTER TO FEROZE GANDHI

February 10, 1935

MY DEAR FEROZE,

I have your letter. I understand Kamala's desire to see me. I will try. I do not know when I would be able to do so. Lest I forget you should continue to remind me.

SHRI FEROZE GANDHI
16 STANLEY ROAD
ALLAHABAD

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

295. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI N. PATEL

February 10, 1935

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

I have received your postcard. I am yet to receive the paddy. I see that paddy is first husked. Let me know what kind of mill-stones are used for it? We are not concerned with any other processes except husking. You are in a position to make the best experiments as you are in the land of rice. How many days does it take for paddy to dry for husking after it is harvested? Or can it be husked immediately after it has been harvested? How much is the husk? How much paddy can be husked in an hour? What is its cost? Over and above this give me as much information as you can. There was a letter from

Nathabhai about Lalitabehn. You must have read it.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RAOJIBHAI NATHABHAI

LIMBASI

(MATAR TALUKA)

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9004

296. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

February 10, 1935

DEAR AMTUSSALAAM,

I read both your letters and was distressed. I have not done a thing for you and what could I have possibly done? It was not right to go [and live] in the jungle. If you will but listen to me, you will come here. All your troubles will disappear. I have written to Devdas to send you here. It will be a great favour to me if you comply with my suggestion. You can go back when all the rest have shifted to Harijan Colony. What can you do by living there at present except cause me anxiety? If you are not agreeable to my suggestion, you may live with Devdas. But you must leave Harijan Colony whether or not you agree even to the latter course. And I reiterate that I cannot compel Sharma. Please come away, do come away. I repeat it. And if that is not possible for you, for God's sake, let us part company.

The stock of dates is exhausted.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 315

297. LETTER TO VAMANRAO D. BURHANPURKAR

WARDHA,
February 11, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter as also your report and your manuscript. I must tackle the manuscript only when I get the time. I do not favour the ideal of village dispensaries. What I would like is to give the villagers sound instruction in elementary hygiene and sanitation. It is easy enough to give them instruction in preventive measures. And side by side with that, they may be given a knowledge of bazaar medicines and their effective use. So far as the use of bazaar medicines is concerned, the more I understand village life the more I realize how much they know of the value of indigenous drugs. Dispensaries for the7,00,000 villages of India is almost an impossible proposition unless we have State control. Drugs, whether allopathic or ayurvedic, are expensive even when they are sold cheap—I mean expensive compared to the cost of bazaar medicines.

Could you please tell me, quoting authorities, why ayurvedic physicians regard cow's milk and cow's milk butter as superior to buffalo's milk and buffalo's milk butter?

Yours sincerely

VIDYA VAMANRAO D. BURHANPURKAR
45 CATHEDRAL STREET
BOMBAY 2

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

298. LETTER TO JANAMMAL

February 11, 1935

Your Hindi writing is quite good. You have no difficulty in expressing yourself correctly. And why do you expect me to laugh at your English? It is a wretched habit we have cultivated of not merely wanting to write perfectly grammatical English but also criticizing those who do not, whereas the very best men on the Continent think nothing of their mistakes in writing English. They concentrate only on correctly giving their meaning.

I am glad you are arranging to have the device put up at the Ashram for the hand-pounding of rice. But evidently you are all still labouring under a mistake. You do not want the pestle and mortar that is required for polishing. The removing of husk is done by grinding on a very light *chakki*. I have now discovered that *chakkis* for grinding are made of wood or pure mud for the simple reason that it is only the outer husk we want to remove without damaging the inner grain which can't bear much weight. It is, therefore, a performance which even a child can undertake without any strain. No further process is required for preparing the rice for cooking.

My food is tomatoes, milk, almond paste and some bhaji, ordinarily *palak*, *methi* or luni. I have given up fruit just to reduce the cost. It is purely an experiment. I am keeping up weight at 109 lb. We are now living in the garden which you once visited. Prabhavati comes here every evening and passes the night here. Ramdas is in Bombay trying to regain health and confidence in himself. He is not doing badly.

Ambujam must have told you that the three girls who were to come to Madras do not want to, and I do not want to force them. Therefore, if you are opening the Ashram, you should do so without any fuss or ceremony. In that case you can start even with one girl as I have said to Ambujam in my talks with her. Vasumati will gladly come if she is still required. She is here for the purpose of going to Madras. It may be inadvisable to bring her down there merely for the sake of two girls. They can have such carding and ginning as Ambujam herself knows. But if both of you require Vasumati, she will fulfil her promise.

I have just received Ambujam's letter. She may have to give more attention to her son than she expected. In that case you should be prepared to take charge of the Ashram. Can you do so? I hope you can.

SHRI JANAMMAL
"NARMADA"
MOWBREYS ROAD, CATHEDRAL P.O.,
MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

299. LETTER TO GIRIJA BHUSHAN DUTT

February 11, 1935

DEAR GIRIJABABU,

I have your letter. I have never asked Harijans to give up their poultry or anything else but carrion, beef-eating and intoxicants. They are certainly at liberty to take poultry, goats, sheep and whatever else they like and whatever other Hindus can lawfully take.

It will certainly be a great thing if you succeed in getting Harijan weavers to do their own spinning amongst their families. Every one of such families will always be able to keep the wolf from the door if they will adopt this method of combining spinning with weaving. I suggested it to nearly 10,000 weavers during the march near Sakhigopal.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI GIRIJA BHUSHAN DUTT

ANGUL HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH

ANGUL (ORISSA)

From a copy. Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

300. LETTER TO H. J. KHANDEKAR

February 11, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your postcard. Whilst I am most anxious that every public place should be open to Harijans without let or hindrance, I am unable to find finance for you to undertake the demonstration that you are contemplating. It requires a great deal of thinking out and can only be done under very strict discipline.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI H. J. KHANDEKAR

GENERAL SECRETARY

C. P. MAHAR YOUTH LEAGUE, ITWARI, NAGPUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

301. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

February 11, 1935

DEAR MOTIBABU,

I have your letter. I understand what you say. You will please let me know what finally happens in connection with khadi.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI MOTILAL ROY
PRABARTAK BHAVAN
61 BOWBAZAR STREET, CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

302. LETTER TO MOTASINGH PATARA

February 11, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

Your telegram to the All-India Village Industries Association Board has been transferred to me. I am sorry that I cannot participate in your Conference.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI MOTASINGH PATARA
JULLUNDUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

303. LETTER TO RAM KRISHNA BHARDWAJ

February 11, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I am glad that the institution which you are having will be under the aegis of the Sanatan Dharam Educational Board and that it has been decided to have Harijan girls side by side with the others.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI RAM KRISHNA BHARDWAJ
GENERAL SECRETARY
SANATAN DHARAM SABHA
QILLA GUJJAR SINGH, LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

304. LETTER TO V. M. NAWLE

February 11, 1935

MY DEAR NAWLE,

So you have returned after your round-the-world tour. What you say about Japan is quite true.

Yes, send me by post *Whispers from Eternity* by Swami Yogananda.

Yours sincerely,

DR. V. M. NAWLE
EDITOR, "DINABANDHOO" AND "HINDI-VIJAYA"
RASTA PETH, POONA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

305. LETTER TO P. S. S. RAMA IYER

February 11, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is difficult for me to try to remove your doubts. They can only be solved by prayerful waiting.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI P. S. S. RAMA IYER
SANKESWARAM VILLAGE
CHITTUR (COCHIN)

From a copy: Pyerelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

306. LETTER TO V. BHASHYAM IYENGAR

February 11, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

Thakkar Bapa forwarded your letter to me. You have raised such important questions that I thought I should deal with them publicly. I send you an advance copy of the article[1] for *Harijan.* I hope you approve of the method I have adopted of answering your question. If you have still any doubt, please do not hesitate to write to me.

[1] *Vide* "Meaning of 'Status' ", 15-2-1935

A suggestion has been made that *Harijan* should be retransferred to Poona. This will save Rs. 2,000 per year. Sastri has examined the question impersonally and he thinks that the publication of *Harijan* in Madras is a distinct advantage to the cause. Will you and Venkatasubbayya apply your minds to the problem and let me have your opinion? You are free to confer with Sastri and Ganesan.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI DEWAN BAHADUR V. BHASHYAM IYENGAR

'VARDHINI'

KILPAUK, MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

307. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

February 11, 1935

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

Enclosed is a reply to Dewan Bahadur Bhashyam and others like him. Pass it on to Viyogi Hari for *Harijansevak* after you have read it. I am also writing[1] to the Dewan Bahadur and sending him a copy. I have not so far received a single copy of the constitution. Send me a few.

Go at the problem of Ganesan patiently.

I am in correspondence with Sastri regarding *Harijan.*[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1151

308. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

February 11, 1935

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,[3]

I have your letter. What can I write to you? Though I had forbidden it, you went away to Patiala before you had got well. Now

[1] *Vide*. the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* " Letter to R. V. Sastri", 10-2-1935

[3] The superscription and the subscription are in Urdu.

what is the point in rushing from there simply because of my admonition! For no reason at all you cause misery to yourself and to me.

Amina's address is: Dhandhuka, *via* Ahmedabad. The tailor's name and address is with Bapa. You must, for the time being, forget this matter. We shall see about it when you are fit.

Someone recently told me of a remedy for megrim. Clear, cool water should be drawn in through the left nostril and brought out through the mouth. Taking water in a bowl, one should close the right nostril and put the left into the water, keeping the neck bent and the mouth closed. The water will automatically be drawn in. There is no harm even if some of it enters the stomach but as far as possible one should spit it out. One should sleep at night on the left side, keep the mouth shut and breathe through the right nostril.

Sharma again writes to say that I should not believe what you say about him.

I shall regard it a great favour or kindness on your part if you will now get well.

Any news of the cousin living near Ambala?

I am perfectly comfortable.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 317

309. SPEECH AT LAKSHMINARAYAN DEVASTHAN[1]

February 11, 1935

Even though the temple dates back to 1907 the real *pranpratistha*[2] of Shri Laxminarayan, according to Gandhiji took place on the day when the trustees of the temple opened it to Harijans. Since that day, Shri Laxminarayan could as well be called *Daridranarayana,* meaning God of the most helpless, as untouchables are today.

With the word *Daridranarayana,* villagers who are at present most discarded and heavily oppressed, came before his vision. He said that service of villagers was service of God.

[1] The occasion was the 28th anniversary of the founding of the temple.
[2] Sanctification ritual

The A. I. V. I. A. had this service as its aim, and the Mahatma exhorted the audience to take up its present programme in right earnest. He especially invited the Wardha public to co-operate and do their bit.

He referred to the five items of the A.I.V.I.A. programme, and asked the people to use *chakki* flour, unpolished village husked rice, *gur* and country *ghani* oil.

He told them of the advantages of using hand *chakki* flour, etc., and convinced the audience that their use would benefit the village producers and consumers.

He also referred to village sanitation and its importance in relation to village health. He directed the attention of the public to the fact that people in Sindh, near Wardha, eased on roadsides, and said that they should refrain from this habit.

He concluded his speech with the hope that Wardha would co-operate with the A. I. V. I. A. in the village work undertaken by it.

The Hindustan Times, 12-2-1935

310. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

WARDHA,
February 12, 1935

MY DEAR MALKANI,

You must have thought that I had forgotten all about the bye-laws, or perhaps, having gone to Assam, you have forgottenthem altogether. And if you did so, you would be quite right, for I had taken over the burden from your shoulders. But I had not forgotten them at all. I returned to them again and again, but could not do anything. I had to read up the whole of the constitution anew in order to reply to the three posers from Dewan Bahadur Bhashyam Iyengar.[1] And I realize why I could not frame them. There is nothing more to do than what you have done already. The constitution itself is so full that, beyond what you have drawn up about accounts and the like, no further provision is necessary. The function of bye-laws is to provide for certain routine work which cannot very well be provided for in the main law. Bye-laws, therefore, are framed from time to time as the necessity for them arises. They must not take the place of administrative instructions or of resolutions that may be passed from time to time.

Early this morning, I was reading your instructions on the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to V. Bhashyam Iyengar", 11-2-1935 and "Meaning of 'Status' "

constitution. You will remember you gave a copy to me two or three days before I left Delhi. I was never able to read them before early this morning. Having read them, I felt confirmed that neither I nor you had to draw anything just now. Your instructions are good and very business-like. Even what you have drawn up in the name of bye-laws are hardly such. But if you want to have something which you should call by the name of bye-laws, what you have drawn up will pass muster. I take it that you have kept copies of your draft. If you have not, I can send it. It is not yet destroyed.

Did I write to you that I had already written to Dialdas, and asked Thakkar Bapa to transfer his donation to the account for which he wanted it to be used?[1]

An account of your Assam experiences I expect in the form of a note for *Harijan*. When do you shift the office to the Harijan Home? What is it to be finally known as? Harijan Colony, Harijan Home or what else?

Love.

BAPU

SHRI N. R. MALKANI
BIRLA MILLS, DELHI

Copy to Bapa.

From a photostat: G.N. 912

311. LETTER TO JAYARAMDAS JAYAWARDHANE

February 12, 1935

MY DEAR JAYARAMDAS,

It was good to have something from you after so many years even though it was a telegram. You are surely very unpractical. Malaria has been raging in Ceylon for some months now. Why not a word from you up to now? And then, a telegram? You should know that I had made investigations, and I was told that there was no need to send anything from here, that all the relief work was being done by government and that there were enough doctors also. Of course, all this may be fully wrong. But what can I do? Those who sent me appeals have been able to send me nothing except newspaper cuttings.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amritlal V, Thakkar", 30-1-1935

It means that they themselves know nothing of the affected areas. If you know something, you should give chapter and verse which I can publish. It must be the evidence of your own senses, not any hearsay. You must say also who are the villagers that are affected. Not that it matters who they are, but surely the public ought to know who are affected, why they are affected, why their neighbours were not affected, or is the disease universal in Ceylon? These are all relevant questions. After all, I have no money of my own. I call only make an appeal to the charitable public. I cannot do so unless I can certify the veracity of the statements that come to me. If you can do that thing for me, it will be good.

Yours,

SHRI JAYARAMDAS JAYAWARDHANE

PAROPAKARA MANDALAYA

92 SAUNDERS PLACE, COLOMBO (CEYLON)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

312. LETTER TO AMBUJAMMAL

February 12, 1935

I have your letter. I have already written to Janammal.[1] If you devote your remaining time to your son, it will be the best service you can render to the country. He has got to be looked after by somebody as a member of the State as much as the tallest citizen, and therefore demands State attention. Who can be better fitted than his mother to give it? All this argument would be mischievous and hypocritical if he had a selfish mother. If, as a result of tender care, he turns out to be a good servant of the country, surely it would be no small gain. I should not mind, therefore, your making his welfare your main purpose at the present moment. That would not interfere with your other services. You will still be able to give some attention to Hindi, some attention to Harijans, some attention to khadi and some attention to village industries. Your whole personal life would be guided always in accordance with the principles underlying these things. If your son can remain with you in the proposed Ashram, he should be with you, for at the present moment it is wholly unnecessary for you to advertise

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Janammal", 11-2-1935.

the Ashram. You can quietly take in a few girls and look after them. But if a settled life is impossible and you have to travel about with your son, you should give up the idea of taking in the girls unless Janammal will shoulder the responsibility. In all circumstances you must keep cheerful. May God help you to discharge your responsibility.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI AMBUJAMMAL
MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy; Pyarelal

313. LETTER TO G. SITARAMA SASTRY

February 12, 1935

DEAR SITARAMA SASTRY,

I have your letter giving me a full answer to all my points, and enclosing your report on the Khaddar Samsthanam.

From the description I am getting of the treatment of rice from the first husking to the last polishing, I imagine that your rice also does undergo one polish. In order to set my doubt at rest, please tell me how your first process of removing the husk is done.

SHRI G. SITARAMA SASTRY
VINAYA ASHRAM
CHANDOLE P. O., GUNTUR DT.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

314. LETTER TO THEO DE LA TOUCHE

February 12, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

You remind me of a paper sent by you so long ago as December 2, 1932. As you know, I have had many vicissitudes since then. Many of my papers have gone astray, many are lying buried somewhere. I have no recollection of your paper. Even if I could trace it or if you send another copy to me, I will not be able to read it in the

near future so as to be of any use to you. I am sorry for disappointing you, but I am helpless.

Yours sincerely,

MON. THEO DE LA TOUCHE
SECUNDERABAD (DECCAN)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

315. LETTER TO C. NARAYANA RAO

February 12, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I have no doubt that we need some legislation in connection with untouchability, and it will some in its time

You should not mind the loss of service. Many have suffered like you. You should have confidence in your ability to earn an honest livelihood.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI C. NARAYANA RAO
LATE HEAD CLERK, EXCISE DEPARTMENT
PEDDA WALTAIR, UPLANDS WALTAIR P.O.

From a copy: Pyeralal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

316. LETTER TO MEHRTAJ

February 12, 1935

DEAR MEHRTAJ,

You ought to have written to me long ago. Nevertheless I was glad to have your letter. I am awaiting a reply from Father to my last letter[1], which is due to reach me any day.

I had a cursory glance through Baba's speech. I saw that it was well received and that it was to the point.

Did you get from Zohra or Dr. Ansari the shawl you wanted and I had promised? It was chosen by Zohra. If you got it, did you like it? Of course it was paid for by Zohra. That is how I fulfil my promises, for I have no money of my own. I can only beg. And now Father too has very little money of his own.

[1] *Vide*"Letter to Abdul Ghaffar Khan", 29-1-1935

When you begin going to school, you will tell me all about it.

Do write to me regularly. Are you keeping good health? It is quite warm here now. We are not living in the Ashram.

We are living in the garden to which you had a pleasure trip. We often think of you and wish you were with us.

Love.

SHRI MEHRTAJ
13 WINDSOR PLACE
NEW DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

317. LETTER TO MARIAM

February 12, 1935

MY DEAR MARIAM,

I was glad to see the few words from you written at the end of Father's letter to me. I hope you are getting on well. You should write to me regularly and tell me all about your doings. Do you hear from Sadullah and from Sofia?

SHRI MARIAM
13 WINDSOR PLACE
NEW DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

318. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

WARDHA,
February 12/13, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. I liked it immensely. Mistrust had arisen because Amtussalaam had written very strongly. It is no ordinary matter to be my associate. To renounce everything, to renounce attachment and to rejoice in the renunciation is not within everyone's power. You have given up numerous things but so long as you do not have inner realization how can you have inner joy? And one who lacks inner joy is prone to anger, to sickness and may be up to anything.

I shall now consider all that you write as coming from the heart. You must understand that there is a little difficulty here and the reason for the difficulty is your hastiness, your anger, and if, in your haste and anger you should write something and I accept it as trulymeant, it will not be right. But I see no alternative if I am to deal with you. I like your keeping a cow but bear in mind that you are not to incur any debt. Your contact with the Harijans is also to the good.

The thought of your medical studies occurs to me daily. I have written to Dr. Ansari but there is no saying when he will answer.[1] And how can we complain? He takes up more work than he is equal to.

I do not know which is the better thing. I have no information regarding the curriculum in Madras but I can find out. It will not be possible for you to live with a surgeon. Would you be willing to go alone? I could not bear to have Draupadi living in Khurja all by herself. What appeals to me most is for her to be with me, work for me and put up with Ba's temper. Your task and mine will become easier when she is prepared for this. I have built many hopes on you. I feel I can take much service from you once you have rid yourself of all your blemishes. After all even if you go to the West I could never agree to Draupadi and the children accompanying you, because I consider it unnecessary. If I am prepared to send you, it is only to disillusion you about the West. True nature cure is to be found in the villages. All the knowledge the West has to offer can be got from the books. The rest is to come only from the villages. And in the end the service we wish to render will be to the villagers. Think over all this and tell me what you consider it is best to do. Can Draupadi stay with me?

Your time-table is good. What books do you read and what do you teach the children?

Is the flour ground at home? Is the rice unpolished? I have only now learnt that unpolished rice does not come to the market at all. I hear that it is very easy to husk rice without polishing it. I have grown some paddy and intend to try and get it husked here.

Who is the Pandit teaching your children? I wonder if you will

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. M. A. Ansari", 5-2-1935

be able to decipher this letter.[1] I write with the right hand only on Mondays. It needs a little rest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3154

319. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

WARDHA,
February 13, 1935

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have your separate letters. I will reply to Dool's letter. You should both get acquainted with the new agent. I had a casual talk with him about you. I have most probably written to you about it. Manilal can be said to have done well in Rhodesia. Sushila has given a considerably good account of settlers there. What do the expenses of the two of you come to? You must be making up a statement of accounts every year or every six months. So send me a copy of the latest.

Sushila has asked me a question about sugar-cane juice. It has the same properties as jaggery, only in a larger measure. A man can retain strength and survive for some time on sugar-cane juice only. It is laxative if taken hot. One who takes sugar-cane juice does not need sugar or jaggery at all. Either hot or cold sugar-cane juice should be taken with a lemon squeezed into it. What its other qualities are over and above this I do not know.

You must have received a lengthy letter I wrote to you about Sita's education.[2] Ramdas has completely given up the idea of going there. At present there is no question of my going to jail. One could say it is not likely till the month of May.

The German who called on you was Khuro. However, there was also an Englishman who stayed with me. His name is Rees Jones. He stays permanently in Durban and I had asked him to go to Phoenix. When he does you should get acquainted with him. He is a very nice man.

[1] The letter was dictated.
[2] The letter is not traceable.

Kishorelal and Gomati are still here. They meet me daily. Both are well. Tara had come to see me. She has chosen [All-India Village] Industries Association as her field of work.

Ramdas is keeping well. Devdas is well. Rajaji arrivedonly yesterday. He will return today. Kanti is here at present. He will stay with me only.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4832

320. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

February 13, 1935

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I have received your letter. The previous one was also received. Perhaps it is still lying in the office. I am not able to cope with my daily mail every day, so I am dictating the reply to your latest letter immediately on receiving it.

You have done well in reducing the quantity of milk. You will get the necessary nourishment if you continue to take raw vegetables and fruit. By way of raw vegetables you can have spinach, *luni*, cabbage, radish, carrots, turnips, fenugreek leaves and mustard leaves. You can also have tender leaves of radish, turnips and carrots. You can increase the intake of raw vegetables gradually by an ounce every day, but do not take more than 8 ounces of it. You can have with it papawa, lemons, bananas, raisins, etc. Do not take more than four lb. of milk.

For pain get yourself massaged and take sun-bath by exposing the affected portion to the rays—you will be cured of it.

Write to me your programme again.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Ramji that Bapu wants him to do whatever is possible for cow's milk. I cannot do anything from here.

SHRI BHAGWANJIBHAI
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI (GUJARAT) B.B. & C.I. RLY.

From Gujarati: C.W. 374. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

321. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

February 13, 1935

BHAI RAJENDRABABU,

I replied to your letter by a telegram but Rajaji arrived here yesterday. The fact is that on hearing the news I sent a wire and a letter too in reply to the correspondent's wire. He has sent the following reply:

> We have no further information than what has appeared in the newspapers which may be consulted. The funds are collected by the Government.

Upon this I telegraphed to Rajaji to send someone to Ceylon. He either wrote or sent a wire to his friend who answered that no outside help was needed. Since then I have been silent. In my opinion someone should be sent there before any appeal is issued and that we have to do. Only a man of standing should go. Anyway my mind is at peace. The day before yesterday a wire reached me from someone who had been at the Ashram. He too has supplied no facts. I have asked[1] him to let me know what exactly happened and shall write to you further on hearing from him. I have had a talk with Rajaji. He expresses the same opinion as he did before. You will do what you think best.

I hope you are keeping well. We shall be meeting in March perhaps.

Blessings from

From Hindi: C.W. 9746. Courtesy: Rejendra Prasad

322. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRAN

WARDHA,
February 14, 1935

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRAN,

Devdas told me all about it. Then I read the correspondence and now Kanti is here. He will remain with me. So far as I can see it has been all a mental, one-sided affair, the poor little girl knowing nothing. Evidently your sister knows everything and when the girl is

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jayaramdas Jayawardhane",12-2-1935

fit to make her choice, she would like her to choose Kanti. Of course for me, Kanti has fallen from the ideal which I had hoped he would live up to. But what does his fall matter in the debris of many of my hopes? I do not blame him, for he could not go against his fundamental being. I do not know how far his conduct has hurt you. I know you have forgiven him. Good will come out of it if this discovery of his affection for the girl steadies him and makes him firm in his resolution that even if she makes another choice, he will love no other girl. I see no harm in Kanti harbouring her in his bosom. He is on corresponding terms with your sister. You will now tell me without reserve what you will have me or Kanti to do.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 9739. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

323. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

February 14, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Rajaji had come and has left. I had written to you about Keshu. You appear to have forgotten to write about it. I am still carrying on correspondence with him.

I am unperturbed about Krishnadas. A letter[1] for Ramibai is enclosed herewith. If you think it proper, pass it on to her. I will be glad if you can reach here around the 20th. But come only if the doctor permits you.

Your ear should be completely cured by now.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have forgotten to write about Ghani's expenses. He had asked for Rs. 60. Khan Saheb wanted him to manage with Rs. 30. What is Rameshwar's opinion of him? Does he give him (Ghani) any work? Is he friendly with him?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2957

[1] Not traceable

324. LETTER TO MADALASA BAJAJ

February 14, 1935

CHI. MADALASA,

You have been writing fairly regularly. I certainly like your having stayed on there. I want to see you glowing with health. Body and mind are so closely connected with each other that the purity of one is to a large extent dependent on the purity of the other. There is even a saying in English in support of this. In one Upanishad a similar thing is said about food. A man's character is determined by the food he eats. Doesn't the line in the *Gita*, which says that from food grow living beings, suggest the same thing? You should therefore become—you can become—perfectly healthy. Consider this also a part of your study.

Om sleeps by my side and spends the day at the Kanyashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 316

325. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

February 14, 1935

CHI. HARILAL,

I have received your letter. It is my earnest desire to have you with me if you can come willingly. I think of you every day. If you have come to have the same faith about the truthfulness of my life, your place from now on is with me. What you hope to get in Amreli can be had here and in the neighbourhood. And if you are in a position to do some work, I have plenty of it. Moreover you will have an unlimited number of good companions here. The most weighty argument is that there is no certainty about me. One cannot say when I may get the invitation to go to the temple[1]. I would therefore like you to be with me. Now you do whatever you deem proper. Kanti will

[1] Jail

write to you about the other part of the letter. Maybe we shall meet very soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1537. Courtesy: Munubehn S. Mashruwala

326. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

February 14, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I am enclosing a letter[1] for Harilal. You are not to remain neutral in this matter. You have to guide me, and Harilal too. You are near him whereas I am far away.

Kanti is here just now and will remain here for the present. See if anybody there has Gatulalji's verse translation of the *Gita*. I need it, but can't get a copy anywhere.

I hope you know that Kale's machine[2] is with me just now and I am testing it. We have started husking paddy here. I did it in an ordinary quern set up for light grinding.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8430. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

327. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

February 14, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

The right hand has struck work. I had got your letter. 1 also got afterwards the description of your meeting[3]. It was good that you met. Keep up correspondence now.

I hope the nose does not give you trouble.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Spinning-wheel made for prize-winning competition

[3] With Sir Henry Craik, Home Member of the Viceroy's Executive council. G. D. Birla had arranged the meeting.

When do you plan to come here? Fix the date.

Have a discussion with Pyarelal.

I have assumed charge of the kitchen. My work has completely changed. It has become heavier than I had thought. But why complain about it? Mahadev is expected tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
89 WARDEN ROAD
BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 152-3

328. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

February 14, 1935

CHI. JETHALAL,

Durgaprasad sent me a bill, and I paid up Rs. 30-10 as. It did give me a surprise. Now if that money has to be paid from the account there, please send me the amount. We need not publicize our activities in order to counter their false propaganda. It has yielded no results. From this people will have fully understood its nature.

I will know about Vinoba's experiences from him only. They are bound to be good. Do the people of your region eat rice or wheat? What is the main crop of your region? I am making experiments in husking paddy and making them eat unpolished rice here. You will find the results in *Harijanbandhu* and *Harijansevak.*

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9849. Courtesy: Narayan J. Sampat

329. LETTER TO R.[1]

February 14, 1935

CHI.

Read the letter for. . .[2] and pass it on to her. If there has been a lapse, who are you and I to condemn or punish? We are all beggars for mercy and God is the only doer. Proper care must be taken if she is pregnant. Both of you should come here and we shall talk it over. In any case your passions must subside to nothingness.

I hope at least your health is good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 207

330. GREEN LEAVES

Take up any modern text-book on food or vitamins, and you will find in it a strong recommendation to take a few edible green leaves uncooked at every meal. Of course, these should always be well washed half a dozen times to remove all dirt. These leaves are to be had in every village for the trouble of picking. And yet greens are supposed to be only a delicacy of cities. Villagers in many parts of India live on dal and rice or roti, and plenty of chillies, which harm the system. Since the economic reorganization of villages has been commenced with food reform it is necessary to find out the simplest and cheapest foods that would enable villagers to regain lost health. The addition of green leaves to their meals will enable villagers to avoid many disease from which they are now suffering. The villagers' food is deficient in vitamins; many of them can be supplied by fresh green leaves. An eminent English doctor told me in Delhi that a proper use of green leaves was calculated to revolutionize the customary notions of food and that much of what was today being supplied by milk might be supplied by green leaves. That, of course, means elaborate research and examination in detail of the nourishing properties of the innumerable leaves that are to be found hidden among the grasses that grow wild in India.

[1] The names have been omitted.

[2] *ibid*

For nearly five months I have been living entirely on uncooked foods. I used to take what appeared to me an enormous quantity of a vegetable every day. For the past five months I have been taking green leaves in the place of cooked leaves or other vegetable. It then seemed to me monstrous that I should have to depend upon the Wardha bazaar for the few ounces of leaves I needed. One fine morning Sjt. Chhotelalji of the Wardha Ashram brought to me a leaf that was growing wild among the Ashram grasses. It was *luni*. I tried it, and it agreed with me. Another day he brought *chakwat*. That also agreed. But before recommending these jungle leaves to the public, I thought I would have them botanically identified. Here is the result, through the kind courtesy of Prof. J. P. Trivedi. The quotations are from Watt's monumental volumes on *The Economic Products of India*.[1]

Since these were received, I had introduced to me the leaves of *sarsav*, *suva*, turnip-tops, carrot-tops, radish-tops and pea-plant leaves. Besides these, it is hardly necessary to state that the radish, turnip and carrot tubers are also known to be edible in their raw state. It is waste of money and 'good' taste to cook these leaves or tubers. The vitamins contained in these vegetables are wholly or partially lost in cooking. I have called cooking these waste of 'good' taste, because the uncooked vegetables have a natural good taste of their own which is destroyed by cooking.

Harijan, 15-2-1935

331. WANTED[2]

People have been sending donations in cash for the All-India Village Industries Association. But there are other donations also required by the Association. There is the literature on village industries, on indigenous herbs found for the picking on village fields, and specimens of articles manufactured in villages. All these are things that are required for the museum which is being set up by the Association. There are also village *kolus* in use in different parts of India for pressing oils and pressing cane. The two are different types,

[1] The quotations, giving the various local names and properties and uses of *luni* (Indian purslane) and *chakwat* (white goose-foot), are not reproduced here.

[2] This was published under "Notes".

and each type differs also according to the province in which it is used. If those who are interested in village industries would take the trouble of finding out the various instruments of production and send them to the Central Office, it will be the business of the Office to classify them, to experiment on them and to recommend those which may be considered to be the best by the experts. If anybody has in his possession Watts's *Dictionary of Economic Products of India,* Lt-Col. Kirtikar's *Indian Medicinal Plants* or Nadkarni's *Indian Herbs,* which he does not use and is not likely to use, he will certainly put them to use by presenting these volumes to the Association.

Harijan, 15-2-1935

332. ALL ABOUT RICE

The problem of rice is daily presenting interesting features. Shri Shankerlal Banker has already commenced experiments unpolished rice. He writes:[1]

The only comment I would like to offer on this letter is that I do not think that any further medical opinion will help. The opinion I have gathered and reproduced in these columns is emphatic in favour of unpolished rice. But so far as I am aware we have nothing in medical literature describing experiments on which Shri Banker has, like many of us, made the commencement. Proof of the pudding is in the eating; let everyone make the experiment for himself.

One caution, however, as a practised cook, I would like to utter. Among the many domestic quarrels I used to have with my wife was one over rice-cooking. She would have every grain separated. I had developed into a dietetic reformer and I knew that that rice was not half as good as that which was well and properly cooked. Not an ounce of water in which I cooked rice was thrown away. But at that time I knew no distinction between polished and unpolished rice. I simply took the ordinary bazaar rice and cooked it through till it became one mass. The reader will be glad to know that the quarrel ended in a victory for the reform, and the wife became a convert to properly cooked rice. The precaution about unpolished rice is all the

[1] The quotation is not reproduced here. Banker had asserted that contrary to the opinion of some, unpolished. rice was not difficult to digest and suggested that Gandhiji might elicit authentic information on the point.

more necessary, because the pericarp of rice, which contains all its richer constituents, requires to be cooked thoroughly. Therefore, if un-polished rice is soaked in cold water for at least three hours before cooking, and then well boiled, there is not only no danger of its proving indigestible, but it will be decidedly more palatable, as has already been found at Maganwadi, the abode of the Association in Wardha. We have been having here what may be called half-polished rice, not the perfect variety that is described in the foregoing letter. Ne-vertheless, the rice is well cooked. Nobody has complained about its indigestibility. But, being far more nutritious than polished rice, which is about pure starch, naturally unpolished rice cannot be, and must not be, eaten in the same quantity as polished rice. This is true of all conservative cookery.

Harijan, 15-2-1935

333. MEANING OF 'STATUS'

A very valued Harijan sevak puts the following question arising out of the working of the recently passed[1] new constitution.

> The term 'status' in the pledges A and B. If by this term is meant that in the eye of God there is no superior or inferior human being, as in the eye of law there is none, our members are prepared to subscribe to it. That is to say, they accept it as a religious or philosophical doctrine, the status referred to being spiritual. But if by it is meant that no difference in worldly status should be recognized as between master and servant, teacher and pupil, husband and wife, judge and prisoner and so on, it is difficult for us to sign the pledge. Kindly let me know if it is spiritual and not wordly status that is meant here.

Here is the portion of the pledge referred to.

> I do not consider any human being as inferior to me in status and I should strive my utmost to live up to that belief.

I should think that the answer is given in the pledge itself. Evidently, however, equality has been confused by the writer with obliteration of differences. If there were no differences or no varieties, there would be no phenomenal world, and the question of equality, i.e., inferiority and superiority, would not arise at all. But when God became many, differentiation became a necessity of the case, it would be surely rebellion against the Maker for any of the component parts

[1] The constitution of the Harijan Sevak Sangh was adopted on January 2, 1935.

to claim superiority over others. They must be all equal in status, though different in stature, colour, form, qualities, etc. Husband and wife, pupil and teacher, master and servant, judge and criminal, jailor and prisoner are undoubtedly different, but woe betide the husband who considers himself as superior to his wife, or the master as superior to his servant, of the judge as superior to the condemned criminal. All the misery in the world is born of the belief in inequality. Untouchability as Hindus practise it is its extreme form. And what can be more appropriate than that a Harijan sevak should, whilst purging himself of the ancestral taint, think inwardly and get rid altogether of the poison of inequality? But what is to be the mark of a master who considers his servant to be his inferior and of the one who considers him to be his equal? Well, the one has no consideration for his servant, for he has no interest in him save that he wants service from him against the pay he receives. The other treats him as a member of his family. Old servants in godfearing families take the place of parents to their masters' children. The masters are sharers in their servants' misfortunes and trials. The servants do not feel that they are any different from their masters, whom they will even upbraid if they go wrong. The difference between the superior master and the humble master is the difference between chalk and cheese. It is a difference in kind, not merely in degree. We are all far from the attainment of this equality, though it is natural and becoming to us as human beings endowed with reason and heart. But it is our duty, as also privilege, to strive to enforce that belief in daily life and not merely hope to live it in the world hereafter. If we do not make an honest effort, what can be the meaning of equality in the eye of the law?

This friend, who is a conscientious honorary and honoured worker in the cause, has also difficulty in understanding the implications of the expression 'whole-time workers' occurring in Rule 10 of the constitution, which provides for one-third of Provincial Boards being whole-time workers. His difficulty is real, because there is nothing to suggest in the rule that they should or may be paid workers. As I was present when the constitution was being patiently hammered into shape, I can easily fill in the gap which was purposely left there. A permanent paid service by whole-time workers is in contemplation. It is already in the process of formation. It will not exclude honorary whole-time workers who have means enough to enable them to give their whole time to the work. The word 'paid' seemed also to be offensive in this connection. Hence it was dropped.

But it is clearly contemplated that one-third of the workers should be drawn from paid whole-time workers wherever they might be available, always assuming that they possess other qualifications for the responsible office.

The friend has a third difficulty which he states as follows:

> The members of our Board, and especially the Harijan members, desire that Rule 24 should be modified by inserting a minimum proportion of one-third in the place of "as many Harijan members as it is possible to secure". In a place like Madras, it is e asily possible to secure 15 Harijanmembers, and as the rule now stands, it would not be permissible to put any others on the Board. That would defeat the very object of the Sangh, which is the service of Harijans by non-Harijan Hindus.

The difficulty arises, perhaps, from his overlooking the clause consistently with its maximum". Let me give the whole sentence in the rule. "Every Board or Committee shall have as many Harijan members as it is possible to secure consistently with its maximum." The qualifying clause was intentionally put to avoid the interpretation sought to be placed upon the rule. The suggested alteration was considered by the Board at Delhi. But many members had ex-perienced difficulties in securing suitable Harijans to make one-third of the membership of their Boards. The existing rule meets both the difficulties.

I must, however, reiterate my own faith here. I was opposed, as I am even now, to the inclusion of Harijans in Harijan Sevak Boards. If the Harijan Sevak Sangh is a society of penitent debtors, as it has been conceived to be, it can contain no creditors. Creditors are there. They will some day or other dictate their terms. Today the vast majority are helpless. Some even believe that they would commit a heinous sin if they regarded themselves as anything but the meanest and tabooed creation of God. The penitent caste Hindu has to render service in all humility. It may or may not be accepted. His repentance may be too late. But whether late or in time, he must perform it. He can't have Harijans to do for him. No wonder, with the possible interpretation put upon the rule, the Harijan friends were frightened to shoulder the burden. Were they to do penance themselves or to impose it on caste Hindus, who would not be on the Board at all?

But the tangible difficulty of members from the different provinces who wanted some Harijans on their Boards overbore my opposition. My ideal had to recede before their hard experience. The

proper, unstrained interpretation of the rule, therefore, is that the Harijan Sevak Boards are to contain as many Harijans as possible, but always containing a preponderating majority of caste Hindus who shall not be less than two-thirds of the whole Board. But they are not bound to have even one-third Harijans if duly qualified persons cannot be secured. The pledge to be signed by them has been purposely made extremely light and simple. There should, therefore, be no difficulty in securing one-third Harijan members. The rule being there, it must be honestly worked.

Harijan, 15-2-1935

334. LETTER TO KRISHNA KRIPALANI

WARDHA,

February 15, 1935

MY DEAR KRIPALANI,

You are voracious. What is the use of your asking me to contribute to the forthcoming quarterly? I have absolutely no time to spare. All friends in Santiniketan have known this and therefore have spared me. After all you will have no dearth of first-class contributors.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KRISHNA KRIPALANI
SANTINIKETAN

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

335. LETTER TO SUSHIL KUMAR SEN

February 15, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your respected father's letter. I was distressed to learn of his illness. I hope he will soon recover. Then you send your considered opinion on my questionnaire[1]. I would like you to quote the Ayurvedic text in support of your statement. I am aware of the

[1] *Vide* "A Questionnaire", 5-2-1935 and "Letter to Gananath Sen", 7-2-1935

modern scientists' opinion on the comparative qualities of different milks.

KAVIRAJ SUSHIL KUMAR SEN[1]
KALPATARU PALACE
CHITTARANJAN AVENUE NORTH, CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

336. LETTER TO G. K. V. DEVAR

February 15, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

You must not believe all that may be reported of me. But I can say this much that the women of our villages are not slaves. They are mistresses of their households and I do say also that they are not compelled in the matter of child-bearing by their husbands.

SJT. G. K. V. DEVAR, B.A., B.L.
GUNTUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

337. A LETTER

WARDHA,
February 16, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I would advise you to confer with Lala Hardhyan Singh who has been appointed agent[2] for Delhi. He will certainly take all the assistance he can from you.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

338. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

February 16, 1935

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

I was afraid that you were fast losing what you had gained when in Europe. If you go on like that, you will presently give India a bad

[1] Son of Gananath Sen
[2] Of All-India Village Industries Association

name and everybody, [who] wanted to be or remain well, will be going to Europe. For the sake, therefore, of the good name of India you have to show us a way of life whereby we may repair our bodies in India itself or keep intact. And before you entitle yourself to do soyou will have to follow the prescription, "Physician heal thyself". I hope you will not desert the Board or the Committee. You need not take any great active part requiring much strain. But your counsel cannot be dispensed with. That is my opinion.

Yours sincerely,

DR. ANSARI
DARIAGANJ
DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

339. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

February 16, 1935

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

Arjun Deo, the writer of the enclosed[1], has been in correspondence with me now for nearly a month. He wanted to come here. I wrote to him that was neither possible nor desirable. He should seek the assistance of places nearest his abode. He seems, therefore, to have come to Lahore. I have advised him to approach you. You will examine him, make his acquaintance, find out his credentials, and do whatever is needed. I hope the village work is getting on nicely.

Yours sincerely,

DR. GOPICHAND
LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

340. LETTER TO AMIYA

WARDHA,
February 16, 1935

DEAR AMIYA,

Father tells me you are about to enter a new state. May you and yours lead a happy life of useful service to the country. Remember

[1] This is not traceable

that marriage is a sacrament. You are therefore presently to take up a new and sacred trust in life. May God give you and yours strength to discharge it.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

341. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

February 16, 1935

CHI. BRAJKRISHNA,

I have your letter.

Can you not pursue your efforts from here? But you should follow your own inclination.

I shall see about Hardhyan Singhji. It is up to him to define his own sphere of work. In Delhi too I told him the same thing.

Let me know the title, etc., of the Hindi book that is with you.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI BRAJKRISHNA

KATRA KHUSHALRAI

DELHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2440

342. LETTER TO RAMESHCHANDRA

February 16, 1935

BHAI RAMESHCHANDRAJI,

Your letter is pertinent. We cannot discriminate on the basis of different religious faiths such as Hindus or Muslim or any other. I know many Muslims who scrupulously follow the rules of cleanliness. A few of them are even vegetarians. Therefore it would suffice if we restricted ourselves to eating and drinking wherever the rules of hygiene are observed. For my part I dislike any kind of inoculation

but the ones involving blood, etc., are to be totally shunned. The ones involving vegetable or mineral substances are not to be avoided to that extent.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6093

343. LETTER TO SURESH SINGH

February 16, 1935

BHAI SURESH SINGH,

I have your letter. Whatever is possible should be done. Who is the custodian appointed by the Court of Wards? You should adopt all possible simplicity in your life. Keep writing to me. Serve villagers to the extent you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8689

344. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

Unrevised

WARDHA,
February 18, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Your letter of 5th instant is still before me.

A parcel of envelopes was sent to you the other day.

The writers' cramp is still there. I wrote today for *Harijan* and a few brief letters. But that was about all I could do for the day with the right hand.

I know that your entry and that of women like you into the village movement will make it artistic and attractive.

I take it that Shummy's[1] name may now appear on the Board of Advisers. Never mind his ignorance. It takes a wise man to own his ignorance. And have not doctors to unlearn many things if they would serve villagers? Please tell me his full name and title for the Association Register. My love and thanks to him.

[1] Addressee's brother Lt. Col. Kanwar Shamsher Singh, a retired surgeon

I am glad you have commenced your visits to villages. I wish it were possible for you to lessen your desk work and increase concrete village work. But I see you have a special gift for writing work. Your organization perhaps can't do without the quantity of work you are giving it. Only, please take care not to overwork yourself by reason of your having taken up village work.

I have passed on your message to Kumarappa. You are quite right in not taking member's pledges indiscriminately.

Here is my message to Harijans:

"Please tell Harijans that in the movement for self-purifition that is going on at present, they are expected not to copy the vices and errors of the so-called caste Hindus. I was therefore distressed to find that child-marriages were as common among them as among some caste Hindus. It is a cruel custom having nothing of good in it. They should also know that it has been declared illegal by special legislation. I hope therefore that Harijans will make a great effort to rid themselves of this evil custom."[1]

I hope this meets your requirements.

Mira had a bad motor accident. All her companions were hurt. One of them was very badly hurt. She was the least injured. The car was smashed to pieces. They were all thrown up in the air. It was a miraculous escape. The one who was seriously injured is lying in the local hospital. He is out of danger. No one dies without His will.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
JULLUNDUR CITY

From the original: C.W. 3522. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6331

345. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

February 18, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. Even today my hand is not fit enough to write. But I have written for *Harijan*, so why not this too?

Are you prepared to leave Draupadi and the children with me

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Amrit kaur", 2-2-1935

while you go abroad? What can Draupadi do there? And I would not like it either that a mother should leave behind her children. It is enough that I have agreed to send you.[1] Not that I see any benefit from it now but I feel that it is to your good. After all you are bound to gain something from the visit.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

There is no need to wait till Friday or Saturday to reply to me.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3152

346. TELEGRAM TO P. R. NAGU[2]

WARDHAGANJ,
February 19, 1935

P. R. NAGU
BOGALE

HOPE YOU WILL REVIVE RIGHT KIND INDUSTRIES.

GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 11076. Courtesy: P. R. Nagu

347. LETTER TO BUDHABHAI AND JUTHABHAI

WARDHA,
February 19, 1935

BHAI BUDHABHAI AND JUTHABHAI,

You have given me good news. Send a sample of the salt you have obtained to Satisbabu at 15, College Square, Calcutta. Give him my name and also the details of the process by which you got the salt. Send him, and me as well, the samples of the soap you have made. We shall proceed further on receiving Satisbabu's report.

[1] Some words of this and the preceding sentence are illegible.

[2] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram which read: ". . . lakhs of artisans and agriculturists who had given shape to sky-reaching towers and fine beautiful sculptures to be wondered [at] and praised by the world, but had been set aside as daily coolies under the foreign rule, will certainly be benefited by the cottage industries scheme of your respectful and noble self."

Many inventions like yours remained unutilized because of our foolishness. No one will have to starve if we know how to put to proper use the wealth lavished by God on this country. Go on doing whatever you are able to do.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4589

348. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

February 19, 1935

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have been the defaulter. Every day I think of writing to you but have to postpone it. Today I have set aside other letters and have taken up yours. My right hand is out of form. That also is a handicap. What is one to do when life is so short and the things to do so many? Now I have again become a cook.

1. Take it that I have a right to appoint a Gram Seva Samiti and I appoint Jugatram a member as well as trustee of the Fund in place of Kakasaheb.

2. If Sardar also desires it, then let the Gram Seva Samiti and Jain Sahitya Prachar Samiti form a part of Vidyapith. I assume that Kakasaheb has no suggestions to make in this matter. I write this because I often forget what happened in the past.

3. I would definitely like it if the children of Ras and other places who are scattered over different places are brought to one placeand a school is started for them. I shall concur if you all and Sardar do that.

4.The question of girls' education is worth considering. *Savarna* Hindus should not dominate in a Harijan Ashram. Its buildings should never be used in a way which would put us to shame later. And who would look after that work? Do not involve yourself in any other activity. The person who went to Godhra Ashram found the work dull there. Bear in mind that so far that work has been most despised. I am, therefore, doubtful about starting something exclusively for girls. Raojibhai has started something. What about that? You may take me as being indifferent with regard to this enterprise.

Your four questions are covered in this.

Pyarelal arrived today all of a sudden. I am increasing the population and there is a shortage of accommodation. God will look after everything.

Tell Parikshitlal that so far there is no one in my mind for Godhra.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9071

349. LETTER TO PARMANAND K. KAPADIA

February 19, 1935

BHAI PARMANAND,

You have done well in writing to me. There is no difference between what is addressed to you and what is addressed to me. Kakasaheb will have this experience with my full consent. It is better to have authoritative information about the place where so many Gujaratis and other Indians go and seem to get peace of mind. You and I must have no fear about Kakasaheb. It is good for him to have the experience.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI PARMANAND KUNVARJI
164 MUMBADEVI
BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 11588

350. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

February 19, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

Dr. Ansari has sent a list of books. We have a new doctor here. He is an altruistic person. I had a talk with him about you. He is willing to give you lessons daily. Are you prepared to come here with Draupadi? If not, shall I procure some books, etc., and send them to you? I am awaiting the reply to my earlier letter[1] too. You have now

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H. L. Sharma", 18-2-1935

three alternatives. Two involve Draupadi's living in Wardha. And the third requires both of you to remain there and do what you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

What is the price of good quality ghee there? And what would be the railway freight on it for Wardha?

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha,* between pp. 149 and 150

351. LETTER TO SECRETARY, POLITICAL DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL

WARDHA,

February 20, 1935

SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL

POLITICAL DEPARTMENT

DEAR SIR,

Sjt. Dhirendra Chandra Mukerji is a detenu in the Deoli Camp. He has been as son to Shrimati Urmiladevi, of 335 Jitendas Road, Calcutta, widowed sister of the late Deshbandhu C. R. Das. I know the lady well. She has motherly affection for my companion Sjt. Mahadev Desai. The latter had recently gone to Gosaba and was therefore able to pass a day with Shrimati Urmiladevi. She is most anxious about Sjt. Dhirendra Chandra Mukerji. She has not seen him for three years and not heard from him since June last. She is unable to see him, but would be delighted if Sjt. Mahadev Desai could be permitted to see one whom she calls her son. I may state that both Sjt. Mahadev Desai and I know Sjt. Dhirendra Chandra Mukerji, who was with me for some time at the late Sabarmati Ashram, and would very probably have joined it had he not been arrested.

I shall be obliged if you would kindly let me know if Sjt. Mahadev Desai could have permission to visit Sjt. Dhirendra Chandra Mukerji and if, he could, the conditions under which the visit could

take place.[1]

Yours faithfully,

Home Department, Political, File No. 43/15/35. Courtesy: National Archives of India

352. LETTER TO ZAKIR HUSAIN

February 20, 1935

DEAR ZAKIR,

It is a great idea to have the foundation of the Jamia[2] laid by its youngest child. My congratulations on the originality of the conception. I know that the Jamia has a great future. Through it I expect the seed of Hindu-Muslim union to grow into a majestic tree. I therefore wish every success to the enterprise. I hope that the appeal for funds made by Dr. Ansari will meet with the success it deserves.

You have every right to expect me to do whatever is in my power. Jamnalalji is coming today. I shall share your letter with him.

Yours,

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The Government of Bengal were against the request being granted as neither Mahadev Desai nor Urmiladevi was a relative of the detenu. They feared also that the detenu was "a dangerous terrorist" and the interview might be used for political purposes. However, on advice from the Government of India the interview was allowed.

[2] Jamia Millia Islamia

353. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
February 20, 1935

CHI. RAMDAS,

I received your letter. I get time for writing letters only before the morning prayer. I therefore reply to you before the prayer. Jamnalalji will of course see you today.

I cannot say that I like the printing press work you have taken up. I would have liked your tailor's job more. But what pleasure can I take in what 1 like? My pleasure lies in what you like and can do. You like the work you have taken up and so does Jamnalalji. Swami has liked it, too. I am therefore content. You would not have made money quickly as a tailor, but may do so from the printing press. Patil is a good man and is intelligent. It is therefore likely that he will acquit himself well. Your need just now is not only to keep your mind occupied but also to earn enough money. By all means take up the work and make a success of it. It cannot but give me pleasure if your health is restored, you stand on your own feet, and acquire self-confidence. There is nothing demeaning in the printing press work. Take care of your health.

Harilal is arriving today. I thought it best to keep him under my care for the present. Quite a few are not convinced that he has reformed himself. He has been reassuring me and I felt that I should keep him with me.

My daily life is gradually returning to its former manner. I do not at all like to leave this place. I have taken over charge of the kitchen from today. All work is done by hand. Ba is helping me more than I had expected. She makes there *rotlis* for one meal every day, keeps all the grains clean and washes the utensils. She does not lack enthusiasm, does nothing unwillingly. Thus things are going on all right just now.

I am returning your letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

354. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
February 21, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. Harilal has arrived. Mavji's letter is enclosed. Panditji is here.

Do you know what arrangement has been made for the marriage ceremony? The only other person we have is Jugatram. Can you get anybody from there? Qureshi has not written to me either. Ramdas wrote in his letter that he was in Bombay. Amina is probably in Dhandhuka. A letter for Lilavati is enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8431. Courtesy Narandas Gandhi

355. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

WARDHA,
February 21, 1935

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have received your letter. It is good to consider ourselves unworthy. However, at the same time, there should be a mighty effort, to make ourselves worthy. As you are making such an effort, all is bound to be well with you. Do not deceive yourself. Do not exert yourself beyond your capacity. Keep writing to me. Take care of your body and mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

356. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

February 21, 1935

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I had your letter.[1] I find it difficult to write Urdu with the left hand. You did not come even after my wire. Your letter will explain what happened. Under the changed circumstances your letter does not need a reply. You should now follow Devdas's advice there. Those who want to serve can always do so. Your impression that people here will resent your coming to me is totally unfounded. There are no such persons in my circle here. I am, of course, living in the garden house[2] but you should follow your own inclination.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 316

357. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

February 21, 1935

BHAI RAJENDRA PRASAD,

Jayaprakash had been to see me. I do feel that the Congress should fix one day for the Bengal troubles. I have even drafted a resolution[3] and given it to Jayaprakash. He will send it on if he likes it.

This letter should be shown to the Sardar as I have no time to write separately to him. I am leaving for Nagpur just now and shall be back tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: A.I.C.C. File 1935. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The superscription and this sentence are in Urdu.

[2] Gandhiji was at this time living at Maganwadi, the garden-estate of Jamnalal Bajaj.

[3] Not available

358. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[After *February 21, 1935*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

Kale himself has brought the machine. It is being worked in front of me. It seems all right.

It is not good enough for a prize, but can be very useful. The owner is arriving today. I wish to have a long talk with him. One length of cloth has already been woven from its yarn. A second one is about to be ready. It can spin 16,000 yards in eight hours. The yarn is of 20 count.

If paddy is ground in an ordinary quern, the husk is separated. A large quantity can thus be husked with little labour. This may be said to be my discovery. The quern can be made as light as desired by fixing a washer to the axle. This saves a lot of time. The work has been rendered very easy. The rice obtained thus is always cheaper than mill rice. It tastes verysweet and one gets more satisfaction from a smaller quantity. Paddy is easier to preserve and one can, if one wishes, eat freshly husked rice every day.

Kanu tells me that respected Khushalbhai's collection contains other translations of the *Gita*, too. If this is true, please send me a list of them. I required the verse translation to compare it with Kishorelal's verse translation. It has nothing of special interest in regard to the meaning or anything else.

Harilal has made himself completely at home. Dhiru's letter is enclosed. Keshu's is under consideration.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8447. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] From the reference in the letter to Harilal's being in Wardha; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 21-2-1935

359. MEMBERSHIP OF ALL-INDIA VILLAGE INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION

From the abstract of the proceedings, to be found elsewhere[1], of the last meeting of the All-India Village Industries Association (Headquarters: Wardha, C. P.), readers will find out how one can become a Member or Associate of the Sangh. It is to be hoped that those who can fulfil the conditions of Membership or Associateship, will send in the forms duly filled in to the Secretary, Wardha. It will be wrong to wait for invitations. People await invitations when it is a matter of getting power or prestige. They do not, when it is a matter of seeking the privilege of service. Let the intending members realize that, unless they are registered as such before 31st March next, they lose in certain eventualities the opportunity of appointment as trustees. In the event of a trusteeship becoming vacant before the expiry of five years of the existence of the Association, the remaining trustees should have as long a range of choice as possible. This is not possible if many members are not registered before 31st March. Without a wide range of choice, the progress of the movement towards its ideal would suffer a check. For, the trustees are not merely custodians of the funds, but they are also custodians of the ideal for which the Association stands. But even they, however capable they may be of representing the ideal, will be a shaky foundation unless they have the knowledge that they have the support of a large number of men and women from whom they can draw inspiration and strength and on whom they can rely when they have to choose a successor or successors.

Trusteeship of the Association has been made a position of heavy responsibility by the trustees being made finally responsible for the protection of the ideal, in the remote but not altogether impossible event of its being lowered in the process of democratization of the Association. And yet democratization is as necessary for the growth of the movement as the permanence of the ideal, which must not be put in the melting pot. But the working out of the ideal is so put. For, it is made to rest solely in the hands of a Board which seven years hence becomes subject to election by voters whose sole qualification is

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Abstract of the Proceedings of the Board of Management of All-India Village Industries Association", 22-2-1935.

subscribing to the creed of the Association. It is true that the application for membership is subject to rejection by the Board. That is a precaution merely to prevent an unbeliever becoming a member only to shatter the ideal to pieces. The franchise is more extensive than even adult franchise. Every villager who is conscious of the dignity of village life and its infinite capacity for promoting the happiness of mankind can belong to the Association. Let those, therefore, who believe in the policy and the ideal of the Association become members and work for the economic, moral and physical welfare of the villagers of India, irrespective of differences in political faith, religion, caste or race. The Association recognizes no caste, religious, political or racial differences.

Harijan, 22-2-1935

360. COW'S MILK v. BUFFALO'S

The question whether cow's milk is superior to buffalo's has come up for inquiry in considering that of village reconstruction. I have addressed friends on the subject. Shri Haribhau Phatak has forwarded to me a letter received by him from Prof. Rao Bahadur Sahasrabuddhe, which reads as follows:[1]

> With regard to your enquiry about the differences between cow milk and buffalo milk, I have to say that the fat and casein of cow milk are more easily digestible than those of buffalo millk.
>
> The cow milk has also greater amount of vitamins than buffalo milk. These qualities affect children and adults equally, but an adult can digest buffalo milk while a child cannot. I think this is all that you want.

He has also received an opinion from Dr. S. K. Apte of Sholapur, Vice-President, Gopalak Sangh, which is reproducedbelow,[2] the names of those who sent replies to his questionnaire and some of the replies themselves being omitted.

> The question whether cow milk is superior to buffalo milk is being discussed during the last three years, and this has had a good effect in attracting the public attention to the utility of cow milk. . . . The burden of proving that it is superior lies on those who assert so. There are several ways of proving this scientifically. They can be enumerated as follows:

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.
[2] Only extracts are reproduced here.

1. To compare the merits and demerits of both milks by analysis of their components. It is possible chemically to ascertain the nutritive value of their components. Such an experiment has been made by Prof. Rao Bahadur D. L. Sahasrabuddhe of the Agricultural College, Poona, the details of which he has published in the *Dhyanprakash* dated 11-9-1934. He has made it clear therein not only that cow milk is very useful for the nutrition of young children but that buffalo milk is actually harmful to them.

2. To make two equal groups of boys or men live under the same conditions and to provide one batch with about a seer of cow milk and the other with an equal amount of buffalo milk for a certain period and to watch and record the physical, mental and intellectual development of each member of both the groups. . . . The Gopalak Sangh of Sholapur had written to the *Hoard s Dairy-man* for information as to which countries except India use buffaloes as dairy animals. The reply to this query shows that buffalo milk is used outside India only in the Philippine Islands and the southern part of China. . . . An experiment of the above nature is, therefore, not likely to be made anywhere outside India. This experiment will have to be made on some students residing in a boarding-house. . . .

3. This comparative experiment on human beings is a matter of great expense. It is possible to try this experiment on animals, especially rats and guinea-pigs kept in experimental laboratories. As the Gopolak Sangh has no material available for this sort of experiment, it has written to the Government Pasteur Institute at Coonoor to try such an experiment; but no reply has yet been received from the authorities there.

4. The Gopalak Sangh, Sholapur, took recourse to a fourth, and the easiest, way towards this end. A questionnaire regarding cow and buffalo milks was prepared and sent some six months back to various doctors, physicians, research experts, newspapers and periodicals, and Government officers in Medical and Health Departments in and outside India. About seven hundred copies in Marathi and English of this questionnaire were then sent out. . . . About fifty replies have been received so far.

The following are the conclusions deducible from the replies:

1. Buffalo milk is injurious to the development of children, and only cow milk is, in the absence of mother's milk, useful to them.

2. Cow milk, being easily digestible, is more beneficial to patients than buffalo milk.

3. There is no definite evidence to show that the use of buffalo milk by adults is in any way injurious. Mr. Bruen, the livestock expert to the Government of Bombay, says that buffalo milk is hard to digest for a person of any age, because the excess fat in buffalo milk when it forms soap in the intestine, is hard to digest with the usual amount of salts, and it takes the

deficient quantity of the mineral salts from bones, which are consequently weakened. This does not occur in the digestion of cow milk.

4. Cow milk is useful for intellectual growth, mainly of children. No definite conclusion can be drawn regarding better effect of cow milk on the intellectual growth of adults.

5. If, instead of rearing up buffaloes, cows are kept in the city, it will produce a beneficial effect on the general hygiene of that city, with less expense.

The experiment that Dr. Apte has suggested is worth making. The question of the comparative merits of the cow and the buffalo is of national importance from many points of view. In no other country in the world do these animals play the part that they do in the life of the nation in India.

Even without further experiment, the opinions collected by Dr. Apte of eminent medical men and dairy experts sufficiently prove the superiority of cow's milk over buffalo's.

Harijan, 22-2-1935

361. ALL-INDIA VILLAGE INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION PROCEEDINGS

The following is an abstract[1] of the proceedings of the Board of Management that met at Wardha on 1st to 4th February. It includes vital amendments of the constitution. The figures before paragraphs signify sections of the constitution.

Harijan, 22-2-1935

362. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

WARDHA,
February 22, 1935

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

Increase the quantity of leafy vegetables and see what happens. Take either fenugreek leaves, spinach, white goosefoot or purslane. Along with radish its leaves can also be taken, also those of carrots. Radish might perhaps aggravate constipation. It is believed that leaves are very good as laxative.

[1] For the text of the abstract, *vide* Appendix "Abstract of the Proceedings of the Board of Management of All-India Village Industries Association", 22-2-1935.

Do whatever you can in Vadaj by widening the contact with the people there. It requires unlimited patience.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI BHAGWANJI
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI, B.B. & C.I. RLY.

From Gujarati: C.W. 375. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

363. SPEECH AT KITCHEN MEETING, WARDHA[1]

[*February 22, 1935*][2]

I have been a cook all my life. I began experimenting with my diet in my student days in London. I ran the kitchen throughout my stay in South Africa, and some of you know how much I had to do with the kitchen in Sabarmati. Now we have embarked on a mission the like of which we had not undertaken before. We have got to be ideal villagers, not the villagers with their queer ideas, or absence of ideas, about sanitation and giving no thought to how they eat and what they eat. Let us not, like most of them, cook anyhow, eat anyhow, liveanyhow. Let us show them the ideal diet. Let us not go by mere likes and dislikes, but get at the root of those likes and dislikes. Don't rest content with simply saying, ' The food disagrees with me.' Find out the reason why it disagrees. Whether you like a thing or not will depend on the ideal of village life that you have kept before yourselves. The bulk of the villagers, we know live on wheat, *jowari, bajri,* or rice and dal, but they don't have green leaves and other vegetables. We have got to show them that they can grow their vegetables, their greens, without much expense, and keep good health. We have also to show them that most of the vitamins are lost when they cook the leaves. These are not my fads. I am simply trying to put into effect what all the doctors are saying and prescribing, and I am asking you to do what hundreds have done to their great benefit.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Notes". The meeting was held to discuss the changes introduced in the Ashram food by which spices were completely discarded and cooked vegetables were replaced by vegetable salad at least once a day, and to consider various suggestions.

[2] According to Mahadev Desai the meeting was held on the eve of Gandhiji's departure for Nagpur. He was in Nagpur on February 23.

Therefore, if you agree with my reasoning that the villagers ought to eat the green stuffs raw, that they must cook their rice just husked and not pounded or polished, you must set them the example. But also remember that we have to show them an inexpensive way of getting all the best part of our food products and of thus gaining in health. We have to teach them how to economize in time, health and money. If I could carry you all with me, I could make even the present menu simpler. But I want your hearty and intelligent consent and I want you to feel that, in doing what we are doing, we are discharging a sacred trust. We want agents to carry on the work of the Village Industries Association. Well, in that case, we must start with becoming agents for our own surroundings. Lionel Curtis described our villages as dung-heaps. We have to turn them into model villages. Our village folk do not get fresh air, though they are surrounded by fresh air; they don't get fresh food, though they arc surrounded by the freshest foods. I am talking like a missionary in this matter of food, because my mission is to make villages a thing of beauty. Let all that we do be in consonance with our mission. Even jokes have a meaning hidden in them, and when Jamnalalji twitted Mirabehn with the remark that she was reconnoitring the villages driving in a motor-car, he certainly pointed our attention to glaring inconsistencies in our lives. People pardon inconsistencies in their own lives, but remember that they will not pardon them in us, their servants.

Harijan, 1-3-1935

364. SPEECH AT ITWARI KHADI BHANDAR, NAGPUR

February 23, 1935

In declaring the third Khadi Bhandar in Nagpur open, Mahatmaji hoped that the public would support the new Bhandar as they had done in the case of the two Bhandars already opened. He said:

Do not suppose that I will be elated with the opening of this Bhandar or that my hopes will be fulfilled with this. My expectations will be fulfilled only when everyone in Nagpur is clad in khadi and when no piece of cloth other than khadi is found in every house in Nagpur.

Proceeding Gandhiji said that khadi was the mainstay of the rural population and it was the duty of everyone to stand by them. The only way to help the rural population was to wear khadi so extensively that Khadi Bhandars would be opened in

every locality of Nagpur. He hoped that the day when Khadi Bhandars would be opened in every locality of Nagpur would not be far off. Concluding, he appealed to the audience not to leave the place after his departure but to purchase khadi from the newly opened Bhandar.

Hitavada, 24-2-1935

365. SPEECH AT OPENING OF SITABULDI KHADI BHANDAR, NAGPUR

February 23, 1935

Mahatma Gandhi, in declaring the newly erected building of the Bhandar open, said that as it was his first visit to Nagpur after the death of Mr. Abhyankar, he thought it his duty to say a few words about him. It was no exaggeration that in Mr. Abhyankar Gandhiji himself had lost a near relative. It was on the fitness of things that the Nagpur Congress Committee had decided to raise a suitable memorial to him and he hoped that everyone would contribute his mite towards the memorial fund.

He also appealed to the Memorial Committee to complete the work undertaken by them as quickly as possible. He thanked the Nagpur Municipality for allotting a piece of land on nominal rent and expressed the desire that not only its members but even its servants would become khaddar-clad. He reminded theaudience that the Khadi Bhandar in Sitabuldi sold khadi produced in Maharashtra which was held in high esteem both for its price, durability and fineness.

Hitavada, 24-2-1935

366. SPEECH AT MEETING OF VILLAGE WORKERS, NAGPUR[1]

[*February 23, 1935*]

I am afraid I must repeat the gospel to you and remind you that, when you demand swaraj, you do not want swaraj for yourself alone, but for your neighbour, too. The principle is neither metaphysical nor too philosophical for comprehension. It is just good common sense. If you love thy neighbour as thyself, he will do likewise with you.

What you say about the difficulties of a worker in the villages is too true,[2] but we have got to falsify it. We have to be true villagers

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Notes". The meeting was held at the residence of Ganpatrao Tikekar.

[2] A worker had said that he had found it very difficult to live like a villager in a village and make both ends meet.

without their shortcomings and failings, and I am quite sure that, when we do so, there would be no difficulty for an honest labourer to earn a living wage. But let no one come and tell me: 'I have a mother, three widowed sisters, a brother who has to be sent to England to be called to the Bar, another reading in Muir College and a third to be sent to the Indian Sandhurst.' Sure enough, work in the villages will not give such a one a ' living'! But it is possible to earn a genuine living for all the members of one's family, if all those members also will work, as do all the members in a peasant's family.

There is a conflict of interest between capital and labour, but we have to resolve it by doing our own duty. Just as pure blood is proof against poisonous germs, so will labour, when it is pure, be proof against exploitation. The labourer has but to realize that labour is also capital. As soon as labourers are properly educated and organized and they realize their strength, no amount of capital can subdue them. Organized and enlightened labour can dictate its own terms. It is no use vowing vengeance against a party because we are weak. We have to get strong. Strong hearts, enlightened minds and willing hands can brave all odds and remove all obstacles. No, 'Lovethy neighbour as thyself' is on counsel of perfection. The capitalist is as much a neighbour of the labourer as the latter is a neighbour of the former, and one has to seek and win the willing co-operation of the other. Nor does the principle mean that we should accept exploitation lying down. Our internal strength will render all exploitation impossible.

Harijan, 1-3-1935

367. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, NAGPUR[1]

February 23, 1935

Gandhiji referred in feeling terms to the late Sjt. Abhyankar and asked those in charge of the memorial to collect quickly the money necessary for a memorial worthy of the departed leader: They did not seem to be definite regarding the shape it was to take, but Gandhiji said:

No memorial in these days can be a memorial in name. It must be such as would yield ten times the result of the money expended on it, and it must be such as would satisfy not only sentiment but the need

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The meeting was held at the Chitnis Park. Mrs. Kale presided.

of the city and the country.

It was during my walk in Orissa, in the course of my Harijan tour, that it was clearly brought home to me that the village industries must be revived if khadi is to be universal.

I could not have realized this in any tour by rail or car. As the late Madhusudan Das had said, our villagers were fast being reduced to the state of the brutes with whom they worked and lived as a result of the forced idleness in which they passed their days. If they continued in that state, not even independence would improve the state of India. I, therefore, decided that I must, even in the evening of my life, make a heroic effort to end this idleness, this inertia. This may be considered to be quixotic, but it is my firm faith that he who undertakes to do something in the name of God, and in full faith in Him, even at the end of his days, does not work in vain, and I am sure that the work I have undertaken is not mine, it is God's.

The principles of economics are not, like the principles of mathematics, for instance, immutable, and for all times and climes. England will not accept the economics of France, nor France that of Germany, nor Germany that of America, and they would be wrong if they did so. A country which produces no food-stuffs and producesonly minerals must have different economics from that which produces food-stuffs but has no mineral resources. India, therefore, cannot afford to go by the economics of France, England, America or Germany. India was once the land of gold. Not that it produced much gold, but it had such treasures of art, it produced cloth of such rich quality and spices of such value that other lands paid for them in treasures of gold. We have lost that proud position today and have become mere hewers of wood and drawers of water. But even now we can regain that proud position, for, our natural resources are unique and no other country in the world, excepting China, can boast of the crores of living machines we have. Now, how can a country with crores of living machines afford to have a machine which will displace the labour of crores of living machines? It would spell their unemployment and their ruin. We have to employ all these crores of human machines that are idle, we have to make them intelligent machines, and unless cities decide to depend for the necessaries of life and for most of their other needs on the villages, this can never happen. We are guilty of a grievous wrong against the villagers, and the only way in which we can expiate it is by

encouraging them to revive their lost industries and arts by assuring them of a ready market. There is no one more patient and forbearing than God, but there comes a limit even to His patience and forbearance. If we neglect our duty to our villagers, we shall be courting our own ruin. This duty is no onerous one. It is incredibly simple. We have to be rural-minded and think of our necessities and the necessities of our household in the terms of rural-mindedness. The task does not involve much expenditure either. Volunteers are needed to go to the nearest villages to assure them that all that they produce would find a ready market in the towns and cities. This is a task which can be undertaken by men and women of all castes and creeds, of all parties and all faiths. It is in consonance with the true economics of our country. I have no time to expatiate on this, but I would ask you to read what is written in the columns of *Harijan*, English and Hindi, from week to week.

Harijan, 1-3-1935

368. UNPOLISHED RICE v. *POLISHED RICE*

Rice from which merely its husk has been removed is known as unpolished rice, whereas, that from which a part of the grain has been rubbed off, is known as polished rice. It seems that in Gujarat, ordinarily, the latter is consumed in greater quantities. Medical opinion, however, states that only the former should be used, the reason being that polished rice has no nutritional value. One doctor is of the opinion that eating polished rice is one of the causes of constipation. In all cases of constipation he has cured his patients by prescribing unpolished rice to them. However, rice-eaters will not give up their deplorable habit of eating polished rice on account of medical opinion alone. What they need is their own experience as well as that of others. And this is as it should be. A statement is meaningless to anyone whose experience contradicts it. Hence, I am collecting the experiences of those who are making experiments. Shri Shankerlal Banker's experiment is the best amongst these. I have described it in the last issue.[1]

Shri Banker has suggested that if necessary medical opinion should be sought to prove that unpolished rice is not harmful to the

[1] *Vide* "All About Rice", 15-2-1935

digestive system. That, however, is not necessary. All doctors claim with one voice that only unpolished rice should be eaten. But this cannot be regarded as a statement based on experience. They should either give their own experience or that of their patients. There is little of such experience from them. Hence, we should rely on the experience only of rice-eaters.

Anyone undertaking the experiment should bear in mind that as unpolished rice contains all the nutritional elements, it should be properly cooked. We should give up the habit of keeping the grains separate. These may appear pleasing to the eye but there is no sweetness in them. Unpolished rice is cooked in the offices of the Village Industries Association in Wardha. Everyone eats it with relish. But this rice cannot be eaten in the same quantity as white, shiny, polished rice. A small quantity is enough to satisfy both the palate and the appetite. The monetary gain is obviously twofold. As husking is a simple operation, the cost of labour is much less. The pounding requires more effort and skill; hence the labour charges are higher. However, the greatest benefit lies in the maximum strength and satisfaction derived from eating unpolished rice in small quantities. Mill rice can never equal these benefits. No one could have a mill merely for the sake of husking rice. One cannot afford it. The experiments will be pure and productive of results if those making them observe the following rules:

1. Only the husk should be removed from the paddy. It should not be pounded at all.

2. Unpolished rice should be cleaned, little stones and other impurities should be removed from it and it should then be washed a couple of times in clean cold water. It should not be rubbed while washing. Rubbing is bound to remove some of the nutritious upper coating.

3. The washed rice should be soaked in cold water for three hours. Only a little water should be used.

4. This soaked rice, along with the water used for soaking, should be added to boiling water and allowed to cook on a slow fire and removed only after it acquires a homogeneous consistency. If too much water has been added, it should not be drained but allowed to be soaked up by the rice. The next time a more proportionate quantity of water should be used.

Those who undertake the experiment are requested to send in their experiences.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 24-2-1935

369. LETTER TO GOSIBEHN CAPTAIN

WARDHA,
February 24, 1935

DEAR SISTER,[1]

I have your letter. You will come whenever you wish and can. If you can, wait until you can. I would like to hold over my opinion on the constitution. It will require some amendments. I return Shoorjibhai's letter. I do not put the meaning upon it that you do. It reads perfectly harmless. It does not in any shape or form interfere with your initiative or responsibility. Your inherent right of making mistakes is unaffected if you accept his services. I think he is quiteright in saying that there was no question of his making a contribution. You wanted a room or rooms in Cutch Castle. He offered to find some other rooms. And in addition, to give you such goods as you would care to take. There was no question of his controlling your activities in any shape or form. You would be either wholesale purchaser of goods that he might supply or his commission agent selling goods on his behalf or running your own shop wholly independently of him. There is no third way of conducting the store. That you may not wish to accept his offer and may dispense with his services is a separate thing altogether. But it should not arise from his letter. As a co-worker in the same line and as a co-member on the Managing Board, you should allow him the correctness of the attitude taken up by him in his letter. I await expectantly the information about the value of soya beans as food.

GOSIBEHN
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This is in Gujarati.

370. LETTER TO JAYARAMDAS JAYAWARDHANE

February 24, 1935

MY DEAR JAYARAMDAS,

I have your two letters just now. I hasten to reply at once. Though your letters are long, you do not give me the information I need. How many people are affected? Who are they? What is the private agency that is working? What funds have they collected? What is the relief that you want whether in men or money or both? If private agencies are in existence, give me the names of their committees and the collections done by them. Is disease still continuing in its epidemic form? What is the death rate? Why did you not write to me immediately you felt the need for outside assistance?

SJT. JAYARAMDAS
PAROPAKARA MANDALAYA
92 SAUNDERS PLACE, PELTAH (COLOMBO)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

371. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

February 24, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM[1],

I have your two letters. Also almonds. I shall report on the latter later. I am glad you are going back to Bangalore. I have told Vasumati that she is now not required in Madras at least for some time.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Mira and the others are all right. Theirs was a miraculous escape.

From the original. Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] This is in Hindi.

372. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

WARDHA,
February 24, 1935

CHI. SUMANGAL,

I have your distressing letter. Please come over. Ask Narendra Dev why he has not yet recovered.

Blessings from
BAPU

SUMANGAL PRAKASH
KASHI VIDYAPITH
BANARAS CANTT.

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

373. NOTE FOR RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

February 24, 1935

We have no right to judge anyone a sinner as we are all full of imperfections. We have no reason or means to judge whether those we regard as greater sinners than ourselves are truly so. A person stealing a mere pice can be a greater sinner than a person indulging in sexual immorality. Possibly the thief committed a deliberate theft while the licentious person put up great but unsuccessful resistance against the temptation. Who can know of his good efforts? God alone knows the secrets of the human heart. Thus we must not make comparative reckoning of others' sins but only increase the spirit of forgiveness. This is one of the aims of the doctrine of ahimsa.

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

All this I have written applies to everyone.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 191

374. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHA,
February 25, 1935

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I had your letter. There was nothing worth wiring about. And does my wire carry any weight now? If you would heed me, you would

(1) come to me or

(2) go to Bombay or

(3) to Indore or

(4) to Patiala. Going or living anywhere else should be considered a sin. Otherwise you may do what you like. What can I say to you or do about you?

God alone can help you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 318

375. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

February 25, 1935

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have written to Dialdas.[1] Wrote in the train after leaving Delhi.

Why these proceedings although the H. Q. had given the permission?

If the building operations are to take more than a month to commence, you do not need to detain Brijkishen. As it is, he is not free to come immediately.

Supposing a man is bed-ridden, has all his people orthodox, he is able to pay and does pay a Harijan fund, that is not personal service. But I agree that it would be better to add "also by employing Harijans wherever possible". By confining the mention to monetary contributions he has erred on the side of strictest honesty.

[1] The letter is not available.

I am sorry you have to have Amtul Salaam on your hands. My only excuse is that she is a fine and passionate servant[1] of Harijans.

Here are two letters—for Devdas and Amtul.

Your article has gone to Madras.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 913

376. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

February 25, 1935

MY DEAR CHILD,

Your letter. Why apologize for the length of your letter? You do not write too often.

Mrs. S.[2] was here for a day. She is a good, well-meaning woman. She told me she was with you.

Yes, the children have to be in Kodai for their health's sake. It grieves me to think that Menon has still to draw funds from Denmark. But of this we must talk when we meet.

So Maria cannot go home! It is no easy work to love India with all one's heart.

Send my love to Nellie Ball when you write to her.

C. F. Andrews is in W. A.[3] He expects to come to India in April.

Mira had a very narrow escape in a motor-car accident. She is all right now.

BAPU

From a photostat. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child*, p. 111

[1] The source has "service".
[2] The full name is illegible.
[3] West Africa

377. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

February 25, 1935

MY DEAR SHANKERLAL,

Sjt. Kirloskar and his principal staff are with me today. They are all eager to have the decision about their machine one way or the other. I have told them that it is not for me to give a decision. That can be given solely by the judges. I have told them too that whatever the decision, it will be given effect to. If it is in their favour, they will get the prize money at once against the legal transfer of patent rights and the other necessary formalities.

They are anxious to have the decision as early as possible. Please, therefore, expedite the matter as much as possible. If the judges desire to hear Sjt. Kirloskar's representative, he will gladly send him on receiving due information.

I need hardly say that the judges are not to be affected by anything I have said about it.

SHRI SHANKERLAL BANKER
AHMEDABAD

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

378. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

February 25, 1935

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

I did not like your letter regarding Surajbehn. What will I do if both you and Karsandas wash your hands of her? I have nothing to say if you feel that I am doing injustice to that woman, however slight it may be. My strength lies in my devotion to truth and my sense of justice. Remember that you are bound by your word to put an end to this episode. If the debt incurred by Ganesan is in connection with Kodamakam [Ashram] alone, then pay it off and hand over the charge with a clean slate to the new manager.

Advise me about taking *Harijan* to Poona. I am not able to see my way very clearly. I see it clearly that it is my duty to retain the services of *Harijan* Shastri but I cannot decide whether to entrust him

with *Harijan* work or some other work. I did not like D. B.'s[1] suggestions. We should not get involved with Tamil and Telugu [*Harijan*].

Do what you can about Nattar-Harijan problem.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1152

379. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVLEKAR

February 25, 1935

BHAI SATAVLEKAR,

I have your letter. I learn from Devdas's letter from Delhi that Kelkar is in Delhi and doing well.

The account of the *yajna* at Kurundwad is painful.

All the news about the Village Industries Association appears in *Harijan* and *Harijansevak*. If you are not getting them, shall I send them? Would it suit you to become a member and agent of the Association?

The silk industry has not been left out of the programme of the Association. That work is carried on through the Spinners' Association.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi C.W. 4776. Courtesy: S. D. Satavlekar

380. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

February 25, 1935

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. Be calm and get well. We shall talk about the complaints later. Forget that you are a Rani. Be a humble servant in thought, speech and action.

If it is malnutrition, consult your doctor. Is anyone accompanying you? Take eggs as medicine. If eggs alone could put things

[1] Dewan Bahadur Bhasyam Iyengar's

right I would consider it an achievement.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

381. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

[After *February 25, 1935*][1]

I have just finished reading your precious letter. My heart was weeping as I was reading it. Do you know this Tamil proverb— " *Thikkatravanukku theivamay thunai*"? It means God is the help of the helpless. He will help you and comfort you. You must not lose faith in His mercy and His healing power.

You should have written to me much earlier than you have done. But better late than never.

You should tell Menon all that the children feel. What is done is done. God had a purpose behind this marriage. You are neither spent nor bent.

You way is clear. You should take the children to Denmark or England if your expenses can be easily found. If you cannot stand that climate, you should return to India leaving the children to the care of those who would take them.

If this is not possible, you should live on a hill where you can be all the year round and bring them up as Indians in Indian surroundings. I think they are too good to resist this. To bring them up in India in a European school is fatal for their moral growth.

Of course I should love to have you and the children by my side. But they won't stand the climate and probably the surroundings also. Do not hesitate to write to me as often as you need. I am well enough to attend to your letters.

I tried to secure something good for Menon but failed, i.e., I could not secure the salary he would need. But if he is freed of the care of the children and even you, he can take up an ill paid post but one in which he will have ample experience.

[1] In *My Dear Child* this has been placed after "Letter to Esther Menon", 25-2-1935.

Whatever the ultimate issue, you must not be anxious about anything. Remember that God takes the burden of all our cares on Hisbroad shoulders if we will but let Him. This is as true as it is true that I am writing to you. Only His way is not our way, His shoulders are not like ours. But there is all the beauty in doing His will.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat. Courtesy: National Archives of India

382. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

WARDHA,
February 27, 1935

CHI. MRIDU,

I have received your beautiful letter. Many young men today are not even prepared to listen to the words of their parents, whereas there are others who would not tolerate anything from their parents but would put up with a great deal from those whom they regard as their friends. Thus, everything depends on individuals and circumstances.

You have taken the right step. Rambhau will be leaving today. Panditji will discuss the matter with you. Do only what you think is in the interest of the organization.

Mummy must have gone away happy. Convey my blessings when you write to her. Also write to her that I always think of her. Let her come after complete recovery.

Come back when it is possible.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11194. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

383. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

WARDHA,
February 28, 1935

CHI. MANILAL,

I have received your letter. There is a verse[1] in Sanskrit. It means: "Speak the truth, speak the pleasant and do not speak unpleasant truth." It means that the truth should always be non-violent. One should learn non-violent language for criticism. You or anyone else writing it could have expressed the same thing in a sweet language. One cannot acquire sweet language without getting rid of anger. In your article and letter I see marks of anger. I write this not as a reproach but only to caution you. Otherwise there is no point in criticizing you from this distance. I feel, however, that it is proper to tell you what impression your language creates.

Take it that Ramdas has settled here. He will be a partner in the press. He is keeping well.

Harilal and Kanti are with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am not able to finish my work. I just missed reading Sushila's letter. Gomati, clever as she is, found out that I am arranging to get the cloth.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4833

384. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

February 28, 1935

BHAI RAJENDRABABU,

As I am willing to do everything, why would I be averse to the joint electorate? If Muslims can accept even this, and if Sikhs and Hindus agree, I have no doubt it will be extremely good. To bring round Malaviyaji appears to be a difficult proposition, but he would put up no opposition if Sikhs could be persuaded. There is no

[1] सत्यं ब्रयात प्रियं ब्रयान्न ब्रयात्तसत्यमप्रियम् ।

occasion now for my writing to him though I shall do so if that is your wish. Ghanshyamdas is enough.[1] After the others have agreed even Jamnalalji can go to Panditji.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi: C.W. 9747. Courtesy: Rajendra Prasad

385. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS[2]

[Before *March 1, 1935*][3]

Q. You do not seem to have regard to the question of leisure. Too much work leaves little leisure to the poorer classes for any intellectual thinking and recreation, and you are now seeking to make them work more.

A. Is that really so? I am trying to deal with people who do not know what to do with their enforced leisure. It is their enforced idleness that has made them like so many lifeless stones. There is such inertia that some of them do not want to be disturbed.

Q. You will certainly give employment where it is needed. But are you not putting an excessive emphasis on dull monotonous work when you ask them to grind their own corn and husk their own rice?

A. It is no more monotonous than the idle hours hanging heavy on their hands, and it will cease to be monotonous when they realize that they not only earn a few coppers but preserve their own health and that of their countrymen. It is certainly not more monotonous than working away in modern factories. Any work, however humdrum, which does not take away the joy of creating something, is not monotonous. You go to a huge shoe-making factory. Some people would be engaged in making soles, some in making the uppers, some in doing other parts. This is monotonous, for they work without intelligence, but there is no monotony about the work of the shoe-maker who makes the whole shoe himself. His work will bear the impress of his skill, and he will have the joy of having created

[1] G. D. Birla was at this time acting as intermediary between Malaviya and Gandhiji.

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Notes". Desai does not identify Gandhiji's interlocutor.

[3] Mahadev Desai left Wardha for Bombay on March 1, 1935, *vide* "Letter to Narahari D. Parikh", 2-3-1935

something himself. No, almost everything depends on the spirit in which a thing is done. I would not mind being my own drawer of water and hewer of wood, provided I am doing the work intelligently and not because someone compels me to do so. All labour when done intelligently and to some high purpose becomes at once re-creation and recreation.

Q. Pardon me, but when you insist on pure and simple physical work all day long, don't you run the risk of making them intellectually dull? How many hours of physical work you think are necessary?

A. I would not mind working eight hours myself.

Q. I do not mean yourself. You have enough intellectual energy and creative talent to fill the rest of your hours. Yours should be regarded as an exceptional case. I know you can derive joy from eight hours' spinning.

A. No, I want everyone to derive joy out of eight hours' work. Everything depends on the spirit in which work is done, and an eight hours' day of honest, clean labour leaves one enough time for intellectual pursuits. My object is to put an end to inertia and lethargy, and I would be immensely satisfied when I tell the world that every villager of India is earning Rs. 20 a month by the sweat of his brow.

Harijan, 8-3-1935

386. NOTE

ECONOMICS, FALSE AND TRUE

A friend has sent me the following extract from Dr. F. D. Farrell, President of the Kansas State College:

> Social values must not be sacrificed for economic values. One of the greatest futilities is to progress economically and retrogress socially. We all need to recognize that we work and strive so that we may live better, rather than that we live solely that we may work and strive. If we live badly, we are poor, no matter how much money we have.
>
> Adversity is impressing large numbers of farm people with this fact. Thus, it is laying the foundation for the acceptance of a rural philosophy that seems likely in the end to prevail. This philosophy holds that the chief objective of farming is not to accumulate monetary wealth, but to promote human happiness in the countryside that the farm should be regarded primarily as a home and only incidentally as a business enterprise.
>
> Adversity is teaching many of us to enjoy the non-monetary wealth with which we are surrounded. This wealth includes an endless variety of things

from which happiness and satisfaction may be extracted: things ranging all the way from gorgeous sunsets to the companionship of children. By living simply and depending largely on our non-monetary wealth, we may find not only health and l happiness, but also a large measure of economic security.

Indeed, economics that ruins one's health is false, because money without health has no value. Only that economy is true which enables one to conserve one's health. The whole of the initial programme of village re-construction is, therefore, aimed at true economy, because it is aimed at promoting the health and vigour of the villagers.

A SHAME

A strongly-built young man of about 25 years presented himself to me only yesterday and asked me whether he could stay with me for two or three days. He hails from Bahraich. His people have a few acres of land. He attended the Bombay Congress. Ever since he has been travelling and living on the hospitality of strangers. He mixes with Ramanujis. They, he tells me, give him food andsomething towards his railway fare. On my telling him that living as he was doing on charity was not right, his retort was: "I see nothing wrong in my begging for my food and expenses, as I expect to serve the people." He could see no incongruity in demanding his maintenance first and then expecting, at some distant date, to render service against maintenance plus, of course wages. As he had come at the dinner hour, I invited him to share the meal with us. I told him after the meal that he could not stay with us any longer, unless he was prepared to labour with us the whole day long and do the work allotted to him. Up to the time of writing he has not been seen by any of us.[1]

I wish it was possible to say that this was the first case of its kind that came under my observation. Young men and women should be ashamed of begging for the supply of their wants. If the sense of shame that wrongly attaches to physical labour could be got rid of, there is work enough and to spare for young men and women of average intelligence.

Harijan, 1-3-1935

[1] For further light on the case of the young man, whose name was Avadhesh, v*ide* "Notes", 13-4-1935, sub-title, "Full Repentance".

387. MANURE PITS

Mr. Brayne, Commissioner, Rural Reconstruction, Punjab has sent me, at my request, a parcel of literature published by him. This contains useful leaflets of general information to the villagers. From these, I propose to publish a selection from time to time. I take first the bulletin[1] on Manure Pits:

One can subscribe to all that is said here. I know that the pits such as Mr. Brayne suggests are generally recommended. In my opinion, however, superficial burial recommended by Poore is more scientific and more remunerative. The cost of digging is lessened and that of removal avoided altogether or certainly lessened. Add to this the fact that the excreta are turned into manure in almost a week's time, for the reason that the bacteria, which live within six or nine inches of the surface of the earth, and the air and the rays of the sun act upon the excreta and turn them into sweet manure much more quickly than when the refuse is buried deep.

But the chief thing to remember is not the various methods of disposing of refuse so much as the necessity of burying all the refuse for the double purpose of promoting the villagers' health and their material condition through the better yield of their crops which the manure must produce. It should be remembered that organic rubbish other than excreta must be separately buried. Attention to hygiene is undoubtedly the first step to village reconstruction.

Harijan, 1-3-1935

388. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

WARDHA,
March 1, 1935

CHI. MARY,

This is being brought to you by Sumitrabehn. I am inclined to think that Chhotelal[2] has made a wise choice. Sumitra is a good, hard-working woman. But you will test for yourself. If she is not the type you contemplated, you will send her back.

From a photostat: G.N. 6039. Also C.W. 3369. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] Not reproduced here. It emphasized the necessity of digging near the villages pits on which all the rubbish and dung could be collected to be fermented into manure.

[2] Manager of the Wardha Ashram

389. LETTER TO MARY CHESLEY[1]

[*March 1, 1935*][2]

MY DEAR MARY C.,

I have your very wonderful letter. You must shed this fear complex of your inability to earn your bread by the sweat of your brow. I am not going to criticize anything just now. You must continue to give me a vivid description of your labours and I will tell you whenever I think you are going the wrong way. Only both of you, all of you, must keep well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6039. Also C.W. 3369. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

390. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

Unrevised

MAGANWADI,
March 2, 1935

CHI. NARAHARI,

Mahadev left for Bombay last night. I am forwarding your letter there.

Do you know Hira Singh's relatives? You must have informed them. I am sure he must have been cremated. Who attended the funeral? Where was Hira Singh sleeping? Is the place all right? Was he sleeping on the cot or on the ground?

I for one believe that everyone dies at his appointed hour. But since one does not know that hour and death is unpleasant, one has to take treatment. That being so, when one does not know what has bitten one, one should presume it was a snake and take remedies accordingly. Of course the patient can be taken to a doctor but if a doctor is not available there is always the remedy of stopping the flow of the blood in the vessel, making an incision over the bite thus letting out blood, filling it with potassium permanganate, covering it with a mud pack and making the patient keep awake. He can also be induced

[1] A Canadian Quaker, she came to India to visit friends in the North and with the idea of doing some kind of village work. She joined Mary Barr at Khedi.

[2] This is written on the same sheet as the letter to F. Mary Barr, the preceding item.

to vomit. It can be done by thrusting fingers into the mouth or making him drink hot water with salt in it. If plenty of salt is put in the water, vomiting will be instantaneous. If there are other remedies, find out from a doctor.

Tell Bhagwanji that I have received his letter. I do not remember his questions. He should write to me again.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI NARAHARI D. PARIKH
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI, AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9083

391. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

March 3, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I have your two letters. Yes, the Khan Brothers are truly servants of God. I am glad you were able to go through the book at a single sitting. You should get some copies from Devdas, free if you like, and send them to your English friends.

The paper that Jugulkishore has sent you has the defect you point out. I am making investigations to see if improvement can be made. Envelopes should present no difficulty. They can be neatly prepared by hand. The making of them may by itself become an occupation. Do the ones I have sent you lack the finish?

You may not wait for adopting khaddar till you have used up all your mill-made saris. There is any amount of beauty to be found among hand-spun stuffs. Of course hand-spun silk is khadi.

Please give my love to Maharaj Singh and his wife. You may not know that my second son is editor of a S. A. paper called *Indian Opinion*. He is a good young man. He did net like Maharaj Singh's policy and attacked him fiercely in his paper. Andrews and I reasoned with the boy for the manner of his attack but we failed to convince him of the error of his method. He is an obstinate boy. I told him I did not mind his criticism where he disapproved of a policy but I reasoned with him as to the manner of his approach. I am still trying.

I remain unconvinced by Mrs. B. Nehru's argument. My point

is that we as reformers may not do the work of prosecution. The sanatanists will pay the fines and put up the Harijans against us. I am quite clear in my mind that we have to begin with the so-called higher classes who are the real culprits. That Harijans know sometimes that they are contravening the Sarda Act does not affect my argument. They are still ignorant of the wrongdoing. Mere defiance of law has ceased to be a wrong in itself. My argument holds good even for the women's organization. You may show this to Mrs. B. N. Naturally, if my reasoning does not convince you, you will ignore it.

I must inquire about linen.

You will come whenever you can. The earlier the better.

Love.

[PS]

This paper is especially bad. I hope you can decipher the writing.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3523. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6332

392. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHA,
March 4, 1935

CHI. AMTUSSALAAM,

I have your very long letter. What am I to do if you twist the meaning of what I write? Now do whatever you think is proper. Be calm and improve your health by any means. That will make me happy, you may be sure. What is it that you have asked for? Is it a charkha or that solar instrument? Will it do if I send it with someone who is going there?

I am not surprised that Devdas and Lakshmi look after you and love you. If it was otherwise, I should have been surprised as well as unhappy.

Blessings from[1]
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 319

[1] This is in Urdu.

393. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

March 4, 1935

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

If we talk of ideals, the Harijan workers who participated in the Santaram celebrations can be said to have violated the rule. But it can be argued that perhaps it was proper under the prevailing circumstances there. This issue is not at all worth discussing in public. The workers had the right to do what they felt was proper in the situation existing there. We cannot set ourselves up as judges of the world.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4002

394. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

March 4, 1935

It will not be necessary for you to attend any function that may be arranged in connection with the Silver Jubilee celebrations. If it is clear, however, that your not attending will harm the Corporation, you ought to go. The same rule applies to social functions. You should remember that we are not practising non-co-operation these days. That part of the programme has been suspended. A municipal councillor, therefore, may serve the city in whatever manner he can consistently with his freedom, self-respect and popularity. Having said this, I need not give illustrations. If you want, however, I shall think up some. When you feel that you are not in a position to serve but on the contrary are likely to endanger your self-respect, it will be your duty to resign and give reasons for your action.

Do whatever you can in the fields of Harijan work, prohibition, khadi, village industries, etc. The Government it is true has not left much scope for such work. But we also are a good deal to blame for that. As you see, we are able to do nothing about Hindu-Muslim unity. However, this fact is not a reason for yielding to despair but for intensifying our efforts.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 157

395. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

March 5, 1935

BHAI MAVALANKAR,

I have your letter. Thakkar Bapa's terms were exactly similar. I can very well visualize from here the load on you. There are only a few workers, so they will have to bear the burden.

Do whatever you can.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1243

396. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI N. PATEL

WARDHA,
[*March*][1]*6, 1935*

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

I have your letter and Lalita's. Lalita may come whenever she pleases. If she is not in a hurry, she should come after the 18th. The meetings will continue till then.

Here everyone eats unpolished rice and with great relish. It cooks well. It is first soaked in water for twelve hours and then put in boiling water. Washing the rice vigorously two or three times has the same effect as pounding. Such washing, therefore, is tantamount to polishing, and is therefore harmful. I only wanted to point out this easy method to those who eat their rice polished.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT, RAOJIBHAI PATEL
LIMBASI
MATAR TALUKA, B.B. & C.I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9003

[1] The source has "January", but it seems to be a slip as the postal cancellation mark of Wardha bears the date March 6, 1935.

397. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

March 6, 1935

It has been resolved

1. to have a congregational prayer in the evening;
2. to create among the wives of the workers interest in publicity work;
3. to promote among the wives of the workers feeling of mutual love and affection;
4. to take minimum help from servants for domestic chores;
5. to give up tea and sugar in our homes;
6. to help the workers make progress in spinning, etc.;
7. to provide hygienic lavatories, etc.;
8. to give systematic education to co-workers on free days;
9. to reduce the area of publicity;
10. to begin work with the processing of cotton;
11. to acquire an average of fifteen counts in spinning;
12. to propagate *takli* among the proper people;
13. to think also about the other industries.

March 6, 1935

CHI. JETHALAL,

Vinoba told me that all of you had resolved to put the above—mentioned things in practice with immediate effect. If you have already done so, bring the report with you or send it by post.

Vinoba has narrated to me his experiences there. It seems he has made a minute observation.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9850. Courtesy: Narayan J. Sampat

398. MESSAGE TO "THE LEADER"

WARDHA,

March 7, 1935

I have time only to wish success to the Silver Jubilee function. This is assured to you when Panditji[1] is there not only to grace the celebration but even to lead the function. You know that though I have not always been able to accept the political views propounded by *The Leader*, I have always had a very high regard for it. I have known it to be one of the best edited Indian dailies.

M. K. GANDHI

The Leader, 12-3-1935

399. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

Thursday, March 7, 1935

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I have your letter of 24th ultimo. You are quite clear. I have no difficulty in reaching the heart of your letters. I know why you want me not to precipitate matters. Sometimes l may appear to others to do so, but it is contrary to my nature to act hastily; and at the present moment I am doubly circumspect, for the simple reason that my own ahimsa is on trial. It is not enough for me to protest my innocence. If I have it in me, it must be self-luminous even as the sun. I suppose even the blind, though they do not see the sun, feel the dawn when it is coming. The noon-day heat, of course, they cannot help feeling. And when a man is filled with love, it must be like the noon-day sun. I may fail to express such ahimsa during this lifetime. I shall proclaim that failure from the housetops rather than alter by a hair's breadth the standard I have set before me. Just at the present moment, therefore, I can say that any action hastening Civil Resistance is highly improbable. But if it does come, I have no doubt that you will say that

[1] Madan Mohan Malaviya

it was inevitable.

Love.

BAPU

MISS AGATHA HARRISON
2 CRANBOURNE COURT
ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD, S.W. 11

From a photostat: G.N. 1485

400. LETTER TO SATYA DEVA

March 7, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It does not show that you have any knowledge of things going around you. From your writing I hardly think that you will be able to render any service to the Association[1] as an accountant. But you can become a good village worker in your own district and if you will be that, I should like to ask you to correspond with Babu Brijkishor Prasad, Durbhanga.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SATYA DEVA
C/O B. HARIBHAU SAHAY
SEGAULI SUGAR WORKS LTD.
SEGAULI, (CHAMPARAN)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

401. LETTER TO DR. GIRDHARILAL BATRA

March 7, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

There is no one here who can be sent to your village in Punjab. To train workers will be possible after a few months but I would like you to correspond with Dr. Gopichand[2] who is the agent in general of the A. I. V. I. A. for the Punjab. He will be better able to guide you than I.

Yours sincerely,

DR. GIRDHARILAL BATRA
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] All India Village Industries Association
[2] Dr. Gopichand Bhargava; *vide* the following item.

402. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

March 7, 1935

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

Here is Dr. Batra's letter and a copy of my reply[1] to him for your information.

Yours sincerely,

DR. GOPICHAND
LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

403. LETTER TO N. G. APTE

March 7, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. There is an unfortunate history about the juices you sent with Sjt. Marathe. I could not tempt any person to try those juices as there were plenty of fruits and I could not try them myself for the simple reason that I limit myself to five articles per day and there can be found no room for any of the two juices.

I thought that I had returned the papers to Sjt. Marathe but now that you remind me I shall make a search.

What sample are you referring to?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. G. APTE
754 SHUKRAWAR
POONA 2

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

404. LETTER TO DR. MARTIN

March 7, 1935

DEAR DR. MARTIN,

I am thankful to you for your letter giving all the information about the Pendra Road Sanatorium. You may have come to know that I was recently in Nagpur. I am sorry I had not a moment left to visit your Hospital.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

405. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

WARDHA,
March 7, 1935

DEAR DR. HOLMES,

I have your letter of 25th January last redirected from Delhi by Devdas, I know you have been regularly receiving a diary of events from here. Therefore I need say nothing about them. I do remember a reference to your Church[1] having conferred upon me the Community Church Medal. You may send it to my address at Wardha duly registered and I shall get it.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. HOLMES
N.Y., U. S. A.

From a photostat: C.W. 10964. Courtesy: Roger W. Holmes and Frances L. Brown

406. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

March 7, 1935

CHI. PREMA,

Since I have gone into silence in order to clear the arrears of correspondence, I must write this little note with my own hand. As for your letter, it is Iying by my side, but I will be able to take it up only when I can write with my right hand or when I get enough time.

If you can get even a small piece woven from the yarn with you, do so and send it directly to Manilal at Phoenix. Only so will it reach him before Arun's birthday. It is for him that Sushila has asked for it.

If I cannot write to you for some reason, that does not mean that you should stop sending your regular reports. You are putting on good weight. That is as it should be.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10367. Also C.W. 6806, Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] The Community Church of New York

[2] The addressee had written "You may remember that two years ago my Church conferred upon you our so-called Community Church Medal for outstanding service in the higher religious interests of mankind", and had expressed his intention of sending the Medal safely and early enough.

407. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

March 7, 1935

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Go through this. Could there be anything in the man?

The purport of Mahadev's letter was just this. You have laboured hard and arrived at this stage. Now when you get time, you should go to England and do what you can. Success can be proved only by an honourable compromise but there seems little possibility of it at this juncture. While a genuine Hindu-Muslim agreement has not been achieved, the achievement of the other appears well-nigh impossible. We can but make an effort.

What happened about the Ranchi Ashram?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 8005. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

408. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

March 7, 1935

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Having taken silence for a short while, I reply to your letter myself.

You may write to him that such is my opinion. You will be going to England in a few months. It would be proper then to talk to Barlow and others. But it cannot possibly result in any rights being granted[1]. At the same time it is also necessary to make clear that anything workable can be negotiated only with the political leaders. In the prevailing atmosphere no agreement unrelated to politics is possible.

Writing this will not lead to any misunderstanding.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 8006. Courtesy: G. D. Birla.

[1] The original here is not clear.

409. WELL BEGUN

A sister[1] who in conjunction with another[2] has just begun work in a little village in C. P. writes a deeply interesting and earnest letter from which I take the following extract:[3]

There is much more that is valuable in the letter before me. But I resist the temptation to quote more. I must not divide with other items[4] the emphasis which I wish to lay on the necessity for village workers of labouring like the villagers, which the quotation so clearly recognizes. If these two sisters are blessed by God with health and can stick to their work for long, if not for life, they will certainly make of their village a model—not merely because they have begun with physical labour, but also because of the propriety of their whole scheme of work and the selfless love of the villagers which fires them.

Harijan, 8-3-1935

410. A BAFFLING PROBLEM

An honours graduate writes:

I am a native of Rayalaseema[5] now in the grip of famine. The reasons for the deplorable distress which should move the hearts of all the people of India are:

(1) The awful neglect of the minor irrigation works essential for water-supply for daily and irrigation purposes in this rainless-uplands region.

(2) Awful neglect of the domestic industries including hand-spinning and weaving, which were brought to life by your work in the other parts of the country but not in this region.

(3) Awful ignorance and want of education, ancient or modern, among the people and their everlasting engagement in factious fights and criminal litigation. Hence, more than famine relief work, famine protection work is absolutely necessary to making the life of the people of this region worth living at all.

The third is, perhaps, not a cause but a result of the first two causes. And if the first is substantial and cannot be or is not remedied,

[1] Mary Chesley; *vide* "Letter to Mary Chesley", 1-3-1935

[2] Mary Barr

[3] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had written about the manual labour she had been doing constructing a verandah in her house. She had further added that after completing the verandah she intended to take up gardening.

[4] The source has "with her items".

[5] In Andhra Pradesh

the alternatives before the unhappy inhabitants of these regions are death from starvation or migration from that waterless land. It is, however, likely that the situation is not so hopeless as my correspondent describes. In any case, I expect that the improvement in the matter of water supply is beyond the ability of private workers. But if the conditions of life are at all tolerable, much can undoubtedly be done by right and honest effort in the direction of finding employment for the people. There is so much waste material and waste labour in the country that if the two can be utilized, no one need starve. There is no doubt that relief measures without simultaneous preventive measures are worse than useless. They pauperise the people and turn them away from honest labour. Relief measures can themselves be preventive. Thus, instead of giving doles, organizers can organize local industries and invite the sufferers to engage in them. No one who is not disabled should be fed unless he performs his allotted task. In my opinion, intelligent labour is for the time being the only primary and adult education in this land of starving millions. Literary education should follow the education of the hand—the one gift that visibly distinguishes man from beast. It is a superstition to think that the fullest development of man is impossible without a knowledge of the art of reading and writing. That knowledge undoubtedly adds grace to life, but is in no way indispensable for man's moral, physical or material growth. It is, therefore, to be wished that the graduate correspondent and all the workers whom we can muster together would live in the midst of the sufferers and apply themselves to the constructive task of finding work on the spot for them, so as to enable them to feel the dignity that belongs to the man who earns his bread honestly.

Harijan, 8-3-1935

411. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

March 8, 1935

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

I understand your letter. I shall not strive with you but shall plead with Rajenbabu to release you. I can see quite clearly that if we are to have your services for many a year you should not have any regular responsibility to shoulder. I see too that you must go to Europe from time to time.

My love to you all.

Yours,

Ansari Papers. Courtesy: Jamia Millia Islamia Library

412. LETTER TO O. V. R. SESHAN

WARDHA,
March 8, 1935

MY DEAR SESHAN,

Better late than never. Your letter of 11th ultimo has lain with me all these many days. It is quite true that I do not appreciate the idea of raising funds by means of dramas. Those who stage plays should do so because it is a good thing in itself.

SJT. O. V. R. SESHAN
24 BUNGALOW
TATAPURAM (COCHIN)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

413. LETTER TO FEROZE GANDHI

March 8, 1935

MY DEAR FEROZE,

You have been lax this time in writing to me. I wish it was possible for me to give you the date. I have simply told you that I entertain the idea of being able to go there. I am glad Kamala has gone to live in the sanatorium. I am sure it is the proper thing.

Love.

SJT. FEROZE GANDHI
C/O KAMALA NEHRU
CHANDRA BHUVAN, BHIVANI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

414. LETTER TO JAYARAMDAS JAYAWARDHANE

March 8, 1935

MY DEAR JAYARAMDAS,

I have your letter of the 3rd instant. You have now given me what I can call definite information in as brief a form as possible. I have already put myself in touch with a medical man. I shall see what is possible to do. Meantime send me full particulars. How many volunteers are working in your Mandal?

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

415. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM BAVISHI

March 8, 1935

BHAI SHRI PURUSHOTTAM,

I have your letter. The custom prevalent among the Kanabis of consuming large quantities of sugar on such occasions as death is certainly bad. But who will pay heed to my writings? The local people should work to that end. It is better if they use jaggery instead of sugar, but why should even jaggery be put to unnecessary use? Send me the details of your village industry. What work do you do in the agriculture department? In what subject have you gained specialized knowledge?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 125. Also C.W. 4744

416. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI

March 8, 1935

BHAI CHAND TYAGI,

I require from you an account of your work. I have detained Rajkishori here because they were not interested in their marriage. Neither was desirous of living with the other. The brother did not care. I placed a stiff condition before them and they cheerfully agreed to it. It seemed unfair to let you bear the burden of her care and also

extract work from you. This was the reason for my detaining Rajkishori here. Her work is going on smoothly. She is inexperienced but a simple girl. Her health is good.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3262

417. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

WARDHA,
March 9, 1935

CHI. AMALA,

I have your two letters. Unfortunately the receipt for Rs. 20 cannot be traced. But I am trying through the postmaster to find out how the money can be received. If you are hard up, surely you ought not to have sent me Rs. 20. Shall I send that back to you?

I hope the ailing Sparrow is restored to health. I hope you are now out of pain entirely. Why do you say you cannot cook? You will tell me in good time when the Russian sister is to come.

Blessings from
BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

418. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

March 9, 1935

MY DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

I fear I have not acknowledged your letter of February 12 containing the reference to Miris. I have no objection whatsoever to Rs. 15,000 being set apart for work among them. I hope you will find the right man for it.

SJT. THAKKAR BAPA
MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

419. A LETTER

March 9, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

You will please pardon me for not acknowledging your letter earlier. As you may know I have no funds. I have to beg for all the movements for which I make myself responsible. Why do you not get a contribution from the C. P. Government or from the Leper Fund which is controlled, I understand, by the Government of India?

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

420. LETTER TO HATIM ALVI

March 9, 1935

MY DEAR HATIM,

I have your letter. The pamphlet you refer to has not yet been received. When I get it I shall certainly go through it for your sake if it does not require too much time. But tell me of what use can my opinion be in an essentially domestic quarrel of a family in which I would be considered an utter outsider?

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

421. LETTER TO ABDUL GHANI

March 9, 1935

MY DEAR GHANI,

I hope you are doing well and have had no further trouble with your tonsils. Sardar Vallabhbhai and Sadullah very recently saw Father. He is very much reduced in health, though quite cheerful. It is just likely that he will be transferred to a place in the North. I have no definite information as yet.

You are quite right that in isolated factories people are prone to live upon one another and therefore petty jealousies and scandals are rife. I hope you will rise above all these and set a worthy example to everybody around you.

Are you doing any reading? You should give one hour to reading Urdu and you ought to learn Hindi script also.

Sadullah was here for a few days.

Love.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

422. LETTER TO HEMCHANDRA

March 9, 1935

DEAR HEMCHANDRA,

I have your letter. The authoritative guidance you can only get from the Working Committee. My own opinion, however, is that when a humiliating notice is served, a person may leave his district where that notice is to operate or submit to it. There are undoubtedly occasions when submission would be wrong and leaving the district would be impossible. In that case one would offer Civil Disobedience on one's own responsibility. In this individual case there can be no guidance either from the Congress or from anyone else.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. HEMCHANDRA
GAYGHOR
FARIDPUR (DIST.)

[PS.]

An active office-bearer in the Congress cannot be an active worker in the A. I. V. I. A. for the simple reason that he has to neglect either the one or the other.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

423. LETTER TO J. C. AKARTE

March 9, 1935

MY DEAR AKARTE,

It is very difficult to guide you in the matter. It must be decided by you and you alone. If the incident you refer to can be proved, you can certainly file the information and ask the authorities to prosecute. I see nothing wrong in your publishing in the Press a statement which can be proved.

If the Buva comes here without any fuss and without announcing that he has been invited, I shall certainly receive him. But I have no desire to see him or to send him an invitation. If he comes, he must come alone.

Yours,
BAPU

SJT. AKARTE
MORSHI
AMRAOTI (DIST.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

424. A LETTER

March 9, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I think the letter from the secretary of the A. I. V. I. A. is quite proper. What we want to do is not to carry on a campaign of prohibition, which can only come through the State and which is the proper subject to be taken up by somebody. But what the A. I. V. I. A. seeks to do is to convert the drunkard to abstemiousness. After all you yourself do admit that your picketing could not produce a permanent effect. Picketing is a valuable thing up to a point and for a time. It cannot become a permanent institution and then according to the principle of the division of labour it cannot be done by one and the same organization. A. I. V. I. A. is purely constructive and therefore it must confine itself to teaching people abstemiousness. It cannot take up also the work of picketing and move the State to declare prohi- bition. For that another body has to be created. You have therefore to make your choice. Either work from without or work from within. Both are necessary and no rule can be laid down as to what a person should do. That choice has to be made by each one for himself.

Yours sincerely,
M. K G.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

425. LETTER TO ACHYUT PATWARDHAN

March 9, 1935

MY DEAR PATWARDHAN,

I have your letter. I am sorry that Sastri or Ganesan took all these many months to discharge a small amount.[1] Of course I know that you would gladly take up the Harijan printing again for my sake. I am in correspondence with Sastri and Ganesan about it.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. A. PATWARDHAN
ARYABHUSAN PRESS
POONA 4

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

426. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

March 9, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

See what happened to the wire I sent you.[2] You had said just "Sharma" would suffice and so I thought I would save an anna. The telegram said: "Do come. No misunderstanding."

My decision was not the result of a misapprehension. In view of your circumstances it seemed the correct thing. But do come if thatis your wish. I have written to Dr. Bhaskar about the books. They should be arriving in a day or two.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha*, between pp. 130 and 131

[1] *Vide* "Letter to S. Ganesan",10-3-1935

[2] Gandhiji had addressed it "Sharma, Khurja", but it was returned undelivered as the addressee had shifted in the meanwhile to a neighbouring village.

427. LETTER TO MESSRS KIRLOSKAR BROTHERS[1]

March 10, 1935

GENTLEMEN,

Sheth Ambalal, who is one of the judges, says that he would like to know my views on your wheel before he can come to a conclusion. He proposes to sail for England about the 23rd April next. If the decision is to be arrived at before he sails, the matter has to be expedited. I am under promise to you not to give my opinion to the judges. I would strictly abide by that promise, so long as you wish me to do so, but if Sheth Ambalal represents the opinion of the other judges, there is just a danger of their either declining to give their decision, or give it against you on the grounds of insufficiency of evidence. I felt therefore that I should let you know what was happening. You will please let me know what you would like me to do. I cannot guide you, one way or the other, for the simple reason that I do not know what is best in your interest. You alone can judge for yourselves what is good for you.

Yours sincerely,

MESSRS KIRLOSKAR BROTHERS
KIRLOSKAR WADI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

428. LETTER TO DR. B. JAYARAM

March 10, 1935

DEAR DR. JAYARAM,

I thank you for your letter and I am glad that you consider Shri Bhole to be free from any disease. It is a great thing that he has put on weight. I am asking[2] him to withdraw and adopt your advice to take up some work or continue his studies.

Yours sincerely,

DR. B. JAYARAM
MEDICAL OFFICER
PRINCESS KRISHNAJAMMANNI
TUBERCULOSIS SANATORIUM, MYSORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Kirloskar Brothers", 24-11-1934 and "Letter to Kirloskar Brothers", 10-12-1934

[2] *Vide* the following item.

429. LETTER TO BHOLE

March 10, 1935

MY DEAR BHOLE,

Here is a copy of Dr. Jayaram's letter just received. I have had your letters regularly but I was waiting for Dr. Jayaram's letter before writing to you. It is quite clear now that you should withdraw and proceed to Poona or remain for some time with Sjt. Ramachandran at Bangalore.

SJT BHOLE
PRINCESS KRISHNAJAMMANNI
TUBERCULOSIS SANATORIUM, MYSORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

430. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRAN

March 10, 1935

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRAN,

I have now heard from Dr. Jayaram. He has come to the conclusion that Bhole never had any tuberculosis but whether he had any or not he is certainly now entirely free and that he should now leave the Sanatorium and take to some social work or continue his studies so as to take his mind off himself. I have, therefore, advised[1] Bhole to withdraw and be with you for some time if he wishes to or proceed to Poona at once.

SJT. RAMACHANDRAN
HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH
BANGALORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

431. LETTER TO S. GANESAN

March 10, 1935

MY DEAR GANESAN,

Here is Thakkar Bapa's indictment. This is a most damaging letter. I am sending it to you. It has moved me also. Why have your debts gone on increasing on every inspection? And what can be the

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

meaning of your having promised to sleep at the institution when evidently you will not be able to carry out the undertaking?

I have advised that if the liabilities were incurred properly on behalf of the institution and if in spite of irregularities dishonesty could not be imputed to you and if the institution is found to be necessary for the cause, the whole of the liabilities should be discharged. I have also said that if your honesty was questioned or your promises were proved to be entirely unreliable but the institution was useful, all the liabilities legitimately incurred on behalf of the institution should be discharged and you should be relieved of all connection with the institution. And if the institution was not useful, the Harijan Sevak Sangh should withdraw its support or connection with it altogether.

SJT. S. GANESAN
MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

432. LETTER TO S. BANERJI

March 11, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am quite clear in my mind that the Sangh must not identify itself with any election campaign. Its service of the cause must be judged on its own merits. This does not mean that the public should not support deserving Harijan candidates or that parties which are interested in such things should not promote the election of suitable Harijan candidates to municipalities and local boards. My only point is that the Harijan Sangh has a much superior task to claim its attention.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. S. BANERJI
NEW DRUGGISTS' HALL
JUMMA MUSJID, DELHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2203

433. LETTER TO NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE[1]

WARDHA,
March 11, 1935

DEAR NIRMALBABU,

I have your note as also two numbers of *Congress Socialist* containing your articles which you will be glad to know I had already seen, Masani having brought them to my notice and given me the two copies.

I should not say that any of the articles contains an exposition of Varnashrama or non-violence but in so far as you have touched upon either I can say that you have given a fairly correct representation of the two doctrines as I have known them. As to the rest of the articles whilst you have made an endeavour to be fair to me, there are several things in them on which I do not agree that they are accurate. I don't think they correctly set forth the true state of things. This is, however, of no importance. It is enough that you have made your best endeavour to examine my position in an impartial spirit.

You will be glad to know that I have not forgotten your questions and answers. I hope to finish the revision which I do at odd moments. I hope to send it to you as soon as I have finished it.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. NIRMAL K. BOSE
6/1A BRITISH INDIAN ST.
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 10519

[1] Quoting a part of this letter in *My Days with Gandhi* (p. 14) he says: "In February 1935, I had written two articles in the *Congress Socialist*, entitled 'Is Gandhi a nationalist?' The opinion had been expressed that he was after all, more of an internationalist, and more intimately tied to the poor people's cause to be a 'nationalist', in the usual sense of the term. But for the sake of India's freedom, there had come about an alliance between the radical Gandhi and the nationalist forces; and the prediction was made that as Gandhi became more and more radical in action, the nationalist forces would tend to drop away from his company.

Copies of these two articles were despatched to Gandhi who wrote back from Wardha on the 11th of March 1935."

434. LETTER TO KRISHNA HUTHEESING

March 11, 1935

CHI. KRISHNA,

Prabhavati showed me your letter to her. It grieved me. I knew you had a temper but I had never imagined that you could get so angry without there being any occasion for it. I am the cause of your anger, am I not? After all Prabhavati only conveyed to you what instructions I had given her. You ought to understand that a vow if taken must be observed too. And why such contempt for the Ashram? Can anyone contemptuous of the Ashram have any respect for me? If there is no love for the Ashram, how can there be any love for me? But can one argue against anger? Anger is a kind of madness andwhen it subsides you will laugh at yourself. After all we can be angry only with our own people, and who am I if not one of your own people? The anger will have abated by now. You must tell me of Mummy's condition. You will obey me in this at least, won't you? The ayah's work will be done by the ayah and what Prabha was doing can be done by some other girl like her. Just as you accepted Prabha on better acquaintance, so will you accept any other girl. Supposing Khorshed or even Ba herself comes in place of Prabha! Anyway I shall pull you by the ear and settle the score when we meet. You must now give me a frank account of Mummy's health.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

435. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

March 12, 1935

REVERED BHAI,

Narandas wrote to me about your illness. If you are at all inclined to take treatment, I have suggested an extremely simple one.

I do not expect a letter from you.

Respects from

MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

436. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 12, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I learnt about Radha only from you. I have written to her.

We shouldn't expect much improvement in Father's condition now.

A new book has just been published in which it is stated that the left nostril should first be cleansed by drawing in water through it and throwing it out through the throat and that water should then bedrawn in through both nostrils. This will keep the passage clean and open. The process is not very troublesome. If cold water cannot be tolerated, the washing can be done with lukewarm water. If Father is willing to try this remedy and take the necessary trouble, let him practise it. The only real means of purification, however, is Ramanama.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8432. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

437. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

March 12, 1935

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have your letter. I find it is a difficult task to rescue Kesar. It is obviously impossible for you or for me to detain her against the wishes of her father. Kesar should live wherever Uttamchand lives. You should correspond with the person who intends to marry her. Perhaps he might be induced to give up the thought of Kesar.

I think it is not proper to put Kesar in the Kanya Ashram here. As for me, I am now in an entirely independent house. It can be said that I am doing wholly different work. How can a thirteen-year-old girl be accommodated in a place like the office where there is no provision for education and the like? Uttamchand can protect Kesar provided she remains firm; but if she falters, no one can save her.

It seems Bhagwanji is tired and wants to spend some time with me. If you can relieve him for a short time, the duration of which you

can decide at your end, let him come. You alone should be responsible for the decision. I can have no preferences in the matter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9072

438. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

March 12, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

I think you gave me a list of the books belonging to the Ahmedabad Municipality that are with you. I have no recollection of the titles but *The Earth* and *Colonial and Farm Sanitation*, both by Poore, should be among them. If they are with you, send them on to me or bring them with you when you come.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, p. 152

439. LETTER TO N. S. HARDIKAR

WARDHA,
March 13, 1935

DEAR DR. HARDIKAR,

On inquiring of Kamala Devi about you, she told me that you were suffering from T.B. I was distressed. Please let me know how you are faring.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. HARDIKAR
HOOBLI
KARNATAKA

From the original: N. S. Hardikar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

440. ADVICE TO VILLAGERS[1]

[Before *March 14, 1935*][2]

Just a number of six inches wide and a foot deep trenches would do with open space in between, on which the earth dug out should be banked up in ridges, the people to use the two banks of the trench as seats. This is the simplest device. You have done the thing without any sense of shame all these years, and you may do without latrines. But if you do want them, we could easily help in building them for you out of your own village materials. All that you have to do is to cover the evacuations with the earth near by. In eight days you will see that it is converted into rich manure, and you can have a rotation of suitable fodder or vegetable crops all the year round. I am telling you from my own experience. Your crops will be increased without any extra expense or effort, your health will improve, for the flies will carry no disease germs, and your village will be turned intoa clean spot. Come along, then, will you come with your spades and shovels, or not?

'We will, we will,' they exclaimed.

Harijan, 15-3-1935

441. ADVICE TO A FRIEND[3]

[Before *March 14, 1935*][4]

I shall explain it to you in a minute. One of these *ghanis* probably costs nothing less than 50 rupees to make. Now, if all stopped home-pressing, there would be over 100,000 *ghanis* lying idle in the country. I have allowed one press to seven villages —surely, an underestimate.

Think what it means. Allow 30 rupees per ghani. That means

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Notes". In the course of a sanitation campaign in the neighbourhood of Wardha, Gandhiji and party visited Ramnagar and Sindi and found the streets littered with excreta. Gandhiji armed the party with shovels and buckets and began to remove the dirt. The villagers joined. He then addressed the villagers.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak",14-3-1935

[3] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Notes". Gandhiji had advised purchase of an idle village *ghani* (oil-press). But the friend who was asked to get this *ghani* and to install it had failed to see the rationale of the whole adventure.

[4] *Vide* the following item.

that three millions of rupees worth of capital is lying idle! Is it not a tragedy? How can we allow this to run to waste? And if we had all of them working, fancy the number of men they would employ, at the rate of only one man per each. And, then, the tons and tons of oil-cake that would be released for the half-starved cows and bullocks. The same is the case about our wooden sugar-cane crushers.

But will the people listen?

It is to make them listen to us that we are having this *ghani* on our own land, that we are husking our own rice and grinding[1] our own flour. But even if they will not listen, what then? Supposing people will not listen to the gospel of truth and non-violence, shall we ask them, then, to take to untruth and violence? We have to go on doing what is the best thing for the nation and for the poor, who compose the nation, no matter what others do, or will not do.

Harijan, 15-3-1935

442. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

Unrevised *March 14, 1935*

CHI. PREMA,

Now that there has been a second letter from you, I abandon the desire of writing in my own hand and dictate this.

Why should you apologize for the fact that the yarn with you is not enough? If the yarn I sent is not enough for the purpose, what can you do?

Arun's birthday comes some time in April. I don't remember the exact date. It was mentioned in Sushila's letter.

Your hand can probably be likened to Mira's. Of what use is a hand which has never become rough or developed sores through work?

No new car has arrived here at Jamnalalji's place; he has only a horse-carriage and a bullock-cart.

Take unboiled milk, uncooked leafy vegetables and tamarind and see what happens. Perhaps all the pimples will subside.

An indigenous oil-press has been installed here and linseed oil is extracted. Ba and the other women clean the seed. There is no servant. All work is done by ourselves. I always eat with the others seated in a

[1] The source has "pounding".

row.

About a mile from here there is a village named Sindi which Mahadev, Mira, Kanu, Jamnalal, Madalasa and Ramakrishna go and clean every day. I also went once. I am thinking of going again. The problem of cleanliness in villages can be solved only if we ourselves become scavengers.

The picture of the village which you have given is as pathetic as it is true. We have to transform such villages. The task can be accomplished neither by intellectual power nor by physical force but only through the power of love.

You should derive what comfort you can from so much today. I must have the account of your progress.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10368. Also C.W. 6807. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

443. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHANA CHANDIWALA

March 14/15, 1935

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

May you live long. May all your noble aspirations be realized.

I consider your staying on here futile; I shall not be able to endure your illness. Go and stay where you can maintain your health. I deem it best that you leave today. If you have any questions to ask, ask them by post.

I certainly want to be a mother to you, but I have not the requisite ability. A mother serves; she never expects service. I have always taken service from you. I don't remember ever having served you. A mother never commands; I have always commanded you. What reassurance can I then give you? Do go to the South with your mother. There is no harm in your going to Pondicherry. I do not like the idea of Banaras. Where is there any Rajayoga there? If not to Pondicherry, you may go to Dehra Dun, Almora, etc. For the present Delhi will do.

Do whatever service you like to in Delhi. Of course, anybody can serve the Village Industries Association without being a member. I

have already spoken to you about the books. . . .[1]

. . .[2] Nobody ever has two helpers. There is only one helper, that is God, the others are so only in name. . . .[3]

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 10233. Courtesy: Brijkrishna Chandiwala

444. SCAVENGERS ALL

Untouchability is responsible for more things than we know. Now that attention is being drawn to village sanitation, it is becoming clear that the insanitation of villages and towns is chiefly due to the belief in untouchability. For fear of touching our own dirt and, therefore, cleaning it, we wallow in dirt and have consigned our obvious duty to a portion of our kith and kin, and because they are rendering what is the most important service of all, we have made them lepers of society, untouchable and uncared for.

The only remedy for the removal of this social evil and curse is for every one of us to be his own scavengers. We would then soon learn the art of cleanliness. We would miss many of the most common diseases which are due to filth. And we should at the same time serve an economic end. G. I. Fowler states, in his *Wealth and Waste,* that a proper disposal of human excreta would realize Rs. 2 per head per year. In the vast majority of cases, all this rich manure is being wasted and disease invited. He quotes Prof. Brultini, from his volume *The Use of Waste Materials,* who says that "nitrogen derived from the 282,000 residents of Delhi is sufficient to fertilize a minimum of 10,000 and maximum of 95,000 acres." Because we do not know how to treat our scavengers, Delhi of ancient fame has pestilential spots of which we have to feel ashamed. If we all become scavengers, we would know how to treat ourselves and how to turn what today is poison into rich food for plant life. Thirty crores of the population of India should mean, according to Dr. Fowler, an annual gain of 60 crores of rupees to the country if we would but make a wise use of human excreta.

Let no one be appalled by the magnitude of the problem. Those who have the conviction have to begin with themselves in the full faith that everybody else is bound to follow their example if their faith

[1], [2] & [3] Omissions as in the source

outlasts the first flush of enthusiasm. The word "faith" is, perhaps, not the proper word. For the proposition that human excreta are as valuable as those of cattle is not a matter of faith but of daily experience. What is required is eradication of age-long inertia. Sustained, intelligent application of a few today will be the common property of the many tomorrow.

Harijan, 15-3-1935

445. LETTER TO HARIBHAU PHATAK

March 15, 1935

MY DEAR HARIBHAU,

I have your letter. When I get the particulars from you, I shall try to write something on Paisa Mandal for the *Harijan.* I hope that you have made it clear that you are the donor, though it is likely that I may acquire the merit. You should not have had even a slight attack of dysentery from trying whole unhusked rice. If it was under-cooked, that rice should not have been eaten. This rice is not to be taken as an infliction, but as an aid to health. Every one of the workers if he honestly can, after thorough experimenting, must testify that whole rice is sweeter to the taste, that it requires to be eaten in smaller quantities than polished rice to produce the same satisfaction, and that it cannot in any way be injurious to the body. I have no doubt that you will be the better for taking your milk with *gur*. I hope you do not share the common superstition that *gur* cannot be taken with milk. The situation of the Harijans in your part of the country has to be handled delicately and tactfully. There can be no doubt that unless we have the general principle of drawing our workers from the villages, we shall make no headway, and in my opinion real swaraj consists in successfully tackling this age-long problem. Where have you procured the paper on which you have written? What is the price?

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

446. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

March 15, 1935

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

I have received your letter. l have no objection to giving you some more time. But I will find it objectionable if you sleep over the

matter. How much more time do you want? The work will not be finished unless you fix a time-limit. Surajbehn had asked for a maximum of six months when she had come here. She had told me that if it was possible she would vacate in only a month. As far as I remember I had this talk in November. Should I consider this the fourth month and May 31 as the final date? I feel that it is improper to give in to that woman's persistence.

Harijan's Sastri is your responsibility. I will shift *Harijan* to Poona and will see that the Sangh does not have to incur an expense of even one paisa on that. But is it not our duty to maintain Sastri after making him leave his job? He must be maintained if he is not a wholly useless person. I am proceeding in the belief that he is not a worthless person. Guide me, as you are my eyes as well as my ears.

I still adhere to what I wrote to you about Ganesan.

It will be a great achievement if you can settle the dispute between the Nattars and the Harijans.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1153

447. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

WARDHA,
March 15/16, 1935

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. I had received the previous letter also but was waiting for the second one.

See that you do not have constipation. I hope you do know that leafy vegetables can be grown anywhere. The leaves certainly come up within seven days of the sowing. If you take a farmer to a field in the vicinity of Bochasan, he will show you a few varieties of eatable leafy vegetables. Some of these grow like grass—they are in fact grass. It will serve your purpose even if you get ten or twenty leaves. The people there are bound to have seeds of leafy vegetables. Which house will not have fenugreek, mustard and coriander seeds?

Who are the guests? What do you cook for them? Is the rice you use unpolished? How much time does it take to cook? Does it take more time than polished rice? You should measure time by a watch.

At what time are you supposed to get up? Do you have prayer?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9395. Also C.W. 640. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

448. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

March 15/16, 1935

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Why do you long for my letters? I do not write to you because I feel that you do not need my letters so much and that also saves time. I do write if there is anything to say. Moreover Kishorelal is here, so I get to know things from him and also let you know anything I want to convey through him.

I hope you are keeping well. Know it for certain that you are making a big mistake if you are spending too much time with thedoctors. Medical science is not the greatest need of the people of India or that of the world. Perhaps you are aware that common experience does not prove that people are more healthy and freer from diseases where there are many doctors. But they are more healthy when they strictly observe the laws of nature, i.e., cleanliness. There was a Turkish woman here. She said that in Turkey villagers were told to shun six things and one of these was doctors. This does not mean that one should not make use of the knowledge one has obtained. It only means that it should be used very sparingly and even while doing that people should be taught to prevent diseases.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9395. Also C.W. 640. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

449. LETTER TO EDMOND AND YVONNE PRIVAT

March 16, 1935

MY DEAR ANAND AND BHAKTI,

Though you have given me a long love letter I can only dictate and then too be brief. Allow me to do so because I have hardly any time and because just now I can only write with the left hand. I have what may be called the writer's cramp. You will be surprised to learn that I have never been able to read *Utopia*, though I have heard much in praise of it.

We are getting on with village work and trying to convert the 13 acres of ground that Jamnalalji has given us in Wardha into a model village. We are very far from it. But we are only just settling down. You must some day not very far revisit India. You know that third-class travelling is not so difficult and that it is comparatively cheaper.

I hope you are getting your *Harijan* regularly. Devdas is getting on very well: He and his wife are devoted to their baby.

Love to you both.

BAPU

DR. EDMOND PRIVAT
BELLAVISTA
LOCARNO, SWITZERLAND

From a photostat: G.N. 2339; also a facsimile: *Mahatma*, Vol. IV, Opp. p. 32

450. LETTER TO N. G. APTE

March 16, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have now been able to trace the file you sent to me. I am returning it to you by registered book post. I have already expressed my sorrow for the destruction of the two samples that you had kindly sent me. If you would send them again, I shall try them and report to you. I would, however, say that preparation of these juices can hardly ever be part of any village industry. They are not of any great value from the health point of view. The latest researches show that these juices do not retain the vitamins of the fruits from which they are

extracted. If your preparation retains the vitamins, that would undoubtedly be a gain.[1]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

451. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

March 17, 1935

CHI. MARY,

I wonder if I replied to your previous letter. Now I have your second letter. You cannot always make people pay for medicines. Always tell them that they ought to pay, whatever they can, not by way of fees but in order that people who cannot afford anything might be helped. Where you find that people are taking advantage of you, you should resolutely refuse to let them have any medicines without payment. Do not encourage people to come to you for medicines but lead them to a natural life and point out to them household nature-cure remedies.

Of course cripples are to be fed and clothed without being expected to do any work. They are a first charge on a well-ordered society.

I understand what you say about the coolie question. You were certainly entitled to ask your neighbour to help you without feeling dependent upon him. There was no principle at stake. Mary C.'s[2] method of doing everything herself even at the risk of losingtime is not to be lightly disposed of. Local circumstances should determine the choice of a particular way where more than one are open to us.

If you have the slightest trace of dysentery it is absolutely necessary for you not to strain yourself in any way. You have to do only light work.

I am not doing physical work. What I am doing is the superintendence of the kitchen so as to bring it in line with village surroundings. All servants have been dispensed with. One only has been retained because he has undergone training enough himself to become one with us. He is a member of the family. He works side by side with everybody else. And whereas he was getting only 7 or 8

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to N. G. Apte", 7-3-1935

[2] Mary Chesley

rupees per month he is getting here 8 rupees plus food which means at least 14 rupees per month.

Mary C. is quite wrong in holding that foreign industrialists are to be preferred to Indian industrialists. I admit that there is not much room for choice but such as there is in favour of the indigenous gentry, for the simple reason that they cannot drain the wealth of the country and it is easier to deal with them than with the foreign industrialists who do not hesitate to make good their position by force of arms which they are able to wield effectively. Their Indian counterpart is unarmed, and knows that he cannot play fast and loose with his dependents.

If you saw that your neighbours were in need of assistance during the harvesting season, it would certainly be your duty to offer your help without any expectation of return in the shape of helping you to build the verandah.

I have now your letter of 9th March in front of me. I have a vivid recollection of our discussion over Duncan's two chapters. They had reference to the village worker. You told me in the course of our discussion whilst you endorsed his views generally there were portions about which you thought he was over enthusiastic and highly emotional. It was not a perfunctory discussion either. You laid special stress upon his suggestion of wandering teachers who would go from village to village. I think that this was the only point which would have been overlooked[1] had I not come across your letter of the 9th.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6095. Also C.W. 3365. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

452. LETTER TO R. S. PANDIT

March 17, 1935

MY DEAR RANJIT,

I hope you have received my wire regarding the purchase of Shaila Ashram in Almora. The Sangh Committee thought that they ought not to reduce the price to below Rs. 15,000. You can take possession at once. There is a public worker staying on the property. Perhaps you have no objection to his occupying a portion of the

[1] The source has "looked over".

buildings till you require the use of the whole of the buildings. But he can be removed immediately [when] you are to take possession.

You will now correspond with Jamnalalji or rather Shri Kishorelal Mashruwala, Chairman of the Gandhi Seva Sangh, about payment and legal transfer.

I understand what you say about Swaraj Bhavan.

[PS.]

A copy is sent to Jamnalalji also.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

453. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

March 17, 1935

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

I had your telegram and tried to send you one in reply but the post office was closed. The service was available only on paying a higher charge. So I decided to reply by letter as there was no particular hurry about it.

Rajendrababu is going to Calcutta. He will form his opinion after consultations there. Rajendrababu had a complaint about your suggestion of joint action. How can it be "joint action"? It is for the Congress to fix or not fix a day. A joint meeting of non-Congressmen and Congressmen is understandable. The very name 'Congress' includes Socialists and all other Congressmen. Socialists are a part of the Congress, are they not?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3449

454. TESTIMONIAL TO TULSI MAHER

March 17, 1935

On behalf of the Nepal Government Tulsi Maher, the Charkha Pracharak of Nepal, is making a study tour of India in connection with the charkha. 1 hope that all lovers of the charkha will give him all possible information and the requisite help in his research.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6548

455. SPEECH AT THE A. I .V. I. A. BOARD MEETING[1]

[On Or before *March 18*, 1935][2]

The pledge does bear a spiritual stamp. The very fact that we are coming again and again to it indicates that the Board wants to discharge its duties strictly, consistently with the objects of the Association. The Pledge was arrived at after the fullest deliberation, and the question whether it will affect the number of our members need not worry us at all. The Board can go on with half a dozen members. All that we have to do is to explain the implications of the pledge and then it should be left to him or her who subscribes to it to find out whether he or she can satisfy all the conditions. The member will certainly ask himself at every step whether he is applying the best part of *his* energy and talent to the objects of the Association, that is to say, even whilst he is eating or travelling. If you think it is a vague pledge, you may make it more concrete, but I do not think it is vague. It is a gentlemen's pledge, and each member is put upon his honour as to the interpretation of the pledge. We may not pry into the details of a man's life. Let the man be his own judge. Let me tell you that it is possible for an active solicitor to give all his talent and energy to the objects of the Association. Thus he will give a different shape tohis office. He will invest in reams and reams of hand-made paper and village-made ink and see that all the documents issuing from his office are on that paper and written in that ink. He has a large staff in his office. Whenever he has leisure, he will try to interest them in the Association and persuade them to confine themselves, as far as possible, to village made things. And so on and so forth.

Harijan, 22-3-1935

[1] There was a prolonged discussion on the Membership Pledge at the A. I. V. I. A. Board meeting and the members had sought Gandhiji's advice.

[2] The meeting of the A. I. V. I. A. was held at Wardha from the 16th to 18th March, 1935

456. DISCUSSION WITH MEMBERS OF A. I. V. I. A.[1]

[On or before *March 18, 1935*][2]

A regular battle raged between Gandhiji and the scientist members from Bengal on the meaning of unpolished rice. Some of the members ate for the first time here the full unpolished rice of Gandhiji's definition, and some had understood by it the hand-pounded, part-polished rice which is still to be found in our villages. But Gandhiji, who had taken his stand on medical opinion refused to yield an iota of his ground and contended that the pericarp, aleurone and embryo, containing vitamins that, according to medical opinion, were destroyed in mill-polished rice, were all retained only in unhusked rice and could be retained in no other. That they were so retained or could be so retained in once-pounded or twice-pounded rice had to be proved by the chemists and scientists.

[A MEMBER:] But rice pounded only once by the hand in the village *dhenki is* almost unpolished.

[GANDHIJI:] That is not how a scientist would talk. Do we talk of an *almost* complete right angle? A right angle is a right angle of 90 degrees, not less, not more.

But the people are so accustomed to the slightly polished rice that it is difficult to persuade them to take to the use of wholly unpolished rice.

A reformer will not argue like that.

It does not cook easily, and when cooked, it all becomes a lump and scares people away.

That it takes more time to cook is true, that it is delicious, and more delicious than the polished rice, has been proved beyond doubt; and after all, what is handsome to the eye may not be handsome after all. Handsome is that handsome tastes.

[GOSIBEHN:] Don't you murder good age-old proverbs, Bapu, in the heat of your argument.

Well, what else can I do, when I am out to murder age-old prejudices and superstitions?

The scientist members were adamant too. Pericarp, they conceded, was lost in the part-polished, once-pounded rice, but was it essential to health?

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Notes"

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[G.] If you can prove that it is not essential to health, I shall readily capitulate.

But the problem of food does not simply consist in the calculation of vitamins and proteins. Biological experiments must also be made, and it is those experiments that should finally determine the matter.

It is for you to make those biological experiments. Don't say off-hand that Bengalis need half a pound of rice every day and must digest half a pound. Devise a scientifically perfect diet for them. Determine the quantity of starch required for an average human constitution. I would not be satisfied until I have been able to add some milk and milk fat and greens to the diet of our common village folk, and I want chemists who would starve in order to find an ideal diet for their poor countrymen. Unfortunately for us, our doctors have never approached the question from the humanitarian standpoint, at any rate from the poor man's standpoint.

The upshot of the discussion was the decision to suspend the issue of certificates and cancel the ones already issued, so far as unpolished rice is concerned, and the members were urged to carry on further inquiry and research, in order to place the matter beyond a shadow of doubt.

Harijan, 22-3-1935

457. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

Unrevised *March 18, 1935*

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

You have given a good description of the agent. I am able to form an idea. You should write "Saiyed Sahib" and not just "Saiyed". I do not want to annoy you by persistently criticizing you. I trust that you would do nothing with deliberate malice but I also know that you could be led astray or provoked into saying or writing thoughtless words. Moreover you do allow your opinions to be based on unconfirmed reports. But it is difficult to change your habit forthwith. Yes, if you regularly pray as in the ashram and recite Chapter XII [of the Gita] which both of you were made to memorize before your marriage and if you meditate on all this, your heart will soften without any effort and your words will be full of humility, love and truth. Then you will not sit in judgment upon what others do. You will rather examine your own conduct. God has not equipped us very fully with the faculty of judging others. Who has been able to

penetrate the depth of the human heart and isn't everything imperfect unless we know what is within us? That is why the sages have said that we should never sit in judgment over others. We will have done our duty if we can weigh our own deeds dispassionately. The maxim that if we are good, the whole world is good is but a corollary of this statement.

I have no time to write about other things. I will definitely send for Aruna khadi woven from yarn spun by me. But I am afraid you may not get it in time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4834

458. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

March 18, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

It is difficult to advise. Ballubhai seems to have committed himself to some extent. If he has agreed to have prayers, why should he object to distribution of sweets? Are the conditions for free grants the same as for grants-in-aid? The Government's demand makes no distinction between the two.

Be that as it may, Ballubhai should now consult friends. If they are all firm, they should send a reply to this effect: "The people's fight against the Government has not stopped. It is not a private individual's birthday, but a king's reign which is being celebrated. The Government, therefore, would be rewarding hypocrisy on our part if we joined in the celebration of a rule which we denounce. Since civil disobedience has been suspended, the Government may issue any orders it likes and get them obeyed, but most people will do nothing willingly. It would hardly be proper for the Government to force the people to participate in such celebrations against their will. As far as possible, we don't wish to hurt anybody's feelings. The Government, therefore, should not force us to do so. We, on our part, will not start an agitation. Those who wish to join the celebrations will be free to do so. The Government should not write to the Municipality asking it do anything, and the Municipality would write nothing to the Government nor pass any resolution."

I think that, even if the Government offers some special facilities to the Municipality on this occasion, the latter cannot participate in the celebrations. As for the larger question, Ballubhai ought not to raise it.

This is only my general view. If the circumstances in Ahmedabad require a different policy, of course I can't judge about it.

You may now advise Ballubhai as you think fit.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 153-4

459. LETTER TO JOHARILAL MITTAL

[On or after *March 18, 1935*][1]

BHAI JOHARILALJI,

I have your telegram as well as letter. The deputation too is here. I require two lacs but I also understand the circumstances. Jamnalalji too is insistent. How can I resist so much love? God willing I shall reach on the 20th. Please do your best to collect the amount.

Leave out all pomp and show. Do this work as a religious duty. Send me a copy of the rules and regulations of the Sammelan, past addresses and the history of the Sammelan, etc.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Madhya Pradesh aur Gandhiji, p. 48

[1] Jamnalal Bajaj's diary contains an entry under this date regarding the deputation and Gandhiji's assent to preside over the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan to be held at Indore in April 1935.

460. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

WARDHA,
March 19, 1935

CHI AMBUJAM[1],

You are right. I have been too busy to write, though you have always been in my thoughts.

I have a huge parcel of delicacies. Honey and fruit alone may be sent. What is the use of your sending *papar, murabba,* etc. And as you know I get enough fruit locally. Therefore learn to save every pice. Put it by and send the savings to me for the poor. If there is anything I want, I shall surely ask for it.

Just now I am taking raw milk, raw leaves, honey, fresh tamarind and oranges. My weight last week was 108 lb.

Amtul is in Delhi with Devdas. Gomtibehn is here. Mira and her companions have completely recovered.

I hope Krishnasamy is getting on.

Your yarn was quite good.

If K. needs housekeeping, you have to keep it, not Mother.

You can do service there as well as anywhere else. You have Hindi, khadi and other village industries.

I know Kengheri Ashram. Do you interest K. in such things?

We had many sisters here for the A. I. V. I. A. meeting. Now we have Rajkumari Amrit Kaur.

I have accepted the invitation to preside at the Hindi Sammelan on April 20th. There will be at the same time a Mahila Sammelan. You should come if you can. You can bring K. with you, if he will come. Janammal will, I take it, accompany you.

Love.

BAPU[2]

From the original. Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] This is in Hindi.
[2] *ibid*

461. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

WARDHA,
March 19, 1935

MY DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I have already handed to you Messrs Kirloskar Bros. letter of 14th instant addressed to me.

I commend their letter to the earnest attention of the examiners.

As Messrs Kirloskar Bros. have permitted me to give my own opinion, 1 do so for the guidance of the examiners. The numbers against the following paragraphs refer to those in their letter.

(2) The trial at Wardha is not yet complete. In so far as it has gone, I can say that a capable worker did succeed once or twice in spinning over 8,000 yards in 4 hours. There never has yet been an output of 16,000 in eight hours at Wardha. No woman has worked at it for eight hours at a stretch here. My trial of it is still proceeding. I should like to try it for six months before pronouncing an opinion onits average capacity. But if the examiners are satisfied on this point, absence of a conclusive opinion from me need not in any way delay or otherwise affect the examiners' award.

(5) I am unable to subscribe to the opinion that the machine "has fulfilled all the important and major conditions of the competition". I have up to now only applied myself to two conditions, viz., 1st and 4th.

I do not regard the 1st condition as to handiness as a minor one. Indeed it is in my opinion the one unalterable condition. Without that condition, there would surely be no difficulty in producing a machine that would give more than 16,000 yards in 8 hours. Handiness has to be proved with reference to the crores of cottages scattered in 700,000 villages of India. Accepting Webster's definition of 'convenient', a mere look at the machine would convince one who has any knowledge of Indian cottages and conditions that the machine cannot be called handy in any shape or form. For an Indian cottage it is without doubt a cumbersome piece of machinery.

As to conditions 5 and 6, I am wholly incompetent to pronounce an opinion.

As to condition 2, it is yet too early for me to pronounce an opinion.

I understand from Shri Kale as also from the machine of the

firm who were good enough to visit me that the machine is not capable of being reduced in size any further than it is already. I am quite satisfied that the machine cannot be accommodated in an Indian cottage of the average size. The firm's suggestion that cottages should be specially built in order to house the machine is too unpractical to need refutation. In my opinion, therefore, the machine does not satisfy what to me is one of the vital conditions of the prize. But it may not be considered as more than the evidence of a witness before the judges.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SHANKERLAL BANKER
AHMEDABAD

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

462. LETTER TO L. K. KIRLOSKAR

March 19, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your exhaustive letter in reply to mine of the 10th instant. Sjt. Banker happened to be here when it came and I handed him a copy of your letter. I have now forwarded to him my opinion[1] of which I enclose herewith a copy.

I was tempted to add a paragraph about the lower use which in my discussion with you I showed could be made of the machine. I avoided mention of it for I remembered your objection to it. But if you want me to give my opinion to the judges about the lower use, I will gladly send it to them.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1 Banker's letter

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

463. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE[1]

March 19, 1935

CHI. PANDITJI,

I got your letter. I was waiting for it. Do whatever you can for Rambhau. Do not be angry. Conciliate Mridulabehn. I had a very good letter from her. I do appreciate that you have started cooking separately. Teach Rambhau to cook also.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9073

464. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

March 19, 1935

CHI . NARAHARI,

I have your letter. I have already heard something about Neelmani. I shall know something more from Bhagwanji. I am afraid such things will go on happening and we have to overcome them as best we can. It is no doubt good to remove all young men without exception. Our safety lies only in young girls and responsible men remaining.

Bhagwanji will compete his thirty-five days there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9073

465. LETTER TO SECRETARY, POLITICAL DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL

[On or after *March 19, 1935*]

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT
OF BENGAL

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your letter (No. 8043x) of the 19th instant

[1] This and the following item were written on the same postcard.

regarding my letter[1] asking for permission to Shri Mahadev Desai to interview detenu Shri Chandra Mukherjea at present detained in Deoli Jail.

Yours truly,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

466. LETTER TO DR. N. N. GODBOLE

WARDHA,
March 20, 1935

DEAR DR. GODBOLE,

I thank you for your letter enclosing your valuable note on the comparative merit of cow-butter fat and buffalo-butter fat. The carefulness with which you are approaching this question tempts me to put further questions. I am using tamarind as part of food, of course in measured quantities, for those who are suffering from constipation and who are on uncooked green leaves such as *methi, chakvat* and the like. The popular belief in these parts, however, seems to be that tamarind produces boils and induces rheumatism. Is there any warrant for these beliefs? Can you also tell me what leaves are edible in an uncooked state? I am using just now the *bhajis* one gets in the market including cabbage, cauliflower, in an uncooked state.

One thing more. If you are following the pages of Harijan, you must have noticed the opinion I have published on unpolished rice.[2] It seems that there is no such thing as whole unpolished rice to be had in the market. I had difficulty in procuring whole unpolished rice. And I am now grinding my own paddy and have now whole unpolished rice. Chemists, however, say that there is no proof to show that whole unpolished rice is meant by those who have given their opinion in its favour. I have, however, contended that in a matter of such importance medical men who have given me their considered opinion could not have used the expression 'unpolished rice, in a loose unscientific manner. There can be degrees of polished rice but surely not of unpolished. They contend that it is highly likely that the pericarp which even a slight polishing removes, is unnecessary for the system if

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary, Political Department, Government of Bengal", 20-2-1935

[2] *Vide* "How to Begin"

not also injurious. Of course they admit that they have no authority for their statement. They simply say that the testimony in favour of unpolished rice has reference only to the partly polished, hand-pounded bazaar rice which passes as unpolished. Can you throw any light on this controversy? Is the pericarp of rice lndigestible? Is it harmful to the system? Can it be that this matter has escaped investigation up till now?

Yours sincerely,

DR. N. N. GODBOLE
HINDU UNIVERSITY
BENARES

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

467. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

March 20, 1935

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS,

I have your letter. I think it is worth while incurring the air mail expense if we incur any expense at all in sending the weekly letter. I think that it is a good thing to send the weekly letter. Edith Hunter is a fine worker. She is the soul of the Society. They are publishing a weekly bulletin also. Do you not get it?

You have drawn a full and pathetic picture of Satisbabu's life. I am quite clear in my mind that there is nothing to be done. There are men enough to take loving care of him in Benares. But he must be allowed to live out his life in the manner he likes best. After all God concerns Himself about the tiniest life. How much more so about those who are conscious of His power as also His benevolence. I think, therefore, you need not worry about him at all.

Love.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

468. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

March 20, 1935

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

Why should doctors get ill? And how are you going to discharge the tremendous burden you have undertaken if you will

develop a weak body? I hope you are now completely restored.

We cannot be party to prosecution against Harijans who indulge in marriages in breach of the Sarda Act. It is a reform which Harijans must tackle for themselves. We have no right to undertake prosecution until *savarna* Hindus have proved themselves abovereproach in this matter and until there is no distinction between *savarnas* and *avarnas.*

What is this complaint about a separate silk store being conducted under your patronage and supervision and by a man discharged by the A. I. S. A.? There is a long complaint made by three writers from Sialkot.

Yours sincerely,

DR. GOPICHAND
LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

469. LETTER TO HARIVADAN

March 20, 1935

BHAI HARIVADAN,

Neither you ever give me any trouble nor I you. But I am not ignorant of your whereabouts and your activities. Now today the time has come for giving you some trouble. A Harijan who is a favourite of Mama and whom Mama gives first rank in integrity and who shares half of your name—being called Haribhai—seems to have become your neighbour to satisfy your wishes. He is building a house under your inspiration. Now all this is beyond my comprehension. Leave aside Harijans. How many men of such integrity have we among non-Harijan workers? When there is such a shortage of workers why did you choose to bury such a worker as Haribhai by getting him build a house in Sachin? Mama has asked me to help him. Solve my problem to my satisfaction; and only after that the question of assistance can be thought of.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI HARIVADAN
HARIJANVAS
NAVSARI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4006

470. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA B. ATHAVALE[1]

[*March 21, 1935*][2]

Prabhashankar told me that I had given sufficient cause to Nanalal Ravi to get angry with me. I do not know anything about it. However if I have given him any cause to get angry with me, I would, being a devotee of ahimsa, apologize a thousand times. If you have not so far found out the cause, please do so and let me know.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

471. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

March 21, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. I understand about the wire. If my advice is not in conformity with your experience, you need not act upon it. I have issued no command to you, simply left you free. You should come here only if you feel that for your study or for the sake of Draupadi or the children it would be best for you to come here. That is, I am not particular as to where you live.

The two books by Poore have been received. Whose biographies do you want? And should they be in English or in Hindi?

I did have quite a number of books on Indian drugs but now I have none as they have all been donated to the Ahmedabad Municipality.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, pp. 152-3

[1] Professor of Sanskrit first at Gujarat Vidyapith and then at S. L. D. Arts College, Ahmedabad

[2] From the placing of the item in the source

472. LETTER TO TARADEVI

WARDHA,
March 21, 1935

CHI. TARA[1],

I have your letter. I do not know the rules of the Seva Sadan. But if you must go, I do not think there will be any difficulty. Your going will certainly please Mother. Do go if you feel so disposed. But your work should not suffer. I am writing to Mother. How far have you progressed in your studies?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI TARAMATIBEHN
MAHILA VIDYALAYA
LUCKNOW

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

473. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

WARDHA,
March 21, 1935

CHI. VIDYA,

Tara writes that you worry about her. What can you gain by worrying? What can you achieve by her being with you? Your concern at the moment is to regain your health. You will certainly beall right if you calmly pursue the treatment.

Blessings from
BAPU

RANI VIDYAVATI OF HARDOI
IN-PATIENT
CHITTARANJAN SEVA SADAN
148 RASSA ROAD
KALIGHAT, CALCUTTA

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

[1] Daughter of Rani Vidyavati

474. INTERVIEW TO A MISSIONARY[1]

[Before *March 22, 1935*][2]

A missionary friend who was on a visit to us asked Gandhiji what was the most effective way of preaching the gospel of Christ, for that was his mission.

[GANDHIJI:] To live the gospel is the most effective way— most effective in the beginning, in the middle and in the end. Preaching jars on me and makes no appeal to me, and I get suspicious of missionaries who preach. But I love those who never preach but live the life according to their lights. Their lives are silent yet most effective testimonies. Therefore I cannot say what to preach, but I can say that a life of service and uttermost simplicity is the best preaching. If, therefore, you go on serving people and ask them also to serve, they would understand. But you quote instead John 3, 16 and ask them to believe it. That has no appeal to me, and I am sure people will not understand it. Where there has been acceptance of the gospel through preaching, my complaint is that there has been some motive.

[Q.] But we also see it and we try our best to guard against it.

[A.] But you can't guard against it. One sordid motive vitiates the whole preaching. It is like a drop of poison which fouls the whole food. Therefore I should do without any preaching at all. A rose does not need to preach. It simply spreads its fragrance. The fragrance is its own sermon. If it had human understanding and if it could engage a number of preachers' the preachers would not be able to sell more roses than the fragrance itself could do. The fragrance of religious and spiritual life is much finer and subtler than that of the rose.[3]

Harijan, 29-3-1935

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's report of the interview published in, *Harijan* under the title "The Most Effective Way".

[2] Gandhiji commenced his four-week silence on March 22. The interview, therefore, must have taken place before that date.

[3] Mahadev Desai says: "But all this apparently failed to be of effect and the reverend gentleman retired with the imprecation, ... 'Mr. Gandhi . . . soon there will come a day when you will be judged, not in your righteousness, but in the righteousness of Jesus.' "

475. INTERVIEW TO MISSIONARY LADIES[1]

[Before *March, 22, 1935*][2]

Q. When you concentrate on the health and welfare of the villages, are you going in for medical relief to any extent?

GANDHIJI: We are not going in for medical relief but for prevention. Therefore we concentrate on sanitation and hygiene. I am of opinion that a good deal of medical help is given 'only in order to make people more helpless. Medical help, in most cases, is practically thrown at them, and so it is lost on them. Some of my co-workers are going to a village close by where the streets are covered with filth. No wonder if the eyes of the children there are bad and there are all kinds of diseases. Just now our workers' efforts do not seem to make any impression on the villagers; but when they find that, as a result of their village having become cleaner and free from filth, they are also comparatively free from disease, they will appreciate the difference. Now, if you had a free dispensary there and were giving doses of medicine to all that came, you would make no headway. Tackling the village sanitation is the only really substantial work. There is an evil at our doors which is perfectly preventible, and yet we have suffered our villagers to tolerate it for scores of years. It is an uphill task, whilst the distribution of free medicines is much easier. But I am asking my co-workers to avoid the easy thing and cheap applause. We must first concentrate on the prevention of disease, we can tackle the disease itself later on.

Q. Then you won't have doctors?

A. No, if you will not misunderstand me. I have done medical relief work myself. Only last month Harijans in Kathiawar were given free medical relief by doctors, who performed operations for cataract and other diseases of the eyes. But I am just now talking of measures for the preservation of general health, and even when my workers have achieved the preliminary task of cleaning the villages, I should equip them with just four things— quinine, castor oil, bicarbonate of soda and iodine. No fifth thing is necessary.

Q. You seem to give the last place in your programme to schools?

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's report of the interview published in *Harijan* under the title "The Most Effective Way". The missionary ladies had come from Nagpur.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

A. No. We are conducting numerous schools for Harijans and giving numerous scholarships to Harijan boys. What is the use of my adding the school programme to the work of the Industries Association? It is intended to supplement the work of the Harijan Sangh and the Spinners' Association. This last has a capital of Rs. 20 lakhs to operate upon, and the Harijan Sangh has also a fair amount of funds. I must now launch a campaign, I said to myself, which needs very little funds and which adds to the pockets of the poor. Thus, if I could simply ask the villagers not to waste the human manure but to turn it to good account, I should, without any capital outlay, help them to save Rs. 50 crores every year. This turning of human evacuations to rich manure by superficial burial I learnt from Dr. Poore, and it is the simplest and the most effective method, whereas the activated sludge plan and the septic tank are comparatively expensive things.

Q. Does your Harijan Sangh do anything for the spiritual welfare of the people?

A. With me, moral includes spiritual, and so my answer to your question will be 'everything, and 'nothing'. Nothing, because we have no department to look after their spiritual welfare. Everything, because we expect the personal touch of the workers to transform the men among whom they are working. Even as it is, we are caught in the coil of hypocrisy; but when you set apart a department for the work, you make the thing doubly difficult. In my career as a reformer I have regarded everything from the moral standpoint. Whether I am engaged in tackling a political question or a social or economic one, the moral side of it always obtrudes itself and it pervades my whole attitude. But I admit I have no special department to look after the Harijans' spiritual welfare.

Q. But we, Christians, feel that we, who have something to share, must share it with others. If we want consolation, we find it from the Bible. Now, as for the Harijans, who have no solace to get from Hinduism, how are we to meet their spiritual needs?

A. By behaving just like the rose. Does the rose proclaim itself, or is it self-propagated? Has it an army of missionaries proclaiming its beauties?

Q. But supposing someone asked us, 'Where did you get the scent?'

A. The rose, if it had sense and speech, would say, 'Fool, don't you see that I got it from my Maker?'

Q. But if someone asks you, 'Then, is there no book?'

A. You will then say, 'Yes, for me there is the Bible.' If they were to ask me, I would present to some the Koran, to some the *Gita*, to some the Bible and to some Tulsidas's *Ramayana*. I am like a wise doctor prescribing what is necessary for each patient.

Q. But I find difficulty in getting much from the *Gita*.

A. You may, but I do not find any difficulty in getting much from the Bible as well as from the Koran.

Harijan, 29-3-1935

476. LETTER TO MADELEINE ROLLAND

[Before *March 22, 1935*][1]

DEAR MADELEINE,

I have just read your letter to Pyarelal. Thank God I am about to observe complete silence, thus I can reply to your letter immediately. Yes, I ought to write a complete letter in reply to the long letter of the Sage[2]. But the very adjective "complete" frightens me. I have no time to compose a letter which will do sufficient justice to this letter from there. I must try to do it during my days of silence. Your question is simple. My opposition is to socialism as it is interpreted here in its official programme. I can have nothing to say against the theory or the philosophy of socialism. The programme as it is put here cannot be achieved without violence. The socialists here do not exclude violence under all circumstances whatsoever. They would take to arms openly if they saw there was a chance to usurp power by it. There are in the programme some details into which I need not enter. I wonder if this reply will answer your difficulties. However, you must write about your difficulties more concretely.

Love to you both.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 9737. Courtesy: R. K. Prabhu

[1] The source has "March 28". However it is clear from the text that the letter was written before Gandhiji had started his silence, which he did on March 22.

[2] Romain Rolland

477. NOTES

DEPLORING 'CONVERSIONS'

A Harijan sevak in Devakottah writes deploring the so-called conversions to Christianity of Harijans in that locality. The public know how they are systematically persecuted by the Nattars. If, afflicted by the persecution and losing hope of ever receiving help from the other *savarna* Hindus, the poor Harijans seek shelter in Christianity, we may not be surprised. And our grief is worse than useless if we cannot turn it into powerful energy. Conversion under the stress of physical discomfort is no spiritual conversion. But we may not grumble if Harijans change their faith in order to better their material condition and to secure protection from persecution.

What we need deplore is the cause of conversion. Let us realize and own that *savarna* Hindus are the cause. If the *savarna* Hindus of Devakottah were alive to a sense of duty by the Harijans of their locality the Nattars, who are themselves *savarna* Hindus, would not dare persecute Harijans as if the latter were not members of the same human family as the former. The correspondent suggests that some persons from outside Devakottah might go and work among the Nattars and the Harijans. It would be good if this happened. But I doubt if ever substantial results will be obtained by stray outsiders going there temporarily. Any such effort must be vain, as will be that of doctors going among and seeking to cure patients who would not help themselves with the medicines prescribed for them. Both the wings of the *savarna* Hindus, those who stand aloof and the Nattar *savarna* Hindus, are suffering from illnesses, the latter from hankering after the persecution of their fellows, and the former from criminal apathy. Outsiders can at best go among them, diagnose the disease and prescribe the remedy. It is for the patients to adopt the remedy. The young *savarnas* of Devakottah know the cause and the remedy. Will they apply it? Thakkar Bapa is in their midst or will be presently. Will they listen to his advice? Conversions are but one small result of the disease. Remove the cause, and the conversions will cease, as also many worse results.

'TAKLI' FOR VILLAGE WORKERS

I would request the several workers in various parts of India who

have been seeking to deliver the message of self-reliance in the matter of cloth in villages, to pay their attention to the potentialities of the *takli* as a means of spinning. This subject has been referred to previously in these columns some time back, and it deserves to be studied with great attention. It has been demonstrated by the inmates of the Satyagraha Ashram and sister institutions of Wardha that for an average spinner the productive capacity of the *takli,* if rightly handled, is equal to that of the charkha in every respect. For a person who is not altogether weak and who wants to spin only during leisure hours, and not with a view to remuneration, the *takli* is capable of completely replacing the charkha. The workers should, therefore, learn the new method of plying the *takli,* and introduce it in the villages in preference to the charkha. For the aged and the weak the charkha would still be necessary. For, the charkha, according to the principles of mechanics, is but a *takli* worked by a system of levers. And as one whose muscles are not strong enough to lift up a weight by hand would need the help of a lever to do so, so one who cannot give the necessary momentum to the *takli* by the muscles of his palm, or cannot bear the strain of constantly raising and lowering the arm, would need the charkha.

A WORKER'S PILGRIMAGE

Shri Sitarama Sastry has been organizing what may be called pilgrimages of workers who convey the message of village service, among their surroundings. He sends me a brief report of the second pilgrimage from which I take the following:

> The second 'march, commenced on the morning of the 17th February and ended in the evening of the 4th March. The party consisted of 8 men led by Srijut N. Venkatachellapaty and Ramineni Appayya. Two worked for 4 days, one for 11 days, and the other 5 worked continuously.
>
> They visited 13 villages in the Bapatla[1] taluq, one village in Tenali[2] taluq, and another in Repalle taluq, in all 15 places. They travelled by rail, motor, country carts and on foot; and the distance covered by them is 75 miles.
>
> They delivered lectures in 4 villages with the aid of the magic lantern and gave gramophone performances in 5 villages.

[1] In Andhra Pradesh
[2] *ibid*

They sold			Rs.	As.	P.
1.	Khadi	worth	1,030	10	6
2.	Swadeshi articles	,,	135	15	9
3.	Potteries	,,	3	7	0
4.	*Taklis* (2)	,,	0	3	0
5.	Razors (5)	,,	2	13	0
6.	*Bhringamalaka Tailam* (Hair oil) (2 lbs. 10 oz.)	,,	4	6	0
7.	Shoes and sandals (42 pairs)	,,	34	14	0
	TOTAL		1,212	5	3

Razors were made in Cherukumpalem, Ongole[1] taluq, and the *tailam* and shoes and sandals were made in the Vinayasramam. The sales commanded in this 'march' were greater than those in the first 'march'. The expenses incurred come to Rs. 36-3-3.

This is a step in the right direction. I would suggest that the pilgrims should avoid all travelling by rail, motor, or even village carts. If they will adopt my advice, they will observe that their work will be more effective and that the expenses will be practically nil. No more than two or three should form a party. I would expect villagers to house and feed the parties. Small parties will be no tax on the resources of villagers, as large ones are likely to be.

The work of the parties should be more in the nature of sanitary service, survey of village conditions and instruction of the villagers as to what they can do without much, if any, outlay of money to improve their health and economic conditions. If we seek to make villages self-dependent to the utmost extent possible, there is not much scope for sale, in the villages visited, of articles made in other villages, except where it is clear that villagers do not or cannot make such articles in their own villages. Village service as conceived by the A. I. V. I. A. has a unique mission. Town parties go out to villages to clean, instruct and purchase. Parties of villagers can be organized to go to towns to sell articles made in their villages and demonstrate their usefulness.

This village movement is one of decentralization and restoration of health and comfort and the skill of the artisan to villagers.

[1] In Andhra Pradesh

Dr. Profullla Ghosh has been examining the comparative value of cow's milk-ghee and buffalo's milk-ghee. He writes:[1]

This opinion is too technical for the lay reader. Opinion about the two varieties of ghee is not as decisive as about the two milks. This much is, however, clear—that chemical analysis shows no superiority of buffalo ghee over cow ghee. It is impossible to support both the animals. We have, therefore, to make the choice. The balance of opinion, all things considered, lies with the cow which, with proper care and selective breeding, is capable of giving as rich and sweet milk as anyone can desire.

Harijan, 22-3-1935

478. TEMPLE-ENTRY

Readers of *Harijan* know that Thakkar Bapa has been touring in the South for the Harijan cause. Taking advantage of his presence in Travancore, the workers had arranged a conference at Aranmula, with Thakkar Bapa as President. The conference met on the 10th instant and was very largely attended. There were present as many Harijans as other caste Hindus. An address was presented to Thakkar Bapa on behalf of Harijans. It contained this important reference to temple-entry:

> It is our deepest conviction that untouchability can and will never die as long as the temple doors are closed against us. Temple-entry is to us the acid test of success of the Harijan movement. All other efforts at our uplift are bound to appear to us insincere so long as temple-entry is denied to us. We implore you to employ all the strength of the Harijan Sevak Sangh to secure for us temple-entry.

Of course, there is no abolition of untouchability till every public temple is open to every Hindu precisely on the same terms as to the other Hindus. A common place of worship is the surest test of a common faith. No wonder all other efforts appear as insincere to Harijans. But they are not necessarily insincere because they *appear* so. There are hundreds of workers whose efforts to remove the blot of untouchability are not any the less sincere because they are unable

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. Dr. Ghosh had stated that from scientific study it was not possible to pronounce which of the two varieties of ghee—buffalo ghee or cow ghee—was better from the dietetic point of view.

today to have every temple flung open to Harijans. The seed has beensown, never to die. It is bound to bear fruit in its own time. Seeds of hardy trees take long to sprout. None the less they are growing every minute. So is the seed of temple-entry growing. The reformers will not rest till every public temple is open to Harijans. All ameliorative measures are steps in the direction of temple-entry. The Harijan address is a timely reminder to every one of us desiring to serve the cause that we are not to think that the temple-entry question is shelved because there is nowadays no mention of it in the Press. While they may not carry on a public agitation in the matter, workers should do personal canvassing in their neighbourhood and persuade trustees and temple-goers to open the temples within their beat.

Harijan, 22-3-1935

479. INSTRUCTIONS TO THE MEMBERS OF A. I. V. I. A.

The Pledge[1] was purposely drawn up as it is. It is of a general character. It is a gentleman's pledge, each member being put upon his or her honour as to the interpretation of the expression 'the best part of my energy and talents to the furtherance of its object, which is the all-round welfare of villagers of India'.

Members are also pledged, not only to work for the furtherance of the object, but also 'to strive to live up to the ideals and prefer the use of village manufactures to any other'.

The recommending Member of the Board will, therefore, see to it that the candidate for Membership has, in everything he does, welfare of villagers at heart. It follows that such a person will give to village work at least some time every day, not necessarily in villages, but may be, for villages. Thus, a Member living in a city on a particular day, who sells to or induces a person to buy village manufactures, has done some village work for that day.

The Member recommending will also see to it that the candidate, wherever possible, uses for himself articles of village manufacture, e.g., khadi in the place of mill-cloth, village earthen pots instead of factory-made china, reed pen instead of steel pen, hand-made paper instead of ordinary paper, wholesome *babul*, *neem* or such other twigs

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Forms of Undertaking to be given by Associates, Paid Workers and Honorary Workers of A.I.V.I.A", 22-3-1935.

as tooth-brushes, instead of the very insanitary and injurious modern tooth-brushes, leather goods made in villages out of village-tanned hide, instead of ordinary bazaar articles, village *gur* instead of factory sugar, hand-pounded, whole rice, instead of mill- polished rice.

Harijan, 22-3-1935

480. LETTER TO HARIBHAU PHATAK

March 22, 1935

MY DEAR HARIBHAU,

Your letter of 10th came into my hands only yesterday. Mahadev had gone to Calcutta and some correspondence remained unattended to.

What is the date of the exhibition? In any case, if anybody there wants to attain the speed on the *takli,* he should be sent here for a week. Mere demonstration for a day or two in Poona won't serve the purpose you have in mind.

What about rice? We are preparing unpolished rice ourselves.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1370

481. LETTER TO R. S. HUKERIKAR

March 22,1935

DEAR HUKERIKAR,

I think that when Congress village workers are invited, they should go and put their viewpoints at the meeting. If there is agreement on any items, we should work in co-operation. For a true village worker the question of prestige does not come in at all; he does not work in order to acquire influence or prestige. He works because he must. He cannot help serving the villagers.

What under certain definite circumstances one should do depends solely upon one's own judgment based on those circumstances.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. S. HUKERIKAR
PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE
DHARWAR, KARNATAK

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

482. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

March 22, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I am enjoying the sweetness of silence on the first day[1]. I have left myself free to talk with Rajkumari. She has specially come to see me. How can I, therefore, displease her? She has been here for four days but I could have a real discussion with her only today.

I think it would be better if you wrote to Delhi to tell them what is happening on your side.

. . .'s[2] is a painful case. I am writing to him. It would certainly not be advisable for you to call him to you. I will send you a copy of the letter which I intend to write to him. You will know from it what I do.

I will not write more today. Munshi has written to me. Mahadev will write more about that.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
BARODA

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 154

483. LETTER TO KOTWAL[3]

March 22, 1935

BHAI KOTWAL[4],

I have your letter. I hope the collection[5] goes on daily. It will become difficult if it is not done regularly. I must have an account

[1] Gandhiji observed silence for four weeks from March 22 to April 19.
[2] The name is omitted in the source.
[3] The original letter, which was in Gujarati, is not available.
[4] Member of the Managing Committee appointed for the convention of Hindi Sahitya Sammelan at Indore
[5] For the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. Gandhiji had asked for Rs. 1,00,000 to be collected.

every day. . . .[1] Send me the literature.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Veena, Tributes Issue, April-May 1969

484. LETTER TO R.[2]

March 22, 1935

You ought to write to G. some time. She seems to be doing well. Her brother has come here and suggests that she should be sent to her mother. The mother is not well and wants the confinement to take place there. I have told him that I cannot send G. unless you agree to it. Let me have your opinion.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 208

485. CONDOLENCE MESSAGE ON T. A. K. SHERWANI'S DEATH [3]

NEW DELHI

March 23, 1935

In Sherwani the nation loses a great good man and patriot. He has gone when he was most needed. Pray convey to his our sincere condolence.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-3-1935

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] The names have been omitted.

[3] T. A. K. Sherwani, Congress worker of U. P. died on March 22, Gandhiji sent the message to Dr. Ansari to be conveyed to the family of the deceased.

486. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

March 23,1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I am sending all the papers herewith. A letter to Patel is also enclosed. Hold it back if you do not like it.

Sucheta is welcome. You may bring her whenever you like. We have to go to Kanyashram today for prayers.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 2958

487. LETTER TO VAIKUNTHLAL L. MEHTA

March 23, 1935

BHAISHRI VAIKUNTH,

I have read your letter addressed to Mahadev. Now I am writing to you. Do what your conscience bids you to do. It would not befit me to put pressure on you. You will not get justice. Your letter does not prick me if it is intended as a warning. If it is intended for me or Mahadev to arrive at a decision, then that decision you alone cantake. A man knows his heart only partially. The Lord alone knows it fully.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1361

488. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

WARDHA

March 23 1935

CHI. RAMDAS,

I got your letter. I have only now read Patilji's letter to J. He has been very much hurt. I have consoled him. It would of course have been better if you had told him in advance. But do not worry about it now. Do not enter into partnership with anybody until you have become quite proficient. I would suggest that you should try to get a

job in a big press. Personally I do not like press work. If, however, you do wish to take up such work, first take up a job in a press and learn the work. My own preference still is for a tailor's or a cobbler's profession. Both are first-class professions. They have great room for artistic skill. Nimu can give you all possible help in that work. You may execute 'a deed of partnership'[1] with her. No loss is ever possible in these professions. But this is mere pretentious advice from me. Do only what pleases you. Go and visit Radha[2] when you get an opportunity to do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

489. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

[After *March 23, 1935*][3]

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

One advantage of the vow of silence is that I can dispose of each day's mail on the very same day. The work takes at least three hours. The remaining time is spent in clearing the arrears.

* * *[4]

There is no need now to write to Delhi or Bombay. I hope you have informed Bhailal.

I have gone through the leaflet about the plague. I did not like the remark about the Government or the local boards. Don't you think it is altogether inopportune at this time? In any case it will certainly not help us. The task in the U. P. is a rather delicate one. Do you think you will succeed in it?

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
SATYAGRAHA CHHAVANI
BORSAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 157

[1] Gandhiji has used the English expression.
[2] Maganlal Gandhi's daughter
[3] The addressee arrived in Borsad on March 23 for plague relief work.
[4] Omission as in the source

490. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

March 24, 1935

CHI. AMTUSSALAAM,

DEAR BIBI,

I have your letter. What can I say? You may go if someone else stays in the Harijan Colony and Malkani and Devdas give you permission. Do what will help you to keep well.

I am not able to write more with the left hand.

You must have received the spinning-wheel, etc. Write to me if you want anything else. I have given up insisting on anything with you. Do anything you like. Only be healthy in body and mind. Do what Dr. Ansari bids you to do. I hope you often go and see Dr. Khan Saheb and Mehrtaj. Do you? If not, you should. If you want, you may go to Sharma. But the pressure of work on him is too heavy. There is no room in his house, but I know he will not find you a burden. Take Dr. Ansari's permission and go.

I sent you Id greetings. Did I not? I shall be at Indore on April 20 and will spend four days there. Would you like to come? There is a Hindi Sahitya Sammelan and an exhibition.

Now nothing is left unanswered.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

If Rs. 300 is not enough to complete your hut, it will not matter if you have to incur more expenditure later.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 320

491. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

March 24, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

It would be good for Madalasa to join you at Kathgodam. We shall be able to know about her boils also by then.

Let the arrangement with Rajendrababu be a formal one. Ask for a mortgage or a sale deed and charge interest, though at the lowest possible rate.

Leave Bhowali immediately if you do not keep good health there. Lakshmi Narayan Gadodia had been sending parcels of vegetables to Kamala. She writes that as the vegetables were not of good quality, she has asked him to stop sending them. Enquire whether you can get vegetables and fruits there.

Inform Sarup about your going. Tell her about me what you like.

Madalasa will herself see about her diet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2959

492. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 24, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter.

Don't mind if a second teacher also has left. Can't you get anybody there for teaching English? Ask Bhujangilal Chhaya. He is the son of a lawyer in Porbandar. He writes to me occasionally. Or ask Nanabhai. What would you pay the teacher? Would you be satisfied if a person agreed to come and teach for an hour or two?

Santok did write to me.

Do you write to Amtussalaam? She is in Delhi with Devdas. She is ill.

This is the third day of my silence. I am making good progress in clearing the arrears.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8433. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

493. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

March 24, 1935

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. You seem to be doing very good work. If you sow plenty of leafy vegetables, you will have enough for all the twelve months.

My weight is 109 lb.

Everything is being cooked by steam for the last two days, so plenty of time is saved.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VASUMATIBEHN
UDYOG MANDIR
BOCHASAN (NEAR BORSAD)

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9396. Also C.W. 642. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

494. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

March 24, 1935

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

If Malkani and Viyogi Hari are dissatisfied with the Harijan work, then after Thakkar Bapa returns to the office they may all three of them prepare and submit a report. And if after due deliberation on it and possible amendments some scholarships can be granted to boys and girls, I would regard the expenditure justified. We may disapprove of the present education but that is all that is available to our young people. We have not so far presented any substitute before the public or the Harijans. Thus we have to grant scholarships till we have a living scheme to offer. There is ample scope for improvement in our own schools. As we do not have good teachers, the experiments at Delhi and Sabarmati are greatly to my liking.

I got the telegram regarding Rajendrababu. It has relieved us of anxiety. Now Jamnalalji goes to Chapra.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 8007. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

495. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

March 24, 1935

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

The article "Sacrifice" is good. I shall go through the whole series.

What struck you in Satisbabu's work? Tell me other things too that I ought to know.

Is it possible now for Prabhavati to commence her studies?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1097

496. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI

March 24, 1935

BHAI CHAND TYAGI,

I have your letter, also Balvir's.

Rajkishori is doing well. Do you not know weaving? If that is so, you should learn it as quickly as possible. It is much easier than spinning. You must be well versed at least in ginning and carding. And what about the new method with the *takli?* If you do not know that too, you ought to learn it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3268

497. LETTER TO DECCAN EDUCATION SOCIETY

March 25, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

Who can fail to be enthused over the noble record of the service rendered by the D. E. Society and the Fergusson College to the cause of education? I wish the forthcoming function[1] every success.

This is all I have the time to send you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 9735. Courtesy: Deccan Education Society, Poona

[1] The Golden Jubilee celebration of the Society

498. LETTER TO PURATAN J. BUCH

March 26, 1935

CHI. PURATAN,

I have your letter. How can there be no feeling in renting out [the Ashram]? Were there no feelings when Harischandra sold himself and his wife? It in letting out the Ashram for the sake of Harijans it is not feelings that are respected, then what else is it? I was impelled by feelings when I left the Ashram.

Instead of so many houses getting eaten up by termites and going to ruin, how much nicer it would be if they were rented out and looked after. Do you know that the non-Harijans who are not Harijan workers now pay rent? I hope you do. A golden dagger may well adorn the waist, but what if it is thrust into the stomach?

I would certainly demand rent if any literature pertaining to the Ashram history, etc., is kept within the premises. That land is meant for the Harijans. If it is put to any other use, the sanctity of it can be preserved only by charging rent.

Is it difficult to understand all this?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9171

499. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

March 26, 1935

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have my own doubts about the success of the boys' school. We should be content with introducing whatever changes we can in the institutions where our children study. That is my intention, but how do I know about the atmosphere there? I am not well equipped for taking a definite decision. That is why I agreed so readily to accept what Sardar wanted. All workers, therefore, should do that if they find that it is practicable. You cannot give your time to any activity other than Harijan work. The dairy is one of those activities. Give Titus Harijan assistants as far as possible. Do not rest so long as a good tanneryis not set up there. We must learn to take possession of the carcasses and

learn how to deal with them. Here Valunjkar is doing that work very effectively.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9074

500. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

March 26, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Mahadev has gone to Yeotmal this morning to inspect an institution there. He will return in the evening.

You write 'Asaf Ali' but I think you had in mind Sharifa Hamid Ali.

A letter is enclosed on the question of vaccination.

Munshi writes that at present Lilavati does not even receive any commission. He informed me about the Rs. 50,000 only yesterday.

Narahari must now depend on simpler remedies to get well.

This hand-made paper is difficult to write on. It will be more than enough if you are able to read this.

I think you should accept Ranjit's[1] invitation. The thing is difficult, but I think it would be better to accept it.

I have gone quite deep into the problem and am determined to solve it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 155

[1] Ranjit Sitaram Pandit

501. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHA,
March 26, 1935

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Pyarelal is wholly free. If he had listened to me how could he be in the present state? He is at present blinded by lust. In such a state he expects to have a vision of God. None but God can rescue him from this situation. Do call him to you if you can persuade him. The address is: Gandhi Seva Sena, Bhadrak. Kaka has been to see him. He is studying Marathi in the land of Oriya. Mahadev has explained to me the reason of his silence. It is cent per cent correct.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

502. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA

March 26, 1935

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

I have your letter. "*Bachchon ghoomte the*" is incorrect, it should be "*bachche ghoomte the*". You can study any text-book of Hindi grammar. Your account of the trip is good. I liked your distributing oranges among the Harijan children but it is not binding on everyone to do so. Tell me the count of the yarn spun from *devakapas*[1]. What speed have you attained on the *takli*? What name has been given to the establishment at Bari.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI ANNAPURNA KUMARI
C/O GOPA BANDHU CHOWDHRY
BARI, DIST. CUTTACK

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2779

[1] A variety of cotton

503. NOTE TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH[1]

[*March 26, 1935*][2]

Everyone cannot be prescribed the same diet. If health could be ensured without fruit I would never serve fruit. It seems, however,that fruit is necessary, be it in ever so small a quantity. You should therefore take whatever fruit you are given, considering it as medicine. If some particular fruit does not seem to suit you, you may give it up. Mirabehn thus takes fruit, Bhau[3] takes it and so should you. Tell Bhau he may take five or seven *tolas* of leafy vegetables. He will know from experience exactly how much he should take. If it is necessary to cut down on bread you may do so. If the amount of milk, curd, etc., is increased you may not need as much bread. Here also experience will help you decide the quantity. You can have as much curd as you want. Tell Balvantsinha this.

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

504. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

WARDHA,
March 27, 1935

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I must write though it be only a short note written with the left hand, the right needing rest.

Muriel complains of absence of any letter from you for a long time. Her address is Y. M. C.A., Shanghai.

Any move to establish human contact must be welcomed. I like your robust hopefulness when others find no warrant for it.

Your references to C. F. Andrews are good and well merited. He has his next step always guided and so can remain without any human help or direction.

The rest from the usual letters.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1486

[1] The note followed a talk that the addressee had had with Gandhiji after an attack of colic pain.

[2] The date has been supplied by the addressee.

[3] Bhau Panse

505. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

March 27, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

You are as good as your word. You have given me a wire, a postcard and a good letter. Your overlooking Kumarappa's notice is therefore excused. It was not meant for you. You were no guest of the Association. You came as a member of the family.

Among the commissions for Shummy please add the medicinal and food value of tamarind if I did not ask you to note it. As I am making extensive use of it and as there is a superstition against its use in these parts, I am anxious to have medical opinion as early as possible.

Heat is daily growing here. It does not worry me. The wet cloth on the head cools the whole system.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
JULLUNDUR CITY, PUNJAB

From the original: C.W. 3524. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6333

506. LETTER TO SUDHIR KUMAR RUDRA

March 27, 1935

DEAR SUDHIR[1],

C. F. Andrews has just written to me about your serious illness and your recovery from it. God be thanked for it. You have to serve for many a year yet to come. I hope you will soon regain all your lost strength.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SUDHIR KUMAR
20 ALBERT ROAD
ALLAHABAD (U. P.)

From the original: C.W. 9740. Courtesy: Rajmohini Rudra

[1] Son of Principal Sushil Kumar Rudra

507. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

March 27, 1935

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

Do argue with me over Ganesan. I can fully convince you. I have not given you advice, as you take it, to favour anyone. My only consideration was the welfare of the Harijans. I believe that it is more advantageous to get work from Ganesan. He has no talent for collecting money. But he has the talent for work and for looking after people. However, all this is useless if he is dishonest. The Committee alone will collect the funds, but that pertains to the future. Who will pay the past debt? If it was on account of *Harijan,* who has incurred it? Will Sastri pay it? We shall discuss all this when we meet. There will be a Hindi Sammelan in Indore from the 19th to 25th. I have to go there. If you come there, we shall do something about *Harijan* and have porridge together.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 22752

508. LETTER TO SHRIPATRAO PATWARDHAN

March 27, 1935

CHI. SHRIPATRAO,

Those who wish to observe *brahmacharya* should not marry. But if a person does wish to marry, he should do so treasuring the thought of *brahmacharya* in his heart. He should then consult the wishes of his wife and observe as much self-control as possible.

The insistence on marrying outside the caste does not mean that one should not consider a girl belonging to the same caste. One should marry her if she is most suitable. It is natural that one who marries will beget children. I had known about Appa. Never mind what he has taken away. I won't call it an illmatched marriage if a thirty-five year old man marries a girl of twenty-five. This answers all your questions, doesn't it?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIPATRAO PATWARDHAN
P. O. PANVAS
DIST. RATNAGIRI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

509. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

March 27, 1935

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

I read your letter to Mahadev. We have to devote four columns to the Charkha Sangh. I have written to Shankerlal about this, saying that he should either secure a certain number of subscribers or pay a certain sum. We should guarantee the columns but must not immediately raise the number of columns in the paper. Many items we publish are much too lengthy. The expansion should come about as we go along.

Do write to me regarding the Sammelan.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1077

510. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

March 27, 1935

BHAI RAJENDRA PRASAD,

The Bengal affair today is the most tangled and shameful one. Nothing can be accomplished by our forming a committee. None of the leaders of Bengal will co-operate in this and who will listen to other workers? Yet I feel that we ought to observe an all-India day. Other things can be considered when the report from Calcutta comes in.

We can do nothing in Ceylon. Whatever is done there is only through the Government. Poor Jayaramdas does his little bit but I do not see anything more being done. If you can catch hold of a doctor there, do send him. I tried to send Bhaskar, but he is unable to leave. Still I am trying to find someone.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi: C.W. 9748. Courtesy: Rajendra Prasad

511. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

March 27, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

I had your letter. My present mood is such that I do not command even children. If I could form a judgment, I would even give orders but I find it impossible day by day to judge what would be best for others. For the present you may stay on there. The hunt for the book is going on. This is all part of the economy. But I may say that if you are both so inclined you are at liberty to come here. You may come also if that place does not suit every one's health. There is no question of your going away once you have come here. Going to the West is, of course, another thing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha*, facing p. 153

512. A NOTE

March 28, 1935

In that case he[1] should put ten grains of soda to every eight ounces of water and drink it even if he feels sick. He should take hot water with salt or honey as he may relish it. He may also take starch from boiled rice. The honey should be of the best quality and taken with soda and hot water.

From the Gujarati original: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

513. LETTER TO HUSSAIN

March 28, 1935

In my opinion your plan must fail.[2] When a house is on fire, the finest essay showing how to quench it would not abate the fury of the

[1] Sumangal Prakash

[2] The addressee had written from London to Gandhiji, Rabindranath Tagore and others for articles on the Hindu-Muslim problem.

fire. A bucketful of water, however clumsily handled, will somewhat affect the fire.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

514. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

WARDHA,
March 28, 1935

Does a man need the solace of a mortal when he knows he has that of the Immortal God? Please tell those who may raise the question that the village service is nobody's monopoly. The A. I. V. I. A. steps in where no one else is working along the same lines.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

515. LETTER TO G. C. TAMBE

March 28, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for the booklet on the Indore process. I have read it with much interest. As I am going to Indore on 20th, I would like to see the process at work. I would like you, too, to demonstrate it at the forthcoming exhibition if [it] is at all possible.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI G. C. TAMBE
FARM SUPT.
INSTITUTE OF PLANT INDUSTRY, INDORE

From a photostat: G.N. 7960

516. A LETTER[1]

March 28, 1935

It is beyond me to translate into my own tongue what does not bear translating. But I can say that the truth of the two proverbs has been verified by me in my own life and that of many companions.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

517. A LETTER[2]

March 28, 1935

In my opinion Shri T. Ramachandra Rao should receive nothing unless he promises never to repeat the performance[3] he has gone through and unless the donors are satisfied that the money will be used for the purpose intended.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

518. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM BAVISHI

March 28, 1935

BHAI PURUSHOTTAM,

I have your letter. I have read the pamphlet you have sent me. I liked it. Send me the book about your scheme. I shall reach Indore on the 20th and stay there for four days. Will it be possible for you to see me during those days?

[1] The addressee, an American, has not been identified in the source. He had requested Gandhiji to send a translation of the following:

"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."

[2] The source does not identify the addressee.

[3] He had undertaken a fast for rural uplift and thereby brought about pressure on the rich people to donate money.

Keep on sending me anything which you feel would be useful to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI P. L. BAVISHI
SHAMPUR (MALWA)
GWALIOR STATE

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 124. Also C.W. 4745. Courtesy: Purushottam Bavishi

519. LETTER TO BHUJANGILAL CHHAYA

March 28, 1935

CHI. BHUJANGILAL,

The reply to your second letter is pending. There was nothing needing a reply in the first letter.

Since you have time to spare, meet Narandas Gandhi and ask him to give you some light social work.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI BHUJANGILAL CHHAYA
AT PORBUNDER STATE VAKIL'S
RAJKOT (C. S. KATHIAWAR)

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 24218

520. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 28, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

April is drawing near. I assume that you are still ready to come here. I have been discussing the matter with Jamnalalji. I discussed it today with Vinoba. All three of us are of the view that if you can come without endangering the work which you have been doing there and without hurting Father and Mother, you should come and take charge of the girls' school. The moral responsibility will remain Vinoba's. But running this girls' ashram is a difficult job. It is with great difficulty that we can make up our minds to refuse admission to new applicants. All of us believe

that you will be able to do that job well. And, moreover, if you are here, you can help me, and also Jamnalal, in a number of small ways.

Just now Babaji Moghe is in charge. Vinoba has entrusted him with this work as a last resort. He himself loves village uplift work and had even taken it up. But after the Ashram at Sabarmati was disbanded, we were suddenly faced with the necessity of running the girls' ashram. Vinoba, therefore, entrusted Babaji with the job. If he can be released from this responsibility, Vinoba wants to use him for village uplift work. If you come, I assume that Jamna also will come.

Purushottam will look after Father and Mother, and he is also doing public work there. I also assume, therefore, that he will remain there. But if he can come too, I would certainly be happy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8434. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

521. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

March 28, 1935

BHAI SHRI MUNSHI,

I have not forgotten about your preface. Your book is lying in front of me. It is for such work alone that I have taken to silence, but so far I have not been able to do it. Writing with the left hand takes quite a lot of time, so today I have started writing with the right hand. I shall see now how it works. My health is no doubt good.

Quite a lot of Hindi activities are carried on by the A.I.C.C. But who will engage the interest of the members? Is all our work carried on in Hindi? Do the people from the South and Bengal learn Hindi? A script conference will be held at Indore alone with the Sahitya Sammelan. Kakasaheb will preside over it. Will you be able to go? Whether you do so or not please send your suggestions. If you can close the mint for six days, both of you must come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7570. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

522. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

March 28, 1935

CHI. JETHALAL,

I have received your detailed letter. I will pass it on to Vinoba.

You should train the women who are staying there. There is only one department of our work which needs to be understood. It will be difficult to evaluate our strength if we do not start the publicity work at home.

Vinoba has gone deep. My assessment of his work from the shortcomings he could discern, can never be proved wrong. We are all like castor-oil plants becoming important in the absence of other trees. In comparison, in my opinion, your work is outstanding. Take it that it is the end of your work if you are satisfied with it. However I am sure that such a thing will never happen.

Vinoba's aim in staying here is that he can explain to us our shortcoming.

Both the departments those of self-sustained khadi and commercial khadi, are important for you. Commercial khadi, without self-sustained khadi will remain ineffective. The latter will not satisfy the poor. How much of it can they wear? They can certainly produce more than that. If the poor do not wear it, then there is a fear that they will even cease to produce commercial khadi.

It is possible that even if one has faith in prayer, one cannot sing well. In such cases it is all right if there are no *bhajans* and *slokas*. *Ramdhun* will certainly serve the purpose. The *slokas* should be correctly articulated if they are recited. Otherwise their translation should be read out. However, it should be dropped if it is found to be dull. For singing *bhajans* it is necessary to have a good voice. If that is not available, *bhajans* should also be dropped. Everyone would know how to sing Ramadhun. But that also requires a little practice.

Purbai will bring credit to herself if left alone. She will be a misfit in a group. It is unlikely that Gangabehn will leave Bochasan. We do not have so many trained women, so for the time being thereis no other course for you but to manage your work alone.

It is likely that the urinal which you have devised underground will cause great damage one day, while it will serve both the purposes if instead you make it on heaps of mud which can be thrown into the

fields daily. Urine is a valuable manure and the less we use it the greater is the harm done.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9851. Courtesy: Narayan J. Sampat

523. SELF-SUSTAINED KHADI

Shri Shankerlal Banker has been travelling in the villages, in order to ascertain the possibilities of self-sustained khadi and of the development of other industries.

Self-sustained khadi means khadi spun and woven in the first instance by the villagers for themselves and, wherever possible, out of cotton grown, ginned and carded in the respective villages. This is the true mission of khadi. The end can only be achieved by persistent human contact with the villagers. They should know the dignity and value of work apart even from its economic value. Khadi under this scheme will be manufactured to suit the village taste. Bleaching, even washing, will be avoided, for every villager will wash for himself or herself. Khadi thus produced will be cheaper than any cloth if its durability is taken into account. The town khadi carries all the incidental charges, e. g., extra processes, stocking, transport, rents, commissions. The village khadi eliminates all these charges. The towns and cities should rely for their supplies on the surplus that may be saved after village use. Hence no khadi store should be run at a loss. A. I. S. A. stores should aim primarily at quality, never at mere show, masquerading under the name of art. Who knows what true art is? At best it is a relative term. A. I. S. A. stores should be original, should introduce village art in towns and have confidence that they will win the day. Every piece of khadi must be strong and durable. We must not procure fineness at the cost of durability Flimsiness will kill khadi in the end. If we cannot produce fine counts without sacrificing strength, we must own our inability. I have noticed, often enough to frighten me out of bleaching, that bleached khadi gives way almost at the first wear. It is not suggested that this is true in every case. It is enough for my purpose to be able to say that cases of bleached khadi having proved undurable have been frequent enough to cut out customers. Let all Khadi Bhandars, therefore, revise their standard in so far as it may be necessary in the light of what I have said here. And

what is true of khadi is more or less true of tanning and other village industries. Workers must not, without considerable experience, interfere with the old tools, old methods and old patterns. They will be safe if they think of improvements retaining intact the old existing background. They will find that it is true economy.

Harijan, 29-3-1935

524. TEMPLE-ENTRY

A few days ago a conference of the Pallas of Kulitalai taluk in Trichinopoly District was held, at which the following two resolutions were passed:

> 1. That this Conference views with regret and great disappointment the attitude evinced by the Mahatma towards the Temple-Entry Bill in the Assembly and, therefore, requests him to withdraw his present views on the subject and to kindly see that this subject is brought into the Assembly at any cost, irrespective of results thereof.
>
> 2. That this Conference has intended to request all the members of the Depressed Classes of the country either to convert themselves as Muslims or Christians, if the Mahatma is not pleased to change his present views on the Temple-Entry Bill or to agitate for a separate electorate to the Depressed Classes as it has been awarded by the Premier of the British Cabinet.

I like the first resolution. I wish all Harijans will take the same interest in the temple-entry question as this conference seems to have done. Then my task would be less difficult than it now is. Whether it is difficult or easy, I shall pursue the course I think best in order to have every public Hindu temple thrown open to Harijans. For, in my opinion, untouchability cannot be claimed to have been removed, unless all temples are accessible to Harijans as they are to other Hindus.

But the second resolution gives away the whole case for temple-entry, so far as the conference is concerned. Men who threaten to leave their religion, because some other men, pretending to be of the same faith as they, prevent them from entering temples, have little religion about them. Such men cannot be said to be actuated by the religious spirit. Temples are houses of worship. They are for allwho believe in them. Religious persecution is not a thing of today. It is as ancient as religion itself. It tries and purifies the persecuted who prove themselves staunch in their faith. If Harijans can patiently bear persecution, they are bound to come triumphant in the end.

But the threat to desert the faith they have uncomplainingly professed from time immemorial, if their right of temple-entry is not recognized, puts them out of court. Sanatanists probably do not care if Harijans leave the Hindu fold. Reformers will be nonplussed if they have no case to fight for. Fortunately, there are tens of thousands of Harijans whose faith remains unshakable in spite of persecution.

Religion is an essentially personal matter. It is one between oneself and one's God. It should never be made a matter of bargain. I would respectfully advise the leading spirits behind the conference of the Pallas of Kulitalai to treat the question of temple-entry on its merits and not to confuse the issue by the threat contained in their second resolution.

Harijan, 29-3-1935

525. NOTES

A GENEROUS DONATION

During Thakkar Bapa's tour in Travancore, we received on behalf of the Central Sangh, from Shri Parmeswaran Pillai, President of the local Harijan Sevak Sangh, a donation of a portion of his ground for Harijan Ashram. It is situated at Vithura Nedumangad. The following brief speech[1] he made at the meeting announcing the gift sufficiently describes it.

> It is now over fourteen years since a school was started here. Ten months ago I rebuilt the school house at a cost of about Rs. 800. The school has now three classes with a total attendance of 75. Of these, 40 are Harijans. Of these Harijans 34 are boys and 6 girls. The number of Kani children in the school now is 16. I have long thought that a school of this kind cannot fully serve its purpose without being made part of an ashram where one or two workers will stay all the time and undertake daily a programme of co-ordinated Harijan uplift work. I have, therefore, now put up a small building for the Ashram. I have also set apart 10 acres of land for the Ashram, 8_ acres of which are planted with about 2,000 cashewnut trees. These trees will begin to bear in another 2 years, and as cashewnuts are fetching a good price, this will constitute a tangible item of income. . . . I intend taking at once 5 Harijan boys, including 3 Kanis, as residential students in the Ashram. A worker has been appointed and he will stay with the boys in the Ashram. After 6 months I propose to take 5 more boys, making the total of residential students 10. . . .

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

> Thinking that an institution of this kind will work better as part of the Harijan Sevak Sangh, I have handed over the school, the Ashram building and the ten acres of land to the Kerala Board of the Harijan Sevak Sangh . . .

I congratulate the donor for his generous gift and hope that the Harijans will make good use of the Ashram which is to receive the personal care and affection of the donor.

PAISA FUND

Paisa Fund is a unique institution in India, if not in the world. Its creator, Shri Antaji D. Kale, is a poor man. Twenty-five years ago, he conceived the idea of establishing what might be otherwise called a poor man's fund. For he meant literally to collect paisas—quarter annas—for the promotion of industries and thus help the poor. Its visible monument is the Talegaon Glass Works near Poona, which have been a means of providing decent livelihood to hundreds of young men. The committee of this Fund celebrated the other day its silver jubilee amid the blessings of many friends. I wish this enterprise, brilliant as it has been, a still more brilliant career. The committee have issued a sumptuous and readable volume, in commemoration of the silver jubilee, which gives a history of the whole enterprise and a fund of information about glass works throughout India. It can be had on application to the Secretary, 626, Shanvar, Poona 2.

BUFFALO MILK-FAT *V.* COW MILK-FAT

Dr. Godbole, professor of Industrial Chemistry in the Benares Hindu University, has sent me at my request an elaborate and critical analysis of these two fats. It is far too technical for the lay reader. I shall gladly lend it to any student of this important subject. Meanwhile I content myself with giving his conclusions.

> I. Cow butter-fat is known to have iodine in its composition, whereas no data are available on this point in the case of buffalo butter-fat.
>
> II. Both cow butter-fat and buffalo butter-fat contain vitamins A and D; but cow butter-fat is richer in vitamin A, while the other is richer in vitamin D.
>
> III. Butter-fat as such is any time better than tallow, lard or vegetable ghee.
>
> IV. Cow butter-fat is richer than the buffalo butter-fat in the total assimilable and digestible part and is, therefore, comparatively more suitable for children and weaklings.
>
> V. From an economic point of view, the buffalo is a better butter-producing machine than the cow.

We are of opinion that it is worth while trying physiological experiments in India on oils like sesame, cocoanut, etc., which are rich in assimilables, although poor in vitamins.

Of the two butter-fats, cow's is in a sense nearer to the composition of human body-fat than the buffalo butter-fat.

Harijan, 29-3-1935

526. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

WARDHA,
March 29, 1935

DEAR AGATHA,

Because I am silent I am able to reply to your letter just as it is received.

As usual, the newspaper report is an unintelligent anticipation of an event that was not to come. Yes, you shall have notice of any contemplated step unless it comes absolutely unperceived by me.

I remember Joshuah Oldfield well. He was of the greatest help to me when I went to London as a lad. He is a fellow crank.

Rajkumari has promised to hunt out Watts' volumes for me. But Henry[1] must be dispossessed if he has them.

Mahadev's book[2] is having a wonderfully good reception. All village paper is not as bad as this. This was given as the very first product after revival. Since then much improvement has been made.

Mahadev is probably telling you how vindictively they are acting. It is all being done to consolidate power!!! Little do they realize how it is undermined. A scholar who has renounced everything, who is as non-violent as anyone can be, had undergone his full term of imprisonment. He had also a fine against him. This they had recovered from his brother who had separated. The fine had to be refunded. This happened perhaps a year ago. Now the scholar who was doing village work has been arrested and is serving six weeks in lieu of fine. This is not the only instance of its kind.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1487

[1] Henry Polak
[2] Two Servants of God

527. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

Unrevised *March 29, 1935*

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I have your letter. You have been prompt about sugar. If you want Ba's thanks, you can have them. Though 'Thanks' is a good custom, somehow among members of a family it seems artificial. There you are, you have your choice.

I am sure the *thali*[1] and *katora*[2] is a sound investment.

I hope the plague in Khan Khana has abated. It is just a punishment for our flagrant breach of the fundamentals of sanitation and hygiene.

I have no doubt that the method adopted by you regarding the erring servant is the correct method. It is a thousand times better to be deceived for having trusted than to be able to boast of never having been deceived by having been strict and suspicious. Only trusting should never mean tempting.

But this calculated deception by the president is insufferable. You should find out means of exposing the deceit. No law of secrecy can protect fraud on the part of a trustee. And lawyers say that there is no wrong but has a remedy. Therefore you should discover a remedy for the public wrong done by your president.

I sent yesterday some more questions for Shummy. Tell him with my love that he will have no rest from me and that he will have questions put to him which perhaps he never had to face in the course of practice.

You need not worry about your slow progress in spinning. You can't be more stupid than I.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
JULLUNDUR CITY

From the original: C.W. 3525. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6334

[1] Large metal plate in which food is served
[2] Metal bowl

528. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

March 29, 1935

MY DEAR ANGADA[1],

This is just to tell you that I wrote to David Pyke. He must be a brave boy.

Why don't you tell me something about yourself?

I am enjoying my silence.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 4545. Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

529. LETTER TO TRANK LANBEAH

March 29, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter.

Please do not think that I undervalue literacy. I do not put upon it the same emphasis that you do. And my field of operations is so different on the surface. At bottom we are one. You cherish human happiness as much as I do.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. TRANK LANBEAH
MINDAN. (P. I.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Gandhiji used to address Reginald Reynolds as Angada—Rama's messenger to Ravana—as he was the bearer of Gandhiji's letter of ultimatum dated March 2, 1930 to the then Viceroy; *vide* "Leter to Lord Irwin", 2-3-1930

530. LETTER TO NARAHARI BHAVE[1]

[*March 29, 1935*][2]

Maganlal Gandhi's father had entrusted all his four sons[3] to me; similarly you have given me all your three sons[4]. Need I say how much closer you have come to me thereby? I now request you to spend your remaining years with me. We will utilize your wide knowledge in our village industries work. It will be good if you can come over after I return from Indore.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

531. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

March 29, 1935

A determined refusal solves all problems. One of the maxims of practical wisdom offered by the English weekly *Punch* is this: Whenever in doubt, "Don't is *Punch's* advice. . . ."[5]

We can see that the prevailing atmosphere is thoroughly immoral. In such circumstances silent service is the only golden path.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 157

532. LETTER TO TAGADUR RAMACHANDRA RAO

March 30, 1935

Your letter confirms the opinion I have already given.[6] Your fast was a species of violence. Apathy can be turned into sympathy only

[1] Father of Vinoba Bhave
[2] In the source this is placed among the items of this date.
[3] Maganlal, Chhaganlal, Narandas and Jamnadas
[4] Vinoba, Balkrishna and Shivaji
[5] Gandhiji uses here the original English quotation.
[6] *Vide* "A Letter"

by sustained, silent and selfless service.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

533. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

WARDHA,
March 30, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I never gave my consent to anybody. I was surprised when I read the news in the paper. At present I do not feel like going anywhere. If I could have my way, I would prolong the period of silence. It suits me very well. Whenever necessary, I speak and give instructions. But can anybody refuse a request from you? Nobody else would have been able to draw me out of my retreat at present. If you would let me pass one year in this manner, I should very much like to do so. If, however, you must drag me anywhere, let it be to Borsad where the plague is the most virulent. I shall enjoy camping in the open. We will visit Ras on foot. Use my services for four types of work: removal of untouchability, khadi, village industries and plague control. Comforting the cultivators can hardly be described as a programme. Don't take me anywhere else. Keep me there for the fewest possible days and then send me away. Fix any date after the middle of May. I shall have to go there again after the visit to Indore.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 156

534. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

March 30, 1935

CHI. MITHUBEHN,

I see that your work is making good progress. It is a good thing that you will soon be producing honey. You must do something about hides and also grow cotton.

My visit to Gujarat is not certain. Sardar did ask me. I am still considering. If at all I go to Gujarat, I shall confine myself to one place only.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 24320

535. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

March 30, 1935

CHI. HARIBHAU,

I feel you are completely off the track. This always happens to one who is carried away by emotions. I just do not understand how you could override . . . .'s[1] guardian and presume to ask . . . . Despite your being members of the same institution you did not have the decency to consult the Manager. How did you come to have the right to encourage . . .? She has not been pining for anybody. Her heart is still a blank page. Your motive is not to protect her but to help . . . . The way you appreciate . . . .'s careful nature suggests that you have a low opinion of people's morals. Has . . . done anything special if he has not violated the rules of the Ashram while he lived there with everybody else? Well, you must then think that the others who never had any evil thought towards the girls in the Ashram must surpass even the gods.

You will not understand how this must have hurt. . .behn. You have only added to your guilt by exploiting . . . for such matters. Would you welcome anyone doing to . . . what you havedone to . . . . Would you agree to anybody arrogating the title of father to someone else's daughter?

In my opinion you have harmed . . . as well as . . . . I have been put in an awkward position now. I must caution . . .behn and send . . . out of the Ashram. I assume from your letter that you will flout everyone and try to arrange a marriage between . . . and . . ., making poor . . . instrumental. I should be reassured only if you realized what *adharma* you have committed and having freed . . . behn from worry opened . . . 's eye to the *adharma* on his part as well. Send me a telegram, however, if you feel that what you did was the right thing. I

[1] The names are omitted in the source.

will understand if you simply wire 'unconvinced' and speak to. . .behn. At the moment I do not want to tell anyone anything. Do not get worried on account of this. Do not even consider this as a scolding. This is just to explain your dharma to you.

Make arrangements for my stay wherever you like.

I will not hesitate to write to the Maharajas[1].

The Sammelan should have no right over the money to be given to me. About the exhibition in due course.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 6082. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

536. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER[2]

[*March 30, 1935*][3]

There can be no greater hypocrisy than marrying again for the sake of the children or to have someone to cook. I would prefer anyone marrying after humbly admitting that he wanted to marry to satisfy his passions. A person who marries again should stop all pretences of loving his dead wife or should confess that love does not satisfy passions.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

537. LETTER KASIM ALI

March 30, 1935

SAIYED SAHEB,

I have your letter. I shall inquire regarding the matter at Indore. I am of course also looking for the book.

We have not started having any books written for the Village Industries Association. When did you send your application? I have

[1] Presumably the Maharaja of Indore. The Hindi Sahitya Sammelan was holding a convention at Indore.

[2] The addressee had written that his wife had died and his father-in-law had been insisting that he should marry his second daughter for the sake of the children.

[3] In the source this letter is placed among the items of this date.

been hunting for it in the office here. Send me a copy. How and where would you work for the Sangh?

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SAIYED KASIM ALI
VISHARAD
BETUL., C. P.

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9749

538. LETTER TO BHAGWANDIN

March 30, 1935

BHAI BHAGWANDIN,

I saw your letter to Avadhesh. Many young men commit the error that he did. Avadhesh has realized his mistake and repented, so we should not lay it against him any more. I shall be writing so in *Harijan*.[1]

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 736

539. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

March 30, 1935

CHI. BRIJKRISHANA,

I have your letter. It is good you are having treatment there. Your leaving this place was also to the good.[2]

You may certainly ask me any questions arising out of my reply.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2439

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 13-4-1935, sub-title, "Full Repentance"

[2] The addressee though intending to make a long stay had left Wardha in the middle of March on account of ill-health and was now recuperating in Kashmir.

540. LETTER TO HATIM ALVI

March 31, 1935

I have your second letter and now the pamphlet[1]. I have gone through the letter carefully. Your case is undoubtedly strong. I feel flattered by your compliment that there is no domestic circle to which I do not belong. Even so, my duty would often compel non-interference. So long as there are divisions even in the same family, they will have to be respected. We are one vast human family. You have gone further, and rightly. All God's creation is one family. But we accept our limitations. In this quarrel of yours I am quite sure that you ought not to invite outside aid—outside the Borah group. If you break through the fence, you have no complaint to make. If you recognize Borahs as a distinct group, the quarrel should be adjusted among the members of the group. Any extension of the doctrine is sure to land us in trouble.

Then, were you right in disregarding excommunication? Mind, I am not examining the position from the legal standpoint. It is the moral that concerns me. From the ahimsa standpoint, you should have respected the order of excommunication. There is too much violence in the air. Your object was and is to convert the high priest and if not him, at least the fellow Borahs. This you could have done without forcing the entry into the mosque. Your motive is triumph of truth, not assertion of rights. I wonder if what I have said appeals to your reason.

Love.

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Issued by the Borah Young Men's Association giving details of the dispute between the reformers and the orthodox of the Borah community. The former wanted to bring all the Borah Trusts under the Waqf Act. The Mullah excommunicated them for holding such views but they regained their right of entry into the mosque by a legal verdict.

541. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

WARDHA,
March 31, 1935

MY DEAR MALKANI,

Your letter. I have an impression that I wrote to you saying that you might build with the second-hand material including burnt bricks. I note what you say about Amtul Salaam. She is also a burnt brick—very much so. She deserves all the love you can give her. I note also what you say about the Indore boarding.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 914

542. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

March 31, 1935

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have your letters. There was some confusion. I have received a part of the letter addressed to Devdas and a part of mine has gone to him.

I understand about the new Agent[1]. You should not even think about Maharaj Singh's criticism of you. A public worker has to put up with all such things. Do fearlessly what you consider to be your duty.

Ramdas's business is again off the rails. The person with whom he was to enter into partnership has himself broken it off. It is no doubt a good thing.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4835

[1] Syed Raza Ali, Agent of the Government of India in South Africa

543. LETTER TO HARIVADAN

March 31, 1935

BHAI HARIVADAN,

I have your letter. I got the point. I am writing to Parikshitlal. Mama came and saw me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4007

544. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

March 31, 1935

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

I am not observing silence so as to avoid reproaches but to listen silently to whatever anyone has to say.

Please see whether Sastri alone will be able to manage the column and also find out whether he and Ganesan will get on. If you have doubt about Ganesan's honesty, then by all means relieve him. Keep him only if you have no doubts about him.

If the debt is incurred on account of the Congress, we have got to pay it. If the drafts are wholly worthless, then take it that the institution is worthless and you do not have to pay a single pie.

I shall be in Indore from the 20th to 24th and after that here.

BAPU

SHRI TH[AKKAR BAPA]
HARIJAN S[EVAK] SANGH
TRICHINOPOLY S. I.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1154

545. LETTER TO AVADHESH DUTT AVASTHI

March 31, 1935

All right. You will live with me as at present. I shall teach you spinning and other things if you are ignorant of them. As for the rest we shall see. During your stay here you will get an emolument of Rs. 15 per month out of which your boarding expenses, which I am

having calculated, will be deducted. You should tell me all that you feel.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am sending a note to the journal.[1]

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3219

546. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
April 1, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I did not want you to send me the enormous quantity of sugar and *gur* you have sent me. At the rate you are going, you will presently be my universal provider.

Your warning me against overwork induces the retort: "Physician! Heal thyself."

Do you remember Rhys Jones? He asks me to take all the work I can from Shummy. Have I not anticipated Rhys?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3526. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6335

547. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

April 1, 1935

CHI. VALJI,

I had forgotten to mention one thing in my letter. Jivanji was here a few days ago and he told me that some difficulty was being experienced in selling your books because of your insistence on following your own style of spelling. Surely there can be no principle behind such a rigid attitude. And where no principles are involved, is it not one's duty to respect the opinion of the majority? If everybody insisted on his point of view being the right one, we would have neither unity among the people nor any organization. If you are very

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 13-4-1935, sub-title, "Full Repentance".

particular about your style of spelling, you may try to popularize it and win. Till then, however, please accept the spelling recognized by your Vidyapith. You can also do this: explain in all your books the rules governing your system of spelling and give arguments in support of them adding that you will, however, adopt the spelling evolved by your co-workers till they are won over to your point of view.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7471. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

548. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

April 1, 1935

CHI. VASUMATI,

I think I shall have to send you some common sense, too, along with my letters. I had meant a common kitchen. For this, there is a cooker big enough for you and me to be boiled in. Containers with gruel, a vegetable, dal, rice and milk can be put inside it at the same time. This not only saves the trouble of constantly keeping an eye on the things but also results in considerable economy of fuel in the end. Prabhavati, Ba, Kishori and the rest have gone to a rural exhibition inDeoli. I will ask Prabha to write to you. Sharda Kotak came and stayed here for about fifteen days.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I trust Gangabehn is all right. I have written to Durga at the Borivli address.

SHRI VASUMATIBEHN
UDYOG SANGH ASHRAM,
BOCHASAN *via* BORSAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9397. Also C.W. 643. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

549. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

April 1, 1935

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

I got the papers sent by you. I have written to both the Iyengars and sent the papers over to Malkani.

I will wait for you after the 12th. I am holding myself ready.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From: a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 22753

550. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

April 1, 1935

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

The problem of conducting the official business of the Charkha Sangh, Udyog Sangh and Harijan Sangh in Hindi is a difficult one. For all the three offices the only capable men we have found are English-knowing. Where are efficient Hindi-knowing men to be found? What can one do? There is no need for me to expound upon it. If there were right men to be found, we could bring about the change in all the three offices today. Let me know if you have any suggestion. You are coming to Indore, I suppose?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1095

551. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

April 1, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. In the absence of a wire from you I take it that Devi is doing well.[1] So far I have never had anyone given injections. We made use only of mud poultices and similar remedies.

[1] The addressee's son had been bitten by a dog and the wound was being treated with mud poultices.

Yes, you may certainly go to Simla if it is possible. I shall send you the books too if I can lay hands on them. Your fear as to what will happen after I break the silence is groundless.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3153

552. NOTE TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

April 1, 1935

If the tomatoes are good, please wash them first in a solution of potassium permanganate and then in clear water. If you feel like taking milk you should do so. The milk should be taken unboiled. No need now to add hot water. Milk, tomatoes and an orange—this should constitute the diet for today. Tamarind water as and when required.

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

553. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM BAVISHI

April 2, 1935

BHAI PURUSHOTTAM,

I wrote to you on 28th March asking you to come to Indore. But I see from your letter of 31st March that you had not received my letter up to the time of your writing. Maybe I wrote Shampur instead of Shajipur in the address.[1]

Please do both of you come to Indore. I cannot fix the time from here. But we shall certainly talk things over.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 123. Also C.W. 4746. Courtesy: Purushottam Bavishi

[1] Gandhiji did write Shampur; *vide* "Letter to Purushottam Bavishi"

554. LETTER TO LAKSHMANDAS KAPUR

April 2, 1935

BHAI KAPURJI,

I have been wanting to write to you all these days but could not do so. Please forgive me. The new glasses sent by you fit very well and now those are the ones I use every day. Thank you.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2216

555. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

April 2, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Send me a copy of the reply received by Manilal[1]. Its wording will help me decide what to write to Delhi.

Such replies are not yet the worst. Much worse insults are going to follow. That is why we should only go on doing what we can without coming into contact with the Government. I think that that is the only way to conserve our strength. To yield to anger is of course very easy.

Perhaps it would be safer to ignore my views regarding vaccination against the plague. I myself have always taken such risks and made others take them. But, then, I was on the spot on every such occasion. It may be dangerous to act upon the suggestions which I have been making from a distance on the present occasion. I, therefore, would advise you to be guided by Dr. Bhaskar. I have of course placed my views before him. Maybe you have even read that letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 157-8

[1] Manilal Kothari, then Secretary of the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee had been taken to one of the States of Saurashtra and forbidden to return to British Indian territory. The reference is to the reply to his letter to the Government in this connection.

556. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

April 2[1]*, 1935*

DEAR BIBI,

You must have got my letters. How did you fare in Khurja? Now at least the idea of living at Harijanvas has been put off, has it not? Your health must have improved. Are you coming to Indore? Everything is all right here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 321

557. LETTER TO BIMLAPRASAD CHALIHA[2]

WARDHA,
April 3, 1935

DEAR BIMLAPRASAD,

I am glad you were able to go to Madhubani. You should certainly now popularize the different processes in your part of the world. You can have the membership of both A. I. S. A. and A. I. V. I. A. Do you get *Harijan* regularly?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 9736. Courtesy: Government of Assam

558. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

April 3, 1935

DEAR BIBI,

I have your letter. From Indore I return to Wardha. You should stay at Wardha till your cottage is ready. You can even prolong the stay. Regarding your cottage, I shall write to Malkani that it should be constructed of baked bricks and consist of two rooms even at the

[1] Not clear in the source.

[2] A photostat of this letter was displayed at the Assam Pavilion of the Gandhi Darshan Exhibition held at New Delhi in 1969-70.

cost of a slight increase in the outlay. You will have fully recovered by the time I return, won't you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 322

559. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

April 3, 1935

MY DEAR MALKANI,

Better build two rooms for Amtul and use the same material as you would for the other buildings. Additional cost should not matter much as ultimately the building would be our property.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 915

560. LETTER TO DR. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA[1]

April 3, 1935

DEAR DR. PATTABHI,

You have placed me in a most awkward position by sending two young men without notice, without any pots, without bedding. We have hardly settled down here. There is not enough accommodation for our requirements. Is it fair to dump down people in an institution? Supposing others followed your example, where would I be?

We have not yet begun to entertain learners. There is little to teach. I have taken them and told them they will work as scavengers and labourers as we all do consistently with our other duties. Only please do not repeat the performance.

If you can get money from their homes or from friends, send me enough for their return fares and initial expenses.

[1] The addressee explains: "In 1935 a satyagrahi, who had been in jail, came to see me and asked for a letter of introduction to Wardha where he wanted to see the Ashram. I gave one readily. At the railway station he wanted to take a companion, and I included his name also in the letter."

How do you pass your time?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Incidents of Gandhiji's Life, p. 225

561. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

WARDHA,

April 3,1935

CHI. AMBUJAM[1],

Just a line to acknowledge your letter. I have a parcel of honey from Trivandrum. Has that also been sent by you? Do not send till I ask. There is plenty of honey with me just now. But you may send the almonds again. I can't get good ones here.

Do come to Indore if you can. Why not Mother too if she would.

Love.

BAPU

From the original. Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

562. LETTER TO ABBAS

April 3, 1935

CHI. ABBAS,

You wrote after quite a long time. I have already written.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6310

[1] This is in Hindi.

563. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

April 3, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Agree to the betrothal only if Kamalnayan and the girl are fully willing and are ready to live in simplicity. There is no need at all for hurry. Kamalnayan's assurance that he will not go to the West till after his betrothal should be enough for us. He has to learn a great deal to acquire maturity. It is our duty to see that neither he nor the girl is unhappy afterwards.

If Kamala does not particularly want your presence in Bhowali, perhaps it might be better for you to go to Sinhagad. Think over the matter, however. Your health should be the first consideration. . . .[1] must have . . .[2] on the way.

Kamalnayan is bound to come to Indore and we shall know everything then. If you decide to go to Sinhagad, and the date fixed is around the date of the Sammelan, I should like you to go *via* Indore.

Madalasa is doing fairly well. Ganga is calm.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2961

564. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN

April 3, 1935

SECRETARY
ALL INDIA HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN
INDORE

DEAR SIR,

I was under the impression that those arranging the Sammelan and the exhibition were largely the same people. The people who had approached me in connection with the Sammelan had talked about the exhibition. I, therefore gave my consent for another speech for the exhibition and that in the same letter which dealt with the Sammelan

[1] & [2] words are not decipherable in the source.

matters.

Inform me of the train I should board on the 19th and how I should reach there.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Veena, Tributes Issue, April-May 1969

565. NOTE TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

April 3, 1935

Do you feel heaviness in the stomach? Even then you should take only milk and fruit in the morning. At noon a little bread, a little curd, and raw crushed vegetable, tamarind and jaggery. How did you like crushed vegetable yesterday? If you like whole leaves you may take them or you may take them crushed. Take only *bhakhari*. Are you used to taking rice? For the evening *bhakhari* and vegetable and tomatoes if they are available. Increase the quantity slowly. Let not your stomach get out of order.

From the Hindi original: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

566. "HARIJAN" IN POONA

April 4, 1935

For saving expenses and for purely financial considerations, the *Harijan*, which was originally published at Poona by the Aryabhushan Press but which was transferred to Madras some time ago, will from next week be retransferred to Poona. Sjt. Mahadev Desai will be the Editor. Thus both *Harijan* (English) and *Harijanbandhu* (Gujarati) will be published at the same Press and place. All communications meant for *Harijan* should henceforth be addressed to the Manager or the Editor, as the case may be, at the Aryabhushan Press, Poona 4.

M. K. G.

Harijan, 13-4-1935

567. LETTER TO EFY ARISTARCHI

April 4, 1935

Your letter advising me of Alexander Moissi's death. Death is a never-failing, faithful companion, whom we should welcome no

matter when he comes. He is twin brother of Birth. Why we should welcome one and dread the other I have never understood. If there is a certainty about the life beyond, why not welcome the change that Death gives?

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

568. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

WARDHA,
April 4, 1935

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I have your maid. I am supporting your suggestion about sending Rajaji.[1] But I must confess to you I have no faith in these deputations. The British policy is fixed and rigid. They want to carry their Bill at any cost. They will placate any opinion but the advanced Indian political opinion. They honestly believe that if they give the Indian politicians an inch, they will want an ell and grumble even when they get their ell. This belief is not only honest, it is well-founded. The Indian wants his independence as of right. The official says he has no right save that of being governed. The official has the firm opinion that India is incapable of governing herself. Hence whatever he concedes is given grudgingly. Hence no advance will satisfy the Indian advanced politician. He may take it only to agitate for more. The policy has now been definitely adopted of never conceding to the popular demand. They will give only what they honestly think is proper. This does not irritate me. We have to develop internal strength to take what we need.

Now see what is happening here. Read the enclosed latest ordinance—a whole population being degraded for the sake ofcrushing a few "terrorists". They won't attempt to know why young men and women are ready to throw away their lives. They are now doing what they have never dared before. They have evolved a new philosophy.

Things will right themselves but not by your importing even our best men. You must plough the lonely furrow for the time being. I do

[1] Agatha Harrison, while visiting India earlier, had suggested to Gandhiji that someone should go to England "to help people understand the situation better"

not say no one should ever go from here. Those like Dr. Ansari or Bhulabhai will go on business. And then they may do a little political work.

In spite, however, of my opinion, I am not going to throw any obstacle in the way of Rajaji going. In fact, I am making the first move. I would like him to go even for your sake.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1488

569. LETTER TO G. C. TAMBE

April 4, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

Monday is my day of silence. But I do not mind if no other day is possible. I want to see and listen, not speak.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 7961

570. LETTER TO BHUJANGILAL CHHAYA

April 4, 1935

CHI. BHUJANGILAL,

If you are obliged to write to me without your father's knowledge, it is the duty of us both not to write to each other.

Anybody who is unwilling to perform a modest duty facing him in the immediate present in the hope of being able to perform a more important one in future is sunk in *moha*. "Make the best of today, for who has foreseen tomorrow?" But even if you decide to take up the smaller duty, you should do so after consulting your father.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of Gujarati: S. N. 24225

571. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 4, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter.

Father's unwillingness to me is sufficient reason why you should not leave Rajkot. I can understand his feelings. Now that Jamnadas has gone there, he may perhaps agree to your leaving. But just now that makes no difference. Also, you cannot leave till you can find somebody to take charge of the school. What you write about the school is perfectly correct. The right course is to let those who wish to leave go and do the best that you can. I will remember about the English teacher. Till you get one, do whatever you can.

I could not convince Vinoba. The idea was to lighten the final responsibility on your head or on that of anybody else who might take your place. Mathew's problem was a difficult one. I think I have been able to solve it. For everybody else it was a difficult job. If there is still something which I can persuade him to accept, please let me know. But now there is no need for that, either, for the present.

The question which I asked you amounts to this: that excepting for father's consent, you should arrange all your affairs in such a manner that you are able to leave immediately.

At present Amtul is with her brother Miya Rashid in Indore. I am going to Indore. She has, therefore, gone there in advance.

Does Qureshi still draw money?

If you wish to buy land for the school, you may do so. If I have not already given my opinion about the Trust Deed, send me a copy. My impression is that I have already written to Jamnadas about it.

A letter for Lilavati is enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8435. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

572. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

April 4, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

So you have been laid low. I had a letter from Mani. It seems unpolished rice will not agree with you. Here everybody can digest it. It can't possibly cause constipation. But experiments in food are not for you. It will be enough if you can keep yourself fit. If you take proper nourishment, you will be all right.

There was a letter from Agatha. She has strongly urged that Rajaji should go to England. Whoever goes, nobody will be able to do anything just now. But a visit by a person like Rajaji may perhaps be useful for the future.

Let me have your opinion.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 159

573. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

April 4, 1935

CHI. HARIBHAU,

I understand about the exhibition.

Please try your best. If the Maharaja and the Maharani feel embarrassed in sitting in chairs while I do not use one, I will not mind doing so for the occasion.

No matter how much is collected in Indore for Hindi propaganda, I will expect only one lakh for work in South India, that is, the part of the country where the four Dravidian languages, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannad, are spoken. This means that a purse of one lakh should be earmarked for Hindi propaganda in South India or in any other part that I like. I give the second alternative for earmarking contributions so that I may be able to spend the money in provinces like Assam if I wish to do so. I don't want such freedom, but if we can get more contributions in that way, I don't mind.

The arrangement for the disposal of night-soil in Indore is

supposed to be excellent. Please do not forget to take me to that place.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 6083. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

574. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

April 4, 1935

CHI. HARIBHAU,

I got your letter. You ought to have written to . . .[1] to soothe her. Please write even now, no matter if the problem is still being discussed with me. I am not making use of your letter.

You are still labouring under an error. To say that you would adopt the same attitude towards . . . shows that you have not thought carefully about the matter. If you adopted such an attitude, I would say that you did not understand your dharma towards . . . as her father. As a father you should at least insist that even your dearest friend should consult you before he talks about any delicate matter to . . . . How can anybody else understand . . . as well as you, a thoughtful father, can? For anyone to talk to . . . about such a matter, and that without her parents' knowledge, is certainly immoral.

For the present, however, it will or suffice? if you write a reassuring letter to . . . and . . . . God alone knows how . . .'s mind has been affected. But there is nothing we can do about it now. I have no doubt that her mind ought to have been allowed to remain unsullied.

. . . has been following a wrong path. But I have not for that reason stopped doing my duty as a parent as I understand it, though it is possible that he might not like it just now. And moreover, isn't there the true Father of us all above? Is He ever likely to forget any of us?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 6086. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

[1] The names are omitted in the source.

575. LETTER TO RAJAB ALI[1]

Thursday, April 4, 1935[2]

BHAI RAJAN ALI,[3]

Wonderful doctors you are! Day in and day out you din into the ears of your patients: "Stop eating polished rice; start unpolished rice; and your constipation will go." But the unfortunate patient comes back with a sample and asks: 'Sir, here is what I have got from the bazaar. Is that unpolished rice?' I suppose you will tell him: 'It is not my business to answer that question. You must go and consult an expert in industrial chemistry.' Nothing very difficult. Another fat fee and he can get the opinion. What a wonderful age we are living in! Now let me ask Mrs. Jenabehn[4] what rice she cooks for you. Polished? Unpolished? Or just what your 'expert' servant gets from the market?

Blessings from[5]

BAPU

Harijan, 13-4-1935. Also a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

576. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

WARDHA,
April 4, 1935

CHI. LILAVATI,

You seem to be acting in the manner of the thief scolding the policeman. My impression is that the last letter has still to come from you. How can you be forgotten? I do get news of you. Do come during the vacation if you feel like it. Are you in good health or are there complications still?

Ask Kusum to write.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati. Sushila Nayyar original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Notes". The addressee's name is omitted in the source and is supplied from the Gujarati copy. Gandhiji had earlier asked his opinion as to the comparative merits of polished and unpolished rice. And he had said: "This is not my domain. The questions about polished and unpolished rice that you ask belong to the subject of industrial chemistry."

[2] The Gujarati copy bears this date.

[3] & [5] The superscription and subscription are supplied from the Gujarati copy.

[4] Supplied from the Gujarati copy

577. NOTE TO BALVANTSINHA

April 4, 1935

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

1. If there is not enough flour for the evening meal, fewer *rotis* should be prepared for the midday meal. What happened yesterday was not becoming.

2. Is there any difference in the quantity of firewood consumed now and when the cooker was not being used?

3. Can you spare an hour or a half to teach Rajkishori Hindi?

4. What about Kale's room?

5. Can leafy vegetables be grown in the larger plot?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1872

578. NOTE TO BALVANTSINHA

April 4, 1935

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I do not like your being ill. If the climate here does not agree with you and you do not feel cheerful I shall not force you to work in the kitchen. Shall I assign you some other work? The best thing might be to settle down in your own village. Consult Surendra.

Why do you need a room for solitude? You have to find solitude under the trees, and in your heart.

It is proper for Vishwambharji to write. His coming here, in my opinion, will serve no purpose.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1874

579. NOTE TO BALVANTSINHA

April 4, 1935

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

How long can you live with me and not associate with and love others living with me? If you like living here you should like everyone who is here. And they are all good people. What else can

one learn from living with me? You would serve all, so you should make up your mind to love all. If one is good the whole world is good. Why do you need a room for solitude? You have to find solitude under trees and in the cave of your heart.

You should give him the room, for you can live even under a tree. You are not likely to run away from me while Harilal avoids me. Now that at last Rama has come to dwell in his heart and he hascome to me I have no wish to irritate him over small things. It will be a great thing if he can stay on. Ba will be the happiest. She often complains that I do not pay sufficient attention to Harilal. But I can do so only in my own way. I cannot discriminate between mine and outsiders. Whosoever follows my path is mine. I have no ill-will for those who follow other ways, but I will not help them either. Thus I can expect sacrifice from you but not from Harilal.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, p. 72

580. THE EXTENT OF MEDICAL AID

With the commencement of the activities of the A. I. V. I. A., medical aid finds a prominent, if not almost an exclusive, place on the programme of many workers. The aid consists in distributing among the villagers free medicines, allopathic, ayurvedic, unani or homoeopathic, or all combined. Druggists selling these medicines are quite ready to oblige workers approaching them for a few medicines, which cost them a trifle and which, in their opinion, may, if they look at the gift selfishly; bring them more buyers. The poor patients become the victims of well-intentioned but ill-informed or over-enthusiastic workers. More than three-fourths of these drugs are not only useless but imperceptibly, if not perceptibly, harmful to the bodies into which they are put. Where they do bring some temporary relief to the patients, their substitutes are as a rule to be found in the village bazaar.

Medical men of the West are slowly but surely finding out that the less drugs they prescribe the better it is for their patients. The best of them never keep their patients in ignorance of what is prescribed. Instead of overloading their prescriptions, they give some simple harmless drug. The best part of their work consists in steadying their

patients, removing their fears and insisting on careful nursing and a change of diet. They are more and more veering round to the belief that nature is the best healer.

Therefore, A. I. V. I. A. is leaving medical relief of the kind I have described severely alone. Its primary care is education in matters of health as well as of economy. Are not both interrelated? Does not health mean wealth for the millions? There bodies, not their intellects, are the primary instruments of wealth. The Association, therefore, seeks to teach people how to prevent disease. It is well known that the food of the millions is very deficient in its nourishing value. What they do eat they misuse. Their knowledge of hygiene is practically nil. Village sanitation is as bad as it well can be. If, therefore, these defects can be put right and the people imbibe the simple rules of hygiene, most of the ailments they suffer from must disappear without further effort or any outlay of money. Hence the Association does not contemplate opening dispensaries. Investigations are now being made to find out what the villages can supply in the shape of drugs. Satisbabu's cheap remedies are an effort in that direction. But incredibly simple though they are, he is experimenting with a view to making drastic reduction in the number of these remedies, without diminishing their efficacy. He is studying the bazaar drugs and testing them and comparing them with the corresponding drugs in the British pharmacopoeia. The desire is to wean the simple villagers from the awe of my sterious pills and infusions.

Harijan, 5-4-1935

581. PRIESTHOOD AND UNTOUCHABILITY

A correspondent from Sibasagar writes:[1]

When I was touring in Assam last year in the Harijan cause, I had understood that the tea-garden coolies were regarded as untouchables and that the Miris were also almost so regarded. Be that as it may, it is a serious question whether, where the priests exploit the superstition of the people and where innocent birds and animals are offered as sacrifice, it is right to agitate for the entry of Harijans to

[1] The letter to not reproduced here. The correspondent had reported about a temple at Dergaon, Assam, where innocent birds and animals were offered as sacrifice and which barred the entry of tea-labourers and Miris because they were regarded as untouchables.

such a temple.

No doubt temple reform is a separate question. Entry of Harijans into temples cannot await reform. But I would draw the line at temples where animal sacrifices are offered. I would not touch these temples till animal sacrifices are stopped. Inward corruption in temples cannot affect the devotee who knows nothing about it. But with animal sacrifice every worshipper is intimately connected. For, he or she hasto offer such sacrifice. And a Harijan admitted for the first time in such a temple would naturally be expected to bring some poor bird or animal as sacrifice. He may or may not be a meat-eater, but who will make himself responsible for the sin of teaching an unsophisticated Harijan that God expects His worshippers to propitiate Him with the blood of innocent dumb animals who have never sinned, who have no sense of sin? I wish that the leaders of Assam will purge the Dergaon temple of the stain of bloody sacrifice. Let no one retort that the beginning should be made, not with an unknown temple like that of Dergaon, but it should be with the temple of Kali. Most reforms have had their origin in small beginnings. The citadel of Kali will fall by its own weight, if the minor temples wash themselves clean of innocent blood.

Harijan, 5-4-1935

582. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

April 5, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

The *gur* and *shakkar*[1] are both good. What Ba would ultimately say of shakkar I do not know. I shall give you her opinion when she gives it.

Shummy's note on *gur* and *imli*[2] is valuable and I am using it for *Harijan*.[3] He must, or you would for him, warn me when I put an undue strain on him. I am having so many medical and chemical conundrums for solution.

The papers you sent me are going back. They make interesting reading. But we will have to work out our own salvation.

[1] Brown sugar
[2] Tamarind
[3] This was published in the *Harijan* of April 20.

When you get used to it, you would prefer loosely-woven khadi sheets to glossy linen. The softness of the khadi sheets I have in mind is all its own. It is light and airy. This is no exaggeration. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. You get the right kind. If you can't procure it, you must tell me.

Shall I send you good slivers from here? Next time you come, I must teach you carding. It is quite easy. You must not have slivers sent for you. You should make them yourself.

It is almost dawn now and I must stop.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3527. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6336

583. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

April 5, 1935

CHI. PREMA,

I have taken up for reply both your letters of 8-2-'35 and 30-3-'35. How is Kisan now? Is she doing anything? How does she keep herself occupied?

Do you still go on with your self-chosen occupation of ploughing the fields and working the water-lift?

You should try and persuade those over whom you have influence to save the expenditure on births and deaths. All may not listen to you, but a few certainly will.

You had a good discussion with Nariman. It is true that most people follow ahimsa only as a policy.[1] But there are a few at least like you who strive their utmost to follow it as a dharma. Ultimately it is such ahimsa that will work.

There will be an army even after the country has become free. I don't feel that my ahimsa is sufficiently strong to convince the people that there will be no necessity for an army. If the army remains, military training also will remain. But this is only speculation. It is not inconceivable that, if we really and truly win freedom through ahimsa,

[1] Nariman had argued that the Congress had adopted ahimsa only as a policy and not as a creed and that, therefore, when the country became free it would have to maintain an army.

we may not need an army afterwards. There is no limit to the power of ahimsa, as there is none to that of the votary of ahimsa. The latter does nothing of his own will. All his actions are prompted by God. That being so, how can he say in advance what God will prompt him to do at a future time? There is thus no question of compromise in this matter. It is only a question of recognizing the limit of one's strength. My killing a snake through fear is no compromise but merely an exhibition of my lack of strength. One might say that God has given me only so much strength and no more, or that I have not purifiedmyself sufficiently—have not adequate *tapascharya*—to make myself fit for greater strength. A compromise, on the other hand, is a deliberate and voluntary act.

A perfect satyagrahi means a perfect avatar of God. Do you doubt that such a perfect avatar can shake the whole world? It is no exaggeration to say that this world is a laboratory for preparing the ground for such an avatar. If all of us prepare overselves for a partial manifestation of the Divine, we may rest assured that the perfect avatar will come some day. If you have such faith, you will not need to ask about the necessity or otherwise of an army.

The Government may indeed be a machine, but is not the machine controlled by an engineer? There is no harm in attending a music or dance performance, provided there is nothing obscene in it. But I would certainly mind going when somebody else pays for us. It may be possible to pay for one person, but who will pay for the millions? We are among the millions. In this matter, however, everyone should act according to his or her own strength.

Preserve carefully Mahadev's article about bread. The problem of keeping the wells clean is a big one. It will be a great achievement if you can persuade the people to stop using the steps on wells wherever they exist.

Write to me in detail the method of straining oil so that I may try it.

Don't mind if your weight is increasing. Acid things are necessary in one's food. I have introduced here both tamarind and onions.

If Sushila has been appointed an Examiner, she should share her fees and set a question paper that will be easy to answer and that will test originality.

My remark about menstruation is correct. Such freedom from

passion takes a very long time to acquire. Passion is so subtle a thing that we are not always able to recognize it.

It would be proper for Europe to carry on an agitation for the release of Jawaharlal.

The disregard of the Assembly voting does not fill me with disappointment. This contingency was taken into account. Entering the Assembly was necessary and remains so.

I keep silent about Hindu-Muslim unity because I can do nothing about it. When the Elephant King had realized his helplessness, he started praying and his prayer was answered. My condition is like his. My prayer continues. Let deliverance come when it will. Why should an *anasakta*[1] be impatient to know its exact time?

We have a large number of newcomers here. Cooking has been drastically simplified. Everything is cooked in steam. Containers for all the three articles of food are put into the cooker at the same time. This saves a lot of time. Cooking now practically means only making *rotlis*. I am trying to discover some method of simplifying this work too.

The oil-press is still working. We continue the cleaning of the neighbouring village every day. I visited it only once. Mahadev goes there daily.

You can come when you get time and wish to do so. You may come to Indore, too, if you wish.

I think this is enough.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10369. C.W. 6808. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak.

584. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

April 5, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I hope the enemy—your fever—has left you now. Don't tolerate it even for a day.

You have certainly done well in deciding to go to the U. P.

[1] One who remains unattached to fruits of action.

Nobody will feel hurt by anything that you say. "Your real leader is Jawahar. We others can stand before you only as trustees for him. Let that be the warp of your speech, and the woof can be as you like. The very fact that they have so eagerly pressed you to accept the invitation makes me happy. . . .[1]

I carefully read all your leaflets. I have started filing them from yesterday. I am sure Mani is preserving copies of all of them. I should like to have a complete set here too. Ask her to send me the preceding seven leaflets.

If you get the "lucky bag", I hope you will give me a share .

Write to Raja. He seems to feel isolated. He has been working without respite and it seems he can't even open his heart to anybody.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 159-60

585. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

April 5, 1935

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Please be assured it was a good thing you were not elected. You can do a great deal of service from outside. It is possible you may have to be out of the Corporation altogether. I hope you are keeping fit.

I had known about Sardar's illness. I get letters every day.

Do draw Pyarelal to you if you can do so. I am guiding him in my own way. His good lies in finding peace in Utkal. Hence, I would not suggest to him anything else. You have a right to call him over. I shall not stop him if he agrees to go.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Omission as in the source

586. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
April 6, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I understand what you say about *gur* and *shakkar*.

I am returning straight from Indore. The report about the tour was quite wrong. I might have to go to Gujarat later.

I hope to be here in July to receive you.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3712. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6868

587. LETTER TO GOVIND RAO

April 6, 1935

MY DEAR GOVIND RAO,

Though as you say there was no excuse for the negligence, you have now done full reparation to Shri Thomson.

As for the ladies, wait till the next cold season. In any case, will they pay their own board expenses? Do they know Hindi? Of course you will write to the manager when the time for sending them comes.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1383

588. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 6, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

Read the accompanying. A copy of my reply is also enclosed. I would advise you to engage him if he is ready to come on that condition. If, however, you are not satisfied, you may unhesitatingly send me a wire saying "No". I am asking for a wire in case it is "No", so that Mathew, if he is ready, may not be kept waiting.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, Part II, p. 185. Also C.W. 8436. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

589. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

April 6, 1935

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

Why is Balvantsinha unhappy? Has anybody done him an injustice? Or does anybody harass him?

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 3014. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

590. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

April 6, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI

. . .[1] wrote a similar letter to me also. I have asked him why he asks for money like this every now and then. I am writing to him and advising him not to be a cause of pain to you. He may come to me if he wishes.

Your have given a good reply to Chandubhai. I wonder what they find in sannyasa.

I read Bulabhai's letter. It is all right. Let him do whatever he can.

I do not wish to write more today. I had nearly forgotten that today is a day of fasting.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 160-1

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

591. LETTER TO CHANDULAL

April 6, 1935

BHAI CHANDULAL,

It is good that you asked the question. There is nothing wrong in my believing that no one can feel as strongly as I. It is no more than an expression of one's own strong feeling. I do not believe that anyone else can have greater love for my mother than I have. Do you find anything wrong with this statement?

The same is true of the other sentence. There could be millions of people who practise more austere penance. But just the same I can say that I do not know of any such, can't I? Would you look upon it as claiming omniscience I said that I hadn't heard anyone speak the language of the seers? There could be millions speaking the language of the seers, but must I not say it if I have not met any?

If you don't follow, ask again.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

592. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

April 6, 1935

BHAI MOOLCHAND

I have no recollection of any letter about Khudi[1]. Anyway, I shall reply in the *Harijan*.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 834

[1] The source has *"kaddi"* which means bone, presumably a slip; *vide* also "Letter to Moolchand Agrawal"

[2] *Vide* "Notes", 13-4-1935, sub-title, "A Result of Untouchability"

593. LETTER TO KASIM ALI

April 6, 1935

SAIYED SAHEB,

I learn that replies are being sent to you from the office. No services of writers are needed. Let alone a thousand villages, it would be enough if you could properly manage even a single village. Only he can take up the agency of a thousand villages who has scores of assistants at his disposal.

As for *Shiva Bavani*[1] even the name I hear from you for the first time. But I now find it to be an old book. I am collecting more facts.

M. K. GANDHI

SAIYED KASIM ALI
VISHARAD
BETUI, C.P.

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9750

594. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

April 6, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. I hope Devi is well. If he has to have injections, the facility is available in almost all hospitals these days. If it can't be done at Khurja, it certainly can be done in Delhi.

Remember that you have the right to come to live here. As for ordering anyone, I have for the present no wish to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha*, facing p. 154

[1] A Hindi poetical work by Bhushan, extolling the exploits of Shivaji

595. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

WARDHA,
April 7, 1935

CHI. KANAIYO,

How foolish you are! When you first suspected that I was displeased with you, you could have had your doubt resolved immediately. In the instances which you have cited, there was no question at all of my being displeased. I take work from you that is hard enough, and that as exactingly as I can, because I am pleased with you. I am not at all angry with you. If I were, I would say so immediately and not hide the fact from you. You have, therefore, no cause to feel unhappy or disheartened.

You need not believe that you will never be able to learn English. And even if you cannot, why should you give way to despair? Is there anything else to make you feel despondent? You need not hide anything from me.

I am fully satisfied with you. You have given me no cause to feel dissatisfied.

You need not, therefore, leave and go away somewhere else.

After this, do you want any explanation about the instances which upset you?

I am returning your letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I forgot to reply to one of your questions. Your decision to improve your Gujarati thoroughly is perfectly correct. Master the grammar. English will then come of itself. If you make a systematic study of Gujarati, you will be able to learn any other language without much difficulty.

You should do your best to memorize the eighteen chapters [of the *Gita*]. Give more time to the study of Sanskrit.

You should have informed me about Purushottam immediately.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

596. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 7, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I learnt only today that Purushottam's health is again giving trouble. He should stay in Santa Cruz and put himself under Gaurishankar's treatment or he may try Kuvalayanand's treatment. If he wishes to try Sharma's treatment, he can go to Khurja. But I think at present he is not interested in treating patients. Purushottam may go to Mehta also if he is so inclined. I have an impression, however, that he was not satisfied with Mehta's treatment. He may, if he wishes, come here. I have not accepted defeat. It is very hot here, but I do not think it can be less hot there. Let him try any treatment he likes, but he must get well. "Health is the first condition of happiness." Harjivan neglected his health and has now got tuberculosis of the bones.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8437. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

597. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

April 7, 1935

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

Show the accompanying to Balvantsinha. Carry out my suggestion and end the bickerings. Look into Harilal's complaint regarding milk, etc. He seems to have a great deal to say.

Letters for the family are enclosed.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati C.W. 385. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

598. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

April 7, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

The reply[1] received by Manilal is the limit of arrogance. Let the Government follow its own nature. We shall follow ours. I see in the reply the utmost limit of violence. Where shall we put the limit to our non-violence? Violence has a limit, non-violence can have none. That is why it is invincible. But why this philosophizing before you? It is not mere philosophizing, though. That is how I spontaneously feel. I place before you whatever thoughts come to me. As you know, I never wish to hide any thought of mine from you.

The letter received today was accompanied by a copy of yesterdays leaflet. "No 10" seems to have been written through oversight.

I hope you are getting over the weakness brought on by the fever.

What you say about vaccination is correct.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The leaflet is all right. The one received yesterday bore No. 9. I wrote as above only after reading the first few sentenses. I have now read through No. 10 and see that its contents are different.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 161

599. LETTER TO RATANLAL

April 7, 1935

BHAI RATANLALJI,

I like your letter. Your decision to oppose is born out of ignorance. It was your duty, certainly, to find out the full facts from me. What has Hindi got to do with swaraj, a political matter? I need funds only for the propagation of Hindi in South India. What is there

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 2-4-1935

to oppose in this? Are you aware of the magnitude of the work already done in this direction in the South? Have you seen how much has been spent on it? Do you realize the need for it? Have you any reason to doubt that the amount will be spent on the popularization of Hindi? Your remark that the funds will be spent on political workers does not become you. I would expect from you not opposition but help.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

600. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

April 7, 1935

BHAI MOOLCHAND

I have your letter. Concerning the Khudi incident justice should be demanded from where it is due. Can truthful testimonies be got? Can any impartial man go there? Many such questions arise.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 829

601. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HINDI UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE

April 7, 1935

DEAR SIR,

I have your letter. The funds I have asked for are for the propagation of Hindi in the South. Thus I can spare you nothing out of that one lakh. If there are any further donations they can be put down. Of course the work undertaken by your committee is commendable.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SECRETARY
HINDI UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE
INDORE
CENTRAL INDIA

[From Hindi]

Veena, Tributes Issue, April-May 1969

602. LETTER TO DR. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

WARDHA,
April 8, 1935

DEAR DR. PATTABHI,

The young men[1] are not going back unless the life here disquiets them. Strange food, strange climate. If their friends can find money, I should like the return fares in case of need and some for their bedding. They are under Mirabehn's charge.

Yours,
BAPU

Incidents of Gandhiji's Life, p. 225

603. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

April 8, 1935

CHI. MANUDI,

How can you say that I have stopped writing to you? Have I failed to reply to any letter of yours? How can you charge me when you yourself do not write? I got your letter today and here I am replying to it. I am glad to learn that you have passed. Instead of trying to speed up progress from form to form and save years, it would be better to try to master what you learn in every form. Write to me regularly from now on. About other things Ba or somebody else will write. I hope you yourself do not feel that you are already nineteen. Write to me frankly.

Blessings to aunties.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2665. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya", \3-4-1935

604. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

April 8, 1935

CHI. NARAHARI,

Who told you that I intended to go there? We know nothing about the matter here. Please banish the thought from mind.

Do write and let me have your views about the dairy.

Tell Puratan that there is considerable substance in what he says. I still need to get more experience about the tannery, and I am doing so. If I live, I will certainly guide him.

I know the reason for the failure of Sabarmati.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9075

605. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

April 8, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

What else could Ansari have done? He can't refuse anybody, rich or poor. He was once visited by a woman out to rob him, and he emptied his purse into the fold of her sari. It will, therefore, be a mercy to him to free him.

Personally I am all in favour of the policy of doing silently what we can and saying nothing to or begging nothing from the Government.

Let them plunder Ras. We will get back every inch of the land. When to have me there is entirely in your hands. But please do not take me out in a procession. You may, if you wish, have me at Borsad.

I hope you will not have a relapse.

Mani tells me in her letter that the nose has been giving trouble. Is that true?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 162

606. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

April 8, 1935

DEAR BIBI,

You should get yourself examined by the doctor for your brother's satisfaction if for nothing else. It is rather difficult to say how long I shall remain at Wardha. If you follow my instructions to the letter, I shall rid you of pleurisy and the weakness of the heart. What is the alternative if the committee does not permit a structure of sun-dried bricks?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 323

607. NOTE TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

April 8, 1935

First read this.[1] I have not revised it. If there is anything you want to ask me you may. You make the corrections in the language on this itself. I shall then see it and a copy can be made out. If you find any looseness of thought you should make a note of it. It will be convenient for both of us.

From the Hindi original: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

608. NOTE TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

April 8, 1935

Do not spend so much money.[2] With fresh milk and curd you do not need so many oranges. Tamarind can be a substitute for oranges. Tamarind, raw vegetables, papaw and tomatoes are enough.

From the Hindi original Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Draft of speech for the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan of which Gandhiji was the President and which was to be held on April 20 and 23. For the text of the speech, *vide* "Speech at Hindi Sanhita Sammelan Indoe".

[2] The addressee had said that he had been taking a dozen oranges a day and pointed out that the price of oranges had gone up.

609. DISCUSSION WITH J. P. BHANSALI[1]

[*April 8, 1935*][2]

GANDHIJI: Does this diet suit you?

BHANSALI: Quite.

G. Perhaps the *neem* leaves are a great help?

B. Undoubtedly. In winter I have to drop them, as these limbs have a rheumatic tendency.

G. Don't you find the leaves too bitter?

B. Well, there are varieties even among *neem* trees, and while some leaves are very bitter, some are not. The palate gets accustomed to this diet, so much so that it relishes it. There again crops up the question of the control of the palate!

G. And where do you sleep? You have nothing to spread or cover yourself with.

B. Just where I chance to be, and have just what I chance to get.

G. You won't mind a mattress and a bedsheet and a wrap?

B. No. But I have slept often under the trees, often on bare earth and under the open sky, and often on the burning-ground.

G. Ever troubled by dangerous reptiles or animals?

B. Hardly ever. I was once stung by a scorpion, but it was no more than an insect bite. Snakes I have come across and once a leopard, but none of them meant any harm and there was no fear in me.

G. Any queer experiences on the burning-ground?

B. I must own that there is a species of disembodied beings, but one need not believe in them. I have met them, and that is the fear that sometimes lurks in me. But soon I pull myself together.

G. Do you have to speak, if only to beg for your flour?

B. No.

G. Do you manage to get it always?

B. No. I have often had to go without any food. Once for three days

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". Gandhiji had many rounds of talks with Bhansali, an old co-worker and member of the Ashram. He had been silent for three years and wanted to break his silence only to talk to Gandhiji. He had walked for months, barefoot and bare-bodied, to see Gandhiji at Wardha. His diet consisted of corn flour with water and *neem* leaves.

[2] From the manucript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. This source however mentions only one date, while Gandhiji had at least three interviews with Bhansali.

running I had no food. Whilst some would willingly feed me, some have doubted my *bonafides*, some have taken me to be a cheat, and some a member of the C.I.D.

G. Do you think of any of your old friends or relations that were once a source of worry to you?

B. Never. All memory is gone.

G. Does the grinding poverty of the villagers oppress you?

B. Rather. That reminds me of all you have written about it. I think of some of the most heart-moving of your writings like "Death Dance" in *Young India*, and feel that the "Death Dance" is going on, more relentlessly if possible, and feel that I have no right even to the handfuls of flour I eat. I am glad that I do not rob them any more, and the living presence of Death in the burial ground is somewhat of a consolation.

G. Then, you will some day come back to me and yet fulfil my cherished dream about you? Won't you?

B. I wish I could say it. I do not know. God alone knows. Maybe there is a lingering chance.

G. What do you think of the whole day?

B. I have my *mantras* which I constantly repeat. Nothing disturbs me, nothing worries me

G. Then all fear is gone?

B. Indeed. I swim in the ocean of peace. All that is due to you. You taught me all this. I have forgotten most of my past but not the discourses on the *Gita* you used to give us, nor your discourses on *Pilgrim's Progress.* Undisturbed peace is my privilege. Sleep practically untroubled by dreams. I have been often held up to ridicule and contempt. I have rejoiced in it and often craved for it. All I now want is the extinction of even that craving. Why should I rejoice over ridicule if I do not rejoice over praise? Undisturbed equanimity I want—that equability to praise and blame and heat and cold. I wish, if I could, not to delight even in travail. But what a dandy I used to be, Bapu! Oh, the days of my dandyism! It is the mind that makes a heaven of hell and hell of heaven. There is no end to my peace now, and yet what a dandy I used to be once!

With this he laughed a hearty laugh.

G. Where do you sit all day?

B. Downstairs, in the room. Friends come and go. I am perfectly untroubled and peaceful. I do not even know who comes and goes.

G. That is real victory.

Harijan, 13-4-1935

610. LETTER TO KHURSHEDBEHN

April 9, 1935

I am wide awake even when I am asleep. My sleep is *not* a forgetting, it is a renovating.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

611. LETTER TO BAL KALELKAR

April 9, 1935

Like you, I, too, am preparing for an examination. You will appear for your examination without leaving that place, and will have only three or four examiners to satisfy. But I shall have to go as far as Indore for my examination, and as for the number of examiners, the very thought of it frightens me. . . . Let us see what happens.

Has not Kaka also to appear for an examination? That means that all three of us are busy.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary: Courtesy: Narayan Desai

612. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO HARJIVAN KOTAK

April, 9, 1935

What must be the plight of a bachelor or a widower? Should not there be somebody at any rate whom God would look after? I am certainly trying to persuade Sharda, but I cannot bear to see you so helpless as to feel completely lost without her.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

613. LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA.

April 9, 1935

BHAI SAHEB,

Your telegram relieved me of my anxiety. You have resolved to live to a hundred. In order to do that you will have to make an effort to protect the body.

I am setting out to draft the speech for the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. Before I do that I must ask your blessings. I shall be greatly encouraged if I can receive them before I leave here on the 19th.

The presidentship was to be yours but your refusal has thrown the burden on me which only your blessings can lighten.

Your younger brother,

MOHANDAS

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

614. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

WARDHA,
April 10, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letter. What you have done seems perfectly all right. By all means go and stay for some time in that part. I will talk to Janakidevi about the engagement.

When Chandrakant's father writes to me, I will do what is necessary. I hope your car does not give you any trouble.

This is enough for now.

Blessings to Kamala.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2962

615. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

April 10, 1935

BHAI JIVANJI,

I finished *Yeravda Mandir* ten days ago. I hope to finish *Gandhi Vichar Dohan* tomorrow. The remaining things I think I shall be able to finish when I take a vow of silence next time. But I shall see. I have not enjoyed a minute's leisure during the present period of silence.

Read the accompanying letter. Wherever Mohanlal is, you may

send him if you wish to. Do what is necessary and inform me. Do you want *Yeravda Mandir* immediately?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9939. Also C.W. 6914. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

616. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

April 10, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Your leaflets are becoming more trenchant. The dark cell has been vividly described. There are a great many such cells. We are being punished for them. What you have been doing is the only real work.

A letter from Dev Sharma is enclosed. I have received what I expected from him. I hope you are gaining strength.

The *mahuda*[1] experiment is good. Let me know the results.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 163

617. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

April 10, 1935

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Yes, Thakkar Bapa had written to me. The nature of work is such. I enclose Paul's letter. I have desisted on his suggestion. Rajaji too was not in favour of a public agitation. I shall await a further communication from Paul.

The sea is very rough in the first week of June. Could you not leave a little earlier? Schuster's letter is good. The man had meant to do a great deal but could achieve nothing. Their present policy does not show a trace of courtesy. They have no regard for public opinion;

[1] The addressee had taken to eating a few mahuda flowers each morning.

they rely solely on their armed might.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 8008. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

618. LETTER TO SAMPURNANAND

WARDHA,
April 10, 1935

DEAR SAMPURNANAND,

I have your letter. My memory has become weak, but I do seem to recollect that each of the provinces was given its rightful share.[1] If not, the matter should be looked into. Has this happened in every case? If injustice has been done and if I can do something about it, I shall certainly do so.

SHRI SAMPURNANANDJI
JALIP DEVI
KASHI
BANARAS (U. P.)

From the Hindi original: Sampurnanand Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

619. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
April 11, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

If you have difficulty in getting slivers from Adampur, or if what you get is not good enough, please do not hesitate to fall back upon me. I can ensure you a regular supply of good slivers.

You need not worry about Watt's 16 volumes. I have already got the abridgment which will serve the purpose. I had an offer from Calcutta to buy me the whole set. I have stopped the purchase. So for

[1] The addressee had complained that under the new constitution of the Congress, U. P. had been given inadequate representation in the A I. C. C.; for the October 1934 resolution of the Congress embodying the amended constitution.

the time being it will be enough for you to be able to procure for me the other books.

When you come in July I undertake to return you a good carder. It is no strain to work the bow.

If I do go to Europe again, I would love to have you with me. But just now there is little possibility of my going out of India. My heart is in the village work just now.

Love to you both.

BAPU

[PS.]

Of course we gratefully take what help comes to us from friends like Agatha.

From the original: C.W. 3528. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6337

620. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

April 11, 1935

MY DEAR ANAND,

Strange! I wrote[1] to J. yesterday inquiring about you. Today I have your letter. I understand the situation. You must get out of Father's house without bitterness or reproach. Mother you cannot help. Your interference can only make matters worse. If she would leave his roof, you can take her in. Your maintenance will be all right. Payment from me can be returned. You need not enter [into his] private life. Vidya should get well at once. Write to me when you have taken up separate abode. Let Jairamdas share this with you and write to me. Love to you both.

BAPU

SHRI ANAND T. HINGORANI
D/3 COSMOPOLITAN COLONY
KARACHI

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] The letter is not traceable.

621. LETTER TO BHUJANGILAL CHHAYA

April 11, 1935

CHI. BHUJANGILAL,

Your letter was transparently sincere. When perfect ahimsa has grown in you your path will be quite clear before you. Just now I personally feel that it would be better for you to devote your time to your studies and finish them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 24217

622. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

April 11, 1935

I went through more than one-fourth of this line by line. Afterwards, being short of time, I looked at only the portions marked by you.

I see that the pains you have taken over this leave nothing to be desired.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9940. Also C.W. 6915. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

623. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

April 11, 1935

CHI. VASUMATI,

Even before I got your letter, I had heard that you had joined in the work of cleaning. I am glad. Ba returned long ago and is now thinking of going to Delhi where Tara has fallen ill.

Blessings to all from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9398. Also C.W. 644. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

624. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

April 11, 1935

BHAI BENARSIDAS,

I have your letter. It has not hurt me. A man should do only what he can. I would advise you first to get married and then to devote yourself to the task of popularizing Hindi. You will be able to accomplish three purposes in this way: *Vishal Bharat,* propagation of Hindi and writing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2555

625. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI

April 11, 1935

BHAI CHAND TYAGI,

Your letter is frightening.[1] I have sent it on to Jyotiprasadji. You will know how to deal with him, only be firm.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6632. Also C.W. 4280. Courtesy: Chand Tyagi

626. LETTER TO MANZAR ALI SOKHTA

April 12, 1935

MY DEAR MANZAR ALI,

Did you not teach me that 'Sokhta' means burnt? Not until you have burnt your 'I' into 'O' will you achieve success. You say you want funds. What for? Not for cleaning your neighbours' streets and everything else, nor for pounding his and your paddy and wheat. You do not need funds; you need to sweat and produce wealth out of waste.

Yours,

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] The corresponding word in the source is not quite legible.

627. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

Ramanawami, April 12, 1935

CHI. HARILAL,

I have been wanting to write to you all these days, but for one thing and another I never got the time. I have snatched a little time somehow today.

Mahadev had had a little talk with me. Kishorelal wrote and acquainted me with the matter.

I understand your problem. You don't wish to deceive yourself or me. You still crave for sex pleasure. If so, you must satisfy your craving. You can suppress it only when you feel a strong aversion to worldly pleasures.

My difficulty is this. How can I, who have always advocated renunciation of sex, encourage you to gratify it? How can I help you to do so? I can tolerate your remarrying. But how can you carry on your search for a wife while staying with me? If I invited you to come and stay with me, even though I knew your desire to remarry, I did so not with the intention of helping you to get married but with the hope that your staying with me might help your mind to calm down. Besides, I also wanted to understand your change of heart.

I do wish to help you as much as I can. But wouldn't you on your part that I did so only within my limits? Think over this andwrite frankly to me now. You may say whatever you wish to. Are your efforts to give up smoking nearing success, or do you think you will never be able to give it up?

Do not employ Mirabehn's labourers in cleaning those buildings or washing the baths. Clean whatever you can with your own hands. I am not happy about the labourers being employed even in the orchard. I tolerate that being done because of my helplessness.

Avadhesh has informed me of his final decision not to accept the sum of Rs. 15. I felt that day that you were unnecessarily hurting him. He had already yielded. Where was the need, then, to go on lecturing?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1538. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

628. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
April 12, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I send herewith a copy of Ramanlal's report. If you can go to Sabarmati for two or three days and inspect the accounts, I would feel easy in my mind and also know what I should do. Is Titus inefficient or dishonest, or is Ramanlal's letter without basis?

Attend to this immediately if you can.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8438. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

629. LETTER TO VITHAL L. PHADKE

April 12, 1935

CHI. MAMA,

I have written to Parikshitlal, but have received no reply so far. I am sure that the leaf-plates made by you must be excellent. Show me a specimen some time. About *bhaji*, what you say is correct.

You certainly need not select a village in a hurry, but you should not delay through lethargy, either.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3830

630. LETTER TO AVADHESH DUTT AVASTHI

April 12, 1935

CHI. AVDHESH,

Your letter is good. So be it. You will not be on a salary but I shall give you the fare when you happen to leave. Rid yourself of anger and acquire humility. No one is high or low here, all are alike. There is no master and no servant. We are all servent. We are not ashamed to do any kind of work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3210

631. INTERVIEW TO LORD FARINGDON[1]

[Before *April 13, 1935*]

LORD FARINGDON: What is the real object of the Village Industries Association?

GANDHIJI: To show the people how to turn waste into wealth.

L. F. How do you propose to achieve it?

G. By having an army of self-effacing workers who will show the people how they can avoid slow starvation. There is no other constructive programme before the people.

L. F. You should need a very large number of workers. And how would you be able to get them?

G. If the moment has come, we shall find the workers.

L. F. How do you propose to tackle the problem of rural indebtedness?

G. That we are not dealing with. It requires State effort. I am just now discovering things people can do without State aid. Not that I do not want State aid. But I know I cannot get it on my terms.

Lord Faringdon was anxious to get Gandhiji's views on the communal question. How was it to be solved?

G. That has just now become insoluble. I fear that time alone can solve it. If I can persuade the Hindus to give a blank card to the Muslims, the solution can be had today. But there is too much mutual distrust to admit of any such heroic solution in the immediate future.

Harijan, 13-4-1935

632. NO DISAPPOINTMENT

Sjt. Har Dayal Nag, probably the oldest leader at work in all India, writes:[2]

> I feel disappointed to notice want of sufficient rally round you in the work of your All-India Village Industries Association. . . . I have been studying the economic aspect of the problem of village industries since the beginning of my public life. Your programme does not enthuse me much simply because I miss in it that economic aspect. . . .

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Notes". Since Gandhiji was observing silence he gave his answers in writing.

[2] Only extracts are reproduced here.

> Imagine for a while that India is flooded with cottage-made goods; but manufacture of goods without consumers or purchasers is nothing but a loss. The hand-loom can produce khaddar but it cannot produce its buyer. My painful experience is that many of those who spin do not wear any cloth made out of their self-spun. . . . The *gur* producer may taste a bit of it for the sake of lip loyalty to the country, but will he mix it with his tea or milk? Will the owner of a village shoe factory use rough shoes of his own factory in preference to fine pleasurable cheap imported shoes? . . . The Indian cottagers will never eschew foreign goods unless and until they are taught to learn that no foreign goods can be cheaper than the goods which they can produce with their own raw materials and spare labour and for their own use. . . .

Har Dayalbabu has earned his rest, and no one will complain if he retires from all public work. But like his three competitors, Pandit Malaviyaji, Abbas Tyabji and Vijayaraghavachariar, he insists on working. He can, therefore, expect no indulgence from critics on the ground of age. I know he wants none. His body and his intellect remain unimpaired and are ever at the disposal of the nation.

Let me then tell him that those who are actually working have no sense of disappointment. The ground is so new that it takes long to prepare. The workers are not able to cope with what they have on their hands.

I suggest then that Har Dayalbabu has the sense of disappointment for the very reason he has given. He pleads guilty to the charge of neglect of duty. If he had, as is his wont, taken up thework, he would no doubt have found it very difficult but he would certainly not have been disappointed. He misses the economic aspect because he has not worked to see it.

Having been immersed in Harijan work, I discovered that if India was not to perish, we had to begin with the lowest rung of the ladder. If that was rotten, all work done at the top or at the intermediate rungs was bound ultimately to fail.

There is more than the economic aspect in the programme before the country. To provide nourishing food for the nation in the manner sketched in the programme is to give it both money and health. For the villagers to pound their own rice and eat it unpolished whole, means saving at least thirty crores of rupees per year and promoting health. But the tragedy of it is that we have no such thing as unpolished whole rice to be had in the ordinary bazaar. And the Association has to wait some days before it can give a clear lead to the

nation. The nation requires education as to the food to be taken and the manner in which it has to be prepared.

This is no programme of preparing shoddy goods in the villages and forcing them on unwilling buyers. There is to be no competition, foredoomed to failure, with foreign or swadeshi corresponding articles. The villagers are to be their own buyers. They will primarily consume what they produce. For they are ninety per cent of the population. They will manufacture for the cities what the latter want and what they can usefully manufacture. Most undoubtedly people will be advised to use *gur* for their milk and tea. They will be told, as they are being told, that it is a superstition to think that *gur* taken in milk or tea is injurious to health. One correspondent says that on his wife beginning to take *gur* with her tea instead of sugar she lost her constipation. I am not surprised, because *gur* has a mild laxative effect which sugar certainly has not. The middle-class people have exploited the villages. Some of them are now making reparation by making them realize their dignity and importance in the national evolution.

Then take the question of sanitation. Proper attention to it gives the country two rupees per year per head. That means sixty crores of rupees per annum in addition to better health and greater efficiency.

The present programme is the foundation of an all-round improvement in the tottering condition of the seven lacs of India's villages. It is work that is long overdue. It has to be done, no matter what India's political condition is. It includes every class of villagers from the scavenger to the *sowcar.* It is work in which all partiescan whole-heartedly join. Its future is assured if a supply of workers can be assured.

Harijan, 13-4-1935

633. HARIJANS AND PIGS

Seth Achalsingh of Agra wrote to me two months ago a letter describing a scene he had witnessed for the first time in his life. He had seen pigs, with their mouths gagged, being roasted alive by Harijans. I was horrified by the description. But I know that pigs are used as food by Sikhs, and also by thousands of Hindus in Andhra Desha. It is possible that pig-flesh is eaten in the other parts of India by non-Harijans. The only thing that can be said with certainty is that, apart from vegetarians, Mussalmans alone never eat pig's flesh.

Co-workers in Wardha, who have been eyewitnesses, tell me that humaner people suffocate pigs to death and immediately proceed to roast them whole. Those who are devoid altogether of the humane instinct roast them alive. A party, armed with powerful lathis, surrounds the fire to which the poor animal is consigned, and hits him with lathis as, writhing in pain, he is trying to run out of the burning fire. Here is the reply received from Sjt. Bapineedu to whom I referred for information as to the practice in Andhra.

> "In killing pigs, various methods are adopted in various places of Andhra, but all the methods are extremely cruel. They are as follows:
>
> 1. A pig is caught, and its legs are tied fast with a long rope. Then another cord is tied very tightly round its mouth above the nostrils. This disables the animal from breathing, and it dies after some time due to asphyxiation. This method is most common.
>
> 2. As stated in the former paragraph the animal's legs are tied fast, and, instead of tying another cord round its mouth, it is submerged in water, and allowed to die of drowning.
>
> 3. A third method is to tie its legs, and to pierce it with a spear and hold it thus till it dies. The pig, being a very sturdy animal, does not die easily, and suffers for a long time.
>
> 4. Another method is that its forelegs and hind legs are tied separately and two persons hold them tightly after laying the pig upside down. A third man then beats it to death by dealing blows on its chest. The animal suffers much more terribly in this case than in the previous cases.
>
> I am also informed that nowadays some people shoot it with a gun, but it is very rare.
>
> Harijans eat pork rather rarely on account of its being dear. But it is an indispensable item on the menu on festive occasions. In some places, Harijans purchase them at a very young age, and rear them till they are fit to be slaughtered. Then the whole village combines itself, and purchases the animal from the owner. After it is killed, it is shared among the whole village, its cost being borne by them equally."

Sjt. Bapineedu supplements his letter with an American bulletin entitled "We can kill a hog". I had to perform the painful task of reading the bulletin containing for me the most repelling description of how pigs are killed for meat. There is not much to choose in the methods described above. If one is to consider the degrees of cruelty, the pig seems to require the most cruelty before it can be killed. My purpose in writing this is to show that Harijans are the least offenders in this matter, not, I admit, from choice but from sheer necessity. The

question raised by Seth Achalsingh therefore resloves itself into one not of Harijan reform but of broad humanitarian reform. We must not take up any stick that comes our way to beat the poor Harijan with.

But the reform is not the less urgent because it does not specially concern Harijans. If our sense of right and wrong had not become blunt, we would recognize that animals had rights, no less than men. This education of the heart is the proper function of humanitarian leagues. I know that the lower creation groans under the arrogant lordship of man. He counts no cruelty too repulsive when he wants to satisfy his appetite, whether lawful or unlawful.

Harijan, 13-4-1935

634. NOTES

FULL REPENTANCE

Some time ago I referred in these columns to the case of a young man from Bahraich who was living on public charity.[1] As has already been stated, he returned to me fully repentant. He is still at Maganwadi regularly working with us and doing his share of physical labour. He will soon earn his fare for going to Bahraich. But having found himself in Maganwadi, he does not want to leave as soon as he has earned his fare. He proposes to learn something and benefit by his stay in our midst. His friends in Bahraich have been pained over the criticism of his conduct. Avadhesh, for that is the young man's name, admits the justness of my criticism though he says in extenuation that he had no guilty conscience when he was travelling and living on charity as, he says, is the custom among Ramanujis. But now that he has discovered his error, he promises never to repeat it. He has thus turned the error to good account and purged himself of any stigma that might have been brought on him by my criticism. It is to be wished that many others, who like Avadhesh are living on charity, will profit by his example and like him turn over a new leaf of the book of life. To err is human; it is noble after discovery to correct the error and determine never to repeat it.

A RESULT OF UNTOUCHABILITY

The readers of *Harijan* are familiar with the story of the

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 1-3-1935, sub-title "A Shame"

persecutions of Harijans by Nattars in Karaikudi. Now comes a similar story from Rajputana. Khudi is a little village attached to Sikar, an understate to Jaipur. The letters that have come to me allege that on 28th March last a horde of Rajputs surrounded a marriage party of Jats and delivered a terrible lathi charge on the defenceless Jats for their effrontery in taking the bridegroom in procession on horseback. The custom in this part of the world seems to have been that the Jats should not on ceremonial occasions make use of elephants or horses. It was believed that the matter was adjusted between the rival parties and that the Jats could make use of these animals for riding on any occasion. But events seem to have shown that whosoever made the pact could not compel its observance by the Rajputs as a whole. It is said that the charge was preceded by the premeditated murder of a Jat. Over 40 persons are reported to have been seriously injured during the charge, one of the victims having succumbed to the injuries.

Let us hope that the State authorities will carry on full investigation into the matter and afford due protection to the poor Jats in the exercise of rights common to all humanity.

What concerns us here is the fact that this senseless persecution is a direct result of untouchability—the belief that God has created beings of whom some are superior to others, so much so that in the extreme limit the inferior beings become untouchable or even unseeable. The alleged persecution of the Jats of Khudi is a species of untouchability different only in degree from the form familiar to the readers of *Harijan.* If we succeed in dealing with the extreme form, the rest will certainly disappear. It is therefore necessary to deal with the fiend in a summary and most expeditious manner.

A REWARD OF SERVICE

A worker of Darbhanga writes:

> During the Holi holidays I went to my village. Finding the streets very dirty, I thought I would clean them, and accordingly I invited the young men to turn the holiday to good account by helping me to clean up the dirt. About thirty of them responded. Shovels in hand we worked for four hours, gathered the dirt and buried it in a pit. We thought we had done a good day's work. Not so thought the village elders. They thought that we had degraded ourselves by becoming scavengers—untouchables of the worst type. So they met and pronounced an order of excommunication against all who had done the work. I am glad to say that the young men are not frightened.

This worker and his young helpers deserve warm congratulations for their very meritorious service. The order of excommunication shows with what ignorance reformers have to deal. The only way to bear down the opposition is on the one hand not to resent persecution and on the other to persevere in the service regardless of personal consequences. Workers may be sure that if they preserve their equanimity and continue the service, those who are cursing them today will be blessing them tomorrow when they realize what a precious and noble service scavenging is. It will presently come to be regarded as a service of the highest order.

ABOUT NIGHT-SOIL PITS

A correspondent asks:

> 1. what is the length of time that should lapse before a pit one-foot deep could be dug in the same place for a second time, for evacuation?
>
> 2. Usually fields are ploughed immediately after paddy is sown. If night-soil is buried in the fields about a week prior to sowing, will it not come up to the surface when the field is ploughed and thus contaminate the feet of the workmen and of the bulls?

(1) When superficial burial takes place, according to Poore's formula, seeds may be safely sown after a fortnight's at the most. The same soil will used for further burial after a year's use.

(2) The question of soiling the feet, whether of human beings or of cattle can never arise, as nothing can or should be sown without the night-soil being turned into good sweet-smelling manure, which one handles freely without any hesitation.

Harijan, 13-4-1935

635. SILENT WORK

Sjt. Jayaramdas, an old Ashram inmate from Ceylon, through whom I have endeavoured to keep myself somewhat in touch with the recent outbreak of virulent malaria in Ceylon, writes:[1]

> I am glad to be able to state that the epidemic is now on the wane and we have closed 6 out of the 11 convalescent homes.
>
> The following number of patients have been attended to by us without a single casualty.[2]

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

[2] The table is not reproduced. 1896 patients were admitted, 1729 were cured and released 167 were still under treatment.

The number of volunteers now working is 85 composed of 21 Bhikkus and 64 laymen; besides we have 12 Bhikkus and 78 laymen as helpers.

Appeals for help were received by me from Ceylon. I had made such inquiries as I could. There is a large Tamilian settlement in Ceylon. Such aid as was possible was being given by it. Most of the relief measures were in the hands of the Government of Ceylon. But the poverty of the people and their ignorance of the first principles of hygiene rendered effective aid impossible. Some voluntary aid was organized by workers like Sjt. Jayaramdas. The greatest good that the severe outbreak of malaria did was to discover the Bhikkus of Ceylon. 'They toil not, neither do they spin.' They do a little bit of teaching. If they wished, they could, by serving society in a tangible way, rid the beautiful Island of want and disease and restore the beauty with which Nature has endowed it and which man has ravished. It should be the duty and the privilege of the Bhikkus to carry the message of goddess Hygeia to every cottage of Ceylon. It is criminal to go off to sleep when disease in its virulent form abates and to wake up when it revives. Real service consists in devising measures that would make a recurrence impossible.

An object lesson is being taught us by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel who has just now buried himself in Borsad where plague has broken out. Assisted by Dr. Bhasker Patel and a band of volunteers, he is giving medical aid to those in need. But his enduring work consists in doing scavenging work. One by one, he is cleaning, theinfected villages; he is bringing people out of their dark houses and inducing them to live in the open, in their fields, while he is opening out roofs and letting in light, sunshine and air, removing debris, clearing out filth, disinfecting insanitary places and destroying vermin. He is flooding the villagers with crisply written leaflets giving them instruction in preventive measures. He has made no appeal for funds or volunteers. Volunteers have been recruited locally. All villages are not plague-infected. And if the spirit of help cannot be locally roused, it is a moot question whether one should not wait till it is. It is possible to bring from a distance experts who would teach. But workers should surely be coming from walking distances. And so should funds from near neighbours. It is good for Bombay and such big places to keep their purses open for all causes that do not admit of

local relief, but it is equally necessary for afflicted people to learn the lesson of self-help.

Harijan, 13-4 1935

636. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

April 13, 1935

BHAI MUNSHI,

I have your letter. I will start from here on the 19th evening. It will be more convenient for you to go directly to Indore. The train from here is inconvenient. We have to change at Khandwa for the train to Indore. It is possible we shall run into each other there. I shall reach Indore on the 20th morning. You may do what is convenient to you.

I have been daily reading a few pages from your history. If I read the *Gita* or the *Ramayana* with the same perseverance, wouldn't my life be blessed?

Rajaji is extremely tired. He has been after me for two months. Let him have rest. And it is certainly not as if his help would not be available whenever needed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7571. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

637. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

WARDHA

April 13, 1935

CHI. RAMDAS

I have received your note. Let me know when the thing is fixed up. I will be leaving for Indore on the l9th instant[1] and return at the latest on the 25th.The silence[2] will end not onthe 14th morning but after the morning prayer on the 19th. It is not at all certain that I will

[1] To preside over the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan

[2] The four-week silence was started by Gandhiji on 22nd March.

go to Gujarat. Even if I go, it will only be to Borsad. And that too, will depend on Sardar's[1] wishes. Devdas's Tara has got whooping cough. And so, Ba may perhaps have to go to Delhi. Jamnalalji is at Almora. Janakibehn[2] and Madalasa[5] have gone there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

638. LETTER TO L. N. GUBIL SUNDARESAN[3]

WARDHA,
April 14, I935

I do not know anyone who can be spared from India. I do not know if any of the ardent Congressmen can suggest a solution to this difficulty. But I sincerely feel that unless we are able to find out an Indian fit enough to discharge the duties of a representative, we and the Americans cannot understand each other so well as we ought to.

The Hindu, 17-4-1935

639. LETTER TO AVADHESH DUTT AVASTHI

April 14, 1935

CHI. AVADHESH,

There was nothing in it. By all means jot down whatever thoughts occur to you. How well are you acquainted with the *Ramayana*?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3211

[1] Vallabhbhai Patel
[2] Jamnalal Bajaj's wife and daughter respectively
[3] Sundaresan had written to Gandhiji about a suggestion of John Haynes Holmes that some special representative should be sent to America "to keep India before the American people".

640. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

April 14, 1935

DEAR DAUGHTER,

Why can we not address the daughter as Bibi? Why should you worry about repaying Devdas? You have no need now to purchase the ticket for the Sammelan. We shall see on my arrival there.[1] More on meeting.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 324

641. LETTER TO PURSUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

April 15, 1935

BHAISHRI PURUSHOTTAMDAS,

Then you yourself or some institution of experts should take the first step. The series should appear in the Press not anonymously but in the form of responsible, authentic and signed articles which could be easily understood by the layman. There should also be a secretary who may compile the views of different institutions and get signatures on them.

My right hand is tired and I am writing this at 4 in the morning, so I am writing this with left hand. I hope you will have no difficulty in reading it.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Purushottamdas Thakurdas Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The addressee had reached Indore at this time.

642. NOTE TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

April 15, 1935

The idea behind giving you tamarind today is to make vegetable palatable. In the end you must find the leaves tasty as Mirabehn does and as many I think do. Although I have consulted physicians regarding tamarind, people take me to task for it. My experience is that I can take four large spoonfuls of it. So far no adverse effect has been seen. But it is yet too early to say anything. Bhau is none too well. Tamarind could be the cause.

From the Hindi original: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

643. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

April 15, 1935

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

The right hand is aching, but there is no time now to write with the left. I got the letters of you both. Don't expect Ramdas now. Do the best you can and go ahead. Kishorelal has gone on a tour of Poona and other places. Tara has got whooping cough, which is likely to be quite prolonged.

Harilal is still with me. He wants to marry again. Let us see what happens. Ramdas is trying hard for something in Bombay, but has found nothing suitable as yet. Kanti is with me of course.

I am in fine health, and so is Ba.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4836

644. LETTER TO SURAJMAL JAIN[1]

April 15, 1935

BHAI SURAJMALJI,

I have not been able to decide upon the number of people who will accompany me because the number of aspirants is always high. Anyway, they will not require any special arrangements, the food should be the simplest. No need to send for anything from outside. Whatever is available in Indore will do for everybody. My entourage probably will consist of twenty-five. Send me a wire if the number seems too large. Yes, advocate Munshi and his wife might be with me and Acharya Dhruva will reach on Monday. Some preparations might be necessary for them.

As regards the purse, I will not take anything from the one lac, but if an extra few thousands are collected over and above that, it will be a different matter.

One motor-car will suffice.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Veena, Tributes Issue, April-May 1969

645. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
April 16, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I have two letters to acknowledge.

Your circular is good. It is weak on sanitation. No refuse need be burnt. It is like burning a currency note. Shummy can tell you what I mean. When you come here in July, you will know much more about this. K. has gone to Andhra. He returns next week.

Fancy Shummy having an ache. 'Physician, heal thyself.'

Your yarn has come in. It is quite good for a beginner. I could not do as much in the time you have done. But then I am more stupid

[1] Secretary, Managing Committee of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan

than the average learner.

Please tell Miss Reynolds that the 2 guineas will be used for the benefit of Harijan girls-—the most neglected of Indian humanity and that too where starvation is great just now.

Of course you will write what you like to Agatha. I know what you are going to write. But this perhaps you do not know that our Chairman and Secretary are among the most competent accountants in India. The accounts are public property.

Yes, Agatha has brought us so close to each other. It is a matter of sorrow to me that I cannot give her the satisfaction she wants in the shape of sending a man like Rajaji to England. She does not realize that it is all one man's show. Sir S.[1] does not want to placate the Congress at all. He is riding for a fall. He does not know what terrorism is being employed in order to enforce his will. If non-violence is the remedy, as it is, against this evil, we must have patience and all will be well. I wish you could let Agatha see why nobody can be usefully sent just now.

I am sending you some slivers. You will tell me how they work.

You ought to get hold of a boy or a girl who would learn these processes and then teach others. I could soon train anyone you may send.

I have overtaken the arrears of correspondence. I am enjoying my silence and dread having to break it on Friday. Arrears will pile up in no time.

You have captivated the Ashram girls. They often inquire about you.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

R.'s letter herewith.

From the original: C.W. 3529. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6338

[1] Sir Samuel Hoare

646. LETTER TO G. M. THAWRE[1]

April 16, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry I cannot visit the fair. You should persuade the Harijans not to pay a single pice to the Pandas. Your complaint about temples is just but they cannot be opened by compulsion. The act of persuasion is being tried. You can depend upon it that there can be no rest without the temples being opened.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Hitavada, 21-4-1935

647. LETTER TO BULAKHIDAS

April 16, 1935

BHAI BULAKHIDAS,

I have no plans to go to that side in the near future. If I was going, I would certainly meet you. With perseverance, the Bhavsars can revive many of the old dyes.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3140

648. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

April 16, 1935

CHI. VALJI,

Which is the right place for a gold dagger, the waistband or the stomach? Is it proper that Magan Kutir should be a haunt of snakes, with white-ants eating holes in the walls and pigeons building nests inside, or should it rather be inhabited by living human beings? Having gifted away the whole place for Harijan work, is it proper for you to retain such attachment as you do? Only such people as can fit into our discipline are likely to come.

The article about bees was duly received. Just now Jaykaran's

[1] The addressee was Assistant General Secretary, All-India Depressed Classes Association, Nagpur, and had complained about Harijans having been unjustly treated at a fair in the Bhandara District.

series is being published.[1]

I suggest that you yourself should write something about cow-protection. I will turn it to some account

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7472. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

649. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
April 16, 1935

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

You should make it a rule always to write your address at the top of the letter. The paper on which you have written your letter is of the finest quality. It cannot be hand-made paper. Go and see for yourself and assure yourself whether it is so or not. Let me know its price, size, etc. Who makes that paper? What daily wage does he get for the work? And similar details. I have still not received the ink-and-pen-stand. What do you do for your share of milk?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PRABHUDAS GANDHI
GULERIA
BADAUN
U. P.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33049

650. LETTER TO MAHAVIR PRASAD GUPTA

April 16, 1935

BHAI MAHAVIR PRASAD,

Your counsel is good, I shall discuss it at Indore.

Being a dealer in oil you should give me your experiences

[1] Two articles of J. N. Jaykaran under the title "Bee-keeping" were published in *Harijan* on 20-4-1935 and 27-4-1935.

regarding oil. How is it refined?

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI MAHAVIR PRASAD GUPTA
RENDI GODOWN
P. O. BINDKI
DIST. FATEHPUR

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9671. Courtesy: Mahavir Prasad Gupta

651. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

April 17, 1935

MY DEAR ANAND,

I have your second letter. And this is second reply. You must be weak. You must stick to your work at any cost. Your maintenance will come. I am glad Vidya has gone to Multan.

Yours,

BAPU

SHRI ANAND T. HINGORANI
D/3 COSMOPOLITAN COLONY
KARACHI

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

652. LETTER TO NARASINHARAO DIVATIA

WARDHA,
April 17, 1935

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I have just heard that you are at present bed-ridden. How can you afford to be so? You have to live for many more years still and serve. Haven't you a right to live up to a hundred at least?

You need not even reply to this letter.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Narasinharaoni Rojnishi, p. 617

653. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

April 17, 1935

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I had expected that you would be with me.[1] I have no idea of the arrangements there but there are hardly any more days left. We shall soon see.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 325

654. LETTER TO JAMNA GANDHI

Silence Day [Before *April 18, 1935*][2]

CHI. JAMNA,

I get no time at all to write letters. If Purshottam wishes to be betrothed, I have no objection at all to that being done. Why should I object even if he wants to be betrothed to a girl belonging to the *modh* subcaste? But in that case, I will not be able to attend the wedding. I should welcome if he married a girl outside our caste. Do not effect the betrothal thinking that you would get a maid servant to help you. In this matter, we should consider only Purshottam's own good and his own inclination.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33781

655. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
April 18, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Please convey my condolences to Sardar Devraj's people. Yes, I had the privilege of meeting him. He was himself an institution.

[1] The addressee was at this time in Indore where Gandhiji was to proceed on the 19th and she might have been staying with her brother.

[2] *Vide* fn 1 to the preceding item.

I return not on 27th but on 25th at the latest.

I do hope Shummy will get over his flu in good time. The slivers went to you yesterday.

Love to you both.

BAPU

SHRI RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
JULLUNDUR CITY
PUNJAB

From the original: C.W. 3713. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6869

656. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

April 18, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got both your letters. I have asked Kumarappa. No president had been appointed when we got these forms printed, but a treasurer had already been appointed. His name was printed as that was thought necessary. I in fact knew nothing about the matter. I called for and read his letter also after receiving yours. I have suggested that the new forms to be printed should be revised. The thing has no special significance.

I am glad that Kamalnayan is paying a visit to the Frontier Province. The newspapers say that he was injured, but there seems to be no truth in the report.

I understand about Kamala. It is her desire that when she leaves, I should go and see her in Bombay. Since you are there please guide me.

How is the ear? You have not answered. Thakkar Bapa has arrived today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2963

657. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

April 18, 1935

CHI. KANAIYA,

Once again you have been hasty in coming to a conclusion. All my work and accounts which require to be looked after are here.

There will be nobody whose luggage will have to be looked after. Who will see the daily mail? And who will keep the daily accounts? Neither of you is needed just to make additions and subtractions. I shall have hardly any luggage with me. I don't need to take anybody just to do typing. There will be nothing at all to be typed. If, therefore, you are not very eager to accompany me, both of you should remain behind and look after the normal work here. You should plan some study and make a few tools. Some of course will have to be purchased. Do you understand?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

658. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

April 18, 1935

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

I got your letter today. May you live long and may your aspirations be fulfilled. I had got your previous letter, too. I shall be satisfied if you improve your health somehow. Your plan of going to Chorwad is a good one. Can't one serve wherever one happens to be?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

659. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

April 18, 1935

CHI. PREMA,

Today is the last day of my silence. During this period I disposed of considerable arrears of work. I got your letter only today.

What you say about your coming here is correct.

Do I force anybody to eat rice, jaggery, onions, etc.? I only point out the virtues and defects of the things people eat. I consume tamarind when eating uncooked vegetables. I soak it in water and squeeze out the nutritive elements in it. Even raw vegetables I have to get crushed before eating.

Onion occupies an important place in the diet of the village

people. It is the one vegetable that is of inestimable value for them. While it is present in their diet, they don't very much need ghee, etc. I, therefore, have included it in our food on an experimental basis. Those who like eat it. I have indeed revised my view about onions to this extent, that those who eat them as medicine will not find them an obstacle to the practice of *brahmacharya*. I have no evidence for this, however.

Teaching of lathi exercises, etc., is certainly likely to weaken the desire to cling to ahimsa. Wouldn't they be taught as training in self-defence? But I don't feel inclined to make a rule forbidding those who wish to teach them to do so.

I have never said that people should not use coloured khadi instead of plain khadi. If I have, it was an error.

Many things will change so completely when we get swaraj that it is difficult to say anything today with certainty about the Indian States. But in a general way it can be stated that the swaraj Government will do nothing to impede the growth of their strength.

Blacksmiths, goldsmiths, etc., are Vaishyas.

I am leaving for Indore tomorrow and will return on the 25th

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10370. Also C.W. 6809. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

660. LETTER TO ANASUYABAI KALE

April 18, 1935

DEAR SISTER,

I have your very full reply for which I am obliged.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 6901

661. A TELEGRAM[1]

[Before *April 19, I935*][2]

PURSE WILL BE USED ONLY FOR HINDI PRACHAR NEVER FOR POLITICAL OR HARIJAN WORK. ACCOUNTS OPEN PUBLIC INSPECTION .

Madhya Pradesh aur Gandhiji, p. 49

662. LETTER TO KOTWAL

[Before *April 19, 1935*]

BHAI KOTWAL[3]

Where do you plan to put me up? Will it be all right if my entourage increases in number? I would prefer to live in a hut in some village in the vicinity of Indore.

[From Hindi]

Veena, Tributes Issue, April-May 1969

663. MESSAGE TO THE BENGAL PROVINCIAL POLITICAL CONFERENCE[4]

[On or before *April 19, 1935*][5]

Having retired from the Congress you don't expect me to attend the Conference. I hope, however, that you will have a successful session.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 24-4-1935

664. LETTER TO N. VENKATA KRISHNAIYA

April 19, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

In one of my letters I pointed out the difficulty of the barter

[1] The addressee is not identified in the source.

[2] The telegram must have been sent before Gandhiji left for Indore, which was on April 19.

[3] Member of the Managing Committee, Hindi Sahitya Sammelan

[4] Held at Dinajpur

[5] The report in the source is dated April 19.

system. There should be a common measure of value. As to your second point, undoubtedly there should be division of labour.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI N. VENKATA KRISHNAIYA
KHADDAR SANSTHANAM BEZWADA

From a photostat: G.N. 9242

665. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

April 19, 1935

CHI. AMALA,

I am in good condition and order. Broke silence today.

The qualifications you have described are perfect. The shy manner in which you have announced the giving up of khaddar is characteristic. You are making progress with a vengeance.

Mahadev has gone to Ajmer. He and I return on 25th.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

666. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

April 19, I935

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I got your letter. I have asked for your opinion about Haribhai. What is your wish? I didn't approve of his having spent so much. All the same, your opinion will help me to come to a decision.

Now about the Udyoga Mandir money. I don't remember anything about the matter. Write to Narandas and ask if he knows. He will be there at the end of the month.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4030

667. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

April 19, 1935

My silence[2] was taken just with a view to clearing off heavy arrears, but I now see that that was but one of the many good things I have got out of it. As I do nothing except with an ultimate spiritual end in view, this silence obviously carried with it its spiritual advantage. Silence is essential for one whose life is an incessant search for truth. But such silence is a much more serious affair than this. Even writing as a means of communication must stop. Truth would speak, if it must, in every act and not through the written word. I had a letter the other day from Vinoba who wrote in connection with the slivers which Bhau had made for me and which I had warmly praised. Vinoba wrote: "Bhau of course deserves all the praise you have given him, but I want your slivers to be still better. The cotton that he has used is not unbaled cotton. You should use no other cotton. It will have an effect all its own." I had a sure proof of this some days ago when Nanibehn, who had gone to Nanded to study the processes of fine spinning, came here and gave me some of her specially prepared slivers from unpressed cotton. When I tried these, the difference was great. The thread did not break at all. Not that I spun with extra care, but the cotton had been cleaned and carded with exquisite care. I am trying to show what care truth requires and that action is more eloquent than speech. Some years ago in Calcutta I contented myself with telling my auidence that they must listen to the silent speech of my fingers which were plying the *takli.*

There is another merit in silence which these four weeks demonstrated to me unmistakably. I am prone to anger like anyone else, but I can successfully suppress it. Well, I found out that silence helps one to suppress one's anger as perhaps nothing else does. How is one to give vent to one's wrath if one is silent? Not by eyes. Surely not by physical violence, when one is pledged to non-violence. Not by writing, for the wrath would disappear in the very process of writing.

There are a number of other uses of silence that I could mention, but these should suffice. Let me tell you that I was not

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Notes"

[2] Gandhiji had been on four weeks' silence from March 22 and had just broken it.

looking forward to the termination of this silence. I was dreading it, and I should often like to go into silence, if not quite for a month or months, at least for brief periods.

Harijan, 27-4-1935

668. MESSAGE TO THE KISAN CONFERENCE

[Before *April 20, 1935*][1]

I am sorry I cannot attend the Conference. With Sardar in the chair, the success of the Conference is assured.

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-4-1935

669. DISCUSSION WITH J. P. BHANSALI[2]

[Before *April 20, 1935*][3]

GANDHIJI: As you sit in your meditation, are you troubled by extraneous thoughts?

BHANSALI: No, never.

G. Never during the day?

B. Not so. Whilst I am not engaged in my meditation, I think of the talks we are having, and I put your questions to myself again and again.

G. You do. Well, then, you said the other day that when you see all the surrounding misery, you are considerably agitated. Don't you feel like doing your little bit to lessen it?

B. No, though it may seem strange.

G. But, then, what is the meaning of being agitated?

B. I feel the misery myself, but also feel that I am powerless to do anything.

G. When a thorn pierces your foot, you pull it out, don't you?

B. Yes.

G. When you feel hungry, you eat, don't you?

B. I do.

[1] The report in the source is dated April 20.

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[3] In the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary this is reported under April 10.

G. Then if you find a thorn piercing someone else's foot, would you not help him to pull it out? If you find someone suffering from the pangs of hunger, would you not feed him?

B. I would, if I could.

G. If there was someone who was going through agonies and there was none but you to tend him, would you not sit down to do so?

B. I should, but I could not do much. I should confess my helplessness .

G. Surely, one like you would not shirk a responsibility so lightly?

The recluse smiled a winsome smile in reply.

G. But we started with the premise that the surrounding misery agitates you, and that, as you yourself said, you see the Death Dance in ever fiercer reality.

B. I do. But I declare my helplessness.

G. Only he who has exhausted all efforts may say that he can do nothing more. If he has a lame person to attend to, he will give him all the attention that he is capable of. This one act of service will mean the service of humanity.

B. But I could not exclusively devote my attention to relieving the misery of the distressed. I would do a little bit, but I should soon feel powerless.

G. The world is sustained by sacrifice and service. As the *Gita* says, "The Lord created the beings with the duty of sacrifice cast on them."

B. I know. But are not meditation and worship too a sacred duty?

G. Meditation and worship are not exclusive things like jewels to be kept locked up in a strong box. They must be seen in every act of ours. But I will not press you for a reply today. I simply want to set you thinking about this. You know that you are always in my thoughts.

G. Not a bit of it.[1] I felt I must share my feelings with you, and so I asked you those questions.

B. Please don't think of giving me up.

G. I will not think of giving you up. But I want you to do

[1] Bhansali had met Gandhiji the following morning and told him that he was distressed that he should be a source of worry to Gandhiji but that he found himself helpless.

nothing that does not appeal to you. At the same time let me also plead with you. However, I am sure that, whether you are in a cave or working in the midst of multitudes, all is well with you.

The talk was continued the next evening.

G. Though you have told me that all that I have said does not alter your conviction, you will please let me harp on the same subject a little while longer.

B. You have every right, Bapu. Only I thought I might tell you how my mind was working.

G. Of course I know your mind. But knowing your mind, how is it that I do not feel like copying your example? Of course I should love to trudge about like you from one end of the country to the other; and, if my body allowed it, I should like to live on uncooked flour and *neem* leaves. But I find there is a serious flaw in your way of life. As a seeker after truth, if I find that yours is the true way, it would be my duty to adopt it. On the other hand, if I feel that there is some serious error in it, it is my duty to draw your attention to it. As I have told you I have no quarrel with your flour or with your *neem* leaves. What I cannot understand is that you should ignore a vital condition of our very existence, I mean the principle of sacrifice with which we are born.

B. I should like you to make this a little clearer.

G. You know that the *Gita* says that he who eats without offering the daily sacrifice steals his food. To beg one's food is a good thing, but only after one has offered one's sacrifice.

B. I have heard it. I was pondering the whole day over what you said the other day. I wondered if I had any right to eat my flour and *neem* leaves, as I did no work.

G. Yes, you have heard it. But the world accepts the principle and acts up to it, e.g., Jain *munis* and sannyasis. They live on alms, but they do so because they persuade themselves that they are offering sufficient sacrifice in the shape of the teaching they impart. Here they are somewhat mistaken, as I think. It is their duty to impart spiritual teaching, but all the same they must offer some sacrifice in the shape of bread labour, and rather than expect their food as a reward of their sacrifice, they should, like true Brahmins, live on the charity of the people. All, therefore, that I have to tell you again and again is that you must shake yourself of this illusion. To do no work is norenunciation. It is inertia. What I have written has universal

experience in support of it, and my own life is an eloquent witness to it. You interrupted your wanderings and came here out of love for me. God sent you here. How best am I to requite your love? Not by treating you to good food. You would not care to have it, I would not care to give it. But I must pour out to you what the purest love bids the heart to do.

B. I am deeply thankful. I must go over all that you have said.

There was one more talk on the subject, which for the moment may be regarded as final.

G. Well, have you thought over what I said?

B. I have, but, I confess, to no effect. The fact is that for ten years my views have run along this line. Even when I was in England, I said to myself I should adopt sannyasa on my return, and, if anything, the years that have elapsed have strengthened the old conviction.

G. I know the conviction has been long with you.

B. Yes, and I have not yet found any reason to alter it. Pray pardon me, if I am rude.

G. There is no question of rudeness. If plain-speaking were rudeness, I am simply saturated with it. No, I am glad you are speaking to me your mind quite frankly. But there I will leave you. I do not want to tax you any further.

Harijan, 20-4-1935

670. WAGES OF SIN

'The wages of sin is death,' says the Bible. That by reason of our sin of untouchability we are daily courting economic death is exemplified by a letter received from a correspondent in Rajputana. In a Hindi letter he says in substance:

> "Here, in our parts, wherever I look I find bones of animals strewing the paths. No one cares to collect them. Village surroundings therefore look like neglected crematoria. Dogs make worse what is already so bad. You have written now and again on this subject in the pages of *Harijan.* Will you not give summary instructions for guiding Harijan, and even village workers? It will be useless if you advise us to send the bones to some bonegrinding mill; for the expense would be prohibitive. Then you have to consider the religious prejudice against the use of articles made of bones, etc."

The waste that is going on in this country is truly terrific. If, however, an economist were to work out figures of waste caused by

the curse of untouchability, they will be staggering. The wages we are paying for the luxury of committing the sin of untouchability will comfortably feed the starving millions. It is no small waste deliberately to stunt the mental and moral growth, and to make the least economic use, of one-sixth of the population of India. But to state the problem in such large terms baffles one. For workers who need not think in terms of millions, either of money or men, it is simple enough.

Religious values have to change. In a country like India, where animal life is held sacred, we must learn to regard as sacred the use, other than for food, of all parts of naturally dead animals. Harijan workers I regard as having advanced to the position here set forth. If they have, they would collect all the bones they thus see strewn about on village paths and put them by till they receive further instructions. I am trying to find out easy methods of grinding bones to powder. To turn them into manure seems to me to be the cheapest method of disposal. Experiments are being made by Satisbabu of Khadi Pratisthan to find out the best way open to villagers of making the most economic use of all parts of carcasses. I hope to acquaint the readers of *Harijan* with the result of Satisbabu's researches.

Harijan, 20-4-1935

671. A WORKING SUB-COMMITTEE

Most committees or sub-committees are appointed to make investigations. But I have come across a sub-committee that was appointed to take prompt action. Sjt. A. A. Paul, the Hon. General Secretary of the Federation of International Fellowships, sends me a report of a sub-committee appointed by the Federation to deal with rural indebtedness in a confined area in Karnataka. From the report of the sub-committee I take the following interesting particulars:[1]

> The extortion evil is like the weather; everybody talks about it, but nobody does anything about it. Eight months ago our International Fellowship awoke to the menace of this evil to the life of our under-privileged village brethren. This is not to say that this menace is peculiar to the villages, but due to the generally defenceless position of the villager, with the ranks of privilege arrayed against him, he is especially victimized. Our attention was directed to a certain village which had a vicious nest of extortioners. The chief

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

one had come there with next to nothing a few years ago and now owned the only storied building in the place, with almost everybody in his debt. His prevailing rate of interest was 75% per annum. Roving Pathans extorted up to 300%. . . .

Finally, a committee was appointed with two leaders, one a Muslim and the other a Hindu, volunteering to serve. The next step was to get from one of our Matric students, resident in the village, a long list of debtors; with particulars of their debts. After studying this, our committee visited the village and questioned each debtor. In the case of those whose testimony at their own risk showed that they had paid back the principal plus a decent rate of interest, our pleader members served a free legal notice on their behalf, acknowledging no further debt. . . . At the same time, the debtors stopped payments. About fifty such notices were served in course of time. The movement of rebellion spread to other villages, even without the process of legal notice. We found it necessary to send a carefully written note of warning to the Police Sub-Inspector as well as the money-lender, enclosing the annual report of our Fellowship, which gave a more or less imposing array of names of members. . . .

During the last eight months approximately a hundred debtors have been relieved, and thousands of rupees turned into the building of their families. . . .

After prejudicing their cases by not replying to the legal notice for six months, the extortioners have at last filed three or four suits. But they are at a great disadvantage, as the evidence at hand shows, in the fact of their high-handed and careless methods of doing business. . . .

The latest development, and the most encouraging one in view of the initial apathy, is the fact that a formerly sceptical pleader friend is quietly getting together a group of the more idealistic young pleaders for the formation of a Legal Aid Society. He has a vision of taking such pleaders (who ordinarily rot around the bar room waiting for touts to stir up a case) to the surrounding villages where, through various means of propaganda, they will awaken the villagers, especially the debtors, to their legal rights, and offer them very reasonable and *incorruptible* legal aid. This is, happily, in line with Gandhiji's recent call to village reconstruction. It is our conviction that the vigilance on the part of the privileged classes, such as those who compose our International Fellowship, is the price of liberty for these victims of extortion. . . .

This is an example to copy. No capital expenditure was required here. All that was evidently necessary was to hearten thevillagers and tell their creditors (while such was the case) that most of them had paid more than was due by them.

Harijan, 20-4-1935

672. SELF-SUSTAINED KHADI

Mysore has always appreciated the worth of hand-spinning as an aid to the farmer. It runs several such centres. The managers keep themselves in touch with the A. I. S. A. so as to keep their centres abreast of the latest researches and improvements made by the Association. The following letter from the Badanval Spinning Circle addressed to the Secretary, A. I. S. A., will be read with interest:

> I beg to inform you that Government sanction was received to pursue a policy of developing local market: and for popularizing khadi in villages. This was in accordance with the new policy which was followed to keep pace with the changes introduced by the A.I.S.A. Khadi cloth is given at cost price to *bonafide* weavers and spinners of this Circle. Since the month of November, 1934, work was started in this direction. Till now we have sold just over Rs. 2,000 worth of khadi to about a thousand spinners. We issue cloth and recover the value thereof in weekly instalments at the time of yarn purchase. From April onwards, we propose to launch the sales again. Our aim is to sell another Rs. 2,000 worth of khadi, this time mainly consisting of village sarees. We find that the programme is working quite normally here.

Similar encouraging reports are coming from many quarters. I would suggest to the workers that now that the true message of khadi has been understood they should take all the steps simultaneously. A commencement has to be made with cotton-growing with a fair knowledge of the conditions of cotton cultivation. It should be possible to grow cotton for village use almost anywhere. Concentration in the most favourable soil is necessary when the ambition is to supply the world. But the reverse holds good where the ambition is to supply the village need. A corner in a field can easily grow rough cotton for the village farmer; or a village may grow cotton for itself in co-operation. If this is done, it is simple enough to see that no imported cloth can beat cloth thus produced locally, either in cost or durability. The process induces the greatest conservation of energy. Under such ideal conditions ginning, carding and spinning become pleasurable and simple. The spinning-wheels, too, require overhauling. There is greatwaste of energy when the revolutions of the spindle are not up to the standard. With this however, I propose to deal shortly in an article specially devoted to it.

Harijan, 20-4-1935

673. SPEECH AT HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN, INDORE[1]

April 20, 1935

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

God's ways are inscrutable. I had been avoiding this burden since October. This honour belonged to the venerable Malaviyaji Maharaj. But because his health is not good, and also because he has to go abroad, he sent in his resignation. You found some difficulty in choosing another president. The Reception Committee had my name before it of course. When the Reception Committee's difficulty was explained to me I was compelled to accept the office.

I had no doubt other reasons, too, for my acceptance. Last year when the question of presidentship of this session came up before me, I asked for two lakhs of rupees for the propagation of Hindi in South India. Who can afford to give two lakhs of rupees for this purpose, nowadays? "Yes, we shall try. If you accept the office success will follow." I was never so naive as to be deceived by such talk by the Committee. I insisted on the guarantee of two lakhs. I thought friends had given me up on this issue.

But God had willed otherwise. He had to take from me some service for the cause of Hindi. Malaviyaji Maharaj could not come. May God make him live a hundred years. 1 have seen some portions of the report of your sessions. The first session was held in 1910. The president of that session was Malaviyaji Maharaj himself. Someone having a greater love of Hindi than he is not to be found anywhere in India. How wonderful it would have been if he were in the chair today! His sphere of work for Hindi is the whole of India. His knowledge of Hindi is very deep.

My sphere is very limited. My knowledge of Hindi is almost nil. I cannot pass your Prathama examination. But my love of Hindi is not less than anybody else's. My sphere of work is the spread of Hindi in the South. It was in 1918, when you held a session here thatthe task of the spread of Hindi in the South was first undertaken. From thereon it has been systematically progressing. It should not

[1] This was Gandhiji's prepared address as President of the Sammelan. He did not read it out.

stop for want of funds. Pandit Harihar Sharma is always pestering me for more funds. I tell him, "Now, please do not bother me. You should obtain your funds from the South itself. If you have not the capacity to do even this much, you may consider yourself a failure." It is easy for me to say so. But so large an organization must have the right to remain a minor for 21 years. Therefore, when the opportunity came, I made the demand for two lakh rupees. This is not too large a sum. But the gentlemen who came to me expressed their inability to promise two lakhs because there had been a fall in the price of cotton. It was quite true. Jamnalalji also took their side. I admitted defeat and accepted the promise of one lakh rupees. Now by some means or other, but by fair means, you have to give me one lakh rupees.

You may ask why it should be exclusively for the spread of Hindi in the South? My answer is that South India is not a small area. It is like a continent. There are four provinces and four languages—in it Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada. Its population is nearly seven and a quarter crores. If we can secure the foundation of the propagation of Hindi among so many people, we shall find it the easier to do so in other provinces.

Although I consider these languages daughters of Sanskrit, they are nevertheless different from Hindi, Oriya, Bengali, Assamese, Punjabi, Sindhi, Marathi and Gujarati. Their grammar is quite different from the Hindi grammar. I call them the daughters of Sanskrit because they all abound in Sanskrit words. When they are in difficulty they call out to their mother Sanskrit and drink her milk in the form of new words. They may well have been independent languages in the past, but now they add to their glory by borrowing words from Sanskrit. Besides this, there are several other reasons for calling them the daughters of Sanskrit, but we shall not go into them at present.

Be it as it may, it is an indisputable fact that the task of spreading Hindi in the South is the most difficult. But still, as a result of the systematic work we have been doing there during the past eighteen years, six lakh South Indians endeavoured to learn Hindi, 42,000 sat for various Hindi examinations, Hindi was taught in 3,200 places, 600 teachers were trained, and today this work is being carried on in 450 places. The Snataka examination was started in 1931 and today there are 300 Snatakas. Seventy Hindi books were published there and in Madras 8 lakh copies of them were printed. Seventeen

years ago Hindi was not taught even in a single high school in the South but today it is taught in 70 high schools. All told, there are 70 workers carrying on the work there and so far four lakh rupees have been spent on this task, a little less than half of which was obtained from South India itself. It is necessary to mention one fact here. After his tour of inspection Kakasaheb claims that women of the South worked very hard for the spread of Hindi there. They have realized its importance. They are so keen that some of the menfolk are wondering who would look after the homes if women become so active in this work. Is not such progress a matter for satisfaction? Should we not encourage the growth of such a tree? Even today when I have been given this office, if I do not make efforts to make this organization permanent then there is no greater fool than I. If I have a claim to be elected president for a second time, it is because of my work of spreading Hindi in the South. I may not have held any office but in any event I have played a great part in watering that tree. Its custodians are Shri Jamnalal Bajaj, Shri Rajagopalachari, Shri Ramnath Goenka, Shri Pattabhi Sitaramayya and Shri Harihar Sharma. The accounts of this work are kept to the last pie, and are published from time to time.

I have presented to you a picture of the bright side of this organization. It does not mean that it does not have a dark side as well.

> God has filled the world with animate and inanimate good and bad things. A good man is like the swan which drinks the milk and discards the water.

We have had to face failures too in abundance. It cannot be claimed also that all the workers were good. Had the work been well done from the beginning to the end, we should have had still better results. But it can be definitely stated that when compared to the work done in other provinces in this respect, what has been done in South India is the best. Now remains the question of how this one lakh should be spent. Is it not necessary that this amount should be spent through the Central office at Allahabad? Would it not be an insult to the Sammelan if it were not so spent? In answer to these questions, I humbly submit that no insult is implied. But for the existence of the Sammelan, the Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha would not be there. This organization was born in 1918 in this very town, under the aegis of the Sammelan. It is not necessary to trace its history from

then on. In the end, the Sammelan made it an independent organization, or, you may say, it gave it "Dominion Status". By doing so the Sammelan did not lose any prestige; it only gained it. If all the organizations connected with the Sammelan become self-supporting, what can be more fortunate than that? The donation of a lakh of rupees which is being asked for from you is for this independent organization. They will also have to fly the flag of the Sammelan.

Then the question arises: "Should we neglect the other provinces? Is there no need for the propagation of Hindi in other provinces?" There certainly is. I am not partial to the South, nor do I have any grudge against other provinces. I have put in great efforts as regards other provinces as well. But for want of workers the degree of success there has not been the same; it has, in fact, been negligible. Poor Baba Raghavdas is striving untiringly to spread Hindi in Utkal, Bengal and Assam. He has had some success although it is slight. I tried my very best to give him whatever help I could. Through Babaji's efforts work is going on in Gauhati, Jorhat, Shivsagar and Naogaon in Assam. A hundred and sixty pupils are studying there. Two boys and two girls have been given scholarships and are studying in the Kashi Vidyapith and the Prayag Mahila Vidyapith. One gentleman from Assam is studying Hindi in Barhaj (Gorakhpur) and teaching Assamese to the people there. People of social standing in Assam do not show much interest in the work for the spread of Hindi. The help that Babaji is getting is also for one year only.

In Utkal, some efforts are being made in Cuttack, Puri and Burhampur. It is very gratifying to learn that in Utkal Shri Gopabandhu Chowdhury and his wife Shrimati Ramadevi are keenly interested in the spread of Hindi. They have made their family learn a fair amount of Hindi. They are now staying in a village, engaged in this useful work. There are also some other selfless workers in Utkal. One may surely hope that the spread of Hindi in Utkal will be a success.

In Bengal even a Committee was formed. Everything was done. There are also many Bengalis who love Hindi. Ramanandbabu assisted by Shri Benarsidas Chaturvedi is bringing out *Vishal Bharat.* This is not a small thing. There is also no dearth in Calcutta of Hindi-loving Marwaris. Still what is being done may be considered too little.

I shall leave out the Punjab, for Urdu is understood by everyone

there. The only question is that of the script. A script conference under the presidentship of Kakasaheb will be looking into the question. So I shall not say anything about it here. Now remain Sind, Maharashtra and Gujarat. What is being done in these provinces scarcely deserves mention. But I hope in this Sammelan we shall be able to decide on some constructive work to be taken up there.

The whole difficulty is that though the propagation of Hindi in the other provinces has an important place among the aims of the Sammelan, I do not think I shall be wrong in saying that the Sammelan has not given as much importance to the spread of Hindi as to conducting examinations. I humbly suggest that we deliberate carefully on this question in this Sammelan and adopt a clear policy.

In my opinion, the Sammelan's main task in the other provinces should be the propagation of Hindi. If Hindi is to be made the national language, then the work of propagation of Hindi has to be widespread and well organized. We do not have enough teachers. In the Sammelan headquarters there should be a training college for Hindi teachers in which on the one hand teachers from Hindi provinces are trained and are also taught the language of the province to which they would like to be posted; and on the other hand students from other provinces should be admitted and taught Hindi. Such an effort was made for the South, as a result of which we have Pandit Harihar Sharma and Hrishikesh.

You know that, on my advice, Kakasaheb Kalelkar went to the South to inspect the work and to help Pandit Harihar Sharma. He toured Tamil Nadu, Malabar, Travancore, Mysore, Andhra and Utkal; he met Hindi-lovers and also collected some funds. From this tour he gathered the impression that there is a feeling among a section of the people that we wish to do away with the regional languages and make Hindi the sole language of India. Under this misapprehension they oppose our efforts to spread Hindi. I feel that we must make a clear statement of our policy in this matter and dispel such misapprehesions. I have always maintained that we do not wish under any circumstances to do away with the regional languages. All we want is that for maintaining inter-provincial relations we must all learn Hindi. This does not indicate any bias in favour of Hindi. We consider Hindi the national language of India. It deserves to become the national language. Only that language can become the national

language which is known and spoken by a majority of people and which is easy to learn. Such a language is Hindi and no other. This Sammelan has beensaying this since 1910 and there has been no significant opposition to it up till now. The other provinces too have accepted this fact.

Kakasaheb found among the people a second misapprehension, namely, that we wish to install Hindi in the place of English. Some indeed feel that only English can be and has in fact become the national language.

If Hindi could take the place of English I for one should be happy. But we realize full well the importance of the English language. We need the knowledge of English for the study of science and of modern literature, for contact with the rest of the world, for trade and commerce, for keeping in touch with the officials and for various other things. We have to learn English whether we wish or not. And this is exactly what is happening. English is an international language.

But English can never become the national language. Today it looks like having the sway. Notwithstanding our great efforts to free ourselves from it, English continues to occupy a very large place in the national work. But from this we should not fall into the delusion that English is becoming our national language. We can easily test this in each province. Take Bengal or South India where the influence of English is the greatest. There if we wish to get anything done through the masses, we may not be able to get it done through Hindi, but we certainly cannot get it done in English. We certainly can express ourselves a little bit with the help of a few words of Hindi. We cannot do so at all in English. Yes, it may be admitted that up till now no language has become the national language. English is the official language. It is only natural. I cannot see English advancing any further however strenuous the efforts that may be made in this regard. If India is to become one nation, whether one admits it or not Hindi alone can be our national language, because no other language can have the place Hindi has. Hindi, i.e., Hindustani, with some variations here and there, is the language of 22 crores of people, Hindus and Muslims taken together. Therefore it is proper and practicable that there should be a regional language within each province, Hindi for the inter-provincial communications and English for international intercourse. The number of people speaking Hindi will run into

crores, whereas those speaking English will never exceed a few lakhs. It will be an injustice to the masses even to try.

I just now used the expression "Hindi-Hindustani". In 1918 when you honoured me with this office, I had said the same thing, namely, that Hindi is that language which is spoken both by Hindus and Muslims naturally and without effort. There is no difference between Hindustani and Urdu. Written in the Devanagari script it is called Hindi, and written in the Arabic script it is called Urdu. The writer or the speaker who deliberately uses too many Sanskrit or Persian or Arabic words does a disservice to the country. Our national language should contain all the words that are in common use. Shri Ghanshyamdas Birla has rightly said that advocates of Hindi should adopt words of other provincial languages which have become conventional. Every living language has this capacity to absorb words from other languages. That is how it acquires universality. What has English not adopted? There are so many Latin and Greek idioms that have been absorbed into English. They have not spared even modern languages. Their impartiality in this is praiseworthy. English has borrowed many Hindustani words. Some words taken from African languages are also found in English. In this the English have maintained their policy of "free trade". In saying this I do not mean that we should indiscriminately introduce words from other languages into Hindi as English-educated youths of today do. This should be done with discretion. We are not paupers, but we shall not also be miserly. We shall call a chair a "*kursi*" not "*chatushpadapith*".

Let me take this opportunity to tell you of my own distress. Whether Hindi becomes the national language or not, I cannot give it up. As a worshipper of Tulsidas my love for Hindi will remain. But where is a Rabindranath among those who speak Hindi? Where is a Profulla Chandra Ray? Where is a Jagdish Bose? I can name several others. I Know such men are not born by my merely wishing it, or thousands like me wishing it. But it is only natural to expect that if a language has to become the national language it will have to produce a few such men.

There is in Wardha a girls' school. Several girls are preparing there for the Sammelan examinations. Both teachers and girls complain that not all the prescribed text-books are fit to be read. It has been complained that they are too full of erotic matter. There is erotic literature in Hindi. Shri Benarsidas Chaturvedi had drawn my attention to this a few years ago. The literature of the language which

we wish to make our national language should be pure, radiant and lofty. there is a good deal of obscene literature in Hindi. Editors of periodicals are either not careful or they deliberately encourage obscenity in the writings. In my opinion the Sammelan should not remain indifferent in this matter. Good writers should get encouragement from the Sammelan. People should also get some help from the Sammelan in choosing the right books. The task no doubt is difficult but we cannot run away from difficulties.

A Muslim who knows the Devanagari script well has a complaint about one of the text-books. It contains disparaging things about Mogul emperors which are not even historically true. I humbly submit that great care should be exercised in the choice of text-books; they should have a nationalistic bias and the syllabus should be drawn up keeping in view the modern needs. I know that all this that I have said is outside my province. But I considered it my duty to put before you the complaints that were brought to me.

[From Hindi]

Veena, Tributes Issue, April-May 1969

674. SPEECH AT HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN, INDORE[1]

April 20, 1935

SHRIMAN MAHARAJA SAHEB, MAHARANI SAHEBA, CHAIRMAN OF THE RECEPTION COMMITTEE, SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

On behalf of you all and on my own behalf I thank the Maharaja Saheb for declaring this session open. I consider it my good fortune that when I last came to Indore to preside over another session of the Sammelan, Your Highness was the Crown Prince. It was as Crown Prince that you had opened the proceedings of that Sammelan and now as the Maharaja you have performed the same office for this Sammelan. You have all heard the speech of His Highness and so have I, most attentively. If I can give anything in return for it, it can only be my thanks. If the sentiments that the Maharaja Saheb has expressed for the Hindi language are to be acted upon all over India, then Maharajas like His Highness will also have to do some real work. As the Chairman of the Reception Committee has

[1] Gandhiji delivered this speech as president of the Sammelan in addition to the written address, the preceding item.

recalled in his speech, when the 8th session of the Sammelan was held in Indore, Your Highness had donated Rs. 10,000 for the propagation of Hindi. I sincerely hope that in the same manner now, in order to fulfil the request made by the Reception Committee, full help will be forthcoming. I consider it our good fortune that while Your Highness then gave help as the Crown Prince, now Your Highness will be doing so as the Maharaja. Our millionaire Seth Hukumchandji is also present here. He garlanded me this morning. Although the garland was of yarn, its worth is the worth of the person who garlands. Rai Bahadur Dr. Sarjuprasadji is also present here. He is ill, and, like all of you, I feel sorry about it. There is no question of his lacking in love for the Hindi language or the Sammelan. I have full confidence that whatever has to be done will meet with success. In spite of this, there is some commotion in the Hindi world. I had had an inkling of it in Wardha and after coming here I have understood the situation more fully. It is not still known how this commotion started. It is not true that the spread of Hindi in South India is not connected in any way with the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan; because that work is an inalienable part of the work of Hindi Sahitya Sammelan.

The Hindi Sahitya Sammelan is the mother or the father, whatever you may choose to call it, of Hindi Prachar in South India. If it were not so, it would have been impossible for 6,00,000 people in South India to have learnt to speak or write Hindi as they do. For this spread of Hindi thanks are due to Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. No thanks are due to me for this, because whatever I did I did as President of the Sammelan. There was nothing personal in it. I can say this much that, propagation of Hindi is an inalienable part of the work of the Sammelan. If the Sahitya Sammelan should concern itself only with the growth of literature and not propagate Hindi, how can Hindi become the national language? Yes, it is our bounden duty to promote the growth of literature, but growth of literature cannot make Hindi the national language. Bengali is rich in literature, so rich that no other language can stand comparison with it. Marathi occupies the second place in literature. Hindi would perhaps be placed third or even fourth. Even that I doubt. But Hindi is spoken by a majority of people and it is an easy language to learn and to read, and therefore only Hindi has a claim to becoming the national language. If the propagation of Hindi were not a part of the work of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, then a person like me would be unfit to be its President, because I have done nothing for Hindi literature. I wanted to read out

my written address, but speakers put up resolutions and took up the time. It was pointless to move resolutions because no one could snatch away my rights. The programme of the Sammelan will continue only for a few minutes. So, I wish to end this session by 7.30. From the point of view of Hindi literature I am most unsuited as President. Of the few girls that are present here, many have passed Prathama and are preparing to sit for the Madhyama. Even if I sat only for the Prathama, Purushottamdasji here may not give me enough marks to pass it because I do not know grammar. I have not the least objection to agree to what Jayaswalji has said. I am not partial to the Gujarati language. I have been made the President so that, through me some work for the spread of Hindi may get done. If the criterion was qualification, then even one of the girls could have been in this chair even as was the case with Queen Victoria. The Secretary just said, "I shall do everything. You have only to assent." That is not quite so. I have been chosen President and my condition that you will give me a lakh of rupees has been accepted so that through me Hindi Prachar should be well conducted. Poetry now has many branches. You can hear about them from poets to your hearts' content; but through me you will hear only about the spread of Hindi because I have no mastery over other fields.

When I had come to Indore on an earlier occasion to assume the presidentship of the Sammelan, I had craved the blessings of Malaviyaji Maharaj and he had sent me a long letter of blessings. Now that he is stricken with illness and also overburdened with work, I crave blessings from all of you. Malaviyaji, on account of ill-health and also because he has to go abroad, could not assume the presidentship of the Sammelan. The Reception Committee was therefore obliged to choose me.

Malaviyaji's telegram has also come, in which he has sent me his blessings. It is not necessary to translate the full text of the tele-gram. I pray to God that he may live for a hundred years and may enjoy good health all through. He is seventy years of age, and when he works, he does so like a youth of seventeen. May God give him a long life. May he continue to serve India as he is doing. I have come here with his blessings and as his deputy. His efforts for the spread of Hindi in South India and other provinces are well known. He loves the work as much as you and I do. There are three questions before us today; it is necessary to make them clear. There are three things before people who wish to donate money. The first concerns the

university, of which the Maharaja Saheb has made a mention with satisfaction. Donations have to be sought for it also. People can either donate money for the university or for the spread of Hindi. He who has three cowries to give, for him there is no problem. But he who has a single cowrie, to whom shall he give it? For a cowrie cannot be split. The Maharaja Saheb, Seth Hukumchandji and Dr. Sarjuprasad are all present here. Even if they say no, I can answer that the people of Indore should first help the university if they are fully convinced that this work is good, that there is spirit in the workers and they have the desire to work earnestly. Many people say all sorts of things, but when they are asked what they can do, they answer that they have poetic talents. This should not be so. Once you are convinced that everything for the university is ready and only money is needed, donating money should be your first concern. After this comes the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan and the propagation of Hindi in South India. I am saying this as President of the Sammelan. Because while I am the President I should not do anything that would harm the Sammelan or hinder collection of funds and I would certainly do nothing against the rules of the Sammelan. Because, in accepting this office, I have taken on a very heavy responsibility as I have realized within the last few hours. To make it a success is my duty. I can, therefore, assure you that all the strength I possess, all the strength God can give me, shall be used to make this enterprise a success. There has to be one script if Hindi is to spread everywhere. There is going to be a script conference for this purpose about which you shall hear more from Kakasaheb. Hindi is born from Sanskrit. Assamese and Bengali too are related to it. The South Indian languages are believed to be of Dravidian origin. My own belief is that they too have sprung from Sanskrit. Regarding the Dravidians, some assert that they were uncivilized in the beginning and became civilized later. But the Tamilians say that they were not uncivilized but had enjoyed a high degree of culture. Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and other languages are replete with Sanskrit words. Bengali too is rich in Sanskrit words. When they are short of words, these languages borrow from Sanskrit. Thus, therefore, a common script for all the languages is necessary. In order to achieve this, modifications in Devanagari may be necessary. But I do not wish to involve myself in this. I have just put forth an idea before you, since I believe that a common script will make the languages easy to learn. Kakasaheb has taken the responsibility and he will carry on the work for this, When Kakasaheb went to Assam and Utkal from South India, he had to face

a difficulty of the magnitude of the Vindhyas. People began to murmur that he planned to supplant their languages with Hindi. But that is not so. What is intended is that while the regional languages should continue to be used Hindi should be specially learnt so that it may become the national language. Bengali for that matter is rich in literature but it can never become the national language. But I wish to have it clearly stipulated that Hindi shall not supplant any regional language. Hindi Sahitya Sammelan should, through a resolution, make a clear statement on the question.

Hindi is our national language. It should not be packed with words from Sanskrit. One comes across writings which are full of Sanskrit words which village folk cannot understand at all. Trying to make Hindi the national language while ignoring our seven crore Muslim brethren would be like trying to plant flowers in the void and smelling their scent. Village folk are simple people. They understand plain and simple language only. In the exhibition put up here we are told what is done in Indore State. What do your brethren in villages wish to make? Are those things useful to us or not? It is also necessary to ask whether there is a contact between us—the townsmen and the villagers. Many in the towns believe that they have very little connection with the villages but as far as I know, there is a very strong connection between the townsmen and the villagers. I shall even say that everything India has comes from the peasantry. If they refuse to do our work, then we shall have to starve and this is true of the Maharaja Saheb and of Seth Hukumchandji as well. For no one can feed on gold and silver. They need not resort to satyagraha as I do. They can just say that since they do not have enough to eat they cannot work and the townspeople will have a hard time of it. In India everything depends on the villagers. Therefore it is necessary that we use a language that they can understand. It is also not right for us to exclude words of Arabic or Persian origin. Because, by doing so we cannot make Hindi the national language. For this work I wish to beg funds from all of you. This task can be accomplished with the blessings of the Maharaja Saheb. Whether you call anyone a Mahatma or by any other title, only making efforts can we make a success of this work. I shall not run away with your one lakh rupees. But I shall endeavour to bring glory to this work.

Harihar Sharma learnt some Hindi in Prayag and went to Madras. There he carried on some Hindi Pracher. What he has

achieved is shown at the exhibition. If you wish to see it, you can do so even today. It was my duty to draw your attention to it. How much work remains to be done in the ten minutes that remain or when to close the session, is left to the Maharaja Saheb and is not my concern.

[From Hindi]

Akhil Bharatiya Hindi Sahitya Sammelan: Karya Vivaran, pp. 8-12

675. SPEECH AT OPENING OF VILLAGE INDUSTRIES EXHIBITION[1]

INDORE,
April 20, 1935

Exhibition does not mean collecting artisans and indigenous products of villages in the vicinity of cities dependent upon villages. The civilization of India rests on seventy lakhs of villages, not cities. Our English *Amaldars* say ten per cent of the people of India do not get food at all and the rest get only a small quantity of rice, salt and flour. Chemists inform us that the scanty food which Indians get cannot help to develop their mental, physical and spiritual power. Whatever we eat does not nourish us; we and the villagers both are dying.

People say village uplift in India is impossible, but foreign lands like America give an example to the contrary. When there were no machines in India, a single work was done by a hundred hands and all of them remained employed, but today growth of machinery has left 98 people out of 100 unemployed. Look at America, where sweeping engines are lying useless on roads. In the Western world unemployment means not getting even salt and rice.

Experts say the land of India is not sufficient for the increasing population, but it is not so. The Exhibition should consist of things of everyday use and not of things which we either like or want to use, like wine, etc. It is better to buy pure ghee at double the price. It is cheaper for us than to use cheap but adulterated ghee.

Mahatma Gandhi declared that mere demonstration of rural products would be insufficient to help the cause of Village Industries Association. It was high timemethods were devised by means of which the masses could be clothed and fed. Village industries in India were in a dying state today and the responsibility for it

[1] The exhibition was held at Biscoe Park.

mainly lay with the people. They could expiate their sin only by actively supporting the revival of the decaying village industries. He opined that Indian rural regeneration could only come by falling back on the old system of making every small unit of population self-supporting in all its needs.

The Hindustan Times, 21-4-1925

676. LETTER TO RAJENDRA SINGH BEOHAR

INDORE,
April 21,1935

BHAI RAJENDRA SINGH,

I hope the Harijan Conference will be an all round success. That is to say that the *savarna* Hindus will realize their dharma and abide by it and Harijans will also realize theirs. Both should know that without this kind of two-way self-purification it is difficult for Hinduism to survive.

M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi: Rajendra Singh Beohar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

677. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. BAVISHI

April 22, 1935

BHAI PURUSHOTTAM BHAVISHI,

I saw your letter yesterday. You may come with your friend today at two. I shall of course be observing silence, but that will not matter. For most of the time you will be doing the explaining.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 122. Also C.W. 4747. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Bavishi

678. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

April 22, 1935

CHI. HARILAL,

There is no need at all to be in a hurry to come to a decision about Amala's letter. I think you will have to drop the idea. You

should write and tell her plainly that any children that may be born will have to be brought up in a simple manner. And whatever means of livelihood the Lord provides will probably be in Wardha. If you start going to women or drinking, she should be free to leave you immediately. And even this you may write only if you are sure that you wish to marry her. Amala's letter seems a good one to me, but I didn't know her as she reveals herself in it. I am, therefore, of the view that you will not be happy unless she comes to feel strongly that she cannot live without you.

It is certainly a good thing that you have not become impatient. Have patience and do only what is proper.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 1540. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

679. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

April 22, 1935

CHI. MANUDI,

I got your letter in Indore. You need not ask me whether or not you should go to Bombay. Respect the wishes of your aunt.

I did read about your having entered the nineteenth year. But what you write were only fancies of your mind. What made you write it? I haven't thought even once from that point of view. But now perhaps I may think.

Does all that you write mean that you wish to get married now? If so, you should say so plainly. We don't regard it as anything to be ashamed of. It is a quite natural desire. Yes, to me you seem to be a girl of twelve or so. But it is possible that your body has changed recently. If you feel that you have grown up, there is nothing more to be said about it. Write to me openly what you wish.

We shall return to Indore[1] on Wednesday or Thursday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1539. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

[1] Perhaps Gandhiji meant Wardha where he returned on April 25 which was a Thursday.

680. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

INDORE,
April 22, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have gone through your speech. It won't do. We should not criticize the Government's policy in that tone at the present time. This is not the time for examining the Government's policies or of the zemindars; it is a time for introspection, for putting and keeping our house in order. You should not, therefore, expect me to discuss anything just now except what we ourselves ought to do. After these prefatory remarks, I would point out the duty of cultivators without so much as mentioning the Government even once. We had better forget New Delhi for the present. If, however, this does not appeal to you, you may say what the Lord in your heart prompts you to say.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 163-4

681. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

April 22, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I wrote a letter to you this morning. After that I had to write so much that I cannot write with the right hand any more today.

If you think it necessary to make Munshi the secretary of the Board[1], you may consider doing so. Now that Ansari has resigned, will Bhulabhai become the President? If you can persuade Raja by some means, do so. Has Bidhan resigned too?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 164

[1] Congress Parliamentary Board

682. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

April 23, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have had a fairly long talk with Kamalnayan. If. . .[1] can come here before the engagement takes place, I think I may also examine her a little. Kamalnayan also has approved of this. I have, therefore, given him a letter to that effect addressed to . . .[2].

I had already sent Radhakrishna to Sikar before I got your wire, and so I didn't wire to you.

How is the ear?

How is Madalasa?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2964

683. LETTER TO SHASHIBALA

April 23, 1935

CHI. SHASHIBALA,

Even though Kamalnayan[3] and you have talked things over sufficiently, you may still come and see me before finally deciding on the relationship. You may come even if Father agrees to the proposal.[4]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 10985. Courtesy: Ramakrishna Bajaj

684. SPEECH AT HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN, INDORE

April 23, 1935

Mahatmaji expressed his regrets to the delegates and the assembled public for having been late. He said the election of members of the Standing Committee and the resolutions, etc., had taken up so much time that with all the will in the world he was not able to arrive in time. Making an appeal for donations for the work of Hindi

[1] The name has been omitted.

[2] *Ibid*

[3] Son of Jamnalal Bajaj

[4] *Vide* also "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 27-4-1935 and "Letter to Kamalnayan Bajaj", 16-7-1935

Prachar, he said:

The alms for which I am appealing to you could be split up into three parts. If you wish, you may deposit your donation in the office of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, or you may donate for the Hindi University which is being planned for Indore, or you may give money to help in the propagation of Hindi in South India and other provinces. While donating, if you do not specify whether it is for the Hindi University or for the promotion of Hindi in non-Hindi speaking States, the donation will automatically be sent to the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan office. You should specially donate for the Hindi University, and thepropagation of Hindi. I do not mean that you should ignore the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. But the first two tasks are of primary importance and should be started very soon. The Hindi Sahitya Sammelan is self-supporting. Its programme of examinations is financed from the fee charged from students, small though it may be. It has started independent institutions like the Hindi Prachar Sabha for the spread of Hindi in South India which are no burden to it. They are self-supporting. The cost of publishing Hindi literature is met fully from the sale of books. The cost of printing and other expenses of the Ojha- Welcome Volume which has been presented to me, is met by donations from Rajas and Maharajas. Because the cost of printing, cost of articles therein and the cost of illustrations are very heavy in such books, the articles in this volume have been obtained free of charge. And so the expense of bringing out this volume is less. It is also priced low at Rs. 12 per copy. Otherwise such a volume would cost not less than Rs. 50 or Rs. 60. My contention is that, whatever is spent in bringing out this work, is got from Rajas and Maharajas and later from the sale of it. I am sure you will have now understood what I have said. Some money is needed for the museum whose foundations were laid by the Sahitya Sammelan, and on which more than half the construction work is over. Otherwise, it will remain incomplete. Wood and other material bought for the construction is lying idle. Unless a work which is begun is completed in a short time, it goes to waste. To complete the building, ten to fifteen thousand rupees are needed. Until you donate towards its construction its doors will remain closed. In addition to this I beg you for donations for the spread of Hindi in the South, the burden of which is not upon the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. As the Sanskrit saying goes, “plenty yields plenty”, the more you give the more will be the benefits you will get. Now, I wish to repeat to you that before you give your donation,

please state whether it is to be deposited in the office of the Sammelan, or is for the Hindi University or meant for the spread of Hindi in other provinces. It is up to you if you do not wish to make any donation at all. It is neither against the law nor a matter for regret. If you donate nothing for the spread of Hindi but only give your contribution to the office or to the University, I shall understand that you have given your donation to me. I shall not feel hurt by that. This year, even as an obligation, I must ask you for donations for the Sammelan. I do not wish to say more to you, and before I start my work with the speed of a railway train, I request you to give your donations quietly. If you have the money on you, you can give your donations now. But if you have not brought it with you, please give your names and addresses. Later, members of the Reception Committee can collect them from you and send them to the office. There are volunteers here. They will come round to you.

Whatever you wish to donate you can either give or put the amount against your name. You know that I am ready to snatch away even the jewellery from the sisters. So they have realized that they should wear no jewellery in my presence. If they want to take to stealing in this way, they may. But I will say to you sisters, that by the establishment of a University in Indore, and with the spread of Hindi in other provinces the service rendered to the brothers and sisters who are poor brings its benefits to you also. Therefore, those sisters who wish to give their ornaments can do so. Whatever you give as charity should be given whole-heartedly and not grudgingly. The volunteers will come to you now because there are many representatives who are unable to donate anything themselves. So, those among the onlookers who have money, please donate quickly. I shall have to hurry with the remaining work like a train after this because I shall have to end this by half past five and quit. Pandit Lakshminarayanji of Indore has presented his house Jagannath Trivedi Bhavan worth fifty thousand rupees to the Hindi University. And, therefore, he deserves our thanks. If the people here follow his example, and if we have the goodwill of the Maharaja, then your University can become the Indore Hindi University like the Osmania University. I shall now end my speech with this and volunteers will be approaching you. Please give whatever you wish.

[From Hindi]

Akhil Bharatiya Hindi Sahitya Sammelan: Karya Vivarana, pp. 41-3

685. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, INDORE[1]

April 23, 1935

The bulk of those who have come here are citizens of Indore. There are people from the villages too, but the majority are from Indore. You must have seen the exhibition which untimely rain has unfortunately spoilt. It was organized in order to remind the city-dweller of his duty to the villager. We have been oblivious of it all these years, but we can ill-afford to be so now. We may not know it, but it is certain that we are slowly perishing individually and as a nation. It is no use laying the blame at other people's door—the Government, the State, or the Zemindar. They are certainly responsible for our sorry plight, but we are no less responsible, and we had better bethink ourselves of our responsibility.

The reason why our average life-rate is deplorably low, the reason why we are getting more and more impoverished is that we have neglected our 700,000 villages. We have indeed thought of them, but only to the extent of exploiting them. We read thrilling accounts of the glory that was India, and of the land that was flowing with milk and honey; but today it is a land of starving millions. We are sitting in this fine pandal under a blaze of electric lights, but we do not know that we are burning these lights at the expense of the poor. We have no right to use the lights if we forget that we owe these to them.

There is a difference between the civilization of the East—the civilization of India—and that of the West. It is not generally realized wherein the difference lies. Our geography is different, our history is different, our ways of living are different. Our continent, though vast, is a speck on the globe, but it is the most thickly populated, barring China. Well, now, the economics and civilization of a country where the pressure of population on land is greatest are and must be different from those of a country where the pressure is least. Sparsely populated America may have need of machinery. India may not need it at all. Where there are millions upon millions of units of idle labourit is no use thinking of labour-saving devices. If someone devised a machine which saved us the trouble of using our hands to

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's report under the caption "Our Duty to the Villagers". The meeting was held in the pandal of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan and was largely attended. The speech, of which this is a condensed summary, was in Hindi.

eat, eating would cease to be a pleasure, it would become a torture. The reason of our poverty is the extinction of our industries and our consequent unemployment. Some years ago India's agricultural population was said to be 70 per cent. Today it is said to be 90 per cent. It does not mean that 90 per cent are agriculturists, but that, instead of 70 per cent who depended on land, 90 per cent are now driven to depend on land. In other words, whereas there were industries and crafts enough to feed the 20 per cent some time ago, these are no longer there and the people have thus been thrown on land. They thus steal their living, not because they want to, but because there is no more land.

Not that there is not enough land to feed our 35 crores. It is absurd to say that India is overpopulated and that the surplus population must die. I am sure that if all the land that is available was properly utilized and made to yield up to its capacity, it would surely maintain the whole population. Only we have got to be industrious and to make two blades of grass grow where one grows today.

The remedy is to identify ourselves with the poor villager and to help him make the land yield its plenty, help him produce what we need, and confine ourselves to use what he produces, live as he lives, and persuade him to take to more rational ways of diet and living.

We eat mill-ground flour, and even the poor villager walks with a head-load of half a maund grain to have it ground in the nearest flour-mill. Do you know that in spite of the plenty of food-stuffs we produce, we import wheat from outside and we eat the 'superfine' flour from Australia? We will not use our hand-ground flour, and the poor villager also foolishly copies us. We thus turn wealth into waste, nectar into poison. For whole meal is the proper meal. Mill-ground flour is vitaminless flour, mill-ground flour kept for days is not only not vitaminless, but poison. But we will not exert ourselves to produce flour which we must eat fresh every day, and will pay for less nutritious things and purchase ill-health into the bargain. This is not any abstruse economic truth, it is a fact which is daily happening before our eyes. The same is the case with rice and *gur* and oil. We will eat rice, polished of its substance, and eat less nutritious sugar and pay more for it than more nutritious *gur*. We have suffered thevillage oilman to be driven to extinction and we eat adulterated oils. We idolize the cow, but kill her by slow degress. We eat honey and kill the honey bee, with the result that honey is such a rare commodity today

that it is only available to a 'Mahatma' like me or to those who must have it from the physician as a vehicle for the drugs he prescribes. If we took the trouble of learning scientific and harmless bee-keeing, we should get it cheaper and our children would get out of it all the carbohydrates they need. In all our dietetics we mistake the shadow for the substance, preferring bone-white sugar to rich brown *gur* and pale white bread to rich brown bran-bread.

We are said to be a nation of daily bathers. That we are, to be sure, but we are none the better for it. For we bathe with unclean water, we foul our tanks and rivers with filth and use that water for drinking and bath. We lawyers and degree-holders and doctors will not learn the elementary principles of sanitation and hygiene. We have not yet devised the most economic method of disposal of our evacuations and we turn our open healthy spaces into breeding-grounds of disease.

I implore you to throw off your inertia, to bestir yourselves to study these elementary facts and live more rational lives and learn how to turn waste into wealth. I have told you simple truths which we would soon realize and act up to if we threw off the inertia of ages. But we have shunned body-labour to the detriment of our brains, and thus rest content with the irrational way of diet and living. Let us pull ourselves together and resolve to make our bodies and brains more active.

I thank you for the patient attention you have given me.

Harijan, 11-5-1935

686. SPEECH AT MEETING OF GUJARATIS[1]

INDORE,
[*April 2*4, 1935][2]

I am glad that my visit should have been instrumental in the ending of the two factions said to have been existing amongst you. But I would now ask you to go a step further. You must think of the interests of the area where you earn your living. You must not think of sending out the whole of your savings to your families, but should use a portion for the Marathi and Hindi speaking people among

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's report "Other Functions at Indore". The Gujaratis of Indore had organized a function in Gandhiji's honour and presented him a purse.

[2] The date is supplied from *Gandhijini Dinwari*.

whom you live. It is wrong to think that business is incompatible with ethics. I know that it is perfectly possible to carry on one's business profitably and yet honestly and truthfully. The plea that business and ethics never agree is advanced only by those who are actuated by nothing higher than narrow self-interest. He who will serve his own ends will do so by all kinds of questionable means, but he who will earn to serve the community will never sacrifice truth or honesty. You must bear in mind that you have the right to earn as much as you like, but not the right to spend as much as you like. Anything that remains after the needs of a decent living are satisfied belongs to the community.

There should be no Gujarati here who is ignorant of Hindi. When I say this I am thinking of women too. For they must associate with Hindi-speaking women here and give their share in the work of general social uplift.

The Gujarati Youth League asked for permission to take part in the function by separate speeches. To them Gandhiji said:

Would it not be better that *I* give you a couple of minutes than that *you* take a couple of minutes for speech-making? Well, I should like to leave you a message of silence. Speech without the backing of experience based on action will lack chastity and refinement. I would ask you to curb your tongues and make use of your hands and feet forthe service of the community. After you have done so for a few years, you will speak the speech that counts and never fails.

Harijan, 4-5-1935

687. SPEECH AT HARIJAN SCHOOL[1]

INDORE,
[*April 24, 1935*][2]

Do not mind what the caste Hindus do or say. Think of what you have to do. It is no small thing that you still care for a religion which keeps you suppressed. I do not know whether I should attribute it to the greatness of the religion or to your great power of suffering.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's report "Other Functions at Indore"

[2] The source does not specifically mention the date. But in the report Mahadev Desai makes a reference to the day being crowded with functions and Gandhiji going without food till the train started. He left Indore on April 24.

But whatever it may be due to, I would ask you to be patient a little longer and to glorify the religion that you have adhered to through thick and thin. You can do so by purifying your lives, by internal and external cleanliness, by giving up carrion and drink if you are given to them, and by prayer to God. The name 'Rama' has a miraculous power if it is repeated from a faithful and pure heart. Untouchability will disappear in no time and you will soon have your place in the community. May God bless you.

Harijan, 4-5-1935

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

ABSTRACT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT OF ALL-INDIA VILLAGE INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION[1]

The following six persons shall be a permanent Board of Trustees, who shall hold funds and properties on behalf of the Association and shall disburse them in accordance with the instructions of the Board of Management, provided, however, that if the said instructions are, in the opinion of the Trustees, in conflict with the object of the Association or with the best interest thereof, there shall be a joint meeting of the Board of Management and the Trustees and that if, in spite of the joint meeting, two-thirds of the Trustees disapprove of the instructions of the Board of Management, then such instructions would be deemed to have lapsed:

(1) Sjt. Shrikrishnadas Jaju, Treasurer (Wardha)
(2) Sjt. J. C. Kumarappa (Wardha)
(3) Sjt. Jamnalal Bajaj (Wardha)
(4) Dr. Khan Saheb (N.W.F.)
(5) Mr. Gopichand (Lahore)
(6) Sjt. Vaikunth L. Mehta (Bombay)

In the event of a vacancy occurring by reason of resignation, death or otherwise, such vacancy shall be filled in by the remaining Trustees from amongst the ordinary members of five years' standing or if, at the time of the vacancy occurring, the Association has not been in existence for that period, then from the list of members then in existence and registered on or before the 31st day of March, 1935.

7. The following shall be the Foundation Members and shall also be the first Board of Management to hold office for seven years from this, the 3rd of February 1935, along with such members as may be co-opted in the manner hereinafter provided:

(1) Sjt. Shrikrishnadas Jaju
(2) Sjt. J. C. Kumarappa
(3) Smt. Gosibehn Captain
(4) Dr. Khan Saheb

[1] *Vide* "Membership of All-India Village Industries Association and "All-India Village Industries Association Proceedings"

(5) Sjt. Shoorji Vallabhdass
(6) Dr. Profulla Chandra Ghosh
(7) Sjt. Shankerlal Banker
(8) Sjt. Laxmidas P. Asar

Sjt. Shrikrishnadas Jaju shall be the first President and Sjt. J. C. Kumarappa the Organizer and Secretary.

After the expiry of the term of office of the first Board of Management succeeding Boards shall be elected every three years by Ordinary Members of at least three years' standing from amongst themselves.

Each member of the Board shall be jointly and severally responsible for the enforcement of the policy of the Association and shall, therefore, be expected, to the best of his ability, when the Board is not in session, to represent it and enforce its policy and programme within his sphere of influence.

8. Any persons who subscribes to the pledge hereto annexed, who is recommended by a Member of the Board of Management and whose admission is approved by the said Board, shall be an Ordinary Member of the Association.

9. Agents may be selected out of Ordinary Members by the Board for representing it without any pay in a village, villages or district and shall be chosen for their knowledge of the area of their jurisdictions, for their organizing ability and known influence within their area, and shall be subject to the Bye-laws defining their duties.

10. Honorary workers shall be workers other than Agents or Ordinary Members and shall be approved by a Member of the Board or an Agent. Such workers shall perform some tangible service of the Association.

11. Paid Workers shall be chosen by the Board or persons duly authorized thereto, subject to the confirmation of the Board, and shall give their whole time and attention to the work of the Association.

12. Any person who sympathizes with the object of the Association and pays an annual subscription of not less than Rs. 100 shall be an Associate, and one who pays a lump sum of Rs. 1,000 may be enrolled as a Life Associate.

Total receipts upto 31st January were Rs. 11,265-7-6.

Dr. S. K. Datta, Principal, Foreman's Christian College, has agreed to be on the Board of Advisers.

Sjts. Mohanlal Kuvarji (Bombay) and Soniram Poddar (Rangoon) have become Life Associates; and Sjts. Shaligram Ramachandraji (Dhulia), Rameshwardas Joharmal (Dhulia) and Venilal Modi (Baroda) Ordinary Associates.

AFFILIATION

The following rules for affiliation were framed and passed:

1. Institutions, which have as one of their objects the promotion of

village industries and the welfare of the villagers and in whose constitution and rules there is nothing that is repugnant to the ideals of this Association, may be affiliated on theirundertaking to abide by the rules and regulations framed or to be, from time to time, framed on this behalf by the Board of Management under Bye-law No. 8.

2. Such affiliated institutions will be subject to the inspection and supervision of this Association.

3. Every three months, they shall submit a report of work done during that period.

4. Affiliation fees will not be less than Rs. 12 per year.

5. Such affiliated institutions will be entitled to receive free copies of all literature published by this Association, and advice and guidance whenever sought.

CERTIFICATION

The following rules for certification were framed and passed:

1. The institutions and persons, who are prepared to deal in village manufactures coming within the province of this Association and who undertake to abide by the Rules and Regulations framed or to be, from time to time, framed on this behalf by the Board of Management may be certified.

2. Such certified organizations will be subject to the inspection and supervision of this Association and shall furnish from time to time such information as may be received by the Central Office in regard to their dealings periodically when called upon to do so.

Officers and employees of certified institutions and certified dealers will be expected to live up to the ideal of the All-India Village Industries Association.

3. They shall pay such fees as may be prescribed by the Board or any one authorized by the Board for the purpose.

4. Such organizations will be entitled to receive free copies of all literature published by this Association, and advice and guidance whenever sought.

MISCELLANEOUS

It was decided to supply, free of charge, a copy of the *Harijan* each (English, Hindi or Gujarati) to such Agents and workers as may apply.

It was resolved that, out of the annual subscriptions received by the Associates enlisted by an Agent, 75% should be allotted to the work in that district, unless it be earmarked by the donor for a specific area or purpose.

Sjt. Vaikunthrai L. Mehta of Bombay, Babu Braj Kishore Prasad of Bihar and Mr. Gopichand Bhargava of Lahore were co-opted members of the Board of Management.

Harijan, 22-2-1935

APPENDIX II

FORMS[1] *OF UNDERTAKING TO BE GIVEN BY ASSOCIATES, PAID WORKERS AND HONORARY WORKERS OF A.I.V.I.A.*[2]

ASSOCIATE'S FORM

As a sympathizer, I shall strive as far as possible to carry out in my own person the spirit underlying the movement represented by the All-India Village Industries Association and shall use village manufactures so far as is possible.

Date SIGNATURE

PAID WORKER'S FORM

I believe in the Object of the All-India Village Industries Association and shall endeavour to the best of my ability to use only articles made by villagers. I shall obey and carry out faithfully instructions issued by those under whose charge I may be placed from time to time.

Date

Confirmed on SIGNATURE

HONORARY WORKER'S FORM

I have read the Object and the Constitution of the All-India Village Industries Association and, as worker for the advancement of the object, I shall endeavour to the best of my ability to procure and use village manufacture myself and to propagate their use among my neighbours and those I may come in contact with. I shall also seek every opportunity of doing such services of villagers as may be in my power to render. I shall send to the Secretary of the Association a report of my activities on behalf of the All India Village Industries Association every quarter.

Date

Approved by SIGNATURE

Harijan, 22-3-1935

[1] Framed at the Association's meeting held on March 16/18, 1935

[2] *Vide* "Instruction to the Members of A.I. V. I. A.

1. LETTER TO R. R. DIWAKAR

April 25, 1935

Yes, we have to submit to the most exacting orders[1] if we are to learn the art of non-violence. Our submission has therefore to be cheerful and intelligent.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

2. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

WARDHA,
April 25, 1935

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I have your letter. Extra copies of *Harijan* will be sent to you. Your description of the meeting in the S. E. of London is entertaining.

Do not expect me to write another autobiography unless you would send me to prison for a fairly long term and procure the necessary permission to write it there. The papers can certainly be collected and printed. Mahadev can do it best. But he is overloaded with work. Nevertheless I shall see what is possible.

I do hope C. F. Andrews was able to go to his sisters. Yes, it is good he proposed to stay there for two weeks. According to his cable, he should have started ere this reaches you. But if he is still there, please tell him he can stay longer if he likes. For the moment I am reconciled to the outdoor life.

Mira is absorbed in her garden work from early morning to late in the evening. Do not expect any letter from her for some time. You see, we are trying to become villagers but we are [far] from the thing. She is the whole-hogger among us all.

I am purposely not writing anything to C. F. A. as I expect he will have left before this is in your hands.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1489

[1] The addressee was not allowed to enter Akola District under an order from the District Magistrate.

3. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHA,
April 25, 1935

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I had your letter. I spoke to Munshi[1] and wrote to Sardar.[2] You will be keeping good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
74 WALKESHWAR ROAD
BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

4. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

WARDHA
April 26, 1935

CHI. MARY,

If you had told me what to send I would have sent the amount. But you are in the midst of friends. Let the bills come, they would be honoured nevertheless. If you want me to send you cash please write.[3]

I have told you in my wire that I could easily arrange for your examination in Bombay or Nagpur. My impression is that there is the apparatus in Wardha also. But if the friends there advise otherwise, their advice should be followed.

We were all glad to see Duncan[4]. He does not look strong. He will be here for two days.

Chandra is selfish. She prefers to be on the floor from which there is no fall. And she would watch the fun of my slipping from the bed down to the floor and probably having a bump on the forehead. Tell her I shall succumb to none of her wiles.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 6036, Also C. W. 3366, Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] K. M. Munshi

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Gujarati Meeting", 5-10-1909

[3] The addressee had fallen ill. The expenses of her treatment were being met by Gandhiji.

[4] Duncan Greenlees.

5. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

April 26, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I have your letter.

The sooner you go to Simla, the better. You will do what work you can from there. It is well to recognize your limitations. Evidently both of you need the change.

Of course your yarn will be utilized. You will have to spin for many months at the present rate before I can get a sari for Ba and a loin-cloth for myself. But that is not just now of consequence. All that will come after your second training here. It is a tragedy that you cannot find anyone in all Jullundur who knows all the processes. When one comes to think of it, the progress of spinning among the so-called cultured classes is very little.

Dalip Singh will find when he settles down to work among the Harijans that they have skill enough to earn a living but that as labourers they do not get employment as easily as the others and that as artisans they do not find customers for their wares. No doubt improvement can be and should be made in their method of dealing with hide. But this will follow his taking up the work. He need not work as a representative of our organization. He can work independently and yet get all the technical assistance he may need from us to the extent of our capacity.

The rain did interfere with our work at Indore but not much. It damaged the village crafts exhibition that was held as a side show. The women's meeting too went off quite nicely. Thousands of them came out, many perhaps for the first time in their lives.

Love.

Yours,
BAPU

[PS.]

Letter returned.

From the original: C. W. 3530. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6339

6. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 26, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

Enclosed is a letter from Mathew. I have written to him and told him not to expect Rs. 65 at present. He can't be given anything more than what I mentioned. I have also told him that just now he would have to join as no better than a labourer. If he proves his worth, we may think further provided circumstances permit. He may be given railway fare if anything is owing to him in the accounts here, otherwise he will have to find even that from where he is.

The prize of Rs. 1,00,000 has not been awarded to anybody. But it may be awarded if a good enough model of spinning-wheel is received. I have still not received a copy of the resolution. It contains three main points: that the model cannot be considered "handy"; that only a model which is small enough for a village house and can be easily lifted and moved whenever necessary can be considered "handy"; and that such a model cannot be manufactured within Rs. 150. Would it require frequent repairs? And would the expenses on repairs exceed five per cent of the cost annually? I enclose a copy of the specific defects pointed out by Vinoba and Kakasaheb. If Keshu[1] can remove these defects, let him do so. Kale's machine is not with me. It had gone to Ahmedabad. I have asked them to send it back. But I may not get it back and, therefore, may not be able to have a look at it. It is better that Keshu should remain there and go on with his experiment. Let him stay with you. He should fix a limit for the expenditure on the experiments. If he wishes to come to me, he may certainly do so. But I won't be able to tell him anything more or guide him further. There is nothing more to be explained about this experiment. Even if his invention does not deserve a prize of Rs. 1,00,000, whatever improvements he discovers are bound to be useful.

If the machine for making slivers has been perfected, it is also a good thing. Let him describe in detail what progress he has made with it. Since I have explained everything in this letter, I am not writing separately to him.

You may now organize the school as you think best. If it

[1] Keshav Gandhi, Maganlal Gandhi's son

becomes a technical institute for our work, that would be excellent. Languages should be taught from a different point of view altogether. At present they are taught from a literary point of view. We should teach them simply as languages. The curriculum should include Gujarati, Hindi and English and a little bit of Sanskrit. The pupils should be taught the Urdu script. Instruction in these subjects should be easy. They can be taught while the pupils learn crafts. The crafts should be such as would bring the pupils some payment. There should be no fee, the pupil's earning through crafts being counted as fee. Beyond a fixed limit, the earning would go to the pupil. The fee should include all the expenses. You can introduce these changes gradually without much trumpeting or publicity. Find the staff locally, if possible. There should be no highly-paid teacher. Kusum[1], Lilavati[2] and others who have got trained should be your staff. If Keshu helps, nothing like it. Think over this. If you wish to discuss this matter further with me, you may do so.

Do something about the inspection of Titus's[3] work and finish with it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Enclosed is Vinoba's opinion. I am writing to Raghunath Shastri.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8439. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

7. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

[After *April 26, 1935]* [1]

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I enquired and found your assertion to be true. The unaskedfor report gave me pain. Now Mahadev on being questioned tells me that Kanti had tried persuasion. Did you inform before you left? This

[1] Kusam Gandhi
[2] Lilavati Asar
[3] T. Titus, Manager, Ashram dairy
[1] The addressee had left Maganwadi on April 26.

much seems true even now that they were willing enough to dine.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1875

8. DISCUSSION WITH J. P. BHANSALI [2]

[Before *April 27, 1935*]

GANDHIJI: How much did you spin yesterday?

BHANSALI: Not at all, I am sorry to say.

G. But I thought you had started spinning?

B. I did about fifty yards the other day. But that's all.

G. How nice it would be if you would make a loin-cloth for me . . . . I should be very glad if you could make a pair, but even one would satisfy me.

B. It would be a rare privilege to be able to spin for your loin-cloth, but you know my state of mind!

Next day again there was a talk. With child-like naivete he asked Gandhiji, "You do not want the loin-cloth. You want me to work. Don't you?"

G. You are right. But if you must work, why not do this thing for me?

B. If I must work, why not command me to do some other work? I am not worthy to do this sacred thing for you.

G. But surely those who spun for the cloth I am wearing were by no means purer than you.

B. No, Bapu. I am humbler than even the humblest, humbler than the dust of their feet.[3]

Harijan, 27-4-1935

[2] The discussion is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter".

[3] Mahadev Desai had concluded: "The next day old associaters like Kakasaheb tackled him. . . . Bhansali persisted in pleading his unworthiness. 'But', said Kakasaheb, 'supposing Bapu were to ask one of us to fetch a glass of water, and if all of us were to say to him, 'we are sorry, Bapu, we have not the purity to do anything for you', what would happen to Bapu?' That seemed to go straight home. Bhansali wrote (for he talks only to Gandhiji): 'All right, then. I spin. I shall err on the safe side.' And he is now regularly spinning."

9. A GROWING VICE?

The Principal of the Sanatana Dharma College, Lahore, writes:

> Allow me to request you to peruse the accompanying newspaper cutting, notices, etc., which speak for themselves. The Youth Welfare Association is doing very useful work here in the Punjab. It has attracted notice in academic and administrative quarters, while it has secured the active interest of enlightened guardians of boys. Pandit Sitaram Das of Bihar is the leading spirit of this movement which counts very many distinguished people here among its patrons.
>
> The evil of juvenile seduction is admittedly more rampant in the Punjab and North West Frontier Province than elsewhere in India.
>
> May I pray that you will draw the attention of the country to this canker through a note or letter in *Harijan* or in any other newspaper?

The Secretary of the Youth League wrote to me long ago on this very delicate subject. On receiving his letter I entered into correspondence with Dr. Gopichand[1] who confirmed the statements made in the League Secretary's letter. But I could not see my way clear to discussing the problem in these columns or elsewhere. I had known of the evil but was not sure that a newspaper discussion could deal with it to any purpose. Nor am I sure now. But I may not resist the appeal of the Principal of the College.

The vice is not new. It is widespread. As it is necessarily kept secret, it is not possible to detect it easily. It goes hand in hand with easy life. In the case referred to by the Principal, the teachers are alleged to be the corruptors of their own wards. "When the salt loses its savour wherewith shall it be salted?"

This is a matter which no commission, no government can deal with successfully. It is the function of the moral reformer. The parents have to be awakened to a sense of their responsibility. The students should be brought in close touch with clean life. The idea that ethics and clean living are the foundation of true education, should be seriously propagated. Trustees of educational institutions have to exercise the greatest care in the selection of teachers, and having selected them they have to see to it that they remain up to the mark. These are some of the ways in which the awful vice can be brought under control even if it cannot be eradicated.

Harijan, 27-4-1935

[1] Dr. Gopichand Bhargava, a Congress leader of the Punjab and later a Minister

10. LETTER TO G. V. GURJALE

WARDHA,
April 27, 1935

MY DEAR GURJALE[1],

Take your wife in your confidence. Realize that loyalty to her is your complete shield. You will win the day.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1381

11. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

April 27, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Kamalnayan[2] has left for Allahabad. I have written to . . .[3] that I would be glad if she could come here; I should like to meet her before the betrothal takes place. Ramakrishna[4] had accompanied me to Indore. He has been detained there by Gulab for two or three days. He will see Ujjain and other places nearby. Both are expected to arrive today.

Prabhavati[5] had a letter from Brijkishorebabu[6] He has written to her that she should be ready to go to Bihar when he asks her to do so. That means she may have to go there even when there are no holidays. Prabhavati has replied to him that she will be ready to leave as soon as she hears from him.

Chaudhari has come here . . . .[7] I do not know what talk you have had, but from what he and Valunjkar said, I understand that you are prepared to give his wife Rs. 100 for serving in the maternity home. I do not remember having discussed this subject with you. But

[1] Also known as Bhikshu Nirmalanand
[2] Addressee's sons
[3] The name has been imitted
[4] Addressee's sons
[5] Wife of Jayaprakash Narayan
[6] Omissions as in the source
[7] *ibid.*

I do remember that Chaudhari had talked to me. On the basis of our talk, Chaudhari's wife has resigned from the Seva Sadan at Poona. Chaudhari has already arrived here, and his wife also will be arriving soon. From your postcard to Valunjkar, it appears that you have not come to any decision so far. You do not even know that lady. Please write to me what you would now like to do about this matter. His wife can be lodged in the orchard for the time being, though it may not be possible to accommodate. . . The maternity home will have to be built, and perhaps, we shall have to consider the desirability of building it in the orchard. If you have decided to engage that lady, then some portion of the upper storey of the old bungalow or of the new one in which you are now living should be spared for cases of delivery. But before taking in such cases, she should visit the women in their homes and examine ordinary cases, give them medicines, meet village women, and so on. For starting a maternity home, it will also be necessary to spend some money on buying cots, etc. All this can be done only after you arrive here and think over the whole matter. The main thing, however, is, whether or not you wish to engage that lady. Chaudhari cannot be given Rs. 100 from the Industries Association. The Association can give him Rs. 25 per month at the most, for he can be useful only in the experiments of making hand-made paper.

I will pay a short visit to Bombay to see Kamala[1] . I think it will be difficult to see her while she is on her way.

Madalasa[2] must have arrived there. I should like you to give up travelling by trains and cars for some time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 2965

[1] Kamala Nehru, who was to sail for Europe on May 23, under medical advice
[2] Addressee's daughter

12. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

April 27, 1935

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have certainly no plans for a tour. Perhaps I may have to go to Borsad. In the beginning of May at any rate I shall be here.

You will stay with me in the orchard here. There is no room. We are living in the verandah. There is a room but only large enough to keep our things in. Bear these facts in mind before you decide to come.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9681

13. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

April 27, 1935

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have made mention to you of Sharma from Khurja. He has some familiarity with nature cure. I have known him for years. He intends to gain some experience at Battle Creek and later visit some nature-cure clinics of Europe, spending in all one and a half years. He is self-sacrificing and clever but of a slightly erratic temperament. He is full of the spirit of service. He had a clinic of his own which he has squandered away. He had published a few books which he has burnt because they contained little knowledge gained from experience. I want to send Sharma to America and Europe using some funds out of the amount you intend to give me for this year. If this has your approval, find out and let me know what the journey to Battle Creek will cost and the convenient route. He will of course travel third or deck whichever is available. What would be the cost of living there in poverty? Do they take students at Battle Creek? Would it be better for him to go *via* Japan?

How are you keeping now?

You will have seen that I have taken up the burden of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C. W. 8009. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

14. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

April 27, 1935

CH. SHARMA,

What is this? The matter was trivial but pregnant with great import. I did take note of what you said. The load was more than you could carry and you needed assistance. This was what pained me. We are poor people; why need we carry so much luggage? You did not need anything beyond a book, a blanket, a towel, a *lota*, a bowl, a sheet, a dhoti, a *kurta* and a cap. Why did you bring more articles? And since you had brought, you should have quietly called a porter and left, or you could have even left behind the excess luggage as I had suggested. Neither Bhagwanji nor Kishoreprasad should have gone. Both were busy but went to help you to carry the luggage. That Kishoreprasad was also carrying letters is beside the point. You had no reason at all to feel hurt. You ought to have taken a lesson from the incident. If even now you have learnt it, the incident will have served a useful purpose. I have already despatched the letter[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Your letter is being returned.

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha*, between pp. 156 and 157

[1] In the source, the addressee explains that the letter was addressed to Dr. K. H. Kellog of Battle Creek.

15. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

[Before *April 28, 1935*][1]

CHI. NARAHARI,

I got your letter. I have sent a wire to Titus asking him to hand over charge to you immediately and to wait there till the arrival of Narandas and then come over here.

I have also written to him. Do you have any suspicion regarding his integrity? If possible I wish to keep him with us. Please, therefore, guide me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

How is Vanamala[2]? How are you?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9077

16. LETTER TO JAMNA GANDHI

Silence Day [Beofre *April 28, 1935*][3]

CHI. JAMNA,

I have your letter. How did your health take a bad turn once again? Did the Punjabi vaidya's treatment fail? I hope you have gone to Rajkot and that your health has improved.

Purshottam's letter is such that instead of being unhappy by it, we should feel happy. He should get the blessings of us all in his happy decision.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33764

[1] From the reference to Titus; *vide* also the following two items.

[2] Addressee's daughter

[3] In his letter to addressee's son Purshottam, dated April 18, 1935, Gandhiji says "May you live long and may your aspirations be fulfilled" and approves of his plan of going to Chorwad in Saurashtra; *vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 23-9-1909 Then on April 28 of the same year, he writes to Purshottam's wife Vijay at her Chorwad address. Evidently by that date Purshottam and Vijaya had got married. The reference to his "happy decision". presumably the decision to marry, suggests that this was written before his marriage to Vijaya.

17. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
April 28, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

Jivanlal and the others may certainly come to see me in connection with the school. Even if I go out, it will be only for a few days. Only the visit to Borsad depends on Vallabhbhai's desire. Even if I have to go, it will be after the 15th of May.

Yes, the money received from Tharparkar has been disbursed exactly as you have stated. Draw it from some account.

I have already written to you about Mathew. Titus has been relieved from Sabarmati. Narahari has no trust at all in his ability. I have called him here. If he comes, I will keep him and watch him. In any case you should go and look into his accounts. Keshu's letter was a clean one. Give him Rs. 300 more. But fix a limit now. It was a good letter.

The suggestion I made in the letter to Jamna[1] regarding steam cooking deserves careful consideration. Kanu will explain how we do it here. The method is easy and results in considerable economy. No new utensils are required. Why should any *bhatts* come? There should be no such class of professional cooks as there should be none of scavengers. The idea that a cook should always be a Brahmin is born of ignorance.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8440. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

18. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

April 28, 1935

CHI. NARAHARI,

Titus must have handed over charge to you.[2] If he has not done so, send me a wire. I will then wire to him again. I hope he gave you my letter.

If you can manage the dairy and make it a success, I think an important task will have been accomplished.

[1] Addressee's wife
[2] *Vide* also the preceding two items.

Get over your nose trouble. I think it can be done with simple remedies.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Why have you asked for saris and khadi to be sent from here? Your request doesn't seem proper to me. Mahadev will write more.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9076

19. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

April 28, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letter. Madalasa may continue to have boiled milk and eat chapatis if she can digest them. Let her eat anything she likes, provided it is not harmful for her health. But in no case should she eat more than four times a day, nor in between the meals. It is obvious that she will be able to eat more there in proportion as she takes exercise.

Has the discharge from your ear stopped? Rajendrababu and Raja[1] have arrived. Raja is very much tired. He will, therefore, leave after a little while.

The professor also has arrived.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have already written to Taradevi about Pyarelal.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2966

[1] C. Rajagopalachari

20. LETTER TO MADALASA BAJAJ

April 28, 1935

CHI. MADALASA,

I have your letters. I shall wire tomorrow about the diet. Improve your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 316

21. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

April 28, 1935

CHI. MANUDI[1],

All right, you may now even stop writing to me. If you insist on my permission to go to Bombay, you have it provided Aunt[2] is agreeable.

I shall be content if you become happy and good.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1541. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

22. LETTER TO VIJAYA GANDHI

April 28, 1935

CHI. VIJAYA[3],

I learnt from Jamna's letter, received yesterday, that you had survived a serious illness. You should now learn the art of keeping healthy. You should eat food as medicine and not for the pleasure of the palate. Never eat factory-made sugar. Eat daily with your food fresh leaves of a *bhaji* like fenugreek and juicy fruit like orange or

[1] Harilal Gandhi's daughter
[2] Balibehn Adalaja
[3] Purushottam Gandhi's wife, daughter-in-law of Narandas Gandhi

grapes. Learn to breathe properly. And you must take some exercise. Keep in open air as take as possible.

Write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. VIJAYABEHN
C/O SHRI HARAKHCHAND MOTICHAND
CHORWAD
SONAGADH STATE
KATHIAWAR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

23. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

April 28, 1935

CHI. VASUMATI,

How can you possibly expect a long letter from me? Bhansali is here. He takes uncooked flour and *neem* leaves. He goes on spinning all the time. Amtussalaam has come here. She is all right. As for other news, somebody is always coming or going. This time things have been made a little harder than before. Nobody gets a separate room for himself or herself.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 645. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit. Also S.N. 9399

24. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN PATEL

April 28, 1935

CHI. VIJAYA,

I got your letter. I have no separate room for you. You will have to work hard the whole day and the food is unspiced. Come if you can endure all this. If you come, bring with you sufficient clothing and a *thali,* bowl and *lota.* If you think you will not be able to work, do not come.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7059. Also C.W. 4551. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

25. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

April 28, 1935

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I understand what you say. Go on doing service with ever greater devotion. May your pledge to remain steady at one place for five years be fulfilled. What simple remedies did Hakimji teach you?

I heard about Maitri[1] being betrothed too. When are they getting married? The credit for saving that family goes wholly to you.

Do you keep good health?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G.S. Gangabehnne, p. 84

26. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

April 28, 1935

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your letter. You are very lucky, indeed. I am glad that your last enterprise has come to nought. It could not have continued. The difference between business and service is that in the latter income is limited and in the former it is unlimited. Business, of course, calls for hard work. You should therefore take up a job and learn what you wish to learn. You will acquire self-confidence if you learn some trade. If you take in a press, learn printing or composing. Then there are of course the crafts such as tailoring, shoe-making and carpentry. The easiest are tailoring and shoe-making. Both involve only stitching. After learning these crafts you may even do business in the filed. Instead of hankering after money, you should be keen on learning. Ba suggests that you should go to Amreli and serve under Ramjibhai. I also would like Amreli provided that there too you learnt some craft. I have been giving you this advice for many years. You should become an expert in something. Then alone will your worth be properly recognized. If you become an expert, even if only as a barber, you will come to be respected.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Ramdas Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Maitri Giri

27. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

April 28, 1935

BHAI BENARSIDAS,

I had your letter. Even if we do form a committee, who will do the actual work? We shall deliberate in the standing committee. Will you attend it?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI
120/2 UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD
CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2568

28. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

WARDHAGANJ,
April 29,1935

SETH JAMNALALJI
BHOWALI

MADALASA SHOULD HAVE BOILED MILK AND CREAM WHOLE- MEAL BREAD OR CHAPATI IF DIGESTIBLE.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 158

29. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

April 29, 1935

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

The friend who has advised Haribhai[1] to build a house near Sachin does not seem to have advanced his best interest. When Haribhai could not manage to collect as much as Rs. 800, what can he achieve with the aid of Rs. 200? How will he be able to improve his condition? How much of what he has made will he be able to sell from there? Explain to me the whole business.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI PARIKSHITLAL
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3955

[1] A Harijan worker; *vide* also "Letter to Lrod Ampthill", 29-7-1909

30. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
April 29, 1935

CHI. RAMDAS,

I got both your letters. Even if you were to fail in following your own inclination, I would count that too, as success. If you do what I desire and succeed in that, it would be my success. But that would be of no profit to you. What you need just now is self-confidence. If you acquire that, all will be well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mr. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

31. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
April 29, 1935

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I did get the figures about jaggery and sugar sent by you. I have found no exaggeration in them. They lie buried in other papers. I will look for them today.

If no paper is available there, it might perhaps be unnecessary to order new paper to be made. Where such paper cannot be procured at all, I would not consider it right for a poor man to get it from outside and use it[1]. That you are able to get milk is welcome news. If despite your effort, you cannot obtain cow's milk, use goat's.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Now that Ambabhavani[2] is a mother, I hope she will not go to the length of not writing to me at all.

SHRI PRABHUDAS GANDHI
GULERIA
BADAUN
U.P.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33044

[1] Also " Help From Natal"

[2] Prabhudas's wife, Amba. Gandhiji has humorously compared her to the goddess Ambabhavani.

32. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

April 29, 1935

BHAI MOOLCHAND,

I still regret not having been able to see you at Indore. I had absolutely no time. I already know what you have written. For the present I can suggest no course except to endure things. You certainly can write everything to the State. Who will now look after the work at Ringas?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 760.

33. LETTER TO PYARELAL

Sunday [After *April 29, 1935*][1]

CHI. PYARELAL,

Do not hurt the feelings of either Mother or Sushila. Calmly put up with the illness.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

34. A LETTER

April 30, 1935

Of course there are many ways of reaching God and yet all are derivable from the same source. One who prays for the removal of untouchability may be doing more effective work than the one who goes among Harijans. My point is that for millions prayer without work is a mere vocal effort.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] This letter is written on the back of a letter to Gandhiji dated April 29, 1935.

35. LETTER TO HUKAM CHAND

WARDHA,
April 30, 1935

SHRI HUKAM CHANDJI[1]

It is a matter of regret that I have received nothing so far from you. Even now I am hopeful of getting a substantial sum from you for the propagation of Hindi.

I am enclosing herewith a letter submitted by the labourers. If what is said therein is correct, I feel it is necessary and proper to remedy matters quickly. There is no reason why you should not set an example.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]
Veena, Tributes Issue, April-May 1969

36. LETTER TO JOHARILAL MITTAL

April 30, 1935

BHAISHRI MITTAL,

Daily I have been waiting for a letter and some drafts from you. Apart from Rs. 500 from the Gujaratis and Rs. 101 from Bhadwas I have so far received nothing here.[2]

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

GENERAL SECRETARY
RECEPTION COMMITTEE
HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN, INDORE

[From Hindi]
Veena, Tributes Issue, April-May 1969

[1] President, Reception Committee, Hindi Sahitya Sammelan
[2] This sentence is not clear in the original.

37. NOTE TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

[*April, 1935*][1]

You took neem leaves pounded into pulp. That may have made you feel hot. Pounded leaves is not the same thing as the juice of the leaves. They are as different as polished rice is from unpolished rice. The leaves should not be strained. I used to strain the vegetables a little when I was taking vegetable juice. That way you will not get the feeling of heat. You may take as much tamarind as you may find necessary. If you want to take a little more you may do so. Milk will satisfy the hunger. The quantity of the milk cannot be increased too soon. If green vegetable is palatable you may take five *tolas* to begin with. Once you are able to digest it you may increase the quantity by five *tolas* at a times, going up to 20 *tolas.* This should be taken thrice. You do get goat's milk at 10.30 and fresh cow's milk in the morning and evening.

From the Hindi original: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

38. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

WARDHA,
May 1, 1935

CHI. MARY,

I have your letter. I do not know who the friends were who came to you nor have I any knowledge about your needing hand-made paper. To whom did you write? Girls are away on a holiday. Chhotelal[2] has gone to the South to learn bee-keeping. I shall send you nothing till I have heard from you. Duncan was here for four days. He was still working none too well.

I hope you are making steady progress.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 6043. Also C.W. 3373. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] As supplied by the addressee
[2] Chhotelal Jain, manager of the Wardha Ashram

39. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

May 1, 1935

MY DEAR AGATHA,

If it was possible, for your sake, to send somebody to London I would do so. But I see that it cannot be done at present. Rajaji will not look at the proposal[1] nor would anyone else. There never has been within living memory such unbending attitude on the part of the Government one sees now. It is the naked sword that is being dangled before India at the present moment. I regard it as a trial from above. If we have real love, i.e., ahimsa in us, all will be well. If we have not and we have used it merely as a cloak, the naked sword is well deserved. Anyway the mentality being as I have described it, no one of the front rank think of going to England, so long as the policy persists.

I did read a paragraph about Sir Samuel's illness. But the reports did not give it any serious importance. I therefore refrained from writing or cabling.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1490

40. LETTER TO BALUKAKA KANITKAR

May 1, 1935

DEAR BALUKAKA,

When you invite me to read your pamphlets you ask me to do what is not possible for me today. I do hope you will succeed in your endeavour in the three villages.

M. K. GANDHI

C.W. 966. Courtesy: G. N. Kanitkar

[1] The addressee had suggested to Gandhiji that someone should go to England "to help people understand the situation better". *Vide* also "Letter to Swami Shankeranand", 30-8-1909

41. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

May 1, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Shummy[1]'s letter was received after I had written to you. I am going to make good use of the information[2] he has given me. I would like him to prosecute similar inquiry about tamarind seeds and the seeds of other edible fruits.

I am presently going to send you specially made envelopes and note-paper.

You will tell me in good time when you need slivers.

Yes, we saw the old Maharani but had no opportunity of talking to her.

Love to you both.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3531. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6340

42. LETTER TO PADMAVATI

May 1, 1935

DEAR SISTER,

Ramachandran will show you my letter to him. You have developed a liking for Kanti of which I hope he will prove worthy. I would welcome the marriage of your daughter with Kanti, if he proves his worthiness when the time for marriage comes. The interval must be one of sacred preparation on either side. One thing I must beg of you. The girl should know nothing of our intentions. She must be free to make her choice when she grows to maturity.

I know that Kanti has been in frequent correspondence with you. Nothing of it should be secret from Ramachandran. Kanti will be guilty of unfaithfulness if he did anything in connection with the girl or held communication with you secretly from Ramachandran. I could never forgive myself if any such thing happened.

With love,

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 9741. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] Kanwar Shumsher Singh, addressee's brother

[2] Regarding guava seeds and use of coal as toothe powder. The information appeared under the title "Useful Hints" in *Harijan*, 18-5-1935.

43. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRAN

May 1, 1935

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRAN,

I have deliberately refrained hitherto from replying to your letter regarding Kanti. I am now able to give you the reply. The girl should know nothing about our intentions till she grows to maturity. Kanti may harbour and the age of maturity hold any communication with her directly or indirectly [*sic*]. He may write as he is already writing to your sister but nothing of what he writes should be secret from you. All his letters should be accessible to you if and whenever you desire. Each has to be worthy of the other. If, therefore, the girl has to be prepared for Kanti, Kanti has to prepare himself for being worthy of her and you. If when the time for marriage comes, Kanti is found not to have progressed along the right lines, you are free to withhold the girl from his assuming of course that when she comes to maturity, she will listen to you. For you and me the proposed union can be tolerated only if it becomes a pattern for others to copy. It must therefore be developed in the spirit of service. Development along this line must mean greater simplicity, greater self-abnegation, greater advance towards truth and ahimsa, uttermost *brahmacharya* in thought and word and deed. The contemplation of the girl must mean to Kanti exclusion of every other woman from his thought for the gratification of his sexual impulse.

If these conditions are fulfilled, I should welcome the union. There is nothing wrong, as it seems to me, from the inception. Kanti honestly confessed as soon as he felt drawn to the girl. His subsequent conduct too has appeared to me to have been free from reproach,

This will be seen by Kanti who will send it to you. If there is anything in my letter of which you disapprove please let me know, I am asking Kanti to send a copy of this to Devdas. Of course Mahadev will see this as also Harilal. Enclosed[1] is for your sister.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 9742. Courtesy, Kantilal Gandhi

[1] *Vide* the preceding item

44. LETTER TO KANTI LAL GANDHI

May 1, 1935

CHI. KANTI,

I wished every day to write to Ramachandran, but could not decide what to say. I have not [even] asked you what you have been doing. Now read both the accompanying letters[1]. If you like them, send them on to Ramachandran. Show me the letter which you write forwarding them. Show it to Mahadev and Harilal too. Send a copy to Devdas. It is my wish that this alliance may prove an ideal one.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have gone through the cash book. I assume that you daily complete the ledger. Let me know how far you have come.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7295. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi.

45. LETTER TO DR. HARIPRASAD DESAI

May 1, 1935

BHAI HARIPRASAD[2],

I got your letter. The person for whom I wanted your homeremedies had inquired thrice about them; he will be glad now.

I have no doubt that sending your previous letter to Sardar was the best use that could have been made of it.

I liked your description of myself. I am better understood in our own country than anywhere in Europe. Tell Haribhai that he should give the benefit of whatever he has brought from Europe to the villagers.

DR. HARIPRASAD DESAI
11 PRITAM NAGAR
ELLISBRIDGE, AHMEDABAD

Vandemataram from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4137

[1] *Vide* the preceding two items.
[2] A social worker and medical practitioner of Ahmedabad

46. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

May 1, 1935

CHI. VIDYAVATI,

Why are you making yourself miserable? When you want to die a heroic death and tread the path of the brave, how can you show such weakness of heart? You must display heroism under all conditions. When one is afflicted with sickness, there are more occasions to show courage. She is a true heroine who does not forget God in pain, shows a concern for the nurse, is content with whatever nursing she gets, takes the least amount of service and is always prepared to embrace death. Being roused to battle and die is heroism of an inferior kind.

I am sending a telegram to Dr. Roy today. Whatever happens, you will not show anger or condemn anyone. You are not going to leave the Seva Sadan in a hurry.

Send a comforting letter to Tara. Tell her not to cry. If you smile even in your moment of sorrow, others will not cry either.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

47. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

May 1, 1935

CHI. SUMANGAL,

How could you help it if questions arose in your mind? It was proper that you told me. I am giving my attention to Ramakrishna. I have not done anything more. I am watching. If anything comes to your notice unsought do let me know.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

48. LETTER TO AYODHYA PRASAD

May 1, 1935

BHAI AYODHYA PRASAD,

Your letter to Avadhesh was read out to me. If you wish that he should remain with me you have to forgo the temptation of calling him for a short visit. It would cause interruption in work and waste of money.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3216

49. FOREWORD TO "GUJARAT AND ITS LITERATURE"

[Before *May 2, 1935*][1]

The only reason for inviting me to write a Foreword to a literary work such as Shri Munshi's can be that I am called 'Mahatma'. I can make no literary pretensions. My acquaintance with Gujarati and for that matter any literature, is, for no fault of mine, next to nothing. Having led a life of intense action since early youth I have had no opportunity of reading except in prisons whether in South Africa or in India. Shri Munshi's survey of Gujarati literature has made fascinating reading for me. His miniature pen-portraits of writers give one a fair introduction to their writings.

Shri Munshi's estimate of our literary achievement appears to me to be very faithful. The survey naturally confines itself to the language understood and spoken by the middle class. Commercially-minded and self-satisfied, their language has naturally been 'effeminate and sensuous'. Of the language of the people we know next to nothing. We hardly understand their speech. The gulf between them and us, the middle class, is so great that we do not know them and they know still less of what we think and speak.

The dignified persistence of Shri Devendra Satyarthi, a writer whom I do not remember to have ever met, has made me peep into his

[1] *Vide* "Letter to K. M. Munshi", 2-5-1935

remarkable collection of folk songs of the provinces he has been travelling in. They are the literature of the people. The middle classes of the provinces to which the songs belong are untouched by them, even as we of Gujarat are untouched by the songs of folk, i.e., the language of the masses of Gujarat. Meghani of the Saurashtra school has done folklore research in Kathiawar. His researches show the gulf that exists between the language of the people and ours.

But the folklore belongs to an order of things that is passing away, if it has not already done so. There is an awakening among the masses. They have begun not with thought but with action, as I suppose they always do. Their language has yet to take definite shape. It is to be found somewhat, but only somewhat, in the newspapers, not in books. Shri Munshi's work therefore may be said to have only commenced with the volume before me. It was necessary. But he has to continue the work so well begun. He has the requisite passion for his work. If he has health, he will now go direct to the people and find out what they are thinking, and he will give expression to their thoughts. The unquestionable poverty of Gujarati is a token of the poverty of the people. But no language is really poor. We have hardly had time to speak since we have begun to act. Gujarat like the rest of India is brooding. The language is shaping itself. There is enough work awaiting writers like our author.

Munshi has alluded to Parsi-Gujarati. So there is. It is unfortunate that there is Parsi-Gujarati. It is confined to novels and stories of the shilling-shocker style. They are meant merely for passing the idle hour. The language is tortured out of shape. And just as there is Parsi-Gujarati there is also Muslim-Gujarati though on a much humbler scale. It is impossible to ignore these two streams. They are not wells of Gujarati undefiled. But no reviewer of Gujarati literature can afford to ignore the existence of works which hundreds, if not thousands, of Parsis and Muslims read and by which, maybe, even shape part of their conduct.

M. K. GANDHI

Gujarat and Its Literature

50. A LETTER[1]

May 2, 1935

The more you tease some boils, the worse they become. Hindu-Muslim tension is such a boil. I therefore pray for its solution. I do not want to speak about it.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai.

51. A LETTER[2]

May 2, 1935

Love has no boundary. My nationalism includes the love of all the nations of the earth irrespective of creed.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

52. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

WARDHA
May 2, 1935

BHAI MUNSHI,

I had got your letter. The Foreword[3] has already been sent.

The Socialists cannot be stopped from going their ways. We have no choice but to tolerate all that till Jawaharlal leaves. Where is the need to reply to him every time? We do accept some of his views. I think that after pointing out clearly where we differ from him over principles, we should remain silent.

In matters concerning which we have no differences with them, let them go ahead with their work. In regard to matters over which we have differences, why should we not cultivate the faith that their plan will simply not progress?

I tried hard to persuade Rajaji. I think we must let him have rest. He has assured me that there is no such reason as you suspect. We have no reason to disbelieve him. If he has been offended, he wouldn't hide it from me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[1] The addressee had written to say that since swaraj was not possible without Hindu-Muslim unity Gandhiji should concentrate only on this.

[2] The addressee, an American, is not identified by name in the source.

[3] *Vide* "Foreword to "Gujarat and its Literatue", 2-5-1935

[PS.]

Did you see that the resolution[1] we had in mind was passed at the Hindi Sammelan?

From Gujarati: C.W. 7572. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

53. A LETTER

May 3, 1935

Faith is not a thing to grasp, it is a state to grow to. And growth comes from within.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai.

54. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

May 3, 1935

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter just now. All the descriptions are beautiful. You will be able to manage most of the things.[2] The Koran has been translated into Urdu. You should go through the translation. You will then be able to get into its spirit. You should also go through the Urdu readers. They have been published from the Punjab. Some may have been published from Hyderabad, too.

I understand about straining oil. We have an indigenous oil-press here. But your method may perhaps be useful in pressing small quantities. I will try it.

Probably I may have to leave on the 6th for Borsad. I intend to return on the 17th. I shall be spending a few hours on the way in Bombay, which will be on the 16th.[3] If this programme is finalized, you will be able to know about it from the newspapers also.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10371. Also C.W. 6810. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak.

[1] *Vide* "Two Good Resolutions"

[2] The addressee was working among Muslim women and used to read out to them from the Marathi version of the Koran.

[3] Gandhiji in fact left Wardha on May 21 and was in Borsad till the end of the month.

55. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

May 3, 1935

BHAI PURUSHOTTAMDAS[1],

I saw your letter only today. I returned from Ahmedabad this very day. I went through the article sent by you. The tears shed by the author towards the end are improper. If the Government is awake why cannot we wake up? It is for persons like you to wake the people up. If, however, you also look to others, won't it be like the sea losing its salt and then bemoaning the fact? Wake up yourself, show the way and others will follow.

Exchange and similar issues are matters of high finance. What can the Congress do about them? Those who know the subject do not, cannot, join the Congress. Those who are in the Congress naturally do not know much about such matters. This is a work for experts on finance. They should set up a special body for that purpose and take the necessary steps.

The author of the article says that if India had been awake when the country went off the gold standard, the step would not have been taken. What ought to have been done to prevent it?

What can we do today so that the right policy will be followed?

Do you think there is any connection between this problem and that of village industries? Won't the villagers have to learn to be clean, irrespective of whether or not the right policy is followed; and know what proper diet is? If the revival of [Village] industries is desirable, shouldn't it be carried out? Do you think carrying it out will interfere with currency agitation? Hardly any currency experts have joined in it. And those who have joined can still continue working in the other field.

What is the remedy if finance experts do not take up this burden? Who will wake them up? I myself do not know enough about the subject to be able to do so.

I understand about cement. I am writing to Bapa[2] asking him to send an application.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From Gujarati: Purushottamdas Thakurdas Papers. File No. 159/1935. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

[1] Economist and Vice-Chairman, Indian Central Banking Enquiry Committee.

[2] Amritlal V. Thakkar.

56. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA[1]

May 3, 1935

I am writing to Dr. Gopichand. Your account here shows a balance of Rs. 53. Rs. 42 is your railway fare. But I don't remember the details. My advice is that you may leave Rs. 100 as a standing account.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, pp. 157-8

57. TWO GOOD RESOLUTIONS

The Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, recently held at Indore, passed some useful resolutions. Among them was one giving a definition of Hindi, and another expressing the opinion that all the languages that had descended from or had been largely influenced by Sanskrit should be written in the Devanagari script.

The first resolution is designed to emphasize the fact that Hindi does not supplant the provincial languages, that it supplements them, and that it extends the knowledge and usefulness of the speaker as an all-India worker. By recognizing the fact that the language written in the Urdu script but understood both by Mussalmans and Hindus is also Hindi, the Sammelan disarms the suspicion that it has any design upon the Urdu script. The authorized script of the Sammelan still remains Devanagari. The propagation of the Devanagari script among the Hindus of the Punjab, as elsewhere, will still continue. The resolution in no way detracts from the value of the Devanagari script. It recognizes the right of Mussalmans to write the language in the Urdu script as they have done hitherto.

In order to give practical effect to the second resolution, a committee was appointed with Kakasaheb Kalelkar as Chairman and Convener, to explore the possibility of such introduction and to make

[1] This was a postscript to Mahadev Desai's letter to the addressee informing him of a bookshop at Lahore and advising him on behalf of Gandhiji to purchase the books he needed through Dr. Gopichand Bhargava so as to get a discount on the price.

such changes and additions in the Devanagri script as may be necessary to make it easier to write and more perfect than it is so as to represent the sounds not expressed by the existing letters.

Such a change is necessary if interprovincial contacts are to increase and if Hindi is to be the medium of communication between provinces. The second was ever an accepted proposition for the past twenty-five years with those who subscribe to the creed of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. The question of script has often been discussed but never seriously tackled. And yet it seems to be a natural corollary to the first proposition. Learning sister languages becomes incredibly simple and easy. *Gitanjali*, written in the Bengali script, is a sealed book to everyone except the Bengalis. It is almost an open book when it is written in the Devanagari script. There is in it a vast number of words derived from Sanskrit and easily understood by the people of the other provinces. Everyone can test the truth of this statement. We ought not unnecessarily to tax the future generations with the trouble of having to learn different scripts. It is cruel to require a person desiring to learn Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kanarese, Oriya and Bengali to learn six scripts, besides Devanagari, let alone the Urdu script if he would know what the Muslim brethren are saying and doing through their writings. I have not presented an ambitious programme for a lover of his country or humanity. Today the impenetrable barrier of different scripts has made the learning of sister languages and the learning of Hindi by the sister provinces a needlessly heavy task. It will be for Kakasaheb's committee on the one hand to educate and canvass public opinion in favour of the reform, and on the other to demonstrate by practical application its great utility in saving the time and energy of those who would learn Hindi or the provincial languages. Let no one run away with the idea that the reform will diminish the importance of the provincial languages. Indeed it can only enrich them even as the adoption of a common script has enriched the languages of Europe by making intercourse between its provinces easy.

Harijan, 4-5-1935

58. HOW TO DOUBLE INCOME

Though the spinning movement has been going on for the past seventeen years, and though it is giving a small but steady income to at least 1,20,000 women from year to year, the deplorable ignorance of the science of spinning on the part of workers keeps the income lower than it need be. Bad cotton, badly carded and spun on a rickety wheel without regard to the revolutions of the spindle, results in a low output. Attention to details can easily double the output and therefore the income. If cotton is carefully picked, hand-ginned and well carded, there will be an increased output and improvement in the strength and evenness of yarn. Speed, strength, evenness and count of yarn depend perhaps most upon the number of revolutions of the spindle, i.e., the turns a spindle makes for every turn of the wheel. The calculation is easily made by drawing a vertical line on the spindle disc and turning the wheel so slowly as to enable one easily to count the turns of the spindle. A spindle should never have less than one hundred revolutions against one of the wheels. But Shri Shankerlal Banker reports that during his tour be noticed spindles performing only thirty-five revolutions. No wonder if the output is miserably low and the yarn weak and fluffy. The way to increase the revolutions of a spindle is to decrease the diameter of the *sari* which keeps the *mal* in its place. Local workers should examine every wheel in their place and make the necessary changes in the spindle and other parts, wherever necessary. It may be that in the end the *takli* may be found to be the best instrument of yarn production. It requires the least attention, and the new method of *takli* spinning gives an average speed of 200 rounds, i.e., 266 yards of yarn, and as much as 440 rounds per hour.

Harijan, 4-5-1935

59. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

WARDHA,
May 4, 1935

MY DEAR MALKANI[1],

I had to give considerable time to the revision of your notes of our talks. You will see I have made many changes and removed whole paragraphs. All references to others have been dropped as they should have been.

I hope you had a useful time in Calcutta.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 909

60. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

May 4, 1935

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND[2],

God will bless you in your new dedication as He has done hitherto. . . [3]

Shri Sharma[4] of Khurja will probably send you a list of medical books to be bought. Will you please get them for him? Perhaps the booksellers will quote cheap rates to you.

BAPU

DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA
LAHORE, PUNJAB

From the original: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Joint Secretary, Harijan Sevak Sangh.

[2] Agent-in-General of the All-India Village Industries Association for the Punjab

[3] Omissions in this and other letters to the addressee indicate words that are undecipherable in the source.

[4] *Vide* also "H. L. Sharma", 3-5-1935

61. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

May 4, 1935

CHI. KANTI,

Kanu had written as foolish a letter as you have done, and I hope that your doubt will be resolved as quickly as his was. Man daily dies a living death and cries when real death comes. Man himself is responsible for being miserable. I do not want to bury either of you here. This time, too, I cannot understand why Mahadev had to answer your letter. I have deliberately decided not to give either of you charge of the kitchen, so that I might be able to take one of you with me when I go on a real tour. I may not be able to take both of you, though I am thinking of taking both. I am sure you will both understand, if owing to chance or exigencies of work I am not able to do as I wish. This year I do not want to travel at all. I wish to put things here in order. I will go on tour next year if I am alive—alive in both senses. For isn't imprisonment also a kind of death? In English they call it 'civil death', that is, death in the eyes of law. Isn't that always there as my lot?

I reprimanded Bal, just as I reprimanded you. He wanted me to write, and so gets letters from me. You in your letter kept me free from the obligation of replying and, therefore, I write less often to you. How often do I write to Devdas? I write according to the need of the other persons.

Do you know the meaning of your statement that my words leave you dumbfounded? It means that you feel yourself miles away from me. Is it your fault or mine that you could not recognize the love behind my harsh words? As a votary of ahimsa, I should believe it to be mine, but as a father I would say it was yours. How strange it is that I should have to weigh my words and restrain my language when speaking to you lest you feel offended?

From the beginning you have had a tendency to rudeness and bad manners. You have tried hard to overcome it and succeeded in a great measure, yet some traces are still left. There is nothing of that kind in this letter to me. But there was something of it on that day on the terrace. I had pacified myself of course. It is strange that Harilal should think you have lost your value in my eyes. I am a little hurt, too, for he knows very well that you mean much to me. For myself, I feel that I am tending you carefully like a flower. Your work has

given me nothing but satisfaction. Your intelligence is impressed on your face. I have been trying to argue with Devdas that he is making some mistake. What does the letter also which I have written to Ramachandran prove? Let me assure you that you really mean a great deal to me. It is a matter of shame for both of us that you hesitate to come to me. There is no reason whatever for this.

Cardamom, oil or toothpaste, none of the three is necessary. The ashes of burnt cowdung, powdered fine like flour and mixed with salt, and a *neem* twig will keep the teeth very clean. Coconut oil is a perfect hair-oil. It is improved still further by the addition of a few drops of lime juice. Instead of cardamom, the *neem* leaf is a fine mouth-purifier and one that is used by the village people.

In your relations with the girl[1] whom you wish to marry, you will have to cultivate the virtues of Bharata. I hope that your marriage will provide an example of self-control.

I wish that you should feel no discontent whatever, not even about studies. If you can endure the hardships of life in this place, you will become a man. Even otherwise, however, you will surely grow up to be a successful man of the world. While living with me Prithuraj became lean and as soon as there was an abundance of money his weight went up to 135. This is a great lesson to me. Live with me in perfect cheerfulness. I would rather bear your staying away from me than that you should languish with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised the letter. If you do not understand any point in it, ask me again. If I have omitted anything, get me to write about it.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7296. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

62. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

WARDHA,
May 5, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your wire. I will arrive there[2] on the 25th. Will it cause any inconvenience if I come on the 23rd? If I go to see Kamala in Bombay on the 22nd, I may perhaps arrive there on the 23rd

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Padmavathi"1-5-1935
[2] Borsad

morning. Let me know how long you intend to keep me there. Make my stay as short as possible.

Raja is weary beyond words. How can we blame him either? How can we press anybody who has lost all interest?[1] But to whom can Rajendrababu and you give your resignations? Those of you who remain should carry on as long as you can. If any party can take control of the Congress, it is welcome to do so.[2]

Jayaprakash has sent to Prabhavati a copy of the letter which he has written to you and asked her to show it to me. What is behind it? What could you have said to provoke it?

Athavale, who had come here, has left. He told me the same thing that he has written to you.

The plague must be under control now. Have you regained your strength?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 165

63. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 5, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

Chi. Harilal is going back to Rajkot. He definitely intends to marry, provided he finds a suitable wife. I feel that if he marries, it will not be proper for me to let him stay with me. I may accept his marriage, but I can't welcome or like it. Still, I do wish that his marriage should be a happy one. I will have no objection, on the contrary I would like it, if he earns a living by engaging himself in one of our manifold activites. However, I can't recommend him to anyone. Harilal's wish is to continue to live in the small room you have provided. If you think it right, I will have no objection. But, it is for you to decide whether it is right or not, since I do not know anything about the situation there. Now you need not give him anything for monthly expenses, but give him up to Rs. 100 in a lump sum or in instalments as he may ask. Over and above that he will earn

[1] C. Rajagopalachari retired temporarily from politics on May 11, 1935.

[2] In his letter dated May 2, the addressee had complained of the trouble he had to undergo as one after another the members were leaving the Congress.

on his own. He is thinking of looking for some job or starting a business. I am in a fix. I liked his staying here. He did whatever work he could and was friendly with everybody. He says that his passion for drinks has completely died out. And I understand that he has no carnal passion left, apart from the desire to marry. I haven't been inquisitive about these things and didn't ask him any questions. He is still addicted to smoking and smokes three cigarettes a day with my permission. I believe that he has kept to the limit of three.

This is Harilal's story. Let us see how fate shapes his life now. I will be content even if the treasure I have got back is not lost again, and thank God for His mercy.

Mathew is quite ready to come on the terms[1] offered. Now he is asking for money from the Wardha Ashram so that he can pay his fare from that amount. I am writing to the Ashram to ascertain the position.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8441. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

64. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

May 5, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM[2],

I have your letter. Write to me about Father's health from time to time.

The rice you sent was very good. But it was slightly polished. Rice should not be polished at all.

Do by all means try to find a girl for Krishnaswami[3]. But why do you worry about it? Worry will not help you to get a girl for him. You will succeed only if you make efforts.

The *sloka* of the [*ekadash*] *vrat* is as follows:

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 26-4-1935

[2] Daughter of S. Srinivasa Iyengar. She was the head of Vidyalaya Girls High School, Madras. The superscription in this and other letters to the addressee is in Devanagari.

[3] Addressee's son

Non-violence, truth, non-stealing, *brahmacharya*, non-posse-ssion, body labour, control of the palate, fearlessness on all occasions, equal respect for all religions, swadeshi and *sparshabhavana*[1] —these eleven vows should be observed in a spirit of humility.[2]

Give the enclosed letter to Father.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

65 . LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

May 5, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

Yesterday I sent you a letter. I have now received the reply[3] regarding the steamer. It is on the back side of this. Isn't it all rgiht? . . .[4] Travelling by cargo boat is in no way uncomfortable. I travelled[5] from Bombay to Ceylon in a cargo boat. I found it better, it provided more seclusion.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, p. 158

66. LETTER TO BALIBEHN M. ADALAJA

May 6, 1935

CHI. BALI,

I didn't write that letter in anger. Harilal has not said anything improper to me. I wrote what I did on the basis of Manu's letter and asked the questions only for my information. If Harilal also takes interest in this matter, why need I bother myself? Rami's engagement

[1] Refusal to treat anybody as untouchable

[2] The two Sanskrit verses of which this is a translation were composed by Vinoba Bhave and were recited during prayer in the Ashram.

[3] From G. D. Birla

[4] Omission as in the source

[5] In November 1927

also was arranged by Harilal and you. I had to make the arrangements for marriage because Harilal was not in his proper mind then. I can have no objection if Harilal and you arrange Manu's marriage. If I have to do that, she should be with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1542. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala.

67. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

WARDHA,
May 6, 1935

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letters. It will be good if you can come by the 17th or 18th or, better still, 16th. On the 18th there is a meeting of the standing commitee of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. I shall nevertheless find some time. On the 21st I am also scheduled to go to Bombay to see Kamala Nehru. She will travel by the same ship as you. The Asphalt Line steamer leaves from Calcutta. Does it sail direct to New York?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Mirabehn's book on bees should be returned.

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8010. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

68. NOTE TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

May 6, 1935

Take fruit and milk now. Afterwards fasting. Wrap your head with a piece of cloth.[1] I used to do that. I am teaching you true poverty. There is in fact no poverty here. In a poor man's home there is one charkha for all. Each charkha should be worked for at least twelve hours. Here itz is not worked even for half an hour. That is why I told you to spin on my charkha. This promotes the feeling of oneness. It teaches humility. There is no feeling of mine and thine.

[1] The addressee had said that spinning on the *takli* irritated the hair.

Whatever there is belongs to all. This apparently small matter has far-reaching implications.

From the Hindi original: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

69. LETTER TO AVADHESH DUTT AVASTHI

May 7, 1935

CHI. AVADHESH,

Tulsidas himself has said that the name of Rama is greater than Rama, meaning that Rama, who transcends the body, is formless and nameless and is greater than Rama in body. Rama was certainly the son of Dasharatha and the husband of Sita, but He is also the Purushottama of our imagination because the Unmanifest is not different from the Manifest. Everything is a manifestation of the Unmanifest. I don't insist on the name Rama, it might be Omkar or Krishna, or Ishwar.

I do get angry, but I feel angry with myself for it. Full conquest of anger is possible only through self-realization.

We should love even those who have the worst opinion of us. This is ahimsa, the rest is only ignorance.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3212

70. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

WARDHA,
May 8, 1935

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

You favoured me with a letter after a long time. I did receive a complaint against you, but there was no necessity for me to write to you. If there is anything to write about after Jivanlal's arrival, I will write. You have not taken up public work to please or oblige anybody. Go on doing it as long as you can. Don't worry at all. We shall do afterwards whatever is necessary. I will not let you be humiliated. Keep yourself engrossed in your work. Don't make yourself unhappy unnecessarily.

I hope Rama[1] and the children are doing well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5529.

[1] Addressee's wife

71. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

May 8, 1935

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I fully understand about Haribhai. I don't approve of giving him a single piece. It will be for his own good to leave him to fend for himself. If he sells off the land and comes away from that place, there will be no difficulty at all in helping him forward. To go on living near Sachin is as foolish as killing a buffalo for the sake of thong. Your duty is also to persuade him to come away from Sachin.[1]

I have carefully gone through your other letter regarding the expenses for Gujarat and I am thinking over the matter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3959.

72. LETTER TO UDAY PRASAD

May 8, 1935

BHAI UDAY PRASAD[2]

I remember your poems. I have not read them. Kishorelal and Kakasaheb said there was nothing much to read in them. Where am I to find fifteen minutes?

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9753

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Parikshitlal L. Majmudar", 29-4-1935
[2] Of Bodegaon in Madhya Pradesh

73. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

WARDHA,
May 9, 1935

CHI. MARY,

Here is a letter from Dr. Tandy[1]. Her bill came to Rs. 87. I have sent word to discharge it.

What about her proposal for you to go to Miraj? If you give yourself full rest and take proper nourishment, nothing more may be necessary. Do write to me fully please.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Did I tell you Chhotelal had gone to Coimbatore to learn bee-keeping? I see that the money order has been sent to you. I am sorry. You have to send the money to Dr. Tandy.

From a photostat: G.N. 6040. Also C.W. 3372. Courtesy: F. Marry Barr

74. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 9, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

Enclosed please find a letter from Bhagwanji[2]. Go to help him or send someone else. There is nothing great in going to nearby villages. Go and see him. He is a simple man and wants to do a lot. If he volunteers to devote some time to the school, you may accept his services. However, if your experience is to the contrary, then leave it.

A letter for Lilavati is enclosed. What is the news about Keshu?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8443. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] She was treating the addressee.
[2] Bhagwanji Anupchand Mehta, a lawyer of Rajkot

75. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 9, 1935

I got your letter regarding Titus. If the dairy at the Ashram cannot be retained, he may go.

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall have to write to Mathew again.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, Part II, p. 190. Also C.W. 8442. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

76. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

May 9, 1935

CHI. NARAHARI,

I got your letter. How can the Harijan Ashram be run without a cow? I think we should keep a cow and a bull in the Ashram and hand over the other cattle to the *pinjrapole*[1]. Think over what should be done about Bidaj. If it is at all possible do hand over the cattle to Ramjibhai without consulting me, but with the consent of the Trustees.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9078.

77. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

WARDHA,
May 9, 1935

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. It is good you went to Rajkot with your brother. Now come whenever you find the time. You certainly have my permission to come.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Place for disabled and weak cattle

78. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May 9, 1935

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your goal is self-realization. For that the *ekadash vrat*[1] that we ponder upon daily is essential. That is why there lies some difficulty in your way at present. Discharging of family debts has, to a certain extent, become obligatory for you. If it can be done easily it may be done. Even for this you need to observe the *pancha mahavrat*[2]. I hope that you will stick to them with a cheerful spirit.

You should suspend your studies for a year and concentrate on building up your health and refreshing your mind.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4268.

79. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

WARDHA,
May 10, 1935

CHI. THAKKAR BAPA[3]

I read your letter to Chandrashankar. From which letter of mine did you draw that conclusion? You desire that the sum of Rs. 3,742-3-8 should be written off. If that is done *Harijan* will go bankrupt. Do you expect *Harijan* to make a gift of it to Kodambakam? So far as I remember, we had a discussion about the supplement too. At one time you were ready to offer monetary help so that *Harijan* might be continued. Do you wish now to put a burden upon it? You may certainly do so if and when it makes a profit and has some savings.

If you put *Harijan* to a loss of Rs. 4,000, it will have to be stopped. I, however, fully approve of your disinclination to write to anybody to enlist subscribers. People will subscribe to it if it has any worth. Otherwise let it die.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1156

[1] *Vide* "Letter to S. Ambujammal", 5-5-1935
[2] Of non-violence, truth, non-stealing, *brahmacharya* and non-possession
[3] General Secretary, Harijan Sevak Sangh

80. INTERVIEW TO A MISSIONARY NURSE[1]

[Before *May 11,1935*]

[NURSE:] You have the reputation of never being angry. Is that true?

[GANDHIJI:] It is not that I do not get angry. I do not give vent to anger. I cultivate the quality of patience as angerlessness, and generally speaking I succeed. But I only control my anger when it comes. How I find it possible to control it would be a useless question, for it is a habit that everyone must cultivate and must succeed in forming by constant practice.

When did you come to experience this great love for the poor? Could you tell me the period or the occasion?

I have always had a love for the poor all my life and in abundance. I could cite illustration after illustration from my past life to show that it was something innate in me. I have never felt that there was any difference between the poor and me. I have always felt toward them as my own kith and kin.

Don't you have anything like antipathy for filth and dirt?

I have no antipathy against dirty people but I have a horror of dirt. I should not eat out of a dirty plate nor touch a dirty spoon or kerchief. But I believe in removing dirt to its proper place, where it ceases to be dirt.[2]

I do feel that whilst it is bad to encourage begging, I will not send away a beggar without offering him work and food. If he will not work, I should let him go without food. Those who are physically disabled like the halt and the maimed and the blind have got to be supported by the State. There is, however, a lot of fraud going on under cover of pretended blindness or even genuine blindness. So many blind have become rich because of ill-gotten gains. It would be a good thing if they were taken to an asylum, rather than to be exposed to this temptation.

Would you prevent missionaries coming to India in order to baptize?

Who am I to prevent them? If I had power and could legislate, I should certainly stop all proselytizing. It is the cause of much avoidable conflict between classes and unnecessary heart-burning

[1] This is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter".

[2] Here Mahadev Desai had explained that "the visitor next discussed the question of beggary".

among missionaries. But I should welcome people of any nationality if they came to serve here for the sake of service. In Hindu households the advent of a missionary has meant the disruption of the family coming in the wake of change of dress, manners, language, food and drink.

Is it not the old conception you are referring to? No such thing is now associated with proselytization.

The outward condition has perhaps changed but the inward mostly remains. Vilification of Hindu religion, though subdued, is there. If there was a radical change in the missionaries' outlook, would Murdoch's books be allowed to be sold in mission depots? Are those books prohibited by missionary societies? There is nothing but vilification of Hinduism in those books. You talk of the conception being no longer there. Only the other day a missionary descended on a famine area withmoney in his pocket, distributed it among the famine-stricken, converted them to his fold, took charge of their temple and demolished it. This is outrageous. The temple could not belong to the converted Hindus, and it could not belong to the Christian missionary. But this friend goes and gets it demolished at the hands of the very men who only a little while ago believed that God was there.

But, Mr. Gandhi, why do you object to proselytization as such? Is not there enough in the Bible to authorize us to invite people to a better way of life?

Oh yes, but it does not mean that they should be made members of the Church. If you interpret your texts in the way you seem to do, you straight away condemn a large part of humanity unless it believes as you do. If Jesus came to earth again, he would disown many things that are being done in the name of Christianity. It is not he who says "Lord, Lord" that is a Christian, but "He that doeth the will of the Lord" that is a true Christian. And cannot he who has not heard the name of Jesus Christ do the will of the Lord?

Harijan, 11-5-1935.

81. GROSS ILL-TREATMENT

> I was working in a *cheri* under the auspices of the Harijan Sevak Sangh for a period of about four months. A Harijan was expelled from the *cheri*, before I began Harijan work in the village, on account of his moral delinquencies. The said Harijan once returned to visit his son studying in our school. I allowed him to stop with me for the purpose. He was resting in the school shed on the particular night. In my absence, a party consisting of five persons belonging to the Harijan class who were the near relatives of the woman seduced, along with a few others of the so-called castemen, took him out and beat him severely for the old offence of seducing a married woman, and drove him out of the shed. Immediately I learnt of the incident, I approached the persons who had taken the law into their own hands and protested against the maltreatment and demanded the re-admission of the Harijan into the *cheri*. This was refused. Therefore, I have withdrawn myself from the village.

The foregoing is a much condensed summary of a long letter. I do not vouch for the accuracy of the statement. But if the facts are as stated, surely it was wrong altogether to beat the Harijan as he appears to have been beaten. If he had committed any crime, he should have been prosecuted. But no one had any right to take the law into his own hands. The correspondent was right in retiring from the *cheri* which was not prepared to do simple justice. I hope that the matter was brought to the notice of the local Sangh and that the latter had tried to secure fair treatment for the Harijan concerned. The whole affair is one for careful investigation. I fear that such cases are frequent enough. It is up to Harijan sevaks on the one hand to afford protection to the injured and on the other to awaken their sense of morality where it is lacking. The offenders do not belong to any particular class. All sections are tarred with the same brush. Only those workers who have proved their worth and are above reproach will be able to create any impression at all on the delinquents.

Harijan, 11-5-1935

82. WELLS FOR HARIJANS

The Government of Bombay are to be congratulated upon their decision to build wells for Harijans in the Presidency of Bombay. The sum set apart is a trifle for the work to be done. As is well known, wells have been constructed for Harijans for years past in Gujarat by

the late Anti-untouchability Board set up by the Congress, and since 1932 by the Harijan Sevak Sangh. The latter has an extensive programme of well-building for Harijans, and Sjt. Juthabhai, a quiet and great worker, has made up his mind to devote his attention to this noble humanitarian work. It is greatly to be desired that in this work there would be perfect co-ordination between the various agencies working towards the same end. If co-operative effort is not possible, there may be at least a division of labour and areas. Whatever is done, the end should be quick work, good work and cheapest cost. The last can be satisfied only if there is unskilled voluntary labour forthcoming either on the part of Harijan Hindus or *savarna* Hindus or both.

Harijan, 11-5-1935

83. VILLAGE WORKER'S QUESTIONS

A village worker writes:

1. I am working in a small village of a hundred houses. You have said that attention to sanitation and hygiene should precede medical relief. But what is a worker to do when a villager suffering from fever seeks aid? I have been hitherto advising them to use indigenous herbs obtainable in the village bazaar.
2. What is to be done with the night-soil during the rains?
3. Can night-soil be used for all crops?
4. What is the advantage of eating *gur*[1] in preference to sugar?

Where cases of fever, constipation or such common diseases come to village workers for help, they will certainly have to render such help as they can. Where one is certain of the diagnosis, there is no doubt that the village bazaar medicine is the cheapest and best. If one must stock drugs, castor oil, quinine and boiling water are the best medical agents. Castor oil may be locally procurable. The *senna* leaf may serve the same purpose. Quinine one should use sparingly. Every fever does not require quinine treatment. Nor does every fever yield to quinine. Most fevers will disappear after a fast or a semi-fast. Abstention from cereals, pulses and milk, and taking fruit juices or

[1] Jaggery

boiling raisin water, even boiling *gur* water with fresh lemon juice or tamarind, is a semi-fast. Boiling water is a most powerful medical agent. It may move the bowels, it will induce perspiration and therefore abate fever; it is the safest and cheapest disinfectant. In every case where it is required to be drunk, the water must be allowed to cool till it is fairly bearable to the skin. Boiling does not mean mere heating. The water begins to bubble and evaporate after it is on the boil.

Where the workers do not know for certain what to do, they must allow the local vaidya to have full sway. Where he is non-existent or unreliable and the workers know a philanthropic doctor nearby, they may invoke his assistance.

But they will find that the most effective way of dealing even with disease is to attend to sanitation. Let them remember that nature is the finest physician. They may be sure that nature is repairing what man has damaged. She appears to have become powerless when man continuously hampers her. Then she sends death—her last and peremptory agent to destroy what is beyond repair—and provides a fresh garment for the wearer. Sanitary and hygienic workers are therefore the best helpers of the best physician every person has, whether he knows it or not.

2. Even during the rains villagers should perform functions in places not trodden by man. Faeces must be buried. This is a most difficult question owing to the erroneous training of villagers. In Sindi village we are trying to persuade the villagers not to use the streets, to go to the adjoining fields and to throw dry clean earth on their own evacuations. After two months' continuous labour and co-operation of the municipal councillors and others, they have been good enough generally to cease to defile the streets. They go to the fields which their owners have been good enough to open for such use. But the villagers still obstinately refuse to throw earth on their own evacuations. 'Surely it is bhangi's work; it is sinful to look at faeces, more so to throw earth on them', they say. They have been taught to believe so. Workers have therefore not to write on a clean slate. They have to rub off what is drawn into the slate with steel points. But I know that if we have faith in our mission, if we have patience enough to persist in the work of daily morning scavenging and, above all, if we don't get irritated against the villagers, their prejudice will disappear as mist before the rays of the sun. Age-hardened ignorance

cannot yield to a few months' object-lessons.

We are preparing for the rains in Sindi. Naturally the owners of fields must protect their crops. They cannot, therefore, allow free access to their fields as many do now. We have suggested to them that they should put up fences a few feet inside their boundaries, leaving the marks intact. The few feet they may leave will by the end of the season be richly-manured strips of their fields. A time is coming when owners of fields will invite people to use them. Every man constantly using a particular field leaves on it two rupees' worth of manure in a year, if Dr. Fowler's estimate may be accepted. The accuracy of the figure may be doubted. The fact that a field benefits by the deposit of night-soil in it is beyond doubt.

3. No one has suggested that night-soil may be administered to crops directly as manure. What is meant is that addition of night-soil to earth enriches it after a fixed time. Night-soil after being received into the earth has to undergo certain changes before the earth becomes fit for ploughing and cultivation. The test in infallible. Open up the earth after a stated time where you have buried night-soil. If you find that it is all sweet earth and no smell, no trace to faeces, the soil is fit to receive the seed. I have used night-soil in this manner for all manner of crops for the past thirty years with the greatest benefit.

4. It is the universal testimony of experts that *gur* is more nutritious than sugar because it contains salts and vitamins which sugar does not contain. As whole-wheat meal is to fine flour, or unpolished rice to polished, so practically is *gur* to sugar.

Harijan, 11-5-1935

84. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

WARDHA,
May 11, 1935

MY DEAR PRAKASAM,

I have gone through your note. I believe in the system of barter. It can apply only to village communities. In its very nature it can work among small groups of men. The village movement [if it][1] succeeds, must result in villagers exchanging their goods. It won't spread by preaching but it will by practising it wherever possible.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 9245

[1] Very faint in the source

85. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

May 11, 1935

MY DEAR JERAMDAS,

What is this? What about Anand[1]? How are you getting on? Do you want me to resume payment to Anand? Do keep me informed of your doings.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Malkani is here. Nothing serious about snake-bite[2] .

From the original: C.W. 9714. Courtesy: Jairamdas Doulatram

86. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

May 11, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM,

You seem to be unnecessarily worrying about your boy's marriage. This is essentially a matter which you should let father and mother manage in the best manner they can. It is a difficult thing. But they seem to have got over every difficulty. You should avoid all anxiety.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Anand T. Hingorani

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar", 11-5-1935 and "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 13-5-1935

87. LETTER TO RAJARAM R. BHOLE

WARDHA,
May 11, 1935

MY DEAR RAJARAM,

Why should you be torn to pieces. You should simply do what your body allows. See friends there and find out what is possible.

Yours,
BAPU

SHRI RAJARAM BHOLE
C/O MINERVA TALKIES
POONA

From the original: R. R. Bhole Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

88. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[May 11, *1935*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letter. Mahadev has gone to Borsad in response to Vallabhbhai's request. He will return in three or four days. Marybehn was very ill and was in the hospital at Itarsi. I have paid the bill of Rs. 87 for her. Maybe she has tuberculosis. The doctor at Itarsi says that she should be sent to Miraj. At present she is at Betul.

I may have to go to Borsad on the 24th. In any case I shall have to go to Bombay to see Kamala. I will, therefore, start from here on the 21st.

Kishorelal[2] and Gomati[3] arrived yesterday. Gomati had a little fever and has become weak.

The meeting of the Standing Committee of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan is fixed here for the 18th.

Ramakrishna is getting on fairly well.

Om[4] seems to have become absorbed in her work.

Blessings from
BAPU

[1] In the source, the addressee had mentioned May 14 as the date of receipt of the letter. Kishorelal Mashruwala and his wife arrived in Wardha on May 10, 1935; *vide* also "Letter to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi", 13-5-1935

[2] Kishorelal Mashruwala and his wife.

[3] *ibid*

[4] Uma, addressee's daughter

[PS.]

I suppose you know that we did not get one lakh for the Sammelan. Write to whomsoever you think worth writing to.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2968

89. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR [1]

May 11, 1935

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

I have been prejudiced against S.[2] from the very beginning. This work hasn't seemed clean to me. It might not perhaps be proper to give anything, against the advice of Shukla and others, from the amount realized through the sale of the cattle. If, therefore, you have full faith in him, you may give him something from the money which is lying in my name.

I sent a wire yesterday regarding Malkani. I had to send another today.

He had gone to Nalvadi to see the work being done there. While returning from there, he was bit by something[3] in the darkness. He was accompanied by. . . and others. They lifted him up and laid him . . . . When some conveyance was available he was taken to hospital. An incision was made to let out blood. . . . The night passed fairly well. . . . He will have to remain in the hospital for two days at least. Even apart from this, I felt that it is not desirable that neither of you should be present in Delhi. Whatever has to be done on the basis of your observations during your visit. . . . What may have happened during your absence. . . .

It is essential that a plan should be drawn up. There is, of course . . . about one well. There must be many more like that. . . . Therefore, think over my suggestion. I told Malkani the same thing yesterday and then wired to you. If, however, you see any error in this reasoning, ask me.

Regarding your reply to Chandrashankar I have sent you my views[4] yesterday.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 22765

[1] The photostat copy of this letter in pencil is very faint and many words are illegible. This translation is based on a partial reconstruction of the letter, presumably from the original, attached to the photostat copy.

[2] The name has been omitted.

[3] It was a snake; *vide* "Letter to Jairamdas Doulatram", 11-5-1935

[4] *Vide* " Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar", 10-5-1935

90. LETTER TO KASIM ALI

May 11, 1935

BHAI KASIM ALI,

The enquiry I had instituted about *Shiva Bavani*[1] is continuing.

A reply from the Village Industries Association has been sent to you. There is no obstacle to anyone doing any work for the village industries but no salary is paid for it.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9751

91. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

WARDHA,
May 12, 1935

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I read your letters, the one to me and the other to Thakkar Bapa, and your article in *Roshani*[2]. I have also discussed the matter with Bhai Jivanlal[3] . Nanalal was present at the discussion. I didn't like your letter to Bapa and your article in *Roshani.*

I admit the necessity of the sphere of your work being defined. Your freedom should be respected. I think the present bitterness is purely the result of temperamental differences. I see no good coming out of your leaving the Sangh, nor from Jivanlal's leaving it. It should be a matter of shame for us that well-to-do and poor workers cannot work together. Bhai Jivanlal and you should bear up with each other. I don't think that you wish to do anything without consulting Bhai Jivanlal, nor do I find that the latter objects to discussing things with you. Today, therefore, I will content myself with this request that both of you should resolve henceforth to work in harmony like blood-brothers. I have given the same advice to Bhai Jivanlal. I have also shown him this letter. I am sending a copy of it to Thakkar Bapa.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5530

[1] A poetical work by Bhushan praising the exploits of Shivaji

[2] Gujarati weekly published from Saurashtra at the time

[3] Jivanlal Motichand Shah, an industrialist of Calcutta, who rendered financial asistance to Gandhiji for khadi and Harijan activities.

92. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

[*May 12, 1935*][1]

CHI. RAMDAS,

What keeps you happy will keep me happy, too. You will develop strength of character and understand your duty only by acting as you wish to. I do not worry. Sumitra has once again run back here. She will not get here the company of . . .[2] she had in the Kanya Ashram. But she is getting along quite well.

Andrews has already arrived here. . . .[3] Harilal has started looking for another wife. . . .[4] He will find some work to do. He is staying with . . . just now. He will keep away from drink and . . . .

I will be going there most probably on the 22nd[5]. The same evening, I will leave for Borsad with Sardar. Sardar also will arrive in Bombay on the 22nd [to see off] Kamala Nehru.[6]

So, after all, I have got letters from Manilal and Sushila. I will send . . . only with . . . .

Andrews will be here upto the 26th at least . . . .

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] As suggested in the source
[2] The source is illegible here and at many other places.
[3] He had returned from England on May 9.
[4] Harilal's first wife, Gulab *alias* Chanchal, had died towards the end of 1918.
[5] Gandhiji arrived at Bombay from Wardha on May 22.
[6] She was to leave for Europe on the 23rd for medical treatement.

93. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

May 12, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I got your letter and Rs. 110. You should not worry about Krishna. There is no need for me to go to a hill-station. Moreover, there is so much work here that I cannot get out.

Ekadash vrat is a means of serving the country. That is why service to the nation is included in the *sloka*[1].

Take father to a hill-station immediately.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

94. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
May 13, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I have shown your letters to C. F. A. He is not likely to be with you before 25th of the month. Ceresole[2] and Wilkinson[3] are coming here on 16th. They sail for Europe on 23rd.

I am having more envelopes and note-papers made of the two varieties you left. If you want any other you will please send me samples. I shall not send you more unless you order more. I shall stock them for you. You will pay for the packet sent when you come.

I hope to send you a lot of slivers in a few days.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3532. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6341

[1] *Vide*"Letter to S. Ambujammal", 5-5-1935

[2] Pierre Ceresole, Swiss engineer and president of the International Voluntary Service, who in response to C. F. Andrews's appeal, came to India in 1934 to do relief work in the earthquake-stricken Bihar

[3] Joe Wilkinson, who came at the instance of C. F. Andrews

95. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

May 13, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letter to Radhakrishna[1]. I am sure that there is no need for you to get involved in a matter like this. It seems to be almost settled. Your duty is to rest there and recover fully. Descending before June is out of the question. What has happened is certainly bad, but the matter is full of so many complications that it will do no good to intervene. It would be better to let events take their own course. We may give whatever advice we can from a distance.

I have already informed[2] you that I have not received anything from Indore. You may now write to anybody you wish.

I understand. . .'s[3] case. You must have received my letter to him.

The Standing Committee of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan will meet here on the 18th. I have asked Radhakrishna to put up the members at his bungalow. Andrews is here. He has been put up at Maganwadi. Malkani, who was bitten by a snake is also here. He is better now because immediate treatment could be given.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I must hear regularly from Madalasa.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2967

[1] Addressee's nephew
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar, 11-5-1935
[3] The name has been omitted.

96. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

May 13, 1935

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letters. In the end the garment to be made from my yarn could not be ready in time. Some day it surely will be.

You can banish the disease from Phoenix in the same way that I did. It was banished merely through a change in diet and the crop raised in the fields. There were hardly any cases of malaria. At that time we never used to take milk.

It is for you to decide what changes you should make. Kishorelal, Gomati, and Anasuya[1] arrived here three days ago. Anasuya will leave when her holidays are over. Kishorelal stood the journey well enough on the whole.

Ramdas is trying hard to settle down in Bombay. He also has joined a Press.

Harilal wants to marry again and that is why he has gone to Rajkot. He will try there and also look for some work. In other respects he seems all right.

Kanti[2] and Kanu[3] are here so far. Andrews arrived the day before yesterday. Devdas is in Delhi.

Blessings from

BAPU

[P.S.]

Thakkar Bapa must have sent acknowledgment to Gokaldas Garach.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4837

[1] Harilal Gandhi's granddaughter
[2] Son of Harilal Gandhi
[3] Son of Narandas Gandhi

97. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

May 13, 1935

CHI. MAHAVIR,

May I treat your letter as a wedding invitation? I got the letters of Maitri[1], Durga,[2] and Satyadevi[3] too. I don't have the time to reply to all separately. May Durga and her husband enjoy a long life. It is my wish and my blessing that they lead a simple life dedicated to service and bring credit to the Ashram. I hope Durga will not forget me after her marriage.

Maitri must get rid of her constipation. When is she to be married? Don't mind if there are no blood-relations. We should look upon all as our relations. The distinction beween relations and others is wholly a product of the mind.

Satyadevi has had a good dig at me. She seems to be reminding me how I used to criticize her for her handwriting. I suppose she merely wants to tell me thereby that she has defeated me. I should like everybody to defeat me in a similar manner. May she be as pure of heart as she is intelligent.

Blessings from

BAPU

[P.S.]

I shall be in Bombay on the 22nd. All of you will be able to see me for a minute or two there. I shall be leaving for Borsad the same night.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6242

[1] Addressee's sister

[2] *ibid*

[3] *ibid*

98. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

May 13, 1935

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. This solution is possible. Father may hand over to me, on your account, the jewellery or the money realized from the sale.[1] This will mean that I would use the income from it every month for you. After your death the trustees of the Ashram will use it for the Ashram. This will cast no blemish on you. No doubt you live your life wholly depending on God. You may keep yourself aloof from any understanding that father and I may arrive at. Isn't that also the arrangement for Mirabehn? One or two hundred pounds are received for her (annually) and are credited to the Ashram. My suggestion will relieve father of his worry and leave you completely out.

I shall arrive there on the 22nd and leave for Borsad the same night. You will of course meet me in Bombay but you can also come to Borsad if you wish. In any case you are always welcome at Wardha.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Has Kisan[2] become as strong as a horse? Sushi[3] seems quite . . .[4]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10372. Also C.W. 6811. Courtsey: Premabehn Kantak

99. LETTER TO THAKUR PRASAD SHARMA

May 13, 1935

BHAI THAKUR PRASAD SHARMA,

Good relations cannot be brought about by concealing our faults. If both the parties jointly appoint an arbitrator, they need not go to the law-court. But if this is not possible I see nothing wrong in making an attempt to obtain justice through the courts. One cannot

[1] The addressee's father and grandfather wanted to sell the ornaments left by her mother and make a trust of the money so that she could have regular income in the form of interest on it. But the addressee wanted to give away all the money to Gandhiji.

[2] Kisan Ghumatkar

[3] Sushila Pai

[4] Illegible in the source

lay down a fixed principle in such matters. Every case is to be judged on its own merits.

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI THAKUR PRASAD
JALPA DEVI
BENARES CITY

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 156. Also C.W. 9754. Courtesy: Bharat Kala Bhavan

100. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN

WARDHA,
May 14, 1935

DEAR SIR,

I have your letter. I have made no categorical statement that the committee is absolved of responsibility. What I said was that, if Haribabu and Kotwal have told you that the total of one lakh is also inclusive of the amount meant for Indore University, your responsibility is over. But I do not want to enter into this discussion nor do I wish to inconvenience you. After all the responsibility has been taken up by Seth Jamnalalji and he can go by his own judgment. I see no fault in Tandonji having spoken and acted as he did. To prevent outside agitation was beyond my strength nor was I so inclined. It was impossible for me to act otherwise than I ultimately did.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 375

101. LETTER TO RAMASWAMI IYENGAR

May 14, 1935

DEAR RAMASWAMI,

I wish your venture success. Take care that you do not leave what you have begun.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 9234. Courtesy: Ramaswami Iyengar

102. LETTER TO G. SITARAM SASTRY

[*May 14, 1935*][1]

DEAR SITARAM SASTRIJI,

I approve of the proposal to invite an essay on the barter system. The prize does not seem to be attractive. Who should be the judges? They must be [men][2] with special [qualifi] cation. [I] cannot just now think [of] them.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

SHRI G. SITARAM SASTRY
VINAYA ASHRAM
GUNTUR DIST.
CHANDOLE P.O.

From the original: C.W. 9175. Courtesy: Government of Andhra Pradesh

103. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

May 14, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have to trouble you even there[3] regarding Indore. I do not think we shall receive anything from there. Please read the accompanying letter. I am also sending a copy of my reply[4] . I do not know anybody there. I have left everything to you. If nothing can be done even by you, we shall drop the matter. You need not worry about it. If you can do anything from there or write to anybody, you may do so. If that is not possible at present, then forget about it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2969

[1] From the postmark.
[2] The source is mutilated.
[3] Bhowali
[4] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary, Hindi Sahitya Sammelan", 14-5-1935

104. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

May 14, 1935

BHAI MOOLCHAND,

It is a mistaken notion that every wrong can be righted if it appears in the pages of *Harijan.* Great effort will be required to eliminate the evil custom of child-marriage.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 756

105. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May 14, 1935

Non-violence, truth, non-stealing, *brahmacharya*, non-possession, body labour, control of the palate, fearlessness on all occassions, equal respect for all religions, swadeshi and *sparshabhavana* these eleven vows should be observed in a spirit of humanity.

May *Gita* become your staff of life.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4269; also S.G. 43

106. LETTER TO SAMIRMAL

May 14, 1935

BHAI SAMIRMAL,

How old are you and Shri Vayulal? Give me all details regarding yourselves such as health, education and whether you can pay your expenses. The work here is only manual.

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SAMIRMAL
DAPHARIA
JAORA, MALWA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1292

107. TELEGRAM TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

WARDHA,
May 15, 1935

SETH RAMESHWARDAS
DHULIA

GANGA[1] DELIVERED DAUGHTER. BOTH WELL.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 741

108. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

May 15, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I didn't like the joke about crows in Delhi. Such jokes don't benefit the people in any way. There is also no fight going on just now.

I had a letter from Amritlal[2]. I have replied and said that it would be proper if he expressed regret in his newspaper.

The rest you will know from Mahadev's letter. I am extremely busy these days. Andrews is here. Ceresole and Wilkinson arrived yesterday. Some others also are arriving. I shall barely get ready by the 21st to leave. I don't think it will be possible to bring Mahadev along with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 167

[1] Addressee's wife
[2] Amritlal Seth, editor of *Janmabhoomi*, a daily published from Bombay

109. LETTER TO AVADHESH DUTT AVASTHI

May 15, 1935

CHI. AVADHESH,

May our nation become and remain the greatest in respect of all moral values. Man's self-respect lies in uplifting himself and in doing this not fearing even death.

Why is anger necessary for protecting our self-respect and fighting wickedness? If I am told to rub my nose on the ground I may not be angry and yet refuse to comply and bear cheerfully whatever punishment is vouchsafed for my disobedience.

Dharma is that which uplifts the soul. We shall think that God is a name for Truth, God is identical with truth.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3217

110. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

WARDHA,
May 16, 1935

CHI. MARY,

Your letter. Wherever you are you need complete rest. Why not take it before it becomes too late? Instead of Miraj, why not undergo examination in Bombay? You almost touch Bombay going to Miraj. But doing it in Bombay will serve the same purpose without any cost. There are most competent doctors in Bombay. Anyway you must be healed quickly.[1]

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6041. Also C.W. 3370. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 11-5-1935

111. LETTER TO GLADYS OWEN

May 16, 1935

DEAR GLADYS,

I was [glad to read][1] your letter. It came into my hands today and just . . . after Pierre Ceresole arrived. I shared with him the portion regarding him. He was glad about it. He would certainly undertake . . . mission . . . way . . . before him.

We shall all be glad to . . .and welcome you with Muriel. C.F. Andrews . . . with me . . . .

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6191

112. LETTER TO SATYAMURTI[2]

May 16, 1935

You are a tempter. I must not succumb. You will be all right without my blessings. As you have well said, you will succeed if you deserve success.

The Hindu, 20-5-1935

113. LETTER TO N. K. BOSE

May 16, 1935

DEAR NIRMALBABU,

I have been simply overworked. As soon as I finish revision I shall return the manuscript. You may certainly send it to *The Modern Review.*

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE
6/1A BRITISH INDIAN STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G. N. 10520

[1] The source is very faint and illegible at places.

[2] Satyamurti had asked Gandhiji for his blessings on his becoming president of the Tamil Nadu Provincial Congress Committee.

114. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

May 16, 1935

BHAI MUNSHI,

I got your letter. You may remain there[1] but I would like you to build up good health. The Standing Committee is meeting on the 18th. Let me see what happens at the meeting. I was glad to receive Jijima's[2] good wishes. My respectul greetings to her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7573. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

115. DISCUSSION WITH PIERRE CERESOLE AND JOE WILKINSON[3]

[*May 16, 1935*][4]

Ceresole proceeded to tell Gandhiji of some of the books he had recently read. There was *India in the Dark Wood* . . . wanting "the main framework of the dominant Hindu philosophy to be shattered". . . . Pierre Ceresole said he had turned from this book with relief to Frank Lonwood's book *Jesus Lord or Leader* where the author rejects the claim of Christianity as the final religion and pines for "a fuller and richer faith than we have yet reached and to believe that God, who has nowhere left Himself without witness,will use the highest institutions of other systems and of many races to enrich the thinking and worship of mankind." He sees definite gain in the abandonment of a special claim for the inspiration of the Bible, and classes himself among those "who humbly desire to follow Jesus as leader, though their view of truth will not allow them to worship him as Lord". Gandhiji said:

There is a swing in the pendulum, and I have a Christian friend telling me that the *Gita* shows him how to live the New Testament, and that many passages in the latter which used to be dark were intelligible to him through a study of the *Gita.*

[1] Panchgani

[2] Addressee's mother

[3] This is extracted from "Weekly Letter" by Mahadev Desai who had explained: "Pierre Ceresole and Joe Wilkinson . . . returning home after a strenous time in Bihar earthquake-stricken districts, broke journey here at Wardha"

[4] From *Gandhi: 1915-1948—A Detailed Chronology*

And yet Ceresole feels that each one must find his solace from his own faith. He attended our prayer meetings regularly, morning and evening, but said one evening: "This repetition of one and the same thing over and over again jars on me. It may be the defect of my rationalist, mathematical temperament. But somehow I cannot like the repetition.". . .

GANDHIJI: But even in mathematics you have your recurring decimals.

PIERRE CERESOLE: But each recurs with a definite new fact.

G. Even so each repetition, or *japa* as it is called, has a new meaning, each repetition carries you nearer and nearer to God. This is a concrete fact, and I may tell you that you are here talking to no theorist but to one who has experienced what he says every minute of his life, so much so that it is easier for the life to stop than for this incessant process to stop. It is a definite need of the soul.

P.C. I quite see it, but for the average man it becomes an empty formula.

G. I agree, but the best thing is liable to be abused. There is room for any amount of hypocrisy, but even hypocrisy is an ode to virtue. And I know that for ten thousand hypocrites you would find millions of simple souls who find their solace from it. It is like scaffolding quite essential to a building.

P.C. But if I may carry the simile a little further, you agree that the scaffolding has to be removed when the building is complete?

G. Yes, it would be removed when this body is removed.

P. C. Why?

JOE WILKINSON: Because we are eternally building.

G. Because we are eternally striving after perfection. God alone is perfect, man is never perfect.

Harijan, 25-5-1935

116. LETTER TO R. B. GREGG

WARDHA,
May 17, 1935

MY DEAR GOVIND,

Of course I know that absence of letters does not mean decrease of love. I know what you are doing to spread the gospel of love. It must tax your energy to the full.

If America will take to an equivalent of khadi, it will be a great thing.

Andrews, Pierre Ceresole and Joe Wilkinson, the fomer's companion, are here just now. Andrews will be in India for some [months][1] with the Poet[2]. Ceresole leaves for Europe on 23rd.

The Village Industries work is going on.

H.L. Sharma is a nature-cure man. He wants to go to Battle Creek to perfect his knowledge. He wants to use it for purely humanitarian purposes. I am getting a scholarship for him. If he can earn his board and lodging by part-time work it will be a good thing. Have you any suggestion for him?

Love to you and Radha.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 4666

117. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

May 17, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Your note-paper looks satin-like.

Dalip Singh's[3] letter is good.

We are a crowded family just now. C.F.A., Ceresole, Wilkinson, Malkani, Mrs. Malkani, their friend and son and two students—a good addition. And you will remember the scarcity of plates and bowls we have. But we manage and keep merry.

Yes, the heat here is trying.

[1] Very faint in the source
[2] Rabindranath Tagore
[3] Addressee's brother

The gum on your envelopes is from the bark of a tree in the garden. I shall see what can be done to the next lot.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3533. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur, Also G.N. 6342

118. FOR MUNICIPALITIES

The following appeal has been issued by Prof. Malkani, Joint Secretary, Harijan Sevak Sangh, to the municipalities.[1]

It is to be hoped that it will receive an effective response from the municipalities.

Harijan, 18-5-1935

119. HARIJAN EDUCATION

The question of primary education is in many respects much more difficult than secondary and college education. And Harijan education is the most difficult for all. Be it in the crudest manner possible, a non-Harijan child receives some home culture. A Harijan child, being shunned by society, has none. Even when, therefore, all primary schools are open to Harijan children, as they must be sooner or later and in my opinion sooner rather than later, preliminary schools will be needed for Harijan children if they are not to labour under a perpetual handicap. The preliminary training can be discovered and tried in all the numerous Harijan schools conducted under the aegis of Harijan Sevak Sanghs scattered throughout India. That preliminary training should consist in teaching Harijan children manners, good speech and good conduct. A Harijan child sits anyhow; dresses anyhow; his eyes, ears, teeth, hair, nails, nose are often full of dirt; many never know what it is to have a wash. I remember what I did when in 1915 I picked up a Harijan boy at Tranquebar and took him with me to Kochrab where the Ashram was then situated. I had him shaved. He was then thoroughly washed and given a simple dhoti, vest and a cap. In a few minutes in appearance he became indistinguishable from any child from a cultured home. His head, eyes, ears, nose were thoroughly cleaned. His nails which had become

[1] The appeal is not reproduced here; it exhorted the municipalities to provide social amenities, such as housing facilities, better service conditions, provision for sick, casual and maternity leave, etc., to its sweepers and scavengers.

repositories of dirt were pared and cleaned. His feet which were laden with dust were rubbed and cleaned out. Such a process has to be gone through every day, if need be, with Harijan children attending schools. Their lesson should begin for the first three months with teaching them cleanliness. They should be taught also how to eat properly, though as I write this sentence I recall what I had seen during the walking pilgrimage[1] in Orissa. Harijan boys and grown-ups, who were fed at some of the stages, ate with much better cleanliness than the others who soiled their fingers, scattered about the savings and left their plates in a messy condition. Harijans had no savings and their dishes were left thoroughly clean. Their fingers, whilst they were eating, were after every morsel taken licked clean. I know that all Harijan children do not eat so cleanly as the particular ones I have described.

If this preliminary training is to be given in all Harijan schools, pamphlets giving detailed instructions for teachers in their languages should be prepared and distributed and inspectors of schools be required during their inspection to examine teachers and pupils on this head and to send full reports of the progress made in this direction.

This programme involves care in the selection of teachers and the training of the present staff. But all this is well worth the attention, if the Sangh is to discharge its trust by the thousands of Harijan children that are brought under its care.

Harijan, 18-5-1935

120. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 18, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

What is the news about Dhiru[2]? Who meets his expenses? How is he progressing? When will he complete his study? Do you have what he gave in writing?

How is Harilal?

Everything has been settled about the school. Everybody agrees that your scheme is all right.

How is Purushottam[3]? Does Chorwad suit him?

[1] In 1934

[2] Dhiru Gandhi, son of Vrajlal Gandhi, who was learning painting at Santiniketan

[3] Addressee's son

Did I write to Jamna that I had writtten a letter to Vijaya?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I shall be in Borsad from 23rd to 31st May.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8444. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

121. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

WARDHA,
May 18, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

While Mahadev was there, I was too lazy to write to you. Then, owing to circumstances over which he had no control, he took two days to return. The result was that I could not write to you.

What you say about Mohanlal Pandya is quite right.[1] The memories of old days are quite vivid. But what will it avail to grieve? Co-workers come and go. You feel that they only go, don't come. Even if that be so, what does it matter? God doesn't disappear. It is because He is, that we are. Without Him, of what help could all others be to us? They would be so many bodies without souls. You should not, therefore, grieve over the passing of a co-worker. Our duty is to do the best that we can.

I won't be free before the 21st. I shall arrive in Bombay on the 22nd morning. The 20th is Monday. I must be here on the 21st. Most probably I shall be accompanied only by Ba. I will take along Mirabehn only if I cannot help it. If she insists on coming I shall be obliged to take her and may also bring one more person. For food, I will have goat's milk, *neem* leaves and any fruit available locally. Please don't get anything from Bombay. That is my diet here too. In place of lime-juice I take the juice of tamarind and in place of green vegetables crushed *neem* leaves. These days I also eat mangoes which grow in the orchard here. I have not as yet tasted Bombay mangoes this year. I will do that in Bombay. But positively not in Borsad.

I must leave Mahadev behind here. I will send him, if necessary, after I return here. The rest when we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 168-9

[1] *Vide* also "Speech at inauguration of Bal Mandir, Nadiad", 31-5-1935

122. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

May 18, 1935

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have not a shadow of doubt that it is best for you to settle down in some village. You should live by your body labour and serve the villagers by thought, word and deed and to that end observe the eleven vows. A timepiece is not a necessity; but if you think it is, you can construct a device using sand or water. That would involve no expense whatsoever. Yes, you have my permission to visit me whenever you like, only remember that we have no money to waste on railway journeys.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1876

123. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

May 18, 1935

CHI. LILAVATI,

You have entered your twenty-eighth year. That means you are growing. Are you also growing mentally and emotionally? May you be of sound health. May your spirit of service grow. May you be more firm and may you find your peace of mind.

I hope to reach Borsad by the 23rd. I shall return from there on the 31st.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

124. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

May 19, 1935

CHI. KUNVARJI[1],

I got your letter. Here we didn't see anything to criticize in Harilal's behaviour. I shall be pained if your suspicion proves true. There is no question of handing over Manu to his care. I hope all of you are quite well there.

Ba and I shall be in Bombay on Wednesday. You can come. I will give you a few minutes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9721

125. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI[2]

May 19, 1935

CHI. MANU,

I got your letter. I shall be in Bombay on Wednesday; also Ba. Do come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9721

126. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

WARDHA,
May 19, 1935

BHAI DAHYABHAI,

After reflecting over your letter of June [sic] 25, 1935 for so many days, I content myself with this reply. After I got it, a number of similar incidents have occurred at other places too. I am tired of

[1] Harilal Gandhi's son-in-law and Rami's husband

[2] In the source, the letter is written on the back of "Letter to Kunwarji Parekh"; *vide* the preceding item.

writing about them. My writings may have had some effect, but nothing worth speaking about. In regard to these activities the local worker at each place must go on doing the best he can. He must of course keep me informed. We should realize our limitations. We are reformers and not policemen. Nor do we want to become policemen. A reformer brings about reforms by laying down his life for them, the policemen impose them by force. The same person cannot function both as a reformer and as policeman. Hence the rise of the State. Since, however, we are not with the State we can get but negligible help from it. We may accept it wherever we can do so without loss of self-respect.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati: C.W. 2706. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

127. LETTER TO SHALIGRAM VERMA

May 19, 1935

BHAI SHALIGRAM VERMA,

Whatever I said was wholly without prejudice. An argument was advanced and I reacted to it. There was no intention to cast any aspersion on anyone. I had already made it clear that the consultation I had was only informal. I had later on understood that it would not be proper to exclude the publishers from the office of the secretary. There is no reason for you to sever connection. I hope that you will give up the intention of resigning.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 8219. Also C.W. 5634

128. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA[1]

WARDHA,
May 19, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

The order for your ticket has been received but it is more difficult about the passport. Everyone has to apply for it in person. So you might have to go to Delhi. Possibly the form is available with the magistrate in Khurja. I shall be able to write, if at all it should be necessary, after you have sent in your application. A visa from the

[1] This was written at 3 a.m.; *vide* "Letter to H. L. Sharma", 20-5-1935

American Consul at Calcutta will be required after the receipt of the passport. I expect to be able to obtain it for you. Now it is up to you to arrange for the passport.

The enclosed letters are to be returned. I leave tomorrow for Borsad, returning on June 2. My address from the 23rd to the 31st will be: Borsad, *via* Anand, B. B. & C. I. Rly.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, pp. 160-1

129. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

May 20, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I have not been able to write you during the past five days. Guests have absorbed all my time.

Charlie's wire has just arrived. Not one of us had realized till I got your letter what a miraculous escape you had. You are destined to render greater service than you have already rendered. That to me is the reasonable meaning in God having kept you whole in spite of what looked so like a fatal accident. Let the accident make us all careful of every moment He spares us.

I am having slivers and note-paper made for you. They will be sent to you in due course.

I suppose you have known Puri for a long time. If you have found him trustworthy, he should be of great help to you. What is he doing there?

Does Shummy know the fruit-tree called *falsa*? The fruit is a berry, the size of a pea. Can he get for me the analysis of the pulp and the seed? What is its botanical name? I am trying to discover the food values of all these easily obtainable fruits and leaves. They seem to me to have immense possibilities. I would like Shummy to specialize in this branch of the work. He has access to specialists which few persons have.

Love to you three.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3534. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6343

130. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

May 20, 1935

CHI. NARAHARI,

I got your letter. I have already written[1] to you and given you complete freedom whether or not to give a cow to Ramjibhai. Follow your own inclination in the matter. I attach no importance to my wish. Where is the sense in my expressing a wish when it is you who are doing the work?

You may sell to Parnerkar[2] as many of the cattle as you think necessary. In other words, you have complete freedom in this matter. I assume that you will inform me of whatever you do.

How Vanu's[3] illness is being prolonged? I have to reach Borsad on the 23rd. And what a bother also that you have to go to Broach for Mani's[4] molar?

Blessing from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9079

131. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

May 20, 1935

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I can't stop thinking about you. Kaka is here at present. I will leave everything to him and bring along Mahadev with me. What would be the use of sending him later, I kept asking myself, when you needed him just now? I, therefore, told Kaka and he agreed to shoulder the burden.

We will discuss other things when we meet or after we reach Borsad. On Wednesday perhaps people will not leave us any free time for a talk.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: *Sardar Vallabhbhaine*, p. 169

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narahari D. Parikh", 9-5-1935
[2] Yashvant Mahadev Parnerkar
[3] Vanamala Parikh, daughter of the addressee
[4] Manibehn Parikh, the addressee's wife

132. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

May 20, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM,

The sooner father goes to a hill-station the better. Only the doctor can decide how long he should stay there. Let us all pray that he will get well soon.

It is good that Krishnaswami's marriage has been fixed. Let us hope that this alliance will bring happiness to both.

I still have the almonds. I am leaving tomorrow. I shall return on 2nd June.

The letters should be addressed: Borsad, *via* Anand, B.B. & C.I. Rly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

133. LETTER TO SAMIRMAL

May 20, 1935

BHAI SAMIRMAL,

You can both come after the 10th June having first informed me. I have not a single room to spare. People have to sleep in the verandah. Manual labour is the daily routine. If you do come you should bring with you, apart from the bedding, a *thali, a lota,* a bowl, a towel and so forth. No useless possessions should be brought. A box is superfluous.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1291

134. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

May 20, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

The accompanying letter[1] was written at 3 a.m. and yours arrived in the afternoon. The same mail brought the news that you

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H. L. Sharma", 20-5-1935

had demanded Rs. 5,000 for giving evidence[1]. I gave no weight to it. And then I read your letter which contained quite a different account of the same affair. Why are you so disheartened? How was the judge disappointed? Why should you leave Khurja? What does it matter if people indulge in wild talk? . . . .[2] I shall certainly print something if you fully explain about the joint policy, I do not understand as yet. You are well aware of my opposition to insurance. But what is the particular significance of joint insurance? There are often enough cases of poisoning among people insured. I do not see anything special about joint insurance.

Where do you have the boils? Mud treatemnt may be given up if it does not bring prompt relief.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Nothing should be done rashly.

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, p. 162

135. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

May 20, 1935

CHI. SUMANGAL,

I have your letter. I know what value to place on the sentiments it contains. I know how permanent they are. Remain quiet for a couple of months. Improve your health. Eat sparingly. Find pleasure in what is good. If what pleases is not good, give it up. Do not worry about the future. Take good care of the present.

This covers everything. I shall be at Borsad from the 23rd to the 31st. Then Wardha.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] In a case involving an insurance claim

[2] As in the source

136. INTERVIEW TO A CHRISTIAN STUDENT[1]

[On or before *May 21, 1935*][2]

GANDHIJI: Why, service which has not the slightest touch of self in it is itself the highest religion.

[STUDENT:] But one must be devoted to someone?

Yes, to Truth. I am devoted to none but Truth and I owe no discipline to anybody but Truth.

But how is one to get inspiration from this general idea?

That means to say that you want a God who has form. Truth is too impersonal for you. Well, idolatry is embedded in human nature. But you may if you like worship God as Truth, if not Truth as God. God is Truth, but God is many other things also. That is why I prefer to say Truth is God. But you need not go into what may sound like mystic lore; you may simply worship what you find to be the Truth, for Truth is known relatively. Only remember that Truth is not one of the many qualities that we name. It is the living embodiment of God, it is the only Life, and I identify Truth with fullest life, and that is how it becomes a concrete thing, for God is His whole Creation, the whole Existence, and service of all that exists. Truth is service of God.

But how should we Christian students go to the villagers? They might shun us because we are Christians.

You will tell them: 'We are Christians, but don't be alarmed, even as we are not alarmed because you are Hindus. We have no designs on you, as we know that you have no designs on us. We want you to be better Hindus, even as by reasons of our contact with you we know that we will better Chrisitains.' That is the way of approach. It is idle to talk of winning souls for God. Is God so helpless that He cannot win souls for Himself? Everyone's religion is a personal matter with himself. I cannot preach Hinduism, I can but practise it.

Harijan, 25-5-1935

[1] This is extracted from "Weekly Letter" by Mahadev Desai, who had explained: "A Christian student, who is now with us studying things and preparing to qualify himself for village work, asked Gandhiji whether there could be any service without religion."

[2] Gandhiji left Wardha on May 21, 1935 for Bombay, *en route* to Borsad.

137. TALK WITH JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

[On or before] *May* [*21*,][1] *1935*

This is Jawaharlal Nehru all over. He means nothing. He did not invite [a] discussion on my view of statue of Westminster. But his moods we know and must learn to tolerate cheerfully.

I have written to Anand. He is the author of his own grief. The best way to bring his father round is to forget him. It is also the best way to soothe and serve him. He must also firmly tell his mother that she must not grieve over the separation. She may not listen to him but if after having given her that advice, she does persist in nursing her grief, Anand should not worry. As to Vidya, I do not believe in prolonging the existence of the body at any cost or without purpose. A lingering death is worse than a quick death brought about by disregarding or refusing the highly artifical aids that the so-called science has provided. I have written in that strain to Anand. Perhaps you too will be shocked over this last view on preservation of the body. But is the view I have held and enforced for years. I enforced it in Mira's and Nanavati's cases when both bodies were said to be perishing.

Form a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

138. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

WARDHA,
May 21, 1935

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

You must have received the permission regarding wells. Wait and see what happens now. The fruits of patience are sweet. I had heard long ago that you did not get the permission. I had even forgotten about the matter. May it not be that God will throw me to that side one day so that we might meet?

I am not writing to Bhai Nanji[2] anything just now. I will see later if it becomes necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5531

[1] *Vide* footnote 2"Interview to A Christian Student", 21-5-1935
[2] Nanji Kalidas Mehta of Porbandar

139. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May 21, 1935

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

May all your noble intentions fructify. I have owned you long since but only you or God knows how long you will continue thus.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4271

140. DISCUSSION WITH PIERRE CERESOLE[1]

[*May 21, 1935*]

PIERRE CERESOLE: Could one lay down a rule of life for the wealthy?[2] That is to say, could one define how much belongs to the rich and how much does not belong to them?

GANDHIJI: Yes. Let the rich man take 5 per cent, or 10 per cent, or 15 per cent.

But not 85 per cent?

Ah! I was thinking of going up to 25 per cent! but not even an exploiter must think of taking 85 per cent!

That is where I disagree with the communist.[3] With me the ultimatetest is non-violence. We have always to remember that even we were one day in the same position as the wealthy man. It has not been an easy process with us and as we bore with ourselves, even so should we bear with others. Besides, I have no right to assume that I am right and he is wrong. I have to wait until I convert him to my point of view. In the meanwhile if he says, 'I am prepared to keep for myself 25 per cent and to give 75 percent to charities', I close with the offer. For I know that 75 per cent voluntarily given is better than 100 per cent surrendered at the point of the bayonet, and by thus being

[1] This is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"; Desai had explained that the discussion took place in the train on way to Bombay. Ceresole was to return to Europe on May 23.

[2] Mahadev Desai had explained that "Pierre was reading a book in which the communist author had suggested that Gandhiji's sympathy for the poor was only 'a cover for his real sympathy for the rich'."

[3] Mahadev Desai had explained: "Ceresole's tangible difficulty was how long one should wait in order to carry conviction to the rich man."

satisfied with 75 per cent I render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's. Non-violence must be the common factor between us.

You may argue that a man who surrenders by compulsion today will voluntarily accept the position tomorrow. That, to my mind, is a remote possiblility on which I should not care to build much. What is certain is that if I use violence today, I shall be doubtless faced with greater violence. With non-violence as the rule, life will no doubt be a series of compromises. But it is better than an endless series of clashes.

How would you in a word describe the rich man's legitimate position?

That of a trustee. I know a number of friends who earn and spend for the poor and who do not regard themselves as anything but trustees of their wealth.

I too have a number of friends wealthy and poor. I do not possess wealth but accept money from my wealthy friends. How can I justify myself.

You will accept nothing for yourself personally. That is to say, you will not accept a cheque to go to Switzerland for a change but you will accept a lakh of rupees for wells for Harijans or for schools and hospitals for them. All self has got to be eliminated and the problem is simplified.

But what about my personal expense?

You have to act on the principle that a labourer is worthy of his hire. You must not hesitate to accept your minimum wage. Every one of us is doing the same thing. Bhansali's wage is just wheat flour and *neem* leaves. We cannot all be Bhansalis, but we can try to approximate to that life. Thus I will be satisfied with having my livelihood, but I must not ask a rich man to accommodate my son. My only concern is to keep my body and soul together so long as I serve the community.

But so long as I draw that allowance from him, is it not my duty to remind him continually of the unenviableness of his position and to tell him that he must cease to be owner of all that he does not need for his bare living?

Oh yes, that is your duty.

But there are wealthy and wealthy. There are some who may have made their pile from alcoholic traffic.

Yes, you will certainly draw a line. But whilst you will not accept money from a brewer, I do not know what will happen if you have made an appeal for funds. Will you tell the people that only those who have justly earned their money will pay? I would rather withdraw the appeal than expect any money on those terms. Who is to decide whether one is just or otherwise? And justice too is a relative term. If we will but ask ourselves, we will find that we have not been just all our

lives. the *Gita* says in effect that everyone is tarred with the same brush; so rather than judge others, live in the world untouched or unaffected by it. Elimination of self is the secret.

Harijan, 1-6-1935

141. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

[*May 22, 1935*][1]

GANDHIJI: That is quite right.[2] Now, have you got your questions ready? What is it you want me to tell?

REPRESENTATIVE: First and foremost I would like you to tell me something about the All-India Village Industries Association. What work has it been doing since it was started ten months ago?

G. The work of the Village Industries Association is going on steadily. There is nothing heroic to report. But not a moment is being wasted in the pursuit of the programme chalked out at the commencement. Though we are having all the difficulties that were anticipated and others which were not anticipated, I still swear by the original programme. I believe that on this earth there is no better instrument of progress than human flesh, and you cannot expect brilliant results if that flesh is weak, and is daily getting weaker, because of interior and exterior defects. We are, therefore, tackling the question of food and that of sanitation. And since charity begins at home, we are trying to reproduce at the centre conditions that we would like to see in use in every village of India.

Side by side with that we have selected a village nearest the centre for experiment. I would like the Press to realize the deep significance of the movement and give its intelligent support. By intelligent support I mean that important newspapers should have on their staff specialists who would regularly contribute instructive articles which the reader can profit by. You will see that in the programme which to the superficial observer appears dry, but in reality is highly interesting, there is no room for difference of opinion. all parties and persons must recognize the primary necessity of India's millions getting nourishing food or a "balanced diet", as Dr. Tilak calls it, and healthy surroundings. I think that both these things are possible in spite of our corroding poverty.

[1] According to the reporter, the interview took place in Calcutta Mail, which was nearing Bombay early in the morning.

[2] The source had reported: "Before the interview commenced, the representative told Gandhiji that he had been instructed not to put him any questions about politics."

When informed that though it had been ten months since the Association was started little was known about the work done on behalf of the Association excepting, possibly, about the work at Wardha and Panvel, Gandhiji said that silent work was being done all over the country. The workers were finding out the depths to which the work could be carried on. There was nothing much to report in the papers, day to day or week to week. As workers of the right stamp were being found, the different questions were being tackled.

Asked whether it would not be necessary for him to undertake an all India tour in the near future, with a view to widen the scope and work of the Association, Gandhiji said that he did not think that it was necessary just yet. He added:

Undertaking an all-India tour just now would be for tackling the extent instead of the depth. There was no doubt that such a tour would bring money, and I will be giving superficial instructions about the work, that too without knowing anything of the difficulties that face village workers.

Just now I am endeavouring to concentrate at the centre and the neighbouring village to give myself and co-workers first-hand instructions. Other workers in other centres are also carrying on work likewise. When we have taken the preliminary training then I will go on an all-India tour, if necessary. Remember this is a question of a kind of adult education on a mass scale. It cannot be given without previous preparation. I have said all that I have to say about the All-India Village Industries Association. That is all.

Our representative told Gandhiji that he would ask him one or two brief questions and not disturb him after that. Gandhiji was reminded about Dr. Tagore's message to him regarding village arts and the A.I.V.I.A. in which the Poet had said that the Central Museum that is to be started by the Association should not be restricted only to industries. The Poet had said: ". . . the economic life of a nation is not such an isolated fact as Mahatmaji imagines, and today, side by side with economic poverty we are faced with cultural poverty which puts us to shame—shame that is in no way lessened when we consider what we once were. Our art treasures are today found in museums outside India, and our village artists are dying out . . . Please tell Mahatmaji that art is not a luxury of the well-to-do. The poor man needs it as much and employs it as much in his cottage building, his pots, his floor-decorations, etc. If Mahatmaji's men go round collecting specimens of village industries, why can they not look for and collect specimens of various indigenous arts spread all over our land and waiting to be re-cherished. . ." Gandhiji said:

Every message coming from Dr. Tagore must receive respectful attention from me. I quite believe that we have got to take care of village arts and by his assistance we shall not neglect the arts. He would not let us neglect, even if we forgot our duties. He had lent the assistance of Sjt. Surendranath Kar who has already paid a preliminary visit and I have discussed the whole thing with

Deenabandhu C.F. Andrews who will in turn discuss with Gurudev.[1]

Gandhiji was asked if he wanted Hindustani, the *Lingua Franca* of India, to be written both in Devanagari and Urdu scripts. Gandhiji replied:

Hindustani will naturally be written by the vast masses in Devanagari, but Mussalmans will for a long time to come—or, it may be for all time—insist on writing in Urdu script. Therefore, in the definition we have said that Hindustani is the language spoken by the people in the North and written either in Devanagari or Urdu script. My hope, however, is that when religious differences have sunk and religious unity is accentuated, and friendship of the heart established between Hindus and Mussalmans, Devanagari, as the most scientific script of all the scripts of the world, will receive its due, that is, universal recognition in India.

At this stage, Sjt. Mahadev Desai informed our representative that his time was up, and he should leave the seat he was occupying and Gandhiji observed that he would not have enough time to talk to his son if further questions were asked. The *Chronicle* representative said that he would leave his seat immediately after he had got a reply for his last and only question that he would put, adding:

"I know it is beyond the scope of my instructions to ask this question as it is definitely political." Gandhiji said:

Go ahead.

[R.] It was stated by Sjt. Bhulabhai Desai the other day that everyone should try to get back Gandhiji into the congress and the politics. When are you coming back to the Congress? Gandhiji laughed and said:

If you have direct access to God, ask him when I am coming back to the Congress. I am saying this because I do not know it myself.[2]

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-5-1935

[1] Here the source had reported: "By the time Gandhiji gave the above reply, the train had reached Kalyan and Ramdas Gandhi and others got into the compartment. . . ."

[2] The reporter had concluded: "After the above question, our representative was asked to take his leave but before leaving his seat Gandhiji asked him to collect his 'commission' from the 'torchers', meaning the photographers! A certain amount (less than a rupee) was collected and handed over to Gandhiji."

142. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

BOMBAY,
May 22, 1935

You will wonder why I consented to have a prayer meeting in Bombay, when even the existence of God is with many a matter of doubt. There are others who say: 'If God is seated in the heart of everyone, who shall pray to whom, who shall invoke whom?' I am not here to solve these intellectual puzzles. I can only say that ever since my childhood prayer has been my solace and my strength.

I am told that there is despair and depression everywhere, that there is disappointment all round as the gateway to jail is closed. People, I am told, do not know what to do. I do not know why, when there is the whole of the constructive programme of work to do. When the programme of jail-going was on, there was room for hypocrisy, compulsion, violence. he present constructive programme leaves no room for these. And it leaves no room for disappointment and despair. For them there is the name of God. It is God's covenant that whoever goes to Him in weakness and helplessness, him He will make strong. 'When I am weak, then I am strong.' As the poet Surdas has sung, Rama is the strength of the weak. This strength is not to be obtained by taking up arms or by similar means. It is to be had by throwing oneself on His name. Rama is but a synonym of God. You may say God or Allah or whatever other name you like, but the moment you trust naught but Him, you are strong, all disappointment disappears. The hymn alludes to the story of the Lord of elephants who was in the jaws of a crocodile and who had been all but drowned in water. There was only the tip of his trunk left above water when he invoked God's name and he was saved. No doubt it is an allegory. But it conceals a truth. Over and over again in my life I have found it. Even in darkest despair, when there seems no helper and no comfort in the wide wide world, His name inspires us with strength and puts all doubts and despair to flight. The sky may be overcast today with clouds, but a fervent prayer to Him is enough to dispel them. It is because of prayer that I have known no disappointment. Though I have retired from the Congress, I have not closed my eyes or stopped my ears. I know all that is happening about me, and if anyone must give way to despair, it should be I. But I have known no despair. Why

[1] This is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The meeting was held in the Congress House compound. Thousands of men and women were found seated on house-tops, balconies and terraces.

then should you give way to it? Let us pray that He may cleanse our hearts of pettinesses, meannesses and deceit, and He will surely answer our prayers. Many I know have always turned to that unfailing source of strength.

Swaraj is our birthright. No one can deprive us of it, unless we forfeit it ourselves. We have forfeited it and we have to win it back. Swaraj does not depend on jail-going. If it did, there are thousands of prisoners in jail today. It depends on everyone doing his or her own task. That task has been shown to you. Go to the villages, identify yourselves with villagers, befriend the untouchables, make Hindu-Muslim unity a concrete fact. Do not despair although there may be Hindu-Muslim riots in the country, but go ahead with the work before you and be sure that He will pull you through.

Harijan, 1-6-1935; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 23-5-1935

143. LETTER TO MIRABEHN[1]

BORSAD,
May [*23*][2], *1935*

CHI. MIRA,

We arrived here [at] 5.45. It is now 8.20 a.m. The weather is quite cool. A gentle wind is blowing. Anandi[3] and Bal[4] joined us at Bombay. So we are five. Bal has taken charge of me. There are many old faces here ready to anticipate my wants. So you need have no anxiety on my behalf. I am quite clear in my mind that it was well not to take you with me. But this is no precedent for the future. And in any case yours is to be the final voice.

I hope you are getting all you need in the shape of fruit. You must not hesitate to order what you want.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6302. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9768

[1] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, Mirabehn explains: "On my return from Europe, I joined Bapu at Wardha Ashram. Not long after, Bapu took up residence at Maganwadi, where the Village Industries Association was then taking root. I had remained on there when Bapu wrote the . . . letter . . ."

[2] The source has "22" which is obviously a slip. Gandhiji reached Borsad on this date.

[3] Anandi Asar

[4] Bal Kalelkar

144. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 23, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter today. I have sent you a wire asking you to send Keshu. I do not remember your having asked for my permission.

I did not at all like Harilal's idea about watches.[1] Dissuade him. If he goes in for it in spite of that, let him.

Mathew has grown impatient about coming. The Ashram does not owe him anything. If you feel inclined, we may send him railway fare for coming; I don't. If he is very eager to come, he will, I am writing to him and informing him that if he does not come in a few days, time he will not be taken up.

Titus has not gone on leave. He has left altogether. He was paid railway fare for the journey. I had agreed to keep him at Wardha, but he did not seem very eager. However, he will reply from Travancore. I have refused to give him a note of recommendation on anybody else.

For the present draw the amount for Tharparkar from the Ashram account. Afterwards, if necessary, I will pay it from some other account.

In my view Chimanlal[2] is spending too much. But since we have tolerated similar expenditure by other, we should tolerate it in his case too. To a certain extent the desire to recover and to live on clings in all of us. Each one fixes his own limit of expenditure. Chimanlal is satisfied merely with staying in Veraval and having Talwalkar's[3] injection. But we have spent over others much more than that. I therefore, do not feel like imposing excessive restrictions on senior workers. We should be satisfied with whatever self-restraint he exercises. Do you have anything else to suggest in this matter?

I see that we shall not get interest.

It seems that giving money to Gajanan was a mistake. He had even given up study. The payment to Dhiru also should stop. He will have a copy of the agreement he gave in writing. It may be with Chhaganlal. Look into the matter.

Was my suggestion to Lilavati all right?

[1] Harilal Gandhi wanted to start business in watches; *vide* "Letter to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi", 24-5-1935

[2] Chimanlal N. Shah, a senior inmate of the Ashram

[3] Dr. Talwalkar of Ahmedabad

I am writing separately to f ather[1].

Prema came and saw me. She handed over some of her jewellery. We couldn't have any talk. If you have preserved her last two letters, send them to Gomati to read. (She is at Wardha).

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8445. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

145. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

May 23, 1935

RESPECTED BROTHER,

Chi. Narandas informs me that, though you have read and reflected a great deal, all that seems to be of little help now and your mind has become weak. I am not surprised, for this happens to everybody. I must say, however, that I have cherishd a different hope about you. For one whose mind has turned Godward, there is no old age. The body becomes weak but in that it but follows its law. The mind need not become weak. It may go on rising till at last it merges in God. Isn't this the meaning of the verse:

This is the state, O Partha, of the man who rests in Brahman; having attained to it,

he is not deluded. He who abides in this state even at the hour of death passes into oneness with Brahman.[2]

Isn't the true *brahmi* state that which endures up to the end? What should a mind that has become weak do to attain such a state? The only reply is, constant repetition of the name. I, therefore, pray that you should make a firm resolution and, withdrawing your mind from everything, merely go on repeating, after taking the Lord's name, the following verse:

I desire neither earthly kingdom nor paradise no, not even release from birth and death . I desire only release of the afflicted from misery.[3]

If you cannot do this, repetition of the name will suffice. If you fill your mind completely with strength and light, you will cease

[1] Khushalchand Gandhi; *vide* the following item.

[2] *Bhagavad Gita,* II. 72.

[3] *Ashram Bhajanavali,* verse 10; *vide*, "Letter to Jayaprakash Narayan", 11-12-1930

feeling old and feel young instead. If you still feel attachment to any being or object, I entreat you to shed it completely.

Humblest respects from
MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II.

146. LETTER TO MADALASA BAJAJ

May 23, 1935

CHI. MADALASA,

It does not matter if your letters are long. I must know about everything. Tell Janakibehn[1] that she should not ride. If she has a fall, she will take time to recover. In your case, there is not the same fear. And is it not a common truth that 'one who rides may also fall'?

We must find a remedy for your boils. Do start eating salt, although I do not think that has anything to do with the boils. Try *neem* leaves. I am also experimenting with them. Chew half a tola of leaves twice a day after meals. That will improve your appetite and purify your blood. Let me know about the result.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 317

147. LETTER TO KANTI AND KANU GANDHI

May 23, 1935

CHI. KANTI AND KANU,

Please understand that I was very eager to take you with me but I had to restrain my desire. I have no doubt that it is for the best. But there is no doubt, either, that you are wanting to accompany me. I hope everything is going on all right. Take as much interest in prayers as you can. Kanu must learn the chapters of the *Gita* by heart.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7297. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] Addressee's mother

148. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

May 23, 1935

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I was distressed to see you so upset on the 21st. But it was well that I learnt the extent of your weakness. You should now be calm in mind and understand yourself. Talk it over with Kishorelal and Kakasaheb.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1877

149. LETTER TO RAJKISHORI TYAGI

May 23, 1935

CHI. RAJKISHORI[1],

I was sorry I did not take you with me. But your good lay in my keeping you there. However, you will have opportunities of travelling with me in future. I hope you are happy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6636. Also C.W. 4284

150. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 23, 1935

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I expect that you are in good spirits and that everything is progressing satisfactorily. Your weight must be increasing. You are not to worry about anything.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 326.

[1] Daughter-in-law of Chand Tyagi

151. SPEECHES AT BORSAD VILLAGE[1]

[On or after *May 23, 1935*][2]

Rats and fleas spread the infection and experts say that these have got to be exterminated. But rats and fleas are messengers of God. God speaks to us through them. In villages where Nature has blessed you with the finest climate and the healthiest soil, as I can see with my own eyes, you have so infringed Nature's rules that plague seems to have a knack of appearing again and again if you do not make your houses and surroundings inhospitable to them. A man like me wedded to non-violence would say rats and fleas have as much right to live as I, and there is no reason why I should not exterminate myself rather than that I exterminate them. But I cannot reach that pitch of non-violence in this lifetime, may be in several lifetimes, nor perhaps can you. But you certainly can produce conditions where rats and fleas can never flourish. I want you to create those conditions. I want you to make the cleaning and scavenging campaign of these volunteers a permanent affair, and I want you to break up your floors, break up rat-nests and rat-burrows, and construct floors where rats cannot make their homes.[3]

A plague-infected man is worse than a plague-infected rat or fleas and unless you make your bodies proofs against infection you cannot abolish these epidemics. Nature has endowed us with enough capacity for the resistance of disease. It is we who, careless of her laws, have ruined that capacity. We have to regain it by healthy and hygienic ways of living and eating.

Harijan, 8-6-1935

[1] This is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". Without mentioning either the date or the place of the meeting or meetings, Mahadev Desai had merely reported that "Gandhiji addressed about ten meetings in these villages and in the course of his speeches asked the people not to go to sleep over the flight of the enemy but to take permanent measures for banishing him."

[2] Gandhiji reached Borsad on May 23.

[3] What follows was reported by Mahadev Desai as said by Gandhiji "in one of his speeches". Mahadev Desai had explained: "During his eight days' stay at Borsad, Gandhiji got Dr. Bhaskar to issue a series of leaflets on the elements of rat-proofing of houses and on the disease-proofing of human bodies."

152. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

May 24, 1935

CHI. MARY,

I had a talk about you with Khurshed. Her whole house will be practically vacated. If therefore you would rather go to Miraj, do by all means go and that as early as you can. Of course there is no difficulty about your stay elsewhere in Bombay if you go simply for examination. You will do whatever is best for your health.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6042. Also C.W. 3371. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

153. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

WARDHA,[1]
May 24, 1935

MY DEAR AGATHA,

Whilst C. F. A. is here I need not write at all. But I must refer to your letter enclosing Carl Heath's letter to *Manchester Guardian.* The letter evokes no response because it takes no note of the truth as it is known here. The king there is, or may be, above party strife. The King-Emperor is here identified with the services. He is the ruler through his Viceroy. The India Office laughs to see the paragraph which is so hopelessly out of touch with the reality. And why should the Government release prisoners who bear no affection either towards the Emperor as such or his Empire? I have never appreciated the agitation for the release of political prisoners. I have understood the Government's stubborn refusal. It is consistent. It is wrong only if the whole system is admitted to be wrong. O! for an ounce of facts.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1491

[1] Permanent address

154. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

May 24, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

So you were not free from the effect of the accident even at the time you wrote, i.e., the 20th instant. I hope you are now completely free.

I am glad you have established touch with the villagers. You should learn their domestic condition and know them as if they were members of the family. Their morals need not worry us just now for they know no better. They have not a guilty conscience. If therefore we establish contact with them it becomes easy and effective to ask them to give up some of their habits.

Heat is there but none too oppressive.

I am not writing to Charlie separately.

Love to you all there.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3535. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6344

155. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 24, 1935

CHI. MIRA,

I had put in an *ateran*[1] myself. So there was no difficulty. There are plenty of winders here and slivers. Of foot-wipers too there is no dearth. So far as food is concerned, Bal goes and gets the goat milked and mangoes are plentiful. *Neem* trees are everywhere. So you need have no anxiety on my score.

I am glad you are having Raghavayya treated. It is good too that you are helping in the kitchen.

Kamala was quite well and cheerful.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6303. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9769.

[1] A wooden winder

156. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

May 24, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letter. Do not let the Indore matter weight on your mind. Do please go there after you come down.

You must be getting news about Gangadevi.

Everything is all right at Borsad.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2970

157. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

May 24, 1935

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I came to Borsad yesterday in response to Sardar's wish. Ba and Mahadev have accompanied me. I will leave on the 31st to return to Wardha. Ba will most probably stay on in this part for about a month.

I was sorry to hear that your sugarcane crop had dried up. But that is the common lot of all farmers. In taking up farming one must make due allowance for such contingencies. Weren't golden crops worth crores ruined here this year because of frost?

Ba may feel upset for a while, but you should always give all news, good or bad, from that side. Only then can I guide you whenever necessary.

I liked your suggestion about Ramdas. I am sending your letter to him. He will not go there, but he can certainly take up the agency, to the profit of you both. I will advise him to do so.

Harilal is at present busy looking for a new wife. He wants to start business in watches.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

. . .[1] has not returned a pie of the money that he borrowed from Jamnalal. He swallowed the amount sent by Medh[2]. You must, therefore, send one pound every month.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4838

[1] The name has been omitted.

[2] Surendra Medh

158. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

May 24, 1935

CHI. SHNTIKUMAR,

I got your letter. May you live long and render great services—that is ever my hope and my blessing.

I hope Sumati[1] is keeping good health.

My *pranams* to Mother.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4800. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarjee.

159. LETTER TO AVADHESH DUTT AVASTHI

May 24, 1935

CHI. AVADHESH,

Service to all living beings may be said to be the object of human life.

2. The observance of the eleven vows and avoidance of their opposites is essential.

3. Garuda, indeed, spoke in anger; but it does not mean that we, too may get angry.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3215.

[1] Addressee's wife

160. DRAFT TELEGRAM TO SUPERINTENDENT, WANLESS SANATORIUM

[*After May 24, 1935*][1]

SUPERINTENDENT
WANLESS SANATORIUM
MIRAJ

MISS BARR PREVENTED START YESTERDAY OWING FEVER. REACHING THERE SATURDAY MORNING.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal.

161. WANTED ONE LAC RUPEES

The Central Board of the Harijan Sevak Sangh has already built many wells out of the fund that was placed at its disposal by Sheth Jugalkishore Birla. That fund is exhausted and there is still a need for buiding wells for Harijans. The orthodox opposition to the use by Harijans of common wells still continues in many places, and Harijans are obliged either to drink water out of cattle troughs or pay for water which people may for a consideration pour into their pots. Every additional well built is therefore undoubtedly a great comfort to Harijans, but it is also an increase in the wealth of the country. The Central Board of the Harijan Sevak Sangh has resolved to make an appeal for one lac of rupees for the purpose. Figures are being prepared for presentation to the public showing the wants of the different provinces. One lac is nothing in comparison to the need. But the Sangh has not the resources to spend large sums on well-construction. It is slow work requiring special skill. Not everyone can construct a well. And the work being scattered makes it very difficult to provide effective supervision. The policy of the Board is not to ask for what it cannot spend well and give a good account of to the public. I hope the modest appeal will receive prompt and adequate response.

Harijan, 25-5-1935

[1] From the reference to Mary Barr to whom Gandhiji had written on May 24; *vide* "Letter to F. Mary Barr", 24-5-1935.

162. LETTER TO RAJARAM R. BHOLE

AS AT WARDHA,
May 25, 1935

DEAR RAJARAM,

It is most difficult to guide you. My own general advice to all has been to stop all college education as soon as they have had in their own opinion enough of it and enter business. Those who have love of education truly begin it after the college course. I would like you to succeed as an honest, able businessman who would earn not for himself but for all. And in every case you must consider your body.

Yours,
BAPU

From the original: R. R. Bhole Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

163. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

May 25, 1935

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I had your very graphic letter. Take proper care of your health. Do not forget Vadaj.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 387. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

164. LETTER TO VINAYAKPRASAD PANDYA

May 25, 1935

BHAI SHRI VINAYAK,

Except for persuasion I see no way of making your brother-in-law give up tea and smoking. If the love of you all doesn't melt him, you should put up with his habits.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1367

165. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA

[AS AT] WARDHA,
May 25, 1935

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

Why did father undertake a fast? What did he do during the fast? Did he suffer much? What does he eat now? How was the fast concluded? Write to me all the details after Satisbabu's[1] arrival. What does Vaidyanath do? What is the number of girls now? We should try to grow *devakapas*.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI ANNAPURNA KUMARI
C/O SHRI GOPABANDHU CHOWDHARY
P.O. BARI, DISTRICT CUTTACK

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2778

166. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

BORSAD,
May 26, 1935

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

Your letter was put into my hands at 3.30 a.m., and after reading it I have immediately sat down to reply to it. Shedding tears will not help us to remove the hardships of Savli's women. It can be proved that the condition of the Harijan women of Savli is not as bad as you believe it to be. Your imagination can carry you too far. That faculty needs to be kept under control. This world is a sea of misery. If we keep thinking of it only we would get drowned in it. We should remember that God, who created this world and who rules it is just and, therefore, the sufferings that we imagine do not exist and that, on the balance, happiness reigns, that is, truth alone triumphs. Knowing this, we should keep our minds light. That will also help us in removing the sufferings. If, on the contrary, we magnify the sufferings, we would sink into *moha*[2] and become incapable of relieving them.

[1] Satis Chandra Das Gupta
[2] Ignorant attachment

I will certainly inquire regarding Salvi. But I will say one thing. It is surely a matter of satisfaction that whereas before the women earned nothing, through spinning they earn something now, however little it may be. They do have other income. A woman is but one member of a family. There are others, too, who earn. There are countless women in this country much poorer than they. Instead of shedding tears over their poverty, we would steel our hearts while thinking about it and devise measures to eradicate it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 388. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

167. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

[AS AT] WARDHA,
May 26, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I have now got your yarn. It is not bad. You should now learn to make properly-twisted strands. If you do not, the yarn becomes weak. I see you have sent a lot of razor blades, some of which are quite new. They make up for the postage spent on the yarn. Now you should collect a fair quantity before you send a parcel.

Did you get the packet of envelopes and note-paper? The expert has [not] yet commenced paper-making. I put him on to making note-paper, etc., out of the stock brought from Indore. When he does make paper you shall know.

Yes, I began about the market in Simla. I suggested your personally visiting it and studying the local vegetables and fruit and their quality from the health point of view and at the market knowing the poor who come from distant hills to sell their produce. You can also sell paper, khaddar and the like among those who will congregate in Simla.

I hope you have both already felt the effect of the mountain air.

Andrews should be here during the week.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3536. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6345.

168. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

May 26, 1935

MY DEAR MALKANI,

Your letter of 23rd April which Hariji[1] seems to have resented is none too courteous. It is professorial not secretarial (if there is such an adjective). A secretary is nothing if he is not pleasant even when he is saying unpleasant things which he has to say far more often than a professor.

I have written to Bapa to throw cold water on the fire lit by Hariji. I am also writing. And you may write a polite letter apologizing for any unconsciously discourteous language into using which you might have been betrayed.

Yours,
BAPU

[PS.]

Have you been sending the list of Pani Fund[2] Donations?

From a photostat: G.N. 953

169. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 26, 1935

CHI. MIRA,

I am glad you are guiding Ganga Devi. She must not do any strenuous work just yet. I hope Raghavayya is better now. Sindi cleaning must not be omitted even for a day.[3] But at the same time you must have that silent walk up to the hill.

Sardar has arranged a very light programme for me.

Love

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6304. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9770.

[1] H.N. Kunzru

[2] J. K. Pani Fund was started by the Harijan Sevak Sangh in June, 1933 for the improvement of water supply in Harijan colonies.

[3] Mirabehn explains: "The inhabitants of this village . . . used the sides of the roads . . . for easing themselves. I happened to mention this matter to Bapu and he immediately said: 'It is our duty to teach these people sanitation and if they won't listen . . . we should clean up . . . .' The villagers proved deaf . . . . so Bapu told me to take bucket and shovel, and any volunteers . . . and daily go to clean . . . ."

170. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

May 26, 1935

CHI. KANTI,

Your explanation is correct. I understand only this, that you have on the whole seen your good in staying with me. I don't think you are convinced that the way of life you have to follow in staying with me is true education. But I do believe that your decision has made you happy. I have no doubt at all that all will be well with you. I understand your programme. We shall think over it when I return there. If the ledger is completed, one job will be over. By all means take as much advantage of Kakasaheb's presence as you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7298. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

171. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

May 26, 1935

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. I don't like your falling ill. The disease must be cured. Kamala told me that you had gone to see her. It was also good that you went and stayed with Jayaprakash for some time. If, similarly, the marriage also is settled, all your problems will have been solved. See that you don't fall ill before that. Eat *neem* leaves. Take hip-baths and go out for regular walks. I will leave Borsad on the 31st and reach Wardha on June 2. My weight is 104. My present food is milk, *neem* leaves and mango juice. Tamarind is not available just now. In place of it, I take the juice of lemons. My health is good. Only Ba and Mahadev are with me. Bal and Anandi joined from Bombay. Most probably Ba will stay on for a month. There are many girls at present with Gangabehn[1] in Bochasan.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3449

[1] Gangabehn Vaidya

172. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

May 26, 1935

You couldn't come to see me nor could I go to see Kapil[1]. I read your letter to Mahadev. It was good to hear that Kapil was all right again.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 158

173. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 26, 1935

DEAR DAUGHTER,

Your letter. You did nothing wrong in coming to the station.[2] Why do you unnecessarily distress yourself? You did well in giving me all the news. Gangabehn[3], I hope, is cheerful. Rajkishori must have got my letter[4]. Do only as much as your health permits. I shall reach on the 2nd.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 327

174. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 27, 1935

CHI. MIRA,

I have your two fine descriptive letters. They show how much you need these solitary walks for self-expression. You must have them more frequently if not daily. I am writing against mail time. 2 lb. of milk, two *tolas neem*, a big bowlful local mango juice and lemons is my staple here. The weather here is undoubtedly much cooler than there. We are only 15 miles from the sea.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6305. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9771.

[1] Addressee's son

[2] The addressee had gone to the Wardha railway station to see Gandhiji off when he left for Bombay a few days earlier.

[3] Wife of Rameshwardas Poddar of Dhulia

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 23-5-1935

175. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

May 27, 1935

CHI. KANU,

I got your letter. I am glad that you are studying the *Gita* systematically. If you master the *Margopadeshika*[1] well, you will become proficient in grammar, and that will help you in learning the correct pronunciations and also aid your memory. If you use every minute well, you will learn a great deal. I hope you keep everything clean. What happened about the third quern that had arrived? What was done about cleaning the damaged parts? I hope the mangoes and other gifts which were received have also been entered in the register.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

176. LETTER TO VAIKUNTHLAL L. MEHTA

BORSAD,
May 27, 1935

BHAI VAI[KUNTH][2],

Bhai [Ma]thu[ra]das Vasanji informs me that as you are unable to sign the Harijan Sevak Sangh pledge, you wish to resign. Is this true? I didn't believe it. The pledge is only a symbol of our mental attitude. How can we dispense with it? How can we ask anybody else to take a pledge which you cannot take? I believe that Bhai Mathuradas [has not understood you]. Write [to me] and explain the correct position. The Bombay branch of the Sangh must be placed on a sound footing.

BAPU

[PS.]

I will leave Borsad on the 31st.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N.1362

[1] Bhandarkar's manual of Sanskrit grammar for beginners
[2] The original is mutilated.

177. LETTER TO V. N. ABHYANKAR

May 27, 1935

BHAI VISHNU NARAYAN ABHYANKAR,

I have read your letter carefully. I congratulate you on the faith and firmness which you have put in the khadi work. That the Praja Mandal should buy mill carpet rather than khadi carpet is as painful as it is amazing. We who have faith in khadi should not, however, give up our faith.

Yours
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 12761

178. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

May 27, 1935

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

If you do not see the fault, why should you be troubled? Even if a mahatma shows us our faults, we should neither be pained nor repent, so long as we do not see them for ourselves. I have not found you untruthful, only indiscreet. When you had to travel at public cost, there was no need to go. It is also debatable whether your coming from Delhi was in itself proper. The same is true about *rotis* and mangoes. All these things should not cause you distress. You should only try to understand and try to restrain yourself. More when we meet. I hope you have put to good use the 12 days that you got.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am returning your letter.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1878

179. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

May 27, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. I understand you have paid for the books for the present. I shall send you the money when the remaining books arrive. It is not necessary for you to pay for the books. Did the shop-

keeper charge the printed price or did he allow some discount? You may continue reading whatever books are available now. In the mean time, let us see how the plans about America progress. You can certainly come and learn at Wardha. All this will depend upon plans regarding America. The letter to Dr. Kellogg does not mean that your departure depends upon his reply. If the passport was ready, I would certainly send you away on the 31st without waiting for Kellogg's reply. The position about the passport is as I explained[1]. We cannot move a single step without your application.

I am at Borsad. I shall leave on the 31st and reach Wardha on the 2nd June.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

How is your boil? What about the court judgment?

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha,* between pp. 162 and 163.

180. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 27, 1935

DEAR DAUGHTER,

Though you forbade me to write I feel my letter will gladden you. I do have some leisure for writing. It is pleasing to learn that everything is proceeding smoothly there. I hope the Japanese monk is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 328

181. SPEECH AT BORSAD[2]

May 27, 1935

It is a shame that plague should have been endemic here for four years. Borsad proper has only a population of 13,000, and the taluka has a population of 1,44,000 to deal with. It should not be impossible to abolish plague both from the town and the taluka. But

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H. L. Sharma", 20-5-1935

[2] This is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter".

you cannot do so with only six scavengers for the whole of the town. Unless you convert yourselves into Bhangis, unless all of you become voluntary scavengers, plague must come gain, the Sardar's and his volunteers' efforts notwithstanding. In fact the voluntary relief work that has now come to an end adds considerably to your responsibility. Unless you follow up the work it will be wasted. I have in the past come to you to congratulate you on the pluck with, which you had fought during the civil disobedience movement and on your sufferings and sacrifice. But I have come to tell you today that it is not those who can fight the Government that can govern themselves, but those who can show themselves to be equal to calamities like this. Let me tell you that ever since I learnt the word '*swaraj*', I have been interesting myself in work of this kind. Ever since 1893 when my public life began my principal interest has been this kind of constructive work. The fight with the Government came at a very late stage in life. But it may be said to be an edifice built on the sure foundation of solid constructive work done through several years. I have obeyed and respected every municipal and civic law to the best of my ability, and even the Government that has often imprisoned me knows my capacity for obedience. I learnt scavenging for the first time in South Africa, and have ever been laying the greatest stress on the fact that it is work of this kind that qualifies one for swaraj. You will not say that after you have won swaraj you can go to sleep, unmindful of these problems. *Swaraj* is not absence of rule. You will have to tackle all these problems successfully even after you have won swaraj. Remember that the man who made the call for civil disobedience is making the call for work of this essential character. Even constructive work like production of khadi and revival of village industries cannot be done unless you have made your bodies and your homes proof against disease, and therefore this sanitation work is the very foundation of all constructive work.

Harijan, 8-6-1935; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 28-5-1935.

182. LETTER TO KANTI LAL GANDHI

BORSAD,
May 28, 1935

CHI. KANTI,

I got your entertaining letter. Ravishankar[1] comes and sees me regularly. If the rule he has taught you has gone down the throat and sunk into your heart, you may rest assured that all your problems will be solved. Everything will happen when its turn comes. You will have Bal and everything else too. All feel hunger and thirst, but he who remains cheerful despite them enjoys true happiness.

Anyone who has got a wooden flute like the one that Mirabehn has should please give it to Amtussalaam. I am trying to procure another.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7299. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

183. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 28, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

Read the accompanying letter and give it to Harilal. Do you think there is anything in it?

Keshu has gone to Bombay. He wants something by way of scholarship. I have told Panditji[2] about Gajanan. He will have a talk with Gajanan. Go on giving[3] for the present.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8446. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Ravishankar Vyas, popularly known as Ravishankar Maharaj
[2] Narayan Moreshwar Khare
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Naran das Gandhi", 23-5-1935

184. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

Unrevised *May 28, 1935*

CHI. PREMA,

Why did you have to keep waiting for forty-five minutes? In any case, I didn't think you would run away. Since you were meeting me after a long time, I was eager to ask you a few questions and have a careful look at you. Of course you did well to go back to your place of work. But I was eager because on that day you had stayed on.

I am unable to say anything about Aurobindobabu. If a man with a flabby body cannot have pure wisdom, what can one say of one who is slim? I can only say that my path has borne fruit for me. Let us not make ourselves judges of the whole world. We should admit that among the slim? I can only say that my path has borne fruit for me. Let us not make ourselves judges of the whole world. We should admit that among thetwo hundred persons living under his wing there are several whose lives have undergone a great transformation through his influence.

Everybody follows his own natural bent.

It is not quite correct to say that in the West they do not recognize the necessity of purity in private life, nor is it correct to say that here everybody recognizes it. We ourselves not only recognize it, but go further and believe that the actions prompted by a reason not purified inwardly will not endure, however attractive they may appear. Such actions cannot be judged from their immediate results. It is true, of course, that actions which have no connection with morality do not require inward purity. A dissolute carpenter will be able to make a right-angled table. But a person lacking in purity will not be able to eradicate untouchability or turn the people to the spinning-wheel, for both these tasks require qualities of the heart. In such activities calculations of time count for little. We should have no doubt at all that actions performed with sincere and truthful motives are bound to have certain results. If we do not have such faith, we shall never be able to adhere to moral principles.

God is beyond the reach of human thought. The God, therefore, whom we worship is a creation of our imagination. Nobody has seen the real God. If anybody has seen Him, he has not been able to describe Him. It is difficult to say which Form of Him is dearest to

me. The Form, however, which I worship is known as Truth. He both has a manifest form and has none. He manifests Himself in innumerable ways. How can imperfect man see perfect truth?

I don't intend to write anything about the jewellery though I have alreay made a note of the point in my diary. The additional note which will appear after your letter will be for my information. Isn't that what you desire?

I will use the khadi when it is received.

Lilavati has arrived here from Rajkot. This time her health is excellent. She has gained weight, too, and seems to be quite happy.

I intend to leave on the 31st and reach Wardha on the 2nd.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10373

185. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

[AS AT WARDHA,]
May 29, 1935

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS,

I did not know that the illegal sessions were counted among the others. I think you should take the ruling from Rajendrababu[1] and act as he says. If they are counted as sessions, their chairmen undoubtedly become members of A.I.C.C. if they conform to the rule applicable to original members.

Shri Srinivasa Iyengar is not found in the list because I imagine he has not paid his subscription.

If the Congress has actually finished 50 years of its life, undoubtedly there should be celebrations on a grand scale. The programme requires careful thinking out. Confer on this with Rajenbabu.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Sardar has seen this letter and he approves.

From a copy: A.I.C.C. File, 1931 Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

[1] Then President of the Indian National Congress, to whom Gandhiji had sent a copy of this letter.

186. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

BORSAD,
May 29, 1935

CHI. MIRA,

From your description of the weather there, Borsad is heaven. The evenings and mornings are delightfully cool. Wardha must be a furnace day and night. Whatever it is, if all goes well you will find us there on 2nd June.

I am glad Janakiprasad joined the party of his own accord.

Amtussalaam has to be allowed to grow her own way. She is a wonderful girl—a freak of nature. If she lives long, she is likely to become a first-class servant of humanity.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6306. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9772.

187. LETTER TO VITHAL L. PHADKE

May 29, 1935

CHI. MAMA,

I could read your letter only last night. I am camping tomorrow at Ras and at Nadiad on the 31st morning. From there we take the train for Ahmedabad at 9.22. At Ahmedabad I shall spend the day at Budhabhai's and at night take a train for Wardha. Thus we can meet only at Ahmedabad now. We are spending four hours at Kanjibhai's[1] in Surat. I shall expect Bhaskar[2] there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3831

[1] Kanaiyalal Desai
[2] Dr. Bhaskar Patel

188. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

May 29, 1935

BHAI PURUSHOTTAMDAS,

The Harijan Sevak Sangh has a big scheme for digging wells. It is planned to construct them with cement. Can we expect your help in obtaining it? Thakkar Bapa informs me that you had allowed 30 per cent in the Bihar Relief work. I assume that you will do whatever is possible in this instance. I was told in Borsad that you had called during the few hours I spent in Bombay. I was disappointed that we couldn't meet.

I hope you keep perfect health.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From Gujarati: Purushottamdas Thakurdas Papers. File No. 159/1935. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

189. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

[*May 29, 1935*][1]

CHI. SHARMA,

What can I do? You cannot get a passport at Wardha. As far as I know, you will get it in Delhi only. You will have to apply to the magistrate. The Police Commissioner will make inquiries. So you have to get an application form and fill it. I was hoping that I could take out a passport for you but rules do not permit it. I too had to apply and attach a photograph and all this not at Simla but in Bombay. The only difference was that, since I had to attend the Round Table Conference, Simla had cleared the way for me. They will make many inquiries about you, as they do in all cases. This should not cause anything like fear. You will often have to come in contact with many such officials. More so in America. There are inquiries and verifications at every stage, so you must make a start.

It was a reliable person who wrote to me about the Rs. 5,000.[2] He does not want to disclose his name. It is the same firm. In this I can

[1] As in the source

[2] *Vide* "Letter to H. L. Sharma", 20-5-1935

never be misled. Nor does that seem to be his intention. When he learnt that I was sending you to America, he wrote to caution me. I replied to say that there was no reason for me to be cautious. I have written to you as a matter of duty to let you know how people talk about you. This should not cause you any worry.

I understand about joint policy. I fear nothing can be done in this matter. My writing is not likely to deter anyone from taking out a policy. I would not bother about the effect, if writing becomes a duty. At present I do not feel called upon to write.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha,* facing p. 164.

190. LETTER TO KOTWAL

May 31, 1935

BHAI KOTWAL,

I got your letter. I have absolved nobody. I merely said that if Haribhau and you had misled the members of the Committee, they would be absolved from blame. But even though you might have misled them, how can those who accompanied you be absolved? As a matter of fact, therefore, nobody is absolved. Your atonement lies, first in explaining to the people there what their dharma is, and, secondly, in refusing in future to assume any responsibility beyond your capacity. You have no gift for collecting money. Since you did not have money, you should not have involved yourself in money matters. Except this there is no other atonement. It will not matter if you can collect nothing. But even if you are offered contributions of a hundred or two hundred rupees, you may accept them. Drop by drop the lake fills.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3610

191. LETTER TO VIPIN D. PATEL

BORSAD,
May 31, 1935

CHI. BABA[1],

Manibehn says today is your birthday. What will you do on this day? Won't you do some act of service? If you wish to do so, then ask Manibehn what you can do. You will certainly be growing up. You must also become good.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: *Manibehn Patelne*, p. 163

192. SPEECH AT INAUGURATION OF VITHAL KANYA VIDYALAYA, NADIAD

May 31, 1935

Today we have assembled for the opening of a girls' school. I have made a thorough study of child education. I could say the same thing about girls' education. But how can experts accept this? Today, even I cannot make that claim. In the prevailing state of affairs it is not easy to talk about girls' education. Everyone may well claim that he is capable of giving education to girls. I will however ask him whether he has imparted true education to his daughter or his wife. How can he who has not observed his dharma towards his wife, sister, mother or mother-in-law, set out to teach the daughters or sisters of others? They may well become B.A.s or M.A.s but I shall put them to the same test. I should like to know what kind of husbands and fathers those who write books on girls' education are.

You will tell me that although this school is to be opened as a memorial to Vithalbhai, I have not yet said anything about him. Why should we have a memorial to Vithalbhai in Nadiad? His services extended over a vast area. He brought credit to the office of the Mayor of the Bombay Corporation. Both in Bombay and Simla, he struggled for the nation's cause. There have always been differences of opinion between Vithalbhai and myself. Nevertheless the very same

[1] Grandson of Vallabhbhai Patel

Vithalbhai sang my praises in America. The reason for this was that both of us had one thing in common—the zeal to live and die for the country. He did not keep a pie for himself. He bequeathed to the country whatever he had saved. When he was earning, he donated Rs. 40,000 the interest on which is still accumulating. Is it a child's play to build a memorial to such an individual? The ideal of education for girls is not that our girls become like dolls or beautiful dancers but good volunteers. As Patidars, you have thought of erecting this memorial. God alone knows whether he was a Patidar or not. When I first met him, I mistook him for a Muslim because of his *fez* and his beard. I did not even ask him, for it would not be in keeping with my habit. How can he who regards everyone as his brother ask about a person's caste or religion! If you want to ridicule Vithalbhai by calling him a Patidar, you may well do so. Which of the Patidars' customs did he observe? Which circle of Patidars can absorb him? If you want to claim Vithalbhai and Vallabhbhai as your own, thenbe sure that you are doomed. If you regard the former as one of you, you will have to regard Dheds, Bhangis and Dharalas as your kinsfolk. He never distinguished between Bhangis and Patidars. If you want to build a memorial to him, you will have to make this institution such as would do credit not to Kheda but to India and you will have to produce women volunteers who will serve the country. If you run this institution with this ideal in view, it will be regarded as a real memorial to Vithalbhai.

It is not easy to do that. However, I have come here on your insistence and because of my blind love for you. How could I refuse to come to Kheda district and refuse to open a school when I have a fund of sacred memories of this district, where I went round on horseback and in bullock-carts, where I gathered a lot of dust by going on foot, where once I was on my death-bed and where volunteers like Fulchand cleaned my bed-pan? It is true that I was not very enthusiastic about performing this ceremony, for I have burnt my fingers once, but I agreed to do it as I hold the belief that faith moves mountains.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 9-6-1935

193. SPEECH AT INAUGURATION OF BAL MANDIR, NADIAD

May 31, 1935

I feel it is necessary to say two things before we begin our programme for the day. Today, on this occasion, I feel the absence of Fulchand[1] and Mohanlal Pandya[2]—the onion thief. I came into contact with both these persons when I was staying at the Nadiad orphanage in 1918 and that relationship lasted till they died. I have preserved in my memory many sweet recollections of both. I received a heart-rending letter from Sardar at the time of Mohanlal's death. Ordinarily, Sardar has a heart of steel, he can harden his heart to put up with any kind of suffering that befalls him. Nevertheless when I came across heart-rending phrases in his letter, I realized how much he must have felt at the loss of such a colleague. Not only this district, but the entire Gujarat feels his loss. These two workers embodied my ideal of silent volunteers. Both gave up their lives thinking of their own work.

I have visited the Bal Mandir which has been built in memory of Fulchand. It is natural that you should wish to have a memorial for Mohanlal as well. However, it is better if we do not beguile ourselves with such small memorials. If we wish to erect a permanent memorial, it cannot be done by spending money on buildings of brick and mortar. This does not mean that such memorials should not be built. Only we must understand what we intend through the memorial. We cannot sit by saying, now he is gone and where are we to find the like of him? We are bound to feel sorry at the loss of such workers but their loss should be made good. Just as at the death of a king his throne does not remain vacant and we say "the king is dead, long live the king", similarly the institution built by workers who are no longer alive should continue to function. And a successive line of workers belonging to these should continue. Both Fulchand and Mohanlal Pandya were institutions by themselves. What would happen to a person like myself if such institutions did not function? Or, in other words, no sooner a person who is prepared to face the gallows has departed, than another such person should be ready. I would,

[1] Fulchand Bapuji Shah died on April 19, 1934

[2] Mohanlal Kameshvar Pandya died on May 18, 1934.

therefore, suggest that if we wish to perpetuate the memory of Fulchand and Mohanlal Pandya we may certainly erect buildings but before doing that our task should be to resolve to make all efforts to become like them. The poet Shakespeare has said: "The evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones." The poet has not expressed a universal truth in this but has reproached the world.

As a matter of fact, Nature does not store rubbish. It continues to give out its fragrance after burying or burning up filth. Similarly, we should bury any faults in our elders and departed leaders and preserve their virtues. The reason is that it is not the former but the latter which is our wealth. We are not guilty of any injustice to those like Mohanlal Pandya if we believe that we can excel them. Each one of us is born with his own faults. It is the dharma of every one of us to rid ourselves of these and to develop our virtues and preserve them. To the extent that the world has not been regularly practising this dharma, it has not done credit to its heritage.

This morning, I visited the Bal Mandir started in memory of Fulchand. I was informed by the persons who run it that the transport charges for bringing the children to the school every day came to fifty rupees per month. I am acquainted with child education and the Montessori system. I have met[1] the learned Madam Montessori. I have not taken a single lesson from her and yet she has publicly awarded a certificate to me saying that I fully understand her system and have been practising it. This certificate was not by way of false flattery. For I had given a certificate to myself at the very outset. So, with full knowledge as to what child education is, I say that this expense of fifty rupees seems preposterous to me. Spending fifty rupees for making cripples of children is not the Montessori system. Those who blindly imitate in this country the way it is practised in Europe are fools. And how far will you carry out that imitation? According to that system, it is necessary to have a garden along with the school. In this school I did not find a garden. When I enquired about the distance of the school from the children's homes, I was informed that it would not be more than a mile. I would ask the parents and the teachers to save these fifty rupees. Teachers should set out early in the morning and bring the children to the school, leading them by the hand. You

[1] In 1931, when Gandhiji was visiting England for the second Round Table Conference; *Vide* "Interview with Maria Montessori", 9-10-1931

cannot perpetuate the memory of Fulchand by packing the children into a carriage and bringing them to the school. Fulchand was not the person to rest in a bed of flowers. He was as hard as steel. Hence I would tell the teachers to serve a notice on parents that they should accept your resignation if they cannot send their children on foot, but they should not compel you to make the children helpless. Only aged and helpless persons like Nanasaheb[1] go about in carriages. I would not do so. And if an old man of sixty-six does not sit in a carriage, why should you send children of two-and-a-half years in that manner?

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 9-6-1935

194. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[2]

AHMEDABAD,
May 31, 1935

Ghaffar Khan is cheerful and happy, though considerably reduced. He looks weak. Our conversation throughout was about the members of his family.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-6-1935

195. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

May 31, 1935

Answering several questions, Gandhiji said that plague was practically exterminated from Borsad. The conversation next turned to the village industries work. Asked as to why he selected Wardha as his headquarters Gandhiji said:

Because Wardha is in the centre of India, and it was in Wardha that I was able to get a rich piece of land with buildings and plenty of water, land worth over two lakhs. There are nearly 700 fruit trees on the land. I selected Wardha also because Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj was most anxious that the land which he had contemplated as donation for Maganlal Gandhi Memorial should be taken up by the All-India Village Industries Association. Lastly, Wardha is a half-village and half-town, and my own desire and that of my associates was that the headquarters should not be selected in any presidency town. There

[1] Gopaldas Vithaldas Desai

[2] Gandhiji issued the statement after meeting Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan in Sabarmati Jail in the afternoon.

was an additional attraction of Vinoba and his band of workers already trained at the Wardha Ashram. These were sufficient inducements for all of us for selecting Wardha as headquarters.

Answering further questions, Gandhiji said that he did not propose to move out of Wardha as far as possible in order that the work might go on in his presence, as the conception was his. Moreover, it was advisable that all office-bearers of the Association should be in close touch with him and that he might be available,

whenever any of them wanted his guidance at Wardha. They met daily for one-and-a-half hours except on Mondays.

Asked as to whether it was a fact that he had left Gujarat because he was dissatisfied with her, Gandhiji said that that was altogether a wrong notice. [He said:]

It is not without considerable pain that I am just now physically cut off from Gujarat, though, in other respects, I am in constant touch with her work.

Replying to another question, Gandhiji said that he wished he could stay in Gujarat for the Village Industries work, but he was afraid that Gujarat was far too commercialized for doing spade-work with better prospects of success than elsewhere. Gandhiji was of opinion that villages in Gujarat were more touched by that commercial spirit than elsewhere.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-6-1935

196. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

May 31, 1935

What should be the attitude of a woman towards her family? To what extent can she maintain her individuality in the family?

There is not the slightest doubt that wives have all the rights which husbands enjoy. Their duties are different but their rights are the same. If a woman sets out in shirt and trousers with a gun in her hand, a man has no right to stop her. In such matters men and women enjoy equal rights. A husband cannot compel his wife to go to a cinema against her wishes or if she wishes to go out by herself, he cannot prevent her. In other words, in things which have to be done jointly—the greater the amount of co-operation and unanimity the better it is.

This co-operation is not a one-sided affair. It cannot be measured. The husband saying, 'I am your master, you are my property, you should do as I tell you' is the kind of thing that has no place in my ideology. Satyagraha is the final weapon against such

[1] The questions were asked by members of Jyoti Sangh, an institution for women's welfare.

attitude in husbands. A woman too can resort to it. It is both a single-edged and a double-edged sword. It can be used anywhere with success. The husband has no alternative but to give in before this strength of love. Although I am pointing out this path of love—of satyagraha—to the woman who wishes to assert her own personality before her husband, it is as the poet Pritam has said "the flame of the fire". She will have to walk in it and that too bare-footed, not with shoes on.

With reference to removing the economic dependence of women, Gandhiji said:

I can point out many ways of removing the economic dependence of women. The easiest way to this is for every woman to take up some form of work. It is not as if the educated women of today were independent. They are equally dependent. But this is a problem that concerns only the city women and high-caste women. I have travelled in villages and have seen numerous women enjoying economic independence. These women do more work than men. But women get less wages. Truly speaking, both men and women should get equal wages. That is women's right. It is only fair. If Jyoti Sangh could achieve this, one could say it had brought forth a new principle in the world.

Now we have to find out what our work should be. Of the crores of women, how many of you are going to become B.A.s and M.A.s? But let me inform you that crores of women in India enjoy economic freedom. I have to find out how many in Ahmedabad do so. It is difficult for the Jyoti Sangh to remove their financial dependence. For peasant women it is not so. We do not enjoy the right which they enjoy. It is the Brahmins and Banias who have to fight for the right of divorce. Other communities have long been enjoying this right. Hence, I ask you not to pity them unnecessarily. Only you city-dwellers are dependent.

All of us have to work in the way bricks are put together one upon another. You should work within the scope set for your work and bring credit to it. You can invite those who wish to take an active part in national and social activities. I bless you that you may succeed in your endeavours. But for this many women will have to become martyrs to this cause and become ascetics. This is no play and if it is that at all, it is like that of the tight-rope-walker who is able to keep himself straight like a stick only when he concentrates fully, keeps his eyes fixed on a particular point and is fully attuned to the tunes of the *shehnai* and the drum. You shall be able to achieve something only if you work with such concentration.

With reference to the duties of women, Gandhiji said:

The duty of a woman is to look after what in English is called the hearth and home. Man has never performed this task. He has been content to build forts and ramparts for protection. Will he come forward to protect the home? And even if he does so, what sort of protection will he offer? Even in a home he will build fortresses and walls. He will make holes within these to fire bullets from and put glass and nails on walls. In the end, the children of the house will meet their death by climbing upon these. But we have to bring credit to the home. Hence it is my confirmed opinion that women should get a distinct kind of education. The two have separate spheres of activity and their training, therefore, should also be different. This does not imply that the work of the one is inferior while that of the other is superior; the spheres of the two are complementary.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 16-6-1935

197. STRUGGLES OF A WORKER

I am conducting, with the co-operation of some comrades, an ashram; its object is to so train ourselves as to be transformed into ideal peasants, so that we may be able to completely identify ourselves with village people and village society, and thus be able to serve them by being actually of them. With this end in view, agriculture has been taken up as the chief means of support with spinning and weaving as supplementary . . .

While starting the ashram, it had been conceived that along with the working out of the ideal of ourselves living a self-supporting peasant life, we should also serve the villagers by doing Harijan work, by introducing spinning and in other possible ways. But we have been entirely disappointed in this respect, for we have not been as yet able to find a suitable locality for the ashram. In the locality wherein the ashram is at present situated the hamlets consist of one or two houses; and these hamlets are separated from one another by a distance of from half a mile to one mile.

Another thing that has seriously impeded the progress of the ashram is that I committed grave blunders, as I now find them to be, in the matter of diet. In what now seems to be a mere over-enthusiasm for the ideal of poverty, the standard of diet was kept very low. The ashram, for instance, did not even use vegetables regularly . . . . Milk and milk products were considered a luxury . . . . All this has seriously crippled the health of the inmates. The ashram started with twelve inmates; we are now only five . . . .

The ashram has up till now stuck to the ideal of maintaining itself by manual labour . . .

Friends and sympathizers as well as critics set this our insistence on the Tolstoyan idea of bread labour in opposition to the ideal of social service, and argue

that the ashram has thus deprived society of the benefits of the many services that the ashram workers would have been otherwise in a position to render to it. How and when, if at all, can one be justified in compromising the principle of bread labour for the sake of rendering 'social service'? Is not, most often, the conflict between 'being' and 'doing' only apparent and superficial, while in truth, 'being' is 'doing' in the real sense?

. . . . the board per head per month has been Rs. 3 and other expenses including clothing Re. 1 per head per month.

This is from a letter[1] addressed to Shri Kishorelal Mashruwala by a highly educated selfless worker. It depicts the struggles of a sincere worker and is likely to help all who are trying to lead a life of service.

The effort is noble. The writer and his co-workers do not hesitate to own and mend mistakes when they discover any.

I do not know how Shri Kishorelal has answered the queries put by his correspondent. I must try to answer them in order to help the general reader who is interested in the questions of the type that puzzle the writer of the letter.

There seems to be some confusion about the principle of bread labour. It is never opposed to social service. Intelligent bread labour is any day the highest form of social service. For what can be better than that a man should by his personal labour add to the useful wealth of the country? 'Being' *is* 'doing'.

The adjective 'intelligent' has been prefixed to 'labour' in order to show that labour to be social service must have that definite purpose behind it. Otherwise every labourer can be said to render social service. He does in a way, but what is meant here is something much more than that. A person who labours for the general good of all serves society and is worthy of his hire. Therefore, such bread labour is not different from social service. What the vast mass of mankind does for self or at best for family, a social servant does for general good. These seven members today find that they have hardly time left for service other than that of slaving for their daily bread. This need not be so if they were proficient in their work. In fact they are not. As field labourers, they are no match for the ordinary labourers. As artisans too they are novices. Every worker, thank God, now knows that with intelligent use of his tools a spinner can easily double his output in a given time. That means doubling the income from the wheel. This is true of most things. In agriculture, the field for development with the same tools is so vast that unless Nature

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

interferes, a farmer can by the use of his intelligence any day quadruple his income, working the same number of hours per day. This means that for the same amount of income he need not labour so much as he is now doing. These workers can, therefore, when they have acquired proficiency, earn their bread in much less time than they need now, and will have energy set free for special Harijan or other service. The problem becomes complicated for householders who have many calls on their purses, but a self-denying worker whose needs amount to Rs. 4 per month has any day ample time at his disposal for work beyond labour that would bring him Rs. 4 per month.

But will three rupees per month needed out of four for food give a person enough to feed himself? If Dr. Tilak's figure for Bombay, i.e., Rs. 5 per month, is good, Rs. 3 for village life is certainly good. And when I add my own experience to Dr. Tilak's prescription there is no difficulty. Dr. Tilak erases powdered milk from the village menu. But as he says there is no escape from milk. The inmates were wrong in eliminating milk from their dietary. It is true that millions get not a drop of milk. But they do not get many other things without which we dare not do if we are to live to serve. We must therefore take those bare necessaries which we have to strive every villager to produce for himself. Whole cereal, whether wheat, rice, *bajri, juwar* or the like, green edible leaves uncooked, milk, and any village fruit when in season such as mango, *amrood, jamun, ber,* etc., are indispensable for healthy life. The prince among edible leaves is perhaps *neem* leaves, to be had for the picking everywhere in India; and there are many edible grasses of which we have no knowledge. And tamarind fruit which is also obtainable everywhere is not to be despised. There is, however, a prejudice against tamarind which is difficult to understand. I have been using it liberally in the place of the expensive lemon with the greatest advantage. Diet reform is a limitless field of research, fraught with the greatest consequences for the world and more especially for the famishing millions of India. It means both health and wealth which according to Ruskin are one and the same thing. The members of the little ashram are right in thinking that they will do the greatest social service by living right all along the line. They will infect their surroundings whose limit may in course of time be the whole of India and then the universe. In this service the welfare of one is the welfare of all.

Harijan, 1-6-1935

198. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BARODA,
June 1, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

Do you know anything about . . . .?[1] According to . . . , [2] those women are completely dissolute. If there is the slightest truth in this report, I must know it. Afterwards we shall also have to consider whether . . . [3]should remain there. Please therefore guide me in this matter.

Help Harilal to find a suitable occupation. I have not been able to approve of his choice. I am in Baroda today, where I have come to see the Kanya Vidyalaya. Rasik[4] met me. He has secured very good marks indeed. Bal and Tansukh also have fared equally well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

On reading Harilal's letter again, I see that you are prepared to persuade him to join the school. I would like that, if you can trust him to that extent. I have till not been able to have a talk with Keshu and have asked him to come to Wardha.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8448. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

199. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

June 1, 1935

BHAI KHAMBHATTA,

I do get news about your illness from time to time. Please let me know how you are now. The Rajkumari has given me some news and that has increased my curiosity. You must get well. What treatment are you trying there? I hope your mind is perfectly clear irrespective of the state of your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7556. Also C.W. 5031. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta.

[1] The names have been omitted.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*
[4] Nephew of V. G. Desai

200. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

BORSAD,
June 2, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I reach Wardha on 3rd instead of 2nd. I shall send you more note-paper and envelopes after reaching Wardha.

I hope there is no after-effect now left of the accident.

How about your slivers?

Yes, I know the Khambhattas very well indeed. They are both very good workers. I am eagerly looking forward to Charlie's letter about them. Please send me their address and have the enclosed delivered or posted to Khambhattas.

Mira says it is like a furnace in Wardha just now. It is much better comparatively in Borsad.

Love to you all.

BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Charlie, Khansaheb sends his love to him.

From the original: C.W. 3714. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6870

201. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
June 3, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

On reaching here this morning I found your letter and samples.

I return Dr. Gopichand's letter.

If, contrary to Dr. G., you think that Puri has managed the abolition of octroi on khadi, you have to have the honour with him.

Pray do not go to the market at the sacrifice of health.

I shall hope to send you village-paper note-paper as per size sample, not the colour sample, at any rate not for some time to come.

Love to you all and a kiss to the little friend if she won't blush.

BAPU

[PS.]

Nothing yet from Charlie regarding Khambhatta.

From the original: C.W. 3715. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6871

202. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

June 3, 1935

CHI. KAMAL,

1. Speak little.

2. Listen to everybody but always do what is right.

3. Keep an account of every minute and do punctually the work fixed for the hour.

4. Live like a poor man. Never be proud of wealth.

5. Keep an account of every pie.

6. Study attentively.

7. Similarly, do exercises regularly.

8. Eat moderately.

9. Keep a diary.

10. Cultivate strength of heart, which is far more precious than sharpness of the intellect. For that purpose, it is necessary to read the *Gita* and Tulsidas.

11. Read the *Bhajanavali*[1] daily. Pray daily both times.

12. Now that you are engaged, you are like an animal tied with a tether. Do not let your mind be drawn to any other woman.

13. It will be to your good if you write to me once every week and give an account of your work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2196

203. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 3, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I have arrived only today. Ba has stayed over in Bochasan. Here it is hot as a furnace. They say it will remain like this for the whole month.

I have already written to you about Harilal. I would be happy if he lives under your care. Write to me about . . . [2] . Keshu[3] is here. Today is my Silence Day. I will, therefore, talk to him tomorrow, I

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi" , 3-6-1935

[2] The name has been omitted.

[3] Maganlal Gandhi's son

have not forgotten about the trust-deed of the school, and will attend to it when I get time. I had a letter from Mathew from which it seems that he will be there in a few days' time. I wrote to him that he would be reimbursed the fare only after he reaches there and satisfies us with his work. I think I wrote to you about this too.

I hope Vijaya has now fully recovered.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8449. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

204. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

June 3, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

Your letter. I am returning the copy of your application for passport.

Why did you not deduct from the money-order what was due to you? You may debit my account for books and other expenses and credit it, for the time being, with the amount saved on evidence. The account should be settled subsequently. I hope you know how to maintain such simple accounts.

Do whatever you consider proper about the Rs. 5,000. If someone does not disclose his name to you, you may presume that he is afraid. Were the boils cured by earth treatment or did you have to apply something else?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

It has been very hot here, too, for the last 24 hours. We had to halt at Bhusaval for four hours. But we did not go to the waiting-room. During the years 1915-17 I have had sufficient experience of third-class waiting-rooms.

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha,* facing p. 166

205. TELEGRAM TO C. F. ANDREWS

WARDHA,
June 4, 1935

ANDREWS
MANORVILLE
SIMLA

DELIGHTED KHAMBHATTA'S OPERATION. GIVE LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 509. Also C. W. 5032. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta.

206. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

June 4, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I returned yesterday to find your letter. I am glad you are all in the hills and that Father is making daily progress. I do hope you will be able to stay there at least for the whole month.

Yes, it is very hot here. They say it will remain like that for the whole of June.

Ba has gone to Bochasan, very cool comparatively.

My weight has just now become steady at 104 lb.

I shall gladly take Kamalabai, if she is anxious to come to me. Let her first write to me. And in any case she had better not come just now in this heat. The weather will be quite cool in July.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 960. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal

207. LETTER TO SASTRI

June 4, 1935

MY DEAR SASTRI,

I am not quite sure that you are bound to report every theft in your house. Therefore, I would not report theft except under extraordinary circumstances. No prosecution generally, even if the thief is caught red-handed. The moral is you must have no valuables; if you have them, you must have your own guards day and night. You

should cultivate friendship with your neighbours and kinship with servants. Women should avoid all ornaments including *mangalasutra*[1] if it is gold, silver, pearl or the like.

The foot-pounder is interesting experiment. But you must grind your paddy which is the cheapest.

Yours
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

208. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

June 4, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I wished to write to you from Surat, but how could I possibly get time then to do so? Afterwards during the journey it was impossible to write, and yesterday I got no time. The return journey was a bit trying. We barely got sitting accommodation at Bhusaval. We had to spend the night sitting.

Take immediate treatment for your bowel complaint. As yet it is only worms and the condition can be cured without difficulty. Lose no time.

Kanuga[2] has sent some mangoes at your suggestion. I hope Mridula[3] sends them for Ghaffar Khan.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
ABU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: *Sardar Vallabhbhaine*, p. 170

[1] Literally, 'auspicious thread'; necklace worn by married woman.
[2] Dr. Balwantrai Kanuga, a medical practitioner of Ahmedabad
[3] Mridula Sarabhai

209. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

June 4, 1935

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I got your letter. I read what you have written to Shankerlal and Jerajani[1]. I have written to them. But I wish to write to you something else. We should act in this spirit, namely, we should not want something which others need. We have love, but never attachment, for khadi. Nor do we have the pride that we are the best workers. Therefore we should leave Borkamata if we cannot work there smoothly. Besides this, I have said another thing. We are no more traders. We seek the spread of khadias a means of self-help. The production of khadi for sale has not much significance. We cannot vindicate the message of khadi with the help of commercial khadi, and such khadi is bound to vanish.

In spite of this, I would say that you should follow your inclinations as long as you are not convinced of this truth.That is why I have written to Jerajani and Banker.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Satisbabu had sent a long letter. Since I had nothing to say, I did not reply.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1710

210. LETTER TO S. L. SOKHEY

WARDHA,
June 5, 1935

DEAR COL. SOKHEY[2],

As you may be aware, in company with Sardar Patel I visited several villages of Borsad Taluka and saw the houses in those villages specially with a view to test the possibility of effectively using calcid for the destruction of rats and fleas. I could see at a glance that such destruction was well-nigh impossible unless you hold that calcid pumped into brick houses with storeys which are not air-proof will reach every nook and corner and the burrows under floors. Nor is it

[1] Vithaldas Jerajani
[2] Director, Haffkine Institute, Bombay

possible to denude the houses of huge earthen or mud jars under and round which mice and rats take shelter. The only thing effective in these cases seems to me to make the floors of all houses rat-proof. This was the method devised successfully in South Africa when the plague made its first appearance there. The device was to tear open all cutcha floors without disturbing the super-structure and make them pucka and rat-proof. This was easily and cheaply done by a liberal use of stone or brick and cement. Dr. Bhasker Patel has [after] consultation with an experienced house contractor devised several cheap methods of floor renewal so as to make floors rat-proof. Leaflets have already been issued for the purpose. If you can approve of the method, it will receive additional impetus and might be perfected under your kind guidance.

If you have anything further to say on behalf of the use of calcid or to criticize the method adopted of making houses rat-proof you will please not hesitate to send your criticism freely. Both the Sardar and I would welcome any criticism or advice you may have to offer.

I may add that the agent for calcid who went to Borsad whilst I was there opined to Dr. Patel after visiting a few houses that the calcid treatment is not applicable to them. I discovered too that a judicious use of the special emulsion prepared by Dr. Bhasker Patel followed by sulphur fumigation had proved most effective for the destruction [of] fleas.

I must not omit to mention how grateful both Sardar and I were to you for showing us round the Institute with so much care.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

211. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

June 5, 1935

CHI. RUKMINI[1]

Giriraj mentioned your name to me but I thought he was referring to some relation of Damodardas. I was surprised to read your letter received today. I didn't know at all that your health had deteriorated so badly. There was no letter from you and I concluded from that both of you must be quite well. Get well there now. Write to me from time to time.

[1] Maganlal Gandhi's daughter

Keshu was with me till yesterday. He has gone to Bombay. He intends to learn car-repairing there. Navin[1] is here. He had met Radha[2] in Bombay. Ba has stayed back in Bochasan. Ramdas is in Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RUKMINI DEVI BAZAJ
SHAKTI ASHRAM
P. O. RAJPUR, DEHRADUN

From Gujarati: C. W. 9711. Courtesy: Benarsilal Bazaj

212. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

June 5, 1935

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter. I am writing to Jayaprakash. Send on the letter to him. You have done your best. You should still go on writing to him. If he doesn't take care of his health, what can you do? When your one year is over, we shall certainly have to think about your future. It will probably be desirable then that you should stay with Jayaprakash. Cook for him and take care of his health. But it is too early to think about that just now. My weight has remained steady. It is extremely hot here.

See that your health is not affected there. It will indeed be good if you can go to Sitabadiyara for three or four days. It was indeed good that you went and stayed with Jayaprakash for a few days. Your leave has been sanctioned. Return on the next day after the wedding. Make the wedding as simple as possible.

The only newcomer here is Chitre. Amtussalaam will remain here for the present. She is working very hard. Devraj[3] has arrived.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: B.N. 3450

[1] Vrajlal Gandhi's son
[2] Addressee's elder sister
[3] Gandhiji's typist

213. LET US PRAY

WARDHAGANJ
June 6, 1935[1]

When a man is down, he prays to God to lift him up. He is the Help of the helpless, says a Tamil proverb. The appalling disaster[2] in Quetta paralyses one. It baffles all attempt at reconstruction. The whole truth about the disaster will perhaps never be known. The dead cannot be recalled to life.

Human effort must be there always. Those who are left behind must have help. Such reconstruction as is possible will no doubt beundertaken. All this and much more along the same line can never be a substitute for prayer.

But why pray at all? Does not God, if there be One, know what has happened? Does He stand in need of prayer to enable Him to do His duty?

No, God needs no reminder. He is within everyone. Nothing happens without His permission. Our prayer is a heart search. It is a reminder to ourselves that we are helpless without His support. No effort is complete without prayer, without a definite recognition that the best human endeavour is of no effect if it has not God's blessing behind it. Prayer is a call to humility. It is a call to self-purification, to inward search.

I must repeat what I said at the time of the Bihar disaster[3]. There is a divine purpose behind every physical calamity. That perfected science will one day be able to tell us beforehand when earthquakes will occur, as it tells us today of eclipses, is quite possible. It will be another triumph of the human mind. But such triumphs even indefinitely multiplied can bring about no purification of self without which nothing is of any value.

Of course we will forget this latest calamity as we have forgotten the Bihar one. I ask those who appreciate the necessity of inward purification to join in the prayer that we may read the purpose of God behind such visitations, that they may humble us and prepare us to face our Maker whenever the call comes, and that we may be ever ready to share the sufferings of our fellows whoever they may be.

Harijan, 8-6-1935

[1] From *The Bombay Chronicle,* 7-6-1935
[2] Earthquake on May 31, 1935
[3] Earthquake on January 15, 1934

214. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY[1]

WARDHA,
June 6, 1935

DEAR MR. MIEVILLE.

All differences vanish in the midst of the awful calamity in Quetta[2] following almost in the wake of Bihar.

I got the enclosed from Hyderabad today to which I sent a reply[3], copy of which is also enclosed herewith.

Hardly had I sent the reply when the voice within told me that I must enforce in my own action what I had advised Shri Jairamdas and Prof. Kripalani—both Congress secretaries. Hence this private approach to the highest authority.

If I am permitted, I should love to proceed to Quetta myself and do whatever is possible.

My submission is that a small relief committee should be formed comprising all sections to concert measures of relief. In my opinion it is necessary to take the public into confidence about everything that may be done regarding alleviation of distress.

Will you please put this before His Excellency and if possible wire reply as to permission for me to proceed to Quetta? If the permission is granted, it should include sufficient member[s] to enable me to do effective work.

E. C. MIEVILLE, ESQ.
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
H. E. THE VICEROY

From a copy: Dr. Rajendra Prasad Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

215. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

June 6, 1935

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I had your letter in Borsad. Strange, Thakkar Bapa had complained before your letter and had seen me. He had a grievance

[1] A copy of this letter and a copy each of the enclosures mentioned in it were sent to Dr. Rajendra Prasad by Mahadev Desai with a forwarding note dated June 7, 1935.

[2] Quetta had been rocked by a severe earthquake on May 31, 1935.

[3] *Vide* "Draft Telegram to Jairamdas Doulatram", 6-6-1935

against me. He thought that I had accepted your one-sided complaints. I told him my wire was independent of what you had said and that I had prejudged nothing. In any case you and I have to take things calmly. Thakkar Bapa means nothing even when he says a lot. It is the vent he needs for bottled up rage over things real or imaginary. My advice is: Think nothing of what he says! And do as he wishes even when there is conflict of opinion. We must not let him be soured.

Do act as if he was still in office.

I hope your wound is completely healed.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 952

216. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

June 6, 1935

CHI. MANU,

I have sent both your letters to Bhai[1]. His postcard to you was bad. I have written to him about it. This chapter is becoming more and more painful. It is good that you have shed your fear of Bhai.

You say that you wish to abide by my advice. Is it in all matters? If that is so, you should give up your idea of marrying in the Modh caste. I would certainly get you married in a good family where you would be completely happy. Your happiness would be the sole consideration in the selection I would make. Harilal has been writing to me frightful things. Personally, I should like you to be with me just now. I am inquiring about what Harilal has writen to me. I need your help in that too. But I would like you to come only if you would like to stay with me. It is quite clear that if you have grown more fond of luxuries, I cannot satisfy your desires. Therefore do what will please you. Whatever you write to me, do so frankly. You are a free person.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 1543. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

[1] Harilal Gandhi, addressee's father

217. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
June 6, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

Please go through the enclosed letters that I wrote to Harilal. I don't like to take your time in this matter, but I have no choice. I will soon end this chapter. Meanwhile you will have to put up with a little infliction.

I had a talk with Keshu. He must have come there by now. What do you intend to do with the workshop which he will be leaving? He is going to learn motor-car and radio repairing. I understand from him that he will secure some help in Bombay. I see that we shall have to bear the expenses of Santok[1] and Radha.

I forgot to ask Keshu whether the research which he has made so far would now become useless. Thus sometimes important matters are left out when I have to finish our discussion in a short time. Please have me clarify the points which I may have left unclear.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8451. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

218. LETTER TO PUPILS OF VITHAL L. PHADKE

June 6, 1935

PUPILS OF MAMASAHEB,

I cannot reply to you without knowing your names and addresses. One should never write an anonymous letter. Who taught you to write such a letter?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3832

[1] Widow of Maganlal Gandhi

219. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

June 6, 1935

CHI. NARMADA,

I doubt now whether you have really understood me. I wrote to Shambhushankar what I saw with no other aim but that of your own good. Be good and humble.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2779. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

220. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 6, 1935

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter. If I find the letter about *neem*, I shall send it. *Neem* never causes heat. Even people who are taking a fast eat *neem*. But I wish you to take as much milk as you can. Cow's milk is the best. Give up all worry. I have already said that you should spend this one year of abstention from studies with me here. Come whenever you like.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4272

221. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

WARDHA,
June 6, 1935

CHI. SUMANGAL,

I have your letter. It is good you went to your mother. May the peace you have found endure. May you gain in self-control. May you have excellent health.

I read Trine's *In Tune with the Infinite* many years ago. I remember I enjoyed it. Rabindranath's *Sadhana* certainly merits being read again and again. Remember one thing: pondering is better than reading, Even if you read just a little, but digest it well, it is good.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

222. DRAFT TELEGRAM TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM[1]

[On or after *June 6, 1935*]

JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
MARKET ROAD
HYDERABAD

TELL PUBLIC AGITATION PREMATURE. PRIVATE APPROACH SHOULD BE MADE LOCAL AND HIGHER AUTHORITIES. ASCERTAIN REASONS CONTEMPLATED BURNING. MUST REALIZE HELPLESSNESS.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

223. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

WARDHA,
June 7, 1935

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

No letter from you means no anxiety complex. For if there was any even the presence of Rajkumari as the medium of communication between us would not have prevented you from writing.

Here is a copy of my correspondence with the Viceroy. It is purely for your information, not for any action thereon. Things will take their own course. The most probable thing is that they will allow nobody to go there.[2]

I hope your book[3] is making good progress and that you are keeping well.

Love

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 986

[1] This was in reply to a joint telegram received on June 6 from the addressee and J. B. Kripalani. It was dated June 4 and read: "Public relief Quetta impossible. Military authorities disallow entry men. Jamshed Mehta and even title-holders refused permission though prepared own arrangements and not draw on local resources. Much life property could have been saved. Possible danger epidemics avoided if adequte labour imported and public offers co-operation accepted. Whole population including injured being evacuated. Rumours rife about abandoning excavated and burning city with petrol. All 20,000 lying under assumed dead after only three days. Public feel even now life property can be saved if immediate public co-operation Sind Punjab India accepted. Public meetings Sind condemn attitude authorities. Public sent wires Secretary, Viceroy. Possible help see healthy refugees being given by public bodies various stations Sind [*sic*]."

[2] After the earthquake, Martial Law was imposed in Quetta and nobody was allowed to enter the town; *vide* also the preceding item and pp. 151 and 156.

[3] *India and Britain*

224. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

June 7, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I see why your body wears itself out. You insist on doing everything thoroughly. Of course it is the right thing for any seeker. But there is no warrant for any seeker taking over more than he or she can well manage. I wonder whether I was right in letting you come into my movements. God will take care of you. You *must* cut down the social functions of Simla even though it may involve some seeming sacrifice of the good you might do to the movements you may be in. No movement designed for the multitude will suffer by your conserving your time and energy by cutting down many social functions.

Now for khadi. All Punjab shops are not run at a loss. The Simla one has always been. Management is no doubt defective. But the people in Simla look down upon khadi and there is a class that is afraid to wear it. The wearers become marked men. Your idea of having a swadeshi mart on the Mall is attractive but its execution is risky. However good swadeshi articles may be, they must suffer in comparison. And I doubt the utility of aiming at gaudiness. I differentiate between art and gaudiness. What one sees in fashionable shop windows is by no means all art. To produce things of real beauty and hope to put them side by side with the showy things of the Mall in Simla is an expensive ambition which we had better suppress at least for this season. Do what you can with the shop as it is. Convert it into something better. Let there be swadeshi articles in it. Arrange it after your taste and gain experiencebefore you take expensive quarters. We must have this as one of the topics of discussion when you come down in July or August—the earlier the better.

You will read what I have felt and done about the Quetta disaster.[1] You will read my letter[2] to Charlie. He should know that one swallow does not make a summer. He will have to trace me in Orissa or some such place when I take up walking again. Meantime I accept 12 miles on the hills as a fair beginning.

I am waiting for the analysis of *falsa*[3].

[1] *Vide* "Let us Pray", 6-6-1935

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] From Shumsher Singh; *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 20-5-1935

Note-paper and envelopes are nearly ready. Some slivers are also ready. I want to put together a fair lot. I hope to give you the cost price of everything, at the time of sending the articles. I have kept no account of what has been already sent to you of paper or slivers. Nor need you worry about these.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3537. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6346.

225. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 7, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

Enclosed are two letters. Read them carefully. Both of you brothers sit together, think over the matter and let me have your view. I am completely at my wit's end. If . . .[1] has fallen with . . . , that is enough for me. I would regard it as most dreadful . .does level such a charge. Does he have any proof for it? You have no option but to dirty your hands with this filth.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8452, Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

226. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

June 7, 1935

BHAI PURUSHOTTAMDAS,

I understand what you say. I only want to know what is possible under the present circumstances. What should we do to bring about the adoption of a monetary policy that would be in the interest of the country? I leave aside the argument that we should go on doing our best. Doing one's best is not enough when a cloud is actually threatening. How much do you think the efforts of the people of Quetta must have availed against the recent earthquake there? According to me, a political earthquake is going on in the country just now and we seem helpless against it. I am therefore taking care of the future.

[1] The names have been omitted.

I will not involve you in the problem of village industries. I give you this assurance, however, that that programme will not interfere with the movement for the protection of gold and silver.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From Gujarati: Purushottamdas Thakurdas Papers, File No. 159/1935. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

227. TRUE KINSHIP

Those educated men who are conducting ashrams or are desirous of living in villages and have their physical constitutions disabled or ruined for want of use and find it difficult to do work involving physical labour and would yet be village workers, complain that unless they have at least one companion with them, they would feel lonely. Those who would turn ashrams into colonies of farmers, dairymen and artisans, would do well to employ labour and treat the men and women so employed as if they were members of the ashram. Thus they will understand the domestic and economic condition of their employees and will take them only if the wages paid would at all meet their wants. They would interest themselves in their lives as they would if they were ashramites.

Labourers thus treated are likely to more than repay the wages taken by them. It will be found that under such treatment the labourers will respond to the affection so lavishly bestowed upon them.

Under this scheme the founder will live his own life and the labourers theirs. I have observed that the common kitchen often taxes the best resources of the ashram and becomes also a theatre for quarrels and heart-burnings between the members. This will be altogether avoided when the labourers alone are employed. Labourers are used to food which they won't leave and upon which they flourish. Educated men's tastes have become different and often artificial. They would collapse if they attempted to live on labourers' rations.

This is not to say that a common kitchen is a failure. It is a necessity where the ideals are common and full kinship is a mutually recognized obligation. This is not to be expected for many a year to come from the labourers.

The proposed scheme reduces chances of hypocrisy to a minimum and enables a natural union between intelligence and labour to be established. Each will be complementary of the other. There is, too, a chance of the ashram so conducted becoming immediately self-supporting and rapidly developing.

This is all very well for the imaginary ashram or the ashrams which would experiment with the new scheme, but what about the village worker who becomes a villager for the first time in his life? My scheme applies to him with necessary changes. He must not regard himself as a different species from those in whose midst he is to go. He must regard the villagers amidst whom he will work as friends and fellow workers. According to his wants he will employ the willing labour of those whose services he may need. And if he has enough intelligence that would suit the villagers, he may need the paid services of all the villagers who have enforced leisure and who would gladly employ it if they can.

Harijan, 8-6-1935

228. LETTER TO TEHMINA KHAMBHATTA

WARDHA,
June 8, 1935

DEAR SISTER,

I was glad to read your detailed letter. Do please keep me regularly informed. I hope he is daily improving. It is good that Deenabandhu is there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6609

229. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[Before *June 9, 1935*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

It is good that you went and saw everybody in Nainital. I should like you to spend the whole of June in the hills. Postpone the programme you have drawn for 15th onward to 30th. It is not good that the discharge from your ear has not completely stopped. Do you keep Bombay informed? If not, you must send a detailed report now. We should know what they think. If they want to express their helplessness, let them say so. The discharge from the ear must stop.

You have perhaps been a little hasty in writing to Ogylvie, that is, from the point of view of your health. I believe that you will see me before going to see him if he says yes.

I enclose a letter for that Danish friend. He has given his Bombay address.

Marybehn is arriving tomorrow. You are silent about Madalasa's progress.

Kamalnayan has left. He was quite enthusiastic. Gangadevi has arrived and been lodged in the garden. We met Khansaheb[2] and had long talks with him. His health is very bad, but he was cheerful. He was really happy that we visited him. He remembered all of you very much. I have written that he should be transferred to Nasik or Yeravda. Let us see what happens. He did feel a little worried about Abdul Ghani.

The [All-India Village] Industries Association is progressing slowly yet steadily. It is shaping up. Everything else is all right.

Andrews is in Simla and is writing his book there. He is not seeing any officials this time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2971

[1] From a note by the addresse at the top of the letter indicating June 9 as the date of its receipt

[2] Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan

230. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

WARDHA,
June 9, 1935

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your letter. I am arranging for a teacher for you. I will entrust the task to Maganbhai[1] himself. Write a letter to him giving him an idea of your knowledge of English and Gujarati. Tell him what you have read in English and in Gujarati, how much grammar you know, etc. Send the letter to me. Write in a neat hand. Don't mind if the letter becomes long. Write a letter in English, too. The letter should be addressed to Maganbhai. Take this as the beginning of your lessons. You will get a reply immediately. He will correct your English and Gujarati and will tell you what you should do further. Keep some space between the lines and also a margin.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9331. Also C.W. 6606. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

231. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

June 9, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letter. Enclosed please find an acknowledgment to Das.

I enclose copies of two letters I wrote to the Viceroy. I have received his reply, which is in the negative. And now, when everybody has been sent down from Quetta, there is nothing we can do except look after them.

Please do not be in a hurry to come down to the plains. Do stay there till the end of this month. Here it is still as hot as a furnace.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2972

[1] Maganbhai Prabhubhai Desai

232. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

June 9, 1935

BHAI MUNSHI,

In Jamiatram Kaka you have lost a source of great strength.

I had a letter from Amritlal regarding Sikar[1]. I can't decide even about the propriety or otherwise of a committee without understanding the position better. I am afraid we shall not be able to get any good out of it. If my fear is unwarranted, I can decide that only after I understand the position more fully.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati: C. W. 7575. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

233. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

June 9, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter . . . .[2]

As regards Quetta, what can we do now? They are sending out everybody, and so the question of going there doesn't arise. Wherever the injured or those rendered homeless go, they are helped by the people. What more could we do? Yesterday I received a wire similar to the one received by Rajendrababu. The only thing for us now to do is to keep silent.

I don't consider the change in India Office as a happy augury.[3] You must have read Sapru's certificate. To whom are we to complain? He himself had disapproved of such a Bill, and now welcomes this one.

Rajendrababu is arriving here on the 12th. He will stop for four hours.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro-2: *Sardar Vallabhbhaine*, pp. 170-1.

[1] In the former Jaipur State, where a satyagraha had been launched against excesses of the State Government

[2] Omission as in the source

[3] The reference is to the appointment of Lord Zetland as Secretary of State for India in place of Sir Samuel Hoare.

234. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

June 9, 1935

CHI. VIJAYA,

It is but right that you should pursue your studies instead of coming here to labour.

Even if either husband or wife desires their relations to be like those of a brother and sister but cannot live like that in the same house, it will be their dharma to separate.

Blessings from

BAPU

VIJAYABEHN NARANBHAI PATEL
VARAD, *via* BARDOLI, TAPTI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7058. Also C.W. 4550. Courtesy: Vijaya M. Pancholi

235. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

June 9, 1935

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

This time you have punished me severely. I waited and waited for your letter and was always disappointed. A man does not die by desiring to die. Come here after you have done with Kashmir. I shall assign you work. Let us wait and see. No one is allowed to go to Quetta.

Prabhavati is at Savali these days and Ba at Bochasan.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2438

236. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD[1]

WARDHAGANJ,
June 10, 1935

BABU RAJENDRA PRASAD
BHUSAVAL

THINK PROPOSED ACTION RIGHT

GANDHI

RAJENDRA PRASAD
CONGRESS PRESIDENT
CAMP DHULIA

From the original: Dr. Rajendra Prasad Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

237. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

WARDHA,
June 10, 1935

BHAI PURUSHOTTAMDAS,

I got your letter. From which expression of mine did you conclude that I was offended?

As regards the Village Industries Association, I merely reassured you and took the opportunity to have a little dig at you.

However, I was very much pleased that you wrote to me. Do write to me often. I was never so thin-skinned as to take offence quickly, and even if I was I have been assailed by so many that I am no longer so. Have no fear about me, therefore.

My question was not about what kind of relief we should ask for, but about what we should do to prevent harm. My difficulty is that nobody is likely to listen to us just now. What steps should we take to ensure that no harm will be done?

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From Gujarati: Purushottamdas Thakurdas Papers, File No. 159/1935. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] This was in reply to a telegram from the addressee dated June 9, which read: "Your letter. Government express inability grant entry to relief parties giving reasons in reply my telegram. Wishing not embarrass Government, propose asking people organize relief refugees as suggested by Government. Reply immediate, Posting correspondence."

238. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

June 10, 1935

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I got your letter, as also Manu's. I very much liked the latter's decision to come here, Kanti or Kanu will go to the station on the 15th morning to receive her. I understand the other things that you write about.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9722

239. LETTER TO ALAMGHEIR

WARDHA,
June 11, 1935

DEAR ALAMGHEIR,

Surely you should be able to answer the question whether I love the Mussalmans as dearly as life or I hate them. If you yourself have any doubt, then I cannot solve it by means of a letter. You must study the whole of my life and get the answer from it.

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

240. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

June 11, 1935

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your letter. It is not good that your constipation persists. Eat *neem* leaves and tamarind. You get plenty of tamarind there. Clean it before eating it.

Narandas is very eager that you should go to Rajkot. If you are not needed there, it would certainly be good that you should go to Rajkot. If you do not find the place agreeable you may come away.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9400. Also C.W. 646. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

241. LETTER TO NIRUPAMA PANGALKAR

June 11, 1935

CHI. NIRUPAMA,

I have got your letter. There is a way of putting an end to your weeping. You are still a child. You should not speak in public for three or four years. Concentrate on studies. When you grow up, you will start speaking on your own, and your self-restraint will have strengthened you.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI NIRUPAMA PANGALKAR[1]
SUDAMA KUTIR
UDIPI, KATAPADI, P.O.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9226

242. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

June 11, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

I have known cases where passports have taken more than six months. Let us see how much time yours takes. I do not follow what you say about money. Clothes, watch, etc., should be thought of only after you have got the passport. Pyjama and *kurta* are a good dress. I understand about bitter gourd.[2] It is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha*, facing p. 167

[1] The address is written in English on the postcard.

[2] The addressee's wife was planning to supply him with a stock of dried bitter gourds and other vegetables for the trip abroad.

243. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[On or after *June 11, 1935*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I should like you to probe into the affair of . . .[2] . I must get to the root of the matter. Personally, I formed a good impression about the Kanya Vidyalaya in Baroda. But we cannot come to any conclusion on the basis of just one day's impression. We will have to go deeper.

Ramniklal and Kishorelal will write to me. I have already talked about the matter to Vasumati. It will be better if you also write to her. Write to Ramniklal too.

Did the Chorwad climate have any effect on Purushottam's health? Has Jamna benefited? Is Vijaya all right now? Mathew should reach there in a few days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8454. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

244. LETTER TO SHIVASEVAK TIWARI

WARDHA,
June 12, 1935

BHAISHRI TIWARIJI,

I am glad to learn that you and your colleagues are making efforts to collect a fund.

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SHIVASEVAK TIWARI[3]
HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN
INDORE

[From Hindi]

Veena, Tributes Issue, April-May 1969

[1] From the reference to Vasumati Pandit, whom the addressee wanted to go to Rajkot; *vide* "Letter to Vasumati Pandit", 11-6-1935

[2] The names have been omitted.

[3] Joint Secretary of the Reception Committee

245. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

WARDHA,
June 12, 1935

CHI. VIDYA,

If you are learning Bengali there and if everyone is envious of your cheerfulness, I shall congratulate you. What right does one who is both mother and father have to worry? Also, is there a rule for one who is only a mother that she must remain free from anxiety?

There is no chance of my going to Calcutta now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

246. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

WARDHA,
June 12, 1935

CHI. SUMANGAL,

I have your letter. We shall never own defeat, even if we forfeit life itself.

I have gone through the diary. I have pointed out the remedy. The dignosis is accurate. If possible refrain from thinking too much and take up some work of service. It could be the service of your mother or of the children of Rajgarh. I am surprised at whatever Prabhavati wrote to you about Kanta. You did well to stop her and to have restrained your own curiosity.

You must cling to Ramanama.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

247. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

WARDHA,
June 13, 1935

SETH JAMNALALJI
BHOWALI

REMAIN THERE TILL END MONTH IF POSSIBLE.

BAPU

Panchaven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 164

248. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

June 13, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Your letter brought tears to my eyes. God will certainly bless service so conscientiously and selflessly rendered.

I would have joyously taken you both to Quetta if I could have gone. But it was not to be.

Yes, you will convince me of the necessity of removing the Khadi Bhandar to the Mall.[1]

I can't write much as I am writing with the left hand. The right needs rest.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3538. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6347

249. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

June 13, 1935

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have already written[2] to you about Bapa.

Now I have your letter about the Pani Fund. I shall write again. I have seen also Jugalkishore Birla's objection. Was the first use of his name without sanction? If it was with his sanction, then the second use is inoffensive. But if the first use was without sanction, I do not know what answer you would give. I had written to him. He said he might pay later on.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 917.

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Amrt Kaur", 7-6-1935
[2] *Vide* "Letter to N.R. Malkani", 6-6-1935

250. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

June 13, 1935

BHAI VITHALDAS,

You have raised a very big issue. If you had this doubt in your mind, the method that you adopted was wrong. If the reason which you now give was the real reason for relieving them, they could have been relieved but in a different manner. The question at the moment is this: Was the reason mentioned in the notice given to Ganatra[1] honestly the real one?

That notice is certainly imperfect. If any assurance was given by Kakubhai it should certainly be honoured. The conduct of the others was no doubt objectionable, but if they apologize for it they should be taken back. If you approve of this much, I would take up the question of adopting a new policy and would even give immediate notice of it. To my mind this is an important question. Even for arriving at a correct decision about it, it is necessary to disperse this small cloud. Unless this latter problem is solved completely, it will not be possible to solve the other important ones.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9788

251. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
June 14, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I can see that I should not involve you in . . .'s[2] affair.

Pass on the accompanying after reading it. Then watch what happens. In any case, Manu will come here tomorrow and live with me.

I understand about Keshu. What about the workshop? Shall we get any benefit from the machines Keshu has invented?

[1] Of All-India Spinners' Association, Bombay; *vide* also "An Award", 18-6-1935

[2] The name has been omitted.

I had a letter from Dhiru, but it didn't satisfy me. Enclosed please find a letter from Panditji. Meet Gajanan's expenses as desired by Panditji. I intend to write to Dhiru. Do you think the problem of expenses should be reconsidered?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8453. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

252. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

June 14, 1935

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. You must have received Babaji's letter. You should leave immediately after the marriage. I got Jayaprakash's letter. Kumarappa gave me your message regarding Sardar. The lessons with Viyogiji[1] are going on. Do people in Srinagar card or spin? If nobody spins, you should carry on propaganda and persuade some people to do so. Srinagar is just a village. You should make a beginning with yourself. There you must be getting sufficient time. Give me your daily programme of work. Amtussalaam is here. I am all right. Lakshmi[2] will come here from Bardoli. Manu also is coming.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3452

253. TALK WITH A HARIJAN SEVAK[3]

[Before *June 15, 1935*]

What are four years in the life of a nation, and what is even a lifetime in the vast space of eternity, when one remembered that one had to conquer the prejudices of centuries? And have we tried enough and suffered enough? Look at Booker T. Washington[4]. Have any of

[1] Viyogi Hari

[2] Lakshmi Marutidas Sharma

[3] This is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The Harijan sevak had failed to get enought money for his institutions from the Harijan Sevak Sangh and was also unable to enlist the sympathies of young men during the four years of his service.

[4] American Negro educator, founder of the Tuskegee Institute. He had to suffer great hardships as a youth.

us suffered as much as he did? We narrate the woes of Harijans but do we ever share with them those woes? They are sharp-witted enough to see that we do not starve whilst it is they who have to starve, we have plenty of clean water to drink whereas they have dirty pools to depend upon.

The Harijan Sevak Sangh does not give you money. Well, it is right from its point of view. We have begun at the wrong end; we rely on outside assistance instead of relying on our own strength. The time has come when we must cease to be spoonfed. Why not teach the boys in the verandahs or their own sheds and make the school a natural growth from the soil? Why not get them help you in growing your own grain and your vegetables and thus reduce the expenses of the boarding house? It is preposterous for a school, say in Trivandrum, to depend on Delhi. It is so unnatural. It may have been necessary in the initial stages, but it should be no longer necessary now. The man in charge of the school depending for his salary on Delhi is a foreigner there. If he completely identifies himself with Harijans, they will share with him their meagre fare and will certainly not allow him to starve. It is no use looking up to the Central Board every now and then. The Central Board will keep the whole show nicely moving, but the sinews should come from the offshoots, the provincial boards. But my mind is daily making so many discoveries that I feel that we might even dispense with collections. If we have no money we have other resources, if only we knew the art of discovering them.

And why should the Harijans be the cause of despair? Show me many people who can keep their pledges. Have we kept all our pledges? And why do we make so much of their carrion-eating? We want them to give it up no doubt, but it is no use getting impatient with them. If many *savarna* Hindus eat flesh, naturally they will eat carrion. There is hardly any chemical difference between meat and carrion. You will remember Dr. Deshmukh wrote to me that he would find it impossible to distinguish between fresh meat and fresh carrion. And the logic at least is with the Harijans. A rich Hindu may afford to have a goat killed for himself, but what is a poor Harijan to do? You will give him no live goat, and you will not allow him to eat a dead goat's flesh that chance throws in his way. No, We must realize that there is no vice among the Harijans that is not traceable to us. It is we who have to do all the penance. If crores of *savarna* Hindus will give up meat-eating, Harijans will today give up carrion.

QUESTION: Could we ask them to leave their wretched abodes and settle in our midst?

ANSWER: This is more easily said than done. If all caste Hindus become reformers your question won't arise. Today the reformers would be powerless to defend Harijans from molestation if they settled in *savarna* quarters. But I would advocate exodus by Harijans from where they are persistently persecuted, as by the Nattars for example.

Q. What about making them go through an *Upanayana*[1] ceremony?

A. No; it involves the assumption that they are low and that they have got to be raised to a higher status. There is nothing low about them. Whatever appears to be low in them is a reflection of our own terrible lowness. Supposing I have a diseased child, what shall I do with it? Shall I discard it, shall I consider it low? No, I shall have to remind myself that it is suffering for my sins, and that therefore it deserves extra care from me. But here with the Harijans, let me tell you that I literally hold that they are far superior to us. They have remained with us in spite of our persecution, and they are still clinging on to us. It is a marvel of marvels to me that they continue to hold on to a religion, of which some of the adherents say that it has no place for them. No, we must come down from the high pedestal we have occupied all these years and take our natural place with them.

Harijan, 15-6-1935

254. IMPLICATIONS OF PRAYER

The few lines that I wrote[2] inviting the people to prayer and repentance on the Quetta disaster have given rise to some private correspondence. One of the correspondents asks:

At the time of the Bihar quake you had no hesitation in saying that it was to be taken by *savarna* Hindus as a fit punishment for the sin of untouchability. For what sin must the more terrible quake of Quetta be?

The writer had the right to put the question. What I said about Bihar was deliberately said even as the lines on Quetta were deliberately written. This call to prayer is a definite yearning of the soul. Prayer is a sign of repentance, a desire to beocme better, purer. A man of prayer regards what are known as physical calamities as divine chastisement. It is a chastisement alike for individuals and for

[1] Wearing the sacred thread

[2] *Vide* " Let us Pray", 6-6-1935

natioins. All chastisements do not equally startle people. Some affect only individuals, some others affect groups or nations only mildly. Disasters like Quetta stun us. Familiarity with ordinary everyday calamities breeds contempt for them. If earthquakes were a daily occurrence, we would take no notice of them. Even this Quetta one has not caused in us the same disturbance that the Bihar one did.

But it is the universal experience that every calamity brings a sensible man down on his knees. He thinks that it is God's answer to his sins and that he must henceforth behave better. His sins have left him hopelessly weak, and in his weakness he cries out to God for help. Thus have millions of human beings used their personal calamities for self-improvement. Nations too have been known to invoke the assistance of God when calamities have overtaken them. They have abased themselves before God and appointed days of humiliation, prayer and purification.

I have suggested nothing new or original. In these days of fashionable disbelief, it does need some courage to call men and women to repentance. But I can claim no credit for courage. For my weaknesses or idiosyncrasies are well-known. If I had known Quetta, as I know Bihar and Biharis, I would certainly have mentioned the sins of Quetta, though they might be no more its specialities than untouchability was Bihar's. But we all—the rulers and the ruled—know that we have many sins, personal and national, to answer for. The call is to all these to repentance, prayer and humiliation. True prayer is not a prelude to inaction. It is a spur to ceaselesss, selfless action. Purification is never for the selfishly idle, it accrues only to the selflessly industrious.

Harijan, 15-6-1935

255. CRIMINAL WASTE

Shri Annadababu writes from Raha (Assam):[1]

I hope that some Assam worker will put an end to the criminal waste to which Annadababu has drawn attention. If cotton seeds are thrown away, it will pay any young man to collect them. They have a market price. This is pre-eminently a matter of educating the ignorant.

Harijan, 15-6-1935

256. THE EVIL OF GAMBLING

A friend has been persistently asking me to draw public attention to the species of gambling prevalent in Bombay among the so-called high class people. Whilst I have been heart and soul with the friend in deploring the evil, I have not had the courage to write about it. I felt that whatever I said would be a waste of effort, as I had no hope of following up my writing by some organized constructive effort to combat the evil. Whilst I was thus debating as to writing on the evil, I had to go to Borsad in answer to the Sardar's summons. There in Borsad the Sardar and his volunteers poured into my ears harrowing tales of the havoc that gambling was working in the villages of Gujarat. It is spreading like grass fire of a windy night. Everybody is in a hurry to be rich without working. 'Somebody will have made the correct guess as to the ruling price for the day of some commodity. Why not I?'—argues the gambler and rushes to his ruin. Peace is being destroyed in the once happy homes of Gujarat.

There is no doubt that whatever one calls it, this gambling is as old as Adam, and that though the form and the name may have changed, the substance has not changed at all.

The law must be against this gambling. But it is of no avail if public opinion is not behind it. It is therefore necessary for workers to

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had drawn attention to the primitive process of oil-pressing which resulted in much wastage. He had mentioned that villagers did not even make use of the cake and those who used "unginned cotton on the *adhi* system threw away the cotton seeds". He had suggested to A.I.S.A. workers there to set up a *ghani* to be made available to the villagers "at no cost or for a part of the cake".

bestir themselves as they did during the plague or as they have done for the earthquake relief. They must not be satisfied till the evil is rooted out. In a way it is worse than the plague or the quake. For it destroys the soul within. A person without the soul is a burden upon the earth. No doubt war against gambling is not so simple as war against plague or earthquake distress. In the latter there is more or less co-operation from the sufferers. In the former the sufferers invite and hug their sufferings. To wean the gambler from his vice is like weaning the drunkard from the drink habit. This war against gambling is therefore an uphill task. But it must be tackled, if the evil is not dealt with in time. It is bad enough in Bombay. Its inroad upon the villages is a danger signal which no lover of the country can dare ignore.

Harijan, 15-6-1935

257. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

WARDHA,
June 15, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I have your letter.

I hope that Kichi[1] is out of fever. What is the matter with him? When you are not there, with whom does he stay? How does he pass his time? Does he interest himself in any thing or person?

Kamala has written to me. How nice it would be if you could come with her.[2] But I know you must not leave Father or Kichi just now.

Yes the Quetta disaster is awful. You should ponder over what I have written thereon.

Prabha is with her father. She returns in July. Amtussalaam is here.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 9601. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal

[1] Krishnaswami
[2] *Vide* "Letter to S. Ambujammal

258. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

June 15, 1935

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

On the subject coming up for discussion with Balvantrai[1], I told him that it was on your advice that Devchandbhai[2] was not calling a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Kathiawar Political Conference, and that I, too, approved of the decision. Balvantrai says that nobody desires to transgress the limits agreed upon in Porbandar. I have told him that if he could assure you to that effect, you might perhaps withdraw your objection. But even apart from this, I have advised him to talk things over with you.

He and some others are here in connection with the situation in Sikar.[3] He will tell you my opinion about it. Get well soon.[4]

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
89 WARDEN ROAD
BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 171-72

259. MESSAGE ON OPENING OF MEMORIAL TO C.R. DAS[5]

[Before *June 16, 1935*]

I am sorry I cannot attend the function which is to take place on the 16th instant. I wish it every success. How nice it would be if those present would remember that the true memorial will be to weave into our own lives the virtues we prized most in Deshbandhu's life.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-6-1935

[1] Balvantrai Mehta
[2] Devchand Parekh of Wadhwan
[3] *Vide* "Letter to K.M. Munshi", 9-6-1935
[4] The addressee was suffering from jaundice.
[5] The Memorial, built on Keoratala crematorium, was opened by Nil Ratan Sircar on June 16, which marked the tenth anniversary of the death of C. R. Das.

260. LETTER TO G. SITARAMA SASTRY

June 16, 1935

DEAR SITARAMA SASTRI,

I shall try the *gur* syrup and report the result to you. Only I shall know nothing about its capacity to keep for a long time.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

Sjt. SITARAMA SASTRY
VINAYA ASHRAM
P.O. CHANDLE, DIST. GUNTUR

From a photostat: C.W. 9174. Courtesy: G. Sitarama Sastry

261. LETTER TO MOHANLAL

WARDHA,
June 16, 1935

MY DEAR MOHANLAL[1]

I have your letter. The point you raised cannot be discussed in the pages of the *Harijan*. I think that Dr. Gopichand's opinion is quite sound. Only I would go a step further and say that as Sangh we ought not to carry on any agitation regarding what may be done by the Government. Our scope is confined to such work as we can do without the assistance of the Government. We should appreciate every step that the Government may take. It is open to us to give co-operation to the Government if and when they seek it. But it is outside our province to criticize the Government or to carry on platform agitation with a view to secure measures from the Government. This is not conceived as a permanent policy but for the moment I have not doubt that it is the only sound policy for us to follow. We must recognize that Harijans at the present moment are undecided as to what they should do. We must deserve their absolute confidence before we can hope to influence the Government along the lines that we may desire. I take it that you will show this letter to Dr. Gopichand also.

Yours,

SJT. MOHANLALJI
LAJPATRAI BHAWAN
LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Secretary, Punjab Harijan Sevak Sangh

262. LETTER TO MOHAMMAD AJMAL KHAN

June 16, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter received four days ago and now your book. I cannot read Urdu fast and I have little leisure left to me today for reading however much I may like to do it. At the present moment I have given your book to a Mussalman friend who is staying with us. When he has finished it I shall try to go through your book and if and when I succeed I shall certainly give you my opinion. You may not know that I do not review any book in the pages of the *Harijan.*

Yours sincerely,

MAULVI MOHAMMAD AJMAL KHAN
THE INSTITUTE OF DIVINE TRUTHS
DAIRA, ALLAHABAD

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

263. LETTER TO MUHAMMAD ABOOSALEH A. NIZAMI

June 16, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have gone through your book on tanning. It is very scrappy and very incomplete. There are many things omitted. It is not a book which a learner may take up and carry on experiments without reference to any teacher. You have not given the accurate proportion of materials used. I would recommend your rewriting the chapters and making your book much more accurate than it is. It need not be bulky but it ought to be accurate. You have said very little about the quality of water to be used by tanners and all the literature I have read about tanning lays the greatest stress upon the quality of water. Lastly it seems to me that the price you have put upon the book is altogether out of proportion to the cost of the publication. Your book is not intended for the wealthy few but it is intended for the poor many.

Yours sincerely,

MUHAMMAD ABOOSALEH A. NIZAMI
BARODA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

264. LETTER TO DR. M. B. GODBOLE

June 16, 1935

DEAR GODBOLE[1]

I thought that I had returned the book you left with me long ago. That was to have been handed to you when you passed through on your way to Poona. Somehow or other this was not done. I hope you have now received it. It was sent immediately after I got the letter.

As for the apparatus I gave it for trial to Shri Kishorelal Mashruwala whom I introduced to you and who is an asthmatic. He has been giving it a trial and I have asked him to make a written report. As soon as I receive it I shall send it to you. So far as my own opinion is concerned I think that it is a very simple device for measuring the breathing capacity of people and therefore it is likely to be of use in schools and hospitals where the lung capacity of children or patients is required to be measured.

Herewith Sjt. Kishorelal's report.

Yours sincerely,

DR. M. B. GODBOLE
POST BOX 19, POONA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

265. LETTER TO L. K. KIRLOSKAR

June 16, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I had hoped to hear from you in reply to my letter[2] about your machine. As I have already said I would like to buy one machine from you so as to enable me to try it for a lengthened period. If it gives the work that I contemplate it may be possible to take from you a large number at an agreed price. And I would like to discuss more fully the larger proposition I tentatively discussed with you for enforcement in the event of your failing to secure the price.

[1] Professor of Industrial Chemistry, Banaras Hindu University
[2] *Vide* "Speech at Hindi Sahitya Sammelan", 29-3-1918

I enclose Sir Daniel Hamilton's[1] letter to me for your perusal. If you think that you would let him have a drawing of your charkha for the purpose intended by him you may either send it to me or Sir Daniel directly to the address given in his letter.

Please return the letter.

Yours sincerely,

L.K. KIRLOSKAR
KIRLOSKARWADI

From A copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

266. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

June 16, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. A time limit of 15 days is too short. Even important persons do not get passport in 15 days. Recently a doctor got a passport after 18 months.

Your coming here is a different matter. What will happen to Draupadi and the children when you leave? Will she stay with your brothers? Give me all details. Even when you decide to come, I shall not reserve a room for you. We shall think of a separate room only after your arrival. All this will be done only after the decision about the passport. And after getting the passport, will a separate room be necessary? Before coming here, you will have to write to the Collector or see him and tell him that he should write to Wardha, in case he wants to make any inquiries. He should also be asked when the reply may be expected.

I have not understood what you have written about Mother. Ramgopal has sent many complaints but they are not well-founded. An answer has been sent along these lines.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha,* facing p. 169

[1] Of Gosaba Zamindari Estate, Sunderbans

267. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

WARDHA,
June 17, 1935

CHI. MARY,

I was glad to have your postcard. Thakkar Bapa sent me a letter. I would like to have a daily bulletin for a few days.

All well here.

Love from all.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6045. Also C.W. 3375. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

268. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

June 17, 1935

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. I shall go through the Bihar report and may have to write[1] again on wells. I hope to write on the Pani Fund in the next issue of the *Harijan.*

Rao Bahadur M. C. Raja has sent me a copy of the letter he sent to you. It speaks highly of Ganesan. I take it that you have dealt with that letter.

Ganesan seems to have disappointed everybody. Of course Thakkar Bapa does not trust him at all. Now Sastri has been disillusioned and so, I believe, have the Chairman and the Secretary of the Madras branch of the Sangh.

Love.

BAPU

PROF. MALKANI
DELHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1160

[1] *Vide* "Wells for Harijans", 22-6-1935

269. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

June 17, 1935

CHI. VASUMATI,

If Shivabhai[1] has really some work for you and wishes you to remain there, you have already given a promise to stay there for a year and you should keep it and live there in perfect peace and joy and carefully do the work entrusted to you. Try to cure your constipation.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Lakshmi and Manu have arrived here.

SHRI VASUMATIBEHN
VALLABH VIDYALAYA
BOCHASAN

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9401. Also C.W. 647. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

270. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

June 17, 1935

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

After all experiments are experiments. There is no knowing when they will succeed or fail. If you live for a few days only on juicy fruits, you will need neither medicines nor anything else. If the bowels don't move, you must take enema. And it is altogether unreasonable for you to refuse to use a commode. It makes things convenient both for the patient and those who are attending on him. Do start using one.

Andrews is coming here tomorrow. He will stay for a day or two. We have a miscellaneous crowd of people here at present. Kumarappa's brother Bharatan has come.

Vasumati had almost decided to leave Bochasan, but Shivabhai is pressing her to stay on. I have written to her and told her that if she is really needed there, she may certainly stay on for a year. If you

[1] Shivabhai Gokalbhai Patel, Principal, Vallabh Vidyalaya, Bochasan

have any suggestion to make in this regard, convey it through Mani[1]. I don't expect a letter in your own handwriting just now. You must get over your illness.

Come here when you are all right. Rajendrababu is definitely coming. Jamnalal also will arrive in July. It will also be fairly cool here by that time. Now the excessive heat of the past few days is no longer there.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 172-3

271. LETTER TO N.R. MALKANI

WARDHA,
June 18, 1935

DEAR MALKANI,

The letter dictated on Sunday has not yet been posted. This, therefore, will accompany that letter.

I cannot trace anywhere the letter written to you by Mrs. Nehru which you were sending me and which you wanted me to return. You will, therefore, trace that letter in your papers. I shall not need it because I shall guess its purport and I hope to deal with Women's Conference in one of the issues of the *Harijan.*

As you will see from the forthcoming issue I shall be dealing with the Wells Fund practically from week to week. I have already dealt with the Punjab report. I have on my file the Bihar report and now I understand also the Gujarat report. The one or the other will go in next week.

I have already written to Seth Jugalkishore. I have told him that he should not mind the mention, and that it was begun by Thakkar Bapa purely out of enthusiastic admiration. I have also said that if he has still strong objection to his name being in any way coupled with the Fund, it will be formally removed. If you have, therefore, already not written to him, you need not think about it any more until I write to you.

What is your objection to the David Scholarship Fund retaining the name David? And if that name is anathema to anybody, call it

[1] Manibehn Patel

Harijan Scholarship Fund. "What is in a name? A rose smells sweet under any other name."

The note on the framing of budgets I have not yet studied.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1161

272. LETTER TO C. G. JAGANNATHDAS

June 18, 1935

MY DEAR JAGANNATHDAS,

You were quite right in writing to me at length on nudism.[1] I have no hesitation in agreeing with you in theory. But theories are not always capable of being reduced to practice. Not even in exact mathematics, like geometry, are theories capable of always being reduced to practice. The imaginary right angle of geometry will not build houses but the nearly perfect right angle which masons and carpenters use is responsible for many marvellous things. In the Western world as well as in India nudism in practice is not permissible. I am convinced that it would be a great error to act as though all men and women were pure-minded. I hold it, therefore, to be dangerous.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

SJT. C.G. JAGANNATHDAS
459 MINT STREET
PARK TOWN, MADRAS

From a photostat: G.N. 9091

273. LETTER TO SARDUL SINGH CAVEESHAR

June 18, 1935

DEAR CAVEESHAR,

Dr. Khan Saheb should reamin the solitary exception. By all means take what assistance you can from Dr. Gopichand without connecting him officially with any organization. I assure you that one or the other is bound to suffer if he is officially connected with both. Though the branches of a tree are one and the same at the root, on the

[1] The addressee in his letter of June 15 had made out a case for the adoption of nudism. Clothing, he had argued, was unnatural and unhealthy and ought to be abolished, thus ensuring the exposure of the skin to light and air.

tree their separate existence is justified and they fully serve the root only by remaining in their respective places and discharging their duties. I know we are grievously short of true workers and we shall always remain so if we continue to saddle more than one responsibility on them and flatter ourselves with the belief that they are being well discharged. If you agree with my argument you will be satisfied with Dr. Gopichand giving you the help required without being officially identified with the Parliamentary Board. Absence of official connection gives a freedom to a conscientious man which he will not enjoy when he is officially connected. Do you not agree?

Yours sincerely,

SARDAR SARDUL SINGH CAVEESHAR
CHAMBERLAIN ROAD
LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

274. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

June 18, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM,

My whole heart goes out to you in your trial. God is merciful. He will give you strength. It was good you did not inform Father and Mother and had the courage to have the operation performed at once. Why not take Kichi too to Kodai, if the doctor will allow it?

I sent you a letter at Bangalore. I hope you will receive it in due course, if it has not already come to you.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

275. AN AWARD[1]

June 18, 1935

With the consent of both the parties concerned, I have been involved in the grievances of the workers of the Bombay bhandar of the All-India Spinners' Association against their local agent.

I have gone through the papers presented by both parties.

[1] *Vide* also the following two items.

The notice served on Mr. Ganatra was improper. This defect can be overcome by giving him additional salary.

The conduct of the workers and their written memoranda after the notice had been served were rude and not befitting those who serve the cause of khadi. Such conduct cannot keep any institution going. Hence, the agent is justified in dismissing the workers who misbehaved.

However, if the workers give a written apology as suggested in the appendix, the agent should reinstate everyone including Shri Ganatra without any deductions from their salaries.

If the workers do not hand in the letter of apology within seventy-two hours of this resolution reaching Shri Ratubhai Desai,the representative of the workers, they would not be able to join their duty and the notice they have been served with will hold good permanently.

The agent is of the opinion that the bhandar does not have the capacity to bear the burden of the number of workers employed there. The award I have given above does not preclude any changes in the bhandar, reduction in the number of workers engaged or in their present salaries. I myself wish to make some suggestions regarding the way in which all khadi bhandars are being run, and it has become necessary to state them now.

It is my hope that the workers will willingly sign the letter of apology and return to their duty in the bhandar.

In case all the dismissed workers do not accept the above decision, the agent shall take back those who do so.

M. K. GANDHI

APPENDIX

After Shri Ganatra received the notice of dismissal, his and our behaviour was not worthy of the khadi workers. The letters we wrote were rude. We are sorry for such conduct. Hereafter we shall ceaselessly endeavour not to behave in that manner.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9789

276. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

June 18, 1935

BHAI VITHALDAS,

Here is my decision[1]. You yourself should call Ratubhai and show it to him. Give him a copy of it, too. I think it is the right course. Treat those friends with the utmost love. I will soon take up the question of the policy as a whole. Arrange and note down your ideas about the subject. If your mind cannot work on the subject or if you are physically unfit for the task, let me know. I want to take up the problem immediately.

You may come whenever you wish after reinstating the men.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9790

277. LETTER TO RATUBHAI DESAI

June 18, 1935

BHAI RATUBHAI,

I have already drafted my award[2]. Bhai Vithaldas will give you a copy of it. Go and collect it yourself in order to save time.

The purport of the message is that if you, Ganatra and others do not send in your apologies, you are doomed. I have given the message in the hope that all of you will live as members of a family and will work with greater devotion than before and serve the cause of khadi through the bhandar.

Write to me as soon as possible what you have to say regarding the management of the bhandar. I shall take up the matter immediately. The bhandar does not belong to anybody. It is for us only a means of service. I have as much right as you to give suggestions regarding its management.

Blessings from

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] *Vide* "An Award", 18-6-1935

278. LETTER TO SOHANLAL OBEROI

June 18, 1935

BHAI SOHANLAL,

What you have written is correct. Many girls suffer the fate that befell your sister. I shall try to write[1] about it. I hope your efforts will succeed.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Don't you have good slivers? Or good cotton?

SHRI SOHANLAL OBEROI
A. I. S. A. DEPOT
ADAMPUR, JULLUNDUR DISTRICT

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6863

279. TELEGRAM TO THE HOME SECRETARY

June 19, 1935

THANKING YOU FOR PERMISSION INTERVIEW KHANSAHEB REGRET UNABLE AVAIL PERMISSION UNLESS CONDITION ENGLISH-SPEAKING WAIVED. CAN PLEDGE HONOUR NOT TALK ANYTHING BUT DOMESTIC AFFAIRS HEALTH. SARDAR TELLS ME WHEN HE WAS ALLOWED VISIT KHANSAHEB INTERVIEW WAS CARRIED ON HINDUSTANI. REQUEST WAIVE CONDITION ENGLISH-SPEAKING.[2]

GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

280. LETTER TO R. R. DIWAKAR

June 19, 1935

MY DEAR DIWAKAR,

The interview does not surprise me. I expect nothing better just now. The weakening of the peasant does not pain me, for it has

[1] *Vide* "Notes sub-title Helpless Widows", 22-6-1935

[2] In his reply, the Home Secretary agreed to Gandhiji's speaking in Hindustani.

become general. The leaders have done no better. It is nobody's fault. The leaders as well as the peasants have done as well as it was possible for them to do. The lesson was valuable. All will be well if some of us are able to retain our faith in truth and non-violence undimmed by the surrounding weakness and gloom.

Yours,
BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

281. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

Unrevised WARDHA,

June 19, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

The frank admission of one's proved helplessness does not make one a coward but may be the beginning of bravery. I am taking you at your word and dictating. Writing with the left hand is a pleasure to me but I cannot do it with the same ease and quickness as with right hand.

Charlie has duly handed your letter. I am returning the photo-prints with autographs in the manner suggested by you.

I cannot remember Krishnalal Goswami. It may be that he was in the Ashram during my absence. Charlie says he has distinct recollection of having seen him in the Ashram. Mahadev has not. What he has said to you about charkha seems to be correct and shows that he knows something of the art of spinning. Slivers I am sending with Charlie. You will tell me how you find them. You should have the spindles locally made. If you cannot secure good steel, they can be made of any iron. So long as they are true it does not matter much. A weak spindle spins as well as any other, so long as it remains true. But in an inexperienced hand a weak spindle will go wrong more frequently than a steel spindle.

I am sending you also 450 note-paper sheets and an equal number of envelopes done up in nine bundles. I was about to have packets of 50 each pressed and nicely covered in some blank paper, of course hand-made, when your letter came telling me that I was to send the sheets coverless and that you would have them dressed up for the windows. You ask me to give you the price. The bundle that is coming to you with Charlie and the one that was sent previously to this were made out of paper which has cost me Rs. 12. Odd sheets that

were saved were used up by me. There still remain 150 sheets with me. The labour of making these I have not counted, nor the price of material specially prepared for making the envelopes. The price of the latter can only be trifling. The price of the former cannot today be estimated. Two or three workers have been at it for some odd days. I did not ask them to keep a record of all the time that they gave to this work. Now I have given you enough material to put your own price on the note-papers and envelopes. The least you have to sell them for is Rs. 12. But you are at liberty to do what you like with them. Of the slivers I can say nothing because all I have to pay for is the cotton purchased from the khaddar bhandar. But I have kept no account of what has been sent to you. The raw material could not have cost more than a rupee and a half.

As to Quetta relief I have asked you to reserve for the time being what you collect. Later on I shall be able to guide you. The relief will last for some time. Of course this advice has force so long as you have no definite idea about its direction. Immediately you know where you would like to spend your donation, you will not hesitate to do so.

One thing I cannot help asking you to collect for and that is the Harijan Wells Fund. You will note what I have said[1] about it in the ensuing number of the *Harijan.*

About the photos you will do what you like with them. They are your property. I think this covers all the points raised in your two unanswered letters. There is nothing wrong about the right hand. It will be all right after due rest.

Love to you both.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3716. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6872

282. A LETTER

June 19, 1935

DEAR SISTER,

I cannot vouch for the accuracy of the quotation. But my difficulty is fundamental. Which Jesus am I to believe? Him of your conception or mine? You will say, 'Jesus of the Bible'. Then the question is: 'According to whose interpretation?' I solve the difficulty by going the way God takes me.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] *Vide* "Wells for Harijans", 22-6-1935

283. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

June 19, 1935

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your letters. The work is going on.[1] Maganbhai is examining the Gujarati. The English may have to be given to somebody else. Rest assured, I will make perfect arrangements about your work.

Write to me what English and Gujarati books you have.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9576. Also C.W. 6548. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

284. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

WARDHA,
June 20, 1935

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I got your letter and the two cheques. I will do as you wish. I was surprised to learn about what you had to go through in the hospital. Write out in English all that you observed and show the draft to Deenabandhu Andrews. Then send it to the head of the institution. If he does not pay attention to it, we shall take the next step. Inquire as to who controls the hospital and who are the persons in charge of its running and let me know their names and addresses. You put up with the hardships but what would a poor man do? You have a devoted wife like Sita and, therefore, receive the best nursing. But what would be the plight of a person who has nobody to look after him and who has no faith in God? You must, therefore, acquaint the proper quarters with what you went through in the hospital. I hope your health is daily improving.

Blessings to you all from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7558. Also C.W. 5033. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lilavait Asar", 9-6-1935

285. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

June 20, 1935

CHI. NARAHARI,

Let Panditji start a music class if he wishes. The expenses seem all right. There must be a regular curriculum for inclusion in the prospectus. The progress which the pupil will make during the whole period and annually must be indicated in detail.

Even if Vanamala's fever has subsided, it will benefit her if she sticks to the diet I have suggested. You have certainly done well in imposing on yourself that restriction. It doesn't matter if you cannot observe it outside. Vanamala must take regular walks and the baths, too, of course.

How many boys and girls have joined the new school? Who are the teachers? What will the expenses come to every month?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Is Jayabehn there at present? What does she teach?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9080

286. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

WARDHA,
June 21, 1935

CHI. MARY,

You have given me good news. I expect better tomorrow. Where are you staying? Are you comfortable?

Strange, Margarete had no letter from me. I have searched my file. I cannot find her letter which shows that it is destroyed and no such letter is destroyed without answer. Please ask her with my love to write again and I will reply at once. All well here.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Mira has shown me your letter. K. may come any day in July and will stay perhaps a month. Mira need not write now.

From a photostat: G.N. 6046. Also C.W. 3376. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

287. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

June 21, 1935

CHI. PREMA,

I was not in a position to reply immediately to your excellent letter. When the right hand demands rest, it becomes impossible to cope with the work.

All my questions are not such as can be asked in a letter. I must of course have asked you such questions. Questions which occur to me at any moment belong only to that moment.

My aim in taking you to Borsad was that you might be able to do such work more easily in future, and to show you that I had taken a share in anti-plague work also.

I have already written in *Harijan* and explained the connection between our sin and the earthquake.[1] Read that article. Nobody was angered in Bihar. On the contrary, everybody realized that it was the result of our sin. All this follows from the principle of oneness.

I have written an article[2] in *Harijan* about snakes, etc. Read it. If you are not reading the articles which I have been writing recently in *Harijan*, I would advise you to read them carefully. I hope you get copies of it.

I wouldn't see any sin in ending the life of the husband who was lingering in pain and to whom no relief could be given even by careful nursing.[3] If, however, the husband is conscious, his wishes should be ascertained. If he wishes to live despite the pain, he should be allowed to live.

The owners becoming trustees means their handing over to the poor, that is, to the State or any other public welfare institution, all income in excess of a certain percentage.

If everybody handed over all their possessions to the State, the spirit of enterprise would disappear and everybody would become an automaton

My relations with the rich will continue. I don't look upon the rich as wicked and upon the poor as angels. Both in the East and the West there are a great many rich who earn money with philanthropic motives. They deserve to be honoured. I know numbers of poor

[1] *Vide* "Implications of Prayer", 15-6-1935

[2] *Vide* "All Life is One", 22-6-1935

[3] The reference is to a news item in a newspaper that an actress had shot her husband, who was suffering from cancer, to save him from a painful death.

people whose company should be shunned. In the swaraj of my dream, the tiger and the goat should be able to drink water together from the same pool. What will it matter if this remains for ever a dream? If I didn't know what I wanted, what would I strive for?

It is certainly true that I cannot understand people correctly, but do those who claim to understand them really do so? I, therefore, do not regret my ignorance. Since I cannot know human beings, I trust them.

Is it necessary for you to answer every time somebody asks you a question about me? Why don't you say, 'I cannot answer your question. I like the man's work and his ideas. Does one always give reasons for what one likes? You should, therefore, address your questions to the man himself'? If you replied thus, you would be saved from a great deal of unpleasant argument. However, you may certainly impart to others what you have learnt from me and fully digested. But then what one has digested doesn't remain somebody else's but becomes one's own. One entertains no doubt about what is one's own and is always ready with answers to any questions about it.

Let this suffice for today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10374. Also C.W. 6813 Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

288. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

June 21, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have not become impatient at all. But I can't put my faith in vaids. Their remedies are like black magic. They are just a shot in the dark. Are they worth trying even if they help? The best known vaid in the country is Gananath Sen. But he also is like the others. They do have some effective drugs, but when their power is exhausted you are where you were. I would quake with fear to put you in their hands. I see that even Malaviyaji and Motilalji went ultimately to doctors. If, however, you have really got all right, I needn't say anything in the matter. Call Mahadev there whenever you wish . . . .[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 173

[1] Omission as in the source

289. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 21, 1935

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Maybe in the early morning you may feel listless, but after sipping something, the strength will return and you may then stir out for a walk. The stomach should be empty before sleep.

Repetition of Ramanama serves me best when I am engaged in an act of service. But if one does not get peace in this way, one may seek it in solitude.

True renown comes from service rendered while practising truthfulness and other virtues.

God is author of good and evil, after all, only to the devotee. A proud ungodly man believes that he does everything. The *Gita* would not have been necessary if the Arjuna within had conducted rigorously the battle that goes on in this body.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4273

290. DISCUSSION WITH A VISITOR FROM QUETTA[1]

[Before *June 22, 1935*]

VISITOR: But why prayer, and not service? Would not service be the most effective form of prayer?

GANDHIJI: Indeed if service was open to us. But there are vast masses of people who have no power to render any tangible service to the survivors. Rather than talk about this grim visitation, they should cast the searchlight inwards and purify themselves. Prayer is a call to self-purification.

But is not prayer by itself ineffective without acts of service?

I do not mean outward demonstration of prayer. I mean self-introspection and self-purification which is essential for us all. If we

[1] This is extracted from "Weekly Letter" by Mahadev Desai, who had reported that the visitor "had specially come to give Gandhiji an idea of the ravages of the earthquake . . . . He had read with deep interest Gandhiji's call to prayer".

were engaged in service all our waking hours, I should have to say nothing. But we are not so engaged. And when we are not so engaged, God's name, taken with a view to self-purification, is not taken in vain.

I see it. So far as some of the survivors—both our own people and tommies who did rescue work for the first two days—are concerned, I am afraid they badly need to pray. For the moment when the calamity occurs we are stunned, we make professions of prayer and brotherhood of man, but the very next moment we forget that there was a calamity. Our acquisitive and depredatory instincts get possession of us, with the result, we are none the better for the earthquake.

Harijan, 22-6-1935

291. A DISCUSSION[1]

[Before *June 22, 1935*]

GANDHIJI: Is not this wheel a machine?[2]

[SOCIALIST:] I do not mean this machine, but I mean bigger machinery.

Do you mean Singer's sewing machine? That too is protected by the village industries movement, and for that matter any machinery which does not deprive masses of men of the opportunity to labour, but which helps the individual and adds to his efficiency, and which a man can handle at will without being its slave.

But what about the great inventions? You would have nothing to do with electricity?

Who said so? If we could have electricity in every village home, I should not mind villagers plying their implements and tools with the help of electricity. But then the village communities or the State would own power-houses, just as they have their grazing pastures. But where there is no electricity and no machinery, what are idle hands to do? Will you give them work, or would you have their owners cut them down for want of work?

I would prize every invention of science made for the benefit of all. There is a difference between invention and invention. I should not care for the asphyxiating gases capable of killing masses of men

[1] This is extracted from "Weekly Letter" by Mahadev Desai, who had reported: "A socialist holding a brief for machinery asked Gandhiji if the village industries movement was not meant to oust all machinery."

[2] Gandhiji was just then spinning.

at a time. The heavy machinery for work of public utility which cannot be undertaken by human labour has its inevitable place, but all that would be owned by the State and used entirely for the benefit of the people. I can have no consideration for machinery which is meant either to enrich the few at the expense of the many, or without cause to displace the useful labour of many.

But even you as a socialist would not be in favour of an indiscriminate use of machinery. Take printing-presses. They will go on. Take surgical instruments. How can one make them with one's hands? Heavy machinery would be needed for them. But there is no machinery for the cure of idleness but this. I can work it whilst I am carrying on this conversation with you, and am adding a little to the wealth of the country. This machine no one can oust.

Harijan, 22-6-1935

292. NOTES

HELPLESS WIDOWS

A bereaved friend sends a pathetic letter describing the plight of a 17-year-old girl, who has lost in Quetta her husband, two months old child, father-in-law and her husband's younger brother, that is to say everybody in her father-in-law's house. My correspondent adds that she escaped unhurt and returned with only her clothes on. She is his uncle's daughter and he does not know how to console her or what to do with her. She herself is not undamaged. Her leg has been injured, though fortunately the bone remains intact. The correspondent concluded by saying:

> I have left her with her mother in Lahore. I gently mentioned to her and other relatives whether the girl might not be remarried. Some listened to me sympathetically and some resented the proposal. I have no doubt that many a girl must have suffered the same fate as this cousin of mine. Will you say a word of encouragement to these unfortunate widows?

I do not know what my pen or voice can do in matters in which age-long prejudices are concerned. I have repeatedly said that every widow has as much right to remarry as every widower. Voluntary widowhood is a priceless boon in Hinduism; enforced widowhood is a curse. And I very much feel that many young widows if they were absolutely free, not so much from the fear of physical restraint as from the opprobrium of Hindu public opinion, would remarry

without the slightest hesitation. All the young widows, therefore, who are in the unfortunate position of this bereaved sister from Quetta should have every inducement given to them to remarry, and should be sure that no blame would be attached to them if they chose to remarry, and every effort should be made to select for them suitable matches. This is not work that can be done by any institution. This work has got to be done by individual reformers whose relatives have become widows, and they have to carry on a vigorous, dignified and restrained propaganda in their own circles, and whenever they succeed they should give the widest publicity to the event. Thus, and only thus, there is likely to be tangible relief provided for the girls who might have become widows during the earthquake. It is possible that the public sympathy can be easily mobilized whilst the memory of the tragedy is fresh in mind, and if once the reform takes place on a large scale, the girls who may have become widows in the natural course will also find it easy to get married if they are willing to do so.

THE THREE SERVICES

Khadi service, village service and Harijan service are all one in reality, though three in name. They are purely humanitarian services with no other aim than that of serving *Daridranarayana*. Harijans are the most down-trodden among the millions of *Daridranarayanas*. Their service necessarily includes that of all. A cup of water served to a Harijan in the name of God is a cup served to all the neglected ones of humanity.

With services so conceived it is wrong to associate ideas of capital and labour. From the unpaid chairmen to the salaried bearers all are servants. The funds belong to the respective trusts. All the servants, whether paid or unpaid, are subject to the rules framed from time to time by the respective boards. Where the whole idea is one of duty, there is no question of privilege. Anyone therefore in these services who thinks of privileges and rights is doomed some day or other to disappointment. For in these services there is no gradual betterment of the economic condition; on the contrary, there is or there soon will be a progressive renunciation of material advantage. ‘Duty will be merit when debt becomes a donation.’ Duty done is its own reward. Satisfaction there undoubtedly is in these services. But it is that of having done one’s duty. It is true that all have not approached their tasks in the spirit of pure service. Hence there have been exhibitions of distemper now and then in the oldest of the three services. The only way to avoid a repetition of these distempers is to

remind ourselves that we are in these services merely to discharge our obligations to *Daridranarayana*, not to seek privileges. We own no master but *Daridranarayana*, and if for the time being we own human superiors, we do so voluntarily, well knowing that no organization can be carried on without discipline. Discipline presupposes an organizing head. He is only the first among equals. And being purely a servant, in order to be the head, he has to be the humblestof all his co-servants. He is there on sufferance. But whilst he is there, he is entitled to the whole-hearted allegiance and uncomplaining obedience of all the fellow-servants.

Harijan, 22-6-1935

293. ALL LIFE IS ONE

During my brief visit to Borsad last month in several of my speeches I had said that, although I believed that even plague stricken rats and fleas were my kindred and had as much right to live as I had, I had no hesitation in endorsing Dr. Bhaskar Patel's campaign against rats and fleas.

A reporter who was struck by this claim to kinship with rats and fleas, but not interested in the context in which I had said it, telegraphed to his paper the interesting claim I had advanced. The Sardar's eagle eye caught the paragraph and wanted me to correct the mischief it was likely to do. Being immersed in the work he had entrusted me with, I excused myself by saying that the people concerned would not misunderstand me.

But perhaps the Sardar was right. For the paragraph containing the half-truth was wired to London. Those who are jealous about my European reputation were agitated, though they had realized that my claim to kinship must have had large qualifications. They have sent me the clipping containing the paragraph. I am bound now, if only for the sake of these loving friends, to clear the position though the half-truth having had a start cannot be overtaken at once.

I was in the midst of a population which would not kill wild animals that daily destroy their crops. Before the Sardar threw the whole weight of his tremendous influence into the campaign of the destruction of rats and fleas, the people of the Borsad Taluka had not destroyed a single rat or flea. But they could not resist the Sardar to whom they had owed much, and Dr. Bhaskar Patel was allowed to

carry on wholesale destruction of rats and fleas. I was in daily touch with what was going on in Borsad.

The Sardar had invited me naturally to endorse what had been done. For the work had still to continue, though henceforth with the people's own unaided effort. Therefore, in order to emphasize my endorsement, I redeclared in the clearest possible terms my implicit belief in ahimsa, i.e., sacredness and kinship of all life.

But why this contradiction between belief and action? Contradiction is undoubtedly there. Life is an aspiration. Its mission is to strive after perfection which is self-realization. The ideal must not be lowered because of our weaknesses or imperfections. I am painfully conscious of both in me. The silent cry daily goes out to Truth to help me to remove these weaknesses and imperfections of mine. I own my fear of snakes, scorpions, lions, tigers, plague-stricken rats and fleas, even as I must own fear of evil-looking robbers and murderers. I know that I ought not to fear any of them. But this is no intellectual feat. It is a feat of the heart. It needs more than a heart of oak to shed all fear except the fear of God. I could not in my weakness ask the people of Borsad not to kill deadly rats and fleas. But I knew that it was a concession to human weakness.

Nevertheless there is that difference between a belief in ahimsa and a belief in *himsa* which there is between north and south, life and death. One who hooks his fortunes to ahimsa, the law of love, daily lessens the circle of destruction and to that extent promotes life and love; he who swears by *himsa,* the law of hate, daily widens the circle of destruction and to that extent promotes death and hate. Though, before the people of Borsad, I endorsed the destruction of rats and fleas, my own kith and kin, I preached to them without adulteration the grand doctrine of the eternal Law of love of all life. Though I may fail to carry it out to the full in this life, my faith in it shall abide. Every failure brings me nearer the realization.

Harijan, 22-6-1935

294. FAECES AS CATTLE FOOD

I have seen in childhood in Porbandar cows freely eating human faeces. The practice appeared to me to be revolting and the feeling has persisted to this day. But a correspondent wrote telling me that in Satara district it was the usual thing for *gwalis* to pay for the right of

getting access to the *pekhanas* of people so that their cattle may eat the faeces from day to day. The correspondent said that the feeding of cow with faeces increased the yield of milk. Having no reason to doubt my correspondent's veracity I asked a medical friend to obtain an expert's opinion on the statement. Here is the startling opinion:

Normal faeces contain some nutritive material in the form of cellulose and nitrogenous material. The main substance in the faeces which might produce some physiological action on the animal feeding on them is vitamin B. "That vitamin B is present in the faeces was shown by Cooper (1914). He cured polyneuritic pigeons by administering an alcoholic extract of faeces. There seems to be general agreement that the nursing animal requires an increased amount of vitamin B in order to suckle her young successfully." (*Vide Monograph on Vitamins* published by Pickett Thomson Research Laboratory, London.)

It is quite possible that animals feeding on faeces get a liberal supply of this vitamin which ensures a copious secretion of milk from the active mammary gland.

Lack of appetite and deficient utilization of food are well marked characteristics of vitamin B deficiency in the diet, and it is quite likely that cows that feed on faeces along with other vegetable foodstuffs will put on fat owing to stimulation of appetite by vitamin B and greater utilization of carbohydrate food which is mostly transformed into fat in herbivorous animals.

As regards the bacteria, etc., which are normally to be found in the stools of human beings, it may be said that most of them are dead or dying bacteria and that the few that survive are killed by the gastric juice in the cow's stomach.

Thus though the chemical evidence in favour of human excreta as good food for cattle may be said to be established, the psychological objection will persist.

Harijan, 22-6-1935

295. WELLS FOR HARIJANS

Though the spectre of stricken Quetta haunts me still, I have neither compunction nor hesitation in asking the benevolent to respond quickly to the appeal for the Harijan Wells Fund published in these columns. Quetta has the whole world at its back. Harijans have only a few to help them. Not one sufferer from the Quetta disaster has to languish for thirst or to be obliged to drink filthy water which people would not have their cattle to drink.

We may not lose the sense of proportion in the face of overwhelming disasters. Not even the gaieties of people have been stopped except perhaps in some cases for a solitary moment. Must the burden of the Quetta grief fall on the already bruised shoulder of the Harijan? Donors would be guilty of misappropriation before God's court, if they were to divert what they had intended for giving clean drinking-water to Harijans or begrudge Harijans because the unexpected call of Quetta has come. The proper way is to revise the budget of personal expenses, not that of charities, least of the penetential which the Harijan Wells Fund is.

It was not without purpose or experience that the appeal for prayer was made. Heart-felt prayer steadies one's nerves, humbles one and clearly shows one the next step. Let the readers study the Punjab report on the drinking needs of the Harijans of that land of five mighty rivers. Is it not a shame that the rich people of the Punjab cannot provide clean water for Harijans? The appeal for a paltry lakh of rupees should be speedily over-subscribed.

Harijan, 22-6-1935

296. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

WARDHA,
June 22, 1935

CHI. NARHARI,

I will write to Velchand and then to you. Give the accompanying letter to Bhagwan. What is being done about the cows?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9081

297. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

WARDHA,
June 23, 1935

CHI. MARY,

If the place agrees with you, you should stay as long as they will let you. I want you to return strong and healthy. Ask them what it is that causes fruit to disagree with you.

I am not likely to be out of Wardha for another five months.

Yes, Chhotelal is as you describe him.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6047. Also C.W. 3377. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

298. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

June 23, 1935

BHAI VITHALDAS,

I got your two letters, the one written from home and the other from the store.

You need not give any statement to the Press. We shall send one, if necessary, when there is a union of hearts.

What Ratubhai said was painful. I am writing to him. Just now you should not take any step without consulting me. Have patience and do not worry. About effecting economy, too, we shall think together. I will call Vallabhdas. Send your whole scheme. I will call Ratubhai, if necessary.

Take action about Lakshmidas also after consulting me. Just now when things are going wrong everywhere, we should take every step carefully.

Do not endanger your health in doing this work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9791

299. LETTER TO PADMA

June 23, 1935

CHI. PADMA,

By replying to your letter with a postcard, I am saving a pice for the *Daridranarayana*. You are all getting alone very well. Study well but train your body well, too, and do not give up physical labour. Here it is all labour, as you must be observing from *Harijan Sevak.*

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6151. Also C.W. 3507. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

300. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

June 23, 1935

BHAI MOOLCHAND,

I have your letter.

Yours is a sad tale, but you can make it a means of dharma. Compassion subserves dharma. Dharma is put to test in adversity. When a wife does not follow the husband, how can she become his help-mate? She has a right to follow a different dharma and so has the husband. But when a wife follows an opposite dharma, she should not expect co-operation or cohabitation from the husband. She has every right to get maintenance from the husband. A husband who can be passionless towards his wife, and who remains and would remain passionless towards other women, has a right to part with his wife under such circumstances. So she should have complete freedom to stay away from you and live her own life. There is no cause for anger here. Let no harsh word be said to the wife. She should be reminded of her dharma affectionately; and non-co-operation should follow.

Then comes the problem of the children. As long as the children do not attain the age of 16, they must be in your custody. After that it is up to them to decide where to stay and whom to obey.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 837

301. LETTER TO AVADHESH DUTT AVASTHI

June 23, 1935

CHI. AVADHESH,

You cannot do social service by neglecting your duty to your father, mother and wife. This duty is not opposed to social service. It is necessary to understand the nature and scope of one's duty to one's mother and father. It is the duty of a husband to provide for his wife and to live with her, with due restraint, as long as she can tread the same path of duty. If the mother and father are invalid or poor and if they have no other son, it becomes one's duty to provide for them and to serve them.

I take goat's milk as I was driven to it. My vow prevented me from taking cow's or buffalo's milk. I resorted to a narrow interpretation of the vow and secured the freedom to take goat's milk.

If one wants to avoid cooked food, one can do with fruit only.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3213

302. LETTER TO SHRINATH SINGH

June 23, 1935

BHAI SHRINATH SINGH,

I have your letter. The committee's decision may be conveyed to Shri Suryanarayanji by the Sammelan office. That was my idea in sending his letter to the office.

I am exchanging views with the Nagpur friends about the next session of the Sammelan. I have also received your letter in that connection.

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SHRINATH SINGH
SECRETARY, HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN
P.O. BOX 11
ALLAHABAD (PRAYAG)

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5662. Also C.W. 2974. Courtesy: Parashuram Mehrotra

303. TELEGRAM TO H. L. SHARMA [1]

WARDHA,
June 25, 1935

DR. SHARMA

KHURJA

WIRE RECEIVED. COME THOUGH DATE NEXT STEAMER UNKNOWN. ENQUIRING.

BAPU

From a facsimile: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha*, facing p.170

304. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

June 25, 1935

CHI. MARY,

I am glad you are daily improving. Therefore if once in a while they induce fever in order to complete their test, I suppose we may not grudge them.

Chhotelal has not yet turned up. Hakim's medicine did no good. I didn't expect any.

Love.

Blessings from
BAPU [2]

From a photostat: G.N. 6048. Also C.W. 3378. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

305. LETTER TO L. K. KIRLOSKAR

June 25, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry you have lost all interest in the machine. My suggestion[3] not only does not contain anything inviting fresh expenditure but it contains a proposition that will cost you nothing. Paying for any fresh labour may be put in and may lead to payment of part or whole of the proved expenditure on the great effort you made in order to win the prize.

I told you when we met in Wardha and I repeat what I said then

[1] This was in reply to a telegram of even date from the addressee, which read: "Passport granted. Wire if I bring it for Calcutta."

[2] The subscription is in Hindi.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to L. K. Kirliskar", 16-6-1935

that, if the machine answered the modest points that I had suggested, I would like to place with you orders under a contract that may gradually liquidate the expenses incurred by you. For the time being this proposal has nothing to do with the Association[1] because the idea is wholly mine. If we came to a workable understanding, I would endeavour to interest the Association in the proposal.

I note that you cannot let Sir Daniel Hamilton have the drawings of your machine.

SJT. L.K. KIRLOSKAR
KIRLOSKARWADI

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

306. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

June 25, 1935

Unrevised

CHI. AMBUJAM,

Whilst the right hand is resting I must dictate to save time and be in time with my correspondence.

I had fear that mother would not be able to restrain herself. Both she and you would try your joint best to prevent father from interrupting his cure. I do hope that Kichi's wound is still healing. I know how troublesome these little operations are even for people in robust health. They take a long time to heal.

I am keeping your Quetta-quake donation. I shall make use of it when the proper time comes. When you are free I would like you to collect for Harijan Wells Fund. And you can begin with father and mother. It is a work of religious merit and therefore each has to win it for himself or herself. I take it you have been reading all about it in the columns of *Harijan.*

Yes, rains have set in here and so the temperature has gone down considerably.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI AMBUJAM
FAIRYFALLS VIEW
KODAIKANAL OBSERVATORY

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] All-India Spinners' Association; *vide* also" Improvement in Spinning", 29-6-1935

307. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 25, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

It seems that Harilal is off the rails again. He has left the job. You have promised to give him some work, but if he is in the habit of telling down right lies then are you sure you have done well? How will he prove useful to you? Of late, his letters do not satisfy me at all.

How is Mathew getting on? I hope you give him manual work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8455. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

308. LETTER TO DIWAN OF INDORE

[Before *June 26, 1935*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

You may know that during Easter I presided over the deliberations of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan[2]. There was established at the conference a Lipi Parishad. I understand that His Highness had ordered a compilation of opinion on Mr. Latifi's scheme for an improved Roman script for universal adoption. I would be grateful if you could lend me the papers the State may have in the matter.

Then there are Hindi publications by the State and publications in Devanagari script. I should be grateful if they could be supplied.

Lastly, I would like to have, if I may, copies of all State circulars regarding the use of Hindi in the State.

Yours sincerely,

THE DIWAN SAHEB

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the following item.
[2] Held at Indore from April 20 to 23

309. LETTER TO DIWAN OF INDORE

WARDHA,
June 26, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I am grateful to you for your prompt reply to my letter. I have now received the books and the papers I had asked for. Will you please accept the thanks of the Lipi Parishad for the gift?

I have now received from the convener, Kakasaheb Kalelkar a memorandum containing a list of books he needs for his research work. I should be grateful if these books can be supplied.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

310. LETTER TO O. V. ALAGESAN[1]

June 26, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your letter. I wish my pen or my word had the influence that you attribute to them.

What you say about the puzzles competition appearing in the daily Press is largely true. But it is an evil much subtler than the gambling on which I have been writing.[2] Though fashionable, the latter is still regarded an evil. The puzzles competition is not. I have not, therefore, the courage to deal with this evil.

Yours sincerely,

The Hindu, 6-7-1935

[1] The correspondent had drawn Gandhiji's attention to the puzzles competitions started by various literary journals in Tamil Nadu and requested him to write an article in *Harijan* condemning the practice which was a form of gambling.

[2] *Vide* "The Evil of Gambling", 15-6-1935 and "Notes" sub-title "The Gambling Evil", 29-6-1935

311. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

June 26, 1935

CHI. MARY,

Chhotelal has just arrived. I read the paragraph about the cooker to Mira. She remembered nothing about it. She has been searching it, but till now it has not been found. Don't you disturb yourself about it. If you can give me more particulars my search will be facilitated, unless I have found the thing before the arrival of your reply.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6049. Also C.W. 3379. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

312. LETTER TO RAJARAM R. BHOLE

WARDHA,
June 26, 1935

MY DEAR RAJARAM,

Though it is fairly cool now it is nothing like Poona yet. If you come after the first week of July, it would be pleasant. But you are at liberty to come earlier if you wish to.

Yours,
BAPU

SJT. RAJARAM BHOLE
C/O MINERVA TALKIES
POONA CITY

From the original: R. R. Bhole Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

313. LETTER TO C. G. JAGANNATHDAS

June 26, 1935

MY DEAR JAGANNATHDAS,

I have no objection to your publishing my letter[1] on nudism.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 9093

[1] *Vide* "Letter to C. G. Jagannathdas", 18-6-1935

314. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

June 26, 1935

CHI. LILAVATI,

Herewith your first exercise.[1] You can now send the Gujarati exercises directly to Maganbhai. However, you may send them to me if you wish.

This has been delayed in returning. It lay with me for three days. And since it was the first, Maganbhai also took some time over it.

The English [exercise] seems to have been lost. It is being searched for. If it is not found, I will frame a new exercise and send it. This work will remain in my charge for the time being.

Ask every time you do not understand a point. That will help you to make very great progress.

If you are one in a class of 20, you will receive 1/20 of the attention paid to the class. Through correspondence you will receive individual attention. Tuition by correspondence can help an industrious pupil a great deal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9333. Also C.W. 6608 Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

315. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

June 26, 1935

CHI. LILAVATI,

Your English exercises have been found. They are being returned duly corrected. Maganbhai's previous remarks apply to these exercises, too. Write in a neat handwriting. Use a reed-pen and write slowly. Your English is better than I had thought. It will improve very quickly. After I get a list of the books you have with you, I will let you know which of them you should use for your study. Just now take up *Pathmala,* Part I, and make a start with it. You will find the first few lessons easy. Start translating from the point where you find

[1] The addressee used to send weekly exercises in English to Gandhiji which he returned with correction and notes. Some of the routine corrections are omitted here.

the exercises difficult. Do not in the least feel shy to ask the meaning of any construction that you cannot grasp. We have here Prabhavati's copy of *Pathmala*, Part I. It will be enough, therefore, if you quote page numbers. Study the corrections carefully. If you do not understand any of them, ask again about them.

How is Mathew getting on? What work does he do?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9332. Also C.W. 6607. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar.

316. LETTER TO BENARSILAL AND RUKMINI BAZAJ

June 26, 1935

CHI. BENARSILAL AND RUKMINI,

I got the letters of you both. A disease must be stamped out before it has taken root. I hope Devendra's tonsils are all right now. I am glad that you will be going to Bombay *via* Wardha.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI BENARSILAL BAZAJ
TATHERI BAZAAR
BANARAS CITY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9159

317. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM L. BAVISHI

June 26, 1935

BHAI PURUSHOTTAM,

I got your letter.

I do indeed see a miracle in the spinning-wheel.

May your agricultural experiment succeed. Please write to me from time to time about everything you may think worth writing about in connection with it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N.129. Also C.W. 4748. Courtesy: Purushottam L. Bavishi

318. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

June 26, 1935

CHI. NARAHARI,

I am enclosing a letter for Velchand. If you think it all right, send it to him wherever he is. I had a talk with Lakshmidas. I think he is right in being keen that Velchand should join.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9082

319. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

June 26, 1935

CHI. VANAMALA,

Now that you have recovered your health, try to preserve it. If you are sure that the giving up of salt and pulses has definitely benefited you, keep up the practice. You may gratify your palate as well as you can with the things that help you to maintain good health.

I do not understand what you will gain from a hand-written magazine. What is the value of my blessings, then? All the same it may be a source of innocent pleasure and, therefore, if you are keen on getting my blessings you have them.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5784. Also C.W. 3007. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai.

320. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

June 26, 1935

BHAI JETHALAL,

I have sent the informtion about gamboge thistle to *Harijanbandhu*.[1] I have examined the oil-seeds. I will look for oily variety and if I get that I will even try to extract oil. I shall wait for your next letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI JETHALAL GOVINDJI
ANANTPUR
P.O. REHLI, SAUGAR DISTRICT

From Gujarati: C.W. 9852. Courtesy: Narayan Jethalal Sampat

[1] This was published under the title "Darudi" in *Harijanbandhu*, 30-6-1935.

321. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
June 27, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

If I am routing all my letters to Harilal through you, there is some purpose behind it, viz., to enable you to know what your relationship with Harilal should be although you may not take part in the inquiry. This question has become one of very great importance to me, as you will see from my letters to him. Still, even after reading all these letters, you are free to form your own impression of Harilal and act accordingly. If you have to feed him, you may give him any work to do which involves no risk. But this does not mean that you are bound to maintain relations with him or give him work. The bond of blood-relationship also has its limits. It shouldn't make us violate moral principles. Harilal cannot have greater claims on you than a stranger placed in similar circumstances. We should rather be more generous towards a stranger and more miserly towards Harilal. That is, the more intimate the blood-relationship, the stricter should our attitude be. Only thus can we do pure justice.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8456. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

322. LETTER TO KAKUBHAI

June 27, 1935

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

Ratubhai and other workers of the Khadi Pratishthan say that you have given them an assurance that none of the workers will be retrenched as a consequence of the economy drive. Have you given the assurance to any one of them? They have said so and published it too. I am asking you this question because some important changes have got to be made because of the new policy . . . .[1]

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The letter is incomplete in the source.

323. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

June 27, 1935

BHAI VITHALDAS,

I got your letter. Do not give notice to Ganatra just now. If there is no typing work you may give him any other work. Do give him typing, however, if there is any to be done. As for other changes, everything depends on when you are ready. Such changes as occur to me can be carried out even through correspondence with Shankerlal. Jamnalalji is arriving on the 7th without fail. Everything thus depends on your convenience. I am in favour of drastic economy measures. I will, therefore, go all out to help you in that respect.

Hemprabhadevi has charged that after agreeing to buy goods from Khadi Pratishthan you changed your mind. I once asked you about it, but you seem to have completely forgotten the question.

As Shankerlal is not keeping good health, I want him to remain in Ooty for as long as possible. Please, therefore, do not be in a hurry to call him back. It is our duty to carry on the work somehow.

Send the accompanying letter[1] to Kakubhai.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9792

324. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

June 27, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Not being sure whether Mahadev would be there, I am dictating this letter to you. I got the statement[2] and went through it. I waited for the second post, but there was none. Ba also didn't bring any letter. And so I sent the wire.

I didn't like the statement at all. Instead of setting out facts only, it mixes facts with arguments. I disliked the very first paragraph and sent you the wire. The post arrived just now, that is, at four, and now I

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] About the Borsad plague-relief work

am dictating this. I see that you like the idea of our appointing a committee. I was glad, for I know that such a committee can be of great help to us, inasmuch as a doctor's opinion is bound to be considered independent. Since you have accepted its necessity, I needn't write anything more. I should like to see the revised draft of the statement before it is issued.

If Mahadev has got all the facts with him, he can draft the statement here. Or you may detain him there for one more day if you think that necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 174

325. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

WARDHA,
June 28, 1935

CHI. MARY,

The cooker was after all traced,[1] thank God.

Is there anything else left by you? Chhotelal returned on Wednesday. If you are getting on well there and are well fed and can be kept there without inconvenience to anybody, do stay there long enough to be restored to perfect health.

Mary Chesley expects to come here on or about July 7 and bring Miss Ingham[2] with her.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

If I write so often your cards demand an answer.

From a photostat: G.N. 6050. Also C.W. 3380. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] *Vide* "Letter to F. Mary Barr", 26-6-1935

[2] Mary Ingham had come from England at the invitation of Mary Chesley to do village work.

326. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

June 28, 1935

MY DEAR MALKANI,

Here is the first contribution received from a *Harijan* subscriber. You should send me every week a list of contributors for publication in *Harijan.*

Sjt. Jugal Kishore[1] has sent me a nice long letter. He will presently be making a handsome contribution without any loss [*sic*]. Cease to make use of name in connection with the fund but simply call it as I have called it Harijan Wells Fund.

BAPU

Encl. 1 (cheque)

From a photostat: G.N. 1162

327. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

Unrevised *June 28, 1935*

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your letter. You should have some patience. Once the work gets going it will proceed smoothly.

For the present you should write one letter every week. Whenever you wish, however, you can write two lessons, one in Gujarati and one in English. But despatch both on the same day. That will save one stamp. Maganbhai will need three days after the receipt of your letter and you can accordingly calculate the date on which you may expect a reply. If your letters are received here on the same day of the week, you will get the reply, too, on the same day.

If along with your weight your strength also increases, you need not worry in the least about the increase in weight. Your weight can easily be 110 pounds.

You have correctly grasped the argument in my article[2]. I think it more advisable to encourage a child-widow to marry again rather than that she should pretend, under social pressure, to observe self-

[1] Jugal Kishore Birla

[2] *Vide* "Notes" sub-title Helpless Widows, 22-6-1935

control. If any such widow feels sincere aversion to worldly life, she will plainly refuse. Her widowhood will then be an adornment.

For the English book, get the *Nelson Reader* just now. Copy out and send fifteen lines from it every week in the most careful handwriting together with a translation of them in equally good handwriting. Use sheets of the same size every time, so that afterwards you can bind them together and preserve them.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9575. Also C.W. 6547. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

328. LETTER TO NAVIN GANDHI

June 28, 1935

CHI. NAVIN,

I have your letter. I appreciate your keen desire [for studies]. But I am afraid I will not be able to help you much in the matter. However much time I may devote to you I will always consider it as insufficient. It would be like the proverbial recluse who, hankering after this world as well as the next, ruins his prospects in both. So it is better if you join the Vinaya Mandir at Ahmedabad or a high school at Rajkot or Bhavnagar. If I cannot afford to send you to a high school, there is nothing else that I can do to satisfy your craving. If you come to me I shall certainly help you in learning English and Arithmetic thoroughly. But you cannot lay down any conditions with me. The main thing is the work here and anything that has to be done is by way of service. Of course the best course would be to come to me. I too would welcome it but staying with me means learning to serve and making progress in it. Even acquiring knowledge is for the sake of service.

Don't hesitate to write to me. I shall try to guide you if you keep on writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

329. DUTY OF BREAD LABOUR

Brahma created his people with the duty of sacrifice laid upon them and said: 'By this do you flourish. Let it be the fulfiller of all your desires.' He who eats without performing this sacrifice eats stolen bread.

Thus says the *Gita.* "Earn thy bread by the sweat of thy brow", says the Bible. Sacrifices may be of many kinds. One of them may well be bread labour. If all laboured for their bread and no more, then there would be enough food and enough leisure for all. Then there would be no cry of over population, no disease, and no such misery as we see around.

Such labour will be the highest form of a sacrifice. Men will no doubt do many other things either through their bodies or through their minds, but all this will be labour of love, for the common good. There will then beno rich and no poor, none high and none low, no touchable and no untouchable.

This may be an unattainable ideal. But we need not, therefore, cease to strive for it. Even if without fulfilling the whole law of sacrifice, that is, the law of our being, we performed physical labour enough for our daily bread, we should go a long way towards the ideal.

If we did so, our wants would be minimized, our food would be simple. We should then eat to live, not live to eat. Let anyone who doubts the accuracy of this proposition try to sweat for his bread, he will derive the greatest relish from the productions of his labour, improve his health and discover that many things he took were superfluities.

May not men earn their bread by intellectual labour? No. The needs of the body must be supplied by the body. "Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's" perhaps applies here well.

Mere mental, that is, intellectual labour is for the soul and is its own satisfaction. It should never demand payment. In the ideal State, doctors, lawyers and the like will work solely for the benefit of society, not for self. Obedience to the law of bread labour will bring about a silent revolution in the structure of society. Man's triumph will consist in substituting the struggle for existence by the struggle for mutual service. The law of the brute will be replaced by the law of man.

Return to the villages means a definite voluntary recognition of the duty of bread labour and all it connotes. But says the critic, "millions of India's children are today living in the villages and yet they are living a life of semi-starvation". This, alas, is but too true. Fortunately we know that theirs is not voluntary obedience. They would perhaps shirk body labour if they could, and even rush to the nearest city if they could be accommodated in it. Compulsory obedience to a master is state of slavery, willing obedience to one's father is the glory of sonship. Similarly compulsory obedience to the law of bread labour breeds poverty, disease and discontent. It is a state of slavery. Willing obedience to it must bring contentment and health. And it is health which is real wealth, not pieces of silver and gold. The Village Industries Association is an experiment in willing bread labour.

Harijan, 29-6-1935

330. IMPROVEMENT IN SPINNING

Investigations made in Savli, one of the good centres of khadi production, reveal the fact that the spinners there earn no more than one pie per hour on an average. Fortunately they have other sources of income or they are members of families whose other members are following some more remunerative occupations. But a khadi servant cannot afford to be satisfied with this knowledge. He must devise means of increasing the spinners' wage. There are three ways of doing it: (1) By paying a higher wage and increasing the price of commercial khadi. (2) By inviting the ginners, carders and weavers to divide their wages with the spinners. (3) By making improvements in the existing wheels and by teaching the spinners to be more careful than they are.

If this last was not possible, one of the first two alternatives would be obligatory, but improvement in the existing machines and in the spinners' manners is undoubtedly possible. Had Messrs Kirloskars' efforts come up to mark, the spinners' wage would easily have gone up to nine pies per hour. But that was not to be. Though it was easily the best among all the attempts submitted to the A. I. S. A., it was not considered by the judges to satisfy the tests laid down for a cottage machine. It could not replace the existing machines. Let us hope that neither Kirloskar Bros. nor other inventors will give up the

attempt. Though the prize has been withdrawn, I have no doubt that the Association will always be prepared to examine any promising effort and give the full reward if a really handy, easy-working machine is forthcoming. But till that happy time comes, if it ever does, improvements in the existing machines must not be despised. Shri Shankerlal Banker has been concentrating on one essential improvement, speed of the spindle. The revolutions of the spindle have been found to be as low as 35 to 1 of the turning wheel. The result has been that the average output is not more than 150 yards per hour, if not even 100 yards. The highest attained has been over 800 yards. If the speed of the spindle can be improved, the average and therefore the wage can be easily doubled. This can be effected by using thinner spindles, thinner *mals* (wheel-strings) and reducing the circumference of the little pulley round the spindle. These are but illustrations of the way in which improvements can be easily made.

But no improvement is possible unless khadi workers master the science of spinning. They must know both the theory and the practice. They must study the incredibly simple construction of the existing machines and the function of each part. They must themselves be expert ginners, carders and spinners. And they must take a lively interest in the welfare of the spinners.

This means overhauling the khadi service. The sooner it is done, the better it will be for all concerned. We must not be satisfied with the indifferent work of spinners, when we know that better is easily possible.

Harijan, 29-6-1935

331. NOTES

THE GAMBLING EVIL

A correspondent from Bombay writes a pathetic letter on the growing evil of gambling. Below is a free translation of the telling passages of the letter:

If the canker is eating into the vitals of the simple village folk of Gujarat, it is invading titled men, barristers, doctors, merchants and even teachers who are expected to guard national morals. Even the police are said not to be free from the vice. Women, children of tender age and blind beggars are not free from the vice. Some newspapers thrive on advertising the evil. It goes on unchecked in

spite of the effort of some reformers. May not growing poverty and consequent unemployment be the cause of the evil?

I do not think so. No doubt unemployment favours the spread. But the causes are much deeper. The very fact that the vice has affected all classes must make us cautious and lead us to make deeper investigations into the causes.

SUGAR *v.* GUR

Testimony in favour of *gur* over sugar is daily accumulating. Shri Shankerlal Banker who is touring in the Ooty regions sends the following analysis prepared for him by a chemist friend, showing the copper content in milligrams in one kilogram each of the samples submitted for analysis:

Singanallur sugar	0.61
Aska sugar	1.93
Gur Anakapalli	7.48
Gur Singanallur	7.67
Molasses	5.70
Sugar Candy (cane)	4.98
Palmyra Candy	7.40

Thus it is a double waste of money to use sugar instead of *gur*.

Harijan, 29-6-1935

332. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

WARDHA,
June 29, 1935

CHI. MARY,[1]

I quite see that you are going to take long there. But you should give as much time as may be necessary.

What about the climate there? How many are you in your ward?

What is the distance between bed and bed?

What food do they serve you?

Love.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6051. Also C.W. 3381. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] The superscription and the subscription are in Hindi.

333. LETTER TO BALIBEHN M. ADALAJA

June 29, 1935

CHI. BALI,

I got both your letters. I hope you are keeping patience. The truth will come out ultimately. Harilal is throwing off all self-restraint. There is no need at all for you to reply to him. You may certainly defend yourself through a lawyer against any step that he might take. You have every right to expose his misdeeds. There is no reason whatever for you to yield to blackmail. Do not give him a single pice. I am of course writing to him. I am returning the notice, as also Harilal's letter which you wanted back.

Ba is leaving for Delhi tomorrow. As Lakshmi is expecting they have asked for Manu to go and help. Since she also wants to go, I am letting her go.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5051. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

334. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

WARDHA,
June 30, 1935

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

Your letters with enclosures have duly arrived. I must not write about it to Agatha. You will remember this sentence in her letter: "For we look to Mahatmaji to be above the battle. Am I right in thinking that the events of the past year are wearing him down?" If you feel with me that the events are not wearing me down and that I am above the battle then you must give her the assurance on my behalf and tell her that I am not "hopeless about the whole thing". Only I can't build hope on a foundation of sand. It is truth on the rock of Faith which persists in the face of appearances to the contrary. If I am not enthusiastic about any Indian going to England,[1] I have the soundest reasons. The best of us have more than our share of work cut out for

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Balukaka Kanitkar", 1-5-1935

us here, and I am quite clear in my mind that when we have discharged our trust here, real friendship between England and India will come. Those Indians who believe in non-violence must not go unless they are able to testify that politically conscious India has no hatred for Englishmen, but that it has nothing but goodwill towards them, if not active love. Rajagopalachari cannot bear that testimony today. And what is the use of his going to ask Englishmen to do their duty even though Indians cannot surmount their unregenerate nature and like the rest of mankind hate those who they believe persecute them? Do you not see my argument quite clearly? I am dictating so much on one sentence in Agatha's letter, because I realize the distress of her mind and I want to soothe her and those who feel like her.

About the Simla incident you will have to put up with it a little longer. But what does it matter that bitter criticism is levelled against you. You said the correct word[1] and that is its own satisfaction.

About the rest of your letter and the enclosures I expect you do not want any reply. I hope Khambhatta is making steady progress and that you had time to look into his charges against Hospital management.

I must not forget one thing. You won't disturb your programme owing to Agatha's letter. Let things take their course. You are quite right in wanting the little bit of rest [*sic*] from the agonizing toil that Agatha is going through. That of course can happen only when you are there. But meanwhile you can soothe her while insisting on her hastening slowly and on being careful for nothing.

Love to you all.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 989

[1] In his letter dated June 7 to Agatha Harrison, the addressee had referred to the "racial discrimination in the official communiques to the Press" on the Quetta earthquake: ". . . the papers were full of every English name surviving, died and wounded; and even civil servants who were Indians were not recorded. The atmosphere in Simla was electric . . . . It is impossible to get one grain of common sense into their heads . . . . They are convinced that every Indian all over India is quite happy about what has happened and that the only one who was disturbed and stirring up racial feeling was C. F. Andrews!" (*Charles Freere Andrews,* p. 282)

335. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

June 30, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your two letters. The Consul is being contacted for the visa. I hope you will not have to go to Calcutta for that. Dr. Kellogg has not sent a reply. It should have come. I shall make other arrangements. Shri P.'s letter contains nothing. I have written to him that I cannot pay any heed to his letter. I have not attached any weight to his letter. That is why I did not write to you about it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, pp. 172-3

336. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

WARDHA,
July 1, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM,

May the marriage ceremony go off well and may Krishnaswami and his wife have a long life of happiness and service. I hope that Kichi's finger will be quite healed by Saturday.

There is no hurry about the Wells Fund.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 9602. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal

337. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

July 1, 1935

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

If for the goodwill a payment has to be made to Premchandji[1], then I personally would prefer to start an independent paper. We would be able to secure the services of some Hindi writer. We can

[1] Munshi Premchand, Hindi novelist who jointly owned and edited with the addressee a Hindi monthly, *Hansa*

afford to have Premchandji only if he takes up the work in a spirit of service. Let us not decide in too much hurry. After the decision is taken, we shall approach Gurudev. I hesitate to write to him myself because he [might agree to write] something even against his will through sheer courtesy. When the time comes I will ask Mahadev to write. Or else you may write. Your leaflet is bound to mention my name in some connection and that will amount to an invitation [from me].

I hope you have benefited from your stay in Panchgani.

It will also be necessary before starting *Hansa* to make sure where the money is to come from.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 7576. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

338. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 1, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

Read my letter[1] to Harilal. It will perhaps help you to see what you should do. I am not yet ready to order you, but I think Bali[2], Kumi and Manu are right. Please warn me beforehand if you think they are wrong. If they appear right to you and if Harilal does not confess his faults, then, you cannot keep him at all. In no circumstances can anything be given to him in the shape of help from public funds. He may certainly earn something by doing work. This sums up my advice. Think over it and act according to the promptings of your heart.

Enclosed please find Mathew's letter. Prema's letters are such that they promptly elicit fitting replies.

What about the workshop?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8457. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Not traceable; however, *vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 3-7-1935

[2] Bali Manilal Adalaja and Kumi Tulsidas Maniar, sisters-in-law of Harilal Gandhi.

339. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

July 1, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

There is a letter[1] from Calcutta announcing the ship's departure arround August 10. It also says that you must reach there 10 or 12 days earlier. They will arrange for your visa for America. Who sent you the newspaper cutting[2]? Anyway, we shall have more specific news in four or five days' time.

Never mind the sea. You have to leave only from Calcutta.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha,* between pp. 172 and 173.

340. LETTER TO G. SITARAMA SASTRY

WARDHA,
July 2, 1935

DEAR SITARAM SASTRI,

As Khadi Samsthanam reports seem to contain nothing new I would advise you not to send them every month. Send them only when there is anything new or striking in the way of conquest or defeat. Efficiency of a high order comes only after meticulous attention to every little detail. Even as the slightest looseness in a screw in the mechanism of a watch upsets its balance, how much more is it true of mental processes? And the correctness or efficiency of mental processes is determined by the correctness of our work in daily life.

Now about barter. Rs. 450 will do but why not the round sum of 500? I think a gold medal is unnecessary. The choice of Samsthanam khaddar may be given to the prize winner but the judge should be an economist. I, therefore, suggest Sjt. Kumarappa. I do not think that many judges are necessary. You may select another name. Ramadas Pantulu may be a better name. It may be worth while thinking of a

[1] Presumably from the Birla brothers, who were financing the addressee's trip abroad.

[2] A friend of the addressee had sent him a cutting from a Calcutta newspaper reporting the addressee's proposed trip to America.

name with a view to attracting competitors. Finally, drop a skeleton of the note of yourself. I shall then work after my own style and publish it.

I am not publishing the account of the sixth Bharata Bhagya Yatra[1]. It is the repetition of the same old thing. It is enough for a people to know that it has become a permanent part of Vinaya Ashram. If you have workers enough, I would like you to send some in the villages, one each. That will make the workers resourceful and self-supporting. We shall thereby have a variety of experiences. This village reconstruction work is the most difficult, as we have tackled. You will see it if you have followed the pages of *Harijan* closely.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

341. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

Not revised *July 2 ,1935*

CHI. NARAHARI,

Mahadev left last night for Bombay. I am redirecting your letter there.

Do you know any relation of Hari Singh? I hope you have informed him. I assume that he was duly cremated. Who attended the funeral? Where was Hari Singh sleeping? Is the place safe? Was he sleeping on a cot or on the ground? Personally I believe that everbody dies only at the appointed hour, but because we do not know the hour and also because nobody welcomes death, we must take measures to save a man's life. Looking at the matter thus, when we do not know definitely what bit a person, we must assume that it was a serpent and apply remedies accordingly. We may take him to a doctor, or, if we do not do that, we can bi nd the vein so as to stop the flow of blood, cut open the spot where we suspect the person to have been bitten and put permanganate in the wound, apply a mud pack and keep him conscious anyhow. We may even induce vomiting. This can be done by thrusting one's fingers into the throat or by making the person drink warm water mixed with salt. If the salt is in sufficient quantity, vomiting is bound to follow. We should know from a doctor if there are other remedies also.

[1] A 'pilgrimage' of workers organized by the addressee to "convey the message of village service". The first 'march' was conducted from December 27, 1934 to January 13, 1935. For a report of the "second pilgrimage", *vide* "Letter to Lord Ampthill", 4-8-1909

Tell Bhagwanji that I got his letter. I do not remember his questions, however. Ask him to state them again.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI NARAHARI D. PARIKH
HARIJAN ASHRAM, SABARMATI, AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9083

342. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
July 2, 1935

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I got your letter. You have started well. In my view, there is no place for the buffalo or buffalo-ghee in our programme of village industries. Why should we interfere with an activity that is going on smoothly? We do not want to take up this work as a business.

No one who looks upon service of the cow as a religious duty will ever advocate the cause of the buffalo.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9515. Also C.W. 431. Courtesy: Shivabhai G. Patel.

343. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

July 2, 1935

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your letter. I was indeed very glad to learn that you had decided firmly to stay there for one full year. If your mind is cheerful, then your health will automatically improve and remain better. The work assigned to you is really very good. Also engage yourself in learning something which interests you personally but not at the cost of your health. It is strange that Prabhavati has not yet arrived. Please give the enclosed letter[1] to Shivabhai. Ba has gone to Delhi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9402. Also C.W. 648. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

344. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 2, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I forgot to reply to one question of yours.

Is it necessary to reply to what Vajubhai[1] has written? I do want your reply when you get the time. I have received another still longer statement. I will send it to you after reading it. Read both and send me your remarks.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8458. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

345. LETTER TO MRS. S. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

July 3, 1935

DEAR SISTER,

As my right hand is resting I must dictate, for the left hand can work but slowly. The forthcoming Sunday is a great event for you. May God bless you and yours, and may He bless the bride and the bridegroom. May He give him a long life of health, strength and service.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Vajubhai Shukla, teacher of Rajkot Rashtriya Shala and Jamnadas Gandhi's colleague

346. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

WARDHA,
July 3, 1935

DEAR SATISH BABU,

I must now dictate this letter as my left hand cannot cope with all the correspondence. I enclose herewith two letters. Can you trace the books mentioned in one of them? And will you examine the fire-proof process copied from an American magazine? At the time of replying you will return both the letters.

Now about the little storm that is going on there about Borkamata. Why all this insistence on operation either? Is it for the good of khadi? I have not gone into the merits, though I have written to Jerajani so far as the sale of Khadi Pratishthan is concerned. And I have his reply, the purport of which is that everything that has been done was done with the full concurrence of Vishwanath. About Borkamata, Annada has been sending bitter letters to Shankerlal who has passed the correspondence on to me. I have not the time to study it. I implored Prafulla to settle the matter and he sends the following telegram: "Met Hemprabha Devi, Satis Babu. They justify steps. So Borkamata competition continues. Hemprabha Devi's attitude disheartened me discussing details." Do you want me to go into the whole thing and decide or will you come to an understanding with Annada?

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

347. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

MAGANWADI,
July 3, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

Jethalal's[1] letter has been lying with me for a long time, but I could go through it only today. He has sent copies of it to Vallabhbhai and others. Before that he had written to Nanabhai and Nanabhai had sent the letter to me. Nanabhai had also replied to him but there seems to have been some misunderstanding on his part. He should clarify the matter. When I got that letter, I wrote to Jethalal and asked him to write whatever he wanted to. The accompanying letter is in reply to that. I myself can reply to many of the points in it, but that is not enough. I must have your official reply. Please, therefore, let me have it. I had a letter from Harilal yesterday. I could understand nothing in it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8459. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Jethalal Joshi, ex-member of Rajya Sabha ; formerly a teacher of Rajkot Rashtriya Shala

348. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

July 3, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter. Mahadev seems to have needlessly frightened you and got frightened himself. I merely cautioned Harilal not to play any tricks on me lest he should lose me altogether. But he seems to have been up to something of that kind and, therefore, has taken the warning. There was a letter from Narandas saying that he had disappeared since two days ago. If, therefore, he has not returned before now, it is five days since he left. There is no fear at all of my taking his disappearance to heart. He has been disappearing in this manner for a long time now. Some outward signs of change in him had certainly roused my hopes, but how long can a man keep up pretence? Please don't worry in the least. I will not take any hasty step. There is no need, either, for any such step now. Apart from this, my health is excellent and I am working with the utmost care. And ultimately it is God's will that prevails. As long as He wants to use me as an instrument of service, no harm will come to me. And when the end does come, no precaution or remedy will avail. India's future is safe. I see no sign at all for despair. God will permit nothing that is not for the country's good.

After you have recovered, your health will perhaps improve if you have your headquarters here.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 175

349. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

July 3, 1935

CHI. NARAHARI,

I went through your letter regarding the school. What salary does Jayabehn get? The fact that you have not trained even a single lady out of twenty-five shows that there must be some defect in our system of teaching. And if this is so, how can we expect to get a lady

from outside who would fit into our system of education? I think we will have to reap as we have sown. Please do not think for a moment that I say 'we' just for the sake of formality. I fully realize my own shortcomings. I do regard myself as a teacher but I am a giant among pigmies. All that I want to convey is that you must resolve to train someone up to your expectations from among our women. It is. . .[1]

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

350. LETTER TO VAIKUNTH L. MEHTA

July 3, 1935

BHAI VAIKUNTH,

Mahadev is of course there. I read your postcard to him.

I also learnt the good news that Lallubhai's operation was successful. I hope he is well.

Mahadev had told me about the talk [you had] with Seth Mathuradas. What I can gather from it is that he will sign the document.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VAIKUNTH MEHTA
CENTRAL CO-OPERATIVE BANK
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: V.L. Mehta Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

351. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

Unrevised *July 3, 1935*

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

An eternal conflict goes on in our hearts between the divine and the demoniac, truth and untruth, knowledge and ignorance, light and darkness. We should put up a struggle to our utmost but not beyond our strength. Arjuna was overreaching himself when God dissuaded him. To take an example, ahimsa is good but what should I do if I cannot rid myself of the fear of snakes? When I have already killed it in my mind, but only shrink from putting the thought into action,

[1] The letter is incomplete in the source.

dharma indicates that I kill it in accordance with my nature. The resolve not to kill it serves no purpose. The same holds true in the instance of *brahmacharya* and the householder's estate. Observance of lifelong continence is undoubtedly worthy but those unable to control their passion should enter the holy state of matrimony as *brahmacharya* in such instances would be a mere mockery of it. There is no contradiction here, only a matter of two distinct dharmas.[1]

Yes, prayers are most essential. They help one to cultivate a spontaneous habit of constant remembrance. The quantity of *neem* leaves may be reduced if necessary.

I can judge the state of your health only when you come here. There should be no faintness of heart now. When you hope to gain your peace of mind with me you should promptly come over.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4275

352. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

WARDHA,
July 3, 1935

CHI. SUMANGAL,

I have your letter. If for the sake of your parents you must earn money and go out for the purpose or take to writing you should do so. Maybe in so doing you will find greater peace. Do not feel yourself bound by any past commitments. That alone is binding which brings us peace and promotes dharma. Dharma means dharma for the moment.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

353. LETTER TO TARADEVI

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
July 3, 1935

CHI. TARA,

I have your letter as also those of your mother and Laxmidevi[2].

[1] *Vide* also "Ideals and Practice", 13-7-1935
[2] Rani Vidyavati's sister-in-law

We must do our best and then accept whatever happens. Where can we find a better Seva Sadan than the one where your mother is? The path of service is difficult. Happiness and unhappiness are all matters of the mind. We must regard both alike. If Laxmidevi has reached there, I shall not write to her separately.

Blessings from
BAPU

TARADEVI
BARUA KOTHI
SANDILA
DIST. HARDOI

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

354. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
July 4, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I have your letter. Your letters to me are love letters, each time I suppose not less than an hour's effort even for you—a ready and fast writer. Now that we know each other so well, you can certainly save your time by writing only when you must. Though I treasure your long letters, I would be satisfied with a mere postcard telling me of important events.

You have your work cut out for you at Poona. Are you coming to Wardha on your way to Poona or on your way back or both ways? The weather is much cooler just now.

I have shared your letter with Kumarappa[1]. If you can establish contact with rickshaw-pullers, it would be a great thing. They can easily spin, weave and add to their meagre earnings.

I am sorry Krishnarao is leaving you. Of course, ultimately you will have to rely upon yourself. Though your arms may not be strong enough to work at the bow, it is good that you will know the process of carding. That would enable you to regulate and control carding by others. If your girls learn spinning, you will insist upon their carding. Unless they do, they will never spin regularly. And it is a bad job to

[1] J. C. Kumarappa, Secretary of the All-India Village Industries' Association founded in October 1934

depend upon others for slivers. If they form a kind of spinning-club, they can have a division of labour. Some may gin, some others may do the carding, many can make slivers and all will spin.

The clothes you have for Quetta relief, may be sent to Dr. Gopichand[1] for the refugees in the Punjab, unless of course there are refugees in Simla itself, in which case you can distribute your clothes among them. Only I fancy that in Simla you will have the most well-to-do refugees, whereas in Lahore the poorest must have congregated.

I shall hold on the money. It can be sent where they have spent what is being collected now. There is always in such calamities an ample fund in the beginning stages.

You need not get out of your 'Ville' to sell those paper sheets and envelopes I have sent you. I am in no hurry to have the price of them. And ultimately even if they could not be sold there, there would not be any difficulty in selling them here, without any loss. I know we cannot make the profits that you can, but you must not give undue labour to their sale.

The slivers I have sent you, should give you at least 25 counts, as they are capable of giving 30 counts.

Please hand over the enclosed letter to Andrews.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI RAJKUMARI AMRIT KUNVAR BEHN
MANORVILLE
SIMLA

From the original: C.W. 3539. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6348

355. LETTER TO S. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

July 4, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I was glad to have your letter. I do hope that you will not leave Kodaikanal till you are thoroughly restored and enjoying your normal health.

I sent my blessings[2] through Ambujam two days ago, as I learnt through her the date of the forthcoming marriage. I have written[3]

[1] Dr. Gopichand Bhargava
[2] *Vide* "Letter to S. Ambujammal", 1-7-1935
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Mrs. S. Srinivasa Iyengar

today to Mrs. Iyengar as also to Krishnaswami. Thank you for your good wishes.

Yes, I am keeping quite well and quite cheerful. Both I count as God's gifts.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. S. SRINIVASA IYENGAR
"SRINIKETAN"
KODAIKANAL

From a photostat: C.W. 10752. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

356. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

July 4, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM,

Here are two letters, one for Mother and the other for Krishnaswami. To Mother I am writing at Father's wish. I have received a sweet note from him today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the original: Ambujammal Papers, Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

357. LETTER TO AMRITLAL NANAVATI

July 4, 1935

BHAI AMRITLAL,

It is natural that I was sorry to learn about your younger brother's death. But, after all, since I have so many co-workers, there is always news of somebody's death or birth, and joy and sorrow are balanced so equally that to say 'I feel sorry' seems to be an exaggeration. Moreover, if regarded rationally, death is not a curse, but is rather a gift from God, being a release from life. This intellectual conviction has considerably blunted my feelings. I should like you to see the matter in the same light and console yourself with that knowledge, and cultivate a greater spirit of service.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10710

358. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

July 5, 1935

CHI. PRABHA,

You have caused me much pain this time. How long would it have taken to drop me a postcard with two lines? I hope you have obtained Babuji's permission. From your description of the conditions, I can see that it was absolutely necessary for you to stay on there. It is raining here daily. My diet remains the same. My health is good. I have not taken my weight recently. Ba and Manu have gone to Delhi. Rajendrababu was here on a visit some time ago. Amtussalaam is still here. Lakshmi[1] has come from Bardoli.

I don't have time to write more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3451

359. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

WARDHA,
July 5, 1935

CHI. LILAVATI,

If you do not follow the corrections and the notes, do ask me. Please improve your handwriting. Make the letters large and keep your words separate.

I do not have any trouble [in correcting your lessons]. But I will appoint another teacher. Meanwhile keep on sending [your lessons] to me.[2]

1. Normally we can say that 's' is used for living things and 'of' for non-living things; e.g., 'a man's leg' but 'a leg of a table'.

2. 'Had' is used for an action which is already over before another; e.g., 'He had eaten when I went to him'; but 'He ate at 10 o'clock'. 'Had eaten' is past perfect tense; 'ate' is simple past tense.

[1] Wife of Maruti Sharma
[2] What follows is given on the margin of the addressee's letter.

3. ‘Have’ is used as an auxiliary verb as well as the main verb. As the main verb it denotes possession or relationship, e.g., ‘He has a box.’—possession; ‘He has a son.’—relationship.

When an action is complete, forms of ‘have’ are used but when it is intended merely to suggest the past tense, forms of ‘be’ are used. For examples, see the second note.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9254. Also C.W. 10127. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

360. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

July 5, 1935

CHI. RAMDAS,

I understand now why you have taken up the printing-press work. May it give you satisfaction. My life has been spent in food and other experiments and the experiments will continue still. I believe they have done no harm either to me or to the world because, whenever I have discovered an error, I have corrected it. The *neem* leaves experiment was useful and is still continuing. Even the tamarind experiment has done me nothing but good. But I ate it in rather excessive quantity and therefore suffered for three quarters of an hour. After that I have suffered no ill-effects. It was even necessary to eat it in excessive quantity. Ba and Manu[1] have safely reached Delhi. Kana is getting along so so . . .[2] besides being something of a vagabond of course. I have gone through the articles you have procured. I thought . . .[3] they have no force in them. They may certainly be regarded harmless ....[4] You should procure articles written in very good Gujarati . . .[5]

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Harilal Gandhi’s daughter

[2, 3,4 & 5] A few words at these places are illegible in the source.

[6] A Gujarati saying, meaning that it is futile to give advice to one who is not willing to listen to it.

361. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI AGRAWAL[1]

July 5, 1935

DEAR SISTER,

I, on my part, have instructed Moolchandji not to exercise any compulsion on you.[2] And you too should treat him in the same way. You should have all liberty in respect of food. But as you cannot bring yourself to accept the mode of life followed by Moolchandji you may live separately and do as you please. This, however, does not absolve him of the duty of providing for your maintenance.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 836

362. HARIJAN CONFERENCE

On 16th June a Conference of workers in the Harijan cause was organized in Mysore under the auspices of the Mysore State Harijan Sevak Sangh. Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru presided. The following message was sent by the Dewan, Sir Mirza Ismail:

I am very glad to hear that the Mysore State Harijan Sevak Sangh is Organizing a conference of workers engaged in the noble cause of the uplift of the Depressed Classes, better known as Harijans, to review the result of the past year's work and to settle future lines of action. I need hardly say that I wish the conference all possible success. The keen solicitude of His Highness the Maharaja and his Government for the well being and prosperity of the people extends, as is well known, to his subjects irrespective of their caste, creed or race. The social and educational uplift of the Harijans, who form no small section of His Highness's subjects, is therefore a matter which has received and will continue to receive the active sympathy and support of His Highness's Government. Various measures have been adopted by Government in recent years to ameliorate the conditions of this community. In this task the co-operation of the public and of such organizations as the Harijan Sevak Sangh of Bangalore is to be welcomed. I wish this Sangh all success in its labours to create a higher tone in the social life of the community and to enable it to play its part in the public life of the State.

[1] Wife of Moolchand Agrawal
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Moolchand Agrawal", 23-6-1935

The conference passed many resolutions of local importance from which I take the following:

This conference appeals to Government to be pleased to grant the following additional facilities.

1. Lands for the starting of agricultural colonies in the Irwin Canal Area and also under the Vani Vilas Sagara.

2. Sites for the extension of Harijan quarters in the villages.

3. Definite allotment in the budget for the provision of drinking-water wells to Harijans in the villages.

4. Increased grants to aided Harijan hostels, scholarships and exemption from the payment of sports and library fees.

5. Preferential appointments to the Harijans who have passed the high schools and college examinations.

6. Appointment of a Special Office with staff and budget provisions to look after the moral and material improvement of the Harijans in the State.

7. Creation of an Educational Trust Fund and formation of an advisory board.

8. Starting of a free boarding-home for Harijan girls in Mysore.

9. Permission to the Harijans to enter and worship in all temples under the management of the Muzrai Department.

Let us hope that these reasonable requests will be granted by the authorities and perfect equality established between the Harijans and the other citizens of the State.

Harijan, 6-7-1935

363. MISSION OF KHADI

The mission of khadi is not merely to supply the townspeople with fashionable khadi that will vie with the mill manufactures and thus like other industries supply a few artisans with employment, but is to become a supplementary industry to agriculture. This mission still remains unfulfilled.

In order that it may fulfil this mission, it has to be self-sustained and its use must spread in the villages. Just as the villagers cook their own *roti* or rice so must they make their own khadi for personal use. The surplus, if any, they may sell. This mission cannot be delivered unless the khadi service changes its complexion and the Spinners' Association its policy.

Every member of the khadi service should know the processes through which cotton passes before it becomes khadi.

When emphasis is put on self-sufficient khadi, commercial production will be restricted to the real wants of townspeople. It will then pass into the hands of private businessmen instead of being centralized in the hands of the Association.

In trying to commercialize khadi, the Association has been hitherto dominated by the ruling prices. Thus the spinnings wage has been the worst of all the wages for any form of labour. They have also varied with provinces. Therefore the prices of khadi too have varied with the provinces. It is all very well for more profiteering bodies to countenance and even stimulate cut-throat competition, but associations whose sole purpose is to serve the pauper millions cannot afford to join such competition. There is no reason why a spinner in Bihar should get less than her sister in Gujarat. No doubt prices vary in different provinces because the standard of living varies. But the Association cannot afford to take things as they are. It has to change them, if they are unjust. There is no reason why the price of one hour's labour in spinning should be less than one in weaving. There is more skill involved in spinning than in simple weaving. Simple weaving is a purely mechanical process. Simplest spinning requires the cunning of the hand. Yet the spinner gets one pie per hour against the weaver's minimum of six; the carder too does better, almost as well as the weaver, There are historical reasons for this state of things. But they are not just merely because they are historical. Time has come for the Association to equalize if not also to stabilize the prices of all labour regulated by it. This, in many cases, will mean inviting the weaver to lower his scale of wages where he gets more than one anna per hour. Time may never come when all the weavers will voluntarily consent to the equalization process. But if the doctrine of equality of wages for all productive labour is sound, the Association must strive to approach the ideal as near as may be. Unless the whole jump is taken at once, the beginning must be made with raising the wages of spinners to a decent level for a decent hour's work. Vinoba is experimenting with spinning at the rate of nearly nine hours per day at the same time that he is taking his classes. His output per hour should be regarded as the standard output per hour entitling the spinner to the standard wage. I hope to publish shortly the results of Vinoba's labours.

My scheme presupposes living contact with the spinners' life. A body that would give an unexpected rise in wages will watch the course of the nickel pieces that may be distributed. It will be useless to

raise wages gratuitously if they are to be wasted in drink or extravagant marriage or other feasts. The mission of khadi is almost like that of untouchability. The so-called higher classes have for ages utterly neglected the lower classes with the result that the latter do not know the art of living. They think that they are mere ‘hewers of wood and drawers of water’. The so-called upper classes have not escaped the punishment of their misdeeds, for they too do not know the art of living and would perish today if they had no help from the ‘lower classes’. The mission of khadi is to correct this double evil by inviting the ‘upper classes’ to [do] penance towards the ‘lower classes’.

Let the village industries workers, too, see to it that the villagers occupied in the various industries organized by them get the minimum wage that may be fixed by the Association.

Harijan, 6-7-1935

364. ON DIARY-WRITING[1]

Your diary must contain every particular about your health. It must also contain the particulars of work done every hour, if the work could be so divided. You might also make it a mirror of your own mind, recording your thoughts and dreams, good and bad, and you must also make it a record of your acts, good and bad. This mirror of the self is helpful for a purification of one’s self. One’s bowels must move regularly in order to keep one in a fit condition. That is physical purification. Just as this physical purification is necessary for the health of the body, even so spiritual purification is necessary for the health of the soul. In fact the necessity for physical cleanliness is in inverse proportion to the necessity for spiritual cleanliness. That is to say, spiritual cleanliness means automatic physical cleanliness. Have we not heard that a yogi’s body emits a fragrant smell? The ‘fragrant’ smell means here the absence of bad smell.

Harijan, 6-7-1935

[1] This is extracted from Mahadev Desai’s “Weekly Letter”. Gandhiji, who was examining the diaries of Ashram members, gave this advice when one of them asked him "what particulars he should enter in the diary and what not”.

365. NOTES

HARIJAN WELLS FUNDS

This week is published an estimate of wells required in the Province of Delhi for Harijans. The reader will note what the wells mean to sweeper-class Harijans. They are debarred from using even the wells set apart for the other classes of Harijans. Of course this is not peculiar to the Delhi Province. The reiteration of the grievance emphasizes the importance of this special charity. I hope that the heads of provincial Sanghs will make local collections which may be earmarked for use in their own provinces to the extent required.

TAMIL HOLY BOOK

Thiruvalluvar was a Tamil Saint. Tradition says that he was a Harijan weaver. He is said to have lived in the first century of the Christian era. He gave us the famous *Thirukural*—holy maxims described by the Tamilians as the Tamil Veda and by M. Ariel as 'one of the highest and purest expressions of human thought'. The maxims number 1,330. These have been translated into many languages. There are several English translations. The late V.V.S. Iyer, who founded the Sharmadevi Ashram for the service of Harijans among others, produced the latest translation. He died leaving Sharmadevi and his book to the nation. Sharmadevi now belongs to the Harijan Sevak Sangh. There are about 1,000 copies still left of the second edition of the translation. The price of the book was Rs. 5 originally. It has now been reduced to Rs. 2/8. The book has a substantial preface written by the translator. The proceeds will be utilized for the Harijan service. To whet the reader's appetite I quote two maxims at random:

> Take not away from any living thing the life that is sweet unto all, even if it be to save thine own.

Compare Goldsmith's:

> No flocks that range the valley free
>
> To slaughter I condemn,
>
> Taught by the Power that pities me
>
> I learn to pity them.

The other selection is:

Death is like unto sleep and life is like the waking after that sleep.

Compare Wordsworth's:

Death is but a sleep and a forgetting.

The book can be had on application to the Secretary, Tamil Nad Harijan Sevak Sangh, Teppakulam, Trichinopoly.

Harijan, 6-7-1935

366. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

WARDHA,
June 6, 1935

MY DEAR MARY,

(Bapu insisted on my calling you by your Christian name when he heard me say that I was going to write to you as "Miss Barr"!)

I am writing to you on his behalf. He has your letter of the 2nd instant. It is his desire that you should not leave Miraj until the doctors have declared you quite cured and fit enough to return to your work. He agrees entirely with your plan—when you do return—of returning *via* Secunderabad, instead of by Poona. Bapu feels also that your teeth and eyes should receive the necessary attention from the specialists who have treated you before—so you must consult them when it is possible for you to do so.

Regarding Maria Petersen's letter Bapu wishes me to say that there is no likelihood of his going to Denmark . . .

With love from
AMRIT KAUR

From a photostat: G.N. 6052

367. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

June 6, 1935

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have your letters. I understand the difficulty about eradicating malaria. The task is certainly difficult if all around the place there are plantations of sugarcane. But one thing about mosquitoes is that they do not fly beyond a certain distance. I think you are not likely to be affected by plantations situated at a distance of a hundred acres from your place. Be that as it may, make sure that no water or moisture collects around the place. Since the houses are on top of a hill, there is no possibility, either, of water accumulating around them. The food

should be light. You should eat green leaves like salad, etc. Constipation should never be ignored. Mosquito-nets should be used. I think with the help of these precautions you can keep off malaria. I was surprised to learn that Lakshmi could send khadi made from the yarn spun by me. May I take it then that I need not send anything now? If you two cannot spare any time to teach Sita, then I should think that there is some big defect somewhere in your life. If, willingly or unwillingly, you accept the responsibility of parenthood, then it also becomes your duty to train the children's body, mind, etc., and you ought to spare some time for that, however busy your life may be. Thanks to God's kindness, children do get some education from parents whether they know it or not. Whether you want it or not, your children are bound to imitate your manners and thoughts. Even for that reason, parents are obliged to keep their thoughts and actions absolutely pure. If your speech is pure, that of your children will be pure. If you pray regularly, your children also will do the same. Whatever things and in whatever manner you eat, your children will do the same. What remains then is instruction in letters. How much time can it consume? With a little care, you can easily impart that to children while they are playing about. But then, there should be a firm determination on your part to impart education to your children yourselves. You should first acquire in some measure the knowledge that you want to impart to your children. And the result will be that your children will get valuable knowlege in the normal course of their daily life, such as they can never get in schools. If you spend your time in this way instead of in idle gossip, then you will increase your knowledge also and, what is more, your whole life will become more disciplined.

Forget Sorabji and his conduct. If you try to understand the affair about *halwa*, you will find it amusing. You should learn to get entertainment even from such malicious stories.

Harilal seems to have gone off the rails once again[1]. Maybe he had never returned to the rails and was merely pretending reformation when he came here. But, instead of levelling such a serious charge against him, assume that he has now gone off the rails. This is only my suspicion as yet. I do not know what the truth is. It will be known in a few days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4839. Also C.W. 1251. Courtesy: Sushila Gandhi

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel",3-7-1935

368. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

July 6, 1935

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your very strange and sad letter. Only two days ago I had from you a letter full of hope, which gave me an impression that you were now completely composed. But today's letter seems to have been written by another Lilavati as it were. How did such a profound change take place in just two days' time? You are staying in Rajkot of your own free will. I had even suggested that you might study in Bombay. It has always been my wish that you should not overstrain yourself. What has happend all at once to fill you with such profound despair? If you find the atmosphere there full of selfishness, it will hardly be different anywhere else. It is in your hands to create and preserve the atmosphere that you desire. Have patience and be calm. But if your patience and endurance are exhausted, leave Rajkot by all means. You are entirely free. The relationship with me does not clip anybody's wings. On the contrary, it gives fresh wings to a person if he has none. Hence, you can fly wherever you want to. Whether you can stay with me here is a different question altogether. We shall think over it if an opportunity occurs. Do not ever give up Narandas's protection. You will repent if you do that. I cannot suggest a better guide for you than he is.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9334. Also C.W. 6609. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

369. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 6, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

Read the accompanying letter and do what is necessary. What has happened to Lilavati? She is extremely agitated. She is a good girl, but one can never be sure when she will let one down. Still I am at ease since you are by her side.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U. II. Also C.W. 8460. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* also the preceding item.

370. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

July 6, 1935

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I wish to write this letter with the left hand for a change. Whatever one might think, it is in india we shall find our happiness in the poor comforts of our huts. Can we ever be happy by going abroad? I am glad that you read the Harijan story twice despite your worries. Don't mind what happens now. I hope you are taking care of your health. Worrying won't solve this problem. Don't you know that Ramabehn[1] is by your side? I wanted to write this last sentence differently but wrote it thus. But since it is apt, I am not revising it. She is a sort of a philosopher, but just as we do not know God who is very near us, we often do not know the friend who gives us real solace. Hence, if you do not feel reassured in her presence, I have suggested in the sentence above that you have no cause for worry so long as she is with you. She is the right person to bear the burden of your suffering.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5943. Also C.W. 3260. Courtesy: Mahesh P. Pattani

371. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
July 7, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

Where is the need for you to reason any further with Harilal? Can we compel him to be virtuous? It, therefore, seems to me that you need do nothing except pass his letters to me and mine to him. You may see what you can do when he repents again.

Kanu[2] recovered from fever long ago. Please rest assured that he is perfectly at ease here. Neither you nor Jamna nor Purushottam need worry in the least about him. He is working constantly under my eyes.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8461. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Addressee's wife
[2] Addressee's son

372. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

Monday, July 8, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

These are the remains of the paper sent to you. Never believe what the papers say of me unless you have confirmation from here. I did howl from pain for 45 minutes. When it was over, there was no weakness felt, no weight lost. It was an overdose of *neem* leaf. I was trying its maximum capacity. Such experiments must be tried on self. My experiments have never done permanent harm. I have made rich discoveries for myself and companions. In the early days my teeth suffered. But there too, there was nothing wrong with the experiment. It was my ignorance of early days. If our doctors knew the properties of indigenous foods and drugs, the way of persons like me would be simple and easy.

I shall have more paper made for you.

Believe me, I am quite fit.

I had to do the writing myself today—Monday!

Love to you all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3540. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6349

373. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

July 8, 1935

BHAI MUNSHI,

Your article is good, but it should be in Hindi. The English version should be as its translation. If this is not done, you will be making a wrong beginning. The writers in the North will not tolerate English. Have you made it clear that the monthly[1] will be printed in Hindi? I hope articles in other languages also will be printed in the Devanagari script. If I am right in this assumption, you should make the point clear in your article.

I like the idea of an advisory board. If I am to be the president in my official capacity, then there is no question of accepting or declining. If I am to be appointed President afresh, I would certainly

[1] *Hansa*

hesitate. What place can I have among scholars? I like to remain within my sphere.

If it is possible to elect a new President, Vidhu Shekhar Shastri of Santiniketan or Shri Joshi of Karve University will deserve the honour. I hear that the latter is a great scholar. I do not know him personally. Think over this suggestion objectively. My hesitation does not spring in the least from false modesty. My literary ability is practically nil. Being gifted with common sense, I can make good use of whatever little ability I have. After you send me the brochure, I will write a brief 'Foreword'[1] for it. For the present, I would like to see the advertisements. We shall think of some restrictions by and by. Personally, I would be for accepting advertisements only of books, education, etc. What connection can a purely literary paper have with soap or hand-made stick? or khadi? Advertisements of hand-made pens or paper or pictures would be all right. We may freely accept advertisements of foreign books. But I donot insist on my own views prevailing in this matter. We shall have whatever restrictions I can persuade you to accept. My health is excellent.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 7578. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

374. LETTER TO SAIYED KASIM ALI

WARDHA,
July 8, 1935

BHAI KASIM ALI,

I am helpless. Village uplift can be brought about only by silent service, not by stage-plays. I do not find your play with me. Did you send it under registration? Anyway, I am hunting for it. You ought to find some occupation there itself if you are in financial straits. Even otherwise it is not the proper thing to earn one's living from writing alone.

M. K. GANDHI

SAIYED SAHEB KASIM ALI, VISHARAD
BETUL

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9752

[1] *Vide* "Message to *Hansa*", 5-8-1935,

375. LETTER TO B. R. AMBEDKAR

WARDHA,
July 9, 1935

DEAR DR. AMBEDKAR,

As you may know, Rajaram Bhole is with me just now. He wants me to advise him as to the course he should take. Regard being had as to his precarious health, I have advised that it would be better if he could reconcile himself to some Harijan service against . . . .[1] to feed and clothe himself. The other alternative is to take up a business line. I see difficulties in his taking it up. He must then attend regular hours and be prepared to do best work which is fatal for a man who is in perpetual fear of developing active T.B. But I told him that he should take your advice and be guided by you. He tells me he has already written to you. I know he will receive your reply in due course. But I would like you, for my sake, please, to hasten your reply so as to enable me to tell Rajaram what to do.

Yours sincerely,
DR. AMBEDKAR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

376. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
July 9, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I had in fact washed my hands of him[2] after I got his last letter. I fear that he had started drinking from the very beginning. The day he had sought my permission to take brandy as medicine for malaria, I had concluded that he had started drinking again. Hence there is no question of my being shocked at all. Since he

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] Harilal Gandhi

had come to me, I trusted him and would do so again, but I can do no more than that.

You certainly did well in not sending a wire. Don't spend any money for sending him here. Leave him to his fate.

I have already sent Lilavati's letter to you as also my reply[1].

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II Also C.W. 8462. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

377. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

July 9, 1935

CHI. LILAVATI,

I hope you have calmed down. What had upset you? You would not be so easily upset if you don't do anything against your nature. May God give you wisdom. Pray to Him every day, both in the morning as soon as you get up and in the evening before going to bed, to give you mental strength.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9335. Also C.W. 6610. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lilavati Asar", 6-7-1935
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Lilavati Asar", 6-7-1935

378. LETTER TO HARI GOVIND GOVIL

July 10, 1935

BHAI HARI GOVIL,

The book you sent has been received. My thanks to your wife. She can write whenever she pleases.

What you say about a dictionary and a Hindi primer is quite right. I shall do what is possible.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1022.

379. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

WARDHA,
July 10, 1935

BHAI SATISBABU,

Your letter. How is it possible for me to keep aloof from the Barkamta affair? If the Charkha Sangh receives any complaint regarding khadi the matter perforce has to be cleared up. Shankerlal is ill and he is moreover upset over this dispute. Therefore he has referred it to me. Annada's letters too are pouring in. So the matter has to be settled one way or the other. In my opinion you and Annada should both make your statements. Next, each of you should answer the other's allegation. If, after that, there is need for you two to be called, I shall send for you. Otherwise I shall simply give my award. Isn't this quite the right thing?

As regards bones I appreciate the process adopted in Indore.[1] Some nitrogen is of course wasted. But does it matter? If the bones are fired carefully they can be easily ground in an ordinary mill. Hundreds of maunds of it can be ground to powder in the lime-grinding mill and this manure will be marketable.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1711

[1] andhiji had visited the plant earlier in April.

380. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

WARDHA,
July 11, 1935

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter just now. Since it was written on the occasion of your birthday, have my blessings first.

What a woman you are! You don't say which birthday you celebrated. Your noble aspirations will assuredly be fulfilled. One who strives for good aims never strives in vain, and one who strives for evil aims never succeeds. The latter only seems to succeed sometimes.

About other things, when I have more time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10375. Also C.W. 6814. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

381. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

July 11, 1935

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your letter. Do come over during the holidays. We shall consider the matter then. I am writing to Narandas about your pay.[1] Do you know what staying with me means? It means living like a labourer, learning whatever you can while labouring and eating whatever food you are given. If you can be satisfied with this, then come. You won't have a separate room here. This manner of living is difficult for me, for Ba, and would be so for everybody. But you may see for yourself when you come here. For the present, patiently go on doing the work assigned to you there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 10107. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] *Vide* the following item.

382. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 11, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

For the present Harilal may be considered as lost to us . . . .[1] I get Lilavati's letters. Enclosed please find one for her.[2] We may pay her out of the school funds if that is possible. If this is the only cause of her discontent, remove it.

Do give Mathew physical labour. What is the duration of each class?

Kanu is keeping very well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8463. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

383. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
July 12, 1935

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

Ambalalbhai must have reached there now. He has become a handicap, but that does not mean that he has got exemption from having to contribute to the purse occasionally. You may, therefore, go and explain to him the whole budget. Accept whatever he gives and write to me and tell me what he says. I will discuss the matter with Shankerlal when he comes.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3960. Also C.W. 126. Courtesy: Parikshitlal L. Majmudar

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

384. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

July 12, 1935

CHI HEMPRABHA,

Your long letter gave me much joy. If I had not read it I could not have understood your mind. Your letter expresses anger, agitation and pride. To assert that men controlling the Charkha Sangh have spoilt it all, that the Pratishthan alone has accomplished everything, yet has had to suffer all hardships and that Annada and others bear animosity is not correct and it proceeds from pride. Regarding all this I shall not answer through a letter. You have to come here; only then will you and I, too, gain peace of mind. You must bring Satisbabu with you but it does not matter if he cannot come. The decision taken will be conveyed to him when the time comes and of course put into effect. Do come over at your earliest; your health, too, will benefit.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1712

385. ADVICE TO KEISHO[1]

[Before *July 13, 1935*]

It is indeed swadeshi cloth for you, but not the cloth that you should go in for in India. "In Rome do as the Romans do" is not a meaningless saying. We must try to observe the manners and customs of the country whose salt we eat. When I was in Africa, I tried to use as many things as I could, made by African hands. So unless you have any special objection, I would ask you to use khadi, Khadi is no doubt dearer, but then you may try to do with less cloth than you need.

Harijan, 13-7-1935

[1] This is extracted from "Weekly Letter" by Mahadev Desai who had explained that the advice was given when Keisho, a Japanese monk staying at the Ashram, purchased Japanese cloth. Vide also "Speech at Ashram, Wardha", Before 20-7-1935.

386. IDEALS AND PRACTICE[1]

There is an eternal struggle going on in us between the powers of light and powers of darkness, those of truth and of untruth, between God and the Devil. We have to carry on the struggle as best as we may, but we have always to be conscious of our limitations. Arjuna was on the point of forgetting his limitations and Lord Krishna prevented him from doing so. Ahimsa is the law of life, but if I have not shed the fear of serpents what am I to do? My mind has already killed the serpent, only the flesh is weak. Your duty says: 'Kill it. Give up the vain attempt of refraining from killing it.' The same is the case about *brahmacharya* and *grihasthashrama*. Lifelong *brahmacharya* is a consummation devoutly to be wished, but he who cannot control his passions, whose mind and sense lust after the flesh, must enter *grihasthashrama* and a pure householder's life. For him the attempt at lifelong *brahmacharya* is vain. He will not give up his faith in the ideal, but he will approach it by gradual practice in self-restraint.

Harijan, 13-7- 1935

387. PUNJAB HARIJANS AND WELLS

I gladly publish the foregoing[2]. I am asking Lala Mohanlal, the Secretary of the Punjab Harijan Sevak Sangh, to deal with the letter. All the needs of Harijans in the matter of wells that come under the observation of the local Sangh will certainly be brought to the notice of the Punjab Sanitary Board. The Harijan Sevak Sangh's policy is not to duplicate the work done by the Government but wherever

[1] This is extracted from "Weekly Letter" by Mahadev Desai, who had explained: "In a recent article entitled "All Life Is One" , 22-6-1935Gandhiji answered all questions directed at some of the seeming contradictions between his belief and action. In reply to similar questions addressed to him privately he sent a reply [presumably "Letter to Krishnachandra", 3-7-1935 which makes his position and those of aspirants clearer, if possible."

[2] This was a letter dated June 28, 1935, from K. A. Rahman, Secretary, Sanitary Board, Punjab, not reproduced here. The addressee, who had read an article about drinking-water for Harijans in the Punjab in Civil and Military Gazette, dated June 27, 1935, had pointed out that "in recent years lakhs of rupees have been spent in providing good drinking-water for villagers" and that there was no "distinction between Harijans and non-Harijans".

possible to supplement it. The Sangh is building wells only where necessity is proved. I may mention here, that though in law everywhere in British India public wells are open to Harijans in common with the others, in practice it has been found that Harijans are forcibly debarred from their use by caste Hindus and sometimes even others. Harijans dare not use these wells without inviting severe corporal punishment from caste Hindus. So far as my information goes, things are not very different in the Punjab.

Harijan, 13-7-1935

388. NEED FOR A STANDARD WAGE

The following questionnaire to its agents and others has been issued by the A.I.V.I.A.[1], the answers to reach the Central Office, Wardha, before 1st August next:

It has been proposed that we should insist on the village artisan getting an adequate return for his labour in connection with all articles produced or sold under the aegis of the A.I.V.I.A. For this purpose it will be necessary to fix a working wage standard. Such standard should be the same for either sex for equal quantity of work. It may be based on an eight-hour day with a prescribed minimum output. Such wage will enter into the cost and the price should be fixed in relation to this. Ordinarily we may not be able to fix the prices in the competitive market, but we may do so for articles which do not enter into competition and for goods chosen for their special virtues which are appreciated by the consumers.

This questionnaire is sent out to inivite your opinion on the following points:

1. Do you think it feasible to fix a minimum daily wage and ensure it to the workers by fixing prices?

2. Should we fix our ultimate standard and work up towards it, or should we start with a low minimum and then raise it as we proceed?

3. On what basis should it be arrived at? Can you suggest a subsistence wage taking into consideration only food for the time being, as clothing should be made by personal effort? Will half an anna per hour be too low?

Associations like the A.I.S.A.[2], and the A.I.V.I.A., and such philanthropic institutions may not follow the commercial maxim of buying in the cheapest market and selling in the dearest. The A.I.S.A. has certainly tried to buy in the cheapest market. Of this however in

[1] All-India Village Industries' Association
[2] All-India Spinners' Association

another column.[1] Wishing to give the A.I.V.I.A. the benefit of my experience of the evolution of khadi, I initiated a discussion about the wages received by the artisans working under its influence. The result was the questionnaire.

It has already been discovered that the tendency among agents is to produce the required articles at as low prices as possible. Where may the axe be laid if not upon the artisan's earnings? Unless, therefore, a minimum rate be fixed, there is every danger of the village artisan suffering, though it is for his sake that the A.I.V.I.A. has been brought into being.

We have exploited the poor patient villagers for too long. Let not A.I.V.I.A. intensify the exploitation under the guise of philanthropy. Its aim is not to produce village articles as cheap as possible; it is to provide the workless villagers with work at a living wage.

It has been argued that anything that may raise the prices of articles made in the villages will defeat the purpose for which the A.I.V.I.A. has been brought into being, for, it is said, nobody will buy the village articles if the prices are too high. Why should the price of an article be considered too high, if it only provides a living wage for the manufacturer? The buying public has to be instructed to know the abject condition of the people. If we are to do justice to the toiling millions we must render to them their due; we must pay them a wage that will sustain them; we must not take advantage of their helplessness and pay wage that would hardly give them one full meal.

It is quite clear that the Association must refuse to compete with mill-manufactures. We may not take part in a game in which we know we must lose. In terms of metal, the big combines, whether foreign or indigenous, will always be able to outbid the effort of the human hand. What the Association seeks to do is to substitute false and non-human economics by the true and human. Not killing competition, but life-giving co-operation, is the law of the human being. Ignoring the emotion is to forget that man has feelings. Not the good of the few, not even the good of the many, but it is the good of all that we are made to promote, if we are 'made in His own image'.

A philanthropic body like the A.I.V.I.A. cannot shirk a consideration of the problems involved in the questionnaire. If the

[1] *Vide* the following item.

true solution appears to be impracticable, it must be its endeavour to make it practicable. Truth is ever practicable. Thus considered the programme of the Association may fittingly be called adult education.

And if the Association is to secure for the artisan under its care a living wage, it must also pry into his domestic budget, and trace the course of every coin that is paid.

The most difficult question to determine would be the minimum of the living wage. I have suggested eight annas for eight hours' strenuous labour converted into a given quantity of the particular goods turned out by an artisan of good ability. Eight annas is a mere token representing a certain quantity of necessaries of life. If in a family of five there are two full workers they would earn at the proposed rate Rs. 30 per month allowing no holiday and no sickness gap. Thirty rupees per month is no extravagant income for five mouths. The method here proposed necessarily ignores the distinction of sex or age. But every referee will draw upon his own personal experience and report accordingly.

Harijan, 13-7-1935

389. ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION

What is true of the artisans working through the A.I.V.I.A., is equally true of those who are working through the A.I.S.A. Only the A.I.V.I.A. has to write on a clean slate. The A.I.S.A. has to undo a tradition of fifteen years' standing if it has to introduce a uniform minimum. In helping the numerous spinners, it has also to deal with weavers, one-tenth of the number of spinners, besides carders, ginners and others. The wages of each class vary. The difference between those earned by weavers and those earned by spinners would appear to be too great to admit of equality. Whereas a spinner gets two pies per hour, a weaver gets one anna at the lowest and not unoften two. To bring the spinners to 12 pies from two is a very big problem, especially when it is remembered that they number nearly one lac and half.

But the Association to be worthy of its trust has to develop enough courage to do the right thing. Difficulties are there to be faced, not to cower us. We must trust those who buy khadi for the love of *Daridranarayana* to pay a higher price for it than they have donehitherto. If the trust is misplaced we must face a fall, however big, in sales. Those who love khadi will buy it at any cost if they know that ninety-five rupees out of one hundred go into the pockets of the *Daridranarayana*.

But after all the commercial use of khadi is its secondary and least use. Not more than one crore persons, i.e., city people, would need to buy khadi. These can be easily and comfortably clothed by twenty lacs of full-time artisans. The primary use of khadi is to find supplementary employment for the peasantry. They have to be taught to spin their own yarn and even weave it themselves or have it woven. They become their producers and buyers or rather users even as they are their own cooks and eaters. This work we have hardly touched seriously as yet. Shri Banker is quietly and slowly organizing the change. Whilst that is being done, it is as well to set ourselves right by the spinners by offering them an adequate wage. Is it to be eight annas per day or less? Whatever the limit, what is to be the quantity of yarn expected in one hour to qualify the spinner to receive the given wage? The same question has to be solved for ginners, carders, weavers and all those who are today working in the manufacture of khadi.

Will those who are interested in khadi and are at all conversant with the science favour me with their views on the proposed change in the scale of wages? If they favour the change, they will also say what minimum they will fix.

Harijan, 13-7-1935

390. MEMBERS BEWARE

Sjt. Kumarappa sends me the following for publication:

> The ordinary members are reminded that they are required to send in their reports to the Secretary regularly every quarter under the Bye-Law No. 11 which reads as follows:
>
> "Every ordinary member of the Association shall send to the Secretary a report of the work done by him every quarter so as to reach the Central Office not later than one month after the expiry of the quarter. If no report is received for three consecutive quarters from any ordinary member, such member shall cease to be a member of the Association."
>
> Such ordinary members as have not sent in their reports hitherto are requested to submit an account of their work done up to 30th June, 1935 without further delay.

Sjt. Kumarappa is a vigilant Secretary and so is the Chairman Sjt. Jajooji. They both believe that the rules of an institution should be enforced or repealed. As there is no likelihood of the above reasonable rule being repealed, it is to be hoped that the members will carry out the rule both in the spirit and to the letter.

Harijan, 13-7-1935

391. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

WARDHA,
July 13, 1935

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I welcomed your letter. I had thought that Narandas and you were now getting along well with each other. But I see that I was mistaken. I was very glad that you wrote frankly. I have received a letter regarding the school there. I am inquiring into the matter. Have you told Narandas what you think? I see from your letter that you are inclined to sympathize with the teachers who have left. Do you know

all that they demand? Have you discussed the whole problem with Nanalal?

Bapa[1] tells me in his letter that there is complete understanding now between Jivanlal and you. Your letter raises a doubt in my mind. Let me know the truth.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5532

392. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

July 13, 1935

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your long letter; it is good and I notice nothing wrong in it. Nevertheless I have grave apprehension that things will fizzle out if any conditions are laid down such as release of the prisoners and detenus, abolition of deportation to the Andamans, restoration of the satyagrahi's lands. It might be considered improper at this juncture.These suggestions may well come from a person invited for consultations. If the present atmosphere continues, I see no hope of an agreement. All their amiable talk with you seems to have an underlying implication that only the existing state of things will be accepted. If the fear is not groundless it is impossible to reach an agreement; I can do nothing more at present. But it does not mean that you should give up the efforts you are making. You should go ahead with your endeavour; the outcome lies only with God.

You are keeping well, I hope.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 7972. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

[1] Amritlal V. Thakkar

393. LETTER TO LAKSHMI NIVAS BIRLA

July 13, 1935

CHI. LAKSHMI NIVAS

I have your letter. A letter for Father is enclosed, post it by air mail. All are well I hope.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 8011. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

394. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

WARDHA,
July 14, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

Enclosed is the letter from Mr. Gregg giving an idea of the situation there. But have no worry. The fees if required will be paid. Someone had come here. He says that Kellogg is not now held in such high esteem as some others. I shall find out their names, addresses and other particulars.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 3151

395. LETTER TO LACEY

WARDHA,
July 15, 1935

DEAR MR. LACEY,

I thank you for your letter. Your question is so important that without mentioning your name I have ventured to have on it an article for *Harijan*. I enclose herewith an advance copy of it. I hope you will make no public reference to it before its publication on Saturday.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

396. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

WARDHA,
July 15, 1935

DEAR PLAYMATE,

How stupid of you not to have broken your journey because I was silent. You did not need to here my voice. And you could have made sure yourself that I was not ill. I expect better behaviour next time.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

How is the Shuaib family?

MISS PADMAJA NAIDU
C/O SHUAIB QURESHI
PRIME MINISTER
BHOPAL

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

397. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

July 15, 1935

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got both your letters. Obtain Babuji's permission and stay there as long as you wish. Since we shall be meeting soon, I don't write more. I can't think of anything which I should like you to bring with you from there. I hope you will see Vallabhbhai. Ramdas also is in Bombay. His address is: 1, Ash Lane, Fort.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Ba is in Delhi.

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N. 3447

398. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

July 15, 1935

BHAI KHAMBHATTA,

Please send me a copy of the letter you wrote about the hospital. I hope your health is better everyday.

Blessings to both of you from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 6610. Also C. W. 4400. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

399. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

July 15, 1935

1. When ‘have’ means to get we can in many cases use ‘get’; e.g., ‘I must have it’ or ‘I must get it.’

2. There is very little difference between ‘must’ and ‘have’.

3. We can say either ‘If you had done this’ or ‘Had you done this’, i.e., if we use ‘had’ in the place of ‘if’ the meaning remains unchanged. You will understand this better when you use it.

4. The article ‘a’ must be used before a noun denoting countable things. ‘A’ is taken to mean as one, therefore ‘the’ is used for the plural.

Where ‘that’ is used, we can use ‘the’; e.g., ‘The or that man whom you know is here.’ If there are more persons, then ‘The or those men whom you know are here.’

You must have calmed down now. I had stomach-ache one day for a short while as I had taken *neem* juice in excess. It had subsided very soon.

BAPU

From a phototstat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9254. Also C.W. 10101. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

400. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 15, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

Forget Harilal completely now. I have almost forgotten him.

Enclosed is a lesson[1] for Lilavati.

Vajubhai has sent one more letter as a reminder. I shall send it to you, if necessary, after I get your reply.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

What is your advice regarding Dhiru's request. I suppose you know that he wants to go to Santiniketan.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C. W. 8464. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

401. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

July 15, 1935

CHI. NARAHARI,

Herewith an extract from Devsharmaji's letter which concerns you. I would advise you to engage this gentleman. That will partly satisfy your urgent need for a Hindi teacher. Write to him directly [at]: Gandhi Sevasaram, Post. Gurukul Kangri, Saharanpur District.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9085

402. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

WARDHA,
July 16, 1935

CHI. MARY,

I had your letters. I hope you are making steady progress. If you procure a knife and bamboo, a bit of broken slate and a little compass you can make a *takli* yourself with the compass you can get

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

a circular disc and with the point of your knife or a nail you can pierce a clean hole in the slate disc. Try this as a recreation. We have the trinity here: Mary C.[1], Mary I. i.e., Ingham and Sumitra. Mary C. grumbles that I have put her on curds for she has a little cold.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MARY BARR
WANLESS T. B. SANATORIUM
MIRAJ

From a photostat: G.N. 6053. Also C.W. 3383. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

403. LETTER TO K.V. RATNAM

July 16, 1935

DEAR RATNAM,

I must thank you for the fountain pen you have sent me through Shri Kumarappa. I have received it and it seems to be a good substitute for the foreign pens one sees in the bazaars.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

K. V. RATNAM AND BROTHERS
RATNAM FOUNTAIN PEN WORKS
RAJAHMUNDRY

From a photostat: G.N. 816

404. LETTER TO BHAILAL PATEL

July 16, 1935

BHAI BHAILAL,

I got your letter and the money order. You are doing excellent work. I am sending your letter[2] to *Harijanbandhu*.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3301

[1] Mary Chesley, a Canadian Quaker

[2] The letter appeared under the title "Experience of a Harijan Sevak" in *Harijanbandhu* , 21-7-1935.

405. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

July 16, 1935

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

I heard from your father that . . .[1] now does not want to marry you. She was, therefore, released from the engagement. That is the only proper course for us. I hope you are undisturbed. Rest assured that your stars are fortunate, and that you will get a wife best suited for you. At present, you should devote yourself exclusively to your studies and to building your character. You have still not written to me. Improve your English. Take interest in your studies, and train your body to bear strain. Do not get tired of physical work, much less feel ashamed of it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3050

406. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

WARDHA,
July 18, 1935

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I am glad the burden of the book is off your mind.[2] Of course Simla was the right place for it.

I understand what you say of Khambhatta.[3]

As to the young Bengali, apart from the desire to learn, the proposed book[4] will be of little value unless it has outstanding merit. I may also tell you that Dr. Pattabhi is writing the Congress history[5].

Yes, Jawaharlal's discharge[6] will be an important event. The Socialist creed would be most attractive, if the sting of compulsion was out.

Love.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G. N. 990

[1] The name has been omitted.

[2] The addressee had just completed his book *India and Britain*.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to H. L. Sharma", 30-6-1935

[4] *The Rise and Growth of the Congress in India* by C. F. Andrews and Girija Mookerjee published by George Allen & Unwin Ltd. in 1938; *vide* also "Letter to C.F. Andrews", 29-7-1935

[5] Later published as *History of the Indian National Congress*

[6] Owing to Kamala Nehru's illness he was discharged from the Almora Jail on September 2, 1935 before the expiry of his full term.

407. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

July 18, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

This is just to wish you a happy time in Poona.

Of course you will do about the balance Rs. 400 what you would have done about 400 should a similar occasion arise. I wanted you to wait for me to give the word so long as you were in doubt.

I shall look forward to your arrival on 1st or 2nd August. Herewith a note[1] for Charlie.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3717. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6873

408. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

July 18, 1935

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

You ought not to fall ill. If you have been laid up because of my letters it reflects badly on your obedience. You are not to feel hurt over anything I may say, only to get well promptly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1713

409. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

WARDHA,
July 19, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM,[2]

Your letters can't tire me, for I am interested in your true happiness.

You may send the little bigger size cooker through someone coming. There is no immediate hurry.

I am glad you have a good daughter-in-law.

[1] *Vide* the preceeding item.
[2] The source has this in Hindi

I shall be relieved when I hear that Kichi's finger is completely healed.

I hope Father is keeping good health.

Love.

Blessings from[1]
BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 9603. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal

410. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

July 19, 1935

CHI. MARY,

I have no particular view on the reactions the treatment is producing. I am quite clear that having gone there, if only to do justice to the doctors there you should go through the full course. After all we must trust them to know what they are doing. You need not hurry. I hope you are otherwise well. The Marys are here, gaining experience.

We are having gentle rains daily.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6054. Also C.W. 3384. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

411. SPEECH AT ASHRAM, WARDHA[2]

[Before *July 20, 1935*]

I rarely say anything on the occasion of the departure of our visitors, but I do so today, first, because he is a visitor from Japan, but secondly and principally, because of the noble example he has set to us all by the way in which he lived in our midst.[3] He has been with us for four or five months, but no one has worked with such devotion to his task and in such self-abnegation. He has worked away so mutely that we rarely noticed his presence. His absorption in his prayers was a thing to charm anyone. To repeat one *mantra* over and over again for

[1] The source has this in Hindi

[2] The speech is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter".

[3] Keisho, the Japanese monk, was leaving the Ashram to take the place of another disciple at Calcutta

four hours in the day, not in a haphazard or perfunctory way, but with zest, devotion and concentration is an extraordinary thing. Knowing no language of India and not even English, he must have found himself an utter stranger in our midst when he came. But stranger he would be none. He began the study of Hindi and learnt it soon enough to be able to speak with us somewhat. But what I prize most is the radiance of his joy all the days he has been with us. Fancy yourself in a strange land where you know no one, where everything, including the language, manners, customs, is strange, and ask yourself if you can live as this friend has lived in the midst of us. I fancy I could not do so, nor can any one of you. He derived his joy from the inner self, I should say. For I am sure the sourroundings in the midst of which he found himself were no source of such joy for him. None of us has ever seen him ruffled, ever sour or bitter. His presence everywhere radiated joy which we prize. That is why we will all miss him. We bid him a very hearty farewell and hope that he will be back in our midst as soon as he can.

Harijan, 20-7-1935

412. REMARKS ON THIRD-CLASS TRAVELLING[1]

[Before *July 20, 1935*]

You simply cannot have a clean seat in an upper class with its paddings and its cushions. These absorb dirt and dust and perspiration as nothing else can, and because they afford a comfortable seat you sit on them as a matter of course. These seats are or can be washed daily and you could clean them yourself as often as you like.

Harijan, 20-7-1935

413. MEANING OF NON-VIOLENCE

An English friend sends me the following letter:

> Will you please see the attached copy of a report in the *Madras Mail,* and very kindly let me know whether it reproduces your words accurately? And if it

[1] This is extracted from 'Weekly Letter' by Mahadev Desai, who had reported that Gandhiji made these remarks during his talk with a friend who had never travelled third class but wanted to do so against the protests of his friends and relations because "one could never improve the lot of third-class passengers except by travelling with them".

does, would you be so good as to explain how you reconcile the view here expressed with your more usual statements? It seems to me the most dangerous doctrine yet recorded. It invites anyone to take law into his own hands, and do murder or other violence, on the sole pretext that he is afraid, or that the only alternative to violence is a cowardice that is worse. Hurrah for General Dyer, in that case!

The following is the cutting from the *Madras Mail* dated 7th instant:

Replying to a letter from a prominent Congressman, who had described the Hindu-Muslim tension in a village in Andhradesha and the reported aggressive attitude exhibited by Muslims of the village, and who sought his advice in the circumstances, Mr. Gandhi in a private communication, says:

"DEAR FRIEND,

"The condition described by hyou is regrettable. If the people fear their Muslim brethren they have every right to defend themselves by physical resistance.

"Not to do so will be cowardice which can in no way be described as non-violence. Cowardice is a species of violence worse than open and armed violence."

Though I have no copy of my letter, what is claimed to be a reproduction of it substantially represents my views. I cannot recall the name of my correspondent. He is unknown to me. If he is a prominent Congressman, I fancy, I would know him. As stated by the *Madras Mail* correspondent, my letter was a private communication in reply to an enquiry. My reply should, therefore, be read together with the circumstances which prompted it. If I had preserved the letter, I would have reproduced the main contents. It was a long letter. The writer gave in detail the condition of the villagers. The Hindu inhabitants were described as helpless and panic-stricken. They knew nothing of non-violence. The writer wanted to know what the villagers so situated were to do in the face of daily increasing violence on the part of the Muslims of the village supported by others coming from other villages. The advice I gave has been the advice I have always given in such circumstances. When I was travelling with the Ali Brothers in 1920, wanton acts of violence by the police near Bettiah were reported to have been done. I dealt with the matter in a public speech delivered in Bettiah and wrote on it in the columns of *Young*

India of 15th December 1920.[1] The relevant paragraph from it is reproduced at the end of this article.

Non-violence cannot be taught to a person who fears to die and has no power of resistance. A helpless mouse is not non-violent because he is always eaten by pussy. He would gladly eat the murderess if he could, but he ever tries to flee from her. We do not call him a coward, because he is made by nature to behave no better than he does. But a man who, when faced by danger, behaves like a mouse, is rightly called a coward. He harbours violence and hatred in his heart and would kill his enemy if he could without being hurt himself. He is a stranger to non-violence. All sermonizing on it will be lost on him. Bravery is foreign to his nature. Before he can understand non-violence he has to be taught to stand his ground and even suffer death in the attempt to defend himself against the aggressor who bids fair to overwhelm him. To do otherwise would be to confirm his cowardice and take him further away from non-violence. Whilst I may not actually help anyone to retaliate, I must not let a coward seek shelter behind non-violence so called. Not knowing the stuff of which non-violence is made many have honestly believed that running away from danger every time was a virtue compared to offering resistance especially when it is fraught with danger to one's life. As a teacher of non-violence I must, so far as it is possible for me, guard against such an unmanly belief.

Non-violence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction devised by the ingenuity of man. Destruction is not the law of the humans. Man lives freely only by his readiness to die, if need be, at the hands of his brother, never by killing him. Every murder or other injury, no matter for what cause, committed or inflicted on another is a crime against humanity.

But I see quite clearly that this truth about non-violence cannot be delivered to the helpless. They must be taught to defend themselves.

The sceptic then argues: "You cannot teach non-violence to the weak and you dare not take it to the powerful. Why not admit that it is a futile creed?" The answer is, non-violence can be effectively taught only by living it. When there is an unmistakable demonstration of its

[1] *Vide* "Satyagraha in South Africa" and "Satyagraha in South Africa", Chapter XIX, sub-title "Indian Opinion"

power and efficacy the weak will shed their weakness and the mighty will quickly realize the valuelessness of might and becoming meek acknowledge the sovereignty of non-violence. It is my humble effort to show that this is no unattainable goal even in mass action. With critics like the English friend, I plead for patience.

The deduction that the friend draws from my letter to the Andhra correspondent is in my opinion wholly unwarranted. Even without the letter to which mine was a reply, it is clear that there would be no occasion to defend oneself when police aid is at hand. The police won't, if they are faithful to their trust, allow open aggression or violence. Resistance in self-defence is allowed in law. I was dealing with circumstances which were assumed to be beyond the reach of law or police.

They punish more often than they prevent, much less detect, crime. Self-defence, then, is the only honourable course where there is unreadiness for self-immolation.

And in future, if and when such incidents happen, they must be prepared to defend themselves. It is better if they can manfully stand persecution and allow themselves to be robbed, instead of hitting in defence of their persons or property. That would indeed be their crowning triumph. But such forbearance can only be exercised out of strength and not out of weakness. Till that power is acquired, they must be prepared to resist the wrongdoer by force. Whena policeman comes not to arrest but to molest, he travels beyond his authority. The citizen has then the inalienable right of treating him as a robber and dealing with him as such. He will therefore use sufficient force to prevent him from robbing. He will most decidedly use force in order to defend the honour of his women. The doctrine of non-violence is not for the weak and the cowardly; it is meant for the brave and the strong. The bravest man allows himself to be killed without killing. And he desists from killing or injuring, because he knows that it is wrong to injure. Not so the villagers of Champaran. They flee from the police. They would strike and even kill a policemen, if they had no fear of the law. They gain no merit of non-violence but on the contrary incur the reproach of cowardice and unmanliness; they stand condemned before Government and man.

Harijan, 20-7-1935

414. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

WARDHA,
July 20, 1935

MY DEAR ANAND,

What nonsense! What more encouragement did you and Vidya[1] need beyond saying 'you may come'? Come both of you or one of you whenever you like. Have of me what is possible.

Love to both.

BAPU

From a microfilm: Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani.

415. LETTER TO KEVALCHAND K. MEHTA

July 20, 1935

BHAI KEVALCHAND,

I have your letter. I am afraid I understand nothing about electricity and the immediate solution is not in my hands. So many such things are being done in our country today against which there seems to be no help.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 147

416. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

July 20, 1935

CHI. VASUMATI,

Join Gangabehn whole-heartedly in the work of sweeping and cleaning. Even the pupils who join can be asked to do this work after some time. This work is neither laborious nor time-consuming.

You seem now to have recovered your peace of mind.

Prabha[2] has fallen ill after going to Bombay and has not, therefore, returned as yet.

Lakshmi is still here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9404. Also C.W. 650. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

[1] Addressee's wife
[2] Prabhavati

417. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

July 20, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

I got your letter. Whatever it be, you are going to America[1]. A letter has come from Calcutta intimating the ship's departure on the 10th [August]. As you have to reach there well in advance, you should be here on the 25th. You would better leave for Calcutta after spending two or three days here. You must not bring too much luggage from there, though, of course, what is essential has to be brought.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha*, between pp. 174 and 175

418. LETTER TO GOVINDLAL SAHA

July 20, 1935

BHAI GOVINDLALJI,

I have your letter after a long interval. As you have given your word to the Municipality there is nothing more to be said. Even otherwise the Harijan Sevak Sangh could not have taken possession of the plot. It is much better to let the Municipality have it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10677. Also C.W. 9758. Courtesy: Government of Uttar Pradesh

[1] The addressee had in his letter suggested cancelling the journey if the expense was too high.

419. LETTER TO A VILLAGE WORKER[1]

[Before *July 21, 1935*]

I got your letter yesterday. It is very good. Keep on describing your work in the same way. If you consider the hut or cave whatever you call it as your sole abode, then alone you will be able to do some real work. At present do not give permission to anyone to stay with you. Excuse yourself. It may be that someone comes and stays for a short while after you have settled down. At the moment if anyone comes there he will definitely disturb your work. Avoid this. Take good care of your health. In case you do fall ill at some time, do not hope for or expect the companionship of an ashram inmate. Whoever is there is your companion. He also would render help and if he does not it is God's will. God is always with you wherever you go.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 21-7-1935

420. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

WARDHA,
July 21, 1935

CHI. JANAKIBEHN,

Your letter was very good. Coax Madalasa gently to learn what you want her to learn. The days are gone when one could command obedience by scolding. Both of you should stay there[2] for the present. Read as much as possible and write as often as you can.

Live there as if Ranjit and Saroop were your children. Rest assured that nobody can encroach upon your freedom.

Everything is all right here. Om is absorbed in herself and Ramakrishna is collecting tickets and is quite happy. He does not sleep by my side now, and that is but proper.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2973

[1] The addressee had seriously taken up his work and had decided to have no companion to help him.

[2] At Almora

421. LETTER TO MADALASA BAJAJ

July 21, 1935

CHI. MADALASA,

There was nothing improper in your letter. I like your daily programme of work. It does not matter if you have given up reading. Your decision to eat without fear the food which you like is correct. You will thus discover by and by the food which suits you best.

Do not be perturbed by Janakibehn's anger. Pay attention to the truth behind what she says.

Your body must be kept warm. You must sit upright when praying, reading or writing. It is not necessary to bend your head at any time. You must wear sufficient clothes there.

Pay attention to all these things. Have you got justice now?

It is good that you take Ranjit's help in your study. Remain there as long as you like.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 317

422. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

July 21, 1935

BHAI KHAMBHATTA,

Let us now forget the hospital. Just remember that you had recovered your health there and be grateful to God for that, and serve every living creature in whatever way you can. My hand only needed some rest.

Blessings to both of you from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6611. Also C.W. 4401. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

423. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

July 21, 1935

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I got your letter. Your figures will be helpful to me. At present I have been discussing this subject frequently. See that you get back your strength. It will be better to have the whole body massaged.

Is your connection with Vadaj getting stronger? Have you tried to get cloth woven out of your own yarn? What opinion did the weaver express after trying to weave it?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 389. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

424. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

July 21, 1935

CHI. NARAHARI,

I got your letter. The services of the man whom Devsharma may send can be used even outside the Vidyapith for the propagation of Hindi.[1] We should not sacrifice many gods at that altar.

I will settle Velchand's[2] case with Sardar now.

If Joshi does not wear khadi, he cannot be acceptable to us. Apart from that, does Narandas's explanation convince you?

I would be surprised if Bhaskarrao has not yet met you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9087

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narahari D. Parikh", 15-7-1935

[2] Velchand Banker of Baroda; *vide* also "Letter to Narahari D. Parikh", 23-8-1935.

425. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

July 21, 1935

BHAI JETHALAL,

May the child get well soon.

I shall wait for an account of your change of heart.

I understand your suggestions. I shall not do anything in a hurry. Since you are so near, would it not be better if you went to Anantpur *via* Wardha?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9853. Courtesy: Narayan J. Sampat

426. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
July 21, 1935

CHI. RAMDAS,

I wish you well. But the course you have adopted seems to me fraught with danger. You have become impatient to make money and therefore are not content with mere commission. Have patience. Get some experience. Calm down. Be satisfied with a little. But then, one remembers one's master's counsel only as far as the gate.[6] In the end you will go where your fate leads you. This is but a caution by an old father.

We are flourishing here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

427. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

July 21, 1935

BHAI MOOLCHAND,

The wife has an equal right to the husband's earnings. But it does not mean that she can utilize the money just as she pleases. Your decision to maintain an account is quite correct.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 838

428. LETTER TO B. R. AMBEDKAR

WARDHA,
July 9, 1935

DEAR DR. AMBEDKAR,

As you may know, Rajaram Bhole is with me just now. He wants me to advise him as to the course he should take. Regard being had as to his precarious health, I have advised that it would be better if he could reconcile himself to some Harijan service against . . .[2] to feed and clothe himself. The other alternative is to take up a business line. I see difficulties in his taking it up. He must then attend regular hours and be prepared to do best work which is fatal for a man who is in perpetual fear of developing active T.B. But I told him that he should take your advice and be guided by you. He tells me he has already written to you. I know he will receive your reply in due course. But I would like you, for my sake, please, to hasten your reply so as to enable me to tell Rajaram what to do.

Yours sincerely,

DR. AMBEDKAR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee had in his letter mentioned about the differences between him and his wife over items of expenditure; *vide* also "Letter to Janakidevi Agrawal", 5-7-1935

[2] Omission as in the source

429. DISCUSSION WITH MARY CHESLEY AND MIRABEHN[1]

[Before *July 22, 1935*][2]

GANDHIJI: But why do you object to it?[3]

MARY CHESLEY: Because it is English.

G. But why should I not adopt whatever is best in English dress? I would not mind doing so, though Englishmen may look with contempt on Indian dress and disdain to adopt any part of it.

M.C. It is so inartistic. The English shorts go ill with the flowing Indian shirts.

G. Then I suppose you would be horrified if I asked people to wear the sola hat.

Here Mirabehn took up the battle on behalf of the friend and said it would certainly shock her. The sola hat was most expensive and extremely unportable.

G. That only shows that the hat you wore when you were in England was a misfit.

MIRABEHN: No. I had the best hats available in those days, but I never liked them. They cramp one's head and give one an ache.

G. Then perhaps your head was so ill-shaped. What I do seriously feel is that the sola hat is a good protection from the sun.

M. I would any day wear an Indian puggree in preference to the hat. It does keep off the sun as well.

G. It does not.

M. Well, well. But these shorts are bad. Between the loin-cloth that you wear and the shorts these people wear there is all the difference between heaven and hell.

G. Oh! Then you will explain why it is so shocking.

M. Perhaps I am putting it too strongly; I shall say there is all the difference that there is between day and night.

[1] The discussion is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter".

[2] Mary Chesley, left Wardha on Monday, July 22, 1935; *vide* "Letter to F. Mary Barr", 25-7-1935

[3] Mary Chesley, during her brief stay at the Ashram, had raised a question about the short-sleeved shirts and the shorts worn by some Ashram inmates.

M.C. But that is not my reason, I simply can't stand this incongruous mixture. Your loin-cloth is Indian. why should they not put on something like that? Let it be all Indian or all English.

G. Then to be all English I must go to a grogshop, too? As regards my loin-cloth I know that it is far superior to the shorts. But if they all adopted it they would be laughed at for trying to look like the Mahatma.

M. C. But why not wear the lower part of the shirt inside the shorts?

G. Yes, that is what you do. But it is hygienically bad.

Harijan, 27-7-1935

430. TELEGRAM TO H. L. SHARMA

WARDHAGANJ,
July 22, 1935

DR. SHARMA
KHURJA

THEY WANT YOU QUICK CALCUTTA, COME IMMEDIATELY.

BAPU

From a facsimile: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha*, between pp. 174 and 175

431. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

July 22, 1935

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got the letters of you both. Your letter to Ba has been redirected to her at Delhi. She and Manu are there. News about Lakshmi's delivery is expected in a day or two.

Ramdas seems to have lost some money recently. He will learn only from his own bitter experiences.

Harilal has gone to the last extreme. For the whole day he is found in a drunken state. This time he has crossed all limits.

Narandas and Kusum are in Rajkot. Nimu and her children are here. They keep fairly good health.

Jamnalalji has already arrived here. Janakibehn and Madalasa are in Almora.

Kanti and Kanu are here. This being the season for rain and malaria, everybody has to be careful. Fasting has proved to be the most effective medicine. Even though it may not work in all cases, it can do no harm either. The fast may either be partial or complete. In a partial fast protein and starch are avoided. Protein is present in milk and dal. Starch is found in rice, wheat, potatoes, etc. In a partial fast, therefore, juicy fruits and green vegetables can be eaten. When there is actual temperature, however, green vegetables, too, cannot be eaten. At that time one should take only orange juice or grape juice.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4840. Also C.W. 1252. Courtesy: Sushila Gandhi

432. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

July 22, 1935

CHI. MANUDI,

You haven't still replied to my letter. How can I permit that? You know I want to know your whole day's programme.

Here, everyday it rains for some time. Hence the weather is rather cold. The sun is rarely seen.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

The letter from Natal is enclosed.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1544. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

433. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

WARDHA,
July 23, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

What is going on in Lahore? Can you form any idea about it? Who is to blame? Insurance companies seem to have come up like mushrooms. I don't like them at all. But what can we do? It is too bad that they should cash in on the name of the Congress. But what else can we do except look on helplessly? . . .[1]

. . . [2] is a straightforward man. How can we take offence in a matter like this?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 176

434. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR [3]

WARDHA,
July 24, 1935

1. No article is used before those substances because we cannot count them; they can only be weighed.

2. The other meanings of 'would' which you have pointed out are correct. It is the custom to use them in those senses. Such usage is called 'idiom'.

3. It will be beneficial to continue the *Pathmala* exercises for the present.

4. I have given your letter to Maganbhai.

BAPU

[PS.]

Now that you have calmed down, remain calm.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9254. Also C.W. 10102. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] & [2] Omissions as in the source

[3] Lilavati Asar had asked : "(1) Should the article be used for material nouns like ghee, *gur*, sugar, milk, water, etc.? (2) I only know that 'would' is the past tense of 'will but many a time it is used for the present tense e.g., I would like to do this. Sometimes 'would' is used in the past tense also., *Hun Jato* is translated as 'I would go'. What meaning is to be taken of 'would' in this sentence? (3) Shall I continue to translate from Gujarati into English from the sentences given in the *Pathmala* ? Can you send me a small English paragraph for translation ? (4) Has *Murabbi* Maganbhai received my Gujarati letter to him?"

435. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 24, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

You have forgotten to reply to my suggestion to give a regular salary to Lilavati. Pay her if that can be done.

Send Dhiru to Ahmedabad or Bhavnagar if that is possible. If he agrees, inquire at both these places.

But don't send him just now if his cough still troubles him. Let him stay there for some time, do whatever he can by himself and build up his body. If Maneklal can meet his expenses, he must do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Doesn't the teacher Joshi wear khadi?

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8465. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

436. LETTER TO LOUISETTE GUIEYESSE

July 25,1935

DEAR SISTER,

I have read your long letter to Mira. If the Indian merchant has not come to you it shows that he is not interested in your work. You need not write to Bhulabhai Desai. I shall try to know from him his intentions. Do not expect anything from Prof. Wadia. He can hardly help. My firm advice is: Do not on any account incur debts; if you cannot pay, you may cease publication.[1] Do not depend upon Indian aid, save in the way of being supplied with news and literature. If there are not enough French men of means who can shoulder the little burden, you should close the venture, and rely upon your own personal labour. God expects the impossible from none. Whatever you do, do for His sake and in His name. Then He is responsible and not you for anything you may do. Though many of my friends here

[1] The addressee wanted monetary help for her journal *Nouvelles de L' lnde* towards which she had already incurred a debt of 5,000 francs.

think differently, I feel certain that we should not spend money on foreign propaganda. Our worthiness will be its own propaganda, anything else will be a cover for weaknesses.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

437. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

WARDHA,
July 25, 1935

CHI. MARY,

I must not send any money myself. For I have nothing of my own to give. But Jamnalalji will send Rs. 50. I showed your letter to him and he at once said he would send. So far as food is concerned, you must not stint yourself. Concentrate on getting well for the sake of service.

The Marys went on Monday with Sumitra. Mary C. and Sumitra do not get on well. But Sumitra is determined to finish the six months she promised.

Dr. Premnath has not written to me.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6055. Also C.W. 3385. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

438. LETTER TO ABBAS K. VARTEJI

July 25, 1935

CHI. ABBAS[1]

Your suggestion is correct. Arrangements are being made to implement it. The rates for women spinners must be raised. If your help is required for this work, can you be spared from there?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6311

[1] Craft teacher for spinning and weaving at Sabarmati Ashram

439. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

July 25, 1935

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

I got your letter and the other things.

I am not too pleased with your list of advertisements. Our approaches are altogether different. I won't go into details. If I could convince you, I would have you accept only advertisements for books. But I have no right to interfere thus in the affairs of this monthly. I will therefore, say only this: Exercise as much restraint as you can.[1]

I see from your letter to Gurudev that you have given up the idea of an advisory board. If that is true, I like it.

So far as I understand Bhulabhai's advice[2] about Indian States, it applies to the relations of the States with the Government and not with their subjects. If my belief is correct, then I see nothing wrong in Bhulabhai's opinion. I think his view is subtle, but sound. The relation between Indian States and their subjects and the subjects of British India is a separate issue and was not before Bhulabhai. I have held this opinion from the time Bhulabhai's advice was first mentioned in the papers. I see no contradiction between this and the Congress policy. The subjects of Indian States have to demand their rights from the Rulers of the States and not from the British Government.

The letter to Gurudev will be posted soon. Mahadev will write it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 7579. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

440. LETTER TO HARI GOVIND GOVIL

July 25, 1935

BHAI HARI GOVIL,

I am trying to read your book. I have gone through the newspapers and I find much exaggeration in them. Send me the name, place and other particulars of the nature-cure institutions you have come across.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1023

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to K. M. Munshi", 8-7-1935

[2] The reference, presumably, is to the advisory opinion Bhulabhai gave as a lawyer to some Princes regarding the advisability of their joining the Federation.

441. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

July 25, 1935

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

I got your frank letter. It is indeed good that you acknowledge your shortcomings. Now proceed one step further and strive hard to get rid of them. You can note the ablutions, etc., in your diary and certainly say your prayers twice a day. And of course there is *Ramadhun*. The best way to overcome lethargy is to meticulously chalk out your daily routine and stick to it although the work turned out may be less. Exercise should be deemed an essential item of the daily routine.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3051

442. LETTER TO KEWALRAM

WARDHA,
July 26, 1935

CHI. KEWALRAM,

All my fears have been proved true. In fact there is nothing like private or public humiliation. And that, too, for a servant of the public [like me], my humiliation is that of the public and theirs is mine. We are the people and the people are we. Where is the difference between man and world?

Whether you are lucky or unlucky, you lose only because somebody is there to lend you. You ask for my advice. Just stick to two rules:

1. You will not undertake anything.

2. You will not start independent business.

Your independence is your dependence. How can you call a person dependent if he willingly serves under somebody? Do you take away somebody's freedom when you employ him? Servant and master are man-made divisions. Serving means observing certain rules and being the master is doing as you wish to. How will you choose between the two? How long can I go on advising you like this? If by

giving publicity to your error I could do some good to anybody, I would . . .[1], but I see no such possibility. It is good that you should go on learning from your mistakes.

The treatment available in Wadhwan is good. Besides you have your house and your generous father is there. Go there and improve your health. Fasting will help in improving it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

443. ADVICE TO ASHRAM MEMBERS[2]

[Before *July 27, 1935*]

We are not judged so much by the big things that we do as by the smallest. You might have chosen a better sheet of paper, written more legibly and you had certainly no excuse to write in English, which you do not seem to know well, when you could do so in Gujarati or Hindi. 'Take care of your pence and the pounds will take care of themselves' is not only a maxim of economic thrift. It is a moral maxim as well. No matter how insignificant the thing is you have to do it as well as you can, give it as much of your care and attention as you would give to the thing you regard as most important. For it will be by those small things that you shall be judged.

Harijan, 27-7-1935

444. HOW TO BEGIN

Whether it is to be a standard rate or a minimm for khadi artisans, a change seems to be a certainty. With the exception of one dissentient of the many opinions so far received, none has opposed my proposal for fixing an increased rate. No one has yet been found to endorse the eight-anna proposal.[3] Some of the writers regard the

[1] The source is illegible here.

[2] This is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". Gandhiji, who had substituted oil-cake for dal in the Ashram diet, "asked everyone to express in writing what he or she felt about it". Three members disapproved of the move and dal was immediately restored. But the "little slip of paper" signed by them "served Gandhiji as a peg on which to hang a sermon".

[3] *Vide* "Need for a Standard wage", 13-7-1935

eight-anna proposal as fatal to khadi. The price of khadi will, in that case, have to be so far advanced, they say, that there will be very few buyers. Be that as it may, in any change worthy of the name some conditions will have to be fulfilled. It will therefore be wise to take time by the forelock and enforce the following immediatly wherever it is at all possible:

1. The workers should master all the processes from cotton picking to weaving so as to be able to teach others.

2. Organizers should make a register of all the carders, spinners, weavers, etc., within their circle or jurisidiction.

3. They should know the variety of cotton used by their spinners, and see that they do not attempt to spin a higher count than it is capable of.

4. Spinners and the other artisans should be warned that unless they use khadi in their own households, they may not get any work.

5. The artisans so warned should have facilities put in their way, so as to enable them always to get their khadi for their labour.

6. Every hank of yarn received should be examined for its strength and evenness, all uneven and weak yarn being rejected, even as underbaked bread would be.

7. As a rule, each spinner's yarn should be stocked separately and woven when there is enough for a piece. This will ensure durability of khadi and an all-round improvement in the texture and appearance.

8. All pieces thus prepared should have labels attached to them giving the names of ginners, carders, spinners and weavers where they are all different.

9. Where artisans are members of families, the latter should be induced and encouraged to have all the processes in their own homes. This will be easy when the wages are equalized or nearly so.

10. The lives and budgets of families coming under the influence of the workers should be carefully studied and those who spend their earnings judiciously should be helped.

11. If ever it becomes necessary to restrict the number of artisans served by the Association, by reason of shortage of custom, those who have other means of livelihood should be first eliminated. At present, I understand, in several provinces, it is not only the

neediest who spin but also the thrifty women who want a little money for themselves to buy a few trifles, rather than to have better food or to pay debts.

12. In every case the workers will have to closely examine the carding-bows and the wheels, especially the latter with reference to the spindles and their revolutions. For the proposed increase will never be a rise pure and simple. It will be partly earned by greater and better output in the same time and partly there will be pure increase. No spinner who refuses to make any improvement in her or his manner of work is likely to get any increase unless the demand for khadi increases.

13. It follows from the last paragraph that new machines or parts will have to be supplied by the associations on easy terms in the first instance. In many cases alterations in the *mal* (string) and the spindle will automatically increase and improve the quality of the output.

All these conditions can be fulfilled only if the workers realize that they have a grand mission and that they are but humble units in a vast family of artisans and labourers who are semi-starved or underfed.

I have not touched the question of cotton-growing. So far I have dealt with the khadi that is manufactured for the market. Some different rules will govern self-sufficient khadi. It will never succeed without cotton being grown by spinners themselves or practically in every village. It means decentralization of cotton cultivations so far at least as self-sufficient khadi is concerned. For this we shall need a census of the villages served. For not every spinner or weaver has a plot (ever so tiny) of land, where he or she can grow cotton. Self-sufficient khadi is a much bigger proposition, for which alone can the existence of the A. I.S.A. be justified. It is a field as yet untouched by it on any scale worth mentioning.

Harijan, 27-7-1935

445. NOTES

NEED FOR CORRECTNESS

Professor Malkani has been kindly sending me copies of the notices he has been issuing to the Provincial Sanghs on the necessity of compliance with the rules framed by the Central Board for the proper management of the wonderful organizations that have been

brought into being in the provinces. They cannot function well or in co-ordination with one another and with the Central Board unless they strictly carry out all the rules and instructions issued by the Central Board from time to time. Failure to comply with requirements regarding budgets or preparation of accounts must result in bad finance—a very serious matter for a Board having numerous branches which have control of large funds. Failure to send in regular reports of work done must leave the Centre in the dark and impair the efficiency of work. Failure to attend meetings must bring work of the Sangh to a standstill resulting in stagnation and finally disruption. If attention to rules and instructions is held to be essential in business organizations, how much more must it be so in the working of a voluntary, philanthropic or penitential institution?It is to be hoped, therefore, that all the component parts of the Sangh will respond to the requirements from the Centre and thus by correct behaviour hasten the disappearance of the canker of untouchability from our midst.

A PLEA FOR PURITY

A correspondent, himself an editor, sends me cuttings from one single newspaper owned or managed by a public worker of approved merit. They were with one exception about medicine. In my opinion they were highly objectionable. They contained indecent suggestions calculated to excite and promote animal passion in man. These advertisements were taken from recent issues of the newspaper concerned. They were all claimed to possess the virtue of rejuvenating their users. The description was revolting. Some of them were manifest lies.

My correspondent tells me that the newspaper from which he had taken the cuttings was by no means the sole offender. He could send me similar cuttings from others known to be popular and respectable.

The proprietors of such newspapers probably do not know that their sheets contain indecent advertisements. Perhaps they have not even read them. Let me hope that the editors and managers of newspapers will study their advertisements and remove those that are without doubt objectionable. I trust, too, that journalists' associations in the provinces will take up the matter and persuade proprietors to exercise restraint in the matter of admitting advertisements. It is not too much to expect them to remove all such as are likely to corrupt public morals or offend sense of decency.

Harijan, 27-7-1935

446. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES[1]

WARDHA,
July 27, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

This will introduce to you Shri. H. L. Sharma who is an utter stranger to America. He is going there in order to gain further knowledge of natural treatment of diseases. Dr. Kellogg's Battle Creek Sanatorium has attracted his attention. I now learn from Dr. Kellogg's representative that he has stopped taking in pupils. I can think of no better guide for Shri Sharma than your good self. He wants to live there as a very poor man. He is hard working. If he can work for his studies and food, he would like it and so would I. If he cannot, he is assisted by a friend who will defray his expenses. Please give him such help as is in your power to give him. I am not giving Shri Sharma any further introductions, not even to Hari Das. Whatever you may think necessary in this direction, you will please do. I know you do not mind my putting you to this trouble. It will interest you to know that Shri Sharma is pursuing this study purely to serve diseased humanity.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, pp. 176-7

447. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

July 27, 1935

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter. I don't want the happy relations between Narandas and you to be endangered. I, therefore, will keep you out of this trouble about the school. But I see from your letter that acute temperamental differences still persist between you. You have only cultivated a kind of mutual forbearance. It is enough for you that your work goes on smoothly. Do write to me, however, about anything to which you think my attention should be drawn. I will use such information as I think fit.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Ask Rama if it is too much to expect a letter from her.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5522

[1] A copy of this letter was given to Hiralal Sharma.

448. LETTER TO HARI GOVIND GOVIL

July 27, 1935

BHAI GOVIL,

This letter will be handed over by Shri Hiralal Sharma. He is proceeding to America to gain further knowledge of nature cure. He wants to live in poverty and if possible even earn his living. He may be supplied with the names and other details of the sanatoria [there] as also some introductions if possible. Shri Sharma had never been out of India.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI HARI GOVIND GOVIL
54 CHOWRINGHEE
CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N.1024

449. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

July 27, 1935

Q. Apart from reforms in sanitation and food-habits, as for example in respect of flour, rice, *gur*, oil, etc., what other reforms are necessary for an ideal village?

A. Every village has to be studied individually.

Q. Should I obey parents and other relatives and keep away from participating in activities of universal benefit when I am certain that there injunction is prompted only by misguided love?

A. In that case disobedience might be dharma for you.

Q. Would it be right to obey a command of one's superiors, viz., parents, teachers and official superiors, if it goes against any one of the vows of truth, non-violence and so on?

A. No.

Q. The following is one of the ten rules laid down by the Arya Samaj: "An individual has some freedom in the observance of all rules of particular benefit but none in observing rules of universal benefit."

[1] The questions were asked by Avadhesh Dutt Avasthi on July 25, 1935.

A. It is not quite clear to me. If so, would it not mean that a vicious custom prevalent in society but calling for eradication should be conformed to until the whole of society or the majority is in favour of its eradication? In other words, one should not individually offer active opposition to it though one may continue other efforts. I want to learn the duty of an average individual. A great man of course attracts the popular opinion to follow him in whichever cause he adopts.

The individual should firmly adhere to his duty.

Q. You have stated that only those jail rules really offending one's self-respect need be disregarded. Therefore it may be explained which of these following seven conditions are really derogatory to one's self-respect as these were usually the causes of conflict in all the jails:

To be counted by pairs, to perform tasks in spite of abuse and beatings, to be served by the barber with handcuffs on, to be subjected to restraints in saying prayers, to remain standing during the parade holding one's ticket, to parade, to be searched morning and evening in an objectionable manner.

A. We should disregard only that which we feel violates our dharma.

Q. You have said that dharma enjoins a husband to provide for the wife and also to co-operate with her so long as she follows his way of life. Therefore what is the husband's duty when the wife holds views opposed to his and does not adopt his ways, and what is the wife's duty when the situation is reversed?

A. Dharma indicates that they live separately and the husband provides for the wife.

Q. If anyone, especially a poor man or a Harijan, due to some reason, is being abused or beaten in my presence by a State official or a policeman or any arrogant person, especially a *savarna* as happens often enough, what would be my duty?

A. You should render non-violent help to the victim by pleading with the oppressor.

Q. Would it not be right to kill a mad elephant or a dog that has caused death to many and that is altogether uncontrollable? And if this is right, would it be proper for the State to give the same or similar treatment to men turned mad by selfishness, lust and anger?

A. It is possible to control even a mad elephant if one bears him true love and, as for insane people, the State has already some arrangement.

Q. Is man by nature slightly superior to woman?

A. No.

Q. Why is that women usually suffer no embarrassment in wearing male apparel while men feel it a matter of humiliation to dress like women? I think women regard masculinity to be somewhat superior.

A. It is because man attributes weakness to woman.

Q. What is the reason behind your avoidance of food cooked on fire?

A. Non-violence, saving on expense and time, health and so on.

Q. Owing to some reasons I have formed the opinion that one should keep totally aloof from political and social movements while one is a student. Am I correct in this opinion?

A. That is for you to decide.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 3221

450. VIOLENCE v. NON-VIOLENCE

A reader of *Harijanbandhu* writes to say:[1]

The confrontation between violence and non-violence has lasted from time immemorial and will last till eternity. Everyone will interpret these words in his own way and act in accordance with his wishes and his capacity. Hence, it seems that any further discussion on this much debated topic will not take us much further. However, the way I look at non-violence in our enfeebled circumstances appears to be a novel viewpoint and this sometimes has even hurt the votaries of non-violence. Non-Violence is the characteristic of a brave man. Fear and non-violence are deadly enemies. We are unable to see non-violence inits true form as we are surrounded by fear and have become accustomed to look at it from a distorted angle.

This introduction seems necessary for a consideration of the above letter.

We have no evidence before us to support the belief that the death-rate is higher where the number of snakes killed is great. On the contrary snakes are seldom found in places where people have unanimously decided to make it their dharma to kill every snake. But this evidence cannot establish the dharma of violence. Non-violence

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that he was unable to overcome the fear of snakes, though he knew that "ahimsa was the law of life".

can be proved only by dying. The practice of killing has always been there. This state of affairs shocked a certain brave man who proclaimed: “This is not dharma.” Non-violence alone is the true religion for all times.

If I have suggested that snakes should be killed in certain circumstances, it is to help non-violence, not to destroy it. Non-violence is an attitude of mind. My non-violence is not put to shame if I kill a snake through fear although my efforts are directed towards befriending it. If I make the fullest effort, I can even reach this ideal.

It is not because we are merciful that we refrain from killing snakes and such other creatures; we are persuaded to do so because we traditionally believe that there is non-violence in doing so and hence do not kill snakes. We cannot claim that human beings are kind towards those whom they fear. He who is strong is merciful towards the weak. Where is the mercy in catching hold of a snake and throwing it away because we are afraid of it? While doing so, generally we do not even have the notion that some day we shall make friends with the snake. Non-violence is the dharma of awakening. Its votary has to make conscious use of it at every moment as we are surrounded by violence on all sides. Every one of us has according to his capacity to make his own way out of this dangerous predicament.

Let us examine that act of refraining from killing a serpent. When a snake comes to attack us, we shall certainly kill it because it does not attack us. While going its own way, it strays from its path and comes into our homes. We then catch hold of it and throw it far away. While taking care that it does not attack us, we subject it to as much pain as is necessary. Mercy plays no part in this, but what is at work is the fear of punishment in our next birth for our failure to practise the dharma of non-violence. We have given no proof of our bravery in not killing the snake. Killing it would not have been a courageous act either. The motive behind both [the killing and non-killing] is fear. If mercy in its pure state were present in me, I would catch hold of the serpent and befriend it and rid others of the fear of snakes. We do hear stories of sadhus who do this. It is possible that these reports are not true or are mere exaggerations. However, if non-violence is real, such friendship between snakes and human beings is not an impossibility.

If this much is clear to the reader, he will realize that there is no room for doubt regarding the sentence[1] in question. This does not imply that so long as the fear of snakes presists, these should be killed at sight. However, wherever their danger continues, it is not necessary to have any hesitation in killing them, as underlying that fear there is a deep-rooted desire for their death. One feels free from fear when one kills them. I cannot imagine a more pitiable condition for the non-violent person. Anyone who attempts to befriend snakes and such other creatures will not rest satisfied by solving such problems in the traditional manner, but will rather make an effort to rid himself of the fear of such ferocious animals without indulging in violence of any kind.

The example of a beautiful woman is not applicable here at all. If anyone desires her and tries to seduce her, many persons will be ready to beat him up. Human beings suppress such desires. Or by consciously nurturing them they seek the means of their own destruction. The comparison with snakes could be made in the following manner. Rather than be infatuated by a woman and yield to this infatuation, I should destroy the serpent within me or, in other words, drown myself by jumping into a well. This should be regarded as pure non-violence and be considered an act of bravery. Snakes and such other creatures are symbols for us. The passions within us are the reflection of evil. If we make a Herculean effort to rid ourselves of the fear of our fellow-creatures such as snakes. However, so long as we cannot do so, we should do whatever we think best while entertaining the desire for friendship.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 28-7-1935

[1] The correspondent had quoted the following from Mahadev Desai's Gujarati translation of "Ideals and Practice" (p. 248) which appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 14-7-1935: "Ahimsa is the law of life, but if I have not shed the fear of serpents, what am I to do? My mind has already killed the serpent, only the flesh is weak. Your duty says: 'Kill it. Give up the vain attempt of refraining from killing it.'"

451. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
July 28, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

Herewith a letter from Harilal. Wasn't it as I have been saying it was? Still the same old self? Where is he staying?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am sending the accompanying letter since it contains a suggestion about the educational value of the spinning-wheel which is worth thinking over.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8466. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

452. LETTER TO L. R. DUCHA

WARDHA,
July 29, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your remarks on my suggestions about khadi.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI L. R. DUCHA
SOCIAL WORKER
3224/A LINGAMPALLY
HYDERABAD, DECCAN

From a photostat: C.W. 4742. Courtesy: L. R. Ducha

453. LETTER TO C.F. ANDREWS

July 29, 1935

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

If you have booked for 17th, you have to leave Santiniketan fairly soon. Or else there will be a rush at the last moment. A day with Verrier is quite right but you have hardly time to go to Kodai. Esther's is a tough problem. My opinion is that Menon should stick to India but not to Tanjore. Real skill has its price everywhere.

. . .[1]ember Dina Babu . . . [2]ay give my . . .[3] d condolences to Gurudev.

Mrs. Ambalal is in Ahmedabad. They returned only the other day. She is well.

It would be a good thing if you can write something substantial about the Congress for the European reader. But then it would have to be independent and authorship exclusively yours. You can't tack yourself on to Girija or anybody else.[4]

[PS.]

Did I tell you I wrote to Sudhir at once?

What about Aprakash?

From a photostat: G.N.991

454. LETTER TO PADMA

July 29, 1935

CHI. PADMA,

If I used a coloured slip of paper, it would cost one pice more and, besides, it won't be hand-made paper. One must not fall ill. Do you have a Magan spinning-wheel? How much yarn do you spin everyday? It is really good that Sheela is studying in a Harijan school. Do all the others spin? Here it has been raining more than we need.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6152. Also C.W. 3508. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

455. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

July 29, 1935

BHAI MUNSHI,

Your readiness to accept my suggestion regarding advertisements embarrasses me because it increases my burden and makes me afraid lest I should exploit your habit of accepting my

[1] Illegible in the source
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*
[4] *Vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 18-7-1935

views and in consequence lose a co-worker like you. I have no doubt, however, that such self-restraint will definitely enhance the prestige of the paper.

I do admit that Bhulabhai's opinion[1] is too technical.

I understand about the advisory board.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9580. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

456. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

July 29, 1935

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. I liked the charkha made by you and therefore tried hard and have mastered it. I even made some improvements in it which occurred to me. But I could not pass your budget. How can I find two persons? It may be possible if you can persuade Maruti[3] or Lakshmidas[4]. But, as the saying is, one cannot go to heaven without oneself dying. I, therefore, feel that you will have to rely on yourself. I will do what I can.

Your sphere of work has been fixed and you cannot, therefore, leave Gularia. Do what you can there. I will show your letter to Ishwarlal, Vinoba and Kaka. Let this, however, not upset you in any way. My figures regarding spinning seem all right.

You are completely mistaken about village industries. Even if you were to list twice as many industries as you have done, you will still not be able to show that the variation in wage follows any fixed rule. The disparity is as between men and women and does not follow the principle that the greater the risk the higher the wage. Nature has laid it down that all have equal needs. Indeed all the workers should be paid at the same rate. You have seen equality in inequality here, but that is fallacy. Think over the matter again. I agree that those who are receiving more wages today will not agree to accept less. That does not worry me. I shall be satisfied if those who are getting less receive

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to K. M. Munshi", 25-7-1935

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to K. M. Munshi", 8-7-1935

[3] Maruti Sharma

[4] Lakshmidas Asar

justice. If all people become wise or good, they would accept equal payment for every work. Work will then become *yajna*. But that time is far away. It will be enough if we progress towards it.

I will go through Gopinathji's article when I get it an send it back to you. I do not know how far you are right in praising it. I had heard something to the contrary. However, I paid no attention to it

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

457. LETTER TO AMBA GANDHI

July 29, 1935

CHI. AMBA,

Your letter is good even though it smacks of pessimism. But we must not lose heart. Whatever the circumstances, we have to render service and that cheerfully and devotedly. It is all right if people care to listen to us, but even if they do not [we have to go on serving].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtsey: Pyarelal

458. LETTER TO S. C. DELURFF

WARDHA,
July 30, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

Tolstoy was one of those teachers before whom my head bowed instinctively.

This is all I can send you. During my several breakings up, I destroyed many foreign letters. Tolstoy's were no exception. I keep no portrait of me.

Yours sincerely,

S.C. DELURFF
"SVOBODA"
RUE 6 SEPTEMBER, N. 5
SOFIA (BULGARIA)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

459. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

July 30, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM,

The photograph you have sent me is good. I like the girl's face. It is open and innocent. Let their life fill yours as I know it will fill Father's and Mother's. I hope Kichi's finger is on the way to complete recovery.

The cooker came to me today.[1] It is very good. You have not told me its price. The fruit too was duly received.

As it so happened, it came in useful this time because I have several patients. This is no invitation to you to send more. I have just now an ample supply, as visitors have brought baskets.

Love.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 9604. Courtsey: S. Ambujammal

460. LETTER TO G. SITARAMA SASTRY

July 30, 1935

MY DEAR SASTRY,

About the barter essay[2] I have not been idle. Shri Vaikunth Mehta's name has been suggested by Prof. Shah. K[3]. suggests Prof. Ranga. Who is Prof. Rao of Lucknow? Is he an Andhra man? May the prize be given if the best and the most convincing essay is against the barter system?

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 9173. Courtesy: G. Sitaram Sastry.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to S. Ambujammal", 19-7-1935

[2] U. Venkata Krishnaya of Khaddar Samsthanam, Gunadala, Krishna District, had announced a prize for the best essay on the barter system.

[3] Presumably, J.C. Kumarappa

461. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

July 30, 1935

BHAI BHAGWANJI,

I am sending your letter to Jamnalalji. I will definitely talk to him when I see him. The engagement on which you have offered congratulations has been broken off. Kamalnayan is preparing for the London matriculation examination in Colombo. It is incorrect to say that there is nobody in Kathiawar. Who is prepared to live a pure life and work in a spirit of self-sacrifice? Such a statement cannot be proved. It is as true to say, "As are the subjects so is the ruler" as to say, "As is the ruler, so are the subjects." If one is good, the whole world is good. Do you meet Chhaganlal Joshi? I think he is touring the villages.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5825. Also C.W. 3048. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

462. LETTER TO KOTWAL

July 30, 1935

BHAI KOTWAL,

Why can't you still get rid of your vain hankering? Isn't service its own reward and certificate? What certificate can I give to those whom I do not know at all? You should get rid of such wordly entanglements.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3599.

463. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

July 30, 1935

CHI. NARAHARI,

I read your letter regarding the Vidyapith. What pay has been fixed for Jayabehn? Don't you think there is something wrong with our training so that, though we have at least twenty-five women, not one of them has been trained in the way you want? And if that is the case, how can we expect to get a woman from outside who would fit into our mould? I feel that we shall have to reap as we have sown. Do not have the slightest suspicion that I include myself in 'we' merely out of politeness. I know my limitations full well. I do consider myself a teacher but I am no better than a shrub in a desert. Having said all this, what I want to tell you is simply that you should aim ultimately at producing from among ourselves a woman worker of the type you want. Some day your effort will succeed. Be sure that all attempts to get such a worker from outside will be futile. Even if there is a chance of your succeeding in such an attempt, it will be to our good and ensure the success of our mission not to make it.

Do you teach the girls the new method of spinning on the *takli*? That method is of great importa nce. By following it, little girls attain a speed of 80 rounds per half hour in just 15 days' time, as it is very easy to learn. Test from time to time the girls' speed of spinning on the *takli* and on the spinning-wheel.

I am not writing anything about the Vidyapith just now.

I have been constantly thinking about the goshala. I still feel that either we should take over some *pinjrapole* and keep the useless cattle there, or we should set up one ourselves along with the dairy. Such cattle can be kept only in Bidaj or some such place. Parnerkar's idea of securing the co-operation of Bharawads attracts me more and more. I wish to try that experiment on a large scale here. I am only waiting for Dahyalal to get ready. Titus may perhaps come. I had a telegram from him. What I have understood from Parnerkar is this: We should have complete control over the Bharawads' cattle. They should give the cattle fodder of our choice; should milk them and rear the calves scientifically. We on our part undertake to sell the milk obtained from them. If the last two suggestions cannot be implemented, forget about them. Keep as many good cows as you can manage and do whatever is practicable.

Vanamala will have to end her vow of saltless diet for the present. It would be better if she takes some other vow. You perhaps know Bhaskarrao. He was in the Ashram for some time. Afterwards he worked with Vinobaji. He has also worked under Mama. He comes from Baroda. He does not want to live very far from his parents. He knows Gujarati, Sanskrit and Marathi. Most probably he also knows English. He requires only twenty-five rupees as pay. I would advise you to employ him either in Vinaya Mandir or in the Harijan Ashram. Vinoba thinks that he will prove useful if we employ him. He is a very pious man. I am not sure, but probably he knows you. Write to me if you cannot utilize his services either in the Vidyapith or in the Harijan Ashram.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9084

464. MESSAGE ON ITALO-ABYSSINIAN CRISIS[1]

WARDHA,
[On or before *August 1, 1935*][2]

I can only pray and hope for peace.

The Hindustan Times, 2-8-1935

465. STATEMENT ON ITALO-ABYSSINIAN CRISIS

[On or before *August 1, 1935*][3]

Gandhiji, I understand, has made it clear in response to enquiries that no such appeal for funds has been issued by him.[4] Gandhiji refuses to be interviewed on the Italo-Abyssinian question on the ground that a verbal expression of opinion would be valueless unless he was also able to follow it up by action.

The Hindustan Times, 2-8-1935

[1] This was in reply to an urgent request for the Council of the League of Nations for a message on the eve of the meeting of the council of the League of Nations to consider the Italo-Abyssinian crisis.

[2] The message was reported under the date-line "Wardha, August 1", 1935, as "from our special correspondent".

[3] The statement was reported under the date-line "Wardha, August 1", 1935.

[4] The source had reported the "rumour seems to have got abroad of which nothing at all has been heard in India, that Gandhiji has issued an appeal for funds for raising a volunteer corps of Indians for Red Cross Service in Abyssinia. The rumour starting apparently from London has travelled to America and Gandhiji has been the astonished recipient of a cabled message from America congratulating him on his action."

466. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHAGANJ,

August 1, 1935

I am surprised at the statement attributed by Reuters Agency to Lord Zetland[1] that Mr. M. R. Masani had advocated violence, when he oppo-sed my resolution[2] on the substitution of the words "legitimate and peaceful" by the words "truthful and non-violent" in the Congress creed.

I distinctly remember the occasion and I am quite sure that there was nothing in his speech showing that he advocated violence His objection was, like that of many others, to the introduction in a political creed of expressions of a more or less religious character.

I can only therefore hope that Lord Zetland, occupying, as he does, one of the most responsible positions under the Crown, did not allow hi-mself to make use of the unequivocal language attributed to his Lordship.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-8-1935

467. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

August 1, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

Why have I not got any letter from you? I learn from Shri Braj Mohan's letter that living in America is very expensive. It should not be. Anyway, you will have an idea only when you are there. The expenses should be less if you lived like a working man. Everything is proceeding well, I hope. Give me all the news.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jiwanke Solah Varsha*, facing p. 179

[1] The Secretary of State for India; he was replying to Lord Farringdon's question in the House of Commons on the impounding of M. R. Masani's passport.

[2] At the annual session of Indian National Congress held in Bombay on October 26, 1934.

468. LETTER TO APRAKASH CHANDRA MEHTA

WARDHA,
August 2, 1935

MY DEAR APRAKASH,

Why should it be galling to you to be on trial at your age. Age is rather against you in a novel experiment. A stranger would be on trial no matter how able he is. Much more so one who embarks like you on a new venture. Why should we assume that the world knows us as we think we are? Remember the recital of the eleven vows[1] which we have at each prayer daily. The verse ends with the exhortation that the observance should be with due humility. Humility is the key to peace and real joy.

I await your first letter of experiences with a little impatience.

Look out for Ambala[2] there and befriend her.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

469. NOTE TO AVADHESH DUTT AVASTHI[3]

August 2, 1935

Do write and I shall try to answer. Write a letter whenever you want to come here and, if I happen to be here, I shall try to reply to you in confirmation.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3223

[1] *Vide* "Leeter to Samirmal", 14-5-1935
[2] Margarete Spiegel
[3] This was written on a letter from the addressee who was about to leave the Ashram.

A GOOD SERVANT GONE

Nibaranbabu who dies the other day in Purulia was one of the gentlest of souls. He was a true servant of Harijans and equally true friend of all the poor. He had realized to the full the matchless beauty of non-violence which had become a living creed with him. His life was an inspiration to many of his friends and followers who looked to him for guidance and comfort in their darkest hours. May the memory of it ever sustain them and move them from good to better.

WEALTH WELL USED

Shri Jwala Prasad Mandelia, a great servant of Harijans, is no more. He was the treasurer of the Central Harijan Sevak Sangh. And what a treasurer he was to the cause which he loved with a rare passion! He could not be called a wealthy man as the expression is understood nowadays. But he was secretary of the Birla Mills and earned well. He has willed away practically all he possessed. During his lifetime too he spent liberally on charities. He was a born reformer. The cause of the widow was as dear to him as that of Harijans, and by his will he provided for both these, the bequest to be spent in his home, Pilani.

Harijan, 3-8-1935

471. SELF-SUFFICIENT KHADI

The conditions promoting the success of and governing self-sufficient khadi are different from those governing khadi produced for the town-dweller who would not or cannot toil to make it at any stage of its manufacture. In khadi, made for sale, every process from sowing and picking of cotton to weaving the yarn can be distributed with ease, especially when the cost of labour is equalized or nearly so. Specialization under supervision and on a co-operative basis must yield better returns. But where an article is produced for personal use, the greater the concentration of all the processes in the same family or even the same hands, the greater the economy of time and money. A person, who has a little land which he can call his own even for a fair period and works on it daily, can have his khadi for mere labour put in by him or his during their odd moments. All he needs is instruction or education to show how each one can make his own khadi practically for nothing. When labour has to be paid for and that at an equal rate per period, spinning would take in the largest part of the outlay. For spinning yarn for one yard of Khadi takes longer then any of the other processes anterior or posterior to it will take. If a person gins, cards and spins for himself, which he can do easily, he will get his khadi almost at the same price as mill-cloth. The cost of an article represents the cost of labour spent in its production. So when the whole labour comes from the user himself the cost is practically nothing, when that labour is given during leisure hours. Self-suffcient khadi eliminates the middleman altogether. It is the easiest method of perceptibly increasing the income of the millions of the semi-starved villagers.

But will the villager ever take to self-sufficent khadi? Yes, if we have faith accompanied by technical skill, or rather a living faith that will move mountains and give the worker all the skill necessary for his task which is undoubtedly difficult. But whether difficult or easy it has hardly been attempted as yet on any large or organized scale or a well conceived plan. Not without a well conceived, India-wide effort to educate the villagers to produce their own cloth and thus stop the unnecessary drain from their villages of what little they possess, will the A.I.S.A. have justified its existence; for as I have been of late insisting in these columns, the message of khadi is nothing less than its

universal use in the villages by local production and local use. The beginning has to be made by inducing cotton cultivation in every village, even in those where it is never known to have been grown. Without decentralization of cotton cultivation, universal manufacture in villages may not be possible. We have authentic examples of deserts having been turned into smiling gardens by judicious manipulation of the soil. It ought not, therefore, to be impossible to grow enough cotton in every village, for local use. Not only will this cheapen khadi for the villagers, but it will also improve the durability of khadi. Experience has conclusively demonstrated that the strength of yarn and the output are affected by the variety of cotton used and the manner of picking, cleaning, ginning, carding and spinning cotton. A material from which the famous Dacca muslin could be produced must demand gentle handling during all the processes it undergoes, before it comes out as *shabnam* or the morningdew.

Harijan, 3-8-1935

472. REMARKS ON BODY-LABOUR[1]

Why worry about those who do not do body-labour? I have never imagined that every man on earth will earn his bread by the sweat of his brow, but I have simply enunciated the golden rule. Are you prepared to do it? If you are, you need not be jealous of the man who is not prepared to do it or cannot do it. I may not be able to earn what fruit and milk I eat by mere body-labour, but that means that I am to be pitied, the rule is not affected. Only a few people can observe *brahmacharya*, but should they, therefore, be jealous of the millions who cannot? The latter may be pitied, rather than be envied. . . . I have indicated the ideal to work up to. Let everyone try to observe it as best as one can. Don't worry because you are incapable of doing any body-labour. Do whatever other clean labour you can, and be sure that you do not exploit those that labour for you. Do not worry about the doctors and the rest who in your opinion seem to have no time for body-labour. When they will practise their professions in a pure spirit of service to the community, the community will take care to see that they are not starved.

Harijan, 3-8-1935

[1] This is extracted from the "Weekly Letter" by Mahadev Desai, who had reported: "Some of the simplest things that Gandhiji has been saying and writing seem to puzzle and perplex people. One of these is Gandhiji's insistence on bread-labour." What follows is Gandhiji's reply to them.

473. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

August 3, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I do not have anything to say in reply to either of your two letters just now. I am sending them to the persons concerned. I had sent them for perusal to Sardar and Narahari, as they also had got similar letters. They have nothing to say in the matter. There was a reference to Joshi's dress about which I have already asked you. I haven't yet heard from him. What was the charge against him? It should be enough for assistant teachers like him if they attend the school in khadi. Nothing more should be expected of them. It would be fine, of course, if he has faith in khadi.

Just now I am under great pressure since senior co-workers have assembled here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8467. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

474. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

August 3, 1935

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

You should not enter such deep waters, you should do only what is within your capacity. The incident of the false rupee coin involved grave sin and the other too denoted weakness. Anyway we are all subject to frailties; may God save us from them. These days it is quite cool here but it is bound to get hot when the rains cease. I have a feeling that you should settle in a place like Almora. That too offers ample scope for service. Everything is all right here.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA
KATRA KHUSHAL RAI
DELHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2437

475. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

WARDHA,
August 3, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

You are proceeding to Indore to collect funds for the purse. In this connection you want to be clear on these three points:

1. How will this money be spent?

2. Should any earmarked donation be accepted?

3. Whether I wish to form a trust or a committee to deal with the expenditure or if I have thought of any alternative arrangement.

Here is my clarification on these points: Although my main requirement is for the propagation of Hindi in South India, I would like to utilize the funds when occasion arises for provinces like Bengal, Assam, Sind, Gujarat and Punjab where Hindi is not known well or has not been propagated. There should be no objection to accepting for the purse earmaked contributions if a donor wishes to contribute for the work in any of these provinces or for the training of necessary propagandists.

Now about a trust or a committee. I intend to form a trust or a committee or a registered institution when the whole sum is collected and disburse the funds through it under my own supervision.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2974

476. LETTER TO SATYADEV

August 3. 1935

BHAI SATYADEV,

You are running a new sect. I will not be able to say anything about it. Therefore, why should I trouble you to come over here? By all means continue to correspond from Lahore.

I had carefully considered what you had to say in your earlier letter. I gave my reply only after that. I have not found anything despicable in Vishal Bharat. I have found him to be a truthful person.

I do not agree with all his views. But there is nothing wrong in it. Except you nobody has complained against him. Do you agree with this?

Among those who are around me, whom have you not found to be truthful and honest? If you give incontrovertible evidence [against anyone], I would give him up. Except Mahadev you perhaps don't know the others.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

477. LETTER TO ISHWARDAS

August 3, 1935

BHAI ISHWARDAS,

I have both your letters. You seem to have a mania for asking questions. So I will not answer them. Rest content with whatever you can gain from *Harijan* and *Harijan Sevak* and try to put into practice as much as you like in it to the best of your ability.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

478. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

WARDHA,
August 4, 1935

CHI. VALJI,

I have disallowed your article on Bengal khadi. I have an impression that I wrote to you on the matter. I will see about the suggestion for increasing the yield of cow's milk. I see nothing wrong at present in the moneys of the village Industries Association being deposited in banks.

I cannot express a definite opinion about sterilization. I am inclined against the idea, however. We must endure the fruit of our sins. Forcible sterilization is likely very much to increase immorality and lead to coercion. The theory of degeneration seems to me to be without any foundation.

Govindlal had written to me about Govindnagar. It is not advisable for us to take interest in the matter. Let him approach the Municipality.

What books do you want? If you send me a list, I will try to procure them. But I will not permit you to keep late hours for reading them and harm your eyes. I hope you are all in good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7473. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

479. LETTER TO G.D. BIRLA

August 4, 1935

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter, and all the earlier ones too. My letter did not at all imply that there was any shortcoming in your presentation of the case. So far as I remember I meant to say that on your part you did everything well but I feared that the interpretation of the agreement is bound to create many problems. But my mind is at ease; what is to be will be. We can only follow our duty fearlessly. Do come away when your task is completed. To remain there idle would not suit you either, though you may certainly stay on if it seems desirable in the interests of health.

You must be receiving all the news of the Harijan Sangh.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 8013. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

480. LETTER TO LAKSHMI NIVAS BIRLA

August 4, 1935

CHI. LAKSHMI NIVAS,

I have your letter. I got all the earlier ones. I am sending a letter for Father; do write or wire to me if he has already left.

All are well, I hope.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 8018. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

481. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

August 4, 1935

BHAI MOOLCHAND,

I had both your letters.

The remedy for the boycott is to remain unaffected by it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 757

482. MESSAGE TO "HANSA"

WARDHA,
August 5, 1935

Hansa is a unique enterprise in the whole of India. A monthly of this kind is sorely needed if Hindi or Hindustani is to become the national language. Through the medium of the national language all should become acquainted with the current writings in all the provincial languages. It is very gratifying that whosoever desires can get this benefit at a cost of only half a rupee a month.

M. K. GANDHI

From Hindi: C.W. 7582. Courtesy: K.M. Munshi

483. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

August 5, 1935

CHI. AMALA,

You are unnecessarily suspicious. And now that you are grandmother of five pupils, you can afford to ignore Mahadev, me and a whole host of lovers. Slivers, I have asked Satisbabu to send you at once. I hope you have got them by this time. I am glad you are feeling settled there.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI AMALABEHN SPIEGEL

SANTINIKETAN, *via* BOLPUR

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

484. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

August 5, 1935

BHAI MUNSHI,

You have brought out an attractive pamphlet indeed. You are certainly likely to spare no pains in regard to the get-up. If we always receive articles as attractively got up as this pamphlet, we can want nothing more.

My message[1] is enclosed. Please don't yield to the temptation of getting it engraved.

The request for an article may perhaps be more than I can meet. If I get time, I will write out something. Can you suggest a subject?

Take care and enlist enough subscribers in advance.

I had a brief talk with Tandonji, and that, too, by chance. I had nothing particular to tell him. The purport of what I told him was that it was necessary to keep him informed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7581. Courtesy: K.M. Munshi

485. LETTER TO N.R. MALKANI

WARDHA,
August 6, 1935

MY DEAR MALKANI,

As to Hariji[2] all's well that ends well. He suggests decentralization. Please send me list of members of the Executive and tell me who are likely to come. Send an invitation to Hariji, if he is not on the Board[3].

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 916

[1] *Vide* "Message to "Hansa" ", 5-8-1935
[2] H. N. Kunzru
[3] Harijan Sevak Sangh Board; *vide* also "Harijan Sevak Sangh Resolutions"

486. LETTER TO SHIVAPRASAD GUPTA

[August, *6, 1935*][1]

DEAR SHIVAPRASAD,

Received your letter. You have not forgotten the country even in your ill health. After my severance from the Congress, the Working Committee met here for the first time. It matters little whether it meets here or somewhere else. Your question is why I am so very interested in the Congress after I have severed my connections with it, and why I give my advice and opinion to them. I think you already know that when I severed my connection with the Congress I had already said that, if anything be referred to me. I would give my opinion. To control the Congress and to give advice to Congressmen are two different things. The Congress Committee held its sittings here, but I never participated therein. I am totally in the dark regarding its full proceedings up till now, Whenever any member wanted to consult me or have my opinion, they used to call at my place and I used to give them my advice most willingly. I do not see any reason for not doing so. I came out of the Congress only for its benefit. I cannot forgo the ideals of the Congress. Knowingly if I refuse to give them my advice, I fall from dharma.

Now as regards Council-entry, I think Council-entry is dharma at this stage but not for myself, for I have devoted myself to something else. My *sadhana* at present is non-violent disobedience of laws. Council-entry will prove a hindrance in the realization of that end of mi-ne. Do you not know, what is one man's meat is another man's poison?

I hope I have given answers to all your questions which will be to your satisfaction.

Leave the Council-entry to me and devote yourself entirely to village industry and Hindi *prachar.* If you will devote heart and soul to the above, you will not get time to think of other things. May God

[1] From the addressee's reply which also appeared in the source

grant you speedy, perfect recovery.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

The Searchlight, 6-9-1935

487. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

WARDHA,
August 7, 1935

CHI. AMALA,

Your wonderful letter. Nobody believed that you were going to shave your head and if you had, the hairs would have begun to grow again. I hope the grandchildren[2] are doing well.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] According to *The Hindu,* 30-8-1935, the addressee had in his reply said: "I cannot even for a moment imagine how you could advocate Council-entry where everyone is required to take an oath of loyalty to the King and how you consider it in accordance with the resolution of the Lahore and Karachi Congress." *The Hindu* had also reported: "Mr. Mahadev Desai, Gandhiji's Secretary, acknowledging the letter wrote, 'Your letter reached Bapuji. As regards taking of the oath, Bapuji says that Council-entry was decided upon seeing the present condition of our country and for those who take an oath, it is not good on their part to do anything against the Government. In the attainment of swaraj, this is also a stage and he considers this stage essential.'"

[2] The addressee's pupils; *vide* "Letter to Margarete Spiegel", 5-8-1935

488. LETTER TO G. .A. GAVAI[1]

[Before *August 8, 1935*][2]

MY DEAR GAVAI,

I have gone through the interesting document left by you with me. This is my opinion:

All rules must be interpreted so as to advance their purpose; in this case the interest of the Harijans. Therefore election of four is not obligatory but if there are more than four candidates, four have to be elected by the college. Withdrawals are certainly permissible at any stage. Any candidate of the Harijan class has the right of becoming a candidate for the general election. If the electoral college is considered a burden, Harijans can any day by practically unanimous agreement forgo the privilege. Such a provision is made in the Pact itself.

Needless to say mine cannot be in any way regarded as a legal opinion. It is that of one who had a hand in promoting the Pact.

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai. Also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 11-8-1935

489. LETTER TO A STUDENT[3]

August 8, 1935

No matter how weak a person is in body, if it is a shame to flee he will stand his ground and die at his post. This would be non-

[1] According to *The Bombay Chronicle*, the addressee, a member of the Legislative Council (Depressed Classes), had, in an interview with Gandhiji at Wardha, "explained the interpretation of the Poona Pact and the view taken by the members of the Central Provinces Delimitation Committee on the question of primary elections".

[2] In the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary, this letter precedes "Letter to a Student", 8-8-1935, the following item.

[3] In his "Weekly Letter" Mahadev Desai had reported : "A student who is a regular reader of *Harijan* asked Gandhiji whether his own conduct would be described as cowardice or as only natural under circumstances he thus described: 'I am physically very weak, and I naturally avoid burly blustering ruffians wherever I see them. Why should it be cowardice if one flees from a monster against whom one can never hold out? Is a mouse a coward because it flees from a cat?"

violence and bravery. No matter how weak he is, he will use what strength he has in inflicting injury on his opponent and die in the attempt. This is bravery but *not* non-violence. If when his duty is to face danger, he flees, it is cowardice. In the first case man will have love or charity in him. In the second and third cases there would be dislike or distrust and fear.

Yours,

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai. Also *Harijan*, 17-8-1935

490. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

WARDHA,
August 8, 1935

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got both your letters. I am very glad indeed that you are keeping good health. Now go on doing whatever work you can. Tell Gangabehn that I got her letter. There was nothing particular in it which called for a reply. Ask her to write to me from time to time and consult me whenever she is in doubt.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9405. Also C.W. 651. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

491. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

August 8, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have received no such letter from Mathew as he speaks of. His demand is against our principles. He persists in it in spite of repeated warnings. For the present, we are unable to send him anything for his parents, nor can he come to me just now. He can consider himself permanent so long as he is satisfied with bare maintenance and works for it. When we are fully convinced about his sincerity and ability, we may give him something for his parents, according to his deserts. But that is a matter for the distant future.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8486. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

492. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

WARDHA,

August 8, 1935

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

I have found no mistake in your work. Even before I got your letter I had already written to Ratubhai[1] that for the sake of the inquiry the transfer of a person who has to be transferred for some other reason should not be stopped. The inquiry will of course go on. Let me know when your inquiry is over. Do not hesitate to write to me out of pity, thinking that I am over-burdened with work. I am very pleased that it had occurred to you early that the spinners' wages should be increased. The fact that the idea had occurred to my co-workers before it did to me makes my path easier. You may therefore take the credit for being original. I now wish that you should also earn the credit fornot letting that affect the sales too much. You have no doubt taken the first bold step in that direction.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C W. 10833. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

493. A LETTER[2]

August 8, 1935

What special message do you have to give that impels you to bring out this journal? Anyway, to bring out a journal has these days become a profession. Do you not have any other profession? Leave it alone.

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Ratubhai Desai, representative of the workers of the Bombay Bhandar of the All-India Spinners' Association

[2] To a woman correspondent; the letter appeared in *Harijan*, 17-8-1935.

494. LESSON TO LILAVATI ASAR[1]

August 9, 1935

1. A clause beginning with 'when' can be used either before or after the principal clause. 'When' is used for all tenses as in Gujarati, e.g., 'When you come, we shall play.'

2. 'Before you come, I shall have gone.' 'Before'-*pahelan.* 'Since you have come, we have been all well.' 'Since'-*tyarthi* or *karanake* [because]. 'Ago' is not used to make an independent sentence. 'Long ago'-*lamba kal pahelan,* 'years ago'-*varsho pahelan;* they are thus used to suggest the tense.

3. 'Large' is used for inanimate objects only, e.g., 'A large vessel'; but 'A big boy'.

'Big can be used in both cases. The same is the case with 'small' and 'little'.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9254. Also C.W. 10103. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

495. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

August 9, 1935

CHI. LILAVATI,

You should improve your handwriting still further. It is not proper that you are not keeping the rule.

You have certainly done well to reduce your expenses. If you have patience, everything will be well. Don't reduce the expenses to a

[1] Lilavati Asar had written : "(1) The 14th lesson of the *Pathmala* is now completed. Now I will start on the 15th. It is about the past continuous tense. I am giving you one example : 'When I came yesterday you were writing.' Here 'when' is at the beginning of the sentence. The second sentence is as follows : 'We were coming to school when the bell rang.' Now in the first sentence 'when' is placed at the beginning of the sentence and in the second sentence after. Is there any difference in their usage? Is there any rule as to when 'when' is placed before or after? Is the verb in the past tense when 'when' is used? (2) Another thing I do not know well is how to use 'since'. What is the difference between 'since', before' and 'ago'? (3) The two words 'large' and 'big' are they synonyms? Can both he used in the same place? Is it the same with 'small' and 'little'?

level which you may not be able to keep up. Take every step after careful thought.

If you do not follow any of the explanations I give in your exercises, ask me again. If you use sheets of the same quality and size and keep a margin for comments, the exercises will be easier to preserve.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 10103. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

496. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
August 9, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I scribbled a letter[1] to you yesterday in great hurry. Enclosed are letters for Lilavati and Mathew. Read the letter to Mathew carefully before passing it on to him. You also should talk to him with firmness. If he harasses you, relieve him. Keep him only if he teaches carefully and puts his heart into his work, and also does some physical work. What does he do for his meals?

Did you pay the rent for Harilal? What makes you think he wouldn't get liquor in Junagadh? I'm sure he won't behave well in regard to anything. One thing is certain, however. You will have less trouble there, that is, if he does not come back.

I understand about Radha and Santok. Your suggestion regarding Pyarelal is correct. We have got to agree to it.

Enclosed please find another letter from Vajubhai. As there was nothing new in it, I did not send it to you earlier. There is no question of handing over the school to him. It is you who have to develop it. I have not yet been able to send him your letters.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 8-8-1935

497. DISCUSSION ON REORGANIZING KHADI PRODUCTION[1]

[Before *August 10, 1935*]

QUESTION: In Bihar something like five thousand women walk ten miles a day to receive the present scanty wage. More would come if we could sell more khadi. What would happen to these poor women, if the demand for khadi disappeared?"

GANDHIJI: Quite, right. I know the same is the state of things in Bengal villages and in South India. But I would put your proposition in a converse way. Supposing you gave one pie instead of two pies an hour that you give at present, you would be employing not 5,000 women but 10,000 women. And supposing these helpless women were ready to accept even that miserable pittance, would you dare to do it? I say, you would not. That means that you will have to determine a point beyond which you cannot go. Call it if you will a 'helpless minimum'. But if that minimum has to be fixed, why not fix it once and for all, no matter whether it affects some of the producers for the time being adversely? So long as the number of purchasers is limited and the number of producers unlimited, there is no doubt that you will have to turn some of the producers away. Why not then have a deliberately fixed, high enough minimum wage to ensure these poor women at least a living wage? Otherwise there would be no end to this unconscious exploitation. A paper manufacturer sends us paper from a place. He is paying the labourers at the rate of six pice per day, and says he hopes to make the paper cheaper. I tell him I will not have it cheaper.

Then you will now change the definition of khadi. It no longer remains hand-spun hand-woven cloth, but cloth hand-spun and hand-woven at a particular wage.

There is no doubt. I am sorry that you are making the discovery so late.

But spinning is a supplementary occupation, we have been telling the world all these years. It is done only in one's spare hours.

[1] This is extracted from "Weekly Letter" by Mahadev Desai who had explained that the presence of Congress Working Committee members like Rajendra Prasad, Vallabhbhai Patel, Jairamdas Doulatram, Jamnalal Bajaj, Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Gangadharrao Deshpande and J.B. Kripalani "stimulated the discussion" on the subject which had become a burning question ever since Gandhiji wrote the article on the "Need for a Standard Wage"

Yes and no. I know that there are thousands who are doing it for the whole day. To them it is not a supplementary but a substantive occupation. And even if it is not, why not give them for an hour's work what you would usually give for any other hour's work?

Do you know that in some parts of Guntur District, people are taking to rice-pounding because it fetches a higher wage than spinning?

I do. But you support my argument. They will certainly choose whatever work fetches them a higher wage. Then why not dignify the spinner by a wage which will be equal to any other wage?

Practical difficulties are very great. You cannot induce these spinners to conform to your terms. You want a regular register of them, you want them to spin yarn of a particular count, of particular evenness and of particular strength. How will all that be done?

The difficulties have got to be conquered. Don't I know that for considerable length of time there will be tales of long-drawn-out agony—some saying we cannot induce the spinners to spin for themselves, some saying we cannot get them to conform to our requirements?

But supposing they conform to our regulations and we give them better machines and better spindles, they will automatically do more work and more than double the wage.

That they will do automatically but for no virtue of yours. That more production means more earning is obvious enough. But what are we going to do, by way of justice which we have denied them?

No, we shall have to forget that khadi has to compete with mill-cloth. Mill-cloth is mill-cloth and khadi is khadi. The mill-cloth producer will always concentrate on cheapening it, we must concentrate on justice and a fair wage. There can be therefore no comparison between the two. As regards the practical difficulties, let us reduce our establishments, let us stop advertisements, let us not patronize the private producer. It is going to be the test of those who are pledged to khadi. Let them produce it themselves or pay for it enough to give our brothers and sisters a living wage. It is a question of the self-purification of all khadi-weavers. Let us not forget that our mission is the service of *Daridranarayana.* Difficulties there may be, but let us solve them gradually.[1]

Harijan, 10-8-1935

[1] Mahadev Desai had concluded: "It seemed to be generally agreed that the experiment must be started wherever possible and with varying but increased wages for spinners."

498. THE BOMBAY KHADI BHANDAR

The Bombay Khadi Bhandar is the largest khadi bhandar depot of the A.I.S.A. It is no single individual's property. It belongs to the A.I.S.A. as the sole trustees for *Daridranarayana.* As such its primary concern must be *Daridranarayana.* Though it has served as a means of giving honourable employment to some middle-class people, it must not be regarded as an employment bureau for them. Since a new policy is in the course of adoption, reduction is being made in the staff in keeping with the requirements of the new policy. Hitherto extraordinary efforts have been made to push up sales of khadi sent from all parts of India and ordered by Shri Jerajani in accordance with patterns designed by his inventive genius. But this effort meant overhead charges out of proportion to the results achieved in terms of *Daridranarayana.* And it drew the attention of the provincial workers away from their main work which was to make khadi self-supporting or popular in their own provinces. The universal mission of khadi cannot be fulfilled without true provincial effort. That can be achieved only by its distribution as faras possible in the innumerable centres of production. No doubt some khadi will always be required for big cities like Bombay which will never produce it themselves. That will be a healthy demand to be met without extraordinary effort. The rich variety one sees in the city khadi shop was possible only because the Association put forth the effort to meet the varied tastes of the city public. But time has come, if khadi is to fulfil its mission,to turn the attention towards centres of production. They are far too few. Every village, if not every home, has to be such a centre even as every home is a centre of production of cooked food. The economy of the kitchen is wholly different from the economy of the books. Even so is the economy of khadi. The contemplated change, then, means substantial reduction in the staff of large bhandars run by or on behalf of the A.I.S.A. It also means reduction in the number, if not disappearance, of certified private producers. How it will all be worked, it is difficult to say as yet. It is being carefully worked out by Shri Shankerlal Banker who has been travelling throughout India for that special purpose.

But meanwhile this is to warn the lovers of khadi, the votaries of *Daridranarayana,* the prices of khadi must go up, greater technical skill must be developed among khadi workers, a greater spirit of self-

sacrifice must be evoked amongst all the classes connected with the production and distribution of khadi. Sales depots have taken delight in showing a progressive decline in the prices. I remember the time when I sold the first piece of very coarse khadi for over one rupee per yard. Such coarse khadi will not fetch two annas today. It is not on sale at khadi depots. This decrease has been brought about no doubt by progressive efficiency in every department of khadi, but it has been largely purchased at the cost of the spinner. And yet the concrete shape of *Daridranarayana* is the spinner—the lowest paid labourer in all India. It was good that the A.I.S.A. found a means of employment on the widest scale possible for the chronic unemployed at a wage, be it ever so low, even one pie per hour. But if it is to discharge its trust, it must find at least a subsistence wage for the spinner. Her receipt for the spinning hour should be in proportion to the amount she would need to live if she worked for eight hours a day. What that amount is to be is not so much matter of moment, as that there must be an increase in the rate of wages earned by the spinners. Henceforth the reports of the A.I.S.A. should state not how much reduction in the price of khadi has taken place during the period under review, but they should take pride in showing how much increase has been made in spinning wage. It should not be satisfied—I cannot be satisfied—till the spinner's wage per hour has been put on a level with, say, the weaver's. And let the buying public remember that they are the unnamed members of that great trust and that the spinners are their wards. Once that relation is realized there should be no difficulty in the progressive rise of khadi in the geometrical ratio. Would that every lover of khadi will know his duty and falsify the fears of the unbelievers among khadi workers who think that the public will never pay a higher price for khadi!

Harijan, 10-8-1935

499. LETTER TO BHUJANGILAL CHHAYA

WARDHA,
August 10, 1935

CHI. BHUJANGILAL,

Do what your conscience tells you and your strength permits you to do. What others may advise is not one's dharma. Dharma is what a man himself believes to be such. How can another man know your heart? You should, therefore, pray to God to help you to recognize your path. He is the only true guide.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2607

500. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

August 10, 1935

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I get your letters. You are making good progress in collections. I had a talk with Shankerlal, too. I will have a talk with Bapa when he comes. We should place our trust in God and go on working.

The incidents of harassment of Harijans are a painful matter. It seems we shall have no option but to take such cases to court. There must, however, be a local agitation to protest against every such incident.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Sardar says that it would be proper for us to ask Taluka Boards for money for Harijan schools and that we would get the money if we applied. Think over this suggestion.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4028. Also C.W. 128. Courtesy: Parikshitlal L. Majmudar

501. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

August 10, 1935

CHI. MANUDI,

I got your letter after I had finished writing the letters. I had already got the news about Ba's illness yesterday and, therefore, wrote today. You must be fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1546. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

502. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI

August 10, 1935

CHI. KASHI (GANDHI),

We are put to a test as soon as we enter the *vana*[1]. Why this restlessness? If we have dedicated everything to Krishna, one sign of it is that no one can take away our inner happiness. If there is anything that is held back in such dedication, let us surrender it now while entering on this new stage of our life. Nimu and the children are with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 10706. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

503. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

August 10, 1935

CHI. BRAJKISAN,

Your letter. There is no harm in using rice husked in the watermill if the grain remains unbroken.

I like it when abuse is showered on me. Its greatest benefit is that it clears the way for better understanding. I would far rather receive abuse than receive worship without being followed. Those who offer

[1] The third stage of life commencing with the 51st year

homage will never do anything because they have acquired the habit of doing nothing. But the maligners dislike me from their hearts, therefore they can do a great many things when a change of heart occurs.

What can be gained by sending Krishnan under compulsion? He came away only when he was released. Is it not your own duty to manage the work that is being mismanaged by those to whom you entrusted it? This course would be the best.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2436

504. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

WARDHA,
August 11, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter. After getting the Government's permission, you should publish the whole correspondence from the beginning to date. Publish also the letter appointing the Committee[1]. After doing that we should wholly concern ourselves with producing the evidence. If Lallubhai[2] has recovered and is strong enough to do the work, it will be all right. But I am very doubtful if he will be able to study the matter in sufficient detail. I would be glad if Kunzru joins. Gilder and Bahadurji, however, will suffice. It will not matter if the third person is a little weak.

I understand about Balvantrai. We should, however, go on doing what we think right. I had glanced at the article in [*The*] *Servant* [*of India*]. I didn't have even the time to read it carefully. Rajenbabu has taken it away.

If you can get . . .[3]'s address, pass on the accompanying letter to him.

All the other accompanying material is for Mahadev.

Blessings from
BAPU

[1] The Committee in connection with the plague relief work, undertaken by Vallabhbhai Patel at Borsad, which the Government had alleged to be unscientific.

[2] Lallubhai Shamaldas Mehta

[3] The name is omitted in the source.

[PS.]

If you have thought of anything with regard to Vithalbhai's money, let me know.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 176-7

505. LETTER TO N.R. MALKANI

WARDHA,
August 12, 1935

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I see quite clearly that you have not done much secretarial work. Or you would not send me your mail. You may not know that I had done nothing but secretarial work throughout my stay in South Africa. You have therefore my sympathy. But you will have to keep your peace and good humour in the midst of disappointments, censures from the multitude of employers. It makes no difference that one is a volunteer or rather when one is a volunteer, one has to bear more lashes than otherwise and still say 'Thank you, Sir'. All the notable secretaries of the world have been made of such noble stuff. You have to belong to that category. More when we meet.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Enclosure for Ba.

From a photostat: G.N. 910

506. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

August 12, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

1. No matter how weak a person is in body, if it is a shame to flee, he will stand his ground and die at his post. This would be non-violence and bravery.
2. No matter how weak he is, he will use what strength he has in inflicting injury on his opponent and die in the attempt. This is bravery but not non-violence.
3. If when his duty is to face danger, he flees, it is cowardice.

4. In the first case the man will have love or charity in him. In the 2nd and 3rd cases there would be dislike or distrust and fear.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 11072. Courtesy: Anand T. Hingorani

507. LETTER TO DRAUPADI SHARMA

August 12, 1935

CHI. DRAUPADI,

Sharma[1] is to leave today. While he was yet in Calcutta I had no worry regarding you. Henceforth it becomes my duty to keep myself informed regarding you all. Give me the news about yourself and the children. Write about your way of living and also give me your daily routine.

Tell me who are all the people who help you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Are there any books belonging to the Kanya Ashram?

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha,* facing p. 184

508. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVLEKAR

August 12, 1935

BHAI SATAVLEKAR,

I am grateful for your loving letter. I think the snake was not venomous at all. Even Panchlegaonkar[2] said that it was not particularly venomous. It did not bite anyone even though deliberately provoked. Still, your warning is quite proper.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 4777. Courtesy: S.D. Satavlekar

[1] The addressee's husband, Hiralal Sharma, who was going to America

[2] A sadhu reputed for his power over snakes. On Nagpanchami Day (August 4, 1935), he placed a snake around Gandhiji's neck.

509. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

WARDHA,
August 13, 1935

CHI. PREMA,

I am observing two and a half hours' silence today to overtake the arrears of correspondence. Disposing of the letters one by one, I saw just now your letter of July 9, 1935.

You did very well in meeting Kelkar[1]. It would be good if you could take him to see your work.

What you say about work regarded as unclean is correct. I am giving in *Harijanbandhu* the portion about the Mahars. Your name will not be published.

Inform me when the Poona resolution is implemented. Which is the other book about Hitler?[2]

And now I come to your question. There is great risk in taking Russia as a model to be emulated. For one thing, we have no direct knowledge; secondly, the experiment has not yet lasted long enough; and thirdly, they rely on violence for what they are doing. We should, therefore, leave out Russia when thinking about our problems. This must be assumed to be common ground between us, that we do not wish to use violence to force people to do anything. Hence the easiest way of securing justice from the rich is to see that they make the best use of the wealth they earn. This may possibly result in their being no longer eager to acquire much wealth. We need not mind that. Nor need we mind, even if such a result does not follow. We shall in this way get the use of so much wealth without having to bother about its safety. If a large number of rich people become trustees, we shall want nothing more. Your argument springs from the suspicion that the rich will never agree to be trustees of their own property. We needn't worry if your suspicion is well founded, for truth is bound to triumph ultimately. He who keeps more than he needs is a thief and stolen wealth is like unprocessed mercury. It cannot be digested. We should have faith that the thief will

[1] N.C. Kelkar

[2] In *Bapuna Patro–5 : Ku. Premabehn Kantakne,* pp. 230-2, the addressee mentions *Mein Kampf,* as a book read by Gandhiji and herself, but does not specify "the other book".

not be able to retain the property he has stolen and should go on employing non-violent means.

If you are still not satisfied, ask me again, The question you have put is an important one, and if you have fully grasped the meaning of ahimsa my answer should satisfy you as a perfect one.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Lakshmi has gone to Bardoli, Prabhavati is here, and so is Amtussalaam. Ba is in Delhi. Lakshmi has given birth to a son[1].

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10376. Also C.W. 6815. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

510. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

August 13, 1935

CHI. RA [MDAS],

I have your letter. Ultimately everyone lives as he is destined to. So you also will work according to your lights. But as there is destiny so also there is effort and since it is in our hands to make efforts, we are taught not to rely on destiny. That is how the *shloka* "Action alone is thy province, never the fruits thereof"[2] came into being. We can certainly put it this way: 'You have a right to make efforts, never to know your destiny.' We should live as God ordains after making efforts. Do you ponder over the *Gita* sometimes? Do you keep "Ramagita" with you?

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Rajmohan Devdas Gandhi
[2] *Bhagavad Gita,* II. 47

511. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR[1]

WARDHA,
August 14, 1935

What do you say to my new secretary?

Love

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6056. Also C.W. 3386. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

512. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

WARDHA,
August 14, 1935

DEAR KAKUBHAI,

I have not fully read the accompanying letter. Mahadev may be still there. If so, give the letter to him to read. Bhai Kishorelal has read it. He thinks that you should read it. If you have any comments to make after reading it, you may do so, If you meet Mahadev, return the letter to him after reading it. If you do not meet him, send it back to me. Make a full inquiry into the allegation.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10834. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

[1] This was Gandhiji's postscript to Amrit Kaur's letter of even date which read: "Bapu has received your letter of the 11th instant. He is glad you are progressing satisfactorily. The report about *neem* leaves and tamarind having been discarded is quite wrong. I can vouch for the goodness of the marmalade and you will do well to obtain the recipe when you next come here. Bapu says it is good that you are learning to do your own 'examinations'—so that you need not trouble the hospital folk. I have only a week left here now—alas! It has been lovely being here. Love from Bapu and me."

513. LETTER TO H.L. SHARMA

August 14, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. You did well in supplying all the dates. I have written to Draupadi.[1]

I got a telegram from Braj Mohanji telling me of your departure. I had had your earlier letters. The account of your experiences on board should come now.

Were there any books belonging to the Kanya Ashram with you? Chhotelal has sent a memorandum. I have forgotten if you told me anything.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

A list of the books is given on the reverse.

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha,* facing p. 186

514. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

August 14, 1935

BHAI SATISBABU,

Your letter has helped me in understanding things better. I feel somewhat over-burdened. Would it be right to saddle a person with the responsibility of so many committees, paper-work and sundry activities? But I am unable to come to any conclusion. I ought to go and stay in the Pratishthan. But in the absence of personal experience I have no business to hurl any criticism. We shall have an exchange of ideas if you come over here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1714

[1] *Vide* "Letter to S. D. Satavlekar", 12-8-1935

515. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

August 14, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM,

Today I am writing to you in Hindi. Let me know if you can read it. If you have any difficulty I will write to you in English.

Who are we to look after Kichi? In the end it is God alone who will take care of him.

Nimu is here with me these days. Kano is ill. He has grown very weak. Lakshmi has gone to Bardoli. Kumarappa was sick but is now all right. His sister came and stayed with us for ten days. At present Rajkumari Amrit Kaur and Khurshedbehn are here. Prabhavati and Amtul are of course here.

I got the fruit sent by you. The honey is also good. Send fruit and honey whenever you wish to, but they should be cheap because I need them daily.

My diet is milk, *neem* and some other leaves and fruit. Sometimes I don't take fruit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

516. LETTER TO NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE

WARDHA,
August 15, 1935

DEAR NIRMAL BABU,

I have your postcard of the 5th instant. At last I am able to return your article with the necessary corrections. I regret the delay and hope you will have no difficulty in deciphering the corrections.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 10509

517. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

August 15, 1935

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I am dashing this off in great hurry in order not to miss the mail. Everything is going on all right here. I am working under great pressure these days. I don't get even a minute free. Harilal spends the whole day immersed in a tub of liquor, so to say. All our hopes about his having been reformed are falsified. He is now worse than he was. But one keeps on hoping as long as one breathes. Accordingly, let us hope that, if he lives, some day he will reform himself.

Ba and Manu are in Delhi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4841. Also C.W. 1253. Courtesy: Sushila Gandhi

518. LETTER TO RASIK DESAI

August 15, 1935

CHI. RASIK,

I am glad that you wrote to me, whatever the pretext.

Live in a manner worthy of the Ashram in every way. The easiest way of sending the Quetta money is to send it by insured registered letter. You can send the amount to Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj at Wardha. I hope you are keeping well enough.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI RASIK DESAI
SHAMALDAS COLLEGE HOSTEL
BHAVNAGAR, KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6621

519. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

August 15, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter. Don't worry, you will get somebody else. We are in no great hurry. Keep Mahadev there as long as necessary. I will try and manage somehow without him. Rajkumari and Khurshed are helping as much as they can. The former disposes of most of the English correspondence. She will leave on the 21st. Khurshedbehn will remain here for the present.

Rajendrababu left today. He was, as usual, accompanied by Mathurababu and Gorakhbabu. The astronomer is leaving for that side this evening.

If necessary, take fourteen instead of seven doses of the powder, but see that you completely get rid of the jaundice. Never leave a job half done.

Your buying a second-class ticket for Andrews was all right. You could feed him well there because we starved him here. If we had fed him here, too, he would have been laid up in bed, as he was in Allahabad.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 177-8

520. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

WARDHA,
August 15, 1935

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

Four days back Jethalal left for Anantpur. He needed some *bhakharis* prepared from ghee-softened dough as he buys nothing from the wayside stations. I sanctioned the preparation when Amtussalaam referred it to me. I was reminded of the occasion when I had berated you for the same matter;[1] the recollection was painful.

[1] About three months earlier when the addressee was leaving Wardha

Although I know it turned to your ultimate good, it does not justify my own error. Notwithstanding the purity of motive I am not absolved. Do forgive me, your Bapu is so very imperfect! The other details have been conveyed by K.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1879

521. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

WARDHA,
August 16, 1935

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

As I have now begun to take a direct part in the administration of the A.I.S.A. affairs, I am expected to deal with various standing complaints. One of these is about the Punjab branch. I would like you to give me your brief replies. . . Khadi Bhandar opened by H. Kotak is required in Lahore. There are complaints about the management of the Kashmir branch. I would like to have your views about that branch.

Yours,
BAPU

[PS.]
Please return the enclosed when replying.

From the original: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

522. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI N. PATEL

Wardha,
August 16, 1935

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

I had a talk with Chanchal. But she does not wish at all to leave this place. She likes working and, therefore, has won everybody's love. Being hard-working, she learns things quickly. She does not wish to exchange the certain for the uncertain.

[1] The reference is to a letter dated August 10 from Kishorelal Mashruwala, reproduced in *Bapuki Chhayamen*

In these circumstances, I for one wouldn't press her to go there. Only a girl who feels spontaneously attracted by the Harijan Ashram may go there.

Dahibehn is always having some trouble or other. One must endure the body's punishments. Has the quality of your ghee improved? We have completely stopped ordering ghee from outside.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RAOJIBHAI PATEL
GRAM UDYOG KARYALAYA
LIMBASI, MATAR TALUKA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9005

523. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

August 16, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter. I am writing to . . .[1] about . . .[2] Such incidents are enough to shake one's faith in God. The only remedy is for those who are vigilant to become more vigilant.

In a recent speech in Poona, Jayakar[3] had made very harsh remarks about the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Haribhau[4] has sent me those remarks. I have written to Jayakar and asked him if the report is correct. I will write to you after I receive his reply.

The labourer's letter and the reply to it are enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The letter to . . . is enclosed. Get his address and send it on to him.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 178

[1] The names in this item are omitted in the source.
[2] *ibid*
[3] Mukundrao R. Jayakar, a liberal leader
[4] Haribhau Phatak, a congress worker of Poona

524. DECENTRALIZATION?

Before the forthcoming meeting (on 30th instant) of the executive of the Harijan Sevak Sangh Board, among the many important questions for discussion, will be that of the need for decentralization which some provincial boards have felt for the sake of the better advancement of its object.

Centralization was insisted upon by Sheth Ghanshyamdas Birla and Shri Amritlal Thakkar for the decisive reason that money was found by the Centre, the Presidents of the Provincial Boards were selected by Sheth Ghanshyamdas, and the policy was also evolved by the Central Board.

Though I have concurred in the policy of centralization I have always desired, as I have no doubt the Board, too, has desired, decentralization at the first opportunity. But that could only be done when the Provincial Boards were ready and able to raise their own funds. I would love nothing so much as that every village had its Harijan Board and was able to find its own funds. When that day comes, it will also be one of complete abolition of untouchability in every shape and form. For the present it has to be unfortunately admitted that the cause is still led by a handful of earnest reformers scattered all over the country. Not all of them are able to raise funds locally nor are they all sure of the policy to be followed. I use the word 'policy' deliberately. For while everyone knows the goal, everyone does not know the grave limitations under which the reformer labours. The slightest error of judgment, a hasty action or a hasty word may put back the hands of the clock of progress. Policies have, therefore, to be cautiously evolved in the light of experiences daily gained by the few who have no other thought but that of serving Harijans and ridding Hinduism of its greatest blot.

Harijan workers will be grieved to learn that there are more than Rs. 80,000 as advances to Provincial Boards in the books of the Central Office.

This has a tale to tell. Those Boards against whom the money stand have not been able to find their quota. It is also a grievous fact that not all the Boards have sent in their returns in accordance with the prescribed manner. The third thing to note is that in spite of the ceaseless vigilance of the Secretaries and their tours, the district

organizations have not functioned as they might have done. This is not to say that workers in the provinces and districts have nothing to their credit. Indeed the columns of *Harijan* have abundantly shown, what amazing progress the cause has made during the very short period that the Boards have functioned. But just now my purpose is to examine the debit side so as to enable interested workers to come to a right decision. It may be that the defects to which I have drawn attention are due to the policy of overcentralization. If it be so, the advocates of decentralization have to prove their case. Had the Centre felt the need, it would have come long ago. The forthcoming meeting is that of the executive of the Board. It consists of seven members of whom the Chairman is absent. I would invite the Harijan sevaks throughout the provinces to send their considered opinion to the Secretaries at Delhi supporting them as briefly as they can with facts and figures. After all in a cause so humanitarian as that of Harijans involving the very existence of an ancient faith, nothing should be left undone that would advance it. Personal considerations do not count in such matters.

Harijan, 17-8-1935

525. COMPOST MANURE

There is in Indore an Institute of Plant Industry. It issues from time to time leaflets for those whom it is designed to serve. The first one of these describes the utility and the method of preparing compost manure from farm wastes. As it is valuable for Harijans and village workers who handle cattle-dung and night-soil, I copy below practically the whole of the leaflet[1] incorporating footnotes into the running description of the process.

Harijan, 17-8-1935

526. SNAKE POISONING

Dr. Sokhey, Director of Haffkine Institute, has kindly supplied me with a note on Indian snakes. As co-workers are spreading out in villages, it becomes necessary to arm them with information in matters of common occurrence in villages where city conveniences are

[1] Not reproduced here; it appeared, in parts, in this and the following issue of *Harijan.*

unfortunately unavailable. The most dangerous is snakebite which proves fatal in many cases if the necessary measures are not immediately adopted. I give below the important portions of the note[1]. The whole contains useful information about identification of snakes. But the description is too technical for the village worker to follow. I am, therefore, omitting this part of the note.

Since nine-tenths of snakes are non-poisonous and are valuable protectors of fields against rats, etc., it would be a good thing if a simple key for distinguishing poisonous from non-poisonous snakes can be had. Meanwhile let those interested study the very simple remedy described below:[2]

Though Col. Sokhey has warned me that there is no sure remedy against bites of poisonous snakes except injections of antivenom serum, I cannot resist giving the remedy claimed to have been succesfully tried by Just, the author of *Return to Nature*. I have tried it successfully in two or three cases of snake-bites and numerous cases of scorpion stings. It consists in applying an ample earth bandage to the affected part. Take as much clean earth as possible, add cold water to it and make a cold poultice of it. Spread the composition an inch as a pack on a wet linen piece, fold, apply and bandage. If it is a toe that is bitten, the leg should have the poultice up to the knee, if a finger, the whole area should be bandaged, the more the better. All the other treatment as described in the foregoing note should undoubtedly be taken. And if the serum injection is taken, the earth treatment may be quite superfluous. I was assured that if the injection was given in time, it was a sure antidote. Nor can I vouch for the absolute efficacy of the earth treatment. For I have no knowledge that the bites treated by me were highly poisonous. I suggest the earth treatment as being harmless and most easily available in villages and as being highly acclaimed by its author.

Harijan, 17-8-1935

[1] *Vide* Appendix Extracts frrom Dr. Sokhey's notes on snake poisoning.
[2] *ibid*

527. LETTER TO N.R. MALKANI

WARDHA,
August 17, 1935

DEAR MALKANI,

Your letter of the 15th instant arrived today but the draft of Deed and papers in connection with the new Trust have not been received.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1164

528. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

August 17, 1935

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your loving gift. Be firm in your thoughts; learn and serve.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9336. Also C.W. 6611. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

529. LETTER TO NIRANJAN SWAMI[1]

August 17, 1935

BHAI NIRANJAN SWAMI,

I found nothing in your articles to justify their publication. Even so, your labour in thinking on those subjects and writing the articles will not be altogether wasted.

What shall I say to Chi. Vallabh[2]? Vinoba will see what should be done about him. I cannot interfere with the running of that Ashram. I know, however that Vallabh has to carry heavy enough burden in managing the Nalwadi Ashram.

BAPU

SHRI NIRANJAN SWAMI
AULPAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10466

[1] Alias Makanji Gopalji
[2] Vallabh Swami

530. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

August 17, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

What shall we do about Harilal? He is suspicious about everything and considers himself innocent. I hope he does not create scandal in Junagadh.

I am indeed very glad that you are fully satisfied with Mathew. If he devotes himself whole-heartedly to his work, he will make a name for himself in Rajkot itself. When you are fully convinced, you may pay him more if you can. In any case, you must give him physical work to do. And also he must learn Hindi.

Send the money which they have asked for from Sabarmati.

Send me Vajubhai's address which he has given in his last letter. I need it. I have not yet been able to write to him.

I am returning Prof. Joshi's letter. If he has faith in khadi, why doesn't he get a khadi dhoti? Superfine khadi dhotis are available now. If he himself would spin fine yarn, he can have a dhoti made at low cost. There is no reason at all for relieving him. I liked his letter. You should send it to Narahari.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8470. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

531. LETTER TO ISHWARDAS

August 17, 1935

BHAI ISHWARDAS,

The couplets composed by you concern a guru and his disciple and that too when they are residing at the same place. Neither am I a guru nor are you a disciple. I have never made anyone my disciple. I hope you know this. I find a sort of listlessness in your questions. They are such that they have already been covered in my writings. But you don't study and ponder over them.

Blessings from

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

532. THE WAY TO SERVE

For nearly a year a lady has been doing welfare work in a village. She is gradually making some headway. She has already crossed some huge hurdles. She ploughs with the farmer's plough-share, cleans roads and teaches women how to spin. She is teaching the young and the old. From among the experiences which she had, I give below[1] a recent one as it is a very useful one.

> The Chamars would not take a goat's carcass as it had been touched by a Mahar . . . To take it to the Mangs I put the basket on my head. When I started to walk people stared at me. I went straight to the Mangs and they took the carcass. They said, "why did you carry it? If you had told us, we would have fetched it." I replied, "I wanted to show that no work is dirty; I was not ashamed of this job. So why should I trouble you?"

This instance shows that nothing is accomplished through speeches, but that results can be obtained by our actually doing what we wish others to do.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 18-8-1935

533. LETTER TO RAJARAM R. BHOLE

WARDHA,
August 18, 1935

DEAR RAJARAM,

I have your p. c. If you feel that your health will permit, I have no objection to your finishing your course in college. But you will come to a decision after seeing Dr. Ambedkar[2].

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI RAJARAM BHOLE
C/O K. D. BANKER, ESQ.
EMPIRE OF INDIA LIFE HOUSE
WALKER ROAD, NAGPUR

From the original: R. R. Bhole Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Only extracts are translated here. The correspondent presumably was Premabehn Kantak; *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 1-8-1935

[2] B. R. Ambedkar, to whom Gandhiji had written about the addressee; *vide* "Letter to B. R. Ambedkar", 9-7-1935

534. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

August 18, 1935

BHAI BHAGWANJI,

I sent you some hand-made paper. You must have received it. Herewith the bill for it.

Indigenous reeds and ink are freely available in Rajkot. Vohras stock both. Such things needn't be sent from here. Reeds grow in our fields. Some types of them, which are strong and beautiful in appearance, do not grow in all places. But bamboos are found everywhere. I remember that when we were children we brothers used to make bamboo pens just for the pleasure of seeing if we could make them. And we didn't have any thing but reed-pens at home. The steel-pens entered our home after we had joined the English School. We used to compete among ouerselves in using the two.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5826. Also C.W. 3049. Courtesy: Bhagwanji A. Vakil

535. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

WARDHA,

August 18, 1935

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

Your letter narrates a painful story. In this particular instance, the newspapers have not exaggerated but on the contrary have understated [the facts]. You did perfectly well in seeking the help of the authorities. The persecutors must be punished. There will be minimum violence in that. As long as the number and strength of the non-violent are limited, violence by the State will be the smallest evil. However, even while seeking the help of the authorities, you should continue to adopt other measures of your own. Is there nobody who can have some influence on the Rajputs and the Baraiyas? One of us must stay among the Harijans. I hope that the other Rajput, the

Vibhishana[1], is receiving encouragement.

You have given useful information about the schools. I am sending your letter to Sardar. About our budget I will have a talk with Bapa when he comes here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4036, Also C.W. 127. Courtesy: Parikshitlal L. Majmudar

536. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

August 18, 1935

BA,

I got your letter after much waiting. You should get all right quickly. Please do not worry about Nimu, etc. She is very well. The children also have improved after coming here. Kano always has his meals with me. Sumitra also does that sometimes. Sometimes she drops out. Usha is growing up. Nimu's practice on the *sitar* also goes on a little. Amtussalaam serves with the utmost devotion. Rajkumari is still here. She will leave on the 21st. Khurshedbehn has been here all the time. Gosibehn is likely to come on the 22nd. I continue to get letters from Harilal. He writes whatever comes into his head.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 1546. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

537. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

August 18, 1935

CHI. MANUDI,

You ought not to have got fever. Henceforth live in such a way that you never get it again.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1547. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

[1] Brother of Ravana who had gone over to Rama's side when the former refused to heed his advice to restore Sita to Rama

538. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

August 18, 1935

CHI. DEVDAS,

For Lakshmi's molar try gargling with warm water mixed with permanganate, if you have not done so. That helps.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1548. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

539. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

August 18, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Herewith a letter from . . .[1]. Poor man, he doesn't know anything about the Committee. Have you taken any step?

Kishorelal told me yesterday that you had an acute attack of piles which had even started bleeding, and that an operation had become necessary. This is the result of putting up with chronic constipation for so long. Send me full details. In your present state of health, an operation doesn't seem advisable either. It would, therefore, be better if you could avoid it. I would advise you to consult Gaurishankar or Dr. Mehta[2]. Perhaps the former may be of real help. Many persons find it possible to avoid an operation by improving their digestion. If you could trust your body to a quack-hakim of Ahmedabad, you might as well trust it now to a quack naturopath. You just can't afford to remain ill. How is Amritlal?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

A letter from Parikshitlal is enclosed. I think it is one you should read—concerning both matters.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 179

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

[2] Dr. Dinshaw Mehta

540. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

August 19, 1935

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

Today also I have just enough time to write only a few words. Did I write to you about a son having been born to Devdas? Lakshmi and the baby are very well. Ba and Manu are still in Delhi. Nimu is with me at present. Kano is having fever. The temperature rises and falls. He will be all right soon.

Mahadev is in Bombay just now, with Sardar, He may return tomorrow. Navin has come here. He will stay here for the present.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4842. Also C.W. 1254. Courtesy: Sushila Gandhi.

541. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

WARDHA,
August 19, 1935

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

There is no reason for you to be distressed. Passing of the "sediment"[1] is bound to stop. You should have more exercise. Continue hip baths and perform the breathing exercises outdoors. You may decrease the quantity of *neem* and take more raw vegetables. Milk should not be totally given up; eat fruit and have no hesitation in taking all the necessary items of diet so long as taste does not come into consideration. The ultimate responsibility is mine. Do take porridge. The effects caused by *roti* could have been caused by the oil used in its preparation. This should be remedied.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4277

[1] Gandhiji had used the English expression.

542. A LETTER

WARDHA,
August 20, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 19th instant, enclosing a cutting from a Phillippine paper. The inforamation contained therein is wholly wrong. I have made no statement[1] about Abyssinia.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-8-1935

543. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

August 20, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter. The Committee is well constituted. It is essential that it should finish its work as soon as possible . . . .[2] Morarji and Chandubhai are arriving here on the 25th morning.

How are your piles?

Kumarappa still shows signs of fever. I intend to get him examined by the Civil Surgeon today.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 180

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 1-8-1935
[2] Omission as in the source

544. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

August 20, 1935

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

I hope the experience you gained here is proving useful there.

Do send me as much indigenous paper from there as you can. I can sell it.

We are all doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6549

545. A LETTER

August 21, 1935

Althought I have never thought in such terms as presented by you, now that I am challenged my first thought is that belief in man's freedom is wholly unnecessary for conducting the highest type of activity. But to answer your second question, I have always reconciled comparative freedom of the individual with the all-powerfulness of the Supreme Will. I came to that conclusion on observing some ordinary experience of life. A prisoner, even in a solitary cell, has freedom of movement, however little it may be, and he has complete freedom of the mind. In the question presented by you, even the mind is prisoner under the Supreme Will, and yet He permits us to think millions of idle thoughts. Hence I conclude that there is some freedom left to the individual, be it the tiniest conceivable. The acid test of complete obedience to the Universal Will would be full surrender even of that tiny freedom.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

546. LETTER TO K.M. MUNSHI

WARDHA,
August 21, 1935

BHAI MUNSHI,

I got your book. Let me know how it is received. Kaka told me the rest.

Blessings from
BAPU

ADVOCATE K. M. MUNSHI
RIDGE ROAD, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 7584. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

547. LETTER TO MADALASA BAJAJ

August 21, 1935

CHI. MADALASA,

I got a letter from you after a long time. You may eat what you like, on condition that you do not fall ill. Rules of self-control which may be necessary should be observed spontaneously. There is no hurry. Learn to control anger and live like a child. From Ashram life one may learn freedom, but never rudeness, incivility or pride.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 318

548. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

WARDHA,
August 22, 1935

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

I have your letter. I for one am satisfied by your reply. Since you are keen I will read Ratubhai's letter so that justice is done to him. Actually, the letter is not even meant for me. It is not for me to do justice to Ratubhai or anybody else. Here doing justice to Ratubhai only means that I should not entertain any unjust thought about him

even in my mind. Ratubhai seems to be making a great mistake. The judgment about his Sevak Sangh has already been given. The personal matter has therefore ended there. During that inquiry Ratubhai talked about the whole management of the Bhandar. I suggested an inquiry. Even if I had not done so, it was my duty as President to inquire into the matter. Ratubhai's resigning does not absolve him from his duty of co-operating in the inquiry. But that is a matter for him to consider. Ratubhai in his letters keeps himself in the centre and not the improvement of the Bhandar, that is, the interest of khadi. And by doing so he is making himself miserable. I do not have to think about anything except the policy of the Bhandar and the interest of khadi. It is not therefore my duty at present to go through his letters. When you have completed your inquiry and made your recommendations I will definitely think about the matter if necessary and if I feel that injustice has been done to Ratubhai and others.

It is good that you feel that both Vithaldas[1] and Ratubhai may be right. In fact the truth may lie somewhere else altogether. But God alone knows it. Ratubhai sees the episode from one point of view and Vithaldas from another. From their respective paints of view, both may be right.

If you wish you may certainly show this letter to Ratubhai. I tried all means available to me to satisfy him. I troubled Kishorelal in whom he has faith. I asked you to intervene, because he has faith in you, too. Finally Mahadev felt that he could help him and he also lent a hand. If I cannot satisfy him with all this, then I suppose that is fate. In trying to satisfy him or anybody else my interest can only be the good of *Daridranarayana*. I can think of nothing else but that.

Blessings from
BAPU

PURUSHOTTAM KANJI JERAJANI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10835. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

[1] Vithaldas K. Jerajani, addressee's elder brother

549. DISCUSSION ON MINIMUM LIVING WAGE-I[1]

[*August 22/23, 1935*][2]

GANDHIJI: Let us realize our amazing limitations. Do not mind even if we have to be like the three tailors of Tooley Street. Our resources are few and limited. We cannot afford to squander money on high sounding schemes and we cannot adopt any and every means. We may fail to get workers and agents, and our branches may have to be few and far between. But I am in no hurry to see a network of institutions all over the country. Ours is a policy of ploughing a lonely furrow . . . . If we find that it is not possible for any industry to pay this minimum living wage, we had better close our shop. We should see that in any industry that we handle the wage covers a reasonable maintenance allowance.

DR. PRAFULLA: When I was an official earning a salary, I used to calculate how much my servants, including their dependants, would need for a fair maintenance and I used to pay them accordingly. It used to come to Rs. 20 a month. With clothing and other needs, it would come to Rs. 30.

GANDHIJI (laughingly): Then if you like we shall have a rupee a day as the minimum wage for Bengal. What you used to do as an official you have now to do as a member of the Association. I would certainly have the wage as high as possible and include in it the maintenance of at least one dependant. But you will go as far as you can.

Sjt. Vaikuntha Mehta, who is the Managing Director of the Provincial Co-operative Bank in Bombay, had not the slightest doubt that the sooner we tackled the question the better; for, when we insisted on an adequate solution of the wage question and that of work in organized large-scale industries, it was our duty to attend to these question in case of unorganized industries. There were obvious difficulties, but he had no doubt that the moment people were made to see that ninety per cent or more of the rupee that the people spend on an article they purchase goes directly into the pocket of the man who has produced it, they would not grudge to pay the money.

Sjt. Shankerlal Banker emphasized the importance of collecting data, from different provinces, of the prices of the minimum articles of a balanced diet, but he had some difficulty in applying the wage question to existing industries.

[1] The discussion is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The Management Board of the All India Village Industries Association met at Wardha.

[2] From *The Searchlight*, 30-8-1935

Gandhiji made it clear that we were exclusively concerned with dead or dying industries which we were trying to revive and we were not going to disturb the existing industries. Was the minimum wage likely to make matters difficult for the villager? What about the little articles of the villagers' daily need, earthen pots and lamps, for instance? Because the townspeople were to pay a higher price for those articles, were the villagers also to pay that higher price? Already villagers in villages in close proximity to towns were paying a higher price for milk than those in distant villages. Gandhiji said:

That was inevitable. But the villagers among themselves will adjust the prices. Besides, when our organization is in good running order, the carpenter and the smith and the weaver and the spinner, who purchase from the potter at the minimum wage price, will have also had their minimum-wage price for their respective wares, and they won't grudge the poor potter his price. But that is a distant goal. Let us at the present moment content ourselves with things that pass out of villages to the towns and let us refuse to have them at anything less than the minimum-living-wage price.[1]

Harijan, 31-8-1935

550. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
August 23, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

The promised wire has come. And I am glad your place remains vacant. Whenever I take my seat, I miss you. You had become a fixture. Then you have left so many reminders behind. The thermos is a perpetual reminder. The citronel [la] bottle, too, I found lying on the table. I suppose you left that, too, by design. The baskets are still there. The beet never ends. I must try it again. So you see what you have done!

I hope Shummy was able to issue the certificate I wanted.

You have invited Kumarappa to be your guest whenever he could go to Simla. The Civil Surgeon examined him yesterday and regard being had to the slight temperature, he wants him to go to a hill for a month or two. I am sending him to Bombay for further

[1] For the resolution passed at the meeting, *vide* "An Important Resolution", 31-8-1935

examination and then he may be ready to go to Simla, if you really can take him in without any inconvenience to you at all. If you can, please wire to me. But you must not hesitate to say no, if you will be inconvenienced in any way whatsoever.

Love to you both.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3541. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6350

551. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

August 23, 1935

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

You do not seem to read *Harijan*. If you convert the bones into manure, there is bound to be a demand for it. In every village collect the bones in one place, roast them slightly as explained in *Harijan*[1] and then grind it into fine powder. You can then dispatch that powder wherever necessary. You can sell it to the Agriculture Department of the State. It can be stored indefinitely for it does not get spoiled. How to convert the flesh into manure has also been explained in *Harijan*. Money for this is provided by a certain big firm. The process of converting flesh into manure is more difficult than that of making bone-powder, but it is such as can be carried out at home. I will get a detailed copy of the explanation made and send it to you. The guts can be converted into nets. Jethalal does it. There is no part of a carcass which cannot be utilized in some way or other. Even blood can be utilized, but I do not remember the process. I will ask and find out. I have not yet been able to complete the arrangements. When they are completed, I hope to be able to create a permanent demand for the materials. The bone-manure or the other things need not be sent out of Kathiawar. We can sell the materials at low prices to cultivators whom we can persuade to buy them, for the cost of production is bound to be very low at present.

If Mathew cannot be steady even there, I shall be helpless. I have taken much trouble for him.

I understand about Rama. I am satisfied if the children are growing properly.

Ba is in Delhi. She has been through a severe illness.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5523

[1] An article on the subject by S.C. Das Gupta appeared in *Harijan* 30-11-1934 and 14-12-1934.

552. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

August 23, 1935

CHI. LILAVATI,

If you leave some space below the questions in your exercises, it will be easier for you to study my comments.

The questions should be serially numbered. 'I will' indicates the future tense. In the second and the third person 'would' expresses desire. Apply this rule whenever you find these words used in the lesson you read.

1. 'If' and 'will' can be used in the same sentence. *If* is a conjunction and 'will' a verb in this context.

2. 'You will have received my letter.' 'I hope you are happy.'

3. 'Though you are good, yet will I not hurt you.' There is very little difference between 'still' and 'yet'.

4. 'He must be punished' means "He ought to be punished". 'He shall have been punished' means 'He must certainly have been punished'. There is not much difference between 'must' and 'shall have'. Shall in the second or the third person can have the force of 'must'.

5.[1]

6. 'Though' and 'yet' or 'still' are used in the same sentence. 'Yet' and 'still' complete the sense of 'though'.

I hope you will be able to understand all the answers. If you do not understand any of them, do not hesitate to ask again.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9337. Also C.W. 6612. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] As in the source

553. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

August 23, 1935

CHI. NARAHARI,

Though your letter of the 18th has been lying before me for the last two days, I could read it only today.

I like Bhai Velchand's intention. Let a few wells be dug and tablets put up with Pandya's name inscribed on them. Really speaking, however, his name can be fittingly associated only with a task accomplished with the greatest difficulty. Velchand should leave the implementation to us. Let the Pandya Village Uplift Fund immortalize both itself and Pandya, as the Tilak Swaraj Fund has immortalized itself and the Lokamanya. The sum that Velchand wishes to spend will partly fulfil that aim. At present we would not be able to use a larger sum than that.

This, however, may be your and my view. I had a talk with Sardar. He has not been able to decide. He was to write to Velchand. He will decide after doing that and let me know. We shall have to wait till then. The dairy seems to be going on very well there. How do you use the milk? Mahadev told me the Bhagat story. It seems a very strange affair.

I heard about Ratilal, too. Your hands are quite full, it seems.

Why has Surendra gone there? And how is it that I have had no intimation at all?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9088

554. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

August 23, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I drafted the terms[1] immediately yesterday and the draft is being sent with Vaikunth. I have also discussed the matter with him.

I am returning the cutting from *Sanj*. This sort of agitation is sure to be intensified still more. We shall be free from the bother as soon as the committee starts functioning.

The Civil Surgeon is somewhat alarmed by Kumarappa's low fever. He has advised that we should get him examined in Bombay. He will arrive there in two or three days. Afterwards I am thinking of sending him to Simla. An invitation has been received from Rajkumari. Get Kumarappa examined by Jivraj. Since you are there, I am not writing to anybody else. I suggested to him that he should stay with you, but he is being dragged away by Shoorji who is here. Sahani has advised that we should get Kumarappa's throat and lungs examined.

If you have been able to come to any decision regarding the donation contemplated by Velchand, let me know. His letter to Narahari is enclosed. I still feel that a part of the sum may be used for digging some wells, as desired by Velchand, and that the whole of the remaining amount should be spent for village reconstruction. You may, if you wish, restrict the expenditure to Gujarat. Give me your own independent views, however.[2]

If you have come to any decision regarding Vithalbhai's money also, let me know it. The letter to Motilal[3] was excellent. Morarji and Chandubhai are arriving on the 25th.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 180-1

[1] For the Plague Committee
[2] *Vide* also the preceding item.
[3] Motilal Setalvad, well-known advocate

555. NOTES

HARIJAN–NATTAR PROBLEM

This problem is ever with us. I have before me a long report sent by a worker in the black area. It shows that the Nattars are not much better than before. What improvement there is, is due not to conviction or enlightenment. It is largely due to the fear of prosecution against the Nattars for the harm they may do to the Harijans, and it is also due to the good work done by the Harijan Sevak Sangh's workers among the Harijans. They have somewhat succeeded in their effort to lessen the Harijans' fear of the Nattars. Permanent improvement is possible only if, as the report suggests, there is steady education spread both among Harijans and Nattars. The latter need perhaps more enlightenment than the former. Their unspeakable intolerance is due not so much to viciousness as it certainly is to unpardonable ignorance among them. Therefore the Sangh has to continue its labours undismayed by difficulties no matter how grave they may appear to be. If their faith survives them, it is sure to triumph.

NOT BOUND

Some weavers of Piplav, Bhadran Taluka, Baroda State, write to say that two years ago they resolved to give up carrion-eating and to that end gave up carrying and flaying carcasses. But the tanners and the Bhangis of the village have been doing that work. The Patidars of the village would not tolerate what they thought was presumption on the weavers part and proclaimed a severe boycott of them, cutting off all social services. They polluted their well, and began throwing stones on their roofs. The writers ask for guidance.

The Baroda State is well known for its enlightened policy about untouchability. I trust that the authorities will go out of their way to save these helpless Harijans whenever they are persecuted by the so-called caste Hindus. It is also up to the many reformers of advanced Bhadran to befriend these poor weavers and persuade the Patidars of Piplav to desist from the reported ill-treatment of its weavers. The latter deserve congratulations on their having given up carrion-eating. They need not have, on that account, given up the carrying and flaying of dead cattle, which is a lucrative and honourable calling and a necessary social service. But they are in no way bound to do the carrying or the flaying. If an honourable calling is regarded as

degrading, the responsibility for its being so regarded lies on *savarna* Hindus. No wonder if the weavers of Piplav, having become conscious of their degradation and being determined to get rid of it, decided to give up a calling that had led to their being regarded as degraded people. It is well for the village of Piplav that it has tanners and scavengers who, not having attained class consciousness, are yet doing carcass carrying and flaying, which society wrongly considers degrading. The whole social structure must crumble to pieces if the so-called higher classes do not realize the obvious duty of abolishing the evil custom of considering any class of persons as lower than themselves. But, while that consummation is being reached, it is the duty of the authorities and the reformers to do everything in theirpower to protect the Harijans against the cruel treatment to which the poor weavers of Piplav are said to be subjected.

UNTRUTHFUL ADVERTISEMENTS

The other day I drew attention[1] to indecent advertising. A Calcutta correspondent now sends me cuttings from well-known newspapers of advertisement which I would call untruthful. Just now a very vigorous propaganda seems to be going on in Bengal and probably in the other provinces also in favour of drinking Indian tea. The following is the translation sent by the correspondent of an advertisement in Bengali:

TEA-DRINKING AND YOUTHFUL LOOK

JALPAIGURI,
May 15

> That tea helps retain youthful look and energy long is, it appears, demonstrated from the experience of Shrijut Nepal Chandra Bhattacharya. He is now forty-eight, but he looks no older than thirty-four. He maintains that this youthful look of his is due to his taking tea. He had his first cup of tea when he was fourteen. Since then he has been a regular tea-drinker, and since the year before last he has been taking more or less thirty cups of tea daily. In this respect he has a peculiarity all his own. He does not take tea immediately it is prepared, nor does he sip in the whole of it, but rejects a little at the bottom. He takes from six to ten cups of it at a time.

This is a specimen of many such and reads as if it were a report from the paper's own correspondent. It advances a claim for tea-drinking which has no support in human experience anywhere. On the contrary even those who advocate tea-drinking advise extreme

[1] *Vide* "Notes" Sub-title "Need for Correctness

moderation. We should be no worse off if there was no tea drunk in India. But unfortunately tea and such other so-called harmless drinks have come to stay in our midst. My plea is for due regard for truth in advertising. It is a habit with people, especially in India, to treat the printed word in a book or a newspaper as gospel truth. There is need, therefore, for extreme caution in drawing up advertisements. Untruths such as my correspondent has drawn attention to are most dangerous. To drink thirty cups of tea per day not only does not refresh the body or the mind but weakens digestion and enervates the drinker. One or two cups of weak tea per day is about as much as the human body can accommodate, perhaps, without harm. In India the tea leaves are actually boiled so as to draw all the tannin they may contain. Any doctor would testify that tannin is bad for the stomach. The Chinese know how to drink tea. Theyput their leaves in a strainer and pour boiling water over the leaves which are never put in the tea pot. The water has to attain only the colour of the straw. It is pale yellow, never bordering on the red as tea made generally in India. Strong tea is poison.

Harijan, 24-8-1935

556. ANSWERS TO VILLAGE WORKERS' QUESTIONS[1]

1-5. There is no difference whatsoever between the two villages, so far as the village industries programme is concerned. In no case should a worker come in conflict with the authorities.

[1] This is extracted from "Weekly Letter" by Mahadev Desai who had explained: "Some young men who have settled in a village in a Kathiawar State have sent the following questions to Gandhiji: (1) Which of the two should be preferred for swaraj work—a village in a native State or a British Indian village. (2) Which should be prefered from the point of view of the village industries programme? (3) Is not the need for uplift work greater in the British Indian village? (4) If the answer to 3 is in the affirmative, why should not all workers go to the British Indian villages? (5) Would not the Congress give any definite direction in the matter? (6) What standard of living should be adopted by the village worker? The villagers standard is far too low to be acceptable to the workers. You do not taboo milk and fruit for village workers. But villagers never get these things. How can a village worker conscientiously take them? (7) It is a fact that millions are starving. If we too follow suit, how are we to do work for them? And yet in a family a brother would share his loaf with a brother rather than let him starve. (8) What are the minimum necessaries of life?"

6-8. The main thing to be borne in mind by the village worker is that he is in the village for the villagers' service, and it is his right and his duty to allow himself such articles of diet and other necessaries as would keep him fit and enable him to fulfil his function. This will necessarily involve the acceptance of a higher standard of living by the village worker, but I have an impression that the villagers do not grudge the worker these necessary things. The worker's conscience is the test. He must be self-restrained, he will eat nothing in order to indulge his palate, he will go in for no luxuries, and will fill all his waking hours with work of service. In spite of this, it is likely that a handful of people will cavil at his mode of life. We have to live that criticism down. The diet I have suggested is not quite unobtainable in a village, with a certain amount of labour. Milk can generally be obtained, and there are numerous fruits, *e.g.*, *ber*, *karamda*, *mhora* flower, which are easily available, but which we count of no value because they are so easily available. There are all kinds of leaves available which grow wild in ourvillages, which we do not use because of sheer ignorance or laziness (if not snobbery). I am myself using numerous varieties of these green leaves which I had never tried before, but which I find I should have used. It is quite possible to make a cow in a village pay for her upkeep and maintenance. I have not tried the experiment but I think it should be possible. I have also an impression that it is not impossible for the villagers to obtain and live on the same articles of diet as the village workers and thus to adopt the same standard of life.

Harijan, 24-8-1935

557. SELF-SUFFICING KHADI

From Madhopur centre in Bihar comes the news that in ten villages nineteen persons have had their yarn woven into khadi measuring $166\frac{1}{2}$ yards for personal use and that 82 persons in 22 villages had their yarn exchanged for khadi measuring 709 yards. This is good news.

Good news of distribution of seeds and sowing them for growing cotton for self-spinning comes from Payyanur and Nileshwar in Malabar. When cotton-growing for self-spinning becomes universal

in the country, people can have their khadi for the mere labour spent upon it during leisure hours if the home growers of cotton will learn all the processes as they do in Assam for silk in many homes. Silk connot be universalized. Cotton can and almost was at one time. This method means a most substantial addition to the national income and a perfect scheme of employment for the millions of the partially unemployed in this country.

Though the proposition is thus simple to state, it is undoubtedly very difficult to work. But it is in no way impossible. It needs no great outlay of capital. The processes to be learnt are simple, the tools required are all ready in the villages or can be quickly made. The greatest stumbling block is the disinclination of the people to work at new things and to exert intelligence. Generations of enforced idleness and consequent starvation have led to loss of hope, stamina and even the will to live. No greater calamity can befall a people than that they should lose hope even to the extent of the will to live. But those who have not lost hope have to work with greater zeal than ever before with an unquenchable faith in their mission. Their faith will certainly overcomemountains. In this glorious country, where sufficient food and clothing can be produced without much labour and skill, there need never be any loss of hope.

But hope has to be translated into progressive action based on ever-increasing knowledge of the science of khadi. Workers have to respond to the lead that the Centre may give from time to time, and they have also to anticipate the objections of the villagers whom they have to serve. For that purpose they have to come into closest touch and trust. They may never appear before the villagers as patrons but they should appear as voluntary servants who have hitherto neglected their trust. Given a due fulfilment of this primary indispensable condition, the rest will follow as night follows day.

Harijan, 24-8-1935

558. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI N. PATEL

August 24, 1935

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

Can you not be content to have Dahibehn treated by Haribhai? Try and see if you can persuade Chanchal. One is put in an extremely difficult position when faced with two equal duties. You, who know

the situation there better than I, may certainly guide her as you think best.

If you can get pure cow's milk of good quality there, by all means organize a business in it. But take up the work only after ascertaining what the producers get. We shall have to enter their lives, know in minute detail how they live and work and what debts they owe. You should thus know the history of the sample which you have sent to me. All your depots should have the history of every sample, in this fashion: 'This sample was made by Bharwad Meghraj of Limbasi, who spent—hours in the work;—of milk cost—; labour charges per hour—; the middleman's commission—; And this information should be passed on to the buyer. Please don't tell me that this will take up too much of your time. The work will not take so much time after it has been systematized. No matter what rate is fixed by the Sangh, you should not pay less than two pice per hour. In the case of articles for which average production per hour can be calculated, you should fix the rate for workper hour. This can be done. For instance, if an average spinner spins 400 [yards][1] of yarn of 15 count in one hour, we may pay two pice for 400 [yards][2] of 15 count. Many new ideas are being discussed in *Harijan* these days. I should like you to read all these articles regularly. The institution of insolvency was originally intended to help persons like Chanchal's father. But afterwards it came to be misused by knaves and, therefore, fell into disrepute. I, however, would certainly advise him to resort to this means and free himself from his worries. He may then cherish the hope of being able to pay off the balance of his debts one day. As things are, he would not even be able to engage himself in any business in peace because of harassment by importunate creditors.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9006

[1] The source has "rounds ", which was subsequently corrected by Gandhiji; *vide* "Letter to Raojibhai N. Patel", 27-9-1935.

[2] *ibid*

559. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

WARDHA,
August 24, 1935

BA,

Don't you feel that you were prompted by God to go there? Moreover Manu also is with you. And so I am not worrying at all. You are a lioness and illness has no terrors for you.[1] Face the situation courageously, therefore. Put your trust in Rama. Ask Manu to write to me every day. Ansari is bound to be there. There is no better doctor than he. Most probably Brijkrishna also is there. And in any case Pyarelal's people are all there.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 1549. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

560. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

August 24, 1935

CHI. MANUDI,

Keep me informed daily about Devdas's condition. I got your postcard. You yourself must have got completely all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1550. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

561. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

August 24, 1935

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I got your postcard. Shankerlal also had wired to me. What is ordained cannot but happen, do what we will. Whom can we blame for that? In my view Umiya[2] has only one place to go to, and that is yours in Amreli. We should be content with whatever medical help we can get there. All ordinary facilities will be available there. I think it

[1] Devdas was laid up with typhoid.
[2] The addressee's daughter Umiya Agrawal

useless to go to Bombay or any other place. If the hospital there is a good one and she can be kept in it without inconvenience, she may get admitted to it. I believe, too , that nature cure will suffice for her illness, provided she has the necesssary faith and patience for that.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

562. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

August 24, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Andrews has taken ill and, therefore, has stayed on here. . . .[1]

Jayakar's reply is enclosed. Preserve it for some time. I have asked him with whom he had the conversation and what it was he found fault with in the administration [of the Tilak Swaraj Fund][2]. I will send you his reply when it is received. He may act as he wishes.

I send with this a telegram from Devdas. It was something of a shock[3]. I have wired to him and assured him that, if he took complete rest and abstained from food, there was no danger. Raja of course will go. Ba and Manu are already with him. There is also a physician like Ansari to look after him. What more can we desire? I am not worrying at all.

Kumarappa is arriving there today. Do what is necessary about him. I wrote to you about him in yesterday's letter[4]. Let him come back as soon as the examination is over.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 182

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhabhai Patel", 16-8-1935

[3] *Vid*e, footnote 3; " Letter to Kasturba Gandhi", 24-8-1935 also the following item.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 23-8-1935

563. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

August 24, 1935

CHI. DEVDAS,

I am not surprised by your wire nor am I worried. I had already seen your irregular way of living when I was there.[1] I did not like it at all. At the moment you are alone in the office. Moreover you have to look after Lakshmi[2] and you eat at irregular hours. Ba and Manu are also there and Tara[3] is ill. All this is very much beyond your strength. It is enough if you are doing according to my wire. . . .[4]

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

564. LETTER TO DRAUPADI SHARMA

August 24, 1935

CHI. DRAUPADI,

Your letter. Continue thus. Enclosed is Sharma's letter which you may return after reading it. Ask one of the children to write if he can.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha*, facing p. 189

[1] In Delhi
[2] Addressee's wife and daughter
[3] Addressee's wife and daughter
[4] The letter is incomplete in the source.

565. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

August 24, 1935

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

Who has written in *Hin. Swa*?[1] I did say something to this effect to someone and I recollect Mahadev saying on the same day that mistakes do occur in the *Harijanbandhu* and the *Harijan Sevak* and that it would be better to send the translations from here. Mahadev even started some Gujarati translation. No one person can be blamed for the occurence of errors. Translation is a pretty difficult job and to be first rate it requires of the translator an equal command over both the languages. I have to confess with regret that I am unable to read any one of the three journals. I am in continuous touch with the material published in the *Harijan* as it passes through my hands but I am ignorant of all that is published in the other two journals. Mahadev does go through some items but ours is a pitiable plight. The burden of work is so overwhelming that we reconcile ourselves with what little we can do, regarding even that as God's mercy.

I expect to have a talk with Malkani about the Sansi[2].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1073

566. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

WARDHA,

August 25, 1935

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

I am going through the papers left by you. Shankerlal tells me that the receipt for the monies received through Mrs. Hariram and others were given in the name. . . In any case the disposal of the funds should be held over till the whole thing is settled. I returned the original letters you left here.

Yours,

BAPU

From the original: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: NehruMemorial Museum and Library

[1] The original has only these initials.

[2] A scheduled tribe of North India.

567. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
August 25, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

How can we expect satisfactory news about Harilal?

I do not know what can be done about Mathew. He can't be given anything more till he fulfils my conditions.

A copy of the letter I have written to Vajubhai and others is enclosed. I succeeded in writing it only today.

I was not eager to have serpent put round my neck. I think this particular one was harmless. Jamnalalji knew the man very well. Nevertheless, your caution is right. I should not take interest in such experiments.[1]

Amtussalaam is still here. As she is very busy she does not write to you. I will now ask her to do so.

I have sent away Sharma. He has gone to learn about nature cure. He has impressed me with his simplicity, truthfulness and enthusiasm. I am watching the outcome of this experiment.

What shall I say about Father's health? It is a pleasant surprise that both are keeping alive. You should assume my humblest *pranams* to them in every letter.

Navin has arrived here. He will be given English and arithmetic. I am going to ask him to do carpenter's work. Do you use the small workshop you have there? If you are not doing so, I may get it transferred here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M. U./II. Also C.W. 8471. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

568. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

August 25, 1935

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I have your yearly offerings. Preserve your health. The work is vast and we are few.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: G.N. 11561

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to S. D. Satavlekar", 12-8-1935

569. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

WARDHA,
August 25, 1935

DEAR SISTER,

You are passing through considerable ordeals. Only yesterday I heard that Vikram[1] had been seriously ill. You yourself have not recovered yet. I see much sickness around. I strongly feel that nature cure, simple food, pure air, is all that a man needs. How far can we improve the body which is more delicate than a glass bangle? My blessings to all the children.

There is no need to reply to this letter.

The enclosed letter is for Deenabandhu.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11142. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

570. PRIZE ESSAY ON BARTER SYSTEM

WARDHA,
August 26, 1935

Shri Uppulur Venkatakrishnayya is the trustee of the Khaddar Samsthanam which was started in the year 1927 at Gunadala near Bezwada. He is an ardent believer in the system of barter, and has been practising it to some extent in his institution in its internal and external dealings, especially with reference to the production and distribution of food and clothing.

He believes it to be the only remedy for the present economic depression and thinks that it can solve the many evils arising from the present monetary system. He further believes that the adoption of barter is essential to the development of agriculture, revival of khadi and other handicrafts and cottage industries in India, and the propagation and practice of the doctrine of non-violence. He holds that it is implied in non-violence itself. He fervently desires to know how far his views can stand the test of a scientific study and examination of the system. He therefore offers a prize for the best essay on the subject, and he has chosen me as his instrument for

[1] Addressee's son

announcing his intention. I have gladly consented to be the medium for inviting essays on the system of barter. The prize-winner will be given at his choice Rs. 500 in cash or Rs. 500 worth of geniune, durable khadi woven in the Samsthanam itself. The cash amount is deposited with me.

The essay (which should be in English) should trace the early history of the barter system, the causes of its decline, and the possibilities of its revival at present. It should also describe the purpose it served in the past and the part it can play in the future economic life of the world, with particular reference to its adaptability to the Indian village life concerning some or all of the departments of its activities. The essay should discuss the conditions congenial for its successful working and development and to what extent the assistance of the ruling power is required for the same, and should indicate the nature and mode of exchange if the adoption of the system is recommended. The essay should also discuss the effects of the barter system on the development of the internal and international trade of India.

Prof. K. T. Shah, Shri Vaikunth L. Mehta and Prof. J.C. Kumarappa have kindly consented to act as examiners. Prof. Kumarappa will also act as Secretary to whom all essays should be sent addressed Maganwadi, Wardha. The essays should reach Prof. Kumarappa not later than the noon of August 31, 1936. No prize will be awarded if no essay reached the standard to be determined by the examiners. The result of the examination will be announced not later than 31st December 1936. The copyright of the prize essay will vest in the Khaddar Samsthanam. I do hope that there will be keen competition for winning the prize not for its monetary value but for the importance of the subject.

M. K. GANDHI

Harijan, 31-8-1935

571. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

August 26, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM,[1]

Prabhavati returned about three weeks ago. She is quite well. Ba is still in Delhi now nursing Devdas who is lying dangerously ill. The illness may end in paralysis. Rajagopalachari is going there.

Just now I am eating fruit sparingly. There are so many whose need is [greater][2] than mine. I take occasionally apples or oranges. Don't be anxious about me. When the body needs it, I shall take all I may need.

I have not read the book you refer to on *Ramayana*.

I hope Kichi will find his place in the Bank where he is undergoing training.

Love.

Blessings from[3]
BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 9605. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal

572. LETTER TO C. R. SRINIVASAN

August 26, 1935

I am really and literally drained dry. I have no gift for weaving messages to order. This village work is so taxing and so baffling that if I could help it I would stop all writing and simply bury myself in a village and there work away for all I am worth and that I should love to do [in] perfect silence. In the circumstances you will please excuse for not sending you a message.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] The source has this in Hindi.
[2] The source has "in".
[3] Of *Swadeshamitran*, Madras

573. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

August 26, 1935

BHAI MAVALANKAR,

I see from Manibehn's letter just received that your wife has had a mild attack of typhoid. I hope the fever has come down.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1244. Also S. N. 22860

574. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

August 26, 1935

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have sent a wire today. I was expecting a telegram from you but none has come. What can you do? And who would think of sending a telegram from there? It is good that I have a detailed letter from Ba. She writes and says that you have become panicky. But why should you be alarmed because of the illness? When we know the ultimate result and are prepared for it, why should you feel frightened? But there is still plenty of time before you take leave. You have to render a lot of service through your body. So resolve and get well. I can only advise you as regards diet and so on. May God protect you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

575. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

WARDHA,
August 26, 1935

CHI. MRIDU,

Shankerlal has sent me a copy of your letter for my reply. For want of time, your letter remained unanswered for a few days.

It is true that I have permitted the use of Indian mill thread and even foreign thread for embroidery on khadi if hand-spun thread

cannot be had. But deep within me I would still wish that we could manage without either. I have no doubt given that concession in the hope that that would lead to increased sale of khadi. I do not remember the Charkha Sangh having made any rule for it. After knowing this much, do what you think proper.

I should send a copy of this letter to Shankerlal. But surely I can saddle you with that responsibility to save time and money?

You will all be doing well.

Come when you can.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11195. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

576. LETTER TO AVADHESH DUTT AVASTHI

August 26, 1935

CHI. AVADHESH,

To follow the immediate dharma as it presents itself can have nothing but good consequences.

People have no right to remain in an institution when they knowingly violate its rules.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI AVADESH DUTT AVASTHI
VILLAGE RAMPURVA, POST BADWAPUR
DIST. BAHRAICH, U.P.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3218

577. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
August 27, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Don't be alarmed. I am writing with the left hand to keep the right fit for Monday.

Your two letters and wire came in duly. Perhaps you will have to receive Devdas, too, if you have room for him. Poor boy! He is in danger of being attacked by paralysis. Jamnalalji wired yesterday saying Ansari had advised change to Simla. Simla must have come to

his lips because of you. What other special recommendation could Simla have? I am simply preparing you for the application. If it comes, you will know what to do with it. Once more I warn you. Never hesitate to say 'No' when you mean 'No'. That is the only way to preserve friendships. You have become dearer to me than a friend. But if you are to remain a dear daughter, I must not put undue strain on your loyalty. And yet my life is so full of companionships that everyone intimately connected with me is taxed to the uttermost. May God give you the strength to carry the burden you have imposed on yourself.

Shummy won't now regulate Kumarappa's life from the heights of Simla. For he is having Kumarappa under his own observation. Tell him I am religiously eating daily the beet he sent. Amtussalaam has found out the way of cooking it well.

I did not have much talk about Puri with Gopichandji. I see from Pyarelal's letter sent by you that his heart is not in Simla. Is there no local man there who would take it up? I am writing to G.

How did you find the paper that was given to you by Choudhury? You should send me samples of the sizes and the colours you want.

The meetings of the Board[1] were quite good. I wish you had been present. But I know it was right for you to go. Of course, you will come and resume your work here whenever you can come.

Give my love to your two faithful attendants and tell them I was sorry I was not able to know more of them as I would have liked to do. But my activities leave me no time for such amenities.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3542. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6351

578. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

WARDHA,
August 27, 1935

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

Here is Puri's letter to Kunver Saheb. You will do what is best. My firm opinion is that the Simla Stores should be given up if it is

[1] *Vide* "Discussion on Minimum Living Wage-I", 22/23-8-1935

being run at a loss. The stock can be distributed am[ongst] those who will . . . sale. Rajkum . . . a helper. If there is one who can card, gin and spin on the *takli* as well as the wheel, he will be useful. If there is none such available, you should wait till you get such a person. From Puri's letter it would appear that he won't be happy till he can stay with his mother. It is a most natural desire for a son to cherish. But then he can give us only a limited . . . I would like you to . . . summary . . . me . . . but the other Stores. . . [Pu]njab?

Yours,
BAPU

From the original: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

579. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

August 27, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I learnt from Mani's letter yesterday about Baba's[1] tonsils. Isn't it strange that a boy of his age should have such enlarged tonsils? What could be the cause? Can the doctors explain it? . . . .[2]

What way have you found out of the difficulty created by the illness of Durbar[3] and Bhaskar? Do you need Mahadev?

Morarji and Chandulal will stay here for two or three days yet. Swami Yoganand of the U.S.A. is here.

I am sending you Devdas's letter itself. Raja[4] passed through this place today on his way to him. There was a wire from Jamnalal from which it seems that there is no threat to life as yet.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Morarji will go there in a day or two. Keep him there. Pass on Devdas's letter to Ramdas.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 183

[1] Vipin, elder son of Dahyabhai Patel
[2] Omission as in the source
[3] Gopaldas Ambaidas Desai
[4] C. Rajagopalachari

580. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR[1]

[After *August 27, 1935*][2]

No one would have known that [the letter] was for me. 'Would' indicates desire in the First Person, too.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9254. Also C.W. 10128. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

581. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

WARDHA,
August 28, 1935

BHAI MUNSHI,

Please be satisfied with message I have sent. There is such a crowd of people living in the Ashram just now that I do not get a minute free. Last night I could go to bed only after 11.25 p.m. and got up at 1.50. It is 2.40 as I write this. From 6 in the morning the daily round starts.

Blessings from
BAPU

ADVOCATE MUNSHI
RIDGE ROAD, BOMBAY

From Gujarati: C.W. 7585. Courtesy: K.M. Munshi

582. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

August 28, 1935

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

You must take the burden of Gurudev's requirements[3] on your mind. I quite agree that he must not go out on a begging mission. I will see what is possible for me to do.

[1] This letter was written on the margin of the addressee's letter dated August 27, 1935, in which she had informed Gandhiji that an earlier letter addressed to him was returned to her undelivered.

[2] To *Hansa; vide* "Message to "Hansa" ", 5-8-1935

[3] Of funds for the Visvabharati; *vide* "Letter to Rabindranath Tagore", 13-10-1935.

Of course you should give up the rush and devote yourself to writing not magazine articles but things of permanent value.

And you must avoid starches and much proteid. Fruits and raw milk, raw eggs are the things for you.

Love.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 3156

583. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

August 28, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

What is the use of your being in that clear air and having good honey and fresh fruit, if you have laryngitis? I hope it is now a thing of the past.

I am passing on your letter to Kumarappa. I know that he won't feel lonely there.

How do you like this note-paper and the cover, all made here? Is the border too rough? What of the colour?

I must remember to send you rice and the spindle.

I had better news about Devdas.

Love to you both.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3543. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6352

584. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

WARDHA,
August 29, 1935

CHI. MARY,

I expect to be in Wardha during the remaining months of the year. Could you ascertain the names of the Congressmen who smashed buildings? I can understand missionary suspicion of me if such things were done by Congressmen there. How should they believe that where such things happened they did so in spite of myself? I do not mind the prolongation of your treatment if thereby a complete cure is achieved. Mary Ingham is in Mayo Hospital, Nagpur. Sumitra is in Betul Hospital. Let us pray. Just now khadi work is broken up.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6057. Also C.W. 3387. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

585. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM L. BAVISHI

August 29, 1935

BHAI PURUSHOTTAM,

I got your letters and the seed. Mirabehn has relinquished charge of farming for the present. It is in Dahyabhai's hands. It is enough that you are doing your best. I understand about cactus. Will you please enumerate its uses? Have you had experience about them?

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 128. Also C.W. 4749. Courtesy: Purushottam L. Bavishi

586. TELEGRAM TO VICEROY

WARDHA,
August 30, 1935

REGARDING KAMALA NEHRU'S HEALTH HAVE JUST RECEIVED EXPRESS CABLE GERMANY. "CONDITION SERIOUS OWING TO PERSISTENT NAUSEA AND VOMITING." IN VIEW OF THIS SERIOUS NEWS MAY I APPEAL FOR PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S UNCONDITIONAL DISCHARGE ENABLING HIM IF AT ALL POSSIBLE TO CATCH DUTCH AIR MAIL FLYING NEXT TUESDAY?[1]

The Leader, 5-9-1935

[1] Similar telegrams were reported to have been sent to the Governors of Bengal and the United Provinces. The Government of India, after having communication with the Secretary of State of India, released Jawaharlal Nehru unconditionally on September 2. He left Almora Jail for Allahabad on September 3 and from there for Germany on September 4.

587. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

August 30, 1935

CHI. KUNVARJI,

Kanti has gone to Savli. I see from your postcard to him that you have fallen ill. How did that happen? Since when have you been ill? As you know, Bali is unable to write any letters these days? If you get no replies, may not the reason be Rami's lethargy? Can she not return whenever she wishes? You need rest, why not have it in Rajkot itself?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI KUNVARJI KHETSHI
ZANDU PHARMACY
SAYANI ROAD, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9723. Also C.W. 703. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

588. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

August 30, 1935

CHI. KANTI,

Ramachandran was very much surprised and pained by your absence. He says that he will not leave without meeting you. He even suggested that he would follow you to Savli. He calmed down when I told him that I would get you back. He has unbounded love for you. In these circumstances, how can I ask him to leave before Monday? Please do return early on that day. Returning before that is of course out of the question.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7300. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

589. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

August 30, 1935

CHI. VALJI,

I understand about Chitre. I got the article. The testimonial I have given to Munshi is about his collection of the facts of the history of literature. You will see that in the book which has been published. I have not read his books to examine the tendency of his novels as to their effects on the readers. I have no time to read them from that point of view. Munshi, of course, desires that I should read them and give my opinion. I hope all of you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI V. G. DESAI
GOVINDNAGAR
NAINITAL (U. P.)

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7474. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

590. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

August 30, 1935

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

Hand over the respective letters to Ishwarbhai and Kanti. I had your letters and saw the account. I suppose you have enough funds. Tell me when you need any; your account is satisfactory. It is good that you made a study of the vegetables, etc. My apology[1] was only for my own spiritual good but I am happy to learn of the deep impression it has made on you. You already possess a good capacity for work and Savli will help you attain equanimity.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1880

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Balvantsinha", 15-8-1935

591. LETTER TO A VILLAGE WORKER[1]

[Before *August 31, 1935*]

If you can get good and clean cow's ghee made there, you can certainly concentrate on the industry. You must first ascertain whether it secures the ghee-maker anything like a living wage. We have to enter into the lives of our working classes, ascertain, what they eat and drink, where they live, and how they live, to what extent they are indebted, and so on and so forth. You should thus be able to tell me the whole history of the sample of ghee you have sent me. You must maintain in your shop a register containing all these details: (1) the name and place of the producer; (2) time taken for preparation; (3) quantity of milk from which ghee was prepared; (4) price of ghee; (5) wage earned by the producer per hour; (6) the middle-man's share and transit charges. Every article that you stock and sell out of your depot must bear this history ticket and whoever purchases it has a right to ask for it. You will not tell me that this is a tedious procedure and that you have not time for it. When once the thing has got started, it will be a matter of routine and not much time will be required. Whatever minimum wage may be fixed by the A.I.V.I.A., you will in no case pay less than half an anna per hour. This is easily done. Find out the number of hours taken up in the manufacture of an article, and then fix the wage and the price. Thus, for instance, it takes an ordinary spinner one hour to spin 400 yards of yarn of 15 counts. You will therefore pay half an anna as the wage for spinning 400 yards of 15 counts of strong, even yarn.

Harijan, 31-8-1935

592. AN IMPORTANT RESOLUTION

After a full two days' discussion the following resolution was unanimously passed by the A.I.V.I.A. Board at its periodical meeting last week:

[1] This is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The addressee had asked "if he could concentrate on ghee-making as a supplementary industry to agriculture" and, if so, "how he should do it". *Harijan,* 19-10-1935, published an account of the addressee's experience about procuring good ghee.

> Whereas the object of the Association includes bringing about the moral and material advancement of the rural population by encouraging the revival of dead and dying industries, the Board of Management desire that, for all commodities produced or marketed under the aegis of the Association, each workman should receive a minimum wage calculated on the basis of eight hours' efficient work sufficient at least for his (or her) maintenance in accordance with a scientifically prescribed scale of minimum food requirements; and it should be the duty of all connected with the Association to see that the workmen engaged in the industries promoted by them actually receive remuneration never less than the scale herein prescribed, always bearing in mind that as and when circumstances permit there should be a progressive rise in the scale so as to reach a standard enabling a worker's family to be properly maintained out of the earnings of its working members.

If this resolution is honestly worked it must produce far-reaching consequences. It would render a measure of tardy justice to the working class, whether labourers or artisans. To arrive at the correct figure in terms of money is going to prove a difficult task. The members and agents will have to compile three kinds of tables:

1. How much do the workmen and work-women earn per hour at their work in the different spheres in the different provinces?

2. What is the daily diet of the workmen within their area of work and what is its cost?

3. A scientific scale on a minimum basis prepared by experts in the respective provinces out of the local staples with the cost thereof.

What statistics I have received go to show that all over India, except in the Punjab, the articles of diet the masses live on are deficient in nutritive value.

The most helpful pamphlet on the minimum diet scale is the one prepared by Dr. H. V. Tilak, on behalf of the Bombay Presidency Baby and Health Week Association (Delisle Road, Bombay 11). It is called *Balanced Diets.* Its price is four annas. It has been translated into Marathi and Gujarati. The diet recommended by the pamphlet, containing a variety of whole grain (some of which is sprouted) including soya beans, dried skim milk and vegetables, increases a white rat to 55 grammes in weight from 13 grammes when fed on a diet containing an excess of highly polished rice with very little vegetables and milk. The diet scale recommended in the pamphlet has been prepared after careful experimentation. It costs in Bombay Rs. 5 per month. I have my doubts about the possibility of introducing soya

beans and dried skim milk in the poor man's diet even in a place like Bombay. The sprouting of pulses and malting of *jowari* recommended by Dr. Tilak is also very difficult of enforcement in private households. It is almost impossible of introduction in villages. Skim milk is unobtainable in the villages, and I know that in hundreds of them not a drop of fresh milk or good ghee is to be had. I mention these difficulties in order that taking Dr. Tilak's carefully prepared scale as a basis, experts may work out a scale more suited to the villages in their provinces and yet produce the results that Dr. Tilak's diet is claimed to have achieved. We may not be satisfied until the village workers have put the workmen coming under their influence in possession of means to procure an adequate diet for themselves and their dependants. Reduction in price of articles must be a consideration that must always be subordinated to the ability of workmen engaged in their production to earn a living wage for themselves. We must rule out the question of competition with machine-made articles whether foreign or indigenous. Millions of workmen must not live on the margin of starvation so that the few engaged in production by powerdriven machinery may have more than they need. In the absence of State protection public opinion should be so cultivated that it will refuse to exploit the toilers of the land.

Let khadi workers who are engaged in producing khadi for sale note that what applies to the other village industries applies equally to khadi produced for sale. From the spinner to the weaver all the khadi working men should have the wage contemplated in the resolution under discussion.

Harijan, 31-8-1935

593. OUR DUTY

Perhaps the burden of untouchability falls on Harijans in one way nowhere so heavily as in Gujarat. In Dholka a Harijan was done to death by a *savarna* Hindu and the murderer escaped with a fine of Rs. 300. In Kavitha the so-called Rajputs mercilessly attacked helpless Harijans for daring to send their children to a public school. In Kathiawar just now in various villages in its various provinces *savarnas* persecute Harijans because a plague has broken out among the cattle. They do so under the superstitious belief that the disease is caused owing to the incantations or some other machinations of Harijans. The

Harijan is in perpetual fear of injury to his person or property. The reformer feels helpless; the State is indifferent or is itself also helpless in the face of the powerful *savarnas.* The reason is obvious. The Harijan does not know how to secure redress. He has no will to defend himself. He is wholly unconscious of his human dignity or innate ability to protect himself against the insolence of fellow human beings. The reformer has to carry the torch of knowledge among the persecutors, for they know not what they are doing. Leaflets may be distributed among them. But the *savarna* lynchers rarely read newspapers or leaflets. They are self-contained and self-satisfied. Personal contact is the only way of approach to them. They must be visited if need be in their own homes. Meetings should be addressed in their villages. No amount of anger or declamation will cure them of their ignorance. The quickest way to combat ignorance is the spread of the knowledge that would tell them how cattle diseases are contracted and how by careful treatment they may be prevented or cured.

All this means patient labour on the part of those who will carry on the propaganda. The States concerned should also be moved to protectthe poor Harijans who are molested. Where the reformers are fairly numerous they may have to settle in the midst of Harijans and themselves share their hardships, if their presence does not prevent molestation. In this campaign against ignorance the sanatanists' assistance should also be invoked. I am sure no sane sanatanist will defend the cruel persecution of the utterly innocent Harijans by ignorant, misguided *savarnas*.

Harijan, 31-8-1935

594. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 1, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

This paper is the waste of what is now being prepared here by apprentices. I am sending it for you to see the colour and the thinness. It lacks finish. Presently we shall produce the finest paper made in India at a reasonable cost. Devdas's coming to you will be earlier than I had expected. I am sending your love letter to Devdas. Kumarappa may leave Nagpur on 4th and be with you on 6th.

I have sent you a bag of rice with Avinashilingam. It is very good though cheap. I have paid double railway fare, for, the goods train would have meant a month's waiting and the risk of damage. I wonder if I did right. The rice should keep good in Simla though unpolished rice must not be stored for long. If the quantity sent is too much for you, you should sell it. I hope to send you the bill herewith if it has not gone already.

The *takli* also went with Avinashilingam.

If Devdas does come, you should use him for khaddar propaganda. He knows spinning.

We are crowded here just now. We have the members of the Harijan Board.

Janakiprasad finished his seventeen days under extraordinarily good condition. He broke it on honey, lemon and water.

I was not able to take your apples. I have so many who are in greater need.

Love to you both.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3544. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6353

595. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

September 2, 1935

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

You must have read the explanation[1] about how to make bone manure. About the other processes, I have got an article specially written. Read it carefully and try the methods or induce somebody else to do so. They are such as can be tried without any help. You can even send somebody here and get him trained. Lakshmidas intends to send someone.

I have preserved the report of the Sangh in the hope of being able to read it some time, but I do not know when I shall be. I alone know under what pressure I am working.

It is true that I have given up fruit. They cost too much. I do eat those which are cheap, but no fruit is cheap just now. Orange peel is certainly cheap and whenever there is any I get it made into jam. I then need less of jaggery and the purpose of eating fruit is also partly

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 23-8-1935

served. I am experimenting just now with such jam. But generally I depend only on milk and green vegetables, besides honey of course. There has been no ill effect. It remains to be seen how long I can go on with this diet. We cannot judge in a short time. I eat green leaves, as also pumpkin, gourd, etc., which grow in the garden here. Just now we get lady's fingers and pumpkin, besides *bhaji*.

Bhansali is behaving with great self-restraint. He submits to my control and takes care of his health. He keeps very cheerful. If I restrain him too much, I am afraid, I would lose him. So I restrain him only as much as he will bear. His path is entirely different from ours. How can we, therefore, compare his way of life with mine or anybody else's? Who knows who is right? May it not be that both of us are right? How can one blind person judge another blind person? Both will deserve compliments if they escape falling into a ditch. I have given your message to Bhansali. Whenever he laughs, he fills the whole room with his laughter. We don't have the privacy of the Ashram here. He occupies one corner in a big room, which is shared with him by Kanti, Navin and three or four others. No extra space is left.

The picture of the conditions here is quite interesting. With me are Mahadev, Kanu, and Mirabehn as permanent fixtures. Others come and go. Another room is occupied at present by Nimu and her three children, and three more women. Amtussalaam spends the day in the kitchen or in my room. And so also does Prabhavati when she is here. When it is raining, all of us sleep in the verandah or in the room; at other times, we sleep in the open on the terrace above. This will give you some idea of the conditions here. The expense on food comes on an average to between seven and seven and a half [annas]. We wish to reduce it. Let us see if we succeed. We hope to reduce it to five!

At present I wouldn't feel unhappy at all in accepting the services of a teacher in a Government school who otherwise did not violate our ideals. I made all possible inquiries regarding this friend's character and his love of khadi. He wrote to me a letter which I found satisfactory. He believes in khadi and wears it for the most part. He has not been able to go as far as to wear dhotis of khadi. He had even a tussle with his superior for wearing a khadi cap and other garments of khadi, and he won. His relation with a lady which was the subject of an allegation against him still continues, but he says that it has always been pure. His letter seemed to me quite truthful. This inquiry was

completed only recently. I didn't wish to involve you in this matter, but now if you can throw some light on it please do.

I have exchanged letters with Narahari and Vallabhbhai on this subject. Sardar has nothing to say about it. Narahari seems to be satisfied with Narandas's statement. It has also been sent to Vajubhai and Jethalal and they have been requested to send their replies. I found nothing to criticize in that statement. There seem to be some differences of principle between Vajubhai and Narandas, but they also are not clear to me, except that the latter may have laid greater stress on crafts and expected the teachers to pay attention to them. I wouldn't regard that as a difference of principle. Have you read Vajubhai's and Jethalal's letters? If you are prepared to take interest in the matter and give your time to it, I will send their explanations to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

My blessings to Rama and the children. Today's letter reminds me of the long letters I used to write to you formerly. On days other than Monday, I mostly write with the left hand.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5533.

596. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

WARDHA,
Septenber 2, 1935

CHI. MANUDI,

Here is a separate letter for you. Have you fallen ill again? If one lives very carefully, why should one ever fall ill? Won't you now be coming here in a very few days? Kunvarji has written asking for your being sent to Rajkot. He has already sent for Rami. He is not keeping well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1551. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

597. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 2, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

Rest assured that all will be well with you. I know that you are being tested there. But you have patience and faith and, therefore, everything will be well. There must be somebody there, too, to look after things. Besides, you have to think of your parents. Circumstances have thus favoured you at present with an opportunity for doing service there. God has, as it were, so ordained things that you are able to perform all your duties.

Yes, it was feared that Devdas might get paralysis. He is better now. He has become weak. He and Ba will perhaps go to Simla. It rarely occurs to me to write about such matters.

I understand about Mathew. This paper was made here. This is the first lot.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8472. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

598. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

WARDHA,
3 a.m., September 3, 1935

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You will experience supreme bliss and of course realize the presence of God when, faithfully believing that He is witness to every act, you dedicate all your deeds, thoughts and speech to Him. Remember, "Whatever you do, whatever you eat", etc.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4276

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, IX. 27

599. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

September 4, 1935

THANK GOD. HOPE YOU ARE WELL[1]

The Leader, 6-9-1935

600. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,

September 4, 1935

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

You can imagine the relief I had on receiving your wire. As usual Mahadev is taking this with him. I wish I had come myself but I must not. You will frankly give me your opinion on all the things of common interest. Unless there is an insuperable bar you should take charge of the Congress ship next year. You will wire to me Kamala's condition on reaching there. The news of your release must itself have brought her considerable relief.

I hope you were keeping well.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1935. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

601. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 4, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

This is the thinnest paper made here. You can write on both the sides as you can see. He has prepared the blotting paper too. And he promises to make considerable improvements. This paper industry may prove a veritable boon. If it does, it will be a proof of what a combination of talent and labour can do for the village. I am hoping to get with your assistance, more than even eight annas per day for the makers.

[1] The addressee's reply telegram of even date read : "Leaving this evening by air. Love." *Vide* also "Telegram to Viceroy", 30-8-1935

Avinashilingam has got your rice with him, he says, as he could not find your place. He would not let me pay the railage. The cost of the bag is a trifle as you will see. The railage twice the price of the article! I wonder if I did right in sending you all that quantity. Perhaps you did not know what a bag would contain. There are bags and bags!

Having asked you to accommodate Kumarappa and Devdas I am not going to say more than I have done. I only hope that they will not prove a source of burden to you. Of course you are not expected to give any time to them. It is monstrous for poor people to think of going to fashionable hill-stations. You are responsible for the mischief. My poverty is only so-called?

Shummy must not forget the real poor. I must have the analysis of the *neem* leaf.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3545. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6354

602. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

September 4, 1935

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

I am glad that I got your letter, though late.

Repetition of Ramanama, if done regularly, will help you.

It does not matter if you do not use hand-made paper there. To do that, you should feel zeal and passionate sympathy for the poor. When these become part of your nature, you will on your own start doing these things. Only what you do spontaneously and gladly will have value and bear fruit.

Do not form any views from what you see there about the difference between the British and other foreigners.

Let me tell one thing regarding dress. You may give up khadi there if you cannot willingly make it a rule to wear it. Wear whatever dress is convenient to you and of whatever cloth you find suitable. I believe, this answers all your questions.

Thus, you may wear on overcoat, made from foreign cloth or mill-cloth, and likewise socks and banian for exercise. It won't be bad if you try to get all these things hand-made, but you will be committing no sin, either, if you don't.

Your main duty while you are there is to study hard, to acquire mastery in your subjects, to acquire the virtues of fearlessness,

courage, firmness, habits of hard work, generosity, compassion and love and to cultivate greater simplicity and humility. Observe the life there. Spend every moment usefully. Keep a diary.

I am returning your letter. Write to me if any question has been left unanswered.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 286-7

603. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

WARDHA,
September 5, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Mahadev left yesterday for Prayag to meet Jawaharlal. But I see from the latter's wire received today that Mahadev will not be able to meet him, since he is leaving[1] this evening.

The Bombay Government has made its reply as venomous as it could. Its meaning is clear. Every effort will be made to suppress the facts. I now feel that we should not publish the correspondence for the present. It may be published together with the report of the Committee, when it is received, as our introduction to the report explaining the genesis of the Committee. Do you see anything against this? It is desirable that the Committee should finish its work as soon as possible.

I hope Baba is all right now. At present we have some meeting or other everyday . . . .

Mahadev will return day after tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 184

[1] *Vide* footnote 2, "Telegream to Jawaharlal Nehru",4-9-1935. For Mahadev Desai's letter to Jawaharlal Nehru, *vide* Appendix II.

[2] Omission as in the source

604. LETTER TO JAYANTI N. PAREKH

September 5, 1935

CHI. JAYANTI,

I am surprised that you have not been able to understand my step. What I have said is that all my activities have swaraj as their goal. Every breath I take is dedicated to it. To reach that goal sooner I left Yeravda Mandir and took up Harijan work and have now taken up village industries work. Worship of any God is worship of Lord Krishna.

It is now our duty to help Kanti. You two brothers should take up some honest business and free Nathubhai from debts.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 6262

605. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHA,
September 5, 1935

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. Mahadev has replied to your earlier letter. Today Mahadev is on the train to Prayag. Jawaharlal must have slipped away last evening. Still, the trip could not be avoided.

A more exhaustive statement of accounts of the Tilak Swaraj Fund than the one you have sent has already been published in octavo size. This is not it. If this is all you have, then it is incomplete. It would be proper to write that the printed version is available only at Revashankarbhai's or at the All-India office. I have not gone deeply into it. You will have gone through my correspondence with J. which is with Sardar. It is not to be published. I have nothing to say in my defence. The [charges] against the Congress can be answered only by producing the accounts. I am saving your letter for Mahadev. Enquire at Revashankarbhai's for other major items in the accounts.
I hope you are all in good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

606. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
September 6, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Your daily post has commenced even before the patients[1] are there! This is like your rehearsal of *Shakuntala.* Next time you come, you will teach something of your art to the girls, if a little time can be saved from your secretarial work. I suppose your rehearsal there was in English? Whose translation was it? Who were the actresses?

Yes, you will have the salesman and the present rent paid for a limited period if you will guarantee purchase of definite minimum of khadi and not stock mill-cloth. You can sell all other swadeshi articles. But my anxiety is for you not to add to your already heavy burdens, financial and administrative. Run the swadeshi enterprise by all means if you have the right stamp of men and your financial responsibility is rigidly fixed. The undertakings with which I am connected are so vast in their scope that they can absorb fortunes. That they have never yet done so is because I have never allowed them to go out of hand. And there is protection from within as there is little chance of personal gain. All I want therefore is your great ability, constancy and purity dedicated to the service of the lowliest and the downtrodden. That, thank God, I already have.

I return Vijaya Singh's letter. I do not like it over much. But I have no right to judge. You will insist on a proper accounting of every pice spent.

Mahadev has gone for a day to meet Jawaharlal. I fear however that he must have missed him by a few hours. Jawaharlal flew earlier than he had expected.

I hope you are not overworking yourself.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3546. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6355

[1] The reference is to J. C. Kumarappa and Devdas

607. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

September 6, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I am glad you will have a little touring. Of course it would be well for you to confine yourself to Harijan work, khadi and Hindi. Since you are going to Trivandrum, you may see the Government apiary which is said to be there. You know Ramachandra there, do you not? You should seek him out. He is secretary of the Harijan Sevak Sangh and one of our finest workers.

I hope, even if Kichi's finger remains permanently deformed, there will be no constitutional evil resulting from it.

I do take almonds, but rarely. Do not send any unless I ask for them.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: Ambujammal papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

608. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI[1]

September 6, 1935

BHAI MUNSHI,

Study this case. If you think we can win it, you may go to Jalgaon or send someone else. These friends cannot afford to pay that person anything more than the railway fare.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 7589. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

[1] This was an enclosure to the following letter dated September 11, 1935 from Deokinandan, Khadi Bhandar, Jalgaon, to the addressee : "We have here a civil case before the Additional First Class Sub Judge, fixed for argument on September 27. It is a case filed by the Khadi Bhandar against the Government. We consulted Mahatmaji and he has directed us to go to you. We send herewith Mahatmaji's letter addressed to you regarding the case, etc."

609. LETTER TO GOWAMAL[1]

September 6, 1935

BHAI GOWAMAL,

I have had no letter from Padmavati. I don't remember at all about the blessings. If she got them, I can't tell in what circumstances she did. You should not waste my time about such matters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Gujarati: *Mahatma Gandhi aur Jabalpur*, p. 47

610. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

September 6, 1935

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

It will be all right if Nair can withstand the circumstances and remain there for a year. But recall him from Calcutta if the Ashram work is badly hampered.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2435

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter enquiring whether Gandhiji had blessed the inter-caste marriage of Padmavati, a Kerala girl.

611. DISCUSSION WITH SWAMI YOGANANDA[1]

[Before *September 7, 1935*][2]

GANDHIJI: Why is there evil in the world, is a difficult question to answer. I can only give what I may call a villager's answer. If there is good there must also be evil, just as where there is light there is also darkness, but it is true only so far as we human mortals are concerned. Before God there is nothing good, nothing evil. We poor villagers may talk of His dispensation in human terms, but our language is not God's.

The Vedanta says the world is *maya*. Even that explanation is a babbling of imperfect humanity. I therefore say that I am not going to bother my head about it. Even if I was allowed to peep into the innermost recess of God's chamber I should not care to do it. For I should not know what to do there. It is enough for our spiritual growth to know that God is always with the doer of good. That again is a villager's explanation.

YOGANANDA: But if He is All-mighty, as unquestionably He is, why does He not free us from evil?

I would rule out this question, too. God and we are not equals. Equals may put such questions to one another, but not unequals.Villagers do not ask why town-dwellers do things which if they did would mean certain destruction.

I quite see what you mean. It is a strong point you have made. But who made God?

If He is All-powerful, He must have made Himself.

Do you think He is an autocrat or a democrat?

I do not think these things at all. I do not want to divide the power with Him and hence I am absolved from having to consider these questions. I am content with the doing of the task in front of me. I do not worry about the why and wherefore of things.

But has He not given us reason?

[1] This is extracted from "Weekly Letter" by Mahadev Desai, who had reported that Swami Yogananda had "just returned home after a long stay in America". On his way to Ranchi, he halted at Wardha to meet Gandhiji.

[2] According to *Gandhi—1915-1948: A Detailed Chronology*, the discussion took place on August 26 and 27.

Indeed He has. But that reason helps us to see that we should not dabble in things we cannot fathom. It is my implicit belief that a true villager has an amazing amount of common sense and therefore he never worries about these things.

Then I will now ask a different question. Do you believe it is easier to be evil than good, that a descent is easier than an ascent?

Apparently it is so. But really it is easier to be good than to be evil. Of course poets have said that descent to hell is easy, but I do not think so. Nor do I think there are more bad people in the world than good. In that case God himself would be evil and not an embodiment of ahimsa or love which He is.

May I know your definition of ahimsa?

Ahimsa means avoiding injury to anything on earth, in thought, word and deed . . . .

I shall now change the subject. You would prefer self-control to birth-control?

I think artificial birth-control or birth-control according to methods suggested today and recommended in the West is suicidal. When I say 'suicidal', I do not mean resulting in the extinction of the race, I mean suicidal in a higher sense of the term, that is to say these methods make man lower than the brute; they are immoral.

But how long are we to tolerate indiscriminate procreation? I know a man who used to purchase a seer of milk, and went on diluting it with water in order to divide it between his children whose number increased every year. Don't you think this was a sin?

It is a sin to bring forth unwanted children, but I think it is a greater sin to avoid the consequences of one's own action. It simply unmans man.

What then is the most practical method of telling man this truth?

The most practical method is to live the life of self-control. Example is better than precept.

But the West asks us, "Why is it that you have greater child mortality and lower life average than we, though you regard yourselves as more spiritual than the West?" Do you believe in many children, Mahatmaji?

I believe in no children.

Then the whole race will be extinct.

It won't be extinct, it will be transformed into something better. But it can never happen, for we have inherited from eternity the sex instinct from our progenitors. It means a tremendous effort to check this habit of ages, and yet it is a simple effort. Absolute renunciation, absolute *brahmacharya* is the ideal state. If you dare not think of it marry by all means, but even then live a life of self-control.

Have you any working method to teach this to the masses?

It is, as I said a moment ago, to attain complete self-control and go and live that life amongst the masses. A life of self-restraint and denial of all luxuries cannot but have its effect on the masses. There is an indissoluble connection between self-control and the control of the palate. The man who observes *brahmacharya* will be controlled in every one of his acts and will be humble.

I see what you mean. The masses do not know the happiness of self-control and we have to teach them that. But what about the argument of the West I referred to before?

I do not think that we are more spiritually minded than the West. If we were, we should not have fallen so low. But because the average life of a Westerner is much higher than ours, it does not prove the spirituality of the West. Whoever is spiritually minded must show a better, not necessarily longer, life.

Harijan, 7-9-1935

612. HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH RESOLUTIONS

The meeting of the Executive of the Harijan Sevak Sangh Board held from 30th August to 2nd September passed several important resolutons. The following is one of them:

> The question of decentralizing the finance and administration of the Sangh was discussed, in the presence of Sjt. J. N. Kunzru, who was specially invited to attend this meeting of the Committee; the position with regard to U. P. (East) and the representations from the other provinces were considered. At the end of the discussion Pandit Kunzru was requested to frame a separate scheme for U.P. (East) in consultation with his Provincial Board and District Committees by way of experiment and to submit it for consideration at the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

Another important resolution passed was the following:

> Resolved that the [24th][1] of September 1935, the day on which the Poona Pact was signed, be celebrated as the 'Harijan Day' in accordance with instructions issued in that behalf by the Head Office, Delhi.

It is to be hoped that Harijan workers throughout India will make a special effort to establish closer contact with Harijans and that there will be an all-round greater self dedication.

The third resolution of importance runs:

> Resolved that efforts be made for the co-ordination of the activities of the Charkha, Gram Udyog and Harijan Sevak Sanghs, and to secure that purpose it is suggested that a joint committee, consisting of the Secretaries of these sister organizatons, be created after getting constitutional recognition from the Charkha and Gram Udyog Sanghs.

Seeing that all the three activities are constructive and meet at many points, much time, energy and money can be saved and the work of the three organizations advanced if there is greater co-ordination among workers wherever it is possible and desirable.

Harijan, 7-9-1935

613. PRIVATE PRODUCERS BEWARE

Whilst the new policy of giving an adequate wage to the spinners and others working at the manufacture of khadi is taking shape, the question of certified private producers of khadi comes up for serious consideration. They are responsible for a large quantity of khadi. The Association has a duty towards these no less than towards the wage-earners. The contracts made with them must be duly fulfilled. But the duty ends there. The whole organization of the Spinners' Association is or should be run as a trust for the spinners whose lot must be progressively improved. Private producers are certified primarily for the benefit of the spinners. They should get their profit through the service of the latter, not at their expense, as we discover, they and others are doing.

But certificates issued to them need not be withdrawn if they will put themselves on a par with the direct agents of the Associaton. But they will have to radically revise their method of work if they will do so. They will have even to suffer loss. They have to maintain in accordance with the requirements of the Association registers of the

[1] The source has. "25th" which was subsequently corrected by Gandhiji; *vide* "Notes", 14-9-1935 and 21-9-1935.

spinners and other wage-earners served by them. They have to produce proof of payment of wages, collect and supply satistics regarding them. This may be too onerous for them. The risk entailed by the probable increase in the price of khadi may be too great to be borne by them. The requirements of the Association may be too exacting for producers who have undoubtedly to work hard for making the profits they do. Those who feel so, should from now begin to wind up their khadi business. Those who wish to continue to do khadi work, should put themselves in touch with the agents of the Association. Only they should know that the slightest neglect in the observance of the conditions will entail cancellation of certificates. Loss or no loss, strictest honesty is the essential condition of continuation of their contract with the Association. Only those therefore should continue who are lovers of khadi and devotees of *Daridranarayana* for whose sake they will not mind losses. Those who are themselves not users of khadi in their own persons and homes need not entertain any hope of continuing the contract.

Harijan, 7-9-1935

614. LEPROSY AND ITS PREVENTION

Savli is one of the hives of khadi workers who are living in the midst of poor spinners and weavers. Leprosy is rampant in Savli. It is no wonder when these toilers have to slave to eke out a bare living, spinners getting no more than two pies at the most per hour. Their average bill of fare is one rupee per month.

The workers inquire how they are to deal with the lepers, who mix with everyone without let or hindrance. Many of them work for their living or help their relatives. What is to be done with their manufacture? How are they to serve these unfortunate countrymen?

The Indian Council of the British Empire Leprosy Relief Assocition has published a booklet called *Leprosy Diagnosis, Treatment and Prevention.* It is running its fifth edition. The author is Dr. Muir, M.D.I quote freely from the chapter on Preventon.[1]

Harijan, 7-9-1935

[1] The extracts are not reproduced here.

615. LETTER TO LALCHAND J. VORA

WARDHA,
September 8, 1935

BHAI LALCHAND,

You are conducting a good many useful activities. If such work is carried on with the co-operation of all and purely in a spirit of service, it will certainly bear fruit.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10497. Also C.W. 9127. Courtesy: Lalchand J. Vora

616. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
September 9, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Just a line whilst I use the right hand. I see that I must rest the right hand except during the silence day, if I am to retain its use for that day for some years. This is merely a precautionary measure.

I am eating your apples. But you won't issue peremptory instructions with each consignment you may be sending. I assure you, I shall not deny myself fruit when I need it.

Khurshed[1] is acting as secretary, Mahadev having gone to Allahabad only to miss Jawahar and now having gone to Sardar at his bidding. She is giving full time and is slaving today even as you had to that terrible Monday.

Amtul Salaam has just risen from sick-bed to find Mira taking her place.[2] And it is pouring cats and dogs today! I hope however there is nothing serious with her.

Ba and Devdas must have come to you today. I do hope all this party won't be too much strain on you. Shummy will give me his profeessional note on both Kumarappa and Devdas please.

[1] Granddaughter of Dadabhai Naoroji
[2] Mirabehn was suffering from malaria.

I wonder how long the bag of rice will last you. Next time you should import paddy from the nearest place and instal a husking *chakki*. That would be the cheapest method and in keeping with the village spirit.

Love to the ever-increasing family.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3547. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6356.

617. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

September 9, 1935

MY DEAR MALKANI,

Your batch of papers to hand. You will find in *Harijan* your wishes fully given effect to.[1] I have also written to Hariji. I wrote to *Gulistan*[2] last week to be excused. I am drained dry. And as you know I have enough hay on my fork.You should therefore plead for me to all the 'beggars'.

Love.

BAPU

PROF. MALKANI
HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH, BIRLA MILLS
DELHI

From a photostat: G.N. 924

618. LETTER TO KANTI N. PAREKH

September 9, 1935

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter. By all means start business. See that you avoid the sin of harming the country by doing trade in foreign goods, even if you can earn crores through it.

I didn't know what you say about Shanta. I am not surprised by her conduct. Get married only after you have started earning and saved some money. If she is free then and both of you are willing, you may marry her. Or else you may find out some other partner.

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 14-9-1935.

[2] A children's journal. Shawakraj Bhojraj Dada, President of All-India Balkanji Bari, had asked for the message.

I never desire that all of you should approve of all of my ideas. Satyagraha means that you should think independently and shape your conduct accordingly. Earn every pie honestly. Nathubhai will not desire anything else. Write to me occasionally.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have torn up your letter. Nobody else has read it.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6270

619. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

September 9 , 1935

CHI. VASUMATI,

I read both your letters. Your programme seems all right. You are always free to come whenever you wish. Why should you then wait for a letter from me? Does a daughter ask her father's permission every time she wishes to visit him? Tell Gangabehn that I have no time and that, therefore, I am restraining my desire to write a long letter to her. Pratap and his wife Taramati came to see me before leaving for Germany. We talked a lot. I will write and tell you about it if I get the time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9406. Also C.W. 652. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

620. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

September 9, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Please go through the accompanying letter. I haven't replied to it. Perhaps you will recognize the person. See if you can do anything. I do hope your burden has lightened a little.

I have been hearing rumours about an indirect breach of the Poona Pact on the part of the Government. Let us wait and see.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 185

621. LETTER TO P. KODANDA RAO

WARDHA,

September 10, 1935

DEAR KODANDA RAO,

The statement that I had derived my idea of civil disobedience from the writings of Thoreau is wrong. The resistance to authority in South Africa was well advanced before I got the essay of Thoreau on civil disobedience.[1] But the movement was then known as passive resistance. As it was incomplete I had coined the word satyagraha for the Gujarati readers. When I saw the title of Thoreau's great essay, I began the use of his phrase to explain our struggle to the English readers. But I found that even civil disobedience failed to convey the full meaning of the struggle. I therefore adopted the phrase civil resistance. Non-violence was always an integral part of our struggle.

As per your advice, a copy is going to Mr. Pearson. I hope you have done well. Mahadev is in Bombay just now.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. KODANDA RAO[2]

From a photostat: G.N. 6280; also *Gandhi and the American Scene*, pp. 18-9

622. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 10, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I am not going to worry about Kumarappa's temperature. He is absolutely safe under Shummy's care.

I do not remember having suggested your name to Rajendrababu. If you really do not feel equal to the task, say so unhesitatingly. If it is from the Congress standpoint that the pamphlet is required, you must not undertake the task. If it is from the woman's standpoint, I do not know anyone who can do it better than you. But I

[1] *Vide* "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience", 7-9-1907; also "Letter to Henry S. Salt", 12-10-1929

[2] Of the Servants of India Society. He was in the United States of America at the time; *vide* "Interview to "The Natal Mercury" ", 5-1-1909

myself dread your undertaking fresh burdens. Therefore whilst from the latter's standpoint I would like you to shoulder the burden, you shall be the judge as to whether you can spare the time. It need not be a book. A pamphlet of 25 pages octavo size compactly written would be quite good. Of course you may write more, if you feel like it.

You shall have the paper as soon as possible. The samples not yet received.

Did I tell you yesterday that Mira was on her back? She has just been transferred to where Kumarappa was placed. Amtul Salaam, tell Kumarappa, has now got her job and is now up and doing. She has forgotten that she was sick only yesterday.

Please tell Ba, Laxmi is to be put up at the bungalow.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Just received wire about Devdas. Thank God.

From the orginal: C.W. 3548. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6357

623. LETTER TO GIRDHARILAL BATRA

September 10, 1935

DEAR DR. BATRA,

The cases of books have been delivered in good order and condition. They have not been unpacked and will not be for a little time to come. The portraits have also arrived safely.

I wrote to you hastily that they will be accommodated on the walls of the library, but it occurred to me at once that I was wrong in falling in with your proposal. I have always dissuaded friends from entertaining the desire to associate such memorials with their gifts. What is more, the regulation of the library will rest not with me, but with the trustees of whom I am not even one.

You will therefore pardon me for my hasty answer and let me revise it. Will you be satisfied if I make some other good use of the portraits? I have not discussed your proposal with the trustees though I mentioned it to Sjt. Kumarappa, who agreed with my view.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

624. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

September 10, 1935

CHI. PREMA,

I had received the *rakhadi* in time. I got the [hand-made] paper made in Junnar. It was good. I have given the whole bulk to Khurshedbehn whose need was greater than mine. The yarn being kept aside. It attracts a good many people's eyes. And what will be the payment for my labour of spinning? Whenever I can spin 160 rounds during a day, it is Diwali for me.

I have all along been under the impression that indigenous reed-pens are available in plenty. The one with which I am writing is believed to be Indian. I will inquire.

Among the Socialists there are many good people, and some have the spirit of self-sacrifice in them; there are some who possess a powerful intellect and some who are rogues. Almost all of them have Westernized minds. None of them knows the real conditions in Indian villages or perhaps even cares to know them.

Be thankful that your food was appreciated.

I do not recollect the name Lakshmibai Thunse[1].

It is all right if Kaka has invited you. Your duty, however, lies where you are.[2] I have not changed my views. Deo seems to be upset by the attempt to entice you. Reassure him on my behalf. He needs no such reassurance from you of course.

I also feel about Hitler nearly the same way as you.

If one point regarding my attitude is borne in mind, everything else will be clear. I am indifferent about the time when the goal will be reached, but not at all about the work to be done and the good to be reached. I say that I do not care whether the rich do or do not give up their wealth not because I am unconcerned whether or not they do so but because I have no fear that they will not do so. If the steps we are taking are right, sooner or later they will lead to only one end.

[1] An old Congress worker of Poona

[2] In *Bapuna Patro-5: Kum. Premabehn Kantakne*, the addressee explains that she was asked by Kalelkar to take charge of Mahila Ashram at Wardha leaving the village work at Sasvad to Shankarrao Deo.

The theory about man having descended from the ape does not convince me. There is no doubt, however, that the soul which lives in the human body now has lived in the bodies of an ape and other animals in the past.

I do not like the argument that the *atatayi*[1] may be killed. Who should be regarded as an *atatayi?* For the present I do believe that murderers and other criminals will have to be imprisoned. But I do not remember even having said that that is ahimsa. I certainly do not believe that it is. I have said that in the existing circumstances such action may be unavoidable. This only means that my ahimsa is still far from perfect and that, therefore, I have not yet been able to discover a remedy for this kind of violence. Truth lies in recognizing a fall from an ideal as what it is.

If we win power by any means other than ahimsa, the swaraj will most certainly not be the swaraj of the poor. They will profit only in proportion to the degree of ahimsa we observe in winning swaraj. Perfect ahimsa neither you nor I nor anybody else can claim. But one who believes in ahimsa will become more and more non-violent day by day and in consequence his field of service will keep ever expanding. The field of service of the votary of violence will become narrower day by day and will ultimately become restricted to himself.

You have done well in inviting Kelkar.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Ba has taken Devdas to Simla. His illness was fairly serious. We have a good many sick-beds here these days. Mira is ill. Amtussalaam also is practically ill. Nimu and her children are with me. Lakshmi is arriving from Delhi today. She is going to Madras. Prabha is here.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10378. Also C.W. 6816. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] A killer

625. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS BIRLA

September 10, 1935

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

I had your letter and the cheque. I shall expect nothing after October unless some dire need overtakes me. But it is understood that you will continue the payments to the Sardar and Rajendrababu.

. . .'s[1] letter did not reach me. It is good that she went to . . .[2] as she is the only one who can save him and she can undoubtedly make some impression on him if she carries true strength within herself. The visit abroad will then prove to have been fruitful.

I am not writing a separate letter to Ghanshyamdas. Tell him to see me here on his way to wherever he may be going. I am staying put here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 7973. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

626. TELEGRAM TO ANKLESARIA[3]

[On or before *September 12, 1935*][4]

SORRY, PLEASE TELL HIM TO SUSPEND FAST, GET WELL AND PREACH HIS MESSAGE GENTLY AMONG PEOPLE THERE. HE MUST QUALIFY HIMSELF BEFORE HE RESUMES VICARIOUS FAST. I HAVE ALREADY TOLD HIM THAT THIS FAST IS ALTOGETHER PREMATURE.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 13-9-1935

[1] The names have been omitted.

[2] *ibid*

[3] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram to Gandhiji asking for advice regarding the "fast unto death" undertaken by one Ram Chandra Sharma.

[4] The telegram was reported under the date-line "Wardhaganj, September 12", 1935.

627. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
September 12, 1935

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

How well you have joined Kamala! It is the best tonic for her. I shall keep a note for her herewith. Your messages are being duly received here. And Sarup repeats what she receives. Let us hope all will end well. Please thank Dr. Atal for his messages and letters which have been most helpful. I expect a regular mail from you whilst the crisis lasts. Typed sheets[1] are with me. I shall go through them as soon as possible.

Mahadev had to go to Bombay to help Vallabhbhai about an inquiry. And he is still there. Rajagopalachari has just dropped in with Laxmi and her baby boy. Devdas was badly ill. Ansari has packed him off to Simla. I have Mira on my hands prostrate with bad fever.

I would like you to allow yourself to be elected President for the next year. Your acceptance will solve many difficulties. If you think fit, send me a wire.

Has Indu been fixed up?

Khurshed is here. She will be writing to you by the ordinary mail.

Love from us all.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1935. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

628. LETTER TO VITHAL L. PHADKE

September 12, 1935

CHI. MAMA,

I have thrown your article into the waste-paper basket. There is no ban against efforts by the right type of men or women. We cannot, however, get such workers by advertising for them in *Harijanbandhu*, nor do they grow in the [Harijan Sevak] Sangh's Office. They emerge in answer to *tapascharya*. Why don't you become one?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3833

[1] Of the addressee's autobiography published in 1936

629. LETTER TO DILKHUSH DIWANJI

September 12, 1935

BHAI DILKHUSH,

Only today I have been able to read the question you have sent to Kishorelal. The questions are good. In fixing the wages for spinning by the poor students who spin for their own needs, you may make them as high or as low as you like. If the khadi so spun is more than what they need, you can adopt the rate prevailing in any [khadi] association. If it is sold in the market, it should be sold so as to help khadi sales.

If the spinning activity is merely [part-time] for buying condiments or pan and *bidis,* the wages can be fixed quite low. But if it is [a whole-time activity] for buying ghee and milk, the rate of wage for an hour's spinning should be sufficiently high to meet one's needs. You may consider this a new theory, but according to me it is not. It can be inferred from what I have written earlier. So it is not a new theory and can be deduced logically from what has been stated as a premise. Experience shows that thousands of women earn their livelihood from spinning. When the question of fixing their wages came up, I had to say that they should at least be able to maintain themselves with that. Or we should show them some occupation by which they can do so. I think thiscovers answers to all your questions. If not, by all means ask me again.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Motana Man, p. 71

630. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[After *September 12, 1935*][1]

DEAR DAUGHTER,[2]

All your efforts are in vain until you have been able to win over Kanam.[3]

I don't think it will affect me, if anyone touches my feet. But I want to put down this idolatry. I do not regard myself so pure.

I see no benefit in cutting off the hair but you can certainly have it trimmed by someone if it comes in the way of your doing your work.

I do not accuse you of harbouring any impurity. There can be no fear on my part if you find nothing wrong with yourself. It is a matter of your own choice whether or no to go to Kanpur or any other place.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 601

631. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[After *September 12, 1935*][4]

There is hardly anything I can suggest in this matter. You can win him [Kanam] over only through love and this love will grow of its own accord. Anyway, it is an old story.

There is nothing to write down. Do on your own whatever you can do.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 608

[1] Inferred from the sentence : "I don't think it will affect me, if anyone touches my feet." On September 12, 1935, Gandhiji had renounced the practice of placing his hand on a girl's shoulder for support while walking. *Vide* also "A Renunciation",
21-9-1935.

[2] The source has this in Urdu.

[3] In *Bapuke Patra—8 : Bibi Amtussalamake Nam,* the addressee explains that she was asked to take care of Kanam, son of Ramdas Gandhi, as Ba was in Simla.

[4] Inferred from the reference to Kanam; *vide* the preceding item.

632. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

WARDHA,
September 12/ [13][1]*, 1935*

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Your letter. Your suggestion that the expenses should be reduced is quite pertinent. Let Krishnan Nair remain in Calcutta for a year. In the mean time you and Hardhyan Singh can do what you can. Any enterprise that depends solely on one person is bound to break down ultimately, and how long can you keep Krishnan Nair in Delhi?

This time I chanced to notice the secret hatred K.N. bears towards the rich. He too realized that his heart has yet to digest it. What you write is quite correct. His stay in Bengal should prove beneficial. Gradually he will acquire mastery over everything. Meanwhile the other Ashram inmates too will have been tested. Only those can be defined as Ashram inmates who have no financial or any other kind of obligations towards parents and other relatives, whose wants comprise only food and clothing and who are ever alert in the observance of ahimsa and the other eleven vows. That is why one who is inclined to put aside even the smallest amount is disqualified as an Ashram inmate. Keeping this in view no one should be paid more than Rs. 10 and moreover anything saved over andabove food, etc., should be returned to the Ashram. But we can employ on a salary those whose services are needed and who in spite of their spirit of service cannot, owing to their other obligations, work except on a higher remuneration. We should strictly limit our expenditure in accordance with the sums available in the budget. You can circulate this to all the workers currently employed. This will shift the responsibility from your head and have the desired effect. My health is satisfactory. The diet consists of milk, vegetables and occasionally fruit. Part of this letter has been written by me and the rest dictated, with many interruptions in between. In the mean while Rajaji arrived yesterday and informed me of your having fallen ill; how is it? I hope that you have recovered by now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2434

[1] From the contents it is clear that Gandhiji had begun this letter on September 12, 1935, but was interrupted by the arrival of Rajagopalachari and could complete it only the next day; *vide* also "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 12-9-1935

633. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM L. BAVISHI

September 13, 1935

BHAI PURUSHOTTAM,

I got your postcard. Send me the name of the village you have in mind. The decision regarding Vinoba is not yet final.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 127. Also C.W. 4750. Courtesy: Purushottam L. Bavishi

634. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

September 13, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter. Rajaji is sitting by my side. I read out your order[1] to him. He says he must leave on the 17th at the latest. Papa is expected in Madras and her son, who was ill, is eager to see him. Rajaji thinks you want to talk to him about the crown of thorns[2] and says that, if it is so, your effort will be wasted. He says he has given no assurance at all to Bhulabhai. He is in no condition just now to accept the crown. He is extremely tired both physically and mentally. With his consent, I have written[3] to Jawaharlal and asked him. All the same, it would be worthwhile if you can reach here by Monday. We must let him go on Tuesday at the latest. The weather here is none too good just now.

Mira is better, but she is having temperature since 2 o'clock. I inquired about the price of *mosambis* because, if they are available here at the same price, I should like to get them here itself.

You seem to have misunderstood my point regarding Sindi.[4] We have no desire at all to force anything on the people. We simply wish to go on working silently. We shall discuss this further when we meet.

[1] That he should be detained at Wardha for a week
[2] Congress Presidentship
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam"
[4] *Vide* footnote 2,"Letter to Mirabehn", 26-5-1935

If we don't meet in a few days, I will write to you a detailed letter. I will do nothing in haste.

I understand about the gentleman from Bulsar.

The less argument there is in the committee's report, the better. There should be no adjective at all. A report giving their conclusions on the main issues and suggestions for future guidance will make it a pamphlet to which nobody could take exception. This is what I think.

It seems Bhau is living in Jamnalal's chawl. It will be enough if he gets some money regularly.

. . .'s[1] case is a strange one.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 186-7

635. DISCUSSION ON MINIMUM LIVING WAGE–II[2]

[Before *September 14, 1935*]

Our objective is as the name implies to represent the spinners who are the lowest paid labourers, i.e., to improve their lot. Therefore we have to show a progressive improvement in their lot. You must remember my earliest formula which holds good as much today as it did then—a spinning-wheel in every home and a loom or looms in every village. That is the ideal of self-sufficing khadi, and if I could take you with me I would have you serve the spinners not so much by selling their khadi as by making them prepare it for their own use. We

[1] The name is omitted in the source

[2] This is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter" which gave the following summary of arguments by khadi workers : "(1) It is wrong to say that we are exploiting the poor spinners. On the contrary, the consumers who can easily purchase cheap Japanese and other foreign stuffs, go in for khadi which is dearer. This is patriotism and not exploitation. (2) The minimum wage may mean a few more coppers in the pocket of a very few, but what about the thousands who will find their occupation gone? (3) The spinners themselves would far rather prefer a permanent small wage than a precarious higher minimum wage. If a referendum were to be taken, they would cast their vote against the minimum wage. (4) We have not reduced the spinners' wage; the reductions in our prices are due to the fall in the price of cotton, and reduction in the weavers' wages. (5) It would have been possible to do something when the political situation was favourable, but at the present moment it is hardly the atmosphere."

make our own chapatis, there are no hotels in villages; in the same way all villagers should make their own khadi. Not that some of them will not make extra khadi but that will depend only on the demand. We shall certainly take orders from the city people who will want our khadi, and we shall get that khadi done by those who will get a wage per hour proportionate to their daily need. This may mean a temporary rise in the present price of khadi. We may no longer exploit the poverty of the people. I have never said it was deliberate exploitation. I take the fullest responsibility for allwe have done during the past fifteen years, and what we have done was inevitable. But we have now to strike a new departure. We have ignored the proletariat for centuries, and whilst we have arrogated to ourselves the right of commanding their labour, the thought has never crossed us that they have a right to dictate their wage, that labour is as much their capital as money is ours. It is time we began to think in terms of their needs, their hours of work and leisure and their standard of living.

It is idle to argue that the spinners themselves would plump for a smaller wage for all than a higher wage for a few. That is the argument of every exploiter and slave-owner, and indeed there were unfortunate folks amongst slaves who hugged the chains of slavery. But why should you fear that the majority of them will find their occupation gone? Haven't we other occupations to recommend them? In Andhra, Sitarama Sastry has not hesitated to encourage them to prefer paddy-husking to spinning as the former gives a better wage. Let us not deceive ourselves. We have made their necessity our opportunity, and have never looked at the question from their point of view.

Satisbabu had a fear that the minimum wage would open the door of fraudulent transactions. That fear, said Gandhiji, was always there. Without the minimum wage, had we not that trouble already? That was a problem which had to be independently dealt with. Gandhiji entirely agreed that the atmosphere of competition must disappear, and he was sure it would disappear as soon as the commercial spirit behind khadi disappeared.

Satisbabu was also anxious that in no case should the workmen's minimum wage exceed the wage of an agriculturist. There was no such thing as an agriculturist's wage, explained Gandhiji. In many parts of India the peasant hardly got out of his land enough to keep body and soul together, and the peasant who had no land of his own and cultivated it on lease produced not even enough to pay his rent. Gandhiji said:

The peasant's condition is no standard. The only standard is to get the daily bread. To seek to pay anything less would be called criminal.

Harijan, 14-9-1935

636. NOTES

HARIJAN DAY

The Central Office of the Harijan Sevak Sangh has issued the following circular:

> The Harijan Sevak Sangh will complete the third year of its existence by the end of September, and the Poona Pact agreed to by the leaders of caste Hindus and Harijans was signed at Poona on the 24th September 1932. It is therefore natural that the end of September, and more specially the 24th of September, should be considered an important date in the life of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. The Executive Committee of the Sangh which recently met at Wardha has therefore resolved that the 24th September be celebrated both by caste Hindus and Harijans all over the country in the following manner:
>
> (a) On that day all Harijan sevaks should visit Harijan *bastis* in the morning and speak to Harijans on the importance of sanitation and perform some personal service for them however small.
>
> (b) In the evening Harijan and non-Harijan children may be taken to open places for sports and entertainments.
>
> (c) Processions, *kirtan* or *bhajan* parties may be organized. Public meetings may also be held wherever possible and the solemn pledge of the Hindu community for the abolition of untouchability by birth reiterated.
>
> (d) Association and sympathizers of the Sangh should be enrolled.
>
> (e) Collections for the Harijan Wells Fund—the special feature of this year's work—be continued with zeal and vigour.

I hope that the Sangh's appeal will receive ready response from all reformers, both Harijans and non-Harijans, no matter to what party they belong.

WARNING TO HARIJAN BOARDS

Here is an extract from Shri Malkani's letter:

> I am beginning to receive letters from Provincial Secretaries showing the difficulty of even raising 25 per cent of expenditure on welfare work out of fresh collections. A copy of Sjt. Gopalaswamy's letter enclosed herewith shows the danger of laxity in collections. On 22nd August, a sum of Rs. 81,455-10-2 was outstanding as advances to Provincial Boards representing, roughly speaking, two month's expenditure of all Boards and their branches. I am afraid several committees have already got into the habit of eating up

advances instead of making fresh collections. If this tendency grows, as it may after 1st October next, a very difficult situation will arise, and without fresh advances heavy arrears may grow up in various centres so as to dislocate normal work. In this, Assam is the worst sinner and should serve as a warning. It was given the whole purse fund without any deduction and could get cent per cent on welfare out of the purse fund and two-thirds grant on A & B. Yet it is in heavy arrears and has eaten up advances. I shall be thankful if you kindly show the importance of vigilance with regard to our advances and fresh collections.

Hardly any comment on this is necessary. Provincial Boards, District Boards and other branches will find themselves without resources if they sleep away during the time while there is something to go on with. Fortune favours the vigilant, never the slothful. I know that the Central Office will follow literally this very sound practice of fortune. It is well, therefore, for all branches to be warned in time and find their own sinews of war. They will find them by local collections if they can show solid work. If they do not, it would be a sign to wind up work.

Harijan, 14-9-1935

637. FALLACIES

A careful observer of events and things writes:

I have no doubt that there is an enormous scope for work in the directions indicated by you in your letter under reply. Cottage industries have a place. But, to be quite frank, I do not think that these can replace industries on a big scale. Leaving aside the financial interests of those controlling such industries, I think that it will not be in the interest of the country to work for the ruin of such industries, which have been established and which can be established in this country. The greatest objection to machinery that has been urged is the growing tendency to reduce the number of men employed. This results in unemployment. The present method of distribution of profits may require readjustment. But leisure, if it can be well utilized, is more important than many other things. Merely to keep a large number employed at work I do not think it is necessary to discard economic and efficient machinery. It should be able to give leisure and food to many, and in this 'many' I include people not even distantly connected with the industry. With such a large population as in India and steadily increasing I fear that at no time will it be possible to keep everyone in reasonable comfort. With improved education and sanitation life will be prolonged and death-rate will come down. From the

population point of view this will make the condition worse. So, you will forgive my saying that the first thing that requires to be done is to take measures to restrict population and it cannot be done without birth-control. I know that you are against it. But now that you are applying your mind solely to the problem of economic reconstruction by improvement in sanitation, food values, cottage industries, etc., I request you to consider if this is not also one of the things that should receive your attention.

The writer is an honest thinker and yet, as it seems to me, has missed the whole aim of the work being done by the two organizations he has in mind. Their aim is *not* to replace or to ruin the big industries, but it *is* to revive the dead or dying industries and therethrough to find employment for the millions who are semi-starved because they are forced to live in complete or semi-idleness. This is a constructive, not a destructive, programme. The big industries can never, they don't hope to, overtake the unemployed millions. Their aim is primarily to make money for the few owners, never the direct one of finding employment for the unemployed millions. The organizers of khadi and other village industries don't hope in the near future to affect the big industries. They may hope to bring a ray of light into the dark dungeons, miscalled cottages, of the villagers. My esteemed correspondent seems to give up his whole case when he says 'leisure, if it can be well utilized, is more important than many other things'. The activities which he disapproves of are intended to accomplish the very end he has in view. They are designed to *well utilize* the leisure hours of the idle millions.

In this there is *no* war against the misuse and abuse of machinery, i.e., its use to the detriment of the millions. Dead machinery must not be pitted against the millions of living machines represented by the villagers scattered in the several hundred thousand villages of India. Machinery to be well used has to help and ease human effort. The present use of machinery tends more and more to concentrate wealth in the hands of a few in total disregard of millions of men and women whose bread is snatched by it out of their mouths. The movement represented by the A.I.S.A. and the A.I.V.I.A. has been conceived so as to minimize the evil wrought by the craze for amassing large fortunes through the use of dead tools in order to avoid having to deal with very sensitive human tools.

The writer fears that at no time will it be possible to keep everyone in reasonable comfort. This fear is not shared by those who

are working in the villages. On the contrary, closer contact with the villagers andcloser knowledge of the villages fill them with the hope that if only the villagers can be induced to shed their traditional idleness they can all live in reasonable comfort, without causing any very great dislocation. Certain oppressive conditions have no doubt to be abated. But the process will almost be unfelt, if there is some co-operation from what are termed vested interests.

The correspondent's fear about the securing of reasonable comfort for the existing population leads naturally to the fear of over-population. The resort to birth-control becomes more than the logical step. Birth-control to me is a dismal abyss. It amounts to playing with unknown forces. Assuming that birth-control by artificial aids is justifiable under certain conditions, it seems to be utterly impracticable of application among the millions. It seems to me to be easier to induce them to practise self-control than control by contraceptives. This little globe of ours is not a toy of yesterday. In has not suffered from the weight of over-population through its age of countless millions. How can it be that the truth has suddenly dawned upon some people that it is in danger of perishing of shortage of food unless birth-rate is checked through the use of contraceptives? My fear is that my correspondent has led himself from one fallacy to another ending in the quagmire of contraceptives on a scale hitherto unknown.

Harijan, 14-9-1935

638. PROCREATION AMONG LEPERS

The following letter[1] sent to me from London by Mr. A. Donald Miller, Honorary Secretary to the Indian Auxiliary to the Mission to Lepers, will be read with deep interest by all humanitarians who are at all interested in the baffling problem connected with the welfare of lepers.

Harijan, 14-9-1935

[1] *Vide* Appendix III.

639. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
September 14, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Your unfailing full letters are a blessing to me. With the two patients under your care I have no anxiety about them. Please tell Pyarelal I have his letters. I take him at his word and save time by not replying just yet. Mahadev has not yet returned. He may not before Monday.

Your reply to Dr. Gopichand Bhargava is quite correct. I am destroying the letter as desired by you. You must resolutely refuse to carry burdens you cannot bear.[1]

Mira is still not out of the wood. She had another restless night. Nevertheless the fever is abating though slowly.

Rajaji is still here. He will probably leave on Tuesday. Laxmi and the new-born are well. Tara still has recurring fever. And so has Manu. They are all at Jamnalalji's bungalow.

Tell Ba and Devdas I got no time for writing to them. My letters to you must serve the purpose of separate letters.

Love to all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3549. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6358

640. LETTER TO BISWANATH

September 14, 1935

MY DEAR BISWANATH,

Neither Baba[2] nor Ma should have suppressed you. You have a perfect right to write to me as you have now at last done. You have a double claim upon me. First because you are in an organization of which I am the head and secondly because you are connected with two persons who have for many years accepted my word as law. In writing your letter, therefore, you have not only recognized your unadulterated right but you have also performed the duty which you owe to me. That you have grievously erred in your writing does not in

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 10-9-1935
[2] Satis Chandra Das Gupta and his wife Hemprabha Das Gupta

any shape or form diminish the value of your letter. On the contrary, the value is enhanced in that you have dared to tell me what you hold to be unadulterated truth although it may appear bitter to me and although I may consider it to be the reverse of truth. Very often we mount to truth by wading through errors so long [as] they do not appear to us to be errors. Your attachment as distinguished from affection for khadi has led you into a maze of errors. All-India Spinners' Association is the head and the associations affiliated to it are the branches. The head has rights which branches do not and cannot possess. What appeared to me at one time a sound policy under given circumstances may prove unsound under altered circumstances or on a fuller perception of even same circumstances. I would be an unworthy head of an organization if I sacrificed its interests for a seeming consistency. Again the liberties that Baba and Ma have allowed me to take with them and their creation I may not take with others. I would never be afraid of being misunderstood by them. Every one of my actions in connection with Pratishthan, therefore, you have to interpret in the light of my relationship with Baba and Ma. It is a relationship of their creation. So much for the Pratishthan.

Now for my new experiment. Since you admit that I am the creator of the khadi movement I must have the right to regulate its growth and even to destroy it. He who creates can also recreate. And if I found that I made a mistake in fashioning my creation I must have the right to refashion it in any manner I like so long as I carry with me my associates in nursing the creation. You would admit that I would be a traitor to myown creation if for fear of the judgement of fellow-workers like you I fail to act up to my own judgement if it abide in spite of the criticisms of fellow-workers. I think this covers all the points that you have raised. You may write to me as often as you like till I have convinced you or till you despair of my ever succeeding in convincing you.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I shall regard your letter as purely personal as desired by you.

SJT. BISWANATH
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
SODEPUR, NEAR CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 2729

641. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

WARDHA,
September 14, 1935

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

I have your belated reply. But better late than never. As for the funds which you claim as donations given to you personally, as I have not studied all the ramifications I would like you to abide by Shankerlal's judgment. Without admitting any error of judgment and without any reflection being cast upon you, you could simply get the funds converted into donations for the A.I.S.A. Rajkumari has decided to stop the khadi Bhandar in her own place. Therefore the sooner we close the Simla Bhandar the better. I shall be prepared to give Puri the training in self-sufficient khadi whenever he could be conveniently sent. I understand what you say about keeping the accounts in our Bhandars in Urdu and you are right in what you say. I am carefully going into everything in connection with Harjivan. Without perhaps meaning it, he succeeds in displeasing his associates. I am trying to induce him to leave Kashmir work and take rest for the time . . . he recovers, his services can be utilized for less . . . . I would, therefore, like you to give me your suggestion for the conduct of the Kashmir Bhandar and its branches . . . your warning that all correspondenceand the questions regarding the management of khadi work in the Punjab should be through you, if you are to keep yourself in touch with the movement and are to be really responsible for its growth in the Punjab. All Bhandars that are being run at a loss are certainly to be closed as quickly as possible, including, of course, the Peshawar Bhandar.

What you tell me about Khan Pirbux and Dr. Alam makes painful reading. We have to cut our way through all weathers, fair or foul and rely upon God's help in so far as we may be walking along the path of truth and love.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the original: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

642. LETTER TO RAJARAM R. BHOLE

WARDHA,
September 14, 1935

MY DEAR RAJARAM,

I have your letter and am glad you have at last seen Dr. Ambedkar. He is right about the profession of law. Only my conviction is that you will not be able to stand the strain of studies and I would not risk the sacrifice of your health upon any consideration whatsoever. I do not share the fear he has about going to villages. The Sangh will not endanger your health in the pursuit of the work that may be assigned to you. Anyway if you are satisfied with social service, you should give this very good offer a trial. The moment you find it uncongenial for your body you may give it up. Of course you should dispel the fear of instability about the Sangh. You will not be taking any permanent step. You will be taking no risk if the Sangh is extinct.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the original: R. R. Bhole Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

643. LETTER TO G.V. MAVALANKAR

September 14, 1935

BHAI MAVALANKAR,

Our only consolation is the fact, isn't it, that others too have like you to pass through the trials of a householder's life? But I hope everything is all right now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1245

644. LETTER TO G.V. GURJALE

WARDHA,
September 15, 1935

MY DEAR GURJALE,

I have your letter. It is very doleful. You must not give in like that. But your resolve, if it is not born of despondency, to remain in the Ashram and depend upon the friends sending help to you is admirable. The indispensable condition is that you should keep cheerful, if they do not send a single pie to you. You can appeal to your friends by letters and ceaselessly work up the institution there. You should also undertake some labour which would be an encouragement to village industries and which would bring at the same time a little income. If you can think out a good scheme it would be your deliverance. One thing in your letter disturbs me. You say that your wife who was your helper in every way has now turned against you. What is the meaning of this? Why should she turn against you?

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. GOVINDARAO GURJALE
THE KRIPA ASRAM
TIRUVENNAINALLUR (S.I.)

From a photostat: G.N. 1403

645. LETTER TO K. G. RAKHADE

September 15, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

Many thanks for your letter. I have suggested to Shri Trivedi that the money should be transferred to me and I shall at once proceed to form a Salukar Memorial Committee to give effect to the trust.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K.G. RAKHADE
CHHINDWARA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

646. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 15, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I am writing a separate letter to Father.

The leaflet about *Rentia Baras*[1] is well written, but I shall know what you can achieve through it only after I get a detailed report from you. At present, the middle class does not seem to have much faith in khadi, though some individuals have certainly retained their faith in it. I will be content if, in a town like Rajkot, you get a fairly good number of spinners.

If you are not using the equipment of the workshop lying there, I can easily make use of it here. If, however, it is of any use to you, I can do without it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8473. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

647. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

September 15, 1935

RESPECTED BROTHER,

Your *tapascharya* has borne fruit. May you do more *tapascharya* still and may it bear fruit so that I may continue to have your blessings.

Humble pranams from
MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

[1] *Bhadarva Vad 12*, Gandhiji's birthday according to Vikram calendar, celebrated as Spinning Day. In 1935, it was on September 24.

648. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

September 15, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I too was worried by Manilal's[1] wire. In the end, I replied to him as per copy enclosed. Don't mind having detained Mahadev there. My ways are becoming more and more rural every day. With a thick-wheeled bullock-cart and several inches deep layers of dust on the roads, where is the need for hurry? But I hope now that you will come here on Tuesday. Rajaji will be here for the whole of the day. Release him in the evening.

You are worrying needlessly about Sindi. I will remove all your fears.

I hope the problems of . . .[2] will be solved without delay.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 189

649. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*September 16, 1935*][3]

CHI. MIRA,

Read this now and return with suggestions if any. Don't read if you feel too weak for the effort.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5481. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9480

[1] Manilal Kothari

[2] The name is omitted in the source.

[3] According to G.N. Register this is a silence-day note written in September 1935. From the contents it is clear that this was written soon after Mirabehn's recovery. *Vide* also the following two items.

650. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

September 16, 1935

DEAR RAJENDRABABU,

I have unwillingly begun to write in English. Mahadev is returning tomorrow with Sardar and Ghanshyamdas.

You must be well and then quickly come here if you can. Devdas cannot spare Pyarelal. If you cannot come, I must send Mahadev to you. You may not be deserted. Please therefore wire your intention.

BAPU

[PS.]

Mirabehn had a bad attack of Malaria. She has been free since yesterday. No cause for anxiety.

From a copy: C.W. 9768. Courtesy: Rajendra Prasad

651. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 16, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Your dear letters never fail me. God bless you. You must not tax your eyes overmuch and then spoil them.

With the doctor in the house, I must not say Devdas should not be pressed to eat more than he wants to take. Better to let him go slow. That's the layman's tip to be taken for what it may be worth.

Here are two letters.

Love to all.

BAPU

[PS.]

Mira is free.

From the original: C.W. 3550. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6359

652. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

September 16, 1935

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letters. I have no time at all today. On one side is Mirabehn's sick-bed; Nimu, Lakshmi also are here. And I myself am busier with *Harijan* today than I am on other Mondays. Rajaji and Kishorelal are busy revising an important article of mine. In the mean time I am writing this. Devdas and Ba are in Simla. Devdas is a little better now. Pyarelal is attending on him. There is no cause for anxiety. Rajaji and Lakshmi will leave tomorrow. Rajaji himself has named the baby Rajmohan.

Sardar, Ghanshyamdas and Mahadev are coming here from Bombay tomorrow.

I am firm about Sita's and Arun's education. You may be certain that they will never get from anybody else what they can from you. If they are trained in the right way, they will learn by themselves whatever else they especially wish to when they are grown up. Manilal must spare some time every day for them just as he spares some for eating.

Once a man forms rules for himself it is easy enough to follow them. If you regard it as your duty to teach the children, as you regard it as your duty to do the work for *Indian Opinion* from week to week, you will be able to spare the time.

Discuss courteously with the Agent as many problems as you can. Knowing that the office of the Agent is not likely to be abolished now, avail yourself of it for as much public service as you can. How can we change ourselves all at once from what we are?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4843

653. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

September 16, 1935

I do not have to go anywhere till the end of this year. Hence I shall be here in October. Your complaint regarding pencil hand-writing is correct. I will now make the corrections in ink.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9254. Aslo C.W. 10104. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

654. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
September 17, 1935

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

Your account of the offering of goats to the goddess made painful reading. We cannot in a moment remove superstitions centuries old. The people's hearts, too, will not be prepared to take any note of us till we have performed some tangible service apparent to them. The approach to their intellect is even more difficult. The very spirit of ahimsa is a matter of the heart only, it touches the intellect in a much lesser degree. Hearts can be reached soon enough by disinterested service. Therefore our present duty consists of service among those making the goat-offering to the goddeses and we shall as the occasion arises remove their superstition. Keep in mind that the scene witnessed by you among the uneducated can be seen among the educated, too, in Calcutta and that on a vast scale.

The other incident also is of the same category[1] though not so painful or unbearable and the remedy is the same. I am not aware if Krishnadas has taken with him the seeds, etc. Your letter came into my hands after he had left.

Yes, the patient from Delhi is Harishchandra. Dr. Pingle is treating him with massage, etc., and they both have good hope of his recovery.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1881

[1] The addressee had witnessed a woman being harassed for stealing a gold ornament. She, however, returned it on his intervention and entreaty.

655. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
September 18, 1935

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

The question you have raised at this late date surprises me. What is the meaning of absolution of sins? Who is to absolve and why? Such language is used only by those who have no doubts because in talking of absolution they imply purification of man. But basically the effect of sin needs must be endured. One who endures it intelligently does not sin again and becomes pure. This is the meaning of being absolved. Absolution can never mean that man may continue to sin and seek forgiveness over and over again. One who has been forgiven does not sin again and, if he does, the absolution is no absolution.

Secondly, why must we regard every ailment as a visitation for our sins? Why should we not regard it as a blessing of God? That is, we can interpret both ways and improve ourselves either way.

Nair wrote to me, too. I would not like to interfere any more. You may yourself write to Nair. If he is indispensable for the Ashram he may suspend the training and come away. And if he comes he should be given complete authority and whatever financial assistance he may need. Whatever is to be said may be said only by way of advice. He may then act according to his judgment.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2433

656. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

[After *September 19, 1935*][1]

CHI. LILAVATI,

Just as you were delayed, I too was delayed by a couple of days. I have already sent you your previous lesson. You have all taken enough pains.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9254. Also C.W. 1050. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] The letter was in reply to one dated September 19, 1935 from the addressee.

657. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

WARDHA,
September 20, 1935

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I have not been able to write to you for weeks though I have succeeded at times in asking someone to write to you for me. All this of course apart from what Mahadev and Chandrashanker may be writing to you. Your work in connection with Jawaharlal's release was prompt and glorious. As you very properly say, it was more humanitarian than political. I am glad, too, that the authorities rose to the occasion and lost not a minute in granting adequate relief. At this end, too, our machinery was set in motion. The whole thing ended so well. This release of Jawaharlal stands out prominently as the one bright spot on the black and mournful surface. I know you do not want thanks. You may have them by the train-load if you want them. I know this, that it would have been a severe disappointment to me if you had not acted as you did. You have accustomed me to look for such prompt and decisive action on your part. Do please, however, thank all those who helped you and made your difficult mission so completely successful. You did well in flying to Badenweiler.[1] I am eagerly looking forward to your description of the visit. There can be no doubt that, if we really ever succeed in disturbing God's plans and if God has any plans, these efforts resulting in Jawaharlal's reaching there have prolonged Kamala's life. I am old-fashioned enough to believe that not a blade of grass moves but by His will. Then, too, I can derive ample satisfaction in the knowledge that you and other friends conspired to fulfil God's purpose and therefore whilst you were doing your duty angels above were saying, 'well done, well, done'.

Ghanshyamdas had to leave this morning abruptly, for he received a telegram yesterday that his mother was suffering from fever. He would otherwise have stayed here at least four days longer. He was able, however, to give me a fair summary of his doings there. Charlie must have told you all about the situation here. I can add nothing to what he must have said. I hope he benefited by the voyage. He needed rest badly. I wish so much that he would abide by the plans made here, namely, that he would live in Cambridge or some such place and busy himself in writing work of a permanent nature, holding himself at your disposal when there might be something on

[1] To see Kamala Nehru

which he alone could throw light or give guidance. I hope that you would encourage this plan. I know what a weak spot he has for you. Therefore you can always successfully act as the temptress if you chose. I must stop now.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1492

658. LETTER TO G.V. GURJALE

September 20, 1935

MY DEAR GURJALE,

I have your letter. I shall say nothing on it. I shall pray that God may help you to fulfil your difficult vows.[1]

BAPU

From a photostat G.N. 1384

659. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

September 20, 1935

MY DEAR ANAND,

I must dictate this if I am to reach you at all today. It is bad thing—these continuous attacks for Vidya. I hope that the special treatment at Delhi did good. It would certainly be good if you could accept Valji's[2] invitation. I am glad, too, that you have hope from your Harijan work in Karachi. Personally I am opposed to taking cost of clothing for Harijans. I refuse to treat them as forelorn paupers. And when I have to provide anything in the shape of clothing, I always resort to khadi [but] it is not possible to lay down a law for all. You must, therefore, use your own judgment in every case of this kind and do what appears to you to be proper or refer to Jairamdas[3]. And when in doubt always err on the right side.

Love to you both.

BAPU

SJT. ANAND HINGORANI
FEROZEPORE

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to G. V. Gurjale", 15-9-1935
[2] Valji G. Desai
[3] Jairamdas Doulatram

660. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

September 20, 1935

BHAI BHAGWANJI,

I shall send on to Jamnalalji your letter to him. Why do you deliberately select rich partners for your daughters? I got your letter regarding Devchandbhai. If I send that letter to him, he wouldn't meet you even if he otherwise had intended to do so. I, therefore, wrote to him a separate letter. I will let you know the result.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5827. Also C.W. 3050. Courtesy: Bhagwanji A. Mehta

661. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

September 20, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I hear that the date of your arrival here is being repeatedly postponed. As that means a longer stay in Almora, I certainly like the postponement. You do need rest. Even there, however, you cannot have complete rest. There are letters to be written and visitors to see. Besides, you have to attend to the affairs of that place. Nevertheless, the strain which you will have to bear here is certainly not there. Hence, I would even like it if you stay there till the beginning of winter. And winter there is famous. The winter of Simla is even more famous, and in winter the cost of living there is much less than even in Wardha. Bungalows can be rented almost for nothing. Green vegetables, fruit, etc., are plentiful and cheap and the scenery is perfect. The cold there is a creation of people's imagination only. Simla is less cold in winter than Lahore. I would, therefore, give you leave to stay there even for the whole of winter. I am sure you will do some work wherever, you are. If you spend one whole year peacefully at a hill-station, then I believe your ear complaint will be cured, Madalasa's health will become perfect and even Janakimaiya will become an excellent rider, assuming that she does not have her bones broken meanwhile. I would certainly like you to attend the meeting of the Spinners' Association. However, I would do without you if you are content not to attend. We have had enough discussions about the new policy, and you can write to me from there and send your views.

If decisions about Khadi Pratishthan, Meerut and Kashmir remain to be taken, my views about these also have been formed.

You may send your views about them too, and then resign yourself to what happens.

There remains the meeting of the Congress [Working] Committee. You need not attend even that. However, I excuse you from all this on condition that you spend all the time at some hill-station. If you come down, then it will be your duty to attend both the meetings. Didn't you go to Jullundur, as you had intended to do? Radhakrishna[1] and Sardar believe that you did not. Now Sardar will have to go. Everything is going on well here. Balkoba is experimenting with an exclusive milk diet under the guidance of Gaurishankar. He is better now. I enclose herewith a letter from Bhagwanji. I have asked him to see the man you wrote to me about.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2975

662. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 20, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I wish success to your programme for the *Rentia Baras*. I can see in khadi the means of both dharma and *artha*[2]; and anybody who understands khadi in the sense in which I understand it cannot but come to the same conclusion. I do wish that many people will join your *yajna*. Those who do so will not only advance their own welfare but also that of the country to that extent.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

If Jamnadas undertakes to look after things there, I have plenty of work for you here.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8474. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Addressee's nephew

[2] Material Welfare

663. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

WARDHA,
September 20, 1935

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

Shankerlal has sent to me your letter addressed to him.

We have got three alternatives:

1. to close the shop if they attack,
2. to defend ourselves,
3. to seek police protection.

Since we cannot resort to the first two alternatives, only the third remains. The fourth atlernative is to agree to a *panch* if they propose it. But how can we hope for such good fortune? If there is anybody in it[1] who has some sense of responsibility, we must persuade him to act in a straightforward manner.

There seems no need to remove anybody because he is in the Sevak Sangh. Whether or not somebody is in the Sevak Sangh, if he does not abide by our discipline, we may remove him giving him the reason or without doing so.

In the end, however, the question may remain whether we will be able to get persons acceptable to us. However, there should be no problem if we can find loyal persons.

If you wish you may continue to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10836. Courtesy: Purushottam Kanji Jerajani

[1] The Sevak Sangh

664. LETTER TO P.G. MATHEW

[*September 20, 1935*][1]

DEAR MATHEW,

Can't you see how difficult it is to write with the left hand and against time?

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./II

665. LETTER TO H.L. SHARMA

September 20, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

I have been unable to write to you after the letter addressed to Colombo, although there was hardly any occasion to write till you wrote from America. But this is not the whole truth. I always wanted to write to you but could not do so for sheer lack of time. God alone knows when this will reach you. I had your letter from Port Sudan and the one from Colombo too, both were pleasing. May your days in America prove as pleasant as the recent ones. I shall pursue the matter regarding the book you need. I have a feeling that the book will hardly be needed after your arrival there. Still, I shall enquire for it.

I had an extremely short letter from Draupadi and nothing since then, in spite of my writing to her. Amtussalaam too feels strongly the absence of letters from her. I suppose you are getting some letters. Do tell me if you want me to do anything.

Regarding the books belonging to the Kanya Ashram I shall write after consulting Chhotelal.

I hope your letters at any rate will continue to come in regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha*, between pp. 196 and 197

[1] In the source, the letter appears below the Gujarati letter to Narandas Gandhi, the preceding item, written on a postcard.

666. NOTES

A CORRECTION

Prof. Malkani writes saying that Harijan Day is to be observed not on the 25th but on the 24th instant as the Pact was signed on the date.[1]

SILK AND WOOL

Allied to and in support of pure khadi are the hand-spun woollens and silks supported somewhat by the A.I.S.A., the former chiefly in, Kashmir, the latter in Bengal. The question has arisen as to how far the rule of the minimum wage applies to wool and silk spinning. The rule applies much more forcibly to them than to khadi. They are still, thank God, able to stand on their own legs. They permit one to charge a higher profit and thus help to reduce the price of khadi. Therefore the payment of a fair wage to wool and silk spinners is an obligation which does not admit of shirking on any account. The idea underlying the resolution of the A.I.V.I.A. and the effort being made by the A.I.S.A. is to ensure at least a subsistence wage to all the artisans and workmen coming under their sphere of work. And seeing that the scale finally fixed will always be the minimum, the tendency wherever possible must always be to pay a higher wage than the minimum. Hence it follows that no producers can be certificated by either Association unless they maintain an accurate register of all workmen served by them and can give satisfactory proof of their having given them the stipulated wage. It follows also that no certified sale stores can stock woollens or silks that are not purchased from certified producers.

LATE JUSTICE RANADE ON THE SPINNING-WHEEL

A correspondent sends me the following interesting advertisement published by the late Justice Ranade on 9th December 1880:

> Cotton grows in various parts of our country, and the industry of spinning yarn on the charkha (*rahat*) is carried on at various places on a large scale, since yarn spun on charkha has yet a vast demand. Under the circumstances, improvement in the mode of spinning has immense

[1] *Vide* also"Harijan Sevak Sangh Resolutions", 7-9-1935 and "Notes" sub-title "Harijan Day"

possibilities of doing good to the indigent and diligent. Towards this end is this advertisement being published for a spinning-machine with the following improvements:

1. An apparatus, either as a part of the spinning-machine itself or independent of it, for cleaning the cotton.

2. The machine should yield at least five threads instead of one and thus should increase fivefold the total output.

3. The yarn, besides being even, should be fine at least as much as the yarn woven into khadi; it may not be more coarse.

4. The machine, besides being strong, should be simple and it must work smoothly and without break.

The machine is not required merely as a model (in a museum) but it must yield work in actual practice. The machines (to the above order) that will be submitted before the 15th of May 1881 will all be examined by experts and prize of Rs. 500 will be awarded to the maker of one which will be approved by the examiners.

The said maker has to undertake to supply machines up to 25 in number at our demand for a fair price and also has to undertake guarantee to repair the machines if out of order within four months of their use.

Those, then, that mean to try this experiment should accordingly inform the undersigned in writing within two months from the date of this notice.

Details may be had personally from Mr. Hattibelgelkar (one of the undersigned) Shukrawar Peth, Poona, or through post-paid letter.

POONA CITY	(SD).	SHRINIVAS SHESHO HATTIBELGELKAR,
December 9, 1880		Pensioner Record Keeper, S.D.
	(SD).	MAHADEV GOVIND RANADE

The Indian Press is requested to publish this advertisement in their papers more than once for giving it wide publicity.

As the late Gokhale used to say, nothing escaped Ranade's eagle eye and nothing that would benefit the least of his countrymen was ever too trifling for his consideration.

Harijan, 21-9-1935

667. A RENUNCIATION

In 1891 after my return from England, I virtually took charge of the children of the family and introduced the habit of walking with them—boys and girls—putting my hands on their shoulders. These were my brothers' children. The practice continued even after they

grew old. With the extension of the family, it gradually grew to proportions sufficient to attract attention.

I was unconscious of doing any wrong, so far as I can recollect, till some years ago at Sabarmati an inmate of the Ashram told me that my practice, when extended to grown-up girls and women, offended the accepted notion of decency. But after discussion with the inmates it was continued. Recently two co-workers who came to Wardha suggested that the practice was likely to set a bad example to others and that I should discontinue it on that account. Their argument did not appeal to me. Nevertheless I did not want to ignore the friends' warning. I, therefore, referred it for examination and advice to five inmates of the Ashram. Whilst it was taking shape a decisive event took place. It was brought to my notice that a bright university student was taking all sorts of liberties in private with a girl who was under his influence, on the plea that heloved her like his own sister and could not restrain himself from some physical demonstration of it. He resented the slightest suggestion of impurity. Could I mention what the youth had been doing, the reader would unhesitatingly pronounce the liberties taken by him as impure. When I read the correspondence, I and those who saw it came to the conclusion that either the young man was a consummate hypocrite or was self-deluded.

Anyway the discovery set me athinking. I recalled the warning of the two co-workers and asked myself how I would feel if I found that the young man was using my practice in its defence. I may mention that the girl who is the victim of the youth's attentions, although she regards him as absolutely pure and brotherly, does not like them, even protests against them, but is too weak to resist his action. The self-introspection induced by the event resulted, within two or three days of the reading of the correspondence, in the renunciation of the practice, and I announced it to the inmates of the Wardha Ashram on the 12th instant. It was not without a pang that I came to the decision. Never has an impure thought entered my being during or owing to the practice. My act has always been open. I believe that my act was that of a parent and enabled the numerous girls under my guidance and wardship to give their confidences which perhaps no one else has enjoyed in the same measure. Whilst I do not believe in a *brahmacharya* which ever requires a wall of protection against the touch of the opposite sex and will fail if exposed to the least tempation, I am not unaware of the dangers attendant upon the freedom I have taken.

The discovery quoted by me has, therefore, prompted me to renounce the practice, however pure it may have been in itself. Every act of mine is scrutinized by thousands of men and women, as I am conducting an experiment requiring ceaseless vigilance. I must avoid doing things which may require a reasoned defence. My example was never meant to be followed by all and sundry. The young man's case has come upon me as a warning. I have taken it in the hope that my renunciation will set right those who may have erred whether under the influence of my example or without it. Innocent youth is a priceless possession not to be squandered away for the sake of a momentary excitement, miscalled pleasure. And let the weak girls like the one in this picture be strong enough to resist the approaches, though they may be declared to be innocent, of young men who are either knaves or who do not know what they are doing.

Harijan, 21-9-1935

668. GUR-PRESERVATION [1]

While it is true that it is difficult to keep *gur* for long time especially during the rainy season, I have been told by one who ought to know that *rab*, which the juice becomes before being boiled down to *gur*, will keep indefinitely and is supposed to become better for keeping. This experiment is worth trying when the sugarcane season commences.

Harijan, 21-9-1935

[1] This appeared as a note to Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter" describing his talk with a doctor who had "cast off the habits of a lifetime, gave up drink and tobacco, also meat, to a large extent, and took to part-polished rice, hand-ground flour, leafy vegetables and raw milk . . ." The doctor had remarked : "I wish you laid in your *Harijan* greater emphasis on the scientific value of *gur*. It is in every way better than sugar, and ever so much cheaper than those foreign products—glucose and dextrose and what not. The only disadvantage is that some of our things do not keep long . . ."

669. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
September 22, 1935

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Your three welcome letters give us all accurate news about Kamala. For the time being I expect you to follow up the practice. I had telegraphed for daily wires because of the public demand. But you were right in not sending any when there was no change. You were right also in omitting the sender's name. Your presence there is a source of great satisfaction to your friends here as it is an elixir of life to Kamala. I am not writing to her separately this air mail.

I am going to take up your manuscript presently. I have no difficulty in agreeing with you in the enunciation of principles. But when we descend to the concrete, we generally use the language I have used. In the huge organization the Congress has become, no one man can hope to run the show. But some-one has to shoulder the burden. And people want some guidance. Hence my inquiry[1] . If you are elected, you will beelected for the policy and principles you stand for. I would like you therefore to tell me whether you will allow your name to be proposed for the crown of thorns.[2]

I suppose Indira will now wait till Kamala's condition is better known.

I am sending the Congress Constitution.[3] If you can concentrate your attention on it, I would like you to send me your considered criticism on it.

As to the present policy of the Congress, whilst I can in no way be responsible for the detailed working of it, it is in the main of my shaping. It is not one of drift. It is founded upon one central idea—that of consolidating the power of the people with a view to peaceful action. But in your absence, we have been literally trekking. Now that you are free you have to give the guidance and take with you such of your old colleagues as would go with you whole-heartedly. So far as I know they will not resist you, even where they may not be able to follow you. I must not weary you with more of this kind of thing

[1] *Vide*"Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 4-9-1935 and "Letter to Jawharlal Nehru",12-9-1-935

[2] *Vide* also Appendices IV and V.

[3] This was obviously not sent, as Mahadev Desai had, in his postscript, said : "It was too late to get enough stamps for posting the Constitutions. It will follow by the next air mail."

whilst you are there nursing Kamala.

Love.

BAPU

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
HEMS WALDECK
BADENWEILER, BADEN, GERMANY

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1935. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also File No. 3001/H, pp. 3-5, Police Commissioner's Office, Bombay

670. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

September 22, 1935

CHI. NARAHARI,

A letter from Ramjibhai is enclosed. There seems to be some misunderstanding once again. Do what is needed and let me know. I hope the goshala is running well. If Sardar gets time, try to settle Velchand's affairs. I hope Vanamala is feeling better.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9068

671. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

WARDHA,
September 22, 1935

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

Bhai Vallabhdas's case is complicated. Does he have any money? Is it invested in the Bhandar? At one time I think he had invested his money in it. What post has he been given now? Does it carry a salary of Rs. 80? If he were not employed in that post could he earn that much or more elsewhere? I can arrive at a decision if I know all this in detail. Write to me whatever you wish without hesitation.

If you wish, you may show this letter to Bhai Vithaldas and Vallabhdas. They too, if they wish, may write to me about this. They may also come and see me if they wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10837. Courtesy: Purushottam Kanji Jerajani

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

EXTRACTS FROM DR. SOKHEY'S NOTES ON SNAKE POISONING

NATURE OF POISONS

The colubrine poison (that of the cobra and krait) acts chiefly on the brain and spinal cord, causing death by paralysis of the respiratory centre in the brain.

Viperine poisons produce their effect on the heart and blood, death being caused by paralysis of the vasomotor centre, exhaustion from profuse and persistent bleeding, or from blood poisoning due to septic infection of the wound.

SYMPTOMS OF POISONING

COBRA VENOM. Earliest constitutional symptom is one of intoxication. Later, there is a sense of creeping paralysis, beginning in the legs and ascending to the head by way of the trunk. The head droops and there is paralysis of the muscles of the eyelids, lips, tongue and throat. Saliva dribbles from the mouth and speech becomes increasingly difficult. Nausea and vomiting frequently occur. The breathing gets more and more difficult till it finally ceases, the face being livid and distressed and swallowing impossible. The heart remains unaffected and continues to beat after respiration has failed. Death usually takes place in from one and a half to six hours.

KRAIT VENOM. Death primarily due to suffocation, but, in addition, haemorrhages into stomach and bowels may occur, accompanied in many cases with violent abdominal pain.

VIPER VENOM. Prevents clotting of the blood and destroys the internal coats of the blood vessels, thus encouraging haemorrhages in various parts of the body. The wound inflicted is painful, the parts much swollen; bleeding occurs with great infiltration and discoloration, and, lastly, sloughing occurs permitting infection. Nausea and vomiting frequently occur, but there is no paralysis.

TREATMENT

The bite of a venomous snake is unmistakably due to fang punctures. If nothing happens within ten minutes the snake may be taken as harmless, for the bite from a poisonous snake develops a burning pain and swelling rapidly. In half an hour or less,profuse sweating and vomiting may supervene. By this time, of course, treatment should have been given, specially antivenene serum. The latter can be injected before a condition of collapse has set in; the earlier the better. Treatment would probably be possible in the following order only, as medical aid is not usually at hand.

1. LIGATURE. If the patient is bitten on a limb, apply a ligature above the bite. It should compress all the tissues against a single bone, e.g., in bites on a finger the ligature should be applied on the base of the finger with a second perhaps above the elbow; in case of bite on a toe apply one ligature round the base of the toe and a second above the knee. The ligature should be slackened off about every ten minutes and suction repeated as below. Such ligation should not be kept on for much over half an hour but mechanical suction should continue at intervals for some hours.

2. INCISION. The fang should be opened with extensive incisions across, deep enough but with care not to injure the delicate skin covering the bone or to cut into a blood-vessel. A safety razor blade, if possible, sterilized by rapidly passing through a flame, may be used.

3. DRAINAGE. By cupping, if possible, or by sucking with lips (no danger involved if mouth free from sores.)

4. INJECTION OF ANTIVENENE SERUM. This may be injected as soon as medical aid is available. This serum is sold by the Central Research Institute, Kasauli.

5. SUPPLEMENTARY. It is advisable to wash the incised wound with a mild solution of permanganate of potash (pale pink colour). Do not apply permanganate crystals directly nor cauterize the wound.

Harijan, 17-8-1935

APPENDIX II

MAHADEV DESAI'S LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

ANAND BHAWAN, ALLAHABAD,
September 6, 1935

MY DEAR JAWAHARBHAI,

I am writing this from Anand Bhawan, where, like half a dozen others, I made a vain dash to meet you. Sarupbehn's telegram of the 3rd saying you were to take the Dutch air mail on Friday reached Wardha on the 4th, as also yours of the 3rd. That moment Bapu decided I must leave the same evening for Allahabad and take the chance of seeing you for no matter how brief an interval. Sarupbehn's telegram intimating that you had already left did not reach Wardha until yesterday when I was already half way to Allahabad! It was a sore disappointment, but I rejoiced that you could start a day earlier.I hope and pray that you may find Kamalabehn better and that you may be able to return with her completely restored to health.

I enclose herewith letters from Bapu and Khorshed. Bapu had also sent as his loving gifts hand-made paper—manufactured in our premises—and a hand-made

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 5-9-1935.

paper-cutter and spoon. There is no point in sending these there. By the time you return we hope to be making much superior stuff and you will have samples when you come to Wardha.

There were two messages of some importance that I had brought from Bapu: (1) That Bapu wished very much that you could assume the Congress helm next year. When he made the suggestion to the Working Committee it was unanimously accepted, and it was the general feeling that that was the only way in which much of the difficulties of the Working Committee and the bitter controversies of today could be avoided and your policy and your programme could be given a fair and unobstructed trial. The new Constitution enables you to have your own Cabinet, and those who were out would give as much co-operation as they could possibly give, but would place no obstacles in your way. (2) That you should even in Europe make no speeches or statement. Bapu was sure it would enhance your prestige and India's to impose upon yourself a vow of silence until February or until your return here.

Besides these two messages, he was anxious to have your usually frank and outspoken views on: (1) the Village Industries Association work that was absorbing all Bapu's time; (2) Bapu's views regarding Council-entry; (3) the present Congress Constitution. Bapu himself had no doubt that it was a most effective instrument of our progress and that though there was a lot of corruption in the shape of manipulation of figures, etc., it was capable of being used to prepare the country for a final and successful effort for achieving freedom; (4) the question of the minimum wage; (5) the Socialists' programme and their methods of work.

Though the progress of the constructive programme was slow, Bapu was getting more and more confirmed in his conviction that nothing else could qualify us for the final successful satyagraha compaign, for nothing heroic could be done unless we had won the hearts of the masses and this was impossible without intense constructive work in their midst enabling them to earn more and to live better.

That's about all that I was charged with. We shall expect a cable from you regarding Kamalabehn's condition as soon as you are with her. You will not think of replying to this until she feels fit and you may not send any reply at all if you can look forward to an early return.

With much love,

Yours,

MAHADEV

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1935. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX III

LETTER FROM A. DONALD MILLER[1]

[Before *September 14, 1935*]

Mr. Sharpe has passed to me your letter to him of 2nd July, in which you asked his opinion about procreation of children by those suffering from leprosy, and you made reference to the Home at Naini, Allahabad, where you gathered from Mrs. Higginbottom that that was permitted. . . .

You will be the first to realize how many questions are involved, medical, social, economic and spiritual. What is ideal and what is practical are courses that are not always identical. We have to arrive at the best possible course in a world as it is, and not as we would like it to be . . . .

At a conference held under the auspices of the Mission at Allahabad in 1924, and attended by medical experts as well as by administrators of large leper institutions, the following were among the findings of the Medical Committee, and approved by the Conference:

(a) That the disease has not been proved to be congenital, but childhood is the period of greatest liability to infection. It has been found that children separated from leprous parents at birth and thereafter protected from the possibility of infection do not develop the disease. These facts make strongly advisable the earliest possible separation of infants and children from such leper parents as have the disease in an infectious form.

(b) That in view of the considerable degree of fecundity of lepers, especially of females, and the excessive danger of infection to the children of lepers, both of which play a great part in maintaining the prevalence of the disease, the separation of the sexes is desirable as far as possible. Where this is not found to be practicable married lepers should only be allowed to live together on the express understanding that any children born to them shall be separated from their infected parents at the earliest possible age. It is also especially desirable to separate parents presenting good prospects of recovery under efficient treatment, both to eliminate the risk of the healthy mate becoming infected while the partner is undergoing treatment and because child-bearing is often accompanied by rapid development of the disease. . . .

More recent investigation has gone to strengthen the view that both for the leper mother and for her child, procreation is not to be encouraged. The mother is subject to strain that gives the disease an opportunity of developing; the child is

[1] *Vide*"Procreation among lepers", 14-9-1935. Only extracts are reproduced here.

subject to grave and constant risk of infection so long as he is with the mother, if she has the disease in its contagious stage . . . .

When we touch the spiritual issue we reach ground where it is not easy to dogmatize. Yet I think it is clear that the highest solution of the problem raised lies in spiritual realms. Sacrifices of one kind and another are called for by all in the building up of a nobler future; individual sacrifice is of the very bone and marrow of the common good. And the sacrifice that is demanded of a man or woman, depending upon God's grace and seeking His will, who has leprosy is to refrain from imperilling future lives by any personal gratification.

So that we arrive, quite decisively I feel, at the conclusion that ideally it is neither well medically, socially, nor spiritully for there to be cohabitation of destitute lepers in institutions, where it leads to the procreation of children.

But I said that 'what is ideal and what is practical are courses that are not always identical', and so it comes about that sometimes, while the Mission to Lepers has as its definite policy the non-provision of married quarters for those who come voluntarily to us and who are our guests, circumstances have sometimes made this policy incapable of complete adoption . . . .

At Allahabad which you mention in your letter married quarters do continue for those already occupying them, but the weight of evidence is clearly that such quarters are not serving the highest good, and so for fresh admissions provision is only made for them in either the men's or the women's separate quarters.

Where patients come to an institution under legal compulsion, the issue would be somewhat altered, at any rate on the social score. Then it would be a case of a community definitely taking the responsiblity for governing the lives of others. But in all Mission institutions in India patients come voluntarily, and are our guests and not our prisoners. And just as you at your old Ashram at Sabarmati had principles to be observed by your guests calculated to achieve the highest good, so we at our institutions are endeavouring, so far as is possible, to achieve the greatest good by a policy which will, as far as is practical, not encourage the procreation of children by leper parents.

Have I made our difficulties and our ideals clear? I hope so.

Harijan, 14-9-1935

APPENDIX IV

MAHADEV DESAI'S LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

WARDHA,
September 25, 1935

MY DEAR JAWAHARLALJI,

Bapuji is too busy to write today and so I am writing instead. There has been no news from you for some days, and we take it that no news is good news. Progress is bound to be painfully slow, but we trust your presence will act as an infallible medicine. And what a comfort it must be to Indu who would hardly have borne the strain without you.

My dash to Allahabad to see you was not valueless, for I was the privileged bearer of your valuable manuscript. I read three parts (about 275 pages) on the way and was in raptures over them. Work here has prevented me from further progress, but Khorshed has finished it and Bapu has now started on it. He finished the 1st part today and hopes to get through it soon. Of course he does all this reading in what he calls the 'Library' (meaning the W. C.!). You will be amused to hear that the only book which shares the W. C. shelf, with your manuscript, is a biography of Hitler! He finished Hitler's autobiography (*My Struggle*) some days ago.

Yours affectionately,
MAHADEV

[PS.]

The Congress Constitution is accompanying this.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1935. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX V

MAHADEV DESAI'S LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[2]

WARDHA,
September 29, 1935

MY DEAR JAWAHARLALJI,

I am afraid Bapu must miss today's airmail, too. There has been a number of visitors and just at the present moment when the post must be sent he is spinning and giving an interview. But he asked me, interrupting the interview for a second, that I must acknowledge your important letter received yesterday dated September 20 and tell you how happy he is that you have been able to communicate your decision[3]. No

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 22-9-1935
[2] *ibid*
[3] Accepting the Congress presidentship.

letter could be nobler and if you did not write in the straight way you have done you would not be you. Bapu is regularly reading the *Magnum Opus*[1] and today he has finished the second part. There are eight parts, but Upadhyaya gave me only seven. The eighth was not yet ready when I left Allahabad, and Kripalani who comes here for the A.I.S.A. meeting on the 10th will bring the eighth part.

Yours affectionately,
MAHADEV

[PS.]

The other letter giving detailed news of Kamala's health also arrived yesterday. What a cross you are carrying. May God sustain you.

MAHADEV

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1935. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Addressee's autobiography.

1. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

Unrevised WARDHA,

September 23, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Your letter to Choudhury has told. He has taken it in the right spirit. There was no occasion for apology. And if you cannot call a spade a spade to your own people in your own home, which Maganwadi is, where could you do so? You *must* repeat the performance, whenever the occasion arises. This size is especially prepared for you. But you will give me your criticism on it. For the stinking lot you have to pay nothing. Has the stink gone with exposure to the sun and the air?

Puri should send his detailed criticism without delay. He must not wait for the time when he comes here. I must not be kept in darkness.

I am eating your apples with vengeance. And I needed them. They and *musambis* have acted like medicine.

Mira is free from fever. But she is still terribly weak and the digestive apparatus does not respond as it should. In spite of big doses of Eno's Fruit Salt, she has to take the enema in order to get a clearance. But there is no anxiety on her behalf. You won't get full marks as a good nurse, nor Shummy as a good doctor, unless between you two [you] make Pyarelal take milk and your excellent butter. Has Shummy anything to add to what I have given[1] in *Harijan* on snake bites? Is there an easy way of distinguishing a poisonous from a non-poisonous snake? Does he recommend any book on it?

When does he think Kumarappa can be discharged?

Here are some letters for your guests[2] (!)

Love.

BAPU

[1] *Vide* "Snake Poisoning", 17-8-1935.

[2] Pyarelal, Kumarappa and Devdas

[PS.]

When do you descend to the plains? You may not overstay your time in Simla for the sake of the convalescents.

From the original: C.W. 3551. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6360

2. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 23, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I can see your tears of joy on your letter. If and when I close my eyes in the same condition in which I am today, you may shed more such tears.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8475. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

3. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

September 23, 1935

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

I have your letter. If I didn't know you, I would be displeased to get no letter from you. I console myself thinking that you must have some good reason for not writing to me, either that you want to save my time or to save yours. According to my nature, I would rather that persons like you wrote to me frequently so that I could know them better and hence could also help.

I have not yet been able to go through the report of the Harijan work in Kathiawar. I do wish to read it. What you write about Chhaganlal has disturbed me. The Harijan work there must not suffer. And we cant't also afford Jivanlal losing interest in it. Can you make any suggestion? After your letter, it is not possible for me to keep still and do nothing. Can I use the contents of your letter in writing to

Chhaganlal?

Would it be correct to say that you have completely recovered now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gurjarati: M.M.U./II

4. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHA,
September 23, 1935

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I can understand your embarrassment. I have written to Nilkanth that he should undertake to send the amount to Gosibehn[1]. I hope your affairs are going on well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

5. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

WARDHA,
September 24, 1935

DEAR SATISBABU,

I have gone through your correspondence with Malkani. I enclose a copy of my letter to him which speaks for itself. About Sharma our letters have crossed each other. Biswanath has got to be helped against himself.[2] I do not suppose I know him at all but from the correspondence with Annada I have gathered the impression that he is one of your faithful workers. But whether he is that or not, he must not be allowed to go astray for want of attention. Therefore even if you have to neglect your work a bit and if he would not come alone to me, you should bring him with you. That is of course if you think that his being with me is not likely to aggravate his disease. This is

[1] Gosibehn Captain
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Biswanath", 14-9-1935.

merely to tell you that I am anxious about his mental condition but you should be the final judge as for the proper treatment to be given to him.

BAPU

SJT. SATISBABU

CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 2730

6. LETTER TO B.G. KHER

September 24, 1935

MY DEAR KHER,

I ought to have written this to you whilst Swami was here, but I simply could not do it and then it escaped me altogether, till I got a reminder from Swami yesterday afternoon. I see no contradiction between what Thakkar Bapa has written and what I conveyed to Swami, Harijan Sevek Sangh won't take direct responsibility of owning the property in Pandharpur, but it will provide the majority of trustees and continue to do so, as vacancies occur by any reason whatsoever. The idea behind this arrangement is that the Sangh should not undertake any financial responsibility. Its burden would be fully discharged when it has appointed trustees who are able to manage property financially and otherwise. This proposition was adopted under my advice. The Sangh has not sufficient workers to enable it to take charge of properties that are being offered to it. This Pandharpur proposition has been entertained because you and Swami are interested in it and because both of you are connected with the donor, who I am sure holds advanced and liberal views on untouchability and other matters and who wholly endorses the Sangh's campaign against untouchability. I hope this is sufficiently clear and quite satisfactory from the point of view of the Buva. If any further elucidation is required please do not hesitate to write to me. I understand from Shri Kavde who was here for two days that the Buva was expected to be somewhere near Wardha during the first week of October. If that does happen I would like you to urge him to pass a few days with me at Maganwadi so that I can make his personal acquaintance and understand his desire about the management of the Dharmashala in Pandharpur. In view of the conversation I had with Swami and Shri Kavde I would advise that in drawing up the trust-deed you give the

trustees full powers of mortgage, alienation, etc., so long as the corpus is used for the exclusive benefit of Harijans. I have explained to Swami why I consider the possession of this power by the trustees as a vital part of the deed.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

7. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

WARDHA,
September 24, 1935

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

I have your letter. I am conferring with Shankerlal as to what should be done. My own inclination is to hand the charge to Meerut people because they already know the working of the Kashmir Bhandar. If that proposition does not commend itself to Shankerlal or to the council, your alternate proposals will be helpful. Let us decide upon certain propositions as decisive, namely, that we shall not run any Bhandar at a loss. Secondly we shall not make purchases even in the open market for replenishing our stocks if we do not know what wages the workers at those articles have received. This applies to the market *pattus*[1] you have mentioned. It is not enough for us to know, that the *pattus* come within our definition of khadi or swadeshi.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA
LAHORE

From a copy: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Felt

8. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

September 24, 1935

CHI. VALJI,

I couldn't write to you because of heavy pressure of work. Munshi's writing is neither seductive nor obscene. I didn't see anything objectionable in his ridicule of *brahmacharya*. I had read nearly the whole of it before writing the Foreword. I had liked his effort. The fact is that, having come to know Munshi personally, I have developed a partiality for him. He has capacity for self-sacrifice. He seems to be a sincere man. This does not mean that I like everything about him. But we should regard others in the spirit of ahimsa, that is, with a broad mind. In other words, we should judge everybody according to his limitations. I hope this answers all your questions. I received your article. I hope all of you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7474. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

9. MESSAGE ON BIRTHDAY[1]

[On or after *September 24, 1935*][2]

These spurts are no good, if one sleeps away the rest of the year; and now that we have a definite ideal in front of us, viz., the working towards a minimum wage for eight hours' work, some of us must try to do eight hours' spinning, either single or by several combining together, keeping a regular record of everyone's spinning and every

[1] The message extracted from "Weekly Letter" by Mahadev Desai who had explained: "When some years ago Gandhiji came to know about the public celebration of his birthday', he said: 'Let the day be consecrated to spinning for *Daridranarayana*.' And ever since, the celebrations have taken the form of some kind of khadi work. This year the Hindu [Vikram era] date was separated from the Christian date by nine days and people devoted the whole time to extra spinning or selling khadi or making khadi collections. As the 24th of September (birthday according to the Hindu year) coincided with the Harijan Day, in many parts of India effort was made to do some special acts of service for the Harijans . . . . Several places, including our own, had 16 hours' unbroken spinning on wheel for the whole period. But this was far from satisfying Gandhiji . . . ."

[2] *Ibid*

day's spinning, so that one can arrive at a standard average spinning . . . . I understand the depth of feeling behind your wishing many returns of my birthday. But as you know well, not a minute will be added by the Creator to the allotted span of my life, no matter what human effort is put forth. Nevertheless, while it lasts we shall always continue to pray and otherwise strive for one another's good and longevity.

Harijan, 12-10-1935

10. LETTER TO BHUJANGILAL CHHAYA

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
September 25, 1935

CHI. BHUJANGILAL,

I am guilty of delay in replying to your letter. There is no need at all to try to see Harilal. You yourself must decide about your future.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2605

11. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

September 25, 1935

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter. Reading about the things that Balvantrai has tolerated doesn't lessen my grief. Please tell him so, or convey it in a letter, if you have shown him my previous letter. The news that the houses of Bhangis were satisfactorily completed though after much delay, was welcome.

Can you not, with the help of Dakshinamurti, find somebody in Bhavnagar who would take up debt-relief work among Bhangis? Valji's nephew Rasik is studying in Shamaldas College. College students are often found doing silent social work while studying. See if you can tempt Rasik. If he comes forward, he may also be able to draw his friends into the work. The fact that 15 maunds of bones did not give even a basketful of manure means that they were heated more than necessary. The bones should merely be charred, that is, heated till

they turn black. They should be heated less than wood is when it is turned into charcoal. There will then be hardly any loss of weight in the bones. I performed the process myself and produced manure. The experiment was demonstrated in Maganwadi. The method is now frequently made use of in Nalvadi. The fuel consists of dried stumps of uprooted hedge-plants. Wood should not be used for the purpose, and dry sticks not at all. The material used for fuel should be such as would burn just a little longer than hay, so that when it is burnt up it will leave the bones unburnt. It should be remembered that our aim is not even to heat the bones till they look like charcoal. Charring bones means merely heating them till they turn black. We have to go just a little further than smoking them. Bones heated in this manner lose nothing besides a little nitrogen, and certainly no phosphorus. If the phosphorus in bones is lost, their essence is lost. Collect a few bones and make the experiment yourself several times till you have mastered the process. Did you by any chance try to heat the 15 maunds of bones together at one time?

More and more bone-mills and flour-mills will continue to come up and people will go in for their products. But wouldn't a true *brahmachari* remain unshaken in his vow even in the midst of widespread immorality? Going further than that, don't we see that, though the threat of death hangs over everybody, the whole world strives, and commendably, to stave off the evil day? If in the same way we regard it our duty to do our best, we would go on doing our work fearlessly and with faith and a cheerful mind no matter how often we fail.

The success of mills lies in being able to pay dividends, whereas ours lies in doing our duty. One who has dedicated himself to a cause doesn't hope for the reward of his work. A person who travels to Hardwar in a train does nothing very great, but a pilgrim who travels on foot from Kanyakumari to Jamnotri may be said to have achieved something. I say 'something' because after all Jamnotri is only a physical goal. Our effort for the revival of village industries belongs to the same class. But real effort consists in striving for an invisible goal. Despite the coming into vogue of aeroplanes, we shall need our legs. Likewise, despite the numerous mills which have sprung up, there will be need for village industries. Just as it would be foolish to neglect cultivating strength of limbs because of the increasing use of aeroplanes, so it would be foolish to neglect village industries because

of the multiplication of mills. We are trying to save to country from committing such folly. There can be no room for despair in such effort.

The description of the condition of the cultivators in Samdhiyala proves that I am fully justified in giving the first place in our programme to village sanitation. Even this first step in man's education has come to be neglected. The reason for that neglect is the unforgivable sin of the higher castes in looking down upon the lower castes.

If Dhiru has gone to Totaramji to learn agriculture or with the noble desire of serving him, my congratulations to him, Rama and you. I never think about Harilal now.

I have already written to you about the result of my inquiry concerning . . .'s[1] character. To me his letter seemed to be perfectly sincere. It seems he is connected with several institutions in Rajkot. He has suggested to me that, if I wish, I might make further inquiries to ascertain the correctness of the facts stated in his letter. Narandas has no doubt regarding that, and Bhai Jethalal has produced before me no definite evidence. I, therefore, have made no further enquiry. However, I am prepared to do so if you produce definite evidence. I have still kept that door open for you. Personally, I have no bias either way in the matter. My condition is like that of a judge who changes his view from time to time as more and more evidence for or against is brought forward. I have sent Narandas's letter to Jethalal Joshi. Please tell him that he has not even acknowledged it, and, if he has not received my letter, inform me accordingly. I haven't even kept a copy of Narandas's letter. The date of posting of my letter can be ascertained from my register. Jethalal lives in the same house where you live. If, therefore, you feel inclined to take up this matter, by all means do so. You must have seen from Narandas's letter that he does not accept a single charge. It should be borne in mind that. . .s'[2] character or whether or not he habitually wears khadi is not the only subject-matter of inquiry. It is possible that Narandas's attitude on that point is not correct. I have not come to any conclusion even about that. The main complaint is against the whole management of

[1] The name has been omitted.

[2] *Ibid*

the school and Narandas's fitness as a teacher.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5534

12. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 25, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

Please find enclosed a letter for Jamnadas. I am also writing one to Kusum. Your purse is being filled up fairly well. Some work is being done here under Amtussalaam's inspiration. One charkha will be kept working for sixteen hours daily till the 2nd. Yesterday, it was kept working 24 hours just by chance. Kanti started spinning late in the evening and continued till 4.45 a.m. He rose at the time of morning prayer, because only he and Mahadev have all the eighteen chapters by heart. Kanaiyo cannot but absorb himself in such work and Navin also has done the same. It looks as if they really like it all. Does Mathew take part in any of the activities?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8486. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

13. LETTER TO K.M. MUNSHI

September 25, 1935

BHAI MUNSHI,

I add the good wishes of you both to those of many others. But isn't it God's will that prevails in the end? Who can thwart the decrees of Fate? Have you considered what kind of figure I would cut in the Sahitya Parishad? When my name was suggested on a similar occasion years ago, the late Ramanbhai had remarked that I did not know even as much Gujarati as a raw matriculate. I had at that time agreed wholeheartedly with him when I heard the remark. As my era had already commenced then, others who heard that sincerely meant remark had felt hurt, but I saw in it nothing but sincerity of purpose and regard

for propriety. Our people's love is blind. They believe that a person who is capable in one field must be so in other fields, too. If the person is weak-minded, he would therefore soon come to grief. Ramanbhai's remark made in 1915-16 holds true literally even today, and I am therefore shaking in my shoes ever since my name was suggested for the forthcoming session of the Parishad. In cherishing the aspiration to make the Parishad a symbol of Gujarat's unity and culture, don't you think you are making its field unlimited? And I see no likelihood of that aspiration being realized through my becoming its President. This is precisely the state of my mind. If even after knowing this all the members desire that I must become the President and if the Parishad is to meet next year, you may give me an opportunity to think again then.[1] You have approached me as advocate of the Reception Committee, but now please become my advocate and reply to the Committee on my behalf that you are personally convinced by my argument and agree that I should be spared from having to become President.

Regarding the Advisory Committee for *Hansa*, I thought I had said my say.[2] But Mahadev gave me your message just now. I see that you have enumerated fifteen languages, from out of which you yourself agree to the exclusion of three, leaving twelve. Fixing an upper limit of 20 for twelve languages, you may select whatever names you like. I would find it difficult to make the selection, since I do not know everybody. I was concerned only with the size, and if my argument on that point appeals to you, you yourself should select the agreed number of names. I will accept your selection.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 7592. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

[1] Gandhiji presided over its twelth session in Ahmedabad from October 31 to November 2, 1936; for his presidential and concluding addresses.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to K. M. Munshi", 8-7-1935.

14. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

AGANWADI, WARDHA,
September 26, 1935

CHI. NARAHARI,

I got your letter. We cannot afford to give way to despair in this manner. I can't explain much in a letter. Find some time after Parikshitlal returns and come over for a while.

It is true that we are not able to give the girls as much as we ought to. But it is also true that we do not have the necessary women workers. God creates difficulties so that we might overcome them and not run away from them. You acted rightly in relieving Bhagwanji. Puratan may go to a village if he wishes. We may certainly introduce any reforms that you desire and others also that we can think of. While doing so we should bear only one thing in mind. namely, that we must not abandon anything we have started so long as we see no immorality in it. Think over this while you are waiting to come here. Can Anasuyabehn take charge of the younger girls who give you trouble? If she is short of space, can she shift her Bal Mandir to the Harijan Ashram?

You can do the tanning and the dairy work even there. Where else will you get the facilities of land, etc., which you have there? Valunjkar has been doing his work here so efficiently and intelligently that I am hopeful that he will soon be able to run tanneries at a number of places. He has even undertaken to start one at Nasik. A building is already under construction there and the work will start as soon as it is completed. You will see that, too, when you come here. Valunjkar has resolved to suffer no loss from the very beginning and all kinds of schemes are being thought out with that end in view. I think from the economic point of view the work here will be more successful than Satisbabu's project. The latter has already consumed a lot of money by now. The return has yet to come. In Valunjkar's project very little money has been invested, the hides are being tanned, there is a sufficient number of cobblers for the work and the trainees, too, are making progress.

Please remember that a servant of the people must display all the four qualities in proper balance, namely, the Brahmin's wisdom, the Kshatriya's fearlessness, the Vaishya's purity of management and the

Shudra's capacity for untiring labour. The greatest shortcoming in us all is the lack of the Kshatriya spirit. We lose heart much too soon. We tremble to stand alone. At sight of the tiger of difficulties, whether we are one or many we start running away. Please do not think that any of these charges is directed against you alone. I am explaining to you what I see all around me and even in myself. As for myself, where can I run away to? My condition, therefore, is like that of a Bania who had got himself tied on the back of a horse. If you have not heard this story, please ask me some time. I will enjoy telling it to you or, if you cannot come in the near future, will write to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9089

15. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

September 27, 1935

Visma Pathmathi: Tame avsho te pahelan hun maro path lakhirahish.[1]

From the 20th chapter: 'I shall have written my lesson when you will come'. ('when you come' is better.) In the second sentence: 'The old woman will have finished grinding *bajra* before the girls will reach home.' ('reach home' is better.)

Between two actions which will be happening in future the one that is going to be accomplished will take the Future Perfect. Now do the 20th chapter. We shall think what you may do next after you complete the *Pathmala,* Part I.

From now onwards I shall not use a pencil.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9254. Also C.W. 10106. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] The addressee had requested Gandhiji to translate a few sentences from the 20th chapter as she was not able to understand the Future Perfect.

[2] The addressee had complained that the corrections in pencil faded out.

16. LETTER TO RASIK DESAI

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
September 27, 1935

CHI. RASIK,

I have not preserved your letter, but the language was so clumsy that I had to read it twice to take in its meaning. It is natural that you two couldn't have any such meaning in your minds, but the letter did mean that you certainly wanted your money to be used for relief work but that I should send you an account showing the particulars of individuals to whom it was paid. If Kanti has written to you and said that the money received by me was not being used, he is not right. It is true that some funds that are lying with me are not being used as yet, but if Kanti did write what you think he did, you ought not to have sent me at all the money for Quetta relief work. If, however, you felt it your dharma to send it, you should have quoted Kanti'swords and told me that your money should be spent immediately and should not lie with me unused.

I hope you will see that your error in writing in English was still more serious. I was surprised to discover that, after having lived with me for so many years, you have not been able to understand and see that, however well one may know the English language, one should write or speak in it only when absolutely necessary. Since there was no incivility anywhere in your letter, you need not have apologized for it. If, however, you lose all that you have learnt in the Ashram, then will be the time for you to apologize.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 6622. Also C.W. 4354

17. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI N. PATEL

September 27, 1935

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

Even the small quantity of ghee you sent last time turned out to be very bad. It had to be boiled again. As soon as he tasted it, Swami told me that I ought not to eat it. Even if the ghee comes in a goods

train, it should remain good. It should be so well packed that there would be no danger of leakage. If you cannot procure really good ghee, you should stop sending any. One of our men should go to the people who prepare the ghee and teach them how to make it and see that they pack only properly boiled ghee and use clean tins. It requires great art to boil the ghee properly. Don't mind having sent the last sample, I will examine it and let you know.

Read '400 yards' in place of '400 rounds'.[1] You yourself may fix the rate there, but see that the spinner gets at least one and a half pice per hour. It will be possible to have different rates per yard or rounds from province to province, but everywhere the spinner must get enough to pay for well balanced and nourishing food.

It is good news that Dahibehn's eyes could be treated and cured in Anand itself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9007

18. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

September 27, 1935

Your replies to . . .' s[2] questions[3] are perfectly correct. Such questions may be asked at any time. When they are asked by a responsible person, we must reply to them. There can be no time limit for such questions. The people's memory is always short, but their servants cannot afford to lose patience. They must always be ready to reply. I have, therefore, sent your reply in my name.

Nothing whatever is going on in Wardha. There was nothing, either, when Vallabhbhai was here. When Ghanshyamdas came, Vallabhbhai, too, came to listen to his stories. There was therefore, nothing in our talks except Ghanshyamdas's stories of his exploits in England and some gossip. This real fact, fortunately, escaped the attention of reporters altogether, otherwise all kinds of speculation would have followed and Ghanshyamdas would have been upset.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Kasturba Gandhi", 24-8-1935
[2] Omission as in the source
[3] About the Tilak Swaraj Fund

Rajaji's being here at that time was just an accident. He was returning with Lakshmi and was bound to break journey here on his way. As Ghanshyamdas was coming I detained him for two days. I don't remember anybody having so much as even mentioned the subject of my re-entry into politics. I do not understand how he gave currency to such a wild story.

I have made an inquiry. Why didn't you ask him?

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 159

19. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 27, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have nothing particular to write about.

You must have received my letter to Mathew. A spinning-wheel is kept going here continuously for 16 hours.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./ II. Also C.W. 8477. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

20. THE HINDI PRACHAR WEEK

The foregoing notice[1] hardly needs any recommendation from me. The solid work done by the institution must be its own recommendation. The people of the South should prove their appreciation by giving it adequate financial support.

Harijan, 28-9-1935

[1] Not reproduced here; written by Harihar Sharma, it gave an account of the origin and progress of Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha and the decision of its Executive Council to "organize Hindi Prachar Week from September 30 to October 6, 1935 . . . . in order to convey the message of Hindi to every home in South India and also to collect funds . . . " The Council had also desired "to enlist as many new members as possible to the Sabha during the Week. . . ."

21. ABOUT 'CONVERSION'

Mr. A. A. Paul of the Federation of International Fellowships asked me the other day to define in these columns my position on 'conversion'. I told him to frame definite questions on which he would like my answers. The result was the following letter with a list of propositions attached:

> You remember that a little over a month ago, I wrote to you asking you whether you would publish a statement giving your views on 'conversion'.You wrote back to say that it would be easier for you if we could put them in the form of questions or assertions. At the request of the Executive Committee of the Madras International Fellowship, one of our Christian members has prepared the enclosed statement and the Committee has asked me to pass it on to you with the request that you will kindly find it possible to answer these statements in *Harijan.* Of course you will notice that the questions are framed from the Christian point of view; but the Committee feels that the questions will apply equally well to other Missionary Religions which are engaged in conversion programme. May I hope that you will find it possible to explain your attitude to these questions?
>
> PROPOSITIONS
>
> 1. Conversion is a change of heart from sin to God. It is the work of God. Sin is separation from God.
>
> 2. The Christian believes that Jesus is the fulfilment of God's revelation to mankind, that He is our Saviour from sin, that He alone can bring the sinner to God and thus enable him to live.
>
> 3. The Christian, to whom God has become a living reality and power through Christ, regards it as his privilege and duty to speak about Jesus and to proclaim the free offer which He came on earth to make.
>
> 4. If any man's heart is so moved by the hearing of this message as to repent and wish to live a new life as a disciple of Jesus, the Christian regards it as right to admit him to the company of His professed believers which is called the Christian Church.
>
> 5. The Christian shall do all in his power to sound the sincerity of conviction in all such cases and shall point out, as he can, the consequences of such a step, stressing the duty a man owes to his family.

6. The Christian shall do everything in his power to prevent any motives of self-seeking on his part and of material considerations on the part of the convert.

7. Inasmuch as Jesus came to give full life, and that as a matter of history conversion has often meant an enhancing of personality, the Christian shall not be accused of using material inducements if conversion results in the social uplift of the convert—it always being understood that such shall never be used as a means to an end.

8. The Christian is right in accepting as his duty the care of the sincere convert—body, soul and mind.

9. It shall not be brought against the Christian that he is using material inducements, when certain facts in Hindu social theory, out of his control, are in themselves an inducement to the Harijan. (But see points 5 and 6.)

In order to understand the background to these propositions, the reader should know that the origin of the main question was a discussion I was carrying on with Mr. A. A. Paul on the so called mass conversion of a village predominantly or wholly composed of Harijans. The reader may later on read more of this 'conversion'. For the present purpose it is enough that he understands, that it is the method of mass conversion that has to be tested in the light of these propositions. Indeed the ninth proposition almost says as much.

I have read the propositions several times, and the more I read them the more I feel that they can be applied only to individual contacts, never to the mass of mankind. Take the very first proposition. Sin is defined to be "separation from God". "Conversion is a change of heart from sin to God. It is the work of God." So says the author of the propositions. If conversion is the work of God, why should that work be taken away from Him? And who is man to take away anything from God? He may become a humble instrument in the hands of God. Even so he cannot be a judge of men's hearts. I often wonder whether we are always true judges of our own hearts. 'Man, know thyself' must have been wrung out of a desparate heart. And if we know so little of ourselves, how much less must we know of our neighbours and remote strangers who may differ from us in a multitude of things, some of which are of the highest moment? The second proposition deals with the Christian belief handed to the believer from generation to generation, the truth of which thousands of Christians born are never called upon to test for themselves, and rightly not. Surely it is a dangerous thing to present it

to those who have been brought up to a different belief. And it would appear to me to be impertinent on my part to present my untested belief to the professor of another which for aught I know may be as true as mine. It is highly likely that mine may be good enough for me and his for him. A thick woollen coat would be the thing for one living in the cold region of the earth, as a piece of loincloth for another living near the equatorial regions.

The third proposition too, like the first, relates to the mysteries of religion which are not understood by the common people who take them in faith. They work well enough among people living in the traditional faith. They will repel those who have been brought up to believe something else.

The other five propositions deal with the conduct of the missionary among those whom he is seeking to convert. They seemto me to be almost impossible of application in practice. The start being wrong, all that follows must be necessarily so. Thus how is the Christian to sound the sincerity of the conviction of his hearers? By a show of hands? By personal conversation? By a temporary trial? Any test that can be conceived will fail even to be reasonably conclusive. No one but God knows a man's heart. Is the Christian so sure of his being so right in body, mind and soul as to feel comfortably "right in accepting as his duty the care of the sincere convert—body, soul and mind"?

The last proposition—the crown of all the preceding ones—takes one's breath away. For it makes it clear that the other eight are to be applied in all their fulness to the poor Harijans. And yet the very first proposition has not ceased to puzzle the brains of some of the most intellectual and philosophical persons even in the present generation. Who knows the nature of original sin? What is the meaning of separation from God? What is that of the union with God? What are the signs of him who is united to God? Are all who dare to preach the message of Jesus the Christ sure of their union with God? If they are not, who will test the Harijans' knowledge of these deep things?

This is my reaction to the foregoing propositions. I hope no Christian who reads it will be offended by it. I would have been false to my numerous Christian friends, if I had hidden from them my true position on the nine propositions.

My own detached view may now be stated in a few words. I

believe that there is no such thing as conversion from one faith to another in the accepted sense of the term. It is a highly personal matter for the individual and his God. I may not have any design upon my neighbour as to his faith which I must honour even as I honour my own. For I regard all the great religions of the world as true at any rate for the people professing them as mine is true for me. Having reverently studied the scriptures of the world, I have no difficulty in perceiving the beauties in all of them. I could no more think of asking a Christian or a Mussalman or a Parsi or a Jew to change his faith than I would think of changing my own. This makes me no more oblivious of the limitations of the professors of those faiths, than it makes me of the grave limitations of the professors of mine. And seeing that it takes all my resources in trying to bring my practice to the level of my faith and in preaching the same to my co-religionists, I do not dream of preaching to the followers of other faiths. "Judge not lest ye be judged" is sound maxim for one's conduct. It is a conviction daily growing upon me that the greatand rich Christian missions will render true service to India, if they can persuade themselves to confine their activities to humanitarian service without the ulterior motive of converting India or at least her unsophisticated villagers to Christianity, and destroying their social superstructure, which notwithstanding its many defects has stood now from time immemorial the onslaughts upon it from within and from without. Whether they—the missionaries—and we wish it or not, what is true in the Hindu faith will abide, what is untrue will fall to pieces. Every living faith must have within itself the power of rejuvenation if it is to live.

Harijan, 28-9-1935

22. SOYA BEANS

As soya beans are claimed to possess high nutritive value, I reproduce the following[1] from pamphlet No. 7 published by the Bombay Presidency Baby and Health Week Association to enable the food reformer to make experiments.

Harijan, 28-9-1935

[1] Not reproduced here

23. ACHARYA P. C. RAY ON SPINNERS' WELFARE

In recommending to Khadi Pratishthan, in which he is deeply interested and to which he has made handsome contributions out of his savings, the scheme for raising the wages of spinners and for making self-sufficing khadi, the main activity of the Pratishthan, Acharya P. C. Ray sends me the following nine points[1] which besides being valuable in themselves show the deep faith he retains in khadi and the active interest he takes in it even at his advanced age.

Harijan, 28-9-1935

24. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
September 28, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I better dictate this letter. These ups and downs in Devdas's health do not trouble me at all. I know that he is getting on there. And I know further that he is in the best of hands. Whoever gave the news to Pyarelal did no good turn. Really and truly I have never felt better.

The whole of the last supply of your apples was practically finished by me. And I was also taking *musumbis.* Therefore there is no cause for worry, even on that score. Whenever I feel the need for fruit I shall certainly take it. I have not left off raw leaves. There was for a few days no room left for *neem* leaves. So that was omitted. But then all the vegetables were to be omitted if I was taking fruit and the fruit jam. And now I have gone back to *neem* leaves. The *bhaji* I have been taking in its cooked form in order to avoid constipation but I stopped it when I was taking apples. You will please therefore not worry about my health.

Now about Ba. If she is not happy there and if she can be spared, I think it is no good keeping her there. With all your care and attention I am quite sure that Devdas does not need her presence there. If, therefore, she feels like coming away to Wardha you should let her do so. She is well able to travel by herself. She requires some

[1] *Vide* Appendix, "Spinners' Welfare", 28-9-1935.

assistance at stations where she alights. That you can arrange without the slightest difficulty at Kalka, Ambala and Delhi. Someone has simply to meet her at the station and put her in the right compartment.

I am looking forward to your letter giving me your own programme. I should be very much disturbed if you altered your own programe on account of Devdas or Kumarappa. If they cannot stay at Manorville after you leave it, they must shift somewhere else or go to some other hill-station, if a more prolonged stay is necessary. And I do think that both of them should remain in the bracing climate at least up to the end of October if not November. Devdas may even require a longer stay.

The apples and your letter have just come in. If Ba forfeits her ticket, she should pay the fare, i.e., Devdas.

Love.

From the original: C.W. 3552. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6361

25. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

September 28, 1935

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter written on *Rentia Baras* Day. It looks very nice indeed that you are taking part in the uninterrupted spinning programme in the national school. Thanks to Amtussalaam's efforts, here also spinning is going on daily for 16 hours. Sixteen persons give one hour each by turn. The spinning starts at 5 a.m. and goes on up to 9 p.m. About 3,500 rounds are spun daily. I have suggested some changes in this programme, and my suggestion that one spinning-wheel should be kept systematically working day and night is being discussed.

It seems you have not correctly understood my article[1]. I did not give up the practice under pressure from anybody. When Morarji and Chandulal came here to express their views, their arguments had no effect on my mind or could not make me give up the practice. But when I was faced with the problem of how to save the young man, my attitude changed immediately. I have done many things in my life with the motive of saving other persons. Nor have I accepted it as a

[1] *Vide* "A Renunciation", 21-9-1935.

principle never to yield to popular sentiments, though I do oppose doing anything merely to respect such sentiments. My rule is this: Whenever respecting popular sentiments does not involve violation of moral principles or loss of self-respect, they should be respected even at some cost to oneself. For instance, if it was not for popular sentiments, I would most probably wear no clothes. I would see for myself in such practice many moral benefits besides benefit to my health. It would strengthen my self-control. But out of respect for popular sentiments I refrain from taking this very desirable step.

I learnt about Jivanlal's resignation only from your letter. You should have given more details. If I am required to decide about it finally any details given by you would have been useful. Now I myself will write to you and ask you for information that I might need if the matter comes before me. You must have received my previous letter[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5535

26. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

September 28, 1935

CHI. PREMA,

I have no option today but to dictate. I use the right hand only on Monday to write for *Harijan*. On the other days I write with the left hand. That takes more time. Besides, your letter calls for immediate reply. Do come some time about the 16th. By bits I will give you as much time as you need. Will it be all right if I do so during my walks? It would be better if you do not fix in advance the time of your stay here. You shouldn't mind if you have to stay on for a day or two longer. It would be better to see all the scattered activities at leisure and also if our conversations were spread over. Prabhavati has collected the yarn spun by me. And I have entrusted its dispatch also to her. I read the book about Hitler at your suggestion. I read Maxton's book[2] on Lenin, too. I also asked them to send me another book on Hitler and I have got it now. Your description of the room is

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 25-9-1935.

[2] James Maxton's book, *Lenin*, appeared in 1932.

interesting. There are many reasons for people to envy you. I am sure that when you know all the circumstances of my renunciation, you also will agree with me.

Most probably Jamnalalji will return by the 2nd or the 3rd. So far as I remember, I had replied to both your questions in my previous letter. I see no acknowledgement of that letter in your present letter. I, therefore, briefly reply to your questions again.

There are many objections against approving of compulsory sterilization of people suffering from leprosy. The practice is likely to lead to numerous evils. It is also not right to assume any disease to be incurable. It seems safer to me to propagate the method of self-control and be content with whatever results can be achieved in thatway. I sense cowardice at every step. A spinner who was a coward would cut apart tangled yarn. A good spinner, on the other hand, would undo the tangle with patience and skill and keep the thread whole. A follower of ahimsa would adopt some such method with persons suffering from supposedly incurable diseases.

Systematic foreign propaganda by us seems to me to be like a bullock-cart competing with a railway train. If we can spend a thousand for propaganda in the cause of truth, the adversary is in a position to spend a crore. I am, therefore, convinced that we should be satisfied with whatever propaganda takes place in the normal course through the work of individuals.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10377. Also C.W. 6817. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

27. A TESTIMONIAL

WARDHA,
September 30, 1935

Shri K. S. Savant was with me for nearly a week. He is a Harijan and sculptor by profession, having gone through the full course in the Bombay School of Art. I could not resist his appeal to be allowed to sit in my room and do his work without distracting my attention in any way. He had his heart's wish and he made the fullest use of the opportunity. Experts alone can judge his art. But I could see that Shri

Savant had varied gifts. He showed great application all the time he was with me and was entirely absorbed in his work. We found him to be thoroughly sociable and [he] became one of us the moment he came. He deserves encouragement from lovers of art and moneyed men. I wish him every success.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2832

28. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 30, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I am sure the apples sent by you are not from your garden. Do you know what railage they mean? It is too much of a good thing. Let me be satisfied with what local fruit I can get here. If they were needed as medicine, I would have asked you to send them. But they are not. The only fruit, I fancy, I need for the ailing ones is oranges or *musumbis.* And I have arranged for a continuous supply. This too may be my fancy but if I am to do with the least amount of drugs, I must, so it appears to me, have honey and oranges. And I assure you I am almost extravagant in the use of these articles. Therefore please stop buying apples for me. When you have the next yield in your own garden I shall gladly have my share.

I expect Ba this evening. She will give me all the latest news about Devdas and Kumarappa though I suppose she will hardly be able to add to the very full information you have been giving me.

Kumarappa's brother, J.M., has been here. He is leaving for Bombay this evening. They are chips of the same block, so alike in appearance and their liberal outlook of life and love of the land !

Hope you are well. No use saying do not overwork yourself. I suppose you have rendered yourself incapable of responding to any such request, advice or even command !

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Mira is completely free. Did I tell you we had built a little cabin for her just behind Kumarappa's own office room? She migrated there yesterday, quite happy now.

From the original: C. W. 3553. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6362

29. LETTER TO MANORANJAN CHAUDHURI

September 30, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I am making use of the information you have given me about tree cotton grown by Shri Kiranprova Devi[1]. I would like you to send me a sample of her cotton and the seeds; if available. I would like to spin it myself.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI MANORANJAN CHAUDHURI

B. P. HINDUNISA

211 BOWBAZAR STREET, CALCUTTA

From a copy: C. W. 9769

30. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

September 30, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I have been waiting for your letter which has come at last. I did write[2] to you acknowledging the fruit that was sent by you.

You must pick up strength quickly. You cannot afford to play with your body. It is a trust for God's service.

I was sorry to hear of Ramachandran's death. It must mean a loss of a member of the family. I know what it means to lose an old and faithful servant.

[1] Addressee's wife

[2] *Vide* "Letter to S. Ambujammal", 14-8-1935.

Mira is all right now. Ba returns today from Simla. No more just now.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

31. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

September 30, 1935

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

Accidents like the one that happened to Sita are a common occurrence. We should not treat them either as a good or a bad omen. If both of you feel that she ought to go to a school, that would be the right course to adopt. I am firm in my own opinion, though. It is the duty of you both to give Sita whatever you have. When she is grown up, she may add to it whatever she wishes. But I attach no value to my views before yours. After all it is you who have to shape her future. You know best your difficulties and aspirations. It would be proper, therefore, that you should do what you yourselves desire after taking my views into consideration and attaching to them whatever importance you may feel inclined to.

Ba is returning from Simla this evening. Devdas is improving. Ramdas has become a little weak. He does not wish to leave Bombay. Harilal is sanctifying his anatomy in the holy Ganga of liquor. Nimu and her children are at present staying with me.

Kishorelal is keeping indifferent health, as usual. Kanti, Kanu and Navin are absorbed here in work and study.

Be satisfied with this much today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4844. Also C. W. 1256. Courtesy: Sushila Gandhi

32. LETTER TO RATILAL SHETH

September 30, 1935

BHAI RATIBHAI,

I got your letter. May the new year be happy for you and may your capacity for service increase. I was glad to read the news about your family. If one can earn enough for a livelihood through honest means, why should one covet more? If Kantilal does his work to your satisfaction, you will be free from your worry about him. I understand about Chhagan.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7175. Also C.W. 4671. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

33. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

September 30, 1935

May you live long and do service without swerving from truth and ahimsa.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 313. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

34. LETTER TO HARJIVAN KOTAK

September 30, 1935

CHI. HARJIVAN,

You are being obstinate. Nobody can convince a person who is being stubborn. Your behaviour shows that you cannot observe rules. Either things should work out as you wish or else you would be furious. Is this the result of staying so many years with me? You are angry and I am pained. God knows whether it is a folly to be angry or to feel pained. Pain is a sign of attachment. Attachment and anger are signs of *rajas.* My pain will not be for long. How nice it would be if your anger also subsides after showing up for a moment.

Blessings from

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

35. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN H. KOTAK

September 30, 1935

CHI. SHARDA,

You seem to be doing good work there[1].

Blessings from

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] At Srinagar

36. LETTER TO VISHWANATH

WARDHA,
October 1, 1935

MY DEAR VISHWANATH,

I have your note. I shall await your arrival on the 5th instant. If you do not see anybody to receive you at the station, you will ask your way to Maganwadi which is about under ten minutes' walk from the station. Someone will be there, however, to receive you.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I am not writing to Satis Babu.

SJT. VISHWANATH
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
15 COLLEGE SQUARE
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 2731

37. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

October 1, 1935

CHI. NARAHARI,

I got your letter. I understand about Ramji. His nature is exactly as you describe it. What can we expect from one whom even a man like Lakshmidas found difficult to deal with? It is our penance to suffer him. The rest when we meet.

Tell me about the machine, too, when you come. If the engine-pump proves to be an enemy of the bullock, then we had better be careful about it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9090

38. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

October 1, 1935

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I got your letter. It will help me a lot. Send me the hakim's name.

Bachubhai[1] seems to be causing you much worry. Death, disease and decay are the inevitable lot of every creature that is born, no matter how many vaidyas like Charaka[2] and hakims like Lukman come into the world and go out of it. It is our good fortune that God always keeps from us the time of death or of recovery from disease. It is because of that that we can make some limited efforts to fight against the two. Keep me informed about Bachubhai's condition. Give him my blessings.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. GANGABEHN VAIDYA
RAMDAS BHIMJI'S BUNGALOW
BORIVLI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna patro–6: G.S. Gangabehnne, p. 85. Also C.W. 8819. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

39. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

October 1, 1935

BHAI FULCHAND,

I was very happy to have your letter; I had thought you had completely forgotten me.

All that I have to say to the friends of Harijans is that they should strengthen their faith in the purity of their task.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Bachubhai Bhimji Ramdas, addressee's brother's son

[2] Principal exponent of the Ayurvedic system of medicine and author of *Charakasamhita*

40. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

WARDHA,
October 2, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM,[1]

I have your letter with Rs. 55. As I answer I call to mind a young man who lives on charity and wants me to supplement it for continuing his studies. I am reserving the Rs. 55 for that special purpose. As a result of my enquiry if I understand that he does not need any further assistance, I shall transfer the amount to the general Harijan cause.

I have your parcel of fruit also. I understand the depth of feeling behind your writing many returns of my birthday. But as you know well, not a minute will be added by the Creator to the allotted span of my life, no matter what human effort is put forth. Nevertheless while it lasts we shall always continue to pray and otherwise strive for one another's good health and longevity.

I am glad you seem to have recovered completely from your last attack of fever.

Blessings from[2]
BAPU

SHRIMATI AMBUJAMMAL
AMJAD BAGH, LUZ
MYLAPORE, MADRAS

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Daughter of S. Srinivasa Iyengar. The superscription in this and the other letters to the addressee is in Hindi.

[2] This is in Hindi.

41. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS BUJNA

October 2, 1935

BHAI PURUSHOTTAMDAS,

I have your letter. I am wholly opposed to Pandit Ramchandra's fast because I find ignorance and violence in it. Therefore my approving of it is a total impossibility. I only appeal to the friends who write to me to persuade him to abandon the fast by giving him the assurance that an agitation would be taken up to stop animal sacrifice.

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI PURUSHOTTAMDAS BUJNA
5 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLACE
CALCUTTA

From the Hindi original: C.W. 9839. Courtesy: Bharat Kala Bhavan

42. THANKS[1]

[After *October 2, 1935*]

I am grateful to the senders of wires, cables and letters received from friends in India and abroad containing their good wishes and blessings on my sixty-seventh birthday. I can only hope that the future such as may be in store for me will find me worthy of their precious gift. They will forgive me for my utter inability to send them personal acknowledgements.

Harijan, 12-10-1935

43. THANKS[2]

[After *October 2, 1935*]

Many brothers and sisters from all provinces have sent me letters and telegrams of good wishes and blessings on my sixty-seventh birthday. Speech is not adequate to express my gratitude. I pray to

[1] This appeared under "Notes". *Vide* also the following item.

[2] This appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 12-10-1935, and a Gujarati version in *Harijanbandhu*, 13-10-1935.

God to make me worthy of the pure love showered and to remove my imperfections in order to make me a true servant of the public. I am aware that the letters and telegrams received are not merely formal but an expression of heart-felt sentiments.

As the greetings cannot possibly be individually acknowledged, I hope all the friends will be content with this.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1102

44. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

[After *October 2, 1935*][1]

BHAI VIYOGI HARI[2],

Do correct errors of style or grammar, if any.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1102

45. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

WARDHA,
October 3, 1935

CHI. AMALA[3],

I was delighted to receive your postcard. It was wrong of you not to have got down when Kanti met you at the station. However, If you get something there it would be very good. Don't be nervous and don't be impatient. Take the money that may be offerred to you by Hiralal. He will see you again. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from[4]

BAPU

SMT. AMALA

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] This is written in the form of a note to the preceding item.

[2] Editor, *Harijan Sevak*

[3] The superscription and the subscription in this and the other letters to the addressee are in Hindi.

[4] *Ibid*

46. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

October 3, 1935

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL[1],

Your letters come in with clock-like regularity and they are such a blessing.

I see that Kamala is putting forth a very brave effort. It will be rewarded. You know my partiality for nature-cure methods. There are in Germany itself many nature-cure establishments. Kamala's case may be past that stage. But one never knows. I know of cases which were reported to be for surgical treatment but which yielded to nature-cure treatment. I send you this experience of mine for what it is worth.

Your letter about the wearing of the next year's crown was delightful. I was glad to have your consent. I am sure that it would solve many difficulties and it is the rightest thing that could have happened for the country. Your presidentship at Lahore[2] was totally different from what it would be at Lucknow[3]. In my opinion it was comparatively plain sailing at Lahore in every respect. It won't be so in any respect at Lucknow. But those circumstances I cannot imagine anybody better able to cope with than you. May God give you all the strength to shoulder the burden.

I am going through your chapters[4] as speedily as I can. They are to me of absorbing interest. More than that I must not say just now.

This letter carries the love of us to you all.

BAPU

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1935. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The addressee was in Germany with his wife Kamala who was undergoing treatment in a sanatorium.

[2] In 1929

[3] The Congress session was scheduled to be held in April 1936.

[4] Of autobiography

47. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

October 3, 1935

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

I got your letter. It was a clear one. I received a letter from Thakkar Bapa[1] just before I got yours. He has placed the whole burden on me. I have accordingly written a long letter to Chhaganlal. I do not wish to put more pressure on Jivanlalbhai. Let him do as much as he can. It is not possible to change Chhaganlal's methods very much now. He can spend his energy in doing service, and Thakkar Bapa is in love with him. It is natural, therefore, that he should have full confidence in himself. Let him find out a president and carry on the work. Thakkar Bapa's suggestion is that either Nanalal or Narandas should become the president. But Narandas and Chhaganlal will not team up well. The two follow their own methods of work and, therefore, the one cannot be president over the other. Even if that is possible, however, I wish to get Narandas over here if some other arrangement can be made for his parents. Chhaganlal simply cannot leave Kathiawar at present. I am sending your letter to him. Try and discuss the matter with him to the extent you can. Our duty is to serve the Harijans and we have to solve this problem only with a view to finding how best we can do it. Your own dissatisfaction certainly does not mean that you wish to give up Harijan work. On the contrary you also have the same problem, namely, what contribution you can make to the solution of the difficulty which has arisen.

Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

[1] Amritlal V. Thakkar

48. LETTER TO RAJARAM R. BHOLE

WARDHA,
October 4, 1935

MY DEAR RAJARAM,

I have your letter. I appreciate your frankness. I can understand your desire to get good government service and I quite believe that your having anything to do with the Sangh or me is bound to affect your chances. It is wisdom to face facts however painful they may be. You will, however, continue to write to me from time to timeand consult your health no matter what you decide to do.

Savant[1] was here for a week. He seemed to enjoy his time here. All of us liked him very much.

Yours,
BAPU

SJT. RAJARAM BHOLE
MINERVA TALKIES
POONA CITY

From the original: R. R. Bhole Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

49. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
October 4, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

You must have seem what I have written to Mathew[2]. Let Lilavati come. We may give her as much work as she is willing to do. I had a letter form Harilal. He has asked for permission to come here and for railway fare. Give him the enclosed letter[3]. During the charkha week,

[1] K. S. Savant, a Harijan sculptor, to whom Gandhiji gave a testimonial; *vide* "A Testimonial", 30-9-1935.
[2] P. G. Mathew
[3] Not available

about 50, 000 rounds of yarn was spun here. Some persons, besides taking part in non-stop spinning, also spun sometimes for eight hours at a stretch. They showed great keenness. Manu was one of them.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Jamnalalji has arrived here. I talked to him. He is eager to know your decision. He wishes to merge the Mahila Ashram and the Kanya Ashram into one and hand over full charge to you. This suggestion was mine. If you have already discussed the matter with Jamnadas and if you can get the whole-hearted consent of your parents, send me a wire. It will be enough if you are able to take a decision for coming. It will not matter if you take some time to come. Once I know your decision, I can make definite arrangements.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8478. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

50. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

October 4, 1935

CHI. SHARDA[1],

I had given up hope of having a letter form you. I think of you quite often. If you wish, you can derive some consolation from the thought that you are not the only one who avoids writing to me. You wrote me a letter if only after nine months. Narayandas of course kept me informed about your helath. I was also informed about your activities.

Now, if you are not able to study there I wish you joined the Vidyapith where at present all facilities are available and many of your friends are studying. But I make one condition which you must fulfil, and is it you should not be separated from your parents. Try to gain as much as you can by remaining wherever they are. Your helath is my main consideration in laying down this condition. In spite of your staying there, you will be able to improve your English by your

[1] Daughter of Chimanlal Shah

own effort, although Mathew might leave. Since you are not keen about passing examinations, you can conveniently take up the subjects of your liking taught in Sushilabehn's school. Moreover, you will be able to have an easy influence on the girls attending that school. I have no fear of your being tempted by the happy-go-lucky tendency of the girls attending the school. Nor do I think you have.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9969. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

51. THREE QUESTIONS

Shri Gopabandhu Choudhury writing from Bari, Cuttack, sends the following three questions:

1. In self-sufficing khadi what should be the price of surplus khadi?

2. If a villager has cotton but no spinners to give him the requirements of his family and he wants to have his cotton spun for his own family requirements by his co-villagers or neighbouring villagers, what should be the wage? Will the proposed living wage for commercial khadi be applicable here? Or, will it be left to mutual adjustment?

3. What should be the wage when the spinner has no cotton of her own and she spins not for wages in cash for living but for cotton and that also till she earns a quantity sufficient for her cloth need?

The price of surplus khadi passing through the A.I.S.A. can only be the same as that of any other in the same province. Now that for the most part khadi sales, except for the requirements of cities, will be confined to the province where it is manufactured, the prices in different provinces will perhaps vary more than they do now. But there connot be any distinction between surplus khadi and any other. Indeed all khadi can only be surplus khadi, for khadi will not be accepted by the Association or its branches from anyone who is not himself or herself a full wearer of khadi. Of course the rule may have to be relaxed during the transition stage.

On the analogy of the first answer, there is no doubt that so far as the Association is concerned it must pay all spinners alike. But the Association will not regulate the dealings between spinners themselves. They must be allowed to adjust their own mutual relations. Any other policy must fail.

In the third case also the same principle applies as in the first two. The thing to remember is that the Association will be responsible for the payment of the minimum subsistence wage where it is itself concerned. If its policy becomes popular and therefore general, no doubt it will be difficult if not impossible for anyone to get things done for less wages. And the co-operation between A.I.S.A. and A.I.V.I.A. may beomce so powerful that wages in every other department will at once be levelled up to their standard. The success of the effort will depend upon the hearty response from the buying public. If they will realize that they may no longer exploit the poor villagers on whom depends their existence, the problem of unemployment and semi-starvation will be automatically solved.

Harijan, 5-10-1935

52. VACATE KAVITHA

Sjt. A. V. Thakkar says in a letter[1] received last week:

There is no help like self-help. God helps those who help themselves. If the Harijans concerned will carry out their reported resolve to wipe the dust of Kavitha off their feet, they will not only be happy themselves but they will pave the way for others who may be similarly treated. If people migrate in search of employment, how much more should they do so in search of self-respect? I hope that well-wishers of Harijans will help these poor families to vacate inhospitable Kavitha.

Harijan, 5-10-1935

53. A KNOTTY QUESTION

Since the talk of the rise in the wages of spinners khadi-lovers are filled with all kinds of vague fears. For instance, they fear a fall in the public demand for khadi in view of a rise in its price. I am hoping that the public will appreciate the little rise that must take place in the price of khadi. They have hitherto benefited by the continuous reduction in prices which hitherto it has been the aim of the Association to achieve by extraordinary effort in the direction. The price of khadi

[1] Not reproduced here. Amritlal V. Thakkar had written that Harijans in Kavitha, a village in Ahmedabad district of Gujarat, had been subjected to great hardships by caste Hindus and therefore they had decided to vacate the village. *Vide* also "Our Duty", 31-8-1935.

has been never so low as it is today. And yet the sales have gone down owing to want of propaganda. If some systematic propaganda is carried on without increasing administrative expenses, I have little doubt that the sales of khadi can be increased in spite of the rise that will take place in the prices.

But it is well to be prepared for the worst. The Association must not be deterred from doing the just thing by the spinners for fear of the public demand falling. It must, however, if need be, remove from its list of spinners those who do not need the support of spinning for their food. There are hundreds, if not thousands, of spinners who spin for gaining a few pice not for buying food, but for buying tobacco, bangles or the like. If there is pressure, these may be told to abstain from competition with those who need coppers for their food. The vast majority of spinners are such. The question, therefore, for workers is to find who are the needy ones in terms of the Association scheme. From the definition will be excluded those petty cultivators who employ labour and who are not ordinarily in want of food and clothing and who are not obliged to sell their holdings or other property to buy food with. But it will strain every nerve to give spinning work or other work accessory to spinning, assuring for every one of the occupations not less than a minimum subsistence wage at the rate of eight hours a day, to all those landless and propertyless workers who would starve partially or wholly but for the work found for them by the A.I.S.A.or the A.I.V.I.A. Conversely, these Associations will not concern themselves¾not for want of will but for want of sheer ability¾with those who eke out a living in some other way. If these bodies succeed to the full in their mission, they will have not only fulfilled their mission but they will have indirectly helped all the other needy ones and turned their lives of blank despair into those of bright hope.

Harijan, 5-10-1935

54. NOTES

TREE COTTON AND SPINNING

Of Shrimati Kiranprava Chaudhuri of Noakhali, who was good enough to send me a beautiful specimen of khadi woven from yarn of her own spinning, a friend of hers writes:[1]

I congratulate this sister on her devotion to khadi. Her emphasis on growing tree cotton is supported by several khadi experts throughout India. The experiment is worth making on a fairly large scale all over India. Evidently it does not require any expense worth the name. And if it is true that tree cotton does not need carding, it must mean a great advantage over the ordinary plant cotton. I would like those who spin tree cotton to send me their experiences and if possible samples of their cotton and yarn, as also the seeds.

HOW TO PRESERVE GUR

A correspondent sends the following useful recipe for preserving *gur*:[2]

Harijan, 5-10-1935

55. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
October 5, 1935

BHAI BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. I have sent it to Devchandbhai. I am not at all fit for such matters now. I don't get even a single minute free. I understand what you say regarding your daughters.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5828. Also C.W. 3051. Courtesy: Bhagwanji A. Mehta

[1] The letter is not reproduced here.
[2] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had written that jaggery could be preserved during rainy season in gunny bags with cloth lining, stored under wheat straw.

56. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

October 5, 1935

CHI. CHANDU,

I got your letter. I understand what you say. As far as I can help it, I would not give you the trouble of coming to me. But if I am obliged to do so, you may be sure that it will be for your own good, for the sake of . . .[1] whom up to now you have respected as your guru and father and for the sake of Shankar[2] who is going to be your companion for this life and for all your lives to come. You are like a daughter to me, Shankar is like a son and . . . is an old co-worker. He is a trustee of a big national institution. For the present I will content myself with a few questions.

If you stick to every word of your letter to Kishorelalbhai, then what about your letter to Manubhai? How do you reconcile the two? Kishorelalbhai wrote that letter at my instance. I wanted to save my time. Besides, in your letter to Kishorelalbhai written by you on your own, you had offered to answer any questions that he might ask. That is why he wrote those letters to you and asked some questions. It was formal courtesy on Kishorelalbhai's part to say that you were not bound to answer them, and it was obviously your duty to answer them, if not for anybody else's sake certainly for Shankar's sake. But don't mind that you didn't answer them. Now please reply to this letter and answer the other questions, too, that Kishorelalbhai has asked. Do so without fear and with the God of Truth as your witness.

Blessings form

BAPU

Form a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 936. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

57. LETTER TO BHUJANGILAL CHHAYA

October 5, 1935

CHI. BHUJANGILAL,

I got your letter. Please take whatever step you do after the most careful deliberation and with the utmost courtesy. I do not understand

[1] This name has been omitted in this and subsequent letters to the addressee.

[2] Shankar *alias* Satish, elder son of D. B. Kalelkar

how you can now break off the engagement to which you had given your consent. It is a grievous sin to act against the wishes of one's parents unless a great moral issue is involved. When such an issue may be considered to be involved is for you to judge. I can do nothing form here. All those who, after a superficial study of my life, take any hasty step in imitation of me feel frustrated afterwards and many of them even repent their actions. See that such a thing never happens in your case.

Blessings form

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2595

58. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 7, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I have hardly time to give you a line. But I must. Day by day I must deny myself more and more the pleasure of writing love-letters, if I am to preserve my health and cope with the ever-increasing calls on my time. I have to lay the axe somewhere. It has to fall on the correspondence, I much fear.

Yes, you will share apples with me or the like when these come your way without having to buy. I know there [is] little logic about it. But it is some restraint on my greed and if you like yours also¾mine to take and yours to give. We won't quarrel about which is worse. It would be well for us both to give it [up] simultaneously and thus avoid at least one cause of war between us.

Yes, Ba is happy that she finds herself among her grand children and their mother.

The enclosed to P [yarelal] and D [evdas].

Love to you all.

BAPU

SMT. RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE, SIMLA W.

From the original: C.W. 3554. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6363

59. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

WARDHAGANJ,
October 9, 1935

CHI. GANGABEHN,

It is a difficult time for you. Tell Bachubhai that he should not lose his peace of mind in spite of his painful condition. Our faith is tested only in adversity. Do drop me a few lines from time to time. Nath's[1] presence there must be a great support for you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 85. Also C.W. 8820. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

60. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
[*October 10, 1935*][2]

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I wanted to write to you on Sunday but I was so busy that I simply could not do it. That was to be in answer to your letter enclosing copy of your letter to Agatha[3]. Yours to Agatha gave me an insight into the working of your mind which I would not miss for anything. She fully deserved that frankness. I can endorse most of your sentiments. You do not know that I have written to her more than once in much the same strain though in my own way and my own language. Nevertheless if Kamala shows distinct signs of improvement and if you are free to go [to] London and the way is open, I would like you to see the big ones, open yourself out to them even as you have to Agatha.

But your letter received yesterday shows that you may not leave Kamala's bedside just yet. After all you have been freed for that

[1] Kedarnath Kulkarni, Kishorelal Mashruwala's guru

[2] A part of this letter is available in Mahadev Desai's Diary under this date. The original, which is damaged here, however bears the date 18-10-1935.

[3] Agatha Harrison

purpose and if Providence keeps you chained to Kamala's bed, we must not grumble. You have gone there to see her through the terrible ordeal. How I wish I was there to share your burden and cheer Kamala! As I saw her for two days in Bombay before her departure, I observed that she never had so much peace of mind as she seemed to enjoy then. Her faith in the benevolence of God, she said, was never so bright as then. Her mental disturbance had vanished and she did not mind what happened to her. She went to Europe because you all wished it; it seemed to be her obvious duty to do so. If she lives, she will live for greater service than she has yet rendered. If she dies, she will do so to come down to earth with a body more fitted for her task than the one she has today.

It is well too that Indu's[1] literary studies remain suspended for a while. For me, she is having a training that is of far greater value than any she would have in a college. She is having her training in the University of Nature. She may give the finishing touch by completing her literary studies.

I am going through your chapters with the deepest interest. I should like to finish them at a single sitting as Mahadev did and as Khurshed[2] almost did. I have no such good luck. I must reserve my opinion till I have reached the last chapter.[3] I am thankful that you have sent them to me.

I am not going to talk to you about the politics. It is enough for my purpose that you will shoulder the burden, if it falls to your lot. That it will, seems to me to be a foregone conclusion.

You will read the accompanying to Kamala, if you think fit. Indu used to write to me a few lines when you were not there. Now I suppose she thinks she is absolved from the task !

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

You must excuse my obstinacy in writing with village ink, village reed on village paper.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1935. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Indira, addressee's daughter

[2] Dadabhoy Naoroji's granddaughter

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 19-12-1935.

61. LETTER TO KAMALA NEHRU

October 10, 1935

CHI. KAMALA,

What can I write to you except to say that we remember you every day? May God give you peace whatever be the circumstances. Have no worry for anything.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

62. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

October 10, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

I got the letter you wrote prior to reaching Boston; it was extremely good. You must have got over the disappointment of not receiving while in Boston any letter of mine. I could not help it, nor was there anything fresh to write about. You have the opportunity to write about fresh matters and you have been using it freely so far. I am fully hopeful that such letters will continue to come. You must be writing to Draupadi[1] too. I am passing on your letters for her perusal. She is unable to write frankly. I do not mind her not writing [to me] as long as she and the children are happy, though I shall persist in my effort of drawing her to me. I send you the letter[2] for London that you had asked for. Be in no haste to leave America, but you may if there is nothing worth learning or if the expenses are too high. Do what you think best. There was a birthday greetings cable from New York. The name 'Sharma' was also in it, I suppose it was you. Do give me word-pictures of the people you meet.

I send only one letter for London, it will do.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh,* between pp. 198 and 199

[1] Addressee's wife

[2] Letter of introduction addressed to Agatha Harrison, which is not available

63. TELEGRAM TO H.N. KUNZRU

October 11, 1935

KUNZRU
CARE "HITAVADA"
NAGPUR

YOUR AKOLA LETTER CLEAR INDICATION EXCLUDE BEANS GREENS. CONFINE ONLY HONEY FRUIT JUICES WITH WITHOUT SODA INTERMITTENT HIPBATHS. AWAITING DAY'S REPORT TOMORROW.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

64. MESSAGE TO INDIAN IMMIGRANTS OF SURINAME

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
October 11, 1935

Pandit Bhavani Bhikh Mishra from the Dutch Guiana came to see me along with Shri Benarsidas Chaturvedi, and asked for a message for the Indian immigrant brethren of Suriname. All I have to say to you is to live in unity, taking care to lead a pure life by observing chastity of body, mind and speech. You should resort to Hindi-Hindustani to communicate with one another and open Hindi schools and libraries.

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Surinameke Pravasi Bharatiyonke Nam*

65. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

October 11, 1935

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter. Encouraged by you, I am pressing Jivanlalbhai. I am sending your letter to him. I will write to you after I receive his reply.

If Pranjivan Joshi has already been relieved I will not waste time in inquiring into the matter now.

Let me know the result of your experiments in making manure out of bones and carcasses.

You shouldn't have had the difficulty which you had regarding the use of hand-made paper. The argument has often been advanced against the use of khadi and we have solved the difficulty in but one way. Though khadi is relatively costly, those who have understood its importance have found a way of making it cheap for themselves. Many of us, for instance, reduced the consumption of cloth after they started using costly khadi and on the whole effected some saving. Those who could not reduce consumption saved on other items but did not accept defeat. Similarly, when we resolved to use hand-made paper, we reduced writing or included more matter in a given amount of space than previously. We stopped using envelopes costing four or five pice and started using postcards costing three pice only. I resumed here the practice of writing on small slips of paper, which I used to follow in jail. On the balance, therefore, our expenditure on postage has not increased.

I do not know how things are in Delhi. But I hope Malkani has started practising economy. What we give to the Government is in fact given to ourselves, It is, therefore, not right to think that we should spend less on postage because the money goes to the Government. Even when the Government will be in our hands, it will certainly not be proper for public workers to spend extravagantly on postage. In jail, we tried to keep the consumption of everything to a minimum because we thought that all things in the country belonged to us. For, no matter who ran the Government, everything it owned belonged to us, the people. The money that we give to the Government is spent for Government purposes.

Because the Government money is spent extravagantly when the Government is in foreign hands, it does not mean that such money ceases to be ours. It is our duty of course to check its extravagance. But so long as it continues, it is we, the people, who provide the money in one way or another. Hence the argument of increase in postage should not be advanced against the use of hand-made paper. In propagating the use of such paper, the expenditure on postage may perhaps go up in the beginning. Even them, if the use of hand-made paper is likely to increase through our example we ought not to grudge the additional expense on postage. Those teachers who see the moral necessity of manual work will themselves find out some crafts which they can take up. Nobody else can advise them in this matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5536

66. LETTER TO BALIBEHN M. ADALAJA

October 11, 1935

CHI. BALI[1],

I got your letter. You did well in going to Bombay. I know about Tulsidas's illness. I had written to him. Now you should write to him. What can we do about Harilal? It seems he is heading for complete ruin. He rarely writes to me. He is the fruit of some sins I must have committed. How can we blame him? Can one ever change one's nature?

Manu[2] has returned. She got quite ill in Delhi. She is well now. As you know she is lazy about writing letters. Kishorelalbhai has asked for her hand for Surendra, his nephew, son of Balubhai. Ba and I would very much welcome this alliance. If you two sisters[3] and Kunvarji[4] approve of it, I will arrange the betrothal. I hope you remember Surendra who was in the Ashram. He is in Bombay at present. Manu has left the decision to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1552. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

67. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM G. PANSE

October 11, 1935

CHI. BHAU,

I do reply to your letters. Only one has remained unanswered. Your letters are very frank and satisfactory. The expenses should be accounted for but not worried over. The money spent now is only for the sake of service and I shall take as much work from you. Regard it your duty to make yourself strong.

[1] Sister of Harilal Gandhi's wife
[2] Harilal Gandhi's daughter
[3] The addressee and Kumibehn Maniar
[4] Kunvarji Parekh, husband of Rami, Harilal Gandhi's elder daughter

I am trying to send Balkoba[1] there and have written to Gaurishankerbhai.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6754. Also C.W. 4497. Courtesy: Purushottam G. Panse

68. LETTER TO A VILLAGE WORKER [2]

[Before *October 12, 1935*]

You will borrow cotton this season, but next year you must grow your own cotton. Anyone will permit you to grow a few cotton trees in his field. The seed should be the tree cotton or *devakapas.* It lasts for ten to fifteen years and the cotton, I am told, does not need to be carded. I have not used to cotton myself but propose to do so.

You are right that I did not like your leaving your place even for a couple of days. I did not like it because it is a pastime with you, and the best discipline for you is to settle down quietly and work away uninterruptedly for a year. A villager absorbed in his work has no time to go on friendly visits. We must try to emulate him. You must therefore make it a rule not to move out beyond a radius of ten miles. It is impossible to get under the skin of the villagers until one lives in their midst all the twenty-four hours for an unbroken period. The moment you relax the rule, you will find excuses for going.To be free from filth and the dog nuisance is certainly necessary, but one may not run away from them. Everyone cannot go out of his house and find conveniences for himself. One has also to cultivate that sense of cleanliness in others. One must not therefore shun people. One cannot serve them from a safe distance. I know this is easier said than done, and if you cannot sleep in the midst of these nuisances you will continue to repair to the fields. I do not want you to do anything at the risk of your health.

Yes, you may have in course of time a grass hut, but it should not be far from the village. The people must be free to call upon us at all hours of the day and night. We must always be within easy call.

[1] Balkrishna Bhave, younger brother of Vinoba Bhave

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The addressee, "one of the best workers working in a Gujarat village", had restricted his needs to Rs. 5 a month.

The fact that you leave the village at 7 p.m. every day means that you deprive the villagers of the chance of talking to you and seeking your advice after supper, and that you will not hold even an hour's night-school. You see the difficulty of Ashram inmates serving in the villages. The Ashram life and rules might easily become a luxury. We must realize that the villagers do not enjoy most of the amenities we enjoy with all our much-talked-of simplicity and renunciation. Man is naturally apt to turn every renunciation into a joy. Sannyasa which cannotes the highest renunciation has become today the biggest source of laziness and indulgence for many!

The scavengers will slowly understand your work of love. You must make them understand that you do not want to oust them, but to improve their efficiency. You must also find out for them more sources of income.

Because my recent renunciation was a source of pang, it need not have grieved you. The pang was a source of joy, and such pangs are inevitable.[1]

Harijan, 12-10-1935

69. NOTES

TO PRIVATE CORRESPONDENTS

As time advances, my private correspondence too keeps on advancing at an accelerated speed and leaves its adversary for behind. My capacity to overtake this ever-increasing correspondence decreases in the same ratio as the increase in the volume of my correspondence. The mischief is aggravated by the new tasks that have come to me unsolicited. The most absorbing and fascinating is the work of village regeneration or, to adopt a current word, rejuvenation. The fascination increases with a growing perception of the difficulty of the work. My mind is living in the villages. They are calling me to bury myself in them. I do not know how this internal struggle will end. Difficulties are already cropping up to prevent such a burial. Much against my will I have been obliged to make a promise to shoulder a burden in Gujarat early next year. I know what it will bring in its trail. God's will be done. But if a breakdown is not to take place,

[1] The addressee had referred to Gandhiji's renunciation; *vide* "A Renunciation", 21-9-1935.

I must cut off as much private correspondence as possible and deal with the most necessary part of it through deputy. Then only can I at all hope to cope with the increasing call of *Harijan.* The extent of its scope has meant much additional burden on both Mahadev Desai and me. If the readers are to receive justice, we must free ourselves for it more than we have done hitherto.

This is, therefore, written to invite the co-operation of my many correspondents. Let them be assured that I am not tired of the correspondence. I have prized their confidence beyond measure. It has given me an insight into human nature and its ultimate nobility I should not have had otherwise. Such correspondence I have carried on for over a generation. My writings and publication of some of my correspondence provide sufficient help to those who will know my opinion on a given problem. I know that nothing can be a substitute for personal contact. But in the nature of things it is a perishable article, very fragile. I would urge correspondents to deny themselves the temptation of referring to me on all kinds of problems. Let them take the trouble of solving them themselves with such help as writings on ethics and eternal verities can give. They will find that they will do better in the end than if they would make of me a dictionary of reference on every occasion. Any way let my private correspondents not be surprised if they find that they no longer hear from me directly or that their letters remain unanswered or are answered on my behalf.

DUTY OF SPEAKING GENTLY

A Gujarati correspondent writes:

> Speaking unnecessarily loud affects the health of hearers. In this country and among us, women and children, more than men, are in the habit of speaking much louder than we need and a false sense of delicacy makes most of us, even though we may be aware of the noise and its ill effects, tolerate such speaking which really grates on our ears. We would not protest. This may be a sign of our ahimsa but I would not classify it under 'courtesy'. Model Montessory schools can be abodes of peace, not so our socalled homes, much less our institutions or our public roads. You advise people not to tolerate insanitation. Cay you not do likewise about noises that are almost equally injurious to health? I am quite clear that gentle speech should have the same place in our system of education as sanitation. May I warn you that you are yourself often guilty of tolerating

the vice of loud speaking about you and thus injuring your health and missing the opportunity of educating public opinion.

I must plead guilty to the charge. What the correspondent says is largely true. I have often tolerated maddening noises which could have been easily avoided. I am well aware that they are injurious to health. The object of giving place to this correspondent, however, is to draw the attention of teachers to this national defect and invite them to make a beginning by restraining their pupils from making noises and speaking loud in class-rooms and outside. In railway trains these noises are simply maddening. They are made in total disregard of the feelings of fellow-passengers. Many indulge in loud talks which they can easily carry on in gentle tones. In this connection I am reminded of the meetings of Sikhs in which whenever necessity arises someone on the platform puts up a board which is fastened onto a long bamboo containing the words "Please avoid loud talking" or "Peace Peace". Some such device can be adopted by passengers who notice such noises.

WASTE INTO WEALTH

Those who have been following what is being written in these columns on balanced diet will not have failed to understand the vast importance of bran which we simply throw away and give to our cattle. I do not grudge the cattle what they get. But it seems to me that we are thoughtless about cattle-feeding as about many other things. Cattle do not need bran so much as green fodder and seed cakes which they can easily divide with us if we will revert to the village oil-presses. But we need every ounce of the bran of wheat and rice if we are to become efficient instruments of production not to be beaten on this earth by any race, and yet without the necessity of entering into killing competition or literally killing one another. But I must not prolong what is becoming a heavy preface to a simple recipe which a friend has passed on to me for treating wheat bran. He is obliged to his sister for it. Here it is:

> Grind sufficient wheat coarse to give you one pound of bran which you get by passing the meal through a medium sieve. Add $1\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of cold water, eight *tolas* of pulverized clean *gur* and half a tea-spoonful of clean salt to the bran and stir well. Pour the mixture in a flat vessel, cover and let it stand for full half hour. Then put a well-fitting *tava* or dish on the pot

containing the mixture and stand it on hot coal and heap hot coals on top. Keep the pot between the two fires for full five minutes. Then transfer the mixture onto an iron *kadai* and roast on a slow fire till the water is fairly dried out. Then take the pot off the *chula* and let the contents cool. Then strain them through a sieve with clean hands and the contents will drop on a clean cloth or board in the form of threads. Expose these to the sun till thoroughly dry. These can be taken as they are or with hot or cold milk or hot water or whey. Two ounces will make a good breakfast and is claimed to be a valuable aid to remove constipation—the bane of civilized life and precursor of many diseases.

FOR FOUR RUPEES A MONTH

Dr. Aykroyd, Director of Nutrition Research at Coonoor, recently delivered an instructive lecture at Bangalore. From the lecture as published in the daily Press it appears that a well balanced diet need not cost more than Rs. 4 per month. Thus the lecturer said that:

> The dietary requirements of an adult man per day were 16 ounces of *ragi* [1], two ounces of soya bean[2], an ounce of jaggery, four ounces each of spinach and amaranth, an ounce each of potatoes and colacasia, 1.5 ounces of coconut oil and six ounces of buttermilk—all costing about two annas.

Harijan, 12-10-1935

70. CONSOLATION FOR THE AGED AND THE INFIRM

Dr. Sir P.C. Ray is 75 years old. He has been a weakling in body from youth upward. Yet he is foremost among the chemists of the world and retains to the present day the vigour and energy of youth. His greed for service is insatiable. He never refuses to help people in distress, especially the student world. He is so generous that swindlers have been known successfully to have exploited his name. He has not minded this. He takes pride in his prodigality and turns away from those who plead with him to discriminate. He works away till late at night, keeps an open door, and has a smile for everybody. In spite of all this output of service why does he remain so fresh when many of

[1] The source has "16 ounces of soyya bean", which is a slip; *vide* "A Correction", 19-10-1935.

[2] *Ibid*

his contemporaries have either joined the majority or are too infirm to do any work? He gives the answer in a remarkable chapter he has written for the second volume of his autobiography. He had occasion to write to me on the event of my birthday. Without even mentioning (to him) the insignificant event (for am I not a youngster compared to him?), he quietly sends me the 'foul' proof of that chapter.[1] It is so full of bright hope that I have no hesitation in sharing it with the readers especially old and infirm, though I have no doubt that young people can read it with profit. To the reasons Dr. Ray has given for his energy in[2] old age I would add his irrepressible humour and his boyishness. I have seen him shamelessly mount on the shoulders of his bulky friends like Sjt. Jamnalalji or Maulana Shaukat Ali and cracking all kinds of joke, forgetting for the moment that the world knows him as a serious scientist and Principal of a great college of science of which he is virtually also the creator.

Harijan, 12-10-1935

71. THE GREATEST FORCE

Non-violence is at the root of every one of my activities and therefore also of the three public activities on which I am just now visibly concentrating all my energy. These are untouchability, khadi, and village regeneration in general. Hindu-Muslim unity is my fourth love. But so far as any visible manifestation is concerned, I have owned defeat on that score. Let the public, however, not assume therefrom that I am inactive. If not during my lifetime, I know that after my death both Hindus and Mussalmans will bear witness that I had never ceased to yearn after communal peace.

Non-violence to be a creed has to be all-pervasive. I cannot be non-violent about one activity of mine and violent about others. That would be a policy, not a life-force. That being so, I cannot be indifferent about the war that Italy is now waging against Abyssinia. But I have resisted[3] most pressing invitation to express my opinion and give a lead to the country. Self-suppression is often necessary in the interest of Truth and non-violence. If India had as a nation imbibed the creed of non-violence, corporate or national, I should have had no

[1] The extracts from the chapter are not reproduced here.
[2] The source has "and".
[3] *Vide* "Message on Italo-Abyssinian Crisis", 2-8-1935.

hesitation in giving a lead. But in spite of a certain hold I have on the millions of this country, I know the very grave and glaring limitation of that hold. India had an unbroken tradition of non-violence from times imm-emorial. But at no time in her ancient history, as far as I know it, has it had complete non-violence in action pervading the whole land. Nevertheless, it is my unshakable belief that her destiny is to deliver the message of non-violence to mankind. It may take ages to come to fruition. But so far as I can judge, no other country will precede her in the fulfilment of that mission. Be that as it may, it is seasonable to contemplate the implications of that matchless force. Three concrete questions were, the other day, incidentally asked by friends:

1.What could ill-armed Abyssinia do against well-armed Italy, if she were non-violent?

2.What could England, the greatest and the most powerful member of the League, do against determined Italy, if she (England) were non-violent in your sense of the term?

3. What could India do, if she suddenly became non-violent in your sense of the term?

Before I answer the question let me lay down five simple axioms of non-violence as I know it:

1. Non-violence implies as complete self-purification as is humanly possible.

2. Man for man the strength of non-violence is in exact proportion to the ability, not the will, of the non-violent person to inflict violence.

3. Non-violence is without exception superior to violence, i.e., the power at the disposal of a non-violent person is always greater than he would have if he was violent.

4. There is no such thing as defeat in non-violence. The end of violence is surest defeat.

5. The ultimate end of non-violence is surest victory—if such a term may be used of non-violence. In reality where there is no sense of defeat, there is no sense of victory.

The foregoing questions may be answered in the light of these axioms.

1. If Abyssinia were non-violent, she would have no arms, would want none. She would make no appeal to the League or any other

power for armed intervention. She would never give any cause for complaint. And Italy would find nothing to conquer if Abyssinians would not offer armed resistance, nor would they give co-operation willing or forced. Italian occupation in that case would mean that of the land without its people. That, however, is not Italy's exact object. She seeks submission of the people of the beautiful land.

2. If Englishmen were as a nation to become non-violent at heart, they would shed imperialism, they would give up the use of arms. The moral force generated by such an act of renunciation would stagger Italy into willing surrender of her designs. England would then be a living embodiment of the axioms I have laid down. The effect of such conversion would mean the greatest miracle of all ages. And yet if non-violence is not an idle dream, some such thing has some day to come to pass somewhere. I live in that faith.

3. The last question may be answered thus. As I have said, India as a nation is not non-violent in the full sense of the term. Neither has she any capacity for offering violence—not because she has no arms. Physical possession of arms is the least necessity of the brave. Her non-violence is that of the weak. She betrays her weakness in many of her daily acts. She appears before the world today as a decaying nation. I mean here not in the mere political sense but essentially in the non-violent, moral sense. She lacks the ability of offer physical resistance. She has no consciousness of strength. She is conscious only of her weakness. If she were otherwise, there would be no communal problems, nor political. If she were non-violent in the consciousness of her strength, Englishmen would lose their role of distrustful conquerors. We may talk politically as we like and often legitimately blame the English rulers. But if we, as Indians, could but for a moment visualize ourselves as a strong people disdaining to strike, we should cease to fear Englishmen whether as soldiers, traders or administrators, and they to distrust us. Therefore if we became truly non-violent we should carry Englishmen with us in all we might do. In other words, we being millions would be the greatest moral force in the world, and Italy would listen to our friendly word.

The reader has, I hope, by now perceived that my argument is but a feeble and clumsy attempt to prove my axioms which to be such must be self-proved.

Till my eyes of geometrical understanding had been opened, my brain was swimming, as I read and re-read the twelve axioms of

Euclid. After the opening of my eyes geometry seemed to be the easiest science to learn. Much more so is the case with non-violence. It is a matter of faith and experience, not of argument beyond a point. So long as the world refuses to believe, she mustawait a miracle, i.e., an ocular demonstration of non-violence on a mass scale. They say this is against human nature—non-violence is only for the individual. If so, where is the difference in kind between man and beast?

*Harijan,*12-10-1935

72. SPEECH AT A.I.S.A. COUNCIL MEETING [1]

WARDHA,
[On or before *October 13, 1935*][2]

We must once for all dismiss the thought of competing with futile soul-killing economics. Do you know the insidious way in which Japanese fents are glutting the market? Whereas less than five years ago they were a few thousand yards, they amount to millions of yards today. How can you compete with these? No, we must no longer aim at reducing the prices in order to meet this competition. We have all these years thought of the consumer and done precious little for the spinner, forgetting that the Association was a spinners' association, not an association of consumers. We have to be the true repre-sentatives of the spinners which we have ceased to be. The result is that we have simply jogged on and relied on the political upheavals and indulged in a kind of gamble. 'What is the use of all the fancy advertisements that you have been giving?' I asked Jerajani[3]. 'We shall soon end in justifying the charge that we are maintaining the institution in order to provide work for the middle-class unemp-loyed.' It is therefore that I suggest that we should no more incur losses in order to exploit the neediest of our fellowmen. 'In order to give a hundred women a satisfactory wage, you will run the risk of depriving thousands of them of employment?' is the question that was put to me. I say it is a crisis that it is necessary to produce in order to get rid of a remittent fever. Our goal is to see a spinning-wheel in the

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". Earlier, members had expressed their doubts and difficulties regarding "Gandhiji's proposal for a new departure in the khadi policy".

[2] The A.I.S.A. Council met from October 11 to 13.

[3] Vithaldas Jerajani

hands of every adult villager and a loom in every village. We may have produced millions of rupees worth of khadi but we have gone nowhere nearer the goal. I ask you to forget the cities and the consumer in the cities. Concentrate on making the thirty crores of our villagers produce and use their own khadi, and the one crore of the city-dwellers will automatically begin wearing khadi. Do not mind a temporary lull or a breakdown. If there is no demand, do not produce the supply. Where your bhandars are run at a loss close them down, and tell all those who care to have your khadi that you are prepared to get it made for them but only at the revised rates.

But I do not want to thrust my proposal on you. You may reject it, if it fails to carry conviction. Do not assume on your shoulders heavier responsibility than they can bear. Cut your coat according to your cloth. Let me tell you that in the production centre at Savli there are already spinners who are satisfying the conditions of the new wage and have begun to earn from three to four annas daily. Concentrate on self-sufficing khadi wherever it is possible, and a healthy khadi atmosphere will grow out of it. In Kathiawar, for instance, for a time they made desperate attempts to run several centres and to stimulate the sale of khadi thus produced. They have given it up now, and among the replies that Sjt. Shankerlal Banker has received is one from the Secretary of the Kathiawar Branch to the effect that he has no criticism to offer and no opinion to express on the new policy, inasmuch as all the production in that centre consists of self-sufficient khadi.[1]

Harijan, 19-10-1935

73. SIXTY-THREE YEARS AGO AND TODAY

From a circular issued on February 24, 1872, we find that cotton used to be consumed in the following quantities in Vadod in Kathiawar:

Twine	300	seers
Ropes and muzzles	250	,,
Webbing	46	,,
Indian-made cloth	2,000	,,

[1] For the resolutions adopted at the meeting; *vide* "A.I.S.A. Resolution", 11-10-1935.

Mattresses	75	,,
Sewing thread	50	,,
Wicks for lamps	75	,,
Sacred thread	4	,,
	2,800	,,

10,000 seers [of cotton] was sent elsewhere. The same circular states that the spinning-wheel alone was used for spinning and women belonging to the Kanbi, Koli, Rajput, Vania, Brahmin, Khoja, Memon, Darji, Luhar, Suthar, Mochi, Ghanchi, Dhed, Bhangi and all other communities used to engage in spinning. The Dheds alone did the work of weaving with looms. Altogether, 53 spinning-wheels and 10 looms were in operation. The following is a communitywise break-up of the women who did the work of spinning:

11 Kanbi [peasant]	1 Brahmin
10 Koli [farm labourer]	4 Rajput
5 Soni [goldsmith]	1 Bhangi
1 Pinjara [Muslim carder]	1 Darji [tailor]
1 Bharwad [shepherd]	1 Luhar [blacksmith]
1 Khoja [Ismaili Muslim]	2 Mochi [cobbler]
8 Vania [bania]	3 Memon [Kathiawar Muslim]
1 Valand [barber]	1 Bawa [sadhu]
2 Suthar [carpenter]	1 Khavas [a mixed caste]

The gentleman who has sent this circular writes to say that not even two seers of cotton is spun now at a place where sixty-three years ago they used to spin 2,000 seers, not a single spinning-wheel plies, the few weavers who are there weave millyarn. The production of cotton in Vadod and Kathiawar has increased, not decreased. And the situation that obtains in the large industries is also to be found in the smallest industries. We can easily imagine how impoverished the people would become when they do not utilize the raw material grown in their vicinity but instead sell it to others. And this is what we actually see today. The small-scale industries which once flourished in the villages are no longer there. Hence men and women are unemployed for most of the time. And what else could the idle minds be if not the Devil's workshops?

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 13-10-1935

74. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

WARDHA,
October 13, 1935

DEAR GURUDEV,

Your touching letter was received only on 11th instant when I was in the midst of meetings. In the hope of delivering it to me personally Anil needlessly detained it. I hope he is now quite restored to health.

Yes, I have the financial position before me now. You may depend upon my straining every nerve to find the required money. I am groping. I am trying to find the way out. It will take some time before I can report the result of my search to you.

It is unthinkable that you should have to undertake another begging mission at your age. The necessary funds must come to you without your having to stir out of Santiniketan.[1]

I hope you are keeping well. Padmaja[2] who was with you a few days ago is here for the day and has been telling me how you have aged.

With reverential love,

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2287

75. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 13, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Your note on the position of women was received yesterday afternoon. I have gone through it. It does not admit of corrections. Your writing is always proper and easy to follow. The argument runs smooth. But it is not what I had expected. It is not a striking statement of the position. I now appreciate when you said, you had never had to perform such a mission before. That your presentation is not

[1] Rabindranath Tagore was touring with a ballet troupe to collect funds for the Visva-Bharati.

[2] Sarojini Naidu's daughter

impressive is no fault of yours. I do not want you to make another effort, just now, on any account whatsoever. When you come here, we shall discuss the thing and I shall tell you what I would have liked. Then if you feel like it you will write something independently, perhaps for your Association[1].

I do not worry about Devdas. I know he would have done no better, if he was with me. And most certainly he would not have received from me the same care which you and Shummy[2] are able to give. My fear is that you are worrying unnecessarily.

I have been having many meetings just now—A.I.S.A., Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, etc. No attention can be paid to correspondence or any other thing in these circumstances.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3555. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also. G.N. 6364

76. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

October 13, 1935

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got the letters of you both. You may arrange for Sita's[3] education as you like best.

We are considering a proposal for Manu's betrothal with Surendra. It was Kishorelal's wish.

Devdas is still in Simla. Pyarelal is with him. He seems to be improving. But he still needs very careful nursing. There is no cause for worry.

Ramdas is battling with fate in Bombay. He enjoys the game. I am therefore content.

I have already written to you that Ba has returned here.

Mirabehn has recovered completely. In a few days' time she will go to a village to live there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4845

[1] All-India Women's Conference
[2] Kunwar Shamshere Singh, a retired surgeon, addressee's brother
[3] Addressees' daughter

77. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHA,
October 14, 1935

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Here is a telegram from New York and the reply to it. Please copy it out on a telegraph form and send it. We do not have to pay any money as you will see. It is possible that as the cable went to Sabarmati the money also went there. But there should be some authority at Bombay Central. Of course, they may not accept it because the 14th is already over. Even then there is no harm. In that case we would be spared the trouble. We do not want to spend any money. If it cannot be done, return the telegram and the reply.

You will be well. Taramati and the children too will be well. Do not ask how burdened I am.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

78. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS [2]

WARDHA,
October 15, 1935

With reference to Dr. Ambedkar's speech[3] at Yeoli, Mahatma Gandhi said:

The speech attributed to Dr. Ambedkar seems to be unbelievable. If, however, he has made such a speech and the

[1] This last sentence has been included in "Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", 14-10-1935

[2] This appeared in *Harijan*, 19-10-1935, under the title "Unfortunate".

[3] On October 14 at the Bombay Presidency Depressed Classes Conference, Nasik, B.R. Ambedkar had said : "Because we have the misfortune to call ourselves Hindus, we are treated thus. If we were members of another faith none dare treat us so . . . . Choose any religion which gives you equality of status and treatment." On Ambedkar's advice, the Conference unanimously passed a resolution urging complete severance of the Depressed Classes from the Hindu fold and their embracing any other religion which guaranteed them equal status and treatment with the other members of it.

conference adopted the resoultion of complete severance and acceptance of any faith that would guarantee equality, I regard both as unfortunate events, especially when one notices that in spite of isolated events to the contrary, untouchability is on its last legs. I can understand the anger of a high-souled and highly educated person like Dr. Ambedkar over the atrocities as were committed in Kavitha and other villages.[1] But religion is not like a house or a cloak which can be changed at will. It is more an integral part of one's self than of one's body. Religion is the tie that binds one to one's Creator and whilst the body perishes, as it has to, religion persists even after death. If Dr. Ambedkar has faith in God, I would urge him to assuage his wrath and reconsider the position and examine his ancestral religion on its own merits and not through the weakness of its faithless followers. Lastly, I am convinced that change of faith by him and those who passed the resolution will not serve the cause which they have at heart; for millions of unsophisticated, illiterate Harijans will not listen to him and them when they have disowned their ancestral faith, especially when it is remembered that their lives, for good or for evil, are intertwined with those of caste Hindus.[2]

The Hitavada, 16-10-1935

79. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

October 15, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I have your well-written Hindi letter. You must get rid of your fever altogether. How I wish you were here ! Just now the weather is very good. But I suppose that must not be.

The month of January I shall have to give to Gujarat. February will probably be devoted to Delhi. It is not so cold there at that time.

Vasumati is due here this week. Amtul Salaam and Prabhavati

[1] *Vide* "Vacate Kavitha", 5-10-1935.

[2] On being asked by an Associated Press of India representative for his comments on this, Ambedkar said : "I have made up my mind to change my religion. I do not care if the masses do not come. It is for them to decide. . . . Kavitha does not represent an isolated incident but it is the very basis of the system founded on the ancestral religion of the Hindus."

are here and so is Ba. Devdas has now returned to Delhi. He still remains depressed.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Did I ask to send me your recipe for *rasam*[1]? If not, I do so now. You may send me medical opinion on the quality of *rasam.*

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

80. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

October 15, 1935

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

You are right. I shall make some effort[2] though who but Rama can undo the damage done! Let us see how He guides us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1882

81. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

October 17, 1935

BABU RAJENDRA PRASAD

CARE CONGRESS

MADRAS

JAWAHARLAL MAY [HAVE] RECEIVED MOHANLAL NEHRU'S[3] LETTER SWARAJ BHAWAN. WANTS DEFINITION DECISIVE ATTITUDE CONGREESS COMMITTEE..

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] A thin soup of tamarind and pulses

[2] The addressee had requested Gandhiji to take better care of his already indifferent health.

[3] Secretary, Board of Management, Swaraj Bhawan Trust; *vide* also the following item.

82. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
October 17, 1935

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Your very important letter to hand. I have wired[1] to Rajendra Babu about Swaraj Bhawan. I do not know what is happening. I am entirely of your opinion that the policy of the Committee should be strictly defined.

As to our attitude on the present world situation, I do not think there is want of appreciation of it. But it is our helplessness which imposes silence on us. There is no weakness either. It is merely a matter, if you will, of tactics in the best sense of the term. Anyway I have no sense in me of weakness. But I know that I cannot speak with effect at this juncture. I cannot give the lead without knowing what the people can do. I know what they should do. And what is true of me is perhaps equally true of the majority of our workers. But I have great faith in you in these matters. You have undoubtedly a much greater grasp of the situation than any one of us has, certainly than I can ever hope to have. Therefore you may be able to evolve a dignified formula for national self-expression in speech as well as in action¾ assuming of course that at the present moment direct action is ruled out.

Your paragraph about Kamala is somewhat disturbing. But we are prepared for these ups and downs. I must await your further contribution on the Constitution[2] before I say anything. I am glad I spent the money[3] for putting you in possession of the Constitution as early as it was possible.

Love to you all.

Blessings from
BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1935. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Congress constitution
[3] The constitution was sent by air mail and the addressee had protested against this expenditure.

83. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

WARDHA,
October 18, 1935

DEAR AMALA,

Your letters are beginning to be sane and that shows that you are settling down. Now, don't you be greedy. Be content with what you are getting. Rs. 50 plus Rs. 25 should be enough for you. It is good you have got into touch with Miss Chattopadhyaya. Whilst you are thus making fresh contacts and settling down, you must not think of coming here though of course you are free to come whenever you like. The conditions you know well by now.

Blessings from
BAPU[1]

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

84. LETTER TO A UNIVERSITY STUDENT [2]

[Before *October 19, 1935*]

You can serve the country:

1. By spinning daily even and strong yarn for the sake of *Daridranarayana;* by keeping a diary of the time for which you have spun, of the quantity spun, with its weight and count; and reporting the work to me every month. Yarn should be carefully collected and held at my disposal.

2. By daily selling some khadi on behalf of the local certified bhandar and by keeping a record of your daily sales.

3. By saving at least one pice per day.

4. By holding the collection at my disposal. The implication of the adjective 'least' should be understood, namely, that if you are able to save more, you should pour more into *Daridranarayana's* chest.

[1] The subscription is in Gujarati.

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The student had "expressed his keenness to serve during his spare time without prejudice to his studies".

5. By visiting Harijan quarters in company with other students; and with your companions cleaning the quarters, befriending the children and giving them useful lessons in sanitation, hygiene, etc.

Then if you can save some more time, you should learn some village industries for future service of villagers after finishing your studies. When you have been able to do these things and have still time and ambition for doing more, consistently with your studies, you can ask me and I shall send you more suggestions.

Harijan, 19-10-1935

85. SOYA BEANS

It has been found that soya beans can be cooked whold and eaten like any other beans. Shri Narhar Bhave of Baroda, who has given his three gifted and gentle sons, Vinoba, Balkrishna and Shivaji, to national service, is himself a careful observer, 61 years old. He is living almost wholly on milk and six ounces of soya beans and is keeping perfect health and strength. He is of opinion that soya beans help him to avoid constipation which milk alone or milk taken in combination with cereals and vegetables could not do. Soya beans have in his opinion helped him also to avoid flatulence which other pulses or milk produced. He has come to this conclusion after an unbroken experience of over ten months. I may add that Shri Bhave used to suffer from gout and corpulence and had a trace of diabetes. He got rid of this triple disability by mere careful dieting. In imitation of Shri Bhave the inmates of Maganwadi including me have been trying soya beans for the last few days. It is too early yet to pronounce any opinion for ourselves. Each inmate gets a heaped dessert-spoonful per day. This is how the beans are cooked: Clean the beans of foreign particles or dirt, wash in cold water and soak at least for twelve hours, and not more than eighteen, and drain off superfluous water. Put these beans in boiling water and cook for fifteen minutes on a quick fire. No salt or soda to be added while cooking. Salt may be added later.[1] At Maganwadi we steam them for two hours. Let those who are interested in food-reform from the poor man's point of view try the experiment. It should be remembered that

[1] The source has "after".

soya beans are a most nutritious diet. It stands at the top of all the known articles of diet because of its low percentage of carbohydrates and high percentage of salts, protein and fat. Its energy value is 2, 100 calories per lb. against 1,750 of wheat and 1,530 of gram. It contains 40 per cent of protein and 20.3 per cent of fat against 19 and 4.3 respectively of gram and 14.8 and 10.5 of eggs. Therefore no one should take soya beans in addition to the usual protein and fatty foods. The quantity, therefore, of wheat and ghee should be reduced and dal omitted altogether, soya beans being themselves a highly nutritious dal. We are just now trying the Manchurian variety. The Baroda beans we have not tried. Maganwadi has its own crop of soya beans. I hope to report the quality of Indian varieties from a layman's point of view as they come under my observation. Those who have Indian varieties are requested to send me samples with prices.

Harijan, 19-10-1935

86. SIMPLE CURE FOR SCORPION STINGS

Shri M.S. Narayanan who is a retired engineer writes the following letter[1]:

The caution Shri Narayanan gives is worthy of him.[2] He is devoting his savings and his time and skill to village reconstruction principally through khadi. Though Maganwadi has a fair share of scorpions, the cases are nothing so frequent as Shri Narayanan has. I have no reason to doubt his testimony. I must not therefore keep this costless remedy from the public for fear of its proving a failure. Those who will try the cure will please report the results of their observations. If I have reports only of failures, the public shall know them. Let those who will try the cure prepare the solution in the manner prescribed.

Harijan, 19-10-1935

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent, a social worker, had suggested a simple remedy for scorpion stings : "Make a saturated solution of common salt, allow it to settle for a day and decant the clean solution. A drop of this solution put into each eye removes the pain of the sting instantaneously."

[2] The correspondent had written that "after local tests you may give the information to the rest of the world".

87. NOT PATCHWORK

A correspondent whose earnestness is unmistakable wrote some time ago a long, very long letter declaiming against the anti-untouchability campaign and the methods adopted by the Harijan Sevak Sangh to combat the evil. He called it all patchwork. The letter lay in my file for several weeks, always making room for something which I then considered more important and pressing. With great difficulty I have reduced the letter to readable compass. Here it is:

> I hold that your programme re: 'untouchability' is misconceived for the following reasons: You presume that 'untouchability' is nine-tenths of the ills of Harijans and its removal the only cure. You feel it a social and religious curse. I respectfully disagree with you. I hold the whole trouble is directly economic. Social and religious aspects that have gained ascendancy in the public view only serve the purpose of sugar-coating. We have been long trained by our ancestors (who knew the proper clue to it) to close our eyes to the bitter pill inside, but it mocks at us grimly in all its naked truth. I believe that 'untouchability' is bound to disappear along with the disappearance of the inferiority complex of the Harijan. Remove the causee of his poverty, improve his economic conditions, fight for a more equitable distribution of national wealth, make the Harijan feel that he has to revolt against the existing capitalistic exploitation; then a panoramic view of his future will be opened to him and he will then need no outside agency to count the steps of his progress and caution halt at measured intervals.
>
> You believe 'untouchability' is peculiar to Hindu society and confined to our own land. But my view is totally different. It is a universal problem facing every land and the Harijan that inhabits it. So the solution to root out this evil must be one which is common to all lands, and which goes to the root of the matter, and one ought not to be satisfied only with lopping off the topmost branches. After all, what is 'untouchability'? It is treating a whole race of men as lepers and denying the elementary rights to them. Mere touching or not touching is just a symbol and a symptom of the corroding disease, viz., subjection, and matters little or nothing to the victim so long as the main cancer is not sought to be removed. In this view, 'untouchability' is a universal menace and all oppressed peoples have got to rebel against it. It has taken various guises in various countries with difference in degree. Everywhere, its basis is economic which is miscalled 'political'. Indian 'untouchability' arose, I believe, out of the conquest of Aryans over the so-called 'Aborigines' to whom the present-day Harijan has to trace his ancestry.

American ‘untouchability’ towards the Negroes is rooted in the land-greed of the white man who first travelled to America in the *Mayflower*. The Hitlerian hatred of the Jew, the Bolshevik’s hatred of the *bourgeoisie*, the Chinaman’s fear of the ‘Mikado’ are all traceable to the same source, viz., economic exploitation, euphemistically called ‘Politics’. The Indian *‘asprishyata’*, the American ‘lynching’, the Belgian ‘Congo’, the Nazian persecution of the Jews are outstanding examples of this injustice, and world wars are their natural culmination.

Again ‘untouchability’ or, to speak more correctly, the inferiority complex of the conquered original owners of this land, was a *bourgeoi* political necessity of the Aryans for keeping the comparatively inferior races of the Harijans under eternal subjection solely for economic ends, that is, for permanently maintaining the superiority in status of the conqueror over the conquered. The much-advertised I.C.S. steelframe superiority, the recent uncouth reminder to the African Negro chief Tesh-Kendy by his European masters, the preferential treatment claimed [by] and conceded to those of European extraction are but living reminders of this hiatus which have been carefully conceived to enable smaller but more powerful nations to exploit bigger but weaker peoples.

This explains and greatly probabilizes the imposition, for economic ends, of cruel disabilities by the conquering Aryan hordes over the vanquished forces of the sons of the soil. Then followed as night did the day the engine of ruthless suppression, and every effort was made to introduce and establish this racial superiority in matters of residence, association, eating and drinking and in every walk of life. Poets sang praises of this system and Puranas sealed it with divine approval. The Harijan, like the Natal Indian, was feared in commercial competition, too, and there came the law ousting him from main business centres and important thriving trades. The impoverished Harijan reduced to mere manual labour became half-naked, huddled in huts, developed insanitation and illiteracy and, to use Arnold’s language, “bowed low and let the storm to pass”. He had of course to pay the penalty for being a conquered nation, as others do.

You do not believe in the existence of class struggle and are not prepared to unseat those owners of the so-called vested interests for the mere reason that their ‘status quo’ ought not to be disturbed. You refuse to recognize that the interests of the capitalists and the labourers are bound to clash with each other so long as the inequality in their present position is approved and sought to be maintained.

The Harijan asks for bread but a stone is your answer. For aught I know about the Harijan, he is least concerned about his ‘touch me not’ trouble. I am sure you realize that the Harijan’s untouchability is too deep to be removed by an occasional inter-dining, demonstrative sweeping in the slums, ceremonious entries into the village temples and merciful distribution of

clothing and sweetmeats, which seem to be the type-design programme that is chalked out for the much tired Congressman. To all appearance, the programme seems to go on merrily. Details of boys holding scholarships in the till-recently banned schools, instances of temples and wells thrown open, are tabulated in *Harijan*, but what strikes me most pointedly is: Is the Harijan going to bee satisfied with all this? Can we say that he is on the shortest road to his salvation? I would only wonder what the response would be if the public are asked to give better wages for shorter hours of work and do their duty by the impoverished Harijan.

To be true to you, I feel compelled to state that the too much stress you have laid on this comparatively minor problem, in preference to their more vital needs, leads the Harijans to self-deception, binds them to the chariot-wheel of capitalistic exploitation, and puts off indefinitely the day of their economic freedom, which their brethren in other countries are striving hard to secure.

Such argument was heard when I was touring in the South in the Harijan interest. It is well, however, to have it summed up in a letter. The mistake the correspondent makes is in thinking that the struggle against untouchability ends with the remonval of touch pollution. The campaign had to begin with the removal of the impassable religious bar. Those who come under the religious ban are a class apart. To them the taint attaches by birth. Who does not know that these men though they may be economically well off are still treated as social lepers? Thousands of Ezhawas in Travancore and Namosudras in Bengal are very well off and yet to their great sorrow and to the equally great disgrace of the so called *savarna* Hindus, the former's possession of the good things of the earth makes no difference in their social status.

There is no difficulty in admitting that much will remain to be done after the bar sinister is removed. Indeed it is the recognition of this obvious fact that has impelled the Harijan Sevak Sangh to handle educational and economic work among Harijans which the correspondent seems to be little. That work serves the Harijans tangibly and tests the sincerity of the reformers and brings them in close touch with those whom they are out to serve.

When untouchability is altogether gone, Harijans will share the benefit with the others of the economic uplift that is silently but surely going on. Harijans contribute, say, 16 per cent of the total population of India. But those who suffer from economic exploitation form at least 90 per cent of the population. It is for that reason that I have said

in these columns that the missions of the A.I.S.A., A.I.V.I.A. and Harijan Sevak Sangh are inter-related, and that is why the scope of *Harijan* has been extended.

The correspondent is wrong in suggesting that I do not believe in the existence of class struggle. What I do not believe in is the necessity of fomenting and keeping it up. I entertain a growing belief that it is perfectly possible to aviod it. There is no virtue in fomenting it, as there is in preventing it. The conflict between moneyed classes and labourers is merely seeming. When labour is intelligent enough to organize itself and learns to act as one man, it will have the same weight as money if not much greater. The conflict is really between intelligence and unintelligence. Surely it will be folly to keep up such a conflict. Unintelligence must be removed.

Money has its use as much as labour. After all money is a token of exchange. A person having 25 rupees has, say, 50 labourers per day at his disposal, regarding eight annas as the wage for a day of eight hours. A labourer who has 49 fellow-labourers working in unison with him is even with the person who has Rs. 25. The advantage, if any, will be with the one who has monopoly of labour. If both are even there will be harmony. The problem therefore is not to set class against class, but to educate labour to a sense of its dignity. Moneyed men after all form a microscopic minority in the world. They will act on the square, immediately labour realizes its power and yet acts on the square. To inflame labour against moneyed men is to perpetuate class hatred and all the evil consequences flowing from it. The strife is a vicious circle to be avoided at any cost. It is an admission of weakness, a sign of inferiority complex. The moment labour recognizes its own dignity, money will find its rightful place, i.e., it will be held in trust for labour. For labour is more than money.

Harijan, 19-10-1935

88. DUTY OF REFORMERS

I gladly publish the following letter[1] from the Principal, Sanatan Dharma College, Lahore:

There can be no doubt that there must be a relentless war waged against this vice. I have gone through the gruesome reports enclosed with this letter. These are of a different type from those dealt with by

[1] This is not reproduced here.

me in the articles[1] to which the Principal refers. They had reference to cases exclusively of seduction by teachers. The reports now sent mostly deal with cases of unnatural assaults committed by goondas on boys of tender age and then murdered. Though the cases of unnatural assaults followed by murder appear more hidious, I believe that they are more capable of being dealt with than the cases in which boys become willing victims of their teachers. Both require incessant vigilance by the reformer and the rousing of public conscience against the commission of this disgusting crime. It is the duty of leaders in the Punjab, in which this crime seems to flourish most, to get together, irrespective of race or creed, and devise methods of protecting the youth of the land of five rivers from criminals whether as seducers or ravishers and murderers. It is no use passing resolutions condemning the criminals. All crimes are different kinds of diseases and they should be treated as such by the reformers. That does not mean that the police will suspend their function of regarding such cases as public crimes, but their measures are never intended to deal with causes of these social disturbances. To do so is the special prerogative of the reformer. And unless the moral tone of society is raised, in spite of whatever may be written in the newspapers such crimes will flourish, if only for the simple reason that the moral sense of these perverts had become blunt and they rarely read newspapers, especially those portions which contain fervent exhortation against such vices. The only effective way I can conceive of, therefore, is for some enthusiastic reformers like the Principal of the Sanatan Dharma College, if he is one, to gather together other reformers and take concerted measures to deal with the evil.

Harijan, 19-10-1935

89. A CORRECTION

In the last issue of *Harijan* a serious mistake has crept in. In the last note[2] on the last page. Dr. Aykroyd is made to say that among other things the dietary requirements of an adult man per day were 16 ounces of soya bean. Please read there 16 ounces of *ragi* and two ounces of soya bean.

Harijan, 19-10-1935

[1] *Vide* "Plight of School Children", 9-9-1926 and "Sexual Perversion", 27-6-1929.

[2] *Vide* "Notes subtitle - For Four Rupees a Month", 12-10-1935.

90. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

MAGANWADI, (WARDHA),
October 19, 1935

MY DEAR MALKANI,

There is no such good news for you or for me. I don't stir out of Wardha till the end of the year. January has been mortgaged to Gujarat, and February will probably be given to Delhi.

The Sangh[1] Council will meet here in November, I expect. But do not expect me to go either to Calcutta or to Bangalore next year. I do not want to devote the whole year to travelling. There is much work to be done here. It is with the utmost reluctance that I have undertaken to go to Gujarat. One month to Delhi I will have to give.

You may expect no congratulations; but you will certainly deserve them for having built at such a reasonable cost, and from the details you have sent, I see that everything was worked out most thoughtfully. You won't have Amtul Salaam before next year and you might not have Viyogi Hari either.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 923

91. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

October 19, 1935

CHI. CHANDU,

I got your letter of the 9th. I like it very much. It is a frank one. Kishorelalbhai had written everything with the purest of motives. He used to speak in Shankar's favour when I was prejudiced against him. He was shaken in his confidence by the . . .[2] episode, but your letter to him made him wonder again whether Shankar might not be right in his belief. Hence with the aim of discovering the truth and because you had permitted him, he put you more questions. There was thus no

[1] Harijan Sevak Sangh
[2] The name has been omitted.

reason for you to feel offended with him. But now your letter to me closes that chapter.

I am still meeting Nanabhai[1]. . . . will return. I will of course still need your help. I will not put you to the trouble of coming here while you are taking rest. You may certainly stay with your brother and his wife for some time and recoup yourself. When your stay is over, I may suggest your coming over here before going to Vartej. I think it will be necessary to do so. And if you wish, I shall send a reliable person to escort you. If anything occurs to you meanwhile, write to me. Is there any other girl, besides you two sisters, who can throw light on this chapter? If there is, give me her name and address. If there is anyone else also who is in a position to help, let me know.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 936. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

92. ABOUT SNAKE-BITES

I give below a summary in my words of the questions put by a Harijan reader and my answers:

Q. Is there any risk involved in making vertical and horizontal cuts over a [snake-] bite? And, if there is any, is it proper to invite one risk in order to avoid another?

A. There is no risk at all in making a cut over the bite. It would have been easier to follow if the translator had used the word 'incision' instead of ‘cut’. The only purpose of making an incision is to drain some blood out. Such superficial incision does not hurt much; and anyone who has been bitten does not feel the pain at all and because he gradually tends to lose consciousness the cells in his brain become so insensitive that he has little awareness of what his body is being subjected to.

Q. Please explain clearly how the tender skin covering the bones escapes injury.

A. The previous passage explains this. The razor's edge does not reach the bone while making an incision. Instead of the skin we should think of layers. We should imagine that there are layers

[1] Nrisinhaprasad Kalidas Bhatt, founder of the Lokbharati

beneath the skin which we can see and touch. The incision which has to be made is just to open up the skin. In that case the edge of the knife cannot even reach the layer of the skin immediately next to the bone.

Q. What is meant by "using the blade of the safety razor after passing it over a flame"?

A. The blade should be passed back and forth over a lighted match until the latter burns out. This would take only a few seconds.

Q. Is there no danger of death to the person who sucks [the poison]?

A. If he has no ulcers in his mouth, there is no danger of death or of any other harm. If he has ulcers, there is no question of his sucking.

Q. You write of mud-pack remedies, but you cannot give any assurances.

A. I can give no guarantee whatsoever. Moreover, who will permit me to make sufficient number of experiments to give any assurance?

Q. The sixth question is that I should have written[1] exhaustively about identifying the different kinds of snakes.

A. Nothing is gained by putting before the reader something which I find it difficult to understand because even if I understood, it cannot help me in identifying the kinds. Those who [want to] understand this matter more than I do ought to obtain the literature for themselves and go through it; this literature can generally be found in libraries.

Finally, I may add that I am collecting further knowledge about snake-bites and if I find anything more valuable, I shall certainly inform the readers. An experienced doctor, who is an old friend, writes to say that there is no likelihood of anything new and worth communicating coming to light. I may say that Ramanama is the remedy for a bite by a venomous cobra. Luckily, such cobras are few. There is little danger of death if the other bites are treated immediately in the manner suggested.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 20-10-1935

[1] *Vide* "Snake Poisoning", 17-8-1935.

93. TWO QUESTIONS

Many questions keep coming up about the new policy of the Spinner's Association, which is being framed. Here are some of them:

Q. 1. How can workers prepare themselves to put into effect the new policy?

The best way is for those who have grown accustomed to the new policy to train workers from among villagers and persons who do not know English. We shall need innumerable workers if the policy of self-sufficing [khadi] is to be made widespread. This poor country cannot afford them salaries if these happen to be large. If workers are trained only from amongst the English-educated persons they would demand large salaries as their needs have increased. They no longer possess a hardy constitution. And, in a sphere where a knowledge of the English language is not essential they cannot be said to be particularly useful. Very often, their usefulness has indeed inclined. For instance, they do not like living in villages and they try to import city-life into the villages. Their bodies are less supple and only in rare cases can they become skilled craftsmen. Even when they learn a craft, they can seldom compete with ordinary craftsmen. I only want to suggest here that we should give up the craze of looking for workers who know English. This does not mean that we should boycott or despite those who know English. We should welcome any such person who is available. They are all right where they belong. The only purpose of saying this is to rid ourselves of the false notion that only those who know English are fit to be workers. If a village worker's services are available, he will bring in greater returns than the amount paid to him. An allowance of not more than Rs. 10 to 15 should be required for such a worker. And he can easily bring in by way of return that amount every month. Organizers should train such workers wherever there are khadi centres and to that extent enlarge their field of work. Workers should acquaint themselves with all the processes starting from growing cotton right up to making khadi. And if those who are in charge of these centres are themselves efficient, they can readily produce such workers at no cost.

At present, I do not visualize any separate institution for training workers.

Q. 2. Will the number of private traders increase or decrease with the implementation of the new policy?

There cannot be any increase in the number of private traders. Making [khadi] self-sufficing will be the principal policy. Private traders have no place in it. They will cotinue for the purpose of selling khadi in the cities. There is very little likelihood of there being an increase in their numbers because, with the growing desire of craftsmen to add to their earnings, private traders will progressively decrease in number. This is because the latter are impelled by the profit motive. Hence they will not be satisfied. In the new scheme, the ceilling to the seller's earnings will be fixed and whatever profit is there, will go to the craftsmen.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 20-10-1935

94. A LETTER[1]

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
October 20, 1935

It is true that I have the strength to strike her non-violently to bring her round, but it is not right to use such strength on every occasion irrespective of the circumstances.

Differences of opinion have been known to exist even among those whose spiritual eye has opened or is believed to have opened.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8770

95. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 20, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

Mathew has reached here. He has no work. He says that he will go to Poona at any rate. I won't send him to you. The desire for degrees is becoming universal at present. How, then, can we blame Sharda[2] and Vijaya[3]? Let them satisfy their desire. Only they should not expect any money from us.

[1] Only the last sheet of the letter is available.
[2] Sharda C. Shah
[3] Vijaya N. Patel

I got Nanubhai's letter. Is it necessary to reply to it? I can't recall his face.

I was pained and surprised to read about Jamnadas. He had given me a firm assurance here.

Really speaking the money collected during the Charkha Week[1] should be utilized in promoting khadi activities. However, do what you think best.

Lilavati[2] has been entrusted just now with the management of the kitchen. I have of course been encouraging her to go to you. At the moment, however, she does not think of leaving this place till December. After I leave in January, she is bound to feel unhappy. Let us see what happens. Mirabehn recovered long ago. (A palatial hut has been put up for her.) She has gone to live in Sindi.

Devdas has returned to Delhi. He is steadily improving. But he will take some time to recover completely. Ghanshyamdas has kept him at his place. I am sending herewith a letter from Jethalal Joshi. Have you relieved Pranjivan Joshi? If so, on what ground? What is truth in what Jethalal writes? What is the Seva Sangh? What has been Sushila's part in it?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8479. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

96. INTERVIEW TO PATITPAWANDAS AND OTHERS [3]

October 20, 1935

Mahatma Gandhi said that it was no fault of the religion that Dr. Ambedkar was going to make himself a convert.[4] Caste Hindus and Harijans had a common religion. The enmity between those two parties was no sufficient reason for him to go against

[1] The period, of about a week, from the date of Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram Calendar and October 2; *vide* "Message on Birthday", 12-10-1935.

[2] Lilavati Asar

[3] At the instance of the Depressed Classes Federation Conference of the C. P. and Berar held on October 20, Patitpawandas, head of the Berar Maharashtra Temple-entry Satyagraha Movement, D.K. Bhagat, Chairman, C.P. and Berar Matang Society, T.A. Purohit of Arvi and D.S. Shende of Nagpur met Gandhiji at 9 p.m.

[4] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 15-10-1935.

the religion. Dr. Ambedkar and Harijans might go against the caste Hindus and fight for their equality. It was a fact that the Harijans were molested by the caste Hindus at Kavitha. It should not be the case that from some such stray instances of harassment, men like Dr. Ambedkar should go against the religion. The Harijans of Kavitha might leave the place and go to other places where they would get the necessary environment to pull on. If Dr. Ambedkar was converted, many men from the depressed classes would not follow him. Anyhow the Muslim fold was thought to be a suitable place to go into. The Muslims would not be able to take many depressed classes in their fold; for they would not be able to manage them. Moreover, he said that the water-tight compartment of untouchability had been already loosened through the efforts to the Harijan Sevak Sangh and others. In such circumstances Dr. Ambedkar's threat to change his religion only showed that he was impatient and no one was able to help him in such a situation.

The Hitavada, 3-11-1935

97. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 21, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

The longer you stay in Simla, the gladder I feel. Now that the giddy season there is over, you get a change of having a little bit of rest. I fancy that now is the real season for Simla—quiet and bracing. There need be no hurry to descend to Jullundur. The work won't run away from you, if you go there a little later.

Pray do not worry over my estimate[1] of your brochure on the position of women in India. The matter is all right it is the manner which appeared to me to be defective. I could smell your fatigue and midnight oil—must one say now midnight electric burners—in it. I did not miss the political part. It was not expected there. But of all this when we meet, if only that will bring you here earlier.

Nor need you worry about Devdas not having been completely cured there. Dr. Ansari is more than satisfied. The weather in Delhi is quite good now and Devdas is accommodated in a nice house. Pyarelal is no longer with him all the 24 hours. Devdas says nowhere could he have had greater kindness than under your roof. 'Be careful

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 13-10-1935.

for nothing.'

Love to you all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3556. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6365

98. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

October 21, 1935

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I get your letters. Don't expect long or regular letters from me. I certainly wish to write, but being in the Committee I get no time at all. I am glad that you keep good health. I don't know how long I shall have to stay here. I see that I shall have to do some travelling, unless indeed I have to go there immediately for some reason.

I am quite well. I intentionally avoid writing with my right hand. I am trying to drink $2\frac{1}{2}$ [pounds] of milk daily.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–10: Shri Prabhavatibehnne, pp. 73-4

99. SPEECH TO VILLAGE WORKERS[1]

October 22, 1935

As today's menu was selected by me with some careful thought, and especially with a view to the needs of village workers, I must speak to you about it at some length. The idea was to provide you with food, nourishing and yet within the means of an average villager and within the possibility of an eight hours' minimum wage as we have fixed it, i.e., three annas.

We were 98 diners today and the total cost of our food was Rs. 9-14-3, which means that each meal cost slightly more than six pice. Here are the details:

[1] As summarized by Mahadev Desai. The workers had undergone a fortnight's study course from October 8 to 22.

			Rs.	As.	Ps.
36	Ib.	Wheat flour	1	8	0
12	,,	Tomatoes	0	11	3
4	,,	Jaggery	0	6	3
24	,,	Red gourd	0	7	6
6	”	Linseed oil	1	2	0
50	,,	Milk	3	13	0
4	,,	Soya bean	0	6	0
4	Cocoanuts		0	4	0
16	*Koth* fruit		0	2	0
	Tamarind and salt		0	2	3
	Fuel		1	0	0
		Total	9	14	3

Vinoba had passed on the suggestion to me that I need not worry about giving all of you *roti*[1] but might simply give you wheaten porridge (that we have here every morning) and thus save a lot of trouble. No, said I to myself, you young men whom God has given strong teeth must have good hard well-baked *bhakhari*[2], which anyone can make, which one can easily carry on one's person from place to place and which can keep for a couple of days. Before the dough was kneaded it was treated with linseed oil. This rendered it both soft and crisp. Then, as we must have some greens and raw vegetables, we had tomatoes and two chutneys—one made of *koth* fruit available in plenty in these parts and another made of leaves available in our garden. *Koth* fruit is known for both its aperient and astringent properties, and jaggery goes well with it and makes a delicious chutney. The other chutney contained some cocoanut, tamarind and salt to spice the leaves. Green leaves must be eaten by us in some form on other, in order what we may get proper vitamins in our diet. The vegetable chosen was the cheapest available and grows everywhere in our villages. You will see that I allowed the use of tamarind in the preparation of chutney. In spite of the popular prejudice against tamarind, it has been found that it is a good aperient and blood-purifier. I gave copious doses of tamarind water to one of the inmates suffering from malaria with very good effect and have tried it in

[1] Bread
[2] Crisp chapati

several cases of constipation.

Milk is an essential article of diet. Your menu contained half a pound of milk, but you must have seen that I gave you no ghee. I hope, however, that you did not miss it. For I gave you soya beans and oil. Soya beans are rich in oil (20 per cent) and proteins (40 per cent). Ground-nuts also are rich in oil, but they have the disadvantage of containing too much starch from which soya beans are comparatively free. Milk with soya beans gives us almost all that we need in the shape of fats and there is no need for ghee at all. Why then go to all the wasteful trouble of making ghee. And where procuring good ghee is a doubtful proposition, why have spurious ghee? But milk or buttermilk we ought to have, no matter how little. Medical men say that it helps in the assimilation of the vegetable fats and proteids. Therefore ghee you can omit with impunity. I had recently two little children under my care whose diet I carefully regulated. I cut out ghee from it and found that they were none the worse for the cutting out of ghee. Of course I gave them as much milk as they wanted.

Our menu has cost us a little more than six pice. It was a full meal and the other meals need not be so heavy as this. They, therefore, need not cost more than an anna or so. Milk may be omitted for the other meals. Wheat *bhakhari,* soya bean and chutney should be quite enough. So this is one of the two main things you have to do—to ensure to villagers a balanced diet, and to content yourselves with the same. There may be some who burden their diet with useless articles and many whose diet is badly deficient in vitamins. You have to introduce the right kind of diet to them. You will learn cow-keeping yourselves and encourage cow-keeping among villagers. It ought to be considered a shame that milk is not available in many of our villages. The second main duty is sanitation—a most difficult thing indeed. But if you have succeeded in introducing the right kind of diet and making the sanitation of your village tolerably good, you will have rendered human bodies worthy of becoming temples of God and efficient tools for doing a good day's work.

Khadi will certainly occupy the centre of the village industries. But remember that we have to concentrate on making the villages self-sufficing in khadi. Out of self-sufficing khadi will follow commercial khadi as a matter of course. The argument you will find elaborated in the columns of *Harijan.* But on you will depend the success of failure

of khadi. People have been frightened by baseless scares. You have to restore their faith in khadi and explain to them the new policy.[1]

You will of course take up any other industry available in villages and for which you can find a market, care being taken that no shop has to be run at a loss and no article produced for which there is no market. Give eight hours of your day to any home-craft you like and show to the villagers that as you earn your wage, even so can they earn it by eight hours' work. Make Vinoba your ideal here. It is impossible for you to emulate his learning or to have his wonderful memory, but you can certainly emulate his industry and devotion to work. Go not to the villages to write commentaries on the Upanishads, which you may well do in towns and cities. Your work will provide the best commentary as does Vinoba's concentrated work. We have to infect the villagers with our passion for work. We say they have become hewers of wood and drawers of water[2]. In order that they may stand erect and say they shall no longer be mere hewers of wood and drawers of water for us, you have to explain to them the reason for every one of their actions and make them voluntary workers for a living wage. What Vinoba has done should be easier for these simple folks to achieve. I am told a village lad called Gulab has already broken Vinoba's record in spinning.

You will also not take a companion to work with you. Our policy is to send a single worker to a village or group of villages. That will enable him to bring his resourcefulness into full play. He may pick out any number of companions from the village itself. They will work under his direction, but he will be mainly responsible for the village under his charge.

Let us not be tempted by the allurements of the machine age, let us concentrate on rendering our own body-machines perfect and efficient instruments of work and let us get the best out of them. This is your task. Go ahead with it, without flinching. There need be no despair in a field which Vinoba has made his own and where he has given the best of his 15 years. I at least have no cause for despair and that is why you find me settled down here.

Harijan, 2-11-1935

[1] *Vide* "Speech at A.I.S.A. Council meeting", on or before 13-10-1935.
[2] The source has "work".

100. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
October 23, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I got your letter. The fever should go now. Om[1] has stayed over there. Keep in touch with her. Come over only when your parents give you their consent. I have read the recipe for *rasam.* I had enquired about it because Bharatan told me that it is recommended to patients suffering from fever, etc. Write to me what the doctors and vaidyas there say about the efficacy of *rasam.*

Are soya beans available in Madras? If so, at what price? Are they indigenous or imported? Send me a sample.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

101. FOREWORD TO "SHRIMADRAJACHANDRA"

WARDHA,
October 24, 1935

There is no doubt that these gleanings selected from the writings of the late Shri Raichandbhai will prove useful as an introduction to the original work. As they are arranged subjectwise, they will be very helpful to the *jijnasu*[2].

[From Gujarati]
Shrimadrajachandra

[1] Umadevi, daughter of Jamnalal Bajaj
[2] Seeker of knowledge

102. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
October 24, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Whilst the language you have chosen to describe the attitude of your co-workers, including myself, is unhappy, the substance of what you say is undeniable. There is no want of regard and affection for you. Your great services for the country will command them at any time; but the country has adopted a faith which runs counter to that of the days when you were one of the most active workers. I am not therefore surprised that you found the atmosphere in Madras unresponsive to your presentation of the situation and the remedy.[1] In spite of all the desire to appreciate your viewpoint, it has not been possible to follow it here. In my opinion there is no cause for grief or complaint. Is it not well that although our views differ, we can retain our affection and old friendship unimpaired?

Do come by all means, whenever you have a few days to spare.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C. Vijayaraghavachariar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

103. LETTER TO JAIJI PETIT

[Before *October 25, 1935*][2]

DEAR SISTER,

Mithubehn has sent to me your letter to your sister for my perusal. She did it because I had inquired about your health. I try to

[1] The A.I.C.C. had met at Madras on October 17 and 18 to consider the question of office acceptance and that of the Congress and the States. The Committee felt that considering the long interval that would elapse before the provincial elections under the new Constitution, as well as the uncertain character of the political conditions during the period, it would be inadvisable to commit the Congress to any decision regarding office acceptance.

[2] From the contents this letter appears to have been written before the one to the addressee dated October 25, 1935; *vide* "Letter to Jaiji Petit", 25-10-1935.

get news of you from every possible source. Do write to me sometimes. I can see that you will find your peace of mind only by patiently enduring your suffering, and God has given you the strength to do so. I do not therefore intend to write to you a letter of sympathy even in your illness. Instead I wish that your God-given gift of preserving your peace of mind in any and every kind of suffering should go on increasing. Happiness and suffering are part of our lot. Who can say with certainty that what we think to be happiness or sorrow is really so? The best thing for us, therefore, is to be able to preserve our peace of mind in all circumstances and thank God for being able to do so.

What shall I write to you about the situation here? Do you get *Harijan*? Please let me know if you do not. I will send copies. How long do you intend to stay there? Andrews is here at present. He will leave tomorrow. Is Hilda with you? Write and tell me about everybody.

Ba sends you her blessings.

Blessings from

BAPU

JAIJI PETIT

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3158

104. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
October 24, 1935

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I received your long letter. Do not mind it being so long. I am sending a copy of it to Shankerlal. I would not at any time advise either you or Amba to leave Guleria. I would regard it as humiliating for you to do so. Your description of the three circumstances there is correct. Till a person has spent ten years in the same village, nothing can be said as to whether he has succeeded or failed. I simply do not believe that your stay in Guleria is failing in its purpose. I have such blind faith in your uprightness that I have never believed that you have failed in your purpose in staying there. Nor do I believe that you have lost anything yourself by staying there.

I am trying to get the Magan spinning-wheel. Only if I do not get it from anywhere will I send for it from you. I am ready to buy ten thousand rupees worth of jaggery. I will pay even a higher price. But you should have the price fixed in advance before proceeding in the matter. Some limit must be fixed for the price. Unless that is done, the business cannot be carried on. The total quantity may be divided into cubes of one pound each and the cubes may be wrapped in paper of good quality. Do not mind if doing so increases the labour charges. I will certainly be able to obtain for it a price upto a certain limit.

I understand what you say regarding the saree. I will try to get some tamarind from the market and make the experiment.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33040

105. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

WARDHA,
October 25, 1935

BHAI NANABHAI[1],

The bonds between our two families are increasing on their own. There must be some divine purpose behind it. You sent a girl into our family. You have now taken a girl into your family. As Sushila and Manilal make each other happy, even so may Surendra and Manu do. Manu is a submissive and simple-hearted girl, delicate in health. I do not think she would have felt as secure in any other family as she will be in yours and with Surendra. Let us hope that they live long and learn to do selfless service. Jamnalalji came here just a little while ago at 9.30 and, with the willing consent of Ba, the betrothal was solemnized. A coconut was broken and the betrothal ceremony was performed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7524. Also C.W. 5000. Courtesy: Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

[1] Sushila Gandhi's father

106. LETTER TO JAIJI PETIT

October 25, 1935

DEAR SISTER,

How could I, of course, expect you to write to me? But even so I often thought of you. And then I got Charlie's[1] letter. He has given a vivid description of the state of your health. I can imagine from it what agony you have been passing through and with what courage you are enduring all the suffering. You have endured so much mental suffering that in comparison with it this physical suffering should be nothing. I hope to see in you increasing awareness of God even asyour suffering increases. I feel easy in mind because of the knowledge that Hilda is with you. Please ask her to write to me sometimes.

Charlie tells me in this letter that you often wish you were at Panchgani. I have indeed often wished that you were in India. If you were here today and in good health, I could have got so much work out of you in connection with village industries. But God's will be done. Now please get all right soon. I am still hoping that you will return one day and serve the women of India.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3157

107. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,

October 25, 1935

DEAR SISTER,

I hope you are benefiting from the treatment of the Calcutta doctor and that it will bring you full recovery. I hope that you will regain your health completely and return home safe and sound after spending a few days at Wardha. May the New Year bring happiness to all of you. And may you have the most of that which will give you a sense of fulfilment in life. Give my blessings to Bharati[2] and Suhrid[3]

[1] C.F. Andrews
[2] Addressee's daughter
[3] Addressee's son

when you write to them. I hope both of them are in good health.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11143. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

108. LETTER TO DRAUPADI SHARMA

October 25, 1935

CHI. DRAUPADI,

How is it that there has been no letter from you? I forwarded to you a long letter from Sharma and asked that it may be returned.[1] Neither that letter nor yours had been received. Amtul Salaam is keeping indifferent health and she too awaits your letter. I hope you are all doing well. You should not be lazy about letter writing. Ramdas must have sent you yet another letter from Sharma.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 191

109. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

October 25, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

Long beautiful letters kept pouring in while you were on board the ship but they have stopped, now that you have reached America. I had the one written prior to your reaching Boston but none since then which is extremely surprising. I could not reach you at the ports of call but I am now trying to write almost every week but your letters have stopped coming. Every week I look forward to a letter from you and am invariably disappointed. I feel that you have written but they are still in transit from New York. Your letter ought to arrive by tomorrow's mail. It is now three weeks since you wrote from Boston.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Draupadi Sharma", 24-8-1935.

As desired by you I have already sent the letter for England and you must have got it by now.

I receive no letters from Draupadi, but on my part I keep on writing and ultimately she also may write regularly.

You are doing well, I suppose.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh,* facing p. 206

110. ON ITS LAST LEGS

Some critics have not hesitated to observe that it was preposterous for me to claim, in answer to Dr. Ambedkar's threat to accept some other faith rather than die a Hindu, that untouchability was on its last legs in spite of Kavitha. Indeed, Kavitha itself supports my claim. Kavitha had gone on ever since its birth living peacefully till an our-zealous worker, not knowing his own limitations, had put up Kavitha Harijans to dare to send their children to the local school, though he knew that there was opposition from some Kavitha *savarnas.* He had hoped, as had happened elsewhere, that Harijans had successfully asserted their right to send their children to public schools. But Kavitha *savarnas* showed that they had not recognized the time spirit.

Only a few years ago the Kavitha incident would have attracted no notice. There were very few reformers then. The few were to be found mostly in towns and cities. Now, thank God, their number is increasing and presently every village will have its quota. But a few years ago Harijans could not be induced to resist untouchability on any account whatsoever. It was part of their faith as it was of *savarnas'* faith. These columns contain sufficient evidence of the weekly progress made by the campaign against untouchability. Phenomenal though the progress has been, Kavitha and the like show that it has not yet affected the majority of *savarnas* in many places. The fact is a warning to the reformers and the Harijans that much has yet to be done before the hard hearts of *savarnas* are melted.

Let it be further observed that it was *savarna* reformers who advertised the Kavitha tragedy and gave it an all-India importance. It has agitated *savarna* conscience more than it has angered the

Harijans. I have to note with shame and sorrow that even Kavitha Harijans no longer want to agitate for their rights. They have meekly submitted to the *savarna* impudence. In spite of all the help offered to them, they would not leave Kavitha. It is easy enough for the few that are there to earn their bread by honourable toil elsewhere. The attempt of the reformers to induce them to leave Kavitha under their protection has failed.

Even if change of faith, not on account of its inherent inadequacy but because of the unreasoning prejudice of many of its followers, were justified, in the present instance it can but defeat the cause intended to be served. Secession of stalwarts like Dr. Ambedkar can but weaken the defences of Harijans. We know, as a matter of fact, that non-Hindu Harijans, no matter how eminent they may be, are not able to help Hindu Harijans. Indeed, they are a class apart still in their adopted faiths. Such is the hold untouchability of the Indian type has on the people in India.

Let not Dr. Ambedkar's just wrath deject the reformer, let it spur him to greater effort. For whilst it is true that the number of workers against untouchability has greatly increased, there can be no doubt that the number is yet too small to overtake the prejudice of ages. Nevertheless [with] a movement which has attained the proportions that the anti-untouchability campaign has attained and in which the slightest untoward incident can attract world-wide attention, [untouchability] cannot but be on its last legs. Humanity will not suffer it any longer.

Harijan, 26-10-1935

111. "DEV COTTON"

Some of the readers of *Harijan* may recall the periodical publications of khadi bulletins givng all kinds of useful information to khadi workers. It was part of the pioneer work done by the late Maganlal Gandhi who built up the science of khadi. Shri T. Sreenivas of Secunderabad sends me a copy of one of these bulletins called *Dev Cotton* published in 1923. It is almost prophetic or rather shows how attempts were being made even in the early stages of the movement to work out a scheme or self-sufficing khadi. Now that it is to have the

first place in the activities of the A.I.S.A. the reader will appreciate the reproduction of the bulletin[1]:

Harijan, 26-10-1935

112. NEW KHADI SCHEME

The resolution[2] adopted by the A.I.S.A. regarding spinners' wages and khadi policy generally deserves the careful study of every khadi worker. It can produce great changes, if the new policy is properly worked. In order to work it properly, all the instructions issued from time to time from the Centre should be meticulously carried out. Self-sufficing khadi has to receive the first place in all khadi organizations. In a way, self-sufficing khadi and production for sale will go together. Production for sale will be a by-product of self-sufficing khadi, and the latter will ensure the success of the former. As the condition of production is that the workers must be khadi-clad, they will have to make or take khadi for themselves. This they can easily do out of the (for them) very big rise in their wages which they will be receiving without having expected or demanded it. But receipt of wages will depend upon the surplus production which to be of use must command a ready sale. Thus self-sufficing methods will be easy where there are producing centres. For the spinners and other artisans will be more open to conviction than the others with whom workers have never come in touch. But some ask, who will buy khadi at higher prices? In my opinion this betrays ignorance and want of faith and resourcefulness.

Hitherto we have confined our attention to stimulating demand in the cities: we have been urban-minded. We have never cared to study the localities immediately surrounding centres of production, we have neglected the very producers themselves. Now, before we even tested the latter, we seem to have confidence that they will respond. Why should we not have the same confidence about the people in the surrounding localities? Surely they need cloth for their daily use. Is it too much to expect them to take in some khadi manufactured by their next-door neighbours? I know that those who have made an earnest effort in that direction have never failed. Failure has been with us, not

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] *Vide* "A.I.S.A. Resolution", 11-10-1935.

with the prospective buyers. They are always with us, it does not matter what they buy and use today. If we[1] would study the wants of the surrounding localities, we would produce khadi that would suit their taste and arrest their attention. Khadi workers have done that before now with success for the sake of the city-dwellers. Will they now turn their attention towards rural areas? It is not so much the dearness of khadi that turns people away from it. It is our want of faith and resourcefulness. If we have faith, we shall find that the same millions are open to us as they are to the vendors of fents that come to us from the Far East. They rely upon the cheapness of their pieces to produce a demand for their wares. We may rely upon local patriotism and the tastefulness of our wares to tempt the would-be buyers of cloth.

It is not without full justification that the Council of the A.I.S.A. has insisted upon every khadi organization being self-supporting and hence autonomous. They may no longer rely on the Centre to spoon-feed them. The central fund should be freed for tapping areas we have hitherto neglected.

Harijan, 26-10-1935

113. LETTER TO BEHCHARDAS DOSHI

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
October 26, 1935

BHAI BEHCHARDAS,

I got your letter. May you prosper in the new year[2]. I hope you are quite at peace there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1342

[1] The source has "one".

[2] According to Vikram calendar the new year begins on the day following Diwali, i.e., *Kartak Sud* 1.

114. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

October 26, 1935

CHI. KUNVARJI,

Manu was betrothed to Surendra Mashruwala yesterday at 9.30.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9724.

115. LETTER TO ABHIMANYU

October 26, 1935

CHI. ABHIMANYU,

I am glad you wrote to me the moment you reached there. When you write next, please improve your handwriting. Why didn't you like this place? Which item of food did you not like? A hungry person would relish any food. Such likes and dislikes in food are for the sick and the aged. Children should be satisfied with whatever things the elders give them to eat. May you all prosper in the new year.

I am not writing a separate letter to Mother.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI ABHIMANYU

C/O SHRI HEMENDRA B. DIWANJI

KHAR, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5744

116. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 26, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I wished to write this in the letter addressed to pranjivan Joshi which I sent to you, but could not do so.

Jivrambhai's cheque has been traced You must have heard its amusing story.

I have already written to Jethalal Joshi. It is a strange affair.

Mathew has arrived here. I have made everything plain to him. I have fixed the whole day's programme of work for him. It consists entirely of physical labour. I have told him that if he learns sufficient Hindi to satisfy me and takes whole-hearted interest in physical labour, I am ready to provide for the maintenance of his parents. He will stay here. I will see what work he can do.

I have sent for publication in *Harijan* the account[1] of the khadi woven from yarn spun by you. How many hours of work does the yarn represent? What is your speed? What is the count of the yarn? If you give me these details, they will help me still more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8480. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

117. PROBLEMS CONFRONTING A SANITARY WORKER

A volunteer who has taken up the task of sanitation in villages has written a long letter from which I give the following extract[2].

This letter may be divided into two parts—one relating to the incopetence of the ordinary worker and the other about the difficulties involved in the work of sanitation. It can certainly be said that very little progress, if at all, can be made in a task which is not done in an enlightened manner.

A volunteer who does his work with sincerity will indeed come at last to do it intelligently. It may so happen that a person may do the work entrusted to him through a sense of loyalty to his superior but there may be an absence both of sincerity and knowledge. Such volunteers continue to give the expected results and we can hardly hope for any enlightenment or of any new discoveries resulting from their work. Every volunteer should become engrossed in the work entrusted to him and keep doing research in it. From experiences published in *Harijan* we find that this has happened in certain places. Some are seeking ways and means to do away with the indifference of the people, while others are trying to find out how night-soil can be

[1] *Vide* "An Experience", 30-11-1935.

[2] Not translated here

disposed of with the least expenditure and in the simplest manner. This is happening in relation to Sindi. The people's indifference persists. There is no response from them. Hence, Mirabehn has as a last resort gone to live there. Underlying this is the conviction that the people's indifference cannot be done away with so long as we do not find out someone to live amongst the people of every village. Methods are being evolved also for the rapid disposal of night-soil.

There is no end to the difficulties of volunteers; the work of sanitation is more difficult than all other forms of service, as it is regarded as the meanest of tasks. There is a feeling of great disgust attached to it. Very few persons are prepared to do this work. I am of the opinion that there should be only one volunteer for every village. It is possible that this will yield result most quickly. He will realize that he alone is responsible for the sanitation of the entire village. By himself, he will never be able to cope with the entire work of sanitation if people from the village itself do not come forward to help him. When faced with problems, human beings find out new ways; hence the English saying: necessity is the mother of invention. As in the work of sanitation so too in the task of disposal of night-soil it is difficult to find assistance from the villagers. Let us take the example of Sindi again. People there defecate publicly in their own courtyards. The neighbouring fields are surrounded by fences, so these cannot be used. No one would be prepared to go very far. The village population consists of labourers. How can the latter find the time to go to a distance? How far can the womenfolk go? If so, nothing need be said of children. Hence, as a last resort, nothing but courtyards remain for the people to make use of. Villagers are not accustomed to have a latrine in evey household. Hence so long as there are no public latrines in fair numbers or people are not prepared to make their own, public roads will continue to be used as latrines. In fact, so long as every individual does not acquire a knowledge of sanitation and he does not put it into practice, the practice of using roads as latrines, despite its being unseemly, is perhaps the least harmful from the hygienic point of view and may be tolerated.

How can a single volunteer living in a village facing such a situation carry out the work of sanitation? He should set aside a certain time each day for this task. So long as he is staying there, he should spend that time in educating the people and keeping the place clean to the extent that it is possible to do it singlehanded. As soon as someone is ready to take up the work of sanitation in the locality, he

himself should seek out yet another locality in the same village. If he is capable enough he should seek the assistance of the district board and such other authorities for sanitary work. He should find out the best possible use for the night-soil which accumulates every day. He may either sell it to the owners of the fields nearby and use whatever he so earns for further sanitation work in that very area, or, if no one is prepared to purchase it, he should give it away to any farmer who is prepared to use the manure made out of it in his field and demonstrate how useful it is. This is but a trend of thought presented to the reader. I have not been able to put this idea totally into practice myself, nor to make others do so. After all this field of work is but new. Hence, for the present, there can only be an exchange of ideas. Volunteers who are doing this work will adopt from this whatever is worth adopting. They will inform me of any drawback in these ideas, and report to me the experience which they have gained wherever these have been put into practice.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 27-10-1935

118. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

WARDHA,
October 27, 1935

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

Your two letters were duly received. I know you have been doing what you can for the Harijans. Please continue to watch the situation in Kavitha. If the Harijans there wish to leave the place we should encourage them to do so. I hope you remember that I am awaiting your letter in regard to the appeal for funds. Tell Narahari that he forgot to tell me what he intended to do regarding Bhai Velchand, and that I forgot to ask him. Ask him to write now. I hope Shashikant, who had a fall, is all right now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3957. Also C.W. 129. Courtesy: Parikshitlal L. Majmudar.

119. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

October 27, 1935

CHI. CHANDU,

I got your letter. Before you go to Vartej, please do pay a visit here. You will be returning there before December. I will be here all the while. Meanwhile, I am collecting as much information as I can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 937. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

120. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
October 28, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

What do you say to this postcard? Choudhury has made vast strides. You will see the works when you come.

I do hope you are having full rest in Simla. I dread your habit of making work and then fretting that the day's work is not done.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3718. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6874

121. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

October 28, 1935

CHI. SHARDA,

Today is a day of silence. I am scribbling a few lines since I have just finished writing for *Harijan*. Whether or not I write, you should definitely write to me from time to time to give a full account of yourself. Lilavati is looking after the management of the kitchen for the time being. She is working very hard. Let this year bring happiness to all of you. I have received a letter from Chimanlal. It is

just as well that you would be going back to Rajkot. Even there you can learn whatever you wish to learn.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9970. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

122. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

October 28, 1935

BHAI BHAGWANJI,

Please be satisfied that Devchandbhai has written to me. It is plain that he does not wish to write to you. In these circumstances, I don't in the least feel inclined to press him to do so. Surely you don't believe that you will have had justice if he wrote directly to you what he has written to me.

May the new year bring you happiness. I remember the matter of indigenous herbs.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

SHRI BHAGWANJI ANUPCHAND, VAKILSAHEB
RAJKOT

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5829. Also C.W. 3052. Courtesy Bhagwanji A. Mehta

123. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 28, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I understand about Jethalal. All this is a mystery. Why should Sushila take part in this? I shall be eager to know what Pranjivan Joshi has to say in the matter.

I understand about Jamnadas. Manu has been betrothed to Surendra Mashruwala.

Kanu[1] has settled down very well just now. He uses his time so carefully that he can account for every minute. He keeps good health and remains cheerful. At the moment he does not in the least feel like

[1] Addressee's son

going there. Please, therefore, give up your desire of getting him away from here. I won't hold him back if he shows the slightest inclination to go there.

I would certainly like to take him with me on my tour. I shall be able to decide it when the tour starts. My inclination is to let him accompany me. You may take it for certain that I shall be here till January 10. Perhaps I may have to start a day earlier. In any case, I am not going out anywhere before December 31. I have to reach Ahmedabad on the 12th for the Parishad[1]. After that, I have to tour a little in Gujarat. The programme will be fixed by Vallabhbhai.

I wish you all a happy new year.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 9481. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

124. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

October 29, 1935

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letters. When you feel tired, you may wind up your work there. Do not wait till you are besieged on all sides. One must understand one's limitations. If the quarrels go on increasing and you feel helpless against them, you should frankly admit defeat and wind up the whole thing. Rent out the orchard to somebody. If you get a buyer, sell it off. If the public want the journal[2], they should meet the expenditure. If they do not want it, it is against our principle to force it on them. About the Trust, I shall think and let you know.

I tried hard to persuade Ramdas to accompany Pragji, but he did not yield. Manu has been betrothed to Surendra, which means one more tie with the Mashruwala family.

May the new year see you prosper.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4846

[1] Gujarati Sahitya Parishad, over which Gandhiji was to preside; the session, however was postponed owing to Gandhiji's illness and was held from October 31 to November 2, 1936. For Gandhiji's Presidential and concluding addresses at the session

[2] *Indian Opinion*

125. LETTER TO SURENDRA B. MASHRUWALA

October 29, 1935

CHI. SURENDRA,

It was not I who was responsible for your betrothal. It was Kishorelal and next to him Jamnalalji. Even in your short letter you have committed quite a number of spelling mistakes. Will you be able to take it well when Manu points out your mistakes? Wait and see.

I am sure both of you will be happy.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SURENDRA MASHRUWALA

TOPIWALA CHAWL

SANDHURST ROAD, BOMBAY[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2666. Courtesy: Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

126. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

October 29, 1935

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

If the women spinners there refuse to accept khadi or they keep back a part of their yarn for their own clothing before giving it for weaving, you should give them no spinning work. Do not mind if as a result no spinner is left in Vijapur. If middleclass people wish to spin for their own requirements, you may give them the necessary facilities. If nobody listens to your appeal to wear khadi or to spin for his or her own clothing or by way of service, you may leave off khadi work. If the people agree to learn some other village or home industry, you may create the necessary facilities to enable them to do so, but see that we do not have to bear the expense for that. It should be possible to meet it from the sale-proceeds of the articles produced. And see that the industries which you select are also such that their products have a ready market; for instance, ghee, oil, jaggery, paper and some medicinal foods. This is only an illustrative list. If you cannot undertake any of these activities, you may try to run a hostel

[1] Address from a copy

for Harijan boys and girls. If you cannot do even that, you may find out any other activity in the way of service.

I note that Gangabehn[1] refuses to sign for registration a document transferring the land and the building to the names of the trustees of the Ashram. But in spite of her refusal to sign there is no risk to the land. We have with us a document signed by her and, therefore, she can create no difficulty. And no third party can do so either. Am I right? If, however, there is any risk even in this, discuss the matter with Mavalankar[2].

Manu was betrothed the day before yesterday to Surendra Mashruwala. She is here for the present. She went to Akola yesterday for two day's stay.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9682. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

127. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

WARDHA,

October 29, 1935

CHI. MRIDULA,

I should not really forgive you. But when many undeserving people escape from me, what is surprising about your escaping? Do come over.

Why should Gautam[1] and Vikram also not spend a day here? Tempt them to come if you can give the place a good certificate after your visit.

You can have the reply to the second part of your letter after coming here.

Khurshedbehn[4] will be here.

[1] Gangabehn Majmudar

[2] G. V. Mavalankar

[3] The addressee reached England on October 29, 1935. Evidently the letter was written some time about this period. Again, in his letter dated November 7, 1935, to the addressee, Mahadev Desai wrote that Khurshed had already left.

[4] Khurshed Naoroji, grand-daughter of Dadabhai Naoroji

I had received the telegram of Diwali greetings from your parents.

I am glad to read that Mother's health is improving.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11196. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

128. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

[About *October 29, 1935*][3]

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter. We have to be prepared for ups and downs in Kamala's health. I marvel at the resisting power Kamala is showing and so long as she has got this tremendous reserve of strength and will, we can hope for the best; at least I do. When I said good-bye to her in Bombay, I did not feel that we were parting for all time, and I naturally said: 'We are going to meet again in a year's time, if I am out till then.' I claim to have that hope still and I interpret your reports in that light.

I understand the depth of feeling behind your intense disinclination to see the "big folk",[1] but I know that in spite of your disinclination, if there is a real approach to you, you are not going to be unapproachable. I know that at a given moment your decisions are always correct. Your firm decision, therefore, does not frighten me. I share your view, however, that during the election fever nobody would want to see you, nobody would be in the mood to discuss things that are irrelevant to their electioneering campaign, and India has ever been irrelevant on such occasions. From your standpoint you will be going to England at a safe time.

Khurshedbehn will be most probably leaving for Bombay on Wednesday. She has a bit of a literary programme before her which should keep her busy for some months.

I wonder if you have ever time to look into *Harijan*, which is sent to you regularly?

Love.

Blessings from
BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 10-10-1935.

129. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
October 30, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your very interesting letter. I simply cannot tax my mind about offices. I do not even know that the Constitution is coming. That it has received the King's assent is not of much consequence. There's many a slip between the cup and the lip. The inauguration is still far off. Many events may happen to upset the apple-cart, and way should I worry over a thing which is highly problematical? But I can say this, that if the Constitution does actually begin to work and if I find that there is no escape from taking office, that is, if the Congress is represented in the Legislatures, I would not hesitate to say so. Just at present, I can see many an escape from the predicament.

I do not think we need speculate about the Congress President because Jawaharlal Nehru has definitely written, saying that if the responsibility is entrusted to him, he will shoulder the burden. There should be no difficulty about his return in March.

You will be welcome whenever you come. From January my movements become uncertain.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C. Vijayaraghavachariar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

130. LETTER TO ABHIMANYU

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
October 30, 1935

CHI. ABHIMANYU,

Your handwriting cannot be described as very good but it is fairly good. The letters in a word are also pictures, and a good picture is one that is an exact copy. If you drew such well-formed letters as looked like pictures, I would say your handwriting was good. According to me, learning to form letters is a step in the process of

learning to draw. If you are eager to learn how to draw such letters, you may succeed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5746

131. LETTER TO G. K. DEODHAR

October 31, 1935

MY DEAR DEODHAR[1],

Kishorelal gives me a graphic and pathetic description of his visit to you. You are not a broken reed. You [have] a record of faithful service in the past and, God willing, you will rise from your sick-bed to render still further service. But if God has willed otherwise, what then? Your past—stainless past—is an absolute assurance of your equally stainless future, no matter where God takes you. You are a man of faith. It is always well with those that have faith. May God keep you in our midst for many a long year.

From a manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

132. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

WARDHA,

October 31, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Enclosed is a letter from Parikshitlal. You seem to have read it. I think I was wrong in giving my consent. Before I correct myself, however, I must have a clear idea of the situation[2]. I think that, if Harijans are physically ill-treated in a place and if they cannot get redress in any other way, they should leave that village and we should encourage them to do so. I have accepted and followed this policy for many years, both for individuals and groups. I started advocating it in 1906 and gave expression to my views in writing in 1908, and since then I have given the same advice on all occasions. When the Harijans

[1] Founder-member of the Servants of India Society, social reformer and friend of Harijans. He passed away on November 16, 1935; *vide* "Telegram to R. R. Bakhale", 16-11-1935.

[2] At Kavitha; *vide* "Vacate Kavitha", 5-10-1935.

of Talaja and of the villages near Meerut were terrorized, I gave this very advice. In Talaja, Pattanisaheb[1] intervened on behalf of the Harijans. In the village near Meerut, there was a court case which dragged on for a long time and the Harijans lost it. The lawyers and other advisers were lukewarm and the matter was not pursued. Possibly there are special reasons in the case of Kavitha which make mass migration inadvisable. But what is the harm if the Harijans, all or some of them, leave the place after serving notice on the caste Hindus? If you differ with me about this, please explain your point of view to me. I don't know if there are any special circumstances in Kavitha. You have been there and so will be able to throw plenty of light on the situation. We should not treat the Kavitha chapter as closed. We do not hear that the kind of things which happen in Gujarat ever happen in the other provinces. In Tamil Nad the relations between Nairs [*sic*] and Harijans are equally bad, but I have not heard of such things happening anywhere else. We must find some remedy.

Valchand[2] is thinking of coming here and bringing Ambedkar with him.

They have asked me about the programme to be drawn up during my visit there. It should include a tour of the Bhil areas and a tour for public collections for the Harijan Fund.

If the operations are necessary, you should get them done as soon as possible,unless of course the doctors think otherwise.

Deodhar is on his death-bed in Bhajekar's hospital. Write to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

DR. KANUGA'S BUNGALOW

ELLIS BRIDGE, AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 190-1

[1] Prabhashankar Pattani, Dewan of Bhavnagar

[2] Valchand Hirachand, an industrialist

133. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

October 31, 1935

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I couldn't understand your letter. I remember your having written and told me that Sardar had gone to the place and brought about an understanding between the parties. But I did not know that though the Harijans were ready to migrate, Sardar disapproved of their intention. If he did, I must rectify the error now. I am asking Sardar how it can be done. You also may throw light on the matter. It was you, Dahyabhai[1] and Puratan[2] who gave me the information about Kavitha.

I had asked you to send me a scheme in connection with the appeal for funds, suggested by Thakkar Bapa, for the estimated expenses for the year. Either you did not get the letter or I did not receive your reply. I am waiting for your reply.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4005. Also C.W. 130. Courtesy: Parikshitlal L. Majmudar

134. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

October 31, 1935

BHAI DAHYABHAI,

I got your letter. If you go to a village and engage yourself in silent service, you will experience peace of mind from the very first day. The people will not be able to rival you in making speeches, but they will be able to follow your example in hard work. If anybody from among the Harijans in Kavitha still wishes to leave the place, he can do so. Parikshitlal is keeping a watch on the situation.

What you say may be practicable where one latrine is used by one person. But in a place like Santa Cruz, as many as 25 people may be living in one bungalow. The latrine is at a height of 25 to 30 feet so that the stools fall to the ground from that height. Again, this can

[1] Dahyabhai M. Patel
[2] Puratan Buch

barely be removed through a dark passage. Now if there are no Bhangis in such a place, how and by whom would the latrine be cleaned? And such cleanliness maintained as you describe?

What you say about food and drink is correct. But since I myself have not been able to reach such an ideal state despite my strenuous efforts, what light can I throw on the subject? May be, in order to reach it many other things are necessary besides right food. Let all of us strive our best to reach it.

May you prosper in the new year.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

DHOLKA

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2707. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

135. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

October 31, 1935

CHI. MANI,

Why do you fall ill so often? I hope you don't think that devotion to one's father means that whenever the latter is ill one should fall ill, too? Shravana's parents were infirm, but he made his body as strong as steel and took them round on a pilgrimage, carrying them in a *kavad* carried across his shoulders. King Lear's daughter maintained good health while serving her father. Why have you, then, become prematurely old? If not indigestion, you have fever, and if not that you have cold, but you are always suffering from one thing or another. Why don't you find out the reason and make your body as strong as steel?

Blessings from

BAPU

MANIBEHN PATEL

89 WARDEN ROAD, BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 118

136. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. How could you trust Harilal? How can we believe in anything he says when drunk? But I am quite guarded. I am not going to spend a single pie out of public funds for his coming here or for keeping him here. I hope you also have not promised to pay him the [railway] fare from such funds. You know that formerly he had asked me for the fare and I had plainly refused.

Why do you insist on calling away Kanu against his will? He has settled down here now, his studies are progressing and his health also is improving. He does not at all feel happy in Rajkot. What is then the point in sending for him? He has been here only for fourteen months. He has been entrusted with responsible work. For that reason, too, it will be difficult for him to leave.

If he is to accompany me on my tour, he wouldn't like to miss even one day from it. Such absence would stand in the way of his acquiring practical experience, and perhaps I may not be in a position to spare him at that time. When he is needed here, I am sure you will not call him away. Hence, the most convenient and the best time for him to go there would be when I am here. Let Santok[1], therefore, come [here] any day between now and December 31 or she may do so after I return and get settled here, that is, at the earliest after the end of March. If you take into account Kanu's inclination and my convenience, he should be called away only after March, or for a few days just now. Personally he does not wish to leave this place for the present. That also should be borne in mind. But finally your wish is to prevail. I have simply given you the facts which I know, to enable you to come to a decision. You will know from his letter what activities he is engaged in here. Do let me know your final decision. I will carry it out.

If Jamnadas remains so ill, how will he be able to take up responsible tasks in his present condition? What arrangement has been made for his expenses? What is the expenditure on account of Chimanlal? Is all that met from the Ashram fund? What are his

[1] Maganlal Gandhi's widow

activities there? Send me the figure of the expenditure incurred every month from the Ashram reserves.

The reasoning behind three yards and two yards of khadi is this: Satis Babu and Jethalal think that any spinner who wishes to consume three yards of khadi for personal use will, if he produces two yards of khadi for sale, realize the cost of the three yards. These figures have no importance. We have made the calculations here on a different basis. I have not gone through them. I will publish the figures when I get time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8482. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

137. LETTER TO A VILLAGE WORKER[1]

[Before *November 2, 1935*]

Your meal is very meagre, it is starvation diet. In my opinion, you are not making full use of the instrument that God has put at your disposal. You know the story of the talents[2] that were taken away from him who did not know how to use them, or having known would not use them?

Mortification of the flesh is a necessity when the flesh rebels against one; it is a sin when the flesh has come under subjection and can be used as an instrument of service. In other words, there is no inherent merit in mortification of the flesh.

Harijan, 2-11-1935

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The addressee had "imposed on himself a strict regimen involving only one meal a day, consisting generally of 15 *tolas* of raw rice boiled, *amti* (made of vegetables and dal) and buttermilk—all costing only one anna per day."

[2] *St. Matthew, xxv.* 28-9

138. LETTER TO DR. P.C. RAY

MAGANWADI,
[Before *November 2, 1935*][1]

DEAR DR. RAY,

It is most cheering to find you taking such interest in the spread of the *charkha*. The scheme is being slowly inaugurated. [The][2] demand for khadi is bound to be reshuffled…[3] may for want of faith of the workers sup…[4] temporary check. I would like you, therefore, as you travel, to sow the seed and create a demand for khadi in the immediate neighbourhood of production centres. Once this is done, khadi will occupy its natural and deserved place.

If it is not an undue strain upon you I would suggest your reading all that is being written in the *Harijan* about the scheme.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

139. A TALK[4]

[Before *November 2, 1935*]

A visitor asked Gandhiji if he was not putting too much emphasis on the gospel of work, if not making a kind of fetish of work. Gandhiji replied:

Not at all. I have always meant what I said. There can never be too much emphasis placed on work. I am simply repeating the gospel taught by the *Gita* where the Lord says: "If I did not remain ever at work sleeplessly, I should set a wrong example to mankind."[5] Did I not appeal to the professional men to turn the wheel to set an example to the rest of our countrymen?

[1] From the reference to the new khadi scheme and to the addressee's efforts towards the spread of khadi; *vide* "Two Questions", 20-10-1935; "Dev Cotton", 26-10-1935 and "Need for Humane Custom", 2-11-1935. This was evidently written before the article in *Harijan*, 2-11-1935, wherein Gandhiji refers to this letter.

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[3] *Ibid*

[4] *Ibid*

[5] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 23

[VISITOR] Would you do the same thing with, say, one like Lord Buddha?

Yes; without the slightest hesitation.

Then what would you say about great saints like Tukaram and Jnanadev?

Who am I to judge them?

But you would judge Buddha?

I never said so. I simply said, if I had the good fortune to be face to face with one like him, I should not hesitate to ask him why he did not teach the gospel of work, in preference to one of contemplation. I should do the same thing if I were to meet these saints.

Harijan, 2-11-1935

140. NEED FOR HUMANE CUSTOM

Dr. P.C. Ray, who at his ripe age of 75 is exhibiting in the interest of suffering humanity the energy of youth, writes:[1]

The custom for fine khadi has fallen off even before the expected or rather threatened rise in prices. When it falls further, if it does, it will do so not because of the rise in prices but undoubtedly because of want of love or humanity in the buyer. Humanity does not search for low prices in a spirit of bargain. The humane in man, even in his purchases, seeks opportunities of service, and therefore wants to know first not the price of the article of purchase but the condition of its producers, and makes purchases in a manner that serves most the most needy and deserving. If a sufficiently large number of men and women were actuated by this spirit of love of fellow beings, there would be an ever-increasing demand for khadi, and now more than ever, because of the knowledge that extraordinary care is being taken to assure to the humblest spinner at least a subsistence wage—a wage which would enable her not merely to eke out a living somehow but which would enable her to get sustaining food.

Side by side with the attempt to give khadi artisans a subsistence wage there must be an attempt to find a better, i.e., more natural market for khadi. We have hitherto been satisfied with the easy way of obtaining custom only in the big cities—such as Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, etc. This was surely wrong. I have suggested to Dr. Ray that

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. P. C. Ray had written that they in Bengal had to seek the Bombay market as there was very little sale of fine khadi in Bengal.

he should, if his health permits, deliver his message of love to the places surrounding the producing centres. The whole of Bengal wears fine cloth. Why should it not wear fine khadi? Under the new scheme it is possible to cheapen khadi if Bengal will produce cotton not for speculation but strictly for home use. But that day may be far off. For the time being Bengal as the rest of India should buy khadi for humanity's sake, not in a commercial spirit, counting the cost. We do not count the cost and find out what our children or our aged parents cost us. We support them at any cost. Should we do less for our millions of brothers and sisters who are starving by reason of our criminal neglect of them for centuries? We may leave no part of India neglected. The science of khadi requires decentralization of production and consumption. Consumption should take place as nearly as possible where khadi is produced. All effort should be directed towards that end. We may produce for the demands of the cities, but should never depend upon them as we would on the local market. We must first study the local market and supply its wants. And since all khadi artisans and wherever possible all artisans working under the aegis of the A.I.S.A. or A. I. V. I. A. will be expected to use khadi, a minimum demand will thus always be assured. Satis Babu and Shri Jethalal of Anantpur have made independent calculations and have concluded that self-sufficing khadi will mean two yards of sale outside against three yards of wear by the artisans. If the calculation is correct, self-sufficing khadi to be popular will need considerable support from local markets. Since other industries will go hand in hand with khadi, it may be that self-sufficing khadi will receive help through village industries other than khadi. The test of self-sufficing khadi lies in the fact that it will cost the wearer practically nothing but his labour. Self-sufficing khadi will never spread unless local markets are created all over the country and demand stabilized. In order to ensure stabilization it is necessary to define areas for every producing centre so as to avoid overlapping and unhealthy competition among workers attached to the same organization.

Harijan, 2-11-1935

141. GHEE

Those who can afford it are fond of eating ghee. It enters into the preparation of almost all the sweetmeats. And yet, or perhaps by reason of it, it is one of the most adulterated articles of food The vast

bulk of it that one gets in the bazar is undoubtedly adulterated. Some, if not most, of it is mixed with injurious fats which non-meat-eaters must not eat. Vegetable oils are often mixed with ghee. This mixture diminishes the vitamin value of ghee when it does not contain rancid oils.When the oils mixed are rancid, the ghee is unfit for consumption.

At Maganwadi we have been insisting on procuring cow's ghee. It has meant much difficulty and great expense. We have paid as much as Rs. 29 per 40 lb. plus railage.

This can only be for a rich man's pockets. We are trying as much as we can to approximate the poor man's standard consistent with balanced diet scale. I observed that Dr. Aykroyd had omitted ghee from his balanced diet scale.[1] Medical testimony, while it insists on milk or buttermilk, does not insist on butter or ghee as an indispensable part of the daily menu. We have tentatively dropped ghee from our menu, except for those who consider it to be necessary for their health. We are issuing an equivalent in weight of pure fresh vegetable oils. Millions in India never know the taste of ghee. After all it should be borne in mind that those who take milk get some ghee in the purest and most assimilable form. Apart from the question of relish it may safely be said that village workers can with impunity omit ghee from their diet so long as they can procure some milk or curds or buttermilk. At the same time it is the duty of wealthy people and public bodies like municipalities to place at the disposal of the poor people cheap wholesome unadulterated milk and its products. Adulteration of milk or other foods should be as difficult as counterfeit coin or note or postage stamp, and their value should be standardized as is that of postage stamps.

If half the skill that is today devoted to the management of commercial concerns meant for private gain were devoted to the conduct of dairies for the public benefit and shops for food-stuffs, they could be run as self-supporting institutions. There is nothing to prevent them from becoming so, except the public disinclination to give the requisite skill and capital to such philanthropic concerns. The benevolence of the wealthy is exhausted in the effort to run *sadavrats*[2], to misfeed the ever-increasing army of beggars who are a burden on society. For they eat without labouring. It is benevolence misplaced, if it may not be described as mischievous. The difficulty

[1] *Vide* “Notes subtitle- For four rupees a month”, 12-10-1935.

[2] Charitable eating-houses

amounting to impossibility of getting wholesome articles of diet at reasonable rates in every town and village is a great stumbling-block in the way of the village worker. Time is not wasted when village workers attempt to find out by experiments what in spite of this handicap are the indigenous sources of procuring an adequate diet.

Harijan, 2-11-1935

142. NOTES

APOLOGIES TO VISITORS

Maganwadi is taxed to its utmost limit. It has guest quarters with maximum accommodation for 12. They are principally meant for A. I. V. I. A. Board members and those who are invited for consultation or otherwise by the Chairman or the Secretary. But wherever I stay people gravitate from all parts. I have made it a rule to ask them so far as possible to share with me what has been put at my disposal. The result is that my abode has become a dharmashala without any private quarters. In dry weather this is no hardship. People sleep on the ample flat roof of the rooms occupied by me and the Board office. In the daytime they spread out anyhow. Living thus it is not possible for me to find comfortable rooms for an unlimited number of visitors. Yet they come without notice and without appointment. Add to this the fact that we are working without servants. Cooking, washing and cleaning are all done by us. The resources of Maganwadi are therefore truly taxed when visitors come as they do without notice. I am obliged to refuse them accommodation or food. The latter is always cooked according to the number known to be resident the previous night. This is all contrary to convention. In an Indian household, a chance comer becomes an honoured guest, and he shares what is prepared for the household. But Maganwadi is not a household. It is a trust created solely for the service of the semi-starved unemployed or semi-employed millions. We are trying in the best manner we know to husband all our resources to save every pice we can. We have therefore no warrant for providing a lavish table at which all who come may sit.

Hence even at the risk of being considered rude or miserly, I am obliged to be very strict and turn away those who come without previous appointment. Those who have therefore been, much against my wish, refused hospitality will please extend their sympathy to me

and excuse me. Future comers will take note of the peculiar position we are in at Maganwadi. I may mention for the convenience of those who must come without notice that within a stone's throw of Maganwadi there is a well-appointed dharmashala capable of taking in a fair number of guests. It has private quarters too for a limited number. I would like to add that in asking for appointments would-be comers should have mercy on me. It taxes all my strength to cope with the day-to-day work. No appointment should therefore be sought except for the benefit of the tasks which at the moment engage my attention to the exclusion of all else.

LAJPAT RAI WEEK

The All-India Achhutoddhar Committee, which was started by the late Lala Lajpat Rai, has decided to celebrate a Harijan Week in the revered memory of the Lion of the Punjab as from 11th November to 17th November. Besides what local committees may arrange, the A. I. A. C. has circularized the workers in the Harijan cause all over India to observe certain common features. They are as follows:

November 11: *Prabhat pheris* singing songs impressing upon the minds of all the necessity of treating the Harijans as brothers and sisters, and reciting the services of Lalaji in the Harijan cause.

November 12: *Kathas* of religious literature, such as *Ramayana, Gita, Bhagawat,* etc., to be read in Harijan quarters by *purohits* and pundits. Other Hindus should be invited to these *kathas*.

November 13: *Panchayats* to be held in Harijan quarters or temples to which all groups of the Harijans should be invited. Speeches emphasizing removal of untouchability among Harijans themselves and other evil habits.

November 14: Caste ladies to be persuaded to visit Harijan sisters in their quarters and establish social contacts with them.

November 15: Baby show. Harijan mothers with their babies should be invited to a temple or dharmashala where caste ladies would meet them and award the babies presents and prizes for cleanliness and good health.

November 16: Games. Caste students should fraternize with Harijan students and play with them indigenous games and end with light refreshments.

Shri Algurai Shastri who has sent circulars to friends informs me that the programme above sketched is subject to change. Readers should therefore be ready for alterations that may be sent from headquarters. The chief point to remember is that the celebrations

must be fitting to the great cause and the memory of the illustrious patriot and reformer. Workers and committees should zealously devote themselves to the success of the celebrations.

Harijan, 2-11-1935

143. TWO QUESTIONS

A worker of the Harijan movement has sent me two written questions, of which the first one is:[1]

There is no dilemma here. When we take a Harijan into our family circle, we should tell him all the rules of our household at the very beginning. He should be told plainly that guests who observe untouchability also visit us and in order not to violate their principles they would be served drinks and other things by us or by the other servants. The Bhangi servant who knows this custom of ours will have no cause to feel hurt. But the above question implies that because of such behaviour a new problem faces the Bhangi. Hence, in such circumstances we should clarify our position to the Bhangi as well as the guest. Then neither is deceived and there is no dilemma.

The second question is this:[2]

If this question relates to an event in the past, then it is quite pointless. I can only speak for the future. When we invite all communities of Harijans for a feast, they must be informed beforehand that the meals would be cooked and served by Bhangi Harijans only. If we do not make this clear, then we are certainly guilty of practising deception. We should never forget the fact that the poison of untouchability has permeated Harijans as well.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 2-11-1935

[1] Not reproduced here. The worker had asked whether he should let his Harijan servant serve his guests.

[2] Not reproduced here. It asked whether guests at dinner parties for Harijans should be forewarned about the caste of the cooks, etc.

144. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

WARDHA,
November 2, 1935

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

Will it be convenient to arrange the collection for the Harijan Fund during my visit there for the [Gujarati] Sahitya [Parishad]?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4004. Also C.W. 131. Courtesy: Parikshitlal L. Majmudar

145. LETTER TO MANEKLAL AND RADHA GANDHI

November 2, 1935

CHI. MANEKLAL AND RADHA,

I have the New Year day letters from both of you and was glad to read them. May the new year bring you happiness and prosperity.

Ba is here. Devdas recovered recently from his illness. He will come over here for rest. Ramdas is in Bombay, doing nothing there. One cannot quite say that he has settled down. Manu and Kanti are here. Manu is betrothed to Surendra, Kishorelalbhai's nephew.

Blessings from
BAPU[1]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./ XXIII

146. LETTER TO PYARELAL

WARDHA,
November 2, 1935

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have your letter. I shall not press you to come. I would be happy if you did. Mahadev and I are also hard-pressed. But if you cannot remain cheerful after coming here, do go to Calcutta. Your

[1] This is followed by a note to someone, saying: "I was glad to read this." November 2 being Monday was a silence day.

place is where you can be more at peace.

I am not able to understand this combination of faith and despair in you. May God grant you peace.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

147. A FATAL FALLACY[1]

Among the questions that a correspondent asked me for discussion in *Harijan* there was one which I have kept on my file for some time:

> Don't you think that it is impossible to achieve any great reform without winning political power? The present economic structure has also got to be tackled. No reconstruction is possible without a political reconstruction and I am afraid all this talk of polished and unpolished rice, balanced diet and so on and so forth is mere moonshine.

I have often heard this argument advanced as an excuse for failure to do many things. I admit that there are certain things which cannot be done without political power, but there are numerous other things which do not at all depend upon political power. That is why a thinker like Thoreau said that "that government is the best which governs the least." This means that when people come into possession of political power, the interference with the freedom of people is reduced to a minimum. In other words, a nation that runs its affairs smoothly and effectively without much State interference is truly democratic. Where such a condition is absent, the form of government is democratic in name.

There is certainly no limit or restraint on the freedom of thought. It may be remembered that many reformers are nowadays laying the greatest emphasis on a new ideology. How few of us are going in for any reform in our opinions? Modern scientists recognize the potency of thought and that is why it is said that as a man thinks so does he become. One who always thinks of murder will turn a murderer, and one who thinks of incest will be incestuous. On the contrary he who always thinks of truth and non-violence will be

[1] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 3-11-1935.

truthful and non-violent, and he whose thoughts are fixed on God will be godly. In this realm of thought political power does not come into play at all. Even so it must be obvious that political power or want of it is of no consequence in many of our activities. I would make a humble suggestion to the correspondent. Let him make a detailed note of all his daily activities and he is sure to find that many of them are performed independently of any political power. Man has to thank himself for his dependence. He can be independent as soon as he wills it.

The correspondent has raised the bugbear of ‘great’ reform and then fought shy of it. He who is not ready for small reforms will never be ready for great reforms. He who makes the best of his faculties will go on augmenting them, and he will find that what once seemed to him a great reform was really a small one. He who orders his life in this way will lead a truly natural life. One must forget the political goal in order to realize it. To think in terms of the political goal in every matter and at every step is to raise unnecessary dust. Why worry one's head over a thing that is inevitable? Why die before one's death?

That is why I can take the keenest interest in discussing vitamins and leafy vegetables and unpolished rice. That is why it has become a matter of absorbing interest to me to find out how best to clean our latrines, how best to save our people from the heinous sin of fouling Mother Earth every morning. I do not quite see how thinking of these necessary problems and finding a solution for them has no political significance and how an examination of the financial policy of Government has necessarily a political bearing. What I am clear about is that the work I am doing and asking the masses to do is such as can be done by millions of people, whereas the work of examining the policy of our rulers will be beyond them. That it is a few people's business I will not dispute. Let those who are qualified to do so do it as best as they can. But until these leaders can bring great changes into being, why should not millions like me use the gifts that God has given them to the best advantage? Why should they not make their bodies fitter instruments of service? Why should not they clear their own doors and environments of dirt and filth? Why should they be always in the grip of disease and incapable of helping themselves or anyone else?

No, I am afraid the correspondent’s question betrays his laziness and despair and the depression that has overtaken many of us. I can

confidently claim that I yield to none in my passion for freedom. No fatigue or depression has seized me. Many years' experience has convinced me that the activities that absorb my energies and attention are calculated to achieve the nation's freedom, that therein lies the secret of non-violent freedom. That is why I invite everyone, men and women, young and old, to contribute his or her share to the great sacrifice.

Harijan, 11-1-1936

148. SOME WAYS OF SERVING THE COW

Shri Purushottam Narhar Joshi who calls himself a worker in the cause of the cow writes as follow:[1]

This letter deserves consideration. Only an institution can put into practice the suggestions made in it. Some of them can be implemented by Government authority alone. However, every reader of *Harijanbandhu* can implement one point. He should use nothing but cow's milk and ghee made from cow's milk. Cow's milk is better and more nourishing than buffalo's milk. Nothing but cow's milk should be given to children. Ghee made from this is easier to digest. The testimony of doctors and vaids regarding these two points has already been published in *Harijanbandhu*. Despite this, many people use buffalo's milk and ghee made from it for the sake of their taste. Some others, while prepared to drink cow's milk, are not ready to use ghee made from it. They claim that the ghee made from buffalo's milk alone is good. It is whiter in appearance and is thicker in consistency. Many people who have become accustomed to its appearance and taste are not ready to give it up for the sake of the cow or the country. In fact the whiteness and the consistency of ghee made from buffalo's milk are themselves points against it. It seems impossible to keep both the cow and the buffalo alive. If the buffalo is to survive, the cow must perish. The buffalo is dying even now. It is because we deliberately permit the slaughter of he-buffaloes that the she-buffalo survives. If, therefore, we remain negligent, we shall be instrumental in destroying both the cow and the buffalo and shall become dependent upon milk and butter imported from countries where thousands of cows are slaughtered daily and not a single cow is even allowed to grow old. Any reader who does nothing beyond

[1] The letter is not translated here.

insisting upon what I have suggested will make his contribution to cow-protection and averting this terrible calamity.

Shri Joshi refers to the Goseva Sangh. That organization is not defunct; there are some members who still belong to it. One may say that its activities as an organization are very few, nevertheless it does continue to exist. A few individual *go-sevaks* are being trained. A dairy is being run under its auspices. Another receives inspiration from it. At the moment, I am not in a position to point out any tangible result of its activities. Attempts are being made to demonstrate such results. God alone knows what will happen in the future.

There is no doubt that much can be accomplished if the Indian States start implementing Shri Joshi's suggestions. Even if the work is taken up on a large scale and in a co-ordinated manner in the States of Kathiawar alone, it cannot but succeed. And once its success is demonstrated, it cannot but spread to other parts. Shri Joshi fails to mention that a tannery is an important instrument in saving the cow. As this has been often repeated in *Harijanbandhu*,I do not mention it here again. But every *go-sevak* has to bear this fact in mind.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 3-11-1935

149. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

November 4, 1935

DEAR, MATHEW,

Your letter to hand. I never threw you overboard. I have dealt with you no otherwise than I have with my blood-son and blood-sister. I repeat my advice to you not to come if you can be suited elsewhere. I must refuse to undertake the support of your parents until I am satisfied that you can cheerfully labour with your hands and feet the whole day long and assiduously make up your Hindi and that you have consecrated yourself to constructive work through me and that there remains no cause to suspect your purity.

Love.

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

150. LETTER TO S. DUTTA

November 4, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I know Sjt. Krishnadas very well. If you will give your daughter to a man of character, staunch and true, even though he may be above 40, possessing no means nor a strong physical frame, Krishnadas will make a wholly worthy husband.

yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

S. DUTTA

C/O PROF. BOSE

BALLYGUNJ, CALCUTTA

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

151. LETTER TO TARA N. MASHRUWALA

WARDHA,

November 4, 1935

CHI. TARA,

I like your letter very much. I shall wait for you on the 7th. I fully agree with your view. I do not want to tempt you in any way. At present I only want to help you as much as I can in improving your health. I am not writing separately to Nanabhai[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. TARABEHN

C/O NANABHAI MASHRUWALA

AKOLA, BERAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6697. Also C.W. 4342. Courtesy: Nanabhai I. Mashruwala

[1] Addressee's father

152. LETTER TO NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE

WARDHA,
November 6, 1935

DEAR NIRMAL BABU,

Ghani tells me that ten rupees out of his account are missing and that you propose to reimburse the loss from your pocket. That is not to be thought of for a single minute. Such things will always happen especially where Ghani is involved. He has been brought up in the lap of luxury. He is a spoilt child of his family. You must not, therefore, worry over the loss. Surely it is enough that you have given him your precious time and bestowed on him such extraordinary care.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE
6/IA BRITISH INDIAN STREET, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 10521-a

153. LETTER TO S. P. KAMAT

November 6, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I know that some khadi bhandars have been having their khadi dyed and bleached through mills, if not with the permission, certainly with the connivance of the A. I. S. A. I do not propose to interfere with them all of a sudden, but your objection is sound. I shall see what is practicable in view of the fact that the custom of having khadi dyed and bleached through mills has been going on for some years.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. S. P. KAMAT
ANKOLA (NORTH KANARA DIST.)

From a photostat: G.N. 5680

154. LETTER TO S. V. KOWJALGI

November 6, 1935

DEAR SRINIVASARAO,

I have a vivid recollection of our meeting at Bijapur but none of your letter. All my 'secretaries' were not secretaries but youngsters who were doing their very best to share my burden. Mahadev himself was in the Belgaum jail. But to show how much I value your letters and your co-operation, whenever you can give it to me, I hasten to reply per return.[1]

1. The story of Rama and Ravana is to my mind an allegory. In my preface to *Anasaktiyoga* I have explained what I understand by 'incarnation'. What Rama used were spiritual weapons, i.e., satyagraha against the material weapons of the ten-headed Ravana. There is intrinsic support in Tulsidas's *Ramayana* for this interpretation.

2. The verse you quote from the *Bhagavad Gita*, in my opinion, emphasizes the interpretation that I have put upon the whole teaching of the *Gita*, namely, that when a man has lost his egotism and his

[1] The addressee, in his letter dated November 1, had asked: (1) When Ravana carried away Sita, why did not Shri Rama practise satyagraha instead of going to Lanka and destroying Ravana? (2) Shri Krishna, the author of the *Bhagavad Gita* which you have annotated, says:

यस्य नाहंकृतो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते
हत्वाऽपि स इमाँल्लोकात्र हन्ति न निबध्यते। [XVIII. 17]

Not only did he say this but helped, though himself unarmed, the Pandavas to conquer the Kauravas after a bloody battle in which millions of warriors were killed, frequently with the power of his brain which proved superior to material weapons, in order to gain their birth-right. Does this not show that Shri Krishna did believe in the destruction of evil rather than in its reform by peaceful methods? (3) When Vishwamitra proceeded to snatch away Kamadhenu by force and when she complained to her master Vasishtha, the latter told her that he was precluded by his vow from getting angry or retaliating, but at the same time permitted her to protect herself against the outrage. Thereon soldiers fully armed cropped up from every hair of hers and routed the army of Vishwamitra with great slaughter. Why did not Vasishtha permit her to be taken by Vishwamitra? Why did he not practise satyagraha to retain her by peaceful means? (4) It is said that Buddha died of poisoned animal food offered to him by a devotee. We find all his followers to be flesh-eaters. How is this consistent with ahimsa? (5) Is there any instance in history where evil—unreformable evil—was conquered by good only by peaceful means?

intellect remains untarnished, what though he should kill all life. In other words, such a person would be incapable of killing.

3. My interpretation of the version of Kamadhenu is hat the rage of Vishwamitra was impotent to touch even a single hair of the Kamadhenu. It is an illustration of the famous saying that God is the help of the helpless.

4. Eating of animal food as a matter of habit is not inconsistent with the observance of ahimsa, even as eating milk and vegetable which have also life is not inconsistent with the practice of ahimsa. I have elsewhere argued that practice of absolute ahimsa by embodied life is an utter impossibility.

5. Perhaps your question is not properly put. There can be no question of conquering evil. Evil will always retain its quality but what we endeavour always is to induce our companions, even as we try ourselves, to rid them and us of evil. Is not history replete with instances of men and women, the most evilminded, being reformed by an appeal to their higher natures? I have not entered into an elaborate argument because I assume that you will take the trouble of procuring a copy of my introduction to *Anasaktiyoga*. It is translated into Marathi—I believe also in Kanarese. An English translation was published in the pages of *Young India*, but so far as I am aware it has never been published in book form as yet.

I hope you are keeping well.

Sjt. S.V. KOWJALGI
ADVOCATE, BIJAPUR

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6569

155. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
November 7, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter after a long wait. The surprising thing is that in America you did not receive even one letter of mine. You should have received at least three. I have the dates of posting. These shall be given at the end of this letter as they have to be traced in the diary.

But our agreement stipulated your writing every week irrespective of my writing or not writing. It is possible that I may have nothing much to say while you must always have something new to write about. Anyway, let bygones be bygones. Now I shall expect a letter from you every week. I have also made it a practice to send on your letters to Draupadi and Ramdas; to the latter because of his specific request and to the former just by the way. It has brought forth one result, namely, that Draupadi is obliged to write in reply. Otherwise would she have at all written to me?

I did not expect you to pay your way so soon in America but I did hold that it would not be difficult to live on modest means. Anyway, now that you are there you may stay on till you are satisfied. You should leave only when you feel that you have nothing further to learn regarding nature cure. The experiences of America will be almost repeated in England. There, too, you will not find much by way of nature cure but it was imperative that you visit the West. Quite a few misconceptions persist until experience drives them out. From this angle I do not regard your trip unproductive.

Do see Shelton's place if you have not visited it so far; Govind waxed eloquent over it. His Health School is situated in San Antonio, Texas.

You must have got the letter for England which I sent at your request.

You ask me what I meant by saying that you would open out in America. I meant that the slight eccentricity or say a kind of kink that you possessed would be straightened out there and that you would develop the habit of living well-adjusted to others. Your account has been received. You should keep up correspondence with Bhai Brijmohanji but you need not send him an account of your expenses. You must have got the *Harijan* issues. They have been sent so far to Dr. Holmes's address as also my letters but this letter I am sending to Dr. Kellogg's address. I have already forwarded to you the letter I received from Dr. Kellogg. What advice can I give you from here regarding your health except that you should be well protected against the cold and should walk daily at least ten miles? You should partake liberally of milk and fruit and eat salads prepared from greens. This much should ensure good health; and keep up the breathing exercises.

Blessings from,

BAPU

[PS.]

Dates of letters sent to America:

1. Friday, September 20
2. Thursday, October 3
3. Friday[1], October 10

Three letters.

HERBERT SHELTON'S HEALTH SCHOOL
SAN ANTONIO (TEXAS)

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 208 and 209

156. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
November 8, 1935

CHI. SUMANGAL,

Your letters are received regularly. I destroy them after reading. I do not see any need to give you any advice at the moment. Do what you consider best. "None who works for self-redemption meets with an evil destiny."[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Evidently a slip for 'Thursday'
[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, VI, 40

157. LETTER TO UMADEVI BAJAJ

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
November 8, 1935

CHI. OM,

I got your letter at long last after waiting for many days. How dare I reproach you? I accept what you give me. I must content myself with it. Ambujam also gives me news about you from time to time. You are having good experience there[1]. Take the best advantage of it. I am sure you will perfect your English. The music in that place is also reputed to be excellent. Learn it well. I do hope that you will learn Tamil at any rate, and will also propagate Hindi there. Reduce your weight too. In short, since you have gone to such a distant place prove yourself worthy of the great, although mono-syllabic, name[2] which you sport. There must be some meaning in your owning a name which, the Shastras say, leads to spiritual welfare. I want you to justify this belief. You do possess some of the virtues symbolized in this syllable. If you acquire a few more, you will need nothing else. I will also tell you another thing, in case you do not know it. Sanskrit words are spoken with perfect pronunciation in Tamilnad as in Maharashtra. Maharashtra is good in repect of pronunciation but the quality of music is not so high. In Tamilnad, the Sanskrit *mantras*, etc., are recited melodiously and in a sweet voice. You can learn all this with Ambujam's help. All this can be learnt with little trouble. It will not be necessary to spend much time over it. May this year prove good for you. Now that you have started writing, please keep up the practice and write to me from time to time.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 341-2

[1] The addressee, had joined the Vidyodaya School at Madanapalle where S. Ambujammal was the head misress.

[2] The mystic syllable ˙ standing for the Brahman or the Supreme

158. NOTE ON CALCUTTA BUSTIS OR SLUMS [1]

Many a time have I rehearsed to myself what I should do if I were a member of a corporation, and when years ago I used to walk through the streets of Calcutta and compare the palaces with their beautiful and sanitary surroundings with the ugliness and want of sanitation of its slums, I used to say to myself that the work and worth of the Corporation of Calcutta should be measured not by the number or beauty of its palaces, but by the condition of its slums, and I felt that then the Corporation had neglected its duties.

Harijan, 9-11-1935

159. MEDICAL RELIEF

Medical relief as part of village work or social service plays an important part in many reports I receive from numerous organizations. This relief consists of medicines supplied to patients who from far and near flock to any person who advertises himself as distributor of such relief. It means no trouble on the part of the medicine man. He need not have much or any knowledge of diseases and the symptoms. Medicines he often receives free from obliging chemists. Donations are always to be had from indiscriminate donors whose conscience is satisified if they can distribute their charity in aid of suffering humanity.

This social service has appeared to me to be the laziest form of service and often even mischievous. It works mischief when the patient is expected to do nothing save to swallow the drug given to him. He is none the wiser for having received the medicine. If anything, he is worse off than before. The knowledge that he can get for nothing, or for a trifle, a pill or a potion that will correct certain irregularities will tempt him to repeat them. The fact that he gets such aid free of charge will undermine his self-respect which should disdain to receive anything for nothing.

There is another type of medical relief which is a boon. It is

[1] A.V. Thakkar's article which appeared along with this note is not reproduced here.

given by those who know the nature of diseases, who will tell the patients why they have their particular complaints and will also tell them how to avoid them. Such servants will rush to assist at all odd hours of the day or night. Such discriminating relief is an education in hygiene, teaching the people how to observe cleanliness and to gain health. But such service is rare. In the majority of cases mention of medical relief in reports is a piece of advertisement leading to donations for other activities requiring perhaps as little exertion or knowledge as medical relief. I would therefore urge all workers in the social field, whether urban or rural, to treat their medical activity as the least important item of service. It would be better to aviod all mention of such relief. Workers would do well to adopt measures that would prevent disease in their localities. Their stock of medicines should be as small as possible. They should study the bazaar medicines available in their villages, know their reputed properties, and use them as far as possible. They will find as we are finding in Sindi that hot water, sunshine, clean salt and soda with an occasional use of castor oil or quinine answer most purposes. We make it a point to send all serious cases to the Civil Hospital. Patients flock to Mirabehn and receive lessons in hygiene and prevention of diseases. They do not resent this method of approach instead of simply being given a powder or a mixture.

Harijan, 9-11-1935

160. SOYA BEANS

Inquiries are being made as to where soya beans are to be had and how they are to be sown and in what ways they are to be cooked.

The leaflet published by the Bombay Health Association was condensed in these columns only recently. I now give below a free translation of the main parts of a Gujarati leaflet published by the Baroda State Food Survey Office. Its cost is one pice:

> Soya beans grow on a plant from one foot to fifteen inches in height. Every pod has on an average three beans. The plant has many varieties. The bean may be white, yellow, blackish, variegated, etc. The yellow variety has the largest percentage of protein and fat. This variety is more nutritious than meat or eggs. The Chinese eat beans with rice. Soya bean flour may be mixed with ordinary flour in the proportion of one to five parts of wheat and turned

into chapatis.

Soya bean crop improves the soil. Instead of deriving nitrogen like other plants from the soil, soya bean derives it from the air and thus enriches the soil.

Soya bean grows in practically all soils. It thrives most in soils favourable to cotton or grain crops. Slat soil improves if soya bean is sown in it. In such soil more manure should be used. Fermented cowdung, grass, leaves and dungheap manure are quite serviceable for this crop.

Temperate climate suits the bean. It thrives where the rainfall is not more than 40 inches. It should not be sown in water-logged soil. The bean is generally sown after the frist rains, but it can be sown during any season. In the dry season it requires to be watered once a week, or twice if the soil is inclined to dry quickly.

The soil is best prepared in summer. It should be ploughed up and exposed to the sun's rays. Then the clods should be broken up and pulverized.

The seed should be sown in rows twenty-four to thrity-six inches apart. The plants should be three to four inches apart in their rows. There should be frequent weeding.

One acre would take from 20 to 30 lb. of seeds. They should not be sown deeper than two inches. One acre will require about 10 cartloads of manure.

After the sprouting of the seeds there shoud be proper weeding with a light plough. All crust should be broken up.

The pods are ready for picking in 120 days after sowing. They should be picked as soon as the leaves begin to turn yellow and drop off. They should not be allowed to be on the plants till they open, or else the seeds will drop out and be lost in the soil.

So much for the Gap.

Now a word as to the results of the experiment being made in Maganwadi.

It is too early to draw deductions as yet. It may be said that the weight of the inmates has kept constant. In a few cases there has been a decided increase—in one case as much as $4\frac{1}{2}$ b. in a fortnight. Ghee has been stopped since the close of the first week. The absence of it has yet made no impression on the weight. One ounce of oil is being issued instead. The ration of beans has been increased for the current week from two ounces to three per head. The bean is served both morning and evening. They are soaked for some hours and then cooked well. Water in which it is steamed is strained out and tamarind

and salt added to it. It makes a very popular soup. To the bean after straining are added linseed or *til o*il and salt making a tasty dish. In the morning the bean is served with chapati or *bhakhari* and in the evening with rice. The bean requires to be chewed well. NO ill effect has yet been reported.

The bean is obtainable in Bombay and Baroda. Negotiations are being carried on for a reduction in the price. Meanwhile small quantities can be had from Maganwadi at three annas per pound, railage extra. This price is prohibitive. By some mistake our beans were received from Baroda by passenger train instead of goods. My advice to senders is not yet to order the beans from Maganwadi Godrej and Co. (Parel, Bombay) supply the beans in Bombay and the Baroda Food Survey Office in Baroda.

Harijan, 9-11-1935

161. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

WARDHA,
November 9, 1935

MY DEAR ANAND,

The pamphlets are well got up. I am glad that *From Yeravda*[1] was sold out so quickly.

You must not allow your constipation to persist. You must take serious steps to get rid of it not by drugging yourelf but by proper dietetics. Wheat bread, prunes, pure and raw milk and plenty of leafy vegetables—raw and cooked—ought to see you through.

I have a letter from Vidya[2], which still awaits answering. I do hope she is getting on well.

Love.

BAPU

SJT. ANAND T. HINGORANI
D/3 COSMOPOLITAN COLONY
KARACHI (SIND)

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] *From Yeravda Mandir,* English translation of *Mangal Prabhat; vide* 1st footnote of "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 18/22-7-1930 and "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 27-1-1932, and "Preface to 'From Yeravda Mandir'", 6-3-1932.

[2] Addressee's wife

162. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

November 9, 1935

CHI. NARAHARI,

I saw your letter only last night, because Kaka had forgotten [to hand it over to me]. It will be good if you can anyhow persuade Bhai Velchand to start paying Rs. 500 a month. In fact, he should have started doing so as soon as he had decided to do so.

It is good news that Vanu[1] has recovered completely. Her leaving the Vidyapith is a great act of renunciation. But it will endure only if her attachment for the Vidyapith is dead. I hope you haven't in any way coerced her into taking the step. Otherwise she will always repent it afterwards and will continue to nurse the desire in her heart. If, however, the arrangement that you have made endures, the work being done there will shine out very well.

It won't be in my hands to arrange where I will stay. I believe it will be done by the Sahitya [Parishad]. See the person in charge and do what may be necessary.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9091

163. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

November 9, 1935

CHI. CHANDU,

I got your postcard. If you come to meet me in January it will be too late. . . . is coming here on the 12th at my call. He will stay here as long as I wish. I sent for him earlier on the strength of your letter. I will arrange to send your brother's son to Bhavnagar and then you, too, after your work here is finished. You will feel completely at home here, and so will have good rest and will at the same time see some new things. Perhaps you know that Mahila Ashram, kanya Vidyalaya, Charkha Sangh, Gramodyog Sangh and such other activities are being run here. Women from different provinces have

[1] Vanamala, addressee's daughter

gathered here. Hence even from the point of view of experience, your time will not have been wasted. Besides, you will be able to fulfil your resolve mentioned in your letter. Your may come and see me again in January in Ahmedbad. Please, therefore, don't fail to come to Wardha now, if you can manage to do so some how.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 938. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

164. LETTER TO A. S. SATYARTHI [1]

[Before *November 10, 1935*][2]

Malaviyaji occupies an unrivalled position in the country and in the Congress. He at least should be above aspersions. If your translations is correct, the writer of the paragraph in his zeal to vilify Malaviyaji has not had strict regard for truth. Malaviyaji never applied for the Communal Award.

The Hindustan Times, 11-11-1935

165. LETTER TO UMASHANKAR J. JOSHI

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
November 10, 1935

BHAI UMASHANKAR[3],

Never mind if you are an utterly unsophisticated man; why can't you write to me and tell me in a postcard, without arguing, what I as President of the Conference should do? Do write to me. And if you are harbouring any suspicion that I told you I could not understand your previous letter even though I had understood it, banish that suspicion from your mind. I sought Mahadev's help also

[1] Some statements against Madan Mohan Malaviya had appeared in a language newspaper of Lahor. The addressee was General Secretary of the Punjab Congress Nationalist Party.

[2] The letter appeared under the date-line "Lahore, November 10, 1935".

[3] Gujarati poet and man of letters

to understand it, but when even he could not help I sent the reply I did.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10705. Courtesy: Umashankar J. Joshi

166. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

November 10, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I read the letters. I see no need for Kamalnayan[1] to write to Dr. Jawaharlal. It will do if you yourself write to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

Form a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2976

167. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[Before *November 12, 1935*][2]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I learnt only today from Narandas's letter that you were running fever. Your letter came later.

It seems you have not properly understood the point of what I have written to Jethalal[3]. I did disapprove of Bharatan[4] getting Rs. 50. Howerver, he had given up a post of Rs. 300 a month and even now he can get a job which would bring him the same income or even more. From the Rs. 50 which he takes, he gives as much as half to a poor student whom he supports. Bhai Jethalal is looking for some other job or occupation and will leave the work of the Seva Sangh as as soon he gets any. I had clearly seen this. I hope you will be able to see the difference between the two cases. Those of you who take more than Jethalal does have dedicated yourselves to public work and your

[1] Addressee's son

[2] According to the addressee the letter was received on November 12, 1935.

[3] Jethalal Joshi, who had resigned from the National School and accepted the post of secretary, Seva Sangh, Rojkot on a remuneration of Rs. 40 per month.

[4] Bharatan Kumarappa, an office-bearer of A.I.V.I.A.

market value is greater than what you are getting at present. That is the difference. Even so, I do expect increasing self-sacrifice, within your capacity, from you all, though I wouldn't feel disappointed, either, if that expectation did not materialize.

Get well soon. We shall meet when it is so willed by God.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5537

168. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

WARDHA,

November 12, 1935

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

I have your letter. It satisfied me. Malkani too wrote about you. I want to retain you as the Editor even though you continue to live where you are. You will send from there whatever you can. If an agency of *Harijan Sevak* can be carried on in Delhi, that too should be done. If you have semeone in mind who can cope with all the work here, do send me his name as also what he would expect by way of salary. Your maintenance, as Malkani has said, will be provided by the Harijan Sevak Sangh and the editorship will be only honorary. I shall inform you when the date for the publication from here of *Harijan Sevak* is fixed. It will be enough if the list and other things are kept ready. If the list can be prepared in duplicate, a copy may be sent in advance.

If the names and the addresses of the subscribers are printed, they should also be sent. There is of course no hurry about anything; for the press, etc; will not be arriving till towards the end of the month.

Blessings form

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1078

169. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

November 12, 1935

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. Therer are many reasons for issuing *Harijan Sevak* from here. Ghanshyamdas had approved of all the suggestions as also Viyogi Hari's coming here. But I understand your difficulties. You shall certainly keep him. I shall manage somehow. He also likes the idea of staying there. More when we meet.

Herewith a letter[1] for Viyogi Hari.

LOVE.

BAPU

PROF. N.R. MALKANI
DELHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1168

170. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHA,
November 12, 1935

CHI. MATHURADAS,

The sight of your handwriting has become rare of late. But it is a matter of satisfaction that your letters come at the opportune moment.

Now I am nursing the hope that you will keep writing, even if it is only a post-card. Sardar procrastinated and now he is suffering in the same proportion.[2] He knows how to suffer pain and he can even laugh while in pain. So there is nothing to worry about.

Prithviraj's case will have happily ended yesterday. Of course, today I have not received the expected letter. It may still arrive by the

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Vallabhbhai Patel had undergone an operation for piles on November 9, 1935.

evening mail.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

74 WALKESHWAR ROAD

BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

171. LETTER TO JAYANTI N. PAREKH

November 12, 1935

CHI. JAYANTI,

I got your letter,

Swaraj is definitely connected with politics. But many an activity can have its roots in swaraj, and not in politics. For example, I would definitely regard it your contribution, however small, to the winning of swaraj if you all three brothers[1] engage yourselves in business¾ at present not for your own benefit but to help your father[2] and to pay off his debts. Please remember that our means of winning swaraj are non-violent and doing one's dharma is the most important of non-violent means.

May this year see your noble aspirations bear good fruit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6271

[1] The addressee, Kanti and Indu

[2] Nathubhai, a businessman of Calicut

172. LETTER TO KANTI N. PAREKH

November 12, 1935

CHI. KANTI,

I have your letter.

Never mind if you have changed from a farmer to a businessman. Are all our dreams realized, even if they were noble?

Most of the band of eighty[1] have taken up some work or other for themselves. How then, can we find fault with Jayanti or Indu[2]? Besides, a special dharma has arisen for Jayanti and Indu, as it has for you. I do not regard it as a breach of your former pledge[3] if you three brothers do your dharma. If, when he is in difficulty, you don't help your father who has sacrificed everything for you, you cannot claim to be devoted to him. No higher dharma is facing you just now. Of course, I do wish that even for your father's sake you should not violate moral principles for earning money.

I have no other reason than this in my mind when I advise Indu to give up his education at an early ege.

May this year see your noble aspirations fulfilled.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6273

173. LETTER TO INDU N. PAREKH

November 12, 1935

CHI. INDU,

I at any rate didn't know that you had gone to Calicut. I have dictated letters for your two brothers and so there is nothing new to tell you.

Harbhai and Moolshankar[4] have come to see me today. They

[1] Who participated in the Dandi March
[2] Who, however, was not one of the eighty
[3] *Vide* "Pledge for Swaraj Workers", April 1930.
[4] Moolshankar Mohanlal bhatt

will stay here for some time. If you write to this address, they will get your letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a Photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6272

174. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

November 12, 1935

CHI. MANIBEHN,

Show the remarks on the reverse to Father. I hear that everybody was extremely pleased with the way Jawaharlal conducted himself.[1]

Father must be in excellent spirit and making the doctors laugh with his jokes. Don't neglect your own health.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 118

175. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

WARDHA,

November 12, 1935

CHI. SUMANGAL,

I have been receiving your letters. It would be best to stick to a diet of milk and fruit when you go anywhere. In doing so we give no trouble to the host and our purpose is also served. In the early days ofthe Ashram this was the rule all members had to follow. It would be even better to carry some fruit with you. If at some place milk is not available you should make do with fruit. It should be explained that

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru had, at Gandhiji's instance, seen several British statesmen in England.

the reason for this rule is not self-control but considerations of health.

Blessings from
BAPU

SUMANGAL PRAKASH
NAVASHAKTI
PATNA

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

176. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

WARDHA,
November 13, 1935

CHI. MARY,[1]

I have just received your letter. I have written toMargarete and sent her a general note of introduction.

I believe that Shanta has been suffering from over-tiredness; but it was strong enough to induce fever which she seems to have got rid of. She is taking sufficient nourishment¾five to six pounds of milk and fruit daliy. Sumitra[2] had a very bad night. She developed high fever, about 105° ; so she had to be sent back to the hospital today. Naturally Tara is in charge. Here she readily abstained as much as she could. But with Tara here, I could not think of sending anyone else with Sumitra. Of course she would be relieved twice daily. The doctor thinks that septic poisoning was not eliminated entirely when she was discharged last time from the hospital.

I hope you are keeping fit. Tara has not been bombarding me with questions as before. It is only during the mealtime that she asks some questions. She has been most considerate and keeping quite well. Hitherto soya beans do not seem to have disagreed with her.

Love.

BAPU

MARY BARR
KHEDI SAOLIGARH (BETUL)

From a photostat: G.N. 6059. Also C.W. 3389. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] The superscription is in the Devanagari script.
[2] Ramdas Gandhi's daughter

177. LETTER TO JITENDRA NATH KUSARI

WARDHA,
November 14, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have not a shadow of doubt that the Congress will attain complete political independence in spite of present dissensions.

Delicious and stimulating tea can be made by boiling *tulsi* plant leaves with a lettle ginger and *gur*. It has none of the injurious properties of tea and it is any day better.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. JITENDRA NATH KUSARI
C/O HOME HALL
NEW MARKET, PATNA

From a photostat: G.N. 7192

178. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

November 14,1935

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I shall be reaching there[1] on the 12th. It is, therefore, necessary to think and decide right now in what way. I can be useful for collecting money for the Harijan Fund. Thakkar Bapa will be arriving here on the 23rd instant. If you wish you may come then.

Blessings form
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4003. Also C.W. 132. Courtesy: Parikshitlal L. Majmudar

[1] Ahmedabad

179. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

November 14, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You must be strong enough now to talk and shout [in your usual manner]. I went through your letter to Ambedkar. It is apt but is not likely to have any effect on him at present. He cannot help abusing me how can he spare you, than? Here, as in London, there are several influences acting on him from behind. The pity of it is that the problem has been given exaggerated importance because of his threats. Even that would't matter, were it not that instead of exploiting the situation for constructive work people are going about the wrong way to solve it. Instead of making a determined effort for the eradi-cation of untouchability, they are trying to win over Ambedkar with appeals and entreaties. But let it be; this is the atmosphere in which we have to work. Look where you will, you find nothing but an exhi-bition of fear and weakness.

Can't you take some steps regarding Patadi? Is it right for your secretary to preside over any sort of meeting without your permission?[1]

I hope you understand now the position about my programme in Gujarat in the month of January. As the 12th is fixed for my arrival in Ahmedabad, so the 28th is fixed for my return to Wardha, for on that day Radhakrishna[2] and Anasuya[3] are getting married. I must, therefore, return here at the latest on that day. I can thus give to gujarat 14 days at the most. You may arrange whatever is possible within that period.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
89 WARDEN ROAD, BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 192-3

[1] A conference of the people of 17 villages of British India was held at Patadi, at principality, on November 8, 1935, with Morarji Desai as Chairman, to oppose the proposal to hand over criminal and civil powers to the Patadi durbar.

[2] Son of Jamnalal Bajaj

[3] Daughter of Shrikrishnadas Jaju

180. LETTER TO AVADHESH DUTT AVASTHI

[*November 14, 1935*][1]

CHI. AVADHESH,

I have your letter after a long time. Why have you not yet taken up some definite work? In order to be fearless we should love all and adhere to the path of truth. The assertion that goodness is easier to come by is based on the fact that all wish to be known as good people and no one wants to be known as a sinner. Therefore it can be said that to be a sinner is difficult!

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3214

181. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

WARDHA,

November 15, 1935

CHI. AMALA,

I have your letter. As soon as the German card was placed in Mahadev's hand he redirected it and you got it. There seems to have been no avoidable delay in redirecting it to you. It was first addressed to you at Bombay. From there it was redirected to the Ashram, not Maganwadi. At the Ashram, there is anarchy at present because the whole thing is being reconstructed. No one can tell when ultimately the card was brought here. You must careflly study the five postel stamps on it. Examine the dates, and perhaps you will solve the mystery of the delay. Such misfortunes are inevitable and you are able to stand greater ones.

I am glad your income is increasing by leaps and bounds. No wonder you like Bombay. You must not count the cost of your food but take whatever is necessary to keep you in perfect health.

With Khurshedbehn at your back you will be quite all right. I

[1] From the postmark on the original postcard preserved in the National Archives of India

am glad Krishna and her party came to see you.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. MARGARETE SPIEGEL
C/O MRS. Bhandarkar
MADHAV NIVAS, 8 LABURNUN ROAD
BOMBAY

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

182. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

November 15, 1935

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

Your letter remained unattended to till today. You are observing your vow well enough. With a firm mind you will go farther. The food seems to be quite all right, except that it is deficient in green leaves and vegetables. You must include some fresh raw leaves. You should grow them yourself.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Ask Vasumati to write to me.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9516. Also C.W. 432. Courtesy: Shivabhai G. Patel

183. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

November 15, 1935

CHI. RAMESHWARDAS,

I had your letter. Follow Jamnalalji's advice.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 210

184. LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

November 15, 1935

CHI. VIDYA,

I had your letter. I get no time. Restore your health by any means. It is good to act as Dr. Ansari says. In the last analysis, God is our only doctor.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi: Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

185. NEEM LEAVES AND TAMARIND

In answer to certain questions Dr. Aykroyd, Director of Nutrition Research, sends the following interesting replies:

> You ask about food values. Data on this point are being rapidly gathered here and elsewhere in India, and I hope that at no very distant period an authoritative book or pamphlet giving the chemical composition, vitamin, potency, etc., of all common foods will become available for those interested in dietetics. I have little doubt that you are right in stating that in practice different vegetable fats and oils produce different physiological effects. This is probably due to their chemical make-up, but unfortunately we are not yet in a position to correlate chemical composition and dietary effect in this case. In all probability some research worker somewhere in the world will soon enlighten us.
>
> We have analysed *neem* leaves in the laboratory. As compared with a number of other green vegetable previously investigated, they have a high nutritive value. Both mature and tender leaves are rich in protein, calcium, iron and vitamin A activity and are superior in these respects to amaranth leaves, coriander leaves, drumstick leaves, lettuce, murraya leaves, and spinach. This perhaps explains the tradition of their high nutritive value. I believe that modern laboratory investigations in China have not infrequently domonstrated that herbs and other types of food recommended in ancient Chinese books are rich in vitamins, etc.
>
> With regard to vitamin content, tamarind and lemon are roughly similar, except that the latter is richer in the antiscorbutic vitamin C. Tamarind plup, unlike lemon, contains a good deal of tartaric acid—about 14%; the chief acid

in lemon is citric acid. Otherwise the two fruits resemble each other in food value. Tamarind is stated to contain a laxative principle. I can offer nothing in support of the popular belief that it induces fever and rheumatism.

The reader should know that I have been making extensive experiments in *neem* leaves and tamarind. *Neem* leaves have been taken with impunity by several. My difficulty has been to make them palatable. Taken in the form of chutney containing sufficient tamarind pulp and salt or lemon and salt, it is least objectionable. Some take two to three *tolas* of whole leaves with relish. I am unable to say definitely what effect the taking of leaves produces on the system. I have been tempting volunteers to try them because of the high merit attributed in Ayurveda to them and because of their decidedly good effect on Shri Bhansali[1]. Their common use would enable the poor people without extra cost to take the green leaves upon which modern diet experts lay much stress. That the use of the leaf produces no ill effect can be stated with perfect confidence.

Of the good effect of tamarind I can write with equal confidence. One ounce of pulp taken with meals has in several cases induced free movement of bowels. It can be mixed with vegetables or rice or dal. It can be eaten as jam when mixed with sufficient quantity of *gur.* I have used it with beneficial effect for reducing fevers by giving it in the form of tamarind water. In no case have I found it to have induced cold or rheumatism or boils as many people believe it does. There is hardly a man or woman in the South who does not eat tamarind in some shape or form. It is the base for its famous *rasam.*

Village workers will have to find out cheap, effective and harmless substitutes for the expensive yet useful articles one uses in cities and which one cannot get in the villages for love or money. Tamarind *neem* leaf are such substitutes.[2]

Harijan, 16-11-1935

186. CASTE HAS TO GO

I gladly publish Sir Govindrao Madgaonkar's open letter[3] in this issue. My own position has been often stated in these columns. It may be summed up as follows:

[1] Jayakrishna P. Bhansali

[2] *Vide* also "Need for Care", 30-11-1935.

[3] The letter appeared under the title "An Open Letter to Mahatma Gandhi and Hindu Leaders". The writer, a former judge of the Bombay High Court, had appealed to Gandhiji, Madan Mohan Malaviya and N.C. Kelkar and others "to give a clear and a courageous lead" in reforming the caste system.

1. I believe in varnashrama of the Vedas which in my opinion is based on absolute equality of status, notwithstanding passages to the contrary in the *smritis* and elsewhere.

2. Every word of the printed works passing muster as 'Shastras' is not, in my opinion, a revelation.

3. The interpretation of accepted taxts has undergone evolution, and is capable of indefinite evolution, even as the human intellect and heart are.

4. Nothing in the Shastras which is manifestly contrary to universal truths and morals can stand.

5. Nothing in the Shastras which is capable of being reasoned can stand if it is in conflict with reason.

6. Varnashrama of the Shastras is today non-existent in practice.

7. The present caste system is the very antithesis of varnashrama. The sooner public opinion abolishes it the better.

8. In varnashrama there was and should be no prohibition of intermarriage or inter-dining. Prohibition there is of change of one's hereditary occupation for purposes of gain. The existing practice is, therefore, doubly wrong in that it has set up cruel restrictions about inter-dining and intermarriage and tolerates anarchy about choice of occupation.

9. Thought there is in varnashrama no prohibition against intermarriage and inter-dining, there can be no compulsion. It must be left to the unfettered choice of the individuals as to where he or she will marry or dine. If the law of varnashrama was observed there would naturally be a tendency, so far as marriage is concerned, for people to restrict the marital relations to their own varna.

10. As I have repeatedly said there is no such thing as untouchability by birth in the Shastras. I hold the present practice to to be a sin and the greatest blot on Hinduism. I feel more than ever that if untouchability lives, Hinduism dies.

11. The most effective, quickest, and the most unobtrusive way to destroy caste is for reformers to begin the practice with themselves and where necessary take the consequences of social boycott. The reform will not come by reviling the orthodox. The change will be gradual and imperceptible. The so-called higher classes will have to descend from their pedestal before they can make any impression upon the so-called lower classed. Day-to-day experience of village

work shows how difficult the task is of bridging the gulf that exists between the city-dwellers and the villagers, the higher classes and the lower classes. The two are not synonymous terms. For the class distinction exists both in the cities and the villages.

Harijan, 16-11-1935

187. AWFULNESS OF CHILD-MARRIAGE

The Anti-Child-Marriage Committee has published a useful and instructive bulletin on child-marriage. I copy the main paragraphs below:[1]

The Census Report for India of 1931 gave the following figures of the number of girls who are married under the age of 15 by age groups;

Age group	Percentage married
0 to 1	0.8
1 ” 2	1.2
2 ” 3	2.0
3 ” 4	4.2
4 ” 5	6.6
5 ” 10	19.3
10 ” 15	38.1

Thus nearly one girl in 100 girls of less than one year of age is married and the same horrible fact is repeated in all the other age groups under 15.

One consequence of this is the almost unbelievable number of child widows in the country.

The figures are:

Age group	Actual number of widows
0 to 1	1,515
1 ” 2	1,785
2 ” 3	3, 485
3 ” 4	9,076
4 ” 5	15,019
5 ” 10	1,05,482
10 ” 15	1,85,339

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

> Another consequence of child marriage is the number of young mothers who die in childbirth. 2,00,000 deaths in child birth is the yearly average for India. This works up to 20 deaths per hour, and a vast number of these deaths occur to girls in their teens . . . .
>
> Lastly, child-marriage affects not merely the mother but the child and therefore the race. In India out of every, 1,000 children born, 181 die. This is the average; there are places in India where the average goes up to 400 per, 1,000. . . .

The figures should cause us all to hang our heads in shame. But that won't remedy the evil. The evil of child-marriage is at least as extensive in the villages as in the cities. It is pre-emi-nently women's work. Men have no doubt to do their share. But when a man turns into a beast, he is not likely to listen to reason. It is the mothers who have to be educated to understand their privilege and duty of refusal. Who can teach them this but women? I venture to suggest therefore that the All-India Women's Conference to be true to its name has to descend to the villages. The bulletins are valuable. They only reach a few of the English-knowing city-dwellers. What is needed is personal touch with the village women. Even when, if ever, it is established, the task won't be easy. But some day or other the beginning has to be made in that direction before any result can be hoped for. Will the All-India Women's Conference make common cause with the All-India Village Industries Association? No village worker, no matter how able he or she is, need expect to approach villagers purely for the sake of social reform. They will have to touch all spheres of village life. Village work, I must repeat, means real education, not in the three R's but in opening the minds of the villagers to the needs of true life befitting thinking beings which humans are supposed to be.

Harijan, 16-11-1935

188. TELEGRAM TO R. R. BAKHALE

[*November 16, 1935*][1]

BAKHALE
SERVINDIA
BOMBAY

SOCIETY[2] HAS LOST ONE OF ITS FOUNDERS COUNTRY A TRUE TIRELESS SERVANT AND HARIJAN AN INTREPID FRIEND. DEODHAR WAS SOCIAL REFORMER OF FIRST RANK. ALL IS WELL WITH THIS PURE SOUL. MY CONDOLENCES TO ALL CONCERNED.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

189. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

WARDHA,
November 16, 1935

DEAR SISTER,

I have your very affectionate letter. You have mastered well the language of politeness. A person who knows how to be polite naturally acquires that language. I see this in your case. I am very happy to learn that your health is gradually improving. I have received the two baskets of fruit you sent with Mridula with special instructions. I ate the fruit and shared it with my co-workers. I shall be happy if you can break your journey here when you go to Ahmedabad after fully regaining your health.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11144. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

[1] The telegram was sent to condole the death of G.K. Deodhar on November 16.

[2] Servants of India Society

190. LETTER TO DRAUPADI SHARMA

WARDHA,
November 16, 1935

CHI. DRAUPADI,

I have your letter of the 30th October but not the one of October 8. Even the letter from Colombo has not been returned though the letter enclosed with Ramdas's has been received. I would not like to bother you this time to send me a copy of the letter from Ceylon. Make enquiries there if possible. To whom did you give it? Sharma complains of the absence of letters from you. There should be no laziness about letter-writing. If you confess you are guilty of laziness, you must follow it up by ridding yourself of it. You are all well, I hope. Do write.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 192

191. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

WARDHA,
November 17, 1935

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

Send the accompanying letter to Kavitha if you approve of it. If you receive any names of persons intending to migrate from the place, see Gulzarilal[1] and fix them up in some mill for the present. Write to me if you encounter any difficulty.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4034. Also C.W. 133. Courtesy: Parikshitlal L. Majmudar

[1] Gulzarilal Nanda, then secretary of the labour union of Ahmedabad

192. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

November 17, 1935

CHI. CHANDU,

I got your letter after waiting long for it. . . . is still here. He is as firm as you are. I personally am concerned with the good name of you both. My interest and peace of mind lie in your welfare. May be today Shankar's heart is estranged from Kakasaheb's and mine; but how can I forget that you are going to be Kakasaheb's daughter-in-law? I, therefore, feel all the more concerned for your good. My bond with . . . is an old one. I won't be able to find out the truth unless you come. If you don't come this time you will be failing in your dharma. So please come even if doing so means some hardship to you. Take the advice and help of Bal[1].

More when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 939. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

193. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

Unrevised

WARDHA,

November 18, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Your description of the village visit is consoling and stirring. In Sindi we have nothing but apparent disappointments to register. Your reports is therefore a good set-off. I hope the progress will be sustained.

So you did not or could not go to Saharanpur? You should, if you can.

You must not expect a long letter from me. Only I love to talk to you on Mondays, the day I use the right hand for writing.

[1] Elder son of D.B. Kalelkar

Even before you come here, you hold the pistol to my head and say when you must leave here. You will be somewhat just, if you also told when at the latest you will reach here.

Devdas is at Jamnalalji's. He is getting on quite well. He is still tired if he attempts to do any writing himself. He does a lot of dictating.

Pyarelal and his sister are also here just now.

You will see the child-marriage note reproduced in the current number of *Harijan.*[1] The other will partly go in, in due course. You want the other returned?

Love to you all.

BAPU

[PS.]

How I wish you could be here when Mrs. Sanger[2] comes about 26th !

From the original: C.W. 3557. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6366

194. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA J. SOMAN

November 18, 1935

BHAI SOMAN,

Instead of milk, take curds made from cow's milk once a day. Be satisfied with 20 *tolas* of milk just now. Mix ten grains of soda bicarb in the curds and eat them slowly with a spoon after having stirred them thoroughly. The curds must not be sour. Measure out 20 *tolas* of milk before boiling it. The quantity will be reduced slightly on boiling. Don't boil the milk long. This will be all your breakfast. You should have a brisk walk at least half an hour before eating the curds. Eat them only if you feel hungry. You will have eaten them, say, at seven. Take 20 minutes in eating, keeping a watch in front of you. At eleven you may eat a *bhakhari*, made from whole-wheat flour and well-baked, with cooked fenugreek leaves. If you wish, you may add to the latter mustard, turmeric and a little oil. You may also eat ripe uncooked tomatoes, but nothing else.

[1] *Vide* "Awfulness of Child-Marriage", 16-11-1935.

[2] Margaret Sanger; *vide* "Interview to Margaret Sanger", 3/4-12-1935.

In the afternoon at three you may take, if you wish, lime juice in boiled water with a little soda bicarb. At six in the evening you may eat a *bhakhari* of the kind described above with milk or take pattarveli[1] cooked with garlic and uncooked fenugreek leaves; tomatoes also if you wish. It is not necessary to eat fruit for the present. Changes may be mad in this regimen after you have tried it for a week.

You should go out for an hour's walk daily in the evening. Every morning and evening you should carefully do breathing exercises on an empty stomach. Drink boiled water, warm or cold, according to need. Juggery and sugar must be avoided for the present.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4050. Aslo C.W. 95. Courtesy: Ramachandra J. Soman

195. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

WARDHA,
November 18, 1935

CHI. MRIDULA,

I wish that you would show yourself here every three months.

I have written about Roshni.

As for staying on the only consideration should be what you can do from there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11197. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

[1] Arum indicum

196. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

WARDHA,
November 19, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I have your letter. You have done well in sending me a small quantity of *ragi.* I simply wanted to have a specimen. I shall now try it. Is it used only for making chapatis or is it used like rice also? What is the price of it? I inquire in order to compare prices, not to send you the money. I understand your difficulty about the A.I.V.I.A. I quite see that you should not become an ordinary member. I shall look up the rules and find out whether you can come in cheaply under any classification. Probably Bharatan or Kumarappa will write to you.

When I have tried the *ragi* you have sent me, I shall tell you whether you have to send more.

Next time when you come you should come to stay at least for a few days.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI AMBUJAM
MADRAS

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

197. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

November 19, 1935

BHAI DAHYABHAI,

I got your letter. You want me to write on the evils that were rampant during the fair. I would certainly like to do it; but would it have any effect on anybody?And one likes to write something only if it is going to have some effect. Everybody in the country is talking about the fine of Rs. 1,000. If we go on brooding over such misfortunes, we can do no work at all. One should not grieve over what can't be helped; only then can we do something about what we can help, what is within our strength to set right. So if you really

want to become a villager, you should, like a true villager, foreget all other things.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI DAHYABHAI MANORBHAI PATEL

CONGRESS OFFICE

DHOLKA

From Gujarati: C.W. 2708. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

198. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

November 19, 1935

CHI. SUMANGAL,

This sort of thing is common among friends. You must tell Sumantji, in good humour and without any anger, that you are a poor man and bring with you only enough food for yourself for the day and if you lose or part with some of it you have to go hungry that day. I am sure if you tell him this he will never again tamper with your food. Millions of poor people are forced to do this kind of thing. Dishonest traders often sell for flour stuff that is quite inedible. Poor people have then to go hungry. For they have no money to buy provisions with. That is what happens in jails too. And is not this world also a kind of jail?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SUMANGAL PRAKASH

NAVASHAKTI

PATNA

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

199. LETTER TO KIKABHAI L. WAGHELA[1]

[Before *November 21, 1935*][2]

Pandit Malaviya has not arrived at Wardha. there is little possiblility of his coming here. It will not be necessary for me to visit Dr. Ambedkar, but if it is necessary I will not hesitate to do so. I will try to visit the Harijan locality when I visit Ahmedabad, but my programme after arrival at Ahmedabad will be fixed by Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel.

The Hindu, 22-11-1935

200. LETTER TO H.L. SHARMA

WARDHA,
November 21, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

I had your letter. *The Hindustan Times* will continue to be available to you as before as Devdas who is here has agreed to it. I have a letter from Draupadi saying that she is happy and would now write regularly.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, pp. 210-1

201. TALK WITH PROFESSORS AND STUDENTS[3]

[Before *November 23, 1935*]

Finding that they were thinking of opening night-schools for adults and children[4], Gandhiji wondered whether they were agreeable to working under All-India Village Industries Association or would chalk out their own path. If they did the latter he had naturally no suggestions to make. If they would work under the All-India

[1] A Harijan leader of Ahmedabad

[2] The letter appeared under the date-line "Ahmedabad, November 21, 1935".

[3] Of a college newly started in Wardha. This is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter".

[4] In Sindi

Village Industries Association he would give them his own idea of the educational needs of the villagers. He Said:

What they need is not a knowledge of the three Rs, but a knowledge of their economic life and how they can better it. They are today working as mere automatons, without any responsibility whatsoever to their surroundings and without feeling the joy of work. We are entirely responsible for this sate of things, as we have had no intimate contact with them. We have indeed studied their Politico-economic condition, as did the late Romesh Chandra Dutt. But whilst we have been told of the state to which they have been reduced, they do not know how they themselves can partly or wholly remove their poverty. Now I think it is possible to show them how to double their income. You will say they are heavily taxed. That they are, but I am not cancerned with that problem at the present moment. Our present policy is to leave all politics or politico-economics alone. You will therefore begin with a study of their social, hygienic and moral condition. You may use magic lantern slides for the purpose. You have to show them that untouchability is no part of religion, and that the idea of superiority of status is foreign to any true religion. Just as a healthy man does not regard an unhealthy man as inferior to him in status, even so a teacher or a merchant may not regard a scavenger as inferior to him. You have to teach them these fundamentals of religion and ethics. Then you will teach them geography and history—you will begin with the history of their own village. Now I would teach them the three Rs as a means for imparting a knowledge of these things, but you do not need to make them matriculates or graduates for this purpose. A knowledge of English may be a source of income in these days, but it is not necessary to add to the health of one's mind or body. All our energy has been sapped in mastering a foreign language and in reading tons of books which in no way help us to keep ourselves physically and morally fit or to serve the villagers. You will thus see where I bring in a knowledge of the three Rs. It comes in at the end, and at the long end at that, and not in the beginning, and then, as a help to things permanent. You cannot more usefully pass an hour every night with them than by teaching them the laws of health, social morals, and the way of a strenuous life of easy labour.

Harijan, 23-11-1935

202. FEAR COMPLEX

Many workers are so frightened of village life that they fear that if they are not paid by some agency they will not be able to earn their living by labouring in villages, especially if they are married and have a family to support. In my opinion this is a demoralizing belief. No doubt, if a person goes to a village with the city mentality and wants to live in villages the city life, he will never earn enough unless he, like the city people, exploits the villagers. But if a person settles in a village and tries to live like the villagers, he should hve no difficulty in making a 'living by the sweat of his brow'. He should have confidence that if the villagers who are prepared to toil all the year round in the traditional unintelligent manner can earn their living, he must also earn at least as much as the average villager. This he will do without displacing a single villager, for he will go to village as a producer, not as a parasite.

If the worker has the ordinary size family, his wife and one other member should be full-time workers. Such a worker won't immediately have the muscle of the villager, but he will more than make up for the deficiency by his intelligence, if only he will shed his difference and fear complex. He would be doing productive work, and not be a mere consumer, unless he gets an adequate response from the villagers so as to occupy the whole of his time in seving them. In that case he will be worth the commission on the additional production of the villagers induced by his effort. But the experience of the few months that the village work has gone on under the aegis of the A.I.V.I.A. shows that the response from the villagers will be very slow and that the worker will have to become a pattern of virtue and work before the villagers. That will be the best object-lesson for them which is bound to impress them sooner or later provided that he lives as one of them and not a patron seated amongst them to be adored from a respectful distance.

The question, therefore, is: what remunerative work can he do in the village of his choice? He and the members of the family will give some time to cleaning the village, whether the villagers help him or not, and he will give them such simple medical assistance as is within his power to give. Every person can prescribe a simple opening drug or quinine, wash a boil or wound, wash dirty eyes and ears, and apply

a clean ointment to a wound. I am trying to find out a book that will give the simplest directions in the ordinary cases occurrring daily in the villages. Anyway these two things must be an integral part of village work. This ought not to occupy more than two hours of his time per day. The village worker has no such things as an eight hours' day. For him the labour for the villager is a labour of love. For his living, therefore, he will give eight hours at least in addition to the two hours. It should be borne in mind that under the new scheme propounded by the A.I.S.A. and A.I.V.I.A. all labour has an equal minimum value. Thus a carder who works at his bow for one hour and turns out the average quantity of cards will get exactly the same wage that the weaver, the spinner or the papermaker would, for the given quantity of their respective works per hour. Therefore the worker is free to choose and learn whatever work he can easily do, care being always taken to choose such labour whoes product is easily salable in his village or the surrounding area or is in demand by the Associations.

One great need in every village in an honest shop where unadulterated food-stuffs and other things can be had for the cost price and a moderate commission. It is true that a shop, be it ever so small, requires some capital. But a worker who is at all known in the area of his work should command sufficient confidence in his honesty to enable him to make small wholesale purchases on credit.

I may not take these concrete suggestion much further. An observant worker will always make important discoveries and soon know what labour he can do to earn a living and be at the same time an object-lesson to the villagers whom he is to serve. He will therefore have to choose labour that will not exploit the villagers, that will not injure their health or morals but will teach the villagers to take up industries to occupy their leisure hours and add to their tiny incomes. His observations will lead him to direct his attention to the village wastes including weeds and the superficial natural resources of the village. He will soon find that he can turn many of them to good account. If he picks up edible weeds, it is as good as earning part of his food. Mirabehn has presented me with a museum of beautiful marble-like stones which serve several useful purposes as they are, and I would soon convert them into bazaar articles if I has leisure and would invest into simple tools to give them different shapes. Kaka-saheb had given to me split bamboo waste that was destined to be burnt, and with a rude knife he turned some of it into paper knives

and wooden spoons both salable in limited quantities. Some workers in Maganwadi occupy their leisure in making envelopes out of waste paper blank on one side.

The fact is the villagers have lost all hope. They suspect that every stranger's hand is at their throats and that he goes to them only to exploit them. Divorce between intellect and labour has paralysed their thinking faculty. Their working hours they do not use to the best advantage. The worker should enter such villages full of love and hope, feeling sure that where men and women labour unintelligently and remain unemployed half the year round, he working all the year round and combining labour with intelligence cannot fail to win the confidence of the villagers and earn his living honestly and well by labouring in their midst.

'But what about my children and their education?'—says the candidate worker. If the children are to receive their education after the modern style, I can give no useful guidance. If it be deemed enough to make them healthy, sinewy, honest, intelligent villagers, any day able to earn their livelihood in the home of their parents' adoption, they will have their all-around education under the parental roof and withal they will be partly earning members of the family from the moment they reach the years of understanding and are able to use their hands and feet in a methodical manner. There is no school equal to a decent home and no teachers equal to honest virtuous parents. Modern high school education is a dead weight on the villagers. Their children will never be able to get it, and thank God they will never miss it if they have the training of the decent home. If the village worker is not a decent man or woman, capable of conducting a decent home, he or she had better not aspire after the high privilege and honour of becoming a village worker.

Harijan, 23-11-1935

203. A GREAT SOCIAL WORKER

In the death of Shri G.K. Deodhar the country has lost one of its great social workers and an uncompromising and faithful friend of Haijans. He was one of the foundation members of the Society fonded by Gokhale. He was President of the Maharashtra Provincial Harijan Sevak Sangh. There was not a famine or a flood in the country which did not claim the attention of this servant of humanity. Thought he

could easily become a rich man, he chose poverty as a life principle for a public worker. His tireless energy was contagious. He never spared himself when social service was demanded of him. His was a life of spotless purity. He was the soul of the Poona Seva Sadan which he loved and for which he laboured so well that from a little thing it has today grown into an institution of the kind second to none in all India. I tender my respectful condolences to the family of the deceased.

Harijan, 23-11-1935

204. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

WARDHA,
November 23, 1935

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

I have copies of your letters to Shankerlal. So far as I can see, I have nothing to say on the arrangements about the Lahore Bhandar. But in this matter Shankerlal's word has to be final for he knows ever so much more than I do.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA
13 MALL ROAD
LAHORE

From the original: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

205. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

WARDHA,
November 23, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I have your two letters and *ragi*, also samples of soya beans, and now cow-gram. We have already cooked *ragi*, but not exactly in the fashion mentioned by you. Cow-gram does not contain the quantity of fats that soya beans do. I am now trying to find the chemical

constituents of *ragi.* If you can find them through any doctor please send them.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

206. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

November 23, 1935

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have been indeed late in replying to your letter but I was helpless. Your budget seems a bit too exacting. You do not have enough workers to cope with so many activities. The scheme is certainly good provided financial assistance and workers too are available. Every enterprise must necessarily become self-supporting. Only those articles should be produced about the demand for which you are quite confident.

You must be keeping well. Malkaniji told me that you were to shift today to the new residence.

Wherefrom and at what price did you obtain the soya beans?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2432

207. DEATH OF A TRUE HARIJAN SEVAK

There are only a handful of persons in Kathiawar who have no trace of the feeling of untouchability in their veins and are engrossed in the service of Harijans despite being orthodox. Among them the celebrated Harijan Govindji Parekh of Amreli was a leading personality. The late Harilal was the soul of Amreli. There could seldom be a public welfare activity in Kathiawar in which Shri Harilal Parekh did not have a hand. One and all needed his services and his advice, and everyone found it acceptable. In many ways, his was an exemplary life; we should perpetuate his memory by learning all that we can from it.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 24-11-1935

208. AN APPEAL[1]

WARDHA,
November, 24, 1935

A sum of about Rs. 29,000 is needed for this year's work of the Harijan Sevak Sangh of Gujarat. Fifty-seven schools and three ashrams are being run with the Sangh's help. The Sangh is under the supervision of no less a public worker than Thakkar Bapa. Shri Parikshitlal Majmudar is giving his devoted services to it. According to me the expenditure of Rs. 29,000 a year in nothing. If we regard the service of Harijans as our dharma and if everybody who earns Rs. 500 a year decides to spare even Re.1 this charitable activity, we can get several Lakhs of rupees annually. But we don't yet have such religious awareness. Moreover, not all caste Hindus regard untouchability as contrary to dharma and, therefore, accept service of the Harijan as their dharma. Hence it doubly becomes a duty of those who regard the service of Harijans as their dharma to sustain the work of such service.

Eradication of untouchability is not one man's job. Neither can it be done only with the help of money. Money can be regarded as a form of energy for the work of service. If every caste Hindu who looks upon eradication of untouchability as his dharma regularly contributes to the fund according to his capacity, then the work being done at present can be kept up and those in charge of it will be saved from financial worries.

I shall be going to Ahmedabad in the second week of January for the Gujarati Sahitya Parishad. I am hoping to collect at that time from Gujaratis the sum mentioned above. It was suggested to me that I should appeal for help from friends outside Gujarat [also] but I rejected the suggestion. If I did that, it would be a disgrace to Gujarat and so to me. No one can say that Gujarat is among the poor provinces in the country. It has, on the contrary, helped other provinces in their time of need. It has never begged for anything from other provinces, and rightly too. Why shouldn't it, then, contribute for such a noble activity? It is true that it has to contribute to many funds. It is also true that the farmers of Gujarat have suffered many

[1] This appeared in the form of an open latter "To All Gujaratis" in *Harijanbandhu*, 8-12-1935.

calamities and borne great losses. But I firmly believe that such arguments cannot be advanced as excuses for not doing one's dharma. I, therefore, hope that all friends, men and women, will work hard and collect the small amount mentioned above and thus relieve Thakkar Bapa, other workers and me of the worry. The burden of most of the activities in Gujarat is generally borne by Sardar. I know that he has had to collect money for many of them. I have, therefore, deliberately not put this burden on him. But he cannot, for that reason, remain unconcerned till the money is collected. Nobody should think that eradication of untouchability is Thakkar Bapa's and my concern only and not his. I hope that Gujarat will not send me back empty-handed.

Your servant,
MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7184; also C.W. 4781

209. LETTER TO M.R. MASANI

WARDHA, MAGANWADI,
November 25, 1935

MY DEAR MASANI,

Come whenever you can during the next fortnight excepting of course Mondays—my silence days.

Yours sincerely,
M.K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4127

210. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 25, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I have now two letters in front of me. Better a postcard than no letter. I sent you a wire in reply to your first. I expect you here any day in reply to this.

Love.

BAPU

SMT. RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
JALLUNDER CITY
PUNJAB

From the original: C.W. 3719. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6875

211. LETTER TO G.V. MAVALANKAR

November 25, 1935

BHAI MAVALANKAR,

You must of course be a member of the Reception Committee. Take me for the opening ceremony as you wish, after consulting the Committee. Convey my condolences to the family of the deceased.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1246

212. NOTE TO MANU GANDHI

[On or after *November 25, 1935*][1]

Do you wish to tell me anything? Return soon. Write to me regularly. Give me all the news. Live in the utmost Simplicity. Don't fear Harilal at all. I will write to Narandas about slivers. Kanti will go to see you off. Ask for a direct ticket for Rajkot.

I hope you have been writing to Surendra. Continue to write from there too. Does he write?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1553. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

213. LETTER TO G.D. BIRLA

WARDHA,
November 26, 1935

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

It was settled yesterday with Thakkar Bapa himself that Malkani would do his work independently while remaining the Joint Secretary. But he came to me early this morning expressing his inability to hold the office. I am enclosing a copy of the letter[2] I have written to

[1] This silence day note is written on the back of a letter dated November 20, 1935. The Monday following November 20 fell on November 25, 1935.

[2] This is not available.

Thakkar Bapa regarding this development. Hence it would be superfluous to go into further details here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8014. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

214. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

WARDHA,
November 27, 1935

CHI. CHANDU,

I got your letter. When I say that one per cent doubt remains, what I mean is that I am ready to listen to and think over what Father or you may say. If I didn't have even this one per cent doubt, there would be no need at all for me to here anybody. Please don't forget this, that before I discussed the matter with You I used to doubt the truth of what . . . and his friends said. After my long and patient talk with you, my attitude towards . . . became more favourable. Your story is something like this: you were bitten by a snake, but you did not feel the effect of poison although you already knew from experience the nature of the poison. Just as this wouldn't be a plausible story, so is your story of [the effect of] . . .'s touch not plausible. The poison of a lustful man's touch is far more than that of a snake. And if a snake, while lifting its young one with its teeth. accidentally bites it with its fangs, the young one also would feel the effect of poison. Since a child is easily influenced by its parents, if they pour poison into it the child cannot but feel its effect. Please, therefore, know that it is your own testimony that proves the innocence of . . . to the extent of 99 per cent. And that is why I have told you, and I repeat here, that you should continue to write to me and keep me informed about everything. If you continue to help me, the remaining one per cent doubt also can be cleared. After your testimony, I cannot bring myself to find . . . guilty. Nor can I bring myself to believe that you are telling a brazen lie. Till, therefore, I get further evidence, the one per cent will remain in your favour. If you are one hundred per cent truthful and if you continue your effort [to convince me], you will be able to raise the one per cent to 100 per-cent.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 940. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

215. LETTER TO UMADEVI BAJAJ

November 27, 1935

CHI. OM,

I got your letter. I find it intolerable that teachers in your school cannot speak with their pupils in any language other than English. You should report this matter to the management politely. why do they behave in this manner? Your letter is fairly good. You do not take much time to get used to such things. Learn whatever good you find there, but try to keep away from whatever is undesirable.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 342

216. LETTER TO RAMESHCHANDRA

November 27, 1935

BHAI RAMESHCHANDRAJI,

I have certainly asserted that birth-control by artificial means is harmful and I still maintain it. It would be wrong even to think about the possible exceptions. The same holds true in the case of insurance, the only difference being that the number of exceptional cases can be greater in the latter case. The spiritual harm resulting from birth-control by artificial means is much greater than what results from insurance.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6094

217. TELEGRAM TO HANUMANT SAHAI

WARDHA,
[On or before *November 28, 1935*][1]

YOUR TELEGRAM[2]. INTERVENTION IMPROPER WITHOUT FULL KNOWLEDGE, CIRCUMSTANCES SUGGEST IMPARTIAL ARBITRATION SUBJECT MEN'S RETURN WORK AND BOTH PARTIES ACCEPTING AWARD AS FINAL BINDING.[3]

GANDHI

Bapu—A Unique Association, Vol. II, p. 160

218. CASTE AND VARNA

WARDHA,
November 28, 1935

A gentleman writes that I advocate the abolition of castes and maintain that the varnas are and ought to be enduring. He wants me to explain this with illustrations.

Castes are numerous. They are man-made. They undergo constant change. The older ones die and new ones spring up. Castes based on occupations are to be found all over the world. It is only in India that there are restrictions, as regards intermarriage and inter-dining, which defy reason. This is very harmful. It stands in the way of the community's progress. It has nothing to do with religion.

Varnas are just four and not numerous. They have been sanctioned by the Shastras. Whether or not people are conscious of them, they do exist all over the world as we see. There are everywhere these four classes: one to impart knowledge of god for the welfare of

[1] The telegram was reproduced by Mahadev Desai in his letter to G. D. Birla dated November 28, 1935.

[2] Which read: "Birla Mill's labourers strike six days. Heavy wage cuts. Authorities unyielding. Police and goondas employed. Read *National Call*. Pray intervene".

[3] The workers of the Birla Cotton Mill had gone on strike in protest against reduction in their wages; *vide* also "Telegram to G.D. Birla", 2-12-1935 and "Letter to G. D. Birla", 5-12-1935.

the world, another to protect the people against manifold dangers, a third one to carry on the work of farming, etc., to sustain the community and one class to work for these three classes. There is no feeling of high and low in this division. But since this is not understood as a great law of nature, there has been confusion in it, that is, these four functions are no more confined to the respective varnas. Instead men have been taking up any occupation they choose with a view to achieving their selfish ends. At one time in India people used to consciously folllow this law and thus lived in peace. One accepted the calling of one's own varna and was satisfied in its pursuit for general welfare. There was no unhealthy competition among people to jump from one varna to another for the sake of money or fame. At present this significance of the varna system seems to have disappeared even in India. Destructive competition is on the increase, everyone takes liberty of following any profession and the meaning of varna has been restricted to unnatural and meaningless restrictions on intermarriage and inter-dining. And that is why the country has stopped progressing. Hinduism will once again shine forth if such senseless restrictions are abolished, the pristine varna system is resurrected and the distinctions of high and low are banished. This would be to the good of India as well as the whole world.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 19-1-1936

219. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHAGANJ,
November 28, 1935

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
78 WALKESHWAR RD.
BY

PYARELAL LEAVING EVENING. MEET STATION.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

220. LETTER TO S.V. KAMAT

November 28, 1935

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[1] I am sending it to Sjt. Gangadharrao for his reply. On receipt of it I shall write to you further.

I cannot recall all the conversations that take place with friends.

Yours sincerely,

M. .K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal. Papers. Courtesy: Payarelal

221. LETTER TO SWARUPRANI NEHRU

November 28, 1935

DEAR SISTER[2],

I have a letter from you after months and that too in response to one of mine. Still, something is better than nothing.

I too got a letter about the rise in Kamala's temperature. Let us hope that it has come down by now.

You must be getting letters from Krishna[3]; there is hardly any chance of her writing to me. Jawaharlal will never have any respite from work. Did he have rest even in jail? He wrote a book there and now that he is out he writes letters which read like books.

Ramdas is keeping indifferent health and passing his days in Bombay. He is expected here this week. Ba is all right and so is Mahadev. I hope you are keeping well and cheerful.

MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: Gandhiji-Indira Gandhi Correspondence. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] In his letter dated November 27 the addressee had sought an account of Rs. 2675 out of Rs. 20,000 entrusted by Gandhiji to Gangadharrao Desh-pande for Kanara Relief.

[2] Jawaharlal Nehru's mother

[3] Krishna Hutheesingh addressee's daughter

222. LETTER TO MIRABEHN [1]

MAGANWADI,
November 29, 1935

CHI. MIRA[2],

The bearer of your note is in a hurry to go. Your note was read as soon as it came. The reply is being dictated immediately after the reading. The things wanted will be sent tomorrow with the bearer who will bring tomorrow's note. The idea of cow-keeping is good. If there is none there, I could perhaps send one from here. She will be a good companion for you and provide with good occupation. Meanwhile you should take such milk as you get there. Are there any goats there? If there are, you should possess a few goats on loan. You should take as much ghee as you need and fall back on Maganwadi for supply. I am glad the first experience has been so happy. All well here.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6307. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9773

[1] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira* Mirabehn explains: "Between the last letter ["Letter to Mirabehn", 29-5-1935] and this there comes another eventful gap. For some time I was serving Bapu in Maganwadi. Bapu's health had become very bad and high blood-pressure had developed. At the same time. Maganwadi had become overcrowded with inmates of all descriptions. The problem of Sindi village was continuing unsolved and Bapu suddenly announced that he in tended to go and live in Sindi all alone, taking what help he required from the villagers. Everyone was aghast at the idea, specially in view of Bapu's state of health. I asked Bapu that if I went instead to Sindi, would he accept the compromise. Bapu reluctantly agreed. A small one-room cottage was built and I went there to live. I felt that Sindi was no village and that our experiences of, and experiments with regard to, villages life could not really be carried on there. I, therefore, suggested that as soon as someone else would be found ready to stay in Sindi. I would go on to a real village in the countryside. The following letter was addressed to me in segaon which was the village I had gone on to from Sindi."

[2] The superscription in this and the other letters to the addressee is in the Devanagari script.

223. DISCUSSION WITH G.D. BIRLA [1]

[Before *November 30, 1935*]

G.D. BIRLA: That friend in charge of the tannery[2], you say, is working for a mere pittance. It is highly commendable.

GANDHIJI: He is a brahmin and a graduate. He does not accept more than eight annas a day. His wife also works else where the whole day for a bare living wage.

Yes: All that surprises me, but I do not know how long this can go on in this machine age.

I have no such fear, because I have the conviction within me that when all these achievements of the machine age will have disappeared these our handicrafts will remain; when all exploitation will have ceased, service and honest labour will remain. It is because this faith sustains me that I am going on with my work. After all where is there any cause for despair? What are a few years in the vast stretch of eternity? A study of human origins would carry us back to millions of years. Indomitable faith in their work sustained men like Stephenson and Columbus. Faith in my work sustains me, but there is also added to it the conviction that all the other things that seem to challenge my faith are doomed. Don't you see that if India becomes industrialized, we shall need a Nadirshah to find out other worlds to exploit, that we shall have to pit ourselves against the naval and military power of Britain and Japan and America, of Russia and Italy? My head reels to think of these rivalries. No, I am clear that whilst this machine age aims at converting men into machines, I am aiming at reinstating man-turned-machine to his original estate.

I quite see your invincible faith. But you seem to forget in your enthusiasm that you will not be with us until eternity. You are getting old. Why not make large collections and spread your work over a large area?

No. I do not believe in collecting more than I need.

But supposing you constructed twenty, even ten, model villages?

If it is such an easy thing, you might do so with your money. But I know it is not easy. You cannot bring a model village into being

[1] Extracted from Mahdev Desai's "Weekly Letter". G.D. Birla was at Wardha for the executive meeting of the Harijan Sevak Sangh.

[2] At Nalawadi

by the magic wand of money. And I believe in making a full return for whatever money I receive from the public. And then I am against raising any more central funds now. There are so many Harijan schools and ashrams in Gujarat requiring an annual budget of Rs. 29,000.[1] Why should I ask you for work in Gujarat? Is it not the duty of the Gujaratis to find money for the Harijan work in Gujarat? If they cannot find it, they had better close down their institutions rather than ask for outside help.

Harijan, 30-11-1935

224. AN INTERESTING POINT

The Council of the Harijan Sevak Sangh met last week at Wardha. In view of my article "Caste Has to Go"[2] some members raised the question whether in the pages of *Harijan* which was issued under the aegis of the Harijan Sevak Sangh I was justified in airing my views on the Sangh, or whether I could express views which went beyond the official policy of the Sangh, or lastly whether the Sangh could extend the scope of its objective.

I gave it as my opinion that I was free as an individual to advocate in the pages of *Harijan* views which I may know to be contrary to the views of some members or maybe in advance of the official policy of the Sangh. In my opinion, any member of the Sangh is entitled to the same freedom so long as his views do not in any way tone down the Sangh's objective. Its policy represents the highest common factor between the views of the moderate reformer and those of the radical. We have in the Harijan Sevak Sangh both the sections well represented. There are sanatanists who would restrict removal of untouchability to the mere touch. There are others who would extend it to inter-dining and intermarriage. The membership pledge lays down the minimum which every member has to subscribe to and practise in his or her own life. It does not prevent any member from going further so long as he or she does not advocate the advanced view as the policy of the Sangh. At its very origin all sections of Hindus had met and, in order to carry the largest number of Hindus with them, that representative gathering passed a compre-

[1] *Vide* "An Appeal", 24-11-1935.
[2] *Vide* "Caste Has to Go", 16-11-1935.

hensive resolution[1] that would secure the hearty assent of the Largest number present. The wisdom of the course was justified in that there was, thanks to Pandit Malaviyaji, practical unanimity. It is obvious that if the resolution had contemplated the suppression of advanced views and practice by members acting in their individual capacity many members would not have subscribed to such restriction. But on the other hands not even a majority of the members of the board could change the constitution so far as its objective is concerned. That can only be done by a general representative meeting of Hindus convened specially for the purpose. Therefore whilst the most cautious reformer may rest secure about the fundamental policy of the Sangh, the extreme radical is in no way hampered in his advocacy, as an individual, of the views which in his opinion may promote the purity and health of Hinduism.

It may be mentioned, in passing, that the views expressed by me in the article "Caste Has to Go" have been often expressed in these columns though under different headings. Moreover the article does not deal with the relations between caste Hindus and Harijan Hindus. It deals with reform only among caste men or *savarnas.* When untouchability goes, untouchables will occupy precisely the same position as caste men. And whatever rule or custom then governs caste men will govern Harijans who are no longer Harijans. If, therefore, caste remains as it is now, there will be no intermarriage and no interdining between Harijans and caste men. But if caste goes in its present form, as it will some day, there will most undoubtedly be intermarriage and inter-dining between Harijans and caste men as there will be between caste men and caste men. And if varna remains, as I hope it will, occupations will be restricted as they were in the past; intermarriage and inter-dining will not be restricted even as they were not in the past. Whaterver happens it will happen not because of the activity of the Sangh as a body but because of other forces which the Sangh can neither regulate nor control. Its members as individuals will no doubt take their due share in moulding those forces according to their predilections.

Harijan, 30-11-1935

[1] *Vide* "Resolution at the Hindu Leaders' Conference, Bombay", 25-9-1932.

225. THE IDEAL AND THE PRACTICAL

Shri Gopabandhu Chaudhry writes:[1]

> In the article "Need for Humane Custom"[2] you refer to a calculation that "self-sufficing khadi will mean two yards of sale outside against three yards of wear by artisans, etc." . . . But the reading of the article leaves an impression that the success of self-sufficing khadi entirely depends upon the sale of khadi. But is this a correct ideal?It not the ideal of self-sufficing khadi this that in a majority of cases the spinners will spin their own cotton or purchase their cotton and pay the weaver from their earnings from other village industries or agricultural labour?
>
> Otherwise, when our aim is to make every home in the village self-sufficient, where will the extra two yards for outside sale produced by the spinners sell?Will the demand of the cities be possibly so large?
>
> . . . Self-sufficing khadi ought to thrive independently on its own merits, as there is enough unutilized land to grow the cotton required and unemployed leisure to spin the yarn.

The ideal no boubt is for every family to grow, spin, weave and wear its own cotton, just as it it for every family to own land and grow its own corn, cook and eat it. But we know that every family won't and can't realize the ideal; we know, too, that success will not attend the worker immediately he begins to preach the unadulterated message of self-sufficing khadi. What Gopabandhu Babu has himself suggested is itself an intermediary stage, that of a householder buying enough cotton, spinning it himself, having the yarn woven and paying the charges from his savings. But there are million who have no savings and there are millions who purchase their cloth without performing any of the processes. To spin for oneself and pay for cotton and weaving out of the proceeds of some other industry is an intermediate stage. To spin extra and from the proceeds of that labour to pay for weaving is yet another intermediate stage and perhaps the easiest both from the workers' and the weavers' points of view. In working out this stage we have ready-made khadi centres. There the workers have to induce spinners and other artisans to wear khadi if

[1] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.
[2] *Vide* "Need for Humane Custom", 2-11-1935.

they are to continue to get work through the All-India Spinners' Association agency. There are many among them who depend for their maintenance entirely on their labour spent on spinning, weaving, carding or dyeing. These can only wear khadi if they work at producing surplus khadi and command the sale of such products. This ought not to be difficult, if in spite of the rise in the spinners' wage the existing demand for khadi continues.

In practice all the stages will be worked simultaneously. What the new scheme does is to put the emphasis on the right spot and state what the goal is in unmistakable terms. Khadi workers will no longer concentrate on increasing sales and reducing the price of khadi. They are henceforth to concentrate on people becoming self-sufficing about their cloth requirements at least to the extent of spinning. They will have to establish personal touch with the artisans, befriend them, know their wants and help them, progressively to improve their economic condition by making the best possible use of their leisure hours consistently with equal opportunity for all. This ought to be a good enough programme for the most ambitious worker. The most difficult task will be on the one hand to open the eyes of understanding of the millions and persuade them to use their leisure hours for their own betterment and on the other to persuade the buying class—the city people and the middle men—to realize that in the long run it pays them if they buy village manufactures even though their cost may be apparently some what higher than they have hitherto paid and even though the appearance be not quite what they have been used to. It pays them because it raises the material condition of the people and therefore their purchasing power. The new scheme is therefore calculated to draw the best out of the whole of the nation irrespective of 'caste, colour or creed'. The question ultimately resolves itself into this: Have we for this task workers enough of the requisite purity, self-sacrifice, industry and intelligence?

Harijan, 30-11-1935

226. AN EXPERIENCE

A correspondent who has for years been wearing khadi made out of his own yarn writes:

> This year I had 80 yards of khadi of 50 inches width. It cost me twenty rupees in round figures. People want my khadi at 10 as. per yard. i.e., Rs. 50 for the whole piece. Thus if I want to use three yards for myself I need to sell only $1\frac{1}{2}$ yards. If I keep for myself 20 yards and sell the rest, besides paying for my own khadi, I would make a profit of Rs. 17/8.

I know this correspondent. He stands in an exceptionally favourable position becuase his yarn is a fine, even and strong. Weavers weave it at reasonable rates, and the khadi being therefore strong and fine-looking is greatly in demand. Everyone having faith and patiene may verify the truth of the statement by making the experiment himself. Strong, even and fine yarn is the secret of successful khadi.

Harijan, 30-11-1935

227. NEED FOR CARE

Apropos of my reproduction of Dr. Aykroyd's letter[1] on *neem* leaves and tamarind, the reader will appreciate the following further letter[2] from the Director of Nutrition Research.

> 1. I think there is a certain danger in publishing small items of dietetic knowledge apart, as it were, from their scientific context. Ignorant readers are apt to make faulty interpretations. For example, on rereading the paragraph in my letter of Novermber 6 relating to *neem* leaves, which you wish to publish in your paper, I think it might possibly give the impression that everyone should consume great quantities of this vegetable as a cure for all human ills. Actually, the small series of analyses we have carried out to date show *neem* leaves to be somewhat richer in certain food factors than a number of other leafy vegetables, but it is only a question of degree. In a word, it would be better, for purposes of popular education, to stress the value of all green leafy vegetables rather than to single out one particular vegetable for special

[1] *Vide* "Neem Leaves and Tamarind", 16-11-1935.
[2] From which only extracts are reporduced here.

commendation. I should therefore prefer the paragraph, which refers to the bitter variety of *neem* leaves (*Azadirachta Indica*) to read as follows:

QUEESTION: What is the nutritive value of *neem* leaves?

ANSWER: *Neem* leaves resemble other green leafy vegetables in composition. Both mature and tender leaves are richer in protein, calcium, iron and carotene than amaranth leaves, coriander leaves, drumstick leaves, lettuce, marraya leaves and spinach. Their composition makes them valuable as a supplement to a diet largely composed of cereals, and in this respect they resemble the leafy vegetables in general.

2. The paragraph relating to tamarind and lemon might be modified as follows:

With regard to vitamin content, tamarind and lemon are roughly similar, except that the latter is richer in the antiscorbutic vitamin C. Tamarind pulp, unlike lemon, contains a good deal of tartaric acid—about 14%; the chief acid in lemon is citric acid. Fresh tamarind, which is more solid than fresh lemon, contains a somewhat higher percentage of protein, corbohydrate and minerals than lemon; in the dried state tamarind yields about 3% protein and 73% carbohydrate (by difference). Tamarind is stated to contain a laxative principle. I can offer nothing in support of the popular belief that it induces fever and rheumatism . . . .

Harijan, 30-11-1935

228. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

November 30, 1935

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

How much do you spend daily on vegetables? How much on fruit? What is the expenditure on food per head per month at the present rate of quantity served? Do you keep an account of the quantity consumed daily? Do you note down the names of those who come for meals from day to day? How are you keeping? In what other activities besides this are you engaged?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 383. Courtesy: I Bhagwanji P. Pandya

229. LETTER TO K.M. MUNSHI

WARDHA,
November 30, 1935

BHAI MUNSHI,

I got your letter. I am not at all surprised by the result. Your duty ended when you responded promptly to an urgent call at the last hour. Tatachari was happy beyond words. He had written a fine letter to me. Who will be hearing the appeal?Whoever it may be, there is no doubt that an appeal should be made.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7586. Courtesy: K.M. Munshi

230. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

November 30, 1935

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

You should immediately approach the four persons whose names you have given me and show them your budget. For this you need not await my arrival. Let me know the outcome. Mother must have recovered by now.

Soya beans are available in Bombay at two rates. The variety from Sind costs 12 annas a lb. and the one from Manchuria 8 annas a lb. Both the varieties can be obtained through Gosibehn.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Gosibehn's address: Shrimati Gosibehn Captain, Nair Building, Gandhi Seva Sena, Sandhurst Road, Bombay.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2431

231. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

WARDHA,
December 1, 1935

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

I have your letter enclosing the budget. Its critical examination will rest with Shankerlal. So far as I am concerned, I shall require to be satisfied that no new obligations are taken by the central organization. Provinces may frame their budgets in any manner they like (1) so long as they do not run a single store at loss, (2) so long as they pay the minimum wage to all the artisans whom they employ — the minimum wage being fixed for each province in consultation with the centre, and (3) so long as the budget convincingly shows that the provincial organization can be run without loss.

You suggest that no interest should be charged. But it has been suggested by others that Per cent should be charged for covering expenses of the centre.

Yours,
BAPU

DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA
LAHORE

From a copy: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

232. LETTER TO PYARELAL

December 1, 1935

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have received your letter. Now do not leave anything wanting with regard to food and get well soon. There is no need to put up with pain of any kind. Your present duty is to build your health properly. You have not written anything about Mother. Where is she staying? Who is treating her?

Rajkumari arrived yesterday. Her health is indifferent. She has cough. She was making enquiries about you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

233. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA [1]

WARDHAGANJ,
December 2, 1935

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
ALBUQUERQUE ROAD
NEW DELHI

WITHOUT DIMINSHING INFLUENCE OR DAMAGING STATUS OF RECOGNIZED UNION OFFER LISTEN COMPLAINTS BY WHOMSOEVER MADE AND REDRESS LEGITIMATE PROVED GRIEVANCE. PERSONS THEMSELVES NOT ENPLOYEES SHOULD PROVE THEIR AUTHORITY SPEAK FOR AGGRIEVED WORKERS. IF THIS ADVICE DOES NOT FIND ECHO IN YOUR HEART IT IS CLEAR I HAVE NOT GRASPED TRUE SITUATION. IN THAT EVENT SHOULD ACT ACCORDING YOUR BEST JUDGEMENT.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 7785. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

234. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

December 2, 1935

I got your letter. I am getting confirmed in the views which I have publicly expressed. Your argument[2] applies to all similar things, but just as it would not be right to carry on public propaganda for such things so also it would not be right to do so in this case. One may propagate a thing that is spiritually elevating. How can one propagate something that has a lowering tendency? "A lowering tendency" need not be taken in a deprecatory sense here. Everybody would welcome sex-gratification without having to have children. Therefore the means of ensuring this are spreading like intoxicants. If there is any cause for regret, it is only that what is morally bad is being regarded as morally desirable. I have recently been given Mrs.

[1] The workers of the Birla Cotton Mill had gone on strike in protest against reduction in their wages, and under the leadership of Satyavati had formed an *ad hoc* committee to fight their cause. But the addressee had refused to recognize her authority and insisted on negotiating with the Birla Cotton Mill Union functioning since 1928.

[2] About artificial birth-control

Erskine's book. It is worth pondering over. It also advocates control but in a different way. I have no time to write more.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, P.160

235. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

December 2, 1935

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have seen both your letters and you must have got the wire I sent you this morning.

In my opinion no harm can come out of seeing Satyavati. After all, your aim is justice. But she should hold an authority from the workers. The best thing would be to take all the complaints to an agreed arbitrator with the initial condition that there should be no future strike. I have not suggested my own name, for how can I even take up this function? You have to appoint someone else as the arbitrator. I hope you will be patient in everything.

Blessings from

BAPU[1]

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8015. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

236. LETTER TO SURENDRA

WARDHA,
December 3, 1935

CHI. SURENDRA,

I had your previous letter. It did not particularly call for a reply, hence I saved my time for some other work. Now I shall not treat your letter of the 29th ultimo in the same manner.

Do continue to post me with your bitter- sweet experiences. It would be a mistake to regard the experiences at Sindi as fully

[1] The letter carries the following note by Mahadev Desai: "A *Hindustan Times* issues reports Satyavati as the 'wife of dismissed employee'. It hurt Bapu. He wrote to Satyavati who had complained to him that it was a stupid blunder by a reporter and that even Ghanshyamdas would not like it."

comprehensive. I fail to see a reflection of my own experiences in the picture that I form in my mind by putting together Mahaev's description of the experiences at Sindi. There is a restraint in Mahadev's description, hence the bitter experiences included in it are like sugar refined in a factory. I can summarize my experience of Sindi in one sentence. Justice has not yet been done to Sindi. But willy-nilly I happen to be its director. And what sort of a director? I used to pay only short visits. Now I visit the place daily and stay there for a few minutes. I have not mixed with the people. Mirabehn tried hard to do it. But she had gone there only to stop me from settling down in the place.[1] She had not set her mind on it. She was staying under my pressure. Now Gajanan[2] is there but it is also only an experiment. Hence it is likely you are mistaken in placing Sindi in line with the others. I can say that for me [the work at] Sindi is vast enough.

We have done nothing about. Vadaj. A separate ashram has come into being at Nalawadi. it cannot be said that it has any appreciable impact on the people of Nalawadi. It is a different kind of activity. We have not yet mastered the art of living in a village. We still have to learn the way of mingling with them. Hence Nalawadi, Vadaj and Sindi, and all the three are different things. Your experiment is the fourth and it is in line with the experiments that are now being carried on. Let us see what finally comes out of it. I am therefore closely watching your work. I am intentionally forgoing the temptation of taking more work from you. I had to exercise great firmness in sending my reply to Navli . . . .[3]

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

237. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

December 3, 1935

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Your letter. I have forgotten the letters connected with the swadeshi industry. You can do what seems fit to you. It would not be proper to send suggestions from here.

[1] *Vide* footnote 1 of “Letter to Mirabehn”, 29-11-1935.
[2] Gajanan Nayak
[3] Omission as in the source

I had given an appointment to the sadhu but refused to keep it as he desired me to go to his place. We could certainly meet on my coming to Delhi if he wants it.

You are keeping well, I hope.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2430

238. INTERVIEW TO MARGARET SANGER [1]

[*December 3/4, 1935*][2]

Gandhiji poured his whole being into his conversation. He revealed himself inside out, giving Mrs. Sanger an intimate glimpse of his own private life. He also declared to her his own limitations, especially the stupendous limitation of his own philosophy of life—a philosophy that seeks self-realization through self-control, and said that from him there could be one solution and one alone:

[G.] I could not recommend the remedy of birth-control to a woman who wanted my approval. I should simply say to her: My remedy is of no use to you. You must go to others for advice.

Mrs. Sanger cited some hard cases. Gandhiji said:

I agree, there are hard cases. Else birth-control enthusiasts would have no case. But I would say, do devise remedies by all means, but the remedies should be other than the ones you advise. If you and I as moral reformers put our foot down on this remedy and said, 'You must fall back on other remedies', those would surely be found.

Both seemed to be agreed that woman should be emancipated, that woman should be the arbiter of her destiny. But Mrs. Sanger would have Gandhiji work for woman's emancipation through her pet device, just as believers in violence want Gandhiji to win India's freedom through violence, since they seem to be sure that non-violence can never succeed.

She forgets this fundamental difference in her impatience to prove that Gandhiji does not know the women of India. And she claims to prove this on the ground that he makes an impossible appeal to the women of India—the appeal to resist their husbands. Well, this is what he said:

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's article "Mrs. Sanger and Birthcontrol"

[2] According to *Gandhi—1915-1948: A Detailed Chronology,* Margaret Sanger met Gandhiji on December 3 and 4.

My wife I made the orbit of all women. In her I studied all women. I came in contact with many European women in South Africa, and I knew practically every Indian woman there. I worked with them. I tried to show them they were not slaves either to their husbands or parents, not only in the political field but in the domestic as well. But the trouble was that some could not resist their husbands. The remedy is in the hands of women themselves. The struggle is difficult for them, and I do not blame them. I blame the men. Men have legislated against them. Man has regarded woman as his tool. She has learned to be his tool and in the end found it easy and pleasurable to be such, because when one drags another in his fall the descent is easy . . .[1] I have felt that during the years still left to me if I can drive home to women's minds the truth that they are free, we will have no birth-control problem in India. If they will only learn to say 'no' to their husbands when they approach them carnally! I do not suppose all husbands are brutes and if women only know how to resist them, all will be well. I have been able to teach women who have come in contact with me how to resist their husbands. The real problem is that many do not want to resist them. . . . No resistance bordering upon bitterness will be necessary in 99 out of 100 cases. If a wife says to her husband, 'No, I do not want it', he will make no trouble. But she hasn't been taught. Her parents in most cases won't teach it to her. There are some cases, I know, in which parents have appealed to their daughters' husbands not to force motherhood on their daughters. And I have come across amenable husbands too. I want woman to learn the primary right of resistance. She thinks now that she has not got it . . .

Mrs. Sanger raises the phantasmagoria of "irritations, disputes, and thwarted longings that Gandhiji's advice would bring into the home." . . . She cited cases of great nervous and mental breakdowns as a result of the practice of self-control. Gandhiji spoke from a knowledge of the numerous letters he receives every mail, when he said to her:

The evidence is all based on examination of imbeciles. The conclusions are not drawn from the practice of healthy-minded people. The people they take for examples have not lived a life of even tolerable continence. These neurologists assume that people are expected to exercise self-restraint while they continue to lead the same ill-regulated life. The consequence is that they do not exercise self-restraint but become lunatics. I carry on correspondence with many of

[1] Omissions as in the source

these people and they describe their own ailments to me. I simply say that if I were to present them with this method of birth-control they would lead far worse lives.

He told her that when she went to Calcutta she would be told by those who knew what havoc contraceptives had worked among unmarried young men and women. But evidently for the purpose of the conversation, at any rate, Mrs. Sanger confined herself to propagation of knowledge of birthcontrol among married couples only . . . . The distinction that Gandhiji drew between love and lust will be evident from the following excerpts from the conversation:

When both want to satisfy animal passion without having to suffer the consequences of their act it is not love, it is lust. But if love is pure, it will transcend animal passion and will regulate itself. We have not had enough education of the passions. When a husband says, 'Let us not have children, but let us have relations", what is that but animal passion? If they do not want to have more children they should simply refuse to unite. Love becomes lust the moment you make it a means for the satisfaction of animal needs. It is just the same with food. If food is taken only for pleasure it is lust. You do not take chocolates for the sake of satisfying your hunger. You take them for pleasure and then ask the doctor for an antidote. Perhaps you tell the doctor that whisky befogs your brain and he gives you an antidote. Would it not be better not to take chocolates or whisky?

MRS. S. No I do not accept the analogy.

G. Of course you will not accept the analogy because you think this sex expression without desire for children is a need of the soul, a contention I do not endorse.

MRS. S. Yes, sex expression is a spiritual need and I claim that the quality of this expression is more important than the result, for the quality of the relationship is there regardless of results. We all know that the great majority of children are born as an accident, without the parents having any desire for conception. seldom are two people drawn together in the sex act by their desire to have children. . . . Do you think it possible for two people who are in love, who are happy together, to regulate their sex act only once in two years, so that relationship would only take place when they wanted a child? Do you think is possible?

G. I had the honour of doing that very thing and I am not the only one.

Mrs. Sanger thought it was illogical to contend that sex union for the purpose of having children would be love and union for the satisfaction of the sexual appetite

was lust, for the same act was involved in both. Gandhiji immediately capitulated and said he was ready to describe all sexual union as partaking of the nature of lust.

I know, from my own experience that as long as I looked upon my wife carnally, we had no real understanding. Our love did not reach a high plane. There was affection between us always, but we came closer and closer the more we or rather I became restrained. There never was want of restraint on the part of my wife. Very often she would show restraint, but she rarely resisted me although she showed disinclination very often. All the time I wanted carnal pleasure I could not serve her. The moment I bade good-bye to a life of carnal pleasure our whole relationship became spiritual. Lust died and love reigned instead. . . .

Mrs. Sanger is so impatient to prove that Gandhiji is a visionary that she forgets the practical ways and means that Gandhiji suggested to her. she asked:

Must the sexual union take place only three or four times in an entire lifetime?

G. Why should people not be taught that it is immoral to have more than three or four children and that after they have had that number they should sleep separately? If they are taught this it would harden into custom. And if social reformers cannot impress this idea upon the people, why not a law? If husband and wife have four children, they would have had sufficient animal enjoyment. Their love may then be lifted to a higher plane. Their bodies have met. After they have had the children they wanted, their love transforms itself into a spiritual relationship. If these children die and they want more, then they may meet again. Why must people be slaves of this passion when they are not of others? When you give them education in birth-control,you tell them it is a duty. You say to them that if they do not do this thing they will interrupt their spiritual evolution. You do not even talk of regulation. After giving them education in birth-control, you do not say to them, 'thus far and no further'. You ask people to drink temperately, as though it was possible to remain temperate. I know these temperate people . . . .

And yet as Mrs. Sanger was so dreadfully in earnest Gandhiji did mention a remedy which could conceivably appeal to him. That method was the avoidance of sexual union during unsafe periods confining it to the "safe" period of about ten days during the month. That had at least an element of self-control which had to exercised during the unsafe period. Whether this appealed to Mrs. Sanger or not I do not know. But therein spoke Gandhiji the truth-seeker. Mrs. Sanger has not referred to it anywhere in her interviews or her *Illustrated Weekly* article. Perhaps if birth-

controllers were to be satisfied with this simple method, the birth-control clinics and propagandists would find their trade gone . . . .[1]

Harijan, 25-1-1936

239. A MESSAGE [2]

[*December 4, 1935*][3]

At the age of sixty, a person does not become old but rather attains the fullest maturity; unfortunately, however, in this country we wear out too soon and therefore rejoice when we complete fifty years. Lady Vidyagauri does not suffer from old age. May she ward off old age for many years to come!

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 5-1-1936

240. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

WARDHA,
December 4, 1935

CHI. MANUDI,

I sent you yesterday the letters from Natal. But though I spent money on postage, I didn't reply to you and so am writing again. I am glad you wrote to me. Do write to me from time to time. You did very well in going there. Serve your mother's sisters devotedly and, if they permit you, return soon. Keep yourself well occupied all the time. Describe your daily programme to me. We had quite a crowd of guests here. The number has come down today, but will go up again.

Take proper care of your health. If you are careful about your food, you are bound to keep well.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. MANUBEHN GANDHI
C/O BALIBEHN VORA
OPP. HIGH SCHOOL
RAJKOT SADAR (KATHIAWAR)[4]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2667. Courtsy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

[1] Margaret Sanger's rejoinder appeared in *Harijan*, 22-2-1936.

[2] This was sent for the 60th birthday celebration of Vidyagauri, wife of Ramanbhai Mahipatram Nilkanth.

[3] From Gandhi—1915-1948: A Detailed Chronology.

[4] The address is from a copy.

241. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

WARDHA,
December 5, 1935

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

I have your letter dictated with calm and deliberation.

The Harijan Sevak Sangh is as much yours as mine if not more.

You should cling to your own dharma. If you succeed in that place Navli will get everything [it needs]. . . .[1] ought to be. Hemubhai is a good man. He works hard. I myself could not give him much time. Kishorelal should be reaching in a day or two. Anyway I have to go to Gujarat in the month of January. And now I must stop.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

242. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

December 5, 1935

CHI. CHANDU,

It was very good indeed that you wrote your letter calmly. Do continue to write in detail so that Father needn't write.

It is extremely difficult to explain fully why I didn't believe your story.[2] The analogy you have adduced is not correct. You yourself admit that the incident Which took place couldnot happen without impure desire. And when it took place you had already had experience of such desire. And still you say that even in impure actions you did not recognize any impure desire in . . ., nor was such desire aroused in you by those actions. This part of the story is not plausible and so I disregard the rest of it also. If I accept your account, I would have to draw a terrible inference against you, namely, that impure desire was aroused in you but that you now shrink from admitting the fact. How can I bring myself to draw such an inference? I, therefore, believe that there is conscious or unconscious exaggeration in your account. And since I believe that, the conundrums you have put to me have little meaning. You did well in

[1] Illegible
[2] *Vide* "Lette to Chandan Parekh", 27-11-1935.

sending me an extract from Kamu's diary. Send its date also. I will then write again.

Do come and see me when I arrive in Ahmedabad.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 941. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

243. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

December 5, 1935

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Your letter. The letter you wrote to Hanumant Sahai is perfectly correct. Neither he nor Satyavati can be recognized to represent labour unless either of them is elected by the workers. But they should get their due. This was all I meant to say[1] and I understand that you have already taken action in this regard.

I expect the whole matter to have been concluded by now. Your offer[2] seems adequate.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8016. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

244. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Wardha,
December 6, 1935

I wasn't arguing merely academically. You had asked for my views and I expounded them.[3]

How can I support the move for the Corporation[4] to open a clinic and to issue posters advising the people to take advantage of it?

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", 2-12-1935.

[2] To examine the mill's records to judge if the workers' grievances were legitimate

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", 2-12-1935.

[4] The Municipal Corporation of Bombay, of which the addressee was a Councillor

I had long discussions with Mrs. Sanger.[1] The more I listened to her arguments the more I became confirmed in my view. If a gourmand falls ill, what else would a vaid advise him to do but to fast? But people will continue to take digestive pills and yet continue to suffer. Understand that it is the same with regard to birth-control. My advice to you is that, in your own case, you may do what you like but should take no interest in the propaganda move. If, however, you have come to definite views on the subject and are convinced of the universal necessity of birth-control, I would have nothing to say.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 161

245. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM J. JOSHI

December 6, 1935

BHAI PURUSHOTTAM,

I have your letter. I was surprised. It needed no reply.

PURUSHOTTAM JIVRAJ JOSHI
AMRELI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

246. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

December 6, 1935

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

I have your letter regarding the circular about the restriction on taking loans. The circular is all right. But the law of mortgage is against it. Hence we shall have to consider its implementation. I myself cannot decide immediately what should be done in cases in which money is withdrawn with the Head's consent. Now that the 12th is drawing near we shall have a further discussion then. For the present let your circular remain. Personally I approve of it. I never like the employees in a big department taking loans from its funds. I can, however, imagine the necessity of permitting them to borrow with the Head's permission. It would be less undesirable if employees got loans openly from a public organization instead of incurring private debts.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Margaret Sanger", 3/4-12-1935.

247. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

December 6, 1935

CHI. SUSHILA,

Let us see whether you get this letter or not. I have never thought or written that your wish is to make money. If it were so, how could you even think of sending me the money you save? Now I know what you want. Let us see what God ordains.

Pyarelal must have been operated upon yesterday. I hope to get more news today.

LADY HARDINGE MEDICAL COLLEGE
NEW DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

248. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

WARDHA,
December 6, 1935

CHI. SUMANGAL,

Your letters come regularly. My advice is that you should give-up your vows about food. You should eat in the mess like everybody and be content with whatever is served. Once you have eaten, you should forget about food. Maybe in this way you will develop self-control automatically. Today the palate pulls you in one direction, the mind in another. This is regrettable. However, if my analysis is wrong my advice may be discarded.

BAPU[1]

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] This is in Mahadev Desai's hand, Gandhiji having been taken ill with blood-pressure and advised complete rest.

249. LETTER TO GIRIJAPRASAD CHINUBHAI

[Before *December 7, 1935*][1]

BHAI GIRIJAPRASAD: SIR CHINUBHAI MADHAVLAL,

It is against my nature to announce beforehand what I intend to do. Doing So makes me feel ashamed. Quite often, an impression has got around of my having done something only after having announced my intention of doing it. Your letter raises such a question. I really consider myself disqualified for the Sahitya Parishad. But I was forgetting that you brothers and sisters want to use me to keep the Parishad free from feuds. Doubtless I can be useful in that way and I am accepting your invitation in the hope that I may be instrumental in doing something in that direction. Keep my burden as light as possible. It is a matter of consolation to me that you are the Chairman of the Reception Committee. I take it for granted that the Parishad would not be meeting at least this year. If it is scheduled to meet some time in January or after that, there will be no inconvenience. But it will suit me if it is scheduled for as early as possible in the new year. I have destroyed your personal letter.

Regards from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

PRESIDENT

SAHITYA MANDAL

G. S. SAMMELAN

AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] From the reference to the Gujarati Sahitya Parishad which was to be held in January, 1936 and over which Gandhiji was to preside but could not as he fell ill on December 7, 1935; *vide* 2nd footnote of "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 28-10-1935 and footnote 1 of "Letter to Fulchand K. Shah", 7-12-1935. The Parishad was subsequently held from October 31 to November 2, 1936; *vide* "Speech at Gujrati Sahitya Parishad", 31-10-1936.

250. DISCUSSION WITH A VILLAGE WORKER [1]

[Before *December 7, 1935*]

[VILLAGE WORKER:] Why are we laying such an emphasis on khadi and wholesome food-stuffs, when you know that even before the advent of the British, khadi was there and our good food-stuffs were there, and yet we were in no better case?

[GANDHIJI:] This question was discussed threadbare in the columms of *Young India* and *Navajivan* if you read them. But I shall sum up the reply for you. We had khadi, but we did not know its significance; we were self-contained, but without realizing its necessity. There was little intelligence behind khadi and our handicrafts, and we little realized that they sustained us. Therefore, when they were lost to us we did not miss them, and today when an attempt is being made to restore them, some of us are wondering what use there could be in their restoration.

Then that means that political education and propaganda is needed, and you have tabooed this.

No political propaganda is needed to teach people the lesson of self-help, of reform in their diet, and of throwing off their inertia and making the best of their idle hours.

My difficulty is this, that though people in our villages are working like asses from morning until night without an hour's respite they do not get enough to eat. And you are asking them to labour still more?

What you say is news to me. The villages I know are those in which quantities of time are being wasted. But if as you say there are people who are being overworked, I am asking such people to accept nothing less than a living wage for nothing more than eight hours' work.

But why not accept the machine with all its good points, eliminating the bad ones?

I cannot afford to keep our human machines idle. We have such an amount of human power lying idle that we have no room for other power-driven machines.

Introduce the power-driven machines and get them to work for only as long as is needed for our purposes.

How do you mean? Supposing X produced all the cloth we needed, in mills specially constructed for the purpose, and gave work

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's “Weekly Letter”

to say three million men, also distributing all the profit between them, what then? Then these three million men will be having all the money that used to be distributed between 300 million a hundred years ago.

No, Sir, I propose that our men should not work more than is necessary for our purposes. same work is indeed necessary for all of us, but why should we work, say, more than a couple of hours a day and not devote the rest of our time to pleasant occupations?

So you would be satisfied if our men were to work only for one hour a day?

That should be worked out. But I should certainly be satisfied.

Well there's the rub. I should never be satisfied until all men had plenty of productive work, say, eight hours a day.

But why, I wonder, should you insist on this eight hours' minimum?

Because I know that millions will not employ themselves in work for the sake of it. If they did not need to work for their bread, they would lack the incentive. Supposing a few millionaires from America came and offered to send us all our food-stuffs and implored us not to work but to permit them to give vent to their philanthropy, I should refuse point-blank to accept their kind offer.

That would be because the offer would hurt your self- respect?

No, not only because of that; but especially because it strikes at the root of the fundamental law of our being, viz., that we must work for our bread, that we eat our bread by the sweat of our brow.

But that is your personal view. Would you leave the organization of society to society itself, or would you leave it to a few good guides?

I should leave it to a few good guides.

Which means that you are for a dictatorship.

No, for the simple reason that my fundamental principle is non-violence and I should not coerce any individual or community. Guidance is not dictatorship.

Harijan, 7-12-1935

251. EVIL OF CREDIT SALES

Whilst the whole policy of the A.I.S.A. about khadi is being overhauled, it is well to remind those who are in charge of the numerous khadi depots that the custom of selling khadi on credit has on the whole resulted in loss rather than gain to khadi. The temptation to give credit to friends, acquaintances and monied men is no doubt very great. Often it offends them if credit is refused when, they

contend, no risk is to be run. These good people do not realize that it is wrong to expect a salesman to make invidious distinctions. Numerous complaints are received from managers of khadi depots about friends and well-to-do men not discharging the debts incurred by them. To issue processes of law for the recovery of debts is a thankless and expensive task and often means more worry than it is worth. Hence even at the risk of offending and even losing some customers the safe course is never to depart from the golden rule of 'no credit sales'.

Let the khadi workers realize that the mission of khadi is not to be confined to the cities, it has to spread among the millions of villagers who are waiting to hear the call. We do not know how to reach them. We have hitherto tried the roundabout way. We shall not find the direct and the true way in the vain attempt to show ever-increasing sales in the books of city depots. Let them know that it is the surplus khadi that is to find its way to cities. The vast quantity has to be made and used by the villagers themselves. The true way to reach the villagers is to concentrate on them in their own cottages.

City sales, therefore, car be no index of the progress of the mission of khadi. Khadi statistics of the future have to show the progress made from year to year in the villages. If a large number of workers are to be freed for the spread of khadi in the villages, we must reduce our labours in the cities. One way of doing it is religiously to do away with credit sales and confine our attention to those who really want khadi and appreciate the virtue of cash payment. Credit sales invariably mean increase in prices for they involve more work, i.e., more expenses. Considered from all points of view credit sales have nothing to recommend them except the doubtful convenience of a few customers. But khadi exists not for the convenience of the few. It is intended for the benefit of all. In restricting khadi sales, therefore, to cash transactions the A. I. S. A. seeks the welfare not only of the hungry millions but also of the city buyers of khadi.

Harijan, 7-12-1935

252. HAND-MADE PAPER

Shri Yadavrao S. Chaudhary is a paper expert trained in Germany. He has prepared the following notes[1] showing how hand-made paper is prepared in Maganwadi.

Harijan, 7-11-1935

[1] Not reproduced here

253. LETTER TO UDIT MISHRA

WARDHA,

December 7, 1935

BHAI UDIT MISHRA,

I have your letter about Sharma. I am not satisfied. In your earlier letter you had praised Sharma. It now becomes your duty to give me a correct picture of what Sharma said. Please let me have it. I have not received Brijmohanji's letter.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

254. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

December 7, 1935

BHAI FULCHAND,

Jaisukhlal read in a newspaper that you had been suffering from a dreadful disease of the lungs. We cannot believe the newspapers. I hope that is the case in regard to this report, too. Please write to me, or ask somebody to write, and tell me what the fact is. Persons like you cannot afford to fall ill. You have a good many tasks yet to accomplish.

How old are you?[1]

SHRI FULCHAND KASTURCHAND SHAH
RASHTRIYA SHALA
WADHWAN CITY, KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9197. Also C.W. 2850. Courtesy: Fulchand K. Shah

[1] The letter carries a note by Mahadev Desai saying that after he had dictated the letter Gandhiji suddenly took ill and was forbidden by doctors to do any work. The letter, therefore, could not be signed by Gandhiji. In his letter dated December 13 to Jawaharlal Nehru, Mahadev Desai wrote: "He [Gandhiji] has been having high blood-pressure for several months, I think, and we should not have noticed it but for a timely warning ten days ago when he had some unaccountable pain in the back regions of the head—no headache, no neuralgic or rheumatic pain, but a certain pain accompanied by numbness which disappeared with careful massage but recurred every two or three hours. It was only when the doctors were called—I wired to Jivaraj—that it was found that he had a blood-pressure over 200 (syst.) and 120 (diast.). He has since been having perfect rest in bed, attending to no correspondence, writing nothing, dictating nothing."

255. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

[*December 8, 1935*][1]

DEAR SISTER,

I have been wanting to write to you and then forgetting. As far as I can see sitting here, I think I shall be staying at the Vidyapith when I visit Ahmedabad, l certainly would have liked to stay with you, but in view of your health and my engagements there I think it will be preferable for me to stay at the Vidyapith.

I hope you are well. I can see from Shankerlal's letter that the treatment at Calcutta has done you some good. Tell Chi. Mridu that I am not writing separately to her.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11145. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

256. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

WARDHA,

December 11, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I am writing to you after many days. I don't know if I am disobeying doctors' instructions in doing so. Jamnalalji has got alarmed, but I don't want you to be so. Come only when you would ordinarily have done. I am all right. The strings of your life, mine and everybody else's, are held by Mira's Lord. Let Him pull them as He wills. Does He ever let anybody have his way? Pyarelal is fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 193

[1] From the postmark

257. IN PRAISE OF GROUND-NUT CAKE

A friend sends the following opinion[1] of Prof. D. L. Sahasrabuddhe, in praise of ground-nut cake. It certainly deserves a trial.

Harijan, 14-12-1935

258. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

WARDHA,
December 14, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

Your letters have started coming, which is good. I had a short letter from Draupadi.I keep passing on your letters to her and Ramdas. I have not written again to Kellogg but I shall certainly do so if necessary, on your reaching there. You do well to observe everything there—good or bad. Tell me if you notice anything there that can be useful.[2] Everywhere there are two kinds of shops—those in the poorer quarters and those in the rich section of the town. Sometimes some extremely useful but inexpensive articles are available in the poor business section. This has been my experience in London and Paris. You should not leave the poorer section of New York unexplored. You will of course visit Shelton's Health Home.

Amtussalaam is here and reads your letters. I was not aware that she never writes to you. Ramdas is still in Bombay, and has not yet settled down.

Your diet seems simple and good. You will of course build up your body.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi in Mahadev Desai's hand: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, facing p. 213

[1] Not reproduced here. Professor Sahasrabuddhe has stated that groundnut was as good as soya beans in proteids, amino-acids and mineral matter, and that ground-nut cake (free from oil) was "a highly nutritious food material for human consumption."

[2] The addressee had noticed several appliances in the American naturecure clinics but had found them much too expensive and complicated for India.

259. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
December 19, 1935

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I wrote to you last week about the sudden breakdown in Bapu's health.[1] He is progressing well, but it will be some time before his bloodpressure becomes normal again. He seems to have worked at high pressure all these months and Dr. Jivraj and Dr. Gilder who examined him two days ago are definitely of opinion that he must have a couple of months' rest. This he has agreed to do. For ten days now he has been in bed resting and sleeping, never reading or writing or dictating. But you will be surprised to know that he continued to do his reading on the commode even during these days! And he finished the 9th Part of your *magnum opus*—which it really is—this evening.

And as soon as he finished it he called me to his bedside and asked me to send you his impressions. If he had been well he should have written himself or dictated something but he did not want to strain himself in the teeth of the doctors' advice and so told me in Gujarati in a minute or two what he felt. What I say will, therefore, be in my language and not his. He said:

It is needless to say that it is a brilliantly written book, and a great literary production. There are parts where I have my fundamental differences with you and which I would like to criticize, but I will not do so as it is scarcely necessary or useful. For when all is said and done it is a highly introspective narrative containing an expression of your innermost thoughts and convictions. Even if you could be persuaded to moderate or soften that expression, I should not attempt it, as it would result in taking away from its naturalness, if not aslo its truthfulness. After all we are helpless actors in the mighty flow of events, we have to act according to our lights allowing or expecting the events to correct us where we err. There is just one thing where perhaps I might make a helpful suggestion. The attack on the Liberals seems to have been overdone. It seems to obtrude on the reader's attention over and over again and sometimes mars the grace and beauty of the narrative. Not that there is any venom in anything that you have said; far from it; but you should not be even unconsciously guilty of doing an injustice to them. What you have said about Sastri leaves that impression on me. These friends served the country in their time according to their lights, and whilst we may

[1] *Vide* 1st footnote of Letter to Fulchand K. Shah.

have our serious differences with them we do not exactly serve the cause of the country by publicly pillorying them. If you have not, therefore, already sent the book on to the publishers, you might alter these portions. . . .

Yours affectionately,

MAHADEV

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1935. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

260. CABLE TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU [1]

December 22, 1935

OUR HEARTS ARE WITH YOU AND KAMALA.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers,1935. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

261. LETTER TO PADMAVATHI

WARDHA,
December 26, 1935

DEAR PADMAVATHI,

I wrote one letter to Devdas yesterday after my so-called illness. This is the second letter. Your letter of 20th November last has been lying on my head all these days. But I did not want to disregard doctor's warning.

Your love for Kanti[2] is very great. May he prove worthy of it. Personally I have no objection to the betrothal being announced. But it may not be in Saraswathi's[3] interest. She must have the right of refusal when she grows to her full age. As you yourself tell me she knows very little of the understanding between you and Kanti or, say, between us. Her mind should be left free and unfettered.

Do ask Saraswathi to write to me some lines on the strength of the old connection.

[1] Extracted form Mahadev Desai's letter to the addressee dated December 23, 1935, which read: "Two cables from you inpainfully quick succession have been repeated by Sarupbehn. Bapu immediately sent a cable to you yesterday. And 'our' here mans the whole family, including Rajendra Babu, and Jamnalalji and Vallabhbhai (who are all here) not to mention those near Bapu."

[2] Son of Harilal Gandhi

[3] Addressee's daughter

I am getting better.

Love.

From a copy: C.W. 9770

262. FOREWORD TO "SATYAGRAHA IN GANDHIJI'S OWN WORDS" [1]

[Before *December 27,1935*][2]

A dear friend on seeing Rajendra Babu's letter asking for a pamphlet, among others, on the philosophy represented by the name 'satyagraha' asked me if I would write such a pamphlet. Rajendra Babu who knew my preoccupations did not make any such demand upon my time. I, therefore, pleaded my inability when the suggestion came to me. Another suggestion was then put forward that some friend who knew my writings should make relevant extracts from them and prepare the booklet required. I readily endorsed it. The result was the following pages prepared after much labour of love. The workers desire to remain unknown. I glanced through the manuscript and I felt that the work was ably done. I believe that it will enable the reader to appreciate the very important implications of satyagraha. The fascination of the doctrine as an epitome of non-violence is daily growing on me, and I doubt not that if an individual or a nation adopts it as a plan of life, it will promote their happiness and peace and it would be their highest contribution to the attainment of the world peace after which we are all hankering.

Satyagraha in Gandhiji's Own Words, p. 36

263. FOREWORD TO "TO THE STUDENTS"

[Before *December 28, 1935*][2]

I like Anand Hingorani's idea of collecting my writings under suitable heads. The reader will not fail to appreciate the labour he has given to securing attractive printing and binding.

M. K. GANDHI

To the Students

[1] The last sentence of this Foreword appeared in *The Hindu*, 27-12-1935, under the date-line "Allahabad, December 27" as Gandhiji's "Foreword to the Jubilee Brochure on the subject of satyagraha issued by the A.I.C.C. office."

[2] The first edition was published on December 28, 1935.

264. MESSAGE TO CONGRESS JUBILEE SAMMELAN

[Before *December 28, 1935*][1]

Happy at the thought that so many ex-Presidents are meeting. The President's is the spirit of brotherly love. Hope it may augur well for the country.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-12-1935

265. ANSWER TO "THE COSMOPOLITAN[2]

[*1935*][3]

Not to believe in the possibility of permanent peace is to disbelieve the godliness of human nature. Methods hitherto adopted have failed because rock-bottom sincerity on the part of those who have striven has been lacking. Not that they have realized this lack. Peace is unattainable by part performance of conditions, even as a chemical combination is impossible without complete fulfilment of the conditions of attainment thereof. If the recognized leaders of mankind who have control over engines of destruction were wholly to renounce their use, with full knowledge of its implications, permanent peace can be obtained. This is clearly impossible without the great Powers of the earth renouncing their imperialistic design. This again seems impossible without great nations ceasing to believe in soul-destroying competition and to desire to multiply wants and therefore increase their material possessions. It is my conviction that the root of the evil is want of a living faith in a living God. It is a first-class human tragedy that peoples of the earth who claim to believe in the message of Jesus who they describe as the Prince of Peace show little of that belief in actual practice. It is painful to see sincere Christian divines limiting the scope of Jesus' message to select individuals. I have been taught from my childhood and tested the truth by experience that the primary virtues of mankind are possible of cultivation by the meanest of the human species. It is this undoubted universal possibility that distinguishes the humans from the rest of

[1] The message was read out at the Sammelan on December 28, 1935.

[2] Of New York. This is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter", which says this was "Gandhiji's answer given three years ago . . . fresh enough to be repeated today."

[3] *Ibid*

God's creation. *If even one great nation were unconditionally to perform the supreme act of renunciation, many of us would see in our lifetime visible peace established on earth.*

Harijan, 18-6-1938

266. TELEGRAM TO A.I.S.A.

[*1935*][1]

SPINNERS ASSOCIATION

TAKE CHARGE SEND ABSTRACT STOCK WITH PRESENT PRICES AND LIST PERSONAL AND OTHER OUTSTANDINGS. CLEAR ALL SALABLE STOCK NOT BELOW COST WITHOUT PERMISSION.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

267. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

WARDHA,
[*1935*][2]

CHI. VALJI,

Received the articles. Let Chitre come there if he wants. Right now he has gone elsewhere. He writes that he wants to learn there the science of bee-keeping. Your nephew must be well. I am happy that you are there. I would not like to move you from there for the time being. Are your eyes cured? Do whatever work you can in the field of village industries.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 11172. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1] In the source, this telegram is placed along with the material belonging to 1935.

[2] The year has been inferred from the fact that the All India Village Industries Association was established in December 1934 and the references to Chitre in letters to the addressee are to be found from 1935 onwards; *vide* also "Letter to Valji G. Desai", 4-8-1935, for the letter expressing concern about the addressee's eyes.

268. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
[*1935*][1]

CHI. CHAND TYAGI,

Rajkishori[2] is going there. Nothing much the matter but she was herself somewhat worried. Her temperature often rises up to 99° F. Even otherwise she intended to go there on a visit. She has taken permission to be away for a month. She is such a nice girl that we all like her. We find her simple, innocent and pure. She is leaving but with an assurance of writing to me every now and then. You should encourage her to keep this promise. Write to me often how you are faring.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6634. Also C.W. 4282. Courtesy: Chand Tyagi

269. LETTER TO AMRITLAL NANAVATI

WARDHA,
January 4, 1936

CHI. AMRITLAL,

If you have anything to say to me, do write. Take full work from Lilavati. She can help a great deal in the job of cooking. She also wishes to participate in sanitation work at Sindi. She does not know how to recite *slokas* and bhajans in tune. Do give her the time if she wants to learn it. Ramjilal should be made to learn all the kitchen work. It would be good if he is trained to undertake light responsible work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10713

[1] The source bears only the date '16', but this appears to have been written in 1935 when Gandhiji was staying at Maganwadi.

[2] Widowed daughter-in-law of the addressee. She had been staying in the Ashram since February 1935.

270. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

January 4, 1936

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I am distressed by my inability to come there but I could not accept the strict conditions laid down by the doctors. The better course indeed is not to go at all if my health is as bad as they think. Now, in any case, you should come here after finishing the work of raising contributions for the Harijan cause in a few days. Bring Rajen Babu also with you. Probably you will be able to raise the needed money at Ahmedabad itself.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

GUJARAT VIDYAPITH

AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna patro−2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 194

271. NOTE TO FULCHAND JAIN

January 4, 1935

I am reminded of my 21-day fast[1] on this death anniversary of Maulana Saheb. He brought for me a beautiful cow when my fast was over and told me that she was a memento from him for Hindu-Muslim Unity. How nice it would be if keeping this incident in mind, we worked for Hindu-Muslim unity.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 11070, Courtesy: Fulchand Jain

[1] Undertaken for Hindu-Muslim unity from September 17 to October 8, 1924, after which Mahomed Ali had presented a cow to Gandhiji; *vide* "Letter to Motilal Nehru", 17-9-1924 and "Letter to Hatim Alvi", 19-12-1934. Mahomed Ali, to whom Gandhiji refers as Maulana Saheb, died on January 4, 1931.

272. INTERVIEW TO YONE NOGUCHI [1]

[Before *January 11, 1936*]

It was in the teeth of the doctors' advice that Gandhiji made an exception in favour of Japan's poet Yone Noguchi and invited him to visit him. He said:

He is not going to discuss anything with me. I shall simply have the pleasure of listening to him.

So the poet came and saw Gandhiji in his bed lying with a wet-earth bandage on his head. Gandhiji said:

I sprang from Indian earth and so it is Indian earth that crowns me.

NOGUCHI: In fundamentals, we are the same, in the virtue of negation, of simplicity, of the unification [of] poetry with life, and I am here to give you a few words of adoration.

On Gandhiji asking him his impressions of his visit to India, he said: "India has deeply interested me. So many things I have seen that I had never dreamed of seeing. Sometimes I have had disappointments, too. In the exhibition at Nagpur I found a new India, people very busy working" .. . . . He asked Gandhiji if he knew anything about Japan. Gandhiji said:

Nothing except through Edwin Arnold whose descriptions[2] of Japanese life I read exactly 45 years ago with great avidity as they were appearing in his letters published weekly in an English journal. He had married a Japanese wife and all that he wrote he did with intimate sympathy.

NOGUCHI: You are right, Arnold's book is true even today. Without love and sympathy you cannot give a correct picture of a people.

GANDHIJI: Yes, and it is easiest to see the darker side. You must have seen our darker side, as we know the darker side of Japan through Japan's traffic and trade rivalry. But it is best to see the brighter side, and Japan's brighter side I know through Kagawa[3].

Kasturba came and she was introduced to the poet. Gandhiji said:

Don't you think, she is the picture of a Japanese woman?

NOGUCHI: Yes, she is like my mother.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"
[2] In *Seas and Lands* (1891) and *Japonica* (1892)
[3] A Japanese sadhu who had stayed with Gandhiji at his Ashram

Gandhiji was apparently unsatisfied with the very little that the poet said about India. So he said once again:

Yours is the most hospitable country in the world, I know. I hope you found my country at least a second best.

NOGUCHI: Yours is the most hopitable.

He perhaps did not want to tax Gandhiji in his weak condition. He said: "I have nothing to ask you since your life is an open book to me. You have had nothing to conceal."

But as he was leaving he just asked if Gandhiji would give him any message for Japan. Gandhiji said:

My message is included in the message you have received from our poet Dr. Tagore. His message includes all the messages that many of us can give.

Gandhiji requested the poet to visit Ahmedabad and also arranged through Seth Ambalal Sarabhai an invitation to him.

Harijan,11-1-1936

273. LETTER TO DR. SHUMSHERE SINGH

WARDHA,
January 15, 1936

MY DEAR SHUMMY,

You have I know forgiven me for keeping Amrit here so long. Her presence was a great comfort to me. The discovery of her great affection was a treasure. I hope you have found her in possession of good health. I am faring well. Amrit passed on to me all your carefully thought out suggestions. Thank you.

Love to you both.

BAPU

[PS.]

the accompanying from Prabhavati for Amrit.

From the original: C.W. 3560. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6369

274. MESSAGE TO BIHAR POLITICAL CONFERENCE

[Before *January 17, 1936*][1]

Let no one have any anxiety for me. If anyone has anxiety, let him work ten times greater than I am doing now.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-1-1936

275. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY,
January 18, 1936

Am well. Ever thinking of you, often your image is in front of me, smiling and loving.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3559. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6368

276. CABLE TO QUEEN MARY

[*January 21, 1936*][2]

Mahatma Gandhi has sent a cable to Her Majesty the Queen and members of the royal family expressing deep regret over the passing away of His Majesty the King and conveying sincere condolences.

The Hindustan Times, 22-1-1936

277. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[After *January 22, 1936*][3]

CHI. MIRA,

So you are laid low.[4] I hope you will soon be well and return to your post. You may certainly seek the solitude of the hills. I am

[1] The message conveyed through Rajedra Prasad, appeared under the date-line "Chatra (Hazaribagh), January 17, 1936".

[2] From *Gandhi—1915-1948: A Detailed Chronology*. King George V died on January 20, 1936

[3] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, this letter is placed before that of February 8, 1936, and carries a note saying, "Bapu had been taken to Ahmedabad for a change". Gandhiji reached Ahmedabad on Wednesday, January 22, 1936.

[4] The addressee was suffering from fever.

making steady progress in spite of the blood-pressure. I think I have discovered the cause of the present increase. But I shall know more on Wednesday. There is no cause for anxiety. I am allowed plenty of exercise and solid food.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6308. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9774

278. LETTER TO ANASUYA JAJU

AHMEDABAD,
January 25, 1936

CHI. ANASUYA,

It pains me to think that I shall not be attending your wedding, but I am helpless. Be an ideal wife. Remain the ideal *sevika* that you are. Bring honour to dharma and to the country. Rest assured that you could not have a more suitable husband than Radhakisan.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9119

279. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

January 25, 1936

CHI. RADHAKISAN,

It is no small pain to me to think that I shall not be in Wardha at the time of your marriage. But what can we do, if God planned it that way? The hopes I have expressed for Anasuya in my letter[1] to her I have of you also, only with the necessary changes in their application to a man. I am convinced that you could not have a better match than Anasuya. I am having great expectations of your new relationship, which I urge you to fulfil. Along with this letter I am sending for both of you wedding garlands made from my hand-spun yarn, which you should both wear while circumambulating during the wedding ceremony. May you both live long.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9119

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

280. LETTER TO SAADULLAH KHAN AND SOFIA SOMJI

[January 26, 1936]

If Bapu had been well, he should have written himself what I am writing on his behalf. May the auspicious day of the 26th of January begin for you both a happy wedded life of service and dedication, made all the stronger and richer by the indissoluble tie that binds you.

Yours sincerely,

MAHADEV DESAI

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-1-1936

281. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

January 26, 1936

When tyrants flourish rebels become slaves. I am flourishing! What about you?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3558. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6367

282. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 26, 1936

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

You must have got my letters. There has been no letter from you for quite some time. You should not be lazy in this regard. How are things with you now? You are now in charge of the kitchen, are you not?[1] Are you taking any medicine?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 329

[1] The addressee was at this time living in the newly-constructed Harijan Colony, Kingsway, Delhi.

283. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

[Before *February 5, 1936*][1]

BHAI JIVANJI,

I did hear from Sardar about your brother's death, but I did not know that you had been out of station. What consolation may I offer you? Being the printer[2] of *Anasaktiyoga,* you of course know that he whom you took to be your brother never died and cannot die. [The body][3] is here today but not tomorrow. Why should one worry about it? May the departed soul rest in bliss and may we be more devoted to our duty.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI JIVANJI DAHYABHAI DESAI

CHHAPARA, *VIA* NAVASARI, B.B. & C.I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9942. Also C.W. 6917. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

284. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*February 8, 1936*][4]

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter relieved me of all anxiety. I hope you will be able to keep the promise not to brood over the past mistakes but look hopefully to the future not to repeat thm. I am sure you will be quite all right if in coming to decisions [you] never think of what others will say. Consult the Dweller within and He will never fail you. I am making steady progress. Doctors come tomorrow. You shall have their opinion.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6309. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9775

[1] The delivery postmark bears the date February 5, 1936.
[2] The addressee was manager of the Navajivan Press.
[3] Illegible
[4] From *Bapu's Letters to Mira; vide* also the following item.

285. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

AHMEDABAD,
February 9, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I wrote to you yesterday.[1] Today I have your letter telling me of your conversation with Jamnalalji. It is a great thing to be able to bear with joy being humbled. You should do the work in front of you without thinking of the future. Jamnalal Bajaj is here. I have not met him yet. I shall surely see him and talk to him about you. No anxiety of any sort. Prabha is writing to you about the medical examination.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6310. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9776

286. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

February 12, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter from Wardha—not yet the corrections. Certainly your coming here was a good thing.[2] When it became a definite want of the soul, it would have been foolish to resist it, The thing now is to reap the fullest benefit from the visit. I had five minutes with Jamnalal Bajaj about you. He is quite agreeable that you should go on as you are and that you should have a cottage on the hill. More when we meet. I hope to reach there on 23rd. Carry no cares with you. Prabhavati went today to Patna. I thought that now that I was fairly well, it was necessary for her to join her husband. Let us see what now happens.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6311. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9777

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] According to *Gandhi—1915-1948: A Detailed Chronology*, the addressee visited Gandhiji on february 5, 1936.

287. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

February 12, 1936

CHI. NIMU,

I read your letter to Prabha[1]. I have sent her away with her husband today. My health is not so bad as to justify my detaining her here. I hope to be able to reach there on the 23rd. You would have got the letter I wrote to Ramdas regarding Sumitra. She is sitting near me. She flatly refuses to leave the Ashram and go to Wardha. She drinks one and a half pound of milk ever day, eats fruit and plays about with a lot of friends and studies too. Manibehn, Vanamala and Anandibehn take all possible care of her. Her eye is better. It has improved the all respects. We regularly put eye-drops in them. If, therefore, I do not receive a prohibitory order from you, I wish to take her and put her in the H. Ashram.[2] If afterwards she feels uncomfortable there, we will get her back. For the present, Ramdas seems to have left the decision to you and me. He thinks that it would be better if you, too, go and stay in the H. Ashram. We will think of this when we meet, provided Sumitra stays on there. Let me have your reply before the 19th. You will get this on the 14th. If you reply on the same day, I will get it on the 16th. But do so only if you feel strong enough for it. Give me whatever suggestion you wish to make.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Prabhavati, wife of Jayaprakash Narayan

[2] Harijan Ashram

288. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*February 13, 1936*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

I see you dread going to Segaon.[2] Don't if you do not have the urge. You know the verse[3] in *Gita* निग्रहः कि करिष्यति? What will compulsion avail? This is compulsion against oneself. Resistance up to a point is a duty. It becomes compulsion when the urge and the joy is lacking. All resistance is good and obligatory so long as it gives us strength. But when one is exhausted with every effort, be sure it is compulsion which must be avoided. The evil with you is that you have compelled yourself against your will to do certain things. This is an untruth. Therefore don't go to Segaon unless you feel you must and will be miserable if you did not go.

Is this quite clear? Kanti and Kanu are looking after me with great diligence and care.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6312. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9778

289. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

AHMEDABAD,
February 13, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Your rebellious letter have all been delivered to me. I must not attempt a long reply. Prabha went yesterday to Patna to join her husband. I felt it would be wrong to keep her any longer when I was

[1] From *Bapu's Letters to Mira; vide* also "Letter to Mirabehn", 14-2-1936.

[2] The addressee explains: "A tremendous struggle was going on within myself . . . I had always been torn between the longing for the countryside and the longing to be with Bapu. Now I had hoped that the time had come when the two longings could be fulfilled. The situation however became very painful. If living in Segaon was to mean perpetual separation from Bapu, my health and nerves would not be able to endure it. Already my health was giving way under the strain which was seriously aggravated by other people telling me that if I did not stay permanently in Segaon, Bapu's blood-pressure would get worse. When Bapu became aware of the fact that my nerves were giving out, he said, if I could not live in Segaon he would himself go there."

[3] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 33

almost a discharged patient. The capacity to stand discussions, etc., will come slowly. That fatigue is no new thing. The disinclination came on me a year ago or even earlier.

Kanti and Kanu are looking after me and they are doing it quite efficiently. Manibehn is guiding them. And Manibehn is an adept in these things. In neatness she is not to be beaten. Ba is still in Bombay nursing Lakshmi[1].

God willing, we leave here on 19th giving two days to Bardoli and then we proceed to Wardha. We (Sardar and I) reach Delhi about seventh or eighth March. Your letters are partly responsible for the delay in coming to Delhi. For all your recent letters have warned me against going to Delhi before the end of February. And Sardar would take no risk.

Hope Shummy is quite well. Looking forward to having an account of your doings in the villages when we meet.

Cartloads of love from

BAPU OR TYRANT, WHICHEVER YOU LIKE

From the original: C.W. 3561. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6370

290. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

February 13, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

You forgot to see that I wrote a letter to Jayaprakash. I am now sending it with this. I hope you had no difficulty on the way. Kanti and Kanu have properly settled down to their work and the time-table is strictly followed. Manibehn is guiding them. I had the support of her shoulder during the morning constitutional today. Anandi[2] does the massaging with oil in the afternoon, and Kanti and Kanu in the evening. You should not worry about me at all. I felt better for not taking ghee yesterday. I didn't take it today also, though I took all the other things correctly. I had excellent sleep. The weather is not cold at all. Be regular in writing to me, and do please avoid grief on my account.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3455

[1] Wife of Devdas Gandhi

[2] Daughter of Lakshmidas Asar

291. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

February 13, 1936

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTULSALAAM,

Your letter. As regards your going to Patiala I instructed Kanti to write. You may take Rs. 300 from Thakkar Bapa and hand it over to lala Dunichand. It is good that you are paying rent for your room. We shall consider the future course on my coming to Delhi. I like the idea of your going to Dhaka[1]. Consult Dr. Ansari about yourself; you have to become well. You shall have news of Ba from Kanti. Be content with this much from me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 330

292. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

AHMEDABAD,
February 14, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. I do not think you have quoted me correctly. But that does not affect your argument. My letter[2] of yesterday anticipates most part of your argument and answers it. I do not think you need go to Segaon by way of penance. You should go there only if you cannot be happy otherwise. Whilst I am in Maganwadi you can render all the personal service you like, only letting Ba share what she likes. When I go to Segaon, as I must, if you are not there nobody of the present company can be with me. I must make new friends and co-workers in Segaon. You can settle in any other neighbouring village if you like, so as to be near me. I do not contemplate much travelling—certainly none outside India in the near future. "I do not ask to see the distant scene, one step enough for me!" My heart is in the villages. I want an excuse for going there. Of my own volition I lack the courage to go or to combat the argument of friends. But if you can persuade yourself to leave Segaon, as soon as I return from

[1] A Harijan village near Delhi
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 13-2-1936.

my convalescence, I would love to go to Segaon not as any punishment to you but as a welcome God-given opportunity for going to a village. The rains won't worry me in the slightest degree. I should find for myself all the comfort I may need there. Hence I would like you not to disturb yourself on my account. You should go to Segaon only if you feel the impulse to do village work. If you do not, you should quietly setle down in Maganwadi. Your hut is there. If you need better arrangement you have but to ask. In fine, you must do nothing in violation of the inner voice, whatever it may be. I am getting on. Yes, we halt for two days at Bardoli, reaching there on 23rd, D. V.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6313. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9779

293. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

February 14, 1936

CHI. MANUDI,

I have your letter. Devote yourself entirely to your duties. Take care of your health, and engage yourself in some study. You should ask for Sushilabehn's help in the matter. She will guide you. Do some general reading also.

Ba is still in Bombay. We intend to leave here on the 19th and reach Wardha on the 23rd. It seems Ba will not be able to come even to Wardha. Convey my blessings to your mother's sisters. Ask Bhanu if he would still be afraid of me. Tell Kumi that she should not give up the idea of coming to Wardha.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1554. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

294. PREFACE TO "BE KHUDAI KHIDMATGAR"

It is a good thing that this concise account of the two servants of God is being placed before the Gujarati reading public. The lives of these two brothers are, in my view, very pure. Of the two, Shri Abdul

Ghaffar Khan seems to be a veritable fakir. I see this trait in the letters he has been writing from prison. From day to day his self-abnegation has been increasing and the contemplation of God in his heart becoming more intense. No house where Gujarati is read should be without a copy of this book.

The book is not a mere translation of the original[1] English. The author[2] has tried to write an independent book of his own, and one acquainted with both languages can easily see that he has succeeded in the attempt. This book has also something fresh to contribute.

MOHANDAS K. GANDHI[3]

GUJARAT VIDYAPITH
AHMEDABAD
February 16,1936

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9941. Also C.W. 6916

295. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
February 16, 1936

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have been getting your letters, but I was helpless. Of course I did have energy enough to write, but chose to follow the doctors' orders. Now I have got the permission to write a few letters such as this. What about the Agent's betrothal? You write nothing about it. Perhaps your next letter will bring the information. If you have not written to me of this already and if there is something I should know, do write. Write to me whatever you wish as regards *Indian Opinion*. Now my health may be said to be good enough. There never was anything to worry about. All I needed was just rest and no more, and I am still under orders to rest myself though I have started writing a

[1] Entitled *The Two Servants of God*. For Gandhiji's Foreword *Vide* "Letter to *Two Servants of God*", 14-1-1935.

[2] Mahadev Desai

[3] This is followed by a note saying: "Please consider if the place and the date should be retained. Maybe it would be correct to omit them." They were finally omitted in the printed book.

little. You must have heard from someone about Lakshmi's illness. Ba is with her.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am enclosing a letter[1] to Medh.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4847

296. SPEECH AT HARIJAN ASHRAM[2]

[*February 16, 1936*][3]

Though I have been having rest for the last two months or more I have been constantly thinking of the rules and vows[4] of our Ashram. Quite a number of the Ashram inmates, old and young, have given up or have failed to live up to the vows of the Ashram and I wondered if that meant that there was anything inherently defective about those vows. But I came to the conclusion that there was no such thing and that it was well that we had kept those vows in front of us and tried, each according to his or her ability, to observe them, and that there was absolutely no cause for regret that the vows had been taken. I am devotee of the *Gita* and a firm believer in the inexorable law of karma. Even the least little tripping or stumbling is not without its cause and I have wondered why one who has tried to follow the *Gita* in thought, word and deed should have any ailment. The doctors have assured me that this trouble of high blood-pressure is entirely the result of mental strain and worry. If that is true, it is likely that I have been unnecessarily worrying myself, unnessarily fretting and secretly harbouring passions like anger, lust, etc. The fact that any event or incident should disturb my mental equilibrium, in spite of my serious efforts, means not that the *Gita* ideal is defective but that my devotion to it is defective. The *Gita* ideal is true for all time, my understanding of it and observance of it is full of flaws. The same is the case about the vows. The vows are true for all time, our observance of them has

[1] Not available

[2] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu,* 1-3-1936.

[3] Gandhiji visited Harijan Ashram on this date; *vide* the following item.

[4] *Vide* "Satyagraha Ashram", 14-6-1928.

been defective. The very contemplation of those vows is a source of perennial joy to me.

I know that several inmates of the old Satyagraha Ashram are staying here. They must be living here for some purpose; it can be none other than service of the Harijans. If they cherish the old vows and insist on their observance, they will be thereby rendering a service to the Harijans. Monetary help is not the only way to serve the Harijans. Our spirit of service and self-purification may take that concrete shape, but that is not the only shape it can take. We can, for instance, never render monetary help to the extent that Government can do. The essence of our help consists in our passionate desire to help and suffer for them, and that desire can come only out of self-purification, out of the observance of the vows we have been endeavouring to keep all these years. That will be the measure of our service to them, and of our capacity to make them true 'Harijans'—men of God.

Harijan, 29-2-1936

297.. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

AHMEDABAD,
February 17, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Your letter. Remember Tyrant won't tolerate Rebel for long. Rebel will have to be tamed into a slave.

Of course you can come to Wardha if you can. That means Savli, a village about 150 miles from Wardha. There will be the A. I. V. I. A. meeting there among other meetings,too. There will be over 100 people—members of Gandhi Seva Sangh gathered there. We would be there for four or five days and then go to Delhi. Of course you will stay with me in Delhi. I shall let them know.

I walked yesterday to Harijan Ashram, $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Vidyapith and met there Ghaniram and his son. Both of them are doing good work. He showed me his invention. I could not give him much time. I have asked him to settle down there. The workshop that used to be in Bardoli has been transferred to the Ashram. Therefore there is much scope for his ability. He seemed to be quite happy. Lakshmidas whom

you know is looking after him.

Kanti and Kanu are looking after my wants. Manibehn is the supervisor.

Love.

Blessings from
TYRANT

[PS.]

I am glad you were villaging instead of watching games.

From the original: C.W. 3562. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N.6371

298. LETTER TO PYARELAL

AHMEDABAD,
February 17, 1936

CHI. PYARELAL,

Everything that is humanly possible has been done. Jamnalalji talked with Yoga[1] for hours. Panditji and Lakshmibehn gave them all freedom. Jamnalalji made full use of it. He had prolonged discussions with Panditji and Lakshmibehn also. Yoga showed remarkable firmness. She has never thought about you. Although she is not particular about caste or community, she would have only a Maharashtrian Brahmin as her husband. She says she is not under pressure of any kind. I accept her word. Now your duty is clear. You must stop thinking of Yoga and relieve Panditji of his anxiety. You have already found the Yoga of your imagination. She is not this Yoga, though she may have been instrumental in bringing it about. This has been to your good in the sense that your constantly thinking of her has added to the purity of your soul. May your meditation of the Yoga of (your) imagination free you from all fears and temptations. But do not ever identify this physical Yoga with the Yoga of your imagination. Let me stop with this today. I shall explain the rest on my arrival there. I shall explain to you your duty more clearly. Do not fail me in my expectations. Regain your health fully.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Niece of Narayan Moreshwar Khare

299. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

February 17, 1936

CHI. SHARMA,

Though you are often in my mind I am writing a few words today now that I have obtained permission to write some letters. You seem to be acquiring good experience in London. Now tell me about the books you read and the diet you take and where. Do not stint yourself in the matter of warm clothing or bedding; you must keep warm, I am now all right. We shall go to Wardha in a couple of days. The month of March would be spent in Delhi. After that Wardha. What do you think of Miss Agatha Harrison now that you are acquainted with her?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh,* facing p. 228

300. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
February 18, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

Today I shall write only this much. After looking up the books or inquiring of Chhaganlal[1], send to me at Wardha the details of the sum of over Rs. 1,000 which Bhanushanker paid to the Ashram in several instalments apparently in Chhaganlal's time. I have waited long for Kusum. Now I hardly expect her to come.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8483. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Chhaganlal Joshi, who was for some time secretary of Satyagraha, Ashram, Sabarmati

301. TRIBUTE TO DINSHAW E. WACHHA [1]

[*February 19, 1936*][2]

The country has lost a great patriot. The very first Congress I had the privilege of attending was presided over by him at Calcutta[3]. I have vivid recollection of his great industry and unfailing courtesy to all. I remember well how much his fearless criticism of Government measures and his grasp of financial questions were admired by all Congressmen.

The Bombay Chronicle, 20-2-1936

302. SPEECH AT GUJARAT VIDYAPITH, AHMEDABAD[4]

February 19, 1936

Do not forget that the aims and objects[5] of the Vidyapith continue to be what they were. They were framed after much thought and deliberation by the organizers and the teachers. You have to keep them all in front of you. They are all contained in the prayer you have just now recited. We have all to march from untruth to truth, from darkness to light .Truth is at the very root of all our aims and vows and the plant of truth will not grow and fructify if you do not water its roots with ahimsa. But for you the truth lies in cultivating true rural-mindedness. The Vidyapith was started in order to make the children of city-dwellers real servants of villages and we devised our curricula with that end in view. But you are not children of city-dwellers.You come from villages, you are children of villagers who have gone through suffering and sacrifice in the fight for freedom, and your duty towards the villages is therefore greater.[6] May you use all that you learn, for the benefit of the villages.

Harijan, 29-3-1936, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 21-2-1936

[1] Who passed away on February 18 at Bombay

[2] From *Gandhi¾1915-1948: A Detailed Chronology*

[3] In December, 1901

[4] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 1-3-1936.

[5] *Vide* "Inaugural Speech at Gujarat Mahavidyalaya, Ahmedabad", 15-11-1920.

[6] *The Bombay Chronicle* here adds: "They should help village industries. . . They must make spinning a habit, so that they could spin the yarn required for their own clothing."

303. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

BARDOLI, ON WAY TO WARDHA,
February 20, 1936

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

I got your letter. I was very glad to read it. The satisfaction you have from Anasuya is bound to find an echo in her too. May this mutual satisfaction last for ever. You will be able to build up your health there and also learn the art of nursing people in their illness.

I hope Narmada and Tara[1] also are improving in health.

I reached Bardoli today and hope to be in Wardha on Sunday.

Blessing from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9120

304. LETTER TO ANASUYA BAJAJ

[*February 20, 1936*][2]

CHI. ANASUYA,

I have your letter. Sardar is accompanying me and we are going to Wardha *via* Bardoli. I have had a good certificate from Radhakisan about you and me as well, but I am still to get one from you about Radhakisan and myself. I take it that this omission results from your modesty.

I got the slivers which you sent me. They are very good. It is no surprise to me to learn that you have been doing much public service, for you have accepted service to others as your religion.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9130

[1] Tara N. Mashruwala, Sushila Gandhi's younger sister

[2] From the contents it is obvious that this letter was written on the same date as the preceding item.

305. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

BARDOLI,

February 20, 1936

BHAI FULCHAND,

I learnt only recently from Sardar that you had been quite ill. They have permitted me now to write a few letters and hence I am writing this. Write or ask somebody to write to me what your illness is. Do get well soon, for I have still much work to take from you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Send your reply to Wardha.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9198. Also C.W. 2851. Courtesy: Fulchand K. Shah

306. LETTER TO TARA N. MASHRUWALA

February 20, 1936

CHI. TARA,

I keep thinking of you though I do not write to you. Follow the treatment with faith, not giving it up unless and until Gaurishankarbhai admits defeat. Write to me. Write to me about Narmada also.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7525. Also C.W. 5001. Courtesy: Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

307. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

BARDOLI,
February 21,1936

CHI. PRABHA,

How is it that I have heard nothing from you after your letter to Kanti from Hathras? I hope you got the letter[1] I wrote the very next day after you left. You shouldn't be lazy in writing. I write this from Bardoli. I am in good health, and Kanti and Kanu are doing your part of the work ably enough. At the time of leaving, my weight was 112 lb. and the blood-pressure 150-90.

I expect you are keeping good health and taking milk regularly. I am reminded of you by the daily use of your mirror, pattu[2], lamp and scissors. You have forgotten to take with you your khaddar shoes, which are in safe custody here. You ought to take up some studies there at any rate.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3456

308. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

BARDOLI,
February 21, 1936

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

Unable to resist your love I brought along your gift with me here. And today I had a look at them. The bowl is made in Germany. The razor of course is foreign made, your dharma and mine lies in making do with things made in our villages (not even in our cities). For this reason and in pursuance of the ideal of non-possession I manage without many things. So while on tour I shave with whatever razor I can get hold of. In Wardha there is a nationalist barber who shaves me with a village-made razor. Such being the situation, how can I make use of your bowl and things? Also we must spend every

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Prabhavati", 13-2-1936.
[2] A kind of woollen cloth

pie with the utmost care because it belongs to the poor, but you go on lavishly spending on me. These thoughts strike me most poignantly here in Bardoli. Hence this letter. Here they have built a hut for me under a mango tree. The walls are of dried stems of *tuver* in a framework of bamboo. Khadi has been used where found necessary. Not a single pie has been spent in making the hut. When I leave here all the building material of the hut will be returned to its original users. You will also be happy to see the hut. The village industry movement includes such activities.

I shall find some use for the things I have accepted. It will suffice if this incident remains a guide for the future. Not only should you not incur any unnecessary expense on my account, but anything you buy for me should be of village manufacture. The same consideration should apply to whatever you buy for yourself or for the Majoor Mahajan.

I am keeping fit. Here, too, I have enough leisure, so there is no cause for worry.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32837

309. INTERVIEW TO AMERICAN NEGRO DELEGATION [1]

[*February 21, 1936*][2]

GANDHIJI: Is the prejudice against colour growing or dying out?

DR. THURMAN[3]: It is difficult to say because in one place things look much improved, whilst in another the outlook is still dark. Among many of the Southern white students there is a disposition to improve upon the a attitude of their forbears, and the nigration occasioned by the World War did contribute appreciably to break down the barriers. But the economic question is acute everywhere, and in many of the industrial centres in Middle West the prejudice against the Negro shows itself in its ugliest form. Among the masses of workers there is a great amount of tension, which

[1] This appeared under the title "With Our Negro Guests" by Mahadev Desai. According to Mahadev Desai, "the meeting was the first engagement of an important nature undertaken by Gandhiji since the breakdown in his health."

[2] From *Gandhi¾1915-48: A Detailed Chronology*

[3] A professor of comparative religion and philosophy

is quite natural when the white thinks that the Negro's very existence is a threat to his own.

G. Is the union between Negroes and the whites recognized by law?

CARROL[1] Twenty-five States have laws definitely against these unions, and I have had to sign a bond of 500 dollars to promise that I would not register any such union.

DR. T. But there has been a lot of intermixture of races as for 300 years or more the Negro woman had no control over her body. . . . Did the South African Negro take any part in your movement?

G. No, I purposely did not invite them. It would have endangered their cause. They would not have understood the technique of our struggle nor could they have seen the purpose or utility non-violence.

This led to a very interesting discussion of the state of Christianity among the South African Negroes and Gandhiji explained at great length why Islam scored against Christianity there. "We are often told", said Dr. Thurman, "that but for the Arabs there would have been no slavery. I do not believe it."

G. No, it is not true at all. For, the moment a slave accepts Islam he obtains equality with his master, and there are several instances of this in history.

The whole discussion led to many a question and cross-question during which the guests had an occasion to see that Gandhiji's principle of equal respect for all religions was no theoretical formula but a practical creed. "Is non-violence from your point of view a form of direct action"¾inquired Dr. Thurman.

G. It is not one form, it is the only form. I do not of course confine the words 'direct action' to their technical meaning. But without a direct active expression of it, non-violence to my mind is meaningless. It is the greatest and the activest force in the world. One cannot be passively non-violent. In fact'non-violence' is a term I had to coin in order to bring out the root meaning of ahimsa. In spite of the negative particle 'non', it is no negative force. Superficially we are surrounded in life by strife and bloodshed, life living upon life. But some great seer, who ages ago penetrated the centre of truth, said: It is not through strife and violence, but through non-violence that man can fulfil his destiny and his duty to his fellow creatures. It is a force which is more positive than electricity and more powerful than even ether. At the centre of non-violence is a force which is self-acting.

[1] Pastor of Salem

Ahimsa means ‘love’ in the Pauline sense, and yet something more than the ‘love’ defined by St. Paul, although I know St. Paul's beautiful definition is good enough for all practical purposes. Ahimsa includes the whole creation, and not only human. Besides, love in the English language has other connotations too, and so I was compelled to use the negative word. But it does not, as I have told you, express a negative force, but a force superior to all the forces put together. One person who can express ahimsa in life exercises a force superior to all the forces of brutality.

Q. And is it possible for any individual to achieve this?

G. Certainly. If there was any exclusiveness about it, I should reject it at once.

Q. Any idea of possession is foreign to it?

G. Yes. It possesses nothing, therefore it possesses everything.

Q. Is it possible for a single human being to resist the persistent invasion of the quality successfully?

G. It is possible. Perhaps your question is more universal than you mean. Isn't it possible, you mean to ask, for one single Indian for instance to resist the exploitation of 300 million Indians? Or do you mean the onslaught of the whole world against a single individual personality?

DR.T. Yes, that is one half of the question. I wanted to know if one man can hold the whole violence at bay?

G. If he cannot, you must take it that he is not a true representative of ahimsa. Supposing I cannot produce a single instance in life of a man who truly converted his adversary, I would then say that is because no one had yet been found to express ahimsa in its fulness.

Q. Then it overrides all other forces?

G. Yes, it is the only true force in life.

DR.T. Forgive the weakness, but may I ask how are we to train individuals or communities in this difficult art?

G. There is no royal road, except through living the creed in your life which must be a living sermon. Of course the expression in one's own life presupposes great study, tremendous perseverance, and thorough cleansing of one's self of all the impurities. If for mastering of the physical sciences you have to devote a whole lifetime, how many lifetimes may be needed for mastering the greatest spiritual

force that mankind has known? But why worry even if it means several lifetimes? For if this is the only permanent thing in life, if this is the only thing that counts,then whatever effort you bestow on mastering it is well spent. Seek ye first the kingdom of Heaven and everything else shall be added unto you. The Kingdom of Heaven is ahimsa.

MRS.T. How am I to act, supposing my own brother was lynched before my very eyes?

G. There is such a thing as self-immolation. Supposing I was a Negro, and my sister was ravished by a white or lynched by a whole community, what would be my duty?— I ask myself. And the answer comes to me: I must not wish ill to these, but neither must I co-operate with them. It may be that ordinarily I depend on the lynching community for my livelihood. I refuse to co-operate with them, refuse even to touch the food that comes from them, and I refuse to co-operate with even my brother Negroes who tolerate the wrong. That is the self-immolation I mean. I have often in my life resorted to the plan. Of course a mechanical act of starvation will mean nothing. One's faith must remain undimmed whilst life ebbs out minute by minute. But I am a very poor specimen of the practice of non-violence, and my answer may not convince you. But I am striving very hard, and even if I do not succeed fully in this life, my faith will not diminish.

"We want you to come to America", said the guests.

MRS.T. We want you not for white America, but for the Negroes; we have many a problem that cries for solution, and we need you badly.

G. How I wish I could, but I would have nothing to give you unless I had given an ocular demonstration here of all that I have been saying. I must make good the message here before I bring it to you. I do not say that I am defeated, but I have still to perfect myself. You may be sure that the moment I feel the call within me I shall not hesitate.

DR.T. Much of the peculiar background of our own life in America is our own interpretation of the Christian religion. When one goes through the pages of the hundreds of Negro spirituals, striking things are brought to my mind which remind me of all that you have told us today.

G. Well, if it comes true it may be through the Negroes that the

unadulterated message of non-violence will be delivered to the world.[1]

Harijan, 14-3-1936

310. SPEECH AT VILLAGE WORKERS' MEETING [2]

BARDOLI,
February 22, 1936

The first question was about the duties of the village workers. The only duty of the village worker was to serve the villagers, said Gandhiji, and he could best serve them if he kept the eleven vows[3] in front of him as a beacon-light.

The other question was about the livelihood of the village worker. How was he to earn it? Was he to draw an allowance from an institution, or to earn it by labouring for it, or to depend upon the village for it? The ideal way, said Gandhiji, was to depend upon the village. There was no shame therein, but humility. There was no scope for self-indulgence either, for he could not think of a village which would encourage or tolerate self-indulgence. All that the worker need do was to work for the village all his working hours, and to collect whatever grain and vegetables he needed from the village. He might collect a little money too (for postage and other monetary expenditure) if he should need it, though Gandhiji did not think he could not do without it. The village would willingly support him if he had gone there at the invitation of the village. He could conceive an occasion when the villagers might not be able to tolerate his views and withdraw their support, as, for instance, they did when he admitted untouchables in the Satyagraha Ashram in 1915. Then he should work for his living. It was no use depending on an institution.

The third question was about body-labour. The village worker was in the village to do as much body-labour as possible and to teach the villagers to outgrow idleness. He might do any kind of labour, but give preference to scavenging. Scavenging was certainly productive labour. He liked some of the workers' insistence on devoting at least half an hour to work entirely of service and of a productive kind.

[1] Before taking leave of Gandhiji Mrs. Thurman sang two famous Negro spirituals: "Were you there, when they crucified my Lord" and "We are climbing Jacob's ladder."

[2] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 1-3-1936. The village workers gave a list of questions to Gandhiji and requested him to enlighten them.

[3] Non-violence, truth, non-stealing, *brahmacharya*, non-possession, bodylabour, control of the palate, fearlessness, equal respect for all religions, swadeshi (restricting oneself to the use and service of one's nearest surroundings in preference to those more remote) and spirit of unexclusive brotherhood

Scavenging certainly came under that category. Also grinding; for money saved is money got.

The fourth question was about maintaining a diary. Gandhiji had no doubt that the village worker must be prepared to account for every minute of his waking hours and must fill them with work and mention it distenctly in his diary. A real diary was a mirror of the diarist's mind and soul, but many might find it difficult to make a truthful record of their mind's activities. In that case they might confine themselves to a record of their physical activities. But it should not be done in a haphazard way. Simply sayng, “Worked in the kitchen” would not do. One may have whiled away one's time in the kitchen. Specific items of work should be mentioned.

The fifth question was about work among Dublas who work more or lesss as serfs in certain parts of Gujarat. Service of Dublas, said Gandhiji, meant readiness to share their toil and their hardships, and to get into touch with their masters and to see that they dealt with them justly and kindly.

Summing up, Gandhiji said:

The village worker will leave politics alone. He may become a Congress member, but he may not take part in an election campaign. He has his work cut out for himself. The Village Industries Association and the Spinners' Association were both created by the Congress. and yet they work independently of the Congress. That is why they and their members steer clear of all Congress politics. That is the non-violent way.

He will also leave village factions alone. He must go and settle there determined to do without most of the things he does not do without in a city. If I sit down in a village I should have to decide what things I should not take with me in the village, however inherently harmless those things may be. The question is whether those things will sort well or ill with the life of an ordinary villager. He will be incorruptible and stand like a rock against the inroad of temptations and save the village from them. Even one pure soul can save a whole village, as one Vibhishana[1] saved Lanka. Sodom and Gomorrah were not destroyed so long as there was one pure soul left in them.[2] That is why I said long ago that I would far rather that India perished than sacrifice truth in order to save it.

Harijan, 29-2-1936

[1] Ravana's brother who went over to Rama's side

[2] *Genesis*, 13.4 and 18.9

311. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
February 24, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Kumarappa handed me your welcome longish letter at the station. The prescription for flit is twice welcome. I needed it. It will duly appear in *Harijan* without your name. The parcel will arrive in due course. How wise of me to have let you cut out $\frac{1}{2}$ yard! When the articles come the artless tyrant will duly examine [the] so-called art of the rebel. Let the rebel however know in advance that sometimes art lies in not interfering with nature's unevenness and irregular curves and lines. Fancy hammering the earth into a perfect sphere! Perhaps then we should cease to be. So you see, if I certify your art, it will be a feather in your cap. But then you will have to sport a cap to wear the feather!

This shows how well I must be in spite of the journey.

I am sorry you can't come to Savli.

We shall see, when we meet in Delhi, what you will or can do in the nature of service. Your appointments will leave you no time.

Love to you all.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3563. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6372

312. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

February 24, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your two letters together. You caused me a little anxiety, for you were told to write immediately after reaching, were you not? You may certainly go to Mother, if there is nothing for Jayaprakash that you might have to do, that is, if there is no service to render him. You may visit your other relatives, if you have to. However, you ought to stay with him if he accepts your services and eats the food you cook. You may come to me after seeing your elders if he is not at all in need of your services and you can gain your freedom gladly. Before coming, however, it should be clear that you will come not to render me any special personal service but to do the task that I might assign to you. Is this clear?

The language you write is good enough. You have secured a good command over Gujarati.

Mind you preserve your health. You should insist on Jayaprakash following the remedies needed for his health.

We reached Wardha safely yesterday. We are putting up at Kanya Ashram. Kanti and Kanu look after me. Ba is at Bombay still. Mirabehn is sitting near me; but she does not take part in any work of service.

Kanti will write the rest.

Don't be lazy in writing to me. Do not worry about anything.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3457

313. LETTER TO DR. KHAN SAHEB

WARDHA,
February 25, 1936

DEAR KHAN SAHEB,

Since you won't attend Sofia's marriage, I may not complain of the absence of any letter from you. But the A.I.V.I.A. is a peremptory body with a strong constitution. You may not be eternally absent and

still remain member and trustee. Your difficulty I can anticipate. If it is insurmountable, you should send in your resignation of both and we must wait till the prisoner brother[1] is out.

Love to you all.

Yours,

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

314. DRAFT TELEGRAM TO NARAYANLA [2]

[On or after *February 27, 1936*][3]

NARAYANLAL

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI DISCUSSED BARODA AFFAIR WITH ME. HE WANTS APPOINT INDEPENDENT COMMITTEE. THOUGH DISINCLINED BEFORE FOR REASONS HEALTH AND OTHERWISE AM PREPARED INQUIRE AND GIVE DECISION ON POINTS RAISED. WIRE IF YOU WOULD LIKE ME INTERVENE..

From a photostat: G.N. 3072.

315. A TELEGRAM

[On or after *February 27, 1936*][4]

JAMNALALJI PREPARED ACT SOLE ARBITRATOR. HAS WIRED NARAYANLAL ACCORDINGLY. YOU SHOULD NEVERTHELESS INQUIRE WHETHER PURUSHOTTAMDAS WILL ACCEPT NOMINATION IF REQUIRED.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3072; also *panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 379*

[1] Abdul Ghaffar Khan, who was arrested on December 7, 1934, and released on August 2, 1936

[2] Gandhiji drafted this for Jamnalal Bajaj.

[3] This and the following item are on the same sheet. According to *Bapu Smaran,* Jamnalal Bajaj discussed the Baroda affair with Gandhiji on February 26 and 27.

[4] *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Draft Telegram to Narayanlal", on or before 27-2-1936. *Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad,* however, places this telegram under March-April, 1936 with a question mark.

316. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
February 28, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Ghee from cow's milk I cannot take. I can take only goat's milk and its products. Have plenty of goat's milk in stock.

The dhotis have come. The ends are well made. But they will not suit dhotis as you will realize when we meet. But they will be used as upper sheets which as you know I wear. The yarn is very fine indeed. Everyone to whom I showed the things admired the texture and the ends-making.

We leave this evening for Savli and return here probably on 6th. Only one letter is likely to reach me in Savli if you write to that address. District Chanda, C.P. you will have to put. Savli is an unknown village so far as the public is concerned. I shall miss your presence there as I had almost expected you. Kanti and Kanu accompany me of course.

The date for reaching Delhi is not yet fixed. But I am still hoping it would be 8th March.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3564. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6373

317. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

February 28, 1936

CHI.MIRA,

Yesterday's blood-pressure was a fraud—just a result of garlic. It was taken immediately after the meal to test what effect garlic had. I would have felt miserable if I had been prevented from coming to Segaon. Jamnalal Bajaj was superb. He suppressed his feeling and let me come. It was bound to go down as soon as the immediate effect of garlic had abated.

I am glad you were not upset. Of course I would love to be among the people and chat away with them. Kamala had a setback

and poor Jawaharlal will be delayed for eleven days. In the circumstances I may go to Delhi directly. I shall let you know.

Am quite well and preparing for Savli.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6314. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9780

318. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

February 28, 1936

CHI. AMTUSSALAAM,

I did not write to you as you had told me not to. I have not still started dictating my letters. We are going to Savli today, and I hope to reach there [Delhi] on the 8th. I expect to learn more about this at Savli. I hope to see you much improved in health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 331

319. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

February 28, 1936

BHAI FULCHAND,

I was very glad to have your letter. Would you not go to Ahmedabad and get yourself treated by Talwalkar[1]? I find his remedies work very well in certain diseases.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9199. Also C.W. 2852. Courtesy: Fulchand K. Shah

[1] Dr. Talwalkar, a tuberculosis specialist of Ahmedabad

320. LETTER TO PYARELAL

WARDHA,

February 28, 1936

CHI. PYARELAL,

I heard all from Jamnalalji. I was much pained. You must now wake up, get over the stupor and dedicate yourself to work. Come over if you wish. Let me know your programme. It may be as well if you come with me to Savli.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

321. TELEGRAM TO VIJAYALAKSHMI PANDIT [1]

February 28, 1936

JUST SYMPATHIES OF ALL OF US ARE WITH YOU ALL. YOU MUST ALL BE BRAVE. LOVE.

BAPU

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-2-1936

322. TRIBUTE TO KAMALA NEHRU [2]

February 28, 1936

Kamala's death is a great national loss. I had the privilege of knowing her intimately for years. I have not known a truer, braver and more godfearing Woman. May her life be a pattern for us all to follow.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-2-1936

[1] On Kamala Nehru's death

[2] This was handed over to Mahadev Desai by Gandhiji as he left for Savli by the Grand Trunk Express.

323. NOTHING WITHOUT GRACE

By the grace of medical friends and self-constituted gaolers, Sardar Vallabhbhai and Jamnalalji, I am now able by way of trial to resume to a limited extent my talks with the readers of *Harijan*. The restrictions that they have put on my liberty and to which I have agreed, are that, for the time being at any rate, I shall not write for *Harijan* more than I may consider to be absolutely necessary and that, too, not involving more than a few hours' writing per week. I shall not carry on private correspondence with reference to correspondents' personal problems or domestic difficulties, except those with which I have already concerned myself, and I shall not accept public engagements or attend or speak at public gatherings. There are positive directions about sleep, recreation, exercise and food, with which the reader is not concerned and with which therefore I need not deal. I hope that the readers of *Harijan* and correspondents will co-operate with me and Mahadev Desai, who has in the first instance to attend to all correspondence, in the observance of these restrictions.

It will interest the reader to know something about the origin of the breakdown and the measures taken to cope with it. So far as I have understood the medical friends, after a very careful and painstaking examination of my system they have found no functional derangement. Their opinion is that the breakdown was most probably due to deficiency of proteins and carbohydrates in the form of sugar and starches, coupled with overstrain for a prolonged period involving long hours and concentration on numerous taxing private problems in addition to the performance of daily public duty. So far as I can recollect I had been complaining for the past twelve months or more that, if I did not curtail the volume of ever-growing work, I was sure to break down. Therefore when it came, it was nothing new to me. And it is highly likely that the world would have heard little of it but for the over-anxiety of one of the friends who, on seeing me indisposed, sent a sensational note to Jamnalalji who gathered together all the medical talent that was available in Wardha and sent messages to Nagpur and Bombay for further help.

The day I collapsed I had a warning on rising in the morning that there was some unusual pain about the neck, but I made light of it and never mentioned it to anybody. I continued to go through the

daily programme. The final stroke was a most exhausting and serious conversation I had with a friend whilst I was having the daily evening stroll. The nerves had already been sufficiently taxed during the preceding fortnight with the consideration and solution of problems which for me were quite as big and as important as, say, the paramount question of swaraj.

Even if no fuss had been made over the collapse, I would have taken nature's peremptory warning to heart, given myself moderate rest and tided over the difficulty. But looking back upon the past I feel that it was well that the fuss was made. The extraordinary precautions advised by the medical friends and equally extraordinary care taken by the two 'gaolers' enforced on me the exacting rest which I would not have taken and which allowed ample time for introspection. Not only have I profited by it but the introspection has revealed vital defects in my following out of the interpretation of the *Gita* as I have understood it. I have discovered that I have not approached with adequate detachment the innumerable problems that have presented themselves for solution. It is clear that I have taken many of them to heart and allowed them to rouse my emotional being and thus affect my nerves. In other words they have not, as they should have in a votary of the *Gita,* left my body or mind untouched. I verily believe that one who literally follows the prescription of the eternal Mother need never grow old in mind. Such a one's body will wither in due course like leaves of a healthy tree, leaving the mind as young and as fresh as ever. That seems to me to be the meaning of Bhishma delivering his marvellous discourse to Yudhishthira though he was on his death-bed. Medical friends were never tired of warning me against being excited over or affected by events happening around me. Extra precautions were taken to keep from me news of a tragic character. Though, I think, I was not quite so bad a devotee of the *Gita* as their precautions Lead me to suppose, there was undoubtedly substance behind them. For I discovered with what a wrench I accepted Jamnalalji's conditions and demand that I should remove from Maganwadi to Mahila Ashram. Anyway I had lost credit with him for detached action. The fact of the collapse was for him eloquent enough testimony for discrediting my vaunted detachment. I must plead guilty to the condemnation.

The worst however was to follow. I have been trying to follow *brahmacharya* consciously and deliberately since 1899. My definition of it is purity not merely of body but of both speech and

thought also. With the exception of what must be regarded as one lapse, I can recall no instance, during more than thirty-six years' constant and conscious effort, of mental disturbance such as I experienced during this illness. I was disgusted with myself. The moment the feeling came I acquainted my attendants and the medical friends with my condition. They could give me no help. I expected none. I broke loose after the experience from the rigid rest that was imposed upon me. The confession of the wretched experience brought much relief to me. I felt as if a great load had been raised from over me. It enabled me to pull myself together before any harm could be done.[1] But what of the *Gita*? Its teaching is clear and precise. A mind that is once hooked to the Star of stars becomes incorruptible. How far I must be from Him, He alone knows. Thank God, my much-vaunted Mahatmaship has never fooled me. But this enforced rest has humbled me as never before. It has brought to the surface my limitations and imperfections. But I am not so much ashamed of them, as I should be of hiding them from the public. My faith in the message of the *Gita* is as bright as ever. Unwearied ceaseless effort is the price that must be paid for turning that faith into rich infallible experience. But the same *Gita* says without any equivocation that the experience is not to be had without divine grace. We should develop swelled heads if Divinity had not made that ample reservation.

Harijan, 29-2-1936

324. LETTER TO NIRMALABEHN J. SHROFF

SAVLI,
February 29, 1936

CHI. NIRMALA,

This is no letter of condolence. Of course we do feel pained at the death of anyone and, from that standpoint, there is certainly pain at the death of your husband. You have not become a widow, and if you think you have, you were as much a widow in your married state. I expect you do not think that there has been any change in this state. Carry out your duty firmly. If you get the custody of your child, rear him. Do not ever get your head shaved. I see no need for any change in your way of life. In my view, it is your duty to continue your work of service as before. May God grant you the good sense and the strength to do your duty.

[1] *Vide* letters to Premabehn Kantak, 6-5-1936 and 21-5-1936.

In fact, there is no need to write even this much as Nathji is already there by your side.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9718. Courtesy: Nilkanth B. Mashruwala

325. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING−I [1]

SALVI,
February 29, 1936

The truth is that I have come here after opening the exhibition. I thought that first I would see the exhibition and then tell you what was worth seeing there. Just now you have heard the reports of those who have brought exhibits from other parts.

When I was told that an exhibition was to be held here I had an impression that there would be things produced in Savli and the neighbouring villages. They would not be numerous. Khadi work is being carried on here. Fine khadi is made. The Harijans get their livelihood from it, because most of the workers are Harijans. From this point of view I feel the lack of the different processes and types of khadi. The reason given for this is—and it may be a correct one—that we would see Savli closely, study it well and would try to measure in a better way Savli's capacity in khadi production.

For the last two or three months efforts were being made for the members to meet here. For this reason I had expected that you would try in the mean time and exhibit articles made here. Had this been done, all of us would have had the opportunity to see what Savli could do. But this criticism should be borne in mind for the future. The sessions of our Sangh will always be held in villages. On such occasions we should undertake a study of the local industries and the products to explore the potentialities of the place and content ourselves with exhibiting only the things that it can produce. We must also see that we do not confuse the aims of such exhibitions with those of a museum. There can be a display of ancient things which have no connection with our economic life. But such museums should be where they belong; they have no place in our sessions. Our duty is to concentrate on only those industries and crafts which are capable of

[1] At its second annual meeting

being revived. Now when you go and see the exhibition, also note what things are not there and what could have been included.

A circular had been sent to you about what you were to bring when coming here. It asked you to bring a lantern, writing material, postcards, envelopes, stamps, etc. The circular was appropriate because these things are not available in villages. More than 80% of the villagers are illiterate. So who would store these things for sale? It would have been an unnecessary expenditure if lanterns were provided by the Sangh.

The circular also mentioned that it was difficult to procure milk in Savli and cow's milk was practically unprocurable. Those who needed cow's ghee were instructed to bring their own supply. After coming here you would have discovered that buffalo's milk has been provided for you. You would hardly know that your milk supply comes from Chanda[1] and vegetables from Nagpur[2]. I think it is sinful. It was our duty to have had cows here instead of getting milk and vegetables from such a long distance. So many of our people live here. They could always have kept some cows. Of course it would have meant some expenditure. It is possible that less expenditure is incurred in procuring milk from Chanda. But the higher expenditure would not have been improper. We should have also had vegetables grown here. We should have informed the farmers two or three months in advance that three to four hundred of our people were coming to stay here for a week. We would require so many maunds of vegetables daily and they should right then plan their farms to meet the needs. They would have gladly welcomed your suggestion and would have thanked you for having decided to have the session at Savli.

It is better to do without milk or vegetables for a week if such local arrangements are not possible. Arrangements should be made for sick persons or people like me who cannot do without milk or vegetables and that, too, from the supply that is locally available. A pertinent question is: why should they take the trouble of coming such a long distance? We should keep it in mind that we should be able to benefit the villagers to the maximum from our stay there. At least we should try to do so. We should try and get the necessary things made there. If we incur an expenditure of Rs. 3,000 over such a

[1] Thirty-four miles from Savli
[2] More than 120 miles from Savli

session, we should try and see that we benefit the local people to the same extent by our body-labour purchasing power.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Dwitiya Adhiveshan (Savli) ka Vivaran, pp. 25-7

326. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING−II [1]

SAVLI,
March 1, 1936

I shall devote one hour every day to the session. During that time I can speak for about half an hour at the most, and the remaining half hour will be spent in listening to your questions and so on. I have already received some questions from you and the President[2] has also raised some questions in the course of his speech. I shall first reply to his questions. If my reply raises any further questions in your minds, you are free to ask them.

The first question concerns the subsistence wages. In my view we cannot formulate any exact rule about it. We can no doubt say that we shall not go beyond a certain limit. For instance, the Sangh has set the limit of Rs. 75 as monthly wage. According to me even this is too much, because our field of activity is in the villages. And we cannot allow Rs. 75 or Rs. 50 in the villages. Nor is so much money needed there. True, all people cannot go to the villages. They have their own difficulties. Then, there are some people who are good workers and whose ideas and actions are acceptable and whom we would not permit to leave the field of service. And they cannot maintain themselves on low wages either. To such people we can give even Rs. 75. But we give this reluctantly and they too accept it reluctantly. This, however, is not a matter to be considered by others. But, if one person can carry on with Rs. 5, why should he demand Rs. 50 Merely because some other parson is getting Rs. 50? The person earning Rs. 50 or Rs. 75 has either poor health or has some other handicaps which the person earning Rs. 5 does not have. This should not be considered a matter of competition at all. Let a person take only what he needs. For instance, Mirabehn can manage with very little. But I told her that she should definitely take milk and fruits. Because of this her monthly expense goes up to Rs. 10 or 15. But Gajanan who works in her place

[1] Gandhiji arrived at the meeting at 4 p.m.
[2] Kishorelal Mashruwala

in Sindi has such habits that he requires almost nothing compared to Mirabehn. This does not make him envy Mirabehn. And it should not make him envious. Thus, no one should accept more than his minimum requirements. Any person who has lived in a city so far and has now gone to a village but has not been able to adjust himself to village life may take higher wages for some time.

The next question deals with body-labour. What I have said earlier includes my reply on this point also. Each person will function within his own individual limits. We cannot lay down more than this. Let every man put in the maximum body-labour he can. One worker wrote to me that he managed to earn his livelihood in the village; but all his time was spent in doing body-labour. He had resolved to take to spinning and also planned to make a living by spinning. But he found no time to do anything else. I have written to him that, if he continues his work with devotion, people will have a lesson to learn even from this. If the people of the village desire to accept his services, he can educate their children, clean up the garbage and in return earn his bread from them. If he puts his heart in his work, he will be able to earn his livelihood. But he must take only what is necessary. He may be able to have sweets, ghee, fruits, etc., if he asks for them. But he should not accept these things even if the people offer them on their own. I go round with the thought of the village in my mind, and so other problems do not arise for me. There can be no question at all of drawing the maximum out of public funds.

PRESIDENT: What should be the lowest limit of body-labour, so that, if a particular worker is not able to put in that much work, he would be justified [in withdrawing himself and thus] cease to be a drain on public funds?

GANDHIJI: I have understood your question. But it is not possible to set the same limit for all workers. In fact, each one of them should put in as much labour as he can. Let him earn whatever wages he can, and supplement the deficit from the funds of the Sangh. If his needs are not so great that it would be disturbing to others when they know about them, he should not hesitate to meet them from the Sangh. I cannot set any limit. I would not set any limit if the management were in my hands. I do not also wish to determine which type of work should be regarded as body-labour. I can only say that writing a book is not body-labour.

The third question—a very difficult one—relates to the family. Members should help the President in solving this problem. And the

President also should be alert in the matter. We have changed our way of life. We have given up the old tradition. Nevertheless, we are born in the cities. We have got our parents, wives and children. They have been all brought up in the old tradition. They have not changed their way of living. We wonder what right we have to compel them to accept the way of life we have accepted. And we want to educate our children in the old method which we have discarded. That is the reason why the workers are worried about the future of their children. They wonder if they would be able to educate their children so as to make them lawyers or doctors. On the one hand, a member of the Sangh lives in poverty and on the other he feels that his duty to his wife and children is different from what he has accepted for himself. He believes that sacrifice is his dharma but not his family's. Renunciation is regarded as a duty in old age. At the root of this idea is the traditional Hindu sentiment that we should renounce the world in old age. That is why we want to educate our children in the old way. But we have given up the belief that renunciation is a duty only of old age, not imperative for youth. We have accepted it as our duty, even in youth, to renounce all pleasures and serve the country. If we believe that sacrifice is man's dharma and that our pleasures should be consistent with the dharma of renunciation, then it becomes our duty to recognize the appropriateness of this dharma for our wives and children as well. If they insist on having more than this, let us tell them that we can give them only this much, that we can give them only the food that we ourselves eat; that what we consider proper for ourselves, we consider proper for them too. What more could be done? Right from my South Africa days I have adhered to this ideal. There is nothing wrong in wanting to reduce one's income. And any ideal which is right for us is also right for our children. All problems would be easily solved if we acccept this. But the conflict arises when we believe that our wives and children have a different dharma to follow. We must go as far along this path as possible. If, out of an impulse, we have gone too far, there should be no hesitation in retracing our steps. The Sangh should carry on with whatever means it may be having. Let us keep an eye on our resources and fix the maximum limit. But, in doing this, we shall have to look to the country as well. We are bound to be affected by whatever may be happening in the country. And it is our goal to take the country along with us. We must always try to pursue our activities taking the country with us. I cannot lay down any rule in such matters. These are matters concerning the individual and

they depend on his sincerity. The highest limit of Rs. 75 has been set. Whether or not that amount should be drawn is a matter for individual decision.

JAMNALALJI: But, from the point of view of an organization, it becomes necessary to make some rules. It would not be a good rule that the organization should give what an individual considers proper to demand. One who is engaged in public work should also think of one's market value.

G. I think from the public viewpoint it is difficult to clarify the matter any further. A person's market value may be Rs. 25 merely because he knows only Marathi and Sanskrit and is ignorant of English. But why should we put his value merely at Rs. 25? Take the example of a woman spinner. She would not earn even a pice in the market. But we have decided to pay her three annas. The question of market value arises in the case of a lawyer or a doctor. He charges whatever fee he desires. But we should not make such distinctions. We may make some distinction if the lowness of one's wages is due to one's special quality. For instance, if the needs of Gajanan are fewer than those of Mirabehn, he has no need to take as much as Mirabehn. If a person who is a B.A. LL.B. and another with a knowledge of Marathi-Sanskrit have similar functions to perform, they should be valued at the same rate.

J. But, if a person who can earn only Rs. 25 outside can get Rs. 40 from the Sangh, he would remain with the Sangh merely because of the temptation to get Rs. 40 even at the cost of degrading his soul.

G. That is correct. But it depends on the firmness of the organizers of the Sangh; if there were any such person in the Sangh, they should convey it to him that he does not possess the abilities he was supposed to possess. But take the example of Ravishankerbhai[1]. He may not have any market value but he is a great worker.

J. What would be the correct policy with regard to the education of children and medical treatment?

G. The education of the boys certainly deserves our consideration. I have already said that the dharma which is proper for us should also be considered proper for our families. The children should not be converted to another dharma. If I have considered it my dharma to maintain myself through body-labour, it would be as good as converting my son to another dharma if I try to make him a

[1] Ravishankar M. Raval

barrister. I can only give him training in body-labour. Along with this, I should give my children whatever education I can within the income limits I have set for myself.

Let me now come to the point of medical treatment. Take the example of Timmappa. It is true that once we have gone to the villages, we should adjust our whole life accordingly. But we must also look to the results of our experiments. What was the result of Timmappa's not taking milk for a few days? He had to spend on railway fare to go to Bombay. He had to be under obligation to a doctor. But even that was a mistake. When we go to a village and live in poverty, we must avail ourselves only of such medical facilities as the poor villagers can command for maintaining their health. Even if you tell me that I do not follow this precept myself, I cannot conceal my ideal, though I may accept the charge. He who remains continuously ill should send in his resignation.

RAJENDRA BABU: Why do you stress so much the condition of the worker maintaining himself by body-labour? This would leave little time for service. It may be all right to set an example to the people but setting an example is not enough. The need for advice and consultation cannot be ruled out. A worker's usefulness is very much reduced by overmuch insistence on physical labour.

G. This involves the question of reforming the entire indian society Every human being should maintain himself only through physical labour. I consider it a divine law. That is the reason why I have fixed that ideal. Now, the question is about intellectual development Yes, it is a relevant question. But, if I could have power over the world, I would make physical labour compulsory for everybody. Exceptions would have to be made even here, for example,in favour of sannyasis and such others. People would themselves make the means of livelihood available to them. Whether you call it society or people or State, the meaning is the same. I am not making any new or original point. Ruskin, in his *Unto This Last* (translated by me as Sarvodaya[1]) has said the same thing. Our Shastras also stress the same point. It may not be clearly mentioned, but it is there by implication. I am not well-versed in the Shastras. Vinobaji and Kakasaheb can talk with authority citing references from the Shastras. But I found the point clearly expounded in *Unto This Last*

[1] *Vide* "Sarvodaya [-1] ",16-5-1908; [II], 23-5-1908; [III], 30-5-1908; [IV], 6-6-1908; [V], 13-6-1908; [VI], 20-6-1908; [VII], 27-6-1908; [VIII], 4-7-1908; [IX], 18-7-1908.

and that very night I transformed my life. The gist of Ruskin's argument is that a doctor or a lawyer should take the same wages as a labourer.

R. What should the present members do to pursue that ideal?

G. All the present members have this ideal before them. But in the pursuit of that ideal they may follow some honest occupation or take their wages from the Sangh. But the Sangh should give wages only to those whose services it values. It should not give the wages as a favour. The Sangh should not make anyone dependent on it. This Sangh is not to produce parasites. It may become dependent on them by taking the maximum work from them.

DEVSHARMAJI: Is not the limit of Rs. 75 too high?

G. All the better if it could be brought down. As for me I have decided upon Rs. 15 as the limit. you may lower it from Rs. 75 to Rs. 50 if you wish. But it does not seem likely.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Dwitiya Adhiveshan (Savli) ka Vivaran, pp. 32-6

327. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

March 3, 1936

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

Having obtained some dispensation from medical friends, I am able to write this to you. I hope to reach Delhi on 8th. I hope you will prevent people from coming to the station. I am not in a fit state to face crowds and cut my way through them. I should love quietly to be taken to Birla's new Harijan Home.

This must—could—have been written by Mahadev. I have taken up this letter to tell you that as soon as I received your great book[1] on regeneration, I began to read it and finished it the day following. I have called it great because it is evidence of much research and great labour. There is hardly a superfluous word in it.

But as I was reading it, I asked myself, “Does this book take mankind upward? Is it in need of that kind of regeneration? What is revival of youth worth if you cannot be sure of persistent physical existence for two consecutive seconds?”

[1] *Regeneration in Man*

Is mere physical restoration the end of true medical science? I wonder!

I asked myself these questions, because you were the author of the book I have ever known you as a seeker of God. When you can spare a few moments, I would like to know from you how this form of regeneration harmonizes with a search after God.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

328. LETTER TO P. M. NAIDU

March 3, 1936

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I attach no value to my son's letter of recantation, and if the job he has received is the price for his recantation, it is a premium put upon sin.[1] As my son is continuously under the subtle influence of drink he has become incapable of coherent thinking or constancy to his words. Nevertheless, if he is faithful in the performance of the job given to him, it is so much to the good. I can only hope that he only appreciates the extraordinary kindness that has been shown to him by you and others and that he makes good use of the money he is receiving.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

329. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SAVLI,
March 3, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter this morning. I read it immediately after having my meal, had a few rounds and am now writing this reply at 8.30.

I tore up your letter soon after reading it. What was so confidential init that you had to doubly reassure yourself? Indeed, there was nothing private at all. And how could you have so private a

[1] As Harilal had threatened to embrace Islam or Christianity if he was not provided with a job, the addressee, a lawyer, secured him one in the Nagpur Municipality. The former, however, gave it up and secretly embraced Islam on May 29, 1936. *Vide* also, "Statement to the Press", 2-6-1936

thing as that? I shall, however, carry out your wish so long as you mark your letter confidential and ask me to tear it up. Your going has of course lessened my anxiety because the going meant following the law of truth, and not to go would have been, I feared, its violation. But that had no relation to the blood Pressure, which had already been going down and so went down by itself. I was not so much worried about your staying on, as I knew all the time that you would at last do the right thing only, and you did so quite promptly. As for the blood-pressure, however, things will go on as they have been going. It had reached 188/110 at Wardha and once it went up to as high as 212/120, but the same day again it fell to 188/108. I don't know what it now is. It cannot, therefore, be said at all that the blood-pressure went down because of your going. You may come when you can, after staying there as long as you have the duty to stay on. Happiness ever goes with dharma. And there alone lies peace of mind. Never have any doubt that there can be no happiness in the violation of dharma.

Why do you want to be exempted from taking milk? Your good lies only in taking it. Of course, you have freedom to reduce its quantity when you cannot digest four lb. of it. There will be no difficulty in digesting four lb. of milk as long as you have regular exercise and sleep. As for fruit, take what is easily to be had. It will be good if Jayaprakash follows the same diet as yours.

Keep your diary day after day. I follow your point about studies. You may do what you can. Study Hindi grammar. Send for anything you need from here. I shall leave here on the 6th, hoping to reach Delhi on the 8th. I shall be spending at least a fortnight there.

You must have written, I think, to Swaruprani and others about Kamala. Ba is in Bombay, Rajaji, who has gone to Bombay, may perhaps come here.

We have a fairly good gathering here. The weather is fair and they see that I get good peace and rest.

It seems one of your letters has been lost in transit. I have noted that. I know it is unlikely that you would avoid writing out of laziness. The fear is you might grow melancholy, but you ought not to under any circumstances. Doesn't Mother *Gita* teach us to endure cheerfully the situation that we happen to be in?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3458

330. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING–III

SAVLI,
March 3, 1936

Ramnarayanji[1] has passed on a letter to the President. He showed it to me, and I read it too. Then I wished to know what this committee[2] for Gandhian thought was, who were the persons constituting it, what were its powers and so on. Then I was informed about all that happened yesterday. I was told at the same time that this committee was not a body authorized by this session. This session does not function by passing resolutions. When the occasion arose, a suggestion was made, and then those who favoured the suggestion formed a committee. At first I felt that I should not involve myself in this matter. I felt also that since I had not been able to be present at the discussion, I was not entitled to express any opinion. Nevertheless, I do have an opinion on the subject and I consider it my duty to express it even if it should be considered an impertinence on my part. I wish to make clear to the committee its scope. If it undertakes any work, it should only be one of collecting my thoughts and beliefs. If it does anything more, I am afraid the misgivings[3] expressed by Ramnarayanji are bound to come true.

I have conceived no such thing as Gandhism. I am not an exponent of any sect. I never claimed to have originated any philosophy. Nor am I endeavoring to do so. Several people said to me

[1] Ramnarayan Chowdhary

[2] It was proposed that a committee for Gandhian thought be formed with D. B. Kalelkar, as President and the following members: Shankar Tryambak Dharmadhikari, Mahadev Desai, Swami Anand, Kishorelal Mashruwala, Rangarao R. Diwakar, Haribhau Upadhyaya, Balubhai Mehta, Devsharma 'Abhay', Rajendra Prasad, Shankarrao Deo, Raghunath Shridhar Dhotre, Satis Chandra Das Gupta and Sitaram Purushottam Patwardhan.

[3] Namely: (1) Gandhism would end up by becoming one more sect. (2) It would give rise to more blind faith and intellectual dependence. (3) Differences would crop up among the Gandhians themselves with regard to the interpretation of Gandhian thought. (4) The importance of practice would decrease and undue importance would come to be attached to mere thought. (5) The evolution of Gandhian thought would slacken. (6) Gandhism would assume the form of a dogma and breed hypocrisy. (7) The bad habit of reading and writing will grow and inclination to do service would go down. (8) It would also increase Gandhiji's difficulty in giving decisions on doubtful points.

that I should write a *smriti*[1] of Gandhian thought. I told them that I could not presume to vie with the ancient law-givers. I have no such plans. The right to codify my thoughts cannot belong to me. Whatever is lasting will take shape after I am gone. Without any elaborate scheme I have simply tried in my own way to apply the eternal Principles of truth and non-violence to our daily life and problems. Like a child I did whatever occurred to me on the spur of the moment during the course of events.

Then I realized that what I was doing were experiments in truth. In doing so I have sometimes erred and learnt by my errors. Life has thus become for me a series of experiments in truth. In my pursuit of truth I came across the method of non-violence. By instinct I have been a votary of truth, but not non-violent. As the Muni Jinavijayaji once rightly observed, I was all for truth and was capable of sacrificing non-violence for the sake of truth. I confessed to him that it was true. For me "there was no dharma higher than truth" and "no dharma higher than the supreme duty of non-violence."[2] The word dharma in my opinion has different connotations as used in the two statements. In other words it means that there cannot be an ideal higher then truth and there cannot be any duty higher than non-violence. A man can pursue truth only by constantly adhering to this duty. There is no other means for the pursuit of truth. For the sake of truth one should not hesitate even to witness the ruin of one's country. One may even leave one's country. Paul Richard has severely criticized me in this regard. He had pointed out the difference between my ideas and those of *Manusmriti*. I do not regard it as dharma to have to resort to untruth either for the sake of argument or to protect the cow. This statement is correct. However, I do not think this is a subject which can be discussed academically.

Well, all my philosophy, if it may be called by that pretentious name, is contained in what I have said. You will not call it Gandhism; there is no ism about it. And no elaborate literature is needed about it. All that I have written is but a description of whatever I have done. And my actions alone are the greatest exposition of truth and non-violence. Those who believe in these can propagate them only by following them in practice. They call for no books. My work is there for them to emulate. But it may be said that this, too, is not permanent.

[1] Code

[2] *Mahabharata,* Adiparvan, XI. 13 and Shantiparvan, CLXII. 24

A caustic critic once observed that the spinning-wheel would be so discredited that when I died the wheels would serve to make the funeral pyre. That, however, has not shaken my faith in the spinning-wheel. I will not despair even if you all forsook me. My faith will grow all the more. Indeed, I have never despaired nor have I had to repent. I do not regret the long struggle that I have put up nor the amount of money and the number of lives lost. Whenever I went to the villages I have returned with my vessel full of hope. But how can I convince the world that one cannot communicate this confidence with the help of books? Silent work alone can provide it. Hence no one should yield to the weakness that he would be helpless if the committee did not supply literature. The workers complain that pundits from the government and other circles go to the villagers and criticize our ideas. They misguide the people. What can we do, then, since we do not have their superior knowledge?

It is a real difficulty. But where is the need for books? Tell the villagers that you are there in their midst to serve them with your wheels, your brooms and buckets. Let them accept your service if they will. Must we then, you will ask, work away in silence, without bothering about our critics? Yes; I should not mind even your taking a vow of silence. Write if you feel you cannot do without it. But let not your real work suffer because you are busy writing books.

This, however, is the ideal. This committee was not so imperative. But now that it has come into being it will not be inconsistent with our work. There are no grounds for Ramnarayanji's misgivings. All we need is a little vigilance. I can understand your desire for some authoritative publications explaining the things we are striving to do. These you may have without entering into a controversy. The committee should function quietly without much ado. It will only spread poison, if it sets about to work with pomp and show. And of course it shall have to be self-supporting.

I should be satisfied if your Sangh became a register of workers who have complete faith in all activities which are a concrete expression of truth and non-violence, or rather simply of non-violence (for the practice of non-violence is impossible without acceptance of truth). Thus let no member say that he believes in truth and non-violence, but does not believe in handicrafts or khadi and service of the villagers therethrough, or that he believes in truth and

non-violence but does not believe in Hindu-Muslim unity, or in the removal of untouchability. If your meet such a one you may tell him that it is possible that he is a believer in truth and non-violence according to his own conception, but not according to Gandhiji's conception of them, and that he cannot therefore be a member of the Sangh. Beyond this, your Sangh has no credal, regional or institutional limitations. Your members may belong to any caste or creed, any race or nation.

I agree with the President regarding this.[1]

There is no need to repeat that everyone should follow the ideal of celibacy. Of course it is not possible to ride two horses at a time. Those who are not married or, though married, are living like unmarried ones can serve better. But it is no possible to have a rigid rule regarding this. Moreover, there is no need for it. It is good if we get workers who do not wish to marry but if tomorrow Gajanan or Surendra wants to get married, he can do so and still remain a member of the Sangh. If their expenses increase they can take them from the Sangh. It is a personal question. Hypocrisy and unchastity will creep in if we form a rule for it.

Some of the shortcomings shown by the President are shortcomings of the whole of India. It is necessary for us to be alert about them. Those who are worshippers of truth and non-violence and want to serve India and humanity cannot afford to be lazy. Those who waste time waste truth, non-violence and service as well. This applies to cleanliness, too. If we are alert, do not waste time and observe cleanliness, we will not be lacking in knowledge. What we call lack of knowledge is actually lack of concentration. Mother *Gita* says that one who worships with faith will automatically gain knowledge.[2]

The President has shown three angles.[3] Possession is really mental. I have a watch, a rope and an undergarment. I am possessive,

[1] Kishorelal Mashruwala had said that the Sangh would comprise workers who would help the various institutions in times of need. It would propagate Gandhiji's principles and would be ready to form a band of worker for a good cause. It would be a trustee of the property of the various institutions.

[2] *Bhagavad Gita,* IV. 39.

[3] The President had suggested that a limit should be fixed regarding (1) the amount of balance an institution may have at the end of a year; (2) donations it may receive and (3) the property of worker may acquire in the name of the institution.

if I feel unhappy without them. A person can keep a large blanket if he needs one; if he is not distressed when it is lost he is not possessive.

What the President has said[1] is enough. There is no need to say more.[2]

I see that there is a tendency to believe that these programmes are mutually exclusive or antagonistic. Much of our misunderstanding arises out of this belief. The worker in the constructive field looks down upon the political programme and *vice versa.* But really there is no such opposition. I had thought that it was clear by now to every worker that there was no absolute division between the so-called political and the so-called constructive programmes. In our method of work there are no watertight compartments. Nevertheless I do maintain that for the sake of efficiency it is necessary for one to confine oneself to one item at a time or such items as conveniently run together. The governor of the Bank of England exercises considerable influence on the politics of England, but he never busies himself with what are called active politics. He has hardly the time to follow the debates in the House of Commons. But he is at least as important a member in the English public life as, say, a noted member of the House of Commons. As a general rule I would suggest that the members of the Sangh should occupy themselves with work which brings no kudos and which is ordinarily not liked by workers.

We have different programmes, such as the Spinners' Association, the Harijan sevak Sangh, the Village Industries Association and *goseva,* which I have not yet placed before you. But one connected with *goseva* can also become a member of the Sangh. Those who wish may even take part in more than one activity. It is a matter of one's capacity. As for me, I can attend to other things even as I work for the Charkha Sangh Everybody cannot do the same. For example, take the Parliamentary Board[3]. Even this I have brought into being. But would I ever join it? Today I cannot even think of entering the Legislatures. However, it is not a matter of principle. We must do whatever may be necessary at a given time. And tomorrow, if I deem it

[1] That a satyagrahi should be firm about one thing: He should consider it his duty to help the oppressed and raise them, make them full of life and spirit. He should resist untruth under any circumstances in spite of his superior's anger.

[2] Mahadev Desai here reports: "One of the questions . . . was about the compatibility or otherwise of the contructive with the political programme."

[3] Formed in May 1934, with M.A. Ansari as President

my duty to go to the Legislature, I may very well do it. It was I who started the civil disobedience movement. But I instructed the Hindi propaganda workers in South India that they should not court imprisonment, as the work would suffer. Only Anna (Shri Harihar Sharma) from among them went to jail and that, too, with my permission. I had told Shankerlal [Banker] that the work of the Spinners' Association was as valuable as courting of imprisonment by thousands of men. Except for a few days in the beginning, jail-going became another name for taking rest. Those who remained outside faced a number of hardships and those who had gone to jail returned strong and sturdy. Once they went in, they violently defied the jail rules. What good did such people do by going to jail? It is a mistake to make a distinction between the constructive and the political programmes. In my opinion, political work also is constructive work. I once wrote in *Young India* that even civil disobedience was constructive work according to me. But from the point of view of the world, it may be described as destructive. In reality, they are two branches of satyagraha, and hence are akin. One cannot be complete without the other. But some people wonder how *goseva,* removal of untouchability or propagation of Hindi could be called political activities. Would these things bring swaraj? But it is my belief that swaraj cannot be attained without these. Many Congressmen, too, do not have faith in them. It is also our task to inspire such faith in them. These people do not consider these activities political. Hence, they describe them as constructive. A large number of people are ready to take to activities which they regard as political. Hence, we must consciously abide by a particular rule.The whole thing will break down if we do not observe the rule. That is the reason why the work is going on well in Gujarat. Today we have imperfect faith in these things. The plant is tender. We have to tend it with great care. It is my belief that if we could do these four or five things well, swaraj is as good as in our hands. It would also increase our efficiency. I am reminded of an incident. There was some discussion about the constructive programme at a meeting. Sapru[1], Chintamani[2] and Pal[3] were also present there. Chintamani was very critical of the constructive programme. Pal replied to him. He was considered my

[1] T. B. Sapru
[2] C. Y. Chintamani
[3] Bipin Chandra Pal

opponent; but his sharp intellect grasped the thing. Of language he was a master. He explained, much better than I could have done, that with it the prestige of the country would go up. He said we had come across something which would give us the strength that we would not derive from all our other works and all the journals. What he expressed in a beautiful language I conveyed in my uncouth language. My faith in the constructive programme is probably ten times it was then.

The work of the Parliamentary Board is also my creation. But, if you wish to go to the Legislatures for this reason, I shall not allow you to do so. Today, I shall send Bhulabhai[1] there. He has faith in that work and he is also capable. What would I do with Satyamurti[2] here? If I have to attain swaraj through music, I would send Khareshastri[3] or Balkoba. And, if your faith in the constructive programme is deep enough, you must do only that work. Such is my faith in *goseva.* I even dream of the cow. Let us all concentrate on our own work and our own place. Let that be our dharma. And even if another's dharma appears to be best we should understand that it is fraught with danger.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Dwitiya Adhiveshan(Savli)ka Vivaran, pp. 50-4

331. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING−IV

SAVLI,
March 4, 1936

Before replying to the questions[4] I wish to say a few things on my own. I have of course no right to say anything. But it is my habit to express my opinion on whatever I hear. I am no doubt very eager to listen to your discussion. But I have held back my eagerness. Even so, things are conveyed to me by jailor (the Sardar), sometimes light-heartedly and sometimes solemnly. Why have we all gathered here? Why are we wasting our time? I hear that votes were taken on the question of the wages for the members of the Sangh. Four hours were spent in unnecessary arguments over it, although it was self-evident. Where was the need to argue about it? Jamnalalji raised the question,

[1] Bhulabhai J. Desai
[2] S. Satyamurti
[3] Narayan Moreshwar Khare
[4] Raised by Jamnalal Bajaj

because he has to find the money. But we must tell him that we do not expect wages. I do not know what Gandhism is. But I do not know the Gandhian teaching. Let us try to carry on our work without money. Where there is non-violence, not even a cowrie is needed. Yes, I was telling you that we are arguing without a concrete resolution. Even this would be all right in a way. Everyone is engrossed in his own work. Where is the need for a resolution? Even so, some resolutions can be necessary. I cannot say what these resolutions should be as I am not able to fully participate in the session. If you cannot think of any resolutions and if there are going to be just arguments, do stop the exercise at once. Or, let some definite programme be formulated. Let something or the other be achieved here. Put back the money that has been spent here. Observe Savli very closely. So many of us who are workers have gathered here and if we do nothing for Savli, it would be a very harsh comment on the session. Mahadev is much pained by this thought. The sad condition as in Savli is to be found everywhere—there is dirt, there is the problem of water, there are quarrels. Let us do our utmost to remedy these things. There was a suggestion that there should be an eight-hour spinning programme one day. But it was voted out. The pretext was the difficulty about obtaining so many charkhas. If so many charkhas were not available, we could have carried on with half the number?

Some could have done carding, while others did the spinning. But leaving aside the charkhas, let us at least clean up the filth in the village. I am reminded of Balasore. The Sanitary Inspector of the town said that, if only he could have 50 men, the local tank could be cleaned. I appealed to the people and 50 men volunteered. Many such tasks are waiting to be done in Savli. You can take up some such work. You have spent Rs. 4,000 on the session. Do some work here worth Rs. 4,000. We have long passed the age of resolutions. So, what new outlook will you take back with you from this session?

The most difficult question is the one of village industries. Then there is the question of health. Yes, let us not talk about the debts of the villagers. Let us not take up that burden. But let us at least improve their health. That, too, is the business of the Congress. But now it is getting late. So I leave this subject here, and come to the other questions.

Q. How can lifelong interest in work be developed among the workers?

A. The *Gita* has furnished the answer: through constant practice.[1]

Q. Can person who has taken the vow of non-possession become a trustee

A Yes, he can. There can be no objection to this on principle. If I have given a different opinion in the case of Vinobaji, there must have been a personal reason.[2]

Q. What is your view about the position Dr. Ambedkar has taken?

A. Had I been in Dr. Ambedkr's place, I would have been as angry. In his position, may be, I would not have been a believer in non-violence. When overcome by anger, a person does whatever comes to his mind. Whatever Dr. Ambedkar does, we must bear it in all humility. Not only that, it would be a service to Harijans. If he really hits us with shoes, we must bear even that. But we should not be afraid of him. There is no need to kiss Dr. Ambedkar's feet to convince him. That would be a disservice. If he and the othr Harijans who have no faith in Hinduism embrace another religion, that too would make for our expiation. We deserve such treatment. Our task [now] is to wake up to the situation and purify ourselves. There is no need for flattery. That is why I expressed my sorrow at his announcement and suggested self-purification. I did nothing more.

Q. What are the points of similarity and difference between your point of view and socialism?

A. There are quite a few similarities. I too desire that everything should be considered as belonging to God. I too believe that all wealth belongs to the people. But the difference lies in that the socialists advocate collective effort, whereas I believe that the beginning should be made at once in our individual conduct. If we have such faith, we should dedicate to society at least our own property. One cannot be a socialist so long as one retains even a cowrie for oneself. They want to achieve their aim through legislation. Legislation implies coercion. If they are not saying all these things now, it is because that is not within their power. They are virtuous because they are weak. Socialists, that is Communists, want to use force, but they are helpless. But we are believers in democracy.

[1] Bhagavad Gita, VI. 35

[2] This was in reply to a doubt expressed by a member.

Q. What is the difference between your views and those of Pt. Jawaharlalji?

A. We have many differences, and they are well known too. The position as revealed in our correspondence still remains.[1] But in spite of our differences we respect each other and desire to work together as far as possible.

Q. What should be the limits of the worker's individual service?

A. A very fine criterion for this is to be found in the *sloka*[2] which lays down that for the good of the family the individual may be sacrificed. An individual may be served only as far as it does not hamper service of the society. Suppose that my son is ill, my mother is ill, or my wife is ill, but I am expected to preside over a meeting at Lucknow. In such a situation, I would leave my son, mother and wife in charge of my brother, etc., and go.

Q. Can people who believe in non-violence take unfertilized eggs?

A. It is a personal matter. Those who have no objection can take such eggs. The reason why we should take a neutral attitude on this point is that these days the Hindus' definition of non-violence is confined to the matter of food. I have regarded it as of secondary importance. If you say that we have to do it in order to live, well, strictly speaking, it would be an act of violence to eat even a single morsel. In such things we can have no rules which would be equally applicable to all. I have myself given cod liver oil to some boys in the Ashram. Doctors frequently prescribe alcohol and meat. They have even started prescribing glands. If anybody objects, the Doctors cite the authority of Manu and do not hesitate to tell a lie to save the life of a patient. Throughout the world only a section of Hindus has restrictions about non-vegetarian food on religious grounds. And these are confined to some Vaishyas, Jains and a few Brahmins. Shall we then abandon the Muslims, Parsis, etc.? I have seen many non-vegetarians who believe in non-violence and many vegetarians who believe in violence. Some abstain from non-vegetarian food because

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 14-9-1933 and Appendix "Letter from Jawaharlal Nehru", 13-9-1933.

[2] Which says: One should sacrifice the individual for the sake of the family, the family for the village and the village for the country; for the sake of *atman* one should sacrifice the whole world.

they do not relish it; it is not in their upbringing. When I took meat out of a sense of duty, I had a bad time of it. Let not the vegetarians feel proud. Non-violence is a unique thing. It is a matter of feeling, not merely of external behaviour.

Q. What should be done to check the increase in births among poor women?

A. Our duty is to explain to them the duty of self-control. Artificial measures would be as good as death. And I do not think the village women will take to these measures. Why, Premabehn herself is a maiden with a mind completely free from passion. On her own she is a votary of *brahmacharya.* She should work with this faith. Women like her will have quite an impact. We must try to get milk for the village children.

Q. Women may be willing to exercise restraint to keep births in check. But what should be done if men use force?

A. This is a question of a women's true dharma. Premabehn has grasped it fully. I am a worshipper of the satis. But I do not wish to push them down the well. Draupadi has shown what a woman's true dharma is. Even if the husband falls the wife must not. It is pure lechery to stand in the way of a woman when she desires to abstain. If he forces himself on her, it is her duty to make him desist even by slapping him. She should close her door to the lustful husband. She must refuse to be the wife of a sinful husband. We must inculcate such courage in women.

Q. What is the duty of the middle-class women in the matter of birth-control?

A. Whether it be the midle-class or the aristocracy, indulgence is in our hands. But we cannot have control over the consequences. It is not for us to ask whether we shall be successful. Our task is only to teach them the dharma of truth. If the middle class women wish to adopt the latest birth-control measures, we must advise them against it. Self-control alone can be the remedy. Premabehn should place before them her own example.

Q. What should a wife do if the husband has syphilis?

A. In such circumstances not even any birth-control measures can protect the wife. She must regard such a husband as impotent and remarry. But for this women should have sufficient education to be self-reliant.

Q. Like the socialists you also believe that 'all land belongs to the Lord'. But today one man tills the soil and another exploits him. We want to resolve this conflict of interests with the help of non-violence. And one does have to resort to evil practices if one wants to earn wealth. Under the circumstances, is it not sinful to accept financial help from the rich?

A. All that we can do is to try to undestand the principle as fully as possible. But God alone fully observes the [ideal] dharma. We are but imperfect and limited souls. Therefore I do not hesitate to receive money from the rich in spite of my belief that piling up wealth is the opposite of dharma. I do not consider it wrong to accept money in this way because I believe that thereby I only serve the rich and society in general. Up to this point I can also hold my own *vis-a-vis* the socialist. But I must counter his arguments only with silent service. Those who believe that it is wrong to collect money from the rich should act up to their belief. But for the Sangh it is dharma although it seems the opposite of it. I am crazy about body-labour. It includes everything. "What more need be said for the wise?"

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Dwitiya Adhiveshan (Savli) Ka Vivaran, pp. 59-63

332. A LETTER [1]

[On or before *March 5, 1936*]

I had fully hoped to attend the function but God had willed otherwise. Though the embargo on my movements has been slightly relaxed, I am still under orders not to accept any public engagements. I could go to Delhi, I might as well have gone to Gurukul. I am not going to Delhi to fulfil any engagement but for rest and I hope everyone at the Gurukul will understand my inability and excuse it. I also hope that my inability to attend will not in any way affect the donations and other help that the Gurukul deserves in an ample measure. It had, always had, my blessings. Though I cannot go I am glad Sardar Vallabhbhai is going there. His going is as good as my going, because he goes there on my behalf and fully represents me.

The Hindu, 5-3-1936

333. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SAVLI,
[*March 5, 1936*] [2]

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter, read it and tore it up. I see that you have been going through mental strain. You should, however, remember that happiness and unhappiness are passing fancies of the mind, and know that pain is no pain, the only real pain being unmindful of God. Yes, you may stay or move about with Jayaprakash as long as he wishes and you can serve him in some useful way. Giving him medicine regularly, cooking for him, looking after his personal belongings—all this is service, of course, and so doing you should gain whatever experience you can. You should certainly keep seeming relatives and acquaintances if you go to a place like Patna. Do all such acts with

[1] According to Mahadev Desai's telegram dated March 5, 1936, from which this is reproduced, Acharya Devsharma went specially to Savli to persuade Ganhiji to attend the convocation of the Gurukul at Kangri. Presumably this letter was sent through Acharya Devsharma. *Vide* also "Message to Gurukul Convocation", before 9-3-1936.

[2] From *Bapuna Patro– 10: Shri Prabhavatibehnne,* p. 78

interest and yet without attachment. I shall of course be pained if you spoil your health. Be careful of your diet. Write to me the experiences you gather.

We shall leave Savli tomorrow. The marriage of Krishnadas[1] was celebrated here today. Both being in every way plain and simple, they had put on nothing more than their usual dress, and there were no presents, etc. I have never seen so simple a wedding as this.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

We shall reach Delhi on the 8th.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3312

334. LETTER TO ANASUYA SARABHAI

March 5, 1936

CHI. ANASUYABEHN[2],

Your letter is worthy of you.

Of course, I do use the flask you gave me and it reminds me of your love. So also the mirror. Do you know where it came from? There has been no occasion to use the razor. The question therefore is one only of future. I am aware that the metal sheets are imported from abroad but the flask is wholly manufactured abroad. For the present the sheets will continue to be imported but the utensils worth crores [of rupees] ought to be made here. If German-silver sheets are no more imported, we should do without them. We should have brass utensils plated with tin or find some other remedy. What I mean is that the thought of the villager should be in our minds when we make any purchases.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am leaving Savli tomorrow and expect to reach Delhi on the 8th.

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 11562

[1] Chhaganlal Gandhi's son who was married to Manojna Devi

[2] Sister of Ambalal Sarabhai and leader of the Ahmedabad labour movement.

335. LETTER TO RAMNARESH TRIPATHI

WARDHA,
March 5, 1936

BHAI RAMNARESHJI,

I have your letter and the annotated version of *Ramacharitmanas*, too. Daily for half an hour during these days of rest, I listen to the recitation from the *Ramayana*. For the last three days I have been reading your book. Apart from reading the passages recited I also started on the preface and I have now progressed on to the biography. I have great faith in your rendering.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Shri Ramacharitmanas*

336. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SAVLI,
March 5, 1936

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your letter. You did the right thing. I write a few letters now. I have not noticed the effect you fear from the eating of sour things, but it does occur on giving up milk and ghee. Anyway you can watch the results if you eschew sour foods for a while. For constipation you can experiment with raw garlic weighing up to a *tola* and taken with the meals. I have personal experience of its great benefit. Continue with the *neem* leaves; no harm can possibly result from it.

What is your routine these days?

I expect to reach Delhi on the 8th instant.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4284

337. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING−V

SAVLI,
March 5, 1936

For the past two days I have been trying to get acquainted with each one of you. But I have failed. I had a desire to meet every one of you and resolve your doubts. That would have satisfied you as well as me. I have grown rather fond of meeting people individually. But I found I should overcome this temptation if I wanted to work. You exercised restraint and thus put a check on this fondness. None of you sought to meet me and with great reluctance I gave up my desire.

I had to restrain myself a great deal today. It pained me that I could not say anything at the wedding of Krishnadas. I did not address even a few words to the newly-married couple. Some day one will have to suffer even physical separation. Then why should we not prepare ourselves for it right from now on? The relationship between you and me should be so lasting that it would not be affected by physical separation.

Let me now reply to Prabhudas Gandhi's questions. He has asked me how we can become one with the poor. This means that he has been trying, but has not succeeded so far. The conclusion to be drawn is that it is only with difficulty that such a state can be attained. We have lived on urban life, and we still have a lingering desire for that life. On the other hand, the desire to serve the villages is growing.

I cannot prescribe any method for becoming one with the people. Nor do I have one. If Vinoba has suggested something, I am not aware of if.[1] One cannot say to what extent oneness with the poor in a broad sense is possible. Some may be able to attain it in full, and some partially and some not at all throughout their life. But we must attain that oneness at any rate in our own hearts. Once the heart has begun to experience such oneness, the mind would automatically follow, and we would gradually progress in that direction. Whether or not we succeed is in the hands of God. What really matters is the effort.

His second question is whether we should make it a rule that Rs. 4 out of Rs. 15 should be sent direct to some poor person every

[1] Vinoba Bhave had replied to these questions on the previous day.

month. It is not up to me to make such a rule. Nor is it necessary. Even after giving away that amount it cannot be said oneness would have been established between us. An external act is no proof of the inner reality. If any such rule were to be enforced by the State, people would seek to evade it.[1]

Q. So long as we do not put an end to economic exploitation of our rural masses and bring them concrete financial gain, they will continue to be indifferent towards us. . . . How can we help them?

A. We face all these difficulties not because the village people do not understand us, but because we are not able to understand them. It is a pity. Even I have not been able to explain my ideas fully. Our work has just begun. It is not even a year since it started. We do not have enough experience to serve the people. I myself have not been able to settle down in a village so far. But I have done some research. In South Africa I lived in the midst of many villagers and I have experienced their difficulties. I also know from experience that we have not yet thought about the reasons why we have not been able to inspire confidence among the villagers. We must discover these reasons. We are working and spending money in the hope that the villagers will accept what we say. When we understand these people they, too, will cling to us. Till then, let us scavenge for them, distribute some medicines and teach them the laws of sanitation. Let us not go there as physicians. Let us be satisfied with giving the medicines which they accept. Let us not expect any further rewards. Let us not be worried whether or not we give financial help, whether or not they are indifferent. I have repeatedly told the village workers that they should not feel disappointed. Have they not turned themselves into sweepers? And a sweeper is satisfied even with the left-overs. Let us also go to them with such an attitude. If they abuse us, let us bear it in silence. If they beat us, let us bear that also. It is not that they are not coming forward because their economic conditions are not good. They would not come even if you offered them money. They would take the money and also expect us to do the scavenging for them. That is all. Let us work so that the sick are given medicines. Let the people defecate wherever they choose. Let us not even ask them to avoid a particular place or go elsewhere. But let us go on cleaning up without a word. That is non-violence. Protecting their health, showing them the way and going on cleaning up is the only path we have to follow.

[1] Gandhiji then replied to the questions asked by Swami Anand.

Some day they are bound to understand. If this does not work, then there is no such thing as non-violence.

Q. Is it or is it not necessary to do something more than this?

A. We may if we can. But it is not necessary to connect the two. They are two independent services. Even if we cannot take up the service that would bring them economic benefits, let us at least take up the first one. And let us not worry if we can do nothing more.

Q. Can a village worker, with a view to making consumer articles available to the villagers at low prices, run a shop and sell betel leaves, *bidis,* tobacco, fish, tea, etc.?

A. We can resort to every means to put an extra pice into the villagers' pockets. But whether or not a village worker can open a shop depends on his own capacity and resourcefulness. I cannot lay down any hard and fast rule as to the articles a village worker may have in his shop. Let each worker fix a limit for himself in accordance with his own ability. He will have to compete with the village shopkeepers and also consider the habits of the villagers. If I go to the villages and find that the people cannot do without tobacco and *bidis,* I would sell these, too, even though I consider tobacco worse than alcohol. A habit that has been entrenched for thousands of years cannot go in a day. My work has not been directed towards making people give up smoking. Ideal is one thing, practice is another and what other people can do is yet another.

Q. Then would you sell liquor also?

A. No. I would not sell liquor. I would not give them something which they hate and which even the drink addicts consider evil. But if I went to England and found that I could not rid people of this habit, I would sell liquor. And if there are people who eat meat or fish and want them clean, I would supply these, too, with my own hands.

Let my words not be taken literally and misinterpreted. I shall certainly try to make people give up things which are considered bad. But I would give them those things till I could persuade them to give them up and continue with my work. It is very difficult to run a shop. A resourceful man like Lakshmidas can do much. The path of village organization is arduous. There is no royal road. He who serves sincerely will find the right way.

Q. Should we not use bullock-carts instead of motor-lorries to transport the goods made or produced in the villages?

A. This is a ticklish question. I have no answer to it which can touch your heart. I shall only say that I am helpless. Motor-vehicles are invading the villages day after day. The question involved is that of service of the cow. We must continue our efforts in good faith. Shall I lay down the principle? If we do not try to understand aright this question of service to the cow we might start eating beef. Even today if the doctor advises, people would not mind taking beef as medicine. You cannot carry on with buffalo's milk. I have seen beef being consumed in the name of medicine even in Vaishanva families. But let us remember that if the cow perishes, we shall perish, too. The motor-car has been invading the villages. If this goes on, India will become another South Africa. I do not favour small holdings. But at the same time I do not wish to see that any single individual should own twenty or twenty-five thousand acres of land. Today service to the cow is more expensive than a motor-vehicle. But this question is similar to the question of khadi. I have sold khadi cloth worth two annas a yard at 17 annas a yard. I am talking of an ideal. Our duty is to carry on work with faith in our heart.

RAJENDRA PRASAD: But is it a proven fact that it is cheaper to use a motor-car?

A. Absolutely not. The question of expensive or inexpensive is not correct. The law of demand and supply is not a human law, it is a devilish law.

Q. Would it be proper, in the light of your definition of swadeshi, to procure for Bombay rice from Ahmedabad or wheat from Khandwa? Will it not be proper to fix a ceiling on profit in respect of every commodity?

A. Limits should be fixed both as to the quantum of profit and the distance. Let us not get all our rice from Bombay. Sitarama Sastri sends rice to Bombay. In fact, it should be [sold][1] in Guntur District. The proper thing would be to utilize rice where it is grown. My definition of swadeshi is old but it is valid. Only by following it can we evolve a new kind of economics. True economics must follow ethics. Even if we fail in this we shall have succeeded.

Q. The village workers employ middle-men instead of taking the help of the villagers. Is this proper?

A. There should be direct dealings as far as possible.

[1] The source has ‘sent’.

Q. Hand-pounded rice, hand-ground flour, oil, etc., can be made in cities also. Would you call them village industries?

A. Today we seem to be going in the wrong direction in the name of dietary reform. There is not enough milk in the villages. So Dr. Tilak recommends that milk powder should be brought from Bombay. It is a terrible thing. We must never do it. We must stop the exploitation of villages by all possible means. We must persuade the villagers not to sell milk.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Dwitiya Adhiveshan (*Savli*) *ka Vivaran*, pp. 67-70

338. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING−VI [1]

SAVLI,
March 6, 1936

Q. With regard to the policy adopted by the Sangh last year under your advice on the question of the States, has not the time come, according to you, when the Sangh should concentrate more on the work in the States and make concerted efforts in the direction?

A. I have forgotten what I had agreed to. But I am quite clear about my attitude on the subject. We should no doubt make concerted efforts in the matter. But how can I say what kind of effforts should be considered concerted? Trying to do well what can be done through the State should be considered concerted efforts.

Q. Would you adopt the same policy of co-operation even in the States where Englishmen or their people have been appointed Prime Ministers, army commanders, police officials, etc., and where the administration is carried on in a large measure along British lines?

A. There can be no change in our policy even if the entire staff of the States consists of Englishmen. I can well imagine the difficulties that would arise in such a situation. But there could be no solution to it. Even if all the officials were Englishmen the administration could still be carried on in the name of the State.

Q. Is there now any change in your opinion that there should be no British interference in the affairs of the States? If not, why did you allow Shri Manibhai and Shri Jamnalalji to act as they did?

[1] Gandhiji first replied to the remaining questions from Swami Anand and then to those put by Ramnarayan Chaudhari in regard to the States.

A. Whatever Shri Jamnalalji and Shri Manilalji have done has been with my consent. But my policy in that matter is the same as it was. Through a policy I arrive at a principle; but I do not wish to restrict the field of its operation. Even in my dreams I do not wish for British interference. But those who wish for such interference under exceptional circumstances have fixed their own limits. Everyone has a right to fix his own lmit; and if somebody comes to consult me, I can even fix the limit for him keeping in mind the individual concerned. Someone asked me if, under the same circumstances, another person could do what Shri Jamnalalji was doing. I told him to come to me with Jamnalalji and then I would answer. Only when a person has full understanding of the situation, can he fix the limit after deciding the extent to which the principle can be applied in the given situation. His conduct cannot serve as an example to others. The qualification of the person also to be considered. I can say that in letting Jamnalalji or Manilalji go it was not my intention to seek interference. But even supposing that the principle was set aside, it should be attributed to my failing rather than made a precedent. He who is firm must adhere to the principle.

Violent and non-violent activities are going on side by side. God is their witness. People see only the effects. We shall see the causes. The way I have been practising non-violence appears to be a novel thing. The Jains and the Buddhists also experimented in non-violence. But that non-violence has become restricted to diet. Political and social activities also are inspired by both violent and non-violent forces. On the surface they do not appear to be different. But the difference lies in their motivation. There would be no trouble if we remember this point in everything we do. And there would be no difficulties.

Q. Can newspapers concerned only with the problems of the States be run in accordance with your policy?

A. I am afraid such newspapers are not run in accordance with my policy. But how can I convince those whose point of view is altogether different? In my view, there is no need to have different newspapers for the States. Our work will not be done through newspapers. My advice would be that we work in silence. Let us do whatever the officials of the States permit us to do. If we cannot work like this, let us withdraw. We will achieve in the States what we achieve in British India. It is like the rule of three. The States' people are slaves

of slaves. Those who work according to my idea cannot be slaves. But those who follow the path of non-violence must proceed after great thought. Whatever we may be able to do there must be done in such a manner that no British interference would be possible at all. India will not attain swaraj through agitation carried on in the States. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad once said that the whole country was a gurudwara. That very moment it occurred to me that the whole country was a prison. And the States are doubly so. The facilities available in the States are those available in a jail.

I wish to tell you a couple of things. I spoke without authority earlier, I shall speak without authority now also. I heard with a sense of pain that the committee for Gandhian thought[1] which had been formed has ceased to exist. Since it had not come into existence as a result of any resolution of the Sangh but voluntarily, it was within its right to wind itself up. But I hear that the committee has broken up because I was not in favour of it. But I could have been consulted. I was just here. If anybody says that I desire this and I desire that, do not believe it. It is my misfortune that my words can be interpreted in two or more ways. I do try to speak and write a language from which only one meaning can be drawn. But language is an imperfect instrument. And then I am no master of language. Where shall I find the power to put down in writing all that is in my mind? My words affect different people in different ways. I did not mean to say that you should not propagate my ideas. I do not believe it is [your] duty to explain my views. But I do have the vanity to believe that my ideas are right. And because of this I am also keen on explaining them to my colleagues. I possess the faculty of speech also. And that necessarily results in some propaganda. I also wish that my ideas are propagated. But I had a feeling that you were being pretentious. I wanted to avoid it. It was not that I did not want the committee to be formed. The committee could have been formed, but it should have been as I wanted it to be. I am bound to express my views so long as I am alive. What then is the harm in forming such a committee? This committee can be instrumental in propagating my thoughts and my words. So I wish the committee is formed again and functions within its limits. Is it ever possible that any work with which Kakasaheb is associated would be considered worthless by me? I had no apprehension that the committee would do any wrong. But why

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Gandhi Seva Sangh Meeting-III".

should I not caution you? And even if one believes that I wanted to undo the work of the committee, why did other members join me in undoing the work and why did it become necessary for Kakasaheb to carry it all on his own?

MAHADEV DESAI: Who gave you the information that the committee had broken up? It has only been adjourned. It can become active any time it is desired.

A. I am making these observations from something that I have heard. It is a happy thing if it has not broken up. Kakasaheb gave me the assurance that he was to do the work all by himself. Now the committee should give him its co-operation.

Another thing which I want to say relates to the functioning of the Sangh. When I said that every worker of the Sangh should work with the pickaxe during the day and at night there should be discussion for some two or three hours, I did not mean that the Sangh should be wound up. You are so many and you are also efficient; I would, therefore, say nothing on such an occasion. I am old and close to death. My memory also has grown weak. Hence, I say whatever I can remember. What I said has been only to encourage you in your work, and your progress. So do not think I want to criticize, rather think that I want to explain something to you. Try to learn something new from it. The Sangh is proceeding on right lines today. I am not so completely deprived of my reasoning as to suggest its winding up at such a time.

There is a new point, but I shall deal with it if there is any time left. I shall speak about the next session. Let the next session be held at a place which is not so far away from a railway station that one cannot reach there either on foot or by a bullock-cart. As for me it does not matter if the place is even fifty miles away. But then the condition should be that everyone should walk to the place. The luggage too should be taken in a bullock-cart, not a motor-car. If some handicapped persons like me do not come, let them stay away. But I shall definitely come. You may provide for me a bullock-cart or carry me on your shoulders. I shall not fight shy of either. We have to go and put that village into shape. Let us select areas where there is no doctor or engineer. If there is paucity of water, let us dig wells. If there are no cows there, let us get cows for them. I would even insist that we should drink only cow's milk. Let us not give up milk on any account. If I pour out my heart to you about *goseva*, I could make you cry and break down myself. My heart is so full of sorrow.

I would insist that we should have only cows. How can we serve India if we cannot insist even on this much? When one calls me obstinate I feel that I have some kind of insistence. And all that I insist upon is that we should not take buffalo's milk but only cow's milk and should never give up milk. I shall be content even to die while insisting on it. Let us find out a village where cow's milk will be available, where it would be possible to procure green vegetables, pure water, etc., and start our preparations right from now on. Let us not be worried if the place is far away. We shall serve the people living nearby and get new experiences every moment. I have placed before you what according to me is the most correct point of view. If the session is to be held, let us start the preparations right from today. Let us make a close study of the village. We have been passing through a long period of degradation. We have no strength to raise ourselves. All the work of the Congress is not being carried on according to my wishes. When I say this, I am not criticizing the Congress. But will they ever hold the Congress session in an obscure place?

Even if we can get eleven months to make our preparations for the next session it would not be too long. The place should provide enough work for the workers. If there is dearth of cows we should bring some from the surrounding areas. We should look after these cows while we are there and if the people of the village are prepared to keep them we may leave these cows with them. Otherwise we should take them back.

If we work in this manner we shall derive greater benefit than from a long speech. I am sayng all this from the point of view of the purest ideal. This is not a matter of money. It is a matter of intelligence. The session is to be held twelve months hence. I can invite you to Segaon. But I am not allowed to do so. Whoever desires to invite the session, must do so within a month. We ourselves must perform the functions of the doctor, engineer, mason, carpenter, etc. I cannot understand how you can put up with buffalo's milk. Arrangements should, therefore, be made for cow's milk and green vegetables.

I wish to mention to you another subject. First I thought that Vinoba should discuss it. But since I have some time, I shall myself mention it. It is my nature to share a good thing with everyone. This thing arose many years back. Chhaganlal may be a witness to this. I was then in the midst of the Zulu War. Chhaganlal can tell you the

year.

CHHAGANLAL GANDHI: 1906.

Yes, it was during that time and a great thing it was. Look, this is how the Divine play goes on. I realized there that one who wishes to serve the world must practise *brahmacharya.* A married couple should also observe *brahmacharya,* by which I mean cessation of reproductive activity. I believe that those who procreate cannot be called *brahmacharis.* Hence I placed this ideal of *brahmacharya* before Chhaganlal and others. I was quite young then and a young person can do anything. If I ask all of you to practise *brahmacharya,* would that be practicable? It is only an ideal. So I myself preside over many marrriages. While laying down the ideal, I do see that people will indulge in pleasure. I was under the impression that *brahmacharya* and procreation were contradictory.

But on Thursday Vinoba brought to me a problem. It was a quotation from the Shastras. I had not realized its significance earlier. It has filled my heart with a new light. I lost myself in pondering over it. I am still under its spell. The scriptural interpretation of *brahmacharya* is perfect. An avowed *brahmachari* is one who has practised it since birth, who has not lost semen even in a dream. But I did not know why a person who cohabits for the sake of procreation was considered a *brahmachari.* Yesterday this great truth flashed on my mind. The couple which, in a state of marriage, withdraw into privacy and cohabit for the purpose of procreation are *brahmacharis* in the right sense of the word. What we call marriage today is but its outward form. What we call pleasure is only dissipation. Although I maintained that the motive behind marriage was procreation, what I meant to convey was that neither party should dread having children or make efforts to avoid this natural consequence of the sex act in which both should be willing partners.

I did not realize that it had a greater purpose. But this also was not the perfect marriage. The perfect marriage is founded on *brahmacharya.* When can a marriage be called perfect? In a perfect marriage a couple may have children when they are necessary and cohabit only when they need a child. That is to say, procreation ought to be looked upon as a duty and sexual union resorted to for that purpose only. Apart from this they should never engage in the sex act. Nor should they allow themselves privacy. If a man controls his semen, except on the occasion of such purposeful cohabitation, he is

as good as an avowed *brahmachari*. Just imagine, how many occasions for such cohabitation can there be in a lifetime? In the life of a healthy and virile man or woman, there may be only one such occasion. Why should such persons not be looked upon as avowed *brahmacharis?* This truth, of which I had only a glimpse earlier, is now as clear as daylight. Those who are married should think of it. I had mentioned this subject earlier also; but I had not so much faith then. I used to think that it was impracticable. Today I think it is practicable. It might be different in the animal world. But it must be a rule in the married life of man, that no couple should procreate without the need for a child nor should they cohabit without the object of procreation.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Dwitiya Adhiveshan (Savli) Ka Vivaran, pp. 78-82

339. A CONTRAST

Savli is a little village in the District of Chanda, C.P. It has a large Harijan population, and Harijans are for the most part devoted to khadi production under the aegis of the Maharashtra Charkha Sangh. Member of the Gandhi Seva Sangh and some other workers met there between 29th February and 6th March. In the Hindi notices sent to the invitees, among the things they were to bring were lantern, writing material, postcards, envelopes, postage stamps and soap. The notices mentioned that it was difficult to procure any milk in Savli and cow's milk was practically unprocurable. Those who would take no ghee other than cow's ghee were advised to bring their own supply. On reaching Savli, it was further discovered that for the 300 men and women gathered there, milk had to be brought all the way from Chanda, a distance of 34 miles, and fresh vegetables from Nagpur, a distance of over 120 miles.

Savli is a typical village. The difficulties mentioned above are to be met with in most of the villages of this land.

India worships the cow, and cow's milk is unprocurable in the majority of our villages! She has a climate fit enough everywhere for vegetable growth, and fresh vegetables are not to be found in many of her villages! It is no wonder that writing material and stationery are scarce in the thousands of our impoverished villages. The villagers are

mostly illiterate and those who can write have not money enough to invest in writing material or stamps. It is profitless to find out whether the villages of India were always what they are today. If they were never better it is a reflection upon the ancient culture in which we take so much pride. But if they were never better, how is it that they have survived centuries of decay which we see going round us and of which Savli is but a type?

The task before every lover of the country is how to prevent this decay or, which is the same thing, how to reconstruct the villages of India so that it may be as easy for anyone to live in them as it is supposed to be in the cities. Indeed, it is *the* task before every patriot. It may be that the villages are beyond redemption, that rural civilization has had its day and that the seven hundred thousand villages have to give place to seven hundred well-ordered cities supporting a population not of three hundred millions but thirty. If such is to be India's fate, even that won't come in a day. It must take time to wipe out a large number of villages and villagers and transform the remainder into cities and citizens.

However, those who believe in the possibility of village reconstruction have to follow out their programme logically and truthfully and not be satisfied with any make-believe. For them Savli is an eye-opener. Any village ought to be able easily to accommodate a party of 300 men and women with perfect comfort and give them fresh open air, fragrant grass and good rich milk from healthy cows and fresh vegetables and fruit in addition. Surely there is something radically wrong if many of these things have to be brought from cities.

There is no trick of magic that can bring about this change overnight. But with patience and perseverance, the programme of reconstruction can be carried out without much difficulty. But nothing can be done if ardent workers do not settle down in villages with the fixed determination of reconstructing their villages in the right manner.

Harijan, 7-3-1936

340. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

March 8, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Your letter was waiting for me when I arrived here.

The weather is not hot but there is nothing cold about it. It rained near Jhansi. We are all well. Ba and Navin[1] are the additions to the party. Puri too was with us.

I sent a wire as soon as we arrived.[2] I hope you received it.

You may be proud of the frilling to the 'uppers' miscalled shawls or scarves. I am proud of your spinning. For spinning is real art. And for you—a 'novice'— the effort is quite worthy. There, once in a way, even a rebel may receive a compliment

from a loving

TYRANT

[PS.]

You will drive directly to the Harijan quarters on 11th, D.V.

From the original: C.W 3565. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6374

341. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

March 8, 1936

I see something troubles your mind, though you may try to conceal it. You may certainly come according to your wish, provided you get the permission. It will be the greatest service you render to Jayaprakash if you lay before him your correct position with the utmost firmness and calm of mind. I am afraid you have not fully stated your case to Jayaprakash and if you have, it did not make any impression on him, that is, he does not take the statement to be correct. He will calm down without doubt, if he is convinced that you have in you no such thing as sexual desire. Your freedom from desire should put out the fire of his, just as water puts out any fire. Why should you be afraid and lose peace of mind, when you do have faith in God? At the time of going you made me a promise not to get

[1] The telegram sent by Gandhiji on his arrival at Delhi is not traceable.

[2] Son of Vrajlal Gandhi

disturbed, and you ought to keep it. Keep writing to me . . . .[1] Take care to be true to the promise, remain calm and undisturbed, preserve your health, come if and when you can. We shall be here for about fifteen days.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

342. MESSAGE TO GURUKUL CONVOCATION

[Before *March* 9, 1936][2]

While giving his blessings to the outgoing graduates, Sardar Patel at first read out a message from Mahatma Gandhi sent to the outgoing graduates in which he had asked them to lead a life of truth, purity and service and to never forget that the institution to which they were bidding farewell was founded by the late Swami Shraddhanand who died while serving the nation to his last breath.

The anniversary of the Gurukul concluded when a message from Mahatma Gandhi asking the public to give liberal donations to the Gurukul was read out by Sardar Patel. In that message, Mahatmaji had expected everybody present there to fill the coffers of the Gurukul which was run by contributions from the public.

The Hindustan Times, 11-3-1936

343. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

DELHI,
March 9, 1936

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

So you return leaving Kamala for ever in Europe. And yet her spirit was never out of India and will always be your precious treasure as it will be of many of us. I shall never forget the final talk that wetted our four eyes.

Heavy responsibility awaits you here. It is laid on you because you are well able to bear it. I dare not come to you, as I would have if my body had regained its original elasticity. There is nothing organically wrong with me. The body has even gained in weight. But it has lost the vitality it seemed to have only three months ago. Strange

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] The convocation was held on March 9, 1936, at Kangri.

to say, I never felt any illness. And yet the body had become weak and the instrument registered high blood-pressure. I have to be careful.

I am in Delhi to rest for a few days. If your original plan had been carried out I would have remained in Wardha for our meeting. It would have been quieter there for you. But if it is the same thing to you, we may meet in Delhi where I should be till 23rd instant at least. But if you prefer Wardha I can return there earlier. If you come to Delhi, you could stay with me in the Harijan quarters newly built in Kingsway—quite a good place. You will tell me, when you can, the date of our meeting. Rajendra Babu and Jamnalalji are or will be with you. Vallabhbhai also would have been but we all thought it would be better if he stayed away. The other two have gone there not for political discussion but for condolence. The political discussion will take place when we have all met and when you have finished domestic work.

I hope Indu bore well the grief of Kamala's death and the almost immediate separation from you. What is her address?

May everything be well with you.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers,1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

344. LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL

HARIJAN COLONY,
KINGSWAY, DELHI
March 9, 1936

DEAR SIR MIRZA,[1]

Now that I am free to attend to correspondence to a limited extent, I write this to acknowledge your kind invitation which I treasure. You know how I love to be with you and under your care. But I do not know how I shall fare during the hot weather and where fate will take me. For the moment I can only say, the wish is there.

My love to you all.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2179

[1] Dewan of Mysore

345. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 9, 1936

CHI.NARANDAS,

Isn't there anyone else at the Ashram who can also go into Bhanushanker's account? We can roughly guess the year. Bhanushanker should be able to give the exact year at any rate.

We reached Delhi yesterday. Kanti, Navin and Kanu are with us. All are having a happy time. I brought Navin here for the sake of his health. This month is always cool here.

I believe I shall be here at least for a fortnight. I feel I am in fairly good health. Krishnadas's marriage was solemnized with great simplicity.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8484. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

346. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

March 9, 1936

CHI. NARAHARI,

I hope Sumitra is doing well. See that she writes in ink.

I am sure Ramji does not cause any trouble. The goshala must be working well.

I wish to spend a fortnight in Delhi. But let us see what happens.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9092

347. LETTER TO JAIJI PETIT

March 9, 1936

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. God has been putting you to a severe test and you are going through it very well, which also is due to His grace. There is a verse which we have been reciting here during the daily

prayers. It says, that which goes by the name of adversity is not such; nor is that prosperity which goes by that name. To forget God is adversity; ever to think to Him is prosperity. It is good that Hira is with you.

Do write a few lines to me whenever you think it fit. Are you at all likely to pay a visit to the country?

I am quite well, though perhaps I may not now be able to put in the amount of work I used to formerly. I, of course, do need rest. At present we are in Delhi. Ba is with me. Probably we shall be back in Wardha in a fortnight.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3155

348. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

March 9, 1936

CHI. VANAMALA,

You must have learnt from Anandi why I could not speak to you. I had very much wished to hear from you all the news of Sumitra, but does God always let all our wishes be fulfilled?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5785. Also C.W. 3008. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

349. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

March 9, 1936

CHI. SUMITRA,

How is it that you do not write to me? You must be enjoying yourself. Do play well and do study well, but understand that all work or all play is of no real use. Can you read this letter? Grandmother is here with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5786. Also C.W. 3009. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

350. LETTER TO DRAUPADI SHARMA

March 9, 1936

CHI. DRAUPADI,

I have a letter from Sharma from which I learn that you are not keeping well. What is this? I am writing this, for I am now permitted to do some writing. As I am in Delhi it would be fine if you could come up to see me. Amtussalaam is of course here already

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, facing p. 192

351. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

DELHI,
March 10, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter. Your experiences are interesting. You must not count the days of my return. I shall do so as early as I can, especially as Jawaharlal is not coming before 3rd April.[1] This was a false alarm. He is coming tomorrow.

The weather here is still decidedly cool. Amtul Salaam is much better than what she was there. So is Brijkishan.

I hope you were able to get a good mare.

You are much below your normal weight. You must put on more. Do not hesitate to increase the quantity of milk or ghee or both and anything else you may need. You must put on more muscle.

I am keeping well and am getting plenty of quiet.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6323. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9789

[1] The following two sentences were added by Gandhiji after completing the letter.

352. LETTER TO BACHUBHAI B. RAMDAS

March 10, 1936

CHI.BACHUBHAI,

Gangabehn has written to me about you. I think that Vaidya Jugatram's advice to you is right. For the present at any rate your diet should be milk and fruit. You may take glucose with it. At present it will be good not to take anythng made of when or other cereals. In place of milk, you may take churned curds, which will be easier to digest and will cause no gas. A healthy cow's milk if taken fresh soon after milking does not cause any gas; this may be taken in small quantities. Instead of taking milk and fruit together, you should take them at intervals separtely. For the present, take only juicy fruits, such as oranges, *mosambis,* grapes, pomegranate, pinapple and papaya. Take care that the curds are not sour. If Jugatram agrees, you would do well to take about ten bulbs of garlic. Recently I have heard much about the good that garlic does. It appears to help much in the digestion of milk. Dr. Talvalkar's brother prepares an essence of garlic. In my recent illness, I could take twenty-five big bulbs of garlic a day. I do not take them now as there is no need to do so. One may add glucose to milk and to fruit juice. Do not take buffalo's milk. It is likely to prove heavy for you. If you find even cow's milk heavy, have a goat at your place and take its milk.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9719

353. A LETTER

March 11, 1936

CHI. RANCHHODLAL,

Ever since I left Ahmedabad I have been intending to write to you but could not, as it was left out or forgotten at the time of writing the few letters that I am permitted. Today, however, early in the morning I made a note of doing this. The reason for the letter is the pain caused to Bhai Mavalankar, who had put his entire trust in you and held you in great respect. Now, that confidence being no longer there, he writes to Sardar that you have yourself given him cause to

lose his faith in you, as you neither consulted him nor so much as informed him of your going to Bombay. He feels aggrieved in the matter, has even begun doubting the purity of your motives, and repents that he put so much trust in you. You should explain to me all that has happened, as Mavalankar writes that he helped you in the nick of time trustfully though several friends had warned him against you. You should remove the doubts in Mavalankar's mind and see that you do not lose such an open-hearted and disinterested friend as he. You should not lose the faith your creditors put in you. No matter if you have to turn a penniless beggar, you ought not to lose your credit for truthfulness. I shall be waiting for your reply by return of post. I hope Motibehn is doing well. I shall be here for the present at any rate.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

354. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

DELHI
March 11, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I trust you get my letters regularly. The last of your letters was from Sitab Diyara. I have received the book[1] written by Jayaprakash and have been reading it. Tell him that I shall send him my opinion after finishing the reading. It is exceedingly cold today and it is windy. Dr. Ansari examined me today.The blood-pressure was 156/94, but last evening it was higher. The doctor, therefore, thinks that I should still be moderate in work and observe the restrictions. It is very good that at Sitab Diyara you get milk [from the cow] at home. You should increase the quantity as much as you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarti: G.N. 3459

[1] *Why socialism*?

355. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

[*March 12, 1936*][1]

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

I read your book carefully and liked it although the attack on me which it carries betrays considerable ignorance regarding me. That can be removed but I am enchanted with your study. after these preliminaries I may say that I find in it no remedy for our problem. Your solution does not suit the conditions in this country at least for the present. The goal you aim at is almost the same as that desired by me and many Congressmen. But our method of attaining it differs from yours. Your method in my opinion is not practicable in this country. I am not so attached to my own method that I cannot see the merits of anyone else's. But I am unable to appreciate your solution in spite of all sincere effort.

Your speech at the Bengal session had been travelling with me and I read it only today. I like your resolution regarding the committee of experts. Have you anyone in mind who can do justice to the work? Have you taken any further step in this respect? Your book has given rise to many thought with more to come but I cannot write anything just now on that topic. Prabha writes that you are totally negligent of your health; this is not good.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

356. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

DELHI,
March 12, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I have had no letters from you of late. I wrote to you a brief note yesterday. I write this letter today as I wish to send the letter I have written to Jayaprakash on his book. Perhaps you are both at

[1] This was sent along with letter to Prabhavati; *vide* the following item.

Allahabad by now. Jamnalalji, for his part,has already gone there. Rajen Babu too was there. Jayaprakash's book is worthy of your reading and observation. Some of his ideas are wrong, if mine are right. Is a person great just because all want to follow him? Rajkumari is expected to arrive today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3460

357. LETTER TO SHANKERBHAI B. PATEL

DELHI,
March 12, 1936

CHI. SHANKERBHAI,

I indeed made inquiries of you all, but none of you turned up. It was certainly good that narrow caste bonds were broken.[1]

SHRI SHANKERBHAI
JAMSI VILLA, ELLIS BRIDGE
AHMEDABAD, B.B. & C.I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4088. Also C.W. 51. Courtesy: Mangalabehn B. Desai

358. LETTER TO MANGALABEHN B. DESAI

[*March 12, 1936*][2]

CHI. MANGALA,

A child may turn a bad child, but parents can never change; and hence I offer blessings to both of you. But you know the conditions going with them. Render service and bring honour to the Ashram. Life is not intended for enjoyment, but for service to others, and service is impossible without self-restraint. Hence, may you both be self-restrained and live long.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4088. Also C.W. 51. Courtesy: Mangalabehn B. Desai

[1] The addressee's daughter Mangala was married outside the caste.
[2] This and the preceding item are written on the same sheet.

359. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

DELHI,
March 13, 1936

MY DEAR ANAND,

Of course you come when you can. Only here in the Harijan colony you may be crowded out. There will be an influx of visitors presently. And of me you will have precious little in the way of talking. Hope you are both getting well.

Love.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

360. BIRTH-CONTROL [*−I*]

A co-worker[1] who is a careful reader of my writings was disturbed to read that I was likely to approve of the 'safe period' method of birth-control. I endeavoured to make it clear to the friend that the safe period method did not repel me as did the use of contraceptives and that it was open largely only to married couples. But the discussion of the topic led us into much deeper waters than either of us had expected. The fact that my friend was repelled by the safe period method as much as by that of contraceptives showed to me that he believed in the possibility of ordinary persons practising the restraint imposed by the *smritis*, i.e., that the union between husband and wife was permitted only when the parties really desired to have children. Whilst I knew the rule I had never regarded it in the light that I began to do at the discussion. All these long years I had regarded it as a counsel of perfection not to be carried out literally and that so long as married couples carried on intercourse by mutual consent but without special regard to the desire for progeny, they were carrying out the purpose of marriage without breaking any positive injunction of the *smriti*. But the new light in which I viewed the *smriti* text was a revelation to me. I understood now as I never had done before the statement that married people, who strictly observed the

[1] Vinoba Bhave

injunction of the *smritis*, were as much *brahmacharis* as those who were never married and lived chaste lives.

The sole object of sexual intercourse according to the new light was the desire for progeny, never gratification of the sexual instinct. Simple gratification of the instinct would be counted according to this view of marriage as lust. This may appear to be a harsh expression to use for our enjoyment which has hitherto been regarded as innocent and legitimate. But I am not dealing with custom. I am dealing with the science of marriage as propounded by Hindu sages. Their presentation may be faulty, it may be altogether wrong. But for one like me who believes in several *smriti* texts as inspired and based on experience, there is no escape from a full acceptance of their meaning. I know no other way of finding the truth of things and testing certain old texts in accordance with their full meaning no matter how hard the test may appear and how harsh its deductions may sound.

In the light of what I have said above, birth-controls by contraceptives and the like is a profound error. I write thus with a full sense of my responsibility. I have great regard for Mrs. Margaret Sanger and her followers. She impressed me much by her great zeal for her cause.[1] I know that she has great sympathy for the women who suffer because they have to bear the burden of carrying and rearing unwanted children. I know also that this method of birth-control has the support of many Protestant divines, scientists, learned men and doctors, many of whom I have the hounour of knowing personally and for whom I entertain high regard. But I should be false to my God who is Truth and nothing but Truth, if I concealed my belief from the reader or these great advocates of the method. Indeed, if I hid my belief, I should never discover my error if my present belief is one. Moreover, its declaration is due to those many men and women who accept my guidance and advice in many moral problems including this one concerning birth-control.

That birth requires to be regulated and controlled is common cause between the advocates of contraceptives and the like. The difficulty of control through self-restraint is not to be denied. Yet there is no other way of attaining the end, if mankind is to fulfil its destiny. It is my innermost conviction that if the method under discussion gains universal acceptance, mankind will suffer moral

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Margaret Sanger", 3/4-12-1935.

deterioration. This I say in spite of the evidence to the contrary that is often produced by the advocates of the method.

I believe I have no superstition in me. Truth is not truth merely because it is ancient. Nor is it necessarily to be regarded with suspicion because it is ancient. There are some fundamentals of life which cay not be lightly given up because they are difficult of enforcement in one's life.

Birth-control through self-control is no doubt difficult. But no one has yet been known seriously to dispute its efficacy and even superiority over the use of contraceptives.

Then, I feel that full of acceptance of the implication of the injuction of the Shastras as to the strictly confined use of the sexual act makes the observance of self-control much easier than if one regards the act itself as a source of supreme enjoyment. The function of the organs of generation is merely to generate progeny obviously of the highest type possible for a married couple. This can and should only take place when both parties desire, not sexual union but progeny which is the result of such union. Desire for such union, therefore, without the desire for progeny, must be considered unlawful and should be restrained.

The possibility of such control for the ordinary man will be examined in the next issue.[1]

Harijan, 14-3-1936

361. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

KINGSWAY, DELHI,
March 14, 1936

DEAR SATIS BABU,

Profulla[2] gave me a sorrowful account of you and Hemprabha[3]. He says both of you are ailing and full of anxiety. I had a brief card from Hemprabha in reply to my inquiry.

Do please give me a full account of your condition and doings. Both of you are devotees of *Gita* and *Ramayana*. Of anxiety therefore

[1] *Vide* "Birth Control-II", 21-3-1936.
[2] Profulla Chandra Ghosh
[3] Addressee's wife

you should have none. From ailments we can hope to be free, if we would take reasonable care ourselves.

Throughout my illness, I have never ceased to think of you. And how is the mad *pujari* of yours? How is Arun[1]? Where is he? What is he doing? What is Charu doing? What about the Harijan work? I know nothing of your many activities.

I am well and hope to be in Delhi till 23rd instant at least.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1628

362. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

March 14, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Your second letter is before me. I hope you received mine[2]. I shall try to think of your message when Jawaharlal comes. He will be here on 17th and will stay at the Harijan colony.

Of course every intimate contact with the real villagers in their villages gives us new knowledge and new hope, though it also shows us the difficulties in our path. My heart is there. What is my effort will end in I do not know.

I think I told you what Dr. Ansari found. He is satisfied with the condition but he is firmly of opinion that I have to go slow yet for a while. I am having all the rest I need.

Rajkumari is here and sitting by my side as before.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6315. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9781

[1] Addressee's son

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 28-2-1936.

363. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

March 14, 1936

CHI. MANILAL,

After I had written the letters today, I remembered your inquiry regarding the diet for diabetes. There should be no starch and no sugar in the diet; so one ought not to take bananas, potatoes, rice, wheat, jaggery, sugar, etc. One may take a little of porridge made of broken wheat—such as remains after the flour is sifted out. Salt may be added to the porridge. Or, one may grind the sifted wheat pieces into flour and make chapates out of it. One may take milk, curds, leafy vegetables, green peas, gourd, and sour fruits but no sweet fruits. The main food should be milk and vegetables, and this should restore one's health fully.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4848

364. LETTER TO DRAUPADI SHARMA

March 14, 1936

CHI. DRAUPADI,

I have your letter which I am sending on to Sharma. My [stay][1] in Delhi is certain till the [23rd][2]. I would like it if you could visit me in the mean while. I am keeping well but cannot tackle much work. I have strength but there is the doctor's veto.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh,* between pp. 192 and 193

[1] From the printed version in the source

[2] *Ibid*

365. LETTER TO H.L. SHARMA

March 14, 1936

CHI. SHARMA,

I had your letter which prompted me to send for Draupadi and here is her reply. But I have repeated my invitation. You are gaining good experience. It will be nice if you have nothing further to learn from any institution after you come here. You may remain there as long as your knowledge remains incomplete in any respect. As for my opinion, I hold that nature cure requires a different kind of training though a complete knowledge of anatomy and chemistry is of course most essential.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 236 and 237

366. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 14, 1936

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

The diary must be filled in every day. As we eat daily, so must we pray daily and fill in the diary. Sometimes food has to be dispensed with but the diary is indispensable as long as we have any strength, and prayer too cannot be given up as long as the heart is pure.

If you start on garlic you will be totally relieved of wind and black pepper will become unnecessary. Partaking of garlic and milk by way of medicine need not constitute a violation of *brahmacharya*. In the case of the weak, the proclivity to passion tends to grow and also results in involuntary discharge. Such men require milk and the like. My opinion regarding milk as expressed in my *Guide* to *Health*[1] has certainly undergone some change.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4285

[1] An English translation of a seriees of Gujarati articles on general knowledge about health published in *Indian Opinion* from January 4, 1913 to August 16, 1913.

367. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

DELHI,
March 15, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

I read your letter to Mahadev. You sound as if your staying in Maganwadi was a punishment. If you have knowingly stayed there, you must consider it your duty to stay there like that. One who follows religion with proper understanding always finds great joy before which other pleasures are insignificant. Other pleasures cannot ever be called joys. This joy does not depend on anything external. Hence, outside worries cannot ever diminish that joy. You will have passed the test only when you derive such joy from your pursuit of duty.

None of you is going to be inconvenienced if I can manage to go to Segaon. But, as you say, when that 'if' is removed, everything will fall in place. Hence, instead of thinking about the future steps let one step be enough for the present. Thus, you will find contentment. When one step is taken, the next step will be right before you, is there any doubt about it?

I understand about the Kumarappa brothers. It is sufficient that you have done your duty. Congratulations on the recovery of Nanavati[1]. Are your keeping well? Everything is fine here.

Blessing from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

368. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

DELHI,
March 16, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Your third letter has arrived. I am delighted you have a horse. Never mind the cost. They will allocate it as they think best. You should do everything gently and take rest while the sun is blazing. All

[1] Amritlal Nanavati

work before 10 a.m. and after 4 p.m. during summer. You should take more fruit than you do. Cold bandage on the head is a necessity. Earth retains the cold longer than the mere wet bandage.

The weather is now getting steadily warmer. It is nearing 3 p.m. and I have nothing to cover the body. I can bear the *pankha* [1].

I thought I did see your dictionaries in Wardha. But I will inquire and see that you get dictionaries.

Yes, the more you can interest Jajuji, the better it will be for village work.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6316. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9782

369. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI [2]

March 16, 1936

MURABBI BHAI,

I had decided in the presence of Kashi[3] to write to you regarding Chi. Krishnadas's marriage. Yesterday I remembered the decision which I had forgotten because of my change of place. Such a marriage must be the consequence of the merits of the couple and their elders. The ceremony was performed by a true Brahmin, Ravishankar Maharaj, amidst the blessings of numerous loving friends. Instead of Krishnadas having to go to the place of the bride's father, the latter came with his daughter to meet Krishnadas at his place of duty. The bride wore a white sari woven from yarn spun by Krishnadas himself. For other ornaments she had garlands of yarn spun by Kashi and me. Vinoba, Krishnadas's guru, was of course present, and the very next day the couple joined the guru in doing their work of service. The bride did not have even a grain of gold as a wedding ring. The expense on the wedding is not likely to have been even so much as two rupees. I found the bride truly gentle. Never had I witnessed such a wedding before. The other marriages I attended

[1] Fan
[2] Gandhiji's father's brother's son
[3] Addressee's daughter-in-law, wife of Chhaganlal Gandhi

had been simple enough, but nowhere else did I find the holy atmosphere of this one. I take it that this information will give satisfaction to you both.

Respectful pranams from

MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

370. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 16, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

The enclosed letter[1] is for Father to read. I do know that all of you will of course do your best at the time of Purushottam's marriage. However, don't circumstances sometimes overcome us, just as we sometimes overcome them? The duel between destiny and human effort must continue.

I have asked for the dates from Bhanushanker. Are you sure we did not have his account in the ledger-books? Or, it might be that the sums were credited to the Goseva Sangh's account or some other account. I am here up to the 23rd at any rate.

Blessings form

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati; M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8485. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

371. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

March 16, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

You must have got my letter. This I am writing on purpose. There are bound to be some Hindi-Engligh and English-Hindi dictionaries on the bookshelf. Give them to Mirabehn whether they belong to her or to Prabhavati. If the dictionaries are not to be found among the books, ask Ramjilal to find them out and give them to

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

Mirabehn. On my return I shall arrange to get new ones for her and we shall return the borrowed ones.

Blessings form

BAPU

[PS.]

Deliver the enclosed letters yourself.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9338. Also C.W. 6613. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

372. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

March 16, 1936

CHI. KAKA,

I have your letter. It is likely that I may not reach Wardha on the 28th or the 29th. Shankerlal insists that I should go to Lucknow[1]. The date [fixed] is the 28th. I have no idea what I ought to do. Let me see where destiny takes me. However, I do see that this creates confusion for you. For the present I am helpless, but I will inform you as soon as I am able to decide the date. Certainly, keep to the 28th or the 29th, if you can manage without me. Fix your own programme while I am touring. I am of course sending a telegram to Bombay today.

Blessings form

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10894

373. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI

[After *March 16, 1936*][2]

I marvel at your Urdu handwriting. Milk should not be given up though sweets and ghee can be dispensed with.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 3265

[1] To open the All-India Village Industries Association Exhibition

[2] The letter is in reply to the addressee's letter of March 16, 1936.

374. LETTER TO DR. SHUMSHERE SINGH

March 17, 1936

MY DEAR SHUMMY,

Amrit has given me your message and something more ¾ her tears. She felt most miserable as she was labouring through the message.

Amrit has told me so many things about your great love for her that I could and would not believe that a coolness had sprung up between you two and that too owing to my having entered Amrit's life. She tells me that my way of looking at life had begun of affect hers as early as 1915. For me her affection and co-operation are a precious treasure. But I want neither at the cost of abiding love between you two. You alone, I am aware, have [stood] by her through thick and through thin. My own connection with you all must, if anything, tighten that bond, never weaken it. So you will tell me what you will have me to do. This I can say that I shall never be guilty of weaning her from her present public activites. I would love to make them purer, i.e., I would have her to work in a much more detached manner than she has hitherto done. But in all my doings about Amrit, you shall be my guide. If ever I differ from you I shall tell you. But where the supreme good of Amrit is a common cause there can be no difference. She is too tender a flower to be allowed to wither.

You must look after yourself and her village work.

Love.

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

375. LETTER TO PYARELAL

DELHI,

March 17, 1936

CHI. PYARELAL,

I do not understand your behaviour. I am extremely pained. I shall be relieved if you can explain things to me. What are you doing, with whom and for what purpose? Is there any thought behind it? If

you wish to see me I shall find the time. I shall be thankful even if you write. Have you abandoned everyone? You have brought shame to the training I gave you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

376. A LETTER

March 17, 1936

It is no strain for me to write to you. Dr. Ansari has allowed considerable latitude, I assure you. I am going very slowly and very cheerfully. But no amount of care would keep this body intact when its time-limit is reached. We merely infer, and probably after the event, that it happened because of such and such circumstances. But our inference is based on probability. Hence I think we should not worry about our own likes, or those of dear ones.

Mahadev has smelt in your letter a dislike for him. I have combated the view but I know you will tell me frankly whatever the matter is. Your letter does exclude him. Your conversation led me to think that you wanted me to be with you all alone. Gosibehn spoke to me differently. She gave me details about the place, too. I could understand your first proposal.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

377. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

DELHI,
March 18, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

This time you were late in writing to me; you should not let that happen. What could keep you so busy? You ought to write a postcard at least.

Jawaharlal arrived yesterday. I shall have to go to Lucknow for the Exhibition so as to reach there on the 28th. My idea is to leave Lucknow on the 29th for Wardha. However, one never can tell. The rest Kanti will write.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3468

378. MY IDEA OF LIVING IN A VILLAGE[1]

DELHI,
March 19, 1936

If Ba desires then with her, otherwise I would live alone in a hut in Segaon.

Mirabehn's [hut] may not suffice for me.

As little expense as possible should be incurred in building the hut and in no case should it exceed Rs. 100.

Whatever help I might need, I should obtain from Segaon.

I sould pay visits to Maganwadi as often as necessary. For that I should use whatever vehicle I can get.

Mira . . . [2] should stay with . . . . [3]She must not give her time to attend personally on, me but she can help me in my village work.

If necessary, Mahadev, Kanti and others might stay in the village. For them a simple hut should be erected.

Along with this, I will continue my other outside activities.

Unless there is some special reason, people from outside should not come to see me at Segaon. They may see me only at Maganwadi on the days fixed for my going there.

Whenever there is need for me to go out. . . .[4]

I firmly . . . [5]by doing . . . [6]the work of village industries will gain momentum and the attention of the people will be directed to village handicrafts. By doing this, full use could be made of Mirabehn's great capacities. And Mahadev, Kanti and others will also get a novel and good experience.

Whatever defects there may be in my way of thinking will come to the surface on my lving in a village. Other people will, no doubt, get encouragement.

It is not. . . [7]to stay at Segaon alone, but Segaon seems to have

[1] This was sent to Jamnalal Bajaj.
[2] Illegible
[3] *ibid*
[4] *ibid*
[5] *ibid*
[6] *ibid*
[7] Illegible

come to my mind in the natural course. But, if there is any other more suitable village, I am prepared to consider it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2977

379. LETTER TO ANASUYA BAJAJ

March 19, 1936

CHI. GODAVARI,[1]

Your letter. You do not tell me the time you get up. Sugar is unnecessary and can be even harmful if taken in large quantities. To chew sugar-cane when in season is preferable to sugar and so is jaggery.

Blessings form

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9134

380. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

DELHI,
4 a. m. March 20, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Yours this time is a revealing letter. What you say about the well on Jamnalal Bajaj's farm is disturbing[2]. But it merely shows the tremendous difficulties we have in our way. In the midst of all these you must keep well and calm, even as I am trying to do. For you might imagine that it cannot all be plain sailing for me here. I am having difficulty about the political part as also the village settlement part. But according to Dr. Ansari my progress is steady and he wants me to undergo more physical and mental exertion to test my capacity. And I am keeping calm. Bood-pressure was on 18th evening 154/92. I have to go to Lucknow on 28th to open [the] Exhibition. I am then supposed to go to Wardha. I do not know for certain what is going to happen after 28th. But I shall soon know.

I hope your fever has not returned and your pony is giving you

[1] This was another name of the addressee.
[2] The caste-Hindu villagers had been objcting to Harijans using the well.

satisfaction.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6317. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9783

381. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

2. p. m., March 20, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I have another letter before me. These recurring attacks of fever disturb me. If you cannot keep well in villages, you must live in Maganwadi and do what you can from there. You may not use violence against yourself. Why do you not write about the difficulties there to Jamnalalji? When I mentioned the well difficulty[1] to him, he resented having to know it through me. He said the understanding was that you should let him know directly about all your difficulties. Perhaps you will answer that that agreement was cancelled. I would say 'not quite'. You are still bound so long as you atttend to Segaon to write to him directly. That does not mean that you may not write to me.

Love.

Bapu

[PS.]

I shall procure *palak*[2] seeds. You mean the *bhaji*[3], do you not?

From the original: C.W. 6318. courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9784

382. LETTER TO ABBAS K. VARTEJI

March 20, 1936

CHI. ABBAS,

I got your letter. It is right that you are getting married. May you both live long and be happy. Both of you should observe the

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Spinach
[3] Leafy vegetable

restrictions laid down for Ashram life. Is the girl educated? If so, she should write to me. How old is she?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6312

383. LETTER TO LILI H. SHAH

March 20, 1936

CHI. LILI,

You are now about to fly away. But you could not get time to write in ink the letter seeking my blessings! Are you so busy with work, or are you mad with joy? Whatever the case, you both certainly have my blessings. May you both live a pure life, continue to be pure and dedicate yourselves to the country.

Blessings from
BAPU

[C/o] SHRI HIRALAL AMRITLAL SHAH
CHAPSI BUILDING
PRINCESS STREET, BOMBAY 2

From Gujarati: C.W. 9720. Courtesy: Lilibehn A. Pandya

384. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

March 20, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter only today. I shall be going to Lucknow, not on the 3rd, but on the 28th. I shall return from there on the 29th. I expect I shall go to Wardha most probably. Though I do not quite like it my life nowadays is spent in wanderings. However, it may all be only to the good and perhaps I gather experience at any rate. Do try to read Jayaprakash's book, though it is sure to be rendered into Hindi.

My talks with Jawaharlal are continuing and will, I believe, go on for some time more.

Dr. Ansari came to examine me again and expressed his satisfaction with the improvement in my health. The weight continues to be 111 lb. and it is a good thing that the blood-pressure was 154/92 though noted in the evening. It will indeed be good if you will be at

Lucknow. I do not know yet where I shall be putting up.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3461

385. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 20, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I am indeed glad that you have taken up the propagation of village industries and sanitation. You should succeed in this work.

These activitis are, according to me, an integral part of swaraj.

Bhanushanker does not remember the dates.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8486. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

386. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

March 20, 1936

CHI. KAKA,

What a pitiable plight I am in! No one may explain anything to me fully. Lest any harm should come to my health, none would ask me anything in detail and I may not speak at length. The result was that I never realized that the proposed conference[1] was to have three or four hundred invitees and that I was to preside over it. Moreover, there is going to be a reception committee! How can you involve me in all this? I am still under orders not to do any such thing. For my part, I took it that I was to sit in a small room for a little while and offer whatever suggestions might occur to me. It is of course my fault that I did not understand things fully. I admit it, but the admission is not the end of the matter for us. Jamnalalji has been greatly surprised and even pained at this. I undertook the responsibility of replying to the letter and sent a long telegram. Of course the telegram was sent to Munshi since I did not know where you might be at the time. Rajendra Babu thinks that it would be good if this function follows immediately after the Hindi [Sahitya] Sammelan which is fixed for the 25th and the 26th April. That would means saving the expenses

[1] Akhil Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad

that we might then have to incur. Do think over this. Does Jawaharlal take interest in this? He might choose to come if it takes place towards the end of April. And what if we made him the President? He will of course have a pleasant time as an honoured guest. Let someone else be Chairman of the Reception Committee. What about Jajuji, if at all you consider the Reception Committee necessary? Or, why not you yourself?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10895

387. BIRTH-CONTROL–II

There is nothing in our society today which would conduce to self-control. Our very upbringing is against it. The primary concern of parents is to marry their children anyhow so that they may breed like rabbits. If they are girls, they are married at as early an age as they conveniently can be, irrespective of their moral welfare. The marriage ceremony is one longdrawn-out agony of feasting and frivolity. The householder's life is in keeping with the past life. It is a prolongation of self-indulgence. Holidays and social enjoyments are so arranged as to allow one the greatest latitude for sensuous living. The literature that is almost thrust on one generally panders to the animal passion. The most modern literatuee almost teaches that indulgence in it is a duty and total abstinence a sin.

Is it any wonder if control of the sexual appetite has become difficult if not almost impossible? If then birth-control through self-restraint is the most desirable and sensible and totally harmless method, we must change the soical ideal and environment. The only way to bring about the desired end is for individuals who believe in the method of self-control to make the beginning themselves and with unqunenchable faith to affect their surroundings. For them the conception of marriage I discussed[1] last week has, it seems to me, the greatest significance. A proper grasp of it means a complete mental revolution. It is not meant merely for a few select individuals. It is presented as the law of the human species. Its breach reduces the status of human beings and brings swift punishment in the shape of multiplicity of unwanted children, a train of ever-increasing diseases

[1] *Vide* "Birth Control [-I], 14-3-1936.

and disruption of man as a moral being responsbile to his Maker. Birth-control by contraceptives no doubt regulates to a certain extent the number of newcomers and enables persons of moderate means to keep the wolf from the door. But the moral harm it does to the individual and society is incalculable. For one thing, the outlook upon life for those who satisfy the sexual appetite for the sake of it is wholly changed. Marriage ceases to be a sacrament for them. It means a revaluation of the social ideals hitherto prized as a precious treasure. No doubt this argument will make little appeal to those who regard the old ideals about marriage as a superstition. My argument is only addressed to thsoe who regard marriage as a sacrament and woman not as an instrument of animal pleasure but as mother of man and trustee of the virtue of her progeny.

My experience of self-control by fellow-workers and myself confirms me in the view presented here. It assumes overwhelming force from the discovery in a vivid light of the ancient conception of marriage. For me *brahmacharya* in married life now assumes its natural and inevitable position and becomes as simple as the fact of marriage itslef. Any other method of birth-control seems useless and unthinkable. Once the idea that the only and grand function of the sexual organ is generation possesses man and woman, union for any other purpose they will hold as criminal waste of the vital fluid and consequent excitement caused to man and woman as an equally criminal waste of precious energy. It is now easy to understand why the scientists of old have put such great value upon the vital fluid and why they have insisted upon it strong transmutation into the highest form of energy for the benefit of society. They boldly declare that one who has acquired a perfect control over his or her sexual energy strengthens the whole being, physical, mental and spiritual, and attains powers unattainable by any other means.

Let not the reader be disturbed by the absence of many or even any living specimen of such giant *brahmacharis* . The *brahmacharis* we see about us today are very incomplete specimens. At best they are aspirants who have acquired control over their bodies but not their minds. They have not become proof against temptation. This is not because *brahmacharya* is so difficult of attainment. Social environment is against them, and the majority of those who are making an honest effort unknowingly isolate the control of the animal passion from all other passions, whereas the effort to be successful must include control over all the passions to which man is prey. Whilst

brahmacharya is not impossible of attainment by the average man and woman. it must not be supposed that it requires less effort than that required by an average student who has set his heart upon becoming a master of any one of the sciences. Attainment of *brahmacharya* in the sense here meant means mastery of the Science of Life.

Harijan, 21-3-1936

388. LIMITATION OF REFORMERS

Ever since Dr. Ambedkar has thrown his bomb-shell in the midst of Hindu society in the shape of threatened conversion, frantic efforts have been made to wean him from the proposed step. Dr. Ambedkar's threat has had its repercussions on Harijans, too, who are at all literate and are able to read newspapers. They have begun to approach Hindu institutions or reformers with a demand for posts, scholarships or the like, accompanying it with the statement that the writer might, in the event of refusal, be obliged to change to another faith, aid having been offered on behalf of the representatives of that faith.

Without a doubt these threats are a portent and a matter of grave concern to those who care at all for the religion of their forefathers. But it will not be served by coming to terms with those who have lost faith in Hinduism or for that matter in any religion. Religion is not a matter of barter. It is a matter for every individual to decide for himself to which faith he will belong. It does not lend itself to purchase in any shape or form. Or if such an expression can be used in connection with things of the spirit, religion can only be purchased with one's own blood. If therefore any Harijan wants to give up Hinduism, he should be entirely free to do so.

There must be a searching of heart for the reformer. Has his practice or that of his neighbours caused the defection? If it has and if it is found to be improper, it must be changed.

It is an admitted fact that the conduct of a vast number of Hindus who call themselves sanatanists is such as to cause the greatest inconvenience and irritation to the Harijans all over India. The wonder is that many more Harijans than already have, have not left Hinduism. It speaks volumes for their loyalty or for the innate virtue of Hinduism that millions of Harijans have clung to it in spite of the

inhumanities to which in the name of that very faith they have been subjectd.

This wonderful loyalty of Harijans and their unexampled patience render it imperative for every *savarna* Hindu to see that Harijans receive the same treatment that every other Hindu does. The course before *savarnas* is, therefore, on the one hand not to interfere with Harijans wishing to leave the Hindu fold by trying to keep them within it by the offer of bribes in the shape of finding employment or scholarships and, on the other hand, to insist on full justice being done to Harijans in every walk of life. Indeed reformers should anticipate the Harijans'requirements and not wait till they begin to complain. The Harijan Sevak Sangh is the biggest institution for the removal of untouchability. It has wisely adpoted a most liberal policy of giving scholarships to deserving students. It employs as many Harijans as possible. But it is in no sense a bureau for finding jobs for unemployed Harijans. Generally speaking, there, is no dearth of jobs for Harijans who are fit for the jobs for which they offer themselves. The greatest hardship felt by thousands of Harijans is want of pure water for drinking and domestic use, denial of access to public schools and other institutions, constant pinpricks in villages and, last but not least, denial of access to temples of worship. These disabilities are stern realities in the lives of the vast mass of Harijans. If they as a mass give up Hinduism, they will do so becasue of these common disabilities which brand them as lepers of Hindu society. Hinduism is passing through a fiery ordeal. It will perish not through individual conversions, not even through mass conversions, but it will perish because of the sinful denial by the so-called *savarna* Hindus of elementary justice to Harijans. Every threat of conversion is, therefore, a warning to the *savarnas* that if they do not wake up in time, it may be too late !

One word to the impatient and needy Harijans. They must not use threats when they approach Hindu institutions or indviduals for help. They should rely upon the strength of their case commanding a hearing. The majority of Harijans do not know what change of religion can mean. They mutely suffer the continuing degradation to which *savarnas* in their selfishness have consigned them. They must be the primary care of Hindu reformers whether they complain or do not. Those who are enlightened enough to know and feel the degradation and know also what change of religion means, are either

too good Hindus to desert their ancestral faith and deserve every help they need, or being indifferent as to religion may not claim help from *savarna* Hindus in exhange for their condescending to remain in the Hindu fold. I would, therefore, plead with enlightened Harijans for their own sakes not to seek material betterment under threat of conversion. And whilst reformers must on no account yield to threats, they must ceaselessly strive to secure justice for Harijans at the hands of *savarna* Hindus.

Harijan, 21-3-1936

389. LETTER TO K.M. MUNSHI

DELHI,
March 21, 1936

BHAI MUNSHI,

Jamnalalji was greatly surprised at Kaka's letter to him on the subject of the conference, and I got scared. I have, therefore, sent Kaka a long telegram on behalf of Jamnalal but to your address. I have also written to him.[1] It would not be proper to expect a long speech from me. I am not yet in a position to preside over such a large conference. When I said yes, I imagined there would be just a handful of men attending and we would be exchanging a few thoughts with one another. Your idea, it appears, is to have a gathering on a big scale. It is of course my own fault that I did not gather full infomation in advance. You may now do as you think fit. Indeed, I like Rajendra Babu's suggestion.[2] He himself may even attend the function, and perhaps Jawaharlal too would. The latter may even agree to preside. Why should you not have Kaka or someone else as Chairman of the Reception Committee? If you hold the conference after the Hindi Sammelan and if they do have a Reception Committee, Jamnalalji might be available.

I hope you are both doing well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7598. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

[1] *Vide* "Letter to D. B. Kalelkar", 20-3-1936.
[2] *Ibid*

390. LETTER TO TARA N. MASHRUWALA

March 21, 1936

CHI. TARA,

After all, you didn't write to me. Anxiety or thinking about you¾call it what you like¾persists every day. I regard it as wrong that you should ignore your ailment. You have many excellent qualities, but this disregard of the body is hard to reconcile with them. You ought to make a "manly effort" to overcome your ailment. It does not matter if you have given up the treatment of Gaurishankerbhai. Try the prescription of any other in whom you have faith. I am certainly prepared to keep you under my care. You had, if I have correctly followed your words, no troubles when you were living with me. Try one thing for a week: take in two instalments, mixing it with your food, one *tola* of green garlic very finely crushed. It indeed had excellent effect on me. It helps greatly in eliminating viruses in the body¾in relieving one of gas. This was the remedy prescribed by Dr. Ansari for Navin. Green garlic, which is to be consumed along with the bulb and the stems and the leaves, should be washed clean before it is crushed. It is meant not for imparting taste, but as medicine. Write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7526. Also C.W. 5002. Courtesy: Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

391. INTERVIEW TO M. C. RAJAH [1]

[*March 22, 1936*][2]

Rao Bahadur Rajah[3]. . . discussed the Delimitation Committee's recommendation which a Committee appointed by the Assembly had recently considered, and invited Ganhiji's suggestions as to how to proceed further.

. . . I am not in a position to reveal these suggestions. . . Rao Bahadur Rajah was much exercised over the irresponsible talk of mass conversions and wondered if intensive religious propaganda among Harijans could not be undertaken. He instanced

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"
[2] From *The Hindu*
[3] Member, Legislative Assembly

the formation of *bhajan* parties to travel from *cheri*[1] to *cheri* singing *bhajans* and giving *kathas*[2], and wondered if the Sangh could not send some parties from the North. Gandhiji said:

Whilst parties could be sent from the North, there is no need for the South to depend on the North. The South has its inexhaustible treasures of religious songs and it should be the easiest thing to organize *bhajan* parties from the province itself. I have heard soul-stirring *bhajans* of Thyagaraja, and Sjt. Rajagopalachari and Dr. Rajan would give you many a tip in this behalf. For Malabar you connot think of a better guide than the poet Vallathol Narayana Menon. I assure you there is a lot of musical talent even among Harijan boys of which we have not availed ourselves. During the Harijan tour in Bhavnagar[3] I came across a Harijan boy who kept audiences spellbound by his simple songs. In her indigenous kindergarten school[4] for Harijan children Anasuyabehn has an infant prodigy who wields his tabors as an expert and she has equally good songsters.

Dr. Ambedkar has every reason to be bitter for he has had to suffer humiliations and insults which should make anyone of us bitter and resentful. If it is permitted to be bitter and to vent one's wrath, there is no reason why he should not do so. What he fails in my opinion to realize is that it is not the fault fo Hinduism but of Hindus.

RAJAH: But has he to suffer those humiliations even now? Those must be a thing of the past.

GANDHIJI: Those particular humiliations are a thing of the past, but even now he would not be welcomed in an orthodox Brahmin's house.

R. But why should he want to enter an orthodox Brahmin's house?

G. It is not that he wants to enter it, but he resents the attitude. Even that refusal he would not resent if the rest of the *savrnas* were on their best behaviour. Thus if an orthodox Hindu minister were to invite a number of Hindus, including Dr. Ambedkar, to dinner, and if he discriminated agianst the Doctor by asking him to sit apart, it is the duty of the rest of the Hindus to leave that house along with Dr.

[1] Slum
[2] Religious stories
[3] From July 1 to 3, 1934
[4] Balagriha which Gandhiji visited on June 29, 1934

Ambedkar. If we all did so Dr. Ambedkar would easily feel like one of us.

R. I see. But, Mahatmaji, we have made rapid strides and we shall see the end of it.

G. There is no doubt. The monster of untouchability has been laid low, only he is so huge that even whilst he is in his death-throes he is capable of much mischief. But I cherish the dream when every one of the Harijans will be ransomed and brought up to the same levels as the tallest among the so-called high-class Hindus. Dr., Ambedkar once pointedly asked me if when untouchability was removed the highest status that persons like him aspired to would be that of a Shudra. I said to him that if he would be classed as a shudra evey other Hindu would also be so regarded. Varna today has become a means of arrogating to oneself a higher status. The real varna of my conception does not exist today. In the purest type of Hinduism a Brahmin, an ant, an elephant and a dog-eater *(shvapaka)* are of the same status.[1] And because our philosophy is so high, and we have failed to live up to it, that very philosophy today stinks in our nostrils. Hinduism insists on the brotherhood not only of all mankind but of all that lives. It is a conception which makes one giddy, but we have to work up to it. The moment we have restored real living equality between man and man, we shall be able to establish equality between man and the whole creation. When that day comes we shall have peace on earth and goodwill to men.

Rao Bahadur Rajah wondered if under the new Constitution the Harijans might identify themselves with any of the Parties¾the Congress Party, the Justice Party and so on. Gandhiji. . . said:

You must not identify yourselves with any party. My views about the existing system of government have not changed, but with the peculiar disabilities that you have suffered for ages I would not expect you to identify yourselves even with the most forward party in India. You will accept whatever is given you by Government, but you will not sacrifice your self-respect. You will similarly endorse whatever is good in the Congress programme, e. g., prohibition, abolition of the salt tax, and say to the world that you would not allow the Harijans to be in any way isolated from the poor of India whose interests are identical with yours. Whilst you will join no party you will

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, v. 18

under no circumstance whatsoever sell the country. If you can do this, Harijans will be the greatest factor in India. When these Harijans awake, they will become an irremovable force.

Harijan, 28-3-1936

392. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

DELHI,
March 23, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter disturbs me in more senses than one. You are not yet well. If life in Segaon does not suit you, you must leave in time and not as you had not in Bihar where there was a collapse. I may or may not know my limits. But you certainly do need to be cautioned, again and again . You must not become a wreck. And may this illness again be due to separation from me, though this time there are no such antecedent circumstances as there were last time. Re-read your letter to me; you have kept a copy. It will be terrible if it needs revision. But terrible or not, if there is the need, it must be revised. Only one thing must not happen and that is living with me for personal service. In my opinion you should be able joyfully to carry out the present understanding which is in no way arrived at under pressure of any kind whatsoever. Let the mere fact of my mention of this thing not disturb you.

I would not have discussed this at all except for the fact my stay here is being unavoidably prolonged and I do not know how long it will be. It won't be beyond the middle of April in any case and it won't be earlier than 7th April. I am booked up to 5th April.

Yes, do not believe Press resports. Dr. Ansari is giving me more and more latitude daliy. He found me last night fitter than I was four days ago. He now wants me to walk for one hour at a stretch twice daily and undertake greater mental strain. He is trying to test the extreme of my capacity for physical and mental exertion. I have written many letters today besides an article for *Harijan.*

The weather all over India is very funny this year. There is a howling wind blowing here just now. It is not thus ordinarily in March.

Love.

BAPU

From the orginal: C.W. 6320. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9786

393. LETTER TO BALIBEHN M. ADALAJA AND KUMIBEHN T. MANIAR

March 23, 1936

CHI. BALI AND KUMI,

There is nothing particluar to write to you. However, I am writing to acknowledge the letter your sisters have sent me. I was indeed very glad that you both saw me at Sabarmati. I expect the children are quite happy and hope that Kumi is now quiet and peaceful.

Blessings form

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1555. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

394. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

March 23, 1936

CHI. MANUDI,

I have your letter after a long time. If Ba and I do not happen to be in Wardha in the month of May, we shall consider what may be done. For your part, you should obtain the consent of your mother's sisters and get ready. Ba returned today from a visit to Amritsar. Madalasa accompanied her during the trip. I hope you are keeping fit.

Do not be lazy in writing to me.

I shall be in these parts for some more days still.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1556. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

395. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

March 23, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

Enclosed is Bhansalibhai's letter. Nanavati will have understood the meaning of the telegram. I have got the import of your letter. It will be enough for me if you bring credit to your work.

This will be all for the present since I have lots of other writing to do today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

396. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

DELHI,
March 25, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter. Just a line to say that I have to stay for the Congress. I shall not be there therefore before 15th April. I am sorry but it was inevitable. I am just off to see the Poet[1]. Dr. Ansari's diagnosis remains hopeful. The manometer showed a rise of 8 points but he is not disturbed. He insists on my taking garlic. I wrote to you yesterday.

Love.

BAPU

From the orignial: C.W. 6321. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9787

397. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

March 25, 1936

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

I read both your letters. If you find no peace in Savli or your health suffers there, you have my permission and blessings to go

[1] Rabindranath Tagore

wherever you deem fit. Kishorelalbhai will write in detail. I have written to him at length.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1883

398. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

March 25, 1936

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter. I shall not write much as I am writing this at night.

I had long talks with Jawaharlal, but what shall I write about them? My stay at Lucknow may perhpas extend to the 3rd. On the same day I shall proceed to Allahabad, from where I would return to Lucknow on the 7th, perhaps, and stay on till the Congress session. Hence I take it that you will be meeting me somewhere or other.

Blessings from

BAPU

Form a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3465

399. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

DELHI,
March 27, 1936

DEAR GURUDEV,

God has blessed my poor effort. And here is the money[2]. Now you will relieve the public mind by announcing cancellation of the rest of the programme. May God keep you for many a year to come.

Yours with love,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2288

[1] The letter is not available.

[2] Gandhiji had sent a draft for Rs 60,000 for the Visva-Bharati. *Vide* also "Letter to Rabindranath Tagore", 13-10-1935.

400. DISCUSSION WITH HARIJAN SEVAKS [1]

[*March 27, 1936*][2]

HARIJAN SEVAKS[3]: We received our inspiration from Swami Shraddhanandji.

GANDHIJI: Not only you, but many of us received inspiration from the noble life of the late Swamiji. . . .

Why don't you take some steps to counteract the vicious propaganda of the missionaries? Why not have Hindu missionaries for counter-propaganda?[4] Of course, Mahatmaji, you are there enough to cover the whole field. But *pracharaks* are needed.

Let me explain to you. The Sangh was not created for that purpose. Our object was to end the disabilities of Harijans and to put them on the same social level as the rest of the Hindus. As for propaganda that you have in mind, the best propaganda is that of personal example. Let every Harijan sevak lead a model life of purity and simplicity, clothe the Harijans with love and, I am quite sure, no counter-propaganda will be necessary.

But there are places where the missionaries rush to the scene, do nothing but provide a few amenities like a water-pipe or a good road and make the recipients declare that they are Christians. The poor recipients often do so, but beyond the declaration they do nothing. They share in the life of their Harijan brethren, celebrate the same Hindu festivals, and remian Hindus in every respect, except perhaps for census purposes.

True. They will remain Harijans and even the missions will not set much store by them. Our duty is to work hard amongst the orthodox Hindus and to get them to admit the Harijans in their fold as their kith and kin and to end the disabilities they suffer from.

But how are we to persuade the orthodox? May we storm their fortresses? There are local board wells, for instance, which have been thrown open to the Harijans but the orthodox people will not allow them to use them. May we advise the Harijans to defy the opposition and challenge them to do their worst?

You might, where you are fearless and where you are sure that

[1] The workers, including some Harijans, met Gandhiji "on the last day" of his stay in Delhi i.e., March 27

[2] ibid

[3] Those who belonged to the Arya Samaj

[4] Propaganda workers

there will be no clash and that the Harijans will not be cowed down. But the opposition is melting away gradually everywhere and I trust no storming will be necessary.

When untouchability is no more, Mahatmaji, what varna will you assign to us?

Who am I to assign a varna to you? But if I had the power, I should declare that we are Hindus, all of the same varna. As I have made it clear over and over again there is no real varna today. When we have come to our own, when we have cleansed ourselves, we may have the four varnas according to the way in which we can express the best in us. But varna then will invest no one with a superior status or right, it will invest one with higher responsibility and duties. Those who will impart knowledge in a spirit of service will be called Brahmins. They will assume no superior airs but will be true servents of society. When ineqaulity of status or rights is ended, every one of us will be equal. I do not know, however, when we sahll be able to revive true varnadharma. Its real revival would mean true democracy.

What we want today is not that the caste Hindus eat with us or have marital ties with us. We want rights of true citizenship, equal opportunities.

I want my son to have the liberty to be a *vakil* or a barrister or a doctor according to his own wish

You know there is no legal bar against your son being anything he likes. There is custom, hard prejudice and blind superstition. That the Snagh is trying its best to fight. Dr. Ambedkar is a barrister and now a professor. But blind orthodoxy will not treat him as equal with the *savarnas.* You cannot force them by legal enactment. You can do it by education, by converting the orthodox. There was, for instance, a Harijan who used to sell *bidis* in Nasik. So long as no one knew that he was a Harijan, he had very good custom. The moment they came to know that he was Harijan, they stopped pruchasing *bidis* at his shop, How are we to compel people to purchase *bidis* at his shop, otherwise than by showing them that it is inhuman and irreligious of them to boycott anybody by reason of his birth?

But why should we be called Harijans and not Hindus?

I know that a small section of you resents the name. But you may know the genesis of the name. You used to be called ‘depressed classes’ or ‘*asprishyas’* or *‘achhoots’* (untouchables). All these names the vast mass of you naturally resented. Some of you sent their protests to me and asked me to find out a better name. In English I

had adopted a better word than 'depressed', viz., 'suppressed', but whilst I was casting about for a good Indian word a friend suggested the word 'Harijan' taken from the song of one of the best of our saints[1]. It appealed to me because it best described your condition and still had no bad odour about it. It means a devotee of God, and as God is the help of the helpless, and as it is the helpless who naturally turn to God, I thought you deserved the name better than I for instance. For whilst I have to aspire to become a Harijan you are Harijans in the very nature of things. But you will say, 'When your objective is to make Harijans Hindus why don't you start by calling them Hindus straightaway?' What am I to do so long as I have not succeeded in abolishing untouchability?

But today, sir, it is an opprobrious term. There is a Brahmin who threatens to hammer us if we call him a Harijan.

Then he is no Brahmin. You know the word 'Harijan' occurs in Tulsidas's *Ramayana*? There Lakshmana describes to Parashurama the characteristic of a true Kshatriya. He says:

सुर महिसुर हरिजन अरु गाई । हमरें कुल इन्ह पर न सुराई

(It is the trait of our clan never to use force towards a god, a Brahimin, a Harijan or a cow.) 'Harijan' there means a man of God, a devotee, no matter to what caste or varna he belongs. We all have to treasure the beautiful connotation of the word and try to be worthy of the name.

One more question. You call your Sangh "Harijan Sevak Sangh." You are unnecessarily exploiting our name. Fourteen annas in the rupee expended by the Harijan Sevak Sangh goes into the pockets of non-Harijans, 2 annas barely goes into the pockets of the poor Harijans.

Now, now, there you are betraying gross ignorance. I can prove to you the reverse of what you say. Have you got any proof in support of your statement? I make you a sporting offer. If you can prove what you say, you can come to Wardha, at the Sangh's expense, with all the evidence in your possession, and if you succeed in convincing me I shall declare myself beaten and do proper penance. In case you fail, I will not ask you to pay back to me the train fare. But I will expect you to publicly apologize for bringing a baseless charge against the Sangh. The Sangh's books are there open to inspection by anyone, and I tell you the books will convince you that

[1] Narasinha Mehta; *vide* "My Notes", 6-8-1931.

the truth is the reverse of what you say.

There is one thing certainly that you can prove. It is that there are a few sevaks who are paid even as much as a hundred rupees per month. But where that is the case, through such a sevak we distribute thousands to Harijans. Also he who is being paid a hundred rupees could easily earn in the market much more than what he receives. I am ready to confess, too, that, there are some who have to be paid as much as their market value but if no volunteer workers are available, or if you cannot get the services of the present staff on better terms, what can be done? I can, however, assure you that our administrative charges do not exceed 15 per cent, and the balance goes for the benefit of the Harijans.[1]

Harijan, 4-4-1936

401. TEMPLE-ENTRY

The reader will recall the important resolution[2] on temple-entry passed recently by the Harijan Sevak Sangh. No one need run away with the idea that because not much is nowadays heard of the questions it has been forgotten or given up by the Sangh. Pandit Malaviyaji's visit to Nasik and the vast audiences that gathered round him show that the people as a whole are not averse to the removal of untouchability, though it showed also that orthodoxy was not yet prepared to give up its untouchability. But it is not possible to await developments. The local Sanghs should make a sustained effort to have the existing temples thrown open and even to build new ones, not for Harijans only but for all. If they are situated in healthy localities and have a school, a meeting place and a dharmashala attached to them, they must prove useful and popular among all classes of Hindus. There may be public prayers held there every evening or at

[1] Harijans who were present at the meeting repudiated the suggestion and admitted that the bulk of the funds went into Harijans' pockets.

[2] At the annual meeting held in Delhi from February 6 to 8. It read: "Since any further delay in securing temple-entry for Harijans will result in great harm to Hindu dharma, and since such temple-entry is part of the immediate justice to which the Harijans are entitled, the Central Board of the All-India Harijan Sevak Sangh resolves that effective steps be taken immediately for achieving temple-entry for Harijans and, with a view to achieving this purpose, the Executive Committee be asked to take necessary steps in consultation with Gandhiji".

stated periods and religious discourses may be occasionally arranged. If these temples are properly conducted, they would go a long way towards removing the prejudice against the opening of existing temples to Harijans. Care must be taken, where temples are opened to Harijans, that no discrimination is made against them. They must be opened on precisely the same terms as they are opened to the other Hindus.

It is hardly necessary to state that in different localities different methods may be adopted for securing the desired end. Perfect non-violence must of course be maintained in all cases. An all-India simultaneous movement of the same type is not contemplated. It will vary in intensity and method according to the circumstances in each locality. Nowhere should temples be opened where there is an active minority opposed to the opening. Practical unanimity should be secured before any temple is opened. Thus what is required is sustained effort to convert local public opinion in favour of temple-entry.

The position in the Hindu States is somewhat different. Where the Prince or his officials are favourably inclined, there should be no difficulty about opening them. The question has assumed a great importance in Travancore. In most other places Harijans are indiffernt about temple-entry. The position is otherwise in Travancore. The vast majority of Harijans of that State are far more advanced then in other places. They have many men belonging to the learned professions. Many have passed through colleges. They naturally chafe under any restriction of their liberty but most of all on the entry into temples. One hears that the large body of *savarnas* there are wholly in favour of the removal of the bar. Travancore has an enlightened Prince and an enlightened Maharani. Surely the opposition of a few orthodox persons, however influential they may be in their own spheres, cannot be allowed to prevent a much-needed reform which has become long overdue. But Harijan sevaks should by an accurate referendum or some such means show beyond all doubt that a great majority of *savarna* Hindus are decidedly in favour of the opening of Travancore temples to Harijans precisely on the same terms as themselves. The Maharaja may not march in advance of the public opinion of his State, but I can hardly imagine his flouting clearly expressed public opinion.

Harijan, 28-3-1936

402. FOR THE YOUNG

It is the fashion in some quarters nowadays for the young to discredit whatever may be said by old people. I am not prepared to say that there is absolutely no justification for this belief. But I warn the youth of the country against always discounting whatever old men or women may say for the mere fact that it is said by such persons. Even as wisdom often comes from the mouths of babes, so does it often come from the mouths of old people. The golden rule is to test everything in the light of reason and experience, no matter from whom it comes. I want to revert to the subject of birth-control by contraceptives. It is dinned into one's ears that gratification of the sex urge is a solemn obigation like the obligation of discharging debts lawfully incurred, and that not to do so would involve the penalty of intellectual decay. This sex urge has been isolated from the desire for progeny, and it is said by the protagonists of the use of contraceptives that conception is an accident to be prevented except when the parties desire to have children. I venture to suggest that this is a most dangerous doctrine to preach anywhere; much more so in a country like India where the middle-class male population has become imbecile through abuse of the creative function. If satisfaction of the sex urge is a duty, the unnatural vice of which I wrote[1] some time ago and several other ways of gratification would be commendable. The reader should know that even persons of note have been known to approve of what is commonly know as sexual perversion. He may be shocked at the statement. But if it somehow or other gains the stamp of respectability, it will be the rage among boys and girls to satisfy their urge among members of their own sex. For me the use of contraceptives is not far removed from the means to which persons have hitherto resorted for the gratification of their sexual desire with results that very few know. I know what havoc secret vice has played among schoolboys and schoolgirls. The introuduction of contraceptives under the name of science and *imprimatur* of known leaders society has intensified the complication and made the task of reformers who work for purity of social life well-nigh impossible for the moment. I betray no confidence when I inform the reader that

[1] *Vide* "Duty of Reformers", 19-10-1935 and also "A Growing Vice?", 27-4-1935.

there are unmarried girls of impressionable age studying in schools and colleges who study birth-control literature and magazines with avidity and even possess contraceptives. It is impossible to confine their use to married women. Marriage loses its sanctity when its purpose and highest use is conceived to be the satisfaction of the animal passion without contemplating the natural result of such satisfaction.

I have no doubt that those learned men and women who are carrying no propaganda with missionary zeal in favour of the use of contraceptives are doing irreparable harm to the youth of the country under the false belief that they will be saving thereby the poor women who may be obliged to bear children against their will. Those who need to limit their children will not be easily reached by them. Our poor women have not the knowledge or the training that the women of the West have. Surely the propaganda is not being carried on on behalf of the middle-class women, for they do not need the knowledge, at any rate so much as the poor classes do.

The greatest harm, however, done by that propaganda lies in its rejection of the old ideal and substitution in its place of one which, if carried out, must spell the moral and physical extinction of the race. The horror with which ancient literature has regarded the fruitless use of the vital fluid was not a superstition born of ignorance. What shall we say of a husband¾man¾who will sow the finest seed in his possession on stony ground or of the owner of a field who will receive in his field rich with fine soil good seed under conditions that will make it impossible for it to grow? God has blessed man with seed that has the highest potency and woman with a field richer than the richest earth to be found anywhere on this globe. Surely it is criminal folly for man to allow his most precious possession to run to waste. He must guard it with a care greater than he will bestow upon the richest pearls in his possession. And so is a woman guilty of criminal folly who will receive the seed in her life-producing field with the deliberate intention of letting it run to waste. Both he and she will be judged guilty of misuse of the telents given to them and they will be dispossessed of what they have been given. Sex urge is a fine and noble thing. There is nothing to be ashamed of in it. But it is meant only for the act of creation. Any other use of it is a sin against God and humanity. Contraceptives of a kind there were before and there will be hereafter, but the use of them was formerly regarded as sinful. It was reserved for our generation to glorify vice by calling it virtue.

The greatest disservice protagonists of contraceptives are rendering to the youth of India is to fill their minds with what appears to me to be wrong ideology. Let the young men and women of India who hold her destiny in their hands beware of this false god and guard the treasure with which God has blessed them and use it, if they wish, for the only purpose for which it is intended.

Harijan, 28-3-1936

403. SPEECH AT KHADI AND VILLAGE INDUSTRIES EXHIBITION, LUCKNOW[1]

March 28, 1936

I am glad and thankful to be able to come to Lucknow to open this khadi and other village industries exhibition. I may tell you that I was eager to be here at the opening. Though I know that Dr. Murarilal and Sjt. Shankerlal Banker have devoted themselves heart and soul to organizing it, at the back of it all was my conception. This exhibition, to my mind, brings out concretely for the first time the conception of a true rural exhibition I have nursed in my breast for several years. In 1921 when we met in Ahmedabad in the first year of the new Congress Constitution, we took the first step towards rural-mindedness, and the exhibition organized under the auspices of the Congress held there was the beginning of the process which you find reaching its maturity today after 15 years. I have believed and repeated times without number that India is to be found not in its few cities but in its 7, 00, 000 villages. But we who have gathered here are not villagers. We are town-dwellers. We town-dwellers have believed that India is to be found in its towns and that the villages were created to minister to our needs. We have hardly ever paused to inquire of those poor folks get sufficient to eat and clothe themselves with and whether they have a roof to shelter themselves from sun and rain. Now I do not think any Congress worker has travelled through the length and breadth of India as much as I have done during the past twenty years. That in itself is hardly thing to be proud of. I, however, humbly claim, as a result of those peregrinations, to know the Indian villages more than any other Congress worker or leader. I have found that the town-dweller has generally exploited the villager, in fact he has lived on the poor villager's substance. Many a British official has written about the

[1] This appeared under the title "A Unique Exhibition".

conditions of the people of India. No one has, to my knowledge, said that the Indian villager has enough to keep body and soul together. On the contrary they have admitted that the bulk of the population live on the verge of starvation and ten per cent are semi-starved, and that millions have to rest content with a pinch of dirty salt and chillies and polished rice or parched grain. You may be sure that if any of us were to be asked to live on that diet, we should not expect of survive it longer than a month or should be afraid of losing our mental faculties. And yet our villagers go through that state from day to day. The Village Industries Association was formed last year[1] in order to study the conditions in which they lived and the state of their handicrafts, and to revive such village arts and crafts as may be revived. Simultaneously with the creation of the A.I.V.I. Association was passed a resolution[2] to the effect that future exhibitions should be organized by the Spinners' and the Village Industries Associations. This exhibition I am about to declare open today is the first of that kind.

As I have told you the whole conception here is mine, and yet I must confess that we are still far from bringing out that conception fully. It is an evidence of the organizers' wonderful industry, and yet it is not perfect of its kind. It was not humanly possible to achieve it during the time at their disposal. It is no easy job to bring village artisans form their villages. You will find here villagers from South India who perhaps don't know where they have come to. It is the purpose of this Exhibition to show that even this starving India of the villages is capable of producing things which we town-dwellers may use both to the villagers' and our advantage.

This exhibition is not a spectacular show like its predecessors. Those earlier ones were bound to be big shows. They were designed for a different purpose. Congress expenses were generally found out of the takings of the exhibition. The whole outlook was changed last year. We decided not to have things of spectacular interest, but we decided to give the spectators a glimpse of the Indian villager and his craft. This therefore is a vast educative effort. Not that we will have no takings this time. Only they will depened on those Congressmen who are intent on freedom and will win it by rehabilitating the village. If they will establish a living bond between towns and villages, they will

[1] *Vide* "A.I.V.I.A—Object and Constitution", 14-12-1934.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Jivanji D. Desai".

flock to the exhibition and will make a point of studying the various demonstrations in the exhibition.

This cannot be done by one visit only. You should visit it daily and carefully study every section. If you will do this, you will marvel at the energy and industry expended in organizing it. You will be deeply interested in it if you approach it in a spirit of service. You will find here craftsmen and craftswomen for Kashmir and South India, form Sind and Assam, and learn how they earn their scanty living. You will find that it is within your power to add a little to their income and to enable them to have square meal, if only you will make up your minds to pay for their wares enough to ensure them a living wage.

You will not expect me to describe all or even one of the numerous sections of the exhibition. It is impossible for me to do so. Let me tell you that you will have an inkling of the inside even from where you are sitting. For in fornt of you are no triumphal arches but there are simply but exquisitely decorated walls done by Sjt. Nandlal Bose, the eminent artist from Santiniketan, and his co-workers who have tried to represent all the villagers' crafts in simple artistic symbols. And when you go inside the art gallery on which Babu Nandlal Bose has lavished his labours for weeks, you will feel, as I did, like spending there hours together. But even the other sections will attract you. You may not find in the exhibition anything to amuse you like music or cinema shows but I assure you you will find much to learn.

In conclusion, I want you all to be voluntary advertising agents of the exhibition so that numbers may be attracted to see it. The exhibition has not been organized for the villagers, it is organized for the city-dweller to enable him to see how the villager lives and what he is capable of. The Reception Committee has spent something like Rs. 35, 000 in order to bring this exhibition into being. The lest that you must do is to enable them to meet the expenses. This you can do if you become their enthusiastic advertising agents. Commission I can promise none, though I dare say you will get it for work dutifully done when you appear before the Great White Throne. I may tell you that I am staying here for some days and expect to visit the exhibition as often as I can. I shall therefore know how you have discharged your trust.

It is our intention to throw the exhibition open to the people from villages if the expenses are covered.

You will find in the exhibition many a drawback, but you and I are to blame for them, not the villagers. Let me tell you, however, that the organizers have attempted the stupendous task of achieving in a few weeks the work which should take many months to be properly done. You will therefore bear with us and forgive the shortcomings you will no doubt see.

Harijan, 4-4-1936

404. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

LUCKNOW,
March 29, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

It is nearing time for bed, 8.25 p.m. I have just taken silence.

Your letters have reached me in time. I was able to speak for over 38 minutes without any strain at the opening of the Exhibition. It is too early to say whether it will be a success. Shankerlal has worked like a Trojan.

We leave Lucknow on 3rd April night train and [shall] be in Allahabad from 4 to 7th reaching Lucknow on 8th. If all goes well I expect to leave Lucknow for Wardha on 12th or 13th. I hope you are steadily getting better.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6322. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9788.

405. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

March 29, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your two letters¾one reflecting a disturbed mind and the other a quiet one. I was glad to have both. I would be able to give you some guidance so long as you reveal your whole mind to me. It would be good indeed if your present peace of mind endures, but I will not be scared if you happen to lose it again. Trying in this way, some day you will certainly attain steadiness of mind. I have not at all

given up the hopes I had of you. You, too, should not give up. Now I expect ot return only on the 15th of April. It is unlikely that I might reach earlier, and don't be scared if I am delayed by two more days.

Take good care of your health. One may say you have made good progress in carding.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Deliver the enclosed letter to Mirabehn.[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9339. Also C.W. 6614. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

406. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

LUCKNOW,
March 30, 1936

I have received no communication whatsoever from Lord Halifax. The whole story is a fabrication.[2] I am sorry that responsible newspapers should publish sensational statements, the truth or otherwsie of which they could verify without loss of time.

The Bombay Chronicle, 31-3-1936

407. LETTER TO UMADEVI BAJAJ

March 30, 1936

CHI. OM,

I am well aware that you have in my illness a good excuse for not writing to me; but, as you know, your letters would not prove a burden to me. You would cease to be the 'Sleeping Beauty'[3]¾ won't you¾ if you thus began writing!

I write this because you do not keep cheerful there, you get

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Some newspapers had reported that Lord Halifax was arranging an interview between Lord Linlithgow and Gandhiji.

[3] The addressee who accompanied Gandhiji during the Harijan tour of 1933 used to snatch naps as often as possible which earned her this nickname.

homesick and sometimes even shed tears. When did you get so soft as that? Our home is where we happen to live. After all, aren't we sojourning in this world for "a few days"? I have not seen those parts myself, but I am told the region has a bracing climate and is equally beautiful, too. I expect you have seen Mr. Duncan[1] . I should have from you a description of the place.

All of us, including Kakaji and Madalasa, are here together at Lucknow. We shall go to Allahabad on the 3rd and probably return on the 8th. We hope to reach Wardha some time about the 15th.

One may say my health is now good enough. Do you try to get *Harijan Sevak?* I think you now understand English also very well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 342-3

408. LETTER TO VITHAL L. PHADKE

March 30, 1936

CHI. MAMA,

I don't know whether Sardar has replied to you. You should do as he says.. For my part, I would say that you should not incur the trouble of having a house, unless you are required to stay there rather long.

You must have read in *Harijan* what I have written[2] about an ideal temple. Read it if you have not. While writing it I had you in mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3834

[1] Duncan Greenlees

[2] *Vide* "Temple-Entry", 28-3-1936.

409. LETTER TO CHAMPABEHN R. MEHTA

March 30, 1936

CHI. CHAMPA[1],

The only person I know in Kashmir is Shri Surendra Mashruwala of the Khadi Bhandar. You may write to him direct. If you like, you may enclose this letter. You should do as he says.

The address is: A.I.S.A. Depot, Srinagar, Kashmir.

I expect you are all doing well. Mother must be well enough and Prabhashankar[2] completely restored and on his feet again.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI CHAMPABEHN
SHASHI BHUVAN
SABARMATI

From Gujarati: C.W. 9693. Courtesy: Moolubhai Nautamlal

410. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

March 30, 1936

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letters. As for Medh, Ba tried very hard. If no help is available there, it does not matter even if all the savings get exhausted. In no time can one earn the money again if one's health is restored. Failing that, one should cheerfully remain in God's keeping as He wills.

I follow the idea of leaving Sita in the care of A. You should do what you both think fit. In my view it would be a great thing if all preserve their health.

We are in Lucknow for the present and shall be here till the Congress session. To Wardha thereafter.

I may be said to be well enough now, though it cannot be said that I have regained my strength.

[1] Wife of Ratilal, Dr, Pranjivan Mehta's son
[2] Addressee's father

Krishnadas has come to Lucknow with his wife. Of course Prabhudas[1] and Amba[2] are already here. Prabhudas has been showing his spinning-wheel to everyone around. Ramdas has taken up yet another job. After such trials, he would settle down somewhere. Devdas and Lakshmi are still at Bombay. Jamnadas has already started business there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4849

411. LETTER TO INDIRA NEHRU

March 30, 1936

CHI. INDU,

Kamala's passing away has added to your responsibilities but I have no misgivings about you. You have grown so wise that you understand your dharma fully well. Kamala possessed some qualities rarely found in other women. I am entertaining the hope that all the qualities of Kamala will be manifested in you in equal measure. May God give you long life and strength to emulate her virtues.

This time I have been able to have heart-to-heart talks with Jawaharlal. I shall leave here for Allahabad on the 3rd April. It has been decided that I should stay on till the Congress session but you should address your reply to Wardha.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Gandhi-Indira Gandhi Correspondence: Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Chhaganlal Gandhi's son
[2] Wife of Prabhudas Gandhi

412. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

CAMP LUCKNOW,

April 1, 193[*6*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Kindly have Rs. 15, 000 (fifteen thousand only) sent to the Secretary, Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha, Madras, out of whatever funds have been collected for the 'purse'[2] in connection with the Indore session of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2960

413. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

LUCKNOW,

April 3, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Though you could have stayed here till today, it was well you went on Tuesday. Your wire was good and the letter quite in keeping with the past performances. Yes, we had the rain here, too, but not much damage was done at the Exhibition for the dust storm and the cold wind gave ample warning. The attendance is improving. Of course it was good to have told your sister-in-law to purchase khadi for you. I understand she went yesterday and bought a fair quantity, I hope, not all for you. I was tempted to buy an exquisite mat for Rs. 35 for you. But I resisted the temptation. Mahadev was inclined to purchase it.

I am glad Nabi Bux[3] told you why he would not eat at Harijan mess. I shall talk to Amtul Salaam about it. This is being written before the morning prayer. Don't be alarmed. I got up only at 3.50.

[1] The source has "1935", but Gandhiji was in Lucknow on April 1, 1936.

[2] The purse of one lakh rupees which was to be presented by the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan to Gandhiji for propagation of Hindi; *vide* "Speech at Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Indore", 20-4-1935.

[3] Addressee's attendant

I miss you during my walks more than at other times. At other times, I saw very little of you.

Expect you in July at the latest.

Hope Shummy has got rid of his cold, etc., and that Beryl is thoroughly restored.

Love to you both.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3566. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6375

414. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

April 3, 1936

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI
BIRLA HOUSE
NEW DELHI

WIRE IF HEALTH PERMITS YOUR PRESENCE ALLAHABAD MONDAY[1] FOR CERTAIN.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

415. LETTER TO C.F. ANDREWS

April 3, 1936

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have had your letters to which Mahadev has been replying. I have been permitted for some time to write few letters daily and to write to a limited extent for *Harijan.*

This is however to inform you that Gurudev's presence in Delhi whilst I was there made it possible to collect the whole of the deficit, i.e., Rs. 60, 000. Gurudev was pleased beyond measure and cancelled the rest of the tour. So you see how God worked. This news ought to help you to get rid or anxiety complex.

I am just now in Lucknow for the Khadi Exhibition and the Congress. I am not taking any active part in the latter. We hope to return to Wardha by the middle of the month.

I hope you are, i.e., your work is, prospering.

Love.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 988

[1] For the Congress Working Committee meeting on April 6

416. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

April 3, 1936

DEAR AGATHA,

Every mail-day I think of you and then let it pass by so as not to add to the number of letters I am permitted to write. Though no numerical limit has been put, I try to carry our the spirit of their advice.

I have had very long and quiet chats with Jawaharlal. By the time this reaches you, you will know the result of the Congress deliberations.

You must have been filled with disgust as we have been here over the sensational and false news published in the Indian Press about the supposed interview to take place between the coming Viceroy and myself.[1] Poor Lord Halifax has also been dragged in. Nowadays I never believe anything that appears in the papers. I hope you, too, do likewise.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1493

417. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

April 3, 1936

DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I have your long letter and have read it carefully. Bapa's letter has not at all pained me. I know you are not the one to take defeat and I believe the taunting words of Rukminibehn[2] will not affect you. However, Bapa's letter suggests that you are not really needed there. It is a different matter that you are sure to be of service wherever you may be. I wish to put you where they need your services, and you are indeed needed elsewhere. Hence I have written to Bapa to send you to me if you are not really needed there. Now do what Bapa says.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lilavati Asar", 29-3-1936 to "Letter to Champabehn R. Mehta", 30-3-1936.

[2] Wife of N.R. Malkani

It is not true that people find fault with you because you are a Muslim. But do not mind if they do so because you are a woman and an unmarried one. Even in such a case, however, be assured that they are just a few, if any, whereas there are countless people who respect you and love you for your purity. But you never care for praise or censure, do you? You may start worrying when I entertain any suspicion of you. Go to Segaon. Get away from Bapa.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 333

418. FOR CONTRACEPTIVES

A correspondent writes:[1]

I would like to say a few words on the report of the interview[2] between Mrs. Sanger and Mahatma Gandhi that appeared recently in the *Harijan.*

The cardinal fact that I see missed in the interview is that it has not been taken into consideration that man is above all an artist and a creator. He is not satisfied with bare necessity, but must have beauty, colour and charm as well . . . . He has made every necessity into an art and has spent tons of blood on them. His creative instinct impels him to add to his difficulties and problems and solve them over again. He *cannot* be 'simple' as Rousseau, Ruskin, Tolstoy, Thoreau, and Gandhiji would like him to be. War he must have as its necessary corollary which also he has transformed into a great art.

To appeal to him [to copy] the example of nature would be in vain, for it is totally incompatible with his very being. 'Nature' *cannot* be his teacher . . . . "From an artistic standpoint," says Nietzsche the iconoclast, 'nature is no model. It exaggerates, distorts and leaves gaps. Nature is the *accident.* To study 'from nature' seems to me bad sign; thus lying in the dust before trivial facts is unworthy of a thorough artist". . . To end sexual life when the need of propagation is no longer there, or to enjoin sex-communion expressly with the desire of begetting offspring, is too calculating. too natural, too 'matter-of-fact' . . . .

. . . I do not mean to underrate the value of the discipline of self-control or what is technically knows as *brahmacharya*. I would always admire it as the

[1] Only extracts of the letter are reproduced here.
[2] *Vide* "Interview to Margaret Sanger", 3/4-12-1935.

art of the control of the sex instinct carried to perfection. But just as the perfection of other arts does not interfere with the *science* of life, with the *whole* life (in the Nietzschean sense of the term), with the proper scheme of all the values of life, so also I will not allow the value of the ideal of *brahmacharya dominate* other values, far less use is as an *instrument* of solving problems, such as over-population. . . . I believe it was with an eye to such a scheme of values that the scriptures (प्रश्नोपनिषत्) said, "ब्रह्मचर्यमेव तद् यद् रात्रौ रत्था संदज्यते", or, there is *brahmacharya* where sexual union occurs only at night (i.e., as opposed to abnormal cohabitation during the day time). Here normal sex-life itself is sopken of as *brahmacharya,* the rigid conception of which began after we had already topsyturvied the proper scheme of all values of life.

I gladly publish this letter as I should any such letter that is not full of declamation, abuse or insinuations. The reader should have both the sides of the question to enable him to come a decision. I am myself eager to know why a thing which is claimed to be scientific and beneficial and which has many distinguished supporters repels me notwithstanding my effort to see the bright side of it.

Thus it is not proved to my satisfaction that sexual union in marriage is in itself good and beneficial to the unionists. To the contrary effect I can bear ample testimony from my own experience and that of many friends. I am not aware of any of us having derived any benefit, mental, spiritual or physical. Momentary excitement and satisfaction there certainly was. But it was invariably followed by exhaustion. And the desire for union returned immediately the effect of exhaustion had worn out. Although I have always been a conscientious worker, I can clearly recall the fact that this indulgence interfered with my work. It was the consciousness of this limitation that put me on the track of self-restraint and I have no manner of doubt that the self-restraint is responsible for the comparative freedom form illnesses that I have enjoyed for long periods and for my output of energy and work both physical and mental which eye-witnesses have described as phenomenal.

I fear that the correspondent has misapplied his reading. Man is undoubtedly an artist and creator. Undoubtedly he must have beauty and therefore colour. His artistic and creative nature at its best taught him to see art in self-restraint and ugliness in uncreative union. His instinct for the artistic taught him to discriminate and to know that any

conglomeration of colours was no mark of beauty, nor every sense enjoyment good in itself. His eye for art taught man to seek enjoyment in usefulness. Thus he learnt at an early stage if his evolution that he was to eat for its own sake as some of us still do, but he should eat to enable him to live. At a later stage he learnt further that there was neither beauty nor joy in living for its own sake but that he must live to serve his fellow-creatures and through them his Maker. Similarly, when he pondered over the phenomenon of the pleasurableness of sexual union, he discovered that like every other organ of sense, this one of generation had its use and abuse. And he saw that its true function, its right use, was to restrict it to generation. Any other use, he saw, was ugly and he saw further that it was fraught with very serious consequences as well to the individual as to the race. It is hardly necessary for me to prolong the argument.

The correspondent says well than man makes art out of his necessities. Necessity is not only the mother of invention, it is the mother also of art. We should therefore beware of that art which has not necessity as its basis.

Nor may we dignify every want by the name of necessity. Man's estate is one of probation. During that period he is played upon by evil forces as well as good. He is every prey to temptations. He has to prove his manliness by resisting and fighting temptations. He is no warrior who fights outside foes of his imagination and is powerless to lift his little finger against the innumerable foes within, or, what is worse, mistakes them for friends. "War he must have". But the correspondent is wrong when he says that "as its necessary corollary he has transformed it into a great art". He has hardly yet learnt the art of war. He has mistaken false war for true even as our forefathers under a mistaken view of sacrifice instead of sacrificing their base passions sacrificed innocent non-human fellow-creatures as many even do at the present day. We have yet to learn the art of true war. Surely there is neither beauty nor art in what is going on today on the Abyssinian frontier. The correspondent has chosen unhappy (for him) names for his illustrations. Rousseau, Ruskin, Thoreau and Tolstoy were firstclass artists of their time. They will live even after many of us are dead, cremated and forgotten.

The correspondent seems to have misapplied the word 'nature'. When an appeal to man is made to copy or study nature, he is not invited to follow what the reptiles do or even what the King of the

forest does. He has to study man's nature at its best, i.e., I presume his regenerate nature, whatever it may be. Perhaps it requires considerable effort to know what regenerate nature is. It is dangerous nowadays to refer to old teachers. I suggest to the correspondent that it is unnecessary to bring in Neitzsche or even *Prashnopanishad*. The question for me is past the stage of quotations. What has cold reason to say on the point under discussion? Is it or is it not correct to say that the only right use of the generative organ is to confine it solely to generation and that any other use is its abuse? If it is, no difficulty in achieving the right use and avoiding the wrong should baffle the scientific seeker.

Harijan, 4-4-1936

419. HINDI PRACHAR APPEAL

The following appeal[1] has been issued by Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj and others:

> The Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha is the body at present engaged in carrying out Mahatma Gandhi's work of propagating Hindi in South India, inaugurated by him eighteen years ago at the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan held at Prayag in 1918. Since its inception the Sabha has succeeded in laying the work of Hindi *prachar* in South India on a firm and sure basis. For the last five or six years it has been functioning in a self-sufficient manner. It is at present operating through its 450 centres in four different provinces with different languages in South India. Besides, the teaching of Hindi is being pushed forth through the various arts schools and colleges through the efforts of the Sabha. The total number of students receiving instruction in Hindi in South India through the agency of the Sabha today stands over 40,000.
>
> It is now proposed to erect a *bhavan* for the Sabha to house its various departments. The Madras Corporation has donated three acres and a half of land for the purpose. . . . The scheme would cost one lakh rupees and when completed will include, besides residential quarters for the workers, a college with hostel accommodation for at least 50 for training workers for Hindi *prachar* work, an arts school where Hindi will be compulsory and a prayer hall and a gymnasium for the use of students and workers of the Sabha and the neighbouring public. . . .

[1] Of which only extracts are reproduced here.

All remittances should be sent to the Treasurer, Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha, 107, Armenian Street or to Indo-Commercial Bank, Madras.

I heartily endorse the appeal and hope that it will receive adequate response.

Harijan, 4-4-1936

420. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ALLAHABAD,
April 5, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL

Your letter duly came today. You shall have the shawl if it is unsold when I reach Lucknow. But you will have to develop a kind of village art, cheap yet real beautiful. You must have seen something about art in my latest article[1] on birthcontrol. The wooden spoon made by Navin out of waste bamboo is, you have admitted, a thing of beauty and yet quite cheap.

The value of women like you taking up village work lies in your capacity for making it attractive in spite of the necessity of conforming to cheapness. Perhaps art to be real must be cheap in terms of coin.

No more today.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3567. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6376

421. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 5, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

All your letters arrived here in due order.

The weather here too has been unsteady. We had storms and rain. Let us hope we shall have settled weather¾till the rains overtake us.

[1] *Vide* "For Contraceptives", 4-4-1936.

The dates I have given you still abide.[1] We leave here no 7th reaching Lucknow on 8th morning.

At Anand Bhavan I have the same room, the same surroundings without Motilaliji and Kamala¾big gap. Old Mother is almost inconsolable. She is broken down in health. Her bravery persists.

You will keep your health at all cost. I am so glad you have Sejila[2]. He must be a boon.

Yes, I envy you your life. Just now my mind is in the villages though the body thrives in the cities.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6324. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9790

422. SPEECH AT HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN [3]

April 5, 1936

Mahatma Gandhi read out a letter from Mr. Narmada Prashad, Secretary of the Sammelan, regretting his absence due to illness and announcing a donation of Rs. 500. Mahatma Gandhi, speaking [in Hindi], said that these announcements[4] had made up for the debt the building had incurred but the building was still incomplete. It was sad to reflect that whereas Mr. Tandon[5] had appealed for four lakhs the response had been so small in a matter which concerned what India had declared was its national language. The country was undoubtedly starving. Of course physically crores of people did not even have one meal a day and poverty and hunger in India were worse than in any [other] country in the world. But he used the expression 'starving' in a different sense. Even lakhs of donations could not breathe soul into the language. This work could be accomplished if someone was born whose heart overflowed, as Tagore's had overflowed in Bengal and made Bangalee a living language. The language never died. Tulsidas and Surdas did not write for the sake of the Hindi language. Their hearts and thoughts flowed out and humanity was benefited. Such a person must be born and create the necessary activity to make the language of 23

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 29-3-1936.

[2] Addressee's horse

[3] Gandhiji performed the opening ceremony of the library and museum of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan of which he was the President. *Vide* also the following item.

[4] Earlier, two donations amounting to Rs. 2, 250 had been announced.

[5] Purushottamdas Tandon

crores of people again live.

The efforts of one or two persons cannot accomplish this work; it can succeed only with the efforts of all the Hindi-speaking people[1].

The Leader, 7-4-1936, and *Hindi Sangrahalaya: Samkshipta Parichaya*,p. 8

423. ENTRY IN VISITORS' BOOK[2]

April 5, 1936

Performed the opening ceremony today.[3]

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Hindi Sangrahalaya: Sankshipta Parichaya, p. 8

424. TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT, KERALA HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH

[Before *April 6, 1936*][4]

DIFFICULT TO GUIDE FROM DISTANCE. BUT DO NOTHING IN CONTRAVENTION OF ORDERS.[5] CANVASS SIGNATURES DOOR TO DOOR. HOLD MEETINGS.

The Hindu, 6-4-1936

[1] This sentence is translated from the Hindi in *Hindi Sangrahalaya: Samkshipta Parichaya.*

[2] Hindi Sangrahalaya, Allahabad

[3] Gandhiji then announced a donation of Rs. 5, 000 to the Museum.

[4] The report has the date-line "Trivandrum, April 6".

[5] The batches organized by the Kerala Harijan Sevak Sangh to carry on propaganda in connection with the Temple-entry movement were banned in Travancore.

425. LETTER TO ALBERT H. WEST

LUCKNOW,
April 8, 1936

MY DEAR WEST[1],

I was delighted to have your letter, and see your well-known signature, after a long time. Is it not years?

I am sorry about Sorabji[2]. Though I am far away from where I can get access to books I can say with confidence that for years I have received no payments either through Reuter's Agency or the East Indian Trading Co., or Dr. Nanji. Amounts received by me through the Trust were, upon recommendation of Mr. Doull if I remember aright, backed by other trustees, sent back for Sorabji's use as a loan, his policy being accepted as received security. The premium for the policy has not been paid and probably it has lapsed. I gave this loan with the greatest reluctance. But I felt that I could do so. For in those circumstances had Parsi Rustomji been alive he would have liked me to help Sorabji. Of course no part of the loan has been returned. I had years ago small payment for giving prizes to children. That sum still is held and prizes are still being distributed annually. Beyond that there is nothing to report as there is no money in my hands on behalf of the two Trusts. In order to get the authoritative statement I am forwarding your letter with this reply to Narandas Gandhi who is in charge of the books of the Ashram. And if there is any error in what I have said, I shall rectify it.

You will please keep me informed of the results of your investigations.

I hope you are all doing well including Mrs. Pywell who must be nearing her century. How are you doing now?

With love to you all.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

ALBERT H. WEST, ESQ.
256 MOORE ROAD
DURBAN, NATAL (S. A.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Gandhiji's close associate in South Africa
[2] Sorabji Rustom, son of Parsi Rustomji

426. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

April 8, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

I am waiting for your wire in reply to mine. You ought not to catch cold as often as you do. I am quite sure that you can avoid these colds by a judiciously natural life. I have a vague fear that your silk underwear has not a little to do with the delicacy of your skin. There is also the constant irritation you subject your skin to by frequent baths and still more frequent face-washes. Add to this the criminal use of soap which destroys all the grease with which nature protects the skin. These three exterior causes perhaps largely account for your colds. Discuss this with Shummy and if the physician in him endorses my view, make the necessary change, not perhaps all at once but one by one.

Khurshed is here and so is Perin[1]. I have sent your memo to them to make a selection. I have authorized not more than Rs. 600 investment. You should not incur any loss on the articles. The shawl and the knife will be packed with the other articles.

Prabha is sitting by me as I write this. She came in four days ago to Lucknow.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3568. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6377

427. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

LUCKNOW,
April 9, 1936

CHI. AMALA,

I was longing to hear from you and to know how you were faring. I was therefore glad to see your handwriting and that, too, Gujarati. I observe that you have not forgotten your Gujarati as you have forgotten your khadi. But that is nothing. It is better to be perfectly natural and bad than to be artificially good.

[1] Perin Captain, granddaughter of Dadabhai Naoroji

I am glad your mother[1] would be with you very soon and that you are saving up for her. I hope you are keeping quite well.

We hope to return to Wardha by 15th inst.

I continue to call you Amala. But if you will have me to do otherwise, you will tell me.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

428. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

April 10, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

I hope you are quite happy, undisturbed and absorbed in doing your duty. I still hope to reach there on the 15th or 6th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9340. Also C.W. 6615. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

429. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

LUCKNOW,
April 10, 1936

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

I have your letter. You always have my blessings wherever you go. May you live long. I regard you as a *bhakta.* No harm will ever come to you. If your constipation persists, take with curds or milk half a *tola* of crushed garlic, green or dry, with your meals. It would be good to do so one hour before you begin your meal. Continue it if you find relief after three days.

Blessings from
BAPU

PURUSHOTTAM NARANDAS GANDHI
OPP. MIDDLE SCHOOL, NAVUN PARUN
RAJKOT, KATHIAWAR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

[1] Who was in Germany

430. DANGER FROM WITHIN

No movement or organization having vitality dies from external attack. It dies of internal decay. This is true at any rate of great all-India organizations like the A.I.S.A. and A.I.V.I.A. or the Harijan Sevak Sangh. I omit mention of others which are no less for all India than these three. I single out the first two for they seek to represent and promote the immediate welfare of the millions of villagers who do not earn enough to keep body and soul together because they have to live in enforced idleness for at least four months in the year for want of work. And I refer to the third because it seeks to represent the despised millions of society. The three causes are thus worthy. They should, therefore, not only be able to survive all external attack but even to thrive on it.

It is clear that they cannot flourish on mere pecuniary support. They will always need it, but it must come as a direct fruit of honest work. Therefore, what is necessary is character above suspicion, ceaseless effort accompanied by ever-increasing knowledge of the technique of the work and a life of rigorous simplicity. Workers without character, living far above the ordinary life of villagers, and devoid of the knowledge required of them for their work, can produce no impression on the villagers whether Harijan or other.

As I write these lines instances of those workers who for want of character or simple living damaged the cause and themselves recur to my mind. Happily instances of positive misconduct are rare. But the greatest hindrance to the progress of the work lies in the inability of workers of quality of support themselves on the village scale. If every one of such workers puts on his work a price which village service cannot sustain, ultimately these organizations must be wound up. For the existence of payments on the city scale except in rare and temporary cases would imply that the gulf between cities and villages is unbridgeable. The village movement is as much an education of the city people as of the villagers. Workers drawn from cities have to develop village mentality and learn the art of living after the manner of villagers. This does not mean that they have to starve like the villagers. But it does mean that there must be a radical change in the old style of life. While the standard of living in the villages must be raised, the city standard has to undergo considerable revision, without the worker being required in any way to adopt a mode of life that would impair his health.

Harijan, 11-4-1936

431. UNCERTIFIED KHADI

The Secretary of the Tamil Nad Branch of the A.I.S.A. writes to Shri Shankerlal Banker:[1]

> The old khadi merchants of Tirupur have started an association for certifying their khadi products.
>
> Their object is to sell their existing stocks at enhanced rates and allow liberal commission to retail merchants throughout the province and to continue khadi production at old system and pay low wages. Many an old spinner, who is either unable to purchase cotton from us or improve the quality of yarn, may continue to spin for these merchants. We are, however, making arrangements to counteract these merchants' efforts by vigorous propaganda among the villagers by pamphlets, private talks and lectures about the object and work of our Association and that of these merchants. Our workers go from house to house and teach the spinners how to hank and improve the quality of yarn.
>
> These merchants still continue to use our name for deceiving the public. Their sign boards, letter-heads, bills, invoices, labels on clothes are all printed as certified by the A.I.S.A. I sent them letters the other day asking them to strike out our name at once. One merchant has replied as follows:
>
> 'I am surprised to read your letter dated 2-3-'36. You say that if I do not strike off the words "Certified by A.I.S.A." within a week you are going to take legal action. The All-India Spinners' Association is not a registered body. . . .' Neither you nor anybody else has the right to object or protest. . ..'
>
> I have written to the Press. I am making arrangements to stock A. I. S. A.-certified khadi at every Congress sabha. . . . Already two committees, the Mylapore Congress Committee and the Vedaranyam Town Congress Committee, have taken sales certificates. I hope before long other committees will apply for certificates and arrange to stock and sell khadi. . . .
>
> I request that you will kindly explain the situation to Mahatmaji and request him to issue an appeal in the Press asking people who cannot spin for themselves to purchase only A. I, S. A.-certified khadi and also to sound a note of warning to the merchants of Tirupur.

It is certainly wrong of the erstwhile certified-khadi merchants to continue their trade in uncertified khadi after refusing to conform to the new rules about khadi and thus making themselves unfit for

[1] Only extracts of the letter are reproduced here.

certificates. Their conduct is unpatriotic and unhuman. They ought not to exploit the poor spinners and to a much lesser degree the credulous buyers. I would urge them to conform to the new rules and take out certificates, or if they are not satisfied with the new scale, to take to some other business. It ill becomes them to retort that the A.I.S.A. is not a registered body and that therefore they can do what they like. I suggest to the objectors that their defiance of a body which they have hitherto obeyed is a breach of the moral and social code.

But whilst I hope that my appeal to the sellers of uncertified khadi will bear fruit, I would like the Secretary of the Tamil Nad Branch to acquaint the spinners of the new rules and persuade them not to spin for lower wages. The most effective remedy lies in the hands of the spinners.

Of course I heartily endorse the Secretary's appeal to Congress Committees and other lovers of the poor villagers to take out certificates for the sale of khadi and thus render concrete sevice to the toiling spinners. Their active co-operation will largely check the sale of uncertified khadi.

Harijan, 11-4-1936

432. TELEGRAM TO J. A. D. NAOROJI

April 11, 1936

J. A. D. NAOROJI
78 NAPEAN SEA ROAD
BOMBAY

AWAITING YOUR CONSENT KAMALA MEMORIAL APPEAL.[1]

GANDHI

Form a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The Kamala Nehru Memorial Trust meeting was held at Allahabad on April 7, 1936.

433. SPEECH AT KHADI AND VILLAGE INDUSTRIES EXHIBITION-II

LUCKNOW,
April 12, 1936

[Gandhiji] appealed to them to go and visit the Exhibition, once, twice, three times, even four times, with their eyes and ears open, and if possible with the eyes and ears of their souls open. They would then see miracles in the Exhibition.

When I told[1] you the other day that the Exhibition was not a cinema show, I meant more than I said.[2] If you move about this Exhibition with my eyes and ears, you will spontaneously exclaim, 'Hurrah! what a splendid exhibition!'

There may be many young men here who shout 'hurrah' on witnessing the dance and gesticulations of a woman. But God has given us eyes not to see and appreciate the dance of a woman, but to recognize the mother in her. The 'hurrah' that will spontaneously come to your lips on witnessing the Exhibition with my eyes and ears will be clean and not filthy. We go into raptures no hearing the name of Khuda or Rama in a *durgah*, mosque or a temple. You can look upon this Exhibition as an equally sacred place. You will not find here anything to captivate you in a sensual way. You have to see it with my eyes. It does not mean you should see it with the eyes of a mahatma. I am only a villager, a simple man. Therefore you have to look at this village industries exhibition with the eyes of a simple villager.

Anyone who pays a rupee, the charge for seeing the Exhibition four times, can learn four lessons in the bargain. I am sure you have heard about spectacles made of pebble. Now, here you can actually witness them being made. Where else would you go to learn this craft? But then this is a rather difficult job. They also make paper here. You will be amazed at the progress made by the paper industry. Even a lad of ten can make paper if he wants to. If you closely study here the process of paper-making you will be able to pursue the craft in your home. Here you will come across a novelty at every step and stop to marvel at it.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Khadi and Village Industries Exhibition, Lucknow", 28-3-1936

[2] This is reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". What follows has been translated from the Hindi in *Harijan Sevak.*

When you go to a cinema show you meet with things there to captivate in a sensual way your eyes and ears. I may tell you that we have tried to boycott from this Exhibition everything that had no educative value. We have tried to make the Exhibition a sacred and holy place, a feast for your eyes and ears, a spiritual feast capable of purifying the senses. I shall tell you why. Do you know Orissa and its skeletons? Well, form that hungerstricken, impoverished land of skeletons have come men who have wrought miracles in bone and horn and silver. Go and see these things not only ready-made but in the making, and see how the soul of man even in an impoverished body can breathe life into lifeless horns and metal. A poor potter has also worked miracles out of clay.[1]

I have bought from the stall a nice little ink-pot to hold my ink. I thought its price would be six or seven annas, but I was surprised to learn that it was just one pice. Well, when you look at it you will no doubt wonder if it had not come from Germany or Japan. But the article is village-made. If this is not a wonder, what is?[2]

Things which I thought would be worth several annas are worth only a copper or a couple of coppers and yet they are delicate little pieces of art. A dear sister purchased the other day a little 'Krishna' in ivory. She was not given to worshipping Lord Krishna, but she now tells that she has begun to worship the exquisite little form.

The Exhibition is thus not a spectacular show, but a kind of fairyland. But our tastes have been so debased that miracles happening before our very eyes appear like so much dust or clay and trifles coming from abroad become exquisite pieces of art; water from a spring in far off Europe with the witchery of an unintelligible name becomes invested with miraculous quality, while the water of the holy Ganges which is said to be a purifier and a natural disinfectant seems to be no better than water from a dirty pool.

You can, of course, see that craftsmen from distant Travancore, Kashmir and Cuttack have congregated here. These poor people have come here to earn a few coins by exhibiting their crafts. Therefore those people on whom God has bestowed money ought to purchase here something or other. Things are not overpriced here. It is another matter if you yourself pay a fabulous price for a piece which pleases you. The price you pay here will not go to fill the pockets of any rich

[1] This paragraph is from *Harijan.* The following paragraph is *Harijan Sevak.*

[2] What follows is form *Harijan.*

commission-agent. It will directly reach the purse of the poor villager to whom all of us are indebted. We are all living at the cost of the villagers. The city-dwellers are exploiting the villagers, and they must repay the debt, at least partially. A link has been built to bridge the yawning gulf between the cities and the villages; we have only to cross this bridge. Patronizing village industries will constitute the crossing of the bridge. This is not a metter of charity; I have placed a purely commercial proposition before you. Those who buy things here should also return with 'hurrah' on their lips; and the craftsmen from Kashmir, Travancore, Cuttack, etc., should also return to their homes saying, "Hurrah, how well the people in Lucknow appreciated our handiwork.' If you engrave my words on your hearts, I shall also feel that I have been duly paid for my lecture.[1]

If a vision of the kind I have described to you fails to stir your hearts and urge you to make some little sacrifice for the illfed and the underfed, God help you. Iqbal whose poem "Hindostan hamara"[2] still stirs our hearts with emotion must have had some such vision before his mind's eye when he described India with her eternal sentry the Himalayas, and Ganges the eternal witness of the numerous stages through which our civilization has passed. We attend flag-hoisting ceremonies and are proud of our National Flag. Let me tell you that our pride has no meaning if you do not like things made in India and hanker after foreign ones. It is idle for those whose heart is not stirred at the light of things made by our poor craftsmen and craftswomen and to make a little sacrifice for them to talk of independence for India.

Harijan, 18-4-1936, and *Harijan Sevak*, 18-4-1936

434. A LETTER[3]

[Before *April 13, 1936*][4]

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter. Wisdom suggests ad experience testifies that one should never grieve over the past, however sinful or awful it might have been. The past is worth remembering only in order to profit by

[1] This paragraph is from *Harijan* Sevak. What follows is from *Harijan.*

[2] "Sare jahanse achchha Hindostan hamara"

[3] The addressee, a retired accountant, had written that though he was 65 he was not free from passion and had broken certain vows taken in the past.

[4] In the source this letter is placed before those of April 13, 1936.

it, to strengthen the good we might have done and to prevent, with all our might, a repetition of the bad. I hold that determination never to repeat a sin is the best form of repentance. The only remedy I can suggest is to rely upon Ramanama with an undying faith. It will surely give you mental relief and ultimately root out all the evil that may be in you in spite of yourself.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

435. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

LUCKNOW,
April 13, 1936

DEAR HYSTERICAL IDIOT,

Your two letters before me. I may leave tomorrow and for certain the day after. On reaching Wardha I shall send you a wire if the change of scene does not produce a lapse of memory, as it so often does with me.[1]

The parcel is in course of preparation.

I have the Rs. 100 in mind. Add the amount to your donation to the Kamala Memorial. You will see the notice in a day or two. You may give as much as you comfortably can. And if you knew her well and that as a woman of rare spiritual beauty, make collections if you can, in an easy way. I do not want you to strain yourself in any way. Nor must you do it because I suggest it.

If I settle down in Segaon, I shall most decidedly be available to the outside world and certainly to idiots, lunatics and the like. And you may depend upon my taking care of brother ass. Therefore "Be careful for nothing".

I have asked K.[2] to expedite the purchases for you.

You shall certainly pay for the hospital building in Maganwadi.

No more time.

Love.

TYRANT

SMT. RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
JULLUNDUR CITY
PUNJAB

From the original: C.W. 3770. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6876

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Anrit Kaur", 20-4-1936 and 21-4-1936.
[2] Khurshedbehn

436. NOTE TO S. A. BRELVI

April 13, 1936

No. I would not accept office[1] for table crumbs, but I would accept office for substantial gains. I told Masani not to use what I said and he endorsed what I said.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

437. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

April 13, 1936

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letter. I have gone through the article on the Agent's marriage. It puts forth a good argument but it cannot be said that it is written in good English. Some mistakes have gone undetected. However, it does not matter. I say this only to draw your attention to it. What is essential is clarity of thought although it would be good to write a language faultlessly. Of course a mistake in a foreign language may be excusable.

We are still in Lucknow. Probably we shall leave here on the 15th. For the present we shall be going to Wardha. I am thinking of settling down in a village near Wardha.

Nimu[2], Krishnadas and his wife Manojna, Prabhudas and Amba, etc., are here at present. Umiya[3] and her husband Shankarlal[4] live close to us. Jaisukhlal also has come and has put up near the Exhibition. The Exhibition has been a success.

Kanti, Navin, Kanu, Ba are with me already, and also Jamnalalji, Janakidevi and Madalasa. Thus we have quite a good gathering here. The day after tomorrow, however, most of them will have dispersed.

[1] Mahadev Desai records: "Brelvi reported that Masani had said that Gandhiji's inclination was then growing more and more towards 'non-acceptance' of 'ministry'. " Opinion in the Indian National Congress was divided over the question of accepting ministerships in provinces under the new Constitution provided for in the Government of India Act of 1935.

[2] Nirmala, wife of Ramdas Gandhi

[3] Daughter of Jaisukhlal Gandhi

[4] Shankarlal Agrawal

Ramdas, Devdas and Lakshmi are staying on at Bombay..

I may say I am in fairly good health.

I believe Medh is improving steadily.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Remembering that it is Jallianwala Bagh Day, some of us have been observing a fast.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4850

438. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 13, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I have now two letters of yours to deal with. Not much to say. If I do not leave tomorrow, I leave for certain on 15th.

Segaon is on the brain. Jamnalalji is half converted.

It is a great joy to me that in Sejila you have found a faithful and intelligent companion. I dread your nightly adventures.[1] I know it is wrong to do so. We are all in His keeping. But I am anxious for you to avoid all mishaps which can be anticipated.

I expect of find you hale, hearty and joyful.

Yes, Ku.[2] has put his whole soul into making my rooms as attractive as possible and that after my style.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

We are all fasting today. I have just broken mine.

From the original: C.W. 6325. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9791

[1] The addressee used to ride home in the dark over the long country roads.

[2] Bharatan Kumarappa

439. A LETTER[1]

April 14, 1936

Your letter surprises me although I rather like it, too. Your language does not appear to spring from your heart. Perhaps such language comes to you naturally. I am not impressed by the mention of your *jap*[2], etc. You had written a similar letter at Maganwadi. In spite of the several vows you took you were full of sensual aberrations and kept from me the fact. This letter gives no proof of your frankness. You seem to accept your guilt because you have no option. I see in it no feeling of remorse although it may be that I am mistaken. Maybe, you have turned a new leaf; on my part, I would of course wish it. Show all the papers to Ramjibhai and confess everything to him. Do away with such figurative and flowery language. Use adjectives sparingly. Your very first sentence irks: "Let us thank the gracious Dweller in the heart for bringing in the fortunate opportunity of confess with humility what was concealed by conwardice". Why "us"? I see nothing to be thankful for. I have not known such a thing happening to man all of a sudden, as you describe. By saying "If we went into the details I might perhaps win the point", you weaken your feeling of remorse, if you had any. Do go into the details, if you think you can win the point that way. The saints magnify their own fault if it were as samll as a speck of dust and make it look as big as an elephant. You are, however, not at all obliged to do so; you kept back for long whatever you had [to confess].

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

440. SPEECH AT ALL-INDIA DEPRESSED CLASSES CONFERENCE, LUCKNOW

April 14, 1936

Speaking for five minutes Mahatma Gandhi said that the Harijans had all his blessings and asked them to have patience as the demon of untouchability was a long-standing one and could not be destroyed in a day. He exhorted them to be clean and neat and assured them that he was always with them and was one among them.

The Leader, 17-4-1936

[1] The name has been omitted.

[2] Repetition of a name of God or a *mantra*

441. DISCUSSION WITH VISITORS[1]

[Before *April 16, 1936*][2]

"This book-cover is made by our women", said the lady from Poland. Thanking them Gandhiji asked:

Is it only the women who spin and weave there, and do the men do nothing?

Spinning is done exclusively by women. But men are not idlers either. They are engaged in other crafts. For instance this wooden casket is made by our men

Is this a recent revival, or has the movement been on for some time? Has it touched the intellectual classes, or is there a gulf between them and the masses?

No; the intellectuals have taken keenly to it and we have had the movement now for some time. and it is daily growing.

And how do you happen to work together¾you who must be as poles asunder, Poland an agricultural country and France a highly industrialized country?

We have been working together for several years. There is a village industries movement in France too, and we thought we should go together to India to study things first-hand. We must say we have had much to learn.

They were contemplating writing a book on India and wanted to know whether they could serve India by doing so.

You could, if you write for Poland and France or say Europe, but not if you write for India.

They paused for a moment wondering what Gandhiji meant.

I shall explain. If you have really learnt somethiing from our villages, you can only give the benefit of that learning to your own people. What I learn from the West I give to my country. Fallen though we seem today, our villages have still to teach something to the world. And if what you say to your people appeals to them, that will have its reaction on us. What I say holds good only if you have really learnt something worthy from our villages. Perhaps the Exhibition has opened your eyes to many possibilities.

[1] Two ladies, one from Poland and the other from France, representing the village industries movement in Europe, called on Gandhiji and presented a little hand-spun hand-woven book-cover and a tiny wooden casket.

[2] According to Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter" from which the report is extracted, the discussion took place at Lucknow. Gandhiji left Lucknow on April 16.

I should like to spend weeks there and fill my soul with the atmosphere of the past. You find there workmen actually at work¾workmen from Orissa and Kashmir working with their crudest possible tools, if you please, and yet conjuring up with their aid some of the most gorgeous articles in silver and wool. The things you have brought for me are no patch on similar things you will find in the Exhibition. Look at the men from Patan working at their sari of exquisite pattern and design. The work is now confined to only four families whereas hundreds of families used to get their living in the past out of the work. They are so conservative that they would not let their nearest neighbour know the cunning of their craft. But we have drawn some of them out into light. Some of this work can be revived, in all its glory, if we are prepared to pay for it adequately, pay enough to feed them and to keep them in health and comfort. Now that is a nearly perfect Exhibition, i. e., as perfect as it could be looking to the limited time at the disposal of the organizers and to the numerous handicaps they had to contend against. And yet it is nothing compared to what it could be, if we could have brought all the representative men and wemen engaged in many other crafts.

Harijan, 25-4-1936

442. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

April 16, 1936

CHI. MANUDI,

You of course asked for a quick reply, but I didn't have the time. It remains for you to come over in accordance with your vow. Ba and I shall be at Wardha for the present. Do come over. I wonder if you have any other plan. We are going to Wardha today. I hope you are in good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1559. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

443. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

LUCKNOW,
April 16, 1936

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

You had a right to tell Jamnalalji what you did about me. But you should have taken me into confidence if you felt hurt. Prabha came to me with your consent as well as Brijkishore Babu's. I can say nothing about the influence I exercised on her. But by her association with me there has been no waning of her devotion to her father or love for her husband. True, Prabha does not give you conjugal satisfaction, because by her very nature she cannot. She was free from passion even before she came to me. We can only go by what she says. She told me this repeatedly and firmly and I accepted her word. Now tell me what I should do. If you want that Prabha should give up visiting me or writing to me, for your peace of mind I will accept this restriction.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Jayaprakash Narayan Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

444. SPEECH TO VILLAGERS

SEGAON
[After *April 17, 1936*][1]

Mirabehn who is here in your midst came here with the intention of settling down for good. But I find that she is not in a position to carry out her intention. Even if she stayed on, she could do so not without considerable mental struggle. The will is not lacking but perhaps the flesh is weak. Now as you know an unbreakable bond of common service binds us both, and so I thought it my duty to do what she could not do. God willing, therefore, I shall come to stay in

[1] According to Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter", from which the speech is extracted, Gandhiji visited Segaon soon after his return from Lucknow. He reached Wardha on April 17, 1936.

your midst. Maybe God will give me the strength that He did not vouchsafe to her.

But even God's will is expressed through various agencies and unless I have your goodwill even I may fail in my mission. Ever since my childhood it has been a principle with me that I should not think of inflicting myself on those who view my going in their midst with mistrust, misgivings or apprehension. I should not think of coming here, except to serve you. But in many places my presence and the programme I stand for are viewed with considerable dread. At the back of this dread is the fact that I have made the removal of untouchability a life's mission.You must have known from Mirabehn that I have cost out all untouchability from myself, that I hold all classes of people¾Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra, Rajput, Mahar, Chamar¾all alike, and I regard these distinctions based on birth as immoral. We have suffered because of these distinctions, and this sense of high and low has vitiated our lives. But I may tell you that I should not think of imposing these convictions on you. I should try to do so by persuasion, above all by my own example. I shall try to serve you by cleaning your roads and your surroundings, by trying to render such help as I can if there is illness in the village, by teaching you self-help by way of helping you to revive your handicrafts. If you will co-operate with me I shall be happy, if you will not I shall be content to be absorbed among you as one among the few hundreds that live here.

I hope I shall come to settle here. But it depends on His will. For I did not know that He would move me from India to South Africa, and from South Africa I should come to Sabarmati, and from Sabarmati to Maganwadi,and now from Maganwadi to Segaon.

Harijan, 2-5-1936

445. FOR CHRISTIAN FRIENDS

DEAR BR. GANDHI

> . . . You have had your name blazoned abroad. . . as one of the greatest philosophers and sacrificial workers on earth. In India you have been proclaimed *the* Mahatma, and actually worshipped as one of *the* incarnations of India's many deities. . . Your practice also of fasting when sin has been committed. . . has had a tendency to make Indians believe that you can merit

blessing which can be communicated to others,---but has anybody been loving and courageous enough to write and challenge you as to how personally you are going to obtain atonement for your own sin? All your self-denials and fastings and prayer and good deeds cannot blot out one sin of your early days. For thirty or more years of your life you lived the carnal, self-life, seeking and following your own plans and ambitions without seeking to know God's purpose for your life or to honour His holy name. . .

Even if, as you profess to believe, Christ was only one of many incarnations of God, and the latest of them, you must either accept His tremendous claims as of Divine origin, or reject them as only human and fallible. And when He declares as He did to the Jews of His day ¾'If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins' or 'I am *the* way, *the* truth, and *the* life, no man cometh unto the Father, but by me', you must either believe Him to have been self-deceived, or deliberately false. . . . I pray daily that Christ may grant you a revelation of Himself as He did to Saul of Tarsus, that. . . you may be used to proclaim to India's millions the sacrificial efficacy of His precious blood.

This is a typical letter[1] from an old English friend who regularly writes such letters almost every six months. This friend is very earnest and well known to me. But there are numerous other correspondents unknown to me who write in the same strain without arguing. Since now I cannot for reasons of health write to individual writers, I use this letter as a text for a general reply. Incidentally this effort will enable the readers of *Harijan* who accpet my guidance to understand the nature of my religious belief.

My correspondent is a literalist. He gives its literal meaning to every text of the Bible in spite of its clear statement that "the letter killeth, the spirit giveth life". My very first reading of the Bible showed me that I would be repelled by many things in it if I gave their literal meaning many texts or even took every passage in it as the word of God. I found as I proceeded with my study of the scriptures of the various religions that every scripture had to be treated likewise, not excepting the Vedas or the Upanishads. Therefore the story of the immaculate conception when I interpret it mystically does not repel me. I should find it hard to believe in the literal meaning of the verses relating to the immaculate conception of Jesus. Nor would it deepen my regard for Jesus if I gave those verses their literal meaning. This does not mean that the writers of the Gospels were untruthful persons.

[1] Of which only extracts have been reproduced here

They wrote in a mood of exaltation. From my youth upward I learnt the art of estimating the value of scriptures on the basis of their ethical teaching. Miracles therefore had no interest for me. The miracles said ot have been performed by Jesus, even in I had believed them literally, would not have reconciled me to any teaching that did not satisfy universal ethics. Somehow or other, words of religious teachers have for me, as I presume for millions, a living force which the same words uttered by ordinary mortals do not possess.

Jesus then to me is a great world-teacher among others. He was to the devotees of his generation no doubt 'the only begotten son of God'. Their belief need not be mine. He affects my life no less because I regard him as one among the many begotten sons of God. The adjcetive 'begotten' has, for me, a deeper and possibly a grander meaning than its literal meaning. For me it implies spiritual birth. In his own times he was the nearest of God.

Jesus atoned for the sins of those who accepted his teachings by being an infallible example to them. But the example was worth nothing to those who never troubled to change their lives. A regenerate outgrows the original taint even as purified gold outgrows the original alloy.

I have made the frankest admission of my many sins. But I do not carry their burden on my shoulders, If I am journeying Godward, as I feel I am, it is safe with me. For I feel the warmth of the sunshine of His presence. My austerities, fastings and prayers are, I know, of no value, if I rely upon them for reforming me. But they have an inestimable value, it they represent, as I hope they do, the yearnings of a soul striving to lay his weary head in the lap of his Maker.

The *Gita* has become for me the key to the scriptures of the world. It unravels for me the deepest mysteries to be found in them. I regard them with the same reverence that I pay to the Hindu scriptures. Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians, Parsis, Jews, are convenient labels. But when I tear them down, I do not know which is which. We are all children of the same God. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, not everyone that sayeth unto me Lord Lord, shall enter the Kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven shall enter the Kingdom", was said, though in different words, by all the great teachers of the world.

Harijan, 18-4-1936

446. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA.
April 18, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

We reached here yesterday noon quite comfortably. I hope you had my wire in time. Sardar and Rajendra Babu came with me. So we were quite a large company. But we came by a train in which there was no discomfort caused to fellow-passengers. Only we came by the passenger train from Itarsi.

My programme is that I am in and about Wardha till the middle of May. May go to Panchgani after that for about a fortnight.

I hope your throat is quite in order. You must get rid of these ailments. How you can do so I do not know. But I do feel that there is a simple natural remedy.

Jawaharlal will be here about 24th instant.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3569. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6378

447. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

April 18, 1936

CHI. VALJI,

Do go to Nainital. It would be good if Jivram[1] gives up his insistence on attaching his mother-in-law's name to the donation. If he does not, we shall have the name.

There is little likelihood of getting an extensive grazing ground for Rs. 500. He might entrust it to Gopabandhu Chowdhary to utilize the sum for the service of the cow.

Blessings from

BAPU

[P.S.]

Your letter was delivered only yesterday as it did not bear the correct address.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7477 Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1] Jivram Kothari of Kutch who had settled in Orissa to work among the poor

448. LETTER TO R. RAMASWAMI[1]

[Before *April 19, 1936*][2]

Gandhiji has your letter of the 8th instant. The contents surprised him, inasmuch as an educated man like you does not understand the reason why the price of khadi has slightly gone up. It has been increased in order to enable the poor spinner to have something like a living wage. We are far yet from giving him a real living wage, but the recent increase in khadi [prices] ensures him a wage just enough to secure him two full meals a day. Do you, poor as you are, grudge the little increase to the men and women who are much poorer than you?

The Hindu, 20-4-1936

449. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
April 20, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

You are right in saying I worry about nothing and therefore not even about your persistent cough which you so lightly regarded. But not to worry is not to neglect or underrate such information. Why should you be so delicate? Why should the slightest change in the weather upset you? If it is the diet that is at the bottom, you must revert to the old regimen. On no such account may you endanger your health. There are occasions in a person's life when everything has to be sacrificed. Surely a new regimen suddenly adopted is not such an occasion. My own inclination is always on the side of nature cure. But that you may not adopt unless Shummy co-operates, you believe in it, and you get a proper guide. A guide is obtainable but Shummy may not agree and you may not have *faith* in it. Mere liking is of no consequence. Please do not play with your ailments. Even a rebel has to submit to the laws of nature.

[1] The addressee, a clerk of the Scindia Steam Navigation Company, had written to Gandhiji protesting against the increase in the price of khadi. In reply Mahadev Desai wrote to him.

[2] The report appears under the date-line "Cuddalore, April 19, 1936".

I look forward to better news tomorrow.

You know all about the tragedy of the wire.[1] You began to crow before the dawn.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

The electric stand adorns my desk now. Bharatan brought it yesterday.

From the original: C.W. 3570. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6379

450. LETTER TO VITHAL L. PHADKE

April 20, 1936

CHI. MAMA,

Now that Sardar has communicated to you his permission to put up a hut, I have nothing further to write. You will, of course, incur the minimum expenditure.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3835

451. LETTER TO BHUJANGILAL CHHAYA

April 20, 1936

CHI. BHUJANGILAL,

I have your letter. At present nothing in certain as to where I may settle. Even after I have settled down you must obtain your father's permission. It would not be proper to let you stay with me against your father's wish. You have to have patience.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2638

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 21-4-1936.

452. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI[1]

April 20, 1936

In my opinion *The Hindustan Times* has become a thoroughly worthless paper. It does not contain any news worth knowing. And if there are any they ae harmful. If it cannot be improved you must wash your hands of it. I do not see a single newspaper which publishes authentic news. Of course I do not cite the instances. Mahadev wrote to Parasnath[2] but so far there is no improvement. You can hardly do anything ! Who can?

From Gujarati: C.W. 8018. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

453. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
April 21, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Your letter gives encouraging news. You do like to be told that letters from you are always welcome and wanted. Well, this is to tell you once for all that you must write regularly except when you can't do so without straining yourself. It must never be a task.

You are wrong as in usual for idiots. Your letters were duly received in Lucknow. But poor Kanu absent-minded forgot that you were in Simla. My memory is bad enough but it was quite in order for the purpose of sending you the wire. I must however confess that I thought of it a few hours after my arrival.

I must find the yarn you want. I shall try to get it twisted.

Don't be ill again. What is the use of having the car there? Surely it can be well looked after in Jullunder.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3721. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6877

[1] Devdas Gandhi had joined *The Hindustan Times* in 1934. The use of the second person singular and the contents of the letter indicate that the letter was addressed to him.

[2] Editor, The Hindustan Times

454. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

April 21, 1936

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

The notes make good reading. Your answers were fairly full and of course straight.

Why do you feel worried over the forthcoming meeting[1]? If there is discussion it would only be to convince one another of the soundness of one's views. You will stop the discussion when you think a proposition has been thoroughly argued. After all you want team-work and I have great hope of this happening.

I reach Nagpur 23rd evening.

I wish Ranjit[2] will take care of himself. I am glad he has gone to Khali. I expect Sarup to accompany you.

Sardar is still suffering and is just now on buttermilk only. I am taking him to Nandi Hill after 8th May. I wish you too could come.

Love.

BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, p. 175

455. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 21, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Jamnalalji has given full authority to commence building operations[3]. If you come tomorrow evening or 23rd morning, I could explain everything. I leave for Nagpur 23rd evening, returning 26th evening or 27th morning at the latest.

More when we meet.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6328. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9794

[1] Of the Congress Working Committee
[2] Ranjit Pandit, addressee's sister's husband
[3] For Gandhiji's hut at Segaon

456. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI

WARDHA,
April 21, 1936

BHAI CHAND TYAGI,

A son must feel the sting of his father's death but it should not be taken too much to heart for we all have to go the same way one day or the other. Why grieve over what comes inevitably with one's birth itself? One should grieve, if at all, over one's birth.

I thought Rajkishori was not required to go there. We are poor and we wish to live like the poor. Why then should we spend needless railway fare? Am I wrong in thinking thus or have you changed your opinion? Anyway, on my part there will be no restriction on Rajkishori, she can leave whenever she is so inclined.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6098

457. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
April 22, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Only idiots can think of idiotic interpretation[1] and because you are such a brilliant specimen and agent of the A.I.V.I.A., naturally you will like the rest to belong to your species. Heaven help poor me—their guide ! ! !

Do you think anything on earth can be done without trouble? You can't do even your unpacking without trouble. Then what is the use of your saying that I should redeem my promise to send you honey if it can be done without trouble? I tell you that it cannot be done without some trouble. But that trouble is going to be taken and honey is being sent. You will cover the expense when you next send your cheque. The parcels to follow will be sent to you direct from Calcutta or Shillong, V.P.P. if you like. You will tell me when you will

[1] The addressee had interpreted A.I.V.I.A. as 'All-India Village Idiots' Association'.

want the next parcel. Let all eat this honey, if they prefer it to the Australian. I am sure the Shillong honey is any day better than the foreign stuff, if only because it is fresher.

Your lace, mattress and the reversible sari must be in the box that was being packed for you. You must receive it by this time. I know there was some bungling about it. You are not the only idiot. You may be the princess among them !! Are you?

I go tomorrow to Nagpur, probably return on 25th, 27th for certain. I go to Segaon, 5 miles from here, on 29th or 30th, returning when required. I go with Sardar on 9th May or about the date no Nandi Hill, Mysore. Mahadev and others accompany me. Or else I would have insisted on Mahadev going to you for a month. We descend to Bangalore about 1st June and leave it about 10th June. This outing is necessary because Dr. A[nsari] wants Sardar to go to a hill-station. He would not go without me. If I had not to go to Mysore, I would have passed a fortnight with the sister at Panchgani. I am sorry to disappoint them.

Of course I inflict myself on you, if I have to come to Simla. I do not think I shall have to just yet. As for you, I shall hold you to the three winter months with me and then you will diet yourself under supervision. What would Shummy say about it?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3722. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6878

458. LETTER TO RAMI K. PAREKH

April 22, 1936

CHI. RAMI,

I have your letter. If you do wish to have Manu with you let it be so. I shall be required to go to the Mysore region with Sardar about the 10th of May. We would be returning about June 10. So, Manu will be staying with you during that period, won't she? In June I may perhaps go to settle in a village, where I may have Manu with me. However, I do not know whether I could stay there during the monsoon. Nothing has been finalized.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.W. 9725

459. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

April 22, 1936

CHI. MANUDI,

My letter to Ramibehn contains my reply. I am not writing to your mother's sisters separately.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1557. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

460. LETTER TO KRISHNALAL

April 22, 1936

CHI. KRISHNALAL,

You are on the contrary finding fault with me. You yourself would not write and yet expect me to write. How is that? Shall I say that you did not even argue out my case properly? It is good that you have passed your examination. Become a very intelligent and equally nice boy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1558. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

461. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

April 22, 1936

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I have your letter. You must not go on grumbling. You should work within your capacity. Not much may be expected from Tyagi. He is a good man but he cannot keep his mind steady. You have to take the injections; start on them soon. Kanti is with me all along. I am keeping well. It is naturally hot. I shall leave for Bangalore about May 8, taking Sardar with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 332

462. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[Before *April 23, 1936*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I did expect that you would send Shivprasad's letter after making a fair copy. It would be good if, in my old age, I could personally teach Vijaya and Manu how to read and write at any rate. I, therefore, give some dictation to both of them after the prayer. I think that even with my left hand I would write faster than they do, more legibly at any rate. But I have found this key for training them, and I am holding on to it. My handwriting is none too good, either. So I allow the letter as taken down by Vijaya to go, as also the one by Manudi[2]. That 'mission' became "machine" is not so very important. But I did sympathize with Shivprasad. Although I had expected that you would have a fair copy made if you found it too difficult to read. Bablo[3], Durga[4], Prabhudayal or, if free, Kanu could have made a copy. I must have presumed some such thing. But what can we do, now that the arrow has sped from the bow? Let it strike Shivprasad. Why should he have asked such questions? Kuruvilla is free to send the note prepared by you.

You will have to accompany me to Hodge's. Do whatever you can for Daniel Hamilton. I will of course try to detain Rajkumari[5]. When should we reach Nagpur? Decide this if it has not already been done, so that I may know when I will have to leave Segaon. Please remember and caution other visitors that the wooden bridge on the longer route has been pulled down. Hence cars, etc. should not take this route.

Read Moore's[6] letter to Rajkumari and then destroy it.

Jamnalalji will have arrived before Anandshankarbhai[7] does.

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's proposed visit to Nagpur and from the contents, this letter appears to have been written before April 23, 1936 when Gandhiji reached Nagpur, presumably to attend the Akhil Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad meeting.

[2] Manu S. Mashruwala

[3] Addressee's son Narayan

[4] Addressee's wife

[5] Rajkumari Amrit Kaur

[6] Bishop Moore; *vide* also Letter to Amrit Kaur", 10-3-1937 and 17-3-1937.

[7] Anandshankar Bapubhai Dhruv

Even if he has not, why not put up Anandshankarbhai at his place? But do what you think best. If there is no reply from Madan Mohan[1], make alternative arrangements for his stay in consultation with Jajuji[2] or Radhakisan. Tikekar is, of course, there. He would be comfortable at his place also. But he is in bad shape these days. Hence it would be better to make some other arrangement.

I talked to Rambhau and also told him not to have his meals with you. I also asked him to leave Wardha immediately. But what can I do when you yourself are soft? Pyarelal says that he too had scolded him severely. You can tell him on my behalf that he may either leave or take his meals anywhere else he wishes. I knew nothing about the bangles.

I have read Chopra's booklet. We do have a copy. It was lent to Mahodaya[3]. It came eight or nine months ago. Its title is likely to be 'Indian Drugs' rather than 'Indian Plants'.

I am writing to Jugal Kishore and Pattani. Jajuji's lot is pitiable. Keep in touch with him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S. N. 11519

463. LETTER TO GOVIND V. GURJALE

April 23, 1936

MY DEAR GURJALE[4],

The troubles, such as you mention, will make us, if we can stand them in the right spirit, I hope that the persecuted family will come through the fire scatheless.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1385

[1] Jamnalal Bajaj's secretary
[2] Shrikrishnadas Jaju
[3] Dr. Mahodaya
[4] Alias Bhikshu Nirmalananda

464. LETTER TO CARL BUTTO[1]

April 23, 1936

I have just received your interesting letter. Yes, I am following the events in Germany and the other parts of Europe. It is all confusion worse confounded. It is a mere trial of physical strength, it is also a trial of diplomacy of the worst kind ever experienced in history. As you know my attempt is wholly on a different plane. I can show nothing and yet my faith is growing stronger—more so for the events of Europe.

Love.

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai.

465. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
April 23, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I am going to Nandi Durg, taking Sardar with me. I am prepared to take Kusum[2] with me if you can send her and if she wants to come. We shall be leaving here on the 8th. She can accompany Sardar who is coming here from Ahmedabad.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8447. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] The addressee had explained the conditions prevailing in Germany and highly praised Hitler.

[2] Daughter of Vrajlal Gandhi

466. SPEECH AT AKHIL BHARATIYA SAHITYA PARISHAD

NAGPUR,
April 24, 1936

Introducing his printed speech to the audience, Gandhiji said he was out of place in a conference of *litterateurs* especially as he knew better than anyone else that his knowledge of Hindi literature, and even of Gujarati literature, was nothing to speak of, that his knowledge even of Gujarati grammar was indifferent. But he had been told that it was an impossible task to get together formidable *litterateurs*, who were like lions safe enough in their own cages, but difficult to keep together and to be made to work together. It had been thought that he as a neutral man and a 'mahatma' might be of some service in bringing them together. There he was available to them for what he might be worth, but he wanted to make it clear that he was there simply to initiate the work of bringing [together] the literary men of every province speaking the different languages, and of serving the masses of India by making available to them the best in all the rich languages of our country[1].

In the course of his extempore speech Gandhiji said that doctors had advised him not to exert himself too much.[2]

I am here for a brief while for the limited purpose I have told you, but you may know that my heart is neither here nor even in Wardha. My heart is in the villages. For days I have been striving with the Sardar to let me go to a village near Wardha. He is still unconvinced, but my mind won't rest, and God willing, I hope to go and settle in a village near Wardha in a short while. But that does not mean that I will not do the work I am doing now, or that I shall cease to be available for consultation to friends, or for advice to those who will seek it. Only my address will be a village where I would be living ordinarily. I have been asking all my co-workers who are doing village work to go and settle in villages and to serve the villagers. I feel that I cannot do so effectively until I go and settle in village myself.

Proceeding, Gandhiji referred to the conflict between Hindi (Hindustani) and Urdu which was due mainly because Hindus and Muslims considered each other as enemies. He noticed disputes ever since he returned to India from Africa. In fact there was no cause for dispute because even if Muslims took the vow not to use a single

[1] This is reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The following paragraph is from *The Hitavada.*

[2] What follows is from *Harijan.*

Hindi word they were unable to keep it mainly because the grammatical systems of both were identical. Neither could the staunch advocates of Hindi abolish Persian or Urdu words as could be seen from Tulsidas's *Ramayana* which abounded in Persian and Arabic words.[1]

Gandhiji said that Hindi or Hindustani stood the best chances of becoming India's lingua franca since it was a comprehensive language and was receptive to outside influences, in that it had absorbed the best from every other literature. He favoured simplification of Hindi and deprecated the tendency to Sanskritize it. He also urged that all current expressions in different languages should be adopted.

Proceeding, Gandhiji deplored the tendency to translate Hindi books first into English and then into Bengali or other [languages]. If they wanted to revive the vernacular, if they wanted to achieve the object they had in view, they must banish English so far as Indian masses were concerned. He had no desire to underestimate the value of English which was a universal language and had international significance but Hindustani must become India's lingua franca and the pernicious notion that they could produce excellent literature only in English must go.[2]

Gandhiji deplored the present state of things where people were, so to say, in a hide-bound way content to remain in their own linguistic and cultural wells, not ready even to acquaint themselves with the language and literature of their neighbouring provinces. A handful of our literary men may be studying different provincial literatures and exchanging the treasures of other provincial languages. But we had to seek do do more . . . .

We must not only seek to know the picturesque language of the village folk, but also to spread a knowledge of modern useful literature among the villagers. It is a shame that Chaitanya's[3] lyrics are a sealed book to people outside Bengal and Orissa. Few of us here may know the name of Tiruvalluvar. People in the North are innocent even of the great saint's name. Few saints have given us treasures of knowledge contained in pithy epigrams as he has done.

In this context, I can at this moment recall the name only of Tukaram.[4]

But for that purpose not only the existing literary treasures had to be made available in a language which could be easily learnt by the masses in all the provinces, but even new literature had to be created—new literature of a healthy and

[1] This and the following two paragraphs are from *The Hitavada.*
[2] The following two paragraphs are from *Harijan.*
[3] Founder of a sect of Bengal Vaishnavas
[4] This sentence is translated from the Hindi in *Harijanbandhu.*

health-giving type.[1]

If we were to enter the vast field of Indian literature, should we stop somewhere? In my opinion there should certainly be a limit. I never had the temptation of increasing the number of books. I do not consider it necessary that every book written or published in the language of every province should be introduced to all the other languages. Even if such an attempt were possible, I think it would be harmful. Such interature as fosters unity, morality, valour and such other qualities, and science, should profitably spread to every province.[2]

Today a plethora of highly objectionable erotic literature seems to be in evidence in every province. Indeed, there are some who say that barring the erotic there is no other rasa[3] worth the name; and because the erotic is at a premium, those who insist on restraint in literature are held up to ridicule as devoid of all *rasa.* They forget that even those who are said to sacrifice everything do not sacrifice *rasa.* Each one of us feeds himself on some *rasa* or sacred passion. Dadabhai Naoroji sacrificed everything for the country, but he was fired by the sacred passion of patriotism. That gave him all his inner happiness. To say that Chaitanya was devoid of *rasa* is to confess innocence of all *rasa.* Narasinh Mehta, the poet-saint of Gujarat, has described himself as a *bhogi*[4], but his *bhoga* was that of singleminded devotion to God. If you will not be annoyed, I would go to the length of saying that the erotic is the lowest of all *rasas,* and when it partakes of the obscene it is wholly to be eschewed. If I had the power I should taboo all literature calculated to promote communalism, fanaticism and ill will and hatred between individuals, classes or races.[5]

How can all this be achieved? Munshiji and Kakasaheb have cleared our way to a certain extent. Literature of wider appeal can only be spread by a widely [spoken] language. Hindi-Hindustani is such a language compared to the other languages. The reason why Hindi is qualified by the word 'Hindustani' is that words originating from the Persian idiom may not be shunned in that language.

[1] This paragraph is from *Harijan.* The following paragraph is translated from the Hindi in *Harijanbandhu.*

[2] The following paragraph is from *Harijan.*

[3] According to Indian aesthetics there are nine *rasas,* i.e., types of emotional responses.

[4] One who enjoys the pleasures of life

[5] What follows is translated from the Hindi in *Harijanbandhu.*

The English language can never become the medium for all the provinces. If we sincerely hope to enrich Indian literature, to carry the gems hidden in the different languages to the crores of Indian masses, we can do so only through Hindustani. It was with this end in view that Munshi started the monthly *Hans* with the help of the famous writer Premchandji. It is necessary to make it a success.

Harijan, 2-5-1936, *Harijanbandhu,* 17-5-1936, and *The Hitavada,* 26-4-1936

467. A YOUTH'S DIFFICULTY

A correspondent who prefers to remain anonymous seeks an answer to a question arising out of my article[1] in *Harijan* addressed to the young. Although it is a sound rule to ignore anonymous correspondence, I do sometimes make an exception when the question put is substantial as in the present case.

The letter is in Hindi and is longer than it need have been. Its purport is:

From your writing I doubt if you understand the young mind. What has been possible for you is not possible for all young men. I happen to be married. I can restrain myself. My wife cannot. She does not want children but she does want to enjoy herself. What am I to do? Is it not my duty to satisfy her? I am not generous enough to look upon her satisfying her desire through other channels. I read from the papers that you are not averse to promoting marriages and blessing them. Surely you know or ought to know that they are not contracted with the high purpose that you have mentioned.

The correspondent is right. The fact that I bless so many marriages, when they satisfy the tests that I have set as to age, economy, etc., perhaps shows somewhat that I know the youth of the country to an extent that would justify my guiding them when they seek my guidance.

My correspondent's case is typical. He deserves sympathy. That the sole purpose of sexual connection is procreation is in the nature of a new discovery for me. Though I had known the rule, I had never before given it the weight it deserved. I must have till recently

[1] *Vide* "For the Young", 28-3-1936.

regarded it as a mere pious wish. I now regard it as a fundamental law of married state which is easy of observance if its paramount importance is duly recognized. My object will be fulfilled when the law is given its due place in society. To me it is a living law. We break it always and pay heavily for its breach. If my correspondent realizes its inestimable value and if he has love for her and has faith in himself, he will convert his wife to his view. Is he sincere when he says he can restrain himself? Has the animal passion become transmuted in his case into a higher passion, say, for service of fellow-beings? Does he naturally refrain from doing anything to excite the passion in his wife? Let him know that Hindu science denotes eight kinds of unious which include sexual suggestions made even by signs. Is the correspondent free from these? If he is not[1] and if he is sincerely desirous that his wife should be weaned from the sexual desire, let him surround her with the purest love, let him explain the law to her, let him explain the physical effects of union without the desire for procreation, let him tell her what the vital fluid means. Let him further engage his wife in healthy pursuits and strive to regulate her diet, exercise etc., so as to still the passion in her. Above all, if he is a man of religion he will try to transmit to his companion his own living faith. For I must confess that the observance of the law of continence is impossible without a living faith in God which is living Truth. It is the fashion nowadays to dismiss God from life altogether and insist on the possibility of reaching the highest kind of life without the necessity of a living faith in a living God. I must confess my inability to drive the truth of the law home to those who have no faith in and no need for a Power infinitely higher than themselves. My own experience has led me to the knowledge that fullest life is impossible without an immovable belief in a living Law in obedience to which the whole universe moves. A man without that faith is like a drop thrown out of the ocean bound to perish. Every drop in the ocean shares its majesty and has the honour of giving us the ozone of life.

Harijan, 25-4-1936

[1] Could this be a slip for “If he is” ?

468. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

April 27, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Your two letters. A copy of good *Ramayana* with notes which Mahadev has will be sent to you.

Your cheque has duly arrived. The amounts will be duly distributed as per instructions.

The Simla parcel should contain the soft fibre mattress, the reversible sari, your lace and two knives.

I returned from Nagpur last night. I did plenty of work but without much strain.

The W.C. is now on. But they are all at J[amnalal]'s place.

I hope your expectation will be fulfilled and you will be free from throat trouble at least for four months.

Love.

In haste

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3723. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6879

469. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 27, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

If it is possible the boiling-pot will accompany the messenger. If not, it will go with me.[1] Ba is not quite well. Are there any goats in Segaon? If there are, I do not want to bring any with me.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6329. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9795

[1] In *Bapus's Letters to Mira* the addressee says : "Bapu was planning to come to stay for a few days in my camp under the trees in order to choose the exact site of his cottage and give me detailed directions as to how it was to be built."

470. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 28, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I shall bring the necessary things with me. I cannot come tomorrow. The W.C. is still sitting and I cannot leave so long as the members are here. In no case shall I have uninterrupted 10 days there. I must be here no Sunday and also for 1st and 2nd May, if Dr. Ambedkar comes.[1] Then I have to be absent from 5th or 6th. I expect to leave for Bangalore on 8th. Therefore there will be no returning after I leave on 5th or 6th. So the ten days will be reduced to 30th, 31st and 4th and 5th May, the latter only possibly. I shall be thankful even if I can be there even to that extent. Ba is still not well.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6330. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9796

471. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

April 28, 1936

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I have your letter. If you take hip-baths, live on fruit juice and have massages, I have no doubt that you will be rid of your complaint. For you garlic is not the best cure. Partial fasting, as I have explained above, is the only way you can get rid of the excess fat—or whatever you call it—in your body. It is possible that your system does not take kindly to fruit, in which case you will have to live on water. You will definitely return a cured person if you go to Poona and get yourself treated by Dr. Mehta.

It is all right if Shankerlal does not come. He should improve his health there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32774

[1] The addressee writes : "Dr. Ambedkar did come but saw Bapu in Segaon under the trees."

homesick and sometimes even shed tears. When did you get so soft as that? Our home is where we happen to live. After all, aren't we sojourning in this world for "a few days"? I have not seen those parts myself, but I am told the region has a bracing climate and is equally beautiful, too. I expect you have seen Mr. Duncan[1] . I should have from you a description of the place.

All of us, including Kakaji and Madalasa, are here together at Lucknow. We shall go to Allahabad on the 3rd and probably return on the 8th. We hope to reach Wardha some time about the 15th.

One may say my health is now good enough. Do you try to get *Harijan Sevak?* I think you now understand English also very well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, *PP. 342-3*

472. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

WARDHA,
April 29, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

God willing I am coming tomorrow. The paper is being sent. More when we meet. I expect to be with you at about 7 a. m.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6331. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9797

473. TELEGRAM TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

April 30, 1936

BAPA
"SEVAK"
DELHI

IF AMTUL'S SERVICES NOT REALLY NEEDED SEND HER HERE SOON.
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Duncan Greenlees

474. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SEGAON,
April 29/30, 1936 [1]

BHAI BAPA,

I have written to Chimandas. To Choithram[2] I wrote from Lucknow itself. The case of Amtussalaam is a difficult one. She is not going to be happy with me, too, and I am now going to settle in a village. For the present, however, I am going to Nandi Durg with Sardar. He has been confined and I am banding jailor to him; I mean he is ill and I am to act as his number I am prepared to take Amtussalaam there. It is not good morning away from Rukmini's harassment of her. That women encourage her in her ways. We must find out a way to reform Rukmini. Therefore, consider Amtussalaam's case in this way. Is it necessary to have her there? If it is so, keep her there and clip Rukmini's wings. If she is not needed she should be sent to me forthwith. I sent her there with a view to satisfying her ambition to serve and under the belief that she was needed there. She is certainly not to be accommodated on the assumption that work may be taken from whoever is there. You are fully entitled to do what you think right after looking at the question from this angle. I am enclosing her letter herewith.

Now about Sastri. He was here and talked about many things. His mention of Ganesan's abuses is only an excuse. He is tired of the work because he has no energy to raise the funds. On my part I am disappointed about him. I believe he is fit for specified desk work and can perhaps maintain accounts and carry on correspondence well. But he has not the ability to run an institution. He lacks initiative, has no self-confidence, no interest in the work, no such thing as drive. However, he is a good man and he is honest. I advise you, therefore, to relieve him from the Kumbhakonam work and entrust the burden to Bhashyam Iyengar. Let him do as he wishes. As for Pratapmal, Jagannath Das may take him on if he wants to, but we should not shoulder the burden of expenditure. He may carry on by raising funds from Madras or any other place he likes. In no case can Ganesan continue. You might share the burden to any extent you

[1] Gandhiji began this letter on April 29 and completed it the next day.
[2] Choithram Gidwani

choose provided Bhashyam Iyengar and Venkatasubbayya can shoulder the responsibility. You should boldly settle the matter as you wish. See that in whatever you do Sastri and Ganesan are carefully kept out. Sastri may be accommodated anywhere else. I wish you should no more burden me on his account. My heart turns towards the villages. I wrote the part concerning Amtussalaam at Wardha and then had to leave it incomplete as visitors came up. Now I complete it today, the second day, here at Segaon which is five miles from Wardha. You should take it that I have settled finally when I return here from Bangalore. Till then you may regard it as the Mahatma's imposture.

It is not that Sardar is taking me to Nandi Durg, I am taking him there.

Is it not enough, considering that I have not written to you for a long time, that I wrote all this from a village on country-made paper with a country-made reed-pen and country-made ink?

I got a long letter from Amtussalaam. I am enclosing my reply[1] to her, which you should read to her.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

[PS.]

Reply to the Wardha address.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1158

475. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

Not revised

WARDHA,
April 30, 1936

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I have your letter of 17th instant. Nothing less was to be expected of Jawaharlal. His address[2] is a confession of his faith. You see from the formation of his cabinet that he has chosen a majority of those who represent the traditional view, i.e., from 1920. Of course the majority represent my view. I would love to kill the New Constitution[3]

[1] This is not available.
[2] As President at the annual session of the Congress at Lucknow
[3] Under Government of India Act of 1935

today if I can. There is hardly anything in it I like. But Jawaharlal's way is not my way. I accept his ideal about land, etc. But I do not accept practically any of his methods. I would strain every nerve to prevent a class war. So would he, I expect. But he does not believe it to be possible to avoid it. I believe it to be perfectly possible especially if my method is accepted. But though Jawaharlal is extreme in his presentation of his methods, he is sober in action. So far as I know him, he will not precipitate a conflict nor will he shirk it if it is forced on him. But there perhaps the whole Congress is not of one mind. A difference there certainly is. My method is designed to avoid conflict. His is not so designed. My own feeling is that Jawaharlal will accept the decisions of the majority of his colleagues. For a man of his temperament, this is most difficult. He is finding it so already. Whatever he does he will do it nobly. Though the gulf between us as to the outlook upon life has undoubtedly widened, we have never been so near each other in hearts as we perhaps are today.

This is not for public use but you are at liberty to show it to friends.

I do not suppose you want anything more in answer to your question.

The rest from Mahadev.

Love.

BAPU

MISS AGATHA HARRISON
2 CRANBOURNE COURT
ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD, [LONDON] S.W. 11

File No. 3001/H/ pp. 13-15, Police Commissioner, Bombay. Also Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

476. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 30, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. Sardar is taking a different route. Arrange to send Kusum to Wardha. She should be here before the 8th as we are leaving on that day. She should bring warm clothing and blankets, but not superfluous luggage.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am spending the day in Segaon, where I hope to settle down.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8488. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

477. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

SEGAON,
April 30, 1936

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I got your letter. You have done well in giving me an account. What a good thing it would be if by this time we had cultivated the strength to raise contributions!

I expect the Bharuch affair has been settled.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4035

478. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

April 30, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I got two letters from you. I understand what you say about money. Of course, your father's letter is excellent and I noted what he had to say about giving you money. Inform him that I have sent it.

It is all right if you have given up milk for health reasons. But you are not to undertake any experiment with a view to giving up milk. The fit was probably due to your going without milk. You are not to worry at all. As long as you have your parents' blessings and they have not the least dissatisfaction about you, what have you to worry about? How does it matter what the world says? You alone have to settle your account with Jayaprakash. His is a different case. Hence it will not do if you fall ill under the stress of worry. The true follower of the *Gita* is one who can remain calm and composed in any situation whatever, and you have to become such a one. For the present, write to me regularly.

Jayaprakash came to see me yesterday; Patwardhan was with him. He spoke to me about your future although he said nothing in reply to my letter. He said he wished to put you for three months at the school in Banaras where, he said, you might learn the Montessorie method. Then he mentioned Patna and asked my opinion about it. I told him I had no objection to the proposal. You should have the

three months' experience at the Banaras school, and then we shall see what is to be done. In any case you must maintain your health.

My stay in Nandi and Bangalore will take up a month, after which I am returning here. I came to Segaon today and shall be here for three days at least. Then again, after another two or three days I shall be leaving for Bangalore on the 8th. I expect Jayaprakash took your luggage with him and you were able to speak to him. Pyarelal alone has accompanied me to Segaon. Ba has not come as she is unwell.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Note that my address continues to be Wardha. The Mysore address is: Nandi Hill, Near Bangalore.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3462

479. DISCUSSION WITH A WORKER [1]

April 30, 1936[2]

"Don't you think, Bapu," the worker asked, "rather than bury yourself in this village, you should undertake a tour through the country, just for the rural reconstruction programme? I cannot tell you what a godsend that Harijan tour[3] was, how it worked a silent revolution in people's minds. Nothing else could have achieved it. Couldn't you take a tour like that?"

[G.] Oh, no. There is no similarity between the two cases. In Harijan work the practical and the theoretical aspects were combined. Here I cannot combine the two. I have been talking theory all these days, talking and giving advice on village work, without having personally come to grips with the difficulties of village work. If I undertook the tour, say, after passing three seasons in a village and among the villagers, a year hence I should be able to talk with knowledge and experience which I have not got today. Yesterday I went to Sindi to see how Gajanan Naik was working. The condition of things there is scarcely better but he is carrying on his work, patiently and perseveringly. The moment I saw him last morning I said to

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"
[2] Gandhiji had moved to Segaon early in the morning.
[3] From November 7, 1933 to August 2, 1934

myself: 'If I had been working with Gajanan, I should certainly have had intimate experience of the difficulties he is meeting with.' No. It is clearer to me than ever before that my place is in the village.

Harijan, 9-5-1936

480. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

[On or after *April 30, 1936*][1]

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your long letter. I have read it with the deepest interest. You have a tough problem in front of you. If you can, you should come to Nandi Hill to see me. I reach there on 10th May, D.V. God will guide you. You must not worry. Take things as they come to you when you cannot alter them.

I am writing this from the village Segaon where I want to settle down. Mirabai is here already. She will go to some other village, if I settle down here. I do not want any of the old co-workers with me, if I can help it.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 137. Courtesy: National Archives of India

481. LETTER TO BAL D. KALELKAR

[Before *May 1, 1936*][2]

That work[3] is for you to do provided you have digested what I told you.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] From the reference to Segaon where Gandhiji moved on April 30, 1936

[2] The source states that this was written before the letter to the addressee dated May 1, 1936; *vide* "Letter to Bal D. Kalelkar", 1-5-1936.

[3] The addressee had suggested that D. B. Kalelkar or Kishorelal Mashruwala should write a treatise to counteract the harangues on socialism.

482. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

May 1, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

You won't be a rebel if you were not an idiot. So it is always a question which title suits you most. And since no one can take titles for oneself and Rebel is your choice, I suppose I should prefer the use of Idiot. But though called Tyrant I pamper you so that the rebel of today may be a willing slave of tomorrow.

Well, I am at last in Segaon. Pyarelal is with me. I wanted him. Ba was to have come but she was unwell. You will be glad to learn that I walked almost the whole distance. I was none the worse for it. I took the *bandi*[1] for the remaining $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile because we had missed the way and the others were getting uneasy about me. We came yesterday. The night was glorious..

The reversible sari was surely your own choice. Was it a shawl or sari, I forget. If the khes[2] has come back to you it is a mistake. It has to come back to me.

I hope you get your money. No more now as Mahadev must take this and leave at once.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3724. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6880

483. LETTER TO BAL D. KALELKAR

[*May 1, 1936*][3]

CHI. BAL,

My suggestion[4] was a considered one. You should indeed possess the ability to compile a volume explaining my ideas which can meet your need if you all really appreciated my thoughts. If you were convinced that the earth is round, you would not go to find out its proof from the best book of geography, but would rather prove your

[1] Cart
[2] An upper garment for men draped across the shoulders
[3] Gandhiji had arrived in Segaon on April 30, 1936.
[4] *Vide* “Letter to Bal D. Kalelkar", 1-5-1936.

point by advancing arguments in your own way and in your own language. The same applies to my thoughts or those of others. Ultimately in the matter of dharma, too, the final authority is neither the Vedas nor the *Gita* nor the *Bhagavata*; the sole authority is our own unflinching faith and the resultant understanding.

This is what I mean when I say 'solely due to Kaka's greatness'.[1] He taught you both brothers Gujarati without reservations and, moreover, brought you up in Gujarat. Had he been narrow-minded he would [not] have let you speak any other language and would have had you brought up somewhere in Maharashtra. Is it not ture?

This I am writing from Segaon on the second day of my arrival here. I surely like this place. Do you remember my tour of Orissa? Here we have a shelter like the ones in that tour. I am satisfied. My hut will come up in my absence. But, for the time being, I have to take Sardar to Bangalore—Nandi.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

484. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

May 1, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter quite in time.

Kanti will send you your luggage.

I am sending a money order for Rs. 25. Do not be so careless again. It is likely that there was not so much carelessness as a feeling of shame. If so, such shame, too, ought to be given up.

You should put your time to good use.

I am concerned about your giving up milk. What is wrong with your health that you should give up milk? You must not let your health suffer.

My health is good, of course. My weight taken last night was 110-lb., i.e., about the same as at Delhi. The food, too, is nearly the same as there.

[1] Gandhiji had stated that the addressee's brother winning the Paramananda Prize was "solely due to Kaka's greatness".

I shall be going to Nandi, Bangalore, on 8th or 9th May from here accompanied by Sardar. Our stay is expected to last a month.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3453

485. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON,
May 1, 1936

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Mahadev cannot leave today. One strong reason is given in the wire. The other is *Harijan.* If he finishes it, you may detain him even longer. I have explained everything to him and, therefore, I do not write anything more in this letter.

If you don't improve your health and make it perfectly fit, I am bound to quarrel with you.

The air of the place is fine indeed. It was very cool at night. My requirements about food, etc., can be met satisfactorily. But more about this when I get some free time. Doctor (Ambedkar) and Walchand[1] met me in Segaon. They are coming again

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
89 WARDEN ROAD
BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 195

486. FOR WOMEN REFORMERS

From a serious discussion I had with a sister[2] I fear that my position on the use of contraceptives has not yet been sufficiently understood. My opposition is not due to their having come to us from the West. I thankfully use some Western things when I know that they

[1] Walchand Hirachand, an industrialist
[2] Mrs. Margaret Sanger; *vide* "Interview to Margart Sanger", 3/4-12-1935.

benefit us as they benefit those in the West. My opposition to contraceptives is based on merits.

I take it that the wisest among the protagonists of contraceptives restrict their use to married women who desire to satisfy their and their husbands' sexual appetite without wanting children. I hold this desire as unnatural in the human species and its satisfaction detrimental to the spiritual progress of the human family. As against this is often cited the following testimony among others of Lord Dawson of Penn:[1]

> Sex love is one of the clamant, dominating forces of the world. . . . You may guide it into healthy channels but an outlet it will have, and if that outlet is inadequate or unduly obstructed, irregular channels will be forced. Self-control has a breaking point, and if in any community marriage is difficult or late of attainment, an increase of irregular unions will inevitably result. . . .
>
> Sex love has, apart from parenthood, a purport of its own. It is an essential part of health and happiness in marriage. . . . The attainment of mutual and reciprocal joy in their relations constitutes a firm bond between two people and makes for durability of their marriage tie. . . .
>
> I will pass on to consider the all-important question of birth-control . . . . The reasons which lead parents to limit their offspring are sometimes selfish, but more often honourable and cogent. The desire to marry and to rear children well-equipped for life's struggle, limited incomes, the cost of living, burdensome taxation, are forcible motives. . . . Absence of birth-control means late marriages and these carry with them irregular unions and all the baneful consequences. . . . But say many, 'Birth-control may be necessary, but the only birth-control which is justifiable is voluntary abstention.' Such abstention would be either ineffective or, if effective, impracticable and harmful to health and happiness. To limit the size of a family to, say, four children, would be to impose on a married couple an amount of abstention which for long period would almost be equivalent to celibacy, and when one remembers that owing to economic reasons the abstention would have to be most strict during the earlier years of married life when desires are strongest, I maintain a demand is being made which, for the mass of people it is impossible to meet; that the endeavours to meet it would impose a strain hostile to health and happiness and carry with them grave dangers to morals . . .

Lord Dawson's eminence is not to be denied. But with all due respect to his greatness as a physician, I am tempted to question the

[1] Only extracts from the quotation are reproduced here.

value of his evidence, specially when it is pitted against the experience of men and women who have lived a life of continence without suffering any moral or physical harm. Physicians generally come across those who have so defied laws of health that they have contracted some illness. They, therefore, often successfully prescribe what sufferers should do to become well, but they cannot always know what healthy men and women can do in any particular direction. Lord Dawson's evidence, therefore, about the effect of continence on married people has to be taken with the greatest caution. No doubt the tendency among married people is to regard sexual satisfaction for itself as legitimate. But in the modern age in which nothing is taken for granted and everything is rightly scrutinized, it is surely wrong to take it for granted that because we have hitherto indulged in the sexual appetite in married life, the practice is either legitimate or healthy. Many old practices have been discontinued with good results. Why should this particular practice be exempt from examination especially in the light of the experience of those who even as married men and women are living a life of restraint with mutual benefit both physical and moral?

But I object to contraceptives also on special grounds in India. Young men in India do not know what sexual restraint is. It is not their fault. They are married early. It is the custom. Nobody tells them to exercise restraint in married life. Parents are impatient to see grandchildren. The poor girl-wives are expected by their surroundings to bear children as fast as they can. In such surroundings, the use of contraceptives can only further aggravate the mischief. The poor girls who are expected to submit to their husbands' desires are now to be taught that it is a good thing to desire sexual satisfaction without the desire to have children. And in order to fulfil the double purpose they are to have recourse to contraceptives !!!

I regard this to be most pernicious education for married women. I do not believe that woman is prey to sexual desire to the same extent as man. It is easier for her than for man to exercise self-restraint. I hold that the right education in this country is to teach woman the art of saying no even to her husband, to teach her that it is not part of her duty to become a mere tool or a doll in her husband’s hands. She has rights as well as duties. Those who see in Sita a willing slave under Rama do not realize the loftiness of either her independence or Rama's consideration for her in everything. Sita was no helpless weak woman incapable of protecting herself or her

honour. To ask India's women to take to contraceptives is, to say the least, putting the cart before the horse. The first thing is to free her from mental slavery, to teach her the sacredness of her body and to teach her the dignity of national service and the service of humanity. It is not fair to assume that India's women are beyond redemption and that they have therefore to be simply taught the use of contraceptives for the sake of preventing births and preserving such health as they may be in possession of.

Let not the sisters who are rightly indignant over the miseries of women who are called upon to bear children whether they will or no, be impatient. Not even the propaganda in favour of contraceptives is going to promote the desired end overnight. Every method is a matter of education. My plea is for the right type.

Harijan, 2-5-1936

487. LETTER TO M. MUJEEB

SEGAON, NEAR WARDHA
May 2, 1936

MY DEAR MUJEEB[1],

You were quite right in writing to me as you did. Aqil must have given you a full account of what I did and what happened. As your letter[2] is so good and so important, I propose to publish it without your name and answer it in the columns of *Harijan.*[3] I hope you will see the answer. If it does not satisfy you, you will not hesitate to write again. I want to give you complete satisfaction if I at all can. There are parts of your letter where you have made mistakes.

My love to all whom I know.

Yours,
BAPU

From the original: C.W. 1464. Courtesy: M. Mujeeb

[1] Of Jamia Millia Islamia
[2] *Vide* Appendix, "Popularize Hindustani", 27-4-1936.
[3] *Vide* "Hindi or Hindustani", 9-5-1936 and 16-5-1936.

488. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

May 2, 1936

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I have your letter from Madras. I hope to leave for Bangalore *via* Madras on 8th instant. I pass through on 9th evening. If you can you will find me out at the station. Ba, Mahadev, the same boys[1], Kumarappa, will certainly be with me. I am going to Nandi Hill for the sake of Sardar.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 9606. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal

489 LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

May 2, 1936

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

We already have in our hands the work of *Harijan Sevak;* other kinds of service of Harijans are carried on everywhere. Now a third cause has come up. As desired by Jamnalalji the Hindi Sammelan has entrusted the work of Hindi propagation to a special committee which will have Wardha as its headquarters. We all want you to be the secretary of that committee. We have Baba Raghavdas[2], too, in mind. Can he not leave Gorakhpur? Do you like this work? Would you like to come over to Wardha? Can you leave your work of Harijan education without any harm? If not, do you know anyone who is a lover of Hindi and can handle the work of a secretary and who is also willing to stay in Wardha?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1099

[1] Kanti Gandhi and Kanu Gandhi

[2] A prominent social worker from U.P.

490. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

May 2, 1936

BAPA,

I have carefully gone through your 'circular letter' regarding the Harijans of Tiruchengodu. What may we do in such a case? The money given is in a way the price paid for proselytization and, in a way, it is not so either. To fill the belly man resorts to forced labour and flattery. The remedy could be only one. Let us remove their sufferings. But these 'our men' in Tiruchengodu are attached to money and therefore in such cases we are helpless. They would soon come over to our side if we paid them more. But this would be an unprofitable trade. "Therefore what is unavoidable thou shouldst not regret."[1] All the same, wisdom would consist in doing what Rajaji says since he is a man with experience of the place. I do not write to him because you have already written. Your letter had not reached me when he was in Wardha.

I have already written to you how the question of Amtussalaam is to be solved.[2]

Read my letter to Viyogi Hari and give it to him if you think it right. I mean it is no use giving him the letter if you are sure you cannot relieve him. It will be possible to make full use of him here if it cannot be done there.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1155

491. LETTER TO DRAUPADI SHARMA

May 2, 1936

CHI. DRAUPADI,

I, too, got a letter from Sharma after writing to you. I have sent it on to Ramdas asking him to pass it on to you. Yes, I shall leave on the 8th for Bangalore, Mysore, taking Sardar with me. I have now come to settle in a village. Amtussalaam writes to you, I suppos.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 192 and 193

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 27

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar", 29/30-4-1936.

492. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
May 3, 1936

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

My right hand needs rest. You will perhaps like to read the enclosed.[1] It need not be returned.

Khurshed has written to me about her new suggestion regarding the scope of Kamala Memorial. If it is a substitute for the hospital, it is in my opinion inadmissible. And it cannot be carried out for 3 lacs.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

493. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

May 3, 1936

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I spoke to Shriman Narayan. I like him. He has good poetic promise and is keen on improving it. The family seems to be good.

I visited the site of the memorial. I could not know what they were now doing there. I would certainly like to know.

Dharmadhikari will look after the garden at the site of the memorial. He seems to like this place. They are satisfied with him. He remains absorbed in his work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2978

[1] Presumably a copy of the letter to Agatha Harrison, dated April 30, 1936; *vide* also "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 12-5-1936.

494. SPEECH AT A.I.V.I.A. EXHIBITION [1]

WARDHA,

May 3, 1936[2]

As I was coming to Maganwadi I saw the weekly bazaar that is held here every Sunday. That bazaar has the raw produce as well as manufactures from raw produce exhibited in abundance. This exhibition has these exhibited on a very humble scale. I therefore wondered how our exhibition compared with the weekly bazaar. The fundamental difference is that the exhibition is held entirely with a view to service of the village and the townsfolk, whereas the bazaar is a business concern in which the villager is exploited. He is made to sell his wares as cheap as possible, often even below cost price. At this exhibition there is hardly any buying and selling. This exhibition is an attempt to educate the residents of Wardha in their duty towards the villages surrounding them and to educate the villagers in what is possible for them to better themselves in every way. The exhibition teaches them how to keep their villages clean, what food to eat and how to improve their industries and thus earn a little more than they do today. So far as the town-dweller in concerned the exhibiton forcibly brings to his mind the various ways in which he is exploiting the villager, and how best he may serve the villager by going in for his wares. The Lucknow Exhibition opened the eyes of those who visited it to the wonderful capacity of our village craftsman, and even this will do so somewhat. I may tell you here that though the admission here has been kept free, at Lucknow it was not free. Reports have been published that the exhibition there resulted in a heavy loss. They are wrong. The receipts from the sale of tickets exceeded Rs. 25,000. There were, besides, receipts from stall-holders. It is just possible that there will be a nominal profit. Those around Lucknow will not see such an exhibition in Lucknow for years to come. The Kumbh Mela recurs at long but regular intervals. The Congress and the Exhibition may not be held again at the same place, and even if it is, it may be held at an indefinitely long interval, especially because the tendency, I

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". Gandhiji inaugurated the exhibition arranged at Maganwadi.

[2] From The Bombay Chronicle, 5-5-1936

hope, now will be to select not big cities but small towns for their venue. But local exhibitions like this should be inexpensive annual efforts of growingly educative value. The village oilman has, for instance, deteriorated nowadays. He adulterates the oil with cheap and spurious stuffs. He will learn here how it is profitable to make the oil absolutely pure and unadulterated. The paper-maker will learn here how to make the paper neat and lasting. As time goes we should be able to show improvements in these processes. I know that we have been able to produce little effect, during the year, on our surroundings or on the villages in the neighbourhood. But that does not disappoint me. We have to plod on. Those of you who have come here have to go forth to the villages as advertising agents and to draw the villagers to such exhibitions. The tragedy today is that the town-dweller is becoming increasingly indifferent to the villages, that he even believes that the villages are going to be destroyed in the near future. They certainly will be if we continue to prefer mill-made articles to hand-made. Those of you who have come here have to go out as preachers of the gospel of rural-mindedness.

A factory employs a few hundreds and renders thousands unemployed. I may produce tons of oil from an oil-mill, but I also drive thousands of oilmen out of employment. I call this destructive energy, whereas production by the labour of millions of hands is constructive and conductive to the common good.[1] Mass production through power-driven machinery, even when Stateowned, will be of on avail.

But why not, it is asked, save the labour of millions and give them more leisure for intellectual pursuits? Leisure is good and necessary up to a point only. God created man to eat his bread by the sweat of his brow, and I dread the prospect of our being able to produce all that we wnt, including our Food-stuffs, out of a conjurer's hat.

Harijan, 16-5-1936

[1] The report in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 5-5-1936, here has: "The method of production of necessaries through power-driven machinery displacing tens of thousands of men and providing prolonged leisure was, in his opinion, *asuric*, whereas the ancient method of production by human labour in co-operation was *daivic*— that is to say, conducive to the progress of humanity. The ancient method had its effects. The All-India Village Industries Association was endeavouring to remedy the evil and exhibitions were a method of encompassing that end."

495. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
May 4, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

As Mahadev is here and has brought your note, I must send this through him. Your post generally comes in the evening in Maganwadi. I am not, therefore, able to deal with your letters the very day. In Segaon, your post comes late at night which is the same thing. So there is no delay about incoming letters.

You are right. 'Idiots' must not meet in broiling heat. Next year we meet in February of early March unless you invite us to Simla !!!

Your Lucknow parcel must be with you by this time.

Yes, I have almost all the creature comforts I need. What I do not have, I do not miss. And I could have them, if I want.

Your suggestion about Ku.[1] was ever anticipated. He is going with me to Nandi and I hope to have the tonsils removed in Bangalore.

You may depend upon it I am having a royal time in Segaon. Therefore no anxiety.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3725. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6881

496. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI [2]

P. O. WARDHA,
May 4, 1936

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

Is there in your State a cool place having Gopnath[3] or some such name? I am sure you came across Vinoba's brother, Balkrishna, at the Ashram. He is a learned man, well versed in music, too, but his health has run down. He loves solitude and may not be able to stand

[1] J.C. Kumarappa
[2] Dewan of Bhavnagar State
[3] A seaside health resort in the Bhavnagar State

noise. I wish he could use a quiet room in Gopnath or whatever the place is called. I have written to Bhai Jivanlal[1] to see if accommodation can be found for him at Chorwad.

I am in Segaon and Mahadev [will be] in Bombay. I am taking Sardar to Nandi Durg on the 8th. May I, therefore, ask for a reply by wire if this reaches you in time?

I hope you are quite well.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Please address the mail to Wardha.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5947. Also C.W. 3264. Courtesy: Mahesh P. Pattani

497. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
May 5, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Surely by this time you have had more than one letter from Segaon. I am sure in a day or two you would have begun to like the place and the life. Ba came with me yesterday. I walked the whole distance. It took me full two hours. But then we again missed the way a little. We were all novices without a guide. And I was silent. I can comfortably do the whole distance on $1\frac{3}{4}$ hours. I was none the worse for the walk and was ready for the evening walk. Mahadev and Lilavati walked in at 8.30 p.m., and slept on the ground where the operations are going on. We all sleep there, surrounded on all sides by double trenches supported by the excavated earth. We eat the vegetables grown here. We do not therefore get a variety but there is more than compensation in the thought that we are taking what is grown locally. This restriction, if persisted in, will soon induce a cultivation of other vegetables. So much for Segaon.

Now for the parcel from Lucknow. You wrote to me the other day saying you had advice of despatch of parcel by Miss Ala worth

[1] Jivanlal Motichand Shah who helped Gandhiji financially in his khadi and Harijan welfare work.

over Rs. 600. You even hoped that it won't contain the *khes* you had sent. Where is that parcel? Instructions together with addresses were duly passed. But everything was topsy-turvy. All were overworked. I am sorry about the parcel having gone to Simla. I know what worry it is to have things wrongly addressed. I had spoken to Khurshed more than once and then to Jerajani[1]. Let us see what finally happens. You need not send your cheque before the receipt of the parcels. By way of curiosity I would like to know how much extra the wrong address has cost.

I am sure you should accept the Jullundur nomination[2] if it comes to you. And I take it, you have taken over the college responsibility. These things cannot be put away lightly.

You are right about Ku. He is coming to Nandi Hill. I shall see what is possible. I shall not have the operation performed unless I am sure that it is necessary and the surgeon knows his work. Bharatan too will be going probably to Kodaikanal.

Remember the date of my departure, 8th instant. I leave Segaon on 8th morning.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3726. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6882.

498. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[*May*][3] *5, 1936*

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Herewith Akarte's[4] letter. It is difficult to make out what the truth is. I find it necessary to exercise restraint in giving publicity to Buva. It is all right to cultivate his acquaintance. I consider it improper to make use of him for public service without closer experience of him. I shall go deep into the matter when I get the time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2979

[1] Vithaldas Jerajani, a khadi worker
[2] To the Municipality
[3] From Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 179
[4] J.S. Akarte, an advocate from Nagpur

499. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

May 6, 1936

CHI. PREMA,

You can write to me now. We are leaving on the 8th for Nandi Durg.

You seem to have gathered good experience. Merely because we doubt a man's sincerity we cannot reject his application if he is prepared to sign the Congress Pledge. There will always be men who will wangle admission under one or the other pretext. If the majority of the members are sincere, ultimately all will be well.

The report of the Maharashtrian's letter is perfectly correct.[1] But his supposition was completely wrong. The correspondent's letter could be interpreted to mean that by resting my hands on girls' shoulders I used to gratify my sensual desire. His words of course were different.

But the truth is that my discontinuing the practice of resting my hands on the shoulders of girls has nothing to do with my sensual desire. It had its origin in my pampering the body with food while doing no work. I had a discharge, but I was awake and the mind was under control. I understood the cause and from that time stopped taking rest as prescribed by the doctors. And my state now is better than it was, if such a state could be imagined. If you wish to ask me more questions about this you may, for I have cherished high hopes of you. You may, therefore, know from me anything concerning myself that you wish to.

The articles I have written recently deserve careful pondering over. If you have understood them, the practice of *brahmacharya* will become very easy. If one is convinced that the genital organs are not intended for sex-gratification, wouldn't one's attitude change completely? As a man happening to see on the road the blood-stained sputum of a consumptive may take it to be a gem and long to pick it up, but will come to his senses as soon as he realizes his error, so is the case in regard to the function of the genital organs. The truth is that this belief has never been held with sufficient conviction and clarity.

[1] A Maharashtrian professor from Poona had written to Gandhiji in connection with his article "Nothing Without Grace" ;*vide* "Nothing Without Grace", 29-2-1936.

And now the new education denounces it, teaches that moderate sex-gratification is a good thing and asserts its necessity. Think over all this.

The experience of your friends that you have described is excellent.[1]

Let this suffice for the present.

Probably Lilavati will join you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10380. Also C.W. 6818. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

500. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 6, 1936

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I have your letter. What shall I write to you? I have a telegram from Dr. Ansari; you must follow his instructions. I wanted to take you to Bangalore with me, but let us now see how things take shape. You shall follow the treatment unquestioningly. The first thing is to get well. After that we shall see what we can do.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 334

501. SPEECH AT KHADI YATRA[2]

PAUNAR,

[*May 6, 1936*][3]

Gandhiji said he had sense enough not to spoil the effect of that rapturous utterance[4] by inflicting another speech on them. But, he said, he would offer one test whereby he would like to measure their sincerity and earnestness next year.

[1] Two women of Sasvad, who though married and living with their husbands had observed abstinence for several years, had narrated their experiences to the addressee.

[2] Mahadev Desai in his "Weekly Letter", from which this is extracted, explains that the "yatra" was an "annual gathering of believers in khadi in Marathi-speaking Central Provinces".

[3] Gandhiji visited Paunar on May 6, 1936.

[4] Earlier, Vinoba Bhave had "in a torrence of eloquence . . . explained the object f khadi yatra and in doing so brought to bear all the wealth of imagery and illustration".

I should be satisfied if you were to follow the gospel of khadi with even a hundredth of Vinoba's faith. We have to demonstrate to the poor that khadi could be had for the price of unginned raw cotton, that is to say, those who produce cotton can have khadi free. That can happen only when we popularize the handginning of cotton, a process which preserves the vitality both of the cotton fibre and of the seed. Jamnalalji would fain close his ginning factory tomorrow, if we were to ask him to do so. But it would have no value. If you were to take upon yourselves to gin all the cotton that you produce it would close down automatically. Vinoba's simile of the lamp was very beautifully expressive indeed. As darkness cannot stand in front of light, even so absence of khadi cannot exist in front of khadi. Your khadi will be infectious only if you will bring to bear on it all the devotion and the perseverance and, above all, the intelligent devotion and perseverance that it deserves. Only thereby will you be able to take it out of a narrow and exclusive groove and succeed in sharing it with those whom you come across.

Harijan, 16-5-1936

502. TELEGRAM TO G. RAMACHANDRAN

May 7, 1936

G, RAMACHANDRAN[1]
THAIKAD
TRIVANDRUM

HOPE UNDER WISE GUIDANCE SHRIMATI RAMESHWARI NEHRU[2] CONFERENCE [SUCCEED] AND SOLVE TEMPLE-ENTRY AND OTHER QUESTIONS SO AS TO PURIFY HINDUISM OF CURSE UNTOUCHABILITY.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Secretary, Harijan Sevak Sangh, Kerala

[2] President of the Harijan Sevak Sangh, who presided over the All-Kerala Temple-entry Conference

503. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 7, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I am leaving tomorrow 8th. Amtul Salaam has not arrived. Dr. Ansari has detained her. Lilavati went to Bombay with Mahadev. She may join you in Segaon during the last week of May or beginning of June. I suppose you would not mind her coming and becoming initiated and knowing the people there. Balwant Singh may also pass the month with you. If he comes he can only help you. I suggested [it] to him this morning. The work you are just now doing is too much for you. If however you do not like any of my appointments you will tell me. I suggested Balwant Singh, as you were inclined to take Munnalal[1]. And of Lilavati you had shown readiness to take her. That was a different thing, I know. But this is a proper occasion if she would come in advance. I have my doubts as to her coming. She simply wants my company. But you will let me know your own wishes plainly and they will be given effect to.

The rammers should have gone to you this morning to be returned without fail on Sunday.

I understand about the sandals.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I walked the whole distance yesterday. The scenery was splendid.

From the original: C.W. 6332. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9798

504. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

May 7, 1936

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I entirely agree with you that if people had to be banished from the colony because of Rukmini's likes or dislikes, many more people than Amtul Salaam would have to leave. I have said as much to Bapa.

[1] Munnalal G. Shah

Of course he has suggested A.'s leaving for your peace and A.'s. But I know you do not want such peace. To bear with Rukmini and yet not to yield to her[1] is your martyrdom. But if A. has to leave for the sake of her health she must do so. I now have a wire from Dr. Ansari that he has detained A. I now await his letter which he has promised.

My sympathies are all with you.

Here are letters for A.S. and Rukmini. You need not give the letter to R. if you do not like it.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 921

505. LETTER TO RUKMINI MALKANI

May 7, 1936

CHI. RUKMINI,

What is all this? What could a nice girl like Amtussalaam have done to you? It is not good of you to harass a husband like Malkani. Do you remember your promise to me? Be calm, assist Malkani in his work and live amicably with all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 920

506. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 7, 1936

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I wrote no letters to you earlier as I was expecting you. Why need you go to a hill-station when Doctor Saheb has said that it is not at all necessary? You may well stay on. Now I understand why Thakkar Bapa said that there was no work for you; it was solely to avoid unpleasantness. Malkani frankly says that he needs you. Hence you have now to stay on in the Harijan Colony. There is no need at present to go to Dhaka[2] whatever might happen in future. Anyway,

[1] The source has "him".

[2] A Harijan village near Delhi

what could you do in Patiala? Now the problem of the Harijan girl is out of the way. You should take no note of what . . .[1] says; let her say whatever she likes; she is silly. Anyway, I have written to her and I am writing to Bapa, too. Kanti and Kanu are with me. Mahadev and . . .[2] will come *via* Poona. Kumarappa will join us later.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Devanagari transliteration of Urdu]

Bapuke patra–8: Bibi Amtussalaamke Naam, pp. 70-1

507. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

May 7, 1936

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Chandrashanker[3] is ill and Mahadev has gone to Poona; from there he will join me at Bangalore. I leave this place tomorrow for Bangalore. I shall be at Nandi Durg for a fortnight and then I go to Bangalore, for Vallabhbhai's sake.

Regarding Parameshwari[4] I have already obtained Parnerkar's[5] opinion and shall seek some more opinions. The sanction of Rs. 10,000 from the Goseva Sangh to Parameshwari is being delayed.

A meeting will have to be called as three members have voted against it. The meeting can be called only in June. There will be a further hitch on account of Parnerkar's recent adverse opinion. No doubt, he has experience behind him, having worked for years at Sabarmati. At present he is working at Dhulia on behalf of the Goseva Sangh.

Dinkar[6] met me and I told him not to accept defeat but to go on trying to give you satisfaction. I also told him that you certainly had some doubt about his application, none about his honesty or hard

[1] The names are omitted in the source.
[2] *Ibid*
[3] Chandrashanker Pranshanker Shukla, Editor, *Harijanbandhu*
[4] A dairy expert running the addressee's goshala in Delhi
[5] Yashwant Mahadev Parnerkar
[6] Dinkarrai Pandya, in charge of the dairy in the Sabarmati Ashram

work. He will come to see you and you may do what is right.

I have come to like Segaon.

If necessary you may come over to Bangalore where the climate is of course good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 8019. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

508. SPEECH AT A.I.V.I.A. MEETING [1]

WARDHA,
May 7, 1936

I take it that those who are members of the A. I. V. I. A. know the rules of the Association, one of which is that there is to be an annual general meeting. Either such a meeting is necessary or it is not. If it is, surely it is the duty of every member to attend the meeting unless he is unavoidably absent. What I cannot understand is that the absentees have not all written to say what prevented them from attending the meeting. The feeling on the part of an individual member that his absence alone cannot affect the quorum is obviously wrong.

Our ambition is to make at least one member for each of our 7,00,000 villages, but our actual membership is 517! And the bulk of the members are not present! It is deplorable, but it does not dismay me. Let those who are present carry to the absentees at least this message that it was their duty to inform the Secretary as to the reason of their failure. Failure even to intimate the reason argues lethargy, which certainly should disqualify one to be the member of an association like ours.[2]

Mahatma Gandhi observed that the duty of the workers was to serve the villagers and if they found that the atmosphere in some place was not congenial to them for the pursuit of service owing to the hostility of local officials, nothing would be lost by their shifting their centres of work. The country was wide enough to provide ample scope for work in places other than those in which conditions were

[1] The first annual general meeting of the Association scheduled to be held at 3 p.m. had to be adjourned for want of quorum and was held at 8 p.m.

[2] This is extracted from Mahadev Desai's “Weekly Letter”. The following paragraph is from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

rendered difficult owing to extraneous forces. Difficulties occasioned by internal forces it would be the duty of workers, however, to overcemo.

Some members talk of difficulties created from outside. I think most of them are imaginary. How much have we been able to do where there are no difficulties from outside? Take Sindi and Segaon where Gajanan and Mirabehn have both been working with a zeal and rural-mindedness that every one of us might envy. How much have they achieved that could be shown? The reason is the inertia, the lethargy of our people, the masters. We want them to do something, i.e., to keep their surroundings clean, to eat wholesome food and to regulate their working hours so as to increase their income. They have no faith in all this. They have lost hope of bettering their lot.

We have to tackle the triple malady which holds our villages fast in its grip: (1) Want of corporate sanitation; (2) Deficient diet; (3) Inertia.

In Segaon where Mirabehn is working, all the outside circumstances are more favourable than anywhere else. The zamindars there are Jamnalalji and Babasaheb Deshmukh. They place no obstacles; they, on the contrary, help her. And yet, do you think she gets much co-operation from the people? Not that they are wilfully obstructive. They are not interested in their own welfare. They don't appreciate modern sanitary methods. They don't want to exert themselves beyond scratching their farms or doing such labour as they are used to. These difficulties are real and serious. But they must not baffle us. We must have an unquenchable faith in our mission. We must be patient with the people. We are ourselves novices in village work. We have to deal with a chronic disease. Patience and perseverance, if we have them, overcome mountains of diffculties. We are like nurses who may not leave their patients because they are reported to have an incurable disease.

The only way is to sit down in their midst and work away in steadfast faith, as their scavengers, their nurses, their servants, not as their patrons, and to forget all our prejudices are prepossessions. Let us for a moment forget even swaraj, and certainly forget the ‘haves’ whose presence oppresses us at every step. They are there. There are many who are dealing with these big problems. Let us tackle the humbler work of the village which is necessary now and would be

even after we have reached our goal. Indeed, the village work when it becomes successful will itself bring us nearer the goal.[1]

He hoped to see Segaon become an ideal centre of persistent effort, and he trusted that worker's elsewhere would apply to the work before them the same zest and energy. It was too early to judge the progress achieved, but he hoped that they would also attempt to understand thoroughly the implications of the threefold programme that had been placed before them by the Association. The first part of this was the improvement of sanitary conditions, removal of filth and the eradication of habits which gave rise to uncleanliness. That meant the education of the village population by personal example and steady work.

The next part of the programme called for a radical change in the dietary of the people so that they might be enabled to draw greater sustenance from the articles of food ordinarily available in villages. This required that the processing of food-stuffs should be done in the villages, as in the past, and that pure food-stuffs should be made available in villages and not be drained away to towns. The last portion of the programme was the utilization of spare time of the cultivators, the revival of dead or dying industries, and teaching all classes of people the right use of leisure.

All these were difficult tasks, Mahatma Gandhi admitted, and those friends of his were not wrong who warned him that he had now in the evening of his life taken upon his head a heavier responsibility than the promotion of the charkha movement or the removal of untouchability. Both these activities, important as they were, formed only a part of the vast work of rural reconstruction.

Harijan, 16-5-1936, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 11-5-1936

509. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 8, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Your sweet letter. I leave by the Grand Trunk after 6 p.m. I had a long talk with J.[2] about the road through the village. His mind is working on it. Do keep yourself perfectly well and cheerful. Do not overwork yourself even though my cottage itself remains unfinished.[3]

[1] What follows is from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

[2] Jamnalal Bajaj

[3] The addressee explains: "There were only six weeks in which to complete the cottage, the cowshed, the road and my hut on the hill. Balwant Singh, Munnalalbhai and myself worked at full speed from daybreak to night. Even so, rains began before we had fully completed everything. But the house was inhabitable when Bapu arrived in pouring rain to take up residence on the 16th of June."

No fretting.

I hope you got the rammers.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6333. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9799

510. LETTER TO PANDURANG N. RAJBHOJ

May 8, 1936

BHAI RAJBHOJ,

I regard it as necessary to encourage the craft of leather-work. I hope you will acquire proficiency in this craft and you must not be satisfied till you attain it.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 795

511. SPEECH AT TRAINING SCHOOL FOR VILLAGE WORKERS

WARDHA,

May 8, 1936

I may confess that I was sceptical about the opening of the school.[1] We had not enough material, we had not much practical experience of village work, and I doubted whether we should be able to give the students anything helpful by way of training. I also doubted whether many students would be forthcoming and whether they would be the kind of men we need for village work. I am glad to say that my fears have been so far falsified, and that we have achieved during the brief three months more than was expected.

But today I propose to speak to you about the ideal of work and life that you have to keep in view and work towards.

You are here not for a career in the current sense of the term.

[1] The school was opened by the A.I.V.I.A at Maganwadi in January and had 37 students.

Today man's worth is measured in rupees, annas, pies and a man's educational training is an article of commerce. If you have come with that measure in mind, you are doomed to disappointment. At the end of your studies you may start with an honorarium of ten rupees and end with it. You may not compare it with what a manager of a great firm or a high official gets.[1]

You should cultivate the true spirit of humility and appreciate properly the role you are to play in the life of the rural community.

Your ambition should be to serve the villagers more intensively and not to look to higher emoluments. You are not less valuable servants of India than members of the Indian Civil Service who draw a remuneration a hundred times higher than what you will get.

It is a topsy-turvy economics which is fashioning your destiny today when persons draw salaries which are nearly a thousand to two thousand times the average income of an Indian.

We have to change the current standards. We promise you no earthly careers, in fact we want to wean you from ambition of that kind. You are expected to bring your food-bill within Rs. 6 a month. The food-bill of an I.C.S. may come to Rs. 60 a month, but that does not mean that he is or will be on that account physically or intellectually or morally superior to you. He may be for all his sumptuous living even inferior in all these respects. You have come to this institution because, I presume, you do not value your qualifications in metal. You delight in giving your service to the country for a mere pittance. A man may earn thousands of rupees on the Stock Exchange but may be thoroughly useless for our purposes. He would be unhappy in our humble surroundings and we should be unhappy in his. We want ideal labourers in the country's cause. They will not bother about what food they get, or what comforts they are assured by the villagers whom they serve. They will trust to God for whatever they need, and will exult in the trials and tribulations they might have to undergo. This is inevitable in our country where we have 7,00,000 villages to think of. We cannot afford to have a salaried staff of workers who have an eye to regular increments, provident funds and pensions. Faithful service of the villagers is its own satisfaction.

Some of you will be tempted to ask if this is also the standard

[1] This is reproduced from Mahadev Desai's “Weekly Letter”. The following three paragraphs are from *The Bombay Chronicle.*

for the villagers. Not by any means. These prospects are for us servants and not for the village-folk our masters. We have sat on their backs all these years, and we want to accept voluntary and increasing poverty in order that our masters' lot may be much better than it is today. We have to enable them to earn much more than they are earning today. That is the aim of the Village Industries Association. It cannot prosper unless it has an ever-increasing number of servants such as I have described. May you be such servants.[1]

He hoped, in conclusion,that this institution would serve to be an agency for forging links between the rural population in different parts of India.

Harijan, 23-5-1936, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 11-5-1936

512. HINDI OR HINDUSTANI

Elsewhere the reader will find a deeply interesting letter[2] from an esteemed friend which was read to the delegates who recently assembled in Nagpur and who inaugurated the Akhil Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad. There is a similar letter from another Muslim friend enclosing leading article[3] on the subject in *The Bombay Chronicle* dated 27th April last. These letters and the *Chronicle* article generally represent my views on the question of common inter-provincial speech. However, I fear that there are perhaps limitations to my agreement which need to be publicly stated. The limitations if they may be so called are designed to compass the very end that my friends have in view.

At the outset I must dismiss from consideration the suspicion entertained by some Muslims. The whole atmosphere is surcharged with suspicion. No person's declarations or acts are above suspicion. The best way, in my opinion, for those who sincerely desire full communal unity and have themselves given no cause for suspicion is to act on the square without being swayed one way or the other by the passions of the moment, especially in matters like the Parishad which have nothing to do with the passions. The object of the Parishad is to gather together all that is best in all the languages of India and to

[1] What follows is from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

[2] *Vide* Appendix, "Popularize Hindustani", 27-4-1936; also "Letter to M. Mujeeb", 2-5-1936.

[3] *Vide* Appendix, "Letter from Jawaharlal Nehru", 25-5-1936.

make it available to the largest number of her inhabitants and therefore through a speech understood by the largest number. Urdu is undoubtedly one of the many languages and contains treasures which should be the common property of all India. No Indian who wishes to know the Muslim mind or to know all about Islam as it is being interpreted through the Indian medium can afford to ignore Urdu literature. And the Parishad just established will fail in its duty and purpose if it does not unlock for all India the treasures to be found in the current Urdu literature.

My correspondent has made a mistake which needs to be cleared. He could not have had before him the full test of Tandonji's speech[1] made not as the friend thinks at Banaras but at Allahabad, or he would not have made the serious mistake of thinking that when Tandonji talked of 22 crores speaking Hindi, he had in mind only those who wrote the modern artificial Hindi. He made it clear that he referred to the vast mass of people of north of the Vindhya including the seven crores of Mussalmans who more or less spoke and understood the language which is evolved from Vrajabhasha and which has the latter's grammatical structure. The name Hindi given to it is not original. It was given by Muslim writers to what they wrote for the people of the North and what was undoubtedly like that which their Hindu brethren wrote. Later on a bifurcation took place and Hindi written in Devanagari came to be the speech of the Hindus of the North and Urdu written in Arabic or Persian script came to be the speech of the Muslims of the North. It is hardly true as yet to say that Urdu is common to the Mussalmans all over India. I know that the Ali Brothers[2] and I found it difficult to make ourselves understood by the Moplahs of Malabar through our Urdu. We had to have a Malayalee interpreter. We found a similar diffiulty in East Bengal among its numerous Mussalmans. Both Tandonji and Rajendra Babu[3] therefore meant the same thing absolutely as my friend when they used the word ‘Hindi’. The use of the word ‘Hindustani’ would not make their position clearer.

But the writer of the letter is on sure ground when he complains of the writers of the North who write a language which they call ‘Hindi’ but which very few persons even of the North would

[1] At the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan on April 5, 1936, at Allahabad
[2] Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali
[3] As President of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan held at Nagpur

understand. It is an effort which is doomed to fail like Johnsonian speech.

Then why insist on 'Hindi or Hindustani' and why not simply say 'Hindustani', the writer may say. For one simple reason that it would be impertinent for me, a newcomer, to ask an association[1] of 25 years' standing to alter its name when the need for it is not clearly proved. The new Parishad is an offspring of the older Association and wants to cater both for the Muslims and Hindus of the North who speak the common mother tongue, it does not matter whether it is called Hindi or Hindustani. For me either word has the same connotation. But I would not quarrel with those who would use the word 'Hindi' if they mean the same speech as I do.

I do not understand the writer's objection to the adoption of the expression Akhil Bharatiya. It is an expression certainly known to the Hindus all over India. And I make bold to say that even the majority of the Mussalmans of the North would understand it. The Indian culture of our times is in the making. Many of us are striving to produce a blend of all the cultures which seem today to be in clash with one another. No culture can live if it attempts to be exclusive. There is no such thing as pure Aryan culture in existence today in India. Whether the Aryans were indigenous to India or were unwelcome intruders, does not interest me much. What does interest me is the fact that my remote ancestors blended with one another with the utmost freedom and we of the present generation are a result of that blend. Whether we are doing any good to the country of our birth and the tiny globe which sustains us or whether we are a burden, the future alone will show. So far as I am concerned the new Parishad and the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan have the common good of all through a blending of the best in all India's languages. If they have not, they will perish. But blending to be that must not mean exclusion of everything that has an Aryan flavour any more than that of everything that has an Arabian or for that matter English or any other flavour.

I may not prolong the argument this week. There are still some important points to be covered. I hope to deal with them next week.[2]

Harijan, 9-5-1936

[1] Hindi Sahitya Sammelan

[2] *Vide* "Hindi or Hindustani-II", 16-5-1936.

513. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

May 9, 1936

MY DEAR SLAVE-TO-BE,

This is being written on the train nearing Madras. We were in a crowded train at Wardha and were divided into three parties. Towards 10 o'clock we all had sleeping room quite comfortable. I wished you were with us. Except for the heat you would have enjoyed the journey. On way I have already collected Rs. 186 for the Harijan cause. I hope to make up Rs. 200 before reaching Madras.

I shall cease to be tyrant when you become a willing slave instead of a reble for nothing—an imaginary rebel to an imaginary tyrant. Whether your idiocy will permit you to see such an obvious thing is another question. I shall wait, watch and see.

I hope the parcel contains much you wanted. What about the bigger one for Ala? I can't understand why you have not got the lace. I must inquire.

Ku. and Shanta[1] will follow me in a day or two. I have asked Ku. to stop in Bombay a day or two longer, in order to have a thorough examination.

I hope you were a match for your opponents in the matter of birth-control argument. Non-violence is not an easy job. It is the subtlest force in the world. It easily eludes one. But I know that in the matter of non-violence you may be beaten in argument; you won't be dislodged from your conviction which had come to you before your reason had approved of it. Is that not so?

My address is Nandi Hill, Mysore State or simply Bangalore City.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3727. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6883

[1] An Englishwoman

514. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

ON THE TRAIN,
May 9, 1936

DEAR SISTER,

It was very good that you went to Trivandrum.[1] I gave you the trouble of travelling such a long distance only because of the importance of the work. I am sure much benefit has resulted from your visit.

I am writing this on the train. I had to send Mahadev to Poona As Chandrashanker who looks after the *Harijan* work has fallen ill. Mahadev will join me at Nandi Durg. Come to Nandi Durg and see me if you can and tell me how things are at Trivandrum. Write to me in detail if you cannot come over. I hope you were keeping well there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7982. Also C.W. 3078. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

515.INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

MADRAS,
May 9, 1936

Declining to comment on Indian or world politics, Gandhiji told an Associated Press representative:

Talk to me about the weather, but politics—no. Having withdrawn from politics now, it will not be proper for me to talk about politics or politicians.

The Mahatma likewise declined to comment on the Abyssinian question, but read with interest Pandit Jawaharlal's rejoinder to the Italian Consul-General.

In reply to an enquiry about his health, the Mahatma said that he was now feeling very much better. The trip was not unpleasant. He had been travelling along the coast with a sea breeze blowing. At Wardha it was intensely hot, with hot winds

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to G. Ramachandran", 7-5-1936.

continuing till midnight.

Referring to his visit to Nandi Hills where he will be staying for a fortnight and at Bangalore probably for a fortnight before returning to Wardha, Gandhiji said:

My jailor (Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel) will be there (Bangalore) half an hour before me to take charge of me. It may be that this time I may have to act as jailor to him (Mr. Vallabhbhai) because it is for his recuperation rather than mine that I am going to Nandi Hills.

The Hindu, 11-5-1936

516. DISCUSSION WITH C.V. RAMAN AND DR. RAHM [1]

[On or after *May 10, 1936*][2]

"He has discovered", said Sir Chandrashekharan, introducing Dr. Rahm, "an insect that can live without food and water for 12 years, and has come to India for further researches in biology."

[GANDHIJI:] When you discover the secret at the back of it, please pass it on to me.

[DR. RAHM:] But I am a scientist and a monk also, and when I decided to come to pay my respects to you, I thought of asking you a question or two. May I do so?

With pleasure.

Dr. Rahm was perplexed by the many warring creeds in the world and wondered if there was no way of ending the conflict.

It depends on Christians. If only they would make up their minds to unite with the others ! But they will not do so. Their solution is universal acceptance of Christianity as they believe it. An English friend has been at me for the past thirty years trying to persuade me that there is nothing but damnation in Hinduism and that I must accept Christianity. When I was in jail I got, from separate sources, no less than three copies of the *Life of Sister Therese*, in the hope that I should follow her example and accept Jesus as the only begotten Son of God and my Saviour. I read the book prayerfully but I could not accept even St. Therese's testimony for myself. I must say I have an open mind, if indeed at this stage and age of my life I can be said to

[1] Introducing the interview, Mahadev Desai writes in his "Weekly Letter" : "Sir Chandrashekharan Venkata Raman came up the hill one afternoon with Professor Rahm from Switzerland, a reputed biologist."

[2] Gandhiji reached Nandi Hills on May 10, 1936.

have an open mind on this question. Anyway I claim to have an open mind in this sense that if things were to happen to me as they did to Saul before he became Paul, I should not hesitate to be converted.

But today I rebel against orthodox Christianity, as I am convinced that it has distorted the message of Jesus. He was an Asiatic whose message was delivered through many media and when it had the backing of a Roman emperor it became an imperialist faith as it remains to this day. Of course there are noble but rare exceptions like Andrews and Elwin.[1] But the general trend is as I have indicated.

There was held the other day in Bombay a parliament of religions. Now a positive bar to a real parliament of religions is the refusal to accept an equal basis and a mutual regard for one another's faith. We must not forget that it is a parliament of religions, and not of a few religious-minded men. Did Christianity enter the parliament on a par with the others? When they do not do so openly, they secretly criticize us for our having many gods, forgetting that they have also many gods.

Dr. Rahm was not perhaps perpared for this reply. He made no answer. He put another question in reply: "If we cannot unite, can't we fight atheism which seems to be so much on the increase?"

Sir. C.V. Raman put in: "I shall answer your question. If there is a God we must look for Him in the universe. If He is not there, He is not worth looking for. I am being looked upon in various quarters as an atheist, but I am not. The growing discoveries in the science of astronomy and physics seem to me to be further and further revelations of God. Mahatmaji, religions cannot unite. Science offers the best opportunity for a complete fellowship. All men of science are brothers."

What about the converse? All who are not men of science are not brothers?

The distinguished physicist saw the joke and said: "But all can become men of science."

You will have to present a *kalma*[2] of science as Islam presents one.

"Science", said Sir C.V. Raman, "is nothing but a search for truth¾truth not only in the physical world, but in the world of logic, psychology, behaviour and so on. The virtue of a truly scientific frame of mind is the readiness to reject what is false and untrue. It proclaims from the house-tops that there is no virtue in sticking to untruth. I think the latest biological discovery is that there is no fundamental

[1] Verrier Elwin
[2] Muslim prayer

cleavage between the life of man and the life of the lower creation and that salvation lies in the perfection of the biological instinct for the perpetuation of race—the instinct to sacrifice the individual for the sake of the species."

Harijan, 30-5-1936

517. TELEGRAM TO ASSOCIATED PRESS [1]

May 11, 1936

DR. ANSARI'S DEATH IS A STUNNING BLOW. HE WAS ONE OF THE BEST AMONG MUSSALMANS AS ALSO HINDUS. FOR ME HIS DEATH IS A. PERSONAL LOSS. HE WAS MY INFALLIBLE GUIDE ON HINDU-MUSLIM QUESTIONS. HE AND I WERE JUST PLANNING AN ATTACK ON THE GROWING SOCIAL EVILS. HE WAS THE POOR MAN'S PHYSICIAN IF HE WAS ALSO THAT OF THE PRINCES. HIS DEATH WILL BE MOURNED BY THOUSANDS FOR WHOM HE WAS THEIR SOLE CONSOLATION AND GUIDE..

The Hindu, 12-5-1936

518. TELEGRAM TO BEGUM ANSARI

May 11, 1936

JUST HEARD OF DOCTOR'S DEATH. YOUR LOSS IS EQUALLY MINE.. I FEEL SUDDENLY FORLORN. I KNOW YOUR FAITH IN ALLAH IS GREAT. YOU THEREFORE STAND IN NO NEED OF CONSOLATION FROM POOR MORTALS LIKE ME. POOR ZOHRA. MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL.. SARDAR VALLABHBHAI WHO IS HERE JOINS ME IN THE CONDOLENCES.

The Hindu, 12-5-1936

519. LETTER TO ZAKIR HUSAIN [2]

May 11, 1936

I came to know of the Doctor's death before receiving your wire. I sent a wire to Begum Sahiba and a message to the Press. I have written, too, to Zohra. I expect from you a full account. Please tell me

[1] This was sent by Mahadev Desai with the following note : "We were all stunned this morning to receive the message from the Associated Press, . . . announcing the terrible news of Dr. Ansari's sudden death. Gandhiji immediately issued the following Press message." Dr. M.A. Ansari died on the train while going from Dehradun to Delhi on May 10.

[2] Principal, Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi

also who will look after the practice and the home. Few deaths leave me disconsolate as this has done. Quite wrongly, I know, but I had pictured Dr. Ansari as one destined to finish his century. When, therefore, I got the Press wire,I would not believe [it] at first. He had become part of the lives of many. But God is great. He gives and takes away. We never know His purpose. We dare not quarrel with His dispositions. Let us hope and believe that good will come out of this good friend's death, as nothing but good came out of his life. I know what this death means to the Jamia. My deepest sympathy with you all.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai.

520. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NANDI HILL,
May 11, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have just got your letter. We reached here yesterday safe and sound. It was Sunday and so though I thought of you, I dismissed the talk of a wire. Those who try to approach the villagers have to forget that there is such a thing as telegrams. A weekly post is all they have and often not even that. In Segaon there is supposed to be a weekly delivery but I am told the postman in Wardha hands the letters to any Segaon man whom he comes across and whom *he* trusts !!!

Your letters are all torn [up] after I have read and answered them.

I hope you got my letter[1] written on the train in pencil hand. It was posted at Madras.

I walked up the hill from the base. It took me $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours, the distance covered was over 5 miles. I walked very slow. Hence there was no fatigue. It was Dr. Ansari who wanted the Sardar to pass the summer on a hill. And he himself is no more. Evidently his death was quite sudden. For me it is a very personal loss. I relied upon his advice in so many matters.

The pressure put upon you not to resist your nomination to the Jullunder Municipality, I quite understand. Idiots being honest people and therefore impartial, are always in demand. How could it be

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 9-5-1936.

otherwise—you, a princess among them—not the hereditary one but by right of merit.

I do not mind your trying to make Simla less insanitary. Only don't you catch the infection. Why don't you move the Municipal Committee? Of course, what is true of Segaon and Sindi must be true of the black town of Simla. I suppose you know that the old Indian part of Madras is to this day called black town. It has not occurred to any of the city fathers to change that name, though they give patriotic names to some of their streets. We cannot all of a sudden develop sanitary habits because we heave up to Simla heights. But the M. Committee can, if it will, enforce proper sanitation. Many things are enforced over there. Sanitary enforcement will be least open to objection.

Well, Nandi Hill is really a model of sanitation, of course enforced from above. The air is beautiful. The calmness is divine. No[1] cars or carts or even rickshaws. Only 30 families can live here comfortably. More are not allowed. I do not know a more secluded, cleaner, quieter hill. Sardar is in raptures over the stillness. I know you will love it, if you were here.

Ku. reaches Wednesday.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3571. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6380

521. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

NANDI HILL,
May 12, 1936

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

The reason why I sent you my reply[2] to Agatha was to know whether I had correctly represented your attitude.

But I am glad you have gone for me instead. I am not guilty of 'supporting a system which involves a continuous and devastating class war' or expressing approval of systems based essentially on *himsa* or 'of criticizing and condemning people for more or less

[1] The original has "Not".
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Agatha Harrison", 30-4-1936.

minor faults and praising others who are guilty of far more important failings.'

It is possible that I am unconsciously guilty of the things you seem to impute to me. If so, you should give me concrete instances. I have already admitted that my method of dealing with things is different from yours as I see it. But there is no difference whatsoever about looking at the existing system.

Dr. Ansari's death is a severe blow. For me it was infinitely more than a political friendship.

I hope you are going to Khali or coming to me to breathe a little cool air.

Please tell Sarup I had her two notes. I will write to Sir Tej.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

522. LETTER TO NUR M. MALIK

May 12, 1936

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter of 2nd ultimo. Much as I would like you to return to India I must not encourage you. I think you are better off as you are. It is a most uphill task to run a new hospital in India.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

NUR M. MALIK, MD., ESQ.

7407 TWELFTH AVE.

DETROIT, MICHIGAN

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

523. LETTER TO SHARMA

May 12, 1936

DEAR SHARMA,

I am sorry that it is only now that I am able to reach your letter of 30th ultimo. Yes, I was delighted with the cartoons on swadeshi that

I saw in the Lucknow Exhibition. I would like to possess a copy of them if it is available So far as khadi exhibits in a swadeshi exhibition which admits mill-cloth are concerned, it is a ticklish question. I wish you had discussed it with Shankerlal Banker when he was in Lucknow. If khadi is not exhibited in such exhibitions there are sound business reasons for the absence. But I am myself open to conviction. The first thing, however, for you to do is to convert Shankerlal Banker.

Yours sincerely,

THE MANAGER
ALLAHABAD SWADESHI LEAGUE
ALLAHABAD

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

524. LETTER TO M. B. GODBOLE

May 12, 1936

DEAR DR. GODBOLE,

Please forgive me for my inability to acknowledge your letter of 15th March last earlier. It was impossible as I was moving to and fro. I was able to read it only the other day. I am sorry to have to disappoint you for going through Dr. Lindlahr's volumes. It did not strike me that reprinting of the volumes would be of much use. Some of the conclusions of the author are dogmatic and some others are based on insufficient observation.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

DR. M.B. GODBOLE
P.B. 19
POONA CITY

From a copy: Pyarelal papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

525. TELEGRAM TO PRABHAVATI

May 13, 1936

PRABHAVATI
BABU HARSUDAYAL
SITAB DIARA

WRITTEN REGULARLY. WRITING TODAY. HOPE YOU WELL.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

526. LETTER TO V.S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

NANDI HILL,
May 13, 1936

DEAR BROTHER,

Yes, I had need of sympathy on Ansari's death. Your letter was therefore most welcome. Few deaths make me disconsolate. This one has made me so. Not only were our hearts one but we had so much in common. We had some joint plans also in view. All these have been dashed to pieces at a stroke. Your recalling the old days in Delhi adds to the poignancy of the grief.

I do hope you are well. We must meet before Sardar and I leave this place.

Love.

M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, p. 286

527. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

May 13, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your telegram last night. How am I to prevent your unhappiness? I have of course written[1] to you in the matter of

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Prabhavati", 30-4-1936.

Jayaprakash's visit to me and the proposal to send you to Banaras. Do not be impatient. It is not likely that I won't write to you at all. It is another matter that you may get the letters at irregular intervals. As I understand from your telegram that you will reach Srinagar on the 15th, I am sending this to that place. I expect you are in good health now and are taking milk regularly. What about the Banaras proposal? Write to me frankly whatever you have to say without any reserve. I shall deal with your letter according as you wish. We reached here on Sunday. It is an excellent place. We have here peace and solitude. There are very few residents as the hill is a small one. I would have been happy to have you here with us. Ba, too, remembers you. Our party comprises Sardar, Mani, Kusum Gandhi, Tara Mashruwala, Navin, Kanti, Kanu, Ba and me. Kumarappa and Shanta are arriving today and Kakasaheb in about four days. Sardar is keeping well. As for Tara one doesn't know when she will get well, though she is sure to. Even Kusum who has been weak is expected to recover here. Our stay here will, it seems, last till the 15th June, part of the time having to be spent at Bangalore.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3463

528. LETTER TO PYARELAL

NANDI DURG,
May 13, 1936

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have your letter. I do not like it. How can it be the final farewell? Are those not the words of an unbeliever? I did not like it either that you had the ticket bought, then returned it, and also took back the baggage. Since I had given up putting any pressure on you, I kept quiet. Otherwise I would not have allowed you to return the ticket.

But your saying that I heard you out the last time out of kindness is the limit of unbelief. Such lack of faith in the very person whom you revere! If I had not wanted to hear you out could I not have said so? I listened to your tale about your uncle with such interest that even today I can repeat it almost in your very words. I did not have the time, otherwise I would have gone on listening to you for

even longer than an hour. I was absolutely certain that you would walk with me if only to finish your tale. What led you to believe that I was merely being tolerant and did not really wish to hear you out? Why did you not ask me the moment you had such a doubt? Why this lack of faith?

But it is no good crying over spilt milk. What has happened has happened. From this incident too learn if you can a lesson in faith. Even now you are free to come if you want. Only remember this much, that if you come now, come in good faith. What good will it do if you come with a doubtful mind?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

529. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NANDI HILL,
May 14, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

It is quite like you to be laid up. How I wish I could exercise the authority of a tyrant to drag you down to this beauty spot. No worry, no noises, not a particle of dust, perfect quiet, subdued foliage and refreshing coolness, no social functions, nice tennis ground, beautiful walks. But what can a poor tyrant do to an idiot-rebel? Therefore you will suffer and eat the dust of Simla rather than breathe the dustless fresh air of Nandi. I hope to have better news in your next letter. Don't you go near those dirty places in this state of your health.

Ku. and Shanta already feel much better. They are having good walks.

Of course when you come to Segaon, ever faithful Nabi Bux shall be with you.

Love.

TYRANT

WITHOUT AUTHORITY

From the original: C.W. 3572. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6381

530. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 14, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. Yes, it is very delightful here. My personal love wishes you were here to share with us the quiet and isolation of this beautiful hill. My impersonal love tells me you are better off where you are for it is the part of duty. Kumarappya and Shanta came in yesterday. Sardar is feeling much better here. He takes very long walks with impunity and eats much better than before.

Dr. Ansari's death was a great shock to me. I have hardly got over it yet. I feel the want of his presence in so many things.

I am glad you are making good progress with the hut. I understand what you say about the road. You will do what is the best. I have implicit faith in your judgement in these matters.

Balwantsingh and Munnalal must not be a burden on you in any shape or form. I enclose notes for them.[1]

I hope by the time this reaches you, the land[2] in Varoda will have been taken.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6334. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9800

531. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

NANDI DURG,
May 14, 1936

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

Mirabehn tells me that you have reached Segaon. Good. Now help her and be cheerful. I hope you will not even want to go anywhere till I return. Train Govind and Dashrath well. Preserve your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1884

[1] *Vide* the following item. The letter to Munnalal is not available.
[2] For the addressee's cottage

532. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

May 14, 1936

MY DEAR CHILD,

May God give you full strength to live up to your motto, 'It is no easy matter to count always loss as gain, in joy as well as pain.' I know anyway that your life is not in vain. Of course you are right in not coming to me. You will come, when God wills it.

I hope Tangai[1] is quite well again. Kisses to the children. See if they would write to me. Here is a little note[2] for them.

Don't coax them to write.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 139. Courtesy: National Archives of India

533. LETTER TO NAN [3] AND TANGAI MENON

May 14, 1936

DEAR CHILDREN,

Do you remember that there was a time when you used to write to me? Should you not—now that you have grown in years and wisdom? I was sorry to hear of Tangai's illness. The hat for delicate children like you is a necessary article of wear.

Love and kisses from

BAPU

[PS.]

Esther will tell you all about where I am at present.

My Dear Child, p. 122

[1] Addressee's daughter
[2] *Vide* the following item.
[3] Daughter of Esther Menon

534. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

May 14, 1936

BHAI BAPA,

I send with this a cheque for Rs. 200 received from Sophia Wadia[1]. The receipt need not be sent to her. Send it to me.

I understand what you say regarding Sastri. I enclose [a report of] the work done in Madras in four hours. Jagannathdas had arranged a prayer meeting in Kodambakkam, but I refused to go till an assurance was given that the institution would be continued. Jagannathdas gave the required assurance, which I send with this. Please preserve it. I met Pratapmalji also. He, too, has undertaken to solve the financial worries, but he asked for somebody who would be able to create there the atmosphere that we have in the Ashram. How can I find such a person? I met Venkatasubbiah here and discussed the problem with him. He and the others expressed their dislike of Sastri. Venkatasubbiah says, however, that they will do without Sastri and Ganesan. One of the four will visit the place daily by turns. This is what I have been able to do. Kindly write from there now and ask them clearly to relieve Ganesan. Sastri's resignation has already been accepted. You can mention Jagannathdas's letter and say that you hope that the four of them will carry on the work.

Since Dr. Ansari had detained Amtussalaam please accommodate her. Malkani, poor man, writes and tells me that he could not tolerate the thought that she had to leave because of Rukmini. The latter does not tolerate anybody. But does that mean that they should all leave? I have written a strong letter[2] to her. Amtussalaam is not likely to pay attention to Rukmini's words. She will remain happy if you go on giving her some work.

I hope that your letters are opened before they are sent to you. If there is any cheque or such things in an envelope, they should not follow you from place to place.

You, too, have been travelling a good deal. It seems you are becoming young again. If you share your experiences with the people, they will be of priceless value to them, Garhwal is a 'sealed

[1] Madam Sophia Wadia, Indian representative on the P.E.N.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Rukmini Malkani", 7-5-1936.

book' for most people. I have heard that it is a very beautiful but a very poor region.

We are in Nandi Durg, enjoying its pleasant air.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1122

535. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM AND VIJAYA GANDHI

May 14, 1936

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM AND VIJAYA[2],

May you live a long married life, and may you both devote your life to service. These are my wishes and my blessings. There is no place for sensual pleasure in married life; the coming together of man and wife should be only for the sake of begetting progeny. Recently I wrote an article[1] suggesting this. You should try to live accordingly if you like my idea. A certain discipline has to be observed to be able to live such a life. Only then can one find the aim within reach.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

536. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 14, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. Here are my blessings to the bride and the bridegroom.[2] I am also enclosing yarn garlands for them both. Other letters that I intend writing will also be enclosed in this packet.

Kanu is enjoying himself and remains absorbed in his work. He is full of idealism and will have, I feel, a bright future.

Kusum, too, is well enough. I hope you won't mind if she cannot reach there before the 20th or 22nd, as we shall be in Mysore till the 15th [of June] at any rate.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8489. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* "For Contraceptives", 4-4-1936.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

537. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

May 14, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter.

How can it be hot there? That is the beauty of a coastal place.

You are a rash and impatient person. You could not have seen your way even if you had not indulged in the adventure at Segaon. Adventure is a good thing if undertaken at the right time and for a right cause. Otherwise it is sheer rashness. Your coming to Segaon was no better. The point in recalling this incident is only to prevent its recurrence. Yes, there you have of course to act with caution.

I have already written to Mirabehn[1] to accommodate you if you go there before me. I have also her reply in the affirmative. But if you go, do it realizing that it is your dharma; do not go merely to please me. I have already told you that I am surely going to take you to Segaon. I am not going to change my word. Do not neglect your health. We are all fine here. The place is very quiet and small.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9341. Also C.W. 6616. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

538. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

May 14, 1936

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

Your letter reached me only last evening. Your birthday falls today. Where shall I send the telegram? It may not reach you today even if I should send it now. It is 2.45 and we are in Nandi Durg. You have my blessings of course. May you live long and may your noble inclinations ever increase !

Pranams to Maji. Blessings to Gokibehn[2] and Sumati[3].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4725. Courtesy: Shantikumar N. Morarjee

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 7-5-1936.

[2] Addressee's father's sister and wife

[3] *Ibid*

539. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May 14, 1936

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

My previous opinions have changed. In the past I insisted on eschewing quinine, etc., but now I do not. There is no harm in taking them as a temporary measure. We do not know all the natural cures and the ones that we know are not effective against all diseases. *Neem* leaves ought not to be shunned simply on account of their bitter taste; their efficacy is well known. Similarly, some qualities of tamarind also are universally acknowledged. However, there is no such rule that one or the other thing must prove beneficial to everyone. There is no reason, either, to believe that milk no more agrees with you because of the quinine. The rule about forgoing the morning meal [on the day] of the does not apply to those who do not take the evening meal. But you may discontinue the morning meal if it does not suit you. Nor do you need to make it a rule to have a weekly fast. In case of a feeling like indigestion you should of course abstain from food. It is good that the pain in your spine has disappeared. Yes, I do intend to settle in Segaon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4270

540. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

NANDI,
May 15, 1936

JAMNALAL BAJAJ
WARDHA

WIRE PARTICULARS TARABEHN'S[1] DEATH.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 180

[1] Mary Chesley had taken ill while on a pilrimage to Badri- kedar. She died in a hospital, leaving all her property and money in Canadian banks to Gandhiji. *Vide* also "In Memoriam", 23-5-1936.

541. TELEGRAM TO SATYADEV

May [15][1], 1936

SATYADEVJI
KANKHAL

WIRE PARTICULARS OF TARABEHN'S DEATH.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

542. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

NANDI HILL.
May 15,1936

CHI. MARY,

I have just had a wire saying that Tara died at Hrishikesh. The news is stunning, unbelievable. I have no further particulars. I had warned her against braving the pilgrimage. But she had an iron will. Once it was made up it was immovable. I have wired for particulars. Perhpas you have them already. Her forgiving nature and charity had captivated me. Her belief in the goodness of human nature was beyond all praise. She has sacrificed herself for the cause she believed in. Shanta is here and she has given Miss Blythe's address. Miss B. was her partner. You will tell me all you know and I ought to know about Tara. I got your letter yesterday. All these days I had taken you at your word and never wrote to you.

I am looking forward to Miss Madden's letter. I am glad she will be with you for one year. Tara wanted me to invite her to see me again. There was no question of doing so immediately as I was coming to Nandi. But I think the present arrangement is better. Only, she must go slow in making changes in her life. Europeans simply cannot make some changes. Each one has to recognize his limitations. Of course you can spend for the roof and the like what you might have saved from your expenses. You will take a lesson form Tara's life and not overdo things.[2]

[1] The source has "14", obviously a slip. Gandhiji received the news of Mary Chesley's death only on May 15; *vide* the following item.

[2] The addressee was doing social work in Khedi, a village near Betul.

The office is and still will be at Maganwadi. Segaon is a good place. You will see it one of these days, I hope.

This is a beautiful place. Not too high. It is isolated and quiet. Not many people can live here. No cars or carts or even horses. We walked up. It took me 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Writing paper has improved all over. Choudhary[1] the expert has revolutionized the making of hand-made paper. And an assured demand has cropped up for the time being. Kumarappa is with me. Of course Ba is and also Sardar and Manibehn. I have come here for Sardar's health. Dr. Ansari insisted on his having a change to a hill. And he himslef is gone ! ! ! God's will is there unmistakably in everything. Ours is only to strive in all humility.

Love to both of you.

BAPU

[PS.]

The enclosed is for Gopal.[2] Try to read it and hand it to him or send wherever he is.

From a photostat: G.N. 6060. Also C.W. 3390. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

543. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

Unrevised *May 15, 1936*

DEAR SATIS BABU,

Cholera cases need organized treatment. But I suppose nothing of the kind is yet possible in our country. There is not that corporate sense of responsibility. The few of us who have must persevere before a visible impression is made.

Do you suggest anything to make the exhibition less expensive, and more instructive? This one[3] was instructive enough as far as it went. It was not inexpensive. Later on it drew huge crowds and there will be practically no loss, if at all. We had Rs. 25, 000 entrance fees and Rs. 5, 000 from stalls. Khadi sold very well and so did many other things. You must have got the detailed guide-book. Go through it and make concrete suggestions.

[1] Yadavrao S. Choudhary
[2] The letter is not available
[3] At Lucknow

If frequent change of residence keeps you in good from, you should arrange your work accordingly. It is no use making of one residence an inevitable thing. When you have many forms of service open to you, you have to take that which is most conducive[1] to your health. If Atari[2] was the only thing open and obligatory, I should understand consecration unto death. You must do everything humanly possible to keep your body a fit instrument of service.

Pyarelal is there. I hope he will accept your guidance.

I hope both you and Hemprabha are well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1629

544. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

May 15, 1936

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have your postcard. I understand what you say about Sumitra. Sardar told us about Vanamala's adventure. I am now trying to free Sumitra from the botheration. You were quite right in sending her. Ramdas has by now realized that Sumitra only harms herself by going to her mother.

I am sending herewith the letter which reports that a sum of Rs. . . . [3] has been paid to the Gandhi Seva Sangh on account of the Goseva Sangh. File the letter in the records there.

The climate here is beautiful, and Sardar says that [Mt.] Abu has now become stale, while this hill is an ideal one from the standpoint of sanitation. For quietness no other place can excel it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9093

[1] The source has "inducive"
[2] A place in Bengal
[3] Illegible

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

SPINNERS' WELFARE[1]

A few points why Khadi Pratishthan, devoted to the khadi work in Bengal, should continue to give work (in a graduated higher scale of wages) to spinners and find sale for their products in conjunction with self-spinning work:

1. Khadi is never meant to enter into competition with machine- (i.e., mill-) made cloth.

2. Khadi represents 'back to village' cry.

3. Village life means simplicity and freedom from contamination of urban 'civilized and refined' mode of life, i.e., life represented by cinemas, race-gambling and other nonsensical things.

4. In the mills the workmen get higher wages, but they are converted into so many automata and drudges in the mill area. Half their wages again are consumed in drink and prostitution.

5. The poor women (generally widows) who ply the charkha and earn a bare pittance are thereby enabled to be self-supporting and not dependent on their male relatives who really sit idle and make the helpless women dependent on them work like drudges and galley-slaves. Thus the latter are really freed from sweated labour.

6. Those who ply the charkha are seldom or never whole-time workers; only during the intervals of household duties they utilize their leisure hours. So it would be wrong to compare their off-time labour with that of the sweated labour of the mills.

7. In Bengal there is only one crop (the Aman Paddy) in most parts. That gives peasants occupation for barely three months in the year. Even where there is second crop which gives employment for a couple of extra months or so, for seven months they sit idle. Hence, if the people could be persuaded to ply the charkha, they would have a second occupation or another string to the bow. Thus during a failure of crop due to drought or flood (as is often the case in Bengal at any rate) plying the charkha would be a 'God-send'. The people won't starve or be dependent on chance doles distributed in the relief centres.

8. The spinners are not the only people benefited; along with the spinners a large body of weavers find occupation; in fact, on week days (especially during the *hat* or village market days) the weavers in the khadi centres with their woven dhotis and

[1] *Vide* "Acharya P. C. Ray on Spinners' Welfare".

shirtings eagerly look for payment. Then other subsidiary artisans would be benefited, e.g., the village carpenters, etc., making charkhas.

9. A unique experiment is going on in the Atral and Talora centres (visited by you in 1925). After 12 years of hard labour, expenses, not to speak of the sacrifices of voluntary workers, at last we have got a body of willing 'self-spinners'. I have myself watched with interest and joy how the women look forward to the *saris*, bodices, and *chadars* for children, supplied in exchange for the yarn

P. C. RAY

Harijan, 28-9-1935

APPENDIX II

A.I.S.A. RESOLUTION [1]

[On or before *October 11, 1935*]

1. This Council is of opinion that the wages now paid for spinning are inadequate, and therefore resolves that they be raised and a suitable standard be fixed so that spinners may at least receive a minimum wage calculated on the basis of eight hours' efficient work, sufficient at least to procure clothing (20 yards per year) and maintenance in accordance with a scientifically prescribed scale of minimum food requirements. All concerned should try, as circumstances permit, for a progressive rise in the wages scale, so as to reach a standard enabling each spinning family to be properly maintained out of earning of its working members.

2. In order to guide the A.I.S.A. workers in the execution of the principle underlying the foregoing proposition, the following should be regarded by all branches and bodies, working in affiliation to or in any other way under the Association, as the settled policy of the Association until it is altered in the light of further experience by the Council:

(a) The mission of the Association is to make every home in India selfsufficing through khadi with reference to its clothing requirements, and to promote the welfare of spinners who are the least paid among khadi artisans and all others engaged in the different cotton processes beginning with growing cotton and ending with weaving of khadi.

(b) It is therefore imperative that those who work for the production of khadi, whether as artisans, sellers or otherwise, shall use khadi for their clothing requirements to the exclusion of every other kind of cloth.

[1] *Vide* "Sixty-Three Years ago and Today", 13-10-1935 and "New Khadi Scheme", 26-10-1935.

(c) All the branches and affiliated bodies shall so work the scheme as to avoid all losses, that is, so as to restrict their production to the demand within their own selected areas commencing with their immediate neighbourhood and never extending beyond their province except in so far as they are called upon by other provinces to meet the latter's demand.

(d) In order to avoid surplus production, producers may restrict their operations only to those spinners who solely depend upon spinning for their daily bread for part of the year or the whole of it. Branches and other bodies shall maintain an accurate register of all the spinners and other artisans employed by them and shall deal directly with them. In order to ensure the use of the wages for clothing and food, a part or the whole of them may be paid in kind, i.e., khadi or other necessaries of life.

(e) In order to avoid overlapping, undue competition, or duplicating of expenses where there are more khadi-producing organizations than one, the area of operation of each shall be previously defined. Private certified producers will not be encouraged by the Association. Among those that are already certified, those only who will work strictly under the same rules that govern the Association branches and take all risks without any prospect of recouping themselves from the Association will have their certificates renewed on the strict understanding that any breach of the rule that may be laid down from time to time or instructions given will involve automatic withdrawal of their certificates.

(f) It should be understood that it is the primary and imperatiye duty of all organizations working under the Association to promote the scheme of self-sufficing khadi. Production of khadi for meeting the demand of cities or of khadi-wearers out-side cities who do not spin for themselves is a secondary or supplementary duty. No organization will be considered bound to produce or sell such khadi.

File No. 4/12/36, Home, Political. Courtesy: National Archives of India

APPENDIX III

FOR HINDUSTANI ONLY [1]

That the Hindi-Urdu question is in imminent danger of becoming a communal issue is evident from the speech Mr. Purshottamdas Tandon delivered at the opening caremony of the Hindi Museum at Benares in the first week of this month. He declared that next to Chinese, Hindi was the most widely spoken language in Asia. This means, in other words, that the problem of a common language is solved; it is going to be Hindi, because Hindi is spoken by the majority of Indians. Those who clamour for Hindustani can be outnumbered, therefore they cannot matter. But the counting of heads is no more a remedy than breaking of heads. Whatever Mr. Tandon may have really meant, it seems to me that ground is being prepared for another such indignity as the Communal Award.

It is only your prestige and the confidence inspired by your personality that can rescue us. I am giving below a number of points which in my humble opinion are rational in themselves and provide a sound basis for a common language. If you consider them and find them worthy, not in your own estimation only but also of the cause they are meant to serve, you may make them known to others. What I am dreaming of just now is that they might become the basis of a public pronouncement by you.

The points are:

1. That our common language shall be called ‘Hindustani’, not ‘Hindi’.

2. That Hindustani shall not be considered to have any peculiar association with the religious traditions of any community.

3. That the test of ‘foreign’ and ‘indigenous’ shall not be applied to any word, but only the test of currency.

4. That all words used by Hindu writers of Urdu and Muslim writers of Hindi shall be deemed current. This of course shall not apply to Urdu and Hindi as sectional languages.

5. That in the choice of technical terms, specially political terminology, no preference be given to Sanskrit terms as such, but as much room as possible be allowed for natural selection from among Urdu, Hindi and Sanskrit terms.

6. That the Devnagari and the Arabic scripts shall both be considered current and official, and that in all institutions whose policy is directed by the official promoters of Hindustani, facilities shall be provided for learning both scripts.

There may be friends to whom these suggestions will look like Muslim demands.

[1] *Vide* “Letter to M. Mujeeb”, 2-5-1936; “Hindi or Hindustani”, 9-5-1936; “Hindi or Hindustani-II”, 16-5-1936 and “Letter to Zakir Husain”, 25-5-1936. Only the concluding portion of M, Mujeeb’s letter is reproduced here.

They are not. But I know that unless an assurance of some such kind is given by you and the Parishad, there can be no question of Muslim literary effort being harnessed in the cause of a common language. So I have submitted these suggestions to you. If they are extravagant, I know you will pardon me, and if they are unjustified, they will not offend you. So far as I am concerned I have only wanted to do my duty, and to show, by an appeal to you, my unlimited respect for your judgment and my confidence in your deep feeling of justice and tolerance.

Harijan, 9-5-1936

APPENDIX IV

POPULARIZE HINDUSTANI [1]

The All-India Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, the twenty-fifth session of which was held at Nagpur during the week-end, has two main objects before it: to develop Hindi literature and popularize Hindi throughout the country. We shall consider here the latter object mainly. The need for a national language is undeniable. That English cannot possibly be that language is equally undeniable. The popular form of Hindi or of Urdu, generally called Hindustani, has alone the prospect of being a perfect national language if earnest efforts are made to popularize this form in every possible way, particularly by developing Hindustani literature, that is to say, Hindi and Urdu literature without a large admixture of classical words.

CALL IT HINDUSTANI

Unfortunately, however, this national aim is not precisely understood. Many, who possess wrong notions of purity of language or literary elegance, persist in using too many classical expressions, the Hindus from Sanskrit and the Muslims from Persian and Arabic. Sometimes this tendency is deliberately fostered by communalists, whence has arisen the Hindi-Urdu controversy. Babu Rajendra Prasad much deplored this spirit of exclusiveness both because it hindered the growth of national language and because it widened the gulf between the authors and the common readers. He rightly commended the use of a simple language and at the same time urged the absorption of foreign words wherever necessary. He would have brought out his point more clearly if he had definitely suggested that the language which should be specially cultivated should be Hindustani. That is, we believe, the suggestion made by Gandhiji himself at the Nagpur Conference. The most effective way to end once for all the Hindi-Urdu controversy and to develop a national language is not only to propagate a simple or popular form of Hindi

[1] *Vide* "Hindi or Hindustani", 9-5-1936. Only extracts from the article are reproduced here.

and Urdu but also to call that language Hindustani, which in fact is its most appropriate name. In order that much confusion and needless controversy regarding the respective claims of Hindi and Urdu may be avoided, may we suggest to the Congress President to issue definite instructions to all Congress organizations that the only national language to be recognized by them should be Hindustani and that Congressmen should not carry on propaganda in favour of either Urdu or Hndi being the national language?

USE BOTH SCRIPTS

The question of a common script for the national language has come very much to the fore during the last two years or so. Many suggest that the Nagari script should be the national one, with some improvements made therein, as it is the basis of the scripts of all the vernaculars derived from Sanskrit and, therefore, intelligible to a large majority of the people. A few have suggested the use of the Roman script, and the rumour was abroad some time ago that President Jawaharlal had supported it. He has now made it clear that, though he sees some advantage in it, he does not see any chance of its being adopted by any considerable community in the country. Even as regard the Nagari script there is not at present that consensus of opinion in its favour which can justify its exclusive adoption in writing Hindustani. Apart from this the claims of the Arabic script, which is being used in many Asiatic and African and even European countries as well as in India cannot lightly be ignored. In the circumstances the best immediate approach to the problem is for every Indian to learn both the Nagari and the Arabic scripts. That was Gandhiji's suggestion during the N.C.O. Movement and many national schools and colleges loyally followed it. We believe he has not changed his mind on this point.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-4-1936

1. A GREAT FRIEND GONE

It is not usual in these columns to have obituary notices of all the great men who pass away. This is a journal devoted to a special cause. Such notices are taken generally only of those who had specially identified themselves with the Harijan cause. I had to use extraordinary self-restraint to avoid noticing Kamala Nehru's death. It almost become an oppression. But I need exercise no such restraint about Dr. Ansari's death. For he was essentially a symbol of Hindu-Muslim unity with Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan. Dr. Ansari never wavered in his faith even when it was put to a severe test. He was an orthodox Mussalman proud of his descent from the helpers of the Prophet when the latter was most in need of help. His very staunchness and his intimate knowledge of Islam made Dr. Ansari a believer in Hindu-Muslim unity. It is no exaggeration to say that he had at least as many Hindu as he had Mussalman friends. He was one of the ablest physicians in all India. His advice was freely available to the poor of all races. And what he earned from the princes and rich men, he spent with both hands among his many needy friends. No beggar approached him without emptying whatever his pocket contained, and he never counted what he gave. He was a tower of strength to hundreds of men and women who swore by him. I have no doubt that he has left many literally weeping for the personal loss they have sustained. He has left a wife who is a philosopher though invalid. She is too brave and too much of a believer to shed a tear over her loss. But the many whom I have in mind are no philosophers. Their faith in God is vapoury; their fatih in Dr. Ansari was living. It was no fault of theirs that their faith in God was weak as with most of us. They had many proofs of the Doctor's friendship when they thought God had forsaken them. They little knew that even the great Doctor could only help them so long as his Maker allowed him. Would that what he could not accomplish while he was alive would be accomplished by his death.

Harijan, 16-5-1936

2. HINDI OR HINDUSTANI−II

In the previous article[1] I have already showed how and why I regard Hindi and Hindustani as synonymous terms and why it is necessary to retain the use of the word 'Hindi'.

An objection to the use of the word 'Hindi' has been thus stated in the letter[2] reproduced in the last issue:

> It has been studied by Mussalmans in the past and they have done as much if not more than their Hindu brethren to raise it to the status of a literary language. But it has also religious and cultural associations with which Mussalmans as a whole cannot identify themselves. Besides, it is now evolving a vocabulary that is exclusively its own and is generally unintelligible to those who know only Urdu.

If the Mussalmans of old studied and enriched Hindi in the past, why should they of the present generation avoid it? Surely the Hindi of old had greater religious and cultural associations than modern Hindi has today. And should one avoid the use of a language because of its religious and cultural associations? Must I avoid Arabic and Persian for their religious and cultural associations? I may not be affected by the latter, if I do not want to be or if I have antipathy towards them. Surely if we are to live together as blood-brothers that we are, we may not fight shy of each other's culture. And why quarrel with the use of Sanskrit words, in Hindi to the point of rebelling against the language itself? The unnatural process of using Sanskrit words in the place of simpler current words or giving the derived words their original Sanskrit form is undoubtedly a reprehensible practice and robs a language of its music. But a certain use of Sanskrit words, as the nation expands, is inevitable in the hands of Hindus who know only Sanskrit, as the use of Arabic is inevitable in the hands of Mussalmans who know only Arabic, though both write the same language and have no special likes or dislikes. Educated Hindus and Mussalmans will have to acquaint themselves with both the forms. Is this not true of all growing languages? Educated Englishmen know both 'sympathy' and 'fellow-feeling'or 'fatherly' and 'paternal' or

[1] *Vide* "Hindi or Hindustani", 9-5-1936

[2] For extracts from the letter, *vide* Appendix, "For Hindustan only", 9-5-1936.

yearly' and 'annual'. The difficulty with us is that just now our hearts are not one and the best of us are affected by the virus of mutual suspicion.

Hindi, Hindustani and Urdu are different names for the same speech just as the dialects of Cornwall, Lancashire and Middlesex are different names for the same speech. What is being aimed at today is not to evolve a new language but to adopt the language known under the three names as the inter-provincial language. I believe Shri Munshi was right when he defended the form of the language used in *Hans.* For rendering, say, a Tamil or Telugu piece into Hindi or Hindustani, the use of Sanskrit words is almost inevitable, even as the use of Arabic words would be inevitable if one was translating an Arabic piece into Hindi or Hindustani. Rabindranath's *Gitanjali* in Hindi would read much less musical than it does, if its Hindi or Hindustani translation studiously avoided the Sanskrit words with which Bengali is replete. Literary Musssalmans like Moulvi Abdul Haq Sahib or Aquil Sahib have but to make thier own contribution to the common speech to avoid its degenerating into a language only spoken by the Hindus. I would if I could wean them from treating the Urdu form as the exclusive speech of Mussalmans, as I would wean literary Hindus from treating Hindi as the exclusive speech of Hindus. If none of them is weaned, there will be no common speech for Hindus and Mussalmans of the North, no matter by what name it is known. Here at least, therefore, we do not need to quarrel about the name. Call it by what name you like, if only you mean the same thing in all sincerity.

There remains the question of script. At the present moment insistence on Devanagari by Mussalmans is not to be thought of. Insistence on the adoption of Arabic script by the vast mass of Hindus is still less thinkable. What therefore I have suggested as the definition of Hindi or Hindustani is 'that language which is generally spoken by Hindus and Mussalmans of the North, whether written in Devanagari or Urdu'. I abide by that definition, in spite of protests to the contrary. But there is undoubtedly a Devanagari movement with which I have allied myself whole-heartedly and that is to have it as the common script of all the languages spoken in the different provinces, especially those which have a large Sanskrit vocabulary. Anyway, an attempt is being made to transcribe in Devanagari script the most precious treasures of all the languages of India .

Harijan, 16-5-1936

3. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

NANDI DURG,

May 16, 1936

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

You must have received an unexpected letter[1] from me even before I got yours. The noble hopes expressed in it could be entertained only of one like you brought up in the Ashram from childhood. Vijaya alone would know the state of her mind but you have to be a teacher to her. The circumstance is common in the Hindu family. If you wish to follow the duties of married life as I have suggested, I have also outlined its restriction in my article. If you find these difficult, it only means that you have not really understood the one purpose of sexual intercourse. Even to the husband the wife is a mother. It has been said in a book that the woman giving birth to a child gives birth to a portion of the husband himself, and that therefore after she has conceived she deserves to be daily honoured with a *namaskara* much as his own mother. Such things are looked upon as intellectual indulgence. The conviction that such things need to be put into practice has not gone down people's throat. Hence they turn a deaf ear to any talk of acting according to it. "The path of God is for the brave alone." Read this to Vijaya if you think it fit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

4. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 16, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

Herewith a letter[2] for Purushottam and Marybehn's letter to you. Yesterday I had a telegram telling me of the death at Rishikesh of a very benevolent lady, Tarabehn Chesley, whom you do not know.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Purushottam and Vijaya Gandhi", 14-5-1936

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

She was on her way to Badri-Kedar with two other women. She was a learned person, living an exceedingly simple life.

Kusum is having a nice time. She comes out daily for a walk with me. I do hope this place will help her recover her health. Kanu moves about, absorbed in his work. He has been trying to train his hand on the *dilruba*[1], and his instrument accompanies the *Ramayana* recitation every day. All the three brothers[2] sing the verses in unison, and now Kusum has joined them. Sardar walks for four hours every day, and Mahadev and Mani accompany him. It is beyond my capacity to take such long walks. Kumarappa and Shantabehn are of course here. Both are good company to each other and spend their time working. Ba keeps fairly good health. This is how our little world here goes on.

I learn from Kusum's talks that the Bal Mandir has been running at a loss. In my opinion, we should send an account of income and expenditure to the parents and notify to them that the Bal Mandir would be closed if they did not help to meet this expenditure. You may also mention that the house rent, etc., is not included in the accounts . You should, however, include Kusum's salary of Rs. 35 or 40 as also those of the other teachers, if any, whatever they are paid. We might go about begging to run the school if the children belonged to the Harijan or some other so-called lower communities, but certainly not for the others; and emphatically not a Bal Mandir. The very poor cannot afford to send their children there; nor is there any great need that they should. Please think over this and, if you are convinced about it, you should consult the Committee and give the parents notice of one or two months. Kusum says that you have increased the fee already, in which case the increase should be only to the extent of meeting the increased cost. You must be aware that there are several schools in the country, which bring profits to the owners after defraying all expenses. Many schools, for example, the Bharda High School, are a source of income. Only the Proprietary High School of Ahmedabad and some others regarded as national schools and some experimental schools are run with the help of contributions

[1] A stringed musical instrument

[2] Kanti Gandhi, Kanu Gandhi and Navin Gandhi; in fact, cousins

raised from the public. I think we should get away from this kind of work and give our time to work among Harijans and in the villages.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8490. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

5. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

May 16, 1936

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I read the two lines you added to Nimu's letter to me. See that you preserve your health. Give the body as much milk, curds and ghee as it might need. It is only if you preserve your health that I shall be able to take from you all the work I want. Tell Bhanubapa that an obstacle has again cropped up. A fresh estimate is contemplated for the place where the building is to be put up. This is a complicated affair. Perhaps Mahadev will have to be sent to Nasik.

Did you hear anything further as regards the summons?

Let Nimu have her studies to her fill.

All are well and happy here. The coolness here and the hot winds there—what a contrast! Yet one may not say that here I am in better health than there. The fact is that heat does not affect me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10714

6. LETTER TO NEKI RAM SHARMA

NANDI DURG,
May 17, 1936

BHAI NEKI RAM SHARMA,

Please convey my blessings to Chi. Chandrakala and Chi. Omprakash. May their married life be happy and devoted to service.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI NEKI RAM SHARMA
BHIWANI
(PUNJAB)

From the Hindi original: Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

7. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NANDI DURG,
May 17, 1936

DEAR DAUGHTER,

All that you write about Doctor Saheb is perfectly true. We have no one to take his place. But we do not know if his death was for the good or otherwise. God alone is the best judge. He gives and He takes away. We should only learn a lesson from Doctor Saheb's death. We should carry on from where he left. Mourning and fasting serve no purpose. Those who believe in God have no reason to fear death. Those who are born are bound to die. You do not want any more clarification on your earlier letters, do you? Now you do not have to go to Patiala or Chitrakoot or even to join me. To me you can come whenever you feel like it. Otherwise the Harijan Ashram is all you should devote yourself to. This is not my own suggestion but deduced from the last letter from Doctor Saheb. You are taking, I hope, the medicine prescribed by him. We are all well. I do not write separately to Tyagiji. Rajkishori is happy, I suppose.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 335

8. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NANDI HILL,
May 18, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

You must have seen all I have written about Dr. Ansari.[1] I may weep over his death selfishly. But there need be no sorrow over his death, if one is certain, as I am, that it is only the perishable body that has perished, not the indestructible soul within. Having put off the old garment, it will put on a new and better one.[2] His services are not lost. If we have faith we may be sure that he is serving even now though in an unseen manner. Being used only to relying upon the feeble and

[1] *Vide* "A Great Friend Gone", 16-5-1936
[2] *Bhagavad Gita,* II. 20 and 22

often unreliable evidence of our senses, we refuse to believe that things go on which transcend our senses and which are far more durable and useful than the passing show our senses note and make us alternately weep and laugh. Enough of this wisdom-spinning.

Yes, I shall try to secure for you ivory goods and the rest within the limits assigned by you.

Ku. is flourishing. Dr. Subba Rao will examine him and Shanta about the 20th instant.

I hope you have been able to persuade Dalip to take "rest and be thankful". The court work will go on without him for a few weeks or months. The services have taken good care about their work.

Why do you worry about your inability to invite Mira? These are limitations of a joint family which both you and I must recognize. Friendships do not exist, must not, for selfish gratification. Mira is quite happy though she is melting in Wardha heat. She is joyous in that she is superintending the creation of my hut. She is looking after the minutest detail with the greatest care. And she is glad too that I shall be her neighbour in the very near future D.V.

You are exasperating. When you meet me you will forget all about Kallenbach[1]. Why not out with the talk? Let me share the joke or own up the shame, if I see any in what I might have said. But I hear so many things about myself about which I am an utter stranger that I shall not be surprised if what you have heard ranks among them.

Love to you all.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3573. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6382

9. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 18, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I hope you got my letter[2] from Nandi.

Yes, Dr. Ansari's death is a great personal loss. Both birth and death are great mysteries. If death is not a prelude to another life, the

[1] A German architect who became a friend and associate of Gandhiji in South Africa; *vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 28-5-1936

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 14-5-1936

intermediate period is a cruel mockery. We must learn the art of never grieving over death no matter when and to whom it comes. I suppose that we shall do when we have really learnt to be utterly indifferent to our own and the indifference will come when we are every moment conscious of having done the task to which we are called. But how shall we know the task? By knowing God's will. How shall we know the will? By prayer and right living. Indeed, prayer should mean right living. There is a *bhajan* we sing every day before the *Ramayana* commences whose refrain is "Prayer has been never known to have failed anybody. Prayer means being one with God."

I am glad you are making progress with the buildings. Rs. 300 for the land and the building in Varoda should prove enough for the time being at any rate. I wish you would be able to squeeze in the fence. There need be no paid labour for it. Balwantsingh and Munnalal should be able under your direction to put it up. The material should cost practically nothing. Fence and some shade is the chief thing. We are all flourishing. But those who are profiting most are Sardar, Shanta and Ku. They were the ones who positively needed the bracing air of a hill. The others not so much and so they do not show visible signs of gain. I see we shall not be able to move away from Mysore before 15th June.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6335. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9801

10. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

May 18, 1936

MY DEAR CHILD,

You are being tested. Why should you have " flu even in a cool place like Kodai? But I know you will keep your peace even in the midst of tortures and live up to your motto.[1] You will tell me when you are free. My prayers and my love are with you.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 140. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Esther Menon"14-5-1936

11. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

NANDI HILL,

May 18, 1936

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

The people in Maganwadi report that they have not yet got cow-milk ghee. They will be presently out of stock. Please see to the supply.

Yours,

BAPU

DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

LAHORE, PUNJAB

From a copy: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

12. LETTER TO GOVIND V. GURJALE

May 18, 1936

DEAR GURJALE,

I have your letter. Much as I should like to visit you, I cannot do it. I have come here for Sardar's health. I have other patients, too, with me. And I must keep time.

My advice to you is for you simply and solely to live like a villager. Therefore your own expenses can only be under Rs. 10 per month. If there is any productive work to be done, get it done by paid labour. Labour combined with intelligence must always be self-supporting.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1399

13. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

May [*18, 1936*][1]

BHAI BAPA,

I see the point about Amtussalaam. Her silliness we can afford to suffer, but Rukmini's hurts.

I do not see how Rajaji's suggestion can be acted upon. We may procure ten thousand acres of land right now, but who will put it to use? How can it be colonized? Supposing we get the land in Dharampur[2] ¾ would it be of any use? I think, therefore, the idea is not worth consideration. We have no remedy but that of exposing the missionaries' tactics and rendering more and more service if possible to Harijans.

Now about the Rs. 3, 000. He has left it to me and hence I have not sent the sum on to you. I would soon spend it all if I came across a place suffering from acute scarcity of water. I understand that the sum is not such as could be included in our current fund. Do you know of any cause for which you can spend it right now? If so I shall send the sum for it or to you if you ask for it. Otherwise my idea is to spend the sum on the repair of wells for Harijans, which comes under my purview. Would it not be right to spend it that way rather than ask for money from you when such need arises? All the same, I am prepared to act according to your wishes.

Now the fourth thing, which is a new one. Hardly could we persuade Surajbehn[3] to quit when a demand for the building has come on behalf of the Women's Servants of India. For my part, I think that these women's idea is quite different. It smells of Western polish. These women do not with to go along the lines that I have all along followed in the course of my work among women. There may well need for their work, but I think we should not use this income for such a purpose. You should however give your opinion with a free mind, and explain to me if I am making any mistake. While you are roasting there, we are enjoying the coolness of this place. What can be done? I envy you.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1157

[1] From the contents and the G.N. Register
[2] A small town in the inhosptiable terrain of the Dangs
[3] A worker of the Bhagini Samaj, Bombay

14. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

May 18, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

You have been causing some anxiety. It is over 12 days since I got your little note. There was a wire from you, to which also I have replied.[1] How are you keeping now? Have you started taking milk? How much milk do you take? What is your decision?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3469

15. LETTER TO PYARELAL

NANDI DURG,
May 18, 1936

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have read both your letters carefully. Why do you write in English? You ought to write either in Gujarati or Hindi. We must take a vow not to talk or write in English except when it is unavoidable. Is this habit of conversing and writing in English not a great drawback?

You must also cultivate writing a neat hand.

Your impression of Yashodhara is not wholly correct. I found Akshaychandra's behaviour faultless. Yashodhara will be seeing me. I had a long lucid letter from Akshaychandra. I know Yashodhara very well.

Hence your case must be examined independently. Haribhau's letters to me give an altogether different impression. I do not think Yoga has gone to the length you imagine. Yoga is not just repeating what she is tutored to speak. But your case is not related to your like or dislike of her. I find your case amazing. Your love did not need a response.

Your getting her or the desirability of your getting her was not, is not, and should not be a necessity in your life. That is one sign of pure love. Your love was extraordinary, yet it had certain ordinary features, such as the need for Haribhau's mediation. It would have

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Prabhavati", 13-5-1936

been better without it. But what even if it was brought in? The idea occurred to you too. Perhaps it was inevitable. You are not perfect, are you? You can say that perfect love was born in an imperfect man and that made love imperfect. I shall act on your suggestion if there is an occasion. But I know that you would not find anyone who would pass the test you have suggested.

I must stop here or I shall miss the post.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

16. LETTER TO PRABHUDAYAL VIDYARTHI

NANDI DURG,
May 18, 1936

CHI. PRABHUDAYAL,

If your nose bleeds, clean it with cold water every morning and also inhale water through the nose. Keep a wet cloth on your head throughout the day as I am doing. Otherwise, consult a doctor. There is no need to go to Sind. Tell Nanavatiji that I have given instructions about ghee. Tell Bhanu Bapa that I have sent a letter to Nasik. Pursue your studies diligently.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PRABHUDAYAL
MAGANWADI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 11670

17. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

May 18, 1936

CHI. BRAJKISAN,

Only today have I reached your letter of May 1. It was received during the days of our preparation for Nandi and it remained unattended to. Now Dr. Ansari is no more. I had such faith in his treatment that whenever a patient was under his care I used to rest

fully assured. But I do not know what you will do now. Illness seems to be your constant companion. Now give me all the details.

It was the right thing to close down the Bhandar. Your helath would not permit you to cope with this work. And it becomes dificult to carry on such an enterprise solely depending on others. I understand what you say about Nair[1] . If no one will stay with him the Ashram may be closed down. Nair may return to Malabar or work under the Harijan Sangh or come over to me. Coming to me implies that I shall post him anywhere. It will not be possible to keep him at Segaon where I am going to live. You may show this letter to him, so that I need not write separately to him. If not the whole of it, give him a copy of this paragraph.

If you have a balance or Rs. 50 or whatever the amount, please send it to me. I shall utilize it as I wish. You should keep with you only the amont required for your maintenance.

You have of course my permission to come to Wardha whenever you wish. You must not take up any work involving permanent responsibility. You may take up only such work as can be relinquished whenever you have to, or none at all. Your primary duty is to improve your helath which you must somehow improve. It appears that the Delhi climate suits you best; therefore you should live there most of the time and engage yourself if you can in the kind of work I have suggested. It will be good if you live in a rented place in the Harijan Nivas. Kshama had offered to erect a room if some land near the colony could be acquired. You could live there paying rent if she accepts it. I have made all the suggestions I could, except one. Gadodiaji[2] has come across a hakim practising nature cure. Please see him. His treatment might prove beneficial to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2447

[1] Krishnan Nair
[2] Lakshmi Narayan Gadodia

18. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 18, 1936

DEAR DAUGHTER,

Why are you quarrelling with Bapa? Was not whatever he wrote meant for your own good, to protect you from Rukmini? Is he to blame? Bapa asks me to explain it to you. Tell me what there is to explain.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 336

19. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NANDI HILL,
May 19, 1936

DEAR TEACHER OF SLANG,

You are adding to your titles. Your breast won't hold them all. Then perhaps you will shed some or better still select one and reject the rest.

Terrible lightning has just now burnt up all the fuses and we are in utter darkness. A little light has been made up for me with cotton wicks and eating oil. This bungalow seems to have no substitute for electric lights.

It was good you got the Tr.[1] Maharani to give you Rs. 500.

I do hope they will accept your terms about Urdu broadcast. You certainly deserve congratualtions.

Mrs. Marsden will be supplied with Mahadev's fine yarn. His is the finest.

I must trace the lace. It must not be lost.

I hope you are quite restored now.

Ku. and Shanta are flourishing.

Love.

BAPU

From the oiginal: C.W. 3574. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6383

[1] Travancore

20. A LETTER

May 19, 1936

My search is not outward, it is inward. Perhaps the search is its own reward. If an embodied guru is a necessity in my case, God will send him to me.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahdev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

21. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

May 19, 1936

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

After many days I have your letter today. Apart from the letters I wrote to you in April, I wrote on May 1, 12[2] and 18. Whose fault could it be if you got none of them? You must take it that I do write in reply to yours and, in the absence of any letter from you, would certainly write a reminder card. I shall ask Kanti why he has not been writing.

You miscalculate the dates. Yours was [received] not on the 17th but on the 19th and was written on the 14th, and on that basis this should reach you on the 24th, and if you do not get my letters by then wire receipt of this. I shall await your wire on the 24th and the 25th unless I hear fom you in the mean while. Yes, Jayaprakash saw me and spoke to me. Patwardhan had accompanied him. He said nothing in reply to the letter I had written. I understood that he did not want to reply. He spoke to me only of your future, proposing that you should undergo Montessorie training for three months at Kashi and then he wants you to live in Patna. He sought my consent, which I readily gave. There can be no harm in your learning the Montessorie method, though I don't fancy it. You should, however, follow his wish and train yourself in the Montessorie method. I expect you will then be staying in Patna or some such place. I believe you will decide this

[1] The addressee had suggested to Gandhiji to accept as his guru a certain person living near Madras.

[2] This appears to be a slip for '13'.

point with him in a personal talk. This is the substance of our talk. Your things have gone with Jayaprakash.

How very foolish of you that you did not write to me to say that you were unwell. Do you have the fainting fits now? What about taking milk? Why did you have to go to Banaras? And again why to Sitab Diyara? What is your routine at Srinagar?

I have already told you about our party. All are fine. Sardar is daily having walks for four hours, Mani and Mahadev accompanying. Kumarappa and Shanta have benefited much. Kaka arrived the day before yesterday. Ba and I are well. Tari and Kusum continue to be weak. *Ramayana* recitation and the prayers go on as usual. I expect the Ayodhyakanda will be over tomorrow. The address is given in my letter of the 1st of 12th.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3470

22. LETTER TO RAMIBEHN K. PAREKH

May 19, 1936

CHI. RAMI,

I have your letter. You did well in writing to me. I shall send for Manu after I have reached Wardha, although, if Manu so wishes, she might even now go to Wardha since Nimu has taken up her stay at Maganwadi. I trust you and the children are keeping well. I hope Kunvarji is well enough.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9726

23. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

May 19, 1936

CHI. MANUDI,

You managed all right to escape. You know that Taribehn is here, don't you? All are well and happy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9726

24. LETTER TO FATAH-ULLA-KHAN

NANDI,
May 20, 1936

The holy Koran I regard as a book of spiritual experiences, the same as, say, the Bible or the Zend-Avesta. I do not know the Quran offers more real solution to the modern problems than the other scriptures of the world. The competition today is not between the different scriptures of the world but between the representatives thereof and then between the latter on the one hand and those who reject the authority of the scriptures altogether.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

25. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

May 20, 1936

CHI. BRAJKISAN,

I read your letter about the Union. Taking into consideration all the circumstances, I feel that you should dissociate yourself from this affair of the workers. You must put it out of your mind; it is beyond your strength. Your word will not carry weight. Hence your presence is in the long run likely to harm the workers instead of benefiting them. Your duty at present is only to recover your health. Who can come over from Ahmedabad? Whoever comes, can he succeed? We must content ourselves with the tasks within our capacity. There is therefore no need to offer any opinion about the scheme. Tell me all the details regarding Dr. Ansari.

You must have got my earlier letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2446

26. LETTER TO ASAF ALI

NANDI HILL, BANGALORE,
May 21, 1936

DEAR ASAF ALI,

You have done well in writing to me. I can drink in all the news you can give me about the deceased brother. He was nothing less to me. I have already written to Zohra and Zakir Husain[1] about the details. I should receive their replies tomorrow or the day after. But you will now send me what they may not be able to.

As to the memorial, I fear we can get nothing worthy just now. Even the little thing about Kamala is causing difficulty. Since Lalaji[2] memeorial I have discountenanced any memorials for big people like Dr. Ansari. I should wait for better times not materially but politically. Sardar who is here joins me in this view. But let me know what G. and R. have to say.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

27. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

May 21, 1936

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Here are two cuttings from *The Hindu*.[3] I have refused to believe that you are correctly represented by the reporter. But I would like the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Zakir Husain", 11-5-1936

[2] Lala Lajpat Rai

[3] The first cutting read: Bombay, May 18—Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, addressing a ladies' meeting this evening, said that he was asked in several places why he had not included women in the Congress Working Committee. He was surprised that no such question was forthcoming from women.

He continued, "The responsibility of choosing the Working Committee members rests with the President, and you all know what the situation was at Lucknow. You know the price I had to pay for my views and I will have to continue to pay such price. Choosing the Working Committee members was not so easy. You are also aware, I, as President, encountered many odds at Lucknow and my wishes were not carried out. Possibly, another man in my place would have resigned but I propose to do my utmost."

The other cutting read: Bombay, May 18—Mr. Nehru when he visited the Khadi Bhandar today expressed doubts as to whether hand-spinning and weaving were an economic proposition. From his experiences in the united Provinces, he could say that it was not so. He, therefore, favoured development of machinery.

correct version, if you can send me one on both the subjects.[1] The exclusion of women was entirely your own act. Indeed, nobody else had even thought it possible to exclude a woman from the cabinet. As to khadi I have understood you to say that it is indispensable in the present economy of the nation and that when the nation came to its own, hand-made cloth might have to give place to the mill-made.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

28. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 21, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

This fever I do not like at all. I hope you have given yourself adequate rest. If your hut cannot be ready at the expected time, it does not matter, nor for that matter my hut. You must not put an undue strain on yourself and should take all the fruit you may need. I am glad both B.[2] and M.[3] were with you in the nick of time. I am impatient to be with you. But it cannot be before 17th or 18th.

Tara's death has disturbed me much. She was an extraordinarily good woman, possessing great strength of mind. Her love was amazing. I have a graphic description of her death. Brave Mahadevi[4] was by her side all the time.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Do you know the price paid for your plot in Varoda?

From the original: C.W. 6336. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9802

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Jawaharlal Nehru", 25-5-1936, also "A False Alarm", 6-6-1936.

[2] Balwantsinha G. Shah

[3] Munnalal G. Shah

[4] Vinoba Bhave's disciple Mahadevitai

29. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

May 21, 1936

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Tarabehn was indeed an extraordinary woman. Her singleminded devotion, firmness of mind, purity, generosity and love of India baffle description. Mahadevi, too, rendered excellent service and also showed courage.

Mirabehn writes to me of her illness. The lady's faults are negligible, but her merits are worthy of emulation. May God save her.

Madalasa, Om are fine. I am returning both the letters.

I expect you are taking care of your health. Are you following the instructions I sent you in the matter of diet? Do you take enough rest? Do you take a daily walk? Do not ignore Janakibehn's suggestion regarding the abdominal belt.

Everything is all right here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2980

30. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

May 21, 1936

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letters here at Nandi Durg. The photos are excellent. I have sent them to Ramdas and Devdas. What is Ali doing? Are Ali and Ismail partners in business? What is the trade they carry on? I hope they are not baffled by the great rise in population.

I should be glad if someone would look after your work and you could make a trip here. But avoid the temptation to visit me if you cannot save the necessary money. Do not incur the heavy expense merely for the sake of a trip if you all keep well and enjoy other amenities too.

It does not surprise me to hear that *Indian Opinion* is under a boycott. Continue to publish it as long as the people want it; stop it if they do not like it. We surely ought not to be unduly insistent. What is

the present number of subscribers? How many of them are Hindus and how many Muslims? Do you sell any copies otherwise?

130 lb. is too much weight for Sushila. She should and can easily reduce it by 10 lb. She should eat less of starch and take enough fruit, give up ghee for some time if necessary, but not milk. This will certainly bring down the weight. She must not omit to take exercise but walk at least six miles every day, that is to say, for two hours at her normal speed. She should also take hip-baths.

Maybe I have written to you earlier about our party here at Nandi Hill. If I have not, here it is. Sardar, Manibehn, Tari, Kusum Gandhi, Navin, Kanti, Kanu, Ba, Kumarappa, Shantabehn (the Englishwoman) and Kakasaheb. Sardar, Manibehn and Mahadev have daily walks for four to five hours. Kusum and Shantabehn, too, walk just as much, and the rest of us for two hours. The climate here may not be said to have proved quite beneficial to Tari, though she is better than on the plains. Her health has suffered pretty much on account of worry and indifference to treatment. Kusum, too, is weak, no doubt, but comparatively better.

Recitation from the *Ramayana* is conducted daily. A fairly good number of people attent it. The morning and evening prayers are of course held as usual.

Devdas may now be said to be well enough. I think the letter is now long enough.

We shall be going to Wardha on June 15.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujar ati: G.N. 4851

31. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

May 21, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

Your weight has gone up fairly well. Hence you should be asked to stay on there. You did very well to have visited Gangabehn. You gave me no news of Bachubhai's health.

What is Tansukh's[1] salary?

[1] Tansukh Bhatt

It was hasty of you to have begun walking. Never be impatient in anything. Rest your leg and have it completely cured. Why don't you use home-made paper? It is quite easy to make and is cheap, too. We ought to pay attention to things that are regarded as trivial. Now that you are confined there, should you not introduce as many country-made things as possible?

You may pay a visit to Nagpur. You may go wherever you want to before reaching Segaon.

It seems I shall reach Wardha on the 17th at the earliest.

All here are doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Tarabehn passed away on her way to Badri-Kedar. Mahadevi nursed her exceedingly well. She had a severe attack of fever.

Hoodbal[1] means rashness.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9342

32. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

May 21, 1936

CHI. PREMA,

Here in Nandi Durg, I may claim, I am able to dispose of each day's mail practically on the same day. I read your letter of the 18th last evening, and am replying to it today.

It matters little what hopes I cherish about you. You may go on striving according to what you think these hopes are and according to your ability.[2]

You have put the question very well. You could have put it still more plainly.[3] I have always had involuntary discharges. In South

[1] Gandhiji had used this expression in the letter dated May 14, 1936.

[2] The addressee had pleaded lack of confidence in her own capacity to grow into an illustrious *brahmacharini*, as hoped for by Gandhiji. *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 13-2-1933

[3] The addressee could not readily believe Gandhiji's confession of involuntary violation of *brahmacharya*. *Vide* "Nothing without Grace", and letter to the addressee, "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 6-5-1933. After an inconclusive discussion with and at the instance of Acharaya Bhagavat the addressee had hesitantly sought clarification from him.

Africa they occurred at intervals of several years. I do not remember exactly. Here in India they have been of months. I have mentioned the fact of my getting discharges in a few articles of mine. If my *brahmacharya* had been completely free from discharges, I would have been able to place before the world very much more than I have succeeded in doing. But it seems practically impossible that a person who has indulged in sex gratification from the age of 15 to 30, maybe with his own wife only, can, on taking a vow of *brahmacharya*, control the discharge of his vital fluid completely. One whose capacity for retention has progressively weakened from day to day for fifteen years cannot recover it fully all at once. Both his body and mind will have become too weak for that. I, therefore, consider myself a very imperfect *brahmachari*. But my position is like that of the castor oil plant which looks big on a heath where there are no trees. People know this shortcoming of mine.

The experience which tormented me in Bombay was a strange and painful one. All my discharges so far had occurred in dreams and they never troubled me. I could forget them. But the experience in Bombay occurred while I was fully awake and had a sudden desire for intercourse. I felt of course no urge to gratify the craving, there was no self-forgetfulness whatever. I was completely master of my body. But despite my best efforts the organ remained aroused. This was an altogether strange and shameful experience. I have already explained the cause.[1] As soon as that cause was removed the state of remaining aroused came to a stop, that is, waking state.

Despite my imperfection, one thing has always come easily to me, viz., that thousands of women have remained safe in my company. There have been occasions in my life when certain women, though aroused, were saved by God, or say, I was saved. I am a hundred per cent certain that it was God who saved us and, therefore, take no pride in the fact. It is my unceasing prayer to God that I might remain in the same condition till the very end of my life.

I have been striving to attain to Shukadeva's[2] condition. I have not succeeded in that aim. If I succeed, I would become a eunuch[3] though possessed of the vital fluid and discharges would become impossible.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 6-5-1936

[2] Son of Vyasa and the ideal *brahmachari* described in the *Bhagavata*.

[3] *Vide New Testament, St. Matthew* , XIX, 12.

However, the views which I have recently expressed[1] regarding *brahmacharya* have no flaw in them and contain no exaggeration. With effort, any man or woman can attain that ideal. This does not mean that the whole world or thousands will realize, it in my own lifetime. Let it take centuries to be realized, but the ideal is correct, is realizable and must be realized.

Man has a long way to travel yet. His instincts are still those of a beast. Only his frame is human. Violence seems to reign all round. Untruth fills the world. And yet we do not doubt the rightness of the path of truth and non-violence. Know that the same is the case with regard to *bramacharya*.

Those who strive but continue to burn inwardly are in fact not striving. They nurse lust in their minds and only wish to control loss of the vital fluid, to refrain from the physical act of intercourse. Such persons are correctly described in Chapter II[2] [of the *Gita*]. They may be regarded as hypocrites.

What I am at present striving to achieve is purification of thought.

Modern thought regards *brahmacharya* as *adharma* and recommends the 'dharma' of self-indulgence and control of progeny by artificial means. My soul rebels against this.

Sex-craving will always remain in the world, but its moral basis rests and will ever rest on *brahmacharya*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10381. Also C.W. 6819. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

33 . LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

May 21, 1936

CHI. MUNNALAL,

You reached there quite in the nick of time. You could get the

[1] *Vide* "For Contraceptives", 4-4-1936 and "For Women Reformers", 2-5-1936

[2] In fact Chapter III. 6

right type of work since you arrived when Mirabehn was really hard pressed. I am hoping to reach there on the 18th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8605. Also C.W. 6991. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

34. LETTER TO PYARELAL

NANDI DURG,

May 21, 1936

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have your letter of the 17th. It would be better to learn the facts from me instead of knowing my mind. Hence, only that step would be correct which does justice to both. I was really unhappy that you did not come. Otherwise, why should I have got the ticket?

I consider the service of the lepers, etc., the greatest thing only if you can stick to it. I did believe that Yoga would not have approved of your becoming a fakir. Those day are gone. Faith is the only thing left for the present age. For that, I would consider renunciation the best thing. There is hardly any scope for human endeavour. Occasions may occur when human endeavour is possible. Right now, there is a feeling of utter defeat. Hence there is nothing left except to depend on God's power. That is the reason why I did not show displeasure at your going to Calcutta or Orissa. I never considered it important. I had already suggested that it would be right for you only to stay with me. Even now, that is how I feel independently of anything. Hence I would appreciate it if you abandon what you are pursuing and came to me. But I would not like it if you ran away from Calcutta or Orissa after settling there.

As I see it you still do not have mental poise. You are not at peace. You have not found faith. It seems your mind is wavering between faith and human endeavour. If that is the case, I think your place is only with me.

I have no doubt at all about Yashodhara. Her love was merely attachment. It had not the backing of the spirit or strength of sacrifice.

Had she been even a little firm, she would not have had any trouble. I shall know more when she sees me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

35. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

May 22, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Your note-paper is certainly very good. It shows the very great progress made by the hand-made paper industry. I think it is a good idea your sending for uncut paper and hav[ing] it cut to order there. Perhaps that would support a few poor people there, if you get enough orders there. The question then would be whether it would be worth while your devoting your time to such details. You must be the best judge. You have to make the best use possible of your time in Simla consistently with the preservation of your health such as you have.

You are quite idiotically reserving so many things to tell me when we meet. When that great event comes to pass, you will have forgotten most of the things. I am sure you are not making notes of these reservations. For once therefore you had better be a little wise and reserve nothing for the next meeting. There will be enough to discuss when we meet. And I hope you are telling the Adampur people whatever they need to be told. Certainly you should tolerate nothing fraudulent, no matter what it costs. No cost is too great to pay for your putting down fraud in a pure movement.

Did I tell you about Tara's death during her pilgrimage to Badri-Kedar? You will see all about this in *Harijan.*[1] She was one of the noblest of women I had the good fortune to meet.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3575. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6384

[1] *Vide* "In Memoriam"

36. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

NANDI HILL,

May 22, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

My heart is with you though my body is here.[1] I had expected a word from you but I have one from Radhakrishna. His letter contemplates bringing you to Wardha. I hope it was not necessary. Of course whatever is thought necessary for quick recovery must be done. You must not allow the building programme or anything else to prey on your mind. Without good health, you can carry out no programme. I look forward to tomorrow bringing good news.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

We descend to Bangalore on 31st.

From the original: C. W. 6337. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9803

37. LETTER TO CHUNILAL

May 22, 1936

BHAI CHUNILAL,

I have your letter. Now that Thakkar Bapa is arriving there everything must settle down. From now on it is not necessary to send the papers to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII

[1] The addressee "had gone down with a severe attack of malaria."

38. IN MEMORIAM

Miss Mary Chesley, an Englishwoman, came to India in 1934 when the Congress was in session[1] in Bombay. As soon as she landed she came to my hut in the Congress camp and told me she knew Mirabehn and had expected to come with her but somehow or other she had preceded her by a week or there-about. Her desire was to serve India through her villages. She did not prepossess me by her talk and I thought she would not stay in India many months. But I was wholly mistaken. She had come to know of Miss Mary Barr who had already commenced village work in Khedi, a village a few miles from Betul (C.P.). Miss Chesley found her way to Mary Barr. Mary Barr brought Mary Chesley to Wardha and we were together for a few days. Miss Chesley showed a determination that surprised me. She began work with Mary Barr in Khedi, adopted the Indian costume and changed her name to Tarabehn and toiled at Khedi in a manner that alarmed poor Mary Barr. She would dig, carry baskets full of earth on her head. She simplified her food as much as to put her health in danger. She had her own handsome income from Canada from which she kept only a paltry sum of about Rs. 10 for herself and gave the rest to the A.I.V.I.A., or to Indians with whom she came in contact and who seemed to her to give promise of being good village workers and who needed some pecuniary help. I came in closest touch with her. Her charity was boundless, she had great faith in the goodness of human nature. She was forgiving to a fault. She was a devout Christian. She belonged to a Quaker family. But she had no narrowness about her. She did not believe in converting others to her own faith. She was a graduate of the London School of Economics and a good teacher, having conducted togther with a companion a school in London for several years. She realized at once that she must learn Hindi and was regularly studying it. For being able to pick up conversational Hindi she lived for a few months in the Wardha Mahila Ashram and there with two members formed a plan of going to Badri-Kedar during summer. I had warned her against the adventure. But it was difficult to turn her from such adventures when once her mind was made up. So only the other day she started with her friends on

[1] In the last week of October

her perilous pilgrimage. And I got a brief message on the 15th from Kankhal saying, “Tarabehn expired”. In her love for India's villages she was not to be excelled by anybody. Her passion for India's independence was equal to that of the best among us. She was impatient of the inferiority complex wherever she noticed it. She mixed with poor women and children with the greatest freedom. There was nothing of the patron about her. She would take service from none, but would serve anybody with the greatest zeal. She was a self-effacing mute worker whose left hand did not know what the right had done. May her soul rest in peace.

Harijan, 23-5-1936

39. BRIBERY

Bribery in the name of *mamul*[1] and the like to railway officials and the others is not an unusual occurrence in Indian life. Any official with whom the public has anything to do is generally said to be open to receive bribes even for the performance of his duty, not to speak of committing breach thereof. I have had to suffer in my time for refusing to pay a paltry anna at the third-class ticket windows for getting my ticket in my turn which would never come because favourites had to be served first. I have had to wait for hours sometimes before I could get a chance of buying my ticket. The customs and the railways are the two departments with which the general public have to come in frequent touch. And it is there that the public suffer most. A correspondent draws my attention to the woes of public workers who want to despatch goods or receive consignments. At either end unless you are prepared to bribe officials, you are made to wait exasperatingly long. He wants to know how this evil can be remedied. There is desire among spirited workers to resist this immoral blackmail. It is difficult to advise in this matter. Obviously no bribe[2] may possibly be given. Equally obviously public work must not be allowed to suffer. There is no quick remedy against a petty official who misuses his brief authority. Threat to lodge a complaint produces no effect on hardened officials. They know their strength and use it mercilessly, for it is a matter of pecuniary gain for them. They have come to think these perquisites are a part of their pay. And he who

[1] Custom
[2] The source has “bribery”.

questions their right to demand them needs to be taught a lesson. Lesson or no lesson, someone has to have the courage to bring to book those who will not recognize the new spirit that is seizing so many workers. Despatch or clearance work may suffer for the time being. It is worth while taking the risk, if thereby officals will learn the elementary morality of not taking bribes. If they are ill paid, let them demand a higher pay, but they may not take bribes from the public whom they are paid to serve. I hope the higher authorities will see these lines and deal effectively with the evil which they know does flourish widely.

Harijan, 23-5-1936

40. MARRIAGE BY PURCHASE

Some months ago *The Statesman* opened its columns to a discussion of the dowry system prevalent among many castes almost all over India, and dealt with it editorially. I used to write on the cruel custom[1] often enough in the columns of *Young India*. The cuttings from *The Statesman* revive the cruel memories of what I used to know then. My remarks were aimed at *deti leti* as the custom is known in Sind. Enough educated Sindhis were found who exacted large sums of money from parents who were anxious to see their daughters well married. *The Statesman* has carried on a crusade against the custom in general. There is no doubt that the custom is heartless. But so far as I am aware it does not touch the millions. The custom is confined to the middle-class who are but a drop in the ocean of Indian humanity.

Whenever we talk of evil customs, we usually think of the middle-class. The millions living in the villages have their customs and woes of which we have as yet but little knowledge.

This however does not mean that one may ignore the dowry evil because it is confined to a comparatively small number of the people of this country. The system has to go. Marriage must cease to be a matter of arrangement made by parents for money. The system is intimately connected with caste. So long as the choice is restricted to a few hundred young men or young women of a particular caste, the system will persist no matteer what is said against it. The girls or boys or their parents will have to break the bonds of caste if the evil is to be eradicated. Then the age for marrying has also to be raised and the

[1] The source has “customs.”

girls have to dare to remain spinsters, if need be, i.e., if they do not get a suitable match. All this means education of a character that will revolutionize the mentality of the youth of the nation. Unfortunately the system of education has no connection with our surroundings which therefore remain practically untouched by the education received by a microscopic minority of the boys and girls of the nation. Whilst, therefore, whatever can be done to abate the evil must be done, it is clear to me that this evil and many others which can be named can only be tackled if there is education which responds to the rapidly changing conditions of the country. How is it that so many boys and girls who have even passed through colleges are found unable or unwilling to resist the manifestly evil custom which affects their future so intimately as marriage does? Why should educated girls be found to commit suicide because they are not suited? Of what value is their education if it does not enable them to dare to defy a custom which is wholly indefensible and repugnant to one's moral sense? The answer is clear. There is something radically wrong in the system of education that fails to arm girls and boys to fight against social or other evils. That education alone is of value which draws out the faculties of a student so as to enable him or her to solve correctly the problems of life in every department.

Harijan, 23-5-1936

41. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

NANDI HILL,

May 24, 1936

CHI. MARY,

I have your letter. You will see my note[1] on Tara in *Harijan*. Yes, she made in Rishikesh a will in Hindi making over evrything to me. It is signed simply Tarabehn. Do you know who her relatives are? Do you know her address in Canada? If you do, please send [it]. Her friend in England is Miss. P. Blythe, Anthorn School, Quakers Lane, Potters Bar, London. I have written to her at length and so has Shanta. I am sending your letter to Sumitra through Satyadevji. His address is Gurukul, Kangri, U.P.

[1] *Vide* "In Memoriam", 23-5-1936

I have heard from Miss Madden. I am glad you have given me particulars about her. It is plucky at her age to come to village work. But faith can overcome mountains. I am writing to her.

The climb up did not hurt me at all.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Address: Bangalore City. After 31st May till 15th June.

Herewith for Gopal.[1]

From C. W. 3391. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

42. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 24, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

The late-fee letter of 20 and the one of 21 reached me at the same time. It does often happen like that to late-fee letters. However, nothing is lost. I had R.' s[2] note the previous day. I do hope you had no further fever. I hope too that you are still taking rest. You never give yourself enough rest after these attacks of malaria. I wish you could become proof against them. You should go to some hill or seaside for that rest. I could easily send you to a Kathiawar seaside place where you would have quiet, would be happy and be doing some village work. Let us see what the coming rains have in store for us. No rooms as yet for Mahadev & Co.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6338. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9804

43. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 24, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I am glad you are free from fever. Of course you were quite right in ordering oranges.You should order from outside any other

[1] The letter is not available.

[2] Radhakrishna; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 22-5-1936

fruit you may need. And do take plenty of rest before beginning strenuous work. And you should seriously consider my proposal for a change at a seaside place.

I would like you not to incur the expense of having partitions made. I would like to improvise them as they may be need[ed] almost like what Chhotelal had arranged for my bathroom, you will remember. As it is I dread the cost of the hut. I hope Divanji is keeping within the limits prescribed by me. The plinth, four walls and a waterproof roof with open verandah and fence round is the indispensable minimum. But you are giving me in addition a kitchen and bath-room and a stable.

Let the other additions wait till after my arrival.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Give my blessings to Ram[1] and Lakshmi[2]. Tell them I hope they will prove worthy of each other and the country.

From the original: C.W. 6339. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9805

44. LETTER TO FARID ANSARI

May 24, 1936

MY DEAR FAREED[3],

Your letter gave me an agreeable shock. Your handwriting is an almost exact copy of Dr. Ansari's. And I wondered how I could receive the Doctor's letter when I saw your signature.

Neither Ammajan's fortitude nor Zohra's grief surprises me. Zohra is a tender flower. She knows nothing of philosophy. She has tasted abundantly of human love that has sustained her all these years. Now the poor girl feels the void. It can never be wholly filled, not even when she is married. Dr. Ansari's love for Zohra was unique. There was nothing he would not do to make her good and happy. And all this was out of pure selfless love.

I can understand your grief too. He was to you all you describe him. The fact [is][4] he was a selfless friend and guide . . .[5]. Such was his

[1] Presumably, Rameshwardas Poddar's son Shriram and Purushottamdas Jajoria's daughter Lakshmi

[2] *ibid*

[3] Dr. M.A. Ansari's brother's son

[4] Illegible

[5] *ibid*

[greatness] ! May his spirit sustain us and enable [us to condu-] ct ourselves [so] as to prove worthy [of] him.

You vainly approach me [for] relief and strength. I have none of his great [nursing] skill nor do I possess the [devotion] of you all that he had. But if my love for Dr. Ansari can be sufficient passport for entry to the hearts of you, Zohra and others who were specially his care, I can present that passport. For his death has deepened that love whose bottom was as sound as that of human love can be.

I hope you are making steady progress.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile: *Mahatma,* Vol. IV, between pp. 112 and 113. Also C.W. 9797

45. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

May 24, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I was very happy to have your wire at the expected time. This document leads me to conclude that you did not get my three earlier letters.[1] Nor have they come back; I therefore do not know what happened to them. Whatever it may be, I have of course given you the substance of the earlier letters in the one you got. Kanti also did write two letters. Write to me what food including milk you take and in what measure, and also your daily programme.

Should you not speak frankly to him and seek his advice as you do with me because I am away? There should be no hesitation in doing so. By all means you may ask whatever can be asked through letters. But you may certainly seek Father's assistance in anything that calls for quick decision.

The chief mark of faith is that whatever the situation the inner joy should abide. Everything is all right here.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Send your reply to Bangalore where we shall go on the 31st. Kumara Park, Bangalore City.

From a phototstat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3466

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Prabhavati", 19-5-1936

46. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 24, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I am sending to you Prema's first letter after the illness, as originally desired by her. I hope the wedding[1] passed off without any hitch and you received my letters.[2]

Has Balkrishna reached Chorwad?

Kusum keeps fairly well. She comes with me for a walk daily.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Leaving Nandi on the 31st, we shall go to Bangalore and most probably stay there for 14 days. The address is: Kumara Park, Bangalore City.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8491. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

47. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

May 24, 1936

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I think you did well in going there. You should look upon Mirabehn's company as a vertitable *satsang*[3]. Serve her as much as you can and put your heart in doing what she bids you. Don't you be a burden to her in any way. Learn from Balwantsinha the entire processing of cotton.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8604. Also C.W. 6992. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Of Purushottam and Vijaya

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Purushottam and Vijaya Gandhi", 14-5-1936

[3] Association with the good.

48. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

NANDI HILL,
May 25, 1936

DEAR FRIEND,

It would have been delightful if you could have come to Bangalore where we shall be from 31st to 15th June probably. Do come even now, if health allows it

As you know I have planned to settle down in Segaon, a village near Wardha. How far God will allow the plan to succeed He alone knows. But I may not disturb it voluntarily. Therefore I dare not attend the Exhibition, much as I would like to.

It is difficult to give a decisive opinion about the Lucknow Congress. There was nothing alarming about it. And I do entertain the hope that only good will come out of the confusion that seems to have been created in the minds of Congressmen. After all has that not been our history since 1920? It was inevitable when new ideas and new policies were being introduced. I have great faith in Jawaharlal's nobility, sobriety and loyalty to the Congress. He won't place it in jeopardy.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I did not attend the session for the opening. The telegram . . . [1] were read after I had left . . .[2] was read

From the original: C. Vijayaraghavachariar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

49. LETTER TO ZAKIR HUSAIN

May 25, 1936

MY DEAR ZAKIR,

Your letter has just reached me. The same post has brought a copy of what Agatha Harrison wrote about the Doctor for *Hitavada*—Servants of India paper in Nagpur. I send it to show what he meant to me. I know he had interrupted his journey[3] to Europe. My pleading

[1]& [2] The source is mutilated here.

[3] During Gandhiji's 21-day fast which commenced on May 8, 1933

for the journey was in vain. He had run to me without [my] asking. And he had gathered round him all the best doctors he knew. It was almost worth fasting to have that extraordinary demonstration of love. It might be taken in another light. One might well say it was folly to fast if it was to cost the precious time of so many first-class physicians who during those three weeks deprived their many patients of the assistance they badly needed. Who knows how such demonstrations should really be taken? We can but obey, in all humility, the will as we can know it of Him who is the Controller-General of every second of our life.

This long paragraph shows you the state of mind I am in. Not that I have time enough and to spare here from the daily tasks. But I am in the position of poor Zohra. If I had not the peremptory call of duty from moment to moment, I should be as distracted as she is.

For the last three days I have been framing in my mind a letter to you alone and then I thought of Shwaib[1], then Khwaja[2] and then quite forgetfully of Sherwani[3], not just then realizing that the big man was also no more in the flesh with us. There are other Muslims I know. But for this moment these were the names vividly before me.

But I know that none of you can become the infallible guide Dr. Ansari had grown to be. It is not a question of merits. It is a question of faith.

As I am writing this I feel I must confine myself to you. The question I wanted to ask was and I still want to ask is, will you be to me what the Doctor was on the Hindu-Muslim question? What distracts me is not the absence of the warmth of a gentleman-friend, of a God-believing and godfearing doctor. It is the absence of an unfailing guide in the matter of Hindu-Muslim unity. My silence at the present time on this question is not a sign of my apathy, it is a sign of an ever-deepening conviction that the unity has got to come. Then I ask, will you take Dr. A[nsari]'s place? In answer, do not think of your status in society. If you have self-confidence, you must say ‘Yes’. If you have not, you must say ‘No’. I shall not misunderstand you. I know and love you too well to misunderstand you.

Whether you become my guide or not, please answer the question I asked, among others, Dr. Ansari in my last letter. Is this step

[1] Shwaib Qureshi

[2] *Vide*, “Letter to Khwaja Abdul Majid”, 7-6-1936.

[3] Tasadduq Ahmed Sherwani

the Frontier Govrnment has taken, that of practically refusing the grant to Sikh Hindu girls' schools that teach through Hindi and Gurumukhi right? I have been asked for months to express my opinion. I have resisted the invitation till now. But the question is one of principle and bears in its womb great consequences. I have approached Sahibzada Sir Abdul Qayum in the matter. He has sent me what is a painful reply. You can have a copy if you want it, before expressing your opinion.

I do not know whether you share the opinion Mujeeb expressed in his letter to me on Hindi-Hindustani question.[1] I would like you, him, Aqil and other friends to read my two articles[2] in *Harijan* and if they do not give satisfaction, I would like you all to argue the thing out with me, if you like through *Harijan* or privately. I see no cause for difference of opinion. But if there is, we must try to remove it.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

50. LETTER TO BHUJANGILAL CHHAYA

NANDI DURG,
May 25, 1936

CHI. BHUJANGILAL,

I have your letter. Young people should never write with a pencil. In fact no one should. Pencil-writing fades out with passage of time. It presents difficulty in reading.

You should have patience and be polite. Your father will not come in your way if your conduct is faultless in all matters. He has the right to test your firmness.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2603

[1] *Vide* Appendix, "For Hindustani Only", 9-5-1936.
[2] *Vide* "Hindi or Hindustani", 9-6-1936 and 16-5-1936.

51. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

May 25, 1936

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I send herewith Gopal's letter for you to read. He seems to have been greatly shocked at Tarabehn's death. He has some faults as also some good qualities. It now falls to my lot to guide him. I see no difficulty in it; I have only to direct him from a distance. For the present, I have suggested that he should stick to his insurance business and prepare himself for village welfare work.

The question of Sumitra and Subhadra is complicated. I think Tarabehn had taken them to Hardwar. I am inquiring. I am also trying to know sumitra's mind. If, as Gopal says, Sumitra hands over custody of Subhadra, I think we might keep the latter at the Mahila Ashram. As for Sumitra, I have suggested that she should stay with Marybehn in Khedi. Perhaps she may have to be given something towards her expenses.

Do tell me your opinion in the matter. You must rest yourself.

[PS.]

In Nandi Durg up to May 30 and at Bangalore City from May 18 to June 15.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2981

52. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

May 25, 1936

DEAR SISTER RAIHANA,

It is wonderful to have your letter after so many months and in such excellent Gujarati! You seem to have been improving your knowledge of the language. How good if I could do the same with my Urdu! But then, is the teacher or the pupil to blame for it?

What a way you have of telling me of Abbajan[1]! Inscrutable are God's ways of saving him He wishes to! What beautiful situations He brings about! A master Manipulator of strings, He makes us dance by plucking at any of the strings He likes. We do not even feel that

[1] Addressee's father, Abbas Tyabji

He is pulling the strings if we dance as He wishes. It is when we resist Him that we feel the pull of the string, and then we begin complaining. Observe Abbajan's face as you read this to him and write to me what you notice. You should, however, suppress the letter if he does not have the strength to listen and the doctors do not permit it.

You have mentioned so many members of the family that most of them are no more than names to me. I do not remember any of the faces, and I have to commit to memory the names. All the same, I am myself a member of the family, am I not? And such a one as does not even know the names of his own family members or their faces either! But what can be done? That must be the plight of a person becoming one of a vast family. But what is great about knowing name and form? We are all children of the same Mother. If we truly understood this, we could do without name and form, couldn't we? Read this to all, apologize to them on my behalf and make them forgive me. Anyway, do convey my good wishes and blessings.

Yes, Dr. Ansari's passing away has created a big void which will be difficult to fill. Poor Zohra is lost in grief. I am sending her today a second letter[1] in my broken Urdu.

Sardar [and] Kaka are of course here and very much remember Abbajan and Ammajan.

My address is Bangalore City up to June 15.

Can you read my writing? Has Hamida[2] come?

SMT. RAIHANA TYABJI
SOUTHWOOD

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Neither letter is available.
[2] Addressee's brother's daughter

53. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

NANDI DURG,
May 25, 1936

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I was delighted to get your letter. Krishnaswami[1] must be happy now. Your daughter-in-law too is happy, I hope. You must be keeping well, physically as well as mentally. Your parents too must be doing fine.

The climate here is friendly. Sardar takes plenty of walks daily. The others too are all right and so am I.

Yes, we shall be in Bangalore for a fortnight, going there on the 31st instant. It will be good if [you] too can come. We have to go to Wardha *via* Madras only.

Kamala wants to spend two or three days with me. I have sent my consent.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Tell me if you can read the above with ease. There is Mrs. Esther Menon living there in Shamrock Cottage. See her if you can on my behalf and befriend her.[2]

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9607. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal

54. TELEGRAM TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

May 26, 1936

MAGANLAL PRANJIVAN MEHTA
MOGHUL STREET, RANGOON

YOU MUST NOT GO WITHOUT SEEING ME. NANDI HILL TILL THIRTY-FIRST THEN BANGALORE FORTNIGHT. COME IF ONLY FOR ONE DAY.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's son
[2] The postscript is in English.

55. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 26, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Your two letters 23rd, 24th came in today.

Of course if you are happier and better in Segaon, you will go there. You must have rest and the food you want at the time you want. Tell someone quietly there and perhaps matters will mend. I return the maps.[1] No corrections. You have thought the thing out well and it stands.

No more today, as I am anxious to catch the post just now going.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6340. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9806

56. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

BANGALORE CITY,[2]

May 26, 1936

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

Only today I got your letter. The telegram regarding Sukirti's[3] wedding will go tomorrow. It is a good development. Send my blessings to both. Convey to Bhagavati Prasad that I hope the motive behind this marriage was not lust but only pure religious feeling. The purity in Sukirti and Bhagavati Prasad's life from now on will have a great impact on the Hindu world.

I have already written about you. Your decision, I find, is correct.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] The addressee had drawn "two alternative plans for the lay-out of the buildings, prayer-ground and compound".

[2] Gandhiji apparently meant this for the addressee's reply

[3] An inmate of the Harijan Ashram, Delhi

[PS.]

Hand over the enclosed letter to Amtussalaam.

It must be made clear that Sukirti's marriage had no connection with the Harijan Sevak Sangh. It need not be announced to the Press. Does Bhagavati have parents or any other relatives? Has he been thrown out by his caste or is there any such possibility?

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1071

57. LETTER TO K. HAZAREESINGH

[AS AT] WARDHA,
May 26, 1936

BHAI HAZAREESINGH,

I was about to leave for Nandi Durg when your letter reached me. I had already received your book which however has been left at Wardha. I have your letter before me.

I stayed in Mauritius for about ten days, while my boat was lying at anchor.[1] There was no other purpose in my visit and this is why only a few people may have been aware of my presence there.[2] I stayed in the house of some Muslim friends and that gave me an opportunity of meeting other people. I also met the Governor at a social function. Please convey my greetings to all my fellow-countrymen. *Vandemataram.*

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *A History of Indians in Mauritius,* Appendix E

58. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 27, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I gave a hurried reply yesterday to your two letters. I returned also the two plans for the fenced yard. I did not examine your maps critically, as I regard your judgment to be superior to mine. You have a natural faculty for these matters.

[1] Gandhiji, in fact, stayed in Mauritius for 20 days; *vide* "Speech in Mauritius", 13-11-1901

[2] What follows is a translation as given in the source, the corresponding Hindi original not having been reproduced.

I think I have already told you[1] that Mahadev's hut need not be thought of just yet. I want first to feel my legs before incurring the expenses of further buildings. It is wise to move slowly. The experience of five days shows that contact can be retained even while Mahadev & Co. are in Maganwadi. This is merely said to justify cautious movement.

I must discuss with you the disorganization you noticed at J.'s[2] when we meet.

The storm you describe is an indication of what things can be in the villages in the rainy season. Perhaps the things were better in Segaon, because it is not on an eminence as Paunar is. Every position has both its advantages and disadvantages. It is better therefore not to make elaborate plans about things which are themselves unenduring.[3]

I think I have told you, we descend to Bangalore on 31st to remain there a fortnight. We leave Bangalore any day between 10th and 15th. It depends upon the engagements there. My inclination will be to hasten the date of departure. I have not needed the outing. I think Sardar has gained well. He won't need the full 15 days in Bangalore. Therefore if we stay on till the last day, it will be business that would keep us.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6341. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9807

59. LETTER TO MAULVI M. ASHRAF

AS AT WARDHA,
May 27, 1936

DEAR ASHRAF,

What can you expect from me? No doubt you have written to Kumarappa and Shankerlal Banker. They can send you what little literature the two Associations[4] have produced. I am sure you do not

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 24-5-1936.

[2] Jamnalal Bajaj

[3] Explaining this the addressee writes: "While I was building Bapu's mud cottage, a pucca brick bungalow happened to be being prepared for Jamnalalji at Paunar. In the severe storm referred to the little mud cottage stood firm and the brick bungalow collapsed."

[4] The A.I.S.A. and the A.I.V.I.A.

want *Harijan*, which deals with untouchability mainly and some moral problems.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MAULVI M. ASHRAF
POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INFORMATION DEPARTMENT
SWARAJ BHAWAN, ALLAHBAD

A.I.C.C. File, 1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

60. LETTER TO KANAIYALAL AND LILAVATI MUNSHI

May 27, 1936

BHAI MUNSHI AND CHI. LILAVATI,

If I could persuade myself to yield to your love, I would certainly accept your hospitality. But now I am a party to keeping even Sardar back. We had a talk yesterday and both of us came to the conclusion that he too should not go [to Ooty]. From the point of view of health, Nandi has agreed with us all, and especially with Sardar. Do not think for a moment that the place can offer Nandi's solitude. It is now cool in Bangalore too, and we hope to be able to do some work after going there. It, therefore, seems unwise that Sardar should part from me even for two days. Since my programme in Bangalore will be crowded, I suggest that you should come here and spend your last two days with us. If you do so, we shall be able to talk a little and also do some work. The climate of Ooty is certainly excellent, and so is the scenery. But I don't feel like going there just for that reason, nor can I summon the courage to do so. Sardar has already enjoyed your hospitality. I also shall enjoy it some day. As for your love, I am tasting it daily.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7574. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

61. LETTER TO VITHAL V. DASTANE

NANDI DURG,
May 27, 1936

BHAI DASTANE,

It appears you are expecting too much from me. You know my present limitations in placing the thing before the country. Publicity, however, is inherent in diligence in your own work.

In response to his letter I have asked Dev to let me know the location, plan and other facts. In the mean while here are my answers to your questions:

(1) In the rainy season you should grow there the requisite vegetables as also a few flowering plants. You should also grow such food grain as could be harvested by December. All this should be utilized at the time of the Congress session. Measurements of the land should be obtained right now. Make notes of places which are waterlogged during the rainy season. If there is any tank which gets filled up, this water too should be conserved. For this job you should immediately obtain the services of an expert agriculturist and an expert engineer. I take it that you will get their help gratis.

Do see Shankerlal right now. He knows about this more than anyone else. Mhatre the architect has worked for two sessions; so please take him there right now. Again ask Shankerlal about Nandalal Bose and the material from the Santiniketan exhibition. Contact Lakshmidas, as also Jajuji and Kumarappa.

Mhatre will help you with the calculations regarding the time and space for the *pandal*, barracks, etc. Assume that the minimum time required would be three months, so that the construction work should start soon after the monsoon is over. But first of all prepare a plan [of work].

The site should accommodate a hundred thousand people. Enroll the names of men and women volunteers right from today. Start with . . .[1], Vatsala[2] and others.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Illegible
[2] Addressee's daughter

62. LETTER TO TIRUPUR KHADI-PRODUCING ASSOCIATION[1]

[Before *May 28, 1936*][2]

All I can say is that it is wrong for you to sell khaddar in the circumstances in which you are doing. It hurts the poor people in whose interest the affairs of the All-India Spinners' Association are conducted.

The Hindu, 30-5-1936

63. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

May 28, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Your letter came in yesterday. The post comes after the closing of the outgoing mail.

You are a proper family party¾Judge, Government Member, Doctor, with rebellious sister in their midst and you want the Collector Brother in your midst to finish your happiness. Remember that feeding up an exhausted brother is not the only manner of expressing a sister's love. She has to know the food that is required for a given constitution. I know cases where rich and nutritious food has resulted in harm. But you have lived with me in vain if you do not know how to choose the correct articles. The manner of preparing them must be your very own.

When I read the sentence in your letter, attributed to me as having ever said to Kallenbach, I couldn't believe it. I re-read the thing and then I laughed. I never lay down the law like that even for little children. Though K. had immense faith in me, he would not tolerate the autocracy and arrogance attributed to me. And faith like his would not require such assertions of infallibility. You must now fill in the gap and tell me who regaled you with the precious information

[1] The Association had pointed out that they were paying the spinners decent wages and ...that if they had really reduced the wages of spinners, they would not spin for them but would forthwith go to the All-India Spinners' Association and that the prices raised by the All-India Spinners' Association were too high. *Vide* "Uncertified Khadi", 11-4-1936.

[2] The report appeared under the date-line "Tirupur, May 28, 1936".

and I might be able to throw some more light on the grave problem ! But my denial should not be taken to mean that I won't lay down the law for rebels and idiots and require obedience because it is given by me. I must live up to the title given to me if only to give you the satisfaction of proving your rebellious spirit! And then heaven help me, if such assertion being heard by somebody is quoted as an authentic example of my arrogance !!!

When we descend to Bangalore I shan't have time to give you such nonsense. Here there is quiet and therefore comparative leisure for giving you senseless things.

I do hope this hospitality even of nearest and dearest is not proving a strain on your weak body. I know what closest attention to the tiniest details, of which you are capable when it is a matter of loving service, means to the person giving such love. Happily Shummy is there to prevent you from overdoing it.

Mira was badly ill but she is better now. She was taken to J.'s bungalow. She must have returned to Segaon.

Rameshwari Nehru comes here today for three days. She had a very successful tour in the Harijan cause in Travancore.

There was no indication in your note[1] on Lucknow Exhibition that you did not want it published. I read it carefully, made alterations to hide your identity and let it go. You will tell me how it reads. And why did you not want it published? Next time you will mark all such things suitably so as to indicate your wishes. That note had little value if it was not meant to tell me people what a town-bred woman had felt about the Exhibiton.

Here is a note received from Mr. Marsden which speaks for itself.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Remember we descend to Bangalore City on 31st and stay there not beyond 15th June.

From the original: C.W. 3728. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6884

[1] Published in *Harijan,* 23-5-1936, under the title "A City Woman on the Lucknow Exhibition"

64. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 28, 1936

CHI. AMTUSSALAAM,

I have a letter from you after a long time. Nowadays I am afraid of writing to you. You see in my words what was not intended because you have grown very suspicious. I am even considering whether I should stop writing in Urdu. You were hurt by an innocent letter containing nothing offensive because you put a contrary interpretation on it. I was only jesting when I worte to you not to quarrel with Thakkar Bapa[1]. I know that you are not one to quarrel with anybody, and hence it can be only a jest if I talk of a quarrel with reference to you. I made the joke only after I had Thakkar Bapa's loving letter and understood that it was all over. Why should you then feel unhappy and not be glad about it?

Shall I henceforth give up all joking with you?

What if there are all kinds of stories about you? Are you sure it is not your suspicious nature that is at work here again? You are concerned with your work alone. Tell me what other work can be better than cooking for the Harijan children, feeding them and keeping all things clean. Moreover, you have Tyagi and Rajkishori with you and you should therefore experience no difficulty.

It will pain me greatly if you ruin your health. You ought to forget the grief over Dr. Ansari's death and take up the work he has left behind.

The talk you had with your brothers at Patiala was not right. It was nothing but your foolishness and it evoked the response it deserved. What else would an unhappy member of the family say? All have to bend before your obstinacy.

I had already sent for Saraswati and her mother even before you made the suggestion. I believe they will come to Bangalore. Have no anxiety on Kanti's account.

The reply should now be addressed: Bangalore City.

I am writing to Sukirti and Raj. Write about your health.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 18-5-1936.

Tell me whether you can correctly read this letter.

Have I not answered all your questions now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 595

65. LETTER TO RAJKISHORI TYAGI

May 28, 1936

CHI. RAJKISHORI,

Your letter. You need not return if you do not like to live in the Mahila Ashram. You should write a letter to Sethji[1] regarding this. Write to me in detail what you did not like at the Mahila Ashram.

It is better to stay with Amtussalaambehn and Tyagiji is of course there. Learn form him as much Hindi and arithmetic as possible.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6637. Also C.W. 4285. Courtesy: Chand Tyagi

66. TELEGRAM TO PYARELAL

NANDI,
May 29, 1936

PYARELAL
15 COLLEGE SQUARE
CALCUTTA

YOU HAVE WHOLLY MISUNDERSTOOD MY LETTER. ABANDONING REFERS PRESENT WORK.

BAPU

From a photostat: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Jamnalal Bajaj

67. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

May 29, 1936

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter of 25th instant.[1] So you are touring with almost feverish speed. May you have the requisite strength. Even a week at Khali will be a godsend.

I propose to make public use of your statement on khadi[2] . I have received so many inquiries. The distorted summary[3] has caused consternation among our people who have faith in khadi. Your statement will ease the situation a bit.

Your explanation about the omission of a woman on the W. C. does not give me satisfaction. If you had shown the slightest desire to have a woman on the Committee, there would have been no difficulty whatsoever about any of the older ones standing out. There was pressure if it may be so called only about Bhulabhai.[4] And the first time his name was mentioned you had no objection. There was no pressure about any other member. And then you had this unfettered choice of omitting a socialist name and taking a woman. But so far as I remember you yourself had difficulty in choosing a substitute for Sarojini Devi and you were anxious to omit her. You even went so far as to say that you did not believe in the tradition or convention of always having a woman and a certain number of Mussalmans on the cabinet. Therefore so far as the exclusion of [a] woman is concerned, I think it was your own unfettered discretion. No other member would have had the desire or the courage to break the convention. I must also tell you that in certain Congress circles the whole blame is being thrown on me, for I am reported to have excluded Mrs. Naidu and to have insisted on having no woman¾a thing for which as I said to you I had not even the courage. I could not exclude even Mrs. N., not to mention a woman.

As to the other members too, I have been under the impression that you chose the members because it was the right thing to do for

[1] *Vide* Appendix, "Letter from Jawaharlal Nehru", 25-5-1936.
[2] *Vide*, "A False Alarm", 6-6-1936.
[3] *Vide* footnote to "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru"
[4] Bhulabhai J. Desai

the cause. There was no question of *behaya*[1] or *hayadar*[2] when all were actuated by the noblest of motives, i.e., service of the cause according to their lights. I may say that your statement which your letter confirms has given much pain to Rajen Babu, C. R.[3] and Vallabhbhai.[4] They feel ¾ and I agree with them¾ they have tried to act honourably and with perfect loyalty towards you as a colleague. Your statement makes you out to be the injured party. I wish you could see this viewpoint and correct the report if it is at all possible.

As to the third thing. I would love to have the thing cleared. I cannot guess what you want to say. But that must wait till we meet. I must not add to the strain you are already bearing.

About Dr. Ansari Memorial, I have given[5] Asaf Ali my clear opinion that the memorial for the Doctor should await better times politically as it has for Papa[6]. Do you think otherwise?

The Kamala memorial is making slow progress.

Herewith the Princess's letter containing a reference to Indu.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Bangalore City till 10th.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

68. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 29, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

So you are in Segaon already. I do not mind. If you get there the comforts you need, it will be where your heart is. If you get the rains, of course there can be no building. Therefore let all labour that can be used be given to the walls and the roof. If these are ready and the walls dry, the rest can be finished even after the rains. But I am not going to worry, if in spite of all effort the building is not ready for

[1] Shameless

[2] A self-respecting person

[3] C. Rajagopalachari

[4] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Vallabhbhai Patel to Rajendra Prasad", 29-5-1936.

[5] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 21-5-1936

[6] Motilal Nehru, who had passed away on February 6, 1931

occupation by the time we return. No strain should be put upon your weak body.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

The accompanying for Munnalal. I hope you got a basket of fruit sent by Janammal[1]

From the original: C.W. 6342. Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9808

69. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

May 29, 1936

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have your letter. Both of you[2] are passing through a severe test. We ought to learn to live in a village, come wind, come rain. The city-dwellers have their own risks to run and yet live there, and so do the villagers. At present we have ceased to belong to the town nor have we come to belong to the village and, hanging midway between the two, we are in a miserable state.

Blessings to both from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8603. Also C.W. 6993. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

70. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

May 29, 1936

CHI. AMRITLAL,

You must have got my reply to your telegram. The reason for replying by wire was that if for some reason Nimu should wish not to go she need not go. I am not enthusiastic about Nimu's going to Bombay. Her mother would not very much need Nimu's services as her sister is in Bombay and so are her sister's husband and her brother. However, I permitted her to go thinking that since Ramdas has sent a telegram she might think it necessary to go. Show this to her if she is there.

[1] Cousin of S. Ambujammal

[2] The other being Balwantsinha

Dispose of the letters enclosed herewith. If no one from Mirabehn has turned up to receive the mail, make inquiries at Jamnalalji's. And if no one from Jamnalalji's is going, someone at Maganwadi should take it to her. Munnalal too is with Mirabehn.

Letters should now be sent to Bangalore City.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10715

71. SELF-CONTROL AGAIN

> Your recent articles[1] on self-control have created quite a stir. Persons who are in sympathy with your views find it difficult to exercise self-control for any length of time. They argue that you are applying your own experience and practice to the whole mankind. And even you have admitted that you do not fulfil the definition of a complete *brahmachari.* For you yourself are not free from animal passion. And since you admit the necessity of limiting the number of children a married couple may have, the use of contraceptives is the only practical method open to the vast majority of mankind.

Thus writes a correspondent.

I have admitted my own limitations. In this matter of self-control *v.* contraceptives, they constitute my qualifications. For my limitations show quite clearly that I am like the majority of earth earthy and can have no pretensions to any extraordinary gifts The motive for my self-control was also quite ordinary, viz., the desire to limit the progeny for the purpose of serving the country or humanity. Inability to support a large family should be a greater incentive than the very distant one of serving one's country or humanity. That in spite of thirty-five years of successful (from the present standpoint) self-control, the animal in me still needs watching shows in an eminent degree that I am very much an ordinary mortal. I, therefore, do suggest that what has been possible for me is possible for any human being who would make the required effort.

My quarrel with the advocates of contraceptives lies in their taking it for granted that ordinary mortals cannot exercise self-control. Some of them even go so far as to say that even if they can,

[1] *Vide* "For Contraceptives", 4-4-1936; "For Women Reformers", 2-5-1936; also "Birth-Control [-I], "Birth- Control-II" and "For the Young", 28-3-1936

they ought not to do so . To them, no matter how eminent they may be in their own spheres, I say, in all humility but with utmost confidence, they are talking without experience of the possibilities of self-control. They have no *right* to limit the capacity of the human soul. In such instances the positive evidence of one person like me, if it is reliable, is not only of greater value but decisive. To dismiss my evidence as useless because I am popularly regarded as a 'mahatma' is not proper in a serious inquiry.

Far more weighty is the argument of a sister who says in effect:

> We, the advocates of contraceptives, have come on the scene only recently. You self-controllers had the field all to yourselves all these long generations, maybe thousands of years. What have you to show to your credit? Has the world learnt the lesson of self-control? What have you done to stop the misery of over-burdened families? Have you heard the cry of wounded motherhood? Come, the field is even now open to you. We do not mind your advocacy of self-control. We may even wish you success, if perchance you save wives from the unwanted approaches of their husbands. But why should you seek to decry the methods which we employ and which take note of and make every allowance for common human weaknesses or habits and which when properly employed almost never fail to accomplish their purpose?

The taunt is dictated by the anguish of a sister filled with compassion for the families that are always in want because of the ever-increasing number of children. The appeal of human misery has been known to melt hearts of stone. How can it fail to affect high-souled sisters? But such appeals may easily lead one astray, if one is lifted off one's feet and, like a drowning man, catches [at] any floating straw.

We are living in times when values are undergoing quick changes. We are not satisfied with slow results. We are not satisfied with the welfare merely of our own caste-fellows, not even of our own country. We feel or want to feel for the whole of humanity. All this is a tremendous gain in humanity's march towards its goal.

But we won't find the remedy for human ills by losing patience and by rejecting everything that is old because it is old. Our ancestors also dreamt, perhaps vaguely, the same dreams that fire us with zeal. The remedies they applied for similar ills, it is possible, are applicable even to the horizon that appears to have widened beyondexpectations.

And my plea based on positive experience is that even as truth and ahimsa are not merely for the chosen few but for the whole of

humanity to be practised in daily life, so exactly is self-control not merely for a few 'mahatmas' but for the whole of humanity. And even as because many people will be untruthful and violent, humanity may not lower its standard, so also though many, even the majority, may not respond to the message of self-control, we may not lower our standard.

A wise judge will not give a wrong decision in the face of a hard case. He will allow himself to appear to have hardened his heart because he *knows* that truest mercy lies in not making bad law.

We may not attribute the weaknesses of the perishable body or the flesh to the imperishable soul that resides in it. We have to regulate the body in the light of the laws that govern the soul. In my humble opinion, these laws are few and unchangeable, capable of being understood and followed by the whole of the human family. There would be differences of degree but not of kind in their application. If we have faith, we won't lose it because it may take a million years before humanity realizes or makes the nearest or visible approach to its goal. In Jawaharlal's language, let us have the correct ideology.

The sister's challenge, however, remains to be answered. The "self-controllers" are not idle. They are carrying on their propaganda. If their method is different in kind from the method of contraceptives, so is and must be their propaganda. "Self-controllers" do not need clinics, they cannot advertise their cure for the simple reason that it is not an article to be sold or given. But their criticism of contraceptives and warning to the people against their use is part of their propaganda. The constructive side has always been there, but naturally in an unfelt and unseen manner. Advocacy of self-control has never been suspended. The most effective is that of example. The larger the number of honest persons who practise successful self-control, the more effective becomes the propaganda.

Harijan, 30-5-1936

72. NOTES

PRIZE ESSAY ON BARTER

Those who are interested in the question of barter in the place of exchange are reminded that the date for closing the competition is

drawing near. I reproduce below the notice[1] that appeared in *Harijan* dated August 31, 1935.

CERTIFIED DEALERS, NOT CERTIFIED KHADI

The manager of the Burma Branch of the A. I. S. A. writes to the Secretary: [2]

> With reference to the article of Gandhiji under the caption "Uncertified Khadi" in *Harijan* of 11-4-1936, I beg to bring to your notice the fact that here in Burma also, spurious khadi is sold in large quantities and it is a common practice amongst the uncertified dealers to demonstrate to the buyers that they are stocking and selling khadi certified by A.I.S.A., by showing to them the words "Certified by A.I.S.A." stamped on (some) cloth or the label bearing these words affixed on (some) cloth ....
>
> We have therefore often and often to bring to the notice of the public and the credulous buyers the fact that khadi or cloth is never certified by A. I. S. A. but it is only the dealer or the party that is certified, (and the public are advised to buy only from A.I.S.A. or A. I. S. A. certified dealers or depots.) You will thus see that it is wrong for us to use the words "certified khadi" or "uncertified khadi" because it only strengthens the hands of uncertified dealers.
>
> Now that the use of these words is made even by Gandhiji. . . I have not been able to check myself from bringing to your notice the mistake that we unconsciously commit by using the words "certified khadi" or "uncertified khadi". . . .

I gladly make amends. It is undoubtedly an error to speak of certified khadi. It will be difficult to certify pieces and it is futile to expect buyers to make sure of every article they purchase, whether it is genuine or not. The A.I.S.A. has always therefore followed the practice of certifying stores and dealers selling only genuine khadi in the cloth line. I hope that, whether in Burma or elsewhere, lovers of khadi will make themselves sure that they buy only from *stores* or *dealers* certified by the A.I.S.A.

Harijan, 30-5-1936

[1] Not reproduced here; *vide* "Prize Essay on Barter System", 26-8-1935

[2] Only excerpts of the letter are reproduced here.

73. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

NANDI HILL,
May 30, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter of 28th.

Of course you will incur the expense of a latrine. It may be well to rig up a bathroom also side by side as we had in Sabarmati.

I would not want you to go to a seaside, if your hut on an apology for a hill serves the same purpose.

I hope we shall reach Wardha on 15th June, Monday, if not on 14th. My effort would be to reach there on a speaking day. That can only be Sunday. But if I cannot manage it, I shall be satisfied to reach there even on Monday.

You must have by now heard about Harilal's acceptance of Islam. If he had no selfish purpose behind, I should have nothing to say against the step. But I very much fear that there is no other motive behind this step. Let us see what happens now.

We descend to Bangalore City tomorrow.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6343. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9809

74. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

Saturday, May 30, 1936

. . . [1] just read in the paper about Harilal's exploit. There could be no harm in his being converted to Islam with understanding and selfless motives. But he suffers from greed for wealth and sensual pleasures. At Nagpur he gave me to understand that he would do anything whatever to satisfy his greed. I shall be spared all the mental pain if I find my impression wrong and if he turns a new leaf. But here it is [like] adding meat-eating to drinking, and he had more or less assumed the freedom to eat meat. All the same none of you

[1] Omission as in the source

should be unhappy about it. What is destined must be. He had ceased to belong to any faith and now he has taken on the label of Islam. That does not make him a follower of the faith, though we should indeed feel satisfied if he truly practises in his life what is best in Islam. And if this is a mere show, it does not deserve to be lamented.

This instance should make us all alert and we should [try to] understand whatever religion we follow and bring credit to it.

Read this to Devdas and send an extract to Manilal.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

75. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

May 30, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter which arrived just today. I read it and promptly destroyed it. Hence I am writing this 'out of my head', i.e., on the basis of my recollection.

You are bound to have a burden to shoulder while there. God is there to take care of you. You are quite right in reducing your food when there is much work to attend to, but it would be good not to have to give up milk. Perhaps you will be getting more rest at Sitab Diyara.

I follow the point about Chandramukhi[1], Vidyavati[2]. You have well escaped it. You must have learnt about Tarabehn's [death][3]. My opinion is that you should go to Banaras and learn what you can. After all, you do wish to read. You should, therefore, welcome this new knowledge. You will meet some new persons and it will please Jayaprakash. It is a different matter if you could convince him with your arguments, but the better thing is not to have much argument. It is all right if you could persuade him with a casual discussion. Only after the completion of the Banaras course shall we consider what is to be done.

[1] Jayaprakash Narayan's brother's daughter

[2] Addressee's sister

[3] This sentence, being illegible in the source, is taken from *Bapuna Patro–10: Shri Prabhavatibehnne,*. The book however places the letter under May 20, which is a slip.

Don't you think you have now my opinion of the Banaras proposal fully?

Give me an account of Chandrakanta's wedding, if you can. Where is Sumangal[1] and how is he? Do you know anything about him? Tomorrow we leave for Bangalore City from where we proceed to Wardha on the 13th at the latest, reaching there on the 15th. I shall be living at Segaon, five miles from there. Perhaps I shall be visiting Wardha once a week. My hut is under construction.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The newspapers report that Harilal has become a Muslim.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3471

76. LETTER TO PYARELAL

[*May 30, 1936*][3]

CHI. PYARELAL,

You must have received the telegram I sent you yesterday. What should I write to you? Such utter lack of faith ! Where there is faith, even a wrongly written word would be rightly interpreted. I did not write anything wrong. You must know that I do not revise my letters. I have many letters to write. Sentences are written as they come from the pen. They should be interpreted only in the context of the relevant facts. How can “abandon what you are pursuing and come to me” be interpreted the way you have done? “What you are pursuing” is a reference not to Yoga but to your work in Calcutta or Orissa. I wrote that way because I felt that although that work is worth doing, it may be better in your interest to stay with me. But what is the remedy when you see such a contrary meaning in it? In my view that indicates the height of suspicion and lack of faith! But it is like ‘once bitten twice shy’. But in this case it is like being shy even though there is no bite at all.

It is possible that I may have the remedy even for such lack of faith.

Have you understood the meaning of what I have said? There

[1] Sumangal Prakash

[3] From the reference to the telegram; *vide* the preceding item.

is no scope for wrong interpretation at least in this.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall be at Bangalore city after Mar 31.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

77. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

May 30, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. It is an excuse that hand-made paper is not available there. Do not people find similar pretexts for not wearing khadi? All these are signs of laziness and lack of earnestness.

I shall reach Wardha latest on the 17th or 18th. It is probable that I shall leave by the 14th or the 15th.

Prema's address is: Sasvad, near Poona.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

78. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

[Before *May 31, 1936*][1]

CHI. NIMU,

I got your letter. Also Nanavati's with it. I was very pleased lo learn that you feel quite at home there and are having the education that you wanted. That Nanavati will give you a certificate is equally gratifying. Look after every thing carefully as if it was your own. Preserve cleanliness. Keep the kitchen perfectly neat. There will be little for you to do yourself but certainly you can keep an eye over everything. As a general rule, women are better at such jobs. This may not be true of all women but it can certainly be said of you. I will not

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's proposed visit to Bangalore on May 31; Gandhiji left Nandidoorg for Bangalore on May 31, 1936; *vide* "Letter to Begum Mohammad Alam", 9-1-1933

write to Nanavati today. Tell him so. . . .[1] I hope it will not be necessary to go to Ahmedabad. I wrote to you what Ramdas wrote to me about his illness. I have written to Sarita as well. I will leave for Bangalore on 31st May. If you address your letter to Bangalore City, it will do.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

79. DISCUSSION WITH C. V. RAMAN AND LADY RAMAN[2]

[Before *May 31, 1936*][3]

The young men wanted Gandhiji to go to their Institute . . . . If he listened to them, he would have to listen to many other requests, he argued in reply. Some of them wanted his autograph and had also thought of presenting him with a purse for Harijans.

[GANDHIJI:] I wish every one of you would want my autograph so as to swell that purse; but you must do all that where I am staying, but not drag me to the Institute.

The moment he was told that it was the Science Institute, he capitulated.

Of course, if it is the Science Institute you are talking of, I must make an exception in its favour, provided Sir C. V. Raman will show me some magic there.

He said to Lady Raman:

I have heard all kinds of good things about you from your husband, but I have to find out how far they are true. He told me the other day that whilst he is absorbed in his science, you find time for all kinds of humanitarian activities.

[LADY RAMAN:] Not as much as I should be doing. But I am certainly interested in khadi and Harijan welfare and social service and things of that kind. You know, Mahatmaji, I have been a spinner since many years ago. Some fifteen years ago I sent you a quantity of my own hand-spun yarn to be woven into cloth and the

[1] Some words here are illegible in the source.

[2] Who were accompanied by some students of the Science Institute

[3] According to Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter", from which this and the following item are reproduced, these discussions took place at Nandi Hill where Gandhiji stayed till May 31, 1936.

late Maganlal Gandhi sent the cloth on to me. But my husband had no faith in the wheel then. He would put away my wheel, smash it and break it; but I am glad to tell you that in my own life-time the day has come when he no longer ridicules the wheel. He too believes in it.

I am very happy. Well, then, I want you to do a little work for me. Did you ever meet the late Kamala Nehru?

Once or twice, Mahatmaji. But I know the old Mrs. Nehru very well.

But you of course know what a good woman Kamala was. You know how she spent herself for the country. But what I prize most of her is not her political contribution but her great spiritual beauty which I should like every man and woman to know.

Yes, I know of her services and her moral beauty.

Then you must help me in collecting some money for the Memorial we are having for her.

And he explained to her the object of the Memorial.

"Oh yes, Mahatmaji," she said, "don't I know how you sat down in Calcutta after Deshbandhu Das's death[1] for a few months and collected as much as 8 lakhs? You can certainly collect a lot if you sat down like that here. I had the privilege of helping in that collection. I was in Calcutta then.

Oh yes, but I have not the time I had then at my disposal. But you can bring to bear all your influence and collect as much as you can.

Lady Raman heartily agreed. As this business was going on, in came. . . Sir C. V. Raman. She was talking in Hindi as he came in. "Now, is that Hindi any good?" he asked jocularly.

Certainly as good as your science.

"Oh yes" spoke... Sir C. V. Raman, "she has an amazing capacity for picking up languages. She knows Hindi, she knows Bengali better than Hindi."

Of course, she has stayed in Calcutta for some years.

"Not necessarily for that reason. I, too, have stayed with her. But I know not a word. And now here she has picked up Kannada and talks it." Sir Chandrashekhara [Venkataraman] then began wondering what language could be the language for the masses of India and seemed for a moment to be inclined to the belief that English had the chance.

Don't you think it will be a bad day for the many millions of India who know Hindi without learning it to attempt to know English?

[1] On June 16, 1925.

And Sir Chandrashekhara [Venkataraman] immediately said he was glad that Hindi was making rapid strides in South India and added: "I know Hindi, too, Mahatmaji. I understand it very well. I learnt it from no less a teacher than Malaviyaji whose wonderful Hindi I had sometimes to hear for hours when I was in Kashi, and I could not help learning it. But I cannot speak Hindi. It is that conceit, you know, that I am full of as much as you."

Harijan, 6-6-1936

80. DISCUSSION WITH DR. ERIKA ROSENTHAL[1]

[Before *May 31, 1936*][2]

[DR. ROSENTHAL:] Could you teach me how to make them co-operate with us?[3]

[GANDHIJI:] I am trying to learn it myself. You may have heard that I am now going to settle in a genuine village instead of living in a glorified village that Wardha is. Well, all that I have been saying to the people and my co-workers will be there put to the test. But if I have said that I am going to learn the art, there is no doubting the fact that the only way is to go in their midst and do the things oneself. Dumping educated patrons amongst them or even mere enlisting the help of monied men cannot go a long way. One must do as the late Mary Chesley did.

And with that he narrated the pathetic life-story of Tarabehn Chesley who met her death on her pilgrimage to Badri-Kedar.

"But," said Dr. Rosenthal, "that was, if I may say so, a rash adventure and I should not imitate her."

No, I do not want you to. I am talking of her spirit—the spirit in which she tried to identify herself with the poorest. There is Miss Mary Barr there who, if you please, is more sensible, who makes allowances for her own limitations and still has completely identified herself with the people. You must see for yourself the work she is doing.

I must. What I mean is that a foreigner cannot and must not adopt all the ways and habits of Indians. He should assimilate what is best in their life. Many an Indian

[1] Daughter of Dr. Paul Deussen and wife of a doctor who, following the Nazi persecution of Jews had come of India. She was doing welfare work in Mysore.

[2] *Vide* footnote 3, "Discussuion with C. V. Raman and Lady Raman", 31-5-1936

[3] She had asked Gandhiji "the secret of teaching people to help themselves".

goes to Europe and picks up the superficial things of European life, much to his own damage. That is what I don't like.

What you say is cent per cent true. The foreigners ought not to attempt to adopt more than they naturally and easily can. Miss Barr has, I think, struck the true balance.

"Yes, one has to sit down in the midst like missionaries," said Mr. De Souza who accompanied her.

"Yes," said Dr. Rosenthal but energetically added, "but not with the desire to convert the people. The religious motive is what spoils most of their work I hate conversion."

No doubt you would, being the daughter of your father.

And yet, you will be rather surprised that I have come up against a sentence in my father's writings which I cannot understand. He says, in effect, that he could not understand why people were unable to accept a religion because of the outside temptations that were offered them.

It must be just the contrary. I should like to see that text. It cannot be as you say.

I shall send you the text.

Yes, do. And then if I am right and you are wrong you will have to admit that I am a better son of your father than you are his daughter.

Yes. I think, Mahatmaji, we have to contend against religion being mixed up too much with the daily life of our people.

No, if it is true religion we want more of it.

I do not want to exclude true religion. I shall give you an example. We have in one of our centres a very good Harijan nurse. One day a Brahmin came there wih his son who was suffering from sores. The doctor with the help of the nurse washed the sores and dressed them and bandaged them. But lo and behold the consternation of the Brahmin when he found that it was a Harijan nurse who had dressed his boy's sores. He took him to the nearest river, bathed him and washed away the whole dressing and bandage!

That is no religion. It is rank superstition. You will come across instances of that kind, but they are getting fewer every day.

Harijan, 6-6-1936

81. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

BANGALORE CITY,
May 31, 1936

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have your postcard. It is surprising that you never are quite free from illness. However, watch the result of the serum injection. Why should Babu[1] write to me, now that she is a learned lady? However, I would not complain if she never wrote to me, so long as she does not fall ill or grow weak. I know complaining will not avail but I would not complain even to myself, if Babu made her body like copper.

How very seriously you take the Narandas episode! It is contrary to non-violence. Not to mind the pain inflicted whether by a friend or by a foe is one more form of non-violence. Such conduct is part and parcel of non-violence. Moreover, we must also think of the friend's point of view. Why should we be pained if he said or did something without ill will even though his words or act were improper? You could point out his error, if any, to Narandas in case you are convinced that he is not a man to take any step out of ill will. Be patient if he is unable to see his error, but never take offence. Even if you think that he had an evil motive, your heart should feel no shock because a malicious person deserves to be pitied. Should we take offence at the act of one who deserves pity? My purpose in writing this is that you may analyse the state of your mind, apply to it the touchstone of non-violence and, if you detect your error, rectify it, cleanse your heart and calm down.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

[PS.]

We shall be here till the 12th.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.G. 18

[1] Sharda, addressee's daughter

82. SPEECH AT CHICKBALLAPUR

May 31, 1936

Addressing the gathering in Hindi[1] Mahatmaji said as the doctor had asked him not to overexert himself he did not propose to make a long speech to them. He was very glad to address them that day which happened to be the birthday of H.H. the Maharaja of Mysore. Along with the people of Mysore, he joined in praying to God to give long life and prosperity to their beloved Ruler.

He prayed further that it may be given to H. H. the Maharaja of Mysore to approach more and more to *Ramarajya* in Mysore. In olden days, *Ramarajya* meant a government in which everyone in the country, including the lowest ryot, had peace and plenty.

Continuing, Mr. Gandhi thanked the people of Chickballapur for their cordial welcome. He and members of his party had all been very well cared for during their stay at Nandi Hills and they had all benefited greatly by their stay. The Government as well as the people had shown him great love and he and his party were duly thankful to them.[2]

The Hindu, 1-6-1936

83. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CHINTAMANI[3]

May 31, 1936

Addressing the gathering, Gandhiji said that medical advisers had prohibited him from raising his voice. Fortunately, it was one and the same thing to them whether he raised the voice or not. He wished he knew their own language. It would have been better perhaps if many of them could have followed his . . . Hindi or Hindustani. He still lived under the hope that before he died he would see educated India speaking the inter-provincial language¾ Hindi or Hindustani. He knew that there were some people who entertained, quite falsely, in these parts of India the notion that the movement of Hindi was conceived in order to supplant the provincial languages, but this belief proceeded from gross ignorance. This movement had contributed handsomely to further the working knowledge of Hindi or Hindustani. It had . . . intended to strengthen the vernacular provincial languages. But provincial languages would suffer stagnation so long as they could not extend help to other

[1] Ismail Sheriff translated Gandhiji's speech into Kannada.

[2] A purse of Rs. 100 was presented to Gandhiji. Accepting the purse he smilingly said: “It is too small. Only hundred rupees. Three times shame!”

[3] An address on behalf of the Municipal Council was presented to Gandhiji. Over 2,000 people attended the meeting.

languages. The English language had a definite place and an international character. But it had certainly no place whatsoever in the heart of the masses of India.

Proceeding, Gandhiji said that it was a great day for the people of the State as it was the birthday of His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore. He would also join them in their prayers wishing the Almighty to give him long life and prosperity. (Cheers)

They all knew what views he held about the quality of the rule of Princes in India. Princes forgot their duty. In ancient days they carried their administration in a way which was called *Ramarajya.* In *Ramarajya,* there was no such thing as grinding poverty. People lived in absolute peace. There was no one high or low. He wished that that principle of *Ramarajya* was translated into practice in all parts of India.

Continuing, Mahatma Gandhi said that they had done well in presenting him with a little purse[1] for the Harijan Fund. He called it little because it was possible for them to give him a better purse. Nothing that they could give for the Harijan cause was sufficient penance. There could be no peace for them until the Harijans were levelled up to the highest status in Hindu society. They must enjoy absolutely the same rights as other Hindus. While they were entitled to take credit for what little they had done for Harijans, he was glad that they admitted that much more remained to be done. He therefore hoped that they would redouble their efforts in that direction.

*The Hindu,*1-6-1936

84. SPEECH AT KOLAR

May 31, 1936

Mahatmaji thanked the Municipal Council for the address and the townsmen for the purse. He would like to join the people of Kolar in wishing His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore many a return of the birthday which his subjects all over the State were celebrating with great joy. He was glad to hear that the Municipality was doing some work in the cause of the Harijans. He was also very much pleased to hear that the Municipality had many more things to do for the Harijans. Unless untouchability was blotted out, root and branch, the Hindu society would perish. Therefore, so long as untouchability remained in the land in one form or another, they could not say that they had done anything for the cause of the Harijans.

Proceeding, Mahatmaji congratulated the Mysore Government on the establishment of khadi centres and appealed to the people to take to khadi. He wished he could go to other parts of India and say that in Mysore State at least, the people wore khadi and used swadeshi articles.

The Hindu, 1-6-1936

[1] Of Rs. 201

85. SPEECH AT LABOURERS' MEETING

KOLAR GOLD FIELDS,
May 31, 1936

Gandhiji, speaking to a mass meeting of mine-labourers for a few minutes, said he had paid a hurried visit to the labour huts which seemed to him too small, too ill-lighted and too low-roofed to be fit for human habitation. If the workers only knew what they could do for themselves by combining their training and intelligence they would realize that they were no less proprietors of the mines than the managers and shareholders. Their labour was better gold than the metal they extracted with their labour from the bowels of the earth.[1]

Gandhiji made an earnest appeal to the mining authorities to see to the betterment of the lot of coolies working in the mines, through whom the mining authorities derived their maximum benefit. Mahatmaji wanted that the mining officials should give the same facilities to the coolies working underground as they did to the highly paid officials.

Mahatmaji said that he could not congratulate the management on their efforts to house the poor. He understood that the labourers were charged about twelve annas to one rupee per hut. The rent should be much less.

He reminded the mine-owners that unless they voluntarily recognized the due status of labour and treated it as they treated themselves, time was not far distant when labour would dictate its own terms. He mentioned his theory of trust which he had propounded before the Ahmedabad mill-owners. He told the workers that whilst it was right and proper to assert their rights they ought to do their tasks as if the mines were their personal property. He also asked them to shun drink, gambling and other vices.

Mahatmaji observed that considering the cause for which the money was collected, this sum of Rs. 619 from the Kolar Gold Fields area was not much.[2]

Harijan, 13-6-1936, and *The Hindu*, 1-6-1936

[1] The following two paragraphs are from *The Hindu.*
[2] This sentence is from *The Hindu.*

86. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

NANDI HILLS,
Wednesday [*May 1936*][1]

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I got your letter.

For your throat, you must consult a good doctor. Consult Haribhai in Ahmedabad or Dr. Mehta or Dr. Rajab Ali in Bombay. Let me know what you propose to do.

Do not pay the rent to the old aunt herself but pay it to the owner of the house and obtain a receipt from him. Pay the rent which has been fixed. Keep the balance with you. Meet the owner of the house and inquire.

If the quantity decreases in spite of the students working . . .[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33820

[1] The letter is written from Nandi Hills which Gandhiji visited twice—in 1927 and 1936. The 1927 material has no reference to the addressee whereas the 1936 material indicates that Gandhiji was in communication with the addressee and there is evidence of the addressee teaching at the Rajkot Rashtriya Shala; *vide*, "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 3-7-1935; "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 20-9-1935 and "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 25-9-1935. Hence, the letter was presumably written between May 10 and 31, 1936 when Gandhiji stayed at Nandi Hills.

[2] The last sentence is illegible.

87. SPEECH AT MUNICIPAL COLONY, BANGALORE [1]

[After *May 31, 1936*][2]

I was taken to the huts of the workers in the Kolar Gold-fields the other day. I could not help remarking that the huts were not fit for human habitation. With the mining Company declaring fat dividends of 30 to 40 per cent it seemed to be cruel to me that those who earned the profits for them were housed in those dismal hovels. The huts you have built here are certainly better, they are well ventilated and well situated. But there ought to be something like a minimum standard of a hut for unmarried people and of a hut for married couples and couples with children. We ought to realize that husband and wife must not share the same room with grown-up children. These cabins provide for no privacy. I cannot understand municipalities measuring out land for their poor employees by so many feet. One more room for each of these huts and a verandah is an absolute necessity. I am glad you propose to provide the same facilities for the Harijan employees, but pray bear this suggestion in mind when you build houses for them. There are, I am pained to say, still numerous municipalities which provide no housing facilities for their lowest paid employees. I do not know when we shall realize our duty to the most essential of our servants. If we do not do so ere long, the doom will soon settle on our society, as it must, if the society does not correct itself.

Harijan, 11-7-1936

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The colony, consisted of 250 huts, built by the Municipality for its employees.

[2] From the reference to Kolar Gold-fields in the speech it is evident that this visit took place after May 31, 1936.

88. TELEGRAM TO THE SECRETARY, HINDU SABHA, DELHI[1]

June 1, 1936

HINDU SABHA
CARE KALIA, DELHI

THANKS. IGNORE SUCH ABERRATIONS EXCEPT FOR PURGING RELIGION OF ALL IMPURITIES.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

89. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

BANGALORE CITY,
June 1, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter of 30th is before me. I am glad you are making steady progress. If you will always keep some strength in reserve, you will be proof against malaria.

Yes, we had a strenuous time yesterday. I was none the worse for it. Sardar picked a bad cold on the way and he won't give it up even today. The boys and the girls remained behind to see the gold mines. They return today. The right hand has been giving excellent work. I am therefore giving it rest.

The Gujarati papers are full of Harilal's exploits.[2]

If you will be in local Simla,[3] there will have to be a local line to it too. And there will have to be variations in the two temperatures to attract me!

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6344. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9810

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram saying: "Hindus shocked over Harilal's conversion. Please guide how we can reclaim misguided brother."

[2] He had embraced Islam and changed his name to Abdulla.

[3] The reference is to the addressee's cottage which was going to be built at Varoda, "an apology for a hill", as Gandhiji had described it in a previous letter; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 30-5-1936

90. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

June 1, 1936

DEAR SATIS BABU,

You give me a satisfactory account of your health. Not so Pyarelal. He says your heart is not sound and that you are constantly overstraining yourself. I wish you would recognize that such treatment of the body is a positive sin.

Are you dealing with the same famine that Profulla is dealing with? Or is this some other?

I see several difficulties about leaving something permanent after every exhibition. We never get a site where we can build anything solid. Then there must be that [local][1] desire which would pay for the thing and ensure its upkeep. We are having the next Congress in a *bona-fide* village. What would you suggest? How cheaply can we organize it? You know that the Lucknow [show][2] did after all become self-supporting.

We leave Bangalore City probably on 12th instant.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1630

91. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

June 1, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

We descended yesterday and work began. We toured the gold area the whole day, collected over Rs. 1,000 for Harijan cause and returned after 10 p.m. not much tired.

It is warm in Bangalore compared to Nandi Hill. And nothing pleases after the bracing air and isolation of Nandi Hill which for me has a charm which no other hill possesses. It was not without a sigh I left Nandi. Sardar is almost disconsolate. He won't even go out for awalk. I had my usual hour. But Bangalore itself is undoubtedly pleasant at this time of the year. Only Nandi has spoiled us.

[1] Not clear in the source
[2] *ibid*

I am glad you are again able to spin.

Yes, your envelope is good. But you must not pay through the nose for them. It must be an idle hour's job for someone who is in the household or given to those who would be thankful to earn an honest anna.

Why should you feel helpless? Why not be wholly satisfied with what you can get through during the day? You may be angry with yourself when you neglect anything. But what can you do when time runs against you?

You must have seen Harilal having adopted Islam! He must have sensation and he must have money. He has both. I am thinking of addressing a general letter to Mussalman friends.[1] I will see how it shapes itself. Poor Ba and poorer Kanti[2]. Both were much upset.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

You are right about our unbusiness-like habits. Go for those who betray them.

SHRI RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANOR VILLE
SIMLA W.

From the original: C.W. 3729. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6885

92. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

June 1, 1936

CHI. NARAHARI,

I hope you have all returned, and in much better health. How did Manibehn[3] fare at the place? Is she now quite well? Did Vanamala[4] and Mohan[5] gain in health? You used to take long walks, didn't you?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9094

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 2-6-1936
[2] Harilal's son
[3] Addressee's wife
[4] Addressee's daughter
[5] Addressee's son

93. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

June 1, 1936

CHI. SHARMA,

Last night, on reaching Bangalore, I got your letter of May 12. By now you must be in Khurja. I hope you are keeping fit. I shall certainly reach Wardha on the 15th; you can come over then. In the mean while write to me at Bangalore City.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh,* facing p. 251.

94. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

BANGALORE,
June 2, 1936

The newspapers report that about a fortnight ago my eldest son Harilal, now nearing fifty years, accepted Islam and that on Friday last 29th May in the midst of a large congregation in the Jumma Musjid at Bombay, he was permitted to announce his acceptance amid great acclamation and that, after his speech was finished, he was besieged by his admirers who vied with one another to shake hands with him. If his acceptance was from the heart and free from any worldly considerations, I should have no quarrel. For I believe Islam to be as true a religion as my own.

But I have the gravest doubt about this acceptance being from the heart or free from selfish considerations. Everyone who knows my son Harilal, knows that he has been for years addicted to the drink evil and has been in the habit of visiting houses of ill-fame. For some years he has been living on the charity of friends who have helped him unstintingly. He is indebted to some Pathans from whom he had borrowed on heavy interest. Up to only recently he was in dread of his life from his Pathan creditors in Bombay. Now he is the hero of the hour in that city. He had a most devoted wife who always forgave his

[1] The Statement, published in *Harijan* under the title "To My Numerous Muslim Friends", was issued to the Press on June 2, 1936.

many sins including his unfaithfulness. He has three grown-up children, two daughters and one son, whom he ceased to support long ago.

Not many weeks ago he wrote to the Press complaining against Hindus—not Hinduism—and threatening to go over to Christianity or Islam. The language of the letter showed quite clearly that he would go over to the highest bidder. That letter had the desired effect. Through the good offices of a Hindu councillor he got a job in Nagpur Municipality. And he came out with another letter[1] to the Press recalling the first and declaring emphatic adherence to his ancestral faith.

But, as events have proved, his pecuniary ambition was not satisfied and in order to satisfy that ambition, he has embraced Islam. There are other facts which are known to me and which strengthen my inference.

When I was in Nagpur, in April last, he had come to see me and his mother and he told me how he was amused by the attentions that were being paid to him by the missionaries of rival faiths. God can work wonders. He has been known to have changed the stoniest hearts and turned sinners into saints, as it were, in a moment. Nothing will please me better than to find that during the Nagpur meeting and the Friday announcement he had repented of the past and had suddenly become a changed man having shed the drink habit and sexual lust.

But the Press reports give no such evidence. He still delights in sensation and in good living. If he had changed, he would have written to me to gladden my heart. All my children have had the greatest freedom of thought and action. They have been taught to regard all religions with the same respect that they paid to their own. Harilal knew that if he had told me that he had found the key to a right life and peace in Islam, I would have put no obstacle in his path. But no one of us, including his son now twenty-four years old and who is with me, knew anything about the event till we saw the announcement in the Press.

My views on Islam are well known to the Mussalmans who are reported to have enthused over my son's profession. A brotherhood of Islam has telegraphed to me thus:

> Expect like your son you truth-seeker to embrace Islam truest religion

[1] For Gandhiji's comment on it, *vide* "Letter to P. M. Naidu", 3-3-1936

of world.

I must confess that all this has hurt me. I sense no religious spirit behind this demonstration. I feel that those who are responsible for Harilal's acceptance of Islam did not take the most ordinary precautions they ought to have in a case of this kind.

Harilal's apostasy is no loss to Hinduism and his admission to Islam is a source of weakness to it if, as I apprehend, he remains the same wreck that he was before.

Surely conversion is a matter between man and his Maker who alone knows His creatures' hearts. And conversion without a clean heart is, in my opinion, a denial of God and religion. Conversion without cleanness of heart can only be a matter for sorrow, not joy, to a godly person.

My object in addressing these lines to my numerous Muslim friends is to ask them to examine Harilal in the light of his immediate past and, if they find that his conversion is a soulless matter, to tell him so plainly and disown him and if they discover sincerity in him to see that he is protected against temptations so that his sincerity results in his becoming a godfearing member of society. Let them know that excessive indulgence has softened his brain and undermined his sense of right and wrong, truth and falsehood. I do not mind whether he is known as Abdulla or Harilal if, by adopting one name for the other, he becomes a true devotee of God which both the names mean.

Harijan, 6-6-1936

95. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

June 2, 1936

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter.

I shall be satisfied if you can get proper rest at Juhu; take exercise and observe the food restrictions. You certainly need the belt for your abdomen though you may also consult a doctor if you like.

We shall reach Wardha on the 15th. Madalasa[1] has scribbled a couple of lines perfunctorily. I would not mind her not writing if by

[1] Addressee's daughter

going there she has gained weight and thrown her mental worries into the sea.

Where is Om[1]? I of course have Shriman's Hindi work[2]. I shall write something and send it. You must have read about Harilal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2982

96. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

June 2, 1936

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

The enclosed letter[3] is for your information. I have written to him that he should place his suggestion before you and before Bapa if the latter happens to go to Bharuch.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

We shall be here till the 13th.

This letter certainly does not mean that you are to accommodate him. I do not even know him. This responsibility is yours entirely. The reply to Jagjivandas amounts only to this.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4039

97. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

[After *June 2, 1936*][4]

DEAR MAULANA SAHEB,

If you have seen the enclosed I would like your considered opinion on the points raised therein. Is such conversion valid in

[1] Addressee's daughter

[2] A collection of Hindi poems, *Rotika Raga; vide* "Letter to Shriman Narayan Agrawal", 13-7-1936.

[3] This is not traceable.

[4] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 2-6-1936

Islam? Is the method adopted lawful? Is the way the thing is being advertised lawful or permissible? Will you publish your opinion or permit me to publish it?

Yours sincerely,
M.K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

98. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

June 4, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

I congratulate you on not being nominated[1]. If some of the things you have drop out of themselves, it would be a gain.

As to the Y. M. C. A., I would not hazard an opinion without having fuller knowledge.

I have myself chosen the ivory things for you today. They will be sent to you by the depot with invoice. If the things are ill-chosen or not to your taste, you must blame yourself for having commissioned for the choice an ignoramus. You will give me your opinion without reserve. Proper address has been given.

The weather in Bangalore, too, is cool enough.

I have addressed a fairly long letter to Muslim friends. I observe that the papers over here have been afraid to publish the full text. You shall have it if it is not published anywhere.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3576. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6385

99. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

June 5, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Yours of Ist has just arrived. “Empty bottles” are more needed in Segaon than perhaps in Maganwadi. But I am not less in Maganwadi for being in Segaon than when I was there without Segaon. But no extra exertion should be put forth to secure them.

[1] To the Jullundur Municipality

Whatever you have to spare should come my way when you are coming. The razors are not used for knives. They are used for shaving. You shall see the specimen knives when you come. Yes, you will occupy a corner wherever I am both on your way to Waltair and return.

Self-praise is no praise. And when one always insists that she can never be coerced the hearer will take it with a grain or two of salt. *A la* J. you belong to a system that is based on coercion. Therefore the less you talk of not being coerced the better!!

The return of the *khes* to you is a double-distilled stupidity. Did you get the lace too? Poor Jerajani sent me a copy of the letter he sent to his people saying that the *khes* was to come to me and the lace to you. This is an idiotic circle. Are you responsible for the infection? Anyway do write a strong letter of protest to the sender. And do not spend money on sending it. You should bring it. You *must obey*.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3577. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6386

100. LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL

BANGALORE,
June 5, 1936

DEAR SIR MIRZA,

Many thanks for your letter. It emboldens me to ask you, please put the following before His Highness.

I understand Harijans are not allowed even to attend the Durbars whenever they are held. I can find no warrant in Hindu religion for the bar. Unless there are valid and insuperable objections to the relief being granted, I do hope that the prohibition will be removed.

I would urge the necessity of opening all State temples to Harijans on the same terms as the *savarna* Hindus.

I am hoping we shall meet before we leave Bangalore which we expect to do the 12th inst.

With renewed thanks for the hospitality and attention we are receiving.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

101. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 5, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I was silent over your letter because I wanted to have a talk with Kanu, which I had at length yesterday. He does not wish to be away for the present at any rate. He particularly wishes to acquire from me whatever he can just by remaining by my side although he no doubt wants to learn a good deal of music from Panditji[1]. Hence, I have assured him that he may rely without fear on my promise that I would gladly let him go any time he thinks he has had enough of me or wants to go to Panditji or anywhere else and obtain some special knowledge. I think this is enough for the present. Of course I shall be watching him.

He has a clean mind, but after all he is only an adolescent. Some-times he suffers from melancholy but it is momentary and there is no particular reason for it. Didn't we all at his age have a similar experience more or less?

As for the school, I am getting convinced more and more that we should start thinking in terms of closing it unless it becomes self-supporting. For, if it does not stand on its own it could be looked upon as being run to serve our needs. We however believe that knowledge should be imparted only to the seeker. Yes, of course we would go begging money for such students if we have any as might thirst for knowledge and yet be unable to pay their way. If we had such seekers, they would cheerfully carry out our word and within a year fully bear their financial burden. There are many institutions of the kind in America where immediately on admission the student begins to earn his board side by side with his studies. You may continue this discussion in your letter if you wish.

Kanu has gone through this letter and says that I am not correct in saying that he has a great desire to learn music under Panditji. If he is ordered to go to Ahmedabad, he would rather learn it at the Gandharva Vidyalaya under Shankarrao[2] Vyas although it cannot be said that this is what he wishes. According to his present state of mind,

[1] Narayan Moreshwar Khare

[2] 'Shankarlal' in the source, which is obviously a slip.

his only wish is to be with me and do what I ask him to. He will be under my care and there is no reason to worry on his account. He has written a long letter to you.

I have written to the Press on the subject of Harilal, though nothing has been published yet. I do not say anything here, hoping it will be in print in due course.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

The progress made there in spinning is excellent in my view. As for Sardar, I will speak to him. He should, however, make it a point to come if he can have an opportunity.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III. Also C.W. 8492. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

102. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

June 5, 1936

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. I was pained to read about Bachubhai[1]. You cannot leave him as long as he is bed-ridden. Tell Jugatram[2] to consult a homoeopath. Homoeopathy has not won my faith, but it helped Devdas and a medical specialist[3] whom we met here is all praise for it. In any case it will do no harm, and may do some good.

I am returning Kusum's letter. I should like it very much if she went to Bochasan. If Lilavati feels inclined to go, I would certainly encourage her to do so. I will have a talk with her when I return to Wardha on the 14th. Amtul Salaam is not at Wardha. She is still in Delhi and is not too eager to leave it. If she joins, she can of course give you much help and the work will benefit her, too. Write to her at Delhi; she reads Gujarati. Her address is: Harijan Nivas, Kingsway, Delhi.

[1] Addressee's nephew
[2] An Ayurvedic physician of Bombay
[3] Captain C. Oommen, the Medical Expert of the Grace Medical Mission

Do come and see me when I visit Gujarat. I will find some time for you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6 G.S. Gangabehnne, pp. 90-1. Also C.W. 8831. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

103. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

June 5, 1936

CHI. SHARMA,

You must have received the letter I sent. I got your telegram here. You must have passed through Wardha at that time.

Amtul Salaam is in Delhi ailing. You should go there and try your newly acquired knowledge and then come over to Wardha when you can.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

We reach Wardha on the 14th.

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh,* facing p. 252

104. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

June 5, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter.

Shall I ever prevail with you? Why should you not come to me if you are in bad health? Why should you stick on there in spite of your bad health? I have of course written to Sharma who has now reached Khurja.[1]

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

I follow your point about the food there. For the present, however, I cannot think of any suggestion. I shall be much pained if you do not eat what you should.

Ask the resident boys to write to me once so that I can start writing to them. It would be helpful if I knew their names, their standard of knowledge, etc.

Where is Sukirti gone?

We shall be reaching Wardha on the 14th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 617

105. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

June 5, 1936

BHAI RAJENDRA PRASAD,

Pass on the enclosed letter to Pierre Ceresole[1]. I saw your letter. You must have received a copy of Jawaharlal's letter. This time we shall have to further clarify many things.

I hope you are keeping well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 9875, Courtesy: Rajendra Prasad

106. THE LEPROSY PROBLEM

Wardha is a Tahsil having a fair share of lepers. Village workers often come in contact with them. What are the workers to do? May they freely mix with the lepers? How may they help these unfortunate people? Is there any cure? These are daily questions for serious village workers. I, therefore, approached Rev. Donald Miller, whom I have had the pleasure of knowing for years as a great worker among lepers in the Purulia Leper Asylum and otherwise, for simple

[1] A Swiss pacifist, President of the International Voluntary Service, who had come to India for helping in the relief work in Bihar

directions for village workers. He readily agreed and a series of letters to an imaginary village worker was the result. The first letter is given below.[1]

Harijan, 6-6-1936

107. A FALSE ALARM

When I saw a newspaper report purporting to be a summary of what Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had said on khadi during his recent visit to the Khadi Bhandar at Bombay, I refused to believe it. It seemed to me to be so thoroughly contrary to what I had understood to be his considered view about khadi. I, therefore, sent the cutting to the Pandit,[2] and the following is the reply he promptly sent me.

> I attended and spoke at several dozen meetings in Bombay__I have lost count of them—and had no time to see reports. I spoke in Hindustani of course, and reporting was no easy matter—and then condensed reports are apt to be misleading. The report of what I said on khadi, however, was pointed out to me and was corrected the same day or the next day. What I had said was that for many reasons—economic, political, social—khadi was an important item in our present programme and must be encouraged, but that I did not think that it could finally solve our poverty problem, especially if the present social system continued. This system transferred the improvements and additional earnings of the peasant to the landlord. But I pointed out that this theoretical argument did not apply today. For this I said that although I was in favour of big industry, I believed that even with the increase of industrialization there would be considerable room for the development of cottage industries in India. At present, of course, they were even more important from various points of view.

This position may not satisfy the 'whole-hoggers'. But it is vastly different from the misleading report. Such misreporting is the lot of public men, especially in India, where they have to speak in an Indian language which reporters do not always understand and which has invariably to be translated into English for the purpose of transmission by wire. The moral is, the public should wait for authentic

[1] Not reproduced here. This and the other four articles of the series first appeared in *Harijan* and later in the form of a booklet, *The Leprosy Problem.*

[2] *Vide*, "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 21-5-1936

information before believing the so called pronouncements of leaders in important matters.

Form the letters I have received I see that the report created great uneasiness among some khadi workers. To them I should like to give a warning. It is fortunate that, for all practical purposes, what Pandit Jawaharlal actually says is satisfactory. He is too noble to say anything to please anybody if he does not believe in it. The quotation from his letter, therefore, derives added weight from the fact that the helmsman of the Congress holds views favourable to khadi, But khadi workers should know that there are many important public men outside the Congress who decry khadi and would never touch it. They should know too that even in the Congress ranks there are some who do not believe in khadi, who are never tired of ridiculing it, and use it merely as a measure of discipline till they succeed in banishing it from the Congress programme. Khadi has progressed in spite of these obstacles. No doubt it would have made greater progress if we had not such opposition to contend against. It is a matter of very great consolation that Pandit Jawaharlal believes in khadi as he does. But what should khadi workers do if he, on further study, finds it necessary to declare himself against it? I hope that after sixteen years of experience of khadi and its possibilities, we have a sufficient number of confirmed believers whose faith in it is based on thier own knowledge of its working. If it is still a derived faith, the prophecy of a great journalist will undoubtedly come true that on my death khadi will also die and that the wheels that would be broken after the natural event would be sufficient for full cremation of the body.

This nervousness over the false alarm is a portent if it is a token of weak faith of khadi workers. I suggest to them that they examine their own position and if they have doubts about the great economic importance of khadi, let them revise their attitude. In order to help them to carry on the examination, I propose, if at all possible, in the next issue,[1] to put my view of the importance of khadi for India from several points of view.

Harijan, 6-6-1936

[1] *Vide* "Is Khadi Economically Sound?", 20-6-1936.

108. INDIA IN A VILLAGE

I tender my congratulations to the Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee on their decision to hold the next Congress Session at Khirdi, a village near Faizpur—another village in East Khandesh. If the plans are properly laid and preparations undertaken in advance, the Reception Committee will be able to put up a brave show at a comparatively less cost than is usually incurred at these annual national gatherings. The conditions are obvious. The Committee must not aim at reproducing a city in the village. That would be doing violence to the whole conception. They should aim at giving the city people who, let us hope, will gather in their thousands, such hospitality as a model village should be able to supply. In other words, we should see in December a miniature edition of village India in Khirdi. By wise planning the organizers will find that there is practically nothing that a model village cannot supply in the way of hygienic comforts, proper food, proper sanitation, and in case of sickness proper medical aid. These are not to be had today in the generality of villages. Therefore, I have used the expression 'model village'. A model village should lack nothing that is required for healthy living. But everything in a village has to conform to the village scale which need never be shoddy and [has to] be, at the same time, subdued. For lighting, I would suggest electric light, though it may be a long time before our villages are able to have electricity. The whole show should be an object lesson both for villagers and townsfolk. The chief attraction of the Congress will necessarily be the exhibition. The Lucknow Exhibition was undoubtedly a success when one realizes that it was the first effort of its kind. The coming exhibition should be a much greater success and yet, so far as I can see, need not cost as much as the Lucknow Exhibition did. In order that it may become a success, artists, engineers and like professional men will have to volunteer their services free of charge on a larger scale than heretofore. And they will have to approach what to me is a sacred task with the village mentality.

Harijan, 6-6-1936

109. FOR UNCERTIFIED KHADI DEALERS

Unfortunately it has been found that owing to the increased scale of wages that are being offered to hand-spinners on behalf of the A.I.S.A. and a consequent slight rise in the price of a certain style of khadi, several uncertified dealers are selling khadi as if it was certified by the A. I. S. A. and some of them do not even hesitate to defend their unpatriotic and unhumanitarian action on the ground that the A. I. S. A. is not a registered body.[1] In order to ascertain the true legal position instead of relying on his own ancient knowledge of law, Shri Rajagopalachari referred to an eminent lawyer for opinion and this is his decisive opinion:

> I have no doubt that the Tirupur merchant has been wrongly advised as to the law. The law protects unregistered bodies as much as registered bodies in this respect. To use an unregistered name pretending to be somebody that he is not is as much a deceit of the public as it would be if the name had been registered. Registration under a statute may have statutory consequences and protections; but in the protection of the public from deceit there is no distinction between registered and unregistered names. It is absurd *prima facie* that because a name is not registered, he can assume the same name and pass off goods as certified by A. I. S. A. An action will lie for injunction and damages. Injunction you will have. Damages will depend on proof that persons purchased believing the stuff had been made or certified by the A. I. S. A.
>
> If formal opinion with authorities is required I shall get it drawn for you at an early date.
>
> (Sd.) T. R. V. SASTRI
>
> Ooty, 23rd *May, '36*

The eminent lawyer is no other than the ex-Advocate-General of Madras, Shri T. R. Venkatarama Sastriar. I hope that in view of this opinion those dealers who are carrying on unauthorized sales of khadi as if they were authorized by the A. I. S. A. will desist from the practice which has been described as fraudulent. If it becomes necessary, opposed though I am to resort to law-courts, I would not hesitate in the interest of poor dumb spinners to advise legal steps being taken against those who knowingly injure their poor sisters.

Harijan, 6-6-1936

[1] *Vide* "Uncertified Khadi", 11-4-1936

110. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

June [*6*][1]*, 1936*

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. Serve Mirabehn as much as you can. It would have been better if you had been to see Premabehn. Do not undertake anything beyond your capacity. Do not talk too much. Do nothing but bury yourself in work. Do not talk unless it is necessary. I expect you have brought to Segaon only the necessary things.

I hope you are in good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9343. Also C. W. 6618. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

111. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 6, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I have your three letters received by the same post.

Devkapas[2] seed can be had from Bengal and other places. I am writing to Satis Babu.

I do not like the idea of bring [ing] the commode and pot or the desk from Wardha. For commode there should [be] a stool with the middle open and a half tin or a bucket or some such thing. For pot we may use a bottle or keep a village metal pot. For desk something quite cheap and serviceable made in Segaon. There need be no hurry about these things. If you have not quite understood what I want, you may wait till I return. Wooden bedstead may be brought, *lota* also. Stool should be rigged up there. Another cow will be necessary. Consult Chhotelal about it.

Did I tell you the date of departure is not 13 but 12. We reach therefore on 14th, Sunday, D. V.

[1] Illegible in the source. This letter appears to be the one mentioned in the letter to Mirabehn dated June 6, 1936, the following item.

[2] A Variety of cotton

You may expect Lilavati by the time this reaches you. The accompanying is for her.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6345. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9811

112. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

BANGALORE CITY,
June 6, 1936

CHI. AMBUJAM,[1]

Your letter.

I am glad Padma is proving so good and satisfactory. You must not judge sons from what you can say of Kichi[2]. Poor boy! His has been an unfortunate development. Let us hope Padma's goodness well infect Kichi and make him also good.

I am glad you went to Esther. If you found her glad to receive your visit, I would like you to go to her as often as you conveniently can.

I was sorry to hear about Father's continued illness. How nice it would be if he would take nature cure. Mention this to him on my behalf. He ought to pull through and get perfectly well through proper dieting and water and sun treatment.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Bangalore City till 12th.

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

113. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

June 6, 1936

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter of the 29th. You must have got my letter repeating the reply I gave earlier. You did well in returning to milk.

[1] Daughter of S. Srinivasa Iyenagar. This is written in Hindi.
[2] Addressee's son

Take 4 lb. and see. Do you get any fruit there, and do you find time for walks? You seem to have been deeply immersed in serving the family. Never give up your fixed course of prayers, etc. Teach spinning [to the people there]. There are likely to be many singers of the *Ramayana* there. Learn from them the tune in which to recite the *Ramayana*. You can find the time once you have a settled programme. For you have already learnt how to utilize even a short interval of five minutes. You must be getting *Harijanbandhu* if not anything else. Write regularly to Jayaprakash whether you hear from him or not.

You should find a carding-bow.

Write to Mathuradas[1] at Madhubani, P. O. Champaran, so that he may send you what you need.

You should never lose your inner peace in spite of the many outer worries.

I write nothing about Harilal here as I have said much through the Press. Write to Amtul Salaam at Delhi; her address: Harijan Nivas, Kingsway, Delhi.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

At Bangalore City till the 12th and at Wardha on the 14th.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3472

114. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[After *June 6, 1936*][2]

CHI. MIRA,

Yours of 3rd just to hand. Yes, Sejila should have a shed by himself, so as to leave your verandah free. On second thoughts I think it will be wise to bring the commode and the pot from Maganwadi for European visitors. Therefore this is in addition to the plan suggested by me.

[1] Mathuradas Asar, a khadi expert of Sabarmati Ashram who had gone to work in Bihar

[2] From the contents it is evident that this was written after the letter to the addressee dated June 6, 1936; "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 11-10-1935

If you get hold of peacocks, I do not mind. But I know nothing of their habits.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6346. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9812

115. LETTER TO KHWAJA ABDUL MAJID

AS AT WARDHA,
June 7, 1936

Wonderful! I was about to write to you today about another matter when I got your welcome letter. To hear from you is like meeting a long lost friend or brother whichever you will; have both.

In my diconsolateness over Ansari's death I thought of you, Shuaib and Zakir Husain. I decided to write a long letter to Z.[1] I am daily awaiting his reply.

Asaf Ali wrote to me about some memorial. I told him this was not an opportune time politically for a national memorial to so big a man. I gave the same opinion over Motilalji's death. I have in mind not the financial stringency but the political condition. If people spontaneously send money and if we get a large enough sum, we might make some use as a memorial by personal admirers and obligers (cannot find the right word just now). I hold on to the cheque[2] till I hear from you or till we meet.

Your exposition of politics is deeply interesting. *"Et tu, Brute!"* Do not take this literally in its application. How have the mighty fallen? Do you remember your remark at the Ansari Hotel? But I do not blame you. I have nothing but praise for your downright honesty. Yes, we must meet. Do come to Wardha any day after 16th June. You know that at the end of the month the whole Working Committee will be there. But I know you want to discuss the thing first with me. Only therefore the earlier you come the better.

Now for what I was to write about. If you have not seen my public letter about my eldest son's so-called conversion, I enclose a cutting herewith. Read it and let me know your views. Is such a conversion permissible and right? Is all this advertisement the poor

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Zakir Husain", 25-5-1936

[2] The addressee had sent a cheque for Rs. 1, 000 for a memorial to Ansari.

wreck and rake is receiving a proper thing? I have no anger against Harilal. He is hardly responsible for his acts. During the past three months he has gone through many changes. You must know that it is not loafers who are responsible for what has happened and is happening. Those who are accepted as responsible Muslims in society are doing all this. Do study this phenomenon, interest yourself in it for the sake of religion and this unhappy land. If you put a different construction on the event, you will not hesitate to tell me so frankly.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

116. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

June 7, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Do not be alarmed at the reduced prices of the articles sent to you. I asked for it because you were to sell them as swadeshi propaganda and might have to lose on them, too, if you are unable to dispose of them. Let not your princely pride be wounded. You should charge the full selling price plus postage, etc. No idiocy allowed in business matters. For these things you are no *rajkumari* but a simple *sevika* and trustee. I have a copy of the letter and bill sent to you.

Hope you are quite restored.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3578. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6387

117. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

June 7, 1936

CHI. MARY,

I return the letter from Hardwar and retain the other papers sent by you.

Sumitra had left for Nagpur when your letter and mine were received at the Gurukul. I now send them all to you. If Gopal is there, he might know her address.

As to Tara's[1] other papers and things, they should be left untouched till we know what can be done with the will.[2] We have first to trace her relatives who may be interested in her property. The bicycle can certainly be used by Gopal. Similarly you may use the *sita* [*r*].

I fear Dr. Nur Jahan has to be asked to keep her English things

with her for the time being. We reach Wardha [on 14th][3]

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6062 Also C.W. 3392. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

118. LETTER TO GOVIND V. GURJALE

June 7, 1936

MY DEAR GOVINDRAO,

You have given me interesting bits about your activities. May they prosper. Never depart from the golden rule of cutting your cloak according to your cloth. No debts to be incurred.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Bangalore City till 12th.

From a photostat: G.N. 1400

119. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

June 7, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. I am sorry to learn about the sudden death of Prakashmani. Please convey my condolences to his relatives there if any.

Where has Sukirti gone?

[1] Mary Chesley, who died of pneumonia in May 1936, on her way to Badri-Kedar; *vide* "In Memoriam", 23-5-1936

[2] *Vide* "Letter to F. Mary Barr", 24-5-1936

[2] Illegible in the source.

Nothing can be better if looking after the children brings you back to health. How does Rukmini behave now? Do you visit Dr. Ansari's?

Ask Sharma to come there; I have written[1] to him.

Paparamma[2] and Saraswati[3] are arriving here tomorrow morning. There is no question of Kanti going to Harilal now. He has calmed down. You must have read what I have written about Harilal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 616

120. LETTER TO JANKIE AMMAL NAIDOO

[AS AT] WARDHA,
June 8, 1936

MY DEAR JANKIE,

I was delighted to have your letter. It is good Father is coming to India. I wish you too had come. Of course after the rich living of Natal, you may not appreciate the simple life here. And you will be horrified to see the appalling poverty of the villages. That experience would chasten you. However, Father will tell you on his return what India is like.

Yes, all the Phoenixites are well.

Love.

BAPU[4]

[PS.]

Address: M. K. Gandhi
Wardha
India

SHRI JANKIE AMMAL NAIDOO
37 MALLINSON RD., SYDENHAM
DURBAN, NATAL

From a photostat: G.N. 10463

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 5-6-1936
[2] G. Ramachandran's sister.
[3] G. Ramachandran's sisters'daughter.
[4] This is in Tamil script.

121. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

June 8, 1936

CHI. MARY,

I am in no hurry. Do finish your slivers and other urgent work before tackling Tara's box. I wrote[1] yesterday or the day before returning your letter to Sumitrabehn.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6063. Also C.W. 3393. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

122. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

BANGALORE,
June 8, 1936

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have the letters from you both. You must have read of Harilal's exploit. I am not sending you a separate copy of my article as it has appeared in several newspapers. Nor have I anything to add as I have said enough in my article. Ba has been unhappy but bears it very patiently. Kanti is calm. I should have no worry or objection if he reforms himself now.

We shall reach Wardha on the 14th. Tari is still not cured of her ailment, but she is bound to get well if she follows my treatment with patience. All the youngsters here, both boys and girls, are at present busy sight-seeing in this State.

Lakshmi has been keeping indifferent health. She fell ill at Bombay just when Devdas was about to leave for this place.

Ramdas is doing his agency business satisfactorily.

I have not the least grudge against Sushila's going to live in the city. One has to practise self-denial for the children's sake. Without this the latter cannot advance in life. It is just proper that both [the children] are with you. I shall be satisfied if you do not Anglicize them, but bring them up under the influence of dharma. Do not let them forget their mother tongue and also teach them Hindi. I should like them to learn Tamil since you are living there. None of your acts

[1] *Vide* "Letter to F. Barr", 7-6-1936

should encourage in them an infatuation for English. They will acquire a working knowledge of the language. However, if one acquires knowledge through one's mother tongue, one can better understand, digest and utilize it in one's life. But then this is what I think is wise. It is for you to adopt the course that you both find agreeable. There is no question of doing anything merely to please me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4852

123. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

BANGALORE,
June 9, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your exploit in going with drawing-room slippers and missing your way and walking till you were exhausted was worthy of an idiot. You have more than earned the title !

This letter will probably be the last from Bangalore. We leave here on 12th, reaching Wardha 14th.

Yes, Mira is quite well working as hard as she can at my hut. *Vidya hi seva*[1] is quite good. But it is better to have *Seva hi Vidya*[2]. Why not *Vidya Sevayai*, meaning Knowledge for Service? I suppose you will have it somewhat like this:

This as artistically drawn as is possible to do. But you know what I mean.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3730. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6886

[1] "Knowledge itself is service"; the motto was needed for the crest of the Lady Irwin College in Delhi.

[2] "Service itself is knowledge."

124. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 9, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

This will be perhaps my last letter from here. We hope to be in Wardha on 14th inst.

Cartmen seem to be having a fine time there. 50 carts working at a single job simultaneously must be a record for Segaon. I hope they were all local. I expect to see you hale and hearty.

Evidently Balwantsinha and Munnalal were a godsend for you. When I felt like accepting Munnalal's offer and suggested to Balwantsinha to seek your unbroken contact, ,à,¢ª I had no notion you would find them almost indispensable. Anyway, their being with you during your illness and convalescence was a source of great comfort to me.

The Madras basket contained apples. Did you have them? They were all from Janammal.

Love.

BAPU

From the Original: C.W. 6347. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9813

125. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 9, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

You have, I believe, my letter[1] about Kanu. They have all been very busy sight-seeing. We hear from them from time to time. The other day they paid us a visit also. Here is another letter from Prema. You got the earlier too, I hope.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8493. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 5-6-1936

126. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

June 9, 1936

CHI. AMRITLAL,

We expect to reach there on the 14th morning. Attend to the enclosed letters. I hope you are in good health and Bhansali is practising his penance within limits. Of course I remember others, too, but don't write about them to save time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10716

127. TELEGRAM TO RAIHANA TYABJI[1]

BANGALORE,
June 10, 1936

ONE OF MY STAUNCHEST FRIENDS GONE.[2] MOTHER AND YOU WILL FIND ME EQUAL SHARER IN LOSS. FATHER WAS TRULY GRAND OLD MAN OF GUJARAT AND FAITHFUL SERVANT OF NATION WHO KNEW NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HINDU AND MUSLIM. SARDAR AND OTHERS ALL JOIN ME.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-6-1936

128. MESSAGE TO MANJULA M. MEHTA

June 10, 1936

Return with greater purity, kindness, health and self-restraint. I have great expectations of you both. May you prove Doctor's[3] true heirs.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 1602

[1] An almost identical telegram was sent to Mohammed Habib, son-in-law of Abbas Tyabji.

[2] Addressee's father Abbas Tyabji died on June 9, 1936.

[1] Addressee's father-in-law, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

129. INTERVIEW TO ADI-KARNATAKA SANGH

June 10, 1936

Mahatma Gandhi stated that he was in full agreement with the view that no work for the uplift of Harijans could be carried on satisfactorily unless it had their co-operation. No one had emphasized more than he the fact that in the service that they had undertaken, to remove all social and other disabilities in the case of Harijans, they were only discharging a debt of obligation, as they had committed the sin which had doomed the persons to social and other hardships.[1]

He pointed out that the Kengeri Gurukul did not belong to the Harijan Sevak Sangh; and that far from the Kengeri Gurukul excluding Harijans, it expressly served Harijans and took in Harijans whenever they were forthcoming.

The next important thing was that the Conference was one of *savarna* Hindu workers who were going to assemble in order to compare notes, discuss their difficulties, find out their own weaknesses and to organize their work better. The

Conference was one of hereditary sinners who wanted to find out ways and means of repaying the debt they owed to Harijans. How were the Harijans going to help in this Conference? They were certainly welcome to attend it, but how would they help in the deliberations?

D'souza: You may call yourselves debtors but the Harijans cannot help suspecting a superiority complex in all that you do, and you will lend yourselves to the suspicion that instead of devising means to help them you are devising new means to keep them down.

GANDHIJI: If there is suspicion for which there is no ground, I do not mind the suspicion. The *savarnas'* action if it is honest will dispel it. I do not blame the Harijans because they have known nothing better.

A HARIJAN: There is no suspicion. We simply wanted to narrate our hardships.

GANDHIJI: Need you narrate them to me? Don't I know them?

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". P.G. D'Souza, leader of the deputation, among other things pointed out that the Harijan Sevak Sangh took no account of work being done by Harijans who wanted H.S.S. Funds to be made available to them, that if Hindu opposition persisted the Missionaries were bound to accentuate their antagonism, that the Harijans were not being admitted in the Gurukul Ashram at Kengeri, that the Harijan Workers' Conference about to be held was going to be a purely non-Harijan affair and that it was no use concentrating on temple-entry when Harijans' economic and social conditions badly needed improvement.

Don't I proclaim from the house-tops that you have to rise all along the line? No; I want you to understand that it is a conference of sincere sinners. You are all welcome of course, but you will find that the complexion of the meeting is different from what you expect it to be. We are all debtors; we know that we can pay nothing more than small instalments, and that our creditors may be so enraged as to fling those instalments in our faces and kick us out. But we have to tolerate even this if such is to be our lot. For our goal is to pay the principal with interest. When Dr. Ambedkar abuses us, I say that it serves us right. Then sometimes the creditor becomes so great that he does not care for the debt of the debtors. We, however, have to forget everything else and concentrate on repaying the debt. The Shastras say that when the cup of a people's iniquity is full, they perish. Hinduism is a dying cult if it will not purge itself of untouchability and will perish, Ambedkar or no Ambedkar. If our attempt is sincere, I assume you will see no superiority complex among the reformers. I admit that as I see Hinduism, darkness envelops many *savarnas.* They call irreligion religion. Now it is out of this darkness that a very imperfect class of sinners are trying to come out. As regards the condition of some Harijans, I am reminding the *savarnas* day in and day out that it is they the *savarnas* who are responsible for the filthy habits of some of the Harijans. I tell them it is wrong of them to insist on Harijans getting clean before they receive the same status as other Hindus. We have to admit them first and then make them clean. As regards your disabilities, housing conditions, etc., I am pleading with the State. Pray be patient. We may not be able to deliver the goods as quickly as you want us to, but do not question our motives.

D'SOUZA: We thank you for having given us the assurance you have given. We want you to extend to the Harijans the hand of fellowship. A sinner should not behave as though in expressing penitence he was doing some service to God. I want you to get the Harijans direct representation in the Mysore Assembly in proportion to their population. They should be recognized as having attained manhood.

GANDHIJI: For that I must make a suggestion to you. You must displace the present Maharajah and have me as such for a week !

Harijan, 27-6-1936, and *The Hindu,* 11-6-1936

130. SPEECH AT HARIJAN WORKERS' CONFERENCE, KENGERI[1]

June 10, 1936[2]

Whoever conceived the idea of this Conference gave vent to a happy idea and we should be able to make good use of this meeting. Though there are at this Conference representatives invited from all parts of South India, there are others here, too, and instead of confining myself only to the actual work of the delegates, I will make some general observations.

These general observations I shall make for the benefit of the *savarna* Hindus. Let them understand that this movement for the removal of untouchability is different from other current movements in India. So far as I am concerned, and so far as the Harijan Sevak Sangh is concerned, the anti-untouchability movement is not a political movement. Nor is it intended purely for the economic amelioration of the Harijans nor yet for their social regeneration. But this does not mean that we do not aim at the Harijans' social, economic or political advancement. We want all these improvements. If we are honest about our work, progress in these directions is bound to follow from our efforts.

But our goal is quite different from the things I have mentioned just now. It is this: that untouchability is a blot upon Hinduism and must be removed at any cost. Untouchability is a poison which, if we do not get rid of it in time, will destroy Hinduism.

I know that those of you who are outside the ranks of workers and delegates—nay, even some of the workers and delegates—do not realize the real significance of what I am saying. But whether you realize the significance or not, I must continue to express the views which I hold and hold very strongly.

I can see in the continuance of untouchability slow destruction overtaking Hinduism now, and I promise that if you study the thing itself as I am doing, you will observe that the slow disintegration which Hinduism is going through, may become so rapid as to make it impossible for the workers to overcome it.

[1] This was published in *Harijan* under the title "The Inwardness of Harijan Movement."

[2] From *The Hindu*

And why do I say that untouchability is a curse, a blot and a powerful poison that will destroy Hinduism? It is repugnant to our sense of humanity to consider a single human being as untouchable by birth. If you were to examine the scriptures of the world and the conduct of peoples other than Hindus, you would not find any parallel to the untouchability I have brought to your attention just now. I can well understand a person being untouchable whilst he is performing a task which he himself would feel makes him untouchable. For instance, a nurse, who is nursing a patient who is helpless and bleeding and soiling his clothes and suffering from a disease giving out from his body a foul smell, such a nurse whilst she is nursing such a patient is untouchable. But when she has washed herself, she becomes as touchable as ourselves. Not only that. She is not only just as fit to move in society as any of us, but she is also adorable for the profession which she follows. She is worthy of our respect and, so long as we have ranks in our society, she must occupy a very high place amongst us.

Now look at the other side of the picture. Take, for instance, Dr. Ambedkar. He is pronounced as belonging to the Depressed Classes and as being untouchable. Intellectually he is superior to thousands of intelligent and educated caste Hindus. His personal cleanliness is as high as that of any of us. Today he is an eminent lecturer in Law. Tomorrow you may find him a Judge of the High Court. In other words, there is no position in the Government of this country to which he may not aspire and rise, and to which an orthodox Brahmin can rise. But that orthodox Brahmin will be defiled by the touch of Dr. Ambedkar and that because of his unpardonable sin that he was born a Mahar (Untouchable)!

If we had not been habituated to think that untouchability by birth is an integral part of Hinduism, we would not conduct ourselves towards our fellow human beings as many of us conduct ourselves even today.

I know that I have told you nothing new in this my talk to you today. I know I have said this same thing in a much more burning language than I have done today. Yet what I say is not, and will not be, superfluous so long as this simple fact of the need for the removal of untouchability does not affect your understanding or conduct.

Untouchability is a phenomenon which is peculiar to Hinduism only and it has got no warrant either in reason or in the Shastras, and

what little I have studied of the Shastras and what I have been told by people who have made a deeper study of them shows that there is no warrant for untouchability by birth in Hinduism. I have not the time now to go into the Shastric precepts. Nor is it necessary at this time of the day to give you Shastric proofs for my statement. But what is necessary is that if you are satisfied that untouchability is a blot on Hinduism and that there is a danger of its destroying Hinduism, you must set about removing it.

What will you do to remove it? If all of you will say that you have done your duty by declaring that untouchability is a blot on Hinduism, it will be a mockery. It will not be enough even if you in a flush of enthusiasm go to a Harijan and touch him and embrace him, and then forget all about him. It will not do even if you go to the Harijan quarters every day and make it a point to touch a number of Harijans as a token of your conviction.

What is required of you is that you should regulate your day-to-day conduct in such a manner that you make it absolutely evident to the Harijans whom you come across that a better day has dawned for them all.

You will begin by taking the Harijans along with you to the temple if you are in the habit of going to a temple. But if you discover that you will not be allowed into the temple along with your Harijan companions, then if you have the living belief that I have that untouchability is wrong, you will shun that temple as you shun a scorpion or fire. You will then believe with me that such a temple is not inhabited by God. I will take by way of illustration the greatest temple known all over the world, viz., Kashi Vishwanath in Banaras. The Lord who is supposed to reside there is known as the Lord of the Universe. And yet in the very name of that Vishwanath the *savarna* Hindus have today the impudence to say to the Harijans: 'You shall not come to this temple'!

I claim to be as good a Hindu as any orthodox Hindu. I have endeavoured to enforce all precepts of Hinduism in my own life to the best of my ability. I admit that my ability is small. But that does not affect my attitude to and love for Hinduism. Yet, in spite of all that love for Hinduism, with a due sense of my own responsibility I am here to tell you that so long as the doors of the Banaras temple are closed against a single Harijan, Kashi Vishwanath does not reside in that temple and I could not possibly approach that temple with a

belief in its sanctity or in the faith that by worshipping there I should be purified of my sins. I can have no sense of piety in respect of such a temple. And what is true of Kashi Vishwanath is true of every other temple in India which bars its doors to Harijans. It applies of course to all such temples in South India, including the Guruvayur temple.

Thank God, the gates of the Guruvayur temple are closed to me. But even supposing the trustees of that temple, or whoever is in authority there, gave me permission to enter that temple, I could not possibly avail myself of it so long as members of the Harijan community are shut out. Unless every one of you here begins in the way I have pointed out, he has not removed untouchability from his heart.

It is absolutely of no consequence that a vast majority of Harijans are uninterested in our campaign. Only this morning Mr. D'Souza, leading a deputation of Harijans,[1] told me that the Harijans were not so interested in temple-entry as in their political and economic ameliora-tion and perhaps a rise in their social status. Naturally, they cannot think otherwise. For we are responsible for deadening their sense of unity with us and their desire to worship in common with us in our temples.

Therefore I say that the God of Hinduism is really non-existent for them. It is true that the God of Hinduism is not different from the God in Islam or Christianity. Only the mode of worship is peculiar to each religion. If Harijans because of our own sins—our own unpardonable treatment of them—have been taught to consider that the temples visited by *savarnas* are not for them, you could not blame them for their indifference in this matter. Force of habit has made them indifferent. That Harijans in Travancore and other parts of India have still got the desire to enter the temples and claim the same rights as other Hindus, is a good thing and a comforting thing, but it does not affect my argument.

There is another aspect of the opening of temples to Harijans which you must not fail to realize. If you open your temples to Harijans because they demand that they shall be so opened, you will not be doing any great thing. But if you open the temples to them because of a sense of sin for which you should atone, it becomes a religious act. I should insist on Hindu temples being thrown open to

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

Harijans even if the Harijans in India were converted to another religion and there was only one Harijan left in the Hindu fold. It is this religious attitude that isolates the Harijan question from all other questions, and gives it a special importance. If our present programme was merely one of policy or political expediency, it would not have the religious significance that it has for me. If it was demonstrated to me to my satisfaction that the political or economic regeneration of Harijans would be enough to retain the Harijans in the Hindu fold, I should still want to open the temples and remove every trace of inequality. Because for me it is, as it must be for you, a question of repentance and reparation for the wrong we have done to our fellowmen.

Thus the threat of the conversion of Harijans to other religions which is agitating so many Hindus today, has no bearing on our duty to Harijans. If we begin to quicken our activities, because of the threat of conversion, then such opening will lose the significance which I have outlined. I promise you that Hinduism will not be saved by such means.

Hinduism can only be saved when it has become purified by the performance of our duty without the expectation of any return whatsoever from the Harijans. Nothing less than that can possibly save Hinduism. If you do something by Harijans as a matter of expediency or political manoeuvre, you have not rid yourselves of untouchability in your hearts. There will come many occasions when that poison will erupt on the Hindu social organism to such an extent that we shall be confounded. If we are ashamed of untouchability, we must shed it, no matter what results follow or may not follow.

I become impatient when *savarna* Hindus tell me from their platform of high superiority that they will remove un-touchability when Harijans give up their habits of drinking, eating carrion, un-cleanliness, etc. Suppose my father, mother, son or daughter were lepers, can I say that I will touch him or her only when he or she had got rid of leprosy? I will be false to our sacred tie if I do not serve him or her in his or her need. The position regarding Harijans is infinitely worse, because we ourselves are responsible for the condition to which Harijans have been reduced. For their drinking, eating carrion, and other unclean habits we are directly responsible. Therefore, if we are true, we have to embrace them in spite of their shortcomings; and I hope, not without foundation, that immediately you adopt an attitude

of mind looking upon the Harijans as your brothers they will change their habits. People who had experience in this direction will confirm this statement. It is therefore first necessary that *savarna* Hindus should purify their hearts and change their attitude towards Harijans.

I would ask you, please, not to fling in my face bad cases you may have come across—cases where you befriended Harijans and they refused to improve.

But having uttered this word of caution, I want to give you my evidence. I do not know a single Harijan adopted by a Hindu who has not reformed himself. As a matter of fact, it cannot be otherwise. The Harijan is bound to feel the change to be too good to be true. The novel experience of his improved surroundings will enable him to get rid of the craving for drink or carrion-eating. As for cleanliness it is a question of facilities made available to him. It is merely the cussedness of the *savarna* Hindus that employs the arguments about the uncleanliness of the Harijans, so that they themselves need not act correctly.

I will close with a material thought. I have told you exactly my views of the duty of every *savarna* Hindu to Harijans. There are many more things that the *savarna* Hindu can do in his own personal conduct.

But I know that there will be a lot of discussion among members assembled here as to how to conduct the work of Harijan Sevak Sanghs without money. I say to such delegates that the fear comes out of their own want of faith. We want to move not half a dozen *savarna* Hindus, we want to touch the hearts of millions of *savarna* Hindus. Paupers though we are, we find that no Hindu temple has ever to be closed for want of funds. I invite you to study this phenomenon. But do not run away with the false idea that millions of Hindus always pay to their temples merely out of superstition. There may be a partial truth in that statement. But it is only a partial truth. The better part of the truth is that the people who support these temples by their offerings of pice or rice or coconut or *supari*[1], do so because of an indefinable faith that they are doing an act of piety. And I tell you that you will not be doing justice to yourselves, or to India or to humanity, if you will characterize these things as superstition. I know that superstition is a long-lived thing. There are many monsters of

[1] Areca-nut

superstition which have been given a long rope by the Almighty. But however long their life, it is nothing in the cycle of time. The better half of the truth is that there is some-thing undoubtedly holy and true about the faith that takes millions to the temples. If you have faith in the piety of the dumb humanity who support these temples, and faith in your mission, each of you will become little temples and gather pice or rice from the people.

If you remain content with the lazy delusion that a few millionaires like Ghanshyamdas Birla will always send money to you for your work, I assure you that the movement is bound to fail. You will never be able to bring this movement to a successful conclusion unless you realize the need to go to the dumb millions and collect pice or even their rice as a token of their conviction that untouchability is a sin to be got rid of.

Never mind if it takes time before you are successful. Whether it takes a few years or ages you must have unbounded faith that it is the only way to convert *savarna* Hindus and bring this message to every Hindu home. Know that time never runs against Truth. And this is the downright truth: You have to get rid of untouchability or perish. Only those become impatient who want to prop up a mission about whose correctness they have a doubt. Have faith that when all the forces that are arrayed against us—and they are mighty forces—have died down, there is still this movement which will go on to purify Hinduism. But if you lose heart, courage and faith and become too lazy to remain on the watch-tower, do not blame people for not paying. The movement will perish not because of external forces but because of internal weakness. I urge every worker to approach the problem in this light.

Harijan, 20-6-1936

131. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

BANGALORE,
June 11, 1936

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

When you go for change of air or take other cures it never occurs to me that you do it out of attachment for life. The body is a field of duty. We must maintain it by taking proper care of it and for that reason you should take all the necessary treatment. I am greedy to take a lot of service from you and that is one of the reasons why I

make you wander from place to place. As long as you are weak you will have to take service from others wherever you are. I do not see any harm in it if it is done with humility in the name of God. The idea behind it after all is that if God grants you health it will be utilized only for rendering service. My advice therefore is that you should not obstruct the improvement of your health by entertaining any kind of worries.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

132. LETTER TO VALLABH

June 11, 1936

CHI. VALLABH,

Mahadev has already briefly answered your two letters yesterday. "Vallabh" is all right. If you want to add anything to it, I would suggest "das"[1]. First, because it is a simple suffix and secondly because we have voluntarily accepted the dharma of service and also because, the varnas having vanished, we are Shudras. Moreover, Vallabhdas is generally a name given to sadhus. Let everyone in the Ashram abuse you in just by calling you Swami but outside merely Vallabh or Vallabhdas will be proper. You do not want to become 'bhai'so you are only a half rival of Sardar. You should remain so.

Both of you are certainly servants. Let him be a 'Sardar'; you always remain a "das"

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

133. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

June 11, 1936

DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

It was very good you wired. For us, Abbajan is always alive. This body is but a play lasting "a few days"[2]. However, the *atman* living within is immortal. His body we consigned to the tomb. Our association with it was momentary. He who had taken on the body and whom we loved as our own is no doubt even now watching us. May he witness all our acts, and save us from doing anything unworthy.

It was good that nearly the whole family was present at the time.

[1] A servant

[2] From a *ghazal* by Nazir Akbarabadi

Please offer condolences on my behalf to all. Who will console me? You know the bond between us.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

134. INTERVIEW TO M. V. JAMBUNATHAN

June 11, 1936

Gandhiji appreciated the efforts of Mr. Jambunathan[1] in publishing an Urdu-Hindi dictionary and gave a few suggestions to make his work more exhaustive and more complete.

Referring to the Urdu-Hindi controversy, Gandhiji said it was due more to the mentality of the Hindus and Muslims of the present generation than the scripts themselves.

The Hindu, 13-6-1936

135. DISCUSSION AT HARIJAN WORKERS' CONFERENCE, KENGERI[2]

[*June 11, 1936*][3]

Q. You were rather hard in your speech[4] about the temples. The *savarna* orthodoxy feels that we have no faith in the temples and your remark will support their feeling.

A. You are begging the question when you say that *savarnas* feel that we have no faith in their temples. They are *our* temples as much as theirs. My remarks were addressed to those who have faith in the temples. We do not create any hostile feeling in the *savarnas* by saying that God had left temples whose doors were barred against Harijans. For God there is the God of *our* creation. If it was God of His own creation, He would say: "Fools!Do you not see me everywhere?" But God is good enough to forget that we are fools,

[1] Of the Mysore University
[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter".
[3] From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary.
[4] *Vide* "Speech at Harijan Workers'Conference, Kengeri", 10-6-1936

and thinks that we have enshrined Him in order to purge corruption from our hearts. But when we discover that God whom we had enshrined in our temples permitted a class of His devotees to be regarded as untouchables, we said God had fled from such temples. I therefore say we must not visit the temples that forbid the entry of Harijans, and after we have finished with the members of our families we should go out with the same advice to others.

Q. Is the Harijan Sevak Sangh entitled to fight caste as we know it, since untouchability cannot go without the present caste going?

A. Untouchability has to go in its entirety, but so far as the Sangh as a body is concerned we have confined its work to the removal of the extreme form of untouchability. Therefore we do not begin with an attack on caste, though most of the members individually do not believe in and have discarded from their lives all caste restrictions about food and marriage.

Q. Shall we ever at some stage have to attack caste?

A. Why not? We recognize our limits and have thus restricted the rate of our progress. When we have got confidence we can change the creed of our Sangh and go a step further. Individuals, as I have said, have gone further. So far as restrictions about intermarriage and inter-dining are concerned, they are no part of varnashramadharma. Both of them are individual matters. No Shastra can compel me to feed or marry or refuse to do so with particular individuals. I urge you to recognize the fundamental distinction between our own personal conduct and the policy of the Sangh, which can only be changed in accordance with its constitution.

Q. There were places where Harijans had as a result of the present awakening given up handling dead animals and their disposal. There were places where Harijan reformers had to ask their Harijan brethren to give up the work, if only to give up carrion. In some places these had incurred the wrath of the *savarna* Hindus who had declared a boycott against them and stopped all social amenities. What were the Harijan *sevaks* to do?

A. It is our duty to protect the Harijans wherever such a thing happens, and if life is made difficult for them, we should help them to migrate to some more hospitable neighbourhood. But the best thing is for Harijan *Sevaks* to find out from amongst *savarna* reformers, including themselves, men ready to learn the art of curing hides and tanning. There are tanneries where all the processes from the skinning of carcasses to tanning are taught, and if we have many *savarnas*

ready to do this work the awakened Harijans will not fight shy of it. But they have every right to abandon the work and take up anything else, and wherever they will not take charge of it we must take it up ourselves. Let us make the community realize the terrible waste of wealth that is going on from day to day. If we knew the science of dealing with carcasses, we should find that often a carcass pays more than the animal being worn out and starved would have fetched when alive. For the dead flesh can be turned into fine manure; the bones need to be simply charred in order to be turned into rich manure, they are also used to make buttons, handles, etc.; fat which can be easily preserved is precious for various purposes; the intestines are valuable for guts for carding-bows and musical instruments.

Q. But in our place a curious situation has arisen. The Harijan community is strong, and they have resolved to face even social boycott. There is only a small minority of Harijans who are in favour of continuing the work of the disposal of carcasses. What advice am I to give them?

A. Of course they should be free to continue their calling.

Q. Even at the risk of being boycotted by their own community?

A. No. Then we should not divide the community.

Q. Have we given up the Temple-entry Bill? Can't we take it up again?

A. We have not given it up. It will be taken up as soon as the conditions are propitious.

Q. Can't we make greater provision in the budget for propaganda?

A. No. If I could help it, I should not permit even 5 per cent of the budget for propaganda. But if you must expend money on propaganda, you may collect money specially for propaganda, but even then the Sangh will ask you to account for every pie you have spent.

Q. In our work we find the existence of sub-castes and untouchability among Harijans themselves a very great barrier. How are we to break the barrier?

A. By removing sub-castes and untouchability from ourselves. The Harijans are simply imitating their masters. We have kept them as slaves and taught them to imitate us. And you must remember that an imitator improves on the original, i.e., he disfigures it.

Q. Don't you think that the whole Harijan problem is in the last analysis an economic problem, and that the moment you improve the Harijans'economic status you solve the problem?

A. No. You may solve the economic problem, but unhappily the Harijan problem, which is essentially that of the eradication of a disease in Hinduism, will not be solved thereby. Dr. Ambedkar who is economically much better off than most of us is still regarded as an untouchable.

Q. A worker, apparently an iconoclast, seemed to be impatient of some of the forms of worship among Harijans--including even their worship of Rama and Krishna— and naively said: "I know that they worship sticks and stones, even when they say they worship Rama and Krishna. And worship of these, however great they may be, does not inspire me. May I ask them to regard you as an incarnation of God and worship you, as I do?"

Amidst the laughter of all present Gandhiji calmly replied:

A. There is this difficulty staring me in the face: I am, you must know, an idol of mud, and those who seem to you to be revolting as ideals are my revered ideals. The names of Rama and Krishna fill me and Krishna fill me with hope. So I would advise you to break your incarnation—me—to pieces. That will be better than condemning Rama and Krishna which is nothing short of violence to Hinduism and to religion.

"But", replied the friend, "Rama and Krishna were human beings."

You think I am such a fool as to worship Rama and Krishna who existed ages ago? I worship Rama and Krishna who exist today, who have existed for all time, who know my innermost thoughts and who continually correct me. If I were not sure of my Rama and Krishna, existing on both sides of me, I should have gone mad with Sjts. X and Y and questioners like you.

"But", put in C.R.[1], "this explanation may not improve matters. He might regard you as an inearnation all the more for this explanation !"

Well, then I must remind you, young man, that if you are confirmed in your opinion that I am an incarnation you will find that one day I am no more. Will then God disappear for you?

But Christians also worship Christ?

Let me tell you that Christians worship the Christ who was resurrected. In the same manner those who worship Rama and Krishna worship Rama and Krishna who are more living than you are, or certainly more living than I am. They live now and will live until eternity. If ideals of Rama and Krishna are revolting to you, you

[1] C. Rajagopalachari

should advise Harijans to forsake Hinduism, for I am quite sure that if a man does not believe in Rama and Krishna as God he is not a Hindu. A Muslim who says he does not believe in his *Kalema* will be hounded out of Muslim company. Do not then ask me, if I worship Rama who killed Shambuka and *k*rishna about whom we hear all kinds of legends. I worship the living Rama and Krishna, the incarnation of all that is True and Good and Perfect.

Harijan, 4-7-1936

136. DISCUSSION WITH A HARIJAN COUPLE[1]

[On or before *June 12, 1936*][2]

Not knowing that they were Harijans, Gandhiji asked:

You are a married couple? What have you brought for me?

"We have brought flowers", the bridegroom said.

But flowers won't do. You are married and would you ask me to be satisfied with flowers only?

Sir, we have brought grapes too.

The grapes are sour. Can't accept grapes, can't accept flowers. Go and consult together and decide what to give me for the poor Harijans.

"We are ourselves Harijans", they exclaimed, and Sjt. Ramachandra put in on their behalf: "Bapuji, he is Dewan Bahadur Srinivasan's grandson."

For a moment Gandhiji paused, as he had forgotten that the Dewan Bahadur was a Harijan. and then said:

I see, I see. Then it is not *you* who should give, but I should give you something.

We have come to have your blessings.

Of course you have them. Now tell me, are you happy in Hinduism, or will you give up the wretched religion?

We are perfectly happy and we will never give up Hinduism.

May I then proclaim to the world that Dewan Bahadur Srinivasan's grandson and granddaughter-in-law are happy in Hinduism?

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter".

[2] According to the source, this and the following discussion took place at Bangalore where Gandhiji was till June 12, 1936.

Please do. We are perfectly happy.

"May we touch your feet?" Both did so and received hearty thumps on the back—Gandhiji's favourite way of giving blessings to those nearest to him.

Harijan, 27-6-1936

137. DISCUSSION WITH A POLISH STUDENT[1]

[On or before *June 12, 1936*]

[STUDENT:] I am keenly interested in rural reconstruction. There is at... [2] a school conducted by Catholic Fathers. I shall help the school from the proceeds of the sale of this photograph[3].

Returning the photograph Gandhiji said:

Ah, that is a different story. You do not expect me to support the Fathers in their mission of conversion? You know what they do?

And with this he told him... the story of the so-called conversions in the vicinity of Tiruchengodu, the desecration and demolition of the Hindu temple, how he had been requested by the International Fellowship of Faiths to forbear writing anything about the episode as they were trying to intervene, how ultimately even the intervention of that body composed mainly of Christians had failed, and how he was permitted to write about it in *Harijan*. He, however, had deliberately refrained from writing, in order not to exacerbate feelings on the matter.

"But", said the student, "the Christians among whom the Fathers I mention are working became Christians long ago."

Well, there they foment fresh troubles. I do not know why the professors of a noble faith should assist in creating deadly quarrels between two sections of the same faith.

But I myself am a Christian convert. I cannot tell you the happiness and the solace that Christianity has meant to me.

I can understand that. You are using the language of a truly converted Christian. You have a heart to lose or to keep. If the Harijans in India reach your intellectual and spiritual level, and experience your sense of original sin, I would bless them for voluntarily embracing Christianity. Have you read what I have written on my son's so-called conversion to Islam? If he had become a

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter".
[2] Omission as in the source.
[3] On which the student wanted Gandhiji's autograph.

Muslim from a pure and a contrite heart, I should have no quarrel with him. But those who had helped him to embrace Islam and are enthusing over his apostasy simply exploited his weaknesses. Theyare no true representatives of Islam. My letter to the Muslims, I tell you, was written with my pen dipped in my heart's blood. Similarly there is no redeeming feature about the Tiruchengodu conversions I have spoken to you about.[1]

Harijan, 27-6-1936

138. ADVISE TO HINDI WORKERS[2]

BANGALORE,
June 12, 1936

Gandhiji advised Hindi *pracharakas* who are imbued with a sense of service, not to fritter away their energies in all possible spheres, but to confine themselves to the one work they had undertaken.

Gandhiji observed that it was quite possible for anybody, man or woman, to attain full mental development through the mother tongue alone and he considered all those who did not agree with the view as being guilty of treachery against their mother tongue. Even if Sir Venkata Raman were to say that he could not explain his researches in his mother tongue, Gandhiji would ask him to keep his Nobel Prize and Knighthood to himself.

The Hindu, 12-6-1936

139. SPEECH AT HARIJAN WORKERS' CONFERENCE, KENGERI[3]

June 12, 1936

We should do nothing having in view the threat of conversions. For I am sure that everything that you will do merely to stop them will fail of its purpose. Conversions or no conversions, we have to redouble our efforts in order to remove all the disabilities under which

[1] Here Mahadev Desai remarks: "The young man could see the deep pain with which Gandhiji was speaking. He did not press him to give the autograph and took his leave."

[2] More than 100 Hindi workers, including about 30 women drawn from all parts of the State, met Gandhiji in the morning.

[3] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter".

Harijans are labouring. The reaction that we should do something because of the threat of conversions was bound to take place as we are human beings. We may therefore take note of the fact but do no fact but do nothingbecause of it. If we redouble our efforts because of the threat, we shall slacken our efforts immediately the threat is carried out, or the moment we find that the threat was empty. Either way, if we slacken our effort we shall be harming the cause. Harijans will feel that the whole of our agitation was, like a soda-water bottle affair, momentary, and that there is now going to be nothing more. Our movement is essentially religious and independent of political vicissitudes. There can, therefore, be only greater and greater dedication on our part. What shall we, then, a handful of us do for the cause, when we find that thousands and thousands of our people are wholly indifferent and will do nothing beyond passing a few resolutions? Somehow or other they do not feel that these resolutions are addressed to them individually. Years ago eloquent speeches used to be made on swadeshi, but speakers did not feel that they were bound to carry out what they said. They took shelter under the phrase 'as far as possible'. There is no 'as far as possible'on the question of untouchability. If it is to go, it must go in its. entirety, from the temples as from everywhere else. So if the thousands who passed the resolutions in Travancore were serious when they raised their hands, no power on earth can prevent the entry of Harijans to temples. Those of us, therefore, who are working for the removal of untouchability must convince the Harijans of our *bona fides*. I have, however, a suspicion that all who have come here are not as thorough in their action as they should be. Most of you do not go far enough in identifying yourselves with the Harijans'difficulties. You will say, 'We belive in the removal of untouchability only to the extent of the Harijan Sevak Sangh programme.'If Harijan workers take shelter under this 'thus far and no further', it will be difficult to convince Harijans that we are sincere. Naturally Harijans want to have positive proofs of daily increasing progress. They want to rise to the highest status that a Hindu is capable of. I ask you, therefore, not to leave this conference without discussing the difficulties that face us. If all our workers were capable of making cent per cent delivery of goods and of becoming cent per cent Harijans voluntarily, it would be well with us.

I do not want to blame anyone, I am simply thinking aloud, and when Ramachandran wanted me to say what should be done I could not put the thing more concretely. It is a question of ourselves feeling

the thing. This cannot happen except with the conviction that if untouchability does not go Hinduism will perish. I would go even further and say: 'I would pray that a religion which damns any human beings because they were born in a particular section should perish.'And I want you, if you feel with me, to pray that it ought to perish if this blot on humanity is not removed. That points to the necessity of our becoming Harijans in every sense of the term. Does it mean that we should start eating carrion or drinking or living filthily? No, we must feel miserable whenever they feel miserable, and try to remove all that makes them miserable , Let us never say their misery is due to their karma, but let us say we have made up our minds to discharge at least a portion of our debts to them. Let us ask ourselves every morning if we have done anything in discharge of that debt. Unless we do this all our resolutions will be a fruitless effort.

Q. What is to be our attitude to those who want to come back to Hinduism?

A. We shall simply say to them:'You are perfectly welcome,'but you will offer no inducements to those you expect to win back by doing so.

Q. Oh no. That is out of the question. I was wondering if you would approve of any purification ceremony.

A. No purification ceremony is necessary. If they had become converts wantonly, they will regretfully come back, in which case those who take them back may ask them to do some *shuddhi*. I would simply ask them to take Ramanama a hundred times.

Q. Won't you object to a Harijan sevak attending a voluntary *shuddhi* ceremony of this character?

A. I see no objection to his attending such a ceremony, but let him be clear that *Shuddhi* is no part of the Harijan Sevak Sangh's programme, and also he should be sure that the man wanting to be reconverted was doing so absolutely freely and without the offer of any inducement. The question is: Are you convinced of the downright sincerity of the man wanting to be reconverted? If you are, do everything to befriend him.

Harijan, 4-7-1936

140. CONVOCATION ADDRESS AT HINDI PRACHAR SABHA, BANGALORE[1]

[*June 12, 1936*] [2]

I had no idea that when I promised to give you half an hour this evening I was going in for an elaborate function and should have to give you more time than I had bargained for. Not that I should not have liked to give you more time. If it had been possible I should certainly have given you two hours, examined you in Hindi, done a little business by asking for contributions for Hindi propaganda, and possibly for your ornaments. But that was not to be. Within a couple of hours I shall be leaving Bangalore. That however, does not mean that those who want to contribute may not do so after I have left.

I congratulate those who have won their diplomas and certificates today. I hope they will keep up their studies and go on adding to their knowledge every day. Those who go to ordinary schools and colleges go there for a career, read their books for examinations and the moment they leave their examination-hall forget the books along with what they have learnt from them. Many care more for degrees than for knowledge. But those who have won their diplomas today have not done so for the sake of diplomas, for the obvious reason that the Institution for the Propagation of Hindi does not aim at helping you to win jobs. The diplomas and degrees conferred on you are meant only as proof of the knowledge your teachers have imparted to you. It is quite possible, of course, for a few of you to earn your livelihood from your Hindi studies, but that certainly is not our object.

It delights my hearts that a majority of the successful candidates today are members of the fair sex. That indicates a bright future for Hindi *prachar* and for Mother India, for I am firmly of opinion that India's salvation depends on the sacrifice and enlightenment of her women. In many of the women's meetings I used to address, I emphasized the fact that when we wanted to speak of our ancient heroes and heroines or gods and goddesses we would name the latter first, e.g., Sita Rama, Radha Krishna and not Rama Sita or Krishna Radha. This practice is not without its significance. Women used to be

[1] Published in *Harijan* under the title " The Question of Hindi". Gandhiji presided over the Convocation, which was attended among others by Srinivasa Sastri, C. Rajagopalachari and Satyamurti.

[2] From *The Hindu,* 13-6-1936.

honoured and their work and worth were regarded of special value. Let us continue the tradition in its letter and spirit.

I shall take this occasion to give you a few obvious reasons why Hindi or Hindustani alone can be the national language. So long as you live in Karnataka ,and do not look out of it, a knowledge of Kannada is enough for you. But a look at any one of your villages is enough to show that your outlook and your'horizon have widened, you no longer think in terms of Karnataka but in terms of India. Events outside Karnataka interest you, but the interest cannot obviously go very far, without a common medium of expression. How is a Karnataka man to establish and maintain contact with men from Sind or U.P.? Some of our people have held and perhaps still hold that English can be this medium. If it was a question of a few thousands of our educated people, English would certainly do. But I am sure none of you will be satisfied with that. You and I want millions of people to establish interprovincial contacts, and they cannot obviously do so through English for generations to come, if ever. There is no reason why they should all learn English, and it certainly is no sure or substantial means of winning a livelihood. Its value for this object will, if anything, become less and less as more people come to learn it. Then Hindi-Hindustani offers no difficulty in studying as English must. Study of it is never going to take the time that study of English would do. It has been estimated that the number of Hindus and Mussalmans speaking and understanding Hindi-Hindustani exceeds 200 million. Would not the 11 millions of men and women of Karnataka like to learn a language that is spoken by 200 millions of their own brothers and sisters? And can they not very easily learn it? The answer is supplied by a fact I noticed very strikingly a moment ago. You have all listened to a Kannada translation of Lady Raman's Hindi speech. You could not but have noticed that the translation adopted unaltered quite a large number of words which Lady Raman had used in her Hindi speech—words *like prem, premi, sangha, sabha, adhyaksha, pada, ananta, bhakti, swagata, adhyakshata, sammelan*. All these words are common to Hindi and Kannada. Now supposing someone was translating Lady Raman's speech into English, could he have retained any of these words? By no means,. The English equivalent of every one of these words would be new to the listeners. When therefore our Kannada friends say that Hindi is difficult for them, they amuse me no less than they make me angry and impatient. I am sure it is a matter of a few hours'careful study for a month. I am 67 and have not many years before me, but I assure you that when I listened to the Kannada translation I felt as though I should not take more than eight days to learn Kannada if I gave a few

hours to it each day. With the exception of half a dozen, like the Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri and myself, all of you here are quite young. Have you not energy enough to devote to a study of Hindi four hours each day for just one month? Do you think it is too much to devote this time to cultivate a contact with 200 millions of your own countrymen? Now suppose those of you who do not know English decided to learn English. Do you think any one of you would be able to learn the language in a month by devoting four hours to it each day? By no means. The reason why Hindi is so ridiculously easy is that all the languages, including even the four South Indian spoken by Hindus in India contain a large number of Sanskrit words. It is a matter of history that contact in the old days between the South and the North used to be maintained by means of Sanskrit. Even today the *shastris* in the South hold discourses with the *shastris* in the North through Sanskrit. The difference in the various vernaculars is mainly of grammar. In the North Indian languages even the grammatical structure is identical. The grammar of the South Indian languages is of course vastly different, and even their vocabularies, before they came under the influence of Sanskrit, were equally different. But now even these languages have adopted a very large number of Sanskrit words, so much so that I have not found it difficult, whenever I have gone South, to get a gist of what was being said in all the four languages.

I come now to our Mussalman friends. They know the vernaculars of their provinces as a matter of course and Urdu in addition. There is no difference whatsoever between Hindi and Urdu or Hindustani. The grammar is common to both, it is only the script that makes the difference, and when one comes to think of it one finds that the three words Hindi, Hindustani and Urdu denote only one. language. If we were to refer to the lexicons of these languages, we should find that most of the words are the same. For them, therefore, barring the question of script which will adjust itself, there is no difficulty whatsoever.

To return therefore, to where I began, if your horizon goes as far as Srinagar in the North and Cape Comorin in the South, Karachi in the West and Dibrugarh in the East—as indeed it should—there is for you nothing for it but to learn Hindi. English, I have shown to you, cannot be our lingua franca. I have no prejudice against English. A knowledge of English is necessary for a few scholars, it is necessary for international contacts, and for a knowledge of the sciences pursued in the West. But I am pained when an attempt is made to give

English a place it cannot take. That attempt, I have no doubt, is bound to fail. Everything looks proper in its own place.

There is a scare of which I should like to disabuse your minds. Is Hindi to be taught at the expense of Kannada? Is it likely to oust Kannada? On the contrary, I claim that the more we propagate Hindi the more shall we stimulate a study of our vernaculars and even improve their power and potency. I say this from my experience of different provinces.

A word about the question of script. Even when I was in South Africa, I thought that all the languages derived from Sanskrit should have Devanagari script, and I am sure that even the Dravidian languages could be easily learnt through the Devanagari script. I have tried to learn Tamil and Telugu through the Tamil and Telugu scripts, as also Kannada and Malayalam, for a few days, through their respective scripts. I tell you I was frightfully upset over having to learn four scripts when I could see that if the four languages had a common script—Devanagari—I should learn them in no time. What a terrible strain it is on those like me who are anxious to learn the four languages? As between the speakers of the four South Indian vernaculars, does it need any argument to show that Devanagari would be the most convenient script for the speaker of one to learn the other three? The question of Hindi as lingua franca need not be mixed up with the question of script, but I have referred to this simply in order to point out the difficulty of those who want to know all the Indian languages.

Hirijan, 27-6-1936

141. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

BANGALORE,
June 12, 1936

I believe Sjt. Kodanda Rao to be incapable of having made the claims attributed to him. viz., of being a Congress representative or my 'envoy'[1] I consider him to be too straightforward a man to make any such claim.

[1] P. Kodanda Rao of the Servants of India Society was on a visit to Trinidad.

I do not know anything about his views on Hindi, but I must decline to believe the statement put into his mouth that Hindi is of no use for Indians overseas, or that he advised the educational authorities there that they should not listen to any such claim put forth by Indian settlers. I should be sorry if it is found that he holds these views, because I think it is absolutely essential for Indian settlers not only not to forget their mother tongue but to keep themselves in touch with the literature and growth of Hindi.

The Hindu, 13-6-1936

142. A WITNESS FROM AMERICA

Miss Mabel E. Simpson of Montana (U. S. A.) writes to the Editor:

> I wish to express my appreciation of your publication. What it lacks in size it more than makes up in quality. I greatly enjoyed Mr. Gandhi's article on birth-control displaying his usual clear insight into the heart of things. If he had visited America twenty years ago when birth-control was disapproved and now when it is in full swing, he would know that it brings moral deterioration. But he would not be able to convince anybody of it, for it also brings a blindness to both moral and spiritual perception that makes it impossible for its followers to discern with sensitivity along high moral and spiritual lines. If India follows the West in this it will surely lose two of its most. priceless and beautiful jewels: affection for little children and reverence for parenthood. America has lost both—and does not know it. Could you print a statement of the meaning of *brahmacharya*? I have been asked about it and while I have an idea I am not sure enough to attempt to explain it to others. Thank you.

The reader may place what value he or she chooses on this piece of evidence. I suggest however that such evidence against the use of contraceptives is worth far more than that of those who claim to derive benefit from their use. The reason is obvious. The benefit in the sense that advent of children is often checked is not denied. What is contended is that the moral harm the use does is incalculable. Miss Simpson has given us a measure of such harm.

Now for the definition—the meaning—of *brahmacharya*. Its root meaning may be given thus: that conduct which puts one in touch with God.

The conduct consists in the fullest control over all the senses. This is the true and relevant meaning of the word.

Popularly it has come to mean mere physical control over the organ of generation. This narrow meaning has debased *brahmacharya* and made its practice all but impossible. Control over the organ of generation is impossible without proper control over all the senses. They are all interdependent. Mind on the lower plane is included in the senses. Without control over the mind mere physical control, even if it can be attained for a time, is of little or no use.

Harijan, 13-6-1936

143.WHERE IS THE LIVING GOD?

The following is taken from a letter form Bengal.[1]

I had the privilege to go through your article[2] on birth-control with the heading 'A Youth's Difficulty'.

With the original theme of your article, I am in full agreement. But, in that article, you have expressed in a line your sentiment on God. You have said that it is the fashion nowadays for young men to discard the idea of God and they have no *living* faith in a *living* God.

But, may I ask what proof (which must be positive and undisputed) can you put forth regarding the existence of a God? Hindu philosophers or ancient *rishis*[3], it seems to me, in their attempt to describs the *swarupa* or reality of *Ishwara* have at last come to the conclusion that He is indescribable and veiled in *maya* and so on.... I do not dare to deny that a true Mahatma like you or Sri Aurobindo, or the Buddha and Sankaracharyas of the past, may well conceive and realize the existence of such a God, who is far beyond the reach of ordinary human intellect.

But, what have we (the general mass), whose coarse intellect can never penetrate into the unfathomable deep, to do with such a God if we do not feel His presence in our midst?...

So, it is not at all surprising that young men of the present day do not believe in a God, because they do not want to make a *supposition* of God—they want a *real living God*. You have mentioned in your article of a *living* faith in a *living God*. I shall feel highly gratified and I think you will be rendering a great benefit to the young world, if you put forth some positive, undeniable proofs of the existence of God. I have the confidence that you will

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.
[2] *Vide* "A Youth's Difficulty", 25-4-1936
[3] Seers

not more *mystify* the already mystified problem, and will throw some definite light on the matter.

I very much fear that what I am about to write will not remove the mist to which the correspondent alludes.

The writer supposes that I might have realized the existence of a living God. I can lay no such claim. But I do have a living faith in a living God even as I have a living faith in many things that scientists tell me. It may be retorted that what the scientists say can be verified if one followed the prescription given for realizing the facts which are taken for granted. Precisely in that manner speak the *rishis* and the prophets. They say, anybody following the path they have trodden can realize God. The fact is we do not want to follow the path leading to realization and we won't take the testimony of eye-witnesses about the one thing that really matters. Not all the achievements of physical sciences put together can compare with that which gives us a living faith in God. Those who do not want to believe in the existence of God do not believe in the existence of anything apart from the body. Such a belief is held to be unnecessary for the progress of humanity. For such persons the weightiest argument in proof of the existence of soul or God is of no avail. You cannot make a person who has stuffed his ears, listen to, much less appreciate, the finest music. Even so can you not convince those about the existence of a living God who do not want the conviction.

Fortunately the vast majority of people do have a living faith in a living God. They cannot, will not, argue about it. For them "it is".

Are all the scriptures of the world old women's tales of superstition? Is the testimony of the *rishis*, the prophets, to be rejected? Is the testimony of Chaitanya, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Tukaram, Dnyandeva, Ramdas, Nanak, Kabir, Tulsidas of no value? What about Ramamohan Roy, Devendranath Tagore, Vivekananda—all modern men as well educated as the tallest among the living ones? I omit the living witnesses whose evidence would be considered unimpeachable. This belief in God has to be based on faith which transcends reason. Indeed even the so-called realization has at bottom an element of faith without which it cannot be sustained. In the very nature of things it must be so. Who can transgress the limitations of his being? I hold that complete realization is impossible in this embodied life. Nor is it necessary. A living immovable faith is all that is required for reaching the full spiritual height attainable by human

beings. God is not outside this earthly case of ours. Therefore exterior proof is not of much avail, if any at all. We must ever fail to perceive. Him through the senses, because He is beyond them. We can feel Him, if we will but withdraw ourselves from the senses. The divine music is incessantly going on within ourselves, but the loud senses drown the delicate music which is unlike and infinitely superior to anything we can perceive or hear with our senses.

The writer wants to know why, if God is a 'God of mercy and justice, He allows all the miseries and sorrows we see around us. I can give no satisfactory explanation. He imputes to me a sense of defeat and humiliation. I have no such sense of defeat, humiliation or despair. My retirement, such as it is, has nothing to do with any defeat. It is no more and no less than a course of self-purification and self-preparation. I state this to show that things are often not what they seem. It may be that what we mistake as sorrows, injustices and the like are not such in truth. If we could solve all the mysteries of the universe, we would be co-equals with God. Every drop of the ocean shares its glory but is not the ocean. Realizing our littleness during this tiny span of life, we close every morning prayer with the recitation of a verse which means: "Misery so-called is no misery nor riches so-called riches. Forgetting (or denying) God is the true misery, remembering (or faith in) God is true riches."

Harijan, 13-6-1936

144. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

[AS AT] WARDHA,
June 13, 1936

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I have your love letter and a longer one from Horace[1]. This is for you both. I did not mean to suggest that we have not to convert Englishmen. What I meant and mean even now is that our contribution must be from this side. We must show that we mean no harm to England. It is not our fitness which is in dispute. Our harmlessness is, and rightly. This cannot be proved by any protestations made by the ablest Indian representative in England. It can only be proved by our uniform conduct here. But our conduct is

[1] Horace Alexander

by no means uniform. Not every Indian means well by England. And the best of us do not wish well in the same sense that Englishmen would have us to. Thus it was very difficult for me to convince the Lancashire operatives that I meant and wished well even in the act of preaching the immediate boycott of foreign cloth.[1]

Do you see that the non-violent way requires patience and has to be worked after the style peculiar to it?

This is not to say that it is wrong for any Indian ever to go there. No doubt chance visits of women like Mrs. Hamid Ali or men like Bhulabhai[2] must be exploited. I can even conceive occasions when men like Jawaharlal might specially go to remove misunderstandings. Let us wait for such a time.

C.F. Andrews expected here on 18th inst.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1494

145. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

[AS AT] SEGAON,
June 13, 1936

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have written to Mangaldas[3] during the free time I now have in Madras. If there is time Mahadev will enclose a copy. I hope you did not find the journey difficult. Finish your work soon and come back. Do keep up the walks.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
89 WARDEN ROAD, BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 195

[1] Gandhiji visited Lancashire on September 26/27, 1931; *vide* "Talk with Representatives of Cotton Industry", 26-9-1931 and "Statement to the Press", 27-9-1931

[2] Bhulabhai J. Desai, leader of the Congress Party in the Legislative Assembly.

[3] Mangaldas Pakwasa, President, Bombay Legislative Council.

146. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 14, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

We arrived here[1] at 8 a.m. The train was late. I have your letter. My mind is there. But my body must be here till Monday for *Harijan's* sake. If the weather is good, I hope to be with you on Tuesday morning about 7.30 a.m. I shall have taken milk on the way. I understand about Lilavati. I do not know who will be with me if any at all. We shall see. Do not worry. I quite see that till the things have shaped, you will have to be in Segaon. 'Be careful for nothing.'If someone is at the gate to show me the exact way to take, it would be good. It may be Govind or Dasrath—is that the other comrade's name? But it does not matter if no one can be spared.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Some fruits will go with this if the bearer... [2]

From the original: C.W. 6348. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9814

147. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 14, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

Kusum must have reached there by now. I do not remember if I wrote to you of her wish to have perfect training in music from Panditji. Alongside, she would like to earn something and undertake some studies, if possible. Or, she might, for the present, give up the desire to earn. Talk with her on the subject and then let me know. We might arrange for her studies, but what is to happen there? You should consider where, in view of her nature, her own good lies and guide her and tell me what you propose. She is as tender as her name implies.[3]

[1] At Wardha.
[2] Illegible
[3] 'Kusum'literally means a flower

In a single moment I could read her whole self on the day we parted.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.M./II. Also C.W. 8494. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

148. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
June 15, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

We reached here yesterday morning. The weather is superb. The clouds all the day and a cool breeze, not much rain yet to speak of. I hope, if there is no rain in the morning, to leave for Segaon tomorrow, though my hut is not quite ready yet. Things move slowly in villages. But I know there will be no difficulty about getting a dry corner for myself.

Rameshwari Nehru is with me. She travelled 3rd class with us all the way. Of course 3rd class with me is no discomfort except for the crowds that gather at every station. She had two nights with us in the train. Her tour in Travancore was quite successful. She will be leaving Wardha on Wednesday.

Kanti went to Poona and returns on Friday. Navin stayed behind to learn the art of carving. He expects to be able to carve ivory-goods like what I have sent you.

Ba had a sandal-wood box sent to her. It was no use to her. I thought the best use was to send it to you either to sell or keep. It was left with Navin to send by post.

I hope you are better and the weather has improved. You must find a better place to go to in summer. From your descriptions Simla seems to be none too good.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

My weight on leaving Bangalore was 112 lb.!!! B.P. 156/90.

Quite good as the doctor said.

From the original: C.W. 3731. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6887

149. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

June 15, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

It is a great thing for a rebel to own defeat. At last you have a plethora of letters from me! Your humiliation delights me. But you are not to think of making yourself sick in an attempt to overtake my letters. Remember you are in Simla having calls on your time which I have not.

Now to change the topic. You wouldn't be an idiot if you had guessed why I had chosen the brooches with flimsy pins. Your dense head could not see that the purchaser or wearer belonging to the exploiting class would have a solid gold pin put on in the place of the flimsy one. The question is: is the carving of the brooch good or not? Is it neat enough? I gave much time to the selection of the two brooches. Most were loud. These two I thought might pass Your Highness's test.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

It is raining now.

From the original: C.W. 3579. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6388

150. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 15, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Your note. It is raining here well. I expect therefore that I shall [not] be able to get out.[1] Yes, I shall bring the *bhaji*[2]. And I can do without it, too, for a time.

No more till we meet.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6349. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9815

[1] For Segaon

[2] Leafy vegetable

151. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

June 15, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

Kanti is not here today. I saw your letter and opened it. I am preserving it as you have permitted Kanti to read it. I shall not destroy it till Kanti and Saraswati arrive on Friday. However, no one else will read it.

I do not myself fancy Kashi. I gave the advice I did because it is your duty to please Jayaprakash in such a matter. Now there is no question of your going there since Harsubabu himself says no and J.P. does not wish to displease him. Sitab Diyara is your Kashi for the present, and all that you do there with understanding is of course your education. Do acquaint yourself with the villagers. Do you pray alone or do other women join you? It is surprising that there is none in the village who can sing the *Ramayana*.

I shall go to Segaon tomorrow. Probably I shall go alone since my hut is not yet ready. Perhaps Lilavati may accompany me.

My weight at Bangalore was 114 lb. and my blood pressure 156/110, which may be taken as satisfactory. Sardar is at Bombay.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3474

152. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 15, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

Here are some of my thoughts. We should not run the school from a rich man's viewpoint, but have as teachers only those whose motto is service. They should be satisfied with a maximum salary of Rs. 15 a month and devote their whole time to it. To start with, there should be one teacher for just one pupil of whatever age. The teacher should prepare his own textbook and impart knowledge through the use of the eyes and the ears and teach the pupil to use his hands for wielding implements to make things. He should himself do what he teaches. It would be better to have such a school in some village. As

for you, you have to make the beginning at the place where you are. You can start with yourself. Accept pupils from middleclass families if they agree to your terms. They must pay fees, but one should not depend on this income while undertaking the work. You may start the experiment only if you accept the idea whole-heartedly. You should swallow only what you can digest.

If you understand this, this is what you should do for the present. Put the thoughts before your associates. It is our dharma to run the existing school if it pays its way but those parents who can should pay the full fees.

I have put all these ideas before Nanabhai[1]. He likes them but he is himself so deeply involved that the changes suggested by me are beyond his power. The help I used to get for Dakshinamurti has now stopped.

You may ask me time and again whatever you want to. Kanu is my responsibility. He will be under my supervision whether at Segaon or at Maganwadi. He has my permission to live at Segaon. Hence if he continues to stay at Maganwadi, it will have been his own decision. Now that Kanti has gone to stay with Kaka to attend on him, Mahadev will be left alone. If, on that account, Kanu is required to be with Mahadev, that too will be left to his choice.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have not been giving anything to Kanu.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8495. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Nrisimhaprasad Kalidas Bhatt who conducted Dakshinamurti, an educational institution in Bhavnagar

153. MESSAGE TO RAJPUTANA HARIJAN SEVAK CONFERENCE

[Before *June 16, 1936*][1]

Hinduism is on trial today. Those alone can become true sevaks who have faith in dharma and who have love for Harijans and are prepared to dedicate themselves to the service of Harijans.

[From Hindi]

Gandhiji aur Rajasthan, p. 197

154. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

June 16, 1936

CHI. RAMESHWARDAS,

I want Parnerkar to visit the Delhi and Pilani dairies. He will, of course, make arrangements about Dhulia before leaving. Anyway, there the work is already well organized. After all we want to serve the cow; if we could do it better by Parnerkar's going to Delhi and Pilani, it becomes our dharma to let him go. You may, therefore, release him. The rest he will explain to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 211

155. LETTER TO J. K. SHARMA

WARDHA,
June 17, 1936

MY DEAR SHARMA,

You are in a hurry. Your business is to convert many. I am pursuing the subject. All the letters so far received show that the restriction is wholesome and necessary. They say khadi does not gain by being exhibited alongside mill-cloth. It is not intended to supplement the latter, it is intended to sup-plant it. Khadi has a mission of its own. It is part of national education and it stands for new and true economics at least for India.

[1] The conference was held on June 16 and 17, 1936 at Nareli near Ajmer.

You are hasty in your criticism of khadi workers. They are working in the light of their experience and for the sole good of the poor. You should understand their viewpoint and difficulty before criticizing them.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 88

156. LETTER TO DILIP KUMAR ROY

WARDHA,
June 17, 1936

MY DEAR DILIP,

Mahadev Desai gave me your letter and the correspondence only yesterday. I glanced through the very interesting correspondence between you and Raihana[1]! I have perhaps a theory of my own about Krishna. I need not discuss it here as it is of no consequence. I hope with you that we shall meet some day. Then we can usefully discuss the Krishna legends and many other things of common interest. And of course I should listen once more to your music.

Love.

M. K. GANDHI

Golden Book of Dilip Kumar Roy, p. 121

157. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER[2]

June 17, 1936

For me the whole of philosophy is contained in truth at any cost.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Raihana Tyabji
[2] According to the source the addressee was an American woman.

158. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

June 17, 1936

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

I have the invitation from Palampur.

Send immediately the sum of Rs. 2,000 which Valunjkar has not yet received. You can always take from him the detailed accounts, etc., that you would require. Do not let his work be held up.

The Bharuch matter must have been decided. Karsandas has thrust on me the responsibility for the building at Vile Parle. A meeting of the Trustees has to be called. I hope Kishorelal has written to them. We may hold the meeting on hearing from you about the convenient date.

I shall of course be going to Wardha for meetings and such other work, even though I am settled in Segaon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1159

159. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEGAON,
June 17, 1936

CHI. MRIDU,

You have not acknowledged my long letter. I do expect a detailed letter from you.

I had sent a reply to your telegram. Now you may come over any time you feel like it. I have returned to Segaon. But that does not matter in the least.

The occasion for writing this is the enclosed letter. I am under the impression that you need good women workers. The writer of the enclosed letter belongs to a good family in Rajkot. She does not have much education, but she is efficient and experienced. She can be useful in taking care of the girls and so on. Think about the possible ways in which you can use her. She is needy. But that is of secondary importance. Think over it and write to me if she can be useful or not. Do not think that she has to be absorbed somewhere because I have

recommended her. As I had to do something for this widow, I am asking you first because you had asked for women workers.

You must be receiving happy news from Vienna and Oxford.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Write only to the Wardha address.

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11198. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

160. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

June 17, 1936

CHI. VIJAYA,

Well, I am in Segaon, though residential arrangements are yet to come. The work cannot be completed on account of the rains. I would be prepared to put you up at Maganwadi or in the Mahila Ashram if you came over. You can visit me from there. Even Ba has not yet come to stay with me. You will have to wait if you must stay with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7061. Also C.W. 4553. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

161. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

June 17, 1936

CHI. SHARMA,

I have two letters from you. I am sorry to hear the news from your family.[1] Do treat the patients if you have now gained confidence in your treatment or leave them to themselves; let them carry on with the routine treatment.

Come over here to discuss your own future and Draupadi's[2] too. That I am living away in Segaon should not matter. It is possible to make daily trips from Maganwadi. The air is pretty cool here, the rains have been copious and have not stopped even now. What was the

[1] The addressee's elder brother's only son had passed away.
[2] Addressee's wife.

total expense of your travels? Did you achieve what you wanted? Is there still anything else that you might have learnt there? Did you acquire sufficient knowledge of anatomy-physiology?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 253

162. A MESSAGE

June 17, 1936

Every Hindu organization can easily do the following five things:

1. Root out untouchability, treating it as a sin.
2. Take up the service of the cow, which at present suffers from slackness due to ignorance, and pursue it with intelligence.
3. Serve *Daridranarayana* to the extent possible by adopting khadi.
4. Serve the villagers by buying the goods produced by them.
5. Do away with such bonds of caste as are destructive of dharma.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

163. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 18, 1936

MY DEAR AGATHA,

This is from my new abode—a proper village which may be defined as a place with no post-office, no store for food-stuffs of quality, no medical, comforts and difficult of access in the rainy season. I could add many more adjectives but these should be enough for the time being. This is not to say that I am suffering any discomfort. I have told you this to let you understand the nature of [the] task before me.

I appreciate all you say about news. Jawaharlal is trying to cope with the problem. Let us see what is in store for us during the next six months.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1495

164. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

June 18, 1936

MY DEAR MURIEL,

You have overtaken me. When young Kalelkar described his meeting you, finding you malaria-ridden and asking me to insist upon your treating yourself decently, I wanted to write at once. And lo and behold, your first letter came and now second with Dorothy's.

You are ever before my mind's eye and often in our talks but pressing work here prevents my writing as often as I would to friends and co-workers living away from India.

And how am I to insist on your taking care of yourself? If your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost and not a den of thieves, you must rest when the body needs it. 'Be careful for nothing'is a wonderful admonition. If we would adopt it in daily life, we would not, in fearful hurry to achieve results, neglect our bodies and then be incapacitated for further work. You have no business to have malaria in England. God be with you.

Well, I am at last in Segaon in the cottage Jamnalalji has built for me. I do not know what the future has in store for me. But for the moment my headquarters are in Segaon. The postal address must be Wardha. There is no post-office here. You cannot but a stamp here as you cannot but many things.

I dare not write to Dorothy separately: There is no time.

My love to you, her and all the other members of the family.

Kamalnayan, Jamnalalji's son, will be soon with you. You will mother him and put him where he will be taken care of.

Yours
BAPU

[PS.]

Your article[1] will receive prompt attention.

From a photostat: G.N. 3807

165. TELEGRAM TO PADMAJA NAIDU

WARDHA,
June 19, 1936

PADMAJA NAIDU

C/O PALACE, BOMBAY

PRAYING SUCCESSFUL OPERATION. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

166. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 19, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Your complaint about my faint writing is quite legitimate. Nor are you the only complainant. I must improve village ink. Village [ink] and village paper is not a combination I can yet advertise. You will admit, however, that if I give in, improvement may become impossible. Rebels like you must persist in their rebellion and you will soon find that even the tyrant will have to mind his manners. Perhaps I shall have to give up using this thin paper. Tell me if you were able to read this without the magnifier

You have certainly done well over your sales. I have answered[2] your objection about the shoddy pin for the brooches. If the answer is not satisfactory, they will, I am sure, exchange the brooches for any article you may fancy of the same value.

[1] "Tissington Well-dressing", written by the addressee and Dorothy Hogg, appeared in *Harijan*, 5-9-1936.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur",15-6-1936

I hope you got the sandal-wood box that was separately sent to you. You must get out of this chronic overwork even if it is to be by living in Segaon. I can build you a hut according to your plan. You can drive straight from the station reaching Segaon at the most in $1^1/_2$ hours. You should do it in one hour. You must not drive if it is raining or if it is just after a heavy downpour.

My hut has thick mud-walks, twice the breadth of ordinary brick-wall. The mud is rain-proof. I think you will fall in love with the hut and the surroundings.

Mira is quite well.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3732. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6888

167. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

[*June*][1] *19, 1936*

MY DEAR CHILD,

You are naughty. You will write on all the sides of your letter without giving any direction as to where you began writing in all the margins. Why don't you add one more sheet? But no more of grumbling. I sent Saraswati and Kanti as I thought you would like to see them.

Strange! I have a letter from Maria[2] this week. She shows considerable anxiety about you.

It must be torture to K. that he cannot do just what he thinks is best for want of funds. We have however to take comfort from the fact, God does not always allow us to do what we think is the best. I suppose we don't always know what is best.

Do not make the children write to me. Let them write when they are led to do so of their own free will.

I hope you have completely recovered from your illness. How I should love to see you as hale and hearty as you were when we first

[1] From the contents it is evident that this letter was written after the letter to the addressee dated May 18, 1936; *vide* "Letter to Esther Menon", 18-5-1936. On June 19, 1936 Gandhiji was in Wardha.

[2] Anne Marie Petersen.

met. You were such a picture of health that I had thought you to be incapable of getting ill.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 138. Courtesy: National Archives of India.

168. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

June 19, 1936

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I was about to send you the enclosed[1] for your information when I got your letter yesterday.

I am glad Ranjit is better. He must take care of himself.

I do not want you to issue any special statement about the omission of [a] woman from your cabinet.[2] I think that this omission does not stand on the same footing as the inclusion or exclusion of others. None of us had either the courage or the wish to exclude [a] woman altogether from the W. C. If this is the correct interpretation of your attitude, it should be made clear if the occassion offers itself.

As to the others I am sorry you feel still sore about what happened. You swallowed the Bhulabhai pill in the interest of the cause. And surely at the very first discussion I had said before you had mentioned the thing that there must be Socialists in the cabinet. I mentioned also the names. What however I want to emphasize is not who mentioned whom but that all were actuated by no other motive than that of serving the common cause.

So far as I remember, what you have sent me is not the statement I had seen. What you have enclosed I seem to see for the first time. Please ask Dr. H. if he issued any other. Even the one you have sent me is at variance with what the Doctor used to tell me. I take no exception to the expression of his views faulty, in my opinion, though they are. My complaint is that he said one thing to me and said another thing [for] publication. You are at liberty to show this to Dr. H.

I hope you are well. I was following your Punjab hurricane tour not without anxiety.

Love.

BAPU

[1] This is not traceable.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 29-5-1936

[PS.]

If the writing is too faint to read, please throw away the letter.[1]

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, pp. 178-9

169. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 19, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. As for the school, do only what you think proper. I am in no hurry. I have no doubt about our duty, but there may be some practical difficulties.

Tell me whether you can now read my writing correctly.

I am enclosing two letters. Kanu sees me every day almost.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8496. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

170. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

June 19, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I accept the blame for sending Sharma to you. Please forgive me. I shall not repeat such a mistake. Do you ever listen to anyone's advice? Why then should you act upon Sharma's? Once you revered him, followed his advice and even used to say that it had done you good. That you do not now like his advice shows how times are changing.

I did not suggest to Kanti to go to Kakasaheb. He got ready for the work because he learnt that Kakasaheb was in need of his services and assistance. I like his readiness. It will indeed do him good. Kanti will come to me when Kakasaheb's work is finished or when Kanti wishes to come.

[1] In the original this is written at the top of the letter.

I see that you have already written to your brothers and your brother's wife. I see no politeness in it. I see in it your stubbornness. But who can persuade you? A man like me has only to watch helplessly whatever you do. Do come over when you have your holiday. My health is fine and I am in Segaon. I expect Saraswati has come today. The letter[1] for the children accompanies this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 338

171. LETTER TO MANGALA PRASAD AND OTHERS

June 19, 1936

CHI. MANGALA PRASAD, JOGIRAM, BANWARI LAL,

I was glad to read your letters.

Mangala Prasad's words run into each other, and his writing can well improve. Jogiram's is shaky and Banwari Lal's good. Mangala Prasad and Jogiram should write better.

All three of you should pay full attention to your studies and account for every single minute. Live in harmony with each other and observe simplicity.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1085

172. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

June 19, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

Don't you be in a hurry. Mahadev has personally seen how difficult it is to accommodate anyone here just now. Should we not at least have a bathroom and a latrine? These just do not exist. The rains continue, workmen do not turn up as required, and even the mason does not appear so that the culvert is half built. Now I doubt whether we shall have things done within the next month or two. Besides, you

[1] *Vide* the following item.

have not cured your cough so that you can think of coming over. This is not good. Are you indulging your taste for chillies and oil? I have heard a lot about your fondness for tasty foods. Even here, you missed your spicy things, didn't you? Conquer this weakness. Things are difficult here. In such matters you should not go by what Ba does. That, however, is another thing. Get over your cough by taking salt in warm water and other things.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9577. Also C.W. 6549. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

173. G. O. M. OF GUJARAT

It was in 1915 I first met Shri Abbas Tyabji. Wherever I have gone and there has been a Tyabji, he or she has made it a point to come to me as if I was a member of that great and numerous family. I do not know what the binding tie specially was, except perhaps that the distinguished judge to whom the family owe their fame had befriended me in 1890[1] when I had come to India from South Africa as an utterly unknown man, possibly an adventurer as some had thought. Not so however thought Badruddin Tyabji and several others I can name.

But I must come back to Abbas Mian of Baroda. As we embraced each other and I looked into his face, it reminded me of the late Justice Badruddin. That meeting laid the foundation of a life-long friendship. I found in him not merely a friend of Harijans, he was himself one. When at Godhra[2] long ago I had, to the surprise of my audience, invited them to have an anti-untouchability conference in the evening at the untouchable quarters, Abbas Mian was there taking as lively an interest in the Harijans as any staunch Hindu. Yet he was no ordinary Mussalman. He had given lavishly to the cause of Islam and was supporting several Islamic institutions. And yet he had never any designs upon Harijans. His Islam had room for all the great religions of the earth. Hence he looked at the anti-untouchability campaign with the fervour of a Hindu. And I know that he retained

[1] Actually 1896; *vide* "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 5-5-1936
[2] In November 1917.

that fervour to the end of his time on this earth.

The fact is he never took up anything half-heartedly. There were no mental reservations about Abbas Tyabji. At a moment's notice he answered the call of the Punjab.[1] At his age and for one who had never known hardships of life it was no joke to suffer imprisonments. But his faith conquered every obstacle. He put to shame many a young man by his ability to live with an infectious smile the simple life of the Kheda peasant, to share their simple food, travel in all seasons in their rude carts. I have never known him complain about inconveniences which could have been avoided. "His was not to reason why, his was to do and die." He who had once the power as Chief Judge of imposing the death penalty and exacting obedience showed an amazing capacity for submitting unquestioningly to discipline. He was a rare servant of humanity. He was a servant of India because he was a servant of humanity. He believed in God as *Daridranarayana.* He believed that God was to be found in the humblest cottages and among the despised of the earth. Abbas Mian is not dead, though his body rests in the grave. His life is an inspiration for us all.

Harijan, 20-6-1936

174. IS KHADI ECONOMICALLY SOUND?

If by the question is meant whether khadi can compete with Japanese 'fent'or even with the cloth manufactured by the Indian Mills in price, the answer must be emphatically 'no'. But the negative answer would have to be given about almost everything turned out by man-power as against labour-saving power. It would have to be so even with regard to goods manufactured in Indian factories. Cloth, iron, sugar made in factories require State aid in some form or other to withstand foreign competition. It is wrong to put the question in that way at all. In the open market a more organized industry will always be able to drive out a less organized one, much more so when the former is assisted by bounties and can command unlimited capital and can therefore afford to sell its manufactures at a temporary loss.

[1] Abbas Tyabji was one of the five Commissioners appointed by the Congress Sub-committee to study the evidence and prepare a report on the Punjab disorders in April 1919.

Such has been the tragic fate of many enterprises in this country.

Any country that exposes itself to unlimited foreign competition can be reduced to starvation and therefore subjection if the foreigners desire it. This is known as peaceful penetration. One has to go only a step further to understand that the result would be the same as between hand-made goods and those made by power-driven machinery. We are seeing the process going on before our eyes. Little flour mills are ousting the *chakkis,* oil mills the village *ghani,* rice mills the village *dhenki,* sugar mills the village *gur*-pans, etc. This displacement of village labour is impoverishing the villagers and enriching the monied men. If the process continues sufficiently long the villages will be destroyed without any further effort. No Chengis Khan could devise a more ingenious or more profitable method of destroying these villages. And the tragedy of it all is that the villagers are unconsciously but none the less surely contributing to their own destruction. To complete the tale of their woe let the reader know that even cultivation has ceased to be profitable. For some crops the villager does not cover even the cost of seed.

With all these deadly admissions, what do I mean by saying that khadi is the only true economic proposition? Let me then state the proposition fully: "Khadi is the only true economic proposition in terms of the millions of villagers until such time, if ever, when a better system of supplying work and adequate wages for every able-bodied person above the age of sixteen, male or female, is found for his field, cottage or even factory in every one of the villages of India; or till sufficient cities are built up to displace the villages so as to give the villagers the necessary comforts and amenities that a well-regulated life demands and is entitled to." I have only to state the proposition thus fully to show that khadi must hold the field for any length of time that we can think of.

The present pressing problem is how to find work and wages for the millions of villagers who are becoming increasingly pauperized, as anyone who will take the trouble of going to the villages can testify for himself and as is amply proved by contemporary expert evidence that people are becoming poorer economically, mentally and morally. They are fast losing the will to work, to think and even to live. It is a living death that they are living.

Khadi supplies them with work, tools and a ready market for their manufactures. It gives them hope where but yesterday there was blank despair.

"Then why has khadi made so little progress if it is such a hopeful proposition?"—the sceptic asks. The answer is the progress khadi has made in terms of the millions, though little in itself, is comparatively the largest of all the other single industries. It distributes yearly the largest amount as wages among the largest number of wage-earners in the villages with the minimum of over-head charges and every pice practically circulates among the people. This can be verified by anyone who would study the figures published by the A.I.S.A.

Khadi has to work against almost settled prejudices among the villagers, against unscrupulous competition without State protection, and against the prevalent opinion of so-called experts in the science of economics, against even the demand of khadi wearers for progressively cheaper khadi. It is thus largely a question of the education of the villagers and the city-dwellers in the true economics for this land of tears. These transcend all religions. Hindus, Mussalmans and Christians who live in the villages suffer from the same disease of poverty and want. If there is a difference it is only one of degree.

I therefore maintain that though yard per yard khadi may be dearer than mill-made cloth, in its totality and in terms of the villagers it is the most economic, practical proposition without a rival. Khadi may be interpreted to include other village industries for the purposes of a thorough examination of the proposition.

Harijan, 20-6-1936

175. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

June 20, 1936

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I have your letter and fruit. I shall certainly write to you when I need fruit from your end. Generally, Bombay is nearer. But sometimes oranges are almost unavailable in B[ombay] when sweet limes of the South are most welcome.

I am glad Father is feeling better.

I know... [1] too needs the hip-baths and sitz-baths. Women are more easily cured by sitz-baths than men.

I would like you both to join the Kodambakkam Committee. I would like you as such to visit the Institution at least once a week when you are in Madras and inspect the work and make inspection report. You should come in touch with the inmates.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 9608. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal

176. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 20, 1936

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have not-heard from you for a long time as it seems to me.

How is the school going? Is Rukmini causing further trouble?

Please pass the enclosed[2] on to Thadani. The article gives another method [of] interpreting the Vedas. Is his theory making any headway?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 918

177. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

June 20, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. What can one say to a person with endless flights of fancy? You would of course want to see Saraswati; that is why I wrote to you as I did. It was neither to test you nor to tempt you. I cannot send Saraswati there. It involves a lot of expense. This I would certainly call *moha*[3].

[1] Two words here are smudged in the source
[2] This is not available.
[3] Infatuation

There would be some sense in your coming to Wardha, but none in Saraswati going there. She will stay here long if she likes to.

The Harijan children who know the Urdu script should be encouraged to keep it up.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 337

178. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

June 20, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

There was no need to have taken a vow to give up chillies but now that you have, do keep it. I wish you to improve your speech. You have formed a habit of uttering thoughtless words. This is not right. It is better to accept as true that sense which the listener derives from our words. By this we learn to speak less and that too thoughtfully. I am eager to have you here but I do not want you to suffer the inconveniences. Moreover, there is another consideration. If I bring you here on the 24th or 25th and go away on the 27th leaving you behind, you will not like to spend the week at Segaon without me.

There you have the opportunity to serve Ba if nothing else. Talk less.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9578, Also C.W. 6550. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

179. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

June 20, 1936

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I have already disposed of your letter orally.

Many persons are now likely to interfere in the kitchen affairs, but be patient in dealing with them.

Do not try to restrict the group favouring spiced food. Say no to

none.

Get the required khadi and have it stitched into garments.

By all means refuse to spare time for Manu if you cannot afford it. It will be right for her to stick to the *sitar*.

Take care of Bharatan's food.

Improve your health by taking the diet you need.

I expect Gajanan has recovered. Ask him to write to me about his health as also about the Sindi work.

Tell Bhanubapa that the Nasik work must not be delayed even for a day because of laxity on my part. The Government office is a new unforeseen factor.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10717

180. LETTER TO ATAR SINGH AND OTHERS

June 20, 1936

CHI. ATAR SINGH, PRABHU DAYAL AND JAYAKARAN,

I was glad to have your letters. Write a good hand, work hard and gain proficiency in the craft.

Atar Singh asks about the benefit of observing silence. It brings peace, conserves energy and leaves more time for meditation.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

The boys knowing the Urdu alphabet should not forget it.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1083

181. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 22, 1936

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

This is another batch of cuttings[1], of more importance perhaps to you than to me. My right hand is resting.

No more, since we meet soon.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

182. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

June 22, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Three rupees have been paid. You have already had letters from Segaon which I leave for a week on 27th to be in Wardha for several meetings.

It has been raining daily off and on. Nothing serious. There was no damage here or none to be noticeable.

Of course, only an idiot could expect customers to cure their purchases of defects. I fully expected to make the brooches presentable to the royalty adding the extra cost entailed in doing so. However, it is something that you thought at last of the right thing.

I see nothing wrong in your trying to give to Arjan the best of your knowledge and experience. Ba did not want the sandal-wood casket. Now for profuse apologies.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3733. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6889

[1] These are not traceable.

183. LETTER TO DR. B. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

June 22, 1936

DEAR DR. PATTABHI,

You have a brilliant boy, quite like his father. But he does not seem to have been able to carry the whole joke to you. When I saw Mrs. P. decked literally from top to toe, I said: "Now I know why Father was afraid to come to Bangalore.[1] For the sin of this barbarity is more on Father's shoulders than Mother's." Now you may take the joke as seriously as you like. I quite agree with your philosophy. Wives and grown-up children must have vacation from their husbands and parents.

Love.

M. K. GANDHI

Incidents of Gandhiji's Life, p. 226

184. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

June 22, 1936

BHAI MUNSHI,

I have both your letters. I have not yet been able to read the articles. I am returning with minor changes the one you wanted. My idea about the office would be a little different. If you come to hold the same view it is as well. But if I set out to incorporate it in your article, the language would be changed and the article would take a different form. I do not think it necessary. Let your own idea get around. I am writing my own article and it may be ready by Tuesday. You may, if you like, withhold the article in question till then. And after seeing my article if you want to revise it you may do so. However I see no need for that. Anyway do what you think best. Consult Sardar if you like.

I understand what you say about Premchandji.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7602. Courtesy: K.M. Munshi

[1] Gandhiji and Vallabhbhai Patel, who were in Bangalore some days previously had asked the addressee to come over. He did not go.

185. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

June 22, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter just now. You are very clever. There is still nothing certain about your coming and you ask me about Segaon. After you have got the leave you can ask me telegraphically or if you are not impatient you can ask me after you have arrived.

It is not proper that you keep falling ill. You will certainly not get Father's disease, provided you take milk and fruit regularly, garlic with vegetables or curds, regular exercise, hip-bath and friction-bath. You will never fall ill if you do this.

My letter bore the postmark of the following day because I wrote it after the clearance of the mail.

I am in good health and take the usual food without any change. The weight was 112 ib. when I left Bangalore.

I shall be going to Maganwadi on the 27th for a week.

The mail is delivered in Segaon once a week, so you should address your letter to Maganwadi, Wardha, only. I get my mail every day from there.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Mirabehn is well. Balwantsinha and Munnalal are with me. Ba is at Maganwadi.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3475

186. LETTER TO JAYANT E. PATEL

June 22, 1936

BHAI JAYANTBHAI,

If you cannot leave your wife and if you are truly free from lust, you can be a true teacher to her and make of her an accomplished woman. If your *brahmacharya* is only theoretical, then it is better given up.

I cannot give you more guidance than this.

JAYANTBHAI E. PATEL
CHAMPAKLAL BROS.
143 PRINCESS STREET
SAI BHUVAN, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

187. LETTER TO SURENDRA

June 22, 1936

CHI. SURENDRA,

Which of your questions have I not answered? I have the impression that I did not leave out anything. Maybe, since I didn't have your letter before me when I wrote to you, something was left out. When this happens you should write again. I do not have your previous letter with me.

Now I have stopped using Nepalese paper. I have yet to solve the problem of the ink. You must let me know without fail when the handwriting becomes illegible.

You must observe this rule for the diet. When the body requires a certain thing you must give it that as a medicine. At that time you should not count the annas and pies. Milk must be considered indispensable.

Balwantsinha has decided to stay in Segaon. He will go anywhere I send him. Let us see whether he will settle down here or not. I hope he will.

Today I shall be completing a week here. There is no question of my not liking it, as my mind was always here.

How shall I address you? I cannot write "Mr." Every Surendra can be addressed as "Shri'. "Maharaj" was certainly written in jest but that appellation is being used there, isn't it? "Sadhu" Surendra seems good. "Brahmachari" is also all right. Now have your choice. Mirabehn will go to stay at her chosen place, Varoda, on Wednesday.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

188. LETTER TO SHOBHALAL GUPTA

June 22, 1936

BHAI SHOBHALAL,

The test through which Hinduism is passing...[1] They alone can be true servants who have faith in dharma and genuine love for Harijans and who are prepared to sacrifice themselves in the service of Harijans.

SHOBHALAL GUPTA
C/O HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH
AJMER

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

189. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 22, 1936

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

That nature cure is not effective for all ailments is admitted by all medical practitioners.

I see no need for permitting the use of turmeric and other condiments unless specifically required although anyone may take them as medicine.

Unboiled milk cannot be the cause of mucus, but you may start taking *neem* leaves; you may also try garlic. Hip-bath is of course beneficial. You should take it in the morning before eating anything. Then take a walk and drink milk an hour later.

Sharma's book is not entirely reliable.

You may certainly go to Europe if it can improve your health. For my part I have no other interest. But you should follow only the dictates of your own conscience. Never mind what I think about it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4286

[1] Omission as in the source

190. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

June 22, 1936

DEAR SISTER,

I was awaiting your letter. Although you suffered discomfort in coming to Segaon, the matters discussed at the end were essential. God will grant you the strength to follow your duty. Keep writing to me.

You will be glad to learn that Ghanshyamdas's telegram says he has had satisfactory interviews with the Maharaja[1]. Let us watch developments.

... [2] must be very happy.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7983. Also C.W. 3079. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

191. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

WARDHAGANJ,
June 23, 1936

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
GUEST HOUSE
TRIVANDRUM

RECEIVED. GOD BLESS YOU.[3]

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 7975. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

[1] Of Travancore
[2] A word here is illegible.
[3] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram which read: ". . . Had two interviews with His Highness. Promised satisfactory results next Birthday Anniversary." *Vide* also the preceding item.

192. LETTER TO G. N. KANITKAR

June 23, 1936

DEAR BALUKAKA,

You did well in writing to me. I know the value as well as the limitations of oil lamps and even मसाल[1]. But I thought that some patriotic firm might put a dynamo light [in] the place free of charge or at a trifling cost. I should defend the use of electric lighting if it can be done on my terms.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SEWANANDJI
341 SADASHIV
POONA CITY

From a photostat : C.W. 967. Courtesy : G.N. Kanitkar

193. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 23, 1936

CHI. MRIDU,

Our letters crossed. You must have received my letter. I have destroyed yours. I have read the statement. I do not approve of it. The language does not describe the actual state of affairs. I do not wish to make such a remark intentionally. There is no time to analyse it. Some time, when both of us are free and you are eager, I shall explain. But it is not as if by issuing this statement you have disobeyed my order. You were perfectly entitled to issue the statement. Nor do I think you have intentionally committed any mistake in doing so. It does not also diminish my love in any way. You have all the right to seek my advice.

It appears to me from your letter and also from Jawaharlal's public statement that there is a difference between what I had told you and what you have said. If that is so, then let me know so that if there

[1] A torch or flame.

is any lapse of memory on my part, I would make amends or reaffirm what I have said.

Blessings to brothers.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11199. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

194. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

June 23, 1936

BHAI RAJENDRA BABU,

I delayed replying to your letter till Ceresole arrived. He tells me that all the difficulties have been resolved. That is why I did not hurry. If there are still some loose ends you can tell me on coming here. I shall leave here on the 27th. I am now using my left hand, having overworked the right one.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 9875. Courtesy: Rajendra Prasad

195. DISCUSSION WITH PIERRE CERESOLE AND CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES[1]

[About *June 23, 1936*][2]

[PIERRE CERESOLE]: Religion which should bind us divides us. Is it not a sorry spectacle that whilst people of various denominations find no diffculty in working together all day in hearty co-operation, they must disband when the time for prayer comes? Is religion then meant to divide us?

Must it be allowed to become an expression of conceit rather than of a desire to be of service? I want some sort of religious communion between men of different faiths.

[GANDHI]: Quite possible, if there is no mental reservation.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekely Letter". Pierre Ceresole, founder of Service Civil International—a moral equivalent for war—met. Gandhiji at Segaon with two other missionary women.

[2] Ceresole arrived in Wardha presumably on 23-6-1936; *vide* the preceding item.

[P.C.] But a friend of mine, a great humanitarian worker, believes that but for evangelism he should not have taken up his mission work. He gets the driving power from communion with Jesus, he says, because Jesus was always in communion with God.

[G.] The greatest trouble with us is not that a Christian missionary should rely on his own experience, but that he should dispute the evidence of a Hindu devotee's life. Just as he has his spiritual experience and the joy of communion, even so has a Hindu.

Dr. Ceresole seemed to have no doubt about this, and he said that the broadest view of Christianity seemed to him to have been presented by Frank Lenwood; whose book *Jesus—Lord or Leader*, deserved to be better known than it is. "He says he has the greatest respect for the personality of Jesus, but he thought he might respectfully criticize him."

[MISSIONARY LADY]: I have not had the time or desire to evangelize. The Church at home would be happy if through our hospital more people would be led to Christian lives.

[G.] But whilst you give the medical help you expect the reward in the shape of your patients becoming Christians.

[M.L.] Yes, the reward is expected. Otherwise there are many other places in the world which need our service. But instead of going there, we come here.

[G.] There is the kink. At the back of your mind there is not pure service for its sake, but the result of service in this shape of many people coming to the Christian fold.

[M.L.] In my own work there is no ulterior motive. I care for people, I alleviate pain, because I cannot do otherwise, The source of this is my loyalty to Jesus who ministered to suffering humanity. At the back of my mind there is, I admit, the desire that people may find the same joy in Jesus that I find. Where is the kink?

[G.] The kink is in the Church thinking that there are people in whom certain things are lacking and that you must supply them whether they want them or not. If you simply say to your patients, 'You have taken the medicine I gave you. Thank God, He has healed you. Don't come again,' you have done your duty: But if you also say, 'How nice it would be if you had the same faith in Christianity as I have,' you do not make of your medicine a free gift.

[M.L.] But if I feel that I have something medically and spiritually which I can give, how can I keep it?

[G.] There is a way out of the difficulty. You must feel that what you possess your patient also can possess but through a different

route. You will say to yourself, 'I have come through this route, you may come through a different route.' Why should you want him to pass through your university and no other?

[M.L.] Because I have my partiality for my Alma Mater.

[G.] There is my difficulty. Becuase you adore your mother, you cannot wish that all the rest were your mother's children.

[M.L.] That is a physical impossibility.

[G.] Then this one is a spiritual impossibility. God has the whole humanity as His children. How can I limit God's grace by my little mind and say this is the only way?

[M.L.] I do not say it is the only way. There might be a better way.

[G.] If you concede that there might be a better way, you have surrendered your point.

[M.L.] Well, if you say that you have found your way, I am not so terrifically concerned with you. I will deal with one who is floundering in mud.

[G.] Will you judge him? Have you people not floundered? Why will you present your particular brand of truth to all?

[M.L.] I must present to them the medicine I know.

[G.] Then you will say to him, 'Have you seen your own doctor? You will send him to his doctor, ask the doctor to take charge of him. You will perhaps consult that doctor, you will discuss with him the diagnosis, and will convince him or allow yourself to be convinced by him. But there you are dealing with a wretched physical thing. Here we are dealing with a spiritual thing where you cannot go through all these necessary investigations. What I plead for is humanity. You do not claim freedom from hypocrisy for the Christian Church?

DR. CERESOLE: Most of us believe our religion to be the best and they have not the slightest idea of what other religions have revealed to their adherents, Dr.....[1] has made a careful study of the Hindu scriptures, and he has observed what Hinduism gives to the Hindus.

[G.] I say it is not enough for him to read the *Song Celestial* or the Koran. It is necessary for him to read the Koran with Islamic spectacles and the *Gita* with Hindu spectacles, just as he would expect me to read the Bible with Christian spectacles. I would ask him: 'Have you read the *Gita* as reverently as I have or even as reverently as I have read the Bible?'I tell you I have not read as many books on

[1] Omission as in the source.

Hinduism as I have about Christianity. And yet I did not come to the conclusion that Christianity or Hinduism was the ONLY way.

Gandhiji discussed the instance of Mr. Stokes—now Shri Satyanand—who was, in his early years in India, nearly killed for preaching Christianity to the Pathans, but who in a truly Christian spirit secured his assailant's reprieve, and who in the later years said to himself, 'My faith in Jesus is as bright as ever, but I cannot deliver the message of Jesus to the Hindus unless I become a Hindu. Unless I make the Hindus better Hindus I shall not,' he said, 'be true to my Lord.'[1]

But then, wondered the missionary friends, what exactly should be missionaries'attitude?

[G.] I think I have made it clear. But I shall say it again in other words: *Just to forget that you have come to a country of heathens, and to think that they are as much in search of God as you are; just to feel that you are not going there to give your spiritual goods to them, but that you will share your worldly goods of which you have a good stock. You will then do your work without a mental reservation and thereby you will share your spiritual treasures*'[2]. The knowledge that you have this reservation creates a barrier between you and me.

[P.C.] Do you think that because of what you call that mental reservation the work that one could accomplish would suffer?

[G.] I am sure. You would not be half as useful as you would be without the reservation. The reservation means that you belong to a different and a higher species, and you make, yourself inaccessible to others.

[P.C.] A barrier would be certainly my Western way of living.

[G.] No, that can be immediately broken.

[P.C.] Would you be really happy if we stayed at home?

[G.] I cannot say that. But I will certainly say that I have never been able to understand your going out of America. Is there nothing to do there?

[P.C.] Even in America there is enough scope for educational work.

[G.] That is fatal confession. You are not a superfluity there. But for the curious position that your Church has taken, you would not be

[1] Satyanand Stokes's letter clarifying his position was published in "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*, 15-8-1936.

[2] Italics in the source.

here.

[P.C.] I have come because the Indian women need medical care to a greater extent than American women do. But coupled with that I have desire to share my Christian heritage.

[G.] That is exactly the position I have been trying to counter. You have already said that there may be a better way.

[P.C.] No, I meant to say that there may be a better way fifty years hence.

[G.] Well we were talking of the present, and you said there might be a better way.

[P.C.] No, there is no better way today than the one I am following.

That is what I say is assuming too much. You have not examined all religious beliefs. But even if you had, you may not claim infallibility. You assume knowledge of all people, which you can do only if you were God. I want you to understand that you are labouring under a double fallacy: That what you think is best for you is really so; and that what you regard as the best for you is the best for the whole world. It is an assumption of omniscience and infallibility. I plead for a little humility.

Harijan, 18-7-1936

196. ADVICE TO VISITORS[1]

[After *June 23, 1936*][2]

To appreciate all the advantages of walking you must read Thoreau. I have made it a rule that no one, unless he is completely disabled, should be encouraged to come here in a bullockcart—not even Jamnalalji with his heavy body. In fact I told him that trudging to Segaon and back was for him the best possible remedy to reduce his paunch and to add a few years to his life. And no one should fight shy of it, seeing that European ladies who have seldom walked on roads waded through mire with their shoes and stockings on!

Harijan, 25-7-1936

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter".

[2] *Vide* the preceding item; the visitors were two missionary ladies who accompanied Ceresole to Segaon.

197. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 24, 1936

CHI. AMBUJAM,

Perhaps the work of begging from the parties named in the enclosed is not beyond you. I do not feel like writing to them. I know you are shy. But you must shed your shyness if you are to render service for which God has made you. You may take Janammal[1] with you if you like.

But you will not hesitate to say no if you find the mission beyond you.

Hope Mother is doing well and Father is keeping up the improvement.

Love

BAPU

From the original: Ambujammal Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

198. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

June 24, 1936

CHI. PREMA,

There is no harm in undertaking the work for the duration of the Congress session.[2]

Your complaint regarding the paper is justified.[3] I hope this paper will satisfy you.

You should go on educating public opinion about flour, rice and oil. Though these articles cost more, they are cheap in the end. We are building up a new economics. Conditions differ from country to country. And, moreover, the rich and the poor have their own economics. Please, therefore, do not lose heart.

[1] Addressee's niece

[2] The addressee had agreed to organize a women's volunteer corps for the Faizpur session.

[3] Gandhiji had used inferior hand-made paper and ink. The superior paper supplied by the addressee had been given away by Gandhiji to another person.

I know about *bajra*. However good the seed may be, if the soil, water, etc., are not suitable, the seed loses its virtue.

Here is a four-line Foreword.[1]

[*Be*] *Khudai Khidmatgar* is a book that ought to be translated in all the languages of India. It has already come out in Gujarati, Urdu and Hindi. It will probably be translated into other languages also. It is in the fitness of things, therefore, that a Marathi translation is being published; and the greater cause of pleasure is the fact that the translation has been done by a dedicated woman worker. She deserves compliments for her commendable venture. I hope that the people of Maharashtra will read with loving devotion the lives of the two Khudai Khidmatgars or Servants of God.

M. K. GANDHI[2]

To be an atheist till one comes to have faith in God is as reasonable as one's trying to cremate the body of a man who has entered *samadhi*, assuming him dead till one can be sure that he is alive.

If *bhavana*[3] and *shraddha*[4] can be distinguished from each other, one benefits by joining the prayer with a sincere heart even in the absence of *bhavana*, in order to acquire *shraddha*.

If we are living among primitive people, instead of propagating our religion we should propagate the religion of morality. As and when the doors of their hearts open, they may choose whichever religion they like. We shall have given them general information about all the religions.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10382. Also C.W. 6820. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] To Mahadev Desai's *Be Khudai Khidmatgar*, which the addressee had translated into Marathi; for Gandhiji's "Foreword" to the English original, *vide* "Interview to *The Natal Mercury*", 30-9-1908

[2] The Foreword is in Hindi

[3] Feeling of devotion

[4] Firm faith

199. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

June 24, 1936

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I do not remeber to have told Sardar that the Godhra Ashram[1] was running very well. I told him that the Ashram was working and had not been closed. However, you certainly did well in informing me of the situation. Do what you think right.

You do not say whether the decision about Bharuch is correct. I have not been able to understand the effect of the decision. Is that the whole resolution, or is there anything more to it?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4038

200. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

June 24, 1936

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have your letter. You ought to recover your health. If a course of injections does it, well and good. You must find out why your well-knit frame broke down. Believe me it is impossible that the observance of these *niyamas*[2] can affect health; but dangerous consequences do follow from a lapse in the observance of *yamas*,[3] etc. For example, the greatest lapses are to be found in the observance of *brahmacharya*. It being a bodily penance, the consequences of its faulty observance must adversely affect the body. The same is true of *aswada*[4]. I mention these only as illustrations. It is difficult to say where you might have committed a slip. The detection of your fault, if possible, can now benefit only to the extent of proving helpful in your treatment.

[1] Harijan Ashram, managed by Vithal L. Phadke

[2] Any self-imposed religious observance, dependent on external conditions

[3] Any moral duty or religious observance; the *yamas* are usually said to be ten, but their names and given differently by different writers. According to Patanjali's *Yogasutras*, they are ahimsa, truth, non-stealing, *brahmacharya* and non-possession.

[4] Control of the palate

Why is not your mind composed? To one constantly thinking of non-violence it should be like a myrobalan held in the hand.

Sharda[1] may have a change if the climate does not suit her.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.G. 19

201. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

June 24, 1936

CHI. SHARDA,

It is a lame excuse that you had nothing to write about.Many boys and girls engaged in work which is not to my liking keep on writing to me.

Your argument is not worthy of your intelligence. You say that your body being delicate you would like to develop your intellectual faculties to make a living. But you do not see that mental work can have an adverse effect on health. It is a lowly idea to acquire knowledge for the sake of earning money. It is a also a mistaken notion that you will be a burden. Why don't you realize that you are going to be a burden if, in spite of acquiring the highest knowledge, you have to remain bed-ridden? I would certainly be happy if you acquired knowledge. I would not grudge it if, like Bal, you studied in a college and acquired a high degree. But certainly not at the cost of your health. Your primary duty is to improve your health. This is of course my view. What matters is your own bent. Now that you have started, continue writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9971. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] Addressee's daughter

202. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI AND SUMITRA GANDHI

[WARDHA][1]
June 25, 1936

CHI. NIMU,

I am having quite a good discussion with Ramdas these days. He is very keen that you should come over to Wardha, look after Kanam and other children and pursue whatever studies you can. Ramdas himself will not be able to remain fixed at one place. He will have to keep moving. You should therefore come over as soon as you can. You will of course have to stay where Kaka Saheb decides. In no case at Segaon. Nanavati is with Kaka and so you will feel at home. It will also help the children. If you stay at Segaon, I should like it very much indeed. But Wardha is a more suitable place for the work you have to do. We will be here at least upto July 1. After that nothing is certain. The visit to the Frontier Province is not quite certain.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. SUMI,

Your letter is very good. If you could go walking up to Mussoorie, 1 would count it as excellent. But if such a long walk is likely to tire you, do not go. Kanam's letter is enclosed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Though the letter is written on a printed letterhead with the address: 'Birla House, Mt. Pleasant Road, Bombay' Gandhiji was at Wardha on this date.

203. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 26, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

The length of the kerchief is $1^{3}/_{4}$ of the length of this paper and width $1^{1}/_{2}$. I have no measure-tape or rod here.

Yes, you were free to keep the sandal-wood box for yourself. Ba had expected as much.

There is not likely to be heavy rain at the end of July. If there is, you will walk part of the way. It will be perfectly pleasant. It is only a certain class of people who die many times before their death. Thank heaven you do not belong to that class. Are you not the lion brand?

No more today.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Mira went to her hut on Wednesday at Varoda, $1^{1}/_{2}$ miles from here.

From the original: C.W. 3580. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6389

204. LETTER TO NAN MENON

June 26, 1936

MY DEAR NAN,

I had hoped to send you a long chatty letter but I never got the time. Now Esther sends me a reminder. So here is this note to tell you that though I cannot write, I can never forget you. I hope both of you are happier than before.

Love and kisses to both of you.

BAPU

My Dear Child, p. 122

205. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

June 26, 1936

CHI. MARY,

Your letter. The receipt of the cheque and the credit-note for £800 disturb me. I do not know how to overtake this work. God will open the way.

I know Margaret was looking forward to the Assam work.

The Christian sadhu must be a real sadhu. You will tell me more about him, if there is more to tell me.

You must fight this terrible reduction in weight. You should discover the cause and remove it, even if it means another vacation. Are you taking balanced diet? Do tell me what it is.

I am glad you have stumbled upon weavers.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Mira is now in Varoda, $1^{1}/_{2}$ miles from here.

From a photostat: G.N. 6064. Also C.W. 3394. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

206. LETTER TO G.V. KETKAR

June 26,1936

DEAR FRIEND,

I have just finished reading your note.

I do not remember the incidents referred to by you.

If you do not strain the meaning of whatever I said, your interesting research does not affect my general position. But if there is in your opinion a real conflict between my remark and your discovery, I have no hesitation in saying that your discovery should be

preferred to my remark

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

G.V. KETKAR
'MARHATTA' OFFICE
568 NARAYAN PETH, POONA 2

From a photostat: G.N. 7866. Also C.W. 983. Courtesy: G.V. Ketkar

207. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 26, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

After I had half torn up Prema's letter, which I am enclosing, I remembered that I should be sending it to you. Hence I joined the pieces.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8497. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

208. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

June 26, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

What do you want me to withdraw? You say, "You should not have sent Sharma at all. I am not going to follow his instructions." But I committed the mistake of sending him. Should I not now ask to be forgiven for my mistake? I wrote[1] "You used to revere Sharma"; and you say, "I worship no man." Now tell me how we should manage to agree with each other. I, on my part, revere everyone, including you. I thought you revered Kanti, you worshipped Draupadi. What will the worshipper of God do if he does not worship His creation? Will not one holding me in reverence revere my Kanti? But how can I cope with you? You presume to be a veritable storehouse of knowledge. What do you care for my grace or anybody's? It is doubtful if you would care for His grace.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam",19-6-1936

To be stubborn means 'to refuse to be persuaded'. Neither by the mother, nor by the brother, nor by a companion, nor even by a poor adopted father like me. Now tell me, who is merciless? You or I? You do not discard your own pride and kiss Bapu's feet. Only when you sincerely reduce yourself to zero and think that not you but God is the Doer of all things, will your self reveal itself to you. At present, however, your pride has been leading you away. Why don't you persuade yourself that the work you have is enough and be content? Why should you take up any new work that Bapa might entrust to you? Your agreement with me is that you will do only what I tell you to do. When did you have my permission to take up new work?

Give the enclosed letter[1] to Lilavati when she returns from Badri-Kedar. Krishnan Nair will learn in due course. The letter[2] for the students accompanies this. Saraswati has gone to the Mahila Ashram.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 378

209. LETTER TO DEVNANDAN AND OTHERS

June 26, 1936

CHI. DEVNANDAN, RAMEHAR, RAMSWARUP, SHRIRAM AND RAMVRIKSHA,

I have your letters. You did well in writing. Out of the four[3] the best handwriting is Devnandan's, the worst Ramvriksha's. The least the learners can do is to perfect their handwriting. If the handwriting does not improve now it will be extremely difficult to improve it later. I write a wretched hand and it can hardly be improved in my old age.

And just as we should maintain a neat and tidy hand, so should we keep our heart good and pure. This is the easiest thing to attain.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1084

[1] This is not traceable.
[2] *Vide* the following item.
[3] A correction in the original suggests that the fifth name was added as an afterthought.

210. LETTER TO SHANNODEVI

June 26, 1936

CHI. SHANNO DEVI,

What can I say to you? Your energies will certainly be misspent on the daily.

From being a teacher you what to become an editor. Although I am your well-wisher, how can I give my blessings to a venture which does not interest me at all?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

211. BARBAROUS IF TRUE

A correspondent sends me the following paragraph[1] from *The Hindu's* own correspondent dated 8th June at Ramnad:

> At a meeting of the Devacottah Panchayat Board held on Saturday at the Board's office,... the usual procedure was adopted, viz., the Harijan member entered the meeting hall, signed his signature in the attendance register, receded to the exit door of the meeting hall, and stood all the while till the close of the meeting...

I take the following[2] from his letter enclosing the cutting from *The Hindu*:

> I am sending herewith a cutting from *The Hindu*.…
>
> The Panchayat Board referred to is in the heart of Chettinad and is supposed to be composed of Congressmen or men who had been elected quite recently on the Congress ticket to advance through local boards and panchayats the aims and objects for which the great Indian National Congress stands.
>
> It is shocking to read that a body like this should in this twentieth century has the audacity to compel a Harijan member to stand out of the meeting hall in spite of the fact that he is himself a member of that body duly

[1] Of which only excerpts are reproduced here.
[2] *ibid*

elected and representing a section of the community and thereby enjoying all the privileges to which such a membership entitles him...

I do not know whether my correspondent is correct in saying that the Devacottah Panchayat is composed of Congressmen. If it is, so much the worse for the Congressmen concerned, for apart from the manifest injustice of the conduct adopted by the Panchayat towards its Harijan members, Congressmen are pledged opponents of untouchability. But whether the Panchayat is composed of Congressmen or not, the conduct of the Board can only be characterized as barbarous, even as it would be of the Legislative Assembly if it made its member Rao Bahadur Rajah stand in a corner whilst its proceedings were going on.

But *The Hindu* correspondent lets the public know that the procedure is usual for the Devacottah Panchayat. It is to be presumed that the occasion for noticing the usual event has been supplied by the fact that untouchability just now looms large especially in the South. Even if the practice of making Harijan members stand in a corner by certain panchayats is usual, public opinion should make it impossible of repetition. Evidently, however, the paragraph does not appear to have caused any public stir. The editorial columns of the Southern Press seem, too, to have taken no notice of the incident which is ugly enough to demand strong condemnation. Thanks are therefore due to my correspondent for lifting *The Hindu* paragraph from oblivion.

Not only is the practice barbarous, I think it is also illegal. The Harijan member has a legal right to demand a seat side by side with his fellow members. It would be no answer to the charge that the Harijan member was party to his own insult. I can well understand poor Harijans in remote parts of India being too timid to assert their rights. And for Harijans, Devacottah is unfortunately remote enough.

Anyway, it is the duty of the Provincial and the local Harijan Sevak Sanghs to investigate the matter and take such steps as may be proper to avoid a repetition of the insult offered not merely to the Harijan member but the whole society, if it is jealous of the rights of the least among its members equally with the greatest.

Harijan, 27-6-1936

212. HARIJANS AND ELECTIONS

The talk I had on my return journey from Bangalore, with Shri. A. Kaleswara Rao and Shri V. Kurmiah, a Harijan lawyer, has been published in *The Hindu*. Friends have written to inquire whether the correspondent of *The Hindu* has correctly reported the conversation. They also ask me to give my opinion in my own language.

The Hindu correspondent's version is substantially correct so far as it goes. It omits the preliminary part of the talk. In answer to Shri Kurmiah's question I said I adhered to the written advice I had sent to Shri Gavai of Nagpur, M.L.C. "But what are we to do if we are not one undivided party, and if individuals or groups are not strong enough to act unaided?" asked Shri Kurmiah.

"Then," I said, "naturally you will ally yourselves to that party which gives you the greatest advantage. "In my opinion such a party is undoubtedly the Congress. It is pledged to the removal of untouchability root and branch; the largest number of Congressmen are to be found among workers engaged in doing anti-untouchability work. But you will do well not to participate in any council boycott or civil resistance campaign, if the Congress is driven to any such thing in the pursuit of its clearly defined goal of complete independence. And this I say, if only because the vast majority of Harijans are hardly equipped for such a fight. Your immediate goal is to vindicate your status of absolute equality which is denied to you in the sacred name of religion by the so-called sanatani Hindus. You ask as if you were only an isolated individual. But all Harijans are not like you. An ocean separates you from the fellow-Harijans in education and understanding. If I am true to you, I must speak only in terms of the vast mass of illiterate Harijans in whose name Harijan members of councils will speak."

This is the purport of the conversation and it represents my considered opinion. The reader will be interested to know that this was the advice I tendered Harijans even when I launched on the first civil resistance campaign and prevented Ashram Harijans from either joining the campaign or the exodus from the Ashram.

Harijan, 27-6-1936

213. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

WARDHA,
June 27, 1936

MY DEAR MALKANI,

My whole heart goes out to you. You ought to tear yourself away from Rukmini for a time and [rest your nerves a bit.][1]

I fancy that the trouble with Bapa is partly due to the tension under which you are living.

Why should you worry about boys from Delhi or the provinces. If you succeed in training the boys you have so that they become good citizens and wage earners, your fame will spread and you will have to reject applications for want of space.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 922

214. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

June 27, 1936

My Europe is in Segaon. It is difficult even to wait till September.[1]

The Hindu, 1-7-1936

215. LETTER TO A HARIJAN WORKER[23]

June 27, 1936

Hinduism is not opposed to humanism. Untouchability being a disease peculiar to Hinduism, our work in this regard should be confined to Hindus alone. There can be no such expression as a Muslim untouchable. The problem you have to face is due to the peculiar local conditions. If someone who was a Harijan yesterday is a Christian today, we need not take note of such conversion. To us he

[1] The portion in square brackets is very faint in the source.

[2] A correspondent from Calcutta had enquired whether the Press report about Gandhiji's sailing in September for Europe was correct.

[3] Of the Punjab

remains a Harijan so long as he receives help from us. Of course if a person is educated it is a different matter. For instance, if someone is getting aid for his college education he ceases to be entitled to it on his conversion.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

216. TALK WITH A FRIEND[1]

[About *June 27, 1936*][2]

We all know that conditions of life in a village are particularly hard in the monsoon. Why then should I not begin with that rich experience and wait until conditions were better? I had been nursing the thought of going to live in a village ever since I had heard of the experiences of Timappa Naik and his friends, and I tell you that now that I am there, I grudge having to come here even for a single day. I came this week because it would have been too much to expect all the members of the Working Committee and other friends to tramp to Segaon in this weather. But I may tell you that though I am here, my mind is there.

Harijan, 11-7-1936

217. LETTER TO GITA BAJAJ

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 28, 1936

CHI. GITA[3],

You should live up to your name. Widowhood and the married state are not of our choosing. No one has control over life and death.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] From the reference to the Working Committee meeting it is evident that the conversation took place at Wardha where Gandhiji had gone to attend the meeting on June 27 and stayed on for a week.

[3] Widow of Girdharilal, Jamnalal Bajaj's nephew who had met with an untimely death

Hence remain calm and dedicate yourself to service. I just got the news from Jamnalalji. Write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Gandhiji aur Rajasthan, p. 204

218. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 29, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

This is merely a love letter. Nothing to say except that I am praying for your relief. Do not make any experiments is the lesson to be learnt from this new experience. [1]

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6350. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9816

219. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM BAVISHI

WARDHA,
June 29, 1936

BHAI BAVISHI,

Unless I write this postcard, writing to you may be delayed. God will surely lead you to where your mind is fixed. You will find no one to advance you money until your experiments succeed. The Bhangi quarter incident is surprising.

To you both,

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 126. Also C.W. 4751. Courtesy: Purushottam Bavishi

[1] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, Mirabehn says: "As far as I can remember, I had tried eating a wild plant *panwar*, as vegetable, which the villagers had recommended."

220. LETTER TO PYARELAL

WARDHA,
June 29, 1936

CHI. PYARELAL,

Today is a silence-day. And then there is your letter. I have not been able to see all the letters. I have glanced through your original letter. I had been waiting for your letter every day. I had intended to write you a letter of reprimand. But I could not find the time. Then your letter came and I was relieved of the anxiety.

Is it clear to you that my letter did not mean what you had understood it to mean? I shall know this when I read your letter in full. I shall read the papers enclosed with it and shall write you another letter if necessary. I must have your letters regularly.

I have understood about Sushila. Only God knows to what extent I can win her heart. I will certainly try. I have always tried to draw her to me. As in the case of others, in Sushila's case also my attempt has been to be a mother and a father. But I was not aware that she had greater need of a father. In my future efforts I shall remember this. I shall be willing to keep her at Segaon if she can carry on there, and I shall take work from her to my heart's content. This is of course my aspiration and yours. But there is no question of my imposing my aspiration and yours on her. Let her do only as much as she wishes. I shall be ready from my side.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I shall definitely go to Segaon on the 6th if not on the 5th.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

221. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

June 29, 1936

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

Your letter was up to my expectations. Munnalal should have got well by now. He is not very restless, is he? I am sending a bottle of

milk. He should drink as much as he can and you can drink the rest or make it into curds. Do return the bottle. I shall send some milk tomorrow, too.

I understand what you say about the well. Let us be patient. All will be well.

Your work is indeed progressing splendidly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1885

222. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 30, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

If there is no satisfactory clearance, why not castor oil or Epsom salt. If you need any other opening medicine, I can send it. Shall I send any vegetable from here?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6351. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9817

223. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

WARDHA,
June 30, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I destroy your letter, but why does it need to be destroyed?

Your time-table shows that you sleep very little. Why can't you sleep soon at night? Do you worry about anything? You should go to bed uttering Ramanama. I see that you don't sleep during day-time either. You should have some sleep during the day also. It will be good if you take more milk. I follow your point about Patna. It seems to be your destiny not to be able to live with Jayaprakash and serve him. At Segaon either Balwantsinha or Munnalal cooks for me. Both of them insisted on living there. My food continues to be what it was, i.e., what you used to cook. I continue to take garlic and onions. The weight is 112 lb. At the moment I am in Wardha and shall go to Segaon on Saturday or Sunday. Mirabehn is at Varoda. It is a mile

and a half from Segaon. She is alone. When I go this time Lilavati might perhaps accompany me. My programme at Segaon so far has been writing letters and seeing visitors. I dispense medicines to the patients who turn up. How can I say what will happen next? We have there a goat and a cow. Cow's milk is for Mirabehn.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3477

224. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA AND MUNNALAL G. SHAH

June 30, 1936

CHI. BALWANTSINHA AND MUNNALAL,

I shall find some other remedy for the worms. All my thoughts are with you.

I am again sending the milk today. It is no trouble. Yesterday too I sent it of my own accord. I have not met Kanchan[1] so far; she might come today.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.][2]

You may use Jamnalalji's portion, and Nanavati may use Ba's. Hurry up with the weaving shed as soon as the skies are clear. What more need I say in the matter? Fill up the vacancy that might occur. Here too there is sure to be some vacancy. The person who has to do the work should find out what must be done.

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 6995. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah. Also G.N. 8299

[1] Munnalal's wife
[2] The postscript which is in Gujarati is written on the reverse of the letter.

225. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 1, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Yours is a good report. It is raining here. I am going to try to come on 5th. 6th is the real date.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6352. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9818

226. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

WARDHA,
July 2, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Do not try to come here unless you feel quite up to the mark and the day is fine. Mohanlal is going to the bazaar to get *bhaji* for you and if it is available it will be sent. If the bearer does not bring *bhaji* from here, try Segaon.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6353. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9819

227. LETTER TO NARAYAN SWAMI

July 2, 1936

DEAR FRIEND,

Pressure of work has prevented me all these days from thanking you for all the care with which you attended to the arrangements of our stay in Nandi and Bangalore. While I am thankful to the State for the generous hospitality extended to me and my party, I know that our comfortable stay had not a little to do with your careful stewardship.

Yours sincerely,

NARAYAN SWAMI
BANGALORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

228. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

[*July*][1] *2, 1936*

CHI. MUNNALAL,

See that Balwantsinha does not fall ill. For the present, follow Mirabehn's instructions.

I understand the trouble caused by the strap. Only wait and watch where you can do nothing. Diwanji may help if he can. We shall see what can be done when I come. I am sending the milk....[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Kanchan, Hiramani[3] and Bhai[4] came to see me today.

SJT. MUNNALAL
SEGAON

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8602. Also C.W. 6994. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

229. MESSAGE TO "INDIAN OPINION"

July 2, 1936

The Editor of *Indian Opinion* asks me to send a message for the Diwali number of the paper. How can there be any Diwali—festival of lamps—for one who has a Holi—an all consuming fire—burning in his heart? How can one celebrate Diwali when one's ears are filled with the sighs of the millions of the living dead in this country? All I can think of saying to the readers of *Indian Opinion* is this: Celebrate Diwali by all means, but don't forget the skeletons in India. Set apart a share for them first.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4853

[1] The source has "June" which obviously is a slip. It is evident from the contents that this was written after the letter to the addressee dated June 30, 1936; *vide* "Letter to Balwantsinha and Munnalal G. Shah", 30-6-1936

[2] The source is damaged here.

[3] Addressee's brother's daughter

[4] Addressee's brother

230. LETTER TO MUNNALAL SHAH

[Before *July 3, 1936*][1]

CHI. MUNNALAL,

This man will bring sulphur if available. Smoke away the sulphur for about an hour. I am sending a spray pump and also some liquid Flit if available. You may be knowing how to use Flit. If not, we will use it when I come there. And then, what right have I to advise you when you are prepared to put up with the pest. But I will certainly go there and find some remedy for the irritation. It should be easy for you to discover a remedy. Have you not studied chemistry?

Why have you stopped taking milk? At present both of you should take it. Reduce the quantity of cereals.

There is nothing about the Mahar affair in today's letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8601

231. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

WARDHA,
July 3, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I hope you found everything in order in Segaon. I am making a desperate effort to reach Segaon on Sunday. Yes, I read Mrs. Sanger's speech. Most leaders have gone. It was an anxious time.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6354. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9820

[1] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Munnalal G. Shah", 3-7-1936

232. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

July 3, 1936

MY DEAR SUBHAS,

I have just received your letter. I hope to be able to write to you as frequently as I hear from you. I know what it means to prisoners or detenus to receive letters from friends.[1]

I am asking Mahadev to see that *Harijan* is sent to you every week.

If it is of any use, you may inform the authorities that any views you may express on non-political matters, I have no desire to publish unless permission is given thereto.

Love.

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

233. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

July 3, 1936

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I am sending the milk as usual, as also sulphur, a Flitsprayer and a bottle of Flit. We shall use the sulphur when I come but use the Flit right now. Climb on a ladder or a pile of planks and spray it into the thatch twice or thrice a day. Send back the bottle when the liquid is used up. We shall fill it again.

Ba will not come; Lilavati may. Most probably I shall come on Sunday if there is no rain. But then as He wills.

I understand what you say about the Mahar. Have the labourers started coming?

To you both,

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8600. Also C.W. 6996. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] The addressee was in Darjeeling jail.

234. LETTER TO PYARELAL

WARDHA,
July 3, 1936

CHI. PYARELAL,

I am sending you this brief note in order not to keep you without a letter. I have received your letter only today. But I am so deep in work that I have not yet found the time to read your letter. Perhaps I shall be able to read it only when I go to Segaon. A lot of people are coming and going. Do I not know your feelings? Do not think that your dreams will never become a reality. You must proceed on the assumption that they will come true.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

235. FOR KHADI-WEARERS

Here are two extracts[1] from a longish letter from a Bihar correspondent:

> I have a complaint against you. I am a habitual khadi-wearer. I have been using khadi since its first appearance.... If I ever be obliged to give up khadi due to my poor circumstances, I shall be much pained. And the present unexpected increase in its prices without proportion will, I fear, drag me to that verge.... This will, I think, bring about the total collapse of the khadi movement.
>
> I am told that you desire to pay more to the poor spinners... But from whose pockets?... It will certainly be death to poor khadi-wearers if they are obliged to give up an ideal for which they stood and bravely fought... Your present decision is a great blunder. I fear by this you mean to give the movement a decent burial.

The following[2] is taken from a U.P. correspondent:

> ...Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has so much minimized the importance, necessity and utility of khadi that many staunch khadi-wearers are placed in a

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.
[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

fix and the weaker believers have got a secure shelter behind Panditji. The Congress has also relaxed the rigidity in the use of khadi and you seem to be finding solace in your determined silence. Would you just guide us and let us know our duty under the present circumstances? Another difficulty lies on account of the existing organization of the supplying source of khadi, the All-India Spinners'Association. Under the present conditions khadi is becoming dearer and dearer and its supply is growing less and less. The independent and individual khadi producers have been almost debarred from producing even a yard of khadi. The rules and restrictions seem, firstly, unreasonable, secondly, almost impossible to be followed, and thirdly, they are applied in an objectionable way and not in the spirit they might have been stipulated by you... How do you justify the restrictions imposed on the private khadi producers who have been compelled to abandon their production?

There is a similar complaint from C.P. National Scouts. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was, as has been made clear by him, misreported. [1] In common with the other believers in khadi, till the country has attained its freedom he thinks khadi to be a vital necessity. His doubt about its economic value has a place, if at all, only when independence is achieved and industrialization on a vast scale takes place in the country. Surely no wise man will give up khadi now for fear of its being overwhelmed by industrialization which may or may not envelop India in the far-off future. The restrictions on private producers are intended as well in the interests of artisans, especially the spinners, as the buyers. If they are removed the market will be flooded with spurious khadi resulting in spinners being put out of work and the buyers being deceived. If there is irregularity in the working of the regulations, attention of the Secretary should be drawn to it and it will be set right without delay.

The increase in prices is the only question that demands satisfactory answer. It should be remembered that when khadi was not half as good as it is now and when there was much less variety, it was much dearer than under the new scale and there was hardly any complaint against the prices then ruling. Whilst the buyers have been benefiting all these many years, the spinners had till now practically no benefit whatsoever in the shape of rise in wages. They were dumb and helpless. They could not declare a strike against the Association. In the very nature of things, they could not combine, being so scattered for the betterment of wages or anything else. They were in such need

[1] *Vide* "A False Alarm", 6-6-1936

of even PIES that they could not make any effective protest. If now the conscience of a few of us has begun to rebel against the wretchedly low wage given to the spinners, we deserve help from the buyers who have hitherto enjoyed the privilege of reduction in prices. The difficulty of poor buyers is obvious. But the value of khadi lies in its social and moral value. If the khadi buyers understand the implications of khadi, they will not complain of rise in prices, if and when it is conclusively shown, as it can be in the present instance, to be due to the increase in the wages of the spinners concerned. If they have the will they will discover many ways of making up for the increase they might have to bear in the purchase of khadi. But this they will do if they have burnt their boats and resolved never to use any other cloth but khadi so long as they are in India. If they leave an escape-door, they will make use of it on emergency. Invention comes generally from necessity. If the correspondents had made up their minds that for them there was no other cloth but khadi, they would not have written as they have done but, like the very large number who are no whit better off than these correspondents, they would have accommodated themselves to the slight increase that has taken place in the price of khadi.

At the same time let me comfort the correspondents by giving them the assurance that every care is being taken to make the increase as slight as possible for the poor lovers of khadi. Let them too peruse the reports from Rajendra Babu and the Secretary, A.I.S.A., Tamil Nad, on the great success that is attending the new experiment in giving unsolicited increase to spinners in their wages. If khadi-lovers will have patience, they will find that, if the price of khadi has slightly increased, there has been corresponding improvement in the quality and durability of khadi.

Harijan, 4-7-1936

236. INFANTICIDE OF GIRLS

It is difficult to believe that even today a cruel inhuman custom like infanticide of girls is prevalent in this unfortunate country. But, the letter that lies before me forces me to believe it. In the village Amarpur, in Bhagalpur District, Bihar, an association to oppose such infanticide among Rajputs has been formed. The secretary of this

body has written a very sad letter in this regard. A few excerpts[1] from it are given below.

Dharma teaches us that all souls are one. Plurality, being momentary, is only an illusion. Nationalism, too, teaches us this same lesson. We do not think of ourselves as Rajputs, or Biharis, Punjabis and so on. We consider ourselves Indians and we believe ourselves to be one nation and persuade others to believe so. Therefore whether from the point of view of religion or of patriotism we are one; the responsibility of the misconduct of any one falls on all of us. For this reason we are all responsible for the infanticide of girls among Rajputs, whether we are Rajputs or from any other community. Had we not been indifferent to one another's faults and troubles, infanticide of girls could not have continued to this day. There is no religious excuse and no need for this. There might have been a time when the life of a Rajput was insecure and therefore the birth of girls was considered calamitous. Today this excuse does not exist. It cannot be said that the lives of Rajputs are less safe than those of the others. War no longer threatens the Rajputs. Today a Rajput does not have to sleep with his sword by his side. There is still a Rajput community, no doubt, but there is nothing like the special dharma of the Rajputs. Why then this infanticide of girls? Why should girls be a burden? The burden certainly is on those who buy husbands for their daughters and have to pay such exorbitant prices that they are all but ruined. It is God's mercy that they have not reached the stage of killing their daughters. I am not aware if any excuse is put forward for the infanticide of Rajput girls. If there is any such excuse, it is the duty of this new association to throw light on the subject.

But even if there is a cause, it is our duty to remove it. No excuse can be accepted for the continuance of this barbarous custom. Public opinion must be mobilized to abolish this custom soon. The burden of mobilizing public opinion must fall on the Rajput Kanya Vadha Virodhini Sabha. This endeavour will not bear fruit by long speeches nor by passing resolutions. A little of both these will be needed. But the most important thing is a complete picture of the facts. You should prepare a chart which should tell at one glance where the infanticide of girls takes place and the number of girls killed in the previous year. It may be difficult to obtain the number of girls killed, it may even be impossible. The point is that all available

[1] These are not translated here.

information must be gathered and the Sabha's message conveyed to every home where there is a possibility of such an incident. Mere publishing of the resolutions in newspapers will have no effect on the parents who resort to this practice. It is important for the workers of the Sabha to remember that they should not exaggerate facts in any way. By ceaseless, sincere and peaceful efforts success in this cause can be attained soon. This is what I think and believe.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 4-7-1936

237. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

WARDHA,
July 4, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I still entertain the hope of coming tomorrow. No more just now. I am in the midst of a meeting.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6355. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9821

238. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

July 4, 1936

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I am sending the milk and the Flit. I expect to reach there tomorrow when I shall go into the Mahar problem.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8599. Also C.W. 6997. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

239. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

July 4, 1936

CHI. KANU,

Only half the work has been done. As you spoke to me of seven annas I mentioned the same amount to Govind. He promptly gave me

four annas and will be giving the three now. I shall send the money there. Debit it to the expense account and credit it on getting it from there.

Ramjilal may take his meals there as he pays for his board.

Never mind the Flit tin. I shall enter it into the accounts here.

You may change the time for the recitation of the *Ramayana* though we shall revert to the existing practice after I come...[1] it is good to have accounts which suit the convenience of all.

Send the pair of tongs which was set apart exclusively for my use, as also the griddle, and the saucepan if they have come back after welding. They get Marathi newspapers there; please send one or two of them. I should now have a red pen. For Munnalal a letter pad of ordinary unlined paper. Enclosed please find [letters] for Krishnadas, Kaka, Shambhu Dayal....[2]

I hope you are in very good humour.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Mahadev, if he is there when you get this, that I don't need fruit.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXI

240. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

July 4, 1936

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I had not told Mahadev to write to you about the museum. I had instructed him to write only about the other buildings. You might remember that when I talked to you about my requirements I had stated the need of Rs. 1,00,000 for the purpose of erecting the other buildings. Later I included among them also the schools already constructed although at the time of mentioning one lakh I had excluded the school, for I had planned to use the amount for the other buildings only. But the construction of the school has involved a heavy expenditure which the Sangh is unable to meet fully. I had an impression that you had already transferred some funds out of the

[1] Illegible in the source
[2] *ibid*

one lakh to Bachcharaj and Co. Now I learn that nothing has been deposited there to this account. Hence I sent you a letter[1] at Trivandrum which probably did not reach you. If any sum can be drawn now from this amount it may be done.

You must have got the copy of my letter[2] to Dr. Moonje. What has been settled with Parnerkar?

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 8020. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

241. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 6, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Having returned to Segaon last evening I can deal with correspondence.

How can a young man of 67 say from *experience* whether men (for women I won't be allowed to speak) become obstinate on old age creeping in?

Yes, I would gladly forgo the pleasure of having Idiot talk to me by post when she is attending to Malaviyaji who needs considerate listeners like you. How I would love to see him rest for a year!But he won't. He will die-in harness. God bless him. Nevertheless he departs from धर्म dharma in refusing to rest when both mind and body need to. You and I *must not* imitate him, though you are inclined always like him to overdo things. You must recognize it as an unpardonable weakness.

I shall find work for you in Bezwada if I know definitely when and how many hours you will be there.

You must impose silence on yourself to give your poor throat some rest. Do you know that a specialist has enjoined on Jawaharlal a week's complete silence on pain of having a complete breakdown. Not even a whisper allowed. Will you listen? Or will you prove the idiotic obstinate princess who will listen to no one? You will give me

[1] Not traceable
[2] *ibid*

the definite date of your coming. Mira is happy in her cottage. Her village instinct is a marvel to me.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Encl. for Malaviyaji.[1]

From the original: C.W. 3581. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6390

242. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

July 6, 1936

CHI. MARY,

This is by return post. Nothing wrong in your getting registered as a voter.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6065. Also C.W. 3395. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

243. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

July 6, 1936

DEAR HENRY,

This will be presented to you by Kamalnayan Bajaj, the eldest son of Jamnalalji. However much we may fight Great Britain, London is increasingly becoming our Mecca or Kashi. Kamalnayan is no exception. I have advised him to take up a course in the London School of Economics. Perhaps you will put him in touch with prof. Laski who may not mind guiding young Bajaj. Muriel has undertaken to mother him.

Please treat this also as acknowledgment of your letter received some time ago. I am trying to become a villager. The place where I am writing this has a population of about 600—no roads, no post-office, no shop.

Love to you all.

BHAI

From a photostat: G.N. 3053

[1] This is not traceable.

244. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

July 6, 1936

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

I am sending herewith three letters of introduction which will serve the purpose. Woodbrooke is in Birmingham. It is an excellent institution. You should establish contact with these persons quite soon. As I am writing this, I think I should send you a letter addressed to Prof. Horace Alexander also. That makes four letters[1]. Prof. Alexander belongs to Woodbrooke. Write to me regularly. Listen to everyone, but do what you consider best and what agrees best with the hopes you raised in us when you went. There is no end of temptations out there. Live up to your name[2] and, recalling its qualities, remain untouched by the mire although surrounded by it, as does the lotus. Then all will be well. Don't delve beyond your depth and don't compete with anybody. Your potentiality will develop to its best if you make good use of every moment. Study deeply the *Ramayana* and the *Gita*, reading them every day. You will of course read the *Gita* in the original but also keep with you a copy of Edwin Arnold's *Song Celestial.*

Blessings from

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3052

245. LETTER TO HORACE ALEXANDER

July 6, 1936

MY DEAR HORACE,

This will be presented to you by young Kamalnayan Bajaj, the eldest son of Jamnalalji. I have advised him to join the London School of Economics. But if you think of anything better, please guide him likewise. In any case, I have asked him to put himself in touch with the Woodbrooke school of thought. The rest I leave to you.

Love to you, Olive and all other friends.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1425

[1] Of these only two are available; *vide* the preceding and the following items.
[2] Kamalnayan literally means "lotus-eyed".

246. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 6, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your telegram and the two letters. In the matter of Saraswati, I did what Kanti had suggested. I wired to you at Kanti's instance as you could have returned after seeing her although I was afraid you would not be able to come. There was no question whatever of Saraswati or Kanti going there. We shall now see what to do when Saraswati returns.

What you write about Mahila Ashram is not at all proper. The institution has been growing day by day and girls have had to be refused admission. It is not right to say that Saraswati cannot stay just because Rajkishori, for instance, could not. The reason for Saraswati's not staying was quite different. I don't have the time to explain all that.

I like the idea of your going through the operation during the holidays. Viyogi Hari will tell you more. Kanti and Saraswati left only yesterday for Trivandrum. Lilavati is with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 339

247. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

July 6, 1936

CHI. NARAHARI,

I forgot to speak to you of one thing that I had intended. Nimu wants to go and stay there. Here she has no opportunity for studies. Besides, Sumitra would thus be under her supervision. The subjects she wants to learn are English, Arithmetic, History, Geography (i.e., through Gujarati), as also vocal music and the *sitar.* I would send her to the Vidyapith if you thought she could study there and she would not in any other way add to your inconvenience.

She should do her own cooking and of course pay the rent, etc. She should give one hour to service of Harijans. She can teach

tailoring, music (elementary) and Gujarati (elementary). You are [not] to accept her for my sake. I inquire about it as I would be glad to fulfil her wish if it could be done without difficulty.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9095

248. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

July 6, 1936

BAPA,

At Wardha I can hardly lift my head and read letters, and if I manage to read them I cannot reply to them. And what is more, if I am to live long, I must avoid working till late at night, or in the small hours of the morning.

Do call a meeting of the Committee in August to discuss the subjects you suggest. Obtain Jamnalalji's consent. I shall be occupied between August 10 and 12.

I have followed the point regarding contributions. It is surprising that you had no success in Bombay. I do not think we should cut down on work everywhere, though all the provinces should certainly become self-supporting.

In accepting conditional Government aid for Kodambakkam I can see nothing but ruin. I had mentioned to the Rao Bahadur very strong reasons and I thought he had been convinced. I now see I was mistaken. The chief reason of course is that if the money is not forthcoming from the Hindus even for this small institution, the Sangh or the Hindus cannot take the credit for running it. Of course if you say we are concerned with the end and not with the argument, then I shall have nothing to say. But even so I shall insist that considering the origin of the Sangh, if nothing else, our ideal should be not to shoulder any burden that the Hindus would not share. The rest is a matter of method or means. If it is somehow worth while running it even with Government aid, why should not the Committee run it on its own independently of the Sangh? I would be interested in keeping the Sangh's foundations firm and strong, though the range of my understanding is limited to Segaon. Hence the correct decision would

be the one that the Committee takes after they have listened to me.

My Malaya or whatever you call it is Segaon, at least for the present. If God lets me spend three seasons here, I would deem it great favour of the Big Brother. But what flattery can work with Him?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1163

249. LETTER TO K. NATARAJAN

WARDHA,
July 7, 1936

Mahadev has just sent me your letter. The editorial you have sent me from *Unity* is extraordinary. The views attributed to me and reproduced in inverted commas were never uttered by me and, what is more, they have never been held by me.[1] From nothing that I have heard from Jawaharlal's lips have I ever even suspected that he contemplated the use of violence for the attainment of India's independence.[2] It is surprising how Dr. Holmes has allowed himself to be duped into thinking that I had ever made the remarks said to have been made by me. You can make whatever use you like of this letter and to save time you may pass on this letter to Dr. Holmes if you think it proper.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

250. LETTER TO KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI

July 7, 1936

Your statement contains a statement of eternal truth. But your previous letter contained a definite complaint which you had a perfect right to make. Indeed it was your duty to do so. Do you not owe it to me [that you should tell me] who were the culprits and what they had done? After all we approach eternal verities only by tackling details in terms thereof. Anyway, whatever glimpses I may have of truth I owe

[1] *Vide* "Are We Rivals?", on or before 22-7-1936.

[2] The report in *Unity inter alia* said: "Elected President of the Indian National Congress at its recent meeting at Lucknow, Nehru came out for a use of violence in the struggle for independence, and is reported to be planning a movement to shake British rule in India."

principally, if not entirely, to attention to the minutest details, always keeping the supreme objective in view. Do please therefore help.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

251. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 8, 1936

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have just received your letter[1]. I was seeking time to be able to write to you on the events in Wardha. Your letter makes it difficult. I would however just like to say that the letter of withdrawal does not bear the meaning you put upon it when it was given to you. It was sent to you after I had seen it. The sending of such a letter in the place of resignation was my suggestion. I wish that you could take a juster view of that letter. In any case I am firmly of opinion that during the remainder of the year, all wrangling should cease and no resignations should take place. A.I.C.C. will be paralysed and powerless to deal with the crisis. It will be torn between two emotions. It would be most unfair to spring upon it a crisis, in the name of democracy, which it has never been called upon to face. You are exaggerating the implications of the letter. I must not argue. But I would urge you to consider the situation calmly and not succumb to it in a moment of depression so unworthy of you. Why should you not allow your

[1] Of July 5, in which the addressee had complained about the attitude of some of his colleagues of the Working Committee with whom he had differences of opinion. At the meeting of the Working Committee held at Wardha on June 29, these differences had come into such sharp focus that seven members of the Working Committee, namely, Rajendra Prasad, C. Rajagopalachari, Jairamdas Doulatram, Jamnalal Bajaj, Vallabhbhai Patel, J.B. Kripalani and S.D. Deo, found it necessary to submit their resignation from that body, which on Gandhiji's suggestion they later withdrew. Rajendra Prasad, however, sent a personal letter to Jawaharlal Nehru on July 1, explaining in detail the reasons which had impelled him and the others to send their resignation letter. All the three documents, viz., the letter of resignation dated June 29, Rajendra Prasad's letter to Nehru dated July 1, and Nehru's letter to Gandhiji dated July 5, not reproduced here, are to be found in *A Bunch of Old Letters.*

The differences in the Working Committee, which had become apparent at the Lucknow Session itself, at which Nehru was elected President, revolved round the question how far the Congress could commit itself to socialism in its programme. "The President," Pattabhi Sitaramayya says, 'was out of tune with the majority of the Working Committee."

humour to play upon the meetings of the W. C.? Why should it be so difficult for you to get on with those with whom you have worked without a jar for years? If they are guilty of intolerance, you have more than your share of it. The country should not be made to suffer for your mutual intolerance.

I do hope you have accepted the very sane advice of the German doctor.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, pp. 191-2

252. LETTER TO GLADYS OWEN

July 8, 1936

DEAR GLADYS,

I am glad you have accepted a year's appointment from the Rajghat Theosophical School[1]. Anyway it will enable you to gain some experience of Indian students and you will certainly be able to give something to the boys or girls who may be under your charge.

Yes, Abbas Tyabji is the one of Baroda whom you had intended to see and who, alas, is no more. He was one of the noblest of men I had the good fortune to meet, and you should still nurse the desire of meeting the members of his family. They are all chips of the old block, and especially Raihana, one of the daughters of the deceased. She is not only most accomplished but she is also deeply spiritual.

Love.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6192

253. LETTER TO ATULANANDA CHAKRABARTY

July 8, 1936

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your letter. I wish you would appreciate my own difficulty. My method of approach to the question is unfortunately

[1] At Varanasi

different from yours. I would therefore at least for the time being suggest that you serve according to your own line. If your method ever commends itself to me I should have no difficulty in accepting it and for any organized efforts I would not do otherwise than to refer you to the Congress. Do not expect any paragraph from me. You will presently find that if I am to do the village work on which I am bent, I should have to cease correspondence at least for the time being.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 1475. Courtesy: A.K. Sen

254. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

July 8, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

What a strange letter! It won't do if you keep falling ill time and again. Why do you not ask leave of everybody and come away here if you never keep fit there? Being ill, you will not be serving but taking service from them all. I could write to Jayaprakash if you wish. Why don't you say boldly what you have in your mind? You talk brave things to me but, I am afraid, you secretly worry all the while, which is not going to help in any way. Jayaprakash saw me. He writes that in Patna you will be living together. The Banaras proposal seems to have blown over completely. It seems he has already taken a house at Patna. He told me that the place was good. I think you know all this.

Kanti has gone to Trivandrum, taking Saraswati with him. His address is: C/o G. Ramachandran, Harijan Sevak Sangh, Trivandrum. He will return in a month.

Wire about your health as soon as you get this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3478

255. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

July 8, 1936

I have gone through the Glossary[1]. I presume the meanings given are just the ones given in *Anasaktiyoga*[2]. It looks quite all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9943. Also C.W. 6918. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

256. TELEGRAM TO LADY FAZL-I-HUSSAIN

[*July 10, 1936*] [3]

PRAY ACCEPT MY CONDOLENCES.[4] I HAVE NOTHING BUT PLEASANT RECOLLECTIONS OF MANY HAPPY INTERVIEWS I HAD WITH YOUR DISTINGUISHED HUSBAND.

The Hindu, 13-7-1936

257. LETTER TO NARASINHRAO B. DIVATIA

July 10, 1936

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

If Gokulbhai were not to give me the news of the passing of your life companion, then who else would? He is one of your many admirers. Where is the need for offering condolence to you? I had been hearing about your illness. I did not know anything about Sushilabehn. Truly God tests his devotees. You have passed through many ordeals. You have to pass all the tests. To those whom God tests He seems to give strength to bear suffering. Your faith in God will make even an atheist a believer. May you always succeed.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

[1] *Gitapadarthakosha*
[2] Gandhiji's Gujarati translation of the *Bhagavad Gita*.
[3] *Vide* footnote 1, "Letter to Kanu Gandhi", 10-7-1936
[4] The addressee had lost her husband on July 9.

[PS.]

No need to acknowledge this.

NARASINHRAO BHOLANATH
MARINE VILLA
14TH ROAD, KHAR [BOMBAY]

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

258. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

July 10, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter and follow what you say. I don't mind how long you stay there provided you preserve your health. You can do much work while there. Meditate on what the verses of Chapter II[1] say and try to live accordingly. Be cheerful, concentrating your attention on the duty facing you at a given time. Try to live on milk, curds, vegetables, fruit and *rotli*[2]. Don't touch dal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3467

259. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 10, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. I shall certainly make use of the figures you have given, and I have made a note of the corrections you have sent me. It is good that you are constantly thinking of khadi. That is as it should be. Swadeshi is one of our eleven vows. And from the beginning khadi has been considered the core of swadeshi. Even so, we have very few people giving constant thought to khadi. That is why the khadi activity is not as widespread as it ought to be.

There is chaos in national education, too. There are many who talk about it, few who understand it. Those who understand it seldom put it into practice. But there is no doubt that true national education is as I have described it. Therefore, just as we cannot permit any

[1] Of the *Bhagavad Gita*
[2] Chapati

adulteration of khadi whether it succeeds or not, so, too, we cannot permit adulteration of national education. And if, without our adulterating it even one student pursues it with love, I will say that national education is going on, its future is bright.

But I would not say that national education was flourishing merely because a number of children pursued what passed for national education but which was not really national education. This view of mine notwithstanding, you should go on doing what you can to the best of your ability. Do not derive any meaning from my words, other than that you will have my co-operation when you are fed up with adulteration and seek to introduce basic changes. You once asked me regarding Kanu's clothing. I do not remember if I replied to you. If I have not, all that I have to say is that you need not worry.

Getting used to as little clothing as possible helps towards a healthy body. I do, therefore, take care of Kanu's clothing to the extent of preserving his health. At the moment it would seem his training, too, is proceeding fast though the credit may not go to Mahadev. As neither Navin nor Kanti is here, I have to take from Kanu alone the work the two of them would be doing. So Kanu is getting his fill of training in the process. But this is the impression I get. The impression that Kanu gets should be the correct one. For the present I see very little of him and so have not been able to ask him about it. He remains deeply immersed in work and has no errands to run for Mahadev.

It seems Manju[1] is progressing well. Is Kusum[2] keeping fit? Did she gain or did she lose from her recent travels?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8498. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Daughter of Vrajlal A. Gandhi
[2] *ibid*

260. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

July 10, 1936

CHI. KANU,

There used to be two nozzles with me, of which one has come here and the other is left behind. Send it over if you find it. I need my *takli* box, which has not come.

The letter to Narandas contains a reference to you. If I am correct, write so to him; write to me also whether it is correct. I enclose the text of a telegram[1]. Please despatch it immediately. The letters to be posted are there as usual. Today you have to bear the whole burden single-handed! Won't you shoulder the work by yourself when it comes to you some day for good? Won't you prove equal to it?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am sending a cheque for Rs. 40 with my endorsement. Send me one or two small bottles which can hold an ounce or two, with corks if you have them there or without.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

261. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

Unrevised *July 10, 1936*

BHAISHRI HARIBHAU,

I have had exhaustive talks with L.[2] and S.[3] L. has nothing in her. She did not impress me favourably. S. did. He admitted that they had both been infatuated with each other and remained so. The situation even now is the same. According to S. the infatuation arose out of blameless service. L. kept mum on the point. She was willing to undergo medical examination but I seriously doubt whether she would stand before a doctor if she was really taken to one. S. assured me that the two of them did not reach the last stage of intimacy as they thought of you and me. I saw L.'s father at Beawar. From his

[1] Presumably this was the telegram to Lady Fazi-i-Hussain.
[2] The name has been omitted.
[3] *ibid*

talks I inferred that he had no knowledge of this illicit relationship and I also did not think it necessary to put him wise about it. Her father did not impress me at all. From one of your letters I gathered that you were satisfied that he was really not L.'s father. But another letter of your seems to show that you have now changed your opinion. According to L. he is indeed her father. Having examined the whole thing I, have given this decision:

(1) L. should go to M.[1] and live as his wife.

(2) If she does not wish to do so and can remain free of passion, she should observe *brahmacharya*.

(3) If she cannot control her passion she should marry some other young man.

She should have kept her relations with S. pure untill marriage. Both claim that they have been pure. I, therefore, do not think it is proper for them to associate with each other. However, if they cannot live without each other's intimate company, they should do so openly. But in that situation, they cannot expect my blessings. They can then stay neither in the Ashram nor in an institution with which I am closely connected. I fear L. cannot live without S. It is my opinion that she is suffering from hysteria caused by sexual desire. S.'s contact is tainted with passion and aggravates the hysteria.

Now you may do what you think proper.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

262. DR. AMBEDKAR'S INDICTMENT—I

The readers will recall the fact that Dr. Ambedkar was to have presided last May at the annual conference of the Jat-Pat-Torak Mandal of Lahore. But the conference itself was cancelled because Dr. Ambedkar's address was found by the Reception Committee to be unacceptable. How far a Reception Committee is justified in rejecting a President of its choice because of his address that may be objectionable to it is open to question. The Committee knew Dr. Ambedkar's views on caste and the Hindu scriptures. They knew also that he had in

[1] The name has been omitted.

unequivocal terms decided to give up Hinduism. Nothing less than the address that Dr. Ambedkar had prepared was to be expected from him. The Committee appears to have deprived the public of an opportunity of listening to the original views of a man who has carved out for himself a unique position in society. Whatever label he wears in future, Dr. Ambedkar is not the man to allow himself to be forgotten.

Dr. Ambedkar was not going to be beaten by the Reception Committee. He has answered their rejection of him by publishing the address at his own expense. He has priced it at 8 annas. I would suggest a reduction to 2 annas or at least 4 annas.

No reformer can ignore the address. The orthodox will gain by reading it. This is not to say that the address is not open to objection. It has to be read if only because it is open to serious objection. Dr. Ambedkar is a challenge to Hinduism. Brought up as a Hindu, educated by a Hindu potentate, he has become so disgusted with the so-called *savarna* Hindus for the treatment that he and his have received at their hands that he proposes to leave not only them but the very religion that is his and their common heritage. He has transferred to that religion his disgust against a part of its professors.

But this is not to be wondered at. After all one can only judge a system or an institution by the conduct of its representatives. What is more, Dr. Ambedkar found that the vast majority of *savarna* Hindus had not only conducted themselves inhumanly against those of their fellow religionists whom they classed as untouchables, but they had based their conduct on the authority of their scriptures, and when he began to search them he had found ample warrant for their belief in untouchability and all its implications. The author of the address has quoted chapter and verse in proof of his therefold indictment—inhuman conduct itself, the unabashed justification for it on the part of the prepetrators, and the subsequent discovery that the justification was warranted by their scriptures.

No Hindu who prizes his faith above life itself can afford to underrate the importance of this indictment. Dr. Ambedkar is not alone in his disgust. He is its most uncompromising exponent and one of the ablest among them. He is certainly the most irreconcilable among them. Thank God, in the front rank of the leaders he is singularly alone and as yet but a representative of a very small minority. But what he says is voiced with more or less vehemence by many

leaders belonging to the depressed classes. Only the latter, for instance Rao Bahadur M.C. Rajah and Dewan Bahadur Srinivasan, not only do not threaten to give up Hinduism but find enough warmth in it to compensate for the shameful persecution to which the vast mass of Harijans are exposed.

But the fact of many leaders remaining in the Hindu fold is no warrant for disregarding what Dr. Ambedkar has to say. The *savarnas* have to correct their belief and their conduct. Above all, those who are by their learning and influence among the *savarnas* have to give an authoritative interpretaion of the scriptures. The questions that Dr. Ambedkar's indictment suggests are:

1. What are the scriptures?

2. Are all the printed texts to be regarded as an integral part of them or is any part of them to be rejected as unauthorized interpolations?

3. What is the answer of such accepted and expurgated scriptures on the question of untouchability, caste, equality of status, inter-dining and intermarriages?

(These have been all ably examined by Dr. Ambedkar in his address).

I must reserve for the next issue[1] my own answer to these questions and a statement of the (at least some) manifest flaws in Dr. Ambedkar's thesis.

Harijan, 11-7-1936

263. LETTER TO A. DONALD MILLER

WARDHA,
July 11,1936

DEAR MR. MILLER,

Your letter of 3rd July to Mahadev Desai. Thank you for the letters you have been contributing in connection with the terrible leprosy in India.[2] I know from personal experience of village workers of the increasing number. Only this morning Mirabehn who, as you know, has now for nearly 18 months settled down to village life,[3] was

[1] *Vide* "Dr. Ambedkar's Indictment—II", 18-7-1936
[2] *Vide* "The Leprosy Problem", 6-6-1936
[3] At Varoda, a village near Wardha

telling me how many lepers have been coming in contact with her, hoping to find some remedy for their disease. I know that she will derive much help from your letters. And now that I have just begun the village life, I am already making use of the instructions which you have given in your letters.

Needless to say your fifth letter will be published. Of course the readers of *Harijan* should know fully what missionary effort has done to alleviate the suffering of lepers. It would be churlish of me or anybody to ignore the medical work of the various missions in India and elsewhere. My complaint is that that work is not done without an alien motive behind it. I could not give you an adequate conception of the barrier that this motive erects between them and the thousands who would gladly take advantage of medical and other help that missionaries could render. You will probably rejoin that missionaries are not deflected from the call which they consider to be divine, by knowledge of the barrier. Persons like me who believe in the essential truth of all religions feel on the contrary that the proselytizing effort prevents so many Indians from benefiting by the unadulterated teachings of Jesus which ennobles life in spite of their not believing in him as the only begotten Son of God.

I hope you will not regard this paragraph of my letter as in any way qualifying my gratefulness for your articles. I felt that it would not be complete if I did not let you know that my view on proselytization could not in any way affect my recognition of the good that is done by the mission, apart from their proselytizing attempt. I need hardly say that this little discussion of my view is not meant as an invitation to a debate on the subject. This letter itself does not call for any reply. It is merely meant to be one of thanks and nothing more. You may expect questions on leprosy as may be prompted by personal contact with lepers which will probably be my daily lot.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers Courtesy: Pyarelal

264. LETTER TO SAHEBJI MAHARAJ

July 11,1936

DEAR SAHEBJI MAHARAJ[1],

I know you have supplied the Karachi Harijan Tannery a competent tutor for shoe-making and so you have for the Harijan Colony in Delhi. We have in Wardha also a tannery to which a few young men are devoting their time principally for their love of Harijans! But we are feeling the want of a competent teacher for shoe-making and other leather manufacture. If we can teach shoe-making to the Harijans and others in village-tanning, they will have an additional capacity for earning and we would be able to have more men if we can add manufacture to finished tanning. If you have such a teacher to spare, could you please lend one for six months? The idea is that the teacher will prepare from among the students a promising young man as a teacher. If you can send such a person you will please tell me when he can come and what he will expect to be paid.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2163

265. LETTER TO UMADEVI BAJAJ

July 11, 1936

CHI. OM,

I want you to send me little Marathi books that may be with you, Madalasa, or anybody else and are not of immediate use there, since I wish to set up a small library here and need Marathi books. They should be textbooks as well as books for general reading. The books will be returned to their owners if my scheme does not work. These should be lent for six months at least. And those books which can be given away are to be given away for good. Send me a list of the books that may be given away. I don't propose to have a library costing more than ten rupees. This will give you an idea of the kind of books I want. If anybody preserves Marathi newspapers I would like to have

[1] Head of a Radhaswami Sect in Dayalbagh, Agra

them, too, after they are read there. This is not asking for any big donation. Nor do the seniors need be disturbed. However, some persons like you can easily undertake such work if they have a thought for the villagers. Do this job with your heart in it. If you do not find interest in it, say no, so that I may plead with someone else.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 343

266. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

July 11, 1936

CHI. VIJAYA,

You yourself will write whenever you fancy, and I am expected to reply by return of post. Nor will you apologize for your laxity! Where did you have all this training? I am settled in Segaon all right but I have no facility to accommodate you. You may go to the Mahila Ashram if you wish. Ba has not yet come. She is still at Maganwadi.

There is within us divine going on constantly; it is, no doubt, beyond the perception of sense-organs, but we can believe in it on the strength of our faith. Moreover, just as we have sense-organs, so too we have the *atman* within us, don't we? Hence the *atman* may experience it, being itself beyond the senseorgans. I experience every moment the presence of the *atman* and therefore I occasionally catch the echoes of the divine music. With effort you, too, can hear the music if you wish. It is not the music that another can help one hear. One can communicate to another only that which is perceptible to sense-organs. About the *atman*, the *atman* alone can know.

Wait if you wish to stay nowhere but with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7060. Also C.W. 4552. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

267. LETTER TO D.B. KALELKAR

July 11, 1936

CHI. KAKA,

I have gone through Rameshwardas's letter. Since you have offered no comments I do not know what you desire. I shall explain as I see the situation.

Parnerkar will not give up responsibility for the Dhulia Goshala. He well keep an eye on it. He has not gone there to take up any other work for Rameshwardas. He cannot involve himself in Rameshwardas's domestic affairs, though there has been some interference on his part. This was natural since he has been staying with the family. Both the husband and wife are foolish and though they do not get along well together, Rameshwardas cannot do without Gangabehn even for a moment and quarrels are inevitable. What can anyone do in this situation? Neither of the two can make use of Shivaji who stays there. Gangabehn cannot put him to any good use; though she would certainly misuse his presence if she could. So awful is the situation. If you can see the situation differently please ignore my letter. If your view is much the same as mine, give any advice that you think fit after considering my view. Perhaps the better course might be for you to see Vinoba and advise me as you two decide. But this is only what occurs to me on reading the letter. You should do as you may have decided.

I am returning the letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7700

268. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 12, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have your letter. *Do not* strain to write to me. You must not thin away. Do not waste your energy. Your letters to me must be a pleasure and a recreation or they must not be written at all. We shall

not come closer by reason of letters. Absence of them can't separate us or create coolness. Why should you become a chronic invalid?

Your sense though of an idiot evidently led you aright. For your Simla khadi experiment seems to be succeeding beyond expectations. I suppose I must call it a mere accident. Idiots can't design good things !

The cottage here is a picture. I have just now a young sadhu.[1] He is a great *bhajani*, singer of bhajans of his own composition. He will be with me for a month. I occupy one corner, he occupies another, the third is occupied by Munnalal, a co-worker. The first accommodates a plank bedstead which you have seen. That corner will be taken up by Ba, if she comes, *and* you. So, you will prepare yourself for the proper village life. No privacy except in the bathroom which you will share with me. You must shudder to think of the fate that awaits you. You will enjoy the newness. There is no noise in spite of the seemingly crowded state of the room. All round is open and beautiful. Fresh breeze blowing throughout the day. It is quite cool. Perfect walks all over. When you come for two nights you will tell me what changes you will want.

You are there perhaps much more crowded than you are likely to feel here. All of us sleep under the sky without a roof separating us from it. Nevertheless you should bring your mosquito net and the cork for your thermos which you have made mine. I am managing with the one which is now almost all eaten away.

Agatha[2] expects to attend the Ceylon Conference which you have tabooed for yourself.

This is the newest sample of Maganwadi paper. You will have this in an envelope of Maganwadi make.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3582. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6391

[1] Tukdoji Maharaj: *vide* the following item.

[2] Agatha Harrison

269. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

July 12, 1936

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Cooking and washing clothes are no small service. There is an idea abroad these days that only the educated can do public service and the value of cooking and similar work has gone down very much. But did you not see that at Sabarmati the responsibility of the kitchen was entrusted only to a mature and experienced Ashram worker? When the Ashram was first established at Kochrab, I had in the beginning assumed the responsibility myself. Subsequently it was passed on to Vinoba, Kaka and others, and a worker like Vrajlal[1] lost his life while attending to the washing of clothes. Even when he joined, he had asked to be allowed to do all the clothes-washing, though he could do accounting and possessed a handwriting beautiful as a string of pearls. At a time of difficulty once, the charge of the store had to be entrusted to him. Without such workers we can never hope to win swaraj.

What I have said above doesn't mean, however, that you may not increase your knowledge of letters when you get the opportunity to do so or that you should not encourage others in their desire to learn. All that I mean is that anybody who hankers after education, neglecting the dharma that has fallen to his lot unsought, is committing an error.

Do come to Wardha before going to Bochasan. Gomati will try to drag you to her place. Besides, there are Maganwadi and Mahila Ashram also. Janakibehn is there, too, and, if you wish, you can come to me at Segaon and even stay with me, though we have only one room here for all of us. Only lately Tukdoji Maharaj has come and has been assigned one corner. The room is large enough, 29 x 14, with a 7'verandah running all round. In one corner of the verandah is a small kitchen and in another a bathroom for me. The walls are made of mud. The entire building is constructed with purely local materials. All around in this season our eyes rest on green fields.

[1] Vrajlal Gandhi who had descended into a well to bring up someone's water pot which had fallen in. While climbing up he slipped and was drowned

Mirabehn lives by herself in a hut smaller than this room, about a mile and a half from here.

It is very essential that Bachubhai does not ignore any of the restrictions regarding food or exertion.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G.S. Gangabehn, pp. 91-2. Also C.W. 8832. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

270. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[*July*][1] *12, 1936*

CHI. PYARELAL,

Now that I have given the first priority to your letter, I cannot give it up. Hence I am sending this letter at my earliest. But Sushila's letter is still lying unanswered because I am still waiting for a free moment. I want to make it a beautiful letter. Where should I send it?

You may go wherever you please, but please understand that you will be most welcome whenever you come here. I am in a hut here. There is shortage of space. But surely you are not bothered by that? You have seen the *dharmashala* at Maganwadi, have you not? This little place is becoming just like that. I like it. There is peace. Right now Tukde Maharaj is keeping me company. He will be staying for a month. He has an endless treasure of *bhajans*. All of them sound beautiful. Come if you feel you want to listen to them. For the rest I am just getting acquainted with him. I see that much service can be had from him. People have great faith in him.

Others living with me at present are Munnalal, Balwantsinha and Lilavati. Ba is planning to come. Now that Devdas has gone to Delhi,

[1] The source bears the date "12-6-1936", evidently a slip, for Gandhiji was in Bangalore on this date. Further, from the contents of the letter it is clear that it was written on July 12;*vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 12-7-1936

she may come.

What is your diet?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

271. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

July 13[1]*, 1936*

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your wire yesterday evening and was very glad. I will not tolerate your falling ill as it would put you and me to shame. Why should one who has learnt from me the key to health fall ill? Take only the food that agrees with you, breathe fresh air and take regular exercise. Take hip-bath whenever you need it. Do not worry under any circumstances. This anyone can do. You should never work beyond your capacity.

Ba came here last evening with Manu. A sadhu also has come to spend a month with me. We are all in the same hut. The sadhu is known by the name Tukdoji Maharaj.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Kanti is at Trivandrum.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3473

272. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN AGRAWAL

SEGAON,
July 13, 1936

BHAI SHRIMAN,

Your letter I could read only just now. I am unable to read the whole mail as soon as it arrives.

I am sending *Roti ka Raga*. Return it to me after Kakasaheb does his writing on it. In fact I had understood that my opinion was

required solely for your own satisfaction. But now I cannot find anything to write which can go into print. All the same let us see what can be done. You may come over whenever you wish to. You are not going to take my time, are you? Do whatever work Mahadev asks you to do for *Harijan*.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 239

273. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Unrevised by me SEGAON,
July 15, 1936

DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

(1) I hope you got my wire about *The Times of India* letter. I procured it yesterday and read it through. Nobody has ever written to me about the subject-matter. My reading of the letter confirms my view that you should take legal notice of the libel.

(2) If you will not misunderstand me, I would like you to keep me free of the Civil Liberties Union. I do not like for the time being to join any political institution. And there is no meaning in a confirmed civil resister joining it. Apart however from my joining or not joining the Union, maturer consideration confirms me in my opinion that it would be a mistkae to appoint Sarojini Naidu or for that matter any civil resister as President. I am still of opinion that the President should be a well-known constitutional lawyer. If that does not commend itself to you then, you should have an author of note who is not a law-breaker. I would also ask you to restrict the number of members. You need quality, not quantity.

(3) Your letter is touching. You feel to be the most injured party. The fact is that your colleagues have lacked your courage and frankness. The result has been disastrous. I have always pleaded with them to speak out to you freely and fearlessly. But having lacked the courage, whenever they have spoken they have done it clumsily and you have felt irritated. I tell you they have dreaded you, because of your irritability and impatience of them. They have chafed under your rebukes and magisterial manner and above all your arrogation

of what has appeared to them your infallibility and superior knowledge. They feel that you have treated them with scant courtesy and never defended them from socialists'ridicule and even misrepresentation.

You complain of their having called your activities harmful. That was not to say that you were harmful. Their letter was no occasion for recounting your virtues or your services. They were fully conscious of your dynamism and your hold over the masses and the youth of the country. They know that you cannot be dispensed with. And so they wanted to give way.

I look upon the whole affair as a tragi-comedy. I would therefore like you to look at the whole thing in a lighter vein. I do not mind your taking the A.I.C.C. into your confidence. But I do want you not to impose on it the unbearable taks of adjusting your family quarrels or choosing between them and you. Whatever you do you must face them with accomplished things.

Why do you resent their majority being reflected in all subcommittees, etc.? Is it not the most natural thing? You are in office by their unanimous choice but you are not in power yet. To put you in office was an attempt to find you in power, quicker than you would otherwise have been. Anyway that was at the back of my mind when I suggested your name for the crown of thorns. Keep it on though the head be bruised. Resume your humour at the committee meetings. That is your most usual role, not that of a care-worn irritable man ready to burst on the slightest occasion.

How I wish you could telegraph to me that on finishing my letter you felt as merry as you were on that New Year's Day in Lahore when you were reported to have danced round the tricolour flag.

You must give your throat a chance.

I am revising my statement. I have decided not to publish it till you have seen it.

I have decided that nobody should see our correspondence, besides Mahadev.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

274. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

July 15, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. Don't fall ill again. What was the cause of the last illness? Do you take hip-baths? In no case should you give it up.

Kanti is still at Trivandrum. Nimu is going to join Ramdas in Bombay. Manu will come to stay at Segaon. Lilavati is already here. So here, too, we shall be congested.

I seem to be keeping good health, and the food, too, continues to be as usual. For the present, Tukdoji Maharaj is here to spend a month with me.

I have written to you about the talk with Jayaprakashji.[1] When will you be going to Patna?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3479

275. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 15, 1936

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,[2]

I have your letter today, and I am sending the reply with Kanu so that it might be carried by the morning train.

The operation[3] can certainly be performed at Delhi and I shall arrange for it. I shall let you know the names of the doctors when I learn them.

Why should you believe what others say to you about my displeasure? Would I not express my displeasure myself? What a daughter you must be to believe what others say about your father!

Haven't I told you that you should have from me the money to meet your needs? You will take from me the money for coming

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Prabhavati", 8-7-1936
[2] This is in Urdu.
[3] For nose trouble

over here.

I had a bit of a letter from Kanti. He is happy. He will return in a month.

Have your nose examined by someone there. Consult Devdas.

I think I have answered the questions in your letter. There is no time to write more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 340

276. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 16, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

There are tyrants and tyrants. You will see on 22nd how you feel. If the night is fine, the roads dry and you do not feel fatigued, drive to Segaon after having your food. I shall be ready to give you a shake down at Segaon. If the fates are not propitious, you will sleep at Maganwadi and walk or drive, as you will, to Segaon in the morning. You must not be tired out in any way. You may brave all kinds of experiences, subject to the tyrant's will, on your return when you are expected to stay for a period.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3583. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6392

277. LETTER TO HORACE ALEXANDER

July 16, 1936

DEAR HORACE,

Your letter was most welcome. You will get a note[1] from me through Kamalnayan Bajaj. But that is a mere introduction. Only it was written before the receipt of your letter.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Horace Alexander", 6-7-1936

I anticipated you about Agatha. I cabled approval of her plan.[1]Her expenses in India can certainly be found but, on principle, her passage to India and back should be found from your end. That is what I have generally followed.

I quite agree with you that such visits are helpful. Therefore if the Heaths[2] can come it would [be] a good thing.

Jawaharlal is tirelessly preaching his message. He has an unconquerable faith in his mission.

Love to you both.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1424

278. LETTER TO KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI[3]

July 16, 1936

When did the pilgrimage become due? If you are merely referring to Khan Saheb's manifesto, it contains no such message for me. The incident is too trivial for me to notice. My undertaking with the Brothers is that I am not to rush without a call from them, unless I have an irresistible urge. I have none of the latter.

Saints are both real and false. The real ones never *want* any noise round them but it does become their hard lot. The false ones cannot live without noise.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

279. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

July 16, 1936

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I got your note well in time. It is easy to say, 'May you live a hundred years.' However, It is for you to make the effort. It is enough

[1] The cable is not available. Agatha Harrison was to attend the Ceylon Conference. *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 12-7-1936

[2] Presumably Carl Heath, a Quaker, and his wife

[3] The addressee had informed Gandhiji that there was a call for him from the Frontier to go there silently and had also remarked. "Can't saints do anything without noise?"

if we regard our body as a trust held in behalf of God and use it accordingly. Take care of your body. Take up no more burden than it can carry.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10718

280. LETTER TO J.P. BHANSALI

July 16, 1936

CHI. BHANSALI

I have your note. I cannot help feeling anxious. You have to become a model for others. You ought to preserve your health in good condition. You cannot get up without assistance. Why this sign of old age? I want you to do this: Live on unboiled milk alone, or eat any flour and almonds, or take coconut, gram and lemon. It is possible to keep the vow of abstaining from cooked food. True discipline would lie in this: You should eat nothing to indulge the palate. By way of medicine, you may take any food in the prescribed measure. Your weakness and night blindness must disappear.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

281. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

[*July 16, 1936*][1]

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have your letter. Nimu [is going][2] to Bombay. Ramdas insists that she should now stay with him. He is now engaged in the . . .[3].business.

I follow your point about Ramji. Do not give up your firmness in any case. Service of the cow we shall entrust to Vinoba.

. . .[4]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9096

[1] From the S.N. Register
[2] Illegible
[3] *ibid*
[4] *ibid*

282. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

July [*16*][1]*,1936*

CHI. KANTI,

You have been proved right and I wrong. What misuse and misinterpretation of a quite innocent statement of mine!Even so, why should it touch you? I have explained to you that you should not be touchy. Our letters crossed; yours reaching Wardha the day I sent mine from Segaon.

I don't think there is anything particular in Saraswati asking leave to stay on for two months. What comment did my letter evoke? And who made it?

You say nothing about your health. Where had you been to? I have not understood what Saraswati writes.

Nimu is leaving today to join Ramdas. Kanam[2] will be here. Ba and others have gone to Wardha to see Nimu off. She will return tomorrow. She comfortably works from Wardha to this place and has the courage also to walk back the same day. Manu too will come here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7302. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

283. TELEGRAM TO PYARELAL

WARDHAGANJ,
July 17, 1936

PYARELALJI
KHADIPRATISHTHAN
15 COLLEGE SQUARE
CALCUTTA

WIRE HEALTH. WRITING FULLY TODAY.

BAPU

From a photostat: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The source has July 26, which apparently is a slip as Nirmala went to join Ramdas on July 16; *vide* " Letter to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi", 18-7-1936

[2] Son of Ramdas Gandhi

284. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 17, 1936

CHI. PYARELAL,

I received your letter only last night. It is painful that your health should be spoilt. You must have received the telegram I sent you today. If you have not committed yourself to go to Utkal, come to Segaon. There is plenty of work waiting here. Only in this jungle can we have a couple of hours to ourselves. Therefore my wish is that you should now settle down only with me. Who knows about October? We shall see when that time comes. "Enjoy the present moment, who has seen the morrow?"

I had then and there read the note you had sent in a small cover. I have not been able to read your article. I have kept it safe. I shall read it when I find some time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

285. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
July 17,1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have corrected the note[1] you sent me and am now returning it with my endorsement. It would be proper not to expect a visit from me at present. If you persist in your request to Sardar, he will, I expect, try to come, though no one can say if that will be on the 12th[2] exactly. I have struck out those names as things are all uncertain. It would of course be admirable if people joined purely out of love of khadi; otherwise what does it matter if we get or do not get a little

[1] *Vide* the following item.
[2] Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram calendar

more khadi? How long can we sustain their enthusiasm for them? However, you many publish the names if in course of time you can ascertain who will be coming.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8499. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

286. LETTER TO KHADI WORKERS

July 17, 1936

Before this[1] was printed a draft was sent to me. I know Narandas's love of khadi so I cannot refuse his request for my signature under it. The more khadi we produce with a pure heart the nearer comes swaraj for all. What Narandas asks of the readers is as good as nothing; it should therefore be complied with without reserve.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8500 Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

287. TALK WITH JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM AND DEVDAS GANDHI[2]

[Before *July 18, 1936*][3]

I am very happy that you have come here, but, I hope, not to see this dignified hut of mine. I am responsible for little of the planning here, and I have given to it none of my art or my labour. But I wonder if you saw on you way Mirabehn's hut. It was worth while coming all the way to see her hut certainly. That is really and truly HER hut. This

[1] It was a note on the programme for Gandhiji's sixty-eighth birthday which was revised by Gandhiji. It read: " If a spinner wishes to use for himself the yarn spun by him, he will get it back as *prasada*; if not, it will be used to promote khadi activity.

It is not too much to hope that everyone will understand the significance of this occasion and give an impetus to khadi activity."

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[3] Devdas Gandhi had reached Delhi by July 18; *vide* "Letter to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi", 18-7-1936

is a hut built FOR me, not MY hut. Here is her own hut, planned and built by herself (of course with other people's labour). But it is not merely a hut. It is a poem. I studied it in detail only yesterday, and I tell you I had tears of joy as I saw the villager's mentality about everything in it. You know I often have my quarrels with her, but let me tell you that no one from amongst us can claim to have the real rural-mindedness that she has. Did you study the position of her little bath-room and the inside of it? She has utilized every stone that the blasting of the underground rock in her well, made available to her. The seat for the bath is all one stone fixed to the ground. Next to the bathroom in the same little hut is the latrine. No commode or wooden plank or any brickwork. Just two beautiful stones, half buried in the ground, and with two halves of kerosene tins between the stones. Any villager can do this, but never does it. All the water naturally runs to carefully made beds for plants and vegetables. And look at the care with which she has built the little stable for her horse, on the grooming and feeding and keeping of which she lavishes all her love and attention. Her love of animals is a thing to learn from her. Even whilst she is sitting and working in her hut; the stable is so arranged that she can give an occasional look to the horse. And now let us see the inside of the hut—all mud and split bamboo and wattle of palm-branches. You note every little article in the hut and the place given to it. Her *chula* (fire) is all made with her own hands, and though she has learnt it from us no one can beat her in the art. Then see the bamboo mantelpiece (if you will give it that big name) on which she keeps her earthen cooking utensils. Then see the little doorless windows and bamboo bookshelf and note the palms and peacocks over the windows, moulded in relief by herself. Also note her little kitchen and the carding room. The village where she works is about two to three furlongs from the hut. All the women and many of the men in the village know her, and the women confide to her many of their household secrets and look to her for advice and guidance—not always an easy matter, but always unfailingly for solace and comfort. She looks like one of them. Well, if you have not studied her hut carefully I would like you to go there again on your way back.

Harijan, 25-7-1936

288. DR. AMBEDKAR'S INDICTMENT—II

The Vedas, Upanishads, *Smritis* and Puranas including *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* are the Hindu scriptures. Nor is this a finite list. Evey age or even generation has added to the list. It follows, therefore, that everything printed or even found handwritten is not scripture. The *Smritis*, for instance, contain much that can never be accepted as the word of God. Thus many of the texts that Dr. Ambedkar quotes from the *smritis* cannot be accepted as authentic, The scriptures properly so called can only be concerned with eternal verities and must appeal to any conscience, i.e., any heart whose eyes of understanding are opened. Nothing can be accepted as the word of God which cannot be tested by reason or is not capable of being spiritually experienced. And even when you have an expurgated edition of the scriptures, you will need their interpretation. Who is the best interpreter? Not learned men surely. Learning there must be. But religion does not live by it. It lives in the experiences of its saints and seers, in their lives and sayings. When all the most learned commentators of the scriptures are utterly forgotten, the accumulated experience of the sages and saints will abide and be an inspiration for ages to come.

Caste has nothing to do with religion. It is a custom whose origin I do not know and do not need to know for the satisfaction of my spiritual hunger. But I do know, that it is harmful both to spiritual and national growth. Varna and ashrama are institutions which have nothing to do with castes. The law of varna teaches us that we have each one of us to earn our bread by following the ancestral calling. It defines not our rights but our duties. it necessarily has reference to callings that are conducive to the welfare of humanity and to no other. It also follows that there is no calling too low and none too high. All are good, lawful, and absolutely equal in status. The callings of a Brahmin—spiritual teacher—and a scavenger are equal, and their due performance carries equal merit before God and at one time seems to have carried identical reward before man. Both were entitled to their livelihood and no more. Indeed one traces even now in the villages the faint lines of this healthy operation of the law. Living in Segaon with its population of 600, I do not find a great disparity between the earnings of different tradesmen including Brahmins. I find too that real Brahmins are to be found even in these degenerate days who are

living on alms freely given to them and are giving freely of what they have of spiritual treasures. It would be wrong and improper to judge the law of varna by its caricature in the lives of men who profess to belong to a varna whilst they openly commit a breach of its only operative rule. Arrogation of a superior status by any of the varnas over another is a denial of the law. And there is nothing in the law of varna to warrant a belief in untouchability.(The essence of Hinduism is contained in its enunciation of one and only God as Truth and its bold acceptance of ahimsa as the law of the human family.)

I am aware that my interpretation of Hinduism will be disputed by many besides Dr. Ambedkar. That does not affect my position. It is an interpretation by which I have lived for nearly half a century and according to which I have endeavoured to the best of my ability to regulate my life.

In my opinion the profound mistake that Dr. Ambedkar has made in his address is to pick out the texts of doubtful authenticity and value and the state of degraded Hindus who are no fit specimens of the faith they, so woefully misrepresent. Judged by the standard applied by Dr. Ambedkar, every known living faith will probably fail.

In his able address, the learned Doctor has over-proved his case. Can a religion that was professed by Chaitanya, Jnanadeva, Tukaram, Tiruvalluvar, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Maharshi Devendranath Tagore, Vivekanand and a host of others who might be easily mentioned, be so utterly devoid of merit as is made out in Dr. Ambedkar's address? A religion has to be judged not by its worst specimens but by the best it might have produced. For that and that alone can be used as the standard to aspire to, if not to improve upon.

Harijan, 18-7-1936

289. NOTES

HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH AND MUNICIPAL GRANTS.

The Secretary of the Harijan Sevak Sangh writes:

> The Government auditors have raised objection to the grant made to the Harijan Sevak Sangh by the Dhulia Municipal Borough during the last year, on the ground that the work of Harijan uplift is not an educational object and the Municipal Borough cannot spend for it. Here is a serious question to be tackled.

It is also contended that hostels of students are not educational institutions. This is an astounding interpretation and unless set right at an early date will adversely affect the work of the Sangh and other institutions as well.

If what is stated here is true, there must be some misunderstanding. It may be debatable whether Harijan uplift can be classed as an educational effort, but when a school is conducted for Harijans or a hostel run in the interests of students surely both are educational efforts, and as such there should be no objection to a municipal borough financing such institutions. I hope, therefore, that the remarks said to have been made by the Government auditors are due to a pure misunderstanding of the position. It may be that the Dhulia Board voted a grant for 'Harijan Uplift'and if it has no power to make grants except to educational institutions, Harijan uplift as such might not be classified under grants to education. The matter requires further elucidation. Any futher comment must be withheld till all the facts of the case are known.

A VILLAGER'S HUMANITY

The reader will be glad to see the following two pictures sent by Miss Mary Barr of Khedi of what I have called "A Villager's Humanity".

1. Yesterday I found an old woman sitting in the wet with her calf. I asked her why she did not sit in the verandah (meaning the verandah of Miss Mary Barr's Cottage) with the rest of her party and keep dry. (They were some wandering people who had asked leave to camp for 24 hours on the verandah) She replied, 'I am sitting by this 'ëøÊ (calf). Its mother is dead.'

2. This afternoon I found two donkeys had come on to the verandah out of the rain and my first instinct was to 'shoo'them off as they would spoil the floor. They obediently 'shooed'and I immediately felt ashamed remembering yesterday's old woman and invited them back. They came.

I am sure Tara would be glad to know that HER verandah is sheltering all kinds of men and beasts during these wet days.

The reference to Tara, i.e., the late Mary Chesley, entirely bears out what I knew of her, and now that her numerous intimate friends have come to know about her premature and unexpected death, I have been receiving touching letters about the qualities of her heart and head. From those I copy the following.[1]

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

Polly (Miss Chesley) was built of the stuff from which martyrs are made. She never knew fear. She was keen pacifist and persuaded me to take the post left vacant at her mother's death as Superintendent of Peace and Arbitration in the W.C.T.U. for Cananda... Polly and I worked together to gather money for the Russian and Chinese famines, getting ten thousand dollars..... We also collected one thousand dollars for German children's relief.

A CORRECTION

With reference to my note 'Barbarous If True'[1] the President of the Panchayat Board, Devakottai writes: [2]

> ... There has been no objection raised at all at any time by myself or any other member of the Board to the Harijan member taking his seat alongside the other members. On the other hand he has been repeatedly requested during each and every meeting to take his seat. He has complied with our request during a few of the meetings that were held during the last four months.
>
> ... The Harijan member was questioned about the alleged treatment and he has issued a statement... that he was never objected to by anybody in the Board in taking his seat, and at times when he hesitated to take his seat along with others as per age-long custom, he has been promptly cheered up by the President to take his seat and advised not to get disheartened.
>
> ... Finally I wish to inform you that the Harijan member is no doubt sitting along with other members during the whole of the meeting now, and I want to assure you that all facilities are accorded to him by me so that his rights and privileges are duly enjoyed by him.

I gladly publish this letter. I am gladder still to find that the statement published was wholly untrue. In these days of suspicion and ferment among Harijans, it is necessary for correspondents to be accurate about the information they give. It is worth while knowing how the correspondent came to make the statement which appears to have been without any foundation whatsoever.

Harijan, 18-7-1936

[1] *Vide* "Barbarous if True", 27-6-1936

[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

290. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 18,1936

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letter. For some time past I have not been able to attend to your letters regularly.

There is nothing special concerning Harilal for the present. He goes about talking at random.

Sushila seems to think that I am insisting on your coming over here, but I don't remember having suggested such a thing in any of my letters. I do not think that you need come over if you are comfortably settled there. I would of course wish you not to feel helpless. Do what you both think right.

Ba, Manu and Kano came over to stay with me yesterday. Lilavati is here already. I may say we are now cramped for space.

I think I have told you earlier that there is just one room.

Ramdas has set himself up very well for the present. Let us now see how he fares. Nimu went to join him two days ago.

Devdas and Lakshmi had been here and have now reached Delhi. Chhaganlal and Kashi continue to stay at Wardha.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4854

291. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 18, 1936

CHI. MRIDU,

The bulletins arrived two days after your letter. You have strong shoulders and they will bear the burden of this work. But if you pass some of that burden on to my shoulders, I am afraid they will be crushed. What more can I say or do beyond giving you the empty blessings that God may grant you glory in the gigantic task you have undertaken. My strength is limited and every single movement of

mine is taken up by my rural but nevertheless new work. Even so I have spared the time required to read your bulletins. I have made the necessary comments which you will receive along with this letter.

I had a long letter from Jawaharlal in which he writes that you have become a matter of controversy between him and me. When will you write to me about this? I am awaiting the letter. I am trying to get to the root of this problem.

Give the enclosed letter to Mummy.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original; C. W. 11200. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

292. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 18, 1936

CHI. NIMU,

I received Sumi's letter...[1] I have written today. She must have reached the place. Kanam is fine. Write to me in detail.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papars. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

293. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON,
July 19,1936

CHI. MIRA,

You need not attempt to come here for the statement. There is no hurry. I cannot even give time, today being *Harijan* editing day. And of course you were right in postponing the statement to the plants which in village life take the prior place.

Love.

BAPU

From the original:C.W. 6356, Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9822

[1] Some words here are illegible in the source.

294. TALK WITH STUDENTS OF VILLAGE WORKERS' TRAINING SCHOOL[1]

[*July 19,1936*][2]

He[3] does not talk like me; he simply sings *bhajans* and preaches and teaches through them. I must needs talk as I can neither compose nor sing.

After the entertainment... the talk began with a light banter of a student who believes in growing long hair. Gandhiji asked him:

Is this just for show, or for the sake of health? If it is for no particular purpose, why not get rid of it?

Well, don't you run away with the idea that one can do village work by just going and sitting down in a village. To be a real villager is to serve them, and you may remember that to be a real villager is more difficult than to obtain a graduate's degree. I have been talking of villages and villagers for the past thirty years, but have been able to come to stay in a village only today. And that too is just the stay and no work. We eat unpolished rice and hand-ground flour, but how can we compel the villagers to do likewise? Even if we had the power to do so, we should not exercise it. We have to convince them by patient persuasion.

Q. Without power, can we really achieve much?

A. Did I not say that even if we had it, we should not use it? We have to convert them to our way of thinking. We have to bring to bear on them moral pressure.

Q. If you take such a desperate view, where are we?

A. I am far from taking a desperate view and it would be wrong to suppose that potentially you are weaker than I. Physically of course there may be considerable difference between you and me, and the spiritual power in you may be dormant in your case, active in my case. But this is no task where one could do things as if by magic. What magic is there in merely staying in a village? Even six months'stay in a village may not by itself achieve anything. Much

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter", 25-7-1936

[2] According to Mahadev Desai the conversation took place on a Sunday. The Sunday prior to July 25 fell on July 19.

[3] Tukdoji Maharaj

depends on the spirit in which one goes to stay there. We stay for years in cities without affecting the life around us. We have to go there as their voluntary servants. They come and labour for us in cities for a wage. We have to go to villages and labour for them without a wage.

Q. I see. Do the village folk come to see you?

A. They do, but not without fear, and perhaps even suspicion. These also are among the many shortcomings of villagers. We have to rid them of these.

Q. How?

A. By gently insinuating ourselves into their affections. We must disabuse them of the fear that we have gone there to coerce them, we must show them by our behaviour that there in no intention to coerce, nor any selfish motive. But this is all patient work. You cannot quickly convince them of your *bona fides*.

Q. Don't you think that only those who work without any remuneration or allowance can inspire confidence in them, i.e., those who accept nothing whether from any association or from the village?

A. No. They do not even know who is and who is not working for remuneration. What does impress them is the way in which we live, our habits, our talks, even our gestures. There may be a few who suspect us of a desire to earn; we have to dispel their suspicion no doubt. And then do not run away with the feeling that he who accepts nothing from an association or from the villages is by any means an ideal servant. He is often a prey to self-righteousness which debases one.

Q. You teach us village crafts. Is that to give us a means of earning our livelihood or to enable us to teach the villagers? If it is for the latter object, how can we master a craft in the course of a year?

A. You are being taught the ordinary crafts, because unless you know the principles you will not be able to help people with suggestions. The most enterprising among you would certainly earn a living by following a craft. Now here you see I had a hut ready made for me, thanks to Jamnalalji and thanks to my 'Mahatmaship'! But you will have to build your own hut, unless of course you also get a friend to build it for you—in which case I will say you were old and decrepit like me!

Q. Shri Rajagopalachariar who was here the other day told us that it was no use our going to villages without mastering a craft, for then we should not be able to

teach them anything. You must be better agriculturists than they are, he said, better cobblers, better weavers, and so on.

A. What he said is true. But we have no agricultural course here, because mastery of agriculture would take a century. And the things we teach here are such that you are likely to be able to bring to the villagers better knowledge of them. We have improved grinding stones and rice-husking stones and oil-presses. We are carrying on experiments in improving our tools and we have to take the improvements to them. Above all there is truth and honesty in business that we have to teach them. They adulterate milk, they adulterate oil, they will adulterate truth for petty gain. It is not their fault, it is ours. We have so long ignored them and only exploited them, never taught them anything better.. By close contact with them we can easily correct their ways. Long neglect and isolation has dulled their intellect and even moral sense. We have to brighten them up and revive them all along the line.

Q. What about the Harijan problem here?

A. It is as acute as anywhere else.

Q. There is untouchability as amongst the Harijans?

A. Of course. A Mahar would keep a Bhangi at arm's length. Here is a well belonging to Jamnalalji, no public well. After consultation with the man in charge of the estate, we decided to declare it open to all the Harijans and invited Mahars, Chamars, Bhangis and others to use it. They would not do it. They hesitated. One or two Mahars then came forward, a Bhangi also came. That created an uproar. The Harijans stopped using the well, and the tumult has ceased. But there it is. It is like an armed truce. But it is no use blaming them. What are we doing? I have heard with horror the incident from Rajputana where Harijans would not be suffered to cook their food in ghee and to prepare sweetmeats, and that, because of the perversity of the *savarnas*, the situation reached such a pass that firing had to be resorted to and three *savarnas* were killed. It is a tremendous problem. Now, can we who have not cast out untouchability expect the Harijans to cast it out from their midst in a moment?

Harijan, 25-7-1936

295. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 20, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

No one understands what message the bearer has brought. Lilavati is too careless to understand. I cannot speak. Munnalal is half dead. B. threatens to follow suit. In these circumstances, it is better to write out what you want. This has become a confused household instead of a hermitage it was expected to be. Such has been my fate!! I must find my hermitage from within.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W.6357. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9823

296. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

WARDHA,

July 20, 1936

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. Even if somebody offers a big donation, do not spend money received from outside on the sanitation work. I have forbidden the spending of even a single rupee in the village here where sanitation work is being carried on, for then people miss the education. We should work as hard as we can but must not spend money. Let the work remain incomplete till the people themselves are prepared to pay for it. We may ourselves do the sweeping, remove the night-soil and bury it. But until the people put up latrines with their own money, let them relieve themselves in the open. We may instruct people in the ways but they must themselves find the means. The Taluka Board may find the money. It may not cost more than ten or twenty rupees. If you do not follow all this, ask me again.

Have no doubt that sanitation work and educating the people with regard to a healthy diet is the only real medical service. Why should not Shamalbhai, Shivabhai and the other men staying there join the sanitation work? It will be enough to devote one hour daily.

You should set out every morning like the Bhangis with brooms, spades and baskets.

You may ask me anything you wish to.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: *G.S. Gangabehnne*, p. 93. Also C.W. 8835. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

297. LETTER TO PANNALAL JHAVERI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 20, 1936

CHI. PANNALAL,

I have your letter. You have given a good account of your activities. May they bring you credit. I have neither the desire nor the strength to write anything beyond what I write for the *Harijan*. I would certainly reply to the questions that someone like you may ask.

I was indeed surprised when I saw your name on the Reception Committee and Sardar showed me the speech of the Chairman of the Committee. I thought the Chairman's speech was impudent and devoid of truth. I did wonder how you could lend support to such a speech. But what can I say to anyone today? Is Dinkar any different? He has given up all sense of decency. There are other similar examples also. As far as you are concerned, I know that you would do only what you thought was proper. No one has a right to expect more than this from anyone. If someone expected more even from me, I would feel he was being unfair to me.

All of you who act in adherence to truth are bound to prosper.

But I am forgetting the main thing. I will certainly send Walunjkar. He will be getting his railway fare from there, won't he?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari—Pannalal Jhaveri, p, 32

298. LETTER TO NANIBEHN JHAVERI

SEGAON, WARDHA.
July 20, 1936

CHI. NANIBEHN,

Your letter came in all right. I would certainly like to settle down in Gujarat in the midst of all of you. But my *sadhana* has to be at Segaon for the present. My coming in October will be as good as not coming. We shall of course have the satisfaction of seeing each other.

I hope you and Gangabehn are keeping yourselves fit. I shall not ask about your minds.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Ba, Manu and Kanu, Prabhavati, Balvantsinha are doing well.

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari—Pannalal Jhaveri, p. 28

299. LETTER TO BABURAO D. MHATRE

SEGAON,
July 21, 1936

DEAR MHATRE,

Shoorjibhai[1] sends the message that the absence of mention of your name in *Harijan*[2] has been felt by you. I assure you that it is not intentional. As you know I am sparing in my compliments. I should have mentioned you when Shri Kar was mentioned. Only at that time I had not your name before me. I know your valuable services too well to underrate them. But I am not going to make an opportunity for mention. It will come in the natural course.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 9824. Courtesy: B.D. Mhatre

[1] Shoorji Vallabhdas

[2] Presumably this is a reference to Gandhiji's speech published in *Harijan*, 4-4-1936; *vide* "Speech at Khadi And Village Industries Exhibition, Lucknow", 28-3-1936

300. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 21, 1936

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have your telegram and letter. I had to wait for your reply to my last letter. But I am writing this because I have read your articles in the mean time. The articles are good. I shall publish them in the *Harijan* in four parts.[1] More could be written about the remedies. You can still do so if anything further occurs to you.

I hope your health is in perfect shape. If you decide not to come here, it must be after careful thought. You should not need any time to decide to come. If there is any doubt the benefit of it should be in favour of coming.

Let me know if you had any talk with Haribhau about which I should know.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

301. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI

July 21, 1936

BHAI TYAGI,

I cannot read the whole of your letter. It is sad news that Balvir[2] has contracted tuberculosis. How is he now?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6097

[1] The articles appeared under the title "The water they drink", in six parts in the *Harijan* issues of the 8th, 15th, 22nd ant 29th of August and the 5th and 12th of September 1936.

[2] Addressee's son

302. LETTER TO RAJKISHORI

July 21, 1936

CHI. RAJKISHORI,

Your letter. Stay wherever you find peace.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6638. Also C.W. 4286. Courtesy: Chand Tyagi

303. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 21, 1936

CHI. AMTUSSALAAM,

I hope you have received my letter. I am enclosing letters to Tyagi[1] and Raj[2] and also one[3] to the students.

Return the letter to Rammehar[4] noting on it all the facts. Ask Malkaniji[5] why he had to be relieved.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 341

304. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 21,1936

CHI. NIMU,

Your fears about Kanu came true. Since you have written to me, I am sending him with an escort. I am no doubt unhappy about it but feel that at the moment God wills it that way.

The snake that bit Satyavan was not a snake in the physical sense; the snake was lust. Savitri got the venom out by her purity and

[1] *Vide* the preceding two items.
[2] *ibid*
[3] This is not traceable.
[4] Inmate of the Harijan Ashram, Delhi
[5] N.R. Malkani

love. That is the mystry of the story of Savitri. A person whose purity can overcome lust in another can overcome anything. You should thus by your purity and by your love become fit to overcome the threefold afflictions of Ramdas. That is my wish.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Nirmala Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

305. ARE WE RIVALS?

[On or before *July 22,1936*][1]

I have had two typical cuttings sent to me giving altogether false news about relations between Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and myself. Remarks said to have been made by me have been reproduced in quotation marks. Thus I am reported to have said, "My life-work is ruined" (i.e., by Jawaharlal's programme); "not even the firmness and repression of the British Government have harmed my work as much as the policy outlined by Nehru." [2]

I have never said anything of the kind nor uttered one single remark attributed to me in the two articles sent to me. What is more, I have not even entertained the opinions contained in them. So far as I am aware, Jawaharlal has come to the conclusion that India's freedom cannot be gained by violent means and that it can be gained by non-violent means. And I know for a fact that he did not in Lucknow "come out for the use of violence in the struggle for Independence".[3]

No doubt there are differences of opinion between us. They were clearly set forth in the letters we exchanged some years ago, and in reply to correspondents I hope at an early date to bring our differences up to date. But they do not affect our personal relations in any way whatsoever. We remain the same adherents to the Congress goal that we have ever been. My life-work is not, cannot be, ruined by Jawaharlal's programme, nor have I ever believed for that matter that it

[1] The report in *The Hindustan Times* carrying this item is dated July 22,1936.

[2] This was reported in the *Literary Digest*.

[3] This was reported by *Unity; vide* footnote 2, "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 18-11-1935

has been harmed even by "the firmness and repression of the British Government". My philosophy, if I can be said to have any, excludes the possibility of harm to one's cause by outside agencies. The harm comes deservedly and only when the cause itself is bad, or being good its champions are untrue, faint-hearted, or unclean. The article in question refers to "Gandhiji's secret plans".[1] If I know Gandhi at all I can vouchsafe for it that he never had any secret plans in his life. And if beyond what the readers of *Harijan* know there is no plan that I can disclose, it is because I know none myself. Then one of the articles presents Jawaharlal and me as rivals. I cannot think of myself as a rival to Jawaharlal or him to me. Or if we are, we are rivals in making love to each other in the pursuit of the common goal, and if in the joint work for reaching the goal we at times seem to be taking different routes, I hope the world will find that we had lost sight of each other only for the moment and only to meet again with greater mutual attraction and affection.

Harijan, 25-7-1936

306. LETTER TO SAHEBJI MAHARAJ

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 22, 1936

DEAR SAHEBJI MAHARAJ,

Many thanks for your prompt attention to my letter.[2] Do please send the *mistry* as soon as he can come. I may mention that we have no *tools* save nine casts, one simple sewing machine and a village awl. Whatever tools may be needed should be brought by the *mistry*. If they are within our means we shall buy them. If they are not they may go back with him when the time for return arrives. Rs. 60 per month

[1] The *Literary Digest* had reported: "As anxious as India's 350,000,000 people to prove Gandhi's secret plans is the Marquess of Linlithgow,... Facing a turbulent Nationalist Party, Linlithgow next year will institute India's new British made Constitution, which provides for a Parliamentary Government by a series of compromises in favour of India's minorities, mostly the sixty million Moslems... To placate Moslems, who fear Hindu dominance, the Constitution grants them almost as many seats in the Federal Legislature, which will exercise no control in India's foreign and defence affairs.... Knowing that neither Gandhi nor Nehru's Nationalists cherish the new Constitution, Lord Linlithgow is watchful of the two rivals' next move."

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Sahebji Maharaj", 11-7-1936

will be paid from the day he reaches Wardha or, if you prefer, from the day he leaves Agra. Will you please also let me know what will be expected of us for his accommodation? The tannery is situated in the open about $1^1/_2$ miles from the post-office. We can place at his disposal two rooms in the tannery.

I appreciate your kind wish that I should revisit Dayal Bagh if it be only to see your new dairy. I should love to do so. But my present *sadhana* lies in not leaving Segaon. I want to feel my feet in this little village and be constantly in it for 3 seasons. I know that there will be at least 3 breaks during the time. I do not want to add to the list. But I can say this that I need no inducement to go to Dayal Bagh.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2164

307. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

July 22, 1936

MY DEAR AMRIT,

You are not to venture out tonight. Come as early as you can tomorrow morning but without disturbing your rest. And on your way look in at Mira's cottage.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W.3734. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6890

308. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

July 22, 1936

CHI. PREMA,

I have your postcard written on your birthday. You did right in taking my blessings for granted. In order to be a Mahatma's disciple you will have to imagine one yourself. The person who is called Mahatma is not one at all, though he is certainly able to take the place of father to many and is content with that. He would be fully satisfied

if most of them testified to his being a good father.[1]

I hope your work is going on well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

With me at present are Ba, Manu, Lilavati, Balwantsinha and Munnalal.

Tukde Buva also is staying with me these days.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10383. Also C.W. 6821. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

309. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

July 22, 1936

CHI. NARAHARI,

After all Bhaskarrao[2] did not come up to the mark. Nothing can add to my grief. What does it matter to the ocean if the number of rivers emptying themselves into it is one more or one less? But then don't we sing in our daily prayers that misery is not really misery and happiness is not really happiness? A mountain of misery will confront us when we forget Narayana.

Bhaskarrao is a man who does not subscribe to this view. I have also informed Vinoba today.

I have understood what you write about Ramji.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarait: S.N. 9097

[1] The addressee insisted on calling Gandhiji 'Mahatmaji' unlike others who called him 'Bapuji', arguing that she would not call anyone else father as long as her own father was living and that a name ought to denote only one person.

[2] Bhaskarroa Behere

310. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN GANDHI

July 22, 1936

CHI. VIJAYA,[1]

I have your little note. You do not write with an open heart still. I am glad that Jamna[2] has asked for a copy of the *Gita* with the Sanskrit text and printed in large type for your use. I have asked for one and shall send it to you both.

The third chapter of the *Gita* which you have learnt is very useful to us. Its effect is true to its heading[3]. It interprets (in the highest sense) *yajna* as body labour. However, I have described fetching water, grinding corn, sweeping and the process connected with spinning as the *panchamahayajnas*.[4] How many of them do you perform?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

311. CABLE TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

July 23, 1936

KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ
INDIAN CONTINGENT
OLYMPIC VILLAGE
BERLIN

ENGAGEMENT[5] MADE ANNOUNCED. GOD BE WITH YOU. LOVE.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad; p. 290

[1] Wife of Purushottam Gandhi
[2] Wife of Narandas Gandhi
[3] Viz., "The Yoga of Karma"
[4] The five great sacrifices traditionally enjoined on the householder are *svadhyaya, homa, balivaishvadeva, pindakriya, atithipujan.*
[5] Of the addressee with Savitri, daughter of Laxmanprasad Poddar; *vide* the following item.

312. TELEGRAM TO LAXMANPRASAD PODDAR

July 23,1936

SETH LAXMANPRASADJI PODDAR
2 HASTINGS PARK ROAD
ALIPORE, CALCUTTA

BOTH KAMALNAYAN AND SAVITRI HAVE MY BLESSINGS. MAY THIS CONNECTION BE FRUITFUL OF GOOD FOR THEM AND FOR COUNTRY.

GANDHI

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 267

313. NOTE TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[After *July 23,1936*][1]

1. The marriage should not be solemnized in less than four years or before Kamalnayan completes his studies.

2. Whatever education Savitri wants to have, she should have only in India. After they are married the two of them may travel for sight-seeing or for work.

3. Kamalnayan and Savitri should have full freedom to correspond with each other. I do not see why such correspondence need be secret.

4. Even before marriage, Savitri should from time to time visit Wardha or any other place where Janakibehn, etc., may be staying.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3054

314. LETTER TO ELENI SAMIOS

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 24, 1936

DEAR SISTER[2],

Your book had escaped me till Mirabehn showed a letter from

[1] *Vide* " Cable to Kamalnayan Bajaj", 23-7-1936

[2] Widow of the Greek author Nikos Kazantzakis. She had written a book entitled *The Holy Life of Mahatma Gandhi* and sent a copy to Gandhiji.

Mons. Jean Herbert. I am sorry I was never able to have the whole book read to me. I hope that those for whom you took the trouble of writing the book will profit by it.

Yours sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 11075. Courtesy: Eleni Samios, Nicosia

315. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 24, 1936

CHI. KANTI,

I have your letter. How can I relieve your depression? You are so sensitive that one never knows when you might take offence. First, this is in your nature and secondly, you are at present unhappy. You cannot forget Harilal, so you are unhappy over everything that you either do not find pleasant or do not understand. In this, God alone can help you and He will. May those *bhajans* which you sing with such relish be your shield, since they are the balm to soothe all your burning.

I cannot at all see why Ramachandran and Paparamma are angry. Explain it to me if you have understood it.

We shall discuss the question of Harilal when you return. I understand from Ramdas's letter that Harilal is perpetually in a drunken stupor. When Ramdas spoke to him about the unrestrained language of his Rander speech, his reply was that it was their way of propaganda. You have been sent a copy of the speech of course.

I destroyed Paparamma's letter. It contained nothing special about you. On the contrary, from beginning to end it was full of praise for you. You are a sadhu, you are clever, Saraswati got you on account of great *punya*[1], and so on. So I wrote: "May your hopes be fulfilled!"

You certainly ought not to extend your stay beyond a month notwithstanding their importunity. You may obtain Kakasaheb's permission and stay on if you are very keen but it does not look well

[1] Spiritual merit

to ask for such permission unless the need is very great. You should yourself consider if it is necessary.

I have not understood the telegram from Devdas. You don't have to think of it.

Build up your health well while you are there.

I am enclosing a letter for Saraswati.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7301. Courtesy; Kantilal Gandhi

316. LETTER TO SARASWATI

SEGAON,
[*July 24, 1936*][2]

CHI. SARASWATI,

I did get a letter from you at long last. Keep it up.

You are not like what? Did you not say that you wished to marry the same day if it were possible? What is wrong with it? Yours was a childlike wish. I fail to understand Mama's and Mother's anger.

What a smart girl you are! I let Kanti go for a month and now you ask him to stay for two. Don't do it. Do not detain Kanti beyond one month.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6153. Also C.W.3426. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

317. AVOIDABLE MISERY

From a correspondent's long letter of wail I take the following.[3]

This letter is one out of many such. The majority of letters are written in Hindi. But we know that English education has made things

[1] *Vide* the following item.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] Not reproduced here. The correspondent, a father of seven daughters, had dwelt on his straitened circumstances and sought Gandhiji's help in meeting the expenses of one of his daughter's marriage.

no better for parents of daughters. In some cases they have become worse in that the market price of possible young men who would suit an English-educated daughter of an English-educated father suffers an appreciable increase.

In a case like the Bengali father's the best help that can be rendered is not a loan or a gift of the required sum, but it should consist in persuading and strengthening the parent to refuse to purchase a match for his daughter but choose or let the daughter choose one who would marry her for love, not for money. This means a voluntary extension of the field of choice. There must be a breach in the double wall of caste and province. If India is one and indivisible, surely there should be no artificial divisions creating innumerable little groups which would neither inter-dine nor intermarry. There is no religion in this cruel custom. It would not do to plead that individuals cannot make the commencement and that they must wait till the whole society is ripe for the change. No reform has ever been brought about except through intrepid individuals breaking down inhuman customs or usages. And after all what hardships can the schoolmaster suffer if he and his daughters refused to treat marriage as a marketable transaction instead of a status or a sacrament which it undoubtedly is. I would, therefore, advise my correspondent courageously to give up the idea of borrowing or begging and to save the four hundred rupees he can get on his life policy by choosing in consultation with his daughter a suitable husband no matter to what caste or province he belongs.

Harijan, 25-7-1936

318. IN WATERLESS SALEM

The Secretary, Salem District Harijan Sevak Sangh, writes:

> The District is dry and the Harijans are not allowed to take water from the wells owned by caste Hindus. The Gandhi Ashram has provided wells in two or three villages. In the village of Avangier the Harijans are now depending on the visit of the railway engine to the railway station for their drinking water supply. The engine driver doles out some water and the villagers have to be content with that. There is another place called Managalapuram where water scarcity is severe.

This reveals a shocking state of affairs. No private organization can ever cope with this terrible distress. As it is, Salem District has a

perpetual scarcity of water. And when to this is added scarcity of common fellow-feeling on the part of a large part of its inhabitants, the distress becomes unbearable as it has become in the case of Harijans in Salem District. Is it not the first duty of the District Board to ensure a regular supply of water for the Harijans--the most neglected and yet the most useful servants of society? And now that the Government of Madras has a department dealing with difficulties of such classes as Harijans, one may hope to hear less and less of scarcity of pure water for Harijans. But this is not to mean that Harijan *sevaks* are to relax their vigilanice or that private charity need not concern itself with water supply to Harijans. Aid must reach Harijans in the shape of water no matter from what source it comes. And it will come only when all sources combine to cope effectively with the distress.

Harijan, 25-7-1936

319. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON,
July 25,1936

CHI. NIMU,

This time your going away pricks me a lot. I liked your staying with me. The next place I would have liked is Sabarmati. But your dharma clearly is to go to Bombay and serve Ramdas. So go there, look after your health, be happy, remain cheerful and, as Ramdas wants, become his teacher. I have already explained to you what it was Savitri saved Satyavan from, haven't I? Save Ramdas in the same way. Do not worry about Kanam. Keep on writing to me regularly at least once a week.

A letter for Ramdas is enclosed. I could not at all find time to write to him earlier.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Nirmala Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

320. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 25, 1936

CHI. NIMU,

Kanu left with Jamnalalji just yesterday. Ba went to see them off. For me it was. . .[1] I ardently looked forward to being able to help him advance. I did not realize my limitation. And so this happened. I see that his spoon, dish and bowl are still here. I do not know why Ba kept them back. She is at Maganwadi. Send for whatever you want from among the things lying here or at Maganwadi. Write to me a detailed letter. Never be tardy in writing to me. What was forgiven in Ramdas's case, will not be forgiven in yours.

With Tukdoji Maharaj, Kano had come to feel at perfect ease. Write to me and tell me all about yourself and Sumi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

321. LETTER TO M.C. RAJAH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 26,1936

DEAR RAO BAHADUR,

I have no difficulty about giving general endorsement to your letter to Dr. Moonje.[2] I do not at all understand Dr. Moonje's or Dr. Ambedkar's position[2]. For me removal of untouchability stands on a

[1] A word here is illegible.

[2] &[3] Dr. B.S. Moonje's proposal, accepted by Dr. Ambedkar, was as follows: " If Dr. Ambedkar were to announce his decision that he and his followers are prepared to embrace Sikhism in preference to Islam and Christianity, and that he shall honestly and sincerely cooperate with the Hindus and the Sikhs in propagating their culture and in counteracting the Moslem movement for drawing the Depressed Classes into the Moslem fold, the Hindu Mahasabha will be prepared, in view of their having agreed to remain within the Hindu culture, to make an announcement that it will not object:

(I) To the conversion of the Depressed classes to Sikhism

(ii) To the inclusion of the neo-Sikhs in the list of the Scheduled Castes; and

(iii) To the enjoyment by the Depressed Classes of the political rights of the Poona Pact by free competition between the non-Sikh and the neo-Sikh Depressed Classes as provided for under the Poona Pact." For Gandhiji's views, *vide*" Letter to B.S. Moonje", 31-7-1936

footing all its own. It is to me a deeply religious question. The very existence of our religion depends on its voluntary removal by *savarna* Hindus in the spirit of repentance. It can never be a question of barter for me. And I am glad you take nearly the same position[1] that I do.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7787. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

322. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

July 26, 1936

CHI, CHHAGANLAL,

Today I must write to you. I very much wished to write to you all these days, but could get no time at all.

Enclosed is a letter from the Bhangis of Bhavnagar. I have written to them and advised them that they should seek and follow the advice of the local branch of the Sangh. I am sending the letter[2] only for your information. Read it and take whatever action, if any, may be necessary.

I often think about what you wrote in your personal letter. These are troubled times and it is difficult to keep one's moorings at such a time. Be sure about this: that reason without moral sense is like a prostitute who may be outwardly attractive, may dance and sing and cast a spell on one, but who will ruin a man. I see the prostitute reason doing that to many people at the present time.

See that you yourself do not abandon even the smallest of the Ashram rules.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: B.N. 5539

[1] In his letter the addressee had challenged the position of Moonje pointing out that there was a difference between religious conversion and communal migration such as he was advocating and declared that he could not be a party to the political manipulation proposed by Moonje.

[2] Not available

323. LETTER TO TARA N. MASHRUWALA

July 26,1936

CHI. TARA,

I wanted to reply to your letter immediately and with a long letter, but it could not be. Now, however, I must reply. Do continue Dr. Gauri's treatment.

You must write to me regularly.

You should try to stay at Mahila Ashram, if you are not certain that it is your duty to stay at Akola. There, you may, if you wish, increase your knowledge of English. Besides, you will be able to see me from time to time if you are in the Mahila Ashram. Kishorelal and Gomati are also there, and Jamnalalji, too, will generally be there.

I have lent you a helping hand but it remains to be seen how long you will let me help. I shall not tire of it, nor should you. I want to lead you just as far as your mind and your heart can take you. You are therefore safe with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7527. Also C.W. 5003. Courtesy: Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

324. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON,
July 27, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I had prepared myself for the news, especially when I found that you had not come. Will you have Manu or Lilavati? You will tell me when I come in the evening. Whether germ or chill, let us hope you will be free tomorrow. I shan't negotiate the hillock tomorrow but walk straight to you. I wish you will take an earth bandage for the head. The ache will go. Take soda with hot or cold water. More when I come.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W.6360. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9826

325. LETTER TO UTTAMCHAND

July 28,1936

What are you referring to when you say that there has been silence observed at this end about your drops as you call your donations? I assure [you] in the forlorn causes I handle, every drop is an ocean. Your latest cheque is most welcome.

I appreciated your caution about Kamala Memorial. There are trustees behind it who will control it. I am hoping that it will be a home for ailing women and children.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

326. LETTER TO MANDY MACCARTHY

July 28, 1936

I have received your articles with much interest. But before I publish them in *Harijan*, I would like to know much more about you than you have said in your postcard. What is your occupation, what is your age, what led you to India, what led you to adopt an Indian name[1], what is your faith, how do you support yourself? I hope you will not consider these questions to be impertinent. Generally we take in *Harijan* articles from those whom we know and who try to live up to what they write. I have observed over the past 50 years that the simplest writings of earnest persons are effective when brilliant writings of mere clever people fall flat. Words seem to take the vitality of their writers or speakers.

And if I am to use your articles, I should have your full permission to cut them about always taking care not to change the sense.

Yours,

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Tandradevi

327. LETTER TO EFY ARISTARCHI

July 28,1936

It is ages since I wrote to you. So you have lost your uncle. For seekers of God every loss is a gain. Separation is purely nominal and temporary. Death is a deliverance for all without exception. But you need no sermon form me. Since I wanted to write on your uncle's death, I could only give you my innermost thoughts long held on death.

I dare not give myself the time to write to you about things going on in this little village.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

328. LETTER TO RAJARAM R. BHOLE

SEGAON, WARDHA,

July 28, 1936

DEAR RAJARAM,

Pray don't expect me to answer all your letters. I have but limited time for such work now.

I still retain the opinion that the d. c. should retain independence of action. But the position changes, when some of them go to the Parliamentary Board and seek assistance and advice. The P. B. may not put them off. You see the distinction.

Yours,

BAPU

From the original: R. R. Bhole Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

329. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON,
July 28, 1936

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You have been suffering much indeed. You must have got yourself operated upon by now.[1]

The revelation about...[2] is a serious one. But such corruption is not to be found in the States People's [Conference] only. It is a widespread evil. There are a great many people like...[3]among us...'s[4] sin has been discovered. Let us see what he does now.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Take complete rest. It will not matter if you cannot come here. I am in excellent health.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: *Sardar Vallabhbhaine*, p. 196

330. LETTER TO LAKSHMI NARAYAN GADODIA

July 28, 1936

BHAI LAKSHMI NARAYAN,

I am happy to see the signatures of you both.[5] My hipbaths still continue. There is no need of steam-baths as I perspire enough as it is. I am not using the mud-pack at night. I am not used to a sitz-bath. I shall now see about it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5625

[1] The addressee was operated upon for septum of the nose at a polyclinic on July 30,1936.

[2] Omissions as in the source

[3] *ibid*

[4] *ibid*

[5] Presumabbly the addressee and a hakim who practised nature-cure

331. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 29,1936

BHAI SATIS BABU,

There is little likelihood of Chandranath following your advice if he does not wholly believe in truth and non-violence.

Why does Hemprabha keep worrying?

How are matters with the Harijan Sevak Sangh? And how is Arun[1]?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1627

332. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 29/30,1936

CHI. PYARELAL,

I am awaiting your letter. I have of course received the post-card. You will have fully recovered by now.

I understand about the articles. You must hurry about whatever further you want to write.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Your letter has just reached me. 1 shall write after reading it.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Addressee's youngest son

333. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 30, 1936

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

How I wish you would put down your foot on 'insane' programmes and save your energy for the common good.

All will be well if you will never lose your humour and make up your mind to stay out your period, trying to push through your policy as much as you can through the present team. Time has arrived to think of the future, i.e., next year's plans. Whatever happens, you must not be in opposition. That is my confirmed opinion. When like Father you feel that you are ready to take sole charge of the Congress, I think that from the present company you will find no opposition. I hope you will have plain sailing in Bombay.[1]

Kamala Memorial is disturbing me. I do not know what is happening about the collections or the scheme. If Khurshed or Sarup[2] or both are concentrating on the thing, it is well. Please tell Sarup I expect her to keep me informed of her doings in this connection.

I won't discuss here the question of socialism. As soon as I finish revision of my note, you will have the draft before it goes to the Press. My difficulty is not about the remote future. It is always the present that I can concentrate upon and that at times worries me. If the present is well taken care of, the future will take care of itself. But I must not anticipate.

I hope you are keeping really well.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

You will see the correspondence between Jenkins and myself. I too hate legal proceedings. But this seems to me to be a case where action is called for.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] At the A.I.C.C. meeting scheduled to be held on August 22 and 23
[2] Vijayalakhmi Pandit

334. DRAFT OF APPEAL FOR FUNDS[1]

[*July 30*, 1936][2]

An appeal is respectfully made for at least Rs.... on behalf of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. Gandhiji cannot be expected to tour as he did in 1933-34 for collections and stirring public conscience. There is no cause other than the Harijan cause that can claim greater support from caste Hindus who believe that untouchability is a blot on Hinduism. The only question therefore for the public to consider is whether the Harijan Sevak Sangh is the organization that is enough to discharge the trust it has undertaken.

The Appendix gives enough details to enable the public to judge this for themselves. And if they are satisfied about the fitness of the institution, we hope that a generous response will be made to this appeal.

From a photostat: G.N. 10503. Also C.W. 7976 b. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

335. ENDORSEMENT OF APPEAL FOR FUNDS

July 30, 1936

I heartily endorse this appeal[3]. Removal of untouchability is a matter of change of heart. Hearts are not changed by expenditure of money however wise it may be. The change will come when we have enough selfless spiritually-minded workers. Monetary contributions will be an effective test of the existence of such persons. For one of the results of the change of heart should be incessant work among Harijans. This cannot be done without plenty of funds. Schools and hostels cannot be opened nor can wells be dug without ample funds. I hope therefore that this appeal will receive liberal support from both the rich and the poor according to their means.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N.10503. Also C.W. 7976 a. courtesy: G.D. Birla

[1] This was drafted by Gandhiji; *vide* "Letter to S.R. Venkataraman", 30-7-1936

[2] *ibid*

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

336. LETTER TO S.R. VENKATARAMAN

July 30, 1936

DEAR VENKATARAMAN,

In accordance with Shri Birla's wish, I have drafted the appeal[1] for funds. I enclose also my endorsement[3]. I have not the time to make a fair copy for facsimile reproduction. If shri Birla's conception is different from mine, the draft should be altered as he wishes. I am of opinion that the appeal should not be issued unless some support is guaranteed and arrangements made for collections throghout India.

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 10503. Also C.W. 7976. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

337. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 30, 1936

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM[2],

I have with me two of your letters to answer. There is no harm in your being operated upon there. I shall do through Devdas whatever is possible. Moreover, there will be Brajkisan when he comes. Give the accompanying letter[3] to Devdas.

I have understood your point about Rukmini. And now she has after all gone. It was just the proper thing that Malkani should have gone to leave her at Hyderabad.

I shall ask you to come after your operation. Meanwhile look after your health carefully. Do send for anything that you need. You should freely ask Devdas for anything that you need if you truly regard him as your brother.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 342

[1] *Vide* the preceding two items.
[2] *ibid*
[3] Not traceable

338. LETTER TO ANANDSHANKAR B. DHRUVA

July 30, 1936[1]

SUJNA BHAISHRI (PROF. DHRUVA) [2],

I have carefully gone through both your letters to Mahadev. What I want is not something for the learned but something which Harijans and workers can understand and put into practice. I do not want you to make a fresh study, but only that form your wide knowledge you should send me something which you can write in... [3] hours or at the most in eight hours.

I had already written to you that I liked your book on Hindu religion very much. I will certainly read it again. But I do not wantextracts from anything. For a moment imagine yourself among Harijans in a village, converse with the old men, women and children and teach them religion. I want whatever is available in this way and it should have your stamp. Mahadev won't even translate it into English. The testimonial you give him is deserved, but first he hasn't the time and then I want your language. It is not beyond you to write simple English and finally you will grant the two of us the right to make some suggestions. Won't you? The suggestions will be put into the writing only if you approve of them.

Now about your programme. Going through it I am scared. At the moment Gujarat or Hindu religion does not require scholarship. That will not save either religion or India or Gujarat. I do not mean to say that there is absolutely no need for scholarship. There are many who will give us scholarly writings. But there are very few religious enthusiasts who would make themselves one with the people. I have believed that you are one of them. You have given quite a big share of your scholarship to the scholars and the educated. But what have you given to the villagers and persons like me? A person like me would steal something from what you have given to the educated. But that does not amount to giving. Do what Tolstoy did. In his old age he had before his eyes the unknown peasants of Russia and the literature he produced for them will live for ever. Can't I expect something like that from you?

[1] The source has Ahmedabad in the date-line which is obviously a slip.
[2] 1869-1942; Sanskrit scholar and Gujarati man of letters
[3] The source is illegible here.

Be that as it may. I have said whatever I wanted to. I did not want to write so much. Accept whatever appeals to you and throw away the rest. I won't feel unhappy. Why should a beggar feel shy? Donors will only give according to their wishes and means.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: Payarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

339. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

July 30, 1936

CHI. KANU,

I am sending six letters with this. Keep copies of the letters[1] to Jugalkishore and Gangabehn. The rest may be posted straight away. Make a copy of the letter[2] to Satyanand Bose also.

In this way you are getting closer to Mahadev's place.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II.

340. LETTER TO SATYANAND BOSE[3]

[*July 30,1936*][4]

DEAR SATYANAND BABU,

I quite agree with you that the Congress has to respond to variations in public opinion. Pandit Jawaharlal is wide awake and handling the questions as they arise. My work is strictly limited to advising those who find it necessary to refer certain matters to me.

I would therefore like you to pass on your views to Pandit Nehru.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] These are not traceable.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Although it is explained in the footnote on p. 184 that the letter to the addressee referred to in the text is not traceable, it is possible that this is the letter meant, a copy of which became available after the volume was sent to the press.

[4] Pyarelal has kept this letter with those of 1936.

341. LETTER TO JAYANTI N. PAREKH

July 30, 1936[1]

CHI. JAYANTI[2]

I had always sought and got news about you. I am glad that you wrote to me. I do not have to say anything about the change in your views. May you go on making progress in your thinking and do fearlessly whatever you feel is right. Your good lies in that.

As you were bound by pledge it was your duty before violating it to meet the leader of your batch and acquaint him with your dilemma. You have not done that. A soldier's duty is not easy. If all the eighty soldiers interpret the pledge as they like, what will the leader do? Can the country's work be done like that? But the milk that has been spilt cannot be collected again. This is to be remembered for the future.

I know ill-feeling prevails in Gujarat. It is difficult to say who is to blame for it. But I have seen that socialists in Gujarat do not discriminate bteween truth and untruth. There are some among them of whom I would not have believed it. I do feel unhappy about it. I do hope that you have not accepted diplomacy as your dharma.

You had been to see me. I was happy to know that both of you brothers are doing very well financially.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

342. LETTER TO H.L. SHARMA

July 30, 1936

BHAI SHARMA,

We are looking for Babbitt[3] but it has not been found so far. How much was the yarn[4]? The corresponding length of khadi of the same count will be sent. I am looking for the fine yarn; it simply slipped from my mind. You know my attitude to going to the villages.

[1] The source has Ahmedabad in the date-line which is obviously a slip.

[2] An Ashram immate who later become a communist.

[3] *Principles of Light and Colour* by E.D. Babbitt, obtained by the addressee in Switzerland

[4] The yarn spun by the addressee for his own *kurtas*

Do not incur heavy expenditure. Draupadi and the child are well, I hope. Do keep writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, facing p. 258

343. LETTER TO B.S. MOONJE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 31, 1936

DEAR DR. MOONJE,

R.B.M.C. Rajah has sent Seth Birla and me copies of your correspondence with him on the Yeravda Pact[1] for such use as we may wish to make. But the correspondence on your side is marked confidential. My own opinion is that the subject-matter admits no confidence. But before I can avail myself of the Rao Bahadur's permission, I would like to have your consent to the publication of the correspondence. Meanwhile you will permit me to say that your proposal[2] is subversive of the spirit of the Yeravda Pact and wholly contrary to the object of the anti-untouchability movement.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 7788. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

[1] *Vide* Appendix, "Agreement between depressed classes leaders and caste hindu Leaders", after 17-10-1932.

[2] *Vide* footnotes 1 and 2, "Letter to M. C. Rajah", 26-7-1936

344. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

July 31, 1936

CHI. KANTI,

At this place one needs the tools every moment. I tried to obtain country-made tools, but could not. They are now being made at Bangalore. Meanwhile I sent for your kit as it was not needed at Maganwadi.

It seems some of the tools are missing. Whatever that may be, I have made a list of those that came to hand. You will find it on the reverse. Let me know which ones you remember having been lost. I shall arrange to search for them.

From the handwriting on the reverse you will see that Rajkumari is here. She came last evening. You will now admit that my place has become similar to your dharmashala—one corner to me, another to Rajkumari, a third to Tukdoji Maharaj and a fourth to Munnalal. In the centre are Ba, Lilavati and Manu; and Tukdoji includes himself and his followers who stream in all day long. Have you heard of him? He had come to see me at Nagpur.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7303. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

345. A TALK[1]

[Before *August 1, 1936*]

Now, you must see that I am being compelled to grow a beard!

"But my husband is ready to come whenever you summon him!", says the woman.

That I know, but will he shave the Harijans?

I do not know that, Maharaj; but he is quite prepared to shave you.

But how can I have his services when my Harijan brothers cannot have them?

Harijan, 1-8-1936

346. A TALK[2]

[Before *August 1, 1936*]

So, Patil, I must remain without the services of the barber?

No, Mahatmaji, he is ready. Shall I send him?

I know you can send him. But what about my Harijan son? You must know that I have a family here and Govind is my son. How can I have the barber's services if he will not allow Govind to go near him? What would you do if you were in my position? Tell me. Supposing you were invited to a place from where your son was deliberately excluded. Would you go there?

" Now, there, Bapuji, don't you touch him on the raw", says Jamnalalji, who has known the old Patil for years. "If someone could assure him that he would go straight to *swarga* (Heaven) if he were to cast off untouchability, he would do so. But he wants a reliable assurance, and he would not accept ours." And the room resounds with laughter in which the old Patil joins. " Everything is permissible to a Mahatma like you, but not to folks like us," he says and returns.

Harijan, 1-8-1936

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter" The headman of Segaon had made clear to Gandhiji that he would not co-operate with him on the question of untouchability and for that reason the local barber was prevented from rendering his services to Gandhiji. For Gandhiji's talk with the headman, *vide* the following item.

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

347. DISCUSSION WITH VISITORS[1]

[Before *August 1, 1936*]

The sadhu or the Buva[2] who is for the moment a member of the family has for visitors a number of devotees. They are frankly surprised that the sadhu is not only associating with the Mahatma but eats under his roof food cooked by a Harijan boy....They come and argue, sometimes the sadhu cannot solve their doubts and difficulties and they turn to Gandhiji.

[A VISITOR:] But, even the lower creation observes untouchability, Mahatmaji, and you would have even man to shed it!

[GANDHIJI:] Now that's something novel. Let me understand.

Donkeys don't associate with dogs; a crow would not touch a pigeon's eggs. Every species has its own sphere, its own place, its own use in God's creation.

But cows, donkeys and dogs will gladly remain under the same roof if you feed them and own them. And do you hold that there is the same difference between you and an untouchable, as there is between a cow and a dog?

Don't we shun wild animals?

You shun lions and tigers and snakes, because they are untouchable? Absurd! You shun them because you fear them. You would fain tame them if you could, and crowds flock and attribute miraculous powers to one who can domesticate them.

But we don't touch pigs because they are dirty, and not because we are afraid of them.

Well, then, supposing a man in cleaner clothes looked upon you as dirty and regarded you as an untouchable, you won't mind? And what of your women who do all the dirty jobs for your children? They are the mistresses of the family. Why so?

Well, then, supposing the so-called untouchables were dressed as well as you, and washed themselves clean after doing the dirty jobs for you, and for which you should thank them rather than despise or shun them, would you touch them? Supposing they ate clean food and did not touch beef or carrion, would you touch them? I tell you there are numerous so-called Harijans in India who satisfy all these conditions, who live cleaner and purer lives than we do and yet we regard them as

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's “Weekly Letter”

[2] Tukdoji Maharaj

untouchables. How will God forgive this heinous sin of ours?

But you want us to admit them to the temples too! How can people doing dirty jobs be admitted to temples?

Have I ever asked them to go to temples with baskets of filth on their heads? Have I not said that they would satisfy all the conditions about bath and cleanliness that the other Hindus satisfy? According to you all surgeons and all nurses are unfit to go to our temples!

Harijan, 1-8-1936

348. DISCUSSION WITH A FRIEND[1]

[Before *August 1, 1936*]

[FRIEND:] Why do you insist on eight hours'manual work a day? Is it not possible in a well-ordered society to reduce the working day to two hours and leave the citizen ample leisure for intellectual and artistic pursuits?

[GANDHIJI:] We know that those who get all that leisure—both the working and the intellectual class—do not make the best use of it. In fact we too often find the idle mind being turned into the devil's workshop.

No; he would not be idling away. Supposing we divided the day into two hours'physical labour and six hours'intellectual labour; would it not be good for the nation?

I do not know that it would be feasible. I have not mathematically calculated it, but if a man will do the intellectual labour only for profit and not for the nation, I am sure that the scheme will break down; unless of course the State pays him amply for the two hours'labour and compels him to do other work without paying him anything. That would be a fine thing, but it cannot be done without a kind of State conscription.

But take for instance you. You cannot in the nature of things do eight hour's physical labour, and have to do eight hours'or more intellectual work. You do not abuse your leisure?

It is compulsory work and leaves no leisure, as for instance it would if I was going out to play tennis. But I tell you even taking my case that I am sure our minds would have been infinitely better if we

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

laboured with our hands for eight hours. We would not have a single idle thought, and I may tell you that my mind is not entirely free from idle thoughts. Even now I am what I am because I realized the value of physical labour at a very early stage of my life.

But then if physical work has such inherent virtue, our people have been working more than eight hours a day, not with any appreciable effect on the purity or strength of their minds.

Physical labour by itself is not an education even as mental labour is not. It has been with our people deadly drudgery without their knowing this, and that deadens one's finer instincts. That is where I have my strongest complaint against the *savarna* Hindus. They have rendered work for the proletariat a task of hard drudgery, from which they have no pleasure and in which they have no interest. If they had been considered members of the society enjoying the same status as they, theirs would have been the proudest position in life. This is supposed to be the *Kaliyuga*. In the *Satyayuga*, or golden age, whenever it was, the society I dare say was better ordered than today. Ours is an ancient land where civilizations have come and gone, and it is difficult to say what exactly we were like in a particular age. But there is no doubt that we are where we are because we have long neglected the Shudras. Today's village culture, if culture it can be called, is an awful culture. The villagers live as worse than animals. Nature compels animals to work and live naturally. We have so dabased our working classes that they cannot work and live naturally, If our people had laboured intelligently and with joy, we should have been quite different today.

Work and culture cannot be separated, then?

No. They tried to do it in ancient Rome and failed miserably. Culture without labour, or culture which is not the fruit of labour, would be 'Vomitoria’as a Roman Catholic writer says. The Romans made indulgence a habit, and were ruined. Man cannot develop his mind by simply writing and reading or making speeches all day long. All my reading I tell you was done in the leisure hours I got in jails, and I have benefited by it because all of it was done not desultorily but for some purpose. And though I have worked physically for days and months for eight hours on end I don't think I suffered from mental decay. I have often walked as much as 40 miles a day and yet never felt dull.

But you had this mental equipment.

No fear. You don't know how mediocre I was at school and in England. I had never the courage to speak at debating society meetings or even in a gathering of vegetarians. No. Don't you run away with the thought that I was blessed with any extraordinary powers. God, I think, advisedly did not give me then the power to speak. You must know, among us I am the least read man.

Harijan, 1-8-1936

349. DISCUSSION WITH STUDENTS OF VILLAGE WORKERS'TRAINING SCHOOL[1]

[Before *August 1, 1936*]

Q. How to dipossess people of ill-gotten gains which is what the Socialists are out to do?

A. Who is to judge what gains or riches are ill-gotten or well-gotten? God alone can judge, or a competent authority appointed both by the 'haves'and the 'have-nots'can judge. Not anyone and everyone. But if you say that All property and possession is theft, all must give up property and wealth. Have we given it up? Let us make a beginning, expecting the rest of follow. For those who are convinced that their own possessions are ill-gotten, there is of course no other alternative but to give them up.

Q. What is the root of violence? Does it not take place to prevent injustice and humiliation?

A. Hardly. The root of violence is selfishness, anger, lust, etc.

Q. I have not made myself understood. I see in front of me terrible wrong being done and I am provoked to violence. Is not the wrong at the root of it?

A. No, anger is at the root of your violence. Whether your violence is justified or not on such an occasion is another question, but there is no doubt that anger is at the root.

Q. How to deal with beggars? How can we turn them away when we see they are famishing?

A. Beggars must be distinguished from famishing people. Beggars are often enough sturdy. Some are theives. There is nothing like a right to beg, there is certainly a right to ask for work. And whilst

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

you may not give alms, it is your duty to give work to those who ask for it.

Q. But how are you going to do it when you have work for four and eight turn up? Will you engage all the eight?

A. No, because I must recognize my limitations.

Q. Then they will beg rather than starve?

A. They shall not beg. They must do some work. I have not yet settled down in Segaon. When I do so I shall see that no one goes away for want of work. I will have spinning wheels and *chakkis* for those who being in want of work ask for it.

Q. When we go to villages we are bound to come up against opposition. For instance, they are opposed to sanitation work. What are we to do?

A. We have to put up with the opposition.

Q. They boycott us, they will not allow us to use their wells.

A. They may; we will use other wells, but we shall not fight them. We will not provoke them, but argue with them until they understand. We have to face all kinds of difficulties.

Q. My difficulty is that if my sanitation work scares people away, if they will not attend the prayers, if they will not do even spinning, must I persist?

A. It depends on the spirit in which you have sat down there. If you have gone there principally for sanitation work, you will certainly not give it up, whatever happens. After all we will certainly do our own sanitation, keep our own surroundings clean. But it is open to one to begin with spinning, night classes, etc., and go on to sanitation if one thinks that would enable one to do one's work easier.

Harijan, 1-8-1936

350. A COBWEB OF MISUNDERSTANDINGS

I have before me a number of cuttings from various Urdu papers severely and even bitterly criticizing the proceedings[1] of the recently formed Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad and thereanent Babu Rajendra Prasad, Babu Purushottamdas Tandon, Pandit Jawaharlal and me. They attribute motives and designs to which, I know, we are all strangers. The writers have not taken the trouble of even understanding what was said or done by us or at the Parishad. Thus

[1] At Nagpur; *vide* "Speech at Akhil Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad", 24-4-1936

they think that the design at the bottom of the Association is to push Hindi at the expense of Urdu, and so to Sanskritize Hindi as to make it almost impossible for Mussalmans to understand it. They also infer from a speech of Babu Purushottamdas Tandon delivered at Allahabad at the time of the opening of the Literary Museum of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan that he distorted facts when he claimed that there were nearly 23 crores of Indians who spoke or at least understood Hindi. There are in these writings other innuendoes which I need not notice, my purpose being simply to remove if possible the misunderstandings that have led to the innuendoes.

To take the last first. If the writers had the whole speech of Tandonji before them they would have known that in the 23 crores he deliberately included the Urdu-speaking Hindus and Mussal-mans. He therefore included Urdu in the use of the word Hindi. This will be clear if it is borne in mind that Hindi according to the resolution adopted at Indore in 1935,[1] to which Tandonji was party, meant that language which was spoken in the North by Hindus and Mussalmans and was written either in Devanagari or Urdu scripts. If the writers had known this definition, surely they would have had no complaint on any account unless they objected to the very name Hindi. If they did, it was deplorable. Hindi is the original word for the language of the North. Urdu, as is well known, was the name specially given for a special purpose. The script was also a graft for the convenience of the Muslim rulers. If that is the historical sequence, there ought not to be any opposition to the use of the word 'Hindi'so long as it is used inclusively. In any event at the most the difference, if there must be any, narrows itself down to the use of one word or the other for signifying the same thing.

The complaint about Sanskritizing has some justification in that some writers of Hindi insist on unnecessarily introducing Sanskrit words in their writings. A similar charge can justly be brought against some Urdu writers who insist on equally unnecessarily introducing Persian or Arabic words. And what is worse, they even alter the grammar of the language. These extremes are bound to disappear in course of time because they would never be adopted by the masses. A speech that is beyond the comprehension of the masses has but a brief existence.

[1] At the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan held from April 20 to 23; *vide* " Two Good Resolutions", 4-5-1935

As for the Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad, it aims at making through Hindi as above defined available to the whole of India the best thought in the provinces. Surely there is in this nothing sinister or communal, as suggested in some writings.

The adoption of 'Hindi-Hindustani'was at my instance. It was adopted in order to bring out in a compound word the meaning of the definition of Hindi. Moulvi Abdul Kadar Sahib had suggested the use either only of Hindustani or Hindi-Urdu instead of Hindi-Hindustani. I should personally have no objection to either course, but the Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad could not ignore its own origin. The idea was born at the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan at Indore and took a definite shape at Nagpur under its aegis. The retention of the word 'Hindi'was therefore necessary in the nature of things. The substitution of Urdu would have been bad for the reasons I have already stated. But as I have endeavoured to show, Hindi, Hindustani and Urdu are synonymous terms and refer substantially to the same language.

Harijan, 1-8-1936

351. A CRIMINAL TRIBE

Perhaps there are not many places on this globe where crime is the profession of tribes as it is in India and it flourishes under the garb of religion. We have therefore in this country a law called the Criminal Tribes Act. The Aheris of Hissar District are supposed to be one of such tribes. On 7th June a conference of Aheris was held in the village of Gangan Kheri under the presidentship of Lala Thakurdas Bhargava. It was attended by over 1,000 Aheris and over 200 *savarna* Hindus. From the report before me it appears that the Aheris were told by some persons that if they embraced Islam they would be helped to become free from the application of the Act and the stigma of being a criminal tribe would no longer attach to them. Therefore the Aheris assembled declared their 'undying faith'in Hinduism and appealed to the Government to free them from the application of the Act.

In these days of ferment mere conferences and resolutions will not prevent appeals for conversions against material inducements nor bring the freedom sought. The only way to avert danger of defection and to procure freedom from special hardships is self-purification and selfless continuous service of the depressed people by the *savarnas*. Criminal tribes and untouchable castes are a scourge upon Hindu

society for its godless treatment of its own members in the sacred name of religion. You cannot have a diseased limb without the whole body being affected. Therefore the only effective method is reform from within. If the whole society is purified, it will be immune from external attacks, no matter how fierce they are. Conversely, no battling against external attacks can prevent internal disintegration. Indeed the energy expended in repelling external attacks must result in further exhaustion and therefore speedier destruction. I hope that the responsible *savarna* Hindus who attended the Conference will continue the work begun at the Conference and direct their energy in constructive channels.

Harijan, 1-8-1936

352. LETTER TO RAFI AHMED KIDWAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 1, 1936

MY DEAR KIDWAI,

To ask for a message from me is like drawing... [1] live tooth and then too for a meeting such as you are describing.

Surely at a meeting at which Mr. Jinnah presides and which Jawaharlal opens any message would be superfluous.

Yours sincerely,

MOULVI RAFI AHMED KIDWAI
4A RUTTLEDGE ROAD
LUCKNOW

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

353. LETTER TO BAL D. KALELKAR

August 1, 1936

CHI. BAL,

From my experiments in cooking I have come to the following conclusions: By cooking for oneself one saves money, improves health, becomes more enthusiastic and improves general knowledge.

[1] The source is damaged here.

One also automatically gains knowledge of the science of nutrition and becomes more efficient in serving food to others.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

354. LETTER TO KIKABHAI LAVAJI

August 1, 1936

BHAI KIKABHAI,

I have received your letter. We can say that Yeravda Pact is for all. If it finds appeal, everything will be all right. I see no need for reprinting it now. If it is necessary, I shall certainly have it reprinted.

We must put up with whatever Dr. Ambedkar says. One who is born a Hindu would not give up his religion because of the misdeeds of other Hindus. We can very well say that Harijans are unhappy because of their deeds. But a person like me would not forget that the ill-treatment by the so-called *savarna* Hindus adds to their unhappiness. If the *savarna* Hindus mend their ways and repent of their deeds, then very soon the seeming faults of Harijans will be on the wane even if they do not go root and branch.

Drinking will certainly increase with the increase in the number of mills.

BAPU

KIKABHAI LAVAJI

PATTHAR KUVA

AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

355. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

August 1,1936

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

It is good that you got the operation done: If it proves successful, you will have permanent relief.

You must have received the copy of my reply to Rajaram.[1] If you have not replied yet, I suggest this: "Your letter contains no fresh

[1] The letter is not traceable.

point which calls for a reply. I have, therefore, nothing to add to my previous letter."

Do not be in a hurry to leave the hospital and do not resume work without taking complete rest.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 196-7

356. LETTER TO GANGABEHN B. JHAVERI

August 1, 1936

CHI. GANGABEHN,

After a long time I did receive your letter. I cannot form any opinion about the new school. I cannot swallow the views of its manager which are destructive of morality. However, treat this view of mine as of no consequence. Consult Pannalal and, having heard him, do what you wish.

If you have not read everything pertaining to socialism, then take a decision only after reading something more about it. Socialism is one thing and Jawaharlal is another. There has always been a difference between individuals and ideology.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

357. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 1, 1936

CHI. NIMU,

I received your letter. Do not fail to relieve Ramdas of the burden of writing to me. The children must have got well. Send for Kanam's things which may be required. Do not postpone writing to me. Write to me in time and give all the details.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

358. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

August 1, 1936

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your letter. You will fall and rise, fall again and rise again and by thus falling and rising attain success. Never give up your efforts. You must certainly write to me but you may not expect a reply from me as I have no time to spare. If I have I shall scribble a couple of lines.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4287

359. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 2,1936

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

This time Manilal did not write to me. I am writing this with my left hand as the right one is tired. Let those who want to brag about Harilal's action do so with pleasure. Here at any rate they have almost forgotten him and he is always under the influence of drink. The fault must lie somewhere in my own method of bringing him up. Mine has been a life of wanderings and it has had a number of vicissitudes. It is quite obvious that I could not manage it all.

Manu is with me at present, enjoying herself. And of course Ba and Lilavati are also with me. Sushila ought to control her palate and improve her health. Indulging the palate is not limited to eating starchy foods and sugar alone. You can get so much fruit there that you can very well maintain your health. Milk and fresh fruit must improve your health. Moreover, you must never miss your daily walk.

Ramdas, one may say, has now settled down. Nimu too has gone to join him. Devdas and Lakshmi are in Delhi.

Kishorelal went to Akola and from there to Bombay.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4855

360. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI M. PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 3, 1936

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

Your letter. You may take it that Andrews has left Fiji. All the same I shall make inquiries.

It would be nice if you could procure good ghee. On my part, I have been insisting on producing it at Maganwadi, where we now have an expert. At Segaon, too, I am having a cow.

Your work seems to be going on well. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. RAOJIBHAI
P.O. PETLAD *via* ANAND
B.B. & C.I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9008

361. LETTER TO B.K. DIWANJI

SEGAON, WARDHA, C.P.
August 4, 1936

DEAR DIWANJI,

It cannot be desirable for Indians to act as agents of foreign concerns whose traffic is detrimental to the moral or material interests of the country. This covers all your questions but I may add that acceptance of advertisements, Indian or foreign, whose object is to advertise things which are contrary to the policy advocated by the newspapers cannot be defended.

The medical profession is a noble profession only when medical men practise it for service, not for money, and if they give predominant place to prevention rather than cure, and accept the limits to their remedial measures so that they are not contrary to humanness towards non-human life.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers: Courtesy: Pyarelal

362. LETTER TO K.M. MUNSHI

August 4, 1936

BHAI MUNSHI,

Since he[1] insists on starting another magazine, why should we retain *Hans*? Why not write to him:

"Since you contemplate another magazine you must keep *Hans*. Parishad can easily manage with other title."[2]

You may carry out your suggestion if you do not think this right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7604. Courtesy: K.M. Munshi

363. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

SEGAON WARDHA,
August 5, 1936

MY DEAR SUBHAS,

You may be late replying but I must reply per return. I know what it means for a prisoner to hear from friends.

I share your regret that we cannot freely exchange views [even] on absolutely non-political questions.

I am surprised that you are not getting your copy of *Harijan*. I am inquiring.

Yes, my dietetic experiments continue unabated. Just now I am trying to find jungly edible leaves. and I have succeeded beyond expectations. I am not having any fresh vegitables from outside Segaon. The second thing I am doing [is] to use lemons and *gur* [as] an effective substitute for fresh fruit.

After many experiments I have come to the conclusion that cow milk, fresh green vegetables (including leaves and fruit of plants), onion and garlic, wheat or any other grain, *gur* and any juicy fruitmake a perfect diet. Generally I recommend avoidance of pulses

[1] Munshi Premchand
[2] This paragraph is in English

for brain workers—vegetable protein is not so easy to digest as animal protein. I have mentioned onion and garlic. They are both strongly recommended by many medical men.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI SUBHAS BOSE
C/O SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE
DARJEELING

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

364. LETTER TO SAHEBJI MAHARAJ

August 5, 1936

DEAR SAHEBJI MAHARAJ,

Many thanks for your letter. We shall await the *mistry* on the 12th. He will be paid his travelling expenses to and fro and the pay will begin as from the date of his departure from Agra.

I am expecting much out of this experiment.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2165

365. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

August 5, 1936

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Why need you fall into despair? Why do you feel that you have wasted fifty-seven years? Ever since I have known you, I have observed that you are always striving. God has given man only the strength to strive and nothing more. If we ever remain absorbed in doing our duty without lethargy, we have no reason to feel despair.

Ramibai seems to be very unhappy. Can anything be done to

[1] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Sahebji Maharaj", 22-7-1936

help her? I understand about Bachubhai.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. GANGABEHN VAIDYA
RAMBAG, BORIVLI
B.B. & C.I. RLY.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G.S. Gangabehnne, p. 94. Also C.W. 8834. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

366. LETTER TO PANNALAL JHAVERI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 5, 1936

CHI PANNALAI,

Shri Walunjkar will be starting from here on the 19th and thus reaching there on the 21st morning. He will be put up at the Harijan Ashram, I suppose. He has to reach Wardha latest by the 26th. Send me a telegram if this date is not suitable.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari—Pannalal Jhaveri, pp. 32-3

367. LETTER TO N. C. KELKAR

SEGAON WARDHA,
August 6, 1936

DEAR MR. KELKAR,

You are reported to have said: "When he (Gandhi) openly says that his object is to run down the Tilak school of politics, etc., etc." If you have said it, will you kindly let me know when I did so? I have no

recollection of ever having said any such thing and how could I when, as you rightly say, I have "carried forward the work of Mr. Tilak"?[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 3120. Courtesy: Kashinath N. Kelkar

368. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 7, 1936

CHI. MRIDU,

I am pleasantly surprised to see that you are able to find time to write such long letters. You are taking upon yourself so much work that even a person like me shudders. May God grant you the strength to attend to all your tasks.

I do not know what you would be able to do in the Women's Conference to be held at Ahmedabad.[2] I have no clear idea of that organization and what little I know is only through Rajkumari[3]. I have not formed the impression that it can do anything for village women. Rajkumari herself is very keen to serve in the villages. It remains to be seen how far she can carry her other friends with her.

You are greatly mistaken if you think that there are no Hindu-Muslim distinctions among women. There certainly are. They have not found extreme expression because women do not come out in public very much. When they come out like men and they are awakened, they too will be found making these distinctions to a considerable extent. They will become conscious in a few years. But the possibility of Hindus and Muslims uniting in the mean time is remote. Nevertheless it is your duty as well as mine to carry on the work on the assumption that those distinctions do not exist among

[1] In his reply the addressee said: "The work of Tilak which you have carried forward is the work intensive political agitation, but by the Tilak 'school' of politics I mean Tilak's philosophy and methods and in respect of these, you and he vastly differ."... "Your open insistence on non-violence, truth and non-co-operation was taken to imply that the school of political thought you superseded favoured the antithesis of these three...." *Vide* also "Letter to N.C. Kelkar", 24-8-1936.

[2] The All-India Women's Conference commenced on December 23 and was presided over by Margaret Cousins.

[3] Amrit Kaur, Secretary of the All-India Women's Conference

women. Among the avoidable things I have enumerated the measures you suggest are of course included. But at that place I had to stress one point only. Other things were irrelevant there.

Now about giving recognition to the Jyoti Sangh[1]. Your arguments are interesting. I would only say that for the moment you do everything you are doing, but give up any talk about recognition. Citing the instance of tailors, etc., is not proper because the Sangh does not recognize them. It provides them work. Till now they had even been given by the mills the work of dyeing and washing. I stopped it only recently. Your arguments befit those who are indifferent to khadi. But you are a khadi volunteer. You believe in the power of khadi. How can you bend in the face of difficulties? But you say that you are ready to come if it is necessary. If you are not convinced by all this from me, come over at your earliest. At least we can meet under that pretext.

I hope Mummy is well. The letter for Suhrid[2] is enclosed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11201. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

369. LETTER TO G.D. BIRLA

SEGAON WARDHA,
August 7, 1936

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I read both the letters. Other things later. Parnerkar has not come to me so far.

The interview[3] was all right but I see nothing hopeful in it; he will not be able to do a thing. Their policy and ours are poles apart. I firmly hold that no further overtures should be made to him. It is not correct to say that I had made any promise. Whatever I did was all worth doing. This is the reason why it was done and not because of any promise of mine. It was not in the public interest to proceed any further. I write all this in order to make things clear for the future.

[1] An institution in Ahmedabad for socially oppressed women
[2] Addressee's brother
[3] The addressee had met the Viceroy Lord Linlithgow on August 5, 1936.

What can I do in connection with the elections? Yes, I can try to avoid friction within the Congress; in fact I am already engaged in this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 8021. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

370. INTERVIEW TO PAULA LECLER AND Y.S. CHEN[1]

[Before *August 8, 1936*]

In reply to several questions Gandhiji said:

On the political programme you should go and visit Pandit Nehru who, though he is busier than I, might give you a useful half hour. I am no authority on politics, and having retired from the Congress for two years now, I am a kind of a back number.

But may it not be that you have retired to give the other people a chance, and in the conviction that after they have had their chance they are bound to come back to you?

That is not my way. I am a votary of truth. I meant it cent per cent when I retired from the Congress and the so-called politics of the country. My mind and body are buried in Segaon. What the future has in store for me God alone knows.

[Y. S. CHEN:] Your body is here, but your spirit travels over the whole world.

Yes, but not my political spirit. What I am doing today, i.e., living in a village, I might have done in the beginning of my career. lnstead I am doing it in the evening of my life.[2]

The American lady wanted... him to... give a message to the distracted world as to how best to get out of the trouble and chaos.

I am off talking. I can give you no message. You can see what I am doing if you will stay in this village. How to help the world out of

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". Paula Lecler was an American woman and Y.S. Chen a member of the Cotton Industry Commission of China.

[2] Paula Lecler here quotes Gandhiji having said: "You may be sure I am living now just the way I wish to live. What I might have done at the beginning, had I more light, I am doing now in the evening of my life, at the end of my career, building from the bottom up. Study my way of living here, study my surroundings, if you wish to know what I am. Village improvement is the only foundation on which conditions in India can be permanently ameliorated."

chaos is a vast question which cannot be answered at a moments's notice. But if there is an answer it is this: 'By waiting on God.'

I want to transmit to America a picture of the faith and light you have.

I could not give it by word of mouth. I am not in a talking mood.

But you have your faith?

Oh yes, I have.

Then could you not put it in a few words?

How can I impart it in words?

Then you can just say a few words of prayer, i. e., what is your innermost desire. You can just pray audibly.

No, I cannot possibly do so. Is it not enough for you to know that I am trying to live a simple village life as simple villager? When I succeed in it. I shall have achieved my ambition.

And what happens to your children, the people of India?

They are in the villages. I live with them. They will live with me.

Are you happy?

Ah! I can answer that question. I am perfectly happy.

More happy that you were outside the village?

I cannot say, for my happiness is not dependent on external circumstances.

[Y. S. CHEN:] wanted to know something about our social programme.

I have no doubt that untouchability is going. It can go quicker, but we have not got a corps of social workers adequate to the task. It is social work indeed, but more than that it is great spiritual effort. If untouchability remains, Hinduism perishes and with it Hindu culture. And if that calamity comes, the whole face of India will be changed. The ruining of Hindu culture is fraught with incalculable harm for the general culture of India. But I am firm in my faith that untouchability is bound to go, it is going. Here you will see I am surrounded by untouchables. We have, for instance, for our cook an untouchable boy. He never knew cooking, certainly he did not know how to cook hygienically. He is now learning it. He is a fine boy, eager to learn, and hard-working. This process is going on throughout India. The best of our workers are trying to work amongst the untouchables in this fashion. That is the complete reform. We have to obliterate all the

differences of social status. That is the essence of this part of our social reform.

I want to correct the impression that has got abroad in America that Mr. Gandhi is sulking....But what is the truth about the supposed antagonism between you and Nehru?

You must see my disclaimer.[1]

I have seen it.

I have said that it was an absolute travesty, an absolute falsehood.

What is your feeling about Nehru?

My feeling about Nehru is nothing but that of love and admiration. We are not estranged from each other. I hear from him nearly twice a week.[2] There are things on which I do not talk the same way.There are obvious differences in outlook, but in spite of them our affection has not diminished. And these differences are not new. He has never kept from me whatever he has felt from time to time. Even what he said in Lucknow was not new. It was a summary of views he had stated in different places on different occasions.

But you don't see the truth entirely his way?

I don't. But it is one thing to say that I do not sympathize with some of his views and quite another to say that he had ruined my life-work! It is a lie. There is no other name for it.[3] I have never had even the suspicion that Jawaharlal's policy has ruined any part of my work.

Because the truth you stand for is still there?

That is a truism. I am not talking from that higher philosophical point of view. I am just talking in mundane terms. I want to say that he has taken no such steps as would ruin my programme or my work. If he had said: 'You have blundered all along. You must retrace your steps. You have taken the country back a century', as some have certainly said, he, because he is he, would embarrass me. But he has

[1] *Vide* "Are We Rivals?", 22-7-1936

[2] Paula Lecler quotes here: "Jawaharlal Nehru and I are friends. It is true our beliefs may differ in some ways. But to say there is enmity between us, that is a lie. Even when he is travelling around the country on speaking tours, as he has been doing, I hear from him at least twice each week. There is no rivalry in work like ours."

[3] Paula Lecler reports here: "They quoted me: 'My life-work is ruined... not even the firmness and repression of the British Government have harmed my work as much as the policy outlined by Nehru.' But much as I dislike to use so strong a word, it is an absolute lie. I never said anything like that nor do I think it."

said nothing of the kind. Also, it is not wholly true to say that I do not sympathize with his programme. What is he doing today with which I cannot sympathize? His enunciation of scientific socialism does not jar on me. I have been living the life since 1906 that he would have all India to live. To say that he favours Russian communism is a travesty of truth.[1] He says it is good for Russia, but he does not give an unequivocal certificate to it even about Russia. As for India, he has said plainly that the methods to be adopted in India would have to answer India's needs. He does not say that there must be class war, though he thinks it may be inevitable;[2] and only recently he declared emphatically that there should be no confiscation without compensation. There is nothing in all this which I oppose. Nevertheless there are differences of method; but to say that they make us opponents or rivals is a caricature.[3]

There is nothing he believes, nothing in his programme today about which I can say, as I certainly would if I felt that way: I oppose this tooth and nail. I would not present the same thing in the same way. Certain methods I adopted Jawaharlal would not adopt.

Are you fond of him?

Yes, as I am fond of you. But that is not saying anything much.

Do you approve of him for India?

Yes.

This our friend had got the impression in Karachi that your own internal cleavages were far worse than outside tyranny, and that was the impression she was going to fly off with to America.

That remark of hers elicited one sentence of withering criticism from Gandhiji:

If I did not believe in human nature, I would say that to give you that impression was a diabolical plot to blacken India's name.

Asked if he would emerge from his retirement to lead his people if they again needed him, Gandhiji replied firmly, with a quick look from under irregular eyebrows at his interrogator.

[1] Paula Lecler reports: "To say he favours communism on the Russian model is doing a grave injustice to Jawaharlal."

[2] Paula Lecler adds here: "I believe he thinks a class war may be inevitable, but he is doing his best to avert one."

[3] The paragraph that follows is from Paula Lecler's report reproduced in *The Bombay Chronicle.*

That depends upon God. I never decide beforehand but wait for the contingency to decide. Planning ahead for myself, even for a few years, is opposed to my principles.

Harijan, 8-8-1936, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 7-3-1937

371. TWO PEN-PICTURES

Babu Hara Dayal Nag, the G. O. M. of Bengal, is never weary of well-doing. In the constancy of love of his country he is not to be excelled. The reader will appreciate the following instructive description[1] of his village as he saw it in his youth and as it is today.

Harijan, 8-8-1936

372. PROPAGANDA BY VILIFICATION

A correspondent sends me a proselytizing pamphlet, being a Gujarati version of the original in Urdu. The Gujarati translator and publisher is Shekh Umarbhai Mohmedbhai and the pamphlet is printed in Ahmedabad. I take the following[2] from the correspondent's letter.

> Permit me to send you a copy of a pamphlet published...with a view to induce Harijans for conversion to Islam and create hatred among them against Hindus. This pamphlet is full of such remarks about the Hindu religion and the Hindu rites as are not only false but are likely to intensify the communal tension....
>
> You will kindly...suggest the course to be adopted so that these poor and illiterate Harijan people may not be entrapped by such false and inflammatory pamphlets.

I had the pain of going through the pamphlet. It is as mischievous as it has been described by the correspondent. It is in the form of a dialogue between two Harijans, father and son. At the instance of the father the son reads Hindu scriptures and ridicules them. Everything held sacred by Hindus is caricatured so as to excite disgust towards Hinduism and *savarna* Hindus. Even the sacred name of Swami Shraddhanandji has been dragged in the discussion and words have been put into his mouth which I hold him to be incapable

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

of having uttered. Here is a sentence which no gentleman would write of his fellow-men: "Some Hindus sit in squares smeared with cow-dung as if they were sitting to evacuate themselves. Cursed be such eaters." the pamphlet is full of distortions. And it holds out material hopes to Harijans which can hardly be fulfilled especially about the mass of Harijans if they are ever tempted to forsake their ancestral faith. Thus the Moulvi who is responsible for the conversion of the Harijan's son is represented to be a convert from being a Chamar and having married a girl belonging to a noble Muslim family. The new convert drinks from the same cup as the Moulvi and the remains of the water are drunk by the company. He is treated to a feast at a Munshi's palatial house. The feast fills the dining hall with fragrance.

"Every morsel was a nectar, every potion the water of life," and this erstwhile Harijan is treated to the inhalation of a *hookah* which goes the round of the whole company.

It is tragic to see that religion is dragged down to the low level of crude materialism to lure people into which the most cherished sentiments of millions of human being are trodden underfoot.

I hope that the pamphlet has no support from thoughtful Mussalmans who should read it to realize the mischief such pamphlets can create.

My correspondent asks me how to deal with the menace. One remedy I have applied, viz., to bring hereby the vilifying propaganda to the notice of the responsible Muslim world. He himself can claim the attention of the local Mussalman leaders to the publication. The second and the most important thing to do is purification from within. So long as the poison of untouchability remains in the Hindu body, it will be liable to attacks from outside. It will be proof against such attacks only when a solid and impregnable wall of purification is erected in the shape of complete removal of untouchability.

Harijan, 8-8-1936

373. NOTES

WHEELERS, NOT SHOULDERS

Shri C. Tejpal has for years been conducting a campaign in favour of using light vehicles instead of shoulders for carrying dead bodies. He knows that he has to fight against a sentiment cherished by millions of Hindus and Mussalmans from times immemorial. Persons

vie with one another in giving their shoulders for carrying the dead. The carrying of corpses on human shoulders is an impressive sight. So at any rate we have been used to think. But apart from sentiment there is nothing to recommend the practice. Where the burial ground or the crematorium is some distance from the place where death occurs, carrying on shoulders becomes a trying task. Again when a caste has only a few members, or it is a poor man who has lost a relative, no matter how near the place of disposal is the question assumes serious proportions. And we know that in times of plague and famine corpses are often left in the streets to rot or to be food for vultures. There is no doubt, therefore, that there is much to be said in favour of carrying corpses on carts. Shri Tejpal has constructed a cart which costs a little over 100 rupees. In a poor country like India a hundred rupees is a consideration not to be lightly dismissed. But if village Mahajans[1] and municipalities were to own such carts and hire them out at a trifling charge, the question of expense can be eliminated. And local enthusiasts who appreciate the reform may popularize the practice in their surroundings. Shri Tejpal informs me that the Municipality of Ahmedabad keeps one such cart and so do Mahajans or Seva Samitis in Surat, Baroda, Jamnagar and Porbandar. The Prarthana Samaj of Bombay is also reported to have one. It will be interesting to know the extent to which the reform has made headway in the places where such carts are kept.

HAND-GINNING

Like the wheel, the carding-bow and the hand-gins have been undergoing progressive improvements though not to the same extent as the wheel. But the processes anterior to spinning are just as important as spinning itself. Evenness, strength and speed depend upon good cotton, good picking, good ginning and good carding. If any of the processes are defective, they tell upon the quality and the quantity of yarn turned out in a given time. Experiments are therefore being conducted by Shri Radhakrishna Bajaj in Wardha in finding out the possibility of improvement in the hand-gin. If there are khadi lovers who have made improvements, they should correspond with Shri Radhakrishna and send him specimens if any.

Harijan, 8-8-1936

[1] A representative body of responsible citizens

374. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

August 9, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Yes, it is well for you not to come. I am sending more milk. If not wanted, let Motibehn bring it back.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6358. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9824

375. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 9, 1936

CHI. KANTI,

How you have hurt me like a thorn![1] Since I had this news, your face has been present before my mind's eye, and I have been brooding constantly. What is this that has happened and why did you do it? But how could you help it? Who could overcome his nature? And it is quite proper that you should not curb your nature, as this would only lead to hypocrisy. It is thus I console myself. I am considering what I can do, within my limits, to help you fulfil your ambition.

I shall send you a *dhoti* if you write to me the length and the width you want. Or, you may yourself cut it out when you come here. I have three rolls with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7304. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] The reference is to the addressee wanting to have formal education and a degree; *vide* "Letter to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi", 16-8-1936.

376. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 9, 1936

CHI. PYARELAL,

I see that our views are divergent. You still appear to have faith in outward effort. I have given up outward effort altogether. I depend only on the grace of God. The reason for my asking you to come is that it is here that your *sadhana* has to be, not in Bengal or Utkal. Your natural place is also here with me and perhaps it is here that you can be most useful. This therefore is my advice to you. If my writing strikes a chord in your heart, do come.

What you write about Khan Saheb is correct. He came yesterday to stay with me. He is occupying a corner of the room at the moment. I like this *dharmashala.* How wonderful it would be if you could also join! Still a small room has been built for Khan Saheb. You can also make use of it. He is not using it. Maybe he will not use it at all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

377. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 9/10, 1936

CHI. KANAIYO,

Tell Chhotelal to send me two vessels each big enough to hold five to seven seers of milk. They should preferably be tin-coated brass ones. Zinc vessels will do if they are cheaper.

Send me some mustard oil.

A few letters accompany this.

I want hand-made paper for making note-books, etc.

Blessings from
BAPU

P. T. O.

August 10, 1936

On the reverse I wrote yesterday.

But it got left behind. I find, however, that it was not very urgent. I am now sending some letters and an article. I propose to send some more later. I want the enema things we have here. If they are needed there, new ones have to be bought for this place.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U./II

378. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

August 10, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I hope the progress will continue. If there is any complication, you will at once let me know.

Love

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6359. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Aslo G. N. 9825

379. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 10, 1936[1]

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Khan Saheb has received the usual notice to attend the meetings[2] in Bombay. He has no desire to attend them and I do not want to press him. And in Bombay he will be asked to attend meetings and functions at which he would be called upon to speak. I do not want him to do so just now. I want him rather to pass the year with me. And he is none too strong nor invulnerable to attacks of illness. Will you, therefore, please excuse him from attendance?

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1934. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] In the source this letter is placed among 1934 papers and the same year is assigned to it in *A Bunch of Old Letters*. This however is a mistake as Gandhiji shifted to Segaon only in 1936.

[2] Of the A. I. C. C.

380. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

August 10, 1936

CHI. PREMA,

I had a reason for not being content with a three-pice postcard.[1]

I didn't get your *rakhdi*[2]. I would certainly have worn it had I received it. Since you sent one, however, you have had the joy and earned the merit of sending it.

You seem to be picking up knowledge of a good many subjects. I shall at any rate glance through the book sent by you.

I can certainly enlarge the area of experience in Segaon, but not just now. I have neither the time nor the inclination. The experiences don't seem to me worth communicating to anybody.

Man's speech has a conventional meaning but in addition each utterance also has a specific meaning intended by the speaker which can be known from the context. Nobody has known truth in its perfection and, therefore, each person describes a thing as he sees it and that is the truth for him, even though as a matter of fact his view might be false.

In like manner man's view of a thing changes from age to age and the view held in a particular age is the truth for that age. This is the meaning or idea in *asato ma sadgamaya*[3].

Where the notion of high and low has disappeared I see no harm in the Shudras serving the other three varnas.[4] [Nobody][5] is compelled to be a Shudra. [If, then, service is the natural bent of mind of a Shudra,][6] why should he change that calling for another? If the Brahmin and the Bhangi both get just enough for their sustenance,

[1] The addressee had enquired why Gandhiji had used an envelope for his letter dated July 22, 1936, when the matter could have been fitted in a postcard.

[2] The thread tied by a sister to her brother's wrist symbolizing the brother's obligation to protect her

[3] Lead me from untruth to truth.

[4] The addressee had maintained that the whole tradition of the saint-poets of Maharashtra had more or less acknowledged the idea of high and low as inherent in the varna system; how then could they look upon all with equality?

[5] This sentence is incomplete in the source.

[6] *ibid*

what is the difference between the two? Nobody will prevent a Bhangi from becoming a *jnani*[1]. In the varna system of my conception, no varna will have the monopoly of knowledge. Think over the verses in the women's prayer.[2] What are the common dharmas of the four varnas? Maybe you will find some utterances of Jnanadeva[3] and others which seem to support the distinction of high and low. But nobody should be judged in this way by a few isolated sayings of his. I know what you wish to say regarding Ramdas[4]. Even if those examples could be shown to be inapplicable, my argument remains untouched.

I cannot accede to your request, for you have given no thought as to its propriety. You have just been carried away by the present tide. You, I and all others are cast in the moulds inherited from our parents. There is as much sense, or lack of sense, in rejecting it as there is in forgetting the fact and claiming ourselves to be different. We can remain in the old mould and still make many changes. That is growth or progress. To assume a completely new appearance will mean a total revolution or a new religion altogether. Does Hinduism have no definite mould in any respect? Children daily trace new letters in water which disappear the moment they are formed, but they enjoy the game. It seems you wish to do the same. But do you think you can lure an old man of 67 who has grown up in the old mould, and interest him in drawing circles in water? Standing on the bank, I watch the play of such as you. In the next issue of *Harijan*, you will see something having a bearing on this in my comments on a letter.[5]

You have discovered my ignorance all right. If you search more, you will discover still grosser ignorance. But I hope you will not desert me when you have discovered all my ignorance. If you promise me that, I will confess that I don't know anything at all, for I have not made such a study.

I have read enough about communism to satisfy me. What we shall need in swaraj I can tell only when I see the swaraj. Any opposition from me that you may notice will be concerning the question of

[1] A spiritually enlightened person
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Prabhavati", 15-12-1930
[3] Jnaneshwara, saint-poet of Maharashtra
[4] Samartha Ramdas Swami, Shivaji's guru
[5] *Vide* "Varna *v*. Caste," 15-8-1936

truth-untruth and violence-non-violence.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10384. Also C. W. 6822. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

381. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

August 10, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I am enclosing Prema's letter. Lilavati does not wish to move out of this place, though you have been inviting her and, on my part, I have gladly given the permission. She is very unsettled in her mind and wants to try and see if she can steady herself with a year's effort. And she believes that going there might disturb her. There is some truth in it, no doubt.

I therfore recommend that you manage without her if you can. Yesterday she told me that she was going to write to you.

Kanaiyo comes often to see me. I see he is in a very happy mood.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8501. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

382. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

August 10, 1936

CHI. NARAHARI,

Have you ever extracted juice from a dried lemon? If you say 'no', how will you squeeze out of me a lesson for your series of readers? I went through your circular request. It is good, but not for me. I would stop all writing if I could have my way. Don't ask for anything new. Go ahead with your work, taking me as gone.

Maruti[1] desires to build a house. The land should be from the Harijan Ashram. What happened to Avantikabai's[2] plot? Can we give him that or some part of it? Or he might keep with us the sum he wishes to invest and so long as he does so he might put the land to his use and enjoy ownership rights of the house. If it does not suit us, we may return his deposit after estimating the current value of the property. I am saying all this on the supposition that Avantikabai's land might not be available or that the Ashram land might not be sold. For my part, I have no objection whatever to selling it. Think over the whole matter and do what seems proper.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9098

383. LETTER TO H.L. SHARMA

August 10, 1936

CHI. SHARMA,

Your letter. I feel ashamed that Babbitt's book has not yet been found though I am sure it will be found. The yarn got mixed up with the other yarns. You should accept the khadi form me.... [3]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh,* facing p. 259

384. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 11, 1936

CHI. PYARELAL,

I started reading your letters in detail after writing to you. I see that you suffered from bleeding. That also is a sign that it would be unwise for you to go to Utkal and that you should come here. I have always been telling you that it is your duty to make your body healthy. I was pained to hear about the squalor in the College Square.

[1] Husband of Lakshmi, a Harijan girl adopted by Gandhiji
[2] Avantikabai Gokhale
[3] The last sentance is illegible, the original having been damaged.

Have you drawn Satis Babu's[1] attention to it? Do let me have news of your health if you are not coming immediately.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

385. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 12, 1936

BAPA,

You have made a pretty full miscellany of a single letter. I hope Devdas's presence causes no distraction to life there.

I had a long letter from Malkani whose plight is indeed pitiable. The question constantly occurs to me whether to call Rukmini a shrew or an absolutely foolish person.

What shall we do about Satis Babu? On the one hand he has made a great sacrifice and, on the other, he is very suspicious by nature. Of course we shall be able to keep him as long as we wish to.

Ramachandran has caused me a surprise. Let me know if any difficulty concerning him arises.

Surely, some day you are going to look at things at Segaon....[2] Tukdoji occupies the corner in front of me, Khan Saheb the one beside me; Munnalal by Tukdoji's side. Rajkumari's bed is between me and Tukdoji. On the wooden stand before her rests a rustice medicine box which is nothing but a used fruit-case and other odds and ends. Ba, Lilavati and Manu accommodate themselves where they can. Again, we have quite a different scene at night. Isn't 'houselessness' one of the distinguishing characteristics of a *bhakta*? At any rate, am I not indulging in all sorts of pranks, trying to play the *bhakta*? Whatever it may be to others, Segaon is to me an inexhaustible source of joy. Yesterday the last corner fell vacant—for the present at least. Munnalal's of course is permanent.

I expect you are doing well.

BAPU

[1] Satis Chandra Das Gupta
[2] A word or two are illegible here.

[PS.]

I had very little time even to scribble this silly stuff. But shouldn't I rather relax in this way? I have only followed you.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1169

386. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 13, 1936

CHI. KANTA,

I was glad to have your letter, though late. Doubtless you had to do what your father wanted. But surely he did not tell you to bedeck yourself in finery. He would never ask you to array yourself in ornaments. And even if he did, he must have left it to your *wish.* He got you married, but surely he would not run your household. But I do not wish to write a long letter. Be straightforward, simple and good. Be a good worker and serve. Fulfil at least some of the hopes you have aroused. Preserve your health—physical, mental and spiritual.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI CHANDRAKANTA
BHAKTI BHAVAN
SIGRA
BENARES CITY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

387. LETTER TO MANGIBAI

SEGAON,

August 13, 1936

CHI. MANGIBAI,

I have just heard of your husband's death. Why should we grieve over the death of our loved ones. In the long run death spares no one. This too should be regarded as one of God's blessings. Now be calm and devote yourself to service.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 172

388. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

WARDHA,
August 14, 1936

MY DEAR SISTER,

This is to acknowledge your letter to Bapu of the 9th inst. I assume that you are still in Khedi though Dr. Baretto told me that he was expecting you on Tuesday last. Evidently his date did not suit you and you asked for another, otherwise you should have been here by now.

In your letter too, you do not say when exactly you are arriving here.

Bapu likes very much your idea of taking a brief holiday in England. We will discuss the details about your travel after you arrive. In the mean time he wants me to tell you that much as he likes the idea of your getting England to take a bigger share in helping India's poor, you must not think that you are not giving to India more than you are taking from her. You must dismiss the thought from your mind that you have ever been a burden or are ever likely to be one. Whilst you may ask for support from English friends, it will not be in order to find the wherewithal for your livelihood, but in order to help our work here. You are a member of the family and are entitled to wage as much as the rest of us.

More when we meet.

Yours sincerely,
MAHADEV

MISS MARY BARR
KHEDI SAOLIGARH
DISTT. BETUL, C.P.

From a photostat: G. N. 6066. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

389. TALK WITH A PATIL[1]

[Before *August 15, 1936*]

The old Patil... went one evening to Gandhiji saying, "I am ready to have the barber's services...immediately after he has served Govind."[2]

[GANDHIJI:] What then is the difficulty?

[PATIL:] But now he is asking of me a thing I cannot give.

[GANDHIJI:] What is that?

[PATIL:] It is that I should once go and feed at his place. With God as witness, Maharaj, I say I have never in my life of about four score years had tea or any kind of refreshment in a hotel. How does he expect me to go and feed at his place?

I quite appreciate what you say, but why does he insist on your feeding at his place?

Because he thinks his castemen might boycott him, and he wants to make assurance doubly sure by having me in his place to eat. Now, Maharaj, is that part of your anti-untouchability programme?

Certainly not. I am satisfied if you have conquered the prejudice of touch. Inter-dining is no part of the anti-untouchability programme, though as you know I am having Govind to cook for me. But that is what I would expect every Harijan sevak to do, not you.

Harijan, 15-8-1936

390. TALK WITH A BARBER[3]

SEGAON,
[Before *August 15, 1936*]

One morning when I went to Segaon, I found Gandhiji busy pulling to pieces a hair-cropping machine, in order to clean and oil it. That done, he began having a crop with his own hands with a mirror in front of him.

At the same moment one of the devotees of the sadhu came in, and he happened to be a barber. "Bapuji," shouted the sadhu from the opposite corner, "Let Bhima crop your hair. He knows the art."

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter", 15-8-1936

[2] The barber for fear of being boycotted by the village Patil and others had refused to shave Govind, a Harijan boy.

[3] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[GANDHIJI:] But how does he know it?

He is a barber by profession.

Ah, that is very good. Come along then.

But as soon as Bhima began the operation, Gandhiji asked him:

But I hope you have no prejudice against shaving our Harijan brethren. Have you?

He slightly hesitated, and said: "I have in my heart no prejudice against Harijans."

That I can believe. But will you shave a Harijan on the same terms as you would shave me?

Again he hesitated. Thereupon Gandhiji said to the sadhu:

I thought you had ascertained from him this thing before you asked me to have his services.

"I am sorry," said the sadhu, "that aspect had for the moment escaped me."

Then I shall have to consider whether I should stop in the middle of the crop and dispense with Bhima.

But Bhima said: "No, though I do not usually do it, I promise from now to serve Harijans on the same terms."

Harijan, 15-8-1936

391. MORE COBWEBS

A seeker of truth cannot afford to write or speak to please anybody. During my long search after truth in all things which have come my way, I know that I have hardly ever succeeded in convincing all of the correctness of my position regarding the matters then in question. In the matter of Hindi propaganda, if I have displeased certain Muslim friends I have no less displeased Hindu friends. But unless my critics convince me of my error, they should not expect me to change merely because they want me to. Thus a correspondent actually says that although my position is logically and historically correct, I should change it to suit the Muslim critics who would have me either to advocate the adoption of the expression 'Hindi-Urdu' or merely 'Urdu' to denote the same common speech, the objection being not to the speech but the name which it has hitherto carried. Now there is a letter before me which quarrels with my address to the

Hindi Prachar Convocation recently held at Bangalore[1] from another standpoint. It is a long letter from which I quote below the most relevant extracts:

> In your convocation address at Bangalore you have asked the 11 million men and women of Karnatak to learn Hindi in order to establish contact with them. You have not even restricted the appeal to those who are already educated in the mother tongue. Even taking for granted that all are educated in the mother tongue, it is neither possible nor desirable, though possible, nor natural that the masses should learn a language other than their mother tongue. Only all India national workers, business men and other people who come in daily contact with the people of North India can and should learn Hindi. Necessity will make them learn the language even without any propaganda.
>
> Though you say that Hindi does not supplant but supplements the provincial languages, in effect it is not so. The bulk of the intellectuals of Tamil Nad today don't think nor even feel in Tamil but in English. They have completely neglected Tamil. You can understand to what depths of cultural slavery they have fallen when you know that they are even proud of declaring in public meetings and other places that they cannot speak or write well in Tamil but they can do both fluently in English. Now some of them have taken to the study of Hindi more with the help of English than with the help of Tamil. The result is going to be the same. They will begin to think in Hindi instead of English. If a Gujarati tells you that he can write a beautiful essay in Hindi but not in Gujarati, you will be only sorry for him and think that our country is far from attaining *purna* swaraj. Many have begun to say in Tamil Nad that they know Hindi better than Tamil.
>
> One should not learn any language even though it be the language of the gods, to the detriment of one's own mother tongue. In this connection I used to cite your own example to the Hindi fanatics. Though you declare that Hindi is the common language of India you have not written either your *Autobiography* or *Satyagraha in South Africa* in Hindi but in Gujarati. If you had written them in Hindi many more people would have known what you say in your own words. But you preferred to write them in Gujarati. Though your teaching and personal example differ in this matter, I hold your action to be correct and proper. Therefore I want people to follow not what you say but what you do.
>
> Swaraj should not mean the imposition of one language over those who speak different languages. Primary importance ought to be given only to the

[1] On June 12, 1936; *vide* "Convocation Address at Hindi Prachar Sabha, Bangalore", 12-6-1936

mother tongue. Only secondary importance can be given to Hindi, the common language of India. Real inspiration and elevation can come only through the mother tongue.

Let me come to the question of script. In *Harijan* dated 4-5-1935, writing on the resolution passed by the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan held at Indore you show a partiality for the Urdu script which passes my understanding. In your convocation address at Bangalore also you show the same partiality for the Urdu script. You want to destroy the scripts of all Indian languages derived from or largely influenced by Sanskrit and substitute Devanagari for them for the sake of those who want to learn the various languages. You want to preserve the two scripts, Devanagari and Urdu, for one and the same language spoken by Hindus and Muslims. Others, who also number millions and who have the misfortune of speaking different languages, should allow their scripts to be destroyed and displaced by Devanagari, learn Hindi-Hindustani and also learn Urdu script in order to understand and come into contact with 130 million Hindus and 70 million Muslims! Does this not sound ridiculous and represent the highest from of tyranny? The logical conclusion of this policy would inevitably be the abolition of all languages except Hindi with both of its scripts, for the Devanagari script would have been adopted for all the languages, all would have learnt Hindi and all the important works in the mother tongue would have been translated in [to] Hindi. I want you to reflect for a moment whether this consummation would be desirable in the best interestes of India, our common land of birth. Before you propose to destroy the various scripts, should you not attempt to destroy one of the scripts, Devanagari and Urdu, for one and the same language? Why should Muslims and Hindus speaking the same language use two different scripts?

I do not know that I asked all 11 million men and women of Karnatak to learn Hindi-Hindustani. I should be more than satisfied if all those who ever have to come in contact with the people from the North would learn Hindi-Hindustani. But I would certainly not only not deplore, as my correspondent would have me to, on the contrary I would welcome, all people of all the non-Hindi provinces learning Hindi. Why is it not desirable or natural for all India to know an all-India speech *in addition to* every province knowing its own language and in addition knowing All-India speech? Why should such knowledge be the privilege of the cultured few and not of the masses? It will surely show a very high degree of culture for a whole nation of over 300 million souls to know two languages. That such an event is highly improbable is unfortunately too true.

What, however, would be most unfortunate would be for any province to neglect its own language and to prefer another speech as the correspondent complains is happening in Tamil Nad. My frequent travels in Tamil Nad have confirmed the opinion expressed by my correspondent. But latterly I have noticed a change for the better in that province. And the process of preferring the provincial speech to every other where the choice is possible will be hastened without an effort as the educated in every province recognize more and more the necessity of seeking and establishing contact with the masses.

The correspondent incidentally touches the eternal rivalry between English and Hindi-Hindustani to be the common speech. I have held and declared, ever since I have entered public life, the definite opinion that English never can or ought to be the all-Inida speech and that it can only be Hindi, i.e., Hindustani, the speech spoken by the millions of Hindus and Mussalmans of the North. The attempt to treat English as such is to establish a permanent bar between the masses and the English-educated classes and to retard the progress of the country to its destination. I have repeatedly explained that English has a definite place in our culture. In order to understand the rulers and the whole Western world and to bring to India the best that the West has to give, a few of us must learn English which is the most widely known speech of the West. But a thousand times more Indians have to know Hindi-Hindustani if the illiterate masses are to be one with the educated classes.

The correspondent is wholly ignorant of my opinion when he thinks that I have even been guilty of advising preference for Hindi over the provincial speech. There is no hiatus between my principle and my practice in this connection. I heartily endorse the proposition that primary importance should be given to the mother tongue.

On the question of script my correspondents's fear is justified, nor do I apologize for the opinion I hold. Different languages descended from or intimately connected with Sanskrit ought to have one script and that is surely Devanagari. Different scripts are an unnecessary hindrance to the learning by the people of one province the language of other provinces. Even Europe which is not one nation has generally adopted one script. Why should India, which claims to be and is one nation, not have one script? I know I am inconsistent when I tolerate both Devanagari and Urdu scripts for the same language. But my inconsistency is not quite foolish. There is Hindu-

Muslim friction at the present moment. It is wise and necessary for the educated Hindus and Muslims to show mutual respect and toleration to the utmost extent possible. Hence the option for Devanagari or Urdu scripts. Happily there is no friction between provinces and provinces. Hence the desirability of advocating a reform which means a closer knitting together of provinces in more ways than one. And let it be remembered that the vast mass of the people are wholly illiterate. It would be suicidal to impose on them different scripts for no other reason than a false sentiment and laziness to think.

Harijan, 15-8-1936

392. VARNA v. *CASTE*

Shri Sant Ramji, of the Jat-Pat-Torak Mandal of Lahore, wants me to publish the following:

> I have read your remarks[1] about Dr. Ambedkar and the Jat-Pat-Torak Mandal, Lahore. In that connection I beg to submit as follows:
>
> We did not invite Dr. Ambedkar to preside over our conference because he belonged to the Depressed Classes, for we do not distinguish between a touchable and an untouchable Hindu. On the contrary our choice fell on him simply because his diagnosis of the fatal disease of the Hindu community was the same as ours, i.e., he too was of the opinion that caste system was the root cause of the disruption and downfall of the Hindu. The subject of the Doctor's thesis for doctorate being caste system, he has studied the subject thoroughly. Now the object of our conference was to persuade the Hindus to annihilate caste, but the advice of a non-Hindu in social and religious matters can have no effect on them. The Doctor in the supplementary portion of his address insisted on saying that that was his last speech as a Hindu, which was irrelevant as well as pernicious to the interests of the conference. So we requested him to expunge that sentence, for he could easily say the same thing on any other occasion. But he refused and we saw no utility in making merely a show of our function. In spite of all this, I cannot help praising his address which is, as far as I know, the most learned thesis on the subject and worth translating into every vernacular of India.
>
> Moreover I want to bring to your notice that your philosophical difference between caste and varna is too subtle to be grasped by people in general, because for all practical purposes in the Hindu society caste and varna are one and the same thing, for the function of both of them is one and the

[1] *Vide* "Dr. Ambedkar's Indictment- I", 11-7-1936

same, i.e., to restrict intercaste marriages and inter-dining. Your theory of *varnavyavastha* is impracticable in this age and there is no hope of its revival in the near future. But Hindus are slaves of caste and do not want to destroy it. So when you advocate your ideal or imaginary *varnavyavastha* they find justification for clinging to caste. Thus you are doing a great disservice to social reform by advocating your imaginary utility of division of varnas, for it creates hindrance in our way. To try to remove untouchability without striking disease or to draw a line on the surface of water. As in the heart of their hearts *dwijas*[1] do not want to give social equality to the so-called touchable and untouchable Shudras, so they refuse to break caste, and give liberal donations for the removal of untouchability, simply to evade the issue. To seek the help of the Shastras for the removal of untouchability and caste is simply to wash mud with mud.

The last paragraph of the letter surely cancels the first. If the Mandal rejects the help of the Shastras, they do exactly what Dr. Ambedkar does, i.e., cease to be Hindus. How then can they object to Dr. Ambedkar's address merely because he said that that was his last speech as a Hindu? The position appears to be wholly untenable especially when the Mandal, for which Shri Sant Ram claims to speak, applauds the whole argument of Dr. Ambedkar's address.

But it is pertinent to ask what the Mandal believes if it rejects the Shastras. How can a Muslim remain one if he rejects the Quran, or a Christian remain Christian if he rejects the Bible? If caste and varna are convertible terms and if varna is an integral part of the Shastras which define Hinduism, I do not know how a person who rejects caste, i.e., varna can call himself a Hindu.

Shri Sant Ram likens the Shastras to mud. Dr. Ambedkar has not, so far as I remember, given any such picturesque name to the Shastras. I have certainly meant it when I have said that if the Shastras support the existing untouchability I should cease to call myself a Hindu. Similarly, if the Shastras support caste as we know it today in all its hideousness, I may not call myself or remain a Hindu since I have no scruples about inter-dining or intermarriage. I need not repeat my position regarding the Shastras and their interpretation. I venture to suggest to Shri Sant Ram that it is the only rational and correct and morally defensible position and it has ample warrant in Hindu tradition.

Harijan, 15-8-1936

[1] The twice-born

393. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

SEGAON WARDHA,
August 16, 1936

CHI. MANILAL, SUSHILA,

I have your letters. There is no need at all for you to come here if you are happy where you are. No matter where we are we should render whatever services we can, and regard the people wherever we are as members of our own family. The true meeting is that of hearts, and they are quite close though we are millions of miles apart. If the hearts of two prisoners in the same cell are not one their physical proximity is meaningless. Hence, I do not long to have you come here to see me. You may live there permanently if you find your peace there.

Now a surprise for you both. Kanti's mind is now set on getting formal education and obtaining a degree. However one may try, he cannot possibly be deterred. I tried hard, but without success. Now, the question of the expenses for his education remains. Kanti, too, agrees that it cannot be paid from the public funds and that it would be a crime to take anything from his mother's sisters who have already spent a good deal on him. Hence, either you three brothers should pay his expenses or he must earn and learn. In my opinion, you three should share the burden, which is likely to be Rs. 75 to Rs. 100 a month, though I do not know about it. It is enough if you give your share of Rs. 33. Start sending the sum if you agree with the proposal.

Manu and Ba are with me. We are getting on quite well.

I got a letter from Harilal, his first after his conversion. He asks for a copy of the Golden Number[1] and wants to see me. I have written[2] to him, saying that he may come provided he agrees to my terms for the visit.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4856

[1] Of *Indian Opinion*
[2] The letter is not traceable.

394. TELEGRAM TO KASTURBHAI LALBHAI[1]

[On or before *August 17, 1936*] [2]

THE NOTICES ARE AGAINST THE PRINCIPLE OF ARBITRATION AND ARE FRAUGHT WITH SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-8-1936

395. LETTER TO N.R. MALKANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 17, 1936

MY DEAR MALKANI,

You did well in pouring out your heart to me. You should ignore what others may say. Thakkar Bapa has often made mistakes in judging people. And he writes letters often without careful thinking. But it is idle to expect him at this time of life to change his ways. We must take him as he is and love him for his sacrifice, single-minded devotion to the poor and the oppressed. I never attached any value to his remarks over the visit of the lady. It was undoubtedly wrong to have written at all about the incident and written in the way he did.

You did well in leaving Rukmini in Sind. You will have to be firm with her for her own sake. She must not be allowed to make life miserable or interfere with your work.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 919

396. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 19, 1936

CHI. SUMANGAL,

I have your letter after a long time. I have been keeping myself informed about you. What can I write? I shall not give up hope of you. Some day your mind will become steady. Please note that should

[1] President of the Mill-owners' Association. According to *The Bombay Chronicle* the telegram was addressed also to Chimanlal Parekh who had put up the wage-cut notices in his mill.

[2] The report bearing the telegram was dated August 17, 1936.

you wish to lead a married life there would be nothing wrong in it. No one can transgress the bounds of his nature.

Write whenever you feel inclined.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

397. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 19, 1936

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

You should have written earlier but better late than never. You seem to have made yourself unhappy for some things without any reason. But what wisdom can I give you from this distance? For, you showed wisdom in not calling over Kashi. Our family is where we live. We should be content with what help they give.

I still advise you not to work beyond your strength. We are not omnipotent like God that we can help all people in all their troubles. We may go only as far as our strength permits. The baby is not likely to derive much benefit from glucose. As for cod-liver oil, I do not like it at all. If, however, you are very keen on it, you also may do as others do. You yourself have taken it. So have Kusum and Navin. It may possibly help.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32997

398. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 20, 1936

CHI. AMBUJAM,

So, you can't be satisfied without letters written by me. You shall have them

You must be composed whatever happens. You should not worry over Kichi's indifferent health. God protects us all and we may not distrust Him when things do not go as we wish or when our dear ones get ill. So I am glad to see that you say you have resigned yourself to God. Let that resignation be from the heart and not merely mechanical. For often we utter these truths without their finding a set in our hearts.

My food is just now milk, pumpkin or any vegetable obtainable in Segaon or surrounding villages, a little garlic and fruit when there is any. I do not find the need for fruit as I used to before.

I hope you have recovered your strength and that Father and Mother are also well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 9609. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal

399. A LETTER

August 20, 1936

Your letter makes me think. If all the principal relatives have no objection, if... [1] is free to retain her own faith and does as a matter of fact retain it, and [her] future partner is likewise and does as a matter of fact retain his own faith and both have equal regard for each other's faith and practices, so far as I can see now, I should have no difficulty in blessing the union.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

400. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

August 20, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

Could you give Kumi some work at the school or elsewhere, if I arranged an allowance of Rs. 15 a month for her from this place? To put the question differently, does she in your opinion have the disposition to be entrusted with some work?

Will a copy of the *Gita* with the words split up and with their meanings, do for Purushottam and Vijaya? They had asked for only a

[1] Omission as in the source

Sanskrit text. I now learn that there is such an edition in large type and with meanings. There will of course be no difficulty in getting the bare Sanskrit text.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8502. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

401. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 21, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

A letter from you after many days. I had been waiting for it day after day. I very well understand the reason why you could not write. It would be enough to write out a postcard when under such a stress. Who am I to worry on you account? And after all how would my worrying avail? God alone worries and protects us all. May you have the faith that He is the Lord of every breath we take ! Everything will then go well. Otherwise you are being fully put to the test and you are sure to pass it. Do nothing beyond your capacity. Do manage to take milk and fruit. You will not then have to worry about the rest of your food. Who stays there? This is all I am writing today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3480

402. LETTER TO H.L. SHARMA

August 21, 1936

CHI. SHARMA,

. . .[1] Give me the full title of Babbitt's book. You may not mind the loss of the book but I cannot help feeling upset till it is found. How can a book disappear like this? And the same goes for the khadi.

[1] Omission as in the source

However, I do not feel as bad about it as about the loss of Babbitt. I still hope I shall find it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 260

403. A LETTER[1]

[Before *August 22, 1936*]

I see that you do not know the origin of the word 'Harijan' as applied to the so-called untouchables. Hindu literature and, so far as I know, even Christian literature is full of the idea that the despised of the earth are favoured children of God; and so we have a proverb in daily use which means that God is the help of the helpless. Who could be better fitted to be called Harijans in this sense than the millions whom the insolence of men has made the outcastes of society? It would be a different thing if the untouchables themselves said, 'We are Harijans because we are without sin'—but can any man born of woman say 'I am without sin whether he has experienced what you call 'new birth' or not?

Harijan, 22-8-1936

404. DISCUSSION WITH A PANDIT[2]

[Before *August 22, 1936*]

A Pandit was one of the visitors to Segaon the other day. He was introduced as one learned in the Shastras and as one who gave regular discourses on the *Gita*. Gandhiji asked him if untouchability had the sanction of the *Gita*. It seemed to depend, according to him, on how one defined an untouchable. He said:

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The addressee, a missionary, had enquired: "Does it not indicate that to be really and truly Harijans we must have the experience of a new birth, a spiritual regeneration, which the ordinary man can have no very great understanding of, so long as he is in the unregenerate state? Instead of designating the poor villagers who are still 'dead in trespasses and sins' as 'sons of God', would it not be better to call them all men and women who might become true sons of God?"

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

An untouchable is he who thinks evil thoughts, speaks foul language, does evil deeds. Such a one would be an untouchable according to the *Gita*.

But at that rate every one of us would be an untouchable. Who is there amongst us who is without sin? Let me ascertain. Tukde Maharaj, are you without sin?

No, by no means.

Then, Khan Saheb, what about you?

The same thing. Who can claim to be perfect?

Which means that we are all untouchable. Anyway, it is better that we regard ourselves as less pure than others, for we know ourselves better than we do others, and we may judge none. That is why saint Surdas sang: "There is none so wicked and base as I."

"But then one needs the help of the Shastras to purge onself of evil thoughts?" said the Pandit.

Yes, but I refuse to accept the authority of a Shastra which supports untouchability, i.e., which condemns a certain class of people, by reason of their birth, as untouchable. Such a Shastra, far from purging us of sin, adds to our load of sin.

Harijan, 22-8-1936

405. DISCUSSION WITH A SADHU[1]

[Before *August 22, 1936*]

Another sadhu, a header of the Harijans, one day came in with a curious poser: "How can we serve God when we do not know God?"

[GANDHIJI:] We may not know God, but we know His creation. Service of His creation is the service of God.

But how can we serve the whole of God's creation.

We can but serve that part of God's creation which is nearest and best known to us. We can start with our next-door neighbour. We should not be content with keeping our courtyard clean, we should see that our neighbour's courtyard is also clean. We may serve our family, but may not sacrifice the village for the sake of the family. Our own honour lies in the preservation of that of our own village.But we must each of us understand our own limitations. Our capacity for service is automatically limited by our knowledge of the world in

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

which we live. But let me put it in the simplest possible language. Let us think less of ourselves than of our next-door neighbour. Dumping the refuse of our courtyard into that of our neighbour is no service of humanity but disservice. Let us start with the service of our neighbours.

Harijan, 22-8-1936

406. A DANGEROUS PROPOSAL

Rao Bahadur Rajah has rendered public service by publishing the correspondence between himself and Dr. Moonje.[1] There was no breach of confidence in the publication. Privilege of confidence is surely not available for proposals which the receiver may regard to be dangerous or harmful to a cause as the Moonje-Ambedkar proposal most undoubtedly is. That neither Dr. Moonje nor Dr. Ambedkar regards his proposal as dangerous does not make it less so in the estimation of those who disapprove of it. What else was R.B. Rajah todo if he intended by all legitimate means to thwart it? He entered into correspondence with some of those who were parties to the Yeravda Pact, and when he saw that not one of them favoured the proposal he promptly released the correspondence for publication. One may hope that we have seen the last of any bargaining between. Dr. Ambedkar and *savarna* Hindus for the transfer to another form of several million dumb Harijans as if they were chattels.

The Pact is between one large section of Hindus and another. It frustrated the attempt to cut the Hindu body into two and gave the opportunity to *savarna* Hindus to make reparation to those millions whom they had ill-treated for centuries.

Dr. Ambedkar wants to scourge the *savarna* Hindus as he has every right to do, but he may not expect the latter to be party to it. He has every right to be impatient. But prejudices and superstitions centuries old do not die in a moment. No one who has at all cared to study the reform movement will deny that every attempt humanly possible has been and is being made to bring home to the *savarna* Hindus the message of the anti-untouchability movement. If Dr. Ambedkar's proposal were accepted, the reform movement would receive a setback which might mean death to it in the end. For it

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M.C. Rajah", 26-6-1936

contemplates a paper but legal transfer of Harijans from the Hindu fold to some other, no matter by what name the latter is called. It must mean fratricide. Harijans themselves will be cut up into two rival sections, and if they are both classified as Harijans within the meaning of the Pact their state then will be worse than it is today, and it will be an evil day for unhappy India if such a calamity descends on her.

It is futile to argue that although there will be nominal change of religion, there won't be a real one, and if there is any, it would not be so bad as if Harijans were called Christians or Muslims. If it is a change of religion, it matters little under what label they are classified. Only if they are said to belong to another religion and still remain Harijans, an additional cause of internecine quarrel would be created; and all this to satisfy the desire to punish *savarna* Hindus. If in his anger or impatience Dr. Ambedkar refuses to see the obvious result, surely Dr. Moonje ought to.

And who are we, the self-constituted leaders, to barter away the religious freedom of Harijans? Has not every Harijan, however dull or stupid he may be, the right to make his own choice? It is one thing for Dr. Ambedkar and those who wish to change over to some other religion to do so, and wholly another for political or other parties to assume such change for the mass of Harijans and to base thereon legal and other consequences of a farreaching character.

If the leaders of different religions in India ceased to compete with one another for enticing Harijans into their fold, it would be well for this unfortunate country. I have the profound conviction that those who are engaged in the competition are not serving the cause of religion. By looking at it in terms of politics or economics they reduce the religious values, whereas the proper thing would be to esitmate politics and every other thing in terms of religion. Religion deals with the science of the soul. Great as the other forces of the world are, if there is such a thing as God soul force is the greatest of all. We know as a matter of fact that the greater the force the finer it is. Hitherto electricity has held the field among the finer physical powers. And yet nobody has seen it except through its wonderful results. Scientific speculation dares to talk of a force finer even than that of electricity. But no instrument devised by man has been able to know anything positive of soul force or spiritual force. It is on that force that the true religious reformer has hitherto relied and never without hope fulfilled. It is that force which will finally govern the welfare of

Harijans and everyone else and confound the calculations of men however gifted they may be intellectually. The reformer who has entered upon the duty of ridding Hinduism of the disease of untouchability has to depend in everything he does on that force and nothing else.

Harijan, 22-8-1936

407. LETTER TO MEHERCHAND AHLUWALIA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 22, 1936

DEAR FRIEND,

My agreement is general. I have never advocated nor do I now advocate class war of class hatred. I do not believe the former to be inevitable. But I have never said nor believed that capitalist help is necessary for the Congress cause.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI MEHERCHAND AHLUWALIA
RAJPURA
N.W.R.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

408. LETTER TO MEHRABEHN ZABWALA

August 22, 1936

DEAR SISTER,

I have your nice letter. There is no direct relation between Harijan workers and khadi. Even those who wear foreign clothes can serve Harijans. Therefore keep on doing social work without paying any heed to the criticism.

But you are also a devotee of *Daridranarayana*. *Daridranarayana* means thousands of starving villagers. Those who serve them can certainly bear the weight of khadi. It is enough that you do all that is possible for you. May I give you one suggestion? You are able to spin very fine yarn. If you do that you can get a very light sari made for five or six rupees. Many poor women do the same.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

409. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 23, 1936

BAPA,

I do not remember the talks regarding the Sevak Mandal of South India. For the present at least, I form an opinion about each situation as and when it is represented to me. I see no objection if deserving workers can be found for the South India Mandal and the expenses are met from the South itself. The centre cannot give any aid.

I hope Amtul Salaam is not, on the whole, a source of worry to you. She is preparing to return. You have to accept payment from here for Nilam's expenses. The burden is not to be thrown on you there. Most probably Jamnalalji will pay her expenses or as a last resort my purse is always there.

Valunjkar will need more money. I have already written to you to accept his *hundi*. He has been working under my supervision and consults me in all matters.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1165

410. LETTER TO N.C. KELKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 24, 1936

DEAR MR. KELKAR,

I am late acknowledging your letter.

Do you not think your statement[1] was based on very flimsy evidence? You might have referred Swami Satyadev's article to me for confirmation. If I had the time I would love to enter into correspondence with him and find out the names of parties to whom I was supposed to be talking. But I have neither the time nor the inclination to pursue the matter any further. Truth stands.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 3119. Courtesy: Kashinath N. Kelkar

[1] *Vide* "Letter to N. C. Kelkar", 6-8-1936

411. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

August 24, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Time only to send you love in abundance for two wires. Thank God thumb well.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3735. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6891

412. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

August 24, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Here is Sitaram Sastri's letter for you to deal with. You forgot the sandals. I wonder if you got your own pair. If not, you should procure a pair there or write to Valunjkar at once.

I hope you are well and well settled.[1] I am looking forward to your first letter after settling down to the new life. Do not make any time-table.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6362. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9828

413. LETTER TO B. G. KHER

August 24, 1936

MY DEAR KHER,

Having little time, I have delayed acknowledging your important letter.[2] This is no question of anybody becoming a Buddhist. The temple is meant to be one dedicated to Buddha as temples are dedicated to Rama, Krishna and the like. There is no proselytizing

[1] The addressee had moved to Betul.

[2] Wherein the addressee had written: "Shri Dharmanand Kosambi told me that you would like to look into the way the amount given by Birlaji for the Naigaum Vihar is spent. I will do so; until the building is ready I shall see to the application of this amount. Thereafter I do not know what I could do, being today identified with the Harijan Seva Sangh. How am I to work on a Buddhist Vihar committee? Are they all going to become Buddhists? Where is the need?... "

taint about this movement. At the most it is to be a Hindu temple of an advanced type in which a very learned man will be keeper or *pujari*. That is how I have understood the whole scheme of Prof. Kosambi. You may share this with the Professor, and if he endorses my position, with Shri Natarajan, so that there may be a common understanding about the temple.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7977. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

414. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

August 24, 1936

CHI. MANILAL, SUSHILA,

I have your letters to me and have also read the one to Kishorelal. The idea of having share-holders does not seem right. Where there is a field ready for share-holders, one for customers and expert workers can well be assumed. Having share-holders does not mean having subscribers or expert workers. In my opinion, there may be difficulty in getting men in spite of a flow of funds. Plainly speaking, the subscribers to *Indian Opinion* are not exactly its readers but rather patrons. This is a pitiable situation. You should stop running around and find another honest trade which can support both of you. You may pay the loss in running *Indian Opinion* or those who desire its continuance should give a guarantee to bear the loss. You should close down *Indian Opinion* if this cannot be done. The insistence on continuing it could be right only up to a point. You ought to have the ability to support yourself by means of some other trade in case *Indian Opinion* cannot run. You should also be equipped to support yourself solely on agriculture. You ought to think over all this patiently. Very little help can be had through exchange of ideas across this distance. You alone know the present condition there. It may, however, be right to inform me before taking a final decision. If there is no time for it there is no harm in deciding independently. In any case do observe these conditions:

(1) Incur no debts.

(2) Transact no business on credit.

(3) Take up no business in forbidden goods such as selling *bidis.*

(4) Don't engage in a business to get rich quickly.

I am pained to read about Sorabji. Sheth Rustomji's fears about him seem to be proving true. After all things must go the destined way and one's understanding follows the same way.

Perhaps I have already written to you about Kanti, who too is drawn into the current of examinations and degrees. He would not be satisfied without it. Now I recollect that I even asked you to help him.[1] It seems Devdas has offered him some help which would reach here in two or three days when I expect to learn more about it. Ramdas writes to say that he will not be able to help.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4857

415. A DISCUSSION WITH MAURICE FRYDMAN[2]

[On or before *August 25, 1936*][3]

[GANDHIJI:] So that is Frydman. You have come to study the spinning-wheel. But you will not win the Rs. 100,000 prize, as the prize has been withdrawn.

[Maurice Frydman] joined heartily in the laughter and said, "Oh, no, I do not want the prize, my only aim is to give you the wheel you want."

He again asked a number of questions about the wheel, discussed various improvements and left for Wardha.[4]

He inquired if Gandhiji's aim was just humanitarian in sitting down in the village, just serving the villagers as best he could !

I am here to serve no one else but myself, to find my own self-realization through the service of these village folk. Man's ultimate aim is the realization of God, and all his activities, social, political,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi", 16-8-1936

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". Maurice Frydman was a Polish engineer, interested in village reconstruction movement, who had met Gandhiji earlier at Nandi Hill. He was given the name Bharatanand.

[3] According to the source the discussion took place on a Tuesday. The Tuesday before 29-8-1936 fell on 25-8-1936.

[4] The discussion which follows took place on a subsequent visit.

religious, have to be guided by the ultimate aim of the vision of God. The immediate service of all human beings becomes a necessary part of the endeavour simply because the only way to find God is to see Him in His creation and be one with it. This can only be done by service of all. And this cannot be done except through one's country. I am part and parcel of the whole, and I cannot find Him apart from the rest of humanity. My countrymen are my nearest neighbours. They have become so helpless, so resourceless, so inert that I must concentrate on serving them. If I could persuade myself that I should find Him in a Himalayan cave, I would proceed there immediately. But I know that I cannot find Him apart from humanity.

But some comforts may be necessary even for man's spiritual advancement. One could not advance himself by identifying himself with the discomfort and squalour of the villager?

A certain degree of physical harmony and comfort is necessary, but above a certain level it becomes a hindrance instead of help. Therefore the ideal of creating an unlimited number of wants and satisfying them seems to be a delusion and a snare. The satisfaction of one's physical needs, even the intellectual needs of one's narrow self, must meet at a certain point a dead stop, before it degenerates into physical and intellectual voluptuousness. A man must arrange his physical and cultural circumstances so that they do not hinder him in his service of humanity, on which all his energies should be concentrated.

What then was the secret of his concentration on the village?

I have been saying that if untouchability stays, Hinduism goes; even so I would say that if the village perishes, India will perish too. It will be no more India, Her own mission in the world will get lost. The revival of the village is possible only when it is no more exploited. Industrialization on a mass scale will necessarily lead to passive or active exploitation of the villagers as the problems of competition and marketing come in. Therefore we have to concentrate on the village being self-contained, manufacturing mainly for use. Provided this character of the village industry is maintained, there would be no objection to villagers using even the modern machines and tools that they can make and can afford to use. Only they should not be used as a means of exploitation of others.

Harijan, 29-8-1936

416. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHAGANJ,

August 25, 1936

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA

WIRE EXACT CONDITION BODY INCLUDING THUMB AS MEDICALLY CERTIFIED. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3736. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6892

417. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

August 25, 1936

MY DEAR AMRIT,

What have you done? Shummy says you "return an ill woman" and naturally he says he "feels very disappointed all round". You shall not be cross with him for having told the truth. The wire distresses me. What could be wrong with you? I have sent you a peremptory wire.

I hope you will not leave me in suspense and will give me a faithful report. Why is Shummy disappointed *all round?* You will enlighten me. You told me not to write to Shummy. But I could not ignore the wire. I have sent him a brief note.[1]

I do hope there is nothing seriously wrong with you. More when I know the whole truth.

Yes, Mira left for Betul yesterday and Puri[2] occupies her hut.

Your corners are vacant ! And the bathroom? All the playthings gone ! But how can you return to me if you cannot keep good health here?

Love.

BAPU

[1] This is not traceable.
[2] Anant Ram Puri

[PS.]

You dare send me a blank sheet when you leave not a blank corner on your written sheet!

B.

From the original: C.W. 3737. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6893

418. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

August 25, 1936

CHI. MARY,

Your letter[1] does you credit and draws me nearer to you if that is possible. We do need to have scrupulous regard for truth. The fact is that I inquired only to know whether you were disturbed. I did not want you to respond to the bell. Even for the few who are with me in Segaon, I am not rigid. They are free not to attend the morning prayer. The moral is never do anything to please people, even the dearest, unless the doing of it pleases you also. This broad proposition does raise side issues. But you know what I mean.

Give my love to Moti. I am glad she likes her life there. I hope she is keeping quite well.

Mira has gone. Let us hope she will be comfortable there. If she is not, she must return. I could easily have sent her to another but a distant place. She was disinclined to go far.

Mahadev will be inquiring about cargo boats.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6067. Also C.W. 3397. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

419. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

August 25, 1936

CHI. BRAJKISHAN,

The replies to your letters have been overdelayed. The reason is nothing but lack of time. Even today I am writing just at bedtime.

[1] In this the addressee had written that she had told Gandhiji "practically an untruth" when she had given an excuse for not getting up for prayer at Segaon while she had not intended to get up at all.

You ask me who lives with me. The three were already here. Among others are Ba, Manu and Khan Saheb. I stop those whom I can from coming here. What do we stand to gain by allowing you to come? You never keep well here.

Give up the village industries work if you cannot find any help.

But do write to me if you do not keep well there.

BAPU

[PS.]

I had not finished my letter with this. I wrote the last sentence half asleep, the pen slipped out of my hand and I promptly fell asleep. I am now writing this after I awoke from my nap and had some hot water. This is no sign of any ailment or weakness; if at all, it is a sign of good health. Give up the longing to live with me and live there or at any other place where you can engage yourself in some occupation and earn not more than you spend. Why not join some khadi bhandar? Or go to live at Narela and work with the help of others. It is not good to sit idle. Consult Devdas. Take it that the reason you attribute to my not writing is an utter impossibility. How can I ever forget you?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2445

420. LETTER TO R.S. PANDIT

WARDHA,
August 26, 1936

CHI. RANJIT,

Why are you keeping indifferent health? Sarup writes that now you are a little better. You must make your body as strong as steel even if it requires some effort. One can certainly make a boat to cross the Ganga. The real achievement would be to make a boat to cross the waters of slavery. But you cannot do this with a hollow chest. You should be strong enough not to let the oar slip from your hands.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

421. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[Before *August 27, 1936*][1]

DEAR DAUGHTER,[2]

I have your two letters. You ought to have faith in what Dr. Bharadwaj tells you. Dr. Ansari would have done the same. You are therefore going to clean your nose and carry out whatever else he has recommended.

I am enclosing Nilam's letter[3]. I would certainly have sent for you had it not been for Nilam's illness. I shall show both your letters to Kanti and shall permit him to go if he wishes. I also do not like the step he proposes to take, but I do not wish to suppress him either.

I have no more time now, so I stop here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 603

422. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHAGANJ,
August 27, 1936

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA WEST

YOUR WIRE. THANK GOD. WIRE CONDITION DAILY. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3738. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6894

[1] From the reference to Kantilal Gandhi's proposed visit to the addressee; *vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Amtussalaam", 27-8-1936

[2] This is in Urdu.

[3] This is not available.

423. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 27, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

Let me see what great feat you perform, now that Kanti has gone there. Do not pick quarrels. Persuade him sweetly if you wish to. As far as I can tell, it is now impossible to stop him.

Carry out Dr. Bharadwaj's instructions. While you have been advising others, you yourself need to look after your own health. Do not expect any long letter from me for some time now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 343

424. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August [*27, 1936*][1]

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I have your letter. You should clearly write so to Bapa if you feel that he has made a mistake. I wrote to him nothing since I had not read everything fully. However, I am quite aware that a judge's function is over with the delivery of his decision, and that he is not even entitled to interpret his judgment. However, I have not written to Bapa even to say that if both the parties approach him again with a representation he might take it up, because I am so much immersed in work that many such things are left out. You may send this to Bapa if you now write to him. Now that I have written so much to you I feel like writing to him also, but where is the time?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4037

[1] From the G.N. Register

425. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[About *August 27, 1936*][1]

CHI. PRABHA,

You must have got my letter to the Sitab Diyara address though you have gone to Patna. Now obtain milk and fruit there and improve your health. Look after the household properly. You have now the opportunity to take full care of Jayaprakash's food. I do not write here about your questions since I have replied to them earlier in detail. Tell me about the house you live in and about other things I should know. How is the climate, for example? Do take regular walks. My weight as recorded yesterday was 109 lb.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadevi and others have returned from Badrinarayan. Nilam, one of the party who fell ill, is with Amtul.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3464

426. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHAGANJ,
August 28, 1936

AMTUSSALAAM
SEVAK
DELHI

YOU MUST COMPOSE YOURSELF. GET WELL QUICK. AM LOOKING AFTER KANTI.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 344

[1] From the reference to Nilam's illness and her stay with Amtussalaam; *vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 27-8-1936

427. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
August [*28*][1] *1936*

MY DEAR REBEL,

I am writing this at J.'s in the early morning to catch the train.

I can't give you the assurance that I am without anxiety. How can I be when you act so rebelliously? You were docile in the presence of the tyrant. Behind his back the rebellious spirit breaks out. Therefore the only way to free me from anxiety is for you to get quickly well and, if fish-eating would restore you, you should unhesitatingly take it.

But I can give you this assurance that nothing that Shummy can say will affect me in the least. His great anger is the measure of his love for you. Brought up as he is, he has every right to accuse me of having ruined your health and otherwise disturbed the even tenor of your life. How can he feel otherwise? I had told you that much was to depend upon your returning to Simla in a first-class condition. You did not, you could not. We would settle accounts after you have got well and look better than ever before. You would continue to write and wire daily while the illness lasts. You must not take up any work till you are completely restored. I hope you had my wire[2] yesterday.

I came to Wardha yesterday. I walk back this evening.

Mira is returning today from Betul.

Love to you and Shummy.

TYRANT
ROBBER
BAPU, etc.

From the original: C.W. 3584. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6393

[1] The source has "29-8-1936", but below it someone has written "Really", 28-8-1936", which is confirmed by the postmark.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 27-8-1936

428. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON,
August 28, 1936

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Our conversation of yesterday has set me thinking. Why is it that with all the will in the world I cannot understand what is so obvious to you? I am not, so far as I know, suffering from intellectual decay. Should you not then set your heart on at least making me understand what you are after? I may not agree with you. But I should be in a position to say so. Yesterday's talk throws no light on what you are after. And probably what is true of me is true of some others. I am just now discussing the thing with Raja. I should like you to discuss your programme with him if you can spare the time. I must not write at length, having no time. You know what I mean.

Love.

BAPU

429. NOTES

UNCERTIFIED *v.* CERTIFIED

The difficulty that cropped up in the Tamil Nad on the introduction of the new scale of wages for spinning has arisen in other places and specially in Andhra, as appears from several letters I have received from that part of India. Correspondents complain bitterly of the harm uncertified dealers of khadi are doing to the cause of the poor women who have no chance of earning an additional pice. I do not know whether the uncertified dealers will listen to my exhortation not to be so selfish as to snatch the pice from thousands of poor spinners. I hope they will. But the real remedy lies in the hands of the khadi-buying public. If they will not buy khadi except from the bhandars certified by the A.I.S.A., the uncertified bhandars will haveto close down. The public should realize that there can be no khadi if there is no A.I.S.A. Until khadi becomes current coin and has found general favour in the villages, it must be nursed by a vigilant body having the capacity for performing the onerous duty. Such a body is the A.I.S.A. The public know or ought to know that it is a purely philanthropic institution having no interest save that of the millions of poor women spinners of the villages of India. As its name

implies, all its activities are intended to subserve their interest. Economic salvation of the villages is impossible, unless the millions of women who have no occupation for nearly six months in the year have a steady and profitable occupation fitted to their constitutions. There is no such universal occupation as hand-spinning. I have been obliged to restate this oft-told truth in order to emphasize the necessity of the public patronizing certified khadi bhandars to the exclusion of uncertified ones, even though the latter sell khadi at less than the Association rates. The public should know that the Association rates alone make it possible to pay higher wages to spinners.

HUTS WITHOUT MONEY

Last year I had 60 Harijans accommodated in the village of my future abode. The question of building huts for them was ticklish. But it was solved for me by Harijans themselves. When I went to the village a month after their settlement, I found 12 huts already erected evidently without the cost of a pice. The walls were made of palm branches or stalks of *juari,* cotton or *tuver;* the roof of split stalks of *juari,* knitted into *chatais*[1] and those were covered with leaves of *khakhra.* The ropes were made from the fibres of *khakhra* roots.

Thus writes an enthusiastic agriculture graduate who is keen on settling down in a village. Where labour is not exploited and where it has free access to the material that Nature produces in abundance and which is generally allowed to go to waste or sold for a trifle, poor Harijans have no difficulty in getting for themselves comfortable cottages and other amenities of life. But orthodox prejudice makes it a sin or a crime for Harijans to touch even its wells ! ! !

Harijan, 29-8-1936

430. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 29, 1936

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I hope you got my letter of yesterday. I am writing this in Segaon; therefore this can't go by late fee post. Your daily telegrams and letters giving cent per cent truth are absolutely necessary for the peace of my mind. Why must you send vegetables too? Surely that is repugnant to the village sense. Trust me to ask for what I need from you.

[1] Mats

There is no hurry about the surgical instruments. I can wait till Shummy is himself again. You have to make up your mind to win him back. It is sheer nonsense for you to talk of running away from the home. It is so unlike you. 'Love is patient and long suffering.' And what are you if not embodiment of love? Your precious association with me is not going to make you less loving and less lovable. If you have not been able to give satisfaction to the family by showing better health, surely it is within your power to show an equable mind and a love that will quench the fieriest anger. Do wire to me that you have reconquered Shummy. I tell you the thought of his pain over your illness haunts me all the day long. I do not know how I can appease him except by your unmistakably showing him that you have not lost, but if possible gained by your contact with me, in all that counts.

Mira came back yesterday. The appointments in Betul were too dirty for her.

Love to both of you.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3585. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6394

431. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 30, 1936

MY DEAR AMRIT,

You are good. You are sending me full letters and wires. I needed them all. Your letters are also cheerful. But whilst I do not worry in the sense you do. I must confess that your illness has given me a rude shock and Shummy's estrangement has proved unbearable. You must walk to his room and stoop to conquer. Bathe him with your tears. I want his wire that he has forgiven me from his heart. It hurts me to think that I should be the cause of estrangement between you and him.

Here you were perfect in your obedience. I want you to obey me in this from your heart. Voluntary obedience always carries its own conviction. And I know that your obedience will restore the

harmony of the household. The exact, method of winning over Shummy I must leave to you.

When you are entirely restored, I shall discuss with you and Shummy, if he is then composed, my own opinion about the cause of your painful collapse.

It may be well for you to reduce the quantity of milk rather than giving up eggs. The heaviness need not be looked for in that direction first. And if the doctor agrees, you should take a little garlic always. I cannot vouch for it but I am inclined to think that onion oil should be good for eczema.

I was not amused over Subhas's fear. There is much truth in what he says. If you were feigning strength however unwittingly, under the impulse of your enthusiasm and your intense love for me, naturally the separation would produce a collapse. You alone could be the judge of the condition, which [you] can fathom by introspection. No more tonight.

Love

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3586. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6395

432. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

August 30, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

This time your letter is late. You must fix a day for writing. For my part, I have never been lax. I reply to you as soon as I get your letter. Your last letter reached me yesterday and today I am writing this reply. I hear that Jayaprakash is reaching Wardha today. I have not known the reason. Are the letters henceforth to be sent to the new address? Are letters to the *Searchlight* address delayed? How did you get the cough? You should regain your strength quickly if milk is now available.

You should shoulder only as much responsibility as you can bear. One does not have to repent if one takes up service in proportion to one's capacity.

I am just told that Jayaprakash has arrived.

In your letters you make mistakes of gender. I am returning today's with the corrections. Ask me if you don't follow them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3481

433. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

WARDHA,
August 31, 1936

GHANSHYAMDAS

CARE LUCKY

BOMBAY

COME AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. VALLABHBHAI WAITING FOR YOU. WIRE REPLY.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 7979. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

434. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SEGAON,
August 31, 1936

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I forgot to discuss three points with you.

What happened in the case of Babarao Harkare? I think it is good to send him Rs. 25 every month.

If his brother deserves more, he should be paid more.

Shankarrao Tikekar seems to be in a pitiable plight. A summons to pay Rs. 1,500 has been served on him, and he is unemployed. Have you thought of doing anything for him?

You are better placed to think over all these matters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 2983

435. A TALK[1]

[Before September *2, 1936*][2]

It was interesting one morning to watch a number of urchins collected in the verandah of Gandhiji's hut....Their eyes were fixed on a snake in a glass jar....Though the place cannot... be said to be infested with snakes, a fair number of snakes are to be found there during the season. There must therefore be a fair number of cases of snake-bites, and in all cases the villagers kill the snakes at sight. Explaning the presence of the exhibit Gandhiji said:

That is hardly proper or necessary. We cannot tell a poisonous from a non-poisonous snake and therefore we kill all without discrimination. The bulk of them are non-poisonous, and in many cases it is the fright that kills the victim of snake-bite. The snakes have their place in the agricultural economy of the village, but our villagers do not seem to realize it. They perform a particularly useful function, in that they clear the fields of rats, vermin and other pests. It is best therefore to know the elementary principles of snake-lore and to teach them to the villagers. They must know how to distinguish between a poisonous and a non-poisonous snake, they must know that it is not necessary to kill all snakes, which although they may be poisonous do not usually bite unless they are trodden upon or mishandled, and they must also know that certain snakes at least are useful. With that purpose in view I have decided to have here snakes alive or dead to be shown to the villagers. This one in the jar was caught alive by an inmate of our household. We have a simple device with which it is easy to catch snakes alive without doing them physical injury, and this one was found clinging to a roof in the farmyard over there. I decided to send it on to the Civil Surgeon for examination. He was good enough to examine it. He found that it was a Krait, one of the most poisonous varieties, and so he killed it and sent it back. I decided to preserve it and sent for a glass jar with rectified spirit. We had to wait several hours for the jar to come, and when it did come we found on opening the basket that the snake was alive. It seems to be particularly tenacious of life, and so it lingered on until the third day, when we decided to end its pains by immersing it in water. The fact was that the

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] This and the subsequent interviews evidently took place before Gandhiji was hospitalized on September 2, 1936.

Civil Surgeon had smashed its brain and stunned it, and as he explained later its spinal cord was intact and therefore it had remained alive. I have now got a cage to keep live specimens in. As you see, the little urchins are already being attracted. I have begun to study snake-lore and hope to place before the villagers the broad facts regarding these creatures.

Harijan, 5-9-1936

436. DISCUSSION WITH TEACHERS[1]

[Before *September 2, 1936*]

A group of school teachers went to Segaon one morning with that old Platonic problem—Knowledge is virtue—and asked if it was true. Why was it that though we knew very well indeed that a particular course of action was morally wrong, we could not avoid it? Replying to them Gandhiji said:

Human life is a series of compromises and it is not always easy to achieve in practice what one has found to be true in theory. Take this very simple case. The principle is that all life is one and we have to treat the sinner and the saint alike, as the *Gita* says we have to look with an equal eye on a learned pundit and a dog and a dog-eater. But there I am. Though I have not killed the snake, I know I have been instrumental in killing it. I know that I should not have done so. I know, besides, that snakes are *kshetrapals* (guardians of the field); and therefore too I should not have helped in killing it. But as you see I have not been able to avoid it. But it is no use my thinking that I cannot avoid it. I do not give up the principle which is true for all time that all life is one, and I pray to God that He may rid me of the fear of snakes and enable me to achieve the non-violences necessary to handle snakes and as we handle other domestics. Take another instance, again a very simple one. I know that as a villager and as one who has made it his business to promote village crafts, I must use a village-made razor, but you see that I am using a foreign one.[2]

I might have got a village-made razor, if I had written to friends to procure one for me. But I thought I must help the village barber, no matter what kind of razor he used. I therefore decided to cultivate him, and put up with his dirty clothes and uncouth instruments. But on one thing I could not possibly compromise. He said he would not

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] Gandhiji was having a shave when the teachers arrived.

shave Harijans on the same terms as he was prepared to shave me, and I had to do without his services. Now you find me having a shave with a foreign razor, though it is open to me to procure a village-made one. Here there is obviously an indefensible compromise. And yet there is an explanation. I have been sticking on to a set of shaving tackle given me by a loving sister, whose gift I could not resist and whose feelings I could not hurt by rejecting the foreign razor and insisting on having a village-made one. But there it is, the compromise is there. I do not commend it for imitation. We must be prepared to displease the dearest ones for the sake of principles.

There are eternal principles which admit of no compromise, and one must be prepared to lay down one's life in the practice of them. Supposing someone came and asked you to give up your religion and to embrace another at the point of the sword, would you do it? Supposing someone were to compel you to drink wine or eat beef, or tell a lie, would you not rather lay down your life than yield to the coercion? No. A principle is a principle, and in no case can it be watered down because of our incapacity to live it in practice. We have to strive to achieve it, and the striving should be conscious, deliberate and hard.

Has not our Poet sung for all time that fearless striving is the very condition of freedom?

> Where the mind is without fear, and the head is held high,...Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;...
> Into that heaven of freedom, Oh Father, let my country awake.[1]

Harijan, 5-9-1936

437. TALK WITH BHARATAN KUMARAPPA[2]

[Before *September 2, 1936*]

I have no heart in this correspondence, no zest in it. I am actually tired of it and feel like asking people not to write to me at all. I long to wander among the villages around us rather than go to Wardha where so many friends are coming and I may have to go. But I feel it a wrench to be torn from my work. It is, if I may call it, my *sadhana*, and I would, if I could, not let anything interrupt it. I have

[1] *Gitanjali*, 35
[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

two or three engagements which I accepted long ago and I shall have to keep them, though I would love to find some excuse to put them off or avoid them. I would like to walk out every morning to the villages in our neighbourhood. I am doing practically little physical work now, and I am longing to do it. We have taken a couple of cows and are trying the experiment of making our own ghee. Now I should like to look after the cow myself, look after her feed and her general upkeep. My idea is to show these villagers that a cow can easily pay for her feed and the charges of her upkeep. Then look at the number of ailments these villagers suffer from, and how they will try all kinds of quack remedies but will not do the simplest things they must do.

All this is slow work, and it is no use expecting startling results as those of the Five Year Plan in Soviet Russia. We have to realize that we are eating the salt of the poor, and we have to make an adequate return to them. Never mind if you do not get agents for this difficult work. If we have only one genuine agent, I should be satisfied. Indeed I should not worry even if we had none. Our acid test is: Have we organized any single village according to our programme? Have we introduced food reform there? Are their roads and their lanes clean and perfect? Have we revived any industries? Have we tackled the problem of drink and vice? If we could do this successfully even in one village, I should think we had achieved a good deal. From individuals you may get a response but I should not call it making headway. Making headway is touching one whole village. Jajuji[1] was wondering if we might not have a wider scheme. No, we cannot have it. It is not one item of work like hand-spinning for instance. It is whole village-work, and today our work centres round three or four things I have mentioned. It may centre round thirty things some day, but not today.

Harijan, 5-9-1936

438. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHAGANJ,
September 2, 1936

AMTUL SALAAM
CARE SEVAK
DELHI

YOU CAN GO INDORE PATIALA BOMBAY WARDHA FOR IMPROVING

[1] Shrikrishnadas Jaju

HEALTH. KANTI JOINED VAKIL'S SCHOOL BOMBAY. WHEN BA I DEVDAS DO NOT WORRY IT IS WRONG FOR YOU TO WORRY.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 345

439. MESSAGE TO WORLD PEACE CONGRESS[1]

September 2, 1936

NO INDIAN CAN HELP SYMPATHIZING WITH PEACE EFFORT GOING ON IN WESTERN COUNTRIES.

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-9-1936

440. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHAGANJ,
[*September*][2] *3, 1936*

AMUTUL SALAAM
CARE SEVAK
DELHI

SARASWATI GOING TRIVANDRUM MONDAY. COME BEFORE IF POSSIBLE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 346

441. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHAGANJ,
September 4, 1936

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA

YOU MUST BEHAVE YOURSELF AND NOT GRIEVE OVER MY ILLNESS.[3] NO FEVER YET. LOVE.

BAPU

From the orginal: C. W. 3739. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6895

[1] The message was sent through Sarojini Naidu.
[2] From *Bapuke Patra—8: Bibi Amtussalamke Naam*,. The original is damaged.
[3] Gandhiji was down with malaria; *vide* also the following item.

442. MESSAGE FOR AMRIT KAUR[1]

September 4, 1936

Tell her she must be content with a letter from you, at least for two or three days. Also tell her my prophecy about the thermos was correct; it is broken, and that she has now to replace it.

From a copy: C. W. 10100. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur

443. GOD OF LOVE, NOT WAR

The Statesman of Delhi has devoted four articles to an unmeasured condemnation of the no-war movement led by Canon Sheppard and other earnest Christians in England. The paper has dragged into its support the authority of the *Bhagavad Gita* in these words:

> Indeed the true but difficult teaching of Christianity seems to be that society must fight its enemies but love them.
>
> Such, too,—will Mr. Gandhi please note—is the clear teaching of the *Bhagavad Gita,* where Krishna tells Arjuna that victory also goes to him who fights with complete fearlessness and is utterly devoid of hatred. Indeed on the highest plane the argument between the conscientious objector and the knightly warrior is for ever settled in the second book of that great classic. We have little space to quote and the whole poem deserves to be read not once but many times.

The writer of the articles perhaps does not know that the terrorist has also used in his defence the very verses quoted by him. But the fact is that a dispassionate reading of the *Bhagavad Gita* has revealed to me a meaning wholly contrary to the one given to it by the *Statesman* writer.

He has forgotten that Arjuna was no conscientious objector in the sense the Western war-resisters are. Arjuna believed in war. He had fought the Kaurava hosts many times before. But he was unnerved when the two armies were drawn up in battle array and when he suddenly realized that he had to fight his nearest kinsmen and revered

[1] This was conveyed by Mahadev Desai to Amrit Kaur in a letter which, *inter alia,* read: "[Gandhiji] deliberately went to the hospital in order that the doctor may not have to be troubled over and over again. He is being properly looked after and is progressing well. There was no fever until 2.30 [p.m.] Even if it does come, I am sure it will be mild. He is taking complete rest . . . ."

teachers. It was not love of man or the hatred of war that had actuated the questioner. Krishna could give no other answer than he did. The immortal author of the *Mahabharata*, of which the *Gita* is one—no doubt the brightest—of the many gems contained in that literary mine, has shown to the world the futility of war by giving the victors an empty glory, leaving but seven victors alive out of millions said to have been engaged in the fight in which unnamable atrocities were used on either side. But the *Mahabharata* has a better message even than the demonstration of war as a delusion and a folly. It is the spiritual history of man considered as an immortal being and has used with a magnifying lens a historical episode considered in his times of moment for the tiny world round him but in terms of present-day values of no significance. In those days the globe had not shrunk to a pinhead, as it has today, on which the slightest movement on one spot affects the whole. The *Mahabharata* depicts for all time the eternal struggle that goes on daily between the forces of good and evil in the human breast and in which though good is ever victorious evil does put up a brave show and baffles even the keenest conscience. It shows also the only way to right action.

But whatever the true message of the *Bhagavad Gita* may be, what matters to the leaders of the peace movement is not what the *Gita* says but what the Bible, which is their spiritual dictionary, says and then, too, not what meaning the Church authorities give to it, but what meaning a prayerful reading of it yields to the reader. What matters most of all is the objector's knowledge of the implications of the law of love or ahimsa, inadequately rendered in English as non-violence. The articles of *The Statesman* are perhaps a fair challenge to the objectors. I am sorry I do not know enough of the movement to give a definite opinion. My opinion need have no weight whatsoever with the objectors. But it has, inasmuch as I know intimately some of them, who even correspond with me. And now they have gone a step further in that they have adopted alomst as their textbook Mr. Richard Gregg's book called *The Power of Non-violence* which is claimed by its author to be a Westen interpretation of what non-violence as I interpret it stands for. It may not therefore be presumptuous on my part if I set down without argument the implications and conditions of success of non-violence. Here they are:

(1) Non-violence is the law of the human race and is infinitely greater than and superior to brute force.

(2) In the last resort it does not avail to those who do not possess a living faith in the God of Love.

(3) Non-violence affords the fullest protection to one's selfrespect and sense of honour, but not always to possession of land or movable property, though its habitual practice does prove a better bulwark than the possession of armed men to defend them. Non-violence in the very nature of things is of no assistance in the defence of ill-gotten gains and immoral acts.

(4) Individuals or nations who would practise non-violence must be prepared to sacrifice (nations to the last man) their all except honour. It is therefore inconsistent with the possession of other people's countries, i.e., modern imperialism which is frankly based on force for its defence.

(5) Non-violence is a power which can be wielded equally by all—children, young men and women or grown-up people—provided they have a living faith in the God of love and have therefore equal love for all mankind. When non-violence is accepted as the law of life it must pervade the whole being and not applied to isolated acts.

(6) It is a profound error to suppose that whilst the law is good enough for individuals it is not for masses of mankind.

Harijan, 5-9-1936

444. WHAT A GIRL NEEDS

A fair correspondent writes: [1]

> Your article "Avoidable Misery"[2] seems to me to be incomplete....If parents were to educate their daughters as they educate their sons, so as to enable them to earn an independent living, they would not have to worry themselves over the selection of husbands for their daughters.... When girls have had the opportunity of developing their minds fairly and are able to support themselves in a dignified manner, they have no difficulty, when they are desirous of marrying, in being suitably matched... What I plead for is a training of girls in useful knowledge and some calling that would make them fully confident about their ability to face the world and not to feel dependent upon parents or their future husbands.... I wish you could emphasize this

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.
[2] *Vide* "Avoidable Misery", 25-7-1936

aspect of the question in considering the difficulties of parents having on their hands daughters of marriageable age!!

I heartily endorse the sentiments expressed by my correspondent. Only I had to deal with the case of a parent who had made himself miserable not because he had an incompetent daughter, but because he and perhaps even his daughter wanted to restrict themselves, in the choice of a husband, to their own little caste. The ‘ accomplishment’ of the girl was itself a hindrance in this case. If the girl was illiterate, she could have accommodated herself to any young man. But being an accomplished girl, naturally she would need an equally accomplished husband. It is our misfortune that the sordidness of exacting a price for marrying a girl is not regarded as a decided disqualification. An altogether artificial value is put upon English collegiate education. It covers a multitude of sins. If the definition of ‘accomplishment’ was more sensible than it has become among the classes whose educated young men exact a price for accepting marriage proposals on behalf of girls, the difficulty of selecting suitable matches for girls would be much lessened, If not entirely removed. Whilst, therefore, I commend the proposal of my fair correspondent to the attention of parents, I must insist on the necessity of breaking down the highly injurious caste barriers. Breaking down the barriers will widen the range of choice and thus in a great measure prevent exactions.

Harijan, 5-9-1936

445. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHAGANJ,
September 5, 1936

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA

COMPLETELY FREE FOR SIXTY HOURS. QUITE HAPPY. YOU SHOULD ACCEPT MEMORIAL[1] AGENCY FOR JULLUNDUR ONLY.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3740. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6896

[1] Kamala Nehru Memorial

446. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
September 6/7, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

All these few days I was in no mood to play. Hence I had forgotten that you were a Rebel, Idiot, etc., etc. Now I am somewhat composed. You have still to send me the news that there is reconciliation between you and Shummy. If you have not gone to him, you must do so at once.

I told you I did not like that eruption on the thumb. You must not doctor it yourself. You should see a competent doctor, if Shummy will not attend to you. Nor can I guide you from here as to your food except in a general way. The bath is all right. You are right in raising its temperature. It is enough to have it is at least 5 degrees below the temperature of the body.

I must tell you later what I consider was the cause of your breakdown. This is being written after 8 p. m. So I must not write more.

Mahadev has kept you fully posted about my health. Hence I need say nothing more except that I am A 1.

Please thank Shummy for the book on snakes of which I saw some beautiful live specimens yesterday.

Much love from

ROBBER

September 7, 1936

[PS.]

My door can never be shut in your face.

From the original: C. W. 3587. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6396

447. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHA,
September 7, 1936

DEAR DAUGHTER,[1]

For three days there has been no temperature and so it can be said that I am rid of the fever. I am writing this from my hospital bed. Kanti's letter accompanies this.

It is not right for you to worry about him. Can your relationship be deeper than Ba's and even mine? Can the measure of your love be greater? Be reasonable and calm down.

You do not care to improve your health; this is not good. You must have got my wire[2], but there is no reply from you. How cruel you are!

Send me a full report and take a final decision.

It is foolish of you to be afraid of a visit to Wardha. However, I don't insist. Go wherever you can improve your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Is Chitre there?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 347

448. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

September 7, 1936

CHI. KANTI,

I have been thinking of you every day, only my indifferent health would not let me write to you. But I cannot postpone writing today. I have no fever. I have written for *Harijan*, so why should I not write to you? I have your letter. I was certainly pained beyond measure. The edifice of my trust collapsed in a moment. You suddenly drifted away from me. Ba's grief is greater than mine; andpoor A.'s the greatest. You have justified the epithets I gave you.

[1] This is in Urdu.
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Amtussalaam", 2-9-1936

You are a tyrant, you are treacherous. You stole A.'s heart and then you spurned her. Can you think of an act of greater cruelty? In your curriculum you will have occasions to drive needles into living beings and dissect them. Remember this letter then. You have started your lessons by torturing a living human being. But I am not at all angry at your strange sacrifice. What could you do? How far can you get over your nature? You have been carried away by the current of the prevailing atmosphere as well as by your own mental makeup. This happens more or less to everyone. May you be blessed. One thing hurt me very much. In the evening you came to me with a certain resolve. Next day you changed it altogether. You did not even think it necessary to discuss it with me. What kind of conduct is this? Do you regard your own word as absolutely worthless? It was a severe blow. You made me cry so much. You could have desisted from this act without difficulty. Well, one cannot collect spilt water. It will be enough if you learn to value your own word after this regrettable episode. Remember knowledge without a moral basis has no worth whatsoever. It is like a two-pice bit of copper coated with mercury to look like a rupee.

Take good care of your health. Don't reduce yourself to a skeleton by overwork. Don't exhaust your brain. I have no doubt that you will pass all the tests.

Write to me regularly.

I am still in the hospital. The fever may be said to have gone. Mirabehn's bed is by my side. She is still running a temperature. The third patient is Ba who is suffering from cough.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 10707. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

449. LETTER TO JUGAL KISHORE BIRLA

WARDHA,
September 7, 1936

BHAI JUGAL KISHOREJI,

I was about to have an attack of fever when your letter of 26th August reached me. I am now free from fever but am still confined to the hospital bed. Even then I should write to you. Thinking on objects

of sense is a delusion. I have not received any divine message. If what I say does not appeal to you, you must never listen to me. If I cannot hope to persuade you by this letter and in my present condition of health, I shall certainly try to do so when we meet. Perhaps I shall succeed.

Today I will only say that to me Sikhism is a part of Hinduism. But the situation is different from the legal point of view. Dr. Ambedkar wants a change of religion. If becoming a Sikh amounts to conversion, then this kind of conversion on the part of Harijans is dangerous. And that too with a stroke of the pen and without the Harijans being consulted. Conversion as well as change of community can only be a personal matter. It is not so in this case. If you can persuade the Sikhs to accept that Sikhism is a part of Hinduism and if you can make them give up the separate electorate, then I will have no objection to Harijans calling themselves Ramanujis or Sikhs.

More when I have the time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

450. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

September 8/9, 1936

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I am having good news from you. I got your note just now at seven in the morning. It was painful for me that your hearts could not be one. Not only that, it obstructed our work too. Let us hope that the [harmony][1] now restored will never crack.

I understand what you say about Govind. You should visit him and the other patients from time to time.

I am sending the newspaper.

Send here the brass barrel for honey which is there, and also the lid of the white metal box to be used in the cooker. The box sent to Radhakisan cannot be put to full use because its lid got mixed up and another came in its place.

Ask Puri to send me a report of his health and his work.

[1] Illegible in the source

I am having no fever at all and the weakness is disappearing gradually. I am still on milk and fruit. It seems the doctor will take some time to discharge me. Mirabehn had an attack of fever yesterday. She was given a purge. She is well now. She too is on milk and fruit.

Ba still has cough, but it looks like subsiding now.

Rajendra Babu, Brajkishore Babu and Jayaprakash are still here. R. Babu and J. are unwell and B. Babu has stayed behind to nurse J.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have detained Prahlad for the day. The needle will be extracted. We shall know only tomorrow where the needle is lodged.

[*September 9, 1936*]

After all this could not go yesterday. Prahlad is being operated upon just now at 10 o'clock. The needle has been located.

At 10.30[1]

Mirabehn and I went to watch the operation. The needle has been extracted. [Prahlad] is all right.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8598. Also C. W. 6998. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

451. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

September 9, 1936

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your letter, but here at the Hospital. Indeed, I forget the other newspapers. Now I can send for them only tomorrow. Today I am sending only *The Bombay Chronicle* and *Harijan.* The lid seems to have been returned to you; if so, send it tomorrow.

Prahlad has been progressing well. He asks for food. But today he will be on milk only.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8597. Also C.W. 6999. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] This is in Hindi.

452. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

WARDHA HOSPITAL,
September 10, 1936

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

I have had three letters from you which I have acknowledged in my letter to Munnalal. I got the letter from Ramniklal too. I have also sent you my congratulations. I hope to reach there probably the day after tomorrow.

I am almost recovered.

I do not send for Munnalal now but I shall try to send Dr. Mahodaya. In the mean while he should subsist on milk only. If he does not have clear motions he may take castor oil and at least ten grains of quinine. Of course you are looking after him.

Neither Gangabehn's nor Munnalal's letter has reached me. Do not send milk for Prahlad or anyone else unless asked for. Prahlad was given milk yesterday as well as today from Maganwadi. He is quite comfortable. He will have to stay on for at least ten days. I shall not write to Puri today.

More tomorrow. Two bottles are being [returned][1] today. The rest I shall try to send tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1886

453. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 10, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I had the physical capacity to write to you all these days. But I have been so busy talking things that I have not been able to do any writing except on Monday. I hope you got my letter[2] written that day.

Now too I am writing this before retiring for the night.

[1] Illegible in the source
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 6/7-9-1936

Yes, I had a good letter from Shummy. I do not agree with you that Segaon climate had nothing to do with my malaria. Indeed Segaon is noted for its malarial climate. It is for me to conquer it and not shun it. I hope to be there on Saturday. The plate[1] will be taken tomorrow. It will decide my fate.

Your letters, received with extraordinary regularity, have been a rich treasure. You must not trifle with your eczema or the eruption on the thumb. You *must* put yourself under a competent doctor and do as he tells you. So long as you take eggs, I do not think anybody will insist on your taking meat. I would like you to wire to me saying you have called in skilled assistance. Consult Shummy on the point. You must not be obstinate on the point.

No more just now.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3588. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6397

454. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

WARDHA HOSPITAL,
September 10, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

I understand from Mahadev that you have developed a dislike for Segaon, and whenever you think of the place you become miserable. You have lost your peace of mind. Since you had taken a decision, you want to spend a year somehow with me. I had known this all along. Now it is all the more clear. I must consider now what my duty is. For me to seek forgiveness from children is nothing new. The most recent example is that of Kusum. If you do not know about it ask her. Perhaps even Mahadev can tell you. If I had reason to ask Kusum's forgiveness, I have still more reason to ask your forgiveness. I thought I was protecting you like a flower. Whether you were aware of it or not, despite all the harsh words I threw at you, I was protecting you against attacks from others. But I set no store by it. What has value is the impression made on you. Judging by that standard, I acknowledge my failure. Forgive me for the unhappiness I caused you. I shall not let such a situation be repeated. But now I have lost self-confidence. You do not have to ask your freedom from me. But you have to free yourself of me. Or, say, I have to give you your

[1] X-ray

freedom. Only a few can learn from me by being physically near me. Countless persons have been able to do that while being away from me. You are one of them. If you wish to learn something from me while being away, I am willing to teach you regularly through letters. Your coming to Segaon is going to benefit neither you nor me. I shall have to be constantly on my guard if I take you with me. You would not like me to be in such a pitiable state. The situation in which parents have to guard themselves from children is always to be avoided. So you should give up your insistence on coming to Segaon. There is no reason to be unhappy about it. There is no reason for you to feel ashamed as you are not giving up Segaon. In despair I am making you give up Segaon. Respect this wish of mine in good cheer. It is my duty and yours to avoid a situation in which you may break down at the end of a year and your heart may be filled with contempt for me. How can I explain this better? I particularly wish that you should go to Rajkot and help Narandas. You have hardly any place now at Maganwadi. The kitchen is being discontinued. What would you do in that event? There is no provision at all at Maganwadi to accommodate women. Of course, you may stay in the Mahila Ashram. But Mahadev will guide you in this regard. I urge you once again that you should forget the unhappiness you have suffered at Segaon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

455. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH AND BALWANTSINHA

September 11, 1936

CHI. MUNNALAL AND CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

I have your letter. In any case the Doctor is surely coming today. Moreover, he is from Burhanpur like you. Tomorrow he will not come. He may examine the patients, if any, today. Prahlad is fine. What you write is likely to have happened to Balwantsinha's letters. For my part, I have an impression that I had acknowledged his letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8597. Also C.W. 7000. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

456. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

September 11, 1936

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Who is taking up the responsibility for milk and other things from now on? Send the *khakhari*[1] for Mirabehn if they have prepared it, and butter. Keep the butter being sent herewith and send me another lot. The salt bottle is sent for refilling. Send ten *tolas* of flour, a small griddle, rolling-pin and board if the *khakhari* is not ready. You may send a bill for such of these articles as have to be taken from the new kitchen. Send dal, rice and vegetables for Prahlad. It does not matter if the three are put together.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10719

457. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

[Before *September 12, 1936*][2]

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I extracted two lovely bits of hair from today's curds besides the once that I may have swallowed. They were Mother goat's hair. So the carelessness may be traced to the person who strained the milk. The curds were very sour. If the morning milk is curdled, I can take it now. If you send it I shall want garlic. No garlic if you send milk.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10720

458. WHAT IT IS LIKE

The recent debate between Dr. Sokhey and Dr. Mangaldas Mehta on the ever-green topic of birth-control emboldens me to disclose the opinion of the late Dr. Ansari of revered memory

[1] A thin crisp chapati

[2] The addressee has placed this letter in August/September, 1936. It appears to have been written from the hospital in Wardha where Gandhiji's food used to be sent from Maganwadi; *vide* the preceding item. Gandhiji was discharged on September 12.

supporting Dr. Mangaldas's position. It was now nearly a year ago I wrote to the deceased asking him whether as a medical man he could endorse the position I had taken up on the vexed question. Much to my agreeable surprise he wrote heartily supporting it. When I was in Delhi last, I had a brief discussion with him on the subject and he promised at my request to contribute a series of articles showing by facts and figures from his own experience and that of other medical men how the practice had hurt both men and women who were party to it. He gave a graphic account of the condition to which the men were reduced after they had mated for some time with their wives or other women who they knew were using contraceptives. Freedom from the fear of the natural consequence of coition had made them reckless in self-indulgence leading to an inordinate craving for seeing women which ended in dementia. Alas! he died just when he was about to write the promised series.

Bernard Shaw is reported to have said that coition accompanied by the use of contraceptives was nothing less than sexual masturbation. A moment's reflection would show how accurate the description is.

I receive almost daily piteous letters from students and sometimes even from teachers complaining how they had become slaves to the habit and were being gradually reduced to loss of manhood. Recall, too, the correspondence[1] published in these columns from the principal of the Sanatan Dharma College, Lahore, bitterly complaining of teachers practising unnatural vice on their pupils and the consequences of the practice on their health and character. The deduction I draw from these examples is that even the union between husband and wife bereft of the possibility of its natural consequence must cause the same ruination that invariably attends masturbation or unnatural vice.

It is the philanthropic motive that no doubt impels many birth-control reformers to a whirlwind campaign in favour of the use of contraceptives. I invite them to contemplate the ruinous consequences of their misplaced philanthropy. Those whom they want to reach will never use them in any appreciable numbers. Those who ought not to use them will, without doubt, use them to the undoing of themselves and their partners. This would not matter in the least if the use of contraceptives was incontestably proved to be right physically

[1] *Vide* "A Growing Vice", 27-4-1935

and morally. Dr. Ansari's opinion, if my testimony about it is accepted, is a grave warning to the reformers and would-be reformers.

Harijan, 12-9-1936

459. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 12, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Well, I am at last in dear old Segaon without Ba, Lilavati and Moti. Amtul Salaam is here for a few hours and she goes back to Wardha. Lilavati is in Maganwadi under discipline and Ba has remained there out of sympathy. All is quiet here and looking nice. In front of me are two live snakes in the cage caught yesterday. Your green soap bit is there in its place. It will give a few day's work still.

You will be glad to learn that your thermos was broken to pieces after giving a night's good use. The door of the cart suddenly opened and the thermos fell out. You are not to replace it any more. I must do the best I can with improvised things. You know by this time that I am shameless enough to ask for things I need. And such a thing is a real good magnifying glass. But this at your leisure and not by post. Tell me what was the cost of the thermos broken today. It is pure curiosity that prompts the question.

I hope you have listened to me and taken expect advice about your eczema. It is a thing not to be lightly treated.

You won't be anxious about me. I shall take every care of myself.

Mira is now in her cottage.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3589. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6398

460. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 12, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Puri has sprung a surprise on me. He says you do not want him, his presence will be a tax on you. You want to be left alone. If so, P. Must go. He too says he won't come up to your expectations. Balwantsinha will follow with milk. You will take what service you like from him. Who will sleep there? You must not put any strain on yourself. I wish I could come over to you and see you face to face. But that cannot be just yet.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6363. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9829

461. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

September 12, 1936

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter.

What service of a Mahatma means you can realize only if you become one yourself. At present you can only follow your imagination as far as it takes you. If a Mahatma gets a boil, the whole world talks about it. If, on the contrary, an ordinary man gets even fistula, it is given no more importance than a boil. Nobody would know about it. That is the way things happen.

I left the hospital only today and have returned here. I am still weak, but I hope to regain strength here.

It seems now it has been raining on your side. Here it has been raining much in excess of our needs.

Your other descriptions were enjoyable. You are going ahead with your work. Let the result be what it will.

I have no wish to criticize your writing activity.[1] You must put your God-given gift to good use.

[1] The addressee had taken to writing articles, stories and even books after going over to Sasvad. She was afraid Gandhiji might not approve and had sought his opinion.

Lilavati's case is certainly a very difficult one. My first attempt has failed. I am now making another. I will of course not admit defeat so easily.

Your question is correct. But I wish to bring swaraj. Why should I die before my time?

What you write about Mirabehn is also correct. She just cannot live away from me. Let us see what happens now.

I may not write more today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10377. Also C.W. 6823. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

462. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 12, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

Prema's letter accompanies this. You must be getting news of my illness from time to time. Neither Sardar nor Jamnalalji will be able to go there. Whom else do you expect?I would advice you not to bank upon anyone but be satisfied with whatever you can do there. You should look upon my effort as absolutely independent.

The contributions raised for the spinning fund you may use for famine relief if a state of famine prevails. But then this is only a suggestion.

Today I put my signature in the copy of the *Gita* required for Purushottam and Vijaya's use.

I returned from the hospital to Segaon today. Ba and Lilavati stayed back at Maganwadi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8504. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

463. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

September 12, 1936

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I must be content with writing to you only a postcard. I have not yet regained full strength. Why should you believe that you are drifting away from me? The right thing is for everyone to work according to his capacity. This alone is truth. How far can we strain ourselves or work out of a false sense of shame? If for the present Tara[1] fails to influence the Patel women, she need not feel defeated. We should render whatever service they accept and be satisfied. Tell Surendra that I have no doubt made a note of writing to him but a number of obstacles come in the way. I write only to reassure you.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. RAMNIKLAL
C/O BHAILALBHAI
HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH
BORIAVI, B.B. & C.I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4183

464. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

September 12, 1936

...She should begin by reading and pondering the verse: "Thou mournest for them whom thou shouldst not mourn for."[2] She should not squabble with Ba. She should not cry before her or anyone else. She should not dwell on her woes.

She should think of whatever good qualities she may have observed in Munnalal, Balwantsinha and Mirabehn and worship them for those qualities. She should not think of their shortcomings and if she is reminded of them she should show forbearance.

No more today. She should make a copy of this and send it to me. If anything further occurs to me I shall let you know.

[1] Addressee's wife
[2] *Bhagavad Gita* II. 11

If the letter to Rajkumari cannot be posted today, then post it tomorrow with late fee paid.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You will have got the bullock-cart by now.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9579. Also C.W. 6551. Courtesy: Liavati Asar

465. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 13, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I have your cheerful letter. Had it been a dry path I would have walked up to you. You must not exert yourself. Patiently train Puri. Do not despair of him quickly.

Have you my torch?Have you the *falka*[1]?

I hope you have all you need.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6364. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9830

466. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 13, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

As you want me to destroy your letters at once, I have always to write from memory. Yes, Shummy wrote a sweet letter which I am going to a acknowledge, though he does not want me to.

Here is my diagnosis of your illness. You left in the midst of nature treatment. As it was not completed, there was a reaction in a radically changed climate. It would be called a healthy reaction if it could be treated *a la* nature-cure method. This [is] not merely hip-baths. There are steam-baths, light-baths, etc. But this was not to be. I

[1] A kind of frame for winding yarn

was not alarmed over the reaction but over the just resentment in the family. They cannot sympathize with nature-cure methods.

Have I made myself clear? Thank God, now there is peace in the family.

But you must not trifle with your eczema. I would certainly treat you if you were with me. But that cannot be, certainly not for cure. You have to go through the orthodox method. The quicker the better.

Yours is a departure from the orthodox routine. You may not therefore resent the criticism of the family. You will justify your rebellion only by your large-hearted charity, ever-increasing inner joy, equableness and possession of good health. Rebellions can only be justified by success. If you will therefore be patient and wise in your changes, all will be well.

Please give my love to Tai, if she is still there.

You need not now give me daily letters if you are pressed for time or too lazy to write. Writing to me must be no tax on your mind or body.

Cartloads of love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3741. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6897

467. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

September 13, 1936

MY DEAR SUBHAS,

I hope you were given my wire in reply to your kind enquiry. My fever—an attack after twelve years of freedom—was the cause of the lateness of my reply to your questions.

(1) Tea or coffee I do not consider to be essential to health. They often do harm. They may remain harmless, if tea is weak and straw colour and coffee drunk with plenty of milk with only a spoonful or two of coffee.

(2) If received fresh from the udder well cleaned and from a healthy cow, milk drunk fresh unboiled unwarmed is the best food. Next best is pasteurized milk. For some stomachs sweet curds are the best. They having the yeast obviate even the use of fruit.

(3) Leafy vegetables must always be taken, better if taken as salads. All leaves are not edible in the raw state. Onion, pumpkin with

the skin, *pandora*, brinjal, lady's finger, turnips, carrots, parsnips, cabbage, cauliflower are good additions to leaves. Potatoes and starchy tubers should be taken sparingly.

(4) Dates are a fine food for a healthy stomach. Raisins are more digestible. I can take both freely but all cannot. All can take raisins and sultanas.

(5) Garlic and onion in a raw state are strongly recommended in the West. I take raw garlic regularly for blood pressure. It is the best antitoxin for internal use. It is also recommended for tubercular patients.

I think the prejudice against these two harmless vegetables is due to the odour which is the essence of them and it arose with the rise of Vaishnavism. Ayurveda sings the praise of both unstintingly. Garlic is called poor man's musk and so it is. I do not know what villagers would do without garlic and onion.

(6) Yes, lemons and *gur* or honey are a good substitute for sweet oranges.

I think this answers all your questions. I hope you are well. I would like to know the result of Drs. Sircar's and Roy's examination.

Love.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

468. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

September 13, 1936

DEAR SIR PURUSHOTTAMDAS,

You will please explain to the South African delegation my sincere regret over my inability to welcome them in person.[1] Apart from convalescence it is difficult for me to tear myself away from my new home Segaon.[2] I pray to God that this visit may result in removing cobwebs of misunderstanding and bringing the two countries closer together.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] On the arrival of the delegation in Bombay on September 19, 1936. The addressee handed over this letter to J.H. Hofmeyer, the leader of the delegation.

[2] *The Bombay Chronicle*, 20-9-1936, has: "my new love—Segaon".

469. LETTER TO SYED MAHMUD

WARDHA,
September 13, 1936

MY DEAR DR. MAHMUD,

Bapu has your affectionate letter of the 9th inst. He is very happy to hear all that you say about wife and children and he is glad that you told her that unless she gave up *purdah* it was not possible for her to expect Bapu's welcome.

The fever has left Bapu very weak and he might take some time to recover all his lost strength. The doctor wanted him very much to stay in Wardha for some time, but his heart was in his village where alone he could get his peace.

It is quite like you to write in the way you have done about Harilal's so-called conversion. You are one of the very few Muslim friends who has written in this behalf with such warmth and sympathy and understanding. Misguided Muslims do not know how very much they are lowering the name of Islam by going on in the way they are doing. Of course Bapu saw the newspaper cutting that you have referred to but to beat everything else, an Urdu newspaper in Lucknow has given the news to the world that Bapu has become a Muslim. It is based on an interview supposed to have taken place with Bapu in the course of which he eulogized Islam, denounced Hinduism and declared that he was repeating Kalma every day. No such interview every took place. This precious piece of news has been copied by dozens of Urdu papers and has now been translated into Gujarati and Marathi by Muslim papers in Gujarat and Maharashtra. What do you say to all this? I do hope you are now completely restored. The three Bihari leaders, Rajendrababu, Brijkishorebabu and Jayaprakash Narayan have converted Jamnalalji's guest-house into a hospital. All the three took suddenly ill on arrival here. Luckily they are progressing now.

Yours sincerely,
MAHADEV

DR. SYED MAHMUD
CHAPRA
BIHAR

From a copy: Dr. Syed Mahmud Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library; also G.N. 5088

470. A LETTER

September 13, 1936

DEAR FRIEND,

With reference to your letter, I am powerless to help you. You may know that for the moment I have retired from active public life. But the public bodies in India and particularly the National Congress have been expressing their opinion in no uncertain terms.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

471. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

September 13, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I have of course asked Mahadevbhai to write to you. I returned to Segaon yesterday. Except for a feeling of weakness I am all right. I am still in a diet of milk and fruit only. Mirabehn has gone to her hut. Ba is not here at present. She will probably go to Devdas at Delhi. Lilavati is at Maganwadi. Manu is with Gomati. She might now go with Ba. This leaves Balwantsinha, Munnalal, Pyarelal and Khan Saheb here. Very probably, Nanavati will come over. Several persons are in a way free because the Maganwadi kitchen has been merged with the students' Moreover, the place is no more crowded.

Amtul Salaam has come and most probably she will leave for Bombay in the evening.

I showed your telegram to Jayaprakash, but he is not a person whom I or anyone else can stop from following his own bent. He may have left today. Father is here. He had a severe attack of fever. A doctor is going to examine him. The particular ailment which Jayaprakash suffered from has abated. Rajendra Babu will however stay on for the present.

Kanti has gone to Bombay for his studies.

Tell me now, haven't I given you plenty of news?

How are you? What is you diet? Do you suffer from headaches? Are you able to get milk? What about fruit?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I just read your letter of 2-9-36. How could it be that you had no letter from me for 22 days? It is true that I could not write during my illness, but that was a matter of 10 days. I have not at all received the letter sent through Kanti. How could I be angry with you?Or, why should I be displeased with you? I remember no occasion when you ever gave me cause for anger or annoyance. It may be that letters go astray or that I am unable to write because of the pressure of work, but never think that I refrain from writing because I am annoyed with you. That I weigh 108 lb. after the fever should be regarded as a good sign. Instead of writing to Kanti's address, write now directly to me. Kanti's address is: Satyagraha Camp, Vile Parle, B.B. & C.I. Rly. Drive away your melancholy. Write to me regularly. My birthday [according to the Vikram calendar] falls on October 12.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3454

472. LETTER TO K.M. MUNSHI

September 13, 1936

BHAI MUNSHI,

"It's good that we are out of the snare; we can easily reach Shrigopal."[1] We are not going to keep *Hans* or its successor going by paying a security of Rs. 1,000. A *hans*[2] will feed on milk alone. Kakasaheb's suggestion seems to be correct; but wouldn't a quarterly need a security? If it does, we may not have that either. I expect you are both doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7605. Courtesy: K.M. Munshi

[1] These lines are from a *bhajan* by Narasinh Mehta.

[2] Literally 'swan'

473. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEGAON,

September 14, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have from Nanavati the painful news that you have been weeping like mad. You will postpone your coming to Segaon so long as, while there, you do not do as I say. I had been expecting a letter in your beautiful handwriting but what I have is only bad news! What is this? Be reasonable and do as I tell you. I am helpless if you must persist in hurting me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9344. Also C. W. 6619. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

474. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

September 14, 1936

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You had an attack of fever, and now it is my turn. Let us see what happens next. My diet consists only of milk or curds, *musambi* and garlic.

It is a pity that you have lost faith in spinning. It is such a great *yajna*; but I shall not argue.

You may, if you wish, take the vow of *brahmacharya* once again; but please understand that it is almost impossible to observe it strictly unless the palate has been conquered. There is no need of your coming to Wardha, I rarely go there. You may not come to Segaon with the intention of staying.

Recoup your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4288

475. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

September 14, 1936

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. I do not have anyone of the kind you want. You must yourself find such men.

Your idea of staying in a village does not appeal to me in the least. At the moment we cannot spend so much money for propaganda work among the villages. Do not expect any help from me in this programme. Even now I would suggest that you start your work without any money, settle down in a village and assess your ability. But I find you have your head in the sky, while I am a creature of the earth and do not want to move my feet away from the earth. It seems, therefore, that our paths at present are different.

What will you gain by going to Satis Babu's?

His...[1] I am persuading him to reduce it still further. From 42 I am trying to get it reduced by another 12.

It is obvious that you do not know the villages. How will you learn midwifery from the books? Still, you may send me the list. I will then send you the books.

I am sorry that I am not able to give you a satisfactory reply. But isn't it better that I tell you what I feel.

I had gone to the hospital after leaving behind my fever. took quite a large quantity of quinine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

476. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 15, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I am glad your thumb seems to be quite restored. But I shall wait. The oozing must be stopped, not merely suppressed. Please do

[1] Illegible in the source

not trifle with it. I do not mind your feeling lazy and not taking up routine work. But you must not deceive yourself and imagine yourself to be well when you are not.

How I wish you could keep Tai there for some time. My love to her.

I have not yet read. the *Statesman* article. It is with me. I shall see what I can do with it.[1]

I have sent a longish letter[2] to S[hummy]. Do not worry over letters to me. Write daily, if it pleases and relaxes you. No strain, please. I shall not imagine all sorts of evil when I do not hear from you, now that I know you are free to miss a day or two.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3742. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6898

477. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 15, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I had expected to meet you at where we met yesterday and tell you why no *rengi*[3] was brought. I wanted to inspect the site when it was possible to walk there. Let us see what happens tomorrow. Are you prepared to make your own *dahi*[4] there? You need not, unless you wish.

Hope you and Puri are getting on famously.

The rains are now ruining everything. God's will be done.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6327. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9793

[1] *Vide* "The Law of Our Being", 26-9-1936.
[2] This is not traceable.
[3] Small bullock-cart
[4] Curds

478. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

September 15, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

You are still a bad girl. You would not shoulder the little burden placed on you. This shows the stuff you are made of. I have told you that you may give me a pleasant one hour, You should not create a scene with me. Know that the more you persist in your ways, the further you push your coming to Segaon. You know best if all this is but a trick to avoid coming. How heartless of you that even for the sake of my peace you would not agree to stay five miles away!

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9345. Also C. W. 6620. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

479. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

September 15, 1936

CHI. KANTI,

I received your postcard only today. I am well. There is only a little weakness, which will pass.

Amtul Salaam has left Rs. 150 for you. This I have credited to her account, for she hasn't a cowrie of her own. She makes merry at the cost of her brothers, who spend all that they earn. But even if she has her own money, why should you beg of her? When we adopt someone as our mother, is it to serve her or to serve our own interests? I do not like your selfish attitude. It would be good if you got out of it. It is not right that while Devdas pays your expenses you should go about begging like this. For my part I have told you to put in some effort and earn while you learn. Why do you lose heart? Amtul Salaam has gone there. She had forbidden me, so I said nothing to you. However, it would be good if you could say to her: "Thinking further on the matter I feel that I ought not to accept any money either from you or from anyone else except Devdas. Therefore, I will not take money from you." But if it does not come out of your heart, then don't say it. Do not scold A. S. or feel constrained. Even while

doing what you want to, don't give up courtesy and humility. She is much hurt.

Put in as much work as you wish while taking care of your health. It is not trouble cooking one's own food. Find the necessary time and eat satisfying meals. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7304. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

480. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

September 15, 1936

CHI. JETHALAL,

I have a vague impression that I did dictate a reply to your letter of the 7th August. I have returned here after being discharged from the hospital. I feel weak. Some things I write myself, some things I dictate. Since Nanavati has come to live here, dictating has become convenient also. I shall not write more about my illness as you will know about it from *Harijan* or *Harijan Sevak* or *Harijanbandhu*. Your letter regarding the tools is encouraging. The important question for me is whether in ordering heavy implements from you the transport charges might not be as great as the price. I have been carrying on here the same experiment that you have been trying there. We have a solitary blacksmith in this village. He, too, poor man, is not very intelligent. Only recently I got him to make three knives from an old file. I paid him whatever he charged. But this is not enough for me. Let me have a list of the items you wish to sell outside along with their prices, the freightage to Wardha, and so on. I need hardly assure you that I will help you in the sale of your articles, if possible. you mention a detailed letter. I have not yet received it. Write it now. Who else are there at present and what are your activities?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 9856. Courtesy: Narayan J. Sampat

481. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI

September 15, 1936

BHAI CHAND TYAGI,

Your letter has been lying in front of me for many days but I could not attend to it till now. You have given me good news about Balvir. I cannot send for him as I am striving hard to live a village life. I do not have enough accommodation in this village nor do I want to add to the family here. I have now neither the strength nor the inclination to do what I could do in places like Sabarmati, etc. My aspiration of leading a village life can be realized only if I maintain a limited family. God alone knows the future, assuming that the thread of my life is to stretch farther. Rajkishori seems to have completely forgotten me. She does not even write to me. What does she do? How much does she spend?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6633. Also C. W. 4281. Courtesy: Chand Tyagi

482. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 16, 1936

CHI. AMALA,

You seem to have deserted me. How so? Do tell me all about yourself.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

483. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 16, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

The dinner bell has gone. You will not stir out today. I am

coming. You shall come to Segaon tomorrow.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6365. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9831

484. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

September 16, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. If you have not understood even after so many letters from me, how am I going to make you understand now? Read all the letters again and act accordingly —joyfully. I do not know how much and what kind of' persuasion you want from me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have written this in great haste.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

485. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[Before *September 17, 1936*][1]

BAPA,

Kakalbhai brought your letter while I was still thinking of writing to you. Of course, I have not seen Kakalbhai or Balwantrai. Just now I can't see anyone, nor am I in a hurry about it. I am only slowly disposing of the arrears of work. The fever came on swift as a horse but my strength is returning at an ant's pace. This is not a complaint against God who alone knows what He has in store. He is the giver of strength; why then may He not withdraw it, too?

Why should I go to Almora to effect a reconciliation between Kakalbhai and Amritlal? Water cannot be parted by hitting at it with a lathi. The two were reconciled but is Amritlal reconciled with himself? I am not impatient to drag him back into public life; I am impatient to

[1] From the date of receipt recorded on the letter

see his mind purified. That is why I wrote to him as soon as I heard of the matter. He will not remain in Almora if he has regained purity. For my part I make no difference between public life and private life. However accomplished a man, if he is immoral the splashes from the mud of his immorality are bound to stain public life. That we cannot see the evil splashing does not mean that it is not doing so. I am, therefore, firmly of the opinion that those who wish Amritlal well, those who wish public life to advance, ought to let Amritlal cleanse himself. Only harm will be done to him and to public work by luring him into a hasty come-back. That is my view.

I fear I have not been able to make you see my point about Valunjkar. The question is only of giving to him the amount which I have promised from among the funds standing in my name. I believe that in doing so the Council's approval is not necessary. Isn't that right? Please correct me if my memory is failing me. I have of course no objection to the matter going before the Council. But on what basis would the Council generally sanction such amounts?

Rukmini is mad of course. Every fault, the famous Lombroso[1] has said, is a symptom of madness. But when is a *kubharya*[2] properly so called? It is a different matter if we dismiss the word altogether. My sympathy is with Malkani, and the pity I feel for Rukmini is of a different kind.

Do you want Amtul Salaam to return?You should not hesitate to warm me if, in spite of her good intentions, she proves a nuisance there. It was God's grace that Nilam survived. I shall await the figures. I have made the letter long enough.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 1170

486. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

September 17, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

That you have no reed pen is a good excuse. I am sending a pen herewith. I am sending a copy of the *Gita*, such as I could find; I do not know which copy you call your own. Kanaiyo knows how to

[1] Cesare Lombroso, the Italian physician and criminologist
[2] Shrew

make a reed pen. Learn it from him. You have written out the verses well enough, but what about their meanings?

You are expected to use hand-made paper. What's the idea of having a hand-made pen and mill-made paper? I shall feel satisfied only when you are completely calm. Send over your *dilruba*[1] for Nanavati's use if you are not playing on it. If you are, there is no need at all to send it.

You have to make out a copy of the instructions I have written to you,[2] and send it to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9580. Also C. W. 6552. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

487. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
September 18, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Just a line only. Your apples have been eaten by all with relish. Not an invitation to send more.

Khan Saheb was most grateful for the attention given by you to the girls.[3] He wants you to go out of your way to befriend them and direct them the right way. Here is his letter.

I am glad Shummy is now attending to you. You will now get well quick. Obey him willingly like a good idiot that you are.

Cartload of love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3590. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6399

[1] A stringed musical instrument
[2] *Vide* "Fragment of a Letter", 12-9-1936
[3] Mehrtaj and Mariam, Abdul Ghaffar Khan's daughter and niece respectively

488. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

[*September 18, 1936*][1]

CHI. KANTI,

I liked your letter. Ten o'clock of Friday morning has passed by. It is four now. I will wait for *Yamaraj*[2] at ten at night.[3] You do know that as it is I am always ready to welcome him.

I will certainly pay the photographer's Rs. 50. Where shall I send it?

About the other things, I have understood whatever you have written. However unhappy I may have felt about your going,[4] I have certainly not given up hope of you.

I have destroyed your letter.

You certainly know more about Amtul Salaam. If you want to write to me something in particular, do so. About the money I wrote whatever she told me. Now I believe every word of what you say.

I understand about Saraswati. I am sure you will not do anything blameworthy. May God give you strength.

I shall not expect a long letter from you from time to time. But you will write me a postcard every week, won't you? Write a long letter, too, occasionally.

Ba and Manu will leave for Delhi tomorrow.

This will be enough for now as it is time for the post.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7388. Courtesy; Kantilal Gandhi

[1] From the reference to Manu and Kasturba going to Delhi which they did on September 19. *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 20-9-1936 Also, the letter was written on a Friday and September 18 was a Friday.

[2] Lord of Death

[3] *Vide* " Letter to Amrit Kaur" , 21-9-1936

[4] For studying medicine. *Vide*, "Letter to Kantilal Gandhi", 7-9-1936

489. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

8.25 p.m., September 18, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

I am alarmed by your last sentence. If you think of going to a school after a year, the worth-while thing is to begin now. One may start one's studies any time, but it ought to be painful to you as well as to me if you have to flee Segaon in disappointment and join a school. Search your heart and shake off your folly. Satisfy your hunger for learning. At Segaon, what can you have except the drudgery and my temper? I cannot help fearing that you will not find your stay here bearable. I spend a good deal of my time thinking of your welfare. Not that I grudge it. But it should be intolerable for both you and me if in the end you have to give me up in disappointment. If you must come to Segaon, it is for you to determine how soon it can be done. Read my instructions again and again and carry them out cheerfully.

Remove all ill will from your mind. If you resent someone with whom you have to deal every day, how will you be happy with me? How shall I be at peace? Isn't this quite easy to understand? There is never any shame in doing the right thing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9346. Also C. W. 6621. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

490. NOTES

ABOUT TARABEHN MARY CHESLEY

Almost every foreign mail, letters are being received from the late Mary Chesley's relatives and friends extolling her many virtues and telling me of the benefactions received by most of them from her and of promises of help made by her and even a will or wills left by her. Though Mahadev Desai has been giving these correspondents such detailed information as he can during the limited time at his disposal, it is necessary to make a public announcement for the benefit of all concerned that the will made by her in my favour just before her lamented death does not, in the opinion of legal friends, appear to be valid according to the Indian Succession Act. Even if it

can be proved, I have no desire whatsoever to use her property, except with the concurrence of her relatives and friends, for the sake of the Indian village industries work, which was her latest and last love for which she slaved and died heroically. If the property came into my hands, of which there is very little chance, I should examine all her commitments and promises in the West and try to satisfy them before making use of anything left by her undisposed of in her lifetime. I have cheques coming from her Bank which lie with me uncashed. My advice to her cousins, of whom I see there are many, is that the nearest of them should take out letters of administration and send me legal authority to part with whatever is in my hands or Miss Mary Barr's. I possess the uncashed cheques and the latter her papers and trinkets. The deceased had so reduced her personal wants in India that there is hardly anything left which can be converted into money. All she received during her lifetime was generally made over to me for village work. I hope this gives to all concerned such information as is in my possession about the affairs of the deceased humanitarian.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING?

Two friends write to me deploring my attitude in the Ambedkar-Moonje proposal.[1] Their argument may be summed up as follows:

> Surely you are making much ado about nothing. Guru Nanak was a Hindu reformer like the others who have founded Hindu sects. Sikhs are Hindus to all intents and purposes. Their culture is the same as of the Hindus. If Harijans declare themselves as Sikhs, why do you call it change of faith?

The objectors seem to be alone in their opinion. Some time after 1915 when I returned home from my self-imposed exile of fourteen years, I happened to go to the Punjab. Addressing a meeting of Sikhs, I had said they were in my opinion Hindus belonging to a sect of reformers. A well-meaning Sikh friend spoke to me aside and said I had unwittingly offended Sikhs by calling them Hindus. Ever since that caution, I have never described them as Hindus. What they believe matters, not what I or a few individuals do. Sikhs have a separate electorate. Dr Ambedkar does not regard Sikhs as Hindus. He definitely wants a change of faith. If Sikhs were a Hindu sect, no change in the Pact would be necessary. It is open to any Hindu to change his sect and still remain a Hindu. Moreover, neither Dr.

[1] *Vide* "A Dangerous Proposal", 22-8-1936

Ambedkar nor R. B. Rajah nor anyone else can change even the sect of a whole mass of Harijans by a stroke of the pen. Religion is essentially an individual matter which each one has to decide for himself. No one who believes in religion as a sacrament can therefore be party to the proposal put forth by Drs. Ambedkar and Moonje.

Harijan, 19-9-1936

491. OF MY RECENT ILLNESS

I would not tax the reader about my recent malaria fever except for the fact that friends are involved in the decision I have prayerfully made and which I hope God will let me fulfil.

It went against the grain for me, a confirmed believer in nature-cure methods, to go to Wardha and seek admission to the hospital. Left entirely to myself, I would have treated myself in accordance with nature-cure methods as far as possible. But I could not do so without offending the friends who happened to be near me at the time. I knew that Jamnalalji too had a special responsibility, in that I had settled in a village near Wardha, his permanent place of residence. With the choice of the village he has had nothing to do. It was entirely Mirabehn's and it was made because Segaon was predominantly a Harijan village and far enough from Wardha and yet not too far. I was drawn to the village in accordance with a certain declaration I had made when Mirabehn went to Segaon. Jamnalalji to an extent and Sardar Vallabhbhai altogether were against my settling in a village as yet and then in Segaon. But I bore down their opposition when I told them that I was bound by the declaration to which I have referred to settle down in Segaon. No doubt the promise was agreeable to me for my heart was in the village. Having gone to Segaon it was my intention not to stir out of it for full three seasons, i. e., one year. Unfortunately there are obligations undertaken before the decision to settle in Segaon, which I shall have to fulfil and which will disturb the unbroken year's stay. I urge friends, therefore, not to make further inroads upon the period. For me it is my *sadhana*. I set the greatest value upon the village problem. It may not be put off except at the cost of our very existence. India lives in her villages, not in her cities. I am supposed to guide and direct the village industries movement to which at Bombay an autonomous existence was given by the

Congress.[1] I am incapable of guiding any movement in which I do not plunge myself actively and directly. Maganwadi, though a village, being a large village,[2] was not good enough for my instruction and ins piration. I needed to be in a real village presenting the problems that face one in generality of villages. Segaon is one such village.

If then I may not leave Segaon in order not to interrupt my instruction and first-hand experience, I may not also leave it for health reasons. Segaon like most villages has its full share of malaria and other diseases which villagers suffer from. Of its population of 600 there is hardly anyone who has not suffered from malaria or dysentery. Of the record of nearly 200 cases that have come under my observation or Mirabehn's, most are those of malaria and dysentery. The simple remedies at our disposal with dietetic control have served their purpose effectively. The villagers do not go to hospitals, they cannot even go to dispensaries. They usually resort to village quacks or incantations and drag on their weary existence. I claim to have some workable knowledge of common ailments. I have successfully treated myself often enough without the assistance of medical friends though they have been ever ready to help me in my need. If I was not a 'Mahatma', so-called, no one would have known anything of the recent attack of malaria. I rarely have fever. The last attack I had was nearly 12 years ago and I had treated myself. There is all the greater reason for me now, if I have another attack of malaria or another ailment, not to stir out of Segaon in search of health; and if I must have medical assistance, I must be satisfied with what I can get without fuss and without having to leave Segaon. I am fatalist enough to believe that no one can put off the hour of death when it has struck. Not the greatest medical assistance available has saved kings and emperors from the jaws of death. One like myself struggling to become a humble village servant surely ought to be satisfied with remedies easily accessible to villages. By leaving my village in search of health or the like I deny myself the opportunity of knowing what village life can be when one's health is in peril.

My malaria has quickened my resolve to study the problem of making Segaon malaria-proof. All round me the fields are water-logged. The crops are rotting. The ground is unwalkable unless you are content to wade through knee-deep mud. Fortunately a pukka

[1] In October 1934

[2] The source has "in being a large village".

road was built for my convenience through Jamnalalji's fields which keeps Segaon somewhat accessible to people from Wardha. The road has proved a great convenience for man and beast. If I had listened to friend's advice to postpone settling in Segaon till after the rains, I would have missed the rich experiences I have gained during the heavy rains of the past two months. Everything I have seen hitherto therefore convinces me that, if I am to make any approach to the village life, I must persevere in my resolve not to desert it in the hour of danger to life or limb. And I ask all the friends to help me in carrying out the resolve and pray with me that God may give me the strength to do so.

Harijan, 19-9-1936

492. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
September 20, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

You are in danger of losing caste even with Tai, if you persist in defending my non-violence so long as it has not become your very own. That the savage in us may get the better of us when we are tried does not affect our position, if we even while we are savage know that we are doing wrong. The fact is that in this age of doubt, we are never sure of our ground. Some attractive argument which we cannot answer baffles us instead of humbling our pride in our intellect. These questions of non-violence, birth-control, and the like are eternal problems. So it might be better for you in the long run, never to seek to defend *my* views. When it is your own views, I know [you] are more than able to hold your own. I do not want your great ability to be discounted because of your association with me. Rather would I like it to be said that neither your body nor your mind had suffered decay after you began to come to Wardha.

I am glad Shummy is now treating your eczema. You must not be touchy about the feet. Is it not better that what is in is now coming out. The only thing is to have a remedy that results in elimination, not suppression.

I hope you will have no difficulty in deciphering the leaf 4. You will have none if you will treat this as part of it. You know what I mean.

Even among closest relatives some can be shameless. I belong to that class. Therefore don't send me a thermos till I call for it. I assure you I am getting hot enough drinks. On that score you need not worry.

I entirely agree with you that women are better nurses and more attentive to details than men. Whether it is so for modern women or not you can speak with greater authority than I can.

Your recent letters make me feel uneasy. You seem to be overdoing things again. Learn to say "No" when you are physically or mentally too tired.

Ba and Manu went to Delhi yesterday. And Lilavati is still at Maganwadi. Mira has no temperature today as yet though this is the day for it.

Your apples were eaten with great relish by Khan Saheb and me.

Sufficient for the day.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3591. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6400

493. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 20, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

Do send me some envelopes.

Write to Dr. Shah about Amtul Salaam, inquiring how she is, what she does, whether she can be cured, etc.

Did you write that your lemons should be included in the parcels that come from Bombay? So far none have come.

I went through Ba's letter in *The Hindustan Times*. It does reveal Ba's pain, and also Devdas's.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11488

494. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 20, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

How foolish of you ! No one reads your letters and, supposing someone does, what is there for you to be ashamed of?Don't you see that your purpose could not be served because your Express Delivery letter reached late?But no one reads it, having recognized your handwriting. But I read it to Mahadev to show him your folly, and both of us laughed at it.

Why do you write in Gujarati or in Hindi?By all means write in Urdu. Your handwriting is clear. Never mind if I take more time to read it.

How can I be persuaded to speak nothing to Kanti when you give money for him?You had forbidden me to discuss the matter with you and I respected your wish. I did rebuke Kanti and he then wrote to say that your wanting to help him was not a recent thing. But then if you persist in making yourself unhappy, how can I help it?

Write to me about the final decision regarding your operation.

Did you get the letter addressed to Santa Cruz P.O.? You have no more complaint regarding letters, have you?Won't you be a little reasonable, a little cheerful? You do not in any way prove your goodness by making yourself miserable.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 348

495. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

September 20, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have read your letter very carefully. If you could only have some idea of my anxiety about you, you would become straightened as a cane, curb the wild horse of your imagination and become absorbed in the work entrusted to you. I do not trust you and hence you cannot be at Maganwadi. I am anxious about you because I have expectations of you. I am thinking what my duty towards you is. If at

Segaon you can mix as sugar does with milk, even if you wanted to I would not let you go. You must admit that you do not have that strength right now. But all will come right in time. Be patient. I have understood the purport of your letter. It contains a few mis-understandings. But I have no time to clear them. It is not ever necessary. Do read *Prithvivallabh*[1] again. And let me know about the effect it has on you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

496. LETTER TO G.D. BIRLA

September 20, 1936

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I gave three days to Parameshwari, Parnerkar, Saryuprasad, Dinkar and Dharmadhikari and talked with them to my heart's content. They all hold different opinions. Parnerkar is not prepared to take charge of the dairies. It does not seem proper to undo Parameshwari's sixteen years of experiments. I have not been able to reach a final decision as even the winding up of this will take two to three months. I feel that Parameshwari should be given a further Rs. 2,000 for the expenditure up to December 31. There was some talk about sowing, to which I have already agreed. He should be given Rs. 2,000 in the same manner as he was given Rs. 500 and, whatever may ultimately come about, the sum of Rs. 2,500 should be the first charge on the establishment. Meanwhile we should meet somewhere and take a final decision. I must go to Banaras on October 25.[2] Jamnalalji, too, will be there. I have further advised Parameshwari to obtain the opinion of the Government expert.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 8023. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

[1] A novel in Gujarati by K. M. Munshi; *vide* also"Letter to K. M. Munshi", 26-9-1936

[2] For the opening of the Bharat Mata Mandir

497. LETTER TO G.S.N. ACHARYA

[Before *September 21, 1936*][1]

I never knew that there was a movement in Andhra Desa against Hindi *pracha*[2]. But I would resist any attempt to displace the rich vernaculars of the different provinces. Hindi is not intended to take their place, but it is intended to supplement them as a medium of inter-provincial intercourse. Therefore, Hindi propaganda should not only not interfere with the progress of vernaculars, but it must enrich them.

The Hindu, 22-9-1936

498. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 21, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your eczema has to go. I do not know how. Will Shummy approve of gently steaming the part affected, then applying ice poultice? If you think you can discuss this with him you should do so. But at the same time you must not fret because it is a skin disease. You will be well earlier, if you will cease to think about the trouble. How I wish I was by your side at the present moment ! But that cannot be.

Please tell Fielden[3] with my regards that he is working himself to death without a just cause. He ought to take leave and get well quickly. Of course the effect of malignant malaria is said to be very bad.

I wonder if Mahadev passed on to you the yarn that I was to have died of heart failure at 10 a.m. on Friday last.[4] This was sent by a learned man in all seriousness to Jamnalalji. He told me all about it. And though he made light of the information, he could not help posting poor Mahodaya here for the night. Though he was deprived of the privilege of last rites, he came in handy as Mira happened to have high fever that very day.

[1] The news report carrying this item is dated September 21, 1936.
[2] Propaganda
[3] Lionel Fielden, first Director-General of All India Radio
[4] *Vide* also "Letter to Kantilal Gandhi", 18-9-1936

I hope the access of visitors has not proved a real strain on your scanty resources. I wish you could hide yourself somewhere during the cold season. Any other hill will be better than Simla. Is it impossible to try Mahabaleshwar or Ooty?

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3592. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6401

499. LETTER TO BHULABHAI J. DESAI

September 21, 1936

BHAISHRI BHULABHAI,

Shoulder the whole burden of the parliamentary election, financial as well as organizational. You will yourself no doubt contribute the largest amount but also persuade others to do likewise. This task is primarily yours; others will join afterwards.

I hope Dhiru and Madhuri are fine. Blessings to them both.

Vandemataram from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Bhulabhai Desai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

500. LETTER TO G.D. BIRLA

September 21, 1936

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I become more and more convinced each day that for Harijan work in each province the necessary funds should be raised within the province. If money has to be provided by the centre to enable provinces to carry on their work, work thus accomplished cannot be enduring. We shall also not be able to gauge the feelings of the caste Hindu. Rather than we should be forced later to cut down on our work, it is better that we should recognize our limitations.

What it means is that each province should now submit its budget in the light of the above and having examined these budgets we should then provide to each province such assistance as may be feasible for a year or two. I see our work purely as a religious

undertaking. Expansion of the work therefore depends on our finding self-sacrificing and saintly workers. Money will go after them. They will not have to go after money. If this has not been made clear to our Council it is only unfortunate.

If it is necessary that there should be a meeting of the Council at Wardha to take a final decision in the matter, such a meeting may be arranged.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8022. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

501. LETTER TO ZOHRA ANSARI

September 21, 1936

DEAR DAUGHTER ZOHRA,

I cannot attend your wedding[1] but I shall certainly be with you in spirit. You will both have my blessings on that day. May God grant you long life and happiness.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Urdu: *Mahatma*, Vol. IV, between pp. 112-3

502. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 22, 1936

CHI. AMALA,

I am glad you are keeping up your Gujarati and Hindi. How could you feel that I had ceased to take an interest in your welfare ! I am glad you are in a more commodious house. You must get rid of your malady. It is tragic how your mother is being hindered. Let us hope however she will be able to come at last.

Love.

Blessings from
BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] With Shaukat. The wedding was to take place on September 25; *vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 25-9-1936

503. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 22, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your two letters came in the same day one after another. I know that my letters comfort you. Therefore I am trying to write to you as frequently as I can.

How I wish I could have you under my care in December and onward. But your eczema must disappear before then. Sardar Vallabhbhai is due there on 24th. I have asked him to get Deshmukh[1] to examine you. He is a good all-round man. He might be able to find the real remedy. I take it Shummy won't mind that.

Of course I shall write to Shummy to let you come to me between December and February both inclusive. But I don't want to write just yet or you will tell me when.

The folding charkha will be sent as soon as you send me the address. It will be specially made.

I understand what you say about your letters. Your wish is being literally respected.

It does seem to me that you should let Shummy put you on a meat diet. Surely you won't refuse to take meat as medicine. You have not developed that independent conscience. Let the evolution be slow and steady. If I religiously avoid meat even as medicine, it has been a life-long *sadhana* independently and deliberately undertaken. Anyway I would urge you to yield to Shummy in this repect, if he is sure that he will cure you. You must not expect the impossible from him.

Love.

ROBBER

SHRI RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANOR VILLE
SIMLA W.

From the original: C. W. 3743. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6899

[1] Dr. Punjabrao Deshmukh

504. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

September 22, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have finished *Prithvivallabh*[1]. I am now sending it to you. Read it carefully but quickly, and let me know what you think of it. The book belongs to Kakasaheb. Be careful not to soil it. Don't make any marks in it. The ones you will find in it are not made by me. We should never make any marks in other people's books.

I got your letter yesterday and the *slokas* you have copied out. How can the *slokas* convey any meaning to you unless you spend some time to understand them? Shouldn't we exercise the mind a little? The work I have given you so far is the least and the easiest. Today also I dreamt of you. What a sorry state. How nice it would be if I did not have to worry on your account!

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9347. Also C. W. 6622. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

505. LETTER TO JAYANTI N. PAREKH

September 22, 1936

CHI. JAYANTI,[2]

I could manage only today to read your letter and I am dictating this at once while spinning. You wrote the letter on your birthday. Live long and bring glory to your elders and to the country by your work. I have followed your argument about the batch and it is correct. But the batch was never disbanded; for those who have this faith, it still exists. But I must admit that there are very few who have this faith. I give you the freedom you now ask for. I would have liked to have a little talk with you before granting you this freedom, if only I had the time to send for you and meet you. That would be purely for my own satisfaction. I have had to forgo such satisfaction on several occasions before; so I can forgo it now. Do only what your inner voice tells you. In this alone lies your good. Only make sure that you rightly understand what the inner voice says. If the inner

[1] A Gujarati novel by K. M. Munshi
[2] An Ashram inmate who later became Communist

voice prompts a murderer to commit murder, a debauch to commit debauchery, or a thief to commit theft, we shall not regard it as the inner voice. Men of experience have therefore laid it down that he alone can have recourse to the inner voice who has acquired the ability to hear it. As men have often failed to understand this clearly, they have pillaged and plundered in the name of religion. However, I know I don't have to explain all this to you. Write to me occasionally. I am in correspo-ndence with several socialists, though not with our comrades from Gujarat. If I set out to seek such contacts on my own I would be overwhelmed by them. I reply to those who write to me, but at present I am curtailing even that kind of correspondence, as I desire as present to bury myself in Segaon and be forgotten. Even if this desire cannot be wholly fulfilled, should I not at least do all I can to realize it? And that is what I am doing. A certain amount of correspondence has therefore come to a stop.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6263

506. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 23, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I am trying to send you somebody. Frontier Gandhi is not sent out anywhere. So this will be rather difficult.

Do keep throwing out the names that occur to you. Why is it not possible to find out from the books what amount was sent by Sorabji? Durban has been urgently demanding it. Maybe Chhaganlal [Gandhi] will know and maybe Chhaganlal Joshi, too. The books are there. For the rest, anyone can look into them and find out. We don't have so very many ledgers, do we? What is the difficulty?

I enclose a letter from Jaisukhlal. It contains complaints against Chhaganlal Joshi. I had written to him that he should allow me to show these complaints to Joshi. At last he has sent me the permission. But he has added that I should send the letter through you and obtain your opinion also. That is why I am sending you the letter. Do let me have your opinion and, unless you have some objection, show it to Joshi and ask him to send me his reply. Or I shall send it direct to

Joshi if you so wish.

You may always take for granted thousands of blessings from me on your birthday. I have cherished many hopes of you. They have also borne fruit, and will further do so. But the real test will come when I am no more, won't it? I have assumed that then, too, you will succeed.

I am reaching Ahmedabad on the 30th and from there I shall have to rush off to Nadiad the same day. My wish to see the elders before that is growing stronger and stronger. I shall therefore try and drop in if I can. I shall leave soon after receiving the blessings of the elders. There should be no fanfare. No one is to be informed. You should not expect me to do any other work. At the most I shall spend one night there. I shall not have all that time and I shall arrive in the morning and leave at night. For me this is nothing but a pilgrimage. You, too, should give up all thought of taking advantage of my presence for some other cause. Persons like Nanalal Joshi will of course know, and anyway Shuklasaheb will have to be informed. However, everyone should understand that my visit to Rajkot is not to be considered a visit at all. It is likely that Khan Saheb will accompany me, and you may take advantage of his presence then but don't make any announcement in advance.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C. W. 8505. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

507. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

September 23, 1936

CHI. KANTI,

I have your letter. I do not wish to annoy you on account of Amtul Salaam. I am satisfied that you visited her.

It is certainly good that you have been using a mosquito-net. Do not take it for granted that you will remain free from fever in spite of taking all sorts of liberties with yourself. As for the studies, you should observe some restraint. Why should you strain your eyes at night after having studied the whole day?

I had forgotten to write about Saraswati. I shall enquire about her from Ramachandran and then let you know.

I expect you have been regularly writing to Devdas. Ba will be glad to have a little note from you. Did I tell you that Ba and Manu have gone to Devdas? Here at present we have two additions—Pyarelal and Nanavati. Lilavati continues to stay at Maganwadi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7306. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

508. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

September 23, 1936

CHI. BRAJKRISHNA,

Mahadev gave me your letter about Deka. I have read Deka's letter. Fortunately Shankerlal too happens to be here. I have had a talk with him too. A copy of my letter[1] to Deka is enclosed from which you will see that you have no reason to worry about him. You must have got the letter I wrote to you some time back. I was sorry to read about Mother being unwell. I hope she is all right now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2444

509. LETTER TO SUNDARLAL

September 23, 1936

MY DEAR SUNDARLAL,

You did well in writing to me this letter[2]. I have not seen Maulana Abdul Haq's statement. I saw only a portion of it. Please send me a copy of that statement.

[1] This is not traceable

[2] In the letter the addressee had regretted that the Hindi-Urdu controversy, which was mainly a literary affair, should have been given a communal shape. Comparing the grammar and idiom of the two he emphasized that they were fundamentally the same. Urdu and Hindi writers were both obstructing the formation and development of a common Hindustani language and confusing its grammar. He explained that neither " Hindi" nor "Urdu" could rightly denote this common language.

Whatever I have done in this connection, I have done with absolutely pure intentions. My position is exactly what it was in 1920. My efforts are directed towards the acceptance of the word. That is why I got the word ‘ Hindustani’ passed by the Congress. I could not do so in the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. Therefore, at Indore, I got the connotation of the word Hindi clarified. In the All- India Sahitya Sammelan[1] I went one step further. My object was the same, viz., to give one common name to the two forms of the language as used by the Hindus and by the Mussalmans, as well as to make them one language in reality.

You have yourself written that the adoption of the name Urdu had its special reasons. I never meant to attribute motives for this adoption.

You have also accepted what I said with regard to grammar. That Hindi writers commit mistakes of another type does not disprove or falsify my statement.

The prevalent misunderstandings are bound to be removed, because there is absolutely no ground for them. I do not at all want to give up Urdu. I have sufficient regard for it. I attach sufficient value to it. I daily read from some Urdu work or other. I also write letters in Urdu to several Muslim sisters and brothers. I have patience enough.

I think I have cleared all your points. If there still remain some doubts, we shall see about them later. Even for writing this I could with difficulty snatch a few moments.

Yours,
BAPU

[PS.]

One thing more. The language of the sentences you have quoted is not mine. From where did you take them?[2]

The Searchlight, 9-10-1936

[1] At Nagpur on April 24 and 25, 1936; *vide* “Speech at Akhil Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad”, 24-4-1936

[2] The original letter was in Hindi.

510. PREFACE TO "GITAPADARTHAKOSHA" [1]

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 24, 1936

Kakasaheb has explained in his own foreword why this *kosha*, which was prepared twelve years ago[2] and which has not come up to the required standard yet, is being published today.

This *kosha* is indeed necessary for those who are at all interested in the translation[3] which has been published under my name. Maybe it will be useful to other students of the *Gita* as well. To them I would suggest that if they do not like the interpretations given in the *Padarthakosha* and prefer others, they should note these down in the book itself. By doing so, they will have a glossary of their own liking with very little effort. And if such students send me the interpretations of their choice, I shall be grateful.

The more I study the *Gita*, the more I am made aware of its uniqueness. For me, it is a spiritual dictionary. Whenever I am in doubt as to what I should or should not do, I fall back upon it, and so far it has never disappointed me. It is indeed a Kamadhenu[4]. In the beginning, we recited one *sloka* a day, then two, then five, then a chapter a day, then a complete recitation in two weeks and, finally, in the last few years some of us have been able to do a complete recitation in seven days. And on particular days of the week the sound of particular chapters is heard around 4.30 a.m. Some—a very few—have learnt all the eighteen chapters by heart. The morning prayers include the chapters in the following order during the days of the week.

Friday I, II	Tuesday XIII, XIV, XV
Saturday III, IV, V	Wednesday XVI, XXII
Sunday VI, VII, VIII	Thursday XVIII.
Monday IX, X, XI, XII	

[1] This appeared in the book under the title *Request to Readers* and also in *Harijanbandhu*, 25-10-1936, under the title "Gitarupi Kamadhenu". A *padarthakosha* is a concordance as well as a glossary.

[2] Gandhiji had prepared this *Padarthakosha* while in the Yeravda jail in 1922-24; *vide* "My Jail Experiences- XI", 17-9-1924

[3] *Anasaktiyoga; vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 23-5-1935

[4] Mythical cow that gave anything that was desired

Suffice it to say that there has been some deliberation behind this schedule. Our experience has been that this order facilitates understanding of the text.

It may well be asked why the recitation has to begin on a Friday. The reason for this is simply the following: For considerable length of time a complete recitation used to take fourteen days. In the Yeravda jail I thought of a seven-day recitation and the idea was put into effect on a Friday. In this way and since that day, the recitation week begins on a Friday.

There are two reasons why I mention the matter of complete recitation here: to show how far devotion to the *Gita* has taken some of us up to date and to indicate to the reader the way to encourage its study.

But we are not to rest content with merely reciting the *Gita*. It is a spiritual dictionary; it is a tremendous force for straightening the creases of the soul; it is the refuge of the afflicted; it is an awakener from stupor. Only those who have this faith can derive help from reciting the *Gita.* I do not in the least suggest that recitation of the *Gita* without an understanding of its meaning is by itself beneficial to a man. With sufficient effort a tame parrot can certainly be taught to memorize the *Gita.* But that is not going to bring the slightest merit either to the parrot or to its trainer.

The *Gita* is the living, life-giving immortal mother. The mother who suckled us will one day disappear and leave us in the lurch. We see countless mothers failing to protect their children from peril. But one who seeks the support of Mother *Gita* saves himself from the greatest peril. She is ever wakeful and she never lets one down. But a mother will not give one nourishment unless one asks for it. Mother *Gita* too gives nothing without our asking for it. Before taking anyone under her wing she tests him severely, expects whole-hearted devotion. The devotion, too, should not be dry. She wants single-minded devotion. Hence, she plainly refuses to help those who are not prepared to surrender their all to her.

The student of physics gains an insight into his subject only when he is crazy after it. Those who obtain M.A. and B.A. degrees read day and night, spend money and put themselves to great physical strain. From amongst those who make such efforts, only a few are successful at the first attempt. Those who fail do not despair but try again and again and only rest when they have passed. And in the

end—?

For those who wish to drink the nectar that is the *Gita,* much greater effort than this should be and is required. But how many want to partake of that nectar? Even of those who feel the need, how many are prepared to make a strenuous effort? We know that the number of people devoted to the *Gita* in the way I have suggested is negligible. Yet all agree that the *Gita* is the essence of all the Upanishads. No Hindu should remain ignorant of it. At present, however, all religion has depreciated in value. This is not the occasion to go into the reasons for this. In this note of appeal all that I have tried to do on the occasion of the publication of this volume is to draw the attention of seekers to the gem that is the *Gita* and to suggest how it can be put to good use. May it bear fruit.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Gitapadarthakosha, pp. iii to vi

511. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 24, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is a left hand effort just to give the right a little rest.

You do seem to be overworking yourself. You ought to find a way out.

The newspaper cutting is funny. They cannot live without lies. Presently they will reduce you to thin air ! ! ! Then you will fly about everywhere without any escort and I shall need provide no corner for you when you choose to waft yourself to Segaon. The only difficulty will be how to make you out—a mere airy nothing. Well, by the time you become nothing, I shall have grown a sixth sense enabling me to recognize beings or non-beings of the air.

Don't you think that I have nothing else to do but to write nonsense. I wanted to chat with you. I don't want to be always lecturing to you on your eczema. And the wretched cutting gave me the text for this letter.

The apples have come in again. Are they still from your

garden?

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3593. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6402

512. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

September 24, 1936

CHI. AMBUJAM,[1]

Your fruit has been coming in regularly and it has been serving its purpose.

I returned to Segaon on Saturday. I am keeping well though still feeling weak. I don't want to move out of the place if I can at all help it.

I see that Mrs. Rangasami has given you Rs. 2,000 for the Hindi work.

I hope Kichi is better and that Father and Mother are also keeping well. And how about you?

I am glad you are continuing the *Ramayana*.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

513. LETTER TO A. H. WEST

September 24, 1936

The Phoenix experiment for me was a life-work. And so, if you ever come to India, you will find me amid conditions simpler than in Phoenix. For the ideal has not only persisted but it bears today an ampler meaning.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] This is in Hindi.

514. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

September 24, 1936

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

I have your letter. Who knows when this will reach you?

Everything is going on smoothly here. Every day there is a churning, giving lots of butter. Today two and a half seers of curds yielded fourteen *tolas* of butter which gave ten *tolas* of ghee. Pyarelal has become an expert at it. Munnalal looks after the milk.

We had a heavy rain today.

Kishorelal's letter is enclosed. He is all right now, though pretty weak.

Tell Maharaj[1] that I got his letter.

Yes, give them a sound training in sanitation too.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1887

515. LETTER TO M. S. KELKAR

September 25, 1936

DEAR ICE[2],

What shall I say to you? I would love to have you by me and yet with all your belief in stars, I have no faith in your treatment. Your belief, too, that I gained by your treatment is not quite correct. After all your effort, I had at last to undergo an operation.[3] You treated many patients in Sabarmati but except little Manu who had raw eggs, nobody derived any permanent relief. You have been trying all these many years to settle down to solid work but you still remain a rolling stone. I very much fear that you are self-deluded. It is high time you recognized your limitations. I know you have talent and energy. It grieves me to find it running to waste.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Sant Tukdoji Maharaj; the addressee had gone to his Ashram at Mojhari to teach carding, spinning, etc.

[2] The addressee was a specialist in ice treatment.

[3] On January 20, 1919

516. LETTER TO BAL D. KALELKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 25, 1936

CHI. BAL,

It is strange that you of all people should have this sudden craze for testimonials. However, if you want one here it is.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2178

517. TESTIMONIAL TO BAL D. KALELKAR

September 25, 1936

Chi. Bal, the younger son of Kakasaheb Kalelkar, is well known to me. It may be said that he was brought up under my care at Sabarmati Ashram. He is very intelligent, sociable and cheerful. His ambition is to live a life of service after acquiring much knowledge. Chi. Bal rendered me excellent service during my second 21-day fast[2] and on other occasions. He is entitled to my blessings at all times.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2177

518. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 25, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

Not only are you foolish, but you are also silly. Your letter is full of nonsense. It appears that in your view no man is good. I got your letter regarding Dr. Gilder. He did not open any of your Urdu letters nor has he read any. I read out your last letter to Mahadev as itcontained nothing confidential. Doesn't a parent have that freedom?

I had replied immediately to your letter regarding Dr. Gilder saying that if you needed to be examined by Dr. Gilder it could be

[1] *Vide* the following item.
[2] From May 8 to May 29, 1933

arranged. Did you get my letter addressed c/o Bari, the Theosophical Lodge? I have not failed to reply to any of your letters. What can I do if letters fail to reach you? If you wish, I shall obtain a certificate of posting. Why do you make yourself unhappy for nothing?

Zohra and Shaukat are getting married today in Delhi. The ceremony will be entirely private.

Write to me regularly. You should write only in Urdu.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 349

519. LETTER TO TARABEHN N. MASHRUWALA

September 25, 1936

CHI. TARA,

What shall I say to you? I would not like to rebuke you but I cannot bear your not keeping your promises. Where is the account you were going to render every week? It is not even in the letter you write. Why are you so sluggish? When will you wake up?

Do you write to Dr. Ooman?You should have kept up the contact for the sake of your studies if for nothing else. If you have broken with him, I would recommend that you make it up with him. I have not given up hope. It is open to you to get from me fresh instructions from day to day. But you do not seem to be interested even in improving your health. Who can create this interest in you?It is our duty to preserve this largesse from God and make noble use of it. But it seems you have closed all your doors. This is not right. You have strength, a desire to serve, candour and purity. But there is also in you something—call it obstinacy or stupidity or some other failing—that does not let your potentialities flower. It would be a good thing for you to find out that shortcoming and resolutely remove it. Open up your mind, which you have locked.

I got the yarn. Congratulations to those who participated in the spinning. I trust your parents are doing well. Do you make use of Oommen's book or his box?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7528. Also C.W. 5004. Courtesy: Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

520. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

September 25, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

You shouldn't be in a hurry to come to Segaon. You have as yet not even acquired a command over your handwriting. Ask yourself whether you can live at peace with Munnalal, Balwantsinha and Mirabehn. At present we have perfect peace here and there are no quarrels to annoy me. I tremble at the thought of a threat to this peace. So think calmly and tell me yourself. Meanwhile, you are already busy with the work there. You have peace. Mahadev gets your full help. He needs that help. Therefore it seems you are in the right place. You will not take this to mean that I do not at all want to have you in Segaon. I do wish to have you here, but not at the cost of any threat to peace. Even from here I do try to guide you. Do you expect anything more?You should patiently consider whether you yourself would be happy here. Do not encroach on Mahadev's time for this. Do the thinking yourself and write to me what you feel.

I hope your leg is all right now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9348. Also C.W. 6623. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

521. LETTER TO GOPINATH

September 25, 1936

BHAI GOPINATHJI[1],

. . . [2] Now tell me if there is in the Ayurvedic system any medicine for malaria as efficacious as quinine. Which medicine is definitely more effective than the allopathic drugs? In the villages, in spite of my strong inclination to the contrary, I have to take

[1] Editor of *Arogya Darpana,* a Hindi journal advocating Ayurvedic system of medicine; the letter was originally published in the November 1936 issue of the journal.

[2] Omissions as in the source

recourse to quinine, soda-bicarb, potassium permanganate and tincture iodine . . . .[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]
Gujarati, 3-1-1937

522. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

September 25, 1936

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

It is only natural for you to grieve over your father's death. What you write about [the devoted][2] Hindu [wife][3] is perfectly right. You must of course console your mother.

The question of giving up the effort to observe *brahmacharya* does not at all arise. Mother *Gita* assures us that "no well-doer meets with a sad end"[4]. You may certainly fast on Saturdays if you find it beneficial.

Consider carefully whatever you decide to do.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4289

523. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN AGRAWAL

September 25, 1936

BHAI SHRIMAN,

I read your *Naye Yugka Raga*. I liked the poems. Your purpose is clear and pure. But I do not consider myself qualified to express any opinion about its poetic quality. Only poets can judge whether your work deserves to be published.

Blessings from
BAPU

[1] Omissions as in the source
[2] Illegible in the source
[3] *ibid*
[4] *Bhagavad Gita*, VI. 40

[PS.]

How much time I spent over writing this ! I didn't know what to write.

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 299

524. THE LAW OF OUR BEING

The Statesman has devoted a reasoned article to the argument advanced by me in reply[1] to its criticism of Canon Sheppard's war against war. In that article a very clever attempt has been made to dispute the whole of the position taken up by me.

The writer says that whilst the *Bhagavad Gita* assists him, it does not assist the terrorist. Once you admit the lawfulness of the use of physical force for purposes other than the benefit of the person against whom it is used, as in the case of a surgeon against his patient, you cannot draw an arbitrary line of distinction. The *Mahabharata,* of which the *Gita* is only a tiny chapter, describes in gruesome detail a night slaughter of the innocents which, but for our recent experiences of our civilized war, would be considered unbelievable in actual practice. The grim fact is that the terrorists have in absolute honesty, earnestness and with cogency used the *Gita,* which some of them know by heart, in defence of their doctrine and policy. Only they have no answer to my interpretation of the *Gita,* except to say that mine is wrong and theirs is right. Time alone will show whose isright. The *Gita* is not a theoretical treatise. It is a living but silent guide whose directions one has to understand by patient striving.

The *Statesman* writer next likens Canon Sheppard's position to that of Arjuna. Surely this is a faulty analogy, hastily drawn. Arjuna was the Commander-in-Chief of the Pandava forces. He became suddenly paralysed when he contemplated the awful scene before him. As general he knew exactly what he had to do. He knew that he had to war against his cousins. His paralysis was due to momentary weakness. He could not have given up the task before him without creating the utmost confusion and disorder, and bringing disgrace on himself and his innumerable friends and followers. He was bound to engage himself and his followers in the terrible slaughter for which he

[1] *Vide* "God of Love, Not War", 5-9-1936

had trained himself and them. It is profitless to conjecture what would have happened if non-violence in thought, word and deed had suddenly but really possessed him.

That rich possession, let us hope, has come to Dick Sheppard and his companions. Anyway, so far as I know, his position is wholly different from Arjuna's. He is no general of an army drawn up in battle array. He makes no distinction between kinsmen and others. For him man is man, no matter where he is born of what his skin is, or what he calls himself. After having prayerfully searched through the book which for him is the Book of Life, he has been driven to the conclusion that he may not hurt his fellowmen for gain for himself or his country, and that therefore he must himself abstain from participation, direct or indirect, in war. He naturally takes the next step of preaching to his neighbours the doctrine of peace or love and goodwill towards men without exception. This is a position which Arjuna never took up.

But the *Statesman* writer has many strings to his bow. And the strongest is his denial of non-violence or love as the law of the human race. If love or non-violence be not the law of our being, the whole of my argument falls to pieces, and there is no escape from a periodical recrudescence of war, each succeeding one outdoing the preceding one in ferocity. I cannot undertake, and least of all through a newspaper article written during moments snatched from the daily routine, to prove that love is the source and end of life. But I venture to make some relevant suggestions which may pave the way for an understanding of the Law. All the Teachers that ever lived have preached that law with more or less vigour. If Love was not the law of life, life would not have persisted in the midst of death. Life is a perpetual triumph over the grave. If there is a fundamental distinction between man and beast, it is the former's progressive recognition of the law and its application in practice to his own personal life. All the saints of the world, ancient and modern, were each according to his light and capacity a living illustration of that supreme Law of our Being. That the brute in us seems so often to gain an easy triumph is true enough.-That, however, does not disprove the law. It shows the difficulty of practice. How should it be otherwise with a law which is as high as truth itself?When the practice of the law becomes universal, God will reign on earth as He does in Heaven. I need not be reminded that earth and heaven are in us. We know the earth, we are strangers to the Heaven within us. If it is allowed that for some the practice of love

is possible, it is arrogance not to allow even the possibility of its practice in all the others. Not very remote ancestors of ours indulged in cannibalism and many other practices which we would today call loathsome. No doubt in those days too there were Dick Sheppards who must have been laughed at and possibly pilloried for preaching (to them) the strange doctrine of refusing to eat fellow men. Modern science is replete with illustrations of the seemingly impossible having become possible within living memory. But the victories of physical science would be nothing against the victory of the Science of Life which is summed up in Love which is the Law of our Being. I know that it cannot be proved by argument. It shall be proved by persons living it in their lives in utter disregard of consequences to themselves. There is no real gain without sacrifice. And since demonstration of the Law of Love is the realest gain, sacrifice too must be the greatest required.

The rest of the argument advanced by the *Statesman* writer in refutation of mine needs no answer if the Law is recognized. His argument is valid if the Law is denied or doubted.

One point may, however, be dealt with in passing. The writer seems to pooh-pooh the idea of honour derived from[1] individual and national gain. He says: "What is this honour that would be left to a nation that voluntarily destroyed itself?" There is no question for one[2] of self-destruction, voluntary or otherwise. But there is of "anation allowing itself to be destroyed" for the sake of preserving its honour, as would be the case, say, if Indians died to the man, without lifting a finger, in their determination not to surrender to the will of an invading host. A woman defends her own honour and that of her sex, when she non-violently refuses to the point of death the advances of a rake. Young Prahlad non-violently risked his life to defend his honour, which consisted in his persistence in declaring his belief in God. Jesus defended his honour and that of man when he preferred the death of a felon to the denial of his faith.

Harijan, 26-9-1936

[1] Slip for 'devoid of'; *vide* "A Correction", 10-10-1936.
[2] Slip for 'me'; *ibid*

525. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 26, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

If the unbreakable thermos comes, I shall not return it. As I destroy all your letters, I have inadvertently destroyed the Mahmudabad address. Please repeat it on a separate sheet.

Surely it is 'idiotic' to pass summer in Simla merely because you possess a house there. You ought to select another summer resort where you can really recoup yourself.

Remember one of the attributes of non-violence. It seldom speaks, it simply and silently acts. It appeals not to the intellect, it pierces the heart. The more it speaks and argues, the less effective it becomes. Therefore do not hesitate to let your case be lost by default. Apparent defeat may be the hour of victory. Speech is often a sign of weakness.

You will please give a trial to meat if Shummy says it is necessary. Your vegetarianism will be on surer ground for your yielding now, if yielding becomes a duty.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3594. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6403

526. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

September 26, 1936

MY DEAR KU.,

Jajuji has sent in his resignation to be presented to you, if I would agree, for submission to the Board. I am not quite happy over the prospect. Though J. is quite capable of adjusting himself to new conditions, the manner. . .[1] to leave. . .[2] do not know that the resignation will be in the best interest of the Sangh. I will like you to examine the situation from that standpoint and that alone. Just think the thing over with Bharatan and let me have your opinion.

[1] Faded in the source
[2] *ibid*

Meanwhile I am holding the paper. I am asking J., too, to consider the question from that point of view.

From a photostat: G.N. 10111

527. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

September 26, 1936

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. The Bhangis' problem seems to have been solved satisfactorily. I am returning the letter which you want.

I am surprised about Chandulal[1]. I have sent him the relevant extract from your letter and asked for his reply.

I hope your work is going on smoothly now. It must. Very few workers are left now.

I am hoping to meet you all. I only wish to pay a visit of duty. There should be, therefore, no publicity.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5540

528. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 26, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I myself went through your letter written in pencil. I just got your wire and am sending a letter to Dr. Shah. You may show it to Dr. Jivraj if Dr. Shah is away. Send me a wire if you need anything.

You are foolish. You make yourself unhappy. You deliberately suspect people. Why did you have to go away when you had fever? Why don't you write a note to Kanti and ask him to come? At the moment I don't have the courage to keep you or anybody else in Segaon. Let me settle down in peace.

Why don't you listen to me?

What do you propose to do if Bari goes out of town?

[1] Chandulal Becharbhai Patel who was then Education Officer of the Gondal State. The reference is to the segregation of Harijans at public places.

Shall I make some other arrangement for you in Bombay itself? Who are there with you in the house?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 350

529. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

September 26, 1936

BHAI MUNSHI,

Kakasaheb's acquaintance with you has been growing and he is having the opportunity of reading your works. He read *Prithvi-vallabh* and has pressed me to read it and give my opinion on it. I read it four days ago and now send my opinion direct to you. Kakasaheb will read it. You had already sent me some of your books when I was in jail where, however, I could read none of them. You had even then asked for my opinion. I read *Prithvivallabh* with interest. Not one character appealed to me. I did not at all wish to be like Munj. Why so? It would not be quite in the fitness of things for you to say that you delineate the characters as they are. Some at least in this wide and varied world are likely to be noble, free from hypocrisy, loyal. Mrinal you reduced to pieces, and poor Vilas melted like wax before Rasanidhi. Could it be that men are so cunning and that even a forty-year-old, homely and self-restrained woman would fall for a man's love talk and suggestive gestures? What does a man read for? For mere enjoyment? And that too so low? Kalidasa wrote nothing of the kind. Shakespeare made no such impression on me. From them I learn something. Why not from you? Personally you appear to me nice and pleasant. I am drawn to you. I have hopes of getting much from you both. How did I fail to get a glimpse of your personality in *Prithvivallabh* which is regarded—or isn't it—your best work? I have little hope that Kaka can solve this puzzle for me. You alone can do it. There is of course no question in this which calls for a reply immediately.

Now allow me to have a little fun. Your last sentence is somewhat like this: Crushed under the elephant's foot, Munj's body lay flat like a *rotlo*[1]. The word *rotlo* was all right; but did it ever occur

[1] Cake made from millet or other coarse grain

to you that the body could not be turned into a *rotlo*? It may do to say 'turned into *chhundo*[1]'. The body can be turned into *murabbo*[2], into *churna*[3], but it can never be turned into a *rotlo*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7606. Courtesy: K.M. Munshi

530. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

September 26, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

You have no reason to be irregular. I definitely wish to learn of your condition even before I have recovered my strength.

I am regaining my strength. I have at present reduced my food intake. I take about a pound and a half of milk. Among fruits I take *mosambis*, prunes and occasionally *chikoos* or some other fruit. I take plenty of rest.

You can find half an hour for a hip-bath whatever work you may be doing. You must. Nor would it do to be unmindful of your food. You will be bed-ridden if you are careless in this regard.

I had a good talk with Father. It was decided that Jayaprakash should get Rs. 50. I take it he will himself explain things to you better. Mirabehn is of course with me. She is improving. The rains may be said to have stopped now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3482

[1] A preparation made by crushing the ingredients
[2] Jelly
[3] Powder

531. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 27, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

If you do not chew garlic well, it is likely to pass out undigested. It must therefore be well pounded. You may take it the last thing before retiring in an ounce of *dahi* or at the table.

You must send me a copy of your rural broadcast.

Khan Saheb wants me specially to thank you for all you are doing for Mehrtaj and Mariam. I am glad they are coming under your influence.

Does Navin ever write to you?

Too late to say more.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3744. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6900

532. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 27, 1936

CHI. AMTUL,

You are hard to please. I have written to you daily. The first letter was sent, as instructed by you, care of the Postmaster and the later ones to the Easter Villa address. Am I to blame if you don't get the letters? And is it my fault that I cannot do something beyond my power? Tell me now how I can satisfy you.

I see no need at present to consult Dr. Gilder. It would be right on our part to go to another after we have tried one. Nonetheless, if you wish I shall write to Dr. Gilder too. You may consult Dr. Jivraj if he is available and anyone else you think fit.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 351

533. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 27, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I got your postcard. I do not at all like your having to suffer, but what am I to do? Do you take anyone with you when you go to Dr. Shah's? Does he carefully attend to you? Give me the full details regularly. Is Bari still there, or has he left? I cannot help it if you make yourself unhappy.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 352

534. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

September 27, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

If I were to call you after you had copied out the whole of the *Gita*, I would ask you to copy out a hundred *slokas* a day and be done away with that excuse. What I am thinking about is the threat to my peace. Nor do I say that the fault lies with you alone. I have made the utmost demand on you because you wish to stay with me purely for training yourself.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9581. Also C.W. 6553. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

535. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 27, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending with this Gadodia's cheque for Rs. 200, which for the present is to be credited to the Segaon account. You will be sending it to Jamnalalji's, I suppose?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11485

536. LETTER TO LAKSHMI NARAYAN GADODIA

September 27, 1936

BHAI LAKSHMI NARAYANJI,

I am very happy to see that you are both taken up with hydrotherapy. Let this always continue. You have found a pure altruistic activity in which both of you have such great faith and I see the greatest good where the energies of you both are equally applied. I continued my morning hip-bath even through the attack of malaria, and my walks too. The hipbath still continues though the hour has been shifted to ten o'clock. After the morning prayers I go to sleep and I cannot manage a walk after the hip-bath at 10 o'clock. Anyway I do go for walks twice a day. I cannot take friction-bath because due to lack of practice the foreskin cannot be drawn back in the required manner. I had made an attempt on receiving your first letter. The skin is intact and I used to take friction-bath years ago. I have not yet started having the abdominal mud-pack at bedtime. Formerly I used to try mud-packs on many occasions and now I shall try it for your sake if for no other reason. If I come across an honest naturopath, I would certainly keep him with me and popularize the treatment. I have not so far found such a person. Most of the hydropaths in India have reduced their treatment to a means of making money. There are very few like your Moulvi Saheb, and they cannot give up their occupations. What can we do under such circumstances? I have thecheque for Rs. 200. I shall see how it can be utilized in Segaon. Three-fourths of the Segaon village is owned by Jamnalalji and he has authorized me to spend for the villagers' benefit whatever returns he gets from the property and I think the amount is sufficient. Hence I cannot tell you just now how and when I shall be able to use your Rs. 200 for the welfare of the people of Segaon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5624

537. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,

September 28, 1936

CHI. AMALA,

You have made such progress in Gujarati as to tempt me to correct the few mistakes you have made.

I am quite well. I wish you could say as much about yourself.

I do hope you will soon have good news about and from Mother.

You must not stint yourself about food. You should eat plenty of fruit and salads.

The friend you have in mind is all right.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

538. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 28, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

Herewith the message. Tell Mother[1] that I am longing as a child to rest my head in her lap and Father's[2]. It is unthinkable that I should go to Ahmedabad and not see them. So take it that, God willing, I shall be there. The date will be around 27th or thereabouts.

Your purpose could be met if someone reaches there between the 2nd and the 12th. I am considering whom I can send. You may send me a wire if you have some other names in your mind.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8506. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Devkunwar Gandhi
[2] Khushalchand Gandhi

539. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 28, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending three articles with this. You may delete from the articles anything that you do not like. I wrote out what I had long been contemplating. I took up my pen at 8 and laid it down at 10. I took up the file at 7.30. It took me half an hour reading and rearranging the matter from Hardikar, drawing out the substance of Raja's writing and trimming the one[1] regarding the Madurai judge.

Narandas does need some public figure. Whom may we send? Can you think of somebody? How about Kaka, Jajuji, Kumarappa, Lakshmidas, Malkani? What about Bapa? Have you any woman in view? I would send no one but Mira if she were well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Post the letter to Magan by air mail.[2]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11486

540. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

September 28, 1936

CHI. BRAJKRISHNA,

You must have received my letter[3] about Deka. I am all right. Amtul Salaam is not here. She stayed for two or three days at Maganwadi but never at Segaon. She is now in Bombay. I had already read about your mother in your letter to Mahadev and I hope she is now better. How is your health?

I suppose you get my letters regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2443

[1] *Vide* "Remnant of Barbarism", 3-10-1936

[2] The letter to Maganlal P. Mehta, however, is not traceable.

[3] *Vide*"Letter to Brijkrishna Chandiwala", 23-9-1936

541. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,

September 29, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your two letters at the same time.

Khan Saheb is delighted that you are giving all that attention to the girls.

You should yield to Shummy now and take what meat he wants you to. There will be grace in your yielding now. There will be little or none if you yield when you are driven to it. And there will be no restraint possible. That you took very little meat when you did is no argument to prove that it will produce no effect in your case. Since you have no religious objection, I would like you to listen to me and straightway tell Shummy to prescribe what he likes. You must get rid of the eczema before you begin to move about.

I see that you can't come to me in December. Let us see what is possible in January and February. Of course you are to be in Faizpur at the time of the Congress if you are able to go to Ahmedabad. When do you descend to Jullundur?

The idea of building a separate cottage for yourself in Simla is a chimera. If you had one, you would be torn to pieces. You are physically unfit to have an eternal round of guests. Mira is free from fever but is not herself still. But she will be quite well in a few days. I am getting stronger though slowly.

You will persevere with the hip-baths and try the sitzbath too. I have described the latter to you. Sit on a stool with the legs outside the water which should be level with the stool and then gently wash the genitals with a smooth towel. It is supposed to work wonders. You should take this separately.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3745. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6901

542. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 29, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I know nothing about my birthday. I see it only as the Charkha Jayanti. The reason why you take an interest in observing the day is not that you are my kinsman but so that the charkha which is as dear to you as it is to me may gain impetus in your vicinity. In the sluggish atmosphere that prevails today this is an arduous, maybe even a rather dreary task. But faith can make a difficult task easy and a dreary task interesting. May your faith make the people around you see the power of the charkha.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8507. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

543. LETTER TO J.P. BHANSALI

September 29, 1936

CHI. BHANSALI,

It is very good indeed that following Mahadev's advice you gave up the idea of coming to me and hiding yourself as in a cave. Your cave is there. Listen to another bit of advice. For the boil in your arm-pit, perhaps plain earth will not suffice. You should let ordinary poultice be applied to it. I see no reason why it should not maturate.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

544. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 29, 1936

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

You have given me good news. Samples of the exercise books

are good. It will be all to the good if people do not forget khadi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10838. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

545. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON, WARDHA
September 30,1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

Your letter is full of fancies. You listen neither to your brothers nor to me. Why a cottage? Why a visit of Ooty? You ought to improve your health in Bomaby. One's mother's home is the true cottage. I would have to hang my head if Dr. Shah did for money what he would not do on the strength of my letter. I advise you to accept his treatment and understand that he does what he thinks right. After the nose has been attended to, you may certainly take homoeopathic treatment if you want to.

Your Urdu letters have certainly not gone astray. I have of course replied to them. Mehrtaj will pursue her studies at Vakil's school there. Lali has gone to the High School at Panchgani. All will go well if you keep up your patience. The Rajkot climate is good if you should choose to go there. Balkrishna, who is staying there for the present, finds it good. I went through your letter myself.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 353

546. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

September 30, 1936

CHI. LILA,

There is no end to your *lila*[1]. Yesterday you wrote, "We shall talk it out when we meet," and today you write to me that there is no letter from me. And what a bad hand you have written! It is all right if

[1] Play, sport, especially of God

you do not go to Rajkot just now. Go there when we go to Kashi and from Rajkot join us at Ahmedabad when we leave the place. Isn't that what you want?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11487

547. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

[About *September 1936*][1]

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I cannot understand why there was no news yesterday.

Hearty congratulations to both of you for the termination of mutual non-co-operation. This news has removed a heavy burden of anxiety from my head. Let the co-operation grow from day to day. I hope to get much work from both of you.

I will inquire from the doctor why he did not come yesterday.

More kudos to Balwant Singh for progress in the production of butter. It is one more step forward that Prahlad, Govind and Rajaram have started taking butter-milk there. Everything will be all right if we hold our patience. I will inquire if anyone needs butter-milk here. I will procure the *Ramayana* for you. You need not try to secure it. Now I know that letters and newspapers were sent from Maganwadi yesterday also but they could not be forwarded from the bungalow. It would be better if someone brought them here. It seems necessary to spend some money over this arrangement. Now it is exactly fiveo'clock. Neither Sadashiv nor Prahlad has arrived. Sadashiv has already taken letters, and newspapers from Maganwadi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8595

[1] From the contents, it is evident that the letter was written about this time; *vide* "Letter to Munnalal G. Shah", 9-9-1936

548. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,

October 1, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I was glad to have your little note saying the toothache was over. I shall anxiously await the Dentist's report.

The unbreakable thermos has arrived after all. Let us see when that too shares the fate of the others.

More than half the apples were quite uneatable. Evidently they have now become too delicate for transport. Is there any fun in wasting money like that? Why not put to my credit all the money you thus save. It may then be used for buying good fruit as and when needed. That is a sporting offer that should appeal even to an idiot ! ! !

I dare not give you more time just now as I have to attend to Nanavati[1] who is laid up with fever whose kind I do not yet know.

Love

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3746. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6902

549. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

October 1, 1936

CHI. PREMA,

I have both your letters. Yesterday I got your last letter. Day before yesterday I had to write 'no' to Achyut Patwardhan. Narandas had invited me for Rentiya Baras.[2] But I could not accept it. Would you then wish me to make an exception in your case? You must understand that from the point of view of our ideals it is good for Khan Saheb to refrain, for the present, from going out for public speeches, etc. Slowly we are getting to know each other. Am I then relieved?

[1] Amritlal Nanavati

[2] Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram calendar

I will be able to answer your earlier letter only at leisure. At the moment I have too much work.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Try to find some women worker; persuade Khurshedbehn.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3788

550. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

October 1, 1936

CHI. MARY,

Just before retiring, this is merely to acknowledge your two love letters giving me very cheerful titbits.

My love to you both.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6068. Also C.W. 3398. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

551. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[Before *October 2, 1936*] [1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I didn't at all like your returning after having arrived so late in the day. However, I did not have the courage to insist on your staying over, with the result that both of you were quite exhausted and reached at 11 in the night. I would not wish to ask anyone to stop over and sleep for the night in this weather. Nanavati's fever persists. It is not malaria; it may be typhoid. There is no need to send a doctor from there; I hope to cope with it.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11497

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 2-10-1936

552. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 2, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I am replying to your letter as soon as I have got it. I enclose a letter[1] also to Vadud[2], from which you will see what my advice is in the matter. I do not write more as I am in a hurry. You should act thoughtfully in your interest. You have a number of ailments. The trouble with your nails requires immediate care. It is better to follow Dr. Shah's advice regarding your nose. If, however, you wish to undergo homoeopathic treatment, take that too there. There are many doctors in Ahmedabad and also in Rajkot, no doubt. I would suggest Rajkot if you definitely do not like Wardha. At Rajkot you will be happy and have peace of mind. The question that always troubles me is how to bring you peace and happiness.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 354

553. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

October 2, 1936

CHI. LILA,

You have seen how from being Lilavati you have become Lila. Now before you become Lili I have to be worthy of it. If I were, I would not have to argue with you. It is difficult to become a kinsman without being a blood relation. About paper you may do as you think fit.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9582. Also C.W. 6564. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] The letter is not traceable.
[2] Addressee's nephew

554. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON,

October 2, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

You may bring in a doctor, if you wish, to put your mind at rest. It would be good if Amtul's letter goes today. The rest when you come. At present Rajendra Babu and others have gathered here. Nanavati is still not free from fever but he is cheerful.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11489

555. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 2, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

Did you find the Kavishar judgment in the *Times*? Do they send newspapers to Navin?—*Harijan, Harijanbandhu* and *The Hindustan Times*? I think Kanti too has asked for them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11490

556. REMNANT OF BARBARISM

We know by painful experience of what is daily happening in India that there are husbands enough who regard their wives as their property like their cattle or household furniture, and therefore think they have the right to beat them as they would their cattle. But I was unprepared for a judicial endorsement of the brutal habit till a friend put into my hands a newspaper cutting reporting a decision of the Sessions Judge of Madura recognizing the legal right of a husband of beating his wife. Fortunately an English Judge on going through the calendar detected this extraordinary Judgment of the Madura Sessions Judge and issued notice to the accused husband to show cause. In due course the case was heard by Justices Pandurang Row and K. S.

Menon, whose judgement[1] I make apology for quoting below:

> ... It is perhaps enough to say that though the learned Judge may be entitled to have his own views on the subject in a private capacity, yet he was not justfied in laying down the law in this manner from his seat on the Bench declaring that the husband has the right of punishing his wife by beating her for impudence or impertinence. No such right is recognized by the Indian Penal Code and wife-beating is not one of the exceptions in the chapter of 'General Exceptions'.
>
> One can easily imagine the serious consequences of such a declaration being made from the Bench by a Sessions Judge unless the declaration is declared to be wrong and unfounded by this court. That is the reason why we thought it necessary to state in unmistakable terms that the learned Sessions Judge's declaration of the rights of husbands in this regard has no foundation, so that no one may rely upon that in future as any justification or excuse for beating wives.

It has to be confessed with shame that even educated husbands are not free from the belief in the right of husbands to treat their wives as chattels and beat them whenever they feel the impulse to do so. Would that this judgment would show them that such treatment of wives is a remnant of barbarism.

Harijan, 3-10-1936

557. TEACHING OF HINDUISM

Referring to my recent articles[2] on the English peace movement led by Canon Sheppard, a friend writes:

> I hold the view that independently of the context of the *Gita* and the preliminary conversation between Arjuna and Shri Krishna, Hinduism does not stand decisively for non-violence in regard to organized invasion. It would be straining too much to interpret all out best scriptures in this way. Hinduism no doubt holds the spirit of compassion and love as the very highest duty for man.
>
> But it does not preach what you or the pacifists preach, and it is no good straining everything into an allegory for this object.

[1] Of which only extracts are reproduced here.

[2] *Vide* "God of Love, Not War", 5-9-1936 and "The Law of Our Being", 26-9-1936

I have admitted in my introduction[1] to the *Gita* known as *Anasaktiyoga* that it is not a treatise on non-violence nor was it written to condemn war. Hinduism as it is practised today, or has even been known to have ever been practised, has certainly not condemned war as I do. What, however, I have done is to put a new but natural and logical interpretation upon the whole teaching of the *Gita* and the spirit of Hinduism. Hinduism, not to speak of other religions, is ever evolving. It has no one scripture like the Quran or the Bible. Its scriptures are also evolving and suffering addition. The *Gita* itself is an instance in point. It has given a new meaning to karma, sannyasa, *yajna*, etc. It has breathed new life into Hinduism. It has given an original rule of conduct. Not that what the *Gita* has given was not implied in the previous writings, but the Gita put these implications in a concrete shape. I have endeavoured in the light of a prayerful study of the other faiths of the world and, what is more, in the light of my own experiences in trying to live the teaching of Hinduism as interpreted in the *Gita*, to give an extended but in no way strained meaning to Hinduism, not as buried in its ample scriptures, but as a living faith speaking like a mother to her aching child. What I have done is perfectly historical. I have followed in the footsteps of our forefathers. At one time they sacrificed animals to propitiate angry gods. Their descendants, but our less remote ancestors, read a different meaning into the word 'sacrifice' and they taught that sacrifice was meant to be of our baser self, to please not angry gods but the one living God within. I hold that the logical outcome of the teaching of the *Gita* is decidedly for peace at the price of life itself. It is the highest aspiration of the human species.

The *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, the two books that millions of Hindus know and regard as their guides, are undoubtedly allegories as the internal evidence shows. That they most probably deal with historical figures does not affect my proposition. Each epic describes the eternal duel that goes on between the forces of darkness and of light. Anyway, I must disclaim any intention of straining the meaning of Hinduism or the *Gita* to suit any preconceived notions of mine. My notions were an outcome of a study of the *Gita*, *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, Upanishads, etc.

Harijan, 3-10-1936

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 23-5-1935

558. HEADING FOR PROMISCUITY

Thus writes a young man:

> You want everyone to become moral in order to change the world. I do not exactly know what you mean by morality-whether you confine it to matters sexual, or whether it covers the whole field of human conduct. I suspect the former, because I do not see you pointing out to your capitalist and landlord friends the great injustice and harm they are doing by making huge profits at the expense of labourers and tenants, while you are never tired of castigating young men and women for their moral lapses in sexual matters and upholding before them the virtues of celibacy. You claim to know the mind of Indian youth. I do not claim to represent anybody, but as a solitary young man I beg to challenge your claim. You do not seem to know through what environment the modern middle-class youth is passing, what with long spells of unemployment, crushing social customs and traditions, and temptations of co-education! It is all a conflict between the old and the new ideas, resulting usually in the defect and misery of youth. I humbly request you to be kind and compassionate to the youth and not to judge them by your puritanic standards of morality. After all, I think every act, when it is performed with mutal consent and mutual love, is moral whether it is performed within marriage or without. Since the invention of contraceptives the sexual basis of the institution of marriage has been knocked down. It has now become an institution mainly for the protection and welfare of children. You will, perhaps, be shocked at these ideas. I would here venture to ask you not to forget your own youth when judging the present-day youth. You were an over-sexed individual given to excessive indulgence, which seems to have created in you a sort of disgust towards the sexual act and hence your asceticism and the idea of sin. Compared to you, I think many young men of today are better in this respect.

This is from a typical letter. To my knowledge the writer has gone through several changes even during the past three months that I have known him. He is still passing through a crisis. The extract quoted is from a long letter which together with many of his other writings he would gladly have me publish. But what I have quoted just represents the attitude of many a youth.

Of course my sympathies are with young men and young women. I have a vivid recollection of the days of my own youth. And it is because of my faith in the youth of the country that I am never tired of dealing with problems that face them.

For me morals, ethics and religion are convertible terms. A moral life without reference to religion is like a house built upon

sand. And religion divorced from morality is like 'sounding brass' good only for making a noise and breaking heads. Morality includes truth, ahimsa and continence. Every virtue that mankind has ever practised is referable to and derived from these three fundamental virtues. Non-violence and continence are again derivable from Truth, which for me is God.

Without continence a man or women is undone. To have no control over the senses is like sailing in a rudderless ship bound to break to pieces on coming in contact with the very first rock. Hence my constant insistence on continence. My correspondent is right in saying in effect that the coming in of contraceptives has changed the ideas about sexual relations. If mutual consent makes a sexual act moral whether within marriage or without, and by parity of reasoning even between members of the same sex, the whole basis of sexual morality is gone and nothing but 'misery and defeat' awaits the youth of the country. Many young men and women are to be found in India who would be glad be free from the craving for mutual intercourse in whose grip they find themselves. This craving is stronger than the strongest intoxicant which has ever enslaved man. It is futile to hope that the use of contraceptives will be restricted to the mere regulation of progeny. There is hope for a decent life only so long as the sexual act is definitely related to the conception of precious life. This rules out of court perverted sexuality and to a lesser degree promiscuity. Divorce of the sexual act from its natural consequence must lead to hideous promiscuity and condonation, if not endorsement, of unnatural vice.

Since my own experiences are relevant to the consideration of the sex problem, let me just warn the reader who has not read my autobiographical chapters against drawing the conclusion that my correspondent has drawn about my sins of indulgence. Whatever over-indulgence there was with me, it was strictly restricted to my wife. And I was living in a big joint family where there was hardly any privacy except for a few hours at night. I awoke to the folly of indulgence for the sake of it even when I was twenty-three years old, and decided upon total *brahmacharya* in 1899,[1] i.e., when I was thirty years old. It is wrong to call me an ascetic. The ideals that regulate my life are presented for acceptance by mankind in general. I have arrived at

[1] However, Gandhiji actually, took the vow in 1906; *vide* "*An Autobiography*" sub-title " Brahmacharya- I"

them by gradual evolution. Every step was thought out, well-considered, and taken with the greatest deliberation. Both my continence and non-violence were derived from personal experience and became necessary in response to the calls of public duty. The isolated life I had to lead in South Africa whether as a householder, legal practitioner, social reformer or politician, required, for the due fulfilment of these duties, the strictest regulation of sexual life and a rigid practice of non-violence and truth in human relations, whether with my own countrymen or with the Europeans. I claim to be no more than an average man with less than average ability. Nor can I claim any special merit for such non-violence or continence as I have been able to reach with laborious research. I have not the shadow of a doubt that any man or woman can achieve what I have, if he or she would make the same effort and cultivate the same hope and faith. Work without faith is like an attempt to reach the bottom of a bottomless pit.

Harijan, 3-10-1936

559. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 3, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I was delighted to hear that you were examined by Dr. Deshmukh even though it was after daylight. Let us hope you will profit by his prescription.

S[hummy]'s antipathy to nature-cure is either a simple pose or simply due to prejudice born of ignorance. Ansari always appreciated it.

How I would love to have you with me even in your bad health and nurse you to good health! But you must not be impatient. No one can get out of his or her limitations whether external or internal without patient and persistent striving.

I fear your fretting over this eczema is due to the temporary disfigurement. What vanity, if my surmise is right. Your will certainl have to come to me to shed it. And here at least you won't be conscious of the spots or any such thing. Here you won't have the society of your peers. Anyway this continual brooding over the

ailment worries me. I want you to be above it. Can you do it? Make a brave effort and forget the wretched thing.

Of course, when I say nothing about myself you should know that I am well. But I have a sick companion to nurse. He is Nanavati—a first-class worker and good singer. He was in chagre of the kitchen in Maganwadi. He seems to have a mild attack of typhoid. He is simply on orange juice or honey and hot water. He has hip-baths and enema daily. He is keeping up his strength and is quite cheerful. I expect he will be free in seven days. This is the fifth day. As you know, I love nursing. It is no strain on me. Pyarelal is in charge of the kitchen. He is a sleepless giant.

Sardar is due here today.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3747. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6903

560. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

October 3, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM

Yesterday I wrote to you in a great hurry. Today also I am in a hurry. Nanavati, beset by fever, lies in bed before me. I have wrapped him in a wet sheet. I would not approve of your going to Trivandrum for improving your health. The climate there cannot be said to be good. Nor would the food there quite agree with you, and an expert doctor may not be readily available.The place, moreover, is so far away for you that you should go there only after improving your health. I have no objection to your going there to meet Saraswati after you have recovered. I have already told you what you should do. As for Kanti, he always has my blessings.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 355

561. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 3, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending with this some telegrams. Any news of Sardar?

Motihari perhaps has no telegraph office.

I am sending the letters also.

I will send away Jawahar from here at 10 o'clock since on account of illnesses here I shall not be in a position to provide meals to anybody tomorrow. You will of course be arriving here tomorrow. I proceed on the assumption that Sardar will certainly reach this afternoon.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Ask Kumarappa or Bharatan to read the telegrams so that no mistake is left. Kanu should despatch the telegrams, post the letters and make the required copies, if Mahadev is already on his way here.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11491

562. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

October 3, 1936

CHI. DEVDAS,

I see your pain in Ba's letter.[1] I was already aware of hers. But what is unavoidable you should not worry over[2]. Besides, no one can say what part, knowingly or unknowingly, I or we both parents might have played in Harilal's fall, and to what extent. The saying 'the quality is in the seed' contains a whole Shastra. There is a similar proverb in Gujarati, "As the banyan so its fruit, as the father so the son." When such thoughts occur, I don't feel like finding fault with Harilal. What is the use of being angry with myself? I know how lustful I was then. I do not know anything else. But who can

[1] To Harilal Gandhi
[2] Reference to *Bhagavad Gita,* II. 27

understand the inscrutable ways of God? We can only deduce principles from well-known illustrations.

Let me know if you have received any comments on Ba's letter whether through public or private correspondence.

How are you? Are you making any progress?

How is Lakshmi? Is Ba happy? Or is she annoyed? How is Manudi?

Kanti has plunged into his studies.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2037

563. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

October 3, 1936

BA,

There has been no letter from you lately. Have you been ill? If so I hope you are recovered by now. Mirabehn is better. She is of course weak. She has no fever. Nanavati, who has some fever still, is likely to be free from it in a couple of days.

I read your letter in the newspaper. What made you write it? Your letter has prompted an Englishwoman to write to you. Understand the letter with the help of Devdas and ask him to write her a reply. Lilavati comes here from time to time with Mahadev. Things are going on fairly well.

All of you there, I expect, are now all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2038

564. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

October 3, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

Your letter brings tears to my eyes. On the one hand, I think that what you say about milk and fruit is true, while on the other hand, we cannot afford your falling ill for want of that kind of food. What is

more, any saving thus effected would be spent in paying the expenses of the doctor and the medicines in case you fell ill. So difficult is dharma. It is not proper for me to send you the extra money nor proper for you thus to take more milk and fruit. I must keep my peace having said that you should, if somehow it is possible, take more milk and fruit. God will protect you. Who am I to worry on your account?

You are quite right in saying that you do everything after consulting me. You are also right in saying that you do it in obedience to my command. If your dharma to do what you have been doing is clear to me, how can I give you an order to the contrary? And, how can I arrange to pay you Rs. 25 as long as you remain occupied with your own family? Hence, I have decided to obtain another Rs. 25 also for Jayaprakash and have even given instructions to send it. You should of course take full rest, and also do a little walking. I expect you are not taking oils and spices, and that you take whole-wheat flour. What leafy vegetable can you get? Is the jaggery that you get good?

I have written to you about myself earlier. I am on milk, fruit and vegetables. I have not started taking chapatis for fear of fever. I have not been weighed recently, as the necessary arrangements do not yet exist. Ba is still with Devdas, and Manu too.

What else would I tell Father about you? He praised your nature and was pleased with you. Yes, I shall reach Kashi[1] on the 24th and leave it on the 26th for Rajkot. After paying my respects to Narandas's parents, I shall go to Ahmedabad and after staying there for three days, to Segaon. You aren't likely to come to Kashi, are you?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3483

[1] Gandhiji was to open there a Bharat Mata Mandir at the invitation of Shivprasad Gupta.

565. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

October 3, 1936

CHI. LILA,

It seems you expect a letter from me every day since I have got you into the habit. I never said that I would write to you daily. It just happened that I did so because I wanted to comfort you. Do you still need that support?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

566. TALK WITH JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

[*October 3, 1936*][2]

That is why we have made you the King Canute so that you may do it better than others[3].

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: But is there no better way? Must you do all these things yourself?

Who else is to do it? If you go the village nearby, you will find that out of 600 people there 300 are ill. Are they all to go to the hospital? We have to learn to treat ourselves. We are suffering for our own sins. You must have seen in the series of articles Pyarelal has written on the water problem in Bengal that we have brought on all the diseases like malaria, cholera, and the rest ourselves. How are we to teach these poor villagers except by personal example?

Harijan, 10-10-1936

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] Mahadev Desai mentions in his "Weekly Letter" published in *Harijan*, 17-10-1936, that Jawaharlal Nehru along with Sardar Patel visited Segaon on this date.

[3] Nehru had compared Gandhiji's insistence on nursing the patients himself to that of King Canute's attempt to stop the tides.

567. TALK WITH AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI[1]

[After *October 3, 1936*] [2]

If you feel like going because you think it would please your parents better if you were in the hospital or under Kakasaheb's roof, you should certainly go. I can ask for a stretcher at once and have you shifted. But if you think of going out of consideration for me, let me tell you that you will be untrue to me. No son would think of leaving his father out of consideration for him. The father himself would feel deeply hurt if he whispered a suggestion of that kind. And no consideration is needed. I can get any amount of help here, I know that I can nurse you back to health as clearly as I knew that I should nurse Ba back to health when she was at death's door in South Africa,[3] or as clearly as I knew that I should pull my son Manilal through his enteric which lasted for 42 days.[4] The doctors in both cases gave me grave warnings and said the responsibility for their deaths would be mine. But I was as ready to sacrifice them as I was anxious to save them and careful to nurse them. Well, God tried my faith, but He also gave me the strength to stand the trial. I may tell you, as you are a brave man, that I am not afraid to lose you, if it should come to it, but I know that I am doing all that is needed to pull you through. If, therefore, you will decide to leave me out of pity for me, you will be untrue to me and to yourself. I am making this so clear to you because we are satyagrahis, we have to weigh the motives and springs of action of everything that we do, and we should deceive neither ourselves nor others.

Nanavati had no difficulty about answering: "I am thinking of going only because of you. I feel that I should not be the source of so much worry to you. Otherwise I know that nowhere else in the world am I going to get better nursing and more loving attention". And he elected to stay.

Harijan, 17-10-1936

[1] In his "Weekly Letter" Mahadev Desai introduces this as follows: "[Amritlal Nanavati's] condition has been apparently giving us all some anxiety, and Kakasaheb and I and other friends thought that he should be removed to the hospital, both in order to relieve the congestion and lighten Gandhiji's task and anxiety as also to place the patient within reach of medical treatment. When we went with the proposal Gandhiji was perfectly agreeable to his removal but he insisted on making one or two things clear."

[2] As reported by Mahadev Desai

[3] *Vide* "*An Autobiography*", sub- title " Kasturbai's Courage"

[4] *Vide* "*An Autobiography*", sub- title "Settled in Bombay"

568. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 4, 1936

CHI. KANTI,

Your letter reached Wardha yesterday evening and came to my hand this morning. You must have received the telegram I immediately sent just for the peace of your mind even though it is Sunday.

I shall not write at length as I am sitting between two sick-beds. Balwantsinha and Nanavati are in the grip of fever.

You are in a painful situation from which you will no doubt free yourself. Have patience and courage. You should refuse politely but firmly to see her, saying that you have orders from me. I am writing[1] to her also not to see you at all and not to annoy you. For fear of the nuisance she may cause you, you do not have to go to Ahmedabad where too she is likely to follow you. I have myself suggested to her that she might go to Ahmedabad or to Rajkot. I have told her not to go to Trivandrum while she is unwell.[2] Even if she follows you everywhere, you will be free from her only be refusing to see her.

However, if you otherwise like the idea of going to Ahmedabad you may by all means go. You may stay with Maganbhai and Diwan and Ballubhai will welcome you [to their school]. Devdas will pay the fees. I only want you to pursue your studies in peace, without any obstacle. I shall see that you do not have to suffer annoyance from Amtul Salaam. Write to me from time to time. Take no step in a hurry.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7307. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

569. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

October 4, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have today a very painful letter from Kanti. He says that you do not leave him alone and waste his time talking for hours about

[1] *Vide* the following item.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 3-10-1936

useless things though he has not a minute to spare. I had told you specifically that you might see Kanti only if he wished it. I have forbidden Kanti to see you, and I am forbidding you also to see him. Kanti's future will take care of itself; you may not bother about him. Just get well as early as possible.

Tell me in your letter that you will not see him any more. Write to me whatever you want to say to him. You must have got my letter of yesterday.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 356

570. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 5, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Two baskets with apples and one containing honey have arrived, also the two glasses.

I do hope Deshmukh will see you again.

Of course I am not going to strive with you any more about meat. I do want to respect your scruples.

I await your experience of the S.A. Delegation[1].

Don't expect long letters from me just now. I have two serious cases and now Mira is down again. She does not know how to regulate her diet. Who does? Idiots may.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3595. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6404

[1] South African Delegation; *vide* "Letter to Purushottamdas Thakurdas", 13-9-1936

571. LETTER TO J. H. HOFMEYER

October 5, 1936

DEAR MR. HOFMEYER,

It was a great pleasure to receive your warm letter.[1] I do hope you are having a profitable time in this land and that you find the people you meet to be hospitable.

It will be a matter of regret to me that although you have so many friends in India, we may not meet at all.

You may be interested to know that the paper I am writing on is hand-made written with a village reed pen. You ought not to leave India without seeing some typical villages. Of course it is foolish of me to expect you to visit Wardha and Segaon and glance at the humble effort we are making.

With kind regards to you and fellow members.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

572. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 5, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending whatever could be got ready. My article is still unfinished, and I must detain Kanu for an hour more if I wish to complete it. I shall, therefore, send it with somebody who may happen to come or with a special messenger tomorrow morning or this evening. Amidst patients I am carrying on as best as I can for the day. Workers from Kathiawar may be invited if Sardar gives 12th/13th to Narandas. Intimate to him whatever Sardar wishes.

Blessings from
BAPU

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Purushottamdas Thakurdas", 13-9-1936

[PS.]

Somebody will be going there as I shall of course have some post to send.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11494

573. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 5, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

You should not expect any letter from me for some time now. Mira and Nanavati have been seriously ill. I have to spend the whole day in nursing them. Jamna[1] too should not expect a letter from me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8508. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

574. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

October 5, 1936

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your explanation concerning Jaisukhlal. I am completely satisfied. I have received complaints against you from many sources. I have however not believed most of them. Those that I believed I have discussed with you. I shall send your letter to Jaisukhlal.[2]

I have received a long reply from Chandulal. Reply to his letter directly. Or better still, send your letter to me so as to avoid the necessity of making a copy.

It seems certain now that we shall be meeting, although I should like to run away on the very same day that I arrive there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5541

[1] Addressee's wife

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Jaisukhlal Gandhi", 6-10-1936

575. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*October 5, 1936*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Just as I was about to send with Prahlad all the accompanying matter having finished it all, I got your gun-shot; but it has misfired. I had a hearty laugh when I read your message. Nowadays we don't have any occasions to laugh. I had no idea that my Note[2] contained any criticism of you. Even when Mirabehn drew my attention to it I told her, "What can Mahadev do?" Cancel my Note and send in yours. Why should I have to insist on anything? For my part I can manage even if nothing is issued. A similar mistake has occurred in the current number too, which I am not at all going to correct. I have in me a far greater strength to let such things pass than you might imagine. However, you are after all a poet and that too with a sensitive skin; so you are easily upset. Where can I have the remedy for this? It would have been enough, had you only asked, 'How if we draft the Note like this?' Why did you have to make an issue of it? But that is that. "Old habits die hard." It is useless to plead on Lilavati's behalf. Her coming up here has crowned her faults. However, why didn't she promptly take charge of him[3] when he fell ill? The fact is she is crushed under the weight of sympathy she gets.

Look here, don't you take offence again. If I haven't said the right thing you should correct me but never feel hurt.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am sending McArrison's speech, which may be included as it is after deleting the first paragraph.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11492

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 5-10-1936; "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 6-10-1936 and "Letter to Lilavati Asar", 6-10-1936

[2] Perhaps this is a reference to "A Correction", 10-10-1936

[3] Prabhu Dayal, *vide* the following item.

576. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 6, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending herewith the letters that I wrote last night. Even today Nanavati's fever has not gone and he is noticeably weak. Balwantsinha has normal temperature. Mirabehn has suffered an attack again and her illness seems to go deeper. She has some kind of a sore on her nipple. She is bed-ridden.

The last blow dealt by Lilavati has hurt me very much. I never thought that she would forget anyone lying ill before her eyes. My impression has been that you encourage her. Why didn't you yourself put her in charge of Prabhu Dayal? Kanu had been keeping a vigil throughout the night. Bhansali happened to visit at 3 in the morning and he then relieved Kanu. This much Kanu told me when I wrote to him and inquired. He also said that she wasted a good deal of your time talking. But I felt she had a number of complaints. You should learn them from her as I don't have the time and am, moreover, as good as dumb. She will not benefit from undeserved pity. Her trouble lies deep within her. She herself says that she has never submitted herself to any rules.

Again my stock of envelopes is exhausted. Why not send me eight packets of them? I have had to send a few letters without envelopes. I need no postcards.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11493

577. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

October 6, 1936

CHI. AMBUJAM,[1]

Your letter. I am getting a regular supply of fruit from you. You must let me know the price. If the fruit is dear I must not have it from you. I must get it from where it is cheap even when it is a gift. I have

[1] This is in Hindi.

three sick-beds just now.

Your argument is both sound and unsound. I would have the hospital in preference to superstition. But there is a middle way—to have intelligent home treatment and then await the result with confidence. Even kings have to die. Thousands die in hospitals. It is all a toss. The key to life is in God's hands. We can but explore His laws and obey them. And I do not expect a time when every villager who wishes can have good hospital treatment. But I do expect a time when he can have at his door competent advice. But even that time is far off.

I hope you are all well.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

578. LETTER TO NANDALAL BOSE

October 6, 1936

DEAR NANDLAL BABU,

Just a line to thank you for your letter and to tell you I shall be at your disposal on 13th instant. You will please wire to Mahadev when you are coming.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. G.

SHRI NANDLAL BOSE
C/O RABINDRANATH TAGORE
6 DWARKANATH TAGORE LANE
JORASANKO, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: C.W. 9778

579. LETTER TO GLADYS OWEN

October 6, 1936

MY DEAR GLADYS[1],

I was glad to receive your good wishes.

You are a bad woman to have free days just when I am to be away. I leave here on 22nd and do not return till 5th Nov. I am in Kashi on 24th and 25th [October][2]. Tell me when you can come

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6193

580. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

October 6, 1936

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

Your touching letter. Of course I am with you and Mother. When I received your first letter I could not understand how Mother was reconciled to a mixed union at this stage of our society. I am sure Hamida is too good to resist Ammajan and you. I expect you have seen my letter[3] to her. I am now corresponding with Shankerlal and if necessary with Prabodha. Please keep me informed of developments if any.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 9650

[1] The addressee was a teacher in the Theosophical Society School, Banaras.
[2] The source has "November".
[3] This is not traceable.

581. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

October 6, 1936

CHI. LILA,

Is it any less *lila* that from Lila you have become Lilavati again? What would have been my plight had you become Lili?[1] I like your decision. It was beyond your capacity to remain with me. I hope you will always carry my blessings with you wherever you are. You may certainly stay away from me but don't forget me altogether.

Your reason for leaving me is unusual. What do you ask to be forgiven for? Have you committed any fault? If you have, the proper atonement would be not to abandon me but to cling to me with greater resolve, to conduct yourself in conformity with it and show greater watchfulness. However, a correct decision, though taken for a wrong reason, is always welcome, and this applies to this decision of yours. Consult Mahadev in taking whatever step you may choose to take. Yesterday you could see my anger, but couldn't you see my unbearable pain—couldn't you read my love?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9349. Also C.W. 6624. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

582. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

October 6, 1936

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I am enclosing with this the reply to your complaint. For my part, I fully believe Chhaganlal's denial, and my impression is that Narandas too believes it. Anyway he does not support you. Now it remains for you either to prove your charges against him or cleanse your own mind in the matter. Chhaganlal has his faults but, I trust, he is free from the ones you attribute to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

[1] *Vide*"Letter to Lilavati Asar", 2-10-1936

583. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

October 6, 1936

CHI. SHARMA,

I have two patients on my own hands. They are both having fever. The temperature of one of them has now been below 99° for the last eight days and the other patient is at Simla. What will you do about such patients? Anyway there are many other patients as well. I hope everyone at home is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh,* facing p. 260

584. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 6, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

Herewith I am sending whatever post I could write as I don't know when I shall be able to finish it. Lilavati's decision is quite correct although she has added insult to injury. She will never be happy with me. She needs to be guided for her future.

It seems the situation here has become very critical. Mirabehn has suffered a severe relapse. Her fever this time looks dangerous. Nanavati too is certainly not well enough. Inwardly he also seems to be losing hope. God's will be done.

The letters include a postcard to Nandalal Bose. It would be good if it goes with late fee paid.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11495

585. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 8, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT AND REBEL COMBINED,

Your own blank paper returns to you duly filled. The magnifiers are already being used for various purposes examining patients as well as snakes. I have two live specimens again.

Yes, Nanavati is with me—three beds going—Mira, Nanavati and Balwantsingh. The latter is free from fever. The other two cases are obstinate. Fever persists with ups and downs. They all require careful nursing. They are under water treatment and get fruit juices. No cause for anxiety as yet.

Of course there is as much illness in Simla as elsewhere and I was told when I came there for the first time that the place was notorious for venereal diseases. But those who choose can certainly benefit by its mountain air. Therefore if the climate agrees with you, you should stay as long as Shummy wants you to. Village work in Manganwal[1] will take care of itself meanwhile.

When I go to Ahmedabad I shall see what can be done about the women's differences. But I hold out no hope. I know the state of affairs there. From what you tell me it seems that you never received any letter from Mridula[2] in reply to yours. And she told me definitely that she had written to you inviting you to her house.

Khan Saheb says it is enough that the girls seek and like your company. He says he is grateful to you for the open invitation you have given them. He does not want or expect you to give them lessons. Khan Saheb was never ill. I suggested an examination of his teeth and sent him to Nagpur. One tooth was extracted.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3748. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6904

[1] A place in the Punjab
[2] Mridula Sarabhai

586. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

October 8, 1936

CHI. LILA,

I have your letter. You would be stable if you stayed with Mahadev; going to Nagpur is lack of stability. Therefore you had better stay with him; or at the Mahila Ashram if you can bear with the life there, though I am afraid you will not be able to. Be sure I have not given you up for lost.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9350. Also C.W. 6625. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

587. TASK BEFORE HARIJAN SEVAKS

Ever since the inauguration of the Harijan Sevak Sangh, the central organization has been feeding, very properly, the provincial branches. But the time has certainly arrived for the branches to stand on their own and be self-sustained, even though it may be at the sacrifice of part of their programme. The work in each province, and for that matter in each district or taluka, should be an unequivocal demonstration of active *savarna* support. For the chief mission of the Sangh is to touch the *savarna* heart and change it. Supposing the central organization had collected from two or three reformers a crore of rupees, and with it established branches all over India to cover it with schools and hostels for Harijan boys and girls, it would not have hastened the day of the doom of untouchability. For the *savarna* heart would remain as stony as ever. Supposing conversely that without the cost of a single pice, by some stroke of good fortune the *savarna* heart was changed and untouchability became a thing of the past, the whole object of the Sangh would be fulfilled. For in that case every public school, place of worship and other institutions would be open to Harijans precisely on the same terms as to caste Hindus. That day may be far off or much nearer than many people expect. Anyway that is the goal of the Harijan Sevak Sangh and never the opening of separate schools, wells, temples and the like for Harijans and consequent perpetuation of untouchability. At present these things are

undoubtedly done, but they are done only as a means to THE end. They have become necessary because the *savarna* heart is slow to change.

The growing number of reformers must not sit still and make protestations of removal of untouchability from themselves. They must demonstrate that change by their visible conduct. The spending of their purse for the Harijan cause is a tangible proof of the change and therefore an essential part of the programme. But immediately it becomes a corner confined to a few individuals who salve their conscience by liberal donations, it ceases to be a token in the manner indicated by me. Hence it becomes a matter of duty for the Central Board to invite the attention of the branches to this fundamental part of the programme and for the branches to appreciate it and prepare the way to becoming wholly self-reliant. Indeed the burden has been progressively thrown on provincial boards of financing their own institutions. But the time has come for definite and decisive action in the direction.

This change to full self-reliance will never come unless all the workers realize that this is essentially a religious movement. We are a nation spending lavishly for causes which the masses believe to be religious. One has only to go to the places of pilgrimage to have an ocular demonstration of the fact. A study of the history of religious endowments will reveal the tragic story of fortunes being entrusted to them by credulous millions without ever caring to know how they were spent. It is enough for people to believe that they pay their mite to a cause which in their opinion is religious. Harijan workers have a cause that is wholly religious in the best sense of the term. If they have a living faith in it, if they do not move mountains they will at least get from their surroundings enough for the institutions in their charge.

Harijan, 10-10-1936

588. A CORRECTION

I know that *Harijan* contains almost always printer's errors. It would be tedious, if not even pedantic, to issue corrections every week. In the difficult circumstances under which *Harijan* is being issued, the problem before me is to cease publication or to continue it in spite of mistakes recurring with unfailing regularity. I have chosen the latter course whilst a sufficient number of subscribers tolerate the errors.

But the issue of 26th September contains two howlers in the article headed 'The Law of Our Being' which need correction:

Last para, II. 2-4.

INCORRECT:

"The writes seems to poohpooh the idea of honour derived from individual and national gain."

CORRECT:

"The writer seems to poohpooh the idea of honour devoid of individual and national gain."

Last para, II. 6-7.

INCORRECT:

"There is no question for one of self-destruction, voluntary or otherwise."

CORRECT:

"There is no question for me of self-destruction, voluntary or otherwise."

The errors seem to have originated in Wardha, the typist having misread the manuscript sent from Segaon.

Harijan, 10-10-1936

589. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 10, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

I have been obliged to neglect you these few days. My only comfort is that the correspondence has been practically suspended—all my time being given to the sick ones. I can't say they are yet on the mend. The temperature is slowly rising daily. There is no danger as yet. But both are very weak. They will be all right if they have enough vitality. Anyway neither they nor I have any anxiety. The C.S.[1] was here today to examine them. They are having only water-cure.

I have just finished your broadcast.[2] Your experience of the village is excellently reproduced. The other part is not well balanced.

[1] Civil Surgeon
[2] To village women

You say "old systems... have perished." If they have, where is the cause for revival? But you yourself show later that they have at most decayed, not perished.

And then you begin at the wrong end—build roads and houses!! Who can do the thing? Surely sanitation comes first.

We were agreed upon it too!! And *you* began with it. But how should [you] be Idiot, if you remembered such a very simple fact? And then you have not made a sharp division between what people can and should do themselves and what the State can and should. You do not want more than this, do you? And you are in no need of praise. Of that you must have had a surfeit.

If you are only permitted to pass two months with me, I should hope to reconstruct your body. This eczema is certainly a source of anxiety from the medical standpoint. But I do not despair. Of course you won't go to Ahmedabad, if you are not quite fit.

The apples of late have been quite hardy and all in a good condi[tion]. You should tell me what the fruit costs each time and what the railage costs. The honey too came in quite safely. I finished the whole yesterday. It was quite nice.

I have not yet heard from Lionel.

Khan Saheb has all the fruit he can eat. I get apples from you and Ambujam—more than I need—*mosambis* from Bombay and oranges locally.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Khan Saheb leaves for Delhi on 14th.

From the original: C.W. 3749. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6905

590. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

October 10, 1936

CHI. DEVDAS,

I am gald to learn that the whole line of thought has been Ba's own.[1] She certainly has that power, and the letter is indeed a good one. Dr. Mahmud writes a long letter which I am enclosing. Read it and

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Kasturba Gandhi", 3-10-1936

tear it up. Am I to understand from the rather long letter you wrote that you can now write fairly well? The two patients take a good deal of my time, which I certainly like to give.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2035

591. LETTER TO V. L. MEHTA

October 10, 1936

BHAI VAIKUNTH,

I heard only yesterday that Lallubhai[1] has fallen ill again. Things are bound to be all right where workers like you are available to look after him. I hope he is better now.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I spoke to Shankerlal about the Agriculture Department.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1363

592. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

October 10, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. Of course, I do wish you to see me at Kashi, but the wish ought not to conflict with dharma. If you cannot be freed, or if you can be freed but Jayaprakash does not want it, then it would be improper for you to come and my desire that you should would be against dharma. I should be glad if, subject to these two conditions, you could come. I might even wish that you could be by my side at present ! However, the wish would go contrary to dharma as your dharma at present is to do whatever service you can by remaining there. Both Mirabehn and Nanavati are laid up here. Both are very ill. You could be very helpful to me on the present occasion; but how can I entertain such a wish? That way, even Mahadev would prove helpful here. But wishing his presence here is against dharma.

[1] Lallubhai Shamaldas, addressee's father

He has before him the dharma I have assigned to him. Such is the case with the others too. Have you now followed me on the question of wishing? Does God let us fulfil all our wishes?

I have been keeping good health amidst all this work. Such work has remained part of my nature to this day. God has always kept me well while nursing the sick. I hope that this time too it will be so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3484

593. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

October 10, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

Your handwriting, instead of improving steadily, becomes worse. I asked Kanu[1] if you had been nursing Prabhudayal and he said that you had not gone anywhere near him. How is that? Can you find no time to serve a person when he falls ill there? You seem to be spending a lot of your time only in talking. I ask that you quietly apply yourself to the work entrusted to you. I am pained.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

594. LETTER TO PRABHUDAYAL VIDYARTHI

SEGAON,
October 10, 1936

CHI. PRABHUDAYAL,

I have your letter. I was all the time having news of you. Never eat peanuts. When one is weak it is usual to have dreams. You need not worry about it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 11703

[1] Second son of Narandas Gandhi

595. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
5 a.m., October 11, 1936

CHI. LILA,

I warn you lest you should prove all my fears right. Do you think you are free from all restraints since you are released from the obligation of coming here? Have you stopped copying out the *slokas*? You do not mean that you will never be able to come here, do you? He who used to play on the *dilruba* is prostrate.[1] Shall I send it to you? Let me have a list also of your other belongings which are here so that I may send them to you, or you may come and collect them. Do as you think fit.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9351. Also C.W. 6626. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

596. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

October 11, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I went through your letter carefully. Stick to your decision. Don't leave Bombay. Ask of me any help you need. Remain cheerful and do everything to recover your health. You may come to Segaon after recovering your health. Three-fourths of the people in this village are Harijans. Those attending on me are Harijans and they are enjoying themselves. You may serve them to your heart's content. Is there anything more that you want? Remember, however, that you will have to go back to Bombay if you fall ill. You are yourself responsible for your falling ill. Have your nails attended to.

You must have got my letter of yesterday regarding Kanti. Kanti, you and I will all be happy if you willingly act on it. If you had been thinking of God as you have been thinking of me you would certainly have got your wish fulfilled. Do it even now. Forget me, forget Kanti and forget Saraswati. Think of God alone. This in no way means that you should abandon me or I should abandon you.

[1] The reference is to Amritlal Nanavati, who was ill.

However, it does mean that you should give up your exaggerated notions of me and trust only God. You will surely have peace and happiness if you do this.

There is sense in weeping for God while remembering Him, but in weeping for a man one only hurts one's eyes. You would stay patiently where you are if you would follow my advice.

Tell Vadud I am not writing to him separately. Even this I am writing after 8 p.m.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 357

597. TALK WITH STUDENTS OF MARWADI VIDYALAYA[1]

October 12, 1936

Gandhiji asked the students to be worthy of the Principal, Sjt. Aryanayakam, who at the invitation of Jamnalalji had agreed to take charge of the institution. He had a distinguished career at Cambridge and London and later on at Santiniketan, and he has come to Wardha with his wife who is a great Sanskrit scholar and a distinguished graduate of the Banaras University. She has been placed in charge of the Mahila Vidyalaya,[1] also a creation of Jamnalalji. Gandhiji asked the boys to be not only worthy of the Principal, but of Jamnalalji... [He said:]

He had long ago broken the bonds of sect and community and creed, and though the institution owed its existence to donations from Marwadis only—that is what gave it its name—Jamnalalji would not be satisfied until it was thrown open to boys of all castes and creeds. He has no interest until he had found his way to destroy its exclusive character, to throw it open as much to the Harijans as to any other section of Hindus, as much to the Mussalmans as to the Hindus. He has no room in his heart for untouchability, and he had none at all for any feeling that Hinduism is in any way superior to any other religion. He has helped Muslim institutions no less than he has done Hindu ones, and he has several Muslim friends whom he treats as blood-brothers. I would ask you students, Hindus and Muslims, to take a leaf from Jamnalalji's book and to have the same regard for one another's religion that Jamnalalji has, and to treat one another as

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The Principal and the students came to see Gandhiji on his birthday which according to the Vikram calendar fell on October 12.

blood-brothers. And let me tell you one thing which you may not know, and perhaps many do not know. This passion for removal of untouchability and freedom from communal feeling as well as equal regard for all religions, Jamnalalji does not at all owe to me. It is not possible for anyone to transfer his conviction to another. All one can do is to help another to manifest the conviction which is already in him. But in respect of Jamnalalji, I could not take the credit for having even helped him to arrive at or to manifest those convictions in his life. He had the convictions in him long before he met me and he had lived up to them. It was these inner convictions of his that brought him and me together and made possible the close co-operation in which we have been able to work together for so many years. You children have to be worthy of a man like him.

Harijan, 24-10-1936

598. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

October 13, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I got your letters, but the nursing of patients here leaves me no spare time. Nanavati and Mirabehn have been suffering from typhoid fever; somebody has to keep awake by their side day and night. I can hardly write a letter. By all means do go to Mecca Sharif if you get the required facilities and if your health permits.

If you recover your health somehow, it would indeed be an achievement. I continue to be well enough, though I have not taken my weight. There aren't the means.

I am enclosing a letter to Dr. Jivraj.[1] I am writing regarding Dr. Gilder also.

Do not expect more letters for the present.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 358

[1] The letter is not available.

599. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON,
October 13, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

When you have already placed your head at my feet, where is the question of forgetting?

I think that the article[1] should go as it is. We had better let him proclaim his dissatisfaction rather than anticipate his argument. There is no harm in letting the article go as it stands, for it is, according to me, a fine thing that the same old argument should have occurred to me involuntarily even today though I had forgotten the subject. Haven't I said before that I have no matter with me? I am certainly not sorry that I can spare no time from amidst the patients. All is well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

You should derive full satisfaction from the services assigned to you.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11496

600. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SEGAON,
October 14, 1936

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. You are flying high. All right fly. But see that you don't get exhausted and fall.

To my right and left are Mira's and Nanavati's sick-beds. Both are suffering from typhoid.

I have practically stopped attending to correspondence. But you certainly have my blessings for your camp which you have asked for. I hope that being the servant you are, you will go on serving silently and without ostentation and regard service as its own reward.

I don't know anything about my having to go to Bombay. Even

[1] *Vide* "Ahimsa Conundrums", 17-10-1936

the visit to Ahmedabad has become uncertain now. I cannot leave Mira in her present condition. Nanavati, one may say, is on the road to recovery.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10385. Also C.W. 6824. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

601. MESSAGE TO MILL-OWNERS' AND LABOUR ASSOCIATIONS[1]

[Before *October 15, 1936*][2]

The Mahatma says he is surrounded by two typhoid fever patients, nevertheless he is prepared to give two hours on October 21. He has to depart for Benares on 22nd if the patients are well enough.

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-10-1936

602. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON,
October 16, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

Nobody brought the papers yesterday. I am sending two letters and also the telegrams herewith. Nanavati shows much improvement today; his temperature in the morning was 99°. Mira, too, may be said to have improved; she too had 101° after several days. Lilavati's clothes which I sent with someone must have reached there. Is there anything more left? If so, she should write to me so that I might find it. There is an entirely discoloured and tattered sari with big holes—is it hers? How is Bhansali?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11498

[1] The Mill-owners' and Labour Associations had requested Gandhiji to fix a convenient date for hearing the wage-cut question.

[2] The report is date-lined "Ahmedabad, October 15".

603. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 16, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Since I have a free moment. I must utilize it for a few words to you. The patients are doing well, though fever persists. How many villagers can go to hospitals?Both would have gone to the hospital if I had wanted them to. I could not do so without denying my past and the recent article[1] I wrote. So long as God wants me to work on this earth in this body, He will take care of it. Not all the physicians in the world can save me when the hour strikes.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3596. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6405

604. LETTER TO VITHAL L. PHADKE

October 16, 1936

CHI. MAMA,

I cannot recall your earlier letter. For the present there is a mountain of letters before me as I lie between two sick-beds. As things stand at present, I am not to stay in Gujarat for more than three days. Sardar has the control of the programme there. You should write to Sardar though at the moment I don't feel like going anywhere. The rest if I find out your letter or if you write again. How should I be able to say at this stage who in Ahmedabad would take how many minutes?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3836

605. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 16, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

You seem to be deeply immersed in work. The fever still persists though it is slowly subsiding.

[1] *Vide* "Of My Recent Illness", 19-9-1936

When can I go through the pile of the Sahitya Parishad papers? I am returning it after removing those about the constitution and the Chandravadan matter. If there is anything else that I should read, send it. Send me a copy of my programme. Very probably I shall have to go direct to Rajkot for a day, and from there Sardar may perhaps take me straight to Nadiad and I may reach Ahmedabad on the 30th afternoon or evening. Do mention that my Rajkot visit is only a family visit. From the present trend of things I see that you will be required to stay on at Segaon. The final programme will be known by Monday.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11499

606. AHIMSA CONUNDRUMS

A college professor and two representatives of a class of fifty students write:[1]

> As you are no doubt aware, the Intermediate Prose Text-Book, Pearce and Aryatna's *Models of Comparative Prose,* used in most Intermediate Colleges in India this year, contains a selection about five pages long from your book *The Story of My Experiments with Truth.* The selection is entitled "Ahimsa", and contains your discussion of this most challenging principle and its application to our lives.
>
> The fifty students in my prose class, and I, their instructor, have been spending several class periods studying and discussing the above essay....
>
> At one point, however, both the students and I, their instructor, have been unable clearly to understand the precise nature of your views. I refer to your statement about the conduct of a votary of ahimsa in case of war, particularly the following passage[2]: "When two nations are fighting, the duty of a votary of ahimsa is to stop the war. He who is not equal to that duty, he who has no power of resisting war, he who is not qualified to resist war, may take part in war, and yet whole-heartedly try to free himself, his nation, and the world from War." A little further on (discussing three methods of recourse in case of the European War, for yourself): "... or I could participate in the war

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.
[2] *Vide* " *An Autobiography*", sub- title " Miniature Satyagraha"

on the side of the Empire and thereby acquire the capacity and fitness for resisting the violence of war. I lacked this capacity and fitness, so I thought there was nothing for it but for me to serve in the War."

We should be deeply and humbly grateful if you would expand and clarify this subject and your past and present views upon it...

I do not know that I need have suppressed the name of the college or the names of the signatories. The learned professor has sent me a stamped envelope for answer. This presumes a personal reply. But I have only limited time at my disposal especially when I am nursing two precious patients. I would not miss my weekly talk with the readers of *Harijan*. I am, therefore, with apologies to my correspondents, combining two purposes to save my time.

The question raised in the letter is of very great importance and has always caused me the greatest difficulty, not much in deciding upon the action to be taken at a given moment but in justifying my conduct in terms of ahimsa. For the same action may outwardly be taken by the believer and the unbeliever. At these times the motive alone decides its quality.

At the time of writing I have neither the text-book nor the original in Gujarati of which the text is a translation. But I have a recollection of what I wrote. What is more, so far as I am aware, my views on ahimsa, as I held them, remain the same today.

The general proposition that I laid down in the quotation was derived from my conduct during the European War. I had thrown myself whole-heartedly into it at the peril of my life—not because of the risks attendant upon serving at such times, but because at the time I was attending drills and camps I was suffering from pleurisy and general weakness as I had hardly regained the strength I had lost during an exhausting fourteen days' fast I had undertaken two or three months or before the War. I believed then the British Empire to be on the whole a system beneficial to humanity. I had dreamt of one day converting it to methods of peace instead of war for the sake even of its own existence though in another form. But I was fully conscious of my limitations. I was an insignificant atom ineffective for resistance to its general policy. Whether I joined the War or not, I was helplessly party to it, inasmuch as I ate the food protected by the British fleet. I was enjoying personal liberty too under its protection. If, therefore, I helped the War somehow or other, I felt that for me as a votary of ahimsa, it was better to take a direct part in it so as to enable me the

sooner to end War. It is quite possible that all this was argument of the weak and that if I felt that war was an evil, I should have gone away from it even if it meant starvation or a rebel's death. Anyway I did not think so then, nor do I now.

It is wholly beside the argument what my attitude would now be, seeing that I no longer believe in the Empire as on the whole a beneficent power.

To illustrate my answer, let me take another argument from my own life. Even when I was a little urchin my heart and intellect rebelled against untouchability. But being then an insignificant member of the family I acquiesced in their conduct towards Harijans which I should not do now. Needless to say, I could not then have argued out my conduct. My personal belief did not appear to me to be inconsistent with my living in the family.

Indeed life is made of such compromises. Ahimsa, simply because it is purest, unselfish love, often demands such compromises. The conditions are imperative. There should be no self in one's action, no fear, no untruth, and it must be in furtherance of the cause of ahimsa. The compromise must be natural to oneself, not imposed from without.

I should not at all wonder if my answer has given no satisfaction to the professor and his pupils. I must be pardoned for the constant reference to my own actions. The reason is obvious. I am not a well-read man in any sense of the term. All I know of ahimsa is in the first instance derived from my own experiences and experiments carried on in broad daylight in a humble scientific spirit and in the fear of God which is Truth.

Harijan, 17-10-1936

607. LETTER TO PRABHUDAYAL VIDYARTHI

SEGAON,
October 17, 1936

CHI. PRABHUDAYAL,

You must not eat rice and *dal*. Take only milk and fruit. I am sending six *Mosambis* from here. Eat them. Take milk. It is your duty to get well quickly. Do not take cereals.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 11701

608. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEGAON,
October 18, 1936

CHI. LILA

I understand your lamentations. I would have sent for you even today if I could have the courage. However, have patience. When I return from my journey, I shall accommodate you at Segaon.You may also stay at Segaon if I leave Mahadev behind. If both of us go, you may go to Rajkot and join us the day we leave Ahmedabad.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9583. Also C.W.- 6555 Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

609. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

October 18, 1936

CHI. RAMESHWARDAS,

I like the scheme sent by Parnerkar for the Goseva section at the Exhibition. I think it would be proper for you to shoulder its expense around Rs. 1,300 to Rs. 1,500 if it is not too much for you. Not more than Rs. 5,000 is to be taken from the Congress Committee for the entire exhibition.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 173

610. LETTER TO SYED MAHMUD

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 19, 1936

MY DEAR MAHMOOD,

Two precious patients have stopped all my usual correspondence. I am wirting this under great stress. I have not much to say in defence of my attitude on Hindi-Hindustani. I fear you do not know the whole history. Moulana Abdul Haq has given a distorted picture. I

entered the Hindi Sammelan not only a year ago. It is now nearly ten years that I was first invited to preside at their conference.[1] I pleaded then for recognition of Urdu as part of Hindi. The views I then pronounced I held even before 1908. I went a step further and got a definition accepted at the Indore Conference a year ago which included Urdu speech and script.[2] That is the *fons et origo* of my crime. Did you know all this? If you did, what is it you do not understand? It is a fault that I could not accept for that meeting either Hindi-Urdu or merely Hindustani? I have dealt with that question fairly fully in *Harijan*.[3] Please read these and then if you do not feel convinced, write to me fully and I shall strive with you. I should despair of myself if I cannot carry conviction to you on an issue which appears to me to be perfectly simple.

Love.

BAPU

DR. MAHMOOD, BAR-AT-LAW
CHHAPRA
BIHAR

From a photostat: G.N. 5079. Also the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

611. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 19, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I am returning the pamphlet after correcting it. I shall give you the exact date in my next letter.

It would not be correct to see Jawaharlalji[4] during the lecture. I would certainly see him if he would grace us with a visit. The timings both for the spinning sacrifice as well as for the prayers, are quite all right. Arrange Khan Saheb's interview with the Muslim brethren. You may arrange another gathering for meeting all the people, if possible, that is, if all wish it. I shall not be able to attend it. There is no harm if

[1] Gandhiji presided over the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan at Indore on March 29, 1918; *vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909 sub-title "A Brief History of the Struggle"

[2] *Vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 29-9-1909

[3] *Vide* "Hindi or Hindustani", 9-5-1936 and " Hindi or Hindustani-II", 16-5-1936

[4] A Jain sadhu

nothing can be arranged for Khan Saheb. Whatever is done shoud be spontaneous.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8509. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

612. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

October 19,1936

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I liked the letters from you both. Manilal, it was your dharma to have pointed out my shortcoming which you did, nor was it indecorous. Filial piety consists in respect for parents in spite of one's knowledge of their shortcomings. In that test none of you fail, barring Harilal. But the fault is not entirely Harilal's. For how could we hold him responsible for what he does or says under the influence of drink?

I shall not write a long reply as I am surrounded by patients. Mirabehn as well as Nanavati are better today. I do not repent for the kind of education I gave you brothers. I should have been glad if I could have done more along the same lines. I offered you at the altar of my sacrifice, not unmindful of your well-being but knowing it fully well. Nor do I believe the result has been unhappy. There was a special purpose in sending Sorabji[1]. He achieved it too; we could have seen it had he lived. As for Chhaganlal[2], he was sent to prepare himself for a specific task. It miscarried because he was threatened with tuberculosis and left England abruptly. How do you forget about Ritch[3] and Polak[4]? There was a purpose in sending them and there was one also in not sending you brothers. By the time you had reached the age of discretion my infatuation with Western education had worn away. It was not that I did not provide you such education for want of money. The Doctor's[5] purse was always at my disposal. When Ritch was sent I too was in a position to meet the cost. However, I purposely moulded you in the school of experience and drafted you for public

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Harilal Gandhi", 16-10-1912
[2] Chhaganlal Gandhi
[3] L.W. Ritch; *vide* "Speech at Farewell to L. W. Ritch", 9-3-1905
[4] H.S.L. Polak
[5] Dr. Pranjivan Jagjivan Mehta

service. I understand how you might regret the want in view of the present times, but that does not change my thinking. Don't you know that I have done the same with the boys and girls that came to be placed in my charge here too? I am not worried that Radha, Keshu, Shankar, Bal, Jayanti, Kanti, etc. rebelled against it. I see in it the force of the current stream and not any defect in my thinking. The best of workers here have no Western education, and men like Mahadev who have it are with me not because of it but because of their other qualities. I do of course make use of Mahadev's education by the way, but that is of no great significance. It may be my efficiency. Mahadev will himself admit that Maganlal was more valuable than he. How many educated men do you think there are in my army? To what position would I have been reduced had I depended on them? Don't you know that I had a hand in sending Joseph, both the Godfreys and Bernard? Where are they? What have they achieved? I also know the art of producing barristers and doctors, but it has borne no fruit. I think you brothers were spared the wild goose chase. Why can you not see my non-violence in the exceptions I made in the cases of West[1] and Sam[2?] Had I not been generous to them, how could I have accommodated them and others like them? You know that I encouraged Kitchin[3] to eat meat when he was ill and, as a result, he gave it up altogether. In the Boer War I myself served wine to the stonebreakers in my corps and served *bidis* to others. Discretion is very necessary in doing all such things. Generosity to others is as necessary as strictness with oneself.

I have dilated far more than I had intended. You need not send anything to Kanti as Devdas has undertaken to pay all his expenses.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4858

[1] A.H. West
[2] Govindaswami; *vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 13-5-1905
[3] H. Kitchin

613. LETTER TO BALVANTRAI K. THAKORE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 19, 1936

BHAISHRI BALVANTRAI[1]

I am at present busy nursing patients. I finished your letter little by little yesterday evening. I have no idea what I would be able to do in Ahmedabad. I regard myself quite unfit to preside over the Conference. Being a Mahatma, perhaps, I am supposed to know all things. Would you send your suggestions in the form of an amendment? I should be glad to meet you, but how could there be such an occasion? After all I am not visiting Bombay. I Shall be wandering into Ahmedabad.

I expect you are in good health.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Your letter shall remain confidential. I have destroyed it.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9238

614. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

October 19, 1936

BHAI BENARSIDAS,

Prabhu Dayal gave me the news of your brother's death. You are a man of knowledge and therefore hardly need to be consoled. We all have to go the same way as Ramnarayan, the only difference being in time. Why then should we grieve over it? But with the passing away of our loved ones, our responsibility increases and yours has grown heavily. God alone is our true help at such times. He alone can guide you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2516

[1] (1869-1952); Gujarati poet and man of letters

615. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 19, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

I can say that I have done a fair amount of writing today. Baba has done a great thing. Mira's temperature today has been 98° and it has not risen so far. She however continues to be restless. There is no release of saliva in her mouth. It remains sticky and she has no wish to take glucose or even fruit. There is something else too. I want no oranges or lemons. Munnalal made a mistake in sending for the lemons.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a Photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11500

616. LETTER TO PRABHUDAYAL VIDYARTHI

October 19, 1936

CHI. PRABHUDAYAL,

It is good you wrote. I am enclosing a letter to Pandit Benarsidas. Send it to him.[1] Take milk and fruit as necessary. Do not work beyond your strength.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a Photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 11677

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 19-10-1936

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

May 25, 1936

About women and W. C. I began by saying that I had received some protests for their non-inclusion. I would have welcomed even stronger protests for I wanted our women to be more aggressive and to insist on their rights, both political and social. I invited them to organize themselves to press for their rights which they were not likely to get if they waited for the goodwill of their menfolk. About the W. C. I said that it was formed under peculiar circumstances when I had to play an unusual part. The *hayadar* (self-respecting) president would probably have resigned and I being *behaya* (shameless) stuck on even though the majority of the Congress had decided against me on some vital issues. This peculiar position was reflected in the formation of the W. C., which certainly could not be under the circumstances of my choice although technically I was responsible for it. When various viewpoints have to be represented, the lesser ones go to the wall. You are perfectly right in saying that I was responsible for the exclusion of women. But yet this is not the whole matter. I would have liked to have a woman in the Working Committee but as the matters developed and a number of other names appeared and stayed, there was little choice left. Ultimately I felt that it mattered little to me who was in the W. C. and who was not. The Committee as it took shape was not my child, I could hardly recognize it and to some inclusions, as you know, I reacted strongly. Yet ultimately I submitted but inevitably with the thought that I was surrendering to others and almost against my own better judgment. At the very first meeting, almost without provocations, the inherent conflicts appeared. The whole purpose of a president nominating a homogeneous committee was thus frustrated.

File No. 32/12/36, Home, Political. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 27-9-1935

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM VALLABHBHAI PATEL TO RAJENDRA PRASAD[1]

May 29, 1936

I have received your letter... of 24th with Kripalani's letter to you enclosed with it.

His[2] Bombay speeches have disturbed me much. I am not worried so much about khaddar. It will recoil on him if he goes on in this fashion. But I cannot stand the attitude of injured innocence he has assumed regarding the nomination of members in the W. C., particularly his statement regarding omission of a woman. Rajaji feels equally strongly.

Bapu had written to him on these points and the extracts of his reply and the last letter of Bapu to him on the subject of the W. C. nominations are enclosed herewith for your information. Re: khadi—he says the report is not correct and he had issued a correct version of his speech next day though. I have not seen it reported anywhere. His reply about the W. C. is bad enough and I don't think I can swallow it. It is a humiliating position in which I for one would not agree to stay at any cost. He was expected to act honourably with his colleagues but he cannot do so or if he feels that we are a drag on him we must clear the way for him.

I am going to Bangalore tomorrow where I am staying till the 12th and then we disperse for our respective places. Hope you are doing well.

File No. 32/12/36, Home, Political. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* "About 'Conversion'", 28-9-1935

[2] Jawaharlal Nehru's

1. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,

Octorber 21, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

You have certainly provided me with excellent material for *Harijan*.[1] Mahadev will see your letter. I shall make judicious use of portions of it. You must then do a little propaganda work, even write to the papers and invite other women to do likewise. If you women would only realize your dignity and privilege, and make full use of it for mankind, you will make it much better than it is. But man has delighted in enslaving you and you have proved willing slaves till the slaves and the slave-holders have become one in the crime of degrading humanity. My special function from childhood, you might say, has been to make woman realize her dignity. I was once slave-holder myself but Ba proved an unwilling slave and thus opened my eyes to my mission. Her task was finished. Now I am in search of a woman who would realize her mission. Are you that woman, will you be one?

If Shummy will be happy and healthy going to Europe and won't go without you, why should you not accompany him? No time for more. Gave you a long letter yesterday.[2]

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Yes, you should write to Natesan without doubt.

From the original: C.W. 3597. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6406

2. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

October 21, 1936

CHI. LILA,

I have been thinking of you, though I have been unable to wirte to you of late. Are you aware, or aren't you, that you have taken upon yourself a much greater burden by asking to be released from the conditions? You do not intend to become a self-indulgent person.

[1] *Vide* "Obscene Advertisements", 14-11-1936

[2] The letter is not traceable.

You have self-control and you want to make progress in that direction. Take it that if you forget this, you will have invited perpetual discord.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11757

3. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 21, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending some post. Rajkumari's letter, which I send you, is for you to read. It should be returned as I shall want it for *Harijan*. Next week it is going to be a question what to write and what not to write. Both the patients are fine— subnormal. Mirabehn's complaint has toned down today. I give her curds.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11501

4. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 21, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

You may send a wire to Shivprasad[1], also stating who are coming with me. Take it for certain that you will be there. The accompanying is for Raja[2]. Write to S. saying that I have written to Raja.

I can't see how I may write on Premchandji[3]. If we suggest it to Viyogi Hari, he might draft a brief note. We take no editorial notice of men of letters. Lallubhai's[4] case, however, deserves to be considered. For my part, I propose to leave here at six o'clock. No arrangements need be made from there. The luggage will be carried in the cart from here. I shall walk as much as I can; I am feeling strong enough. I shall climb on to the cart if I feel it necessary. On my way I shall stop to

[1] Shivprasad Gupta
[2] The letter is not traceable.
[3] Who had recently died
[4] *ibid*

look at Kamala's[1] son. I shall peep into Maganwadi if there is time. You may if you wish suggest any change in this. The patients are fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11502

5. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

October 22, 1936

CHI. RADHAKISAN,

I heard the news about Vinay[2]. It will be good if Kamala whom I very much wish to see comes here. If I go there myself I should have to run away in a few minutes since here I shall be busy working till 5 o'clock. There is no reason for Kamala to confine herself where she is. Read this letter to Kamala if you think it proper and send her or bring her yourself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9121

6. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHAGANJ,
October 22, 1936

As usual I am overwhelmed with messages of birthday greetings. It is impossible for me to send acknowledgments to these kind friends. I, therefore, take this opportunity for thanking them all through the Press for their good wishes.

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-10-1936

[1] Kamala Nevatia, Jamnalal Bajaj's daughter
[2] Kamala Nevatia's son

7. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 23, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I got your letter just now. I had Kanti's letter expressing his happiness on the Rentia Baras Day. It is not worth sending to you. I don't bother him since he has no time to spare.

It is good that you went to hospital. Khurshedbehn had written to me. I should of course be glad if you helped her.

I myself never undertake a pilgrimage. There is so much hypocrisy prevailing in places of pilgrimage. I know several persons who have been to Mecca Sharif. I couldn't see that they had regained health by going there. But since you have the faith, why should I stop you? By all means go, and return more firm of mind, healthier and (free from attachment). What more need I say?

I am leaving for Kashi today. I shall spend two days there and then a few hours in Rajkot. I reach Ahmedabad on the 30th. The patients here are now free form fever. Get well soon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N.359

8. TALK WITH AN ENGLISHMAN[1]

[Before *October 24, 1936*]

A friendly Englishman asked Gandhiji the other day a question which rather surprised me: "You are a Gujarati, you belong to Gujarat. Why should you have selected a Marathi-speaking part for your work and experiments? And why Wardha of all places?" Gandhiji was no less surprised, but he calmly replied:

I do not belong to Gujarat, I belong to the whole of India. Wardha I selected because it afforded so many facilities for work. There is Jamnalal Bajaj who is interested in my programme of work and my experiments, and he gave me his valuable garden and his garden-house for the Village Industries Association of which I made Wardha the headquarters.

Harijan, 24-10-1936

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

9. ALL-ROUND RISE?

Sri Krishnadas Gandhi of Maharashtra Charkha Sangh informs me that the rise in the spinners' wage has necessitated a rise in the twisters' wage. Experiments are therefore now being made how without raising the price of khadi the efficiency of the twister can be raised so as to enable her to make 3 as per day. He has therefore started using the double spindle Magan Rentiyo for the purpose. If all the workers engaged in khadi production will work with the spirit that fires Krishnadas Gandhi and a few such workers, we shall attain the ideal rise in wages in all the departments of khadi without putting an undue strain upon the consumers purse. And if we succeed in giving the full wage to all the khadi artisans, we shoud have no difficulty in reaching the level for all other village industries. What is needed is a scientific spirit that will take nothing for granted, that will brook no laziness of body or mind, that will have an undying faith in its mission. All work is dead without faith.

Harijan, 24-10-1936

10. BUFFALO v. COW

Those who are engaged in saving the cow from the swift destruction that awaits her if measures are not taken betimes to save her, are often confronted with the question whether, apart[1] from the religious sentiment, the buffalo is not the cheaper animal to keep. As a layman I have always hazarded the opinion that the cow is the cheaper to keep, at any rate in the long run, that it is impossible to save the two animals, and that if we would but concentrate attention on saving the cow, the buffalo will take care of herself. But if the cow goes, the buffalo will never be able to take the cow's place and the struggling, starving farmer will have in the deprivation of the cow and her male progeny a handicap that will leave him prostrate. Those who are interested in this important problem will get some help form the following opinion[2] of Sardar Datar Singh M.D.D.(Eng.) of the Montgomery Dairy Farm sent to me by a friend.

Harijan, 24-10-1936

[1] The source has "even apart"

[2] Not reproduced here. It gave reasons why the buffalo was not an economical animal.

11. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL[1]

ON THE TRAIN,
October 24, 1936

CHI. AMALA,

Mira and Nanavati had been ill, and so the delay in replying.[2] They are now better. I am on my way to Benares. I return to Segaon about 5th November. I reach Ahmedabad on 30th and [shall] be there for four days at least. I hope you understand my corrections. Of course you need milk and butter and so do you need fruit. Take it as medicine to save more expenses.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

12. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

ON THE TRAIN TO KASHI,
October 24, 1936

CHI. JETHALAL,

I have had no free time, as I was busy nursing Mirabehn and Nanavati. Now they are better. I have found some time in the train as I am going to Kashi. I have read your letters. I have decided to write to the Home Member myself. Let us see what happens. I shall write in *Harijan* also at the opportune moment. I could never abandon this thing.

You can certainly bring the craftsmen to the Exhibition. But the expenses for bringing them will have to be borne by you. It has been decided not to spend more than Rs.5,000 for the Exhibition this time and so all who come will meet their own expenses. The Committee will bear the expenses of their lodging and boarding. If there is any profit after these expenses are met, it will be distributed among those who would have incurred the expenses. If you bring any tools or have them made, I shall arrange for thier sale up to Rs. 200 at a profit of 20 per cent over their cost price. This would give you a net profit of Rs. 40. I am interested in testing the strength of the Gandhi tools. I am of

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter dated October 1, 1936 written in Gujarati.

[2] This sentence is in Gujarati.

course making other arrangements. You must also find out what is possible at Jalgaon and other places. How can I have the time for it?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I shall return to Segaon between 5th and 9th November.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9857. Courtesy: Narayan J. Sampat

13. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

ON WAY TO KASHI,
October 24, 1936

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

On the basis of your letter, I have written about silk and khadi for *Harijan.*[1] I can get no free moment at all while in Segaon. How could I, therefore, possibly write even a postcard to you? Your saleshave been wonderful. Go on writing to me when you think it necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10839. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

14. SPEECH AT BHARAT MATA MANDIR, BANARAS[2]

October 25, 1936

The temple contains no image of any God or Goddess. It has only a relief map of India made of marble stone in it. I hope this temple, which will serve as a cosmopolitan platform for people of all religions, castes and creeds including Harijans, will go a great way in promoting religious unity, peace and love in the country.[3]

I can hardly express my sentiments in declaring open this shrine. I have left Segaon, and my dear patients and my work in the village, to come to Kashi in obedience to the irresistible call of love—love which, in Saint Mirabai's language, is as soft and fragile as a

[1] *Vide* " Silk and Cotton", 7-11-1936

[2] Gandhiji performed the opening ceremony in the afternoon before a vast gathering of over 25,000 people which included Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis, Jains , Buddhists and Harijans from all parts of the country.

[3] This paragraph is from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

weak thread, but as strong as life itself. It draws men together from thousands of miles, and I could not possibly resist Shivprasad's affection. I am in no way worthy of opening the shrine, but Shivprasad's affection has made me forget my limitations.[1] Babu Shivprasad lives on the bank of the Ganga which purifies his body, but even in his heart flows another Ganga—that of emotion and imagination. One can fly on the wings of emotion and imagination right up to Heaven, and also sink to hell when they are unhealthy. Shivprasad's pure and noble imagination has prompted him to think of the shrine of Mother India and to dedicate a portion of his wealth to its making. In the temple about to be opened he has given a concrete shape to his imagination which he conceived in Prof. Karve's Home for Widows[2]. He rallied craftsmen, sculptors and engineers who could appreciate his sentiment. There was a time when he had despaired of life, but God has enabled him to live to see his dream take shape.[3]

As I was asked to perform the opening[4] ceremony in the morning, and as I listened to the chanting of the Vedic *mantras*, I thought of a verse in our morning prayer which we have been repeating now for 20 years: 'Mother Earth, Spouse of Vishnu, ocean-clad and mountain-breasted, I bow to Thee. Forgive me the touch of my feet.' It is this Mother Earth to the service and devotion of which we are dedicating ourselves today. The Mother who gave us birth was bound to die some day; not so the Universal Mother who bears and sustains us. She must die some day, but when she passed away she would take all her children also along with her. She therefore demands a life-long dedication. Shivprasad had dedicated this shrine for the worship by all, irrespective of creed. He had imposed no conditions whatsoever. Everyone who loved Mother India was welcome to the shrine to offer his or her worship according to his or her light and capacity. Therefore, I could not resist Shivprasad's affectionate summons. Let us all forget our divisions and differences,

[1] *The Bombay Chronicle* reprot here has: "Gandhiji added that he was not fit to perform the opening ceremony of the temple, but as Pandit Malaviya's blessings were with him he set his hands to it."

[2] Shivprasad Gupta had seen a relief map of India at Karve's Home for Widows in Poona.

[3] This paragraph is from the Gujarati in *Harijanbandhu.* What follows is from the "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.*

[4] The source has "closing".

sacrifice them at her feet and bring the purest of our service to her. Shivprasad's dream has, thank God, been realized. May God also be pleased to fulfil his heart's desire—the ceasing of the strife of all warring creeds and opinions and interests and may He let him live long enough to see the fulfilment.

Harijan, 31-10-1936, *Harijanbandhu*, 1-11-1936, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 26-10-1936

15. SPEECH AT BANARAS

October 25, 1936

It strikes me as peculiarly inappropriate to ask a man like me to make this presentation[1]. I am wholly unfit for the task[2]. I am neither a Hindi scholar nor a poet. I do not even like celebrating jubilees of great or small people. If we must celebrate somebody's jubilee we should do so when he is no more among us.

I regard it as peculiarly inappropriate if not impertinent for people to present great men with a book of what I should call certificates of merit. I therefore refused to contribute anything to the Commemoration Volume; but the word Mahatma covers a multitude of disqualifications and so, I suppose, I was asked to present the Volume. It is my innermost conviction that a man cannot be called a poet or a Mahatma or an avatar so long as he is alive[3].

Ramchandraji was not considered an avatar during his lifetime. Tulsidas's birth anniversary was not celebrated when he was living.

It is we who have made them avatars. After all the *Gita* maxim, "To work thou hast the right, not to the fruit thereof", applies peculiarly to poets and Mahatmas. I should therefore have a bone to pick with Maithilisharanji if he were to believe that he was a great poet of India.[4]

So this anniversary should have been celebrated when the Poet was no more. People would have then known that something was being done for honouring him. You will please forgive me. When Padmanarayanji came to Segaon I told him that it was not decent to

[1] Of a commemoration volume to Maithilisharan Gupta who had completed his fiftieth year

[2] This sentence is from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*, 31-10-1936

[3] These paragraphs are from *Harijan*.

[4] *ibid*

go about collecting opinions on a reputed poet. Such a poet's work does not call for an expression of opinions. If ever I had delivered myself of an opinion on Gurudev or Malaviyaji or Dwivediji, it was always under pressure. If you ask me, I have never felt like writing about great men.

The fact that I did so on former occasions is no reason why I should repeat the mistake. If you also press me I might write something for you too, but not willingly. I know Maithilisharanji very well. Even if I refused to write about him he would not misunderstand me. I had the honour of having his hospitality in Chirgaon.

A poet writes under inspiration and not to the dictation of any one. He therefore does not write for applause. His work is its own joy and compensation.[1]

[From Hindi]

Sampadakke Pachchis Varsh, p. 86, and *Harijan*, 31-10-1936

16. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

KASHI,

October 26, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I have not been able to write to you before now. I have just got good news from Munnalal about you both[2]. I hope you are well both in mind and body. It is a matter of joy that our weaknesses exhibit themselves as a warning to us. Therefore the memory of the last day's incident should bring you joy only.

Prabha is here.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6366. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9832

17. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

October 26, 1936

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I just got the wire about you. Keep growing day after day. Do

[1] These paragraphs are from *Harijan*

[2] The reference is to the illness of Mirabehn and Amritlal Nanavati.

write to me.

Kakasaheb is here. Take up the *dilruba* when your strength returns.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10721

18. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

October 26, 1936

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Your telegram came at the expected time. Be patient in all that you do. There my . . . [1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8594. Also C.W. 7002. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

19. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY[2]

IN A MOVING TRAIN,

October 26, 1936

DEAR MOTI BABU,

I had your affectionate wire as also your letter about the debt. Neither you nor I can afford to be satisfied till the whole debt is paid. I send you for your consideration the latest letter from Annada Babu. It is [a][3] serious matter if the kahdi delivered has not been priced at the market rate. And how should you ask for a certficate till the debt is discharged or a settlement arrived at to the satisfaction of the council?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 11047

[1] Illegible in the source.
[2] Of the Pravartak Sangh
[3] In the source the letter is damaged here.

20. LETTER TO EDMOND AND YVONNE PRIVATE

AS AT SEGAON, WARDHA,
C.P. INDIA,
October 26, 1936

DEAR BHAKTI AND ANAND,

Your dear letter has just come into my hands. You need not have included yourselves among those to whom my appeal for sparing me was addressed. Letters from informal friends and co-workers like you living in distant lands are always welcome.

That you cannot come again to India owing to your duty keeping you there is no cause for regret. Where hearts are one, physical separation is of no moment.

Truth and ahimsa are truer than many so called scientific facts. Only they are difficult to put into practice. And then too, they are not so difficult as they seem if there is the proper previous preparation. But we do not care to give this most important thing in life more than a part of our leisure hours. Our valuations need revising.

Mira, of whose serious illness you must have read, is out of the wood. She is still weak.

This is being written in a moving train.

Love to you both.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2338

21. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

ON THE TRAIN,
October 28, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

This is my 2nd letter[1] during travelling and only to tell you that you are never out of my mind. Hope the progress of both continues. I had a very busy day in Delhi doing quiet work. Ba is with us. Manu remaining with Devdas. It is delightfully cool in Delhi just now. Devdas is much better.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Tomorrow Rajkot. 30th Ahmedabad

From the original: C.W. 6367. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9833

[1] The first having been written on October 26

22. LETTER TO SYED MAHMUD

ON THE TRAIN,

October 28, 1936

MY DEAR MAHMUD,

This is being written in a moving train. I hope you got my previous letter[1] written to you on a cursory glance at your note. Now I have read it carefully. There is one very big historical error in it. You will evidently think that the vast majority of Mussalmans are immigrants and their descendants. The truth is just the opposite. The vast majority are converts and their descendants and therefore inheritors of the Vedic civilization and culture. And why should not the immigrants take pride in the achievements of the ancestors of the original inhabitants? Your note contains several other glaring inaccuracies and faulty conclusions or inferences. I detect much haste in its preparation. I wish I had time to point out these. But I have no time. You should reread your note and perhaps you will detect some errors yourself.

To conclude, I should even now refuse to go to heaven without Mussalmans nor has my effort for unity abated in any way. Only my method is different but deeper and more substantial. The result is in God's lap.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N.5078

23. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN, PALANPUR,

October 28, 1936

CHI. KANAIYO,

Of all your fellow-students you alone seem to have remained firm so far. I believe that you have thereby lost nothing whatever. May God grant you the strength to remain firm for ever. May you live long.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Syed Mahmud", 19-10-1936

24. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

ON THE TRAIN,

October [*2*][1] *8, 1936*

CHI. MUNNALAL,

All of you must be working without strain. Both of you men are, I trust, cheerful. Yesterday I waited for your letter and telegram in Delhi but neither came. Now I shall see what I hear from you at Rajkot. I am not writing separately to Nanavati today.

Balwantsinha must be doing well and I expect you both have mixed as well with each other as milk and sugar.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8593. Also C.W. 7001. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

25. ADDRESS TO HARIJAN WORKERS[2]

RAJKOT,

October 29, 1936

Gandhiji said to them that in view of cases of impurity of Harijan workers having come to his notice, he had been confirmed in his conviction that no Harijan ashrams should look to the central office for any financial help; that they may be, if they would; under the discipline and control of the Central Body; and that the impurity had so far alarmed him that he had not the courage to ask individuals to support these institutions financially. It was the clearest duty of those in charge of these institutions to put the public at ease about the purity of the institutions before they approached them for financial help.

Harijan, 7-11-1936

[1] This digit is illegible in the source. Gandhiji was at Delhi on the 27th. This was evidently written the next day.

[2] This and the following two items have been extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

26. SPEECH AT VITHAL KANYA VIDYALAYA HOSTEL, NADIAD[1]

October 30, 1936

I ought not to have been asked to speak on this occasion, inasmuch as my presence is enough to show that the institution has my blessings. Besides, I already blessed the institution when I came here last year[2] to lay the foundation stone. But now that I have been asked to speak, let me say that my blessings are conditional. I should like to impress on those in charge of this institution, the teachers and the girls that the institution will not last without a moral foundation. The workers should all be selfless workers and the education imparted here should be true education, that is to say, which draws out the best in the character of the taught. Every one of us has good inherent in the soul, it needs to be drawn out by the teachers, and only those teachers can perform this sacred function whose own character is unsullied, who are always ready to learn and to grow from perfection to perfection. The girls also will have to be receptive, they will not think of showing themselves off but of enabling their teachers to draw out the best in themselves. I have had bitter experience of institutions of this character and therefore hesitate to bless newly opened institutions. I am even doubtful about the teachers needing my blessings. Some of them, I dare say, think of me a back number, not in touch with the spirit of the age and modern tendencies and not at all competent to speak to the modern youth. Well, let those who think like that reject what I have said.

Harijan, 7-11-1936

27. TALK WITH STUDENTS

NADIAD,
October 30, 1936

The girls of the institution[3] gathered in the afternoon to give Gandhiji their yarn spun on the occasion of his birthday. There were boys, too, of the Vallabh Vidyalaya of Bochasan. The girls gave 122,475 yards of yarn but, what is more, 60 of them took pledge to spin 100,000 yards during the year for their own clothing needs.

[1] Jamnalal Bajaj declared open the hostel.
[2] On May 31; *vide* "Speech At Inauguration of Vithal Kanya Vidyalaya, Nadiad
[3] Vithal Kanya Vidyalaya

[GANDHIJI:] You know that Seth Jamnalal Bajaj has opened your hostel today. You must try to be worthy of that good man. You perhaps know that he is a good man?

[GIRLS:] Oh, yes.

No 'oh, yes' but 'yes, please'.

'Yes, please,' they shouted in a chorus.

But if he is a good man, what about the rest?

Everyone is good.

Not including you?

We are good, too.

All, without exception? Are you sure?

Yes, Sir.

Well, then, now tell me if any of you tell lies.

'We do,' said some of them.

Always or on occasions?

On certain occasions.

And don't you quarrel?

We do.

Always?

'Yes', which was drowned in hearty laughter.

Well, but I must say that you are good, because you are ready to confess that you sometimes tell lies and quarrel amongst yourselves. And the rest of us are also good only in that sense and no other. But what about those who go about saying that everyone must tell the truth but who, themselves never do so?

They are hypocrites.

That's perfect. Let us never be hypocrites. Now, one more question. You have taken a pledge to spin 100,000 yards during the year. What if you break the pledge?

'No fear,' they emphatically protested.

But if you do?

'We know we will not," they rejoined with even greater emphasis.

But supposing you do?

(One voice) 'Fasting !'

Who is to fast? I or you?

We of course.

Fasting on milk and fruit?

No, Sir, We shall take only water.

But how many days will you fast?

So long as we do not finish our promised quota.

Splendid. But know that there are reporters here who will publish this talk of ours and you will have to rue it if you fail.

Then came the turn of Vallabh Vidyalaya boys—boys of the Dharala community who are being taught and given their board and lodging free. The teacher presented to Gandhiji cloth woven out of the yarn spun from slivers carded on the 12th of October, from cotton purchased out of the wages they had earned from carding. The teacher said that the boys did cleaning and sweeping of the streets as well.

Every day?

No, we did so on Gandhiji's birthday.

Well, I tell you, if you do it every day you will make Bochasan a model village from the standpoint of sanitation and you may some day be Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Even if you fail to be Sardar Vallabhbhai, you will have done something good. But you may take it from me that if you do not do this street cleaning, you will never be Sardar Vallabhbhai.

But,'said one of the boys, 'ours is a bad village. It does not deserve these heroic measures. We may clean the streets, but they will go on spoiling them.'

Now, now, don't say so. All villages are like that, and it is our duty to persevere the more, the more they persist in defiling the streets. And you must not forget that you belong to the village.

Harijan, 7-11-1936

28. SPEECH AT MUNICIPAL GIRLS' SCHOOL[1]

AHMEDABAD,

October 30, 1936

My heart is in Segaon. I am not interested in such things although I used to take interest in them before my life turned in a different direction.

He added that women's education should aid development of womanhood whereby women might lead pure life.

The Bombay Chronicle, 31-10-1936

[1] At the inauguration of the building.

29. VOLUNTEER BHANGIS

Let not the word Bhangi frighten any reader as it does many. [The] Bhangi is probably the most useful member of society. Its health depends more upon proper sanitation than perhaps on proper food. Needless to say I am not thinking of the Bhangi caste. I am thinking purely of the occupation that the word 'Bhangi' connotes. I regard the scavenger's or the cleaner's as a noble 'profession', nobler than the professions known as 'honourable'. They may easily become dishonourable; this never can.

Well, Shri Appa Patwardhan who is an M.A. has become commander of a corps of volunteer Bhangis which he is trying to form for attending to the sanitation of the Congress camp at Faizpur. The issue before the Reception Committee was whether to employ professional Bhangis or to have the sanitation attended to by volunteers. Someone pointed out that at the previous Congress the work was done by the town Bhangis. But the volunteer scheme won the day. The task could not have been allotted to fitter hands. Appasaheb has qualified himself for it by long previous training and, what is more, by his love of the most despised member of society. His love has not been purely sentimental. He has done the work of sanitation side by side with Bhangis, and he knows that proper scavenging is as much a science as any other. He has invited applications for the free services of two hundred persons not under 18 years of age for the work. They must be willing and ready to attend to the cleaning of latrines and the whole camp while the Congress work lasts. They must be zealous youths who won't neglect the duty entrusted to them for the sake of seeing the tamasha or the Congress delegates at work. Theirs will be the privilege of making the work of the delegates possible by attending to their sanitary comforts.

Maharashtra is a bee-hive of good hardy workers. It should not be difficult for the province to supply two hundred good and true young men to do the work. Not that young men from other provinces may not apply. But for the sake of economy, if nothing more, it is better to have young men from the province and, better still, the taluq or the district in which the Congress is held.

Harijan, 31-10-1936

30. WHOSE IS THE HUMILIATION?

From a long letter of a worker among Harijans I take the following paragraph:

> There is a growing discontent on the part of educated Harijans to call themselves Hindus. Because if they say they are Hindus, they have to disclose their caste also, and the inferiority complex makes this unpleasant. They would rather call themselves Christians than undergo humiliation by calling themselves Hindus. Why may we not then ask them to become Sikhs or Buddhists and end the humiliation? For Sikhs and Buddhists are as good as Hindus.

The correspondent gives up his case when he says that Sikhs and Buddhists are as good as Hindus. For if that is so, there is no occasion to prompt Harijans or anyone else in the direction. Any Hindu is free to call himself a follower of any one of the innumerable Hindu sects and yet remain Hindu. And why should a Hindu disclose his caste if he does not want to or if he has renounced caste? Many Hindus do not believe in caste. I have endeavoured to show that caste is no part of Hinduism. Varna is not caste, it is class. A man may call himself a Brahmin, i.e., a teacher of religion, if he is one in fact; or a Kshatriya, i.e., a soldier, if he is one; or a Vaishya, i.e., a merchant or a farmer, if he is that; or a Shudra, i.e., an employee, if he is one. These divisions are not castes but classes and have reference to callings. There is no such class as untouchable. Hence an untouchable is not bound to say he is one. He may say if he wishes that Hindu society has regarded him as such but he does not recognize that distinction. I may say that though I have been classified by Hindu society as belonging to the Bania caste, I am not that, as I do not believe in caste, but that if I must call myself anything more than mere Hindu, I am a Harijan by choice, having made, so far as in me lies, common cause with Harijans.

And why is there any humiliation in a Harijan disclosing his classification made by Hindu Society? Surely the humiliation is of the society that reduces its members to the condition of helots, consigned to ghettos and shunned by society. The very education of the Harijan should make him proud of the fact that he can truthfully call himself a Hindu even though so-called higher castes have denied their religion in their lives and persecuted him in a manner beyond description. If untouchability is destroyed root and branch and Hinduism lives, the future historian will assign the place of honour to Harijans who will have stood by their faith in spite of heartless persecution by their

fellows. Each time, therefore, a Harijan has to say what he is classed as in Hindu society, the humiliation is not his but of his persecutors—the so-called caste Hindus.

Harijan, 31-10-1936

31. SPEECH AT LABOURERS' MEETING, AHMEDABAD

October 31, 1936

In 1918 some workers had become indifferent and had also weakened. To carry on a strike for twenty-one days—remaining peaceful, not even throwing a little stone at anyone—is a hard test for anyone. You passed through the test lasting 21 days. Then you weakened somewhat. Do you know what I had to do then and what the results were? For 21 days you carried the banner on which were written the words" Unbreakable Vow". Every day I asked you to remember God and do everything with Him as your witness; otherwise the time would have come for a person like me to die. As on the banner, so in the heart, "Unbreakable Vow" was written. You had all lost heart but you played your part well. Anyone who wishes to keep a pledge should take it only after due deliberation and recognizing his limitations. One should know one's own capacity and, as the saying goes, "You should stretch yourself according to the length of your bedspread." Do I need to explain this to labourers? For you always huddle up when you go to sleep. Everyone should have a seven-foot long bed; the labourer's may well be made of coir strings and the rich man's have silk webbing. The rich may have a painted cot and yours may be [made of] babul wood, but everyone needs to stretch himself full length while sleeping. I can see that this is not the case today. Where is the room in your house for such a bed? Some of you may have it, but the majority do not. And, moreover, even if there is room for one such bed, the houses are not big enough to hold beds for your mother, wife, children, sister, and so on. You live in hovels. You have always to live huddled up as one does when shivering with cold. You have not room enough even to stretch your legs. At present this is the case everywhere. Here too we are able to huddle up. We do not have the strength to soar high into the skies. Means have been invented for killing thousands of people with an explosion from the sky, but I do not want such power. We should not even wish for it. Even if it were possible to acquire the strength to destroy everything by a whiff, I

would refuse such strength. But we should have the strength to keep a pledge, if we have taken one. It is enough if we secure this strength.

We are all children of the earth and it is only if we keep our vows that we can live on this earth preserving our self-respect. You had for twenty years that capacity to keep your vow. If tomorrow you lose this capacity which is your capital, you shall have lost your twenty years' earnings. It would be an asset if you could keep it unto death; otherwise all your achievements will come to nothing. Today there are multi-millionaires who become insolvent and take poison to end their lives. Isn't that so? A vow is worth more than a hundred millions. Its value can never be measured. You treasured that capital for twenty years. With the interest on it, it must have now doubled or trebled itself. We, however, cannot live on interest. We should be satisfied with what we have. It is enough that our principle remains intact. However, when this capital is lost you will become bankrupt.[1]

The question facing you seems to be this: whether you have grown in strength or the mill-owners. If the mill-owners close the doors against arbitration, you may have to resort to a strike. They may want to try your strength. Now I should like to suggest to the mill-owners that if you grow in strength, they have nothing to be afraid of. If they grow in strength you have everything to be afraid of.

But let us see what differentiates us from the mill-owners. Their strength lies in their wealth.Ours in our capacity to work. Whereas they have the strength of money we have the strength of labour. They depend upon their money, we upon our labour. If labour did not co-operate with capital, not a single mill could function. If you and I do not work in their mills, your brothers will go and work there. They will be able to procure workers with the help of money, threats, coercion or force. But the co-operation of labour will have to be secured. Otherwise their mills will come to a standstill. It is labour that holds the key. The labour union may not have it but you, the labourers do have it.

Although there may be crores of you, what could you do if you had no capital? What could you achieve if you had crores of rupees but not the talent to use them? You will also need people to manage these mills. I should not be able to run the industry even if someone gave me a crore of rupees. I would know how to use the sum for Harijan work or for producing khadi. But I cannot run a model mill.

[1] The paragraph that follows is from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*

It may well happen that a mill-owner might hand over a mill to me if I pleaded with him to do so. But even if someone did it I would not have the capacity to run it. I wish you to acquire this capacity some day. But in twenty years you have not acquired it, and in another twenty you may not be able to do so. It may well happen that one labourer may learn the trick and make the others his slaves. But the working class as a whole does not have this ability today. If you believe that you have now developed this capacity, you will no longer require a leader. I do not think you have it. And the day you do so, there will cease to be two isms. If you have it today, you have become capitalists. Capital and labour will become one when you become aware of your own capital. I am imagining a time when we shall bring about such a situation through a vow and this would be done not by breaking the heads of capitalists. Let those who preach class war say what they will. If I appreciated what they said, I would become one of them. However, even if I came to profess class wars I would while doing so have to bring in many of my fads such as non-violence, truth and so on. To me, of course, these are invaluable principles and not fads.

Even if we fight mill-owners, we are not to bear them ill will. If we fight them, we should do so in the same way as we would fight our father, mother, wife or children. We should struggle against them in the same way and for the same reason, as lovingly and reluctantly and with as much respect and politeness as we do against our blood-relations. The lessons which you learnt twenty years ago have still to be kept in mind. Mill-owners belong to the opposite camp. But we have to consider others besides them. Those who are known to all as blacklegs are traitors. Within no time they undo the labour of years. Instead of fighting them, we should plead with them, reason with them. It may well happen that they do not listen to you. It is all right if they walk away after hearing you; it would be even better if they came over to your side, but even if they do not, we have to bear with them. There is another union here. It has sent me an open letter. Its substance is that you should merge in that union. Otherwise there will be two unions. I agree that in a place like Ahmedabad there is no room for two unions. It is easy to undo the work you have been doing for twenty years; it is not so easy to carry it on. If you wish to undo it, the Sabarmati is handy. It may be that one may become a president quicker in the new union, you may even achieve some success, but do not yield to that temptation. The protagonists of class war may claim that co-operation is harmful. For us, co-operation is the first lesson.

When non-co-operation with the Government was advocated it was not implied that there could be no co-operation in future. In fact non-co-operation with the Government was launched so that co-operation could at last become possible. The day the Government becomes the servant of the people we should certainly co-operate with it. Similarly, these people—mill-owners—can become our friends, but that will be when they give up their ism.

My association with you is a lifelong one. If unfortunately you have to non-co-operate, it should only be in order to return to co-operation. If we do not co-operate, both the parties will suffer. You will be put to hardship for nothing and the mill-owners too will suffer loss. It is my desire that Ahmedabad should become a thousand times greater than it is today and the prestige this city has today should be greatly multiplied. It is a heterogeneous place. It is my function to bring about harmony among its varied elements. It is the function of us all. It is not for us to accentuate distinctions; it could be the work of class war enthusiasts. We should on our part plead with them to bear with a single union.

I am one of the arbitrators and as such I may not say anything regarding justice or injustice. After all I am an optimist. I hope you will not be obliged to resort to a strike.[1] The mill-owners have not thrown their reason into the Sabarmati that they would be prepared to fight it out. If for twenty years they regarded this course of action as harmful, would it become all right overnight? I shall strain every nerve to avert a crisis. However, what shall I do if the strain tells on the nerves? I shall then understand that God is going to give us a test. God perhaps wants to see whether or not the labourers keep their vow. Only then will it be known whether your pledge was a flute made of a carrot, which could be eaten if it did not work, or a real flute. Will a drunkard, a gambler or a dissolute character be able to keep his vow? We are after all your servants. We shall suffer for your sake. We shall receive blows along with you, if that becomes necessary. However, it may happen that we shall be spared and you alone will be beaten. If you are beaten, we will nurse you. You yourselves will have to bear the final burden. We are only going to help you when you bear that

[1] The *Bombay Chronicle* reprots here: " He was optimistic. He believed that they would not have to go on strike. Sheth Kasturbhai Lalbhai, the President of the Mill-owners' Association, was going to see him today."

burden. Whatever you do, do it intelligently and not through blind faith.

I believed that the key to swaraj lay with the labourers; but I now feel that it is not with them alone. Swaraj will not come so long as our poverty is not wiped out. The magic cure for achieving this is in Segaon—in the villages. It is a village of six hundred people. Three out of every four persons there are Harijans. It has no railway station. I have settled there because I believe it is untouched and not for my own pleasure. The happiness of the poor, of *Daridranarayana*, is all my pleasure. They do not get even *rotlo*. And if they do, it is of poor quality, unbuttered and savoured with dirty salt. I can testify to this. We must find out how we can rid them of thier misery. How can it be done while sitting here? You are in a much better position than they. There are no *chawls*[1], no schools, no hospitals like yours. Even for Mirabehn, no doctor would be available if we looked for one. On both sides there would be patients suffering from infectious diseases, and we lying between them. My faith, however, grows day after day.

The people of Segaon hold the key to your liberation. You are well aware of your plight. Those who have this awareness are not unhappy. But one who is not conscious of his plight is truly unhappy. He is himself a slave but knows not that he is one. His predicament is such that if you put ghee on his bread, he will get stomachache. As you go farther from Segaon. you find the villages more and more exploited. If I find the magic cure, I shall achieve everything. I am not fond of making speeches. If you depend upon me, I shall prove a false support. You will have to forget me. I am going farther and farther away, and my interest in you is drying up because you do not have that key. I shall have to go far to find that key. For me, there is no other happiness. There is only one joy for me and that is to get a glimpse of God. This will be possible when I become one with the poor. I can be one with the whole world if I can merge myself in the poor people of a poor country. This is my defence before the public. I am running away only to find the right key. I have been a villager for years. I am a villager by temperament. I am therfore happy there. You cannot afford what I can. Today I am being tested. I do not know whether or not I shall be able to live for a year in Segaon, how then can I advise others?

[1] Tenement houses

I have run far away. I have now served you notice not to depend upon me. Even if I have a telegram that I am needed, I may refuse to come. Even if the mill-owners request me to come, I may say no. Anyone who comes to Segaon will get whatever services I can give. My *sadhana* and my *samadhi* are at Segaon. Even if the people of Segaon throw stones at me, my place will be there. At first, they did not even let me have water, now we are on slightly better terms. But the way is not clear. I am not the person to run away from the thorny path. I shall sleep there as I would on a bed of flowers if I could get one. You have to depend upon your own strength. You shall triumph if you fight with God's strength; if you fight with mine, you will fall into the ditch. We are all servants, we serve to the best of our capacity. You should depend upon your own and God's strength.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 8-11-1936, and *Harijan*, 7-11-1936

32. SPEECH AT GUJARATI SAHITYA PARISHAD

AHMEDABAD,
October 31, 1936

What Bhai Munshi told you was not quite ture. He told you that in 1925 I resolutely turned down the offer and refused the presidentship and further said that if such a request was repeated I would plead helplessness. So far so good. But Munshi hastened to add that on this occasion I had accepted the presidentship as resolutely as I had declined it earlier. But this is not a fact, it is far from the truth. I was then not worthy of this honour and I am much less so now. I was not at all eager to accept this honour. However, I have accepted it, but reluctantly. I came because I was faced with a dilemma. When friends from whom I expect to take work put some burden on me, I persuade myself to assume it.

After accepting it I feel ill.[1] I sent word asking to be excused and suggesting that they should go ahead with this session without me. But as I am a Mahatma, who would accept this suggestion? Who knows in whose heart I may be a Mahatma ! However, to my own self I have already become an *alpatma*[2]. The Mahatma's word did not avail.

[1] On December 7, 1935; *vide* "Letter to Fulchand K. Shah", 7-12-1935
[2] One with a small soul, as opposed to mahatma.

Once I fell ill and could not attend the session. And now another difficulty came up. Two of my friends in Segaon fell ill and I thought that if I failed to go , I would now be an *alpatma* for the *alpatmas* too. The Shastras say that a commitment made under certain circumstances may not be operative under certain other circu-mstances. But I am in the habit of keeping my word to the letter; so I have come. But the patients have survived and I am sitting here.

I had hoped that, before coming to the Conference, I would gather all the literature and read it and prepare my speech after reading it all. Today, however, I am bankrupt. I could not prepare my speech and sent word that they should not hope for a written address. At Segaon, I could not leave my patients unattended; I had then hoped for some peace in Rajkot, where however, every minute was occupied. When I came here, I learnt that there was a conflagration—the dispute between the mill-owners and the labour was raging. I had also hoped that I would look through something at night. I even had the necessary material sorted out, but I was engaged in important matters right up to the time of my arrival here. Hence I have not even made the necessary preparation for an impromptu speech. Has the conference ever made a worse choice?

This is said to be the twelfth session. But I am afraid I won't be performing the twelfth day rites[1] of the Conference! That inauspicious word has fallen to my lot. I am however in fact lucky. Various kinds of hopes are kindled wherever I happen to go. It is hoped I would help give things a new form. And if this happens, will it not be as good as doing away with the present idea of the session? I have received some Press clippings[2]. Twelve amendments to the constitution have been sent to me. Although I have gone through them, I have come here without studying the constitution. Hence if some legal pundit raises any problem, I shall be perplexed.

There are twelve items before us on today's agenda. My speech is one of them. All these have to be completed before half past five.

[1] The pun is on *barmun* which as an adjective means 'twelfth' and as a noun 'the twelfth-day rites after death'.

[2] There had been much criticism in the Press about the so-called 'undemocratic' character of the constitution of the Gujarati Literary Conference, and it was also said that the constitution was too rigid or too cleverly drafted by Munshi to permit any improvement.

Having made these introductory remarks, I express my gratitude for the burden imposed on me. Even if the master gives a kick, the servant apologizes to the former and admits that he had made some mistake and had to be kicked. My masters number 33 crores. They have not elected me to serve them but I regard myself as their servant. You too are included in those crores. And, you are doubly my masters as you have elected me. However, I have come in the hope that you will some how put up with me.

I have been unable to go through what appeared in the newspapers about me and the Press-clippings which were sent to me. I must, however, read the lettters which I get. I should read them if only for the sake of courtesy. I am regarded as a democrat and I am one. Hence these people put their faith in me. They pleaded that Munshi was responsible for the constitution of the Conference, that it might be regarded as his monopoly. As he is a legal expert, he has so constructed it that we cannot alter a single brick. Something can be done, however, if I can shift one or two bricks. I may effect certain changes by exercising pressure, willingly or otherwise. Besides this, there were some other suggestions too. I have not been able to digest these suggestions.[1] I believe I am a democrat and as such I understand what can be democratic and what not. Even when the Congress consitution was drafted, someone objected that they did not want to pay four annas as membership fee. I told them that if they had a conscientious objection to paying the fee, they need not want to be members of the Congress. Supposing we had a people's bank—not the usual type of a business concern, but a real people's bank—how should we run it on democ-ratic principles? We should have to employ there men not democrati-cally elected, but men of proved integrity and character, ready to work for the people's welfare. Then take the instance of High Courts, which we will have even under *Ramarajya*. Must the constitution of a High Court also be democratic? Even under true democracy there will be institutions which, in the interests of democracy itself, will have to be run on other than democratic lines. I do know where democracy can function and where it cannot. Similarly, literary conferences too cannot be run on wholly democratic lines. . . .

[1] The following paragraph has been taken from the English version published in *Harijan*.

Though I am joking, I want to talk to you of serious matters. But by telling you of such things, should I make you cry? I do not have such seriousness. I should be incapable of such seriousness even if I was about to be hanged. Hence, even if I make you laugh, you must listen to me in all seriousness.

Although I am a democrat, I say such conferences cannot be run on democratic lines. They may have the spirit of democracy, but not its procedures. I shall be dead by the time the children, women and old men who are now regarded as totally illiterate come to understand the meaning of democracy. But those who will be living then should remember that democratic practices cannot apply to such an instituion. If they were applied, it would cease to be democracy and become mobocracy. Hence I must say all this in all humility to those who have wirtten to me asking me to make these changes if I want democracy. This however does not mean that the present consitution which is the creation of Munshi is his monopoly. I have read that consitution. I am famous for drawing up consitutions at a moment's notice. But I am hardly a legal expert! Hence my language is that of the villager, but I can mould it so that both legal experts as well as the common man can understand it. I have not yet mortgaged my senses, I can therefore say that Munshi has no monopoly in this constitution.[1]

You say it has been framed with such consummate cleverness that no one may change a comma or colon in it. I refuse to believe it. No such constitution has ever been drafted. There is no constitution through which one may not drive a coach and four if one so wills. I do not know of a perfect constitution having ever been drafted. Perfection is the attribute of the Almighty, and yet what a great democrate He is! What an amount of wrong and humbug He suffers on our part! He even suffers us, insignificant creatures of His, to question His very existence, though He is in every atom about us, around us and within us. But He has reserved to Himself the right of becoming manifest to whomsoever He chooses. He is a Being without hands and feet and other organs, yet He can be seen by him to whom He chooses to reveal Himself.

We are a subject nation and Munshi is one of us. Munshi cannot conjure into being a constitution of the kind you suggest. But even in Russia, Italy and elsewhere there is no constitution which cannot be

[1] The two paragraphs that follow have been taken from the English version published in *Harijan.*

altered. Constitutions may indeed be upheld by force of arms, but a flawless constitution is an impossibility. I shall therefore make certain suggestions in order to help you to introduce whatever changes you deem necessary. All that will be under the constituion. You will please trust me to suggest a proper *via media*.

I have a suggestion for those who wish to make changes in the constitution of this Parishad. Worth-while amendments cannot be made within these two days. However reluctantly, I am the president. I know the President's prerogative. And, I am well aware of the responsibilities, But who is the real president?

Turning towards Anandshankarbhai:

This Vice-president is the real person. I am only a figurehead. He had written to me that he would spare me although I was the President. Hence he will take care of all that is to be done. The constitution cannot be amended in a couple of days. Nor can we burden Anandshankarbhai with this responsibility. In order that the Conference may not come to nothing—and this shall not happen so long as I am the President—I shall summon all the skill that I can and recommend amendment of the constitution. But I cannot be sure that I shall succeed. Whatever I shall point out will be in conformity with the constitution. I would never say anything deceitful. I have always had the strength to tell the plain truth straight. I shall point out those changes which may be made in a straightforward manner, in a manner which will be a hundred per cent straight.

Now, my address. What should I say to the *litterateurs*? Of me. Sir Chinubhai has already said that I am neither a scholar nor a literary figure. However, I am the *Kulapati*[1] of the Vidyapith; I was instrumental in having the *Jodanikosha*[2] prepared.Sir Chinubhai referred to the Vidyapith in the past tense. I shall beg leave to inform him that the Vidyapith still exists and will continue to exist. It is not a passing phase. The Vidyapith will continue to function so long as we do not forget the *mantra* of swaraj. The Vidyapith may become a mobile institution like the Ashram. Someone happened to donate two and a half lakhs of rupees, and there was a building. But would not the Vidyapith have functioned had this building not been there? The Vidyapith existed even when there were no funds. It was founded in the past, it exists in the present and shall do so in the future. It has

[1] Chancellor
[2] Gujarati Dictionary

undergone transformations and these will continue. Gidwani[1] is no longer there, nor are Kripalani[2] or Kaka. There are villagers in it. But may only scholars run the Vidyapith? A man may well be a villager. He should be a villager at heart and not merely posing as one. There is a community in Kathiawar called Validas who will perform any part they are asked to perform. It is not people such as these but those who truly have the heart of a villager who can run the Vidyapith. The Vidyapith is not meant for the painted dolls and dandies of Ahmedabad. Bhai Ambalal's daughter[3] may have joined it. But the Vidyapith is not a 'depot' to which dolls would come to be decorated only to be 'delivered' to their parents just as they had come, i.e., returned to their care. The Vidyapith has been formed to build up countrymen and countrywomen. They do not know how to do it, but they are trying all the same. Of such people, it is said in the sixth chapter of the *Gita*, that they will not 'meet with a sad end'.[4] This is a Divine assurance and it must apply in the case of the faithful. Through its contribution in the past, the Vidyapith has fully rewarded those who donated funds to it. But, Sir Chinubhai, I wish to tell you that, if the Vidyapith has fully rewarded donors, you will see that it will also continue to do so in the future.

Now with regard to the Conference. What should it do? What hopes should I have of it? Kaka had written nine pages for my benefit about this. Although I have gone through these, I cannot recall anything. Dr. Hariprasad wrote a letter, but it is running around somewhere. It must be safe somewhere but I could not get at it when starting for this place. I asked him to write it down again.

He did and sent it to me but I received it after I had gone to bed and I have not brought it here. Hence, I cannot give anything that he has suggested. Such is my misfortune. Do I have the time to cook and lay the table? But, whatever I say just now is appropriate for me, if not altogether so. Because I speak what comes from my heart, without gilding my words.

The Chairman of the Reception Committee has lightened my burden. He has repeated to you what I had earlier told the Literary Conference. he did so on the assumption that perhaps I might have to

[1] Choithram Gidwani
[2] J.B. Kripalani
[3] Mridula Sarabhai
[4] *Bhagavad Gita*, VI.40

whip you. But, would a devotee of non-violence resort to whipping? I would not possess a whip. I had then been only polite.[1]

For whose sake are we going to have our literature? For Kasturbhai & Co.? For Ambalalbhai or Sir Chinubhai? Not certainly for the great gentry of Ahmedabad. They can afford to engage literary men and have great libraries in their homes. But what about the poor man at the well who with unspeakable abuse is goading his bullocks to pull the big leather-bucket? Years ago I had asked Sjt. Narasinharao,[2] who I am sorry is too aged and ill to be here in our midst, if he could give me something, some inspired tunes or ditties, which this man at the well could lustily sing and forget for ever the filthy abuse in which he indulged without knowing that it was abuse? What can I say to him? Anyone who is a poet should approach him. Munshi is a novelist, he cannot do so. Only an extraordinary artist can go and persuade him. A couple of words here and a couple of words there and he would put the thing in a way that he will be able to catch the meaning. And, Ramanbhai[3] is not even alive today. [4]

That man belonged to Kochrab, where we had the beginnings of our Satyagr Ahashram. But Kochrab is no village, it is a slum of Ahmedabad. Jivanlalbhai had a bungalow there. Who else but a ghost like me would go to live there? Moreover, who could have given him a higher rent in those days? But they wanted me to stay there and so Jivanlalbhai offered me his bungalow and Sheth Mangaldas promised monetary help. Now I have hundreds of such folks for whom I want real life-giving literature. How am I to do so? I live in Segaon today where in a population of 600 a little over ten are literate, certainly not more than fifty, very likely less. Of the ten or more who can read, there are scarcely three or four who can understand what they read, and among the women there is not one who is literate.

The place is absolutely untouched by Wardha. I would have moved farther away had that been the case. There we have only malaria. But I have an understanding with malaria that it cannot stay on wherever I go. There are many puddles there. But I came across a

[1] The following paragraph has been taken from *Harijan*, with a sentence or two from the Gujarati.

[2] Narasinharao Bholanath Divatia

[3] Ramanbhai Nilkanth

[4] The following paragraph has been taken from *Harijan* with some addition from the Gujarati.

wealthy person[1] who had a road built. People like Anandshankarbhai could not have visited the place under the conditions prevailing six months ago.[2]

Seventy-five per cent of the population are Harijans. I have to justify my position as *Kulapati* of the Vidyapith. Now I thought of setting up a little library for them. The books had to be of course within their understanding, and so I begged a dozen school books from two or three girls who had no use for them.

I could make you laugh a great deal if I spoke to you about the authors of those worthless text-books and I could talk about them for hours but we don't have the time.

The place is a part of Maharashtra. There is not as much illiteracy as in Gujarat, but Segaon is almost entirely illiterate. I have with me a young man[3] who is an L.L.B. but who has forgotten all his law and cast in his lot with me. He is from Gujarat but knows some Marathi. He goes to the village and reads to those who come to him from these books whatever they can follow and digest. He takes a newspaper or two with him. But how is he to make them follow our newpapers? What do they know of Spain and of Russia? What do they know of geography? The place which houses these books worth three and half rupees is such that one cannot sit under the roof during the monsoon. If anyone applied a match-stick, it would go up in flames. It was really Mirabehn's hut. Mirabehn is a self -sacrificing person but foolish. I had told her that she would not be able to live in a place where people defecated. I would live only on the outskirts. I must have pure air, pure water and pure food. That is my condition for living in a village. Fortunately the open place where I live is not used by the people for answering nature's call. But in that hut belonging to Mirabehn we set up a library.

What am I to read to them? Munshi's novels? Or *Krishnacharita* which Sjt. Krishnalal Zaveri has translated from the Bengali? It is a good book but I am afraid I cannot place it before these illiterate folks. They would take time to understand it. This is unfortunate no doubt but ought not you writers to know it from me? Who else will tell you this?

[1] Jamnalal Bajaj
[2] What follows is taken from *Harijan*, with some extracts from the Gujarati.
[3] Munnalal G. Shah

You must know that much as I should have loved to bring with me a Segaon boy here, I have not done so. I would have brought one if I paid his fare. But what would he do here? He would find himself in a strange world. But I am here as his representative, as those village folks' representative, unsolicited, unelected. That is true democracy. I shall one day ask you to go with me there. I am clearing the way for you. Of course the road is strewn with thorns, but I shall see that the thorns will not be without roses too.

As I am speaking to you just now, I am put in mind of Dean Farrar and his book on the life of Christ. I may fight the British rule, but I do not hate the English or their language. In fact I appreciate their literary treasures. And Dean Farrar's book is one of the treasures of the English language. You know how he laboured to produce that book? He read everything about Jesus in the English language, and then he went to Palestine, saw every place and spot in the Bible that he could identify, and then wrote the book in faith and prayer, for the masses in England, in a language which all of them could understand. It is not in Dr. Johnson's style but in the easy style of Dickens. Have we men like Farrar who will produce great literature for the village folk? Our literary men will pore over Kalidasa and Bhavabhuti, and English authors, and will give us imitations. I want them to go to villages, study them and give something life-giving. If, while enjoying such works they develop consumption, sprue or blood-pressure, they will still be tempted to go on. If then they set out to write books for the villages, their works will be as diseased as they are themselves. Villages have no use for such persons. They need thoroughly practical men such as described by Narmadashankar. Those who go and live in villages as true villagers are needed there more than persons like me who go there with their own thermos flasks; such persons can provide living literature to the people.

Men like Ravishankar Raval splash their brushes comfortably in Ahmedabad; what would they do if they went to the villages?

Though I was happy and proud to see what I saw in the exhibition this morning, and felt that I had not seen anything of the kind before in Gujarat, let me tell you that I missed what I would call a painting that speaks. Why sould I need an artist to explain a work of art to me? Why should it not speak out to me itself? I tell you what I mean. I saw in the Vatican art collection a stature of Christ on the Cross which simply captured me and kept me spell-bound. I saw it

five years ago but it is still before me. There was no one there to explain its charm to me. Here in Belur in Mysore, I saw in the ancient temple a bracket in stone made of a little statuette which spoke out to me without anyone to help me to understand it. It was just a woman, half-naked, struggling with the folds of her clothes to extricate herself from the shafts of Cupid who is after all lying defeated at her feet in the shape of a scorpion. I could see the agony on the form—the agony of the stings of the scorpion. That at any rate was my interpretation of it, though Sjt. Ravishankar may have another to offer.

I could speak on to you for hours telling you what I want. I want art and literature that can speak to the millions. I have given you an outline of the picture. You will fill in the details. I have said my say. My heart is weeping at the present moment, but time has made it hard enough not to break even when there are occasions for it. As I think of Segaon and its skeletons.

At this stage he did, however, break down! After a little pause he continued:

as I think of Segaon and its folk, I can't help saying that our literature is a miserable affair. Principal Anandshankar Dhruva sent me a list of a hundred books, but none of them would do for them. What am I to place before them? And their women! Is there any relation, I wonder, between them and the Ahmedabad ladies I see in front of me? The Segaon women know no literature. They cannot even repeat the Ramadhun with me. They simply know how to drudge and slave away. Reckless of sun or rain, of snakes or scorpions, they fetch water, they cut grass and hew wood, and look upon me as their benefactor if I give them work and a few coppers. They don't have an Ambalalbhai to help them with a few coppers. What am I to take to these dumb sisters? Those dumb millions do not live in Ahmedabad but in the Indain villages. The five percent who are literate have a vocabulary of hardly a hundred words or two . I know what to take to them. But I cannot tell you. I am no speaker, neither is the pen my profession. I have wirtten what I have, because I could not help it, and at one time I was dumb, so much so that my friends used to call me a dunce, until I went to the courts where too it was with difficulty that I opened my lips. It is not my business to speak or to write. My business is to live amongst them and show them how to live. The key to swaraj is not in the cities but in the villages, and so I have settled in a village—a

village, too, which I did not go seeking, but which came to me.[1]

Likewise I had not gone around looking for satyagraha. Many of the women from this village gave their love to me much against my will. If, however, I were to accept their love, my vow of faithfulness to my wife would be put to shame; hence, I regard them as my mothers. I know them as such and worship them as such. I invite you to the temple of these mothers.

Turning towards Keshavlal Dhruva:

Keshavlalbhai, I invite you too.

[K.] Then please grant me longer life as well.

But then I also must live equally long. There is not much difference in our ages.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 22-11-1936, *and Harijan,* 14-11-1936

33. LETTER TO VITHAL L. PHADKE

AHMEDABAD,
November 2, 1936

CHI. MAMA,

Please explain my predicament to the Harijan brethren who would be disappointed at my not coming. My soul is in Segaon, and I came here because I had to. I will leave for Segaon as soon as the work here is finished. I shall certainly try to come to Godhra if God grants me another opportunity.

There is nothing wrong in putting away the money that the Harijan brethren have raised for the temple. Only it should be seen to that it is safe. It should bring in interest which should then be added to the principal. The simplest possible temple of my imagination would be for us to find a priest with a pure heart and the place where he conducts the worship should be our temple. We may make this idea as vivid as we like. We should not be in a hurry to spend money on building a temple. It would be all right spending money, if there was any, on building a temple if it could be used as a place of worship, a

[1] The paragraphs that follow have been taken from the Gujarati.

school, a meeting place for village elders and a public resthouse. For the rest, if we would only realize it, we all carry a temple in our hearts.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3837

34. SPEECH AT THE CONCLUDING SESSION OF THE TWELFTH GUJARATI SAHITYA PARISHAD, AHMEDABAD[1]

November 2, 1936

At the outset, I must thank you all. Ordinarily, a president always expresses his gratitude, but I do not do so as a matter of tradition. I came here because of your love for me. I did not even give you the time which I should have given you. I made an extempore, undigestedextempore, undigested and worthless speech.[2] For this, I should beg your forgiveness. I express my heart-felt gratitude to you for having put up with me.

It is not that I do not like to read good essays. I have some interests which I cannot satisfy. A good many of these have become extinguished, but those that are still alive will keep showing up on every occasion so long as I have not been able to see God. Anandshankarbhai told me that a poetry symposium was held here and even young men participated fully. I had wished to go to the lecture on the archaeological work in Indore. But I neither went to the lecture nor attended the poetry symposium. What can it be but generosity on your part that you have put up with all these failings of mine?

On hearing about the donations for prizes, I was reminded of Carnegie who endowed a large library in Scotland. Professors in Scotland told him: 'If you want to make a donation, why insist on a library? You know about business; what can you know of these matters?' I, too, would tell our philanthropists that if they want to make sure that their money would be well spent they should give us donations without attaching any conditions.

Today, we have a spate of novels. Reading of novels has become a passion. These are sprouting like mushrooms. If you want to know how a novel is written, I can tell you a good deal about it. But it cannot be described before civilized men and women. One's imagin-

[1] A summary of the speech by Mahadev Desai was also published in *Harijan*, 21-11-1936.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Gujarati Sahitya Parishad", 23-10-1936

ation can run riot, it knows no restraints. However, we can do without these novels. The Gujarati language will not be widowed without them. At present it is indeed in a state of widowhood. When I went to South Africa, I took some Gujarati books with me. Taylor's Gujarati Grammar was one of them. I liked it very much. This time, too, on the critical night before the Conference, I had taken it out in order to read it. But where was the time to read it? I remember the epilogue to that grammar. Taylor asks in it, "Who said that Gujarati was inadequate?''"Gujarati, the accomplished daughter of Sanskrit, how could it be inadequate?" And he concluded: " As the speaker, so the language. "It is not its inherent poverty that Gujarati reflects but the poverty of the people speaking it. That poverty cannot be wiped out through novels. Our language is hardly going to be redeemed through an increase of books like *Nandabatrisi*.

I live in a village and so I can acquaint you with my hunger as a villager. While doing my matriculation I read a book on astronomy, but no one then asked me to look at the sky. Kakasaheb is a man of keen interests. In Yeravda jail, he used to gaze at the stars every night. I wondered what he could be gazing at. But after his release I too asked for books on the subject. I wanted a Gujarati book and I even found one although worthless. But how could that appease my hunger? Could we not give to our villagers a book on astronomy which they could understand?

But not to speak of astronomy, do we even have books on geography which they could understand? The fact is that we have not paid any attention to the villages. Although we are dependent upon them for our food and clothing, we behave as if we were their masters. We have given no thought whatsoever to their requirements. Is there any other country which is so impoverished that it carries on its business in a foreign language while ignoring its own? It is for this very reason that our country continues to be poor and our language is in a state of widowhood. There is not a single book in French or German, which soon after its publication is not translated into English. Abridged versions of the best classics are produced in large numbers for children. Have we anything like that in Gujarati? If that were the case, I would bless it. I had wanted to introduce a resolution on this subject, but now I shall be content with merely making the suggestion. I entreat our writers to begin writing for our dumb masses rather than for our city-dwellers. I am the self-appointed representative of that dumb public. On their behalf, I ask you to take a plunge into that field. You may be writing entertaining stories but these are not going

to make any impression upon their minds. We have a school for village workers. I asked its teacher to study the tools used in a craft before teaching it, to understand how a *basala*[1] is made. if you wish to develop your mind, you should study village implements, understand their good points and bad points and then write about them. Those whose minds are fresh will find new things to see and to learn in villages. It is not true that your mental development becomes stunned when you go to the villages. My reply to those who say this would be that they must have gone there with close minds. Actually the village, and not the city, is the place for the development of the mind.

I shall say something here which I said yesterday in the Subjects Committee. I received a letter from Shrimati Lilavati Desai on behalf of the Jyoti Sangh. Although I approve of the substance of the letter I did not like its language. Its substance was that what was written about women was painful to them. The description of women which was found in current literature was a destorted one. These women in exasperation asked whether God had created them in order that men could describe their bodies? When they were dead would they embalm their bodies? There was no reason to believe that they were created to cook and clean untensils. Someone had picked out some striking quotations from *Manusmriti* and sent these to her. He had picked out from *Manusmriti* whatever disparaging things could be said against women. Some women, poor soul, themselves admitted that they were helpless, uncouth and like cattle—but for this reason, could that description apply to all women? Why could not someone else have interpolated such ugly verses in *Manusmriti*?

Now these women ask the question why they are not described as they really are. They are neither Rambhas, celestial maidens, nor slave girls. They too are independent human beings like men. Why should the latter describe them as if they were dolls? Why do not men think of their mothers when they talk of women? There was a time when a large number of women stayed with me. In South Africa I had become a father or brother of women belonging to about sixty families. There were pretty women as well as plain ones amongst them. Although these women were illiterate, I brought out the courage in them and they went to jail as bravely as men.

I ask you to change your point of view. I am told that current literature is full of apotheosis of women. I do not want such worng apotheosis, such descriptions of

[1] Carpenter's tool used for trimming wood

their eyes, nose, ears and other features. Do you ever describe your mother's features? I suggest that before you put your pens to paper keep your mother before your eyes. If you do that the literature which will flow from your pen will be like the rain which nurtures the thirsty mother earth. But today,

35. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

SABARMATI,

[*November 2, 1936*][2]

Q. The work of removing untouchability seems to be insuperable. How exactly are we to tackle it?

A. Silent plodding. I better tell you how I am doing it in Segaon. I do not preach to them, but work away never thinking of the result. The one condition is that you should not harbour untouchability in any shape or form . I have made it a point to have as many Harijans about me as possible. They come as servants but they soon know that they are brothers to us. We tolerate no distinction between Harijans. Though I cannot present you with tangible results of this silent service, I may safely say that there is a marked change for the better among all—Harijans and the orthodox Hindus.

Q . It is not quite easy for the Harijans to leave their village where they feel like doing so, as in Kavitha. How can they get work?

A. I still adhere to my advice. We should be ashamed of asking them to stay on in the village and suffer the continuing persecution. It should not be impossible for us to find work for them. The number of those who will migrate will never be large.

Q. The Bhangis' lot is pitiable in many places. How can they secure their elementary rights from Municipalities?

A. They must know that they are not bound to serve under all conditions. They may leave the work if the Municipality will not listen to them. But we have to settle down in their midst and educate them and not make reckless attempts to drive them to strike work. They must be taught to know that they have friends. Whilst they like others have the right to go on strike, they should know its limitations. They

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The questions were asked by a group of Harijan workers of Gujarat and Kathiawar who were spending a month at Harijan Ashram, Sabarmati, learning carding and spinning.

[2] The date is from *Gandhi*: *1915-48*

should be taught to regard their work as equally dignified with all other social services. I have no doubt that they are the most neglected social servants and deserve every assistance we can render them.

Q. What is the outlook, in view of the precarious financial position of our Ashrams and institutions today?

A. It is not our financial position but our moral position that is precarious. You know the instances of moral lapse that have occurred. Purity is the only social foundation. No movement or activity that has the sure foundation of purity of character of its workers, is ever in danger of coming to an end for want of funds. Then we in Gujarat have to realize that we must not always depend only on our monied men. We have to tap humbler resources. Our middle classes and even poor classes support so many beggars, so many temples, why will they not support a few good workers? We must beg from door to door, beg grain, beg copper coins, do as they do in Bihar and Maharashtra. In Maharashtra they have paisa funds and *mushti*[1] funds. It will be the finest form of propaganda among caste Hindus. But remember everything will depend on the singleness of your purpose, your devotion to the task and the purity of your character. People won't give for such work unless they are sure of our selflessness.

Q. What about the Harijans turned Christians who are today no better than Harijans?

A. Everything will be all right the moment untouchability disappears. When there is no untouchability, there will be no occasion for them to label themselves otherwise than as Hindus. I am talking of nominal Christians. If we put our own house in order, we need have no anxiety about Harijans changing religion as people change clothes.

Q. If it is impossible to get the caste Hindus' co-operation in antiuntouchability work, would it not be better to take up the village industries work?

A. That is a delusion. You may be sure that he who gives up Harijan work on a pretext like that will be able to do less for the village industries work . You can't settle down in a village and miss the Harijans who are the foundation of society.

Harijan, 28-11-1936

[1] Literally, 'a handful'

36. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ON THE TRAIN TO BHUSAVAL,
November 3, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

You have been good in that you have been sendingme letters without receiving anything from me. I had simply no time after leaving Segaon. And in Ahmedabad I was washed out. Last night there was hardly 3 hours' sleep for I had to detrain at 12 p.m. at Baroda to see the Tyabjis and entrain at 2.30 a.m. for Surat. On the train for Baroda I had to revise Mahadev's notes and so there was no time to sleep on the train. Thank God it is all over and now I have made up for the lost rest. For I have been sleeping off and on since 8.30 a.m. I have commenced attending to correspondence only just now (4 p.m.).

I had a long chat with Lady Vidyagauri, Hansa[1] and others. I had no time to talk to Mridula[2] after the interview and not at all on the Conference matter. I have now written to her[3].

I am glad S[hummy][4] has agreed to your being with me for two months. Let us hope and pray that you would be all the better in health for being with me. Ba's hut is being built. She went with me from Delhi. She will leave A[hmedabad] today for Bombay and pass about a week with Ramdas who is not keeping extra well. She will be there about a week. Mahadev will also be going to Bombay tonight. He had a touch of fever. I have kept very fit in spite of overwork. I wish you were with me for some functions which were interesting.

I had gone to Rajkot not to see my sister, though she, too, is there. I had gone specially to see my aged cousin[5] and his wife[6], Kanu's[7] grandparents who gave all his [*sic*] children for the cause.

[1] Hansa Mehta
[2] Mridula Sarabhai
[3] The letter is not traceable.
[4] The addressee's brother, Col. Shumsher Singh
[5] Khushalchand Gandhi and Devkunvar
[6] *ibid*
[7] Second son of Narandas Gandhi

Of course you are going to stay with me in Faizpur.

Both the Segaon patients[1] are doing well. They require hardly any nursing. For the most part they are now able to help themselves. What a trail we have all gone through. All's well that ends well.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3750. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6906

37. LETTER TO KASTURBHAI LALBHAI

ON THE TRAIN,
November 3, 1936

BHAI KASTURBHAI,

I have gone through the papers concerning Gordhanbhai's demands. He has no right to ask for the money. Assistance can be given for the labourers' school in Nadiad but its [accounts] should be scrutinized and the school should function under the supervision of the Majoor Mahajan and your association. Such is my firm opinion. The correspondence suggests that, according to the resoultion passed, a trust-deed should immediately be made.

I am returning the papers.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

38. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

November 3, 1936

CHI. MRIDU,

I am returning the letter you had given me. Narmada[2] and Ramnarayan saw me. Both of them said they would come to me, would try to understand each other and perhaps follow my suggestion, that is to say, they would break the marriage bond. I have no doubt that this is an unholy marriage. Their account of it suggests only that. Now, if Narmada wishes to live with you according to her understanding with you, have it in writing and then keep her with you. Narmada need not come to me at all. Of course, she does not

[1] Mirabehn and Amritlal T. Nanavati; *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 5-10-1936, "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 5-10-1936, "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 4-9-1936, "Letter to Amtussalaam", 7-9-1936 and "Letter to Amtussalaam", 13-10-1936

[2] Wife of Ramnarayan Pathak

understand her own mind in the least.

You told me that you had written a letter to Rajkumari inviting her to stay with you. She has not received the letter. I have written to her that it is impossible that you would not even reply to her letter. I do not insist that you should invite her if you have not done so. But you should at least write to her.

Vidyabehn[1], Sharadabehn[2], Hansabehn[3], etc., had come to me. They tell me that you not only refuse to join them in their work but also carry on a campaign against them. I told them that I could understand your not joining them but that I was not aware of your carrying on any campaign against them. If you think it is proper, meet them in this connection or inform them about whatever you may be doing. Or you can write to me.

I have not been able to understand the meaning of the comment about Pramodabehn's temple. If you have understood it, write to me. I did want to talk with you, but it could not be done.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G. W. 11202. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

39. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

SEGAON,
November 4, 1936

CHI. KANAIYO,

Send me the *takli* and some books, such as the *Ramayana*, lying there. I don't find *Meghaduta*, etc., and the small pencil, too, in the luggage. These are not things one should have to search for. When Lilavati comes here she should bring no box, but only useful clothes and other things.

If there are any woollens among my clothes there, I want them.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

[1] Vidyagauri Nilkanth
[2] Sharada Mehta
[3] Hansa Mehta

40. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

November 4, 1936

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

Concerning the financial position of the Harijan Ashrams, you should start doing as I suggested in my reply. A defeatist outlook here will lead us nowhere. Work should at once begin on the lines I have suggested, and then it should be continued in the manner of the charity box kept in Shriji's temple. I hope you know of Shriji's box.

I am very eager to discuss in *Harijanbandhu* such questions as you have asked but I am not able to manage it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4029. Also C. W. 140. Courtesy: Parikshitlal L. Majmudar

41. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

November 4, 1936

CHI. NARAHARI,

The haste this time, and the crowds, were terrible. So, too, the number of accidents.

I could not even have a look at the Ashram. How could I when my mind was in Segaon?

I keep on receiving complaints from Rajaji. Give him the enclosed letter. I have asked Joshi of Bhavnagar to discuss his scheme with you. It will be very nice if there is something worth while in it. Ler me know.

Deliver the accompanying letters.

It still pricks me that I was not able to spend some time with the girls.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9099

42. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
November 5, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Well, I returned yesterday in good order and condition and found both the patients in a fit condition.

I hope you got my letter[1] written on the train and posted at Bhusaval.

No more time to say more.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3751. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6907

43. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

November 5, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I had been anxiously awaiting your letter which I got today. I read it myself and there was hardly a word which I could not decipher. Tell Bari[2] that I did get the honey but did not realize that it was sent by him. Hope he is all right.

I follow what you say about your health. I told you that you could come to Segaon when you got well. How does it mean that you should not do Khurshedbehn's work? I should be glad if you did. I do give you the permission to come but I shall like it better if you take up Khurshedbehn's work. What I should like most is for you to be fully recovered. Even the nails should be healthy. You will be able to share other people's sufferings if you yourself are healthy. If you don't regain health, you will make others suffer for you.

Ba will pay a visit there. There is good news from Delhi. Manu is there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 360

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 3-11-1936
[2] Abdul Bari, addressee's brother

44. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

November 5, 1936

CHI. BHANSALI,

I was very glad to have your letter. I certainly do not want you to give up any of your vows. But a vow means a good vow, i.e., one fit to be taken. Your vow to eat only uncooked starchy foods is a bad one. One who eats unripe bananas would be regarded a monster. You should know that it is the same in the case of uncooked wheat. Why should you withhold anything when you have entrusted everything to me? When you have enough faith to entrust your future to me why can't you entrust your present, too? I do expect penance not only from you but from all. I am therefore, not asking you to pamper the palate when I ask you without hesitation to make some necessary changes in your diet. On the contrary I want you to build up your body so as to exact hard work from you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

45. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

November 5, 1936

BHAI BAPA,

I didn't of course get the Gujarati letter, but I got the English one today. The wire will be despatched tomorrow and this, too, will be posted only tomorrow.

I feel that even writing a confidential letter is very risky. Whatever we want to do can be done only after the proclamation[1] is issued. And even after it is, it will be befitting to have the celebration only in Travancore. It would be too much to give it too big a publicity outside the State. However, we shall be able to organize a movement all over India if the proclamation is up to our expectations. Whatever it may be, we should not be impatient. For my part I don't at all believe that all temples will be thrown open. It will not be dharma but a mere administrative measure if the main temples are not thrown open. Calculating policy has no place in dharma. We must show a sense of proportion.

BAPU

[1] By the Maharaja of Travancore, throwing open temples to Harijans: *vide* "An Example for Hindu Princes and Their Advisers", 16-11-1936

[PS.]

A Copy of the telegram[1] is enclosed.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1171

46. LETTER TO VAKIL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 6, 1936

MY DEAR VAKIL,

I am thankful for your transparent letter just received. I have been in touch with spiritualists for years including, I think, Rishi. I do not disbelieve their experiences. But I know that the spirits which talk to them are themselves not infallible. They are blind guides leading the blind. It is of no moment that they say they are not harmed by these conversations. That the spiritualists who hold them are harmed I see daily. I have painful experiences of some of them becoming unhinged and those who seem to have retained their faculties have certainly suffered weakness of mind.

If one has faith in God, one should be independent of these spirits than whom there are undoubtedly higher orders of beings. Contact with these spirits is a hindrance between God and ourselves. I may not carry this argument any further.

I would like to know why your guide misguided you and became the cause of so much anxiety to others.

Your letter shall be treated as you desire. Do you wish it to be withheld from Mahadev, Pyarelal, and the like? Your wishes shall be strictly respected.

Yours,
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

47. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

November 6, 1936

CHI. NARAHARI,

I am enclosing Lalji's letter. Ponder over it. In the first place, Lalji has to divorce that girl. We should speak to her parents, and also to the girl. We should speak to Lalji's father also. I feel that it was

[1] This is not traceable.

improper on the part of Lakshmi to have spoken directly to Lalji. I don't think we should agree to the proposal too readily. If everything is done rightly, the alliance won't hurt me. I cannot understand why Mama[1] gave in. Make a through inquiry and write to me. Do consult Lakshmidas, Parikshitlal and others.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9100

48. LETTER TO LALJIBHAI

November 6, 1936

CHI. LALJI,

I have sent your letter to Naraharibhai. Tell him everything. The task is not as easy as you think it is. The only thing you have to take into consideration is the well- being of the girl. You should also take into account the feelings of your parents and her parents. Why should you not be satisfied with the girl? What is your objection to her? You have learnt the dharma of self-restraint. Tell me, would I have any objection if this contemplated union was in keeping with the needs of propriety?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3297

49. TELEGRAM TO R. SRINIVASAN

[After *November 6, 1936*][2]

MY ADVICE MISUNDERSTOOD. WHILST I REPEAT ADVICE TENDERED TO HARIJANS I DARE NOT INTERFERE WITH POLITICAL BODIES WHO ARE APPROACHED BY HARIJANS FOR GUIDANCE DURING ELECTIONS. IT IS FOR YOU TO PRODUCE ATMOSPHERE OF SUCH CONFIDENCE THAT NO MORE THAN FOUR MOST DESERVING MEMBERS WILL APPEAR FOR THE PANEL.

The Hindu, 20-11-1936

[1] V. L. Phadke

[2] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram of November 6, regarding the interference of the Congress in the Scheduled castes elections.

50. SILK AND COTTON

There is a subtle rivalry going on just now between hand-manufactured silk and khadi hand-made from cotton. So far as the A.I.S.A. is concerned the matter was settled long ago. Certified khadi stores were permitted to stock indigenous silk cloth only to attract more customers for khadi and to enable the stores to make up somewhat for loss on khadi by charging fancy prices for silk cloth. The line was often overstepped by overzealous store-keepers but never with the approval of the A.I.S.A. Now the manufacturers of silk cloth have discovered that they can easily displace Andhra khadi because they can afford to undersell Andhra saris, and now silk merchants are to be found defying the A.I.S.A. in pushing their wares. So far nothing can be said against these merchants for no one is bound to respect the policy of the A.I.S.A. unless its virtue is recognized. But in Bombay as elsewhere, too, perhaps, silk merchants have been found doing their business so as to lead the credulous public to believe that they, the merchants, are doing their business with the approval of the A.I.S.A. and in the interest of khadi.

It is necessary, therefore, to warn the public against being deceived by such devices. The public should know that the A.I.S.A. has adopted no arbitrary policy. Trade in indigenous silk had not died out when khadi revival was ushered in. Khadi can give employment to crores whereas silk hardly to more than a few thousand. Khadi is a necessity for both the poor and the rich. Silk is a necessity for none but a few who, in order to nourish a religious sentiment, insist on silk garments on certain occasions. Hence when it is a question of choice between silk and khadi, naturally those who have the welfare of starving millions at heart will always choose khadi. And the very object of the All-India Spinners' Association requires it to give the first place always to khadi made of cotton. I say khadi made of cotton in order to avoid confusion in the minds of those who have seen the wider definition of khadi as being cloth hand-spun and hand-woven out of cotton, silk or wool.This wide definition was and is necessary in order to cover woollen and silken hand-spuns when the latter two are used not to supplant cotton hand-spuns but to supplement them. Thus in winter many people want the warmer woollen or silken stuff.

No one need run away with the idea that the policy I have advocated in these lines disregards the welfare of silk spinners and weavers. Nothing can be farther from my thoughts than this. For I know that if khadi dies, indigenous silk dies automatically. Japanese silk and the artificial imitation from the West will sweep every piece of indigenous cloth out of existence. It is the khadi spirit which has enabled Kashmir woollens and Bengal-Assam silks to hold their own. It is the far-seeing policy of the A.I.S.A. which in protecting cotton khadi against all odds automatically protects indigenous hand-spuns made of wool or silk. Put the three in competition with one another and you dig the grave of all the three. Lastly, let it be remembered that if cotton khadi lives but silk dies, the hands left idle due to the death of silk can easily take up cotton spinning and weaving, but if silk displaces cotton, it cannot employ the crores that will be without occupation or chance of it due to the death of cotton khadi. It seems to me, therefore, to be the obvious duty of all lovers of *Daridranarayana* to prefer cotton khadi always when the question of making a choice confronts them. It will be economical in the long run to pay for the present dearer prices for fine cotton khadi than for the corresponding fine silk wear.

Harijan, 7-11-1936

51. ONE THING NEEDFUL

The one thing needful for effective Harijan service and, for that matter, all service of the poor, the forlorn, the helpless, is purity of personal character in the servant. Without it possession of even the highest intellectual ability and administrative capacity is of no account. It may even prove a hindrance, whereas possession of a pure character combined with love of such service will assuredly develop or provide the requisite intellectual and administrative capacity. This reflection is prompted by the discovery of very painful instances of grave moral lapses on the part of two well-known workers in the Harijans' cause. They were both regarded by all who knew them to be above suspicion and of unsullied character. They have both been betrayed into conduct unworthy of those occupying the positions they did. They were no doubt victims of lust that was hiding like a deadly snake in a dark corner of their hearts. But poor mortals that we are, we cannot read into others' hearts. We can but, and we must, judge other fellow men by their acts which we can see and handle. In these two

cases they are such as to make it impossible for them to remain as workers in the Harijan Sevak Sangh. This would be no punishment. Their withdrawal would be necessary for the protection of the Sangh and its cause if not also for themselves. I can safely say that it will be unnecessary for the Sangh to take any step against them. These workers will themselves retire from the Sangh and, I hope, from all public activity. The duty of service is denied to none. A person who has had a grievous moral fall but has come to his senses will serve no matter where he is placed. His very reformation will be a service of society. But performance of such service that comes of itself and is rendered almost secretly is wholly different from being in an organization and enjoying all its privileges. For such re-entry into public life a complete restoration of public confidence is absolutely necessary.

There is in modern public life a tendency to ignore altogether the character of a public worker so long as he works efficiently as a unit in an administrative machinery. It is said that everybody's character is his own private concern. Though I have known this view to have been often taken I have never been able to appreciate, much less to adopt, it. I have known the serious consequences overtaking organizations that have counted private character as a matter of no consequence. Nevertheless the reader will have, observed that for my immediate purpose I have restrictecd the application of my proposition only to organizations like the Harijan Sevak Sangh which make themselves trustees for the welfare of the dumb millions. I have no manner of doubt that possession of a spotless character is the indispensable requisite of such service. Workers in the Harijan cause or for khadi or for village industries must come in closest touch with utterly unsophisticated, innocent, ignorant men and women who might be likened to children in intelligence. If they have not character, they must fail in the end and for ever damn the cause they espouse in the surroundings in which they are known. I write from experience of such cases. Happily they are rare enough for the numbers engaged in such services, but frequent enough to call for publc warning and caution on the part of organizations and workers who are engaged in such services. These last cannot be too watchful or too exacting of themselves.

Harijan, 7-11-1936

52. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 7, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter. I hope this will reach you in Simla.

It is joyous news that S[hummy] denied himself aspirin for full one week and you were gracious enough to have only two tabloids during the whole Simla season. Let us hope now you won't need even two during your lifetime which extend to 100 years.

Your sales of khadi certainly went beyond even my expectations. All this due to the effort of a mere woman—frail in body and idiot mentally !!! No, wonder poor khadi workers in Simla are trembling over the prospect of you absence during the next Simla season. But we need not worry about the future which is in God's hands. *You* will give a good account of yourself no matter where you are.

Nanavati is so well that he is leaving today to pass a few days among the members of his family and friends whilst he is gaining strength. He is a wonderful worker. Mira is chirpy. Balwant Singh is weak. He must overwork himself and take chapati even when he must not.

You were extravagant in buying the thermos, the magnificent apples. But you would not be a Rajkumari if you were not extravagant. You are none the less so because you spend on others. If you counted yourself a trustee, as you should, of all you possess including your body, you would be balanced in using them even for your trust. You may not philosophically smile this simple truth away. Remember the value of a rupee in terms of the poor. It means 64 solid meals which millions do not have. Many in Segaon live on a rupee per month, i.e., only two meals a day costing one pice each. But millions do not get this much. How can you and I, knowing this as well as that I am writing this, mis-spend a pice? Will you be wise for a while? If you will become the—or a—woman of my imagination, you will have to develop all your faculties, not excluding account-keeping. And how about your Hindi?

Will you send me a good portable copy of Granth Sahib in Hindi with translation? No hurry and not an expensive volume. If

getting a cheap copy is beneath your princess-like dignity or your capacity, you must leave this commission alone.

I gave Ku[marappa]'s manuscript to Mira for criticism. She read it carefully and has given me her notes. She thought it was heavy, but terse enough, some parts not convincing. I am glad you have revised it. I wanted to pass on M[ira]'s notes to Ku[marappa]. But I had no time. If it is not given to the printers, and I find the time, I shall go through the thing myself.

Enough for the day.

Love:

ROBBER

[PS.]

Andrews coming here soon.

Isn't this good paper?

From the original: C.W. 3598, Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6407

53. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

November 7, 1936

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,[1]

Arrange to send me through Bari or otherwise a copy of the Koran with Urdu translation by return of post. If you cannot get hold of a spare copy, send me the one you have with translation.

I expect you are well now. Nanavati is leaving for Bombay today.

Ba must have arrived there. You are not to go to see her. I have written to her to call on you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 361

[1] The superscription is in Urdu.

54. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

November 7, 1936

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

I went through the notice issued on behalf of the Majoor Mahajan. It is all right. Be very watchful of every step you take and having taken it you should not waver.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

55. LETTER TO PRABHUDAYAL VIDYARTHI

SEGAON,
November 7, 1936

CHI. PRABHUDAYAL,

Buy a Yeravda chakra if you can-get it cheap. Otherwise I have already one spinning-wheel ready for you. Cheap means for about a rupee and a half., Have you regained your strength?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 11678

56. LETTER TO BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

SEGAON,
November 8, 1936

MY DEAR BHARATAN,

I was about to write to you about the permission given to Kanu & Co. to cook their food. But Kanu mentioned today your remark made to him. Hence this letter now. Your remark was fully justified. The request had come to me before I went to Benares. I pooh-poohed it then. It was repeated on my return with greater emphasis. The reason was indifferent health. I believed it and capitulated. This is no separate kitchen. They want no facilities involving expense. They

need no separate kitchen building and they must not take in guests on any account whatsoever. At the same time I have told Zaverbhai that he should not rest content with the withdrawal of these young men from his kitchen. He must so arrange that he can find suitable food for them.

Is my position clear and sound?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3594

57. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Novermber 8, 1936

CHI PRABHAVATI,

You have entirely stopped writing to me because of my tours. I returned on the 4th and am writing this after waiting for your letter. Both the patients are well. Nanavati left for Bombay yesterday to see the members of his family. Ba is in Bombay. Nimu[1] has become quite weak. Vasumati has come to Segaon for a few days. Khan Saheb and Mehrtaj are of course with me. Lilavati is at Maganwadi and will be at Segaon in about a week.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3485

58. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 9, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

You are nasty and of little faith. Why should you always know that your letters are welcome? Taken to its logical extent, it means that you have always to wire whether your letter will be welcome. Why can you not take it for granted?

So somehow or other you have succeeded in sending me an instrument case! I shall prize it when I receive it and forgive the

[1] Nirmala Gandhi, wife of Ramdas Gandhi

expense of sending the yarn which shall be looked after as desired by you.

Andrews must be in Wardha today.

I wish I was with you to supervise your packing. I should make short work of many of your things and ease your burden for the rest of your life. But now you must be in Jullundur unpacking.

Meher Taj is with me. She seems to be flourishing. Do write to her and send her letter with mine.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3752. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6908

59. LETTER TO NANDALAL BOSE

November 9, 1936

DEAR NANDA BABU,

Here is a wire from Shri Ambalal. What is to be done? You will excuse the left-hand writing. The right needs rest.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9796

60. LETTER TO VITHALDAS

November 9, 1936

CHI. VITHAL,

All were surprised and happy to see the excellent contribution you made in the spinning *yajna* arranged on the occasion of Rentia Barash[1]. May you live long, make progress in the art of spinning and become a true servant of the poor.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

[1] *Bhadarva Vad 12,* Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram calendar

61. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 9, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

It is good that you wrote to me. The letter[1] for Vithal is enclosed herewith. Give him a spinning-wheel worth about Rs. 5 or khadi or books of the same value, whichever he prefers. If you find Rs. 5 too much, then make it less.

It was Vallabh's suggestion to take Balkrishna to Jamnagar. I accepted it deliberately as I like sun-bath treatment which I understand is given to everyone at Jamnagar. I would rather that Balkrishna was given drugs orally than through injections. As Balkrishna has no preference of his own, the whole burden rests on me. I thought it proper to accept the Jamnagar suggestion which happened to present itself. I thought it a duty to do at least this much for Balkrishna, seeing that I had to do much more for others who showed themselves more impatient. Ultimately the hut is there as the last resort. However, if Talwalkar insists and he is not cured by the time, his treatment will have to be tried.

I have sent the clarification about the purse for *Harijanbandhu*[2].

I would be glad if you take up the khadi activity in Kathiawar. Maganlal Patel was chosen because an uncle only in name is better than no uncle. If you take up the work in Kathiawar and do not ask for any financial help from the central office of the Sangh, you will be able to organize your activities as you wish. You ought to have the zest and be able to see your way clearly. If you take up the work, you may perhaps be able to get more help from the Indian States. You may even make Ramjibhai take interest in the work again. For my part I leave everything to you.

I could not recognize Tara. I shall of course write to her.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Won't you put someone under Lakshmi Prasad to learn something about medicinal herbs?

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8510. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* "Kathiawar Purse for *Daridranarayana*", 29-11-1936.

62. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

November 9, 1936

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I just got your card at 7.15. I also had the note sent from Maganwadi. I shall see what to do about the honey and the bottle. I should have given you *Khakharis*[1] for the journey. You should increase your diet gradually. I think your weight is all right and for the present you should go up by at least 2 lb. per week. I hope you are getting fairly good fruit there.

Things here go on well. I allowed Mirabehn to have four *Khakharis* this evening.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI AMRITLAL NANAVATI
BHADARAN BHAVAN
MALAD, B.B. & C.I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10722

63. DISCUSSION WITH C.F. ANDREWS[2]

[On or after *November 9, 1936*][3]

GANDHIJI: Their behaviour has been as bad as that of the rest who are in the field to add to their numbers. What pains one is their frantic attempt to exploit the weakness of Harijans. If they said, 'Hinduism is a diabolical religion and you come to us,' I should understand. But they dangle earthly paradises in front of them and make promises to them which they can never keep. When in Bangalore[4] a deputation of Indian Christians came to me with a number of resolutions which they thought would please me, I said to them: 'This is no matter for bargain. You must say definitely that this

[1] Thin, crisp chapatis made out of wheat flour

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". Andrews had just returned from a visit to New Zealand, Fiji and Australia and had been, since his return, in correspondence with various missionaries. He wanted to know Gandhiji's reaction to the attitude of the missionaries.

[3] According to *Gandhi—1915-1948: A Detailed Chronology*, Andrews arrived in Segaon on November 9. *Vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 9-11-1936

[4] Gandhi was in Bangalore from 31-5-1936 to 13-6-1936.

is a matter to be settled by the Hindus themselves. Where is the sense of talking of a sudden awakening of spiritual hunger among the untouchables and then trying to exploit a particular situation? The poor Harijans have no mind, no intelligence, no sense of difference between God and no-God. It is absurd for a single individual to talk of taking all the Harijans with himself. Are they all bricks that they could be moved from one structure to another? If Christian Missions here want to play the game, and for that matter Mussalmans and others, they should have no such idea as that of adding to their ranks whilst a great reform in Hinduism is going on'.

C.F.A. Let me ask one question. I said in Australia that all the talk of Dr. Ambedkar and his followers was not in terms of religion, and I said also that it was cruelty to bargain with unsophisticated people like the Harijans as they are in most parts of India. Then came the London Missionary Society's statement that the Ezhavas in Travancore had asked for Christian instruction. I said then that the Ezhavas were quite enlightened and if they had really asked to be instructed in Christianity, it would be an entirely different matter. Was I right?

GANDHIJI: I do not think so. Whilst there are individual Ezhavas who are doctors and barristers and so on, the vast majority of them are just the same as the Harijans elsewhere. I can assure you that no one representing the vast body of Ezhavas could have asked for Christian instruction. You should ascertain the fact from our principal workers there.

C.F.A. I see what you mean. Only I wanted to say that the London Missionary Society was a liberal body and would not make an irresponsible statement.

GANDHIJI: But they at the centre cannot know, as the Parliament cannot know the truth of what is happening in India.

C.F.A. But that apart, I should like to discuss the fundamental position with you. What would you say to a man who after considerable thought and prayer said that he could not have his peace and salvation except by becoming a Christian?

GANDHIJI: I would say that if a non-Christian, say a Hindu, came to a Christian and made that statement, he should ask him to become a good Hindu rather than find goodness in change of faith.

C.F.A. I cannot in this go the whole length with you, though you know my own position. I discarded the position that there is no salvation except through Christ long ago. But supposing the Oxford Group Movement people changed the life of your son, and he felt like being converted, what would you say?

GANDHIJI: I would say that the Oxford Group may change the lives of as many as they like, but not their religion. They can draw

their attention to the best in their respective religions and change their lives by asking them to live according to them. There came to me a man, the son of Brahmin parents, who said his reading of your book had led him to embrace Christianity. I asked him if he thought that the religion of his forefathers was wrong. He said 'No.' Then I said: 'Is there any difficulty about your accepting the Bible as one of the great religious books of the world and Christ as one of the great teachers?' I said to him that you had never through your books asked Indians to take up the Bible and embrace Christianity, and that he had misread your book—unless of course your position is like that of the late Maulana Mahomed Ali's, viz., that a believing Mussalman, however bad his life, is better than a good Hindu.

C.F.A. I do not accept Maulana Mahomed Ali's position at all. But I do say that if a person really needs a change of faith I should not stand in his way.

GANDHIJI: But don't you see that you do not even give him a chance? You do not even cross-examine him. Supposing a Christian came to me and said he was captivated by a reading of the *Bhagavata* and so wanted to declare himself a Hindu, I should say to him: 'No. What the *Bhagavata* offers the Bible also offers. You have not yet made the attempt to find it out. Make the attempt and be a good Christian.'

C.F.A. I don't know. If someone earnestly says that he will beocme a good Christian, I should say, 'You may become one', though you know that I have in my own life strongly dissuaded ardent enthusiasts who came to me. I said to them, 'Certainly not on my account will you do anything of the kind.' But human nature does require a concrete faith.

GANDHIJI: If a person wants to believe in the Bible let him say so, but why should he disregard his own religion? This proselytization will mean no peace in the world. Religion is a very personal matter. We should, by living the life according to our light, share the best with one another, thus adding to the sum total of human effort to reach God.

Consider whether you are going to accept the position of mutual toleration or of equality of all religions. My position is that all the great religions are fundamentally equal. We must have the innate respect for other religions as we have for our own. Mind you, not mutual toleration, but equal respect.

Harijan, 28-11-1936

64. LETTER TO J.P. BHANSALI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 11, 1936

CHI BHANSALI,

I enjoy writing to you. Do spin if your body can bear the strain. Continue *moong* and rice for the present.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

65. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

November 11, 1936

CHI MAGANBHAI,

I have been able to use your letter to the full. Get hold of Harbhai's monthly and send it to me.

By a happy coincidence, just as I was leaving, Jivanji put into my hands your work *Sukhmani* and Kaka's *Jivanno Anand*. When I started on *Sukhmani* it so engaged my attention that I could not put it down. I write this after finishing it—except for the "Ashtapadis". I did that in the "Library". What else could I have done? I have now begun reading the "Ashtapadis" too! But that I will do at my leisure. I like your exposition very much. . . .'s[1] translation is good and beautiful. In the language of your essays I feel there is something lacking, though I cannot lay my finger on it. However I found your translation of the essays of Puran Singh and Vaswani quite pleasing. Only you can tell why it should be so, or maybe it is only my feeling. This is, however, an unimportant point and your book is useful for students as also others.

You have done well in raising a doubt about the words which McAuliffe puts into Guru Arjun's mouth on the subject of the Shastras. McAuliffe has no doubt put in great labour into his work. But I suspected him as far back as 1922 when I read all his chapters in Jail. Later I heard that it was thanks to him that Hindus and Sikhs became disunited. You should write a Sikh history if you have the

[1] The name is illegible in the source.

time and can do the necessary reading. You have to read a vast amount of literature on the subject for the purpose, move among the Sikhs, ransack the library of the Khalsa community and meet Sir Joginder Singh. Probably you know that he is a great writer. It is not a small thing to write a good history. I greatly appreciate your study as revealed in *Sukhmani*. I see that you are interested in the subject and therefore you may be able to undertake the task. A superficial book will not satisfy me. May be for many years to come this is the work cut out for you. In that case "Better is death in the discharge of one's duty".[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9066

66. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

November 11, 1936

CHI. KANAIYO,

When will you write to me? I have been expecting your letter daily.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

67. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 12, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter.

Why are you in a hurry to send me the shawl? Whenever it comes, depend upon it I shall wear it. Therefore deliver it yourself or send it through someone who may be coming and save the postage for a better purpose.

I won't be any party to your becoming a miser nor can I tolerate criminal extravagance at the expense of the poor. But of all such things more when we meet.

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 35

There are one or two things missing in your beautiful and needful case. One of the khaddar pieces was used to dress a new Andrews's hernia belt. Ba came in today. She is happy. Her cottage is making steady progress. Andrews went to Nagpur and returns on Saturday or thereabout.

Love.

BAPU

From a original: C.W. 3753. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6909

68. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

November 12, 1936

CHI. MANUDI[1]

You seem to have gorwn lazy. Why don't I have any letters from you? I could stay at Rajkot for just a few hours. I reached there in the morning and left at night. I had a long meeting with Bali[2] and Kumi[3]. Aunt[4] too had come. I missed you much at Ahmedabad. Ba arrived here today bringing Kana[5] with her. Lilavati too will come, though she may perhaps have to go back on account of her brother. Vasumati is here. She will leave for Bochasan in two or three days.

If you are not specially needed there and if you wish to come here you may do so. A companion for the journey will not be difficult to get. Khan Saheb and Mehertaj are of course still here.

Mirabehn is all right. Nanavati has gone to his brother's at Malad.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 1560. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

[1] Harilal Gandhi's daughter
[2] Balibehn M. Adalaja and Kumibehn T. Maniar, addressee's aunts
[3] *ibid*
[4] Gandhiji's sister Raliatbehn
[5] Kanam Gandhi, Gandhiji's grandson and Ramdas Gandhi's son

69. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

November 12, 1936

CHI. DEVDAS,

The enclosed is for Manudi. Send her here if you do not particularly need her there. Read my letter to her.

The accompanying letter will tell you if you do not already know of Harilal's latest exploit[1]. I do not attach any value to his letter. It seems he is not getting any money from there either. Maybe, too, he is tired of the whole thing. After I had torn up the letter it occurred to me that probably you had not come across it, so I decided to send you the pieces.

Write to me about your health and Lakshmi's[2]. Hope the children are well. Nimu has been quite ill at Bombay.

Do you go for walks? Do you take your meals regularly? You must do these two things.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2034

70. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

November 12, 1936

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,[3]

I got both your letters. I went through the account of Ramjibhai's new activity from beginning to end. He is hardworking. Therefore his activities are bound to bear good fruit. I hope his faith in khadi has not diminished. I got the feeling that he was exhausted somewhat. Show him this letter and ask him to write to me. What is the news about Umia[4]?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI JAISUKHLAL GANDHI
RAMBAG, DHARI
KATHIAWAD

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

[1] The reference is to Harilal Gandhi's public statement of November 10, 1936, that he was seriously thinking of adopting Hinduism again.

[2] Addressee's wife

[3] Gandhiji's nephew and father of Manubehn Gandhi.

[4] Addressee's daughter

71. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

November 12, 1936

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Your letter is very good. My right hand needs rest. I consider . . .'s[1] error a serious one. There is certainly no place for guess-work in the matter of food. One should know for certain every item one eats. If you have the necessary facility have hip-bath early in the morning and then go out for a walk. Eat after that. Mirabehn has her bath at 5.45 a.m.; then walks two to three miles and after that she takes milk, etc.

Now keep up the quantity of *rotli,* ghee and leafy vegetables in your diet and increase gradually the intake of milk and curd up to 3 lb. Do not give up garlic. Take whatever honey is available there. See if you can get it in the Khadi Bhandar. However, if grapes are available honey is not so necessary. For my part, these days I take jaggery, which you saw here, with water. I may be taking about two *tolas* of it. I like it, but you should do whatever suits you.

I shall see about Gajanan. Now we are finding things here interesting. The experiments continue. Do not give up yours.

Harilal's letter has no effect on me. The motive behind it is to get money out of me. However, I would not be surprised if doing that he should come to his senses one day. Of course you did well in writing to me as I knew nothing of it before I got your letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10723

72. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

SEGAON, WARDHA,

November 12, 1936

CHI. SUMANGAL,

I have your distressing letter. You may as well take it that the time when I could have people staying with me is past. Even Mahadev is not staying with me. It is impossible to have you staying at Segaon.

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

What will you gain by staying at Maganwadi? In any case I am more and more drawn to crafts. It is my feeling that for getting rid of your illness you should give up writing as a literary activity. Wherever you may be, I would like to make a labourer of you. But you do not find this to your taste. It is also my feeling that you should get married and practice what self-control you can while leading a married life. Your nature being what it is I see no other course. You have been partial to me and you have felt drawn to me. but this is attachment. It seems to me that your ideal is somewhat different from mine. Therefore even if you come to Wardha you will again become restless. The best thing for you would be to forget me. If you cannot do so, keep your self away and digest what you can. Even *loha bhasma* can be taken only in prescribed doses, which are different for different people. The same may be said of a teacher. All teaching cannot be assimilated by all in the same quantity. Very few people have gained anything by staying near me.

I know nothing about Dandekar. It will be no use speaking to Sethji now. But if you feel it is your duty to do anything in this regard you may write to him direct. I would not wish to make reference to your letter, nor would you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers,. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

73. TELEGRAM TO C.P. RAMASWAMI IYER

WARDHA,

[On or after *November 12, 1936*][1]

I TENDER HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS TO HIS HIGHNESS THE MAHARAJA ON HIS GREAT PROCLAMATION[2] OF FREEDOM FOR HARIJANS.

The Hindu, 17-11-1936

[1] The proclamation by the Travancore Durbar was issued on November 12.

[2] For the text of the proclamation, *Vide* "An Example for Hindu Princes and Their Advicers", 16-11-1936

74. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

[On or after *November 12, 1936*]

I tender my congratulations to the Travancore Durbar and their advisers on this overdue fulfilment of the duty of a Hindu Prince as I have always conceived it to be. I hope that this good proclamation will be carried out in letter and spirit so that Harijans may feel the glow of freedom and real oneness with their caste brethren and I hope that all other Hindu Princes will follow the noble example set by this far-off ancient Hindu State.

The Hindu, 14-11-1936

75. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[After *November 12, 1936*][1]

CHI: AMTUL SALAAM,

What can I do.? I do not remember anything about Harilal. Why should you not write short letters?

1. You may go to see Harilal. You can take Ramdas or anybody else to accompany you. I hope no one will prevent you. In my eyes Harilal's conversion is meaningless.

2. I expect Kanti came to see you. It is not as if I forbade him thinking that you were no good, but he himself does not want to see you. He does not wish to enter into argument with you. What then is the sense in your insisting on seeing him? Think of Kanti's happiness and calm down.

3. I would soon send for you if I could improve your health by having you with me, but I just don't believe I can.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 602

[1] From the reference to Harilal's conversion. According to *Gandhi—1915-1948*, Harilal became converted to Hinduism again about this date.

76. AN INTERVIEW[1]

[After *November 12, 1936*][2]

The modern miracle in Travancore is mainly due to the influence of women, or if you please, to the influence of one woman, Her Highness the Maharani of Travancore. When I was in Travancore some years ago[3], I met the Maharani. She was determined to do what was the purest act of justice, and it is she who is really at the back of the Maharaja's decision. It was a most courageous act to issue the proclamation and still more courageous to carry it out to the letter. The Maharaja could not have done it without the support of his mother. So I see the hand of woman in this miracle.

The opening of temples would not have been possible without the widest co-operation of the caste Hindus. It is a unique demonstration of the power of non-violence. I had thought that the State would at least have to post a strong police force at the main temples, and that at least a few heads would be broken. The process began with the biggest State temple, the one that the Maharaja visits himself. There was no political pressure here. It could not be imposed on a million people. I had no idea that there were nearly 2,000 temples in Travancore. I only knew that ten years ago our volunteers had been severely hammered for even crossing a forbidden road near the temple at Vaikom. Now the humblest of the humble have entered the Vaikom temple without the slightest difficulty. The proclamation did not enthuse me, though it was a solid thing. For I had feared that there might be a political motive behind it. But all my fears have been dispelled. That the orthodoxy, who used to swear by the letter of the ritual and made so much of the efficacy of temple worship being destroyed by even the shadow of a pariah, would fall in with the proclamation, is a thing I was not prepared for, so soon at any rate. But God has made possible what man could not have done.

Mahatma, Vol. IV, pp. 103-5

[1] The identity of the interviewer, an American woman, is not given in the source.

[2] From the reference to the proclamation issued by the Maharaja of Travancore, throwing open all State temples to Harijans

[3] In 1927; *vide* of "Speech At Trivandrum", 10-10-1927

77. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 13, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I got your long letter. I feel very sorry for Bari's health. What is the reason of his ill-health? I got the honey and fruit as also the Koran. Why did you send the fruit? If you have so much money, why don't you send it to me?

It will be very good if you can settle the quarrel between the two brothers. Make an effort. May God help you. How foolish you are ! Who said you were bad when you were told not to write to Kanti or see him? Of late I have neither written to him nor got a letter from him. For my part I know no Diwali and how could there be any in Bombay where a holi is raging? I do not like festivals at all. Are we worthy of the festivals?

This is what I think about you. You should stay there, improve your health and then come to me. Where else can you be treated? If you are prepared to go to Bangalore, I can arrange for that. You can certainly get medical aid there. But you will not get anywhere the facilities available in Bombay. Do not even think of observing the Ramzan fast. Get well and then observe as many fasts as you like. I would have allowed you to obrerve the Ramzan fast at Segaon, had you recovered fully. I shall write a letter to Dinshaw if you want to consult him. What was the point in deciding to go to Mecca and giving it up soon after? I think now you have the answers to all your questions.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 363

78. OBSCENE ADVERTISEMENTS

A sister[1] sending me a cutting from a well-known magazine containing the advertisement of a most objectionable book writes:

[1] Amrit Kaur; *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 21-10-1936

> The enclosed came under my eye when glancing over the pages of . . . I do not know if you get this magazine. I do not suppose you ever have time to glance at it even if it is sent to you. Once before I spoke to you about 'obscene advertisements'. I do so wish you would write about them some time. That books of the type advertised are flooding the market today is only too true, but should responsible journals like . . . encourage their sale? My woman's modesty is so utterly repelled by these things that I cannot write to anyone but you. To think that what God has given to woman with intent for an express purpose should be advertised for abuse is too degrading for words. . . . I wish you would write about the responsibility of leading Indian newspapers and journals in this respect. This is not the first by any means that I could have sent to you for criticism.

From the advertisement I do not propose to reproduce any portion except to tell the reader that it describes as obscenely as it can the suggestive contents of the book advertised. Its title is *Sexual Beauty of the Female Form* and the advertising firm tells the reader that it will give away free to the buyer two more books called *New knowledge for the Bride* and *the Sexual Embrace or How to Please Your Partner.*

I fear that in relying on me in any way to affect the course of the advertisers of such books or to move the editors or publishers from their purpose of making their productions yield profits, she relies on a broken reed. No amount of appealing by me to the publishers of the objectionable books or advertisements of them will be of any use. But what I would like to tell the writer of the letter and other learned sisters like her is to come out in the open and to do the work that is peculiarly and specially theirs. Very often a bad name is given to a person and he or she in course of time begins to believe in the badness. To call a woman member of 'the weaker sex' is a lible. In what way is woman the weaker sex I do not know. If the implication is that she lacks the brute instinct of man or does not possess it in the same measure as man, the charge may be admitted. But then woman becomes, as she is, the nobler sex. If she is weak is striking, she is strong in suffering. I have described woman as the embodiment of sacrifice and ahimsa. She has to learn not to rely on man to protect her virtue or her honour. I do not know a single instance of a man having ever protected the virtue of a woman. He cannot even if he would. Rama certainly did not protect the virtue of

Sita, nor the five Pandavas of Draupadi. Both these noble women protected their own virtue by the sheer force of their purity. No person loses honour or self-respect but by his consent. A woman no more loses her honour or virtue because a brute renders her senseless and ravishes her than a man loses his because a wicked woman administers to him a stupefying drug and makes him do what she likes.

It is remarkable that there are no books written in praise of male beauty. But why should there always be literature to excite the animal passions of man? May it be that woman likes to live up to the titles that man has chosen to bestow upon her? Does she like to have the beauty of her form exploited by man? Does she like to look beautiful of form before man and why? These are questions I would like educated sisters to ask themselves. If these advertisements and litreature offend them, they must wage a relentless war against them and they will stop them in a moment. Would that woman will realize the power she has latent in her for good if she has also for mischief. It is in her power to make the world more livable both for herself and her partner, whether as father, son or husband, if she would cease to think of herself as weak and fit only to serve as a doll for man to play with. If society is not to be destroyed by insane wars of nations against nations and still more insane wars on its moral foundations, the woman will have to play her part not manfully, as some are trying to do, but womanfully. She won't better humanity by vying with man in his ability to destroy life mostly without purpose. Let it be her privilege to wean the erring man from his error which will envelop in his ruin that of woman also. This wretched advertisement is merely a straw showing which way the wind is blowing. It is a shameless exploitation of woman. It would not leave alone even "the beauty of female form of savage races of the world".

Harijan, 14-11-1936

79. TEMPLE-ENTRY

A co-worker writes:

> A worker in the Harijan cause came in the other day and wanted money for a Harijan temple and school in Phagwara (Jullundur) District). I resolutely refused money for a 'temple', because I am dead against the building of all such, especially exclusive ones for the Harijans, for it is one form of perpetuating their 'untouchability', and just as he was vehemently arguing

with me the postman brought in *Harijan* with your article[1] on this theme. It was quite a godsend. Some sanatanists, I understand, are trying to induce Harijans to build a temple for themselves, so that they need not then claim entry into existing temples. The Harijans really need protection in this respect and your article has not come a bit too soon.

I had a huge discussion the other day with a mutual acquaintance about your advocating 'temple-entry' for Harijans. The friend maintained:

'(a) The Mahatma never goes to worship in a temple himself; why, then, does he encourage Harijans to do so? For advocating 'temple-entry' is an indirect means of encouraging worship in temples.

(b) Our 'temples' are in the vast majority of cases solely means of livelihood for priests who are incapable of earning an honest living in any other way. Why encourage them?

(c) To every priest in charge of such temples the entrance of Harijans will mean more money because no one can go to a temple without putting in a pice (minimum).

(d) Why impoverish the Harijan community?

(e) Why can't the Mahatma teach Harijans to worship in the open air as he does himself?'

I do not know if these questions have been specifically put to you by others and whether you have ever answered them and think it worth while doing so. I do feel, however, that Harijans must not be allowed to build separate temples for themselves and that the removal of the ban on temple-entry will purify the caste Hindu only. The Harijan has to raise himself in other ways with his own as well as our help.

This letter contains the answer, too, to the questions raised therein. Nevertheless it invites publicity and discussion. These questions have been often raised and equally often discussed in these columns in some shape or other.

The worker who wanted a donation for a separate temple for Harijans, and the one who put the various conundrums before the writer of the letter reproduced above, missed the main reason for temple-entry. The demand for opening all temples to the Harijans is made not because the Harijans desire entry, or that when the temples are thrown open to them they will become changed beings. The demand is made for the purification of caste Hindus. It is made

[1] "Task before Harijan Sevaks", *vide* "Task Before Harijan Sevaks", 10-10-1936

because Harijans are deprived wrongfully of a right that belongs to every Hindu. Even though not a single Harijan enters Hindu temples, it is the duty of caste Hindus to throw them open to their brethren the Harijans. It is the truest sign of removal of untouchability from the caste Hindu heart. The other disabilities have undoubtedly to go, but if this one remains untouchability does not die. The civil disabilities will go in course of time, whether caste Hindus wish it or not, but the temples cannot be opened without their free will. There is nothing to prevent a Harijan from drawing water from a public well or demanding at a public school equal treatment with the other pupils. He does not do so today in a vast majority of cases, only because he is yet too timid to assert his legal right. He has reason to be afraid of physical hurt and worse from the caste Hindus. But as he grows from strength to strength, he will certainly assert himself and exercise the right which, owing to his helplessness, he has been hitherto unable to exercise. Not so, however, about temple-entry. If Harijans in a body marched to a temple, they would be prevented by law from entering that temple. Hence the necessity for agitation by caste Hindu reformers for opening their temples to Harijans.

As to temples designed specially for Harijans, I have always opposed such projects. But there have always been reservations. I would not oppose a movement among Harijans themselves for building a temple accessible to both themselves and the caste Hindus. Nor would I oppose the building of such temples by caste Hindus. In other words I do not always oppose the building of temples as such. I think that they play an important and useful part in the lives of millions of people.

That I do not go to the orthodox temples is irrelevant to the issue before us. In order to prove my belief in temples, I need not be a visitor myself. Surely it is enough that I believe in God and offer daily worship not as a mere formality but as an integral part of my spiritual food. Of course I go out of my way to invite Harijans to attend the daily open-air worship. I do so, however, not to wean them from the desire to visit orthodox temples.

Corruption in the temples there undoubtedly is. The illiteracy and cruel ignorance of the priests in charge of most temples is deplorable. But that is a reason for their reformation, not condemnation to destruction. Nor need Harijans pay anything to the priests. Thousands visit temples without paying even a pie. I verily believe that

the movement for the opening of temples to Harijans, when it succeeds, as it must some day not far distant, will sweep the temples clean of any of their glaring abuses.

Harijan, 14-11-1936

80. DISCUSSION WITH JOHN R. MOTT[1]

[*November 13/14, 1936*][2]

JOHN MOTT: You have been one that has given a great initiative to the movement, you have put your life-blood into it, you have suffered and triumphed, and I want you to help me to a profound understanding of what the issues are and tell me how I may help, for I do not want to hinder. What is happening in India is going to have a profound effect on the world. We are in front of forces the influence of which it would be difficult to prophesy or predict. Give me your own diagnosis of the problem.

GANDHIJI: So far as I am concerned with the untouchability question, it is one of life and death for Hinduism. As I have said repeatedly, if untouchability lives Hinduism perishes, and even India perishes; but if untouchability is eradicated from the Hindu heart root and branch, then Hinduism has a definite message for the world. I have said the first thing to hundreds of audiences, but not the latter part. Now that is the utterance of a man who accepts Truth as God. It is therefore no exaggeration. If untouchability is an integral part of Hinduism, the latter is a spent bullet. But untouchability is hideous untruth. My motive in launching the [anti-] untouchability campaign is clear. What I am aiming at is not every Hindu touching an untouchable, but every touchable Hindu driving untouchability from his heart, going through a complete change of heart. Inter-dining or intermarrying is not the point. I may not dine with you, but I ought not to harbour the feeling that if I dined with you I should be polluted. If I was a woman to be married, I should not say 'I cannot marry a man because he is an untouchable.' I am making this clear to you because in the programme of the Harijan Sevak Sangh we say we

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's report "Dr. Mott's Visit". John Mott was an American evangelist, a prominent Y.M.C.A. leader and Chairman, International Missionary Council.

[2] The source gives no date. *Vide*, however, "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 14-11-1936, where Gandhiji says: "I gave over four hours to Dr. or Mr. Mott with Andrews between yesterday and today". Mahadev Desai's evidence seems to contradict this. He says: This talk was taking place exactly at the moment when the Travancore Proclamation was being issued" which was on the 12. But Mahadev Desai was writing several days after the talks.

don't ask the orthodox Hindus to inter-dine or intermarry with the 'untouchables'. Many of us have no scruples about inter-dining or intermarriage. That untouchability is an ancient custom I admit, but there are many such things intertwined with Hinduism because it is an ancient religion, even a prehistoric religion. Instead of being the dead faith that it threatens to be, I want it to be a living faith, so that it may exist side by side with other religions of the world.

With this he explained, the genesis of the Harijan Sevak Sangh, and how he could not be a member of the Sangh, and yet that he had directed and guided the policy of the Sangh.

"The world looks upon you," said Dr. Mott, "as a front-line prophet, conscience, initiator and warrior, and we pray that you may be spared long for this most fateful period in the life of the world."

The conversation led to the genesis of the Yeravda Pact[1] beginning with Gandhiji's declaration, at the Round Table Conference, to lay down his life to stop the vivisection of Hinduism.[2]

G. But I had no political axe to grind, I have none. Nor have the other Hindus a political motive. For instance, the Pact has been a kind of bombshell thrown in the midst of Bengalis. They have their own Hindu-Muslim problem which has been rendered difficult by the Yeravda Pact. The original Premier's 'Award'[3], as it was called, gave fewer seats to the Harijans than the Pact gives. It is almost an overwhelming number. But I said Hinduism loses nothing if *all* the seats were captured by the Harijans. I would not alter a comma in the Pact unless the Harijans themselves wanted it.

JOHN MOTT: Removal of untouchability is the business of your life-time. The importance of this movement lies beyond the frontiers of India, and yet there are few subjects on which there is more confusion of thought. Take for instance the missionaries and missionary societies. They are not of one mind. It is highly desirable that we become of one mind and find out how far we can help and not hinder. I am Chairman of the International Missionary Council which combines 300 missionary societies in the world. I have on my desk reports of these societies, and I can say that their interest in the untouchables is deepening.I should be interested if

[1] Of September 1932 between Hindu leaders and the Depressed Classes; *vide* Vol. LI, Appendix II.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at West Minster School",13-11-1931

[3] This announced the British Government's scheme of providing separate electorate for the Depressed classes. *Vide* also "Letter to Ramsay Macdonald", 18-8-1932

you would feel free to tell me where, if anywhere, the missionaries have gone along wrong lines. Their desire is to help and not to hinder.

I cannot help saying that the activities of the missionaries in this connection have hurt me. They with the Mussalmans and the Sikhs came forward as soon as Dr. Ambedkar threw the bombshell, and they gave it an importance out of all proportion to the weight it carried, and then ensued a rivalry between these organizations. I could understand the Muslim organizations doing this, as Hindus and Muslims have been quarrelling. The Sikh intervention is an enigma. But the Christian mission claims to be a purely spiritual effort. It hurt me to find Christian bodies vying with the Muslims and Sikhs in trying to add to the numbers of their fold. It seemed to me an ugly performance and a travesty of religion. They even proceeded to enter into secret conclaves with Dr. Ambedkar. I should have understood and appreciated your prayers for the Harijans, but instead you made an appeal to those who had not even the mind and intelligence to understand what you talked; they have certainly not the intelligence to distinguish between Jesus and Mohammed and Nanak and so on.

Dr. Mott referred to the Archbishop of Canterbury's speech[1], and the talks he had with him, and other bishops and missionary leaders in England, and emphasized the fact that the Christians should in no way seem to be bidding with others for the souls of the Indian people. He said he had a reassurance from the Free as well as the State Church leaders, but in the secular papers it had got abroad that Dr. Ambedkar could hand over 50 million people to those who were prepared to accept them. He had sensed that it might mean a tremendous disservice. He said: "The most trustworthy leaders of Protestant missionary forces would give to what you have said great heed. They do believe increasingly in work for the untouchables. Tell us what we can wisely do and what we cannot wisely do."

G. So far as this desire of Dr. Ambedkar is concerned, you can look at the whole movement with utter calmness and indifference. If there is any answer to Dr. Ambedkar's appeal and if the Harijans and he take the final step and come to you, you can take such steps as your conscience suggests. But today it seems unseemly and precipitate to anticipate what Dr. Ambedkar and Harijans are going to do.

Deenabandhu Andrews referred with condemnation to the Lucknow Conference and Dr. Mott said that what the Conference did was not authoritative.

[1] *Vide* "What Is a Miracle?", 19-12-1936.

G. It becomes authoritative owing to the silence of Christian bodies. If they had disowned all that happened it would have been well, but those who met at Lucknow perhaps felt that they were voicing the views of the missionary bodies who, in their opinion, were not moving fast enough.

J. M. But there was a disclaimer.

G. If there was, it did not travel beyond the English Channel.

J. M. But there is a deplorable confusion of thought and divided counsel even amongst friends. The Devil would like nothing better. My life has been mostly spent for the intellectual classes, and I feel very much conscience-moved to help in this movement.

Gandhiji cited the example of good Christians helping by working under the Hindu banner. There was Mr. Keithahn[1] who was trying hard to smooth the path of the untouchables. There were Miss Barr and Miss Madden who had thrown themselves into the rural reconstruction movement. He then adverted to the problem in Travancore where an indecent competition was going on for enticing away the Ezhavas from the Hindu fold.

G. The Ezhavas in Travancore want temple-entry. But it is no use your asking me whether they want temple-entry. Even if they do not want it, I must see that they enjoy the same rights as I enjoy, and so the reformers there are straining every nerve to open the temple doors.

J. M. But must we not serve them?

G. Of course you will, but not make conversion the price of your service.

J. M. I agree that we ought to serve them whether they become Christians or not. Christ offered no inducements. He offered service and sacrifice.

G. If Christians want to associate themselves with this reform movement they should do so without any idea of conversion.

J. M. Apart from this unseemly competition, should they not preach the Gospel with reference to its acceptance?

G. Would you, Dr. Mott, preach the Gospel to a cow? Well, some of the untouchables are worse than cows in understanding. I mean they can no more distinguish between the relative merits of Islam and Hinduism and Christianity than a cow. You can only preach through your life. The rose does not say: ‘Come and smell me.’

[1] R. R. Keithahn, an American missionary

J. M. But Christ said: 'Preach and Teach,' and also that Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. There was a day when I was an unbeliver. Then J. E. K. Studd of Cambridge, a famous cricketer, visited my University on an evangelistic mission and cleared the air for me. His life and splendid example alone would not have answered my question and met my deepest need, but I listened to him and was converted. First and foremost we must live the life; but then by wise and sympathetic unfolding of essential truth we must shed light on processes and actions and attitudes, and remove intellectual difficulties so that it may lead us into the freedom which is freedom indeed. You do not want the Christians to withdraw tomorrow?

G. No. But I do not want you to come in the way of our work, if you cannot help us.

J. M. The whole Christian religion is the religion of sharing our life, and how can we share without supplementing our lives with words?

G. Then what they are doing in Travancore is correct? There may be a difference of degree in what you say and what they are doing, but there is no difference of quality. If you must share it with the Harijans, why don't you share it with Thakkarbapa and Mahadev? Why should you go to the untouchables and try to exploit this upheaval? Why not come to us instead?

J. M. The whole current discussion since the Ambedkar declaration has become badly mixed with other unworthy motives, which must be eliminated. Jesus said: 'Ye shall be witnesses unto Me'. A good Christian has to testify what he has experienced in his own life or as a result of his own observation. We are not true as His followers, if we are not true witnesses of Christ. He said: 'Go and teach and help through the mists and lead them out into larger light.'

Deenabandhu Andrews here asked to be permitted to put forward a concordat. He said: "There are fundamental differences between you and the missionaries, and yet you are the friend of missionaries. But you feel that they are not playing the game. You want the leaders of the Church to say: 'We do not want to fish in troubled waters; we shall do nothing to imply that we are taking advantage of a peculiar situation that has arisen'."

G. I do not think it is a matter which admits of any compromise at all. It is a deeply religious problem and each should do what he likes. If your conscience tells you that the present effort is your mission, you need not give any quarter to Hindu reformers. I can simply state my belief that what the missionaries are doing today does not show spirituality[1].

[1] The talks reproduced above took place on the 13th. What follows is a report of the talk on the 14th.

J. M. What are the governing ideals and aims of this Indian Village Industries movement? What is the object of your settling down in this little village?

G. The immediate object of my stay in Segaon is to remove to the best of my ability the appalling ignorance, poverty and the still more appalling insanitation of the Indian villages. All these really run into one another. We seek to remove ignorance not through imparting the knowledge of the alphabet by word of mouth, but by giving them object-lessons in sanitation, by telling them what is happening in the world, and so on.

J. M. What you are doing here has great industrial significance. Japan with about as high a rate of literacy as any country in the world is not exempt from the sins of industrialism.

G. But I am not seeking to industrialize the village. I want to revive the village after the ancient pattern, i. e., to revive hand-spinning, hand- ginning, and its other vital handicrafts. The village uplift movement is an offshoot of the spinning movement. So great was my ignorance in 1908 that I mixed up the spinning-wheel with the loom in my small book on Indian Home Rule[1].

J. M. What is the cause of your greatest concern, your heaviest burden?

G. My greatest worry is the ignorance and poverty of the masses of India, and the way in which they have been neglected by the classes, especially the neglect of the Harijans by the Hindus. This criminal neglect is unwarranted by any of the scriptures. We are custodians of a great religion and yet we have been guilty of a crime which constitutes our greatest shame. Had I not been a believer in the inscrutable ways of Providence, a sensitive man like me would have been a raving maniac.

J. M. What affords you the greatest hope and satisfaction?

G. Faith in myself born of faith in God.

J. M. In moments when your heart may sink within you, you hark back to this faith in God?

G. Yes. That is why I have always described myself as an irrepressible optimist.

J. M. So am I . Our difficulties are our salvation. They make us hark back to the living God.

G. Yes. My difficulties have strengthened my faith which rises superior to every difficulty, and remains undimmed. My darkest hour

[1] *Hind Swaraj,* which, however, was written in 1909 and not in 1908

was when I was in Bombay a few months ago[1]. It was the hour of my temptation. Whilst I was asleep I suddenly felt as though I wanted to see a woman. Well a man who had tried to rise superior to the sex instinct for nearly 40 years was bound to be intensely pained when he had this frightful experience. I ultimately conquered the feeling, but I was face to face with the blackest moment of my life and if I had succumbed to it, it would have meant my absolute undoing. I was stirred to the depths because strength and peace come from a life of continence. Many Christian friends are jealous of the peace I possess. It comes from God who has blessed me with the strength to battle against temptation.

J. M. I agree. 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.'

The talk now was switched on to subjects vastly different—those of current politics and other subjects. But Gandhiji would not allow a discussion on current politics in the columns of *Harijan*. I am therefore reluctantly obliged to omit this very important part of the discussion.

J. M. If money is to be given to India, in what ways can it be wisely given without causing any harm? Will money be of any value?

G. No. When money is given it can only do harm. It has got to be earned when it is required. I am convinced that the American and British money which has been voted for missionary societies has done more harm than good. You cannot serve God and mammon both. And my fear is that mammon has been sent to serve India and God has remained behind, with the result that He will one day have His vengeance. When the American says, 'I will serve you through money,' I dread him. I simply say to him: 'Send us your engineers not to earn money but to give us the benefit of their scientific knowledge.

J. M. But money is stored-up personality. It can be badly used as well as well used. Through money you can get the services of a good engineer. But far more dangerous than money is human personality. It makes possible the good as well as the bad use of money. Kagawa of Japan admits the use of money and machinery is attended with peril but insists, and I agree with him, that Christ is able to dominate both the money and the machine.

G. I have made the distinction between money given and money earned. If an American says he wants to serve India, and you packed

[1] In January 1936. *Vide* "Nothing Without Grace", 29-2-1936 also "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 21-5-1936

him off here, I should say we had not earned his services. But take Pierre Ceresole who came at his own expense, but after our consent, to serve earthquake-stricken Bihar. We would love to have as many Ceresoles as could possibly come to our help. No. It is my certain conviction based on experience that money plays the least part in matters of spirit.

J. M. If money is the root of evil, we are living in a time when there is more money than ever was before.

G. Which means that there is more evil in the world.

J. M. This makes it supermely important that we study more profoundly than ever how to dominate this power both among the rich and the poor with spiritual purpose, motive and passion . . . .

The greatest thing you have ever done is the observance of your Monday silence. You illustrate thereby the storing up and releasing of power when needed. What place has it continued to have in the preparation of your spiritual tasks?

G. It is not the greatest thing I have done, but it certainly means a great thing to me. I am now taking silence almost every day. If I could impose on myself silence for more days in the week than one I should love it. In Yeravda Jail I once observed a 15 days' silence. I was in the seventh heaven during that period. But this silence is now being utilized to get through arrears of work. It is a superficial advantage after all. The real silence should not be interrupted even by writing notes to others and carrying on conversation through them. The notes interrupt the sacredness of the silence when you should listen to the music of the spheres. That is why I often say that my silence is a fraud.

Harijan, 19-12-1936 and 26-12-1936

81. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 14[1] *, 1936*

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I shall try to procure Ku.'s[2] book as revised by you and read it.

When you post the Granth Saheb, you may pack the precious shawl, if that will satisfy your soul. I understand that Granth Saheb is

[1] There is overwriting in the source; 24 seems to have been made 14; the book *Letters to Amrit Kaur* also gives the date 14-11-1936.

[2] J.C. Kumarappa

available in Hindi characters with Hindi translation. If it is a Gurumukhi edition, you will have to send me a Gurumukhi primer with equivalent Hindi alphabet. I wish you could persuade enlightened Sikhs to take to the Devnagari script in the place of the Gurumukhi.

I gave over four hours to Dr. or Mr. Mott with Andrews between yesterday and today.[1]

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3599. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6408

82. A LETTER

WARDHA,
November 14, 1936

DEAR FRIEND,

Charlie Andrews has passed on your letter to me. I am moving in the matter. I have no recollection of ever having received any letter from you.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfild: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal.

83. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

November 14, 1936

DEAR MOTI BABU,

Shankerlal Banker sends me a pathetic letter covering a letter from the A.I.S.A. I want you to give him the satisfaction that very ordinary business men give and is expected of them. Surely you and I have to be like Ceasar's wife above suspicion. The khadi you give cannot be priced at more than the present market price and if that does not cover the [final][2] advance you should pay off the balance, if necessary, in easy but reasonable instalments.

With love,

yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 11051

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] In the source, the letters are smudged here.

84, LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

November 14, 1936

CHI. AMBUJAM,[1]

As usual you have anticipated me. I had fully intended to write to you on my return to Segaon but you were crowded out.

I am glad you are persisting with your translation of Tulsidas. It will do you good and serve the Tamilians.

It would be a great load off the minds of you all if Kichi[2] sticks to the banking job and keeps well. It is good that he is contented with his work.

I do get the fruit regularly. Once a week is enough. If sour limes are cheap, you may add 2 doz. But you must send me the prices for my satisfaction.

Love.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

85. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

November 14, 1936

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I got your letter. Your disappointment is not justified. One who strives hard does succeed in the end. Do stick to the decision already taken. Think twice before taking a decision and once it is taken stick to it. Vasumati spoke of those twelve things.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9517

[1] This is in Hindi.

[2] Krishnaswami, the addressee's son

86. LETTER TO SHRILAL

November 14, 1936

CHI. SHRILAL,

I have gone through your letter carefully. So far the printed pamphlet has not come into my hands; perhaps it is not necessary. I do like your writing. Your views have become organized to some extent. . .[1] find the way out. For the present do not insist on carrying on without a servant. It facilitates things if we treat a servant not as a servant but as a companion and we get the desired help immediately. It takes time and unnecessary expenditure for half-baked, burdened and weak persons like us to find companions. I on my part keep gathering such persons round me and if I do not have them, then I will have no one for my experiments. . . .

Now about the women. I would prefer husbands and wives. I believe that women can make their full contribution. But I feel that if a woman only goes on bearing children, she will not be able to do anything else. My idea of married *brahmacharya* was born out of these kinds of difficulties. If your group believes in the present methods of birth-control, then it is obvious to me that you are on the way to ruin. Moreover, a woman is not as well trained and educated as her husband. Thus a woman is almost . . .[2] and the institution has to suffer.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtsy: Pyrelal

87. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

November 14, 1936

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I got your letter. I am immediately writing to Chowdhari at the address that I have been given.

I have not yet received the book sent by the Parsi sister. You certainly did well in buying a cow. I am glad that you feel happy there.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro— 6: G.S. Gangabehnne, p. 145

[1] A word or two are illegible here.
[2] *ibid*

88. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

November 14, 1936

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

Ghee should be eschewed unless you are sure of its quality. Oil may be used by those who can digest it. But the quantity of milk should certainly be increased to make up for the lack of ghee. With some effort pure ghee ought to be available. In the matter of spices the attitude should be liberal. Students should go only as far as they can. Give them black pepper if it seems necessary, even green chillies if they are habituated to them. But the value of simple pure food should be explained to them and they should go as far as they can in the matter.

It would be best for the students to grind the flour themselves; it will be cheaper, too, in the end.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1091

89. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

November 15, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

Send fruit with Ganpat. I take it that it includes apples. The stock of apples is exhausted. I have of course spoken to Kanu for the oranges, as that man Satyanarayan fleeces us. His bill was exorbitant. I have paid it. Do the oranges cost four rupees a hundred and bananas eight annas for fifty? In spite of having been told not to, he has sent the fruit again. I have returned it. This is just for your information.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11503

90. AN EXAMPLE FOR HINDU PRINCES AND THEIR ADVISERS

[Before *November 16, 1936*][1]

The Travancore Durbar have earned the congratulations of the whole Hindu world and all thoughtful men by issuing the following proclamation:

> Profoundly convinced of the truth and validity of our religion, believing that it is based on Divine guidance and on all-comprehending toleration, knowing that in its practice it has throughout the centuries adapted itself to the need of the changing times, solicitous that none of our Hindu subjects should, be reason of birth, caste or community, be denied the consolation and solace of the Hindu faith, we have decided and hereby declare, ordain and command that, subject to such rules and conditions as may be laid down and imposed by us for preserving their proper atmosphere and maintaining their rituals and observances, there should henceforth be no restriction placed on any Hindu by birth or religion on entering or worshipping at temples controlled by us and our Government.

The action has been long overdue. But better late than never. It may be said without pride that the way for the great step was prepared by the gentle but persistent efforts of the Travancore branch of the Harijan Sevak Sangh headed by Shri K. Parameswaran Pillai. The workers of the Sangh had awakened the conscience of the *savarna* Hindus who had sent numerous petitions to the Durbar praying for the opening of the State temples to Harijans on the same terms as they were to caste Hindus. Untouchability, though an excrescence, has taken such hold of the Hindu world that whenever a Hindu breaks through it and declares against it, he excites admiration among reformers and becomes the object of fierce criticism from the orthodox. This is much more so when the action is taken by one in high authority as H. H. the Maharaja of Travancore, an ancient orthodox Hindu State. Let us hope all criticism will be hushed before this well thought out, deliberate act of piety and justice.

Let us hope, too, that no attempt will be made to whittle away the hard-earned freedom of Harijans by hedging it round by any the least distinction between one Hindu and another. If the proclamation

[1] Though this was first published in *The Bombay Chronicle* on November 17, it is clear from the following item that it was ready for release on the 16th.

means anything it means that in the temples conducted under the State aegis Harijans will offer worship precisely on the same terms as the highest caste Hindus so called. In other words, in the house of God in Travancore henceforth there will be no distinction between man and man, there will be no Harijans and no high caste, all will be Harijans—children of God. If these are not the implications of the great proclamation, it is nothing but a mere scrap of paper. But we have no reason to doubt its sincerity or suspect any mental reservations.

Travancore has a large and important Christian community. Christian missions are flirting with Harijans, rightly no doubt from their own standpoint, they are spending money on them and holding out hope of real freedom and equality of social status. It is beside the present discussion that for Harijans there is no social equality, no real freedom anywhere except when it is first obtained in Hinduism. I am not thinking of individuals. I am thinking of the whole mass. The latter are so intertwined with the other Hindus that unless they become brothers with them instead of remaining serfs which they are, no change of label can avail anything. But this apart, let us realize that the working of the proclamation will be narrowly watched and criticized by the sister communities. It therefore behoves the State authorities as well as the caste Hindus to give full effect to the letter and the spirit of the proclamation.

The main duty of working the proclamation, however, devolves in a way upon the reformers and Harijans. They should avail themselves of the freedom in a religious, becoming and humble spirit. Reformers should see to it that Harijans enter these temples after proper ablutions and in a clean condition. I know that this primary rule is observed more in the breach than in the performance by the vast majority of temple-going caste Hindus. Harijans may not copy the bad manners of caste Hindus. They should take pride in setting a good example in cleanliness both of body and heart.

The proclamation should have no political significance, as it has none. I regard it as the performance of a purely religious duty by the State. And it should be so taken and so treated by all the Hindus of the State. To give it any other colour will be to destroy its great spiritual purpose and effect.

Let us hope that the example of Travancore will prove infectious and all the othere Hindu States will follow suit. There is no reason why they should not. It is the privilege and duty of a Hindu prince to

propound religious codes which are not inconsistent with the fundamental principles of Hinduism as derived from the Vedas and which are demanded by the spirit of the times. This must be true of all the progressive and living religions. This rule accounts for apparent inconsistencies of the different *smritis* and also obvious departures from the original tenets as even a careless student will detect even in the same *smriti.* If the Hindu princes do not perform this primary function, it is not so much their fault as of the lost Brahminhood. If the Brahminical spirit was restored, princes would be *rishis,* who would take from the revenues the honest minimum necessary to support them as a commission for their labours on behalf of the ryots, and hold their revenue in trust for the ryots. They would not have private property as they possess today and feel independent of their ryots and their wishes.

But whether we reach the ideal state outlined here during the present generation or ever, surely there is nothing to prevent the Hindu princes from following the example set by Travancore, and thus hastening the day of the total removal of untouchability from Hinduism, and helping to save it from certain destruction. I would advise the responsible Hindus in every Hindu State to approach their princes and their advisers to initiate the overdue reform.

Harijan, 21-11-1936

91. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

WARDHAGANJ,
November 16, 1936

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
CARE LUCKY
CALCUTTA

NO NECESSITY ALL-INDIA DAY. YOU SHOULD CONGRA- TULATE DURBAR IN YOUR OFFICIAL CAPACITY. AM RELEASING FOR PUBLICATION MY ARTICLE[1] FOR "HARIJAN" APPEALING PRINCES FOLLOW TRAVANCORE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 7981. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

92. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 16, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I am enclosing Prema's letter. Keshu has sent me your letter to him. Do you believe that Lakshmidas is unjust to him? Can Keshu acquire a patent in his indivdual capacity? Isn't what Lakshmidas writes of Arjun correct? Is Lakshmidas jealous of you or Keshu? Is he partial? Which are the special points about Keshu's machine? Has he stolen any points from the machine which Lakshmidas has made? I have come to believe that Keshu is prejudiced against Lakshmidas.

Please throw whatever light you can on the matter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8511. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

93. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 16, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. Consider this as a footnote to Lilavati's letter. Kanaiyo is happy here. He has taken upon himself a big job. If he sticks to it his life will certainly be rewarded. Jamna[1] should not pester him for coming there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C. W. 8512. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Addressee's wife.

94. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

November 16, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I have no time at all. I have received your letter. You must obtain permission to come here for improving your health. If you can, give the accompanying to Jayaprakash. Ba and Lilavati have arrived. Kanu has come from Bombay. Manu is in Delhi. She has not yet come. Vasumati has left today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3486

95. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[1]

November 16, 1936

CHI. MATHURADAS,

No matter in what context, I like to have your letters. I really have no right to give my opinion. I do not come in contact with anyone. Even newspapers I read only casually. Nevertheless if I am asked, I say what I feel.

Here everyone believes that proposing Vallabhbhai's name will not be proper. There would be no difficulty at all if Rajaji were agreeable. There is already talk of having Rajendra Babu for a second term. I am not particular about anyone. When I suggested Jawaharlal's name, I had only the country's good in mind. Now let us see what happens. The children will be doing well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Parts of this letter have already been reproduced in "Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", 16-11-1936

96. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

WARDHA,
November 16, 1936

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

I saw Prabha in Benares. It gave me much pain to see that she had become very weak. She appeared to be in a much worse condition than before. If it is possible, send her here for a few months.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Jayaprakash Narayan Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

97. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

WARDHA,
November [*17*][1], *1936*

BHAI MUNSHI,

I have got your Diwali card. But for whom is it Diwali? You have a Holi burning there. Who can remain untouched by its sparks?

How is Jijima? Her illness has been prolonged. It is better that we get along with the appointment of the Constitution Committee. It would serve us well if the work begins.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 7610. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi.

[1] The source has 27th which appears to be a slip, for Jijima had died before that date; *vide* "Letter to K. M. Munshi", 20-11-1936 Also, Diwali was on November 14.

98. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

SEGAON,
November 17, 1936

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I got your letter after Vasumati had left. So the address for the information of the relatives could not be given. I am sending Kanu your address.

Among other fruits are pomegranate, custard-apple, pineapple, *jambu*, sweet guavas, mangoes, fully ripe *rayan*, sweet berries, etc. There is no harm in taking bananas occasionally. But it is better to take them in place of *rotli*. You may wash them and add butter or ghee. It is possible that some of these fruits may not suit you as the apples did not. You should give up such fruits.

I follow the point about soap. Chhotelal says that even soap powder is more expensive than the soap made at Maganwadi. Can you say anything on this matter? You are gaining weight satisfactorily. It should go on. See that you do not have the slightest indigestion. Mirabehn is also recouping her health and she does not feel tired while walking. She does some work also. Although sometimes she does transgress the limit. One day she even had fever. I was scared and so was she. She took almost nothing on that day and remained on honey, water and lemon juice and was well again. Amtul Salaam lives at Santa Cruz. Do go there. The address is Easter Villa, 7th Road.

See Kanti if you can. Your recipe for making gruel is correct. No lumps will form even if you put paste of flour made in cold water into the boiling water. I had made gruel for 75 prisoners at a time by this method. It cooks in a very short time. It takes quite a long time if we put the cold mixture on the fire and it requires stirring continuously. Do you understand what I write? I hope you do. You must pour into boiling water the thick paste of flour, stirring the while. The intake of milk should be up to 120 *tolas*. Make a habit of taking lemons.

There is nothing about Harilal in the newspapers. I do wish to know, however, what he said on the occasion, where it was and what happened there, and so on.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10724

[1] The reference is to Harilal's reconversion to Hinduism through *shuddhi* performed according to Arya Samaj rites.

99. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 17, 7936

CHI. RAMDAS,

Why, indeed, need you write to me. Kanu is fine. As l am writing this, he is cycling about. He eats quite well. He accompanies me on my evening walks. He is still coughing a little. Everybody says that Nimu has very badly gone down in health. If finally she does not keep well, send her over to me. Let her go to Lakhtar if she so wishes. Or, she may go to Sabarmati. You ought to observe regular eating habits. If you all constantly fall ill, it would be too great a price to pay for living in Bombay. I do wish that you should not pay such a price.

What came of your plan for a store?

Ba keeps worrying a good deal on your account.

Have you discovered the meaning of the mystery of Harilal's new change?[1] The papers are keeping completely quiet about it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

100. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 17, 1936

CHI. NIMU,

So after all you did fall ill there! But then, are you so ill that you cannot even write? Ba worries so much. You went there to look after Ramdas, to see that he gets his meals at the appointed hours and to share in his work, but Ba tells me that you have become so weak that Ramdas has to prepare his morning meal himself. Of course there is nothing wrong in it. But these days, Ramdas too, is a cripple. Now, you two may do what you deem best. It will be well if you come over here or go either to Sabarmati or Lakhtar. Do whatever you like but

[1] Harilal had embraced Islam about May 14 of the year and then changed over to Arya Samaj about 12th November.

get well. I hope you are not worrying about Kanu. If you wish to make any particular suggestion, do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

101. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 17/19, 1936

CHI. KANTI,

I would of course be glad if you insist on writing to me only a postcard every week. I do not wish to disturb you at all in your studies.

I wrote the above the day before yesterday and then there was an interruption. Nor do I wish to waste even a moment of your time. However, I do not regard five minutes given to me every week an unnecessary waste of time. I very often think of writing to you but fail to find the time. Amtul Salaam writes much about you and sends messages but I write nothing of it to you.

I write this on purpose. Sardar told me that you had been to Harilal and there you saw such a tragic sight that you could not coutrol your tears and wept and came away. How will you help me by keeping unhappiness from me? I must learn to endure unhappiness and get used to it. Write to me, therefore, all that happened there. Also tell me what that Arya Samaj business was. Is there any truth in it? Does anyone look after him? I put these questions to you because you still take interest in Harilal. How are things with you?

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7308. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

102. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 19, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I write never to make you weep but always to make you laugh. After your letter I realized the meaning you gave to your previous letter. At the same time your paragraph did bear the meaning I put upon it. But why should my play make you weep? Why don't you weep over the many choice adjectives I apply to you? You must develop a thick skin, if you will be well, both physically and mentally, and will take up the task for which you seem to be cut out.

I am not going to Faizpur on 1st December but I may on 10th or 11th, certainly about 20th. If you come after 27th it will be very late. Why not come earlier and go from there to Ahmedabad. Then you may be a little late, if you like. But you will see what is possible. I am not touring after the Congress. My destination is Segaon. I shall have to go to Belgaum in March or April, whenever Gandhi Seva Sangh meets. This gives you all the information you need and ask for. The session begins on 27th and ends 29th.

I shall certainly read your article if it comes to me in time for suggestions.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3754. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6910

103. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

November 19, 1936

CHI. PREMA,

There was nothing in your previous letter which called for a reply. I would welcome any pretext for writing to you. But I had no time at all. I must, however, reply to your last letter. Kaka had told me about your illness in the course of a minute's conversation, but I did not know that it was as serious as you describe it to be. How did you manage to fall ill like that? I see your carelessness in this. If you looked upon your body as a trust from God and used it accordingly, you would not fall ill as you did. Why don't you content yourself with what you can do within the limits of your strength?

I have no plan of camping there from December 1 or of starting on a tour in January. Yes, I should certainly like to go to Faizpur before the Exhibition starts.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Lilavati has returned to Segaon. She is unpredictable. Her aspirations are no doubt high. She works hard, too. But she will make no real progress until she overcomes her impatience. Still, if I do not give up hope of swaraj why should I give up hope of Lilavati? It will be difficult for you to find another optimist like me.

Has not Harilal fallen into a deep pit? But I have not given up hope even about him. What more can I say? Becoming an Arya Samajist means nothing.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10386. Also C.W. 6825. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

104. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

November 19, 1936

BHAI DAHYABHAI,

I have your letter. The picture of you sitting in front of me is still vivid before my eyes. How helpless I am! I was so hard pressed for time that I did not even dare to ask you how you were. I wanted to save every moment of my time and every particle of my energy.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI DAHYABHAI MANORDAS
DHOLKA DHANDHUKA RAILWAY

From Gujarati: C.W. 2709, Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

105. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI N. PATEL

November 19, 1936

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

I have your letter. I wish your Conference success. The yardstick of success is not resolutions however grand but firm follow-up action on the part of the youth. They should not pass any resolution which they are not prepared to implement.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RAOJIBHAI NATHABHAI PATEL
PATIDAR YUVAK MANDAL
SEVA MANDIR
NADIAD, B. B. & C.I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9009

106. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN N. PATHAK

November 19, 1936

BHAI RAMNARAYAN,

Your first statement is not an indication of truth. It fails to incorporate many points that should have been there. Even my opinion has not been quoted correctly. How can a person ignorant of the background understand it? I have to join issue with you, should I not, when you do not accept my opinion and at the same time publish it? If you wish, you may publish your second statement. However, you need not do anything under pressure from me. Write and do only what your mind and your heart permit. I expect nothing more than that you will weigh calmly the words of one like me.

It is not up to me to forsake or ignore you. To the end of my life I shall hope, as I do in the case of Harilal, that you will be reformed.

To me Narmada's staying in Jyoti Sangh, her being considered a pious woman, your staying near her and other things are like branding one who has already burnt himself. I do not know what kind of morality you accept. Probably you do not find any immorality in your conduct and therefore my simile would hurt you as everything I say hurts Harilal. However, there is no other way before me to awaken

either him or you. I do not know you but I do know Narmada a little. She is a foolish girl and has very little understanding. She is ignorant of truth and untruth. Any young man can mislead her. You became her husband instead of being a brother or father to her and did obvious injustice to Ganga. Narmada could not even stand the talk she had with me before leaving. I keep on receiving laments from your brother, Ganga and Hemubhai. It is terrible if all that they write is true. And if it is—and from what you yourself write it seems to be—one shouldn't be surprised if you were playing false with them. I know young men who feel satisfied that they have done their duty when they partially acknowledge their sins and if other people are not satisfied with it they get angry. They think that society is ungrateful to them. I wish you would not make such a mistake. Believe it that whatever I have written is for your good and for your guidance. You may forsake me but I do not forsake myself. So how can I do that with you or anyone else? आत्मतुल्यसर्वभूतेषु[1] is not only a scriptural statement; it has been woven into my life.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2786. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

107. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

Unrevised

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 20, 1936

CHI. MARY,

I have been terribly behind hand in my correspondence. No time unless I would work outside the permitted hours. But I won't. How long that 'won't' will last remains to be seen.

I hardly think Maria's[2] case will apply to you. But no one knows what may happen.

About return passage I shall try. I do not want you to collect in London for the A.I.V.I.A. I suppose you have Indians in mind. It is no use your going to them with the beggar's bowl even for *Daridranarayana*.

[1] Seeeing others as oneself
[2] Anne Marie Petersen

You may certainly use the Rs. 100 and any other such sum in the way you indicate.

I do not think you need to thank donors who give through agencies like me.

I do not at all like the idea of your earning anything by giving *takli* lessons unless they are given to some rich people who want to learn *takli* spinning as a hobby. I would far rather supply your small wants from other sources.

My policy of not asking or expecting friends of the West to join any C.D. movement still abides. They can do much by doing what I call constructive work on behalf of A.I.S.A., A.I.V.I.A. and the like.

Now I think I have answered all your questions.

Love to you and Motibehn whom I was delighted to see, even though it was only for a very short time.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6069. Also C.W. 3399. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

108. LETTER TO JOHN R. MOTT

November 20, 1936

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to have your letter. It was a pleasure to me to renew our acquaintance and to have the discussion. Pray thank Mrs. Mott for the two packets of maple sugar.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. JOHN R. MOTT

NAGPUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

109 LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

November 20, 1936

CHI. MANUDI,

I had your letter. Now you are expected here any day. Come and start singing *bhajans* for us immediately. There are certainly

numerous things to learn here if one wants to. Kishorelal and Gomati are touring in Gujarat these days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 1561. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

110. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

November 20, 1936

BHAI MUNSHI,

This is not a letter of condolence. Jijima has been rewarded, having served and been served by both of you. No one born is immortal. I always admired her love for you and your devotion to her. Her devotion to God will always be a protecting hedge around you.

You may come on Saturday or Sunday week. We shall decide and then you can get the resolution passed accordingly. It is unnecessary to bring everyone here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7609. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

111. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

November 20, 1936

DEAR SISTER,

I had your telegram. The Travancore affair for us is a call to greater purity, greater sacrifice and greater dedication. I have an unshakable faith that if we continue to be truly devoted in the performance of our duty, untouchability will go root and branch.

Your work must be progressing satisfactorily.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7984. Also C.W. 3077. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

112. SEX EDUCATION[1]

Sjt. Maganbhai Desai, who received the other day the degree equivalent to Master of Arts from the Gujarat Vidyapith, wrote to me a Gujarati letter dated 7th October from which I cull the following:[2]

> May I invite you to discuss in the columns of *Harijanbandhu* a question which you have so far left more or less untouched, I mean the question of imparting sex instruction to young people? . . .
>
> Should sex education be included in the educational curricula of our children? Who should impart it? What would be the necessary qualification for the task? Should this subject be taught in a matter-of-fact manner to all and sundry just like geography or arithmetic? Or is there any limit? And if so, who is to draw the line and where? Again, should the aim of sex education be to combat the onset of libido or simply to recognize it as an inevitable fact of nature which has to be accepted and submitted to?
>
> May I also take leave to make a special request in this connection? Apart from what you may write on this subject in English, won't you write something for the Gujarati reader in Gujarati? You know it is an old-standing grievance of ours that you have ceased to give your original contributions in Gujarati. . . .

I kept this letter for such a long time hoping that one day I should write something on the subject discussed in it. Meanwhile I had to go to Ahmedabad to preside at the Twelfth Gujarati Sahitya Parishad[3]. During my stay of four days at the Vidyapith and in course of contact with Gujarati men and women there, past incidents came afresh to me. I was confronted by the man who had gently castigated me in the above mentioned letter. He even asked me, "What about that letter?" I pacified him by saying that I was carrying it everywhere with me and that I would definitely write about it. At that time I wanted to write in English. On reaching Segaon, I felt the impact of Maganbhai's castigation. I was reminded of the bitter but affectionate

[1] Translated from Gujarati by Pyarelal. The original appeared in *Harijanbandhu,* 22-11-1936.

[2] Only extracts have been reproduced here.

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Gujarati Sahitya Parishad", 31-10-1936 and "Speech at the Concluding Session of the Twelfth Gujarati Sahitya Parishad, Ahmedabad", 2-11-1936

quarrel with Swami Anand in the days of *Navajivan*. He could not bear that I should contribute my original ideas to *Young India* while only stale versions should go to *Navajivan*. I also felt the same. Yet my insistence on writing in *Young India* was not out of place. I think at long last Swami Anand got tired and stopped troubling me. Even after the lapse of such a long time I cannot say definitely which of us two was right. Be it as it may, having said this much by way of introduction I wish to tell the readers of *Harijanbandhu* that I fully agree with Shri Maganbhai's complaint. And from now onwards, every week I will try to give something new to the Gujarati readers. I appeal to them to encourage me in my effort.[1]

Preoccupation with sex is daily becoming more marked in Gujarat as in the rest of India. And what is more, those who fall under its sway feel as if there is something meritorious about it. When a slave begins to take pride in his fetters and hugs them like precious ornaments, the triumph of the slave-owner is complete. But this success of Cupid, spectacular though it may be, will, I am convinced, prove to be short-lived and ignoble, and at long last end in inanition even like a scorpion whose venom is spent. But that does not mean that we can in the meantime afford to sit with folded hands. The certainty of its defeat need not, must not, lull us into a false sense of security. The conquest of lust is the highest endeavour of a man's or a woman's existence. Without overcoming lust man cannot hope to rule over self. And without rule over self there can be no swaraj or *Ramarajya*. Rule of all without rule of oneself would prove to be as deceptive and disappointing as a painted toy mango, charming to look at outwardly but hollow and empty within. No worker who has not overcome lust can hope to render any genuine service to the cause of Harijans, communal unity, khadi, cow-protection or village reconstruction. Great causes like these cannot be served by intellectual equipment alone, they call for spiritual effort or soul-force. Soul-force comes only through God's grace, and God's grace never descends upon a man who is a slave to lust.

What place has then instruction in sexual science in our educational system, or has it any place there at all? Sexual science is of two kinds, that which is used for controlling or overcoming the sexual passion and that which is used to stimulate and feed it. Instruction in the former is as necessary a part of a child's education

[1] This paragraph has been taken from *Harijanbandhu*.

as the latter is harmful and dangerous and fit therefore only to be shunned. All great religions have rightly regarded *Kama* as the arch-enemy of man, anger or hatred coming only in the second place. According to the *Gita*, the latter is an offspring of the former. The *Gita* of course uses the word *kama* in its wider sense of desire. But the same holds good of the narrow sense in which it is used here.

This, however, still leaves unanswered the question, viz., whether it is desirable to impart to young pupils a knowledge about the use and function of generative organs. It seems to me that it is necessary to impart such knowledge to a certain extent. At present they are often left to pick up such knowledge anyhow, with the result that they are misled into abusive practices. We cannot properly control or conquer the sexual passion by turning a blind eye to it. I am therefore strongly in favour of teaching young boys and girls the significance and right use of their generative organs. And in my own way I have tried to impart this knowledge to young children of both sexes for whose training I was responsible.

But the sex education that I stand for must have for its object the conquest and sublimation of the sex passion. Such education should automatically serve to bring home to children the essential distinction between man and brute, to make them realize that it is man's special privilege and pride to be gifted with the faculties of head and heart both; that he is a thinking, no less than a feeling, animal, as the very derivation of the word *manushya* shows, and to renounce the sovereignty of reason over the blind instincts is therefore to renounce a man's estate. In man reason quickens and guides the feeling, in brute the soul lies over dormant. To awaken the heart is to awaken the dormant soul, to awaken reason, and to inculcate discrimination between good and evil.

Who should teach this true science of sex? Clearly, he who has attained mastery over his passions. To teach astronomy and kindred sciences we have teachers who have gone through a course of training in them and are masters of their art. Even so must we have as teachers of sexual science, i.e., the science of sex control, those who have studied it and have acquired mastery over self. Even a lofty utterance that has not the backing of sincerity and experience will be inert and lifeless, and will utterly fail to penetrate and quicken the hearts of men, while the speech that springs from self-realization and genuine experience is always fruitful.

Today our entire environment—our reading, our thinking, our social behaviour—is generally calculated to subserve and cater for the sex urge. To break through its coils is no easy task. But it is a task worthy of our highest endeavour. Even if there are a handful of teachers endowed with practical experience, who accept the ideal of attaining self-control as the highest duty of man, are fired by a genuine and undying faith in their mission, and are sleeplessly vigilant and active, their labour will light the path of the children of Gujarat, save the unwary from falling into the mire of sexuality and rescue those who might be already engulfed in it.

Harijan, 21-11-1936, and *Harijanbandhu*, 22-11-1936

113. HELP CYCLONE-STRICKEN HARIJANS

Sjt. G. Sitarama Sastri writes to Sjt. Thakkar Bapa the following letter:[1]

> The havoc caused by the terrible cyclone that burst over the coastal districts of Andhradesa, especially Guntur District, cannot be adequately measured in terms of money. The official estimate is one crore of rupees. . . . I am writing this to you specially on behalf of Harijans who have been terribly hard hit. Their plight is very pitiable and calls for prompt and adequate relief. Over 3,000 weavers have lost homes and looms. Fishermen on the coast, aboriginal tribes, Harijans and other Depressed Classes have lost their all—food, clothing and shelter . . . .A sum of Rs. 25,000 is the bare minimum required to give them immediate relief . . . . Donations may be sent to Deshbhakta Konda Venkatapayya, Guntur.

I gladly publish this letter. Calamities such as the one that has overtaken Guntur have become part of our life. There is no doubt that philanthropists will be helping cyclone-stricken people in Guntur, but the call of the Harijans affected by the cyclone required special emphasis, and I hope that those who are interested in Harijans will not fail to respond to this call.

Harijan, 21-11-1936

114. BEWARE OF BEGGARS

I have just understood that Sjt. Govind Chandra Misra, who was at one time in the Sabarmati Ashram and who has been carrying on Harijan work near Cuttack, has come down to Bombay to make the

[1] Only extracts have been reproduced here.

usual collections. As a rule he consults me before going out for collections. He has not done so this time; and he knows too that there are grave allegations against him into which I am investiagating. I would therefore warn all those who have been helping him under the belief that he goes out collecting with my permission, that they should refrain from giving him any assistance whatsoever.[1]

Harijan, 21-11-1936

115. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 21, 1936

MY DEAR C.R.,

Read S.'s[2] letter within and give me your decision. Needless to tell you that Sardar is desperately anxious for you to wear the thorny crown. I shall be pleased if you will but I have no heart to press it on you. If you have directly or indirectly let S. to think that you could be persuaded into shouldering the burden, you should unhesitatingly say yes and end the agony of those like the Sardar who are anxious that you should come forward.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2059

116. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

November 21, 1936

CHI. JETHALAL,

I have received your letter. I have started work about the leather affair. The inquiry has been started from a higher level. I will let you know if I get more information. Keep writing to me about whatever new developments take place there.

You must come for the exhibition. You will give but you will also take. It will give us a pretext for meeting. However, I shall be happy if you meet your own expenses. If you bring goods up to that

[1] Govind Chandra Misra writing to Gandhiji later described the statement as "untrue". For Gandhiji's reply to it, *vide* "A painful Duty", 19-12-1936.

[2] Satyamurti's

amount you will be able to sell them. If that is not possible, I shall manage to get the expenses from somewhere—up to Rs. 25, isn't it? Most probably there won't be any need to bring the workers from there. I will let you know if there is. Come when you are free. You must come over to see me at least ten days before the opening of the exhibition. It will be nice if you spend a few days with me. It will be good if you come over in the first week of December.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9858. Courtesy: Narayan J. Sampat

117. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

November 21, 1936

BHAI FULCHAND,

I have your letter. As for you, I have nothing to say. I am like one who, having been scalded by milk, blows on buttermilk before he drinks it. Ramnarayan's action has made me very unhappy[1]. There have no doubt been such incidents but this was the limit. The question is how our minds react to such incidents.

It is possible that my views are unsuited to the new mind. If it be so, I alone will stick to my views. You must improve your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2863. Courtesy: Shardabehn Shah

118. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 21, 1936

BHAI BAPA,

Why should Mahadev keep back your letter from me? There is nothing in it but your overflowing love for the Harijans. Isn't that so? I too love them equally but there is a difference between the two of us. You overdo it while mine is restrained. It is difficult to say which is

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Ramnarayan N. Pathak", 19-11-1936

better. For the time being it is enough for me to say that I have given due thought to what I have done and therefore we are not going to lose anything. Do we ever prevent those who wish to say something or do more work? A true celebration consists only in increasing our purity and other virtues. The simile of the cow at that time[1] was quite appropriate. It was not an insult to the Harijans. Harijans and children like Pulaya and Kanu should not fall into the hands of the missionaries. Anyway, you should keep sending me your views.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1167

119. LETTER TO BABUJI GAURISHANKER VYAS

November 21, 1936

CHI. BABUJI,

You have done well in writing to me in detail. All that you write is painful. You must work hard. I know Shastri quite well. You should not depend at all on your father-in-law's help. Your duty is clear. You should either engage yourself in some honest work to earn money or plunge into the field of service with a determined will. If you do the latter you have to give up all hope of earning money. You should be interested in service for the sake of service. If it is not so it is hypocrisy, and what can be worse than that? A father-in-law has been given the same status as a father in our religion. Consult Shastriji, therefore, and do as he suggests. Now that you have started writing to me, keep it up. What you have written is true—you are like a son to me.

SHRI BABUJI GAURISHANKER VYAS
HATKESHWAR CHOWK
RAJKOT CITY
KATHIAWAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2510

[1] During the discussion with John Mott; *vide* " Discussion with John R. Mott", 13/14-11-1936

120. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 22, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

Two of your letters are lying with me unanswered. To me Diwali and Holi are the same. When there is a fire raging before our eyes, it is a sin to celebrate Diwali. You indeed deserve congratulations for settling the brothers' quarrel. I believe that that is enough for the success of your Bombay trip. It was good that there you could consult the doctors also. What is wrong in serving your mother? Now you will be able to serve her with knowledge. Service to your mother can be a part of the larger service to the country.

Do go to Trivandrum if you can improve your health there. You might get well if the climate there suits you. However, go only if Ramachandran permits you. As far as I am concerned I prefer Indore. But do whatever you think is best. Hope Bari is improving.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 362

121. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

November 22, 1936

BHAI BHAGWANJI,

I have received your complaints. What can I do if you do not understand humour. I do not regret at all what I have done. You will have nothing to complain of if instead of considering me a mahatma you consider me a biped without horns or tail—a human being with a black head. A correction is perhaps required. Now my head is grey, not black. But that is an argument that can be put forward from my side. Isn't it? If I feel hurt by your letter you will apologize, won't you?

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI BHAGWANJI ANUPCHAND VAKIL
RAJKOT C.S.
KATHIAWAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5830. Also C.W. 3053. Courtesy: Bhagwanji A. Mehta

122. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

November 23, 1936

MY DEAR C.R.,

Don't be angry. I have taken a liberty with your note on the Travancore Act—a liberty I do not remember having ever taken with your writings. The reasons for the amendments and the addition you will easily understand and I would fain hope as easily accept as valid. Anyway, I have felt the duty of making the corrections for the sake of the cause.

Love.

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai.

123. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 23, 1936

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I got your two letters. You seem to be a pretty good reporter of news. Your progress may be regarded fair. No one can put on 5 lb. in a week. I shall be satisfied if henceforth you put on 2 lb. every week.

Mirabehn's diet at present is just the same as you have written. Apples cure many persons of their constipation. However every constitution has its own characteristics. Formerly Mirabehn had no such thing as constipation. I am the main cause of her illness, am I not? Anyway, things are getting on well now at any rate.

Gur made from the date juice has been a complete success now. The cause of the earlier failure seems to be the carelessness in applying lime to the earthen pot.

There is a scarcity of ghee here at present. The number of bachelors has increased. Now Balkrishna has joined them. I shall definitely arrange to send ghee to you.

My method of making the gruel definitely saves time and there is no difficulty in cooking. Some items need boiling water and some other should be put in cold water when being placed on the fire, for instance, potatoes.

No one gave me the information which you have been able to give regarding Harilal. But now I have received more information. His condition is miserable. There is no change in him at all. He only needs money for liquor.

I understand about Kana. Train him when you come here. None of your letters are pending now. Lilavati has taken over the charge of the kitchen and the accounts.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10725

124. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

November 23, 1936

CHI. JETHALAL,

My own feeling is that I have received all your letters and my recollection is that I have answered them all. Now you will be coming here soon, so perhaps there won't be any need for a letter. If there is, let me know.

I am carrying on brisk correspondence about the leather. You must see the correspondence even if nothing comes of it. I shall get the news about the appeal by telegram tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have collected some village instruments which you will see. They are no more to be found in the villages but of this later.

From the Gujarati: C.W. 9859. Courtesy: Narayan J. Sampat

125. LETTER TO PRABHUDAYAL VIDYARTHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,

November 23, 1936

CHI. PRABHUDAYAL,

Your letter is good. The Bhajan Mandali's object is the same as yours. But of course, you must arrange things as you want. Both ways are good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 11679

126. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 24, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

I am quite clear that women shold not seek favours from men. Therefore the fittest should rely upon their being wanted for the parliamentary work. I like the idea of some women at least declining to be on the reserved list. Those who will come on the Congress ticket must sign the Congress pledge. I do not know what is possible at this stage. Dr. M. should have no difficulty if she would sign the pledge and if there is room for her. But I know nothing of what is happening. You have done well in writing to J.N. I think this covers all your questions on this head. If not you will ask again.

Faizpur is 25 miles' motor drive from Bhusaval and 7 from a station before B. I forget the name. If you can start from J.[1] two days earlier, you can easily drop in at Faizpur. You can even stay there two or three days if you can afford to leave J. earlier still. I should not accept any fixtures in J. after 12th December. You will watch my programme about that time and act accordingly. I did ask Mrs. S. to withdraw but I do not remember whether she acted up to my advice. Dr. M. should know.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3755. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6911

127. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS G. KAPADIA

November 24, 1936

CHI. MADHAVDAS[2],

I quite forgot your [letter]. Jamnalalji will no doubt contribute whatever he can afford. If he asks for a note there is no harm in giving it. However, tell him to consult me about the matter. I had indeed opened an account for you but at the same time had instructed them not to harass you.

[1] Jullundur
[2] Brother of Kasturba Gandhi

As for Diwali, I am not even aware of it. The sentiment behind it has died out. When there is a fire raging all around, how can there be a Diwali celebration? As long as Harilal has not freed himself of his addiction, his conversion and reconversion can have no value.

Blessings to you both from both of us.

BAPU

[PS.]

You should always write your address in a letter.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII

128. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

November 24, 1936

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Nobody here shares your view. Personally I liked Jawaharlal's statement. How could he have said less? What more could we expect? This time there is no question of remaining in the Cabinet. We shall see about that at the proper time. I didn't wish to send any draft, but who am I to say no to Mathuradas? After all he is my nephew and has been able to coax me into agreeing with a number of things . If you don't approve of the draft write out another, and if you think it your duty to contest the election do so. If you think it necessary to make any changes, by all means do so. Whatever you do, do with confidence for we have to cross many more deserts yet.

Improve your health.

If you can, come to Wardha on your way back from the Frontier Province.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 197-8

129. DISCUSSION WITH BASIL MATHEWS AND OTHERS[1]

[*November 24, 1936*][2]

I cannot speak with either the definiteness or the confidence of a Stalin or a Hitler, as I have no cut-and-dried programme which I can impose on the villagers. My method, I need not say, is different. I propose to convert by patient persuasion. This is a kind of practical adult education to be put to use as it progresses. The centre is automatically shifted from the cities to the villages. They will be taught to know what they should want and how to obtain it in the shape of sanitation and hygiene, improvement of material conditions and social relations. If this primary education is taken by them in its fullness everything else follows. But in indicating the ideal I have told you of the difficulties of this stupendous task. For you should know that we have smaller, more illiterate villages even than Segaon, where people hug their ignorance and dirt as they do their untouchability.

With this he gave Mr. Mathews a vivid idea of the village and its inhabitants and surroundings, and spoke on the problem of utilization of waste hours and waste products or of products that were going to waste. He described how a successful experiment was now being made of tapping palm-trees for *gur* which were either being used for toddy or not used at all. And he gave Mr. Mathews and Mr. Hodge and others present a sample of the *gur* made that morning. A palm-tapper had to be engaged, he dictated his own terms. Gandhiji said:

I want them to dictate their own terms. He charges Rs. 10 a month for tapping 25 trees, but when more people begin doing the thing and have learnt how to utilize their idle hours, the adjustment will take place of itself.

He next talked of sanitation . . . . He said:

Lionel Curtis[3] when he wrote that the Indian village consisted of dilapidated structures built on dung-heaps did not overdraw the picture. We have to remove the dung-heaps, turn them to good account and make the village site a smiling garden.

Mr. Basil Mathews . . .discussed the place of the money-lender and the zamindar in the village economy. Gandhiji said:

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly letter"

[2] The date is from the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary.

[3] *Vide* "Interview to "The Star", 6-1-1908

The money-lender who is inevitable today will gradually eliminate himself. Nor are co-operative banks needed, because when I have taught Harijans the arts I want to teach them they will not need much ready money. Besides, those who are today deep down in mire cannot make use of co-operative banks. I am not so much concerned in getting them loans of money or plots of land as I am about getting them bread and butter and even a little cheese. When people have learnt the art of turning idle hours to wealth all the adjustment we need will follow.

But what about the zamindar? Would you eliminate him? would you destroy him?

I do not want to destroy the zamindar, but neither do I feel that the zamindar is inevitable. I will illustrate how I work out my trusteeship theory here. In this village Jamnalalji has a 75 per cent share. Of course I have come here not by design but by accident. When I approached Jamnalalji for help he built me the required hut and outhouses and said, "Whatever profit there is from Segaon you may take for the welfare of the village." If I can persuade other zamindars to do likewise village improvement becomes easy. Of course the next question is that of the land system and that of Government exploitation. I regard the difficulties surrounding that aspect of the question as for the moment necessary evils. If the present programme is carried through, I shall perhaps know how to deal with the Government exploitation.

Your actual economic policy would differ from Mr. Nehru's? He, so far as I understand him, would wipe out the zamindar.

Yes, we seem to differ in our ideas of village uplift and reconstruction. The difference is of emphasis. He does not mind the village uplift movement. He believes in industrialization; I have grave doubts about its usefulness for India. He believes in the ultimate inevitability of class conflict, though he would avoid it if he could. I expect to convert the zamindars and other capitalists by the non-violent method, and therefore there is for me nothing like an inevitability of class conflict. For it is an essential part of non-violence to go along the line of least resistance. The moment the cultivators of the soil realize their power, the zamindari evil will be sterilized. What can the poor zamindar do when they say that they will simply not work the land unless they are paid enough to feed and clothe and educate themselves and their children in a decent manner? In reality the toiler is the owner of what he produces. If the toilers intelligently

combine, they will become an irresistible power. That is how I do not see the necessity of class conflict. If I thought it inevitable I should not hesitate to preach it and teach it.

Mr. Mathews referred to the Archishop of Canterbury's speech at the Central Hall, Westminster. Gandhiji said:

That is a question to which I have given great thought and I am convinced that if Christian missions will sincerely play the game, no matter what may be their policy under normal circumstances, they must withdraw from the indecent competition to convert the Harijans. Whatever the Archbishop of Canterbury and others may say, what is done here in India in the name of Christianity is wholly different from what they say.There are others in the field also, but as a devotee of truth I say that if there is any difference between their methods, it is one of degree and not of kind. I know of representatives of different religions standing on the same platform and vying with one another to catch the Harijan ear. To dignify this movement with the name of spiritual hunger is a travesty of truth. Arguing on the highest plane I said to Dr. Mott, if they wanted to convert Harijans had they not better begin to convert me? I am a trifle more intelligent than they, and therefore more receptive to the influences of reason that could be brought to bear upon me. But to approach the Pulayas and Pariahs with their palsied hands and paralysed intelligence is no Christianity. No, whilst our reform movement is going on, all religious minded people should say: Rather than obstruct their work let us support them in their work.

M. Do not the roots of the reform movement go back to the missionary movement? Did not the missionaries wake up the reformers and make a certain amount of stir among the untouchables?

G. I do not think that the missionary movement was responsible for a stirring of the right kind. I agree that it stung the reformers to the quick and awakened them to their sense of duty. They say: 'Here is some good work being done by these missionaries; they open schools and hospitals, train nurses. Why don't we do these things for our own people?' And they try to do something in indifferent imitation.

M. You have spoken of some good work being done by missionaries. Should not we go on with it?

G. Oh yes. Do, by all means. But give up what makes you objects of suspicion and demoralizes us also. We go to your hospitals

with the mercenary motive of having an operation performed, but with no object of responding to what is at the back of your mind, even as our children do when they go to Bible classes in their colleges and then laugh at what they read there. I tell you our conversation at home about these missionary colleges is not at all edifying. Why then spoil your good work with other motives?

Mr. Mathews was curious to know if Gandhiji followed any spiritual practices and what special reading he had found helpful.

G. I am a stranger to yogic practices. The practice I follow is a practice I learnt in my childhood from my nurse. I was afraid of ghosts. She used to say to me: 'There are no ghosts, but if you are afraid, repeat Ramanama.' What I learnt in my childhood has become a huge thing in my mental firmament. It is a sun that has brightened my darkest hour. A Christian may find the same solace from the repetition of the name of Jesus and a Muslim from the name of Allah. All these things have the same implications and they produce identical results under identical circumstances. Only the repetition must not be a lip expression, but part of your very being. About helpful readings we have regular readings of the *Bhagavad Gita* and we have now reached a stage when we finish the *Gita* every week by having readings of appointed chapters every morning. Then we have hymns from the various saints of India, and we therein include hymns from the Christian hymn book. As Khan Saheb is with us, we have readings from the Koran also. We believe in the equality of all religions. I derive the greatest consolation from my reading of Tulsidas's *Ramayana*. I have also derived solace from the New Testament and the Koran. I don't approach them with a critical mind. They are to me as important as the *Bhagavad Gita,* though everything in the former may not appeal to me—everything in the Epistles of Paul for instance, nor everything in Tulsidas. The *Gita* is a pure religious discourse given without any embellishment. It simply describes the progress of the pilgrim soul towards the Supreme Goal. Therefore there is no question of selection.

M. You are really a Protestant.

G. I do not know what I am or not; Mr. Hodge will call me a Presbyterian!

M. Where do you find the seat of authority?

Pointing to his breast, Gandhiji said:

It lies here. I exercise my judgment about every scripture, including the *Gita.* I cannot let a scriptural text supersede my reason. Whilst I believe that the principal books are inspired, they suffer from a process of double distillation. Firstly, they come through a human prophet, and then through the commentaries of interpreters. Nothing in them comes from God directly. Mathew may give one version of one text and John may give another. I cannot surrender my reason whilst I subscribe to Diving revelation. And above all, 'the letter killeth, the spirit giveth life.' But you must not misunderstand my position. I believe in Faith also, in things where Reason has no place e.g., the existence of God. No argument can move me from that faith, and like that little girl who repeated against all reason 'yet we are seven' I would like to repeat, on being baffled in argument by a very superior intellect, 'Yet there is God.'

Harijan, 5-12-1936

130. LETTER TO L. A. HOGG

WARDHA,
November 25, 1936

DEAR MR. HOGG,

Thank you for your letter of the 21st instant.

I am sorry we have not made much headway with papermaking. An expert whose services we had secured left us three or four months ago and we are unfortunately now where we were. Our students are manufacturing paper of a sort, but it is not up to much. I could send you samples of various varieties of hand-made paper that we use, but I could not tell you how they are made and the materials from which they are made. We here use waste paper clippings from the local press. We have now here with us a chemist who can make paper out of gunnybag waste, cotton-seed waste, white rags and such other raw materials available in villages. But he is still a novice and I am afraid I have nothing to communicate to you which you can profitably pass on to your friend in Egypt. For experts in this direction, we have to look to China. The paper on which this is being typed is from a village in the neighbourhood of Poona. It is the best that I have. Our own paper which used to be good when we had our expert here is no good at the present moment. I enclose herewith one sheet of Nepal paper made out of bamboo pulp and another of Junnar paper made

out of, I think, tailors' waste which is identical with the one on which this is being typed. The Nizam's State produces very good hand-made paper. Perhaps if you write to the Director of Industries, Hyderabad (Dn.), he would send you a descriptive report on paper-making as cottage industry.

I am sorry about the *Harijan*. I am asking the Manager to see that you get your copy regularly.

Yours sincerely,

ENCL. SAMPLE PAPER SHEETS
L. A. HOGG, ESQ.
Y.M.C.A.
5 RUSSELL STREET, CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

131. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

November 25, 1936

CHI. AMALA,

You have not given your address. So don't blame me if you get this late. I had your previous letter but I had no time.

I do hope your mother and your pet have come. I do hope you won't have to shift from your present quarters.

Your earnings are good. You must not starve yourself. Take plenty of milk, fruit and greens.

All's well here.

Love.

Blessings from
BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

132. LETTER TO SAM HIGGINBOTTOM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 26, 1936[1]

DEAR FRIEND,

Just as it was a farm manager's turn to pass a few months at your institute[2] and pick up such knowledge as he could, it is now Shri

[1] As given in the G.N. register
[2] Allahabad Agricultural Institute, Allahabad

Mirabai Slade's desire to have her turn, if you will let her come. Our village work whets the appetite for knowledge required for the service. Mirabai is a lover of cattle as also farming. She has a natural aptitude for such work. She is anxious to come as quickly as she can if you can take her. Of course she will pay the necessary charges. The question of housing her may be a difficulty. If she has a room in a professor's house, she will be satisfied.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 8937

133. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

November 26, 1936

MY DEAR ANAND,

Your two letters stay for me. How could you be so cruel to Vidya or she to you and herself and to her progeny? Must love find such unlovely expression! Or are the protagonists of contraceptives justified in their furious advocacy of them? Can love not deny itself? Has it no such power? Or is there absence of love where there is absence of self-restraint? [*sic*] Or is love powerless before the demands of animal passion? You and Vidya are embodiments of emotion. Should emotion take such undesirable turns? What is done cannot be undone. You have now to nurse the child to maturity and nurse Vidya to such health as may be still her lot. That is the least you would do. But I ask you to consider calmly the questions I have framed. If Vidya had no appetite but she could not resist your approach, I would far rather tolerate bigamy than a stormy satisfaction of the animal in you through a helpless mate.

I am powerless to say more or to say anything less. You will share this with Jeramdas. I am not writing to him separately.

Love to you both.

BAPU

SHRI ANAND HINGORANI
C/O SHRI K.B. KEWALRAMANI
P.O.CANAL COLONY
FEROZEPORE
PUNJAB

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

134. LETTER TO DR. HARILAL ADALJA

November 26, 1936

BHAI HARILAL,

I hope you are quite well now. The best and the simplest means to be with God is to serve His creatures as they are beings no different from us.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 93

135. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

November 26, 1936

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

You wrote to me after a long time. I have followed what you say about your activity. Now stick to what you have taken up. Improve your health. For that you should be free from mental tension.

A letter for Balram is enclosed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 391. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

136. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

November 26, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. However busy I may be I will never find it burdensome to reply to your letter. It is true that this place is crowded. But how would it become more so by your coming? In spite of that, if you feel like it, come after December. I may have to go to Faizpur around December 10. You could come even then. You will improve your health while at Segaon, won't you? I shall be at Segaon in January in any case.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3487

137. LETTER TO MANSHANKER J. TRIVEDI

November 26, 1936

BHAI MANSHANKER,

Your conclusions can no doubt be regarded as correct. I have always held myself responsible for Harilal's being what he is. I no doubt have a share in his sins. I am undergoing punishment for that and will have to do so in the future also. I will not consider that a punishment at all which is inflicted by others. I am being punished by my own conscience. I do not see anything confidential in your letter though I will not take up the pages of *Harijan* to reply to it. This reply should be enough for you and other gentlemen like you.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI MANSHANKER J. TRIVEDI
106 VITHALBHAI PATEL ROAD
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4753

138. LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL

November 27, 1936

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 9th instant. I await your further letter as also information about the images.

You were good enough to tell me that I was free to make use of your workshops etc., to make researches and get such assistance as was easily available. I know Mr. M. Frydman[1] of your electrical department. He is a lover of villages and has the village mind. Though he has been helping me with his ideas for some years and has recently made me some village tools, I would like you, if it is proper, to instruct him and the Director of Industries to give me or the Village Industries Association such assistance as they can appropriately render. Being in a village myself I do need such assistance fairly often.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR M. ISMAIL
DEWAN, MYSORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Gandhiji gave him the name "Bharatanand".

139. LETTER TO MARGARET SANGER

WARDHA,
November 27, 1936

DEAR SISTER,

It was very thoughtful of you to send me an assortment of your choice dried fruit. Agatha Harrison is here just now and I remarked to her, "Whilst Mrs. Sanger went away from me without taking anything, you see how much I am taking from her even though she is so many miles away." You may judge who is the better of us two, of course apart from the natural superiority of the sex to which you belong. I have gone through your reproduction of the interview[1] in *Asia*. My hurried reading left on me the impression that it was a faithful reproduction.

Blessings from
BAPU

MRS. MARGARET SANGER
BIRTH CONTROL CLINICAL RESEARCH BUREAU
17 WEST 16TH STREET
NEW YORK CITY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

140. LETTER TO P.G. VENKATADESIKAN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 27, 1936

DEAR VENKATADESIKAN,

I was glad to hear from you.

I hope you will stick to your spinning, propagating khadi and assiduously learning Hindi.

Yours,
BAPU

SHRI P.G. VENKATADESIKAN
3 CHAKRAPANI NAIDU GARDEN
PAPER MILLS ROAD
PERAMBUR
MADRAS

From a photostat: G.N. 10845

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Margaret Sanger", 3/4-12-1935

141. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

November 27, 1936

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have your letter. I follow your point about Lalji[1] We must succeed in bringing his wife to the Ashram. Having read the enclosed letters give them to Lalji-Lakshmi. It seems that we shall have to find a husband for Mani also. There will be no difficulty if she learns things and adopts clean habits.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9101

142. A SPUR TO FURTHER PURIFICATION

If the Travancore proclamation of the religious freedom of Harijans is a matter for great rejoicing, it is also an event calling us to greater humiliation, greater effort and greater purification. It is not the end of untouchability. It is certainly, as C. Rajagopalachari says, 'an indication of the potentiality that exists in us, if only we seek His aid'. It inspires us with hope and faith in our mission. But on no account will it warrant relaxation of effort and vigilance over ourselves. If the proclamation is a result of prayer and purification, if the mute prayer of the selfless workers of Travancore aided by kindred spirits all over India, rather than the advertised meetings and their resolutions, inspired H.H. the Maharaja and his advisers to issue the proclamation (it does not matter whether consciously or unconsciously to them), it follows that greater selflessness and devotion of workers must do the rest.

Let us realize the contents of the rest. We do not yet know how the orthodoxy of Travancore and the Harijans will react to the proclamation. If it is not followed up by suitable response on the part of the public, it can easily become a dead letter. The mere opening of temples will mean nothing, if it does not lead to their purification and that of the priesthood.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narahari D. Parikh",6-11-1936

The opening of temples in Travancore must lead to their opening in the sister State Cochin and must also lead to the opening of the sister temple of Guruvayyur. These are of a piece, guided by the same tradition and ceremonial. Then come the great temples of Tamil, Telugu and Canarese India. Kashi Vishwanath, Dwarika and Puri temples in the North, West and East still remain closed to the Harijans. Of the big black patches of India Travancore, though a big patch in itself, considered relatively, was a small speck. It has, by the grace of God showing itself through the proclamation of H. H. the Maharaja, become suddenly a bright spot radiating its light throughout India. Will the radiation prove strong enough to affect the big patches I have mentioned?

And the religious freedom, if it is real in the sense that it comes from the heart of orthodoxy, must be followed by the economic and social betterment of the Harijans all over India.

A mere mention of these most important things should be sufficient to chasten us. But it cannot frighten us if we have a living faith in God and our cause.

For this great and glorious task we want more workers—men and women, boys and girls. We want more money, paper, gold, silver, copper, even handfuls of grain, but these too will surely, as also only, come if the workers whom we already have are, like Caesar's wife, above suspicion. Are we all pure in heart? Are we faithful to our trust? Have we faith in the purely spiritual nature of our mission? If the answers can be in the affirmative, all is well. But the cases I have somewhat discussed[1] in these columns and which I am still following up, make me cautious. How will it fare if we have other black sheep among us? We are none without sin. But if we are not men enough publicly and without any attempt to underestimate it, to own up to our guilt, again I ask, how will it fare with us and the cause we have dared to represent? My rejoicing over the proclamation is thus tempered by the necessary sadness induced by a vivid knowledge of what is happening in our midst. No cause for gloom, equally no warrant for over-exultation but the greatest cause for vigilant introspection and a vivid sense of our responsibility rendered greater by the proclamation.

Harijan, 28-11-1936

[1] "One Thing Needful", 7-11-1936

143. WOMAN IN THE SMRITIS

A correspondent sends me an issue of *Indian Swarajya* published at Bezwada. It contains an article on the place of woman in the *Smritis*. From it I copy the following few extracts without any alteration:

> The wife should ever treat the husband as God, though he be characterless, sensual and devoid of good qualities. (*Manu* 5. 154)
>
> Women should follow the word of their husbands. This is their highest duty. (*Yajnavalkya* 1. 18)
>
> A woman has no separate sacrifice, ritual or fasting. She gains a high place in heaven by serving the husband. (*Manu* 5. 145)
>
> She who fasts and performs rituals, while the husband lives, cuts off the life of the husband. She goes to hell. A woman who is after the sacred waters should wash the feet or the whole body of the husband and drink the water; and she attains the highest place (*Atri* 136-137)
>
> There is no higher world for the woman than that of the husband. She who displeases the husband cannot go to his world after death. So she should never displease the husband. (*Vasistha* 21-14)
>
> That woman who prides in her father's family and disobeys the husband should be made by the king a prey to the dogs in the presence of a big assembly of people. (*Manu* 8. 371)
>
> None should eat the food offered by a woman who disobeys the husband. Such a woman is to be known as a sensualist. (*Angiras* 69)
>
> If the wife disobeys the husband when he is given to bad habits or becomes a drunkard or is suffering from physical ailment, then, for three months she should be deprived of her valuable clothes and jewels and kept away. (*Manu* 10. 78)

It is sad to think that the *Smritis* contain texts which can command no respect from men who cherish the liberty of woman as their own and who regard her as the mother of the race; sadder still to think that a newspaper published on behalf of orthodoxy should publish such texts as if they were part of religion. Of course there are in the *Smritis* texts which give woman her due place and regard her with deep veneration. The question arises as to what to do with the *Smritis* that contain texts that are in conflict with other texts in the same *Smritis* and that are repugnant to the moral sense. I have already suggested often enough in these columns that all that is printed in the

name of scriptures need not be taken as the word of God or the inspired word. But everyone can't decide what is good and authentic and what is bad and interpolated. There should therefore be some authoritative body that would revise all that passes under the name of scriptures, expurgate all the texts that have no moral value or are contrary to the fundamentals of religion and morality, and present such an edition for the guidance of Hindus. The certainty that the whole mass of Hindus and the persons accepted as religious leaders will not accept the validity of such authority need not interfere with the sacred enterprise. Work done sincerely and in the spirit of service will have its effect on all in the long run and will most assuredly help those who are badly in need of such assistance.

Harijan, 28-11-1936

144. THE IDEAL BHANGI[1]

The ideal Bhangi of my conception would be a Brahmin *par excellence,* possibly even excel him. It is possible to envisage the existence of a Bhangi without a Brahmin. But without the former the latter could not be. It is the Bhangi who enables society to live. A Bhangi does for society what a mother does for her baby. A mother washes her baby of the dirt and insures his health. Even so the Bhangi protects and safeguards the health of the entire community by maintaining sanitation for it. The Brahmin's duty is to look after the sanitation of the soul, the Bhangi's that of the body of society. But there is a difference in practice; the Brahmin generally does not live up to his duty, the Bhangi does, willy-nilly no doubt. Society is sustained by several services. The Bhangi constitutes the foundation of all services.

And yet our woebegone Indian society has branded the Bhangi as a social pariah, set him down at the bottom of the scale, held him fit only to receive kicks and abuse, a creature who must subsist on the leavings of the caste people and dwell on the dung-heap. He is without a friend, his very name has become a term of reproach. This is shocking. It is perhaps useless to seek the why and wherefore of it. I certainly am unaware of the origin of the inhuman conduct, but I know this much that by looking down upon the Bhangi we—Hindus,

[1] Translated from Gujarati by Pyarelal. The original appeared in *Harijanbandhu,* 29-11-1936.

Mussalmans, Christians and all—have deserved the contempt of the whole world. Our villages have today become seats of dirt and insanitation and the villagers come to an early and untimely death. If only we had given due recognition to the status of the Bhangi as equal to that of a Brahmin as in fact and justice he deserves, our villages today no less than their inhabitants would have looked a picture of cleanliness and order. We would have to a large extent been free from the ravages of a host of diseases which directly spring from our uncleanliness and lack of sanitary habits.

I therefore make bold to state without any manner of hesitation or doubt that not till the invidious distinction between the Brahmin and the Bhangi is removed will our society enjoy health, prosperity and peace, and be happy.

What qualities should such an honoured servant of society exemplify in his person? In my opinion an ideal Bhangi should have a thorough knowledge of the principles of sanitation. He should know how a right kind of latrine is constructed and the correct way of cleaning it. He should know how to overcome and destroy the odour of excreta and the various disinfectants to render them innocuous. He should likewise know the process of converting night-soil and urine into manure.

But that is not all. My ideal Bhangi would know the quality of night-soil and urine. He would keep a close watch on these and give a timely warning to the individual concerned. Thus he will give a timely notice of the results of his examination of the excreta. That presupposes a scientific knowledge of the requirements of his profession. He would likewise be an authority on the subject of disposal of night-soil in small villages as well as big cities and his advice and guidance in the matter would be sought for and freely given to society. It goes without saying that he would have the usual learning necessary for reaching the standard here laid down for his profession. Such an ideal Bhangi, while deriving his livelihood from his occupation, would approach it only as a sacred duty. In other words, he would not dream of amassing wealth out of it. He would consider himself responsible for the proper removal and disposal of all the dirt and night-soil within the area which he serves and regard the maintenance of healthy and sanitary condition within the same as the *summum bonum* of his existence.

How may we have this ideal Bhangi? Only when we have produced an army of Appa Patwardhans[1]. To clothe the Bhangi with the dignity and respect due to him is the especial task and privilege of the educated class. Some members of the class would first themselves master the science of sanitation to educate the Bhangi round them in the same. They would carefully study their present condition and the causes underlying it and set themselves to the task of eradicating the same by dint of inexhaustible perserverance and patience that never looks back and knows no defeat. They would teach them the laws of cleanliness. Our Bhangis do not today possess even good brooms or other suitable means for the removal of night-soil. The latrines themselves are wretched. The site round the Bhangis' quarters is no better than a cesspool of dirt. All this can only go if some of the educated class give themselves up to the task of redeeming the Bhangi from his present plight and thus redeeming society from its terrible insanitation. Surely this is work enough to satisfy the highest ambition of one who has the spirit of service in him.

Harijan, 28-11-1936

145. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 28, 1936

DEAR CHARLIE,

I am glad you were able to carry Isudas with you to a certain extent. Of course there can't be any question of *Shuddhi*.

You must get rid of this tiredness. It means that you need both mental and physical rest. If it can be had by delaying departure by a week and taking rest at Wardha or Ahmedabad, you must take it unless you will be too late for your first lecture.[2]

You won't put an undue strain on yourself. Love to Gurudev.

Love.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 992

[1] Sitaram Purushottam Patwardhan

[2] The addressee was going to England to deliver a course of lectures in Cambridge on Pastoral Theology.

146. LETTER TO VINOBA BHAVE

November 28, 1936

CHI. VINOBA,

Balkrishna is fine. I hope you have received the dates. Let me know whether they are of a better quality. Where is the need for my coming there early? I promised Dev and Dastane that I should be there towards the first week of December, but the stipulation was that you felt the need of my presence there. My coming causes unnecessary excitement. Do you think I should come? I do not think so. When I come, possibly a few good workers will get tied up on my account. Khan Saheb will be with me. Pyarelal will be there. Sahasrabuddhe and Vaikunthlal are of the opinion that I should not make the visit before the 21st. Think over all this and write to me and persuade Dev and Dastane.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

147. LETTER TO G.D. BIRLA

November 28, 1936

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I understand your distress over Travancore. Rajaji too is distressed. But I cannot even think of any other course. How can I conceal my feelings when I must speak out?[1] I am so heartily thankful that I have assumed the responsibility for having the order carried out. Now read the laws that have been enacted for temple-goers and tell me if my caution was justified or not. Do we not see everywhere that an order says one thing while the laws framed for its implementation are such as to negate it? It is not as if I was ignorant of the difficulties of the Durbar. But the knowledge should make us vigilant.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8025. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

[1] The reference is to Gandhiji's interview and article on the Travancore proclamation; *vide* " An Interview", 12-11-1936 and "A Spur to Further Purification", 28-11-1936

148. BIRTH-CONTROL THROUGH SELF-CONTROL

The following letter[1] has been lying with me for a long time:

In the mean time, I visited Ahmedabad. I did not have the occasion to express my views on the above subject. But, as mentioned by the correspondent, I certainly believe that birth-control can be made effective only through self-control. Any other means of birth-control is likely to result in harm. One can easily discern the evil effects of artificial birth-control methods where they have taken root. It is not surprising that those who advocate birth-control without abstention cannot see these, as it has gained footing in the name of morality.

It is an exaggeration to say that the object of the committee formed in Ahmedabad is what the correspondent states it to be. But whatever its aim may be, its activities will definitely result in an increase in sexual indulgence. Water when thrown on the ground is bound to follow a downward course; similarly, if means are invented to facilitate sexual indulgence, it is bound to increase.

Similarly, it is an exaggeration to believe that doctors and vaidyas do not preach self-restraint as it is likely to affect their incomes adversely. Doctors and vaidyas have never considered it their field to advocate self-restraint. But I see clear signs of these men tending more and more to do so. Their field is to diagnose diseases and cure them. If they do not assign primary importance to indulgence and lack of self-restraint as a cause of disease, a time will come when they will have to stop their practice. As society becomes increasingly intelligent, it will not rest satisfied unless diseases are completely eradicated. And, so long as society does not turn towards self-restraint and does not observe the rules to prevent diseases, it is impossible for it to remain healthy. This is so clear that ultimately everyone will be able to see it and honest doctors will give it the utmost importance. I have no doubt that birth-control without self-control will contribute largely towards increase in sexual indulgence. Hence, it is my humble opinion that the Ahmedabad League can obtain the desired results if it goes deeper into the problem and, taking into account the dangerous consequences of lack of self-

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had noted with disapproval the setting up of a Birth-control League in Ahmedabad which in his view must lead to an increase of licentiousness.

control, spends its time in teaching women the necessity of self-control and telling them how simple it is.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 29-11-1936

149. ONE ENEMY ALONE

A man has only one enemy and only one friend: and that is himself. These are not my words but of all the Shastras. A person becomes his own enemy when he deceives himself. He becomes his own friend when he puts himself in the hands of the God who is within him. The necessity for writing this has arisen from the two instances of fall which I have mentioned and other such instances, major as well as minor, which I come across. As I go deeper into these, I find that the persons concerned are practising self-deception.The results of my investigations have yet to be known.

All of us commit sins. But we degrade ourselves more when we try to appear innocent though we are really guilty. A man degrades himself with two women who regard him as a brother, a saint, a sincere worker, a teacher or guru, and then marries one of them. I regard it as a device to hide one's licentious conduct. To call such a relationship marriage is to abuse the sacrament of marriage. I know such things are happening at many places these days. But any adding to sin or multiplying it will not make it accepted as virtue. If the whole world practises sin it may well become a custom, nevertheless it will remain sin. I am aware that this does not apply to all acts which are regarded as sins. I have in mind things which have been regarded as sinful for generations and which are considered as such by society today.

Teachers develop secret relationships with their women students. That in some cases these relationships are given the form of marriage does not make them virtuous. It is my firm opinion that just as husband-wife relationship is not possible between brothers and sisters, so should it not be possible in the case of teachers and pupils. If this golden rule is not faithfully adhered to, educational institutions will eventually collapse; no girl will be safe from her men teachers. A teacher's position is such that students—both boys and girls—are constantly under his influence; they regard the teacher's words as gospel truth. So they do not entertain any doubts about any liberties taken by the teacher. Hence such relationships are regarded, and

should be regarded, as uncondonable where the soul is respected as something apart from the body. When such relationship creeps into an institution such as the Harijan Sevak Sangh, it has far-reaching evil effects and ruins its activities.

I am thoroughly convinced that behind the unexpected event of the temples of Travancore being thrown open to Harijans lies the strength of the service of silent workers. Such workers are scattered all over the country. They do not want fame, they have no false sense of pride. They find their fulfilment in service alone. As a result of their *punya* God came to dwell in the heart of the Maharaja of Travancore and made him throw open the temples to Harijans. This step is the first glimpse of the glory of God. It is an invitation to the workers to become more alert, purer and more dedicated. No workers, whether men or women, can rest in peace as long as all the temples are not thrown open to Harijans, hypocrisy, wickedness and filth are not banished from all the temples and untouchability is not eradicated from the very marrow of Hinduism. And, they should realize that the delay caused in washing away the sin which has existed since time immemorial is due to the sins of the workers which have come to light recently. Who knows, there may be other such workers concealing their sins. The workers should not cling to their weaknesses by looking upon their sins as virtues, they should not fall and drag their work with them by hiding their sins, nor should they satisfy themselves with admitting their sins only partially.

Some persons are hesitant to acknowledge publicly their own sins, some others put a gloss over them while acknowledging them. Religion proclaims: Magnify your sins into mountains even when they are as small as mustard seeds. If you sincerely confess your guilt you will look as clean as a cloth after its dirt has been washed off. And your public confession and repentence will be like a shield to guard you in future.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 29-11-1936

150. PURSE FOR KATHIAWAR'S DARIDRANARAYANA

A sum of Rs. 7178-7-6 collected by Shri Narandas Gandhi for the *Daridranarayana* on the occasion of Rentia Barash has been

handed over to Sardar Vallabhbhai for use in Kathiawar. I was to decide how that money should be disbursed.

Those who collected the fund had thought that this sum could be utilized for khadi and Harijan work. I have been given to understand that at the moment money is not needed for khadi work. The Spinners' Association is doing its utmost to meet the needs of khadi work in Kathiawar. Moreover, I understand that there is a provision in the late Mohanlal Pandya Memorial Fund for developing khadi activities in Kathiawar. I know, however, that funds are badly needed for Harijan work in Kathiawar. Hence, I have decided to hand over the above mentioned purse for the welfare of the Harijans to Shri Nanalal Kalidas Jhaveri, the Sangh's representative from Kathiawar.

Let me correct an error along with this. Shri Narandas writes to say that he had contributed 200,000 yards and not an equal number of rounds[1]. A round measures four feet whereas a yard is only three feet. And spinning had been carried on in the school for three months, not two.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 29-11-1936

151. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 29, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

I will write to Shummy. My going to Faizpur early is an uncertainty. If I go I will send you full instructions. Do not worry.

Your report of Manganwal is fine reading. May I publish it over your name? It can't be anonymous.

Whenever you leave you should see me on your way to Ahmedabad. I am quite clear that you may not leave Ahmedabad without finishing your work. It would be improper for you to do so. Whilst your meeting lasts, it should receive your undivided attention. What does it matter even if you come the last day.

I have no time for more.

So with cartloads of love,

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3757. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6913

[1] As mentioned by Mahadev Desai in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*, 24-10-1936.

152. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 29, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

I gave you a hurried note this afternoon.

V.'s letter herewith. You will talk to me about it when we meet.

Yes, I read J.'s letter as you did. The meaning has been wilfully perverted by the Press.

If you do not meet me at Faizpur, your stopping at Wardha would not mean any loss of time. And coming to Wardha and Segaon is certainly easier than Bhusaval and Faizpur. And living at Faizpur is none too comfortable. Let us [see] what is in store for you.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3756. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6912

153. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

November 29, 1936

BHAI BAPA,

I have got your letter regarding Govind Babu. I have brought him up as my son. You do know of his previous misadventure. I asked Baba Raghavdas to make an inquiry. He too gave an unsatisfactory report. I did not know at all that he wanted to become a member of Parliament. All those to whom he had gone know him as my man. I took action[1] when the complaint came from Bombay. For my part I do desire that he should hand over possession of the Ashram. As you share the unhappiness of everybody around, I must write to you. Mustn't I?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI THAKKAR BAPA
HARIJAN NIVAS
KINGSWAY, DELHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1172

[1] *Vide* " Beware of Beggars", 21-11-1936

154. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

November 30, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

The scorpion incident is a serious one. Let Jhaverbhai thoroughly inquire into the matter. Who was in charge of the cooking? It is quite possible that Bhansali is under the effect of it. Did this happen during the night or in the morning? We would not leave Vrajlal so easily. Whatever happens, let it happen here. Let him carry on his propaganda. We can't shut up anyone in a cage, can we?

Corrections took a long time, so with great difficulty I am able to write what I am sending.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

It is three o'clock. I am still writing and therefore I am getting all that checked here.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11504

155. LETTER TO D.B. KALELKAR

November 30, 1936

CHI. KAKA,

I just read your article on eroticism. We shall have to discuss it.

It is not necessary to make any change in your diet. At any rate I approve of what you take at present. This should suffice for the present.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7695

156. LETTER TO SATYAMURTI[1]

SEGAON,
December 1, 1936

The terms[2] offered by you appear to me to be reasonable, but uplift of the Harijans is an equivocal expression. The Congress is pledged to the removal of untouchability, root and branch. It is part of the original programme. I do hope that the primary elections will be uncontested. Why should your terms be confidential? I would advise absolutely open dealings in a question in which a vast mass of people are affected.

The Hindu, 4-12-1936

157. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 1, 1936

CHI. KANTI,

I had your second letter yesterday. I have to answer both your letters here together merely for want of time. I would not have any difficulty in reading your long letters nor would they tire me, because your handwriting is as neat as Mahadev's and you never write nonsense. I was not under any apprehension that you might adopt Islam while you were in Bombay. Amtul Salaam had that fear. I had even rebuked her for that. However, considering the disordered state of your mind, I did not think it an impossibility. But you always have

[1] President of the Tamil Nad Congress Committee.

[2] The terms formulated by the addressee were as follows:

(1) The Congress will always have the uplift of Harijans as an integral part of its programme.

(2) No plan of non-co-operation or boycott of legislatures undertaken by the Congress need bind the Harijan members, if they do not agree to abide by such decisions.

(3) Harijan members will be free to act in matters requiring help of the Government for the special relief and uplift of the Harijan community, despite any party rules to the contrary in respect of other Congress members.

(4) The Harijan members of the Congress party will have full freedom of opinion and vote in respect of matters specially affecting the Harijan community, where they differ from the policy adopted by the party, should any such difference arise.

convincing arguments for your changes and the motives of such changes are not immoral. That is why I am able to put up with them. To me all religions are equal, so I would not feel unhappy if one changed one's religion with deliberate knowledge and in a sincere spirit in order to cultivate more detachment and attain God sooner. However there is one thing: one who believes that all religions are equal will have no need to change his religion as it includes other religions. One who has grasped this has no need to change his religion. I told you of my apprehensions about your going there. I still have my fear. It seems that so far you have been able to keep your head above water. If you succeed in doing that till the end, it will be a triumph for you and I shall be immensely satisfied.

Take it that for me it will have no value if you drain your energies and come first in all the subjects. It has been truly said that the body is verily the first means necessary for the performance of dharma.[1]

Eat wherever you want. Stay where you wish. But remain healthy.

I have not given permission to Amtul Salaam to go anywhere. However, I have not debarred her from going to Trivandrum although I have issued several other injunctions. It was of course good that you did

not see her. There is no doubt that she is childish and foolish. She would squander one lakh of rupees if she had that amount. Do not encourage her but at the same time do not neglect her. She has been asking me to withdraw the injunction against her seeing you but I did not pay any heed to her.

Your examination result is very good. I had no doubt about it.

You have given a good account of Harilal. God alone can guide him. That is why I do not say anything to him. I had a letter from him recently. There was nothing in it. I have replied to it, an Arya Samajist is carrying on correspondence with me. He may improve if the Arya Samajists guide him properly, although the correspondent writes that that probability is remote. I have forgotten his name but I have noted it down somewhere. Harilal still wants to marry. He wants money and a life of ease and enjoyment. You probably know about his talk with Surendraji. However, it is impossible to set store by his word because he is not consistent.

[1] शरीरमाद्यं खलु धर्मसाधनम् ।

Lilavati is here. Manu arrived on Monday. Vijaya of Bardoli is also here. Those gentlemen who came to attend on Nanavati and Mirabehn are also here. In a word, there is enough company for us.

Durga and Bablo have also arrived, so Mahadev can be said to have set up house. Occasionally I receive letters from Navin.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7309. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

158. LETTER TO TARABEHN N. MASHRUWALA

December 1, 1936

CHI . TARI,[1]

I have your letter. Do I have to return any of the books you have sent? I shall write to you even if you don't. I cannot bear to see you despair. You ought to make an effort. How old are you that you should lose hope? Come to me if you would not get yourself treated there. For my part I like Dr. Oommen's suggestion. You will have a change of place and also the help of that kind gentleman. And also by the time you return you would have learnt something. Be guided by me. I understand about the Mahila Ashram. I think you wrote a little about it earlier.

You should never give up writing to me. How can we lower the value of our word? By insisting on writing to me, maybe you will become steady and will not accept defeat.

"Never say die even if you have to give up your life."

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 6698. Also C. W. 4343. Courtesy: Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

159. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[2]

[*December 1, 1936*][3]

QUESTION: Do you see a reason for Christian workers in the West to come here, and if so what is their contribution?

[1] Sister of Sushila Gandhi, Gandhiji's daughter-in-law.

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The questions were asked by visitors interested in Christian mass movements.

[3] From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary

ANSWER: In the manner in which they are working, there would seem to be no room for them. Quite unconsciously they do harm to themselves and so to us. It is perhaps impertinent for me to say that they do harm to themselves, but quite pertinent to say that they do harm to us. They do harm to those amongst whom they work and those amongst whom they do not work, i.e., the harm is done to the whole of India. They present a Christianity of their belief but not the message of Jesus as I understand it. The more I study their activities the more sorry I become. There is such a gross misunderstanding of religion on the part of those who are intelligent, very far advanced and whose motives need not be questioned. It is a tragedy that such a thing should happen in the human family.

Q. You are referring to things as they are at present. Do you visualize a situation in which there is a different approach?

A. Your ability is unquestioned. You can utilize all those abilities for the service of India which she would appreciate. That can only happen if there are no mental reservations. If you come to give education, you must give it after the Indian pattern. You should sympathetically study our institutions and suggest changes. But you come with preconceived notions and seek to destroy. If people from the West came on Indian terms, they would supply a felt want. When Americans come and ask me what service they could render, I tell them: 'If you dengle your millions before us, you will make beggars of us and demoralize us.' But in one thing I do not mind being a beggar. I would beg of you your scientific talent. You can ask your engineers and agricultural experts to place their services at our disposal. They must not come to us as our lords and masters but as voluntary workers. A paid servant would throw up his job any day, but a volunteer worker could not do so. If such come, the more the merrier. A Mysore engineer who is a Pole[1] has sent me a box of hand-made tools made to suit village requirements. Supposing an engineer of that character comes and studies our tools and our cottage machines and suggests improvements in them, he would be of great service. If you do this kind of work in a religious spirit you will have delivered the message of Jesus.

Q. There is this mood abroad in the world.

A. I would like to see it amongst missionaries in general in India.

[1] Maurice Frydman

Q. What would happen if there is an increase in the process of multiplying Christians?

A. If there is an appreciable increase, there would be blood feuds between Harijans themselves, more savage than the feuds we have in Bombay. Fifty per cent of the residents in Segaon are Harijans. Supposing you stole away 10 Harijans and built a church for them you would set up father against son, and son against father, and you would find texts in the Bible to support your action. That would be a caricature of Christianity.

Here Gandhiji explained that the whole story of the sudden uprush of spiritual hunger among the millions of untouchables was absurd. A speech at Central Hall, Westminster, made by Bishop Pickett, of which he had read a report in the *Church Times*, had greatly shocked him. He said:

He has made such extravagant statements that I would want a demonstration of them—even of the statement that millions were seeking to be converted.[1]

Q. Apart from the contribution through the realm of scientific achievement, evangelism seems to be out of the question in establishing relationships between East and West?

A. I do say that. But I speak with a mental reservation. I cannot only reconcile myself to—I must recognize—a fact in nature which it is useless to gainsay—I mean proper evangelization. When you feel you have received peace from your particular interpretation of the Bible, you share it with others. But you do not need to give vocal expression to it. Your whole life is more eloquent than your lips. Language is always an obstacle to the full expression of thought. How, for instance, will you tell a man to read the Bible as you read it, how by word of mouth will you transfer to him the light as you receive it from day to day and moment to moment? Therefore all religions say: 'Your life is your speech.' If you are humble enough you will say you cannot adequately represent your religion by speech or pen.

Q. But may not one in all humility say, 'I know that my life falls far short of the ideal; let me explain the ideal I stand for'?

A. No. You bid good-bye to humility the moment you say that life is not adequate and that you must supplement it by speech. Human species need not go to animals and shout to them: 'We are humans.' The animals know them as humans. The language of the

[1] *Vide* also "What Is a Miracle?" , 19-12-1936.

soul never lends itself to expression. It rises superior to the body. Language is a limitation of the truth which can be only represented by life.

Q. How then is experience to be passed on from generation to generation without some articulate expression?

A. There is no occasion for articulate expression. Life is its own expression. I take the simile of the rose I used years ago. The rose does not need to write a book or deliver a sermon on the scent it sheds all around, nor on the beauty which every one who has eyes can see. Well, spiritual life is infinitely superior to the beautiful and fragrant rose, and I make bold to say that the moment there is a spiritual expression in life, the surroundings will readily respond. There are passages in the Bible, the *Gita*, the *Bhagavata*, the Koran, which eloquently show this. "Wherever", we read, "Krishna appeared, people acted like those possessed." The same thing about Jesus. But to come nearer home, why are people touched as if by magic wherever Jawaharlal goes? They sometimes do not even know he has come, and yet they take sudden fire from the very thought that he is coming. Now there it may not be described as a spiritual influence, but there is a subtle influence and it is unquestionably there, call it by what name you like. They do not want to hear him,they simply want to see him. And that is natural. You cannot deal with millions in any other way. Spiritual life has greater potency than Marconi waves. When there is no medium between me and my Lord and I simply become a willing vessel for his influences to flow into it, then I overflow as the water of the Ganges at its source. There is no desire to speak when one lives the truth. Truth is most economical of words. There is thus no truer or other evangelism than life.

Q. But if a person were to ask the source of such a life, what then?

A. Then you will speak, but your language will be well thought out. You will yourself feel that. It defies expression. But then the questioner probes further, if he is a searcher. Then you will draw him to you. You will not need to go to him. Your fame will so spread that people from all parts of the world will flock to see you and listen to you. You will then speak to them. Take Aurobindo Ghose. Many from all parts go to him. He does not even see them, except on two days during the year, and never talks to them.

Q. You see any indication that there is a drawing together of those who have intimations of a higher life?

A. Yes. But not through these organizations. They are a bar to the process. Why am I at Segaon? Because I believe that my message will have a better chance of penetrating the masses of India, and maybe through them to the world. I am otherwise not a man capable of shutting myself up. But I am so downright natural that once I feel a call I go forward with it, whatever happens. Mr. Hofmeyer[1] of the South African Delegation appreciated my desire not to move out; he did not resent it as price or indifference. Economy of words and action has therefore its value. Only it has to be natural.

Harijan, 12-12-1936.

160. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 2, 1936

BAPA,

Your letters have kept coming. I have had no misgivings so far about the propriety of the steps taken in connection with Travancore. Only harm and no good can come if the limit laid down by me is not adhered to.

I am enclosing the correspondence with Bapi Needu. Keep the Valunjkar report in a file there.

The duplicity of Govind Babu is becoming obvious. He himself wrote that he would come and make a clarification. I invited him and now he writes: "I do not wish to come to you. Your ideas and mine differ. I am not satisfied with social activities" and so on. On the other hand evidence against him is piling up with me. I write this since you have taken interest in this case.

BAPU

From a photostate of the Gujarati: G. N. 1173

161. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

December 2, 1936

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I am dictating this as I eat. Parameshwari Prasad has been here for the last two days. He had a talk with Jamnalalji and myself. He has

[1] He visited India in September 1936; *vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 5-10-1936

obtained the opinion of experts like Smith, which shows that his scheme is scientific and practicable. Go through it if you can find the time. Parameshwari Prasad suggests that all share-holders should donate their shares, thereby turning the limited company into a public association. With this donation a start would be made and public donations would be asked for the rest of the capital. Jamnalalji and I have decided to go by what you decide in the matter. Now about the loan you have advanced. I have advised that it may be treated as all other loans and that it should be repaid. Even if the whole set-up should have to be wound up, it would remain a first charge along with Nathuramji's money. And if it turned into a public association it would perforce have to assume the responsibility for all debts. Parameshwari Prasad is going to Calcutta. He will explain the matter to you. Having heard him you will do what you think best.

This has been taken down by your daughter Anasuya.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C. W. 8024. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

162. LETTER TO KAMALABEHN

December 3, 1936

CHI. KAMALABEHN,

I hope you have received my telegram. What consolation can I give you? Does death spare anyone? Even so we would like to go before our dear ones. But what difference does it make to one who lives only for service whether he dies early or late. May God bless you with health and devotion to service.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

163. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

SEGAON,

December 3, 1936

BHAI BHAGWANJI,

Amidst heavy pressure of work I write this much. You are suspicious by nature and the only remedy for that is work. Bhagwan[1]

[1] God

alone knows, not Bhagwanji, if unknowingly I have done injustice. Who would know the pangs of child-birth? How can you invite as President a man who has just been nursing the sick[1] and expect a written speech from him? I am not annoyed that you have written to this effect. Only please forgive me if I am not always able to write even this much.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5831. Also C.W. 3054. Courtesy: Bhagwanji A. Mehta

164. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[2]

WARDHAGANJ,

December 4, 1936

Certain definite matters have been referred to us by the Ahmedabad Mill-owners' Association and the Ahmedabad Labour Association for arbitration. We had three days' conference with the respective representatives at Wardha and Segaon. We hope to deliver our Awards[3] not later than the 15th instant.

The Hindu, 5-12-1936

165. DISCUSSION WITH STUDENTS OF VILLAGE WORKERS' TRAINING SCHOOL[4]

[Before *December 5, 1936*]

For some time past a party of students of Village Workers Training School has been visiting villages in the neighbourhood on appointed evenings reciting the Tulsi *Ramayana* and *bhajans*. . . . Now that the boys, examinations are drawing near, a proposal came to drop the visits for the time being. Said Gandhiji to them:

This has shocked me. If your studies cannot stand this brief relaxation, and you must pore over your books all the twenty-four hours because of the approach of the examination, those studies are worth nothing. But apart from this, your proposal augurs ill for the villagers. You have promised to go to them on appointed evenings,

[1] Gandhiji had nursed Mirabehn and Nanavati when they were ill in October.

[2] This was a joint statement issued by Gandhiji and Kasturbhai Lalbhai, an industrialist and mill-owner of Ahmedabad.

[3] For Gandhiji's Award, *vide* "Award in Labour Dispute", 26-12-1936.

[4] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

and now you are going to break the promise. I tell you the few visits you have paid to them will be as inauspicious as the appearance of the comet is supposed to be. They may be worse. The comet appears suddenly almost without notice, Nature's known laws do not seem to govern it. But you gave them a promise and now if you go back on it, they will feel that it is not for them that you go there but just to please your own fancies. That feeling will breed indifference and ultimatley disgust. I tell you these visits are more impotrant than the visits to distribute medicines to the villages. The medicines are good for their physical ailments, *Ramayana* is good for their spiritual ailments. If you had not made the beginning I should not have asked you to do so. They never invited you or expected you to go there, but now that the beginning has been made you should keep it up. These visits give you a living touch with the people; rather than drop them you must think out how you can make them more and more useful and successful.

He next spoke to them in answer to a question about the profession of the Bhangi. He asked them to study the article[1] on the Ideal Bhangi that he had written for the current issue of *Harijan* and to fill in the details if they were wanting. He regaled them with stories of the Bhangi who was serving the village, and who was now being asked to go for negligent work, and of the new Bhangi who asked for Rs. 30 a month and ultimately became ready to accept Rs. 15. [He said:]

Now it is your work to mend these people's ways, and you cannot do so unless you are good Bhangis yourselves. As I have explained in my article, I do not want the Bhangi to be the indifferent and perfunctory scavenger that he is today. I want him to be a healer of ailments, and a physicians besides being an ideal scavenger. In ancient times the village barber used to be also the village surgeon. I want the good Bhangi to be the village health inspector and physician. You have to pave the way for this. Today we have reduced him to the lowest level and we have gone down with him. He is content to live in squalor and dirt, we are doing no better. You cannot reform him unless you reform yourselves, unless you set about the task with a passion that you momentarily import into your studies. The task of rural sanitation is no easy one, it means nothing less than raising the village Bhangi to the status of an ideal Bhangi. The whole subject is unexplored; the profession, far from being a dirty one, is a purifying, life-protecting one. Only we have debased it. We have to raise it to its true status. I have indicated the lines in my article and I will not repeat here what I have said there.

Harijan, 5-12-1936

[1] *Vide* " The Ideal Bhangi", 28-11-1936

166. TEMPLE-ENTRY RULES

The reader will find in this issue the full text of the rules[1] framed under the famous Travancore Proclamation opening the State temples to Harijans. It is not possible to criticize the rules in anticipation of their application. As with all rules, naturally they lend themselves to an interpretation and application as liberal as the Proclamation itself, and to so narrow an interpretation and application as to make the Proclamation wholly ineffective and thus make things worse than before. There is no warrant whatsoever for fearing any calamitous result. The Proclamation, as I believe it, is in response to the Time Spirit by a Prince imbued with the spirit of reform. It has behind it the sanction of popular approval, if what appears in the Press and what I have learnt from persons who should know can be relied upon.

But as I have already said in these columns the brunt of making the working of the reform successful will fall on the shoulders of the reformers of Travancore. It should be possible to create an atmosphere whereby the rules may never need enforcement by authority. Temples are generally visited by sincere devotees or hypocrites. The former are meticulous in their observance of rules prescribed by custom for fear of losing all merit of temple worship, and the latter have to observe the rules equally meticulously for fear of their being found out. Framing of rules such as we have now to deal with is a novelty of the modern age though absolutely necessary. When the temple doors are opened by a secular proclamation to thousands of people, it becomes necessary also to frame secular rules for its due enforcement. There is no doubt the whole of this great experiment of Travancore requires careful, sympathetic and prayerful handling by all concerned. If the spirit behind is purely religious all will be well. Who can lead in that direction better than the reformers and the Harijans whom they will bring to those temples?

Harijan, 5-12-1936

[1] *Vide* Appendix.

167. SEGAON, NOT SHEGAON

Several correspondents address their letters to me to Shegaon. Now Shegaon is a main line station between Bhusaval and Wardha. I am not living in Shegaon. I am living in Segaon near Wardha. It is not a railway station. It has no post-office, and no telegraph office. All letterrs and telegrams should therefore be addressed to Wardha.

Harijan, 5-12-1936

168. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

December 5, 1936

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. How shall I please you? I have already told you that you can join me after you have recovered. I cannot, under present conditions, give you the care you can get at home. It is for this reason that I say that your coming to me for the present may not be the right thing.[1]

I felt tired after writing this, and the letter remained unfinished as visitors came. You yourself are the source of your misery. When I speak something frankly you take it in the wrong light. You fail to see the turn my life has taken. I am running no Ashram here and I cannot accommodate here any number of persons I may wish. How could it be that I should call you here and not be able to nurse you? You might say that you need no nursing, but how could I put up with that? I keep no ailing persons here, and to those that are already here I have spoken to the effect that they should go either to Wardha or to their villages. Under such conditions what can I tell you? Recover and then come. If not, tell me where I may arrange to send you for improving you health and I shall do so. It was for this reason that I suggested sending you to Bangalore[2].

For falling ill also you yourself are to blame. You do not even see the reason why I asked Kanti to go to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu and Gujarati: G.N. 364

[1] The letter up to this is in Urdu. *Bapuke Patra-8; Bibi Amtussalaamke Nam* assigns to this portion the date December 4, without however giving any reasons.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 13-11-1936

169. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

December 5, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

Though I have corrected the enclosed I doubt whether it is worth publishing. Consult Andrews today or tomorrow. If you cannot contact him send it to Mott and tell him that I agree to its being published only if he feels that it is worth publishing.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11505

170. ABOUT PIERCING THE NOSE AND THE EARS

From far off Kenya, Shri Badiyani, who is a teacher in the Government Indian School there, writes to say:[1]

The tendency of this correspondent of using adjectives such as "the great child educationist" with reference to Shri Gijubhai and of running down an uneducated person like myself, is not worth emulating at all. Gijubhai wishes to grow old teaching young boys and girls, so why should he not hand over poor girls to the control of men like himself by piercing or allowing them to pierce their ears and noses? If Gijubhai claims to be a great child educationist and does not allow anyone else to share this title, his opinions will have to be carefully weighed. In that case it is necessary to know under what circumstances and in which year he had the noses and ears of his own daughters pierced and in which year and in what context he wrote the above letter.

Let us, for the sake of argument, accept that Gijubhai is a great child educationist. Nevertheless, why should we take it for granted that his views can never be wrong? Why should we regard utterances of Mahatmas on every occasion as gospel truth?

How did my advice, which was being acted upon so far, become wrong after the correspondent had seen and read a letter appearing

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that having read Gijubhai's views on the subject of piercing the nose and the ears he could no longer agree with Gandhiji's views on the matter.

under Gijubhai's name? Had Shri Badiyani found anything wrong with the young girls whos noses and ears had not been pierced?

My advice is that is no matter, whether small or big, should anyone's opinion be given the importance of a gospel truth. Every statement—whether coming from a 'Mahatma' like myself or a great child educationist like Gijubhai—should be weighed in the scales of intelligence and one which is more reasonable should be accepted. If, later, one comes across even a greater 'Mahatma' or a greater *Shastri*, one should not immediately prostrate oneself before him but remain faithful to the person whom one's intelligence has accepted. This is the meaning of an unwavering intelligence. If we do not learn to do so, we shall be left with no faith and our poor intelligence will be rendered ineffective from confusion.

Let us now consider the basic issue. Are only girls fond of jewellery? Is this not true of boys? What can love of jewellery have to do with the piercing of the nose and the ears?

In the West, there are innumerable girls whose noses and ears are not pierced, but we do not hear of their lamenting the fact when they grow up.

If the nose and the ears are to be pierced, how many holes are to be made and why only a specified number of holes? What kind of ornaments can be regarded as adornment and when should these be regarded as ugly?

If the practice of piercing noses and ears is good, then why should we not leave it to the girls to get that done when they are grown up?

Why increase artificial differences between boys and girls? Are there many parents amongst us who get the ears of both their boys and girls pierced? Why then show this favour to or inflict this tyranny on girls alone?

Let me now give my opinion briefly.

In both my ears, taken together, there were six holes. These are still there and I do not like them. But how am I to close these up? My wife's nose and ears were pierced. She must have resented taking off her ornaments. Neither of us feels that either one of us looks less comely for having taken them off. If we do not appear comely in the eyes of others, should we have pity for them even in such matters?

The piercing of the nose and the ears and adorning these with ornaments results in dirt collecting at these places and this sometimes even leads to pus formation. The fact that time is wasted in keeping

these clean to avoid such harmful consequences, is also not an unimportant consideration.

Doctors alone can measure the effect of the pain caused to little children by the piercing of their noses and ears.

Women, as it is, are slaves. In the act of piercing their noses and ears, I have never seen anything but a symbol of their slavery. By tying a string to her ear-rings, woman can be pulled like a bullock. Instances exist of cruel husbands having cut off both the ears and the noses of their wives along with the ornaments in them.

I invite those who advocate the piercing of the nose and the ears to look at the frightful ornaments on the noses and ears of Indian women and the dirt in them and then advise me as to what I should do. Should I have them remove their ornaments or should I advise them to wear ear-pendants of pearls in holes large enough for my finger to go through?

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 6-12-1936

171. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
December 6, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Your letters. Agatha came in last evening. Andrews is here and so is Carl Heath.

Your two parcels have come. I see in them two blankets! The white one is in use already. Is any of them for the Exhibition? The rest, I take it, is for [the] Exhibition. The books are valuable.

What is the letter about articles? I think I told you they were not worth publishing—such, i.e., as I had read.

Shummy's reply has been received. It is good. But he can't bear the separation and he is anxious about your health.

I have to reach Faizpur not before 20th. Hence you will pass through Wardha on your way to Ahmedabad. I leave Wardha on 19th evening. The weather here is very good. I have not seen the lace yet. Is it coming in a separate parcel?

Too busy to say more.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Yes, J.'s appeal is splendid. I understand what you say about V.S. and Manganwal. We must talk about it.

From the original: C.W. 3758. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6914

172. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN R. PATHAK

December 6, 1936

CHI. NARMADA,

You unworthy girl, you sat before me for hours but could not see that I was pained. Could you not see my unshed tears? You even forgot what you had told me. Carried away by an impulse, you have cast away abiding happiness. And now you feel ashamed even to write to me. What were your words when you came to the Ashram[1] and what have you done? I do not resent your marriage[2]. You yourself admit that your relationship cannot be called a marriage. Both of you have to seek dharma in this sin. I do not say that what I have suggested is the right course. At the same time I have no doubt that the path you have chosen is wrong. Wake up. Perhaps your intellect will fail to understand this but your heart, if it is sound, certainly will. This is only in reply to your message.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W 2780. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

173. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN N. PATHAK

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 6, 1936

BHAI RAMNARAYAN,

I have your letters. Instead of drafting a statement for you from these letters I will write an article[3] and publish it. Believe me I weep more than both of you could be doing because all my expectations have been belied. Nothing is lost if your repentance is sincere. But you cannot atone for what you have done by indulging in pleasure. I

[1] In July 1932; *vide* " Letter to Narandas Gandhi", and "Letter to Narmadabehn Rana", 16-7-1932

[2] With Ramnarayan Pathak.

[3] *Vide* "Need for Cleansing of Heart", 13-12-1936

still stick to my views. You were the guardian of Narmada's chastity. You violated that chastity and while doing so you never thought of what you were doing or what the after-effects would be. Still, the problem of doing justice to Gangabehn remains. If you can become Narmada's teacher, her life, and also yours, will be saved from ruin and Gangabehn will have peace of mind. I do not know Gangabehn. Her letter has not impressed me much, though I see that she feels hurt. To your brother and Hemubhai the blow is still fresh. You will be able to see the light not by lamenting over what you have done but by thinking calmly over it. Nothing but ruin can result if you are carried away by your present notion of marriage. Will you not pay off your debt to the Harijans?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2782. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

174. DISCUSSION WITH STUDENTS OF VILLAGE WORKERS TRAINING SCHOOL[1]

[*December 6, 1936*][2]

I have no doubt that this penance[3] willingly undertaken and cheerfully gone through had something to do in bringing about the settlement. I do not mean to imply that it had any direct influence upon the Union Government. It is my firm belief that all real penances produce unseen but sure effects. The penance was undertaken for self-purification, for sharing, however humbly, in the suffering of the strikers.

That was the only way in which I could prayerfully appeal to God.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] According to the source, students of Village Workers' Training School met Gandhiji on "Sunday last", which would be December 6.

[3] Gandhiji had been asked about the fasts he had undertaken on various occasions, and he had referred to his first fast in connection with a public movement which he had undertaken in 1913, when he had imposed on himself a triple vow of self-suffering till the £ 3 tax was abolished: (i) to adopt the labourers' dress; (ii) to walk barefoot; (iii) to have only one meal during the day—a meal which during those days consisted of fruits untouched by fire. This penance went on for some months till the tax was removed.

The man who performs such penances throws himself wholly and solely on God. He does not undertake such a penance lightly, never in anger, and not certainly with a view to winning any advantage for himself. Then it must not be against an opponent with whom there is no bond of affection. Then it presupposes personal purity and a living belief in non-violence and truth. Obviously there can be no room for pride in such penances.

Harijan, 12-12-1936

175. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

[After *December 6, 1936*][1]

DEAR MURIEL,

Though you do not expect to hear from me, I would just like to tell you that Agatha is here just now and walks from Jamnalalji's to Segaon. The cool weather permits such adventures. Andrews was here for four days. Dr. Mott and B. Mathews have been to Segaon. The discussion centres round the untouchability question, i.e., the propriety of Christian Mission interfering with the internal reform movement which has received a tremendous lift by the action of the Travancore State opening all the temples to Harijans.

I hope you are keeping extra fit.

Mira is flourishing after her serious illness.

Love.

BAPU

MISS MURIEL LESTER
C/O N.P.M. 105 EAST 22ND ST.
NEW YORK CITY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

176. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

December 7, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have not been able so much as to lift my eyes. If you do not like this[1] about Ramnarayan, come and discuss it with me. If you like it send it immediately.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11506

[1] From the reference to Andrews's visit in the past. He was still at Segaon on December 6; *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 6-12-1936

[2] *Vide* " Need for Cleansing of Heart", 13-12-1936

177. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

SEGAON,
December 7, 1936

CHI. RADHAKISAN[1]

I do not at all like this fever. Neither you nor Anasuya should fall ill. You may continue with the baths even when you have fever and the water should be cold, not hot. I have also recommended a mud-pack. Come and let me explain if you have no fever tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9122

178. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 8, 1936

MY DEAR ANAND,

I am not angry. I am filled with pain and dismay. Your letter does not mend matters. If you felt for Vidya, your duty was clear even if she was the temptress. You were the guardian of her health. What I stated about contraceptives was not to suggest that you believed in them. It was the measure of my grief that if noble natures like you could not exercise self-restraint, the case for contraceptives came to wear the robe of respectability. Suppose I yield so to some temptation or pity and a frail woman conceives, will not the case for contraceptives seem to be overwhelming? The difference between the two cases will be only one of degree except that my fall will be infinitely more unpardonable than yours.

You must be as practical as you are sentimental, otherwise your sentiment will be nonsensical and may easily become a weakness and a vice.

Of course poor Vidya has my blessings. Let his name connote your and Vidya's victory[2] over the flesh.

Love to you all.

BAPU

[1] Jamnalal Bajaj's nephew
[2] The child's name was "Vijay" which means "victory"; 12-12-1936

[PS.]

I have assumed that Vidya is well.

From a microfilm Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

179. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

SEGAON,
[*December 8, 1936*][2]

Some time ago a group of friends[3]who had come from the World Committee of the Y.M.C.A. were on a visit to Segaon . . . . these friends, questions were refreshingly fresh . . . .Gandhiji had sat down in the village to better the social and economic condition of the villagers, especially Harijans. How exactly was this being done?

ANSWER: By living in their midst, by having them to work with us and by working for them.

QUESTION: That is very good. But does that create in them any ambition to live higher?

A. It does.

Q. Do they have any big hopes for the future?

A. I do not know but I think it is better that it comes naturally and gradually. You may be sure that they feel and know that better times are ahead of them.

Q. Our problem is quite different; we have a number of difficult problems like secularism, nationalism and immigration. Could you give some advice to our young folk?

A. It would be sheer presumption on my part to offer advice to those whom I do not know except through hearsay, and I am so constituted that I cannot send advice to people whom I do not know through people I do not know.

Q. We have here delegates from various countries. Some of them will go out in separate groups to the people of India and would like to speak to them about conditions in their countries. I wonder what Indians would be particularly interested in hearing about?

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"
[2] The date is from the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary.
[3] Mr. and Mrs. Davies Reid and a Japanese named Mr. Saito

A. I suppose I may say, subject to correction, that they would be more interested in politics than in questions economic or spiritual. It may be sad, but that I think is the state of things.

Q. In connection with the political situation, I dare say they have heard of communism and fascism, about which we are at loggerheads. Would they like to hear about Spain?

A Indeed. Our President would not let us remain without hearing about Spain[1]

Q. I see. Now I would put the question from the point of view of our own learning things from India. We will be going back to America, Europe, Far East. What shall we look for here? How can we take back with us something of the imperishable asset of the Indian civilization? Can we hope to get at the heart of things?

A. It is a very difficult question, and yet perhaps not so difficult to answer. I would ask you to ignore big cities if you would see the heart of India. The big cities here are but poor editions of your big cities. Therefore you have to go to the villages, and those too not close to cities or to the railway line, but unspoilt by them. Go thirty miles from the railway line where people are untouched by post and telegraphs, and you will see that the people show a kind of culture which you miss in the West. You will have to see people with the help of the interpreters. You will find there relics of art which has not yet perished, you will find

culture which is unmistakable but far different from that of the West. Then you will take away something that may be worth taking. But of course it depends on the angle from which you would see things.

Q. But how would you describe the elements of culture we should find in the villages?

A. Will you explain what you mean?

Q. A gentleman said we should find in Indian villages qualities of age-old culture which we should not find in the West. Is it in the philosophy of life, or art, or what?

A. You would therefore want me to describe to you the predominant aspect of our culture. Is that what you want?

Q. Yes.

A. I would say it is spiritual.

[1] Civil War had broken out in Spain and Jawaharlal Nehru had been voicing concern for the Spanish Republic.

Q. That leads us to another question. One of the questions we are going to discuss is the 'Impending Challenge of the Will of God to the Youth'. Even in the same religion people have different ways of finding the will of God. Could you tell us whether the people here are conscious that they are working out the will of God?

A. They are not, and I am thankful that they are not, because it is natural with them. They are not conscious that they are breathing or using their eyesight and yet they are doing it every moment. A healthy man will not be thinking or talking of his health. In the same way the spirituality here is unconscious of itself. It is an inherited culture. Thus in a good home they do not know what spirituous liquor is. They do not know what it is to be a teetotaller, for they have been that all their lives. The words do not occur in their dictionary.

Q. Japan and India have many things in common.[1]

A. Well, East is East, but not *now*. Jap an is Americanized. In fact Japan is beating America and England hollow in exploiting India. You know the quantity of fents that are dumped here by Japan?

Q. (Taken rather aback) We provide cheap goods, Sir. Are they harmful?

A. I will not say that they are harmful *because* they are cheap. But they leave us poorer.

Q. It is not good to provide cheap goods?

A. No. You have no business to deprive us of our hands and feet.

Q. So, then, you are against this machine age. I see.

A. To say that is to caricature my views. I am not against machinery as such, but I am totally opposed to it when it masters us. Japan and America and England are doing it today. The agreement between India and Japan is a misnomer. It is an agreement between England and Japan. Japan must wash its hands of this competition. It is harmful to us and harmful to you. No one can make bond-slaves of others without degrading himself. Only a few years ago we manufactured our own cloth, and now we get it from Japan and England. It is an unnatural position. We could make enough cloth for ourselves and the whole world. Our country abounds in natural resources. There is something most hideously wrong in sending one's own cotton out and getting manufactured goods. Nine crore rupees

[1] This was said by Mr. Saito.

worth of cattle hides are exported from here only to return to us as manufactured products. There is no reason why this should happen.

Q. You would not industrialize India?

A. I would indeed, in my sense of the term. The village communities should be revived. Indian villages produced and supplied to the Indian towns and cities all their wants. India became impoverished when our cities became foreign markets and began to drain the villages dry by dumping cheap and shoddy goods from foreign lands.

Q. You would then go back to the natural economy?

A. Yes. Otherwise I should go back to the city. I am quite capable of running a big enterprise, but I deliberately sacrificed the ambition, not as a sacrifice, but because my heart rebelled against it. For I should have no share in the spoliation of the nation which is going on from day to day. But I am industrializing the village in a different way. I shall show you a village product which I am sure compares favourably with American toffee. Tell me if you do not prefer this *gur* (palm-juice *gur*) to American toffee.

Here a little supply of palm-juice *gur* is distributed to the guests who enjoy it. The American lady thoroughly enjoys it . . . her artistic eye catches sight of the palm trees drawn in relief on the wall above the niche in front of her. She appreciates it much.

But there Japan has got plenty to give us. In your arts and handicrafts you are matchless.

Q. But I like the mud floor and the mud walls here.

A. Oh yes, it keeps us warm in winter and cool in summer.

Q. That's what the Germans say about their beer.

A. So mother earth is our beer. Is not that splendid?

But the American friend was not going to while away the time joking. He asked earnestly if Gandhiji would not give a message to youths. . . .

A. Simply this that 50 years of unbroken practice of non-violence to the best of my ability has deepened my faith in it, instead of diminishing it. And if my faith is any worth to them, let them not get weak-hearted, but be heartened by my faith. If that faith went away I should bury myself alive.

Q. You like the Sermon on the Mount?

A. Oh yes. Even my declaration that I like it is exploited by Christian friends. But let that be. What do you want to ask?

Q. I would like you to tell me one passage which has given you more satisfaction than any other.

A. I do not know. But I shall give you a passage that I have often quoted to those who came to convert me to Christianity: 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and everything will be added unto you.' I saw this emphasized in one of Tolstoy's beautiful stories. It gripped me, and also what he wrote underneath it.

The talk then turned to the modern miracle in Travancore, which Gandhiji said was entirely due to the influence of a great woman. The work of the great woman prompted the lady visitor to ask one final question about the women in America.

Q. Our own women and girls unfortunately do not represent the finest and best in us. I wonder if we can reorient our curricula of education for woman, so as to keep her the preserver of the best in us and to enable her to become a good co-worker of man. Could you give us a thought for our girls?

A. I believe in the proper education of women. But I do believe that woman will not make her contribution to the world by mimicking or running a race with men. She can run the race, but she will not rise to the great heights she is capable of by mimicking man. She has to be the complement of man.

Harijan, 27-2-1937

180. LETTER TO KASTURBHAI LALBHAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 10/11, 1936

BHAI KASTURBHAI,

I am sending herewith my draft of the Award.[1] I am still going through the papers. As I read them I find that the mill-owners do not have any case for the cut, and if they have they have not been able to argue it. If you feel that the papers we have received prove their case it is your duty to guide me. I will in any case be receiving your Award, which will contain your arguments also. If I can understand them I will certainly change my decision. I of course take it that in your Award you will not make use of anything that you may know but of which I am ignorant because in that case I will not be able to understand it at all. I may have heard many things from the Labour Association, but what can I do so long as they are not recorded in the

[1] *Vide* "Award in Labour Dispute", 26-12-1936.

files? I write this not by way of warning but just to know your mind because I shall feel unhappy if both of us do not arrive at the same decision. I want to understand your point of view fully but only on the strength of the evidence we have received. I do not understand how you can demand a cut in wages so long as the Delhi settlement[1] is not proved unworkable. So for me the doors are closed. You will realize my difficulties better after reading my Award. If you think it is necessary for you to come here, do come. If you find that it is necessary to send me a telegram, do that.

As I hear that you have gone to Ahmedabad, I am sending this to two addresses. Send back to me one of the two copies.

See that we adhere to the time limit of the 15th.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

December 11, 1936

[PS.]

I wrote this yesterday. As it missed the train in spite of all efforts, I opened it to write about the Umpire. That was left out. Besides Shri Madgavkar, the other names suggested are Shri Motilal Setalvad and Shri Patkar. Shankerlal told me that you approve of Shri Govind Ballabh Pant. You may choose any of these.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4196

181. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 11, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

I have a moment just now for a love letter. I don't understand the possibility of your missing Wardha *en route* to Ahmedabad. If it is to be with Shummy as long as possible you may drop Wardha assuredly. The quickest route from Delhi to Ahmedabad is by metre gauge. From Wardha to Ahmedabad, for you Bombay is more convenient. Tapti valley is cheaper and quite good.

[1] Of 13-1-1935. This provided for a reduction of 6 $^{1}/_{2}$ per cent in the earnings of all time and piece workers and further promised that wages would be standardized and a scheme for adjustment of wages would be framed.

I am glad you are missing Delhi. No feverish running to and fro. V. S. ought not to be pampered.

Ba's cottage is nearly finished. You will like it except for its somewhat city appearance. It has cost more than my hut. I am sure that at least Rs. 100 could have been saved on it. But I could not control the operations unless I was to give my time which I could not afford. But of all this when we meet.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3759. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6915

182. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

December 11, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

What about the borrowed book? Have you received Fowler's article and so forth?

Who among us will go to Faizpur? Even now I do not receive butter regularly. As for oranges, I am buried in them. Who has arranged that? Every alternate day I get a basket of fifty. That should be stopped. What do they cost?

We should make a deeper study of Mott's correction[1]. I hope Bablo is doing well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11507

183. LETTER TO D.B. KALELKAR

December 11, 1936

CHI. KAKA,

"How can a habit once formed be given up?" How many times have I told you not to put trust in my words reported by another and not to act upon them. Dinkar, *deen*[2] as he is, can neither understand humour nor indulge in it. Now I am compelled to say that you too are wanting in that respect. But has your imagination also become stunted

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 5-12-1936
[2] Poor

by fasts? Why do you not use your imagination and say to yourself: 'Bapu has been joking; I will certainly go'? And after all you wanted to come to me only to pay your respects. So what would it have mattered even if I did not speak to you? Or even if I despised you? It was your duty to pay me your respects, was it not? Why should you then have hesitated in observing your dharma? You wanted to talk to me, we could have done that also. Even when you write to me I have to read it. Now you have to come here to discharge your debt with interest. Do you wish that while talking to others I should never mention your name even by mistake?

Now you have entered the *vana*[1]. You should be happy. You can now hold converse with the trees. I have read your address to the Gujarati Sahitya Parishad from beginning to end. I liked it. More when we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7968

184. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 11, 1936

CHI. LILA,

You seem to have gone far. I have written a letter to Dwarkadas[2] which is enclosed. It is difficult to give any guidance from here. Dinshaw[3] visits Bombay from time to time. Bring him along. Find out about his date of coming from his man. His office is in Fort, Bombay. Maybe Ramdas knows about it. Ba's blessings to all of you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Navin[4] has arrived today.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Gandhiji is referring to the addressee having entered his fifties, the age of *vanprastha*.

[2] Addressee's brother

[3] Dr. Dinshaw K. Mehta

[4] Vrajlal Gandhi's son

185. LETTER TO G.D. BIRLA

December 11, 1936

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your two letters in front of me. I understand about Parameshwari and I have sent him a copy of your letter advising him to give up the Delhi farm. I too understand that the financial aspect is not important. The important question for me is one of honour and right judgement. I must not abuse your confidence and generosity nor permit anyone else to do so. Let us see what happens. I understand your point about Travancore. Nevertheless it was unnecessary for me to do more than I did. I express my impressions as they occur. As regards the current developments you will read what I have written in the *Harijan.*[1]

Thakkar Bapa writes that you are somewhat indisposed. What is it? Andy why? Dates are coming regularly and the rug has been received. It is quite warm.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8026. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

186. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

December 11, 1936

CHI. BRAJKISAN,

Mother must have recovered by now. Why do you wish to go to the Congress? I shall probably reach there on the 20th. At present I have no idea where I shall be lodged or how I shall go. My idea is to walk from the station. If I have room enough and if you have to come you can certainly stay with me. But if it is not really necessary for you to come, you should remain there and do some work of service.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2442

[1] *Vide* "God Is Great", 12-12-1936

187. PLACE OF CEREALS IN FOOD

Shri Ishverbhai Amin, Chief Chemist and Technical Superintendent of the Alembic Chemical Works of Baroda, has prepared a chemical analysis of principal cereals and pulses commonly used in Gujarat and a note thereon. I give the important part[1] of it below, omitting the detailed analysis as being too technical for the reader. The note gives the reader sufficient information for his guidance.

Harijan, 12-12-1936

188. GOD IS GREAT

The following telegram[2] was received at Poona from the Harijan Sevak Sangh, Trivandrum, on the 3rd instant:

> Actual working Proclamation most successful. Has disproved all fears entertained certain quarters. No part of temple open to any devotee is barred against Ezhavas and Harijans now. Excepting innermost chamber which has been always used only by offciating priest, all other places including *mandaps*, enclosed platforms, corridors are as freely used by newly admitted devotees as by caste Hindus. What is of the greatest importance is that waters in sacred tanks attached to temples are also freely used now by Ezhavas and Harijans. Sense of horror at approach of Harijans seems completely overcome. Harijan devotees do not seem to excite any special reaction in devotees of other castes who engage in worship at the same time. Hardly necessary to say that no special hour or any other distinction made against new entrants. A hopeful feature is priests and other temple officials genuinely wholeheartedly co-operating. They do not seem to suffer any mental strain . . . .
>
> Orthodox people including Namboodiris have as groups or individuals displayed no hostility, most of them expressing themselves in terms of full approval of Proclamation. We see no signs whatever of resentment. Their behaviour is such as if nothing extraordinary had happened, which from what we know of previous orthodoxy is an astonishing achievement. The noble Proclamation has been followed up by thorough execution.

[1] Not reproduced here.
[2] Only extracts are reproduced here.

The telegram was received too late for publication in the last issue. That is the handicap of having different places of printing and editing.

When the Temple-Entry Proclamation was issued, I had misgivings which I could not and would not suppress. Was it a political document with loopholes and reservations? What would be its effect on the caste Hindus, if it was a superimposed thing? What would be its effect on Harijans? Would it not leave them cold?

Friends took me to task for not sharing their enthusiasm. I could not help it.[1] Not that I had any doubt about the genuine desire of H.H. the Maharani, or the Maharaja, or the Diwan Sir C.P. Ramaswamy Ayyar. Indeed I had the privilege of meeting the Maharani and her young hope, the present Maharaja, when I was in Travancore years ago. The Maharani had even then professed her belief in the reform. I had even jokingly asked the boy, as the Maharaja then was, whether he would remove untouchability and throw open temples when he mounted the *gadi* of Travancore. He had enthusiastically said 'of course'. Have I not known Sir C.P. Ramaswamy Ayyar since 1915 or 1916 as a reformer? My misgivings had a deeper meaning which I had tried to express. It may be that it was my want of faith in the people. There certainly was in the adequacy of the effort and purity of reformers working under the aegis of the Harijan Sevak Sangh.

But the latest happening described in the foregoing telegram with such wealth of detail has dispelled all doubt. The rules[2] reproduced last week have lost their formidableness. The actuality has surpassed all expectations. The enthusiasm of the Harijans, the absence of all opposition to their entrance to the farthest limit permissble to the highest caste, and the willing, nay, the hearty, co-operation of the officiating priests, show the utter genuineness of the great and sweeping reform. What seemed impossible for man has been made possible by God. Royal proclamations cannot convert tens of thousands of people. Here, therefore, is an instance of mass conversion of caste Hindus. It is real because it is spontaneous.

Only a few years ago in Vaikom the caste Hindus had threatened violence if Harijans crossed even certain roads leading to

[1] *Vide* " Letter to G.D. Birla", 28-11-1936
[2] *Vide* Appendix.

the Vaikom temple. Now that very temple has been opened to Harijans on absolutely the same terms as to any caste Hindu. And all this without the slightest pressure from anybody. What was quoted to me as the *Sankara Smriti* has given place to the Maharaja *Smriti* whose validity is proved by the unequivocal response of the caste Hindus as a whole and the equally unequivocal response in another sense by the Harijans. Truly, God is great, if we would but open the eyes of our understanding. My congratulations to the Maharaja and his good mother and his great Diwan, as also the Hindus of Travancore. Let us hope that all caste distinctions, in so far as they connote high and low grades, are things of the past in Travancore. If we garner the enthusiasm of Travancore, it cannot be long before the whole of India catches the Travancore spirit.

Harijan, 12-12-1936

189. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 12, 1936

MY DEAR ANAND,

I am sorry for Vijay's death and yet not quite so. He came to punish man and discharge his debt. His task having been finished the poor infant has gone. Let us shed a tear. My blessing was not available for the act.[1] It was and is ever available for you and Vidya. And if it means anything let it be a shield against repetition of the blunder. Your case has turned me upside down. Both of you have led me to bank so much upon you. I do not yet despair.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Hope Vidya is free from fever.

From a microfilm: Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Anand T. Hingorani", 26-11-1936

190. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

December 12, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I am returning your letter. There is no doubt that you are mad. And you are as suspicious as you are mad. How you have completely misread my meaning in the letter. I wrote to you about Kanti and you vexed yourself. It becomes difficult even to help you. Neither Hindus nor Mussalmans despise you. Both like you. Your brothers love you. Then consider Thakkar Bapa, Malkani, Narandas, Prabhavati, Ba, Mira, Mahadev and the rest. To Kanti you are a mother. There was a time when Kanti could not live without you. Now he has got over that infatuation but he still worships you. Is there anything which Dr. Ansari has not done for you? Khan Saheb is always thinking about you. He even hoped that you would spend Ramzan with him. Your sister-in-law worships you. Your brothers love you. What more do you expect? There are very few as fortunate as you. A person like Khurshedbehn fawns upon you and Madam Wadia is eager to help you. If you wake up and look you will realize that you are mad and therefore unhappy. I will leave on the 19th. If you wish you can come and see me before that. But how will the meeting help you? If you want to get treated here, I can definitely make the arrangement. In that case you can't keep running from place to place and will have to live as I say, eat what I prescribe and do what I ask you to do.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 367

191. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 12, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

Now that I have somthing like leisure I am writing to you.

You have raised the question as to who can stay in the weavers' quarters in the Harijan Ashram. I like your suggestion. Discusss the matter with Narahari. If you have any difference of opinion, let me know. This will save my time.

Vajubhai[1] went as he came. He could not satisfy me and I could not satisfy him. I told him that you did everything after consulting me and with my consent and that therefore if he had any differences of opinion with you he should discuss them with me. After this there was nothing for him but to argue with me. Then I learnt that there was a great gulf between his views and mine. Ultimately he left. I gave him the return fare. He had said that in order to get justice he might resort to satyagraha, that is, undertake a fast. Of course I explained to him the impropriety and the immorality of such a step. Let me know if he does anything or says anything. I am hoping that he will be quiet now and find some other work.

I understand about Keshu. I have always held your opinion in high esteem and therefore I will have to consider the whole episode again. I went through the letters of Lakshmidas, but I was not impressed by them as you were. The reason may be that I was not able to read them carefully. Now I will do so. Write to me if you can throw more light on the subject.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

It seems that Kumi and Bali are having a tough time. Look after them.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8513. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

192. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

December 12, 1936

CHI. PREMA,

I have managed to snatch a little time to write this. You must not leave Saswad even if you have to live under a tree.[2] But give them no cause even in your thoughts. If you nurse anger even in your heart, you will lose the merit or reward of living under a tree.

We may have such decoration at the Congress as we can plan in keeping with the rural environment. Understand "as we can plan" in both the senses—that there should be art in decoration and that it should not cost a single pie.

[1] Vajubhai Shukla

[2] In Saswad the addressee had to give up the house which she had been able to secure for her ashram because of manoeuvring by the Mamlatdar.

I shall be going there on the 20th. How many we shall be will depend on the reply that we get from there.

You seem to be entertaining Vinoba very well.

See that you do not fall ill again. If one works within one's limits, one can do more work and the work shines out.

Lilavati's brother is seriously ill and so she has gone to Vile Parle.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10387. Also C.W. 6826. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

193. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

December 12, 1936

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I am very happy that Tulsidas's *Ramayana* is being translated into Tamil by you. Your noble effort will enable the Tamil knowing people to have the benefit of the unrivalled *prasadi* of Tulsidas.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

194. NEED FOR CLEANSING OF HEART

One of the two Harijan workers about whose downfall I have been writin is Shri Ramnarayan Pathak, who was the soul of the Porbundar Chhaya Harijan Ashram. I had some talk and some correspondence with him. He has now written me the following letter:[1]

The letter of December 3 is really long. I have not summarized it. It is not easy to do so. Even if I published the whole letter it could possibly serve no useful purpose. I believe it is harmful to satisfy a morbid curiosity which seeks pleasure in finding faults with others. I do not therefore wish to put unnecessary details before the readers. Some persons calling themselves friends and well-wishers of Shri

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent, anxious to atone for his misdemeanour, had requested Gandhiji to prepare a confession on his behalf and if he so chose to publish it in *Harijanbandhu.*

Ramnarayan have gently chided me. This was out of place as I had not given the name or address. What I had written was not written without thought or cause. However, what Shri Ramnarayan, unable to bear the burden of his guilt, has confessed is far more serious than I had realized.

I do not repent the habit I have formed since many years of not hiding my own faults or of those dear to me. This has only been to the good of the persons concerned and others. I have not concealed the failings of my late father, nor those of my wife, nor those of my sons. My own failings every reader knows by heart. Lest I forget, people, some in good faith, some others to condemn me, keep on reminding me of them. By making my failings public I have learnt to avoid them. However hard anyone may try secretly to be pure, he will never succeed. Why should God's creation not see the faults which God sees? Anyone who is really ashamed of his failings will be safe only by making them public and having his own co-workers to protect him. This is what is meant by depending on God. I must confess that many a time if I have saved myself from a heinous deed it was because of my friends and children. If I gave in to weakness what would happen to them? If they came to know of it in the case of a man to whom they looked for support, the support would collapse. This reflection saved me. This is what is called God's protection. This is what is meant by Rama being the strength of the weak. We can escape from the net spread by the senses only if we admit our failings. It is for this very reason that making public our faults is the first step towards purification.

Bhai Ramnarayan was already well established in the field of social service when I came to know him. Even at that first meeting, I did not see frankness or innocence in his eyes or on his face. But Thakkar Bapa had recommended him so strongly that disregarding the impression he had made on me I gave him my blessings. After that, however, I too like Thakkar Bapa became an admirer of Shri Ramanarayan. When I wanted to give an instance of an ideal Harijan worker I often cited the name of Shri Ramnarayan. Just as I regard many young men and women as my sons and daughters, even so did I regard Shri Ramnarayan as my son. As for Narmada, she may be said to have come to me while still an infant. I became her father and also her mother, as she needed a mother's affection as well.

So the readers can well imagine the blow which I suffered. They will also understand the purpose of this article. The hopes which I had

entertained about Narmada have now been blown away within a fraction of a second like a particle of dust in the wind.

When the first complaint against Ramnarayan reached me, my heart would not let me to believe it. I smelt Kathiawari rivalry in these. I, therefore, sent those letters for verification. I was showered with evidence. Much of the twofold sin which Shri Ramnarayan had been concealing for a long time came to light and he left Chhaya, along with Narmada.

Narmada is still a child. I still consider her to be innocent. She has a kind of courage, but lacks determination. I do not think she is one who would deliberately commit a sin. That girl became the victim of Shri Ramnarayan's lust. Although she strove with him she fell. Now both of them have married. Another girl who was also involved with him at the same time is left in the lurch.

In giving this account my aim is not to dwell on Shri Ramnarayan's failings. I believe that he has done all this because he was blinded by lust. It could not possibly have happened without the parctice of falsehood, and so the thing continued undetected. But seldom can one hide one's guilt till the very end. Those whose failings come to light, should be regarded as blessed. This is precisely what has happened in the case of Shri Ramnarayan.

He is right in saying that he will be unable to purify himself even by the most candid confession. He has fallen so deep into the pit of lust that he has become almost incapable of coming out of it. Marriage gives a kind of outward peace. Indulgence assumes a new and fuller form. I know that those who hold modern views regarding the relationship between man and woman will not like this language. However, nothing is written in this journal with a view to pleasing anyone. I on my part do not have this aim in writing. I would be happy if I could please everyone while keeping *Satyanarayana*[1] with me. However, even if I cannot do so, I would not write anything which *Satyanarayan* would not tolerate. I do know what Bhai Ramnarayan's views are at the moment. According to his letter of December 3, Shri Ramnarayan does not regard his marriage with Narmada as something improper. However, his letter which I have published suggests that he is restless in his mind, he cannot see his way clearly.

[1] "Truth as God"

I believe that his mental agitation is sincere. Narmada is not his *sahadharmini*[1] Where there is no dharma, how can there be anyone to share it? She is truly a helpless woman. It is only by guiding her and by making her dreams of service come true that he can serve her and atone for the wrongs done to her. Shri Ramnarayan can also fulfil his dharma of doing justice to the other girl by shedding impurity from his heart. And what about the debt to the harijans? My heart fills with pain when I think of this. What a wide gap between Ramnarayan, the mature servant of Harijans and Ramnarayan the slave to sexual desire!

However, many slaves of this kind have attained liberation through sustained effort. Many have extricated themselves from the pit of sins. What alligator had caught the king of elephants? The latter was not a four-footed elephant with a trunk. He was a human being with two feet, like any one of us. The elephant was getting more and more entangled because of his own strength. But when his strength failed him, God came to his rescue and liberated him. The *Gajendramoksha* is not merely a poem. For those like us it is a consolation, it is a protecting hedge.

Those readers who, on reading this article, condemn Ramnarayan will not gain anything. All readers should pray for his purity, but even more important than this is that keeping this incident in mind, they should ever remain vigilant, should never conceal a weakness, should never entertain pride and think that if ever they should be in a similar predicament they would not get caught in the net. Pride has never helped anyone. He alone is triumphant whose heart is in the right place till the very end.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 13-12-1936

195. LETTER TO SARASWATI

December 8/13[2]*, 1936*

CHI. SARASWATI,[3]

I don't mind your failure at all. It is a stepping-stone to success . . . .[4] being thorough in the subjects you have failed in. There is no

[1] Wife; literally, 'partner in dharma'
[2] The PPS. was added on December 13.
[3] This is in Devnagari.
[4] The source is damaged here.

harm in your not being considered clever or brilliant. But there is much harm in not being and in not being considered good. Do write regularly . . . .[1]

BAPU

[PS.]

Poor Minakhsi. Do send her my condolences. What was the matter with her father and what was his age?

BAPU

[PPS.]

In order to write more this was delayed up to today.

From a photostat: G.N. 6157. Also C.W. 3430. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

196. LETTER TO N.R. MALKANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 13, 1936

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. Yes, I do study your figures. I write nothing, as I have nothing to complain about.

I did remark about Tyagiji and asked V. Hari to speak to you about him. His goodness is undoubted. But he is lazy and lives in dreamland. Why does he need Rs. 15 when he gets food and lodging? He used to ask for nothing at the Ashram. He has no needs. His son is working. Rajkishori is well able to support herself. I do not want you to get rid of him but he must not get more than his needs and even then not more than his market price. I fear he is getting more. If you like I shall write to him. I did write to him about his work.

As for yourself, I see nothing wrong in your getting something from *Hindustan Times.*

I agree with you about manufacturing our own *mistris*[2]. The sooner you do so the better. It is a tragedy that Tyagi won't be one. I note you are coming to the Congress.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 925

[1] The source is damaged here.
[2] Masons or carpenters

197. LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 13, 1936

DEAR FRIEND[1],

The Ahmedabad labour dispute[2] has [been] absorbing me to the exclusion of most important correspondence.

I am pondering over your suggestion. I have no hesitation about seeking an interview. But I ask myself: What shall I talk? What will he talk? I shall write what I have decided.

Thank you very much for Navin Chandra. If he equips himself for service and earns his scholarship whilst there I shall be satisfied. Thank you also for giving the necessary instruction to Frydman[3].

My love to the whole family.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 11516

198. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

December 13, 1936

CHI. KANTI,

It was good I got your letter. I had a talk with Manu immediately. Now I will ascertain[4] Surendra's wishes and make arrangements accordingly. I have already written about milk.

I do get news about your health from time to time. I do not write to you because I do not get the time. I will not have you get old so soon. You cannot neglect your health. You must order your diet scientifically. Why worry about studies? Do as much as you can and

[1] Sir Mirza Ismail, Dewan of Mysore

[2] Between the Ahmedabad Mill-owners' Association and the Labour Union on which Gandhiji gave his Award on December 26, 1936; *vide* "Award in Labour Dispute", 26-12-1936

[3] Maurice Frydman, a Polish Engineer who was interested in village reconstruction movement and whom Gandhiji used to address as "Bharatanand". In his earlier letter of November 27, 1936 Gandhiji had asked the addressee to instruct Frydman to render assistance to him or the Village Industries Association, *ibid.*,

[4] *Vide* the following item.

be satisfied with it. Why should you be in a hurry? Do you want to gain true knowledge or show off? Whatever it may be, do not have the desire to get a "double first" at the cost of your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7310. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

199. LETTER TO SURENDRA B. MASHRUWALA

December 13, 1936

CHI. SURENDRA,[1]

Manu writes to your regularly, so I do not write. I write today because of two things Kanti has mentioned in his letter. You do not take milk and you have become somewhat impatient to get married. I do not say that the two things are related. You should never give up milk. The reason given by Kisorelal is also not correct. For one who is having discharges the thing required is purity of mind and, as external remedy, the hip-bath. When do you wish to get married? As Kanti understands it, you think the sooner it is the better. Let me know your wishes frankly. I can then consult the other elders and do what is proper. Where would you prefer to have the wedding soleminzed, at Wardha only or would Segaon also do? Write to me without hesitation.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 1562. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

200. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

December 14, 1936

DEAR KU,

Have not seen the Home Member's statement[2]. Unlucky Guntur!

Yes, have the meeting on the dates mentioned. I was told the opening was on 23rd. But don't know.

Love.

BAPU

From a phtostat: G.N. 10112

[1] Kishorelal Mashruwala's nephew and Balubhai Mashruwala's son

[2] Regarding cyclone damage. According to the Home Member the houses were rebuilt and the relief organizations were doing good work.

201. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON,
December 14, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

We failed to receive the butter once again. Please ask them to send two days' supply with Ganapat.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am sending a letter also.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11508

202. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 14, 1936

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I do hear about you but it is good that you yourself wrote. It is indeed welcome news to me that you are getting steadier in mind and that all three of you keep quite well. May all your noble aspirations be fulfilled. Those who have grown up in the Ashram or have been supported by it are for the present at any rate abandoning the Ashram ideals. I feel very good when at such a time I find anyone clinging to those ideals. You seem to have greatly improved your handwriting. Why doesn't Amba write?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI PRABHUDAS GANDHI
GANDHI SEVA SADAN
ASAFPUR
E.I. RLY.
BADAUN

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 33035

203. LETTER TO KASTURBHAI LALBHAI

December 14, 1936

BHAI KASTURBHAI,

I have prepared a reply to your telegram. It will be despatched tomorrow. It is now 8. 30 p.m. If after reading what you have to say I feel so inclined, I will certainly revise my views. If I find the need of discussion, I will give you trouble.

I on my part have not showed my draft to anyone connected with the Labour Association. I thought I might acquaint Shankerlal with it after we had given our Awards. Whether that happens or not, I quite agree with you that if we have to go to the Umpire neither of the parties should divulge anything about our decision till the Award is made public. Please write and inform the parties concerned on behalf of both of us from there.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I will reach Faizpur on the 20th. My stay there will last at least for nine days. However, if you find it necessary you can meet me there. On my part I do hope that by that time we shall be free of the work.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4197

204. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 15, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

How idiotic of you to disappoint me at the last moment. But it is good. Duty before everything else. To pass through Wardha was no part of duty. It was pleasure to be derived in the course of due performance of duty.

From what you say it seems that the two cotton quilts are also for me, not for the Exhibition. When J. comes he shall have the *fulkaris.*

Yes, I know Natesan very well. I can certainly write to him. But I would like you to tackle him once more. Let me know the result. I shall try if you fail.

Your account of the Manga[n]wal visit with Agatha is interesting. But you must not get tired. Why strain yourself? You won't acquire merit by overstraining or even straining yourself. Why not be satisfied with the use of energy God has given? Overuse is as much abuse as wrong use or underuse. Does this penetrate your idiotic brain? If it does, why not act accordingly?

I leave here on 19th for Faizpur. They are pressing me to go to Travancore to follow up the temple-entry.

Love.

ROBBER

[PS.]

It seems now certain that I must go to Travancore during first week of January. Of this we must talk when we meet.

From the original: C.W. 3760. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6916

205. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

December 15, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending herewith quite a big lot—Gujarati articles, one article[1] about Govind's letter, another about Mysore, a telegram for Kasturbhai and the mail.

I understand about butter. If Dharmadhikari is there he should come and see me, otherwise anyone who is there.

You may send with the bearer whatever little you wish to. Ganapat will of course come at noon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11509

[1] *Vide* "A Painful Duty", 19-12-1936.

206. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

December 15, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

Ramachandran has become impatient. It is necessary to consult you before sending him a wire. I am in need of an annual diary for noting down appointments. Haven't you received any? I also want a wall calendar. This was a digression. I would certainly like to solve the Trivandrum problem quickly if no date has been given to anyone. Guide me. We shall reply tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11513

207. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER[1]

December 15, 1936

When our speech and actions strive faithfully to follow our thoughts, our speech cannot fully describe those thoughts nor is the meaning of our actions fully conveyed by our words. When I describe in words a table of my conception the description falls short of the conception and, when it is made, the product falls short of the description. Euclid's straight line exists only in conception. Its definition is only a part of the conception and its figure again a part of the definition. If this cannot explain what I want to say, you can delete the bracketed portion without fear of break in the continuity of thought.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11559

208. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHAGANJ,
December 16, 1936

AMTUL SALAAM
EASTER VILLA, SANTA CRUZ

UNDESIRABLE COME FAIZPUR. NEVERTHELESS DECIDE FOR YOURSELF.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 365

[1] The addressee is not identified in the source.

209. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

December 16, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have gone through your preface. It is no doubt good. No changes are called for. I have therefore made very few. Whether the reader will be able to digest it is a question. Let us however leave it at that.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have sent three articles, not including one[1] by Andrews. I sit down now to write the Gujarati.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11510

210. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 16, 1936

BHAI MOOLCHAND,

I am replying to your letter after a long time. I am enquiring into the matter instead of writing about it in *Harijan.* Please let me have the names and addresses of the prominent workers of the Arya Samaj in Ajmer.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 759

[1] "A Message of Peace", published in *Harijan,* 26-12-1936

211. INTERVIEW TO MISS FITCH[1]

[*December 16, 1936*][2]

The chief value of Hinduism lies in holding the actual belief that *all* life (not only human beings, but all sentient beings) is one, i.e., all life coming from the One universal source, call it Allah, God or Parameshwara. There is in Hinduism a scripture called *Vishnus-ahasranama* which simply means 'one thousand names of God'. These one thousand names do not mean that God is limited to those names, but that He has as many names as you can possibly give Him. You may give Him as many names as you like provided it is one God without a second, whose name you are invoking. That also means that He is nameless too.

This unity of *all* life is a peculiarity of Hinduism which confines salvation not to human beings alone but says that it is possible for all God's creatures. It may be that it is not possible, save through the human form, but that does not make man the Lord of creation. It makes him the servant of God's creation. Now when we talk of brotherhood of man, we stop there, and feel that all other life is there for man to exploit for his own purposes. But Hinduism excludes all exploitation. There is no limit whatsoever to the measure of sacrifice that one may make in order to realize this oneness with all life, but certainly the immensity of the ideal sets a limit to your wants. That, you will see, is the antithesis of the position of the modern civilization which says: 'Increase your wants'. Those who hold that belief think that increase of wants means an increase of knowledge whereby you understand the Infinite better. On the contrary Hinduism rules out indulgence and multiplication of wants as these hamper one's growth to the ultimate identity with the Universal Self.

Harijan, 26-12-1936

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The interviewer had asked Gandhiji to tell her the chief values of Hinduism as she had been told that he was the life and soul of Hinduism.

[2] The name and the date are supplied from the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary.

212. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 18, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

So you will receive this in Ahmedabad. You will go to the Harijan Ashram and speak to the girls, the cattle and the trees of which there was not a trace when I took the land. There was a solitary *neem* tree, I think. You will see old Ramji, the Harijan, and his tall wife. And you will see also some familiar faces. Anandi, I think you know. And you must see the Vidyapith and the labour work of Anasuyabai. You should see her indigenous kindergarten for the Harijan brats. Of course you will see Mridula's Jyoti Sangh. The other things will be shown to you in the usual manner.

Don't bury yourself in the routine work, though that can't be neglected, I know. But you *must* learn the art of doing things without fretting and feeling the strain.

What a long-drawn-out sermon this letter has become? You will be quite comfortable with me in Faizpur. Only don't come there in a dilapidated condition.

You have all the love you may be in need of there from

TYRANT

[PS.]

I reach Faizpur on 20th.

From the original: C.W. 3761. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6917

213. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

December 18, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have received your telegram. Why do you insist on coming to Faizpur? Come to see me at Segaon and talk to me there. You may stay on if you like the place. Why do you have misgivings when I have already told you that I shall keep you in Segaon? In spite of all this if you want to come to Faizpur do come. I expect to be back in Segaon on the 29th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 366

214. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

December 18, 1936

CHI. LILA,

I have your letter. Why do you worry? Worrying will not help you to lessen your brother's suffering. Why should you worry? Death, life and recovery from illness depend on God alone. It is our dharma to live, to get well or to make an effort in that direction, and we have to discharge it. Why should you worry while discharging your dharma? Know for certain that worry is an obstacle in the path of dharma. Take it that prayers, *bhajans*, and so on are useless if they do not teach us to remain unperturbed under all circumstances.

Why can't you call Dinshaw to the hospital? Seek the doctor's permission. He will give it. Take his permission for the treatment also. At least meet Dinshaw. Talk to him, get the necessary information, find out his visiting days. We should build the dam before the floods. We should not start digging a well when the house catches fire; we should have one ready beforehand.

Do not create unnecessary trouble. Do not talk loudly. Give thought to whatever you do. Do not blurt out whatever comes to your mind. Put up with what you cannot help.

I hope that Damayanti has patience and courage.

You have not given the name of the hospital.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9352. Also C.W. 6627. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

215. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

December 18, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

Babla's handwriting, one can say, has improved. But he has forgotten quite a lot of what he had learnt. I hope you have received and despatched the telegram to Kasturbhai. I have received a fair number of copies of *Ishopanishad*.

I expect to reach there at about 7.30 tomorrow. Navin will come with Ba. So for the present three of us and Mehrtaj will go. Bablo will join us on the 23rd.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11511

216. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

December 18, 1936

BHAI NANABHAI,[1]

I am glad you wrote me the two letters. You should not have any hesitation in writing to me.

About the first letter, Kishorelal has taken the responsibility.

Now about the second letter. I feel that it is right that we should know even our seniors as they are. It has been my experience that since we do not know many of them, we form an exaggerated opinion of them, and as a result the significance of *brahmacharya* is undermined. The idea of *brahmacharya* will lose its lustre if people consider me a *brahmachari* since childhood. A man who is pure of mind, speech, body and temper has a lustre all his own. Where can we find such *brahmacharis* these days? The influence of our seniors does not suffer if we know them as they are, but if they conceal their shortcomings the impression they make on us will only be superficial.

The question of self-control does not arise as I am against artificial means of birth-control. However, I quite agree with your view that even if that knowledge is worth acquiring it should be disseminated in a restrained manner.

There is no doubt whatsoever that the friendship between men and women should not exceed a limit. Of course it is difficult to draw a line. Moreover, such a limit cannot be universal and absolute. I hope you are keeping well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7529. Also C.W. 5005. Courtesy: Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

[1] Kishorelal Mashruwala's brother

217. LETTER TO TARABEHN N. MASHRUWALA

December 18, 1936

CHI. TARI,

I feel like writing: 'How shall I make you understand?' Will you wake up only when your condition becomes utterly hopeless? To improve your health you should make up your mind to get well at least to the extent of two annas in a rupee. Why do you lose hope? If you are giving much help there, then do stay on. I will not say anything.

Tell Nanabhai that Kishorelal has taken the responsibility of dealing with his long letter, so I have not written anything to him.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI TARABEHN MASHRUWALA
AKOLA
BERAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6699

218. LETTER TO G.D. BIRLA

December 18, 1936

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I am glad that you liked my article this time. But the fact is that I can write only what I feel and that is as it should be.

As soon as I received Ramachandran's telegram from Travancore I felt it was my duty to go. Why not see Sir Akbar, too, as you saw the Travancore authorities? Why should we not discuss with the Viceroy and other officials the need for a law? Maybe a law is necessary to open the Guruvayur temple. What is needed is for someone to offer the advice. Will not Malaviyaji agree even now?

I completely forgot about Parnerkar. I shall try to send him. I leave tomorrow for Faizpur. Parnerkar is there. I shall write to you further after seeing him.

I have accepted your opinion regarding Parameshwari for I have nothing definite to suggest. I do have a feeling, thorough, that Parameshwari might be allowed to conduct his experiment by turning the present company into a public association. I think his idea of improving the breed is not ill-founded and he is interested in the

work. He has also obtained favourable opinions of the other experts. My bias is certainly in his favour but how can I be certain? I know him only through you people. I do not therefore wish to do anything independently.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8027. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

219. A PAINFUL DUTY

I publish the following without any alteration:[1]

An open letter to Mahatma Gandhi:

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I was shocked to read your note[2] about myself in the *Harijan* of 21-11-1936 which contains untrue statements about me. I am not "carrying on Harijan work near Cuttack" nor did I "come down to Bombay to make the usual collections" nor "as a rule, I consult you before going out for collections".

I make the following statements in repudiation and correction of your statement which appeared in *Harijan* of 21-11-1936. Though I was at one time at Sabarmati Ashram, never received any help from you nor any mandate to carry on Harijan work or any other work near Cuttack or anywhere else. I have not been carrying on Harijan work near Cuttack. I never consulted you before going out for colleciton for Sevashram started by me and named by me in your honour. It has no connection with or dependence on any Congress institution nor with you. On my return from Sabarmati in the year 1921, I had an idea of serving the country on the line which you were preaching. . . .

When some complaints reached you 18 months ago, you wrote to me and I gave you a suitable reply, solemnly negativing the allegations. There the duty which I owe to you has ended as far as I and my Ashram are concerned. You are free to make any investigation you like . . . .

I remain,
Yours truly,
GOVIND CHANDRA MISRA

Dated Cuttack,
the 6th Dec. 1936

I would have suppressed the letter if the author had not invited publicity. To publish it is a painful task, to comment on it a painful duty.

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.
[2] *Vide* "Beware of Beggars", 21-11-1936

Govind Babu first came to me sent by Deenabandhu Andrews when he was in the greatest need. He was not wanted in Orissa. My weakness for Orissa compelled me to keep him in Sabarmati. His incoherent conversation did not prepossess me in his favour. And but for his being from Orissa and his description of his sufferings I would not have harboured him in spite of Deenabandhu's recommendation. Like everyone else he straight way became like my sons. Indeed his manners were so unattractive that the other inmates did not take to him kindly. So he was my extra care. He went to Orissa after consultation with me. He opened the Ashram in consultation with me. He used to send his reports regularly to me. He did do Harijan work and khadi work under my supervision. He collected monies in Bombay principally from those who know me and him as an inmate of Sabarmati. I went out of my way to visit his Ashram. On going there I was deeply pained to see the bungalow he had built there and publicly condemned it. He pleaded guilty. The only work worth naming that I saw being done was a well-stocked dispensary which was kept in a slovenly condition. I rebuked him severely for belying my hopes, for absence of proper accounts and any constructive work. The dispensary was certainly not a need. I told him it was the easiest thing for anybody to establish if he got some funds.

He had promised to mend but he did not. Then Baba Raghavdas was sent to inquire into the working and his report was adverse. Then came grave allegations about his morals. These are still under investigation. I knew nothing about his being a candidate for the Assembly. He never consulted me about it. He knew that I would disapprove of the step for him. It was only after the paragraph about him had appeared that he felt compelled to disclose the secret to me. His first letter was suppression of truth, the second an admission. After the paragraph was published he offered to come to Segaon to clear himself. I had a number of declarations from his erstwhile friends making most damaging statements. I therefore accepted his offer. But he backed out of it saying he no longer subscribed to my philosophy. In the light of this honest outline of my connection with Govind Babu, I can only say that his letter is a gross perversion of truth. It has been no pleasure to me to have to write a word against one in whose making I had a great deal to do and who was at one time ready to do as I would like him to.

The only relieving feature in this episode is that Govind Babu is so hysterical that he often does not know what he is speaking or that

he is speaking an untruth. May he detect in this writing the anguish of a parent who has suddenly lost an obedient son and repent of the wound he has inflicted on me. In spite of all his limitations I had never doubted his loyalty and readiness to carry out my wishes in the interest of the cause which bound him to me. His two recent letters and this last have come upon me as a thunderbolt.

Harijan, 19-12-1936

220. A CONTRAST

Thakkar Bapa sends me the following four cases from Gwalior:

(1) In the diary for October last, Sjt. K. V. Datey, the chief Harijan worker of Gwalior State, reports that there was a great commotion amongst the audience in a public meeting held in the Town-Hall at Ujjain where Jain Guru Anantsagar was speaking to an audience of about five to six hundred people, because some Harijans entered the hall to hear the religious sermon. The orthodex section amongst the audience wanted the Harijans to go out, but the speaker and the reformists were firm, with the result that the orthodox section went away displeased.

(2) At the end of October the Suba or the Collector of Ujjain issued an order that Harijan sevaks, even of 'high caste', were thereafter prohibited from worshipping in the chief temple of Ujjain, because of their close contact with Harijans. Neccessary representation has been made to the State in connection with this order.

(3) A Chamar girl in a village named Mahudia had the audacity to put a golden ring on one of her ears. This was resented by some orthodox people who had it removed. This came to the notice of one of the workers who went to the village and had them reconciled and the girl was allowed to put the ring on her ear.

(4) The mother of Shri Moolchand Agrawal, a khadi worker, died on 27th October at Neemuch. Sjt. Dhaniram Sagar, a Harijan and a worker, joined the funeral procession and carried the bier for a short distance out of respect for the deceased. The orthodox amongst the funeral party resented this very much, but Sjt. Moolchand remained firm and so the matter did not go further.

What a contrast with what is going on in Travancore! The present Maharaja of Gwalior has only just mounted the gadi. He made a generous statement about the Harijans. If he follows it up by action such as Travancore's, his Subas won't issue the rediculous orders such

as the Suba of Ujjain is reportecd to have done, nor will caste Hindus molest Harijans as they have done according to Thakkar Bapa's report. The bulk of the caste Hindus are torn between two conflictiong opinions.

In the Indian States, the thing appears to be simple. If the other Hindu princes like Travancore will issue authoritative proclamations, they will have the validity of *Smritis* and all opposition will be silenced.

Harijan, 19-12-1936

221. WHAT IS A MIRACLE?

About the 9th of October last there was a meeting of Christian denominations in London. His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury presided. The following occurs in the report of the meeting published in the *Church Times* of 16th October:

> The next speaker was dressed as a layman, without even the smallest discernible purple patch to indicate that he was Dr. J. W. Pickett, a Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, U.S.A. For some years past, Dr. Pickett has been studying the mass movements on the spot in India, and has published the results of his observations in *Christian Mass Movements in India*, described by the Archbishop of Canterbury as a remarkable and valuable book. Dr. Pickett is profoundly impressed with the spiritual significance of the movement. He said that four and a half millions of the depressed classes in India have become the disciples of our Lord, and the witness they bear to Him in their lives is making the multitudes in India marvel. Even Brahmins have testified—albeit reluctantly—to the power of Christianity to transform the characters and lives of people whom they once thought incapable of religious feelings, and to whom they denied the right of entrance to the temples of Hinduism. It is people of this kind, said Dr. Pickett, who have now standards of church attendance and worship difficult to equal in Western Christendom. He quoted an example in the Telugu area, where 900,000 people now profess the Christian faith. Out of 1,026 villages, 1,002 hold a service for the worship of God every evening of the year, and more than two hundred also a daily morning service. It appeared to satisfy Dr. Pickett entirely as a test of the reality of the faith of the converts to hear a surprisingly high proportion of them speak of a sense of mystical union with God and their belief that God had come into their lives. Even their Hindu neighbours admitted that the religion of Jesus Christ had lifted them to a new standard of cleanliness of person and home, and made them a trustworthy people. More impressive still is the fact that high-cast people are now coming into the church, literally by dozens and

hundreds, in areas where this transformation of life has occurred among the untouchables. "It is a miracle," he declared, "one of the great miracles of Christian history."

I have rarely seen so much exaggeration in so little space. A reader ignorant of conditions in India would conclude that the figures relate to the conversions due to the movement led by Dr. Ambedkar. I am sure Dr. Pickett could not have made any such claim. He has in mind the figures to date commencing from the establishment of the first church in India hundreds of years ago. But the figures are irrelevant to the general claim said to have been advanced by the Bishop. Where are "the multitudes in India who marvel" at the transformation in the lives of "four and a half millions of the depressed classes"? I am one of the mul-titudes having practically travelled more than half a dozen times all over India, and have not seen any transformation on the scale described by Dr. Pickett, and certainly none of recent date. I have had the privilege of addressing meetings of Indian Christians who have appeared to me to be no better than their fellows. Indeed the taint of untouchability persists in spite of the nominal change of faith so far as the social status is concerned. Needless to say I am referring to the masses, not individuals. I should like to know the Brahmins "who have testified—albeit reluctantly—to the power of Christianity to transform the characters and lives of people whom they once thought incapable of religious feeling." But if it is of any consequence, I can show many Brahmins who can testify to the power of the reform movement to make a radical change in the lives and outlook of Harijans who were neglected by caste Hindus. I must pass by the other unbelievable generalizations. But I should like to know the hundreds of high-caste Hindus who "are now coming into the church in areas where this transformation of life has occurred among the untouchables." If all the astounding statements Dr. Pickett has propounded can be substantiated, truly it is "one of the great miracles of Christian history", nay, of the history of man.

But do miracles need an oratorical demonstration? Should we in India miss such a grand miracle? Should we remain untouched by it? Miracles are their own demonstration. As witness the miracle in Travancore. Nobody believed a month ago that the more than 2,000 temples of Travancore could be opened to Harijans and that Harijans would enter them in their hundreds without let or hindrance from the most orthodox Hindus. Yet that event has happened in Travancore

which even he who runs may see. It is beside the point whether it can be called a miracle or not. I see in it the visible finger of the Invisible God.

I believe in the Bible as I believe in the *Gita.* I regard all the great faiths of the world as equally true with my own. It hurts me to see any one of them caricatured as they are today by their own followers and as has been done by the learned Bishop, assuming of course that the report reproduced above is substantially correct.

Harijan, 19-12-1936

222. WHAT IS NON-VIOLENCE?

A friend[1] writes.

> You enjoin on all your disciples to be non-violent not only in *acts* but also in *words* and *thoughts*. In the *Harijan* of Nov. 26[2], you are reported to have said to Mr. Andrews on his wanting to know from you your reaction to the present attitude of the missionaries, "Their behaviour has been as bad as that of the rest who are in the field to add to their numbers. What pains one is their frantic attempt to exploit the weakness of Harijans. If they said, 'Hinduism is a diabolical religion and you come to us,' I should understand. But they dangle earthly paradises in front of them and make promises to them which they can never keep."[3]
>
> If you are reported correctly, I ask—is this not *violence in words* against the missionaries as a class?

I have no disciples, being myself an aspirant after discipleship and in search of a guru. But that is irrelevant to the issue raised by my friend. To say or write a distasteful word is surely not violence, especially when the speaker or writer believes it to be true as I did when I spoke to Deenabandhu as reported in the quotation. But even if it were found that what I said was an exaggeration, or worse still, an untruth, it would not be violent in the sense used by my correspondent. The essence of violence is that there must be a violent intention behind a thought, word, or act, i.e., an intention to do harm to the opponent so called. Here there was and could be no such

[1] A. S. Wadia; *vide* "What Is Non-violence?", 6-2-1937.
[2] This should be 28.
[3] *Vide* "Discussion with C. F. Andrews", 28-11-1936

intention. I was engaged in a friendly conversation with two good Christians, both missionaries in their own way.

I have used much stronger language about sanatanist behaviour towards Harijans and quite latterly about the acts of dear co-workers. But there has been no violent intention behind the use of my language. And generally I have been acquitted by my critics of any violent intention.

Indeed the acid test of non-violence is that one thinks, speaks and acts non-violently, even when there is the gravest provocation to be violent. There is no merit in being non-violent to the good and the gentle. Non-violence is the mightiest force in the world capable of resisting the greatest imaginable temptation. Jesus knew 'the generation of vipers', minced no words in describing them, but pleaded for mercy for them before the Judgment Throne, 'for they knew not what they were doing.'

I gave the company chapter and verse in support of the statements I made. I regard myself as a friend of the missionaries. I enjoy happy relations with many of them. But my friendships have never been blind to the limitations of my friends or the systems or methods they have supported.

False notions of propriety or fear of wounding susceptibilities often deter people from saying what they mean and ultimately land them on the shores of hypocrisy. But if non-violence of thought is to be evolved in individuals or societies or nations, truth has to be told, however harsh or unpopular it may appear to be for the moment. And mere non-violent action without the thought behind it is of little value. It can never be infectious. It is almost like a whited sepulchre. Thought is the power and the life behind it. We hardly know that thought is infinitely greater than action or words. When there is correspondence between thought, word and deed, either is a limitation of the first. And the third is a limitation of the sceond. Needless to say that here I am referring to the living thought which awaits translation into speech and action. Thoughts without potency are airy nothings and end in smoke.

Harijan, 19-12-1936

223. HOW TO STOP OBSCENE ADVERTISEMENTS[1]

A correspondent who saw my article[2] on obscene advertisements writes:

> You can do much in preventing obscene advertisements by exposing the names of the papers and magazines which advertise such shameless things as you have mentioned.

I can't undertake the censorship my correspondent advises, but I can suggest a better way. If public conscience is alive, subscribers can write to their respective papers, if they contain objectionable advertisements, drawing their attention to them and stopping their subscriptions if the offence is not cured. The reader will be glad to know that the sister who complained to me about the obscene advertisement wrote also to the editor of the offending magazine who expressed his regret for the inadvertent admission of the obnoxious advertisement and promised to remove it forthwith.

I am glad also to be able to say that my caution has found support from some other papers. Thus the editor of *Nispruha* of Nagpur writes:

> I have not only read with great care your article in the *Harijan* regarding obscene advertisements but have given a detailed translation of it in the *Nispruha*. I have also added a short editorial comment thereon.
>
> I am enclosing a typical advertisement which though not obscene is yet immoral in a sense. The advertisement is obviously bogus and it is generally the villager who falls a prey to it. I have always refused such advertisements and I am also writing to this party similarly. If an editor must supervise the reading matter that he will allow, it is as much his duty to supervise the advertisements, and no editor can permit his paper to be used by people desirous of duping the simple villagers.

Harijan, 2-1-1937

[1] The Hindi version of this was published in *Harijan Sevak*, 19-12-1936.
[2] *Vide* "Obscene Advertisements", 14-11-1936

224. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

December 19, 1936

DHI. MAHADEV,

As decided earlier, I am sending the letter herewith. The bearer's name is Mahadev. Give him whatever he is able to carry. Lilavati is of course coming there in a cart.

I want six pomegranates and 12 bananas.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11512

225. LETTER TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

WARDHA,
December 19, 1936

CHI. KISHORELAL,

As per the instructions I gave you yesterday:

(1) Send to Bhai Chhaganlal Joshi Rs. 1,000 received from Manilal Kothari for khadi work, to be used for the Harijan Sevak Sangh in Kathiawar.

(2) I have sanctioned a budget of nearly Rs. 19,000 for the Nalwadi tannery for the coming year. It is estimated that it will involve investment of nearly Rs. 9,000. Give that amount to Valunjkar as and when he needs it from the Gandhi account. From this amount, pay back Mahadev Desai Rs. 500 taken from him. Besides that, I have approved a 1,200-rupee plan for a building for a students' hostel. And then we shall also need a store-room, etc., to keep the stocks of goods. We will need to spend the necessary amounts for these constructions. Discuss with Ramanlalji and decide from what source the amounts should be drawn. But in the mean time spend the money from the Gandhi account.

(3) Credit Rs. 1,264-4-3 to the account of Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, from the amount of the Goseva Sangh. And Bhai Narahari has suggested that Rs. 500 (five hundred) should be sent to him. Do accordingly.

(4) Sanction the budget for Kager from that fund to the extent it may seem necessary to you. In this connection, have the difference between the Kamrej and Mangarol talukas clarified.

(5) Sanction a grant of up to Rs. 10 per month to Jyotiramji, if he has a good record-of work.

(6) As for continuing the grant to Elwin[1] (Gond Seva Mandal) you may do as Jamnalalji decides.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Gandhi Nidhi File (August 1976). Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

226. WHAT SHOULD THOSE FAILING IN DUTY DO?

Some friends have posed the question arising out of the sad incident which I have had to relate:[2] "You bring to light such cases, and suggest to the persons concerned to give up their posts. You have been unable to find fault with their work from the material point of view. You have even praised their work. Have they now lost their ability as well? Should the public be deprived of their services? Who is to fill the vacancies caused by their going?"

This question is worth considering. For myself I answered it years ago and on innumerable occasions I have acted accordingly. I have not used the adjective 'innumerable' thoughtlessly. I have acted on my belief so many times that I have lost count of them. I believe and I have repeatedly found in experience that however able a person may be, his secret immorality cannot but leave a stamp upon his work. This rule does have a limitation on its field of application, namely, that the type of work in question requires moral integrity. The work done by those who lack ability but are faultless in character, has shone out. There should be no need to give instances of this. Doing so is a delicate task. But if one looks at the activities which have been founded on morality, one cannot fail to be convinced by what I have said. There should be no hesitation in believing that the removal of untouchability is impossible with the help of men who lack character. How can even the best orator, well versed in the Shastras, change the beliefs of an orthodox sanatanist Hindu? Attacking the intellect is futile. The influence of such persons as Chaitanya, Ramakrishna, Rammohan Roy, Dayanand and others, still persists today. Is this through any force? We may perhaps come across numerous persons

[1] Verrier Elwin
[2] *Vide* "Need for Cleansing of Heart", 13-12-1936

more intelligent than they. But they will not be able to convert people's hearts. The history of the world is replete with such instances. Despite this, if we ask for proofs we will be justifying the saying that a bad dancer finds the courtyard uneven. However, it must be admitted that even a person of character must have industry, a keen desire for the necessary knowledge and discernment.

However, the question asked by the correspondent still remains unanswered. Those who have left public institutions do not and cannot give up service even if they want to. No one can take a person away from his dharma. Dharma belongs to him who practises it. Dharma is for those who are engaged in the service of Harijans, in khadi work, in serving the villages. If those who had fallen, but have come out of their swoon, will render service wherever they happen to be, who can prevent them from living in a village? Who can prevent them from silently doing scavenging in villages while living in obscurity? What is there to prevent them from spinning and teaching others to spin or in serving Harijans? While doing all this, they would purify themselves to such an extent that they would not find it difficult to face society. Even if they lived unnoticed wherever they are, the aura which they would create would spread far and wide. I have never said or believed that there is no redemption from sin. Even the first among the fallen can become a saint. A historian has said this of Tulsidas. The *Gita* proclaims that even for the very sinful the path of devotion leads to liberation. It is for this reason that one of the names of God is *Patitapavan*.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 20-12-1936

227. THE IDEAL AND THE ACTUAL

A gentleman has written a long letter on reading my article[2] on the ideal Bhangi. The substance[3] of it is as follows:

[1] Purifier of the fallen

[2] *Vide* "The Ideal Bhangi", 28-11-1936

[3] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had written to say that he disagreed with Gandhiji's views on the ideal Bhangi. He felt that Gandhiji could not differentiate between the ideal and the actual and he would not be sucessful in turning anyone into an ideal Bhangi.

The correspondent has embellished his letter with many arguments. There is nothing new in them. The letter merely attempts to convince me. Hence I shall not involve the reader in these arguments. I intend to make some observations in reply in order to make my stand clearer. An ideal which cannot be put into practice at all is not worth the name. There will always be a gulf between the ideal and the actual. Man's supreme effort should be directed towards bridging this gulf. Even today, we come across many Bhangis who are highly educated and who are carrying on their occupation and are striving to come up to my description of an ideal Bhangi. Their number is constantly increasing. If some of the carpenters remain carpenters all their lives, some of the farmers remain farmers, some stone-cutters and some barbers continue to follow their vocations, then why can't some of the Bhangis remain Bhangis? Do not all these persons have a right to knowledge? Actually every doctor and every nurse is a Bhangi. He or she has to handle human excreta, smell, clean and analyse it. Will it be humiliating to them if we regard them as Bhangis? Why should that be so? What sin has the Bhangi committed that his occupation is regarded as the lowliest of all? This is not the case everywhere in the world. Even in England some persons have to sweep the streets and carry away garbage. That occupation is not regarded as demeaning by anyone there.

Any vocation scientifically pursued is as interesting as any scientific pursuit. It is in our country that society has not allowed the vocations to grow into sciences by looking down upon them. Hence, the carpenter does not compile technical documents on carpentry. We import these from the West. At present Dr. Fowler is doing the work of a Bhangi in Bangalore. He collects all the garbage in the hotel where he stays and is minutely studying how to convert it into manure in the simplest way.

In the West the disposal of the garbage in the big cities is demanding work. Those who do it and devise new methods for doing it are also Bhangis, aren't they?

In Darjeeling and Simla, enormous sums are spent on the disposal of garbage. Is it not a matter of shame and sorrow that none among our Bhangi brothers have acquired any knowledge of this? This is a heinous sin on the part of those who are said to belong to the higher castes. Our looking down upon Bhangis, has made them the

object of the disdain of the world. I have not the slightest doubt in my mind that there cannot be any happiness or independence, whether economic, social or political, in the country as long the Bhangis do not get the same respect as the Brahmins. What I have said here is not about ideals—but purely about what is practicable. I ask for respect for the Bhangi as he is today. When a Bhangi gains knowledge of the Brahman, we shall perforce worship him. But we shall become purified only when we recognize a Bhangi as our own brother even as he is.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 20-12-1936

228. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

December 20, 1936

CHI. A. SALAAM,

You have indeed started writing a good deal in Hindi. What is the use of sending a telegram to you? There is no limit to your foolishness. If you are not patient with the treatment, then please come to Segaon. I will give you the treatment I desire. I will reach Segaon on the 29th, or, at the latest, on the 31st.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 368

229. LETTER TO KASTURBHAI LALBHAI

FAIZPUR,
December 20, 1936

BHAI KASTURBHAI,

As per our talk I have carefully examined the papers which are to be submitted to the Umpire. I have removed all the papers connected with the three issues. I am sending herewith the list of the papers which will have to be sent to the Umpire. I have also appended to Nos. 2, 7, 8, 9, 14, 15 and 16 the latest replies from the Mill-owners' Association. The documents Nos. 10, 11 and 12 are independent notes submitted by the Labout Association. So far we

have not received any reply from the Association. Those notes relate to the discussion held at Wardha. You will see that one of them is a corrigendum. As in the case of the other notes, the copy of this note has also been sent to the Association; so it has to be retained. However, I will not have any objection if you feel that all these three notes should be removed. As far as I am concerned, I have not gone into the merits and demerits of the case. So I do not require to note mistakes or the figures mentioned in the notes in order to arrive at a decision.

I have all the papers mentioned in the list ready in case we are fated to go to the Umpire. I have not made any notes, etc., on them, so that those can be sent to the Umpire. However, I do hope that you, independently or with the help of some lawyer friend, have been convinced of the three basic issues I have raised and will be taking effective steps in the direction we had thought of while arranging the papers. Naturally I had to read the papers again but I could do that only very casually. I feel that my decision is as clear as daylight. But that has no meaning. However, if, and only if, you reach the same conclusion, we can save ourselves from going to the Umpire.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4198

230. LETTER TO SHRIMANNARAYAN

December 20, 1936

CHI. SHRIMAN,

I have gone through your article. It cannot be published in *Harijan*, it is not worth publishing. Make your scheme public. Your resolution is acceptable to all but how are we to define 'literacy'? The question is very controversial.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 299

231. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

December 21, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

We did not have the rain you had but we had full-strength gale and lightning. Here there has been nothing so far. They are working full speed but much remains to be done yet. Nature has been unkind. Her unkindness will be forgotten if she does not repeat it.

It will be a great thing if Prahlad's boy pulls through. I am glad you will have half an hour with Balkoba every evening.

I have given strict instructions about fruit. I hope the two B.s[1] are getting it without any hitch.

Do not overwork.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Tilak Nagar P. O. No further address required.

[PPS.]

Have talked to P. He will write.

From the original: C.W. 6368. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9834

232. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

TILAKNAGAR,
December 21, 1936

CHI. LILA,

How is it you have not received my letter? I was glad to learn that your brother is now recovering.

Tell Damayanti I had thought she was brave. A brave woman will not weep or be restless. Life and death are not in your hands, nor in the hands of anyone else. Why should one grieve then? We have done everything when we have served the sick.

Only Mahadev, Bablo, Pyarelal and Radhakishan are here with me. Of course Khan Saheb and Mehrtaj are here. They lodge separately. Mehr is with Prema.

[1] Ba and Balkoba

Ba, Manu, Nimu's Kano and Navin will arrive on the 24th.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

This is enough for Mehr and Tara.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9353. Also C.W. 6628. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

233. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

FAIZPUR CONGRESS,
December 21, 1936

CHI. HARILAL,

If you can give up drinking for eight months for my sake and for nine months for the sake of Vijayshankerji, then for how long will you do so for your own sake and for the sake of God?

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the Manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

234. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

December 21,1936

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I hope your dairying and scavenging are going on well. Take a testimonial from Mirabehn. She knows this work well. Try to understand the dairy accounts in detail. The students will have come on Sunday.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarari: G.N. 8592. Also C.W. 7004. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

235. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

TILAKNAGAR,
December 21, 1936

CHI. VIJAYA,

There is nothing particular to write to you. You write to me. Bring neatness into everything you do. Be exact in keeping accounts.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7062. Also C.W.4554. Courtesy: Vijaya M. Pancholi

236. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

December 21, 1936

CHI. BALWANTSIN0HA,

I gave Ramdas your letter. He thought you might have come here since you had no work on hand. I told him about your having taken up service of the cow and he was silent. I hope you are keeping well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1888

237. ADDRESS TO CONGRESS VOLUNTEERS[1]

December 21, 1936

Mahatma Gandhi broke his silence tonight with an exhortation to the Congress volunteers, particularly those in charge of conservancy. About 500 men and women listened to him in cloistral silence.

Speaking in quiet persuasive tones, Gandhiji dwelt at length on what he described as the science of Bhangis' work. He started by pointing out that he had begun his work as a Bhangi long ago in South Africa. To be born as a 'Bhangi' was the result of great *punya* in previous birth. He did not know what qualifications determined the birth of one man as Bhangi and another as Brahmin, but from the

[1] This was also reported by *The Hindu, The Hindustan Times* and *The Hitavada.*

point of view of benefit to society the one was no whit lower than the other. Those who considered Bhangis' work as mean did so in their ignorance.

Every mother acted as a Bhangi for her children; every doctor often acted as a Bhangi for his patients. But the doctors received fat fees, while the Bhangi who was equally working for the benefit of society got very little in comparison. Society regarded the work of Bhangis as demeaning, while the wholesome work done by the doctors was considered ennobling. One who could not and did not do the work of the Bhangi in the proper spirit and in a thorough fashion and with pride in it could never be expected to do any other item of national service to the country effectively. The Congress could go on with its deliberations and win success only if sanitary work was carried out properly. Congress deliberations might end in success, but no session of the Congress could be called a success if the sanitary work was not a success. One could go without food for two or three days and could do so without serious trouble but no one could do without the Bhangi's services for that length of time or even less. The greatest cause of worry for those in charge of arrangements for Congress sessions was the anxiety to see that there was no complaint on the score of food and sanitary arrangements. Other things need not worry them so much.

Mahatma Gandhi proceeded to refer critically to the actual work he had seen some of the volunteers do. What struck him was that they were very slow. He did not blame them. It was not their fault. They were sincere, but there seemed to be none to attend to their training. With training he was confident that they would do splendidly. Hisconception of *Ramarajya,* which he said, was certain to come to India, was a dispensation under which there would be no distinction between a Brahmin and a Bhangi or even a Brahmin and a Maharaja. They would be treated from the point of view of the usefulness to society of their respective work. Re-emphasizing the importance of Bhangi in the scheme of things, Gandhiji declared that swaraj would come to India not through the Congress parliamentarians in the legislatures, but through efficient and conscientious discharge of their work by Bhangis and other workers without looking for reward or praise in municipal and public addresses. He exhorted the workers as well as the delegates and visitors to Faizpur to make it an ideal village.

Passing on to the number of volunteers placed at his disposal, Gandhiji said that fifteen volunteers who accompained him during his walks seemed to be too many. He would be satisfied if one volunteer came with him just to show him the way. Faizpur was a village, not a big city and there was no fear of big crowds requiring the attention of a large posse of volunteers.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-12-1936

238. TELEGRAM TO EZHAVA TEMPLE-ENTRY CELEBRATIONS COMMITTEE

[On or before *December 22, 1936*][1]

DO NOT BE IMPATIENT. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO COME BEFORE JANUARY 6TH. SEND ME A FIVE DAYS PROGRAMME AND MAKE ARRANGEMENTS.

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-12-1936

239. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

FAIZPUR,
December 22, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter.

Ba I expect on 24th. It is well I did not bring her with me. The fewer there are here to look after the better. If I could have, I [would] have prevented Ba from coming. But that was not possible.

I do not mind how much work you do so long as you do not strain yourself.

I hope Prahlad's boy is on the mend and so also the new cow. It would be a pity to lose her.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6369 Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9835

240. SPEECH AT KIRODA[2]

December 22, 1936

Gandhiji said how happy he was to come to the village. He regarded it as a pilgrimage, remembering as he did the s acrifices and services of Dhanaji Nana Choudhary of the village who resigned a job in the Police department and took an important part in Congress work. He also recalled the work of 75 men and women who kept company with Mr. Choudhary in his achievements.

[1] The report carrying the item bears the date December 22.

[2] Gandhiji was presented with a purse of Rs. 100 and an address in Marathi. Gandhiji spoke in Hindi. Reports of the speech also apeared in *The Hindu, The Hindustan Times* and *The Hitavada.*

He had come, said Gandhiji, to congratulate the village on that record of service and he was glad to see how clean the surroundings had been kept. If the Congress session had come nearer to them, the reason was perhaps their part in the struggle.

While I am glad to see the way in which you have kept your village clean, I am sorry to say that differentiation of man from man is bad. The other motto says real Hinduism does not recognize discrimination between Harijans and caste Hindus. But during my walk round the village and round the Harijan quarter I found they are differentiating between Harijans and caste Hindus. You are not treating Harijans in the same way as you declare in your motto. You do not allow them to have water from your wells and they are driven to have recourse to tank water which I understand is occasionally also drunk by cattle. This is bad.

Our country has been under foreign domination. We are not a free people. Though all of us agree that swaraj is our birthright, we have not been able to win it so far. Mere membership of Congress means nothing. How many members of Congress are there today in the country? At the most one crore. Then what about the rest of the 34 crores? I have left the Congress. I am not even a four-anna member of the Congress, as I have decided to educate the public—I remain in the 34 crores. For example, there are only 250 out of 2,500 residents of your village as Congress members. Nothing would be lost if you are all not members. Not that I do not want you to become Congress members, but I feel there is no use in your merely becoming Congress members. I am in favour of all of you becoming members of the Congress. I have no objection even if you want to enter legislatures but in your attempt to do so you need not create differences and quarrels amongst yourselves.

I leave the work in the legislatures to those who have the desire, resources and leisure for such work. I have said that nothing substantial could be achieved by entering the legislatures but if Congress decided to capture them and asked Congress members of the legislatures to carry the Congress flag even into the Council Chambers, it is because Congress wants to prevent undesirables capturing those seats and using them in a way detrimental to the national interests.

If real swaraj is to be achieved we must give up quarrelling amongst ourselves. There should be perfect equality and fraternity. All artificial differences between man and man, community and

community, class and class should be immediately obliterated. After all we are all human beings, all children of the same God. The moment we realize this and translate this in our daily lives swaraj will be within our grasp.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-12-1936

241. MESSAGE TO THE ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE[1]

[Before *December 23, 1936*]

I have grown old but will give a message still, if you need one from me. I can only say that until women establish their womanhood, the progress of India in all directions is impossible. When woman whom we call *abala*[2] becomes *sabala*[3], all those who are helpless will become powerful.

The Hindu, 24-12-1936

242. LETTER TO RONALD DUNCAN

AS AT SEGAON,
WARDHA,
December 23, 1936

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your pamphlet. The argument appeared to me to be sound so far as it went. Perhaps there is not sufficient emphasis on personal individual conduct irrespective of what society does or does not do. Non-violent action does not depend upon another's co-operation. Violent action is ineffective without the co-operation of others. Here both the forces are conceived in terms of the ultimate good of society.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

RONALD DUNCAN, ESQ.
6 PALL MALL
LONDON

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The conference commenced on December 23 and was presided over by Margaret Cousins.
[2] Weak
[3] Strong

243. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

TILAKNAGAR,
December 23, 1936

CHI. AMRITLAL,

The sun has not risen yet and my hand is numb with cold, but I am writing this as your postcard is lying before me. Now you should have more strength than before. There is a competition between you and Mira. She has no doubt regained her strength. She takes four pounds of milk daily and also eight to ten *tolas* of butter and fifteen *tolas* of flour, vegetable and fruit. However, she has not put on weight; it is the same as before. Now she washes her own clothes. Ba, Manu and Kanu arrived here yesterday on their way to Segaon. Here with me are Mahadev, Bablo, Pyarelal and Radhakishan and of course Khan Saheb and Mehrtaj.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10727

244. LETTER TO NARNADABEHN R. PATHAK

December 23, 1936

CHI. NARMADA,

I am writing to you since you have asked me to. Those who think you are mature or capable of taking decisions are mistaken. Your intellect is raw and your mind unsteady. Your ideals are good but you do not have the ability to put them into practice. This is my reading of you. The person who could have guided you on the right path himself cast evil eyes on you and you fell a prey to him. As a result, great injustice was done to the woman for whom you had a soft corner and you abetted in the crime. How can such an immoral relationship inspire in you a spirit of service? Why can't you understand this? There is no clarification either in your letter or in Ramnarayan's letter. This much seems clear to me: either you should forget that you are husband and wife or you should go ahead and indulge in carnal pleasures as you wish. I believe that it is almost impossible to practise *brahmacharya* while calling yourselves husband

and wife. At least your thoughts are bound to be carnal. May God be good to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2781. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

245. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN N. PATHAK

December 23, 1936

BHAI RAMNARAYAN,

I received the letters of you both. I hope you have not done anything in a fit of excitement. When both of you have decided to practise *brahmacharya*, the marriage does not exist at all. It is clear from your letter that at the root of your marriage was the desire to satisfy your passion. The married couple who voluntarily observe *brahmacharya* are only brother and sister. But you were not even fit to be husband and wife.

How can a man who had relations with a woman ever marry her? I have nothing to say if the sanctity of marriage rites has no importance in your eyes. In that case your relations with Ganga and Narmada should be considered innocent and such a word as immorality should disappear from the language. I am still striving with you because you respect my opinion. However, do not take any step as long as you are not convinced of my arguments. Whatever you do, it is bound to be difficult. I know that it is not easy to overcome passion. My duty is to help you to purify your thoughts. One should not see morality in sin. Passion makes one see right in wrong. Now do whatever you think is proper and stick to whatever you do. It is easy to say this but difficult to put it into practice.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2783. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

246. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

TILAKNAGAR, FAIZPUR,
December 24, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I got your letter. Which of your questions shall I answer? Kanti has not arrived here so far and I do not know when he will. He has gone to Poona to see one of his friends. Come to Segaon and have a discussion with me. If you stay on, I will give you treatment or have it given to you. It would be right for you to come there for the peace of your mind at least. You still do not write anything about your finger.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 369

247. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

December 24, 1936

Mahatma Gandhi said that he could not conscientiously continue to serve any longer as the President of the League[1], as he could not do without goat's milk. He, however, promised to continue to take interest and guide the activities of the League in the same way as he had been doing in the case of the All-India Village Industries Association.

The Hindustan Times, 27-12-1936

248. LETTER TO KASTURBHAI LALBHAI

TILAKNAGAR, FAIZPUR,
December 25, 1936

BHAI KASTURBHAI,

I have received your telegrams and letter. I take it that you have obtained legal opinion on the basic issues I have raised and that it has gone against me. If it is so, one can easily understand that there is nothing you can do in this connection.

[1] The All-India Cow Protection League. Gandhiji resigned as its President after it was decided that every trustee must use only cow's milk and products of cow's milk.

The paper No. 2 was of course included on my suggestion but at that time you did not raise any objection. I was not bound in any way and therefore it was my duty to hear the Labour Association. My decision no doubt goes against them but their protest is a part of the representation they have made against us and therefore it must go to the Umpire. I did ask for paper No. 6 and you had no objection to it. I have no objection to dropping Nos. 10 and 11.

Both of us had asked for No. 12. We had certainly agreed that the mistakes should be rectified.

Therefore in my record I have kept all the papers except Nos. 10 and 11. I can say that I have even used them for arriving at my decision. Paper No. 12 is of no use to me, but as your opinion is based on the merits and demerits of the case I believe it is necessary for you.

If there is difference of opinion between us even over this, let it also be decided by the Umpire. As a lot of time has already been taken up we should not delay matters further by prolonging our correspondence.

About the Rajnagar mill, my opinion is that Chimanbhai has made a serious mistake. I feel that my decision is correct and therefore it is wrong to change it. Had Chimanbhai allowed us to take the decision regarding the remaining mills, I would have imposed a fine on the workers so that the account would have been squared. We should go deeper into the question of reinstating the workers.

I shall try to send my Award with addtions and alterations by tomorrow. Kindly arrange to send it along with yours to the Umpire there or wherever he may be.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I forgot one point. We should give copies of our Awards to both the parties. Even if we do not do so the Press will continue to write about it. I went through the cutting you have sent. How can we say from which side the names were leaked out? Are newspapermen averse to indulging in guess work? Sometimes something is bound to come true. Don't you think so?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4199

249. SPEECH AT OPENING OF KHADI AND VILLAGE INDUSTRIES EXHIBITION[1]

December 25, 1936

You must have seen from the newspapers that the responsibility for having this session of the Congress in a village is wholly mine. They had also announced that I would go to Faizpur in the beginning of December and supervise all the arrangements about the Exhibition. The latter half of the statement is true, and without any false modesty or exaggeration I would say that I am wholly responsible for whatever shortcomings you see here. The idea of having the Congress and the Exhibition in a village originated with me, and I must shoulder the responsibility for whatever defects or shortcomings you will notice here. The credit for anything good that you will see belongs to those who were in charge of the arrangements here. It was Dastane and Dev who accepted my suggestion to have the Congress and Exhibition in a village and with the thoroughness and determination that characterize the Maharashtrians they have carried out their promise. The Exhibition was bound to be according to my conception because it is organized by the All-India Spinners' Association of which I am the President and the All-India Village Industries Association which I am guiding and directing. I had to warn them against creating a Lucknow or Delhi in a Maharashtra village. Why not in that case have the Congress and the Exhibition both in Poona? But if they were to be in a village, they must be in keeping with an Indian village. And no one could do it better than I, because, as I said to them, I had long been a villager by choice, whereas they had become villagers only recently. Of course, I too settled in Segaon only a few months ago, and as I was actually born and bred and educated in a town, my body found it difficult to adjust itself automatically to village life. I had, therefore, malaria there. But, as you know, I threw it off immediately, recovered quickly and am alive and kicking. Part of the reason of course is that I am now care-free, having cast all my cares on the broad shoulders of

[1] The exhibition was opened at 8.30 a.m. Among those present were Kasturba Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Vallabhbhai Patel, Sarojini Naidu, Rajendra Prasad, Abul Kalam Azad, Govind Ballabh Pant, J.B. Kripalani, Jamnalal Bajaj and Mahadev Desai. Reports of the speech appeared in *The Hindustan Times, The Bombay Chronicle* and other newspapers. What follows is Mahadev Desai's resume of the speech.

Jawarharlal and the Sardar. However, let me yield up the real secret of my health, which is that my body happens to be where I had set my heart.

Credit for the arrangements here belongs to the architect Sjt. Mhatre and the artist Sjt. Nandalal Bose. When Nanda Babu responded to my invitation a couple of months ago I explained to him what I wanted, and left it to him to give concrete shape to the conception. For he is a creative artist and I am none. God has given me the sense of art but not the organs to give it concrete shape. He has blessed Sjt. Nandalal Bose with both. I am thankful that he agreed to take upon himself the whole burden of organizing the artistic side of the Exhibition and he came and settled down here some weeks ago to see to everything himself. The result is that the whole Tilaknagar is an exhibition in itself, and so it begins not where I am going to open it but at the main gateway which is a fine piece of village art. Of course our thanks are due also to Sjt. Mhatre who has spared no pains in bringing the entire plan to completion. Please remember that Nanda Babu has depended entirely on local material and local labour to bring all the structures here into being.

Now I want you to go and see the Exhibition with, if possible, my eyes. If you will realize that it is organized under the auspices of the A.I.S.A. and A.I.V.I.A., you will know what to expect there. The object of the former is to make the whole of India khadi-clad, a goal which we are unfortunately still far from having reached. The object of the latter is to revive the moribund cottage industries of India. Both khadi and the other cottage industries are vital to the economic welfare of our villages.

This Exhibition is no spectacular show, it is not intended either to dazzle the eyes of the public or to delude them. This is a genuine village Exhibition which has been brought into being by the labour of villagers. It is a pure educative effort. It simply shows the villagers how to double their income if only they will use their hands and feet and the resources around them. I would ask our President to take me to a village in U.P. and I would offer to reconstruct the village not out of Jamnalalji's money but with the help of the hands and feet of the men and women living there, on condition that he induces the villagers to work according to instructions. Our President will perhaps say that as soon as these poor folk begin adding to their income, a zamindar like Jamnalalji would enhance the rent and thus rob the

extra income out of their hands. Well, we will not allow the zamindar to do anything of the kind. There is no doubt in my mind that in a country like ours teeming with millions of unemployed, something is needed to keep their hands and feet engaged in order that they may earn an honest living. It is for them that khadi and cottage industries are needed. It is clear to me as daylight that they are badly needed at the present moment. What the future has in store for them I do not know, nor do I care to know.

With this Gandhiji proceeded to describe some of the exhibits that had been placed before him—small tools from the blacksmith's smithy which had been made overnight, articles made by Andhra workmen out of grass growing on river banks (e.g. pouches and spectacle-cases), fox's hide cured and tanned and lined with khadi at the Wardha tannery, and so on.

These little things add substantially to the income of the poor villagers. If you can ensure them three annas instead of the three pice that they get today, they will think they have won swaraj. That is what khadi is trying to do for the spinners today. In brief we have to teach them how to turn waste into wealth, and that is what the Exhibition is meant to teach them. When I met Nanda Babu two months ago I asked him not to bring from Santiniketan costly paintings from his own school of art, lest untimely rain should ruin them. He accepted my advice and has collected things from the neighbourhood of this place. He launched out to the villages with the eye of an artist that is his, and picked up numerous things from the peasants' households, things that never catch an ordinary eye as striking objects of art, but which his discerning eye picked up and arranged and thus clothed with a new meaning.

Sjt. Vaikunth Mehta has apologized for the small size of the Exhibition as compared with the previous ones, but there was no occasion for apology. It does not contain one superfluous exhibit and the crafts represented mean so much additional production. Look, for instance, at the samples of hand-made paper out of *munj* grass, banana bark and bamboo. Bamboo has indeed played a prominent part in all the structures you see here, and you may be sure that after this Congress camp breaks up all the bamboo will be turned to good account.

You could not but have noticed the grand simplicity of the procession that was organized for our President, especially the beautifully designed and decorated chariots drawn by six pairs of bullocks.

Well, all that was designed in order to prepare you for what awaited you here. No city amenities or comforts, but everything that poor villagers could provide. The place is thus a place of pilgrimage for us all, our Kashi and our Mecca, where we have come in order to offer our prayers for freedom and to consecrate ourselves to the nation's service. You have not come here to lord it over the poor peasants but to learn how to get off their backs by participating in their daily toil, by doing the scavenger's job, by washing for yourselves, by grinding your own flour, etc. For the first time in the history of the Congress you are being given here rice unpolished of its substance and chapatis made out of hand-ground flour, plenty of fresh air and clean mother earth to rest your limbs upon. But you will please bear with all the poor organizers' shortcomings, for in Khan Saheb's language we are all Khudai Khidmatgars—servants of God, come here not to take but to tender service.

Harijan, 2-1-1937

250. HALF A DOZEN OR SIX

The following Press cutting[1] has been sent to me by Thakkar Bapa.

Whether the Harijan is nominally a Christian, Muslim or Hindu and now Sikh, he is still a Harijan. He can't change his spots inherited from Hinduism so called. He may change his garb and call himself a Catholic Harijan, or a Muslim Harijan or neo-Muslim or neo-Sikh, his untouchability will haunt him during his lifetime. It is one and the same thing whether you call the numeral after five half a dozen or six. Not until untouchability is removed from Hinduism will the taint be removed from Harijans, no matter what label they adopt. Therefore Harijans have it in their hands either to save Hinduism or to destroy it, as caste Hindus have it in theirs. It is no doubt easier for Harijans to change labels than for caste Hindus to change their hearts, but it may be easier for Harijans to rise superior to every earthly temptation and be consciously steadfast in the faith in which they have been denied by their fellows the most elementary human rights. It is no doubt difficult for anybody to resist the temptations to which Harijans are

[1] Not reproduced here. It reported that during the Sunday service in St. Mary's Cathedral at Kumbakonam caste Catholics withdrew from the service on Catholic Harijans entering in an organized body and distributing themselves among caste Catholics instead of occupying the portion intended for them.

exposed today. It will therefore be a marvel if they prove true and cling to their ancestral faith with the determination to purify it by a conscious supreme effort. They can do this as they could not before for they know that there is a growing body of caste Hindus who are making common cause with them and making reparation for their own past wrongs and the continuing wrongs of fellow caste Hindus. Thus viewed, the Kumbakonam incident is as much a shame of the Roman Church as it is of Hinduism.

Harijan, 26-12-1936

251. THE SECRET OF IT

The Deputy President of the Travancore Assembly has written a long article to disprove my statement that "the way for the great step (the Proclamation) was prepared by the gentle but persistent effort of the Travancore Branch of the Harijan Sevak Sangh".[1] The writer even asks the local Sangh to desist from organizing public meetings and importing outsiders like Shri C. Rajagopalachari to advertise their work. He contrasts my utter failure to have temples opened in Ahmedabad where I must be presumed to have the greatest influence.

What I meant was clear from my language that the *savarna* mind was made responsive by the unremitting zeal of the local Sangh in educating and preparing it. To my knowledge there was no other body or organization in Travancore working among the *savarnas* to awaken their conscience. There was nothing in my writing to suggest that the act of the Maharaja was influenced by the activity of the Harijan Sevak Sangh.

For the rest the local workers know best what to do and how to act.

So far as my own influence is concerned I must plead guilty to the Deputy President's charge. Not only have I not succeeded in having temples opened in Ahmedabad but I have not succeeded in having temples opened even in Wardha after my having established myself there. And what is still more damaging to my reputation is that I have not succeeded in having the only two caste temples in Segaon opened to the Harijans of the little village. But this confession leaves me unrepentant. My failure is a stepping-stone to the success in which

[1] *Vide* "An Example for Hindu Princes and Their Advisers", 16-11-1936

I have full faith. But it will come in God's own time. "Mine is but to do and die".

Therefore the glory of the miracle of Travancore belongs undoubtedly to the Maharaja, his good mother, and his able Diwan. And herein is a lesson for us all who are interested in the root-and-branch removal of untouchability. Rightly or wrongly the tradition in Hinduism is that a Hindu Prince has the authority, as it is his duty, to propound *Smritis* known to the moderns as laws or rules consistent with the fundamentals of religion for the due fulfilment by the people of their moral obligations.

When years ago I had discussions with the Pandits of Vykom they had assured me that in spite of the *Smriti* they had produced in support of their contention, they would obey regulations to the contrary if they were promulgated by their ruler. This belief probably accounts for the happy phenomenon we are witnessing in Travancore where its population is whole-heartedly giving full effect to the Proclamation. If the other Hindu States will follow the example of Travancore they will also perhaps discover that their people will carry out the rules that may be issued. Anyway, the people of the respective States might well prepare public opinion in the direction. But they must not relax their effort for having temples opened by their repective trustees without waiting for Princely lead. For the reformers' argument is that no new *Smriti* is required for opening temples to Harijans or for removing untouchability. Only we may not leave out any honourable avenue open to us for fulfilling our purpose. And appealing to the Princes to take the lead is an honourable avenue and most likely to hasten success.

Harijan, 26-12-1936

252. CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY

The Church Missionary Society of England has published a pamphlet prepared by Prebendary W.W. Cash, in which

> The C.M.S. is appealing for an emergency fund of £ 25,000 to enable extra grants to be made during the next five years to those areas where this big movement is taking place, and the Society appeals to the whole Church to support it in this effort. Not for ourselves do we ask people to give, but for the sake of the hundreds of thousands who are dimly groping after Christ, and who are finding spiritual life and social uplift through the Gospel.

'The big movement' referred to is the movement for the conversion of Harijans. The money is wanted for work in the Telugu area and Travancore.

The appeal ends thus:

> The movement among the outcastes is spreading to the caste people, and within the last five years it is estimated that no less than 30,000 caste peple from fifty-one different castes have become Christians. This is a movement of such far-reaching consequences that we dare not refuse help. The thousands of today may become millions tomorrow. Will you help us to go forward in a great advance that the harvest may be reaped?

Its opening sentences run as follows:

> Recent news in the papers has attracted widespread attention to the untouchable of India. We have read of great conferences of outcaste people who have decided to break away from Hinduism. We have heard of mass movements towards Christianity and of baptisms of tens of thousands of converts in recent years. We have followed with growing interest the development of the young churches in these rural areas, particularly in the Dornakal and Travancore Dioceses. We are therefore compelled to examine more closely what is happening in India and to see how far we are reaping the harvest which has come.

It contains among others these three headlines:

> 1. What is happening among these people?
> 2. Who is Dr. Ambedkar?
> 3. What does India say to Dr. Ambedkar's advice?

I cull the following from what appears under the third headline:

> There is no doubt that there have been important repercussions all over India from the conference of untouchables. Mr. Gandhi had previously carried

on a campaign for the removal of untouchability, but he has signally failed because he clung to the Hindu system which has been the cause of the trouble.

In passing I may remark that I am utterly unconscious of "signal failure". I have not clung to "the Hindu system which has been the cause of the trouble". On the contrary I have rejected that which has been the cause of the trouble, namely, untouchability. And I have not abandoned the campaign as suggested in the quesiton.

Under the same headline occurs also this paragraph:

> In the C.M.S. area of the Dornakal Diocese there are no less than three hundred villages appealing for teachers; they represent forty thousand people definitely asking for baptism. The Bishop reckons that probably about a million people in his diocese are moving Christward.

Though I have travelled in the Telugu area often enough I have never heard of forty thousand Harijans or any figure near it asking for baptism.

Under the same headline occurs also this precious paragraph:

> In Travancore, the Ezhava community are definitely on trek. They are a superior type of the 'exterior' castes. Many of them are educated; some are landowners, others lawyers, doctors, officials and teachers; but they are excluded from the temples and suffer from the disabilities of the outcaste community. The leaders of one section of these people numbering over 850,000 have waited on the Bishop in Travancore, because they are anxious that their entire comm-unity should become Christians. This is by no means entirely due to Dr. Ambedkar, but is another incident in a situation which is growing in magnitude from day to day.

I dare not speak for the Ezhava leaders. The papers report them to have congratulated the Maharaja on his Proclamation. But that may not be inconsistent with their anxiety that their entire community should become Christians. Let them speak if they will on the contents of the quotation.

The exaggerations of Bishop Pickett, with which I had the misfortune of dealing last week,[1] are beaten perhaps by those contained in the appeal.

There is no other way to deal with the exaggerations of which the appeal is full than by living them down and by the truth working through the lives of the reformers. The appeal deals not with the past but with contemporary events. And if millions are waiting to bear

[1] *Vide* "What Is a Miracle?," 19-12-1936

witness to the message of Christ, as and in the form in which it comes through the agents of the C.M.S., my disbelief in the statements made in the appeal will melt like snow under the rays of the midday sun.

Harijan, 26-12-1936

253. AWARD IN LABOUR DISPUTE[1]

TILAKNAGAR,
December 26, 1936

I. The Ahmedabad Mill-owners' Association has referred to arbitration the following questions:

(a) The M. O.A.'s demand for a 20% cut in wages.

(b) Complaint against the New Maneckchowk Mill.

(c) Complaint against Motilal Hirabhai Mill.

(d) Complaint against Rajnagar Mills No. 1.

The reference is subject to two conditions, viz.,

1. The Arbitrators should give a simultaneous award on all the questions referred to them.

2. With reference to the mill which might have resigned from the M.O.A. whether the Arbitrators have any jurisdiction in respect of complaints against them before they enter upon merits.

II. Sheth Chamanlal Girdhardas Parekh was Permanent Arbitrator on behalf of the M.O.A. but he having resigned the M.O.A. has appointed Sheth Kasturbhai in his place only with reference to the questions referred to above. The absence of Sheth Chamanlal has been felt by all.

III. The Arbitrators had conversations with representatives of the M.O.A. and T.L.A. on 2nd, 3rd and 4th instant at Wardha and Segaon. At these meetings no evidence was taken or registered beyond consultations. But at my instance and for my edification certain particulars were supplied as embodied in Appendices 2, 6, 7, 8, and 9. With reference to the admission of these Appendices as part of the record to be submitted to the Umpire, it is likely that my brother Arbitrator will object to their admission. I had asked for the information embodied in these Appendices in Wardha and Segaon. There was no objection raised by my brother at the time. Appendix O

[1] Gandhiji wrote this in Gujarati and the English translation was arranged by Kasturbhai Lalbhai. *Vide* also "Letter to Kasturbhai Lalbhai", 3-1-1937

was asked for by us jointly and if that also is objected to, I do not mind its exclusion as it is unnecessary for my decision.

IV. The evidence that is submitted to the Umpire is embodied in the fourteen appendices attached hereto.

V. From the evidence submitted it appears that the T.L.A. has been obliged reluctantly to agree to the restricted reference (Appendix II). In my opinion, if all the points of dispute between the two parties had been referred to arbitration, the Arbitrators would have found it easier to give their Award because such questions are as a rule closely related to each other. Although therefore there seems to me to be validity in the T.L.A's protest, its letter dated November 30th (Appendix I) is a clear acceptance, however involuntary, of the restriction. Nevertheless the T.L.A. has a perfect right to have all these questions referred to arbitration.

ON WAGE CUT

VI. After having read the papers herewith and having given full consideration to them on the question of the M.O.A.'s demand for a wage cut, I have come to the conclusion that evidence submitted furnishes no cause for any cut.

VII. The last Arbitration Award was given on the 17th January 1935 (Appendix IV, sub-appendix 1).

VIII. In that Award the Arbitrator has thrown certain responsibilities on both the parties of which three are as follows:

(a) Earnest efforts should be made to standardize the wages of piece-workers as soon as possible after 1st January 1936.

(b) With a view to providing for a prompt settlement of all wages questions on either side in future the parties will meet and try to evolve a scheme for automatic adjustment of wages.

(c) The mills which are desirous of adopting rationalization will prepare before 30the June 1935 a register of workers who are working and who are likely to be unemployed in the departments to which such schemes will apply.

IX. From the evidence submitted to the Arbitrators it appears that the M.O.A. has not discharged its share of these responsibilities nor has it taken sufficient pains to do so. In my opinion it is possible, with sufficient endeavour, to standardize wages and although it is difficult to evolve a scheme whereby the question of increasing or decreasing wages can be automatically regulated, I do not consider it

to be impossible. It was the obvious duty of the M.O.A. to keep a registry of hands in connection with rationalazation. In all these three matters either party could have availed itself of the assistance of the Arbitrators but it does not apper to have occurred to them to do so.

X. It is necessary to bear this in mind that the Award of 1935 was originally a voluntary agreement between the parties. To give it the form of an Award was obviously in the natural course but in view of the fact that the Award was merely a stabilization of the voluntary agreement, it was doubly the duty of the parties to give effect to it and is so today.

XI. In my opinion, not until the M.O.A. has made a serious attempt to carry out the terms of the last settlement and the impossibility of its being carried out has been proved is it open for the M.O.A. to ask for a wage cut.

XII. However, the general understanding arrived at between the two parties has the same value as the Award in determining the question of wage cut. The fact that in spite of the admission of the necessity of having a sub-arbitrator appointed to adjudicate upon petty disputes arising from time to time the appointment has not been made is injurious to the harmonious relations between the parties and becomes a cause of mutual distrust and this in its turn harms the industry. It seems improper that the workmen's complaints may not be disposed of in time or not at all and that the question of wage cut can still be referred to arbitration.

XIII. That the permanent Arbitrators cannot investigate every complaint is self-evident. Those who seek justice have to come with clean hands. In my opinion the M.O.A. has not performed its duty in this matter and has no right to ask for a wage cut until this duty of appointing a sub-arbitrator is discharged.

XIV. Such being my opinion it is unnecessary for me to enter into the merits of the case for wage cut.

XV. But a study of the papers submitted by the parties has left on me the impression that the period that has elapsed since the last Award was given is too short to warrant a case for wage cut. Besides, the M.O.A.'s statement does not substantiate its claim.

XVI. At this stage I would like to restate the principles that for the good of both parties I have presented to them as a result of my close and unbroken contact with the industry for a period of 18 years in the capacity of Arbitrator.

(a) No cut should be made till the mills have ceased to make any profit and are obliged to fall back upon their capital for continuing the industry.

(b) There should be no cut till the wages have reached the level adequate for maintenance. It is impossible to conceive a time when the workmen have begun to regard the industry as if it were their own property and they would then be prepared to help it out of a crisis by taking the barest maintenance consisting of a dry crust and working day and night. That would be a voluntary arrangement. Such cases are irrelevant to the present consideration.

(c) There should be a common understanding as to what should be included in determining a living wage.

(d) The consideration of the deterioration in individual mills cannot form part of a case for a cut in wages of labour in general.

(e) It is vital to the well-being of the industry that workmen should be regarded as equals with the shareholders and that they have therefore every right to possess an accurate knowledge of the transactions of the mills.

(f) There should be a register of all available mill-hands acceptable to both the parties and the custom of taking labour through any agency other than the T.L.A. should be stopped.

XVII. I have not presented these principles in the belief that they will be acceptable either to the brother Arbitrator or to the mill-owners or even to the workmen. These have not guided my decision in the present case but I am convinced that without the acceptance of these principles the industry, i.e., the owners and the workmen, are in danger.

XVIII. Before concluding the discussion on the wage cut it seems to be necessary for me to allude to a thing that has come under my observation in the course of the proceedings. The control of the M.O.A. over individual mills appears to have slackened. When the M.O.A'.s decisions appear repugnant to individual mill-owners, they are tempted to secede. This is undoubtedly a regrettable state of things and requires to be mended. But it cannot be cited in support of a case for wage cut. The burden of maintaining such mills cannot be laid on the shoulders of labour. The deterioration of individual mills has been found to be due to the shortcomings of managers, out-of-date machinery or such other internal defects.

NEW MANECKCHOWK MILL

XIX. The reduction of wages by this mill is not denied but no mill has any right to initiate a reduction of its own will. M.O.A. says

that this mill has retired from the Association and the Arbitration has, therefore, no jurisdiction to entertain the case. One notice of reduction was issued on 8th August last and the other on the 2nd October last. Meanwhile the mill seceded from the Association on the 20th August last. The M.O.A's statement that the reduction was made on September 30th is evidently a slip of the pen. Whether it is or not, the fact of the resignation does not debar the T.L.A. from bringing the case before Arbitration. If, whenever a mill so acts as to have its action impeached by the Arbitrators and therefore resigns with a view to escaping discipline, the system of arbitration becomes meaningless. How the M.O.A. can enforce discipline against a seceder is another question. Such a question, when it arises, can be dealt with by resort to arbitration if it becomes necessary. In my opinion the mill in question should restore the reduced amount and withdraw the notice. If the defaulting mill does not carry out this decision the M.O.A. should co-operate with the T.L.A. in adopting all legitimate measures against the defaulter.

MOTILAL HIRABHAI MILL

XX. I can give no definite opinion on the papers submitted. If the owners of this mill do not furnish the required information the M.O.A. should procure it without delay and if it is not procured the T.L.A. is at liberty to come before the Arbitrators. Although the M.O.A. and the mill do not appear to have given the necessary help to the T.L.A., the latter erred in assisting the workmen in resorting to the strike if such assistance was in fact given. However provoking the circumstances might be, workmen cannot cease work without due notice nor can owners impose reduction of their own motion. This is inherent in the acceptance of the principle of arbitration.

THE DECISION

Thus on the points submitted to arbitration my decision is as follows:

1. The case for wage cut is dismissed for the reason that the M.O.A. has failed to prove it.

2. The alleged resignation by the New Maneckchowk Mill does not put it outside the jurisdiction of the Arbitration Board. The mill should restore the reduced wages and withdraw the cut notice. If the owners do not carry out this decision, the M.O.A. should co-operate with the T.L.A., in taking all legitimate steps to enforce discipline and should seek the assistance of the Arbitration Board, if necessary.

3. I am unable to give a definite decision about the complaint against Motilal Hirabhai Mill

History of Wage Adjustments in the Ahmedabad Industry, Vol. IV, pp. 33-40

254.LETTER TO KASTURBHAI LALBHAI

December 26, 1936

BHAI KASTURBHAI,

I am enclosing herewith my Award[1] with two extra copies, one for the Labour Association and the other for the Mill-owners' Association.

Please go through the additions and alterations made therein. There is a reference to sub-appendices in the Appendix. As desired by you I have droped sub-appendices and have made a note to that effect in the Appendix. Please see.

After writing to you yesterday, I thought about the question at night and while writing this it has occured to me that greater justice would be done by not recommending payment of arrears of the wages and therefore I am revising the decision. I have only made a recommendation concerning the wages, which you will see. You will also find therein my reasons for not paying the arrears. It is in conformity with my nature. If you had not drawn my attention to it, I would not perhaps have noticed the error in my approach. However, you drove me to hard thinking. I very much wanted to accept your suggestion. You demonstrated your friendship by drawing my attention to my error. Should I thank you for that? Truth will cease to exist in this world if friends do not fulfill their duty of cautioning one another.

I hope you have received the telegram I have sent to you. It is good if you are able to act accordingly. It hurts me that hundreds of workers are unemployed. It also pains me that we are not allowed to hear their case. Therefore please do not a waste a single minute. I do not have a copy of the letter to the Umpire. Has he been given fifteen days' time limit? Whatever it may be, please request the Umpire on behalf of us both that he should give the decision as early as possible even within that time limit.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4200

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

255. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

December 26, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Your two letters before me. You have to live down the hottest tempers if you are to express ahimsa in your life. It makes no difference whether the temper is directed towards you personally or towards your wards or dear friends. They, Balwantisinha and Munnalal, would not have been with me if they were perfect men or very nearly so.

May reach there 30th inst.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6370. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9836.

256. MESSAGE TO STUDENTS[1]

FAIZPUR,
[*December 26, 1936*][2]

What new message can I give you at the age of 68? And where is the use of my giving you a message if you pass a resolution there of assassinating me or burning my effigy? Assassinating the body of course does not matter, for out of my ashes a thousand Gandhis will arise. But what if you assassinate or burn the principles I have lived for?

Harijan, 16-1-1937

257. HINDU CODE OF CONDUCT

I have preserved the following letter[3] for the past seven months.

I have been keeping the letter suppressed in the belief that it would be better if I got some learned scholar to reply to it instead of doing so myself. Shri Anandshankarbhai has at my request taken the

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The message was in response to a request from the secretary of a students' conference.

[2] Mahadev Desai says the message was given the day before Gandhiji made his "great speech on the cult of the Charkha", which was on December 27.

[3] Not translated here. The correspondent had written to say that it was better to teach Harijans how to observe Hindu religion in day-to-day life than to give them lectures on culture

work in hand now. However, the book which will result will not solve the above question in the manner desired by the correspondent. It is my hope that he will glean the required information from the book. I am putting forward something of that sort here; because I have spent years working amongst Harijans. My experience, therefore, may be useful to other workers like the correspondent.

I do not talk to Harijans about the basic tenets of Hinduism. If they had separate temples I would certainly visit them. I would jest with the priest there. Ordinarily, the poor man is very ignorant. This does not mean that a caste Hindu priest knows more. But why should the latter listen to me? A Harijan priest would regard me as a great man and lend me an ear at least. It is a different thing if he lets my words go out through the other ear. I would say the following to a band of Harijans: So far, we have spurned you; we did not even look at you, we did not share your joys and sorrows. Let me now tell you what our religion expects of us.

1. If we are not in the habit of waking up before dawn, we should form it.

2. There are many persons who start smoking immediately on waking up, others, little better, make the whole house aware of their having woken up by talking profanities. Instead of doing this, one should take the name of God before leaving the bed and thank Him for the night having passed safely.

3. On leaving the bed we should immediately awaken our children and then, sitting in a place which is not frequented by people, we should clean our teeth with *babul* or some other twig. We should use either salt or powdered charcoal which we must keep ready at home to clean our teeth and with the halves of the twig we should scrape the tongue and rinse the mouth well.

We should sprinkle water over our eyes and remove mucus if there is any. Having done that we must wash our face, nose, ears, etc., carefully and wipe these with a clean cloth.

4. If one has to evacuate one's bowels and that particular village has no latrine, or if there is one, but one does not like to use it, this function should be performed in a remote place which people do not frequent. The excreta should be properly covered with earth and the organs concerned should be properly cleansed with water. As both the excretory organs throw out waste, these should be properly cleansed and the waste material eliminated. Thereafter the hands should be

washed with water and earth, and the water-pot should also be cleaned well.

5. While performing this daily routine one should either hum *Ramdhun* or some devotional song. If one does not know any of these, one should merely keep repeating the name of Rama.

6. It would be daylight by the time one returns home. Other members of the family will also have performed their natural functions as mentioned above. All should then get together and sing *bhajans or kirtans* for five minutes to half an hour. So long as one does not know any such thing, one can at least repeat the name of Rama.

7. Thereafter, everyone should set out for work after taking breakfast. Children who do not work should go to school.

8. Before taking the midday meal, everyone should bathe with clean water and scrub the entire body. Dhoti, sari and such other garments should be washed. The poor who do not have the facility of daily change should wear a loin-cloth while bathing. The body should be rubbed and wiped after a bath.

9. In this manner, when night falls while performing one's daily tasks, God's name should be uttered after the evening meal and before going to bed and He should be thanked that the day passed without any mishaps.

10. The hands should be washed after every meal and after performing any task which soils the hands. After a meal, one should gargle and rinse one's mouth.

11. We should realize that God knows our every thought, sees everything we do. Hence no one can deceive Him. How then can we deceive out brothers and sisters who are His creatures? It may well be that these persons are unaware of our deception. If they come to know of the latter, how can we cheat them at all?

12. Hence we should sincerely serve those under whom we work and not deceive them.

13. And, if we do not deceive anyone, how can we commit any theft? Even cheating while weighing goods amounts to theft.

14. We certainly would not like anyone to abuse us or beat us or misbehave with our mother or sisters. Hence we should not abuse anyone, not even our wives and children.

15. Nor should we beat anyone. This includes our wives and children. These persons have to be separately mentioned because many men regard their wives and children as their property. But it is a

grave error. In our religion the wife has been regarded the equal of the husband. Hence, she is known as the other half, co-partner in religion, a goddess. Children are not our property. Parents are the protectors of children. Hence, even with them, we should be gentle, tolerant and patient.

16. Just as we should have goodwill towards our wives and children, similarly we should treat our elders and our parents with respect.

17. And, as shown in 14 above, it is obvious that a man should treat another man's wife as his sister or mother and, similarly, a woman should regard another man as her father or brother.

18. Just as all men are creatures of God, so also animals are His creatures; hence they are also a part of the family. We should therefore be good towards them too. We cannot misuse even mud or stones. Our religion teaches us even such prayer: "Oh! Mother Earth, we walk upon you every day. We depend upon your support. Forgive us for touching you with our feet." Having said this, we put a pinch of dust upon our heads.

19. And hence we should be kind towards our animals; we should feed them properly; we should certainly not overload them with burdens, we should keep them in clean places; and refrain from beating them.

20. Similarly, we should pluck leaves and cut trees only as much as we must. We should use discretion while doing so. We should not destroy wantonly.

21. So far as possible, we should avoid eating meat. Beef should be totally shunned. Cow-protection occupies a very prominent place in our religion.

22. In accordance with clause 19, all living creatures are our brothers and sisters. Hence, our *rishis* and *munis* taught us that we should regard the cow as our mother and should develop friendly relations towards all living beings including non-human creatures. It is in the fitness of things to regard the cow as our mother as she, like the mother, gives us milk. One who gets milk does not require fish or meat. Moreover, the cow provides us with bullocks and even after death gives us leather, manure, fat for carts, etc., and such other things. Hence, we should never kill a cow.

23. And if we may not kill a cow, how can we eat her flesh after her death? No sensible people in the world eat carrion.

24. By becoming an addict, a man renders himself virtually insane; sometimes, he completely loses his senses. Hence liquor, toddy, bhang, *ganja*, opium and tobacco should be eschewed.

25. Gambling involves deception and the money obtained through it is tainted. Hence we should not gamble.

26. Others are as fond of their religion as we are of ours. Hence we should respect all religions eqully. And, therefore we should bear no ill will or have disputes with Muslims, Christians and followers of other faiths.

27. If religion teaches us that all are children of God, there can be no high or low among them and there should not be even the faintest trace of untouchability.

28. Finally, our religion also tells us that anyone who does not earn his living with the sweat of his brow, eats stolen food. Hence, everyone should earn his bread by engaging himself in such manual tasks as farming, or making cloth, etc., and it is for this very reason that each person should produce foodgrains, khadi and such other articles of food and clothing in his own village.

These things which I have often said on different occasions have been put down in written form here. Other clauses may be added to these when the occasion arises bearing in mind the universal elements like truth and non-violence, which are involved in them.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 27-12-1936

258. DUTY TOWARDS CHRISTIAN HARIJANS

A worker in the cause of Harijans has asked me what should be the duty of the Harijan Sevak Sangh towards Christian Harijans. His letter contains many subsidiary questions which need not be reproduced here. This article is intended to answer those very questions.

Ordinarily it may be said that the special duty which the Sangh has taken upon itself and attempts to fulfil towards Hindu Harijans, does not hold good in case of those who have become Christians. However, the goodwill that one human being should have towards another should also be shown towards Christian Harijans. This rule applies to people of all faiths. We cannot be displeased with a Harijan because he calls himself a Christian. However, if he is in receipt of a

scholarship or any such special assistance from the Sangh, that should be discontinued. But if, despite having become a Christian, he is in a Harijan school and wishes to continue in it, he cannot be turned out. Perhaps he may be asked to pay his fees. He cannot be given the usual free clothes, etc., as the Sangh's funds are meant for Hindu Harijans only. Hindus, other than Harijans, can be admitted to Harijan schools, but they cannot join them withour paying fees. The same rule should apply to those who have become Christians.

Christian Harijans should not be offered temptations to embrace Hinduism again. However, if a person wishes to return to his own faith we should not prevent him from doing so.

But if Christian Harijans ask for facilities such as the use of wells or medical help during illness, it is our common dharma to render such service. However, even in these instances assistance cannot be given from Harijan funds. But facilities should be provided for these persons to draw water from wells which are used by Hindu Harijans. Sangh workers should provide Christian Harijans also the services of a doctor or worker who renders free service to Hindu Harijans. It is their dharma to do so.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 27-12-1936

259. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

TILAKNAGAR,
December 27, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I got your letter. I have to go to Travancore on the 10th. Kanti arrived the day before yesterday. I had a three minutes' talk with him last night. You must reach Segaon on the 3rd.

I am in a great hurry.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 370

260. SPEECH AT EXHIBITION GROUND, FAIZPUR

December 27, 1936

This speech was scheduled for 8.30. I am sorry that it is being delivered so late at 9.15. But there was no alternative. People have turned up here in such large numbers and as our exhibition has only screens of unseasoned bamboo for walls, if everyone makes a rush for it they would collapse. Hence, arrangements had to be made to protect things and the organizers took some time in doing this. They were not prepared for such an onrush. You will feel that there has been a trick in putting my speech on the programme. This was deliberate. If for no other reason, people would come to hear me and give two annas for the exhibition. While doing so if they by accident or mistake purchase some khadi and have a glimpse of rural art, they will earn some merit without any particular effort and so will I.

You must have seen that the whole of Tilaknagar is like an exhibition. The credit for this goes to Shri Nandalal Bose. It was he who decided that the plan for both the exhibition and the Congress should be the same. Only a paltry sum has been spent in doing so. I do not know of any Congress session which has been organized at such a low cost. Of course, in my opinion, some expenses have been unnecessarily incurred, but, then, is this not the first Congress to be held in a village? A fair amount had to be spent in obtaining land. But we have done something which will encourage us to hold the future sessions of the Congress in villages. You can see the crowd is increasing. There are many volunteers, but they seem to get lost in the crowd. There are so many persons who have to be fed that it has become difficult to make arrangements for them.[1]

I am going to say nothing new today. The cult of the spinning-wheel is 18 years old. I said in 1918 that we could win swaraj through the spinning-wheel. My faith in the ability of the spinning-wheel is as bright today as when I first declared it in 1918. It has become richer for the experience and experiment of all these years.

[1] This is taken from the Gujarati version published in *Harijanbandhu.* What follows is reproduced from Mahadev Desai's report in *Harijan,* "A Restatement of Faith". The report was revised by Gandhiji.

But you should know the implications of the wheel or khadi, its product. It is not enough that one wears khadi on ceremonial occasions or even wears it to the exclusion of all other cloth if he surrounds himself with *videshi* in everything else. Khadi means the truest swadeshi spirit, identification with the starving millions.

Let there be no mistake about my conception of swaraj. It is complete independence of alien control and complete economic independence. So at one end you have political independence, at the other the economic. It has two other ends. One of them is moral and social, the corresponding end is dharma, i.e., religion in the highest sense of the term. It includes Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, etc., but is superior to them all. You may recognize it by the name of Truth, not the honesty of expedience but the living Truth that pervades everything and will survive all destruction and all transformation. Moral and social uplift may be recognized by the term we are used the term we are used to, i.e., non-violence. Let us call this the square of swaraj, which will be out of shape if any of its angles is untrue. In the language of the Congress we cannot achieve this political and economic freedom without truth and non-violence, in concrete terms without a living faith in God and hence moral and social elevation.

By political independence I do not mean an imitation of the British House of Commons, or the Soviet rule of Russia or the Fascist rule of Italy or the Nazi rule of Germony. They have systems suited to their genius. We must have ours suited to ours. What that can be is more than I can tell. I have described it as *Ramarajya* i.e., sovereignty of the people based on pure moral authority. The Congress constitutions of Nagpur and Bombay for which I am mainly responsible are an attempt to achieve this type of swaraj.

Then take economic independence. It is not a product of industrialization of the modern or the Western type. Indian economic independence means to me the economic uplift of every individual, male and female, by his or her own conscious effort. Under that system all men and women will have enough clothing—not the mere loin-cloth, but what we understand by the term necessary articles of clothing and enough food including milk and butter which are today denied to millions.

This brings me to socialism. Real socialism has been handed down to us by our ancestors who taught: "All land belongs to Gopal, where then is the boundary line? Man is the maker of the line and he can therefore unmake it."[1] Gopal literally means shephred; it also

[1] सबै भूमि गोपाल की वामें अटक कहां?
जाके मनमें अचक है, सोई अटक रहा ।

means God. In modern language it means the State, i.e., the people. That the land today does not belong to the people is too true. But the fault is not in the teaching. It is in us who have not lived up to it.

I have no doubt that we can make as good an approach to it as is possible for any nation, not excluding Russia, and that without violence. The most effective substitute for violent dispossession is the wheel with all its implications. Land and all property is his who will work it. Unfortunately the workers are or have been kept ignorant of this simple fact.

Let us now see how India came to be utterly impoverished. History tells us that the East India Company ruined the cotton manufacture and by all kinds of means made her dependent upon upon Lancashire for her cloth, the next great necessity of man. It is still the largest item of import. It thus created a huge army of partially unemployed men and women counted in millions and gave them no other employment in return. With the destruction of hand-ginning, carding, spinning and weaving to a certain extent, perished the other industries of India's villages. Continuous unemployment has induced in the people a kind of laziness which is most depressing. Thus whilst the alien rule is undoubtedly responsible for the growing pauperism of the people, we are more responsible for it. If the middle-class people, who betrayed their trust and bartered away the economic independence of India for a mess of pottage, would now realize their error and take the message of the wheel to the villagers and induce them to shed their laziness and work at the wheel, we can ameliorate the condition of the people to a great extent. It would be a terrible thing if laziness replaces industry and despair triumphs over hope.

The parliamentary programme is in the air. It has come to stay and rightly. But it cannot bring us independence. Its function is strictly limited though quite necessary. Its success will prevent the Government from claiming that Ordinance rule or any measure restricting our progress to the goal was sanctioned by popular representatives. Hence the necessity for voters voting for the Congress candidates who dare not vote for unpopular measures without being liable to Congress discipline. The success of that programme may also bring some relief in individual cases such as the release of Shri Subhas Bose or the detenus. But that is not independence, political or economic.

Then look at it in another way. Only a limited number of men and women can become members of legislatures, say 1,500. How many from this audience can become legislators? And just now no

more than $3^1/_2$ crores can vote for these 1,500 members. What about the remaining $31^1/_2$ crores? In our conception of swaraj they are the real masters and the $3^1/_2$ crores are the former's servants who in their turn are masters of the 1,500. Thus the latter are doubly servants, if they will be true to their trust.

But the $31^1/_2$ crores have also a trust to discharge towards themselves and the nation of which they as individuals are but tiny parts. And if they remain lazy, know nothing of swaraj and how to win it, they will themselves become slaves of the 1,500 legislators. For my argument the $3^1/_2$ crores of voters here belong to the same category as the $31^1/_2$ crores. For if they do not become industrious and wise, they will be so many pawns in the hands of 1,500 players, it is of little consequence whether they are Congressmen or otherwise. If the voters wake up only to register their votes every three years or more and then go off to sleep, their servants will become their masters.

The only way I know to prevent such a catastrophe is for the 35 crores to be industrious and wise. This they can only be if they will take up the spinning-wheel and the other village industries. They will not take to them unintelligently. I can tell you from experience that the effort means adult education of the correct type and requires possession of patience, moral fibre and a scientific and practical knowledge of the industry the worker seeks to introduce in the village of his choice.

In such a scheme the spinning-wheel becomes its centre. If you call it the solar system, the wheel becomes the golden disc and the industries the planets revolving round it in obedience to the inviolable law of the systems. When the sun lost its illuminating power by the action of the East India Company, the planets lost their power and became invisible or almost so. The sun is being reinstated in his past status now and the planets are regaining their motion in exact proportion to the strength of the sun.

Now perhaps you will understand the meaning and the message of the charkha. I said in 1920 that if the Congress truly and successfully worked the programme laid down in 1920 including the fourfold constructive programme of khadi, communal unity, prohibition of intoxicants and removal by Hindus of untouchability, the attainment of swaraj within a year was a certainty. I am neither sorry for nor ashamed of having made that declaration. I would like to repeat that declaration before you today. Whenever the fourfold programme is achieved in its fulness, you can have swaraj for the

asking. For you will then have attained the power to take it. Just think for a moment where the charkha stands today in your faith or action. Is the mutual secret assasination of Bombay a sign of communal unity? Where is total prohibition? Have the Hindus rid themselves of untouchability root and branch? One swallow does not make a summer. Travancore's great Proclamation may be the beginning of the end, but it is not the end. If we remove the untouchability of Harijans, but treat Mussalmans or others as such, we have not removed the blot. "All land belongs to God" has a deeper meaning. Like the earth we, of it, also belong to God, and hence we must all feel like one and not erect boundary walls and issue prohibition decrees against one another.

This is the non-violent way in action. If we could fulfil this programme, there would be no need to offer civil disobedience, there would certainly be no need to do violence. Thirty five crores of people conscious of their numerical strength as one man would be ashamed of doing violence to 70, 000 white men in India, no matter how capable they are of dealing destruction and administering poison gas to millions in a moment. The charkha understood intelligently can spin not only economic salvation but can also revolutionize our minds and hearts and demonstrate to us that the non-violent aproach to swaraj is the safest and the easiest. Though the progress may seem slow, it will prove quickest in the long run.

Believe me if Jawaharlal is not in jail today, it is not because he is afraid of it. He is quite capable of walking into prison doors as of mounting the gallows with a smile on his lips. I do not think I have lost the power or faith in the efficacy of such suffering. But there is no issue for it today as far as I can see. But what I feel is that all that suffering can be avoided if by united faith and will we achieve the constructive programme. If we can, I promise that we won't need to struggle with or against the British nation, but Lord Linlithgow will come to us and own that he was mistaken in his disbelief of our non-violence and truth and will undertake on behalf of his nation to abide by our decisions. Whether he does or not, I am working towards that and no other. "All belong to God".

Harijanbandhu, 3-1-1937, and *Harijan,* 2-1-1937

261. SPEECH AT CONGRESS SESSION

December 27, 1936

Mahatma Gandhi said that he expected that they would be tired by this time. He himself had nothing much to say. What he had to say he had already said in the morning at the exhibition. He did not want to repeat it. He was happy to see such a big assembly there, because the responsibility of bringing the Congress to a village was his. When the Reception Committee authorities came to him he told them certain things. He told them to throw the responsibility on God and start work. There had been several criticisms against the step taken in holding the Congress in a village.

Several newspapers had criticized it and had dwelt upon the shortcomings. The Reception Committee did not have sufficient money. Nevertheless they all saw that the Congress here was the same as before. In fact the village Congress had turned out to be a bigger one than previous Congresses. He had told the Reception Committee to be prepared for the needs of one lakh of people. During the flag salutation this morning alone, according to the estimate of some, two lakhs of people were present. Allowing for differences of estimate, he was sure there must have been at least one lakh of people. Such a large influx of people had made the Reception authorities fear whether they would be able to meet their needs.

Proceeding, Gandhiji paid a compliment to the 'Bhangis' and said that there were people among those who came to Faizpur who did what they should not do in the interests of sanitation. They no doubt had a hospital, but it was not big enough for a large number of people to be treated at once. He had in fact suggested that the Reception Committee should now ask people to begin to leave. He felt, however, that they should hereafter continue to hold the Congress in a village. They should take a vow there and then not to hold the Congress in towns in future. The drawbacks that they saw there could easily be obviated. There was no doubt in his mind that it would be very easy to hold the Congress in a village. By doing so the amount they spent could be considerably economized. But according to him even that amount was big enough.

He had wanted the Faizpur session to be completed within Rs. 5,000 but that was found to be not possible. They did not get sufficient support and they had to pay a big rent for ground. His idea was that no rent should be paid for the ground on which the Congress was held. The Reception Committee were also compelled to hold the Congress in Khandesh because they could not have got the same number of volunteers elsewhere. However, in spite of the impediments, the Reception Committee had carried on their work and though there was rain, they did not lose heart. If they really wanted to go into the villages and take the message of the Congress to the villagers they should take a vow to hold all future Congresses in villages.

Mahatma Gandhi said that villagers also would have to understand what the people who wanted to get swaraj wanted them to do. The President and the Socialists were saying: "You merely sleep after paying four annas. Mere payment of four annas does not show that you are real Congressmen."

Preparations for the Congress are not over in a day but they take a number of months. They have to go round and get things ready. This sort of connection that has been established should be continued all the year through. If you want this you must take a vow that you will hold future Congresses in villages.

The decision of the Constituent Assembly can be taken only when you have swaraj at your door. You can call a Constituent Assembly when you have got full strength. It cannot meet in Delhi but in the remotest village. Swaraj can be got only by increasing our strength on all sides. If we increase that strength, we can see swaraj coming soon. What I asked you to do in 1920 still remains unaccomplished—charkha, prohibition and removal of untouchability. If you leave these things unaccomplished, hear an old man saying: You will have lost swaraj.

The Bombay Chronicle, 28-12-1936

262. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

December 28, 1936

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

If you finish today, as I hope you will, you will perhaps let me go away tomorrow after midday.

If you have appreciated my suggestion about holding the Congress in villages hereafter, I would like you to ask the Congress to revert to the old rule of holding it in between February and March. The sufferings of the thousands in wintry weather should be avoided if possible. Parliamentarians should fit in with this arrangement. There is no reason why, if the Congress secures a majority in the legislatures, they should not have vacation as they have during Xmas, Easter, etc. I have told Sarup[1] that land somewhere must be secured soon and then house-to-house collections started for Kamala memorial.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, p. 214.

[1] Vijayalakshmi Pandit

263. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

TILAKNAGAR,
December 28, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

After I wrote to you and before commencing silence, I had a little further talk with Kanti. His health cannot be said to be bad. You pray for him. But forget about seeing him. Whatever he had to get from you he has got.

You can come to Segaon on the 1st instead of the 3rd. Intimate the date to Mahadev so that the carriage may take you straight to Segaon from the station. If you want, you may stop at Maganwadi to see Kumarappa. You cannot go to Travancore with me. We shall think about the future at Segaon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 371

264. MESSAGE TO RASHTRA BHASHA SAMMELAN, FAIZPUR

December 28, 1936[1]

I am sorry that it being my day of silence I may not speak today. I have no doubt in my mind that we must have a common language for intercommunication throughout India. And I have also no doubt that that language can only be Hindi, i.e., Hindustani. It is the language that is understood by the Hindus and Muslims alike in northern India. English can never take its place.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10995

[1] The date is from *The Bombay Chronicle*, 30-12-1936, which also published the message.

265. TALK TO CONGRESS WORKERS[1]

[*December 29, 1936*][2]

I know the ordeals through which you have had to pass. Whether I congratulate you or not is going to make not the slightest difference. You all worked not for praise or reward but for the love of it, and such people do not need any congratulation. And how dare I congratulate those who are my peers in the service of the country? But I would ask of you one thing. I would ask every one of you to make a note of your experiences, especially the difficulties you had to contend against, and pass it on to Sardar Vallabhbhai and me. You must give me a detailed account of the way in which you gathered your material, the expenses, and your own failures and successes. They should prove very useful for future guidance. Sjt. Nandalal Bose ought to teach us a little of his art. You are all pioneers in this great experiment and your genius for organization has made it a success. This is a distinct step towards the attainment of swaraj by non-violent means, and it is a great thing that Maharashtra has led the way.

Harijan, 9-1-1937

266. TALK TO CONGRESS VOLUNTEERS

[*December 29, 1936*]

You are all mute servants, and you have earned the praise of everyone who has come here. I have been told that you were always quick to carry out orders, never to issue them, that you did not hesitate to do what are supposed to be meanest jobs. But that is the great merit of Maharashtra which has a very great number of selfless workers who have kept before themselves not the ideal to lead but to serve. If Tilak Maharaj taught us that swaraj is our birth-right, he also taught us that selfless service is the key to win it. Selfless service may have been in existence before Tilak Maharaj came, but he it was who systematized it. He began public life by pledging himself to work on a mere pittance, and ever since Maharashtra has had a galaxy of workers who have been content to work on a pittance. They do not need Rs. 75 or

[1] This and the two items that follow have been extracted from Mahadev Desai's account "The Week at Faizpur-II".

[2] Gandhiji left Faizpur on this date.

100 a month like, for instance, workers in Gujarat, but Rs. 15 a month suffices for them. In some cases contact with Gujarat has spoilt them, but in the majority of cases they are still unspoilt. The credit for the noble way in which you volunteers have acquitted yourselves, therefore, belongs to the well-known workers who have set a great example. They are the pride and the honour of Maharashtra. May you all follow in their footsteps.

Harijan, 9-1-1937

267. TALK TO CONGRESS VOLUNTEERS[1]

[*December 29,1936*]

Why should I congratulate you? You should thank me that I gave you this opportunity to atone for our sins. And congratulations too you will deserve when you fulfil the whole task. It is a noble profession, and one which our graduates and educated men might well turn to in order to earn their living. We have to reduce the thing to a science and to prepare treatises on sanitation. The ordinary Bhangi cannot do this. It is only educated Bhangis who can do this, and only those who will dedicate themselves to this work. That will also mean the end of untouchability which is as bad amongst the untouchables themselves as between them and the so-called touchables. Do not forget what you have learnt here. I would ask you to make it your duty wherever you are and wherever you go to be ministers of cleanliness. You did creditable work, but you might have done better. What about the villages in our vicinity like Faizpur, Khiroda and Savda? They are as filthy as ever. The Congress in future will have to be a permanently civilizing influence so far at least as sanitation is concerned, in the whole of the area where it is held. 'Bhangi' will then not be a name to be disliked or tolerated, but to be coveted. For 'Bhangi' will no more mean the doer of a dirty job, but a purifier and a disinfector, a preventor of disease and epidemics.

Harijan, 9-1-1937

[1] These were the voluntary Bhangis who had taken charge of the sanitation and scavenging department.

268. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 30, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

Send the enclosed telegram to Ramachandran. Give all the details to Raja.

Send me fruit if you have received any. Write to Anna that for the time being the visit to Travancore has been cancelled, so he should continue to send here the fruit received from Ambujam.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11514

269. LETTER TO GIJUBHAI BADHEKA

December 31, 1936

BHAI GIJUBHAI,

I have your letter. It will not be published. You write "I do not like parents to impose their wishes on the children and I would not prevent the children from behaving in the way they like". Will you call . . . [1] children? Will the parents give their own . . .[2] to children? If the children want to eat like gluttons or eat the things which are not worth eating or feel like jumping into the well or . . .[3] with the guests and want or actually ask for . . .[4]? Would you not disapprove of such activities? Ramdas still has such desires and I prevent him from satisfying them.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

270. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

[*1936*][5]

BHAI RAJENDRA BABU,

I had a little discussion with Khan Saheb last night. The result is

[1] Omissions as in the source
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*
[4] *ibid*
[5] As placed in the source

the enclosed resolution[1]. Read it. If you like it, tell Khan Saheb. I had told him that I would draft and send something. If any changes are thought necessary they should be made.

I have instructed Khan Saheb that he should not make public speeches. Please instruct Jawaharlal too accordingly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Rajendra Prasad Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

271. LETTER TO KASTURBHAI LALBHAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 1, 1937

BHAISHRI KASTURBHAI,

I have your letter and a copy of your Award. Gulzarilal writes that Motilal Hirabhai Mill has come to an agreement with the Labour Association. Shouldn't we, therefore, withdraw its case from the Umpire? Please do so. If you send me the English translation of my Award, I will go through it. Meanwhile, if I get time, I myself will do the translation and send it. We will send whichever is ready earlier. If possible I will send it today, for while I am writing this it occurs to me that the translation should be sent to him without delay.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4201

272. DISCUSSION WITH KRZENSKI[2]

[*January 2, 1937*][3]

GANDHIJI: Do you therefore say that other religions are untrue?[4]

KRZENSKI: If others are convinced that their religions are true they are saved.

[1] Not available
[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". Krzenski was a Polish professor of philosophy.
[3] From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary
[4] Krzenski had said that according to him Catholicism was the only true religion.

G. Therefore you will say that everyone would be saved even through untruth.

For you say that if a man really and sincerely believes in what is as a matter of fact untruth, he is saved. Would you not also hold, therefore, that your own way may be untrue but that you are convinced that it is true and therefore you will be saved?

K. But I have studied all religions and have found that mine is the only true religion.

G. But so have others studied other religions. What about them? Well, I go further and tell you that religion is one and it has several branches which are all equal.

K. I accept that no religion lacks divine inspiration but all have not the same truth, because all have not the same light.

G. It is an essentially untrue position to take, for a seeker after truth, that he alone is in absolute possession of truth. What is happening to the poor astronomers today? They are changing their position every day, and there are scientists who impeach even Einstein's latest theory.

K. No. But I have examined the arguments in favour of other religions.

G. But it is an intellectual examination. You require different scales to weigh spiritual truths. Either we are all untrue—quite a logical position to take—but since truth does not come out of untruth it is better to say that we all have truth but not the complete truth. For God reveals His truth to instruments that are imperfect. Raindrops of purest distilled water become diluted or polluted as soon as they come in contact with mother earth. My submission is that your position is arrogant. But I suggest to you a better position. Accept all religions as equal, for all have the same root and the same laws of growth.

K. It is necessary to examine every religion philosophically and find out which is more harmonious, more perfect.

G. That presupposes that all religions are in watertight compartments. That is wrong. They are always growing. Let us not limit God's function. He may reveal Himself in a thousand ways and a thousand times.

Now the professor switched on to the next question, viz., that of fighting materialism.

G. It is no use trying to fight these forces without giving up the idea of conversion, which I assure you is the deadliest poison that ever sapped the fountain of truth.

K. But I have a great respect for your religion.

G. Not enough. I had that feeling myself one day, but I found that it was not enough. Unless I accept the position that all religions are equal, and I have as much regard for other religions as I have for my own, I would not be able to live in the boiling war around me. Any make-believe combination of spiritual forces is doomed to failure if this fundamental position is not accepted. I read and get all my inspiration from the *Gita*. But I also read the Bible and the Koran to enrich my own religion. I incorporate all that is good in other religions.

K. That is your goodwill.

G. That is not enough.

K. But I have great respect for you.

G. Not enough. If I were to join the Catholic Church you would have greater respect for me.

K. Oh yes, if you became a Catholic you would be as great as St. Francis.

G. But not otherwise? A Hindu cannot be a St. Francis? Poor Hindu!

K. But may I take your photograph?

G. No, surely you don't care for materialism! And it is all materialism, isn't it?

Harijan, 16-1-1937

273. LETTER TO LIONEL FIELDEN[1]

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 3, 1937

DEAR FIELDEN,

I welcome the confidence you have given me. My sympathies are with you in your troubles. But you have to take them philosophically if you must stick to the post[2] even though it be to the good of the country. Any attack on your personal character is a vile thing. But every society has its share of blackmailers. These you should laugh at. Then there are the critics. You must not expect informed criticism. Very few write for the public good; most write for money. Then there is the third class who don't come to you as you would have them do. They don't in spite of themselves. Those who know you would like to avail themselves of the facilities you may give them, but they know that the harm done by such co-operation will be greater than the good intended. Take Rajkumari herself. Even she could go only a certain distance and no further. You must not grieve over this but take it as inevitable in the circumstances surrounding us.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Incidents of Gandhi's Life, p. 51

274. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

January 3, 1937

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I wish I could have gone with you to Ajanta.

Before I received your letter, I had spoken strongly to Khan Saheb and urged him to send Mehrtaj to Vakil's school. But he was adamant. He does not want her to go to a mixed school. I spoke to Mehrtaj too. She is undoubtedly restless. But Khan Saheb is sanguine and believes that Mehrtaj will recover her usual cheerfulness.

[1] Extracted from the addressee's article "You Must Not Grieve". The letter, he says, was in response to a sort of "last appeal" against attacks on him from the Government of India, the Congress and the Press.

[2] The addressee was the Director-General of the All India Radio.

I do hope you will take care of yourself and not wear yourself out.

I had a brief talk with Sarup over the memorial[1]. I am sure that before anything else, at least the ground must be acquired. There need be no insistence on having the plot you described to me or another near Anand Bhawan.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

275. LETTER TO SARASWATI

January 3, 1937

CHI. SARASWATI,[2]

Your letter. It seems I have not to come to Tr[3]. Just yet at any rate. Kanti could hardly come even if I have to go there. He was with me for three days at Faizpur.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6158. Also C.W. 3431. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

276. LETTER TO KASTURBHAI LALBHAI

January 3, 1937

BHAISHRI KASTURBHAI,

I have your letter. There are some errors in the translation that you have sent, and considerable liberty has been taken with the second part. If a copy can be got ready, you will get it with this letter.

The Umpire should not be given the trouble of coming here in his present delicate state of health. I will, therefore, keep myself ready to go to Poona. While sending him the translation of my Award, I have asked him to give the dates convenient to him[4]. Which dates will suit you? I have been delaying my going to Travancore. I can now cancel that programme and go to Poona on the 7th.

[1] Kamala Nehru Memorial
[2] This and the subscription are in Hindi.
[3] Travancore; *vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 30-12-1936
[4] This letter is not traceable.

You will probably get this letter on the 5th. It will be good if you send me a wire immediately you get it.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4202

277. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 3, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Enclosed are letters to Madgavkar and Kasturbhai. Send a copy of the translation to each of them. Keep one copy for me. Send one to Shankerlal. A letter[1] to him is also enclosed.

Agatha and Polak have not arrived till now, that is, 4 o'clock.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I read the letters; but personally I feel that we should not go.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11515

278. LETTER TO PRABHUDAYAL VIDYARTHI

SEGANON
January 3, 1937

CHI. PRABHUDAYAL,

Mahadevbhai says you keep falling ill and have again fallen ill. Nobody met me at Faizpur. Your staying here is of no use. You must now go back to your village. You will be given your train fare. You can write to me from home. You must go today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 11680

[1] This is not traceable.

279. LETTER TO THE HONY. SECRETARY, ALIGARH UNIVERSITY UNION

January 4, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

In spite of our differences in post-Khilafat days, I have nothing but pleasant memories of my association with Maulana Mohamed Ali whom I miss on so many difficult occasions. You cannot celebrate the 'Mohamed Ali Day' better than by all of you resolving to establish heart unity with Hindus. Brotherhood which Islam teaches is a mockery if it excludes people belonging to the other faiths.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

THE HONY. SECRETARY
MUSLIM UNIVERSITY UNION
ALIGARH, U.P.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

280. LETTER TO G.V. GURJALE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 4, 1937

MY DEAR GURJALE,

I strongly advise you to take up some occupation and earn your bread and doing so keep one or two Harijan boys. Give up all ambitious schemes. Would you care to go to the Kodambakam Harijan Institute?

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1386

281. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

January 4, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

My memory is daily getting more confused. I did have a vague recollection that I had written to Duncan, but I dictated a letter to him since his letter was lying in the file. It was good that you remembered.

My memory has gone but my laxity has not. I could have saved time and paper and myself from shame if I had noted down on the letter itself while replying to Duncan. "Crooked are all the limbs of a camel; how can they be kept hidden, do what one will?"

Akte, with a straight face denied four or five times his boorish conduct. But afterwards he felt remorse, confessed everything and repented of his conduct very much. However, he stuck to what he had said regarding Buva. The witness that he had produced also boldly stuck to his statement before Buva. My suspicion against Buva is deepening. He seems to be a very strange man. The letter to Pingle and the papers to be forwarded to him which I sent with Rajkumari will throw more light. But it is enough that you know. Don't spend time in reading the papers. You can tell all this to J.

Agatha didn't speak at all yesterday. Polak asked one or two questions in public. The rest of the time was spent on titbits. Fortunately Polak and others came very late: at 4.30. You haven't, therefore, missed anything. Polak's talk was private and as such it cannot be reported. I am going to make you laugh when we meet. Dinkar's talk means a speech. I will tell you about that also some time. Agatha has come today. But she can't even look at me. Tomorrow she will come for a talk. You also may come and spend the day here. Durga and Bablo also may come if they want to.

BAPU

[PS.]

Send today's mail with Rajkumari.

Write to Burbage and tell him that I have referred to his letter in *Harijan.* Send him a copy also.

I will break my silence late at 9.45. If, therefore, the students wish to have a talk with me, they can do so only tomorrow.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11516

282. NOTE OF INTRODUCTION TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

SEGAON,
January 4, 1937

Shri Narahari Dwarkadas Parikh is one of the inmates of the Satyagraha Ashram. At present he is Registrar of the Gujarat Vidyapith and manager of the Harijan Ashram. He is also Secretary of the Goseva Sangh. He is going on a tour of Kathiawar to discuss with the States there suggestions for the preservation and improvement of

the cow and her progeny. I hope that the States and their officers will listen to his suggestions and will implement them to the extent possible. That will prevent in some measure the destruction of the cattle wealth that is taking place today.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9103

283. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

January 4, 1937

CHI. NARAHARI,

The note[1] you asked for is enclosed. Isn't this what you wanted? That booklet is lying on the shelf here unused.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9102

284. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

January 4, 1937

BHAI BAPA,

I have been eager to go to Travancore, but I am not enthusiastic about it any more. I am convinced that C.P.[2] does not want my presence there. In reply to a straight question by me, he tells me that their work there is going on very well, that they don't need anybody's help, but that if I still want to go I shall be welcome and should wire him when I start. The agitation in Cochin goes on. Rajaji says I must not go there. My going there at such a juncture is likely to harm the cause. All the same I have asked the Dewan to send me a telegram. If it comes, I will go. I have also written to Ramachandran to consult Rajaji. Do you wish anything more than this? I will read the book you have sent. I will try to find Rajaji's article.

Meanwhile the talks I am conducting are going on. If we have the spirit in us, everything will be well. If we have lost our spirit, then it is better for us to be destroyed. I console myself thus and go on doing my duty to the best of my ability without worrying about the result.

Vandemataram from
BAPU

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer, Dewan of Travancore

[PS.]

While I write this Amtul Salaam is sewing, seated beside me.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1174.

285. LETTER TO PRABHUDAYAL VIDYARTHI

January 4, 1937

CHI. PRABHUDAYAL,

If your health does not permit you to go, you may do so when it improves.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 11689

286. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*January 6, 1937*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Amtul Salaam is going there. She is leaving with us and going to Bombay. These days I am inundated with news about people's impurity. Send a telegram to Madgavkar as follows:

"Thanks. Reaching Tomorrow."[2] Mention the time also. Send a similar one to Premlilabehn. Then one to Dewan, Morvi: "Hear Maharaja seriously ill. Hope he is recovering—Gandhi."[3]

More when we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11561

[1] Gandhiji reached Poona on January 7 to meet G.D. Madgavkar, the Umpire in the Ahmedabad Mills wage dispute.

[2] The drafts of the telegrams are in English.

[3] *ibid*

287. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

PARNAKUTI,
POONA,
January 8, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

You are straining every nerve to deserve the title. What a scene on Thursday over a most trifling thing! And that too after assuring me that you were indifferent to such things. However, let the past be buried.

This is merely to inform you that Ramachandran wires you and Khan Saheb could go with me. I do not want to bank on that wire. I expect confirmation from C.P.

I hope you had a good journey and that you have no trouble. Do please observe the dietetic rules.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Please remember me to Mrs. Swaminathan.

SHRI RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
C/O SHRI AMMU SWAMINATHAN
GILCHRIST GARDENS
CHETPUT
MADRAS

From the original: C.W. 3762. Courtsy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6918

288. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

January 8, 1937

CHI. AMBUJAM,[1]

I am reaching Madras from Poona on Monday evening. I am supposed to drive straight to Mambalam. Of course you and Janammal will be there. Hope Father is well and you are at peace with yourself.

[1] The superscription and subscription are in Hindi.

Love.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

289. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

January 8, 1937

BHAISHRI PURUSHOTTAM

You may continue to write in English by all means, but permit me to write in Gujarati. Teach your assistant to read my handwriting. I don't want you to waste your time in doing so. Just as you are conscious of the value of my time, I am conscious of that of yours. I also know that my handwriting is not easy to read.

How can I disregard your request? But you know that I don't accept any responsibility in a casual manner. I agree to be the president of a meeting only when I have control over its proceedings and have faith in it. Perhaps you do not know how much I contributed to the formation of the Association[1] and to carrying on through it the agitation against the indenture system. Probably Natarajan is acquainted with the history of it. Vaze was not there at that time.

I am aware of the great injustice about to be done to the Zanzibar Indians. But that injustice cannot be prevented by one meeting or by my presiding over it. Before that I myself should do something. I should enter into correspondence with the Government, study the Binder Report, see a representative of Zanzibar if there is any here. Our people there are divided just as they are here and are selfish and lethargic. If we cannot get them to do any work, then also we will not succeed. How can all this be done? Where am I to find the necessary time? "Better one's own duty, bereft of merit, than another's well-performed; better death in the dicharge of one's duty, another's duty is fraught with danger."[2] For me at present the work about overseas Indians is another's duty. Why do you involve me in it? Nothing will be achieved by my becoming the president. Please don't dismiss my argument as advanced by an impractical man. If

[1] British Indian Association of the Transvaal.
[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 35

you find it convincing I ask you to spare me if you can. Then I shall not be guilty of disregarding your request.

If, however, you cannot swallow my argument, send me the Binder Report and explain to me whatever you feel it is necessary to explain. If there is anybody who knows all the facts send him to explain them to me. If you can spare the time and wish to come, you may do so. I have to leave this place for Travancore on the 10th evening. You will get this tomorrow, that is, Saturday. If you or your representative can come the same day, I can give one hour in the evening. Perhaps even on Sunday I may be able to give one hour. It depends on Sir Govindrao how much time I can spare on Sunday.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[From Guajarati]

Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

290. RIGHT TO LIVE

A correspondent from Greenville, S.C., U.S.A., writes enclosing a clipping from an American newspaper:[1]

The clipping contains an account of my illness of last year and ends.

> The recently powerful spokesman, Gandhi, flying in the face of all modern scientific knowledge and ignoring the tremendous number of human beings slain by such small insects, is reported as having stated in *The Times of India*, June 1935: "We have no right to take the lives of mosquitoes, flies, lice, rats or fleas. They have as much right to live as we."

I am afraid my correspondent cannot have the pleasure of espousing my cause in the manner he proposes. For I did make the statement attributed to me, though I qualified it by saying that in the present state of modern ignorance, and especially my own ignorance, I did countenance campaigns of killing rats, fleas, mosquitoes and the like. But I do believe that all God's creatures have the right to live as much as we have. Instead of prescribing the killing of the so-called

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had expressed his disbelief in the newspaper report of Gandhiji's views concerning killing of flies and mosquitoes and said if Gandhiji would disavow "such nonsense" he would have the disavowal placed in all the newspapers of America.

injurious fellow-creatures of ours as a duty, if men of knowledge had devoted their gift to discovering ways of dealing with them otherwise than by killing them, we would be living in a world befitting our status as men—animals endowed with reason and the power of choosing between good and evil, right and wrong, violence and non-violence, truth and untruth. I prefer to be called a coward or a fool or worse, to denying for the sake of being considered a wise man what I believe to be a fundamental truth of life. Marvellous as the progress of physical sciences undoubtedly is, it only humbles us and enables us to know that we know hardly anything of the mysteries of Nature. In the spiritual realm, we make little or no progress. The physical has overwhelmed the spiritual in us. We hardly like to own the latter's existence. And yet the question of killing and non-killing, of man's relation to his human[1] fellow creatures, belongs to the spiritual realm. Its proper solution will surely revolutionize our thoughts, speech and action. Both my intellect and heart refuse to believe that the so-called noxious life has been created for destruction by man. God is good and wise. A good and wise God cannot be so bad and so unwise as to create to no purpose. It is more conducive to reason to own our ignorance and assume that every form of life has a useful purpose which we must patiently strive to discover. I verily believe that man's habit of killing man on the slightest pretext has darkened his reason and he gives himself liberties with other life which he would shudder to take if he really believed that God is a God of Love and Mercy. Anyway, though for fear of death I may kill tigers, snakes, fleas, mosquitoes and the like, I ever pray for illumination that will shed all fear of death and, thus refusing to take life know the better way for

"Taught by the Power that pities me
I learn to pity them."

Harijan, 9-1-1937

291. HOW TO UTILIZE ELECTIONS

It was stated in Faizpur during the Congress Week that there are nearly $3\frac{1}{2}$ crores of voters who will vote for candidates for the provincial legislatures. Harijan workers can utilize the occasion of the elections for educating the voters on the question of untouchability

[1] This should be "sub-human"; *vide* "Notes" sub-title "An Important Correction", 16-1-1937

and of committing the candidates definitely to one side or the other. They can be asked for instance these questions:

Are you in favour of complete removal of untouchability? Are you in favour of removing the legal bar on the grounds of custom and legislation permitting temple authorities to open temples to Harijans where *savarna* Hindu opinion is ripe for the step? Are you in favour of enforcing the common law in the matter of Harijans freely using public wells, schools, and the like?

A correspondent writes to say that there is a conspiracy of silence among candidates on this question. If there is, it can be broken by energetic Harijan workers simply putting at voters' meetings questions like those I have suggested. Enlightened voters interested in the purification of Hinduism can do a great deal to educate and mould pubic opinion in this matter. It is a pity that the question of untouchability can at all become an issue between rival candidates or between candidates and electors. But pity or no pity, we have to face the facts as they are today.

Harijan, 9-1-1937

292. 'A HUMBLE VILLAGER OF BIRBHUM'

'A Humble Villager of Birbhum' living in Santiniketan sends me through Deenabandhu Andrews the following questions:

1. What is an ideal Indian village in your esteemed opinion and how far is it practicable to reconstruct a village on the basis of an 'Ideal Village' in the present social and political situation of India?
2. Which of the village problems should a worker try to solve first of all and how should he proceed?
3. What should be the special theme of village exhibitions and museums in a miniature form? How should such exhibitons be best utilized for the reconstruction of villages?

1. An ideal Indian village will be so constructed as to lend itself to perfect sanitation. It will have cottages with sufficient light and ventilation built of a material obtainable within a radius of five miles of it. The cottages will have courtyards enabling householders to plant vegetables for domestic use and to house their cattle. The village lanes and streets will be free of all avoidable dust. It will have wells according to its needs and accessible to all. It will have houses of worship for all; also a common meeting place, a village common for

grazing its cattle, a co-operative dairy, primary and secondary schools in which industrial education will be the central fact, and it will have panchayats for settling disputes. It will produce its own grains, vegetables and fruit, and its own khadi. This is roughly my idea of a model village. In the present circumstances its cottages will remain what they are with slight improvements. Given a good zamindar, where there is one, or co-operation among the people, almost the whole of the programme other than model cottages can be worked out at an expenditure within the means of the villagers including the zamindar or zamindars, without Government assistance. With that assistance there is no limit to the possibility of village reconstruction. But my task just now is to discover what the villagers can do to help themselves if they have mutual co-operation and contribute voluntary labour for the common good. I am convinced that they can, under intelligent guidance, double the village income as distinguished from individual income. There are in our villages inexhaustible resources not for commercial purposes in every case but certainly for local purposes in almost every case. The greatest tragedy is the hopeless unwillingness of the villagers to better their lot.

2. The very first problem the village worker will solve is its sanitation. It is the most neglected of all the problems that baffle workers and that undermine physical well-being and breed disease. If the worker became a voluntary Bhangi, he would begin by collecting night-soil and turning it into manure and sweeping village streets. He will tell people how and where they should perform daily functions and speak to them on the value of sanitation and the great injury caused by the neglect. The worker will continue to do the work whether the villagers listen to him or no.

3. The spinning-wheel should be the central theme of all such village exhibitions and the industries suited to the particular locality should revolve round it. An exhibition thus arranged would naturally become an object-lesson for the villagers and an educational treat when it is accompanied by demonstrations, lectures and leaflets.

Harijan, 9-1-1937

293. NOTES

THE COW AND THE HARIJAN

In my conversations with Dr. Mott, at one stage of it I said, "Would you preach the Gospel to a cow? Well, some of the untouchables are worse than cows in understanding. I mean they no more distinguish between the relative merits of Islam and Hinduism and Christianity than a cow."[1] Some Missionary friends have taken exception to the analogy. I have no remorse about the propriety of the analogy. There could be no offence meant to Harijans because the cow is a sacred animal. I worship her as I worship my mother. Both are givers of milk. And so far as understanding is concerned I do maintain that there are, be it said to the discredit of superior-class Hindus, thousands of Harijans who can no more understand the merits and demerits of different religions than a cow. That after a long course of training Harijans can have their intelligence developed in a manner a cow's cannot, is irrelevant to the present discussion.

A STUDENT'S DIFFICULTY

A student asks:

> What should a matriculate or an undergraduate who is unfortunately father of two or three children do in order to procure a living wage, and what should he do when he is forced to marry against his will and before even the age of twenty-five?

The simplest answer that occurs to me is that a student who does not know how to support his wife and children or who marries against his will has studied to no purpose. But that is past history for him. The perplexed student deserves a helpful answer. He does not say what is his requirement. If he does not pitch it high because he is a matriculate and will put himself on a level with the ordinary labourer, he should have no difficulty in earning a livelihood. His intelligence should help his hands and feet and enable him to do better than the labourer who has not had the opportunity of developing his intelligence. This is not to say that a labourer who has never learnt English is devoid of intelligence. Unfortunately labour has never been helped to develop the mind, and those who pass through schools do have their minds opened even though under a handicap not to be

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with John R. Mott", 13/14-11-1936

found in any other part of the world. Even this mental equipment is counter-balanced by false notions of dignity inculcated during school and college days. And so students think that they can earn their living only at the desk. The inquirer has therefore to realize the dignity of labour and seek the maintenance of himself and his family in that field.

And there is no reason why his wife should not add to the family income by utilizing her spare hours. Similarly if the children are at all able to do any work, they too should be inspanned for productive work. The utterly false idea that intelligence can be developed only through book-reading should give place to the truth that the quickest development of the mind can be achieved by artisan's work being learnt in a scientific manner. True development of the mind commences immediately the apprentice is taught at every step why a particular manipulation of the hand or a tool is required. The problem of the unemployment of students can be solved without difficulty if they will rank themselves among the common labourers.

As for marriage against one's will, all I can say is that students should develop sufficient strength of purpose to resist any marriage that is sought to be forced on them. Students should learn the art of standing alone and resisting in every legitimate manner any attempt to force them to do anything against their will much more so to marry against their will.

Harijan, 9-1-1937

294. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

POONA,
January 9, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Yesterday I received another wire from R.[1] saying you and K.[2] should not accompany me. But I do still expect to hear directly from C.P. saying "yes". However, we must be ready for either event.

The weather here is good—but not so bracing as at Segaon.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3763. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6919

[1] Ramachandran; *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 8-1-1937

[2] Khan Saheb; *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 8-1-1937

295. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

January 9, 1937

CHI. MIRA,

I must rest the right hand. No time left here for much writing. I hope you are now quite well and happy in mind. There was a basket of fruit lying in Maganwadi when I reached there. You must have received it. Anyway you will see to it that you, Balkrishna and others who need fruit have a regular supply.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Has Kanu taken up spinning?

From the original: C.W. 6372. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9838.

296. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

January 9, 1937

CHI. MUNNALAL,

This time you will have to get a certificate from Mirabehn. Supervise the scavenging work. Take Mirabehn with you. Wash her clothes, etc., when necessary.

I am not writing a separate letter to Balwantsinha.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8590. Also C.W. 7007. Courtsy: Munnalal G. Shah

297. LETTER TO JAI SINGH

[Before *January 10, 1937*][1]

If Sikhism is a part of Hindu culture, as I believe it is, what is the meaning of change of faith and name? If Sikhism is not part and product of Hinduism you are simply creating a conflict among the Harijans without achieving any noble purpose.

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-1-1937

[1] The report in the source is dated January 10.

298. INTERVIEW TO PROF. MAYS[1]

[Before *January 10, 1937*][2]

GANDHIJI: Passive resistance is a misnomer for non-violent resistance. It is much more active than violent resistance. It is direct, ceaseless, but three-fourths invisible and only one-fourth visible. In its visibility it seems to be ineffective, e.g., the spinning-wheel which I have called the symbol of non-violence. In its visibility it appears ineffective, but it is really intensely active and most effective in ultimate result. This knowledge enables me to detect flaws in the way in which the votaries of non-violence are doing their spinning. I ask for more vigilance and more untiredness. Non-violence is an intensely active force when properly understood and used. A violent man's activity is most visible while it lasts. But it is always transitory. What can be more visible than the Abyssinians done to death by Italians? There it was lesser violence pitted against much greater. But if the Abyssinians had retired from the field and allowed themselves to be slaughtered, their seeming inactivity would have been much more effective though not for the moment visible. Hitler and Mussolini on the one hand and Stalin on the other are able to show the immediate effectiveness of violence. But it will be as transitory as that of Jhenghis's slaughter. But the effects of Buddha's non-violent action persist and are likely to grow with age. And the more it is practised, the more effective and inexhaustible it becomes, and ultimately the whole world stands agape and exclaims, 'a miracle has happened'. All miracles are due to the silent and effective working of invisible forces. Non-violence is the most invisible and the most effective.

PROF. MAYS: I have no doubt in my mind about the superiority of non-violence but the thing that bothers me is about its exercise on a large scale, the difficulty of so disciplining the mass mind on the point of love. It is easier to discipline individuals. What should be the strategy when they break out? Do we retreat or do we go on?

GANDHIJI: I have had that experience in the course of our movement here. Pepole do not gain the training by preaching. Non-

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "A Discourse on Non-violence". Prof. Mays was an American Negro who had come to India along with Dr. Tobias to attend the World's Meeting of the Committees of Y.M.C.A.

[2] According to Mahadev Desai, this interview took place before the meeting with Dr. Tobias; *vide* "Interview to Dr. Tobias", 10-1-1937

violence cannot be preached. It has to be practised. The practice of violence can be taught to people by outward symbols. You shoot at boards, then at targets, then at beasts. Then you are passed as an expert in the art of destruction. The non-violent man has no outward weapon and, therefore, not only his speech but his action also seems ineffective. I may say all kinds of sweet words to you without meaning them. On the other hand I may have real love in me and yet my outward expression may be forbidding. Then outwardly my action in both cases may be the same and yet the effect may be different. For the effect of our action is often more potent when it is not patently known. Thus the unconscious effect you are making on me I may never know. It is, nevertheless, infinitely greater than the conscious effect. In violence there is nothing invisible. Non-violence, on the other hand, is three-fourths invisible, so the effect is in the inverse ratio to its invisibility. Non-violence, when it becomes active, travels with extraordinary velocity, and then it becomes a miracle. So the mass mind is affected first unconsciously, then consciously. When it becomes consciously affected there is demostrable victory. In my own experience, when people seemed to be weakening there was no consciousness of defeat in me. Thus I was fuller of hope in the efficacy of non-violence after the renunciation of Civil Disobedience in 1922, and today I continue to be in the same hopeful mood. It is not a mere emotional thing. Supposing I saw no signs of dawn coming I should not lose faith. Everything has to come in its proper time.

I have discussions here with my co-workers about the scavenging work we are doing. 'Why can't we do it after swaraj? they say. 'We may do it better after swaraj'. I say to them, 'No. The reform has to come today, it must not wait for swaraj; in fact the right type of swaraj will come only out of such work.' Now I cannot show you, as perhaps I cannot show some of my co-workers, the connection between swaraj and scavenging. If I have to win swaraj non-violently I must discipline my people. The maimed and the blind and the leprous cannot join the army of violence. There is also an age-limit for serving in the army. For a non-violent struggle there is no age-limit; the blind and the maimed and the bed-ridden may serve, and not only men but women also. When the spirit of non-violence pervades the people and actually begins to work, its effect is visible to all.

But now comes your poser. There are people, you say, who do not believe in non-violence as you do. Are you to sit quiet? The

friends ask: 'If not now, when will you act?' I say in reply: "I may not succeed in my lifetime, but my faith that victory can only come through non-violence is stronger than ever. When I spoke on the cult of the spinning-wheel at Faizpur, a newspaper correspondent imputed astuteness to me. Nothing could be further from my mind. When I came to Segaon I was told the people might not co-operate and might even boycott me. I said: 'That may be. But this is the way non-violence works. If I go to a village which is still farther off, the experiment may work better. This thing has come in my search after the technique of non-violence. And each day that passes makes my faith brighter. I have come here to bring that faith to fruition and to die in the process if that is God's will. Non-violence to be worth anything has to work in the face of hostile forces. But there may be action in inaction. And action may be worse than inaction.

PROF. MAYS: Is it ever possible to administer violence in a spirit of love?

G. No. Never. I shall give you an illustration from my own experiment. A calf was lame and had developed terrible sores; he could not eat and breathed with difficulty. After three days' argument with myself and my co-workers I put an end to its life.[1] Now that action was non-violent because it was wholly unselfish, inasmuch as the sole purpose was to achieve the calf's relief from pain. Some people have called this an act of violence. I have called it a surgical operation. I should do exactly the same thing with my child, if he were in the same predicament. My point is that non-violence as the supreme law of our being ceases to be such the moment you talk of exceptions.

PROF. MAYS: How is a minority to act against an overwhelming majority?

G. I would say that a minority can do much more in the way of non-violence then a majority. I had an English friend called Symonds. He used to say: 'I am with you so long as you are in a minority. After you are in a majority we are quits.' I had less diffidence in handling my minority in South Africa than I had here in handling a majority. But it would be wholly wrong therefore to say that non-violence is a weapon of the weak. The use of non-violence requires greater bravery than that of violence. When Daniel defied the laws of the Meads and Persians, his action was non-violent.

[1] For a fuller account of the episode, *vide* "The Fiery Ordeal", 4-10-1928

PROF. MAYS: Should the thought of consequences that might accrue to the enemy as a result of your non-violence at all constrain you?

G. Certainly. You may have to suspend your movement as I did in South Africa when the Government was faced with the revolt of European labour. The latter asked me to make common cause with them. I said 'no'.

PROF. MAYS: And non-violence will never rebound on you, whereas violence will be self-destroyed?

G. Yes. Violence must beget violence. But let me tell you that here too my argument has been countered by a great man who said: 'Look at the history on non-violence. Jesus died on the Cross, but his followers shed blood.' This proves nothing. We have no data before us to pass judgement. We do not know the whole of the life of Jesus. The followers perhaps had not imbibed fully the message of non-violence. But I must warn you against carrying the impression with you that mine is the final word on non-violence. I know my own limitations. I am but a humble seeker after truth. And all I claim is that every experiment of mine has deepened my faith in non-violence as the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. Its use is not restricted to individuals merely but it can be practised on a mass scale.

Harijan, 20-3-1937

299. THE NEXT CONGRESS SESSION

Perhaps at the moment it is too early and not proper to write anything about the next Congress session. This, however, holds good only if one wishes to write about political matters; that is because politics is constantly changing. But I wish to write about the manner in which a rural session of the Congress should be held. That is a subject which may be discussed at any time, and preparations should begin from today.

There is no doubt that the success of the Faizpur Congress has surpassed everyone's expectations. Despite this, the unavoidable drawbacks from which it suffered should and can be remedied in the future. No one can be held reponsible for some of the things which were found at Faizpur. No one had expected people would come in such large numbers. At no other session of the Congress were volunteers made to work as hard as at this session. Hence, it may be said that at Faizpur, the ship of the Congress had to be steered through an uncharted sea. I give below a few improvements which I feel are necessary as a result of my experiences at Faizpur.

1. It does not matter how small the village is. It should not be more than seven miles from the nearest railway station.

2. The necessary site should be obtained free.

3. The village must co-operate.

4. The soil should not be black as at Faizpur, but sandy, capable of soaking up water quickly.

5. Water should be provided in sufficient quantity and at various places.

6. There should be an adequate number of latrines and urinals at various convenient spots.

7. At various places, posters in Gujarati, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu and other languages, written in a bold hand, should be put up, saying: "Please use for latrines and urinals only the places provided". The roads should bear names or numbers, preferably the latter. Bhangi volunteers should be in attendance on all the roads. They should have a map of the Congress Nagar and should constantly guide the visitors. They should also have brooms, buckets and small shovels. If anyone urinates or defecates outside the urinals or latrines these volunteers should warn him, and remove the filth immediately and dispose of it. A Bhangi should be in attendance at each urinal and latrine, whose duty should be to clean these up after they have been used. Buckets and shovels made of tin may serve the purpose. These are inexpensive and may be used even later. If shovels are shaped like winnows they would be cheap and easy to use.

8. There must be a good and well-built hospital attached to the Congress Nagar. It is necessary that it should have walls of unbaked bricks and a tiled roof. It should accommodate at least twenty beds with a separate wing for women.

9. There should not be one but several kitchens. Things should become much easier if selected cooks are engaged. It would facilitate matters to have blocks which would accommodate a hundred persons each for meals. There should be separate charges for those who have their meals in the blocks and those who prefer to carry their meals away. The menu should be simple and such as to suit all the provinces. It is necessary to abandon the temptation to serve meals to a large number of people in one place. Everyone must have his meal served in his own utensils. It is never possible to make arrangements for serving thousands of people at any one place at the same time.

10. At Faizpur, it was practically impossible to procure cow's milk and cow's ghee. I think that even from the economic point of view, at Congress gatherings, if not elsewhere , we must make it a rule to use only cow's milk. It is no simple matter to provide cow's milk to thousands of persons. This task can be accomplished if preparations are taken in hand right from today.

11. Flour, rice, etc., must be ground and pounded in the Congress Nagar itself.

12. The Faizpur exhibition, to my mind, was the best held so far. Its success was clearly evident and yet there is scope for improvement.

These are the principal points which occur to me at the moment. Two changes seem to be necessary. Under the new constitution, the Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. meet before the Congress session. Taking advantage of this, other meetings are also held before the opening session of the Congress. This is not proper. It puts an unnecessary burden on the Reception Committee and lengthens the period of the session from three to ten days. Either all meetings before the Congress session should be stopped or preparations should be made beforehand for a rush of people lasting ten days.

And if the Congress is to meet in a village only, it should not meet in December. There is very little substance in the plea that the Congress session must be held towards the end of December because railway fare concessions are available during Christmas week and the Assembly has a holiday. There is a much stronger case for holding the Congress session after the winter is over, for it suits the convenience of the lakhs of people who attend it. I feel that the inconvenience suffered by people in winter, farmers being busy with the harvest in December and the difficulty of getting a large area of open ground on account of the standing crops are three difficulties which cancel out the two advantages. I believe that the number of persons who came to Faizpur on foot from surrounding areas far exceeded the number who spent money on railway fare to come there. Religious fairs such as Kumbh, Magh, etc., are not regulated by such considerations as railway fare concessions. Regardless of whether these are available or not, these fairs are held at the appointed time and are attended by millions. The Congress session should not be a lesser attraction than these.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 10-1-1937

300. VAGUE LANGUAGE

A gentleman who is a careful reader of *Harijanbandhu* likes my article "Hindu Code of Conduct"[1] in its issue of December 27, but he is not satisfied with clause 14 therein. That clause is as follows:

> We certainly would not like anyone to abuse us or beat us or misbehave with our mother or sisters. Hence, we should not abuse anyone, not even our wives and children.

Many of the clauses of this article are interrelated. Clause 14 has a bearing on clauses 15, 16 and 17. If read along with these clauses the implication of clause 14 becomes clear. Despite this, I must admit that one is likely to get confused if one reads clause 14 by itself. I regard its language as vague and inelegant. On rereading it I find that its clarity of meaning is lost because I have overburdened it. Clauses 15, 16 and 17 have been written to clarify what is contained in clause 14. In order to relieve the burden on clause 14 and for the sake of clarity of thought and language, I write clauses 14, 15 and 17 as follows. There is no scope for improvement in clause 16.

14. If anyone abused us or beat us, we would not like it. Why then should we abuse others or beat them?

15. We cannot abuse our wives and children if we do not abuse others. Many men regard their wives and children as their property. This is a grave error. In our religion, the wife has been regarded as the equal of the husband. It is for this reason that she is known as *ardhangini* and also as *sahadharmini*. She is addressed as *devi.*[2] Parents are the protectors of the children. Hence they should be gentle, tolerant, and patient towards them also.

17. We shall not tolerate anyone misbehaving with our wife or mother or sister. How then can we misbehave with anyone else's wife? To cast a lustful glance at a woman, to pass obscene remarks about her, to touch her with wicked intention—all this would be regarded as misconduct. All women except one's wife are one's mothers and sisters.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 10-1-1937

[1] *Vide* "Hindu Code of Conduct", 27-12-1936

[2] Goddess

301. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

POONA,
January 10, 1937

CHI. MIRA,

Your two letters came together. They were enough to make me weep. How can I console you? If you cannot have your peace there you can certainly go to Varoda or Wardha and pass the few days usefully. I have no other Manager to appoint. I have to be satisfied with Munnalal so long as I consider him to be a clean man. The noise is there in my absence but no more than is observable in an Indian home. You can remedy these things, if you can be calm within and treat these noises as also abuses to be remedied. We do not become impatient over ravings of maniacs. For we treat them as diseases to be tolerated till they are remedied. Why can't you treat the aberrations of the Segaon home in exactly the same light?

I am, I hope, not leaving Segaon again quite so soon. Belgaum is there. But that is in April.

I hope your foot is all right. If not you should go to Wardha and show it to the C.S. The post should be sent for daily.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6371. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9837

302. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

January 10, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Hakimji is arriving there today. His remedies are not inhuman, but are such as the poor can afford and tolerate. I would advise you to consult him for Durga. We may not carry out his treatment if we don't want to. The remedies prescribed by Mehta and Gaurishankar are royal. This is a hakim for the poor and a godly man. I am training him and don't intend to let him go away soon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11517

303. INTERVIEW TO DR. TOBIAS[1]

[*January 10, 1937*][2]

DR. TOBIAS: Your doctrine of non-violence has profoundly influenced my life. Do you believe in it as strongly as ever?

GANDHIJI: I do indeed. My faith in it is growing.

Negroes in U.S.A. —12 million—are struggling to obtain such fundamental rights as freedom from mob violence, unrestricted use of the ballot, freedom from segregation, etc. Have you, out of your struggle in India, a word of advice and encouragement to give us?

I had to contend against some such thing, though on a much smaller scale, in South Africa. The difficulties are not yet over. All I can say is that there is no other way than the way of non-violence, a way, however, not of the weak and ignorant but of the strong and wise.

Travancore indicates that your full identification with the untouchables is bearing fruit.[3] Do you think Travancore's example will be followed by other States in the near future?

I shall be surprised if it is not.

What word shall I give my Negro brethren as to the outlook for the future?

With right which is on their side and the choice of non-violence as their only weapon, if they will make it such, a bright future is assured.

Harijan, 20-3-1937

304. LETTER TO MUTHULAKSHMI REDDY

January 11, 1937

DEAR SISTER,

I am writing this in a moving train. I am taking no part or interest in the elections[4]. But I agree with you that women should be treated on a par with men. I go further, where they are equal in ability

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "A Discourse on Non-violence". Dr. Tobias, an American Negro, had come to India to attend the World's Meeting of the Committees of the Y.M.C.A. As the interview took place on a silence day, Gandhiji gave written answers.

[2] The date is from the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary.

[3] The reference is to the Proclamation throwing open all State temples to Harijans.

[4] The first general elections to the Provincial Assemblies under the Government of India Act, 1935, were scheduled for February 1937.

they should be preferred. I do not know what has happened in your case but you are in safe hands. Both Pandit Jawaharlal and Sardar Patel would not be party to favouritism. Unconscious injustice is sometimes inevitable in human institutions.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

305. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

ON WAY TO MADRAS,
January 11, 1937

CHI. KANTI,

Since I am writing to Gokulbhai,[1] I felt like writing to you also. Prabhavati says that to save stamps and for other reasons you will practically stop writing to me now. What is this? You seem to have become careless as ever about your health. I think you are making a great mistake in doing this. Even if you make great progress in your study but ruin your health in the process, what profit will you derive from such study?

Do continue to write to me regularly and in detail. I will expect a letter from you in Trivandrum. I may have to spend nine days in Travancore.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7311. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

306. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

ON WAY TO MADRAS,
January 11, 1937

BHAISHRI PURUSHOTTAMDAS,

I had a talk with Vaze and read the papers. He agreed that I should not involve myself in this business and has undertaken to plead with you and to leave me out. I hope that he has succeeded. To prepare myself for this task, I should read many other papers and do some other preparatory work too. How can I manage it? Where is the time? If I take up that task I must change the direction of my activities

[1] This letter to Gokulbhai is not traceable.

altogether. According to my nature I cannot approach such work in any other manner. I hope you will understand this and willingly leave me out of it. I would really like to help in this work but I am completely helpless.[1]

I am writing this in a moving train.

Vandematram from
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

307. LETTER TO INDU N. PAREKH

ON WAY TO TRIVANDRUM,
January 11, 1937

CHI. INDU,

I remember only your last letter. I can reply to it only now, in a moving train. Of course you have my blessings on your birthday. I do see your restlessness. Everything will be all right if you do not fall into bad company and if you stick to your study. Do not conceal your thoughts and desires and do nothing secretly. Your mind will then automatically become steady.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6255

308. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

ON THE TRAIN,
January 12, 1937

CHI. MIRA,

I am writing this on the train taking me to Trivandrum. I have been brooding over your two letters. I was inclined to send you a wire yesterday and also today. But I restrained myself. I hope to hear from you on reachig Travancore. I hope your foot is all right and that so is your mental condition. I do not want to argue with you. I therefore simply pray for you. How I wish God will give you peace and joy not

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Purushottamdas Thakurdas", 8-1-1937

to be affected by any event however untoward it may appear to be. Prabhavati joined me at Poona and Rajkumari at Madras.

Love.

BAPU

From the Original: C.W. 6373. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9839

309. SPEECH AT CIVIC RECEPTION, TRIVANDRUM[1]

January 12, 1937

As you have in your address very properly said, this is not my first visit to Travancore or its capital Trivandrum. Every time I have come to Travancore, I have come almost as a crusader trying to wean *savarna* Hindus from the curse of untouchability. I have had many occasions to address *savarna* Hindus and *avarna* Hindus, miscalled untouchables or depressed classes, also on this subject. This time, however, I have come as a humble pilgrim to tender my congratulations to H.H. the Maharaja and his good mother Her Highness the Maharani and his able Dewan. With the co-operation of this trinity, if I might so describe the distinguished persons, the great Proclamation has been a settled fact and has now been working with success. The temples have been sealed to me so far, perhaps voluntarily, and I do not know that if I had made the attempt to enter them I should not have been thrown out of them. But even if I had the liberty, having made common cause with the Harijans I could not avail myself of it. But now that the doors have been flung open to the Harijans also, I shall for the first time take the opportunity of entering your beautiful temple. I take your address as a token of your goodwill. I shall have several occasions to speak on the great act of the Maharaja, and I shall therefore refrain from making anything like a speech here.

This Proclamation throws a tremendous responsibility on the people of Travancore. Rajas and Maharajas can make good laws, but they cannot make the people give proper effect to them. Even tyrants cannot control the hearts of those over whom they hold sway. It all depends on your hearts to give proper effect to the Proclamation. I would ask you to go to the temples not as curiosity-mongers, but in a proper prayerful spirit. If *savarnas* go there with mental reservations, the Proclamation will not be properly carried out. Let the

[1] A mammoth meeting of the citizens welcomed Gandhiji at the Trivandrum station, where the City Municipality presented him with an address of welcome.

Proclamation proclaim the fact that henceforth in Travancore there is no distinction between *savarnas* and *avarnas,* touchables and untouchables. Having said this much, I do not propose to tax your patience any more. I do hope that your good wishes will fit me for my pilgrimage through Travancore. I thank you.

The Epic of Travancore, pp. 144-6.

310. SPEECH AT DAKSHINA BHARAT HINDI PRACHAR SABHA, TRIVANDRUM

January 13, 1937

I am glad to have been asked to distribute the certificates and prizes to those who have passed the examination. I do not know whether you will follow even my simple Hindi. I see that some of those who have received their certificates today do not follow it. But that is nothing to be ashamed of. Not living in the midst of a Hindi-speaking public, it is quite natural that you should find it difficult to follow spoken Hindi. What is gratifying is that you are taking some pains over learning Hindi in this Southernmost part of India. But please remember that your objective is not to win certificates but to obtain a working knowledge of Hindi. A certificate can but stimulate you to further effort, in order that you may be induced to put up a serious endeavour for an ever-increasing knowledge of Hindi. The first thing that you have to bear in mind is that you belong to India, that India is as much your motherland as of those whose mother tongue is Hindi. You have therefore to think of your country not as extending up to a part of the Arabian sea in the west and to the Ghats on the east but to the Hindukush in the north, Karachi in the west and Assam in the east. If you went to those remote parts of your country where other languages are spoken, what would you speak there but Hindi? You will not find many people capable of understanding English. The temple priest in the great Ananthapadmanabha temple here was speaking perfect Hindi this morning when I was shown over by him through the precincts of that vast temple. His Hindi was certainly more flawless than mine and he made me forget for a moment that I was in Travancore. The uppermost feeling in my mind is not that I am a Gujarati but that I belong to the whole of India.

I would appeal to H.H. the Maharaja and Her Highness the Maharani to promote the development of Hindi studies in Travancore and encourage those who are going in for the study of Hindi. Let the objective of Travancore be to make every literate man and woman here Hindi-knowing.

The Epic of Travancore, pp. 147-8

311. SPEECH AT EZHAVAS' MEETING, TRIVANDRUM

January 13, 1937

I wish I were able to speak to you in your own mother tongue. I am sorry that I have not yet been able to learn the very musical language that you speak, and it is a matter of equal sorrow to me that you do not understand the national language of India—Hindi-Hindustani. Therefore we have to fall back on the cumbrous process of translation. But it is inevitable if I am at all to reach your hearts somewhat. I assure you I do not want to make here an idle speech, nor am I fond of hearing my own voice. I know that silence is often better than speech. But I know also from experience that there are occasions when speech becomes a necessity, and probably this is one of those occasions.

I thank you very much for having asked me to preside over this celebrations meeting. I thank you also for presenting me with this address. You have already tendered your hearty congratulations to His Highness the Maharaja and Maharani and Sachivottama Sir C.P. Ramaswami Iyer. I want to associate myself fully with the expression of your joy and congratulations. The joy is written on the numerous faces of this assembly over the restoration of a right which was taken away from you, no one knows how many years ago. You have done well also in tracing the historical sequence of the agitation for opening all the temples to the *avarna* Hindus in Travancore, and I again associate myself with you in the praise you have bestowed upon His Holiness the late Narayanaguru Swami and also upon that brave soul Madhavan. You will also let me recall in this connection two names—I mean the late Krishnaswami who at the time of the Vykom Satyagraha used to lead the prayer in his own inimitable manner with recitations of verses from *Gita Govinda*. Though a staunch Brahmin and lover of his religion, he made common cause with all the *avarnas*. And I may not forget also one who is still in our midst—Sjt. Kelappan Nair.

These brave men laid the foundation of the thing we see today in our midst.

But I think that we may not forget the orthodoxy which has come to our assistance at this hour, and in this connection I suppose I may not omit to mention the Namboodiri orthodox people whom I had found to my great regret very difficult to convert to the obvious truth. If they and the other orthodox people had not recognized the spirit of the times, it might be that they would have rendered the task of their Highnesses well nigh impossible or, at least, ineffective.

In this connection let me recall also a meeting I had with the Senior Maharani years ago. That meeting took place when the Vykom Satyagraha was going on, and I appealed to her, with all the earnestness at my command, to come to the assistance of all those who were fighting a forlorn battle, to issue a new *Smriti* and to declare all the temples open. She and her husband, who was present at the interview, expressed their sympathy with this movement. They both welcomed the movement that was going on in Travancore for the liberation of *avarnas*. But they felt burdened with the responsibility of a great State and told me that the time had not come for taking that great step. She than thought that it was still necessary to sound *savarna* opinion and to convert it to the reform. Several years have passed by since that interview. Thanks be to God that you did not remain idle during all these years, and but for the sustained efforts on your part to arouse both *avarna* and *savarna* public opinion, even the Maharaja with all the goodwill in the world would have found it impossible to issue the Proclamation. I hope that the Senior Maharani is today rejoicing over the great change that has come over Travancore and over the fact that the Proclamation is being welcomed by all and sundry—both *avarnas and savarnas*. I am hoping also that with the incoming of this great change over the State of Travancore the *savarna* Hindus are as enthusiastic in visiting temples as the *avarna* Hindus. I want to tell all *savarnas*, men and women, who have from day to day gone to these temples in search of blessings and in the hope that their prayers will be answered; I want to assure them that the temples have gained in efficacy and not lost one whit from the efficacy they enjoyed. Our Shastras teach us—I am not giving you any new truth—that efficacy lies in our hearts, not in stone however well carved it may be, and I do hope that your faith will not fail you because a large part of your co-religionists have had an ancient right

restored to them of offering their prayers in the same manner and on the same conditions as you have offered them.

I would like to mention one sorrow that has oppressed me ever since I came here. I have wondered why you have called this celebration Ezhava Temple-entry Proclamation Celebrations. I wonder if presently we shall have All-Travancore Pulaya and Pariah Celebrations! I know and I grant that Ezhavas are a great and growing and important community in Travancore, but have I not seen the Pulayas and Pariahs of Travancore? When I have met them I have not been able to stare them straight in their faces. I have felt deeply humiliated. I shall never forget the sight of an old Pulaya man shaking with fear, as he was brought to me, and as he tried to hand me a sheet of paper which had been put into his hands. He was brought to me in Cochin as I was passing through the crowds in the streets. I was told that he held in his hand an address to be given me on behalf of the Pulayas. His withered hands, as they were shaking, could not deliver that address in my hands. There was no lustre in his eyes. I do not know that I saw even a ray of hope in those deep sunken eyes. He did not know what he was being called upon to do. I do not know that he could understand the choice Malayalam which the Namboodiri volunteer was speaking. I seized the situation at a glance. I hung my head in shame and sorrow, and I felt it my duty to snatch that precious paper from his hands. Why is he not a member of today's Celebration Committee? I know that he is nameless. Most probably he is dead. If he is alive perhaps he does not know what is happening in Travancore today. And also I asked myself whether you members of this Celebration Committee, you members of this vast gathering, do or do not represent such men. And I must tell you with all respect and humility that if this vast assembly does not represent these Pulayas, then I am certain that there is no place in your midst for me. If this is a purely religious movement, if this is a purely religious revival, if it has no taint of base 'self' in it, then you will be denying yourselves and nullifying the effect of this great Proclamation if you do not represent the lowest and the least in our midst.

You heard with what force Sir C.P. Ramaswami Iyer spoke to this meeting. The Maharaja has given you a *Smriti,* but it is for you to carry it out and breathe life into it , and you will hopelessly fail to do that unless you rise to the occasion and see to it that this religious spirit pervades the whole of Travancore—both *avarnas* and *savarnas.* I tell you if you approach this great step, each with his own mental

reservation, and not give effect to it whole-heartedly, you will find this Proclamation a nine days' wonder. Therefore I want you to understand, whilst you are properly rejoicing over this Proclamation and celebrating it with the joy and zeal that I see on your faces, that you will not be doing your duty if you do not realize your responsibility to the whole of the community that had been so far excluded.

I see that you are now getting restless. I do not propose to keep you longer than is absolutely necessary . I am speaking to you from the fulness of my heart, and when heart is speaking to hearts, it expects to find a lodgment in those hearts. I do not want to keep you more than perhaps ten minutes now. I shall try to omit many of the things I wanted to say this evening, and shall seek another occasion for doing so.

I must mention what I saw at the great Padmanabha Temple. It will perhaps best illustrate what I am saying about the pure and spiritual revival. In the days of my youth I went to so many temples with the faith and devotion with which my parents had fired me. But of late years I have not been visiting temples, and ever since I have been engaged in anti-untouchability work I have refrained from going to temples unless they were open to everyone called untouchable. So what I saw this morning at the temple dawned upon me with the same newness with which it must have dawned upon so many *avarna* Hindus who must have gone to the temple after the Proclamation. In imagination my mind travelled back to the prehistoric centuries when they began to convey the message of God in stone and metal. I saw quite clearly that the priest who was interpreting each figure in his own choice Hindi did not want to tell me that each of those figures was God. But without giving me that particular interpretation he made me realize that these temples were so many bridges between the Unseen, Invisible and Indefinable God and ourselves who are infinitesimal drops in the Infinite Ocean. We the human family are not all philosophers. We are of the earth very earthy, and we are not satisfied with contemplating the Invisible God. Somehow or other we want something which we can touch, something which we can see, something before which we can kneel down. It does not matter whether it is a book, or an empty stone building, or a stone building, inhabited by numerous figures. A book will satisfy some, an empty building will satisfy some others, and many others will not be satisfied unless they see something inhabiting these empty buildings. Then I ask you to approach these temples not as if they represented a

body of superstitions. If you will approach these temples with faith in them, you will know each time you visit them you will come away from them purified, and with your faith more and more in the living God.

Anyway, I have looked upon this Proclamation as a pure religious act. I have regarded this visit to Travancore in the spirit of a pilgrimage, and I am going to these temples as an untouchable suddenly made touchable. If all of you will approach this Proclamation in this spirit, you will abolish all distinctions between *savarnas* and *avarnas* as also all those distinctions which unfortunately still exist between *avarnas* and *avarnas*. Finally you will not be satisfied until you have lifted up your brothers and sisters who are supposed to be the least and the lowest, to heights which you have attained yourselves. True spiritual regeneration must include economic uplift and the removal of ignorance and everything that goes to retard human progress.

May God enable you to realize to the full the possibilities that are embedded in this Proclamation of the Maharaja. I thank you for giving me this patient hearing.

Harijan, 23-1-1937

312. SPEECH AT NEYATTINKARAI

January 14, 1937[1]

I thank you for the three addresses you have read or partially read here. I wish there was time to listen to all the addresses in full. I have read the Hindi address in full and the second, which is really a report of the Harijan work, I promise to read in full. Needless to say that I associate myself with you in your congratulations to the trinity responsible for the Proclamation over which Travancore is rejoicing, and I congratulate the *savarnas* of this place who unanimously and heartily endorsed the Proclamation. Of course, it is open to the *savarnas* and *avarnas* to make the gracious Proclamation perfectly useless—the *savarnas* may be sullenly discontented and not purity their hearts of untouchability, and the *avarnas* can make it perfectly ineffective by misunderstanding the grace of the Proclamation and by not going to temples in the right spirit. The Maharaja, the Maharani

[1] The date is from *The Bombay Chronicle*, 16-1-1937.

not going to temples in the right spirit. The Maharaja, the Maharani and the Dewan have done their duty by issuing the Proclamation which has no reservation, mental or otherwise, behind it; and if both *savarnas* and *avarnas* prove by their real religious conduct that they were worthy of this high act of State, believe me Travancore will go down in history as the saviour of Hindu religion which was in danger of perishing. For I have seen nothing during these long years of struggle against untouchability to modify my opinion that if untouchability lives Hinduism dies. I wish I could infect all of you with the same belief and in every one of your acts you would show that the taint of untouchability has been removed from your hearts.

The Epic of Travancore, pp. 161-2

313. SPEECH AT VENGANOOR

January 14, 1937

It gives me great pleasure to be in your midst and greater pleasure still to realize under what auspices I am touring Travancore today. I have in mind the great Proclamation that has practically removed untouchability from Travancore. I say "practically removed" because the Proclamation cannot do everything, although it has worked wonders. To remove untouchability root and branch from this soil and, for that matter, from India, rests with you and me.

In Ayyan Kali, whom you half in jest and half in endearment call the Pulaya Rajah, you have an indefatigable worker. I understand that under his leadership you have been making steady progress and I have no doubt that this gracious Proclamation will quicken the progress you are making. I must not keep you or keep myself long as I have a heavy day in front of me. If I had the time, I would love to pass a whole day with you and know many of you intimately. As it is, I have to be satisfied with having seen your beaming faces and making such acquaintances as I can within the few minutes I have in your midst. I would like to leave just one thought with you before I go. I hope you will make a wise and religious use of this opportunity to go to the temples. It depends upon our mental condition whether we gain something or do not gain anything by going to the temples. We have to approach these temples in a humble penitent mood. They are so many houses of God. Of course God resides in every human form, indeed in every particle of His creation, in everything that is on

this earth. But since we very fallible mortals do not appreciate the fact that God is everywhere, we impute special sanctity to temples and think that God resides there. And so when we approach these temples we must cleanse our bodies, our minds and our hearts, and we should enter them in a prayerful mood and ask God to make us purer men and purer women for having entered their portals. And if you will take this advice of an old man, this physical deliverance that you have secured will be a deliverance of the soul.

The Epic of Travancore, pp. 157-8

314. SPEECH AT TECKLAI

January 14, 1937

I thank you for the addresses, but I must remind you that they should be brief, to the point and written either in Hindi or in Malayalam. Surely an address written in English cannot be understood by large masses of people whom we want to serve. If they were written in Hindi, they could catch at least a few words common to both Hindi and Malayalam. You will perhaps say that just as the masses do not understand English, neither do they understand Hindi. But I tell you it does not come to the same thing. Those who are innocent of English surely can pick up a few words of Hindi. And then why should you enclose these addresses in hideous frames? How am I to take all these home? The glass is sure to be damaged, as indeed this one has been damaged and it has thus become a dangerous article to carry.

One word about the Proclamation which has brought me here. I know that your presence here is a sign that you are sharing the celebrations going on in Travancore. Every one of you should understand the significance of the Proclamation. If all men and women here think or harbour untouchability in their hearts, they have not given effect to the Proclamation. That Proclamation tells you—every man and woman and child—that henceforth there is no untouchability in Travancore, that in the sight of God and man, Nairs and Nambudiris, Ezhavas and Pulayas and Pariahs and what not are all equally children of God. And when they get entrance to the Holy of Holies, naturally all other distinctions fall to the ground. Therefore, those who are better off will take care to see that they will raise those who are worse off economically and socially. And if you have flatte-

red yourselves with the belief that you are *savarnas*, you should bring the *avarnas* out of their houses and teach them the art of worship. But I know that even the *savarnas* have forgotten the art of worship. However, now that the Proclamation has purified the atmosphere, you must learn the art and teach it to the *avarnas*. I hope and pray that you will do so.

The Epic of Travancore, pp. 159-60

315. SPEECH AT THIRUVATTAR

January 14, 1937[1]

I was at this place not many years ago when the forbidding-looking walls of this temple seemed to say, "not yet for you this place." Nobody had thought some months ago that there would be a Proclamation of H.H. the Maharaja of Travancore and that all temples would be flung open to the untouchables. The sins of past ages have been obliterated by literally a stroke of the pen. Though it was the hand of the Maharaja that traced the signature over the Proclamation, the spirit behind it was that of the Lord Padmanabhaswami. I understood only today the beautiful legend that passes current in Travancore about the Maharaja. As you all know—I suppose every child in Travancore knows—that the Maharajas in Travancore are known as Padmanabhadas. They are so many Viceroys of Padmanabhaswami, and as I understood yesterday the Maharaja has to go from day to day to that temple and receive instructions about the day's work from Padmanabhaswami. That the thing does not happen as I have described to you as between man and man is true, but the spirit behind the legend is an excellent spirit. It means that the Maharaja may not do anything that is wrong or sinful and has not the stamp of God's approval. And so, as I said, it is the spirit of God that moved the Maharaja to take the great step he has taken and I wish to congratulate you who are the beneficiaries under the great Proclamation. It is a great act whose significance we are yet too near in time to realize. During my last tour I addressed a gathering outside the forbidding-looking temple walls as they then appeared to me. I regard myself voluntarily as a Pulaya or a Pariah, the lowest amongst the low, a Harijan amongst Harijans. But the Maharaja himself, as I have now learnt, bears the title of Servant of God, i.e., Harijan, and

[1] The date is from *The Bombay Chronicle*, 16-1-1937.

proudly signs himself as such. No doubt he is the first among God's servants, let us hope by right of service. He is not the first lord among lords and masters. In service there is always open and meritorious competition. It demands no reward, no distinction. Let us look at the Proclamation in this light. Let Nambudiris and other Brahmins and the so-called high-caste people of Travancore rise to the occasion and be voluntarily Harijans amongst Harijans, servants of God, and let all the world know by their action that in virtue of the Proclamation there is none high and none low but all are equal in the eyes of God.

The Epic of Travancore, pp. 163-4

316. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, NAGERCOIL[1]

January 14, 1937

I am not a stranger to Nagercoil and for that matter to the whole of Travancore. You have more than once made me acquainted with the Nagercoil crowds. You have on more than one occasion shown your boundless enthusiasm, if it was only in point of attendance. You do not expect me to give you lengthy replies to the addresses you have been good enough to present to me. Indeed you need not have presented me with any address at all on this occasion. No doubt I have come to share in your rejoicings over the Proclamation. But I have come more as a penitent pilgrim than anything else. And my mind just now is so full of the duty that lies in front of you in virtue of that Proclamation that I cannot divide my attention among other things. Nevertheless I must express my astonishment at getting double addresses from those who are engaged in carriying on Hindi propaganda. I have not been able to find out the reason for this overlapping of energy, but I dare not give time to unravelling this mystery.

Let us consider the duty devolving on those for whom the Proclamation has been designed. You may take this Proclamation as an ordinary act of the State to which for the most part people are indifferent, or you may regard it as an extraordinary act of the State on which the future of Hinduism depends; and if you assimilate the spirit of the Proclamation, the result will be astonishing not only for

[1] The meeting was attended by no less than 50,000 people. Addresses of welcome were presented to Gandhiji on behalf of the Municipal Council, the Hindi Prachar Sabha, Nanjinad Sambar Sangam and Hindi Prem Sabha.

Travancore but for the whole of India. This untouchability was, and I suppose I must still say is, a weedy growth upon Hinduism, so much so that it threatened to smother the finest flowers of Hinduism. I regard this Proclamation as a very brave attempt—an outstanding attempt—to rid Hinduism of the curse of untouchability, and issuing the Proclamation the Maharaja and his advisers have laid the axe at the root of untouchability. But the Proclamation will be of no use if there is no response on the part of the *savarna* and *avarna* Hindus. Ever since my coming to Travancore I have been doing nothing but visiting temples which were until a little while ago forbidden ground to me by my own choice. So long as these temples were barred against the major part of the Hindu population to Travancore, the temples could go on as they liked. The Proclamation is the beginning of the process of purification of Hinduism, and in the process both *savarnas* and *avarnas* have to play their due part. It would be a great reflection on *savarna* Hindus if the untouchables of yesterday were to be left to their own resources. It is therefore absolutely necessary for you and me to find out the place temples have in the growth of Hinduism. You and I have to find out whether a living God resides in these temples. I assure you that our search will be in vain unless we put our hearts into it and apply our minds to it. In all humility I fancy that I know how that search is to be made. But during this hurried tour and hurriedly-got-up meeting, it is not possible to dilate on the search. I must seek some other and better opportunity for making that enquiry. It may be sufficient for the time being if I have succeeded in stimulating your appetite for that search. It will give me great satisfaction if I have succeeded in convincing you that we may not take this Proclamation in the ordinary way. It will be enough if every man and woman realizes his and her duty with reference to the working of this Proclamation. With this thought I propose to leave you to-night.

The Epic of Travancore, pp. 165-7

317. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

CAPE COMORIN,
January 15, 1937

CHI. MIRA,

I had your two letters received last night at the Cape—the end of the earth. And I had reply by wire to my telegraphic inquiry about you, Shanta and Kumarappa. I hope you showed your foot to the C.S.

I am anxious about it. You have severe cold there and we here melt on the slightest pretext. I hope you are at peace with youself. I am not in favour of your going in for new experiments in charkha-making. The charkha which is the simplest and the best is the cheapest in the long run. But if you want to make the experiment you can make it. The question of money does not weigh with me. It is that of postponing the progress of the boys under training. The highest speed has been attained on the flat thing. The vertical is cumbersome. Remember you are training boys who are unused to any spinning. If I were you, I should make them as fit as they can be on the wheel which has proved its worth as the best all-round charkha.

I must not give much time to correspondence, as I want to devote what I have today to *Harijan.*

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6374. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9840

318. TRAVANCORE PILGRIMAGE

[*January 15, 1937*][1]

I am writing this at the Cape in front of the sea where three waters meet and furnish a sight unequalled in the world. For this is no port of call for vessels. Like the goddess the waters around are virgin. The Cape has no population worth the name. The place is therefore eminently fitted for contemplation. This is the third day of the pilgrimage. Having mentally and voluntarily become an untouchable and therefore shunned the temples which were barred against fellow untouchables, I feel like them the joy of the removal of the bar. I approached the great temple in Trivandrum with awe and due veneration. Curiosity had given way to the incoming of something that was to fill the void of years. As I write these lines I am reminded of the peace I felt in the Cathedral in Madras to which Bishop Whitehead had taken me now over twenty years ago. In that Cathedral on the particular morning, so far as I remember, we were the only two persons present. In the Trivandrum Temple there were thousands awaiting the arrival of my party. But there was no noise, no bustle. Untouchables of yesterday were in the silent concourse in perhaps

[1] Gandhiji was at Cape Comorin on this date,

equal numbers. I could not distinguish between the two. All had almost the same marks on their bodies, all had the same kind of garments. Evidently the custom is to have only seamless wear which need not be more than a *lungi*, never more than a wrapper added to it. The majority, including the priests, were bare-bodied. In the midst of this vast assemblage, I seemed to enjoy the kind of peace I had felt in the Madras Cathedral. And yet the two were quite different. The Madras peace had no background. This the Padmanabha Temple had. And I would not have experienced it if the crowd had been boisterous or at all in a non-spiritual mood. All those bare bodies in spotlessly white *lungis* standing row upon row in perfectly silent and reverent attitude produced an impression upon me which will endure till life lasts. The entry into the very spacious temple, crowded with images which the guiding priest in his choice Hindi made almost to speak, was no less soul-stirring. Then we reached the great central image. It was all like a day-dream. The knowledge that I was visiting the temple designed specially for the Maharajas of Travancore and that too in the company of the hitherto despised untouchables, heightened the effect which the images and the surroundings had produced upon me. The silence and the attitude of worship have continued at the three temples I visited between Trivandrum and the Cape. And this morning I visited the famous temple at the Cape, dedicated to the Virgin. Accompained by a large party of Harijans who were singing *bhajans*, we passed through the street leading to the temple. The street like the temple was forbidden to the untouchables. But now, without any opposition from anywhere, we walked through it and then into the temple as if we had never been prohibited. It is a dream realized in a manner and in a place where the realization seemed almost unthinkable before it was realized elsewhere. "You may have temples opened in the North, but you will never succeed in having them opened in Cochin and Travancore—the citadels of orthodoxy," I used to be told before. Now one citadel has yielded with rare generosity and grace. The genuineness of the generosity and grace seems to have disarmed all opposition. The legend attached to the acts of the Maharajas of Travancore had perhaps its due share in the conversion of the people. The Maharajas are called 'Padmanabhadas', meaning servants of Padmanabha, i.e., God. The Maharajas are supposed to visit the temple every morning (and I understand they do whilst in Trivandrum) and receive instructions for the day's work from God. The Proclamation is therefore an act of God through His servant the present Maharaja. Whatever may be the cause, the fact of the Proclamation being given effect to by an overwhelming number of *savarnas* and being availed of by *avarnas* stands out as a miracle.

But the very miracle weighs me down with a sense of responsibility which chastens me and affects my elation. If what is going on today is to be consolidated, there must be continued effort by all true Harijan workers for the education of both *savarnas* and *avarnas* on the meaning of the Proclamation. But a few months ago it was the fashion on the part of *savarnas* to say that *avarnas* did not want temple-entry. It was equally the fashion on the part of some vocal members among the *avarnas* to say that they did not care for temple-entry and that they cared only for economic uplift. Both mistook the meaning of the anti-untouchability campaign. The Travancore experience has opened their eyes. The right of entering temples abolishes untouchability at a stroke—untouchability that prevented a large section of Hindus from sharing with the rest the privilege of worship in the same manner as the latter. Economic uplift was there. But the best among the *avarnas* felt the sting of the deprivation. It soured them and angered them against the haughty *savarnas*. Now all that has changed. The *avarnas* feel the glow of freedom which they had never felt before.

All this marvellous result may easily be nullified if it is not followed up to its logical conclusion. Before *avarnas* can forget the past, they must be made conscious of what they have come to. The message of freedom must be carried to the humblest hut. The minds of the Pulayas and the Pariahs should be opened to the implications of the suddenly-acquired freedom. This does not need an elaborate programme of literacy. That must come. But what is needed is immediate human contact. For this an army of volunteer workers of the right type is needed. And just as the message of freedom has to be taken to the *avarna* huts, so has it to be taken to the *savarna* homes.

Then there is the question of reform of temples from within. Here I cannot do better than quote from a long letter from a Mussalman friend who believes in Hinduism as much as he believes in Islam:

> You will soon be going to Travancore to celebrate the entry of Harijans into the temples thrown open to them. It is indeed a step forward. But what we need most is the restoration of the temples to their pristine purity and sanctity. The ideal thing behind temples is most holy. In the temples of ancient India resided great *rishis* who imparted divine wisdom. Today the priest sit there barring the way to those who need instruction and help to solve the problems of life. Alas! the priests of all religions are more in need of instruction than the poor masses.

These words are true. Never was the need for temple reform more urgent than today. Fortunately in Travancore the vast majority

of temples belong to the State and are under special management. They are kept clean and often undergo improvement and addition. They are never empty. They supply a felt want. If the priests had better education and would be custodians of the spirituality of the people, the temples would be houses both of worship and spiritual instruction as they were before.

Harijan, 23-1-1937

319. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

KANYAKUMARI,
January 15, 1937

CHI. LILA,

I have your letter. You can stay with Dwarkadas as long as you please. Your staying there does not mean that you should become lazy. Your spinning, reading, praying, etc., should regularly go on. It will not do to start on them afresh when you come to me. And it will not be right if you do not follow rules in eating and drinking.

I would rather that Dwarkadas was not taken to another hospital or another doctor. You are absolutely right in saying that all doctors belong to the same brotherhood. Hence, so long as a patient is willing to stick to the same doctor, it is not right to create doubts in his mind. Even the desire to go to a *vaidya* should be overcome. Nature cure is another matter. But in my view even for that the time has passed. So there is no need to insist on it. I am also a believer in fate. There is considerable truth in the saying "what fate has decreed cannot be otherwise". Only such a belief can give us strength for endurance. Human effort has its limitations.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

320. REMARKS IN VISITORS' BOOK

January 15, 1937

I am very happy to have visited this Library. It is my wish that this organization may endure.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 11013. Courtesy: Swami Vivekananda Library and Reading Room, Kanyakumari

321. WHAT IS KHADI SCIENCE?

I have often said that if khadi is a sound economic proposition it is also a science and a romance. I believe there is a book called *The Romance of Cotton* wherein the origin of cotton has been traced and an attempt made to show how its discovery altered the course of civilization. Everything can be turned into a science or a romance if there is a scientific or a romantic spirit behind it. Some people scoff at khadi and betray signs of impatience or disgust when one talks of hand-spinning. But it ceases to be an object of disgust or ridicule immediately you attribute to it the power of removing India-wide idleness, unemployment and consequent pauperism. It need not be, as a matter of fact, a panacea for the three ills. To be absorbingly interesting, the mere honest attributing of the power is enough. But you cannot attribute that potency to khadi and pursue it, as some do, in the manner of an ignorant needy artisan who gins, cards, spins or weaves because he must for his bread. A believer in its potency will pursue it in a deliberate, wise, methodical manner and in a scientific spirit, taking nothing for granted, testing every proposition, checking facts and figures, undaunted by defeats, unelated by petty successes, never satisfied till the goal is reached. The late Maganlal Gandhi had a living faith in the potency of khadi. It was for him a thrilling romance. And he wrote the elements of the science of khadi. No detail was too trifling for him, no scheme was too big for him. Richard Gregg had and has the same fire in him. He has given it a universal meaning. His *Economics of Khaddar* is an original contribution to the movement. He recognizes the spinning-wheel as the symbol *par excellence* of non-violence. It may or may not be all that. But their belief gave Maganlal Gandhi and gives Richard Gregg all the joy and pleasure derivable from any fascination theme. A science to be science must afford the fullest scope for satisfying the hunger of body, mind and soul. Sceptics have wondered how khadi can afford such satisfaction or, in other words, what I mean when I use the expression "Science of Khadi". I cannot better answer the question than by copying below the questions framed by me hurriedly for a khadi worker who offered to be examined by me. The questions were not framed in their logical sequence nor were they exhaustive. They admit of rearrangement and addition. But I reproduce a translation made for me by a friend from the original in Hindi.

PART I

1. How much cotton is produced in India and where? Name the varieties. How much remains in India, how much is spun by hand, how much goes to England and other lands?

2. (a) What quantity of cloth is manufactured in Indian mills? How much of it is used in India and how much is exported?

(b) Of the above how much is manufactured from swadeshi mill yarn and how much from foreign mill yarn?

(c) How much cloth is imported?

(d) What quantity of khadi is produced in India?

Note: Give your answers in square yards and in terms of money.

3. Discuss the merits and demerits of the three kinds of cloth above mentioned.

4. Some say khadi is dear, coarse and not lasting. Give your answers to these complaints, and where there is foundation for any of them offer your solution.

5. In the (A.I.S.A) khadi work how many spinners are engaged? How much have they earned during all these years? Give the number of mill spinners and their total annual earnings.

6. (a) How is the work of the A.I.S.A. carried on? How much is spent by them in administration?

(b) What staff is employed in the running of a swadeshi mill, and what proportion of wages do such persons get in comparison with the mill hands?

7. (a) What place in your opinion does clothing occupy in the necessaries of life?

(b) Name the chief necessaries of life and give their proportionate percentages.

8. If everyone in India gave up wearing mill-made cloth, whether foreign or Indian, how much money would remain in India and to whom would it go?

9. What does India export in place of the cloth she imports? What loss, if any, does India sustain through this exchange?

10. What percentage of the population is able to buy cloth?

11. What is the percentage of those who have the leisure to make their own cloth? And how?

12.“Khadi will establish perfect economic balance.” Is this statement really correct? Give reasons for your answer.

13. If khadi became universal, what effect would this have on trade , occupation and transport, and in what manner?

14. Assuming that for another 50 years khadi does not become universal, what is likely to be the effect on the economic condition of our people?

PART II

1. Give a description of current Indian spinning-wheels. Which is the best amongst them? Give drawings of any four spinning-wheels and the correct measurement of each constituent part. State the species of wood employed, the length and the girth of the spindle and the thickness of the *mal*.

2. Compare the current charkhas with the Yeravda wheel in the matter of speed, cost and general advantages.

3. How would you ascertain the variety of cotton, the strength of the yarn, and the count of spun yarn?

4. Of what count and strength is the yarn you spin? What is your speed on the *takli* and the wheel? Which wheel do you generally use?

5. How much cloth does a man and a woman require respectively for his or her clothing? How much yarn is required for making the same, and how much time is necessary for spinning it?

6. How much yarn is required to clothe one family? How much cotton is needed to produce the above? How much land is required for growing the necessary amount of cotton?

(A family consists of a father, mother and three children—one girl and two boys, 7, 5 and 3 years old.)

7. Compare the current carding-bow with the new ones. How much do you card per hour? How can you judge whether the cotton is properly carded or not? How long does it take you to make one pound of slivers? How many slivers do you make from one *tola* of cotton?

8. How much cotton can you gin in one hour? Compare ginning by hand with ginning by machine, giving the respective merits and demerits of either process. Describe and give a drawing of the current hand-ginning machine.

9. Give the length of the yarn of 20 counts required to weave one yard of cloth 36 inches wide. How many hands are required to weave the same?

10. Compare the pit loom with the shuttle loom.

Harijan, 16-1-1937

322. NOTES

FOR KHADI ORGANIZATIONS

The year 1936 is just over and all khadi organizations would do well to examine promptly and carefully the results of the year's work and submit their statements to the A.I.S.A. office. I have asked the latter to produce a brief but full report of the work of the Association during the last year, particularly with reference to the working of the new scheme of increased spinning wages. Such a report can be had only if all the branches and the various organizations affiliated to the Association readily co-operate and send without delay accurate particulars regarding work done and results achieved by them to the Central Office. The plans and programme for the current year have to be prepared at once, and for this, too, full information regarding the previous year's working is indispensable. I hope therefore that khadi organizations will realize the urgency and supply all available information to the A.I.S.A. office at the earliest moment. Let them remember that time is of the essence in this matter.

SPINNERS' WAGES

The council of the A.I.S.A. has decided that the A.I.S.A. branches and its certified organizations should give spinning wages on the basis of a scale sufficient to enable the spinner to have, besides minimum clothing requirements, adequate nutritive diet for eight hours' efficient work. The various branches and organizations have, in accordance with this decision, fixed suitable standards of spinning rates which are calculated to enable the spinner to earn a daily wage of Rs. 2 to $2^1/_2$. This wage is, however, related to efficient work and can be actually earned only if the requisite standard of output and quality of yarn is attained by the spinner. The standard fixed, though high, is not difficult to attain, but it must be admitted that at the present time only a small percentage of the spinners has come up to it, partly because of the crudeness of the spinning-wheels and slivers they use and partly because of their lack of skill. The real objective of the scheme is, however, not merely to lay down a reasonable scale for wage basis but to enable the bulk of the spinners to actually earn the same. It, therefore, becomes the duty of all workers engaged in production activity to do all that they can to help the spinners to attain the requisite skill besides securing satisfactory wheels and slivers so as to ensure the actual earning of the desired wage by them. It is hoped

the khadi workers will not rest content until the majority of the spinners on their registers actually earn the amount aimed at. Let them also realize that the higher scale is not the highest aimed at. The real aim in terms of present values is to ensure eight annas for eight hours' attentive and skilled spinning. That may be a far-off event. But it will never come unless very early ten pice become as natural as three are today. Let it be also remembered that in the new scale the increase is roughly distributed half-and-half between the effort of the spinner and the rise given by the A.I.S.A.

AN IMPORTANT CORRECTION

I know there are readers of *Harijan* who study many articles that appear from time to time in *Harijan*. The weekly is not published for providing momentary amusement or pleasure for the reader. It is designed to be a serious contribution to the Harijan cause in the widest sense of the term. It therefore often contains writings of more than transitory value. Hence serious errors need to be corrected. Such an error was detected in the *Harijan* of the 9th inst. at page 382, 2nd column, line 2. Read 'sub-human' for 'human'.[1]

Harijan, 16-1-1937

323. MESSAGE TO BAHUJAN-VIHAR BUDDHA MANDIR, BOMBAY

[*January 16, 1937*][2]

I regard this opening[3] as a part of the Hindu revival movement that is going on in our midst. It is fortunate that so learned a scholar as Prof. Dharmanand Kosambi is to be the priest and teacher in charge.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-1-1937

[1] *Vide* "Right to Live", 9-1-1937

[2] From the newspaper report, which says that this was written from Quillon. Gandhiji was in Quillon on this date.

[3] Of the Bahujan-Vihar Buddha Mandir at Poibavdi, Parel; *vide* also "Letter to B. G. Kher", 24-8-1936

324. SPEECH AT SHIVAGIRI MATH, VARAKALLA

January 16, 1937

It gives me very great pleasure to be in your midst for the third time. The first time I was here, I had the pleasure of paying my respects to your Guru, the great Swami.[1] You have invited me to study his work in your midst. Well, I did so as fervently as I could even on the first occasion I was here. I had long and serious discussions with him over matters of common interest, and I had no difficulty in agreeing with him on many subjects of which we spoke. I had discussions also at that time with his first and learned disciples. After his lamented death, his disciples sent me many things including a collection of the Swami's sayings. I studied them with the respect that the work of such a great man demanded.

You are quite right in saying that every time I have come here I have taken away something for myself. I admit that I have no title whatsoever to the title of "Mahatma". That title has often embarrassed me, sometimes it has stunk in my nostrils. This has happened whenever with the name of 'Mahatma' on their lips people have done something unworthy. I have no new religion to give, no new truth to expound. My humble role is that of a scavenger both literally and spiritually. I know the outward art of cleaning the streets, commodes and latrines, and I am endeavouring to the extent of my ability to clean my inside also, so that I may become a faithful interpreter of the truth as I may see it.

Of course I had many things in common with the teachings of the Swami. I do believe that there is only one religion in the world, but I also believe that although it is one mighty tree, it has many branches. I tried to explain this thing to the Swami as I recollect even today. And even as all the branches take their sap from one source, even so all religions derive their essence from one fountain-source. Of course there can be only one God if there is one religion, and God who is one complete whole cannot have many branches. But He is invisible and indefinable and, one might literally say that He has as many names as there are human beings on earth. No matter by what name we describe Him, He is the same without a second and if we are all children of the same Creator, naturally there cannot be any caste amongst us. We are one brotherhood and sisterhood, and there cannot

[1] Narayanguru Swami

be any distinction of high and low amongst us. There are no *savarnas* and *avarnas*, or all are *savarnas* or all are *avarnas*.

But each one of us has his or her occupation cut out for himself or herself. This occupation is not caste, but it is known in Hinduism as varna, which has nothing in common with caste as we understand it today. Caste is a man-made institution only, fit to be destroyed, but varna is a divine law. We may disregard it to our harm, and we will profit by it if we follow it. A carpenter, a blacksmith, a mason, a scavenger, a bricklayer, a teacher, a soldier—these have different occupations, but none is high and none is low among them. And if we begin to overlap one another, we create a *sankara* (confusion) of all varnas. Therefore immediately you take away the sting of distinction from different varnas, it becomes not only a law, but it gives us an opportunity of doing what we are particularly fitted for. That is what Hinduism teaches us. That is my interpretation of all true religions. That is my interpretation of Hinduism pure and undefiled. So far as I understood the great Swami, he did not dissent from the view I have just expounded to you.

You have tickled me by inviting me to come and settle down here. The temptation is really great. This is one of the pleasantest spots in India and the weather here is magnificent. I know that if I should come here I should be surrounded by friends who would provide me with all my needs. But the path of life, if taken religiously, is strait and narrow. It has been described as sharp as the edge of a sword. You cannot look this side or that side without stumbling into an abyss. And the *Gita* says that better by far is the religion which is cut out for you than one for which you are not born. Therefore, although the temptation you have held forth is very great, I must resist it just now.

The Epic of Travancore, pp. 168-71.

325. SPEECH AT PARIPALLI

January 16, 1937

It gives me great pleasure to be in your midst. I see from your address, which I have already read, that many of you have walked nearly 22 miles to come to this meeting. I am sorry that it was not possible for the managers of this tour to enable me to go to your places in the hills.

I have heard something of the great work that is being done by Sjt. Raman Pillai among the hill tribes of Kadakal and Paripalli. Evidently from his hoary beard he appears to be as old as I, if not older. But from the energy with which he addressed this meeting, I thought he was a young old man. It gives me great joy to know that in him you have an indefatigable worker, guide and friend. I am glad to find that several activities are being conducted for your benefit. You are right in saying that this Proclamation is epoch-making and glorious. It is like a gift suddenly come into the possession of a man who is not fit to receive it. The suddenness of it shows that it is something for which neither you nor I were prepared. Not that what has been given was not due to us. But the deprivation of many long years seemed to make us unfit to receive the gift when it came. But what I have been witnessing round me shows that you were fit for the gift, and having got the gift it appears you were never deprived of it. For I know that wherever I have visited temples—where there were Harijans and non-Harijans—I failed to see any distinction between the two. The demeanour and attitude of the Harijans seemed to be as if they were to the manner born. They were spotlessly clean and their attitude of reverence left nothing to be desired. There was among all these men and women a dignity that was truly captivating.

But we should be making a serious mistake if we thought that nothing now remains to be done. The present gives the promise of a bright future if we take the full advantage of the opportunities given to us by reason of the Proclamation. I do hope that many *savarna* Hindu workers will come forward to carry the message of the Proclamation to the *avarnas*, to take them out of their huts, accustom them to going to the temples, and explain to them the implications of the Proclamation. For sceptics and heretics the temples have no meaning, but for one who has believed in temples there is no mistaking the fact that constant temple-going changes the whole outlook on life of temple-goers. May this be realized among all these so-called *avarnas*.

The Epic of Travancore, pp. 172-3.

326. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

QUILON,
January 16, 1937

CHI. BRAJKISAN,

I have your letter. You did indeed commit an error. It has done no good either to Damodar or to Vishwanath. Its doing you any good was of course out of the question. But telling you this will not undo the error, nor will your giving up salt, which in any case has no bearing upon this error arising from attachment. I have already told you that the allowance you receive is for your maintenance and is not to be spent for the satisfaction of your personal cravings. And that if anything is left over it should be spent for public service. I have no hopes of Damodar or Vishwanath. What you now propose to do is the right thing. Sell the books and such other things and repay the debt. If the amount thus obtained is insufficient you may earn some by your own labour; otherwise be patient. Your best repentance will be to make sure that you do not ever again make the same mistake and are careful in everything.

I return you the letter. Mother, I hope, is well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I shall probably return to Wardha on the 24th.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2456

327. SPEECH AT QUILON

January 16, 1937

I am deeply grateful to you for having waived your undoubted right of reading your address.[1] You have been good enough to save your time and my time. I am no stranger to this place. I have many a happy recollection of my stay here. When I came here last it was thought a presumption for an *avarna* to enter a temple, but now I have come to share with you your rejoicing over the Proclamation. It is a brave, generous and gracious act and it combines the enthusiasm of the young Maharaja with the wisdom and courage of Her Highness

[1] The address was presented by K. S. Parameswara Pillay, Chairman of the Municipal Council.

the Maharani, his mother. As you may be aware, I had the pleasure and privilege of waiting upon them in their palace and renewing their acquaintance. The Maharani's queenly heart was full of joy over the manner in which the *avarnas* and the *savarnas* had received the Proclamation, and I saw the young Maharaja nodding his assent to everything that his gracious mother was saying to him. And every lover of the State, from one end of India to the other, has testified to the fact that the Proclamation lacks nothing in completeness. By a stroke of the pen, it opens all State temples to all those who call themselves Hindus without the slightest reservation. As I have said so often, such an act could not be prompted by any purely worldly considerations. There must have been the spirit of God inspiring both the wise mother and the brave son.

As I have been going from temple to temple and looking at beaming faces of perhaps tens of thousands of men and women, mingling together without the slightest distinction, I confess I have not been able to restrain my joy at the sight. I have called it a great religious revival that is going on in Travancore. That religious revival began some years ago, but we had no visible sign, no visible demonstration of it. But this Proclamation is a visible demonstration of the revival which he who runs may read. To me it is a great sign of purification of our ancient faith. I have held for now close on half a century that untouchability is the greatest blot on Hinduism, and therefore you can only imagine—I cannot describe it fully—my joy over the Proclamation. I congratulate all the Travancorians on this signal gift which you have received from your Prince. I only hope that you, who have begun so well, will also end well, till the light that has been lit in Travancore will spread throughout Bharatvarsha. The Maharani and the Maharaja and the Dewan have done their duty. They can do no more. But if this light is to spread throughout India, it will be purely as a result of your response to the Proclamation. You have to understand the implications of this great act and your response must not be purely formal, but must come from the bottom of your heart and then, and not till then, will be manifested the great change of heart for which I have been pining all these years and for which I have always been fervently praying.

Let me for a few moments consider what Hinduism consists of, what it is that has fired so many saints about whom we have historical record. Why has it contributed so many philosophers to the world? What is it in Hinduism that has so enthused its devotees for centuries? Did they see untouchability in Hinduism and still enthuse over it? In the midst of my struggle against untouchability I have been asked by

several workers as to the esssence of Hinduism. We have no simple *Kalema*[1], they said, that we find in Islam, nor have we 3.16 *St. John*[2] of the Bible. Have we or have we not something that will answer the demands of the most philosophic among the Hindus or the most matter-of-fact among them? Some have said, and not without good reason, that the *Gayatri* answers that purpose. I have perhaps recited the *Gayatri mantra* thousands of times, having understood the meaning of it. But still it seems to me that it did not answer the whole of my aspirations. Then as you are aware I have, for years past, been swearing by the *Bhagavad Gita*, and have said that it answers all my difficulties and has been my *Kamadhenu*, the Cow of plenty, my guide, my open sesame, at hundreds of moments of doubt and difficulty. I cannot recall a single occasion when it has failed me. But it is not a book that I can place before the whole of this audience. It requires a prayerful study before the *Kamadhenu* yields the rich milk she holds in her udder.

But I have fixed upon the *mantra* that I am going to recite to you, as containing the whole essence of Hinduism. Many of you, I think, know the *Ishopanishad*. I read it years ago with translation and commentary. I learnt it by heart in Yeravda Jail. But it did not then captivate me as it has done during the past few months, and I have now come to the final conclusion that if all the Upanishads and all the other scriptures happened all of a sudden to be reduced to ashes and if only the first verse in the *Ishopanishad* were left intact in the memory of Hindus, Hinduism would live for ever.

Now this *mantra* divides itself in four parts. The first part is. ईशावास्थमिदं सर्वे थत्किच जगत्थां जगत्. It means, as I would translate: All this that we see in this great Universe is pervaded by God. Then come the second and third parts which read together, as I read them: तेन त्यक्तेन भुंजीथा. I divide these into two and translate them thus: Renounce it and enjoy it. There is another rendering which means the same thing, though: Enjoy what He gives you. Even so you can divide it into two parts. Then follows the final and most important part: मा गृधः कस्यस्विद्धनम— which means: Do not covet anybody's wealth or possession. All the other *mantras* of that ancient Upanishad are a commentary or an attempt to give us the full meaning of the first *mantra*. As I read the *mantra* in the light of the *Gita* or the *Gita* in the

[1] "There is no God but Allah and Mohammed is His Prophet."

[2] "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

light of the *mantra* I find that the *Gita* is a commentary on this *mantra*. It seems to me to satisfy the cravings of the socialist and the communist, of the philosopher and the economist. I venture to suggest to all who do not belong to the Hindu faith that it satisfies their cravings also. And if it is true—and I hold it to be true—you need not take anything in Hinduism which is inconsistent with or contrary to the meaning of this *mantra*. What more can a man in the street want to learn than this that the one God and Creator and Master of all that lives pervades the Universe?

The three other parts of the *mantra* follow directly from the first. If you believe that God pervades everything that He has created, you must believe that you cannot enjoy anything that is not given by Him. And seeing that He is the Creator of His numberless children, it follows that you cannot covet anybody's possession. If you think that you are one of His numerous creatures, it behoves you to renounce everything and lay it at His feet. That means that the act of renunciation of everything is not a mere physical renunciation but represents a second or new birth. It is a deliberate act, not done in ignorance. It is therefore a regeneration. And then, since he who holds the body must eat and drink and clothe himself, he must naturally seek all that he needs from Him. And he gets it as a natural reward of that renunciation. As if this was not enough, the *mantra* closes with this magnificent thought: Do not covet anybody's possession. The moment you carry out these precepts you become a wise citizen of the world, living at peace with all that lives. It satisfies one's highest aspirations on this earth and hereafter. No doubt it will not satisfy the aspirations of him who does not believe in God and His undisputed sovereignty. It is no idle thing that the Maharaja of Travancore is called *Padmanabhadas*. It is a great thought. We know that God Himself has taken the title of *Dasanudas*—servant of servants. If all the princes would call themselves servants of God, they would be correctly describing themselves, but they cannot be servants of God unless they are servants of the people. And if zamindars and monied men and all who have possessions would treat themselves as trustees and perform the act of renunciation that I have described, this world would indeed be a blessed world to live in.

I must not labour the meaning of this *mantra* any longer. I know that many of you here are learned men. My knowledge of Sanskrit is poor and I am a man of the street having no pretensions to learning, but what little I have read and what little has commended

itself to me I have assimilated. I suggest to you that this *mantra* has nothing abstruse in it. Anybody can understand its meaning and follow it out in daily life. Therefore I want to suggest to the whole of this audience that they should carry the whole of this *mantra* in Malayalam to every home and help everyone to shape their lives in accordance with this *mantra;* and I make bold to say that having done so they may, without reading any other scriptures, call themselves Hindus. Disputes and differences arise when you begin to read big tomes and discuss interpretations of varying dictums contained in them. But now that, in virtue of this Proclamation, the distinction between high and low is abolished in Travancore, and there are no *avarnas* and *savarnas*, you will see that this *mantra* will satisfy all your wants. You will model your conduct in the spirit of this *mantra* and you will not find it difficult to live in the spirit of this Proclamation. I am saying this with a full sense of my responsibility. It is for you the people of Travancore to make or unmake this act of the great king. The opportunity for serving one's faith or one's fellowmen does not easily occur. That opportunity has come to you all of a sudden. May God grant you the measure of understanding that is necessary to live up to the spirit of this Proclamation.

The Epic of Travancore, pp. 174-80.

328. COW-PROTECTION OR COW-SLAUGHTER

We find that many of the things we do are contrary to our beliefs or our religion. We believe that we should speak the truth, yet we practise untruth; we believe that we should not indulge in immoral activities but we do indulge in them; we believe that we should refrain from violence, yet we practise it at every moment; we believe that we should win swaraj, yet do much which is contrary to this belief. We do not even do khadi work which will promote swaraj. The human race would perish if it always acted against its beliefs in all matters. Innumerable persons thoughtlessly do what should not be done. The foregoing describes the plight of those who have formed the habit of thinking.

Failure to serve the cow is an instance of conduct contrary to religion. Every Hindu believes that it is his special dharma to serve the cow. But only a handful of Hindus will be found to observe the basic rules of *goseva*. Many persons believe that they have done their duty once they have put a couple of pice into the cow-protection fund. These thoughts came to my mind while reading a letter written by Shri

Purushottam Narhar Joshi who calls himself a "gosevak". Shri Joshi is not only the head of the State goshala of Bhavnagar but also takes interest in cattle development. His letter[1] runs as follows.

Who will not believe while reading this letter that cowslaughter is being practised under the guise of cow-protection? We do not become murderers only when we commit actual murder with a knife. We commit murder even when we watch someone else being murdered and do not attempt to prevent it even though it is within our power to do so. Many of the suggestions made by the *gosevak* Shri Joshi can be put into practice anywhere in India. His letter is mainly addressed to Kathiawar and particularly the ruling princes there, as they can easily take up this work. Every State can set up one or more dairies, keep good stud bulls for the benefit of the people, castrate each and every male calf, supply good cows to whosoever needs them, provide facilities for training in animal husbandry, maintain pastures within their own States and prevent the cruel slaughter of buffalo-bulls which is being practised.

I shall take up later the suggestions which Shri Joshi has made about the activities of the Goseva Sangh.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 17-1-1937

329. SPEECH AT THATHARAMPALLI

January 17, 1937

As a matter of fact I am ill able to speak to you this morning. Ever since my arrival in Travancore I have been suffering from a bad cold and I am afraid I cannot give you a considered speech. I am glad Hindi is making steady progress. I wish everyone knowing English will hold it a crying shame not to be able to speak Hindi as well as English. I tell you it will not take as many years as the study of English does. One reason why it is easier than English is that it has a vocabulary which is common to Malayalam and, even like geographical and climatic conditions, the religious conditions of this great country make all tongues of India in many respects common. The sound of different languages does not strike as strange to our ears. When I hear Kannada, Tamil, Malayalam, Oriya or Bengali, I

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had said that though cows played a very important part in the national life of India, they were neglected. Because of poor breeding bullocks were unsuitable for draught purposes. He had suggested that the Goseva Sangh should draw up a plan for improving the condition and breed of cows.

assure you my ears do not notice any foreign element in that sound and although I do not know these languages I can very often gather the drift because of the common words in these languages. Now if I were to read this Hindi address to you, I am sure you will notice that many words in it are common to Malayalam. Addressing a meeting in Bangalore, I showed that the majority of words in Hindi were quite common to Kannada.

Now I have not said all these things in order to worry you for nothing. From an all-India point of view, it is a foregone conclusion that you must know Hindi. But it has something to do with the Proclamation also. If the *savarnas* are to give effect to the Proclamation, they must be blood-brothers with the *avarnas,* and for that you must spread yourselves amongst *avarnas*. And if there is any spirituality in you, it will overflow in many directions. I had a Pulaya girl coming to me this morning with a petition in her hand. She was a very good specimen of humanity, but she presented her petition in bad English. She wanted some help for her English studies. The person who wrote the petition for her had misrepresented things, but I could not ascertain the correct position from her as she could neither talk Hindi nor English. I have of course handed over her petition to the local Harijan Sevak Sangh. But if this girl had been taught Hindi, I am sure she would have been able to talk to me fluently. I must tell you that a girl of thirteen should be able to call herself an Indian, not merely a Travancorian. Had she known Hindi, she would have been able to travel from one end of India to another without much difficulty. Now fly with me on the wings of your imagination to the Hindukush. What would happen to the girl there? She would be as much at home in Kashmir as here. Here is the point I am trying to make. Supposing you have understood the point of my remark and decided to go about amongst *avarnas*, you will teach them not English but Hindi, and thereby you will enrich yourselves and enrich the boys and girls you will take up, and you will broaden your outlook and theirs, and not commit the atrocious blunder of giving them a modicum of bad English, but straight away you will give them the treasures hidden in Tulsidas. For believe me the Proclamation can become a dead letter not through any fault of the Maharaja but through sins of omissions and commissions on your part.

The Epic of Travancore, pp. 1818-3.

330. SPEECH AT HARIPAD

January 17, 1937

At this meeting I would love to detain you for a few minutes on the message of Hinduism I gave to the meeting in Quilon last night. I ventured at that meeting to say that the whole of Hinduism could be summed up in the first verse of *Ishopanishad*. I suggested then that if all other Hindu scriptures happened to be reduced to ashes and to go out of the memory of men and if only that one verse were to abide with us, the destruction would be no loss. Hinduism would even then remain with us. The original Sanskrit of the *mantra* is perhaps as easy as anybody learning Sanskrit could possibly wish. This Upanishad enjoys the reputation of being part of the original Vedas. It is the shortest Upanishad known to us. But, as I have said, if we had only the first verse of that Upanishad remaining with us, it would be enough to supply all our wants. Let me repeat that *mantra* in my faulty Sanskrit pronunciation:

ईशावास्थमिदं सर्वे थत्किंच जगत्थां जगत्
तेन त्यक्तेन भुंजीथा मा गृधः कस्यस्विद्धनम।

Those who know a little bit of Sanskrit will find that there is nothing abstruse there that you find in other Vedic *mantras,* and its meaning is simply this: All that there is in this Universe, great or small, including the tiniest atom, is pervaded by God, known as Creator or Lord. Isha means the Ruler, and He who is the Creator naturally by very right becomes the Ruler, too. And here in this verse the seer has chosen no other epithet for the Deity but that of the Ruler, and he has excepted nothing from His jurisdiction. He says everything that we see is pervaded by the Deity, and from that naturally the other parts of the *mantra* follow. Thus he says: Renounce everything, i.e., everything that is on this Universe, the whole of the Universe, and not only this tiny globe of ours, renounce it. He asks us to renounce it as we are such insignificant atoms that if we had any idea of possession it would seem ludicrous. And then, says the *rishi,* the reward of renunciation is भुंजीथा i.e., enjoyment of all you need. But there is a meaning about the word 'enjoy'—you might as well say use, eat, etc.,—but it means that you may not take more than is necessary for your growth. Therefore this enjoyment or use is limited by two conditions. One is the act of renunciation or, as the author of the *Bhagavata* would say, enjoy in the spirit श्रद्ध कृष्णार्पणमस्तु सर्वम्. And every day in the morning everyone who believes in Bhagavata Dharma has to dedicate his thoughts, words

thoughts, words and deeds to Krishna, and not until he has performed that daily act of renunciation or dedication has he the right of touching anything or drinking even a cup of water. And when a man has performed that act of renunciation and dedication, he derives from that act the right of eating, drinking, clothing, and housing himself to the extent necessary for his daily life. Therefore take it as you like, either in the sense that the enjoyment or use is the reward or renunciation, or that the renunciation is the condition of enjoyment, renunciation is essential for our very existence, for our soul. And as if that condition given in the *mantra* was incomplete, the *rishi* hastened to complete it by adding: 'Do not covet what belongs to another'. Now I suggest to you that the whole of the philosophy or religion found in any part of the world is contained in this *mantra*, and it excludes everything contrary to it. According to the canons of interpretation, anything that is inconsistent with Shruti—and the *Ishopanishad* is a *Shruti*—is to be rejected altogether.

Now I should like to apply this *mantra* our own condition in virtue of the Proclamation. Whilst I have unstintingly associated myself with your rejoicings over this great Proclamation and in tendering my thanks and congratulations to His Highness, Her Highness and their Dewan, in terms of this *mantra* I am obliged also to say that this Proclamation is a tardy carrying out of the behest contained in this verse of the *Ishopanishad* that I have recited. Only yesterday we were unfit to call ourselves Hindus. For if all that there is in the Universe is pervaded by God, that is to say, if the Brahmin and the Bhangi, the learned man and the scavenger, the Ezhava and the Pariah, no matter what caste they belong to—if all these are pervaded by Lord God, in the light of this *mantra*, there is none that is low, all are absolutely equal, equal because all are the creatures of that Creator. And this is not a philosophical thing to be dished out to Brahmins or Kshatriyas, but it enunciates an eternal truth which admits of no reduction, no dilution[1]. Therefore the Maharaja himself and the Maharani are not one whit superior to the lowliest being in Travancore. We are all creatures and servants of one God. If the Maharaja is the first among equals, as he is, he is so not by right of overlordship but by right of service. And therefore how nice, how noble it is that that very Maharaja is called 'Padmanabhadas'. It is a proud title and I congratulate those who bestowed that title on the

[1] The source has "palliation".

Maharaja of Travancore. Therefore when I told you that the Maharaja or the Maharani were not one whit superior to any one of us I told you what was the actual truth accepted by their Highnesses themselves. And if that is so, how can anyone here dare to arrogate superiority to himself or herself over any other human being? I tell you, therefore, that if the *mantra* holds good, if there is any man or woman here who believes that the temples are defiled by those called *avarnas*, that person I declare would be guilty of a grave sin. I tell you that the Proclamation has purified our temples of the taint that had attached to them.

I would like the *mantra* I have recited to be enshrined in the hearts of all our men and women and children, and if this contains, as I hold, the essence of Hinduism, it should be inscribed on the portals of every temple. Don't you then think that we should be belying that *mantra* at every step if we excluded anyone from those temples? Therefore if you will prove yourselves deserving of the gracious Proclamation and if you will be loyal to yourselves and to those who preside over your destinies, you will carry out the letter and spirit of this Proclamation I regard it as such a great spiritual act that it ought to remove scepticism from the hearts of sceptics or doubt from the hearts of those who doubted the truth of Hinduism or religion itself. Rightly understood this Proclamation should dispel the ignorant atheism of so called atheists. From the date of the Proclamation the Travancore temples, which, as I once said, were not abodes of God, have become abodes of God, since no one who used to be regarded as untouchable is any more to be excluded from them. I therefore hope and pray that throughout Travancore there may be no man or woman who will abstain from going to the temples for the reason that they have been opened to those who were regarded as Pariahs of society.

Harijan, 30-1-1937

331. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

HARIPAD,
January 17, 1937

CHI. MIRA,

I had your letter yesterday too. I am glad you are comparatively at peace with yourself. It will come if you will make an honest attempt. I have not understood your reference to pretension about personal service. But I shall know when we meet.

The tour is going on quite well.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6375. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9841

332. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

January 17, 1937

CHI. AMBUJAM,[1]

I reach there (D.V.) by the Express 22nd morning and pass the day at Kodambakam catching a train for Guntur in the evening.

I would like you during the day, if it is at all possible, to show Kanu the way of playing on the vina. And if it is easily purchasable and not costly, I would like to buy one for K. You can best guide me in this matter.

The tour is progressing well. I hope Father is keeping good health.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

333. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

January 17, 1937

CHI. MANUDI,

I got your letter. I understand what you tell me. I remember you often. I very much wanted to take you with me, but I felt that it would not be right to do so. You must be getting letters from Nimu. I want to reach there on the 24th. Let us see what happens. There it is cold; here it is terribly hot.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a Gujarati: C.W. 1563. courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

[1] The superscription and the subscription in this letter are in Hindi.

334. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

January 17, 1937

CHI. MUNNALAL,

There is no letter from you. You must have impressed Mirabehn. It is an easy task. There seems to have been some confusion regarding fruit. The reply to this I shall get when I reach there, which I expect to do on the 24th. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8360. Also C.W. 7005. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

335. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

January 17, 1937

CHI. KANTI,

Half an hour's trip in a boat has become protracted into one of three or four hours. I am therefore writing this on whatever paper I could lay my hands on. When would I get again so much time to write to you if I insist on using hand-made paper?

Saraswati went about with me for three days. We spent one afternoon at Ramachandran's father's place. I have talked over the matter with Saraswati and Ramachandran. We have fully discussed about Santiniketan. Ramachandran is not at present willing to send Saraswati to Santiniketan and he never was. If Saraswati had continued in the Mahila Ashram, then after her course there was finished he would have agreed to send her to Santiniketan. Now Ramachandran wishes that she should not go anywhere till she has finished her matriculation. He told me that Saraswati was no more keen about Santiniketan. I told both of them that if they desired that she should go to Santiniketan, I would not oppose the plan.

Ba desired that the betrothal should take place while I was here. But Ramachandran and I felt that so long as you two were staying apart and occupied with your studies, there was no need for betrothal. The idea, therefore, has been dropped for the present. I see from what Ramachandran said and from my talk with Saraswati that though she is not very intelligent, she is not likely to weaken in her resolve regarding you. The attitude of Ramachandren's parents is the same. I had a talk with Saraswati's father also and saw that he was no more

opposed to the proposal. I had asked Mahadev also to talk with him. He has already done so. He will write to you. He did tell me one thing, however, that you were sensitive about every little thing, take offence even when there is no cause for any offence and hurt those who love you.

It is my complaint against you that you don't take care of your health. I repeatedly advise you that you should not study at the cost of your health. Do study as much as you can but remember that good health is the first condition of happiness.

Please write to me so that I get your letter on the 24th at Wardha. I expect to reach there on that day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7312. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

336. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

January 17, 1937

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

I hope you are free of the ailment. You must not have even a single boil.

The cows here are even smaller than our cows and their milk yield is also very poor.

Rest from the *Harijan Sevak*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1889

337. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS ASAR

TRAVANCORE,
January 18, 1937

CHI. LAKSHMIDAS,

Hand over Anandi's and Puratan's letters to them. I believe that everything will be all right. Send Anandi to reach Wardha on the 24th. It will not matter if I reach there a day late. Durga is there in Maganwadi. A letter for Velanbehn also is enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5069. Courtesy: Anandibehn P. Buch.

338. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

January 18, 1937

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I am writing this letter at 9.30 p.m. while crossing one of the numerous creeks in Travancore. Half an hour's trip has proved to be one of three hours. Let us see when we reach our destination. As we are not carrying hand-made paper with us, I am using this. If I don't write now, I don't know when again I shall be able to. My companions are Rajkumari, Prabhavati, Mahadev, Pyarelal and Kanaiyo. This is a real pilgrimage. I never visited as many temples as I am doing now. Besides, the devotion with which I visit them was not there before. The throwing open of hundreds of temples to Harijans after the launching of the temple-entry agitation for Harijans is no ordinary event. You will read about all this in both *Harijan* and *Harijanbandhu*. I am hoping to reach Wardha on 24th.

I hope your affairs are going on well. Sushila, you must have recovered completely and must have found out the cause of the miscarriage. I hope Sita also is well.

Here comes the place where we land and this letter-writing must stop for the present.

Here I stop.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4859

339. SPEECH AT SHERTHALAI[1]

January 18, 1937

It is a matter of the greatest pleasure to me to be in your midst this afternoon. It is unnecessary for me now to say that I associate myself entirely in the expression of gratefulness to the Maharaja of Travancore. There can be no doubt that but for his solicitude for the faith of his ancestors and but for the wise guidance of Her Highness the Maharani and the able assistance of Sachivottama. Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar, we should not have seen this Proclamation. But I

[1] The occasion was the Proclamation celebration organized by the S.N.D.P. Yogam, the principal Ezhava organization.

would like to repeat to you what I have said on other occasions: that if the hand that traced the signature to the Proclamation was that of the Maharaja, the spirit which moved the hand to sign it was that of God. In spite of the brave guidance of his wise mother, the youthful ruler of Travancore might well have quailed before taking the unprecedented step of removing, by one stroke of the pen, untouchability which was double-distilled in Travancore. But whilst many things are impossible for mere man, nothing is impossible for God. And in pursuance of the divine voice within, the Maharaja bravely took up the pen and signed the Proclamation which was drafted for him by the Sachivottama. I would like you to look on the Proclamation as a divine gift and therefore respond to it in the spirit in which it has been given to you.

My interpretation of the Proclamation is that it removes the age-long, and yet irreligious, distinction of high and low. There is before God, whose creatures we are all, absolute equality of all. It is man who in his arrogance has disturbed the even justice of his great Deity. The Maharaja has now removed the taint of untouchability and declared once for all to all his subjects that all have equal rights in the matter of temple-entry, and it follows that if they have equality in the matter of temple-entry, they should have equality in all other matters of life. And as I have begun to say for the last two or three days, the Proclamation is wholly consistent with the essence of Hinduism which is very briefly, but equally brilliantly, given in the first *mantra* of *Ishopanishad*. I commend that Upanishad, or at least its first *mantra*, to the attention of every one of you here. I will give you only a free translation of that *mantra*. It means this: God the Ruler and Creator pervades everything that is in the Universe down to the tiniest atom. There is nothing, without a single exception, where God is not. And naturally therefrom follows what the seer has said in the other part of this *mantra*, viz., dedicate all at the feet of the Almighty or, in the language of the *Gita*, renounce everything. But renunciation cannot, must not, mean suicide. Therefore, the *rishi* or the seer says in the same breath: renounce or dedicate and then use or enjoy. But he felt that he had still not given the whole essence so that even a small child could understand it. Therefore, he wound up by saying: "Do not covet anybody's riches". Therefore your use and enjoyment is limited in two ways. The first condition is that we should consider nothing, not even our bodies, as our own, because we have got to dedicate or surrender everything to God the Ruler. The second condition is that we must not steal what belongs to others. That does not mean that we

will not, merely physically, help ourselves to what belongs to our neighbours, but that we will not even cast hungry eyes on it. If we really want to enjoy the things we eat or the clothes we wear or the houses we live in, we must make up our minds definitely that the things are not more than we need for our sustenance and for the praise of our Maker. Then as creatures or children of God we realize that what we eat or clothe ourselves with or live in, does not belong to us but to God. And this advice is not given to a few chosen creatures of God, but to everyone in the world. You will see that the dominant part of the *mantra* is that every atom is pervaded by God. Therefore, the advice as to the renunciation or dedication or surrender is given to all His creatures. It is, therefore, not as if it was a command given to a few people, but the enunciation of a universal law or universal truth. Just imagine if all of us were to live faithfully in accordance with the great law of our being, what a happy world it would be in which we should be living. Then there would be no mutual jealousies, no mutual strife. And those who are blessed, if I might say so, with certain possessions would constitute themselves trustees for such of those as might want them. In virtue of the law that I have endeavoured to explain to you, those who have much possession will use it only to the extent of their own limited requirements. And evidently because the tradition among the Maharajas of Travancore is that they are to constitute themselves servants of Padmanabha, the practice that is in vogue today is that the Maharaja goes to the temple and dedicates himself to the Deity and as His agent and viceroy takes definite instructions to conduct his affairs from day to day. It is perfectly true that these instructions are not given and taken as from man to man, but that even as I suggested to you, it was the spirit of God which moved the Maharaja to take this action. Similarly if he goes to the temple for instructions in a spirit of prayer and humility, he clothes himself with the spirit of God. I do not want, therefore, to deceive myself or you into a false belief or superstition. Far be it from me to suggest that the Maharaja is an infallible being or that he never commits any error of judgment. I do not know what errors of judgment he has committed if any, but assuming that he is a mortal being and, like any one of us, liable to commit errors of judgment, the fact is that he has got to live up to this *mantra*, and, as it is recognized in the blue blood of Travancore, that tradition requires the Maharaja from day to day to perform this act of dedication, and to the extent that he does so his acts must become infallible. Whatever may be the

fact about the acts of the Maharaja, I have used the thing as an illustration to show how this law operates with us in India. Consciously or unconsciously, however imperfectly, it must express itself in our acts and our lives. Your temple-going means that and nothing else or nothing less. If you approach the temples in that spirit, you will renew yourselves day by day as you go to the temples. And hitherto a large part of the Hindus who were deprived of the opportunities of daily surrender and dedication will get that opportunity. The Proclamation has not removed this very great and serious discrepancy or defect.

You have done right in rejoicing over this Proclamation. It was undoubtedly your duty to tender your loyal congratulations to Their Highnesses, but that is merely the beginning of your response to the Proclamation. You must now realize the fullest significance and implication of this Proclamation. You have to make a spiritual use of the opportunity given to you, and I assure you if you realize the deep spirituality of this Proclamation everything else will follow from it as day follows night. The winter of your despair is over, the spring of your hope is now in front of you, and if you will really blossom forth and fully enjoy the fruits of the Proclamation, you will not sit idle but you will live up to the meaning I have given you of the first *mantra* of *Ishopanishad*, and what is equally important is that you will take the message of hope to those who do not even realize what the Proclamation means. Heaven knows there may be thousands who do not realize this. It is your duty to take the message to those less fortunate than you are. Whatever you may have done in the past, I do hope you will not commit the fatal mistake of making any distinction between Ezhava and Pulaya, but you will resolutely make up your minds to think and act in such a manner that you will raise them to the same common platform.

I want you to believe me when I tell you that the essence of Hinduism is contained in the single *mantra* which I have given you. I want you to believe me when I tell you that anything that is inconsistent with the meaning of that *mantra* is not Hinduism. It does not matter in the least what other things inconsistent with the *mantra* are to be found in what is known as Hinduism. I suggest to you that if you believe in this *mantra*, it ought to satisfy your highest aspirations.

The last time when I passed through Cochin and Travancore I had the pleasure of meeting several Ezhava friends. Many of them were very bitter against Hinduism and Hindus. They took pride in

describing themselves as atheists and not Hindus. They were prepared to burn the books which passed under the name of Hindu scriptures. I know that this Proclamation has steadied those unbelievers. I sympathized with them at that moment as those who discussed with me will bear testimony. They could not help being bitter and atheistic when they believed that it was the hand of the *savarna* that was held against the reform. They were bound to take the *savarna* belief and conduct as a correct expression of the true Hindu belief, but now they know that the *savarna's* heart is changed. Therefore in passing through so many places in Travancore I have found no opposition among *savarnas*. I have met during this tour tens of thousands of people and I have not known any distinction being made between man and man. If these crowds contained thousands of erstwhile untouchables they also contained thousands of so-called *savarnas*. But assume for one moment that the *savarna's* heart is not changed. Our religion ought to be totally independent of the conduct of other people towards us. For its source is derived from God within, and if we will be true to our God, we will never forsake the faith we derive from Him. With God as our Guide, Master; Ruler in everything that we do, we may defy the whole world's opposition and stick to our faith. And I dare say that the *mantra* whose meaning I have given you is calculated to satisfy the highest aspiration of any being on earth. May it satisfy your aspiration also and may God give you the strength to live up to it. I thank you.

The Epic of Travancore, pp. 189-95

340. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, VAIKOM[1]

January 18, 1937

I suppose you can better imagine than I can describe my joy for being a second time in your midst and under such happy auspices as you all know. Only a few years ago one had to struggle hard to get the roads leading to the great temple thrown open to *avarna* Hindus. Good Madhavan, assisted by Krishnaswami of revered memory and by Kelappan, laid the foundation of that struggle. It is a matter of

[1] The meeting was held in the Satyagraha Ashram ground. According to Mahadev Desai, over twenty-five thousand people attended.

deep sorrow to me—as it must be to you—that neither Madhavan nor Krishnaswami is here to share your rejoicings.

Now I am on a pilgrimage, as I have called the present tour of Travancore. Throughout the whole course of my life I do not remember having entered so many temples as I have during these few days of pilgrimage, and only an hour more and I shall have the privilege of entering the forbidding-looking walls, as they then were, which surround the great temple of this place. And all these good things have come to pass because the Maharaja and the Maharani resolved to carry out the sacred resolve under the inspiration of Padmanabhaswami. But the Proclamation can be rendered fully ineffective if the *savarnas* and *avarnas* of Travancore do not make an adequate response to this Proclamation. It is not enough that the *savarnas* and the *avarnas* continue to go to the temples just as they are doing now. Hitherto people have gone to the temples more by way of formality than from conviction. They had not reasoned out for themselves why they needed to go to the temples. Largely throughout India the temples have been popular more with women than men, and they have gone there in order to ask some boon of the God residing in those temples. But now if you have rightly understood the Proclamation and all it means, I expect much more from you than a mere formal going to the temples. In my opinion the Proclamation is a call to purification addressed to every Hindu in Travancore, whether *savarna* or *avarna*. It was the *savarnas* who for a thousand years—maybe several thousand years—had deprived their own fellow-religionists of the right of worshipping the same God in the same manner that they worshipped. And in order to justify such an atrocious injustice—no matter for what causes—a whole class of human beings were held as untouchables. Now that the sinful distinction has been abolished by a stroke of the pen, in order that you may render some reparation to *avarna* Hindus you have got to adopt some measure to let them know that you are no longer the superior beings that you have claimed to be all these years. Therefore I would expect all *savarnas* to take the glorious message of liberation to every *avarna* home. It can be done very easily and without much effort on your part. Only one condition is indispensable. You should believe from the bottom of your heart in the necessity of the Proclamation and every Hindu—*savarna* and *avarna*, man and woman—should make it his or her individual work to get hold of some *avarnas*, to take to them the message of the Proclamation and

take them to the temples. And since the spiritual regeneration of an individual or a nation must include all the departments of life—economic, religious, social,—uplift in those departments is bound to follow. You will be vastly mistaken if you labour under the delusion that all these things are going to be done by the Proclamation.

I think that the Maharaja's and the Maharani's task is finished, so far as untouchability is concerned, by issuing this Proclamation. That there would be financial aid by the State for the education of these classes is a foregone conclusion. But that can never bring about the regeneration that I am picturing to myself. That requires a hearty and willing co-operation of the *savarna* Hindus as a class. You can therefore understand my sorrow when I heard—I do not know with what truth—that some women and even men were hesitating to enter the temple which they used to do regularly. In order to disabuse such doubters, if there are any here, of their doubts, I want to quote one historical fact that took place when I was here in connection with [the] Vaikom Satyagraha. Some of you may remember that I had more than one serious discussion with the *Shastris* who were then residing within the temple precincts, and who were attached, if I remember rightly, to the temple in some shape or other. I am trying to give you as correct a version of that discussion as I can recall at the present moment. In support of the proposition that even roads leading to the temples were barred against *avarna Hindus* although they were not barred against non-Hindus, they produced a book called *Shankara Smriti*. I had never heard of such a *Smriti* before I came to Vaikom and heard it quoted. You will be astonished to find that when I had that *Smriti* translated for me, I could not find in it any authority for closing the roads. But I grant that it was enough for them that they believed that the *Shankara Smriti* supported their contention. Then, as I was negotiating through the then Commissioner of Police and with the Senior Maharani, I just asked the question that supposing result of the negotiations the Maharani issued orders to open the roads to the *avarna* Hindus, what would be their attitude to them? Then without the slightest hesitation they said: 'Oh! that is a different thing altogether; a Hindu Prince or Princess has every right to issue an order which has the authority of a *Smriti*!' They said that was implied in Hinduism as Hindu kings are repositories of Hindu faith and they

have every right to issue orders which are not inconsistent with *Shruti*. I asked them whether the same thing applied to the opening of the temples. They said, 'Most decidedly.' Let me tell you that these *shastris* were not the only s*hastris* that gave this reply. I asked the same question to *shastris* in Cochin and Tamilnad and they gave the same answer. As a matter of fact that is the historical evolution of *Smritis* and for that matter of the eighteen *Puranas*. They were all produced or inspired in response to the want of those times. They do not always express eternal verities. The eternal verity is summed up in one verse of the *Ishopanishad* as I have been saying. And without fear of contradiction I am here to say that every believer in this verse is wholly a Hindu, and if he acts up to what is taught by this *mantra* he will find his freedom here and hereafter. I know no other road or better road to happiness than is contained in this first *mantra* of *Ishopanishad*. And if a Hindu Prince, in conformity with the implications and teaching of this *mantra*, issued a Proclamation, such as has been issued by the Maharaja of Travancore, it would carry such authority. And I invite those who know anything of the *Ishapanishad* to tell me whether this Proclamation is in any way inconsistent with this *mantra*. If they will make a prayerful search within and examine it, they will find that the Proclamation is a tardy fulfilment of its requirements. Therefore with all the earnestness that I can command I want to ask every doubter—man and woman—to throw away those doubts and heartily respond to the Proclamation. I must not take this theme any further, as I want to introduce another subject. I shall conclude this part by hoping that the Proclamation will have your hearty, not lukewarm, support and that you will carry it out in letter and spirit.

And now I want to take you all on the wings of your imagination to Cochin. I have come to the borders of Cochin, as far as it was possible, and I understand on the other side of the waters at a distance of less than ten miles lies Cochin. I suppose the last time I came to Vaikom I came through Cochin. But since I am not going to Cochin, I may permit myself to refer to Cochin which is so intimately connected with Travancore. Conditions in both the States are identical and the practices and usages in the two States are the same. I understand that the Maharaja of Cochin has even some rights and privileges with regard to the Vaikom temple. I must confess to you

that I am impatient to see that the Cochin Maharaja follows in the footsteps of the Maharaja of Travancore. I have no desire whatsover to embarrass His Highness. I am myself an old man—awaiting any day the warrant of Yamaraja[1]. The Maharaja is older than I by six years. I assure you that whilst I am overjoyed over the Proclamation and the celebrations in Travancore, I am oppressed by the responsibility which touches every *savarna* Hindu—not that it devolves any the less on the devoted heads of *avarna* Hindus. Only just now what I want to be done has got to be done, and can only be done, by the *savarna* Hindus. I want you to adopt a respectful and prayerful attitude towards the old Maharaja of Cochin. But with due regard to his age and rank, we should be false to the faith we hold in common with him, we should be false to truth, if we did not convey to him our deepest wishes. I claim to have understood the tenets of Hinduism and for an unbroken period of 50 years followed them as far as an imperfect being like me can. And when I have repeated from every platform that untouchability is a blot on Hinduism I have weighed every word of it and I have based my opposition to untouchability on the Hindu Shastras and nothing else. Therefore I venture to convey to the Maharaja of Cochin that what the Maharaja of Travancore guided by his mother has done is no new-fangled venture of a youthful sovereign. I verily believe that when all else about Travancore is forgotten, this one act of the Maharaja will be remembered by future generations with gratitude. I hold that this Proclamation must not begin and end with the border of Travancore.

Then let me give you a little tip. I want you to be at Cochin in imagination. That means that your conduct should affect the decision of the Maharaja of Cochin. How can this be done? By prayerful and religious spirit, as expressed in your own individual conduct, you can influence His Highness. I do not suggest sending petitions to the Maharaja of Cochin. Petitions may be submitted by the people of Cochin, but you the people of Travancore can do something better. Old men are never moved from their purpose by appeals to the intellect. I tell you there are many young men after me to convert me to their views, and they find that they cannot easily take me with them. But the hearts of old men become increasingly responsive with age and so whenever young men or young women want me to do anything they have to get round not my intellect or reason but my heart. So also must it happen to the old Maharaja of Cochin, and you

[1] God of Death

can touch his heart, not through any newspaper propaganda, but by becoming better Hindus under the liberties granted by the Proclamation, by showing that you *savarna* Hindus have not lost a title of your religious fervour, nor have the temples a tittle of the sanctity attached to them by the readmission of *avarnas* to them.

I have so often said, and certainly held the belief, that our temples were losing their sanctity by reason of our criminal neglect of our untouchable brethren. If you realize your responsibility under the Proclamation, you will at once think with me that you cannot be indifferent to what temples mean to you and whether you go there or no. And when the best of you continue to go to the temples and see to it that temples undergo a process of regeneration and the life of *avarnas* becomes purified, no Maharaja can help being moved by such a spectacle. I tell you if you have really understood the spirit of the Proclamation, the silent revolution that the Hindu life will undergo in Travancore will be irresistible and will overtake not only Cochin but every corner of Hindustan.

May God grant that even as the foundation of temple-entry in Travancore was laid in this place by humble workers like Madhavan and the late Krishnaswami and Kelappan, may God grant that you people of Vaikom will lay the foundation of the purification of Hinduism, and thus induce the Maharaja of Cochin to open all the temples in his State and thus render an equally great service to Hinduism with the Maharaja of Travancore.

Harijan, 6-2-1937

341. INTERVIEW TO A TEMPLE TRUSTEE, VAIKOM[1]

[*January 18, 1937*][2]

I have not been a temple-goer but now that this liberty has come to me all of a sudden, I feel fascinated, and the divine stillness that surrounded the prayer meeting under the *ashwattha* tree in the temple yard now stimulates me to find new ways and means for attracting people to temples. My temple-going is not an idle thing. It is a definitely sacred thing that has come to me in my life at an opportune moment.

QUSTION: Would you say anything about the mode of worship?

[1] The trustee in question had earlier opposed the opening of temples to Harijans. Now he had come to express his satisfaction over what had happened.

[2] Gandhiji was at Vaikom on this date.

ANSWER: I will not criticize it. The new thing has come upon me with a newness which humbles me. I refuse to look at it with the eye of a critic. One thing certainly I have noticed, viz., the want of intelligence and devoutness on the part of priests.

The Epic of Travancore, pp. 66-7

342. SPEECH AT ETAMANOOR

January 19, 1937

I am deeply grateful to you for your beautifully-worded Sanskrit address and the gift of the bark tree cloth. I cannot say that I am going to wear this cloth. For one thing it is too dear for me to wear, but it will adorn the museum that we have set up in Maganwadi containing specimens of village crafts.

As I was being taken round the temple and as I approached the central part of the temple, I had a Pulaya boy shown to me, and he boldly mounted up the steps with me. A few months ago, I should not have considered such a thing possible in my lifetime, but what often is impossible for man is easily possible for God to fulfil. And as I said last night and have repeated at several meetings, I see in this Proclamation the spirit of God working through the hand of the Maharaja. As a man, however highly placed he was, he could not have possibly worked the wonders that I see about me in Travancore. If he was a perfect autocrat, heedless of the feeling of his people, he could have issued this Proclamation, but he could by that act no more have touched your hearts than I could have by sending this Proclamation to you. He could not have made tens of thousands of *savarnas* brush shoulders with the so-called *avarnas* and go to the temples in a prayerful mood. For this change of heart—for I cannot call this thing by any other name—only God is responsible. Was I not here only a few years ago and did I not see the hardened features of thousands of people whom I could not move from the citadel of untouchability? That citadel at that time seemed to me to be harder than the hardest steel. And had I not a living faith in God, I should have despaired of your hearts ever being touched. But evidently the age of miracles is not gone. And I see today those very hard hearts having melted. I met last night a Nambudiri *Shastri,* intimately connected with the Vaikom temple, who, as I saw during our conversation, was the old friend with whom I had discussions during the Temple-entry Satyagraha at

Vaikom. And I asked him whether he could confirm the conversation between him and me which took place then and which I recalled during my speech last evening. Well, in a few years' time, that old man's heart has melted like snow under the Travancore sun, and he and I, instead of finding ourselves in opposite camps, found ourselves last night congratulating the Government upon the Proclamation.

But congratulations are not enough. It would have been monstrous if you had not tendered congratulations to both the Maharaja and the Maharani. It is not enough that on an occasion like this thousands of you gather and without any distinction go to the people. This expression of joy, this meeting of *savarnas*' and *avarnas*' hearts must not be a matter of momentary enthusiasm. The process must be continued with redoubled vigour so that nobody would have the misfortune of describing Travancore as a land possessing unapproachables, invisibles and what not. The literature dealing with Pulaya and Pariah should be a thing of the past, to be recalled, if it is ever to be recalled, as relics of the past. And I assure you that this Proclamation will fail of its purpose if this change is not brought about in every department of life. The Maharaja and the Maharani have done their task. It is now reserved for you, the *savarna* men and women of Travancore, to go down to them whom we have persecuted as the outcastes of society, to fraternize with them and own them as members of our families. It must be heart-felt, real, genuine acceptance, without mental reservations, of the Proclamation. It must not be allowed to become a dead letter. It is not meant to be a dead letter. From the heart-to-heart conversations that I had the privilege of having with the Maharani and the Maharaja and the Dewan, I know they want it to be given full effect to. Take this, therefore, as an honest and herculean effort to purify Hinduism. That process of purification is no one man's concern. It is the individual concern of every one of you here. May God give you enough strength for fulfilling the purpose behind the Proclamation.

The Epic of Travancore, pp. 205-7

343. SPEECH AT KUMARANELLOOR [1]

January 19, 1937

There is a special joy that I am experiencing this morning, having come to this temple and having seen what I have seen. I was duly prepared for this upliftment. I was told that this was one of the oldest and most important of private temples, that it was the sole property of the Nambudiris, and that when this temple was declared open, people thought that there remained nothing now to be done in connection with temple-entry. But when I came here and saw what I did see, the joy which was reserved for me was considerably enhanced. Here behind me is the trustee of the temple who took me to the temple with great affection. For this I was not unprepared, because it has been my rare good fortune to experience that personal affection throughout this pilgrimage. But what gladdened my heart was to see that he invited the so-called *avarnas* to come and enter the gates before he took me. And it did not appear to me an artificial act, but perfectly natural. Nowhere else has it happened like that during these seven days of my pilgrimage. Of course I do not notice the omission anywhere, for the so-called *avarnas*, or as I call them by the term of endearment 'Harijans', mixed freely with the others, and there was nothing more required by way of coaxing them to go into the temples. But it was most striking for me to observe that here our friend the trustee would not be satisfied until he drew the hesitating *avarnas* and brought them to my notice. I felt then that this was really the proper manner of giving effect to the Proclamation. The Proclamation does not say that the hitherto proud Nambudiris should take *avarnas* by their arms and give them the place of preference in the temples. Of course I own that the spirit of the Proclamation demands what this friend has done this morning, but then no prince can possibly dictate to the hearts of his people. All responses from the heart must be in their very nature spontaneous, and in this, for him, very natural act of expression of brotherhood I saw a proper fulfilment of the spirit of the Proclamation. My joy was further enhanced by my knowledge that Nambudiris occupy in this State, as in Cochin, a place of pride and privilege. If they even showed secret, sullen opposition to the Proclamation, it could be rendered ineffective.

[1] Delivered on the occasion of the opening to Harijans of a private Nambudiri temple, about two thousand years old, to which Gandhiji was specially invited

But here in this private temple, the stronghold of orthodox Nambudiris, the Proclamation is evidently being carried out both in letter and spirit.

I must here tell you a little secret. I tell you that I was most disinclined to visit Travancore and it required much effort on the part of Sjts. Govindan and Ramachandran to draw me out of Segaon, and at one time it seemed as though all their labours would be in vain. But things happened to melt my heart and I am being led, as a docile man or woman may be led, by the nose by Ramachandran and company. But the heartening experience that I have undergone here tells me that it would have been a stupid act of foolishness on my part if I had not visited Travancore, if only to see this temple and to see Harijans being led into it. Let this be an example to all Nambudiris and other *savarnas* to follow. That is a very fair illustration of what I mean when I say at so many meetings that the Proclamation is to be carried out in its full effect by the *savarnas*. You must know that the *avarna* Hindus, except those who have undergone training, do not know what the Proclamation is and what it means for them. The burden of drawing them out of the ghettos, to which our ignorance and folly have confined them, and letting them see the sunlight which is meant for all, and letting their hearts be warmed up by being led to the temples, lies on the *savarnas*. Let it not be said of Travancoreans that what Nambudiris who are supposed to be the highest caste in Travancore did, others failed to do. This burden of drawing the *avarna* brethren and sisters out of their dens depends no less on *savarna* women than on men. I do hope and pray that all *savarna* Hindus of Travancore will carry out the Proclamation to the fullest extent and deserve to be called the liberators of Hinduism, if not its saviours.

The Epic of Travancore, pp. 208-10.

344.SPEECH AT THIRUVARPPU

January 19, 1937

I am told that this place was the scene of satyagraha and suffering. Whatever sufferings were gone through can be recalled with pleasure, now that the Proclamation has brought delight which the satyagrahis had not expected at the time they were going through suffering. I have no time today to give you a long speech nor do you need a long speech from me. All I had to say, all I could say, has been

mostly said already, but this I cannot help saying that if you are to reap the rich fruits of the Proclamation, every one of you individually will have to work for it. This Proclamation ought not to be allowed to remain, as many rules and regulations are allowed to remain in their portfolios. This Proclamation is a charter of freedom to all *avarnas* and it washes out the sins of *savarnas* against *avarnas*. But it can only wash out these sins if the *savarnas* realize the full significance of the Proclamation. Therefore the *savarnas* should fraternize with the *avarnas*, not for demonstration but from their very hearts. You will then find that Travancore will be a place of pilgrimage for all the Hindus of India and it will also be a great landmark in the history of Hinduism. The burden of taking the message of Hinduism to everyone rests on the broad shoulders of *savarnas*; and remember that you will fail to do so unless your hearts respond to the Proclamation. May God give you the wisdom and strength to do so.

The Epic of Travancore, pp. 211-2.

345. INTERVIEW TO BISHOP MOORE, BISHOP ABRAHAM AND OTHERS[1]

January 19, 1937

Bishop Moore received Gandhiji cordially and welcomed the Temple-entry Proclamation as an important event. He inquired if the *savarnas* and Brahmins also welcomed it, or if there was any opposition on their part.

Gandhiji said he had seen no signs of opposition. He had met several thousands of people, visited several temples, and had found *savarnas* and *avarnas* entering the temples in perfect friendliness.

Bishop Abraham asked if the Ezhavas were ready to treat the Depressed Classes of lower castes on terms of equality.

Gandhiji said he could not reply with confidence but he was striving to emphasize that point everywhere, and he hoped that the Proclamation would be carried out in that spirit.

Bishop Moore . . . said that he had heard that Mr. Gandhi was disturbed over reports of Christian missionary work in Travancore, and that he was ready to remove any misunderstanding that it was possible for him to remove.

Gandhiji said that he was indeed surprised at the report of conversions of thousands of people in the Telugu country and in Travancore made in Bishop Pickett's

[1] The interview took place at Bishop Moore's house at Kottayam. The object was to clear up misunderstandings.

speech in England and in a statement of the Church Missionary Society appealing for funds over the signature of Prebendary Cash. He could not understand how responsible Christians could make extravagant statements to the effect that thousands had experienced a spiritual awakening and accepted the Gospel. The Bishop of Dornakal had even stated that those thousands included not only the Depressed Classes but a large number of so-called high-caste Hindus. Gandhiji said he had challenged the truth of these statements in the columns of *Harijan*[1] and had invited them to prove that he was wrong. He had also met leaders working in Andhra and asked them to make inquiries into the truth of these extravagant statements.

Bishop Moore confessed that he had not read either the appeal for funds or Bishop Pickett's speech and could not, therefore, express any opinion thereon. He was quite sure, however, that no responsible missionary journal should ever publish statements that were not based on actual facts, and he wanted to assure Mr. Gandhi that no wrong information had ever been supplied from his diocese for which alone he could speak.

During the last year they could record 530 persons as having been baptized into the Anglican faith.

Bishop Abraham said he had been to the Andhra country and had seen with his own eyes that there was a tremendous awakening there even among the middle-class *savarnas* . . . . he had addressed meetings which were attended by many of the high-caste people.

GANDHIJI: But that means nothing. Hundreds of students attend meetings addressed by Dr. Stanley Jones, but they cannot be said to seek conversion to Christianity. To say that hundreds attended meetings addressed by Christian preachers is very different from saying that hundreds have accepted the message of Jesus and from making an appeal for money in anticipation of people becoming Christians in large numbers.

Mr. Kuruvilla here put in whether Mr.Gandhi had any objection to their stimulating and responding to the spiritual hunger of people.

Gandhiji said it was wholly irrelevant to the issue.

Bishop Abraham said they were responding to the spiritual hunger of the people. Mr. Gandhi could have no objection to that?

Gandhiji said he could have no objection to responding to spiritual hunger, provided it was genuinely felt and expressed. But the matter was quite irrelevant to the discussion which was entirely about extravagant statements made by responsible people. He said to Bishop Moore that he would furnish him with a copy of the C.M.S. statement and he would like to know what Bishop Moore would have to say regarding it.

Harijan, 13-3-1937

[1] *Vide* "What Is a Miracle?", 19-12-1936

346. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, KOTTAYAM[1]

January 19, 1937

I am delighted to address for the first time during my pilgrimage a women's meeting. I should therefore have given you much longer time and tried to make fuller acquaintance of you who have gathered together in such a larger number and where, for the first time, a sister has made her reception speech in Hindi. I thank you both for the welcome and for the Hindi address. I shall rest content with saying a few words on the Proclamation. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, who will speak to you after I have done, will address herself to women's problems as you may know that she is the Secretary of the All-India Women's Conference.

I have often said that untouchability is a great blot on Hinduism and one that threatened the very life of Hinduism. The Proclamation has come in very good time to enable us to wipe out the blot. But by itself it cannot do so. The Maharaja's work was finished with the Proclamation. It is for you to root out untouchability by carrying the Proclamation into full effect. This work of carrying through the process of purification devolves principally on *savarna* Hindus. I have often said that it is women alone who can be protectors of religion in as much as they are the custodians of the purity of the people. It is particularly women's work because the purification of religion is ultimately a matter of the purification of one's heart. And if the women have realized the true spirit of the Proclamation, they can give better effect to it then men. We have up to now regarded *avarnas* as untouchables, not only in our homes and our temples, but in our hearts. We have to regard them as our own kith and kin. If, therefore, there is anyone amongst you who thinks that the Maharaja has defiled the Hindu religion and the temples by issuing this Proclamation, she will err against humanity and her Maker. I must tell you that these temples were impure so long as the temple doors were closed against Harijans. This Proclamation has purified them all. None of you will, therefore, cease to go to these temples in the belief that they have been defiled. I hope that you will discard that superstition and fraternize with Harijan women and actively help in raising them to a level of social equality with you.

The Epic of Travancore, pp. 213-5

[1] Gandhiji delivered this speech in Hindi

347. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KOTTAYAM[1]

January 19, 1937

I know that this great assemblage is one of the many signs of rejoicings over the Proclamation which H.H. the Maharaja has given to the people of Travancore. Whilst it was but natural and your duty to tender congratulations to Their Highnesses and the Dewan, it would be wholly wrong if you exhausted your effort with these celebrations. Let your congratulations Their Highnesses be an earnest of your determination to make every effort to make the Proclamation as successful as human effort can make it. As I have suggested at various gatherings, the main burden of successfully working out the Proclamation must fall on the shoulders of those who have been regarded as *savarnas*. It is they who have to carry the message of liberation and hope to the desolate homes of those who are miscalled *avarnas*. It is their privilege and their duty to approach the humble huts of the so-called *avarna* brothers and sisters and take the message to them in a humble and prayerful mood. That would be some measure, however tardy, of reparation for wrongs done to those whom we have suppressed. It is and should be their proud privilege to stoop in order to raise those whom they have helped to sink lower and lower from day to day. So much today for the *savarna* Hindus.

I know Kottayam is a stronghold of the Christians of Travancore. Christians know there is between them and me an invisible but unbreakable bond. I venture, therefore, to suggest to Indian Christians, whether they are born Christians or have been converted to Christianity, that they too may not stand aside but take part in advancing the cause that the Proclamation implies. And as briefly as possible I propose to tell you what I mean. That document abolishes all distinctions between high and low that reigned supreme in Travancore as in other parts of India. If a human document can raise by a stroke of the pen all *avarnas* to the status of the *savarnas*—and this Proclamation does really do so—then the Christians in the State owe a duty to the Hindus which they dare not neglect. If you believe with me, as I know a large body of Christian opinion today does believe, that all the principal religions of the world are true, then you will aid *savarna* Hindus in the process of penitence and reparation they are expected to go through under the Proclamation.

[1] The meeting was held in front of the Krishna temple and was attended by about 1,000 people. *The Hindu,* 20-1-1937, also carried a report of the speech.

It undoubtedly grieved me when some of the Depressed Classes felt in disgust towards Hinduism like going out of Hinduism and embracing some other faith. It was a matter of equal grief to me to hear of efforts made by people belonging to different faiths to catch, as it were, the Depressed Classees and remove them from the faith to which they have belonged for centuries. If you believe, as I know some do, that Hinduism is nothing but a body of hideous usages and superstitions, that Hinduism is a fraud upon humanity, then you cannot render better service to the *avarna* and *savarna* Hindus than by exposing this 'fraud'. In the estimation of those who so believe, this Proclamation is an act which it would be their duty to resist and to show to the Maharaja that by issuing the Proclamation of liberation he is simply prolonging the agony and giving a new lease of life to a body of superstitions which were bound to die their natural death. But I know many Christians throughout the length and breadth of India do not regard Hinduism as a fraud upon humanity or a body of bad usages and superstitions. A religion which has produced Ramakrishna, Chaitanya, Shankara and Vivekanand cannot be a body of superstitions. As you know, and if you do not know it I want to declare, that I personally hold all principal religions of the world to be not only true but also to be equal.

I have endeavoured to study the Bible with the eyes of a devout Christian and the Koran with the eyes of a devout Mussalman, and I have not hesitated to assimilate whatever I have found to be good in both these scriptures. I have studied other scriptures of the world also. But I have singled these out for the sake of illustration. But, you might well ask, if I declare all these religions to be equally true and equally demanding my respect, what is the meaning of my remaining a Hindu? I shall tell you why. Latterly I have been endeavouring to describe to vast assemblages of men and women I have addressed what I regard as the essence of Hinduism, and I have been suggesting to them one incredibly simple *mantra* of the *Ishopanishad* and, as you know, it is one of the Upanishads that enjoy the sanctity of the Vedas. The very first verse of the *Ishopanishad* means simply this: God pervades everything that is to be found in this universe down to the tiniest atom. The *mantra* describes God as the Creator, the Ruler and the Lord. The seer to whom this *mantra* or verse was revealed was not satisfied with the magnificent statement that God was to be found everywhere. But he went further and said:'Since God pervades everything nothing belongs to you, not even your own body. God is

the undisputed, unchallengeable Master of everything you possess.' And so when a person who calls himself a Hindu goes through the process of regeneration or a second birth, as Christians would call it, he has to perform a dedication or renunciation of all that he has in ignorance called his own property. And then when he has performed this act of dedication or renunciation, he is told that he will win a reward in the shape of God taking good care of what he will require for food, clothing or housing. Therefore the condition of enjoyment or use of the necessaries of life is their dedication or renunciation. And that dedication or renunciation has got to be done from day to day, lest we may in this busy world forget the central fact of life. And to crown all, the seer says: 'Covet not anybody's riches.' I suggest to you that the truth that is embedded in this very short *mantra* is calculated to satisfy the highest cravings of every human being—whether they have reference to this world or to the next. I have in my search of the scriptures of the world found nothing to add to this *mantra*. Looking back upon all the little I have read of the scriptures—it is precious little I confess—I feel that everything good in all the scriptures is derived from this *mantra*. If it is universal brotherhood—not only brotherhood of all human beings, but of all living beings—I find it in this *mantra*. If it is unshakable faith in the Lord and Master—and all the adjectives you can think of—I find it in this *mantra*. If it is the idea of complete surrender to God and of the faith that He will supply all that I need, then again I say I find it in this *mantra*. Since He pervades every fibre of my being and of all of you, I derive from it the doctrine of equality of all creatures on earth and it should satisfy the cravings of all philosophical communists. This *mantra* tells me that I cannot hold as mine anything that belongs to God, and if my life and that of all who believe in this *mantra* has to be a life of perfect dedication, it follows that it will have to be a life of continual service of our fellow creatures.

This, I say, is my faith and should be the faith of all who call themselves Hindus. And I venture to suggest to my Christian and Mussalman friends that they will find nothing more in their scriptures if they will search them, and I want the aid of every body on earth—whether he is a Christian or a Mussalman or what else—to help the Hindus of Travancore to realize the lofty purpose that lies in this *mantra*. I do not wish to hide from you the fact that I am not unaware of many superstitions that go under the name of Hinduism. I am most painfully conscious of all superstitions that are to be found masqu-

erading as Hinduism and I have no hesitation to call a spade a spade. I have not hesitated to describe untouchability as the greatest of these superstitions. But in spite of them all, I remain a Hindu. For I do not believe that these superstitions form part of Hinduism. The very canons of interpretation laid down by Hinduism teach me that whatever is inconsistent with the truth I have expounded to you and what is hidden in the *mantra* I have named, must be summarily rejected as not belonging to Hinduism. And I want you non-Hindus to help the so-called *savarna* Hindus to spread this truth in the midst of those whom they have hitherto regarded as untouchables, unapproachables, invisibles.

I felt that I could not do justice to this great meeting, especially a meeting that is held in a Christian stronghold, unless I was prepared to utter a truth I held dear as life itself. We all consciously or unconsciously pine and strive for peace on earth and goodwill amongst mankind. I am convinced that we shall find neither peace nor goodwill among men and women through strife among men of different religions, through disputation among them. We shall find truth and peace and goodwill if we approach the humblest of mankind in a prayerful spirit. Anyway that is my humble appeal to Christians who may be present in this great meeting. It is a privilege that may not occur again to any of you in your lifetime. As I have said so often elsewhere, whilst the hand that traced the signature on the Proclamation was that of the Maharaja, the spirit that moved him to do so was that of God. Would to God that that spirit might also fire everyone in Travancore to realize the implications of this Proclamation and to fire every one of you to advance the cause that the Proclamation enunciates.

I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the exemplary silence with which you have listened to my speech.

Harijan, 30-1-1937

348. SPEECH AT CHANGANACHERI

January 20, 1937

It is the partiality of the President of the Travancore Harijan Sevak Sangh that has made it possible for you to read one of your addresses. I do not wonder at his partiality, because Changanacheri is his place. But then I see that this address is an entrapping address, because if it really represents your views the partiality of the President can be easily excused. This is the very comforting statement that you have made in your address: "Our religion has been purified." Then you proceed to say: "All social inequalities have been removed. Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man has been established and we are in the happy land of *Ramarajya* in every sense of the term." Well, if I was an inhabitant of Changanacheri and this address was read in my name and I had been asked to sign it, I should have to undergo various nights of vigil before I could subscribe to the statements therein. If you had rested content with saying that all these things had been implied in the Proclamation, of which you have spoken in enthusiastic terms, it would have been quite in place and I should have said that you were right in reading all these implications in the Proclamation and that God might help you to live up to those implications. But you have with a due sense of responsibility gone forward to make the bold assertions I have read out to you. I know you have made them in pardonable enthusiasm. But now I would ask you to abide by your statements and prove the validity of the assertions made here by your worthy conduct. I should not wonder if you were to prove equal to the assertions you have made here, because, as you have given me the information, this is a Nambudiri stronghold and this is a private Nambudiri temple that they have generously and whole-heartedly opened to the Harijans. The way to live up to every assertion is by every individual doing these very things in his or her own life, and I tell you that a life of spirituality truly lived is far more infectious than all the microbes put together can prove on this earth. And whereas we dread all these infections and would rather escape them, this is an infection which we would all welcome.

Let me hope and pray that all that you have said in this address may prove true in Travancore, and if it does so, I promise that it will prove true in the whole of India.

The Epic of Travancore, pp. 222-3.

349. SPEECH AT THIRUVALLA[1]

January 20, 1937

Lest I should forget them, you have been good enough to remind me of my many virtues. If I had them, really they would have taken care of themselves without your reminding me of them. And I am none the wiser for having been reminded of them. But one thing you have omitted to do which was really necessary. After reminding me of my virtues, you have gone into raptures over the Proclamation but you have failed to tell me what you propose to do with the Proclamation. As I have been telling at every meeting, it is not the Maharaja's work, it is the work of every man and woman in Travancore to do his or her duty, viz., to go down to the dens of Harijans, pull them out of them and raise them to the same status and level that you occupy in society. Not till then will you have done your duty in terms of the Proclamation.

The Epic of Travancore, p. 225

350. SPEECH AT CHENGANOOR

January 20, 1937

I am grateful to you for the address[2] that you have given to me. Of course it is all very well for you to present me with addresses. They have their value if they are properly coined and presented with the proper spirit behind them. When I say that they should be properly coined, I say that they should express the sentiment you really cherish. They should not contain fulsome praise of those to whom you present the address, but what you have done or are about to do should be stated therein for the information of the person to whom you present the address. And today, as the central theme of our rejoicing is the graceful Proclamation issued by the Maharaja, naturally you will express your aspirations and actions in terms of this Proclamation. And it does not matter in the least whether it is from the little children or from the Hindu public or the Youth League. You have not really drafted your address in that way but that does not matter. I am here to remind you of things that are expected of you

[1] This was in reply to several addresses presented to Gandhiji at this place.

[2] This had been presented to Gandhiji by the Nambudiris of Tazhman Mathan temple.

not only by the Maharaja and the Maharani, but of the things that the whole of India expects you to do. At the present moment the whole of India is really dumbfounded. It does not know whether such a thing could happen in this age. Orthodoxy is shaken to its foundations. It trembles to think of the consequences, not in a spirit of hostility by any means, but it is no doubt filled with suspicion and amazement. It wonders whether untouchability was not after all a sin and a crime against humanity. Now I can tell you what can be a net result of this doubt having entered the orthodox mind. One of the results is bound to follow, and it will wholly depend upon the condition of the *savarna* Hindus. The doubts of the orthodoxy will be dispelled like the morning mist at sunrise if the orthodoxy can really see that the *savarnas* of Travancore have washed themselves of the sin of untouchability. On the contrary, if they come to know or feel that you are not playing the game and that you are secretly harbouring untouchability in your hearts, then the orthodoxy will also harden their hearts. You will admit that such a result will be worse than that in which we are. Therefore let not the enthusiasm that I have seen vanish like smoke immediately these celebrations are over. On the contrary let it be said of you, *savarna* Hindus, that you have harnessed the energy born of this enthusiasm for the purification of Hinduism. And I am flattering myself with the belief that I am leaving with you the golden key for the solution of all the difficulties that may linger in your hearts. And that is to remember the first verse of the *Ishopanishad* and forget all about other scriptures. You can really drown yourself and be suffocated in the ocean of literature known as the scriptures. They are good for the learned and the wise, for they will humbly approach them, but I am sure that for the ordinary man in the street they are nothing but a burden. It is not I who say these things, it is what those who wrote these scriptures have said. I shall therefore leave this meeting with a free translation of that *mantra*. It simply means this: “God pervades everything that we see” Therefore it is literally true what the Western science tells us, that Nature abhors a vacuum, for there is nothing on earth where God is not. And if He occupies everything that is, there is nothing for us to occupy. Therefore, the *mantra* says: “You must renounce everything.” But it does not say: “Renounce everything and perish.” On the contrary it says: “Renounce everything if you want to live.” For that act of renunciation or dedication to God will result in God taking the responsibility of feeding you, of housing you and of clothing you.

And then the *mantra* closes with this beautiful advice or injunction: "Do not covet anybody's riches." That does not mean that you must not take away these addresses from me. But it means that your eyes must be single and pure, otherwise you would be criminals. There never was anything yours nor could there be. That applies to all our organs and if you follow what I say, action in terms of the Proclamation will be easy. If you understand this formula of Hinduism—this distilled wisdom of all the sages that lived—you will go and fraternize with Harijans, pull them out of their dens and raise them to the same social level that you enjoy.

The Epic of Travancore, pp. 225-8.

351. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

ARANMULA,
January 20, 1937

CHI. MIRA,

I have your two long letters. I understand what you say in them. I do not know that I shall be able to give more time to the village work than I am giving. My life has to be taken with its amazing limitations. It is enough that I live in the village and think out things in terms of the village. I must act as opportunity comes.

I do not mind Harijans working in the kitchen. Of course the attitude towards them has to be progressively as towards members of the same family. I am satisfied that that attitude is there. It only requires growing emphasis.

As to Munnalal he will leave if he is not satisfied with the work as it comes to him. I have to be patient.

I am glad you are quicker than before. I still expect to reach there on 24th.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6376. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9842.

352. SPEECH AT ARANMULA

January 20, 1937

The scene at this meeting is a visible demonstration of the fact that what I am just now doing is nothing but a pilgrimage. There is the river Pampa, there is the temple and here are thousands of people gathered together to rejoice over the Proclamation. Such are the scenes which are witnessed during the progress of pilgrims all over India. But then, if pilgrimages are undoubtedly matters that furnish joy for the soul, they must at the same time continue to remind us that we should purify ourselves continually in order to satisfy our Maker. All the more so because of the gracious Proclamation that His Highness the Maharaja has given us.

I know that here we are all Harijans and non-Harijans united without the slightest distinction. It is well if our hearts are also equally united. But if they are not united and we cherish all kinds of distinctions that have for ages past disfigured Hindu society, we are unworthy of that great Proclamation. Great is the responsobility that lies upon the shoulders of those who hitherto regarded themselves as belonging to the superior castes. The Proclamation invites such people to descend from the pedestal which they have occupied with no credit but with utter discredit to themselves and the faith which they have hopelessly misrepresented. Let me therefore hope and pray that all who have been called *savarna* Hindus will make the determination to get rid of untouchability from their hearts and make common cause with those whom they have suppressed for ages.

I must, as the pilgrimage is about to finish, put before you for your consideration and assimilation the *Ishopanishad* which I have been doing for the last four or five days. Let the *mantra* be your guide and your inspiration in everything you do. Its meaning can be understood by even a little child and it is this: God pervades the tiniest atom in this mighty universe, and seeing that He is the sole Ruler and indispensable Master of everything that can be conceived and that there is in this universe, we are called upon to dedicate everything to Him. In our ignorance we have fancied that so many things belong to us and that we possess them to the exclusion of everybody else. So long as we entertain such a belief, we are not really Hindus, though being born of Hindu parents we may call ourselves Hindus. Therefore, to be truly, deliberately and consciously Hindus, we have got to act according to this key *mantra* of all Upanishads and the whole of

Hinduism and renounce everything, even our body, and all that we hold near and dear to us, and dedicate it at the feet of God. Then the *mantra* says if you do this, but not otherwise, God will give you your daily bread, a house to live in and clothes to cover your limbs with. And it proceeds further by saying that since God is all powerful and nothing is impossible for Him and since you have surrendered everything to Him, He is not going to neglect you. And hence you shall not covet anything that belongs to others, even a needle.

Now you can easily understand that in the presence of God, the Ruler of the Universe, who pervades everything—even those whom we have called the lowest of the low—all are equal. So you will see how necessary it was for His Highness to issue this Proclamation, if he was to make good his title to be called a Hindu prince.

Now as I leave you I would like to leave this *mantra* with you, and if anybody challenges you and says anything in the name of Hinduism which is contrary to this *mantra*, you can tell him that you know everything about Hinduism and everything contrary to it is not Hinduism.

The Epic of Travancore, pp. 229-31

353. SPEECH AT ELANTHOOR

January 20, 1937

This is a typical village. I tender you my congratulations for having of your own initiative got rid of untouchability even before the issue of the Proclamation. The Proclamation now sets the seal of approval upon your work and makes your work acceptable to the whole of Travancore. Now if your village has been as advanced as you claim it to be in this address, I would expect marvellous results in virtue of this Proclamation. And I would tell you what I would expect you to do. It will not satisfy me—it ought not to satisfy you—that isolated Hindus calling themselves *savarnas* mix with those whom they call *avarnas*. I would now expect not only you, but the whole village, and all the surrounding villages, to forget all distinctions between Ezhavas, Pulayas, Pariahs and others, and that even in your hearts you do not harbour any such distinction. If you will do this, I will also expect that there will be no Harijans perishing for want of food or clothing or for want of opportunities for education. I would

expect your schools to be attended by Harijans as much as by non-Harijans. I hope you will bring about this result in no time.

If this Proclamation has, as if by magic, changed the hearts of the so-called *savarnas,* then you will not measure the progress of the so-called Harijans—socially, morally, economically—in driblets. But the progress will be so phenomenal that it will be noticed by any observer in the way. In my opinion that is the implication of the Proclamation and nothing else. May I hope that you will live up to this implication?

The Epic of Travancore, pp. 232-3

354. SPEECH AT PANDALAM[1]

January 20, 1937

Many glorious meetings I have had in Travancore have now accustomed me to meetings, however large they may be, and to what I may call pin-drop silence. It is a unique phenomenon that I have witnessed in this piligrimage of mine. I have a vivid and happy recollection of meetings addressed in Travancore during my three previous visits. I well remember they were very orderly and gave me great satisfaction. But somehow or other this being in my opinion a purely religious pilgrimage of a humble penitent, I have been in need of perfect silence and I have been amply rewarded for my prayers.

At Kottayam I saw before me about this time last evening a vast assemblage of men and women whose number no one could calculate. It was a sea of human faces. I simply approached it in fear and trembling, because there was unfortunately no microphone arrangement there. The organizers had tried their best to make the arrangement, but they had failed. And yet, you will be pleased to learn from me that in that meeting, which was nearly ten times as large as this, there was wonderful silence for an hour or more. I was amazed at this absolutely unexpected silence and patience of thousands of men and women at this vast meeting. I am not mentioning these facts in order to satisfy idle curiosity or fill in the idle moments. I mention this in order to emphasize the fact that these meetings have a religious character, and I hope I am not wrong to infer from the behaviour of these vast crowds that they were fired within, perhaps unconsciously,

[1] A report of the speech also appeared in *Harijan,* 6-2-1937.

by a religious spirit. Whatever may have been the cause of this divine silence that you have given me, I know that for me there can be no other meaning.

I have regarded this, Proclamation as an act of Divinity, though outwardly it is the act of a great prince. Any man, if possible even braver than the young Maharaja and his wise mother, would have quailed if he had reasoned out the pros and cons of a Proclamation of this character, and yet it was this young Maharaja who signed the Proclamation which was complete for the purpose for which it was intended. And therefore it is that I have often said that though it was his hand that put the signature to the Proclamation, the spirit behind it was that of God working through the Maharaja. Having, therefore, looked at the Proclamation in that light and having approached this pilgrimage in fear and trembling, I have pined for the opening out of your hearts. I have not made a conscious effort to make any appeal to your reason, but I have made a conscious effort to make an appeal to your hearts and penetrate them, and unless I have deluded myself I fancy that I have made some approaches to your hearts. Whether I have done so or not, I want to repeat what I have said at the previous meetings: that the burden of carrying out the Proclamation in letter and in spirit rests principally on *savarna* Hindus. And the implication is emphatically this, that the *savarna* Hindus have to forget their wrong understanding of the message of Hinduism and the distinctions that they have up to now drawn between themselves and the *avarna* Hindus. The Proclamation emphatically means that untouchability, unapproachability and unseeability are all relics of the past and that those Hindus who have arrogated superiority for themselves will forget that they were superior human beings and will remember that they are the children of the same God and that all *savarnas* and *avarnas* are equal. The Proclamation is addressed to every Hindu, and every one of you is expected to show that he has understood it and he has to carry it out in his day-to-day dealings with those whom he has hitherto regarded as Pariahs of socity. I do not propose to carry on this appeal to the *savarna* Hindus any further tonight.

The Maharaja had nothing to do beyond issuing the Proclamation. It was cent per cent truthful in so far as one would want to know his opinion in regard to untouchability. So far as I can see, there is nothing to amplify the Proclamation. Therefore, in your presence I propose to address a few words to His Highness, Her Highness and to their advisers.

Great as this Proclamation is and great as is its religious merit, greater still is the responsibility that His Highness has taken upon his shoulders, and also that of his advisers. Whilst without the effort of every *savarna* Hindu the Proclamation can undoubtedly be rendered ineffective, I must also say that the Proclamation will not have its full effect unless it is backed in an ample measure by State action. So far as I can see the Proclamation demands State activities in all departments of life. Of these I propose to take the religious first; because from it must follow activities in all the other departments. Temples have been matters of indifference, except to women, who have no capital save divine faith, and to men who from many mixed motives have been going to them. They have been neglected by what may be called the intelligentsia. The result has been that they have almost ceased to be repositories of Hinduism and have ceased to impart spiritual power to those who have followed the faith. They have ceased to shed unmistakeble spiritual fragrance in and about and around them. Then I venture to suggest that it is the duty of the State or of the Maharaja—if there is any distinction betweem the two, for he is the custodian of the vast majority of Hindu temples—that he should see to it that the temples are renovated spiritually and have the authority and sanctity that they used undoubtedly to have at one time. And I believe that it can only be done if they are in charge of priests who know what they have to do, who know something of the sanctity of them and of the duties to which they are called. In other words, they should not be ignorant people following their calling for a livelihood but they should be men who are proud of their privilege of bringing the message of God to temple-goers, showing by their own conduct and their life that these temples are abodes of Divinity.

Then there should be the correct kind of instruction given in these temples. The Harijans will be taken by the hand by someone in charge of temples and they will be told what they are expected to gain by temple-worship. This means undoubtedly, according to modern thought, a revolution in the upkeep and conduct of these temples. But the Proclamation itself is nothing short of a revolutionary document and if that revolution is to touch, as it ought to touch, the lives of all Hindus, naturally temples have to be abodes of the living God and not abodes of a mere mass of gold or other metals worked into figures. Then I should expect a history of these temples, understandable by the common folk, to be distributed free or at a cheap price to all who want to know what these temples are. That means a training school for

training the right kind of teachers who will be entrusted with the religious training of the people. If some such thing does not happen, I fear that the purpose of the Proclamation, viz., to expect and to induce lakhs and lakhs of Harijans to go to these temples in a religious spirit, will fail.

So much for the religious department. Then I take the economic. The economic life of the Harijans has got to be lifted out of its miserable state. I venture to think that by a judicious and thoughtful working out of the programme, it can be prosecuted in a short time and with a limited financial outlay, in such a manner that Harijans may be easily able to hold their own by being taught to turn an honest *chakram.* Nor can the State now dare neglect the mental training—I mean literary—of these people. I know to my cost that today it is very difficult to carry on a connected conversation with Pulayas and Pariahs so that you can get a ready response even about simple facts of life.

Similarly, the State has to raise the social status of these people. They should be invited to all State occasions and functions, as for instance Durbars. They must not be allowed to feel that these functions are a sealed book to them, and that they should have to have another agitation before they can attain a social status entitling them to be invited or allowed to take part in those functions. But if the Proclamation bears the meaning I have given to it, then the social uplift of the Harijans has to come as if by magic, as the religious status of going to the temples has come.

In my humble opinion, in suggesting this fourfold programme of the uplift of the Harijans in the State I have not suggested any programme beyond the capacity or resources of a State like Travancore.

But having addressed these few words to the State in all humility, I want to come back to you. The State may resolve to do all these things, but its resolution will not mean the coming in of manpower in order to carry out all these things. And if, from the few words I have addressed to Their Highnesses and their advisers, you think that after all it is Their Highnesses who have to do everything and you have to do nothing, then I am afraid that my labours will have gone in vain. The resquisite manpower has got to be supplied by you, and as a man of experience I will tell you that manpower cannot come by offers of money. Thus, for instance, men who are capable of taking the

management of temples cannot be had by offering scholarships of hundreds of rupees. For such people have got to be fired by a religious spirit, by love of their own work, and should therefore be ready to work for a bare maintenance. It should be their proud privilege to take this training and to fit themselves for this highest task in life. Similarly, unless the State gets men required for giving Harijans educational training, the State can do nothing.

After all, there is a world of meaning about the title that the Maharajas of Travancore have adopted for themselves, viz., *Padmanabhadas*. They pride themselves in calling themselves servants of God, but that means that they are also servants of their people. So, as I said at one of these meetings, the Maharajas are not the first lords among the people of Travancore, but they are the first servants among the people who are also servants. But the first servants of the people will fare badly unless they are ably assisted by the people who are their fellow servants. Therefore the meaning of His Highness the Maharaja going to the temple every day and taking instructions as to his daily duties from Shri Padmanabhaswami means nothing less than that he should be assisted by his people for their own good—spiritual, religious, social, economic.

The Epic of Travancore, pp. 234-40

355. SPEECH AT KOTTARAKARA

January 21, 1937

It is a matter of great joy to be invited to open this private temple. Our friend Sjt. K.M.M. Narayan Nambudiripad deserves the very best congratulations from me, and I hope you will associate yourselves with me in giving him congratulations for following the great example of His Highness the Maharaja. Thereby he is simply living up to the best traditions of Hinduism. He is, therefore, by opening this and seventeen other temples belonging to him, rendering a distinct service in the process of purification of Hinduism. I have great pleasure in declaring the temple open.

The Epic of Travancore, p. 241

356. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KOTTARAKARA

January 21, 1937

This is the very last stage of my pilgrimage in Travancore. I said elsewhere that I came here with great hesitation, equal reluctance, and in fear and trembling; and but for the very pressing and urgent wire of Sjt. Govindan you would not have seen me in your midst today. The telegrams were sent under the joint signatures of Sjt. Govindan and Sjt. Ramachandran. But Ramachandran being a child of Sabarmati, I might not have listened to him; but I dreaded the signature of an ex-judge of Travancore and, more than that , a leader of the Ezhavas. And so at last very reluctantly I capitulated; but having done so, I am free to confess that I am very glad that I capitulated. I am taking away with me spiritual treasures of which I had not dreamt before. Your magnificent temples were as much closed against me, by a voluntary effort on my part, as they were against the tallest amongst the Ezhavas, Pulayas and Pariahs, who were until the other day despised by the *savarna* Hindus. But having found the doors of these temples flung open by the very generous act of His Highness, I entered them with the same joy that must have been felt by the thousands of Ezhavas, Pulayas and Pariahs who must have gone to these temples since the Proclamation. After having entered responsible [*sic*] life, I cannot say that I ever was a habitual temple-goer. But the possibility for spiritual growth by entering these temples in a spiritual and devotional mood has dawned upon me, as it never before had, after all these visits to these temples in a devotional and prayerful mood. But, of course, one needs a proper attitude of mind before one can derive the highest consolation and spiritual joy from visiting these temples. As it is, I have just now come from having performed the opening ceremony of a private temple belonging to Sjt. K.M.M. Narayan Nambudiripad. The ceremony of opening this temple was equal to opening his other temples in Travancore, and I derived the keenest joy in the privilege to open this temple. I have opened several temples before now, but I cannot say that I had such joy in opening those temples. I had missed in those temples the presence of God. There seemed to me to be a kind of artificiality about the opening of those temples. Here, on the contrary, wherever I have gone, I have seen a spontaneity that I was not prepared for. Nor was I prepared for thousands of people waiting for my entry in these temples. No doubt they had come in order to see what must have been to them a

zoological specimen. But I am quite certain that that was not the sole motive in thousands of them coming here and standing in silent and absolutely devotional mood. A scoffer and a sceptic might be easily misled in saying that all this is a figment of my imagination, and has no correspondence to reality. But if such is really the case, I am here to tell you that the whole of my life and growth are due to such figments of imagination and it would be true at least to say of me that I have needed these figments for my growth. And after all imagination is not such a despicable thing that you can neglect it altogether in mundane affairs of life.

Whatever it may be, I leave this word with you that if you will translate the Proclamation that His Highness the Maharaja, guided by Padmanabhaswami, has given you, you will have to identify yourselves completely with all and abolish the distinctions of high and low, *savarnas* and *avarnas*; and in order to assist you to do so, I want to translate for you the verse I have been putting before the people for the last four or five days. The meaning of that verse is this: God the Ruler, our Master and Lord, pervades everything in the universe down to the tiniest atom. It means that He is not merely in your heart or my heart but he is literally and absolutely in every one of the innumerable pores of our skin and the hair of our head. And, therefore, He is nearer to you and to me than our dearest ones. Then the first essential of Hinduism is that we realize the truth of this magnificent statement as we realize that we are sitting here and you are listening to me. Having realized the truth, the seer proceeds to say that since God is so near to us and dominates all our actions, we must voluntarily renounce and dedicate at His feet all that we have regarded as our own. But even after that act of conscious and deliberate dedication and renunciation , we shall want to eat, clothe ourselves and house ourselves, and so the seer says you can only after this dedication use these necessaries of life as if they were given to you by God Himself. That requires the same trust, the same faith and the same love that a child without reasoning it out for himself has for his parents. He never reasons out for himself that it is all well with them and for him so long as his parents are there and so long as they continue to anticipate and supply his wants. Our parents are as much mortal as we ourselves, and therefore it is infinitely more logical and necessary for us that we should have as much faith in God to anticipate and supply our wants. And having told us these three things, the seer proceeds to warn us against coveting anybody's possessions. Now you will see that if we

believe in this *mantra*—and every Hindu is bound to believe in it—there would be no distinctions like those which have been sapping the very foundations of Hinduism and Hindu society.

Now you can also at once realize why temples are and must be an integral part of our lives. We are so easily forgetful of our obligations that we have to renew our vows of loyalty to God, renew our renunciation and dedication from day to day. These temples are the visible symbols of God's power and authority. They are, therefore, truly called the houses of God, the houses of prayer. We go there in a prayerful mood and perform, first thing in the morning after ablutions, the act of dedication and surrender. Scoffers and sceptics may say that all these are figments of imagination, that we are imagining God in the images we see. I will say to these scoffers that it is so. I am not ashamed of confessing that imagination is a powerful factor in life. The temple is not a house of God for, say, my cow, although the cow is as much my fellow-being as any human being. But God has not blessed the cow with imagination, and her presence in the temple has no effect on her, but my presence has a well-defined effect, because I have imagined that the particular temple contains the presence of God.

Therefore, I would love to leave this *mantra* with you and tell you that whatever is inconsistent with this *mantra* you must summarily reject as not Hinduism, and having assimilated all that there is in this *mantra*, you need not worry about other books that pass by the name of Hindu scriptures. Far be it from me to suggest that all else is absolutely worthless or harmful. There are undoubtedly worthless things that are current as Hindu Shastras, but there are also priceless treasures hidden in these books. But you and I have not the time to study them and even if you had the time, I would utter a word of caution to the effect that if a study of the scriptures confuses your mind, it would be well to leave them alone and derive your comfort from this *mantra* to the exclusion of everything else.

And now with a brief reference to my happy experience in Travancore and courteous performance of the obligation that a visitor owes to his hosts, I shall close the proceedings.

I and the whole of my company owe a deep debt of gratitude to the organizers of this pilgrimage who left no-stone unturned to make it as comfortable as possible under the circumstances. I am deeply grateful to Their Highnesses and to Sachivottama Sir C.P. Ramaswami

Aiyar for having extended to me and to my party the hospitality of the State. Naturally this hospitality made my passage through Travancore—and it has been such a rush—free of difficulties and afforded me comforts which otherwise I should not have received. But more than to these high personages and the managers of this pilgrimage, our thanks are due to those who were in actual charge of my day-to-day programme. For instance, the chauffeurs of the three cars that were placed at our disposal were unremitting in their attention, and I am happy to tell you that they did their work without a single untoward accident. They willingly did their work, never minding whether it was night or day. And so also did the cooks, for whom, I assure you, it was a laborious task to prepare our meals from stage to stage. We were never at one place for more than 24 hours. Almost invariably the breakfast had to be taken at one place, the lunch at another place and the dinner at a third place. But these cooks were ever ready for the tasks allotted to them. And there was the officer in charge of these who accompanied us from Trivandrum and supervised everything. He has been equally unremitting in his attention and studiously courteous. But for the hearty co-operation of all these friends whom I have named, we could not have negotiated this pilgrimage without anyone of us getting ill.

And then I may not omit the Tahsildars at every place who were ready to render every assistance required. My thanks are due to every one of them and to others whom I may have inadvertently omitted to mention.

I am just reminded that I had neglected that necessary limb of the law, I mean the Police. The Police have not acted after the proverbial manner to which we are accustomed in India. They really acted in the most gentlemanly manner for which the Police in England are celebrated throughout the world. Whatever Englishmen may be here in India, the English Police constable in England is really a gentleman. I understand that every morning when he is sent out on duty, he is required to repeat the formula that he is not a master but a servant of the people. He has to deal courteously with innumerable people with whom he has to come in daily contact and he may not handle even criminals roughly. And as English law, like all law, requires that no man should be considered guilty unless he is so adjudged by law, the Police in England are taught to be courteous even to people who may be found guilty of murder and caught red-handed. And so you understand what high praise I am bestowing on

the Police here when I say that they behaved in the same gentlemanly manner as they behave in London. Naturally, therefore, they are entitled to the same thanks that I have given to the others I mentioned before.

Lastly, I would thank you, the present audience, and ask you not to forget that the carrying out of the Proclamation rests with every one of you individually.

The Epic of Travancore, pp. 241-8

357. SUMMARY OF SPEECHES AT PRAYER MEETING IN TEMPLES[1]

[*January 12/21, 1937*][2]

I suppose it is true of temples in India—in the South as well as in the North—that there are courtyards attached to them where *bhajan* parties give their *bhajans* and teachers give their discourses. But what I propose to do here and what I have been doing for some days is somewhat different from what I have described to you.

Ever since my return to India we have had, in our Ashram and wherever I have gone, prayers about this time every evening, and I have been so very much enthused over my pilgrimage that I had been longing to have my prayers under the shadow of your grand temples. So I enquired of the trustees whether I could have a prayer meeting under the shadow of the presiding deity of the temple which I am visiting for the first time in my life. The permission was readily given and I am grateful to the trustees for it.

I shall now explain to you the various part of the prayer we have every evening. I am going to commence by reciting the first verse of the *Ishopanishad* which I have been explaining at various meetings. I must give you the gist of the verse which I consider to be the bedrock of Hinduism without which Hinduism is nothing and with which Hinduism need not be anything else. God the Creator and Ruler pervades every atom, ever so tiny, in the universe, and therefore seeing that it is all God's and God pervades everything, we have to surrender

[1] Mahadev Desai says: "Whenever we happened to be near a temple in the evening, we used to have our evening prayer in the temple precincts. Gandhiji explained everywhere in brief the meaning of various parts of the prayer. This is what he said at these prayer meetings."

[2] Gandhiji was in Travancore from January 12 to January 21.

everything and renounce everything in His favour and eat or enjoy or use just what He gives from day to day. The verse closes by saying: "Do not covet anybody's riches." There is nothing so satisfying and beautiful in all the scriptures of the world as this *mantra* and it enunciates a universal truth applicable to all.

This will be followed by a recitation of the 19 last verses of the second chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita*. They tell us what we should do to become good Hindus, how we should behave towards one another and towards ourselves.

Then since all cannot understand Sanskrit we have a simple *bhajan* or hymn from one of our saints who devised this beautiful medium to convey to us the essence of Hinduism. We draw our *bhajans* from the exhaustless stores of Kabir, Tulsidas, Surdas, Nanak, Mirabai, Tyagaraja, Tukaram, and other saints of India.

But there are others who cannot understand even these simple *bhajans*, and so to direct their attention Godward we simply repeat the name of Rama.

And then since our recent penetration into the villages we have readings from Tulsidas's *Ramayana* which is one of the gems of our religious literature. It is known to millions of villagers in North India, and its music is such that even listening to its chant will uplift you.

Now I hope you will follow the prayer somewhat intelligently.

The Epic of Travancore, pp. 249-51

358. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

MADRAS,
January 22, 1937

This visit to Travancore has been in every sense of the term a pilgrimage for me. The Harijan tour of Orissa, which in part I made on foot, I did describe as a pilgrimage. But it was not a pilgrimage in the orthodox sense of the term, except perhaps in the language of Nandana. Has it not been said that he walked miles in order to see God face to face in the temple of his imagination, while knowing that the temple doors would be shut in his face? The difference, however, is that he succeeded in being admitted to the temple, whereas in Orissa, I failed hopelessly.

To Travancore I went in the spirit of an orthodox pilgrim knowing beforehand that the very temples that were closed to me because they were closed to fellow Harijans, were open for me and them. In this sense this was the very first pilgrimage I had ever undertaken in my life. Though before I decided not to visit temples that were closed to Harijans, I visited some temples, it was not as a pilgrim. It was part of the tour or tours undertaken for other purposes, for instance khadi and Khilafat. But this was definitely to visit numerous temples in Travancore. And I must say that my most sanguine expectations were more than realized.

The so-called *savarnas* and the so-called *avarnas* mingled without distinction, in their thousands, everywhere I went. They entered the numerous temples without let or hindrance. The officiating priests conducted their service and distributed flowers, sandal paste and *prasadam* without the slightest hesitation. I saw no sullenness in their faces. The whole scene seemed to me to be a spontaneous response to the Proclamation and a recognition of the fact that it was meeting a long-felt want. I had the fear that Harijans would not flock to the temples as they did. I had also the fear that this long deprivation might have made them indifferent to temple worship, nay, indifferent to religion itself. Evidently it was not so. They must have felt the craving, consciously or unconsciously, for the worship of which they were deprived, when the other Hindus, called *savarnas*, were not. So it appeared to me that they came into their own naturally; and, therefore, there was no difficulty about their knowing what a devotional spirit was or how they should worship.

I know thousands came to the temples, and lined the roads leading to them. The silence that they observed was exemplary and worthy of the sacredness of the occasion. This moved me to my innermost depths and I could not help giving vent to some of the expressions that I did in my speeches. They came, all of them, out of the feeling in my heart. I was called to the many meetings fully unprepared. There was no time left by the organizers for me to think out what I should say. When, therefore, I said that though the hand that traced the signature to the Proclamation was that of the young Maharaja, the spirit behind was that of God, I meant it literally.

I can only hope that this great step taken by the Maharaja, under the wise guidance of his mother and the advice of his Dewan, will be followed up by Cochin and the other Indian States and even in British

India. I was therefore delighted to read in *The Hindu* of yesterday that Professor K. Sundararaman, who is known to be a sanatanist, has suggested that there should be enabling legislation in British India, empowering trustees, wherever they think it desirable and necessary, to open temples under their charge to the so-called untouchables, precisely on the same terms as they are open today to other Hindus.

The sooner such legislation is brought about, the better it is for Hinduism and for Hindus. What is happening in Travancore is likely to happen in all the other parts of India, because Hindu nature in Travancore cannot be different from Hindu nature elsewhere. After all, only a few months ago, nobody was prepared for the great event in Travancore. As a matter of fact, it was thought then that Travancore would not give the lead as it has bravely done; but that it would be the last to throw open its mighty temples to Harijans. But the-unexpected has happened; and that constitutes a miracle of modern times. Travancore has shown the way and it would be a great pity if it is not followed, as I have suggested, by the other Indian States, and by British India, as Prof. Sundararaman has suggested.

The Hindu representative desired Gandhiji to say a word to the orthodox.

Of course, orthodox opinion can do a great deal. I see that some meetings have been held in Tamil Nad, disapproving of the Proclamation. I hope, however, that this disapproval is no proof of general disapproval by the orthodoxy. They ought to recognize the time spirit. No true religion can tolerate distinctions between man and man. The sooner, therefore, the orthodox people recognize the necessity of a change, the better it would be for the faith of which they regard themselves as special custodians. I hope, therefore, that they will follow the lead given by Prof. Sundararaman.

Replying to a question regarding the State action he desired to be taken, following the Proclamation, in the directions he mentioned in his speech at Pandalam, Gandhiji remarked:

It is not an ambitious programme. I have not the least doubt it can be easily worked. Only there must be the will.

The Hindu, 22-1-1937

359. SPEECH AT HARIJAN INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL, KODAMBAKKAM

January 22, 1937

Gandhiji said that he was glad to remain in their midst even for a few hours. If they were wise and prudent, they ought to keep the premises of the institution spick and span. He saw a number of cobwebs in the roofing and also pits in the compound. The residential students should see that these defects were removed. The management was paying a heavy rent of Rs. 40 per mensem for the building and if the students made a wise use of the place, they could get that amount out of it. Another thing he noticed was that there was no spinning and weaving. If they took to spinning and weaving, say, at least, for an hour a day, it would doubly benefit them. They could make their own cloth and sell also the extra cloth woven by them. Those who were in control of this institution should consider whether it was practicable to adopt his suggestion. He would like the inmates to remember the two things he had mentioned.

The Hindu, 23-1-1937

360. SPEECH AT KODAMBAKKAM

January 22, 1937

While I was in Travancore, offering prayers in the presence of huge assemblies, pin-drop silence prevailed. A divine silence pervaded the atmosphere. But here, even in this small assembly, there is not that silence. I do not think that the devotion I saw at Travancore was due to a fit of enthusiasm. If you here have , on a modest scale, that kind of religious spirit which is now in Travancore, you will also see the same silence pervading devotional meetings here. I hope you will remember it. If Hinduism in the future is to live as one of the great religions on earth, a religious revival such as the one in Travancore has got to be brought about throughout the length and breadth of India. I invite you to reason out the pros and cons of it by your individual conduct.

I shall now say a few words about the prayer recited. The first recital was of the last nineteen verses of the second chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita*. These verses are being sung at evening prayers because they are reminders to every Hindu of how he should conduct himself on earth. The second part of the prayer is a *bhajan* from old saints, which is for those who do not understand Sanskrit. Since there are millions in this country who cannot even recite *bhajans*, our forefathers have discovered a method which is a mere recital of the

name of God whom you recognize as Rama, Krishna or by thousands of other names. Then the last thing is a recitation from Tulsidas's *Ramayana*. This is a later introduction; since the village movement has been started, it has been found necessary to take some such thing to the villagers. Tulsidas's *Ramayana* is known to millions of Indians north of the Vindhya Range. I regard this *Ramayana* as one of the richest spiritual treasures that humanity possesses. Its music is lofty and its language equally lofty.

Some sort of evening prayer before retiring to bed is necessary. Just as we require food for the body, so also we require, in the shape of prayers, food for the soul, for we know and recognize that there is something besides our body. If you try prayer for some time sincerely, you will discover with me that whereas you may go without bodily food for some time, even with profit, you may not desire to go without the spiritual food. If prayers are offered both in the morning and evening, you will soon find that a time will come when you will be disgusted if you omit to offer prayers.

In conclusion, Gandhiji appealed to the gathering to give donations to the Harijan Institute which was doing useful work for the Harijans.

Small cash, jewels, watches and fountain pens were offered. Gandhiji humorously asked Srimati Lakshmi, daugther of Mr. Satyamurti, "What are you going to give?" She immediately took out a pair of gold bangles from her hands and gave them to Gandhiji.

The Hindu, 23-1-1937

361. INTERVIEW TO AN EGYPTIAN[1]

[*January 22, 1937*][2]

QUESTION: What do you think of communism? Do you think it would be good for India?

ANSWER: Communism of the Russian type, that is communism which is imposed on a people, would be repugnant to India. I believe in non-violent communism.

Q. But communism in Russia is against private property. Do you want private property?

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] According to Mahadev Desai the interview took place when Gandhiji was preparing to go to bed because he was to get up at 3 o'clock the next morning to visit the cyclone-affected areas. This he did on January 23.

A. If communism came without any violence, it would be welcome. For then no property would be held by anybody except on behalf of the people and for the people. The millionaire may have his millions, but he will hold them for the people. The State could take charge of them whenever they would need them for the common cause.

Q. Is there any difference of opinion between you and Jawaharlal in respect of socialism?

A. There is, but it is a difference in emphasis. He perhaps puts an emphasis on the result, whereas I put on the means. Perhaps according to him I am putting over-emphasis on non-violence, whereas he, though he believes in non-violence, would want to have socialism by other means if it was impossible to have it by non-violence. Of course my emphasis on non-violence becomes one of principle. Even if I was assured that we could have independence by means of violence, I shall refuse to have it. It won't be real independence.

Q. But do you think the English will leave India to you and go back peacefully as a result of your non-violent agitation?

A. I do think so.

Q. What is the basis of your belief?

A. I base my faith in God and His justice.

Q. You are more Christian than we so-called Christians. I will write these words down in block letters.

A. You must, otherwise God would not be God of Love but God of violence.

Harijan, 13-2-1937

362. LETTER TO PYARELAL

January 23, 1937

CHI. PYARELAL,

I passed quite a few days considering whether I should write to you or talk to you. I am merely putting on a brave front. My fear of you does not allow me to do anything. But lest I should repent later I am overcoming my fear of writing to you.

Why am I afraid? Is it because you have always been scared of me? But you had no reason to do so, while I have every reason to fear

you. Must you still torment me? Have some pity on me.

Why do you not believe that even man's actions are prompted by the will of God? Who has been unfair to you, the world or God? Why should you fight against God? Suicide is an affront to God.

Dispel my fear if you can. Allow me to sit in peace and work. I would be satisfied even if you only made *rotis* for me. I would be content even if you just remained before my eyes. Why should you believe that only what you think is knowledge?

What should I write? I am always praying to God that He may grant you good sense and I may not lose you !

Blessings from

AN UNHAPPY FATHER

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

363. SPEECH IN AN ANDHRA VILLAGE[1]

[*January 23, 1937*][2]

I want you to be strictly honest with me and tell me how many of you have suffered and how many have not. I have worked on many an occasion in distressed areas, e.g., in Bihar, where the distress was infinitely greater than here, but even there cent per cent people had not suffered. If several thousands had suffered, several hundreds had escaped. Now I would ask such of you as have actually suffered to raise their hands[3]. I am glad, and I know that those who have suffered would not come to attend these meetings. I should have to go to them. Then please make the beginning, and those of you who have not suffered please pay for the sufferers as much as you can.

Harijan, 13-2-1937

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". Mahadev Desai says: "Gandhiji was invited . . .to give a day for the cyclone area. Gandhiji could not resist the request . . . and he hurried through 129 miles from Nidubrole to Bezwada, taking on his way places like Chirala, Bapatla, Vetapalem, Gollapalem, Timmasundaram, Paruchuru, Chilakaluripeta and Guntur, making collections."

[2] According to *Gandhi—1915-1948*, Gandhiji was in Andhra on this date.

[3] Very few hands were raised.

364. SPEECH IN AN ANDHRA VILLAGE[1]

[*January 23, 1937*]

I have been wandering from 6.30 through the cyclone area, but I cannot say that I have seen much. If I really wanted to see the cyclone area, I should not have gone about like a lord in a car but should have walked through it. But I had only a few hours and there is no time left for anything like a study of the situation. The only thing I can do, having come here, is to say a word of comfort. I know that my voice cannot reach the Government. I have no influence with them, nor have I any with those in charge of affairs here. But I can certainly say that though everyone else may forsake you, God never forsakes people in distress. When I studied Tamil many years ago I came across a proverb which I cannot forget. This is it: *Tikkattravannukku Daivametunai,* which means, 'for those who are helpless, God is the help.' But it should not remain merely on our lips, it should enter our hearts, and then no matter how many cyclones we have, we shall rejoice within. That also does not mean that you will be lazy. A man who has faith in God works twenty-four hours, for He has given us hands and feet. And if we use them, He will give us food and clothing too. So you must not expect me to weep with you. My function is to make those who weep forget their sorrow and smile. And I know you know how to smile. But those only can smile well who know how to labour with their hands and feet for others and, especially in a place like this, those can smile who divide their good fortune with others. If the powers that be give us help, we shall receive it gratefully, but if it does not come, we will not commit suicide or swear at them, nor become misanthropes instead of philanthropes. You must therefore be cheerful and help your less fortunate brethern. I am coming from a place where a gentleman has given away six acres of land for Harijans. Those who are wealthy will, I hope, follow his example.

Harijan, 13-2-1937

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

365. SPEECH AT GUNTUR[1]

[*January 23, 1937*]

I cannot estimate the actual extent of the damage, but I may say that I have seen many a house utterly destroyed, more houses where the roofs had been blown off, many huts remain utterly uninhabitable even after three months. Mighty trees have been bent from their roots and there were innumerable fields from which crops were swept away. It seems to me that the relief granted by Government and sent to the Committee by the public was wholly inadequate to this emergency. At Vinayashramam, when it was quite dark, hundreds of men and women were eager to see me and when I started my mission of begging, there was not a man or woman that did not pay. Some sisters gave away their jewels. I have no influence with Government. I can only make an appeal to them, if my voice can reach them.

Harijan, 13-2-1937, also *The Hindu*, 25-1-1937

366. SPEECH AT. BEZWADA[2]

[*January 23, 1937*]

Mahatmaji, at the outset, referred to the heavy damage done to a portion of the Guntur District by the recent cyclone and regretted that he had no time to narrate his experiences of his tour in that affected area. When Guntur was affected, people in Andhradesha thought that the whole of Andhradesha was afflicted and so there was not sufficient contribution to the Cyclone Relief Fund. Proceeding he said:

I hold it is not true. I commenced collecting subscriptions even at Vinayashramam and other affected areas. In God's dispensation, even in the most affected areas, there are some who escaped affliction and can contribute to the relief of the distressed. Necessarily people from the unaffected areas also came to see me. As it is usual in Andhradesha they contributed liberally. I have been rushing through space and so I had no time to count the collections. Many ladies gave away their jewels. I can say I have collected roughly Rs. 1,500. If I had more time, I would have collected more money. Because several weeks have passed by, do not think no further relief is necessary. Some of the vast damages are irreparable. There are some humble

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". Gandhiji spoke in English and the speech was translated into Telugu.

huts which require adequate and immediate relief. For want of sufficient funds, they are still left in the same state. Some are roofless and some wall-less. If money comes, they will be repaired. I want you to give at this meeting as much as possible. Even afterwards, continue sending liberal contributions to the Cyclone Relief Fund. Let it not be said of the people in Andhradesha that homes were destroyed, crops were swept away, trees were uprooted, men and cattle killed, and yet no person in Andhradesha lifted his finger to organize relief. Because a part has been affected, let no one say that the whole of the province has been affected. It is altogether wrong to expect that Bombay would relieve the distress. People in Bombay will not see the havoc. You can see it within a few miles of you. You must do all in your power before you look to any other province for help.

Harijan, 13-2-1937, also *The Hindu*, 25-1-1937

367. CONUNDRUMS[1]

A friend has addressed me the following conundrums:

(1) If temples are thrown open to the Harijans, there is danger of their next insisting on being admitted to all the parts where the priest is admitted, only because they satisfy the test of personal cleanliness.

(2) Your statement that God does not reside in temples where Harijans are not admitted seems to me to be a one-sided and therefore misleading statement. In my opinion it is as untrue to say that God is not in temples where Harijans are not admitted as that God is to be found only in temples and not outside. It challenged, as it were, the omnipresence of God. He is everywhere; there is no place where He is not.

(3) Then, you say that Hinduism must perish if untouchability lives. But Hinduism has continued to exist all these years in spite of the institution of untouchability, and there is no reason why it should be otherwise now or in future. Nor should you forget that it is Hinduism with its much-abused institution of untouchability that, on your own admission, has in the past brought you spiritual peace and consolation.

Now, for my reply. A man of faith may not shrink from his present duties or deviate from the right path for fear of possible difficulties in the future. The only thing for us, therefore, is to

[1] The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 24-1-1937. This translation is by Pyarelal.

proceed by implicitly accepting absolute equality between ourselves and the harijans and to give them the same credit for reasonableness as we claim for ourselves. All past experience goes to show that they do not resent such restrictions as are reasonable and apply equally to the *savarna* Hindus, but they naturally do not and cannot be expected to appreciate and accept ex-cathedra usages that discriminate between *savarnas* and *avarnas*, and between the different groups among the *avarnas* themselves, as these smack of invidiousness and offend against reason.

(2) True, the statement that God does not dwell in temples from which Harijans are excluded is one-sided and therefore true in a certain and limited sense only. But does that not apply to human speech itself? But we have not on that account condemned or discarded the use of human speech. With all its imperfections as a vehicle for the expression of truth, we must rely on it for all practical purposes, or it would spell an end of all human intercourse. Tulsidas has made Rama say in his *Ramayana* that God dwells only in the hearts of the good and the pure, not of those who are wicked or evil-minded. Now this statement, again, is only partly true. But still more untrue and mischievous in its pragmatic effect would be its reverse, viz, that God dwells in the hearts of the wicked and evil-minded too and actuates them in their evil deeds, though as a strictly scientific statement of truth it would be perhaps nearer the mark. In a strictly scientific sense God is at the bottom of both good and evil. He directs the assassin's dagger no less than the surgeon's knife. But for all that good and evil are, for human purposes, from each other distinct and incompatible, being symbolical of light and darkness, God and Satan, Ahriman and Ormuzd respectively. My statement, therefore, that where Harijans are excluded there God is not, must stand.

(3) My correspondent's argument here altogether lacks point. The slow disintegration of Hinduism one can see even today taking place under our very nose, mainly and principally in consequence of the curse of untouchability. Anyone who has eyes can see it. A moribund, life-in-death sort of existence should not be mistaken for life; in fact it is more distressing than death itself. If a person like me can today derive spiritual force and consolation from Hinduism, it is because I have never regarded untouchability as an integral part of Hinduism. It may perhaps be objected that the term 'disintegration of Hinduism' which I have used is misleading since disintegration of Hindu society need not necessarily mean the disintegration of Hindu

religion. The objection is based on a fallacy and is only partly valid. In mundane sense a faith can have no existence apart from its votaries. It may personally console me even if I can bear witness to my faith as its sole surviving representative; but of what avail would it be to those millions who fell away from it?

Harijan, 20-2-1937

368. HARIJAN ASHRAMS IN KATHIAWAR

My help is expected in raising of funds for these Ashrams. I am sorry to say that my plight is as pitiable as that of the man who having once burnt his tongue with milk, blows even on buttermilk before drinking it. This does not mean that no one should help those ashrams. I can no longer request people or write to them as I did in the past. I do not have the courage to do so. But those who have been supporting such ashrams should make inquiries for their own satisfaction and continue to help them if they are satisfied. It has never happened with regard to any institution in the world that all the workers have turned out good. This should not stop all the public activities. If some workers have proved to be false coin, there are others who have been carrying on their work in keeping with moral principles and have brought credit to their institutions. The work of Harijan welfare will go on and it should go on. All that is necessary is that the organizers who have so far depended on me should give up all hopes of me. I am alive today, but may not be tomorrow. How long can one trust one's physical frame? Hence the organizers should consider my pitiable condition and, relying on themselves, bring credit to the institutions to which they belong. Those who are engaged in Harijan welfare activities or any other service should never give up faith or their work.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 24-1-1937

369. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[*January 24*][1] *, 1937*

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

We reached here today. Kanti went to Poona taking Saraswati with him. He will come to Bombay with her. Paparamma had been to Bangalore but could not come here.

Sharma has met you. If you wish to come and see Saraswati you may.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 597

370. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 25, 1937

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

You did not write to me probably because I was touring. We returned yesterday. Write and tell me how you are. Come if you wish. Don't feel hesitant. I got a letter from Madam Wadia. She has acknowledged the letter. Prabha is with me. Saraswati is fine.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 373

371. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

January 25, 1937

CHI. LILI,

I have had no letters from you recently. We returned from the tour yesterday. I had a letter from Nanavati from which I learnt that your brother could not be said to have improved yet. You will have got my last letter. I hope you are following the suggestions I made in it.

[1] The date is illegible in the source. However, Gandhiji arrived in Segaon on January 24, from where the letter is obviously written.

Tell Nanavati if he is there that I didn't reply to him since he told me he would be reaching there about the 25th. Have you taken your little pair of scissors with you or left it here?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9354. Also C.W. 6629. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

372.LETTER TO G.D. BIRLA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 25, 1937

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I had been hesitating to go to Travancore but it was good I did. God knows what the others got but I for one got more than money. You will find an account in *Harijan*. Double it and you will have an idea of what I mean.

I saw the Maharaja and the Maharani. The interview was good. We talked fully and frankly. Such unprecedented awakening among Harijans, and of such a natrue, would not have been possible in any other way.

My belief is getting stronger that the branches can get from the centre not funds but moral support and prestige. If they are not satisfied with this they may well close down or work independently. In that eventuality we may do what we can through the agency. Those branches should be regarded useless that cannot collect funds to meet their expenditure. I feel no necessity for waiting for a year in this respect. Whatever changes in Harijan Nivas are contemplated need not be put off for a year. Why not reduce the unnecessary expenses from now? But of course Thakkar Bapa's assent is required and Malkani too must be consulted.

I am trying to draw Dinkar and have already sent a letter to him.

The correspondence with Parameshwari is still continuing. I am awaiting one more letter from him and shall write to you further when I receive it. I have now agreed that he may be authorized to form a new institution and that he may do what he wants so long as our work goes on. The condition solely is that he should be able to carry on with the funds available and without seeking loans.

It will be good if you can come over for a few days when you can find some time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8028. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

373. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 26, 1937

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter. It does not become you to say that you should like to go Rasik's way. If you believe that you are taking due care of your health, I would have nothing to say.

I thought you were joking when you said that you wished to fly to Paparamma. On the subject being mentioned casually, Prabhavati told me that you really wanted to fly to Trivandrum. If this is true, then it is something I don't like. The aeroplane is not for the poor or for a man who is patient. You probably know that I don't like even cars, though I do use them when I can't help it. This may be described as a weakness of mine. Moreover, where is the plane fare to come from? If any friend offers to pay it, I wouldn't like you to accept it, nor even if Paparamma sends it. I can't stand your becoming a beggar. But this is my philosophy. You need not ask for my permission to fly in a plane. You are free and I should like you to act freely. It would be a different thing if you deferred to my views voluntarily and with faith. Your freedom will not be compromised thereby. But I shouldn't like it if you did something to please me or out of fear of me. That will not be for your good. I would rather that you acted upon only those ideas of mine which you can readily accept. How can you help it if you can't like my ideas? If I were to find fault with you for that, I myself would be guilty of a wrong. You may, therefore, do as you please as regards flying to Trivandrum.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7313. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

374. TELEGRAM TO VITHALDAS KOTHARI

WARDHAGANJ,
January 27, 1937

VITHALDAS KOTHARI
GUJARAT VIDYAPITH, AHMEDABAD

SEND PURATAN[1] IMMEDIATELY.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 7699

375. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK[2]

January 27, 1937

MY DEAR HENRY,

Owing to the pilgrimage to Travancore, it has not been possible for me to write to you earlier. Your question is whether I retain the same opinion as I did at the R.T.C. of 1931. I said then and repeat now that so far as I am concerned, if Dominion Status were offered in terms of the States of Westminister, i.e., the right to secede at will, I would unhesitatingly accept it.

Yours sincerely,
BHAI

The Hindu, 1-2-1937

376. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 31, 1937

CHI. NIMU,

I got Ramdas's letter at the same time as yours. Probably you also got one. Even so, I am sending on to you the letter I have received.

Kanu is enjoying himself. He takes full advantage of the tricycle. Plays football, too. Daily accompanies me on my walks. Drinks plenty of milk these days. Gets enough fruit as well. Eats *rotli*

[1] Puratan Buch, a khadi worker

[2] In the course of a talk at Segaon in early January Polak had asked Gandhiji what he meant by "complete independence". He then requested Gandhiji to give it in writing.

made of bran. Heartily relishes milk and fruit. You have not the slightest cause to worry about him. Nanavati teaches him. Lilavati teaches him arithemetic. Even apart from this, he learns something or other from everybody.

I got a letter from Mr. Kallenbach written on his way.

My previous letter had remained at Maganwadi through oversight. Kanaiyo tells me that it was posted only the day before yesterday. Such things happen sometimes. There is no reason to believe that my blood-pressure has particularly shot up. I need rest and that I am more or less taking. I should like to send you over to Rajkot. You have told me that you would be ready to go wherever I send you, whether it is Madras, Delhi or Prayag. Or, stay in the Mahila Ashram here. Do not get confused by all these questions. I have asked them only so that it might be easier for me to think and decide.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

377. LETTER TO K.M. MUNSHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 27, 1937

BHAI MUNSHI,

My right hand is disabled and it would take more time to write with the left. Today I can't spare that much time.

I didn't write anything to Rajaji. The newspapers are nowadays cultivating very efficiently the art of telling lies. When Mahadev and I first read the news about Rajaji contesting the election, we just laughed at it. I was taken aback by the news about my consent. Rajaji did explain to me in Madras why he had come to that decision. I am not ready to believe that his candidature is necessarily for the good. Since I have respect for his decisions, I do hope that this decision of his will benefit the country. But my mind is not ready at present to go further than this.

I will welcome it if you can spare me in regard to the late Narasinhrao. I have already conveyed to his family members my homage to his sacred memory. I had great respect for him and it was increasing day by day. I admired his faith in God. He had made a

very pleasing translation of "Lead Kindly Light" at my request. It was the cause of the personal bond between us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7611. Courtesy: K.M. Munshi

378. LETTER TO C.A. AIYAMUTHU

January 28, 1937

DEAR AIYAMUTHU,

Shankerlal Banker has sent me a copy of your letter which I consider hysterical. I had given you some credit for possessing a sense of humour but I see I was thoroughly mistaken. Chelaswami must have been particularly dense seeing that he could not appreciate the very delicate compliment which I really paid you when he told me that he was not Aiyamuthu. The compliment was this. You did not consider it necessary to rush up to Faizpur[1] and abandon your post of duty in Tirupur. All the while I was talking to Chelaswami I was smiling and cracking jokes. So I said, as far as I can recollect, something like this. 'Why should Aiyamuthu come here? He sends you here and himself loafs about in Tirupur'. Chelaswami's densen-ess I can excuse but I cannot excuse yours. Surely you should have at once said to Chelaswami: 'You do not understand what Bapu meant. He liked my restraint in not going to Faizpur'. Now tell me if you understand this letter and whether it helps you out of your agony? And do you now understand what the poets all over the world have said, viz., that a man is the maker of his own hapiness and misery.

Yours,

BAPU

SJT. C.A. AIYAMUTHU

A.I.S.A. KHADI DEPOT

TIRUPUR, S. INDIA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] For the Congress session, from December 22 to 29, 1936

379. LETTER TO TARADEVI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 28, 1937

CHI. TARA,

You are a lazy girl and you advance the excuse that your aunt has forbidden you to write. Are you ashamed of asking forgiveness for not writing till today?

And when you do write you have nothing to say except that you are preparing for class X. Let us see what you are going to write in your next letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. TARABEHN
MAHILA VIDYALAYA
GANGA PRASAD ROAD
LUCKNOW

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

380. LETTER TO KALIDAS NAG

January 29, 1937

DEAR KALIDAS NAG,

I have your letter written on the boat taking you to Honolulu. I have no inspiring message to give to anybody if non-violence is not its own message. But I can state my own experience of nearly fifty years of practice that there is no force known to mankind which is equal to non-violence. It cannot, however, be learnt through books. It has got to be lived.

You ask me to mention books. For the reason just stated it is difficult to single out books purely dedicated to an exposition of non-violence. Richard Gregg's *Power of Non-violence* may be studied with

advantage. Tolstoy's later writings are also aids to a contemplation of non-violence.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. KALIDAS NAG
C/O THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII
HONOLULU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

381. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 29, 1937

CHI. KANTI,

What have you been doing? Have you asked Trivediji for Rs. 100? Devdas is deeply pained. Is it right for you to ask for money in this manner without his permission? What was your promise to me? What has happened to it? What do you want Rs. 100 for? Won't you open your heart to me? I feel much worried about you. Won't you free me from my worry and fear? Please reply immediately and write to Devdas also.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7314. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

382. A CHRISTIAN LETTER

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was with me during the Travancore pilgrimage. Though she could not enter the temples, she followed the pilgrimage in all other respects. She has felt moved by what she observed during the pilgrimage, and has placed in my hands the following letter[1] which I dare not withhold from the reader:

> . . . I am of opinion that the missionary with the best intention in the world—for we must credit him with honesty of purpose—has wronged Indian Christians in more ways than one. Many converts here have been denationalized, e.g., even their names have been changed in many instances

[1] Only extracts have been reproduced here.

to those of Europeans; they have been told that there is no true light to be found in the religion of their forefathers. The ancient scriptures of their ancestors are a closed book to them . . . At the same time, while there has been no conscious effort to purge the Indian Church of the taint of untouchability that exists within its own doors, the untouchability that exists in Hinduism has been exploited to the extent of so-called Christianity of the Depressed Classes. I say 'so-called Christianity' advisedly, because I know that not one of these poor people to whom I have spoken—and I have spoken to many—has been able to tell me anything of the spiritual implications of his change of faith. That he is equally ignorant of the faith of his forefathers and has been sadly neglected by his own community does not seem to me to be ample or any reason for transplanting him to an alien soil where he can find no root. . . .

Your utterances during your pilgrimage of penitence in Travancore have been a great joy. In particular do I rejoice in your special message to the Christian community at Kottayam[1]. In admitting once again the equality of all religions you have given Christians much food for thought, and I hope and pray that this will be the beginning of an era of self-purification for them no less than for the members of the Hindu fold. Are we not all Hindus in as much as we are the children of Hind? Is there not room for Jesus in Hinduism? There must be. I cannot believe that any who seek to worship God in spirit and in truth are outside the pale of any of the great religions which draw their inspiration from Him who is the fountain-head of all Truth. I am sure I am not the only Indian born in the Christian faith who holds these views, but I feel that if the teaching and example of Jesus are to enrich the life of our country, Indian Christians must turn the searchlight inwards and seek to serve in that spirit of humility and tolerance which is the essence of all true religion and without which there can be no unity and no peace and goodwill on earth.

Will you not help the Indian Christian to realize his mission? You can, because you have drawn inspiration from Jesus' undying teachings as embodied in the Sermon on the Mount. We assuredly stand in need of guidance.

Owing to her close contact with me there was hesitation on my part over the publication. But the knowledge that she has very imperfectly voiced what other Christian friends have told me has overcome my hesitation. But I do not feel competent to guide Indian Christians. I can, however, appeal to them as I did at Kottayam and as I have done before then through these columns. I am on safer ground in responding to the Rajkumari's belief that there is in Hinduism room enough for Jesus, as there is for Mahomed, Zoroaster and

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Kottayam", 19-1-1937

Moses. For me the different religions are beautiful flowers from the same garden, or they are branches of the same majestic tree. Therefore they are equally true, though being received and interpreted through human instruments equally imperfect.

It is impossible for me to reconcile myself to the idea of conversion after the style that goes on in India and elsewhere today. It is an error which is perhaps the greatest impediment to the world's progress towards peace. 'Warring creeds' is a blasphemous expression. And it fitly describes the state of things in India, the mother as I believe her to be of religion or religions. If she is truly the mother, the motherhood is on trial . Why should a Christian want to convert a Hindu to Christianity and vice versa? Why should he not be satisfied if the Hindu is a good or godly man? If the morals of a man are a matter of no concern, the form of worship in a particular manner in a church, a mosque or a temple is an empty formula, it may even be a hindrance to individual or social growth, and insistence on a particular form or repetition of a credo may be a potent cause of violent quarrels leading to bloodshed and ending in utter disbelief in religion, i.e., God Himself.

Harijan, 30-1-1937

383. WANT OF THOROUGHNESS

There is in Travancore an association called The All-Kerala Young Folks' League. Its ambitious motto is 'We serve'. They have also a 'League of Pity' as a branch activity. For want of time, during the nine days' rush in Travancore, for a personal discussion, the members sent me a letter from which I cull the following:

> Boys and girls are encouraged to learn some handicrafts by which they can earn some money. We are quite glad to tell you that many of our boys have taken to spinning as one of their hobbies. As beginners in this field, we have also several problems to be solved and difficulties to be encompassed. The one thing that is troubling us much regarding the spinning of yarn is its disposal. We submit that the yarn produced by our boys and girls is of a low type and cannot find a good market. But the difficulty even for the good type of yarn is that we cannot sell even that to our advantage. And hence many of our members have begun to drop the hobby. We shall be grateful if you please tell us of some method to dispose of it. A portion of the money thus earned by the members is given to the poor.

On every Onam day all our members, regardless of caste or creed, collect together to celebrate our Goodwill Day. On that day, they burn in public a devil's form made of straw to represent untouchability, the day's programme closing with a common dinner.

The League has a very ambitious programme and a high sounding motto. It seems to me that they will neither serve themselves nor society unless they are thorough in whatever they take up. In trying to be thorough they may have to cut out some or even many activities. If such be the case, they should not hesitate to do so. They seek my advice on spinning as they rightly think I, as the author of the movement, should be able to guide them. They call it one of their hobbies. But even hobbies need to be thoroughly cultivated if they are to yield the greatest amount of enjoyment. They are mistaken in thinking that good yarn has no market. If they produce strong and even yarn of 8 counts, it will have a market in Nagercoil. I suggest a better use, however, of their yarn. They should add weaving to their hobby of spinning. If they will do so, the coarse yarn which the beginners will turn out can be woven into tape, *nevar*, *asana*, carpets, etc., and the fine into dhotis for men and women. They need not seek a market for such wares. For they will hardly produce enough for their own personal use. If they will specialize in this one hobby, they will sufficiently live up to their motto of service and many young men will most certainly earn a living if they become whole-time workers. The League has 7,000 members. They make a nucleus of true co-operative society. They can run a store or stores which will sell articles manufactured by the members, and they will be mainly only such articles as the members themselves will require. Khadi can assuredly come first in any such co-operative activity. And Travancore or rather the whole of Kerala is a place where khadi can easily become universal, for the Kerala people, both men and women, have the simplest dress of all India and it is all white. Even the border is a late innovation. But let the League members remember that spinning includes all the anterior processes beginning with picking of cotton, disengaging it from pods, cleaning, ginning and carding it and turning it into slivers. If they are all well done, they are fascinating occupations giving exercise both to the body and the mind. If they will turn to spinning in the spirit of scientists, let them read the article 'What Is Khadi Science?'[1] in *Harijan* of the 16th inst.

Harijan, 30-1-1937

[1] *Vide* "What is Khadi Science", 16-1-1937

384.LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 30, 1937

CHI. SUSHILA,

You have been shouldering heavy responsibility. May God help you. But God will help you only if you help yourself. If your health is not good nor Sita's, how long can you keep yourself up? If your health improves you can take up a lot of work. But you do not observe self-control. How did you have the miscarriage? You two are not children. One's life should become reflective. One should acquire control over the senses. Why should the senses drag us? Is there anything more shameful than that? If you exercise control over your food and your personal habits, then your body will become healthy and both of you will be happy. And you will be able to handle a lot of Manilal's work.

Instead of making Sita a doll, you should start giving her training in domestic chores right from now. If your own life is methodical, she will automatically learn a great deal. Sita and you should take both types of Kuhne baths. You must take to walking for exercise. In diet, you should take fruit and things made from whole wheat flour, drink fresh milk and eat green vegetables in moderate quantities. If you get fresh milk, there is not much need for ghee. You can make such changes in this as experience may suggest.

Do not feel unhappy about Shanti. Be content with whatever service anyone renders. If we do not fail in our duty we shall be able to overcome all obstacles.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I won't write a separate letter to Manilal now. I wanted to write one but I have no time.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4860

385. NEED FOR TOLERANCE[1]

A Mussalman friend had addressed me a long letter of which the following is the gist:[2]

> (1) I turned a vegetarian several years ago, being struck by the iniquitous cruelty of slaughtering God's dumb creatures to provide meat for our tables. Ever since then I have completely abjured the taking of meat though meat-eating is allowed by Islam. But I have not been able to induce my children to abjure meat-eating likewise, with the result that I have still to procure meat for them from the bazzar. Sometimes, however, I am troubled by a doubt whether this is not all wrong. Would I remain a silent witness, if my children took to theft and murder, for instance?
>
> (2) What I have said with regard to meat also holds good in respect of tea, betel leaf, soda water, lemonade, etc.
>
> (3) I belong to the trader class and hence am quite conversant with the various shadowy tricks and devices that are in vogue among this class, e.g., how to exploit the inexperience and weakness of the buyer in order to palm off upon him goods that are utterly worthless, charging prices not according to the cost or to any fixed principle but according to what an unwary customer can be made to fork out and so on. For years I have felt an innate repugnance against all this which Mrs. Besant once described as "white loot". But I feel utterly helpless. . . .
>
> (4) You regard Mahomed as a Prophet of God and hold him in high regard. You have even publicly spoken of him in the highest terms. I have heard and even seen reports in cold print to the effect that you have studied the Koran itself. All this, I must confess, has puzzled me. I am at a loss to understand how a person like you, with all your passion for truth and justice, who has never failed to gloss over [*sic*] a single fault in Hinduism or to repudiate as unauthentic the numerous corruptions that masquerade under it, can holus-bolus accept all that is in the Koran. I am not aware of your ever having called into question or denounced any iniquitous injunction of Islam. Against some of these I learnt to revolt when I was scarcely 18 or 20 years old and time has since only strengthened that first feeling.

I have tried as far as was possible to retain the language of the original, taking liberty only to soften a few expressions here and there, but have otherwise scrupulously kept the sense intact. To come to the

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 31-1-1937. The translation is by Pyarelal.

[2] Only extracts have been reproduced here.

various points mentioned by my correspondent. He deserves to be congratulated on his giving up meat-eating and on the various other disciplines that he has cultivated. But he may not impose the same on his unwilling or half-willing relations or dependents. Let him try to touch their hearts and reason by the means of persuasion at his command; but anything more than that before the desired conversion has come about would be compulsion and therefore unjustifiable. It would obviously be too much for him to expect the members of his family all of a sudden to break with a life-long habit that has never been regarded as contrary to Islam, which is almost universal among the Mussalmans today and till yesterday was followed by the friend in question himself. Let him not forget the long years of strenuous introspection and struggle which he took before he arrived at his decision. To require now his dependents to adopt that decision at a stroke would only betray impatience on his part. The golden rule to be observed always in this connection is that you can never be too severe in dealing with yourself but you must be deliberately liberal in judging others. For, experience has shown that no matter how severe we may try to be with regard to ourselves, we shall, in the result, still be found to have acted partially towards ourselves, for the simple reason that our unconscious bias always prepossesses us in our favour and seldom allows the test to be carried beyond our capacity for endurance. But in the case of others we do not know their weaknesses and limitations, which are known only to God who alone can read our hearts. There is therefore always a danger, with all our desire to be liberal, of our being betrayed into a hollow harshness and intolerance when we proceed to apply our personal standards to others; and paradoxical though it may sound, the more liberal, the more patient, the more considerate we are in such cases, the quicker the results are likely to be; they will certainly be more permanent and lasting.

The analogy between meat-eating and theft or murder drawn by the correspondent in question is altogether untenable. Theft and murder, unlike meat-eating, are universally held to be crimes and are heavily punishable under the law. But even so one may not, in the hypothetical case cited above, try to wean dependents and relations from their career of theft and murder through compulsion. My correspondent must, therefore, try to convert members of his household to his view by patient argument alone, tempered by love, and pending their conversion, cultivate an attitude of the broadest tolerance and forbearance towards them.

To proceed to the next question. I do not hold dishonest practices in business to be warranted or excusable. The principle of unconditional honesty is as binding in this as in any other field of life, and it is up to a business man never to compromise his principle no matter what it may cost him. In the end, of course, honesty pays, though that can hardly be a consideration for observing it. One has a perfect right to fix and regulate the scale of prices that he shall charge from a particular set of customers, but it must be done according to a clear fixed principle and not out of mere opportunism or immoral expediency. There should be in it no room for fraud, sharp practice or finesse, to bamboozle the simple, unsuspecting customer.

Now for Islam. I stand by every word that I have written in that connection. I have nowhere said that I believe literally in every word of the Koran, or for the matter of that of any scripture in the world. But it is no business of mine to criticize the scriptures of other faiths or to point out their defects. It is and should be, however, my privilege to proclaim and practise the truths that there may be in them. I may not, therefore, criticize, or condemn things in the Koran or the life of the Prophet that I cannot understand. But I welcome every opportunity to express my admiration for such aspects of his life as I have been able to appreciate and understand. As for things that present difficulties, I am content to see them through the eyes of devout Mussalman friends, while I try to understand them with the help of the writings of eminent Muslim expounders of Islam. It is only through such a reverential approach to faiths other than mine that I can realize the principle of equality of all religions. But it is both my right and duty to point out the defects in Hinduism in order to purify it and to keep it pure. But when non-Hindu critics set about criticizing Hinduism and cataloguing its faults they only blazon their own ignorance of Hinduism and their incapacity to regard it from the Hindu viewpoint. It distorts their vision and vitiates their judgement. Thus my own experience of the non-Hindu critics of Hinduism brings home to me my limitations and teaches me to be wary of launching on a criticism of Islam or Christianity and their founders.

Harijan, 13-3-1937

386. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 31, 1937

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I cannot write with the right hand. I will therefore write only a few lines. How could I get the time to write during the journey?

Why do you send your letters by express delivery?

It was such a long letter and yet there was no substance to it. When will you learn to write letters?

The trip to Belgaum will probably be fixed in the middle of April. Let it be when it will. I should advise you to come over here and tell me whatever you wish to. If you have nothing to do for your brothers there, do come.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 388

387.LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 31, 1937

CHI. NARAHARI,

I got your letter. I will discuss Vinoba's opinion with him. I have not been able to understand it.

The Goseva Sangh can take over the Goshala of Dhulia without assuming financial responsibility for it. But the present trustees of Dhulia would not like it.

When are you leaving for the Kathiawar tour?

I think the opinion that you have expressed to Rameshwar regarding ghee is perfectly correct.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9104

388. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON,

February 1, 1937

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter. Take Rs. 15 from Ramdas. Prabhavati will stay on for this month at any rate. You may come.

I am very much afraid of you. You are very touchy. Even Paparamma is afraid of you, to say nothing of Saraswati. Ramachandran is the only one who is not afraid of you. But you do not spare him either. I absolutely did not understand the meaning of your letters. You may read any meaning in my letters that you like.

I do not at all like the transaction with Kunvarjibhai. Please bear in mind that we always go down in the eyes of those from whom we borrow money. But there is no question of going down in the eyes of one's parents. We may, therefore, take from them whatever they can give and be satisfied. But my yardstick seems to you too big. Does it not? Big or small, know that that is the only right yardstick for human beings. It is not a yardstick for gods. Instead of dismissing me as a superhuman being, if you coolly weigh what I am writing in the scales of your reason, it will assuredly do you good. When you read and remember it for examination, it is called memory. Perhaps it can be cultivated. But reason can only be developed by discriminating between good and bad.

Prabhavati is sleeping. But why need I detain the letter? I am, therefore, sending it for being posted. I myself have sealed it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7315. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

389. LETTER TO GOKULBHAI

February 1, 1937

BHAI GOKULBHAI,

I have your letter about Surajbehn and also the note about Faizpur.

I have much to say about the kitchen. I believe that the work will become very easy if it is entrusted to persons who have the experience of running large messes. They too form a part of the nation. It is our duty to encourage them and train them. They have many short comings. Their talent should on no account be ignored. I think it is easy to supervise a hundred catering experts and get work from them than to train a thousand volunteers for the kitchen. And that is good for the nation as a whole.

It is true that caterers should be highly efficient. I shall be happy if they can serve food to five thousand persons at a time and manage it efficiently. I do not think it is an impossible task. We do arrange feasts for nine communities. Even then it requires training to manage it efficiently. The work becomes easy when there is a division of labour. Sikhs' *langars* are also worth giving thought to. You seem to aspire to become the kitchen expert. There is nothing wrong in that. Wasn't cooking one of the many accomplishments of Nala? So you may become an expert.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

390. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

February 2, 1937

CHI . BHAGWANJI,

I got your letter. Chitre's goodness is beyond doubt. But his goodness is now eating him away. His sacrifice has become purely egoistic. There should be detachment and knowledge even behind sacrifice. One sees neither in Chitre at present. I have tried very hard to bring him round but have failed completely. Perhaps the best service to him may be not to interfere with him in anything he does but give him whatever help he may ask for. Perhaps he will learn from

experience. Through egoistic fasts, etc., he has made his mind blank and his body weak. He has, therefore, remained fit for nothing. If he takes to socialism and can remain cheerful, even then it will be all right. I am writing a letter to him and sending it with this. Give it to him. Please do not worry as you have been doing. God is there to look after all. He makes some people foolish and some wise. His ways are inscrutable. Our dharma is simple. We should do the duty that has come to us unsought and not worry about the result. We need not carry the burden of the world's woes on our heads nor lose our balance of mind at the sight of its pomp. We should not give pain to anybody nor harbour ill will towards anybody. We should not grab anybody's property and should keep our hands clean. If we live thus, we have done our duty. We can then say like king Janaka: "What does it matter if the city is in flames?"

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 392. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

391. LETTER TO BRIJMOHAN

February 2, 1937

BHAI BRIJMOHAN,

I had answered by wire your letter and wire. Since I have a little time I write you a few words.

Do go abroad but don't be too eager. Do earn money but not for yourself, only for the poor. People generally give for the poor from whatever is left after spending on their luxuries. Justice lies in earning money for the poor furst and then for ourselves. Those who have the talent for earning money should certainly make use of it. But the entire earning should be spent in the service of the people. I know all your brothers have such an inclination. May it grow still more—that is my desire and my blessing. May God bless you.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

392. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON,
February 3, 1937

CHI. KANTI,

What would be everbody's fate if you were to get a third eye! At present only a few like me get burnt by the fire of your two eyes. What would happen if you were to get a third?

It was good that I sealed the letter[1] about the Rs. 15 while Prabha was asleep. If I hadn't done that you would definitely have thought that I had sent you Rs. 15 as fine. But why should you demand a fine? It was another Kantilal Gandhi that Trivedi saw. Thus everbody got a reason to smile after a time of sorrow. But what is the difference between Kunvarji and Trivedi?[2] If Devdas were to know about Kunvarji, how would he feel? I haven't written to him. If, however, I have been able to convince you rationally you should not borrow a single pie from anybody without Devdas's permission. Nor should you spend more than necessary. I have no doubt that this will be for your good. You have only two persons from whom to ask for anything, and they are Devdas and myself.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7316. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

393. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

February 3, 1937

RESPECTED BROTHER,

I am sure you could not be grieving over the death of my sister-in-law. Only one who has earned great merit meets such a death. I only felt happy when I got the telegram.

Salutations of
MOHANDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Kantilal Gandhi", 1-2-1937
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Kantilal Gandhi", 29-1-1937

394. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

February 3, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

Your description is excellent. That day of death[1] was indeed a day of celebration. Here also Krishna[2] and Kanaiyo[3] behaved very well.

I hope the school is going on all right.

How is Purushottam[4]? How is Vijaya[5]?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8514. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

395. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 3, 1937

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You have been well saved. If self-control does not come easily to you, you may marry. You must practise restraint over food.

It is very necessary to make slivers with your own hands. You should do it.

What can you gain by further studies? You can readily obtain a teaching job provided you do not require a high salary. Will you be satisfied with Rs. 75 a month?

You must now compose yourself.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4278; also S.G. 55

[1] Of the addressee's mother; *vide* the preceding item.
[2] Krishnadas Gandhi, son of Chhaganlal Gandhi
[3] Addressee's sons
[4] *ibid*
[5] Purushottam Gandhi's wife

396. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEGAON,
February 4, 1937

CHI. LILA,

It is surprising that you did not receive the letter that I wrote to you from here. I have definitely written one. I looked into my diary also. I wrote the letter on the 25th, i.e., on the next day after my arrival in Segaon. Please inquire now. After reading this letter Mahadev also will inquire at Maganwadi.

Do stay on as long as necessary. When you come I will treat you as a newcomer. All that I want you to do is that while you are there you should strictly follow the rules of this place. Take every step after careful thinking. The prayer must not be missed, nor should spinning be omitted. Only indigenous paper should be used. I am glad that Dr. Yodh holds out the fullest hope and is confident. If he recovers, Damayanti will be free, from worry. If you fix a particular day of the week for writing to me, you will be able to write regularly. It would be an excellent thing to fix a definite time for every activity and the practice saves time and the strain of thinking. My right hand needs rest. On Monday, it has to be used for *Harijan* work. I write a little with my left hand but it consumes more time. I, therefore, dictate Gujarati and English letters whenever I can get hold of somebody.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a phtostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9355. Also C.W. 6630. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

397. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

February 4, 1937

CHI. SUSHILA, MANILAL,

How is it that you suffer miscarriages so often? Both of you should think over this. This is a matter in which no one else's wisdom can help you. Those who lead a thoughtful life and are filled with devotion to God, always succeed in finding the right path for themselves. I only wish that you should not become an invalid.

You did not have much hope for Shanti from the very beginning. You got his services so long as he owed you a debt from his previous life.

You will have to wind up everything there if you do not succeed in finding anyone to take up your work. Isn't that so?

I hope Sita is better now. Accustom her to hip-baths and friction-baths. Haven't I already written to you about her food? Milk, whole-wheat flour in very small quantities, green vegetables like gourd, bitter gourd, amaranth lettuce, etc. I see that it is better to eat onions and garlic uncooked. Starchy foods like potatoes, etc., should be eaten sparingly or excluded altogether. Among fruits, pineapple, oranges, *mosambis*, grapes and similar juicy fruits.

I remembered both of you in Faizpur. The Congress session in a village was a great success. Manu is with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4861.

398. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR MEHTA

February 4, 1937

BHAI PRABHASHANKAR,

As I was touring Travancore, I have been much in arrears with my correspondence. Moreover, my hand needs rest nowadays and so I cannot write readily. Nor am I able to dictate letters whenever I wish to. It seems that you are not taking necessary treatment for your health. A disease should be put down the moment its symptoms appear. What can I do regarding the suggestions you have made? Where is the need to advise the teeth to be considerate to the tongue? Champa is your daughter. Ratilal is your son-in-law and so he also is like a son to you. Moreover, Ratilal is a cripple, so to say. He is, therefore, in no position to oppose you in whatever you do. I regard it as your goodness that you consult me. But Nanalal is near you, and you have been consulting him. That is enough.

I understand about Balwant. One cannot expect much improvement in his mother's health at this age. However, I see in many instances that old age can be made bearable by following nature-cure remedies and making necessary changes in diet. A diet like a child's suits best in old age.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8767

399. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

February 4, 1937

CHI. NARAHARI,

I had asked Vinoba about Rameshwardas's letter.[1] He has replied that it is a clear mistake on Rameshwardas's part. He will write to the latter.

How is Titus working? He has asked for a certificate from me. He wants a job somewhere. Of course he says that his dairy is doing very well but that he doesn't get any experience about cattle. I have asked him of what use a certificate from me in a technical matter can be.

How many girls are there? What does the expenditure on education, food, etc., come to?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9105

400. LETTER TO PANNALAL JHAVERI

SEVAGRAM,
[*Thursday*] *February 4, 1937*

CHI. PANNALAL,

I have your letter. I will certainly write. You will remember I had quoted the doctor's opinion about milk. But what can one do when someone has a strong preference for buffalo milk and ghee?

If ghee is in demand you must separate milk first and sell the separated milk at a very low price. You must bring out pamphlets pointing out its qualities. That milk can be sold at a very low price among the working classes and the poor. It can also be turned into curds. Many delicacies can be prepared from it. Many things can be devised in times of difficulty. The primary thing is to persuade the people that it is their duty not to use buffalo milk and have only cow's milk. Once they are convinced, we shall have found a key to solve whatever difficulties may arise and however insurmountable they may seem.

I shall await your letter regarding the new charkha.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari—Pannalal Jhaveri, p. 33

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narahari D. Parikh", 31-1-1937

401. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

Unnrevised

SEGAON,
February 5, 1937

CHI. PREMA,

My right hand needs rest and it takes time to write with the left hand. How can I spare that much time? The burden of work has increased considerably and so I dictate most of the things I have to write. On Mondays I make full use of my right hand.

The amanuenses are Vijaya and Manu, and also sometimes Prabhavati. Probably you do not know Vijaya. She is a Patel woman and hails from Bardoli. She has, so to say, forced herself on us, for we had made a firm rule not to make any fresh admission. Vijaya prevailed upon us to break that rule. She put her case in such a manner that I could not send her away. So far I have not regretted admitting her. She goes on doing her work silently and makes up for Lilavati's absence.

Shankarrao must be all right now. I have asked Haribhau Phatak to give me news about his health. But I think you will be able to give detailed news.

I had told Patwardhan that he could come whenever he wished. But, then, don't the hills seem beautiful only from a distance, as they say?

You seem to be going through a fairly severe test. It is at once easy and difficult to put more money in villagers' pockets. If they follow our advice, we can, without any capital or with a minimum of it, double the earnings of all villages. I am not including in this the money earned from villages by those who exploit the villagers. If, however, they do not follow our advice, that is, refuse to do the work suggested by us or to learn the crafts we try to teach them, it is not only difficult but impossible to increase their earnings. Another big difficulty is this. Only a handful of workers are willing to go to villages, and they, too, are inexperienced. Their bodies are not accustomed to the hardships of village life. They don't know the villagers' nature and are ignorant of their needs. They cannot use their hands or their intelligence. The knowledge acquired by them in schools and colleges is of little use to them. In these circumstances we have to be patient. We should have faith in ourselves. If the villagers

possess sound health, even without Government help we can improve the economic condition of villages considerably, say, to the extent of 50 per cent. I mention 50 per cent as the minimum. My belief is that we can improve it to the extent of 90 per cent. Improvement in physical health, social reform and moral uplift, these are the three main things. They require no Government help at all.

If we get a little Government help only in economic improvement, our task would be very much easier. But in the absence of progress in respect of the foregoing three things, Government help will be of little use. If, therefore, you become a real expert in the science of khadi and refuse to leave the village despite all temptations, you will realize from first-hand experience the truth of all that I have said above.

You are not doing right in not insisting on cow's milk. Whenever you go out, you can carry with you ghee and *pendas* made from cow's milk. The *pendas* should be without sugar, i.e., made from *mava* only. If you wish, you may eat jaggery with it. This keeps down the expense and fully meets one's requirement of milk. Instead of eating dry *pendas* you can turn them into powder and mix them in warm water to make milk. Such milk lacks only vitamins, but absence of vitamins from the diet for a few days does no harm.

Narmada is Narmada Rana. This whole episode is a pitiable one. It is perfectly easy to understand that everybody cannot observe life-long *brahmacharya*. Those who cannot curb their physical senses may by all means marry. But I cannot tolerate secret indulgence. Man falls through such secret indulgence for no restraints are observed then. I have no prejudice at all against *grihasthashrama*. It is a necessary state, and a beautiful one. But, being an ashrama, it has dharma at its heart. *Grihasthadharma* is a fine thing, but self-indulgence is reprehensible. My opposition is solely to self-indulgence.

Jamnalal's question to you was perfectly right. He wanted to know your point of view as a woman. Whatever Vinoba, I or others may say, it is very necessary to know what a mature and pure woman feels. And ultimately the real contribution has to be made by the woman. The burden of demonstrating the importance and necessity of *brahmacharya* should not be on man alone. Till now it has been mostly shouldered by him, and in consequence it has become his

right. This has earned a bad name for *Brahmacharya*. What is more, though it should have been easy to observe, it has proved so difficult that most people find it impossible to observe. In this, too, I blame mostly man. He has done his best to keep woman his inferior. Flattery and brute force have played an equal part in this. Be that as it may, one half of man's body became and has remained weak. The result has been that man has failed in most of his endeavours, as he deserved to do. There is some awakening among women now. But at present it is assuming a perverted form. Man has been indulging her whims and feeding her ego under the pretext of respecting her freedom and woman has taken freedom to mean self-indulgence. Let those men and women who can save themselves from this do so. Save yourself.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10388. Also C.W. 6827. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

402. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

February 5, 1937

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

My right hand needs rest. I must keep it fit for Monday. I, therefore, give it rest on the other days.

You are ruthlessly tyrannizing over your body. But who can call a Sardar to account or restrain him? If you impair your health, you will have to hear quite a few things from me. So much by way of a preface.

Chandrashanker[1] writes to Mahadev and says that you didn't like my letter[2] to Polak. I had no option but to give him a letter. I had to give a reply. If he wanted a letter, I couldn't but give it. I didn't know that he would immediately publish it. But no harm has been done by its publication. Even if some harm results, it can only be temporary, for the publication of what is true can never do any real harm.

Chandrashanker's letter also mentions the conversation with . . .[3] The report was certainly reprehensible. But I am not responsible for it.

[1] Chandrashanker Shukla
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Vithaldas Kothari", 27-1-1937
[3] The name is omitted in the source

He did exactly the opposite of what I had told him. I had plainly declined to express any opinion and had advised him to complain to you. I also explained to him that I had no right to intervene in the matter. In the end I dictated a general principle. He has done no harm in publishing that , of course. What are we to do when somebody thus publishes a false report? As soon as I saw the report, I wrote a strong letter of protest to him. But the man is shameless. He has not even acknowledged the letter.

Do you wish that I should issue contradiction? If I do so, he will be ruined. If you want, you may tell anybody that I had categorically refused to intervene.

When are you coming this way?

Where do you wish the Congress to be held? The prepara-tions must start from now on.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 198-9

403. WHAT IS NON-VIOLENCE?

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

As you were fully engaged with the Congress affairs these past few weeks, I did not before now acknowledge your postcard which you kindly wrote in reply to my query about 'non-violence in word' nor thanked you for your courtesy in discussing at length the point at issue in the *Harijan* of December 19th.[1] I have carefully read and weighed your argument, but I cannot help believing that you were not non-violent in the words you used with reference to the missionaries in general who have been working, and working so nobly, for the good of our motherland for the past hundred years.

You say: 'The essence of violence is that there must be a violent intention behind a thought, word or act, i.e., an intention to do harm to the opponent so called'. I don't think you are right here. Take, for instance, a father smacking the face of his unruly and intractable child for some offence or other. No one could for a moment believe that there was 'a voilent intention behind' that act of the father or that he had 'an intention to do harm' to his own child. Nevertheless that smacking of the child was an act of violence,

[1] *Vide* "What is Non-violence?", 19-12-1936

pure and simple, because it hurt the child's face. Similarly, when a man uses words against his 'opponent so called' which are likely to hurt his feelings or, as you put it, wound his susceptibilities, then quite regardless of his non-violent intention behind his word, he has been violent in word simply because he has hurt his so-called opponent's feelings, just as the father hurt his child's face in the instance given. You say further on: 'The acid test of non-violence is that one thinks, speaks and acts non-violently even when there is the gravest provocation to be violent.' Here again I do not agree with you. The acid test of non-violence is that one thinks, speaks and acts in a manner so as not to hurt 'the opponent so called' in body, mind or spirit, even when there is the gravest provocation to be violent. It is true where you say: "If non-violence of thought is to be evolved in individuals or societies or nations, truth has to be told, however harsh or unpopular it may appear to be for the moment.' But it is not true that harsh truth must be told in harsh words, when a gentler mode of expressing the same ideas might have, with a little more patience, self-control and goodwill, been used against the party opposing. In that discussion how strong in contrast stood Mr. Andrews' gentler mode of arguing to the harsh mode of your expression! In this harshness which you, Mahatmaji, with your habitual and exemplary calm, patience and self-control might have easily avoided, lay, I repeat, your 'violence in word' against the missionaries in general.

With my best wishes for your health and strength,

As always yours,
A. S. WADIA

POONA
Jan. 10, 1937

PS.

You are at liberty to print this letter in my name in the *Harijan*, if you so wish.

I gladly publish the foregoing. But I profoundly differ from the view presented by Shri Wadia. The smacking of a boy, if it is not done out of anger and impatience, is most decidedly not violence as when he is, say, bitten by a snake and it is necessary to keep him awake or as when a youngster in high fever was running amuck and came to his senses only after he was severely smacked. It caused hurt, but he would most assuredly have died if he had not been smacked. Every surgeon causes hurt, but he is every time not only not violent but benevolent and receives thanks and heavy fees for causing hurt, sometimes very serious indeed. He does not conform to Shri Wadia's

definition, he does wholly conform to mine. According to my learned correspondent, Jesus Christ was hopelessly violent when he called some people of his times 'a generation of vipers'. His phrases and his actions so hurt his generation that they compassed his death. And if truth can be harsh, as the writer admits it can be, what is the gentle way of uttering it so that you can render it proof against your opponent's wrath? If a man utters a downright lie or commits a daylight robbery or a murder, am I to call this brother of mine, as he most assuredly is, a liar or a thief or a murderer, or am I to use Churchillian language and say 'he perambulates round the suburbs of veracity,' or 'he helps himself to the goods that do not belong to him without perhaps any intention of stealing,' or, 'he spills innocent blood, though perhaps he does not want to kill?' And if I were to use such circumlocutory speech, is there the slightest guarantee that I shall never hurt the party of whom I may be speaking? Harsh truth may be uttered courteously and gently, but the words would read hard. To be truthful you must call a liar a liar—a harsh word perhaps, but the use is inevitable. In the instance to which Shri Wadia has taken exception, I have no sense of repentance.

I suggest to my friend that like many good people he has allowed his judgment to be warped by the nobility of the actions of missionaries in that they have founded schools, hospitals and the like. Whereas, giving the fullest due for their philanthropic activities, my sober judgment tells me that the lustre of their deeds is diminished by the motive of proselytizing that lies behind them. I may be wrong in my estimate of religious conduct and proselytizing itself. That does not make my characterization in any sense violent.

Therefore I am not going to subscribe to Shri Wadia's judgment or his comparison of Deenabandhu Andrews at my expense in matters of non-violence. And if he really believes that I am gifted with 'habitual and exemplary calm, patience and self-control', I want to assure him that on the occasion referred to I had not lost any of the virtues he imputes to me. This is not to say that I never lose self-control. I do indeed, and those are occasions of my shame. If Shri Wadia has had no occasion to observe them it is because of the hard training I have given myself of exercising self-control in public life and especially in respect of those who regard me as their enemy. But I cannot say the same of my private life. Those who are nearest me do alas! know how impatient I can be with them, even to the extent of behaving like a wild bear let loose. I know that even with them I must

not lose patience. They very generously suffer me for they are quite sure that I mean no ill to them but am their best friend and guide. Their certificate, however, is of little worth to me. It has never deceived me. I know that I would be a better man and their better guide if I could regard them with sufficient detachment and not take it amiss when, in my opinion, they fall short of the standard they have themselves accepted for their daily conduct. But the detachment prescribed by the *Gita* is the hardest thing to achieve, and yet it is so absolutely necessary for perfect peace for the vision of both the little self and the greatest Self.

Harijan, 6-2-1937

404. KHADI IN ANDHRADESH

Whilst I was taking the meeting on the 23rd January last at Guntur, the following letter from Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya was put in my hands:

> Your programme in Andhradesh is so short and so congested that I do not feel justified in obtruding myself upon your notice to the detriment of others' chances. But I am tempted to request you to make a pointed reference if possible in your Bezwada speech in regard to the position of khaddar in Andhradesh where some of the certified producers are taking advantage of the increase in prices without observing the conditions essential to such increase. But both the certified and A.I.S.A. sales have fallen on account of competition of the uncertified producers who are obviously at an advantage, even granting that they sell pure khaddar. A manifesto has been drafted and is being influentially signed by friends representing all shades of opinion in Andhra, a copy of which is enclosed. In one word the sales have gone down in certified shops, and the public may therefore be warned by you against the purchase of uncertified cloth; and the new definition of khaddar as 'hand-spun and hand-woven cloth prepared on the increased wage' may be given publicity once again. I may add that while most of the certified people are being decertified on account of lapses, a few have sought decertification voluntarily for the obvious advantages it brings under the present conditions, and that is a lesson by itself to us that their sales not only do not suffer but improve by decertification. So it is the public that must cultivate the right judgment in the matter.

There was no time to refer to it at the meeting and I would not mix up khadi work with an appeal for funds for cyclone relief. I did

not therefore refer to it even in my subsequent speech at Bezwada. The subject matter of the letter is nevertheless very important. Andhra has possibilities not open to any other province. It has an innate skill which the other provinces do not possess. But some Andhra merchants, as elsewhere, are greedy and for a paltry coppers would injure even khadi, the mainstay of the villagers, the staff of *Daridranarayana* and the indispensable friend of the widow. What is worse, however, is want of co-operation among even the tallest khadi workers. Among the causes of Andhra's fall in the matter of khadi I had a painful eye-opener at Vinaya Ashram. Everybody in Andhradesh knows my partiality for Sitarama Sastry and my regard for Deshabhakta Venkatappayya. The former is the disciple of the latter. Deshabhakta's word is law for Sitarama Sastry. Both are all the emotion in which Andhra seems to have specialized. But Venkatappayya is a weak *guru*—generous and forgiving to a fault. My partiality for Sitarama Sastry kept me in ignorance of what in my opinion was an unpardonable omission in a khadi-lover and representative of the A.I.S.A. On reaching Vinaya Ashram in the dark hours of the morning of 23rd ultimo, I asked for a wheel and was shocked to discover that they had 19 wheels which were out of order and not in use. They had a *Yeravda-Chakra* which was produced but which was also out of order, though not wholly unworkable. They had no carding-bow. And to my dismay I found that no one knew carding in Vinaya Ashram and that those who span did so with slivers purchased in the market. My heart wept. I gave vent to my feeling of grief and disppointment. I quoted in bitterness, 'if the salt loseth its savour, wherewith shall it be salted?' Poor Sitarama Sastry was dumb. Tears trickled down Venkatappayya's cheeks. And during our rush in motor-cars Venkatappayya promised to repair the blunder in two months' time, and said in tones of confidence that Sastry would prepare himself in the manner I expected and that the Vinaya Ashram would hum with the sweet sound of the charkha and the carding bow. Sitarama Sastry was present and he vowed to redeem the promise of his chief.

To err—even grievously—is human. But it is human only if there is a determination to mend the error and not to repeat it. The error will be forgotten if the promise is fully redeemed. And I know both these friends too well to fear that it will not be redeemed.

Now the reader will realize why khadi has not made the progress it should have. It has made progress worthy of note because it has

innate virtue. But it cannot cover every village unless the agents of the A.I.S.A. fulfill the expectations they know they have to fulfil. They must know at least the elements of the science of khadi in terms of the questions I published the other day. Much more searching questions have to be answered by a master of the science of khadi.

Let not any reader run away with the idea that I have strayed from the simple subject matter of Dr. Pattabhi's letter. That is merely a symptom of the disease whose root cause I have ventured to bring to light. When Vinaya Ashram installs the wheel as the central sun in its fulness, uncertified dealers will for the very shame cease to stab *Daridranarayana* in the back by hampering the experiment of giving the lowest-paid workers, the spinners, their due.

Harijan, 6-2-1937

405. LETTER TO RAMDAS

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 6, 1937

BHAI RAMDAS,

I got your letter. The report is very good and useful. Is there a copy of it? Because I want to keep this. If there is not I shall have another copy made. I need you for two or three days for the road-building work in Segaon. Come when you can spare the time but let me know of it in advance.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a phorostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8589. Also C.W. 7006. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

406. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

February 6, 1937

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I got your letter. Sharda has reached an age when, unless she offers her sincere co-operation, she cannot improve. In my opinion, at present her only duty is to build up good health. For that she should give up study. This does not mean that she should read nothing. She may by all means read something that she will enjoy reading. But she should feel no strain at all in that. She should stop reading the

moment she feels tired. She should read nothing regularly but should do physical labour daily. She should take slow walks in the open air at regular hours. She should have hip-baths and friction-baths. She should do slow *pranayama.*There is no harm at all in having hip-baths in the condition that you have described, provided that at the time of taking the bath she does not feel cold. After leaving the tub she should do light exercise and pour warm water over the body. The whole body should be massaged daily. She should take sun-bath, without any clothes on. This can be easily done in any open place. An enclosure can be made by hanging mats all round to ensure privacy. If sun-bath is taken on a sand-covered ground like what we have in a gymnasium, she can take the bath even rolling on the ground. This treatment involves no expense. All that is neccessary is to have faith and to spare the necessary time. If there is no faith, the treatment may become a burden and cause strain on the mind. An asthmatic person can never afford strain. Nerves play a very important part in causing asthma. If Sharda's diet does not include milk and butter, she should get suffcient ghee. She may eat fenugreek leaves, amarnath, mustard leaves, *dabho* and other green leaves, uncooked ripe tomatoes, gourd, brinjals, pumpkin, etc. These things should be steam-cooked. No condiment should be used not even oil or ghee for frying. Ghee or butter may be added afterwards. She should eat some juicy friut if available. She may eat fresh garlic crushed and mixed with vegetables. Ler her start with half a *tola.* It must not be cooked at all. She may eat onions also, either cooked or raw. Both will benefit her.

You may ask about anything else if you want to.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.G. 20

407. MILL-WORKERS AND MILL-OWNERS

Some of the points of dispute which arose between the mill-owners and mill-workers of Ahmedabad, were referred for arbitration and its result has been announced. Both the parties deserve to be congratulated on their having agreed to refer the issue to arbitration in this manner. And the mill-owners also on having accepted the Award. The Umpire also deserves to be congratulated on having given his Award along with many arguments merely out of a spirit of service

without charging any fee. All of us hope that all disputes arising between the two parties will always be speedily resolved through arbitration. It is clear enough for everyone to understand that by accepting the Award of the Umpire both the parties, as also the industry on which the prosperity of Ahmedabad depends, have gained.

But my object in writing this article is not to examine the situation in the past or to praise the principal parties concerned. My object is to find means by which future security could be ensured. I have hinted at these means in clause 16 of my Award. I quote it below along with the clause that follows:

> XVI. At this stage I would like to restate the principles that for the good of both parties I have presented to them as a result of my close and unbroken contact with the industry for a period of 18 years in the capacity of Arbitrator.
>
> (a) No cut should be made till the mills have ceased to make any profit and are obliged to fall back upon their capital for continuing the industry.
>
> (b) There should be no cut till the wages have reached the level adequate for maintenance. It is impossible to conceive a time when the workmen have begun to regard the industry as if it were their own property and they would then be prepared to help it out of a crisis by taking the barest maintenance consisting of a dry crust and working day and night. That would be a voluntary arrangement. Such cases are irrlevant to the present consideration.
>
> (c) There should be a common undestanding as to what should be included in determining a living wage.
>
> (d) The consideration of the deterioration in individual mills cannot form part of a case for a cut in wages of labour in general.
>
> (e) It is vital to the well-being of the industry that workmen should be regarded as equals with the shareholders and that they have therefore every right to possess an accurate knowledge of the transactions of the mills.
>
> (f) There should be a register of all available mill-hands acceptable to both the parties and the custom of taking labour through any other than the T.L.A. should be stopped,
>
> XVII. I have not presented these principles in the belief that they will be acceptable either to my brother Arbitrator or to the mill-owners or even to the workmen. These have not guided my decision in the present case but I am convinced that without the acceptance of these principles the industry i.e., the owners and the workmen are in danger.

The Umpire has described these principles as idealistic and incapable of being implemented.[1] He did not have to pass judgment on those points. I had merely jotted them down in my Award for my own satisfaction and with the object that they might prove useful to both parties in future. Hence, it is possible that the Umpire has not given serious thought to them. And as I have a reputation for being an idealist, a dreamer and an unpractical person, the Umpire did not fully examine these principles, as he was not bound to do, and it is likely that he did not approve of them because of the unfavourable impression he had of the person who had put them forward.

I must accept the allegation that I make my ideal the standard by which to judge others. But I must also say that I am no enemy of what is practical. My life has been spent, and is still being spent, in putting the ideal into practice. I believe that I have achived some success in my effort. I entreat the two parties and the readers to forget me and examine the principles which I have put forward independently.

The Umpire has strongly recommended that mill-owners should speedily take a decision regarding the scale of wages applicable to all mills and with the same speed frame a scheme whereby an increase or decrease in wages can be effected automatically. In my humble opinion, while trying to implement these two points speedily, the assistance of the principles suggested by me in one form or another will become indispensable. In addition to the principles put forward by me, others no doubt will have to be thought out. Nevertheless a consideration of the principles suggested by me is necessary.

The first point that has to be settled in the scheme for automatic decrease or increase in wages is the lowest point in wage reduction. While deciding this one factor, all my six points will have to be taken into consideration. It may well not be accepted that a wage-cut can be made only when mills have ceased to make any profit; but a ceiling on profits should definitely be laid down. In giving a practicable shape to this there is no escape from making absence of profit, that is to say, the ideal, our standard. (16 A)

[1] The Umpire's Award said "Even while I do homage to their idealistic and humanitarian spirit, they are, I think, inconsistent with the hard realities of economic poduction for profit and survival by competiation in an open market. (*History of Wage Adjustments in the Ahmedabad Industry*, Vol. IV, p. 24)

Before fixing a standard for wage-cut it is necessary to decide what should be called a living wage. (16 B)

If a consideration of the living wage is regarded as essential, it is absolutely necessary to consider what are the items to be included in it. (16 C)

While considering a cut in the wages of the entire body of workers a consideration of the plight of any individual mill necessarily becomes irrelevant. (16 D)

In order that workers may be able to accept the demands of the mill-owners they should have the right to know about the detailed working of the mill. (16 E)

And, in order that workers may willingly accept a cut in wages and to reassure them, it will become absolutely necessary to keep a register of all possible labourers. (16 F)

The Mill-owners' Association will have to gain greater control over the mills than it enjoys at present if the principle of arbitration is to become permanent. It will collapse if the individuals ignore the Mill-owners' Association while pursuing their own interests alone. Similarly, if workers pursue their own interest and violate the rules of the Labout Association the principle of arbitration will cease to operate. In order to prevent such an eventuality uniform scales of pay should be introduced everywhere. If, while doing so, a particular mill is put to a strain, the other mill should get together and compensate it. Similarly, whenever it is found that workers have to suffer, those among them who stand to gain should compensate the loss to those who would be adversely affected. I am also of the opinion that the practice of having different scales of wages for labourers working in different departments should be abolished and uniform wages should be accepted for all labourers. I know that this may seem to be an impossibele task, but a further consideration will show that the need for this will become obvious if the united strength of labourers is to be made invincible. Why should anyone working the power-loom for sixty hours get Rs. 30, while a person looking after the spindle for the same number of hours gets Rs. 13? It whould not be proper to conclude that the former has to work more than the latter. If is not also fitting for one labourer to say that he has to use more intelligence than another. So long as such discrepancies exist, jealousies are bound to be there and, as long as there is jealousy, there can be no true unity. This problem, at root, is of some educational value to labourers and to

society as a whole. In my view, the key to socialism lies in equal pay for equal work. Everyone's basic needs are more or less the same. The larger part of the world will always consist of labourers, hence the only way for their uplift is to accept the principle of equal wages. There is no other way but to do so. It is likely that all this may appear to be the talk of someone who lives in a dream world. But unless workers make such dreams come true, their real authority, which is only a dream today, will always remain so.

Yes, there is one exception. If workers wish to establish their authority with the use of arms, that is, through force, it may appear to be possible. This article is based on the assumption that the workers of Ahmedabad have given up violence on principle. But, for the moment, let us, assume that the working class is even prepared to use force. My contention is that there is every likelihood of a struggle taking place amongst them as soon as they get power. Be that as it may, because I am a worshipper of non-violence alone, I can wield my pen only to uphold non-violent means. My mind cannot even conceive of the triumph of any other means. Hence, I shall have betrayed the workers if I do not put before them for their consideration what has been uppermost in my mind while reflecting upon their plight during the past three or four months. If workers cannot digest these important changes all at once, let them move step by step. But they must set it as their aim that there should be the same scale of wages for all workers.

This much is sufficient for today.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 7-2-1937

408. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

SEGAON, WARDHA
February 7, 1937

BHAI KHAMBHATTA,

I got your letter. Your wishes regarding the money and the ring will be respected. It is not proper that you don't write. Even two lines on a postcard would be enough for me.

I do keep myself informed about you. It would be better, however, if I had at least one postcard regularly from you once in a fortnight or a month.

When I was in Poona, I got the news about the set-back in your health. You have tried a good many remedies. But now I would advise you to go and consult Gaurishankar, who is a Government servant living in Santa Cruz and who practises nature cure with a purely philanthropic motive. Go to him and tell him your trouble. If he takes up your case, follow his advice. Mahadev will give his address with this and also enclose a letter to him.

Please don't send me any money by putting yourself to inconvenience. If, however, you save money beyond your need, you are welcome to send it all.

May you both prosper.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7559. Also C.W. 5034. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

409. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

February 7, 1937

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

The right hand demands rest, so I write with it only on Mondays. On the other days I dictate letters, as writing with the left hand is rather time-consuming.

Parameshwari has drafted and sent a proposal which is in accordance with the opinion I have come to form regarding his future. If you have no objection please sign it and send it to me. No one knows what it will come to in the end. But this provides a good opportunity for Parameshwari to prove his mettle and he should have such opportunity. Jamnalalji's signature has already been obtained.

Parnerkar must have reached there by now. I shall recall Pandya whenever you want me to. Why should we delay any cuts in expenditure that may be considered necessary in respect of the Harijan [Sevak Sangh] central office? Of course we shall not be able to do anything that Thakkar Bapa does not approve of. If in connection with all this you consider it proper to come to Wardha on your way to Delhi, please do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8033. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

410. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

February 7, 1937

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

I have your letter.

The cow has arrived,[1] An account will be maintained. You must follow the doctor's instructions.

The question of your leaving Segaon does not arise. Your illness is not incurable, nor is it likely to be a prolonged one. Why should you become so discouraged in only two or three days? Your letter smacks of lack of faith. You have a few boils, you do not even give yourself full treatment and you become frightened that they will never go. What is this? You must have the conviction that you are going to get well, and that quickly, and that in order to get well you will scrupulously obey the doctor's or the vaidya's advice in so far as you have no conscientious objection to it. You should not become a prey to gloomy thoughts. Why should you worry about carrying out my decision? It is of no great significance.[2] Supposing I keep an ailing person in Segaon so as to nurse him. It surely is not going to harm me in any way. Your concern should be only to get well and then soon to come and look after the cows. Your concern should be, also, your hot temper.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1891

411. LETTER TO SHANMUKHAM CHETTY

February 8, 1937

MY DEAR SHANMUKHAM,

Your addressing me familiarly revives old memories and old flavours. I reciprocate.

I like your frank letter. What I expect you to do is to pull your weight in the right direction. The reform must not be confined to the

[1] The cow had been sent by the addressee from Wardha.

[2] Gandhiji had earlier said that only those who were perfectly fit would be allowed to live in Segaon.

borders of Travancore. You can do a great deal to avoid the subtle persecution that must be going on there of the Nambudiris who have dared to accept the Travancore Proclamation.[1]

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

412. LETTER TO BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

February 8, 1937

MY DEAR BHARATAN,

I have just read your note[2]. It is good so far as it goes. It is going in just as it is. Read my article[3] in the current issue and offer your comments if any or write more.

Love to you both.

From a photostat: G.N. 3592

413. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEGAON,
February 9, 1937

CHI. LILA,

I got your letter. It was good to hear that your brother's health was improving fast. When he is permitted to leave Bombay, I would prefer Matheran to Rajkot if he is quite fit then to go out for walks. The water at Matheran contains iron and is, therefore, supposed to be heavy. But it is very good for those who can take walks. The climate of course is good. But Matheran is not a good place if one has to remain in bed. From the point of view of expenses, there is no doubt that Rajkot is cheaper than Matheran.

As regards eating, there is only one way for you: you should ponder over the eleven vows every morning and evening. That means

[1] The addressee was Dewan of Cochin and had written to Gandhiji that there was no persecution in Cochin.

[2] Presumably this was Kumarappa's contribution published in *Harijan*, 20-3-1937, under the title "The Coming National Week"

[3] Presumably "Khadi in Andhra Desh"; *vide* Khadi in Andhradesh", 6-2-1937

you tell God, with the world as your witness, that you ceaselessly strive to keep them. These vows include the vow of non-indulgence of the palate. You and I, therefore, and all others who regularly ponder on that vow cannot eat a single morsel for gratifying the palate. We can eat merely to sustain the body and keep it alive.

The sole reason for the exclusion of condiments from our food is the vow of non-indulgence of the palate.

One can eat even chillies as medicine. But one cannot take even salt for the pleasure of the palate. If you keep pondering over the meaning of these vows and live accordingly, you will earn the merit of living here no matter where you are staying. On the contrary, even if you live here and go on repeating the vows in words but do not strive constantly to keep them, you will only be deceiving yourself by living here. It will not, therefore, be proper if, having gone there for service, you become negligent in keeping the vows.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9356. Also C.W. 6631. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

414. LETTER TO NATHUBHAI

February 9, 1937

BHAI NATHUBHAI,

I got both your letters. I am replying[1] to the first question in *Harijanbandhu*. Please see it. Very few persons would be interested in the other questions, and so I am replying to them here.

The vegetarians may keep meat-eating animals, but they should not procure meat for them, e.g., the cat and the dog. Both are carnivorous, but we do not procure meat for them.

I know the Jain belief. I knew the ideas of Raichandbhai, but I am convinced that they are not consistent with the ethics of ahimsa. From the point of view of ahimsa, uncooked things should be considered sufficient for the needs of the body. Drying, pickling and cooking are forms of violent possessiveness and should, therefore, be eschewed. I see no meaning in the distinction that is made between tubers and other vegetables. In Jain literature ahimsa has been

[1] *Vide* " My Notes", sub-title "Wrong Thinking

confined only to a discussion of what should be eaten and what should not be eaten. This, in my view, is a travesty of ahimsa. I have seen non-vegetarians who are the very images of compassion and hence I consider them to be votaries of ahimsa in spite of their being non-vegetarians. I have also seen people who, although avoiding green vegetables, etc., gratify their palate in all sorts of ways and are full of cruelty. I believe that they are a disgrace to dharma. I also believe that had Raichandbhai not died prematurely, he would have fully endorsed what I am saying here now. To say that a fast is broken by cleaning the teeth or by taking a bath is, in my opinion, sheer ignorance. Those who are completely free from passions and are living in uninhabited forests, wearing no clothes and eating only fruit, etc., yielded by the trees, who meditate on God and roam about, for them it might not matter if they did not clean the teeth or take bath because leaves of *neem* trees are both their food and their means of cleaning the teeth. Earth and sun rays are their bath. It would be sheer ignorance to apply this, during a fast, to persons who are full of evil emotions, hold all kinds of possessions and whose every pore emits foul smell.

As in curds, there are countless bacteria in milk also, a far greater number of them than in plants, tubers, etc. To distinguish among vegetables as some that may be eaten and others that must be avoided, and at the same time to take milk, etc., freely, is like stealing an anvil and giving a needle in alms.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6248

415. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 9, 1937

BHAI KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter. What I wrote was correct. I have not consulted anyone so far but my feeling is that you can be accommodated in the high school here. You can be useful for teaching Hindi, English or Mathematics. Or you can be given some other work, such as would justify Rs. 75 a month being paid to you. It is also possible that I may not be able to fix you at Wardha. Then I can find some other place. But I can make enquiries only when I know that you are ready. But please understand that Rs. 75 is the beginning and the end of it. The

start can be lower but Rs. 75 is as high as you can go. Your asking for more would lead to your degradation. Think well and tell me if I should start working in this direction? Once you have accepted a position, I will not take a 'no' from you afterwards. If you have any terms and conditions to propose, write to me clearly. Only then shall I try to do something. You should obtain the carding-bow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4279. also S.G. 56

416. LETTER TO KRAUSE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 11, 1937

MY DEAR KRAUSE,

I am ashamed of myself. It will be difficult to forgive myself if you have to leave without our meeting. I would, therefore, ask you if it is at all possible specially to come to Wardha. If you will look at the Railway map you will find that Wardha is a central station. You can go to Calcutta via Wardha. It is the most direct route from Bombay. You can also go from Calcutta to Madras *via* Wardha though that does become a little indirect. You can also go from Calcutta to Delhi *via* Wardha.

If you find you simply cannot do it I shall not blame you. It will be my stupidity that will be to blame.

I am glad to receive all the messages that you have brought for me. They revive old memories. If you cannot come you will not forget to write and give me your final impressions. I expect you will be going to Delhi. If you do, you should ask your guides to take you to the Harijan Colony, Kingsway, Delhi. You will meet my youngest son there. But what I want you to see is the work going on in the colony amongst the so-called untouchables.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 10858

417. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

SEGAON,
February 12, 1937

BHAI KHAMBHATTA,

You should of course not leave Pandit half way. Go to Gaurishankar only if Pandit's treatment does not suit you. It is certainly our dharma to try, within limits, to cure physical suffering. But it is also our dharma to bear it cheerfully, knowing that all suffering comes only to test us.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA
DE BELVEDERE COURT
CHURCH GATE RECLAMATION
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6612. Also C.W. 4403. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

418. AHMEDABAD MILL INDUSTRY

Now that the Ahmedabad Mill Industry has tided over the difficulty that had arisen over the mill-owners' demand for a cut in the wages of labour, it is well to examine the conditions of its stability. The Umpire, Sir Govindrao Madgavkar, deserves the thanks of both the parties for his great labour of love. The public do not know that he undertook the onerous burden without any fees which he might have insisted upon, if he had so chosen. Having entered upon the task he might have lightened it by merely giving his decision without any argument. Instead he has reasoned out his Award and made valuable suggestions for the guidance of both capital and labour.

It is to be hoped that both parties will whole-heartedly act up to the Umpire's suggestion and work out the Delhi agreement. The Umpire has made it perfectly clear that no cut is possible without fully implementing the Delhi agreement which has also the merit of being turned into an award of the then Umpire, Mr. Patkar, retired High Court Judge. The essential conditions of that agreement are that wages must be standardized for the whole mill industry and that there should

be a scheme for automatic adjustment whenever there is a demand for a cut or a rise in the wages. It has been argued on behalf of the mill-owners that neither standardization not automatic adjustment is a practical proposition. The Umpire has rejected that argument. Indeed he could not do otherwise. Surely the parties knew what they were doing when they entered into the agreement at Delhi. They would never have introduced the two clauses if they had thought them to be unworkable. It may be that the parties may not agree to a common scheme. It is for them to refer their differences then to the arbitrators and, the latter failing, to an Umpire. Standardization of wages is a mechanical or arithmetical proposition. It may be that an intermediate stage is necessary before all the mills can be induced to adopt an even scale of wages or labour can in all cases be induced to accept a level which in some cases must mean a large reduction in wages though the whole total remains unaffected. But a scheme of automatic adjustment of wages is undoubtedly a complicated matter. It demands for its fruition a spirit of give and take on both sides. And any such scheme must, in the nature of things, be of a temporary character subject to periodical revision.

No scheme of automatic adjustment is possible without reference to the maxims I have ventured to mention in my Award and which Sir Govindrao has been pleased to dismiss as idealistic. Of course it was no part of his duty as Umpire to examine or refer to them at all. I have myself stated in my Award that the maxims have not guided my decision. But having referred to them at all, the learned Umpire might have shown how or why they were idealistic.

I propose to show that whether they are idealistic or otherwise it is impossible to arrive at a satisfactory scheme of automatic adjustment without reference to them. They must be the measuring rod for action which may and will probably fall short of it. Let me reproduce below a translation[1] of the original which is in Gujarati:

Now take the first maxim. Why should mills desire a cut so long as they have profits? It would be like a man desiring to cut off his feet to ease some derangement of the belly, Do they cut out machinery in order to ensure a certain percentage of profits? Are men and women who may be called living machines less than inert machinery? Is there anything very idealistic in the suggestion that the wages of the

[1] Not reproduced here. For the text, *vide* clauses XVI and XVII of Award in Labout Dispute, 26-12-1936

operatives, who are at least as much a foundation of the industry as the machinery and buildings, may not be reduced to ensure a minimum of profits? I make bold to say that if the votes of humane shareholders (and I regard the shareholders of mills as humane) were taken, they would summarily reject the proposition that their profits should be preferred to the wages of labour on whom depend their profits.

And if the first maxim must at least be seriously considered, the second about the living wage follows from it. If there can be no cut before profits are on the brink of sinking, it is necessary to know the limit beyond which reduction in wages cannot go. In other words, there must be a decision as to what constitutes a living wage. I am not concerned with the name. Call it the minimum wage, if that expression sounds sweeter. The process is the same. Living wage to my mind is the most accurate description for an irreducible wage.

And the acceptance of the principle of a living wage implies an examination of what may be included in it. Should intoxicants form part, should tobacco be included, may milk or ghee or *gur* be excluded? These are no visionary things. They touch the very existence of labour. Its efficiency depends very largely upon the right kind of living. And the greater the efficiency, the greater the possibility of enhanced profits.

Maxim (d) is self-evident and accepted by the arbitrators as well as the Umpire.

Who can deny the reasonableness of the statement (Maxim c) that workmen should be regarded as equal owners with the shareholders? If conflict between capital and labour is to be avoided, as I believe it can and must be, labour should have the same status and dignity as capital. Why should a million rupees put together be more than a million men or women put together? Are they not infinitely more than metal, white or yellow? Or should holders of metal always assume that labour cannot be organized and put together as metal can? For the past eighteen years, consciously or unconsciously, capital and labour have acted in Ahmedabad on the assumption that there is no inherent conflict between the two. It is true that peace between the two has been precarious. But it has been so because the parties have not recognized the full validity of the maxims as the conditions of an abiding peace.

If then labourers are co-equal owners, their organization should have the same access to the transactions of mills as the shareholders.

Indeed there can be no confidence on the part of labour if material information is withheld from it.

The last maxim admits of no weakening. If the Labour Union is regarded as a desirable organization as much as is the mill-owners', and is not merely tolerated as a necessary evil, it follows that there should be an agreed register of available hands and that the mill-owners should not accept or engage any person outside the Labour Union.

Thus it seems to me that the maxims are not visionary, but on examination they are found to be absolutely essential to the healthy existence or growth of the great industry in whose interest they have been humbly suggested.

It need not be stated that the list submitted is by no means exhaustive. I must suggest some more, when I am able to revert to the question.

Harijan, 13-2-1937

419. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 12, 1937

CHI. VIDYA,

Your letter dated 16-1-37 reached my hands only three days ago. You are of course aware that I had been touring in Travancore.

What should I write now? I have already written to Dr. Roy. He will of course admit you. Why do you insist on a letter written in my own hand? These days my right hand needs rest. Writing with the left hand takes time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

420. A PRACTICAL SUGGESTION

The following[1] was received just after I had finished the Travancore pilgrimage:

The letter is from a retired principal of a college and deserves attention. I have already drawn attention to the many implications of the Proclamation. But I have not touched in that connection the question of inter-dining. My views in the matter are well known. Restrictions on inter-dining have no vital connection with varnadh-arma. They were, in my opinion, hygienic rules in origin. Given a proper conformity with the rules of cleanliness there should be no scruple about dining with anybody. And training Harijan boys and girls as members of a family ensures cleanliness and raises their status and removes in the safest manner the insane caste restrictions on inter-dining. I fully agree with the writer of the letter quoted that equality all along the line is implied in the Proclamation. The young Maharaja has given the lead. Will the people of Travancore follow it in all its implications?

Harijan, 13-2-1937

421. WHAT KHADI WORKERS SHOULD KNOW[2]

In previous article I have tried to explain what should be covered by the science of khadi. In my opinion it should be made obligatory on every khadi worker engaged in any of the production centres of the A.I.S.A. to know the elements of this science. Sjt. Lakshmidas is a khadi lover and one of the most careful students of the science of khadi that we have. But I would not call even him a master of the science. In the course of a letter which he addressed me in November 1935, he laid down what he considered to be the minimum test which every khadi worker ought to satisfy. The test is reproduced below:

(1) The worker should know how to distinguish between superior and inferior grades of cotton, cotton-seed and lint.

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had suggested that to make the Proclamation a real success people should introduce inter-dining and also employ poor Harijans as cooks and domestic servants.

[2] Translated by Pyarelal from the original in Gujarati

(2) He should be able to fix in position the rolling pin of a hand-ginning machine and to make the necessary correction and adjustment to make it exactly fit with the fixed roller, when the former happens to be bent or of unequal thickness.

(3) He should be able to fit up a carding-bow and to prepare the gut and the hide piece for the shoulder-blade.

(4) He should be able to show a ginning speed of five pounds an hour on a hand-ginning machine over a period of four hours.

(5) He must show a carding speed of ten *tolas* of cotton wool per hour, excluding the time required for making slivers.

(6) He must know the construction of every type of spinning-wheel and how to assemble it. He must be able to straighten a spindle gone out of shape and to prepare the *mal* and the *daman* the cross bands of the motor wheel.

(7) He must be able to maintain a spinning speed of 300 rounds (400 yards) of yarn of 20^s, with a tensile strength of over 80% and evenness 95% in a four hours' test.

(8) He should know the Andhra process of spinning and must be able to spin 200 rounds of 70^s to 80^s, strength 80% and evenness 95% during a two hours' test.

(9) He should know the construction of a pit loom as well as a fly-shuttle loom and be able to prepare together the reeds, the healds and the sizing brush.

(10) He should be able to weave khadi of 50" width on a fly shuttle loom from yarn of 20^s and to make all necessary adjustments to produce at least five different kinds of border designs for saris.

(11) The speed of weaving should come up to one square yard in an hour from yarn of 20^s.

(12) He should know all about the growing of different varieties of cotton and should be able to get hand-gins, carding-bows, spinning-wheels, looms and their accessories locally prepared, preferably out of local material. This would involve a knowledge of:

(a) Rainfall, its extent and distribution over different parts of the year, and a knowledge of manures and the nature of the soil.

(b) Different kinds of wood and of calculations relating to measurement.

(c) A workable knowledge of drawing for the above-mentioned needs.

(13) A knowledge of carpentry sufficient for repairing the various machines.

It is not quite easy to fulfil this test. But given sufficient earnestness and a measure of diligence, anyone who has had a fair education in this should be able to satisfy Sjt. Lakshmidas's test. That would, however, still leave uncovered the commercial aspect of the science of khadi. That is covered by the questions drawn up by me. The syllabus prepared by Sjt. Lakshmidas is calculated to cover the technical side. One must be an adept in both these fields before he can

be said to be versed in the elements of the science of khadi. I shall feel thankful if such khadi workers as may happen to read this article, and can satisfy the technical or the commercial test or both, will send me their full names and addresses. Similarly those who are eager to qualify themselves in the elementary science of khadi should also communicate with me. Unluckily today we have no suitable text-books that could be used to impart the required knowledge. The only available book that somewhat answers the purpose is that of late Sjt. Maganlal Gandhi. But even that book is now out of date owing to the advance that the science of khadi has made since that book was written. A revised edition of that book is therefore urgently needed. That can come about only if we have lovers of khadi who would devote themselves to the revision and have the leisure for the work.

Harijan, 13-2-1937

422. LETTER TO SARLADEVI

February 13, 1937

CHI. SARLA,

I had got your letter. I am late in replying. Won't you forgive me for it? In fact there is nothing in your letter which calls for a reply. But I think I ought to reply. Since you yourself have become a devi[1], need I suffix 'devi' to your name? How old are you? How do you spend your time, or waste it? Don't be shocked to see this sheet ragged [at the edges]. Such paper is made by the poor nowadays. It is not made with machines. Do you keep the poor in your thoughts?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6640. Also C.W. 4289

423. LETTER TO SURESH SINGH

February 13, 1937

BHAI SURESH SINGH,

I have your letter. Come over whenever you feel like it. I hope that everything is proceeding smoothly and there is no discord in the family.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8690

[1] Goddess

424. MY NOTES

THE PROBLEM IN REVERSE

A Hindu gentleman having read my reply[1] to a Muslim gentleman's letter in the *Harijanbandhu* of 31-1-1937 writes to say.[2]

I feel that the reply to this question is contained in what I had written previously. In that case, the Muslim gentleman had introduced a new custom and consequently had to put up with the orthodoxy of his relations. In this case, people wish to give up their existing tradition and eat meat. A vegetarian Hindu is by no means bound to encourage them. It depends on each individual as to how far he is prepared to abandon existing tradition in such matters. Those who regard giving up meat as a part of religion are likely to find it intolerable if other members of the family eat meat. We should follow ahimsa dharma or the religion of love in all our conduct. There should be no anger towards those who give up their religion, they should be won over through love alone. How this may be done, is to be considered in each particular case.

WRONG THINKING

A co-worker committed an error in a fit of rage. I explained to him that it was a grave error and that he should atone for it by apologizing to the person he had wronged. He admitted his fault and also the need for apologizing but he told me that he was not worthy of what I had asked him to do, that he had not risen so high and was not capable of doing so at one stroke. After that, this co-worker, saw his mistake. He is a mature and balanced person. The object of writing this is merely to show that like this co-worker many of us are given to erroneous thinking. To apologize for an offence which has already been committed is even less than paying back a debt without any interest. It can be compared to a promise to repay a debt, as an offence already committed is not wiped out by an apology; but it does imply a promise not to commit such an offence in the future. No debtor to this day has argued that he is not fit to repay his debts. It

[1] *Vide* "Need for Tolerance", 13-3-1937

[2] The letter has not been translated here. The correspondent had stated that Gandhiji's reply to the Muslim gentleman might be in conformity with Islam but it was not in conformity with Hinduism. He had asked whether it was proper for a vegetarian to buy meat for his family members.

may happen that at that moment he does not have a sufficient sum to repay his debts. However, it would provoke laughter if a debtor argued that he was unworthy of repaying his debts. This may even be regarded as impudence. But in moral matters, very often people deceive themselves. Impatience and subtle pride lie at the root of this. If this were not the case, how could we fail to see something which is as clear as daylight? We do not have the capacity to do many things. And there is no room for any effort if, because of this want of ability, we regard ourselves as unfit for that task. Hence no one should consider himself unworthy of doing any good work. No one should doubt that repeated efforts are certain to make us capable of doing it.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 14-2-1937

425. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 14, 1937

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter.

Whatever Valji may do, you cannot come out of Saurashtra in the manner suggested by you. I can understand your resorting to satyagraha just to oppose the Foreigners' Act, after giving the Government a sufficiently long notice, though I wouldn't approve even of that.

I do not think you will have to wait long now. After the new constitution starts functioning, the Government will probably find it difficult to keep such notices in force. Meanwhile, you should write to the persons named by you and ask them what their aim is in disobeying the law. If I could write to them, I should be glad to do so, for that might lead to an opportunity for a pure fight and the Foreigners' Act might even go. But it is outside my present sphere of work to collect material for such a fight. However, if you have learnt anything from me, you can form an intelligent and firm plan on these few words of mine. Nineteen persons can do a lot.

The views which you have expressed are a sign of cowardice. It does not befit a satyagrahi to think of quietly disobeying a law out of desperation and submitting to imprisonment or other consequences which might follow. The line, "Bathe and wash yourself and dress

your hair, for the time has come to go to live with the beloved one", holds true of all satyagrahis. When a satyagrahi goes to battle, he does so after full preparation and with beating of drums, for he goes to jail as he would go to live in a palace. To be merely ready to suffer the punishment if caught is not the right attitude for a satyagrahi to adopt. Even thieves and dacoits do that. Everyone who follows the way of violence risks his life when he embarks on his venture. Is not being confined to Kathiawar a form of imprisonment? If you are weary of such imprisonment, how would you bear banishment to the Andamans? But I will not dwell further on this subject. If I were to go on writing about it, I have so much to say that I would fill pages.

Your letter has opened not a small window but a big door in my brain, from which can pour out a flood of thoughts. But, however unwillingly, I must shut that door.

I am giving rest to my right hand these days, and so dictate the letters. On Mondays I cannot do without using the right hand. I can write with the left, but at present I cannot spare the time that this would require.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5542

426. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

February 14, 1937

BHAI BALWANTSINHA,

There is no reason for you to be overwrought. It is good you have placed yourself under the doctor's care. You are bound to be cured. Only do not give up patience. Doctors, vaidyas and hakims all make mistakes. The system precluding any posibility of mistake is nature cure. But very few people have the faith to carry it on and there are very few experienced practitioners.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1892

427. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 15, 1937

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I feel ashamed that I am not able to write to you. I do remember that I have to write but can't because of the pressure of work. I will be more careful hereafter, even if it is only two lines that I can write, as is the case today. But please be content since there are long letters from Ba and Manu.

Krause has arrived. Probably he will be going back without seeing me because of two day's delay on my part. He got my letter late. I have a long letter from him. I have suggested that he should see Devdas.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4862

428. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

February 15, 1937

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

How angry you can get! Such rage and such rudeness at a remark from an ignorant and idle boy[1]! You have broken all the vows! What do you know of my conversation with Prabhu Dayal? Shall I laugh or weep over your letter or be angry in return? Your letter is one to be wept over but I shall not weep. To give way to anger would be a sin and a bad example. I shall therefore laugh over this folly of yours. If you are tired you may certainly leave Segaon. But you should first come over with Prabhu Dayal and let me explain what happened. You may then do what you like. You need not come today. Come when you are all right. Consider as taboo the food prepared by Prabhu Dayal. Ask Chanchal.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1893

[1] Prabhu Dayal, who used to prepare the addressee's meals, mentioned this to Gandhiji and Gandhiji expressed disapproval. The conversation was conveyed in a garbled version to the addressee.

[2] Wife of Jhaverbhai Patel, a worker at Maganwadi

429. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

February 16, 1937

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

Surely there is nothing intrinsically wrong in seeking election to Legislative Councils or Assemblies. Therefore, if there were any sin in your having done so it could only be if you felt that it was wrong to do so. Not because I had said so but because you had come to that conclusion independently. No *prayaschitta*[1] is necessary beyond this obvious thing that in terms of the constitution you should retire from the A.I.V.I.A. That retirement will be severely felt at least by me. But your not doing so will be still more terrible. You will still do whatever you can for the Association, guiding whoever may be the agent of the Association. I know that this will not be the same thing as your being an active member but it will be the next best thing to do. You cannot be both a parliamentarian and an active worker in the cause of village uplift. A good parliamentarian's work is cut out for him—he too can make himself busy all day long if he is conscientious and wants to become an efficient parliamentarian.

Of course our personal relations will remain unaffected no matter what happens. In my opinion you have undoubtedly erred but you have erred in what you considered was a good cause. And the cause was good, only not for you because of your previous, definite and unequivocal commitment.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA
MACHHIHATAN
LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

430. LETTER TO GOSIBEHN CAPTAIN

February 16, 1937

I have your letter about Jajuji. You cannot be more sorry than I am about the resignation. I like him immensely. He is one of the most selfless men I have known and he is a most conscientious worker—absolutely reliable. He would never handle a thing which he cannot

[1] Atonement

do. But he and Kumarappa cannot hit it off. They are temperamentally different and their method of work is different and Kumarappa finds it very hard to get on with him. Kumarappa too has the qualities that Jajuji possesses. We cannot do without either. Jajuji still remains a member of the Board. I thought, therefore, that the best way of dealing with the difficult situation that has arisen was to accept Jajuji's resignation but, of course, it is for the Board to decide. If there is any other way of dealing with the difficulty that way should be adopted. When the meeting takes place we shall consider all the ways and means.

I will send you as much *gur* as I can when I know of someone going to Bombay. You don't want to incur railway charges. I shall probably get Duncan to take it to you. He is a new member of the family and I am sure you will like him when you meet him. He has come all the way from England to see me. Chhotelal tells me you took away one Karad *chakki* some time ago. If that is so, you don't want another. If you do, let me know. There will be no difficulty about getting money from the Birlas.

BAPU

SHRI GOSHIBEN CAPTAIN
GANDHI SEVA SENA
ADENWALLA BUILDING
NEW QUEEN'S ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

431. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEGAON,
February 16, 1937

CHI. LILA,

I got your letter. After you have become used to writing with a reed pen you wouldn't like the steel nib. The latter became popular merely because of people's laziness, for it does not need to be mended whereas the reed pen frequently does. Besides, the steel nib probably seems cheaper, though a reed pen must prove cheaper if used carefully. Moreover, mending a reed pen is an art by itself; and a steel nib can never write as beautifully as a reed pen. It is difficult to write Indian scripts with the steel nib, which is made for the Western scripts. Of course I do not mean to say that steel nibs that can write the Indian scripts cannot be made. So much for the steelnib philosophy!

Mahabaleshwar is certainly better than Matheran. But perhaps it may be too cold for Dwarkadas[1]. If he can go to Mahabaleshwar, then why shouldn't he go to Panchgani? If Panchgani is convenient to him, it may suit him better. Deolali and Lonavla are also not bad.

If you don't observe restraint in eating, your health is bound to suffer.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9357. Also C.W. 6632. courtesy: Lilavati Asar

432. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

February 16, 1937

CHI. NARAHARI,

I got your letter. Is the enclosed summary based on your letter all right? Would you like to add anything? Revise the summary and send it back.

I am enclosing another letter also. The writer's full name is Nanubhai Desai. He had given his address in his previous letter. He has forgotten to give it in this. Nanavati knows him. He has given the address of Ramanlal Engineer who stays near Ellis Bridge. Puratan would probably know him since he is working among the Harijans. Ask him. My purpose in sending his letter to you is this: I have advised him to get married. He says he is ready to marry even a Harijan girl. Perhaps he may be a suitable match for Dudhabhai's Mani. Please inquire about it. That is, call him to you and have a talk with him. Ask him about his family. And if you find everything all right, do what may be necessary. Write to Nanubhai and tell him that because he didn't give his address in his second letter I couldn't write to him direct. I was going to advise him to go to you in any case. Write to him or tell him that I had torn up his previous letter after replying to it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9106.

[1] Addressee's brother

433. LETTER TO SURENDRA

February 16, 1937

CHI. SURENDRA,

When I said *'yatra'* I meant a pilgrimage. Otherwise I would have used the word '*musafari'*[1]. We are trying to include in the morning prayer, not the whole Upanishad, but certainly the first verse. *Tena tyaktena*[2] is more pregnant with meaning. "Left over from *yajna*"[3] can be derived from it. *Tena tyaktena* can bear two meanings: one, that which is given by God, and two, that one must renounce everything. But when one has renounced everything, what is left over? However, life must go on and so we have "*bhunjitha*"[4]. That is to say that one must partake, like a medicine, of what God has given. And this applies not only to the food that we must eat but to all the needs of body, mind and soul that we must satisfy.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

434. LETTER TO BALWANTRAI K. THAKORE

February 16, 1937

BHAISHRI BALWANTRAI,

I received your letter as well as the poem. Perhaps you do not know that my understanding of modern poetry is very limited. So I cannot easily understand the kind of poems you write. That you went over it again and meticulously rectified the mistakes shows your love for me. But on whom do you shower such love? Of what value is music to a deaf man? I will try to read the poem once again with the help of your notes and try to understand it.

The other thing is certainly my subject. The verses quoted by Shri Wadia are not appropriate. What he wants is impossible. You did not see this. And the only meaning which can be deduced from what you quote is that truth should not be told in a pleasant manner. It may not be a violation of truth to call the father the husband of the mother. But it is certainly a violation of social usage. Accordingly the truth

[1] Travelling
[2] "By that renounced"; *Ishopanishad*, 1
[3] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 13
[4] "Thou shouldst enjoy."

spoken in this way cannot be called truth. One would cease to speak the truth if one stretched the meaning in this way.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

435. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

February 16, 1937

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

Yesterday I laughed at your letter but I could not forget it and now it hurts. I had never thought you capable of such fury. I sent a message through Jhaverbhai. You will have acted upon it. Chanchalbehn will be cooking for you; you will accept it with humility.

Do what the doctor says and get well soon. You may do what you like after you are well. I am beginning to feel that anger is the cause of your weakness. Anger burns none except the person who succumbs to it. In one moment you have harmed yourself by listening to the words of a worthless child. You have also harmed Prabhu Dayal by taking his words literally.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1894

436. LETTER TO PRABHUDAYAL VIDYARTHI

SEGAON,
February 16, 1937

CHI. PRABHUDAYAL,

What did you tell Balvantsinha? You did not even follow what I told you. When you advanced the excuse that you could not give full time to paper-making because you had to serve Balvantsinha, you made a grievous blunder. You only added fuel to the fire of his anger. Were you not told that even after giving six hours to your work you could do anything else you wanted to, even cook for Balvantsinha?

Now I am left with no alternative but to give you railway fare and tell you to go home. You are not fit to do honest labour. You cannot distinguish between truth and untruth, Do not harass me further by insisting on living in Wardha. Go away tomorrow if

possible. I have explained everything to Kanu. He will pay you the money. There is no need to see me. You may write to me if you wish after going home. You will not be able to achieve anything till you start being earnest in doing physical labour, till you begin to learn to speak less, stop speaking and writing without cause and learn to tell the truth. Hence it will be very good if after going home you do these three things well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 11682

437. LETTER TO DILKHUSH B. DIWANJI

SEGAON,
February 17, 1937

BHAI DILKHUSH,

I am happy to have your letter. You should certainly make an effort. Better still, write a small book. If you want you can consult me. I will certainly give you guidance. You may make some alterations in my questions. I put down the questions as they occurred to me. So there is scope for amplifying them and arranging them more systematically. Maybe you will like to leave out carpentry and weaving sections for the time being. Proceed as follows: history of cotton, varieties of cotton, how to recognize them, when and how to collect them, shelling of the pods, uses of the shells, ginning-wheel, description of its parts, methods of ginning. Similarly about carding, sliver-making and spinning. If you follow this order the work will be easy. If you have written anything as a specimen, send it to me. I will go through it. I will make suggestions if they are called for. Do not write anything unless you can do so from personal experience. I have seen some books written without personal experience and I have found that they are not at all useful. So make use of whatever you read only after testing it in practice. This however applies only to the actual working. There are certain things which we cannot learn by experience. In such cases our duty is to find out how reliable the writer is. It is good there are so few writers on the subject, so there is not much choice.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Motana Man, p. 72

438. LETTER TO SOHANLAL OBEROI[1]

February 17, 1937

BHAI SOHANLAL,

Telling lies is not less of a sin than lechery. But one who is a libertine in secret is guilty of three sins: he falls himself, he brings about another's fall, and he also lies.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6864

439. LETTER TO MARIE ROMAIN ROLLAND

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 18, 1937

DEAR SISTER,

My son sent me your letter to him in which you have asked for my autograph for the purpose of selling it in aid of the stricken women and children of Spain. While that unhappy people has my whole-hearted sympathy I am not sending you my autograph. I am not convinced of the right of employing such means for obtaining money for a good cause. People should subscribe willingly for such without expecting any return.

My affection to you both.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10587. Courtesy; Madeleine Rolland

440. LETTER TO SHIVPRASAD GUPTA

February 18, 1937

I am an idealist. I am also a practical man. I have no enmity toward foreign countries but I cannot harm my country for their sake. I first began using Indian dates in South Africa and kept up the practice on my return to India. But I found that the preference was

[1] A khadi worker of the Punjab

meaningless. And what a number of calendars we have! One in Bengal, three in Maharashtra, your own yet another, one in Bihar, one observed by the Arya Samaj, Hijrj for the Mussalmans. I should have so many *panchangs*[1] with me; only then can I possibly be impartial towards the people of other provinces. Alongside I have to take note of the western calendar. Under the circumstances I gave up the use of the Indian calendar and it has resulted in no harm to anyone; in fact I have only benefited. I have no resentment towards protagonists like you of the solar calendar though not to be resentful is indeed difficult. If I resent your partiality I should return your letter and supplememt the date *Magh* 24 with the Christian year. Love holds me back from such impertinence. The Gregorian calendar is not solely English, it is used far and wide in the West. We do adopt many things Western, many of them are harmful while some are beneficial. As for the Gregorian calendar, if it is not of benefit, it is not harmful either.

Now for the second question. You believe in *Ekantvad* while I believe in *Anekantvad*. If I am granted Dominion Status along with the right to secede from the Empire whenever I choose to do so, then the heart of an *Ekantvadi* like yourself will certainly undergo a change. But the day when we shall be thus blessed is in the distant future. For the present we are only the sufferers. But take it that as soon as India gets Dominion Status the word *Ramarajya* will go. When the authority comes to be vested in Indians the occasion will spark off internecine strife. You will want the capital in Kashi while I shall favour Segaon. But the day is far too distant, why need we quarrel about it now?

Disregard my views and improve your health with the help of *asanas* and concentration upon Ramanama. Rest assured that the sacrifices made by Indians will not go in vain because of my shortcomings; neither will your imprisonment prove fruitless.

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

441. LETTER TO HANUMAN PRASAD PODDAR

February 18, 1937

Your letter is a sign of your love. As for death, it is a companion of birth and very faithful one. It never fails. Why should one worship

[1] Almanacs

God only when nearing death? What I regard as worship goes on every moment.

The best worship of God is to serve God's creation in a spirit of devotion to Him. Today it has to be tuned to *tena tyaktena bhunjitha*.

Why do you wish that your dream may prove false?[1] Even if I live to be a hundred it will seem too short to my friends. Then what does today or tomorrow matter? And as for worship, let us ever be doing it, both the young like you and the old like me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

442. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 19, 1937

DEAR GURUDEV,

I got your letter of the 10th instant five days ago. Your trust in me and affection for me are there to be seen in every line but what about my amazing limitations? My shoulders are too weak to bear the burden you wish to impose upon me. My regard to you pulls me in one direction, my reason in the opposite, and it would be folly on my part to surrender reason to emotion in a question like the one that faces me. I know that if I undertake the trust I would not need to go into details of administration but it does imply capacity for financing the Institution[2] and what I heard two days ago has deepened my reluctance for I understand that in spite of your promise[3] to me in Delhi you are about to go to Ahmedabad on a begging expedition. I was grieved and I would ask you on bended knees to forgo the expedition if it is really decided upon. And in any case I would beg of you to recall my appointment as one of the Trustees.[4]

With love and reverence,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4646

[1] The addressee had dreamt that Gandhiji had not long to live and that he should be told to spend the remaining days in the worship of God.

[2] Visvabharati

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Rabindranath Tagore", 27-3-1936

[4] *Vide* also "Letter to Rabindranath Tagore", 2-3-1937

443. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

February 19, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

You surely know that I did not refuse merely out of courtesy. Hence it is altogether wrong for you to take the blame on yourself. It was but proper for you at that time not to press me. I enjoyed myself thoroughly that night. I did not get nervous when I discovered that I had lost the way. I realized the error in just five minutes. There was a sudden change in the landscape and so I stopped the car and got down. I looked around me on all sides and enjoyed the pleasure of solitude that chance had given me. Looking round, I observed the changed position of the stars and retraced my way. I hardly took ten minutes to find the point where I had taken the wrong turn. . . .

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11518

444. LETTER TO CHITRE

February 19, 1937

CHI. CHITRE,

You will get much peace of mind if you concentrate on the last lines of the *mantra*. You should be satisfied with what God gives you. Do not forsake what he has given you. Do not envy others what they have or do not have. That is the meaning of the last line. Wealth does not mean money and riches. One man's wealth is scholarship, another's is physical health while that of a third is sacrifice. Do not feel envious of all these things. That is to say, you should not feel disturbed by others' intelligence, efficiency, sacrifice etc. You should never think about it. We should sacrifice what we can without any difficulty and feel happy about it. But you are doing just the opposite. You are angry because others are not doing anything.

You go on asking yourself—why isn't the Travancore Maharaja a great saint? Why isn't an immoral person pure? Why do the zamindars not become sensible? Why do the poor not occupy palaces? To think in this manner is contrary to the *mantra*. The popular meaning of the *mantra* is: Let the world do what it wants. Watch it. Whatever you do, do it in the name of God and only as much as He allows you to in the name of God and only as much as He allows you to do. Take as much as He allows you to take and be happy.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

445. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 19, 1937

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

If you are prepared even in July, write to me. I shall certainly do what I can then.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4280

446. SO-CALLED INCONSISTENCIES

I have some very persistent correspondents who put posers before me. Here is a specimen letter from one such correspondent:

> Whenever economic troubles arise and whenever questions have been put to you on the economic relations of capital and labour, you have put forth the theory of trusteeship which has always puzzled me. You want the rich to hold all their property in trust for the poor and expend it for their benefit. If I ask you whether this is possible, you will tell me that my question arises from a belief in the essential selfishness of human nature and that your theory is based on the essential goodness of human nature. However, in the political sphere, you do not hold such views without at the same time losing your faith in the fundamental goodness of human nature. The British claim the same trusteeship for their domination of India. But you have lost faith in the British Empire long ago, and today there is no greater enemy to it than you. Is it consistent to have one law for the political world and another for the economic world? Or, do you mean to say that you have not lost faith in capitalism and capitalists just as you have lost faith in British Imperialism and the British? For your trusteeship theory sounds very much like the Divine Right theory of kings which has been exploded long ago. When one man, who was allowed to hold political power in trust for all the others and who derived it from them, misused it, people revolted against it and democracy was born. Similarly now, when a few, who ought to hold the economic power in trust for the others from whom they derive it, use it for their own self- aggrandisement and to the detriment of the rest, the inevitable result is the deprivation of the few of the means of economic power by the many, i.e., the birth of socialism.

Hitherto violence was the only recognized means to attain anything good or bad. When violence is employed even with a view to achieve good, it brings evil in its train and compromises the good achieved. Now I take it that your definite contribution to the world lies in your having successfully demonstrated the efficacy of another means, namely, non-violence, which is superior to violence and does not poison human relations. Therefore my fondest hope is that you should fight and end the present economic order non-violently and help to create a new one.

Secondly, you may answer another question agitating my mind. In 1930 when you launched your Satyagraha campaign, you declared that the fight was a fight to the finish and you would either return victorious or your dead body would float on the waters of the sea. Even in your subsequent statements you emphasized this and called upon all Indians to fight determinedly. Now, though you have reserved the right to civil disobedience to yourself, you have abandoned the fight against the Government. At the present moment you are devoting yourself heart and soul to the infusing of life into and raising the standard of the Indian village. I do not know whether you consider this phase of your activity as fight against the Government. The A.I.V.I.A. is divorced from all politics, and therefore your activity in the promotion of the objects of the A.I.V.I.A. cannot be called a part of the political fight to win political freedom for our country. Or do you think there can be gaps, intervening periods of lull in a fight called a fight to the finish? If so, why did you differentiate the fight of 1930 from that of 1920 and call the former a fight to the finish?

To take the first part, I see no inconsistency in my treatment of capitalism or imperialism. My correspondent has been led into a confusion of thought. I have not talked or thought of what kings, imperialists or capitalists claim and have claimed. I have talked and written of how capital may be treated. And then it is one thing to make a claim and another to live up to it. Not everyone like me (say) who claims to be a servant of the people becomes that by the mere assertion. And yet all would appreciate persons like me if we were found to be living up to our claim. Similarly would all rejoice if a capitalist were to divest himself of exclusive ownership and declare himself to be in possession as a trustee for the people. It is highly probable that my advice will not be accepted and my dream will not be realized. But who can guarantee that the socialists' dream will be realized? Socialism was not born with the discovery of the misuse of capital by capitalists. As I have contended, socialism, even

communism, is explicit in the first verse of *Ishopanishad.* What is true is that when some reformers lost faith in the method of conversion, the technique of what is known as scientific socialism was born. I am engaged in solving the same problem that faces scientific socialists. It is true, however, that my approach is always and only through unadulterated non-violence. It may fail. If it does, it will be because of my ignorance of the technique of non-violence. I may be a bad exponent of the doctrine in which my faith is daily increasing. The A.I.S.A. and the A.I.V.I.A. are organizations through which the technique of non-violence is being tested on an all-India scale. They are special autonomous bodies created by the Congress for the purpose of enabling me to conduct my experiments without being fattered by the vicissitudes of policy to which a wholly democratic body like the Congress is always liable. Trusteeship, as I conceive it, has yet to prove its worth. It is an attempt to secure the best use of property for the people by competent hands.

Now for the second part of the letter. I do not divide life into water-tight compartments. The life of a nation like that of individuals is an indivisible whole. My retirement from the Congress or political life so called does not mean the slightest diminution in my yearning for India's complete independence; nor is civil disobedience any distinct process of non-violence. It is one of the many non-violent processes which are in no way inconsistent with one another. What I have to do is to give a clear demonstration of non-violence in all my actions. I claim to be conducting my experiment in a scientific spirit. In the garden of non-violence are many plants. They are all from the same parent. They may not be all used simultaneously. Some are less powerful than others. All are harmless. But they have to be handled skilfully. I am applying such skill to their use as God has given me. But because I use one plant rather than another at any time, it does not follow that I give up the fight. It is a fight to the finish. Defeat has no place in the dictionary of non-violence.

Harijan, 20-2-1937

447. AND THOU TOO!

An advocate from Tamil Nad writes:[1]

> . . . I write this letter to you since we want you to advise us on a problem which vitally affects us and which is in all respects like the Harijan problem—the problem of pollution. . . .
>
> . . . The Bar Association of this place is nearly 100 strong. All members of the Association are Brahmins except fot three, of whom one is a Christian. . . . The members pay a monthly subscription and the Association is maintained from the subscriptions. The Association maintains a water pot for drinking purposes which is kept in a room. . . . On account of this there was an uproar in the Association and the Brahmin members objected to our taking water from the pot kept in the room on the sentimental ground of pollution . . . .
>
> I am writing this to you so that you can give us the lead and valuable advice for us to follow, lest we should err. . . .

This is an old letter. Probably the Bar Association referred to by my correspondent has settled the differences in an honourable manner. But I know the evil persists in many places. What is true of bar associations is equally true of schools and colleges. I have no manner of doubt that the setting up of such a bar in public schools and associations is a usurpation wholly indefensible, and I should be surprised if it is not also illegal. Those who have prejudices such as the correspondent describes may make their own individual arrangements but cannot deprive fellow members and fellow-students of the right of using common property in a manner common to all.

Harijan, 20-2-1937

448. OUR VILLAGES

A young man who is trying to live in a village and earn his livelihood has sent me a pathetic letter. He does not know much English. I am therefore giving the letter below in an abridged form:

> Three years ago when I was 20 years old I came to this village after spending 15 years in a town. My domestic circumstances did not allow me to have college education. The work you have taken up for village revival has

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

encouraged me to pursue village life. I have some land. My village has a population of nearly 2,500. After close contact with this village I find the following among more than three-fourths of the people:

(1) Party feelings and quarrels,

(2) Jealousy,

(3) Illiteracy,

(4) Wickedness,

(5) Disunion,

(6) Carelessness,

(7) Lack of manners,

(8) Adherence to the old meaningless customs,

(9) Cruelty.

This is an out-of-the-way place. No great man has ever visited such remote villages. The company of great ones is essential for advancement. So I am afraid to live in this village. Shall I leave this village? If not, what guidance will you give me?

Though no doubt there is exaggeration in the picture drawn by the young correspondent, his statement may be generally accepted. The reason for the tragic state is not far to seek. Villages have suffered long from neglect by those who have had the benefit of education. They have chosen the city life. The village movement is an attempt to establish healthy contact with the villages by inducing those who are fired with the spirit of service to settle in them and find self-expression in the service of villagers. The defects noticed by the correspondent are not inherent in village life. Those who have settled in villages in the spirit of service are not dismayed by the difficulties facing them.They knew before they went that they would have to contend against many difficulties including even sullenness on the part of villagers. Only those, therefore, who have faith in themselves and in their mission will serve the villagers and influence their lives. A true life lived amongst the people is in itself an object-lesson that must produce its own effect upon immediate surroundings. The difficulty with the young man is, perhaps, that he has gone to the village merely to earn a living without the spirit of service behind it. I admit that village life does not offer attractions to those who go there in search of money. Without the incentive of service village life would jar after the novelty has worn out. No young man having gone to a village may abandon the pursuit on the slightest contact with difficulty.

Patient effort will show that villagers are not very different from city-dwellers and that they will respond to kindliness and attention. It is no doubt true that one does not have in the villages the opportunity of contact with the great ones of the land. With the growth of village mentality the leaders will find it necessary to tour in the villages and establish a living touch with them. Moreover, the companionship of the great and the good is available to all through the works of saints like Chaitanya, Ramakrishna, Tulsidas, Kabir, Nanak, Dadu, Tukaram, Tiruvalluvar, and others too numerous to mention though equally known and pious. The difficulty is to get the mind tuned to the reception of permanent values. If it is modern thought—political, social, economical, scientific—that is meant, it is possible to procure literature that will satisfy curiosity. I admit, however, that one does not find such as easily as one finds religious literature. Saints wrote and spoke for the masses. The vogue for translating modern thought to the masses in an acceptable manner has not yer quite set in. But it must come in time. I would, therefore, advise young men like my correspondent not to give in but persist in their effort and by their presence make the villages more livable and lovable. That they will do by serving the villages in a manner acceptable to the villagers. Everyone can make the beginning by making the villages cleaner by their own labour and removing illiteracy to the extent of their ability. And if their lives are clean, methodical and industrious, there is no doubt that the infection will spread in the villages in which they may be working.

Harijan, 20-2-1937

449. DUTY OF A HARIJAN SEVAK[1]

A Harijan Sevak writes:[2]

It is not impossible to say when the reformers irritate people and when they dispel their misapprehension. By a single act or word alone it is possible to cause irritation as well as to dispel misapprehension. It should be left to each individual to make his own decision regarding this. This much can be said with certainty, that we should do nothing

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had said that while reformers readily accepted food and drink from Harijans in public they did not do so in their homes for fear that doing so might irritate people.

with a view to irritating anyone; and at the same time we must certainly endeavour to dispel any misapprehension. When the work of reform has become a second nature with one, the question of wanting to irritate anyone does not arise. For who can give up his own nature? And when action or word becomes natural no one will feel irritated by it. Therefore, the proper thing would be for the reformer to pursue his duty as duty, and not with any other motive. By doing so, misapprehension will be dispelled automatically.

[From Hindi]
Harijan Sevak, 20-2-1937.

450. HARIJANS AND OTHERS

A correspondent writes:[1]

It certainly is necessary. If in all Harijan schools the caste-Hindu boys are admitted in large numbers there is certainly a danger of Harijan boys being deprived of education. Therefore some fees must be collected from every caste-Hindu boy. It is possible that caste-Hindu boys are also poor like Harijan boys. If that is the case, then the Bihar Harijan Sevak Sangh should hold consultations with the Bihar Vidyapith and ask the Vidyapith to bear the expense of all the caste-Hindu boys attending the schools. The Vidyapith's field is unrestricted whereas the Harijan Sevak Sangh's is restricted and it should be so. Therefore it would be wrong for the Harijan Sevak Sangh to impart free education to caste-Hindu boys, while in the case of the Vidyapith it may be a duty.

[From Hindi]
Harijan Sevak, 20-2-1937

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had complained that in Bihar a certain Harijan school had more non-Harijan boys than Harijan boys because the school charged no fee. The policy of the Harijan Sevak Sangh, he had pointed out, was to charge fees from non-Harijan boys and had asked if it was necessary further to clarify the point.

451. LETTER TO K. B. JOSHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 20, 1937

MY DEAR JOSHI,

Having read the correspondence between you and Mahadev Desai I took charge of it myself—hence the delay in acknowledging your letter. I see that you are labouring under a sense of injustice and irritation. Let me give you my assurance that no one has the slightest intention of giving you any cause for offence. Jajuji and Kumarappa have appreciated your co-operation and the benefit you have given the A.I.V.I.A. of your expert knowledge and guidance. Of course I know that you undertook to come and organize the paper department at my instance and request. I know your worth and I do not want to lose your services so patriotically given. I know, too, that in our country we have very few experts. Of these those who will give their free service for the benefit of the villagers can be counted on one's finger-tips and you are one of them. It will not do for you, therefore, to be offended. Do please, therefore come as soon as you can spare the time and I will personally see to it that every cause of offence is removed. With your assistance I want the paper department to be put in a first-class condition. I know that this is not so at present.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I like the specimen of the sugar you have made from date palm and I want your [help] in developing this village industry also.

From a photostat: G.N. 2762

452. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

[*February 20, 1937*][1]

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

Your letters keep coming. Poor Lakha[2] is disconsolate while waiting for you. Still you must remain there till the doctor discharges

[1] The date has been supplied by the addressee.
[2] A calf

you. We shall manage somehow or other. The construction work on Mirabehn's hut has been started.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi G.N. 1890

453. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

February 20, 1937

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

I sent a few lines in the morning. I could have written more had I detained Kumarappa's car which did not seem proper and writing with the left hand is an extremely slow business.

Impatience will only delay the cure, it is possible only through patience. The civil surgeon says that impurity in your blood is not recent but of a long standing, which makes treatment prolonged. What are you doing there? How do you pass your time and what is the diet? A cheerful spirit is a great contributing factor towards recovery. A student of the *Gita* should be content whatever be his lot. This is said in Chapter XII.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1895

454. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

February 20, 1937

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

Have patience, I shall write to the surgeon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1868

455. MY NOTES

INNOCENT HUMOUR

Last year, Shri Kishorelal Mashruwala had gone on a tour of Bihar on behalf of the Gandhi Seva Sangh. He had also visited the Santhal Paragana. Generally the people there are very poor. It can be said that they are largely untouched by modern civilization. During his tour of the Paragana Kishorelal happened to go to a village. The headman of the village, although illiterate, knew his work well. Shri Kishorelal writes about him as follows:

> Though he is illiterate, he told me his tale in a very touching manner. It did not appear that he was repeating someone else's words. I found in this headman the naive humour which is characteristic of villagers. He said: "We have only one difficulty: when there is famine in our parts, the crops die, the cattle die, human beings die, well-water dies but revenue and interest—these two never die. This is our only sorrow."

Man cannot survive without humour. Moreover, people in the villages do not have the means to kill time which city-dwellers have. I do not believe that these are necessary. Wherever things are well-planned, there is no need to kill time. Man hardly has time enough to spare. He has sufficient time just to carry out his duties. Instead, we waste a great deal of time and, as a result, suffer starvation. Human beings do not get worn out through work. It is by working that man remains fresh and makes progress in every direction. He gets worn out through worry, by doing that which should not be done and by wasting time. That headman was capable of laughing despite bitter experiences because he would not have been idle in his own work. His humour may be taken as a sign of the joy he could feel in the midst of difficulties.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN CLOTH

In the very same letter, Shri Kishorelal writes as follows about other Santhals:[1]

What has been made possible with these simple Santhals should be possible at any place if the effort is made. Despite this, self-sufficiency in cloth has made little progress in our society. It is the

[1] The letter is not translated here. Mashruwala had stated that the Manjhi Santhals of Hazaribagh district were the only industrious people he found in Bihar. They were truly self-sufficient in the matter of clothing.

task of the khadi worker to find out its causes. How could self-sufficiency be attained in the above mentioned village? Was it there even before khadi activity started? Was it done through the inspiration of some workers? How much khadi do they use? What is the count of the khadi which they make? What is their speed in spinning and carding? What are their tools like and what other activities do they pursue? Answers to these and similar questions should be obtained with regard to this village. If we have this information we shall know why self-sufficiency has not been achieved elsewhere. Whatever the conditions in this village may be, it is my confirmed belief that we can certainly succeed in such work if we can produce experts in the science of khadi for there is no flaw to be seen in the idea of self-sufficiency. And it is a historical fact that at one time India was self-sufficient in cloth.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 21-2-1937

456. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

February 21, 1937

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

Your letter.

Although I do not see any reason why honey or dates should cause boils you may consult the doctor. The reasons were the lack or insufficiency of milk and green vegetables, excess of wheat and, above all, your fiery temper.

Knowledge of English is not required of village workers though knowledge of any language is of course good; but I do not think this was the idea behind your question.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1896

457. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

SEGAON,
February 22, 1937

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

Another cow is certainly needed provided it is a good one. The doctor says that you should be cured soon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1897

458. LETTER TO D.B. KALELKAR

SEGAON,
February 23, 1937

CHI. KAKA,

I am sending a letter with this. Get in touch with the writer. He is so careless that he does not even give his address. But the man is good good at his work and wholly engrossed in it. You can address your letter to him at Reverend Lodge, Nelson Square, Nagpur. If you can borrow from someone a small text-book of geography, one of history, a map, a text-book of geometry and one Sanskrit teacher either in Marathi or Hindi, please send them to me. I want them as help for teaching Kanu.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10897

459. LETTER TO TARABEHN N. MASHRUWALA

February 23, 1937

CHI. TARI,

I got your letter after many days. I was pleased. I am glad that you have gone to take a vaid's treatment. I want your body to get strong somehow. I find it simply intolerable that you should be so unsteady in mind and practically useless for anything. I am hoping to take much work from you. Fulfil that hope of mine. I give rest to my

right hand on days other than Mondays, and dictate most of the Gujarati Letters to Manu or Vijaya.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6700. Also C.W. 4345, Courtesy: Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

460. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

February 23, 1937

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

You must have got my letter of yesterday and your fever must have abated by now. No need to get panicky. Patience will make everything come right. Yes, the *bhajan*[1] is certainly worth pondering over. A mosquito-net should be used if the mosquitoes are proving bothersome.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1898

461. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

February 24, 1937

MY DEAR ANAND,

The hardness of my heart is only apparent. I would not apply hair oil to a wound from which Kanu was suffering. He howled. I was unbending. I was cruel, the boy [had] enough! But in truth I was kind. What is the use of my calling you here without cause? Your agony is mental. Brothers and sisters often live apart and are happy. Husband and wife do likewise when a joint life becomes an impossibility. Even Vidya's illness is no cause for grief. You must therefore learn to be brave and cheerful in the face of domestic or other affliction. I do hope Vidya will become well. A cooler climate after April will no doubt be necessary.

[1] A Hindi *bhajan* starting with "Whosoever is so fortunate as to meet Rama"

I hope this pencil hand will be readable.

Love to you both.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

462. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

WARDHA,
February 24, 1937

DEAR PLAYMATE,

When are you going to be fit for play? It is a shame for you to be bedridden so often. Not enough for me that you can laugh at your illness. Love.

BAPU

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

463. LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

SEGAON,
February 24, 1937

CHI. VIDYA,

Do not give way to despair because of your illness. Illness is sent only to test us. You have to be patient. God will help you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

APPENDIX

TRAVANCORE TEMPLE-ENTRY RULES

The following rules and regulations on temple-entry have been issued over the sign manual of H.H. the Maharaja of Travancore:

Whereas we have by Proclamation issued under date November 12 declared, ordained and commanded that, subject to rules and conditions that we may impose, no restriction shall be placed on any Hindu entering and worshipping at temples controlled by us and our Government, we are hereby pleased to enact the following rules:

1. The expression 'temple' occurring in these rules shall include not only the temple and sub-shrines but also mandapams and other buildings as well as tanks or wells appurtenant to the temple.

2. The expression 'Chief Officer of the Devaswom' occurring in these rules shall mean the officer in charge of the Devaswom. It shall also include every officer superior to him and having jurisdiction when such superior officer exercises the powers of the Chief Officer of the Devaswom.

3. In order that the customs and usages obtaining in the several temples under the control of His Highness the Maharaja and the Government in regard to the *Poojas* (service), *Nivedyams* (offerings), *Vazhivadus* (gifts) the *Nithy-anidhanam, Masavisesham, Attavisesham* (special ceremonies), *Utsavam* (festival), and other ordinary and special ceremonies and rituals shall continue to be observed as heretofore, it shall be competent to the Chief Officer of the Devaswom to give, consistently with the objects of the Proclamation, such directions as may be necessary from time to time for regulating the time of entry and worship or limiting the number of those who may enter for worship at a time or maintaining such special customs and usages as are applicable to certain individuals and communities for specific purposes.

4. The permission to enter temples shall not be exercised so as to empower entrance into the *Srikoil* (sanctum sanctorum), *Thidapally* (kitchen), and other portions of the temple where specific restrictions even now exist in regard to all persons except those who are allowed to use those portions by custom.

5. All worshippers are bound to conform to the directions given by the Chief Officer of the Devaswom in regard to the carrying out of the objects of the Proclamation and these Rules and in regard to places which have to be reserved for the time being for the proper conduct of the rituals in the temple or observances such as the feeding of persons as heretofore conducted.

6. The classes of persons mentioned hereunder shall not enter within the compound walls of a temple, or its premises in case there is no compound wall:

(a) Persons who are not Hindus; (b) persons under pollution arising out of birth or death in their families; (c) women at such time during which they are not by custom and usage allowed to enter temples; (d) drunken or disorderly persons; (e) persons suffering from any loathsome or contagious disease; (f) persons of unsound mind except when taken for worship under proper control and with the sanction of the Chief Officer of the Devaswom concerned; and (g) professional beggars.

7. No person shall enter into any temple premises unless he wears clean clothes of such materials and in such manner as may be customary. The directions of the Chief Officer of the Devaswom concerned shall prevail until set aside by a higher authority. None shall be allowed to enter temple premises with any footwear, except those who are allowed to do so by custom and usage obtaining in the temple.

8. No person shall, within the temple and premises, spit, chew betel, tobacco or any similar article or smoke or carry with him any article for smoking, or take with him fish, eggs, meat, flesh, toddy, arrack or other intoxicants or any other article or animal inappropriate according to custom and usage to be introduced into the temple.

9. No person shall enter the *Belikkalpura* (the hall in which the main altar-stone is installed), *Valiambalam*, (central shrine), *Nalambalam*, (the halls on four sides) or the *Elamathil* which in some temples takes the place of a *Nalambalam*, with any coat, shirt, vest or such other garment, except women who may wear their usual dress. No head-dress shall be worn except by those who are allowed to do so by custom and usage obtaining in the temple. No one shall take therein any cloth-umbrella, kerosene-light or other article inappropriate to be introduced into such places by custom or usage. In temples where the above restrictions obtain even in regard to entering within the compound walls, the same shall be observed.

10. (1) No one shall enter the portions of a temple specified in the last preceding rule without having, in accordance with custom and usage, bathed, and without the customary caste-mark and without wearing clean clothes of such material and in such manner as may be customary in the temple concerned.

(2) No one except a Hindu shall enter a tank appurtenant to a temple, and every person permitted to enter a tank shall obey such directions as may be given by the Chief Officer of the Devaswom concerned. The direction of the Chief Officer of the Devaswom shall prevail until set aside by a higher authority.

(3) Tanks reserved for the exclusive use of particular functionaries of the temple shall continue to be so reserved.

11. Restrictions as to entry and worship, which according to usage and custom apply to all communities alike, shall continue to apply.

12. No one shall interrupt the worship in a temple by loud conversation or other demonstration which would derogate from the solemnity and the proper atmosphere of the temple.

13. It shall not be lawful to any person to use the temple buildings and premises for purposes not connected with or arising from worship, usages and observances of such temples.

14. No one shall do any act which would tend to derogate from the purity and cleanliness of the temple and its premises.

15. If any doubt arises in regard to the applicability of, or conformity to, any of these provisions, the decision of the Chief Officer of the Devaswom concerned shall prevail until set aside by a higher authority.

16. It shall be lawful for the Chief Officer of the Dewaswom concerned to direct that any person who contravenes or is suspected or believed by the Chief Officer of the Devaswom to have contravened any of the provisions of these rules, or disobeys any lawful direction given to him, shall remove himself from the temple and, in case such person does not so remove himself, to cause him to be removed from the temple. In case he resists such removal, or in case when asked to give his name and address he refuses to do so or gives information which is not believed to be true, he shall be liable to be arrested and removed by any Police Officer not below the rank of a Head Constable, and to be dealt with as if he had been arrested under Section 38 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

17. If any person contravenes any of the provisions of these rules, or disobeys any direction lawfully given in pursuance thereof, and thereby renders necessary any purificatory ceremonies, according to the customs and usages of the temple, such person shall be liable to pay the cost of the necessary purificatory ceremonies at the approved rates, and the same shall be recoverable from him as arrears of public or land revenue or otherwise. A person thus contravening or disobeying shall, besides being subject to any penalty to which he may be liable under any other law, be also punishable on conviction by a Magistrate with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three months or with fine or with both.

18. No prosecution under these rules shall lie except on a complaint by a Gazetted Officer having jurisdiction in respect of the temple.

19. No action shall lie against any Devaswom Officer or other public servant who *bona fide* does any act in pursuance of these rules, and no action in a Criminal Court shall lie without sanction of Government.

20. In case of any doubt or dispute regarding the interpretation or the carrying out of any provisions of these rules, the decision of the Dewan thereon shall be final.

21. In cases of emergencies and unforeseen difficulties that may arise in carrying out the provisions and objects of the Proclamation or of these rules, the Dewan shall be competent to pass such orders as he may deem fit.

Harijan, 5-12-1936

1. INTERVIEW TO DR. CRANE[1]

[February 25, 1937][2]

GANDHIJI: I shall certainly give you my reaction to Christianity. Even when I was 18 I came in touch with good Christians in London. Before that I had come in touch with what I used then to call 'beef and beer-bottle Christianity', for these were regarded as the indispensable criteria of a man becoming a Christian, with also a third thing, namely, adoption of a European style of dress. Those Christians were parodying St. Paul's teaching—'Call thou nothing unclean'. I went to London, therefore, with that prejudice against Christianity. I came across good Christians there who placed the Bible in my hands. Then I met numerous Christians in South Africa, and I have since grown to this belief that Christianity is as good and as true a religion as my own. For a time I struggled with the question, 'which was the true religion out of those I know? But ultimately I came to the deliberate conviction that there was no such thing as only one true religion, every other being false. There is no religion that is absolutely perfect. All are equally imperfect or more or less perfect, hence the conclusion that Christianity is as good and true as my own religion. But so also about Islam or Zoroastrianism or Judaism.

I therefore do not take as literally true the text[3] that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God. God cannot be the exclusive father and I cannot ascribe exclusive divinity to Jesus. He is as divine as Krishna or Rama or Mahomed or Zoroaster. Similarly I do not regard every word of the Bible as the inspired word of God even as I do not regard every word of the Vedas or the Koran as inspired. The sum total of each of these books is certainly inspired, but I miss that inspiration in many of the things taken individually. The Bible is as much a book of religion with me as the Gita and the Koran.

Therefore I am not interested in weaning you from Christianity and making you a Hindu, and I would not relish your designs upon

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". Dr. Crane was a clergyman from America, who had given up active service in the midst of World War I in disgust for its violence. He wanted to know Gandhiji's attitude towards Christianity and also religion in general.

[2] From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary

[3] St. John, III 16

me, if you had any, to convert me to Christianity! I would also dispute your claim that Christianity is the only true religion. It is also a true religion, a noble religion, and along with other religions it has contributed to raise the moral height of mankind. But it has yet to make a greater contribution. After all what are 2,000 years in the life of a religion? Just now Christianity comes to yearning mankind in a tainted form. Fancy Bishops supporting slaughter in the name of Christianity.

DR. CRANE: But, when you say that all religions are true, what do you do when there are conflicting counsels?

G. I have no difficulty in hitting upon the truth, because I go by certain fundamental maxims. Truth is superior to everything and I reject what conflicts with it. Similarly that which is in conflict with non-violence should be rejected. And on matters which can be reasoned out, that which conflicts with Reason must also be rejected.

DR. C. In matters which can be reasoned out?

G. Yes, there are subjects where Reason cannot take us far and we have to accept things on faith. Faith then does not contradict Reason but transcends it. Faith is a kind of sixth sense which works in cases which are without the purview of Reason. Well then, given these three criteria, I can have no difficulty in examining all claims made on behalf of religion. Thus to believe that Jesus is the only begotten son of God is to me against Reason, for God can't marry and beget children. The word 'son' there can only be used in a figurative sense. In that sense everyone who stands in the position of Jesus is a begotten son of God. If a man is spiritually miles ahead of us we may say that he is in a special sense the son of God, though we are all children of God. We repudiate the relationship in our lives, whereas his life is a witness to that relationship.

DR. C. Then you will recognize degrees of divinity. Would you not say that Jesus was the most divine?

G. No, for the simple reason that we have no data. Historically we have more data about Mahomed than anyone else because he was more recent in time. For Jesus there are less data and still less for Buddha, Rama and Krishna; and when we know so little about them, is it not preposterous to say that one of them was more divine thananother? In fact even if there were a great deal of data available, no judge should shoulder the burden of sifting all the evidence, if only for the reason that it requires a highly spiritual person to guage

the degree of divinity, of the subjects he examines. To say that Jesus was 99 per cent divine, and Mahomed 50 per cent, and Krishna 10 per cent, is to arrogate to oneself a function which really does not belong to man.

DR. C. But, let us take a debatable point. Supposing I was debating between whether violence is justified or not. Mahomedanism would say one thing, Christianity another.

G. Then I must decide with the help of the tests I have suggested.

DR. C. But does not Mahomed prescribe the use of the sword in certain circumstances?

G. I suppose most Muslims will agree. But I read religion in a different way. Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan derives his belief in non-violence from the Koran, and the Bishop of London derives his belief in violence from the Bible. I derive my belief in non-violence from the Gita, Whereas there are others who read violence in it. But if the worst came of the worst and if I came to the conclusion that the Koran teaches violence, I would still reject violence, but I would not therefore say that the Bible is superior to the Koran or that Mahomed is inferior to Jesus. It is not my function to judge Mahomed and Jesus. It is enough that my non-violence is independent of the sanction of scriptures. But the fact remains that religious books have a hold upon mankind which other books have not. They have made a greater impression on me than Mark Twain or, to take a more appropriate instance, Emerson. Emerson was a thinker. Jesus and Mahomed were through and through men of action in a sense Emerson would never be. Their power was derived from their faith in God.

DR. C. I will take a concrete instance now to show what I mean. I was terribly shocked on Monday. I counted 37 cows slain on the streets by Muslims in the name of religion, and in offence to the Hindu sentiment. I asked the Hindu friend who travelled with me why the Muslims did so. He said it was part of their religion. 'Is it part of their spiritual growth?' I asked him. He said it was. I met a Mussalman who said, 'We both please God and ourselves'. Now here was a Mussalman revelling in a thing that outrages you and me too. Do you think all this is counter to the Koran?

G. I do indeed[1]. Just as many Hindu practices, e.g., untouchability—are no part of Hindu religion, I say that cow-slaughter is no part of Islam. But I do not wrestle with the Muslims who believe that it is part of Islam.

[1] Here Gandhiji referred the interviewer to the article "Need for Tolerance", 13-3-1937

DR. C. What do you say to the attempts to convert?

G. I strongly resent these overtures to utterly ignorant men. I can perhaps understand overtures made to me, as indeed they are being made. For they can reason with me and I can reason with them. But I certainly resent the overtures made to Harijans. When a Christian preacher goes and says to a Harijan that Jesus was the only begotten son of God, he will give him a blank stare. Then he holds out all kinds of inducements which debase Christianity.

DR. C. Would you say a Harijan is not capable of reason?

G. He is. For instance, if you try to take work out of him without payment, he will not give it. He also has a sense of ethical values. But when you ask him to understand theological beliefs and categories he will not understand anything. I could not do so even when I was 17 and had a fair share of education and training. The orthodox Hindus have so horribly neglected the Harijan that it is astonishing how he adheres to the Hindu faith. Now I say it is outrageous for others to shake his faith.

DR. C. What about a man who says he is commanded by God to do violence?

G. There you would not put another God before him. You need not disturb his religion, but you will disturb his reason.

DR. C. But take Hitler. He says he is carrying out God's behest in persecuting the Jews and killing his opponents.

G. You will not pit one word of God against another word of God. But you will have to bear down his reason. For him you will have to produce a miracle which you will do when Christians will learn the art of dying without killing in defence of what they hold dearer then religion. But we can go on arguing like this endlessly. And then I may tell you that you are talking against time.

And with this Gandhiji looked at the watch.

DR. C. Just one question, then. Would you say then that your religion is a synthesis of all religions?

G. Yes, if you will. But I would call that synthesis Hinduism, and for you the synthesis will be Christianity. If I did not do so, you would always be patronizing me, as many Christians do now, saying, 'How nice it would be if Gandhi accepted Christianity,' and Muslims would be doing the same, saying, 'How nice it would be if Gandhi accepted Islam!' That immediately puts a barrier between you and me. Do you see that?

DR. C. I do. Just one last question. In your Hinduism do you basically include the caste system?

G. I do not. Hinduism does not believe in caste. I would obliterate it at once. But I believe in varnadharma, which is the law of life. I believe that some people are born to teach and some to defend and some to engage in trade and agriculture and some to do manual labour, so much so that these occupations become hereditary. The law of varna is nothing but the law of conservation of energy. Why should my son not be a scavengar if I am one?

DR. C. Indeed? Do you go so far?

G. I do, because I hold a scavenger's profession in no way inferior to a clergyman's.

DR. C. I grant that, but should Lincoln have been a wood-chopper rather than President of the U.S.A.?

G. But why should not a wood-chopper be a President of the United States? Gladstone used to chop wood.

DR. C. But he did not accept it as his calling.

G. He would not have been worse off if he had done so. What I mean is, one born a scavenger must earn his livelihood by being a scavenger, and then do whatever else he likes. For a scanvenger is as worthy of his hire as a lawyer or your President. That, according to me, is Hinduism. There is no better communism on earth, and I have illustrated it with one verse from the Upanishads which means: God pervades all—animate and inanimate. Therefore renounce all and dedicate it to God and then live. The right of living is thus derived from renunciation. It does not say, 'When all do their part of the work I too will do it'. It says, 'Don't bother about others, do your job first and leave the rest to Him'. Varnadharma acts even as the law of gravitation. I cannot cancel it or its working by trying to jump higher and higher day by day till gravitation ceases to work. That effort will be vain. So is the effort to jump over one another. The law of varna is the antithesis of competition which kills.

Harijan, 6-3-1937

2. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

SEGAON,
February 26, 1937

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

I got your letter. You are getting more and more involved and here everybody is talking of calling you back soon. Your father-in-

law wants it to be early. So does Jankibehn. Father also is practically of the same view. I am neutral, though I don't believe that you will bring home much from there. But I wouldn't approve of calling you back so long as you are eager to continue there. If you wish to take up business, you should give up your desire for a degree. What will you do after becoming a barrister? Or a graduate? As I understand you, you wish to earn money. You do not wish to live on Father's money or to become a sannyasi. If I am right, business is the proper field for you endeavour. If you agree with this, give up the desire to be a barrister or to get a degree. Your English must have improved sufficiently by now. If, however, you are keen on a degree and on going to Oxford or Cambridge, you may see Deenbandhu Andrews. Those whom I know at Oxford and Cambridge, I know through him. Please, therefore, see him. He will make the necessary arrangement for you. He lives at Cambridge. You know him, of course, but I am writing to him all the same. He will, therefore, remember when you write to him. His address is: Master's Lodge, Pembroke College, Cambridge. Do whatever you do after full deliberation. Keep writing to me. You do seem to be a little lazy about writing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3055

3. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 26, 1937

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your letter. What I meant was that if nothing is settled about you till then, you should do in July whatever you want to do. I shall also help you to the best of my ability. I hardly know anything about Ramana Maharshi. Whatever I know is only at second hand.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4281. Also S.G. 57

4. OUR CATTLE WEALTH

This is being written on Bakr-Id day—a day of rejoicing for Mussalmans and grief for Hindus. It is day of grief for Hindus because their Mussalman brethern slaughter cows for sacrifice though

they know that the cow is an object of worship and veneration for Hindus. Though I hold the cow as much in veneration as any Hindu and am responsible for bringing into being the— in my opinion— only scientific society for effectively protecting the cow, I have never sympathized with the Hindu grief and the implied anger against Mussalmans on Bakr-Id. The latter are undoubtedly foolish and obstinate in that they slaughter the cow and needlessly wound Hindu susceptibility. For there is no religious obligation on the part of Mussalmans to kill the cow on Bakr-Id or any other day. I have heard some Mussalmans arguing that Hindus by their worship of the cow make it obligatory on them to kill the cow. This borders on compulsion. But if the Mussalman is foolish and obstinate, the Hindu is criminally ignorant and indirectly becomes party to the slaughter of the cow by the Mussalman. For cows are sold by Hindus as a rule. Hindu grief and anger are uncalled for. Hindu ignorance is responsible for many more deaths of cows than the deaths casused by the Mussalmans' slaughter of the cow for one day in the year. Be it noted that Hindus are apparently quite reconciled to cow-slaughter on days other than Bakr-Id.

I have in my possession startling authentic figures showing the annual slaughter of cattle and deaths from natural causes. According to the livestock census of 1935 about 80 per cent die naturally and 20 per cent are slaughtered. The percentage of natural death, however, varies according to locality. Where grazing conditions are good and cultivation careful, natural deaths fall as low as 7 per cent, and in famine zones they rise to 30 per cent. In the Bombay Presidency (British) it is estimated that there were, in 1935, 74.5 lakhs of cattle. Of these 9 lakhs died naturally against 2 lakhs by slaughter, i.e., 12 per cent against 3 per cent. In 1935 in British India, including Bengal and Bihar and Orissa, there were over eight crores of cows against just under three crores of buffaloes. Comparison between the census of 1935 and 1930 shows that buffalo wealth is on the increase three times that of the cow.

Now it is common knowledge that the cow is generally owned by Hindus. If they removed their unpardonable ignorance, they could easily prevent many deaths from natural causes. I reproduce immediately below this note two extracts[1] showing why so many cattle die annually and what can and should be done to prevent this

[1] These are not reproduced here.

tremenduous waste of wealth. Time was when the number of cows was the measure of man's wealth. Today the cows are a drag on a man's possessions. It is almost like depreciation of currency. The only difference is that prevention of depreciation of cattle or rather cow currency is possible by internal effort. The effort is threefold:

(1) No waste of energy over persuading Mussalmans to give up cow-slaughter, whether for sacrifice or food. They must be put on their own honour.

(2) Exclusive concentration on improvement of the cow and therefore giving up of buffalo milk and ghee.

(3) Exclusive use of dead cattle hide and free use other than for food of all the parts of carcasses, and improvement in tanning.

The material for improvement is ready at hand in the numerous pinjarapoles and goshalas covering the whole land. The only thing needful is to remove certain prejudices and to conduct these institutions on sound scientific lines.

Harijan, 27-2-1937

5. VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE VICES

A khadi-worker writes:[1]

It is good question. There should be no comparison of vices. As for me, I look upon untruth as the root cause of all sins. No institution which tolerates untruth can serve the community or survive for long. But when a man resorts to untruthfulness, it assumes various forms. It is a kind of immorality. Untruth rarely parades itself in naked form. An immoral person commits three sins. He is guilty of untruthfulness because he hides his misbehaviour. The misbehaviour itself is a sin. And thirdly, it demoralizes the other person with whom he misbehaves.

All other vices which the correspondent has mentioned are abstract. We can neither see them nor catch them. They can be discussed only when they become manifest in action. Then only is it possible to think of remedies for them. Suppose a man hates another. As long as that hatred does not lead to some action, the hatred cannot be criticized nor can the jealous person be improved. But when that

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had asked whether vices like untruth, jealousy and hatred were not more harmful than sexual lapses.

hatred causes any harm to another, then it can be condemned and the person deserves punishment. The fact is, sexual immorality is given a long rope in the social as well as the legal code, although it causes great harm to society. The thief gets stringent punishment and the poor fellow is almost ostracized by society. But the fashionable debauchee moves freely and goes scot-free. The law turns a blind eye to him. I am convinced that an institution pledged to the service of millions should have no room for debauchees, just as it has no place for thives and rowdies.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 27-2-1937

6. WHY SHOULD THREE ANNAS BE PAID?

I am discussing here a difficulty which I am faced with in Segaon in trying to put into practice to some extent the ideas which I had expressed regarding the rate of wages earned by women spinners for yarn spun by them. I engage in, or permit, as little discussion as possible on the experiments which I am carrying on in Segaon and the hopes which I am entertaining because my experiments are still at a preliminary stage. I neither show definite results nor see any myself. I regard myself as an extremely cautious worker. I work out each task in a scientific spirit. A devotee of truth cannot function in any other way. While working in that manner, I feel it would be thought improper for me to write anything at this stage about my experiments in Segaon. But there can be nothing improper in saying what I have been unable to accomplish to this day.

Now, in my opinion, anyone who puts in one hour of diligent work should get one anna. So that a woman who spins skilfully for an hour should also be paid one anna. I have been unable to make any experienced person put this into effect; and that is as it should be. If crores of Indians start earning an anna an hour, India would become an economically prosperous country. Today, the average annual income of an Indian is fifty to sixty rupees; this is not the minimum income. If instead, the minimum income becomes one hundred and eighty rupees no one would starve.

However, in Segaon, to this day, I have not been able to pay three annas for eight hours' work to any unemployed person. In Segaon the rate for a man is three annas and for a woman five to six pice. Children of fifteen or sixteen earn something in between. If I

could have my way, I would see to it that women are paid the same wages as men. But I have been unable to do even this little bit. And I have been unable to pay, or make others pay, the same rate to the unemployed as is paid to labourers in Segaon. This is because the rate I have mentioned applies to those who do not ordinarily remain unemployed. What I desire is the capacity to pay three annas for eight hours' labour to whosover comes in search of work. I have not been able to achieve that or make much progress. I cannot accept that I alone am to blame for this. Partly no doubt my own failing is responsible. But it is for this reason that I have proved for myself and others like me the necessity for living in village. It is not true that a few months' stay in the villages enables one to solve all its problems. I have never imagined it can. One can have a grasp of rural problems and find solutions for them only when one stays in a village like a true villager from three to five years. Here I have merely noted the difficulties experienced in paying even the unemployed the wage of three annas. At the root of this difficulty I see our inveterate idleness.

The unemployed are so indifferent that if entrusted with some work of which they have no experience, they are not even prepared to consider it. They have formed the habit of agreeing to everything, so they will nod their heads in assent to any suggestion but will do nothing beyond that. However, by mentioning these difficulties I have by no means expressed my despondency. I have expressed my sympathy towards other colleagues who experience similar difficulty. Idleness which has persisted for years cannot be got rid of all at once. Patience is what is required. We do not wish to give three annas or even more for eight hours' work by way of a gift, but we wish to create conditions where people can earn this amount. In trying to achieve this lies the education and the test of social workers as well as villagers.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 28-2-1937

7. DEFINITION OF POVERTY

While discussing the question of providing work to the poor living in villages, a gentleman writes to say:

> You had once said that those who engaged labourers to plough their fields could not be called poor. But that is not enough. Can it be said that those who do not suffer from want of food and clothing and do not have to incur debts are not poor?

This question may be answered in the affirmative as well as in the negative. If we consider the matter from the standpoint of health, few persons in the Indian climate suffer from want of clothes. This is because innumerable persons can do with loincloths, and it may be said that it does not harm the health. But even persons said to belong to the middle class do not get a proper diet from the nutritional standpoint. Except for a few wealthy people, all others are unable to get sufficient milk, ghee, vegetables and fruit. They may well afford a drop of dirty milk adulterated with water, and a small quantity of vegetables, but they never get fruit. And because of the want of these three things, crores of people in India, including those of the middleclass, can never maintain good health. Hence, if we examine the matter from the standpoint of health, the number of poor people increases greatly. This however is not the standpoint of the correspondent. For him the question of poverty has arisen in the context of the problem of a minimum wage.

My definition of poverty, if considered from that standpoint would run as follows: Those who, despite working the whole day, cannot earn even three annas are all poor, because the correspondent has before him only the problem of providing work to the unemployed in the villages. Although this is an imperfect definition, it is of importance to workers. The reason being that if poverty is considered from the standpoint of health, etc., all villagers and many city-dwellers also would be regarded as poor—and actually, they are so. But such a definition confuses the workers.

This does not mean that such persons should not be served. The village-worker is constantly faced with problems of sanitation, health and economic betterment. He is constantly faced with problems of how people should get pure milk and butter-milk in their own villages, how they can obtain vegetables and fruit, how those who do not get sufficient coverings for the winter can do so. And his skill lies in solving these. But no one can solve all problems at once. It is for this very reason that I have given a working definition of poverty so that everyone can realize that it is their dharma to serve the maximum number of poor people and make a beginning in that direction.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 28-2-1937

8. LETTER TO MOOLSHANKAR NAUTAMLAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 28, 1937

BHAI MOOLSHANKAR,

You did very well indeed in writing to me.

I see no necessity for you to do anything which would hurt your parents' feelings. It is only when parents push the children into an obviously immoral course of action that the latter are entitled to disregard them. There is nothing of the sort in your case. In many matters your parents are ready to go along with you. You can do a lot of service even while doing business. The ability to earn an honest cowrie is not easy to acquire. Even doing that is a form of service and also tests one's intelligence. For the present, therefore, continue patiently to do what you are doing.

Continue to write to me whenever necessary. If you feel you must come and see me, you may do so.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7946. Also C.W. 9463. Courtesy: Moolshankar Nautamlal.

9. LETTER TO SAMPURNANAND

[*February, 1937*][1]

How is it that the majority of you Socialists keep such bad health?[2] Narendra Dev is a chronic sufferer from asthma, Meherally[3] is down with heart trouble, Jayaprakash is ill and now you, who seemed to be the healthiest of the lot, are also confined to bed. Evidently none of you can look after himself. Come to Wardha for some time and stay with me. I promise to send you back fully cured.

Memories and Reflections, p. 97

[1] This was written after the results of the first election under the Act of 1935 were out in February 1937.

[2] The addressee had been suffering from jaundice.

[3] Yusuf Meherally

10. MESSAGE TO INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS[1]

[Before *March 1, 1937*]

WISH PARLIAMAMENT SUCCESS. WISH IT COULD DO SOME CONSTRUCTIVE WORK.

The Religions of the World, p 80

11. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

SEGAON,
March 1, 1937

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I have your letter. What is this—first you are lazy about writing to me and then you apologize. We should apologize only if in spite of our best efforts we fail to do anything. Yes, it is a different thing if you were not able to write because of measles. Hope Mother is well now. I do intend to come to Madras for the conference. We shall meet then. Kanu tries to play on the vina occasionally.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original. Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

12. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
March 2, 1937

DEAR GURUDEV,

Your letter[2] has caused me much distress. That a letter[3] which was written out of love and reverence should have been so misunderstood is a revelation. There was no question of suspicion and, therefore, no question of misjudging you. I simply put before you my meaning of trusteeship. I have been trustee before now of several institutions and I have worn myself out to see that they were properly financed. Acceptance of the burden by me of Visvabharati could

[1] This met for 8 days at Calcutta from March 1, 1937, as part of Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa's first birth-centenary celebrations.

[2] This is not traceable.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Rabindranath Tagore", 19-2-1937

mean nothing to me unless it at least meant that I would be able to discharge the financial burden. As to the breach of promise, I thought myself to be so near you that I could dare playfully to accuse you of a contemplated breach of promise. My motive was absolutely plain. I wanted, somehow or other, to wean you from any further beggingexpedition—a phrase which you and I used often enough in Delhi. Of course I know your religion and all India is proud of it. Let us have as much of it as you can give but never with the burden hanging over your head of collecting money for Visvabharati against the expression of yourself before the public.

I hope this letter will undo the grief that has been caused to you by my previous letter.

With love and reverence,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 8749.

13. LETTER TO KRAUSE

SEGAON, WARDHA, C.P.,
March 2, 1937

MY DEAR KRAUSE,

You are kind—giving me so many letters. I shall never forgive myself for my letter to you in Bombay not being in time. I see that you cannot come to Wardha. I shall await your fuller letter giving me your impressions. I will not discuss the preliminary opinion that you have given about the situation here. I hope you will have a pleasant voyage.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C.W.10859

14. LETTER TO NAVINCHANDRA N. DESAI

March 2, 1937

CHI. NAVIN,

I got your letter. You seem to be doing good work. May you succeed in your effort. The boys and girls always have my blessings. Guard their character. May they ever grow in body, mind and sprit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2171

15. LETTER TO TARABEHN N. MASHRUWALA

SEGAON,
March 2, 1937

CHI. TARI,

You never adhere to your dates. Nine times you yourself fail to stick to them and the tenth time Providence prevents you. Thinking that you must certainly have left for Ahmednagar, I wrote to you there. Perhaps the letter will reach you after wandering from place to place, for now your going to Ammednagar is uncertain and even after going there who knows for how many days you will stay there. Bachu must have recovered.

Blessings from
BAPU

Form a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6701. Also C.W. 4346. Courtesy: Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

16. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

March 2, 1937

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I got your letter. You should do whatever little service comes naturally to you and be satisfied. Let [the mind] wander if it will. If you do not worry unduly, in course of time it will calm down or the body will fall. About the body, whether one's own or another's, beyond a limit one should not worry.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gjarati: C.W. 393. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

17. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN C. SHAH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
March 2, 1937

CHI. SHARDA,

Received your letter.

There is no reason at all to be scared of hip-baths. The secret is that you should not feel cold while sitting in the tub and the body should be sufficiently warm after coming out of the tub. For this, you should bring warmth to the body either by walking or by covering yourself up in bed or by pouring over yourself a few mugs of hot water after the hip-bath.

Friction-bath can be taken . . . . [1] The bather should perch on a stool, with the private parts kept away from the edge of the stool. They should then be rubbed with a piece of cloth repeatedly soaked in the tub-water. This is what is called friction-bath. The idea behind it is as follows: there is a complex of nerves at the opening of the organ. The effect on them spreads throughout the body with lightning speed. This effect is quite the opposite of that produced by masturbation and other bad habits. And this checks many diseases and cures many others.

Garlic should not be chewed. It should be ground and mixed with vegetables like a sauce. Some people take it with curds. If youcan get fresh garlic it is better than dry garlic. If sweet limes and oranges are available no other fruits are required. If you can get good palm *gur*, you can carry on well with it. You must get good milk. A person like you cannot stay where good milk is not available. Garlic never gives a cold, rather it cures a cold.

I can say without hesitation that the increase in Chimanlal's weight is due to his taking earth treatment.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9972. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

18. LETTER TO D.B. KALELKAR[2]

[Before *March 3, 1937*][3]

You are going to the Dharma sabha—the Parliament of Religions. It is associated with the holy name of Shri Ramakrishna.[4] I do hope that the Sabha will do something that will give a lead and will guide the followers of all faiths. What will the Parliament say in respect of all the religions? Are all the religions equal as we hold or is there any one particular religion which is in the sole possession of truth, the rest being either untrue or a mixture of truth and error as

[1] The original is not clear here.

[2] The original, which was in Hindi, is not traceable.

[3] This was quoted by the addressee in his presidential speech delivered on 3-3-1937 at the Fourth Session of the International Parliament of Religions held at Calcutta.

[4] *Vide* footnote 4, "Message to International Parliament of Religions", 1-3-1937

many believe? The opinion of the Parliament in such matters must prove helpful guidance for us.

The Religions of the World, p. 123

19. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
March 3, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I also read your statement. As is your wont, you have made it brief and simple. No sentence in it could be omitted.

If Chi. Kamu asks you for money, give it to her. I will of course write to her.

Chi. Radha barely writes to me once in a year. I don't know anything regarding her scholarship. For the present go on sending her what you have been doing. If I feel the urge, I will write to her some time.

I don't know anything regarding Keshu's betrothal. Do you want me to keep that in mind, or do you want to know whether I am aware that you know about it?

Chi. Mira is living with me in Segaon. She teaches spinning and carding to five or six children in the village. She will most probably write to you today.

Chi. Balkoba's health is, one may say, fairly good. I meet him every day.

I don't like it at all that Chi. Purushottam keeps bad health. He must make a determined effort to improve it, within the limits voluntarily accepted by him. In the matter of improving one's health, lethargy is a sin. The human body is both a *Kurukshetra* and a *dharmakshetra*. In so far as it is a *dharmakshetra*, it is one's duty to keep it in good shape.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8515. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

20. INTERVIEW TO AN EGYPTIAN DEPUTATION[1]

March 3, 1937

"It was impossible to come to India and go away without seeing you", they said to Gandhiji, to which Gandhiji jokingly said:

And yet you come here at the fag end of your visit.

With Gandhiji the only topic they discussed was that of cementing the relation between India and Egypt.

GANDHIJI: I should heartily welcome the co-operation.

SHEIKH IBRAHIM EL GIBALI: We hope the day will not be far off when India regains her past glory and revives her ancient civilization. We have many things in common, climate, colour, food, and we are orientals. The time has come for us to come closer together.

PROF. HABIB AHMED : We have discovered it is not good fot both the countries to rely on their older generations. They should rely more on the younger generations. Our youths should go to India and yours should come to Egypt as sportsmen.

G. Not only may we have an exchange and a mixing together in the field of sport but we should have it in the field of education. We should invite professors from Egypt and you should invite those from India, so that we may develop cultural contacts.

SHEIKH IBRAHIM EL GIBALI: This end can be attained if there is an intellectual fusion of blood between both countries.

G. That is true, and to reach some kind of solution I would suggest your making a public declaration of this kind. I make an offer. If you kindly send an Egyptian lad of intelligence and resourcefulness, we will welcome him and adopt him here. You will see the maker of this place, Jamnalal Bajaj. There is not a public institution here which does not owe its existence to him. He has had no college education, but he has a heart of gold and he has lavishly given of his gold for the welfare of the country. He has a school here where he has Hindu and Mussalman boys. There is provisionthere for Urdu teaching for Mussalman boys. He has secured a Principal who is an ideal teacher. So if you will send a promising lad, we will adopt him here and he will be like a seed which will grow into a mighty tree. Then there is the Jamia Millia in Delhi where there are fine men like Dr. Zakir Husain, Prof. Mujeeb; and you can exchange boys and professors with the Jamia. Make our boys Egyptian and we will make

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Dasai's "Weekly Letter". The deputation was from Al Azaar University and included among others Sheikh Ibrahim El Gibali as its leader and Prof. Habib Ahmed and Prof. Salah Eldin.

yours Indian. Our different religions should not matter. If you will respect our religion and we respect yours, there should be no bar to a healthy development of these relations. Identity of hearts is what is wanted, and if that is there everything will follow.

Harijan, 13-3-1937

21. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

March 4, 1937

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I hope you had a comfortable journey and reached there safely. Throw off all burden from your mind and get better quickly. I will not let anybody do any washing in your tub. At present it is kept in my room and I have reserved it for my use. If, therefore, I don't need the bigger one, it will remain in my room. There was a letter from Saraswati addressed to you. It is enclosed.

Blessings from[1]

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 374

22. LETTER TO SURENDRA B. MASHRUWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA
March 4, 1937

CHI. SURENDRA,

I am having consultations about the date of your marriage. I gather that you desire the marriage to take place in proper style. You are even thinking of a gathering of friends. If that is so, please let me know your reason. One reason I have understood. You feel that all of us elders have enjoyed celebrations of marriages in our time andnow we are out to stop persons like you from doing that, and you ask why. This is a pure misconception. If, according to our custom, we regard marriage as a festive occasion, a person can enjoy the celebration only once. Now as regards myself, I may tell you that whatever happened when I was only twelve years of age. My parents did not ask for my consent in regard to anything. If anybody had enjoyed the celebrations, it was they and the other relatives. I am not aware of having enjoyed the occasion. Whatever fun I may have had at that time was much in the same way as children enjoy play. I had no sense at all of the responsibility of the occasion. This is how I enjoyed the

[1] The subscription is in Urdu.

celebration. I do not know anything of Kishorelal. You need not, therefore, envy my enjoyment. What I wish is that on the day fixed you should come alone. I will get all the religious ceremonies performed and, after they are over, you may take away Manu on the very same day. If you want to have a gathering of friends, you may have one at Akola or Bombay. I have no zest at all for such things. I am not talking about renunciation but only about common duty. Nowadays some thinkers have elevated sensual enjoyment to the position of a dharma. I have not been able to accept this view. In my opinion marriage is a means of observing self-control. It is desirable that men and women should have only one connection and not many. This is their duty. Marriage should be for service, not for self-indulgence. The relationship of man and woman is only for progeny and should have no other purpose. This is the ideal. Certainly one cannot say that this ideal is wrong simply because it cannot be attained. But if it is right, it is one's duty to follow it in practice to the best of one's ability. And if such is indeed one's duty, then the marriage ceremony should be made as religious, quiet and austere as possible. If you understand this, then you and Manu should look upon marriage as a new birth and should enter it with a sense of duty. Do not regard marriage as a festive occasion but enter the householder's estate with the blessings of elders and with full understanding of the meaning of marriage.

If you have understood this, you will give up insisting on inviting anybody. If I can I will stop even Nanabhai, Neelkanth and others from coming and wasting money on travelling. Notwithstanding these views of mine, however, I do not wish to hurt you. You may, therefore, unhesitatingly let me know whatever you desire.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Manu has read this letter and agrees with me.

From Gujarati: C.W. 1564. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

23. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

March 4, 1937

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

You must have reached there safely. I do feel a little worried about your health. If you carry out my suggestions, the fits of

giddiness will certainly disappear. Do put mud-packs on the stomach and the head. They are bound to benefit you. Don't feel the slightest hesitation or shame about eating onions and garlic. There is a letter from Saraswati addressed to you which I am sending with this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3488

24. LETTER TO SARASWATI

March 4, 1937

CHI. SARASWATI,

I had your letter after a long interval. What subjects are you studying? I want all the details, such as how far you have progressed in mathematics. By now that subject, too, you must be finding interesting.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6155. Also C.W. 3424. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

25. LETTER TO RAJARAM R. BHOLE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
March 5, 1937

DEAR RAJARAM,

I was glad to have your letter and to notice that you stood the strain of the election campaign without any physical ill effect. I hope that you will make the wisest use of the position you have obtained.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

SHRI RAJARAM BHOLE

MINERVA THEATRE

POONA

From the original: R. R. Bhole Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

26. LETTER TO VITHAL L. PHADKE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
March 5, 1937

CHI. MAMA,

I got your letter. I have studied the plan. I once again remembered the original ashram at Godhra. After spending Rs. 3,000, how many untouchables will you have uplifted? I cannot understand your scheme. I was under the impression that you would spend at the most Rs. 1,000. Your plan is suitable not for a temple but for a prince's court or palace. But what can I say when a donor like Sardar is ready to satisfy you? But if I got Rs. 3,000, I would spend out of it not more than Rs. 1,000 on a hut for myself, fencing and the temple, and spend the rest in the service of the Harijans in other ways. Kaka has gone to Calcutta. I am sending your plan first to Vinoba and then to Kishorelal. At the earliest I could have replied yesterday, but that could not be done.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3838

27. DISCUSSION WITH R. R. KEITHAHN[1]

[*March 5, 1937*][2]

Mr. Keithahn... was not quite sure what was at the back of Gandhiji's mind when he said that all religions were not only true but equal. Scientifically, he felt, it was hardly correct to say that all religions are equal. People would make comparisons between animists and theists. "I would say," said Mr. Keithahn, "it is no use comparing religions. They are different ways. Do you think we can explain the thing in different terms?

GANDHIJI: You are right when you say that it is impossible to compare them. But the deduction from it is that they are equal. All men are born free and equal, but one is much stronger or weeker than another physically and mentally. Therefore superficially there is

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". R.R. Keithahn was an American missionary.

[2] From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary

noequality between the two. But there is an essential equality: in our nakedness. God is not going to think of me as Gandhi and you as Keithahn. And what are we in this mighty universe? We are less than atoms, and as between atoms there is no use asking which is smaller and which is bigger. Inherently we are equal. The differences of race and skin and of mind and body and of climate and nation are transitory. In the same way essentially all religions are equal. If you read the Koran, you must read it with the eye of the Muslim; if you read the Bible, you must read it with the eye of the Christian; if you read the *Gita,* you must read it with the eye of a Hindu. Where is the use of scanning details and then holding up a religion to ridicule? Take the very first chapter of *Genesis* or of *Matthew*. We read a long pedigree and then at the end we are told that Jesus was born of a virgin. You come up against a blind wall. But I must read it all with the eye of a Christian.

K. Then even in our Bible, there is the question of Moses and Jesus. We must hold them to be equal.

G. Yes. All prophets are equal. It is a horizontal plane.

K. If we think in terms of Einstein's relativity all are equal. But I cannot happily express that equality.

G. This is why I say they are equally true and equally imperfect. The finer the line you draw, the nearer it approaches Euclid's true staight line, but it never is true straight line. The tree of religion is the same, there is not that physical equality between the branches. They are all growing, and the person who belongs to the growing branch must not gloat over it and say, 'Mine is the superior one'. None is superior, none is inferior, to the other.

Harijan, 13-3-1937

28. DISCUSSION WITH A ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIEST[1]

[*March 5, 1937*][2]

A Roman Catholic Father who saw Gandhiji the other day asked how Gandhiji proposed to break the caste.

GANDHIJI: It is already breaking. All it requires is education, and under the education that is being imparted for some time it is breaking. But by education I do not mean literary education but

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary

thespread of true knowledge. Caste has no religious basis, but it is certainly regarded as bound up with religion, though it is not derived from the scriptures. Untouchability is the last word on caste, and as soon as untouchability goes, caste goes. The outcaste has been all over the world. In Europe the Jews were outcastes and confined to the ghettos where life was much worse than in the untouchables' quarters. The degradation to which the outcastes in India are reduced is bad enough, but what one knew of ghettos from Israel Zangwill's works, which years ago I read at the instance of a friend, was something blood-curdling. Such a thing cannot happen in India, because of the non-violence of a sort that we are practising. However, though we have no ghettos, there is nothing to choose between them and untouchability. Take untouchability out and the fabric of caste is destroyed.

And here Gandhiji explained the distinction between caste and varna, which was not only a law for the Hindus but a universal law, to which we confirm, with or without knowledge, and if we do not, we do so at our peril. Caste had been the best target for missionaries to assail Hinduism with, and rightly, but caste in the sense of varna and trade guilds, as Sir W. W. Hunter[1] described it, will live forever.

CATHOLIC FATHER: If Hinduism became monotheistic, Christianity and Hinduism can serve India in co-operation.

G. I would love to see the co-operation happen, but it cannot if the present-day Christian mission persist in holding up Hinduism to ridicule and saying that no one can go to Heaven unless he renounces and denounces Hinduism. But I can conceive a good Christian, silently working away, and shedding the sweet aroma of his life on Hindu communities, like the rose which does not need any speech to spread its fragrance but spreads it because it must. Even so a truly spiritual life. Then surely there would be peace on earth and goodwill among men. But not so long as there is militant or 'muscular' Christianity. This is not to be found in the Bible, but you find it in Germany and other countries.

R.C.F. But if Indians begin to believe in one God and give up idolatry, don't you think the whole difficulty will be solved?

G. Will the Christians be satisfied with it? Are they all united?

R. C .F. Of course all the Christian sects are not united.

[1] A member of the Viceroy's Council, he directed the statistical survey of Indian Empire (1869-81), whose reports were later condensed in *The Imperial Gazetteer of India.*

G. Then you are asking only a theoretical question. And may I ask you, is there any amalgamation between Islam and Christianity, though both are said to believe in one God? If these two have not amalgamated, there is less hope of amalgamation of Christians and Hindus along the lines you suggest. I have my own solution, but the first instance I dispute the description that Hindus believe in many gods and are idolators. They do say there are many gods, but they also declare unmistakably that there is One God, God of gods. It is therefore not proper to suggest that Hindus believe in many gods. They certainly believe in many worlds. Just as there is a world inhabited by men and another by beasts, so also is there one inhabited by superior beings called gods, whom we do not see but who nevertheless exist. The whole mischief is created by the English rendering of the words *deva* or *devta* for which you have not found a better term than 'god'. But god is Ishwara, Devadhideva, God of gods. So you see it is the word 'god', used to describe different divine beings, that has given rise to such confusion. I believe that I am a thorough Hindu but I never believe in many gods. Never even in my childhood did I hold that belief, and no one ever taught me to do so.

As for idol-worship, you cannot do without it in some form or other. Why does a Mussalman give his life for defending a mosque which he calls a house of God? And why does a Christian go to a church and when he is required to take an oath swear by the Bible? Not that I see any objection to it. And what is it if not idolatry to give untold riches for building mosques and tombs? And what do the Roman Catholics do when they kneel before Virgin Mary and before saints—quite imaginary figures in stone or painted on canvas or glass?

R. C .F. But I keep my mother's photo and kiss it in veneration of her. But I do not worship it, nor do I worship saints. When I worship God, I acknowledge Him as Creator and greater than any human being.

G. Even so, it is not the stone we worship but it is God we worship in images of stone or metal however crude they may be.

R. C .F. But villagers worship stones as God.

G. No, I tell you they do not worship anything that is less than God. When you kneel before Virgin Mary and ask for her intercession, what do you do? You ask to establish contact with God through her. Even so a Hindu seeks to establish contact with God through a stone image. I can understand your asking for the Virgin'sintercession. Why are Mussalmans filled with awe and

exultation when they enter a mosque? Why, is not the whole universe a mosque? And what about the magnificent canopy of heaven that spreads over you? Is it any less than a mosque? But I understand and sympathize with the Muslims. It is their way of approach to God. The Hindus have their own way of approach to the same Eternal Being. Our media of approach are different, but that does not make Him different.

R. C .F. But the Catholics believe that God revealed to them the true way.

G. But why do you say that the will of God is expressed only in one book called the Bible and not in others? Why do you circumscribe the power of God?

R. C .F. But Jesus proved that he had received the word of God through miracles.

G. But that is Mahomed's claim too. If you accept Christian testimony you must accept Muslim testimony and Hindu testmony too.

R. C. F. But Mahomed said he could not do miracles.

G. No. He did not want to prove the existence of God by miracles. But he claimed to receive messages from God.

R. C. F. We are glad the Congress has had a great success. But what about its veering round to communism?

G. Has it? I do not see it. But if it does, and if it is not the Russian model, I do not mind it. For what does communism mean in the last analysis? It means a classless society—an ideal that is worth striving for. Only I part company with it when force is called to aid for achieving it. We are all born equal, but we have all these centuries resisted the will of God. The idea of inequality, of 'high and low' is an evil, but I do not believe in eradicating evil from the human breast at the point of the bayonet. The human breast does not lend itself to that means.

R. C. F. When Hinduism comes to power, will it not make a united front against Christianity? There are all the signs of Hinduism coming to power. And if it happens here, as it is happening in Spain, Indian Christians will be despised and persecuted and swept off.

G. It is an impossible picture. There is no such thing as Hindu rule, there will be no such thing. How can anyone eradicate a population of seven million Christians? And that persupposes the

destruction of Mussalmans too! Let me tell you that no Hindu in his wildest imagination ever thought of this. Will the world tolerate any such thing? If Hinduism ever sought to do it, it would be committing suicide. But I tell you that has never been the desire of the Hindus. Hinduism was well able to destroy the first Christians that came. Why did it not do anything of the kind? Travancore is a brilliant example of toleration. I was asked while I was there to see the most ancient church where St. Thomas is said to have planted the first Cross. Why should he have been allowed to plant it?

R. C. F. But in St. Francis Xavier's time[1] there came a time when Christians were persecuted. But I do not know history and my information may be incorrect. But what makes me afraid is what I actually saw and heard in Japan. There I heard in a public speech a responsible man saying, 'Buddhism is the religion of Japan, we must consolidate it, all other religions should be destroyed.

G. Well, well, no Hindu dreams of such a thing. Even if he dreamt it, it would be impossible.

But now the Father revealed his bugbear—Arya Samaj!

G. I agree that the Arya Samaj represents a type of militant Hinduism, but they never believed in the cult of the sword. The worst thing they are capable of is to ask you to become a Hindu if you went and spoke on their platform!

R. C. F. But I have heard Arya Samajists say that Christianity is a Western religion, and as everything that comes from the West is to be discarded, Christianity must also be discarded.

G. I have never heard of the talk of Christianity being blotted out of India. The Arya Samaj is a community that asks its followers to go to the ends of the earth to preach Arya Dharma, but they have not yet done so. It has a firm foothold in the Punjab. Arya supremacy in the sense you dread is an inconceivable thing. The Hindus are really not the major community if you put the rest together. But why should I prolong the discussion? It is not a practical proposition at all.

Harijan, 13-3-1937

[1] St. Francis Xavier was in India during 1541-45.

29. AS OTHER SEE US

Here is a letter[1] which has been lying on my file for some time:

Your attitude towards religious conversion and particularly the hope you entertain for the Depressed Classes within the fold of Hinduism, overlooks the prevalent practices of Hinduism as it exists in India today...

Any religion is judged by its fruits. Here is a contrast. Take the case of the Christian religion, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant. The funds that are collected from the rich and poor are carefully accounted for and repaid in the form of medical and educational service. Religious worship is open to all alike. The number of schools, colleges, dispensaries, hospitals and orphanges admirably served by their religious institution bear eloquent testimony to the quality of faith that is in them. It is not a theology and philosophy which they possess but the self-sacrificing service which they render in abundant measure towards all that is a contrast to the service rendered by the temples and mutts. What are the uses of the wealth of temples and mutts? Are not these weapons of superstition and oppression? The heads of these mutts live princely lives with vast endowments,. . . . I am informed that there are regular lawyers to collect dues and serve the interests of these religious heads, swamis and gurus. This state of affairs is an oppression worse than popery in its worst days. Not merely the accumulated wealth and the annual collections, which in all these mutts must amount to several crores, are never properly accounted for, but this gigantic system of ghastly exploitation continues to be supported by the most intellectual leaders of the people as if Hindu society will break up by questioning it. This is practical Hinduism. Why should there be any surprise that the Depressed Classes alone should revolt against a system which denies them equal rights to worship the Deity but keeps them also in perpetual social excommunication? Why is it that no one ventures to question the priestly oppression, this draining away annually the wealth of the people without any service whatever? . . .

. . . It is exploitation by religious heads that has crushed the people, and the money-lender and the State combined have finished the process. It is not more work and harder work, and the variety of cottage industries that thesehalf-dead half-living masses require, but more vocational schools and dispensaries, maternity and child welfare centres and better food. . . . If the State is not moved very easily by your Herculean endeavours, Hinduism

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

requires a far more drastic purge as it has been established some thousands of years longer than this alien Government. . . .

Bishops and priests of the Christian religion, in spite of the fierce criticism levelled against them in this land and every other country, render humanitarian service unequalled by any other class of human beings who follow any other faith or no faith, and are approachable to all people. . .

It is good to see ourselves as others see us. Try as we may, we are never able to know ourselves fully as we are, especially the evil side of us. This we can do only if we are not angry with our critics but will take in good part whatever they might have to say. Anyway, I propose to examine the foregoing criticism as dispassionately as I can. The grave limitations of Hinduism as it is seen today in practice must be admitted. Many mutts and their administration are undoubtedly a disgrace to Hinduism. The money that is poured into some of them does not return to the worshippers in the form of service. This state of things must be ended or mended.

Humanitarian work done by Christian missions must also be admitted.

But these admissions of mine must not be interpreted to mean endorsement of the deductions of the writer. Economic and educational relief is required by most poor Indians in common with Harijans. But the latter suffer from special disabilities. It is not a question of what disabilities they resent. It is the duty of the so-called superior Hindus to break the chains that bind the Harijans even though they may hug them.The admission by the writer of the sublimity of Hinduism as expounded by Vivekanand and Radhakrishanan should have led to his discovery of its percolation down to the masses. I make bold to say that in spite of the crudeness which one sees among the villagers, class considered, in all that is good in human nature they compare favourably with any villagers in the world. This testimony is borne out by the majority of travellers who from the times of Huen Tsang down to the present times have recorded their impressions. The innate culture that the villagers of India show, the art which one sees in the homes of the poor, the restraint with which the villagers conduct themselves, are surely due to the religion that has bound them together from time immemorial.

In his zeal to belittle Hinduism, the writer ignores the broad fact that Hinduism has produced a race of reformers who have successfully combated prejudices, superstitions and abuses. Without any drum-beating Hinduism has devised a system of relief of the poor which has been the envy of many foreign admirers. I myself feel that

it leaves much to be desired. It has its evil side. But from the philanthropic standpoint it has wholly justified itself. It is not the Indian habit to advertise charities through printed reports and the like. But he who runs may see the free kitchens and free medical relief given along indigenous lines.

The writer belittles village work. It betrays gross ignorance. If the mutts and the revenue offices were extinguished and free schools were opened, the people would not be cured of their inertia. Mutts must be reformed, the revenue system must be overhauled, free primary schools must be established in every village. But starvation will not disappear because people pay no revenue and mutts are destroyed and schools spring up in every village. The greatest education in the villages consists in the villagers being taught or induced to work methodically and profitably all the year round whether it be on the land or at industries connected with the villages.

Lastly, my correspondent seems to resent acceptance by us of humanitarian services by missionaries. Will he have an agitation led against these missionary institutions? Why should they have non-Christian aid? They are established with the view of weaning Indians from their ancestral faith even as expounded by Vivekanand and Radhakrishnan. Let them isolate the institutions from the double purpose. It will be time enough then to expect non-Christian aid. The critic must be aware of the fact that even as it is some of these institutions do get non-Christian aid. My point is that there should be no complaint if they do not receive such aid so long as they have an aim which is repugnant to the non-Christian sentiment.

Harijan, 6-3-1937

30. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
March 6, 1937

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I got your letter today, Saturday. You seem to have reached there quite in time. Amtul[1] was saved miraculously . . . [2] You have asked me to suggest a name for the girl. But what do I know about that. I can only think of "Amina" or "Fatima". It is the aunt's

[1] Wife of addressee's brother, Wahid Khan

[2] Omission as in the source

prerogative to name a baby and you are the aunt. It is for you, therefore, to choose the name. You have suggested that I should write to Amtul, but you have not given me even her full name. Please, therefore, show the following to her.

"I congratulate you on both you and your daughter having been saved by God. But Amtul Salaam tells me that you had wanted a boy. I know that many women have such a wish. But it is not a proper wish. Why should we give so much importance to whether it is a boy or a girl? We should be happy with whatever God sends us. May God give you both a long life".

You may certainly write to Maulana Saheb[1] whatever you wish and obtain any *fatwa* that you like. I only wish to see you at peace with yourself anyhow.

I have had a talk with Kanu. He says that he had no wish whatever to give up his present work. If he had not been engrossed in the *Ramayana* work, he would have liked to do khadi work with you. But he feels that he would be violating his pledge if he gave up the work to which he has dedicated himself. If, therefore, you want Kanu's help in khadi work, you can have it only in Wardha.

Now that you have got work of your liking there, your health must improve. But you are bound to continue to be ill so long as your mind is not at peace.

Blessings to Rashid[2] and your sister-in-law.[3]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 375

31. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN C. SHAH

SEGAON,
March 6, 1937

CHI. SHARDA,

You had completely forgotten me. But it is nice to receive your letter even after so many months. I believe that I will be able to render you considerable help in improving your health if you keep on writing to me.

[1] Abul Kalam Azad
[2] Addressee's brother
[3] Hosa Rashid, Rashid's wife

Read carefully the letter I have written to Chimanlal[1]. If you follow those instructions I have absolutely no doubt that your body will become like copper. Have your heard the saying that the first happiness is good health?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9973. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

32. HOW TO BEGIN[2]

My invitation in these columns some time back to such khadi workers as may be anxious to become adepts in the various processes relating to the production of Khadi,[3] has evoked a wide reponse and I have already received several communications on the subject. The object of the following remarks is to set forth a few practical hints for the guidance of these friends.

The first essential condition for anyone who wants to become master of any subject is to have a living faith in it. He must next have the eagerness to learn and readiness to make the necessary sacrifice for its sake. Books, teachers and other accessories of education are of course necessary in a more or less degree, but passion for knowledge and eagerness to learn are the most essential of all. Given these, the other things will follow of themselves. I would therefore suggestto these intending students of the khadi science that they can at once make a begining by finiding out what processes relative to khadi production are being carried out in their immediate neighbourhood and picking up all the useful information with regard to them available there. The main task that faces a student of the khadi science today is collation and co-ordination of personal experience. A number of different processes relating to the production of khadi are today in vogue in different parts of the country. But there is no single person today who fully knows all of them. And yet complete, detailed knowledge of all these different processes is necessary before the science of khadi can be developed. The task is obviously beyond the compass of a single individual. But if there are a number of persons

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chimanlal N. Shah", 6-2-1937

[2] The Gujarati original of this was published in the *Harijanbandhu*, 7-3-1937. The translation is by Pyarelal.

[3] *Vide*"What Khadi Workers Should Know", 13-2-1937

who are truly fired by a scientific spirit of research and they apply themselves to the task in a systematic manner, they will, by pooling their talents and experience, be able to evolve a living, growing science of khadi in a short time. But before they can do that, they will need to have themselves collectively mastered all the processes of khadi production that are in vogue in the country today.

To take a concrete instance, several varieties of khadi are produced in different parts of Andhra today, employing different methods of carding. Now any khadi worker in Andhra who is anxious to acquire the science of khadi can begin by mastering all these various methods. For this he need not quit his province. Let him by way of a start pick up the process which is current in his immediate neighbourhood. A scientific study of carding would, of course, include a knowledge of the construction of the carding-bow on the part of the student. He would further need to know the materials from which the gut string and other component parts of a carding-bow are made and how; what exactly the length of a carding-bow should be in order to yield the best results, and the effects of departure from the standard length; where precisely the stroke on the bow-string should be delivered and the reason why, and so on in respect of a host of other questions about which even the best of our professional carders today know little and care even less. Similarly, with regard to cotton a worker who takes up a study of carding as a science would need to know all about the different varieties of cotton; the length, strength and fineness of their respective fibres, the various processes through which it has to pass before it reaches his hands; where it is grown; what is the yield per acre and the total money value of the crop; what is the extent of the area under cotton; what was the crop grown there previously which has been displaced, or was the area under question lying fallow before; what difference it would make to the cultivator if another crop were substituted in place of cotton; etc. Thus his practical experience will be illumined by scientific knowledge and give him such a firm grip of his subject and an insight into its intricacies that to master the other processes of carding prevailing in different parts of Andhra will become comparatively an easy thing for him and take but little time. If, further, he keeps regular notes of his experiments and experiences, they will in time take the place of an authoritative treatise on the science of carding.

It will be thus seen that no khadi worker need leave his field of work in order to learn the science of khadi. If he is fired by the spirit

of inquiry and has patience and capacity for concentrated application in a sufficient measure, he will , by applying himself to an intensive study of the processes for which his neighbourhood offers special facilities, not only become a specialist in those particular processes but also gradually widen the scope of his knowledge so as to deserve the name science.

Harijan, 10-4-1937

33. LETTER TO K.M. MUNSHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
March 7, 1937

BHAI MUNSHI,

I got your letter. Please do stay with me in Delhi.

I have understood your view. These ministries have made our task difficult everywhere. Our ability, spirit of self-sacrifice and selflessness are going to be put to a severe test. Let us see what happens. We shall discuss the problem in Delhi. I shall reach there on the 15th morning.

I hope both of you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7612. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

34. LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

March 7, 1937

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. Only a few days ago I had written a long letter to Anand. Whatever the circumstances we should live peacefully.

Tell Mahadev he is talking of binding me, but when he comes here will he allow himself to be bound?

What treatment are you undergoing nowadays? Is it giving you any relief or not? Write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi: Coutesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

35. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
March 7, 1937

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. Since Dr. Roy knows you now, why do you need a letter from me at all? Write to him introducing yourself and go when he is agreeable. Write to me if there is no reply from Dr. Roy. I am confident that he will answer your letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

36. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

Unrevised

SEGAON, WARDHA,
March 8, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

I have an excuse for writing to you. You have left a small blue bottle. It contains a white powder resembling epsom salt. What is it? I do hope you had no trouble in the train. The moral is no onion, no sweet potatoes, a fair quanity of garlic. Bowels ought no to be loose. Hip and friction sitz baths and garlic ought to set the bowels right and eradicate eczema. You must take at least 3 lb. of milk per day. Try unboiled fresh milk twice a day. It must be taken whilst it is yet warm from the udder.

Your place is vacant and looks dismal. Fancy doing without one's Secretary ever at your side! But such is life, everything fleeting, only God is, nothing else is.

ईशावास्यम् इदम् सर्वम् यत् किन जगत्याम् जगत्।
तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीया मा गृधः कस्यस्वित् धनम् ॥

I have written it breaking up the *sandhi.*

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Forgot to give you Hindi *Anasaktiyoga.* I am writing to Delhi.[1]

From the original : C.W. 3764. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6920

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Viyogi Hari", *infra*.

37. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

March 8, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

I duly received your letter yesterday. Why have you given no description of the journey? If you don't worry, your health is bound to remain good. Take hip-baths. Eat garlic. Procure fresh milk. Take ghee and butter in sufficient quantity. And eat whatever fruit you can get. Rajkumari left this morning. She was reluctant to go. She will stay for four days in Delhi. Amtul Salaam has gone to Indore. She left on Tuesday. The house has becomes empty now. Khan Saheb also is not here. And there is plenty of milk. Everybody is fine. Bhansali is still in hospital. He is better now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3492

38. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
March 8, 1937

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

Anasaktiyoga in Hindi should be available at the Sasta Sahitya Mandal. If it is available there or anywhere else, do arrange to send a copy of it to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, care of Mr. Fielden, 4, Bhagwandas Road, New Delhi. We reach Delhi on Monday.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1096

39. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
March 9, 1937

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter. It would be best to write immediately about things I ought to know. I will leave here for Delhi on Sunday. I don't think I shall have much time to talk with Devdas. The whole day I shall be busy meeting people.You can certainly study in Mysore also. The climate is undoubtedly good and Mysore has a university of its own.

I understand about the railway. Amtul Salaam has gone to Indore.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7317. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

40. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
March 10, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

Herewith Bishop Moore's[1] letter and copy of my reply[2]. Please return after perusal. If you have read the appeal[3] and you do not agree with the Bishop's reading, you should pass on to him your own interpretation.

Your wire gave me great joy.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3765. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6921

41. LETTER TO TILAKAM

March 10, 1937

MY DEAR TILAKAM,

I was glad to hear from you at last. Whatever others do or do not do, we do believe in ahimsa and have to persevere in the sure hope that it will triumph in the end. Mathuradas Trikumji will certainly see you and properly guide you also. You do not need any other introduction to him beyond this letter. You can tell him that you were with me at Kingsley Hall in London, that you were in the Sabarmati for some time and that you are still in touch with me.

[1] Of Travancore
[2] This is not traceable.
[3] Of the Church Missionary Society; *vide* "Interview to Bishop Moore, Bishop Abraham and Others", 19-1-1937

Mirabehn is living with me in Segaon and so is Pyarelal. Devdas is in Delhi.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. TILAKAM
THE BOMBAY INDUSTRIAL CO-OP. BANK LTD.
188 MASJID BUNDER ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

42. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

March 10, 1937

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I got your letter. I am replying to it as soon as I got it.

I will reach Delhi on the 15th and will have to stay there, it seems, up to the 18th. Perhaps it may be a day longer.

Yes, you are right in believing that you need not go to Rajkot now.

Pilani is far away from Delhi and is not on the way to Delhi either. But you can certainly go there whenever you wish to.

You yourself had written to me saying that you wished to ask for a *fatwa* from Maulana Saheb.

I was very glad to learn that Amtul keeps good health. The stiches also must have been removed now, and the baby must be fine, too.

Rajkumari also has left, and so we are very few here now. Harjivan also left today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 376

43. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Unrevised

SEGAON,

March 11, 1937

CHI. NARANADAS,

You of course read what I have been writing about khadi these days. And you have also read Maganlal's book[1]. Will you, taking that book as your guide or according to any other plan you like, write

[1] *Vanat Shastra*, Part I

something on the science of khadi? For a historical account, you will need literature on the subject. If you don't have it or have no time to read it, please see if you can write a book giving an account of the work being done now and giving information about all the processes from cotton onwards.

You must have read my questionnaire and Lakshmidas's article. We must have a book giving all that information.

Kamu writes that she has now started going to school.

I read your printed programme. I didn't like it as well as I did your statement. The portion in dialogue form is certainly excellent, but it can't be said to have been artistically interwoven with the rest. That, however, is a minor defect. I notice spelling mistakes too. The Vidyapith dictionary is an authority for us. I don't know if it contains the words *peen, reeban, chipia,* etc. If it, you should look them up. Now the dictionary does not at all give the word *pin.* In English the vowel is short and we should spell the word accordingly. I went through the rules about spelling and there also it is stated that words borrowed from foreign languages should be spelt in conformity with their spellings in those languages. Moreover, the word *peen* has a definite meaning in Gujarati. The dictionary explains it as "thick", "wellfed", "rounded". At first sight I didn't get the meaning of *peen,* but I made it out as I proceeded further. In the dialogue you have spelt the word as *cheepeeo.* It should be *cheepio.* It is followed in the same sentence by *reeban*[1]. In English the word is pronounced as"riban" and that is how it should be spelt according to the rule given in the dictionary. The word is not given in the dictionary, though there is no harm in using it all the same. You will find many more of similar other spelling mistakes.

I see no poetry in the *bhajan* or song "He is the witless man". The language jars on the ear and the thought also is none too pleasant. The very first syllable augurs ill. There is no such word as *murakh.* The word is *moorakh*. The thought in the line "feeds the foreigner lovingly" is indicative of ill will. It does not befit a follower of non-violence. And if a foreigner is hungry, why should not one feed him lovingly? Of course the meaning in the author's mind is different, but the reader is not concerned with the meaning in an auther's mind if it is not expressed in his language. In the phrase, *deshana dukkhne tane,* the syllable "na", should be nasalized. The expression "to serve the stones of unemployment" lacks moderation. The metaphor also is not happy. The thought in "The fine noose of

[1] Ribbon

the craze for fancifulness" is touched with bitterness. A noose cannot be discribed as "fine", nor can it be said that the word "fine" has been used ironically. The word *greeva* is not in keeping with the author's attempt to use rustic language. The spelling *januni* is incorrect. The word is *janani*. But I will not go on with this criticism. Go through the second part from this point of view. I felt the whole poem crabbed and unpleasant. The other song also didn't interest me. I have not read it carefully, though. But *Vidhatara* did catch my eye. Nanavati suggests that it must have been a misprint. The author must have written *Vidhatra*. If that is correct, please note that the dictionary gives no word like *Vidhatra*. It gives *Vidhata* and *Vidhatri*. A poet has no right to alter spellings of words without sufficient reason.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8516. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

44. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

March 11, 1937

CHI. JETHALAL,

You were writing something on khadi. What happened to that? How is your work going on? What is the situation about leather?

A gentleman by name Keshavlal who lives in Bombay writes, "Jethalal's daughter Indu died after an illness of twenty-two days". He has not given any address. Can you throw some light on this?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9860. Courtesy: Narayan J. Sampat

45. LETTER TO VITHAL L. PHADKE

SEGAON,
March 12, 1937

CHI. MAMA,

It is very strange that you saw anger in my letter[1]. Maybe mere admonition is considered anger, but if no admonition is given there is also the fear that a person may not wake up. There is certainly an art

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vithal L. Phadke", 5-3-1937

of merely expressing one's opinion in pleasing language without admonition, but I have not been able to acquire that art. I know this also, that it is an aspect of ahimsa. If I saw the letter written to you I would certainly be able to know whether there was ahimsa or only *himsa* in it. I do not know Vinoba's and Kishorelal's views. I have certainly not met them. I do not remember to have sent a copy of my letter to them. Be that as it may, even after reading Raiji's letter, I stick to my views. I believe that one should not yield to the temptation of solving a problem. Such external standards as cannot be followed by many had better be abandoned. The letter to Raiji is enclosed.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3839

46. LETTER TO RAIJI

March 12, 1937

BHAI RAIJI,

I got your letter. It was good that you wrote. I could not agree with your argument. The idea of serving many aims in planning the construction of temples does not appeal to me. In my opinion, good lies in implementing all these ideas gradually. How can a person whom we would not like to keep in our house be permitted to stay in a temple? A temple should never be allowed to be a shelter for vagabonds. Only holy men are a worthy sight in a temple compound. If you brothers cherish the idea of making the temple God's abode, then it is desirable that you do not transform it into a place of self-seeking. If your ideas are carried out, God will suffocate in that place although it may be called a temple. I would personally wish that you should never copy the failings of the Hindus who consider themselves as belonging to the upper castes. I may remind you that Bhangi friends twice took an oath before me that they would give up drinking and twice broke it. But I too am made of ordinary clay as you are. So we need not put a high value on the knowledge that you may be able to gain from me, but, if you desire to make the temple a true abode of God, then do not make it a shelter for persons of doubtful worth and a place for storing utensils of use to the community. Instead, the moment the temple is opened you should take before the deity

[1] *Vide* the following item.

installed inside a pledge to abjure drink, and cling to it; then although the temple may have taken only Rs. 5 to build instead of Rs. 5,000, it will still become a shrine of pilgrimage. I should like the place where Mama stays to be such a holy place, and a temple like that cannot be built by spending money. Now do what you and Mamasaheb think proper.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3840

47. THE COW

The cow is an object of worship and veneration to millions in India. I count myself among them. The cow-shed in Segaon is in front of me. I cannot escape its inmates even if I would. And when I was arguing the question of the masses of Harijans with Christian friends, I said, 'The majority of Harijans can no more understand the presentation of Christianity than my cows.' This comparision shocked my friends so much that the shock has travelled to America and I have begun to receive letters from America telling me how my comparision is being used to discredit me and my claim to serve Harijans. The critics seem to say, 'You can have little regard for Harijans if you compare them to the cow.'

Nevertheless I am unrepentant. My American credit will be little worth if it can be demolished on the very first shock however trivial it might be. But I hold that my comparison was as innocuous as it was appropriate. It was innocuous because of the unique place the cow occupies in India. It was appropriate because in the matter of understanding the presentation of Christianity the ordinary Harijan can no more take it in than the cow. That the dullest Harijan can be trained to understand it in course of time, whereas the cow never can, is irrelevant for the simple reason that the discussion related to the present condition, not to future possibility. My point would be better understood if I extend the comparision and say that my five-year old grandson or my sixty-eight-year old wife can no more understand the presentation than my cow, though both my wife and my grandson are objects of tender care and attention. I could say of myself that I can no more read the Chinese alphabet today than my worshipful cow.

The truth of this last statement is not in any way altered by the fact that if someone began to teach my cow and me the difficult alphabet, I should beat the cow hollow, if the poor venerable mother ever consented to enter the competition. Let my critics and credulous friends understand that apart from the comparison, I stand on unassailable ground when I assert that it is a travesty of religion to seek to uproot from the Harijans' simple minds such faith as they have in their ancestral religion and to transfer their allegiance to another, even though that other may be as good as and equal to the original in quality. Though all soils have the same predominantcharaterstics, we know that the same seeds do not fare equally well in all soils. I have some excellent tree cotton seeds which thrive excellently in certain parts of Bengal. But Mirabehn has not succeeded as yet in getting the same result from the same seeds in the Varoda soil. But I should be unable to subscribe to the formula, if the attempt was made to advance it, that the Varoda soil is inferior to the Bengal soil. But my fear is that though Christian friends nowadays do not say or admit that Hindu religion is untrue, they must harbour in their breasts the belief that Hinduism is an error and that Christianity as they believe it is the only true religion. Without some such thing it is not possible to understand, much less to appreciate, the C.M.S. appeal from which I reproduced in these columns some revealing extracts the other day.[1] One could understand the attack on untouchability and many other errors that have crept into Hindu life. And if they would help us to get rid of the admitted abuses and purify our religion, they would do helpful constructive work which would be gratefully accepted. But so far as one can understand the present effort, it is to uproot Hinduism from the very foundation and replace it by another faith. It is like an attempt to destroy a house which though badly in want of repair appears to the dweller quite decent and habitable. No wonder he welcomes those who show him how to repair it and even offer to do so themselves. But he would most decidedly resist those who sought to destroy the house that had served well him and his ancestors for ages, unless he, the dweller, was convinced that the house was beyond repair and unfit for human habitation. If the Christian world entertains that opinion about the Hindu house, 'Parliament of Religions' and 'International Fellowship' are empty phrases. For both the terms presuppose

[1] *Vide* "A Christian Letter", 30-1-1937

equality of status, a common platform. There cannot be a common platform as between inferiors and superiors, or the enlightened and the unenlightened, the regenerate and the unregenerate, the high-born and the low-born, the caste man and the outcaste. My comparison may be defective, may even sound offensive. My reasoning may be unsound. But my proposition stands.

Harijan, 13-3-1937

48. ANDREWS ON TRAVANCORE

Deenbandhu Andrews writes:

> The arrival of each new number of *Harijan* is one of the exciting events of the week in my old college rooms at Cambridge, where I have been busy lecturing this term: but this morning the paper exceeded my highest expectation. For it told me of the wonderful visit to Travancore, and the joy of the Harijans as they entered the temples freely to meet you and take part in the prayers which you conducted within the temple walls. Many years ago, I had gone down into Travancore at your request—both to Vaikom, where I witnessed the great Satyagraha struggle, and also to Kottayam. Outside Kottayam, in the country district, multitudes of the *avarnas* had come to meet me and to receive your message. At one place, nearly two thousand had collected. Their misery and suffering haunted me afterwards and I could not think of anything else. Again, at Vaikom where I stayed with the Satyagrahis, I saw once more the misery and suffering of those who were prevented from going on the road outside the temple. On that occasion, I went and pleaded with the Nambudiri Brahmins, but in vain. Now it was wonderful beyond measure to read how that old Satyagraha struggle, with all its bravery and endurance, had at last found its completion! For not merely the roads but the temple itself had been entered by the *savarnas* and *avarnas* together! What I now long to hear is this, that some at least of Nambudiri Brahmins, who have so truly sought to undo the harm done in the past, may also be led to offer to these Harijans, whom they have thus welcomed as brothers, a brotherly wage for the full work which they perform. Only in that brotherly way can the victory become complete.

From all I hear, the Proclamation is being worked so effectively that the economic salvation which Deenbandhu wants to hear of is bound to come and that sooner than one may expect. For, addressing a meeting of Pulayas, Pariahs and others on the Ist instant at

Trivandrum, the Dewan Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar is reported to have said:

> The Maharaja regarded the Temple-entry Proclamation not as an end in itself, but as the first step in the rehabilitation of the State. What was needed was educational upliftment, economic upliftment and social integration. For this, the co-operation of the Ruler and the people was necessary. Out of consideration for the class of people who were being lifted up, it had been decided to omit the word 'depressed' from Government documents and publications. He ventured to say the time would come when the Depressed Classes would forget that name.

Harijan, 13-3-1937

49. MARRIED BRAHMACHARYA[1]

A friend writes:

> I have long since held with you that self-control is the only sovereign method for attaining birth-control. That the sexual act is meant for procreation only, and apart from it, in any shape or form , would amount to unnatural gratification of lust, needs no proof. But sometimes this brings one up against a grave dilemma. Supposing that the sexual act, once or twice, fails to lead to conception, what is one to do then? Where is one to draw the limit? It is hard finally to give up all hope of begetting offspring. On the other hand, unlimited indulgence in the sexual act must result in the man being drained of all vitality. Again, should such a person be told to regard his failure to beget progeny on the first or the second chance, as a mark of adverse fate and on that score to abstain from having any further intercourse thereafter? But that would require an exceptional degree of self-possession and spiritual strength on the part of the person concerned. Instances of people begetting progeny in their declining years after repeated failure during the years of manhood and youth are by no means either unknown or rare. That makes the observance of complete abstinence still more difficult, and the position becomes further complicated when the parties happen to be otherwise healthy and free from any physical defect.

I admit the difficulty, but the difficulty is inherent in the problem itself. The road to any progress is strewn with such difficulties and the story of man's ascent in the scale of evolution is co-extensive with the history of the successful overcoming of these

[1] The Hindi original of this was published in *Harijan Sevak*, 13-3-1937. The translation is by Pyarelal.

difficulties. Take the story of the attempts to conquer the Himalayas. The higher you go the steeper becomes the climb, the more difficult the ascent, so much so that its highest peak still remains unvanquished.The enterprise has already exacted a heavy toll of sacrifice. Yet every year sees fresh attempts made only to end in failure like their predecessors. All that has, however, failed to damp the spirit of the explorers. If that is the case with the conquest of the Himalayas, what about the conquest of self, which is a harder job by far, even as the reward is richer? The scaling of the the Himalayas can, at best, give a temporary feeling of elation and triumph. But the reward of the conquest of self is a spiritual bliss that knows no waning and grows ever more and more. It is a welll-known maxim of the science of *brahmacharya* that insemination in the case of a man who has properly kept the rules of *brahmacharya* cannot, ought not to, fail to lead to conception. And this is just as it should be. When a man has completely conquered his animality, involuntary incontinence becomes impossible, and the desire for sexual gratification for its own sake ceases altogether. Sexual union then takes place only when there is a desire for offspring. This is the meaning of what has been described as 'married *brahmacharya*'. In other words, a person who obeys this rule, though leading a married life, attains the same state as, and is equal in merit to, one who completely abstains from the sexual act, which is only a means for procreation, never for self-indulgence. In practice, it is true, this ideal is seen to be rarely realized in its completeness. But in shaping our ideals we cannot think in terms of our weaknesses or the possible lapses. The present tendency, however, is to take a complete swing round, and the protagonists of contraceptives have almost set up self-indulgence as their ideal. Self-indulgence obviously can never be an ideal. There can be no limit to the practice of an ideal. But unlimited self-indulgence, as everybody would admit, can only result in certain destruction of the individual or the race concerned. Hence self-control alone can be our ideal, and it has been so regarded from the earliest times. Therefore we have to explore the means of its attainment, not to circumvent it.

It has become my settled conviction that most of the difficulties that are experienced in connection with the practice of *brahmacharya* are due to our ignorance about its laws and would of themselves disappear if we discovered them. Let us, for instance, examine the poser propounded by our correspondent in the ideal light. In the ideal state, in the first place, such a contingency will never arise, because in a normally healthy couple, who have from their childhood upward observed the rules of *brahmacharya*, sexual union can never prove

infertile. In practice, however, anomalies do arise. The only rule that can be laid down in such instances is that coitus may be permittedonce at the end of the monthly period till conception is established. If its object is achieved it must be adjured forthwith, for mere sensual gratification should never be its object. It is my faith based on my experience that bodily and mental health increases in the same ratio as bodily and mental chastity. Nor is it to be wondered at. A substance that is capable of producing such a wounderful being as man, cannot but be transmuted into matchless energy and strength. Anyone can test for himself the truth of this observation of the Shastras for himself by personal experience. And the rule holds good in respect of woman no less than man. The real difficulty, however, is that we vainly expect to be free from outward manifestations of lust, while harbouring it in our minds, with the result that physically and mentally we become utter wrecks, and our lives, in the words of the *Gita* become a living lie or hypocrisy personified.

Harijan, 20-3-1937

50. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
March 13, 1937

REBEL DEAR,

Your two letters were destroyed as soon as I finished reading them. I am glad you have kept well. If you have that tape measure by any chance, you will send it to Delhi.

You will tell me all about Shummy after you reach Jullundur.

Of course I shall see Fielden. R.[1] is with me.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3766. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6922.

[1] Ramachandran; *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 8-1-1937

51. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

March 13, 1937

DEAR KU,

Here are two letters from Dr. G[1]. There is no provision for leave for such purposes as he mentions. We should accept the resignation. I hope to drop in for a moment in Maganwadi.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10113

52. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJUMDAR

SEGAON,
March 13, 1937

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I got your letter. The description of the Harijan school at Edarpura appears to be good but I refrain from publishing it. There have been instances in the past when, after a favourable description about a school or an institution was received and published, our subsequent experience of it was bitter. Either we do not have the courage to publish such experience or it seems improper to do so. If, however, one occasionally comes across a description like the one you have given, one may derive what joy one can from it and then forget about it. One would then be saved from the kind of embarrassing situation mentioned above. If it is a really good school, it will surely go on progressing. Such a school cares for no praise. I have not seen many reasons to hope that because of our description of a school others will immediately copy its example. However, I have not made it a rule in my mind that such descriptions should never be published. Whenever, therefore, you feel it very necessary to publish a particular description, please write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3956

[1] Dr. Gopichand Bhargava

53. THE PROBLEM OF THE HANDLOOM[1]

The following figures represent the aggregate out-turn of handlooms using both inigenous and foreign mill yarn up to 1934:

YEAR		AVERAGE OUT-TURN OF CLOTH IN HUNDRED THOUSAND YARDS
1911-14	..	101
1921-24	..	117
1925-28	..	124
1930	..	134
1931	..	134
1932	..	140
1933	..	172
1934	..	170

It is difficult to say how far these figures are reliable. But I think it may safely be assumed that if they err at all it is on the side of understatement. The actual production of the handlooms is probably higher. We ought to be able to convert all these handlooms to the use of hand-spun yarn, but we are powerless to do that today. Our charkha yarn today is neither of sufficient strength nor is it produced in sufficient quantity. So long as we cannot produce hand-spun yarn that will stand comparison with the mill yarn in strength and uninformity, the handloom weaver will refuse to handle it and for very good reason too. In the first place, the employement of weak and uneven yarn reduces the quantity of cloth that he can turn out in a given time and thus affects his earning capacity. Secondly, the handloom weaver today has specialized more or less in higher lines of production while our output of hand-spun yarn of fine count is extremely meagre and that too is confined mostly to Andhra. The solution of the difficulty involves a complete mastery of the khadi science. But I am not asking anybody to tackle this problem today. It can for the present wait. There are a number of other problems whichwill have to be successfully tackled before we can cope with the question of the handloom. Only let it be borne in mind that this

[1] The original Gujarati was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 14-3-1937. The translation is by Pyarelal.

problem will have to be successfully tackled before the dream of universalizing khadi is realized.

Harijan, 17-4-1937

54. NOTES[1]

[On or after *March 14, 1937*][2]

Review of the activities in the non-Hindi speaking provinces over the past few years.

The importance of this work for the Sammelan.

Special features of the Hindi *prachar* work in the south and how it differs from similar work in the other non-Hindi provinces.

Oneness of Hindi and Urdu. Appeal to the scholars on both sides not to widen the differences between the two.

Admitting the scientific quality of the Devnagari script, an appeal to Hindu scholars to study the Persian script and to Muslim scholars to study Devnagari as a duty.

A review of the work being done in Wardha.

Keeping in view that work, an outline of the coming years' programme and the budget for it.

The outline incorporates the suggestions made by Rajaji and others.

I have only enumerated the topics. They can be discussed further.

[From Hindi]

Panchaven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 380

[1] Gandhiji had prepared these notes for the presidential speech to be delivered by Jamnalal Bajaj at the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan to be held at Madras.

[2] Jamnalal Bajaj has noted in his diary under the date 14-3-1937 that he discussed the subject with Gandhiji. The writing of the notes presumably followed this discussion.

55. CABLE TO AGATHA HARRISON

DELHI,
March 15, 1937

AGATHA HARRISON
2, CRANBOURNE COURT
ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD
LONDON

WHATEVER HAPPENS BREACH BETWEEN US[1] IMPOSSIBLE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1503

56. TELEGRAM TO D. B. KALELKAR

March 15, 1937

KAKA KALELKAR
HARIJAN HOSTEL
WARDHA

GO MADRAS. HELP HARIHAR SHARMA[2].

BAPU
JAMNALAL

From a photostat: G.N. 10898

57. LETTER TO J.C. KUMARAPPA

KINGSWAY, DELHI,
March 15, 1937

MY DEAR KU.,

You will please bear in mind that we have to deliver to Radhakrishna Bajaj one pukka maund of cow's ghee before 25th April. The ghee must be well made. Ghee-making is an art by itself. [You must][3] ensure quality.

[1] Congressmen; *vide* also "Cable to Agatha Harrison", 27-3-1937
[2] Also called Anna
[3] The source here is faded.

The weather . . .[1] I must not forget to tell you that Fischer told me he could easily look at the butter-making.

I expect to return at the . . . [2]Sunday.

Love.

BAPU

From a phototstat: G.N. 10114

58. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

HARIJAN NIWAS,
KINGSWAY, DELHI,
March 15, 1937

CHI. MIRA,

The weather here is superb just now. It always is during March and part of April.

Hope you will win Vijiya's[3] heart. I shall never be able to give you a better girl. And you must not pamper Kandu and the other boys[4]. They are done for if they develop the tender skin that you and I have the misfortune to possess. The water incident stuck me in the throat.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

This was written on the date given but could not be posted before. Your letter is in. May not leave before Sunday.

From the original: C.W. 6377. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9843

[1] A few words are illegible here.

[2] A few words are illegible here.

[3] Vijay N. Patel ; *vide* also the following item.

[4] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, Mirabehn explains them as "Harijan village boys".

59. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL.

March 15, 1937

CHI. VIJAYA,

You wish to win the heart of Mirabehn. Take her company as virtuous, good and saintly. Overlook other people's short-comings and see their virtues. Here is a verse from Tulsidas:

God has made the world full of living and non-living things, of virtue and vices,

The good, like the swan, take the milk of virtue and leave out the water of vice.

If you do not understand the meaning, look it up in "Balkand"or ask Nanavati.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7063. Also C.W. 4555. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

60. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

DELHI,
March 15, 1937

CHI. AMRITLAL,

We have to send to Radhakrishna one pukka maund of jaggery before 25th April. It should be securely packed and should be of good quality, i.e., such as will not become too soft. Jaggery which is likely to become so, we ourselves should use. Send the quantity to him in instalments as and when it is ready.

Take care of your health in whatever you do.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10728

61. EXTRACT FROM A.I.C.C. RESOLUTION[1]

DELHI,
March 16, 1937

The A. I. C. C. endorses and confirms the resolutions of the Working Committee passed at Wardha on February 27 and 28, 1937, on the extra-parliamentary activities of Congress members of the Legislatures, mass contact and the Congress policy in the Legislatures and calls upon all Congressmen in the Legislatures and outside to work in accordance with the directions contained in them. And on the pending question of office-acceptance and in pursuance of the policy summed up in the foregoing paragraph, the A. I. C. C. authorizes and permits the acceptance of the Ministerial offices in Provinces where the Congress commands majority in the Legislature; provided that Ministerships shall not be accepted unless the Leader of the Congress Party in the Legislature is satisfied and is able to state publicly that as long as he and his Cabinet act within the Constitution, the Governor will not use his special powers of interference or set aside the advice of Ministers.

The Hindustan Times, 17-3-1937

62. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

DELHI,
March 17, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This must be a newsletter only. I twice attempted yesterday and Monday to write to you but failed. This I am writing just after prayer. You are right. The tape measure was in the tin box. Nothing escaped your notice. Mahadev has gone to Calcutta to see Subhas Chandra Bose[2]. He went yesterday. I sent him because Jamnalal Bajaj won't let me go before Sunday. We are only Pyarelal, Mahadev and self.

Of course you need not trouble to write to Bishop Moore.

[1] Gandhiji says that he was "the sole author of the office-acceptance clause of the Congress resolution". *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 30-3-1937, also "Interview to the Press", 19-3-1937 For the text of the resolution passed in Delhi, and the background, *vide* Appendix Resolution Passed at A.I.C.C. Meeting, Delhi", 16-3-1937.

[2] He was released from jail on March 17.

Yes, the missionary letter is in keeping with the general belief. But nothing beats Dornakal[1].

I hope you will continue steady progress.

A parcel of Hindi books was sent to you yesterday. Village note-paper has been given to R. I do not think anything else now remains to be done. You have yet to get the steam apparatus.

If you can add cream and butter to your diet so much the better, but no forcible feeding. It must be assimilated.

I am keeping well, taking more milk.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Love to Pierre[2]. I hope he got my message that he can have a free passage.

From the original: C.W. 3767. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6923

63. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

DELHI,
March 17, 1937

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

You will come when you like and not mind waiting if I cannot have you in at once. I am a slave of circumstances controlled by the President.

Yours
BAPU

DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA
LAJPATRAI BHAVAN
LAHORE, PUNJAB

From the original: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] also "Interview to Bishop Moore, Bishop Abraham and Others", 19-1-1937

[2] Pierre Ceresole, a Swiss Pacifist, President, International Voluntary Service. He had come to India for helping relief work in Bihar.

64. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

March 17, 1937

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have written to Ba, but it is you who will have to prepare the thing. You will have always to give to Kanu[1] the bread which he will take with him and eat in the evening. If it is necessary to prepare something else also, do it yourself. Keep an account of each minute of yours. If possible, form the habit of getting up at 4 o'clock without fail. Then in the afternoon, you must have an hour's nap. Attend to your studies carefully.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9584. Also C.W. 6556. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

65. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

[*March 17, 1937*][2]

CHI. MANUDI[3],

I have no time to write to you. Study with care and improve your handwriting. Tell Kanam[4] that I understand that they could not secure a football there. I will bring one from here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9584. Also C.W. 6556. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

66. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

March 17, 1937

CHI. VALJI,

Please get Mota's[5] nostrils operated upon and also his tonsils. There is no harm in doing that. Let me know the result.

I will reach Wardha on the 22nd and Madras on the 26th.

[1] Also called 'Kanaiyo'; son of Narandas Gandhi
[2] In the source, this and the preceding item appear on the same sheet.
[3] Youngest daughter of Harilal Gandhi
[4] Also called 'Kano'; son of Ramdas Gandhi
[5] Mahendra V. Desai, addressee's eldest son

I have gone through your *Bharati*. It does seem enjoyable. But I do not fully understand the aim. Should we give to children descriptions of things which are beyond human experience without explaining them?

Would even grown-ups understand? I am reading the *Ramayana*. I cannot raise any objection. I can barely get time to read it in the 'library' or at such other times.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VALJI DESAI
SHRI MAGANLAL UDANI'S HOUSE
PARVATI MANSION, GRANT ROAD
BOMBAY 7

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7478. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

67. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

DELHI,
March 17, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

How impatient you are! I did write to you. Is it still my fault that you got the letter late? Yes, I could not write last Monday. I got both your letters. The description is very good. Only Mahadev and Pyarelal are accompanying me. We are all very well. Mahadev left yesterday to see Subhas Babu. He will return here. We shall leave Delhi on Sunday. As regards my address here, the particulars you give are enough. We have to reach Madras on the 26th. We shall have to stay there for three days. My address there will be: C/o Hindi Prachar Office, Thyagarajanagar, Madras. Most probably Ba will accompany us to Madras.

If you eat well and do not worry, you will get all right. I will certainly have a talk with Mridu[1]. She has come to stay here. But how can you come away from there when you wish? Can't you come to an understanding with Jayaprakash about that? Doesn't he expect your help for some time? That would of course be the proper course. About the pay I will see.

[1] Mridula Sarabhai

Amtul Salaam is here and Jawaharlal also. There is quite a big crowd here this time and it is likely to increase.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3494

68. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

DELHI,
March 19, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

You want me to give you news. But you have not armed me with your pen. You can write away for hours and still find more to write. I can't carry on for minutes, if I have to do mere chatting. Here goes the morning prayer bell. If you think that the first relevant portion of the London letter may be published, copy it and send. Sardar Datar Singh met me day before yesterday and we talked about his dairy. You should go and see it. He has one in Lahore now. There is no likelihood of my seeing the Governor-General. I leave on Sunday, possibly tomorrow. All seems to have ended well at the A. I. C. C. But there have been little storms which have not made me quite happy[1]. They make one think.

Mahadev returns today or rather tonight. He had an hour with Subhas Chandra Bose, evidently after his release. I am glad Mahadev went in time to greet him as a free man. But who knows whether he is now free or he was freer when he was a prisoner. Your description of the Manganwal village is very hopeful. Of course everywhere the difficulty is about workers. They have to be found or prepared locally. Importation is not possible for nowhere is there a plethora of supply.

I have got to stop now for there are visitors surrounding me.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3768. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6924

[1] For Gandhiji's view, *vide* "Speech at Gandhi Seva Sangh Meeting, Hudli-III", 20-4-1937.

69. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

DELHI,
March 19, 1937

Asked for his comments on the resolution[1] of the A. I. C. C., Gandhiji said:

This is not now within my province. I being now aloof from the day-to-day activities of the Congress, it is not for me to forecast how the resolution would work out in the actualities of provincial politics. My interest at present is confined to that of tendering advice and assisting in drafting[2].

Denying very firmly any intention to make office-acceptance virtually impossible, he said:

The resolution is a downright honest resolution, without the slightest mental reservation but it must be read as an indivisible whole. If Governors want Congressmen to take office, I can see nothing in the resolution to make it even awkward to them to give the fullest satisfaction to the Congress leaders in their representative Provinces– this of course within the very limited sphere in which Provincial Governors have discretion —and the resolution has asked for nothing more. Any leader summoned by the Governor in terms of the Act to form his Cabinet will naturally use the Congress resolution by way of illustration and he will ask for an assurance in cases covered by the resolution.

Asked if he would indicate some of the details of the plan of work of Congress Ministries, Gandhiji said that that could be best done by those who were likely to be in office themselves.

The Hindustan Times, 20-3-1937

70. ENFORCED WIDOWHOOD

Pyarelal has unearthed the following instructive extract on the suttee and widowhood from the treatise on universal histroy by Diodorus the Sicilian who lived in the age of Julius Caesar.

> Now it was an ancient law among the Indians that when young men and maidens were minded to wed they did not marry according to the judgment of the parents, but by mutual consent. But when espousals were made between

[1] *Vide* Appendix Resolution Passed at A.I.C.C. Meeting, Delhi", 16-3-1937.
[2] *Vide* "Extract from A. I. C. C. Resolution", 16-3-1937

persons of immature age, mistakes of judgment were of frequent occurrence, and when both sides repented their union, many of the women became depraved, and through incontinence fell in love with other men, and when at last they wished to leave the husbands they had first chosen, but could not in decency do so openly, they got rid of them by poison, a means of destroying life which they could readily procure in their country which produces in great quantity and variety drugs of fatal potency, some of which cause death if merely introduced as powder into food and drink. But when this nefarious practice had become quite prevalent, and many lives had been sacrificed, and when it was found that the punishment of the guilty had no effect in deterring other wives from their career of iniquity, they passed a law ordaining that a wife, unless she was pregnant or had already borne children, should be burned along with the deceased husband, and that if she did not choose to obey the law she sould remain a widow to the end of her life, and be for ever excommunicated from the sacrifices and other solemnities as being an impious person.

If these extracts give a faithful account of the origin of the two inhuman customs, we have reason to thank Heavens for the suppression of the suttee by law imposed upon us. No outside imposition can cure Hindu society of the enforced widowhood of girls who don't even know what marriage is. The reform can come first by the force of enlightened public opinion among Hindus, secondly by parents recognizing the duty of marrying their girl widows. This they can do, where the girls' consent is lacking, by educating their minds to the correctness of their marrying. Naturally this refers to girls under age. Where the so-called widows have grown to maturity and they do not desire to marry, nothing is necessary save to tell them that they are free to marry precisely as if they were maidens unmarried. It is difficult to break the chains of prisoners who hug them, mistaking them as ornaments, as girls and even grown-up women do regard their silver or golden chains and rings as ornaments.

Harijan, 20-3-1937

71. AN ILLUSION

I received this letter[1] last November. But owing to pressure of work I could not write anything up till now. The writer is a scholar of

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had said that caste Hindus ill-treated Harijans because they were poor and suggested that unless their economic conditions were improved, anti-untouchability activities would bear no fruit.

Lahore. It is surprising that he should be labouring under such a grave misapprehension. Perhaps the recent miracle of Travancore has removed his misapprehension. Still there are many people who harbour such misconceptions. So, it would be better to reply to his letter.

In Travancore the Harijans behind the strong movement for temple-entry were not wanting in money. Their leader was, and still is, Shri Govindan, an ex-judge of Travancore. Money brought them no peace. Temple-entry has brought them peace; we witness it for ourselves. They are very pleased with the Maharaja and Maharani. Even if the Maharaja had bestowed half his kingdom on them, it would not have achieved what temple-entry has achieved. This miracle shows that man values many things more than wealth. Man sacrifices his all for self-respect. People have suffered many hardships in the cause of religion, and have even embraced death for it.

When Hindus observe untouchability towards non-Hindus, there is certainly hatred in it. But as the non-Hindus are strong, they do not feel it as much as the Harijans do, who in spite of belonging to the same religion are considered untouchables.

It is also not right to say that there are restrictions in the matter of eating and drinking even among the four castes. The difference between this and untouchability is like that between an elephant and an ant. Untouchables are outcastes. However rich they may be, if they do anything outside their custom they are flogged. It is my firm belief that Hindus alone are responsible for the grievances of the Harijans. They have made injustice their dharma. To describe their problem as an economic one is tantamount to denying their present situation.

From the way this correspondent writes it appears that though he is a Hindu, he keeps himself a little outside the Hindu society. There are no Brahmins who are hated by Rajputs or any other caste Hindus. On the other hand, we find that a Brahmin or any other caste Hindu is worshipped even by the rich if he embraces poverty.

In the end, even after having read the correspondent's letter with due care and courtesy, I do not regret anything I have said or done regarding untouchability.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 20-3-1937

72. INTERVIEW TO PANDIT INDRA

March 20, 1937

Although I am a prisoner of Jawaharlal and I am bound by his orders, at present I am concentrating my attention on village work and that too in Segaon.

Thus reported Mahatma Gandhi to Pandit Indra, Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Congress Convention[1], and others who had gone to request him to attend today's session of the Convention. Gandhiji added:

I have chosen one particular course of action and cannot think of anything else. At present, my mind moves in that direction. When I am able to present something before you, I shall come without your asking. There is meaning in my sitting in the village. My hopes are brightening.

When requested to address a meeting of villagers here, Gandhiji replied:

My eyes are on Segaon now.

The Hindu, 21-3-1937

73. KHADI WORK IN A SCHOOL

A national school was founded in Rajkot sixteen years ago chiefly through the efforts of the late Shri Revashankar Jagjivan Jhaveri and with the help of Shri Jamnadas Gandhi. Last month, its sixteenth anniversary was celebrated under the chairmanship of Shri Narahari Parikh. There are three sections in that school–the *Vinay*, the *Kumar* and the *Bal Mandir*. In all, 190 students–110 boys and 80 girls–are studying there. I quote below a paragraph from Shri Narandas Gandhi's statement[2]that deserves attention.

It is a matter for rejoicing that interest can be created in this way in khadi amongst girls and boys. It is significant to note that cotton too is grown in the school, that a dairy is run and foodstuff necessary

[1] Of the newly elected Congress members of the Legislatures and otherA. I. C. C. members which met in Delhi on March 19 and 20 to administer to the legislators an oath of national independence and allegiance to the Indian people, prior to their taking of the oath in the form in vogue avowing loyalty to the British Sovereign

[2] Not translated here. The statement amongst other things, explained that children at the Vidyalaya showed a keen interest in khadi. The Vidyalay a conducted classes to teach sewing, weaving, farming and dairying, besides running a provision store.

for a balanced diet also prepared there. If these activities are properly developed and the boys and girls are taught in the skills needed for them in a manner which they would understand, their minds would truly develop. It is an illusion to believe that a child's intellect develops by cramming it with facts which have no relevance to his life. These may well provide entertainment to the intellect, they cannot develop it, because their intellect will not be able to discriminate. But whenever a boy or a girl has to perform some activity and that activity is not taught to him in a mechanical fashion but the reason behind each activity is explained, in such cases the child's intellect develops readily, he acquires self-awareness, self-respect and self-reliance.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 21-3-1937

74. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

[DELHI,

On or before *March 22, 1937*][2]

Question: It is all right that you teach us tailoring and high-class shoe-making. But that is not what our villagers want. We must learn something that our villagers need.

Answer: You are partly right and partly wrong. The villagers may not need these things, but the city people need them. Why should they not depend on you rather than others for these things? If thereby a living contact can be established between the cities and the villages, it will be very good. You have got to teach the villagers whatever you learn here.

Q. If we are to do tanning and scavenging which are the occupations of our forefathers and which have kept us untouchables for centuries, how are you going to destroy untouchability?

[1] This is extracted from "Weekly Letter" by Mahadev Desai, who had repo-rted that Gandhiji spent half an hour with the inmates of the Harijan Industrial Home in Harijan Colony, where he was staying. After some friendly talk with the boys they were "invited to put questions". Mahadev Desai had also explained that the Home, which had about 33 boys, imparted training in tailoring, shoe-making and carpentry, in addition to teaching Hindi and arithmetic. They lived "a clean, healthy corporate life doing cooking, washing, sweeping, grinding, etc., by turns. . . and scavenging of neighbouring villages every Sunday morning".

[2] Gandhiji left Delhi for Wardha on March 22.

A. Not by asking you to give up the occupation of your forefathers but by doing it ourselves. Don't you know that I am a master-scavenger? But nobody treats me as an untouchable. Why should they then treat you as an untouchable? And if they treated you as a touchable only after you give up professions which are so useful to the community, where is the merit? Untouchability will not be removed that way. For then they will treat as untouchables those who will next do these unclean tasks. Untouchability cannot be destroyed that way. It can be destroyed by the so-called untouchables also doing the unclean tasks, and by impressing on the orthodox that however unclean those tasks, they are as honourable as any other and more useful than many.

Harijan, 27-3-1937

75. DISCUSSION WITH LEADERS OF JAMAT-UL-ULEMA-I-HIND

DELHI,
[On or before *March 22, 1937*][1]

With regard to the first question[2], Gandhiji said that he would give his attention to that. Reverting to the second question[3] he said:

There is no cause dearer to my life than the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity and since. I have taken up this cause I have staked my life on several occasions on this issue. All those Muslim leaders who come in closer touch with me know that I have this object every moment in my eye and every minute a fire is kindling in my heart.

Mahatmaji, however, told the Jamiat leaders that he had been pondering over fresh avenues of real Hindu-Muslim unity. Mahatmaji thought that the present situation when the Congress has been returned in a majority in elections in most of the Provinces might help in this task.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-3-1937

[1] Gandhiji left Delhi for Wardha on March 22.

[2] The deputationists invited Gandhiji's attention to the statements of Congress leaders which created difficulties in the way of Muslims joining the Congress and fighting for India's freedom. They also suggested establishing a separate institution for creating a better understanding among the different communities of India on the lines of All-India Spinners' Association and Harijan Sevak Sangh.

[3] *ibid*

76. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

DELHI,
March 22, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

It is 4.30 a.m. now. Your love letters to hand. I do not like your pain in the toe. Why do you want dal or ghee in cooking vegetables? Both are quite unnecessary, I am sure. And where is the difficulty in having local earth bandage? Are you taking enough soda? One who knows more about the baths than I do tells me that sitz-baths are farmore effective than the hip. Therefore you must not omit them unless you find that they hurt. I hope the books have reached you. The parcel was given to R. to be sent to you.

No, I did not see the paper, nor have I received payment. I shall see what is possible about your parcel of hand-made paper.

Of course you should belong to All-India Spinners' Association and take much more interest than you have done in the wheel. Though all has ended well it has cost me much but not more than was warranted by the occasion. Jawaharlal rose to the highest height when he apologized to the Committee[1] for his speech before the Convention[2]. The apology has brought him nearer to the Committee than anything else he has done during these anxious days. Let us see what happens. Thank God that He can and does override our petty plans.

We were not allowed to leave yesterday. We go today and leave Wardha for Madras on 25th. Address is: Hindi Prachar Office, Thyagarayanagar, Madras. We return to Segaon on 31st at latest, I hope.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Don't send the other copy of Granth Sahib. Pierre must tell me in time when he wants to sail. Raksha has just come in and paid for the paper.

From the original: C.W. 3769. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6925

[1] Congress Working Committee which met in Delhi from March 15 to 22
[2] *Vide* footnote on p. 11.

77. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

March 22, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

It is Monday today, and morning just now. Thinking that I may not get time after the day has advanced, I am writing a few lines just now. I got your note.

Jayaprakash has not come to take away the Jaggery. I haven't seen him at all for three days.

Mridu has just left me. I haven't talked about the matter with her. The main point, however, I have already discussed. Am I right in believing that your staying there will also depend on your state of mind? It seems to me that much will depend on Jayaprakash's wish. Once you settle down in the new place, the road will be clear. When can you leave that place?

We are now leaving this evening. We have to reach Madras on the 26th and return to Wardha on the 31st, leaving Madras on the 30th.

You must procure a tub for hip-bath. If possible, take friction-bath. A tub doesn't seem necessary for that. You will find out from experience. Do you get hand-ground flour? Do you have a carding-bow there? Can't anybody near you be persuaded to spin and card? Harilal came and saw me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3495

78. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

DELHI,
March 22, 1937

DEAR SISTER,

It seems you are having your share of sorrows. Mridula usually gives me the news, happy or sad, of the family. Whenever she meets me she generally informs me of things at that end. It is my hope that whatever happens, you will not lose your peace of mind and watch with patience whatever happens and do whatever you can with determination.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11146. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

79. LETTER TO K. B. KEWALRAMANI

March 22, 1937

DEAR KEWALARAMANI,

I had anticipated you had rebuked Vidya for her coming and Anand for bringing her. Vidya had promised to rest and not to try to come to see whilst I was in Delhi. But I saw that she needed to come to me. I share with you the honour of being parent both to Vidya and Anand. I could see that she would have fared worse if she could not have come to me. You were right in asking her not to venture out to Delhi, and she was right in satisfying her soul-hunger. I do hope you did not find her any the worse for her coming to Delhi.

SHRI K. B. KEWALRAMANI, S.D.O.

CANAL COLONY

FEROZEPUR (PUNJAB)

Yours,

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

80. LETTER TO G.D. BIRLA

March 22, 1937

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Parameshwari Prasad[1] says that he is prepared to hand over the possession of the farm, etc., even today. He will sign the necessary documents and he can leave the farm four or five days later.

M. K. GANDHI

From Hindi: C.W. 8029. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

[1] He was in charge of the addressee's dairy farm.

81. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

WARDHAGANJ,
March 25, 1937

BABU RAJENDRA PRASAD
SADAQUAT ASHRAM
PATNA

NOTHING SHORT PRESCRIBED ASSURANCE CAN ANSWER.

BAPU

Dr. Rajendra Prasad : Correspondence and Select Documents, Vol. 1, p. 33

82. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON,
March 25, 1937

CHI. KANTI[1],

I could not write to you earlier. I had a talk with Devdas. If you wish to go to Mysore, you may do so. If the expenses increase by your going there, Devdas will earn the money or raise it. It is, therefore, not necessary for you to join Wilson [College, Bombay] for want of money or Devdas's consent. You may go to Trivandrum if you like. If you get a cargo ship and desire to go by it, there is no objection. It is certainly good to travel thus. Devdas will bear the expense of the voyage, but if he does not, then you may ask me for it. It would not be proper to take it from me if he can bear it.

I know Devdas could not see you. On my asking him he told me that he had tried to see you but could not. He did not send for you because his programme was uncertain. One should not mind such things. And in any case one should never be suspicious. You may take from Nimu or Ramdas whatever money you immediately need. We, i.e., Ba, Manu, Kanu (Junior), Mahadev, Pyarelal and I are leaving for Madras today. We shall be there for three days, and shall be back on the 31st. It has almost been decided to have Manu's wedding[2] in Hudli.

[1] Son of Harilal Gandhi

[2] With Surendra Mashruwala on April 18; *vide* "Advice to Newly-married Couples", 18-4-1937.

Did you cancel your proposed trip to Rajkot? Do you wish to have Amtul Salaam with you? She thinks that you do, but Devdas's impression and mine is that you do not. If that is the case, please write to her frankly. She is making herself needlessly unhappy. She was with me in Delhi as long as I was there.

My language need not be considered mathematical just because I use mathematical terms. But if it is as exact as mathematics, that is, if its successive steps in reasoning are logical and exact, it may be described as mathematical. If my language has that quality, it is because of my worship of truth.

One who wants to learn only a subject of intellectual study can very well do so from a person without character, and such a person may certainly be intelligent also. For instance, a craftsman without character may be highly proficient in his craft. But the highest intelligence or craftsmanship without good character can never do good to the world or serve it. The effect of such service will be temporary. That is why the *Gita* says: "Worship me and I will give you intelligence and whatever else you need". "Worship me"means 'serve me–my creation'.

After writing these sheets I went to the 'library' and after returning I am now drinking milk and am dictating this while doing so. I had taken your letter to the 'library', just to see whether I had omitted to reply to any point. I am replying in brief to what has been left out. A self-controlled man should be busy in service for all the twenty-four hours. If it is merely doing anything even a demon can do it. This is in the character of a Ravana. But such a person cannot be regarded as a self-controlled man. Activity is threefold: of body, mind and soul. In pure service there is a combination of the three.

I do know that it is not an easy task to interpret ahimsa in mathematical language. I am trying to do that. And what is true of ahimsa is also true of all other things, e.g., spinning, village industries, etc. But perhaps you will understand all this on your own if you start reading the three journals[1]. I am expecting from you work of that level. I have torn up your letter. Nothing from it will pass to Delhi. If you decide to go to Trivandrum, and if you do not take a ship and if you can free yourself from there, then why not join us in Madras?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7318. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] *Harijan, Harijan Sevak* and *Harijanbandhu*

83. SPEECH AT DAKSHIN BHARAT HINDI PRACHAR SABHA, MADRAS[1]

March 26, 1937

Mahatmaji expressed his intention to speak in Hindi and . . . said:

It is not my purpose to hear my own voice. I would like that you should all hear it and, what is more important, understand it; for otherwise there can be neither pleasure nor profit in speaking. So kindly raise your hands, those who understand me–partially or fully.

A good number of hands went up.

And now those who cannot understand me, please put up your hands.

Gandhiji looked round at those with lifted hands and seeing Mr. G. A. Natesan among them cried out:

Shame, shame!

"It is a shame,"Mr. Natesan agreed and added, "and I am very sorry indeed." Gandhiji at once took the opportunity to impress upon those present the need for learning Hindi:

You understand on whom I have just now cried shame. It is my good old friend, Mr. Natesan. Of course, I would not take that liberty with others. I have known him since 1915 when I came here from South Africa and he and I understand each other. He is a great publisher and editor. He has also brought out translations of great Sanskrit works. He has enthusiasm and youthfulness for such work. But what has he done in regard to Hindi? He may say, 'Oh I am old.' Perhaps, he is, in body. But let not the mind get old. Let it go on adding to its store of knowledge. For, one whose mind has not become old can do great good to himself and to his fellowmen.

There are still some persons–happily, they are very few–who seem to consider it a sin to look upon Hindi-Hindustani as the national language and a greater sin to study it. I can say from my experience that those who recognize the place of Hindi as the national language will take to its study with enthusiasm and earnestness, whether it be their mother tongue or not. Otherwise, they may not be able to contribute to its growth as the national language. Hindi cannot take the place of the different provincial languages nor is that the aim of Hindi *prachar*. On the other hand, the spread of the national

[1] Gandhiji presided over the convocation of the Sabha.

language will accelerate the growth of the provincial languages and *vice versa*. A strong and virile national language requires healthy development of the provincial languages. If the latter be weak and anaemic, how can the former at all grow?[1]

Gujarati, I said to myself, cannot be the language. Not more than a thirtieth part of the people of the country speaks it. How am I to find Tulsi *Ramayana* therein? What about Marathi, then, I wondered. I love Marathi. I claim among the Marathi-speaking people some staunch co-workers. I know the Maharastrians' efficiency, capacity for self-sacrifice, and their learning. And yet I did not think Marathi–the language that Lokamanya Tilak wielded so wonderfully well–could be our *rashtrabhasha*. When I was thus reasoning this out, let me tell you that I did not know the actual number of people speaking Hindi, and yet I instinctively felt that only Hindi could take that place, and no other. Did I not appreciate Bengali? I did, and I thought highly of it as the language of Chaitanya, Ram Mohun Roy, Ramakrishna, Vivekananda and Rabindranath Tagore. And yet I felt that we could not make even Bengali the language of inter-provincial intercourse.

I was convinced long ago, and my conviction has grown stronger since from experience, that if any Indian language can ever become India's national language–and some one must become the national language if Indians are to become a nation–that language was only Hindi, and I have always directed my efforts in its cause.

No doubt, in the South we are up against a great problem in this matter. But we cannot see how a language of the South, Tamil or Telugu or any other, can serve as the national language. I honestly tried to learn Telugu and Tamil. Indeed there was a time when I could speak in Tamil quite as well as I am now speaking Hindi. I had sufficient material when I was in South Africa to assist me in this, because I had to work in the midst of Tamils. but I must confess, to my regret and shame, that I have not kept up touch with it and have forgotten what little I knew of that language. I am not wholly responsible for it. The blame for it rests partly on my Tamil friends. I have taken a girl[2] from Tamil Nad into my household as my daughter-in-law. But instead of compelling me to keep touch with Tamil, she has learnt Hindi and Gujarati and speaks and writes in

[1] *Vide* also "Speech at Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad, Madras-II", 28-3-1937

[2] Lakshmi, Devdas Gandhi's wife, daughter of C. Rajagopalachari

Hindi. What can I do? How can I hope to refresh my knowledge of Tamil when Tamilians let me down in this manner?

Nor is my Hindi particularly good. My friends behind, who are all proficient in Hindi, laugh at my Hindi pronunciation and grammar. I know both are erratic for I have not studied either. It will do for my purpose if I am able to express my thoughts so as to be understood. If I attempt to be grammatical, I am afraid the results will not be very complimentary to me. I must, on this occasion, express my regret at the absence of any book to help Hindi-speaking people to learn Tamil. If they want to learn Tamil, they have to do it through English. We have not shown the zeal in this cause which some Western Missionaries have evinced. I would appeal to Tamils and also my North Indian friends to remedy this defect. I am thankful to my South Indian friends for the enthusiasm they have shown in learning Hindi but I must say it is not sufficient. It is a unique event that the session of the All-India Sahitya Sammelan is being held in Madras, where Tamil is the chief language. Tamil, of all the Dravidian languages, has borrowed least from Sanskrit. This, no doubt, is a handicap to Tamilians in learning Hindi. But still they have striven to learn the language.[1]

I certainly congratulate you on what you have achieved. But I should be satisfied only when distinguished people like my friend G. A. Natesan, member of the Council of State, give half an hour each day to the study of Hindi. Let him not plead old age. If he is not too old to edit the *Indian Review*, if he is not too old to study Sanskrit and issue Sanskrit publications one after another, if he is not too old to go to the Council of State, why should he be too old to learn Hindi?

What I mean to say is this. Up till now only the middleclass people have taken up the study of Hindi. When will our distinguished leaders take it up? When will the Advocate-General find half an hour to leave his briefs aside and devote it to Hindi? I want men and women among the most distinguished of the South to study Hindi.

The Hindu, 27-3-1937, *and Harijan*, 3-4-1937

[1] What follows is from *Harijan*.

84. SHAMEFUL IF TRUE

A correspondent in British Malabar writes:[1]

> I desire you kindly to comment on the following incident which has agitated me considerably. A public procession was organized by the Congress workers of our village on the eve of the General Elections to the Assembly. A Harijan boy of the place wished to go along with the procession. But the organizers requested him to keep away, mildly saying to him, 'Of course, as you know, we are in full sympathy with you. But the procession has to go through by-lanes along which you people are not generally allowed. Then again, we fear that the orthodox may make this a plea for voting against the Congress. We, therefore, consider it prudent that you do not accompany us.' The poor boy returned with a heavy heart. . . .

This ill-treatment of the noble Harijan lad, if the report is true, deserves severe condemnation, and victory at elections or in other matters is not worth anything if it is bought with the suppression of Harijan liberty. The prohibition against Harijans making use of the roads in the place mentioned is an illegal act and ought not to be tolerated for a single day. Workers should reason with the objectors, and if they do not listen, a test case should be made by taking a few Harijans through the prohibited streets. One would have thought that in Malabar at least such things as are described by the correspondent would not happen.

Harijan, 27-3-1937

85. A VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS

> Just lately I read a review of your conference[2] with Mrs. Sanger, the birth-control advocate. I was so deeply moved that I am writing you to express my appreciation for your stand. God bless you for your courage. . . .
>
> I realize it will take centuries to educate the public to higher ideals, but there is no time like the present to begin. I fear she mistakes passion for love, for love is of the spirit and never born of lust.

[1] Only an extract is reproduced here.
[2] *Vide* "Interview to Margaret Sanger", 3/4-12-1935

Dr. Alexis Carrel agrees with you, in that sex control is not harmful except to those who feed their passions and are already unbalanced. Mrs. Sanger is wrong in saying that most doctors believe abstinence is harmful. I find many leading doctors and scientists belonging to the American Social Hygiene Association hold that control is beneficial.

You are doing a noble work. . . . You are one of the few who have this higher spiritual viewpoint on the sex question. . . .

Let us keep up the good work so that youth may know the truth, for the hope of the future is in their hands.

I add a quotation from one of my talks to boys: ". . . Creation–physical, mental and spiritual–is joy and life. If you are merely seeking the sensations of the flesh with no thought of creating, or even trying to avoid the aim of creation you are perverting nature and killing your spiritual powers. . . ."

I know this is like a prophet crying in the wilderness, but I am convinced of the truth of it, and I can but point the way.

This is one of the letters[1] which I occasionally get from America in condemnation of the use of contraceptives. Current literature that India imports weekly from the Far West would have us believe that in America none but idiots and imbeciles oppose the use of this modern method of deliverance from the bondage of the superstition which imprisons the body and crushes it by denying it its supreme enjoyment. That literature produces as much momentary intoxication as the act which it teaches and incites us to perform without incurring the risk of its oridinary result. I do not put before the readers of *Harijan* merely letters of individual condemnation received from the West. They have their use for me as a seeker but very little for the general reader. This letter, however, from a teacher of boys with thirty years' experience behind him has a definite value. It should serve as a guide for Indian teachers and the public–men and women–who are carried away by the overwhelming tide. The use of contraceptives is infinitely more tempting than the whisky bottle. But it is not more lawful than the sparkling liquid for its fatal temptation. Nor can opposition to the use of either be given up in despair because their use seems to be growing. If the opponents have faith in their mission, it has to be pursued. A voice in the wilderness has a potency which voices uttered in the midst of 'the madding crowd' lack. For the

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

voice in the wilderness has meditation, deliberation and unquenchable faith behind it, whilst the babel of voices has generally nothing but the backing of the experience of personal enjoyment or the false and sentimental pity for the unwanted children and their suffering mothers. Argument of personal experience has as much weight as an act of a drunkard. The argument of pity is a trap into which it is dangerous to fall. Sufferings of unwanted children and of equally unwanted motherhood are punishments or warnings devised by beneficent nature. Disregard of the law of discipline and restraint is suicide. Ours is a state of probation. If we refuse to bear the yoke of discipline we court failure like cowards, we avoid battle and give up the only joy of living.

Harijan, 27-3-1937

86. THE MEANING OF IT

I have a wire from Gwalior saying that the notice board in Mahakaleshwar temple in Ujjain, prohibiting the entry into it of Harijans and those who may be associating with or working with them, has been withdrawn by the Maharaja. Before one can pronounce an opinion on the notice it is necessary to know its full meaning. If the prohibition is not withdrawn but only the offending notice board is, the withdrawal brings no relief to the insulted Harijans and their caste associates. It may even bring punishment to the unwary who seeing the notice board withdrawn may venture to enter the temple. If it means withdrawal of the prohibition itself, one would expect a notification to that effect. And if the prohibition is withdrawn from one temple, why not from all State-owned temples of which I am informed there are nearly fifty in Gwalior State? I hope, therefore, that the State authorities will clear the point and tell the public what the withdrawal of the notice board means.

Indeed there seems to be a timidity on the part of the Princes and their advisers on this matter of doing elementary justice to the poorest and the neediest of their people, and that, too, in a matter which has first-class religious value but which costs them nothing materially. The most striking example of Travancore should have shown them that if they threw open their temples to Harijans there would be no resentment. But it may be that the Princes are afraid of the middle-class Hindus with whom they come in daily contact and that they are not concerned about the silent sufferers–the bulk of the poorest–whether they be Harijans or others. Save for a few Princes who may be counted on the fingers of one's hands the vast majority have themselves no religious scruples about untouchability. Must the

Hindu Princes who are supposed to be custodians of the faith, as is shown by the titles they assume, continue to neglect this obvious duty of throwing open their temples to Harijans? I drew attention the other day[1] to the title of the Maharaja of Travancore. Now I learn from D. B. Har Bilas Sarda that the Maharajas of Oodeypore[2] are entitled Diwans inasmuch as they are ministers of the deity of their clan, and that whenever they visit their temples in Oodeypore they officiate like priests for the deity. I would therefore respectfully urge the Princes and their advisers boldly and unequivocally to throw open the temples in their respective States and prove themselves worthy trustees of their faith.

Harijan, 27-3-1937

87. NATTAR-HARIJAN AGREEMENT

The following has been received from Shri L. N. Gopalaswami, Secretary, Tamil Nad Harijan Sevak Sangh:

> I am very glad to communicate to you the very good news regarding the settlement of troubles between a big section of the Nattars called the 'Tennilai Nattars' and the Harijans of that locality.
>
> The following is the true translation of the agreement entered into between the heads of both the parties:
>
> 'COPY OF THE AGREEMENT DATED FEBURARY 24, 1937
>
> We, the Harijans and Nattars of Tennilai Nadu, have in the presence of
>
> Smt. Kamala Sivasubramaniam, Secretary, Harijan Sevak Sangh, Karaikudi, today resolved to forget and forgive all the differences in the past between the two communities. In token thereof we have set our hand to the conditions of the agreement referred to below:
>
> 1. The Harijans will not be forced to do labour. They are at perfect liberty to take wages for the work they do and refuse to do work for those who do not pay.
>
> 2. Wearing of dress: The Harijans are entitled to use shirts and upper clothes as they like, and the women all kinds of ornaments as they please. But on the car-day festival of Kandadevi and Eluvancottah, the males will not wear shirts as the chief Nattars themselves do not do so.
>
> 3. The Harijans can build any type of houses they please according to their wishes and capacities.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Thiruvattar", 14-1-1937

[2] Now called Udaipur

(Signed)

Harijans: Nattars:
VEMBAN P. N. KARUPPAIAH AMBALAN
KALIAN C. KARUPPIAH AMBALAN
S. RAMASWAMI P. CHIDAMBARA AMBALAN
S. PARANCHODHI PILLAI.'

This is indeed good news, and those who brought about the agreement deserve congratulations. One may hope also that the terms will be strictly observed by the Nattars. But it is humiliating to find that a portion of Indian humanity cannot wear the dress or ornaments they like and receive wages for their labour except by the grace of another supposed to be superior to them but in reality no better than the first.

Harijan, 27-3-1937

88. CABLE TO AGATHA HARRISON

MADRAS,
March 27, 1937

OBSTINACY REFUSING ASSURANCES[1] WILL SURELY RESULT DEADLOCK. BREACH CONGRESS RANKS IMPOSSIBLE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1504

89. SPEECH AT BHARATIYA SAHITYA PARISHAD MADRAS-I[1]

March 27, 1937

The Mahamahopadhyaya's speech has whetted my appetite for a study of Tamil, which neither age nor desire would deter me from undertaking, but only the want of time makes difficult. The object of this conference is to collect gems from all provincial literatures and to make them available through Hindi. For this purpose I would make an appeal to you. Of course everyone must know his own language thoroughly well, and he should also know the great literature of other Indian languages through Hindi. But it is also the object of this conference to stimulate in our people the desire to know languages of other provinces, e.g., Gujaratis should know Tamil, Bengalis should

[1] The speech is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter".

know Gujarati and so on. And I tell you from experience that it is not at all difficult to pick up another Indian language. But to this end a common script is quite essential. It is not difficult to achieve in Tamil Nad. For look at this simple fact: over 90 per cent of our people are illiterate. We have to start with a clean state with them. Why should we not start making them literate by means of a common script? In Europe they have tried the experiment of a common script quite successfully. Some people even go the length of saying that we might adopt the Roman script from Europe. After a good deal of controversy there is a consensus of opinion that the common script can be Devnagari and none else. Urdu is claimed as a rival, but I think neither Urdu nor Roman has the perfection and phonetic capacity of Devnagari. Please remember that I say nothing against your languages. Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada must be there and will be there. But why not teach the illiterate in these parts these languages through the Devnagari script? In the interest of the national unity we desire to achieve, the adoption of Devnagari as a common script is so essential. Here it is a question of just shedding our provincialism and narrowness, there are no difficulties at all. Not that I do not like Tamil or Urdu scripts. I know both. But service of the motherland, to which all my life is being given and without which life would be insupportable for me, has taught me that we should try to lift unneccessary burdens off our people. The burden of knowing many scripts is unnecessary and easily avoidable. I would appeal to men of letters of all provinces to resolve their differences on this point and be agreed on this matter of prime importance. Then and then only can the Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad be a success.

Then you have to think of ways and means for carrying on our work. *Hans* is now defunct.[1] Its founder was Premchandji who is no more. Unfortunately Premchandji did not leave anyone to take his place. Indeed, there was none that could adequately fill his place, for he was an unrivalled writer. But that was not the reason for the stopping of the *Hans*. It ceased even when he was alive. Its cessation was due–it was a pity–to the paucity of the number of men who sympathized with or took sufficient interest in the method of work adopted by the journal. All the articles there were drawn from different provincial languages and were written in the Nagari script. If

[1] The rest of the paragraph is from *The Hindu.*

you accept the ideal of a common script, it would be your duty to earnestly work for this objective of the Parishad.

Kakasaheb has told you that he is issuing periodical booklets now, but the whole thing cannot yet be said to have caught on. I want you to shed your apathy and lend a helping hand. You must remember that the whole work falls on the shoulders of the chief workers of the Sammelan. Our work suffers not for want of funds, but for want of workers. We want them from every province. Kakasaheb said that we had limited the number of our governing body to 50 members, but that does not mean that it does not want more workers.

Today our literature is in the interest of the few, i.e., of the few literates. Even among the literates there would be few who are really interested in literature.

Our country lives in the villages, but we have not gone to the villages to do the country's work. What I saw in Segaon is to be seen in every Indian village. You will be surprised that out of about six hundred villagers in Segaon, not two can read good literature. Every day a gentleman goes to the village to read out to them the day's news from the dailies. But it is with great hardship that he is able to get two villagers to listen to him. You can very well understand from this whata stupendous task it must be to carry good literature to their door. It is the aim of the Parishad to remove that defect. I am not mad after any particular script, but I want you to take a considered and dispassionate view of the question. I appeal to you to give this Parishad as much assistance as you can.[1]

Kakasaheb has told you the kind of literature to which we have limited ourselves. I am not fond of literature for its own sake, I do not make a fetish of literacy either. Literacy must be one of the many means for intellectual development, but we have had in the past intellectual giants who were unlettered. That is why we have confined ourselves only to literature of the cleanest and healthiest kind. How can we have this, unless we have your hearty co-operation and unless you are prepared to select suitable literature in your respective languages?

Harijan, 3-4-1937, and *The Hindu*, 27-3-1937

[1] This paragraph is from *The Hindu*.

90. LONG LIVE KHADI

Shri Kakubhai writes to say from Bombay:[1]

This increase may be regarded as fairly satisfactory. There is no reason to be pleased at the daily sale of khadi worth Rs. 1,000 in the biggest khadi bhandar in the country, and that too, in a city like Bombay. For me the sale of khadi is the best thermometer for measuring India's peaceful progress. The reader should also bear in mind that this Rs. 1,000 includes orders which have been received from outside also. How many shops are there in Bombay which sell mill-cloth both foreign and Indian? What is their daily sale? And how many khadi shops are there? We shall have to hang our heads in shame if these figures are compared. Despite this, we can derive satisfaction from the fact that khadi worth Rs. 1,000 is being sold and, this time, an increase in sale has been recorded.

Shri Kakubhai cannot give any reason for the increase in sale. I found from my conversation with Shri Vithaldas Jerajani that this sale was in no way connected with the enthusiasm about the Legislative Assembly. Had it been the case, the increase would have amounted to not one, but many thousands. Hence, there is some other reason behind it. I presume that people have increasingly begun to understand the significance of khadi, and those who wear khadi are satisfied by the higher rate paid to women spinners and thus their enthusiasm for wearing it has increased. If my guess is correct, it is something that should encourage khadi workers. I have found out something of practical significance. The softness and durability of khadi have increased to a considerable extent ever since the rate for spinning has been increased and the work of women spinners is being supervised. The reason for this is obvious. And that too is something that should encourage us. If readers of *Harijanbandhu* can throw some light on this, they should write to me.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 28-3-1937

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had given details to show that the sale of khadi had increased notwithstanding the rise in prices. He had expressed the hope that it would increase further.

91. SPEECH AT BHARATIYA SAHITYA PARISHAD, MADRAS-II[1]

[*March 28, 1937*][2]

If the Congress went on as usual while we passed resolutions in support of Hindi as the common language, our work would be painfully slow. This resolution appeals to the Congress to exclude the use of English as a language of inter-provincial communication. English, it says, should not be allowed to take either the place of the provincial languages or of Hindi. If English had not ousted the languages of the people, the provincial languages would have been wonderfully rich today. If England had adopted French as the language of her national deliberations we should have had no English literature today. French was the language there after the Norman conquest. But then the tide turned in favour of 'English-undefiled'. That created the great English literature we know. What Yakub Hussain Saheb said was quite right. The Mussalman contact had a great influence on our culture and civilization, so much so that there were men like the late Pandit Ajodhyanath who were perfect scholars in Persian and Arabic. If they had given to their mother tongue all the time that they gave to the study of Arabic and Persian, the mother tongue would have made great progress. Then English came to occupy the unnatural position it does until this day. University professors can wax eloquent in English but will not be able to express their thoughts in their own mother tongue. Sir C. V. Raman's researches are all contained in his papers in English. They are a sealed book to those who do not know English. But look at the position in

[1] The speech is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". Before Gandhiji's speech the Parishad had passed a resolution, drafted by C. Rajagopalachari, which read: "This Conference appeals to the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress to resolve not to use English in future in the proceedings of the Congress, the A. I. C. C. and the Working Committee and to use Hindi-Hindustani instead; provided that those who are not able to express themselves fully in Hindi-Hindustani may use English. If a member who is unable to express himself in Hindi-Hindustani desires to speak in his provincial language, he may do so, and arrangements may be made for translating such a speech into Hindi-Hindustani. If any person finds it necessary on any occasion to speak in English to make himself understood by any section of the audience, he may do so with the permission of the Chairman."

[2] *Gandhi* 1915-1948: *A Detailed Chronology*

Russia. Even before the Revolution they resolved to have all their textbooks (including scientific) in Russian. That really prepared the way for Lenin's Revolution. We cannot establish real mass contacts until the Congress decides to have all its deliberations in Hindi and of its provincial organizations in the pvovincial languages.

The resolution becomes as much a business of the Bharatiya Parishad as of the Sammelan, for the Bharatiya Parishad is intended to advance the cause of the provincial languages, and if the Congress does not adopt the resolution its object will be to that extent frustrated.

It is not that I am making a fetish of language. It is not that I would refuse to have swaraj if I could have it at the cost of our language, as indeed I should refuse to have it at the cost of Truth and Non-violence. But I insist so much on the language because it is a powerful means of achieving national unity, and the more firmly it is established the broader based will be our unity.

Don't be alarmed at my proposal of everyone learning Hindi plus a language of other provinces, besides his mother tongue. Languages are easily learnt. Max Muller knew 14 languages; and I know a German girl who knew 11 languages when she came here five years ago and now knows two or three Indian languages. But you have created before your mind's eye a bugbear and somehow feel that you cannot express yourselves in Hindi. It is our mental laziness that we have made no progress in spite of Hindustani being adopted in our Congress constitution these 12 years.

Yakub Hussain Saheb asked me why I insisted so much on 'Hindi-Hindustani' and was not content with having simple 'Hindustani' as the common language. I must take you through the genesis of the whole thing. It was as early as 1918 that as President of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan I suggested[1] to the Hindi-speaking world to broaden their definition of Hindi to include Urdu. When I presided over the Sammelan once again in 1935[2] I had the word Hindi properly defined as a language that was spoken both by Hindus and Mussalmans and written in Devnagari or Urdu script. My object

[1] *Vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909
[2] *Vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 29-9-1909 and "London", 1-10-1909

in doing so was to include in Hindi the high-flown Urdu of Maulana Shibli and the high-flown Hindi of Pandit Shyamsunderdas. Then came the Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad, also an off-shoot of the Sammelan. At my suggestion the name Hindi-Hindustani was adopted in the place of Hindi. Abdul Huq Saheb stoutly opposed me there. I could not accept his suggestion. I should have done violence to myself and to the Sammelan if I had given up the word 'Hindi' which was the word of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan and which I had persuaded them to define so as to include Urdu. We must remember that the word Hindi is not of Hindu coinage, it was coined after the Muslim advent to describe the language which Hindus of the North spoke and studied. So many Mussalman writers of note have described their language as Hindi. And why now this quarrel over words when Hindi is defined to include the variations spoken and written by Hindus and Mussalmans?

Than there is another factor to be considered. So far as South Indian languages are concerned it is only Hindi with a large number of Sanskrit words that can appeal to them, for they are already familiar with a certain number of Sanskrit words and the Sanskrit sound. When the two—Hindi and Hindustani or Urdu—amalgamate and really become the all-India language, daily augmented by the introduction of provincial words, we shall have a vocabulary richer even than the English vocabulary. I hope you now understand why I insist on Hindi-Hindustani.

And then I would give a tip to such of you as dread the advent of Hindi-Hindustani as the only language of the Congress. Invest in a Hindi daily or a good book, read aloud part of it regularly even for five minutes, select passages from well-known Hindi writings andspeeches and repeat them to yourselves, for correct intonation, make a point of learning a few Hindi words every day, and I assure you that such regular practice will be enough to enable you to express yourselves well in Hindi-Hindustani in six months' time and without putting an undue strain on your memory.

Harijan, 3-4-1937

92. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"[1]

MADRAS,
March 28, 1937

Representative: As the reputed co-author of the resolution[2] of the A. I. C. C. on office-acceptance, can you throw some light on the position as it has emerged today?

GANDHIJI: It is definite that I am not saying anything about politics. That must be understood.

R. Are you aware that an opinion has been expressed that each side has but tried to put the other in the wrong and that that opinion seems to be held by responsible public men?

G. I do not know about it. I have not yet seen this evening's papers.

The interviewer had to switch on to other topics and he sought Gandhiji's views on the progress of Hindi in South India with particular reference to the resolution[3] adopted by the All-India Sahitya Sammelan that day urging the exclusive use of Hindi in Congress deliberations.

G. The progress made in the matter of Hindi is comparatively speaking good. Whereas some years back there was hardly anybody who knew Hindi, today there is a big establishment looking after the training in Hindi of several thousands of boys and girls and men and women. That is a sign of progress. But I cannot say I am satisfied with the response from all the four Provinces of the South so far as the leaders of public opinion are concerned. I very much fear they have not taken up the study of Hindi seriously so as to be able to carry on conversation in Hindi or to understand what is going on in the Hindi Press or to be able to speak to the multitude in northern Provinces. It is therefore a happy thing that for the first time in the history of a southern Province, the Hindi Sammelan was invited and had its sittings in Madras.

I hope and believe the prejudice that Hindi was intended to supplant the provincial languages has by this time been set at rest. Indeed the effort of the Sammelan is to strengthen the provincial

[1] The interview was granted to its representative "immediately after Gandhiji's evening prayers".

[2] *Vide* "Extract from A.I.C.C. Resolution", 16-3-1937

[3] *Vide* footnote 1, "Speech at Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad, Madras- II

languages also. If the provincial languages are not strong, Hindi as a language of inter-provincial intercourse would not be able to thrive. Love of Hindi as the rashtrabhasha must go hand in hand with love of provincial languages.

It was indeed a great thing that with unanimous consent, this resolution asking the Working Committee of the Congress to stop the use of English in all-India proceedings has been passed. I have no doubt that English has enjoyed a status and importance in public affairs which it should never have enjoyed. He who runs can see that this usurpation by English of the place that belongs to Hindi or Hindustani has to that extent delayed the progress of Hindi and also of the vernaculars. It is not a very flattering admission on our part that the riches and discoveries of physical sciences cannot be accurately described in the provincial languages or in Hindi. I am convinced that it is sheer laziness on our part which makes us say so. These two conferences, the Sammelan and the Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad, will have rendered a useful service if the eyes of leaders of opinion in the South are opened to this obvious fact.

R. If, as you say, the fear that the spread of Hindi may be prejudicial to the growth of provincial languages is dying down, is not the suggestion for the adoption of a common script for all Indian languages likely to be a disturbing factor?

G. That is a question very well put. It should be most unfortunate if the suggestion that we should have a common script for the provincial languages disturbs in any way the provincial mind that it is an attempt directly or indirectly to undermine the importance of provincial languages. I can say without fear of contradiction that nothing was farther from my thoughts than that by the adoption of a common script the chances of provincial languages should be reduced. On the other hand, a common script would remove a great difficulty from the path of persons wanting to learn languages of India other than their own and would thereby facilitate the study of those languages. My observation was based on personal experience and that of the experience of co-workers.

We are an illiterate nation, illiterate in the sense that hardly seven per cent of the people of India can trace their own alphabet. What are you going to do to the other ninety or ninety-three per cent? Should the seven or ten per cent of literates, because they are associated with a particular form of script and because they have associated the provincial sound with those signs, impose those signs on the ninety or

ninetythree per cent and make it difficult for them to learn other provincial languages? A little care for the illiterate masses and a little thought about all India should convince the seven per cent of provincial literates of the necessity of adopting a common script. Has the adoption of a common script in Europe prevented the growth of different European languages in any shape or form?

Conversation then turned on the rural uplift work which was being carried on in Segaon village and Gandhiji sat up and said:

You can talk to me freely of it. You can talk to me of khadi, the Charkha, basket-making and paper-making.

R. Had paper-making made great progress in your Segaon reconstruction scheme?

G. If I get a contract for paper from newspapers, I hope to be able to supply their requirements, though I am not just now competing with the paper mills. For, were I to enter into that competition just now, I must needs neglect the anti-malaria work.

Speaking of malaria, Gandhiji said that preventive measures and diet were the most important items in anti-malaria work. Administration of quinine, he said, was of no avail unless food was given to the people at the same time. Gandhiji added:

I have got to give them milk or buttermilk in all cases without exception and advise the adoption of a diet which would enable them to survive the disease. I am convinced that diet is more important than drugs and good food better than constant drugging.

An interesting piece of information which Gandhiji gave out in this connection was that he had hardly taken drugs except on two occasions.

R. Would you suggest a six-month plan for Congress members of the Legislatures on these lines of rural work as the Legislatures, apparently, will have a holiday for the period?

G. Jawaharlal can prescribe one.

Gandhiji then answered a few questions about khadi. At first, he said, he was inclined to think that enthusiasm for it had abated. But the monthly increases in the sales of khadi made him hesitate to pronounce any opinion that love of khadi had abated. It was certainly true, he said, that whereas formerly “a forest of khadi caps” was visible, one did not see such demonstrations now. That, however, was no test of the real love of khadi. Gandhiji added:

I do notice this happy result of the increase in the wages of spinners that it has not affected the demand for khadi, as some workers feared it might affect and I should be surprised if, at a date not very distant, we do not adopt a further rise in the spinners’ wages.

Whilst therefore Gandhiji had absolutely no sense of despair about the progress of khadi, he could not, he said, conceal from himself or from the Press and the public his desire for much greater progress than what made so far. Conceived as a supplementary occupation for the millions of underfed villagers of India, Gandhiji said:

Khadi should command the sympathy and support of town-dwellers and others who required a certain amount of clothing for covering themselves.

The Hindu, 29-3-1937

93. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

MADRAS,
March 30, 1937

Having brooded over the refusal of the Governors to give the assurances asked for by invited Congress leaders in the Majority Provinces, I feel that I must give my opinion on the situation that has arisen in the country. I have had three cables from London shown to me asking for my opinion. Friends in Madras too have pressed for its publication. Though it is departure from my self-imposed rule, I can no longer withstand the pressure especially as I am the sole author of the office-acceptance clause of the Congress resolution[1] and the originator of the idea of attaching a condition to office-acceptance.

My desire was not to lay down any impossible condition. On the contrary, I wanted to devise a condition that could be easily accepted by the Governors. There was no intention whatsoever to lay down a condition whose acceptance would mean any the slightest abrogation of the Constitution. Congressmen were well aware that they could not and would not ask for any such amendment. The Congress policy was and is not to secure an amendment, but an absolute ending of the Constitution which nobody likes. Congressmen were and are also aware that they could not end it by mere acceptance of office, even conditional. The object of that section of the Congress which believed in office-acceptance was, pending the creation, by means consistent with the Congress creed of non-violence, of a situation that would transfer all power to the people, to work the offices so as to strengthen the Congress which has been shown predominantly to represent mass opinion. I felt that this object could not be secured unless there was a gentlemanly understanding between the Governors and their Congress Ministers that they would not exercise their special powers of

[1] *Vide* "Extract from A.I.C.C. Resolution", 16-3-1937

interference so long as the Ministers acted within the Constitution. Not to do so would be to court an almost immediate deadlock after entering upon office. I felt that honesty demanded that understanding.

It is common cause that the Governors have discretionary powers. Surely there was nothing extra-constitutional in their saying that they would not exercise their discretion against Ministers carrying on constitutional activities. It may be remembered that the understanding was not to touch the numerous other safeguards over which the Governors had no power. A strong party with the decisive backing of the electorate could not be expected to put itself in the precarious position of being in dread of interference at the will of the Governors. The question may be put in another way. Should the Governors be courteous to the Ministers or discourteous? I hold that it would be distinctly discourteous if they interfered with their Ministers in matters over which law gave the latter full control and with which the Governors were under no legal obligation to interfere. A self-respecting Minister conscious of an absolute majority at his back could not but demand the assurance of non-interference. Have I not heard Sir Samuel Hoare[1] and other Ministers saying in so many words that ordinarily the Governors would not use their admittedly large powers of interference? I claim that the Congress formula has asked for nothing more.

It has been claimed on behalf of the British Government that the Act gives autonomy to the Provinces. If that is so, it is not the Governors but the Ministers who are during their period of office responsible for the wise adminstration of their Provinces. Responsible Ministers sensible of their duty could not submit to interference in the pursuance of their daily duty. It does therefore appear to me that once more the British Government has broken to the heart what it has promised to the ear. I doubt not that they can and will impose their will on the people till the latter develop enough strength from within to resist it, but that cannot be called working provincial autonomy.

By flouting the majority obtained through the machinery of their creation, they have in plain language ended the autonomy which they claim the Constitution has given to the Provinces. The rule

[1] Secretary of State for Home Affairs

therefore will now be the rule of the sword, not of the pen, nor of the indisputable majority. Anyway that is the only interpretation which with all the goodwill in the world, I can put upon Government action. For I believe in the cent per cent honesty of my formula whose acceptance might have prevented a crisis and resulted in a natural, orderly and peaceful transference of power from the bureaucracy to the largest and fullest democracy known to the world.

The Hindu, 30-3-1937

94. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ON THE TRAIN,
March 30, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is being written in the moving train. You must have had the letter I asked Mahadev to write to you. In Madras I had no time for anything but the work before me. And I worked to the breaking point. The reason was a discovery of great impurity in the Secretary of the Sabha–Pandit Harihar Sharma.

Ammu Swaminathan was not in Madras.

You did well in sending me the wire about your foot for your letter was alarming. I hope you are now completly free. You should discover the cause of it.

Yes, I would like you to give up even the spoonful of dal and equally give up vegetable or anything cooked or fried in ghee or oil. I know you do not touch oil. Do take raw onion with raw garlic, tomatoes and some green leaf. Increase the quantity of milk. If you have a good cow, once during the day try raw milk.

I evidently forgot to send you Dinshaw Mehta's address. It is Dr. Dinshaw Mehta, Healthatorium, near City Station, Poona City. Did you ever get from him the steaming kettle? I have asked him to send it to you per V. P. P. Jullundur City address.

Heat has commenced in these parts. But it is not unbearable as yet. Mira says they had a bad storm in my absence. Wardha weather seems to have changed.

Your Hindi attempt was good. With the Hindi Sammelan Ambujam[1] had got up a Mahila Parishad. Ba was nominally President.

[1] Daughter of S. Srinivasa Iyengar

As A's address was short, I send you a copy of it. It would be good excercise for you. It has a few mistakes which you should be able to detect.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3770. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6926

95. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

ON THE TRAIN,
March 30, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. I am writing this in a train that is carrying me to Wardha. Amtul Salaam has gone to her home in Patiala. Navin had come to Madras. Paparamma[1] also had come. But Saraswati could not. The work in Madras was quite heavy. Do you know Kamalabai of Madras who was doing publicity work? She is here. Anna[2] has fallen with her. So for the time being she has to give up publicity work[3]. Most probably she and Gomatibehn will stay with me. I will test her then. A man falls if he is a little careless. You don't have to think much about staying with Mridula. When you get sufficient self-confidence to be able to work in Bihar independently, you can take up such work. If you have such self-confidence now, you needn't go to Mridula. There is, thus, nothing to worry about. If one does thework that comes to one unsought, without worrying about things and with single-minded attention, one is bound to be at peace with oneself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3496

[1] Padmavathi, sister of G. Ramachandran
[2] Harihar Sharma
[3] *Vide* also "Hindi Prachar and Purity", 3-4-1937

96. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

March 31, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

Still on the train. I wrote[1] yesterday but forgot to tell you that when I saw the cartoon[2] I felt what you felt. The joke was quite innocent. Only a suspicious mind could find a sinister purpose behind the cartoon. But the suspicion is there and has to be taken account of. Therefore you were wholly right in drawing Devdas's attention to the cartoon.

Yesterday's letter was posted in the train without late fee. Mahadev thinks that therefore it will be delivered to you a day later. This is being posted with the late fee. You will tell me if this reaches you earlier.

Hope the toe is in order and you are having your walks. No dal at all and no ghee in cooking vagetables, no fried things, as much milk as you can possibly take, raw onion and raw garlic.

Dr. Dinshaw Mehta, Nature Cure, 6 Toddiwala Road, near City Station, Poona City.

That is Mehta's address. The latter part is a summary of yesterday's letter.

Love TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3771. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6927

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 30-3-1937

[2] Published in The Hindustan Times, 22-3-1937, while Devdas Gandhi was its Managing Director. The cartoon by Shankar which caricatured a biblical saying from First Epistle of St. John, Chapter I, verse 3, referred to Sri Prakasa's speech in Legislative Assembly debate on the Finance Bill. Sri Prakasa who described the Finance Member, J. P. Grigg, as "the God of Capitalism and Imperialism" was shown to be praying to the 'trinity' J. C. Nixon, Finance Secretary, J. P. Grigg and J. B. Taylor, Governor of Reserve Bank of India in the following words:

"To the Glory of our Lord J. C.
For the Love of Grigg and
The Fellowship of Holy Taylor.–Amen"

97. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
April 1, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I got your two letters, one yesterday and one today. Of course the Punjab khadi work must be put right. You should go into it thoroughly and let me know the result of your enquiry.

The Hindi books have to be paid for. I am glad you and Vasumati[1] like the selection. Will you write to Brijkishan Chandiwala, Katra Khushalrai, Delhi, for the bill? I got them through him but examined them personally. I told you, you need not keep them all but keep what you and V. like. What about Pierre?

Why should you not drive out and walk barefoot on soft ground? You must have exercise in the fresh air. Bare-foot walking will do good to the toe. Of course if you had been with me the toe would have been set right without difficulty. Quackery is a good thing at times.

I do not know why Mira says the weather here is bad. Of course it has rained here outside the season. I am well. Weight 114.

Love

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3772. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6928

98. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

April 1, 1937

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

I do remember having quoted quite a number of sayings from Satyarth Prakash but I do not desire any public discussion now. Even when I wrote them, it resulted in considerable harm and the Arya Samaj suffered some injustice. If you send me a copy of Satyarth Prakash, I shall certainly be able to extract the remarks in support of my contention. My opinion has undergone no change. Still it does in no way imply that my reverence for Swami Dayanand has lessened, only it is not blind.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 763

[1] Vasumati Pandit, daughter in-law of Navalram Pandya, a Gujarati writer

99. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

April 1, 1937

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I got your letter yesterday on my return from Madras. It is unworthy of you to hold that I discourage you from joining me because of your faults: moreover, it is unjust to me. I have forbidden you from coming simply because I think living with me would be an idle waste of time. But if you have no peace otherwise, you may certainly come here and stay as long as you deem it fit. What would happen if your health suffered? Even this point may be overlooked for the time being. This much then for your living with me.

Now for your predicament. I think you should get married. There is no grave error attached to marrying; every widower does it, which is certainly better than continually harbouring lustful thoughts.

It is difficult to pronounce any opinion on wealth. I would only say this much that even the earning of wealth can be a mode of service, and in that too some ethical restraints must be observed and the prescribed rule should be applied to money-making and the wealth should be as far as possible used for the benefit of society.

Your anguish increases as you try to work beyond your strength. Ethics should not be misinterpreted in any way. The rest on meeting you. Your letter is being returned.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2455

100. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

April 1, 1937

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I write this letter in Urdu for I know that you find my Urdu letters less difficult to decipher. I have your letter. Convey the following to your brother's wife[1]. "Although I know you people only through Amtul Salaam, she has made me so well acquainted with you that I feel as if you were my relatives. How good it was that Amtul reached there in time! I hope you are better now. May God grant you a quick recovery."

The food you give to her is quite good. She should be given greens too. Give her hip-baths. I had a letter from Kanti. He is to go

[1] She was ailing in Indore.

to Mysore. For the time being he will be in Rajkot. He will go to Mysore at the end of April. Possibly he might go to Trivandrum for a few days. Devdas has permitted him. Manu's marriage will take place in Segaon and Kanti is bound to come there then. I leave here on the 14th instant returning on the 25th. You may come over whenever it suits you. I am very glad to learn that you are keeping well. When you are perfectly fit I shall be able to extract work from you to my heart's content. I returned yesterday from Madras. There was a lot of work there this time.

Let your brother's wife have abdominal mud-packs at night; they ought to benefit her a great deal. Paparamma came to Madras but Saraswati could not come. She is happy, though. I shall not read this again.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 377

101. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SEGAON,
April 2, 1937

BAPA,

You did very very well in writing to me. Your letter came to me as a surprise. I had a talk with Malkani, though Ghanshyamdas had asked me not to tell him, and suggested to him to be ready to leave Harijan Niwas. I then informed Ghanshyamdas. Of course I made it clear that I did not find Malkani's work altogether useless, but that there would be no difficulty at all in removing him. He then said he was himself doubtful but he would see and think over it. I am sending your letter to him. I am not insisting at all [on keeping him]. You also may discuss the matter with him.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1175

102. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

April 2, 1937

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

What is this! I do not in the least insist on keeping Malkani. If his leaving brings greater benefit to the Harijan Niwas it is our duty promptly to remove him from there. Hence whatever is good may be done.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 8030. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

103. HINDI PRACHAR AND PURITY

On the 26th ultimo there was the convocation of the Hindi Prachar University for giving certificates to those young men and women who had passed its final examination. I was invited[1] to present the certificates to the graduates. They had to take a threefold vow which pledged them to the spread of Hindi-Hindustani, service of the motherland and personal purity for the good name of the University. I drew the special attention of the graduates to the last two parts of the pledge. The authors of the pledge, however, had a special intention in inserting the clauses about service and personal purity. They were evidently of opinion that if the young men and women who passed through the institution spread Hindi in the spirit of service, and if their personal purity was assured, these two factors would enhance the prestige of the graduates and they would themselves be the best advertising media for popularizing Hindi-Hindustani. I therefore reminded them of the pledge that they had just taken. In order to enforce my argument, I quoted to the graduates the instance of the reported fall of a Hindi teacher who had already damaged the cause of Hindi prachar. When I referred to this report I had little thought of what was in store for me.

For the morning following I had a letter placed in my hands giving detailed information of the fall from purity of Pandit Harihar

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha, Madras", 26-3-1937

Sharma,[1] the prime author of the pledge and the Secretary of the Sabha. He is also a member of the Satyagraha Ashram from its foundation. He and his wife qualified themselves for Hindi prachar work. He has been for years the soul of the Hindi movement in the South. At the Ashram he was held in high esteem. He was easily among those who were always regarded above suspicion, above reproach. I could not therefore believe the letter. I spoke to him the next morning; and though he resisted the imputation for a while, the concealment became too unbearable for him and he confessed everything. According to the Ashram code he gave me permission to refer to the sin in public. I at once broke the news to the executive. They were unprepared for the stunning news. Pandit Sharma tendered resignation on the ground of the fall. The executive will have accepted the resignation and the administration will have been overhauled. Kakasaheb stayed in Madras to advise the executive of the Hindi Prachar Sabha.

But for me the matter does not end there. It may be thought that events like this do not need publicity. Those who think so evidently do not know the full facts. The institution with which I am intimately connected have to deal with masses of mankind, both men and women. They work through hundreds of volunteers. These have no authority but the moral. The volunteer workers inspire confidence because purity of personal life is assumed about them. Their influence will wane immediately they lose credit for purity. Publicity has never harmed the institutions or the persons involved in sin.

It behoves the workers throughout India to learn the lesson from Pandit Sharma's fall that they must be ever watchful of themselves and not be found napping and unready to resist when the enemy assails them. This remark applies perhaps with greater force to Hindi teachers in the South than to others. There is no purdah there. Girls there have been found to be more interested in Hindi than boys. Teachers by reason of their very occupation exercise over their pupils a moral authority which disarms suspicion and creates a confidence which would ordinarily be wanting.

Indeed a suggestion has already been made to the effect that in order to be fool-proof the Hindi Prachar Sabha should stop private

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Prabhavati", 30-3-1937

tuition of girls altogether. I have not been able to subscribe to the view. Lapses will take place no matter how careful one is. There cannot, therefore, be overcarefulness. But to stop private tuition of girls is to admit moral bankruptcy. There is no warrant for panic. So far as I know, the Hindi teachers in general have done their work without blemish in the matter of personal purity. I have not suppressed from the public any proved lapses. We may not invite temptations nor may we shut ourselves in iron cages in order to avoid them altogether. We must be prepared to face them when they come uninvited. Sharma fell because he invited temptation. He trusted himself too much.

Let the public that is interested in Hindi prachar work not be curious about the future of Pandit Sharma or about the details of his error. He will be with me whilst he is reforming himself. His disappearance from the organization does not mean the close of a career of service. Indeed if this fall has taught him the lesson of his life, he will have lost nothing nor Hindi prachar a worker of his calibre. To err is human, to own up one's error and to so act as to be proof against it is manly. Let us hope that he has the manly quality necessary for the task and pray that he may become a better servant for the fall. Some of the saints of the world had been notorious sinners.

Harijan, 3-4-1937

104. AN UNFORTUNATE DOCUMENT

Fourteen highly educated Indian Christians occupying important social positions have issued a joint manifesto setting forth their views on the missionary work among Harijans. The document has been published in the Indian Press. I was disinclined to publish it in Harijan, as after having read it more than once I could not bring myself to say anything in its favour and I felt that a critical review of it might serve no useful purpose. But I understand that my criticism is expected and will be welcomed no matter how candid and strong it may be.

The reader will find the manifesto published in full in this issue. The heading[1] is also the authors'.They seem to have fallen between

[1] "Our Duty to the Depressed and Backward Classes". The signatories were: K. K. Chandy, S. Gnanaprakasam, S. Gurubatham, S. Jesudasen, M. P. Job, G. V. Job, G. Joseph, K. I. Matthai, A. A. Paul, S. E. Ranganadham, A. N. Sudarsanam, O. F. E. Zacharia, D. M. Devasahayam, G. V. Martyn.

two stools in their attempt to sit on both. They have tried to reconcile the irreconcilable. If one section of Christians has been aggressively open and militant, the other represented by the authors of the manifesto is courteously patronizing. They would not be aggressive for the sake of expedience. The purpose of the manifesto is not to condemn unequivocally the method of converting the illiterate and the ignorant but to assert the right of preaching the Gospel to the millions of Harijans. The key to the manifesto is contained in paragraphs 7 and 8. This is what one reads in paragraph 7:

> Men and women individually and in family or village groups will continue to seek the fellowship of the Christian Chruch. That is the real movement of the Spirit of God. And no power on earth can stem that tide. It will be the duty of the Christian Church in India to receive such seekers after the truth as it is in Jesus Christ and provide for them instruction and spiritual nurture. The Church will cling to its right to receive such people into itself from whatever religious group they may come. It will cling to the further right to go about in these days of irreligion and materialism to awaken spiritual hunger in all.

These few sentences are striking instance of how the wish becomes father to the thought. It is an unconscious process but not on that account less open to criticism. Men and women do not seek the fellowship of the Christian Church. Poor Harijans are no better than the others. I wish they had real spiritual hunger. Such as it is, they satisfy by visits to the temples, however crude they may be. When the missionary of another religion goes to them, he goes like any vendor of goods. He has no special spiritual merit that will distinguish him from those to whom he goes. He does, however, possess material goods which he promises to those who will come to his fold. Then mark, the duty of the Christian Church in India turns into a right. Now when duty-becomes a right it ceases to be a duty. Performance of a duty requires one quality–that of suffering and introspection. Exercise of a right requires a quality that gives the power to impose one's will upon the resister through sanctions devised by the claimant or the law whose aid he invokes in the exercise of his right. I have the duty of paying my debt, but I have no right to thrust the owed coppers (say) into the pocket of an unwilling creditor. The duty of taking spiritual message is performed by the messenger becoming a fit vehicle by prayer and fasting. Conceived as a right, it may easily become an imposition on unwilling parties.

Thus the manifesto, undoubtedly designed to allay suspicion and soothe the ruffled feelings of Hindus, in my opinion, fails to accomplish its purpose. On the contrary, it leaves a bad taste in the

mouth. I venture to suggest to the authors that they need to re-examine their position in the light of my remarks. Let them recognize the fundamental difference between rights and duties. In the spiritual sphere, there is no such thing as a right.

Harijan, 3-4-1937

105. OBSTACLES IN THE WAY OF A GOSEVAK

The secretary of a goshala writes:[1]

It is my firm belief that by making good use of the hide of a dead animal religion is not violated, nor should sanatanist Hindus feel offended over this. Yes, it is certainly a lapse of religion if full use of the hide of a dead animal is not made because it increases cow-slaughter. The price of a cow decreases day by day and so cows are easily sold and taken straight to slaughter-houses. If we consider goseva as an inseparable part of Hindu religion, we can neither look down upon the tanners' profession nor consider them untouchable. The cow dies solely from our ignorance. Dharma cannot be protected by merely talking about it; that can be done only by understanding the meaning of the Shastras and by practising it. I have written several times that if the goshalas in India know their duty and adhere to it faithfully, then cow-slaughter can be done away with and cow's milk will be easily available to everyone. There is no exaggeration of any kind in this statement. Almost all cows are owned by Hindus. If they adhere to their dharma and refrain from selling cows which is the cause of cow-slaughter, there can be no cow-slaughter. Let every goshala become an ideal dairy, that is, self-reliant, and let experts on dairying and animal husbandry work in it. A self reliant goshala must prosper from day to day. It can also make proper use of the hides of the dead cattle. This amounts to saying that with the increase in cattle wealth, our knowledge will also grow; and this will be a great help to us in reducing unemployment in the country. Even if one goshala will accomplish this task, other goshalas will follow it.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 3-4-1937

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had said that till then the practice of the goshala was to give away dead cattle without any charge. However, in that year they had had the hides removed and sold, which had resulted in great dissatisfaction among orthodox Hindus.

106. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

[SEGAON,]
April 3, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I hope you are following my prescription about your toe. Local earth bandage should also be applied.

Of course you won't sign the big book[1] , if it degrades you in your own estimation. The A. I. V. I. A. meeting accepted Jajuji's[2] resignation and did not appoint anyone else. Kumarappa did not shine at the meeting. But it is all right. The things will shape themselves.

Here it is like monsoon.

Love

TYRANT

[PS.]

You have not replied to Kishorelal's letter.

From the original: C.W. 3773. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6929

107. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

SEGAON,
April 3, 1937

MY DEAR KU.,

I have glanced through the report. I have removed the paragraph about bread-making. It is trivial. Otherwise it is readable though it still does not answer the picture I drew of an ideal report. But that can only happen in the next [report].

I return, too, Shah's note. As soon as you are ready, you will let me have your note. I shall announce that none is fit enough for the prize, if such is your joint finding.[3]

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10115

[1] The reference, presumably, is to the report on the Punjab khadi work.

[2] Shrikrishnadas Jaju

[3] *Vide* "Prize Essay on Barter System", 26-8-1935 K. T. Shah, V. L. Mehta and J. C. Kumarappa, the board of examiners, found that none of the three essays that were received fulfilled the conditions laid down. *Vide* also "Essays on Barter System", 1-5-1937.

108. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

April 3, 1937

MY DEAR KU.,

I have seen both Bhagwandas and Shankerrao. I have not yet reached the bottom. Shankerrao is not of the School. He is Choudhury's find. Bhagwandas won't go just yet. He assured me he won't go without my permission.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10116

109. LETTER TO KOTWAL

SEGAON,
April 4, 1937

BHAI KOTWAL,

I had received your letter. Your eyes must have been completely cured.

There was nothing in the Bharatiya [Sahitya] Parishad[1] to make it a success. One may, therefore, console oneself as one likes.

I shall see what you do after your eyes are completely cured. Let alone an order by me, if you can remember to have yielded to any request of mine, tell me when you did so. I do not recollect any such instance.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3600

110. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR H. PAREKH

April 4, 1937

BHAI PRABHASHANKAR,

As I myself was not in a position to do anything, I had sent your letter to Bhai Nanalal[2]. There was, therefore, no need for me to write anything. It is not at all true that your position is like that of a nut

[1] Held at Madras on March 27 and 28, 1937; *vide* "Speech at Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad, Madras- I", 27-3-1937 and "Speech at Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad, Madras- II", 28-3-1937

[2] Nanalal Kalidas Jasani

held in a nut-cracker. Or if it is, then as a nut renders more service by letting itself be held in a nut-cracker, so let the case be with you.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI PRABHASHANKAR HARCHANDBHAI
DERASHERI
RAJKOT (KATHIAWAR)

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8768

111. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

April 4, 1937

BHAI MUNSHI,

What happened to the committee appointed by the Gujarat Sahitya Parishad to revise its constitution? The matter should be finalized. The Governors say that the condition demanded by Congress leaders is not in conformity with the Reforms Act. Have you examined what legal validity their objection has? If you feel that what the Governors say is right, then you will have to convince me. If you think that the Governors could have accepted the Congress condition without violating the Act, you ought to publish that opinion under the signatures of some good lawyers there. Please attend to this urgently.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 7613. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

112. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

April 4, 1937

CHI. JETHALAL,

I have received your well-composed letter. You seem to have got properly involved in the ghee trade. Do not let that business ruin you. It is good that you have begun with butter. Ultimately you will have to begin with milk and I have no objection if you do so. I have to some extent even put into practice what I am thinking at present. You will know more when I can implement all the ideas. If you are coming to Hudli you can ask me further. I take it you will be coming.

If you cannot get money from anywhere to meet the expenses of the case, write to me for it.

*Blessings fro*m

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9861. Courtesy: Narayan J. Sampat

113. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

[April][1]*4, 1937*

BHAI RAJENDRA PRASAD,

I have your letter. What has been done regarding Hindi-Hindustani has been well done. A start should certainly be made towards putting into effect the statement that has been issued. The suggestion about a conference is good but in the atmosphere that prevails I have some doubt about its success. But what can one do about it? Success is bound to come sooner or later if we make the effort. So you must continue your endeavours as and when you find the opportunity.

There is no cause for worry on account of my health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 9881. Courtesy: Rajendra Prasad

114. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

[*Before April 5, 1937*][2]

I still maintain my objection to Kamaladevi. You can have Mridula instead if you want two women. There must be other women in the A.I.C.C. Maulana would remain if pressed. I would like Jamnalalji to be spared. But that is a matter between you, Rajen Babu and him. I do not mind too many from U.P. You can't help it. I take it you will discuss the list with those whom you want to retain. I can't think of anyone else or anything else.

[1] The letter appears to have been written after the meeting of the Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad at Madras; *vide* "Speech at Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad, Madras- I", 27-3-1937 and "Speech at Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad, Madras- II", 28-3-1937

[2] From the reference to Gandhiji's objection to Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya's inclusion, presumably in the Congress Working Committee formed by the addressee in 1937. This is corroborated by the contents of Gandhiji letter of 5-4-1937 to the addressee wherein he mentions this note; *vide* " Letter To Jawaharlal Nehru", 5-4-1937

I think I told you that I used to like her. Her ability is unquestioned. But I have known things which have worried me about her. I should unhesitatingly take Sarup[1]. But I can understand the delicacy. Satyavati deserves the place apart from her fanaticism which makes her sometimes a dangerous ally. You may show my objection to Kamaladevi if you know her sufficiently. For I do not say this behind her back. I believe she knows my opinion. It hurts me to hold that opinion, but how can I help myself?

There fore let not my opinion weigh with you unduly. If those whom you want do not object, you should have her. Of course I am partial to Mridula. But Satyavati has a longer record of service and has from a public point of view a better right. Mridula is a brick so far as work and loyalty are concerned. She will be the youngest member, if the choice falls on her. If I had to make the selection of course the choice will be Satyavati almost for the reasons that make you exclude Sarup.

From the original: Gandhi-Nehru Papers, Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

115. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
April 5, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter. Mahadev has gone to his step-mother about his sister's marriage. He returns tomorrow.

Mahadev had a very long chat with Subhas Chandra Bose who was looking none too well. Have you not written to him after he became free?

Your Hindi writing is excellent. Never mind the speed, it will come by practice. You should persevere as you have begun.

I am stupid at remembering things. You will now have to bear the burden of my forgetfulness. "Bear ye one another's burdens."

All the accomodation here is proving too small for those whom I must take. Vasumati is here, Bal[2] is coming and Amtul will soon follow.

Yes Kanu was with me in Madras and will be with me when I go to Belgaum. Manu will be married in Belgaum. My address there

[1] Vijayalakshmi Pandit
[2] Bal Kalelkar, son of D. B. Kalelkar.

would be: Hudli, District Belgaum, which I reach on 15th, latest 16th. I leave here 13th, latest 14th.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3774. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6930

116. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

April 5, 1937

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I write after ages as it were. Even this is being written against time. But I have not starved you for the news you should know. I have used the cable.[1]

Herewith two enclosures. They may be of use.

I do not mind the Governors not having done the thing. But it has been done in such a shabby manner! And the toy ministries![2] What a lie! Almost without exception the Anglo-Indian Press had welcomed the resolution[3]. What has happened now to change their attitude? The dishonesty of their argument is transparent. It has acerbated almost every Indian whose opinion counts. Bhulabhai's is a lawyer's opinion. This autonomy is still-born. But the teachers of the world teach us to pray when human effort proves vain. I believe in them and therefore do not lose hope but am praying. Jawaharlal is on a sick-bed.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1496

[1] *Vide* "Cable to Agatha Harrison",15-3-1937 and Cable to Agatha Harrison", 27-3-1937

[2] As the Governors had refused to give the "assurances", the majority party in the six Provinces had declined the invitation to form Government and as a result the Governors formed interim ministries with the help of non-Congress members.

[3] Of March 16; *vide* "Extract from A.I.C.C. Resolution

117. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Unrevised *April 5, 1937*

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Why should you become ill? Having become ill, why will you not give yourself rest? I thought you were going to steal away somewhere after Indu came. Please give my love to her when she arrives. I must send her a line with this.

Now about your grouse. Somehow or other everything I say and even perhaps do jars on you. Silence was impossible. I thought in the context the words courtesy and discourtesy came out all right. Yours is the first note of complaint from the Congress side about the statement[1]. I could not help myself if the complaint was universal. I am glad you have written. You must bear with me till my understanding becomes clear or your fears are dispelled. I apprehend no harm from my statement. Is there anything at the back of your mind that I do not understand?

Kamaladevi travelled with us from Wardha to Madras. She was coming from Delhi. She came to my compartment twice and had long chats. At last she wanted to know why Sarojini Devi was excluded[2], why Laxmipati was being kept away by Rajaji, why Anasuyabai was excluded, and so on. I then told her of my part in her exclusion, and told her almost all that [I] could remember of the note I wrote for you on that silent Monday. Of course, I told her I had no hand in Sarojini's exclusion at first or inclusion after. I told her also that Rajaji, so far as I knew, had nothing to do with L's exclusion. I thought you should know this.

I hope this will find you fully restored. You don't say anything about Mother.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also A bunch of Old Letters, pp. 223-4.

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press",30-3-1937

[2] From the Congress Working Committee

118. LETTER TO INDIRA NEHRU

April 5, 1937

CHI. INDU,

You must have grown quite plump by now. Write to me. You will certainly see me, won't you? May God grant you long life—a sevika you already are.

Blessing from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Gandhi-Indira Gandhi Correspondence. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

119. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

April 5, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

What a disappointing letter? What is wrong with you? Why should you be unhappy. Why need you worry? How can one have one's way in everything? Dharma requires us to go on doing cheerfully whatever service we get an opportunity of doing without seeking it. What then will be happiness and misery? Is there anything in this world which can be done with any security? When life itself is short and extremely uncertain, what can we say of our activities? Only dharma abides; it is imperishable because it is related to the atman. And dharma lies in truth and ahimsa. Whatever we do while following it is proper. And what if, in doing it, we get daily something new to do or have to wander from place to place every day? What difference does it make whether we have a broom in our hand or a pen? We should be content with whatever comes to us unsought. We should bring credit to whatever work we do. Stay there as long as Father desires. Go to Sitab Diyara if you think it necessary and to Ahmedabad when Jayaprakash permits you to do so. Who would force you to stay on if you did not feel happy there?

I have written to Poona regarding Harijan. Vasumati arrived yesterday. She will stay for some time. Amtul is at Rajpura. Khan Saheb has come. Bal will come the day after tomorrow. Manu will be

married at Belgaum. I have to reach Belgaum on the 15th or the 16th. [Address:] Hudli, Belgaum District.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3490

120. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

April 5, 1937

BAPA,

Here is a telegram from Ghanshyamdas. What is this? Whatever it is, get it clarified. Probably Ghanshyamdas has already done so.

You are transferring the responsibility regarding Bharuch to me,[1] but I do not mind. I am not the person who will feel ashamed of anything. I do not know, though, what I shall be able to do. I will have to consider how far my intervention would be proper.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1176

121. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

April 5, 1937

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

It is not as if I did not understand what you said. I have only given you the natural solutions.[2] If marrying and money-making seem more painful and you are not indulging in self-delusion, you have to bear the mental conflict. Lasting peace can be attained only by satsang. You should not live as a recluse. There are two kinds of satsang: one the company of good men and second the reading and study of good books and conducting oneself on the pattern enjoined therein.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2454

[1] The addressee had been appointed an arbitrator consequent upon a strike by the sanitary workers of Bharuch Municipality; *vide* also letters to Vallabhbhai Patel of June 19, 1937, and July 22, 1937.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Brijkrishna Chandiwala", 1-4-1937

122. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

April 5, 1937

BHAI RAJENDRA BABU,

The Harijan brethren have evinced great courage and sacrifice.[1] I cannot adequately congratulate them. On my part I feel that all that has happened has happened for the good. How has it affected our people?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 9879. Courtesy: Rajendra Prasad

123. LETTER TO BAHLOL KHAN[3]

[Before *April 6, 1937*]

Do not fear I can ever oppose Urdu. Of course I know not how and in what other way I can help or work for its progress. But I think the very fact that I am not opposing it is enough—I don't think I could do anything more beyond that.

The Bombay Chronicle, 6-4-1937

124. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

WARDHAGANJ,
April 6, 1937

RAJENDRA PRASAD
SADAQUAT ASHRAM, PATNA

WIRED BARDOLOI AS FOLLOWS: ADVICE CONGRESSMEN ABSTAIN UNDER WRITTEN PROTEST BY LEADER AFTER CONSULTATION CONGRESS MEMBERS SINCE CONGRESS ENTERED ASSEMBLY EXPOSE FUTILITY CONSTITUTION AND SINCE PROVINCES WHERE CONGRESS HAD MAJORITY IT HAS BEEN FLOUTED. CONGRESS MEMBERS MUST DECLINE ATTEND FORMAL FUNCTIONS WHERE NO EFFECTIVE OPPOSITION COULD BE SHOWN WITHOUT UNBECOMING DEMONSTRATION.

BAPU

Dr. Rajendra Prasad: Correspondence and Select Documents, Vol. 1, p. 36

[1] According to Mahadev Desai (Harijan 17-5-1937), Jagjivan Ram and Raghunandan Ram had refused to accept office in the Bihar Ministry formed by Mahommed Yunus, leader of Independent Muslim Party.

125. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
April 6, 1937

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

The performance of the Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad was nothing to be proud of. And how could it be that you, the father of the Parishad,[1] did not attend? I was only in the background and Kaka was busy at that very time with many other things. In these circumstances, I feel that it is nothing but sinful to propose a big scheme. Personally I would be ready to wind up the Parishad even on my own responsibility. Or we should remain satisfied with whatever we three can achieve with our own sincere efforts.

I did not at all blame you for not being able to come to Madras.

Do invite suggestions regarding the consititution of Gujarat Sahitya Parishad. Have you received any from those for whose satisfaction the committee is formed? It would be better to announce a date for the meeting of the committee.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7614. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

126. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON,
April 7, 1937

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter. I am replying to you at the Rajkot address. Paparamma was not in a position to go to Belgaum. Ramchandran is quite ill. He had an attack of pleurisy. He is better now but is taking rest. His nerves also have become weak. He did not permit Saraswati to come because he is still afraid that her studies may be disturbed.

It is surprising that your thumb is still not cured. Did you try mud treatment? If the thumb is bandaged while writing, you will find

[1] The first Akhil Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad, held at Nagpur, on April 21 and 25, 1936, was a result of the efforts of the addressee and D. B. Kalelkar.

[2] *Vide* also letter to the addressee,"Letter to K. M. Munshi", 4-4-1937

it much easier to write. I myself had tried a mud bandage as help in writing with the tired thumb, and I had been able to continue working.

Manu has spared you and so it will not be necessary for you to come to Belgaum just for the sake of the wedding. But you probably know that Ba herself is coming there. If, therefore, your stay there for a few days is likely to satisfy your aunts, you can come to Belgaum. And from there you can go to Mysore. If it can be arranged this way, you can be present at the wedding and, after the function at Belgaum is over, you can go to Mysore.

Devdas's letter is all right. I do not remember to have used the word 'strong', though I cannot say, either, that I didn't use it. Even if I did, what is the harm? Even if your desire is no more than a simple wish, there is no harm in satisfying it. Going to Mysore should depend on your own will. It should be enough if Devdas gives his consent. If you do not wish, why should you go? I am firm in my view. I personally prefer Mysore to Bombay, both from the point of view of the climate and of peace of mind. I do not know whether education there will be of the standard of Wilson College. But according to me that depends more on the student. I have come across many dullards educated in Wilson College and very intelligent Mysoreans who have never gone out of Mysore. But the best course is that you should go to Mysore and see things for yourself and then decide as you like.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7319. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

127. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

April 7, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter just now. How can I console you? Why are you frightened? Can you see anybody who has no worries? Everybody has some trouble or other. Is even Jayaprakash at peace? Is Jawaharlal? Or Rajendra Babu? What more worries have you than they? Whether you stay with Father or with in-laws or with me, everywhere you have to do service, haven't you? If you think that their cases are different in that they invite worries voluntarily, then even that is not proper. They also have to submit to others' wishes. We are all dependent on others even as much as we are independent. In fact you are very fortunate. Stop worrying now. As for going to Mridula, do as Jayaprakash says. If he permits you, then go. Don't go if he says no.

I understand as regards Patna. Go to Siwan soon. But if you find that your duty requires you to stay in Patna, then do so and remain calm. From Anna's fall, we should only learn to remain vigilant. Amtul's address is: Judge Wahid Saheb, Rajpura, Patiala State.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3497

128. LETTER TO BHUJANGILAL CHHAYA

April 7, 1937

CHU. BHUJANGILAL,

I have your letter and also the copy of your letter to Chandulalbhai. You are very ambitious. If you wish to be successfulyou must improve your handwriting. One who makes an effort and is careful even about very small matters will remain so about bigger things also. But the belief that one who is careless about little things can be careful about bigger things is a fallacy.

You are a worshipper of non-violence. Politeness is an integral part of non-violence because impoliteness causes pain, politeness does not. A boy who addresses his mother as his father's wife is telling the truth but as his language is rude it is violent and is frowned upon in good society.

If you really approve of my way of working, you should be well versed in the science of khadi. You should know what is goseva and put it into practice and daily serve the so-called untouchables. If you do these and such other things in which I am engaged, you will clearly see your path.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

129. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
April 9, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

You are struggling bravely to set things right with the A. I. S. A. branch there. No one can be sent from here to put things straight. You should have Bhatia also in front of you and then advise Gopichand. I see no other way. You must not strain yourself in the attempt to undo the tangle.

Your Hindi is going forward by leaps and bounds. I see that very soon you will write correct and chaste Hindi. The few sentences you have written are really perfect and the hand-writing is equally good.

Tell me, do you read and understand Japji[1] in the original? If so I would like you to translate literally one verse every day. I am using both the translations you left for me. None satisfies my taste. This work ought not to take you more than five minutes daily, i.e., if you know Japji throughly. If you do not, you need not trouble yourself about it.

What you tell me about the Tanning Institute is interesting. If they have a prospectus, send it on to me.

It is decided that we leave on 14th for Belgaum. The station is Suldhal.

Khan Saheb will go with us. Manu will be married there on 18th.

Have you tried my remedy for the toe?

I do hope this writing will not fade before it reaches you. I have added too much water.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3600. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6409

130. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

April 9, 1937

DEAR AGATHA,

Of course you should be absolutely frank. That is the only way you will serve. Of course you will have the fullest information from here.

The situation is undoubtedly dangerous. Lord Zetland's speech[2] will be bitterly resented. But you may depend upon my doing

[1] A Sikh prayer book

[2] In the House of Lords, Lord Zetland, Secretary of State for India, in answer to Lord Lothian, who was member of the Round Table Conference and who had been associated with the framing of the Act of 1935, had inter alia said: "Under Section 52 of the Act, certain obligations are imposed on the Governors (among them being the obligation to safeguard the legitimate interests of the minorities). . . . Governors could not give, within the framework of the Constitution, the assurance which was asked of them, and that Mr. Gandhi is in error in assuming they could." (A Decade of Indo-British Relations, 1937-47, p. 33) "Mr. Gandhi's statement dated March 30 [*vide* pp. 36-8], was so astonishing that it appeared to be explicable only on the

everything possible to prevent a crisis. But the speech invites a crisis. Mr. Heath[1] has sent a cable advising interview with the Viceroy. Lord Z's speech seems to bar the Government. And in any case it has to be with Jawaharlal. I have shown in my statement the only possible way out.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1497

131. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

April 9, 1937

DEAR GURUDEV,

I have just received your letter of 5th instant. Had I not to go to Belgaum on the very date you will have opening ceremony[2], I would most certainly have come not only for the ceremony but also to see you and Santiniketan which I have not seen now for years. As it is I shall be with you in spirit when Jawaharlal will be performing the ceremony. May the Chinese Hall be a symbol of living contact between China and India.

The letter you wrote to me over that momentary misunderstanding lies in my jacket as a treasure.[3] It brought tears of joy to my eyes. It was so worthy of you.

With love and respects,

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4647. Also Twenty Years of the Visva-Bharati Cheena Bhawana, 1937-1957, p. 16

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assumption that either he never read the Act and the instrument of instructions or the report of the select committee, or that, if he had done so, he had completely forgotten, when he made his statement, the provisions embodied in this document respecting the special responsibilities vested in the Governors. It was all the more unfortunate that he should have made such a statement, for large numbers in India were accustomed to accept any statement made by Mr. Gandhi as necessarily correct." (Mahatma, Vol. 4, pp. 183-4)

[1] Carl Heath, a British Quaker, President of Indian Conciliation Group, London

[2] On April 14, of the 'Cheena Bhavana', a research department of Visva-Bharti

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Rabindranath Tagore",2-3-1937

132. LETTER TO TAN YUN SHAN

[*April 9, 1937*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

Many thanks for your letter. I have written to Gurudev expressing my sorrow over my utter inability to attend the function. Yes, indeed, we want cultural contact between the two nations. Yours is a worthy effort. May it bring fruit.

Yours sincerely,

Twenty Years of the Visva-Bharati Cheena Bhavana; 1937-1957, p. 16

133. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

April 9, 1937

BHAI MUNSHI,

You finished the job very quickly and did it very well. I made the best use of it immediately yesterday and will do so again in future.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KANAIYALAL M. MUNSHI
26 RIDGE ROAD
BOMBAY

From Gujarati: C.W. 7615. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

134. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
April 9, 1937

BHAI MUNSHI,

I had no intention at all of rebuking you. But about the Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad when we meet. From the 16th to the 22nd I shall be in Hudli near Belgaum. On the 24th I shall be back at Wardha. We can meet thereafter. You may, if you like, fix a meeting

[1] From the reference to the letter to Rabindranath Tagore; vide the preceding item.

of the committee then. I am returning U. Joshi's[1] letter. We want to convene a meeting of the committee without laying down any conditions. Ask the members what dates will suit them. I have to leave this place on the 14th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7616. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

135. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

April 9, 1937

BHAI BAPA,

Your explanatory letter is incomplete. Where was the room for misunderstanding? As desired by you,[2] I had sent to Ghanshyamdas your letter regarding him. You say that he was not as much pained as you had thought. He writes that not only was he not pained at all but that you two held the same view. Thus Ghanshyamdas's letter would suggest that a mountain ought not to have been made out of a molehill. Moreover you say, "Please forgive me if you have been pained in regard to this matter." Suppose, being a votary of the Gita, I have not been pained at all, still should not one who has made a mountain out of a molehill apologize? This is for your entertainment, as also by way of philosophy.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1177

136. LETTER TO SARASWATI

April 9, 1937

CHI. SARASWATI,

I have your letter. You have become very lazy. Did you not promise to write regularly? You have not kept the promise. I am getting your letter corrected and returning it. Understand all the errors well and rectify them. Paparamma came and I was happy to meet her though I was unhappy that you could not come. But I got over the disappointment on understanding the reason for your not coming.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6156. Also C.W. 3429. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] Umashankar Joshi, Gujarati poet and man of letters
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar", 2-4-1937

137. WONDERFUL IF TRUE

During our morning and evening walks, Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan and I often talk on matters of common interest. Having travelled in the Frontier territories as far as Kabul and beyond and knowing the Frontier tribes well, he often describes to me the habits and customs of these simple folk. He tells me that these tribesmen who are untouched by the so-called civilization live principally on maize and barley, bread and lentils supplemented at times by buttermilk. They get meat but rarely. The only way I could account for their well-known hardiness was their open-air life and invigorating climate. Khan Saheb promptly added:

> That is not enough. The secret of their strength lies in their chaste lives. They marry, both men and women, after full maturity. Unfaithfulness, adultery or unmarried love are practically unknown. Union out of wedlock is punishable by death. The injured party has the right to take the life of the wrongdoer.

If this chastity is so universal as Khan Saheb describes it, it furnishes us in India a lesson that we should take to heart. I suggested to Khan Saheb that if the fine physique of the tribesmen was largely due to their continence, there must be perfect co-operation between the mind and the body. For, if the mind hankered after satisfaction of the flesh and the body resisted, there must be tremendous waste of vital energy, leaving the body thoroughly exhausted. Khan Saheb agreed that that was a fair deduction and that, so far as he was able to judge, he felt that the tribesmen were so habituated to continence outside marriage that young men and women never seemed to desire sexual satisfaction outside marriage. Khan Saheb also told me that the women in the tribal areas never observed the purdah, there was no false prudery there, the women were fearless, roamed about anywhere freely, were well able to take care of themselves and defend their honour without seeking or needing male protection.

Khan Saheb, however, admits that this continence not being based on reason or enlightened faith breaks down when these men and women of the hills come in contact with civilized or soft life where departure from the custom carries no punishment and publicopinion looks upon unfaithfulness and adultery with more or less indifference. This opens up reflections which I must not discuss just now. My purpose in writing this just now is to seek corroboration and further light from those who know these tribesmen, as Khan Saheb does, and to suggest to young men and women of the plains that observance of continence, if it is really natural to the tribesmen, as Khan Saheb thinks it is, should be equally natural to us, if only we

would inhabit our thought world with the right kind of thoughts and deal summarily with the intruders. Indeed, if the right kind settle down in sufficiently large numbers, the intruders will be crowded out no doubt. The process requires courage. But self-restraint never accrues to the faint-hearted. It is the beautiful fruit of watchfulness and ceaseless effort in the form of prayer and fasting. The prayer is not vain repetition nor fasting mere starvation of the body. Prayer has to come from the heart which knows God by faith, and fasting is abstinence from evil or injurious thought, activity or food. Starvation of the body when the mind thinks of a multiplicity of dishes is worse than useless.

Harijan, 10-4-1937

138. KHADI IN SWADESHI EXHIBITIONS

In all other parts of India where swadeshi exhibitions permitting mill-cloth are held the A. I. S. A. has as a rule refused to exhibit khadi. And the rule has answered the purpose for which it was framed. From U.P., however, the pressure has come to relax the rule. But I have hitherto resisted the temptation. U.P. khadi workers made a special reference for their guidance. They are almost all Congressmen no less ardent than the others, but they have dedicated themselves to the Congress service through its constructive and the most difficult programme, khadi. Appreciating their difficulty I referred the question to Shri Jawaharlal Nehru for his opinion. I have received the following reply[1] from him:

> I have your letter of the 5th March enquiring about khadi at exhibitions. This matter has been repeatedly discussed by us in the course of the past year ever since my return from Europe. . . .
>
> The question you have put is not easy to answer. The average khadi worker seems to be of opinion that khadi should not be exhibited if mill-cloth is allowed there. Other Congress workers are usually of a contrary opinion on the ground that at such exhibitions there is usually a good sale of khadi. Obviously the opinion of the khadi worker, who is presumed to be an expert at his job and who is anxious to push khadi, should be almost final. I would therefore hesitate to give my decision against him unless I succeed in convincing him. I imagine that from a certain long-distance view it is better even to incur some loss now so as to avoid producing any confusion in the public mind as to what khadi is and what it is not. This can only be done by

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

adherence to the present policy of banning certified khadi sales in such exhibitions.

At the same time, I find that uncertified khadi is sold at such exhibitions and plenty of people patronize it. There are quite large numbers of people as you know who are not particularly keen on buying certified khadi, but who are prepared to do so if it comes their way. The point is: are we to cater for the people in any especial measure, or are we to concentrate on holding fast to those who desire to use pure khadi only? This question has not only its business side but its psychological side. Khadi has on the one hand built up a firm foundation for itself, and there is a body of men in the country who must have pure khadi whatever the cost or the trouble. At the same time khadi does not spread as rapidly as it might among other classes who only occasionally patronize it. For khadi workers the object should be to develop the khadi habit in the latter. That habit comes largely from appeals, to the mind or heart and partly from sheer habit. Ordinarily speaking, it would be a good thing to have as many casual purchasers as possible so that they may get used to buying and wearing khadi and thus develop the real habit. The present policy to some extent keeps away this casual purchaser and thus reduces the field from which regular khadi buyers might be drawn. . . .

Therefore, if you want my final opinion, I cannot give it very definitely, and because of my not being definite I must respect the opinions of others who are working for khadi. I am, however, inclined to think that it might be preferable to allow khadi to be exhibited and sold in these exhibitions under certain conditions which would prevent as far as possible (1) something else being mistaken for khadi and the distinction between khadi and mill-cloth being clearly preserved (2) the exclusion of partly foreign stuffs from the exhibition.

In the absence of final opinion which he is unable to give, he would respect the opinions of others who are working for khadi. He is, however, "inclined to think that it might be preferable to allow khadi to be exhibited and sold in these exhibitions." My own experience, however, tells me that it is dangerous to befog the mass mind by putting khadi in juxtaposition with the gaudy mill-made cloth. It is very like putting human beings side by side with robots. Human beings may be worsted in the competition if they allow themselves to be compared to robots. Even so will khadi fare, in comparision with mill-made cloth. The planes of the two are different. The aims are opposite. Khadi gives work to all, mill-cloth gives work to some and deprives many of honest labour. Khadi serves the masses, mill-cloth is intended to serve the classes. Khadi serves labour, mill-cloth exploits it. My experience is backed by that of the khadi workers throughout

India. I hope therefore that with Shri Jawaharlal Nehru the Congressmen of U.P. will respect the experience and the policy of the A. I. S. A. in preference to their own opinion, if it be against that of the A. I. S. A.

Harijan, 10-4-1937

139. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,
April 10, 1937

I have read Lord Lothian's appeal[1] to me with the respect it deserves. I have a vivid recollection of the talks with him among other friends. The provincial autonomy then pictured was a real stuff unlike what the present Constitution is supposed to give. Lord Zetland's elaborate statement[2] confirms my view and hardens the universal suspicion of the British statement's intentions. So long as they wish to bolster up imperialistic designs, India, which the Congress represents, will never reconcile itself to them. I believe in friendship with Britain, not with imperialistic exploitation.

I am free to confess ignorance of the Government of India Act and a greater ignorance of the Select Committee's Report. My advice to the Congress to adopt my resolution on a conditional acceptance of office was based on an assurance of lawyers amongCongressmen that the Governors could give the required assurance without an infringement of the Act.[3] I do not, therefore, need even Sir Samuel Hoare's past declarations to support me. If, therefore, he disclaims having ever made the statement which I aver having heard him make, I accept his disclaimer without argument. The dismal fact stares India in the face that British statement imposed an Act on India against her declared wishes and then instead of leaving its interpretation to impartial tribunals impose their own upon her and call this transaction autonomy. Lawyers, Mussalman, Parsi and Hindu, whom the Government have hitherto honoured with their partronage, declared that the Governors can without an infringement give the required assurance. I regard the British statesmen's interpretation as non-judicial, arbitrary and interested.

[1] The references is to Lord Lothian's letter to The Times; *vide* Appendix "Lord Lothian's Letter to *The Times*", after 16-3-1937.

[2] *Vide* footnote 1, "Letter to Agatha Harrison",9-4-1937

[3] *Vide* also the following item.

At the same time I recognize that other lawyers give an interpretation favourable to the British Government. Therefore I invite them to appoint an arbitration tribunal of three judges of whom one will be appointed by the Congress, another by the British Government with power to the two to appoint a third to decide whether it is competent for the Governors to give the required assurance described by me. And since the legality of the present Ministries has been questioned, I would refer that question also to the proposed tribunal. There is precedent for such a course. If they would accept my proposal I would advise the Congress to do likewise.

I mean every word of my previous statement[1]. I want right to prevail. There is here no question of diplomacy with India. It is a question of life and death. Office will be accepted if only progress towards her goal is accepted, not otherwise. It, therefore, pains me to find Lord Zetland playing upon the old familiar tune of divide and rule. The Congress cannot exist for two days if it disregards the interests of minorities. It cannot bring about mass rule by dividing India into factions. The Congress Ministries, if they ever come into existence, will dig their own graves without the Governors' safeguards the moment they trample upon the rights of the minorities or resort to injustice otherwise. I regret to have to say it but, to be true, I must say that Lord Zetland's speech is that of one who is conscious of his sword rather than of his right. His Lordship is again misleading when he says that the Congress wants to be treated as a privileged body. It does not. Anyone representing a most decisive majority like the Congress. would want the gentlemanly assurance that the Congress has asked for.

The Hindustan Times, 11-4-1937

140. CABLE TO AGATHA HARRISON

WARDHAGANJ,
April 10, 1937

AGATHA HARRISON
CARE KALOPH
LONDON

MY STATEMENT[2] GIVEN AFTER GREATEST DELIBERATION IN STRICTEST TERMS NON-VIOLENCE. SEE NO CAUSE WITHDRAW

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 30-3-1937
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

SINGLE WORD. CONSIDERED LEGAL OPINION INCLUDING BAHADURJI EX-ADVOCATE-GENERAL TARAPORE EX-HIGHCOURT JUDGE ENTIRELY ACCEPTS MY INTERPRETATION AND CONDEMNS PRESENT MINISTRIES AS WHOLLY ILLEGAL. NO SETTLEMENT POSSIBLE WITHOUT SIMPLE ASSURANCE FORTHCOMING.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1498

141. INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT OR DISSIPATION?[1]

During my recent wanderings in Travancore and Madras I found that most of the students and 'intellectuals' who came into touch with me were an instance of intellectual dissipation rather than intellectual development. The fault lies in the modern system of education which encourages this vicious tendency, misdirects the mind, and thereby hinders its development instead of helping it. My experiments in Segaon have only confirmed this impression. But they are as yet too incomplete to be cited as evidence. The views on education that I am now going to set forth have been held by me right from the time of the founding of the Phoenix settlement in South Africa in the year 1904.

I hold that true education of intellect can only come through a proper exercise and training of the bodily organs, e.g., hands, feet, eyes, ears, nose, etc. In other words, an intelligent use of the bodily organs in a child provides the best and quickest way of developing his intellect. But unless the development of the mind and body goes hand in hand with a corresponding awakening of the soul, the former alone would prove to be a poor lop-sided affair. By spiritual training I mean education of the heart. A proper and all-round development of the mind, therefore, can take place only when it proceeds pari passu with the education of the physical and spiritual faculties of the child. They constitute an indivisible whole. According to this theory, therefore, it would be a gross fallacy to suppose that they can be developed piecemeal or independently of one another.

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in Harijanbandhu, 11-4-1937. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

The baneful effects of absence of proper co-ordination and harmony among the various faculties of body, mind and soul respectively are obvious. They are all around us; only we have lost perception of them owing to our present perverse associations. Take the case of our village folk. From their childhood upward they toil and labour in their fields from morning till night like their cattle in the midst of whom they live. Their existence is a weary, endless round of mechanical drudgery unrelieved by a spark of intelligence or higher graces of life. Deprived of all scope for developing their mind and soul, they have sunk to the level of the beast. Life to them is a sorry bungle which they muddle through anyhow. On the other hand what goes by the name of education in our schools and colleges in the cities today is in reality only intellectual dissipation. Intellectual training is there looked upon as something altogether unrelated to manual or physical work. But since the body must have some sort of physical exercise to keep it in health, they vainly try to attain that end by means of an artificial and otherwise barren system of physical culture which would be ridiculous beyond words if the result was not so tragic. The young man who emerges from this system can in no way compete in physical endurance with an ordinary labourer. The slightest physical exertion gives him headache; a mild exposure to the sun is enough to cause him giddiness. And what is more, all this is looked upon as quite natural. As for the faculties of the heart, they are simply allowed to run to seed or to grow anyhow in a wild undisciplined manner. The result is moral and spiritual anarchy. And it is regarded as something laudable!

As against this, take the case of a child in whom the education of the heart is attended to from the very beginning. Supposing he is set to some useful occupation like spinning, carpentry, agriculture, etc., for his education and in that connection is given a thorough, comprehensive knowledge relating to the theory of the various operations that he is to perform and the use and construction of the tools that he would be wielding. He would not only develop a fine, healthy body but also a sound, vigorous intellect that is not merely academic but is firmly rooted in and is tested from day-to-day by experience. His intellectual education would include a knowledge of mathematics and the various sciences that are useful for an intelligent

and efficient exercise of his avocation. If to this is added literature by way of recreation, it would give him a perfect, well-balanced, all-round education in which the intellect, the body and the spirit have all full play and develop together into a natural, harmonious whole. Man is neither mere intellect nor the gross animal body, nor the heart or soul alone. A proper and harmonious combination of all the three is required for the making of the whole man and constitutes the true economics of education. To say that this kind of education can only be given after we have attained our independence would, I am afraid, be like putting the cart before the horse. The advent of independence would be incredibly hastened if we could educate millions of our people through an intelligent exercise of their respective vocations like this and teach them that they live for the common good of all.

Harijan, 8-5-1937

142. MESSAGE TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF AMERICA

WARDHA,
April 12, 1937

You ask me to give you a special message for the readers of your 1,300 American newspapers, whom you serve. I would like Americans first of all to know my limitations and our internal politics. They should know that I am not even a primary member of the Congress. Whatever influence I possess is purely moral. Congressmen recognize in me the author of purely non-violent action and its technique and, therefore, so long as the Congress retains its creed of truth and non-violence, Congressmen are likely to be guided by my advice whenever it has anything to do, directly or indirectly, with non-violent action, but those who can speak with authority are the President of the Congress i.e., Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and the Working Committee, i.e., the Congress Cabinet. I function purely as a humble adviser.

For me the present issue is not political, but moral, It is a fight between truth and untruth; non-violence and violence and right and

might; for I hold that Lord Zetland could not have uttered the speech[1] he did, unless he was conscious of the might of the sword behind him.

It seems as if British statesmen are repenting of even the limited electorate they have created in India. If they were not, they ought to have bowed to the will of the majority as represented by their elected leaders. Surely, it is violence to impose nominated Ministries on the electorate of their creation.

The crisis is of their own making. It is presumption on their part to interpret Acts of their Parliament. Their jurisprudence has taught us that no man can take the law into his own hands, not even the king. Evidently, the maxim does not apply to the British Ministers. Proof of the pudding is in the eating.

I have offered[2] an honourable way out. Let a judicial tribunal of joint creation give the interpretation. It will be time for them to plead incompetence when the tribunal finds in favour of their interpretation. Till then Congress demand for assurances must be held valid.

I must repeat that the latest gesture is one of the sword not of goodwill; certainly not of democratic obedience to the will of a democratic majority.

The Bombay Chronicle, 15-4-1937

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, "Letter to Agatha Harrison",9-4-1937

[2] Wife, sister and son of Mahadev Desai

143. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
April 12, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I shall see if I can give something to Manu on your behalf. If I fail you may send something made of khadi of Punjab make, nothing expensive.

The envelopes you left are still unexhausted. They will last till your return. But the lot you have sent will be welcome.Khan Saheb, his son Wali, Ba, Manu, little Kanu, big Kanu, Mahadev, Durga[1], Nirmala[2] the bride, Bablo[3] and Balvantsinha will accompany me. Bal also. He is Kakasaheb's son.

The weather everywhere seems extraodinary, we had a fierce storm here. The mango crop is all but ruined, and I am afraid of the seasonal rains holding out.

Your Hindi letters are daily improving. If you continue the practice, you will acquire good speed when you come.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3775. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6931

144. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

April 12, 1937

CHI CHANDAN,

Chi. Shankar[4] has sent me your letter to him. I see that the . . .[5] affair still troubles you. The one per cent that I have reserved is not to be dismissed as of no consequence. Open your heart and write frankly about whatever you are harbouring in it. If you mean to, you can do much. I wish that either you should be proved completely truthful, or that you should purify your heart thoroughly. You are

[1] Wife of Mahadev Desai
[2] Sister of Mahadev Desai
[3] S on of Mahadev Desai
[4] Satish D. Kalelkar, addressee's fiance
[5] The name has been omitted

perfectly right in saying that one who admits one's faults rises. I wish you well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 942. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

145. LETTER TO TARADEVI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
April 12, 1937

CHI. TARA,

Let us see when you come with Mother. What is the result of your examination? In how many more examinations do you have to appear? I receive letters from Mother.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI TARA KUMARI
MAHILA VIDYALAYA
LUCKNOW, U. P.

From the Hindi original : Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

146. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

April 13, 1937

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I got both your letters today, just now. Kanu got the letter of the 5th the day before yesterday. Yesterday he didn't come. He got the letter of the 9th yesterday.

If you want to come to Belgaum, you may. Most probably I will stay there till the 21st. I will return here latest by the 24th.

Kanti will come from Rajkot. Probably he will go back to Rajkot. Then he will go to Mysore and from there to Trivandrum. There is thus no question of Saraswati's coming to Belgaum.

You are out and out a fool. I didn't write to Kanti. He wrote on his own. You are needlessly suspicious that I don't trust you.

We will discuss your future when we meet. About the land also, we will decide then. The wedding is fixed for the 18th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 379.

147. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
A pril 13, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. I did not have any talk about you with Jayaprakash. He had no time, nor had I. I only inquired about your health. That was enough. Mridula keeps on inquiring about you. I suppose you are not likely to go to Ahmedabad now. Or will you? Won't you most probably have to stay now with Father in Srinagar? You ask for my orders. What orders can I give you? You should do there what you think to be your duty. You may come here only when it is convenient. How much will you have to worry about Sitab Diara now?

Amtul Salaam will be coming shortly now. Take care of your health. Mirabehn has arrived. It is good that she has come. Kanti is at Bangalore. Address: C/o Y. M. C. A., Bangalore City.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3498

148. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

April 13, 1937

CHI. HARIBHAU,

I have your letter. You have made a big change as regards hip-bath. Really useful changes can be made by the patient himself, with the help of Kuhne's and Just's books. Nature-cure remedies are not like ordinary drugs. A patient can say that a particular drug does not suit him, but only the vaidya who is treating him can say which one is likely to suit. In nature cure, on the other hand, the patient himself knows which remedies benefit him and, after he has submitted himself to several restrictions, can himself decide as to what kind of remedies to employ and in what measures. The reason is that the guide can never know as well as the patient can, the changes that take place in the latter's body. Do make whatever changes seem necessary. But keep me informed, as you did this time. I certainly wish that if no definite change is clearly visible this month, then you may spend a day in Delhi. Saraswati Gadodia owes her job to this remedy. Her guru is a kind maulvi. The only attraction for going to Delhi is that you can have the benefit of the advice of both. I carefully went

through Bhandari's book for five minutes. I was not attracted by it. What I want is Indian equivalents for technical terms, not definitions. A definition of a motor-car can be given, but I heard it described as air-car only in Champaran. I cannot, therefore, give my opinion all at once. If you or somebody else tells me its special merits, then only can I express an opinion. There was a telegram from Bhandari to which I have not been able to reply, since I did not have a dictionary. Please convey this to him so that I need not write to him.

What you have written about surgery is quite correct.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 6085. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

149. DISCUSSION WITH MISSIONARY [1]

[Before *April 14, 1937*][2]

MISSIONARY: I have been following your comments on the statement regarding mass movement made by the Indian Christians. I wonder if those who made the statement were thinking of anything in the nature of a legal right. It is, I think, a moral right they claim here rather than a legal one.

GANDHIJI: My criticism would apply even if they had used the word 'moral right'. But it is clear that they mean a legal right, because for one thing there is no such thing as a moral right, and secondly because in the very next para of the manifesto, in which they have referred to the Karachi Resolution[3] on Fundamental Rights, they make it clear that they mean by 'right' legal right. A moral right, if there is any such thing, does not need any asserting and defending.

The main purpose of the manifesto was to check the agitation that is going on in certain quarters. I admit that if it was meant to be a protest, it was not properly drafted.

That is why I have called it "an unfortunate document" And is there anything like a moral right? Give me an illustration.

Have I not a moral right to speak?

[1] This is extracted from "Weekly Letter" by Mahadev Desai, who had reported: "An Indian Christian missionary had a long talk with Gandhiji the other day during which he put to Gandhiji questions arising from Gandhiji's recent criticism of a joint manifesto issued by several influential Indian Christians." *Vide* "An Unfortunate Document", 3-4-1937

[2] Gandhiji left Wardha for Hudli on April 14, 1937.

[3] *Vide* "Resolution on Fundamental Rights and Economic Changes", 31-3-1931

It is not a moral right, but a legal right. There is no right but is legal. Divorced from legality moral right is a misnomer. And therefore you either enforce a right or fight for it. Whereas nobody asserts one's duty. He humbly performs it. I shall take an illustration. You are here. You feel like preaching to me the Gospel. I deny the right and ask you to go away. If you regard praying for me a duty,you will quietly go away and pray for me. But if you claim the right to preach to me, you will call the police and appeal to them for preventing my obstructing you. That leads to a clash. But your duty no one dare question. You perform it here or elsewhere, and if your prayers to God to change my heart are genuine, God will change my heart. What Christianity, according to my interpretation of it, expects you to do is to pray to God to change my heart. Duty is a debt. Right belongs to a creditor, and it would be a funny thing indeed if a devout Christian claimed to be a creditor!

You have objected to Christian propaganda on the ground that Harijans are illiterate and ignorant. What would you say of propaganda amongst non-Harijans?

I have the same objection, because the vast mass of people of India would not understand the pros and cons of Christianity better than a cow. I repeat this simile in spite of the fact that it has been objected to. When I say I do not understand logarithms any better than my cow, I do not mean any insult to my intelligence. In matters of theology the non-Harijan masses can understand no better than Harijans. I would take you to Segaon and show you that there is no distinction, so far as capacity to understand such things is concerned, between Harijans and non-harijans. Try to preach the principles of Christianity to my wife. She can understand them no better than my cow. I can, because of the training that I have had.

But we do not preach any theology. We simply talk of the life of Christ and tell them what a comfort His life and teaching have been to us. He has been our guide, we say, and ask others also to accept Him as their guide.

Oh yes, you do say that. But when you say I must accept Jesus in preference to Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, you will have to go into deep waters. That is why I say, let your life speak to us, even as the rose needs no speech but simply spreads its perfume. Even the blind who do not see the rose perceive its fragrance. That is the secret of the Gospel of the rose. But the Gospel that Jesus preached is more subtle and fragrant than the Gospel of the rose. If the rose needs no agent, much less does the Gospel of Christ need any agent.

But then your objection is to the commercial aspect of the Christian propaganda. Every true Christian will agree that no baits should be offered.

But what else is Christianity as it is preached nowadays? Not unless you isolate the proselytizing aspect from your educational andmedical institutions are they any worth. Why should students attending Mission schools and colleges be compelled or even expected to attend Bible classes? If they must understand the message of Jesus, why not also of Buddha, Zoroaster and Mahomed? Why should the bait of education be offered for giving education [sic]?

That was the old way, not the modern way.

I can cite to you any number of modern examples. Is not the Bishop of Dornakal a modern? And what else is his open letter to the Depressed Classes of India? It is full of baits.

He represents a type of Christianity which I do not approve. But where there is no compulsion to attend the Bible classes, and only education is given, what objection is there to educational institutions run by Missions?

There is a subtle kind of propaganda when you expect students to attend Bible classes.

As regards hospitals, I think philanthrophy without the dynamic[s] of some religious teaching will not tell.

Then you commercialize your gift, for at the back of your mind is the feeling that because of your service some day the recipient of the gift will accept Christ. Why should not your service be its own reward?

But leave alone these. I think I can cite instances of exceptionally fine people who attract people to them by the example of their lives.

I too can cite such instances. Andrews is one such. But they are exceptions.

But then you must judge Christianity by its best representatives, and not the worst.

I am not judging Christianity as a religion. I am talking of the way Christianity is being propagated, and you cannot judge it by exceptions, even as you may not judge the British system of Government by some fine specimens of Englishmen. No, let us think of the bulk of your people who preach the Gospel. Do they spread the perfume of their lives? That is to me the sole criterion. All I want them to do is to live Christian lives, not to annotate them. I have come to this view after laborious and prayerful search, and I am glad to say that there is a growing body of Christians who accept my view.

Then, I should be obliged to hear from you your attitude to the personality of Jesus.

I have often made it clear. I regard Jesus as a great teacher of humanity, but I do not regard him as the only begotten son of God. That epithet in its material interpretation is quite unacceptable. Metaphorically we are all begotten sons of God, but for each of us there may be different begotten son of God in a special sense. Thus for me Chaitanya may be the only begotten son of God.

But don't you believe in the perfection of human nature, and don't you believe that Jesus had attained perfection?

I believe in the perfectability of human nature. Jesus came as near to perfection as possible. To say that he was perfect is to deny God's superiority to man. And then in this mater I have a theory of my own. Being necessarily limited by the bonds of flesh, we can attain perfection only after dissolution of the body. Therefore God alone is absolutely perfect. When he descends to earth, He of His own accord limits Himself. Jesus died on the Cross because he was limited by the flesh. I do not need either the prophecies or the miracles to establish Jesus's greatness as a teacher. Nothing can be more miraculous than the three years of his ministry. There is no miracle in the story of the multitude being fed on a handful of loaves. A magician can create that illusion. But woe worth the day on which a magician would be hailed as the Saviour of humanity. As for Jesus raising the dead to life, well, I doubt if the men he raised were really dead. I raised a relative's child from supposed death to life, but that was because the child was not dead, and but for my presence there she might have been cremated. But I saw that life was not extinct. I gave her an enema and she was restored to life. There was no miracle about it. I do not deny that Jesus had certain psychic powers and he was undoubtedly filled with the love of humanity. But he brought to life not people who were dead but who were believed to be dead. The laws of Nature are changeless, unchangeable, and there are no miracles in the sense of infringement or interruption of Nature's laws. But we limited beings fancy all kind of things and impute our limitations to God. We may copy God, but not He us. We may not divide Time for Him, Time for Him is eternity. For us there is past, present and future. And what is human life of a hundred years but less than a mere speck in the eternity of Time?

Harijan 17-4-1937

150. CABLE TO "THE TIMES"

WARDHA,
[*April 14, 1937*][1]

I HAVE CAREFULLY READ "THE TIMES" COMMENT ON MY STATEMENT[2]. IT SEEMS A BIG QUESTION WHEN IT INVITES THE CONGRESS TO TEST THE BONA FIDES BY TAKING OFFICE UNCONDITIONALLY. MY ADVICE TO THE CONGRESS HAS ALWAYS BEEN THAT OFFICE-ACCEPTANCE WOULD BE A FATAL BLUNDER WITHOUT A PREVIOUS UNDERSTANDING REGARDING SAFEGUARDS WHICH ARE WITHIN THE GOVERNORS' DISCRETION. IN THE TEETH OF FIRST-CLASS LEGAL OPINION TO THE CONTRARY I REGARD LORD ZETLAND'S INTERPRETATION UNACCEPTABLE. A REFUSAL TO SUBMIT HIS INTERPRETATION TO EXAMINATION BY A LEGAL TRIBUNAL WILL RAISE THE STRONG PRESUMPTION THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAD NO INTENTION OF DEALING FAIRLY BY THE MAJORITY PARTY WHOSE ADVANCED PROGRAMME THEY DISLIKE. I PREFER AN HONOURABLE DEADLOCK TO DISHONOURABLE DAILY SCENES BETWEEN CONGRESSMEN AND GOVERNORS. FOR IN THE SENSE THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT MEAN THE WORKING OF THE ACT BY THE CONGRESS SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE. IT IS THEREFORE FOR THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO SHOW THE CONGRESS BY EVERY MEANS OPEN WITHIN THEIR CONSTITUTION THAT THE CONGRESS CAN ADVANCE TOWARDS ITS GOAL EVEN BY TAKING OFFICE. I WISH EVERYONE CONCERNED WOULD BELIEVE ME THAT WITH ME THERE IS NO QUESTION WHATSOEVER OF FALSE PRESTIGE. MY FUNCTION IS THAT OF A MEDIATOR BETWEEN THE CONGRESS AND THE GOVERNMENT, WHICH UNLIKE MANY CONGRESSMEN, I BELIEVE TO BE CAPABLE OF BEING CONVERTED UNDER MORAL PRESSURE, AS IT IS OF BEING COERCED UNDER PHYSICAL PRESSURE. AFTER THE ABOVE HAD BEEN PREPARED A TELEGRAPHIC SUMMARY OF LORD

[1] From Mahatma, "A Well-Deserved Victory", 14-5-1904
[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 10-4-1937

LOTHIAN'S RECENT LETTER[1] TO "THE TIMES" WAS PLACED IN MY HANDS. HIS ARGUMENT IS BASED ON AN ASSUMED POSITION TO WHICH INDIA IS AN UTTER STRANGER. ONE SEES NOT THE SLIGHTEST REGARD FOR THE MAJORITY VIEW. I REGRET THEREFORE HIS LETTER CALLS FOR NO ALTERATION IN MY OPINION AS STATED ABOVE.

The Hindustan Times, 16-4-1937

151. CABLE TO "THE TIMES"

[*On or before April 15, 1937*][2]

LORD LOTHIAN'S SUGGESTION TO REFER DISPUTES TO THE ELECTORATE IS SOUND IF IT CAN BE PROVED WORKABLE AND NOT PROHIBITIVELY EXPENSIVE. THE PRECEDENT I HAD IN MIND OF ARBITRATION WAS THAT OF THE REFERENCE BY THE TRANSVAAL AND THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT ON THE GRIEVANCES OF BRITISH INDIANS IN TERMS OF THE TRANSVAAL LAW 3 OF 1885 TO THE THEN CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE ORANGE FREE STATE AS THE SOLE ARBITRATOR. IN THE CALCUTTA "STATESMAN" SUGGESTION[3] AS TO GOVERNORS INVITING CONGRESS TO GO AHEAD WITH THE PROGRAMME OUTLINED

[1] In this, Lord Lothian had said: ". . . . If. . . the Governors could constitutionally give the assurance which the Congress Committee asks for, would not the minority in each Province protest vehemently against their giving this promise and would not such an undertaking conflict with the basic principle of constitutional democracy, namely, that neither the party in a majority nor the Governor should be able to exercise arbitrary power without appeal to anybody?

". . . The discretion which a Governor has to exercise is whether his special responsibility will better be discharged by accepting or rejecting the advice of his Ministry when attempts at agreement have failed. His decision, as all past history shows, largely depends on whether the majority in the Legislature is united and resolute and whether it can count on the support of the electorate in the event of a dissolution. . . " (The Hindustan Times, 14-4-1937).

[2] This cable was reported under the date-line; "London, April 15".

[3] In its issue dated April 10,which read: "The Congress put before the electors the definite statement that the safeguards and special powers in the present Act make it absolutely impossible for a Congress majority to put through its social programme for dealing with poverty and unemployment. . . . If the Act is really such that there is the slightest difficulty in the Governors' telling Congress leaders that there is nothing to prevent them going ahead with the programme outlined in the election manifesto, then we have to admit that we too have been mistaken about the Act."

THE CONGRESS ELECTION MANIFESTO[1] WOULD GO A LONG WAY TO SATISFY ME IF THE MANIFESTO BE REGARDED AS MERELY ILLUSTRATIVE. IT SHOULD, HOWEVER, BE UNDERSTOOD THAT ALL MY STATEMENTS ARE PURELY PERSONAL TO ME AND MADE WITHOUT CONSULTATION WITH FRIENDS AND ASSOCIATES.

The Hindustan Times, 17-4-1937

152. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

April 15, 1937

CHI. LILAVATI,

If you steady your mind, you can do much. Steadiness will come only if you do everything after careful thinking.

I have no time just now to write to anybody else. Keep an account of every minute.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev tells me that Dwarkadas has had a relapse. My purpose in telling you this is to suggest that you also may go there if you feel concerned.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9358. Also C.W. 6633. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

153. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[2]

KALYAN,
April 15, 1937

Interviewed by the Associated Press as regards Lord Lothians' letter[3] to the London Times, Mahatma Gandhi said that he had nothing to add to what he already stated in his cable[4] to the London Times (which Reuter had cabled to India). He added, however, that if he had anything to say further he would do so at Poona.

[1] Adopted by the A. I. C. C. in Bombay on August 22, 1936, the manifesto aimed at Complete Independence and a Constituent Assembly. For the extracts from the manifesto, *vide* Appendix "Extracts from the Congress Election Manifesto", 22-8-1936.

[2] Gandhiji accompanied by Kasturba, Mahadev Desai and others passed through Kalyan en route to Hudli. According to Gandhi 1915-1948—A Detailed Chronology, Gandhiji "alighted at Kalyan and drove to Parnakutir".

[3] *Vide* "Cable to "The Times", 14-4-1937

[4] *ibid*

On his attention being drawn to the cable from South Africa about the withdrawal of the anti-Asiatic Bill from the South African Parliament, Mahatma Gandhi said that he wanted to study the cable before he expressed any opinion.

The interviewer referred to Mr. Rajagopalachari's statement, in which he said that Mahatma Gandhi was "in the thick of it" and, before Mahatma Gandhi could be asked whether this meant his coming back to the Congress, Gandhiji forestalled the interviewer and said:

It means nothing more nothing less than what it says. I am in the thick of it. I am not rejoining the Congress at present if that is what you mean.

The Hindustan Times, 16-4-1937

154. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

POONA CITY,
April 15, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

I got your last letter yesterday as I was leaving Wardha. I am glad you were able to go to the villages. It is certainly good news that the surrounding villages are voluntarily taking village reform. No good work but spreads like the perfume of a rose.

You will take the additional man carefully. Please do not take more work than you can without ruining your body.

Love.

ROBBER

[PS.]

We leave tonight for Belgaum.

From the original: C.W. 3601. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6401

155. INTERVIEW TO ASOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

POONA,
April 15, 1937

I have no set schemes. I respond to the situation as it arises.

Regarding the future course of action Gandhiji said there was nothing to add to the former statements as nothing fresh had occured.

Later when he was shown the statement of the Madras leader, Mahatma Gandhi after a cursory persual opined that it needed careful study before he could give his opinion on it. He added that he would do so as early as possible tomorrow after

carefully going through it. All he would say was that the suggestion contained in the statement, which had the backing of all communities, needed great consideration.

A large crowd turned out at the station for darshan and Mahatma Gandhi taking the opportunity started collecting funds for Harijans.

The Hindustan Times, 17-4-1937

156.SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING,HUDLI- I[1]

April 16, 1937

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Please speak up if my voice does not reach you. I shall speak a little louder. I have agreed to say a few words before the President starts the discussion. During the next six days I shall try to participate in the meetings as much as I can.

One thing I wish to mention right at the outset. When I arrived in the morning, someone remarked that if the Faizpur Congress was Jawaharlal's, the Hudli Congress was going to be Gandhi's. It was conveyed to me by the President or someone else. I know it was said in jest. But it pained me that such a thing should be said even in jest. It is a sin to imagine even in jest that there can be any rivalry between Jawaharlal and me, or the Congress and the Gandhi Seva Sangh. The Gandhi Seva Sangh is not opposed to the Congress. It is meant to serve the Congress. How could the Sangh be opposed to the Congress when it was conceived in order to carry out the constructive programme of the Congress? But I would go even further. The Congress represents the millions. The Sangh represents us. The members of the Sangh are either their own representatives or the representatives of truth and non-violence. You can say that the whole world should be the representative of truth and non-violence. But that is a different matter. The members of the Sangh would, under the present situation, represent only themselves. But do we not want to be the representatives of the millions as well? And it is the Congress which is pledged to be the voice of the suffering millions. How, then, can there be any opposition between us and the Congress? I would go to the extent of saying that the Sangh can have rivalry with none at all. Let no one suggest even in jest that there can possibly be any rivalry between the Sangh and the Congress. For, it would be an untruth. And it is forbidden to speak an untruth even in jest. Anyone who hears it must promptly stop it. I wish to give you a warning. Surely, we do not

[1] A report of this speech appeared in Harijan Sevak, 1-5-1937.

intend to indulge in a fight with anyone. We cannot even talk in such terms.

Another thing which I wish to suggest is whether it would not be better to change the name of the Gandhi Seva Sangh. You have associated my name with the Sangh. This does not mean that my field of operation is limited only to this. I wish to make the whole of India my field of activity. I have suggested a way and you have accepted it. But it is not good for us to worship an individual. Only an ideal or a principle can be worshipped. You have agreed to carry out the programme I placed before the country in 1920. Only that part of it which you have assimilated and digested belongs to you. My faith in that programme is brighter than ever. But will you abandon the programme if I say that my faith in it has dwindled? You cannot give it up even if I do so. You should not become my worshippers. You can worship truth and non-violence. When you have accepted a thing, it belongs to you independently. And only what independently belongs to you can be really yours. Like food, only what you have assimlated would serve you any purpose. When we accept someone's ideas but do not digest them, absorb them intellectually but not emotionally anddo not translate them into practice, it is a kind of indigestion. It is an intellectual luxury. Ill-digested ideas are much worse than ill-digested food. There is a cure for ill-digested food; but ill-digested ideas harm the spirit and there is no cure for it. It is right that I should help you. You have right to pick up a quarrel with me if I say anything which is contrary to what I said in 1920. You must consider independently whether I have improved upon those ideas or allowed them to degenerate. Let me tell you that day by day I am marching ahead in the direction of progress and the application of my principles covers a wider field. You will have to judge if I am progressing in the right direction. You cannot do so if you do not exercise your power of independent judgment. The world will ridicule you if you keep on sticking to my name. But there is another and graver danger. I have a fear that the Sangh may degenerate into a sect. If such a thing is possible while I am still alive, what may not happen when I am gone? Whenever a difficult situation arises, you would refer to my writings in Young India and Harijan and swear by them to support your own argument. It would be proper to cremate all my writings with my body. I am not saying this out of any sense of modesty. Have I not already said that the world is not going to lose anything even if all our Vedas are destroyed and only the first mantra of Ishopanishad survives? And what purpose would be served even by that mantra if we do not understand it and follow it in our actions?

Whatever I have said or written is useful only to the extent that it can help you in understanding and digesting the principles of truth and non-violence. Hence you must give a serious thought to what I am saying today.

My faith in truth and non-violence becomes stronger every day. And as I go on applying these principles to my life, I go on making progress, and with that my ideas acquire a fresh quality. This does not mean that I am disorganized and my mind is not steady, or that my intellect is becoming shaky. I claim that my intellect has not lost its sharpness even though I have aged. It is not as if I was making thoughtless statements. My intellect continues to grow and in the matter of truth and non-violence it comes face to face with new things every day. And I find new light in them. I find new meanings in them every day. Hence, I continue to give new suggestions to the organizations like the Spinners' Association, Harijan Sevak Sangh, Village Industries Association etc. This means that these organizationsand their organizers are very much alive. And like a tree they will go on acquiring a changing quality assuming ever new forms. Their merit is that they should grow and progress. They would meet their downfall if they do not do so. I for one do not feel at all that I am going down. I want you to march with me in the direction of progress.

I am not keen to know what would happen when I am dead. My only desire is that the Sangh should always grow like a tree. If you worship the ideals–not me–you should remove my name from the name of the Sangh. You should not be so much attached to my name. You must measure each action of yours with the yardstick of truth and non-violence. If you make this your yardstick, you will be able to deliberate on all problems without any fear even after I am gone. All of you who have come here should always be fully awake. You are going to face problems which will demand from you a fresh outlook. I hope that with the light of truth you will be able to do so.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Tritiya Varshik Adhiveshan (Hudli, Karnatak) ka Vivaran, pp. 8-10

157. SPINNERS' WAGES

The Council of the A. I. S. A. passed the following important resolutions at its meeting at Wardha on the 23rd and 24th ultimo:[1]

[1] The resolutions are not reproduced here.

When the scheme was inaugurated many workers had grave doubts about its success. They had thought that the consequent rise in the price of khadi will adversely affect the sales. Experience has dispelled the fears and the Council is anxious to take a further step forward, if it can at all be taken, at an early date. Whilst, therefore, there need be no haste about taking the further step, workers may not be lazy about it either. They should know that the goal is eight annas per day of eight hours. We have only nominally reached three annas which are evenly distributed between increase and efficiency. The efficiency earnings do not directly affect the sale price. If anything, the efficiency of spinners improves the quality of khadi. The direct increase in the wages undoubtedly raises the prices, but its burden is broken by the improvement in quality. Then the increase is sojudiciously regulated as to affect the poorest buyer not at all or very slightly. I have no manner of doubt that if only the workers will themselves be more efficient, more vigilant and more faithful, they will hasten the day when spinners can easily earn eight annas per day of eight hours' work without involving a phenomenal rise in the sale price. More scientific knowledge must improve the capacity of hand-gins, carding-bows and spinning-wheels. Greater observation of spinners' work must result in their being more skilled and more efficient. Greater grasp of administrative detail and greater faithfulness must mean a substantial decrease in overhead charges. In other words, our ignorance of the science of khadi is at the bottom of our present inability to reach the goal of eight annas per day. The resolution is intended as a spur to effort. God helps only the ever-watchful.

Harijan, 17-4-1937

158. BAD IF TRUE

Shri P. O. Philip of the National Christian Council has received the following complaint from Travancore:

> Many thanks for your letter. I am consoled by the fact that the Mahatma will use his influence in removing the ill-feeling of the caste Hindus in Travancore towards Christians and the Depressed Class converts. Last week, while my evangelist Jacob was returning from a Church in North Travancore after the baptism of eight Pariahs, he was stopped by a Hindu Excise (Government) peon and was seriously assulted. One of his eyes is injured by the blows. The peon said the evangelist had no business to teach and prepare people for baptism after the Temple-entry Proclamation. I have written about this to the The Madras Mail and the Manorama, but my note has not appeared

in the papers. Will you please give publicity to the hideous act? Such acts are not isolated ones, but are perpetrated with the knowledge of influential caste Hindus who want to suppress if possible the progress of Christianity. You may forward a copy of this note to Mr. Gandhi. Communal hatred is on the increase after the Temple-entry Proclamation!

A similar complaint was received by me a few weeks ago through the same source. I have forwarded the papers to the Travancore Harijan Sevak Sangh for investigation. Meantime I have the foregoing. The brief postcard contains most serious allegations. The writer claims that

1. the acts are not isolated;

2. they are perpetrated with the knowledge of influential caste Hindus;

3. caste Hindus want to suppress if possible the progress of Christianity;

4. communal hatred is on the increase after the Temple-entry Proclamation.

Now these statements ought not to be lightly made. I advise the writer to furnish proofs to the Harijan Sevak Sangh who, I promise, will thoroughly investigate the whole complaint. The Sangh has a retired High Court judge as its President and a most conscientious and cultured man as its Secretary. I myself will have no hesitation in denouncing the slightest departure by caste Hindus from the strictest non-violence. It is difficult for me to see why communal hatred should be on the increase because of the Temple-entry Proclamation. Certainly I observed none during my recent tour in Travancore. And in so far as specific charges of molestation are concerned I would advise Shri Philip's correspondent to file complaints in the local courts. I may mention that I received complaints of a contrary nature from caste Hindus alleging that Harijans living in or near Christian cheris were molested by Christians. I refused to publish the statements and referred the writers to the local courts. I would have likewise treated the foregoing postcard but for the very serious allegations contained in it. They could only be dealt with publicly and by a public investigation.

Harijan, 17-4-1937

159. A. I. V. I. A. TRAINING SCHOOL

This school has gone through several vicissitudes because of the inexperience of the management. The A. I. V. I. A. has to cut its way as it proceeds through an unbeaten track. A year's experience and

experimenting have made the management less ambitious. The teachers themselves are training themselves through experimenting. And when the next terms commences, there will be greater preparedness than hitherto. Here is the unambitious but more realistic prospectus of the school:[1]

> The academic year of the All-India Village Industries Association Training School for Village Workers will begin from Ist July 1937. . . .
>
> 1. Hindi will be the medium of instruction.
>
> 2. The course will be as far as may be for a period of 12 months, of which two months will have to be spent in village-uplift centres for practical study. In the first 10 months training in the following industries, together with some theoretical knowledge for village work, will be given:
>
> 1. Paddy-husking and grinding
>
> 2. Paper-making
>
> 3. Oil-pressing by ghani
>
> 4. Date-palm gur making
>
> 5. Bee-keeping
>
> Students will have to select one of the above industries and devote six hours every day to it.
>
> 3. Students will be examined at the end of the year and, if found necessary, the course may be prolonged.
>
> 4. Applicants for admission should not be less than 18 years of age and should possess a healthy body. On arrival, such of those as the School Committee requires will undergo preliminary examination and will be expected to pass a test equal to what is known as the Vernacular Middle Course, and may be rejected if they do not possess adequate knowledge. They should have a working knowledge of Hindi, should be habitual wearers of khadi and should be prepared to do manual work such as sanitary service, kitchen work and spinning, and such other work as may be required under the discipline of the School. . . .

Let the applicants study the prospectus carefully. Those who are disinclined to do manual labour and apply themselves to the practical learning of the industry of their choice will be disappointed. Those who appreciated the necessity of mastering the industries mentioned will find ample scope for their talents.

Harijan, 17-4-1937

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

160. FOR STUDENTS

Though this letter[1] was received about the end of February last, I am able to deal with it only now. It raises issues of great importance, each demanding large enough space for two columns of Harijan. But I must be brief.

The very difficulties the student raises, though serious in their setting, are of his own making. The very mention of them must show the falsity of his position and of the educational system in our country. It turns education into a purely commercial product to be converted into money. For me education has a much nobler purpose. Let the student count himself as one among millions and he will discover that millions of young men and women of his age cannot fulfil the conditions which he will have his degree to do. Why should he make himself responsible for the maintenance of all the relatives he mentions? Why should the grown-up ones, if of sound body, not labour for their maintenance? It is wrong to have many drones to one busy bee—though a male.

The remedy lies in his unlearning many things. He must revise his ideas of education. His sisters ought not to repeat the expensive education that he had. They can develop their intelligence through learning some handicraft in a scientific manner. The moment they do so, they have development of the mind side by side with that of the body. And if they will learn to regard themselves as servants of humanity rather than its exploiters, they will have development of the heart, i.e., the soul as well. And they will become equal earners of bread with their brother.

I might as well discuss here his sister's marriage to which reference has been made in the letter. I do not know what is meant by marriage taking place 'sooner rather than later'. In no case need it take place before they are 20 years old. It is no use thinking so many years in advance. And if he will revise the whole scheme of life, he willhave the sisters to choose their partners and the ceremony need never cost more than five rupees each, if that. I have been present at several such ceremonies. And the husbands or their elders have been graduates in fair circumstances.

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent said that Gandhiji had not done justice to "a student" in his reply; *vide* "Notes", sub-title "A Student's Difficulty", 9-1-1937 He also asked for a "detailed, practical and comprehensive solution" to some of his personal problems.

It is pathetic to find the student so helpless as not to know how and where to have spinning lessons. Let him make a diligent search in Lucknow and he will find that there are young men enough to teach him. But he need not confine himself to spinning, though it too is fast becoming a full-time occupation able to give a village-minded man or woman his or her livelihood. I hope I have said here sufficient to enable him to dot the i's and cross the t's.

And now for contraceptives. Even here, the difficulty is imaginary. He is wrong in underrating his wife's intelligence. I have no doubt whatsoever that if she is the ordinary type of womanhood, she will readily respond to his self-restraint. Let him be true to himself and ask himself whether he has enough of it himself. All the evidence in my possession goes to show that it is man who lacks the power of self-restraint more than woman. But there is no need for belittling his own inability to exercise restraint. He must manfully face the prospect of a large family and discover the best means of suporting them. He must know that against the millions who are strangers to the use of contraceptives, there are possibly a few thousand who use them. The millions are in no dread of having to breed their children though the latter may not all be wanted. I suggest that it is cowardly to refuse to face the consequences of one's acts. Persons who use contraceptives will never learn the virtue of self-restraint. They will not need it. Self-indulgence with contraceptives may prevent the coming of children but will sap the vitality of both men ad women–perhaps more of men than of women. It is unmanly to refuse battle with the devil. Let my correspondent resolve upon self-restraint as the only sure and honourable method of avoiding unwanted children. What though he and his fail in the effort a hundred times? Joy is in the battle. The result comes by the grace of God.

Harijan, 17-4-1937

161. 'OUR PARTIAL SIGHT'

The reader will remember Rajkumari Amrit Kaur's letter[1] to me published in these columns some weeks ago. She received on it, some time ago, a letter from an English friend. She sent it to me to read. It contained so much that was good that I asked for permission to publish the relevant portion. This she readily gave and copied it for me. Here are the passages:

[1] *Vide* "A Christian Letter", 30-1-1937

I have been meaning to write to you ever since I read in Harijan your fine letter to Mr. Gandhi. I want to tell you how very much I feel with you about what you said with regard to missionary work and to thank you for saying it in your own way to a man like Mahatmaji. When I was in India, first as a very undeveloped girl thrust into a C. M. S. atmosphere, very many years ago, I felt that the approach of the missionaries to the people of India was all wrong and I had lonely times of being up against the whole system and yet not exactly being able to formulate my idea or talk to others with any chance of being understood. I was also set wondering if we as British people had any right to be ruling India, and I remember expressing this in those early days and being firmly dealt with! But ever since those days as my thought life has developed I have been getting to feel that fundamentally the whole position of the British in India was wrong and that the missionaries as a whole were sharing in the superiority complex of those who ruled. I am regarded, I know, as a real black sheep in missionary circles. So I can thoroughly sympathize with criticism that I am sure you have met with from those quarters! But what you said needed saying by someone who was a Christian and who yet saw a different way of sharing her faith with others. And it makes all the difference when someone like you who is known and has a position in the country says these things.

We sing in our Churches in England that grand hymn, whose words I expect you know, written by that inspired blind poet George Matheson:

Gather us in; we worship only thee
In varied names we stretch a common hand;
In diverse forms a common soul we see;
In many ships we seek one spirit land;
Gather us in.
Each sees one colour in Thy rainbow light,
Each looks upon one tint and calls it heaven,
Thou art the fulness of OUR partial sight;
We are not perfect till we find the seven;
Gather us in.

Anyway it is a step beyond ‘From Green Land’s lcy Mountains’! But I sometimes wonder if the people here who sing this realize its implications.

Harijan, 17-4-1937

162. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

HUDLI, SULDHAL P.O.,
April 17, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

Your letter.

It is now just before morning prayer time. The night was quite cool. I slept on the beautiful soft ground. Gosibehn and Perin are here. Khan Saheb of course.

If we are to re-introduce village articles after being used to the Western style, we shall have to be patient and inventive. That the pen requires constant dipping is a good point. It lessens fatigue. That the fountain-pen saves time is not an unmixed blessing. The village pen and ink undoubtedly admit of improvement. That can only come when you and I use these things.

The rule to which you took objection has been altered so as to answer your objection.

There was a dispute between Transvaal and British Governments. The matter was referred to arbitration by the Governments.

Love.

Yours,

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3602. Courtesy Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6411

163. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

April 17, 1937

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I have not written to you at all recently. I wrote to the Hindu Mission. We should investigate. If the Christians are holding out inducements to win over Harijans, nothing more need be done beyond publishing the facts. It is of course our duty to remove the hardships the Harijans may be suffering.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3958. Also C.W. 143. Courtesy: Parikshitlal L. Majmudar

164. LETTER TO HASANALI SHAMJI

April 17, 1937

I received your letter. The questions you have asked[1] can be raised more or less about all [religions]. I am just telling you my impression after reading the whole biography of the Prophet. If I start looking for imperfections and faults, I can find many but while doing so a man begins to despair and there is no reason to despair.

I left out about the hearing of the inner voice because while replying I did not have your letter before me. One who wants to hear the inner voice should observe five yamas[2]. The rules laid down for the observance of yamas should be adhered to and in order to do that one should devote as much time as possible to the repetition of His name so that it becomes as orderly as natural as breathing and the repetition should become as the beating of our heart. We do not hear our heartbeats but the heart goes on beating. Similarly the repetition of His name should go on. I have written on the subject many times in my articles.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

165.SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING, HUDLI-II

April 17, 1937

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

At the outset I wish to say a few things which are not relevant to the subject under discussion. Dr. Batra is here. I had requested him to give a helping hand in the sanitation arrangements. He told me a few things which I want to tell you about.

First, the soil here is sandy. For washing we need alkali in more or less degree. Sand contains no alkali. It is to be found only in earth. Therefore earth is our soap. We cannot wash our hands as effectively with sand as with earth. We should remember that there should either be earth placed in heaps outside latrins or members should use soap to wash their hands.

[1] The addressee had been repeatedly writing to Gandhiji about the shortcomings of Islam.

[2] According to Patanjali's Yogasustra, these are: ahimsa (non-violence), satya (truth), asteya (non-stealing), brahmacharya (celibacy) and aparigraha (non-possession).

Second, it has been noticed that some people put their soiled utensils into the drums filled with water. This is bad for health and bad according to tradition.

Third, those who serve are sometimes seen to serve liquids with their hands instead of with ladles. We should always serve liquids with a spoon or a ladle. Devotees of Truth should pay attention to small things. If they do not, they are lazy and laziness is a form of violence.

Now take the subject under consideration. It is a good thing that this discussion is taking place. I have myself been confused and I am still not very clear. I do not wholly agree with what Gangadharrao[1] and Acharya Bhagwat have said: It is of course correct that a man cannot go by his own opinion in everything. Where we are not sure of the correctness of our opinion we should consult our elders. The consultation is necessary. But it is not so here. I myself wanted to know your opinion as to whether we should go into Legislatures. This is not something which we should decide for all time. I know that my opposition to going into Legislatures has not considerably softened. But there has been no loss of principle here. And where there is no loss of principle involved I like to know what people's wishes are. I am a worshipper of Truth and I am also a servant of the people. I am affected by the atmosphere. My response is generally in conformity with the atmosphere. What I said at Patna was correct for the time. What I said at Faizpur was also correct. I keep myself equipped for meeting the needs of the season. If it rains I use an umbrella, if it is cold I can wrap myself in woollens and in summer there is muslin which is light as air or some such thing to cover me. People have agreed that this is right. There has been no change in my ideas. But I express them in keeping with the prevailing wind.

Now I take the question Kakasaheb has posed. He asks whether I am the same man who had advocated non-co-operation from 1920 to 1922 or whether I have changed. My answer is that I am the same man. If I was a non-co-operator then, I am a non-co-operator now. But the fact is that even at that time I was in reality a co-operator. A British magistrate had told me that, though I showed myself as a non-co-operator, at heart I sought co-operation I told him that he was right. Non-co-operation is not something I have accepted for all time. When I find that India can advance through co-operation, I will accept

[1] Gangadharrao Deshpande, also known as 'Karnataka Kesari'

co-operation. Following my 21day[1] fast I had said in a statement that co-operation was my religion and that I would die for co-operation provided I got it with honour.

Today We are going into the Legislatures not to give but to take co-operation. The atmosphere today is changed. We will have to seek remedies to suit the change in the atmosphere. I must refer here to something Premabehn said[2] yesterday. Whether she said it in jest or as sacrasm does not matter. But I cannot understand what kind of jest it was. It was no occasion for jest. I could only conclude that she said it out of her experience. If that was so, it is not right. My own experience is the opposite. I have not become what I am in the sense it has been suggested. Truth came to me when I was yet an infant. Ahimsa came to me when I was eighteen. My intellect was not mature then. Even today I do not pride myself on my intellect. At school the teachers did not consider me a very bright boy. They knew I was a good boy, but not a bright boy. I never knew first class and second class. I barely passed. I was a dull boy. I could not even speak properly. Even when I went to South Africa I went ony as a clerk. I did not go anywhere, like Pherozeshah Mehta, charging a thousand rupees as day's fee. I was to get £ 150 annually. My knowledge of rules and regulations was nil. I am not a learned man. I am a worshipper of Truth. In South Africa I found myself in the midst of Muslims. Mohammed I know only as a name. About Muslims I knew nothing. I told them the story of Harishchandra. Even this absurdity influenced them a great deal. Much later I took to politics. But the groundwork had been laid much before. When I saw that in the interests of Truth and non-violence I had to take part in politics I did so. But my experience is that my influence among people is not because of my political work. This is hundred per cent true. If at Saswad the experience is different, I do not know. But this has been my experience all along. I went to Champaran also at the request of

[1] From May 8 to 29 1933

[2] She had spoken on the question of members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh standing for election to the Legislativve Councils. On Gandhiji's explaining to her that her thoughts were immature, she had resolved not to make any public speech for a year. *Vide* also "Letter to Premabehn Kantak".,13-5-1937.

Brijkrishore Babu[1]. I had merely seen him. People also knew him only as a lawyer. He had not even heard of the Congress. I told them all not even to mention the Congress. Rajendra Babu never even dreamt of bringing him into the Congress. This occured to me later. Even today there are thousands in India who have no need of swaraj. Take Segaon itself, where I live. It is in Maharashtra and people in Maharashtra are very political-minded. But even they don't ask for swaraj. I do not mention Congress to them, because they will not understand it. They understand the question of untouchability and they also oppose untouchability. To women I talk about the charkha, about children. If I speak to them about the Legislatures they may ask me if I would bring them a couple of bags of foodgrains from there. What is the condition of India as a whole today? The talk of bread is all that the people understand. They have no use for politics. I have led campaigns in all parts of India, but never in the name of the Congress. Nowhere have I worked in that fashion. Today in Champaran people in their thousands talk about the Congress. It is the fruit of those six months of work in the course of which the Congress was not so much as mentioned. They repect the Congress because they consider these gentlemen their well-wishers.

There may be some amongst you, too, who think that Truth and non-violence will advance only through politics. I must tell them very clearly that Truth and non-violence are not dependent on anything. They are independent forces. If you want to be the worshippers of what Khan Saheb calls Allah, what I call Rama and Christian call Christ or God, you may do so. If you don't wish so, no harm is done to Him. If God is independent of you and me, He does not need politics. He does not need you and me. There are millions who are in quest of Him. Very few have had a glimpse of Him. I myself have been worshipping him for the last fifty years. In Him I find daily new strength, new things. If today I find it necessary to argue with you it means that I have not been able to imbibe all these things to the extent I should have. What is moral strength? Ramanama is the same thing for all. But when one man utters the name it makes an impact. Another's uttering makes none. What is the reason? The reason is that

[1] Father of Prabhavati

one has merged oneself in it. Another plays upon it as one might on a sitar or a violin. A parrot also utters Ramanama, but it does not touch its heart. It cannot understand its significance. I am not a worshipper of small things. Can a man who has been saying that no man is his guru, who has accepted no living person as his guru, be a worshipper of something that depends on politics? Truth and non-violence are precious commodities. They are neutral; they are unique things and the articles needed for their worship are also unique. Let Premabehn not forget all this.

Jamnalalji has said that if we go into the Legislatures today we cannot pursue Truth and non-violence. He has uttered something of great import. I don't agree with it. If Truth and non-violence cannot be pursued, then democracy also cannot be practised, for in that case it will be against Truth and non-violence. If you believe in democracy we shall have to work for the good of the millions. To do good to the millions we cannot all of us assemble in one place. We shall have to elect a few representatives. If they are true servants of the people, if they are true democrats, they will, with a pure heart, try to understand the wishes of the people and will voice them. When in 1920 the question arose of amending the objective of the Congress and Bipin Chandra Pal suggested democratic swaraj in place of swaraj, I opposed it because when I analyse swaraj I find that without democracy there can be no swaraj. What Pal intended was implied in the word swaraj itself. In swaraj, too, the Legislatures will retain more or less their present structure, though it is possible there may be some change in the external form. Let us sit as we are sitting here instead of in chairs and palaces. About one-third of the people who should have the right to vote have acquired the franchise. After some time the number ofvoters may reach 120 million. It is no small thing that today 30 million people can vote. Thousands of our workers have approached them and this had never been done before. The Congress message has spread more widely. It is not a small thing. I had been thinking whether it is right for members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh to carry this message. I told those who asked me that there was no harm in doing so. So long as there is room in the Congress for Truth and non-violence, so long as it does not say good-bye to the programme of 1920, we shall continue to be an organ of the Congress. We are not an

institution created under the Congress. We are a voluntary organization. The All-India Spinners' Association, and All-India Village Industries Association are organization created by the Congress. But Gandhi Seva Sangh is not created by the Congress. It came into existence in 1923 to save the programme of 1920 at a time when I was undergoing six years' imprisonment and when there was no talk of my being released. Even if the Congress gives up constructive programme tomorrow, the Sangh will not cease to exist. It will carry on that programme. Constructive programme is the permanent programme of Gandhi Seva Sangh. If it gives it up it will cease to be. In 1923 Motilalji and other leaders had taken the Councils programme in hand. It was not for us to quarrel with them. We also had to keep intact this real programme of the Congress because I know that if the Congress gives up the programme of 1920, it will be destroyed. What else could we have done in such a situation? Today also I say that there is no other programme besides this. But constructive programme is not like Truth and non-violence valid for all time. Take the charkha. If you go to the North Pole or to the Himalayan peaks or to Tibet, the talk of cotton won't do. Still I say that the constructive programme is for the good of our millions. Legislatures are only for a few. But the contructive programme is for all. Therefore it is right for me to stay with the thirty crores who stand appart from the three crore. Only a few will go, can go, into the Legislatures. I have told people who have written to me asking my advice not to get themeselves into this. But they did the very opposite saying they couldn't help it. Sardar took away forcibly even those people whom we wanted to keep. The example of Dr. Gopichand of the Punjab is before you. The same thing happened with others. Sardar was responsible for this betrayal. I had to say that what he had done was right. If he had not done it he would have been defeated at any rate in Gujarat. If I had told Rajaji not to go, he would not havegone. But if today I am asked, I shall say that what he did was right. The matter has an interesting history. Rajaji asked my opinion, but after going, not before. He considered it his duty to go and he went. I said I did not like it. But he did the right thing. Much work has been done in Madras. The workers there are members of the Spinners' Association. Most of the work was done through them.

Today Rajagopalachari has left. Tomorrow if I ask Sardar Vallabhbhai, Rajendra Babu or Jamnalalji, they may also leave. But then our Sangh will be reduced into a small band.

We want that everyone should become a member of the Sangh. But thequestion before me today is, if we stop everyone who is with us from going into the Conuncils, will it not harm our own work? For where will the Congress find men? And members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh did just this. I feel that they have done their duty. If they had not done so the Congress would not have been victorious in the same degree as it is. The Sangh is of no importance as compared with the Congress. The Congress is of the millions. We cannot leave it. It has accepted this programme on a permanent basis. It is not that they have accepted it under duress. The thing is clear before us. We cannot give it up. Those who go into the Legislatures today do not go in to Government's Legislatures. They go into their own Legislatures. What I have said is the truth. We have become the representatives of the people. Formerly only the representatives of the Government or of a handful of people went into the Legislatures. The eprentatives of the people have laid down their condition before the Government. If Truth and non-violence have to be practised in Legislatures, who will do so if not you? We have to increase the strength of the Congress. You may ask, well, why in that case have I gone out of the Congress? If I have gone out of the Congress, it is in order to be able to serve it better. So long as the Congress needs my services I shall continue to render them. I do not feel any isappointment. I have not gone to settle in Segaon out of any frustration. Whatever little strength I have is for the Congress. The Congress is mine. The ideas I am placing before you have been influenced by the opinions of you all. In brief, what I wish to say is that we have to find a place for this programme. But the estriction is that we shall continue our own work till then. If our leader, Kishorelal—not Vallabhbhai—orders us, we shall go into the Councils also.

Dharmadhikari asks whether as satyagrahis we can enter institutions opposed to us to voice our opposition there. Yes, why shouldn't we? But you must always remember the limits of satyagraha. We shall not go to betray or to offer violence. It may even be our duty to go in order to offer our open opposition. But here this is not the question. Legislatures are not institutions opposed to us. I like Legislatures. They are mine. The Governor has been made the

head. But the institution is mine. The Governor of Orissa knows this. With the help of Legislatures I wish to destroy this system. We are going into the Legislatures to gain strength. We are not going into the Legislatures to paralyse them. We go even to our enemy in order to change his heart. Supposing there is a meeting of drunkards and it invites us to go and speak on the evils of drinking. We shall certainly go. Someone may say they may burn us. Well, what of it? We shall die. What is important is, why we go. Do we go to advance Truth or to obstruct it? Let us go into the Legislatures to pursue Truth. After all the Legislatures are ours. Aren't they? The majority there is ours. Now that we have an opportunity to accept the challenge, shall we stay out? When we can openly go into the arena to meet our enemy, why shouldn't we? We do not go to beg, but to sap the enemy's strength. Have we spent five lakhs or seven lakhs of rupees for nothing? Today we have had to spend all this money. When the Congress has risen in people's esteem we will not have to spend even a cowrie. We boast of a constructive programme. I have been shouting in the pages of *Harijan*, how many charkha graduates are there? How many graduates for removal of untouchability? The answer is zero. Had conditions been different, the question of spending anything would never have arisen. We have to mobilize all our energies in order to serve.We have to march fully observing Truth and non-violence. We must always be armed with the two weapons of fearlessness and discipline. We will have to use them in Parliament. Carlyle once said that members of the House of Commons had not much need of common sense. This is bound to be so where there is democracy. The main thing a discipline. Obey your leader and ply your *taklis* there in silence. We need just such men. They need no legal or constitutional knowledge. Why should we not go into our own house? It is true everyone cannot go. Still everyone has to vote. I do not agree with Appa. Everybody has to be a primary voter. You may ask me why I have not become a voter. That is for a different reason. Not that I have not been given the right to vote, only I did not want to be a voter. My position is different and it is valid only for myself. The members of the Sangh are votaries of Truth. He whom the Gandhi Seva Sangh orders to go will go. The question is not of individuals. It is not a question of temptation of self-interest. He who goes there out or greed or self-interest will be or brtraying not only the Gandhi Seva Sangh but also Truth. He who thinks of the charkha all the 24 hours can do so in the Legislatures also. He does not have to exercise his mind there. He has merely to raise his band at a signal from his leader. It is not a predicament. It is our dharma. We are the servants of *Daridranarayana*. We shall go there as servants and if the Congress

gives the call. If we can form ministeries on our own conditions, then we have found the way to swaraj. If such men go into the Legislatures, we shall not meet with defeat even in one of the eleven provinces. If the Congress does not call us we should remain where we are. This is not a question of superior or inferior. The constructive programme and this programme are both equal.[1]

As regards the oath of allegiance, I should ask no one to go there who has a conscientious objection to the oath. It is not a religious oath, so far as I understand the constitution, and it is wholly consistent with the demand for immediate and concrete independence.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Tritiya Varshik Adhiveshan (Hudli, Karnatak) ka Vivaran pp. 24-30

166. SACRIFICE OF RAS

At the instance of Sardar, Shrimati Bhaktibehn[2] Shri Ashabhai, Shri Ravishankar[3], who is the priest of the Dharalas and the Baraiyas, and Shri Ravjibhai[4] approached me on behalf of the Kaira district. Sardar also happened to be present. These representatives had heard that I was inclined to hold the Congress session in the Bardoli taluk. I had read the report of the enquiry committee. After a long and friendly discussion, I think I was able to persuade the representatives to shift the venue of the Congress session to the Bardoli taluk. I had only one strong argument to support me. Kaira is a strong district. No one is ignorant of the sacrifice made by Ras. I also believe that Ras would do credit to whatever task it takes upon itself. However, when other districts or taluks wish to compete, it is the dharma of the strong competitor to withdraw in favour of the weak. I suggested such a sacrifice to the representatives, and they accepted my proposal. When Darbar Saheb heard of this decision, he was annoyed and he wrote to me an affectionate but strongly worded letter in which he justified by many arguments the worthiness of the Kaira district.

I would give only one reply to those who hold such a view: If you wish to add to the strength of the Congress, i.e., of Gujarat, will you allow those who are weak to become strong, or allow those who are strong to become even more so? Ras has become more famous for its strength in the already strong Kaira district. Hence the above

[1] What follows is from *Harijan*, 1-5-1937

[2] Bhaktiba, wife of Darbar Gopaldas Desai

[3] Ravishankar Vyas, popularly known as Ravishankar Maharaj

[4] Raojibhai Patel

was my first and final reply to the supporters of Ras. Many other things were discussed in the mean time because, where many side-issues have to be considered, a single consideration does not make a person act; there are many factors–palpable and less palpable–that must be considered.

In whichever village of Gujarat the Congress is held, all Gujaratis have to work for it on the understanding that it is being held in Gujarat taken as a whole. The most important task at the annual session of the Congress should be to make the exhibition impressive. It is an indispensable part of the session. We increase our efficiency by organizing a beautiful exhibition; hundreds of thousands of persons get valuable training; the entire rural area becomes revitalized as our primary purpose is to encourage cottage industries. Hence I hope that Gujaratis will forget that the Congress is to be held in the Bardoli taluk and keep reminding themselves that it is to be held in Gujarat and use all their energies in consolidating the constructive work of the Congress.

Gujarat is backward in many matters. In one matter it lags behind all other Provinces–in abolishing untouchability. The caste discrimination which is practised here is not seen in any other Provinces. That kind of discrimination should be totally done away with. Gujarat also falls behind other Provinces in so far as the production of khadi is concerned. In fact Bardoli had taken the pledge that within six months the spinning-wheel would ply in every home and no other cloth but khadi would be used there and untouchability would be totally wiped out. Will Bardoli and the entire people of Gujarat start making preparation from today so that khadi would be really introduced? Hundreds of thousands of rupees are spent by Gujarat in the name of *goseva* but does anybody know the value of mother cow? How much cow's milk is produced? And how much difficulty is experienced in selling what little is produced! It is Sardar's pledge to supply cow's milk to everyone at the Congress session. If that pledge is to be kept, Bardoli taluk should start collecting cows right now and an exhibition of cows and bullocks, the like of which has never been seen, should be held at the time of the Congress session. Moreover, Surat district is notorious for drinking. If the evil is totally given up in that district before the Congress session, that would be a very creditable achievement. Women can play an important role in all these tasks. Will they do so? Will the Patidars, the Dharalas, Baraiyas, Thakores, whatever you call them, plunge into the tasks I have mentioned, looking upon the holding of the Congress in Bardoli taluk as if it was being held in the Kaira district or in Ras itself? The sacrifice of Ras is great; so is its renown. If, despite the

Congress not being held there, Ras makes its own handsome contribution, it will add to its own prestige and to that extent strengthen itself also.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 18-4-1937

167. ADVICE TO NEWLY MARRIED COUPLES [1]

HUDLI,
[*April 18, 1937*][2]

You must know that I do not believe in ceremonies, except to the extent that they awaken in us a sense of duty. I have had that attitude of mind ever since I began to think for myself. The *mantras* you have repeated and the vows you have taken were all in Sanskrit, but they were all translated for you. We had the Sanskrit text because I know that the Sanskrit word has a power under the influence of which one would love to come.

One of the wishes expressed by the husband during the ceremony is that the bride may be the mother of a good and healthy son. The wish did not shock me. It does not mean that procreation is obligatory but means that if progeny is wanted, marriage performed in a strictly religious spirit is essential. He who does not want a child need not marry at all. Marriage for the satisfaction of sexual appetite is no marriage. It is *Vyabhichara*–concupiscence. Today's ceremony, therefore, means that the sexual act is permitted only when there is a clear desire by both for a child. The whole conception is sacred. The act has therefore to be performed prayerfully. It is not preceded by the usual courtship designed to provide sexual excitement and pleasure. Such union may only be once in a lifetime, if no other child is desired. Those who are not morally and physically healthy have no business to unite, and if they do, it is *vyabhichara*–concupiscence. You must unlearn the lesson, if you have learnt it before, that marriage is for the satisfaction of animal appetite. It is a superstition. The whole ceremony is performed in the presence of the sacred fire. Let the fire make ashes of all the lust in you.

I would also ask you to disabuse yourselves of another

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The newly married couples were Manu and Surendra Mashruwala, and Nirmala and Ishwardas. The weddings took place on the same day. "All outward show and ceremony was eschewed, no invitations to friends or relations were issued . . . " Gandhiji addressed his remarks to the parties privately.

[2] From *Gandhi–1915-1948*

superstition which is rampant nowadays. It is being said that restraint and abstinence are wrong and free satisfaction of the sexual appetite and free love is the most natural thing. There was never a more ruinous superstition. You may be incapable of attaining the ideal, your flesh may be weak, but do not therefore lower the ideal, do not make irreligion your religion. In your weak moments remember what I am telling you. The remembrance of this solemn occasion may well steady and restrain you. The very purpose of marriage is restraint and sublimation of the sexual passion. If there is any other purpose, marriage is no consecration, but marriage for other purposes besides having progeny.

You are being united in marriage as friends and equals. If the husband is called *swamin*, the wife is *swamini*–each master of the other, each helpmate of the other, each co-operating with the other in the performance of life's tasks and duties. To you boys I would say that if you are gifted with better intellects and richer emotions, infect the girls with them. Be their true teachers and guides, help them and guide them, but never hinder them or misguide them. Let there be complete harmony of thought and word and deed between you, may you have no secrets from each other, may you be one in soul.

Don't be hypocrites, don't break your health in the vain effort of performing what may be impossible for you. Restraint never ruins one's health. What ruins one's health is not restraint but outward suppression. A really self-restrained person grows every day from strength to strength and from peace to more peace. The very first step in self-restraint is the restraint of thoughts. Understand your limitations and do only as much as you can. I have placed the ideal before you–the right angle. Try as best as you can to attain the right angle. But if you fail, there is no cause for grief or shame. I have simply explained to you that marriage is consecration, a new birth, even as the sacred thread ceremony is a consecration and a new birth. Let not what I have told you alarm you or weaken you. Always aim at complete harmony of thought and word and deed. Always aim at purifying your thoughts and everything will be well. There is nothing more potent than thought. Deed follows word and word follows thought. The world is the result of a mighty thought, and where the thought is mighty and pure the result is always mighty and pure. I want you to go hence armed with the armour of a noble ideal, and I assure you no temptation can harm you, no impurity can touch you.

Remember the various ceremonies that have been explained to you. Look at the simple-looking ceremony of *madhuparka*. The whole world is full of *madhu*–sweet nectar or honey–if only you will partake of it after the rest of the world has taken its share of it. It

means enjoyment by means of renunciation.

QUESTION: But if there is no desire for progeny, should there be no marriage?

ANSWER: Certainly not. I do not believe in Platonic marriages. In certain rare cases men are known to have married women to protect the latter and not for any physical union at all. But those cases are very rare indeed. You must read all that I have written on pure married life. What I read in the *Mahabharata* is daily growing upon me. Vyasa is described therein as having performed *niyoga*. He is not described as beautiful, but he was the reverse of it. His form is represented as terrible, he made no amorous gestures, but he smeared his whole body with ghee before he performed the union. He performed the act not for lust but for procreation. The desire for a child is perfectly natural, and once the desire is satisfied there should be no union[1].

Nurturing carnal desires is a transgression of the law. The desire for progeny is a natural desire. In woman, one finds that there is a desire to become a mother. That desire is not the same as sexual desire. Anyone who wishes to become a mother, once she has had sexual intercourse, will have no further desire for it. She will keep thinking only of her child, she will make efforts to see that her child is healthy, free from any diseases and is born with the best possible *sanskaras*[2]. This natural rule is practised among animals as well. The reason why lustfulness is increasing in the world is that no one is aware of this kind of marriage.

This pure dharma is not difficult to practise. Just as even dry *roti* arouses the interest of anyone who is hungry, similarly, the practice of dharma, self-control, also becomes interesting.Anyone who practises self-restraint finds it easy to develop his other senses. Manu calls the first son alone *dharmaja*, all the rest are *kamaja* (born out of desire). Our Shastras have been written from experience, not for the sake of writing. The practice of seemingly difficult rules (laws) would become easy if we keep purifying our thoughts and practising these.

That gives in a nutshell the law of sexual relations. And what is God but the Law? And to obey God is to perform the Law. Remember that you were thrice asked to repeat: “I will not transgress the Law in any respect.” Even if we had a handful of men and women prepared to abide by the Law, we should have a race of men and women stalwart and true.

Remember that I really came to enjoy my married life after I

[1] The two paragraphs which follow are translated from Harijanbandhu.

[2] Inherited innate tendencies

ceased to look at Ba sexually. I took the vow of abstinence when I was in the prime of youth and health, when I was young enough to enjoy married life in the accepted sense of the term. I saw in a flash that I was born, as we all are, for a sacred mission. I did not know this when I was married. But on coming to my senses I felt that I must see that the marriage subserved the mission for which I was born. Then indeed did I realize true dharma. True happiness came into our lives only after the vow was taken.[1]

That dharma of restraint can only be practised when all the things which nurture sexual desires are renounced, when sharing the same bed as well as suggestive gestures are eschewed. I realized all this when I became awakened. If the satisfying of sexual desires is not the purpose of marriage, what then is its purpose? I realized that public service was the answer to this question and I was also able to convince Ba of this. Although she is illiterate she stood beside me in all that I did and became the object of praise, not because of me but in her ownright. She may look frail but at the age of sixty-nine she can keep toiling day and night. If, however, we had given in to sexual craving, what would have been our plight?

And yet I woke up late in the sense that I had lived the married life for some years. You are lucky enough to be aroused in good time. Circumstances when I was married were as unpropitious as they could be. For you they are as propitious as they could be. There was one thing though that I possessed and that carried me through. It was the armour of truth. That protected me and saved me. Truth has been the very foundation of my life. *Brahmacharya* and ahimsa were born later out of truth. Whatever, therefore, you do, be true to yourselves and to the world. Hide not your thoughts. If it is shameful to reveal them, it is more shameful to think them.

Harijan, 24-4-1937, and *Harijanbandhu*, 25-4-1937

168. SPEECH AT THREAD CEREMONY HUDLI

[*April 18, 1937*][2]

Do you know that from today you[3] have become *dwijas?* What does the word *dwija* mean? It means twice-born. Today you have taken a new birth, so you have acquired knowledge today of which you were ignorant so far. The *shastri* has told you that you are now worthy of studying the Vedas. That, of course, you will do, but the

[1] The paragraph which follows is translated from *Harijanbandhu*

[2] From *Gandhi–1915-1948*

[3] Brother and son of Mahadev Desai

fuller meaning of "studying of the Vedas" is a life in conformity with dharma. So far your life was devoid of the consciousness of dharma and *adharma* but now you have acquired that consciousness. During a famine, the sage Vishwamitra stole meat out of hunger. Having done that, he had to perform many ceremonies before eating it. No meal can be taken without taking a bath and performing the *sandhya*. Hence he began these ceremonies. But, while in the middle of these activities, he realized how low he had fallen! He had committed theft merely to appease his stomach, and that too of meat. He who was satisfied with fruit and vegetables and had reached the *vanaprastha* stage of his life had coveted meat!These thoughts made him aware of his dharma. He took the piece of meat back to the butcher from whom he had stolen it and begged forgiveness. The latter was embarrassed at the sage seeking his forgiveness and said, "King among sages, this shop is yours, satisfy your hunger as much as you wish." This made a deep impression on the sage. He told the butcher that as from that day the latter was his guru. There follows a long conversation between the two which is narrated in the *Mahabharata*. However, it is irrelevant for your purpose. I narrated this story to you so that you would get an idea of what religious life is like. You have already taken a vow to keep your thoughts pure for twelve years and study while observing *brahmacharya*, but as from today you have begun thinking from the standpoint of dharma. You should not make the mistakes you have been making in the past as you have a new birth now. And, before you do anything you shall ask yourself whether what you are doing is right or wrong. The sacred thread is useful from this standpoint. Otherwise, there is no need to believe that *dwija* means a Brahmin. A Brahmin is one who has awareness of Brahman. If, after receiving the sacred thread, we do not take a new birth, if we do not begin a life in accordance with dharma, it makes little difference whether we wear it or not. I do not ask anyone to wear the sacred thread, as it has become a mere outward ceremony. But those who wish to imbibe consciousness of dharma from the ceremony may well wear the sacred thread.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 25-4-1937

169. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

KUMRI ASHRAM, BELGAUM DISTRICT,
April 19, 1937

CHI. MIRA,

I hope you got my letter[s] from Poona and Hudli. From the night of 17th we have been having continuous rain. The camp was not constructed for rains. We have been obliged to shift where there is cover. Therefore we are overcrowded. And yet there is no sign of rain stopping.

It is a pity Munnalal should have fever again. I hope you are having the papers and the post regularly.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

The wedding[1] went off well.

From the original: C.W. 6378. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9844

170. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

April 19, 1937

CHI. VIJAYA,

Your bundle of saris has been safely conveyed. I hope you have been helping Mirabehn as much as you can. If you understand the reason behind every process, then you may be sure that your intellect will develop with surprising speed. Tell Vasumatibehn that I am not writing to her today. I hope she has been taking hip-baths regularly and taking milk without the cream. Here it has been raining since the 17th evening. Everything has been upset. Now only the discussions regarding the work of the Sangh which had been planned are going on.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7064. Also C.W. 4556. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

[1] Of Manu Gandhi with Surendra Mashruwala; *vide* "Advice to Newly Married Coupies", 18-4-1937

171. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH[1]

April 19, 1937

CHI. MUNNALAL,

You have again fallen ill. How is that? You ought not to [impair] your health . . . You must give up . . . for a long time. That means you should not take wheat. Fruit . . . Live on milk, curds . . . You can eat dates. Do not overexert yourself. Go to bed at 9 p.m. Drink boiled water. You must learn the art of not falling ill.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8588. Also C.W. 7008. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

172. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

April 19, 1937

CHI. LILA,

Dwarkadas seems to have committed some mistake in the diet. I would prefer that he should go to Rajkot. But it would be equally good if he came to Wardha. In any case it would be definitely good for him to leave Bombay. Possibly he may not get at Wardha the facilities he will have at Rajkot. Your bread was altogether ill-baked. Nobody could eat it. Everybody had to throw it away. You will learn in time by keeping on trying like this, but one should draw a lesson from every error. A mango tree does not bear fruit in a short time. Haste will not pay in learning cooking.

We shall reach on the 24th.

Here it has been raining all the time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9585. Also C.W. 6557. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] The original is damaged at several places.

173. LETTER TO C. RAJGOPALACHARI

HUDLI,
April 20, 1937

DEAR C. R.,

Personally I think it is better to ignore Rajah's letter. But you may take notice of it, if you think it necessary in the public interest. No time for more as the bell for attending morning prayer has gone.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
49 FAZALULLAH ROAD.
TYAGARAYA NAGAR
MADRAS

From a photostat: G.N. 2061

174. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING, HUDLI-III

April 20, 1937

For today you may consider me the President. For I shall have to do most of the talking particularly on the subject of Kishorelal's[1] intended resignation. He insists on resigning as President. I do not like it. I had no suspicion at all of his intention to resign. There is something in it which is contrary to dharma. He came to see me in the morning. That is why I have been late by a few minutes. In the course of our talk I asked him a few questions. From his answers I could only conclude that what he intends to do is contrary to dharma. It is impossible of course that Kishorelal should deliberately do anything which is contrary to dharma. He is a godfearing man. But even godfearing men sometimes do things, albeit unknowingly, which are contrary to dharma. I say this from my own experience as well as that of others. The intention always is to pursue dharma. The effect is violation of it. If Kishorelal persists in his intention to resign there is going to be a violation of dharma. I can cite many instances of the kind, only I do not wish to take up your time. I did not of course wish to press Kishorelal. I did question him thoroughly. From his own answers I could see that his resgination would bring no good either to

[1] Kishorelal Mashruwala

the Sangh or to him personally. He himself is the best judge of his dharma. I cannot presume to judge for him. My duty is merely to help him in what he may consider his dharma. I would have done so in such a situation. But he was not able to say definitely that that was his dharma.

Gomati was with him. I have respect for her intelligence. I inquired from her. She could not say much, except that Kishorelal had been distressed during the last two days. In my opinion this was not a sufficient reason. It would not justify my telling Kishorelal to do as he contemplated. Then I sent for Nathji[1] . He is very intimate with Kishorelal. Kishorelal has great respect for him. I knew that in case of doubt Kishorelal would seek his advice. I also know him well. I asked him. I saw that he was inclined to agree with me. He told me he would have a talk with Kishorelal. I had no intention of making use of Nathji's influence with him. If both Kishorelal and Gomati clearly felt that it was Kishorelal's dharma to resign I would ask you to let him go. But Nathji told me that he could not say anything in the matter and that I should order Kishorelal. Well, generally I do not like to order even children. But sometimes I order even old men. I agreed to do so. I told Kishorelal that he could not leave at this juncture. It will not distress Kishorelal to obey because he is conscious of dharma. He has agreed.

I have told you this because you must know. It is now for you and for me to remove the doubt that assails him. We are votaries of truth and non-violence. None of course can boast of fully pursuing truth and non-violence. To boast of any such thing would be conceit. But while we may not boast we have a right to try. Kishorelal fears we are giving up truth and non-violence. The parliamentary programme has created an enthusiasm amongst us. We have come to feel that swaraj will be more quickly obtained through that programme. Therefore the question of the means employed ceases to be considered. The brute in man is awakened. I concede that this possibility is there in our accepting the programme. And it is of course agreed that there is a good deal of the brute in man. Externally God has made us quite different from animals–for instance, we have hands which animals do not have. But the inner distinction is of much greater importance. A sign of this inner distinction is man's ability to judge between the essential and the inessential. The brute in us will show itself in any case. May be, in the Councils programme there are greater chances for the brute to manifest itself. But we have been born as men, which will be justified if we subdue the beast. We have to

[1] Kedarnath Kulkarni

bring out through our conduct the distinction between us and the animals. In this lies our humanness. It is not godliness. I know the Councils programme is such that we may indulge in abusing the British. We may deliver harsh-worded speeches. There is a lot of room for conceit, too. We have to keep away from all this. So we have to have a man who has an awareness of this. That is why we made Kishorelal our President. Gandhi Seva Sangh's work cannot be carried on with money. If it could, we would have proposed Jamnalalji as our President and he would have agreed. But he told us to look for a fitter person and withdrew. If Jamnalalji collects a crore of rupees for the Sangh it will not benefit the Sangh, it will only harm it. Kishorelaldoes not have a pice he can call his own. He was considered fit to be the President.

Kishorelal's argument is that the parliamentary programme is full of temptations. But is that any reason why we should keep away from it? Should we not face the temptations? Kishorelal answers that so far we have remained untouched by temptations, that even today we look upon the things with suspicion. Then there are a number of important things to do. Under the circumstances, why should we unnecessarily take upon ourselves this botheration? I say you are going at my instance. The responsibility is mine. So far we have not gone. But can anyone say our hearts, too, were untouched? From the point of view of truth and non-violence, it can be dharma to accept something that we had earlier rejected. Our dharma is not one-sided. So much for Kishorelal's doubts. Then he also says that the language of the resolutions of the Congress these days does not give expression to truth. This charge, too, is one-sided. He who proposes a resolution expresses his thoughts. The resolutions of the Congress also express the truth as the Congress sees it. We smell untruth in them. The resolution says that we are going into the Councils to wreck the Constitution. How can we show consideration for what we intend to destroy? Before 1920 the feeling was: why look towards a thing which we do not wish to accept?

Kishorelal feels that so far we had kept the flow of water blocked and that now we are breaking the dyke, which must release the water. So long we had talked of boycotting Councils, schools, courts, etc., and of destroying them. Today we are speaking a different language. There are others also who share this feeling. All this is being said with reference to the manifesto of the Congress. How can we consider the language of the manifesto? The manifesto is not that of Jawaharlal alone. Vallabhbhai, Rajendra Babu and I have our share in it. I have not forgotten it. I read it over two or three times. It is not contradicted by the Congress resolution concerning acceptance

of office. The practical part of that resolution has been drafted by me. Jawaharlal thought that it was not in conformity with the remaining three-fourths of the resolution and with the manifesto. He interprets the manifesto in one way, I in another. I see nothing wrong in it. The language is open to two different interpretations; of this there is no doubt. But a satyagrahi can use language which may be interpreted in two different ways. Truth, as I know it, does not demand that the words a satyagrahi utters should have only one meaning. What he says may have not two but several different meanings. The condition merely is that the meaning should not be hidden, words should not be used for deception and should be necessary [to convey the meaning]. The intention in using the language should not be to hide truth. When we frankly speak a language admitting two interpretations, we are not giving up truth. Sometimes it also happens that we intend only one meaning but those who hear us read two meanings in what we say. Here also truth is not violated. An outstanding instance is the Vedas. The *Gita* also has two meanings: one spiritual, the other material. There are also various other meanings. We cannot say the language of Tulsidas has only one meaning. So many meanings are read in his language that poor Tulsidas would never have imagined. But this does not prove either the authors or their commentators false. The language of the servant of truth does not always yield only one meaning.

There is nothing to fear if in the same resolution Jawaharlal reads one meaning and I another. I have told him that his own interpretation may not necessarily be true. I had a discussion with him on the subject of office acceptance. The resolution was an independent document. Jawaharlal's contention was that it was not in conformity with the background of the manifesto[1]. I told him that if he so desired I could make it conform to it. For when I say that I shall wreck the Constitution I mean I shall wreck it through non-violence. Please remember this condition of mine. I can bring about freedom by remaining inside it. If we have courage and independence of spirit, we can wreck the Constitution through non-violence. Jawaharlal does not think it is possible though he would of course be happy if this could be done. He mistrusts the human race a little. He says we would not be able to do anything there. He therefore places his faith in class struggle. This is the fundamental difference between him and me.

I say capital is insentient but the capitalist is not so. It is possible

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Extracts from the Congress Election Manifesto", 22-8-1936.

to change his heart. He says this has never happened before. He quotes instances from history in support of his contention. I hear what he says. But my contention is, if it is not possible through non-violence to do what has not been done so far, which is the other power with which it can be done? If it cannot be done, then non-violence loses all significance. Never till I die can I accept this–provided of course I retain my ideas till I die. Today it is my firm conviction that non-violence will triumph. Even if we are all defeated non-violence will still triumph. I shall continue to say it until my last moment. Personally I would want to change the heart of the Government also. That is why we are going into the Councils. If I accept office it will be to gain swaraj. If we cannot secure office no harm will be done. I loose nothing. In either case I win. He who considers it improper to accept office with a view to wrecking the Constitution will naturally not accept office. But if we come pledging ourselves to truth, non-violence, fearlessness and unselfishness and accept Ministerships on our own conditions, we can win the battle of swaraj and establish a constitution of our own making in place of the present one. Jawaharlal does not think so. There is no point in hiding the fact that he holds opinions which are different from mine.

Obviously Rajendra Babu, Vallabhbhai, Rajaji and others are inclined in one way, Jawaharlal in another. Nevertheless we are all working together. It is certainly a matter of wonder. But it is a necessity. After all we have to live in the world. We have to work with patriots holding views different from our own. Therefore we have to work in a spirit of co-operation and compromise. For this we shall have to take the initiative. There is no doubt that Jawaharlal is inclined to be rash. He says harsh things. Sometimes he calls people names. But he knows the worth of his colleagues. He understands discipline and restraint. Jawaharlal works with his colleagues in the belief that one day he will convert them to his view and he hopes that his contact with them will one day change their opinions. Three ideologies have thus been in conflict in the Congress. Even when I was in the Working Committee there was this conflict between two or three ideologies. I purposely made Vithalbhai the secretary. Even so the drafting of the resolutions always had to be done by me. They always admitted of two interpretations. I saw no objection to this because I have to carry the others with me. Truth and non-violence are the creed of the Congress. Still no one has accepted them as their creed. Those who have accepted them as a creed belong to this Sangh. Having admitted that we have so far pursued truth and non-violence, Kishorelal asks, supposing we adopt policies in future which would mean giving up of truth and non-violence in practice, then? I say to him, “In that case

your leaving the Sangh will not help. In that case you will have to wind up the Sangh, you will have to bury it. You must then say that neither you nor anyone else can run the Sangh."

He asks me, "Who is he to say this." I tell him that it is his right. He is the chief of the Sangh. It is therefore also his duty. If the members of the Sangh practise untruth and violence, he will then have to say that it should be wound up. Others may persist in continuing the Sangh. But in that case it will have ceased to be a body wedded to truth and non-violence. I do not say this without deliberation. I have thought a good deal over the matter. I have ordered Kishorelal to continue at his post. He has agreed to stay and he is non sorry for it. This tale now ends here.

Let me now explain the policy we have adopted on the Councils question. The resolution does not mean that all of you are now free to go to the Councils. We have only one programme–the constructive programme. Swaraj depends only upon this. You have to devote yourself only to this. I do not even dream, no one ever does, that we can secure swaraj through Legislative Assemblies. But if we can promote the constructive programme even with the help of Legislative Assemblies, why should we not do so? We shall certainly further the constructive programme through these bodies. We shall also work outside. Then we shall certainly secure swaraj.

Jawaharlal believes that we can fight the Government there. Fight we certainly can and fight we may. But we shall not sacrifice truth and non-violence even one whit. We have to prepare for civil disobedience. Jawaharlal also says that we have to prepare for civil disobedience. But he does not consider non-violence the only means. To him non-violence is not the supreme dharma. If for the sake of the freedom of India he feels compelled to cut the throats of Englishmen, he will not hesitate. But he will do it openly, not in a clandestine manner.

This is not my policy. I have given the sovereign place to non-violence. Swaraj coming through violence will be no swaraj for me. I shall therefore never agree to it.You also share my view. To Jawaharlal violence may well not be dispensable, but if swaraj could be gained through non-violence he would be happy. He, therefore, co-operates with me in my experiments. We are adopting a new policy. We are going into the Councils to strengthen the old policy. We are there to break the walls. What will happen if, in the name of the three crores of voters, other people go into the Councils and say that they do not want the charkha? I say that you have to go to Councils to further the cause of the charkha. You go there as the representatives of the people. You will say that the charkha had been going on even before.

It is true, but it has been going on without thought. If we had plied the charkha knowing its implications, we should have secured swaraj by now, and it would not have been necessary for us to go to the Councils. Let us ply the charkha with knowledge. I again affirm what I had said in 1920 that if we ply the charkha with knowledge, swaraj is in our hands. You will say that I make statements which have no meanings. I do say things which have many meanings. Here, too, the charkha has to be given a wide interpretation. I still say that if the whole country plies the charkha with deliberation we shall not have so much as to mention the Councils. Today that is not so.

Today we must come into close contact with the representatives of the three crores of voters. We must take from them as much as we can. Why should we not ? It does not mean that all of us should go to the Councils or that all those who wish to go should be permitted to do so. We shall inquire fully into the merits of each case. We shall also need a parlimentary committee. It must have both Rajendra Babu and Vallabhbhai on it. This means that we are not opening the doors of the Legislatures for all the members of the Sangh. Nor are we opening the doors of the Sangh. We are opening the doors of the Legislatures only for those who have pledged themselves to the constructive programme and without whom the Congress risks loosing seats. Let us leave Kishorelal to decide the matter. No one else can decide this.

If tomorrow Satyamurti asks me if I would admit him into the Sangh, I shall say no. .My relations with Satyamurti are excellent. Sometimes out of consideration for me he lets his daughter ply a charkha. But he does not believe in the charkha and he cannot be a member of the Sangh, however much help he may render us. This is by way of an instance. This shows that we have not opened our doors to everyone. We have opened the doors for our own people. Supposing we want that Jethalal should not go, shall we give up the Anantpur seat? If Dr. Khare says that he has to be sent, I may say that he is an uncouth person, that he does not know anything beyond the charkha, cannot even speak properly. But if nevertheless Dr. Khare insists on Jethalal being sent, I shall say to Jethalal: ‘Please go and ply your charkha there. At least one votary of Charkha was found necessary there. I am glad of it. If everyone going there believes in the charkha, the effectiveness of the charkha will increase.’

Let us therefore try and see that everyone going there should be a votary of the charkha. But we must not appease the people. We must not flatter them. Such people have gone. Sardar tells me that if Dr. Gopichand had not gone, we would have lost the seat. There have been several such people. If it has not been the case everywhere it is a

matter of shame. If everywhere we can send representatives of the charkha and the villagers, we should do so. You will become really capable when you develop for your work a thousand times the love that you feel for it today. Then you will not go on your own but under popular pressure. If you have a socialist rival he will withdraw in your favour. Only then is there any point in your going. If the socialist has a chance of going and he does not see any need for you to go, you should let him.

I do not wish to cause mutual quarrels. I am one who left the Congress in order to avoid quarrels. When I was in the Congress I said I wanted Kelkar. I had sufficient faith in my own skill to feel that he would do the least harm if he worked with me. I want that it should be made impossible for anyone else to go except those who have faith in the charkha. If Vallabhbhai gives up the charkha, he will no longer remain the Sardar of Gujarat. And if in that case he fights the election on his own and wins, it would be a matter of shame for the Sangh, it would be a matter of shame for Bardoli, a matter of shame for Gujarat. It would also be a matter of shame for us. Whom then shall we send? One is told that the charkhawalas have no intellect. This is true to some extent. If we ply the charkha like automatons, it is no discipline.

There is the story of Ekalavya in the *Mahabharata.* Think over it. It is not mere poetry. There is truth in it. Clay is not sentient and an image has no strength, but for Ekalavya, the image of Dronacharya was not clay. He saw in it Guru Dronacharya himself. How could his indomitable faith fail? If we have such a faith in the charkha, it can become for us a living image. We can then put into it all our resolve. The charkha is for us a symbol of ahimsa. The real thing here is not the image, but our attitude towards it. In one sense the world is real, in another God alone is the one thing real. Both are true in different ways. If we can see God in our symbol it represents truth for us. Non-violence is not for fools. We will have to use our intelligence. Non-violence has place both for knowledge and action, that is, both forthe intellect and the organs of the body. Today these are used for the destruction of non-violence. What we want is that these should become hand-maidens of non-violence. Only when we make the organs of our body hand-maidens of non-violence will they acquire strength. If non-violence cannot be effective in this field, where else can it be so? I shall not leave any field out of fear. If I leave any field fearing that non-violence will be of no use, then there can be no such thing as non-violence. And what field shall I give up? My body will continue to function, the organs of the body will continue to be active. I do not

wish to commit suicide. I shall not block my ears and my nose. What then shall I do? There is only one way open to me and that is to make all the limbs of my body hand-maidens of non-violence.

The other method was tried by Kishorelal. That was many years ago. He went into solitude to discipline himself. When a train whistled past, it broke his solitude. One day when I went to him on my usual visit, he told me that the whistling of the train troubled him and that he was thinking of plugging his ears with cottonwool or rubber. I told him to try that method also. But it was only an external aid. He was not able to concentrate on God, so he heard the sound of the whistle. Kishorelal himself saw this and so when the next day I told him to put cottonwool or rubber into his ears he said that that was no longer necessary. We have ears but they are not for misuse. The same is true of the other organs. The organs are there to sustain the body. Our mouth eats to nourish the body. If we eat for the pleasure of the palate we shall not be pursuing non-violence.

Even if someone forcibly sends us to the Councils we shall have our own views. Kishorelal fears once we go there we shall forget all our ideas. I share his fear. But why should I shirk because of it? If you do not have a living faith in the charkha and the rest of the constructive programme of the Congress, the fears of Kishorelal will prove true. But I have faith in you. If I did not have it, I would not have come here. Why should I distrust you? I have frankly told you everything. There is here no departure from policy. Last evening the language used was different but that is the way with language. Language acquires lucidity in the course of work. There is no doubt that harmony of thought, word and deed is the sign of truth. But ideas advance and language is left behind. I wondered why I was not able to convince Kishorelal. My language was vague. I listened to the discussion and my ideas became clear. But the language did not become clear. When I meditate after giving thought to a matter my language becomes clearer and clearer each day. But I have not yet had time for this.

In accepting the Councils programme we are not getting away from non-violence. In taking this step, I am making you advance two steps in the direction of non-violence. If you can understand them and act accordingly you shall during this year make progress such as you have never been able to make before. The time has come when India must choose either this way or that. It seems to me that at this juncture you cannot keep yourselves shut up in a room. It is yet to be shown whether as a nation we are moving towards truth and non-violence or not. It would be cowardice for you to turn away from three crores of voters. Even if we have truth and non-violence on our

tongues and something else in our hearts, what I have said will bear fruit. If you are not hypocrites you will go to the Assemblies with full faith in non-violence and advance towards the goal. If you prove to be hypocrites it will not distress me. It would do us good if hypocrisy is exposed. When life leaves the body we burn it, even though it be that of a person as dear as a father, and we cast the ashes in the Ganga. If the soul of the Sangh, which is truth and non-violence, leaves it, it will be the duty of Kishorelal to consign it to the flames. The Sangh will get vigour only if it is a living thing. If even today it has no life in it we are all hypocrites and it will be no use for the Sangh to continue to exist.

Shastris tell me that truth and non-violence are subtle things. They ask how one can form organizations out of abstract things. I assert that truth and non-violence can be organized. If non-violence cannot be organized, it is not a dharma. If there is anything special about me, it is only this, that I am organizing truth and non-violence. Otherwise they will cease to be the eternal verities that they are to me. To me truth and non-violence are not unreal things and if they cannot become our collective dharma they are false. What I want to do and want to die after doing, is to organize non-violence. And if it is not valid in every field it is false. I assert that in every walk of life, non-violence has its use. I speak the language of the Jains. They say that the rule should admit of no exception. This is also the language of geometry. A right angle must have 90 degrees. If there is any sphere of life in which non-violence is ineffective it is false. Please remember this. If you all take the opposite path and give up the charkha and non-violence, I will say that you never had faith in truth and non-vilence. Believe it that though it may be without your knowing it, you were all votaries of violence., I do not condemn you. You have come to the Sangh after careful thought and in the name of truth.Remember that truth and non-violence are not for hermits. These eternal principles apply in courts, legislatures and other spheres of human endeavour. Your faith is going to be put to a severe test. Do not run away in fright.

You are being given today a difficult question paper. Neither you nor I know whether you will pass or not. Even so, why should I fear ? I do not want to render you impotent and stupid. Truth and non-violence are not for the stupid. Why cannot Kanti, Bal, Tansukh[1] and others develop their minds by plying the charkha? Why do they have to go the the college ? If those of us who ply the charkha cannot show the intelligence that Kanti, Bal and Tansukh do, I shall say that

[1] Tansukh Bhatt

we should also go to colleges. But in truth in Kanti and others there has not been a development of the intellect, only a play of intellect. The inquiry into our pursuit of truth and non-violence makes for development of the intellect. If they do not, then either they or we are false. Since it is impossible for truth and non-violence to be false, we ourselves are proved to be false.

The whole of the constructive programme is a reasearch into us. I continue to ply the charkha. I am now 69 years of age. Therefore it cannot be said that my intellect is not developing. What I am saying, I say deliberately and in full command of myself. Bal, Kanti and Tansukh are not developing their intellects by going to colleges. You may say that even those who work do not develop their intellects. The reason is that they work like automatons. My intellect will continue to develop till the moment I die. The charkha is also the prop for my intellect but it does not stray into wrong paths. I have no time to see, hear or read pleasurable things. I discover *Daridranarayana* through the charkha and have vision of God. This is the way my intellect has been developing and will continue to develop all my life. The testing of a man is not complete till he dies. If at the moment of death a man's intellect does not retain its brilliance I will say that he has not succeeded.

There is no rule that the intellect of those who ply the charkha cannot shine. Only you should do it intelligently. If you work as a carpenter, you must develop the science of carpentry. Today I am formulating some stiff questions for the science of the charkha. Because it absorbs all my faculties when I am immersed in the charkha I am in a state of bliss. I am not yet able to say where the limits of the constructive programme lie. The instance of the clay image shows only this. In the constructive programme we have all-round development. The charkha is a *mantra*. When I see those who ply the charkha discouraged, I am baffled. Why is it that they are lacking in spiritual development?

What I am telling you concerns eternal truth, because I am able to experience it. If I have gone to settle in Segaon it is not because I feel frustrated. When the call comes I will even say that I shall not budge from Segaon. I do not work there like a machine. Truth and non-violence develop the body, the intellect and the spirit. If there is not all-round development of all our faculties through truth and non-violence we are hypocrites. What service I have rendered ever since 1920 has been only through the charkha, though Hindu-Muslim unity and through the campaign for eradication of untouchability. I have always said that these reflect truth and non-violence. These were the shortest path to their discovery.

Going into Legislatures is also a means towards approaching truth and non-violence. Otherwise Parliament for us is taboo. That can be the only reason and there is no other for any interest we may have in the Councils programme. Truth and non-violence are ends as well as means. If good and truthful men go into the Legislatures, those institutions can also become an effective means to furthering truth and non-violence. If this does not happen the failure will be ours and not theirs. It will only mean that our intellects have not developed. So much for the Councils programme.

Now I take Balubhai's question. The substance of the questions is whether we should go to the villages to serve or for political awakening. I find it somewhat strange that after seventeen years of effort in furtherance of this programme such a question should be asked. To me there is no political education apart from the constructive programme. Our aim is merely the propagation of the charkha and such other things. This does not mean that we do not wish to give the villagers political education. But there is no such thing as political education by itself. We should keep in touch with them without harbouring any motive. We have to develop their strength. I go to them with the programme of eradication of untouchability and the like and give them education. Political education is just that. If I do something apart from this and go the the villagers seeking votes, I shall be doing exactly what we blame the missionaries for doing. I shall never talk to them about what is to my interest even if it should be intimately connected with the politics of the country. Constructive programme is thus in itself a political education. This is what I did in South Africa. There also the question before me was not of numbers. I never talked to the so-called coolies about politics. I did not organize them from any political motive. The question of the £ 3 tax came later.

The organization came in useful for the satyagraha battle later. During that battle I saw God face to face many times, so many times that even if I were a dunce I should not forget it. I had not hoped that the organization I was building would bring such large results. This is the way I conducted political education in South Africa. It was not the whole of South Africa, only the Transvaal. What I want to show is that the way I carried on the work of political education was by rendering silent, selfless service. The people among whom I worked came of their own accord and began to shout 'Long live the Congress'. If the prestige that the South African Indian Congress today enjoys is not the result of political education, what else can it be? Hertzog is saying the same thing today.

I continued this policy on my return to India from South

Africa. I worked in the Kheda district but did not so much as mention the Congress. I talked solely of land revenue. I worked among the labourers and did not mention the Congress. In Champaran again I did not work in the name of the Congress. My colleagues and I belonged to the Congress and that was enough, but when you go to Champaran today what do you see? Is the Congress anywhere else as strong today as it is in Champaran? On the strength of Champaran, Rajendra Babu rules Bihar today. But even today I would not talk about the Congress there. Knowledge is to be given where there is curiosity. Today they do not even have bread. What shall I gain by talking to them of things outside Champaran? What shall I gain by teaching them geography, or history, or politics? What shall I gain by talking to them about the problems of the whole country? Considering all things, I have come to the conclusion that we cannot give political education by trying to give such education. I have showed you through various instances what may be called real political education. Political education is not something apart.

In 1920 I made boycott an essential part of the political programme. I said: "Forget parliament, forget law courts, forget even educational instituutions." People started saying that this man who has undertaken such terrible work is quite ridiculous. In 1920 I made the charkha the centre of politics. I made it a weapon for a battle. In Bardoli also it was made an essential part of civil disobedience. That is why the condition was laid down that the whole of Bardoli should adopt khadi inside of six months. This was the language of the Congress at that time. Vithalbhai[1] cajoled me. But what shall I say of my shame? What shall I say of Sardar's shame? Even today Bardoli has not fulfilled the condition of the charkha. Prohibition has not been achieved nor has untouchability been eradicated. Today I would not launch a campaign on the strength of Bardoli. But this is my way of political education. If the Congress tries some other method it will not succeed. I am not saying this out of pride. It only shows how unshakable is my faith. If the Congress does not have faith in these things, why does it not give them up? I say with all the force I can command that if these things are bad or useless they should not be accepted out of consideration for Gandhi.

Balubhai has passed M.A., L.L.B., but that does not mean that he remembers what he read of politics. And he is not the only one. We, all of us, educated people, have proved ineffective in giving political education to the people. Our English education has made us useless. The heritage left by out forefathers has been squandered. But

[1] Vithallbhai J. Patel

I must tell you that it is only through these things that political education can be carried on. It is not something separate. If it is our conviction that the charkha in itself constitutes political education we shall not get tired or accept defeat. If socialists come let them. They are my friends. They do not quarrel with me and I do not wish to quarrel with them. They want to conduct political education by a different method. Their means and mine differ. But our goal is the same. I put the same programme before them, too. I also say that all land belongs to God. But merely on the basis of this the socialists cannot claim all land as their property. I cannot today advocate talking away land from those who own it. I too want that we should all be possessors of Jamnalalji's wealth, but all the 30 crores of our people, not I alone. All land belongs to God, that is, to the people. But doesn't this mean that Jamnalalji's land should be partitioned in 30 crores little bits? How are these 30 crores to become owners of the land? Who should make them owners or make themselves the owners on their behalf is the question. Someone has to come forward as their representative. Therefore if Jamnalalji becomes our trustee and remembers that this wealth belongs to 30 crores of people, what is the harm? He has given me all the Sevagram land. But I cannot take it, for I am a fool. I do not understand these things. His manager understands them better than I. Today I take all the profit, he takes all the loss. If you want to make use of the wealth of rich men like Jamnalalji and Rameshwardas Birla, make use of my talent. I cannot derive much profit from the Segaon property because I have neither men nor the intelligence. I do not want even a cowrie from outside Segaon. I have all the means; only I have been slack. Today if I build a house he has to pay for it. This is hundred per cent true. I grab as much as I can digest. What more can I ask from any rich man? Come, I invite you to go to some other village of Jamnalalji and settle there in the way I have settled in Seagon. But the man should be one approved by me and willing to carry out my programme. This however is an entirely different matter. My subject was the charkha.

There was a time when C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyar thought that the charkha was a political weapon. Mohammed Ali called it our gun, Khadilkar cited a verse from the *Gita.*[1]

"Here no effort undertaken is lost, no disaster befalls." Even better than this is the second half: "Even a little of this righteous course delivers one from great fear."

I do not regret my friendship with Mohammed Ali. He was an honest and godfearing man. He used to say what he considered moral

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 40

and true at that time. Yet he also said that in the path of God it is permissible for us to take up the sword and even to utter falsehoods. But people of all religions say this. Among Christians also there is no restriction. The sanatanists say it openly, and even cite a verse from *Manusmriti* as authotity, that uttering of untruth is permissible for saving a cow, when talking to women and on such occasions as marriage, etc. Even *adharma* becomes established in the name of dharma. But it shows the majesty of dharma. Sanatanists tell me that I am a heretic, that I know nothing of dharma and *adharma,* that my truth is more harmful than untruth. This shows how far *adharma* can go in the name of dharma.

It is true that we go to the villages to impart political education to the people. But as I am trying to say, the way of political education is the furthering of constructive programme. We should not even utter the word 'political' among the people. The same applies to dharma. We should not even mention the word 'dharma'. Tell them simply to clean their lavatories well and to bathe. But dharma is beyond their comprehension. This is not a result of their inferiority but of our littleness. I hesitate to talk to them about truth and non-violence. We have kept them suppressed. I can only talk to them about the way they should conduct themselves. How can I speak to them about *brahmacharya*. They cannot even pronounce the word. When they pronounce it as *bharamchar*[1] and cannot even understand it, it is *bharamchar* for them. I want to understand their morals. I want to win their confidence. If one of them comes to me and says he has relations with his sister-in-law how can I condemn him? The sin is on our heads. I want to teach them bit by bit without mentioning truth and non-violence. I know no other way.

If we want non-violent swaraj it can come only thus and here no one can oppose us, whether it be England or America. The question that Balubhai now asks was answered by me 17 years ago. In 1920 everyone was mad about the charkha—Motilalji, Mohammed Ali, Shaukat Ali, Abbas Tyabji and others. Everyone had started spinning. Everyone thought that nothing was to be gained through Parliament. Today I have become much more tolerant, so that I can even permit people going into Parliament. This is a well-tried method of giving political education. This is the way people can be trained. If Segaon tomorrow becomes self-sufficient, if people keep the village clean, do not covet even a pie of another's, what more will be lacking for their freedom? They will say: 'Who is Jamnalal Sheth? We till the land and it is ours. The land was there before Jamnalalji was born. We shall not

[1] Pursuing confusion

be frightened. We shall not resort to hooliganism. If Jamnalalji's manager comes we shall not assault him. We shall simply remove him from our land.' These things will have to be taught to them. Granted that people are the real owners of the land. But how am I to get it accepted? There are only two ways. Force and persuasion. The way of persuasion is the way of dharma. If you cannot adopt it, then what Kishorelal says is true. Then the socialists will prove that they had been in the right. Then I shall have to tell you to follow them. They also stand for the good of the people. If they cannot influence the people it would be a matter of shame to me. But you came into the field of service before they did. You have also worked very hard. If you cannot influence people it would be a matter of greater shame to me.

But how is this to be done? Merely repeating 'constructive programme' like a parrot will not do. Your programme is more vigorous than that of the Spinners' Association. In the Spinners' Association there are some people who fulfil the tasks allotted to them. But among you there are those who have intelligently and thoughtfully developed it into a science. The spheres of work of the Spinners' Association and the Village Industries Association are limited. The same is true of bodies like Goseva Sangh. Your sphere of work is wider. The Gandhi Seva Sangh is a large organization. It is not a rival of the Congress. The Congress too is a large organization. But it has been built by the people. It reflects the strength as well as the weakness of the people. But your organization is voluntary. It is a coming together of those who have undertaken to fulfil the entire programme issuing from truth and non-violence. It is a mighty tree of which Spinners' Association and Village Industries Association are branches. The Sangh is indicative of your strength. Or should I say the power of truth and non-violence will find expression through it? Jamnalalji may well have built it up, but it is not his organization. He himself became only an ordinary member and said that he would never become an office-bearer. This shows not only his humility but also his wisdom.

We want to bring about an all-round advancement of India through what we call constructive work. There are various organizations which have taken up each a separate item of the programme. Your work should be an example to them. Today one cannot say it is. We must, therefore, very clearly declare that our work is constructive work and that we are going into Parliament for furthering that work.

If what I have said has not satisfied you entirely, the reason can only be that I have not been able to couch my language in legalistic

phraseology. But it is clearer than day before yesterday. My language is imperfect. The language of one who is himself imperfect must be imperfect, too. If after 17 years of explaining I have not been able to explain myself, then I am imperfect and so are you who cannot understand. Thakkar has sent me a letter. It is an interesting letter worth reading out. I have not the time but I must read out to you just one sentence from this letter. He says: "Last year I had to be in Dhulia itself and I may have to live there in future, too, but my faith in village work has not diminished one jot and no desire has arisen in me for life in a city."

The workers who have not wholly given up the love for city life have had their faith in the charkha somewhat slackened. This gives rise to doubts. To me the charkha is everything. I am living in a village and devote most of my time to the charkha. About political matters I merely offer advice and then forget about it. I do my writing for the constructive programme and for it I work. I do not despair though the members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh have not been doing their work with full awakening. The charkha work does not end with giving women two pice or two annas. If through the charkha we cannot develop our minds, then we should let it go. It is my faith that the charkha will bring us swaraj. Kishorelal seems to fear that you have accepted the charkha for my sake and that you will give it up when I am no more. He therefore wants to keep you away from temptations.

Even if I should be the only one with faith in the charkha, I shall be proud to die working for it. My pride while plying the charkha or serving the Harijans will be pardonable. After all we have to commune with God through some means or other. Why not then through the charkha? You may say that I have worked for the charkha or that the charkha has worked for me. If the devotee is the slave of God, God also is the slave of the devotee's slave. It is in this sense I am speaking to you. If we cannot create an atmosphere in which the charkha can bring about the development of the mind, Kanti and Bal have no alternative but to go to the college. They do not have the originality of Ekalavya. If you understand what I am trying to say, there will be no reason for you to be in two minds. The main thing is concentration–one-pointedness of attention. Kishorelal prepared his speech with such concentration as if it was meant for the entire world. I was witness to it. To him the Sangh is the whole world. He also prepared a summary of it for your convenience. He works without attachment. He is another Yudhishthira, which I am not. I shall be happy if I can acquire the strength of even a Bhima or an Arjuna. People call me a karmayogi. I do not know whether I am a karmayogi

or any other yogi, but I cannot live without work–this I know. When something sinks into my heart, I cannot be at peace till I have put it into practice. People may say I am mad in saying that I wish to die with the charkha in my hand. I do not wish to die holding a string of beads. For concentration the charkha is my beads. God appears to me in thousands of forms. Sometimes I see him in the charkha, sometimes in Hindu-Muslim unity, sometimes in the eradication of untouchability. I move as my feeling draws me. When I wish to enter a room in an institution, I do so and I feel there the presence of God. In the *Gita* God has said that He looks to the well-being of those who worship Him. You must be firm in this faith if you have understood me.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Tritiya Varshik Adhiveshan (Hudli, Karnatak) ka Vivaran, pp. 54-67

175. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING, HUDLI-IV

HUDLI,
April 20, 1937

Let me now come to Mama's proposal. The proposal is:

Since it is the aim of the Sangh to look upon the constructive programme of the Indian National Congress as a dharma and make it a success, in a programme like the removal of untouchability it is the duty of the members of the Sangh to come into direct contact with sweepers and other Harijan brethren and convince them as well as others that they make no distinctions in their treatment of the Harijans. Let them give a place to Harijans in their homes, receive Harijans in the same way as they would receive others, seek opportunities to eat with them. Let them keep some Harijan members in their houses, bring up some Harijan children, go to the Harijan colonies and serve them in various ways and lovingly participate in their work and prove thereby that none of the jobs the Harijans have to do is lowly.

VALLABHBHAI PATEL: This proposal justifies the fear of the sanatanists.

From removal of untouchability you want to proceed step by step to intermarriage. (Laughter)

GANDHIJI: For ordinary people, removal of untouchability is sufficient. But, for you, mere touch is not enough. You must continue to proceed further. Your field of progress is unlimited. Ordinary people can look up only to the sky. But scientists claim that they can

look through the whole expanse of the milky way. It is not known if something exists beyond that. But truth pierces through the sky and reaches beyond. We have to imbibe truth in our lives. We find that under the guise of truth, untruth is being respected by people. It is the aim of religion to strengthen the idea of brotherhood, to minimize the unnatural distinctions between man and man. But today, in the very name of religion, the Harijans are being treated with contempt. I have already said that untruth, by itself, is powerless, it is dependent. It can never stand on its own without the support of truth. But I wish to point out to you that if untruth can succeed so much in the name of truth, how much more would truth itself succeed? Who can measure the extent of its success?

For us, who are the members of the Sangh, there should be no place for any unjust distinctions in our hearts. It may seem strange, but as far as I am concerned, such a feeling of distinction disappeared from the day I ate a bit of mutton with a Muslim boy.[1] Eating mutton was and is a bad thing. But this small thing saved me from something else as well. By tasting a little mutton I realized that there was nothing particularly to rave about it. That saved me in England and I did not betray my mother. I have not spoken to the millions about interdining and intermarriage. We do not have inter-dining and intermarriage even with Brahmins. My mother, while observing some pious vows, would not take food even from my hands. The Hindu masses still follow quite a few restrictive practices in the matter of inter-dining and intermarriage. Even I have followed certain restrictions in this regard. That is the reason why I have not spoken to the masses about these.

But if I suggest to you that you should go to the extent of inter-dining and intermarrying with Harijans I would not be violating truth. Let me talk to you on a religious point. I am talking about religion as a matter of day-to-day practice. It is not something related to any particular occasion. You have really not much control in the matter of intermarriage. You should certainly not bring compulsion on your children in this matter. Inter-dining is a different matter. If your mother says that it is irreligion, you must tell her that you would take the food cooked by her as well as the food cooked by an untouchable, and it would not matter that you were forsaken by her on that account. You cannot compel your mother or even your wife. We must have two separate establishments in such a situation. If wecannot exercise force over them, we cannot do it over religion either. In other words, we cannot coerce our own sons. Our mothers and wives may well consider it their duty to forsake us. Let us stay apart without

[1] *Vide* "An Autobiography", sub-title "A Tragedy"

being enemies of each other. In such a situation I would treat them more affectionately. I would try not to hurt their feelings. But at the same time I would not hurt the feelings of Harijans in order to please them. Only truth and Hinduism can teach me this. For me, religion, truth and Hinduism are inter-changeable terms. If there is an element of untruth in Hinduism, I cannot accept that particular aspect of Hinduism as religion. If, on this account, the entire Hindu community forsakes me and I am left all alone, I would still proclaim that I am not alone, they who forsake me are alone. For, truth is on my side. And truth is God Himself . . . .[1]

I would accept the hospitality even from a leper. But the manner of acceptance would be different. I would tell him affectionately that he should allow me to cook the food and fetch the water. As far as I am personally concerned, for the sake of love, I would even take the food and the water offered by a leper if he really insists. I would be even willing to die for his love. But the whole world cannot accept his hospitality in this spirit. Hence, I too would accept it in the same manner that the entire society can accept. I followed the same principle in the case of Parachure Shastri. But that is a different case. We should not confuse diesease with the issue of untouchability. They are two absolutely different problems. The question relating to the sweeper is altogether different from the question relating to the leper. We have an opportunity of teaching the sweeper habits of cleanliness if we come in greater contact with him. And, is it not also true that if any sweeper invites me or you for a meal he would himself be concerned about washing himself clean and donning clean clothes and offer us cleanly prepared food?

Please do not confuse the issue of poverty with this. The problem of poverty is economic, whereas the problem of abolition of untouchability is religious or spiritual. My religion will not be destroyed if I do not solve the problem of poverty of a poor peasant. But if I allow the untouchability to persist even in the case of a wealthy Harijan, my religion will cease to exist. That is the reason why the begining of an act of service should be only with the Harijan.

Then Gandhiji moved the following resolution pertaining to *goseva*.

> Economic and moral uplift of India is one of the aims of the Sangh and the protection of our cows is non-violence in its concrete from and it implies economic benefits to millions of people. That is why the attention of the members of the Sangh is being drawn towards *goseva*. It is the duty of

[1] Someone had interposed that Harijans would have to be careful about cleanliness if others were to eat with them, for one could not accept hospitality from a leper.

the members of the Sangh to study animal husbandry as much as possible and try their utmost to protect our cows. The least they can do is to use cow's milk and its products instead of buffalo's milk, etc., as far as possible, and make cow's milk and its products popular.

I am not laying any particular stress on this resolution today. If there is doubt in your mind and you wish to discuss it, we may as well abandon it. For, this is a novel thing. Its language is distinct from that of the Congress. The things Kishorelal mentioned in the course of his introductory speech are easy no doubt; but they cannot provide enough work. As the issue in this form concerns none but the Hindus, I did not bring this proposal before the Congress. This is an inseparable part of Hinduism. The sanatanists consider my way of *goseva* as a thing to be shunned and partonize *goseva* organizations. But this is their gross ignorance. I have described the popular practice of *goseva* as the devouring of cows. And, I have still not withdrawn my words. People are terribly angry with me on this account. But, even if they sever my head, I would say only what is truth. Our religion exhorts us first to protect the cow and then the Brahmin. Cow-protection is an inseparable part of our religion. But today we do not protect, but rather devour our cows. We should lay down our lives for the sake of the cow. But today we are allowing the cow to die for us. Hinduism generally regards suicide as a sin. But in certain situations, our religion not only permits but also exhorts us to resort to suicide. In view of this, we must kill ourselves if it is necessary in order to save the cow.

All that this resolution lays down is that the members of the Sangh should insist on using only cow's milk and ghee. It is not a question of taking a vow. Insisting on cow's milk means that if it is necessary to take buffalo's milk or ghee to save life, it should be taken. But if it is a vow, it leaves no such scope. If you wish, instead of saying "insist on using" you may say "as far as possible use" which would soften both the language and the sentiment. Tomorrow if I go to Dhotre's house, I would insist and I must. I would do the same everywhere. For me "as far as possible" is a meaningless phrase.

VALLABHBHAI PATEL: One who is ill or has to be always travelling, cannot even insist.

GANDHIJI: In such a situation, insistence would include taking buffalo's milk or ghee. Saying "as far as possible" is a different thing. It commits you to nothing. I look at it from the point of view of religion. And for me, service of religion and service of the country mean the same thing.

That is the responsibility of persons like Jamnalalji. I have got a

ready-made plan for cow's ghee.[1] Why can't they throw away a couple of lakhs in that experiment?

Discussing the next annual meeting of the Sangh and invitations from Bengal, U.P. and Utkal for this Gandhiji said:

I am particularly partial to Orissa. We can also expect to raise larger funds there that at Hudli. But, in my view, it would not be proper to give travelling expenses. The members must attend the convention at their own expense. As for those who cannot spend their own money, Gopa Babu can collect the necessary sums to be given to them on the recommendation of the office. And, if even he cannot make such an arrangement, those members should not be invited. But under no circumstances should the Sangh give travelling expenses. Gopa Babu has agreed to all the conditions. There is one more reason. The Congress has done the least amount of work in Orissa. It is a miracle that the Congress has won a majority there. Only one of the Congress candidates was defeated there, and even that on my account. He was such a naive person that it was good for the Congress that he was defeated. The poor Oriyas are considered to be slack people. When they are giving an invitation, we must forget about Bihar and Bengal. I had followed the same principle in deciding in favour of Gujarat for the Congress. It was a tussle between Ras and Bardoli. I said that Ras had a stronger case and should give in. Hence the partiality to Bardoli even at the cost of hurting Ras.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Tritiya Varshik Adhiveshan (Hudli, Karnatak)ka Vivaran, pp. 67-71

176. LETTER TO K.M. MUNSHI

HUDLI,
April 21, 1937

BHAI MUNSHI,

Do come on the 25th. If the meeting of the Working Committee is to be held in Prayag and I have to go there, you will know. Then do not come. As yet I have received no information.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7617. Courtesy: K.M. Munshi

[1] Someone had observed that cow's ghee was too expensive.

[2] In the postscript, Chandrashanker Shukla had added that a telegram was since received to say that the meeting of the Working Committee was to be held at Allahabad on the 26th and that Gandhiji would reach Poona on the 22nd, Wardha on 23rd and Allahabad on 25th night, and that he would not be at Wardha on the 25th.

177. LETTER TO DR. JAWAHARLAL

NEAR HUDLI (BELGAUM),
April 21, 1937

MY DEAR DR. JAWAHARLAL,

Thank you very much for your detailed letter of the 14th. You are right in thinking that the recent attack of influenza had something to do with the extinction of life in the child. I suppose she will have to stay there for about a fortnight before she is in a condition to travel. How is it that there is no kitchen attached to the maternity hospital? Please remember me to Mrs. Jawaharlal who I hope is steadily improving.

Yours sincerely,

DR. JAWAHARLAL, M.L.A.
SWAROOP SADAN
CAWNPORE

From a copy: Pyrelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

178. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU "[1]

POONA,
April 22, 1937

CORRESPONDENT: You say you do not seek any the slightest abrogation of the Government of India Act. Do you not thereby mean that you do not want an immediate amendment but that you contemplate it at some time?

GANDHIJI: That is wholly a mistaken view. I want no amendment whatsoever, immediate or distant. For the Congress insists, so do I, on the complete repeal of the Act so that it might be substituted at the earliest possible moment by an Act of the people themselves. What I want, before Congressmen accept office, is an assurance which I still hold is within the power of the Governors to give, that they will not interfere with the day-to-day administration of the Province. For, under the Act, it is not they but the Ministers who are responsible for the administration of the Province within the sphere prescribed by the

[1] The special correspondent had reported: "In the last two or three days, I have had the privilege of fairly long conversations on the political situation with Mahatma Gandhi. My purpose was to try and clarify and, if possible, to determine the precise scope of the assurances demanded of the Governors by the leaders of the Congress in the six Provinces where the Congress has been returned in a majority in the last electiuos. The final interview which I had this morning on reaching Poona, and of which a report is given below, sums up the present position of the Congress in this matter."

Act. All talk, therefore, of the constitutional inability of the Governors to give an assurance baffles me and makes me suspect the motives of the British politicians who have the working of the Act within their power.

Do you mean that under no circumstances whatsoever can a Governor interfere if an emergency of a grave nature in his opinion arises?

That is a fair question. I certainly do not mean any such thing. I can conceive of the possibility of a Minister making a stupid blunder, so as to harm the people in whose name he is acting. The Governor"s duty will then be plain. He would reason with the Ministers and if the Ministers do not listen, he will dismiss the Cabinet. The assurance contemplates non-interference, not non-dismissal. But dismissal when there is a clear majority in the Assembly would mean dissolution and fresh election. That will always be open to the Governor to precipitate, as it would be open to the Provincial Cabinet to do. But such a crisis cannot occur from day to day. What, therefore, I want is an absolutely honourable understanding which is incapable of a double interpretation by honourable parties.

May I then take it that you would not mind such assurances being given even in Provinces where the Congress is not in a majority?

So fat as I am concerned, not only would I not mind it as a confirmed democrat, I would not have for the Congress what may not be given to other parties where they enjoy a clear majority.

I take it you are aware of the special responsibilities of the Governors.

I am afraid I must confess my ignorance.

May I then tell you that they are responsible when there is a grave menace to peace and tranquillity or to the legitimate rights of the minorities or to Service rights, Indian States, etc.?

But if the Governors are reponsible, Ministers who are worth their salt are surely still more responsible for peace and tranquillity, for the actual protection of the rights of the minorities, rights of the States–if by States is meant the people of the States as well as the Princes. I cannot imagine rights of Princes against the people within their jurisdiction. And even in all these, the pity of it is that the so-called autonomy has been boiled down so much by statue that the Governor's discretion is extremely limited. There is one thing, however, if I were a Congress Minister I would not be willingly responsible for, as I would be for other things you have mentioned—I mean the rights of the Services. By that one guarantee, in my opinion, the framers of the Act have reduced autonomy to a farce. But under the assurance I have contemplated, I have not envisaged a reduction of those rights which are guaranteed by the Act itself. While the Act

remains in force the Congress Ministers will take office knowing well the handicap under which they will labour from the very commencement of their career. I nevertheless feel that, if the assurance contemplated by the Congress resolution is given, the Ministers can, in spite of the handicap, so consolidate their position that they can, even acting within the Constitution, compel the repeal of the Act and hasten the day of the meeting of the Constituent Assembly whose Act will be accepted by the British people—unless they want to govern India by the naked sword.

The Hindu, 22-4-1937

179. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

POONA,
April 22, 1937

When interviewed by the "Associated Press" regarding the Madras leaders' appeal to the Congress and the Government for solving the present impasse, Mahatma Gandhi said:

I read it with respectful attention and so far as I am concerned I hope I have made my position so clear as to leave no room for any misunderstanding. I have also shown now, according to my interpretation, that the offic-acceptance resolution is so eminently reasonable. Therefore, their appeal needs an answer more from the Government than from me.

The Hindustan Times, 23-4-1937

180. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[1]

April 22, 1937

Having been buried in out-of-the-way Kumri all these days, I had not seen the papers that you have kindly shown me. It is very difficult for me to believe that the Maharaja of Cochin has passed the orders[2] described in the cutting before me. I can understand his and his family members' discontinuing worship in the Koodalmanikkam Temple, but I cannot understand the order that clearly interferes with the rights of the Maharaja of Travancore and the rights of priests who would be presumed to know religion as much as the Maharaja of Cochin himself. And if it is true that the *savarna* Hindus who have visited Travancore temples are prohibited from entering the Cochin

[1] This appeared under the title "Irreligious".
[2] *Vide* Appendix "Koodalmanikkam Temple Controversy", 22-5-1937.

temples and having access to wells, etc., apart from its being unworkable it is unsurpassed in irreligiousness. I cannot understand how Sir Shanmukham Chetty could have failed to dissuade the Maharaja from the action which seems to me to be indefensible even from the point of view of staunch sanatanists. I can only hope that the reports in the papers fail to give the correct version of the situation; and in any case I hope that better counsels will prevail in Cochin.

Harijan, 24-4-1937

181. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
April 23, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

Your letters before me. Returned this morning. This will go to Simla.

I have the prospectus, etc. That letter was over-weight and carried a fine of two annas.

It is so hot that we are melting. I am in no mood to write at length.

Yes, I leave for Allahabad on 25th and return on 29th.

The weather this time has been cruel in so many parts of India.

What is this eczema again? Do you mean the same patches?

Love.

Yours,

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3776. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6932

182. CURSE OF DRINK

A sister writes:

On going to the village, I was more than grieved to hear of the havoc drink is working among these people. Some of the women were in tears. What can they do? There is not a woman who would not like to banish alcohol for all time from out midst. It is the cause of so much domestic misery, poverty, ruined health and physique. As usual it is the woman who has to bear the burden of this self-indulgence on the part of man. What can I advise the women to do? It is so hard to face anger and even cruelty. How I wish the leaders in this Province would concentrate on the removal of this evil rather than expend time, energy and brain on the injustice of the Communal Award. We are so apt

to neglect the things that really matter for such trivialities as would settle themselves if the moral stature of our people were raised. Can't you write an appeal to the prople on the question of drink? It is sad to see these people literally going to perdition because of the curse.

My appeal to those who drink will be vain. It must be. They never read *Harijan*. If they do, they do so to scoff. They can have no interest in being informed of the evil of the drink habit. They hug the very evil. But I would like to remind this sister, and through her all the women of India, that at the time of the Dandi march the women of India did listen to my advice and made the fight against drink and the plying of the wheel their speciality. Let the writer recall the fact that thousands of women fearlessly surrounded drink-shops and often successfully appealed to the addicts to give up the habit. In the prosecution of their self-imposed mission they put up with the abuses of the addicts and sometimes even assaults by them. Hundreds went to gaol for the crime of picketing drink-shops. Their zealous work produced a marvellous effect all over the country. But unfortunately with the cessation of civil disobedience, and even before the cessation, the work slackened. Into the reasons for the slackening I need not go. But the work still awaits workers. The women's pledge remains unfulfilled. It was not taken for a definite period only. It could not be fulfilled until prohibition was proclaimed throughout India. The women's was the nobler part. Theirs was to bring about prohibition by emptying drink-shops by an appeal to the best in man. Could they have continued the work, their gentleness combined with earnestness would most assuredly have weaned the drunkard from his habit.

But nothing is lost. The women can still organize the campaign. If the wives of those of whom the writer writes are in earnest, they can surely convert their husbands. Women do not know what influence for good they can exert on their husbands. They wield it unconsciously no doubt, but that is not enough. They must have that consciousness, and the consciousness will give them the strength and show them the way to deal with their partners. The pity of it is that most wives do not interest themselves in their husbands doings. They think they have no right to do so. It never occurs to them that it is their duty to become guardians of their husbands' character, as it is the latter's to be guardians of their wives' character. And yet what can be plainer than that husband and wife are equal sharers of each other's virtues and vices? But who but a woman can effectively awaken the wives to a sense of their power and duty? This is but a part of the women's movement against drink.

There must be enough women with proper equipment to study the statistics of drink, the causes that induce the habit and the remedies against it. They must learn the lesson from the past and realize that mere appeals to the addicts to give up drink cannot produce lasting effects. The habit has to be regarded as a disease and treated as such. In other words, some women have to become research students and carry on researches in a variety of ways. In every branch of reform constant study giving one a mastery over one's subject is necessary. Ignorance is at the root of failures, partial or complete, of all reform movements whose merits are admitted. For every project masquerading under the name of reform is not necessarily worthy of bring so designated.

Harijan, 24-4-1937

183. THE CAUSE OF IT

A Bangalore correspondent asks:

> You say that a married couple may have sexual union only when there is a mutual desire for a child and on no other account. Please let me know why one should wish for a child at all. Many people wish for children without fully realizing the responsibilities of parenthood, and many more wish for children fully knowing that they are incapable of discharging the responsibilities of a parent. Many persons who are physically and mentally unfit for parenthood wish for children. Don't you think that it is wrong for these persons to procreate?
>
> I would like to know the motive behind the desire for children. Many people wish for children to bequeath their possesions and to break the monotony of their life. A few people wish for a male child lest the gates of Heaven would not be opened for them. Are not these prople wrong in wishing for a child?

It is good to seek causes for things. But it is not always possible to discover them. The desire for children is universal. But I do not know any convincing cause, if to see oneself perpetuated through one's descendants is not a sufficient and convincing cause. My proposition, however, is not vitiated if the cause I give for the desire is not found sufficiently convincing. The desire is there. It seems to be natural. I am not sorry for having been born. It cannot be unlawful for me to see the best in me reproduced. Anyway till I see evil in procreation itself and till I see that the sexual act for mere pleasure is justifiable, I must hold that the sexual act is justified only where there is desire for children. I understand that this was so clear to the makers of *Smritis* that Manu described only the first-born as children born of

dharma and the rest of *kama*—lust. The more throught I give to the subject as dispassionately as is possible, the more convinced I feel about the correctness of the position I have taken and am enforcing. It is becoming clearer to me that the difficulty lies in our ignorance of the subject with which needless secrecy is being associated. Our thought is clouded. We dread to face consequences. We resort to half measures as if they were perfect or final and thus render them most difficult of execution. If our thoughts were clear, if we became sure of our ground, our speech and action would be firm.

Thus if I am sure that every morsel of food I take is for building and sustaining the body, I shall never desire to take food for the pleasure of the palate. I shall further realize that if I have any desire to eat things because they are tasty, and apart from hunger or the thought of sustaining the body, it is a token of disease and I should seek to cure myself of it and not satisfy it as if it was lawful or healthy. Even so if I am quite clear that the sexual act, apart from the unquestioned desire for progeny, is unlawful and detrimental to the body, mind and soul, surely resistance to the desire will become easy–far easier than when I am not clear whether the gratification of mere desire is or is not lawful and beneficial. If I am quite clear about the unlawfulness of the desire, I shall treat it as if it were a disease and repel its attacks with all my vigour. I shall feel the stronger for the resistance. They are wrong, even untruthful, who claim that they do not like the act but are helpless and therefore resistance leaves them weak and defeated. If all such people were to examine themselves, they would discover that their thoughts deceive them. Their thoughts cherish the desire and their speech is a false interpreter of their thoughts. If on the other hand the speech is a true interpreter of the thoughts there can be no such thing as weakness. Defeat there may be. Weakness never.

The correspondent's objection to procreation by unhealthy parents is perfectly valid. They can have or should have no desire for progeny. They are deceiving themselves and the world if they say that they perform the sexual act for progeny. In an examination of any subject truthfulness is always assumed. Desire for progeny must not be feigned in order to cover the pleasure of sexual union.

Harijan, 24-4-1937

184. TELEGRAM TO HASRAT MOHANI

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
April 24, 1937

MAULANA HASRAT MAHANI
CAWNPORE

JUST READ ABOUT BEGUM MOHANI'S DEATH CONDOLENCES.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

185. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

April 24, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

How did you fare in your fight about the extraordinary step ordering change in the report[1]. Really these things are enough to make one lose patience. But then these incidents test our faith in ahimsa. And there must be an innocent, non-violent gentle as opposed to noxious, violent, ungentle way of dealing with such difficulties.

What answer did you get, if any, from Devdas about that cartoon[2] in which a Biblical verse was caricatured.

Did I tell you yesterday I was returning from Allahabad on 29th at the latest?

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3777. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6933

186. LETTER TO J.C. KUMARAPPA

April 24, 1937

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

You will do with the Amalner man what you think best. You will take him if he is of use.

I understand what you say about Shah's note.[3]

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10117

[1] *Vide* "Letter to J. C. Kumarappa", 3-4-1937
[2] *Vide* footnote 2, "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 31-3-1937
[3] *Vide* "Letter to J. C. Kumarappa.", 3-4-1937

187. LETTER TO MESSRS PAYRE & CO.

April 24, 1937

GENTLEMEN,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I have been travelling to inaccessible places, hence the delay in acknowledging your letter. If you will forward the one lakh of rupees, I will forward the amounts to institutions that I may select. Meantime, if the cheque for one lakh is received by me I shall bank it and send you proper receipts from the institutions concerned as the money is disbursed from time to time. If however, the amount is held by you it should begin to bear interest not less than the current bank rates from the time that I can be considered responsible for its distribution. So far as half the amount is concerned there would be no difficulty. As for the other half I am entering into correspondence with the Jeeva Daya Mandal.

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

MESSRS PAYRE & CO.

SOLICITORS AND NOTARIES PUBLIC

BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

188. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

April 24, 1937

BHAI BHAGWANJI,

I got both your letters only yesterday. I returned from a tour of the villages yesterday and saw your letters. You did very well indeed in writing to me but if I cannot make use of your letters, how can I solve the matter? I advise you to call both Nanalal and Prabhashankar[1] and guide them properly, shedding all fear. There was a time when Prabhashankar used to treat your advice as sacred word, and that lightened my burden, too. Your letters throw a new light on the situation. You should now put this business on the right lines as Ratilal's lawyer, friend of the Mehta family and lover of justice. I shall be able to do very little from here. Think over this. Ratilal and Champa[2] , both are completely under the influence of Prabhashankar. They will do exactly as he desires. To Ratilal he is in the place of a father. Irrespective of what we consider to be right, how

[1] Prabhashankar Harchandbhai Parekh, father-in-law of Ratilal, the eldest son of Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta

[2] Ratilal"s wife

can we shake Ratilal's and Champa's faith in what they believe to be right? Please think over all these factors and then guide me. If you are unable to do anything besides writing to me, then please permit me to make use of your letters or write to me a letter such as I can use. I do not wish to take any step till I have your reply to this letter.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5832. Also C.W. 3055. Courtesy: Bhagwanji A. Mehta

189. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 24, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

I had got your letter. I had a talk with Shankerlal[1] at Hudli about Jaisukhlal. Shankerlal says that there is no connection between the charge against him and his being relieved. But he is of the opinion that there is not sufficient work in Kathiawar to justify payment of Rs. 75 to Jaisukhlal and that his work would not be worth that much anywhere else either. Jaisukhlal has not mastered the art of running a store, or of producing khadi, nor that of working in a spirit of co-operation with others. But he has no doubt at all regarding Jaisukhlal's integrity. If this statement of Shankerlal is correct, then no injustice is done to Jaisukhlal. If you do not agree with Shankerlal's explanation, then you may employ him in the work you are doing for the spread of khadi. Take from him such work as will enable him to earn Rs. 75 or something more if he can. You can do this and, if he has the ability to earn Rs. 75 through khadi work, may help him to develop in.

I myself am observing the extremely suspicious nature of Jaisukhlal and it has caused me much pain,. He sees Chhaganlal Joshi at the back of all his misfortunes, while I myself have been able to see no such thing in any matter. I know Chhaganlal's merits and defects very well. I have even lived with him. I have seen in him no such failing that he would be after a man and do him ill just out of spite. His opinions are very often baseless. I also know that he lacks the capacity to cite evidence in support of his views.

I have not informed you till now and on inquiring I find that Kanaiyo also has not done so. He was fairly ill during the Hudli trip. Either from over-exertion or for some other reason, he had got fever.

[1] Shankerlal Banker

He had got it as soon as we arrived there and it came down after four days. But he did not suffer in the least. The treatment also was the best possible. It consisted in his drinking as much water as he could—he took hot water with lime-juice and salt, then he was put on water mixed with honey, and then he was given fruit and then milk. He is still on milk and fruit. He used to get good sleep. It can practically be said that he did not require any nursing. He was not given any special comfort apart from a cot. He was given no privacy at all, nor was there any such facility.

Today he has come riding five miles on bicycle of his own free will. There was no necessity for him to come for the sake of any work. But once he feels well he cannot sit idle. And I do not stop him from exerting himself within the limits of his strength. The matter was not at all worth writing to you about. There was no cause for worry. We had an experienced doctor with us But even his help was not taken. He did wish to give some medicine, but I emphatically forbade any medicine.

Kanaiyo also has great faith in fasting as of course I too have. This time a special feature of my treatment was that I did not try enema at all. It could have been given with some special arrangement, but he used to pass stools in the normal course. I, therefore, did not insist on giving him enema. He did not suffer in the least; no doubt it was thanks to his fast and also to the purity of his life.

At the time of giving away Manu and Nirmala, he had insisted on attending, and had joined in singing "*Vaishnava jana*". Kanti also arrived exactly on the day of *kanyadan*[1]. Manu was therefore very happy, although she spared Kanti, having persuaded herself to be content with Kanu's presence.

How is Kumi's work going on? If she gets her daughter admitted in the National School, exempt her from payment of fees.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8517. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

[1] Giving away of the bride.

190. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

April 24, 1937

CHI. SHARDA[1] ,

Received your letter. Nothing is permanent. Stick to the treatment so long as you feel that it is doing you no harm. Both of you must take onions and garlic. It is my opinion that nature-cure, if intelligently taken up, is bound to benefit. Write to me in detail about the treatment you are taking and about your diet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9975. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

191. LETTER TO CHANDRANI SACHAR

April 24, 1937

DEAR SISTER,

Thanks for your cheque for Rs. 500. A well can be constructed for Rs. 500 and even Rs. 1,500. We have to bore a well in the Thana district, which will cost Rs. 1,200. If you can, please send the balance, too, otherwise your money can of course be utilized for some other place.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

SHRIMATI CHANDRANI SACHAR

C/O SHRI J. S. SACHAR

NAYA BAZAR, DELHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4090.

192. LETTER TO PRABHUDAYAL VIDYARTHI

SEGAON,
April 24, 1937

CHI. PRABHUDAYAL,

Again there is a complaint that you do not do full work. What is this? Give me an account of your work.

Blessings form

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 11685

[1] Daughter of Chimanlal N. Shah, an Ashram inmate.

193. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS [1]

NAGPUR,

April 25, 1937

Q. Do you think that there is a ny real anxiety on the part of the Britishers to establish a contact between the Viceroy and the spokesman of the Indian National Congress?

A. I do not think there is any.

Will you of your own accord seek an opportunity to meet the Viceroy?

No.

Will you go if the initiative comes from the Viceroy?

I have no status. The only party to be invited is the President of the Congress.

Will you be satisfied if the Viceroy gives you the necessary assurances and asks you not to press for assurances from provincial Governors?[2]

Do you not think that if the Congress does not accept office, the minority Ministries will win over the electorate by their ameliorative measures?

I should not be surprised.[3]

The Hitavada, 28-4-1937

[1] The correspondent had reported: "Mahatma Gandhi passed through Nagpur on Sunday, 25-4-1937, by the Grand Trunk Express. He was accompanied by Mr. Mahadev Desai. Huddled up in a third-class crowded compartment sat the Mahatma, with files and books piled about him. His secretartiat was with him and even in the train typing was being done. One wonders if it was not a new formula for the Working Committee. On the arrival of the train a set of questions was handed in to Mahatmaji to which he wrote his replies."

[2] The reporter had explained: "In view of his reply to the previous question Gandhiji gave no reply to this question."

[3] In "Interview to Associated Press of India", 26-4-1937, Gandhiji said that this answer was reported "just the contrary to what I meant".

194. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[1]

NAGPUR,
[*April 25, 1937*][2]

Q. Would you be satisfied with the assurance from the Governors on the lines given by Sir Samuel Hoare and quoted[3] by you?

A. I would be satisfied with the assurance with a definition of the word 'ordinarily' which everybody can understand.

Will you kindly give me your own definition of the work 'ordinarily'?

A. definition has really to come from those who want to introduce the adverb. I have not introduced the word 'ordinarily' in the Congress resolution[4] . Congress meaning is quite clear. For, it asked for an assurance in connection with a definite programme. If that programme and everything similar to that programme is pursued by the Congress there should be no interference on the part of the Governor. If in the opinion of the Governors the worst happens as Lord Lothian has suggested, the Governors can dismiss the Cabinet, dissolve the Assemblies and appeal to the electorate to find out whom the electorate will support. If the Congress aim is to create deadlocks, what point is there is asking for any assurance from the Governors? As I have already said and as I have read the Congress resolution, the aim of the Congress is not to create deadlocks,, but its aim undoubtedly is to make Congress position so irresistible as to replace the present Act, which nobody likes, by an Act which will represent the will of the masses. This will be brought about by constitutional means permissible under the Act itself. And if the Congress by force of its majority and by skill of Congress Ministers advances its own constitutional position to such a pitch that the British Ministers cannot possibly resist it except by force of arms, surely there can be nothing to grumble at.

You have said[4] that the Congress wanted non-interference not non-dismissal. Will you please explain the difference between the two?

As a gentleman I cannot possibly ask for a promise that the Cabinet may never be dismissed. But I can ask that there should be no

[1] Gandhiji gave the answers to questions sulrmitted to him by the correspondents of *The Times of India*, Bomay, and *News Chronicle*, London.

[2] On his way to Allahabad Gandhiji passed through Nagpur on this date.

[3] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 30-3-1937

[4] *Vide* " Extract From A.I.C.C. Resolution", 16-3-1937; also "Interview to *The Bombay Chronicle*". 30-4-1937

interference in the day-to-day administration. I do not want the Cabinet to be in a position of having to resign on the slightest pretext; for honourable resignation there must be honourable cause that anybody could see. If I have no assurance of non-interference the Governor may submit his Ministers to pinpricks which they would feel but which may not give them understandable cause to take to the public in justifying resignation. I would never put the Congress Cabinet in such embarrassing and humiliating position. The same thing would apply to the Governors. They would look incredibly foolish if on the slightest pretext they dismissed the Cabinet. Therefore, if Governors are gentlemen and want to preserve the honour of the nation whom they represent they will think fifty times before dismissing the Cabinet. I want to put them in that position so that there shall be no pinpricks from the Governors as all Ministers who worked under the Montford reforms have testified. Their position was made unbearable and humiliating and yet they were unable to resign, perhaps they would not. I do not know which was the case.

The Hitavada, 28-4-1937

195. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ALLAHABAD,
April 26, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

Your note awaited me as I reached Allahabad.

Jawaharlal looks very much pulled down, looks almost an old man. His voice is feeble. Enough to make one weep to see him so pale. Indu is quite nice though she looks the same fragile thing she was before. Old Mrs. Nehru is bed-ridden though better than she was a fewdays ago. Subhas has arrived but I have not yet seen him. It is presently to strike 12 when I break silence.

Subhas sees me at 1 p.m. The Working Committee sits at 2.30 p.m. I leave here on 28th and reach Wardha 29th. The weather seems to have been abnormal everywhere. It is very hot here. Mahadev, Pyarelal and Radhakrishna are with me.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3778. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6934.

196. LETTER TO LAKSHMI NARAYAN

ON THE TRAIN,
April 26, 1937

BHAI LAKSHMI NARAYAN,

Moral degradation is absolutely inexcusable.

There could be different legal opinions in the matter of zone ticket, etc.

Propagation of Hindi has definitely suffered on account of Pandit Sharma's[1] downfall[2].

Inscrutable are the ways of God.

[Adoption of] Hindi-Hindustani should never lead to spoiling of the language. It is indeed true that deliberate omission of non-Sanskrit words, such as Persian, etc. makes the language chaste.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI LAKSHMI NARAYAN
BHARATIYA VISHARAD
HINDI VIDYAPITH
DEOGHAR, BIHAR

From the Hindi original : Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

197. INERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

April 26, 1937

Interviewed regarding the editorial comments of *The Times* and *The Manchester Guardian* on his Poona statement[3] , Gandhiji said:

So far as I am concerned, any bridging the gulf has to come from the Government side. It is to be hoped therefore that representative papers like *The Times* and *The Manchester Guardian* will influence the British Government rather than seek to influence me or the Working Committee. The latter will take care of itself and speak for itself.

I have made my position absolutely clear. It is for the

[1] Pandit Harihar Sharma

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 30-4-1937, "Hindi Prachar and Purity", 3-4-1937 and "Letter to Prabhavati", 7-4-1937

[3] *Vide* "Interview to "The Hindu", 22-4-1937

Government to decide whether they have meant provincial autonomy by the Constitution they have framed or they have meant sometimes the reverse of Autonomy. But to the man in the street who knows nothing of legal quibbles or even of the Consititution that is the only question.

With reference to Press report[1] from Nagpur stating that to a question whether he thought, if the Congress did not accept office, the minority Ministries would win over the electorate by their ameliorative measures, Mr. Gandhi was reported to have said, "I should not be surprised," Mr. Gandhi says:

Whoever is the party concerned for the Nagpur telegram, he has reported just the contrary of what I meant or at least what I intended to mean. My answer was that I should be surprised if minority Ministries would win over the electorate by their ameliorative measures in case Congress did not accept office. A slip of paper containing questions was handed to me through the crowd into the railway compartment which was none too empty. I hurriedly wrote out the answer in pencil. If the reporter maintains that I wrote the word 'not', I would very much like to see the original.

The Hindu, 27-4-1937.

198. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

ALLAHABAD,
April 27, 1937

CHI. MIRA,

I got your postcard and letter about Lali here.

It is settled that we leave here tomorrow evening reaching Wardha in the evening 29th. You may expect me in Segaon about 8 p.m. or thereabouts.

The weather is very hot here but quite cool on the terrace at night.

Hope you understood what I said during the morning walk. But I do not want to blame you for what you can't alter in a moment.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6379. Courtey: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9845

[1] *Vide* "Interview to the Press", 25-4-1937

199. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

April 27, 1937

CHI. LILA,

Your disorderliness must go. It will go by and by. Talk less and think more. Do everything patiently. There should have been a washer in my spinning-wheel but I did not find it. You mislaid it while removing the yarn. This is just an example.

You must have sent the ghee to Radhakrishna.

Stop worrying about Dwarkadas. If you are keen on going, you may go.

I hope you are keeping a diary,

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostate of the Gujarati: G.N. 9359, Also C. W. 6634. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar.

200. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

ALLAHABAD,
April 30, 1937

SETH JAMNALALJI
WARDHA

REGRET INABILITY PERSONALLY BLESS BRIDE[1] BRIDEGROOM[2] PLEASE APOLOGIZE RAMESHWARDAS. REACHING SATURDAY NOON. INFORM MAGANWADI SEGAON.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 185

201. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"[3]

April 30, 1937

Questioned whether he still adhered to the view that if Governors gave assurance to the effect that "ordinarily" they would not interfere with constitutional activities of the Congress Ministers, the Congress would accept office, Gandhiji said,

[1] Laxmi, daughter of Janakidevi Bajaj's brother, Purushottamdas Jajodiya.
[2] Shriram, son of Rameshwardas Poddar of Dhulia.
[3] Gandhiji gave the interview in the train *en route* to Wardha.

in this matter his position should be properly understood. Gandhiji did not think that mere addition of the word 'ordinarily' to the formula would satisfy him or the Congress. Such assurance would be acceptable to him only if the qualifying word was "properly interpreted to our satisfaction". Gandhiji further declared:

We should know the meaning of 'ordinarily' beforehand.[1]

Our correspondent then drew Gandhiji's attention to Prof. Keith's[2] latest constitutional pronouncement published in today's *Leader* and asked him about the Congress position vis-a-vis Governor's special powers.

Gandhiji smiled and said it was stale news and he had read it already in some paper yesterday.

As I read Professor Keith's statement I saw that he entirely endorsed the Congress position that the Congress does not seek any abrogation of the Act.

Asked whether it would not be unconstitutional for the Congress Ministry to attempt to trample over the legitimate rights of the minorities, Gandhiji declared that it would not only be unconstitutional but "suicidal".

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-5-1937

202. HARIJANS ON BEGAR

The newspapers have given publicity to the threat of certain Harijans in certain villages to transfer their allegiance to the Christian Missions seeking to wean them from Hinduism under promise of better treatment, and especially freedom from *begar*[3] to which they are subjected by *savarna* Hindus. It seems that representatives of the Hindu Mission and of the Harijan Sevak Sangh visited the aggrieved Harijans and got the *savarna* Hindus to promise better treatment. The storm has abated for the time being. I do not know what would have been the gain to the Missions concerned if the Harijans had gone over to their fold and how far the Harijans could have been claimed as *bona fide* converts. This I know that such proselytizing efforts demoralize society, create suspicions and bitterness and retard the all-round progress of society. If, instead of wanting the so-called conversion as the price of better treatment, Christian Missions co-operated with Harijan sevaks in their effort to ease the burderns of Harijans, their help would be welcomed and the evolution of society would be hastened.

But I write this more to awaken *savarna* conscience than to

[1] *Vide* also "Interview to the Press",25-4-1937

[2] A. B. Keith, a constitutional lawyer of England.

[3] Forced labour without any wages.

criticize the Mission methods brought to light. The system of forced labour exacted by petty land-owners from Harijans and other classes called backward is almost universal in India. The petty landlords are mostly Hindus. Harijans and others can legally resist forced labour. They are slowly but surely being awakened to a sense of their rights. They are numerous enough to enforce them. But all grace will be gone when *savarna* Hindus impotently resign themselves to their merited fate. Better surely by far if they will recognize their duty of regarding Harijans as blood-brothers, entitled to the respect that belongs to man and to receive due payment for services voluntarily performed.

It is the privilege of Harijan savaks, no matter to what organization they belong, to befriend Harijans to study their condition in detail, to approach *savarna* Hindus and show them as gently as possible what their duty is towards those whom they have treated as outcastes of society and deprived even of legal rights.

From the papers before me I further find that in Ode and some other villages in Gujarat the *savarna* Hindus take from Harijans who dispose of their dead cattle half the hide. This is unlike the usual practice of allowing the Harijans to own the dead cattle they remove. In some cases Harijans not only retain the dead cattle they remove, but receive a payment for the labour of removing carcasses. The matter demands more investigation and fair adjustment. If Harijans were better treated and if *savarna* Hindus had no horror of dead cattle and had no superstitious laws of pollution, they would learn the art of flaying the dead cattle and turning every part of the carcasses into wealth, both to the benefit of themselves and the Harijans whom they may invite to help them in the process of disposing of their dead cattle.

Harijan, 1-5-1937

203. ESSAYS ON BARTER SYSTEM

Reader will remember that a prize of Rs. 500 was announced for the best essay recommending a barter system. The terms were also given. The time for sending the essays having elapsed, the Board of Examiners entered upon their task and have reported that none of the essays fulfil the conditions laid down. The following is their report[1] .

The prize has not been withdrawn by the donor. The examiners, Prof. K.T. Shah, Shri Vaikunth Mehta and Prof. J.C.

[1] This is not reproduced here; *vide* also "Letter to J. C. Kumarappa", 3-4-1937

Kumarappa, have kindly signified their readiness to examine any further essays that may be sent. I would, however, advise competitors, if any are willing, to strictly conform to the requirements laid down by the examiners. It is clear from their note and it is but natural that no essay will pass muster unless it reaches the level expected by them, and none will reach that level unless writers are industrious enough to study the necessary literature on the subject and build on their study an original thesis. It may be that the prize is not sufficiently tempting for such an effort. If that is so, I can only say that those who write for the mere monetary value of prizes hardly ever realize the expectations of donors. Without love of subject itself, high merit is not to be expected in difficult competitions like the one about the system of barter. The time for handing in the essays is fixed as 31st December, 1937. All essays should be addressed to Prof. J.C. Kumarappa, Maganwadi, Wardha. No further extension of time will be given, and if no effort succeeds the prize will be finally withdrawn.

Harijan, 1-5-1937

204. A MORAL DILEMMA[1]

A friend writes:[2]

> About two and a half years ago this city was convulesd by a social tragedy. A Vaishya gentleman had a sixteen-year old daughter. She had a maternal uncle aged twenty-one years studying in college in the same city. The two fell secretly in love with each other. The girl is said to have become pregnant. When the true state of affairs at last became known, the lovers committed suicide by taking poison. The girl died immediately but the boy died a couple of days afterwards in the hospital . . . . At the time when the storm was at its height and nobody had a kind word to say about the deceased unfortunate lovers, I shocked everybody by expressing my opinion that under the afore-mentioned circumstances the young lovers ought to have been allowed to have their way. But mine remained a voice in the wilderness. What is your opinion in the matter?

I have deliberately kept back the name of the correspondent and the place at the request of the writer as he did not want old sores to be reoponded by a revival of an old controversy. All the same I feel that a public discussion of this delicate topic is necessary. In my opinion such marriages as are interdicted in a particulars society cannot be recongnized all at once or at the will of an individual. Nor has society

[1] The Hindi original of this was published in *Harijan Sevak*, 1-5-1937. This appeared as “abridged by Pyarelal”.

[2] Only extracts are reproduced here.

or relatives of parties concerned any right to impose their will upon and forcibly curtail the liberty of action of the young people who may want to contract such marriages. In the instance cited by the correspondent both the parties had fully attained maturity. They could well think for themselves. No one had a right forcibly to prevent them from marrying each other if they wanted to. Society could at the most refuse to recognize the marriage, but it was the height of tyranny to drive them to suicide. Marriage taboos are not universal and are largely based on social usage.[1]

These alliances are not taboo in every society. The Christian, Muslim, Parsi and other communities do not observe this taboo. It is not even taboo in all Hindu varnas. The same varna has different customs in different Provinces. Among the so-called high caste Brahmins of the South, such alliances are not only not tabooed, but on the contrary are considered commendable.[2]

The usage varies from Province to Province and as between different divisions. This does not mean that the youth may ride roughshod over all established social customs and inhibitions. Before they decide to do so, they must convert public opinion to their side. In the meantime, the individuals concerned ought patiently to bide their time, or, if they cannot do that calmly and quietly, to face the consequences of social ostracism.

At the same time it is equally the duty of society not to take up a heartless, step-motherly attitude towards those who might disregard or break the established conventions. In the instance described by my correspondent the guilt of driving the young couple to suicide certainly rests on the shoulders of society if the version that is before me in correct.

Harijan, 29-5-1937

205. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
May 1, 1937

BIBI JAN ALIAS MY DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I got your letter as soon as I returned. You seem to be doing excellent work. If you can preserve good health even while doing so, by all means stay on. I am enclosing a bank-note for Rs. 50. Kanti is still at Rajkot. He is not going to Trivandrum. It appears certain,

[1] The following paragraph is translated from *Harijan Sevak*, 1-5-1937.
[2] *Vide* also "My Mistake", 6-6-1937.

however, that he will go to Mysore. I have no time just now to write more. We returned from Allahabad today.

Your belief that Hindu men and women stood in the way of your serving Harijans is not correct. In any case, don't worry. You should first get well and serve wherever you can do so quietly. If you can do good work living on your own farm, by all means do it. If you need still more money, send for it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am leaving for Gujarat on the 9th.

From a phototstat of the Gujarati: G.N. 380

206. KATHIAWAR COWS.

Shri Narahari Parikh, Secretary of the Goseva Sangh, has sent me a brief description of his tour in some Kathiawar States which he undertook for examining the cattle wealth there. I hope to publish it in *Harijanbandhu*, in two instalments. The following [item in this issue] is the first of these.[1] There was a time when Kathiawar cows were highly praised. That variety still exists but it is gradually disappearing. This wealth, which is being destroyed, may still be saved and fresh additions made to it if the rulers of Kathiawar and their officials put in the effort. There is room for improvement in all industries. Each one of these could be made more paying. But this possibility is perhaps the greatest in animal husbandry. Knowledge, diligence and patience are all that is required. According to our present knowledge, it is even claimed that the health of the human race is especially dependent upon our cattle wealth, i.e., on cow's milk. India is a country where one expects the cows to be of the highest quality. But they are of the poorest quality and are at present a burden on the land.

Shri Purushottam Joshi of the Bhavnagar institution, who is an expert in animal husbandry, suggests the following three ways of looking after cows:

1. Vagrant bulls should be castrated and used as bullocks.

2. Good pedigree bulls should be kept in every village and these should be well cared for.

3. Every farmer should have his own cow.

[1] The articles,which appeared under the title "Cow-protection in Kathiawar", are not translated here. The second instalment appeared in the issue dated May 9.

All the States in Kathiwar can readily do this without incurring any loss. But the reader should now read the statement made by Shri Narahari Parikh.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 2-5-1937

207. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
May 2, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter awaited me yesterday when I reached Wardha.

Allahabad was a taxing time. There was no wrangling. But the discussions in which I had to engage was a strain. The heat was terrible. The nights on the terrace delightful. Jawaharlal was pale and weak. He must have sailed for Burma by now. The trip will do him good. I have asked him to take no less than a month. After it he, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and I are to meet for a few days.

You should write to Prabhavati, if you have not already. Her address is: C/o Brij Kishore Prasad, Srinagar, Sewan, Bihar.

The heat is growing here. It is not trying for me. But I have to go to Gujarat for 20 days to fix up Gujarat Affairs. My address will be Tithal, Bulsar, B.B. & C.I. Railway. Tithal is on the sea. On 10th and 11th I am in Bardoli. I leave here on 9th and reach Bulsar on 12th.

I could not get anything to give to Manu on your behalf. So you have to think of something inexpensive and useful.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3779. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6935

208. LETTER TO P.G. MATHEW

May 2, 1937

MY DEAR MATHEW,

I returned yesterday. I leave here on Sunday, 9th. If you desire to come during the time, you may.

Yours,
BAPU

PROF. P. MATHEW
LEONARD COLLEGE
JUBBULPORE

From a photostat: G.N. 1542

209. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

May 2, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

I was eagerly waiting for your letter. I found two letters yesterday on returning from Allahabad. If you don't write your address and as a result don't receive my letters, is it my fault? I had written to you at Patna C/o *The Searchlight* since I had forgotten your residential address there. Thereafter I went to Allahabad. I waited for your letter but didn't get any. And I also thought I would write to you after returning to Wardha. Now, tell me, who is to blame for this? Certainly not you, but am I to blame, either? Please remember this, that you should give your complete address in every letter.

I have already given you Rajkumari's address. Here it is again: Shri Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Manorville, Simla.

As Jawaharlal was not well, the meeting was arranged at Allahabad. I would have been happy if you could have come there.

How is your health? Is the pressure of work heavy? What do you eat? Vasumati is here. Amtul is in her hometown. She is getting a well dug there.

I shall have to go to Gujarat on the 9th, Bardoli on 10th and 11th, Tithal, Bulsar, B.B. & C.I. Railway between 12th and 30th.

I am all right.

When are you going to Ahmedabad?

Any news about Jayaprakash?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3499

210. LETTER TO G.D. BIRLA

May 2, 1937

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Regarding the mill affairs, ethics demand that the labourers should be told that unless they behave properly the mill will remain closed and no new recruits wil be made. You can work with fresh labour only when the old lot vacate the quarters without giving trouble. I think this way is not only ethical but also economic. Do question further if this does not cover the whole problem. I go to Bardoli on the 9th and shall reach Tithal (Bulsar) on the 12th. The Working Committee of the Harijan Sevak Sangh can meet at Tithal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8031. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

211.LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,

May 4, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,`

Your letters are before me. It is hot here but I do not feel it much. The nights are cool.

I quite agree with you that Lionel[1] should give up the present job and do what he can in England. I wish you could persuade him to give up the job and go back to England.

Shummy[2] is right about his fear of infection. You may not expose your dear ones to risks which they and their parents will not willingly run.

I am glad you have resumed Sanskrit study. You won't give up Hindi on any account.

I have already told you about my movements. Departure 9th 10 p.m., Bardoli, 10-11, Tithal, Bulsar, 12 to 30 May.

Mira has been down again with fever. She can't live without me. So she accompanies me this time and I suppose will insist everytime I

[1] Lionel Fielden, first Director-General, All India Radio; *vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 21-9-1937, and "Letter to Lionel Fielden", 3-1-1937

[2] Addressee's brother, Lt. Col. Kanwar Shumshere Singh, a retired surgeon

go out. It is no use my striving against it any more than I did against her coming back to Segaon.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3780. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6936

212. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

May 4, 1937

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Where do you intend to take me? Wherever you take me, you will have to look after a big crowd. I won't be able to dissuade anybody from joining. I personally don't mind, but we must consider the convenience of the owner[1] of the bungalow in which we are lodged. Mirabehn has already served notice. She will accompany me wherever I go this time. I myself don't think that I need sea air. You may certainly keep me in Bardoli for as long as you wish, or in Surat, if you like. If, you don't mind a big crowd accompanying me, please don't think that I am objecting to it, though of course I do feel very hesitant about it. Here is the list as at this moment:

Ba, Kano, Mira, Pyarelal, Mahadev, Radhakrishna, Kanu, Manoharlal, Sharda.

I hope you are taking rest.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

DR. KANUGA'S BUNGALOW

ELLIS BRIDGE, AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 200

213. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 4, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. I have written to Jaisukhlal. Probably he will settle down where he is. If he studies the science of *goseva* and helps in increasing cow-wealth in Porbandar State, he will have done much. He can do khadi work, too, simultaneously. Guide him as well as you can.

[1] Bhulabhai J. Desai

Kanaiyo is all right now. For some time he was very eager to spend a few days with you, but the desire has weakened now, though it is still there. Let him, therefore, go there. When would you like him to come? He wishes that Purushottam and Vijaya should be there when he goes.

I had understood the reference correctly as regards the fees to be paid by Kumi's daughter. It is but befitting that she should follow in the footsteps of her mother.

Amtul Salaam is in Patiala State. Lilavati is keeping quite well. Her lethargy is well known.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8518. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

214. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

May 4, 1937

CHI. MANUDI,

I got your letter. Letters from Manilal and Sushila are enclosed. All of you please read them and send them to Kishorelal.

I will send you the *sitar*, as also the pair of shoes meant for Surendra.

I hope you are doing well. Take care of your health. Observe restraint in eating. Don't forget spinning and prayer.

Ba misses you, of course. If you want to know about myself, I am also sailing in the same boat. But I will be satisfied if you write regularly.

I shall be going to Gujarat on the 9th and will spend the whole month there. We shall reach Tithal on the 12th, where we shall spend about a fortnight.

Blessings to both from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1565. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

215. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

May 4, 1937

CHI. KANTI,

I have your letter. Your programme is good. The earlier you reach Bangalore, the better will it be from the point of view of the weather.

It is good that you learnt from Bali the history about your mother. It is not an ordinary history. And Chanchi was the most modest among all the sisters. She had the strength to live creditably in any condition.

I wrote to Amtul Salaam only two days ago and told her that she might by all means stay in her town. I doubted whether she would be happy there. But I see that she will experience no difficulty in staying anywhere there because of her father's influence. Moreover I learnt an extraordinary thing about her that she rides. But since I have permitted her she might not stay. Let us now see what she does. I have not seen Saraswati's letter addressed to you. Surendra and Manu are likely to come tomorrow. I will make enquiries. There was a letter from Paparamma[1], which I had asked them to send to you. The letter was opened through oversight. I could not understand who this Khan[2] was. After that I saw Paparamma's signature and understood.

If someone can show you, see the houses where we stayed at Rajkot. One house was near the fort and the other was at some distance in the *mhad*[3] . Perhaps it might have been demolished by now. It had caught fire.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am going to Bardoli on the 9th and to Tithal on the 12th.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7320. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] Padmavati, mother of Saraswati

[2] In the source this name is written in Roman script.

[3] A group of houses approached through a common gate separating them from the rest of the locality.

216. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
May 5, 1937

BHAI BENARSIDAS,

The purpose of the tour of Mauritius, etc., is quite different from the purpose behind the tour of Sumatra and other countries. Burma, Sumatra, Java, Siam, etc., have some connection with Eastern culture and it seems natural enough for them to have links with Indian languages. It does not of course imply that they will all learn Hindi, yet one need not be surprised if some of them do study it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2559

217. LETTER TO CARL HEATH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
May 6, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I have been too overwhelmed with work to answer your letters and your cable though they have all been attended to. I know that Agatha Harrison has been keeping you in touch with things as they are shaping here.[1] Everything that is possible to bring about peace is being done but it is not an easy job. My special contribution, therefore, is negative. The Congress leaders have, in my opinion, been acting with the greatest restraint in the face of grave provocation. I should have no hesitation in seeking an interview with Lord Linlithgow under ordinary circumstances but at the present juncture, if I made any such attempt, it would be wrong. For, the right person to interview the Viceroy is naturally Jawaharlal Nehru. But he has no faith whatsoever in seeking such interviews because he thinks that nothing good can come out of them. Nevertheless if he was invited he would certainly go. I am myself considering ways and means of ending the deadlock in an honourable manner. And if I can find it in me to approach any of the responsible people, you may depend upon my not standing on dignity.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Agatha Harisson", 9-4-1937

I prized your letter written by you to me just before your departure for England. I wanted to send you a line before embarkation but it was not possible and I was sorry. But that letter revealed to me with what care you had been labouring during your stay in India to bring about a better atmosphere.

Yours sincerely,

M.K. GANDHI

CARL HEATH, ESQ.
WHITE WINGS.
MANORWAY
GUILDFORD

From a phototat: G.N. 1030

218. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

May 6, 1937

MY DEAR C.R.,

I have gone through your statement[1]. It is quite good and effective. We might let the thing ripen. I have sent a statement[2] for publication. You will see it if it is published. I hope you are organizing constructive work. I hope you are keeping well.

Love.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2062

219. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

May 6, 1937

CHI. AMBUJAM,

Harihar Sharma is here and so is Kamala, and now appears on the scene Kamala's husband. I am confounded. Lakshmanrao, the husband, says he served as Father's chauffeur and that you know him well. I want you to tell me all you know about him, his adoptive

[1] According to Jagdish Saran Sharma's chronology, *India Since the advent of the British,* on May 16 "C. Rajagopalachari, in a Press statement, explained the Congress viewpoint regarding the suggestion that there was no serious difference between a Ministry's resignation and dismissal."

[2] Presumably, of May 12, 1037; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 12-5-1937

mother and Kamala.. There is a mystery hanging over this affair which I cannot unravel without further light. Throw, therefore, what you can on the problem.

I hope your studies are going on and that you are all keeping perfectly well.

I leave here for Gujarat on 9th instant. But you should write Care Maganwadi, Wardha.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Do you know if Lakshmanrao drank or gambled? How did you find him as a man?

From a photostat: C.W. 9611. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal

220. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

May 6, 1937

CHI . MANUDI,

If my stars are unfavourable, what can you do? I had already written a letter to you before you could demand one. Just then I got the letter informing me that both of you were coming here. I, therefore, kept back my letter. Now you have cancelled your coming here altogether. I am, therefore, posting that letter.

We shall pass through Akola on the 9th on our way to Bardoli. We shall be there at about 1 o'clock. At that time somebody should collect the *sitar* and the pair of shoes, or the station-master may be requested to take charge of both. If you are ready on that day, you also should come along. And we shall take the *sitar* with us if you so desire. Since you are coming to Tithal, I think we had better take it with us. We shall be going to Tithal on the 12th or the 13th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1566. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

221. LETTER TO DEMODAR

May 6, 1937

CHI. DAMODAR,

I have sent Rs. 1,000 to Gangabisan. Send it to Thakkar Bapa at Harijan Nivas, Delhi, for *Harijan.*

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3074

222. LETTER TO M. SATYANARAYANA[1]

May 6, 1937

BHAI SATYANARAYANA,

I have shown your scheme to Anna also. His views are enclosed.

What you have written about Punjabi in the first paragraph does not seem to be correct. For, if Punjabi is quite similar to Hindi, are not Bengali, Oriya, Assamese and Sindhi also very much like Hindi? But at the same time it can be said that Hindustani and Urdu are also as much in use as Punjabi in the Punjab. So whatever work is to be done there should be carried on only through local people. It is for this reason that just as no activity is carried on by the Hindi Prachar Samiti in the United Provinces, there should be none in the Punjab also. You must keep in mind that we do not propagate Hindi where Urdu is spoken. We consider Urdu speaking people as Hindi speaking ones. As for the rest of the scheme my view is that all the activities should be self-sufficient.

Let me give you one more idea. I am of the opinion that we have attempted nothing original in our method of teaching, i.e., we have hardly made any efforts for making the learning of Hindi easy and interesting as has been done in the case of English. Who amongst us can tell how many days it takes to teach Hindi, or in how many days the script may be taught? We have not evolved a model self-teaching primer in any of the Indian languages. Some little effort has been made in Tamil, etc., but I see nothing original, nothing extraordinary in it. If we can do something on these lines the spread

[1] Of the Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha

of Hindi will be greatly expedited and lakhs of rupees saved. We do have a good many teachers in the South because of the Dakshin Bharat [Hindi] Prachar [Sabha] but do we have someone who can take up this kind of task? I think that such an experiment must find a place in one of our schemes.

Blessings from

From the Hindi original: Rashtrabhasha Prachar Samiti Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also G.N. 10993

223. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

WARDHA,
May 6, 1937

Q. I take it that you had much to do with the latest resolution[1] of the Working Committee on office-acceptance. If so, is there any truth in the suggestion that you have yielded to the left-wingers?

A. As a matter of fact there were no left-wingers and right-wingers this time. The only question discussed was about the form the resolution had to take.

Do you not see that there is very little difference between Mr. Butler's[2] statement and the Working Committee's resolution?

If that is so, why is there the slightest difficulty about Mr. Butler's instructing the Governors to offer office to the Congress leaders in terms of the Congress Resolution?

[1] Passed at Allahabad on April 28, which read: :"The past record of the British Government as well as its present attitude show that without the specific assurances as required by the Congress, popular Ministers will be unable to function properly and without irritating interference. The assurances do not contemplate abrogation of the right of the Governor to dismiss the Ministry or dissolve the provincial Assembly when serious differences of opinion arise between the Governor and his Ministers. But this Committee has grave objection to Ministers having to submit to interference by the Governor with the alternative of themselves having to resign their office instead of the Governors taking the responsibility of dismissing them."

[2] Under-Secretary of State for India; addressing the House of Commons on April 26, he said: "His Majesty's Government have no intention of countenancing the use of special powers for purposes other than those for which Parliament intended them. It is certainly not their intention that the Governors, by a narrow or legalistic interpretation of their own responsibilities should trench upon the wide powers which it was the purpose of Parliament to place in the hands of Ministers and which it is desired they should use in furtherance of the programmes they have advocated."

Leaving Lord Zetland's speech[1] aside for the moment, what is the discourtesy you detect in Mr. Butler's statement?

I have never known a great party, commanding a majority that the Congress does, having such a thing as office thrown at it, and its leaders treated as if they were petitioners. If they were Ministers would they have to send applications to the Governors for interviews and run the risk of their applications being summarily rejected? I had thought that in autonomy the Ministers got the audience of their Governors for the asking and often the Governors had to give in to the Ministers where the latter had felt displeased or offended. The British Government know that the Congress is out for complete independence. It seems to me that the British Cabinet resent this attitude of Congress. If so, they should plainly tell the Congress and the world that they will not tolerate complete independence and should cease to play with the word 'autonomy'. If on the other hand they do not mind natural evolution of India to its destiny, whatever it may be, they must treat the Congress with the consideration its position demands and disarm suspicion that, owing to their speech and action, is deepening.

The Hitavada, 7-5-1937

224. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[2]

[*After May 6, 1937*][3]

So far as the tone is concerned, it is an undoubted improvement upon his last speech on the subject. But I fear it is no contribution to the removal of the deadlock.

The last resolution of the Working Committee is the clearest possible annotation of the All-India Congress Committee's resolution, in accordance with which assurances were asked for. Now the world knows what was meant. Surely, it is no strain upon the Constitution Act for the Governors to give the assurance that whenever a situation

[1] Of April 8, in reply to Lord Lothian, it read: "The demand made of the Governors was one which without amendment of the Constitution they could not possibly accept . . . I would add that even if the Constitution admitted a pledge of this kind being given , the giving of it would have involved a grave breach of faith with

[2] The giving of it would have involved a grave breach of faith with the minorities and others in India . . . Opinions might differ as to the extent and necessity for such safeguards but it could not be doubted that the minorities in India themselves attached the utmost importance to them."

[3] The interview was on Lord Zetland's address to the House of Lords on May 6; *vide* Appendix "Lord Zetland's Speech", 6-5-1937.

[4] *ibid*

is created which to them appears intolerable, they will take upon their shoulders the responsibility of dismissing the Minsters which they have the right to do, instead of expecting them to resign or submit to the Governor's wishes.

Citing the performances of Minstries formed by Governors in the face of universal opposition does not improve matters but strengthens suspicion. In my opinion, the Congress is in earnest and wants to make a serious effort, if it takes office to make a substantial advance by that method towards its unequivocal goal of complete independence in so far as it is constitutionally possible to make that advance.

The Indian Annual Register, 1937, Vol. I, p. 258

225. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA
May 7, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

Give the accompanying letter to Kamu. The letter to which it is a reply is also enclosed. If you take from her all the work she can do what would be your assessment of its value at the market rate? You need not consider whether your school can bear the burden.

You have read in *Harijan*[1] about Anna. Kamalabai, the person with whom he fell, is here at present. She says that she is repenting now. I have myself brought Anna here. I think he is repenting. I am not sure about Kamalabai. She says that she has felt so deeply that she is not likely to commit a similar mistake again. It does not seem desirable to keep both of them at Segaon. I think it will be for Anna's good to keep him with me. I, therefore, feel inclined to put Kamalabai under your care. I will bear the expenses on her account. You may give her any work you like. She has some ability. Her mother tongue is Kannada and she is a Hindi teacher. She is ready to learn whatever other work we may teach her. She can teach sewing, etc. If you feel hesitant, please let me know. Send me a wire if you are ready to take her under your care. We start from here on the 9th. 10, 11 and 12 at Bardoli, and after the 12th in Tithal, near Bulsar, Send the wire to Bardoli. [I shall be accompanied by] Ba, Mira, Pyarelal, Kano, Mahadev, Radhakrishna, Kanaiyo. Manu may join at Akola. Sharda also will come there. There will be one or two more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8519. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

[1] Dated April 3, 1937; *vide* "Hindi Prachar and Purity", 3-4-1937

226. COCHIN-TRAVANCORE

My worst fears have come true and Cochin and Travancore are at war with each other. The pity of it is that the war is over a matter of vital interest to Hinduism and therefore to the whole of India. It is a war between light and darkness. I am loath to think that the population of Cochin is behind the Cochin Maharaja's action. He may regulate worship in the Cochin temples under his jurisdiction in any manner he likes. But even the most orthodox Hinduism would hardly permit him to regulate the private conduct of the visitors to the Cochin temples. In no temple in India where Harijans are not permitted to worship are trustees authorized to scrutinize the actions of *savarna* Hindus who are entitled as a matter of right to visit the temples.

In Cochin the Maharaja has interfered in respect of a temple[1] over which he has no exclusive control. The Maharaja of Travancore, too, possesses substantial right over the temples in question. The Cochin order is clearly an interference with that right. If Travancore has sinned, it is no concern of Cochin. The Cochin order is an interference with the right of private judgment.

In this crisis the duty of the public seems to me to be clear. Meetings should be held all over the country condemning the Cochin orders and asking for their withdrawal. The most orthodox Hindus can surely join such protest meetings even though they may not be in favour of throwing open all temples to Harijans. Seeing that the Cochin public is directly interested in the action of its Maharaja, they may lead the agitation. The pundits of India should dispassionately examine the orders and express their unbiased opinion. I am inclined to think that the Travancore Durbar may well invite the opinion of pundits on the single question of the religious propriety of the Cochin order and undertake to abide by their opinion. In other words, Travancore may well offer to abide by the verdict of an arbitration tribunal consisting of unbiased pundits who will be universally accepted as such. The opinion of an assembly of such pundits would be the nearest approach to an arbitration tribunal. For, whilst the

[1] Koodalmanikkam Temple; for details of the controversy, *vide* Appendix "Koodalmanikkam Temple Controversy", 22-5-1937; *vide* also the following item and "Cochin untouchability", 5-6-1937.

Travancore Durbar had a perfect right to open to Harijans the temples within their sole jurisdiction and ownership and without reference to the opinion of pundits, it would hardly be right to propound a new *Smriti* in respect of temples where there is joint jurisdiction. The Harijan cause must be always and everywhere above suspicion. Travancore's glorious action is capable of standing meticulous scrutiny on the ground of moral correctness.

Harijan, 8-5-1937

227. THE COCHIN TEMPLE-ENTRY BAN

Since the foregoing[1] was written the following was received from Shri C.K. Parameswaran Pillai, President, Kerala Harijan Sevak Sangh...[2]

> In a letter to *The Madras Mail* from somebody from Ernakulam, dated the 20th April, 1937, it is stated that considerable resentment is felt here at the criticisms in Travancore of the Cochin Government's order regarding the Koodalmanikkam Temple at Irinjalakuda, and the vast majority of the Hindus in the State support the Government's action.... Again on the 23rd April *The Madras Mail's* own correspondent wrote to that paper that "leading citizens of Irinjalakuda support the Cochin Government's declaration that the temple was defiled by the participation in its ceremonies of *tantris* who had officiated in temples to which *avarnas* were admitted.... "
>
> The Cochin Legislative Council has been passing resolutions year after year recommending to Government the abolition of untouchability. Resoutions were also passed at public meetings on several occasions in support of temple-entry for Harijans. Having reasons, therefore, to doubt therefore, to doubt the correctness of the statement in *The Madras Mail*, I went to Ernakulam on the 25th April accompanied by Sjt. M. Govindan, B.A.,B.L., retired Judge and the President of the Trivandrum District Committee of the Harijan Sevak Sangh, to study the real situation of affairs in Cochin. I interviewed several important persons including the Thachudaya Kaimal, the administrator of the Koodalmanikkam Temple, and the Prisendent of the S.N.D.P. Yogam. I am now in a position, to say difinitely that there is no foundation for the statement in *The Madras Mail* that the majority of the people of Cochin support the action of the Cochin Government in excommunicating the *tantris*. *The Hindu* of the 23rd April has published two

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Only extracts from Parameswaran Pillai's letter, reporting his interview to the Associated Press of India after a study tour of Cochin, are reproduced here.

statements... denouncing in unmistakable terms the action taken by the Cochin Government against the Nedumpally Nambudiri the *tantri* concerned...

From the social and moral standpoint the action of the Cochin Government is unjustifiable and inconsistent. The dharmashastras clearly lay down that anybody who takes a sea voyage—even a person who remains in the sea for three consecutive days—becomes a *patita*. It was for this reason that Professor (now Sir) Ramunny Menon was ostracized by the Cochin Government and prohibited from entering into Cochin temples. A few years later when the Cochin Maharaja's son returned from England after his education, the rule was abrogated and admission was given to all England-returned men to temples. The Cochin temples became polluted then, and the Travancore Government might have taken such steps against the Nedumpally Nambudiripad at that time which the Cochin Government have now taken.

If in fact we apply strictly the rules of the dharmashastras to the present day, the *savarna* Hindus will all have to be treated as *patitas* and they cannot enter the temples there. But in these progressive days no reasonable Government will think of doing such an unreasonable thing. I hope, therefore, that the Cochin Government will reconsider their order and withdraw the same. The Dewan, Sir R. K. Shanmukham Chetty, is a cultured man of modern views and a supporter of the Justice Party. I have no doubt that he will do what is proper and restore public confidence in his administration.

Harijan, 8-5-1937

228. SELF INFLICTED UNTOUCHABILITY

The letter[1] is printed to show the freshness with which this grand old man of Bengal approaches great problems. The first letter referred to in the foregoing was inadvertently destroyed. Happily the reader has the gist of it in this. Shri Hara Dayal Nag says, truly, that if the temple untouchability is not destroyed, the temples have to be; and if temples go, with them must disappear Hinduism as we know it.

Harijan, 8-5-1937

[1] The letter from Hara Dayal Nag is not reproduced here.

229. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
MAY 8, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

This is being written on paper prepared by Prabhu Dayal. He has brought a fair lot of paper and has been showing it to me with great pride. I thought therefore that I should let you see his handiwork. This is not the best specimen but it was a convenient size for me to cut.

Well, normal men are just as good and as bad as normal women. You have been known to have behaved just as badly as if not worse than Lionel. And I see from your letter to Mira that you do not give me any news about your health thus leaving me to infer that you are keeping quite well. But now I understand you are not keeping extra well. Why should I not know all this? And you have been taking medicines too! You *must* let me know accurately what the matter is with you.

Balkrishna[1] is just as you left him. I thought I had told you as much.

I am glad you are giving so much time to Sanskrit. Your Hindi writing is a trifle too large but you are erring on the safe side; when the hand has settled you will soon begin to write the natural size.

I have not had a bill from Mehta. He was given the full address. But an evil fate hangs about your address which no one but I would write correctly. I hope you had to pay nothing extra. I hope it will be of use. You should write to Dinsha Mehta to send you the bill for the kettle.

Love.

From the original: C.W. 3781. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6937

[1] Balkrishna Bhave, Vinoba Bhave's younger brother.

230. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

MAY 8, 1937

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. I am now going to Gujarat and shall reach Tithal on the 12th[1] . The best thing would be to obtain a full account from the gentleman and forward it to me. After reading it, I shall, if I think it necessary, send for him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2453

231. LETTER TO SARASWATI

MAY 8, 1937

CHI. SARASWATI,

I had your letters but could not reply for lack of time. You seem to be paying good attention to your studies. If it is a fact, tell me in detail how far you have progressed during this period. How is Ramachandran? What headway have you made in music? When do you expect to visit us again? These days it is quite hot here though the nights are still cool, which reduces the discomfort caused by the heat.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SARASWATI
C/O G. RAMACHANDRAN
HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH
THAIKAD, TRIVANDRUM

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6159. Also C.W. 3432. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi.

232. DUTIES OF GANDHI SEVA SANGH

Kumri is a small village, about seventeen miles from Belgaum. Shri Gangadharrao has built an ashram there. The annual meeting of the Gandhi Seva Sangh was to have been held in Hudli but the rain-god intervened and the members of the Sangh ran from the pandal and took shelter under the roof of the weaving-school of the Kumri

[1] The source has “13th”, a slip,

Ashram. After a great deal of discussion, some important resolutions were passed there, of which the following are the most noteworthy. I give these[1] in the original Hindi language.

The Hindi is so simple that no reader will need a translation. Despite this, if anyone fails to understand them, he should get them translated by someone who knows Hindi.

As regards the first [three] resoultions, it would be sufficient to say that the changes made have been introduced with a view to the expansion of constructive work. These are not made as alternatives or additions to constructive work. The object of the permission[2] is merely to assist it. If this objective is not clearly understood, the fears of Shri Kishorelal may perhaps prove true. The Sangh exists for the very purpose of keeping constructive work alive, for making it interesting and for spreading it from Kashmir to Cape Comorin and from Karachi to Dibrugarh. This is because constructive work has been regarded as the mark of truth and non-violence. For its success contact has to be established with three crores of voters. In order to make this contact effective, if some members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh have to enter Legislatures, it becomes a clear duty of the Sangh to make provision for it.

The fourth resolution is almost self-evident. No matter how many wells and ponds are added, they will prove useful. They increase the country's wealth and, moreover, wells, ponds and such otherwater-reservouirs constructed by the Sangh, will of course be open to all Harijans. Hence if these are built at appropriate sites, they will provide water to innumerable thirsty Harijans and the donors as well as the Sangh will earn the blessings of the beneficiaries. Hence, those who wish to do so should send contributions, without a second thought, to the Sangh for the purpose of digging wells for Harijans.

The fifth resolution is an all-embracing one. The assumption behind it is that village welfare work begins with the service of Bhangis, i.e., with village sanitation. How this can be done is explained in the resolution. It is worth noting that the task of providing medicines and running schools has not been considered essential. There is no mention in the resolution of spinning and such other crafts. The implication is that these things will have to be done, but the

[1] Not translated here. The resolution dealt with the constructive programme through charkha, wells for drinking water, use and propagation of Hindi, eradication of untouchability, and cow-protection.

[2] For Sangh members to stand for election to the Legislative Assembly with the approval of the Working Committee; *vide* also "Speech at Gandhi Seva Sangh Meeting, Hudli- III",20-4-1937

stress is laid on what one has to start with. This is because the aim of the resolution is to remove the fear entertained by some members of being boycotted while doing the work of sanitation.

In the sixth resolution the propagation of Hindi has been advocated and the methods indicated. As long as leaders feel it *infra dig* to appear for an examination in Hindi, others will not be very enthusiastic about it. So long as public institutions do not carry on their business in Hindi or so long as Hindi translations are not made available where the use of English is found indispensable, Hindi cannot be propagated on a large scale. Here Hindi includes Hindustani. There is no distinction between the two from the point of view of the Sangh.

The Sangh has through the seventh resolution demonstrated its zeal for national education, but the national Vidyapiths have been entrusted with the task, and that is as it should be.

By the eighth resolution, the meaning of the abolition of untouchability from the standpoint of the Sangh has been clarified. The limits which have been accepted by the Harijan Sevak Sangh for crores of persons so far as the abolition of untouchability is concerned, are in no way sufficient for members of the Sangh who regard truth and non-violence from my standpoint. So long as there are restrictions as regards inter-dining and intermarriage, untouchability is bound to survive to some extent. It is necessary for members of the Sangh to give up these restrictions. Anyone who sincerely serves Harijans cannot possibly observe such restrictions.

Although the ninth resolution is not related to the constructive work of the Congress, it is closely connected with the economic condition of India. Crores of rupees are lost because of our indifference towards our cattle wealth. The struggle between the cow and the buffalo on the one hand and between cattle and man on the other can continue only to the detriment of all the three. This is because if cows are allowed to perish, buffaloes are bound to follow suit and drag human beings behind. The latter will survive if cows do, but buffaloes have either to return to their original wild state or continue to survive in a very small number. The Sangh has pointed out the easy, straight and consequently inexpensive way of escaping such an untimely death; and that is to insist upon using cow's milk and nothing but cow's milk and its products. This objective will probably be achieved without much difficulty if an all-out effort is

made. The appeal to study the cow problem scientifically has been made with a view to justifying what has been said in the above resoulution about cattle wealth and helping those engaged in *goseva* propaganda.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 9-5-1937

233. MESSAGE TO INTER-RELIGIOUS STUDENTS' CONFERENCE [2]

WARDHA,
MAY 9, 1937

The thing I would like to say in the forthcoming Inter-Religious Students' Conference is that before they enter upon their deliberations the students assembled should realize that they meet on a common platform where all the religions represented by the students are treated with equal respect. If they approach their task with mental reservations there will be no heart-fellowship.

The Hindu, 17-5-1937

234. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

SEGAON,
MAY 9, 1937

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I have read your letter. I was indeed happy that the day before yesterday night you went on foot. But I was also afraid that perhaps you would get exhausted. Please do not exert yourself beyound your strength—physically or mentally.

Powerful people very often get away with misdeeds and so we cannot hope to convince anybody if we criticize such conduct for there is considerable truth in the popular maxim. That is why even Tulsidas wrote: "The powerful are never guilty." But the big may do whatever they like; how does that concern us? What reply can we give to those who take cover behind the misdeeds of big people to hide their own?

[1] *Vide* also "Speech at Gandhi Seva Sangh Meeting, Hudli- IV", 20-4-1937

[2] The conference was held at Alwaye on May 15. The message was read out by the President of the Session.

I have read your article[1] . I have not been able to spare the time to study it carefully and ponder over the matter. I have made a correction at one place. Please see it. The correction explains itself.

I hope to reach Wardha at about half past seven.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 6086. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

235. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

BHUSAVAL,
MAY 10, 1937

CHI. MUNNALAL,

It pains me very much that there is no harmony among you all at Segaon. Lilavati's shortcomings are numerous but she has as many virtues. Either she should win you over or you have to win her over. Please think over this.

Introduce order in your work. Find out customers for separated milk. Please regard that as your field.

I have talked over everything with Chiranjilal. Jamnalalji also was present. The secretary also was present, and so were the new Diwan and Shri Jewlekar. Please keep me informed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8587. Also C.W. 7009. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

236. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

MAY 10, 1937

CHI. VIJAYA,

I certainly felt unhappy for not bringing you with me. But I am sure that your good lay in not coming.

You have been a little hasty in forming your opinion about Lilavati. She is proud and is prone to anger, but has no malice at all. You have to learn much from everybody. One should see the virtues

[1] *Vide* "The Marrage Ideal",5-6-1937

of all and not their shortcomings. Please remember the couplet...[1]

If you don't follow the meaning of this, please learn it from Anna. Master the secret of serving everybody silently.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7065. Also C.W. 4557. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

237. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

MAY 10, 1937

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I have told Anna to supervise Mirabehn's work like spinning, etc. She is not yet proficient in that work. Please, therefore, explain to her as much as you can. But don't tax yourself.

Everybody should spare half an hour for *goseva*. Develop the children's intelligence by making them spin on the *takli*. Teach them the new method of turning the *takli*.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Look after Kamaladevi. Anna is the oldest inmate of the Ashram. Have full trust in him. He has committed a serious error. But I hope that he will learn from it and will cast out the evil from himself.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10729

238. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

MAY 10, 1937

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

We had a good talk together. You have to learn the art of living with others. Look to the good qualities of Lilavati and others and overlook the bad ones. I hope you have started your *yajna* of *goseva*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1899

[1] Here in the source, Gandhiji again quotes the verse from *Ramacharitamanas*, Balkand; *vide* "Letter to Amritlal T. Nanavati",15-3-1937

239. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BARDOLI,
MAY 10, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

Do you still receive every three months or six months the remittance on Mirabehn's account? If so, what is the amount? How much in all must you have received?

You must have got my letter regarding Kamalabai. Manu has joined me from Akola. I , therefore, have a big enough crowd accompanying me. One or two more may still join. Kanaiyo of course is in the party, together with his *dilruba*. Manu has brought her *sitar.*

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

We reach Tithal on the 12th. Address your reply there.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8520. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

240. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA

MAY 10, 1937

May all your aspirations that you told me of today be realized and may you prove a selfless servant of the people.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9423

241. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

BHUSAVAL,
MAY 10, 1937

CHI. LILA,

If you patiently follow my instructions, all your frailties will disappear Give up your pride and talk gently to everyone. You do know the meaning of the word *anna,* don't you? It means brother. As

you know, Anna[1] is forty-five years old. Consider him your elder brother and take his help whenever necessary. I am writing this letter from Bhusaval where I have to wait for a train.

Manu[2] and Vijayalakshmi joined us at Akola. Manu has left behind her *sitar* there. Now, if anyone from Jamnalalji's house is going to Bombay, send the *sitar* with him or with Surendra[3]. Surendra is going to Bombay. He will leave Akola today. Be absolutely calm. I hope you are not too tired.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

242. DISCUSSION WITH WORKERS[4]

BARDOLI,

[*MAY 11, 1937*][5]

CONGRESS WORKER: But it is 11 miles from the Railway Station, and you have said that the place should not be more than seven miles from the Station. Sydla is two furlongs and Afwa only two miles.

GANDHIJI: If I said seven miles, I meant seventy. At any rate that should be our aim. We have ultimately to reach the villages which are considered inaccessible today. And where else can you have this vast supply of water and so much open space for the thousands of people we are going to have, as also for the numerous cows we shall need for

[1] Harihar Sharma

[2] Wife of Surendra Mashruwala

[3] Surendra Mashruwala

[4] Some Congress workers who disapproved of Haripura ('town of God') as the Congress venue, met Gandhiji at Swaraj Ashram. This is extracted from the "Weekly Letter" by Mahadev Desai, who had reported: "We spent two days in Bardoli . . .Ever since we have decided to hold the Congress in villages, the selection of the venue . . . becomes an additional problem . . . There are several villages in Bardoli taluka that have made themselves famous during recent years by their sacrifice and suffering . . . But Gandhiji showed them that we could not afford to go by that consideration alone. The place selected should be in the heart of villages and it should have natural advantages . . . Haripura, therefore, which is beautifully situated on the river Tapti, with vast stretches of unarable land right on its bank easily captured Gandhiji's heart."

[5] From *The Hindu*, 13-5-1937 and 19-5-1937

them? And then what a charming name is Haripura! Hari meaning God.

It will be frightfully expensive, everything having to be carried ten miles by motor-lorries and buses. It is not in the centre of the taluk, as are other places, and the village people will be hard put to it in going from one end of the taluk to the other.

Why should we fight shy of the distances and why should we have motor-lorries? We have any number of bullock carts in the taluk.

If we have the Congress at Afwa, we can have water from Bardoli at little expense. The ginning companies would readily oblige us with their engines for electricity and something like Rs. 15,000 would be saved.

That means that we should always have our Congress in the vicinity of towns and cities! Why should we not do without electricity? And while people from Surat and the neighbouring villages will flock to Afwa near Bardoli, what about the Raniparaj people–the hill people—whom we want to acquaint somewhat with the Congress?

You must not be swayed by my argument unless it appeals to your reason and experience.

Harijan 22-5-1937

243. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

ON WAY TO TITHAL,
MAY 12, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

It was in Bardoli I got your letter. I do not blame you, but is it not our misfortune, both yours and mine? Otherwise how could a letter sent to you C/o *Searchlight* go astray? But take a lesson from this, that I don't forget to write to you. I reply to you as soon as I receive your letter.[1]

I didn't have the courage to send for you at Allahabad.

Sardar believes that Jayaprakash is sure to be released today. It is good indeed that he has started learning Urdu. Nobody can doubt his capacity for hard work.

I understand about Father. He is getting old, too. Free him completely from the burden of work. He will listen to you.

We shall be staying in Tithal up to the 31st. Then I shall go to Segaon and I wish to stay there till the Congress session.

My diet is the same that you saw. The weight is nearly 112

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Prabhavati", 2-5-1937

which can certainly be described as good. Tithal is right on the sea-coast, so it will be sufficiently cool. We shall reach there at about 3 o'clock today. Just now we are in Navsari. Manilal Kothari is very ill and we have come here to see him.

The party in Tithal will be : Ba, Kano, Manu, Mahadev, Pyarelal, Mirabehn, Kanaiyo, Radhakishan, Manohar (Shankerlal's sister's son) Sardar and Manibehn. Some others also may come.

I understand about you. I see that you will go to Mridula only when you can be free from there. I suppose you will come and see me before going.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3500

244. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

TITHAL (BULSAR),
MAY 12, 1937

I am surprised at my remarks[1] being misunderstood. I still maintain that whilst Lord Zetland's statement is agreeably worded, it does not remove the deadlock in the sense that it gives no specific answer to the specific Congress demand, namely, that the method in which the Governors will use their powers of interference whenever they fear an emergency would be that of dismissal of the Ministry rather than expecting the Ministry to resign or submit to the Governor's wishes. I hold that this is perfectly consitutional and equally honourable for both parties. The Governors will reason with their Ministers. The Ministers would be bound courteously to listen to what they say.But if reason fails to carry conviction the only proper course for both parties would be for the Governors to dismiss such Ministers and dissolve the Assembly or take whatever measures may be open to them constitutionally.

The Hindu, 13-5-1937

[1] The Editor of *The Hindu*, referring to the "Interview to Associated Press of India", pp. 175-6, had sent the following telegram to Gandhiji: "Your observation 'I fear it is no contribution to removal of deadlock' misunderstood in local official quarters as refusal to recognize valuable admissions by Lord Zetland in favour of Congress demand. Request removal misapprehension."

245. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

TITHAL, BULSAR,
MAY 12, 1937

CHI . VIJAYA,

I met Naranbhai[1] . Sardar also was present. We had a long talk. His love for you is boundless. When I talked about Manubhai[2] he started crying. He said: "If she wants to marry only with our consent, why does she bring up Manubhai's name every time? We will never be pleased with that marriage. She has taken a pledge to remain unmarried. Let her keep it. But if at all she wants to marry, then there are two or three good young men in our community; she may select one of them." This is the substance of what he said. I pacified him. I told him that you were not bent upon marrying him. If you at all marry, I said, you would marry Manubhai, but that if your parents would not gladly give you their blessings you would be prepared to remain unmarried. I also told him that you certainly wished that they should not press you to marry anybody else. Sardar also spoke in favour of Manubhai. He said that now in this age girls should be given some freedom; after having educated them we should not expect that they should always obey our wishes. But all this had no effect on Naranbhai. I have assured him that I would not marry you off to Manubhai secretly.

Now my advice is that if you wish you may send this letter to Manubhai. Even if you don't do that, you may, if you think it proper, write to him and tell him that your marriage is likely to be delayed and may not even come off. I am sure you would not wish to marry after the death of your parents. Both of you should wish that they may live long. It would be a different matter if your patience, your blameless conduct and Manubhai's purity should melt their hearts. But I do not think that in this case anything except time and the conduct of you both can have any effect. If occasion arises I would certainly be ready to say more. But I shall not have the courage to hurt them. Sardar is going to try.

I see that Manubhai has become impatient. He should have patience.

You must have got my last letter[3] . I hope you have again

[1] Addressee's father
[2] Manubhai Pancholi, one of the founder-members of Lokbharati, Sanosara
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Vijay N. Patel", 10-5-1937

become friendly with Lilavati.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I do not see my penknife with two blades which used to be kept on my inkstand. Please keep it safe if it is left behind there. If it is not found, it will have to be given up as lost.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7066. Also C.W. 4558. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

246. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

TITHAL, BULSAR,
MAY 12, 1937

CHI. KANTI,

Only today I got your letter. We reached here just today. Bal has come. Tomorrow he will leave for that side.

You have been travelling a good deal and also gathering a lot of experience. Did you carefully see the old family houses in Porbandar? Each and every room has a history.

I didn't know at all that Navin was there. You may by all means stay in Bangalore. Both Places are the same to me. Ramachandran's[1] company, too, will be a good thing. Perhaps you will get more experience in Bangalore. Devdas says that your letters to him are very short. Write in detail. Describe your daily programme also.

Harilal has again become unbalanced. He has again written a letter to the newspapers saying all kinds of things. He has left the Swami with whom he was staying. It is difficult to say what he will do now. I have put my trust in God. He may do as He wills.

I am accompanied by Ba, Kano, Manu, Kanaiyo, Mahadev, Pyarelal and Radhakishan. Sharda (Chimanlal's) is expected to come. You may come whenever you wish. There is enough room here. I am getting good experience of Bachu. I am convinced that the intellect can be fully developed while learning different crafts. This is not to forbid literary studies, but only to say that the intellect can be best developed through crafts. Literary studies then become a very easy task and take their proper place. At present literature has merely

[1] G. Ramachandran

become a means of self-indulgence and we are suffering the consequences of that.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7321. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

247. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

TITHAL, BULSAR,
MAY 12, 1937

CHI. LILA,

I waited for your letter today but it did not come. You must be calm. If milk is in short supply its consumption should be regulated. Let children have as much of it as they want. You must also talk to Khandu and others. He should have no objection to milk coming in.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope you are getting post and newspapers regularly there.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy. Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

248. TELEGRAM TO NANDALAL BOSE

BULSAR
MAY 13, 1937

NANDALAL BOSE
SANTINIKETAN

COULD YOU COME EARLY INSPECT SITE NEXT CONGRESS AND ADVISE REGARDING PLAN ETC? INFORM DATE. REACH BARDOLI VIA BHUSAVAL.

GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9825

249. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

TITHAL, BULSAR,
MAY 13, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your two letters of 7th and 11th respectively have just come in. We arrived here yesterday 3 p.m.

Whether four days' gap is too long or not is a matter of opinion. I certainly missed your letter in Bardoli as also here yesterday. But you are always excused. I do not want your letters at the cost of your health or your work. But I want them when you can give them to me without strain and stress.

Your letter to the Municipality is good. If no relief is immediately given, you should certainly expose the Municipality. Why not write to Lady Linlithgow? Invite her to visit the quarters.

I am

not going to issue a certificate of merit until you possess excellent health. And you can do it, if you will be carefree and take plenty of milk, juicy fruit and salads. What is the quantity of milk you take now?

I do not believe in your reserving things to be told to me when we meet. You either forget them or the things are too stale to bear telling or there is no time.

When you have a hailstorm, why can't you say "God knows best?" If He does not, who does? When we have what we call magnificent weather, why should we thank God, and why not when there is uncomfortable hailstorm? I can understand not thanking at all. But we do, whether we say it in so many words or not, every time we feel pleased. To be pleased is to express thanks by action.

Here comes the meal and I must stop.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

The Hindi letter is first class.

From the original: C.W. 3603. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6412

250. LETTER TO G.D. BIRLA

MAY 13, 1937

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter[1] about Cochin awaits a reply. We may not make light of the matter. It is serious enough in Bapu's opinion, and will need a considerable amount of propaganda. But it is clear that we may not finance it. This sort of spoon feeding cannot last long. However Bapu thinks you may ask Parameswaran Pillai to submit you a detailed budget. We can then examine it and be in a better position to decide. We shall expect you here on the 20th.

Yours affectionately,
MAHADEV

Birla Papers. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

251. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

TITHAL, BULSAR,
MAY 13, 1937

CHI. PREMA,

Only today I got your letter and I am replying to it immediately. Your previous letter is still lying in my file. But let me dispose of this. I will see about the other later.

Tell Sushila that, if all of you had come here, I could have accommodated you but wouldn't have been able to give you the privacy you had there. Nor the cold of that place, if your description of it is correct. Here we do feel the heat.

I don't know if injustice has been done to Nariman.[2] Why should it be assumed that the leader of Bombay should become the leader of the whole Presidency? And can anybody misguide or coerce all the representatives of three Provinces? If injustice has been done, why do all those representatives, who are still alive, put up with it? I, therefore, don't understand this talk about injustice. I don't even

[1] In his letter dated May 7 to Mahadev Desai, the addressee had written: "Parameswaran Pillai wants financial help for carrying on propaganda work. I don't know how Bapu thinks about it, but personally I should not like to give undue importance to Cochin order. Perhaps thereby we would not help the cause."

[2] K.F. Nariman, President, Bombay Provincial Congress Committee, who was defeated in the Bombay Legislature leadership election, had charged Vallabhbhai Patel with bringing about his defeat. This led to a prolonged controversy which was finally settled by arbitrators, who declared Vallabhbhai Patel free from blame.

understand what Sardar is believed to have done. I felt that the whole agitation was got up. But if I don't understand this matter properly, you may reason with me and convince me. I have no antipathy to Nariman. My attitude has nothing to do with the charges which have been levelled against him. The truth or falsehood of these charges can be inquired into whenever Nariman wishes. I learnt only today that he is your friend. I have expressed my opinion in a perfectly objective spirit.

I was pained to read about . . . [1] I have published only what both of them told me and that, too, becuase she wanted me to publish it. It seems to me that . . . [2] makes no distinction between truth and falsehood. You may show her this.

I had written to Dev. I have received his reply. I did not write immediately.

I was glad to learn that the work in Saswad has not been given up. I believe in the saying, "Not to embark upon a thing in the first instance." If you take up any other work now, cling to it.

It would have been better if you four had asked me to give you an appointment. I accept your argument that I wouldn't have been able to say much without knowing the position at Saswad. You are also right in saying that this is only the beginning of my experience of village life, and that, therefore, all of us are equal in that respect. Even so, my ideas have an element of originality in them, and the power behind them comes from ahimsa. I think, therefore, that all four of you would have learnt something from me.

I like your effort to learn the art of thinking for I had found your speech[3] at Hudli lacking in thought. Your ideas there seemed to me like so much smoke emitted by your brain. They were not outpourings of the heart. I wanted to spare some time and discuss them with you and convince you, as clearly as two and two make four, that there was no real thinking behind them. But you left in a great hurry and so I did not get any opportunity. Since I was in no hurry to prove to you your lack of thought, I didn't hold you back. I was sure that you yourself would sooner or later see this deficiency in you. And now I see your admission of it in this very letter of yours. It is understandable that you do not see this deficiency in the ideas you expressed at Hudli. But if you really learn how to think, you are

[1] The names have been omitted.

[2] ibid

[3] *Vide* footnote 2, “Speech at Gandhi Seva Sangh Meeting Hudli-II”, 17-4-1937

bound to see the deficiency in those ideas.

I, therefore, like you having given up the thought of asking for my views regarding principles. I will like it better still if you resolve to make no speeches till you have mastered the art of thinking, and you will acquire the art the sooner if you make no speeches.

Blessing to you all

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10389. Also C.W. 6828. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

252. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

TITHAL, BULSAR,
MAY 13, 1937

CHI. MRIDULA,

We arrived here yesterday afternoon. Now you come as soon as you can. Both of us are waiting for you.

Mummy I hope is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 11203. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

253. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

TITHAL, BULSAR,
MAY 14, 1937

DEAR MOTI BABU,

Arun Chandra Dutt has my blessings and so his partner. I assume that this celibacy means freedom from every form of sexual contact, mental or physical, and that they are husband and wife only in name and are truly partners in service.

I hope you are keeping fit.

Yours,

M.K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 11049

254. LETTER TO G.D. BIRLA

MAY 14, 1937

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your full letter of the 10th with the enclosure. Bapu read both the letter and the enclosure and said you are wrong in thinking–as you seem to do with *The Statesman* [1]–that he is now making an additional demand. He has made Government's work definitely easier by making the Congress demand free from ambiguity and no one can now say as Lord Zetland has done[2] that if an assurance were given it would lead to endless discussions about interpretation and allegations of breach of faith. If the bare assurance[3] that Bapu has now reduced the Congress demand to is granted, there will be no questions of interpretation and no fear of breach of faith. I am surprised that you do not see this.

You seem to have read more meaning in my sentence than I had meant.[4] I meant to say that if the speech had been made two months ago it would have gone a long way in bringing about an understanding. That is to say, from that statement to the assurance asked for by Bapu would have been a very easy step. He has publicly recognized the conciliatory tone in which the speech was couched, but it leaves him enough loop-hole to say that he meant nothing more than is laid down in the Government of India Act. They must be prepared to face the fact that a new convention is being asked for by the party commanding the biggest majority in the country and it must be given.

Lord Lothian's letter[5] contains nothing new. He wrote a much longer letter to Bapu on similar lines.

But more when we meet.

Your affectionately,

MAHADEV

Birla Papers. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

[1] In his letter dated May 13, the addressee referring to the leading article in *The Statesman* had written: "It appears that an impression is gaining ground that there is something more subtle at the bottom of the simple utterances of Bapu than what could be read in the language itself."

[2] In his speech at the House of Lords; *vide* Appendix IV.

[3] *Vide* "Interview to Associated Press of India", 6-5-1937; also "Statement to the Press", 12-5-1937

[4] In his letter dated May 10, the addressee had written: "When I read Bapu's interview (*vide* "Interview to Associated Press of India",6-5-1937), on Zetland's speech, I felt that either I had misunderstood Bapu all along or perhaps his attitude has recently been stiffened . . . You also say that 'had he, viz., Zetland, said this right in the beginning, there would have been no impasse.' That shows that there is nothing wrong with the speech itself . . . it was delivered at a wrong moment."

[5] This was an enclosure to the addressee's letter dated May 10 to Mahadev Desai.

255. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

MAY 14, 1937

[CHI. LILA][1] VATI,

You insisted on walking . . . . Anna writes and says that . . . considerably. Even then you walked with me. What happened was only . . . For this must have . . . . your heart. You must have received my previous letters.

Give Anna Rs. 13 and Kamalabai the fare up to Rajkot plus Rs. 2. If she is ready to go to Rajkot, please prepare for her whatever she wants for tiffin. The fare to Rajkot comes to about Rs. 13.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9586. Also C.W. 6558. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

256. THE CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME

The Working Committee has emphasized the necessity of the members of the Legislatures and other workers taking the constructive programme of 1920 to the three crore villagers between whom and their representatives a direct contact has been established. The representatives may if they choose neglect them, or give them some paltry or even substantial relief from financial burdens; but they cannot give them self-confidence, dignity and the power of continuously bettering their own position unless they will interest them in the fourfold constructive programme i.e., universal production and use of khadi through universal hand-spinning, Hindu-Muslim or rather communal unity, promotion of total prohibition by propaganda among those who are addicted to the drink habit, and removal by Hindus of untouchability root and branch.

It was announced in 1920 and 1921 from a thousand platforms that attainment of swaraj by the non-violent method was impossible without these four things. I hold that it is not less true today.

It is one thing to improve the economic condition of the masses by State regulation of taxation, and wholly another for them to feel that they have bettered their condition by their own sole personal effort. Now this they can only do through hand-spinning and other village handicrafts.

Similarly it is one thing to regulate communal conduct by

[1] The original is damaged at several places.

means of pacts between leaders, voluntary or imposed by the State; it is wholly different for the masses to respect one another's religious and outward observances. This cannot be done unless the legislators and workers would go out among the villagers and teach them mutual toleration.

Again it is one thing to impose, as we must, prohibition by law, and another to sustain it by willing obedience to it. It is a defeatist, arm-chair mentality which says that it cannot work without an expensive and elaborate system of espionage. Surely if the workers went out to the villagers and demonstrated the evil of drink wherever it is prevalent, and if research scholars found out the causes of alcoholism and proper knowledge was imparted to the people, prohibition should not only prove inexpensive but profitable. This is a work essentially for women to handle.

Lastly, we may banish by statute, as we must, the evil consequences of untouchability. But we cannot have real independence unless people banish the touch me not spirit from their hearts. The masses cannot act as one man or with one mind unless they eradicate untouchability from their hearts.

Thus this and the three other items are a matter of true mass education. And it has become imperatively necessary now that three crores of men and women have rightly or wrongly power put into their hands. However hedged in it is, Congressmen and others who want the suffrages of these voters have it in their hands either to educate the three crores of mankind along the right lines or the wrong. It would be the wrong line to neglect them altogether in matters which most vitally concern them.

Harijan, 15-5-1937

257. WHOSE IS THE BLAME?

With reference to my note[1] in *Harijan* of 17th April, 1937, about the alleged ill-treatment of Christians by Hindus, I have received two letters. One is from Shri C.K. Parameswaran Pillai, President of the Kerala Harijan Sevak Sangh, and the other from Dr. M.E. Naidoo of Nagercoil. Shri Pillai writes:

I read in the *Harijan* your statement regarding the complaint made by Father Petro about the interference of an Excise peon with some new converts to Christianity. As soon as I returned from Madras I wrote to this priest for detailed information regarding the incidents referred to in his card. Having received no reply

[1] *Vide* "Bad if True",17-4-1937

from him I sent a reminder yesterday. If he gives me sufficient materials, I will enquire into the matter and make a report.

Dr. Naidoo writes a long letter sending me countercomplaints. He cites 12 cases of disturbances by Christians during the last two years. They are taken from his periodical reports made to the kerala provincial Harijan Sevak Sangh. I take the following extracts[1] from his letter.

Of course the counter-complaints cannot disapprove the charges brought by Father Petro. I hope, therefore, that he will reply to Shri Shri Pillai's letter and enable him to deal with or refute the charges brought by him. It is the duty of the Harijan Sevak Sangh to promote harmony betweem Harijans and others with whom they come in daily contact. It is equally its duty to protect Harijans from ill-treatment as also to protect others from being molested by them.

Harijan, 15-5-1937

258. THE MARRIAGE IDEAL[2]

A FRIEND WRITES:[3]

In the current issue of *Harijan Sevak* in your article entitled "A Moral Dilemma"[4] you have observed, "Many marriage taboos appear to have grown out of social customs.[5] They are nowhere seen to rest on any vital, moral or religious principle." My own instinct based upon my experience tells me that probably these taboos were promulgated out of eugenic considerations. It is a well-known principle of the science of eugenics that the issue resulting from the crossing of exogamous elements is eugenically fitter than the product of endogamous unions. That is the reason why in Hinduism *sagotra* (सगोत्र) and *sapinda* (सपिण्ड) marriage are interdicted. On the other hand if we admit social custom with all its kaleidoscopic variety and change to be sole reason for these taboos, we are left with no strong reason why marriages between paternal uncle and niece, or for the matter of that between brother and sister, should absolutely be tabooed. If, as you say, the begetting of progeny be the only legitimate object of marriage then the choice of partners would become purely a question of eugenic harmony. Are all other considerations to be ruled

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 15-5-1937, of which this is a "slightly abridged" translation by Pyarelal.

[3] Only extracts from the letter written by Haribhau Upadhyaya are reproduced here.

[4] *Vide* "A Moral Dilemma", 29-5-1937

[5] In Pyarelal's translation, however, this reads: "Marriage taboos are not universal and are largely based on social usage."

out of court as relatively unimportant? If not, what should be their order of precedence? I would set it down as follows;

1. mutual attraction or love;
2. eugenic fitness;
3. approval and consent of the respective families concerned; and consideration for the interest of the social order to which one belongs;
4. spiritual development.

What do you say to it? . . .

I entirely agree with you that a married person who confines the sex act strictly to the purpose of procreation should be regarded as a *brahmachari*. I also hold with you that in the case of a married couple who have practised the rule of purity and self-control before and after marriage a single act of union must lead to conception. In support of your first point there is in our Shastras the celebrated story of Vishwamitra and Arundhati, the wife of Vasishtha who in spite of her one hundred sons was greeted by Vishwamitra as a perfect *brahmacharini*, whose command even the elements were bound to obey because her connubial relations with her husband were purely directed to the attainment and discharge of the function of motherhood. But I doubt whether even the Hindu Shastras would support your ideal of having only one offspring irrespective of whether it is male or female. It seems to me, therefore, that if you liberalize your ideal of married life so as to include the begetting of one male offspring in addition to the possible female ones, it would go a long way towards satisfying many married couples.

I do not know what the scientific basis for the various taboos in respect of marriage relationships is. But it seems to me clear that a social custom or usage that helps the practice of virtue and self-control should have the sanctity of a moral law. If it is eugenic considerations that are at the root of interdiction of marriages between brother and sister, then they ought to apply equally to cousin-marriages. A safe rule of conduct, therefore, would be as a rule to respect such taboos where they exist in a marriage enumerated by my correspondent. But I would change their order of importance and put 'love' last in the list. By giving it the first place, the other conditions are liable to be overshadowed by it altogether and rendered more or less nugatory. Therefore, spiritual development ought to be given the first place in the choice for marriage. Service should come next, family considerations and the interest of the social order should have the third place, and mutual attraction or 'love' the fourth and the last place. This means that 'love' alone, where the other four conditions are not fulfilled, should not be held as a valid reason for marriage. At the same time, marriage where there is no love should equally be ruled out even though all the other conditions are fully complied with. I should score out the condition of eugenic fitness, because the begetting of offspring being the central purpose of marriage, eugenic

fitness cannot be treated merely as a condition, it is the *sine qua non* of marriage.

Hindu Shastras certainly show a marked bias in favour of the male offspring. But this orginated at a time when physical warfare was the order of the day and adequate man-power was a *sine qua non* of success in the struggle for existence. The number of sons that a man had was therefore then looked upon as a mark of virility and strength and to facilitate the begetting of numerous offspring even polygamy was sanctioned and encouraged. But if we regard marriage as a sacrament, there is room in it only for one offspring, and that is why in our Shastras the first offspring, described as धर्मज [*dharmaja*], i.e., 'duty-born', all subsequent issues being referred to as कामज [*kamaja*], i.e., lust-born'. I make no distinction between son and daughter. Such distinction is in my opinion invidious and wrong. The birth of a son or a daughter should be welcome alike.

The story of Vishwamitra and Vasishtha is good as an illustration of the principle that the sexual act performed solely for the purpose of begetting offspring is not inconsistent with the highest ideal of *brahmacharya*. But the whole of that story need not be taken literally. Sexual intercourse for the purpose of carnal satisfaction is reversion to animality, and it should therefore be man's endeavour to rise above it. But failure to do so as between husband and wife cannot be regarded as a sin or a matter of obloquy. Millions in this world eat for the satisfaction of their palate; similarly millions of the husbands and wives indulge in the sex act for their carnal satisfaction and will continue to do so and also pay the inexorable penalty in the shape of numberless ills with which nature visits all violations of its order. The ideal of absolute *brahmacharya* or of married *brahmacharya* is for those who aspire to a spiritual or higher life; it is the *sine qua non* of such life.

Harijan, 5-6-1937

259. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

TITHAL, BULSAR,
MAY 15, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

Your note and the cutting. Of course you will miss your Hindi lesson or Sanskrit when you are tired or busy. These things ought never to be a tax on you. They must be your recreation. You will

master these languages better and mentally and physically flourish under recreative work. And on no account may you omit your daily walks.

The cutting you send is out of the ordinary. The writer is concerned about my soul more than about the loss of Harijans to the so-called Christianity.

Sardar has ensured perfect quiet for me. He does not allow visitors to come near me. This leaves me free to attend to correspondence with fair regularity.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3604. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N.: 6413

260. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

MAY 15, 1937

CHI. AMBUJAM,

You have sent me a full and businesslike letter. Lakshmanrao went as he came. He answered your description completely. He was quite docile.

Kamala gave birth to a still-born son. She was put in a maternity hospital at my instance in Cawnpore. She will now be sent to Rajkot where Narandas Gandhi, the Ashram Manager, will take charge of her. She has made lavish promises of exemplary behaviour. Harihar Sharma will be in Segaon. I do not just now need your assistance unless you and Mrs. Rangachari wish to contribute anything towards her maintenance. If she proves worthy she will earn her living. Meanwhile there is no difficulty about supporting her. You need not therefore go out of your way to send me anything.

Whenever your translation of [the] *Ramayana* comes out it must be first class and flawless. I do not want anything inferior from your pen.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

261. LETTER TO NANDALAL BOSE

MAY 15, 1937

DEAR NANDA BABU,

You cannot afford to have indifferent health. I hope, therefore, that you will be soon restored. I would not think of risking any damage to your health although your presence may be urgently needed.[1] But I understand what you mean. As soon as the site is finally chosen, I hope to send you topographical details and the draft plan that may be prepared. Sardar Patel is inviting Mhatre[2] and Ramdas, both of whom you know, to select the site and prepare the sketch plan.

I am in Tithal till the 30th instant.

Yours sincerely,

M.K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9826

262. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

TITHAL,
MAY 15, 1937

CHI. VIJAYA,

I got your letter. Certainly Lilavati is proud but she has no malice in her. One who has malice stings. Lilavati speaks out on the instant whatever she feelbut harbours no ill will afterwards. Anybody who has malice cannot tolerate the happiness of others and will never hesitate to harm him or her when an opportunity occurs. I have not seen Lilavati ever doing this. To speak sarcastically is not a sign of malice. It is just a way of speaking with some. It is a fact that she looks up to very few with respect. But that is only a sign of pride. One who is eager to have good relations with others should keep silent and serve them as much as possible. You have less thinking power and have, therefore, less capacity for weighing things. You should therefore, practise writing and expressing your thoughts clearly so that you may learn to think clearly. And you must study some book of deep wisdom. Such a book is the *Ramayana* or the *Gita.* You have very straightforward nature and a strong moral character, and they

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Nandalal Bose", 13-5-1937

[2] Baburao D. Mhatre, an architect of Bombay

create a good impression about you. Your welfare is assured.

You are experiencing burning heat there. Here because we are just facing the sea we get cool and gentle breezes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7067. Also C.W. 4559. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

263. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

MAY 15, 1937

CHI . MUNNALAL,

I am very glad that you wrote the long letter. It will be enough for me if you and Lilavati only adjust yourselves to each other. It was certainly good that all the pent-up feelings came out that day.

I followed what you have written about Mirabehn. If she had no shortcomings at all, she would be a saint. We should only see everybody's virtues. Is there anybody who has no shortcomings? We should not, therefore, even think about them. If we look at people's shortcomings only, we would be sure to go mad and be left alone in the world.

I understand about Chiranjilal. If we bear in mind that we are servants, then anyone being a leader should not hurt us. We may not submit to anybody's order for our selfish interest, but for the sake of service we may make ourselves slaves of the whole world.

If you feel that Nanavati's[1] health is deteriorating, please find out the cause.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8586. Also C.W. 7010. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Amritlal T. Nanavati

264. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

MAY 15, 1937

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I got your letter. Take whatever rest may be necessary to recoup your health. If you have to give up any work, then do so. Cling to hip-baths. It is good that you have started sucking sugar-cane.

You are in no way responsible for Lilavati's suffering. Nor need you spare half an hour for her. She herself is the cause of her suffering. It is true that she feels lonely there. Give her as much love as you can.

Anna is a very experienced man. I had heard all that he had to say. I have requested him to console Lilavati. He can do it. Wait and see what he can do.

Two books pertaining to khadi are with Anna (with Mirabehn). The rest you will get from the library at either Nalwadi or the Mahila Ashram.

If Nanubhai and the worker from Khadi Karyalaya come, I will see them.

About the jaggery from dates, please write to Radhakisan. He had offered to purchase it. Write to Gosibehn[1] , too. I have written to her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10730

265. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

TEETHAL, VALSAD,
MAY 15, 1937

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your letter. Kano could not have been as happy anywhere else as he is here. The sea almost intoxicates him with joy. Everyday, I take him into the water[2] and all of us walk in the water. Not only is there no danger whatever in this but it is also an excellent thing to do from the point of view of one's health. Sardar and others also do the same.

[1] Gosibehn Captain

[2] Teethal is on the western sea-coast of Gujarat.

I will count it your good fortune if you succeed in inducing Jamnadas to pay you your salary. May I now assume that you have settled down?

I understand what you say about Bangalore. What you say is of course true. One should be satisfied, as you say, with that much for public service. One should not feel embarrassed in asking to be paid enough for subsistence in return. You may stay where you think you will be happy. How can I help if my brain refuses to think in any other way? It just did not occur to me that the conditions which did not suit you in Wardha or Bombay would also not suit you in Bangalore.

I do not fully grasp what you say about Nimu. You may send her over here whenever you wish. I have not been able to decide where ultimately to send her to stay. I would certainly not consign her to just any kind of place. If, however, you send her over to me, you must notthen worry about her. Why should both of us bear the same burden of worry? Do whatever you decide to do after the fullest deliberation by both of you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

266. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

MAY 15, 1937

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

The book on goshala has been located. It will come to hand.

Your *yajna* of *goseva* must be progressing well.

KANU

On behalf of Bapu

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1900

267. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

TITHAL, BULSAR,
MAY 15, 1937

CHI. LILAVATI,

Did I not tell you that it was a good sign that there were no letters from Bhai? In today's post there is a letter to Manu from

Vijaya[1] saying that you have fallen ill—that you have a stomach-ache. I have warned you that you must immediately stop eating wheat preparations and live entirely on milk, fruit and vegetables. You may well take less of milk. Maybe milk has caused the stomach-ache. Juicy fruits are the least harmful. It will be good if you apply mud-pack to the stomach at night. I wish you not to be lazy and do as I suggest.

Pyarelal makes perfect bread. It is baked hard but I have no difficulty in eating the top and the middle portions. It keeps fresh for four days. The loaves are of uniform quality.

I understand about Bhanu Bapa.

Anna had given faithful details about your situation. It does not matter that you had to pay the price for the work that you managed to do. Do not force yourself to attend the morning prayers.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

268. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

MAY 15, 1937

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I had your letter and a separate one from Deka[2]. Deka's letter along with my reply is enclosed herewith. Deka has written something about the socialists. Did you, too, understand the matter in the same way?

I am awaiting your letter regarding the Narela Ashram. I hope your health is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2452

[1] Vijaya N. Patel

[2] K.C. Deka, Assamese labour worker in Delhi

269. LETTER TO SARASWATI

MAY 15, 1937

CHI. SARASWATI,

You ought to write your letters only in ink. We are all living with the Sardar at a seaside village called Tithal, a hundred miles from Bombay. Ba, Manu, Kanu, Mirabehn and others are here. Kanti, too, will come down for a few days.

Why doesn't Amma[1] spin these days? We can do without food but never without spinning. It is a great *yajna*. Does not Amma know this? It is imperative that activities like spinning, carding, etc., should be a daily feature in your home.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6160. Also C.W. 3433. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

270. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

MAY 15, 1937

It is unfortunate that His Excellency has walked round instead of walking straight to the resolution of the Working Committee. If he has only to repeat what he said to Mr. Kher, leader of the Congress Parliamentary Party of the Presidency, there is evidently no advance upon the old position and if the Belgaum speec[2] is a paraphrase of Lord Zetland's recent speech[3] the situation is certianly no better and it is possibly worse.

The Hindu, 15-5-1937

[1] Addressee's mother

[2] On May 14, in his speech at Belgaum, Lord Brabourne, Governor of Bombay, had said: "The special responsibilities placed on the Governor by Parliament deal with matters on which it was hoped that no conflict would arise between a Governor and his Ministers . . . The taking of office means hard work and the assumption of responsibility, but without these no country can govern itself; an attitude of mere negation leads nowhere and avails nothing. . . . My Ministers, whatever their political outlook, can rely not only on this understanding and sympathy but also on my doing everything in my power to avoid a situation occuring in which conflict of opinion would arise between us in the sphere of responsibilities."

[3] Of May 6, 1937; *vide* Appendix IV.

271. THE REED v. THE FOUNTAIN-PEN[1]

I am tempted to share with the reader the following letter[2] received by Mahadev Desai:

> Some time back in an article entitled "Wanted Rural-mindedness", you recommended, as a step in that direction, the adoption of the reedpen in the place of the fountain-pen. I was struck by your argument, and after reading Bapu's interpretation of the A. I. V. I. A. membership pledge[3] , I laid aside my fountain-pen and took to the reed, nine months back. I was not altogether unused to the reed-pen. . . .After a month of baffling experience, however, I was again forced to return to the fountain-pen a sadder and a wiser man. The reasons which compelled the change were as follows:

1. It took three hours to copy out matter, using a reed-pen, that could be done with the fountain-pen in one hour and a half. . .

2. It took at least from a quarter of an hour to three quarters of an hour to mend one reed-pen by means of an indigenous village knife. . .

3. The fountain-pen enables you to make short jottings and entries, so indispensable in the course of village work, while standing, or while you are on the move. When I reverted to the use of the reed-pen, I invariably found that my diary-writing and maintanance of other daily records and registers fell heavily into arrears. . .

Surely, it is no part of the policy of the A.I.V.I.A. to slave-drive its workers to the very limit of their capacity . . .

At the same time it would be unconscionable to go on using the fountain-pen in the teeth of the clear injunction of the A.I.V.I.A. . . . .

As I write this another argument occurs to me. Perhaps you will find it to be specious as the preceding ones. Bapu welcomes the Singer machine as an aid to the tailer's needle; why should he not extend the same welcome to other domestic tools and appliances that are no less helpful to the individual householder . . . .The A.I.V.I.A. does not oppose the use of the plough, the spinning-wheel and the fly shuttle loom in the place respectively of the hoe, the *takli* and the old-fashioned simple pit loom by the cultivator if he feels so inclined. Why stop at that and interdict the use, further, of more advanced and efficient appliances of a like nature? Is not your insistence on the use of the inefficient and fragile reed-pen in the place of a metal nib of a piece with asking people in this age of iron and electricity to discard

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 16-5-1937. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

[2] Only excepts from the letter written by Prabhudas Gandhi are reproduced here.

[3] *Vide* "London", 23-7-1909 and "Letter to Lord' Ampthill", 5-8-1909

all iron instruments and revert to primitive stone ones instead? You have applied yourself to the task of improving village tools. I would like you to suggest the nature and extent of the improvements which you would like to see effected.

The above letter is written partly in jest, partly in earnest and partly as a dialectical exercise for its own sake in which the writer obviously luxuriates. His whole argument boils down to this that modern appliances are capable of more speed then their earlier prototypes. If the consideration of speed were ruled out, there would hardly be left anything from his argument for me to answer. But the village movement, as I conceive it, does not discount speed or efficiency of production. Our village folk need all the efficiency that we can give them and more. The A.I.V.I.A. is doing its level best to increase the speed of production consistently with its ideal and self-imposed limits. Already the speed of the *takli* has been-increased beyond the wildest expectations of its protagonists. But this was achieved without the slightest sacrifice of the principle of ruralmindedness. More, I claim that the marvellous ingenuity and skill which rendered this possible could only spring from a village brain. The limiting principle that was kept in view in effecting improvement in the speed of the *takli* , the spinning-wheel and other domestic tools should hold good in respect of the writing pen too. The rush and hurry of the town have no place in the village. The village-dweller has not to work under high pressure or to speed about from place to place in motor cars and trams like the city dwellers. All this work is done by the easier and more natural modes of locomotion. Similarly the fountain-pen can have no place in his economy. I might, perhaps, reluctantly go so far as to admit the steel nib as a compromise, but that is all. The steel nib in my opinion has spelt the death of the calligraphist's art the mending of a reed-pen was itself an art. It called into play the artistic skill and the personality of the scribe that was reflected in the characters which he traced. All that has gone with the advent of the steel pen. But the steel pen has not done even half the mischief that the fountain-pen is doing. The introduction of the fountain-pen in the village, to me, marks the beginning of the end of the existence of the village as such and its slow metamorphosis into the city.

The analogy of the Singer machine v. the tailor's needle adduced by the writer is misleading. The Singer machine was intended to supplement the work of the needle. It was never intended to be introduced into every hut and home. The purpose which it was calculated to serve and which it has actually served is to increase the speed of the individual needle to such an extent as to make hand-stitching a profitable whole-time avocation for the needy, unemployed

of the cities. The fountain-pen has rendered an analogous service to the art of stenography, and as such it can certainly claim a place as a useful adjunct of city life.

The argument that I have used in connection with the fountain-pen applies *mutatis mutandis* to the other points raised by the correspondent in question. Clearly it is not possible to lay down hard and fast rules in all such cases. Let everybody strive to cultivate and practise the principle of rural-mindedness as best as he or she can. Only let the worker from the city who goes out to work in the villages take care that he does not turn the heads and confuse the intelligence of the simple-minded village folk, whom ostensibly he is anxious to serve but whose requirements and standards of values and utility are altogether different from that of the city-dweller.

Harijan, 5-6-1937

272. LETTER TO MRIDULA SHRABHAI

TITHAL,
MAY 16, 1937

CHI. MRIDULA,

I have your letter. Come as soon as you can. I cannot off-hand think of any woman's name. But can you not postpone the matter till you come here?

One name has occurred to me while writing this. But I shall not let you have it now. If you cannot hold on and if you cannot check your curiosity then write to me and I shall let you have it. Otherwise, I shall tell you when you come. You may guess if you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

MRIDULABEHN SARABHAI
SHAHI BAUG
AHMEDABAD (B. B. & C.I. RLY.)

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11204. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

273. MESSAGE ON OPENING OF ANNAKSHETRA

MAY 16, 1937

I congratulate the Thakore Saheb of Lathi on his throwing open the Annakshetra temple to Harijans. I wish the ceremony will be

completed without any obstacle. I hope the public will accept with grace the Thakore Saheb's generous gesture and the Harijans will make their lives purer by taking advantage of this privilege.

As regards Thakore Saheb Gandhiji wrote:

I congratulate you for having decided to throw open your Annakshetra to the harijans. I hope that untouchability will be completely eradicated from your State.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 23-5-1937

274. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

TITHAL, BULSAR,
MAY 16, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

I had duly received your wire. I have now written to Segaon. The exact date will be fixed there. Either they will inform you direct or I shall inform you.

The reason behind my enquiry[1] regarding Mirabehn's money was that I feel inclined to spend a part of the sum in Europe.

The trunk of papers which was lost has still not been traced.

I have provisionally decided in my mind that, when I leave this place, Kanaiyo will leave for Rajkot.

I understand about Vijaya.

I am enclosing a letter from Prema.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8521. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

275. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

MAY 16, 1937

CHI. MUNNALAL,

You have started thinking on the right lines. Continue to write to me as much as you wish. The two difficulties which you have mentioned are real, but only in the sense that they may hinder

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi",10-5-1937

creation of family spirit. However, I am sorry that the inmates at Segaon do not regard the world as one family. For a devoted servant of the people such a feeling is essential. Those in whom it is born are seen bahaving with a family spirit wherever they go, although the other people might be utter strangers to them and all of them might have different spheres of activity. Moreover, family spirit does not require mutual co-operation. Among members of the same family, some may be so straightforward by nature that they live in harmony with other members of the family who are curt. There is truth in your complaint that Segaon has become a *dharmashala.* But what can I do? I feel helpless. Although I keep off many, there are some whom I simply cannot. But I do hope that we shall succeed in cultivating a family spirit in Segaon. If we do not succeed, then it is certain that we will be able to achieve nothing at Segaon. I will, of course, be vigilant myself and also keep a watch on all others. But the result will depend on the joint efforts of us all.

I had thought that you did not worry about Kanchan[1] , but now I see that I was mistaken. There is no cause at all for worry. Let her do what she can while staying in the Mahila Ashram. Why need you worry?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8585. Also C.W. 7011. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

276. LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

MAY 16, 1937

CHI. VIDYA,

Got a letter from you after a long time. One should not fall ill. And if one falls ill, one should not grieve. Sun-bath should be taken daily. So also friction-bath. Apply mud-pack on the stomach at night. Do not take anything except milk and water. Do write to me. It is good that you have sent away Mahadev[2] . Now he can certainly live away from you. Tell Anand, however poor his Hindi may be, he should try to write in Hindi. You should encourage him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] Addresse's wife

[2] Addressee's son

277. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

MAY 17, 1937

MY DEAR AGATHA,

Your letter has just come. And I hasten to answer.

Could I be more definite than when I said if Mr. Butler and Lord Zetland meant what the papers made out they did, why not straightway give the assurances in terms of the (Congress) resolution? I have now gone a step further and said in so many words that when there is an emergency dismiss the Ministers.

The Bombay Governor's speech[1] , as I read it, is a denial of what Lord Zetland is supposed to have yielded in his recent speech[2] . You must have seen the text.

And why is my remark on complete independence a knotty point? Is it not in the Congress creed? Is it not in the very resolution which was shown to the Governors and to which they raised no objection?

Perhaps you do not know the difficulties we have to combat here. It is impossible to have mental reservations when you have millions of mankind to deal with, especially when you are training them not for an armed rebellion but for a peaceful revolution as yet unknown to history. I want you therefore not to be agitated over what the diplomats say there or here. Your and my first and last care is to hold on to the anchor at all costs but say nothing in anger, nothing equivocal, nothing short of the whole truth and then leave the result to the unseen and uncanny Power that over-rules all our pet decisions at Its own sweet will.

No more, for the postal time is up.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1499

278. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

TITHAL, BULSAR,
MAY 17, 1937

MY DEAR C.R.,

I did not like the last line of your letter to Ghanshyamdas. If what I am doing does not carry conviction to you, you should strive

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, "Interview to Associated Press of India", 15-5-1937

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Lord Zetland's Speech", 6-5-1937.

with me and resist me. For it is you who have to bear the brunt, not I. And if you act merely as an advocate–no matter how brilliant–but without conviction the battle will be lost. I write not a line without deep conviction. Zetland gave me some hope, Bombay[1] has shattered it if what he says is what Zetland meant. But my conviction about the rightness of our position grows with their double-dealing. I would far rather cancel our resolution and accept office without any condition than accepting office under the delusion that Zetland's speech with Butler's annotation was a near enough response to our resolution. Of course my conviction abides that unconditional acceptance would be fatal. The other would be still more so. The only honourable course therefore is to remain as we are till we get what we want and in the manner we want it. But if all this sounds hopelessly unreal to you, you should resist me for my sake and what is more for the sake of the cause.

Hope Laxmi and you are doing well

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2063

279. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

MAY 17, 1937

CHI. VIJAYA,

I had a very long letter from Manubhai. He has given the whole history. For you there is nothing new in it. You must have got my letters.

Please let me know your [daily] programme.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7068. Also C.W. 4560. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

[1] The reference is to the Bombay Governor's speech at Belgaum. *Vide* also the preceding item.

280. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

MAY 17, 1937

CHI. LILA,

There is a letter from Anna today in which again I read about your keeping bad health. You should leave off eating wheat, etc., for a few months. For a few days you should give up even milk. Put mud-packs on the abdomen and take hip-baths. Take as much rest as you wish but improve your health anyhow. Why don't you listen to me in such a simple matter?

I hope you do not worry about anything now and have made friends with all. Never mind if you cannot attend prayers. Sleep well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9360. Also C.W. 6635. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

281. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

MAY 17, 1937

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I hear from Anna and Munnalal that you are not keeping well. That ought not to be. Make whatever changes in your diet you think might help. Reduce your work. If this does not help, then go to some cool place. If you think it desirable to go to Malad, you may come back when the rains start. If your health is good, I will get plenty of work out of you. If you keep weak, I will hesitate to entrust any work to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10731

282. LETTER TO PRABHUDAYAL VIDYARTHI

TITHAL, BULSAR,
MAY 17, 1937

CHI. PRABHUDAYAL,

Yes, if you cannot give full time to paper-making because of any heat, then give five hours. Your health should not suffer on any account.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 11681

283. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

TITHAL BULSAR,
MAY 18, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter. Yes, the sea breezes are fine. I wish you were here to share them. We walk through the sea water every morning and evening. It is a bracing walk. Kanu the little one enjoys it most. We are almost 25 strong now. And presently we shall perhaps double the record. Tithal is a little village. It has only a few bungalows. We are in Bhulabhai's. He has hired another to take in the overflow. He bears all the expenses. I expect to leave this on 30th. I do not mind the Seagon heat. I must not absent myself for any length of time.

I am glad you were able to make a collection from the Club for Harijans. Of course, the principal portion should go to the Harijans and khadi. But I know you cannot, may not, force the pace.

This suppuration of the toe I do not like. Nevertheless, it is good that the poison is coming out. Are you having the hip-baths? What about the friction-baths? I wish you could master them and do them correctly. Are you continuing garlic? What about onion? No fried things I hope. And about dal[1]? Even a spoonful is poison for you. Purest milk and butter if needed with green vegetables and juicy fruit is your food. What is the quantity of milk?

Have you written to Balkrishna?

Love.

From the original: C.W. 3782. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6938

[1] The source has "dholl".

284. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

MAY 18, 1937

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have been meaning to write to you all these days but in the mean time I got your letter today. Sharda is fine. For the present she seems to be happy. If she can stay with me cheerfully, I am ready to relieve you of your responsibility regarding her. I will fix her up where and when I think proper. She will stay with me, of course, till she recoups her health. I will give her whatever treatment I deem fit. Just now she says she is quite ready to stay with me. She also says that both you and Shakaribehn[1] are ready to entrust her to me. She had not told me that she was suffering from leucorrhoea. She felt shy. It seems to have become chronic. But I think it can be cured. It will take time though. I also understand about her marriage. I have been thinking about the matter ever since she told me about it. But marriage is out of the question till her health improves. I would favour marrying her outside the caste and, if possible, even outside the Province. But that remains to be seen. Sharda herself is ready for this and she says that both of you also will be ready. So much about Babu[2].

Now regarding you two. Babu is 20; but in some matters she is wiser than her age. She seems to be much concerned for you both. You have–Shakariben has–Rs. 3,000 and it is on that that you live at present. I do not mind that. You need not worry even after that amount is spent. You ought not to care so much for possessions. But since you have the money, let it remain. I would not mind if, despite your having that money, you earn more somewhere by honest means. But so long as you have it, it would be more becoming of you both to do public work without accepting anything. But this is my personal view. If it does not apeal to you, you may certainly follow another path.

Babu also told me that Vijapur did not suit you and that you wished to go somewhere else. When I mentioned Rajkot, she said that that was the last place you would like to go to. The reason, that the estrangement between Narandas and you still persists, pains me. Being inmates of the Ashram, you two should be more than blood-brothers to each other. You ought to overcome your mutual antipathy. I am sure that there is no deeper cause behind it. You both have no personal interest to serve. Why this enmity, then? Hence, whatever disagreement you have must be one of principles only. Why be afraid

[1] Addressee's wife

[2] Sharda, addressee's daughter

of such disagreement? If you wish, I may go deeper into the cause of this disagreement. Whether you go to Rajkot or not, your antipathy to each other must end.

Babu says further that you prefer your own place. I think nothing would be better than that, if you could settle down there. If you stay there, the expenditure also would be less and you could serve the village more easily. If, therefore, you can decide to stay in your village, you should do so.

If you wish, you may come and see me after the 25th. I shall leave this place for Wardha on the 30th. Don't worry at all about Babu.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 21

285. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[1]

[*After May 18, 1937*][2]

NO MEMBER OF THE CONGRESS PARTY IN MADRAS LEGISLATURE HAS SOUGHT PERMISSION TO ACCEPT OFFICE.

GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-5-1937

286. TELEGRAM TO BABURAO D. MHATRE

BULSAR,
MAY 19, 1937

MHATRE
ARCHITECT
BOMBAY MUTUAL BUILDING
HORNBY ROAD, BOMBAY

PLEASE COME PLANNING NEXT CONGRESS CAMP. WIRE BULSAR.

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 9832. Courtesy: Baburao D. Mhatre

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter dated May 18 inquiring whether any Congress member had written to Gandhiji seeking "permission to accept office on the basis of Lord Zetland's statement and pleading for a change of policy in this respect".

[2] *ibid*.

287. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

MAY 19, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

This is just to send you a sample of the lace now being manufactured in Andhra out of hand-spun yarn. The price is Re. 0-3-6 per yard. Do you, i.e., your customers, need any? Is it up to the mark? There is some for sale in the Bombay Depot.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3783. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6939

288. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

MAY 19, 1937

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have only today learnt of your vow of silence. I can find no fault with it if the vow has been taken with understanding. But if it is done out of anger, give it up.

Munnalal[1] and Anna write that you have a mind to pay a visit to Nagpur, but that you are refraining from asking me because you think I would not approve. You do not have to ask me at all. I have already given you permission to go to Nagpur or Bombay, wherever you want. I would like you to live in a place where you can remain cheerful and where you can make all-round progress. If I say that I would not like your going to Nagpur or Bombay I only mean that if I were in your place I would not go there. But this view has no value if it does not go well with you. Hence, instead of your staying on in a suffocating place, I would really wish that you should go to either Nagpur or Bombay and come back refreshed. Come only after you are well. Ultimately, your good lies only in your hands, not mine. I am now counting the days of my coming there. It is not as if I had anything special to do here and Sardar had no purpose in keeping me here beyond making me enjoy the sea air. I did have some work at Bardoli. But then that some work does crop up wherever I may be is a different matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Munnalal G. Shah

289. LETTER TO N.N. GODBOLE

TITHAL, BULSAR,
MAY 20, 1937

DEAR DR. GODBOLE,

I have now gone through your book carefully. It is good so far as it goes. Its price is prohibitive. You have gone beyond the scope of the book which its title suggests but the chapters are scrappy. Thus your examination of vegetarian and non-vegetarian foods reproduces authorities quoted in vegetarian literature and contains nothing original. I should expect an original contribution from an Indian scholar. Then the chapter on breeding and feeding is very superficial. Dairy experts tell me that breeding is the only thing. Feeding is said to produce little impression on the milk yield. I miss a chapter on comparison between buffalo and cow. Can both be supported? Which is the more economical animal? As you may be aware, separated milk is being widely recommended by Dr. Aykroyd[1] . But I do not find in your book enough instruction as to the ways in which it can be used. I am myself making experiments within the limits of a villager and had hoped to find assistance in your book. Nor have you examined the indigenous methods of using milk.

Your sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

290. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

MAY 20, 1937

BELOVED DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,[2]

I got your letter only this morning. Whose fault is it if I get your letters late and then in spite of my replying by return of post you also got my letters late? You yourself had asked for permission to live in a village, which I gave. What more could you do than riding, serving Harijans, lightening the burden of the poor and helping in digging wells? So I readily consented. But I would certainly like it even if you went to the frontier and did something similar. I had to leave for Allahabad suddenly, for since Jawaharlal was ill the Working Committee could not be held anywhere else and they required my presence.

At Sardar's insistence, I am staying in a village called Tithal on the sea coast near Bulsar. I am accompanied by Ba, Mirabehn and

[1] Dr. W.R. Aykroyed, Director of the Nutrition Research Laboratories
[2] The superscription is in Urdu.

others. I expect to return to Wardha on the 1st.

Why should asthma and cough trouble you even in such a dry climate as you have there? I hope you will have recovered by the time you get this letter, since I got your letters long ago.

It appears that Kanti will stay in Bangalore. He will have better facilities for study there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 381

291. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

MAY 20, 1937

BHAI BHAGWANJI,

It has been left to my discretion to send the accompanying letter. My duty, of course, seems to be to send it.

Vandemataram from

M.K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5833. Also C.W. 3056. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

292. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

MAY 20, 1937

CHI. VIJAYA,

I got your letter. The weather here is, of course, comparatively cool. But it is not favourable for work. Here I am having more sleep. I just like to go on sleeping. All the same the heat of Segaon is certainly not here. You, however, should keep yourself cool with wet clothes.

You did well in sending my letter to Manubhai. The spiritual benefit of not coming with me here was evident, for it was also your duty to stay there. There was pleasure and fun of a sort in coming with me. And one who can deny oneself even such innocent pleasures certainly advances one's spiritual welfare. You no doubt have strength of mind. You have added to it by not coming. Do you see this?

It is good that you and Indu go with Anna and hear the *Gita.* You do well too in helping in milking the cow.

The penknife could not be traced here, which means that it is lost.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: 7069. Also C.W. 4561. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

293. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

MAY 20, 1937

CHI. LILA,

You may be 30 years old but to me you are still a child and will remain so. If you have patience everything will be all right. Everything would be all right if only you settled down. Nothing else is needed. Do you understand that one who wants to become orderly must have no pride in oneself? The orderliness that I want is both external and internal.

I have written about not sending *The Times* [*of India*]. I understand regarding your silence.

Radhakrishna ought not to return the ghee. He may buy some more, but should not return what he has.

Improve your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9361. Also C.W. 6636. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

294. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

MAY 20, 1937

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your letter. I am arranging about *Harijanbandhu*, etc. I do not understand why you do not get them.

Do not mind if milk is sold for two paise a seer. It is certainly a good thing that anyhow people get it Who are the customers? Do people other than Harijans buy it? Lately your letters have been mirroring your mind quite well. I like that.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8584. Also C.W. 7012.Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

295. LETTER TO HARIPRASAD

MAY 20, 1937

BHAI HARIPRASAD,

You did will in writing to me. I am thinking how to make the exhibition at the forthcoming Congress as good as it can be. Please make any suggestions you wish to. Do have a talk with Sardar.

Ramjibhai always tries his best to do well any work in which he takes interest. I am therefore not surprised to learn that you liked his school and his garden.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4139

296. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

MAY 20, 1937

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I continue to receive complaints about your health. Vijaya writes and tells me that you have been losing weight. Vasumati writes and says that you are not keeping good health. You yourself must find out the cause. You are not nursing any trouble in your heart, are you? Write to me in detail.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10732

297. LETTER TO KAPILRAI H. PAREKH

MAY 20, 1937

BHAI KAPILRAI,

It is good that you wrote. I am sending the letter itself to Jamnalalji. I will forward to you the reply that I receive from him. Perhaps he may even write to you direct.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI KAPILRAI PAREKH
SUNNY SIDE
BLOCK NO. 1, PLOT 253
MATUNGA, G.I.P., BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9730. Courtesy: Kapilrai H. Parekh

298. LETTER TO BHAGATRAM TOSHNIWAL

[AS AT] SEGAON, WARDHA,
MAY20, 1937

BHAI BHAGATRAM,

Your letter is quite pertinent. One who believes in ahimsa dharma will not countenance the construction of a slaughter-house.[1]

M.K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Gandhiji aur Rajasthan, p. 308

299. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

TITHAL, BULSAR,
MAY 21, 1937

CHI. ANAND,

At last I have a letter from you in Hindi. Your writing is good. It can be improved.

I feel sorry for Vidya. But we have to be patient in everything. I have sent you a telegram. Do take Vidya to a hill-station

What is the matter with Jairamdas ? Why does he not write ?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 11066. Courtesy: Anand T. Hingorani

300. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

TITHAL, BULSAR,
MAY 21, 1937

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your letter. The value of your letters will be proved if they bring about perfect sweetness in your relations with Balvantsinha, Lilavati and others. Think less, speak less and write less, but work more and cultivate unity of thought, speech, writing and action. I have kept aside the letters that call for replies. I shall take them up if I can.

[1] The addressee had asked Gandhiji to issue an appeal against the huge slaughter-house proposed to be put up in Lahore.

Otherwise we shall talk over things there. At present the pressure of work here has become very heavy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8583. Also C.W. 7013. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

301. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

MAY 21, 1937

CHI. LILA,

I got your letter. I know that you are getting impatient. But I have become helpless. I am hoping to reach there[1] on the 11th. The fruits of patience are sweet. You have come to suffer for the sake of service and not to enjoy yourself. "Those who plunge feel the highest bliss, but the onlookers burn with envy." Dhruva is believed to have suffered unbearable tribulations with a smile on his face. Joan of Arc entered the fire with a smiling face. This is a historical story. Do not some women even today jump into a pyre cheerfully in a frenzy of excitement? This is the only great lesson that is to be learnt from me. What else have I to teach?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9362. Also C.W. 6637 Courtesy: Llilavati Asar

302. LETTER TO K.B. MENON[D]

[Before *May 22, 1937*][2]

You tell me that the Conference[2] on civil liberties will be held in London on June 5. Whatever tends to preserve the civil liberties, no matter where, must command the sympathy and support of all sane people.

The Hindu, 22-5-1937

[1] Segaon

[2] Under the joint auspices of the National Council for Civil Liberties in England and the India League

303. TRAVANCORE v. COCHIN

The reader will find elsewhere an authentic and exhaustive note[1] on the Koodalmanikkam controversy prepared by Shri G. Ramachandran, Secretary of the Kerala Harijan Sevak Sangh. The note is authentic in the sense that it is based purely on official records. Add to this note the following from the Kerala Harijan Sevak Sangh's office in Trivandrum:

In the issue of *Harijan* of 8th May in the article, "Cochin-Travancore"[2] by Mahatmaji, in paragraph three, the following sentences are found:

"The pundits of India should dispassionately examine the orders and express their unbiased opinion. I am inclined to think that the Travancore Durbar may well invite the opinion of pundits on the single question of the religious propriety of the Cochin order and undertake to abide by their opinion. In other words, Travancore may well offer to abide by the verdict of an arbitration tribunal consisting of unbiased pundits who will be universally accepted as such. The opinion of an assembly of such pundits would be the nearest approach to an arbitration tribunal. For, whilst the Travancore Durbar had a perfect right to open to Harijans the temples within their sole jurisdiction and ownership and without reference to the opinion of pundits, it would hardly be right to propound a new *Smriti* in respect of temples where there is joint jurisdiction."

I am herewith forwarding a true copy of a judgment of the Chief Court of Cochin which discusses the Kaimal's position with regard to the Koodalmanikkam Temple. This judgment shows the Kaimal to be the supreme spiritual authority in all matters connected with that Temple, and therefore the opinion of the pundits in this instance seems to be unnecessary.

These enable the reader to form his own judgment as to the propriety or otherwise of the action of the Cochin Durbar. If the note and the Cochin Court judgment are to be trusted, evidently the Cochin Durbar's action was wholly wrong. This is not to say that the Kaimal's action was right in the religious sense. But if it was not, the only course open to the Cochin Durbar was to reason with the Kaimal, notKaimal, not to force his hands as was done. The Kaimal evidently becomes the supreme and final authority on spiritual matters after his appointment by the Travancore Durbar. Like the king he can do no wrong. But even he may not long resist the opinion of his peers. And the only way the Cochin Durbar or anyone else can influence the

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Koodalmanikkam Temple Controversy", 22-5-1937.
[2] *Vide* "Cochin- Travancore", 8-5-1937

Kaimal's judgment is, I presume, by evoking the opinion of pundits learned in spiritual matters. And legally speaking even their opinion has no binding effect on the Kaimal.

Harijan, 22-5-1937

304. RELIGIOUS OATH AND NON-RELIGIOUS

Shri Shivaprasad Gupta, the great philanthropist of Benares, writes:

> After hearing the *Harijan* of May 1st read to me, I have been pondering over the note "Gandhi Seva Sangh and Legislatures". I reread it today, I also read the Weekly Letter, but I could not give rest to the surging thought rising in my mind.
>
> The last paragraph[1] of the note reads: "It is not a religious oath, so far as I understand the Constitution, and it is wholly consistent with the demand for immediate and concrete independence." The following are the questions that arise in my mind:
>
> 1. Are oaths of several and different kinds?
> 2. Can an oath taken in the name of God, or in the alternative form where one has to affirm solemnly, be classed in two categories, "religious oath and non-religious oath"?
> 3. What is the governing idea behind a non-religious oath?
> 4. How can an oath of allegiance to the person of a king be consistent with "the demand for immediate and concrete independence"? This demand, at least to me, means depriving the same sovereign of his sovereignty.
>
> I would very much like your answer to these pertinent questions.

My answer to the first and the second questions is 'Yes'. The answer to the other two questions may be gathered from what follows.

An oath may be taken in the name of God and yet may not be styled religious. An oath that a witness takes in a court of law is a legal not a religious oath, breach of which would carry legal consequences. An oath taken by Members of Parliament may be called a constitutional not a religious oath, breach of which may involve mundane consequences. Breach of a religious oath carries no legal consequences, but in the opinion of the taker does carry divine punishment. This does not mean that any of the three varieties of oaths is less binding than the others on a conscientious man. A conscientious witness will tell the truth, not for fear of the legal consequence, but he will do so in every case. The legislator's oath has

[1] *Vide* "Sacrifice of Ras", 18-4-1937

an interpretation in terms of the Constitution which prescribes the oath. The interpretation may be given in the Constitution itself or may grow up by usage. So far as I understand the British Constitution, the oath of allegiance simply means that the legislator will in pushing forward his policy or point conform to the Constitution. I hold that it is open to the legislator consistently with his oath under the British Constitution to adopt measures in the Legislature for complete independence. That to my mind is the saving grace of the British Constitution. I fancy that the members of the Union Parliament of South Africa take substantially the same oath as the members in India, but it is open to that Parliament today to declare complete independence without any violation of the oath of allegiance. It is because I have a profound conviction that the British Constitution in theory permits of the fulfilment of the highest ambition of an individual or the nation of which he is a member that I advised the Workiing Committee to accept my formula for office-acceptance. And it is in the same conviction that I am struggling to get the British Government to respond to it. I am painfully conscious that they would prolong the agony to the breaking point. But I know that if we have faith and grit we shall win at every point and reach our goal without shedding a drop of blood. The British people apply the same laws to the game of politics that they apply to the game of football which I believe is their invention. They give no quarter to the opponent and ask for none. The fundamental difference in our case is that we have abjured the use of arms. This has confounded them. They do not believe our protestations. They do not mind our agitation for complete independence so long as we keep it within the constitutional limit. What else can the legislators do or are they to do inside their Assemblies? They may not take there pistols in their pockets. That would be a flagrant breach of the oath and also the law. Shri Shivaprasad Gupta need not worry himself over the propriety of the oath by Congressmen. If the agitation for complete independence was inconsistent with the oath, surely the British Government themselves would have raised that preliminary objection even to the candidature of Congressmen.

Harijan, 22-5-1937

305. LETTER TO M.A. JINNAH

TITHAL,
MAY 22, 1937

DEAR SHRI JINNAH,

Mr. Kher[1] has given me your message. I wish I could do something, but I am utterly helpless. My faith in unity[2] is as bright as ever; only I see no daylight out of the impeneratrable darkness and, in such distress, I cry out to God for light.

Your sincerely,
M.K. GANDHI

File No.3001/H/IV-8/38. Police Commissioner's Office, Bombay.court- esy: Government of Maharashtra. Also *Leaders' Correspondence with Jinnah*, p. 37

306. LETTER TO N.S. HARDIKER

MAY 22, 1937

DEAR DR. HARDIKER,

I got your letter[3] yesterday. My opinion is that you should confer with the Provincial Committee there and on its agreeing you should take possession subject to the protest that the Seva Dal for whose work the building was constructed still remains under the ban. Before you consult the Committee it might be as well to ascertain from the Government whether the delivery of the buildings is to mean the lifting of the ban on the Dal. By the time the possessions is taken,

[1] B.G. Kher, who had been elected leader of the Congress Party in the Bombay Legislature.

[2] Hindu-Muslim unity

[3] In his letter dated May 19, the addressee, Organizing Secretary of Hindustani Seva Dal, had sought Gandhiji's advice on taking over the Seva Dal building at Bagalkot. The building and other movable property used as training camp for the Seva Dal volunteers were attached by the Government in 1932. The property which belonged to A.I.C.C. was transferred to Karnataka Provincial Congress Committee in 1931, after Seva Dal's recognition as a subordinate body of the Congress. The addressee was doubtful of the use of the building as the ban on Seva Dal had not yet been lifted.

Jawaharlal will have returned and he will decide what use to make of the buildings.[1]

I hope you are throughly restored to health.

Yours sincerely,
M.K. GANDHI

From the original: N. S. Hardiker Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

307. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

TITHAL, BULSAR,
MAY 22, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. Don't ruin your health. It is good that you paid a visit to Hazaribagh. Sardar took it for granted that prisoners sentenced to short terms would be released.

I didn't send for you at Allahabad because I thought Jaya-prakash might not like it. I would not like to displease him unnecessarily. I consider it my duty to respect his wishes as far as possible.

It is quite proper that you should stay with Father as long as you can. You will certainly be a great help to him. You should give him courage and tell him that he should not at all worry. You should also try to understand why he keeps worrying.

Why have they called you to Sitab Diara? Is Sitab Diara hotter or cooler? In which of the two places can you have greater facility regarding vegetables? Manu has now gone to Rajkot. In Segaon, only Vasumati, Vijaya, Lilavati, Nanavati, Munnalal and Balvantsinha are left now. It is quite hot there.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

We shall leave this place on the 30th.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3502

[1] In his reply dated June 14, the addressee said that according to the Bombay Government the ban was "still in force". He also added that he had been authorized by the Council of K.P.C.C. "to take delivery of the building" as required by A.I.C.C. However, in his letter dated July 6, the addressee in formed Gandhiji of his reluctance to take over the building which were found to be in bad shape. He had accordingly communicated to the Inspector: ". . . .unless full and due repairs are carried out by the Government, I cannot take charge of the said property . . . . " *Vide* also "Letter to N.S. Hardiker", 13-7-1937,

308. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

MAY 22, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

Please pay Chi. Kamu Rs. 30 from this month, i.e., from the 1st. If you can debit part of the sum to the school, do so. Debit the rest to my account.

Kamalabai doesn't seem to have recovered completely. She has expressed a desire to stay on till I return to Segaon and I have agreed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8522. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

309. SPEECH AT TITHAL[1]

MAY 22, 1937

If we want to impart education best suited to the needs of villagers, we should take the Vidyapith to the villages. We should convert it into a training school in order that we might be able to give practical training to teachers in terms of the needs of villagers. You cannot instruct the teachers in the needs of villagers through a training school in a city. Nor can you so interest them in the condition of villages. To interest city-dwellers in villages and make them live in them is no easy task. I am finding daily confirmation of this in Segaon. I cannot give the assurance that our year's stay in Segaon has

[1] This is extracted from "Weekly Letter" By Mahadev Desai, who had reported: "The convener of the small conference of the teachers in Gujarat national schools which met at Tithal on the 22nd May had sent to the invitees a questionnaire which speaks for itself: 1. What is the education best suited to the needs of our villages and most beneficial to them? 2. How to combat mass illiteracy and ignorance? 3. Is literacy indispensable for intellectual growth? Is the system of starting instruction with teaching the alphabet and reading and writing prejudicial to intellectual growth? 4. The need of making vocational training the pivot of all instruction. 5. The future of the present national schools. 6. The possibility of imparting all education through the mother tongue of the children. 7. In what essentials of national education are existing schools lacking? 8. The necessity of making Hindi-Hindustani compulsory in the early years of primary and secondary education.' On Gandhiji being invited to give his views on these points, he made observations giving individual examples. I epitomize them below leaving out the latter, which while they were interesting to the few friends to whom he spoke are of little use to the general reader."

made of us villagers or that we have become one with them for common good.

Then as to primary education my confirmed opinion is that the commencement of training by teaching the alphabet and reading and writing hampers their intellectual growth. I would not teach them the alphabet till they have had an elementary knowledge of history, geography, mental arithmetic and the art (say) of spinning. Through these three I should develop their intelligence. Question may be asked how intelligence can be developed through the *takli* or the spinning-wheel. It can be, to a marvellous degree, if it is not taught merely mechanically. When you tell a child the reason for each process, when you explain the mechanism of the *takli* or the wheel, when you give him the history of cotton and its connection with civilization itself and take him to the village field where it is grown, and teach him to count the rounds he spins and the method of finding the evenness and strength of his yarn, you hold his interest and simultaneously train his hands, his eyes and his mind. I should give six months to this preliminary training. The child is probably now ready for learning how to read the alphabet, and when he is able to do so rapidly, he is ready to learn simple drawing, and when he has leant to draw geometrical figures and the figures of birds, etc., he will draw, not scrawl, the figures of the alphabet. I can recall the days of my childhood when I was being taught the alphabet. I know what a drag it was. Nobody cared why my intellect was rusting. I consider writing as a fine art. We kill it by imposing the alphabet on little children and making it the beginning of learning. Thus we do violence to the art of writing and stunt the growth of the child when we seek to teach him the alphabet before its time.

Indeed in my opinion what we have reason to deplore and be ashamed of is not so much illiteracy as ignorance. Therefore adult education, too, should have an intensive programme of driving out ignorance through carefully selected teachers with an equally carefully selected syllabus according to which they would educate the adult villager's mind. This is not to say that I would not give them a knowledge of the alphabet. I value it too much to despise or even belittle its merit as a vehicle of education. I appreciate Prof. Laubach's immense labours in the way of making the alphabet easy and Prof. Bhagwat's great and practical contribution in the same direction. Indeed I have invited the latter to come to Segaon whenever he chooses and try his art on the men, women and even children of Segaon.

As to the necessity and value of regarding the teaching of village handicrafts as the pivot and centre of education I have no

manner of doubt. The method adopted in the institutions in India, I do not call education, i.e., drawing out the best in man, but a debauchery of the mind. It informs the mind anyhow, whereas the method of training the mind through village handicrafts from the very beginning as the central fact would promote the real, disciplined development of the mind resulting in conservation of the intellectual energy and indirectly also the spiritual. Here, too, I must not be understood to belittle fine arts. But I would not misplace them. Matter misplaced has been rightly described as dirt. In proof of what I am saying, I can only cite the tons of worthless and even indecent literature that is pouring in upon us with the result which he who runs may see.

Harijan, 5-4-1937

310. REGISTER OF CUSTOMERS

Shri Jerajani writes to say:[1]

This suggestion is worth considering, and if a register of customers is maintained at each centre, it is likely to prove useful. The only doubt may be regarding its feasibility. I would regard it as practical if a complete list could be compiled speedily and at little additional cost. A list of workmen poses no difficulties. And, ordinarily it may be said that those workmen who are once registered continue to work for good. But customers keep changing every day. It cannot be said with certainty that the individual who purchases khadi worth one anna today is bound to come back for more. However, if the list is to be complete, even such a customer's name must be recorded. What is its utility? If a list is to be compiled, should it consist only of customers of a certain kind? In order that such a list should prove useful, it should be maintained in alphabetical order. If this is attempted, it will necessarily entail some expenses. Should a list then be made of those who give a certain yearly subscription? If this be the case, what benefit do they get out of it? As I have no experience in this matter, I can only frame such questions. Shri Jerajani's suggestion has been published here in order to invite discussion.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 23-5-1937

[1] The correspondent, whose letter is not translated here, had said that a register of customers with their full names and addresses would prove useful.

311. VERY OLD QUESTIONS

I have received a letter. Its substance is as follows:

> Our country does not manufacture any dyes. But the khadi sold in our country comes in many coloured prints. Obviously the dyes used could only be foreign. I cannot understand how we can tolerate it. India can certainly manufacture its own dyes. Why then foreign chemical dyes on a sacred thing like khadi? For patriotic reasons khadi is of course best for wearing for Indians but why shouldn't it be as fine as muslin? There was a time when India used to produce muslin for the entire world.

All these three questions were discussed at length when *Navajivan* was first started. Ordinarily such questions are not raised these days. As the correspondent desires that replies should be given only through the columns of the *Harijanbandhu*, I give these here.

Ever since I accepted khadi as the focal-point of swadeshi in the year 1918, I have been repeatedly saying that we should keep the pledge of swadeshi not because we hate what is foreign but because the welfare of the country is rooted in swadeshi. Hence we should certianly accept those foreign products which we cannot produce immediately, which are needed by the country and the introduction of which would not harm the country in any way. Everyone can think of examples of such foreign goods. Regarding the propagation of khadi, the question of using [foreign] dyes arose at the very outset. The Spinners' Association did not exist at that time. I had given the opinion that wherever indigenous dyes were not available, there should be no bar to using foreign ones. But the utmost effort should be made for producing the best possible indigenous dyes. The same policy continues even now. Experiments with indigenous dyes are being made and they are being used whenever it is convenient to do so. The needs of those who would not use foreign dyes are met by white khadi. The propaganda for khadi is not for its own sake, nor is it unthinking. The following is the trend of thought behind the khadi shastra. If Indians use nothing but khadi, crores of women spinners, carders, washermen, dyers and such other persons could get a livelihood; and crores of rupees will remain in the country and go into the pockets of half-starved and wholly or partially unemployed

villagers. The Spinners' Association by investing a negligible amount of capital has to date put almost three and a half crores of rupees into the pockets of such artisans. Had these earnings gone to a hundred or two or even ten or twenty thousand persons in cities, it would have been announced by the beating of drums. But no one is surprised because this amount has found its way without any fanfare, into the homes of hundreds of thousands of starving villagers. But I regard it as a minor miracle. No one is deprived of his livelihood by the use of foreign dyes, no new industry is prevented from coming up because of this and khadi has been given an impetus. I do believe that chemical dyes can be made in India but that is a distinct and independent industry. However, it is the dharma of the wealthy to take up that venture. Such risks are beyond the scope of a khadi worker.

Even today mill-like khadi is produced in sufficient quantity to meet the demand. Even the *patolas*[1] of Patan are available today if anyone wished to wear them. But there are few such generous persons who would pay the price. If anyone expects that the same quality of khadi should be available at a price comparable to mill-made mull, I would tell him that it is impossible, and it should be impossible, to have hand-made mull without the use of force against the workmen.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 23-5-1937

312. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

TITHAL, BULSAR,
May 23, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

I am overwhelmingly busy just now. Wish I had the time to describe the interesting events. This is just to acknowledge your letter. Your reconstruction circular letter is good. I have not even been able to study it so carefully as to enable me to offer helpful suggestions.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3784. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6940

[1] Rich silk

313. LETTER TO STUDENTS OF VALLABH VIDYALAYA

May 23, 1937

CHILDREN OF THE VALLABH VIDYALAYA,

Live up to the name your school bears.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Jivandwara Shiksham, Preface; also *Bapuni Ashrami Kelavani*, p. 81

314. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

May 24, 1937

BHAI VITHALDAS,

Please send on credit as much lace as you have or as much as you feel inclined to send to the following address. Most probably all will be sold. If any of it is not sold, it will be returned. If it is not much, wouldn't you send it by post parcel? The address is this: Shri Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Manorville, Simla.

I understand about Harjivan[1]. We may inquire at Calcutta, and ask what they would pay, etc.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Wasn't a tailor to come for stitching clothes for Mr. Kallenbach?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9793

315. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

TITHAL, BULSAR,
May 24, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

I have written[2] to Jerajani, A.I.S.A. Khadi Depot, Kalbadevi, Bombay, asking him to send you the lace for sale or return. You should send him your specimen or your criticism which he can understand.

[1] Harjivan Kotak, a khadi worker; *vide* also "A Letter", 30-5-1937
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

You should similarly send your opinion to the Gandhi Seva Sena.

Poor Tofa! In spite of your references to him in every letter, I have not even thought of him. My apologies to you and him. In spite of my regarding dogs and human beings as equal, I cannot feel the same in respect of illness of dogs as of men. But I hope for your sake that he is fully restored. The moral from this domestic illness may be that you cannot serve man and dogs at the same time and therefore dogs should not be kept as pets. Hard lines, but there it is. You cannot divide your loyalty between two.

The pin's head may be far more dangerous than an open sore into which you can thrust your finger. Therefore don't disregard it.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3605. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6414

316. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

May 24, 1937

CHI. MANUDI,

I got your letter with *pranams* from Surendra. How can I say now whether you should stay there or elsewhere and for how long? It is for you and Surendra to decide that. Wherever you stay, observe the rules [of the Ashram]. Whatever the temptations or pressure, don't break the rules you have accepted for yourself. Both of you should daily recite the 12th chapter[1] attentively and ponder over it. By now you both must have learnt it by heart. You should be methodical in everything. Do nothing in haste. For two days we were quite crowded. Today it is practically empty here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2668. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

[1] Of *Bhagwad Gita*

317. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

May 24, 1937

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Your letter calls for a long reply. But nowadays there is such great pressure of work here that I could not get time to write a long reply. You should keep on writing, so that your thoughts may become clear. I shall then be able to understand you and guide you better. But I will say one thing here. My inability to visit Segaon more often has certainly pained me. My only consolation was that the cause was not my laziness but inability to get away from other jobs. But this is not to deny or extenuate my failure. I did not mean that we have not been able to do anything at all. But whatever we have done cannot be said to be of much value. I am not saying this by way of fault-finding. But we must think about the future. You are, of course, doing that. I expect I will learn more about the fast hereafter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8581. Also C.W. 7014. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

318. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

May 24, 1937

BAPA,

If Jamnalalji agrees, you may hold the Harijan Sevak Sangh meeting in Wardha in July.

I got just now the note about the financial condition of the Sangh. Reading it today is, of course, out of the question. Recently we have had a meeting of nationalist teachers here, and so letters have piled up. I cannot promise to send you my comments before the 28th.

Viyogi Hari[1] writes and tells me that the *Harijan Sevak* continues to remain short of funds and asks what should now be done. I had a talk with Ghanshyamdas. He is unable to decide. Can you? If

[1] Hariprasad Dwivedi, well-known Hindi poet and writer; Editor, *Harijan Sevak*

nobody does anything and the shortage of funds continues, then you know my opinion–close down.

BAPU

SHRI THAKKAR BAPA
HARIJAN NIVAS
KINGSWAY, DELHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1178

319. LETTER TO NATHUBHAI N. PAREKH

May 24, 1937

BHAI NATHUBHAI,

Kanti has given me your letter and it was only after reading it that I came to know about your *vanapravesh*[1]. When I wander, the letters also wander after me. Your letter could not come into my hands till now. All the letters cannot reach me on the very day they arrive. It is good that you have completed 50 years. Take everything that one may from this stage of life and march on. Jayanti[2] also came and saw me. Indu[3] is staying with me at Segaon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6249

320. TELEGRAM TO CHHOTELAL JAIN

BULSAR,
May 25, 1937

CHHOTELAL
MAGANWADI
WARDHA

REGRET DEPARTURE POSTPONED TENTH JUNE. INFORM SEGAON. VASUMATI CAN GO MALAD OR COME HERE ON WAY SABARMATI. KAMALABAI SHOULD COME HERE VIA BARDOLI WAY RAJKOT. NANAVATI SHOULD GO MALAD FOR HEALTH IF NECESSARY.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10733

[1] Or *vanaprastha;* literally means "the life of a forest-dweller". Here the word denotes completion of 50 years of life.

[2] Sons of the addressee

[3] *ibid*

321. LETTERS TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

TITHAL, BULSAR,
May 25, 1937

CHI. VIJAYA,

You have thinned down nowadays. Don't let that happen. Why are you lazy in writing letters?

Manubhai has started writing to me. Nanabhai[1] also was here. I had a talk with him also. I think Nanabhai approves of your self-restraint. He will, therefore, pacify Manubhai.

I was sorry that my return there had been postponed by eleven days. Wherever I am, there is always some work to do. But my real work is there.

Please tell Balvantsinha that I got his letter. There is nothing special in it which calls for reply. I am, therefore, saving my time to that extent today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7070. Also C.W. 4562. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

322. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

May 25, 1937

CHI. MUNNALAL,

God's will be done. Sardar will not permit me to leave this place till the 10th June. My heart is there. The heat there seems pleasant to me and the cool breeze here seems hot, for I know that my right place is there. Today also I am not replying to your [earlier] letter, because there is no time and the pressure of work is heavy. I cannot be very happy that you are going to start eating wheat. You should pass two to three months without eating wheat, i.e., without starch. Not eating wheat is likely to do you no harm, and the benefit is obvious.

I have sent a wire[2] today. It must have been sent to you by Chhotelalji. I, therefore, don't write about that here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8582. Also C.W. 7015. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Nrisinhaprasad Kalidas Bhatt of Dakshinamurti, Bhavnagar
[2] *Vid*e p. Letter to Mun nalal G. Shah", 25-5-1937.

323. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

May 25, 1937

CHI. NANAVATI,

It is not right that I have had no letter from you at all. I have written many letters to you. Do not pity me needlessly. If you are not keeping good health, then have a change of air. I am upset becuase my return there has been postponed. I was holding my patience thinking that I would positively return there on the 1st. I have already sent a wire.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10734

324. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

TITHAL

May 25, 1937

CHI. LILAVATI

I shall he coming there on the 12th instead of on the 1st. It will of course be nice if you can maintain good health and remain cheerful there. But if you cannot do so, the correct thing would be to go to your brother in Bombay. Munnalal writes that you have lost weight. It is not good that the stomach-ache persists. You did well in going to Nagpur.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

325. LETTER TO A. B. LATTHE

TITHAL, BULSAR,

May 26, 1937

DEAR MR. LATTHE,

It was good of you to write to me. My later statements do not in any shape or form alter my position. The formula about dismissal was enunciated in answer to the question as to how I would envisage

[1] *Vid*e p. Letter to Mun nalal G. Shah", 25-5-1937.

interference by the Governors, since I admit that circumstances could be conceived when intereference would be necessary, if the clause defining special powers of Governors was not abrogated. I then said that I did not contemplate an irremovable Ministry except by an adverse vote of the House, but that I contemplated also dismissal byGovernors when a difference arose between them and their Ministers, which could not be got over by any reasoning. I perferred dismissal to voluntary resignation becuase I wanted the burden of dismissal to rest on Governor's shoulders. That would check or minimize opposition pinpricks and make the working of offices by a party which is frankly opposed to the Act and the British Imperial system tolerably smooth. Now, if the difference between dismissal and what Lord Zetland has offered is very little, surely it is up to the Government to make up the difference rather than for the Congress to yield. To show that my original position is not [at] all altered, I would be entirely satisfied if assurances were given as was contemplated by the resolution of the A. I. C. C. The latest resolution of the Working Committee is but an interpretation of the A. I. C. C. resolution, not an advance or impro-vement on it. I hope that this letter clears up all the points raised in your letter; but if there is anything more, please do not hesitate to write to me.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 7982. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

326. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 26, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

Kamalabai returned there rather suddenly. Give the accompanying letter to her. You may take from her whatever work you like, within her capacity. If she serves as she has promised to do, she will certainly be able to do much work. You need not hesitate to ask her any question.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall be staying here up to the 10th. Shouldn't, therefore, Kanu also leave on the 10th?

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8523. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

327. LETTER BHUJANGILAL CHHAYA

May 26, 1937

CHI. BHUJANGILAL,

You did very well in accepting Chandubhai's daughter. Your Father will be certainly happy over this.

I saw no fault in your conduct towards Manu. How could you help if you came to like her? You put the proposal before me in a manner befitting a young man. I don't think that you violated propriety in any way by doing so. Had I thought that your father would be pleased, I would have certainly suggested your name to Manu and she would have accepted my proposal. But, thinking that it would be impossible to obtain Father's blessings, you suppressed your desire and thereby enhanced yours and the Chhaya family's reputation. You may make any use of this letter that you like.

It is time to think what work you should take up in future. We shall do that when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am here till the 10th of June.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2600

328. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

May 26, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

What do we know? Rama didn't know that he would have to go to the forest. Send Amtul Salaam. We will not give insulin and still cure diabetes. We will see about the tonsils. What a fuss I had made!

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11521

329. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

May 26, 1937

CHI. NANAVATI,

I got your letter after a long time. Nimu has been here for the last five days. For the present she will stay here. Nothing is decided about the future. If you have made up your mind to spend the whole summer in Segaon, then reduce your work and sleep at least for ten hours daily, full eight hours at night and full two hours during the day, either at one stretch or piecemeal. The weight must remain constant. The cause of the pain is obviously weakness. I hope you are taking hip-baths regularly. Take more milk if you can. Don't care even for bread.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The time during which I intended to write the other letters was taken up by Gangabehn Jhaveri.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10735

330. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

May 26, 1937

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I had your letter. I shall enquire from Munnalal about milk. Your argument seems to be quite correct. I will not turn you out or anyone else. But I will not stop those who go away of their own accord. I shall extract from everyone as much work as possible. Although all are engaged in something or other, according to me it is still not sufficient. "Never to give up even at the cost of life" is also one of my mottos. To dismiss everyone after having permitted them to stay would be to admit defeat and prove oneself a fool. I don't mind looking a fool as I already am one but this will certainly be painful. So how can I stand discomfiture?

Today Kishorelalbhai and Gomatibehn left for Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1901

331. INSTRUCTIONS TO SPINNERS

[*After May 26, 1937*][1]

Revered Bapuji's instructions are that if the thread snaps while spinning it should be joined rather than thrown away. It will lessen the wastage. The best thing would be to spin in such a way that there would be no occasion for joining. Usually the thread snaps only because of its unevenness. There will not be any wastage if as soon as the thread becomes thinner than usual, the sliver is broken off and put along with the thin thread and spun again. Professional spinners follow this method.

At Bapuji's instance,

NANAVATI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10736

332. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

TITHAL, BULSAR,
May 27, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

One part of your letter has been dealt with by Mahadev.

Jawaharlal's letter to Ammu is inoffensive. It won't do for women to have tender skin. His viewpoint should be appreciated. You were right in not circulating the letter. It may be read, if necessary, at some meeting where you can watch and correct misunderstanding. But just as it is necessary to understand his viewpoint, it is also necessary for you to recognize your limitations. You stand midway between two forces. You will therefore never become a democratic organization.[2] Perhaps your title is a misnomer. You may retain it but define your limitations. This theme can be further considered whenwe meet in July. (Is it not?) I hope the pin-head has closed from the bottom. I am hoping that you will meet Kallenbach. You will love him.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3785. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6941

[1] In the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi Sangrahalaya, tis is placed after "Letter to Amritlal T.Nanavati",

[2] The reference is to All-India Women's Conference.

333. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

May 27, 1937

CHI. VIJAYA,

You have given your daily programme in sufficient detail. It is fine. It is through selfishness that you are grieving over grandmother's death. Her house had become dilapidated. Should she, even then, continue to stay in it merely for serving others? Why should you envy her if she goes to live in a new house? Just because we do not know the meaning of death, through our selfishness we grieve over it. If you understand this simple truth, then you will give up crying.

I have had two letters from Manubhai. I have preserved them for you. I intended to show them to you when I return there. But if you have lost patience, then let me know and I shall send them immediately by return of post. I have presumed that you are not impatient in such matters. I, therefore, did not send them immediately when they were received and today also I am not sending them. Now I will do as you wish. I hope you have regained your normal health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7071. Also C.W. 4563. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

334. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

May 27, 1937

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I cannot cope with your letters. I go on replying as replies to your questions occur to me. You have not at all been at fault in reminding me that I have hardly been able to go to the town. Your motive was pure. You have yourself understood my helplessness and thereby proved the justice of your criticism.

What does Balvantsinha write about milk? I think that he should be given as much separated milk for the cows as he needs. What could be your reason for refusing? It is certainly good that the he-goat was saved. But I cannot accept, without knowing more facts, that your

intention of going on a fast was true satyagraha. Sometimes satyagraha seems to fail and *duragraha*[1] seems to succeed. Still satyagraha remains satyagraha and *duragraha* remains *duragraha*. In other words, we can judge nothing from the results. The counsel "You have no right to the fruit"[2] should always be kept in mind.

The relations with Jamnalalji and his house [at Segaon] should be no obstacle. It all depends on the manner in which we use them. We do hope that we shall always use them for a good purpose.

The meaning you have given of the *Gita* verse will do for you personally, but it assumes belief in the Divine incarnation of Krishna. "People cannot recognize me because I am in the form of a human being."[3] This statement is taken to refer to Krishna in human form and not to the God hidden in all beings. One is free to believe this. The ultimate result of both the meanings is the same.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8580. Also C.W. 7016. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

335. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

May 27, 1937

CHI. LILAVATI,

Your letter is nice. Have I not given you freedom? But I would like it if you kept yourself bound voluntarily. You are, however, entrusting your welfare to me. But do I know my own? However, I value your faith. Even if I make mistakes in guiding you, still because of your faith your welfare is assured.

I have already written[4] to Munnalal regarding separated milk. I think Balvantsinha ought to be given milk. But you should ask Munnalal and understand his reason.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9363. Also C.W. 6638. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] Obduracy
[2] *Bhagavad Gita,* II. 47 and IX. 11
[3] *ibid*
[4] *Vide* "Letter to Vijaya N. Patel", 10-5-1937

336. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

May 27, 1937

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Don't worry about Sharda. Her shyness will disappear. She has gained two pounds. She remains cheerful. If I am to choose a husband for her, in all probability he would be from some other Province. What about Manilal and Sushila who live far away in Phoenix? What meaning has far and near in this age? Please, therefore, overcome Shakaribehn's groundless objection.

The ill-feeling between Narandas and you must end. I will write to him. If you suspect breach of trust in regard to your brother's money, you should quitely return it at the earliest opportunity. In doing that you need not consider what my or anybody's opinion would be. A thing is certainly a sin for him to whom it appears so and he should wash it off as soon as possible.

You may use the remaining amount. For the future, both of you should have trust in God.

There is no doubt that it would be better to select a village in British territory than one in an Indian State.

Boiled onions act as a laxative. There will be no harm in eating a little of it raw while eating the rest boiled. You must take *bhajis*[1] such as *tandalja*, etc., boiled. That is bound to stop bleeding.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.G. 22

337. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 27, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

I send with this the material portion of a letter from Chimanlal for you to read and think over. Since he wishes to leave Vijapur, I casually suggested why he shouldn't go to Rajkot. Sharda replied to the question saying that that was the last place he would go to. This reminded me of the ill-feeling between you two. On my asking whether that was the only reason, she said, "Yes". I thereupon, wrote[2] to Chimanlal admonishing him why two old inmates of the Ashram, whose relation should be closer than that of two brothers, should harbour such ill-feeling? The accompanying letter is his reply to my

[1] Leafy vegetables

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

questions. Previously, too, I had tried to know the cause of this ill-feeling. I think you had written to me and given some explanation. But I have forgotten all that. Please, therefore, explain your point of view now.

Kamalabai must have arrived there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8524. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

338. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

May 27, 1937

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I got your long letter. I have read it carefully. Deka also met me. I think he is a nice young man. There seems to be nothing wrong in what he has written and what he believes. So there is no need to harp on it. If he himself comes to work among the labourers, he would like to work in the labour office for a minimum of three months. Your need at present appears to be urgent as Raghunandan requires assistance in the Press. But in my opinion you should let Deka gain full experience. He will then be more useful.

Satyavati's case is pitiable. She mentions her weaknesses; what are they precisely? The help granted to her for her convalescence is quite proper. But it is difficult to say how far you are qualified to guide her. Know that it all depends on your self-confidence. I am quite partial to her, but she is as wilful as she is courageous. It will be for her own good if she listens to you. I return her letters. I hope Mother is all right.

I am here till June 10.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2451

339. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

TITHAL, BULSAR,
May 28, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I was not concerned with Kamu's deserts, but only with her need. I do believe that she can afford to pay from her own resources. But I couldn't persuade her to do so. I didn't like to enter into an argument with her and, therefore, decided to pay her Rs.30. I didn't know about Rs. 10. You read the figure as 30 correctly. If you know who pays her Rs. 10, let me know. I will write to Kamu.

I have already written to you concerning. . . . [1] Kusum[2] seems to have taken a vow of silence towards me. Does she keep good health?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8525. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

340. LATHI'S EXAMPLE

The reader will find a fair notice in Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter" of the opening to Harijans of its important temple by the ruler of Lathi State. The event is of great value to Kathiawar. And Thakoresaheb Prahladsinghiji deserves the congratulations of all lovers of Hinduism and humanity. Published reports show that there was not a murmur against the act and that the *savarna* Hindus partook in the proceedings without any reserve. I draw from this the same inference I drew from the Travancore Proclamation. For the people religious proclamations of a ruler have the sanction of *Smritis.* I am unable on any other basis to account for the unanimous welcome extended to the generous action of the Thakoresaheb of Lathi. I have bitter experiences of the obstinacy of the *savarnas* of Lathi. They would not come to the Harijan quarters. There was difficulty in getting medical attendance for a Harijan woman who was dying of

[1] The name has been omitted.
[2] Daughter of Vrajlal Gandhi

pneumonia. There were distinctions observed at the State dispensary. It must be said in passing that these disabilities were not peculiar to Lathi, they were common to all parts of Kathiawar and outside it in Gujarat. Indeed in some vital matters untouchability is worse in Gujarat than elsewhere and worst in Kathiawar. Nor do I imagine that with the opening of the temple in Lathi all the disabilities have disappeared in practice. Nevertheless in the ready co-operation of the *savarna* Hindus in the worthy action of the Thakoresaheb of Lathi, as in Travancore, one finds a quick solution of the untouchability problem. For if my reasoning is sound, the other Indian chiefs have but to copy the examples of Travancore and Lathi and untouchability will lose its sharp edge, even though it may not die out altogether inthe States of India. And if it does on that large scale, British India cannot but be affected by the phenomenon. One fails to see, why the princes move so slowly in this matter which is one of life and death to a large portion of Hindu humanity. Would that the princes recognized their obvious duty of purging Hinduism of the virus of untouchability and took timely action.

The Thakoresaheb of Lathi is reported to have said in his address that as soon as he gets suitable priests and teachers he would like to open more temples and cover them with schools for all classes of children. I would suggest to him the same remedy I put before the authorities in Travancore. A small training schoold should be opened in Lathi for giving practical training in conducting services and schools in temples. There is no reason why both the offices should not be combined in one person. A school master has as much need to be pure in heart as a priest and vice versa. Nor need a priest be ignorant of the art of teaching. At the present moment the most deplorable thing is that the temple priests are as a rule ignorant men often devoid of character. The training course need not be long–not beyond six months. If the salaray offered is attractive, the school should draw well-read youths of character beyond reproach. My suggestion no doubt implies that the reform of Lathi has its root in spirituality.

Harijan, 29-5-1937

341. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

TITHAL, BULSAR,
May 29, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have already told you I leave here 10th June, reach Segaon 12th June, not to leave it (D.V.) till the meeting of the Haripura Congress. So I expect you in July and thereafter you will take your seconds, minutes or hours whatever you can get and have advice, guidance, and orders at your wish!

Yes, Kumarappa does feel that his interpretation was right and mine wholly wrong and misleading and when he told me that Bahadurji had agreed with him, I told him I must have his opinion in writing. He said he would get it. I do not know what happened after. I still maintain that he has no legal sense. But what does that matter? He has good sense, he is a faithful worker. I would therefore be pleased if he proves to be right in his interpretation. I shall then have to blow out my legal brain which people thought I had.

Your pin-head is an eternal pin-prick for me. You must not neglect it. You must worry Shummy's life out of him and get it right, your preocupations notwithstanding.

Your dal is also a pin-head. I speak not from prejudice but experience. You cannont judge results from what ordinarily healthy men can eat seemingly without harm. I tell you a tea-spoonful of dal has been known to upset delicate stomachs and yours is extra delicate. You do get enough protein from your milk and chapati when you take enough. I wish you would consult Menkel[1], the food specialist. I am not sure of the spelling of his name.

I would be sorry if you miss meeting Kallenbach. He has no desire to see anything in India. He has come just to be with me as long as he can. He is not sure how long he can stay. Although he has become a big architect and his firm has four branches employing 35 architects, he remains in his personal life just as simple as when I left him in 1914.

I hope you have the lace from Bombay.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3786. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6942

[1] Dr. Menkel of the Seventh Day Adventist Mission; the source has "Menckem".

342. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

May 29, 1937

CHI. PREMA,

I shall not probably be able to reply to the whole of your letter. I will try, though. I have certainly issued no order forbidding you to make speeches. And even if I have issued any, I withdraw it. I wish to order no one. What can I have to say if your views change? You will follow your nature, as everybody should do.[1]

The fact that pure love doesn't care for touch certainly doesn't mean that all touch is impure. I had pure love for my mother, but Iused to massage her legs when they ached. There was no impurity in that touch. Touch prompted by lust is evil. I would, therefore, say that anybody who says that pure love is impossible without touch doesn't know what pure love is.

I still do not understand what you wish to suggest regarding Nariman. Who did him injustice and how? At least for the sake of truth you should come out frankly with what you have in mind. I find it intolerable that there should be a difference of opinion between us in a matter like this. If you are convinced that injustice has been done to Nariman, you should prove that to me, for, though unwillingly, I had to interest myself in the affair. I have, moreover, assured Nariman that I shall be ready to study his case whenever he wishes. But whether or not he comes, your duty is clear.

What you have assumed regarding . . .[2] is not correct. The evidence which you have got is of no value. Before believing in such a thing you should ask the person concerned. I don't wish to suggest that no such untruth has been practised. But the matter should be carefully investigated. If somebody tells me that Prema did a certain thing, should I believe it without asking you whether it is correct?

Maybe what you said at Hudli came from your heart. But what you said in your speech was different from what you say now. Will you admit this much? Be that as it may, I have told you that my experience was different from your reasoning. You are certainly

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 13-5-1937

[2] The name has been omitted.

entitled to attach more importance to your reasoning than to my experience. But what should I do?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10390. Also C.W. 6829. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

343. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

May 29, 1937

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your letter. Did I say that when I wrote a letter to anybody in Segaon, there would always be a letter for you, too, along with it? If I have said that, you should regard it as impossible. For, sometimes I may have to write only two lines to somebody, and I cannot decide in advance that I must write to you even when I have hardly time for that. But it has certainly been the case that I have written the largest number of letters to you and not a single week has passed without my dictating one to you. I think there has never been a gap of more than two days. You can find out the number from the diary.

It will certainly be good if you can stay without ruining your health. I don't feel the heat as much as the others do. Perhaps it is because I keep moving about and do not have to sit near the stove. So how can I feel the heat? But now it is decided. I am fixed up here till the 10th. Whether or not it is hot there after the 10th, we shall, God willing, meet on the 12th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9364. Also C.W. 6639. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

344. A LETTER

May 30, 1937

Shri Harjivan Kotak has been taken away from the All-India Spinners' Association Kashmir depot at my instance principally for reasons wholly unconnected with his conduct of the depot. So far as I know he has never acted in his conduct of the depot in any manner that would reflect on his honesty. His business capacity and his

industry have never been questioned. And but for his unfortunate illness he would have joined any business and had more than can be paid in a wholly philanthropic organization like the A. I. S. A.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

345. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

TITHAL,
May 30, 1937

CHI. BALVANTSIHNA,

A verandah may certianly be added to the front side of the cow-shed if it does not cost much.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1902

346. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

TITHAL, BULSAR,
May 31, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your two letters remain unanswered. I am glad the dog is better but the pin-point still remains active. Can't you get some doctor to find out the cause?

You want Jawaharlal's letter back.[1] Did you ask for it in your first letter? I destroyed it after replying as it was clearly a type copy. The original must be in existence with Ammu. I should be sorry if the original is also destroyed. It cannot be. In future always mark "to be returned" when you want any writing returned.

You should teach men a lesson in punctuality by your leaving punctually even as you reach punctually. Did I tell you of an English friend beginning his meeting exactly at the advertised time, though the audience consisted of only one man or woman–I forget which?

It is not unlikely that Kallenbach would be in Segaon in July when you come.

[1] *Vide* "Instructions to Spinners", 26-5-1937

Did I not tell you I was leaving here on 10th morning? Letters may come here till 9th June.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3606. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6415

347. LETTER TO VAIKUNTHLAL L. MEHTA

May 31, 1937

BHAI VAIKUNTHBHAI,

Do come on Wednesday evening with the friend's message.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1364

348. TELEGRAM TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

BULSAR,
June 1, 1937

ANAND HINGORANI
SHIKAPURI COLONY
KARACHI

VIDYA SHOULD GO GET WELL.

BAPU

From a copy: C. W. 11068. Courtesy: Anand T. Hingorani

349. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 1,1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I understand what you say regarding Chimanlal. I am sending your note to him. What else but a misunderstanding can there be behind this? I have deliberately placed Kamala's burden on you. I don't believe anybody else to be capable of shouldering it. Read my letter to her. Decide for yourself in regard to anything she demands and inform me after taking necessary action, so that if I have any comment to make I may do so. Ask me immediately where you have a doubt. After knowing all the details from her, give her permission to write letters where you think it

proper. Keep every minute of hers occupied. She may study, sew, teach, spin, sweep, card–do everything that her strength permits. Point out to her any defect that you may observe in her.

As regards Kamu I hear that the payment of Rs. 10 will be stopped from this month.

There was a wire from Vijaya[1] from Chorwad: "Send Kanubhai." I have replied: "Wishes to stay here till tenth. Why do you send for him earlier?"

What you wrote regarding Kishorelalbhai's speech didn't seem to me to call for a reply. Personally I see nothing objectionable in the suggestion regarding the addition of cotton-seed as a form of subscription for the Goseva Sangh, nor can we find fault withanybody who may spin the whole quantity at a time rather than a little daily. It is possible that this will nullify our object in requiring everybody to pay subscription in the same form or some other object as well. We need not think that Kishorelal has committed any error because the way he looks at the matter differs from ours in accepting yarn as a form of subscription.

I don't see anything to criticize in what he has said regarding equal respect for all religions. If we see an error in any religion why shouldn't we point it out when occasion demands? That we must make sure that the occasion is proper, is a different matter. If you have read any other meaning, let me know.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8526. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

350. INTERVIEW TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"

TITHAL,
June 1, 1937

I am very anxious that Congressmen should take office—but only if Government show their willingness to conciliate the Congress.

If, as has been said, Lord Zetland has conceded all but the question of dismissal, the Congress asks Government to come a little way to meet it. The conciliatory moves so far have come from the

[1] Vijaya Gandhi, addressee's daughter-in-law

Congress. It would have been easy at Allahabad to close the door by putting a narrow interpretation on the Delhi resolution. Instead it was kept open.

The only obstacle, so far as can at present be seen, is the Congress demand that in the event of serious disagreement between a Governor and his Congress Ministers, the Governor should dismiss them. I personally would be satisfied, however, if the Governor gave an undertaking that in such a case he would demand his Ministers' resignation.

Mr. Gandhi refused to agree that it was a small matter for the Congress, because his idea was to make the Governor think fifty times before he took the responsibility of dismissing his Ministers. In other words, Mr. Gandhi wished to "take advantage of the ordinary human virtue—it may be weakness—of not wishing to look a fool". Congress critics had said that this demand was merely a trifle. [Mr. Gandhi asked:]

If it is so, why not give the Congress the trifle?

In any case, Mr. Gandhi affirmed, the object of the Congress demand was to test the sincerity of British Government. Did they want the Congress in office, or did they not? In South Africa, Britain meticulously conciliated the Boer. In India, however, such a gesture was lacking. Indeed all the moves towards solving the impasse had come from the Congress.

Now the Congress did not demand any legal change. But it was being talked at instead of being talked to. It would appear that British statesmen and the provincial Governors were addressing the world and not the Congress. In fact, they might be accused of attempting as ever to discredit and *isolate* the Congress.

If Congressmen took office, they would be doing so with a full sense of their responsibility. Therefore, unless the Government recognized its policy of wrecking the Act and achieving independence by constitutional means as perfectly legitimate, they would not welcome the rule of the Congress majority.

Mr. Gandhi did not see any constitutional obstacle or impropriety in the Viceroy taking steps in an attempt to end the deadlock. It was known that the Viceroy had conferred with provincial Governors before they summoned the Congress leaders. Surely, then, there was no obstacle to his asking the Congress President to meet him. [Mr. Gandhi said:]

I do not say that this is necessary. It is enough if the Congress demand in accordance with the Allahabad resolution[1] is complied with.

If Government would not make a gesture, the deadlock must continue. The result might in the end be the application of Section 93, that is, the suspension of the

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, "Interview to Associated Press of India", 6-5-1937

democratic portion of of the new Constitution. Mr. Gandhi was prepared for that and its possible consequences. He preferred open oppression under a state of autocracy to veiled oppression of, and interference with, Congress Ministers. Though he was ready to face it, oppression was the last thing he desired. It would increase the existing bitterness and hatred between Britain and India. He himself would die in an effort to prevent the tragedy, but there must come a time when his effort would be fruitless. Mr. Gandhi concluded:

Nobody has yet said that the present Congress condition for accepting office is unconstitutional. The Congress had gone as far as it could, consistent with self-esteem and with its avowed object. The next move must come from the Government, if they really want the Congress to take office.

The Times of india, 2-6-1937

351. A TESTIMONIAL

[AS AT] SEGAON, WARDHA (INDIA),
June 2, 1937

Mr. P. N. Joshi, Superintendent, Bhavnagar Durbar dairy, has been studying the cattle problem in India for the last 14 years, and has done some work towards the improvement of the indigenous breed of cows in Kathiawar. Bhavnagar State is sending him to Denmark and the U.S.A. to study genetics and animal husbandry, so that his knowledge may be used for the betterment of the cattle wealth in this country. I shall be grateful for any facilities or guidance that may be given to Mr. Joshi in the countries he is visiting for the first time in his life.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

352. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

TITHAL, BULSAR,
June 2, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Congratulations. What a splinter![1] So, my anxiety was justified and so is your idiocy. You won't repeat the folly of disregarding pin-points. I hope when this reaches you, you would have recovered completely.

[1] In *Letters to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur*, the addressee explains: "I got a splinter in my foot while walking with Gandhiji in Sevagram. It remained inside for weeks and at last came out itself—a fairly large one—and I sent it to him to see!"

I understand your question about violence. Good results do not justify violence and they do not nullify the evil that violence works. It is not always possible to lay one's hands on the evil that violence works. Thus it is not possible to weigh the evil wrought by hanging a murderer, though we may heave a sigh of relief when he is put out. Faith would be meaningless, if we were able always to account for everything. Have I understood your question correctly?

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3607. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6416

353. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

June 2, 1937

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

May you live long and do great service. The sun of hope dwells not outside but within oneself. Search for it there, and you will surely find it. Tell Mother[1] and Gokibehn[2] that I think of them often. Blessings to Sumati[3] and Mani.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4801. Courtesy: Shantikumar N. Morarjee

354. LETTER TO KAPILRAI H. PAREKH

June 2, 1937

BHAI KAPILRAI,

I got your postcard. I forwarded to you yesterday the reply received from Jamnalalji. But as I wrote a wrong address on it by oversight, it will go astray. I learnt about this just now. Here is the gist of that letter: A very experienced and capable expert is in charge at the main place. If, therefore, you are willing to accept a post under

[1] Grandmother, paternal aunt and wife of the addressee
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*

him, you should see Seth Keshav Devji Nevatia at Bachchharaj & Co., 395 Kalabadevi Road.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KAPILRAI HARIVALLABH PAREKH
"SITA SADAN", ROOM NO. 8
LAKHAMSI NAPPU ROAD, MATUNGA (BOMBAY)

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9731. Courtesy: Kapilrai H. Parekh

355. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

TITHAL,
[*June*][1] *2, 1937*

CHI. LILAVATI,

So you didn't send the letter with Indu? You are counting the days, aren't you? The date has now been advanced from the 12th to the 11th. There is no chance of its being brought earlier. Ba will stay back in Maroli. Kanu will go to Rajkot. So all of us who came from there will not return, but in their place we shall bring some others with us. They are Khan Saheb[2], Mehrtaj[3], Lali[4] and Mr. Kallenbach. See, therefore, that you look fresh and dignified. If you go on losing weight, you won't be able to cope with the cooking.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9587. Also CW. 6559. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] Gandhiji was at Tithal in June 1937. The source, however, has "July" in this and the following two items.

[2] Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, his daughter and son

[3] *ibid*

[3] *ibid*

356. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

TITHAL,
[*June*][1] *2, 1937*

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Indu has given me your letters. After reading them, I wonder whether to laugh, weep or be angry and I was inclined to do these things in that order and I finally decided not to do any of them. I could not follow what Indu told me orally, nor have I been able to judge whose fault it must have been.

I hope to reach there on the 11th instead of the 12th. I shall listen to the story when I come there. Or perhaps by that time the cloud might have cleared. Therefore I wish to say nothing about the discord. Do what you can to settle it among yourselves. You have written to me saying that I have thrust on you the burden of winning over Lilavati, Balvantsinha and others. If I had put on you the burden of village service for which you and others are in Segaon, you would have been able to carry it. But this very distinction that you have made is not proper. We have resolved that village service is not different from overcoming anger, etc.The equation would be: To win over Lilavati and others is to overcoming anger and that is equal to serving the villages. But so long as you regard them as two separate things, they will remain so from your point of view. I have, however, solved this problem, too. As I have already told you and Balvantsinha, you can have separate arrangements for your meals, etc. You will have to deal only with me. You should spend all your time in the service chosen by you. After careful thinking, you rejected the suggestion. And I also see that you were right in doing so. Nobody has ever been able to serve by living in this manner. We are not born independent. From conception to death we are and will remain dependent on others. But I will not go into all this philosophy here. We will discuss it when we meet and find time.

You don't have to think what your duty should have been as regards that goat.[2] It was simply obstinacy on your part. It is good if you can save even one goat by changing people's ideas. But if you save a million goats without their approval, it is of no value. If at all it has any, it is almost nil. In fact you should apologize to the people

[1] *Vide* footnote I above
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Munnalal G. Shah", 27-5-1937

and tell them: ‘My duty was to explain to you your dharma and not threaten you with a fast. I, therefore, apologize to you for having held out such a threat. Though I will not go on a fast to stop you, still I will continue to tell you that it is an evil custom. And will go on trying to prove that with arguments.’

I didn’t follow anything regarding Balvantrai. I will be able to do so only when I go over there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8578. Also C.W. 7018. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

357. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

TITHAL,
[*June*][1] *2, 1937*

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

From your letter I sent to Narandas the portion concerning him. He has replied to it. What do you say about it? I have not shown that letter to Sharda. It is likely that being of sharp intellect she may start brooding and become sentimental and even start worrying. If I let her read it, I would even have to enter into discussion with her, and that is bound to have an adverse effect on her health. All this is not necessary. You should, therefore, send your reply directly to me, so that she may not have to get involved in this matter at all.

I see from Narandas’s letter that there is nothing but a simple difference of opinion. And if it is only a case of honest difference of opinion, there is no reason for unhappiness or anger. If you give a reasoned reply meeting every point, send back Narandas’s letter to me so as to enable me to think over the matter, for I might have forgotten the contents of Narandas’s letter by the time I get your reply.

Sharda is keeping good health. She takes long walks and eats well. On Sunday she weighted 80 lb. I consider it a good sign.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.G. 23

[1] *Vide* footnote 1,”Letter to Lilavati Asar”, 2-6-1937

358. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

June 2, 1937

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I hope you are well. All the people there write to me to have no worry on their account and to stay on in Tithal as long as I wish to. And yet they all—or rather many of them—create causes for worry and pass them on to me. But I refuse to worry any more. I will not leave this place before the 10th instant, though I shall certainly try to leave on the 10th and expect to reach there on the 11th morning. And then I shall listen to the various problems, viz., water, milk, the bullock, the cow, the well, the farm and Munnalal's fast and give my decision on everything.

Is this all right?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1903

359. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

June 2, 1937

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Perhaps you know Giriraj[1]. He was in the Sabarmati Ashram and has two children. His address is as follows:

Vidyashram, 157 Cloth Market, Delhi.

He has a teaching certificate and is willing to do any work like teaching, office work, sales or anything else. His requirement is Rs. 35 per month. Meet him and send me your impression. See if you need him for any kind of job.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2450

[1] Giriraj Kishore Bhatnagar

360. LETTER TO M. R. MASANI

TITHAL, BULSAR,
June 3, 1937

MY DEAR MASANI,

Your letter is superfluous. I have never known you to be disrespectful to anybody. In the speech referred to there was no disrespect. I am surprised Patwardhan thought I had said anything to resent the manner of your speech. My remark was directed to the matter. I instanced your speech as an act of indiscipline. You should not have criticized the action of leaders in pursuance of a mode of action decided upon by the A. I. C. C. I still hold that you were wrong.

I hope you had nice time in Almora.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 4886. Courtesy: M. R. Masani. Also G.N. 4128

361. LETTER TO P. KODANDA RAO

June 3, 1937

MY DEAR KODANDA RAO[1],

Welcome. I hope you have benefited in every way by your long absence. I am not going to Bombay. Come here or come to Segaon after 10th instant.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6284

362. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

June 3, 1937

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Today I am trying to answer several letters of yours. Try to analyse and understand the reasons why you worry about Kanchan. She is now well settled and studies as much as she can. She couldn't be in a better place than where she is at present. What then is the point

[1] 1890-1975; educationist, author and social worker; member of Servants of India Society from 1927 to 1958

in worrying about her? Is it that you wish to live with her? If that is so, there is no real cause for your worry. It is simply a question of your desire. If you are trying to curb that desire, we should consider whether you ought to do so.

The villagers live on *jowar* and *besan*[1]. You will never be able to copy them in that. One should know one's limitations. Hence, the reasoning behind your decision to resume solid food is wrong. Whether from the economic or the moral point of view, which is economical in the long run for you—to eat solid food and fall ill or live on milk which is costlier and work regularly?

There is only one golden key in being able to live a true life. One should plunge into whatever work of service comes to one unsought, surrendering everything to Shri Krishna, and being wholly engrossed in the work. Even the thoughts in one's mind should be about how to complete the task and not whether the work is proper or not.

That we have employed a Bhangi and are building a road is certainly a form of service. We are in a position to make people spend money in this way. If we don't use our advantage we would prove ourselves fools. And, besides, the money is given by the zamindar. That we thus make him take interest in the village, though it be indirectly, is no small thing. We need not postpone the cleaning of a village and wait for the village people themselves to start doing something. If we can melt the heart of the zamindar in every village, our task would be made very much easier. However, we have to keep in view all the limbs of society and the limits of each would be the limits of our strength.

My wish to live alone in Segaon did not mean that it was not possible to enlarge the field of service so long as other people lived there. I only wanted to see what one man could do, to see for my own sake whether I could carry on the work by myself. The plan could not be carried out and others joined me. I must then use their services and they should give them.

The relations with Jamnalalji should not be allowed to become an obstacle. If they make us soft and comfort-loving, we would fall off like dried leaves, and that deservedly. If we think of nothing but service every hour of the day and strive to remain pure, people will understand us even though a multi-millionaire may be living with us.

[1] Gram flour

I see from your letters that you spend most of your time in dreaming, and that prevents your work from shining out. Your motive is pure, but you start running before you have learnt to walk and even while running you dream of flying. The result is that you not only do not run or fly but cannot even walk. During your illness you could somehow carry on your work, but can you be satisfied with that?

I have now answered all your letters. I kept the letters in front of me and went on consulting them. I am sure you do not want me to reply sentence by sentence. The foregoing replies will help you to resolve all your difficulties. I would, however, advise you to stop thinking in this manner altogether and to complete fully whatever task you have undertaken. If you do so, all your problems will solve themselves by and by without any effort on your part and you will be filled with such happiness as you have never known before.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8579. Also C.W. 7017. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

363. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

TITHAL,

June 3, 1937

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. I have given you freedom to write anything you want. I would only appreciate frankness and then alone shall I be able to help you.

You rightly jest about Tithal. If I have to stay at Tithal for a longer period, do suggest Tithal instead of Bombay. When you suggested coming out of the scorching heat of Segaon, did you not mean that you would come only when the weather became cool? There was indeed another simpler reason for not giving preference to Tithal. But if you want to have any more argument on that point, do so on Friday.

It is good news that Nanavati has been gaining weight. I am not writing to him separately.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

364. TELEGRAM TO BHARTAN KUMARAPPA

June 4, 1937

MAY YOUR UNION[1] PROVE HAPPY AND FRUITFUL FOR COUNTRY. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindu, 4-6-1937

365. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BULSAR,
June 4, 1937

NARANDAS GANDHI
OPPOSITE MIDDLE SCHOOL
RAJKOT

GOD BE THANKED. HE[2] LIVED WELL DIED WELL. NO SORROW.

BAPU

From a microfilm. M.M.U./II

366. LETTER TO EDMOND AND YVONNE PRIVAT

TITHAL, BULSAR,
June 4, 1937

MY DEAR ANAND AND BHAKTI,

It was a delight to hear from you after such a long time. *Harijan* tells you weekly something of my movement. Just now I am at a littlesea-side place drawn there by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Mira, Mahadev and Pyrelal are with me. We are leaving here for Wardha on the 10th. Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Mr. Kallenbach, a South African friend who has just come merely to see me, are also with me. Of course, I shall be delighted to see Prof. Bovet[3] when he

[1] The addressee's marriage to Sita Devi, daughter of David Devadoss, was solemnized at the Kodaikanal English Church.

[2] Khushalchand Gandhi, father of the addressee

[3] A member of New Education Fellowship Delegation, he, along with two other members, Prof. Davies and Dr. Zilliacus, attended the Educational Conference at Wardha on October 22 and 23 and commended Gandhiji's scheme.

comes here in October. But I do not know that I shall be able to write the preface which you want from me for his book. However, I look forward to meet him and I shall see what can be done.

With love to both of you,

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2340

367. LETTER TO B. S. GOPALRAO

June 4, 1937

MY DEAR GOPALRAO,

I have your letter. I should like to know what more you can show in Rajahmundry, if your experiment is the same as what you recommended to me during that unfortunate meeting[1] of ours, when I was tempted there and then to try your experiment which I did strictly according to your instructions. I feel convinced that mankind has not yet discovered a complete substitute for milk. I am also clear that farinaceous and nitrogenous foods ought not to be taken uncooked nor starchy vegetables such as potatoes.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. B. S. GOPALRAO
HYDRO CHROMOPATHIC RESEARCH AND NATURE-CURE ACADEMY
RAJAHMUNDRY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

368. LETTER TO P. K. CHENGAMMAL

June 4, 1937

DEAR CHENGAMMAL,

I have your letter as also your son's. If and when Gopalan comes to India, I shall see what can be done for him. If he has not left already let him know that life in India is difficult and the climate also may not be agreeable to those who have been born and bred in South Africa. If, however, Gopalan can lead a simple life and can

[1] In 1929; vide "Food Faddists", 13-6-1937, "Raw v. Cooked Food", 16-6-1929 and "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 8-7-1929 *Vide* also "Letter to Devdas Gandhi", 11-5-1932

accommodate himself to Indian manners and customs, he will have no difficulty.

Yours sincerely,

SH. P. K. CHENGAMMAL
19 DAWIS STREET
DOORN JOUTEIN
JOHANNESBURG
SOUTH AFRICA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

369. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

June 4, 1937

BHAI BHAGWANJI,

How can I help it if you, though a lawyer, see the thing in an altogether wrong light and then are displeased with my actions? I can only put up with your displeasure. Please note that in none of the cases mentioned by you was I appointed an arbitrator. Should I have asked to be made one? It is possible that, if I ask for it, Devchandbhai, Narbheram and Prabhashankar would appoint me. But should I on that account become a judge? It is only in some exceptional cases that I agree to become an arbitrator, and whenever I have done so I have given clearcut decisions. But it is outside my field to be an arbitrator. My special field is to find a solution by persuading the parties. But I do not always succeed in such efforts and, moreover, I have to take considerable pains. You should have compassion for me and not put before me complicated cases. I would have to spare a lot of time for them. How can I manage that? Hence I can only put up with your [harsh] opinion.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5834. Also C.W. 3057. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

370. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

June 4, 1937

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

I had your letter. In this condition what can you do by staying there[1]? How much can you do even for the spread of the charkha? One wonders whether your living there is the right thing from the point of view of service. Think carefully about this and let me know.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6550

371. COCHIN UNTOUCHABILITY

A Cochin correspondent writes:

I have just gone through your article[2] "Cochin-Travancore" in the *Harijan*, dated May 8, 1937. I find that you have, perhaps unwittingly, done a distinct disservice to the cause of truth.

The controversy about the Koodalmanikkam Temple can in no sense be regarded as a war between light and darkness; at any rate, there is not the slightest intention among the people of Cochin to hug darkness as a virtue in itself, worth putting up a fight for.

You seem to be labouring under a misapprehension when you say that "even the most orthodox Hinduism would hardly permit him (the Cochin Maharaja) to regulate the private conduct of the visitors to the Cochin temples. In no temple in India where Harijans are not permitted to worship are trustees authorized to scrutinize the actions of *savarna* Hindus who are entitled, as a matter of right, to visit the temples." So far as the Cochin Government are concerned, they have not sought to regulate the "private conduct" of visitors to Cochin temples. They have also not sought to exercise any scrutiny into the actions of *savarna* Hindus who are entitled, as a matter of right, to visit the temples.

What they have done is simply to declare as polluted, so far as Cochin temples are concerned, the *tantris* who have performed religious worship in the temples of Travancore thrown open to *avarnas*. There is no sort of ban

[1] In Nepal
[2] *Vide* "Cochin-Travancore", 8-5-1937

imposed on entry into Cochin temples of *savarna* Hindus who have *worshipped* in Travancore temples.

Even this ban on *tantris* was imposed by Cochin not because of any spite or malice against a sister State, but solely at the instance of the *vaideekans* and *vadhyars* who, from time immemorial, have been recognized and acknowledged as spiritual directors in such matters.

You observe that "in Cochin the Maharaja has interfered in respect of a temple over which he has no exclusive control. The Maharaja of Travancore, too, possesses substantial rights over the temple in question. The Cochin order is clearly an interference with that right."

History, tradition, usage, custom—all these point to the fact that, while the right of the Maharaja of Travancore in respect of the Koodalmanikkam Temple begins and ends with the nomination of a Thachudaya Kaimal, the Maharaja of Cochin has always exercised, as President of the Yogakkars, enormous powers with regard to its affairs, both spiritual and secular. The very fact that the present Kaimal, when the recent troubles arose, solicited advice and guidance from the Maharaja of Cochin shows conclusively enough that the "substantial rights" alleged to be possessed by Travancore do not include, at any rate, the right to have a voice in the adjudication of spiritual affairs relating to the temple.

It may interest you, in this connection, to know that in a recent speech at Thiruvalla, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, the Dewan of Travancore, admitted that the Travancore Government had no complaint whatever to make in regard to what has happened in the Koodalmanikkam Temple. Is this not a proof that Travancore itself does not find any fault with the attitude of Cochin?

Your suggestion that the opinion of pundits might be invited on the issues involved is certainly one that ought to commend itself to all. But how do you justify, I wonder, your appeal in the same breath to the people of Cochin to hold protest meetings against the order of the Maharaja and lead an agitation for throwing open all temples to Harijans? Why not wait till the pundits give their opinion at least?

"Whilst the Travancore Durbar had a perfect right to open to Harijans the temples within their sole jurisdiction and ownership and without reference to the opinion of pundits, it would hardly be right to propound a new *Smriti* in respect of temples where there is joint jurisdiction. The Harijan cause must be always and everywhere above suspicion."

This is a perfectly sensible position to take up, and we in Cochin would certainly be glad if no attempt is made in Travancore "to propound a new *Smriti* in respect of temples where there is joint jurisdiction".

I gladly publish this letter. The order reffered to of the Maharaja of Cochin reads as follows:

The Maharaja of Cochin is of opinion that proper purificatory ceremonies should be performed in the Koodalmanikkam Temple without any

delay. His Highness considers that the temples has been polluted by entry into and participating in ceremonies by persons who have officiated in other temples where the entry of a*varnas* has been allowed. The Maharaja of Cochin has now definitely ordered that any person who has taken part in the conduct of ceremonies in temples which have been polluted by the entry of a*varnas* thereby becomes polluted and loses the right to enter temples in Cochin until proper *prayashchittams* are performed. Such persons are prohibited from entering temples, touching tanks and wells until they perform the required purificatory ceremonies.

My note was based upon a summary of the order above quoted. There is no mention in it of *tantris*. And are not *tantris savarna* Hindus? My contention was and is that *savarna* Hindus because they visit or officiate in temples visited by Harijans do not become Harijans. But I did err in thinking that the order applied to all *savarna* Hindus who had visited Travancore temples, whereas it is restricted to those who officiated at Travancore temples. Whilst, therefore, I gladly admit the error as to quantity, my argument remains unaffected. The Maharaja has surely extended the doctrine of untouchability by regarding *savarnas* as untouchables because they did not believe in untouchability.

But the authentic and exhaustive note[1] since published in *Harijan* disposes of most of the contentions of my correspondent. For, according to that note neither the Maharaja of Cochin nor of Travancore has any jurisdiction over the administration of the Koodalmanikkam Temple. When, therefore, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar said that Travancore had no complaint, he merely stated the legal position. The only party who has the right and whose duty it is to complain is the Thachudaya Kaimal. And one may hope that he will not rest content till he has secured complete freedom from interference with his exclusive right to regulate the admission of worshippers and officiating *tantris*.

The correspondent has surely confused the issue by suggesting that my advice to the Hindus of Cochin to agitate for the throwing open of temples to Harijans is inconsistent with my proposal to refer to pundits the question of the legality of declaring, as the Cochin Maharaja's order does, *savarna* Hindus as untouchables. And now that it is known that the Maharaja had no right to issue the order he did, the proposed reference becomes unnecessary except as an academic proposition.

Harijan, 5-6-1937

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Koodalnanikkam Temple Controversy", 22-5-1937.

372. SHAMEFUL IF TRUE

Thakkar Bapa sends me the following statement which he received during his recent tour in the Nizam's Dominions:

> About six months ago an event which took place at Karepally, Warangal District, Nizam's Dominions, describes the methods adopted by the Christian missionaries to make conversions of Hindus and especially Harijans. Some days previous to the appointed date, the village teachers sent out news of the coming event into all the surrounding villages and made sure that the people of all castes of Hindus and especially Harijans were present on the occasion in large numbers. Then the pastor arrived at the place bringing with him a girl, about 12 years old, who he said would cure all that were presented to her of all sorts of diseases and also show them the real path of realization of God.
>
> The pastor then stood and said addressing those present: "You believe in gods who are dead and gone. Your Rama was born, behaved and acted like an ordinary mortal and then died. So was the case with Krishna also, who had many more vices to his credit. Here is before you a person who is the very incarnation of Christ. Christ is in her now, which fact you can verify yourself by being cured of your diseases at the mere touch of her hands. Why believe in gods who are past and no more effective? You should all believe in and follow the path of Jesus Christ who was born to Virgin Mary, preached the Gospel which leads to salvation, died outwardly but rose again on the third day to redeem the sinning millions of the world."
>
> A subscription of one anna per head and two annas for a metal cross were charged. They were told that unless they wore the cross at all times and believed in the truth and efficacy of Christianity, there would not be any good effect in the case of diseased patients.
>
> This happened on two occasions. On the third occasion, the Secretary of the District Committee and friends visited them and told them that theycould preach their religion as they wanted to, but they should not wound the feelings of the people by repeating unpleasant things which were not true. The local police then stopped the proceedings fearing there might be breach of peace in the place.

If it is true, it stands self-condemned. I would like the Mission concerned to investigate the complaint and throw light on it.

Harijan, 5-6-1937

373. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

TITHAL, BULSAR,
June 3[5][1] *1937*

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have liked your letter. It is indeed true that my statements contain several implications. Therefore, the meaning that you have read is possible. But the statement also implies the other meaning that you have suggested. Truth need not be made bitter. Nor need it be embellished. If one person wounds another with a sword and a witness describes the incident, such description by itself is not bitter, though the consequences of the testimony may be bitter for the assailant. But that doesn't make truth itself bitter. If, however, the description of the assault was full of exaggerations, we might say that truth had been made bitter. After saying this, I may add that if I had to make a choice, I would certainly prefer bitter truth to untruth agreeably. If, in trying to change bitter into agreeable language, you are likely to kill truth, you had better stick to bitter language.

You have always been unlucky in the matter of helpers. You have never had a really good man. But you have got a good helper in Sushila. I wonder how you could have managed to pull on if you didn't have her. Even from the point of view of self-interest, therefore, Sushila must improve her health with good food, exercise and water treatment.

Mr. Kallenbach has at last arrived. He is fine. For the present he is here. Tithal may be described as a small village about six or seven furlongs from the sea-coast. We are staying in that village. We are leaving on the 10th and shall reach Segaon on the 11th.

I have just got a letter from Harilal. I am enclosing it as a sample.

I have gone through the Phoenix Trust. There is no need to make any changes in it. But if you have any suggestion to make, it can perhaps be carried out. So it is you who should draft something and send it to me, instead of my drafting anything. I had a talk with

[1] From the postcript it is clear that this letter was completed by Gandhiji after he had received Narandas Gandhi's letter about Khushalchand Gandhi's death; *vide* the following two items.

Kallenbach. He says that there is no need to make any changes in the trust-deed or to increase the number of trustees.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

A copy of an account of Khushalbhai's beautiful death is enclosed.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4863

374. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

TITHAL,
June 5, 1937

CHI. LILAVATI,

Yesterday I got a telegram from Narandas informing me about Khushalbhai's death. Today I also got a beautiful letter from him. I am sending a copy with this. Show it to all the others there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9365, Also C.W. 6640. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

375. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 5, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

You must have received my wire[1] in reply to yours. I got your wonderfully beautiful letter today–not a sentence more or less than needed. You are a man of boundless good fortune. I had discovered before your birth the special bond of love that bound your father closest among all the cousins to me. But you had the good fortune to be by his side when the end came, while I remained here, though this was of course but as it should have been. How could I have, yielding to my love, gone there to be by his side? It was your dharma to be by his side and you, therefore, took my place. You did perfectly right in not forcing medicine into his mouth or permitting them to give him injections during the last hour to enable him to take a few more

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 4-7-1937

breaths. We have learnt much from his life. May we, likewise, learn much from his death.

I suppose Kamala is getting along quite well. I hope Jamna[1] is perfectly calm. Kanaiyo is of course calm.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8528. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

376. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

TITHAL,
June 5, 1937

CHI. MANUDI,

I got your letter. You haven't used your brains properly. Why do you think that it was your aunt who tempted you or that only Surendra could tempt you? As soon as you were separated from me, you entered a vast field of temptations. You are a very credulous, simple-hearted and weak girl. All of us are so to some degree. That is why we voluntarily raise a hedge in the form of rules round ourselves for our protection. I think you have put up a few such hedges. I wish, and beg of you, that you should never cross them, no matter who tempts you, whether aunt or husband, mother, father or uncle, or an utter stranger.

We are leaving this place on the 10th.

Have you followed my letter? Your *sitar* and shoes have been sent to Bombay with Vasumati.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1561. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

377. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

June 5, 1937

CHI. VIJAYA,

Now that you have become mature, I need not write to you. And also because I am busy. Besides you have now started driving the carts

[1] Addressee's wife

that carry loads of manures, and have thus become a real Kanban[1]. And a Kanban does not need any letters. Still, since you want it here is one.

It is good that you get your letters revised by others. That will help you to make your thoughts clear if they are confused. The words left out by you [and supplied in the revision] will make your meaning clear.

How jealous of you that while all of you experience heat you don't want me to do that! I have made up my mind to return on the 11th. Generally it does not rain so early in Wardha and hence I will have some experience of the heat there.

Since even those who hadn't eaten food from our kitchen had vomiting, we should look for its cause in something other than the food. Probably it is water. Put some potassium permanganate in the well. Store boiled water as before and use it. It is also possible that the people had eaten more than they could digest in the excessive heat and that had caused the vomiting. We can find other such reasons also if we think about the matter carefully. For that, however, I will have to examine things on the spot. I postpone that till I return there.

You have done well in closing the night-school for the present. If we attempt more than we can manage, we may do more harm than good.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7072. Also C.W. 4564. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

378. MY MISTAKE

In the issue of *Harijanbandhu* dated 16th May, I have said in an article entitled "A Moral Dilemma"[2], that amongst South Indian Brahmins the marriage of a maternal uncle to his niece is permissible, and so, too amongst Parsis and Muslims. Professor Balvantrai Thakore[3] has, in an interesting letter, corrected this error of mine. He points out that amongst the Brahmins of the South the children of a brother and sister are permitted to marry, but not a girl and her maternal uncle. Poet Chaman informs us that such an alliance is prohibited amongst Muslims. I am grateful to both these gentlemen for the correction. I was actually aware of such an alliance between the

[1] Feminine of Kanabi, name of a community of peasant farmers
[2] *Vide* "A Moral Dilemma", 29-5-1937
[3] Balvantrai Kalyanrai Thakore, Gujarati Poet and man of letters

children of a brother and sister. And I regard it as unpardonable on my part to have come to the conclusion and to have made a categorical statement that an alliance would be permissible between a girl and her maternal uncle. I should have realized that in these matters presumptions such as mine have no place. If I presumed, I should have indicated the uncertainly. However, I categorically asserted something for which I had no actual evidence as if I had it. And, as a result, my fidelity to truth has been blemished. For this lapse I must beg forgiveness from readers. They will be generous and forgive me, but my conscience will not forgive me so easily. From this mistake I learnt the lesson that one has to exercise great care before coming to certain conclusions. I shall henceforth try to be more careful to avoid such mistakes.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 6-6-1937

379. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

TITHAL,

June, 6, 1937

CHI. JAMNALAL,

About. . . .[2] I feel confused in mind. I am in correspondence with him. But at the moment I am inclined to say this. Just as you don't need my opinion when deciding whether or no to give something to many others who may approach you for help, so also please assume that you don't need it in this case, too, and do what you think is proper. If you must have my opinion, then you will have to wait for some time.

I hope that you are able to get some rest, do a lot of walking and observe the necessary restrictions on food.

We are leaving this place on the morning of the 10th or the evening of the 9th instant. If you travel by this route, we can go together. But do what is convenient to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2984

[1] *Vide* also "My Notes", 27-6-1937.

[2] The name has been omitted.

380. LETTER TO LALJI PARMAR

June 6, 1937

BHAI LALJI,

I have your letter. I also went through the letter signed by the Bhangi brothers. If you have faith only in me and Jawaharlal and not in the other officials, it will be very difficult for us to work. I myself am not in the Congress and whatever we can do can be done only through Congressmen. I understand that the Chairman of the Municipality wants to fully implement Bapa's award. Chandubhai of course is there. Parikshitlal[1] is busy with the same, day and night. You can get help from all of them. But if you do not trust any of them, how can you get help? I shall leave for Wardha on the 10th. Anyone of you can come over before that. You will be able to see me and Sardar also. I especially advise you not to ask for help after taking a hasty step. You had better seek advice before taking the step.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

381. LETTER TO RUSTOM CAMA

June 6, 1937

BHAI RUSTOM CAMA,

Just as the gramophone goes on playing once we wind it up, the heart also with every breath would go on repeating the name of Rama once we wind it up. The heart would remain pure because of it just as the body stays pure because of the circulation of blood. This repetition of Ramanama should continue even while working or sleeping. The test of it is that we do not get a single impure thought. Only then can we say that the soul is progressing.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

382. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

June 6, 1937

BHAI RAJENDRA BABU,

I have your letter. My views[2] on Hindi-Urdu clear. There must be a protest against the circular. But first meet Mr. Yunus[3]. Consult

[1] Parikshitlal Majmudar

[2] *Vide* "Hindi *v.* Urdu", 3-7-1937.

[3] Mohammed Yunus, leader of the Independent Muslim Party group in the Bihar Legislature. He formed the Government after the Congress Party had rejected the Governor's invitation.

Dr. Mahmud. See other prominent Muslims too. Obtain a pronouncement from Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. It would be necessary to take Jawaharlal's opinion, too, in this matter. Were the Hindu members of the Bihar cabinet in agreement with this circular? If so, why? Has any reason been given in the circular?

Have you read my interview[1] that appeared in *The Times of India* regarding the acceptance of office? My views are stated there. However, we may tone down our conditions, but if even then they are not accepted, we should refuse to form Ministries. This is my firm opinion but it may be overlooked if the opinion and experience of the leaders of the six Provinces[2] differ from mine.

I hope you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 9880. Courtesy: Rajendra Prasad

383. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

TITHAL, BULSAR,
June 7, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL, IDIOT AND WHAT NOT,

Your letter of 3rd not traced. It has evidently miscarried. But yours of 4th gives an indication of what was in that of the 3rd so far as the Sammelan is concerned. The matter is being dealt with in *Harijan*[3].

Am glad there is no oozing. You know now how sinful suppression is. If you had told me, the splinter would have been out in Segaon if it was there that it entered the toe, as it must have. Call thou nothing mean or trifling!

Do you know anything about two Englishmen stealthily removing the Congress flag flying over the Khadi Depot of Simla?

Let us not anticipate my whereabouts when the Sammelan meets in Simla. You know that I shall want to come if I can.

[1] *Vide* "Interview to "The Times of India", 1-6-1937

[2] Madras, the United Provinces, the Central Provinces, Bihar, Orissa and Bombay

[3] *Vide* "Notes" sub-title "Not a Political Organization

Did I tell you I have a very good Gujarati translation with notes of *Japji* together with the original text? It is a shame if there is no such thing in Hindi. But you won't make a search now. The Gujarati translation meets my wants entirely.

Love.

ROBBER

[PS.]

Leave here 10th early morning, reach Wardha 11th about 7 a.m.

From the original: C.W. 3608. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6417

384. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

June 7, 1937

CHI. AMBUJAM,

You have kept me waiting for your reply. But better late than never.

Yes, Gomati[1] may be helped from the Sabha, if she gives work to the Sabha, not otherwise. You should induce her to work. She can . . . [2]

Kamala is in Rajkot. She seems to be happy.

I will inquire about the merits of translation of the *Ramayana*.

It will be nice also if there was a Hindi translation of Kamban's *Ramayana*. I am told that it is a work of original beauty. . . . [3]

[PS.]

Your letter is undated, . . .[4] incomplete. Your last. . . . [5]unfinished.

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

385. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

June 7, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

This time you made me wait long enough, but never mind. Pressure of work may cause such delay occasionally. If you get time,

[1] Wife of Kishorelal Mashruwala

[2] The source is damaged at these places.

[3] *ibid*

[4] *ibid*

[5] *ibid*

don't forget to put in some reading. And you must not in any case neglect spinning. It is indeed very good that you are able to serve Father. How far is Sitab Diara from Srinagar? Isn't it right on the banks of the Ganga? How is it hot even then? Why don't you grow some greens and other vegetables in the garden? There must be some open land around the bungalow.

Vasumati is here. She will now go to Rajkot. Ba will stay in Maroli at present. In Segaon, therefore, in addition to those who are already there, there will be Babu (Sharda), Kallenbach, Mehrtaj, Lali, Khan Saheb, Lila, Vijaya, Munnalal, Balvantsinha and Anna. Nanavati of course is already there. We shall start from here at 3 in the morning of the 10th and shall reach Wardha at 7 a.m. on the 11th.

Tithal is beautifully cool indeed. A cool and gentle breeze blows all the time. Most of us sleep in the open under the sky. There is no dew. If you could have come here, I would have helped you to increase your weight and the quantity of milk, too.

I hope you are getting *Harijanbandhu*, etc.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3501

386. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

TITHAL,

June 8, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

The letter of 3rd came in today with that of 6th. Mahadev is inquiring.

Mira has been well and yet she gets fever now and then. She is ready to go to a hill station. I forget what you had said about her coming to you. My impression is that you had finally said 'No'; she has an impression that you might have said 'Yes'. If you feel like taking her, you must see Shummy and let him decide. She is an easy guest in a well-ordered home. But that is nothing. You must decide without the slightest reserve. Your 'No' won't be misunderstood.

You will see what I have said[1] in *Harijan.* If that is not enough you will tell me.

[1] Presumably, about the Hindi Sahiya Sammelan; *vide* "Interview to "The Times of India", 1-6-1937

You may have political sense. I have none. But I claim the non-violent sense to which you from the camphorated[1] area must be a stranger! My solution is in furtherance of non-violence. That has been my policy and it has served me well. I seem to possess the requisite acumen when I am assiduously accused of lacking it. How else can they belittle my proposal?[2] But am I not a free lance? Congress can repudiate the suggestion, refuse office altogether or retrace its step and accept it unconditionally.

You should write to Vithaldas about the lace. It is made in Andhra. Send him specimens of what you would like.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

You may wire me about Mira at Wardha.

From the original: C.W. 3787. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6943

387. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

June 8, 1937

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. You are worrying needlessly. It is your right to accept others' service so long as you remain ill. To take tea is not such a great crime that you should leave the Ashram on that account. It is only for more important reasons that one should leave the Ashram. It would be a different thing, of course, if you yourself don't like staying there. As long as you are sincerely trying to observe the principal vows, there is no need at all for you to run away.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9366. Also C.W. 6614. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] Amrit Kaur explains: "This was a joke between him and me. I come from Kapurthala and Gandhiji maintained that *kapur* was a misnomer for *kafur* which means camphor."

[2] *Vide* "Interview to *The Times of India*", 1-6-1937

388. LETTER TO J. B. KRIPALANI

TITHAL,
June 9, 1937

DEAR PROFESSOR,

Sardar has handed me your letter of 31st ultimo for reply.

I entirely agree with you that the Congress has to think out a policy and give the lead on the reported kidnappings. We must first of all be sure of the facts and therefore have an impartial inquiry. The burden must be thrown on the Frontier Congressmen of tracing and bringing back by such influence as they may possess on tribesmen the kidnapped girls. If the kidnappings are purely political, why do they kidnap only girls? If they are instigated by the Government, we must have some proof for the statement.

Whilst we may have resolutions on the Government Frontier policy we must express our disapproval of the kidnappings and appeal to the tribesmen and enunciate our policy for the guidance of Congressmen generally and of Frontier Congressmen, in particular.[1]

Yours,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also File No. 3001/H/36-37/IV-1. Courtesy: Government of Maharashtra

389. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

June 9, 1937

CHI. KANTI,

Though you didn't get a first, you got very near it. Your preparation was very inadequate and hence I think that your achievement is creditable.

Khushalbhai's death was such as fully became him. He passed away with his mind fixed on God till the end. Since today is the last day here, I will write no more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7323. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] A statement was issued by Jawaharlal Nehru on June 22, *vide* also "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 25-6-1937.

390. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

June 9, 1937

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. There is no need to bother much about Giriraj.[1]

I shall reach Segaon the day after tommorow and plan at any rate to stay there till the Congress session.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2449

391. SPEECH ON COW-PROTECTION, TITHAL[2]

[Before *June 10, 1937*][3]

The pity is that most of our cow-protection associations will keep cows and buffaloes both and try to run them and make them paying concerns by selling buffalo's milk. The cow, they think, is uneconomic, not knowing that if the cow was exclusively taken care of, and all attention concentrated on increasing her yield of milk, in making her a good breeder, and on making use of every bit of her carcass after she is dead, she would be more than an economic proposition. If someone could convince me that both the cow and the buffalo could be protected, without our having to feed on them or slaughtering them, I should be only too willing to include both in my scheme. The fact, however, is that the buffalo, apart from her milk, is an uneconomic animal. Except in a few wet regions of India the buffalo is useless for agricultural purposes, and so we either starve or kill the male progeny. Some of the best known dairies priding themselves on the wonderful milk-yield of their cows have been found to be doing away with the male calves. We have to make them good milkers and good mothers of fine plough-bullocks. It is no use saying that there is no demand for cow's milk. If we refused to supply any other milk, and if we ensured a supply of the richest and purest and safest milk, everyone would enlist himself as our regular customer.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Brijkrishna Chandiwala", 2-6-1937

[2] This is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter".

[3] Gandhiji left Tithal for Wardha on June 10; *vide* the two preceding items, also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 7-6-1937

But the first thing is to eliminate the buffalo. It is like the exclusive emphasis on khadi. You cannot promote khadi by dividing your attention between khadi and mill-cloth. But we have not given the necessary attention to her feed and her upkeep. Show the best results and I tell you you will not have to complain of lack of patronage. Why is there such a mad run on a certain company's shares? Because people know that it is going to be a highly paying concern. If you could make people believe that yours also would be a payingconcern, they would rush to offer their patronage to you. Concentrate on one. Take a city like Bombay, take a census of the children, enlist the names of people who will buy only cow's milk for their children, and make your dairy an exclusive cow's milk supplier for children. Don't you know how they popularize an article like tea? They distribute free packets of tea, they run free tea-houses. You can do likewise and popularize cow's milk. Your ambition should be to cater to the needs of the whole of Bombay. There is a demand for cow's milk in a city like Calcutta. The best Haryana breed are imported to Calcutta, but as soon as the cows go dry they go to the butcher. The result is that the Haryana cow is getting scarce in the Punjab. No, the cow need not go to the butcher at all. She will have more than paid for her upkeep for her dry years by her rich yield of milk and progeny, and after death, she would fetch the same value as she did when alive. The cow can either be protected by the State or by those who are really religiously inclined. The State we may leave aside for the moment, it is the religiously inclined who should rise to the occasion and bring to bear knowledge and industry to the task. Humanitarianism without knowledge is futile and may even be harmful.

Harijan, 19-6-1937

392. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

WARDHA,
June 11, 1937

MY DEAR C. R.,

If the talk between us about Zetland and company had to be brought out there is nothing to be said against the presentation of the manner of it. Of course, you should not mind what Rafi says. I do, however, feel that your position is different from mine. I can speak and write as an intermediary from a detached point of view; you could not do so. I can be repudiated with safety; you cannot be.

I had your letter drawing my attention to a portion of Ghanshyamdas's letter[1]. I had observed it before but it did not make any appeal to me. Of course, there is force in his argument. But from my standpoint it is irrelevant. I want a sign from them before I take office, and I regard that sign as indispensable. Therefore, for me acceptance continues to be a fatal blunder till our condition, whatever it may be, is satisfied. The fact, therefore, that my condition may be demonstrably childish or meaningless does not affect my position.

What was this incident about asking for your ticket?

What do you say to the latest from Zetland?

I hope Laxmi is doing well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 2064

393. LETTER TO H. RUNHAM BROWN

June 11, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I wish I could join you during the conference days. But you certainly have my good wishes. The success of your conference means the success of peace and the establishment of a warless because a hateless kingdom.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. RUNHAM BROWN, ESQ.
11 ABBEY ROAD
ENFIELD (MIDDLESEX)
ENGLAND

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In his letter dated May 26 to Mahadev Desai, G. D. Birla had written: "While I admit that we can get a lot more in dismissal than in resignation, I feel that even dismissal is not an interference-proof thing. . . . Everyone says it will be a great mistake not to accept Ministry after Zetland's speech . . . I therefore still hold the same opinion that it will be a great mistake to break after Lord Zetland's speech which in my opinion meets the point. . . . I think it my duty to say this because perhaps Bapu may reconsider the situation."

394. LETTER TO DANIEL OLIVER

June 11, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 20th May last. I have no message to give except this that there is no deliverance for any people on this earth or for all the people of this earth except through truth and non-violence in every walk of life without any exceptions. And this is based on an unbroken experience extending practically over half a century.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DANIEL OLIVER, ESQ.
HAMMANA
LEBANON, SYRIA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

395. LETTER TO ABBAS K. VARTEJI

SEGAON,
June 11, 1937

CHI. ABBAS,

I got your letter. I am not happy that you had to leave Narandasbhai. But it is good that you have started working.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6313

396. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

SEGAON,
[On or after] *June* [*11*][1], *1937*

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I got your letter and the fruit too. Some apples had been pilfered during transit in the railway. The basket should be packed properly. Next time you happen to send me fruit do send sour limes. Good ones are not available here. The Wardha sunshine is hot and strong.

I have already written[2] about Gomati.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9610. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal. Also Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

397. NOTES

NOT A POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

As lovers of Hindi know the next session of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan is to take place in Simla. A correspondent who is working in Simla writes to say that there is a suspicion that the Sammelan is a political organization with anti-Muslim tendencies. Having been twice its President, I can unhesitatingly say that it is a purely non-political organization. It has Rajas and Maharajas as its patrons. It has numerous non-Congressmen who are identified with it. Rajas and Maharajas often attend the sessions. His Highness the Maharaja of Baroda has been one of its Presidents. So far as I know it has no anti-Muslim tendencies. I could not have presided if I had suspected any. I hope by anti-Muslim is not meant anti-Urdu. Many use anti-Urdu and anti-Muslim as synonymous terms. But that is a superstition. Urdu is the common language of many Hindus and Mussalmans in the Punjab, Delhi and Kashmir. It is also significant that at the session of the Sammelan held in Indore in 1935 it defined Hindi to mean that

[1] The original is damaged and the date is illegible. Gandhiji arrived in Segaon on June 11.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to S. Ambujammal", 7-6-1937

language which Hindus and Muslims of the North spoke and wrote either in Devanagari or Persian script. I hope, therefore, that even if anti-Muslim has been used in the sense of anti-Urdu, the suspicion to which my correspondent refers will be dispelled and that the work of preparations for the session of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan to be held in Simla will proceed without any suspicion about its object or attitude.

THE SOCIAL BAIT

A friend who has had occasion to study the work of the Salvation Army sends me the following interesting note:

> The Salvation Army is essentially a religious body with 'aggressive evangelism' as its main characteristic. The social work the Army does 'has from the first been regarded by the Army leaders as an organized warfare against social evils in order to clear the way for evangelization.' This is from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (14th edition). It further says that 'It was realized that the physical and the environmental condition of many of the people, especially in great cities, made it extremely difficult for them to apprehend the spiritual message which the Army had to deliver. Therefore various social activities arose, diverse in character but all actuated by the same purpose', and General Booth himself in one of his letters to his son has said that 'the social works is the bait, but it is salvation that is the hook that lands the fish.'
>
> The object and the work of this Mission according to its Founder is 'to seek the conversion of the neglected crowds of people who are living without God and without hope, and to gather those so converted into Christian Fellowship.' It is also stated in the *Salvation Army Year Book* for 1937 that 'upon Salvationists everywhere was urged the importance of personal evangelism—that each one was responsible before God for the salvation of others. Personal touch, personal conversation, personal effort, it was pointed out, was of paramount importance nay, was the duty of every wearer of our uniform.' Thus 'Every Soldier a Soul-winner' became and remains an inspiring slogan.

Of course what is true of the Army is more or less true of all Christian Missions. Their social work is undertaken not for its own sake but as an aid to the salvation of those who receive social service. The history of India would have been written differently if the Christians had come to India to live their lives in our midst and permeate ours with their aroma if there was any. There would then have been mutual goodwill and utter absence of suspicion. But say some of them, "If what you say had held good with Jesus there wouldhave been no Christians." To answer this would land me in a controversy in which I have no desire to engage. But I may be

permitted to say that Jesus preached not a new religion but a new life. He called men to repentance. It was he who said, "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."[1]

Harijan, 12-6-1937

398. HARIJANS

But as for Harijans themselves, I certainly do not agree that they are stupid, or unintelligent, or lacking in religious sense. They are not even unsophisticated. If we tried to use the high pressure methods of which you accuse us, I assure you, we would get no results among them. To me they are just nice people very much like myself and my brothers and sisters and friends. To be sure, they are oppressed and illiterate, even unkempt, but they are thoughtful, spiritual-minded, generous, kindly; in character they seem to me above, rather than below, the average of mankind. I like them better than *savarnas*—but that is my bad taste, perhaps.

Still, I cannot figure out how you can live among them and hold such a superficial attitude towards them. The only explanation that comes to my mind is that you either do not know them or you are insincere. The latter is unworthy of attention. But the former might be true—for we sometimes know least those who live in the same house with us. Harijans do have strong self-protective complex that is hard to get past. A reserve past which they will not readily let an outsider come. They may be in awe of your 'Mahatmaship' (as we all are, a little) or it may be because they think you are a reincarnation of Rama (as they do think). Maybe you begin by trying to 'uplift' them—it seems to be against human nature to appreciate being 'uplifted'. Maybe you still unconsciously have a little 'high-caste' attitude–*savarna* Christians have that trouble sometimes. It may be your city outlook. Whatever it is, you are not seeing them as I see them.

I admit I have certain advantages. I myself am a villager, so can enter into their life of farming, gardening, raising chickens, pigs, goats, cows. As a nurse I could help them in sickness and teach them how to have better health. I was an 'untouchable' to *savarna* Hindus, as they were, and was glad to be allowed to get water out of a decent cattle trough rather than the tanks the pigs and buffaloes wallowed in, when I toured in the villages. So I wasn't an outsider to their life—not even a 'visitor'. I was, as they said, a 'relative', one of themselves. It naturally followed that we would love and respect each other

[1] *St. Matthew*, VII. 21

and that we would trust each other spiritually. Our spiritual communion was always on terms of equality. I received as much from them as I gave—maybe more. At least I can testify that some of the deepest spiritual thinking, the most exquisite spiritual attainment, that I have ever known, I have seen in the souls of Depressed-Class Hindus—and I don't mean exceptional, educated ones, I mean illiterate villagers. But would I have seen it if I had been haggling them to become Christians? I assure you I would not!

Occasionally for information I asked one who was thorougly familiar with Christian doctrine, what he thought of it, pro and con, and he answered me as readily and frankly as if I had asked whether to feed an ox oil cake or *jowari* and why.

To be sure they talk politics and economics, but it is only the spiritual interest that holds them till midnight, brings them back at dawn, and in the hot noonday with the plea, 'If you knew how we want to hear that God loves us, you wouldn't want to rest.'

If you cannot meet that need, you cannot hold the Depressed Classes—if you can meet it you will hold them. For that is what they are asking—yes, and Shudras, too, and even some merchants and Brahmins.

This is an extract from a long letter[1] received from an American sister who has lived for years in India as a Missionary. I heartily endorse the last statement in the extract. Of course, if I cannot meet their spiritual needs, I cannot hold the Harijans. But I am not so stupid as to think that I or any single person can supply the spiritual needs of his neighbour. Spiritual needs cannot be supplied through the intellect or through the stomach even as the needs of the body cannot be supplied through the spirit. One can paraphrase the famous saying of Jesus and say "Render unto the body that which is its, and unto the spirit that which is its.' And the only way I can supply my neighbour's spiritual needs is by living the life of the spirit without even exchanging a word with him. The life of the spirit will translate itself into acts of love for my neighbour. Therefore I have not a shadow of doubt that Hinduism will (and rightly) lose Harijans if the so-called caste Hindus will not love Harijans—the outcaste Hindus—even as themselves. If they will just do that and nothing else, Hinduism is safe and so are Harijans and they. If they will not, they and Hinduism will surely perish. The so-called high-caste Hindus may spend millions for Harijans, but if they do not do the one thing needful, i.e., regard the Harijans as their spiritual equals, the material

[1] In reply to Gandhiji's article "The Cow"; *vide* "The Cow", 13-3-1937

aid will stink in their nostrils and will be and deserve to be thrown away as so much waste.

But to admit that Harijans have the same spiritual need as the rest of us, is not to say that they would understand the intellectual presentation of Christianity as much as I would, for instance. I put them on the same level as my own wife. Her spiritual needs are no less than mine, but she would no more understand the presentation of Christianity than any ordinary Harijan would. The reason is obvious. We came together practically as children. My studies went on in spite of marriage. She never attended a school before marriage. I neglected her educational training. Presentation, with a view to conversion, of a faith other than one's own, can only necessarily be through an appeal to the intellect or the stomach or both. I do maintain in spite of the extract I have quoted that the vast mass of Harijans, and for that matter Indian humanity, cannot understand the presentation of Christianity, and that generally speaking their conversion wherever it has taken place has not been a spiritual act in any sense of the term. They are conversions for convenience. And I have had overwhelming corroboration of the truth during my frequent and extensive wanderings.

The writer has no warrant for suggesting that I do not know or love Harijans sufficiently because I attribute to Harijans inability to receive Christian teachings. My attitude is not 'superficial' as she will have it to be. Whatever it is, it is based on deep experience and observation dependent not on day's or even a year's contact, but on close contact for years with tens of thousands of India's masses, not as a superior being but feeling as one of them. But she is wholly right when she says, 'whatever it is, you are not seeing them as I see them.' They are my kith and kin, breathing the same air, living the same life, having the same faith, the same aspirations, and the same earth sustaining us in life as it will in death! And for her?

Harijan, 12-6-1937

399. HARIJAN QUARTERS IN JAMSHEDPUR

I commend the foregoing reasoned and reasonable statement[1] to the attention of the Tatas. A chain is no stronger than its weakest link. In spite of all its sanitary condition, if the Harijan quarters

[1] By V. P. Varma, not reproduced here.

remain neglected, as they appear to be, Jamshedpur runs the risk of having nasty eruptions of diseases born of insanitation. Proper sanitation is impossible in hovels. To provide decent quarters of the most useful servants of society is the soundest investment in which there is always gain and never any loss. It is to be hoped, therefore, that the reform suggested by Vindhyeshwari Babu will be taken in hand without delay.

Harijan, 12-6-1937

400. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 12, 1937

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I want to give you all the consolation I can. Do come over in July.[1] We both shall talk over the matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7981. Also C.W. 3080. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru.

401. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

June 12, 1937

DEAR BROTHER ANAND,

Bapuji has got your and Vidya's letters of June 9, 1937. For lack of time he could not write himself.

He says if you feel it unavoidable you can certainly write any particular part of your letter in English, but since you have started writing in Hindi you should continue it. You should increase the practice of Hindi. Even if you find it difficult to express any thoughts, you should not care much. And as a last resort there is always the freedom to write in English.

Now [Bapuji] will write only if there is anything to write about after getting more news about Vidya.

Yours,

PYARELAL

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] The punctuation in the original seems to be faulty, and sentence reads: "Do come over both of you in July, we shall talk over the matter."

402. SPEECH TO VILLAGERS, SEGAON [1]

June 12, 1937

You must know that this work is for your own benefit, and not for the benefit of the *malguzar*. He had never even thought of this. But you will not keep your promise and I have come to express my pain to you. You must remember that this is a recurring task. Every year the road will have to be renewed and stone will have to be supplied by you. If you do not co-operate with me, all the labour that we have put in this year will be wasted. This year the profits from the village have not been equal to the tasks we have undertaken, and it was never my purpose to draw upon Jamnalalji's other income for the purposes of this village. I shall therefore have to find the expense from the donations I receive for Segaon work. You will therefore understand the gravity of the breach of promise. I therefore appeal to those of you who have not kept their promises to cart the stones to the other road. I shall ask Jamnalalji to pay for the stones and use the proceeds for the welfare of Segaon.

But I am told that you are indifferent to all that is happening, that you do not care whether you have the road here or not. I ask you to put your heads together and decide whether you should co-operate with us or not. I do not refer to untouchability. There is no untouchability involved in this work, nor in the revival of your handicrafts. If you co-operate, I can assure you that your income will easily be doubled. Then there is the question of sanitation. I cannot make your village neat and clean and sweet-smelling without your co-operation. We have engaged a scavenger here. We pay for his service, but it is for you to keep your streets and lanes clean. We have

[1] This is extracted from "Weekly Letter" by Mahadev Desai, who had reported: "When I was there last Saturday I found him addressing a little meeting of the villagers. There were very few women, but there was a good attendance of men. The occaion was the making of a road through the village to Gandhiji's quarters, and meeting a road that ran to Wardha. The Wardha road is being built at Jamnalalji's cost. The village road was proposed by the villagers themselves. They had given a written undertaking signed by no less than 70 people, each of whom had agreed to bring cartloads of stone for three days, the other expenses to be met by Gandhiji, at whose disposal Jamnalalji had placed all the profits accruing to him from the village, for the public good of the village. But when the work was actually begun the workers were hard put to it in persuading the signatories to keep their pledge. From 15 to 20 people had kept their promise. The rest had not. But Gandhiji could not break his pledge. He saw the thing through. He explained the whole situation to the villagers."

quantities of human manure stored up here, but I am told that you would not give your carts on hire to cart this manure. Nowhere do we come across such apathy on the part of the people. Peasants everywhere in India and the world handle manure and turn it to good account.[1]

Harijan, 19-6-1937.

403. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 13, 1937

CHI. MIRA,

I hope you had no difficulty in reaching Dalhousie[2] and that you were met at the respective stations. How I wish you would be thoroughly restored and return with the body thoroughly renewed. You won't overstrain yourself in your anxiety to get well soon.

No more today.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6380. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9846

404. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
June 13, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

Your letter.

I have no doubt that the *Harijan* article[3] will be copied elsewhere. It ought to give satisfaction. But as I have said, [if] anything more is required, you will let me know. The Muslim distrust

[1] Mahadev Desai had concluded the report: “The old Patel, the leader of the village, said that what Gandhiji had said was all right, and he was grateful and happy that Gandhiji was in their midst. But two things they could not do. Untouchability they could not possibly give up and they could not cart human manure. In all other matters he would promise their co-operation.”

[2] Mirabehn explains: "I had gone to Dalhousie where Bapu had sent me on account of bad health. I stayed at the house of Dr. and Mrs. Dharmavir where Subhas Babu was also staying at that time."

[3] *Vide* “Notes” sub-title “Not A Political Organization”, 12-6-1937

and consequent opposition is difficult to remove. But if anyone can do it you are the person. You *must* therefore study the whole question so thoroughly as to be able to answer every objection. Whatever you cannot answer, you will pass on to me and I shall deal with it. I am afraid this writing is too faint to decipher. If it is, you will let me know. I would like you even to return the letter so that I can have the lesson imprinted on my memory. The ink was too thick. I addedwater. It has served my purpose but I doubt if the writing won't fade by the time this reaches you.

We came in yesterday[1], early morning and reached Segaon 7.30 a.m. It is fairly hot here still. The rain is keeping off.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: c.W. 3788. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6944

405. LETTER TO N.V. RAGHAVAN

June 13, 1937

DEAR RAGHAVAN,

You are keeping me regularly posted with the doings of the Sabha. I have carefully read your letter to the members about the difficulty you are finding in coping with the responsibility that Rajagopalachari has thrust on you. Having put your hands to the plough, I would like you to hold on to it till you find a firmer hand yourself. Rajagopalachari when he mentioned your name was most enthusiastic about you and all I have since heard confirms what he told me. Is it not your experience that those who are most wanted for a particular cause have already several causes which they have to serve? Such is the paucity of true workers all the world over. But it is much more felt in our country. I, therefore, hope that you will not think of giving up what you have taken up without finding an efficient substitute.

Yours sincerely,

M.K. GANDHI

SHRI N.V. RAGHAVAN
DAKSHINA BHARAT HINDI PRACHAR SABHA
MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelel

[1] Evidently a slip; Gandhiji reached Wardha on June 11.

406. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHAGANJ,

June 14, 1937

JWAHARRHARLAL
CARE DOCTOR BIDHAN ROY
WELLINGTON STREET
CALCUTTA

I HOPE YOU INDU WELL. COME WITH HER AND MAULANA DURING LAST WEEK WEATHER COOLING. LOVE.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

407. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

June 14, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

Having just got your letter, this is just to tell you I understand and appreciate your 'No'[1]. I had expected it. Mira went yesterday to Dalhousie, having got Subhas's wire. Why should you worry about explaining the 'No' to me? Must every 'yes' and every 'no' need explaining? Love that demands such explanations must be sorry stuff. Mine never is. It can stand many "no's" so long as there is a 'yes' interspersed.

No nonsense now. Time flies.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3609. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6418.

[1] Regarding Mirabehn's visit; *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 8-6-1937

408. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 14, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

Herewith Andrews's letter. Can't cheer those who won't be cheered. I am positive that you have no cause to feel depressed. You will feel depressed even when you do the right thing, if so doing you are likely to wound somebody's susceptibility. How are you to cheer such stupid people? Are they to be told to do the wrong thing in order to escape depression? Read Chapter 6 of the *Gita* or *Japji*. You will find in the latter many passages to dispel your depression which is a form of ignorance.

I suppose Jawaharlal wrote to me at the same time that he wrote to you. For in his letter to me also he alludes to his sore throat, etc. He is likely to be with me during the last week of the month.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3610. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6419

409. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRAN

June 14, 1937

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRAN,

Nothing from you for a long time. Saraswati said the weather was hot there. Is it cool enough for Amtul Salaam to come? She is anxious to go there as soon as she can.

How are you? What about . . [1] How is Saraswati faring?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6703

[1] Some words are illegible in the source.

410. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

June 14, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Enclosed are a cheque for Rs. 90 and a bank note for Rs. 100. Amtul Salaam says that with these sums, the amount in her name goes up to Rs. 690. If that is correct, Rs. 600 is to be kept as fixed deposit and Rs. 90 is to be credited to her account. Despatch the accompanying wire. You must have despatched the wire to Subhas. Send some envelopes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11522

411. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

June 14, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

Your letter of the 9th I got today, the 14th. I have already written to you. I have also noted down the date. I see that our letters have crossed.

Yes, I arrived on the 11th. I had to stay for ten days more at Tithal. With me here are Amtul Salaam and Sharda. Ba and Kano are in Maroli. Kanu is in Rajkot. Take care of your health.

You have to look after both the elders. Do the best you can. Do not lose courage. Go on doing what you can.

It is good that Jayaprakash is profiting from his imprisonments.

You must be reading a good deal about Shri Kallenbach who is here. You won't be able to see him. I am afraid you will not be able to go to Ahmedabad now. Kanti has gone to Bangalore. He will study there. You probably get letters from him. I will not write any more today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3491

412. LETTER TO SARASWATI

June 14, 1937

CHI. SARASWATI,

I have your letter.

Study hard, spin well. Spinning is a must for Paparamma, too. You must ply the carding-bow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6703. Also C.W. 4449. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

413. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 15, 1937

CHI. MIRA,

I imagine your having just reached or just reaching Dalhousie[1] . Subhas Babu has given ample instructions regarding the route, expenses and timings. It is a perfect letter. Raizada Hansraj wired offering to take you in. But I have wired, you would be with Subhas Babu. And with the latter you would get good medical aid. I shall expect a wire today from you.

The heat is still oppressive here. I have dropped bread altogether.

Here is Rajkumari's letter.[2]

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6381. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9847

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn",13-6-1937

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 14-6-1937

414. LETTER TO GLADYS OWEN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 15, 1937

DEAR GLADYS[1],

Your letter is touching. I know that like the good people at Sat-Tal many are praying unknown to me.

I am glad Celia also is having a little bit of cool air with you. My love to both of you and regards to all at the Ashram.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

MISS GLADYS OWEN
THE ASHRAM
SAT-TAL
Via BHIM TAL

From a photostat: *C.W.* 11280: Courtesy : Dr. Priyamvada Mathur

415. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 15, 1937

CHI. MANUDI,

You seem to be a tyrant. Is it that I am supposed to have written only if the letter carries your address and is written with my own hand? It was good, however, that you understood my meaning. Surendra met me in Bardoli and, therefore, I could have a long talk with him. I explained my meaning to him also.

I hope you keep fine health. Do you study? Let me know your daily programme.

Amtul Salaam is here. Mirabehn has gone to a hill-station because of her illness. Ba and Kano are still in Maroli.

Khan Saheb is expected the day after tomorrow. Mehrtaj and Lali also will be coming.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostato of the Gujarati: C.W. 1568. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

[1] The addressee was a teacher in the Theosophical Society School in Banaras.

416. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

June 15, 1937

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter just now. The description of the lady is interesting. Amtul Salaam is sitting beside me, fan in hand, while I am writing this. Mirabehn has gone to Dalhousie Hill in the Punjab. She couldn't get rid of her fever.

Your asking for exemption from fees does not seem proper. It was not proper either, that the lawyer should have been fined. If you can carry on without staying in a hostel, it would be worth while to save that expense. I had understood from what you said that you would stay with Ramji and thus save boarding and lodging expenses. If, however, you think that staying in a hostel will be of great benefit to you, never mind the expense. You did well in giving Devdas all the details. You cannot by any means be but in the category of the poor. Only those who have none to support them can be called poor. How much was the lawyer fined?

Take care of your health. Even when you don't get time to write, you should drop a postcard at least once in a week. But if you can write a letter as long as 50 postcards every week, then that is what you should do. Because of the rains the sultriness persists.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photosat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7322. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

417. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

June 15, 1937

CHI. KANAIYO,

I got your letter written during the journey. I understand the state of your mind. I am not going to bind you in any way. You may think over the matter afresh and do as you think proper.

Bhansalibhai[1] has resumed coming here from yesterday. He has resumed taking milk since yesterday. Walking does not tire him. The wound has not yet completely healed. Mirabehn left yesterday for a hill-station.

I got Narandas's letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

[1] Jaikrishna Bhansali

418. LETTER TO NATHUBHAI N. PAREKH

June 15, 1937

BHAI NATHUBHAI,

The period of *vanapravesh* will last up to 58.[1] In these many years you can do a lot. When a man enters the forest he is bound to make friends with trees, leaves, birds and animals. He would attain fearlessness, be acquainted with Nature, would live in the midst of men and animals and know what man's place in the world is and, by the time he emerges from the forest, would have gathered such knowledge which would be helpful to himself and which would enable him to guide his neighbours. We have to create such a forest in our heart. If physical desires lose their keenness and we become inward-looking, we shall have gained much.

You have done a bit of research to discover my mistake. I have also had letters from four or five other Gujarati friends from the South in that regard. Indu stayed for quite some time with me and we talked at length on many things. He is still a child. He is not yet aware of his responsibilities. But he does have some good qualities. He has great regard for Kanti. He wishes to share in lightening the burden that has fallen on you. Hence I hope that he will do something. Now he will be staying under the direct care of Kanti. Everything, therefore, will be well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photosate of the Gujarati: G.N. 6250

419. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

SEGAON,
June 16, 1937

BHAI JETHALAL,

I have your letter. Now observe the 30th July but instead of the 30th you can observe the 31st because July has thirty-one days. Do send the book of Vinoba. I suppose the Mobile Weaving School of Travancore must be mentioned only in the pages of his book; I somehow could find no trace of it there. There is no explanation for

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Nathubhai N. Parekh", 24-5-1937

my going to Gujarat. Of course, I was expected to go there for two or three days to inspect the site for the Congress. But then I also have no reason for not going either. I may say that Sardar's keen insistence dragged me. But this is not real defence. If sardar's insistence can persuade me to do something wrong, his other importunities may persuade me to commit greater wrongs. In spite of knowing all this I could not withstand his insistence.

Now about cow's ghee. I charge Rs. 3 per seer or even two and a half. I charge according to the cost. I am able to get this much because there are people like Jamnalalji and I am able to insist on their using cow's ghee prepared in Wardha. But I shall not be able to carry on this Rs. 3 per seer business for long. Your ghee of course cannot be sold even free of cost because we cannot accept an agency for buffalo's ghee. Moreover your ghee is adulterated. It is my firm belief that this business of yours is wrong. As you do not abide by the regulations of the Goseva Sangh, you do not get any help from them and therefore make adulterated ghee at home. Naturally it fetches lower price in the market. Nowadays ghee made out of pure buffalo's milk fetches a good price in the market. Ghee made from from pure cow's milk fetches a lower price. So if at the moment you make no distinction between the cow and the buffalo, you should engage yourself in making ghee only out of buffalo's milk. You will surely succeed in it. I can understand that it will not give you mental satisfaction. But if you derive any mental satisfaction from mixing cow's milk with buffalo's, it is a false satisfaction. Hence it is my sincere advice that you should either make ghee out of pure cow's milk and sell it at the normal rate or, failing that, find some other occupation which would be beneficial to the villages. Obtain from the public whatever cannot be met by the income from the business.

But this after all is my opinion. There is no absolute rule that you have to follow my advice in such matters. Of course I would never insist. So think over my argument and do only what you think proper. Kishorelalbhai will of course read this, and, if possible, Vinoba, too. I shall try to send their opinions along with this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9862. Courtesy: Narayan J. Sampat

420. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 17, 1937

CHI. MIRA,

I had your letter yesterday. Third-class travelling is safe only with me. However, it is well that you reached Dalhousie[1] safely. Today's post might bring another letter from you though there is not much chance. I hope you have all my letters. Only yesterday I could not send you anything. Dr. Dharmavir's wire of safe arrival was duly received. I am sure you will be restored there.

No rain here yet. The first cool night was experienced last night. It has become sultry again during the day.

Kallenbach is still on spare diet. He has added a few *khaskhas* and 8 oz. of *dahi* to his mangoes.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6382. Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9848

421. A LETTER

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
June 17, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I welcome your letter. I must admit that the decision, after meeting in Delhi and thereafter, I had forgotten. But the recollection does not affect what I said[2] at Hudli. My charge was against those who had come to induce me to preside at the meeting in Belgaum. I was most disinclined knowing well that my programme would not be popular nor my method of work. But Gangadharrao whom I knew very well bore down my opposition and assured me that Mr. Chikodi and others would whole-heartedly work out the scheme. Gangadharrao himself admits that he failed. He could not even personally confine himself to cow's milk, nor Mr. Chikodi who was to be active worker in the movement. As I said the collapse of the

[1] The source has "Delhi", evidently a slip.
[2] *Vide* "Speech at Gandhi Seva Sangh Meeting, Hudli- IV", 20-4-1937

resolution of the big body was tragic, through no fault of anybody. But my fault was in not sufficiently realizing that my method of working out the cow-protection programme would not be popular and that I would have to show results by experimenting. That experiment is still going on. Tanning at Ahmedabad did not succeed, because the so-called experts were not really experts. But as it always existed in my imagination it has taken shape in Wardha and Bengal. In Wardha the experiment is being conducted under my direct supervision and in Bengal under the supervision of one of my colleagues. I can still show no striking results because the experiment is novel and difficult. This programme is not any part of the village movement, although it can be. It is being worked out independently as part of the scheme not of village improvement but of cow-protection. My point remains that those who invited me in Belgaum to take up the cow-protection work were previously in that field and should not have given it up because I failed or seemed to fail.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

422. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

June 17, 1937

CHI. KANAIYO,

It seems you have taken the account book [by mistake]. I suppose the information as to the amounts given by different people will be there in that book. If so, please send the book to Mahadev by registered post. Or send a note showing the amounts credited into the accounts of the persons concerned.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

How is the heat there? It is quite hot over here.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

423. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

[*June 17, 1937*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

You must have reached there. Let me see now, how you build up your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

424. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

SEGAON,
June 17, 1937

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

I have your letter. What a life! But I have nothing to say as long as you derive satisfaction by living there. Write to me whenever you find an opportunity. Give me an account of your activity.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6551

425. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
June 18, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

I have not kept you without letter two days running. Sometimes I have written two days running. As you must have seen I have declined to make any statement on the office issue. *The Times of India* interview[2] was exhaustive and the last word so far as I am concerned. Now the Working Committee has to have its say.

Your Hindi writing is getting scarce. But I don't grumble. You have your hands more than full. I therefore satisfy myself with what I get.

[1] In the source this letter appears below "Letter to Kanu Gandhi", the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* "Interview to "The Times of India" ", 1-6-1937

Khan Saheb, Mehr[taj[and Lali came in yesterday.[1]

ROBBER

[PS.]

Still steaming.

Love.

From the original: C.W. 3789. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6945

426. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

June 18, 1937

CHI. JAMNALAL,

If Khan Saheb is willing he may, of course, go. Send a telegram to Biyani[2] saying that he should not force Khan Saheb to make any speech. If he goes, what about Mehrtaj and Lali? They were to arrive here tomorrow?

It is good that Kamal has reached there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2986

427. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 18, 1937

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

It is surprising that you do not notice the unity of thought between my current writings and what I wrote in *Anasaktiyoga*[3] . We creatures are not all *dharmaja* progeny, but *kamaja.* Let us suppose that a man in full control of his passion desires progeny and a suitable mate, too, who desires progeny only from him and is not moved by passion. Their son would be *dharmaja.* But this does not imply that none among their ancestors were *kamaja*.[4] Thus what I mean is that

[1] In "Letter to Mirabehn", 19-6-1937, however ,Gandhiji says that they came on the 19th. *Vide* also the following item.

[2] Brijlal Biyani, President, Vidarbha Congress Committee; *vide* also "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 19-6-1937

[3] *Vide* "Anasaktiyoga" sub-title " The Message of the "Gita"

[4] The sentence is obscure in the Hindi text and Gandhiji replaced it by another sentence in the letter dated July 2.

though we are full of imperfections we should make an effort at any rate to rid ourselves of them.

I cannot say from personal experience whether it is possible or not to procreate *dharmaja* offspring but I do hold that the remark in the *Adiparva* of *Mahabharta* regarding Vyasji stems from experience.[1] It is possible that it is only a poetic fancy and not an actual experience. But this takes away nothing from my argument because if a couple come together not moved by passion but only for the sake of progeny, their *brahmacharya* is in no was lessened. But there can be only one single offspring of this kind. This is a description of the ideal state. And we must try to reach it to the extent we can.

Procreation is no obligatory duty, but the desire for it is no sin either. Thus marriage is impermissible for one who has no wish for progeny, i.e., satisfaction of passion should never be the ground for marriage. Married people should follow their duty keeping this ideal in view.

Write to me when all your efforts for securing a job have failed. Please bear in mind that I have no idea what resources I may have then. And in case you have to come here you should settle down contentedly because you should not limit your services on the basis of the amount of salary you may get.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4282

428. HOW THEY CONVERT

Thakkar Bapa had his attention drawn to the so-called conversion to Christianity in Shahabad District. He thereupon called for a report on the statements made to him. The following is the report[2] made by the local Harijan Sevak Sangh:

> In the district of Shahbad, about 40 years ago, a Methodist Episcopal Christian Mission was established at Arrah. Through its efforts a large number of Harijans, numbering about three thousand, were converted to Christianity up to the year 1931. . . . Last year a Roman Catholic Mission appeared on the scene. Since then, the activities of both the Missions have increased . . . .Enquiry has revealed that they have been successful in getting

[1] *Vide* "Advice to Newly Married Couples", 18-4-1937

[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

some new Christian converts from the Rabidas (Chamar) community amongst whom their activities are mainly confined. Roughly their method of work may be described as follows:

After having visited the village and created familiarity with the Harijans they at once start a school and put it in charge of a Harijan teacher who either himself is an influential man or related to such a one. Whenever they come to learn that some tension or actual litigation is going on between the Harijans and other villagers they at once seize the opportunity to take up the side of the poor Harijans and help them with money and advice. They are thus hailed as saviours and conversion follows as if to repay the obligation.

As their work is scattered throughhout the *thana* in the remotest villages, the present enquiry could not be exhaustive . . . . The one remarkable feature of these recent conversions is that they take place *en masse*. Whenever a village Harijan leader accepts the new faith almost all belonging to his clan follow him . . . . In all cases of conversions new or old, not a single instance can be found in which the acceptance of the new faith was due to any religious conviction . . . The reasons, therefore, of conversions may be roughly described as economic or socioeconomic. Generally, the Harijans have to submit to a number of unjust exactions and to suffer from humiliating treatment which are now resented by them . . . Those of the new and the old who are still continuing as nominal Christians are willing to return to Hinduism if their grievances are removed. Their grievances as disclosed during the enquiry are briefly indicated below:

1. They are forced to labour for their *maliks* and other caste Hindus of their villages at about half or even less wages then they would get for the same kind of labour in other villages.

2. They are forced to labour for their *maliks* and other caste-Hindu villgers on occasions of marriages and deaths in their families on almost no wages.

3. They are charged six annas per year per family as *mutharfa* (house rent).

4. They have to pay Re. 1, Rs. 2 and Rs. 3 or Rs. 4 for the hide of every dead cow, bullock or buffalo respectively to their owners if they fail to deliver a corresponding number of pairs of shoes to them.

5. Their wives are paid only four annas for a male or two annas for a female child born in the house of the caste-Hindu villagers where they have to work as midwives during confinement, and even these payments are not regularly made.

6. They are forced to work for their *maliks* and caste-Hindu villgers even at the sacrifice of their own agricultural needs or when they are ill or engaged in their social or religious functions.

7. The levy of the Chowkidari tax on them is generally excessive.

8. They are not allowed to draw water from wells used by caste Hindus.

9. They are not allowed to enter temples nor are Brahmin priests available to recite religious *kathas* at their houses.

If what is said in the report about the conversions be true, it is from my standpoint reprehensible. Such superficial conversions can only give rise to suspicion and strife. But if a missionary body or individuals choose to follow the methods described in the report, nothing can be done to prevent them. It is therefore much more profitable to turn the searchlight inward and to discover our own defects. Fortunately the report enables us to do so. Nine causes are enumerated to show why Harijans are induced to leave the Hindu fold. Seven are purely economic, one is social, and one is purely religious. Thus they are reduced economically, degraded socially and boycotted from religious participation. The wonder is not that they leave Hinduism; the wonder is that they have not done so for so long and that so few leave their ancestral faith even when they do. The moral is obvious. Let us make every discovery, such as the one made in Shahabad, an occasion for greater self-purification, greater dedication to the harijan cause, greater identification with the Harijans. It should result in the local Sangh collecting more workers than it has for doing on the one hand service among the Harijans and on the other propaganda among the so-called caste Hindus, not in the shape of reviling them but showing them that religion does not warrant the treatment that is meted out to Harijans by them.

Harijan, 19-6-1937

429. KHADI AT HARIPURA

Sjt. Dastane is anxious that something striking should happen at Haripura so as to make khadi much more popular than it is. There are other workers who no doubt anticipate great things from Haripura about khadi. Bardoli's promise to be wholly self-sustained about khadi made in 1921 still remains unredeemed. Painful to tell, Bardoli like other places falls back on Wardha for its cheap and well-coloured khadi. The khadi method excludes concentration. Wardha is in no need of outside patronage. And if it began to rely on it, it would harm itself and khadi in the long run. The secret of success in khadi is for each taluk or at least district to produce and use its own khadi.

But Sjt. Dastane says, though the Working Committee has re-emphasized the fourfold programme of 1920, there is hardly an M.L.A. who talks about it to his constituency. And if the khadi-lovers, too, do not show application or orginality, khadi has a poor chance of becoming universal. There is force in what Sjt. Dastane says. But things are not quite as bad as he perhaps imagines. In Nalwadi, Vinoba is practically concentntrating the whole of his attention on khadi. He is making experiments to see whether the minimum of three annas per day of eight hours for spinners is an easily realizable proposition. It bids fair to succeed. There is a boy 16 year old who is a villager of quite the ordinary type. He is earning four annas per day. If the average villager has a sufficient ocular demonstration of the possibility of earning three annas per day, and if he or she knows that there is an organization that will take in all the standard yarn that can be produced, there will be a spontaneous response. Now this kind of very solid work does not admit of haste or a spectacular display. Then there is one great difficulty in the way. The spinners, weavers and other artisans engaged in khadi production are expected to use khadi for their own wear. This means popular education in the economics of khadi, a change in the mentality of the poor artisans who do not know anything of why they are so helpless and poor and still less of how they can help themselves to get rid of their ignorance and poverty. The spread of such education means again a large number of workers possessing love of khadi and an adequate knowledge of the economics and the technique of khadi.

Thus there are very natural difficulties to be overcome in the attempt to make khadi universal. Let Sjt. Dastane and others who feel like him about khadi make a deep study of the science and make their own experiments if they have any original contribution to make or pursue the beaten track and give to the work their exclusive attention.

Harijan, 19-6-1937

430. MAN'S INHUMANITY

Not many people know what is *phooka*. Still fewer know that there is an association in Calcutta called the Anti-phooka Association. Its patrons are Maharajadhiraja Sir Bijoy Chand Mahatab Bahadur and Justice Sir L. W. J. Costello. Its president is Shri Ramkumar

Bangar. The office is at 65 Pathuriaghata Street. The Secretary thus describes the process of *phooka*:

> I have to inform you that the atrocities of *phooka* are perpetrated on each milch animal twice daily. The four legs of the animal are tied to four strong posts and two men hold the animal so tightly that she cannot make any movement of her limbs whatsoever. A bamboo rod or pipe, 22 inches long and 8 inches in circumference, is then forcibly pushed into the generative organ of the animal, and then one man begins to blow air into the uterus, causing it to be fully distended thereby. This inflammation causes extra pressure on the glands which helps the milkman to extract the last drop of milk. The milking also is indescribably cruel, and it is continued to the great pain of the animal till blood comes out of the udder. Sometimes a few drops of the blood get mixed up with the milk. Unable to make any movements, the animal silently bears this inhuman torture and her great pain is manifested only by the copious perspiration and tears that flow down her body and cheeks. This is repeated twice daily and the animal invaribly swoons after each operation.

It is difficult to conceive anything more torturing or revolting than the process described by the Secretary. From the proceedings of a meeting of the Association it appears that the practice results in the sterility of the cows and she-buffaloes subjected to the torture. They are therefore transferred to butchers after they cease to yield milk even in spite of *phooka*.

The Association undertakes the prosecution of the torturers. It engages plain-clothes detectives to discover the culprits. The activity of the Association is good as far as it goes. But it does not appear to me to go far enough. Punishment of a few criminals won't stop the inhumanity. It is necessary to carry on propaganda among the offenders and educate them to understand the evils of the system. Of course the surest way of dealing with the evil is for the Corporation to take charge of the whole of the milk supply of Calcutta and change the *gwalas* into its paid servants. They would then not be open to temptation as they are now. They will be under sanitary supervision. Milking will be done under proper control. The citizens will have a guarantee of having pure milk for their money. And there is not the slightest reason why the milk supply department should not be self-supporting. The citizens will gladly pay an extra pie, if an increase in the selling price becomes necessary. Of course the milk supply has to

become a monopoly of a municipality undertaking the enterprise, even as the postal stamp is a monopoly of the State.

Harijan, 19-6-1937

431. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 19, 1937

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter has just come. I hope the mountain air will set you right. Here is note for Dr. Dharmavir. My love to Subhas Babu to whom I have no time to write separately.

You will be grieved to know that yesterday the rain set in but destroyed the earth-work near the creek bridge, nearly destroyed the houses on either side. If the rain had continued for five minutes longer the houses would have gone. Now I am considering what to do.

Khan Saheb and Mehrtaj came in today.[1]

No more time to say more.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6383. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9849

432. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

June 19, 1937

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

It was good that the thorn[2] came out. The case is exactly like what had happened to Rajkumari.[3] When the doctors were at their wit's end, Nature became a doctor. I read about the Bharuch affair. Such falsehoods will go on. What other attitude could you have adopted towards a worker like Dinkarrai[4]? I can now attend the Working Committee meeting only between the 26th and the 29th. That is

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 18-6-1937

[2] According to the source, Vallabhbhai Patel had suffered for a fortnight from a thorn which had pierced his foot while he was taking a stroll with Gandhiji on Tithal seaside.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 2-6-1937

[4] Dinkarrai Desai, President of Bharuch Municipality, whose sanitary workers had gone on strike; *vide* "Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar", 5-4-1937

sufficient time. There is no doubt that the earlier the committee meets the better.

Kishorelal keeps indifferent health and so has not been able to come and meet me. I had called on him for a few minutes on the day of my arrival. He was to come to Segaon but has not been able to do so owing to his illness.

I hope you are keeping well otherwise.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
PURUSHOTTAM BUILDING
OPPOSITE OPERA HOUSE
NEW QUEENS ROAD
BOMBAY 4

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 201

433. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

June 19, 1937

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Despatch this wire: "Khan Saheb not enthusiastic on his own. If need his presence urgent come and discuss with him. Gandhi."[1]

Send this reply if it seems proper to you. I do not wish to send it as an order.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2987

434. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 20, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

Your two letters before me. There is nothing wrong with the village ink. The wrong is with me. I am too lazy to attend to the laws

[1] This telegram is in English. It was meant for Brijlal Biyani. *Vide* also "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 18-6-1937

governing the use of village ink. I won't shake off my laziness by reverting to the use of the lazy city ink. I can do so, if ever, by persisting in the use of village ink and by people like you pulling me up when my letters are too faint to be deciphered.

Mira is happy in Dalhousie. She is charmed with the eternal snows which she sees daily. And Dr. Dharmavir and Subhas are very attentive to her. And you are right when you say she won't feel too crowded there. You should write to her.

It is good news you give me of some of the Harijan hovels being destroyed and new houses being built for them.[1]

Most probably the Working Committee will meet here next week. There is no question this time of going to Allahabad.

Who recommended the three pamphlets? Do you know anything of them? You should plead for me with those who would want me to read books. No time.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 6311. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6420

435. LETTER TO J.C. KUMARAPPA

June 20, 1937

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

Here is Vasta's letter to you and mine to him. I hope you have sent him the thing he has asked for. Please post my letter with yours which I expect you are writing.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10118

[1] Probably as a result of the addressee's representation to the municipal authorities; *vide* "Telegram to Nandlal Bose", 13-5-1937

436. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

June 20, 1937

BHAI KHAMBHATTA,

At long last I received your diary. Ailments that cannot be cured by any remedies have got to be endured, and God has given you sufficient strength for that.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

SHRI BEHRAM KHAMBHATTA
BELVEDERE COURT
CHURCHGATE RAILWAY STATION
FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6613. Also C.W. 4404. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

437. LETTER TO KALYANJI V. MEHTA

June 20, 1937

BHAI KALYANJI,

I got your letter. If possible take Ba to Manilal once. If possible try and make Kanam spin on the *takli* regularly. He had started that here. But the practice was given up later.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2714

438. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 21, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

So you have fairly won your victory. But you will have to pursue the matter to the end, lest the Municipality goes to sleep.[1]

[1] *Vide* "Letter to J. C. Kumarappa", 20-6-1937

You are right. Subhas ought not to leave Dalhousie in a hurry. He should be thoroughly restored for the task in front of him. I am sorry I forgot to tell you that Jamnalalji came in here on 6th and will be with the exception of three or four days when he has to go to Calcutta for his son's marriage in Calcutta. He goes on 29th.

You should write to Mira when you get two minutes.

Why won't you consult Menchen or Menkel[1] about your food? You must get rid of your indigestion. I can't guide you much from a distance. Therefore you need some local assistance for the proper selection of your menu.

The Working Committee meets on 4th or 5th July in Wardha. It must decide the office issue finally.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3790. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6946

439. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 21, 1937

CHI. MIRA,

I have just had your second letter from Dalhousie. I had not expected any magical performance in Dalhousie. But you will recover there completely by patience. Do not insist on your way if doctor advises otherwise, of course barring vows. But there are no vows except the abstention from meats and wines.

No rain here to speak of. The weather has cooled a bit. Ba is expected to return by 24th. Khan Saheb and Mehrtaj are flourishing. Kallenbach must take the steamer on 7th July. But he promises to return in December and stay three months.

Balvantsinha has a mania for building. The cowshed is complete but the huge yard is taking up time and space and money. Let us see. Parnerkar[2] is here and will stay.

Remember me to the hosts.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6385. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9851

[1] The source has Menken; *vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 29-5-1937

[2] An agriculture expert; Secretary, Goseva Sangh. In his book *Bapuki Chhayamen* (p. 179) Balvantsinha explains: "Parnerkerji had shifted from Dhulia to Sevagram (on a permanent basis) where he was entrusted with the work of agriculture."

440. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

June 21, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter of the 16th. I have been regularly writing to you.

Lose yourself in whatever service comes to you unasked and be satisfied.

Amtul Salaam is still here, and so are Khan Saheb and Mehrtaj. I have already written to you about Babu-Sharda. Now Sushila's friend, Dr. Soundaram[1] , has come for two days. She plays beautifully on the vina. Ba may come about the 24th. Parnerkar also has come to stay here. A good deal of construction work is going on. You will find many new things when you come.

Write to Mirabehn. Her address C/o Dr. Dharmavir, Dalhousie, Punjab.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have just seen your *Harijanbandhu*. It has been returned from Patna. Why don't you inform Poona about changes in your address? Please let me know whether or not you get it now.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3489

441. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

June 21, 1937

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have read your letter and Jawahar's reply. It seems Nariman will fall into the pit he is digging himself. Let us wait and see what steps he takes next. We needn't do anything in a hurry. The matter is bound to come up at the Working Committee. It is certainly meeting after a long interval, but that can't be helped. Let events take their own

[1] Wife of G. Ramchandran; *vide* "Letter to Kanu Gandhi", 24-6-1937

course. I had a long letter[1] from Lothian, but I have not yet been able to read it. I hope you are well enough now to move about.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 202

442. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

June 21, 1937

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got Manilal's letter. Kallenbach will leave this place on July 7. I hope that he will come back in December. Here he lives just like one of us. He wears only a dhoti, but sometimes a shirt also. He has purchased a lot of khadi and got some dresses made. This time he is not at all inclined to go anywhere for sight-seeing. Next time when he comes I will send him to visit the Taj, etc.

In Segaon, where there was only one hut, several houses have come up now. There seems to be no end to the construction work. The number of residents also is increasing.

Ba, with Kano, is at Maroli with Mithubehn. She is expected to return in a few days now.

Lakshmi has given birth to a son in Madras. Both of them are well. This time she didn't suffer much. Kanti has gone to Bangalore to study in a college. Kishorelal is keeping indifferent health.

Let me know if the handwriting in this letter is rather faint. It is written with pure indigenous ink.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4864

[1] Mahadev Desai had sent a copy of this to Mirabehn on June 25. In his forwarding letter (C.W. 6386), he says: "A long letter from Lothian has come again appealing to Bapu to advise the Congress to take up offices. This is a much more argumentative letter, but it is on the lines of the Viceroy's speech. How they think alike!" For the Viceroy's speech. *vide* Appendix “Viceroy’s Speech”, 21-6-1937.

443. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

June 21, 1937

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

The blanket that I have sent you is a hand-woven one from Scotland. It is said that even the wool is hand spun. The beauty of it lies in the composition of different colours. The purpose in sending it to you is that you may try and make use of the design in Kashmir or some other place. Otherwise preserve it as a sample. I had forgotten to write about this. I am glad you reminded me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10832. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

444. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 22, 1937

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

You letter has just reached me. Though three days might prove too few, they would be better than nothing. It is a pity Indu can't come with you. I had thought that the operation that she had for tonsils many years ago was the last. I take it this would be as simple as the previous one.

Love to you all.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

445. LETTER TO J.C. KUMARAPPA

June 22, 1937

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

I have read your essay on democracy and your speech on conversion. Both are good but you must work out your individualistic

cultural democracy. The charge against Hinduism is that it is too individualistic. I have thought it to be a baseless charge. But you seem to have some other idea. My own opinion is that Hinduism has made the greatest research in that line but simply failed to carry out its discoveries in practice and therefore seemed to be individualistic, i.e., selfish.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10119

446. LETTER TO BABURAO D. MHATRE

June 22, 1937

DEAR MR. MHATRE,

I am glad of your report[1] which will be very helpful in regulating traffic and in repairing, if it is possible, the bad roads. I am passing on your report to the Sardar.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 9827. Courtesy: Baburao D. Mhatre

447. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

June 22, 1937

The Associated Press special correspondent greeted Mahatma Gandhi early this morning today at his hut in Segaon village with a copy of Viceroy's message to India. Mahatma Gandhi who was having discussions with Seth Jamnalal Bajaj and other workers asked the correspondent to wait for a few minutes. In 15 minutes Mahatma Gandhi called in the correspondent, handed back the Viceroy's statement which was sent to him earlier by the correspondent and asked him to read it aloud for the benefit of himself and others present. Gandhiji attentively listened while the correspondent read the entire message slowly. At the conclusion of reading. Mahatma Gandhi asked the correspondent:

Now, what do you want?

On being told that his reactions on the statement were wanted, Mahatma Gandhi shrugged his shoulders and beckoned to the correspondent to take down.

[1] On the site for the 51st Congress Session at Haripura; *vide* also p. 220.

I have listened to the Viceroy's statement most attentively, but I am sorry that I cannot make any statement. The Working Committee will finally decide on July 5 on the grave issue that is before the country and I hope that no Congressman will want to anticipate the decision of the Working Committee and offer criticism.

The conversation then turned to the Segaon village and village folk. Mahatma Gandhi said that the village had considerably improved and that there were better cows in the village than elsewhere in Wardha. People were healthy and they had plenty of fresh air even more than he because they were bold people, not sophisticated.

The Hitavada, 29-6-1937

448. LETTER TO ATULANAND CHAKRABARTY

SEGAON (WARDHA)
June 23, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is unfortunate but it is true that I have not been able to appreciate the utility of your method as a contribution to the communal tangle. That does not mean that there is no value in cultural contact. I think it has great value. But I am more than doubtful as to the possibility of organizing such contact. I do not know if I have expressed myself clearly. Rabindranath has, of all the men of the world, perhaps, made the largest contribution in that direction. But it has not been through any organization. His writings have compelled attention. I should be delighted if your writings serve the same purpose. But then you do not need my certificate or anybody else's, even as the Poet does not. I wonder if I have made my position clear. I, somehow or other, feel that yours is a different position. Maybe that I have not understood it and, therefore, I have been indifferent to it. I would be satisfied if I can make you believe that my indifference is not due to cussedness or even to want of study of your thought expressed by you. The moment I begin to appreciate your method you will find me advertising it in my own humble way. But you seem to be paralysed without my advertisement and this hurts me. Why should you need my advertisement? Surely the names you have gathered round yourself are far better judges of your work than I ever can be.

It is easy enough now to answer your questions.

The solid work for villages that I have in mind is the work such as the Spinners' Association is doing among thousand of artisans irrespective of their caste or creed. I hope to publish statistics showing

the number of artisans with whom the Spinners' Association has established contact–not political but purely economic. Of course, anyone who has faith in such kind of contact can work for it if he has the desire to learn the technique.

This work is necessarily confined to the villages because the bulk of these artisans are to be found in the villages and these are the people who are in need of the assistance of the kind we are offering.

The third and the fourth question are answered in the foregoing paragraphs.

The fifth question is answered in the preliminary paragraph.

You do not seem to have kept a copy of your letter. I am, therefore, returning your letter in order to enable you to see if I have covered all your questions. If I have not, you should tell me and I shall make another endeavour to answer your questions.

Yours sincerely,

M.K.GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 1476. Courtesy: A.K. Sen

449. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

June 23, 1937

BHAI BHAGWANJI,

It was good that you visited Vadavashram near Khambhat. I can never feel hurt by anything you write. How can there be any objection to your letting me know whatever you think? As long as you are alive, how is it possible that the good name and reputation of Karsanji Mulchand would be lost? How can I explain that I had spared no effort in writing to Bhai Narbheram about you? I may not have told you that I had also entered into correspondence with Prof. Thakore regarding the matter. If I didn't do so, the reason must have been that there was nothing important in it. But I had tried my level best. I was not in a position to arbitrate in the dispute between you two. I had neither the necessary material nor the time.

You have now sent a letter for Devchandbhai. I do not know what I shall be able to do in that regard. I am sending that letter to Devchandbhai. I shall let you know if I get a reply from him. And if I can do anything in the matter, I certainly will.

Vandemataram from

M.K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5835. Also C.W. 3058. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

450. LETTER TO LORD LOTHIAN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 24, 1937

DEAR LORD LOTHIAN,

My deepest thanks for your long letter[1]. I appreciate the patient effort you are making to convince me of the correctness of your advice. With much of what you say I wholly agree. The question of office-acceptance will now be finally decided at the forthcoming meeting of the Working Committee of the Congress. The Viceroy has just said[2] the last word about the Government's attitude. I admit that it is an improvement upon the first speech[3] on the situation by Lord Zetland.

Whatever the decision of the Working Committee may be–and you will have known it before this reaches you–what I would like to write upon is the fundamental difference between the colonies and India. So far as I know, the colonists were armed and knew the use of arms. The vast majority of thirty millions of voters here are unarmed, do not know the use of arms and perhaps would not like to be armed even if they were left absolutely free to do so–such is Indian culture. Though, therefore, I have pinned my faith to working along constitutional lines, I have, as every Indian has, either to think out a programme whereby every adult can be trained in the use of arms or find a substitute. At my instance, the Congress has for the last eighteen years attempted to experiment with the substitute called non-violent non-co-operation, civil resistance, etc. For myself I have rejected the idea of achieving freedom by the use of arms in the last resort and I have accepted as its final substitute the use of non-violence in every shape and form. The use of arms is not an unexplored field, that of non-violence has possibilities of infinite exploration. Hence my eagerness to discover a formula whereby, consistently with the Congress creed of complete independence, office-acceptance may be possible. But I must confess that I have not the faith that you have in the possibility of the existing Act to expand into an instrument of complete freedom. On the contrary, I believe in common with the vast majority of educated Indians that it is incapable of giving India what it wants and the sooner it is replaced by something of Indian design the better.

[1] *Vide* footnote on "Letter to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi", 21-6-1937

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Viceroy's Speech", 21-6-1937.

[3] *Vide* Apendix "Lord Zetland's Speech", 6-5-1937.

Of course, the Act does contemplate militarization of India at a snail's pace and therefore it is not so repugnant to those overwhelming numbers of Indians who want India to develop military power as it is to me who would if I could take India along a wholly different route.

Now, if you think that my reasoning is erroneous and that it is possible for India to attain her full height without the back-ground of either military training or of non-violent training, you should come to India during next autumn if only to teach me. In any case, if the Congress decides upon office-acceptance it will be the beginning of real difficulty in one way and your coming is likely to be helpful. If the Congress decides otherwise, you will perhaps yourself feel impelled to come here in order that you might not leave a single stone unturned to avert a calamity which it would be if the rule of the sword replaces the rule of the electorate, that is, democracy, however, incipient it might be.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 6386 a. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9852

451. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

June 24, 1937

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter. I read also your letter to Mahadev. The latter I consider an excellent letter. You have been able to describe very vividly the struggle going on in your heart. Your decision is of course good. If you have determination, and indeed you have it, any college will be good for you. But compared to Bombay, Bangalore is superior because there you will have more freedom. The fact that the Principal has sent his son to Bombay counts little with me, for in doing so he has merely put a higher value on Bombay degrees. For you such value has, and I think should have, secondary importance.

It is not the university that brings credit to a brilliant student but the latter that brings credit to a university. There is a small village in England named Louth. Tennyson was a pupil in that school and because of that even today the teachers of that school take great pride in it. In the same way you should bring glory to the college in Bangalore. What pains me particularly when I see people going to England or the West is that those who seek prestige for themselves by going to the West gain none, but, of course, they certainly raise the value of Western degrees. One can understand that those who seek prestige do not gain any, for many who hold Western degrees remain

unemployed. But anyone who has ability, whether he holds a degree from the East or from the West, does acquire prestige. The late Dr. Tribhovandas was only an L.M.&S. He used to charge Rs. 1,000 a day as fee. He was unrivalled both as physician and surgeon. And in the art of restoring a nose that had been cut off, he has had no equal anywhere in the world. The chief reason was that at that time dacoits had made it a custom to cut the noses of high officials. Had Tribhovandas been diffident he would have called in some English doctor in such cases. But being courageous he held the knife and the needle in his own hands and restored the noses in all or almost all cases. If a man is honest, he is sure to become proficient through experience. I have written all this to strengthen you in your decision, for people will continue to put before you all sorts of arguments that might persuade you to revise your decision. Your aim is to acquire knowledge. It is not as if after getting a degree one need gain no further knowledge. It is possible that real knowledge is acquired only after getting a degree because that has been the experience of most people. Regarding your lodging and boarding make whatever arrangement you think will suit you from the point of view of health and studies.

I did get Saraswati's letter and had also replied to her. It is likely that the reply might have been delayed.

There is one sentence in your letter, "Some of the manners of the people over here seem very uncivilized." Who are those people?

Ba, Kanu and Kusum Desai are expected here the day after tomorrow.

It is cool now. The first rains of the season have not been satisfactory.

Most probably Amtul Salaam will have a tonsillitis operation the day after tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7324. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

452. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

June 24, 1937

CHI. KANAIYO,

I got your letter. I will wait for you after the time limit you have fixed.

A sister from Madras had come here the day before yesterday and left the same day. Pyarelal says that you know her. Her name is Soundaram. She had also brought her vina, which was worth Rs. 150. The chief reason of its high value was its decoration. Without the decoration it would be worth only Rs. 80. But what I like most was her mastery in playing on the vina. She sang, too, to the accompaniment of the vina. Her voice is sweet. During all that time I remembered you. She said she would come again some other time.

You have not followed my questions about book-keeping. That only means that you have not understood the technical terms of book-keeping. So to that extent you probably do not know book-keeping. Show that letter to Narandas. If he does not understand my terms, then I will have to admit that I do not know the technical language of book-keeping and, therefore, could not use it correctly. Narandas knows book-keeping throughly well. I learnt just enough of it for my legal practice, with my own effort, and it is possible, therefore, that I do not know the technical terms as well as an expert in book-keeping. In short, what I had asked from you was a summary, or 'abstract' as it is called in English, of the different accounts in the ledger. If neither the register nor the abstracts are available here, we cannot know what the credit or debit balances are in the different accounts. And such occasions are bound to arise when it becomes necessary to know the figures. Do complete the accounts. While you are there, try to perfect your knowledge of book-keeping.

Similarly you may increase your knowledge of music as much as you wish to. You are doing well in planning to go to Chorwad a little earlier.

Amtul Salaam's amount has been received. I see that you go to bed at 11. I consider it too late. Everybody should form the habit of going to bed by 10. But you should of course follow the convenience of others there.

I was very glad to learn that Purushottam was keeping good health.

Ba will most probably come the day after tomorrow. At present the house here is full. Jamnalal's bungalow having been completed, everybody is accommodated comfortably.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

453. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

June 24, 1937

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Enclosed is Deka's letter. I wrote to you immediately after meeting him. You must have got that letter[1]. Convey your decision to him. My idea was that you can call Deka for *mazdoor seva*[2] whenever you want to. If you send for him for sundry other tasks *mazdoor seva* will suffer. Deka himself holds that if he has to go to Delhi, and he would like to do so, he has to have some training at the Mazdoor Sangh. Now the course has to be decided between you and Deka. I remember having written to you on these lines.

I hope you are keeping well. You were to write about the Narela Ashram; do write when you can find time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a phototat of the Hindi: G.N. 2448

454. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 25, 1937

CHI. MIRA,

I am glad you are better. Here is Dr. Dharmavir's letter. If he thinks that sleeping in the open there is injurious, you should not insist on sleeping outside. It is well to do as he says. The liver, the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Brijkrishna Chandiwala", 15-5-1937

[2] Labour welfare work

spleen and the glands should be dealt with and set right. What is your food now? Do you get good fruit and vegetables? Have you got rid of the cold?

Ba returns tomorrow. We are a growing family.

Govind[1] has gone to Kakasaheb. He wanted some such thing.

This is being written just before the morning prayer.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6377. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9853

455. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

June 25, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

I return Sultan Ahmed's letter[2]. It is good. I do not think it is possible to change the name of the Sammelan[3] . I got the definition put right with difficulty. It is the spirit that needs to be changed and not the name which is ancient. I hope you will not commit yourself to anything that may embarrass you or the officials of the Sammelan. Have you read any of the annual addresses of the Sammelan Presidents? Do, if you get the time.

No more today as this is being written just after the morning prayer for parnerker to take it to Wardha.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original; C.W. 3791. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6947

[1] A boy from Sevagram whom Mirabehn was training for Gandhiji's service

[2] In his letter to the addressee Sultan Ahmed had written that while Gandhiji was trying to propagate the common language spoken in the North, both the Muslims and the Hindus were trying to introduce into it difficult words and phrases from Arabic and Sanskrit creating another communal problem.

[3] Hindi Sahitya Sammelan

456. LETTER O JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

June 25, 1937

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Just received your statement on the Frontier policy. Khan Saheb and I have read it. I like it very well. I wonder if the Spanish bombing and the British are exactly alike. How has the extent of the British damage been known? What has been the ostensible reason given for the British bombing? Don't smile or be angry that I do not know these things so well as you do. I can learn very little from the little I see of the newspapers. But don't trouble to answer my questions. I shall follow the reactions to your statement. Maybe these will throw some light. And in any case you will fill in the gaps when we meet. I hope the Maulana will come. But even if he cannot I would like you to hold on to the date. Let us have the three quiet days.

Hope Indu is well.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Khan Saheb wants you to see the enclosed.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

457. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

June 25, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter just now. Why do you worry? You will have done your duty if you go on nursing to the best of your ability. Our life is not in our hands. Tell Harshubabu on my behalf that he should not worry about the body but meditate on Rama. He will do as He wills. I will be satisfied if I have a postcard from time to time.

Ba will come on the 30th. Shantabehn[1] who was at Khedi has arrived. She will stay here. After some time she will leave for England.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3503

[1] An Englishwoman who was working in the office of Gramodyog Sangh at Maganwadi. *Vide* also the following two items.

458. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS BIRLA

June 25, 1937

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

I got your letter. As regards the money I have had the intimation from Bachharaj and Co. Almost a lakh will go to the Village Industries Association. What you give for my personal expenses is of course additional.

I used to obtain through Braj Mohan passages in cargo-boats for the European workers bound for England. He is not there at present. Whom should I write to in Calcutta? Or will you yourself enquire if an Englishwoman can be accommodated in one of the cargo-boats?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 8032. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

459. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

June 25, 1937

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

An English woman worker is to be sent to England to her mother. Do you have in mind any cargo-boat or any ordinary boat in which she can be sent as soon as possible? What will be the fare? Ghanshyamdas had sent two women in a cargo-boat free of charge. He is not here. Still, I have inquired[1] through Rameshwardas. He may not have any resources at the moment or may have none at all. Hence I am troubling you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4726. Courtesy: Shantikumar N. Morarjee

460. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

June 25, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

All right. I will not go there to see Amtul Salaam. Your presence will be enough. I am not scared. I wanted to come merely for my satisfaction. Let me know the result immediately.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

Bablo has written a beautiful letter. I will write to him afterwards. Will you please detain Bachu for Amtul Salaam?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

If you need more help, shall I send someone from here? Prepare the envelopes for the letters to Shantikumar and Rameshwar there.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11523

461. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

June 25, 1937

BELOVED DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,[1]

I got your note. Mahadev tells me that the doctor would get nervous if I were to go there. So I will not go. I am not worried. Be brave. If necessary I will go over and see you after the operation. Please send me a report yourself. The letter from Kanti is being dispatched today. Read it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 382

462. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

June 25, 1937

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

Mr. Kallenbach has been bothering me to let him send you a gift at the time of your marriage. He wants to spend more than Rs. 100, and spoke of £ 25. I would not hear of it. He then asked me what he should give. I suggested books. "Which books?", he asked. I couldn't decide. Tell me what books you would like to have?

Reply by return of post.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3056

[1] The superscription is in Urdu.

463. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 25, 1937

CHI. SUMANGAL,

Your condition is pathetic. I have no grouse against your literary pursuits but they should be secondary to physical labour. Tolstoy says that his mind became pure only after he started doing eight hours of physical work every day and only then did his writing become pure. Your case is the reverse of this. You appear to have no interest at all in doing physical labour. That is why I have been dissuading you from joining me. You do not need to fast. You must be at a place where there is some activity or other going on. Only when you have worked hard and have tired yourself out physically should you pursue literary activity if at all.

Please consider this and write to me. If in the end we decide to have you here, the work here will be regarding the charkha, No salary.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

464. UNFORTUNATE BUT INDISPENSABLE

The Secretary of the local Harijan Sevak Sangh of Jamshedpur applied to a lady among others for a subscription and he received the following reply:

> It is some time since your letter of 5th February appealing for funds was received by me.
>
> I appreciate the good work your Association is doing at Jamshedpur, but, on principle, I cannot bring myself to send any subscription to any Association that calls itself 'Harijan' just because of the interpretation put upon that word in this country.
>
> I am convinced that as long as any member of a society is classified by a name that savours of inferiority, that section of society will never be raised. I would abolish from our vocabulary the words 'Harijan', 'Depressed Class', and all such other appellations of the same meaning, which are used to distinguish people who should never be separately described from their fellow beings.

The objection raised by the lady is not new. The adoption of the name 'Harijan' was not a matter of choice, it was one of compulsion.

So long as the suppressed classes exist, it will be necessary to have some designation for them. Thus Indians in South Africa were popularly distinguished from the rest as 'coolies' or 'sammies'. This was resented by them. Protests were made with more or less effect not against a distinguished name but against a name which in itself carried reproach and signified inferiority. So ultimately they came to be classified as Indians as they should have been from the beginning. Even thus were untouchables called by various names denoting reproach and inferiority. The Government officers have devised names such as 'depressed', 'backward'. Now they are known as 'scheduled classes'. For the reformers, the name 'Harijan' was suggested by someone who belonged to the suppressed classes. And that name has been adopted by the Harijan Sevak Sangh, being in its meaning absolutely free from reproach and even fitting in the sense that the despised of man are the dear ones of God, which is what 'Harijan means. What, therefore, is possible and is being done is to remove the last trace of inferiority, but it is not possible to do away with a special name for those whose inferiority is abolished even from the hearts of caste Hindus, so long as the necessity for knowing the liberated ones from the rest exists. I hope, therefore, that the objecting lady will recognize the inevitability of a separate designation for the suppressed class, but appreciate the fact that the word chosen by the Sangh has absolutely no reproach about it, and therefore give her subscription and become an active helper in a cause than which none can be found worthier.

Harijan, 26-6-1937

465. ARE THERE DIFFERENT OATHS?

On reading my article[1] on 'Religious Oath and Non-religious', a Quaker friend wrote to a common friend who has passed on the letter to me. I copy the letter[2] below:

> It appears to me that Mr. Gandhi is dealing with two quite distinct questions in this article. I wholly agree with his answer to one of them as, with due respect, I wholly disagree with the other . . . . I agree wholly with him that a Congressman need not worry over the propriety of the oath.
>
> 2. But the Mahatma's subtle mind is too much for me when he draws distinctions between religious and non-religious oaths. At any rate we simple

[1] *Vide* "Religious Oath and Non-Religious",22-5-1937

[2] Only extracts are reproduced here.

> Quakers look at it thus: Religion is man's search for God, and his reference of all life to the life of God. An affirmation, or promise, to tell the truth and do the truth, is a reference of the self back to the life of God, for Truth is a part of God's essential nature. Therefore all *such promises are religious acts.* The Quakers object to oaths, because they claim to be religious people, that is, people who fear God, and intend to observe the truth without swearing in the name of God. As you know, after a long struggle and much suffering they obtained the right to affirm instead of swearing. But affirmation or oath, both are for us religious acts; unless by religion one means something apart from the most part of life. I should not agree that a Court of Law or a Parliament was something apart from religion for a religious man. . . . We, Quakers, are clear that all life is religious for the religious man, and have no particular use for a segregated 'religion' . . . .

Cuttings from two Indian newspapers criticizing the article have also been sent to me.

What I find after reading the letter and the cuttings is that it is very difficult for me to make myself fully intelligible especially when I write on anything out of the way. The only thing for me is to endeavour to elucidate my point so long as there is anything to elucidate.

I can see no subtlety about my argument. But I see the clearest possible distinction between the oath or affirmation that a person takes before a court of law, a legislature and before his God perhaps daily at the time of rising and retiring. They have different functions, different incidences.

The Quaker friend in my opinion surrenders the whole position when he agrees with me in my interpretation of the legislative or constitutional oath. His quarrel is purely over my designation of oaths. If my designation is faulty, I would accept any other which succinctly shows the distinction I have pointed out and which the friend accepts by implication.

The mere linguistic meaning of the legislative oath is wholly different from the meaning that the law and tradition have given to it. One not knowing the law and the tradition will certainly have the objection that Shri Shivprasad Gupta has raised. Mere grammatical or linguistic meaning of a sentence divorced from its context and history has often been found erroneous and sometimes positively mischievous. Therefore, knowing the context of the legislative oath, I had no hesitation in saying that there was not the slightest strain on or violation of truth when I suggested that a Congressman could, consis-

tently with his creed of complete independence and his resolution of wrecking the Constitution Act, take the oath required by law shortly described by me as legislative.

And here again my statement must be interpreted in its context and historical perspective. A Congressman entering the Legislature will strive for gaining complete independence working within the law, and so will he try to wreck the Act working within the law. If he can work for its amendment, he can quite properly work for its repeal, i.e., wrecking. Indeed his deadlocks also will be within the law. And he won't be frightened or hang his head low if his opponent twits him by saying that he is after all working the Constitution. He will not, must not, care so long as he knows his mind, hides nothing and is downright honest in all his dealings.

Of course I agree with the Quaker friend that for a religiously or spiritually minded man religion or rather religious attitude pervades all his thoughts, words and acts.

But having said this I must adhere to my statement that for the multitudinous purposes of life we find it necessary to distinguish our activities as social, political, mercantile, religious, etc. These divisions can be extended almost to infinity. But the seeker of God will apply his godly attitude even to his sports if he finds time for them.

Harijan, 26-6-1937

466. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

June 26, 1937

I forgot to write to you about one thing. You referred to Devdas's third child. I agree with you that he should stop now. I must not write, you can, perhaps, must. I have no doubt he knows. I do not know who is greater sinner. They passionately love each other. And then love expresses itself in the painful fashion. I suppose they cannot help themselves. I know what an effort it is to exercise self-restraint when physical love is let loose. Duty separated us for long intervals. That gave me time for thinking and disciplining myself. After the appearance of Devdas I had fairly conquered the animal in me. Intense public activity of an exacting nature cast upon me a burden which I could not carry at the some time as making additions to the family. Thus did nature help me. And my greatest good luck was that in Ba I had a companion who never tempted me, so far as I can recall. Such is not the case with the present generation. I do not know that it was better in my generation. Ba is perhaps an exceptional woman. So you see I have boundless charity for Devdas. And yet how I wish the terrible burden on Lakshmi could be removed. Devdas and Lakshmi

almost make out a case for the use of contraceptives. And yet I know that it will be a fatal conclusion to draw from this hard case. If they cannot restrain themselves Lakshmi must suffer. Now you have all the data, if you have self-confidence enough, to write to Devdas.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

467. LETTER TO C.A. TULPULE

SEGAON (WARDHA),
June 26, 1937

MY DEAR TULPULE,

You are quite correct in writing to me as you have done. Other friends also have been writing to me and letters such as yours will help me to gauge public opinion. For, it is one thing for me to hold a theoetical opinion, another thing to base it on practical experience.

Yours sincerely,
M.K. GANDHI

SHRI C.A. TULPULE, M.L.A.
TILAK ROAD
POONA

From the original: C.W. 2897. Courtesy: C.A. Tulpule

468. LETTER TO T. S. SUBRAHMANYAN

June 26, 1937

MY DEAR SUBRAHMANYAN,

If it is the inner voice that has spoken to you the conclusion you have come to is undoubtedly right and you will feel daily stronger, no matter what pecuniary or other difficulties you might have to face. My hope is that you will lose yourself to the uttermost in the activities which are born out of a contemplation of and are sure signs of ahimsa, i.e., khadi and other village industries, temperance, Harijan service, communal unity, etc. These must be pursued in a scientific spirit. And when they are so pursued they tax all our energies. At the same time they give the keenest satisfaction and draw out the very best in us.

yours sincerely,
M.K. GANDHI

SHRI T. S. SUBRAHMANYAN
PLEADER
BELLARY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

469. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

June 26, 1937

BELOVED DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,[1]

I hope you passed the night peacefully. Though I am here my mind is there with you. Don't exert yourself to write to me. Send an oral message if you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 383

470. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

June 26, 1937

CHI. KAKA,

Read this letter and let me have your guidance.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7694

471. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

June 26, 1937

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter. I have written to Ramjibhai. If what you say is correct, it is painful. But if the sentiments you have expressed in your letter to him are mere politeness, they do not become a satyagrahi. A satyagrahi's language is bound to be extremely courteous, but that courtesy is also full of truth. You say: "Seeing your step, new khadi workers like me in Kathiawar lose heart. If you still think over the matter and change your opinion, please do so and reassure workers like me." You cannot be called a new khadi worker at all. And a khadi worker like you would not lose courage because of a co-worker's fall but would become more firm, would dedicate himself more whole-heartedly and cultivate greater efficiency. But if you have really lost courage because of Ramjibhai's giving up of khadi work,

[1] The superscription is in Urdu in the source.

what you say is the bare truth. In that case, however, both you and I will have to think where you stand. For there are bound to be a good many hurdles in our khadi and other activities and, if our faith does not spring from within but is dependent on others, all our activities will fail. There must be a few whose faith would be more immovable even than the Himalayas and would remain steadfast till death. What a lecture I have given you on the beautiful letter you wrote to Ramjibhai!

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

472. A GREAT EXPERIMENT[1]

The Ahmedabad Labour Union has of late started a great experiment which is likely to prove of great interest and importance to all labour organizations. The essence of the experiment consists in training its members to a supplementary occupation in addition to their principal occupation in the mills so that in the event of a lock-out, strike or loss of employment otherwise, they would always have something to fall back upon instead of being faced with the prospect of starvation. A mill-hand's life is ever full of vicisssitudes. Thrift and economy no doubt provide a sort of remedy and it would be criminal to neglect them. But the savings thus made cannot carry one far, seeing that the vast bulk of our mill labourers are always struggling on the margin of bare subsistence. Moreover it would never do for a working man during strike or unemployment to rest idly at home. There is nothing more injurious to his morale and self-respect than enforced idleness. The working class will never feel secure or develop a sense of self-assurance and strength unless its members are armed with an unfailing subsidiary means of subsistence to serve as a second string to their bow in a crisis.

The idea of a subsidiary occupation for the mill-hands was first conceived by me during the eventful twenty-three days' strike of the Ahmedabad mill hands in the year 1918. It occurred to me then that if the strike was to be successful the mill-hands must have an occupation that would maintain them wholly or partly. They must not

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 27-6-1937. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

rely upon doles. During the strike many of them were employed on unskilled labour. It was then that I mooted my suggestion to teach mill-hands a subsidiary occupation. But my suggestion remained a dead letter till the next strike came. A sort of a beginning was made then. But it was difficult to bring into being all of a sudden an effective organization for teaching subsidiary occupations. With the end of the second strike died also the effort to find and teach suitable occupations.

An organized and systematic effort is now being made by the Labour Union in that direction. Mill-hands are being taught to select occupations which they can practise in their leisure hours at home and which would give them substantial relief in times of unemployment. These are ginning, cleaning, carding and spinning of cotton, weaving, tailoring, soap and paper making, type-setting, etc.

I hold that a working knowledge of a variety of occupations is to the working class what metal is to the capitalist. A lobourer's skill is his capital. Just as the capitalist cannot make his capital fructify without the co-operation of labour, even so the working man cannot make his labour fructify without the co-operation of capital. And if both labour and capital have the gift of intelligence equally developed in them and have confidence in their capacity to secure a fair deal, each at the hands of the other, they would get to respect and appreciate each other as equal partners in a common enterprise. They need not regard each other as inherently irreconcilable antagonists. But the difficulty is that whilst today capital is organized and seems to be securely entrenched, labour is not. The intelligence of the working man is cramped by this soulless, mechanical occupation which leaves him little scope or chance to develop his mind. It has prevented him from realizing the power and full dignity of his status. He has been taught to believe that his wages have to be dictated by capitalists instead of his demanding his own terms. Let him only be organized along right lines and have his intelligence quickened, let him learn a variety of occupations, and he will be able to go about with his head erect and never be afraid of being without means of sustenance.

It is the grossest of superstitions for the working man to believe that he is helpless before the employers. The effort of the Labour Union in Ahmedabad is to dispel this superstition in a concrete manner. Its experiment, therefore, ought to be welcomed by all concerned. Success will depend on an inflexible determination on the part of the Labour Union to follow up the good beginning that has

been made, with unflagging perseverance. It must have the right sort of instructors who can arouse among the workers an intelligent interest in their work. A handicraft plied merely mechanically can be as cramping to the mind and soul as any other pursuit taken up mechanically. An unintelligent effort is like a corpse from which the sprit has departed.

Harijan, 3-7-1937

473. MY NOTES

IS IT THEN NO MISTAKE?

Many people seem to have been hurt on reading my note entitled "My Mistake"[1] . Of course readers of *Harijanbandhu* are all Gujaratis. But Gujaratis are scattered in all Provinces and among them those who are alert know the customs and practices of the people in whose midst they live. I have received letters from such persons residing in places as far off as Malabar, Tamilnadu, Andhradesh and Karnataka. All of them write that my presumption was correct. In all these Provinces, amongst Hindus both high and low so-called, not only do marriages take place between a maternal uncle and his niece (sister's daughter) but these marriages are highly estemed in most cases. One correspondent asked for a lawyer's opinion. The lawyer wrote back that not only are such marriages customary in the South, but that they are also clearly sanctioned by law.

Thus, although the correction made by Professor Thakore does not to a certain extent hold good, the manner in which I drew my conclusion was nevertheless faulty. The fact that what I had presumed happens to be true with regard to Hindu society, may be regarded as an accident. From the fact that the children of a brother and sister are permitted to marry, I had no right to conclude that a girl could marry her maternal uncle. Hence Professor Thakore has indeed done me a sevice.

I can understand the love of the gentlemen who have written to me having regard for my prestige. I thank them for having informed me and I also compliment them for ascertaining the customs and practices of the Provinces in which they happen to reside.

Because such marriages are acceptable in the South, no one should conclude that the attempt to make them acceptable in places where they are prohibited, will be welcomed. The field for marriages is so wide that where it is prohibited among relatives, there is hardly

[1] *Vide* "My Mistake", 6-6-1937

any need for going against the prohibition. The reforms which Hindu society needs are those concerning the breaking of inter-caste barriers. These restrictions are truly detrimental to social progress. Hence it would be a real reform to permit inter-provincial and inter-caste marriages.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 27-6-1937

474. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 27, 1937

CHI. MIRA,

It is a mere sluit which collects and discharges rain water. It therefore fills as rapidly as it discharges. there was hardly 1/2 inch rain, not violent either. But it was enough to fill the sluit rapidly. You know the sluit. It is like a belt round Segaon village. The idea was to bridge it. The bridge was made but the rushing water destroyed the earth-work in front of and behind the bridge. The water might easily have destroyed Khandu's and Prahlad's houses if the rain had continued[1]. Therefore at considerable expense the sluit is reduced to its original state. But there is no rain worth speaking about. And Bombay had already 30 inches!

Ba returns tomorrow. Spinning by the women has restarted. Govind has gone to Kakasaheb at his own instance.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6388. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9854.

[1] The source has "contained".

475. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 27, 1937

CHI. ANAND, VIDYA,

I have your letter.

Vidya must quietly stay there, whether she gets well or not. You cannot find a better place than Bhowali. It is good for the child also. Both of you should study the *Ramayana* and understand it properly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 11067. Courtesy: Anand T. Hingorani

476. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 27. 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

You have mentioned some letter. I don't remember it. If you had asked any question in it, please repeat it. It can be said that now you have sufficient experience of Kanaiyo. If you have been able to form any opinion, please let me know. What is his state of mind? Please write whatever you would like to say about him so that it may be of help to me.

Write to me in detail about your experience of Kamala, too.

Your letter about khadi was very good.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8529. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

477. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 27, 1937

CHI. MANUDI,

I had your letter. You should find time for reading and practising on the *sitar*. Ba and Kano are coming tomorrow. Khan

Saheb and Mehrtaj were occupying Ba's room. Kusum Desai also is coming. Now the house will be full. You had rain there but here we have had none.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

SHRI MANUBEHN
C/O VORA HARIDAS VAKHATCHAND
BEHIND HIGH SCHOOL
RAJKOT C.S., KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2669. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala.

478. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

June 27, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

A fruit famine has now overtaken us here. Today Mohanlal has been asked to send some particular fruit. We have run out of dates. Do you receive boxes of dates regularly? What can I give to Khan Saheb? Have you written about honey? If not, write at once and tell them to send it promptly. Did you write to Kaleshwar Rao? I had asked for *chikoo* and sweet and sour lemon from that place.

Yes, let somebody go at 4.30 to receive Ba. If she does not arrive by that train, then she will come by the next train.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

A temperature chart of Balkrishna is enclosed. Show it to Amtul Salaam and send whatever medicine she gives. He has enough to last only for today. Send back the chart also.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11524

479. LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL

WARDHAGANJ,
June 28, 1937

DEAR SIR MIRZA,

I appreciate your letter[1] . I must not anticipate the Working Committee's decision. I know it will tax all its Patriotic spirit. I am in letter and in spirit praying for God's guidance during those days.

My kindest regards to you, Lady Mirza, Hamayun and the rest of the family.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2180. Also from a copy: G.A. Natesan Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

480. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

June 28, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Yesterday we had some visitors here. They had brought 112 mangoes from the bazaar in Wardha. They were excellent. The price was one and a half rupees for 120. After they had left 112 mangoes, Chhotelal brought some more. Today apples and rose-apples have arrived, and so I shall be able to pull on for some time now.

Send two dozen sour lemons with Janba.[2]

Ba may stay on for today if she wants, but it would be better that she returns while the sky is clear. However, she may do as she pleases. Congratulations to Kusum. Khan Saheb is having fever. Tell Ba that Khan Saheb and Mehrtaj have been allotted her room. Has she any objection? Khan Saheb is impatient to shift. He may have even shifted to Mira Kutir. I am passing your article after revising it.[3] A copy

[1] The letter, dated June 26, read "... I believe that it would be a great disservice to the country and a great disservice to itself, if Congress were to refuse the invitation extended to it in such cordial terms by the Viceroy. It is by accepting office and working, that is, by taking charge of the machinery that Congress can achieve its purpose more rapidly and satisfactorily....

[2] An errand-boy of the Ashram at Wardha

[3] *Vide* "Interview to Capt. Strunk", 3-7-1937

should be sent to Captain. I am sending two more in addition. The rest[1] by noon with Janba.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11525.

481. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*June 28, 1937*][2]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Come tomorrow. It would be better if Ba comes tomorrow but she may do as she likes. Khan Saheb has vacated the room. I am sending the articles. Buy English water-proof. There are other ways no doubt, but don't bother about them. Enclosed is a letter for Kamalnayan. Go and see him off. Is there no other mail today?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11520

482. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 29, 1937

CHI. MIRA,

your drawing[3] is good. Do continue the practice. It would be good recreation for you.

Dr. Dharmavir again warns me that you should hasten slowly. He is confident of effecting a radical cure.

Ba has just come in with Kusum Desai and Kanam. She has a little bit of a fracture in her left foot.

The rains set in properly yesterday. The weather is now quite cool. Wind is blowing strong.

Khan Saheb occupies your hut. He has a little fever. Balvantsinha and Parnerker have gone to buy cows. Three will presently go dry.

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] The addressee used to send small sketches along with her letters to Gandhiji.

My goat is giving very little milk. So we have to procure a goat, too. Thus the family grows all round.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6389. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9855.

483. LETTER TO BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

June 29, 1937

MY DEAR BHARATAN,

I had a chat with Fischer about Rao the dairyman. Others have also talked to me. Parnerkar went to him to give him instructions and examine the ghee. Rao seems to be no worker. He talks too much and nonsense. If he is what Fischer and others describe him to be, he should be sent away.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10120

484. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

June 29, 1937

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

I have your letter. I do not think it is necessary for you to leave the work there as long as you are mentally satisfied and also something is accomplished. I have suggested[1] your leaving Nepal only when you are no longer interested in the work there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6552

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Tulsi Maher", 4-6-1937

485. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 30, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I knew Menckel[1] was a crank but did not know that he was a fool. Of course you are bound to report to me any itrregularity in your health even though I may be able to do nothing. Garlic shouldnever induce loose stools. Dal or some protein or starch food is at bottom.

Do you know Dharmavir? What do you think of him? I quite see that I must not pile any new work on you even though it be a letter to be written to anyone.

Are you not an idoit? You have said nothing new in suggesting that the common language may be written in either script, Devanagari or Persian. You will read my credo[2] in *Harijan*. But the name Hindi will never be changed. You might as well change your own name to please people! Hindi is the original name. It is the utmost one can do to adopt Hindustani violence in the air and this demand for the change of name not by an individual but by an institution is violence which ought not to be submitted to. There is no logic or reason in it. How can I ask an old literary association[3] to change its name without an overwhelmignly just cause? Do you see the point?

Parkinson's letter is good.

The rains have set in properly now. Ba came in yesterday bringing in Kusum–an old Ashram inmate. The weather is alternately cool and warm. When you come do bring your mosquito net, though there are not more than the usual number. I do not want you to run any avoidable risk.

Love.

ROBBER

[PS.]

I have told Balkrishna that you have a teacher for Sanskrit,

From the original: C.W. 3792. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6948

[1] The source has "Mencken".
[2] *Vide* "Hindi v. Urdu", 3-7-1937
[3] Hindi Sahitya Sammelan; *vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 25-6-1937

486. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

June 30, 1937

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I send herewith a postcard from Bhai Soni Balji Talsi. I have not followed what he wants to say in it. I have replied to him that he can get no money from here. He should not give up his profession. If he gets any spare time after doing his work, he may give some of it to service and do what you ask him to do.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4027

487. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

June 30, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

The doctor's explanation seems satisfactory. What weight need we attach to Shankar's allegations? He has always been like that. You do not seem to have read the letter I wrote to him. I have severely reprimanded him, though I have not written all that you said. I will write that, too. Write to Shantikumar and tell him that I will decide now. You can send for a flask from Bombay. How can you get an exactly similar One? The goat seems to be proving a costly affair.I am in a fix. I am sending the letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Since yoiu also would be writing to Kakalbhai, I am not closing the envelope. Received Gokulbhai's postcard. I forgot to tell you. Write to him and tell him that he can certainly fix for the 10th.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11526

488. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON WARDHA,
June 30, 1937

CHI. NIMU,

I got your letter last evening. I am not thinking about you just now. I have no doubt at all in my mind about the rightness of Ramdas going to S.A. I can think of no other way of helping him to build up his body. The state of things you describe is dangerous. He should not in any circumstances miss this opportunity of going to S.A. rather than be bed-ridden here. If he can build up his body into a fine state, everything else will get all right. Your duty is to reassure him. If you remain undecided, he will not be able to go anywhere in peace of mind. There is nothing more to say for the moment. Kanam is doing fine as if he had not left the place at all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

489. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

June,1937

CHI. JAMNALAL,

If you have agreed to pay Rs. 1,000 towards Harjivan's expenses, then please send it by wire. The following is the answer on behalf of the Sangh:

"Writing thousand cover travelling. Regret inbility advance loan."

I understand that you have not given him any assurance about the loan. So I do not see any need for you giving it.

I am sending back Shankar's letter addressed to you. It is good to send him books.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am sending Harjivan's also.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2985

490. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHA,
July 2, 1937

MATHURADAS
CARE STOCKS
BOMBAY

RAMDAS DECIDES GO SOUTH AFRICA[1]. TAKE TWO SECOND-CLASS BERTHS. IF POSSIBLE SECURE JOINT CABIN.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

491. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEGAON,
July 2, 1937

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

The doubt you have raised is extermely pertinent. I cannot say now how I could dicate such a meaningless sentence.[2] Read it as follows: "But it should never be taken that the ancestors of an *adharmaja* were all *dharmaja* themselves or that his future progeny will all be *dharmaja*."

There is no harm in learning and practising hatha yoga for the sake of physical health, but all the instructors are not fully well-versed in it. It has also been my experience that those who do not know the science and techniques of hatha yoga can even cause harm. Moreover, everyone is not capable of performing each and every *asana*. All this simply means that you must use your discretion in the matter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4283. Also S.G. 59

[1] With Herman Kallenbach, a friend from Gandhiji's South African days, who was on a visit to India at this time to see Gandhiji; *vide* also "Letter to Mirabehn", 5-7-1937 to "Letter to Kantilal Gandhi", 5-7-1937

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Krishnachandra", 18-6-1937

492. DISCUSSION WITH AN AMERICAN[1]

SEGAON,
[Before *July 3, 1937*]

GANDHIJI: It involved intensive education, not in the three Rs, but in changed ways of thinking and changed ways of life. To bring about that change in the people's mentality is a Herculean task. But it is such because the way is the non-violent way, the way of persuasion. This method is any day slower than the method of compulsion, but it is also surer and stabler.

AMERICAN: But would it in any way help if the British were to retire? Would you have been better if the British had retired 150 years ago?

I have no doubt. We should begin anew and without at least the political handicap. You talk of the *pax Britannica*. I do not deny that they have introduced education of a sort, have built schools and colleges, and built an unrivalled railway system, But our difficulty is this, that whereas elsewhere all these things have made the countries prosperous, they have brought about an opposite result here. Not only the wealth of the land but even our intelligence has been drained away. The very life-hope is gone. I will not say that a miracle would happen the moment the British retire. Only we shall begin our history anew. India will then have her destiny in her own hands. And mind you we do not want the British to go, if they will stay as friends and voluntary co-operators.

But why, if they don't want this rule, do they tolerate it? Why is a united will lacking?

There are numerous causes which I cannot go into now. All have their share in it, but the root cause is perhaps indefinable. The will is actively absent today, though indefinitely it is there.

Have the Government reserved to themselves power to overrule the people's will because they think that India is incapable of self-government?

[1] This is extracted from "Weekly Letter" by Mahadev Desai, who had reported: "A youthful American was full of questions about the poverty of India, the meaning and reach of the village industries revival programme and the implications of the British rule in India. To one accustomed to quick results, the village reconstruction programme is bound to look a tame affair. But Gandhiji does not hesitate to tell all such people as he does our own people, that the programme is a Herculean task and takes a Herculean resolve to achieve it."

I do not think so, nor do I suspect that even the British think so. If they did so, they would not have drawn up this Constitution. No, it is an honest effort to make Provinces autonomous. Otherwise why should they arm an electorate of 30 millions with the power to vote? The honest effort is, however, vitiated by the fact that simultaneous effort is being made to maintain the British connection practically by force. And this they do for exploiting India,

Harijan 3-7-1937

493. INTERVIEW TO CAPT. STRUNK[1]

SEGOAN,
[Before *July 3, 1937*]

GANDHIJI: What we mean by independence is that we will not live on the sufferance of any people on earth and that there is a big party in India which will die in vindicating this position. But we will not die killing, though we might be killed. It is a novel experiment, I know. Herr Hitler, I know, does not accept the position of human dignity being maintained without the use of force. Many of us feel that it is possible to achieve independence by non-violent means. It would be a bad day for the whole world if we had to wade through blood. If India gains her freedom by a clash of arms, it will indefinitely postpone the day of real peace for the world. History is a record of perpetual wars, but we are trying to make new history,and I say this as I represent the national mind so far as non-violence is concerned. I have reasoned out the doctrine of the sword, I have worked out its possibilities and come to the conclusion that man's destiny is to replace the law of the jungle with the law of conscious love. The aspiration for independence is the aspiration that fires all nations in Europe. But that independence does not exclude voluntary partnership. Imperialistic ambition is inconsistent with partnerhip.

Capt. Strunk had heard vaguely about Gandhiji's view on machines, and Western civilization, Western medicine, etc. He wanted to know them at first hand.

[1] This is extracted from "Weekly Letter" by Mahadev Desai, who had reproted: "Capt. Strunk, representative of the official daily newspaper in Germany and a member of Hitler's staff, visited Segaon with a view to investigate conditions in India. He wanted to know the content of independence and how far people of India seriously meant it."

G. I have said that we cannot accept Western models holusbolus. I do not believe in mechanization of India. I think that rural reconstruction is possible!

STRUNK: Are you lilely to change these views after you have gained your objective of independence?

G. No. These views represent my permanent convictions. But my opposition to machinery, railways, etc., does not mean that as soon as we are independent we should uproot all of them. They will be used for the benefit of the nation instead of the strategic military purpose they are principally meant to fulfil today.

S. Sometimes you direct your speech against Western sanitation and Western surgery. What is your future plan with regard to India?

G. I am glad you have asked the question. I have said nothing with regard to Western sanitation. In fact I derived my idea of rural sanitation from Poore, an English doctor, and I have copied it here. But I have spoken against Western medicine which I have called the concentrated essence of black magic. My view springs out of my non-violence, for my soul rebels against vivisection. You do not know that I had very nearly taken the medical line when in order to respect the wishes of my dead father I took up law. But in South Africa I again thought of medicine. When I was told I should have to do vivisection, my soul rebelled against it. Why should, I said, have to practise cruelty on lower animals which I would never practise upon myself? But I do not despise all medical treatment. I know that we can learn a lot from the West about safe maternity and the care of infants. Our children are born anyhow and most of our women are ignorant of the science of bringing up children. Here we can learn a good deal from the West.

But the West attaches an exaggerated importance to prolonging man's earthly existence. Until the man's last moment on earth you go on drugging him even by injecting. That, I think, is inconsistent with the recklessness with which they will shed their lives in war. Though I am opposed to war, there is no doubt that war induces reckless courage. Well, without ever having to engage in a war I want to learn from you the art of throwing away my life for a noble cause. But I do not want that excessive desire of living that Western medicine seems to encourage in man even at the cost of tenderness for subhuman life. However, I like the emphasis the Western medical science places upon prevention of disease.

S. There is so much over-production of intelligence in India and so much educated unemployment. Could not this army of educated young men be utilized by being sent to the villages?

G. That movement has commenced. But it is only in its infancy. And then there is no over-production of intelligence but over-production of degrees. The brain power has not at all increased, only the art of memorizing has been stimulated, and these degrees can't be carted to the villages. Only the brains, if there are any left, can be used. This reading for degrees has deprived us of initiative. It makes us upfit to go to the villages. The mechanical university study deprives us of the desire for originality; years of memorizing causes a fatigue of the mind that makes most of us fit for clerical work. Nevertheless the village movement has come to stay.

As Capt. Strunk prepared to leave, Gandhiji introduced him to Mr. Kallenbach.

G. Here is a live Jew and a German Jew, if you please. He was a hot pro-German during the War.

Capt. Strunk was surprised to see a German Jew sitting there barebodied and in a khadi dhoti.

G. Then I should like to understand from you why the Jews are being persecuted in Germany.

Capt. Strunk tried to explain. So many Jews had taken part during the War and Germany had nothing to say against them. It is the Jews who overran Germany after the War, who ousted Germans from their jobs, and who "guided" the fight against Hitler that were not being tolerated.

S. I personally think we have just overdone it. That's the mistake revolutions always do. Oh, there is such a lot of hate in Europe. And it has reached its climax in Spain. It is cruel, heartless, stupid, inhuman–this Spanish War. It can't be compared with any other war.

Harijan, 3-7-1937

494. HINDI v. *URDU*

A correspondent says a great deal is being written against me in the Urdu Press in regard to my attitude towards Urdu. They even go so far to suggest that though I speak about Hindu-Muslim unity I am the most communally minded of all the Hindus.

I have no desire to defend myself against the suggestion referred to by my correspondent. My life must be my credentials on my attitude regarding the Hindu-Muslim question.

But the Hindi-Urdu question is an evergreen. Though I have expressed my views often enough on this question, they will bear repetition. I shall simply enunciate my belief without advancing any argument in support.

I believe that

1. Hindi, Hindustani and Urdu are words denoting the same language spoken in the North by Hindus and Mussalmans and written in either Devanagari or Perisian script;

repetition. I shall simply enunciate my belief without advancing any argument in support.

I believe that

1. Hindi, Hindustani and Urdu are words denoting the same language spoken in the North by Hindus and Mussalmans and written in either Devanagari or Persian script;

2. Hindi was the name for this language used both by Hindus and Mussalmans before the word Urdu came to be used;

3. the word Hindustani also came to be used later (the date unknown to me) to denote the same speech;

4. both Hindus and Mussalmans should try to speak the language as understood by the vast mass of the people in the North;

5. at the same time many Hindus and many Mussalmans will persist in using Sanskrit words and persian or Arabic words respectively and exclusively. This we shall have to bear so long as mutual distrust and aloofness continue. Those Hindus who care to know a certain class of Mussalman thought will study Urdu written in Persian script, and similarly those Mussalmans who care to know a certain class of Hindu thought will study Hindi written in Devanagari script;

6. ultimately when our hearts have become one and we all are proud of India as our country, rather than our Provinces, and shall know and practise different religions as derived from one common source, as we know and relish different fruits of the same tree, we shall reach a common language with a common script whilst we shall retain provincial languages for provincial use;

7. the attempt to force one script or one form of Hindi on any Province or district or people is detrimental to the best interest of the country;

8. the common language question should be viewed apart from the religious differences;

9. Roman script cannot and should not be the common script of India. The rivalry can only be berween Persian and Devanagari. Apart from its intrinsic merit the latter should be the common script for all India because most of the provincial scripts have their origin in Devanagari and it is for them by far the easiest to learn. At the same time no attempt whatsoever should be made to foist it upon Mussalmans and for that matter on those others who do not know it.

10. I served the cause of Urdu, if it may be distinguished from Hindi, when at Indore[1] the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan at my instance accepted the definition given in Clause I, and when at Nagpur[2] at my instance the Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad accepted the definition and called the common langugage of inter-provincial intercourse Hindi or Hindustani, thus giving fullest scope to both Mussalmans and Hindus to identify themselves with the effort to enrich the common language and to interpret the best provincial thought in that language.

Harijan, 3-7-1937

495. A PLEA FOR THE VILLAGE CART

Shri Ishverbhai S. Amin of Baroda sends me a long note on animal power v. machine power. From it I copy the following relevant portion[3] .

> Animal power is not costlier than machine power in fields or short distance work and hence can compete with the latter in most cases. The present-day tendency is towards discarding animal power in preference to machine power.
>
> Take for example a bullock-driven cart, costing Rs. 100 and Rs. 200 for the bullocks. The bullocks can drive the cart at least 15 miles per day with a load of 16 Bengal maunds on rough sandy village roads. This service will cost.... in total Rs. 1/6 per day., A one ton motor-lorry will cost for 15 mles .... Rs. 2/12, i. e., Rs 1/6 per cartload of 16 Bengal maunds .... A moror-lorry may compete when it has to carry loads at a stretch for a long distance on a good metal road, where bullock carts seem too slow and uneconomical.... It is the slowness only which goes againjst the bulocks cart.... If a farmer has his own cart and travels in it, he has not to spend anything in the form of ready money but uses the produce of his own field in producing power by feeding bullocks. Really grass and grain should be looked upon by the farmer as his petrol, and the cart the motor-lorry, and bullocks the engine converting grass into power. The machine will neither consume grass nor will it yield manure,

[1] In April 1935.
[2] In April 1936.
[3] Only extracts are reproduced here.

an article of vast importance. Then the villager has to have his bullocks; in any case he has his grass. And if he has a cart, he is maintaining the village carpenter and the blacksmith; and if he is keeping a cow, he is maintaining a hydrogenation plant converting vagetabele oil into solid butter or ghee and also at the same time a bullock- manufacturing machine-thus serving a twofold purpose.

The invasion of the motor-lorry may or may not succeed. It would be wisdom if intelligent workers will study the pros and cons and definitely guide the villagers. Shri Ishverbhai's note should provoke the thought of all village workers in the direction indicated in it.

Harijan, 3-7-1937

496. WHAT SHOULD BE DONE?

The letter, notice and application quoted below[1] are well worth reading.

I have omitted names and addresses. The correspondent who has written this letter is devoted to ahimsa. This question is pertinent. One who resists the oppressor is, to some extent, saved; but one who has no strength to resist gets beaten. What should a devotee of ahimsa do in such circumstances? Should the oppressed be advised to hit back or at least take the matter to the court? Both these proceedings are lawful. The law allows a person to defend himself if he is illegally assaulted. He of course has the right to go to the court.

But a devotee of ahimsa will not give such advice. He believes that tit for tat is not the true way of ending oppression in the world. The world has hitherto followed this path; but it has not reduced oppression-only its forms may have changed.

As devotee of ahimsa will advise the oppressed to resort to non-co-operation. No one can be compelled to slave for another. Hence those Harijans who are oppressed should learn to quit the oppressors' lands. The questions naturally arises: Where should they go after quitting these lands? It is the duty of a Harijan *sevak* to find some work or other for such helpless Harijans. This should not be difficult. The path of ahimsa is no doubt difficult, but its ultimate result is permanent and beneficial to both. The world has been returning blow for a blow, but it has neither enhanced happiness not removed injustice and oppression. My experience tells me that the only way to remove these is ahimsa.

[1] Not reproduced here. They described the harassment of Harijan labourrers by landlords in villages. The correspondent had asked whether the labourers should be advised to retaliate.

What I have said is the ultimate remedy. But after deciding that blow is no answer for blow and before advising non-co-operation, the non-violent worker will approach the landlords and endeavour to explain to them their duty. It may well be that the landlords may melt a little. Public opinion can be roused against such oppression when the oppressor becomes stubborn and refuses to listen to anyone; then the best remedy is non-co-operation, that is, getting on without him.

It need not be feared that when oppressed Chamars resort to non-co-operation the other castes would join hands with the oppressor. At the moment the question is only of the oppressed. If others do join hands, they too can be taught the lesson of non-co-operation.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 3-7-1937

497. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHAGANJ,
July 3, 1937

MATHURADAS
CARE STOCKS
BOMBAY

KALLENBACH CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION VACCINATION. HAS NEVER BEEN VACCINATED EXCEPT DURING SCHOOL DAYS. INQUIRE WHETHER DEPOSITED RETURN PASSAGE OR SOME OTHER CONDITION WILL FREE HIM FROM COMPULSORY VACCINATION.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

498. HOLIDAYS

Students have always the problem of how to spend their school vacations. Shri Narnadas Gandhi's letter quoted below[1] tells us how some students of the Rajkot National School spent their vacation.

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had recounted how two students spun 200 hanks during their vacation lasting 62 days. Ten students and one teacher lived a very simple life working amongst six villages near Rajkot. In this group, there were two Harijan boys and one Khoja boy and the response from the

I would look upon this programme as a commendable one. In this way students gained prectical knowledge and developed their intellect, as the work they did seems to have been done intelligently and with keen zest. Very often during vacations students spend huge sums on railway fares and travel to distant places and return empty-handed. It will be no small gain if they come to know the villages and the villagers in their own neighbourhood, serve them and carry out propaganda for the charkha and sanitation.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 4-7-1937

499. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

SEGAON,
July 4, 1937

CHI. PARIKSHITLAL,

I got your letter regarding the Bhangi brethren. It was good that you wrote. The responsibility of interpreting Thakkar Bapa's award is going to fall on me. I will see what I can do.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3963. Also C.W. 145. Courtesy: Parikshitlal L. Majmudar

500. LETTER TO MAHADEV DASAI

July 4, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

I send herewith an article which is ready. Bhansalibhai will stay there for some time. Do take rest. I will manage the things here. The rest [of the material] is getting ready. It will not be necessary to get another copy of the article[2] on toddy since it is from Gujarati and, therefore, [*Harijan*] *Sevak* will not need one.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11528.

villagers was very encouraging. The spinning campaign, in which students did commendable work, was also successful. The expenses incurred during the trip were met by the students themselves out of their earnings through sale of khadi. As a result of this camp, three Harijan boys and one Khoja boy had decided to stay in the school.

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel",22-7-1937.

[2] *Vide*, "The Use and Abuse of Toddy", 19-9-1937.

501. LETTER TO GULABCHAND JAIN

July 4, 1937

BHAI GULABCHAND,

I have your letter as well as a copy of the correspondence. I have no idea what I can do in this matter. We should be content with whatever can be accomplished by a pure agitation conducted locally.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7743

502. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON,
July 5, 1937

CHI. MIRA,

You will understand absence of letters from me during these days.[1] Your drawings I like very well. Hope you are flourishing.

Kallenbach went to Wardha in the morning. Ramdas is accompanying him to South Africa. They embark on Wednesday. Kandu and four or five others come from Varoda to spin. They are being paid by Nalwadi[2] according to the Nalwadi scale. They are happy. So you see the seed sown by you has sprouted and may bear ample fruit. No more today.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6390. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9856.

503. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

July 5, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have no time. But I dare not leave you alone. Therefore this is just to acknowledge your letters. Pyarelal must have written to you. I shall try to send you a wire[3] as you desire.

[1] Gandhiji was busy with the Congress Working Committee meeting.
[2] Nalwadi Ashram of Vinoba Bhave.
[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Amrit Kaur", 7-7-1937

If the spot near the ear shows signs of oozing, you should give it steam and try ice, if you won't take the trouble of having an earth bandage. You should bring the steaming apparatus with you when you come. Mine is not with me just now.

Hope your play will go off well if only for the Harijan cause.

Jawaharlal is looking better and cheerful. We had good two days.

Ramdas goes with Kallenbach to South Africa, Kallenbach paying all the expenses. He has plenty of money and my relations with him warrant my accepting his offer.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3793. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6949

504. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

July 5, 1937

CHI. PREMA,

This is just to tell you that a copy of *Gitai*[1] has been sent by the earlier post. You must have received it. The rest when I get time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10391. Also C.W. 6830. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak.

505. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

July 5, 1937

CHI. KANTI,

Nowadays I am not regular in correspondence and hence your letter has remained unanswered. But I will write a few lines today at any rate.

I suppose Bal himself must have written to you about his having settled in Karachi.

Kallenbach left for Bombay today. He will sail for South Africa on Wednesday. Ramdas is going with him. These days his health has deteriorated still further. He can hardly eat anything. He, therefore,

[1] Vinoba Bhave's metrical rendering in Marathi of the *Bhagavad Gita*

agreed to go to South Africa. Kallenbach will come again in November or December for three months. He may stay even longer. He lived in utmost simplicity till the very last day.

Yesterday Segaon became almost empty. That is, Khan Saheb and Mehrtaj left, and now Kallenbach also has left.

Kusumbehn Desai is here. Amtul Salaam was to be operated upon for tonsillitis. But as there was sugar in the urine, the surgeon postponed the operation. Let us see what happens now. Most probably she will go to Trivandrum after the meeting of the Working Committee.

I hope you are getting on well. Is the food all right? The classes also must have started. I suppose they are starting today.

Did I write to you that there was a crack in Ba's leg bone?[1] She is confined to bed. There is no fever or any other complication.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7325. Courtesy : Kantilal Gandhi.

506. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 5, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

My comment was not about what you wrote regarding Maulana, but was about the quotation from Maulana's statement. What you have given is all right, but in such matters that is not enough. It would be a different thing if he himself asked for it to be published. The best course for us is to keep silent.

What you say about Evelyn Underhill is correct.[2] Today I have sent you ample material, so there is no need for you to overexert yourself.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 28-6-1937

[2] "In order that the students may learn the proper way to understand and appreciate a religion other than their own", the addressee had quoted in his "Weekly Letter" for *Harijan*, 10-7-1937, the following from E, Underhill's book *Worship*: "All worship was to him sacred, since he believed that in its most degraded forms, among the most ignorant and foolish of worshippers, there has yet been some true

A shourt article[1] by me is enclosed.

I have had to detain janba for a letter or two. What else could I do?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11529.

507. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

July 5, 1937

CHi. Manilal-sushila,

I got your letter. This will be carried by Ramdas. You two brothers may discuss the problem and do what you think best. I want to see Ramdas's physique as strong as it was before. Today I have no time to write more. And where is the need, when two persons[2] are going there just after meeting me?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4865.

seeking after the Divine, and that between these and the most glorious ritual on the highest philosophic certainty, there lies so small a space that we may believe the saints in Paradise regard it with a smile."

[1] *Vide* "Instructive Figures"10-7-1937

[2] Kallenbach and Ramdas Gandhi.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

RESOLUTION PASSED AT A.I.C.C. MEETING, DELHI[1]

March 16, 1937

The All-India Congress Committee records its high appreciation of the magnificent response of the country to the call of the Congress during the recent elections and the approval by the electorate of the Congress policy and programme. The Congress entered these elections with its objective of independence and its total rejection of the new Constitution; and the demand for a Constituent Assembly to frame India's Constitution. The declared Congress policy was to combat the new Act and end it. The electorate has, in an overwhelming majority, set its seal of approval on this policy and programme, and the new Act, therefore, stands condemned and utterly rejected by the people through the self-same democratic process which has been invoked by the British Government, and the people have further declared that they desire to frame their own constitution, based on national independence, through the medium of a Constituent Assembly elected by adult franchise. This Committee, therefore, demands on behalf of the people of India that the new Constitution be withdrawn.

In the event of the British Government still persisting with the new Constitution in defiance of the declared will of the people, the All-India Congress Committee desire to impress upon all Congress members of the Legislatures that their work inside and outside the Legislatures must be based on the fundamental Congress policy of combating the new Constitution and seeking to end it, a policy on the basis of which they sought the suffrage of the electorate and won their overwhelming victory in elections. That policy must inevitably lead to deadlocks with the British Government and bring out still further the inherent antagonism between British Imperialism and Indian Nationalism and expose the autocratic nature of the new Consititution.[2]

THE BACKGROUND

While the British Governments' reform as proposed in the Government of India Act (1935) had been totally rejected by the Bombay Congress session, at the Working Committee meeting held at Allahabad in April, 1936, the members differed widely in their views on the subject of office-acceptance. In the absence of a consensus, it was decided to review the matter after the elections in February, 1937. When the results of the elections were announced, the Congress had the majority of seats in five Provinces, namely, Madras, the United Provinces, the Central Provinces, Bihar and Orissa. It was the biggest single Party in four Provinces,

[1] Vide "Letter to Amritlal T. Nanavati", 15-3-1937 and "Interview to the Press", 19-3-1937

[2] This was followed by the clause on office-acceptance.

namely, Bombay, Bengal, Assam and North-West Frontier Province. In the Legislative Assmeblies of Sind and the Punjab, the Congress was in a minority. The following extract from the *The History of the Indian National Congress*, shows the Party position in various Assemblies:

PROVINCE	TOTAL NO. OF SEATS IN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY	SEATS WON BY THE CONGRESS
Madras	215	159
Bihar	152	98
Bengal	250	54
C. P.	112	70
Bombay	175	86
U. P.	228	134
Punjab	175	18
N.W.F.P	50	19
Sind	60	7
Assam	108	33
Orissa	60	36

The following is extracted from the resolution passed by the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee in Madras on March 10, 1937:

"The Tamil Nadu Congress Committee is convinced on good grounds that the people of this Province, who have expressed their unqualified confidence in the Congress leadership, are strongly and definitely in favour of the Congress Party accepting ministerial responsibilities with a view to carrying out the policy of the Congress and the programme laid down in the Congress manifesto, and that they will be extremely disappointed if any other decision is adopted.

"The Provincial Congress Committee is of the opinion that accepting the ministerial offices by the Congress in Legislatures will strengthen the Congress Party and develop the sanctions necessary for achieving the Congress goal, by creating the psychology of confidence between the masses and the forces of repression that have been hitherto employed against them by the bureaucracy . . .

"The Provincial Congress Committee therefore is clearly of the opinion that in all the Provinces where Congressmen are in majorities in Provincial Legislatures, so as to enable them to function as stable Ministries without having to depend upon doubtful non-Congress groups, the Congressmen should accept ministerial offices on behalf of the Party."

In his speech on the A.I.C.C. resolution, C. Rajagopalachari said:

" . . . Let us not distrust each other. Do not think we are hankering after jobs . . . . When they went to the Governor they had to tell him what they proposed to

do and ask him if he would use his special powers. If the Governor refused to give an answer, they would come back. If he said he would use them, then also as self-respecting men they would come back; but if he said he would not use them, they would take his words at their face value. If later he broke those words, they could come out. . ."

Jawaharlal Nehru said that "though he also continued the opposition . . . he eventually agreed again in deference to the wishes of Mahatma Gandhi and with a view to keeping up solidarity, which, in his view, was essential to fight the new Constitution."

The A.I.C.C. then "took up consideration of the draft of the oath which every Congress Legislator will be required to take affirming allegiance to Congress and the country on the first day of the National Convention Session." The draft, prepared by Jawaharlal Nehru and revised by Gandhiji, read:

"I, Member of this All-India Convention, pledge myself to the service of India and to work in the Legislatures and outside for the independence of India and the ending of the exploitation and poverty of her people.

"I pledge myself to work under the discipline of the Congress for the furtherance of Congress ideals and objectives to the end that India may be free and independent and her millions freed from the heavy burdens they suffer from."

Pattabhi Sitaramayya explains thus the question of "assurances":

"Apart from the question of the academic and theoretical issues involved in this affair, it would be just as well to study in detail the significance of the demands made by the Congress that the Governors shall not use their special powers of interference or set aside the advice of Ministers in regard to the constitutional activities. These special powers relate to certain groups, interests and areas. The groups are the minorities, the interests are the vested interests of the British and the areas are the excluded and the semi-excluded areas in British India, and the Indian States. By this demand it is meant that the Governors should only act like the Governors in the Provinces of Australia (Section 51). They should not have the power to dismiss Ministers at their pleasure, that the salaries should be fixed as desired by the leader of the House (Section 50), that they should not preside over the Council of Ministers, that they should not interfere or make Ordinances (Section 55-88), or Acts on grounds of menace to peace and tranquillity, that they had nothing to do with the appointment of Advocate-General (Section 56), or with the making of the police rules:

(Section 57) with violent crimes

(" 59) with the framing of rules of business allocating the duties of Ministers

(" 62) dissolving the Assembly

(" 74) introduction of Bills

(" 75) assenting to Bills

(” 78) inclusion of extra amounts of expenditure in the budget

(” 82) introducing a Bill or an amendment to a Bill increasing or imposing any tax or borrowing money except on the recommendation of Ministers

(” 84) making rules for legislative procedure with the consultation of the Speaker

(” 86) interference with any Bill as trenching upon Governor’s special charge

(” 88) Governor’s Ordinances

(” 90) Governor’s Acts

(” 92) Excluded Areas

(” 258) the privileges of Services.”

The Hindustan Times, 17-3-1937, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 11-3-1937, 18-3-1937 and 19-3-1937; also *The History of the Indian National Congress*, Vol. II, pp. 39 and 46-7

APPENDIX II

LORD LOTHIAN’S LETTER TO “THE TIMES”[1]

The statement[2] seems to be based on a complete misunderstanding of the way in which the system of responsible government works in practice and of paragraphs 7 and 8 of the Instrument of Instructions to Governors.

Responsible government has been the method by which the Canadian and Australian Federation and South Africa and New Zealand each have attained full national self-government by constitutional means, often in the early days against the opposition both of Governors and the British Government. In every case the Governor or Governor-General was endowed with veto powers and other responsibilities of his own.

I venture to assert that in no case has a Ministry possessed of a majority in the Legislature asked, and that it certainly never received, any assurance that the Governor would not use his special powers. Yet these powers and responsibilities in the hands of Governors have not prevented steady advance to full self-government.

That is because the issue turns not so much on the legal power as on the responsibility—that responsibility, Mr. Gandhi once told me himself, was India’s first need to exercise.

I do not think, therefore, that Mr. Gandhi had hitherto any legitimate ground for saying that the British Government flouted the majority or failed to give effect to the principle of provincial autonomy.

[1] *Vide* “Statement to the Press”, 10-4-1937

[2] *Vide* “Stateent to the Press”, 30-3-1937

Governors simply acted in the manner always contemplated at the Round Table Conference and repeatedly proclaimed by Ministers as being the ordinary practice under the system of responsible Government.

I am sure that British public opinion hopes and expects that majorities returned by the new electorate will take over responsibility under the Constitution for the Government of their Provinces. If Congress leaders take the course ordinarily adopted under responsible government and, without asking for assurances, accept office, formulate their practical proposals of reform, pass them into law and advise the Governor that they will find themselves endowed with both power and responsibility for the Government of their Provinces, I am sure Mr. Gandhi will find by following this step that he will have taken a tremendous step towards that transference of power from the bureaucracy to the largest and fullest democracy known in the world which he hopes to bring about.

The Indian Annual Register, 1937, Vol. I p. 244

APPENDIX III

EXTRACTS FROM THE CONGRESS ELECTION MANIFESTO[1]

August 22, 1936

For more than fifty years the Indian National Congress has laboured for the freedom of India, and ever, as its strength grew and it came to represent more and more the nationalist urge of the Indian people and their desire to put an end to exploitation by British Imperialism, it came into conflict with the ruling power. During the recent years the Congress has led great movements for national freedom and has sought to develop sanctions whereby such freedom can be achieved by peaceful mass action and the disciplined sacrifice and suffering of the Indian people. To the lead of the Congress the Indian people have responded in an abundant measure and thus confirmed their inherent right to freedom. That struggle for freedom still continues and must continue till India is free and independent.

These years have seen the development of an economic crisis in India and the world which has led to a progressive deterioration in the condition of all classes of our people. The poverty-stricken masses are today in the grip of an even more abject poverty and destitution, and this growing disease urgently and insistently demands a radical remedy. Poverty and unemployment have long been the lot of our peasantry and industrial workers; today they cover and crush other classes also—the artisan, the trader, the small merchant, the middle-class intelligentsia. For the vast millions of our countrymen the problem of achieving national independence has become an

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lilavati Asar", 15-4-1937 and "Speech at Gandhi Seva Sangh Meeting, Hundli- III", 20-4-1937

urgent one, for only independence can give us the power to solve our economic and social problems and end the exploitation of our masses.

The growth of the national movement and the economic crisis have resulted in the intense repression of the Indian people and the suppression of civil liberties, and the British Government has sought to strengthen the imperialist bonds that envelop India and to prepetuate the domination and exploitation of the Indian people by enacting the Government of India Act of 1935. . . .

In the international sphere crisis follows crisis in an ever-deepening degree and world-war hangs over the horizon. The Lucknow Congress called the attention of the nation to this grave situation in India and the world, and declared its opposition to the participation of India in an imperialist war and its firm resolve to continue the struggle for the independence of India.

The Congress rejected in its entirety the Constitution imposed upon India by the new Act and declared that no constitution imposed by outside authority and no constitution which curtails the sovereignty of the people of India, and does not recognize their right to shape and control fully their political and economic future, can be accepted. Such a constitution, in its opinion, must be based on the independence of India as a nation and it can only be framed by a Constituent Assembly.

The Congress has always laid stress on the development of the strength of the people and the forging of sanctions to enforce the people's will. To this end it has carried on activities outside the Legislatures. The Congress holds that real strength comes from thus organizing and serving the masses.

Adhering to this policy and objective, but in view of the present situation and in order to prevent the operation of forces calculated to strengthen alien domination and exploitation, the Congress decides to contest seats in the coming elections for the provincial Legislatures. But the purpose of sending Congressmen to the Legislatures under the new Act is not to co-operate in any way with the Act but to combat it and seek to end it. It is to carry out, in so far as is possible, the Congress policy of rejection of the Act, and to resist British imperialism in its attempts to strengthen its hold on India and its exploitation of the Indian people. In the opinion of the Congress, activity in the Legislatures should be such as to help in the work outside, in the strengthening of the people, and in the development of the sanctions which are essential to freedom.

The new Legislatures, hedged and circumscribed by safeguards and special powers for the protection of British and other vested interests, cannot yield substantial benefits, and they are totally incapable of solving the vital problems of poverty and unemployment. But they may well be used by British imperialism for its own purposes to the disadvantage and injury of the Indian people. The Congress representatives will seek to resist this, and to take all possible steps to end the various regulations, Ordinances and Acts which oppress the Indian people and smother their will to freedom. They will work for the establishment of civil liberty, for the release of political prisoners and detenus, and to repair the wrongs done to the peasantry and to public institutions in the course of national struggle.

The Congress realizes that independence cannot be achieved through these Legislatures, nor can the problem of poverty and unemployment be effectively

tackled by them. Nevertheless the Congress places its general programme before the people of India so that they may know what it stands for and what it will try to achieve, whenever it has the power to do so . . .

Pending the formulation of a fuller programme, the Congress reiterates its declaration made at Karachi—that it stands for a reform of the system of land tenure and rent and an equitable adjustment of the burden on agricultural land, giving immediate relief to the smaller peasantry by a substantial reduction of agricultural rent and revenue now paid by them and exempting uneconomic holdings from payment of rent and revenue. . . .

The communal decision, which forms part of the new Act, has led to much controversy and the Congress attitude towards it has been misunderstood by some people. The rejection in its entirety of the new Act by the Congress inevitably involves the rejection of the communal decision. Even apart from the Act as a whole the communal decision is wholly unacceptable as being inconsistent with independence and the principle of democracy. . . .

The Congress therefore, holds that the right way to deal with the situation created by the communal decision is to intensify our struggle for independence and, at the same time, to seek a common basis for an agreed solution which helps to strengthen the unity of India. . . .

The question of accepting Ministers or not in the new Legislatures was postponed for a decision by the Lucknow Congress. The A.I.C.C. is of opinion that it will be desirable for this decision to be taken after the elections. What- ever the decision on this question might be, it must be remembered that, in any event, the Congress stands for the rejection of the new Act, and for no co-operation in its working. The object remains the same—the ending of the Act. With a view to this end every endeavour will be made to prevent the introduction and functioning of the federal part of the scheme, which is intended to perpetuate the domination of imperialist interests and the feudal interests of the States over the whole country and prevent all progress towards freedom. It must be borne in mind that the new provincial Assemblies will form the electorate for the proposed federal central Legislature and the composition of those provincial Legislatures will materially affect the fate of the federal Constitution. . . .

With this great and inspiring goal before us, for which so many men and women of India have suffered and sacrificed their all under the banner of the Congress, and for which today thousands of our countrymen are suffering silently and with brave endurance, we call upon our people with full hope and confidence to rally to the cause of the Congress, of India, of freedom.

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru, Vol.7 pp. 459-63.

APPENDIX IV

LORD ZETLAND'S SPEECH[1]

May 6, 1937

If a quasi-legal formula could be devised to regulate the varied and changing relationships between the Governor and his Ministry, it would have been embodied in the Act. It was just because there was no such formula that it was emphasized again and again in the course of the discussions preceding the Bill that it would be the spirit in which the Constitution was worked that would be of the first importance for its success. It is here that such unfortunate misunderstandings have arisen. In some quarters a great deal more has been read into that part of the Act which imposes certain obligations upon a Governor that it actually contains.

In its most recent pronouncement, the Congress declared that the past record and the present attitude of the British Government showed that without the assurances demanded a popular Ministry would be exposed to constant irritating interference. This differs so profoundly from the picture of a popular Ministry functioning under the Act as I have always seen it that it is perhaps desirable that I should describe the working of the Constitution in Indian Provinces as I always contemplated it. Since I was a member not only of the Select Committee, but the Round Table Conference, I may claim to know something of the intentions of those who framed the measure and the spirit in which it was conceived.

First let it not be supposed that the field of Government may be divided into two parts in which the Governor and Ministry operate separately at the risk of clashes between them. The essence of the new Constitution is that the initiative and responsibility for the whole Government of the Province, though in form vested in the Governor, passes to the Ministry as soon as it takes office. It will be the Governor's duty to help Ministers in their task in every way, particularly by his political experience or administrative knowledge.

The reserved powers of which so much has been made by the Congress will not normally be in operation; indeed they only come into the picture if he considers that the carefully limited special responsibilities laid upon him by the Act and impressed upon him by the Instrument of Instructions are involved, but even if the question of their use does arise—here is emphasized the spirit in which it was intended that the Constitution should be worked—it would be altogether wrong to assume that a Governor would immediately set himself in open opposition to his Ministry.

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Associated Press of India", 6-5-1937, "Letter to Motila Roy", 14-5-1937, "Whose is the Blame", 15-5-1937, "Letter to Vidya A. Hingorani",16-5-1937, "Letter to Lord Lothian", 24-6-1937 and "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 7-7-1937

That is the last thing in the world that I should either expect or desire. A Governor whose advice and support has been valuable to a Ministry in the conduct of its own affairs will surely be able to lay his own difficulties before them the moment he sees a risk that he and his Ministers may not see eye to eye in a matter for which special responsibility has been laid upon him by parliament. Just as Ministers can count upon the assistance of the Governor in their difficulties, so could he in his turn rely upon receiving the sympathetic consideration of his Ministers for a difficulty in his own position which, maybe, could be met by some modification of their proposals that would not materially affect the Ministry's programme.

In any case a discussion of the matter between men working together for a common purpose is likely at least to secure that points of difference between them are narrowed. It will then be for each having regard to the interests of the Province as a whole to consider whether the points of difference so narrowed and defined justify a break in a fruitful relationship. It would doubtless be too much to hope that occasions will never arise in which neither side can with good conscience give way. But if my picture of the working of Government under the Act is true and if the relations between the Governor and his Ministry are those of partners in a common enterprise, there can be no possible question of the Governors interfering constantly and embarrassingly in the responsibilities and work of the Ministries.

It is certainly not the intention that Govenors by a narrow or legalistic interpretation of their own responsibilities should trench upon the wide power which it was the purpose of parliament to place in the hands of Ministries and which it is our desire they should use in the furtherance of the programmes which they advocated. In the working of the Constitution as far as it at present is possible to judge, I find happy confirmation of the picture as I have always seen it.

Both in the Provinces in which Ministries are working with majorities in the Legislatures and those in which minority Ministries are functioning, a bold programme has been drawn up as far as I know without the smallest attempt on the part of any Governor to interfere.

Is it too much to hope that those who have so far hesitated to accept responsibilities of office from a mistaken sense of fear lest they should be unduly hampered in their tasks will derive reassurance and encouragement from the object-lesson provided by the actual working of the Constitution in their midst? I need hardly say that I hope devoutly and in all sincerity that it may be so.

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-5-1937

APPENDIX V

KOODALMANIKKAM TEMPLE CONTROVERSY[1]

At Irinjalakuda in the Cochin State there is an ancient and important Hindu temple known as the Koodalmanikkam Devaswom. The Devaswom owns extensive lands in Travancore, Cochin and Malabar. The management of the affairs of the Temple, both spiritual and temporal, is vested in a person who is designated the Thachudaya Kaimal which literally means the Chief of Lord, who owns the building (Temple). This person is appointed by His Highness the Maharaja of Travancore in exercise of His Highness's immemorial right recognized and confirmed by the treaties between Travancore and Cochin in 1761, 1765 and 1805.

The nomination and consecration of the Kaimal are no mere secular acts but are attended with elaborate ceremonies which have deep religious significance and are relevant in indicating the status of the Kaimal in relation to the Temple. . . . By virtue of the nomination and consecration ceremonies, the nominee, who was originally a Nair by birth, becomes clothed with the spiritual dignity and status of the highest Brahmin, and his spiritual eminence is considered superior even to that of His Highness the Maharaja of Cochin. For according to tradition even his Highness the Maharaja of Cochin has to touch the pole of the Kaimal's palanquin just when the Kaimal enters it to be taken in procession round the Temple. He assumes the name of the deity and is called *Manikkam Keralan* and manages the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Devaswom. When he dies purificatory ceremonies are performed in the Temple and Brahmins perform the cremation ceremony; and *sraddham* for the dead Kaimal is performed in the Temple. The idea is that with the consecration the Kaimal becomes the visible representative of the presiding deity.

With the death of a former Kaimal in 1850, disputes arose as to the right of the Maharaja of Travancore to appoint the successor. The contention was put forward by Cochin that the Kaimal had no right of management of the Temple and that the right to nominate the Kaimal could be exercised by Travancore only when the Temple building itself stood in need of repair. Travancore repudiated this plea and asserted the right of the Maharaja of Travancore to appoint a Kaimal to be in management of the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Temple whenever that office fell vacant. The matter was referred to arbitration; and after protracted enquiry, the Abritrator Mr. J.C. Hannyngton decided that Cochin's contentions were untenable, that the Travancore nominee had entire management and control of the whole of the Temple concerns and its endowments. . . . The Kaimal was then appointed and duly consecrated, but Cochin again contested before its own local courts the right of the Kaimal to institute suits on behalf of the Devaswom or to collect the rents and profits independently of the *Yogakkars,* who, it was alleged, were still the owners of the Temple. . . . Travancore contended that the Kaimal was the supreme spiritual and temporal authority of the Koodalmanikkam Temple and had the sole right of

[1]*Vide* pp. 142, 177 and 228. Only extracts are reproduced here.

management of all affairs concerning the Temple and that the status and powers of the Kaimal did not depend on the pronouncement of the Municipal Courts of Cochin. . . .

The Madras Government accepted the contentions of the Travancore Government. . . . The Resident was directed to advise the Cochin Durbar to restore to the Kaimal by legislation or proclamation the powers of which he had been found to have been deprived by the judicial decisions in Cochin. The Cochin Durbar took the matter in appeal before the Secretary of State who confirmed the decision of the Madras Government.

Meanwhile, the Kaimal who was then in office died and another Kaimal had to be appointed. . . . The States could not agree as to the best method of providing such control and eventually, after long-pending negotiations, it was agreed that the British Resident might be constituted as the Controlling Authority with reference specially to the management of the properities and incomes belonging to the Devaswom.

A scheme of management was accordingly drawn up and agreed to by all the parties concerned in which the spiritual authority of the Kaimal as "the chief religious authority to clear all doubts in connection with the internal management of the temple" was expressly affirmed and provision was made whereby (a) the Kaimal was not to exceed a certain scale of personal expenditure prescribed for him, (b) the Kaimal had to keep correct accounts of all receipts and expenditure and submit financial statements, as audited, to the Governments of Travancore and Cochin and to the Controlling Authority, (c) the Kaimal was subject to be removed by the Controlling Authority, from the management of the Devaswom properties and incomes if, on enquiry in the manner prescribed in the scheme, the Kaimal was found guilty of mismanagement and misconduct which rendered his further continuance in control of the Temple undesirable. The only right of the *Yogakkars* recognized in the scheme was that the annual accounts should be read out from the Temple to the *Yogakkar*s on a prescribed day of every year.

This, in brief, is the present position of the Kaimal; and the Kaimal now in office functions under the provisions of the scheme outlined above. It will thus be clear that after a dispute which lasted for over seventy years the status and functions of the Kaimal, both spiritual and temporal, were finally settled when the proclamation and scheme of management were promulgated in 1917. Everything was calm and smooth until some time after the Travancore Temple-entry Proclamation.

There was no question that the Kaimal was not the supreme spiritual authority to regulate and settle all matters of a religious nature. But when *tantris* who had officiated in Travancore temples entered and officiated in the Koodalmanikkam Temple, Cochin revived the contention as to the *Yogakkar*'s right to control the Kaimal's action in regard to religious practices and to issue directions to him. On representations made by some of them, His Highness the Maharaja of Cochin declared on the 15th April that the Temple was polluted because a *tantri* who officiated in a Travancore temple which was open to *avarnas* had officiated in the Koodalmanikkam Temple, and that purificatory ceremony in the Temple was necessary before the *utsavam* festival could commence. The *vazhivadoos* or offerings of the Cochin Maharaja were also ordered to be withdrawn until further orders. On the 17th April, the Resident issued directions to the Kaimal asking the latter to follow the instructions

issued by the Maharaja of Cochin. The Kaimal obeyed the directions of the Resident. Encouraged obviously by the action of the Resident, the Cochin Government again issued orders to the Kaimal to prohibit the entry into the Temple or the tank of all persons who had participated in ceremonies in Travancore temples, unless they performed *prayaschittam*. The Kaimal protested against the action of the Cochin Maharaja and complained about the scope of the Resident's orders. . . .

Travancore had no concern with the action taken by the Cochin Government with respect to the subjects of the Cochin State and was merely interested in preserving the authority which the Kaimal assumed when he was invested with that office on nomination by His Highness the Maharaja of Travancore. According to Travancore, the only authority competent to declare whether under the circumstances there was pollution or not and whether purificatory ceremony was required or not was the Kaimal as the spiritual head of the Devaswom—a position affirmed even in the scheme promulgated by the Cochin Maharaja with the consent of Travancore and the British Government. Any order passed by the Maharaja of Cochin or the Resident without reference to the Kaimal and opposed to his (Kaimal's) own declaration would be ineffective and without jurisdiction.

The Resident has subsequently made his position clear as is evident from the interviews given by him to the Press. The direction given by him to the Kaimal did not purport to be an interference with the exercise of the discretion vested in the Kaimal in religious matters but were intended to maintain *status quo* mainly as aprecautionary measure to preserve law and order. . . .

According to Travancore, the powers of the Resident as Controlling Authority are limited to those expressly specified in the Scheme and no proper occasion had arisen for the intervention of the Resident either as Controlling Authority or as representative of the Paramount Power, for, in either capacity, the Resident had no jurisdiction in giving directions on religious matters solely within the cognizance of the Kaimal. If there was any apprehension of breaches of the peace, there is nothing to show that the Cochin Government could not have dealt with the situation adequately. The Kaimal himself has stated in an interview that even without the Resident's intervention the *Utsavam* festival would have passed off peacefully, and that this would have been possible even though some of the sanatanist *tantris* had non-co-operated.

The Kaimal has subsequently exercised his discretion and declared that in the circumstances stated there was no pollution whatever. Travancore contends that this declaration finally settles the controversy and that the Resident having substantially upheld the discretionary authority of the Kaimal in spiritual matters Travancore has no more any reason to complain. . . .

It may be of interest to note that even in the not distant past there have been instances when ancient religious customs and usages have been departed from in Cochin on the ground that they were unreasonable. Men who had cropped their hair and men who had crossed the sea had no admission into temples in Cochin. But the prohibition does not now exist. The ground on which, in the present case, the Maharaja of Cochin declared in favour of pollution, is not sanctioned by the Shastras or by usage.

Harijan, 22-5-1937.

1. SPEECH AT WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING, WARDHA

July 6, 1937

It is stated that at the outset Mahatmaji referred to the misgivings entertained by a not inconsiderable section of the Congressmen that his other Press statements issued prior to that in connection with the constitutional deadlock had, in effect, tended to whittle down the stand so far taken by the Congress. By a thorough analysis of his several statements Mahatmaji was able to satisfy the members of the Committee that they were simply meant to clarify the Congress position, which was being constantly misunderstood and misinterpreted by high officials here and in England.

Mahatmaji then explained to the Committee the alternative course of action open to them in the circumstances confronting the Congress at present. It is understood Gandhiji made no secret of the fact that he had not found in Lord Linlithgow's message[1] the assurance which he had in mind when he inserted the assurance clause[2] in the A.I.C.C. resolution at Delhi. With the Governor's special powers of interference thus left intact, Gandhiji apprehended that frictions were very likely to occur, sooner rather than later, as it would prove difficult to prevent the overlapping of the sphere of the Governor's special powers and the normal field of activities of Ministers. Accordingly, the fear was expressed that, despite the wishes sincerely expressed by Lord Zetland and Lord Linlithgow, the new Constitution might not in actual practice be worked for long by the Congress Ministers in furtherance of the Congress objective.

Without committing himself to any definite opinion Mahatmaji is stated to have admitted that there was some force in the argument of those who maintained that the Congress should utilize the office of ministerships in the six majority Provinces with a view to generating strength in the masses of the country so that, when the final breakdown of the Constitution came–as it was bound to come–this newly developed mass strength and enthusiasm may be harnessed to good account, should the Congress find it necessary to launch upon any mass movement in the future.

In conclusion, Gandhiji is reported to have expressed himself as being in complete agreement with Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru's opinion that there must be no lowering of the Congress flag whether the Congress representatives are in office or out of it.

The Hindu, 7-7-1937

[1] *Vide* "Viceroy's speech", 21-6-1937

[2] *Vide* "Extract from A.I.C.C. Resolution",16-3-1937

2. CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION[1]

WARDHA,
July 7. 1937

The All-India Congress Committee, at its meeting held in Delhi on March 18[2] 1937, passed a resolution affirming the basic Congress policy in regard to the new constitution and laying down the programme to be followed inside and outside the Legislatures by Congress members of such Legislatures. It further directed that in pursuance of that policy permission should be given for congressmen to accept office in provinces where the Congress commanded a majority in the Legislature, and the leader of the Congress Party was satisfied and could state publicly that the Governor would not use his special powers of interference or set aside the advice of Ministers in regard to their constitutional activities. In accordance with these directions, the leaders of Congress party who were invited by Governors to form ministries, asked for the necessary assurances. These not having been given, the leaders expressed their inability to undertake the formation of Ministries. But since the meeting of the Working Committee on April 28 last, Lord Zetland, Lord Stanley and Viceroy have made declarations[3] on this issue on behalf of the British Government. The Working Committee has carefully considered these declarations and is of opinion that though they exhibit a desire to make an approach to the Congress demand they fall short of the assurances demanded in terms of the A.I.C.C. resolution as interpreted by the Working Committee resolution[4] of April 28. Again the Working Committee is unable to subscribe to the doctrine or partnership propounded in some ot the aforesaid declarations. The proper description of the existing relationship between the British Government and the people of India is that of the exploiter and the exploited, and hence they have a different outlook upon almost everything of vital importance. The Committee feels however that the situation created as the result of the circumstances and events that have

[1] This was drafted by Gandhiji. The date-line is reproduced from *The Hitavada*, 9-7-1937.

[2] Actually on March 16; *vide*"Extract from A.I.C.C. Resolution",16-3-1937

[3] For Lord Zetland's and the Viceroy's speeches, *vide* "Viceroy's speech", 21-6-1937

[4] Passed at Allahabad; *vide* footnote 1, "Interview to Associated Press of India", 6-5-1937

since occured, warrants the belief that it will not be easy for the Governors to use their special powers. The Committee has moreover considered the views of Congress members of the Legislatures and of Congressmen generally.

The Committee has therefore come to the conclusion and resolves that Congressmen be permitted to accept office where they may be invited thereto. But it desires to make it clear that office is to be accepted and utilized for the purpose of working in accordance with lines laid down in the Congress election manifesto and to further in every possible way the Congress policy of combating the new Act on the one hand and of prosecuting the constructive programme on the other.

The Working Committee is confident that it has the support and backing of the A.I.C.C. in this decision and that this resolution is in furtherance of the general policy laid down by the Congress and the A.I.C.C. The Committee would have welcomed the opportunity of taking the direction of the A.I.C.C. in this matter but it is of opinion that delay in taking a decision at this stage would be injurious to the country's interests and would create confusion in the public mind at a time when prompt and decisive action is necessary.

Congress Bulletin No. 5, July 1937. Also Home Department, Political Branch, File No. 4/15/37. Courtesy: National Archives of India

3. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHAGANJ,
July 7, 1937

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR

SIMLA,

YES.[1] LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3794. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6950

[1] The addressee has noted on the telegram: "Yes–acceptance of office by Congress".

4. SPEECH AT RASHTRABHASHA ADHYAPAN MANDIR, WARDHA[1]

July 7, 1937

Rajendra Babu has lightened my task by saying that the *pracharaks* should be men of character. It goes without saying that those who have not the literary qualifications would not do, but it is necessary to bear in mind that even literary qualifications would be of no use where the essential qualification of character was wanting.

They will have to master the Hindi language as defined by Indore Sahitya Sammelan, i.e., the language spoken by the Hindus and Mussalmans of North India and written in Devanagari or Persian script. Mastery of this language will mean mastery not only of the easy Hindi-Hindustani spoken by the masses but also of the high flown Hindi full of Sanskrit words and the high-flown Urdu full of Persian and Arabic words. Without a knowledge of these, mastery of the language would be incomplete even as one could not claim to be master of the English language without a knowledge of the English of Chaucer, Swift and Johnson, or mastery of the Sanskrit language without a knowledge of the Sanskrit of Valmiki and Kalidas.

But I should be prepared to put up with their ignorance of Devanagari or Persian scripts, or ignorance of Hindi grammar, but I should not tolerate for a moment lack of character. We do not need such men here and, if there is anyone among the candidates who is not likely to stand the test, let him leave betimes. The work they are called to is no easy thing. There is a strong body of English-knowing people who say that English alone can be the lingua franca of India. There are the pundits of Benares and Allahabad and the alims of Delhi and Lucknow who want a Sanskritized Hindi and Persianized Urdu. The third group we have to contend against is that which has raised the cry of ‘provincial languages in danger’.

Mere learning cannot successfully grapple with these forces. It is the work not of learned men, but of fakirs-men of incorruptible character and with no axe to grind. If you are found wanting in this respect and the people amongst whom you are working were to lay

[1] The speech is extracted from "Weekly Letter" by Mahadev Desai, who had reported its "verbatim" translation. The date-line is reproduced from *The Hindu* 8-7-1937.

rough hands on you, I should not blame them. They are not pledged to ahimsa.

Nor is money going to help us much. You know, I agreed to preside over the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan at Indore in 1935 on condition that the Reception Committee should collect Rs. 1,00,000 for Hindi *prachar* in South India in particular and other non-Hindi Provinces in general. I was loath to accept the invitation, but Jamnalalji stood surety for the Reception Committee. The Committee failed to collect the amount, in fact it collected then practically nothing at all. But in the year following about Rs. 22,000 were collected. Jamnalalji has now contributed Rs. 25,000 from his own pocket, and he has secured a promise of Rs. 75,000 from the charities of the late Kamalapatji of Kanpur. There is thus no lack of money. But what can money do? Wardha was just a cotton centre with a few ginning factories. It is Jamnalalji's ambiton to turn it into a cultural centre and a centre of national activities. He has, therefore, helped in bringing into being Mahila Ashram, a high school, Hindi Prachar Samiti, the present training school, the weaving school, the Village Workers' Training School, a tannery and so on. But more than these institutions, more than money, we want character. That is what I have come this morning to ask you to contribute to this work.

Harijan, 17-7-1937

5. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"[1]

July 8, 1937

GANDHIJI: You have come to waylay me, you highway man!

CORRESPONDENT: Are you giving any message to the Congress on the morrow of the inauguration of the new policy of trying office?

G. The Congress Working Committee's resolution is comprehensive. It contains the message and programme to be followed by the Congressmen and the country.

Asked how he, the author of the demand for assurance, reconciled the stand taken in Delhi with the decision reached yesterday, Gandhiji again said:

The resolution has dealt with it. I have nothing to add to it.

[1] The correspondent had reported that he met Gandhiji "early in the morning, at 5.30, half way down from Segaon to Wardha."

When I drew his attention to the fact that he was completing his year of seclusion in the village, Gandhiji said:

Segaon has an irresistible attraction for me and I feel inclined to stay there indefinitely.

I referred to the European situation, the armament race and the war menace and asked whether he, the apostle of non-violence, would not come out of his retirement in the village and spread the message of non-violence over the world and thus do a service to humanity.

It is all so soothing to hear but I am not big enough for that task. You are taking me beyond my depth.

The rest of the walk was devoted to talk about fast walking. Gandhiji remarked on the ease and facility with which the everage villagers covered the long distances in fair weather or foul.

The Hindu, 8-7-1937

6. MEANING OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL OATH

Shri Kishorelal Mashruwala writes:

> I am afraid that Gandhiji's position[1] with regard to the constitutional oath has not been properly understood. of course, one ought not to make a distinction between a legal oath and a moral oath. But there can be a distinction between a legal oath and a religious oath. By the latter, Gandhiji appears to mean an oath taken in the name of God and framed by [the taker] himself or by his religious teachers or scriptures. If it is framed by himself, he knows the exact implications of that oath, and he is bound by his own interpretation of it only, and not of anyone else. Whether he has fulfilled it or not is a question between himself and his conscience or God. If it has been framed by his religious teachers or scriptures, he is expected to have accepted their interpretation of its implications and is fully discharged if they exonerate him. If a person who does not accept those teachers or scriptures avers on a mere reading of the language of the oath that the oath has been broken, his opinion does not count.
>
> A legal oath is one which is framed not by himself but by the Legislature to which he is, *de facto*, subject. The exact implication of that oath is no more than what the Legislature has decided to give it. In case of doubt as to its exact meaning, the proper authorities to adjudicate upon the meaning are the Legislature itself, the Court of Law having jurisdiction in

[1] *Vide* "Are There Different Oaths",26-6-1937

the matter, and subject to appeal to them eminent lawyers. A person who perfectly fulfils the oath in the light of such interpretation is discharged not only legally but also morally.

A good deal of confusion seems to have arisen by importing into the oath of allegiance implications assigned to it not by the framers or their authorized interpreters but by the layman. Perhaps the layman's interpretation is not without its history. Nevertheless it cannot be accepted as authoritative. The layman's meaning of the oath of allegiance appears to be an attitude of devotional attachment to the person of the King to such a high pitch that the pledger would be willing to die for him. He seems also to hold that the oath once taken becomes binding upon him for life. According to eminent constitutional lawyers, I am given to understand, both these assumptions are wrong. According to them the oath simply means that as long as the pledger is subject to the oath (i.e., is a member of the institution which has framed the oath), he shall not rise in arms against the King, or be a party to his death, except through constitutional process. Through constitutional process, even that is allowable. Through constitutional process, it is open to the proper Legislagure to amend or repeal the oath altogether; it is possible to dethrone the King and even to order his execution. But if the Legislature does not agree to it, no legislator who has taken the oath can resort to violence against the King, except after ceasing to be a member of that body.

A person pledged to Truth and Non-violence (as a member of the Gandhi Seva Sangh) is assumed not to harbour any violent intention to the King under any circumstances. There is, therefore, no moral difficulty in his case to take the oath of allegiance as interpreted above. There is nothing to prevent him from aiming at complete independence, if he means to achieve it–as long as he is in the Legislature–through constitutional means and, in case he means to resort to other means, to do so after resigning his seat. His oath is not intended to bind him to it when he ceases to be a member. There is nothing again, according to lawyers, requiring a member not to harbour intentions of bringing about a constitutional revolution, even violent, if the Legislature will agree. These means are not open to the members of the Sangh, not because they are members of the Legislature but because of their membership of the Sangh. Thus there is no conflict between the legal and the moral aspect as assumed.

I heartily endorse this presentation of my meaning of the distinction drawn by me between legal and religious oaths. But a friend who saw the foregoing note is not yet satisfied. He says,

whatever be the meaning the authors of an oath may give to it, the taker of it should be the final judge of its meaning, and must therefore be at liberty to take or not to take the oath. Whilst he is at liberty to do what he likes, the arbitrary meaning he may give contrary to the meaning given to it by its very author will be held utterly indefensible.

Harijan, 10-7-1937

7. INSTRUCTIVE FIGURES

In the course of a conversation with Dr. Syed Mahmud I happened to mention that the All-India Spinners' Association had on its register a large number of Muslim spinners, weavers and carders. I was speaking from a general knowledge of the working of the Association. This was a few months ago. But as there never was any intention to keep a communal register or even to find out the caste or religion of those engaged in the different processes regarding manufacutre of khadi, figures took some time to prepare. The actual figures generaly correspond to the impression I gave to Dr. Mahmud. They will be found published on p. 171 in this issue.[1]

This is what I call living contact with the masses irrespective of caste or creed. If the workers are true to their salt, the contact must be of an abiding nature. It should result also in an indissoluble bond between Hindus and Mussalmans of the villages of India. Hitherto they have not worked knowingly and voluntarily under the aegis of one agency and for a common purpose. There is every possibility of a conscious union of hearts between them being achieved. It should be much easier under the new scheme in which the interest of the artisans is held to be predominant. Since the new orientation the contact has become far more real than it ever was. For the spinners–and they are by far the largest majority among the artisans served by the Associations–are regularly instructed. Every individual spinner receives personal attention and is taught to use better tools in a better manner. Their wages are in many cases trebled, even quadrupled. It is difficult to forecast the result of this new scheme, both to the individual workers and the nation at large. One result is obvious. These artisans have ceased to be the exploited class. Presently they will be conscious controllers of the A.I.S.A. as they are today its prime, though unconscious, shareholders.

Harijan, 10-7-1937

[1] The figures are not reproduced here.

8. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 10, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have apparently neglected you these few days. I hope you had my wire[1]. I wonder whether the news preceded the wire. For you it should be enough that I did not forget it. Jawaharlal was more than good throughout. His innate nobility asserted itself every time a difficulty cropped up. He is truly a warrior, *sans peur et sans reproche*. The more I see him, the more I love him. I had long chats with him and the Maulana. It will be most difficult to replace him next year.

Rameshwari is here and will be with me probably to the end of the month. She occupies Jamnalal's guest house. No more today.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3795. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6951

9. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

July 10, 1937

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I had long chats with Maulana Saheb yesterday. If he is to be consulted in the choice of Muslim Ministers in the Provinces, I think it is better to make the public announcement to the effect. The Maulana agrees. If you think that the Working Committee should be consulted, I would suggest consultation by wire.

I expect you will write on the Hindi-Urdu topic at an early date.[2]

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A. Bunch of Old Letters*, p. 235.

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to amrit Kaur",7-7-1937

[2] Jawaharlal Nehru wrote an essay entitled "The Question of Languages" for the Congress Political and Economic Studies Series. For extracts from it and Gandhiji's Foreword, dated August 3, 1937,

10. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 10, 1937

CHI. MIRA,

I have not been able to write to you lately. Your letters and sketches have been coming in regularly. I have sent them on to Nandlal Babu for his opinion.[1] You shall know it when it comes.

I am glad Dr. Sen is coming there. You will discuss your health with him and invite him to come to Segaon if he ever wishes to do so.

Rameshwari Nehru is here and is likely to stay for the month.

I do not need to say anything about the Working Committee meeting.

I am glad the doctor has allowed you to go to the simple diet. The nuts are not for you.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6391. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9857

11. LETTER TO NIRMLA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 10, 1937

CHI. NIMU,

Ramdas must have left[2]. You have done well to ask him to go. As for the result, it is in God's hands alone. From the letter I have from him, it appears that you wish to settle dawn there only. He also says in his letter that Navanit will not be willing to bear the expenses of your living there. So let me know how much I will have to send you every month. I will make arrangements accordingly. If you wish

[1] Nandalal Bose, in his letter (C.W. 6393) dated July 22 to Pyarelal, had said: "I was very much interested to look through Mirabehn's sketches. Please tell Bapuji that they show marks of real artistic insight, specially one of them –'Clear after rain–early morning'. Art, like other creative activities, is a very jealous mistress and must be pursued with genuine, disinterested devotion. If used as an amusement or recreation for one's enforced leisure hours, it will not yield its full beauty and significance. I hope Mirabehn will keep up her interest."

[2] Ramdas left for South Africa with Hermann Kallenbach on July 7, 1937; *vide* "Letter to Kantilal Gandhi", 5-7-1937

to come over here, that can certainly be done, or if you wish to settle down somewhere else, that also can be arranged. Ramdas worries about your health, too. What can I do to help him from this distance? It is in your hands. Reply immediately.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

12. LETTER TO INDIRA NEHRU

July 10, 1937

CHI. INDU,

Whatever you may be to others, I find you a lazy-bone. Kamala was never forgetful! Jawaharlal gave me news of you. Why are you still so delicate in health? You must build up your physique. I was hoping that you would come over here. Write to me in detail.

How is Mummy[1]? Where is Sarup[2]?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Gandhiji-Indira Gandhi Correspondence. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

13. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 11, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I answer your idiotic question with a counter-question: "Are all in the camphorated area dishonest"

Haven't seen your letter to Ba.

What a stupid thing to ask whether you would be 'one too many'. Would you ask that of Shummy [when] going to Manorville or will you go there as of right? Well, your six feet by two at the foot of my *chatai*[3] is always there. And friend Nabibux[4] lies anywhere.

[1] Addressees' grandmother, Swaraup Rani

[2] Addressee's aunt, Vijayalakshmi Pandit

[3] Mat

[4] A faithful attendant of the addressee's father. He became her servant after her fathers' death.

Your Hindi letter to B. was perfect. And here you will make rapid progress.

No more today.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Madalasa was married today to Shriman whom you know. He is a most cultured young man. The more I see him the more he grows on me. He is in Nayakam's[1] High School here. Do write to her and him, too, if you can recall him. You should write to Jamnalal also. You may send her a gift, nothing expensive. Better to get something in the khaddar line.

Kanu returned today. He is waiting for the post.[2]

You write well in Hindi. Your grammar is perhaps more accurate than mine. Here we will try to treat the patch near your ear.

Can you read this much?

BAPU

[PPS.]

Congress History[3] in Hindi is obtainable from Hindustan Times, Delhi.

From the original: C.W. 4234. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7867

14. LETTER TO BUDDHA GAYA DEFENCE LEAGUE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 11, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your long letter. I have read it most carefully. I can conceive the possibility of one who is without malice, without anger, who has behind him a long record of service, whose every act is actuated by love, and who is saturated with the spirit of the Buddha sitting motionless near the entrance till the temple passes to those to

[1] E. W. Aryanayakam of Ceylon, Principal, Marwari High School

[2] In the source, the following two paragraphs and the subscription are written in Hindi.

[3] *History of the Indian National Congress* by Pattabhi Sitaramayya

whom it should rightly belong. But such is not your scheme. Nor have you such a person in view so far as I am aware. Nor have you done the spade work which alone can warrant the supreme step. Therefore, however much I may be in sympathy with you, I fear I cannot endorse the movement adumbrated by you in your letter.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Dr. Rajendra Prasad: Correspondence and Select Documents, Vol. 1

15. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

July 11, 1937

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You needn't worry about Nariman at all. The storm will pass.

After I receive Nariman's reply to you, I will write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 203

16. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON,
July 11, 1937

CHI. NIMU,

Yesterday itself I had kept my reply ready but there was some delay in posting. Meanwhile I received your second letter and I have met Chitaliabhai also.

It is not worth spending so many years for learning nursing. Moreover, a married woman cannot do this job well. Housekeeping and nursing cannot go together. One should give all the twenty-four hours to nursing. So my advice is, you had better master English, Hindi and needlework. This you can do either in Bombay or here.[1]

This much [was dictated] in a hurry. Whatever I may write, you may do as you please.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Nirmala Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] In the source, what follows is in Gandhiji's hand.

17. LETTER TO H.L. SHARMA

July 11, 1937

CHI. SHARMA,

I got your letter. Do send me your book[1]. I shall try to read it. Your work must be getting on well. I have an impression that your earlier letter contained nothing to call for a reply. Amtul Salaam is here.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, p. 261.

18. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON,
July 12, 1937

CHI. MIRA,

I have your long letter. You must not worry about coming here. You should become proof against the visitations of malaria or other illnesses. It is pouring cats and dogs. Of course I am thinking out all kinds of things for villages. But you should also think out things.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Shanta is here. She goes to her mother in a week or so. She is in need or Shanta's presence. Remember me to Dr. Sen.

From the original: C.W. 6392. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9858

19. LETTER TO A. KALESWARA RAO

July 12, 1937

MY DEAR KALESWARA RAO,

It is good of you to send me fruits without sending me bills. I appreciate the thought underlying your gift. But you do make it

[1] The reference is to "Loose Leaves from a Socialist's Diary", a typed copy of the addressee's diary which he had maintained during his study tour abroad.

difficult for me to send regular calls. Anyway, please stop the *chikus.* The majority contain maggots.

Yours sincerely,
M.K. GANDHI

SRI A. KALESWARA RAO
BEZWADA

From a photostat: C.W. 9203. Also G.N. 9246

20. LETTER TO J.C. KUMARAPPA

July 12, 1937

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

Mahadev tells me, Sita[1] has come. Hope she is well. He also tells me, you may not come till the weather clears. If so what about Rao? All the accounts I receive go to show that he is no credit to us. He seems to be incurring losses. Please investigate.[2]

Read the enclosed essay and tell me if it is worth publishing in *Harijan*.

The summary of your address at Bezawada[3] will appear in due course.

You should think how we may guide our . . . [4] Ministers in the matter of village improvement.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10121

21. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

July 12, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

I got Jayaprakash's telegram yesterday. Both of you are brave in this respect. It is really better for an ailing man to die rather than go

[1] Wife of Bharatan Kumarappa

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Bharatan Kumarappa", and letter to the addressee,

[3] Now called Vijayawada. The addressee's speech at the tenth anniversary celebration of the Khaddar Samasthanam appeared under the title "Advantages of Barter" in *Harijan*, 24-7-1937.

[4] The source is illegible here.

on suffering. From that point of view,I was in a way glad that Father[1] was released. I had even felt when I got your letter that it would be difficult for him to recover from that illness. Let me know your future plans Explain this to Jayaprakash Of course I am writing a brief letter to him.

Rameshwaribehn Nehru has arrived here. She will stay here for some time. Amtul Salaam has left for Trivandrum. One cannot say her health is good. Kanu has returned from Rajkot. Kusum Desai is here at present.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3493

22. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

July 12, 1937

CHI. KANTI,

I had your letter. The statement of expenditure is faultless. I have nothing to say regarding the expenses. Amtul Salaam has gone to Trivandrum with Rajaji. She will stay with Lakshmi for a day or two. I am all admiration for her capacity for self-sacrifice. She may want to see you on her way back from Trivandrum. I have decided to give her permission to do so. I hope you don't have any objection. I will not let her disturb your studies. She is pining for you. She thinks only about the service she should render and about you. She has no other thought except these.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7326. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

23. LETTER TO N.S. HARDIKAR

SEGAON (WARDHA),
July 13, 1937

DEAR DR. HARDIKER,

My own opinion is that now that there will be a Congress Ministry in the Bombay Presidency it may be well not to publish

[1] Harsu Dayal, addressee's father-in-law

anything.[1] But in this too, it will be better for you to be guided by what Jawaharlal may say.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. N. S. HARDIKER
HUBLI
(KARNATAK)

From the original: N.S. Hardiker Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

24. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

July 13, 1937

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I got your letter. I was only joking regarding Vasumati. I had asked her, "Why did you run away?" But I couldn't spare the time to force her to reply. I could gather from her letters that your temperaments didn't agree. If I had asked her more, she would have given details. But why should I do that? After asking her, I would have had to write to you. All of us have lived together for quite a long time. Nobody has lost anything. Everybody gave his or her best to the others. I, therefore, blame nobody for Vasumati's leaving Bochasan. Everybody can overcome his or her nature only up to a certain limit. That is why at one place the *Gita* says, "Practise self-control," but elsewhere it says. "What will self-control avail?" Rubber also can be stretched only up to a certain point. If stretched further, it will snap. Let all of us, therefore, practise self-control according to our capacity and keep advancing. Kusum is fine. Let me know when something about Manju's[2] [marriage] is settled.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: G.S. Gangabehnne, p. 95

[1] In his letter dated July 6, the addressee had asked Gandhiji whether he could publish details about the difficulties in taking over the Seva Dal building from the Government; *vide* also "Letter to N. S. Hardiker", 22-5-1937

[2] Granddaughter of the addressee

25. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 13, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

Kanu has reached here safely. I feel as if he had never left. Send me your impression of him.

I will have to study the letters regarding Chimanlal again. They are lying with me. But I get no time whatever to take them up. There is no hurry of course.

Read the letter to Chhaganlal and pass it on to him. If you can detain him, certainly do so. I will of course like it.

It is a good thing that you are giving training to the teachers in Harijan schools. I hope you know that there is a difference between teaching a subject as a science and teaching it as a trade. To teachers it should be taught only as science.

Vijaya's daughter[1] must be fine.

The State should of course have no right to inspect a private school. But under despotism where is the question of having or not having a right? If, therefore, any officer comes for inspection, show him everything. But ascertain on what authority he comes. We don't wish to make an issue of the thing just now. Keep me informed. If possible, register your protest.

I see no objection to the use of the numeral 68. If anybody's birthday deserves to be celebrated, use of the number of his years is natural. Will I be completing the 68th year on *Bhadarva Vad* 12 and entering the 69th, or completing the 67th and entering the 68th? I get confused.

It has started raining here in right earnest. The sky has not cleared for four days.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am not writing separately to Jamna. Lilavati tells me that you have several copies of the annotated Gorakhpur edition of the *Gita.* If so, give one to Kamalabai.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8530. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Aruna Gandhi, addressee's grand daughter

26. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 13, 1937

CHI. SUMANGAL,

I have both your letters. The question is not of your being paid a salary here. The food is indifferent. The accommodation is short. It rains a great deal. Milk can be had in plenty and it is pure. Getting fruit is uncertain. You should bring with you a *thali*, a *lota*, two bowls, a tumbler, a spoon, a knife, a mattress, a *durrie*, a pillow, a blanket, an umbrella and a lantern. You will certainly have an hour every day for pursuit of literature. If you feel like it you may go and visit your parents before coming here. The rains end in September, but there is no hitch from my side.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

27. TELEGRAM TO T.S. SHRIPAL

July 14, 1937

SHRI T.S. SHRIPAL
ORGANIZER AND LECTURER
SOUTH INDIAN HUMANITARIAN LEAGUE
132 MINT ROAD, MADRAS 1

SACRIFICE OF ANIMALS IN THE NAME OF RELIGION IS REMNANT OF BARBARISM.

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 9874

28. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 14, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

I return Dagmers' letter. I do not think the rice-eating parts of India suffer because they eat rice but because they are too poor to add to the staple what those in the North do. Whether they were better off hundreds of years [ago] is a certainty, if we grant that they had greater facilities for buying the necessary articles than now. But as there were no statistics kept in the old days, our conclusions will be based on more or less guess.

Shriman will be an ideal husband for her[1] . She is herself perfectly delighted with the choice.

Every time you notice solvenliness or irregularities about our institutions, you should bring these things to the notice of the responsible men. Then only will you be able to cope with the national evil. You should give your impressions and views about Khadi Bhandars to Shankerlal Banker, Ahmedabad, and tell him, too, of your plans for the Simla Bhandar in particular, i.e., if you have the leisure. The leisure you can have, if you give up what is less useful, if not useless.

If I were you, I would not worry over Muslim co-operation in the Hindi work. They will if we are true and have no designs that they suspect.

Love.

Yours,

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3796. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6952

[1] Madalasa; *vide* also "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 11-7-1937

29. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

July 14, 1937

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

I sent you herewith a letter from Nalin. He was the most energetic complainant. Jhaverbhai backs him. Chhotalal considers Rao to be an utter misfit. Fischer considers him to be a thorough discredit. As you know, I was prepossessed in his favour. But I can't disregard the strong statements that all these workers make. Parnerkar has no opinion about his ability. His good report in Andhra is about his athletics and nothing else so far as I know. I have just seen Pandit Harihar Sharma, and he tells me that he was working some years ago under him as Hindi *pracharak* and he had to be dismissed for inattention to duty and even dishonesty. He tells me he is energetic when he wants to be but he can't be constant. However, all these things are to serve as a warning.[1]

I hope your sister is now free from fever.

I am in no hurry about Ministers.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10122

30. LETTER TO K.F. NARIMAN

July 14, 1937

MY DEAR NARIMAN,

I have just seen your latest statement. It surprises and pains me. I do not know who advised you to drop the inquiry. What you dropped was inquiry by the Working Committee because in your own language you thought it could not deal impartially with a matter which involved its own members. I therefore told you, I had the Sardar's assurance that you could have an impartial inquiry even without any reference to the Working Committee because your complaint was not against the committee as such but against its particular member. If the member consented, the Committee could not object to the inquiry. Now you

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to J. C. Kumarappa", 12-7-1937

have come out with a different version altogether. Do you not see the discrepancy?

Then, again, you seem to resent the Sardar's statement[1]. As it happens he issued it on my strong advice. I thought that it was due to the public and due to you also for that matter. He is now pinned to emphatic statements. If you dispute them and you have evidence, it is plain sailing for you. Indeed, you left on me the impression that when you took the Sardar for a drive, you did seek his help. And, if I am rightly informed, you sought the help of others also. What was wrong in it if you did? In your first statement in reply to the Sardar's you have almost made the admission. Nevertheless if you accuse the Sardar of lying, naturally, it is up to you to prove your case. Remember, you are the accuser or the plaintiff. Therefore, draw up your complaint or plaint carefully and let me have the name or names of the tribunal.

I would strongly advise you not to rush to the Press. Let an agreed tribunal to decide on an agreed reference be appointed and a brief statement to the Press might be made afterwards.

Yours sincerely,

A.I.C.C. File No. 747-A, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

31. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

July 14, 1937

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

If you had any doubt or fear regarding Maulana, you should not have sent the wire about him. I felt that we would be saved from a good many difficulties by doing that. I still believe that we stand to gain by your step. You probably remember that I had given the same caution to Jawaharlal.[2] And I myself had put the burden of issuing a notice on him. If I throw out a suggestion which finds no echo in your heart, you must not act on it. I have written[3] to Nariman. A copy of the letter is enclosed. There is no need for you to issue any

[1] *Vide* "Vallabhai Patel's Statement", 9-7-1937
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur",10-7-1937
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

statement now. I am hopeful that this business will end well. How long can a thing which has no foundation go on?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna parto–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 203-4

32. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 14, 1937

CHI. AMTUL,

I have your letter. Yes, you can certainly come back to me whenever you wish to if you are not happy at Trivandrum. Tell Ramachandran in detail about your pain. There are a few good vaidyas there. You may even consult them if you think fit. There is also a Homeopathic mission. But the real cause of your trouble is your own mind. You may come here sooner if your feel uneasy there though I believe that Paparamma and others will be so loving towards you that you will be quite at peace for a few weeks at least.

Kanti's letter is enclosed.

Ba's foot is improving. How crazy you are! You could certainly have sat with Rajaji in the inter compartment to have a chat.[1] But that is now past.

Maintain an account of all the expenditure. There is no letter from Bari[2] or Baqui[3]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 384

[1] The addressee travelled to Madras by the same train as Rajaji but she had only a third-class ticket.

[2] Brothers of the addressee

[3] *ibid*

33. DRAFT TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

[Before *July 15, 1937*][1]

SHRI RAJAGOPALACHARI
SENATE HOUSE
MADRAS

PRIVATE. DEEPEST PRAYER HAS BEEN THE SPRING ON WHICH I HAVE DRAWN FOR GUIDING COMMITTEE.[2] YOU KNOW HOW MY HOPE IS CENTERED ON YOU. MAY GOD BLESS YOUR EFFORT. DON'T PUBLISH THIS. HAVE NO RIGHT TO SEND MESSAGE MEMBERS. YOU MUST ASK JAWAHARLAL. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *In the Shadow of the Mahatma*, p. 233

34.LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Unrevised

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 15, 1937

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Today is the election day. I am watching.

But this I write to tell you that I have begun to write on the function of Congress Ministries and allied topics[3]. I hesitated but I saw that it was my duty to write, when I felt so keenly. I wish I could send you an advance copy of my article for *Harijan.* Mahadev will see this. If he has a copy he will send it. When you see it, you will please tell me if I may continue to write so. I do not want to interfere with your handling of the whole situation. For, I want the maximum from you for the country. I would be doing distinct harm, if my writing disturbed you.

I hope you got my letter[4] about the Maulana.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1937. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A. Bunch of Old Letters*, p. 235.

[1] In his letter dated July 16 to G. D. Birla, Mahadev Desai explains: "C.R. asked for Bapu's blessings to be wired to him and his colleagues when they were all sworn in as Ministers." According to *India Since the Advent of the British*, Rajagopalachari formed the Congress Ministry in Madras on July 15, 1937.

[2] Congress Working Committee

[3] *Vide* "Congress Ministries", 17-7-1937; also "The Fundamental Difference", 24-7-1937.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Amirt Kaur", 10-7-1937

35. LETTER TO K.F. NARIMAN

July 15, 1937

MY DEAR NARIMAN,

You have sent me an extraordinary letter[1]. Either you are in a state of confusion, or your friends are. So far as I can recollect, you accepted the Working Committee's decision as final regarding the telegram. As to your other charges you had no evidence then in your possession. Your letters showed no evidence and therefore the Working Committee could neither decide for itself except to decide against you nor could give you a committee. How can you say you closed the matter though in your letter you reserved to yourself the right to ask for a committee when you had framed your charge-sheet? So far as I can see the matter can only be closed by leading against Sardar Vallabhbhai all the evidence you have in your possession or by making a clear admission that you have nothing against him. Can you not see that the Working Committee's decision so far as it goes is wholly against you? If you regard its verdict as final, then can you sit still when unbounded vilification of the Sardar is going on in front of you, and to which, in your letters, you have allowed yourself to be a party up to a certain extent?

You will be committing no breach of faith with me if you were to publish the whole of the conversation between you and me, if you will let me have beforehand what you will publish.

There are other inaccuracies in your letter which I need not go into. Let me be however clear about one point. So long as you feel that the Sardar has dealt with you unfairly in any shape or form, or that he has done anything ungentlemanly, it is your bounden duty to accept his offer. You owe it to yourself and to a colleague, who emphatically maintains that he has never done or meant any harm to

[1] Dated July 14, which read: "I am being charged for defying and attempting to circumvent the Working Committee Resolution at Delhi and Wardha by demanding an independent tribunal. . . . In the . . . .conversation I had with you, I had made it clear that I could accept such a tribunal only if the Working Committee sanctioned it . . . Before the Working Committee too, I made my position clear that I did not want . . . an independent tribunal . . . if the Working Committee did not sanction . . . I further made it clear to the Secretary that the tribunal should only make a report . . . to the Working Committee who should . . . pronounce verdict . . . .But in view of the definite adverse view of all the members I did not intend to pursue the matter further . .. *Vide* also "Letter to K. F. Nariman", 14-7-1937

you and has not been guilty of dishonourable conduct directly or indirectly. If you do not pursue the tribunal you repeatedly told me you wanted, or drop it without unreservedly withdrawing your charge against the Sardar, you will be committing a grave blunder. Your colleagues of the Working Committee will certianly come to the conclusion that you were simply guided by your own suspicion though you had nothing whatsover to sustain it. And you would confirm the impression that the Sardar has carried with him about your conduct at the Bombay election, and which he so frankly told you during that drive.

Yours sincerely,

A.I.C.C. File No. 747-A, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

36. LETTER TO N. C. KELKAR

July 15, 1937

DEAR MR. KELKAR,

Deo has sent me the enclosed cutting containing a report of your speech.[1] He wants me to reply[2] to certain allegation about me in that report. Before I do so I should like to have your confirmation of the report. For, I know, how often public speeches are misreported, sometimes consciously, sometimes unconsciously.

I hope you are in possession of the best of health.

Yours sincerely,

M.K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 3121. Courtesy: Kashinath N. Kelkar

[1] Shankarrao Deo, President, Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee, in his letter dated July 14 had brought to the notice of Gandhiji a report that had appeared in the issue of of *Dnyanprakash*, 10-7-1937. The report said that N.C. Kelkar, speaking at a meeting in Poona at the Tilak Smarak Mandir, had alleged that Gandhiji had refused to sign on the application for the release of Savarkar; that Gandhiji's attitude towards Maharashtrians, including great leaders like Tilak was not friendly and that Gandhiji's readiness for office-acceptance was not consistent with his earlier stand.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Shankarrao Deo", 20-7-1937.

37. LETTER TO SHANKARRAO DEO

July 15, 1937

MY DEAR DEO,

I have your letter enclosing a newspaper cutting[1]. I have forwarded the cutting to Mr. Kelkar for confirmation. As soon as I receive his reply, you will hear further from me.

I hope your progress towards complete recovery is continuing.

Yours sincerely,

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-7-1937

38. A LETTER

July 15, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

1. Shri Mahadev Desai has sent me your letter.
2. Zoroastrian puggree. Christian hat and red fez can be made and have been made of khaddar.
3. Even as an absolute definition of God is impossible, so is that of truth impossible. When I can evolve an absolute definition of truth, truth will cease to be my God.
4. You are justified in doubting my love for humanity. Just likely that it might be solved after my death.
5. If all the flowers in a garden were endowed with wisdom, I suppose it will be quite consistent for each flower to retain its personality whilst recognizing the basic unity of all flowers.
6. I have not sufficient originality in me to show a new way of life. Nor does the conceived way of life give me any dissatisfaction. I would feel supermely happy if I could live up to it in its fulness.

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item

39. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

July 15, 1937

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I read your letters regarding Nariman. I am not in the least getting frightened. According to me there is no need for you to say anything now. I have started writing to Nariman. When the time for making a public statement comes, I will certainly do so. It is not at all surprising that not a single newspaper is on your side. After all, what kind of newspapers are these? Why should we get elated if they take our side?

I am sure you will be able to deal with Munshi and Bhulabhai. The thing is beyond me. If Gilder joins, it will be excellent of course.

If you don't get a reply from Maulana even after you have sent him a wire, two courses are open to you: to appoint whosoever seems the fittest to you, or to declare publicly that anybody selected by Maulana will be appointed. We know Maulana's tardiness. But the problem about a Muslim secretary is a difficult one. I think we can escape the difficulty only by putting the thing publicly in . . .s"[1] hands. Why don't you wire to Jawaharlal that he should either send Maulana's consent or make an alternative suggestion?

You have been sending away your brothers too soon.[2] They will reserve places for us somewhere. When God decided that our work in this world is done, he will take us away in the twinkling of an eye.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 204-5

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

[2] The reference is to the death of the addressee's eldest brother Somabhai. Speaker Vithalbhai, another brother, had died on October 22, 1933.

40. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 15, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

If you don't need the typewriter there for the present, please send it here. I will ask Shanta to type on it while she is here. Kanu also is ready to learn it. I hope he will start eating properly. For some time now he has developed aversion to food. If you wish, I may arrange temporarily or permanently to send someone from here who will carry the mail from here and bring it from there. I will experience no difficulty in sparing a person from here.

Durga's case is not simple. One should inhale steam when having cold. One should also fast occasionally. Why shouldn't she come and stay here for a few days? Nirmala also should come, so that I may not be put to any trouble. I will merely suggest remedies after examining her. I am sure that Durga can be completely cured. I don't mean to say that it can be done only through my remedies.

What is Kumarappa's difficulty? Shall I write? The flow of water must stop. If he cannot stop it, you may call in an expert at our cost and get it done. There must be somebody from the municipal builders. If I am allowed I will write. I am confident that I will be able to manage the athlete's case.

Let Raojibhai carry Suryabala's letter. I have already given him Harivadan's. If this is not possible, send Suryabala's letter by post.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11530

41. LETTER TO D.B. KALELKAR

July 15, 1937

CHI. KAKA,

Your letter to Raghavan is good. I would shorten it. The central point of Raghavan's argument was that it was considered to be a subordinate body. Your argument, therefore, that it was a misunderstanding and the remark about it being unfortunate are out of place.

Is it quite correct to say that the institutions are independent of each other? I think Madras enjoys Dominion status.

Your letter has been already posted. This is for the future. Why "Maratha"?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7692

42. LETTER TO HARIVADAN

July 15, 1937

BHAI HARIVADAN,

I can look upon your marriage with Rohini from only one angle. Though you two have entered *grihasthashrama,* I hope you will strengthen your present spirit of service and make your marriage an ideal for others to follow. You two have such capacity. May God grant both of you long life and bless your noble aspirations with success. I am not writing separately to Rohini.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2650

43. LETTER TO DAHYALAL JANI

July 15, 1937

CHI. DAHYALAL,

I am writing this letter with a heavy heart. Devsharmaji[1] has sent one of your letters. The other one he had torn up. Your letter is full of untruths. I am sending it back to you so that you can see for yourself. You seem to have mentioned only Jani in it. You have thus started with an untruth. If you had from the beginning wished to join a renowed institution like the Kangri, why did you not go there straightaway? In your description of Ishver Ramji's 'hesitant policy", you have unnecessarily maligned the institution in which you stayed. The letter which he has written to me on his own is in a different vein altogether.

[1] Principal of Gurukul Kangri

Your first sentence suggests excessive respect while what you really feel is helplessness.

Look at your totalling in the third sentence: 75+5=100! Is this dreaming?

You had resolved in my presence to preserve humility. It has been established that you do not have sufficient knowledge. What a big claim you make in your fourth sentence? “I will be able to teach English, science, etc., according to the latest method.” Can you justify this claim? The sentence thereafter is equally insufferable. In all the institutions that you have mentioned you say, “and that too in the capacity of a Principal”. Is not this the limit of deliberate lying? Have you merit enough to say, “You will be fully satisfied with my work and it will also bring you credit”?[1]

See the shabbiness of the whole letter. The handwriting is all a mess.

What impatience ! The word “immediately” occurs thrice.

Devasharma has a royal heart. He was almost ready to take you. Even now, if I urge him, he would do so. I would throw a letter like this from a stranger into the waste-paper basket. Your letter itself proves your unfitness. Where did you pass the three examinations which qualify you as a teacher? [You say,] “One runs up to your Ashram just to purify oneself by living on the holy land.” All right, run on! I feel more pain in writing this letter than you will in reading it. I have absolutely no time to write such a long letter, but I could not control my pen. You address me as "father" and describe yourself as my son. Is not there hypocrisy even in this? However, I will not disown you. But you will have to help me. Go to Sabarmati on the 20th, a changed man. You will not get such an opportunity again. If, however, you don’t wish to go, you are free.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai’s Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] In the source, the quotations are in Hindi.

44. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SEGON (WARDHA),
July 16, 1937

MY DEAR MALKANI,

Why don't you steal in a note in *The Hindustan Times* advertising your wares or write to *The Hindustan Times* a letter to be published in the correspondents' column, complaining of public apathy and telling the public what attactive things can be had there?[1] Secondly, Why don't you have a list of the things you have for sale and post the same to likely addresses in Delhi? You are bound to get some orders. Thirdly, you can engage a hawker who can hawk about your things on commission. Fourthly, sometimes you can pay visits to friends yourself and get their orders. If you just learn enough of the tailoring and shoemaking technique, you can take measurements yourself.

Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru is sporting a pair of slippers or some such thing from your colony. They have given her blisters all over. Now, your department has to turn out first-class articles if you are to command a large custom.

Then you mention the trouble about getting workers in the Provinces to interest themselves more than they are doing. Of course this is a universal complaint. We are not slaves without deserving our slavery.

Then, about the boys themselves, why should you not so arrange your departments as to absorb all the boys in the colony. Then they would be earning a decent livelihood and you will produce master tailors, master shoemakers, etc.

I am surprised that you, as a teacher, can feel lazy and say, you have't enough to do. With eighteen children for whose welfare you are wholly responsible and to whom you are both father and mother, I should have thought that you had more than you could manage. Can you imagine a widowed father having eighteen children to care for feeling lazy and with time hanging heavy over him? That sentence in your letter is a disturbing sentence. You know what I mean.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 926

[1] The addressee was the Superintendent of the Harijan Udyogshala, Delhi, where tailoring, shoemaking, carpentry, etc, were taught.

45. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 16, 1937

You are hard on poor Sen. Surely there are meat-eaters who are as good *brahmacharis* and as abstemious as any vegetarians. The physical effect of milk is the same almost as of flesh [or] meat. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of Roman Catholic monks and nuns are not to be beaten in their self-restraint in everything. Purity of personal life is not a monopoly of vegetarians not kindness. Do you know vegetarians who know not what self-restraint is, no kindness to human or sub-human life? Who can be more cruel to man and beast than some vegetarian husbands, fathers and cattleowners? We must not make a fetish of our vegetarianism and be intolerant. Let us not attribute more virtue to vegetarianism than it can carry. And so long as we must take milk, it is wrong to call ourselves vegetarians or non-flesh eaters. Distinction there is, but ir is not the restriction which you seem to think there is. It is only real godliness that alters the whole course of life.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary: Narayan Desai

46. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 16, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Bhansali has returned and is already a familiar face by now. The assistant doctor applied caustic to the wound and dressed it. He also added that the trouble must have come on partly because he does not eat *rotlis.* It is absolutely necessary now that he should see Balkrishna. Bhansali can see him even after two days when he goes there again. It will be better, of course, if he comes over here to see him. If Bhansali goes to Wardha, he should do so after fixing the time in advance, so that he might not miss the Civil Surgeon.

I don't know how I can persuade Durga. At present we have engaged a maidservant for washing clothes. Gradually such arrangements are being made here. She may stay here for a few days and, if she doesn't feel at ease, may go back. There are no restrictions

of any kind whatever. If she comes, she may bring [the typewriter][1] from there. But if the material is being typed there, nothing need be sent here. Has Kanu started?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11531.

47. LETTER TO PURATAN J. BUCH

July 16, 1937

CHI. PURATAN,

Only two lines today. Fulfil your wishes at the time of the Congress.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9172

48. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[Before *July 17, 1937*][2]

Radhakrishna should have been romoved altogether, shouldn't he? But I don't know much in this matter. You know him [better].

This time I have removed from your article the portion in which you have replied to Syed. For the present let them say what they wish. We should go on writing what we ourselves think proper. Please, therefore, go through the extract I have given from Tandonji's letter. I have also supplied an extract for *Harijan* from Pattabhi's speech. I have inserted that, too, in your article. If you do not like it, you may remove it. It can be said that I have written a political article[3] for *Harijan* this time. Go through it If you don't approve of it, you can wait. And if you find it all right, an advance copy may be supplied to

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 15-7-1937 and "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 17-7-1937

[2] The date is inferred from the reference to Purushottamdas Tandon's letter to Ashraf on Hindi-Urdy controversy and Pattabhi Sitaramayya's speech at Harijan Conference, Berhampur, which appeared in Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*, 17-7-1937.

[3] *Vide* the following item: also "The Fundemental Difference". 24-7-1937.

the press. I cannot make up my mind. How can I possibly get time to talk to Kanu today?

Both Shambhudayal and Janba should take plentry of quinine. They should not eat chapatis. At the most they may take milk, jaggery and fruit if available. I will attend to the receipts, etc., tomorrow. I can't detain Kanu today.

I don't think Nariman's reply calls for a rejoinder. There is nothing in it to suggest that he is on the war path. He seems to have calmed down. But who knows?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11527

49. CONGRESS MINISTRIES

Since the Working Committee and other Congressmen have allowed themselves to be influenced by my opinion on the office issue, it is perhaps due to the public for me to explain my conception of office-acceptance and what is possible to do in terms of the Congress election menifesto. I need offer no apology for crossing the self-imposed limit in the conduct of *Harijan.* The reason is obvious. The Government of India Act is universally regarded as wholly unsatisfactory for achieving India's freedom. But it is possible to consture it as an attempt, however limited and feeble, to replace the rule of the sword by the rule of the majority. The creation of the big electorate of three crores of men and women and the placing of wide powers in their hands cannot be described by any other name. Underlying it is the hope that what has been imposed upon us we shall get to like, i.e., we shall really regard our exploitation as a blessing in the end. The hope may be frustrated if the representatives of the thirty million voters have a faith of their own and are intelligent enough to use the powers (including the holding of offices) placed in their hands for the purpose of thwarting the assumed intention of the framers of the Act. And this can be easily done by lawfully using the Act in a manner not expected by them and by refraining from using it in the way intended by them.

Thus the Ministries may enforce immediate prohibition by making education self-supporting instead of paying for it from the liquor revenue. This may appear a startling proposition, but I hold it

perfectly feasible and eminently reasonable. The jails may be turnecd into reformatories and workshops. They should be self-supporting and educational instead of being spending and punitive departments. In accordance with the Irwin-Gandhi Pact, of which only the Salt Clause remains still alive, salt should be free for the poor man, but it is not; it can now be free in Congress Provinces at least. All purchases of cloth should be in khadi. The attention should now be devoted more to the villages and the peasantry than to the cities. These are but illustrations taken at random. They are perfectly lawful, and yet not one of them has as yet even been attempted.

Then the personal behaviour of Ministers. How will Congress Ministers discharge themselves? Their Chief, the Presidentt of the Congress, travels third class. Will they travel first? The President is satisfied with a coarse khadi dhoti, *Kurta* and waistcoat. Will the Ministers require the Western style and expenditure on Western scale? Congressmen have for the past seventeen years disciplined themselves in rigorous simplicity. The nation will expect the Ministers to introduce simplicity in the administration of their Provinces. They will not be ashamed of it, they will be proud of it. We are the poorest nation on earth, many millions living in semi-srarvation. Its representatives dare not live in a style and manner out of all correspondence with their electors. The Englishmen coming as conquerors and rulers set up a standard of living which took no account whatsoever of the helpless conquered. If the Ministers will simply refrain from copying the Governors and the secured Civil Service, they will have shown the marked contrast that exists between the Congress mentality and theirs. Truly there can be no partnership between them and us even as there can be none between a gaint and a dwarf.

Lest Congressmen should think that they have a monopoly of simplicity and that they erred in 1920 in doing away with the trousers and the chair, let me cite the examples of Aboobaker and Omar. Rama and Krishna are prehistoric names. I may not use these names as examples. History tells us of Pratap and Shivaji living in uttermost simplicity. But opinion may be divided as to what they did when they had power. There is no division of opinion about the Prophet, Aboobaker and Omar. They had the riches of the world at their feet. It will be difficult to find a historical parallel to match their rigorous

life. Omar would not brook the idea of his lieutenants in distant provinces using anything but coarse cloth and coarse flour. The Congress Ministers, if they will retain the simplicity and economy they have inherited since 1920, will save thousands of rupees, will give hope to the poor and probably change the tone of the Services. It is hardly necessary for me to point out that simplicity does not mean shoddiness. There is a beauty and an art in simplicity which he who runs may see. It does not require money to be neat, clean and dignified. Pomp and pageantry are often synonymous with vulgarity.

This unostentatious work must be the prelude to demonstrating the utter insufficiency of the Act to meet the wishes of the people and the determination to end it.

The English Press has been at pains to divide India into Hindu and Muslim. The Congress majority Provinces have been dubbed Hindu, the other five Muslim. That this is demonstrably false has not worried them. My great hope is that the Ministers in the six Provinces will so manage them as to disarm all suspicion. They will show their Muslim colleagues that they know no distinction between Hindu, Muslim, Christian or Sikh or Parsi. Nor will they know any distinction between high-caste and low-caste Hindus. They will demonstrate in every action of theirs that with them all are the sons of the soil among whom there is no one low and no one high. Poverty and climate are common to all without distinction. The major problems are identical for all of them. And whilst, so far as we can judge from actions, the goal of the English system is wholly different from ours, the men and women representing the two goals belong to the same human family. They will now be thrown together as they never have been before. If the human reading that I have given to the Act is correct, the two parties meet together, each with its own history, background and goal, to convert one another. Corporations are wooden and soulless but not those who work them or use them. If the Englishmen or Anglicized Indians can but see the Indian which is the Congress viewpoint, the battle is won by the Congress and complete independence will come to us without shedding a drop of blood. This is what I call the non-violent approach. It may be foolish, visionary, imprectical; nevertheless it is best that Congressmen, other Indians and Englishmen should know it. This office acceptance is not intended to work the Act anyhow. In the prosecution by the Congress of its goal of complete independence, it is a serious attempt on the one hand to avoid a

bloody revolution and on the other to avoid mass civil disobedience on a scale hitherto not attempted. May God bless it.

Harijan, 17-7-1937

50. NOTE ON RENTIA JAYANTI CELEBRATION[1]

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 17, 1937

In the first year two, in the second 16 and in the third 20 lakhs[2]—I count this excellent progress. What is possible for Rajkot is possible for all other cities. If the khadi infection spreads everywhere, "swaraj through yarn" will soon become a fact. I may say that my faith in khadi has, if anything, grown stronger today than what it was twenty years ago. At any rate it has not diminished.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8532. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

51. A LETTER[3]

July 17, 1937

One answer to all your doubts and questions is this. One is said to fall, i.e., completely rely, on Ramanama when one does so through the heart. If you think that you have not attained success, the only inference is that your prayer does not come from the heart, it comes only from the lips. That does not mean that you are not sincere but it does mean that your prayer has some connection with the result that you want to attain and since as a good Hindu you believe in prayer, you think you are complying with all the requirements when you utter the prayer with your lips. Utterance with the lips is no doubt necessary, but in order to perceive the efficacy of prayer it has to find its place in the heart. The only way to test the question whether it has permeated the heart is by finding whether there is real peace of mind. For answer to prayer does not mean that you should get what you

[1] This was a note appended to a pamphlet by Narandas Gandhi in connection with the birthday celebration of Gandhiji. These celebrations were known as *Rentia Jayanti*, spinning-wheel anniversary. *Vide* also "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 17-7-1937

[2] Of yards of yarn.

[3] According to the source this was addressed "to a Sindhi".

want but it means that you become free from all anxiety and become indifferent as to whether you get the thing prayed for or not.

The illustration that I can give from life is that whenever I have been assailed in difficult situations by anxiety or doubts they have been dispelled by prayer, and peace has taken the place of depression.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Dasai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Dasai

52. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

July 17, 1937

CHI. AMBUJAM, [1]

Your letter and fruit have come. Fruit this time has been most welcome because it was needed badly. I can't get good oranges or *musambis* in Bombay. And I need them for patients or some patients. You may therefore send me such *musambis* whenever you can. Our understanding is that they must be reasonably cheap. I suppose I could get almost any fruit if I do not count the cost. But that must not be. I did take the *musambis* but I dared not take more than two when there were others in greater need.

I must not say more now.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 9612. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal

53. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

July 17,1937

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I hope this office-acceptance has removed your anxiety. Ours on the other hand has increased. Both are on their trial. You will watch the pages of *Harijan.*

Herewith the letter for Lord Halifax.

You must take a little rest now.

Love.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1502

[1] The superscription is in Devanagari.

54. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

July 17, 1937

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

Herewith bulletin[1] which reads quite well. I suggest the addition of one sentence.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10123

55. LETTER TO GURDIAL MULLICK

July 17, 1937

MY DEAR GURDIAL,

My heart goes out to you. Our faith proves itself only when it stands firm when unpenetrable darkness surrounds. "God is the strength of the weak"[2] or "So long as the elephant relied on his own strength he could not succeed "[3]. These are bits from life lived. And what is death 'but a sleep and a forgetting'? What though all the dearest and the nearest died at a stroke? "It is good that the snare is broken, now I will get nearer to God,"[4] sang the *bhakta,* Narasinha Mehta. But I write like a Job's comforter. Your peace must come from within. *Bhajans,* even vocal repetition of Ramanama, may prove unavailing. Faith overflowing demands no vocal demonstration. It is enough if the heart grasps the reality. If God is too vague, Truth surely is not. And Truth is God. Have faith in It and It will reveal Itself. God is with you.

Yours,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal.

[1] *Vide*, "A.I.V.I.A. Bulletin", 7-8-1937.
[2] These two sentences are in Hindi in the source.
[3] *ibid*
[4] This sentence is in Gujarati in the source.

56. LETTER TO K. F. NARIMAN

July 17, 1937

MY DEAR NARIMAN,

Sir Govindrao[1] has sent me a copy of his letter to you. In the covering letter he gives me an extract from your letter to him. From you letters to the Working Committee and from your letter to Sir Govindrao I see that, in your excitement, which has become chronic with you, you have lost even your legal acumen. The more I think of this wretched quarrel, the clearer I am becoming that your grievance is wholly imaginary and that, by allowing the agitation to continue, you are harming yourself and the public interest. I would strongly advise you to take legal advice, and frame your indictment in a proper manner which anybody can understand. I wholly endorse Sir Govindrao's remark that your charge is too vague for any lawyer or judge to understand or decide upon.

In your reference, you are bound to refer to the charge of Sardar Vaallabhbhai having secretly poisoned the minds of the voters directly or indirectly in connection with the election of the leader of the Congress Parliamentary Party. How I wish that you could see that you have made mountain out of a molehill. Assuming that you were utterly innocent of the defeat of the Congress candidate at the Bombay election of 1934, and yet the Sardar persisted in believing that you were not innocent, and actuated the voters against you, how can you make that a cause of serious grievance? These things will happen in public life. Do we not often suspect the *bona fides* even of our companions and act upon those suspicions? In your letter to Sir Govindrao, you say that your claims were defeated because of the allegations against you. Has a public worker any claim to anything? Had Jawaharlal any claim to the Presidentship of the Congress? He may even try his level best to get elected, but why should he brood over his defeat? Would he be justified in making that a cause of grievance against those who were responsible for his defeat? And yet is it not this that you are doing, or is there anything more?

But Sardar Vallabhabahi has generously come forward to submit to an inquiry into your charge. You resent this offer and make that an additional grievance. What he believes about you he has

[1] Justice Govindrao Madgaonkar of Bombay High court

frankly told you and he undertakes to give the grounds of his belief to any impartial judge. He tells you and the public that he never asked anyone to vote against you, and challenges you to prove the contrary. What more can he do? That you have failed to be elected is surely nobody's fault, not even yours. Bombay is not the Bombay Presidency. If you have the ambition of leading Maharashtra, Karnataka and Gujarat, the field is still open to you. The golden way is through utterly selfless service, surely, not through a baseless and hysterical agitation for which you must be held responsible.

The target of this agitation remains unharmed. The Sardar has no parliamentary ambition. He has no ambition for leadership either. Nature has endowed him with certain qualities and he uses them. You won't find him going to the Press and complaining if he loses hold on the populace. Therefore, why won't you see and realize that in the end you will be the only loser? Therefore, take the inquiry and let the judge or judges go into the whole matter, and if you do not want it, then bravely and hounourably declare that you had not weighed and valued things properly, and that now you see quite clearly that Sardar Vallabhbhai had nothing to do with your defeat. For, that is so far as I can see, the whole of your allegation. I think I told you in the course of our conversation that if you convince me that Sardar had poisoned the minds of the voters against you, I for one would cease to have the intimate public connection that I have with him. He has told me repeatedly what he has said in his statement[1] which, as I say, was made at my instance.

You will regard this letter as coming from a friend who wishes well to you.

Yours sincerely,

A.I.C.C. File No. 747-A, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

[1] *Vide* "Livery of Freedom", 31-7-1937

57. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

WARDHA,
July 17, 1937

BHAI VALLABHABHAI,

You are needlessly making yourself unhappy or getting angry. It was but proper that your statement regarding the Nariman affair should have been issued immediately. What more can we expect from members of the Working Committee beside the resolution[1] it has passed? If malicious attacks continue to be made, what can we do about them? And who but Nariman will suffer in the end? Yes, I can see that a lot of people will suffer if we submit to rowdyism. But neither you nor anybody else is likely to submit to it. I am enclosing a copy of my letter[2] to Nariman and a copy of Sir Govindrao's.

Don't lose patience or your peace of mind.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 205.

58. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 17, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. Your programme for the annual birth day celebration is becoming quite strenuous. It seems all right to me. Why don't you prepare in this connection a small booklet, something like "*Khadishastra Praveshika*"? Something of that sort needs to be done. My note[3] is given below the pamphlet.

I am arranging to send Rameshwari Nehru to Rajkot. I shall be able to let you know in a few days whether or not she will go. She is

[1] Dated March 17, 1937, which read: " Had the Working COmmittee found any reason to believe that the election had been influenced by improper conduct on the part of anybody or that the [election] was made under any undue pressure from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel as alleged, it would have certainly ordered fresh election." (*The Bombay Chronicle*, 3-11-1937).

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] *Vide* "Note on Rentia Jayanti Celebration", 17-7-1937

the wife of the Accountant-General of the Postal Department of the Punjab and daughter of Raja Narendranath. She is a very efficient lady. She had toured Travancore during the Harijan agitation there and was a member of the Sarda Committee. She is a learned lady.

I am sending with this a letter form Prema.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Can I now use your services if I require them for work outside?

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8531. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

59. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 17, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

I had written[1] to you, without consulting her, that Shanta would be typing. I had a long talk with her yesterday, during which this matter also was discussed. She said she would like to go herself and do the typing there and spend a day with you. I liked this very much. She will, therefore, walk the distance on Monday morning. She will reach there at about 8 a.m. Give her lunch there. She keeps indifferent health. Please, therefore, don't give her too many *rotlis* or too much bread. Give her milk, curds, jaggery, vegetable and some fruit. You may give her a slice of bread or a *khakhri*, unless she herself asks for more. And also talk to her a little. She is unhappy these days. That is why I engaged her in a talk while walking yesterday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11532.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 15-7-1937

60. LETTER TO SARASWATI

July 17, 1937

CHI. SARASWATI,

I have your letter. Look after Amtul Salaam well and learn Hindi and Urdu from her. Will Paparamma never write to me? Ba is improving. Do you ever write to Lakshmi? A soon as you become a good student you will be permitted to come to me.

Consult Amtul Salaam if you find it difficult to read and follow this letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6161. Also C.W. 3434. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi.

61. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 17, 1937

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have had your first letter from Trivandrum. I have already written to you. Have good rest but follow the doctor's instructions regarding diet. Give up worrying and do not insist on washing your own clothes, and so on. Accept humbly whatever services you require.

Ba is getting better. Kusum and Lilavati have by turns the duty of fanning me. From today Ba, too has started doing something or other.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 385.

62. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

July 18, 1937

DEAR KUMARAPPA,

Sankaran Nair was in the Maganwadi school and he was ailing. Expenses were incurred for medical attendance, medicine and food. For these there is a bill outstanding. He is now in the tannery. He has

got Rs. 10 from Ramachandran. He says he should be excused the rest of the payment. What do you say?

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 10124

63. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

July 18, 1937

CHI. KANU,

If it is necessary for you to cook your meals there, you may certainly do so. However, if you can arrange your programme as before, that will not be necessary. In any case don't be careless about food. We will talk further when you go over here. Learn typing as quickly as possible.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II.

64. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON,
July 18, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Did you get a copy of Nariman's letter? For since I had given you no time the day before yesterday, I thought I might send you one. Shanta will go there today. Keep her as long as she wishes and get full work out of her.[1]

I will try to send the post from here by 2 o'clock.

I have gone through *The Sentinel.*

You may send back Shanta when you think proper. She seems to me to be as pure as a pearl. She has the passport.

I don't mind your having kept back the letter to Anandpriya, though it was not necessary to do so. My method of handling such matters is different. Now we will think about the subject only after we have heard from Vallabhbhai. Let the doctor fetch the instrument for

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 17-7-1937

measuring blood-pressure. Let him examine mine. I have made no changes in your article[1] .

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11533

65. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

July 18, 1937

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I read all your letters with good care. I had no time to write nor had I any inclination. What could I write? The situation was changing and developing every moment. It did not seem proper to write anything in such circumstances. It was imperative to write to others so that their replies could weigh with me as far as possible. I cannot specify the impression your letters made on me. But I can assert that the letters received from there did not influence me as much as happenings here. It may be said that my condition was like that of a woman in labour. She cannot give expression to all the turmoil taking place within her. Now we know all that happened. Let me state this much that whatever Jawaharlal said and did in the Working Committee was marvellous. Even otherwise he held a high place in my esteem but now he has risen still higher. The beauty of it is that it is so in spite of our continuing difference of opinion.

The real difficulty starts now. It is good that the future depends upon our strength, truth, courage, firmness, hard work and duty. What you are doing is right. Let the authorities there understand that there is no 'padding' in the decision of the Working Committee. Every word is significant and everything will be acted upon. After all, what has been done has been done in the name of God, with the utmost faith in Him. I hope you are well. Remain so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 7984. Courtesy : G.D. Birla

[1] "Weekly Letter" published in *Harijan* 24-7-1937.

66. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON,
July 19, 1937

BHAI VALLABHABHAI,

The suggestion to fix the salary[1] at Rs. 500 is worth thinking over seriously. I can't understand house-rent allowance in addition to Rs. 500 and the distinction between Personal Assistant and Secretary. But if you hold different views, please let me know.

You must be observing that I am attending to Nariman. You should now leave everything to me. I am in no hurry to make a public statement. Don't get upset.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

DAHYABHAI,

Forward this letter immediately to Father wherever he is.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 206.

67. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*July 19, 1937*][2]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Send a copy each of this to Raja[3], Rajendra Babu, Govind Vallabh[4], Khare[5] Kher[6] and Vishvanathdas[7] Let Jawahar and

[1] The Congress Working Committee meeting held at Wardha from March 15 to 22 had passed the following resolution: "Apart from free provision to be made by the State for residence and conveyance, the salaries of Ministers, Speakers and Advocate-Generals shall not exceed Rs. 500 per month, as laid down in the Karachi Resolution on Fundamental Rights and Economic Programme." For the Karachi Resolution,

[2] From the S.N. Register

[3] C.Rajagopalachari, Premier of Madras

[4] Govind Vallabh Pant, Premier of the United Provinces

[5] Dr. N. B. Kher, Premier of the Central Provinces

[6] B.G. Kher, Premier of Bombay.

[7] The Premier of Orissa

Vallabhbhai also get a copy each. Tell them that it is an advance copy. If they wish they can get it cancelled by sending a wire. You may, however, send the article[1] to Poona assuming that it will not be cancelled. If any of them wishes to send a wire after Wednesday, he should do so directly to Chandrashanker[2] at Poona. Give them the Poona address.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11541

68. LETTER TO WANDA DYNOWSKA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 20, 1937

DEAR UMA,

I was glad to have your descriptive letter. I hope you are keeping sound health during your wandering. You will come when you like and stay in Segaon as long as you feel happy.

Love

BAPU

SHRI UMADEVI
C/O SHRI M. FRYDMAN
MYSORE ROAD, BANGALORE CITY

From a photostat: G.N. 1200. Also C.W. 5094. Courtesy: Wanda Dynowska.

69. LETTER TO MAURICE FRYDMAN

July 20, 1937

DEAR FRYDMAN[3],

So you have taken sannyasa. Were you not a sannyasi even when you came to Segaon? But I understand what you mean. May God fulfil your aim of utterly selfless service of the most downtrodden. Come whenever the spirit moves you.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1199. Also C.W. 5095. Courtesy: Wanda Dynowska

[1] *Vide* "The Fundamental Difference", 24-7-1937
[2] Chandrashanker Shukla who was editing *Harijanbandhu.*
[3] A Polish engineer who had visited Segaon on June 25, 1936

70. LETTER TO SHANKERRAO DEO

July 20, 1937

MY DEAR DEO,

I have now heard from Shri Kelkar. He has forgotten to return the cutting which I had sent him.[1] I, therefore send my reply from memory.

About Shri Savarkar, I did refuse to sign the memorial for, as I told those who came to me, it was wholly unnecessary as Shri Savarkar was bound to be released after the coming into force of the new Act, no matter who the Ministers were. And that is what has happened. The Savarkar Brothers, at least, know that whatever the differences between us as to certain fundamentals, I could never contemplate with equanimity their incarceration.

Perhaps, Dr. Savarkar[2] will bear me out when I say that I did whaever was in my power after my own way to secure their release. And the barrister will perhaps recall the pleasant relations that existed between us when we met for the first time in London and how, when nobody was forthcoming, I presided at the meeting that was held in his honour in London.

As to my relations with the late Lokamanya Tilak, our defferences were well known and yet we were on the friendliest terms. After all, you, Gangadharrao Deshpande and others who know me would perhaps testify that I yield to no one in my regard to Lokamanya for his burning patriotism, his fearlessness, his magnetic personality and his great learning.

As to office acceptance, I have not retraced my steps. I have no repentance for the advice I gave in 1920 to boycott the Legislatures. I have not a shadow of doubt that the abstention of the Congress deprived them of the false halo of glory which they had acquired. In now strongly advising the Congress to send its representatives to the Legislatures and even to accept office I have responded to the wholly new circumstances that have since come into being. I have never made a fetish of foolish consistency.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Shankarrao Deo", 15-7-1937

[2] Brother of V. D. Savarkar

Whilst you are at liberty to publish this letter, my personal inclination is that I should suffer in silence the cruel misinterpretation that Shri Kelkar has given of my motives and attitude.

The Bombay Chronicle. 27-7-1937

71. LETTER TO J.C. KUMARAPPA

July 20, 1937

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

I ought to have talked to you about Bhagwandas of Kalpi. I told him not to return unless I wrote to him. Do you want him? He seems to be no good as a teacher. Please tell me what you will have me to do. Meanwhile I am telling him not to come in answer to a letter just received.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10125.

72. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

July 20, 1937

CHI. PREMA,

How useless? I got your letter of the 16th today, the 20th, at 11. It is *ekadashi* today. How can I send my blessings so that they should reach you on the *dashami*?[1] You must have got my previous letter. What shall I say to you? You have my blessings, of course. Continue to grow and be victorious.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10392. Also C.W. 6831. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] The addressee's birthday was on July 17, 1937, the 10th day (*dashami*) of the bright half of *Ashadh*.

73. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

July 20, 1937

CHI. MANILAL-SUSHILA,

I sent one letter for you with Mr. Kallenbach. I didn't have your letters before me when I wrote it. If what you write about Omar Sheth[1] is true, it is a sad chapter of his life. If you think it would be proper for me to write about the matter. I might do so. Do you wish that I should write?

Ramdas has not gone there of his own accord. I urged him to go. He didn't keep good health here in spite of all his efforts, and so Nimu suggested that I should send him to South Africa. I accordingly made the suggestion to him. The expenses were borne by Mr. Kallenbach. I have even told Ramdas that if he wishes he might stay there as long as it might be necessary just for the sake of his health. Let us see what happens now. Sita's[2] letter was a good one. That doesn't mean, however, that she should forget Gujarati.

If Sushila, or both of you, can come over, I would be happy. But certainly not at the cost of the work there. Now that Ramdas has gone there, you may think what can be done.

About the Phoenix Trust, Mr. Kallenbach will explain. He himself intends to come here again in November.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4866

74. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

July 20, 1937

CHI. SITA,

Your English letter was very good indeed. Won't you write an equally good one in Gujarati? Or is it that you don't know at all how to write Gujarati? Whatever that be, now that you have started, keep

[1] Omar Zaveri of Pretoria

[2] Addressee's daughter; *vide* also the following item.

writing to me from time to time. You can also describe the things you are doing there.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4867

75. LETTER TO L. R. DACHA

July 20, 1937

BHAI DACHA,

Mahadevbhai has given me your letter. Deviji also had spoken to me. Malkaniji is not likely to show partiality to anybody. He is a dedicated worker who serves in a spirit of self-sacrifice. Now serve there with a quiet mind.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI L. R. DACHA
SOCIAL WORKER
3229 LINGAMPALLY
HYDERABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 4743. Courtesy: L. R. Dacha

76. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

July 20, 1937

CHI. KAKA,

I got your note only yesterday. It was undated. It must have been written before you got my letter.

I am enclosing my opinion for Tandonji's benefit

I have not yet been able to read today's article.

I have forgotten what it was about Sholapur. You may reply at any rate. Let the thing take its own course. I can't recollect anything.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7703

[1] *Vide* also the preceding item.

77. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 20, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending today a good deal of material for *Harijan*. If you have not sent a wire to Kher, send one as follows—and if you have already sent, send a revision: "Received yours and Guzarilal's letter. His objection seems unsurmountable. Take all assistance from him. Suggest keeping office vacant taking labour portfolio yourself. Bapu."[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Prepare an envelope for Kallenbach there. I don't remember the address.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11534

78. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 20, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Herewith the mail. From your note I can't decide what should be done at the moment. We shall see later. As I have already sent [most of] the material today, it was not possible to send this early. I could have sent two articles by 1 o'clock. But Kanu told me that the papers for *Harijan* would be sent later in the evening. I, therefore, went on writing till 3 p.m.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat o the Gujarati: S. N. 11535

[1] In the source, the telegram is in English.

79. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 21, 1937

CHI. KANTI,

I read both your letters. You were keeping in touch with Amtul Salaam even in Bombay. I have seen in your letters, too, that you are still clinging to her. But I don't think there is anything wrong in that. In the beginning, of course, you made a mistake in showering thoughtless love on her, but there was no impurity even in that. You shouldn't, therefoe, completely break off your relation with her. But there is no need at all for you to let her come to Bangalore, not even by way of atonement. There is a no need for any atonement. You are right in saying that she is a child. My advice now is that you yourself should write directly to her and tell her that I had asked your opinion; and that it was foolishness on your part to have shown such excessive love. You may tell her that her coming to Bangalore would not benefit either of you in any way, that on the contrary it would upset you, etc. Write a fairly long and affectionate letter. I will manage the rest. Don't worry about her being hurt. Keep writing to her, but only postcards. Don't mind expense on a postcard every week. She has asked me to send her your letters to me. I will not send to the one about her, but will send the other one in which you have described your discussion with the Christian. I will use my discretion every time. I will thus satisfy her. Try to bear with her having gone to Trivandrum. Your admiration for her had its root in a beautiful sentiment. Her sacrifice is beyond description. Poor girl, she lacks intelligence and has bad health. If her health improves and she gets strong, I hope to take much work from her. Don't cut her off completely, but don't think from this, either, that deep in my heart I want you to permit her to go to Bangalore. I fully endorse your decision on that point. I am sending this reply by return of post.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7327. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Amtussalaam", 27-7-1937

80. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 22, 1937

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Maulana Saheb stopped for a day in Wardha and we had a long chat. He showed me the draft agreement between Muslim League members of the Assembly and the Congress members.[1] I thought it was a good document. But he told me that whilst you liked it, Tandonji did not. I have written to the latter about it as the Maulana suggested I should. What is the objection?

The Rs. 500 salary with big house and car allowances is being severely criticized.[2] The more I think of it, the more I dislike this extravagant beginning. I talked about this, too, to the Maulana.

How is Indu?

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, p. 236.

81. LETTER TO VALLABHABHAI PATEL

July 22, 1937

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

A word seems to be missing in Thakkar Bapa's award.[3] Have you gone through it? If the missing words don't affect the sense, I think that according to Bapa's award the Municipality is bound to retain 185 men. However, I am awaiting Dinkarrao's letter. Let him get the award interpreted by a lawyer and send the interpretation to me. There is no question of my being liberal. But if the award means that 185 men should be retained, how can we at all do anything else? I should like you to read the award when you get the time. I am sending a copy with this. I will not hurry you, but you, too, should avoid needless delay.

[1] *Vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 10-7-1937
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 19-7-1937
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar", 5-4-1937

Has the Nariman issue quietened down?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

It will be enough if you read only the portions underlined by me on pages 6 and 10 of the award. Think over this. The Municipality will have to pay Rs. 160 more by way of salaries. If, however, it retrenches 25 persons, it will have a net saving of 25 x 11=275-160=115. Is this the meaning of Bapa's decision? If he has not fixed the number anywhere, wouldn't this be the result?

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 206-7.

82. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

July 22, 1937

CHI. KAKA,

I read Shankar's letter in my present none too good health. I send with this my reply to it and the copy sent by Bal. Send the letter to Bal. You, of course, should read my letters.

I don't feel inclined to involve you in this matter, But if...[1] is really what Shankar believes he is, it is necessary from every point of view to know the truth.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7696

83. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHAGANJ,
July 23, 1937

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
SUMMER HILL
SIMLA

AWAITING YOU MONDAY. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3797. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6953

[1] The name has been omitted.

84. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON,
July 23, 1937

BELOVED DAUGHTER,[1]

I got your letter. For the present stay on there. Complete one month. We will think afterwards. You can stitch clothes for Harijans. There is enough to do there. But do only as much as you can stand.

If Saraswati really wishes to come and Ramachandran also approves of it, I should certainly like her to come. She can gain practical experience here. If Ramachandran agrees, let me know what she wishes.

I have written to Bari about the Rs. 1,000 and told him that if he intends to give the sum he should give it unconditionally.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 386.

85. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

July 23, 1937

I got your letter. You know my opinion about you. You never undertake any task beyond your capacity, and as you are straightforward you bring credit to whatever you undertake. But in the sphere of what is known as politics, it is not the fittest men who are appointed to do particular jobs. No leader can satisfy that criterion. You should realize this and bear with what is happening. I would expect even more from you. You shouldn't even think about such things. One may accept whatever is offered to one, provided it is within one's capacity, and never grieve over something not being offered. When one has no other aim except service, where is the room for ambition? And you are all out for service. But since you have been overcome by ignorance, listen to me. You have reached your present position through sheer merit. And the service you are doing now is not small in any way. You may become a Mayor and enter the All-India field if you can through worthy efforts. For becoming a

[1] The superscription and the subscription are in Urdu.

Minister, as the saying goes, his berries will be sold who knows how to shout. God knows why, but all over the world people pine for such positions. Since from among the many candidates only a few can be selected, does it not follow that only those will be selected who have to included? However, let your candidature be made known in a polite way. Please understand the meaning of the word "polite" here. One must observe the utmost delicacy when suggesting oneself as a candidate in such a matter. If the limit is crossed, one will invite humiliation. The best claim. to candidature, of course, is silent service and unrivalled fitness. Calm down. Don't take the matter to heart.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 165-6.

86. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 23, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Rajkumari is arriving on Monday by the 11.35 train. Read the accompanying letter. I believe Jamnalalji will not be there at the time. You will, of course, go to receive her. Do what is needed. She will stay for two days.

I have talked to Anna about Devraj[1] . He will write to him. I am not very hopeful.

Shankerlal may come tomorrow at 8, or whenever he wishes to come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11537

87. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

July 23, 1937

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

Come when you can. September is also a good time. I will tell Shankerlal about the shawl.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32814

[1] Gandhiji's typist.

88. LETTER TO SARASWATI

July 23, 1937

CHI. SARASWATI,

I have your letter. Yes, you may certainly come over here if Ramachandran, Paparamma, Father and Kanti approve of it. On my part, I shall love to have you here[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6162. Also C.W. 3435. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

89. THE FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE

It is necessary to contemplate for a moment the fundamental difference between the old and the new order. In order fully to realize it we must try to forget for the moment the crushing limitations of the Act. Seeing that the Congress has gone to the farthest limit and has accepted office, let every Congressman note the power it has taken. Whereas formerly the Ministers were amenable to the control of the Governors, now they are under the control of the Congress. They are responsible to the Congress. They owe their status to the Congress. The Governors and the Civil Service though irremovable are yet answerable to the Ministers. The Ministers have effective control over them up to a point. That point enables them to consolidate the power of the Congress, i.e., the people. The Ministers have the whip-hand so long as they act within the four corners of the Act, no matter how distasteful their actions may be to the Governors. It will be found upon examination that so long as the people remain non-violent, the Congress Ministers have enough freedom of action for national growth.

For effective use of this power, the people have to give hearty co-operation to the Congress and their Ministers. If the latter do wrong or they neglect their duty, it is open to any person to complain to the Secretary of the A.I.C.C. and seek redress. But no one may take the law into his own hands.

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Amtussalaam", 23-7-1937

Congressmen should also realize that there is no other political party in the field to question the authority of the Congress. For the other parties have never penetrated the villages. And that is not a work which can be done in a day. So far therefore, as I can see a vast opportunity is at the disposal of the Ministers in terms of the Congress objective of Complete Independence, if only they are honest, selfless, industrious, vigilant and solicitous for the true welfare of the starving millions. No doubt, there is great validity in the argument that the Act has left the Ministers no money to spend for the nation-building departments. But this is largely an illusion. I believe with Sir Daniel Hamilton that labour, and not metal, is real money. Paper backed by labour is as good as, if not better than, paper backed by gold. Here are the sentiments of an English financier[1] who has held high office in India:

> The worst legacy we have left to India is a high-grade Service. What has been done cannot be undone. I should now start something independent. Whatever is being done today with 'money motive' should in future be based on 'service motive'. Why should teachers and doctors be paid high salaries? Why cannot most of the work be done on a co-operative basis? Why should you worry about capital when there are seven hundred million hands to toil? If things are done on a co-operative basis, which in other words is modified socialism, money would not be needed, at least not in large quantity.

I find this verified in little Segaon. The four hundred adults of Segaon can easily put ten thousand rupees annually into their pockets if only they would work as I ask them. But they won't. They lack co-operation, they do not know the art of intelligent labour, they refuse to learn anything new. Untouchability blocks the way. If someone presented them with one lakh of rupees, they would not turn it to account. They are not responsible for this state of affairs. We the middle class are. What is true of Segaon is true of other villages. They will respond by patient effort as they are responding in Segaon though ever so slowly. The State, however, can do much in this direction with out having to spend a single pie extra. The State officials can be utilized for serving the people instead of harassing them. The villagers may not be coerced into doing anything. They can be educated to do things which enrich them morally, mentally, physically and economically.

Harijan, 24-7-1937

[1] Sir George Schuster

90. A KHADI JOURNAL

For the past four years monthly journal has been issued in Wardha called *Maharashtra Khadi Patrika.* It has from month to month registered the progress of khadi in Maharashtra. It has hitherto been issued in Marathi. But its usefulness and the inclusion of Mahakoshal in the sphere of the Maharashtra Branch of the A.I.S.A. have necessitated conversion of the journal into Hindi. The first number is before me. The journal is a record of the great progress khadi has made under the very able guidance of Shri Jajuji assisted as he is by a devoted band of workers. The price of the journal is only Re. 1 per year, a single copy being 11/2 as. It has no advertisements. It has no padding. It contains an unvarnished and faithful account of the progress of khadi within the jurisdiction of the Maharashtra Branch. The work touches the social and economic life of the people who are engaged in it. For the week, I wish to draw attention to a great experiment the branch is making in enabling spinning to yield a wage equal to any in the villages. Three annas per day was the minimum accepted provisionally and in the transition stage instead of eight annas minimum I have aimed at. If the buying public were to give intelligent and patriotic help, the objective can be achieved sooner than expected. The present experiment is one of increasing wages by inducing the spinners to do their own carding. The result has been most gratifying. Sixteen workers spun for two weeks slivers carded for them and after being taught carding for one month they spun their own slivers. The result was that in the place of 161 *chhatanks*[1], they spun in the same period 198, the average count increased from 14 to 18, the test from 55 to 59, their earnings from Rs. 12-4-0 to Rs. 24-0-3. This is a striking example of how with intelligence and application earnings can even be doubled.

Harijan, 24-7-1937

[1] One-sixteenth of a seer

91. LETTER TO K.M. MUNSHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 24, 1937

BHAI MUNSHI,

I got your letter. How can you expect any mercy from me? I can't approve of your princely salaries and additional princely house-rent allowances and conveyance allowances. Moreover, you will draw your salary at one rate and your secretary at another and lower rate, though both of you are guests of the same family. Why such distinctions under the Congress flag? When Vijayaraghavachari was President, Motilalji was secretary. If we were paying salaries, would we have paid less to Motilalji? To me this is like a fly in the very first morsel.

Take care of your health. Don't let there be unpleasantness among yourselves. Overcome co-workers' anger with forbearance.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7618. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

92. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

[On or after *July 24, 1937*][1]

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Your letter.

I liked your statement about salaries. Apart from my convenience I do think that Wardha is the best and the quietest place for W[orking] C[ommittee] meetings.

I am in constant correspondence with Nariman[2]. His latest is a marvellous piece of impudence. You will see my two last letters to him. M. will send you copies.[3] If he does not accept my proposal, I

[1]From the reference to the addressee's "statement about salaries", presumably of public servants, which was issued on July 24, 1937; *vide Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru,* Vol. 8, pp. 284-6.

[2] K. F Nariman, President, Bombay Provincial Congress Committee.

[3]*Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 2-8-1937

shall issue my statement[1]. Therein I propose to tell him that you could have no objection to publishing the whole of the correspondence between the W. C. and him. You too will have to make a statement. Yours may follow mine if the latter becomes inevitable.

I am trying to find time for writing about Essay on Hindi.[2]

Love.

BAPU

From the original Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

93. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 24/25, 1937

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have been handling the Nariman affair according to my lights. You should now forget all about the matter. Ignore all attacks. Surely you don't care for fame, do you? And you don't have to get your son or daughter married. "Let him malign who will, let another bow and let still another say what he will."

Now about Anandpriya.[3] I don't mean anything more than that in such matters your approach differs from mine. Who can say which approach is better? We can't compare them even on the basis of the results. Even if my approach does not produce the desired result or produces a seemingly contrary result, I wouldn't give it up. Nor would you give up yours. This is a matter of the heart. Isn't it but natural that everybody should follow his own? I don't expect him to improve through my letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Now this. My health is good. I only need a little rest which I am taking.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11560

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 2-8-1937

[2] Jawaharlal Nehru wrote an essay entitled "The Question of Languages" for the Congress Political and Economic Studies Series. For extracts from it and Gandhiji's foreword dated August 3, 1937,

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 18-7-1937

94. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 25, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

I got the post at 3.15. Janba had come earlier but had not brought the post. Now do what you can. I will comply with your request that I should observe silence. I feel much better.

Read my letter to Shanta. Think over it and cancel the passage if you wish. Personally that is what I desire. I would of course agree. . . [1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11538

95. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 26, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

If Shanta ultimately decides to stay on, look after her needs. Make her proficient in the daily chores. See that she does not exert herself beyond her strength. Let her have sufficient fruit. Make her sit with you for meals. Fix a salary for her. See that she goes out for regular walks.

Give Kanu plenty of work. Let him learn typing. Give him English typing to do. Take work from Chhotelal, too.

Get the money soon. The present stock will run out in a few days.

I am bringing Balkrishna here today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11539

[1] A word is illegible in the source.

96. LETTER TO M.N. ROY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 27, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I entirely agree with you that every Congressman should fearlessly express the opinion he holds after due deliberation. You ask me how you can best serve the Congress. Since you are new to the organization, I should say you would serve it best by mute service.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI M. N. ROY
"INDEPENDENT INDIA"
BOMBAY 4

Police Commissioner's Office File No. 3001/H, p.23. Courtesy: Government of Maharashtra

97. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

July 27, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your kind letter[1] .

I had for some time intended to ask for an appointment to discuss the possibility of lifting the ban on Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan's entry into the Frontier Province and of my visiting that Province. Of course there is no bar against me but I had no intention of going there except with the approval of the authorities.

Your letter is therefore doubly welcome. I assume that there would be no objection to my discussing these two points at our meeting. I shall gladly report myself at Viceroy's House, New Delhi, on 4th August next at 11.30 a.m.

I remain,
Yours sincerely,
M.K. GANDHI

From a Copy: C.W. 7889. Courtesy: G.D. Birla. Also *In the Shadow of the Mahatma*, pp. 235-6

[1] In his Letter dated July 23, the addressee had invited Gandhiji to meet him at Delhi. After his Assam tour, the Viceroy was passing through Delhi *en route* to Simla.

98. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 27, 1937

CHI. MIRA,

I have not been able to overtake your letters. Appointments and *Harijan* writing overwhelm me. Here is Nanda Babu's opinion[1] .

Balkrishna was brought here this morning. He has been having fever. He has decided traces in his right lung. Dr. Batra who is just now living with me suggested his being brought here. He cheerfully consented and is now housed in Jamnalalji's new cottage. It is quite fine.

Rajkumari came in today. She goes back on 28th and returns on 6th. Rameshwari is still here. So every inch of space is occupied.

I hope you are making steady progress.

After all Shanta is not going. Her mother having learnt of her preparations sends an airmail letter saying she is not wanted by her. Therefore the passage is being cancelled. She is helping Mahadev and she is a very great help to him, Radhakisan having gone for good.

Love to you and Subhas.

BAPU

[PS.]

Remember me to the Dharmavirs.

From the original: C.W. 6394. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9860

99. LETTER TO K.F. NARIMAN

July 27, 1937

MY DEAR NARIMAN,

I got your letter yesterday. I write the reply today, but too late for today's post.

If you trust me, here is my suggestion. Let there be a definite reference drawn by you. I shall show it to the Sardar; and, if he approves, I shall ask Sir Govindrao to take evidence on it and give his decision. The inquiry should be private. I feel that the charge of Sardar having influenced the voters is inevitable. For it he did not use

[1] *Vide* footnote 2, "Letter to Mirabehn",10-7-1937

his opinion of you against your election. There will be nothing for any judge to go upon so, whilst Sardar will have to give grounds for his opinion, you will have to prove that he used his opinion to influence the voters.

As for agitation, I see that you do not disapprove of it. In my opinion it amounts to coercion. Is there any obligation on the part of any leader to take a particular colleague into his Cabinet? Whatever the public may say or do, I tell you that you are estranging your real friends from you by your permitting the agitation to continue as it is doing. If you have accepted the Working Committee's judgment, you have to say so and acquit the Sardar of any complicity. If you have not, and I think you have not, you have to prove your charge against the Sardar. But when he offers to appear before a judge of joint choice, you are in honour bound to stop the agitation which hurts you . and you only. Please do not think me prejudiced against you because I write to you frankly. My frankness is a test of my good wishes.

I daily receive letters asking me to intervene and give my opinion in public. I am referring my correspondents to you telling them that so far as I am concerned, they have access to all my letters to you. But I do not wish to say anything to the Press at this stage unless you want me.

I hope my letter is clear to you.

You have chosen an unfortunate illustration in Dr. Rajan's case. He carried on or continued no agitation. He meekly submitted to the adverst verdict.

Yours, etc.,

A.I.C.C. File No. 747-A 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

100. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 27, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have been at this since morning. I have not slept for more than half an hour since five. I have just finished revising the article and have completed it. I, therefore, could't send Janba earlier. I see that on Mondays the typing should be done here. We must have two typewriters.

I can't attend to the other work today. Send the following wire to Rajaji:

Premier Rajagopalachari, Madras. Suggest referring Meherally's speech[1] to President for instructions. Bapu.

Rajkumari is here just now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11540.

101. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 27, 1937

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I got your letter today and Kanti's, too. I had asked him if he would approve of your going there and also informed him that I was forwarding his letters to you. He writes that he would not like your going to Bangalore, and he does not wish his letters to be passed on to you. He says: "She may well pray that I may yet again develop filial love towards her but this is not the case. I bear no more love towards her than what I bear towards the other womenfolk of the Ashram." Hence I will not be able to let you go there, though I had wanted you to do so on your way back to the Ashram. Do not take Kanti's decision to heart. I shall convey to you the news of his wellbeing. By all means go to Bombay if necessary, for Baqui. It might even be necessary to go in order to look after Mother. It is possible that your short stay there might prove helpful to your brothers. Do stay there for at least a month.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostate of the Hindi: G.N. 387

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sampurnanand", 27-7-1937

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Kantilal Gandhi,", 21-7-1937

102. LETTER TO SAMPURNANAND

July 27, 1937

BHAI SAMPURNANAND,

I had taken your book[1] to Tithal, and had started reading it there. I finished it last Saturday, i.e., on July 24. I used to read it whenever I had a few minutes to spare. I have read it carefully from cover to cover. I liked the book, the language is sweet but it might also be regarded a bit difficult for those totally unacquainted with Sanskrit. The glossary of English-Hindi and Hindi-English equivalents given at the end is useful for the student. It is laudable that arguments in favour of socialism have been put forward without any disparagement of others.

I have no difficulty in accepting almost all the principles of socialism propounded in the book. I have also read with care the book[2] by Jayaprakash. Can there possibly be any difference between his interpretation and yours? Neither in your book nor in his do I find a clear idea how the ultimate revolution in India will be brought about. This I could not understand even after discussing it with many others. Only the day before yesterday a report of Meherally's Madras speech came into my hands and I went through it[3] . It explains fully what the socialists are doing. The object is to start a revolt in every sphere. But a revolt has never been possible without violence. In your book, however, I find nothing of the kind. Have we or have not we acquired strength through peaceful ways such as the civil disobedience or non-violent non-co-operation carried on since 1920?

You say that the principles of socialism cannot be fully implemented until we have State power. Supposing, you ask, a powerful land-owner turned a complete socialist, could he well and truly act upon his principles? Assuming that he had no punitive power, could an Indian raja who was a socialist be able to implement socialism? I recollect your having written that socialism cannot be practised in its entirety until the whole world turns socialist. Does this imply that even if we gain complete independence socialism will not

[1] *Samajvad.*

[2] *Why Socialism?*

[3] *Vide* also "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 27-7-1937., and "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 30-7-1937

be fully or almost fully implemented? I hope you have understood my point. The purpose behind this question is only to ascertain how far it would be possible for me to accept the socialist principles and the means of their implementation.

You may reply to this letter at your leisure. I am in no hurry.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From Hindi: C.W. 9940. Courtesy: Kashi Vidyapith.

103. A SILENCE-DAY NOTE

[Before *July 28, 1937*][1]

Surely I can't do such a thing myself? I explain all the steps. We hold frequent discussions. What more can I do? He can part from me and do what he likes, but under my supervision he can work only in this manner. I know that at present we are making the minimum use of his services but in this lies self-control on our part and his part and this self-control is a test of our faith that morality is inextricably linked with our outward activity.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7693

104. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

[Before *July 28, 1937*][2]

CHI. KANTI,

Read this letter and preserve it. I have accepted Devdas's demand. If now any additional expenses are incurred for you, I will see about them. Send the account also to me. Write a pleasant letter to Devdas. He must be relieved of worry. I have not decided where I will get the money from.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 10230. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] The source bears a note to the effect that this was filed on July 28, 1937.

[2] The date is inferred from the contents and the subsequent letter to the addressee; *vide* "Letter to Kantilal Gandhi"

105. LETTER TO K. F. NARIMAN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 29, 1937

MY DEAR NARIMAN,

I have just seen your letter to the Press.[1] You are strange. You won't wait even whilst you are in correspondence with me. Your letter compels a public statement from me. I want to avoid it if I can.

The Working Committee has never refused to give you a tribunal. It has told you to frame your charge-sheet before it can decide whether to give it or not. But, if you like, I am willing to ask the President to give you a tribunal even before you have framed your charge-sheet. If you do not want me to do so, shall I make a statement of my impressions that have been made upon me throughout this sad episode? Please wire your reply[2] .

I may state that Sardar is here. He is quite willing to join me in asking the President to give you an independent tribunal.

Yours sincerely,

A.I.C.C. File No. 747-A, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

106. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO K. F. NARIMAN

[After *July 29, 1937*][3]

If you do not want an enquiry, please say so without any mental reservation. To say that others are pressing you to drop the matter has no meaning. I do not like your statement at all. You do not appear to realize the harm you are doing. I am as anxious to safeguard your interests as I am of the Sardar's. If the Sardar is my lieutenant, so are you. The only difference is that he does not allow himself to be

[1] Nariman had issued a statement on July 28.

[2] In *Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel*, Vol. II, P. 239, Narahari Parikh explains: "In reply to this Nariman said that he found himself in a most difficult position. Great pressure was being brought to bear on him not to pursue the matter further, and even those whom he approached as arbitrators in this matter also advised him similarly." For Gandhiji's rejoinder, *vide* the following item.

[3] According to the source, this letter was written after Gandhiji had received the addressee's reply to his letter dated July 29; *vide* the preceding item.

prejudiced against me whenever I differ from him or show him his mistakes. You, however, are impatient when I point out your mistakes. All the members of the Working Committee are surely not your enemies. Nevertheless you seem to nurse some grievance against them all. Finally, and in spite of your distrust, I would like you to believe me when I say that I am acting in this matter solely as your well-wisher and friend.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Vol. II, p. 239.

107. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July [*28/*][1] *30, 1937*

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter. I have written[2] to Amtul Salaam as desired by you. She will certainly be very much hurt, but she ought to know your state of mind. I will also not send her your letters.

You will not have to ask anything from Devdas. I will look after it. You won't have to send even the account to Devdas.

I have had no letter from Prabhavati for the last 15 days. Probably she doesn't write because of the death of her father-in-law.

Rajkumari is here. Kanu has already returned. Radhakrishna has left for good. But, as we have Shantabehn in his place, the work is being looked after.

I wrote the above in three instalments spread over three days, for after writing a few lines before the morning prayer I could hardly get time during the day to write more.

Belssings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7328. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] From the last paragraph
[2] *Vide*"Letter to Amtussalaam", 27-7-1937

108. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 30, 1937

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I hope Mahadev told you yesterday in addition to acknowledging your essay on Hindi[1] that the Viceroy had invited me to Delhi on the 4th for no special reason but merely to have the pleasure of meeting him. I replied[2] saying that he had anticipated me for I wanted to seek an interview with him about the ban on Khan Saheb and my desire to visit the Frontier. I am accordingly reaching Delhi on the 4th. The appointment is for 11.30. Therefore, I hope to be able to leave the same day, returning to Segaon on the 5th.

But this letter is to send you a copy of Zakir's letter in reply to my letter giving my reaction to the recent riot in Bombay and the wretched Hindi-Urdu controversy. I thought that I should share with you this considered letter.

I do not regard the Jhansi election as a rout. It is an honourable defeat, giving rise to the hope that if we plod away we can effectively take the Congress message to the Mussalmans. But I still abide by my opinion that the mere taking of the message unaccompanied by substantial work in the villages won't answer our purpose in the end. But it all depends upon the way in which we want to generate power.

Meherally's speech in Madras is an eye-opener for me. I wonder how far he represents the general socialistic view. Rajaji has sent me a cutting containing his speech. I hope he has sent a copy to you also. I call it a bad speech of which you should take notice. This is going contrary to the Congress policy as I read it.

There is also Roy's speech at Madras. I take it, you get all such cuttings. Nevertheless, for ready reference I enclose the cuttings which Pyarelal has made for me. Roy has been writing to me, too. You should see his latest letter. It will go with this if I have not destroyed it. What is your reaction to his attitude? As I have already told you I find it difficult to understand him.[3]

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, "Letter to Mirabehn", 10-7-1937
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 27-7-1937
[3] *Vide* also "Letter to M.N. Roy", 27-7-1937

Your calling khadi 'livery of freedom'[1] will live as long as we speak the English language in India. It needs a first-class poet to translate into Hindi the whole of the thought behind that enchanting phrase. For me it is not merely poetry but it enunciates a great truth whose full significance we have yet to grasp.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Though the paragraph about Roy's speech follows the one about Meherally's it is not to suggest that it is on a par with M's.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A* Bunch of Old Letters, pp. 237-8

109. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

July 30, 1937

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I wanted to show this to you, but forgot. It would be better if you yourself replied to it. Or send for him in person. After you have done with the letter, send it to Rajaji with your remarks.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapune Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 208

110. LETTER TO D.B. KALELKAR

July 30, 1937

CHI. KAKA,

I have gone through what you sent with Vora. Nothing else occurs to me. Clause 11 should come at the end, or Clause 21 should replace Clause 11 and he latter should become Clause 12. You will understand this change as soon as you read the draft. I am sending herewith an essay by Jawaharlal on Hindi. If you can go through it today, please do so and send your suggestions. Jawaharlal has asked

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru used this phrase in his appeal to the country to celebrate August I as 'Ministry Day'; *vide* "Livery of Freedom", 31-7-1937

for my comments. I should send them immediately. If you are very busy and cannot send any suggestions, don't worry. It will suffice if I get them before you leave tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7702

111. CRITICISM ANSWERED

My article[1] on Congress Ministries has attracted attention and evoked criticism. The latter demands an answer.

How can total prohibition be brought about immediately if at all? By 'immediately' I mean an immediate planned declaration bringing about total prohibition not later than three years from 14th July 1937, the date of the taking of office by the first Congress Ministry. I imagine that it is quite possible to bring it about in two years. But not being aware of administrative difficulties I put down three years. I count loss of this revenue as of no account whatsoever. Prohibition will remain a far cry, if the Congress is to count the cost in a matter of first-class national importance.

Let it be remembered that this drink and drugs revenue is a form of extremely degrading taxation. All taxation to be healthy must return tenfold to the tax-payer in the form of necessary services. Excise makes people pay for their own corruption–moral, mental and physical. If falls like a dead weight on those who are least able to bear it. The revenue is largely derived, I believe, from industrial labour which together with field labour the Congress almost exclusively represents.

The loss of revenue is only apparent. Removal of this degrading tax enables the drinkers, i.e., the tax-payer to earn and spend better. Apart, therefore, from the tremendous gain, it means a substantial economic gain to the nation.

I put this prohibition in the forefront because its result is immediate; Congressmen and especially women have bled for it; national prestige will rise in a manner it cannot by any single act that I can conceive, and the other five Provinces are highly likely to follow

[1] *Vide* "Congress Ministries", 17-7-1937

the six. The Mussalman non-Congress Prime Ministers are equally interested in seeing India sober rather than drunk.

The cry of great expenditure in preventing illicit distillation is thoughtless where it is not hypocritical. India is not America. The American example is a hindrance rather than a help to us. In America drinking carries no shame with it. It is the fashion there to drink. It reflects the greatest credit on the determined minority in America that by sheer force of its moral weight it was able to carry through the prohibition measure however shortlived it was. I do not regard that experiment to have been a failure. I do not despair of America once more returning to it with still greater fervour and better experience in dealing with it. It may be that if India carries out prohibition it will hasten the advent of prohibition in America. In no part of the world is prohibition as easy to carry out as in India for with us it is only a minority that drinks. Drinking is generally considered disrespectable. And there are millions, I believe, who have never known what drink is.

But why should prevention of illicit distillation cost any more than prevention of other crimes? I should make illicit distillation heavily punishable and think no more about it. Some of it will go on perhaps till doomsday as thieving will. I would not set up a special agency to pry into illicit distilleries. But I would punish anyone found drunk though not disorderly (in the legal sense) in streets or other public places with a substantial fine or alternatively with indeterminate imprisonment to end when the erring one has earned his or her keep.

This however, is the negative part. Voluntary organizations especially manned by women will work in the labour areas. They will visit those who are addicted to drink and try to wean them from the habit. Employers of labour will be expected by law to provide cheap,healthy refreshment, reading and entertainment rooms where the working men can go and find shelter, knowledge, health-giving food and drink and innocent fun.

Thus prohibition means a type of adult education of the nation and not merely a closing down of grog shops.

Prohibition should begin by preventing any new shop from being licensed and closing some that are in danger of becoming a nuisance to the public. How far the latter is possible without having to pay heavy compensation I do not know. In any case, generally, licences that lapse should not be renewed. No new shops should be opened on any account. Whatever immediately is possible in law

should be done without a moment's thought so far as the revenue is concerned.

But what is the meaning or extent of total prohibition? Total prohibition is prohibition against sales of intoxicating drinks and drugs, except under medical prescription by a practitioner licensed for the purpose and to be purchasable only at Government depots maintained therefor. Foreign liquors in prescribed quantity may be imported for the use of Europeans who cannot or will not do without their drink. These will also be sold in bottles in select areas and under authorized certificates. Hotels and restaurants will cease to sell intoxicating drinks.

But what about relief to the peasantry which is oppressed by excessive taxation, rack-renting, illegal exactions, indebtedness which can never be fully discharged, illiteracy, superstition and disease, peculiarly due to pauperism? Of course it comes first in terms of numbers and economic distress. But the relief of the peasantry is an elaborate programme and does not admit of wholesale treatment. And no Congress Ministry that does not handle this universal problem can exist for ten days. Every Congressman is instinctively interested, if largely academically, in this problem. He has inherited the legacy from the birth of the Congress. The distress of the peasantry may be said to be the *raison d'etre* of the Congress. There was and is no fear of this subject being neglected. I fear the same cannot be said of prohibition. It became an integral part of the Congress programme only in 1920. In my opinion, the Congress,, now that it is in power, will put itself morally right only by once for all courageously and drastically dealing with this devastating evil.

How to solve the problem of education is the problem unfortunately mixed up with the disapperance of the drink revenues. No doubt there are ways and means of raising fresh taxation. Professors Shah and Khambhatta have shown that even this poor country is capable of raising fresh taxation. Riches have not yet been sufficiently taxed. In this of all countries in the world possession of inordinate wealth by individuals should be held as a crime against Indian humanity. Therefore the maximum limit of taxation of riches beyond a certain margin can never be reached. In England, I understand, they have already gone as far as 70% of the earnings beyond a prescribed figure. There is no reason why India should not go to a much higher figure. Why should there not be death duties?

Those sons of millionaires who are of age and yet inherit their parents' wealth, are losers for the very inheritance. The nation thus becomes a double loser. For the inheritance should rightly belong to the nation. And the nation loses again in that the full faculties of the heirs are not drawn out, being crushed under the load of riches. That death duties cannot be imposed by provincial Governments does not affect my argument.

But as a nation we are so backward in education that we cannot hope to fulfil our obligations to the nation in this respect in a given time during this generation, if the programme is to depend on money. I have therefore made bold, even at the risk of losing all reputation for constructive ability, to suggest that education should be self-supporting. By education I mean an all-round drawing out of the best in child and man–body, mind and spirit. Literacy is not the end of education nor even the beginning. It is only one of the means whereby man and woman can be educated. Literacy in itself is no education. I would therefore begin the child's education by teaching it a useful handicraft and enabling it to produce from the moment it begins its training. Thus every school can be made self-supporting, the condition being that the State takes over the manufactures of these schools.

I hold that the highest development of the mind and the soul is possible under such a system of education. Only every handicraft has to be taught not merely mechanically as is done today but scientifically, i.e., the child should know the why and the wherefore of every process. I am not writing this without some confidence, because it has the backing of experience. This method is being adopted more or less completely wherever spinning is being taught to workers. I have myself taught sandal-making and even spinning on these lines with good results. This method does not exclude a knowledge of history and such general information by word of mouth. One imparts ten times as much in this manner as by reading and writing. The signs of the alphabet may be taught later when the pupil has learnt to distinguish wheat from chaff and when he has somewhat developed his or her tastes. This is a revolutionary proposal but it saves immense labour and enables a student to acquire in one year what he may take much longer learn. This means all-round economy. Of course the pupil learns mathematics whilst he is learning his handicraft.

I attach the greatest importance to primary education which according to my conception should be equal to the present matriculation less English. If all the collegians were all of a sudden to forget their knowledge, the loss sustained by the sudden lapse of the memory of say a few lacs of collegians would be as nothing compared to the loss that the nation has sustained and is sustaining through the ocean of darkness that surrounds three hundred millions. The measure of illiteracy is no adequate measure of the prevailing ignorance among the millions of villagers.

I would revolutionize college education and relate it to national necessities. There would be degrees for mechanical and other engineers. They would be attached to the different industries which should pay for the training of the graduates they need. Thus the Tatas would be expected to run a college for training engineers under the supervision of the State, the mill associations would run among them a college for training graduates whom they need. Similarly for the other industries that may be named. Commerce will have its college. There remain arts, medicine and agriculture. Several private arts colleges are today self-supporting. The State would, therefore, cease to run its own. Mecical colleges would be attached to certified hospitals. As they are popular among monied men they may be expected by voluntary contributions to support medical colleges. And agricultural colleges to be worthy of the name must be self-supporting. I have a painful experience of some agricultural graduates. Their knowledge is superficial. They lack practical experience. But if they had their apprenticeship on farms which are self-sustained and answer the requirements of the country, they would not have to gain experience after getting their degrees and at the expense of their employers.

This is not a fanciful picture. If we would but shed our mental laziness, it would appear to be an eminently reasonable and practical solution of the problem of education that faces the Congress Ministers and therefore the Congress. If the declarations recently made on behalf of the British Government mean what they sound to the ear, the Ministers have the organizing and organized ability of the Civil Service at their disposal to execute their policy. The Services have learnt the art of reducing to practice the policies laid down for them even by capricious Governors and Viceroys. Let the Ministers lay down a well-conceived but determined policy, and let the Services redeem the promise made on their behalf and prove worthy of the salt they eat.

There remains the question of teachers. I like Prof. K.T. Shah's idea expressed in his article elsewhere of conscription being applied to men and women of learning.[1] The may be conscripted to give a number of years, say, five, to the teaching for which they may be qualified, on a salary not exceeding their maintenance on a scale in keeping with the economic level of the country. The very high salaries that the teachers and professors in the higher branches demand must go. The village teacher has to be replaced by more competent ones.

My Suggestion to turn jails into reformatories to make them self-supporting has not excited much criticism. Only one remark I have noticed. If they turn out marketable goods, I am told, they will unfairly compete with the open market. There is no substance in the remark. But I anticipated it in 1922 when I was a prisoner in Yeravda. I discussed my plan with the then Home Member, the then Inspector-General of Prisons, and two Superintendents who were in charge of the prison in succession. Not one of them cavilled at my suggestion. The then Home Member was even enthusiastic about it and wanted me to put my scheme in writing, if he could obtain the permission from the Governor. But His Excellency would not hear of a prisoner making suggestions regarding jail administration! And so my scheme never saw the light of day. But the author believes in its soundness today just as much as when he first made it. This was the plan: All industries that were not paying should be stopped. All the jails should be turned into hand-spinning and hand-weaving institutions. They should include (wherever possible) cotton-growing to producing the finest cloth. I suggest that almost every facility for this purpose already exists in the prison. Only the will has to be there. Prisoners must be treated as defectives, not criminals to be looked down upon. Warders should cease to be terrors of the prisoners, but the jail officials should be their friends and instructors". The only one indispensable condition is that the State should buy all the khadi that may be turned out by the prisons at cost price. And if there is a surplus, the public may get it at a trifling higher price to cover the expense of running a sales depot. If my suggestion is adopted, the jails will be linked to the villages and they will spread to them the message of khadi and discharged prisoners may become model citizens of the State.

[1] *Vide* also the following item.

I am reminded that salt being a Central subject, the poor Ministers cannot do anything. I should be painfully surprised if they cannot. The Central Government has to operate in provincial territories. Provincial Governments are bound to protect people within their jurisdiction against being dealt with unjustly even by the Centre. And the Governors are bound to back the protests of their Ministers against unjust dealings with the people of their respective Provinces. If the Ministers are on the alert, there should be no difficulty in the poor villagers helping themselves to the salt without undue interference on behalf of the Central authority. I have no fear of such undue interference.

In conclusion, I should like to add that whatever I have said about prohibition, education and jails is presented merely for the consideration of Congress Ministers and the interested public. I may not withhold from the public the views which–however strange, visionary or unpractical they may appear to critics–I have held tenaciously for long.

Harijan, 31-7-1937

112. PROF. K.T. SHAH'S SUGGESTIONS

Prof. K.T. Shah was requested by me to offer his comments on my article[1] on Congress Ministries. He writes in reply[2] as follows.

Harijan, 31-7-1937

[1] *Vide* “Congress Ministries”, 17-7-1937

[2] This is not reproduced here. Prof. Shah had approved of Gandhiji's programme and had suggested measures to compensate the loss of revenue. One of his suggestions was an appeal "to the Services for a *voluntary surrender* of their excess of salaries and allowances above a prescribed maximum".

113. LETTER TO J.C. KUMARAPPA

SEGAON,
July 31, 1937

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

Your memorandum to the Ministers is good so far as it goes.[1] The article reads all right but Hindi is not up to the mark. Whose is it? Yes, register it. I understand it costs nothing. I leave for Delhi on 3rd and hope to return on 5th, 6th at the latest. Hope Sita continues to like her new life and surroundings.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10126

114. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

July 31, 1937

CHI. NARAHARI,

I got your letter. I would like you to examine Venilal Buch's demand on Navajivan Karyalaya and settle it. I think for the sake of propriety you should get the consent of the trustees. The best thing, therefore, would perhaps be that you yourself should call on Jivanji[2] and get his consent, so that I might be relieved of that burden.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9107

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to J. C. Kumarappa", 12-7-1937
[2] Jivanji Dahyabhai Desai, Manager, Navajivan Press

115. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
August 1, 1937

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
SIMLA WEST

IF REGRET FOR FIRING EXPRESSED AND OTHER RELIEF MENTIONED BY YOU GRANTED NO INQUIRY NEEDED. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3798. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6954

116. LETTER TO K. F. NARIMAN

Your attitude is most bewildering. Before I issue my statement I make this offer. I am prepared to go through the whole of your charges and if I feel convinced that you have been unjustly dealt with by the Sardar, I shall unhesitatingly say so and do everything humanly possible to undo the mischief. If, on the other hand, I find against you and you are not satisfied with my findings, I shall request Bahadurji or Sir Govindrao Madgaonkar to go through the recorded evidence and review my findings. All these proceedings need not be public so far as I am concerned. If the findings are against you, you should have an opportunity of tendering an apology and making a full and frank confession of your weakness and the wrong done to the public, the Sardar and other colleagues. But if you want the proceedings to be public, I do not mind. You need not even know what is being done. I had no desire to be in this affair at all. But you wanted me to intercede. Many friends, including Mr. Bharucha, have been pressing me to do likewise. I may not now sit still. I hope you will understand my anxiety to see that full justice is done to you and avoid everything that may possibly harm you without cause. If you desire an enquiry by me, please send me your charge-sheet and a precis of your evidence. I would send it to the Sardar and any other colleagues against whom you have any grievance and after having had his and their reply, I shall call for such evidence as may be required, if any. These proceedings need not take more than a week.

You need not concern yourself with what the Working

Committee or your friends may think, they need not be informed of this procedure.

Let me add that the information which has so far reached me does not substantiate your stand.[1]

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Vol. II, p. 240, and *The Hindu*, 14-8-1937

117. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON,
August 1, 1937

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Now I can send you a wire only tomorrow, is it not? If possible Mahadev will send it [today]. I can't issue my statement[2] immediately. It will be issued only at the appropriate time. Read my letter of yesterday. I can't decide whether it would be proper to

[1] On receiving this letter, Nariman sent a telegram to Gandhiji saying: "Strongly object publication one-sided impression. Desire to explain other side. Letter follows." In the letter which followed he said: "I find that in the last few letters you have been constantly threatening me with the publication of your conclusions. Am I not entitled to know what you think before you make it public? . . . I am confident that I shall be able to satisfy you on all points and remove any misunderstanding if only I am given an opportunity to do so. If, in spite of this request of mine, you decide to publish your views of this episode, I shall consider myself free also to give my explanation in public. . . ." Even before he received this letter, Gandhiji informed Nariman on August 2 that he and Bahadurji were prepared to arbitrate on the two issues connected with the election of 1934 and the election of the leader of the Congress Party in the Bombay Legislature in 1937, and asked Nariman if this proposal was acceptable to him. To this Nariman replied telegraphically on August 4: "Accept your and Bahadurji's judgement on both issues." On the 6th of August, however, Nariman asked Gandhiji's help on a few points. He suggested that lest his acceptance of this arbitral tribunal against a decision of the Working Committee might be interpreted to mean that he was disloyal to it, Gandhiji should obtain the approval of the Congress President to the proposed procedure. He asked further that all his witnesses should be protected against harassment of any kind; without such an assurance, an independent enquiry and the task of ascertaining the truth would be rendered impossible.

For Gandhiji's reply, *vide* "Letter to K. F. Nariman", 8-8-1937; *vide* also "Statement to the Press", 13-8-1937

[2] On the Nariman controversy; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 13-8-1937

publish the whole correspondence. It is not a question of permission, but one of propriety from our point of view.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
PURUSHOTTAM BUILDING
OPP. OPERA HOUSED
BOMBAY 4

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 209

118 LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 1, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

The Simla-dweller and you have praised the reed with a fountain-pen and a typewriter! I have added a paragraph to your article.

If Shanta[1] can fit herself into the set-up, I don't think we shall need Devraj, provided you take work from Chhotelal also. But now we shall think over all this on the train on Tuesday. Now Kanu is not going there today. He will go tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

PS.

You may send a wire to Vallabhbhai as follows: "Statement not yet. Am considering propriety publishing correspondence."[2]

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11542

[1] An Englishwoman
[2] The draft is in English.

119. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEGAON,
August 2, 1937

MY DEAR C. R.[1],

Here is an interesting cutting for you. *Harijan* is becoming a weekly letter to the Congress Ministers. You should therefore ask Ramanathan[2] to put before you such things that you should read. You must not wear yourself out.

I do hope you won't pay the Members for twelve months. I should regard [as enough] Rs. 2 per day *whilst* the Assembly is sitting plus 3rd class travelling and actual out-of-pocket for coolies and tonga not exceeding Rs. 2. But you know best.Do read the leading article[3] in the current *Harijan*. Let Lakshmi[4] write for you. I don't expect you to write to me yourself. Am off to see the Viceroy on his invitation, the cause is the mere pleasure of meeting.

Love.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 206

120. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 2, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

I think it would be better if you come over today. I suppose Dastane[5] will come by car, as also Rajkumari. As soon as the mail

[1] Premier of Madras
[2] Minister for Public Information in the Government of Madras
[3] *Vide* "Criticism Answered", 31-7-1937
[4] Addressee's daughter, Devdas Gandhi's wife
[5] Vasudev Vitthal Dastane

comes tell Shanta to forward it with either of them. A wire is enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Did you discuss with Shambhu Dayal who is responsible for his support, etc.?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11543

121. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 2, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

I devote all my time these days to writing letters. I am sending one article with this. Another which I have begun may go tomorrow. If somebody goes there in the evening, I will send it with him. Otherwise I shall myself bring it tomorrow morning. If somebody brings the evening post and returns the same day he may take the article with him. Doctor is there and will return in the evening. He can bring the mail. He will be coming by car. Perhaps I will send the article with the car.

Blessings from

BAPU

PS.

I am sending with this [copies of] my letters to Nariman.

Send a copy to Jawaharlal. Send the following wire:

"Begum Ross Masood, Bhopal. My deepest sympathy in your irreparable loss.[1] Gandhi."

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11544

122. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

August 2, 1937

CHI. NARAHARI,

I had a talk with Swami. Will Venilal accept whatever decision you give after going through the account books and examining any other evidence that he might produce? Frame the reference and get

[1] Ross Masood had passed away; *vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 2-8-1937.

the signatures of both on it. After that take the plaint and evidence in writing. You may then fix a hearing if necessary. This will save time and help us to determine what is just. Let me have your reactions to my article[1] on education.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9108

123. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SEGAON,
August 2, 1937

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Does haste ever pay? I am doing whatever is possible. Letters are being sent to Nariman. When the time comes, I will issue a statement if it is necessary.[2] I am also in correspondence with Jawaharlal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

124. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

August 2, 1937

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,[3]

Only now I read in the newspaper that Ross Masood died in Bhopal. I have sent a telegram[4]. The same Ross Masood, isn't he? I can understand how you must be feeling. Have faith in God, have courage. All of us have to face death, some may die today, some

[1] *Vide* "Criticism Answered", 31-7-1937

[2] For Gandhiji's statement to the Press, *vide* "Statement to the Press", 13-8-1937

[3] The superscription is in Urdu.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 2-8-1937.

tomorrow. How many have passed away and how many will in future!

Blessings to Saraswati[1] and Paparamma[2].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 389

125. FOREWORD TO "THE QUESTION OF LANGUAGES"

August 3, 1937

I have very carefully gone through Jawaharlal Nehru's essay[3] on the Hindi-Urdu question. The question has latterly become an unfortunate controversy. There is no valid reason for the ugly turn it has taken. Be that as it may, Jawaharlal's essay is a valuable contribution to a proper elucidation of the whole subject considered from the national and purely educational point of view. His constructive suggestions, if they are widely accepted by persons concerned, should put an end to the controversy which has taken a communal turn. The suggestions are exhaustive and eminently reasonable.[4]

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Lib-rary. Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, pp. 239-40

126. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ON THE TRAIN,
August 3, 1937

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I am writing this on the train taking us to Delhi. Herewith is my Foreword or whatever it may be called. I could not give you anything elaborate.

You have "perhaps"[5] before Pushtu and Punjabi. I suggest your removing the adverb. Khan Saheb for instance will never give up

[1] G. Ramachandran's sister's daughter, Kanti Gandhi's fiancee

[2] G. Ramachandran's sister

[3] For the suggestions made therein, *vide"* The Question Of Languages", 21-8-1937 ; also "Hindi-Urdu", 21-8-1937.

[4] *Vide* also the following item.

[5] This was changed to read "to some extent"; *vide* "The Question Of Languages", 21-8-1937.

Pushtu. I believe it is written in some script, I forget which. And Punjabi? The Sikhs will die for Punjabi written in Gurmukhi. There is no elegance about that script. But I understand that it was specially invented like Sindhi to isolate the Sikhs from the other Hindus. Whether such was the case or not, it seems to me impossible at present to persuade the Sikhs to give up Gurmukhi. You have suggested a common script to be evolved out of the four Southern languages. It seems to me to be as easy for them to substitute Devanagari as a mixture of the four. From a practical standpoint, the four do not admit of an invented mixture. I would, therefore, suggest your confining yourself to the general recommendation that wherever possible the provincial languages which have vital connection with Sanskrit, if they are not off-shoots from it, should adopt revised Devanagari. You may know that this propaganda is going on.

Then, if you think like me, you should not hesitate to express the hope that as Hindus and Muslims are one day bound to be one at heart, they will also, who speak Hindustani, adopt one script, i. e., Devanagari, because of its being more scientific and being akin to the great provincial scripts of the languages descended from Sanskrit.

If you adopt my suggestions in part or *in toto* you will have no difficulty in laying your finger on the spots requiring the necessary changes. I had intended to do so myself in order to save your time. But I must not put that strain on my system just now.

I take it that my endorsement of your suggestions does not mean that I must ask the Hindi Sammelan to give up the use of the word Hindi. I am sure, that cannot be your meaning. I have taken it to the farthest limit possible as far as I can think.

If you cannot accept my suggestions, it would be better for the sake of accuracy to add the following sentence to the 'Foreword': 'At any rate I have no hesitation in heartily endorsing them in a general way.'

I hope Indu's[1] operation will go off well.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, pp. 238-9

[1] Indira, addressee's daughter

127. LETTER TO ATULANANDA CHAKRABARTY

August 3, 1937

DEAR ATULANANDA,

I hope your daughter is well and wholly out of danger. I have gone through your articles carefully. 1 still do not see light. It seems to me that no culture league will answer the purpose you and I have in view.[1] It has got to be done by individuals who have a living faith and who would work with missionary zeal. Try again, if I have not seen what you see in your proposal. I shall be patient and attentive. I want to help if I can see my way clear.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Life of Mahatma Gandhi, p. 366

128. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

ON THE TRAIN,
August 3, 1937

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I am going to Delhi at the Viceroy's invitation and am writing this letter on the train. You say in your letter that you are prepared to get Manju married in another caste. Is Manju also willing? Would you accept an alliance if a suitable partner is available from any part of the country? It is certainly necessary to do so. The barriers ought to be broken. When the whole country is ours, why should we keep ourselves confined to one community or province or region? Pleasure should not be the end of marriage; there should be some sanctity about it and it should be entered into as a matter of dharma. All other barriers should be disregarded.

It is difficult to say when Kusum will settle down to something steady. She makes many plans but is not able to carry out any of them. Guide her as much as you can. By all means draw her there if you can. Ask Manju to write to me. Bachu[2], one may say, has had a

[1] The addressee had proposed a culture league "to bring Hindus and Muslims together".

[2] Bachubhai Bhimji Ramdas, addressee's brother's son.

new life. I have been acquiring more and more cows.

If at any time you are keen on paying a visit here, do come. The season following the rains is pleasant.

I hope your work is winning appreciation.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 96

129. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN,
August 3, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

Anyone who knows all the processes from the [growing of] cotton to weaving should be able to write an introduction to the science of khadi[1] in two or at the most seven days.

1. Cultivation of cotton, its varieties, yield of crops in the different regions and the use of each variety

2. Plucking, cleaning and ginning of cotton-pods

3. Carding, preparation of slivers

4. Spinning

5. Weaving

The booklet would give a description of the machines with illustrations, arithmetical calculations, improvements up to date, etc. From among the persons whose names you suggest, Mahadev or Mirabehn are more likely to take up the work. But nobody can surpass Rameshwari Devi[2]. She is a woman of powerful personolity. She knows excellent Hindi. She has an insight into all our activities. She belongs to well-known families both on her husband's and her father's sides. After you have availed yourself of her services in Rajkot, take her on a short tour of Kathiawar. She will give considerable impetus to khadi and Harijan work. I cannot send anyone better. Still, if youwant me to make some other arrangement, I will do so. I would certainly not send anybody in whom you may

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Village Industries Exhibition", 25-3-1938

[2] Rameshwari Nehru

have no faith. She was with me for a month and is just now with me in a third-class compartment. She has a house in Delhi and also one in Lahore. She is going to Delhi today and I also am going there for a day. I have been invited by the Viceroy for an informal meeting. It was she whom I had sent to Travancore for Harijan work. You must have read in *Harijan* my article on education. You have to demonstrate its practicability.

If you feel that your services can be utilized best in the primary department only, I don't wish to shift you. I shall be more than satisfied if you popularize khadi and uproot untouchability all over Kathiawar. If you can achieve that, you will set an example to the whole country. I have no plan for any work for you outside Kathiawar. I had asked you just to make sure whether I could call you in case I needed somebody.

I feel better. I need a little rest, which I am taking. I am looking after Kanu[1]. He is passing through a difficult stage. At his age we also must have felt the same. But he is an obedient boy and will, therefore, become steady by and by. Most probably he will settle down with me in Segaon. I am trying to adjust myself to him as far as possible.

Lilavati gave me your letter. I for my part have permitted her, but I don't think she will go. She doesn't wish to leave my side. However, at times she does feel restless. Her condition also is somewhat similar to Kanaiyo's.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall return to Wardha on the 5th or the 6th. You must have seen Kamala's request for Rs. 5 for her mother. What do you think of it?

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II Also C.W. 8533. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Addressee's son

130. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ON THE TRAIN,
August 3, 1937

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Give this to Andrews. You must have received my letter of yesterday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

131. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

ON THE TRAIN,
August 4, 1937

CHI. MIRA,

I am nearing Delhi. Mahadev and Pyarelal [are] with me. Hope to take the return train today, if not, tomorrow for certain.

I hope Akash will suit you equally well.

I never knew that both the Dharmavirs spun.

Did I tell you that Shanta did not go to England, her mother having practically stopped her? She is very happy with Mahadev and very helpful to him.

Balwantsinha has brought two more cows. We need still more.

Balkrishna[1] is flourishing in Segaon. He eats freely under Dr. Batra's coaxing. He is on Kepler's malt cod-liver oil. I thought I should relax the rule about fish oils, as there were so many other restrictions. He is fast putting on weight of which he had lost much.

Rameshwari Devi is with me 3rd class, returning to Delhi. I hope you will return proof against malaria. So far as I am concerned I do not mind how long you are there, so long as you keep fit and renew your body. I am sorry about Subhas. The enclosed for him.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6395. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9361

[1] Balkrishna Bhave

132. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ON THE TRAIN,
August 4, 1937

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I am stupid. On receiving your letter I searched my file and behold! I found the cutting containing Meherally's speech. I referred to his, not Masani's speech.[1]

This is being written in a terribly jolting train taking me back to Wardha. It is now 10.30 p.m. I woke up from sleep, thought of the speech and began the search. Yesterday's compartment was better.

I saw the Viceroy. You will have seen the communique[2]. It correctly summarizes the interview. There were other incidental things which Kripalani will mention to you when he meets you. One thing I may mention here. He might invite you as he invited me. I told him that if the invitation was sent, you were not likely to refuse it. Was I right?

I am sorry for having inflicted Roy's speeches on you.[3] But I think you were bound to read them. However I am in no hurry to have your opinion on them. You may take your time unless you have already read them.

I note that you are having the operation for Indu in Bombay.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A Bunch of Old Letters,* p. 240

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 30-7-1937

[2] Issued after the interview on August 4, it read: " . . . The Viceroy listened with interest to Mr. Gandhi's views on the matters in question and undertook to intimate them to the Governor of the North-West Frontier Province. The interview was entirely general and personal in character, the principal subject of discussion being rural uplift and improvement of the conditions of the peasantry."

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 30-7-1937

133. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

August 6, 1937

MY DEAR C. R.,

What nonsense! Why should you feel sorry or disappointed because I hold certain views about salaries?[1] I do not at all resent your not enforcing them. I have said, my views need not be accepted if found unworkable. We all marvel at the way you are managing things there. You have approached your task with faith and religious zeal. You must not feel the slightest disappointment. You know my deepest feeling. Then why should you worry? I hope you will be able to spare yourself for 17th[2]. My prayers and best wishes are with you always.

The talk with the Viceroy was formal though quite friendly.

Devdas was looking well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2066

134. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

August 6, 1937

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. I at once sent a telegram to Amtul[3] at Bhopal. I have already written about Kanti[4]. I think it is better for you to come back as you have already stayed there for a month. Ramachandran writes to say that he does not want Saraswati to go anywhere for three years. He wants her to complete her studies. In that case it would be best to leave her there. I have received no letters form Bari or Baqui.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am keeping well. I returned from Delhi only yesterday.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 390

[1] *Vide* "Congress Ministries", 17-7-1937

[2] For the meeting of the Congress Working Committee which was to be held at Wardha from August 14 to 17

[3] Addressee's niece, widow of Ross Masood

[4] Harilal Gandhi's son

135. ITS DEEPER MEANING

The thought-world of khadi workers had undergone a revolution since the objective of khadi became the steady improvement of the artisans engaged in its production rather than its supply at as cheap rates as possible. The fact that the increase in the wages has not much, if at all, affected the public has given a confidence to the workers which they had not when the policy was revolutionized. The workers are beginning to realize that they have to touch every department of the lives of the artisans and try to bringabout an all-round improvement in their lot. Thus one reads with joy the following in the *Maharashtra khadi Patrika* noticed the other day in these columns:[1]

> In Korutala khadi workers are using the paper prepared by the local paper makers and are inducing local artisans to make twine from flax which is locally grown.
>
> Many artisans have the bad habit of spitting fairly often just where they are sitting. Eighty-two such have been supplied with small earthen spittoons for use.
>
> The manager of a zamindar in Metpally has been induced to stop *begar*.
>
> In Tendur the weavers have been induced to adopt measures to prevent incurring debts. Thus they have reduced marriage expenses to Rs. 30 as the maximum, stopped feasts at the time of the first shave, stopped drinking on ceremonial occasions, caste dinners on deaths. Measures have been adopted to induce the womenfolk to use khadi saris (cheap patterns have been devised for the purpose), to save the increase in the artisans' income against a rainy day.
>
> In Savli a substantial rise has been given to those who will not incur debts and will card and spin one seer of not less than twenty counts of yarn of eighty per cent strength in one month. Thus the following speaks for itself:

COUNT		CURRENT RATE			INCREASED RATE		
		Rs.	As.	Ps.	Rs.	As.	Ps.
22	2		8	0	3	4	0
24	2		14	0	3	12	0

[1] *Vide* "A Khadi Journal", 24-7-1937

26	3	4	0	4	4	0
28	3	10	0	4	12	0
30	4	0	0	5	4	0
32	4	8	0	6	0	0

This new rate enables the workers to make four annas per day of eight hours.

In Sindevahi they have agreed to open a co-operative store.

I have given but a condensation of the original in Hindi which I commend to the diligent student of the working of the new objective.

Harijan, 7-8-1937

136. NOT A PRIZE

I have been receiving several letters from different provinces protesting against the exclusion of their or their friends' names from ministerships and asking me to intervene. I do not think there is a single province from which such complaints have not been received. In some such letters dire results including communal riots have been threatened, if the excluded person's claims are not considered.

In the first instance let me say that I have not intervened in any single case in the selection of ministers. I have no right, having completely withdrawn from the Congress, to intervene in such matters, even if I had the wish which I have not. My participation in Congress affairs is confined to tendering advice on the issues involved in office-acceptance and on the policies to be pursued in the prosecution of our march to the goal of Complete Independence.

But it seems to me that my numerous correspondents who have been writing voluminously think that ministerships are prizes for past services and that certain Congressmen can demand their inclusion. I venture to suggest to them that ministerships are avenues to service which those who are called to it should render cheerfully and to the best of their ability. There can therefore never be a scramble for these offices. It would be decidedly wrong to create ministerships for the sake of conciliating interests. If I were a Prime Minister and I was pestered with such claims, I should tell my electors to choose another leader. These offices have to be held lightly, not tightly. They are or should be crowns of thorns never of renown. Offices have been taken in order to see if they enable us to quicken the pace at which we are

moving towards our goal. It would be tragic if self-seekers or misguided zealots were allowed to impede the progress by imposing themselves on Prime Ministers. If it was necessary to have assurances from those who have ultimately to clothe ministers with authority, it is doubly necessary to have assurances of understanding, of loyalty beyond suspicion and of willing obedience to discipline. The grim fight in which the country is engaged cannot be won if Congressmen do not show in their conduct a sufficient measure of selflessness, discipline and faith in the means enunciated by the Congress for the attainment of the goal.

Thanks to the Karachi resolution[1], ministerships under the Congress aegis have no pecuniary attraction. I must say in parenthesis that considering Rs. 500 as if it was the minimum instead of the maximum was a mistake. Rs. 500 was the last limit. Had we not got used to the excessive scale of salaries imposed upon the country, we would have regarded Rs. 500 to be excessive. The Congress scale has been generally, for the past seventeen years at least, Rs. 75 per month. In its three great constructive all-India departments, national education, khadi and village industries, the authorized scale has been Rs. 75. These departments contain men who are good enough, so far as ability is concerned, any day to be ministers. They have distinguished educationists, lawyers, chemists and merchants, who if they were so minded, could easily command over Rs. 500 per month. Why should the fact of becoming a minister make the great difference we see? But the die is perhaps cast. My remarks represent my personal opinion. I have too high a regard for the Prime Ministers to question their judgment and wisdom. No doubt they thought that this was the best in the circumstances facing them. The point I wish to make, in answer to my correspondents, is that these offices have not been taken in view of the emoluments they offer.

And then they have to be given to those only in the party who are best able to discharge the duty to which they are called.

And, lastly, the acid test is that the choice must commend itself to the members of the party to whom the Prime Ministers owe their nomination. No Prime Minister can for one moment impose a man or woman of his choice on the party. He is Chief because he enjoys the full confidence of his party as to ability, knowledge of persons, and the other qualities that mark out one for leadership.

Harijan, 7-8-1937

[1] *Vide* "Resolution on Fundamental rights and Economic changes", 31-3-1937

137. A. I. V. I. A. BULLETIN

The A. I. V. I. A. has issued its first bulletin. After describing the various activities conducted in Maganwadi, the Headquarters at Wardha, it ends:[1]

> There is a great deal of slackness on the part of members and agents in submitting their reports. Members are reminded that according toour rules no report is received from a member for three consecutive quarters, his membership will lapse. We regret to say that in accordance with this rule the membership of several has lapsed. The reason for such slackness is probably that members think that it is not worthwhile reporting unless there is something noteworthy to mention. . . . Their work is in the nature of routine, and once they have reported they think that so long as they have not done anything new they need not report. This again is a mistake. It is quite essential for the proper working of the Association and for exchange of experiences through the medium of this bulletin that members and agents should carry on their work in close touch with the Central Office and keep it duly informed of their activities by means of full and regular reports. . . .

Harijan, 7-8-l 937

138. TEMPLE-ENTRY

It looks very much as if the whole of Malabar, the citadel of untouchability, is going to lead the way, as Travancore has done already, in the matter of temple-entry. I draw attention to the two brief statements[2] given below. One is by the Cochin Temple-entry Committee and the other by the Malabar Harijan Sevak Sangh, both promising an energetic propaganda organizing the so-called *savarna* and so-called *avarna* opinion in favour of opening all public temples to the *avarnas* precisely on the same terms as they are for the *savarnas*. If there is an unimpeachable pronouncement of such opinion, no State nor trustees can long resist such opinion. The Malabar Committee has rightly laid stress on the necessity of legislation removing all doubt as to the right of trustees to open to

[1] Only excerpts from the All-India Village Industries Association's bulletin are reproduced here.

[2] Not reproduced here

avarnas temples under their charge, especially if it can be proved that the large body of *savarna* opinion is in favour of such an opening. Let us hope that the Committees will receive the enthusiastic public support which the great cause merits and demands.

Harijan, 7-8-1937

139. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHAGANJ,
August 7, 1937

AMTUL SALAAM
HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH
TRIVANDRUM

BETTER COME HERE NOW. RAMACHANDRAN UNWILLING SEND SARASWATI TILL HER EDUCATION FINISHED.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 404

140. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

SEGAON,
August 7, 1937

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

For Sita's sake I would say let us not leave her as Editor just yet. She should be better known than she is among our own circle. Mere possession of literary merit is not enough for our purpose. Our readers should know her as a co-worker. Do you not agree?

The Education Minister[1], C. P., comes, sees me on Tuesday at 2.30 p.m. and the Excise Minister[2] at 5 p.m. I think you, Bharatan, Sita, if she is well, Jajuji[3], Nayakam[4] and Kaka should be present. Will you inform them all?

Love to you—the trio.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10127

[1] Ravishankar Shukla
[2] P. B. Gole
[3] Shrikrishnadas Jaju
[4] E. W. Aryanayakam

141. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

SEGAON,
August 7, 1937

CHI. KANCHAN,

Do come over tomorrow (Sunday) morning and have lunch here. If you can't come early, come after 1 p.m. But do come.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8293. Also C.W. 7020. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

142. LETTER TO JAMUBHAI DANI

[Before *August 8, 1937*]

SHRI DANI,

I have your letter. I have not received the report about the Bhangis. But as soon as I get it I will go through it and write something if it calls for comment.[1]

If the public life of Kathiawar is in a mess, it only means that the people are the same but the leaders are either useless or selfish or unprincipled or all this at the same time. It is observed at some places that life continues as before in different spheres and some workers go on working away in silence without others knowing about it. Are there any such workers in Kathiawar? Try to find this out honestly and with a view to service. Whether you do it as a member of the Sangh or as an individual, do it in a worthy manner.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 8-8-1937

143. WORKERS OF KATHIAWAR

A gathering of some workers of Kathiawar was held some time ago in Bhavnagar. After a great deal of discussion, a resolution was passed, at the instance of Shri Nanabhai, that they should do social work under my guidance and be governed by the restrictions imposed by me. Some of these gentlemen were to come to me to discuss the

[1] *Vide* the following item.

matter. On receiving their letter, I tried to prevent their coming by writing to them that their journey would perhaps be in vain as they would get from me advice only on what I regard as constructive work. However, this failed to convince them and, Shri Jagjivandas, Balwantrai[1], Fulchand[2], Dhebarbhai[3] and Vajubhai[4] came over. At the end of a discussion lasting two hours it was decided that I should write the substance of my advice in *Harijanbandhu*. I agreed to comply with this request.

The first discussion was about the letter[5] I had written to Shri Dani. I had been told that in that letter I had done grave injustice to the workers of Kathiawar by calling them useless, selfish, or unprincipled or all this at the same time. In my reply I had stated that I was not in the habit of writing such crude letters and I asked for a copy of my letter. In reply to this letter the above gentlemen came in person and produced the original letter[6], which runs as follows.

I said that those who took this letter to be censorious could be regarded as ignorant of Gujarati. Its meaning is clear. If public life in Kathiawar is actually in such a mess as described by Shri Dani, public servants must be guilty of one of the three or all the three shortcomings. These gentlemen agreed that my letter could not be construed in any other way.

With reference to this they inquired whether anyone had sent me names of persons who had acted in a manner not befitting Kathiawaris? I replied that I had published the names which had been sent to me and regarding whom I believed the allegations to be true.

The following points were then discussed:

1. Gandhiji to guide
2. [Kathiawar] Political Conference
3. The Prajamandal and the Conference
4. The restrictions and the injustices in the States
5. Organizing labour to improve their conditions
6. Constructive work like khadi, service of Harijans, etc.
7. Whether these activities should be carried on independently or under one organization.

[1] Balwantrai Mehta
[2] Fulchand Kasturchand Shah
[3] U. N. Dhebar
[4] Vajubhai Shukla
[5] For the text, *vide* the preceding item
[6] *ibid*

Regarding my guidance, I declared that I could not shoulder the burden. I have neither the capacity nor the inclination to guide anyone from a distance, hence they should write off my name. If my advice is sought in a particular matter, I have always been giving it, and I regard it as my dharma to do so. In my opinion, Kathiawaris should appoint a leader from amongst persons living there and, such a leader should be reappointed every year. This would give them self-confidence and make them self-reliant. The belief, whether true or otherwise, that Kathiawaris cannot accept for long any leader selected from amongst themselves, will also be dispelled.

While discussing other activities, I gave the opinion that if I had my way, I would engage everyone in khadi work, service of Harijans and village industries. Even if everyone was to be engaged in this manner, many more workers would be needed than are at present available. But those who do not find that kind of service congenial should select whatever field they preferred and put their heart and soul into it. Having once made the choice one should not go on changing one's field of work. If a session of the Political Conference must be called, it should be called keeping in view the restrictions imposed by me in Bhavnagar and in accordance with the practice established in Porbandar. It must not be held outside the boundaries of Indian States. If permission is granted only in a single State it could be held there year after year. It could be held in Amreli[1], but it would be preferable to hold it in a State in Kathiawar.

There should be a Prajamandal in each State.

Everyone should render to the best of his ability whatever service he can to these bodies.

Within the limits imposed by me, the Political Conference cannot freely discuss such questions as injustices practised in different States, etc. This does not imply that these cannot bediscussed anywhere. The people of a particular State may certainly discuss those questions, they should try and get justice in those particular matters, for it is their dharma to do so. Thus, in whichever States restrictive orders are issued or injustices perpetrated, they could be freely discussed there. Only truth and non-violence should be the restraining principles in these cases. Whatever is said should be hundred per cent true; it should be free from exaggeration and discourtesy. We should not hold out threats about anything which we are not capable of doing. We have to tolerate many things in this world because we are

[1] A town in Kathiawar which however formed part of the Baroda State

powerless

In order to improve its condition labour must get organized. Everyone knows that I prefer the policy which has been adopted by Shrimati Anasuyabehn[1] in Ahmedabad. I have not adopted the principle of organizing labour for political purposes. They may take interest in politics as all citizens should. But politics should not be the motive in forming an organization. People should form organizations having regard to their vocations and their special circumstances. We already have in the Congress an organization to deal with political issues and to train men for the work. It has to protect the political rights of labourers in the same way as it has to protect those of others. As a matter of fact, the political rights of labourers are not and should not be opposed to those of others. This means that the work of the Congress safeguards [the interests of] and represents all. It is my experience that if labour unions are politically motivated, there is an unnecessary rivalry between [political] workers, labourers become pawns in their game and, as a result, labourers have to suffer and the unions get a bad name. Labour may also perhaps eye with suspicion those who come claiming to be their friends. Those who form labour unions in order to improve their conditions should also be adept in the art of doing so. If anyone without ability tries to form a union because he wants to, it cannot be done.

Amongst all these activities, I would give the highest place to khadi, eradication of untouchability, service of Harijans, village industries and prohibition. If this cannot be done, I believe that other activities are not worthwhile. The belief that constructive work can be carried on only if supported by other activities is, in my opinion, born out of ignorance. It is my opinion that the strength that can be generated by firm and determined adherence to constructive activity is far superior to the strength gained by any other type of work. I know that ordinarily no one is interested in these constructive activities. I can think of two reasons for this. One reason is that these activities bring one into contact with the villages. Our workers have been brought up in cities, they have been educated in English schools and colleges, hence they have little interest in the life of rural people. They do not regard themselves as fit only for living in villages and are ignorant of the art of mixing with the villagers. The other reason is our idleness and the ignorance born of it. Khadi and such other constructive work demand constant vigilance, effort, study and

[1] Anasuyabehn Sarabhai

diligence. We are not prepared to render these; and later, when we cannot create interest in these great tasks, rather than blame ourselves we conclude that such work is dull. I regard this as a serious shortcoming and have, therefore, come to the conclusion that so long as we do not do credit to these tasks, our other tasks will not be wholly successful. And it is for this reason that, even after so many years, I give the utmost importance to these tasks. Now the last question. If all the activities are being managed by the same body, this may well continue. I see no harm in each activity being carried on wholly independently. Even if these are being carried on under the same authority, each should become self-sufficient, and people should be allowed to be absorbed in the particular sphere which they have chosen.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 8-8-1937

144. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 8, 1937

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I forgot to cover one point in your letter referring to Meherally's speech. I mean Rajaji's communique releasing the summer school prisoners. I had read it before receiving your letter. But it did not offend me. I suppose because you approved of the action of the students of the summer school and I could not defend it any way whatsoever.[1] I think that it was necessary to draw attention to the fact that the release did not mean approval of this breach or the offence which in law it was. I fear that often when the Congress is in power it will use language which its predecessors have used and yet the motive behind will be different.

I hope you will have a nice time in Bombay over the operation. You will wire when it is over.

Love.

BAPU

[1] For Jawaharlal Nehru's statement on Kottapatam Summer School, *vide* "The Kottapatam Summer School".

[PS.]

If Nariman comes to you please grant him the permission to have the inquiry. I am sorry you will be bothered about this affair in Bombay. Mahadev will tell you what I have been doing.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

145. LETTER TO K. F. NARIMAN

WARDHA,
August 8, 1937

MY DEAR NARIMAN,

Your letter came in only today. I am not going to trouble Mr. B.[1] before I have all your evidence. I shall consult him only if my finding is against you and you don't agree with it. There should be no delay. Surely your evidence must be all ready. Of course, I shall go into the allegations against you regarding the election of 1934. Have I not made that clear? As to the witnesses' names being kept secret, you must leave that to me.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 747-A, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

146. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

August 8, 1937

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

All illness should be regarded as misconduct punishable under the I.P.C.! I do hope you will recover soon. If you cannot come I shall reconcile myself to the absence of your bulky contribution to the debate.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10128

[1] D. N. Bahadurji

147. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON,
August 8, 1937

CHI. KANTI,

I am not wrong in calling you a tyrant. You were a tyrant to Amtul Salaam when you idolized her. Now that that idolization has changed into a kind of repulsion, you are again being a tyrant to her. Ramachandran had been pressing her—so were Paparamma and Saraswati—and he had sent a wire. That is why she went. She is having some peace there. Now you wish that I should call her away from there. I, therefore, wrote a letter[1] to her asking her to return and even sent a wire[2]. I haven't told her that it was at your instance that I asked her to come away. I have given no reason at all. If necessary, I will tell her when she comes. I have not said all this to reproach you. I have only drawn your attention to your proneness to extremes. I have willingly called her back. What about Saraswati? She has been pleading to be permitted to come here. Ramachandran wishes that she should not come for three years. What do you yourself wish?

I am returning the statement of accounts. It is excellent. Don't economize at the slightest risk to your health.

I had been to Delhi for a day. I returned the same day. The Viceroy had nothing particular to discuss. He just wished to get acquainted with me. I on my part wished to talk to him about Khan Saheb, which I did.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

My health is good. I do wish to live till you pass out and attain proficiency and get married. But is the thread of life ever in our hands?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7329. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 6-8-1937
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Amtussalaam", 7-8-1937

148. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 8, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

I think I will have to send you to Dhulia for a day. Get ready soon. I am returning your article with this. I have deleted the paragraph about khadi. Try to understand the reason. If you can't, ask me when I am free.

I don't know when I shall be able to reply to the letters. Send the correspondence regarding Nariman to Jawahar. Or make a short summary of it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11545

149. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 9, 1937

CHI. MIRA,

I have your disturbing letter. You need not stop there even till 24th if your mind is not there. It is distinctly harmful for you to be there, if you can't be happy there but will stay there because it is a duty imposed from without. You have tried that again and again and failed each time. Therefore you must follow your will no matter where it leads you to. You will learn only by making mistakes, if mistakes there must be through following your will. To paraphrase the alcoholic saying, I would rather find you always in error than find you correct only under compulsion. You can grow through error, never through compulsion. Therefore please feel absolutely free to anticipate the date (24th) fixed by you and so far as I am concerned come in reply to this letter. I shan't feel unhappy. On the contrary, I shall feel happy in the thought that you would exercise unrestricted freedom[1].

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6396. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9862

[1] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, Mirabehn explains: "The old struggle was again overcoming me, and I returned to Sevagram."

150. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 9, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending with this an article[1] by Kishorelal which has been abridged. It was abridged by Rajkumari. She seems to have done a fine Job of it. However, have a glance at it. And if anything of importance is left out, insert it. I think it will be better if you return the original to Kishorelal. A quotation remains to be copied from it. Please see that it is done. For this at least you will require the original. I will send my article with Janba or whoever comes. I shall be ready at 2.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope the ulcer is better now.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11546

151. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON,
August 9, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Herewith my article. A fair copy is enclosed along with the original. You can straightaway send the fair copy to Poona today. I suppose you don't need anything more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11547

[1] "The Problem of National Funds" which appeared in *Harijan*, 14-8-1937

152. LETTER TO JAYANTI N. PAREKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 9, 1937

CHI. JAYANTI,

I got your letter. Give the accompanying letter[1] to Dinkar if he is feeling better. Public workers ought not to fall ill.

I don't understand what you say regarding the reform of the Provincial Committee. Send me a copy of the rules. I am making inquiries, of course.

I am very glad indeed that you three brothers[2] have come together.

How I wish Indu would settle down to something.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6264

153. LETTER TO PRABHUDAYAL VIDYARTHI

SEVAGRAM,
August 9, 1937

CHI. PRABHUDAYAL,

I have you letter. Authoritative opinion of course can always be had from the Congress Office at Allahabad. My personal opinion is that Committees should not be formed till there is provision in the Constitution for use of khadi. But my personal opinion has no weight.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 11684

[1] This is not available.
[2] The addressee, Indu and Kanti

154. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 10, 1937

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your long letter. I will see how the problem can be solved. When we lack either time or space, we have to leave some things aside even though they may be important.

Please tell Vimu[1] that in her letter to me she was unwilling to promise 25,000 rounds in the spinning *yajna* and had asked my advice. But in the printed list of names with me, I see 51,000 against her name. Is 51 a misprint for 15? If it is not, how did she get the courage to raise 25,000 to twice as much, or to treble the 17,000 which she had intended? If she had the courage to do that, why couldn't she quadruple 17,000 and make it 68,000? If "scoffer-friends" then looked upon her as an idolator, she should pay no attention to them. On the contrary, she should welcome their blessings. Spinning 68,000 rounds in 68 days would be no great achievement for a girl like Vimu. According to the calculations here, 1000 rounds a day would require less than three hours, for the average speed is taken to be 400 rounds an hour. Even if, however, the work takes four hours, I wouldn't regard that as too strenuous for her. Moreover, anyone who does this job with zest and enthusiasm would learn to get absorbed in the work on hand and automatically acquire the ability to do a great many other things.

Narandas is hesitating to undertake the preparation of the manual [of the science of khadi] though there is not the slightest reason for such hesitation. If, however, you join him in preparing the booklet, I think it can immediately be done. Anyone who has complete mastery of most of the processes will find it easy to give a methodical description of them and of the equipment required. If you have not read any literature on the history of the subject, you should read it up. If at least one booklet, covering all aspects of the subject, is brought out systematically, it would be easy to do further work in the field in future. Think over this . . .[2]

It was good indeed that you came and stayed here, though it was

[1] Vimala, the addressee's daughter
[2] Omission as in the source

but for a few days. If you can plan a ten to fifteen days' programme for Rameshwari Devi, counting from the day of her arrival, I think that would be more than enough. You will be able to use her services to get a lot of Harijan and khadi work done. She is a very capable, mature, thoughtful and experienced lady, and is full of noble aspirations. You of course have seen her here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5543

155. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 10, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. There can be no cause at all for worrying about Kanaiyo. What is necessary is to take care of him, to guide him, to understand the thousands of fancies that catch his mind, and to pacify him. Besides this, nothing more is necessary, for his mind is not devious. He is not secretive, doesn't wish to conceal anything and has faith in those whom he regards as his elders. It is, therefore, not at all difficult to guide him. One thing, of course, is true. If he is not given work which he can do and if nobody takes interest in him, he does feel lost. At present I have heaps of work to do. There is so much typing to be done that it leaves him exhausted and so many copies to be made that his fingers get cramps. And this is apart from spinning. I have also asked him to study Hindi and English, for which he has an expert teacher in Pyarelal. He gets his fill listening to the sweet music of Nanavati and, as he does so, tries to pick up as much as he can. Moreover all sorts of people visit me, from whom also he learns as much as he can. He is therefore not likely to feel at any time that he is rusting without work or that nobody takes interest in him. Please, therefore, have no worries on his account. Till he himself wishes to go there, you or Jamna[1] should not tempt him. There will be no difficulty then.

Lilavati, through her own thoughtlessness, is laid down with pain in the ribs. I am dictating this letter reclining against her body as against a pillow. She is listening and tells me that she neither desires

[1] Addressee's wife

nor has the courage to go to Rajkot or anywhere else. Please, therefore, forget her altogether for the present. When she herself wishes to go there, I shall not stop her. Narottam's[1] death is as much a matter for rejoicing as for grief. Such death would bring glory to any youth, for those who enter the jaws of death at such a tender age after having made holy resolutions are bound to attain bliss. And even though dead, he lives through his example. Read this to his father when you offer my condolences to him, and also congratulate him on having had such a son.

I have sent the article[2] sent by you for *Harijanbandhu* after some slight revision.

Read the letter to Chhaganlal and then pass it on to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8535. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

156. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

August 10, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter.

If you find it impossible to write the *Khadishastra Praveshika*, you may give up the idea. But the fact that your brain doesn't work on this subject may perhaps be indicative of some deficiency in you.

I was not satisfied with the few lines that Jayantilal wrote. I got the impression that he had forced himself to write. The discussion with you doesn't seem to have given him a new light. That is, [he believes that] spinning and the other activities are conducted not as a means of intellectual development but only as training in crafts side by side with intellectual training. I hope you understand the difference between the two. If a carpenter teaches me his craft and I learn it mechanically, my hand will be able to use the carpenter's tools but there will hardly be

[1] A student of the national school at Rajkot who died of typhoid. He had resolved to spin one lakh rounds of yarn.

[2] On *Rentia Baras* celebrations in National School, Rajkot, published in *Harijanbandhu*, 15-8-1937

any intellectual development. If, however, an expert on carpentry teaches me the craft, my intellect also will develop fully in the process. That is, I shall not only be a good carpenter but will also become an engineer, for while teaching me carpentry the teacher will have improved and embellished my language. He will have taught me the history of wood and, while explaining where and how wood is grown, will have taught me geography. He will also have taught me a little about agriculture and will have likewise taught me to make illustrations of my tools. While teaching me the economics of carpentry, he will have taught me arithmetic and geometry. All this will make up a course of some seven years. Maybe you do not link up spinning and the other crafts which you are teaching with intellectual development. Perhaps you consider knowledge of the alphabet and reading as the only means of such development. If this is not so, the writing of the *Praveshika* should be an easy job for you. I know that I have not previously explained these thoughts in the manner in which I have explained them in this letter. But I have been explaining in *Harijan* the ideas which are coming to me these days, and this idea is the first and foremost of them all. I have hitherto also said that there should be training in crafts along with training of the intellect and that such training should occupy the primary place in a scheme of national education. What I am now saying is that an important means of intellectual training should be craft-training. I feel that talents are being wasted and the fact that thousands of young people who leave schools are good for nothing except clerkships is indicative not of intellectual development but of intellectual waste. True education is that which trains all the three abilities, spiritual, intellectual and economic, simultaneously. No boy on leaving school should have to ask himself: "What shall I do now?" His education should be a kind of insurance guaranteeing him a livelihood. I have dictated all this for you to think over. If you have followed what I have said, you will have to examine the art of spinning from a new point of view and also devise a new method of teaching it. Please read again from this point of view my recent articles[1] in *Harijan*.

Shankaran's is a painful case. I am of course writing to him.

[1] *Vide* "A Great Experiment", 3-7-1937 and "Criticism Answered", 31-7-1937

You needn't do anything at present.

I will make some arrangement from here for Kamala's mother. How is Kumi?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not been able to revise any portion.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8534. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

157. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 10, 1937

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

This note will be given to you by Syed Saheb of the Siasat. He had four letters of recommendation from Dr. Satyapal[1]. One of them is for you. I told him that I could do nothing and advised him to approach you, assuring him that you would carefully listen to his case and, if you were convinced, you might use your good offices to help him. You may now hear everything and do what is necessary.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
PURUSHOTTAM BUILDING
OPP. OPERA HOUSE, BOMBAY 4

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro- 2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 209

[1] A prominent leader of the Punjab

158. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[About *August 10, 1937*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Write a strong letter to that German. We should ask him to issue a public apology. It will be enough if he corrects his statement.

I don't intend to send you to Dhulia before Wednesday at any rate and I shall do so only if you are willing to go. When we meet tomorrow we will spare two minutes to discuss this too.

Herewith draft of a wire to Bharucha:

"Bharucha, Mahendra Mansion, Fort, Bombay. Come Wednesday nine morning half hour. Whole day engaged otherwise. Gandhi."

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Today I can send for *Harijan* only the material that is ready. I think I will be able to send tomorrow material for about two columns or so.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11548

159. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHAGANJ,
August 11, 1937

AMTUL SALAAM,
CARE "HARIJAN"
TRIVANDRUM

STAY WHILE YOU ARE HAPPY AND TAKING TREATMENT.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 405

[1] From the S.N. Register

160. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*August 11, 1937*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Janba hasn't come yet. But I am sending whatever is ready. Mohanlal's cheque also is enclosed. Credit the money to the accountfor Harijan work.

Bhansali[2] must have arrived there. I have sent some material with him, too. Send [the enclosed to] Amtul Salaam.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11549

161. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 11, 1937

BHAISHRI MAVALANKAR,

I got your letter. You have indeed been entrusted with a great responsibility[3]. But I am sure you will be able to do full Justice to it and will prove yourself worthy of the honour.

Do please continue as one of the Trustees of the Harijan Ashram for the present. Perhaps your effectiveness in begging will increase. Is it not better that I should go on writing what seems right to me? But how can I expect you to do more than what all of you can accept out of the suggestions I make?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1247

[1] From the reference to the telegram to Amtussalaam which was enclosed with this letter; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] Jayakrishnadas Prabhudas Bhansali

[3] As Speaker of the Bombay Legislative Assembly

162. DISCUSSION WITH D. K. MEHTA[1] *AND P. B. GOLE*

SEGAON,
August 11/12, 1937

It is understood that the discussions centred round land revenue and excise policies. It was pointed out to Gandhiji that the policy of flat reduction in land revenue was undesirable, inasmuch as there were areas which had been heavily assessed and needed immediate help, while in some areas the land revenue was so low that it would not be advisable to reduce it any further.

As regards the excise policy, it is understood that Gandhiji impressed on the Ministers that in all the six Congress Provinces the policy in this matter should be uniform and total prohibition should be the goal of the Congress Ministries. This goal should have to be achieved within the lifetimes of the present Ministries. The loss in revenue would be made good by drastic retrenchments, and, if need be, the Congress Ministers should be prepared to face fresh taxation measures.

The Hitavada, 13-8-1937

163. STATEMENT ON INTERVIEW WITH THE VICEROY[2]

August 12, 1937

I have read what are described as startling disclosures of the Delhi interview in *The Bombay Sentinel*[3]. It is from beginning to end a figment of imagination, pure and simple.

The interview, as stated in the Viceroy's letter, was without any purpose beyond that of establishing courteous contact on his part. Therefore, I studiously refrained from referring to any matter outside of lifting the ban on Khan Saheb's entry into his own Province, and an understanding of Government's wishes regarding my desire to visit that Province.

[The] other conversation was more or less of a general character. The word 'Federation' was not even mentioned at the interview.

The Hindu, 13-8-1937

[1] Minister for Finance, C. P.

[2] Gandhiji had met the Viceroy on August 4; *vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 4-8-1937

[3] Dated 10-8-1937

164. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 12, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. Since I wrote to you only the day before yesterday, I have no special reason for writing this. But there is one point. You have written about Rs. 5 to 10 for Kamalabai. Her request is for Rs. 5 only. We have, therefore, to send only that much. How to remit the sum is for you to decide. No expense should be incurred in remitting it. Jivanlal's firm has an office in Madras too. You can make an arrangement with them and pay the money in Rajkot. If you cannot make such an arrangement, let me know. Ask Kamalabai where the money should be remitted.

Kanaiyo has now settled down to work with me. He says: "Now I am absolutely free from worry." There is no need at all for you to worry about him.

Lilavati's health will continue as it has been for some time. It will come round by and by.

When was the last remittance on account of Mirabehn received? There seems to have been some irregularity.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8536. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

165. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 12, 1937,

BHAI BHAGWANJI,

What a sad description of your family affairs you have given! In spite of this, if you alone can practise perfect self-sacrifice I am sure you will be able to repair the broken ship.

You need never apologize to me. It will always remain my wish that your family, that is, the whole Karsanji family, should

prosper and regain the illustrious name that it once had, and that you should be the means of bringing it about.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

BHAGWANJI ANUPCHAND, VAKIL, B.A., LL.B.
RAJKOT SADAR
KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5836. Also C.W. 3059. Courtesy Narandas Gandhi

166. LETTER TO R. S. NIMBKAR[1]

[Before *August 13, 1937*][2]

So far as I am concerned, I would not create deadlocks but would cheerfully face them when they are forced upon me. I do not work the Act, when I work so as to end it. It would be foolish of me, having entered the Legislature, not to take all advantage I can of it, consolidate my position and strengthen it.

Mr. Gandhi informs Mr. Nimbkar that the points raised by him are for the Working Committee to deal with and he takes it they are already before the Committee.

The Hindu, 13-8-1937

167. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,
August 13, 1937

I have seen what seems to be a distorted version of the part I have played in the Nariman episode. The virulent agitation that has gathered round it has caused me deep distress. I cannot do better than quote from my letter, dated August 1, to Mr. Nariman:[3] Since that date, further correspondence between him and me has taken place. A

[1] A communist labour leader, who had written "drawing Mr. Gandhi's attention to the non-release of all politicals and the necessity for labour legislation and the creation of deadlocks after some time."

[2] The letter appeared under the date-line "Bombay, August 13"

[3] The extract is not reproduced here; for the full text of the letter, *vide* "Letter to K. F. Nariman",

telegram received from him today tells me that he will be ready with his evidence in both cases in five days. I shall lose no time whatsoever in applying myself to the task I have undertaken. I have not as yet worried Bahadurji in this matter, but if my findings are adverse to Mr. Nariman and he is not satisfied with them, I shall immediately request Bahadurji to review the evidence produced before me and my findings.

It has been suggested that what I have done now might have been done when the unfortunate controversy first burst forth. I am not free at this stage to publish the whole of the correspondence that has taken place between him and me. But I can say I have been always willing, as he has admitted himself, that he should have an independent inquiry if he desired it. Therefore, whatever has taken place, has not been due to my indifference or unwillingness to help. If I have been hitherto silent, my silence has been solely in the interest of Mr. Nariman as could be amply borne out by the correspondence referred to above.

I would appeal to the Bombay Press to stop the agitation altogether and ask the public to suspend judgment till the findings are in their possession.[1]

The Hindu, 14-8-1937

168. LETTER TO VITHALDAS V. JERAJANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 13, 1937

BHAI VITHALDAS,

I got your three letters. I don't remember Rajkumari to have made the criticism you mention regarding lace. It is 4 a. m. just now. She is asleep. I will ask her later. Her complaint to me is always regarding the khadi section in the Panjab. I have therefore received no complaint against your department.

[1] In *Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel*, "Circular Letter", 2-4-1897, Narahari Parikh explains: "on 14th of August, Shri Nariman requested Gandhiji, telegraphically, for permission to issue a statement in reply. Gandhiji, of course, had no objection, though he advised against it in Nariman's own interest. Nariman, in a long letter dated August 15, expressed surprise that the demand for an apology to the Sardar and public, etc., from him should have been made by Gandhiji, for it seemed to him irrelevant and uncalled for. He knew he had nothing to apologize for and no confession to make."

I still feel that I did right in exempting Gosibehn[1]. The case of this embroidery work is similar to our use of foreign thread for stitching clothes. If she charges Rs. 2_ for an article made of khadi worth eight annas, the additional Rs. 2 are not spent on foreign thread but are paid to the women workers for their art. It is for this reason that I have exempted Gosibehn. This exemption does not in any way militate against the restrictions we have laid down, for as you admit we are still not able to supply exactly the same kind of thread that these women use. I therefore feel that by refusing the exemption we would harm the cause of khadi. We ought not to grudge the use of foreign things which harm nobody but, on the contrary, definitely benefit the country.

I don't advise you to join the Swadeshi Store, but you may give such help as you can from outside. If they have faith in your ability, they should accept your advice and stock only khadi by way of cloth.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9794

169. LETTER TO DR. FRITZ MICHAELIS

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 13, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. Here are answers to your questions of which, I hope, you have kept a copy.

Handicraft experts would be expected to live with us like ourselves and work side by side with us giving us the benefit of their labour and their experience.

We would adopt such European methods and tools which we need, consistently with our poverty. There is no question of independent workshops being established. We are villagers. A village containing not more than 1000 souls all told. No experts are required who cannot work without capital.

India's villages require to be revivified. Land is parcelled out in holdings, often even less than one acre. The idea, therefore, is to turn

[1] Gosibehn Captain, Dadabhoy Naoroji's granddaughter

waste into wealth. Hence talent that is expensive or that can only express itself in bignesses will not serve my purpose. I want the use of that talent which can see the universe in an atom and, therefore, relates itself to and is rooted in the earth from which we have sprung, on which we are living, to which we have to return. Anyone, therefore, who comes from the West has got to be capable of living the life of the poor. Therefore he must [be] able-bodied and be prepared to live the life of the poorest in the land.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. FRITZ MICHAELIS

P. O. BOX NO. 1345

HAIFA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

170. LETTER TO E. K. PALIA

SEGAON, WARDHA,

August 13, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Not knowing anything of transactions relating to land, I cannot be interested in your scheme.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI E. K. PALIA

6/7 CUBBON ROAD

BANGALORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

171. LETTER TO M. MARGUERITE WIY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 13, 1937

DEAR MARGARET,

I was delighted to hear from you. Here is a letter for Maria Sevenich which please send to her.

Love.

BAPU

M. MARGUERITE WIY
LAGER OESCHINENSEE B.
SWITZERLAND

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

172. LETTER TO MARIA SEVENICH

SAGAON WARDHA
[*August 13, 1937*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

I have Margaret's translation of your letter. It is good that you have written so freely. Let me correct one opinion in it. You say I have had the experience of being not successful and that I had retired for some time from political work. In the dictionary of a seeker of truth there is no such thing as being "not successful". He is or should be an irrepressible optimist because of his immovable faith in the ultimate victory of Truth which is God. And, I have not retired, temporarily or permanently, from political work for I recognize no watertight compartments. What I have done is to retire from the Congress and Congress politics—and that I have done to serve the Congress and the politics of the country better than before. For the rest I await your promised letter.

Love.

BAPU
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This and the letter to M. Marguerite Wiy, the preceding item, are written on the same sheet.

173. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

SEGAON WARDHA
[*August 13, 1937*][1]

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

The opinion[2] is a feather in your cap. That does not mean that I accept the reasoning. But it must stand till there is another opinion from a senior. For me it is unnecessary. I accept Mangaldas's interpretation. The opinion must be circulated among the members [and you should say] that it was obtained at my instance and that it was being circulated too at my instance. I am glad you are free from fever. I am in Wardha tomorrow for the Working Committee. This will be in your hands tomorrow. Therefore 'tomorrow' will be 'today' for you.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10129

174. LETTER TO GOKULDAS

WARDHA,
August 13, 1937

BHAI GOKULDAS,

It is the right and duty of the subjects to complain to the State against the menace of leopards and wild pigs. One should be polite and reasonable in whatever one does.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The date, which is faded in the source, is confirmed from the reference to "the Working Committee" which met at Wardha from August 14 to 17.

[2] To amend the constitution of the All-India Village Industries Association so as to make provision for a President

175. LETTER TO SARLA

August 13, 1937

CHI. SARLA,

I got your letter. You are a wise girl. You have understood why I don't send for you here. Persevere and complete the training under Nayee Talim. Become an expert in it. You must be reading in the newspapers about things here. I have managed to write this under great pressure of work just now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8769. Also C.W. 1042. Courtesy: Champabehn R. Mehta

176. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

SEGAON,
August 13, 1937

CHI. MANI,

The car should wait for me tomorrow morning 7.30 near the railway crossing. I expect to reach there about that time.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Please send the accompanying note[1] to Chhotelal just now or in the morning. Inform Mahadev so that he may put up to me whatever work he wants to.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11550

[1] This is not available.

177. NOTES

UNSEEMLINESS IS INDISCIPLINE

The Daily Press reports that at the opening of the C. P. Assembly session the gallery which was packed to overflowing made an unseemly demonstration against Shri Raghavendra Rao[1]. Those who packed the gallery were presumably Congressmen or those who sympathized with the Congress. I suppose there will be parties even after we have Complete Independence of our make. It will go hard with us if the parties will not tolerate one another or show towards one another ordinary courtesy. And the Congress which claims to represent the whole nation can ill afford to be intolerant towards its political opponents or others. If it is, and it is, the only all-India body, it represents all interests. It represents even Shri Raghavendra Rao who was at one time a respected member of the Congress organization. It may be that the votes in the constituency for which he stood were tampered with. If they were, the law would look after it. But he must be presumed to be honest till he is proved guilty. And even if he is proved guilty, the guilt will be no warrant for unseemly demonstration against him. Intolerance, discourtesy, harshness are not only against Congress discipline and code of honour, they are taboo in all good society and are surely contrary to the spirit of democracy.

Harijan, 14-8-1937

178. AGAINST AHIMSA AND TRUTH?

A friend writes:[2]

> The following sentence in your article[3] "Criticism Answered" (31st July) seems to me to offend against the spirit of truth and non-violence as also against good logic.
>
> "Foreign liquors in prescribed quantity may be imported for the use of Europeans who cannot or will not do without their drink."
>
> The Congress Govemments must feel as much concerned for the welfare of the European community within their provinces as for the Indian

[1] The ex-Premier

[2] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.

[3] *Vide* "Criticism Abswered", 31-7-1937

communities. I assume that the Congressmen, as prohibitionists, are agreed that drink is as bad for the European as for the Indian. In that case the mere whim of the drinker cannot count. If drink is to be allowed to the European—although it is bad for him—because he "cannot or will not do without it", the Japanese, the Americans and several other foreigners in India may seek the same permission; and if they are to be allowed to continue their evil habit on that ground, why should an Indian in his own country be not allowed to ruin himself in the same way?. . .

If anyone is to be permitted to take (not take to) alcohol, it must be entirely on medical or some other universally applicable ground. There cannot be under the Congress regime a discriminatory legislation for or against a community. . . .

A foreigner residing in India for a period only ought not to be exempt from the same obligation. Thus, even for those who feel that total abstinence is not absolutely necessary, it must be obligatory to give up drink during their stay in India if the nation has declared itself against it. They must be deemed to reside in India on the understanding that they will respect the laws, customs and rules of decent conduct of the people amongst whom they have come to reside.

I have no difficulty generally in following and often adopting this writer's criticism. But I must confess that though I have read the letter three times, I have failed to understand the argument.

Why is the proposed exemption against the spirit of ahimsa or truth? I fail to see even the bad logic the writer sees in it. In dealing with living entities, the dry syllogistic method leads not only to bad logic but sometimes to fatal logic. For if you miss even a tiny factor—and you never have control over all the factors that enter into dealings with human beings—your conclusion is likely to be wrong. Therefore you never reach the final truth, you only reach an approximation, and that too if you are extra careful in your dealings. Indeed it was my regard for ahimsa and truth that made me think of exempting Europeans. For I am unable to lay down a universal law for all human beings and for all climes that drink is an evil. I can well regard it as a necessity in the frigid zone. I would therefore be chary of imposing prohibition against Europeans who not only do not regard measured quantities of alcohol at each meal an evil but consider it a necessity. Drink is not regarded as a vice in European society as it is generally in India. I would therefore, even from the point of view of courtesy (a phase of ahimsa), leave it to their honour to respect the usage of the

country of their adoption. I would gladly accept the logic of allowing other nationals, if the necessity is proved, the modified freedom the Europeans will enjoy. Indeed it might be necessary to bring in a large number of Indians too under the medical certificate clause. For me the drink question is one of dealing with a growing social evil against which the State is bound to provide whilst it has got the opportunity. The aim is patent. We want to wean the labouring population and the Harijans from the curse. It is a gigantic problem, and the best resources of all social workers, especially women, will be taxed to the utmost before the drink habit goes. The prohibition I have adumbrated is but the beginning (undoubtedly indispensable) of the reform. We cannot reach the drinker so long as he has the drink shop near his door to tempt him. One might not as well prevent an ailing child, nay man, from touching sweets so long as he does not remove the open box in front of them. Whilst on this question, I would like to answer an argument advanced in one of the newspaper cuttings which good friends send me that Shri C. Rajagopalachari in his zeal for this reform has brushed aside the question of the unemployment of the tappers who will be thrown out of work. I do not know what he has in mindfor them. Shri Gajanan, who is becoming an expert in making palm *gur*[1], tells me that in the Southern Presidency there are tappers engaged in the nefarious trade. He further suggests that the tapping need not stop at all. Only what they will tap under the prohibition regime will be sweet toddy which will be converted into *gur* instead of fiery liquid. Indeed I learn that in Andhradesh the tappers do not sell the palm juice they extract, but they convert it into *gur* which they sell to the arrack manufacturers who make arrack out of this *gur*. In such cases nothing need be done except for the State to take over this *gur* at a reasonable agreed price. From what I know of the tappers, they are not likely to lose anything by the impending prohibition, and the poor will get a rich but cheap food in the shape of good pure *gur* instead of a liquid which harms both body and soul.

Harijan, 14-8-1937

[1] Jaggery

179. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 14, 1937

CHI. NARAHARI,

I am enclosing a letter from Nimu. Only Maganbhai[1] and you can answer her questions. The question regarding her staying in the Ashram will have to be answered by you. I suppose the question regarding the Vidyapith will have to be answered for the present by Maganbhai. If he is here, I will show him this letter before posting it to you. Neither you nor Maganbhai need do anything which is found inconvenient.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9109

180. RENTIA BARAS

I feel—and I should feel—hesitant to write about my own birthday. Readers should know that I would have forgotten it altogether if people in India had not kept reminding me of it. I had to recollect my date of birth only on my joining the school and again when I went to become a barrister. However, I do not recall my parents having customarily celebrated either my birthday or that of any of my brothers. I have not celebrated the birthday of my parents or my sons. At one time, I used to keep a record of their birthdays but even that record was lost when like the [proverbial] cat we changed houses more than seven times. I do not know why I have never been interested in birthdays. But ever since my birthday was first celebrated with pomp in India, I made it known as *Rentia Baras*. With reference to this occasion which is to be celebrated this year also by the National School of Rajkot, Shri Chhaganlal Joshi writes as follows:[2] If all Kathiawaris, whether living in Kathiawar or outside, do their part, the amount of Rs. 15,000, which Shri Chhaganlal expects to raise, is a

[1] Maganbhai Prabhudas Desai

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had requested Gandhiji to write in *Hanjanbandhu* about Narandas Gandhi's scheme to celebrate *Rentia Baras*.

very small sum in my opinion. I would regard no amount big enough where khadi propaganda and Harijan work are concerned. Propagation of khadi means a clear increase in national wealth. With an insignificant capital, the Spinners' Association has to date distributed three crore rupees amongst the poor, that is to say that khadi worth a minimum of rupees four crores was produced and, of these three crores found their way to the villages. Similarly, Harijan service should also be regarded as charity which earns immediate merit for the donor, as it is a form of atonement. And charity thus given yields immeasurable fruit. Those who are aware of this will contribute to the *Daridranarayana* fund not in a miserly fashion but in handfuls. But why in the National School at Rajkot alone and why not elsewhere? This should be regarded as a relevant question. I can only say that the scheme drawn up by Shri Narandas Gandhi to celebrate this occasion strikes me as unique. Whatever is collected by means of it is managed by a prosperous organization. It has been found that the routine programme which has been in operation for three years has been steadily expanding. Hence, I can unreservedly request devotees of khadi and Harijans to contribute their utmost to this fund. Those who contribute to this fund should realize that persons contributing to the *yajna* in the form of yarn are certainly giving more than those who pay money, as the former pay with wealth produced by their own labour. Those who give money only transfer it to the charity-box, they do not produce new wealth, though of course they help to produce more.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 15-8-1937

181. MY NOTES

'PLAIT DEED'

The Secretary of the Gujarat Harijan Sevak Sangh, Shri Parikshitlal Majmudar, writes:[1] If this is true, it is clearly a case of crime and it is necessary for the State to promptly stop it. Workers of the Sangh should make further inquiries. Are there documents to be signed in such cases, or are the commitments merely verbal? How many persons are engaged in such practices and where do they live? How many such cases have come to light?

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 15-8-1937

182. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

August [*15*][2], *1937*

CHI. MANI,

Kevalram's letter was among those you returned. I knew that the first part of the telegram was missing. I am sending both with this. Mirabehn is coming today any time between 6 and 8 by the train from Delhi. Rajkumari is arriving tomorrow morning from Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

MANIBEHN PATEL
PURUSHOTTAM BUILDING
OPP. OPERA HOUSE, BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 119

[1] The letter is not translated here. Parikshitlal Majmudar had called upon the State of Baroda to prohibit the practice among Harijans of Mehsana Division of mortgaging their womenfolk's plaits to money-lenders who as a result of this deed enjoyed full rights over the women.

[2] The source has "26". From the reference to Mirabehn's expected arrival that day it is evident that this was written on August 15; *vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 16-8-1937. Amrit Kaur was already with Gandhiji on August 23; *vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 23-8-1937

183. LETTER TO M. VISVESVARAYYA[1]

[After *August 15, 1937*][2]

DEAR SIR VISVESVARAYYA,

You know the havoc wrought by the floods in Orissa. I have advised the Chief Minister Shri Vishwanath Das to approach you for advice and guidance. I have no doubt that you would give him such assistance as it may be in your power to give.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9836. Courtesy: Government of Mysore

184. LETTER TO VICEROY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 16, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

You are aware of the havoc wrought in Orissa by the recent floods. Its Chief Minister was yesterday describing to me the area of destruction. I have long held the opinion that these annual disasters can be prevented by regulating the direction of the floods. I wonder if you could send any friendly engineer to advise the Orissa Government on the best way of dealing with the floods.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This was displayed at the Mysore Pavilion of the Gandhi Darshan Exhibition held in Delhi in 1969-70.

[2] The letter appears to have been written after the Chief Minister of Orissa met Gandhiji on August 15, 1937; *vide* the following item.

185. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 16, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending with this two articles at any rate. Kanu has typed the Hindi one. The other is getting ready. You seem to be very sensitive indeed. I only described to you what I saw. What happened yesterday was worth seeing. How could I possibly be displeased by your remaining present? But I sensed the atmosphere. You did quite right of course in not coming yesterday. More when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11551

186. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 16, 1937

CHI. MRIDULA,

Three of your letters are lying with me. Since you were not in any hurry I have taken my time answering them. I did right, didn't I? You ask me to write to the Majoor Mahajan, but I do not see the need. You did well to write again. You have not mentioned anything in your second letter about the legal proceedings against you. Who is Premlila Mehta? In my view such writings are calculated to rouse sexual passion. But how can they be stopped? Such is today's education. That is how lives are shaped. The Vikas Griha seems to be developing well. Now your second letter. There must be laws about women. Do write to Bhulabhai[1]. It must also be investigated whether or not some laws can be made in the provinces. There is little hope that anyone in the Assembly would study the question. If a good lawyer having some free time studies this problem and frames the Bill, then an agitation can be started on that basis. We shall discuss this when you come here. How much can be written in a letter ? Prabha is plunged in a sea of sorrow. She lost her father-in-law and now she has gone to nurse her father. She has to act on other people's orders.

[1] Bhulabhai J. Desai

Please write to Jayaprakash. I am afraid prabha will not be able to reach there in time. But whenever she comes, she can be of great use to you.

I hope Mummy is fully recovered. Love to you and brothers and sisters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11205. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

187. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

August 16, 1937

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. You must have received my wire allowing you to remain there as long as necessary. It will be a great thing for me if you get well. My consideration was only on behalf of Amtul Masood and Mother. As for the rest, what I wrote to Ramachandran should hold good. You should return only when he permits. Mirabehn arrived yesterday. She has not gained much in health. Kanti writes that he will have nothing to do with you as long as you are attached to him. And when you have become disinterested there will be no problem at all.

I have one more letter from you today. You need not be in a hurry to return. Prolong your stay if you are improving.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 391

188. TELEGRAM TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE[1]

[On or after *August 16, 1937*][2]

GURUDEV
SANTINIKETAN

PRAY DEPEND UPON MY DOING UTMOST END ANDAMAN CRISIS.[3] LOVE.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

189. LETTER TO SARASWATI

August 17, 1937

CHI. SARASWATI,

I have your letter. Kanti does not wish you to come to me till your final examinations are over. Ramachandran also wishes the same. Hence, get through the examination soon and then come over.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6163. Also C.W. 3436. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram dated August 16, 1937, which read: "Have wired Andaman prisoners give up hunger strike. Their lives must be saved. Hope you and Jawaharlal will also exert your influence."

[2] *ibid*

[3] On July 24, 1937, about 225 political prisoners in the Andamans Central Prison had gone on hunger-strike. One of their demands was general release of all political prisoners and repeal of all repressive laws. But the Government of India had decided not to consider any of their demands unless they gave up the strike. *Vide* also "Telegram to Viceroy", 27-8-1937, and "Telegram to Andamans Prisoners", 30-8-1937

190. LETTER TO SAMPURNANAND

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 17, 1937

DEAR SAMPURNANAND,

I had assumed that you were always in good health and physically robust. Narendra Dev is very ill, Jayaprakash is so-so and you are suffering from jaundice and palpitation.

In Gujarat, Dinkar is perpetually ill. Meherally[1] has of course always been weak. I do not know about Masani's[2] condition. I really feel that I should open a nature-cure clinic for persons like you, and give up all other work. You surely know that I am a nature-cure fiend. Hence you should get well if only to avoid provoking the madness in me. Your letter throws ample light on my question.[3] Nothing further remains to be asked. But the letter raises many other questions, which we shall talk over when we meet. However, let me say one thing. It does not seem correct to say that we can never approach our objective by means of compromise. Of course, the reason for compromise should not be our weakness. Do write the other book you have in mind. I for one like your style.[4]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi original: Sampurnanand Papers. Courtesy: National Archi-ves of India

191. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 18, 1937

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. I have carefully gone through it. I feel that there is nothing for me or the Congress to say in this matter. That is to say that none of you should take any step having regard to my

[1] Yusuf Meherally
[2] M. R. Masani
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Sampurnanand", 27-7-1937
[4] Gandhiji had just finished reading the addressee's book *Samajvad.*

approval or disapproval, as your viewpoint and mine are quite different. The stand I took in Lancashire during the Round Table Conference[1] still holds good, for I cannot see any economic agreement independent of political issues. The fact that you people are members of the Pact Committee only means that you no longer have the right to raise political issues. Hence treating this issue as totally independent you must concentrate only on its own merits or otherwise. And what can I say about either? My opinion would most probably coincide with yours. Moreover, I believe that it is your duty to adopt this course. If necessary, you may say that in spite of that being your opinion on the merits and demerits, it need not be given much weight. Since the Congress is the only popular institution, it is necessary that whatever agreement is reached should have the seal of the Congress. And that agreement should be considered binding. This would prove your integrity and sense of justice.

I am dictating this letter after the morning prayers. Your trip to Zurich must have proved beneficial.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 7990. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

192. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEGAON,
August 19, 1937

MY DEAR C. R.,

I was intensely dissatisfied with myself that we could not have a heart-to-heart chat. But that did not matter. That you take no rest during the day has alarmed me. It is wrong if not sinful. There is no merit in overdoing anything. The world won't go wrong if you took an hour's rest during the day. You must listen unless you want to precipitate a collapse. There is something rotten in the State of Denmark if the simplest thing like an hour's rest cannot be taken with perfect safety to the State. Please listen.

Love

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2060

[1] In 1931; *vide* "Interview to Unemployed Workers' Deputation", 26-9-1937, "Statement to the Press", 27-9-1931 and "Interview to Deputation", 27-9-1931

193. LETTER TO BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

August 19, 1937

DEAR BHARATAN,

I have your note about Rao[1]. I got it during my walk at 7 a. m. This reply will go when Chhotelal leaves. You can come either at 1 o'clock or at 4 p.m. today. Between 2 and 4 I am fixed up. I hope you have taken all the papers and cash from Rao. I should like to see him if he could be induced to come.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3593

194. LETTER TO LAKSHMI GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 19, 1937

CHI. LAKSHMI,

I am writing to you after many days or rather weeks. But I keep receiving news of you and the children. I write this letter because of Anna[2]. For, on enquiring about his activities, I learn he works without break from morning till eleven at night. This causes me great anxiety. I have also remonstrated[3] a bit with him. There is no dharma in working like this. In fact I consider it a fault. How long can anyone carry on in this fashion? How will he manage if he himself falls ill? To create all the conditions for illness, yet hope to escape it is to expect the impossible. Therefore I expect that you, your brothers and sisters will all collectively stop him and will not allow him at any cost to overwork like this. If all of you, brothers and sisters, make up your mind, you will surely succeed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2014

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to J. C. Kumarappa", 14-7-1937
[2] C. Rajagopalachari
[3] *Vide* "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 19-8-1937

195. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,
August 20, 1937

Mr. K. F. Nariman has sent me a statement containing his case against Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and others. In it he wants me to invite witnesses and give them certain assurances.[1] This I gladly do hereby. I would like all those members of the Assembly and the Council who took part in the election of the leader for the Congress Party and those who were influencing votes to send me their statements of what they know, especially whether they voted in the manner they did at the instigation of Sardar Vallabhbhai directly or indirectly, and also their reasons for voting. It is said that the election being unanimous there was no voting. Even so, I would like members who were present at the election to write to me, if they will, as to why they did not express their dissent. I would also like those who took part in influencing the decisions of the electors to write to me whether they acted at the instigation or advice of the Sardar and whether, as a matter of fact, they used his name in speaking to the electors and, if they did, whether they did so with his knowledge and consent.

There is another class of witnesses as to the part Mr. Nariman played in 1934 at the election of members from Bombay for the Central Assembly. I would ask those who can to throw light on the charge of betrayal of trust or improper conduct brought against Mr. Nariman. It has been stated to me that the truth might be stifled for fear of victimization by the Sardar. I do not visualize how the Sardar can victimize. But I can give this assurance that in the event of the Sardar being found guilty of such conduct I should cut off the intimate contact I enjoy with him. If there are witnesses who wish to write to me in confidence I shall respect their confidence, but they should know that if their statements are such as need corroboration or

[1] In *Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel*, Narahari Parikh explains: "Nariman . . . issued a statement on the 17th of August. In this he stated that he was not prepared to apologize and that an assurance of protection should be given to all the witnesses. He followed up the public statement by a letter to Gandhiji urging that as the President of the Parliamentary Committee, Sardar Patel enjoyed large and arbitrary powers and many witnesses who were members of the Legislature were afraid of incurring his displeasure. It was essential, therefore, and in the interest of truth, that assurance of complete protection should be given to the witnesses."

contradiction by the Sardar or parties whom they may mention, their statements will have no weight with me if I could not show them—not necessarily the names—to the parties concerned. Any evidence that any party may wish to give in the two matters mentioned above should reach me not later than the 31st instant addressed Maganwadi, Wardha, and marked "Confidential: about Shri Nariman". The statements should be written in clear hand without argument or embellishment and should be relevant to matters referred to by me.

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-8-1937

196. LETTER ON MAHADEV DESAI

August 20, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Haven't I invited all this heavy labour myself? How shall I find time to read these essays on Nariman and education? Would it not be proper to send the accompanying statement[1] to the Associated Press by wire? Do as you please. I understand what you say about the fruit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11552

197. LETTER TO HARIHAR SHARMA

August 20, 1937

CHI. ANNA,

I have your letter. There was no need for you to feel sorry. It was imperative to give expression to the shock I received at the station. It would have been betrayal of friendship if I had not done so. Had I entertained suspicion before this I would have dealt with it. When you had intended to leave after obtaining my permission you ought to have handed over charge to somebody. No calamity would have befallen if I had not given permission. This is evident as you saw how it affected me and what I had to do suddenly since you did not hand over charge. And that too as soon as I got down at the station.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item

198. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 20, 1937

CHI. SUMANGAL,

I see nothing wrong in the decision you have taken. May your efforts bear fruit. Keep me posted with news of your progress.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

199. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 20, 1937

CHI. VIDYA,

I am dictating replies to the letters lying before me. Among them I find your letter too. I am not quite sure if I have replied to this letter.

Tara is a cheat. She is also somewhat lazy. Once in a while she writes to me, even makes promises and subsequently forgets everything, Congratulation's on Virendra having started wearing khadi. If you live carefully and work within the limits of your capacity, your health will be all right.

It is of course good that Tara is studying again. There is no reason for being disheartened if one has failed. Students study to acquire knowledge, not for passing examination. Examinations are a kind of measuring-rod. When students fail, they study more and increase their knowledge. This is not bad at all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original : Rani Vidyavati papers. Courtesy : Gandhi National Museum and Library

200. DISCUSSION ON PROHIBITION[1]

[Before *August 21, 1937*]

GANDHIJI: The cruellest irony of the new reforms lies in the fact that we are left with nothing but the liquor revenue to fall back upon in order to give our children education. That is the educational puzzle but it should not baffle us. We have to solve it and the solution must not involve the compromise of our ideal of prohibition, cost whatever else it may. It must be shameful and humiliating to think that unless we got the drink revenue, our children would be starved of their education. But if it comes to it, we should prefer it as a lesser evil. If only we will refuse to be obsessed by the figures and by the supposed necessity of giving our children the exact kind of education that they get today, the problem should not baffle us.

QUESTION: Then would you really abolish what is called secondary education and give the whole education up to matriculation in the village schools?

A. Certainly. What is your secondary education but compelling the poor boys to learn in a foreign language in seven years what they should learn in the course of a couple of years in their own mother tongue? If you can but make up your minds to free the children from the incubus of learning their subjects in a foreign tongue, and if you teach them to use their hands and feet profitably, the educational puzzle is solved. You can sacrifice without compunction the whole of the drink revenue. But you must resolve to sacrifice this revenue first, and think of the ways and means about education later. Make the beginning by taking the big step.

Q. But would just the mere declaration of prohibition mean prohibition? May it not be that we may sacrifice the revenue without touching the curse of drink, not to talk of abolishing it?

A. The declaration does not mean that you will thereafter sit still. You will impress everyone into your service. In fact the whole staff is there—the staff of excise inspectors, their superior officers, and the whole of their subordinate staff. You will tell them that they will serve on no other terms but those of working for total abolition of drink. You will convert every grog-shop into a recreation centre. You will

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "The Education Puzzle"

concentrate on places where opportunities for getting drunk are greatest. You will ask the mill-owners and factory-owners to provide light refreshment stalls, you will provide there refreshing drinks for them like sugar-cane juice, games for them, lantern shows for them, and make them feel that they are like you. Impress everyone, without exception, into your service. The village school-master and the other official should be all prohibition workers.

Q. Very good. But in many places you will find the village Patel and others joining the drinking folk in their drunken revels. What about them?

A. Every one of your school children will be a prohibition worker. Ministers will be going up and down the country visiting the grog shops-turned-recreation-centres, have their cup of refreshing dirnk with the common folk and make these houses fashionable.

Don't be deterred by the thought that prohibition failed in America. Remember that the stupendous experiment was tried there, where drinking is not looked upon as a vice, where millions usually drink. Here drink is held reprehensible by all religions, and it is not the millions who drink but individuals who drink.

Harijan, 21-8-1937

201. HINDI-URDU

From the valuable essay[1] written by Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, being No. 6 of the Congress Political and Economical Studies Series, I copy his following seventeen main suggestions:[2]

Of course the reader should procure the pamphlet for himself and study it with the care it deserves. It is obtainable at the A. I. C. C. office, Swaraj Bhawan, Allahabad, at the price of 4 annas plus one anna postage.

Harijan, 21-8-1937

[1] For Gandhiji's Foreword, *vide* "Foreword to "The Question of Languages", 3-8-19367

[2] *Vide* "The question of Languages", 21-8-1937

202. NOTES

NOT INSTRUMENT OF INSTRUCTIONS

What I have been recently writing in connection with the constructive programme before the Congress Ministries has been described by some newspapers as "Instrument of Instructions". No one but the President of the Congress and the Working Committee has any power to issue instructions to the Congress Ministries. Mine is a very humble note. I can only advise on matters about which I may claim special Knowledge or experience. My articles have a value only to the extent that they appeal to the reason of those to whom they are addressed. Though I enjoy the confidence of the Working Committee, the views I may express here need not be taken to represent its views or even those of any of its groups. Indeed the public should know that in several matters I do not represent the views of many individual members. Therefore, whatever I may say in these columns should be taken to be purely personal to me and in no way representative of the Working Committee. But in matters relating to the struggle for swaraj through non-violent action. I do claim special qualifications. For me office-acceptance has a special meaning even in terms of the Congress manifesto and resolutions. It would be wrong if I did not put before the Ministers and the public my meaning of office-acceptance. But it may not always be the official Congress view, it may not be the view of Congressmen in general. My position and limitations being made clear, there need be no embarrassment to the Ministers or me. I should feel cramped if my writings were presumed to bear the imprimatur of the official or even the non-official Congress view.

Harijan, 21-8-1937

203. THE IMPLICATIONS

I have not hesitated to express my opinion that the salaries that the Congress Ministers have voted for themselves are much too high for the standard that govern us in this the poorest country in the would. In the hurried note that Prof. K. T. Shah has sent me and which the reader will find elsewhere, India's average annual per capita income will be found to be £4 against £50 of Great Britain. Unfortunately for us we have to bear yet a while the burden of the

British inheritance, and in spite of the best effort we fail to achieve the ideal standard. The salaries and the allowances are now a settled fact. The question now is, will the Ministers, their secretaries and the Members work so hard as to deserve the emoluments they will receive? Will the Members become whole-time workers for the nation and give a faithful account of the services they may render? Let us not make the mistake of imagining that the things are what we wish them to be or what they should be. And it is not enough that the Ministers live simply and work hard. They have to see to it that the departments they control also respond. Thus justice should become cheap and expeditious. Today it is the luxury of the rich and the joy of the gambler. The police should be friends of the people instead of being their dread. Education should be so revolutionized as to answer the wants of the poorest villager instead of answering those of an imperial exploiter. All those who were imprisoned for political offences even of a violent nature will shortly find themselves free if the Ministers can give them the freedom. This is a phenomenon not to be looked at lightly. Does it mean passport to violence? Certainly not in terms of the Congress creed of non-violence. The Congress abhors individual violence in a far more real sense than the Government it replaces. It seeks to meet the violence of individuals not with the organized violence called punishment but with non-violence in the shape of friendly approach to the erring individuals and through the cultivation of sound public opinion against any form of violence. Its methods are preventive, not punitive. In other words, the Congress will rule not through the police backed by the military but through its moral authority based upon the greatest goodwill of the people. It will rule not in virtue of authority derived from a superior armed power but in virtue of the service of the people whom it seeks to represent in every one of its actions. Ban- on all prohibited literature is being removed. Now some of the books banned will be found, I suppose, to inculcate violence and spread obscenity, or hatred among different classes or sects. The Congress rule does not mean licence to violence or obscenity or fomenting of hatred. Again the Congress will rely upon the unstinted support of enlightened public opinion in dealing with objectionable literature. The Ministers who may find violence, hatred or obscenity spreading in their provinces will look to the Congress organizations and ultimately the Working Committee for active and efficient help before they resort to the processes of the criminal law and all it means. Indeed the triumph of the Congress will be measured

by the success it achieves in rendering the police and the military practically idle. And it will fail utterly if it has to face crises that render the use of the police and the military inevitable. The best and the only effective way to wreck the existing Constitution is for the Congress to prove conclusively that it can rule without the aid of the military and with the least possible assistance of the police who may well have some new and friendly designation given to them as a correspondent suggests.

Harijan, 21-8-1937

204. LETTER TO VERRIER ELWIN

Unrevised SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 21, 1937

MY DEAR VERRIER,

Your letter to Jamnalalji and now the fuller letter to Bapa make distressful reading. God has saved you for greater service. You must not give way to dejection. Dejection is the measure of one's want of faith. You say in Bapa's letter: "I have lost most of my Christian or religious faith. How can a just and good God allow these sufferings of the poor?" Are you not judging God? Who are we to say why He allows certain things? There would be little play for faith, if we could reason out every act of God. We would then be co-equal with Him. I understand the persecution to which you have been subjected.[1] But that is the moment of your trial. Your faith must be immovable like the Himalayas. They will suffer decay, but not so your faith, if it is worth anything. No, no, it won't do. You must cheer up. No more of idle sorrow!

Thakkar Bapa in his covering letter to Mahadev says Elwin thinks Bapu is displeased with him. What is this libel on you by him, or by you on me? I have differed from you. That you know. You have never given me cause for displeasure. My love can stand many trials. But you have not put it through any. It burns as bright as ever. Take of it a cartload and distribute it to Shamrao[2] and others.

BAPU

From a copy. Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Perhaps the reference is to the addressee's conflict with the Church authorities.

[2] Shamrao Hivale, addressee's co-worker

205. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 21, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Where is the book[1] that Prema writes about? I don't remember to have received it. I have entered silence at 6 this evening. Silence always suits me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Send over Verrier's letter.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11553

206. LETTER TO JAYANTI N. PAREKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 22, 1937

CHI. JAYANTI,

I have your letter. The years pass for all, old and young. The wheel of time never stops moving even for a moment. All of you were but little children yesterday. Now you are all children no more. I have to make an effort to remember this. May your aspirations be fulfilled and your life be spent in relieving the sufferings of the hungry and other afflicted people. Why don't you write directly to Sardar drawing his attention to the unusual changes about which you have written in your letter to me? Are you afraid that he will not pay attention to you? If you have any such doubt, dispel it. I hope Dinkar is getting stronger.

It would be very good if Indu's mind becomes steady.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6265

[1] On *brahmacharya*, by Premabehn Kantak; *vide* also "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 25-8-1937

207. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 22, 1937

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I send with this a letter from Jayanti addressed to me. I replied[1] to him saying that it would be better if he wrote directly to you instead of writing to me. I think it is best that you yourself should reply to the accompanying letter. I am getting papers from Nariman. I am not sending copies to you. I will of course send copies of papers which you ought to get. Don't worry about my health. I am taking proper rest and will now increase the period.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
POONA

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 210

208. LETTER TO MULSHANKER NAUTAMLAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 23, 1937

CHI. MULSHANKER,

I do not seem to have received your letter of the 19th March. It is certainly good that you are doing the work with your whole heart in it. Please keep it up.This is what I believe to be dharma regarding marriage. Parents cannot force their children to marry, or to marry a particular person. While making their choice, the son or the daughter should listen with the utmost respect to their parents' advice, but need not marry anybody whom their heart does not accept. At the same time they should not form an alliance which would displease their parents. I see no harm in restraining the desire for marriage as long as one can preserve self-control. But one must not deceive oneself in any way. When the time for courting imprisonment comes again, those who have in them a strong spirit of self-sacrifice will have a right to do so. In this one should try to obtain the blessings of one's elders. But I

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

can imagine cases in which it would be one's dharma to make such self-sacrifice even if the elders refuse their blessings. One can decide only after examining the circumstances in each case.

I think I have answered all your questions. If anything is left out, please ask me again.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2585. Also C.W. 9464. Courtesy: Mulshanker Nautamlal

209. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON,

August 23, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Leaving aside important letters, I went on writing for *Harijan*. I have just finished the last article at 3.25. I have not been able to revise any of them. They have been revised by Rajkumari. Please go through them. I got as many of the articles typed as I could but the ones written after two couldn't of course be typed. I suggest that if there is no time you should send them as they are. However, if there is time and you get some copies made, send me one. All the copies of the articles which have been typed are being sent to you. Send me one copy [of each] if you can spare them. Today I cannot send anything more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11554

210. MESSAGE TO TRAVANCORE WOMEN'S CONFERENCE, QUILON[1]

[Before *August 24, 1937*][2]

How I wish Travancore women will play their part in purifying religion by removing from their heart untouchability and all it means and by taking their due share in the prohibition campaign now commenced.

The Hindu, 25-8-1937

211. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 24, 1937

MY DEAR NATESAN,

Many thanks for your letter and cutting. What you have done is wholly worthy of you. You differed honestly, you have revised your view openly. As to education you will see the use I have made of your letter in the forthcoming issue of *Harijan*.[3]

I am under strict order to take rest if I am to escape serious consequences. Please therefore wait for me to overtake reading your Sanskrit abridgments[4].

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2237

[1] The conference concluded on August 24, expressing "its profound gratitude to the Maharaja and Maharani for issuing the Temple-entry Proclamation and resolved to form an All-Kerala Hindu Women's Conference."

[2] *ibid*

[3] *Vide* "Notes", sub-title, "Needless Fear", 28-8-1937

[4] Of the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, etc.

212. LETTER TO G. CUNNINGHAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 24, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter[1] of the 17th instant. Evidently I did not quite understand what H. E. the Viceroy said to me about trans-Frontier. I understood him to mean that he could not think of permitting me to cross the border. And I accepted what I understood to be the Viceroy's decision adding that I did not lose the hope that, when I have inspired sufficient confidence as to my integrity and ability, I could safely be permitted to cross the Frontier. But that is irrelevant to this letter. I would like to know the implication of "leaving all affairs connected with the tribes severely alone" during my visit. Not that I have the slightest desire to meddle in trans-Frontier affairs. My intention is, as it was when I first broached the subject to Lord Irwin[2], as Lord Halifax then was, to know the Frontier Pathan in his own home, to make the acquaintance of Khudai Khidmatgars, to ascertain for myself how far their claim to be utterly non-violent could be sustained and how I could promote the general welfare of the Pathans which is dear to the heart of Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan. He puts implicit reliance upon my judgment as I put on his transparency and trustworthiness. But I suppose it is inevitable that people will come to me to talk about trans-Frontier affairs. Am I not to listen to their narratives and even give my opinion if I were asked toexpress it and could form one on what they might tell me? If I succeed in visiting the Frontier Province, I should certainly feel sorry if I had to leave it without having the pleasure of renewing the acquaintance we made during the time you were at Delhi. I await your further letter about the Khan Saheb's question.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I just read in the papers the ban has been lifted. I am grateful.

H. E. THE GOVERNOR
N.W.F.P.

From a copy: C.W. 7991. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] *Vide* "Letter from G. Cunnigham", 17-8-1937
[2] In March 1931; *vide* "Letter to Dr. William H. Tandy", 20-10-1937

213. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKVASA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 24, 1937

BHAI MANGALDAS,

Kumarappa tells me that you have given up earning money for good and have resolved to devote the rest of your life to service. May you remain loyal to your noble resolve! Such self-sacrifices are certainly needed. I suppose our forefathers must have had a similar motive in entering the *vanaprastha*[1].

I hope to receive an exhaustive note from you regarding the Nariman affair. After all you were the President.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4678. Courtesy: Mangaldas Pakvasa

214. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 25, 1937

CHI. PREMA,

You must have heard about my ill-health. I have been ordered minimum mental exertion and maximum rest. Since both the brain and the right hand demand complete rest, I will content myself with writing what you want immediately.I did tie your *raksha*[2] which I received in time. I have completely re-written the reply to your question.[3] The old replies are not incorrect, but being incomplete they may lend themselves to misinterpretation. I am returning them. Cancel them. See that they are not published at all. If the new reply is useful, you may publish it. I have preserved your letters and will reply to

[1] The third stage in one's life when one retired to the forest leaving behind all worldly connections

[2] A thread tied on *Shravana Shukla* 15 by a sister to the wrist of her brother or a person regarded as such implying that he would protect her

[3] The addressee had written a novel based on a discussion Gandhiji had with a friend about the case of a married professor aspiring to observe *brahmacharya*. The addressee included Gandhiji's answer in her novel, a Gujarati translation of which appeared under the title *Kama ane Kamini.*

them when I am all right. You may even receive my reply sooner if I am permitted to dictate. There is no cause for worry about me. However, I have to be extremely careful.

Blessings from

BAPU

QUESTLON: A professor who is married wants to observe *brahmacharya*. The wife doesn't agree. What is the professor friend's dharma in these circumstances?

ANSWER: This question could have arisen only if the idea of observing *brahmacharya* came to the husband after marriage. What I mean by marriage as a part of dharma is that intercourse between husband and wife is resorted to only when they desire children, and never for sex-gratification. Those who do not look upon marriage as a holy bond will of course respect each other's wishes. Intercourse without the consent of the other party is nothing but rape.

Let us now deal with the above mentioned question. In a case in which it is only the husband who wishes to observe *brahmacharya* but the wife does not, if the husband has become completely free from passion, that is, has, in the language of the *Gita*, Ch. II, v. 59, realized the Supreme, intercourse will be physically impossible. The wife will realize the husband's condition and her passion will subside. But the question refers to a man's striving for *brahmacharya*. A husband or wife can strive for any aim which was not present in the minds of both at the time of marriage, only with the consent of the other partner. In other words, a husband cannot take the vow of *brahmacharya* without the consent of his wife. Of course everybody should try to practise ordinary self-control. When either party is aroused, generally the other party also is agreeable or becomes so after a little persuasion. When this does not happen, bitterness results. I have, therefore, come to the conclusion, from the experiences of many people and after careful reflection over them, that practice of self-control depends on mutual consent. I should therefore say that the question is defective. Where *brahmacharya* has become a natural condition, the question does not arise. And it has no room when passion is present and the person only wants to strive for *brahmacharya*.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10393. Also C.W. 6832. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

215. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 25, 1937

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

What can I write? My mind can work in one direction only. I do not know how I can be of help. What opinion can I form on a matter I know nothing about? Hence I would only suggest that you do what is in the interest of India irrespective of the opinion of Congressmen. Rest assured that the Congress will have to accept what is for the country's good. And its prestige will suffer in rejecting it. The Congress has no other capital except its prestige which in turn depends upon the following of the poor millions. Thus the welfare of India means simply the economic, intellectual and moral welfare of its millions. I have said nothing new but at times such pronouncements of principle are most effective when made by a friend. One can say my health is quite good. A little weakness is there but it will disappear. There is no need for a change. But it will automatically be brought about if the trip to the Frontier Province materializes. For one thing the climate there is good and fruit, etc., are available in plenty.

You must be building up your health. The operation must have been of considerable help.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 7983. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

216. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 26, 1937

MY DEAR C. R.,

I wonder if you have a moment to think of Hindi Prachar Sabha. Raghavan is anxious about its financial condition. He seems to have no faith in the South and expects money from the North. The latter is a broken reed. Jamnalalji thinks that other provinces have been neglected. Do you think you can raise anything on your side? I do not expect you to give muck time to this work but I am just putting

you in mind of it. I hope you have begun to give yourself an hour's rest during the day. That is a duty you may not neglect.

Love.

BAPU[1]

From a photostat: G.N. 2067

217. LETTER TO EDITH HUNTER

SEGAON, WARDHA, C. P.,
August 26, 1937

DEAR SISTER,

Here is my message. You can do with it what you like.

Attainment of world peace is impossible except for greater scientific precision, greater travail of the soul, greater patience and greater resources than required for the invention and consolidation of the means of mutual slaughter. It cannot be attained by a mere muster-roll signed by millions of mankind desiring peace. But it can, if there is a science of peace, as I hold there is, by a few devoting themselves to the discovery of the means. Their effort being from within will not be showy but then it will not need a single farthing.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

MRS. EDITH HUNTER
SECRETARY, FRIENDS OF INDIA SOCIETY
47 VICTORIA STREET
LONDON S.W. 1

From a photostat: G.N. 1534. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In his postscript to this letter Mahadev Desai writes: "Bapu's own condition is giving us no little anxiety. The pressure, as examined by Dr. Gilder, was 200/120, and the outward symptoms too are not at all happy He is trying to give himself rest. But is there any rest for him?"

218. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

SEGAON,
August 26, 1937

CHI. CHANDAN,

I have your frank letter. I have no further questions to ask now. You say that I should send that letter to Shankar[1] and not show it to anybody except Kakasaheb. Why? If we have got rid of a weakness of which we have been guilty, we shouldn't mind the whole world knowing about it. And why need we feel ashamed about it, either? Moreover, you wish to serve women. You wish to save girls from the clutches of . . .[2], for you believe that associating with him does them very great harm. How can you succeed in this unless you make public his misbehaviour with you? From every point of view, therefore, you should have no objection to your letter being read by any person. This does not mean, of course, that a letter like this should be shown to all. But I should be free to show it to anybody to whom I may think it necessary to show. Unless I make appropriate use of your letter, I can make no progress in my inquiry either. I will, therefore, keep a copy and send the original to Shankar.

If you want to be strong enough to see this matter through, you will need to have strength of heart. You will have to get some facts from your girl friends who have any knowledge of this matter. If any of them is willing to write to me, encourage her to do so. If the whole thing happened exactly as you have described, you have nothing to feel ashamed about. The fault was wholly . . .'s, for, as you say, was it not he who aroused passion in you? While gratifying his guilty desires, he made you take interest in his actions. Am I right? Continue to write to me without any constraint. I am sending a copy of your letter to Nanabhai[3] at any rate. I hope you will not be displeased by that. If I don't send a copy to him, my inquiry cannot proceed. I hope your studies are progressing very well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 943. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

[1] Shankar *alias* Satish Kalelkar, addressee's fiance
[2] The name has been omitted.
[3] Nrisimhaprasad Kalidas Bhatt

219. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 26, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

The mail was received just now. Today all the articles have been typed here, and therefore you should have no difficulty. I leave to you the fate of the letters to be posted. Shiv Prasad is a wonderful man! Who is Kale, and who is Shridhar? I am not able to understand anything. Shivprasad must make a careful inquiry. Ask Ku[sum] and Chhotelal if either of them knows. How did he get those replies?

You must have received the mail sent in the morning. Keep taking enough fruit. About Nariman, let us see what happens.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11555

220. TELEGRAM TO VICEROY

August 27, 1937

IF HUNGER-STRIKE ANDAMANS STILL ON COULD YOU PLEASE WIRE FOLLOWING TO STRIKERS. QUOTE. I VENTURE ADD MY ADVICE TO GURUDEV TAGORE'S[1] AND WORKING COMMITTEE'S[2] TO ABANDON STRIKE RELYING UPON US ALL TRYING BEST SECURE RELIEF FOR YOU. IT WOULD BE GRACEFUL ON YOUR PART YIELD TO NATIONWIDE REQUEST. YOU WILL HELP ME PERSONALLY IF I COULD GET ASSURANCE THAT THOSE WHO BELIEVED IN TERRORIST METHODS NO LONGER BELIEVE IN THEM AND THAT THEY HAVE COME TO BELIEVE IN NON-VIOLENCE AS THE BEST METHOD. I ASK THIS BECAUSE SOME LEADERS SAY DETENUS HAVE ABJURED TERRORISM BUT OPINION

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Rabindranath Tagore", 16-8-1937

[2] *Vide* "Congress Working Committee Resolution on Andamans Prisoners".

TO CONTRARY ALSO HAS BEEN EXPRESSED. GANDHI. UNQUOTE. I SHALL ESTEEM YOUR KINDLY ASKING FOR REPLY TO BE WIRED.[1]

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7793. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

221. LETTER TO R. GANGADHARAN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 27, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 10th inst.

Marriage is not an affair in which one person can dispose of his girls or boys against their will. My boy married Shri Rajagopalachari's daughter because they fell in love with each other in perfectly honourable manner and the couple had our blessings. I would be glad to think that you could also be similarly matched. I have absolutely no prejudices, but no third party can bring about such matches.

I see nothing unhygienic in a person carrying a moustache or a *shikha* or both. I cannot give any reason for this age-long custom but I do not believe in setting aside customs for which I can give no valid reason but which are not repugnant to my moral or sanitary sense.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

R. GANGADHARAN
THOPPIKAVILAKOM
VAKKOM, P. O. ANJUTENGU, TRAVANCORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] To this, the Viceroy's reply of even date read: "Many thanks for your message which I am having repeated to the hunger-strikers that they should telegraph reply to you." The telegram dated August 28 from Andamans read: "Your message was personally delivered by me this morning, August 28, to the hunger-strikers who asked for time to discuss the question of calling off the strike and are still deliberating at 7 p.m. Hope to send further report tomorrow." On August 29, Gandhiji received the following telegram: "Hunger-strike suspended unconditionally late last night by an overwhelming majority who broke their fast. Only seven remaining on hunger-strike." For Gandhiji's reply, *vide* "Telegram to Andamans Prisoners", 30-8-1937

222. LETTER TO ZAKIR HUSAIN

SEGAON,
August 27, 1937

MY DEAR ZAKIR,

I got your letter only yesterday. I therefore sent a wire to Rajendra Babu asking him to attend the Conference and seek out Maulvi Abdul Haq Saheb. It is tragic that Nagpur should have so upset him. I have not yet traced the reason for his displeasure. I am glad you have sent Mujeeb[1] to Patna. You will please tell me what happens there.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

ZAKIR HUSAIN
JAMIA MILLIA
DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

223. LETTER TO M. SUBRAHMANYA RAJU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 27, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 12th August. Of course it is possible to revive peaceful picketing and to reconstitute district temperance committees. Both these things will, I have no doubt, take place if it becomes necessary.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SYT. M. S. RAJU
SECRETARY, VILLAGE CONGRESS COMMITTEE
KARVATNAGAR
CHITTOOR

From the original: G.N. 11518

[1] Prof. Mohammed Mujeeb, Vice-Chancellor, Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi

224. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 27, 1937

CHI. KASHI,[1]

You seem to be getting along quite well there. Do not in the least hesitate to stay there as long as necessary. Amba, Prabhudas and the children are bound to benefit. I at any rate have certainly liked your decision that the delivery also should take place there. Things are going on well here. I hope you yourself are keeping well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33096

225. LETTER TO RAGHAVDAS

SEGAON,
August 27, 1937

BHAI RAGHAVDAS,

What you say regarding machines is worth considering. I see that, as it is; the hand-operated grinding-stones are going out of use. It is even difficult to procure one. Even so, think over the matter and write to me. How many machines are operating in the U. P. and Gorakhpur? Find out if one can get as much flour as one needs if the use of machines is discontinued. Also consider whether, if the use of smaller machines is stopped, the tons of white flour prepared in Bombay and other places will not find its way into the villages. The flour of the smaller machines is much better.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The letters are in a different hand but the subscription in both is by Gandhiji.

226. LETTER TO RAMDAS GULATI

August 27, 1937

BHAI RAMDAS[1],

I have your letter. The work has increased . . . .[2] I have told Om about matters here. I am writing to Shankerlal about the Exhibition. Probably he will himself come over and attend to everything. According to me the expense seems to be so great that the villagers cannot hold a session like this. This will not be a village Congress. The idea of a Congress in a village is that all the expenses are kept within two to three thousand rupees. Will not the expense on water supply also be a waste once the session is over? Isn't there any way by which we can avoid all this expense? I feel that a Congress session for so many people will cost less in a city. If this is true, there is something wrong somewhere.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

227. DISCUSSION ON PROHIBITION[3]

[Before *August 28, 1937*]

GANDHIJI: If we can achieve prohibition within the next three years, and if we can demonstrate to the world that we can do without the military in the provinces, we shall have raised India's name to a height that it had never reached before and to which no nation has yet reached. The task of making people sober is a task of the most vital importance and no amount of energy devoted to it is likely to be wasted. It will at once be a kind of true adult education and [a means] of improving the taxable capacity of the citizen.

[QUESTION:] What are the most effective agencies for the creation of a sober India?

G. I have said already that the existing excise force may be used to advantage. Up to now they had no belief in the Government's *bona*

[1] The architect in charge of construction work at the Haripura Congress; *vide* "Letter to Vallabbhbhai Patel", 26-9-1937.

[2] Some words are illegible in the source.

[3] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "A Stupendous Task", under "Notes"

fides to achieve prohibition at even a distant date. They now know well enough that the Congress will not rest in peace and will not let others rest in peace until it has achieved prohibition, and they will gladly fall into line with the new policy and programme. But the voluntary agencies will be more effective. There are our professors and teachers, and students of colleges. They may well be called upon to devote a couple of hours each day to the task. They should go to the areas frequented by the drinkers, associate with them, speak to them and reason with them and do peaceful picketing of an educative character. I look to the medical profession to put their heads together to find out why people drink, how they can be weaned from drink, find out effective, wholesome and healthful substitutes of drink. Then there are our sisters. They did great work during the non-co-operation days. They should be organized again to revive the work under better auspices now. Whilst their presence will be a sure deterrent, they will have few difficulties in the way. Before, the police looked indifferently on, and even helped the ruffians in the days gone by. Now, women can count on their help in their holy crusade. Then there are the temperance associations. Most of them have been up to now inert and inactive. We should now ask them to pull themselves together and engage actively in the crusade. We might well have a Prohibition League under which all these agencies may work in a regular and systematic manner. The revenue drawn from excise may rightly be used for the prohibition campaign. That will be no forbidden use of tainted money, but something like turning a channel of foul water into the holy Ganges and making it pure.

Above all, find out the plague spots., concentrate your forces on them. Have meetings of the liquor contractors and liquor dealers, teach them how to turn an honest penny by converting their liquor booths into recreation centres. I have already described[1] how these places may be turned into centres of harmless recreation and even of educative amusement.

Harijan, 28-8-1937

[1] *Vide* "Discussion on Prohibition", 21-8-1937

228. NOTES

DANGEROUS EVEN IN FRIGID ZONE

Apropos of my remark[1] that alcohol might be required in a frigid zone, a friend sends me the following interesting paragraph from Liquor Control by G. E. G. Catlin who while discussing the apparent warming effect of alcohol says:

> A simple mechanical consideration should, however, warn us against a misinterpretation of these results. The body temperature has not been changed but the warmer blood has been sent to the surface where, if it is chilled, it returns to reduce the temperature of the whole system. In cases where there is serious need of protection against cold, alcohol is not only useless but dangerous. Fridtjof Nansen[2] stated that 'my experience leads me to take a decided stand against the use of stimulants and narcotics of all sorts' in Arctic journeys—in the case of alcohol owing to the increased risk of death by freezing.

We in India, however, do not need such testimony. We have no excuse apparent or real for taking alcoholic drinks in our temperate zone where the sun gives us all the warmth we need.

NEEDLESS FEAR

A Liberal friend[3] after highly appreciating the Congress programme of prohibition within three years thus expresses his fear about education:

> The educational programme of the Congress seems to be causing some uneasiness. There is a fear that it may result in blocking the progress of higher education. I hope that till a well-considered scheme is adumbrated and sufficient notice given of the changes proposed, no precipitate step should be taken, at any rate without giving an opportunity to the public to discuss the Congress proposals fully.

The fear is wholly needless. The Working Committee has laid down no general policy. The Congress, except for being responsible for the existence of many national educational institutions, e.g., the Kashi Vidyapith, Jamia Millia, Tilak Vidyapith, Bihar Vidyapith, Gujarat Vidyapith and the like, has made no general announcement. What I have written is my personal contribution to the discussion.

[1] *Vide* "Against Ahimsa and Truth", 14-8-1937

[2] (1861-1930); Norwegian Polar explorer, who was awarded Nobel Prize in 1922

[3] G. A. Natesan; *vide* "Letter to G. A. Natesan", 24-8-1937

Indeed I feel most strongly about the vast injury that the existing system of education has done to the youth of the country and to the languages and general culture of India. I hold my views strongly. But I do not claim to have converted Congressmen in general. What then can be said of those educationists who are outside even the Congress atmosphere and who dominate the Universities of India? It is no easy task to convert them. My friend and those who share his fear may rest assured that the advice given by Shri Shastriar will be taken to heart by those concerned and no serious step will be taken without due consideration and consultation with the persons whose advice is of value in matters educational. I may add that I am already in correspondence with many educationists and am already receiving valuable opinions which I am happy to be able to say are in general agreement with my scheme.

WHAT ABOUT LITERACY?

I have received many opinions on the ideas I have been propounding in these columns on education. I may be able to reproduce the most important of them in these columns. For the moment I wish to answer a grievance a learned correspondent has made of the neglect of literacy of which he imagines I have been guilty. There is nothing in what I have written to warrant such a belief. For have I not contended that the children in the schools of my conception will receive every instruction through the handicrafts they may be taught? That includes literacy. In my scheme of things the hand will handle tools before it draws or traces the writing. The eyes will read the pictures of letters and words as they will know other things in life, the ears will catch the names and meanings of things and sentences. The whole training will be natural, responsive, and therefore the quickest and the cheapest in the land. The children of my school will therefore read much more quickly than they will write. And when they write they will not produce daubs as I do even now (thanks to my teachers), but they will trace correct letters even as they will trace correct figures of the objects they may see. If the schools of my conception ever come into being, I make bold to say that they will vie with the most advanced schools in quickness, so far as reading is concerned, and even writing if it is common ground that the writing must be correct and not incorrect as now is in the vast majority of cases. The children of the Segaon school may be said to be writing in accordance with the orthodox standard; they spoil slate and paper according to my standard.

Harijan, 28-8-1937

229. THE GREATEST ACT

> In as much as prohibition has been one of the chief planks of the Congress since the inauguration of the non-cooperation movement in 1920, and thousands of men and women have had to suffer imprisonment and physical injury in furtherance of this cause, the Working Committee is of opinion that it is incumbent upon the Congress Ministries to work for this end. The Committee expects them to bring about total prohibition in their respective provinces within three years. The Working Committee appeals to the Ministries in other provinces, and to the Indian States also, to adopt this programme of moral and social uplift of the people.

I regard this resolution as the greatest act of the Working Committee[1] at any time of its chequered career. The cry of prohibition has been always fashionable. In 1920 it became one of the chief constructive items of the Congress. The Congress, therefore, could not but go in for total prohibition immediately it came into power in any part of India. The Ministers had to have the courage to sacrifice nearly Rs. eleven crores of revenue in the six provinces. The Working Committee has taken the risk for the sake of redeeming its pledge and conserving the moral and the material welfare of those who are addicted to intoxicants and narcotics. It is my fervent hope that the five provinces which have non-Congress majorities will not hesitate to follow the example of the six provinces. It is less difficult for them than for the six provinces to achieve prohibition. And is it too much to expect the States to fall in with British India?

I know that many are sceptical about prohibition being achieved. They think that the financial lure will be too strong for them to resist. They argue that the addicts will procure their drinks and drugs anyhow, and that when the Ministers discover that prohibition means mere loss of revenue without any appreciable diminution in the consumption, though illicit, of drinks and drugs, they will revert to the tainted revenue and the then state will be worse than the present.

I do not share any such fear. I believe there is the requisite moral momentum in the nation to achieve the noble end. If prohibition is to be a reality, we shall begin to see the end not with the end of the three years but inside of six months. And when the reality dawns upon India, those provinces or States that have lagged behind

[1] Which met at Wardha from August 14 to 17, 1937

are bound to bow to the inevitable.

We have the right, therefore, to expect the sympathy and support not only of all the parties in India including the Europeans but the best mind of the whole world in this, perhaps the greatest moral movement of the century.

If, then, prohibition is to mean a great moral awakening in India, the closing of liquor shops should merely mean the indispensable beginning of the movement ending in the complete weaning from drink and narcotics of those poor people and some rich people whom the habit has ruined, body and soul. Such a consummation cannot be brought about by mere State effort. At the risk of repetition of what is stated by Mahadev Desai in his notes, let me summarize what should, in my opinion, be the comprehensive programme:

(1) A drink-drug map showing the locality of liquor and opium shops in each province.

(2) Closing them as liquor shops on the expiry of the licences.

(3) Immediate earmarking of liquor revenue, whilst it is still being received, exclusively for the purpose of prohibition.

(4) Conversion, wherever possible, of the liquor shops into refreshment and recreation rooms in the hope that the original visitors will continue to use them, liquor contractors being themselves persuaded to conduct them if they will.

(5) Employment of the existing excise staff for detection of illicit distillation and drinking.

(6) Appeal to the educational institutions to devote a part of the time of teachers and students to temperance work.

(7) Appeal to the women to organize visits to the persons given to the drink and opium habits.

(8) Negotiation with the neighbouring States to undertake simultaneous prohibition.

(9) Engaging the voluntary or, if necessary, paid assistance of the medical profession for suggesting non-alcoholic drinks and other substitutes for intoxicants and methods of weaning the addicts from their habit.

(10) Revival of the activities of temperance associations in support of the campaign against drink.

(11) Requiring employers of labour to open and maintain,

under first-class management, refreshment, recreation and educational rooms for the use of their employees.

(12) Toddy-tappers to be used for drawing sweet toddy for sale, as such, or conversion into *gur*. I understand that the process of collecting sweet toddy for drinking, as such, or for making *gur* is different from the one for fermenting toddy.

So much for the campaign against drink and drugs.

Now as to how to make up for the loss of revenue in some provinces to the extent of one-third. I have unhesitatingly suggested cutting out the educational budget for which purpose mainly the excise revenue is used. I still maintain that education can be made self-supporting. With this I must deal elsewhere.[1] It cannot be made so in a day even if the possibility of its being made self-supporting is accepted. Existing obligations have to be met. Therefore, fresh sources of revenue have to be tapped. Death duties, tax on tobacco including *bidis*, have already been given as some suggestions. If these are considered impossible of immediate accomplishment, short-term loans may be devised to tide over the deficit; and if even that fails, the Central Government should be approached to curtail the military budget and give the provinces the proportionate grant. The demand would be irresistible especially if it is demonstrated by the Provincial Governments that they do not need the military, at any rate for their internal peace and tranquillity.

Harijan, 28-8-1937

230. "SUFFICIENTLY ACQUAINTED"

A professor writes:

> You have suggested that even if an M. L. A. can express himself in English it is open to him to declare that he is not 'sufficiently' acquainted with it and thus enable the Speaker, who is of course not expected to question his *bona fides*, to allow him to speak in Hindustani. I have read your remarks[2] with the greatest care but have not been able to see how a person having a scrupulous regard for truth can take this course, much less how you can suggest it. Section 85 obviously refers to persons who find themselves unable to express their meaning in English well enough to make it intelligible to those who know English and not to those who do not know it. There can be no

[1] *Vide* "Self-supporting Education", 11-9-1937

[2] The reference is to Mahadev Desai's interpretation of Section 85 of the Government of India Act of 1935; *vide* Appendix V.

question of 'sufficient' acquaintance with English for making oneself intelligible to the latter. The wording is too clear to permit any other interpretation, and in face of it for anybody to declare himself insufficiently acquainted with English simply because there arc some fellow Members who do not understand English, looks like mere casuistry. In U.P. they have got out of the difficulty by interpreting the words, 'unacquainted or not sufficiently acquainted with the English language' to mean less acquainted with the English language than with Hindi. But I think the question of comparative acquaintance is also ruled out by the context. I agree that the Section is highly obnoxious and must go. If you suggested that it should be deliberately disobeyed, it would be a perfectly straightforward course and there could be no objection at least of the conscientious type. As it is, however, you must have some justification for the course you have suggested, which I have been unable to see. There must be others in the same position and we shall all benefit if you elucidate the point in the *Harijan.*

"Sufficient" can only have a relative meaning, not absolute. Even an M. A. may not have "sufficient acquaintance" with English for the purpose before him. Thus an M. A. from U. P. will surely not have sufficient knowledge of English to make himself understood by Hindustani-speaking matriculates. My teachers had often to speak in Gujarati in order to make themselves understood to the class they were teaching. The reason was that they, most of them graduates, had to struggle through their English to make themselves intelligible to their class. Speaking in Gujarati they became fluent, and our eyes sparkled as we drank in the wisdom they distilled into us. If I was Speaker of an Assembly, I would certainly allow a most polished speaker in English to speak in Hindustani if he believed that he did not know sufficient English for the audience before him. It is not a question of grammar or fluency. It is a question of intelligibility. To give any other meaning to the Section would be to frustrate its very object. An ungrammatical English speech would amount to sufficient acquaintance with English if the audience could only understand English and no other language. Such things have often happened during my numerous tours in India. The meaning given in these columns is an honest attempt to deal with a difficult situation. My well-known partiality for the Indian languages for India had nothing to do with the inter-pretation. If I could not have honestly subscribed to the interpretation which Mahadev Desai's ingenious brain conceived, I would certainly not have allowed it to go in and would have gladly advised a battle with the Government for a just and workable interpretation of the phrase "sufficiently acquianted". No doubt the proper course is to have the Section amended as the Punjab Premier has already suggested.

Harijan, 28-8-1937

231. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

SEGAON,
August 28, 1937

MY DEAR KU.,

I wonder if Rao has left Maganwadi. Particulars have been pouring in upon me about his dishonest ways. Pandit Hrishikesh Sharma walked with me today—he seems to know him most, he says he has cheated every institution to which he has gone; he has spent extravagantly; he has quarrelled everywhere and nowhere has he earned a good name, and he instances Madras, Andhra, Benares, Punjab and other places I cannot remember. He tells me he is not a man to be trusted—his confession too has to be taken with a grain of salt. I think you should find out how his defalcations which went on for long remained undetected.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10131

232. LETTER TO ATULANAND CHAKRABARTY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 28, 1937

DEAR ATULANAND,

I have your letter. I am glad your daughter is wholly out of danger. May she be found better still when this reaches you.

I have very carefully gone through your article "Not by Politics Alone". I still cannot visualize the "League", much less its ramifications. Your article drives me to what I suggested before.[1] It resolves itself—and quite properly—into spreading your message through your book, other writings and through your speeches. The sale of your book would be simply a bye-product and may incidentally give you maintenance money. You seem to be a man with a mission. The "League" of your imagination may come into being later when people recognize your mission. If you form a "League" now, you are in for a disaster. You will be enmeshed in humdrum

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Atulanand Chakrabarty", 23-6-1937

work and feel cramped and would want to bite your way through the meshes of your own creation. You can see from what I am telling you that there is no lack of interest in you on my part. Only I cannot yet see eye to eye with you. It may be that there is something which I have not yet understood. If such is the case you will continue to strive with me until you make me see the thing as you see it. I know I am, at times, very dense. You will have to be patient with me. I am going to unearth your book that you gave me and if I succeed I shall try to read it. Before, I merely glanced through the pages.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 1477. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

233. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEGAON,
August 28, 1937

CHI. KAKA,

Nimu (Ramdas's) has come here. I have encouraged her to learn Hindi, so that she may become qualified to spread knowledge of Hindi among women and may also, within limits, earn a living through that work. She will need some knowledge of English, too, for my plan for her is that she should go to the South. She has now become eager to learn Hindi as soon as possible. I also suggested Allahabad to her for that purpose, for she will hear nothing but Hindi there. But when she got ready to go to Allahabad, I was in a fix. Where in Allahabad? I, therefore, decided to send her to Vidyavati of the Kanya Gurukul at Dehradun. But as soon as I started thinking about the matter last night, I felt I might ask your opinion too. Would you prefer that she should be taught here? Or would you like some other arrangement? Give me your considered opinion.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7704

234. UNDER SHADOW OF LYNCH LAW[1]

The following is a free translation of a letter[2] of Shri Narahari Parikh on the conditions of Harijans in Kheda District.

If this is a correct picture of the actual state of things, it should not be beyond the power of the Kheda District Congress Committee to cope with it.

Harijan, 4-9-1937

235. A SUPERSTITION

There is no limit to superstitions in Kathiawar. One such superstition concerns the taboo on the castration of calves. It is found particularly in Kathiawar. Peasants cannot earn their livelihood without oxen. Hence they would buy oxen, allowing their own calves to wander about or die or let them be led to the slaughter-house, and consider this as their dharma. Such superstitions can be wiped out only when the rulers and the intelligent section of the public work against them whole-heartedly. A policy of punishment is perhaps pardonable in such instances. Such a policy, when aimed at public welfare and not meant as punishment for its own sake, should be carefully devised. Depriving the owners of their calves if they refuse to get them castrated may be the best punishment, and it may be accompanied by the condition that the owner could have his calf back provided he pays the charge of castrating it and the cost of keeping it. If the fees for castration and the daily expense are fixed in advance, the public would not be handicapped and even a superstitious man would feel satisfied that the sin of castration is committed not by him but by the State. The State must have a team of workers who would do the necessary propaganda about it, and it should be their job to remove such superstitions. I would consider such a thing part of education, for, what value can knowledge have if it is not used for ending wrong practices among people?

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 29-8-1937

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu.* 29-8-1937.

[2] Not reproduced here. Narahari Parikh had written about the Harijans of Kheda District who could not get their children admitted to pubilc schools

236. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 29, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

If you have been able to draw up Rameshwari's programme, send it to me. When should she reach there, by which train and for how many days will you want her there?

I read the few lines written by Jayantilal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8537: Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

237. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 29, 1937

BHAI JETHALAL,

I have your two letters. I keep writing something or other about the cow. Write to me when you have ghee made from cow's milk ready for sale. It is not difficult to sell your ghee but there are a few easy methods you must learn. Just now if you come over to Segaon you can be trained. You should visit a few places in order to learn this. There is a machine in Segaon, too, and it is operated every day. You have to make the ghee yourself. You must collect only milk. You should be able to judge which cows would yield milk. You should know about the bulls. You ought to know something about all this. I will tell Parnerkar[1], who is here, to write something on this and send it to you. There is no alternative to buying a machine. I think I shall be able to do something about what you wrote regarding forced labour, etc.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9863. Courtesy: Narayan J. Sampat

[1] Yashwant Mahadev Parnerkar, a dairy expert

238. TELEGRAM TO ANDAMANS PRISONERS

August 30, 1937

THANKS TELEGRAM. GLAD ALL BUT SEVEN BROKEN FAST. DO SEVEN GIVE REASONS FOR CONTINUING FAST? I PLEAD WITH THEM NOT PERSIST ALLOWING COUNTRY CHANCE SEEK RELIEF. WILL DETENUS NOT ANSWER MY QUESTION ABOUT NON-VIOLENCE?[1]

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7796. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also *Congress Bulletin*, No. 6, September 1937; File No. 4/15/37 Home, Political. Courtesy: National Archives of India

239. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

[*August 31, 1937*][2]

I gladly release the messages[3] that passed between the Andamans prisoners and me. In view of the prisoners' noble response to my appeal for a declaration of their present attitude on terrorist methods, let us hope that all of them will be unconditionally discharged. I have appealed to the proper quarters for relief, in which I am sure the whole country will join.

The Hindu, 1-9-1937

[1] At 7 p.m. on the same day, Gandhiii received the following reply from the prisoners: "Touched by nationwide appeal and your message. We supend hunger-strike on assurance that the whole country has taken up our demands and because we are confidently hoping that within a reasonable period of time you will succeed in getting all our demands fulfilled. We are glad you have given us the opportunity to express our firm opinion on terrorism. We feel honoured to inform you and through you the nation that those of us who ever believed terrorism do not hold to it any more and are convinced of its futility as a political weapon or creed. We declare that it definitely retards rather than advances the cause of our county."

[2] Mahadev Desai released the correspondence to the Press on this date.

[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Viceroy", 27-8-1937, and the preceding item.

240. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 31, 1937

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I got your letter last evening. I am sending a wire[1] today about your coming here or sending Nrisinhprasad. If you can, please do come. You do not seem to have improved in spite of such a long tour. There is no cause for worry about me. The hand and the brain need plenty of rest, which I am giving them. How can your coming here or sending someone be any trouble to me? Can a friend ever cause inconvenience? I used to receive your cables. They didn't call for a reply.

Vandematarm from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5952. Also C.W. 3269. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

241. TELEGRAM TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

WARDHAGANJ,
August 31, 1937

SIR PRABHASHANKAR
BHAVNAGAR

YOUR LETTER. SEND NARSINHPRASAD. BETTER COME YOURSELF.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5953. Also C.W. 3270. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

[1] *Vide* the following item.

242. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

SEGAON,
September 1, I937

MY DEAR KU.,

Of course nothing is required to be done before the meeting of the Association about the President.[1]

Have you considered Shankar Lal's suggestion that the meeting be held on the 23rd instead of the 16th inst.

I understand what you say about Rao. If missing Chhotelal is not found when you get this letter, apply your ingenuity and see whether you can find a way of tracing him.

If you have not done so already I suggest your collecting specimens of all hand-made paper that is produced in India and their present prices.

If Joshi can come here on Saturday at 3 p.m., it will be convenient for me but if the morning is more convenient you can bring him at 8 a.m.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10132

243. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 1, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

"Let neither joy nor grief affect you, for both are with the body born." Considering all the circumstances, I feel that Chhotelal has not committed suicide but has run away somewhere. But who can say for certain what has happened? Do you expect to go over there in the car? What help can I give in the search for a man who is missing? I would definitely go there for the sake of anybody who was ill. If Chhotelal is found, then also I would go there to twist his ears. If, therefore, any discussion is called for, please come yourself. If none is needed, then you too should save your time. If Chhotelal is not found or no information about him is received by the time you get this letter,

[1] Shrikrishnadas Jaju had resigned from the Presidentship of the All India Village Industries Association.

then report at the police station. Inquire at Bhaiya's place. I won't be surprised if Chhotelal comes here. Make sure that his body is not in the well.

There is no need for any special search.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11568

244. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 1, 1937

MY DEAR MATHEW,

Whether I write "love" or do not makes no difference in my attitude towards you. It all depends under what pressure I write letters. There is no royal road to becoming moral. You do so by prayer and penance and by living for the service of humanity. When you do that you have no time to become immoral. Of course, marriage is the ordinary thing for all. I overcame the impulse to the extent I have done simply because the impulse for service was greater than the sexual impulse. I do not know how many people who are associated with me are pure—nor have I any desire to pry into their lives. I assume their purity until their impurity obtrudes itself upon my gaze. A celibate is wedded to his work with which he has fallen in love. If you see any difference between the two states I must accept defeat.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

245. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September I, 1937

CHI. AMBUJAM,[1]

I enclose herewith the name and address of Kamala's mother. I would like you to send her or pay her on my behalf Rs. 10, being Rs. 5 p. m. as from her daughter. This Rs. 10 will, therefore, be for two months. I am asking you to undertake this commission so as to avoid the trouble of having to send an M. O. per month. To send it through you means the saving of some expense also. But you must be prepared to receive this amount from me. I propose to send it to you in a lump sum. If this mission of sending the money to Kamala's mother proves in any way embarrassing to you inasmuch as you do not wish to have any relations with her, you will not hesitate to tell me so. In that case I shall make other arrangements. There is no immediate hurry.

I had the usual basket of fruit. You will take care not to send anything expensive and no fruit that is not grown in the South—for other fruit is cheapest when imported from Delhi. 1 hope Father[2] is keeping good health and you yourself are well and cheerful.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Here is the address: Sri Lakshmi Ammal, 29 M. P. Koi1 Street, Mylapore, Madras.

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The superscription is in Hindi.
[2] S. Srinivasa Iyengar

246. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 1, I 937

BHAI JETHALAL,

The accompanying letters were written on the same day on which I had the postcard written [to you]. They are, however, being dispatched two days later since I had not been able to read them whereas the postcard was ready.

You will please acquaint yourself, within a month, with all those subjects that Bhai Parnerkar has listed under the different heads. This will simplify your task. I would therefore advise you to cheerfully accept one month. I believe this will satisfy you. I stipulate one month at the most.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9864. Courtesy: Narayan J. Sampat

247. A SILENT CO-WORKER GONE[1]

[*September 1, 1937*]

The inmates of the Satyagraha Ashram of Sabarmati are today a scattered family, joined together only by their common vow of silent service. No one, perhaps, with the exception of the late Shri Maganlal Gandhi, personified so nearly this self-effacing ideal as Shri Chhotelal Jain whose death, through suicide, has just stunned me. I have not adequate language to describe his insatiable capacity for silent service. He dreaded publicity and loved to live and serve unknown. In fact it may be said of him that his right hand did not know what his left hand was doing. I do not remember his ever visting his relations or being visited by them. He never even mentioned them to anyone. At the time of writing I do not even know their names or whereabouts.

I have the good luck to have a band of co-workers who are to me as my hands and feet. Without their willing and loyal cooperation I should feel utterly helpless. Prominent among these was Chhotelal.

[1] The original in Gujarati of which this is an adaptation by Pyarelal appeared in *Harijanbandhu,* 5-9-1937.

He had a versatile and powerful intelligence which shirked no task however difficult. He was a born linguist. Rajputana being his home, Hindi was his mother tongue, but he knew Gujarati, Marathi, Bengali, Tamil, Sanskrit and English as well. He knew the Urdu script. I have seldom seen anybody with such aptitude for quickly mastering a new language or a new task. He was one of the foundation members of the Sabarmati Ashram. He went through the whole range of Ashram activities with natural ease, and hardly touched anything that he did not adorn. Thus he felt equally at home whether he was engaged in kitchen work, conservancy, spinning or weaving, accounts, or translation work, or correspondence. He had an equal share with the late Maganlal in the writing of *Vanatshastra*[1].

The riskier a job the more it was welcomed by Chhotelal, and once he took it up, he knew no rest till he had seen it through. He threw himself, with the indefatigable energy which was his characteristic, into any task that he took up, and at the end of it he would still be fresh and ready for the next. The words weariness and fatigue were not in his dictionary. To render service only, never to receive any, was the passion of his life. When the All-India Village Industries Association was started at Wardha, it was Chhotelal who first learnt and then introduced the art of *ghani*[2] in Maganwadi. It was he who introduced the wooden hand-mill for rice-husking. Again, it was he who started bee-culture there. Today I feel disconsolate and crippled by his loss. And I am sure, if we could only know it, the same must be the feeling of the bees whom he had gathered and was looking after with a mother's care. I do not know who else will look after them with the loving care of Chhotelal. For, Chhotelal had literally become apiculture-mad. In the course of his quest he had contracted paratyphoid fever which had a fatal ending. He had been bed-ridden for hardly six or seven days, but the very thought of being a helpless charge upon others evidently ate into him, and on Tuesday night, the 31st of August, leaving everybody asleep, he put an end to his life by throwing himself into the Maganwadi well. The corpse was recovered from the well today, Wednesday, at 4 p. m. and even as I pen these lines at Segaon, at 8 p. m., his body is being cremated at Wardha. I have not the heart to rebuke Chhotelal for his suicide. He was no coward. He was guilty of no unworthy deed. He could laugh at

[1] A Gujarati treatise on the science of weaving
[2] Oil-press

suffering. I cannot account for this self-immolation except on the supposition that he could no longer brook to be nursed. No doubt that is a sign of subtle pride. But there it was. He was not conscious of it.

His name figured in the Delhi Conspiracy Case of 1915. He was acquitted. He had told me he did not desire acquittal. A casual reading of some of my writings gave a new turn to his life and outlook. He studied my activities in South Africa, and from a violent revolutionary became a votary of ahimsa. He shed his cult of violence as completely and naturally as a snake does its outworn skin, but he could never completely control the proneness to anger and pride that were deeply ingrained in his nature. Did he expiate with his life for these?

By his death (he was 42[1]) he has left me heavily in his debt. I had entertained high hopes of him. I could not tolerate any imperfection in him and so he had often to bear the brunt of my impatience as, perhaps, only one or two besides him have borne. But he never complained, never even winced. Had I any right to put him through this fire as I used to? I had hoped one day to discharge my debt towards him by offering him as a sacrifice at the altar of Hindu-Muslim unity, untouchability or cow-protection. To my mind these are some of the altars in the great *yajna* of the swaraj of my dream. And Chhotelal was in the front rank of the few who, to my knowledge, had the strength and capacity to claim this privilege.

The country needs an army of silent warriors like him. The achievement of swaraj, which to me is synonymous with *Ramaraj*, is no joke. Let these few glimpses of Chhotelal's life serve as an inspiration in our striving for India's freedom.

Harijan, 11-9-1937

248. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[2]

September 3, 1937

Still the right hand rests. Your good wire has come. I am better.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3799. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6955

[1] *Harijanbandhu* has "45".

[2] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.

249. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON,
September 3, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Today we all waited eagerly for the car for a long time. We expected it every moment. But it didn't turn up. At last I thought that perhaps you might have forgotten about it because I could tell you only at the last minute when you were leaving. But it doesn't matter. Now either send or bring, a cart or a car tomorrow. If you are arranging for a cart, then it would be better if it comes empty.

Gosibehn wants to reach Wardha today at two o'clock in the afternoon. The car, therefore, should be sent for her. Just now the doctor and Chimanlal have come in the cart. The cart. will take the doctor back to Wardha. If, therefore, the cart has to come again in the afternoon, it will be hard on the bullocks. I am writing to Damodar about this. He will, therefore, make the arrangements for today. You needn't do anything about it. I have written this in order that if you or anybody else wishes to come here, you may ascertain from the bungalow the time when the car will be leaving so that you can get a lift.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.][1]

It is 10.30 [a.m.]. I am going for my bath. I am detaining your man[2]. I shall write and send you a reply[3] after my meal.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11569

[1] The postscript was dictated to Kanu Gandhi.
[2] Shahji
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 3-9-1937

250. TELEGRAM TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

WARDHA,
September 3, 1937

HOME
SIMLA

THANKS YOUR TELEGRAM[1] WHICH DESPATCHED YESTERDAY TWO-THIRTY WAS RECEIVED AFTER SEVEN TODAY. PLEASE WIRE SEVEN PRISONERS. QUOTE. DEEPLY APPRECIATE MESSAGE WHICH IS HELPING ME GREATLY ACHIEVE COMMON OBJECT. I PERSONALLY ACCEPT YOUR INTERPRETATION OF 'RELIEF' AND PROMISE TO WORK FOR FULL FRUITION WITH ACTIVE COOPERATION OF PRISONER FRIENDS. URGE YOU, THEREFORE, ABANDON FAST AND SEND ME HAPPY NEWS. UNQUOTE.

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7797a. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Dated September 2, 1937, which read: "The seven prisoners are continuing hunger-strike send you following message. Begins: Thanks for your telegram regarding terrorism. We declared it will harm rather than help the cause of country. We take this opportunity to convey through you our appeal to all sufferers in jails and detention camps, and to all organizations if there be any who still believe to attain independence of India through terrorism, to give it up, once for all. We further request you to clarify what you mean by 'relief'. We think after Government inaugurating provincial autonomy, relief can only mean release of all political prisoners, detenus, State prisoners, interners, removal of ban on exiles and repeal of all repressive laws. If we get assurance from you on these questions, we can suspend hunger-strike. Ends. Telegram therein mentioned is your message of August 27th. Your message of August 30th had not by then been delivered." For Gandhiji's telegrams dated August 27 and 30, *vide* "Telegram to Viceroy" and Telegram to Anandmans Prisoners. For the telegrams dated September 8 and 11, *vide* 'A Telegram", 8-9-1937 and "A Telegram", 11-9-1937

251. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON,
September 3, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

When I received your letter it was time for me to take my bath. I am, therefore, writing this after finishing the daily morning routine. Shahji has had his meal here.

The mistake which occurred about the car today is bound to occur occasionally. It was good that today's trip was not so important. I assume that the car will definitely come tomorrow. Send a wire to Devdas when Nimu[1] entrains.

The wire[2] to be sent to the Home [Secretary] is on the back of his telegram. Since all the wires are with you, preserve this also there. Please send [me] a copy of this correspondence.

For the present preserve Chhotelal's ashes in a box. I am [not] at all inclined to send them as far as the Ganga, nor to have them immersed even in the liver Paunar. But I don't wish that they should be thrown away either. Ba says that his father may, perhaps, wish to have them immersed. This seems likely. From that point of view also, it is better to preserve the ashes in a box.

Rameshwar[3] is a very straightforward man. What does he say about the two persons from Dhulia? Ask Ganga to go over to Wardha.

I was not at all satisfied with Khanchand's letter. Report to Kishorelal[4] what you have heard.

It is good news indeed that Bablo[5] took an enema. The bowels may become loose even through fear.

You did well of course in sending the letters sealed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11563

[1] Nirmala, wife of Ramdas Gandhi
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] Rameshwardas Poddar
[4] Kishorelal Mashruwala
[5] Narayan, addressee's son

252. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 3, 1937

BHAI BEHRAMJI,

I got both your letters, and also the bank-notes for Rs. 1,000, being Rs. 500 from Behn Dinbai Khan and Rs. 500 from you. I shall send Behn Dinbai Khan's amount to Verrier Elwin for constructing wells for the Gonds and use your amount for Harijans. I will not publish your or Dinbai's name. Please thank Dinbai on my behalf.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7560. Also C.W. 5035. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

253. NOTES

APPEAL TO DISCHARGED PRISONERS

My congratulations to the Congress Ministries who are discharging prisoners who had been condemned for proved violence done from political motives, and also the discharged prisoners. Personally I draw no distinction between violence done from a private motive or from a political motive. The effect on the sufferers does not vary with the motive of the authors of violence. But as an out and out believer in non-violence I do not believe in the system of punishments for crimes, whether private or public. Therefore, I should welcome an extension of the principle which guides the Ministers in discharging prisoners; but I am aware that they do not share my extreme views on non-violence. Their reason, therefore, for discharging the prisoners condemned for violence is not the same as I would apply. They have been guided, naturally and rightly, by the purely political motive, viz., to establish contact with those who have hitherto believed in the efficacy of a species of violence for the attainment of India's freedom. They want to wean these men from violence and harness their energy for the Congress method of non-violence. If my reading of the Congress method is correct, the large public demonstration that took place on the discharge of Kakori prisoners was, to say the least, a political mistake. Did the thousands of demonstrators approve of the

acts said to have been committed by these prisoners, let me hope, in mistaken zeal? If they did, they have evidently not understood the Congress method; what is more, they have embarrassed the Ministry and made more difficult the task of giving the fullest liberty to the people in their Provinces. We ought to learn to take such ministerial acts as in the natural course and, therefore, with calmness. Kakori prisoners are no fools. They are able, intelligent men, with unyielding love of their country. They and all such prisoners will pave the way for the liberty of others, if they use their liberty to help Congress Ministers by their exemplary conduct and by proving themselves true Congressmen, taking their full share in strengthening the Congress organization by silent and selfless service. For they should know that Congress Ministers seem to be having their own way in many matters because they have inspired the respective Governors with confidence in their ability to handle efficiently all the departments under their charge, especially that of law and order, without the intervention of the police and military. The moment they lose their credit in this respect and are obliged to fall back on these two so-called limbs of the law, the confidence will be weakened and their authority all but gone. Whilst power, superimposed, always needs the help of police and military, power generated from within should have little or no use for them.

GAMBLING AND VICE

In the provinces where the Congress has a majority, all kinds of hopes have been raised. Some are legitimate and will, no doubt, be fulfilled. Some others cannot be. Thus the people who indulge in gambling, which unfortunately is ever on the increase in the Bombay Presidency, think that gambling will be legalized and surreptitious dens that cover Bombay will be no longer required. I am not quite sure that even if gambling is legalized on a universal scale, as it is already in a restricted manner, there will be no illegal dens. Thus it has been suggested that the Turf Club, which has the monopoly of gambling on the racecourse, should be allowed to open an additional entrance to make it easier for poor people to gamble. The bait offered is a larger revenue. A similar suggestion has been made for the regulation and licensing of brothels. The argument advanced, as in all such cases, is that the vice will continue whether it is legalized or not and, therefore, it is better to legalize it and make it safe for those who visit the brothels. Let me hope that the Ministers will not fall into this

trap. The proper method of dealing with brothels is for the women to carry on a double propaganda, (a) amongst women who sell their honour for a livelihood and (b) amongst men whom they must shame into behaving better towards their sisters whom they ignorantly or insolently call the weaker sex. I remember years and years ago in the early nineties when the brave Salvation Army people, at the risk of their own lives, used to carry on picketing at the corners of notorious streets of Bombay which were filled with houses of ill fame. There is no reason why some such thing should not be organized on a large scale. As for gambling on the racecourse, it is, so far as I am aware, an importation, like many other importations, from the West, and if I had my way [I] would withdraw the protection of the law that gambling on the racecourse enjoys even to the extent it does. The Congress programme being one of self-purification, as is stated in so many words in the resolution[1] of 1920, the Congress can have nothing to do with income derived from any vice. The Ministers will, therefore, use the authority that they have obtained for educating public opinion in the right direction and for stopping gambling in high quarters. It is useless to hope that the unwary public will not copy the bad manners of the so-called high-placed people. I have heard it argued that horse-racing is necessary for breeding good horses. There may be truth in this. Is it not possible to have horse-racing without gambling, or is gambling also an aid to the good breeding of horses?

Harijan, 4-9-1937

254. MY MEANING OF OFFICE-ACCEPTANCE

Shri Shankerrao Deo[2] writes:

> In your note "Not Instrument of Instructions"[3] in the last *Harijan*, you say in the second paragraph, "For me office-acceptance has a special meaning even in the terms of the Congress manifesto and resolutions. It would be wrong if I did not put before the Ministers and the public my meaning of office-acceptance." As I have understood you, you arefor office-acceptance for serving the masses and consolidating the Congress position through constructive programme. But I think you should explain in greater detail your meaning of office-acceptance.

[1] *Vide* " Congress Resolution on Non-Co-Operation"
[2] President, Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee
[3] *Vide* "Notes", sub-title"Not Instrument of Instructions"

Rightly or wrongly, since 1920 the Congress-minded millions have firmly held the view that the British domination of India has been on the whole a curse. It has been as much sustained by British arms as it has been through the legislatures, distribution of titles, the law-courts, the educational institutions, the financial policy and the like. The Congress came to the conclusion that the guns should not be feared, but that the organized violence of which the British guns were a naked emblem should be met by the organized non-violence of the people, and the legislatures and the rest by non-co-operating with them. There was a strong and effective, positive side to the foregoing plan of non-co-operation, which became known as the constructive programme. The nation succeeded to the exact extent of its success in the programme of action laid down in 1920.

Now this policy has never changed; not even the terms have been revoked by the Congress. In my opinion all the resolutions since passed by the Congress are not a repudiation but a fulfilment of the original, so long as the mentality behind all of them remains the same as in 1920.

The corner-stone of the policy of 1920 was organized national non-violence. The British system was wooden, even Satanic; not so the men and women behind the system. Our non-violence, therefore, meant that we were out to convert the administrators of the system, not to destroy them; the conversion may or may not be willing. If, notwithstanding their desire to the contrary, they saw that their guns and everything they had created for the consolidation of their authority were useless because of our non-use of them, they could not do otherwise than bow to the inevitable and either retire from the scene, or remain on our terms, i. e., as friends to co-operate with us, not as rulers to impose their will upon us.

If Congressmen have entered the legislatures and have accepted office with that mentality, and if the British administrators tolerate Congress Ministries indefinitely, the Congress will be on a fair way to wreck the Act[1] and to achieve complete independence. For an indefinite prolongation of the Ministries on the terms mentioned by me means an ever-increasing power of the Congress till it becomes irresistible and is able to have its way all along the line. The first indispensable condition of the attainment of such a consummation

[1] Government of India Act of 1935

means willing exercise of non-violence by the whole mass of the people. That means perfect communal co-operation and friendship, the eradication of untouchability, willing restraint of the addicts to the drink and opium habits, the social enfranchisement of women, the progressive amelioration of the toiling millions in the villages, free and compulsory primary education—not in name as it is today, but in reality, as I have ventured to adumbrate—the gradual eradication of superstitions of proved harmfulness through adult mass education, a complete overhauling of the system of higher education so as to answer the wants of the millions instead of the few middle class people, a radical change in the legal machinery so as to make justice pure and inexpensive, conversion of jails into reformatories in which detention would be not a course of punishment but a complete course of the education of those miscalled convicts but who are in fact temporarily deranged. This is not conceived as a terribly long plan of action. Every one of the items suggested by me can be put into motion today, without let or hindrance, if we have the will. I had not studied the Act when I advised office-acceptance. I have since been studying Provincial Autonomy by Prof. K. T. Shah. It is an energetic but true indictment of the Act from the orthodox standpoint. But the three months' self-denial of the Congress has changed the atmosphere. I see nothing in the Act to prevent the Congress Ministers from undertaking the programme suggested by me. The special powers and safeguards come into play only when there is violence in the country, or a clash between minorities and the so-called majority community, which is another word for violence. I detect in the Act a profound distrust of the nation's capacity to rule itself running through every Section and an inevitable desire to perpetuate British rule, but at the same time a bold experiment of wooing the masses to the British side, and, failing that, a resignation to their will to reject British domination. The Congress has gone in to convert these missionaries. And I have not a shadow of doubt that if the Congress is true to the spirit of non-violence, non-co-operation and self-purification, it will succeed in its mission.

Harijan, 4-9-1937

255. THE NATIONAL TRICOLOUR[1]

A friend writes:[2]

> In accordance with President Jawaharlal's instructions Cawnpore observed the 1st of August as a National Flag Day and national flags were flown from all parts of the city. But these flags were manufactured anyhow by the individuals concerned according to their whims without any regard . . . to uniformity of size, shape or colour. . . . Some of the flags had the figure of the spinning-wheel printed on them; in others it was conspicuous by its absence. Today, after the lapse of a fortnight, most of these flags present a sorry spectacle. . . . I would, therefore, suggest that arrangements should be made to see that only flags of standard sizes, shape and colour are manufactured. . . .
>
> It seems to me that this can be effectively done only by bringing the manufacture and sale of national flags under a centralized control. . . .

If the facts are as described by my correspondent, it calls for serious thought. We have been using this flag for the last seventeen years.[3] A national flag would lose all its value if it did not strictly conform to the standard laid down. Even in the matter of ordinary articles we like to satisfy ourselves as to their size, shape, colour, etc., before we go in for them. How much more so must it be, then, with our national flag for which we are pledged to live and die? The national flag symbolizes a nation's self-respect and dignity its ideals and aspirations. It must, therefore, be capable of easy identification like coins. Only the strictest conformity to the standard specifications can invest it with the desired sanctity. It should hurt our sense of national pride and self-respect to use a flag that is slipshod or slovenly made. How can a flag that is a mere clout and is dyed anyhow evoke the feelings of deep reverence that one associates with a national flag? I am, therefore, in entire agreement with my correspondent that our national flag should be strictly standardized. And this can be best done by having its manufacture centralized as coins are in mint. In my opinion the All-India Spinners' Association, working under theguidance of the All-India Congress Committee, would be the fittest

[1] The Hindi original appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 11-9-1937.
[2] Only extracts are reproduced here.
[3] This sentence is from *Harijan Sevak.*

agency for this purpose. The collaboration of the two bodies would provide the surest guarantee of strict conformity to the standard specifications as to its size, shape, colour, etc.

Harijan, 4-9-1937, and *Harijan Sevak*, 11-9-1937

256. LETTER TO PYARELAL

September 4, 1937

CHI. PYARELAL,

You fasted yesterday and you are fasting today also. For what reason? Is it because of Yoga's engagement?[1] If that be so it is not right. I do not interfere because I think you do everything after proper consideration. I wanted to talk to you after I had the news about Yoga. But where was the time? My health too did not permit it. There is no strength at all to talk. I am dieting because of my illness.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

257. LETTER TO SARASWATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 4, 1937

CHI. SARASWATI,

Your letter. Amtul Salaam has arrived and has given me all the news. Now you have to concentrate on your studies and complete them. After that you can come over as and when you please. But all this is two years away. Let us see what God wills. Write to me regularly. Amazing that the sick ones here should go to Travancore, but what about all the sick persons in Travancore itself? If there are such expert vaidyas in Travancore who can cure even leprosy, why then should there be any sick people there at all? Are you taught in your school answers to such questions?

Amtul Salaam enquired if I had sent you blessings on your

[1] Yoga was betrothed to Ramachandra J. Soman.

birthday.I do not remember distinctly. If I have been remiss you may now have them fourfold and with *sood*. *Sood* means *vyaja*[1]. You will learn at least one of the two words or even both.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6164. Also C.W. 3437. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

258. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 4, 1937

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. Amtul Salaam has arrived here. It was almost impossible for you to accompany Ramdas as he himselfleft with Kallenbach. Let us see what happens now. . .[2] Tell me what kind of patients you admit. Is fruit available there? And vegetables? Can you get cow's milk?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 264

259. MY NOTES

HARIPURA CONGRESS RECEPTION COMMITTEE

That Darbar Saheb[3] has been chosen President, that three women have been made Vice-Presidents, that a woman has been appointed commander of women volunteers—all these are auspicious signs. Again the Reception Committee has a good number of members. The work has begun on schedule. If all the members have been chosen for actual 'work and not for mere names' sake; the forthcoming

[1] Interest
[2] Omission as in the source
[3] Darbar Gopaldas, ex-ruler of Dhasa, who had been deposed during the non-co-operation days

Congress ought to prove the most successful and the simplest held so far. Often it so happens that everything goes well without any effort and not because of elaborate arrangements. The hand of God is sure to be there in a great task such as the Congress and even possible human failures are got over. The forthcoming Congress should be so organized from now on that there should be no error which human endeavour can avoid and everything should come off as planned.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 5-9-1937

260. LETTER TO GLADYS OWEN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 5, 1937

MY DEAR GLADYS,

I like your idea of throwing yourself heart and soul into the Chinese movement. But I do not know how I can give the lead. No external power can guide you. The direction and the strength have to come from within.

I have just heard from Muriel[1]. She too wants me to do something for China. I must confess that I am fairly groping. China wants to give battle to Japan on her own ground. And in this kind of business I am totally at sea. I do not know how the message of non-violence can be delivered to China as I do not know how it can be delivered to Spain. My theatre of action is, therefore, only India. If India imbibes the message through and through, then there is hope for whole world. If India does not, so far as I can see, a world catastrophe cannot be prevented.

Love.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10571

[1] Muriel Lester

261. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 6, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

No more than a few words. Your telegrams duly came in and so your letter. The last was destroyed as soon as read.

I am well, b. p. 160/105. Of course I am weak. Am taking plenty of rest.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3800. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6956

262. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

SEGAON,
September 7, 1937

I may occasionally write in Hindi also, may I not? I am improving day by day, and I sleep a great deal.

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 3801. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6957

263. LETTER TO PYARELAL

September 7, 1937

CHI. PYARELAL,

What can I write to you? I dare not send for you. I am scared of you. Everyone is. Your mother is scared, your sister is scared, your brother is scared and even Mahadev is scared. Ba says she cannot bring herself to speak to you at all. The girls are also unhappy and keep enquiring. I might not have been scared but now I have no courage left. In the morning I could not bear your silence, your appearance and then your mutterings. Every fibre of my being became filled with tension.

I do not find enlightenment or peace in your letter. If it is not ill

[1] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.

will or anger you have against Panditji[1], what is it? You are being grossly unfair to him. Everyone can see your weakness. Even for the sake of thinking calmly you need to eat. In the present condition, it is impossible to have any conversation with you. If you haveeven an ounce of pity and wisdom, have patience, eat and help me in my work. I have so many ideas, but so long as your fast continues I am helpless.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

264. TELEGRAM TO DESHBANDHU GUPTA[2]

[Before *September 8, 1937*][3]

I AM CERTAINLY OPPOSED TO THE LAHORE ABATTOIR[4] AS I AM TO ALL SLAUGHTER-HOUSES. IF MUSSALMANS ALSO JOIN THE LAHORE ONE WILL NOT BE BUILT.

The Hindustan Times 8-9-1937

265. A TELEGRAM[5]

September 8, 1937

REFERENCE MY MESSAGE[6] ADDRESSED TO SEVEN PRISONERS AWAITING ANXIOUSLY THEIR REPLY. IS HUNGER-STRIKE STILL CONTINUING? IF IT IS, PLEASE TELL THEM MY ENDEAVOUR BEING FRUSTRATED TILL THEY BREAK FAST.[7]

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-9-1937

[1] Narayan Moreshwar Khare

[2] An M. L. A. from the Punjab

[3] The report is date-lined "New Delhi, Wednesday". Wednesday fell on September 8.

[4] In the Cantonment area

[5] This was addressed to the Andamans authorities at Port Blair.

[6] Dated September 3, 1937; *vide* "Telegram to Home Secretary Government of India", 3-9-1937

[7] In reply the authorities telegraphed: "Your telegram delivered yesterday to hunger-strikers who although appreciating your acceptance of their interpretation of 'relief' decline to suspend strike."

266. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHAGANJ,
September 8, 1937

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
SUMMER HILL

JAMNALALJI PRESS STATEMENT OVERDRAWN.[1] REALLY BETTER THAN YOU LEFT. PRESSURE 160/105. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3803. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6959

267. LETTER TO VICEROY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 8, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your frank and exhaustive reply to my telegraphic solicitation. I will not try to combat the position taken up by you which I understand.

The incompleteness you see in the prisoners' reply[2] to my request had not escaped me, but I was very much struck by the frank and unequivocal manner in which they gave me satisfaction so far as terrorist methods are concerned. I shall not despair of enlisting your active co-operation in the pursuit of my mission of procuring a lasting and honourable understanding with the class of patriots whom the Andaman friends represent.

Yours sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

HIS EXCELLENCY
THE VICEROY

From a copy: C.W. 7798. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, "Note to Amrit Kaur", 8-9-1937

[2] *Vide* footnote 4, "Telegram to Home Secretary, Government of India", 3-9-1937

268. LETTER TO G. CUNNINGHAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 8, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter.[1] I understand what you expect of me. I hope not to disappoint you for the simple reason that I want to accumulate more credit than I possess with the powers that be, so that I can trade upon it with them on better terms.

At the present moment I am trying to rest under medicalorders, and I have asked my friend the Khan Saheb not to hurry to call me to the Frontier.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR
N. W. F. P.

From a copy: C.W. 7798a. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

269. LETTER TO M. V. SRINIVASAN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 8, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I hope that your conference will be a success, and that it will be marked by a whole-hearted endorsement of the programme of complete prohibition. Also that it will supply a large enough number of volunteers who will offer their services for carrying on the campaign amongst those who are to be weaned from the drink habit by loving care and attention.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

CHAIRMAN
RECEPTION COMMITTEE
SECOND POLITICAL CONFERENCE
TIRUCHENGODU TALUK
PALLPALAYAM, *(via)* ERODE

From a photostat: G.N. 99

[1] Presumably in reply to Gandhiji's dated August 24; *vide* "Letter to G. Cunningham", 24-8-1937

270. LETTER TO D. B. BARVE[1]

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 8, 1937

I thank you for your letter and your suggestions.[2] I shall think [of] all of them in my talks with the Ministers in charge of Village Industries.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: B. G. Kher Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

271. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEGAON,
September 8, 1937

CHI. LILAVATI,

Well, you have ceased to be Lila and become Lilavati. If you don't follow what this means, ask Mahadev. It will do you no good if you go away without my permission. By all means leave if you wish to. But not in anger like this. I am hoping that you will return here before the evening. Bring with you half a maund or a maund of dates. Have a frank talk with me and then do what you like.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9367. Also C.W. 6642. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] Business Manager, U.P. Government Arts and Crafts Emporium, Lucknow

[2] The addressee who felt that Indian handicrafts had great potential value in foreign markets had suggested a co-ordinated effort on the following lines: "To organize the supply centres by keeping ready the raw materials to be provided to artisans; to supply the designs in demand in various foreign markets; to distribute the goods through the canvassing agents in India and abroad; to find finances from the State for supporting these industries; all the provinces to join in the effort; to exchange the goods of different provinces and States and thus find new markets; to produce the goods on mass scale and to get the same facilities from the foreign countries for Indian handicrafts which they enjoy in India for their goods".

272. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

SEGAON,
September 8, 1937

CHI. BHANSALI,

Don't even dream of going away. You must not leave. Your cave is here and so is your cremation-ground. Most probably Lilavati will return today. If not today, certainly within a few days. Please write a note to her and give it to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8357. Also C.W. 7021. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

273. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

September 8, 1937

Only time for love today.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3802. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6958

274. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
September 8, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is being written after the evening walk. No cause for any worry about me. You must not be shocked to learn that I am taking that specialist's ampules. He has given me full details. It is a simple herb treated with the sun's rays. He says it has never failed to give lasting relief. It can do no harm. Of course it deprives me of one food

[1] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee which *inter alia* read: "Bapu sent you a reassuring wire this morning, and this is just to add a few words. He really is much better today. The tiredness to which Jamnalalji refers in his Press message is the end of the tiredness of which you saw the beginning. It was these interviews and Chhotelal's death all one on top of another. Now rest and *plenty* of sleep have made a wonderful difference."

substance.[1] But that does not matter. It would be wrong not to try this drug.

Khan Saheb's letter is worthy of him.

I am glad you are taking ice and steam. You must add the earth bandage. What had Shummy[2] to say to your health? I would like his opinion. Tell him this with my love.

I understand what S. and J. have to say about Charlie.[3] You should not only regulate his food whilst he is with you but you should also draw his attention to his weakness.

I was looking at that note on education. Do you still want me to study it and give you my opinion on it?

Mira is getting on. She is doing some writing work. A[mtul] Salaam is fairly happy just now. Sharda[4] is flourishing. Lilavati has left in a huff because I lost my temper with her. I can become an ass. Sometimes I doubt the reality of my ahimsa. Why can I not curb my temper for ever? If my ahimsa is worth anything, surely it ought to resist all temptation and provocation. Please don't defend me but go for me. If Lilavati is lost to me, I shall be largely to blame. She is too good not to return to me. If she does, the credit will be hers.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

J. is due tomorrow.

From the original: C.W. 3805. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6961

[1] Since 1915 Gandhiji had been observing a vow of restricting his meals to five substances of food; *vide* "An Autobiography", sub-title "Lakshman Jhula"

[2] The addressee's brother, Kunwar Shamshere Singh, a retired surgeon

[3] C. F. Andrews was convalescing in Simla after a serious illness.

[4] Daughter of Chimanlal N. Shah

275. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*September 8, 1937*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Send half a maund, or even one maund, of dates with anybody who is available. We should get three dozen *mosambis* and two dozen bananas daily.

I send with this a wire for Rajkumari. The one to Andrews must have been dispatched. The wire received from the seven prisoners does not seem to have been given to the Press. If possible give it now together with my reply to it. I am afraid we have delayed it rather too long. I have kept copies of the wires. Have the wire of these seven prisoners and my reply been released?

A painful incident took place this morning. Lilavati has always been a lazy girl. She is careless, suffers from no end of pride and can bear nothing. The incident was trivial. Nanavati drew her attention to her carelessness, which she couldn't bear. Nanavati reported the incident to me. I was busy with my own work and was trying to avoid having to take notice of it. I had said a few words half jokingly, when the lady sailed in. She emphasized each sentence as she spoke, and that at the top of her voice. I asked her to speak calmly. But she wouldn't listen. She then started saying silly things. And so I said, raising my voice, "There is no door here—the only one there is open. If you can't stand it, you may leave." I had lost my senses while I said this and so barked even louder than she. She has now left. Where else would she go, except to the temple of Mahadev? She must have, therefore, come to you. If she realizes that she has been cruel to me, shame her into returning here. If she doesn't realize the gravity of her misbehaviour, she may do as she pleases. She has no place in the Harijan Ashram. She shouldn't be sent there. You may, if you wish, take her under your charge. . . .[2]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11567

[1] From the reference to "a wire for Rajkumari", *vide* "Telegram to Amrit Kaur", 8-9-1937, and Lilavati's departure "in a huff", *vide* the preceding item. *Vide* also "Letter to Lilavati Asar", "Letter to Lilavati Asar", 8-9-1937

[2] The letter is incomplete.

276. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[After *September 8, 1937*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Do send back Lilavati. She must have gone to the doctor, since a visit was due today.

I had nothing private to speak to you. But it was good that you saved your time. It was not Lilavati's fault, but mine, that you had to give some of your time for her. Had I remained silent she woudn't have had to leave this place. It was your fault that you lost your sleep, for in such cases you should remain undisturbed.

Kanu junior[2] has fallen ill today after a long interval.

I am sending the signatures.

Let Ishwardas come. But he should not stay on here at present.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11565

277. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 9, 1937

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. I have instructed the Charkha Sangh office to send the charkha, the spindle, etc., by railway freight. You will get the things in a few days.

I hope you are in good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

RANI VIDYAVATI

BARUA KOTHI

SANDILA

DISTRICT HARDOI (U. P.)

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

[1] It is evident from the text that the letter was written after the preceding item.
[2] Kanam, son of Ramdas Gandhi

278. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 10, 1937

CHI. NIMU,

I got your letter yesterday. Replying immediately would have meant my delaying the posting of the other letters. I therefore put off writing to this morning. I am glad I dictated the Gurukul's correct address. I will await a letter from you after you have settled down there. Do not be lazy in writing. Kano had forgotten you quite soon, or at any rate seemed to have done so. One cannot say anything certain about him. About constipation, follow what Saraswati has suggested to you. I have of course heard from many that one should not take milk with bread, but so far I have not acted upon it. But at any rate you should try to put it into practice and see whether doing so helps. Inquire how much fruit, milk, vegetables, flour etc., cost there. Do they buy flour in the. market, or do they have a flour mill? Are there any girls of Sumi's age? Do they run any industry? Do they have music? Did you leave Delhi the same day or after staying for a day or two? Nothing more in particular.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

279. DISCUSSION WITH EDUCATIONISTS[1]

[Before *September 11, 1937*]

[GANDHIJI:] It is by making the children return to the State a part of what they receive from it that I propose to make education self-supporting. I should combine into one what you call now the primary education and [the] secondary or high-school education. It is my conviction that our children get nothing more in the high schools than a half-baked knowledge of English, besides a superficial

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's article "The Meaning of Manual Work". Ravishanker Shukla, Education Minister, C. P., met Gandhiji with his educational experts including the Director of Education, Owen, and De Silva. They wanted to understand from Gandhiji his idea of the revolution he intended to bring about in the system of education.

knowledge of mathematics and history and geography some of which they had learnt in their own language in the primary classes. If you cut out English from the curriculum altogether, without cutting out the subjects you teach, you can make the children go through the whole course in seven years, instead of eleven, besides giving them manual work whereby they can make a fair return to the State. Manual work will have to be the very centre of the whole thing. I am told that Messrs Abbot[1] and Wood recognize the value of manual work as an important part of rural education. I am glad to be supported by reputed educationists. But I do not suppose they place on manual work the kind of emphasis I place. For I say that the development of the mind should come through manual training. The manual training will not consist in producing articles for a school museum, or toys which have no value. It should produce marketable articles. The children will not do this as children used to do under the whip in the early days of the factories. They will do it because it entertains them and stimulates their intellect.

[DE SILVA:] But whilst I accept the proposition that we must teach through creative work, how can we expect an immature child to compete with a mature individual?

The child will not compete with the mature individual. The State will take over the articles and find a market for them. Teach them to make things suitable for the requirements. Take mats for instance. What they do at home as tedious labour they will do here intelligenty. The tremendous problem will become easy when the education you give will become both self-supporting and self-acting.

But before we can give them this kind of education, we shall have to wipe out the present generation of teachers.

No. There is no intermediate stage. You must make a start and prepare the teachers whilst you go through the process.[2]

Harijan, 11-9-1937

[1] Claude Colleer Abbot, an English educationist

[2] Later, Gandhiji requested the visitors to discuss the subject at length with Aryanayakam, Bharatan, Kumarappa and D. B. Kalelkar.

280. ARE CHRISTIANS AGAINST PROHIBITION?

Having received protests from Christian correspondents against prohibition, I asked Mahadev Desai to write to a few representative Christian friends to ascertain their views on the question. Here are two answers. Shri P. O. Phillip, Indian Secretary of the National Christian Council of India, writes:[1]

> I am not surprised to hear that a number of Christian friends are writing to you to say that 'the policy of prohibition trenches upon their privilege to drink'. I may not be far wrong in thinking that most of the correspondents who write to you in that strain are Roman Catholics or those brought up in Anglo-Catholic traditions. . . . There is . . . no social or religious disapproval among Roman Catholics in India in regard to drinking in moderation as there is among Muslims and higher caste Hindus. Among Protestant Christians the attitude toward drink is different.
>
> . . . The use of alcoholic drink even in moderation is looked upon with social and religious disapprobation among Protestant Christian communities.
>
> Among Roman Catholics also there is awakening to the evils of drink. While the authorities of the Catholic Church may officially maintain that there is nothing wrong in drinking in moderation, they cannot shut their eyes to the moral and economic ruin that drink is causing among their people. . . .
>
> As a Christian Indian I rejoice that the Congress Ministries have placed prohibition in the very forefront of their programme. In the past, few British and American missionaries lent support to the anti-drink campaign of the Congress, under the mistaken notion that it was adopted only to harass the British Government and not from a genuine desire for reform. Unfortunately Indian Christians also took their cue from the missionaries and generally kept aloof from the movement. But the sincerity of the leaders of the Congress in advocating prohibition is beyond question. . . .
>
> . . . The poorer classes in the villages, including Christians, need protection more than any other group of people from the temptations of drink now placed before them. Indian villages will have new life and prosperity when drink is abolished. The Christian Indian community along with other communities stands to gain immensely by this measure.
>
> . . . Christian Indians who love India and care for the real welfare of the

[1] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.

rural masses cannot but rejoice at the prospect of prohibition in the six Provinces[1]. They should not have any difficulty in wholeheartedly co-operating with their fellow-countrymen in making prohibition a complete success.

And Rev. A. Ralla Ram, General Secretary of the Student Christian Movement of India, Burma and Ceylon, writes:

> I give my full support to the objective of the Congress to bring about complete prohibition in the country and that those who are asking that we should be satisfied with temperance should not be listened to. In my opinion the Europeans who come to this country should fall in with our aspirations, and I am afraid that if we should respect their feelings in this matter, we shall leave a loophole for many others.

As I have said before[2] it is for Europeans to make the choice. I know how difficult it is for them to give up a habit of a lifetime, considered respectable. But if they will fall in with the great national reform, the incentive should prove strong enough to wean them from the habit. Anyway, even if in the end exemption within well-defined limits has to be given, let us hope that they will be graceful enough to taboo alcohol from their parties and banquets. Exemption will be, if there is to be, a concession to a lifelong habit and not to a weakness or to an extravagance.

Harijan, 11-9-1937

281. NOTES

A WELCOME MOVE

The joint statement issued by Moulvi Abdul Haq Saheb and Shri Rajendra Prasad over the Hindi-Urdu controversy leads one to hope that the controversy will now end and those who are interested in the evolution of an inter-provincial speech will be able to discuss the question on its merits and discover a plan of joint action. Here is the statement:

> We had an opportunity, on the occasion of the meeting of the Bihar Urdu Committee at Patna on 28-8-37, to discuss the problem of the Hindustani language with each other and with some other friends. We were anxious to

[1] Congress Ministries were formed in Bombay, Madras, the United Provinces, Bihar, the Central Provinces and Orissa.

[2] *Vide* "Against Ahimsa and Truth?",. Also "Citicism Answered"

remove the misunderstandings which have been unfortunately created in connection with the Urdu-Hindi-Hindustani controversy. We are glad to be able to say that as a result of our discussions ranging over various aspects of this problem, we found ourselves in substantial agreement about various points raised. We are agreed that Hindustani should be the common language of India and should be written in both the Urdu and [the] Nagari characters which should be recognized for all official and educational purposes. By 'Hindustani' we mean the largest common factor of the languages spoken in Northern India, and we believe that common usage should be the criterion for the selection and inclusion of words in its vocabulary. We are further of opinion that the fullest opportunities for development should be vouchsafed both to Urdu and Hindi and [the] literary languages. We suggest that an attempt should be made to compile, through the co-operation of Urdu and Hindi scholars, a basic vocabulary of Hindustani words.

In order to devise practical measures for the compilation of such a vocabulary as well as for settling various outstanding problems like the selection of technical terms, we suggest that a small representative committee, consisting of influential advocates of Urdu and Hindi who believe in the desirability of bringing the two languages nearer and of promoting the development of the Hindustani language and thereby creating goodwill amongst the speakers of the two languages, should be convened at an early date.

Let us hope that the authors of the statement will take prompt steps to have the basic vocabulary of Hindustani words acceptable to all parties, and that the small committee they have in view will be set up forthwith for this work and for "settling various outstanding problems". I would put emphasis on the smallness of the committee if promptness is to be ensured.

MUSIC IN SCHOOLS

Pandit Khare[1] of Gandharva Mahavidyalaya, who has dedicated his life to the spread of pure music among boys and girls, reports the great progress being made in Ahmedabad in particular and Gujarat in general, and he deplores the fact that the education authorities do not seem to countenance the introduction of music in the curricula of education. In the Pandit's opinion, based upon wide experience, it should form part of the syllabus of primary education. I heartily endorse the proposition. The modulation of the voice is as necessary

[1] Narayan Moreshwar Khare

as the training of the hand. Physical drill, handicrafts, drawing and music should go hand in hand in order to draw the best out of the boys and girls and create in them a real interest in their tuition.

That this means a revolution in the system of training is admitted. If the future citizens of the State are to build a sure foundation for life's work, these four things are necessary. One has only to visit any primary school to have a striking demonstration of slovenliness, disorderliness and discordant speech. I have no doubt, therefore, that when the Education Ministers in the several provinces recast the system of education and make it answer the requirements of the country, they will not omit the essentials to which I have drawn attention. My plan of primary education certainly comprises these things which easily become possible the moment you remove from the children's shoulders the burden of having to master a difficult foreign language.

Of course, we have not the staff of teachers who can cope with the new method. But that difficulty applies to every new venture. The existing staff of teachers, if they are willing to learn, should be given the opportunity of doing so, and should also have the immediate prospect of a substantial increase in their salaries if they will learn the necessary subjects. It is unthinkable that for all the new subjects that are to become part of primary education separate teachers should be provided. That would be a most expensive method and so wholly unnecessary. It may be that some of the primary school teachers are so ill-equipped that they cannot learn the new subjects within a short time. But a boy who has studied up to the matriculation standard should not take more than three months to learn the elements of music, drawing, physical drill and a handicraft. If he acquires a working knowledge of these, he will be able always to add to it while he is teaching. This presupposes, no doubt, eagerness and zeal on the part of the teachers to make themselves progressively fit for the task of national regeneration.

A MONSTROUS IMPOSITION

In a note[1] in *Harijanbandhu*, recently, I reproduced a note from a correspondent saying that there were money-lenders in and around Sidhpur in the Gaekwar territories who lent money at exorbitant rates of interest and exacted security for due payment of capital and interest. The money-lenders, among other things, had a lien on the young girls of the borrowers. The result of this shameful imposition

[1] *Vide* "My Notes" sub-tite "Platt deed"

has been that sometimes parents have been obliged to part with their girls when they have not been able to pay interest ranging from 100 per cent upwards. I understand that some workers have brought this thing to the notice of the district officers of Sidhpur, but nothing seems to have been visibly done in the matter. If the facts are as stated by my correspondent— and there seems to be no cause to disbelieve him—the matter demands immediate redress.

Harijan, 11-9-1937

282. SELF-SUPPORTING EDUCATION

Dr. A. Lakshmipathi writes:

> I have seen some institutions conducted by missionaries, where the schools are worked only in the mornings, the evenings being spent either in agricultural operations or in some handicraft work for which the students are paid some wages according to the quality and quantity of work done by them. In this way, the institution is made more or less self-supporting, and the students do not feel like fish out of water when they leave the school, as they have learnt to do some work enabling them to earn at least their livelihood. I have noticed that the atmosphere in which such schools are conducted is quite different from the dull routine of the stereotyped schools of the Education Department. The boys look more healthy and happy in the idea that they have turned out some useful work, and are physically of a better build. These schools are closed for a short period in the agricultural seasons when all their energy is required for field work. Even in cities, such of the boys as have an aptitude may be employed in trades and professions, thereby enabling them to find a diversion. One meal may also be provided at school for those boys who are in need, or for all who wish to partake of the same in an interval of half an hour during the morning classes. Poor boys may thus be persuaded to run to the school with pleasure and their parents may also encourage them to go to school regularly.
>
> If this scheme of half-day school be adopted, the services of some of these teachers may be utilized for promoting adult education in the villages without any extra payment for such services. The building and other apparatus may also be useful in the same way.
>
> I have seen the Minister for Education, Madras, and presented a letter stating that the deterioration of health of the present generation is mainly due to unsuitable hours of education at schools. I am of opinion that all schools and colleges should work only in the morning, i. e., between 6 and 11 a. m. A

> study of four hours at school must be quite enough. The afternoon should be spent at home, and the evening should be devoted to games and physical development. Some of the boys may employ themselves in earning their livelihood, and some may help their parents in their business. The students will be more in touch with their parents, which is essential for development of any vocational calling and hereditary aptitude.
>
> If we realize that body-building is nation-building, the proposed change, though apparently revolutionary, is according to Indian customs and climate, and it would be welcome to most people.

Of Dr. Lakshmipathi's suggestion for restricting school hours to mornings, I do not wish to say much save to commend it to the educational authorities. As to the more or less self-supporting institutions, they could not do anything else if they were to pay their way partly or wholly and make something of their pupils. Yet my suggestion has shocked some educationists because they have known no other method. The very idea of education being self-supporting seems to them to rob education of all value. They see in the suggestion a mercenary motive. I have, however, just been reading a monograph on a Jewish effort in matters educational. In it the writer speaks thus of the vocational training imparted in the Jewish schools:

> So they find the labour of their hands to be worthy in itself. It is made lighter by intellectual activity, it is ennobled by the patriotic ideal which it serves.

Given the right kind of teachers, our children will be taught the dignity of labour and learn to regard it as an integral part and a means of their intellectual growth, and to realize that it is patriotic to pay for their training through their labour. The core of my suggestion is that handicrafts are to be taught, not merely for productive work, but for developing the intellect of the pupils. Surely, if the State takes charge of the children between seven and fourteen, and trains their bodies and minds through productive labour, the public schools must be frauds and teachers idiots if they cannot become self-supporting.

Supposing that every boy and girl works, not as a machine but as an intelligent unit, taking interest in the corporate work done under expert guidance, the corporate labour should be, say, after the first year of the course, worth one anna per hour. Thus for twenty-six working days of four hours per day, each child will have earned Rs. 6-8-0 per month. The only question is whether millions of children can be so profitably employed. We should be intellectual bankrupts if

we cannot direct the energy of our children so as to get from them, after a year's training, one anna worth of marketable labour per hour. I know that nowhere in India do villagers earn so much as one anna per hour in the villages. That is because we have reconciled ourselves to the intense disparity between the haves and the have-nots, and because the city people have, perhaps unwittingly, joined in the British exploitation of the village.

Harijan, 11-9-1937

283. A TELEGRAM[1]

September 11, 1937

THANKS WIRE[2]. PLEASE TELL STRIKERS DEEPLY HURT AT YOUR REFUSAL TO SUSPEND STRIKE. YOUR TELEGRAM[3] SEEMED TO ASSURE ME OF SUSPENSION IF I ACCEPTED YOUR INTERPRETATION OF TERM 'RELIEF'. PLEASE END NATIONAL ANXIETY BY SUSPENDING STRIKE AND GIVE WORKERS LIKE ME THE OPPORTUNITY OF SECURING RELIEF.[4]

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-9-1937

284. LETTER TO ATULANAND CHAKRABARTY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 11, 1937

MY DEAR ATULANAND,

I am glad you realize, at least partly, the soundness of my suggestion[5]. If the League has to come into being it will do so in the natural course. Even if you sent me some time ago a copy of your pamphlet on women, please send me another, so that 1 may look at it. Tell me, also, what your monthly minimum expenses are. If you are to fulfil your self-imposed mission, I know that you will have to learn the art of making the two ends meet. And there are two royal roads to this consummation. One is to reduce one's wants to a minimum, and the

[1] This was sent to the Andamans authorities at Port Blair.

[2] *Vide* footnote 6, "A Telegram", 8-9-1937

[3] *Vide* footnote 4, "Telegram to Home Secretary, Government of India", 3-9-1937

[4] The hunger-strikers, however, declined to suspend their strike.

[5] *Vide* "Letter to Atulanand Chakrabarty", 28-8-1937

second is so to arrange one's affairs as never to run into debt. There is no third way which is at once straight and dignified. And nothing can be royal that is undignified.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI[1]

From a photostat: C.W. 1478. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

285. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,

September 12, 1937

CHI. KANTI,

Just now I am not able to write to you myself. What is this you are doing? You are making yourself needlessly unhappy. I can't understand anything. Amtul Salaam would never have gone to Trivandrum if you had forbidden her. No sooner did you ask me to call her back than I acted. But I was not ready to call her back at the risk of displeasing everybody, Ramachandran[2], Saraswati and Paparamma, and interrupting the improvement in her health. Had I known—which I now do—how sensitive you are even now, I would have incurred all these risks and called her back. But how was I to know that you, who show yourself off as a very brave person, are in fact so weak-hearted that you would fall ill to the point of being bed-ridden merely by imagining things? When I talked to her under some pretext, she immediately agreed that not only would she never write to you but she would not write to Saraswati or anybody else and would never in future even so much as talk of going to Trivandrum. What more can she do? Why *so* much hatred? I see no blemish in her. She doesn't ask for anybody's service but goes on silently serving others. Why then do you hate her so much? Wake up, pull yourself together, leave this profound darkness and come out into the light. How can one cure suffering that has no basis at all? I have already sent you a wire and am awaiting a reply.

[1] Here follows a postscript in Mahadev Desai's hand which reads: "Please send a copy of your book also. The copy you gave to Gandhiji has been evidently given to the Vidyapith Library."

[2] G. Ramachandran

I am improving. I need rest.

I am returning herewith the account-sheet.

I got Ramachandran's wire.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7330. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

286. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

September 12, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. Your address keeps changing, like a big man's. One day you are at Sitab Diara, another day at Siwan, then at Patna and then God knows where. You don't stick to one place for any length of time. Where should I then address my letters? I write to the address given by you last, but by that time you have already left the place and the letter doesn't reach you. What is the way out?

My health is all right. I am weak, of course. I must have plenty of mental rest, as also physical. The latter I always have, but mental rest is sometimes disturbed. I find it a problem to manage people. But I do it somehow.

One can't say that Ba's leg is completely all right.

Everything else is normal. Should I conclude from your letter that you don't intend to come here in the near future?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3505

287. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 12, 1937

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. The question is a little vexing. If no doctor can be found to work with you what can you do alone? I think in that case you should not persist. By all means do what you can without straining yourself. As for me I find such . . .[1] suggestion frightful.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

288. INTERVIEW TO WILLIAM B. BENTON[2]

[Before *September 13, 1937*]

Motioning to a varnished box about half the size of an orange crate six feet in front of him, Gandhiji said:

You'd better sit over there.

I ask him some questions about Indian politics, about the victorious Congress party's policies.

This isn't the time for such questions. I have work to do here, I can't take myself from it to answer them. You should ask these questions of the political leaders. Of course, I wouldn't say that I don't know anything about politics. But I have no time for such questions now.

Many feel that any form of co-operation is a mistake. Others disagree, feeling that perhaps our objectives can best be achieved by giving ground now and then. Both groups are sincere.

We have just won a great victory and this brings us a big responsibility. We had literally no opposition. This is what counts. This result didn't surprise me, but it is a fine thing for others to see. It shows the world our strength.

[1] A word is illegible here.
[2] An American journalist

We talk then about American public opinion, its attitude toward India.

American opinion is of great importance to us and by our deeds we hope to win it.

Gandhiji agreed that British foreign policy is often influenced by American opinion. He is aware that England tries in many devious ways to mould it.

We cannot compete for American attention on the same terms with the English. We do not try, our methods must be different methods. We make no conscious effort to influence American opinion. I believe that the American is emotionally sympathetic to our cause, but he is profoundly ignorant of the real facts and of our real problem. When the time is right the American will learn the truth by what we do.

It's a prevalent idea in America, that India requires England for defence. Without the English, would there be civil and religious disturbances? As the Congress party is successful in driving the English out of power in India, will India fall a prey to someone else? Or, for that matter, how will Congress deal with the native Princes right here at home?

These are gross superstitions. They have been propagated for years. Stories and many of such dangers are hopelessly exaggerated. I know that many English people sincerely believe them; there you have the power of such ideas oft repeated.

As to the native States, they'll fall in line when India comes into her own.

A subject close to Gandhi's heart, one of which he will talk freely, is his great movement to improve the lot of the Indian villager or farmer. . . . Experiments are constantly being made, designed to develop new ways to Progress the villager's lot. The Mahatma told me:

Progress is slow, but you must remember that our work is new. We started with nothing but faith. Only faith. Today knowledge is added.

He breaks into his well-known toothless smile.

You might add a third ingredient—give us part of the money you make when you sell your story.

You think if faith plus knowledge are potent, faith plus knowledge plus capital are more so.

Yes. Yes.

He cackles and rocks in a full laugh.

Have you ever seen an American movie or heard American jazz? These are our two most famous exports.

No, no, I haven't.

He laughs again.

There's a good story for you. Do what you can with it. I've never been to a moving picture.

Hasn't one ever been brought to you, I query. He laughs again.

No, I have never seen one.

As I leave Gandhi . . . I produce a sheet of paper made in Wardha which I had purchased for one anna. I ask the Mahatma if he will sign it.

No. He smiles shyly and turns his head. Then he sees my paper and giggles cheerfully.

No, even that does not tempt me[1].

The Hindustan Times, 13-9-1937

289. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[2]

SEGAON,

September 13, 1937

Can't give anything more today than my love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3806. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6962

290. TELEGRAM TO SURENDRANATH MOITRA[3]

[Before *September 14,1937*][4]

I AM IN CONSTANT TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION WITH THE AUTHORITIES AND THE PRISONERS.

The Hindu, 15-9-1937

[1] The report first appeared in *The New York Times*.

[2] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.

[3] In reply to the addressee's telegram requesting Gandhiji to intervene again to end the hunger-strike of the remaining seven Andamans prisoners.

[4] The report appeared under the date-line Calcutta, September 14".

291. TELEGRAM TO NILRATAN SARKAR

WARDHA,
September 14, 1937

DR. NILRATAN SARKAR
SANTINIKETAN

THANK GOD. MANY HEARTS SILENTLY PRAYING GURUDEV'S SPEEDY RECOVERY. EXPECT DAILY WIRES.

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 9877

292. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 14, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

I send with this a letter written by Manu[1] on behalf of Gokibehn[2]. I have understood it to mean that it is proposed to raise the rent by one rupee as electricity charge. 1 understand whatever is received is paid by Behcharlal on behalf of Doctor or in memory of him. I have not interfered with this arrangement. Please make inquiries, if I am right. If the increase of Re. 1 is justified, tell Behcharlal accordingly. If my impression is not correct, let me know ho Gokibehn's monthly expenses are met. Tell her that I acted as soon as I got the letter. Inform her about my health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8538. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

[1] Daughter of Harilal Gandhi
[2] Raliatbehn, Gandhiji's sister

293. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

September 15, 1937

I held back these telegrams[1] in the hope of being able to announce the cheerful news that seven prisoners had broken the fast on my acceptance of their meeting of the word 'relief'. I am sorry that I have failed in my attempt. I can only hope that those who may be special friends of these prisoners will persuade them to break the fast which alone can give the public time to consolidate its effort to secure the very relief for which they are giving up their precious lives.

I would also appeal to the authorities, whoever they may be, to relent and discharge the prisoners, if they will not give up their fast, even as I was discharged and left to my own resources when I would not give up my fast in 1933.[2]

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-9-1937

294. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 15, 1937

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Bapu has given me many messages for you today.

l. He wants you to move amongst the high-class Sikhs and awaken their interest in the Prohibition campaign. Those who drink should be weaned of it, and especially the women should be roused to draw up a resolution.

I would like a declaration from notable Sikhs.[3]

2. C. F. A. should eat exactly what the doctor says. Probably his condition is one which can actually be harmed by fruit, etc. But now, of course, he may [have][4] passed that stage. It should depend on what the doctor says. That C. F. A. eats meat is open knowledge to Bapu.

3. Bapu entirely agrees with you that C. F. A. should not think about answering Miss Mayo's book. It is not needed either in India or the West. An

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Home Secretary, Government of India", 3-9-1937, "Telegram to Deshbandhu Gupta", 8-9-1937 and "A Telegram", 11-9-1937

[2] In May 1933

[3] This and the subscription have been added by Gandhiji.

[4] The source has "be".

entirely independent book would be the only way of touching the matter.[1]

4. There is no likelihood of Bapu going to the Frontier before October. It depends on when and what Khan Saheb[2] writes.

5. It is very good news that the Simla Khadi Bhandar has, become self-supporting.

6. Bapu will look at your brass bucket, and if it is suitable, he will use it himself.

7. Your fan is put away. There are plenty more here. Yours will be kept for you to use when you return.

8. Bapu's right hand is quite usable, but he feels the more rest he can give it the better. And this, he points out, has the advantage of giving him enforced rest from too much writing.

9. Bapu thinks your Hindi letters have much improved, and they are not too big now.

10. Balkoba[3] is slowly improving. He is able to take his full diet, and he has put on I lb. weight.

Bapu's health is certainly improving. He is taking more of the medicine, as it suits him and helps to reduce the b. p. The weather is excellent.

Much love.

MIRA

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3807. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6963

[1] In the summer of 1938 C. F. Andrews completed *The True India,* his reply to Catherine Mayo's *Mother India.*

[2] Abdul Ghaffar Khan

[3] Balkrishna, younger brother of Vinoba Bhave

295. LETTER TO MANHARRAM MEHTA

September 15, 1937

BHAI MANHARRAM,

I have been familiar with folk-theatre troupes and minstrels and bards right from my childhood days and I have been fascinated by them ever since. But we have dubbed the poor fellowsas lowly and discredited them. In course of time even they have come to regard [themselves as such][1]. I like the idea very much but how it can be implemented is a matter to be decided by a person like you.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

296. LETTER TO CHANDRASHANKAR

September 15, 1937

BHAI CHANDRASHANKAR,

Certainly I too lay stress on spinning and especially on the *takli.* My experience confirms my belief that in India there is nothing so small, so cheap, so artistic, so useful and so beautiful [as the *takli*][2].

It is also my claim that except for the English language, all other subjects being taught in India today can be taught through craft within the same amount of time. In spite of all the assurances you may be able to give, if the parents start at the very mention of the word 'craft', if they [shudder][3] to hear the word *takli* and will not send their children if you pay them a stipend of eight annas or four annas instead of a rupee and a half, I should, if I were you, close down the school and follow some other vocation. A true teacher would teach on his own terms, not on the terms laid down by parents [who][4] understand nothing in the matter of education.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] A few words are illegible.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Illegible in the source

[4] *ibid*

297. LETTER TO NARASINHBHAI

September 15, 1937

BHAI NARASINHBHAI,

Very little money has been received for the Kamala Memorial Fund. The largest amount was collected in the course of Jawaharlal's tour. But that did not come in the name of poor Kamala. We might as well say that it came in the name of her husband. What has happened to Kamala is something that happens to saintly women who pass into the last sleep without being a burden to others. This is how the idea of the Kamala Memorial originated. She had taken over the case of the Prayag Congress Hospital. She collected funds for the hospital till her death. The hospital could be maintained only because of her efforts. After her death it was about to be closed down. And so, a few persons like me who knew her well decided that the hospital should be kept going. The easiest way to do it was to make it the Kamala Memorial. Jawaharlal donated half of his small estate for the purpose. Now how can this amount of some 2_ lakhs be spent without a violation of morality? Moreover, those who have given the money have done it knowing this. Hence we should regard it as our duty to use the money only for the hospital at Prayag. And, if we cannot see that what the women of Prayag gain is gained by all of us does it not mean that we do not belong to India but only to our own province? Let us follow the words of the *Gita* that whatever is dedicated to God in a spirit of service reaches God. And this dedication is for the sake of India, through the Kamala Memorial. Hence, remove every other thought from your mind.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

298. LETTER TO DR. DHANJI SHAW

September 15, 1937

BHAI DHANJI SHAW,

I thank you for your letter. Your letter indicates that there is a dearth of khadi workers. There are plenty like you who wear khadi. Real khadi workers are those who make and wear khadi and persuade others to wear it. The khadi programme would never work if everyone only wore khadi and no one produced it, just as Zoroaster's

commands would not be effective if there were many to recite the Avesta but none to follow it in practice. Hence I suggest that wherever you find people not wearing khadi, make an effort to have them wear it.

DR. M. DHANJI SHAW, OCULIST
EDYOUR
P. O. MANDYA (Mysore)

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

299. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 15, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT

I am obliged to speak to you just now through Mira.[1]

I have gone through your reply. It is quite good and quite firm, just like you. Your weakness is only for friends. I shall be interested to know the reply. What is the reason for changing the name? Is it because the money is to come from the memorial fund? I hope you made sure that your objection had valid ground for it.

Nabibuksh[2] is almost due now. Give my love to him.

It is strange you do not get good earth there.

Do you take enough sleep? It is nearing the curfew, therefore good night and love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3808. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6964

300. TELEGRAM TO NILRATAN SARKAR

[On or before *September 17, 1937*][3]

GOD IS GREAT AND MERCIFUL. GREAT COMFORT TO FIND YOU BY GURUDEV'S BEDSIDE. PLEASE CONTINUE DAILY WIRES TILL COMPLETE DISCHARGE.

The Hindu, 17-9-1937

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 15-9-1937
[2] Addressee's servant
[3] The report is date-lined "Santiniketan, September 17".

301. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

SEGAON,

September 17, 1937

No more today.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3809. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6965

302. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SEGAON, WARDHA,

September 17, 1937

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Seeing how many members of the [Village] Industries Association had come here yesterday, I felt ashamed and even distressed. For such work I should myself go there. That would save expense and other things, too. My health wouldn't suffer in any way by my travelling this far. On the other hand, I feel much hurt by not going there and dragging everybody here. Please, therefore, send me a car or cart, whichever is available, in time so that I may reach there at 1.45 at the latest. Get everybody to meet at your bungalow. But if the meeting is not possible in the bungalow, by all means arrange it in Maganwadi. Dispose of the simple, straightforward business relating to the Charkha Sangh yourself, and as much as possible even of the complicated work, so that we may be able to discuss only the most important matters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2988

[1] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.

303. DISCUSSION WITH AN EDUCATIONIST[1]

[Before *September 18, 1937*]

[GANDHIJI] sounded a warning against the assumption that the idea of self-supporting education sprang from the necessity of achieving total prohibition as soon as possible.

Both are independent necessities. You have to start with the conviction that total prohibition has to be achieved, revenue or no revenue, education or no education. Similarly, you have to start with the conviction that looking to the needs of the villages of India our rural education ought to be made self-supporting if it is to be compulsory.

[THE EDUCATIONIST:] I have the first conviction deep down in me. Prohibition to me is an end in itself, and I regard it as a great education in itself. I should, therefore, sacrifice education altogether to make prohibition a success. But the other conviction is lacking. I cannot yet believe that education can be made self-supporting.

There, too, I want you to start with the conviction. The ways and means will come as you begin to work it out. I regret that I woke up to the necessity of this at this very late age. Otherwise I should have made the experiment myself. Even now, God willing, I shall do what I can to show that it can be self-supporting. But my time has been taken up by other things all these years, equally important perhaps, but it is this stay in Segaon that brought the conviction home to me. We have up to now concentrated on stuffing children's minds with all kinds of information, without ever thinking of stimulating and developing them. Let us now cry a halt and concentrate on educating the child properly through manual work, not as a side activity, but as the prime means of intellectual training.

I see that too. But why should it also support the school?

That will be the test of its value. The child at the age of 14, that is after finishing a seven years' course, should be discharged as an earning unit. Even now the poor people's children automatically lend a helping hand to their parents—the feeling at the back of their minds being, what shall my parents eat and what should they give me to eat if I do not also work with them? That is an education in itself. Even so the State takes charge of the child at seven and returns it to the family as an earning unit. You impart education and simultaneously cut at

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Talks on Self-supporting Education"

the root of unemployment. You have to train the boys in one occupation or another. Round this special occupation you will train up his mind, his body, his handwriting, his artistic sense, and so on. He will be master of the craft he learns.

But supposing a boy takes up the art and science of making khadi. Do you think it must occupy him all the seven years to master the craft?

Yes. It must, if he will not learn it mechanically. Why do we give years to the study of history or to the study of languages? Is a craft any the less important than these subjects which have been up to now given an artificial importance?

But as you have been mainly thinking of spinning and weaving, evidently you are thinking of making of these schools so many weaving schools. A child may have no aptitude for weaving and may have it for something else.

Quite so. Then we will teach him some other craft. But you must know that one school will not teach many crafts. The idea is that we should have one teacher for twenty-five boys, and you may have as many classes or schools of twenty-five boys as you have teachers available, and have each of these schools specializing in a separate craft—carpentry, smithy, tanning or shoe-making. Only you must bear in mind the fact that you develop the child's mind through each of these crafts. And I would emphasize one more thing. You must forget the cities and concentrate on the villages. They are an ocean. The cities are a mere drop in the ocean. That is why you cannot think of subjects like brick-making. If they must be civil and mechanical engineers, they will after the seven years' course go to the special colleges meant for these higher and specialized courses. And let me emphasize one more fact. We are apt to think lightly of the village crafts because we have divorced educational from manual training. Manual work has been regarded as something inferior, and owing to the wretched distortion of the varna we came to regard spinners and weavers and carpenters and shoe-makers as belonging to the inferior castes and the proletariat. We have had no Cromptons[1] and Hargreaves[2] because of this vicious system of considering the crafts as something inferior divorced from the skilled. If they had been regarded as callings having an independent status of their own equal

[1] Samuel Crompton, inventor of the spinning mule, and William Crompton and his son George Crompton, inventors of improved weaving loom

[2] James Hargreaves, inventor of the spinning-jenny

to the status that learning enjoyed, we should have had great inventors from among our craftsmen. Of course the 'spinning-jenny' led on to the discovery of water-power and other things which made the mill displace the labour of thousands of people. That was, in my view, a monstrosity. We will by concentrating on the villages see that the inventive skill that an intensive learning of the craft will stimulate will subserve the needs of the villager as a whole.

Harijan, 18-9-1937

304. FOR MONKEYS

I have before me nearly fifty letters from America asking me to do what I can to prevent the export of Macacus Rhesus monkeys from India to America for purposes of vivisection. Some of these letters are from humanitarian and anti-vivisection societies. They send interesting literature containing harrowing details and pictures of vivisection and opinions of eminent medical men against the utility of the cruel practice. A typical letter enclosed a picture of St. Francis of Assisi for whom birds and beasts were as brothers and sisters. The reader will appreciate the following prayer of the saint:

> Lord, make me an instrument of your peace; where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy.
>
> O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood, as to understand; to be loved, as to love; for it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we art born to eternal life.

My sympathies are wholly with my correspondents. If I had the power I would not send a single monkey abroad for vivisection or slaughter. My advice to my correspondents is that they should promote representations to the Government of India which, if they are well supported are, bound to be listened to by them. The other way obviously is a strong public agitation in India against the practice of sending monkeys abroad. Of this, so far as I can see, there is not much prospect. The public hardly know that there is any export of monkeys. And I do not know how to prevent private persons from carrying on what must be to them a lucrative trade. All, therefore, that I can do is to express the pious wish that India will be no party to what

is undoubtedly an inhuman practice. It would be wrong to subject the lower creation to living death even if it could be proved that it contributed something to the alleviation of human suffering. Surely, it can never be an end in itself justifying adoption of inhumanities involved in vivisection. Rather, the end is for the human family not to sacrifice tenderness, even though the practice of that virtue should involve continuation of human suffering or even an increase in it. I suggest that tenderness for others and other life itself promotes alleviation in that it makes pain bearable.

Harijan, 18-9-1937

305. THE SOCIAL SIDE OF PROHIBITION

This excellent article[1] should be studied by every Excise Minister who would make his prohibition policy a success. Every liquor-shop should be turned into a refreshment club. The money is there: the excise revenue during the transition period.

Harijan 18-9-1937

306. FOR MINISTERS OF EDUCATION

A schoolmaster in a southern high school sends me the following extracts[2] showing some of the disabilities of students:

> M. E. R. 99. No pupil convicted in a court of law for disloyal activities should be admitted into a school without the previous sanction of Government. No manager or member of the staff or of the establishment shall be permitted to take part in political agitation directed against the authority of Government or to inculcate opinions tending to excite feelings of political disloyalty or disaffection; and the pupil should not be permitted to attend political meetings or to engage in any form of political agitation.
>
> 100. In the event of such misconduct being persisted in and encouraged or permitted by the masters or the managing authorities, the Director may, after due warning, withdraw recognition from the offending school or withdraw the grant-in-aid or withhold the privilege of competing for Government

[1] In the article, not reproduced here, John Barnabas had discussed how various circumstances—social and financial—drive an average man to drink and suggested that prohibition could be launched in an intelligent manner by providing to the labourer some substitutes such as entertainment and refreshment.

[2] Only excerpts from which are reproduced here

scholarships and receiving Government scholarships.

101. If the public utterances of a schoolmaster are of such a character as to endanger the orderly development of the boys under his charge by introducing into their immature minds doctrines subversive of their respect for authority and calculated to impair their usefulness as citizens and to hinder their advancement in after-life, or if he is found to have personally conducted his pupils to a political meeting or to have deliberately encouraged their attendance at such a meeting, his proceedings may be held to constitute a dereliction of duty and may be visited with disciplinary action.

79. No books (other than books for religious instruction) not authorized by Government shall be used in any case. Government reserve to themselves the right to forbid or to prescribe the use of any book or books in schools.

80. (Insists on all children being vaccinated. Though a dead letter in practice, it should surely be cancelled.)

Other circulars still in force forbid the hoisting of the National Flag on recognized schools and discourage the exhibition of photographs of national leaders in classrooms, and penalize schools where students express national views in answering papers at public examinations. . . .

Most of these should be removed without a moment's delay. The students' minds must not be caged nor for that matter those of the teachers. The teachers can only point to their pupils what they or the State considers is the best way. Having done so they have no right to curb their pupils' thoughts and feelings. This does not mean that they are not to be subject to any discipline. No school can be run without it. But discipline has nothing to do with artificial restraint upon the students' all-round growth. This is impossible where they are subjected to espionage. The fact is that hitherto they have been in an atmosphere subtly anti-national where it has not been openly that. This should now be dispelled. The students should know that the cultivation of nationalism is not a crime but a virtue.

Harijan, 18-9-1937

307. SELF-SUPPORTING SCHOOLS

The main cause of India's economic decay is that her workers begin life too early. . . . The immature mind put to industrial apprenticeship gets dwarfed and fossilized; and there is no grasp of the economic significance of work. Anybody can exploit such a worker. . . . When I visited the Ceylon plantations what harrowed me most was the existence of child-labour. . . . Even in a country like Ceylon where the population is inadequate to exploit natural resources, child-labour is indefensible; much more so is it in India where the employment of children may mean the unemployment of adults.

Let us not delude ourselves into believing that self-supporting work-shop schools manufacturing and marketing goods will impart education. In actual practice it will be nothing but legalized child-labour. . . . I cannot agree with the editor of the *Harijan* that mathematics can be studied by calculating how much yarn would be needed for a piece, and science and geography by observing the growth and improvement of strains of cotton. . . . The training of the eye, ear and hand is absolutely necessary, and manual labour must be made compulsory in all schools; but we must not forget that what is called the training of the hand is really a training of the brain. If a school aims at education, it must give up all ideas of producing standardized goods for sale. It must give a variety of raw materials and machines for children to experiment with and spoil. Waste is inevitable. A careful study of Sjt. Parikh's figures in the current issue of the *Harijan* shows that even when a school has specialized in one occupation and has trained grown-up children, waste is considerable. A vocational school, like a college of science, is a place for experimenting and wasting resources. A country like India with limited resources must start as few as necessary. . . .

That we can force the pace and make the boy learn in two years what he now learns in seven is a curious illusion. . . . A child cannot, and should not, try to learn at eight what he can learn only at 16. The foreign language is not the cause of delay, nor are we giving as much extra time to it as people imagine. . . .

. . . Let us not demand that schools should produce not only men but also goods.

To sum up, it is bad economy to adopt a short-sighted policy which will make the schools solvent and the nation bankrupt.

'A PROFESSOR'

This[1] is from a Professor in a well-known University. There is a signed covering letter to it but the article is unsigned. I therefore refrain from giving the writer's name. After all the reader is concerned with the matter, not its author. This article is a striking case of preconceived notions blurring one's vision. The writer has not taken the trouble to understand my plan. He condemns himself when he likens the boys in the schools of my imagination to the boys on the semi-slave plantations of Ceylon. He forgets that the boys on the plantations are not treated as students. Their labour is no part of their training. In the schools I advocate boys have all that boys learn in high schools less English but plus drill, music, drawing and, of course, a vocation. To call these schools factories amounts to an obstinate refusal to appreciate a series of facts. It is very like a man refusing to read the description of a human being and calling him a monkey because he has seen no other animal but a monkey, and because the description in some particulars, but only in some, answers that of monkeys. The Professor would have been on safe ground if he had cautioned the public against expecting all that I have claimed for the proposal. The caution would however be unnecessary because I have uttered it myself.

I admit that my proposal is novel. But novelty is no crime. I admit that it has not much experience behind it. But what experience my associates and I have encourages me to think that the plan, if worked faithfully, will succeed. The nation can lose nothing by trying the experiment even if it fails. And the gain will be immense if the experiment succeeds even partially. In no other way can primary education be made free, compulsory and effective. The present primary education is admittedly a snare and delusion.

Shri Narahari Parikh's figures have been written in order to support the plan to the extent they can. They are not conclusive. They are encouraging. They supply good data to an enthusiast. Seven years are not an integral part of my plan. It may be that more time will be required to reach the intellectual level aimed at by me. The nation won't lose anything whatsoever by a prolongation of the period of instruction. The integral parts of the scheme are.

(1) Taken as a whole a vocation or vocations are the best medium for the all-round development of a boy or a girl, and therefore all syllabus should be woven round vocational training.

(2) Primary education thus conceived as a whole is bound to

[1] Only extracts from which are reproduced here

be self-supporting even though for the first or even the second year's course it may not be wholly so. Primary education here means as described above.

The Professor questions the possibility of giving arithmetical and other training through vocations. Here he speaks without experience. I can speak from experience. I had no difficulty in giving at the Tolstoy Farm (Transvaal) all-round development to the boys and girls for whose training I was directly responsible.[1] The central fact there was vocational training for nearly eight hours. They had one or, at the most, two hours of book learning. The vocations were digging, cooking, scavenging, sandal-making, simple carpentry, and messenger work. The ages of the children ranged from six to sixteen. That experiment has been since much enriched.

Harijan, 18-9-1937

308. INHUMANITY IN DELHI

Things seem to move slowly in Delhi, where the poor are concerned. The sweepers' quarters in Delhi were the worst of any I had seen. I do not know that they are much better today. Thakkar Bapa now draws attention to the serious grievances of stone-breakers.[2] The poor men are cheated of the price of their labour, and mean advantage is taken of their ignorance and poverty by the heartless contractors. It is high time for the public of Delhi to wake up and remedy the evil. If the contractors will not behave themselves, the public should support a general strike by the stone-breakers and find for them some suitable occupation whilst the strike lasts. No doubt before this last step is taken there would be parleys with the contractors.

Harijan, 18-9-1937

[1] *Vide* "An Autobiography" sub-title "As Schoolmaster"

[2] The article is not reproduced here.

309. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 18, 1937

CHI. NIMU,

Received your second letter. What does Punditji teach you when he comes? Does he give you reading and writing work? How do you find the climate there? How much money is left with you now? Ask for some whenever you need it. Perhaps it will be better if I send you the money direct. If you can find any work there, do take it up. Be of as much use as you can. You must have made friends with everyone there as you are a sociable type. I hope Sumitra[1] does not make a nuisance of herself. It is a very good sign that the Principal himself teaches you English. Tell Vidyavati about your constipation also.

Kanam is enjoying himself. Gosibehn[2] and Perinbehn[3] are at present here. He gets on well with them. Gosibehn tells him stories. And if he is told stories he needs nothing else. His real education consists of stories, football and kite-flying. The regular lessons of course go on. But if he does not find these as interesting as stories, I consider it a shortcoming on the part of the teacher. But it is true, is it not, that the teacher can only impart what he himself possesses?

How old are the seniormost girls there? Is it that they have admitted you as an exception?

Are there any women teachers or only men teachers?

The place is famous for its guavas and berries. Try them both by turns as medicine. Perhaps they might cure your constipation. As far as possible, listen to Saraswatibehn's advice.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Nirmala Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Addressee's eldest daughter

[2] Gosibehn Captain and Perinbehn Captain, granddaughters of Dadabhai Naoroji

[3] *ibid*

310. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 18, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Lilavati's illness seems to be getting somewhat prolonged. Low fever persists. Having an iron constitution, she continues to move about. I have, therefore, put restrictions on her. Even in food she is made to observe fairly severe restrictions. Let the doctor bring his apparatus to examine her when he comes. A patch is visible not only on the tonsils but also on the right side. I suppose it will remain even after the tonsils are removed. So there must be some treatment for the patch adjacent to the tonsils. Please write to Chhotalal about this complaint. He should write if he can think of something. And also write to him about Amtul Salaam and tell him that she has asthma and cough. And she has constipation too. He should suggest something for her also, if he can. As for treatment, she has been treated by a homoeopath and a vaid's treatment is still going on. But there has been no definite improvement. One can only say that she is pulling on.

Write [to Chhotalal] about me and tell him that as advised I am taking two doses of the powder daily for four days. Today is the fourth day. From tomorrow I shall take one dose daily for five days. Find out if he has any suggestion to make regarding food after that. You may also tell him that my diet has decreased after his treatment was started. The quantity of milk has decreased to practically a half of what it was. I cannot eat bread either. Before the treatment was started I used to eat wheat in a fairly good quantity in the form of bread and *golpapdi*[1]. I have lost the ability to digest that. I don't mind this, but Chhotalal should know about it.

I got the mail sent by you. I am surrounded at the moment by four or five persons. Get well soon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11566

[1] A sweetmeat

311. LETTER TO TARADEVI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 18, 1937

CHI. TARA,

You can write a letter in a beautiful hand while lying in bed. Let us see how you are going to work after completing your studies.

Blessings from
BAPU

TARA KUMARI
MAHILA VIDYALAYA
LUCKNOW, U. P.

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

312. THE USE AND ABUSE OF TODDY[1]

A Parsi correspondent from Ahmedabad has addressed me a long letter of which the following is the gist:

> I am not a liquor dealer myself, nor do I drink, though I have found half an ounce of toddy, taken judiciously in illness, to have wonderfully curative properties. But then, it befuddles me and I have to discontinue its use. Since 1896 when I became a vegetarian I have not taken meat. I am sixty-five and therefore can claim to speak with some experience. I have not a shadow of doubt that prohibition will add to the health and longevity of the working people as a whole. But I am afraid that what will be saved from liquor will be swallowed up by cinemas, theatres and vice, besides encouraging idleness and surreptitious illicit distillation. Toddy, on the other hand, has a number of valuable uses which I note below:
>
> (1) Fresh toddy is a healthy, non-intoxicating beverage, though under the heat of the sun it quickly ferments and develops alcoholic properties.
>
> (2) Taken medicinally it acts as a refrigerant and cures the system of excess of heat.
>
> (3) Toddy is used as leaven to raise the flour for making bread, biscuits and pastries.
>
> (4) It cures constipation and promotes bowel action.
>
> (5) From toddy we get vinegar which is used in pickles and as a

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 19-9-1937.

condiment.

Unfortunately it is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain pure, unadulterated toddy. What is generally sold is a thin, poisonous mixture adulterated with water, saccharine, opium and other narcotics which act as a slow poison on the system. The toddy-dealer, who is generally impecunious and harassed by the exactions of the Excise Department, is driven to make both ends meet by defrauding the consumer. In my opinion, what is really needed is to exempt toddy from the licensing system, and make it possible to provide pure stuff to the consumer in sealed bottles at the rate of two pice per bottle.

To enforce prohibition in respect of toddy, while leaving tobacco, ganja, opium and other narcotics free, would be tantamount to favouring Hindu licensees of these narcotics at the expense of Parsi vendors of toddy, and is bound to make a bad impression. The evil of juvenile smoking is daily becoming worse in our country. The result is a devitalized manhood and a fearful increase in the cases of tuberculosis, etc. The economic bill that the nation has to pay annually for this vice of tobacco-smoking works out at a staggering figure. If we take the cases of tobacco-smoking in our country to be one in three, and two pice worth of cigarettes as the average daily consumption of smoke for each smoker, then twelve crore smokers would, in a year, blow away 138 crores of rupees among them in this pleasant vice! By enforcing prohibition against tobacco-smoking the whole of this amount could be saved and the problem of financing primary education for the nation be automatically solved; the national health would distinctly gain; and the daily desecration of the Atash deva1 at the hands of millions of smokers be stopped. At the same time the abolition of licensed toddy shops in the cities would cause the townspeople to go to the villages for fresh-drawn toddy and help to put some money into the pockets of the needy village-folk. Perhaps you know that in certain parts of the Surat District the date-palm is the only stay of the poor as the sub-soil water is too brackish to support any other cultivation. The necessity of journeying to the villages to obtain toddy will also serve as an automatic check on the consumption of toddy and effectively reduce the evil of drunkenness that is becoming more and more rampant in all the big cities.

Other Parsi correspondents too have written to me in the same strain. I must confess that it did surprise me somewhat at first that all such arguments against prohibition should emanate invariably from

[1] Fire-god of the Zoroastrians

Parsi brains. But it may be that this is due to the fact that, owing to the special relations which the Parsis have with me, they freely speak out their mind, while others, who think similarly about prohibition, feel constrained and hold back their feelings, Let me assure my Parsi friends that I value this mark of confidence on their part as a rare privilege, which I hope I have tried to deserve.

Coming now to the arguments advanced by my correspondent, it will be seen that such of them as are valid do not apply to the plan of prohibition that I have adumbrated. Prohibition will certainly not affect the sale of toddy for *bona fide* medicinal purposes. Only, as in the case of other drugs so in the case of toddy, the intending purchaser will be required to produce a certificate issued not by the patient concerned to himself, but by a duly qualified doctor. My correspondent may feel competent to act as his own physician, but an average patient cannot safely be left to prescribe for himself. The proposed restriction in respect of medicinal toddy is thus conceived in the patient's own interest.

It is hardly necessary for me here to examine all the claims on behalf of toddy advanced by my correspondent. Suffice it to say that I have already admitted the immense economic value of the toddy-palm. I have nothing whatever against the use of toddy juice as such. My sole objection is to fermented toddy which has alcoholic properties like any other spirituous liquor whether made from sugarcane, grape or apples. I have myself freely partaken, and made others partake, of sweet toddy *gur*[1] and its sherbet. Nor is there any duty on the tapping of sweet toddy for *gur*-making. I am planning to tap 250 palms here at Segaon in the coming season for sweet toddy and, God willing, I hope to get some of the finest *gur* and sugar from it. The deeper I dive into this question of sweet toddy, the more I find that, owing to the disrepute into which it has fallen by its evil association with liquor manufacture, its proper use has never been inculcated upon our people.[2] The grapes of the Madeira island in the Atlantic Ocean, which is under Portuguese rule, meet with the same fate. There are vines in every courtyard and wine is distilled in every home. Hence in this place 'grape' means 'wine'. The term has acquired such a noxious connotation that in our language it has become a common expression and we employ the word '*madira*'[3] to denote liquor. Today hassimilarly become accursed. I also played no

[1] Jaggery

[2] The rest of the paragraph is translated from the Gujarati in *Harijanbandhu.*

[3] Here Gandhiji is giving a fanciful etymology of the word which, in fact, is derived from the base *mada* meaning 'intoxication'.

small part in condemning it in the last Satyagraha[1]. The above-mentioned gentleman can rest assured that now I am atoning for it by helping people to a true knowledge of toddy and by keeping the intoxicating principle away from it. May I in all sincerity suggest that the Parsi community can render a great service to itself and the Province of Bombay by renouncing the liquor trade and doing its bit for the redemption of the much-wronged toddy-palm. Is it not also a happy augury that the cause of prohibition in the Bombay Presidency has for its helmsman and guide a celebrated Parsi doctor?

I hope it will now be sufficiently clear to my esteemed correspondent, and others who might be inclined to think like him, that the prohibition move which I am sponsoring is not calculated to injure Parsi interests or for the matter of that any legitimate interests. It is directed as much against opium, *ganja, charas* and every narcotic as it is against liquor-drinking and, what is more, as I have already shown, it does not affect the legitimate use of the toddy-palm in which the Parsis as a community are especially interested. It does certainly aim at a crusade against the perversion of its legitimate use, in the form of manufacture and consumption of a fiery liquor. And, in this holy crusade, my venerable Parsi correspondent seems to be at one with me.

Harijan, 9-10-1937, and *Harijanbandhu*, 19-9-1937

313. TO NATIONAL TEACHERS

To the teachers who are conducting national schools I would suggest that if they are convinced by my recent writings[2] on primary education, they should try to put my ideas into practice. They should maintain a proper record and keep me informed about their experiences. Those who are willing to conduct a school on the lines suggested by me, those who are not engaged for the time being or those who are willing to give up their present vocation and run a school, should write to me.

It is my belief that a craft which immediately suggests itself for making primary schools self-sufficient is spinning and allied processes. This includes ail the processes from picking cotton to

[1] Salt Satyagraha of 1930.

[2] *Vide* "Self-Supporting Education", also "Congress Ministries", 17-7-1937

weaving intricate designs into khadi. The wages should be calculated at a minimum of half an anna per hour. Of the five working hours in the school day four hours should be devoted to manual work and one hour to instruction in the science of the craft taught in the school and the teaching of other subjects that cannot be taken up as part of the craft taught. While teaching the crafts, subjects like history, geography and arithmetic would be partially or wholly covered. Language and grammar as part of it, and also correct pronunciation would be naturally included. For the teacher will treat the craft as a vehicle of all such knowledge and will teach the children correct speech and in so doing would incidentally impart knowledge of grammar. Children must learn the process of counting right from the beginning. Hence, the first beginning will have to be made with arithmetic. Neatness would of course not be a separate subject. Children ought to be neat in everything they do. They will begin it by coming to school neat and tidy. Hence, for the present I cannot think of any subject which the children cannot be taught side by side withtheir vocational training.

It is of course my idea that just as the subjects to be taught have not been considered separately but as interconnected and originating from a single source, I also think that there would be a single teacher. There should be no separate teachers for different subjects but only one teacher. There could be separate teachers for the different forms. That is to say, there would be seven teachers if there are seven forms and one teacher would not have more than 25 children. If education is compulsory, I would consider it necessary to have separate classes for boys and girls from the very beginning. For ultimately they will not have to be trained in the same vocations. Hence, I believe that it would be more convenient to have separate classes from the very start.

It may be possible to make some modifications in this method and in the working hours, number of teachers and distribution of subjects; but the school of my conception can be conducted only by regarding as inviolable the principles which each school must follow. Right now, the pursuit of these principles may not have shown any results; but any minister who wishes to start on such a system of education must have faith in these principles. And this faith, based as it is on reason, should not be blind but rational. The two principles are: (I) The vehicle of education should be some vocation or craft which would be useful in the village. (2) Education, on the whole, should be self-supporting. It may be not completely self-supporting for a year or two in the beginning; but income and expenditure

should be balanced at the end of seven years. There is scope for increasing or decreasing these seven years that I have posited for this kind of education.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 19-9-1937

314. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

SEGAON,
September 19, 1937

I had hoped to write to you myself today but sleep made it impossible. Her Ex.'s letter is diplomatic, plausible, yours straight.

What about the ice?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3810. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6966

315. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 19, 1937

CHI. NIMU,

Your letter about Usha[2] alarms me. We call illness corporal punishment. How appropriate is this expression! Because such a body deserves the punishment. Don't be impatient now. Do not worry. Busy yourself with your work. Really speaking you have never lived the life of a student. You had your lessons in your childhood but that was not real student life. When one willingly devotes oneself to something, one is said to be living for it. As for instance life for the sake of service, life for the sake of learning, life for the sake of enjoyment, life for the sake of [amassing] wealth. In these cases service, learning, enjoyment and wealth become the only purpose of life. And other things are sacrificed for their sake. From this point of view, since you have taken up student life you ought to forget about

[1] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.
[2] Addressee's youngest daughter

Usha for the time being, as also Sarita[1], Ramdas and me. Only studies should not be forgotten. This is called the yoga of non-attachment. You have accepted student's life for one year. So forget all other things.

I shall find out about Usha and also write to Sarita. I am not sending a wire today because it is a Sunday. I shall send a wire tomorrow. I shall also write to Navanit. Like Ramdas who cannot rush to Usha's side from South Africa, you also cannot run from where you are. Life and death are in the hands of God. If Usha is destined to live long she will recover soon. If you wish and if Sarita agrees, I am prepared to take charge of Usha. Ba of course is here. Amtul Salaam is also here. If she gets such an opportunity to serve, she will consider it a godsend. I am writing this after getting her consent. About the treatments also I am writing to Sarita as much as I know. Even if you yourself were there, what more could you have done in addition to the treatment she is receiving today? If I ask her to come to me it does not mean that she will be served better here. But certainly there is the thought that better medical consultation can be available here than at Lakhtar. Any other advice can also be more readily available here and I also know fairly well about a number of such diseases. . . .[2]

From a copy of the Gujarati: Nirmala Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

316. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
September 20, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have written with the right hand with a vengeance. In ten minutes more the prayer commences and the silence breaks. Then no more of right hand writing till next Monday.

Nothing more about me than what M.[3] has told you.

I hope you had a good meeting with the women. You can't desert the rich. You have to do the best you can with them. You must have inexhaustible patience.

Tell Charlie, he must keep to regular hours and simplicity for

[1] Addressee's mother
[2] Omission as in the source
[3] Mirabehn

food. It won't do to have another attack, if he is to shoulder the burden of Palestine. It is wrong for him to write for money. It is one thing to accept small gifts for work done without the monetary motive behind it. But to write for gain seems to me to be quite wrong. It would be a different thing if he as a schoolmaster was writing school-books. That labour merits its hire. But not an original work say like the *Indian Fight for Freedom* or the *Life of Jesus*[1].

You are silent about your eczema.

Poor Sharda may have duodenal ulcer. But she is all right and quite brave. Her father, who has come here, is on his back with fever. Lilavati is on the mend. Ba is better though still limping. Balkrishna is the same as before. Batra is in the Punjab.

The medicine I am taking is no patent. It is a well-known bazaar root irradiated. If I may take the *neem* leaf or bark, what is wrong with another bitter root? There is as much harm in this root as there is in the castor seed. Therefore don't take fright over my drug. I am careful.

My love to Nabi Bux. He should return by this time.

The weather has suddenly become warm. We might have a downpour.

We had a good meeting of A. I. S. A. and A. I. V. I. A.

The Urdu numerals are handy. Thoughtful Rebel as ever! I shall ask for more when I have mastered this much. It will be treasured as I have treasured your list of equivalent Hindi names for tools.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3612. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6421

317. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON,
September 20, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

On the envelope you have written "Please send to Dahyabhai Sumitra". I was puzzled. Then I thought that you must have forgotten to cross out one. I am sending the envelope back. Please look at it. This is just by way of fun.

Your notes should be brief. For instance, you could have

[1] Which C. F. Andrews was engaged in writing towards the end of his life, but did not complete

shortened the one about Gulzarilal as also the others. Today I have done nothing but this. You will be able to see it. If we don't follow this method, then no matter how many pages we fill we shall not be able to include all the topics. As the topics increase in number our ability to condense them should also increase a great deal.

Chan.'s extracts cannot be published. I am sending them back. The first part is all right. But it is of no use to us. We have to prepare literature pertaining to our country. The items in the second part have been collected without understanding. Our problem is definitely not how to bring about prohibition by raising the tax. We simply don't want any revenue from that source. I had to accept Shah's matter because he did agree partly at least.

I think that there is a Hindi translation of *Anandamath*[1]. It is possible that there is a good Gujarati translation also. If there is one, please procure a copy.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Please return Chandy's article. Have you omitted from it M. [C.] Rajah's name? I wish to make some other changes too.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11570

318. LETTER TO E. M. S. NAMBOODIRIPAD[2]

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 21, 1937

MY DEAR NAMBOODIRIPAD,

I have your letter. It is right that you have written to the Premier, but before doing so you should have written to the police authorities and gone step by step. Don't expect that from top to bottom the Permanent Service has become angelic. And why do you say you cannot condemn even bad actions of Congress Ministries? I think it is not only a right, but a duty for any Congressmen to openly

[1] A Bengali novel by Bankimchandra Chattopadhyaya which contains the poem *Vandemataram*

[2] The addressee, Joint-Secretary of the All-India Congress Socialist Party and Organizing Secretary of the Kerala Provincial Congress Committee, had drawn Gandhiji's attention to the search carried on by the police for a proscribed book.

criticize acts of Congress officials, no matter however highly placed they may be. The criticism has got to be courteous and well-informed.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. E. M. S. NAMBOODIRIPAD

POST CHERUKARA, *via* SHORANUR

S. MALABAR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

319. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 21, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Please have a talk with R.[1] But [before that][2] ask Appa. If R. is impotent, G.[3] cannot but know about it. Then she should not live with him, nor should she be harassed. R. must have taken treatment. However, if medicines always worked, why do we have so many advertisements about them? But ascertain all the facts. Go and find out what G. has done and what the atmosphere there is like.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11571

320. LETTER TO PRABHUDAYAL VIDYARTHI

SEVAGRAM,
September 21, 1937

CHI. PRABHUDAYAL,

Come whenever you like. Stay the whole day and learn to make *rotis.*

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 11683

[1] The name has been omitted.
[2] Not clear in the source
[3] The name has been omitted.

321. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 22, 1937

DEAR SISTER,

Since I have the opportunity I am dictating these few lines. These days, it is not Mridu but Anasuyabehn who acts as my postman from Shahibag. Hence I am well posted with news of the family. I was distressed to hear about your illness. I wondered why God has not granted health to one whom He has granted all the comforts. Then I remembered this line from Narasinh: "Do not be affected by happiness or misery. They are ever with the body." I hope you are improving. You have done well to send away the children to study instead of detaining them. There is no need at all to answer this letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11147. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

322. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 23, 1937

DEAR GURUDEV,

Your precious letter is before me. You have anticipated me. I wanted to write as soon as Sir Nilratan sent me his last reassuring wire. But my right hand needs rest. I did not want to dictate. The left hand works slow. This is merely to show you what love some of us bear towards you. I verily believe that the silent prayers from the hearts of your admirers have been heard and you are still with us. You are not a mere singer of the world. Your living word is a guide and an inspiration to thousands. May you be spared for many a long year yet to come.

With deep love,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4649

323. MESSAGE TO KARNATAKA UNIFICATION LEAGUE, BELGAUM

[Before *September 24, 1937*]

The creation of Karnataka as a separate province cannot be resisted on merits. Therefore, whoever brings a resolution to that effect should be welcomed by the Congress Ministry and the difficulties of its immediate execution should be frankly pointed out. The Congress Ministry can take the wind out of the Opposition's sails by announcing its policy, means and ways.[1]

The Hindu, 24-9-1937

324. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 24, 1937

CHI. AMBUJAM,[2]

Here is a letter from one who calls himself the maternal uncle of Kamalabai. I have told the writer that Kamalabai's process of purification should not on any account be interrupted, and that this is necessary in the interest of herself as well as the family.

The patient is there; you will see her and guide me. No money is to be paid till I write to you. I am making steady progress.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] At Gandhiji's instance a copy of this message was sent to the Bombay Ministry. It had been proposed to introduce in the Bombay Assembly a resolution for a separate Karnataka province.

[2] The supercription is in Devanagari.

325. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 24, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

This is merely for the pleasure of writing to you. Shummy is hopelessly wrong. You *must* write daily if you can but never at the sacrifice of your rest or work.

Verrier[1] is here today. I shall speak to him and do the needful.

The seven prisoners have suspended their fast.

Why won't you say in writing what you want to say so badly when we meet? But you will please yourself. I am not curious like some I know.

You should get the commitment[2] of noted Sikhs even though their word carries no weight with the Sikhs.

Sufficient for the day.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3811. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6967

326. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 24, 1937

CHI. NARAHARI,

Your letter to Dudabhai[3] seemed all right and I have, therefore, sent it on. And I have advised that he should send Jivantika to her husband's place. Nothing more need be done in this matter.

I understand about the anonymous note of threat. We should know what Raojibhai says. I have talked over everything with Dinkar. He himself offered to have a talk with you and report to you the substance of our talk. I, therefore, did not write to you anything. The long and short of it is that he would give his services as long as the Congress work goes on. He will accept whatever we give him to meet his expenses. His needs are fairly numerous. I, therefore, would advise that he should be paid Rs. 100. Sometimes he may save a little from it and sometimes he will spend the whole amount. I have told him that

[1] Verrier Elwin
[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 15-9-1937
[3] Dudabhai Dafda

he could be given the facilities to set up an establishment there. He will have to pay the rent.

Dahyalal has arrived. For the present he has been given sanitation work and spinning.

I was very happy to learn that ghee is being made from cow's milk. Test every instalment. There is every chance of the ghee going rancid if the butter is underboiled. In making ghee out of cow's milk more care has to be taken than in making it out of buffalo's milk.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9110

327. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,

September 24, 1937

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I have a faint impression that I wrote to you about prohibition in Bhavnagar. But I don't find a note about it anywhere. However, as often happens these days, I might have only thought of writing and then imagined that I had actually written. I write very little with my own hand, and that too with the left. It is possible, therefore, that if there was nobody with me when I wished to write, the intention was not carried out. This is just by way of preface.

What are the implications of the prohibition which is in force in Bhavnagar? For how long has it been in force? What is the result? Is the loss in revenue through prohibition made good through the improved condition of the people? I won't be perturbed if the result has been contrary to my expectations. Nor would I be surprised if the result has been according to my expectations, for any other result is impossible where the constructive work which should accompany prohibition is carried out. It will be enough if you entrust this job to any officer of your Excise Department and he writes to me. I certainly don't want this matter to weigh on your mind.

Vandematram from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5954. Also C.W. *3271. Courtesy:* Mahesh Pattani

328. HAVOC IN ORISSA

Floods, famines and pestilences have become part of the natural life of India. Famines and floods take place almost all the world over, but their effects are largely overcome in countries which have financial and other resources. But in India, where poverty reaches the point of starvation, the effects of floods and famines are not only not overcome but are felt with double force, and pestilences are ever with us through the same cause. But the gravest defect of India's pauperism is that we have come to regard these visitations with resignation which is none the less brutal because it is unconscious. To illustrate my point I single out the case of Orissa because of the appeal issued by the Minister of Revenue and Public Works in his capacity as Chairman of the Orissa Flood Relief Committee. In him, a member of the Congress Ministry, Government and the Congress combine. But in a covering letter he tells me that the response to the appeal has been nothing worth mentioning. The Orissa Governor, in his address at the inaugural meeting of the Flood Relief Fund, says: "As it was graphically put to me, on the night of the 6th August 30,000 people in this town, Cuttack, were sleeping or trying to sleep ten feet below the river level." Cuttack is an insignificant place compared to Bombay. It is not one-tenth the size of that city. Imagine what would happen to Bombay if there was a river passing by it, and floods put three lakhs of people in the predicament in which the people of Cuttack found themselves on the night of the sixth of August! Fifteen hundred square miles in the districts of Cuttack and Puri have been affected by floods. But the recurrence of such floods annually in many parts of India has made popular conscience blunt even in a place so cosmopolitan as Bombay which has never failed to respond to the cry of distress no matter from what corner of India it has come. If my pen moves any person to respond to the appeal, let him or her send whatever he or she can. There are various charities in Bombay. I venture to suggest that they can take consolidated action by making a joint inquiry into all such cases that may come under their notice and can then make proportionate contributions in accordance with the funds at their disposal. If this suggestion is adopted, no distress need go unheard because of want of proper championship. At present, it will be admitted there is no method in the distribution of these great charities. This suggestion is, however, for the future. For the time being, following the proverb 'he gives twice who quickly gives', let

those who feel impelled give without waiting for any joint action.

A word, however, to the Ministers. Whatever donations they may receive will give only partial relief. They ought, therefore, to do two things: first, adopt means and measures to make people, who may be affected, learn the art of helping themselves by engaging in any productive occupation. Bihar took up spinning and the like. Orissa may take up other occupations if people will not look at the spinning-wheel. The chief thing is to learn the dignity of labour. Let the Ministers put off their *kurtas* for a little time daily, and work as common labourers, so as to give an impetus to others who may be in need of labour and what labour brings. Secondly, they should make a proper effort to harness engineering skill so as to guide into healthy channels the course of the rushing waters during the monsoons

Harijan, 25-9-1937

329. NOT IMPRACTICABLE

Sardar Sir Jogendra Singh is a great social reformer, a man of letters and a politician. Whatever, therefore, he writes commands attention. He has contributed an article on total prohibition to *The Times of India*. Having read it with the care his writings demand from me, I must confess that I left the article with a sigh. How could such a reformer accept defeat on grounds that do not bear examination? His only argument seems to be: 'There is bound to be illicit distillation and secret drinking, therefore do not attempt prohibition.' In the Punjab there was local option but nobody applied it. "Therefore," he says, "my conclusion is that prohibition by compulsion will fail, and provinces will lose revenue which they need for rural reconstruction." By linking prohibition to revenue the Sardar has precipitately given up his case and contradicted himself. For in the fourth paragraph of his article he says: "I expressly declared that considerations of revenue would not weigh with me in carrying out a policy of controlling drink." Thank God Congress Ministries have cut their way through the revenue snare by debarring themselves from the use of liquor revenue. Once the loophole is left, the temptation to make use of this immoral gain will be too irresistible, for nobody denies the difficulty of making the drunkard sober in a moment. Old Ministers, with whom I used to plead for prohibition, did not put forth the plea of impracticability. But they pleaded inability to forgo the rich revenue received from the traffic. They wanted it for education. Is

education paid for by a questionable source of revenue worth having? Has it intrinsic merit? Has India got her money's worth from those who have received the education of the type that the schools and colleges of India provide?

Thieving will abide till doomsday. Must it therefore be licensed? Is thieving of the mind less criminal than thieving of matter? Illicit distillation to an extent will no doubt go on. Its quantity will be the measure of the Government's effort assisted by a vigilant public in the shape of continuous and sympathetic treatment of the drinker and the opium-eater. Moral elevation demands a price no less than material or physical elevation. But my submission is that this constructive effort is doomed to failure if it is not preceded by total prohibition. So long as the State not only permits but provides facilities for the addict to satisfy his craving, the reformer has little chance of success. Gipsy Smith was a powerful temperance preacher. It was a feature of his huge gatherings that several people took the vow of total abstinence under the spell of his song and precept. But I say from my experience of South Africa that the majority of the poor addicts could not resist the temptation to enter the palatial bars that faced them, no matter where they wandered, in the principal thoroughfares of cities or the wayside inns when they strayed away from cities. State prohibition is not the end of this great temperance reform but it is the indispensable beginning of it.

Of local option the less said the better. Was, there ever opposition to the closing of these dens of vice? Option has a place where a whole population wants to drink.

God willing, prohibition has come to stay. Whatever other contribution may or may not be made by the Congress, it will go down to history in letters of gold that the Congress pledged itself to prohibition in 1920, and redeemed the pledge at the very first opportunity without counting the cost. I doubt not that the other provinces will follow. I invite Sardar Jogendra Singh not to caution the Congress against the much-needed reform, but to throw in his full weight in favour of it in his own province and among the stalwart Sikhs.

Harijan, 25-9-1937

330. FOUR QUESTIONS

A correspondent asks the following four questions:

1. Hindus who once renounced their faith for some reason or other and joined Islam or Christianity sincerely repent and want to come back. Should we re-convert them or not? You may take the instance of your own son Harilal.[1]

2. Lakhs of the Depressed Class people in South India, as you know, have joined Christianity wholesale. Some of them, since the Travancore Durbar Declaration[2] and the popularity of the Harijan movement, feel it worthwhile to re-adopt their ancestral faith. What would you advise about them?

3. A Hindu was made to join another faith for certain material considerations. After some time he feels disillusioned and comes and knocks at our door. Shall we welcome him or not?

4. Young Hindu boys and girls are often taken hold of by Christian missionaries and converted. At some places Muslims are also making use of their orphanages for this purpose. What should we do, when these boys and girls, either alone or with their guardians, approach us for *shuddhi*?

These, or such questions, have been asked and answered before now in these columns in some shape or other. I do not need to answer each separately. In my opinion they are not examples of real heart conversion. If a person, through fear, compulsion, starvation or for material gain or consideration, goes over to another faith, it is a misnomer to call it conversion. Most cases of mass conversion, of which we have heard so much during the past two years, have been to my mind false coin. Real conversion springs from the heart and at the prompting of God, not of a stranger. The voice of God can always be distinguished from the voice of man. The hypothetical cases coined by my correspondent are, so far as I can see, not cases of conversion. I would, therefore, unhesitatingly re-admit to the Hindu fold all such repentants without ado, certainly without any *shuddhi*. *Shuddhi* is not applicable to such cases. And, as I believe in the equality of all the great religions of the earth, I regard no man as polluted because he

[1] *Vide* "Letter to P. M. Naidu", 3-3-1936 and "Letter to Ramdas Gandhi", 30-5-1936 also "Letter to H. L. Sharma", 1-6-1936

[2] *Vide* "An Example for Hindu Princes and Their Advicers", 16-11-1936

has forsaken the branch on which he was sitting and gone over to another of the same tree. If he comes back to the original branch, he deserves to be welcomed and not told that he had committed a sin by reason of his having forsaken the family to which he belonged. In so far as he may be deemed to have erred, he has sufficiently purged himself of it when he repents of the error and retraces his step.

Harijan, 25-9-1937

331. NOTES

AN APPEAL

I know that there are many teachers who more or less believe in the method of primary education I have been advocating. I know, too, that some are carrying on experiments in giving such training through some vocation. There are again those who are inclined in that direction but circumstances beyond their control have taken them away from the teaching profession. Now that Congress Ministries seem to favour the plan I have outlined, it is necessary to have the names of those who would give their services to the experiment. Will such friends send me their names, qualifications, salaries they would want, and their conditions if any?

LEGALIZED PROSTITUTION

Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi[1] furnishes one more proof of the very high expectations formed of Congress Ministries. People have a right to form such expectations. Even opponents of the Congress have admitted that they are standing the test well. The Congress Ministries seem to be vying with one another in adopting ameliorative measures so as to make their administrations respond to the real Indian environment. Dr. Muthulakshmi has issued a public appeal to the Madras Ministry to pass her bill which puts a stop to the immoral custom of dedicating *devadasis*[2] to a life of shame. I have not examined the bill. But the idea behind is so sound that it is a wonder that it has not yet found a place in the Statute-book of the Southern Presidency. I wholly agree with Dr. Muthulakshmi that the reform is as urgent as prohibition. She recalls the fact that the present Premier[3] spoke out

[1] A social worker of Madras
[2] Literally, servants of God; women dedicated to temples
[3] C. Rajagopalachari

many years ago in strong terms against the evil practice. I know that he is no less eager now that he has some power to deal with it legally. And I hope with her that before many months have passed the *devadasi* system will cease to have legal sanction.

USES OF "MAHURA"

A correspondent writes a long letter about *mahura* flowers, and desires that all restrictions on the use of *mahura* flowers, other than that for distillation, should be removed. As an out and out prohibitionist I have no hesitation in endorsing the proposal. The whole conception of prohibition is not penal but educative. As soon as State recognition of intoxicating drinks and drugs, and licensed shops for the sale thereof, is withdrawn, the way of education becomes clear. Penal enactments under the prohibition law will have to be of a character wholly different from those that have hitherto been in vogue. People will be trusted, therefore, if my scheme is accepted, to make the right use of *mahura*, and not prevented from using it altogether from fear of wrong use. Therefore, under the prohibition law, there will be no check on the right use of *mahura*, as there will be none on the right use of toddy. The following are some of the uses of *mahura* flowers, *mahura* oil and *mahura* wood, which I copy from the letter:

1. Fresh mahura flowers are sweet to eat.

2. A variety of tasty[1] preparations are made out of dried mahura flowers. These preparations serve as sweets to the poor people.

3. Decoction of mahura flowers is very effective in removing chronic constipation.

4. The oil from the seed called dolia is used as food. It is the poor man's ghee.

5. Mahura flowers are regarded as tonic for both men and cattle.

6. In times of scarcity and famine, which are very frequent in Kheda, mahura flowers go a long way in saving the poor from complete starvation.

7. Dolia oil is specially favoured in the preparation of washing- soap.

8. Mahura wood is used as fuel and timber.

Harijan, 25-9-1937

[1] The source has "tasteful"

332. LETTER TO SARASWATI

SEGAON,
September 25, 1937

CHI. SARASWATI,

Your letter. You are not to worry at all. Do exactly what Kanti suggests. There is no need to write to Amtul Salaam; she is here with me. She will be happy if only she knows that all is well with you two.

Come here only when you have Mamaji's[1] and Kanti's consent. Till then you should devote yourself solely to your studies. Keep your mind steady.

Kanti's letters must have now started coming in.

Your observations on the hospitals are true enough. No one is bothered about anyone else. True ahimsa is to regard those who are not related to us as our kinsmen and to serve them; this alone is [true] compassion.

I am keeping well and so is Ba.

Nimu has gone to Dehra Dun to study Hindi and English.

Lakshmi is still in Madras.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6165. Also C.W. 3438. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

333. PRIMARY EDUCATION IN BOMBAY[2]

In discussing the question of primary education I have hither to deliberately confined myself to the villages, as it is in the villages that the bulk of India's population resides. To tackle successfully the question of the villages is to solve the problem for the cities also. But a friend interested in the question of primary education in the city of Bombay puts the following poser:

> The Congress Ministry is just now preoccupied with the question of financing primary education. The cry to make primary education self-supporting is in the air. It would, therefore, be worthwhile to examine as to how and to what extent this can be done in the case of a city like Bombay. The annual budget of the Bombay Corporation for education is said to be somewhere between 35 and 36 lakhs of rupees. But this amount would have to be

[1] G. Ramachandran

[2] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 26-9-1937.

augmented by several lakhs of rupees before the scheme of introducing compulsory primary education in Bombay can be realized. At present over twenty lakhs of rupees are annually spent on teachers' salaries, while another four lakhs go as rent. This gives an average of Rs. 40 to 42 for each student. Can a student earn this amount in the course of his vocational training? And if not, then, how can primary education be made self-supporting?

I have no doubt in my mind that the city of Bombay and its children would only stand to gain by adopting a vocational basis for primary education.[1] Children brought up in cities can learn poems by heart and recite them like parrots. They can dance, mimic and make gestures, beat the drum, march in a line, answer questions about History and Geography and will know a little Arithmetic; but they will not be able to go beyond this. I forget one thing. They will surely be acquainted with a little English too? But if they are asked to repair a chair or mend a torn dress they will not be able to do it. Such helpless children as our city-bred ones I have seen nowhere in my wanderings in South Africa and England. At present all that these children can show at the end of their primary education course is not worth much and certainly not calculated to fit them for citizenship.

I have no hesitation in recommending the adoption of a vocational basis for primary education for cities. It would enable the better part, if not the whole, of the 35 lakhs of the present expenditure on primary education in Bombay to be saved. Taking, for the sake of convenience, Rs. 40 to be the annual expense of giving primary education to a child in Bombay, it would mean that 87,500 children in all are at present receiving education out of the educational grant of the Bombay Corporation. Now, taking the population of Bombay to be ten lakhs, the total number of children of the school-going age ought to be at least one lakh and a half. This means that no less than 62,000 children of school-going age in the city of Bombay are at present going without primary education. If we take away 6,000 out of this figure as the number of children who are possibly receiving their education privately in their homes, it would still leave 56,000 children for whom primary education has still got to be provided. At the present scale of expenditure this would require a sum of Rs. 22,40,000 which, so far as I can see, is hardly likely to be forthcoming on this side of doomsday.

[1] The paragraph, except for the last sentence, which is from *Harijan*, is translated from the Gujarati in *Harijanbandhu.*

I am a firm believer in the principle of free and compulsory primary education for India. I also hold that we shall realize this only by teaching the children a useful vocation and utilizing it as a means for cultivating their mental, physical and spiritual faculties. Let no one consider these economic calculations in connection with education as sordid, or out of place. There is nothing essentially sordid about economic calculations. True economics never militates against the highest ethical standard just as all true ethics to be worth its name must at the same time be also good economics. An economics that inculcates mammon worship and enables the strong to amass wealth at the expense of the weak, is a false and dismal science. It spells death. True economics, on the other hand, stands for social justice, it promotes the good of all equally, including the weakest, and is indispensable for decent life. I therefore make bold to suggest that Bombay would be setting a noble example for the whole country to follow if, by teaching its children a useful industry, it can make primary education pay its way. Supposing a student works at a vocation for four hours a day, then taking the number of working days in a month to be 25 and the rate of remuneration two pice per hour, he or she would be earning Rs. 3-2-0 per month for the school. The vocational exercise will keep the mind of the student fresh and alert while providing at the same time a means for drawing out his or her intellect. This does not mean that the child would begin to pay 2 pice per hour from the commencement. But he will pay during the whole period of seven years at the rate of 2 pice per hour.

It is a gross superstition to think that this sort of vocational exercise will make education dull, or cramp the child's mind. Some of my happiest recollections are of the bright and joyful faces of children while they were receiving vocational instruction under competent teachers. As against this, I have also known the most fascinating of subjects boring children, when taught in the wrong way by an incompetent instructor. But it may be asked where from are we going to get capable instructors of the kind that we require? My reply is that necessity is the mother of invention. Once we realize the necessity for reorientation of our educational policy, the means for giving effect to it will be found without much difficulty. I am sure that, for a fraction of the time and expense incurred on the present educational system and the staff to man it, we could easily train all the manual instructors that we should require for our work. It ought to be possible for a committee of educational experts of Bombay, if they

are in earnest, to draw up a scheme of primary education on the lines suggested by me and to put it into operation without loss of time. Only they must have a living faith in it as I have. Such faith can only grow from within; it cannot be acquired vicariously. Nothing great in this world was ever accomplished without a living faith.

What kinds of vocations are the fittest for being taught to children in urban schools? There is no hard and fast rule about it. But my reply is clear. I want to resuscitate the villages of India. Today our villages have become a mere appendage to the cities. They exist, as it were, to be exploited by the latter and depend on the latter's sufference. This is unnatural. It is only when the cities realize the duty of making an adequate return to the villages for the strength and sustenance which they derive from them, instead of selfishly exploiting them, that a healthy and moral relationship between the two will spring up, and if the city children are to play their part in this great and noble work of social reconstruction, the vocations through which they are to receive their education ought to be directly related to the requirements of the villages. So far as I can see, the various processes of cotton manufacture from ginning and cleaning of cotton to the spinning of yarn answer this test as nothing else does. Even today cotton is grown in the villages and is ginned and spun and converted into cloth in the cities. But the chain of processes which cotton undergoes in the mills from the beginning to the end constitutes a huge tragedy of waste in men, materials and mechanical power.

My plan to impart primary education through the medium of village handicrafts like spinning and carding, etc., is thus conceived as the spearhead of a silent social revolution fraught with the most far-reaching consequence. It will provide a healthy and moral basis of relationship between the city and the village and thus go a long way towards eradicating some of the worst evils of the present social insecurity and poisoned relationship between the classes. It will check the progressive decay of our villages and lay the foundation of a juster social order in which there is no unnatural division between the 'haves' and have-nots' and everybody is assured of a living wage and the right to freedom. And all this would be accomplished without the horrors of a bloody class war or a colossal capital expenditure such as would be involved in the mechanization of a vast continent like India. Nor would it entail a helpless dependence on foreign imported

machinery or technical skill. Lastly, by obviating the necessity for highly specialized talent, it would place the destiny of the masses, as it were, in their own hands. But who will bell the cat? Will the city folk listen to me at all? Or, will mine remain a mere cry in the wilderness? Replies to these and similar questions will depend more on lovers of education like my correspondent living in cities than on me.

Harijan, 9-1-1937

334. MY NOTES

NEED FOR SOCIAL EFFORT

A gentleman writes:[1]

It may be said that such a belief[2] is prevalent among almost all Hindus. One need not find out the source of it. I do not know it. In this age when men and women are supposed to have and should have equal rights they should be rated equally. Why should there be such jubilation at the birth of a son? And why should there be sorrow when a daughter is born? Both of them have an equal right to live. The world can go on only with the existence of both. But a belief which has taken deep roots from ancient times cannot be suddenly wiped out by one or more individuals writing against it. Only when knowledge that enables us to distinguish between good and bad spreads in Hindu society and when women are truly respected will the incidents mentioned by this gentleman from Kutch be averted. Today both husband and wife agree to a second marriage when the first has produced only daughters. It would not be proper to say in this case that sexual desire alone prevails; only a certain kind of sentiment holds sway. And the sentiment cannot be suddenly wished away. Considerable social effort is needed to bring about the change.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 26-9-1937

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had drawn Gandhiji's attention to the marriage of a 55-year-old khadi worker, who had once been praised in *Harijanbandhu*, with a 20-year-old widow, ostensibly for the sake of a son.

[2] In the superiority of the male over the female issue

335. LETTER TO V. V. ATITKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 26, 1937

DEAR ATITKAR,

Morally and legally, in the Congress sense, there is nothing wrong in your asking for and receiving Government grants now, but I quite agree with you that it would be better if you did not.

From the views I have been recently propounding about education you will deduce that I would not multiply Universities if they are to be a burden on the Government. But I would grant a charter for the asking if the Government is called upon to create a separate examining University, for such a body is more than self-supporting from the examination fees it charges. In any event, those who seek a charter for a new University have to calculate upon the University being self-supporting. Colleges and even schools, if the latter are also taken under University wings, would naturally have to conform to the syllabus and other regulations framed by the University. Thus you will be entitled to have a charter for the Lokamanya University if you can see your way to making the University self-supporting—in other words, that is, if you think you can find sufficient students to appear for your examinations.

Under my conception there will be colleges for every conceivable art and craft, and, therefore, I would not mind any number of Universities on these terms.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. ATITKAR
TILAK MEMORIAL VIDYAPITH
POONA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

336. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 26, 1937

DEAR DOCTOR GOPICHAND,

I have your letter. I am sorry for the belated reply, but you know the cause. I do not at all know whether I shall be able to tour the Punjab on my way to the North West Frontier. I rather think not, for the forward journey should be uninterrupted; there may be some possibility on return. So far as Jamnalalji is concerned, let his tour be treated on merits, invite him separately. He should be able to negotiate it after the AICC meeting. As to the Parliamentary work, regard being had to the facts mentioned by you, my inclination is to advise you to withdraw altogether.[1] But whatever you do has to be done in a detatched manner. Therefore my advice is that you should put the whole case before Jawaharlal and be solely guided by him. Offer unconditional resignation. If he does not approve of it, send him the statement you would like to make, and then do as he directs. That is the only straight and constitutional course, and no other. Do not hark back upon the past mistakes. You have sufficiently urged yourself by repentance. The next step has to be considered on its own merits.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From the original: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. *Courtesy :* Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The addressee had complained about the attitude of Dr. Satyapal and other Congress leaders towards him and asked Gandhiji whether he should withdraw from Congress activity and issue a statement explaining his stand in the face of criticism of him and his work in the Congress.

337. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON

September 26, 1937

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I do get your letters and read them. It is a great surprise to me how you could stand the strain of five days of touring. When two devoted workers come together,[1] it becomes hard for both. Sometimes two weak persons can easily work together. And even a strong man will have some pity for his weak companion, and the two, therefore, can work together. But you two were like two tigers neither of whom would yield to the other. Your joint tour, therefore, must have been interesting to watch. Very well. Since you have contributed your share towards the Kamala Memorial, what does it matter? The amount collected also was quite satisfactory, considering the times. Did the (Ahmedabad) mill-owners pay handsomely?

I understand what you say about the Kathiawar Parishad.

Forget the Nariman episode[2]. You have entrusted your problem to me and I have passed it on to Bahadurji[3]. He is a hard worker. He spares time regularly every day and reads every paper and makes notes. He will take two weeks for just reading all the papers. He spares time from the pile of cases with him and reads the papers as if this also was one of his cases. Don't mind the delay, therefore, and let things take their own course.

Don't read the attacks in the newspapers at all. Read the accompanying letter[4] and return it. Where did you deliver such a speech?

If the Congress session becomes expensive, according to me it will only signify our [moral] bankruptcy. I see our doom in the abundance of our resources. Such glory will be borrowed glory. It will not bring out of the volunteers' hard labour. Please don't read in this any reflection on you. I am only foreseeing our future. It is a pathetic picture of our condition. I have already written, five or six

[1] The addressee and Jawaharlal Nehru had toured Gujarat together in connection with the Kamala Nehru Memorial Fund.

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 16-10-1937.

[3] D. N. Bahadurji

[4] Complaining that the addressee during a speech at Mandvi had alleged that the citizens of Bombay were supplied sewage water

days ago, a letter to Ramdas expressing these views but in a different manner. Whatever happens, please don't interpret this letter to mean that you should take no interest in that work and let it suffer. Go on with it according to your lights and as best as you can. All this I have dictated because I have sat down to dictate this letter specially to you.

Mahadev has been sent to Dhulia. . . .[1]

I started dictating this letter in connection with the Durbar case. What I have dictated above was only by way of preface. Don't put up a Congress town. Make it a village so that the village arts can be poured into it. But art requires talent and heart, never money. Don't, therefore, permit anybody to spend even a pie on decoration. 1 think that in the confectionery shops and tea-stalls, we can permit the use of only cow's ghee and cow's milk. In other words, the owners should buy their stores from us or under our supervision, and to help us meet the expenditure on such supervision we should issue licences against payment of a fee. But I do believe that we should provide facilities for such shops and stalls. Only, they should abide by our rules.

And now about Durbar. We must get his village restored not for his sake but for the sake of our honour. In exchange for Dhasa he has acquired Kaira as his capital. Nobody knew the Durbar of Dhasa, but everybody knows the Durbar of Kaira. Raojibhai's[2] letter, therefore, has had no effect on me. On the contrary, it makes me angry. But in my old age now I must not yield to anger. And moreover he is far away. I, therefore, restrain my anger. We are likely to worry, and do worry, about Dhasa more than he is likely to do. Besides, he worries because of his friendship with Durbar. We should have had to worry about Durbar even if he had not been a friend and was only a national worker. If we did not, nobody would have cared for us in the Congress. All this, however, is mere prattle. From the information that Raojibhai has given, it seems we should start taking steps immediately. I had thought that we would start after the new Ministry has had some breathing time. I feel now that you as President of the Gujarat Congress Committee or the Secretary of the Committee should write to the Premier[3] suggesting that for the sake of the prestige of the Congress he should take up Durbar's case and advise the Governor to

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] Raojibhai Manibhai Patel
[3] B. G. Kher

recommend the return of Dhasa to him. I think the request will be granted and that I shall not have to do anything in the matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SWARAJYA ASHRAM

BARDOLI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 210-4

338. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,

September 27, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL

O, Thou of little faith! Thine letters are all destroyed without being read by anybody except when there is something which I want to share with someone. This has happened but once since your deserting your corner near the tool-box.

Never mind what people say about J.[1] or your partiality for him. We must tolerate our neighbours' mannerisms, if we would love them as we would have them to love us. Who is there without his or her mannerisms, then let him or her throw the first stone. Are you? Do you know any? I know none including my poor or big self.

It would be a red-letter day when, though late in life, you marry khadi. When you do, you will find that all your other loves will be satisfied through khadi. Undivided love is[2] the meaning and secret of marriage. All else is prostitution, idolatry. Gods are many but God is one. Enough of sermonizing.

A separate note for Charlie.

I have already told S.[3] he must not go to Calcutta or take up active duty before he is thoroughly fit. Even when he is, he can't replace J. who has his unconsumable energy and single mindedness.

You will come off all right in Nagpur.

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru

[2] The source has "in"

[3] Subhas Chandra Bose

Yes, I do think the medicine has done good and so do the doctors.

Herewith Mira's letter of yesterday. It could not go yesterday through my stupid forgetfulness—measure of little love? Love never forgets.

Enough for the day.

Love.

ROBBER, TYRANT & CO.

From the original: C.W. 3613. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6422

339. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 27, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

Today is the day [of the week][1] for using the right hand. You are bound to miss Narottam there, as I do Chhotelal every minute. If the enthusiasm with which all of you worked on the occasion of the *Rentia Baras* endures, that will be a memorial to Narottam and the day will have been properly celebrated.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8539. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

340. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON,
September 27, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

All the matter is not ready. I am sending as much as is ready. It has been revised.

I could not send back Janba earlier than now. Mirabehn has done the revision quite carefully. Send over to Chandrashanker [whatever you can] and postpone for tomorrow the matter for [*Harijan*] *Sevak* and [*Harijan*]*bandhu*. In that case you will have a copy for revision and the post will be dispatched in time. However, do what

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Kantilal Gandhi", 29-9-1937

you think convenient. A letter[1] I have written to Gurudev and two copies of it are enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11572

341. LETTER TO G. V. GURJALE

SEGAON, WARDHA,

September 28, 1937

MY DEAR GURJALE,

I had better not address you by your titular name. It does not yet come to me naturally. I think that you have made a sweeping statement about tea. Are you able to prove the economic ruin of thousands of families? I know something of the evils of the tea and coffee habit. I have written also against it. But I am not able to endorse your condemnation. There can be no comparison between alcohol and tea and coffee. The latter will damage health when indulged into excess. But alcohol cannot be taken in measured quantities, except medicinally. And it ruins body, mind and soul. I would advise you, therefore, to throw yourself heart and soul into the weaning of the addict from his drinks and drugs, and not to raise other issues, however important they may be on their own merits.

Do the letter-head and the adoption of the sannyasi name show that you are now at peace with yourself, flourishing and in possession of the Truth to your satisfaction?

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

SWAMI NIRMALANANDA BHIKSHU
GANDHI MISSION SOCIETY
KRIPA ASHRAM, GANDHI KUPPAM
TIRUVENNAINALLUR P. O., S. INDIA[2]

From a photostat: G.N. 1401. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Rabindranath Tagore", 23-9-1937

[2] The address is from the Pyarelal Papers copy.

342. LETTER TO MANU SUBEDAR

September 28, 1937

BHAI SUBEDAR,

I shall not tire of your letters. But please do not be displeased if I do not publish your notes. I preserve some of the notes for myself, but I can place before the public only what appeals to me. Do you agree?

Koyaji's article[1] is not likely to sway me, for, I take an altogether different stand in these two matters. With regard to prohibition and the creation of alternative sources of revenue to make up for the excise that will be lost, I would recommend that you make a close study of the Bill presented in Madras. If you have any suggestions to make with regard to the Bill, you can write to me. I shall send your suggestions on to Rajaji. I do not think anyone else has given as much thought to the problem of drinking from this point of view as we two have done. If there are any such persons I do not know of them.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Extracts from J. C. Koyaji's article appeared in *Harijan*, 2-10-1937, along with comments by Mahadev Desai under the title "An Economist and His Figures".

343. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SEGAON,
September 28, 1937

CHI. MATHURADAS,

If we think of the Congress policy in regard to franchise, all men and women aged 21 or 18 years should have a right to vote. But I see no harm if for some reason we have to adopt a middle course. I do not see any particular justice or merit in granting voting right only to the literate persons. But as I pen this reply it occurs to me that I should discuss this issue in *Harijanbandhu*, so that you may have a detailed reply and I may not have to deal with the same thing twice.[1] I do feel strongly in matters like these. My views are based on experience. So it will be as well if, through you, I can let the public know. Hence only this much on the question. You will have read in *H. B.* my reply to your letter about education.[2] Let me know if you have any comments.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

344. A LETTER

September 28, 1937

DEAR SISTER,

You had a right to offer criticism in the matter of the Gujarat Vidyapith. Moreover, I like criticism. I accept the three points you have made. But I would not agree with you in believing that the Vidyapith has failed. The Gujarat Vidyapith and other national institutions have contributed to the struggle which other universities have not done. That was not merely because these universities belonged to the Government but because the students and teachers of these universities had a different mental attitude. Nevertheless, had the things mentioned by you not been present, the national universities

[1] For Gandhiji's article on the subject, *vide* "Illiterates v. Literates
[2] *ibid*

would have contributed much more. But we shall think about it when we meet. These things are closely related to the subject under discussion. What I am stating now cannot be stated in the same manner at a meeting of the University.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

345. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS

September 29, 1937

BHAI LAKSHMIDAS,

I have your letter. I like your frankness. It is good that you wrote to Vallabhbhai. You should write to him. Were you present during the speech?

It is very good indeed that you are corresponding with Kishorelalbhai.

The thing compared cannot be identical in every respect with the thing to which it is compared. When the preceptor, etc., are likened to the father it does not mean that they are in every respect similar to the father. Kishorelalbhai could only mean that if the Sardar is like a father to the Gujaratis, they should regard him as such wherever they may be. It is a different question whether he has, in reality, the requisite qualities to be regarded as such.

What I have written implies only this: that we must weigh every word we may utter or write.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

346. LETTER TO YUSUF MEHERALLY

September 29, 1937

BHAI MEHERALY,

It is only right that the Shop Assistants' Conference should be founded by Seth Jamnalalji who has turned many a shop-assistant into masters of firms. There is no doubt that they have to work long hours. All they should remember is that they would not attain their objectives by following the war-path but by remaining calm, truthful and firm.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

347. LETTER TO SHANKARLAL

September 29, 1937

BHAI SHANKARLALBHAI,

Your letter contains a question to which you expect an answer from me. You ask me how it is possible in practice to be tolerant and continue to bear with faults even when they are quite evident. You have yourself said and written that you are able to see countless faults in yourself every day. And yet, how very tolerant you are to yourself ! I see countless faults in me every day and yet there is no limit to my tolerance of myself. If I am not tolerant of myself in spite of seeing my faults, I would have to fast every day and think of all sorts of expiations and finally go the way of Chhotelal[1]! But I do none of these things. I believe that my tolerance is not misplaced. That is why I learnt to be tolerant of others in spite of seeing their faults. But I have not yet attained the ideal state because I must be at least as tolerant of others as I am of myself if not more. I have not been able to be so. However, I find that I want to proceed in that direction and I know I am doing it. But even as I proceed I regard faults as faults indeed. With these two things my own strength grows as it should indeed. I had my first lesson in this training from my parents. They were tolerant of me even when they saw my faults. I used to worship my parents. But it cannot be said that 1 could not see their faults. I was quite tolerant of them because of my devotion to them. The same attitude then continued towards my brothers and other relatives. My family continued to grow. But the attitude remained unchanged. So there is always a certain measure of tolerance in me.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Chhotelal Jain, who had committed suicide; *vide* "A Silent Co-worker Gone", "A Slient Co-Worker Gone", 1-9-1937

348. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS

September 29, 1937

BHAI BHAGWANDAS,

. .[1] I also dislike an unmarried girl marrying a widower. But after a good deal of experience I have come to feel that in the matter of marriage boys and girls will behave in strange ways. Under such circumstances all the zeal of the reformer is rendered futile. A non-violent reformer has no power other than of his own intellect and the strength of his own hands.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

349. LETTER TO GOPI NATH

September 29, 1937

BHAI GOPI NATH,

What you write about the law-suit is correct. Filing a suit even over a small amount involves considerable expense. But today there is no provision under which one could be governed only by the rule of the *panchayat.* Under such circumstances the golden rule is that we should neither lend nor borrow. If you do lend it must be with the idea that you are not going to get your money back. You just have to do it. And if you have to do such a thing you should be clear in your mind that it is charity. It should be remembered that out of the millions those who are required to go to the court are very few. If we can be out of [debt][2] and mingle with the masses like drops in the ocean, we would not have to bother with law courts.

Now for the profession of vaidyas. In the ancient times vaidyas gave the benefit of their knowledge without charging fees. They did not charge even for the medicines. And generally the medicines too used to be quite inexpensive. The Rajavaidyas and such others used to make their own patent medicines and put up a great show. Today only people of the latter category are left.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] Illegible in the source

350. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 29, 1937

CHI. KANTI,

Have you boycotted me? I wait for your letter every day, but get none. I have carried out all your wishes. What more do you want now? I don't approve of your silence.

I had meant to write to Nanjappa at the same time that I wrote to you. But I couldn't do so owing to pressure of work. I don't write with my right hand on any day except Mondays, and on Mondays the work of *Harijan* leaves no time for any other work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati C.W. 7331 Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

351. LETTER TO SYED BASHIR AHMED[1]

[Before *September 30, 1937*][2]

I cannot subscribe to your sweeping opinion that a Mussalman who joins the Congress betrays Muslim interests. On the contrary, I hold that Mussalmans who desire complete independence for India cannot do better than join the Congress in its uphill fight for independence. It is an organization that is open to all who care to join it. Do you not see that Mussalmans, if they join it in their thousands, can shape the whole policy of the Congress? There is no proportional representation there. It is a wholly democratic organization without any communal barriers.

Not being in the Congress, I cannot hold myself responsible for everything that the Congress and Congressmen do. But being a firm believer in the Congress objective, I had no hesitation in advising the

[1] The addressee, editor of *Isha'at-e-Taleem*, had enquired: "Would you not agree with me that you want to realize truth by following the right path based on honesty, straightforwardness and ethical soundness? The Congress offers Ministries to Muslims who have been elected on the Muslim League ticket, provided they sign the Congress pledge. Do you want the Muslim members who have sworn their loyalty to the League before their election by God and the Holy Koran to break their sacred oaths?"

[2] This and the following item appeared under the date-line "Talegaon, September 30"

Congress to adopt the office-acceptance programme. On questions relating to Mussalmans, the Congress is solely guided by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. I have no notion of the obligation undertaken by the members of the Muslim League, but I doubt not that the Maulana Saheb has taken every care not to allow the Congress to become a party to a violation of any moral principle by any Muslim.

Generally speaking, I see nothing wrong in a member of a political party transferring his allegiance from one party to another. I do not see what objection you can have to the Congress trying to have within its fold all the Muslims it can have by every honourable means. It seems to me that the Congress will forfeit its title to be called an all-India organization if it does not endeavour to represent Mussalmans and other sections as well as Hindus. That has from the very beginning been the traditional policy and strength of the Congress. I, therefore, fail to see where the slightest departure from truth takes place in the Congress accepting those Mussalmans who favour complete independence for India and who appreciate the means adopted by the Congress as for instance, communal unity, Khadi, prohibition, removal of untouchability and other things recited in the Congress election manifesto[1].

The Hindu, 2-10-1937

352. LETTER TO SYED BASHIR AHMED

[Before *September 30, 1937*]

It amazes me that you fail to see the great merit of the Congress having given dictatorial powers to a single Mussalman[2] in the important matter of choosing Muslim Ministers. Of course, the Maulana can err, but it is irrelevant. But what is great and relevant is the fact that a Mussalman divine has been given powers, which the Congress has not given to any single person.

The Hindu, 2-10-1937

[1] The draft of which was approved by the A. I. C. C. at its meeting in Bombay on August 22 and 23, 1936; *vide* "Extracts From the Congress Election Manifesto", 22-8-1936

[2] Abul Kalam Azad; *vide* the preceding item.

353. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 30, 1937

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have already replied to your letter about the question of franchise. Remit Rs. 3,600 to the Gandhi Seva Sangh. Kishorelal[1] will then consider the matter in consultation with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

354. VIEWS ON CONGRESS IN NORTH WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE

[After *September 1937*][1]

The C. however understand that the object of the amendment is to secure uniformity of policy and practice among Congressmen in the Province and strict confirmation to discipline. This object can be easily obtained by the P.C.C. passing a by-law whereby any member who commits a breach of the fundamental policy of the Congress or of the observances enjoined by the constitution or any by-laws would be deprived of the right of voting. The P.C.C. may also pass a by-law preventing the formation of any organization by Congressmen except with its consent in writing previously obtained at Congress meetings. The Committee recognize the special difficulties of the Congress in the Frontier Province. Great latitude that is enjoyed by Congressmen in politically advanced provinces is not to be expected in the Frontier Province. Khan A. G. Khan[2] is the acknowledged leader without a rival in the Province. He experiences difficulties in working the Congress in the Province. He is a silent worker. The C. expect Congressmen in the province to help him in the difficult task in front of him.

The organism of Khudai Khidmatgars is Khan Seheb's own

[1] Kishorelal Mashruwala

[1] Congress Ministry in N.W.F.P. was formed on September 6, 1937. Gandhiji subsequently visited the N. W.F.P. in 1938.

[2] Abdul Ghaffar Khan

creation. It is in the nature of a non-violent army of volunteers. Khan Saheb has very appropriately called it Servants of God because his conception of Independent India is an India dedicated to the service of humanity. Though K. has generously placed at the disposal of the Congress the services of this great organization, if it is to retain its efficiency, it must remain under Khan Saheb as Supreme Commander and subject to his sole discipline. It is also necessary that there should be no other organization of volunteers formed by the F. Province Congress Committee.

From a copy: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

355. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 1, 1937

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

So far as I am concerned Pattabhi is a good choice.[1] But I suppose you will have the sense of the members of the Committee.

I don't know whether you will find time to attend the Educational Conference that is being held in Wardha[2], for which the invitation has gone to you. If you can, I would like you to come, but I do not want you to make time for the Conference if more important work requires your presence elsewhere. Undoubtedly it will be a strain for two days, but your presence will be a solace to me if you can come.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

You will find herewith the result of my correspondence with Syed Habib, in the shape of a cheque and letter. I simply rebuked him for getting money from here, there or anywhere, without mentioning the conversation I had with you.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Pattabhi Sitaramayya's name was being considered for Congress Presidentship.

[2] On October 22 and 23

356. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

SEGAON,
October 1, 1937

No time to write except to send you love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3616. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6425

357. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 1, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. You shouldn't have stopped taking milk. To observe mourning[2] one may give up eating delicacies, but one must eat whatever is essential. If one who has taken the vow of *aswada*[3] is observing it properly, he would be eating nothing to please the palate and, therefore, would have no need to give up anything. Moreover, if birth and death are the same thing, and indeed they are, why mourn the death of the dear ones? Or why rejoice at their birth? Please, therefore, start taking milk immediately you get this letter. If you wish, you can make use of this letter. Moreover, our duty to the departed consists in taking up and carrying on their work, and that all of you are doing to the best of your abilities. The burden cannot be borne by you alone, even if you wished. And if you give up milk and become weak, your capacity for work will diminish, and one may say that you will to that extent be less able to carry your share of the burden. Reason with yourself thus and resume taking milk and fruit.

Come here when you can stir out. And let it not be so late that I may not be here when you come. Never mind, however, if your coming is delayed by work. We shall meet if and when God wills.

I am not as weak as you suppose. I am able, more or less, to attend to all my usual work. I can eat sufficiently well, too. I do less physical work. We are having two fairly serious patients here these days. There are other minor illnesses, too, from time to time.

[1] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.
[2] The addressee's father-in-law Harsu Dayal had died in July, 1937.
[3] Control of the palate

Parnerkar and Chimanlal are in bed. Parnerkar is better and will leave bed in a few days. But Chimanlal's ship is in mid-sea. He has typhoid. Today is the fourteenth day. The temperature has still not come to normal. That means it will last for 21 days at least. He is being looked after chiefly by Sharda and Bhansalibhai.

One cannot yet say that Ba's leg is completely healed. Lilavati keeps indifferent health. She will most probably be operated upon tomorrow for tonsils.

Amtul Salaam is, as you know, a permanent patient.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3506

358. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 1, 1937

CHI. NARAHARI,

Chimanlal is critically ill. Today is the fourteenth day after the attack of typhoid. The temperature has still not come to normal. This means that it will take at least another seven days. He has become extremely weak. But as a patient he preserves wonderful calm. Nobody is put to any trouble, nor is there any fuss. He has had inflamed piles for three days and there is much bleeding. But he suffers everything calmly and shows no impatience. Please inform Shakaribehn[1]. I asked him whether he desired her presence. He doesn't want her to be sent for. She is not needed for nursing either. He is being nursed by Bhansalibhai and Sharda.

Is it true that Shakaribehn will have to leave the Ashram after a month or two for want of accommodation? Is she getting any help?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9111

[1] Wife of Chimanlal Shah

359. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[After] *October* [*1*][1] *1937*

CHI. NARANDAS,

Your programme seems to have succeeded well enough. You got more money, too, than expected and got yarn as well.[2]

I suppose the cotton for the slivers consumed in the spinning done in the school must have been supplied by the school itself. If we calculate the value of the yarn after deducting the cost of the cotton, what would be your estimate of the net gain? If you can supply the figures relating to the number of days and hours of work of each of the notable personalities mentioned by you, please let me have them.

What was the approximate attendance at Rameshwaridevi's meeting? What impression did you form of her? Did you come into fairly close contact with her?

Of the sum of Rs. 15,000, did you get anything from outside or did you collect the entire sum in Kathiawar? You may certainly reserve Rs. 10,000 for 'Harijan' and spend the rest in khadi work.

How old is Vithal who was among those who joined in spinning? Who was the youngest amongst them? Did anyone use the *takli* for spinning?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8541. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] From the reference to the programme for *Rentia Baras* which fell on October l *vide* also "Letter to Narandas Gandhi",27-9-1937

[2] The National School, Rajkot under the addressee's charge, had a special programme for the *Rentia Baras* celebrations. They devoted a few hours daily, for 68 days, to spinning and produced 28,34,000 yards of yarn, and collected funds for khadi work.

360. A LETTER[1]

[Before *October 2, 1937*]

I shall try to make something out of the many handicrafts you have suggested. You are so resourceful that you can even shoulder the new undertaking. But a few things are essential before you can do so. You will have to forget your tomes, and start making use of your hands and feet. For this you must set apart part of your busy hours. Take up cotton and *takli*-spinning and approach them intellectually. I send you Gregg's[2] and the late Maganlal Gandhi's book[3] on the subject. Sjt. Gulzarilal Nanda would gladly initiate you into it. But more important than this is for you to launch out into one of the villages in the neighbourhood of the city, study how some of the poor handicraftsmen, basket-makers, rope-makers, etc., make their living. Even their crude handiwork will reveal some art; But with your intelligent perception you will be able to find out that there is much scope for improvement in the method of their work, and you will see how these ignorant folks have gone along the beaten track for years without anyone to show them improved ways. You will also realize that their ignorance is the result of our middle-class ancestors and of you and I having neglected these poor folks, and you will perhaps shed a genuine tear. You will then see what I mean by education through handicrafts. It is likely that the whole thing may have a different reaction on you, and you may want to preserve the *status quo*. Or perhaps you would reject both the existing and the proposed scheme of things and discover a third thing altogether. That, you may be sure, will not pain me. For my sole purpose is to seek truth by thought, word and deed. That is the thing I am mad about, the thing for which I am living and for which I am hoping to die. That is why I challenge friends like you and invite them to challenge me. If they convince me of the error of my ways, I shall not hesitate to confess my folly.

Harijan, 2-10-1937

[1] Translated by Mahadev Desai this appeared under the title "An Open Mind". Prefacing it he wrote: "An economist friend has been, at Gandhiji's request, sending him a number of notes on education and prohibition. He approaches the question from the purely economic point of view which would seem to make the educational point of view secondary and not primary as Gandhiji wants it to be."

[2] Richard *B. Gregg's Economics of Khaddar*

[3] *Charkha Shastra*

361. LEST WE FORGET

A Harijan *sevak* reminds me that nowadays Harijans, for whom this weekly was started, have receded into the background and its columns are devoted to all sorts of subjects. He is half right. I have begun to discuss questions which have been hitherto deliberately excluded. The reason for exclusion no longer exists. The contrary is the case now. In the greater part of India the Congress is both in office and power. It is true that the power is limited. But it is limited in terms of Complete Independence, not otherwise. India is one vast prison with high walls of suppression choking her mind and body. But its Superintendent has seen fit to give a large part of the prisoners the power to appoint from among themselves the governing officials with full powers of administration, at any rate enough for growing strong, so long as they recognize that they are still prisoners. Well, they have chosen to take advantage of this freedom in the hope that by never requiring the assistance of his admitted physical superiority they will convince the Superintendent that he is no longer wanted.

Anyway, that being my interpretation of the Government of India Act and the office-acceptance, I must strive to show to the co-workers, who have become Ministers, how in my opinion they can achieve the end. And if I succeed in so doing, the battle against untouchability is almost won.

But I need hardly say that removal of untouchability from the Hindu heart is, like communal unity, an indispensable condition of success through the non-violent action that is implicit in office-acceptance. Therefore Harijan *sevaks* have to redouble their efforts to touch the caste Hindu heart as well as the Harijan heart. We must constantly remind Hindu orthodoxy of the solemn oath taken at the all-India meeting held in Bombay on the 25th September, 1932, under the presidentship of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya.[1] Here is the oath:

> This Conference resolves that henceforth, amongst Hindus, no one shall be regarded as untouchable by reason of his birth, and that those who have been so regarded hitherto shall have the same right as other Hindus in regard to the use of public wells, public schools, public roads and all other public institutions. This right shall have statutory recognition at the first opportunity, and shall be one of the earliest acts of the Swaraj Parliament, if it shall not have received such recognition before that time.

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Dr. Nilaranjan Ray and Dr. B. C. Roy", 25-9-1932

It is further agreed that it shall be the duty of all Hindu leaders to secure, by every legitimate and peaceful means, an early removal of all social disabilities now imposed by custom upon the so-called untouchable classes, including the bar in respect of admission to temples.

Harijan, 2-10-1937

362. STUDENTS AND STRIKES

A college student of Bangalore writes:

I have read your article[1] in *Harijan* and I request you to let me know your opinion on students taking part in strikes like Andamans Day, Abattoir Day[2], etc.

Whilst I have pleaded for the removal of restrictions on the speech and movements of students, I am not able to support political strikes or demonstrations. Students should have the greatest freedom of expression and of opinion. They may openly sympathize with any political party they like. But in my opinion they may not have freedom of action whilst they are studying. A student cannot be an active politician and pursue his studies at the same time. It is difficult to draw hard and fast lines at the time of big national upheavals. Then they do not strike or, if the word 'strike' can be used in such circumstances, it is a wholesale strike; it is a suspension of studies. Thus what may appear to be an exception is not one in reality

As a matter of fact the question such as the correspondent has raised should not arise in the Congress Provinces. For there can be no curb which the best mind of the students will not willingly accept. The majority of them are, must be, Congress-minded. They may not do anything that would embarrass the Ministries. If they struck, they would do so because the Ministers wanted them to. But I cannot conceive of Congress Ministers wanting them to strike except when the Congress is no longer in office, and when the Congress declares, maybe, a non-violent active war against the Government of the day. And even then, I should think that to invite students in the first instance to suspend their studies for strikes would be tantamount to a declaration of bankruptcy. If the people in general are with the Congress for any demonstration in the nature of strikes, students will

[1] *Vide* "For Ministers of Education"

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Deshbandhu Gupta", 8-9-1937

be left alone except as a last resort. During the last war the students were not the first to be called out but they were the last, so far as I recollect, and then only college students.

I would like the correspondent to read or re-read my note on a schoolmaster's letter in the *Harijan* of 18th September. He will find therein my position regarding the political liberty of students and schoolmasters.

But another correspondent writes in connection with it:

> If we allow paid State officials, teachers and others to participate in politics, it would become a hell. No Government could be carried on if their policies are subjected to debates among Government or other State officials who have to carry them out. Your desire that national hopes, desires and ideas of patriotism should have free play is of course proper. But I fear your article is likely to be misunderstood unless you make your position quite clear.

I had thought that my position was quite clear. Where there is a national Government there is rarely any friction between it and its officials or the students. My note guards itself against all indiscipline. What the schoolmaster resents, and rightly, is espionage and suppression of free thought which has been the rule of the day hitherto. Congress Ministers themselves are of the people and from the people. They have no secrets. They are expected to be in personal touch with every public activity including the student mind. They have at their disposal the whole of the Congress machinery which, as the interpreter of the popular will, is surely more than the law, the police and the military. Those who have not that machinery to back them are spent bullets. For those Ministers who have the Congress at their back, the law, the police and the military may be said to be a useless appendage. And the Congress is nothing if it is not an embodiment of discipline. Therefore with the Congress in power there should be voluntary; not forced, discipline everywhere.

Harijan, 2-10-193

363. DOING, NOT IDLE THINKING

Dr. G. S. Arundale sends me an advance copy of an article he has written for the *Orient Illustrated Weekly* with the following covering letter:

> You have expressed a wish that education should now begin to be real in this country and not artificial as it has been for so many years. As one who has been active in education in India for more than thirty years, I send you an article which is appearing in the Orient *Illustrated Weekly*. Maybe it represents in some degree your own views. I do feel that there should be a national scheme of education which every National Minister will do his best to express in his particular Province. There has been a good deal of independent tinkering. I feel it is urgent that the note of the great principles should be sounded without delay so that there may be a common bond and a common effort in which public and Government alike shall join.

I take from the article the most important and relevant extracts. After dealing with the question of how to proceed, he says:

> I have no space here to suggest the nature of the principles which should underlie national education. But at least so far as both boys and girls are concerned in the school sphere—I hope we shall gradually eliminate the absurd distinctions of 'school' and 'college'—the note throughout must be that of Doing.
>
> However much thought may be stimulated, it is valueless save as it mellows into Doing. The same may be said as regards the emotions and feelings, so dangerously neglected in most modern systems of education. India needs her youth to be workers—workers whose character is such—developed through education—that it naturally becomes translated into work, into practical capacity, into service. India needs young citizens who can do well in whatever department of life to which they may be called by environment and by heredity. Every subject of the curriculum is to the end of right living. Every subject discloses the Law, the Order and the Purpose of Life. Teachers must never forget this as they tend to grow submerged in the hardness of so-called facts. They should remember that in the world of our intelligence there are no facts, but only conventions. It was well said by Sir Arthur Eddington[1] that science has taken the great step forward of moving from certainty to doubt. Our education must, therefore, cause all its 'facts' to rest lightly in the minds

[1] Sir Arthar Stanley Eddington, a British astronomer

of its pupils, and use them beyond all else for the development of that character which is the only safe foundation both for individuals and for nations.

And once character stirs, the desire to do will intensify, in the directions both of self-support and of self-sacrifice. There will arise the desire to draw as close as possible to the Earth our Mother, to worship her in the ritual of agriculture, and to become as little as may be of a burden to her by simplicity of need and purity of desire. Indeed, I hold that no child of Mother Earth should be unable to draw from her some direct sustenance, and I would have as part of all education some measure of direct contact with her, even in town educational institutions.

We must tear ourselves radically away from those educational conventions which have made education so largely futile today. We must begin, under the existing favourable auspices of the national ministries, a system of real education which is not instruction. We have become imprisoned in the ruts and grooves of out-of-date educational forms and fetishes, and I heartily welcome Gandhiji's adumbration of an education which is self supporting. I am not quite sure if we shall be able to go quite as far as he suggests. I entirely agree that a young citizen after finishing a seven years' course "should be discharged as an earning unit". I myself feel that everyone should, partly through education, become conscious of his creative capacity, for he is a god in the becoming and therefore possesses the supreme attribute of God—the power to create, to do. If this power be not awakened, of what use education? Then indeed is it instruction and not education.

There is as much brain in the hand as there is in the head. For long the intellect in the head has been our God. Intellect has been our tyrant, our dictator. Under the new dispensation it must be one among our many servants, and we must learn to exalt all that makes for simple living, that draws us near to the beautiful simplicities of nature, all that helps me to live with my hands—manual work of all kinds, of the artist, of the artisan, of the agriculturist.

I know I should have lived a happier and more effective life had I so been educated.

What I have been saying as a layman, for the lay reader, Dr. Arundale has said as an educationist, for the educationist, and those who have in their charge the moulding of the youth of the country. I am not surprised at the caution with which he approaches the idea of self-supporting education. For me it is the crux. My one regret is that what I have seen through the glass darkly for the past 40 years I have

begun to see no quite clearly under the stress of circumstances.

Having spoken strongly in 1920 against the present system of education, and having now got the opportunity of influencing, however little it may be, Ministers in seven Provinces, who have been fellow-workers and fellow-sufferers in the glorious struggle for freedom of the country, I have felt an irresistible call to make good the charge that the present mode of education is radically wrong from bottom to top. And what I have been struggling to express in these columns very inadequately has come upon me like a flash, and the truth of it is daily growing upon me. I do, therefore, venture to ask the educationists of the country, who have no axes to grind, and who have an open mind, to study the two propositions that I have laid down, without allowing their preconceived and settled notions about the existing mode of education to interfere with the free flow of their reason. I would urge them not to allow my utter ignorance of education, in its technical and orthodox sense, to prejudice them against what I have been saying and writing. Wisdom, it is said, often comes from the mouths of babes and sucklings. It may be a poetic exaggeration, but there is no doubt that sometimes it does come through babes. Experts polish it and give it a scientific shape. I therefore ask for an examination of my propositions purely on merits. Let me restate them here, not as I have previously laid them down in these columns, but in the language that occurs to me as I am dictating these lines:

1. Primary education, extending over a period of 7 years or longer, and covering all the subjects up to the matriculation standard, except English, plus a vocation used as the vehicle for drawing out the minds of boys and girls in all departments of knowledge, should take the place of what passes today under the name of Primary, Middle and High School Education.

2. Such education, taken as a whole, can, and must be, self-supporting; in fact self-support is the acid test of its reality.

Harijan, 2-10-1937

364. QUESTIONS BEFORE EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

The Marwari High School, recently renamed Navabharat Vidyalaya, is celebrating its Silver Jubilee. The management conceived the idea of calling on the occasion a small conference of nationally-minded educationists to discuss the plan of education I have been endeavouring to propound in these columns. The Secretary, Shri Shrimannarayan Agrawal, consulted me as to the desirability of converting such a conference, and asked me to preside if I approved of the idea. I liked both the suggestions. So the conference will be held at Wardha on October 22nd and 23rd. Only those will attend who are invited thereto. If there are any educationists who would like to attend and who have not received invitations, they may apply to the Secretary, giving their names and addresses, and such particulars as would enable the management to decide whether they can afford to issue the invitation. Provision is being made only for a limited number who are deeply interested in the problem and can make a useful contribution to the discussion. The conference is not intended to be at all spectacular. There will be no visitors. It will be a purely business meeting. A limited number of Press tickets will be issued. I advise Pressmen to elect one or two representatives and share the reporting.

I approach the task in confidence but in all humility, with an open mind, and with the will to learn and to revise and correct my views, whenever necessary. The propositions I shall submit to the conference for consideration will be, so far as they occur to me at present, as follows:

1. The present system of education does not meet the requirements of the country in any shape or form. English, having been made the medium of instruction in all the higher branches of learning, has created a permanent bar between the highly educated few and the uneducated many. It has prevented knowledge from percolating to the masses. This excessive importance given to English has cast upon the educated class a burden which has maimed them mentally for life and made them strangers in their own land. Absence of vocational training has made the educated class almost unfit for productive work and harmed them physically. Money spent on primary education is a waste of expenditure inasmuch as what little is

taught is soon forgotten and has little or no value in terms of the villages or cities. Such advantage as is gained by the existing system of education is not gained by the chief taxpayer, his children getting the least.

2. The course of primary education should be extended at least to seven years and should include the general knowledge gained up to the matriculation standard less English and plus a substantial vocation.

3. For the all-round development of boys and girls all training should so far as possible be given through a profit-yielding vocation. In other words vocations should serve a double purpose—to enable the pupil to pay for his tuition through the products of his labour and at the same time to develop the whole man or woman in him or her through the vocation learnt at school. Land, buildings and equipment are not intended to be covered by the proceeds of the pupil's labour. All the processes of cotton, wool and silk, commencing from gathering, cleaning, ginning (in the case of cotton), carding, spinning, dyeing, sizing, warp-making, double-twisting, designing and weaving, embroidery, tailoring, paper-making, cutting, bookbinding, cabinet-making, toy-making, *gur*-making are undoubtedly occupations that can easily be learnt and handled without much capital outlay. This primary education should equip boys and girls to earn their bread, by the State guaranteeing employment in the vocations learnt or by buying their manufactures at prices fixed by the State.

4. Higher education should be left to private enterprise and for meeting national requirements whether in the various industries, technical arts, belles-lettres or fine arts. The State Universities should be purely examining bodies, self-supporting through the fees charged for examinations. Universities will look after the whole of the field of education and will prepare and approve courses of studies in the various departments of education. No private school should be run without the previous sanction of the respective Universities. University charters should be given liberally to any body of persons of proved worth and integrity, it being always understood that the Universities will not cost the State anything except that it will bear the cost of running a Central Education Department. The foregoing scheme does not absolve the State from running such seminaries as may be required for supplying State needs.

It is claimed that if the whole scheme is accepted, it will solve the question of the greatest concern to the State—training of its youth, its future makers.

Harijan, 2-10-1937

365. NOTES

PRAISE FROM THE HIGHEST

Thus runs an A. P. message[1] from Calicut:

> In a statement issued today His Holiness Azhvancheri Thampurakkal, who is considered as the highest of the Brahmins in Kerala, says: "The Temple-entry Proclamation[2] issued by His Highness the Maharaja of Travancore has resuscitated Hinduism, without in the least deviating from its essential ideals." His Holiness considers that the Proclamation will shine resplendent through the ages as the most perfect doctrine of varnashrama dharma.
>
> His Holiness also points out that the Proclamation has rooted out the evils of untouchability, disharmony and inequality among the Hindus, and as such His Holiness welcomes all the principles laid down in the Proclamation. His Holiness is of opinion that it in no way contravenes the Vedic injunctions or Shastric ordinances.
>
> His Holiness Azhvancheri Thampurakkal is the last resort of appeal in caste matters, according to the history of Kerala written by the historian Padmanabha Menon. . . .

I tender my congratulations to His Holiness on his courageously ranging himself on the side of truth and progress. It is to be hoped that if he is "the last resort of appeal in caste matters" his opinion will be respected and adopted by orthodoxy at least in Kerala if not elsewhere.

HARIJAN SERVICE IN SIMLA

There has been in Simla for the past five years the Valmiki (Harijan) Young Men's Association. Its Honorary Director is Pt. C. V. Viswanathan. Its Honorary Secretary is Lala B. Lachman Singh Sabhotra, himself a Valmiki Harijan. It runs during summer a free night-school open to all communities. Of its twenty-one students, eight are caste Hindus. The school has three Harijan teachers teaching all castes. It has also two caste Hindu and Sikh teachers. The Headmaster is a Harijan. The Association gives free medical relief through honorary physicians. There is also a mutual aid fund. Loans are granted at one pice per rupee interest. This means 18 per cent. I regard this as exorbitant. It should be no more than 6 per cent or at

[1] Only excerpts from which are reproduced here

[2] *Vide* "An Example for Hindu Princes and Their Advisers", 16-11-1936 and Appendix.

the most 8 per cent. That would no doubt mean stricter scrutiny in the giving of loans. This would be all to the good. The course of every rupee given should be traced. The Association also supports a reading-room and sometimes poor stranded Harijans are permitted a shakedown of nights on its premises. I wish the Association every success.

FOR ORISSA FLOOD RELIEF

I am glad to be able to say that Sjts. A. B. Pandit and Co.'s cheque for Rs. 500 and Sjt. Manilal Bulakhidas's cheque for Rs. 100 constitute the first and prompt response to my appeal[1] for Orissa Flood Relief. The cheques have been forwarded directly to the Minister Shri Kanungo, at Cuttack.

Harijan, 2-10-1937

366. LETTER TO AVANTIKABAI GOKHALE AND GAURIBAI KHADILKAR[2]

[About *October 2, 1930*][3]

Your deep affection is a familiar phenomenon. But the affection of countless others whom I have never known keeps me from swerving from the path of duty.

Harijan, 9-10-1937

[1] *Vide* "Havoc in Orissa"

[2] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai "Notes". The addressees used to send Gandhiji dhotis of self-spun yarn on his birthday every year.

[3] *ibid*

367. ILLITERATES v. *LITERATES*

A gentleman writes from Bombay:

The present Government has urged the Corporation to widen its franchise. Today it is limited to the adults who pay not less than Rs. 5 rent. It has been recommended that it should be extended to all literates. The question now is what effect this will have on the proposal to have adult franchise for election to the Constituent Assembly. If the Congress members now rest content with literacy franchise, would it not be a violation of the Congress principle? There are some like me who think it expedient for the present to accept the literacy franchise. What is our duty in the circumstances ?

In so far as this question is directly related to Congress discipline, I have no right to express an opinion on the subject. My interpretation as a journalist I would not consider more authoritative than the interpretation of the questioner. The opinion of the Congress President would be sufficient and should be binding in this matter. But, let me, as one with long experience, give my opinion too for the sake of the questioner and others like him. Anyone who thinks that he lacks the capacity or the time to take all the steps suggested by the Congress, should, I hold, take without hesitation whatever steps he can in the direction laid down by the Congress. It is his duty to do this and there is no question of any breach of discipline.

Considering the merits of the proposal, 1 feel that while extending the franchise, it is not at all proper to confine it to literates. It is possible that an educated young man of 21 may not at all be fit to exercise his franchise, whereas, an illiterate man of 50, experienced and sensible, may realize the value of his vote and his vote will have its own significance. It has been daily happening that way. There are many things taken for granted even in the Congress advocacy of adult franchise. I am firmly convinced that the deaf and dumb, known idiots, lunatics, persons indulging in secret crimes and those suffering from incurable diseases cannot enjoy the right to vote even if they have attained the prescribed age.

Moreover, there is no reason to believe that those who have learnt to read and write have achieved something great. I am not prepared to say that those who have not been able so far to get educated are themselves responsible for their ignorance. It is indeed the indifference of the middle-class people that is responsible for the

ignorance of the masses. The number of illiterate people in India has remained so large because these people have not discharged their duty. Hence, in my view it is a double crime to give franchise to those who, by the favour of the Government, have become educated and to deny it to those who, because of the Government's indifference, received no education. It becomes the duty of those in power to arrange for early education of those illiterates who are entitled to exercise their votes. Thus, on the one hand, it would mean atonement for not giving franchise to those who should have had it from the beginning, and, on the other, it would encourage efforts to educate the electorate so that voters can exercise their franchise intelligently.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 3-10-1937

368. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

SEGAON,
October 3, 1937

No time,

Love

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3617. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6426

369. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 3, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Chimanlal's ship may still be said to be in mid-sea. He didn't sleep the whole night. He kept shivering. His behaviour also has changed considerably. The temperature is all right. It is 98°. I hope the doctor is coming today. If you are not sending him for me, send him for Chimanlal at any rate. The earlier he comes the better. What about Lila?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11574

[1] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.

370. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

October 3, 1937

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

We want to do so many things but God alone knows what is best for us. Now that you have stayed over, it is all right. Come over tomorrow with Lilavati and take the evening train with Jamnalalji or by yourself. You need not leave tonight.

Blessings from

BAPU [1]

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 392

371. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,

October 4, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

It has been impossible for me to write personally during the week. The left hand works slowly, the right must not be used on week days.

Lilavati took one whole day and she deserved it. Poor girl suffered much during and after the operation. Chimanlal's life is hanging by a thread. He causes the greatest anxiety. Temperature became normal for a few hours for the first time yesterday. But he is very weak. His brain does not work. Parnerkar's fever is gone. He is gaining strength.

Sir Jogendra Singh has sent me, after reading my article[2], a sweet letter which I enclose herewith. You may destroy it after reading it.

J.[3] insists on my going to Calcutta[4] and I fear I shall have to go. It might also be well as I should come in touch with the detenus[5]. Your

[1] The subscription is in Urdu.

[2] *Vide* "Not Impracticable"

[3] Jawaharlal Nehru

[4] For the Working Committee meeting which was to be held from October 26

[5] Andamans prisoners; Gandhiji met them on October 30; *vide* "Talk with Andamans prisoners", 30-10-1937, and "Statement to the Press" 1-11-1937.

cheque for Orissa has been sent to Cuttack. Your precious parcel containing blanket, seeds and sandals has come in, also your wire. The first blanket has not worn out yet.

Since you want all your letters destroyed immediately on my reading them and they are destroyed I can't remember the contents that called for answers. So you have to be satisfied with incomplete Monday letters.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Of course I know what love is woven into the shawl and sewn into the sandals and impressed upon the seeds. I ate your apple today with my made teeth.

From the original: C.W. 3813. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6969

372. LETTER TO PYARELAL

October 4, 1937

CHI. PYARELAL,

Herewith the denture. Let him do what he likes with it. I had kept it on during the whole of the day and the night. I shall expect you tomorrow. But you may stay on if necessary. Return only after settling everything.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 802

373. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

WARDHA
October 5, 1937

RAJENDRA PRASAD
SADAQATASHRAM
PATNA

HOPE YOU ARE WELL AND WILL ATTEND EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE 22ND 23RD HERE. SAME TIME LABOUR COMMITTEE MEETING CAWNPORE. HOPE CAN POSTPONE SAME.

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 9878. Courtesy: Rajendra Prasad

374. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEGAON,
October 5, 1937

CHI. MUNNALAL

I have been meaning all these days to send for you and have a talk with you, but I could get no time. I shall, therefore, feel easy in my mind only if I write down what I wanted to say. I am eaten up by discontent at not being able to cope with the work here andyet, if I strain myself to do it all, my health which has already been weakened will deteriorate further.

What is the cause of your antipathy to Mirabehn? Why are you not on talking terms with her? I had asked her to examine the children and also to inspect carding, etc. Accordingly she gave me the accompanying note. That must have been six or seven days ago. If there is any exaggeration in it, we may ignore it, but it is bound to contain something useful also. She is always exact and methodical in her work. I should like you to submit to her supervision. If you can't bear her oral criticism, I would ask her to write it down from time to time and I would pass it on to you. But if you cannot tolerate even her silent supervision, I will stop her doing that also. Are you fully satisfied with your present performance?

Have you anything to say about the school? Are you ready to take charge of it? The residents of the village also are ready to

co-operate and to let you work. Do you wish to take any part in this work? Do you have the time for it? Do you have the capacity?

I will be satisfied even if you carry to perfection the work you are doing now. Anyone who attains perfection even in the smallest job can get satisfaction from it.

You may reply to this either orally when you find me free or in writing. From today I have decided to dispose of the work also by writing as I am doing now. I am, therefore, writing to Nanavati and Dahyalal also.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8577. Also C.W. 7022. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

375. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

SEGAON,
October 5, 1937

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I get no time to discuss things. I am, therefore, having recourse to writing. For a long time, I have been wanting to have a discussion with you. But today this and no more. I want to take from you some original work. If it is necessary for you to give up all other activities for that, I would ask you to do so.

The experiment being conducted on Kanam[1] is sure to benefit him. And if it is carried on with proper understanding, it will not only benefit him but benefit you also a good deal and make my task very much easier.

I want you to master the science of weaving from the first to the last step. Now please let me know your own sincere desire.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10737

[1] Son of Ramdas Gandhi

376. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

October 6, 1937

Love. Your draft manifesto tomorrow.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3815. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6971

377. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 6, 1937

CHI. NIMU[2],

I received your letter. I am sending fifty rupees by money-order. Instead of keeping the amount with you, hand it over to Vidyavati for safe keeping, or give it to the head of the office. In an institution, there is constant danger of money being stolen if one keeps it with oneself. Your study seems to be progressing well. If you cannot get Hindi books there, write to Devdas to send you some. Hindi books are available in Delhi. One cannot expect them here. While learning Hindi, do not fail to give the fullest attention to its grammar. Learning grammar develops one's understanding. There is little in it to be memorized. Much of it requires only intellectual understanding. And once one's understanding has developed, learning grammar becomes an interesting work. Grammar is the science of language. It is very easy, and interesting too, to learn the structure of sentences and the etymology of words.

I had a letter from Manilal and Sushila which I am enclosing with this. You will know about Ramdas from that letter. He seems to be quite cheerful there.

I got Umiyashankar's telegram for the *Rentiabaras*[3] day. It also refers to Ramdas. I infer from it that Ramdas has gone there too. Umiyashankar says that Ramdas is keeping quite well. You may therefore take this as the latest information about Ramdas's state of

[1] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.

[2] The letter is in Mahadev Desai's handwriting.

[3] That is, *Bhadharva Vad* 12, Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram Era followed in Gujarat

health. Other letters you may get now may have been written on an earlier date. Ramdevji suggests that you should consult a vaidya for the problem of your health. I am keeping well enough. I cannot say I am perfectly well. The brain easily gets tired. Chimanlal is laid low with typhoid. But the fever is slowly going down now. There is no cause for worry, therefore. This is the third week.

We are quite a few here. Lilavati's tonsils have been removed. She suffered a good deal. She is still at Maganwadi. She will return here in a day or two. I think it will be quite good if you sit for the examination. That will give you an opportunity to improve your study, extend your reading and will also raise your price. We certainly want our price to be raised.

Blessings from

BAPU[1]

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

378. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

SEGAON,
October 6, 1937

CHI. SUMI[2],

It was nice of you to write to me. Do keep writing. Try and make your body very strong. Understand fully what you learn. By now, you must have become friendly with office girls there. Did you feel more comfortable in Bombay, or are you liking it more there?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and library

[1] The subscription is by Gandhiji.

[2] The letter is in Mahadev Desai's handwriting but the subscription is by Gandhiji

379. LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 6, 1937

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. Got one after a long time. Extend your stay at Nainital and be fully restored. Your first duty is to make your body strong.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

380. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

October 6, 1937

CHI. ANAND,

I have your letter. Your handwriting is better than Vidya's. The Hindi is also good. If you try a little more, you will have a fairly good knowledge of Hindi. In Nainital you should also have enough practice in speaking Hindi. Have some practice also in reading Hindi. Read a Hindi newspaper and the *Ramayana*. You will be doubly benefited by reading *Harijan Sevak*.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

381. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,
October 6, 1937

It is impossible for me to send individual thanks to the numerous friends who have sent me telegrams and cables and also letters, from almost all parts of India and the world. I see that the volume is increasing from year to year. I can only hope that it may be possible for my innumerable friends throughout the world to be able

to say at the end of the last line of the last chapter of my life that I have never ceased to strive to deserve their affection.

The Hindu, 7-10-1937

382. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS AND KRISHNA KAPADIA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 7, 1937

CHI. MADHAVDAS[1] AND KRISHNA[2],

I got your letters and the garlands. Whether or not I convey my blessings through a letter, you always have them.

Everything here is well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII

383. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

October 7, 1937

CHI. CHANDU,

I am writing this letter though I have had none from you. You are alone there and in a foreign land where everything is strange. And moreover you have the burden of the . . .[3] affair weighing on you. Shankar, therefore, thinks that if I write to you occasionally it may cheer you up. I agree. That he worries so much about you is a good sign for you. But when one has gone so far away from home, why should one need cheering up from anybody? Anybody who goes to a foreign country, thousands of miles away, should have the strength to find peace in his or her own mind. I presume you have that strength. And if you don't have it, cultivate such peace. God is never away from one who believes in Him. He is nearer to one than even one's finger-nail, for He dwells in each and every fibre of our being. He is witness to the most secret outpourings of our heart. He does not care whether we believe in Him or not, nor does He care even if we keep away from Him, since He has full control over us.

[1] & [2] Kasturba Gandhi's brother and his wife

[3] The name has been omitted.

You need not at all worry about the . . . affair, for you have left that worry to me. I hope that now I shall have no question to ask you. But if there is anything, I will-frankly ask you and you also may reply equally frankly. I hope you are keeping good health. You must be absorbed in your study.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 944. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

384. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

October 7, 1937

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have your letter.

If we allow confectioner etc., from outside without making it a condition that they will use only cow's milk or ghee made out of such milk, it will certainly be wrong. We should collect ghee from outside also if possible. If we allow confectioners, etc., we should control their prices. If they have to pay more for milk, etc., we may permit them to charge proportionately higher prices. There cannot be any competition within the camp, of course. People, therefore, are sure to pay whatever reasonable prices we fix. Our major difficulty will perhaps be about non-vegetarian food. I don't know what was the arrangement in Faizpur[1]. Even if supply of meat was not arranged in the camp, it must have been available in Faizpur proper. We have selected a place where what we do not provide will not be available. Please think over this. Discuss this with Sardar also. If, at the time of the Education Conference, you cannot stay on after the session is over, we shall not be able to have any discussion. And on the 25th morning I will have to leave for Calcutta. We shall not, therefore, get any time. Perhaps if you could arrive a day or two earlier, we can have some discussion. I assume that you will be making a fairly substantial contribution to the Conference.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. NARAHARI D. PARIKH
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI, B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9114

[1] At the Congress Session in December 1936

385. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON,
October 7, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

That owner of the liquor-booth continues to extract toddy on the strength of his right. Babasaheb's clerk doesn't stop him. Do, therefore, write a letter to Nagpur as soon as you get a reply. But in addition you yourself should go and see the District Commissioner or Excise Commissioner and tell him that this manufacture of liquor must stop.

The bulb of the torch has fused. Please get another and send it tomorrow. I assume that the torch itself is all right.

I understand about Lilavati. I will not be anxious till she herself becomes impatient. I shall be content if her health is completely restored.

I hear that Gomati[1] is having high fever. Kishorelal[2] has cough. Please go and see them if you can. Somebody could be sent from here for help, if need be. You may take Ishvardas's help. Kishorelal himself will never ask for anything. If you think it necessary, please take the Civil Surgeon with you. I don't like his having such frequent attacks.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

It would be advisable to tell Vinoba about the hundred rupees.[3]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11575

[1] Gomati and Kishorelal Mashruwala

[2] *ibid*

[3] This was added by Kanu Gandhi "on behalf of Bapu".

386. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 8, 1937

CHI. AMBUJAM,[1]

I am glad you wrote to me in Hindi. The writing is good perfectly legible, and the language quite good. As I narrowly look at the writing at the time of dictating this, I see that though it is good, and legible, it admits of correction and improvement.

When you can at all get away for a few days, with parents' full consent and blessings, do not hesitate to come for fear of getting ill here. I have no such fear. You will eat exactly as you like—you will bring your cooker and prepare the food for yourself. I fear you cannot come here before the end of November, for I am likely to be away during November in the Frontier. I need prolonged mental rest much more than physical. I am taking as much as is possible, but I can afford to take more.

I am taxing my mind as to Raghavan's substitute. I had myself thought of you. You have always been diffident—have always underestimated your ability—but, if you will take courage in both your hands, you will make quite a good Director[2]. Try —if you feel unequal to it you will resign. After all, in difficulties, you will fall back upon me—not merely as your guide but as the official head of the organization. You have sufficient knowledge of Hindi, you like the work, you know most of the work, you are scrupulously conscientious, you have powers of application and are quite capable of exercising independent judgement when you want to. There is, therefore, no cause for diffidence. You must shed false modesty. Therefore, if there is room for you to reconsider, you should do so, and straightaway go and see Rajagopalachari and seek his advice. I do not want you to accept the post, if, for any reason, he does not like my idea.

I had your special basket of fruit. But what I can manage is not the especially expensive fruit that you sent me but oranges and limes. There are never extra good oranges in Wardha, and never the rich limes you get there. And just now I am using here nearly 3 doz. oranges a day and at least 1 doz. limes. So whenever these are cheap

[1] The superscription is in Hindi.

[2] Of the Hindi Prachar Sabha

you may send them. I dread the railage. For the satisfaction of my curiosity let me know what it comes to when you send your next basket.

Mahadev has not told you but the Rs. 50 must have been received.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

387. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

October 8, 1937

Don't expect love letters from me just now except on Mondays. I thoroughly agree with you about your remarks on culture leagues, etc. Atul knows this.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3816. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6972

388. LETTER TO KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI[2]

October 8, 1937

You do not want a reply from me but I cannot restrain myself. You may run away even from those who love you. But what about them? And are you sure that you can create a bar between yourself and your species? You can no more run away from men than you can from your own body. Wherever you go, embodied life will haunt you. Embodied being can only see the Being through embodied life. He is not outside it. Upanishads are fragments of true human experiences. Will you contemplate the *Ishopanishad*? And what did Jesus mean

[1] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee which *inter alia* conveyed the following from Gandhiji:

i. Nariman's case is still going on.

ii. Very good that Nabi Baksh is well—Bapu sends him his love.

iii. Bapu wrote to Govinddas and wired to him also that he might come here on 11th or 12th.

[2] Dadabhoy Naoroji's granddaughter

when He said: "You cannot see my Father except through me (embodied life)." oh, do please wake up from your sleep. You may forget me, disown me, I simply cannot forget you, what shall I do?

Love.

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

389. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 8, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

I shall have to leave this place on the 25th. I shall perhaps have to be in Calcutta from 26th to 30th. I will return here, of course, but soon after I shall be leaving for the Frontier Province. If, therefore, you can come, do so just now. I don't know where we shall meet afterwards. Even if you come to Calcutta, what will be the use? I won't have time there even to look at you.

Chimanlal is better now. He is still in bed, but the temperature has come down to almost normal.

I am better. The pressure of work is fairly heavy.

Amtul Salaam is in Bombay at present. Perhaps she will still be there when you get this. But I can't say.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3528

390. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEGAON,
October 8, 1937

CHI. KAKA,

I forgot to show you the accompanying letters. Shankar's letter is very sweet. He remembers the past with gratitude. That is sweet of him. Please do remember to give the letter to Bal. He should now arrive there in a day or two.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7705

391. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

SEGAON,
October 8, 1937

CHI. NANAVATI,

I told Mirabehn to note down the many things which she felt called for criticism. The note is enclosed. As a matter of fact, some of them fall within Dahyabhai's sphere of work and some within Vijaya's. Perhaps there is nothing at all in this for which you are directly responsible. But because you are the manager, all this should come to you for implementation at any rate. Mirabehn, of course, had suggested that she herself should give it to you. But I disapproved of it. If she were to be dissatisfied with any explanation given by you, I would have to listen to that again. If some of her words hurt you, you might not let them reach my ears but even so the pain would be there. I have adopted this course in order to avoid that dilemma. Many of Mirabehn's suggestions are useful and worth considering. All of them are indeed good, but there may be an element of exaggeration in some of them for which I would excuse her. I intend to encourage Mirabehn to bring such things to my notice. But she will talk only to me and, therefore, there will be no possibility of any tension arising. I will make whatever suggestion or take whatever steps I wish to on the basis of what she tells me. Please discuss this with Dahyabhai. Show Vijaya whatever concerns her.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10738

392. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
Octobers 8, 1937

CHI. SHARMA,

I am watching your experiments with interest and I wish you success. It seems almost impossible that 1 may be able to witness them personally but God makes even the impossible possible.

You have given me no facts regarding the Khurja Congress; what can I do in these circumstances? If you send me the facts with

the name and address I shall certainly forward the letter to the right quarters.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 268

393. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON

SEGAON,
October 8, 1937

DEAR TANDONJI,

I have gone through all your letters.

All I had heard was that you had taken a liberal decision with regard to language. I had read nothing at all. I had also seen the brief Press report of your statement at the time you took your seat as Speaker. These days I am able to give hardly five to seven minutes to the newspapers. At times I cannot manage even that much.The burden of work has greatly increased since I placed before you my new ideas about education, and the need for rest is always there. None the less, when Kaka Saheb left with me the treasure sent by you, it became my duty to read it. I liked all of it immensely: your speech as the Speaker, your decision about language and your speech on that subject. Both struck me as being original. It is all to the good that you accepted the position of Speaker.

I also received the telegram concerning me. I had not seen anything else. It was good that you sent the report about it. I deliberately did not answer the telegram. This year there were so many telegrams from all parts of the world that I was astonished and I considered it grace of God. I Sent a brief message of thanks through the Press.[1] I decided not to reply to anyone personally. And what reply could I have given in words? Such abundance of love can only be acknowledged through action. Let us see in what way God uses me as His instrument.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Purushottamdas Tandon Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Presss", 6-10-1937

[2] This paragraph has already appeared in "Letter to Tondon".

394. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[Before *October 9, 1937*][1]

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I don't see any chance of my meeting Jinnah at present. Jawaharlal doesn't desire it.

It seems I shall have to go to Calcutta. Jawaharlal is very keen that I should go, and so are the Bengal leaders. I have had a letter from Subhas, too. And if I go, I can see the detenus also. We are, therefore, sure to meet during the journey or, if not during the journey, at any rate in Calcutta.

It will be better if you yourself write to Bahadurji regarding the Nariman case and request him to expedite it.

If we cannot gain control over the turbulent wind that is blowing, I am afraid the game will be lost completely. We should try our best to gain that control. If people don't listen to us, we shall have no option but to leave. A few persons having control at a few points in the present set-up will not serve our purpose. We shall be able to continue to work only if we have control over the whole organization. We will try our best to preserve such control.

I altogether forgot to write to you about Sadananda[2]. He had come to see me. He wanted to resume publication of the paper and organize a news agency. I refused to give him any encouragement in that. I tried to persuade him not to embark on such a futile venture and, whatever he decided, I asked him to leave me out of it. He has agreed to do the latter. He didn't seem to have repented anything. My view is that it is not worth embarking on the venture of another English newspaper in Bombay.

We must certainly reply to Nimbkar[3]. I had only meant that I could do nothing on the basis of the newspaper report.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 215-6

[1] According to the source, the letter was written during the first fortnight of October. *Vide* also "Letter to Vallabhbhi Patel", 9-10-1937

[2] S. Sadananda, Editor, *Free Press Journal*

[3] A communist worker

395. GIVE MINISTERS A CHANCE

This is the gist of the conversation of a visitor:

> You may not know what Ministers have to go through just now. Congressmen, having abjured office for seventeen years, suddenly find that their own chosen representatives are in possession of powers which they had voluntarily surrendered before. They do not know what to do with these representatives. They smother them with addresses and entertainments and, as often as not, they demand interviews with them as a matter of right and present them with all kinds of suggestions and sometimes even ask for petty favours.

This is the best way to disable the Ministers from doing real service to the country. They are new to their work. A conscientious Minister has no time for receiving addresses and honours, or for making speeches in return for fulsome or deserved praise. Nor have they time for interviewers whom they do not invite, or who they think are not going to help them in their work. In theory, a leader of democracy holds himself at the beck and call of the public. It is but right that he should do so. But he dare not do so at the sacrifice of the duty imposed upon him by the public. Ministers will cut a sorry figure if they do not master, or are not allowed by the public to master, the work entrusted to them. An Education Minister has to have all his wits about him if he is to evolve a policy in keeping with the requirements of the country. An Excise Minister will prove a disastrous failure if he does not attend to the constructive side of prohibition. And so will a Finance Minister who, in spite of the handicap created for him by the [Government of] India Act and in spite of the voluntary surrender of the Excise Revenue, will not balance his budget. It requires a juggler in figures to be able to do so. These are but illustrations. Every ministerial office requires almost the same vigilance, care and study as the three I have mentioned.

It would have been easy for them, if they had simply to read and sign papers put before them by the permanent Service. But it is not easy to study every document and think out and originate new policies. Their gesture of simplicity, necessary as it was as a preliminary, will avail them nothing if they will not show the requisite industry, ability, integrity, impartiality, and an infinite capacity for mastering details. It would be well, therefore, if the public will exercise self-restraint in the matter of giving addresses, seeking interviews or writing to them long epistles.

Harijan, 9-10-1937

396. CONDITIONS OF SUCCESS

Bhausaheb Lavate[1] has been honouring me with a visit in the interest of prohibition which is as dear to him as to me. We came to the following conclusions:

1. Strict non-use from now of all Excise Revenue for any but prohibition purposes.

2. Non-renewal of all licences on their expiry and immediate closing of all liquor shops, where there is a clear demand for closing on the part of at least 75% of those who have been visiting these shops.

3. Liquor, whenever it is necessary to sell it, should be sold only through direct Government agency.

4. All existing liquor shops should be, wherever possible, converted into refreshment and recreation rooms.

5. Causes of the habit in typical areas should be carefully investigated and dealt with.

6. Absolutely peaceful, silent and educative picketing by recognized individuals or groups should be undertaken, the object being to establish intimate personal contact with the addicts so as to help them to give up the habit. Personal visits to the addicts in their own homes would be a feature of scientific picketing. Voluntary agency for this work should be invited by the Government and encouraged to do this philanthropic work.

Harijan, 9-10-1937

397. TO APPLICANTS FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION TEACHERSHIPS

It is gratifying that I am daily receiving letters in reply to my appeal[2] for teachers who approve of the plan I have been developing from week to week in these columns of Primary Education and who are prepared to work it. I observe from the correspondence that the writers have not grasped the meaning of my appeal. No one will be wanted who does not thoroughly believe in primary education

[1] Of Poona

[2] *Vide* "Notes" 25-9-1937

through a profitable handicraft and who will not or cannot work it for the love of it and for mere maintenance. To all such I suggest that they thoroughly master the art of spinning and of performing all the anterior processes. Meanwhile I am registering all the names. The writers will hear from me in due course of the progress that may be made with the execution of the plan. My appeal is an effort to anticipate the requirements of the seven Provincial Governments, should they feel inclined to endorse and experiment with the plan.

Harijan, 9-10-1937

398. LETTER TO G. V. GURJALE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 9, 1937

MY DEAR GURJALE,

I appreciate the frankness of the last part of your letter. I am glad you are concentrating the minds of friends on prohibition. I can do nothing about tea and coffee, bad as I know they are, until you give me facts and figures to support your contentions.[1]

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1402

399. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 9, 1937

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have just read your reply to Nimbkar. I didn't like it at all. It displays great intolerance. I think it will be very difficult to prove your accusation against him. And where was the need to say it all? And the attack on the [*Bombay*] *Chronicle* doesn't become you at all. "Obvious reasons" are reasons which everybody knows. In the first instance I don't know that the *Chronicle* always opposes you. And even if it is true that it does, what can be the obvious reason? What was the point in saying it? I am afraid you have needlessly provoked

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G.V. Gurjale", 28-9-1937

opposition.

About Vaikunth (Mehta), Munshi will let you know. Morarji should relieve him from moratorium and co-operative work for three months, and if the Committee's work is to stop after that he may certainly be included.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2 Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 214-5

400. NOTE TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

[Before *October 10, 1937*][1]

You certainly did well in coming away earlier. I have been able to keep myself going with the greatest effort. My brain needs plenty of rest. I observe silence and sleep as long as I can and remain calm so that I may not have a breakdown on the 22nd. But please see everything here. Observe the experiment in Nalwadi through my eyes. Have a discussion with Kaka. [Arya]nayakam also has grasped [the idea] well enough. But Vinoba has done it better than anybody else. He writes and says that he finds nothing to object to in my articles. I have sent an extract from his letter for *Harijanbandhu*.[2] I don't know whether or not it is printed.

* * *

Vanamala and others were well saved.

* * *

What is the age of the student?

* * *

There would hardly be any children of very tender age in any village school. There are such children in the village, of course, but they do not attend school. Here the parents don't send such very young children to school. The teachers take no interest in them. It is not my wish that they should not attend school. I am only describing what I have observed.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9112

[1] From the reference to Vinoba's letter which appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 10-10-1937

[2] *Vide* the following item.

401. TWO ENDORSEMENTS OF EDUCATION THROUGH WORK

Even though Vinoha and I are separated by a distance of only five miles, we hardly meet each other as we are both deep in our own work and as neither is in the best of health. Hence, we decide many matters by correspondence.

I have quoted these ideas[1] from one such letter. I consider these ideas very significant, because I am not aware of anyone else from among my colleagues who has carried out so many experiments in that direction as Vinoba has. The revolutionary increase in the speed of the *takli* has at its root Vinoba's inspiration and his untiring labour. He has worked on his charkha and *takli* for eight to ten hours a day even though he has been managing a big organization. And, right from the beginning he has given this craft an important place in education. Thus, Vinoba is naturally in full agreement with me in making education self-supporting through a craft which I consider to be my original discovery. This, indeed, is a matter of great encouragement for me. I have quoted his opinion here in the hope that it would strengthen the faith of those who know Vinoba and would inspire faith in those who have none now.

Support from Shri Vinoba is not a matter of surprise for me. Nor would it be for readers of *Harijanbandhu.* On the contrary, if I do not get his support, it should set me thinking. It would be foolish and certainly impudent to venture to convince the nation about a point if I am not able to convince my oldest colleagues about it. I was no doubt pleasantly surprised on receiving Shri Manu Subedar's letter. I have been corresponding with him on issues like education, prohibition, etc. As a result I have the following letter[2]. The reader will be happy to see it. He had sent some suggestions in English along with the letter which I have already published in *Harijan*[3].

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 10-10-1937

[1] Not translated here. Vinoba Bhave had conveyed his appreciation of Gandhiji's latest thoughts on education and had further stated that he would not have even the dualistic conception of work and education and he had therefore already started experimenting on the lines of work-education.

[2] Not translated here. The correspondent had supported basic education on financial grounds and suggested that a district-wise survey should be made of locally available raw materials which, along with the necessary implements, should be supplied at the school door.

[3] Dated October 2, 1937, under the title "Useful Hints on Education"

402. MY NOTES

PROHIBITION IN AHMEDABAD

The Government of the Bombay Presidency has taken the welcome decision of introducing total prohibition from the 1st of April. This is no doubt a correct step. As Ahmedabad is one of those fields where this thing has been well tried, this experiment should meet with easy success there. The aim of prohibition is that people may stop taking alcohol. If people do not give up the habit, illicit distillation will go on and the addicts will persist in drinking, and the prohibition law will have failed. Thus, although people cannot be made to give up drinking unless the drinking booths are closed down, the mere closing down of the booths will bring no result unless people are convinced through education of the evils of alcoholism. The largest number of alcoholics in Ahmedabad comes from the working class. The Majoor Mahajan deserves to be congratulated on having undertaken the responsibility of educating the public and on having passed the necessary resolution. If men and women take upon themselves the individual responsibility and carry on this work, it is sure to meet with success. If success is achieved in a centre like Ahmedabad, other parts of India will also be encouraged and they will also learn how success can be achieved.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 10-10-1937

403. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN AGRAWAL

SEGAON,

October 10, 1937

CHI. SHRIMAN

Only yesterday I heard that you had been suffering from unabating fever for four days. How come? Is it because you got married? I believed you could never fall ill. What has happened then? I hope to get some good news even today. This is being dictated at 5 a.m. after the morning prayers. Remember, it was at your instance, and with confidence in you that I allowed the Conference[1] to meet and accepted its presidentship.

[1] All-India Educational Conference

I had not the strength to shoulder such a great burden but your enthusiasm persuaded me to agree. I hope you will not let me down now. Relax and get well soon. Could it be that the strain of the Conference has told on your health? If it is so, take refuge in Mother *Gita* and free yourself from attachment and anxiety. After all He alone brings about whatever comes to be.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 299-300

404. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 10, 1937

You have to wait for my letter till tomorrow.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3817. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6973

405. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 10, 1937

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your two letters. I am quite clear that Horace[2] ought not to be asked to tear himself away from Olive[3] and come here in the anti-opium cause. Of course prohibition applies to both drinks and drugs. There is no question in the seven Provinces of carrying conviction. The Ministers would know how to deal with the matter. Horace is of much greater use in England than he can be here at the

[1] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.

[2] Horace Alexander and his wife who was an invalid

[3] *ibid*

present moment. What is needed is the moral support of the best mind of the world in this campaign. I do hope you are taking good care of yourself.

Love.

MOHAN

[PS.]

Your article[1] is going in.

From a photostat: G.N. 1426

406. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

October 10, 1937

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

Your letter. All are well. Stay on there till the matter is resolved.[2] Today Vijaya is leaving for home. What can be done? Lilavati has arrived and badly needs rest. Dahyalal has been given charge of the kitchen. Start taking the medicine.

Thousands of blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 393

407. LETTER TO VIJAY N. PATEL

October 10, 1937

CHI. VIJAYA,

I could not bear to see your tears. Please return early after obtaining your parents' blessings. Be careful during the journey. Write to me regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7073. Also C.W. 4565. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

[1] Which appeared in *Harijan*, 23-10-1937, under the title "Opium Too".

[2] The addressee was in Bombay helping her brothers to settle their differences.

408. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHAGANJ,
October 11, 1937

AMTUL SALAAM
CARE EUROTRADE
BOMBAY

YOU NEED NOT STAY FOR OPERATION BUT MAY FOR BROTHERS IF NECESSARY. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 406

409. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

Unrevised

SEGAON,
October 11, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

It has been impossible to write to you during the week days in spite of your gentle complaint. I must not use the right hand and the left works laboriously. And I have no time for practice. Every minute must be used to best advantage. If you insist on my tearing your letters as soon as I have read them, you must not expect me to remember your questions for whole seven days and then answer them on Sundays.

Of course I took note of what you wrote about Bhulabhai[1] and[2], what is more, I wrote to him about the matter, though of course without naming the source of information. I have not heard from him as yet. The reply is overdue. I had heard of the thing before but I could not act upon rumours. Your information was definite.

I am glad Nabibux has returned. My love to him. You must bring him when you come. Your cheque has gone to Delhi. You may expect a formal receipt from them. Not to make mistakes in simple account-keeping does not make one an accountant. Even illiterate Nabibux gives an accurate account of everything he spends. You may take unction to your soul in that you are as good as he is in taking

[1] Bhulabhai J. Desai
[2] The source has "I" after this.

down contemporaneous expenses and receipts. Faithful clerk ! ! !

It is a mystery how Sir J's letter[1] was not in your cover. Mira is making a search. Remember she is not a clerk, nor an idiot. Idiots are good at remembering things. Mira can draw mountains and cloud effects. So she disdains to remember trifles like putting things in their places where they should be. But this is poor consolation for you and me. I was most anxious for you to see that very good letter. He is following it up faithfully. I hope it will be traced.

I return you the enclosed duly signed "Bapu" in Hindi. Is that right?

Vijaya was wanted by her parents and I had to send her away. She was most disconsolate and could not restrain her tears.[2] I miss her because she was a most handy girl, always willing, always ready. She wants to return.

A. S. is still in Bombay helping her brothers to settle their differences. She may return any day. Lilavati is almost in harness. Sushila, P[yarelal]'s sister, came in on Saturday bringing fever with her. So she is in Maganwadi. Pyarelal is nursing her. Shriman is down with typhus. I do not know what will happen to the Conference now. It may have to be dropped. He is a rare gem.

On 25th I leave for Calcutta; address care Congress. I expect to be back on 2nd November at the latest and shall await Khan Saheb's summons. He expects to have me with him during 1st week of November.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3818. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6974

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 4-10-1937 & 12-10-1937

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Vijaya N. Patel", 10-10-1937

410. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 11, 1937

CHI. SITA[1],

Your handwriting is very beautiful indeed. Write Gujarati also in an equally beautiful hand. Write in both the languages. I hope you will show us your face some day. If you were here Kanam would get company and I would teach you according to the new method. Do you know what this method is? Ask Sushila.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4868

411. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

October 11, 1937

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

Your letters are regular and quite informative. I have no grounds for complaint; you have some. My hands are so full that I missed the last mail. Only today I am snatching the time. I am writing to Ramdas separately at Johannesburg. It is certainly unfortunate that he could not stay with you. But Kallenbach[2] thought of Ramdas only. His has been military [discipline] always. We should not grieve over it. I understand what you say about the Agent. We have to suffer many such things. If we can remain unaffected by these experiences, we have learnt our dharma and the art of living in this world. The sweet and bitter experiences that you are having there are also common here. They make up the variety of this world. If one gets a bed of roses every day, would one attach any value to it? Hence the great need for religious meditation, reading, and conduct. You may come if you can—both or either of you. It does not matter if you cannot

[1] Daughter of Manilal Gandhi

[2] Hermann Kallenbach, a German architect who became Gandhiji's associate in South Africa

come. Don't come at the cost of the work there. A letter for Sita is enclosed.[1] There is no time to give other news. If I had the time, I would fill a volume.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4809

412. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 11, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

The matter for *Harijan* is getting ready. I hope you have been visiting Shriman. I am worried about Sushila. I hear that her fever has still not come down. This means more work for you. And the 22nd and 25th are approaching. Please see that you don't overexert yourself. Keep Shanta under control. It will be a blow if she spoils her health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11577

413. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 11, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have not been able to read again the reply to the criticism.[2] Mira also has not been able to read it. Please go through it carefully. I don't wish to detain Janba here.

I had enclosed Sir Jogendra's letter with the letter to Rajkumari. She did not receive it. Did Mira forget it or was it left out there? Please inquire.

Do take me to Shriman.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11576

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* "Some Criticism Answered", 16-10-1937

414. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

October 11, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

Your letter. You can come and stay. The post is going in a moment. Why worry? I shall leave for Calcutta on the 25th and hope to return on the 1st.

Come soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3507

415. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SEGAON, WARDHA
October 12, 1937

CHI. JAMNALALJI,

I have your letter.

Bahadurji is welcome.

I have learnt about Shriman's fever. It is a bad one. It seems obstinate. I am hoping to go and see him today. I am dictating this letter after the morning prayer. Because of Shriman's illness, Mahadev and Kishorelal suggested to me that the Education Conference be postponed. The suggestion appealed to me. The responsibility of accommodating a hundred persons ought not to be on you. I assume that you will foot the bill. I don't mind that. But if the other people cannot shoulder the burdens of managing such gatherings without your help, I think we ought not to have them at all. Our work in these gatherings will shine only if the others have acquired the ability to manage them. I have, therefore, sent a message to Aryanayakam that he should let the plan for the Conference stand only if he has the necessary self-confidence and ability. Otherwise it had better be postponed. The Conference was Shriman's idea and I had depended on him alone. As long as he was in normal health I didn't worry. I had assumed that he would never fall ill. When, therefore, I heard about his illness, I was upset. I have regarded your discovery of Shriman as a wonderful one. He has an unusual mixture of learning, maturity of judgement and humility. Without him the Conference would give me no pleasure. But in accordance with the principle that one should not abandon a task already begun, I have insisted that the Conference be held unless [Arya]nayakam's

self-confidence gives way or you oppose its holding. I would regard your opposition to be well-grounded, for I have faith in your practical sense. You alone can judge best whether, without you and the use of your bungalow, the programme of the Conference can go through successfully. If, therefore, you wish that the Conference should be postponed, please tell me so immediately by wire. I will then postpone it.

I hope you are keeping fit. Savitri must be doing quite well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 190-1

416. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

October 12, 1937

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter. I am trying to come to Calcutta, leaving here on the 25th. You will then tell me all about the ministerial deeds in the Congress Provinces. I do hope that the sore throat and cold were only temporary things, and that you were able to stand the strain in the Punjab. The climate in the Frontier must be very delightful. How I wish you would take things easy for a time at least!

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

417. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 12, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

Though there is nothing wrong in Hindus putting emphasis on Devanagari script and a knowledge of Hindi (if it is to be distinguished from highly Persianized Urdu), if you can postpone active work till after the Sammelan it would be wise. This is all a matter of experience, and it is so difficult to advise without sensing the

surrounding atmosphere and the local circumstances. Both these I like to see for myself whenever I have to decide a delicate question which depends for its solution on a knowledge of the atmosphere and circumstances. I hope this will be some sort of guide for you. Whatever happens, this is quite clear to me, that every Punjabi should realize that Punjabi and Urdu are his languages; but a Hindu, wherever he is, should know Hindi through the Devanagari script, for the sake of being able to read first-class devotional literature, the like of which is not to be found in any other Provincial speech.

I do not know what the approach of the Hindi Pracharini Sabha is. It may be wholly different from mine. If that is so the decision as to the propriety of carrying on propaganda will be different from what I have given.

How is it that you have found Sardar Jogendra Singh's letter? For in your letter of yesterday you tell me you had missed it.

This is being dictated after breaking silence. Although I work top-speed, I do not feel any fatigue. It comes from talk. I have just enough strength in the right hand yet to carry on Monday's work. I wish I could find the time for practising writing with the left hand daily, but I don't, beyond having the time for tracing my signature to the daily letters.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3618. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6427

418. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 12, 1937

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

I have your letter. I have not forgotten the Andaman Prisoners. Where are they being treated as 'C' class Prisoners? So far as I know these class distinctions are gone. These friends should help the Congress Ministers for they have their difficulties. You may give them the assurance that I shall strain every nerve not merely to see that they are well treated but that they are discharged. But I must be able myself to give the assurance in every individual case. Their noble respo nse to me has paved the way, but it ought not to be held as

sufficient for full fruition of the common hope. The main reason for my going to Calcutta for the A. I. C. C. is to examine the whole position, and to see what I can do in the matter.[1]

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From the original Dr. Gopichand Bharagava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

419. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 13, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

I dictated last night a long letter to you. Now at 4.15 a.m. I begin this about Khurshed. Her letter and yours were destroyed as soon as I read them. Hers is a sad case. She writes differently to me as if she was retiring from the haunts of men. I have written a gentle reply.[2] Though she writes to me as if I was a stranger, 1 continue to sign myself Bapu and tell her that though she may desert me, I will not desert her.

I gave one hour to Govinddas.[3] His admissions were compromising. I have told him [to] investigate the truth of what has been stated to me against him. You should not allow your favourable opinion to be affected by my unfavourable impressions. More when we meet, if you would remind me.

I hope you threw off your cold long ago. Why should [you] sit with a chill on? You should not be ashamed to sit cross-legged and wrap yourself as we poor villagers do. And then breathe deep when you are cold.

I knew about Palestine schools. K. left a lot of literature about them.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3820. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6976

[1] For Gandhiji's "Statement to the Press" regarding the Andaman prisoners, *vide* "Statement to the Press", 17-10-1937

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Khureshedbehn Naoroji", 8-10-1937

[3] *Vide* footnote 1, "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 8-10-1937

420. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

October 13, 1937

Your remarks on education are quite sound. But you have not fully understood my scheme. I started a letter yesterday[2] at 4 a.m. It is unfinished.

BAPU'S LOVE

From the original: C.W. 3819. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6975

421. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

October 13, 1937

CHI. JANKIBEHN,

I have a letter from Acharya Ramdev saying that you must accept the invitation to go to Dehra Dun. I don't have the date with me. Shriman will get all right, you may rest assured. If you cannot go, send him a wire. It will be better of course if you can go. Is it necessary to consult your lord and master?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2989

422. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

October 13, 1937

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

It seems that in the State dispensary at Botad the doctors, compounders, etc., practise untouchability while examining Harijans or dispensing medicines to them and treat them with contempt. And if any treatment is required which involves touching them, either it is not given or is given with great reluctance. For instance, if any of them is having discharge from his ear and a syringe has to be used, some wads of cotton are thrown at the man and he is sent away and asked to clean his ear with them. I have received a good many letters in this

[1] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.

[2] This is evidently a slip. The reference here, it appears, is to the preceding item.

connection. And it seems to me that there is substance in the complaint. I too believe that, when most of its servants also are tainted with the evil of untouchability, the Government cannot do much. However, some improvement in this regard is bound to take place if untouchability is openly and repeatedly discountenanced by the State authorities in its policies and declarations and through administrative action, and if action is taken against [even] a few persons guilty of practising untouchability. Discrimination in hospitals should be impossible. Just now, I don't wish to take note of this matter in either *Harijanbandhu* or *Harijan.*

I take it that you will attend the forthcoming Education Conference or will send somebody who is interested in the subject.[1]

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5955. Also C.W. 3272. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

423. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

[After *October 13, 1937*][2]

MY DEAR REBEL,

You have asked my opinion about Govind Das after having done the mischief. I have bitter experiences about him. He is ambitious, vain, vulgar, crooked and unreliable. His ventures have resulted in losses. This is the opinion of those who have dealings with him. I know him well. He used to be like a son to me. I used to think well of him. But I soon discovered that he was a schemer. Now he rarely comes near me. I am sorry, but such is my experience. I hope you haven't dropped much.

Love.

TYRANT

Reminiscences of the Nehru Age, p. 31

[1] Here follows a postscript by Mahadev Desai acknowledging with thanks the addressee's letter regarding prohibition.

[2] From the reference to Govind Das and impressions of him; *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 13-10-1937

424. LETTER TO DR. M. JAISOORYA NAIDU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 14, 1937

DEAR OLD RENEGADE-BUT HONEST PUPIL,

I knew that you delighted in calling yourself Jaisoorya, but Mahadev was trying to pull my leg by asking me to judge who could the writer be. He knew that with the advance of years my memory was decaying rapidly, and, trading upon that knowledge he challenged me to guess the writer's identity. I could not till I saw the last sentence, and I asked since when you had become Jaisoorya. Then I thought that my memory was gradually coming back, and I said to myself that when you had come to me at Knightsbridge in that Deputation of self-styled firebrands, you had sent in your name as Jaisoorya. But at that time Mother[1] had prepared me to identify you with the bearded young man with amazing self-assurance.

Your letter shows that you remain the same on the surface, but in spite of your looking down upon old fogies, you have inward regard for them, and know that you can as little do without them as without the very stupid days of your childhood. Therefore, in spite of your profound differences with me, in which you glory, I am not going to disregard your outline. But I am going to study it carefully, and then give you my opinion. But you will be patient with me.

Meanwhile this comes to you with all the good wishes that you and yours may care to have, or be in need of. Cartloads of love to the whole family, including the grey-haired Singer.

Pyarelal is with me, as unchangeable as when you saw him in the Ashram.

OLD MASTER

DR. M. JAISOORYA, M.D.
GOPAL CLINIC
STATION ROAD
HYDERABAD (DECCAN)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Sarojini Naidu

425. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

October 14, 1937

Do not worry about me. God is the greatest physician. He guides me. It is well even if He gives me a fatal dose. You did well at your sales.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3821. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6977

426. NOTE ON NARIMAN-SARDAR CASE

[*October 14, 1937*][2]

Mr. Bahadurji has brought me his judgment[3] on the Nariman-Sardar case which is attached hereto. When I asked, not without much hesitation, to associate himself with me in the task I had taken up in the public interest, he readily agreed to do so.

He had, perhaps, not realized what anxious labour it would cost him to do justice to the task. I do not know what I would have' done without his valuable assistance. We read his judgment together and with very slight changes I suggested, and which he readily accepted. The judgment is absolutely his own and arrived at without any previous consultation with me. I concur with his reasoning and finding.

The public will see that the finding is purely judicial. Parties were given every facility to see the evidence, to take copies and were free to have witnesses orally examined and cross-exarnined. But they did not want any examination or cross-examination nor was it necessary. Though there were over eighty witnesses and the evidence was voluminous, a mass of it was wholly irrelevant to the two issues before us. The greatest latitude was given to Mr. Nariman to bring before me any evidence he had. I sent personal letters to witnesses, whose names he had sent me. Most of the Congress legislators have

[1] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.

[2] This note was written while D. N. Bahadurji was at Segaon on the Thursday prior to October 16 which fell on October 14; *vide* "Self-Supporting Education"

[3] In which Bahadurji had arrived at the conclusion that the "charge against K. F. Nariman in respect of the elections in 1934 was proved and the charge made by K. F. Nariman against Vallabhbhai was not proved."

sent in their statements in answer to my public appeal for evidence.[1]

If I had no further duty to discharge, there would be nothing more for me to say. But I must not avoid reference to the things that have been brought to light in the course of the evidence sent to me. Mr. Nariman has sent to me newspaper cuttings. They have made painful reading. There is no evidence whatsoever to show that the Sardar was actuated by any communal bias. The newspapers, which have made suggestions that there was communal bias behind the rejection of Mr. Nariman, have rendered a great disservice to the Bombay public life and Mr. Nariman, who has himself, I am glad, rejected any such suggestion.

Indeed, Mr. Nariman's grievances against the Sardar seem to resolve themselves into this: As the Sardar told him on the 3rd of March, he would not and did not exert himself on his behalf. It is plain that when a person of the Sardar's influence remains passive, his attitude was bound to go against Mr. Nariman, but for that the Sardar could not be held blameworthy. It seems to me Mr. Nariman forgot that the City of Bombay is not the Bombay Presidency. And if he had really the confidence of Maharashtra and Karnataka, the Sardar's passivity would have availed nothing. Indeed, there is nothing to prevent the legislators even now from inviting Mr. Kher[2] to resign and electing Mr. Nariman in his place. The suggestion that the Sardar's overpowering influence would prevent such a change is thoughtless. Ninety men cannot be overawed for a long time by one man, however powerful he may be.

My analysis of the situation is that Mr. Nariman overestimated his hold on the legislators and felt the keenest disappointment over the defeat. His judgment became warped. This is evidenced by his own statements before me. His advisers and the newspaper propaganda kept up the illusion. It is no pleasure to me to have to pen these lines. But I pen them in the hope that his eyes may be opened by the opening out of the agonized heart of one who has been his friend and well-wisher and who was somewhat responsible for his inclusion in the Congress Cabinet.

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-11-1937

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 20-8-1937

[2] B. G. Kher

427. LETTER TO M. VISVESVARAYYA[1]

SEGAON, WARDHA
October 15, 1937

DEAR SIR M. VISVESVARAYYA,

I thank you for your book. I am keeping it in front of me and I shall read it at the first opportunity. Nothing would give me greater pleasure than to be able to agree with you. I thank you for tackling the Orissa flood problem. Of course, you will take your time.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9837. Courtesy: Government of Mysore

428. LETTER TO DR. N. B. KHARE

October 15, 1937

DEAR DR. KHARE[2],

I think that General Awari should be warned by the P. C. C. and if he does not listen I have no doubt that there should be a legal prosecution. But if you have any doubt yourself I am no authoritative guide. The only authority is the President or the Working Committee.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

The Hitavada, 2-4-1939

[1] This was displayed at the Mysore Pavilion of the Gandhi-Darshan Exhibition, held in Delhi in 1969-70.

[2] Premier of the Central Provinces

429. LETTER TO JAGANNATH DAS

October 15, 1937

MY DEAR JAGANNATH DAS,

Kakasaheb has passed on to me your letter of 15th September. I got it only on 12th October. It makes very sad reading. There never was any guarantee that more money would be found from the North[1]. Nevertheless Rs. 5,000 (five thousand) have been transferred to you. Raghavan however was never expected to find the money; he was merely to look after the administration. But I do not at all agree with him that, on that account, he can desert the ship. He can complain, grumble, put the responsibility on you, his colleagues, and expect you to find the sinews of war. You can certainly pester me, pester Jamnalalji and Rajaji also. Because he has taken up a tremendous responsibility, he cannot divest himself of the duty of discharging old obligations. Only a gambler can take up new obligations before he has discharged existing ones, and without thinking how he will discharge old ones. Sri R. C. is not of this type. We would be doing him an injustice if we think that he will plead the new work to evade the old one. Instead of seeing him, write to him. I am writing to him myself. You may show this to him.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 7708

430. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 15, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have made use of your figures. You are doing admirable service to the cause. But remember you have to advance a great deal further. Think over the question whether real intellectual development can be brought about through crafts.

Enclosed is a letter from Kumi[2]. What do you think about it? If you cannot afford to keep her, certainly don't. She must not be an

[1] For the work of Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha; *vide* "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 26-8-1937

[2] Kumibehn T. Maniar, Harilal Gandhi's wife's sister

obstacle in your efforts for progress. But it seems that I shall have to meet her expenses in any case.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8540. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

431. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

October 15, 1937

CHI. KAKA,

Do talk to Jamnalalji. It will certainly be good if he goes. Will he go? Can he go? When can he go?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7706

432. LETTER TO SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

[Before *October 16, 1937*][1]

I have your affectionate letter. Of course, God willing, I am coming to Calcutta. I am not yet fit for meetings or discussions. I have a limited amount of energy which I would love to use whilst there for the detenus' cause, as also for questions that may crop up at the Working Committee meetings. For myself, I shall gladly be under your roof and have you as my guard against too many visitors and unnecessary interviews. You will also please save me from public demonstrations and meetings.

The Hindu, 18-10-1937

[1] The report is date-lined "Kurseong, October 16".

433. NOTES

A DONATION TO KHADI

Dr. Pattabhi writes to me as follows:

> Mula Lakshmi Narayanaswamigaru of Tadpatri, Anantapur District (Madras Presidency—Andhra), has donated Rs. 5,000 for khadi and also promised to pay up to another Rs. 45,000 as a loan at 3 per cent for work in his district.

I congratulate the donor on his donation and loan. I have no doubt that he could not have better employed his money. Let me hope that the district will receive the full benefit of the donation and the loan, and this will depend upon local workers and local patronage of khadi.

ROMAN CATHOLICS AND PROHIBITION

Mr. F. A. Plair writing from Lahore resents Shri Phillip's remarks[1] which appeared in these columns recently about Roman Catholics, and contends that prohibition has been preached from time immemorial by the Roman Catholic priests. He concludes his letter by saying, "We all Roman Catholics concur in your prohibition movement and join it heartily."

Harijan, 16-10-1937

434. SOME CRITICISM ANSWERED

A high educational officer who wishes to remain unknown has sent me, through a common friend, an elaborate and considered criticism of my plan of primary education. For want of space I may not reproduce the whole argument here. Nor is there anything new in it. And yet it deserves a reply, if only for the pains the writer has bestowed on his paper.

This is how my suggestions have been paraphrased by the writer:

> (i) Primary education should start and end with training in crafts and industries, and that whatever may be necessary by way of general information should come in as auxiliaries in the initial stage, and that formal training through the medium of reading and writing in subjects like History, Geography and Arithmetic [should] come right at the end.

[1] *Vide* "Are Christians Against Prohibition"

(ii) Primary education should be self-supporting from the first, and that this should and could be achieved by the State taking over the finished articles coming from the schools and selling them to the public.

(iii) Primary education should be fully up to the Matriculation standard—less of course English.

(iv) Prof. K. T. Shah's idea of conscripting young men and women to teach in the primary schools should be fully examined and, if possible, acted upon.[1]

The writer at once proceeds to say:

If we analyse the above programme it seems to us that the underlying ideas are in some cases mediaeval, and in some cases based upon assumptions which would not bear examination. Probably No. iii is a very high standard.

It would have been better if, instead of paraphrasing, the writer had quoted my own words. For all the statements in the first paraphrase are wide of the truth. My point is not that the start should be made with crafts and the rest should come in as auxiliaries. On the contrary I have said that the whole of the general education should come through the crafts and simultaneously with their progress. This is wholly different from what the writer imputes to me. 1 do not know what happened in the Middle Ages. But I do know that the aim in the Middle Ages or any age was never to develop the whole man through crafts. The idea is original. That it may prove to be wrong does not affect the originality. And an original idea does not admit of a frontal attack unless it is tried on a sufficiently large scale. To say *a priori* that it is impossible is no argument.

Nor have I said that the formal training through the medium of reading and writing should come right at the end. On the contrary the formal training comes in at the very beginning. Indeed it is an integral part of the general equipment. I have indeed said, and I repeat here, that reading may come a little later, and writing may come last. But the whole process has to be finished within the first year, so that at the end of the first year in the school of my imagination a seven-year-old child, boy or girl, will have much more than the general information that any boy or girl has in the present primary school during the first year. He will read correctly and draw correct letters instead of making the daubs that the children generally do at present. The child will also know elementary additions and subtractions and the simple

[1] K. T. Shah's article appeared in *Harijan*, 31-7-1937.

multiplication table. He will have learned all this through and while he has learned a productive craft, say spinning, by choice.

The second paraphrase is just as unhappy as the first. For what I have claimed is that education through handicrafts should be self-supporting during the sum total of seven years I have assigned for it. I have specifically said that during the first two years it may mean a partial loss.

Mediaeval times may have been bad, but I am not prepared to condemn things simply because they are mediaeval. The spinning-wheel is undoubtedly mediaeval, but seems to have come to stay. Though the article is the same it has become a symbol of freedom and unity as at one time, after the advent of the East India Company, it had become the symbol of slavery. Modern India has found in it a deeper and truer meaning than our forefathers had dreamt of. Even so, if the handicrafts were once symbols of factory labour, may they now be symbols and vehicles of education in the fullest and truest sense of the term. If the Ministers have enough imagination and courage, they will give the idea a trial in spite of the criticism, undoubtedly well- meant, of high educational officers and others especially when the criticism is based on imaginary premises.

Though the writer has been good enough to assume the possibility of Prof. K. T. Shah's scheme of conscription being sound, he later on evidently repents of it. For he says:

> The idea of conscripting teachers is to our mind an outrage. We should have in schools, where young children assemble, men and women who have voluntarily dedicated their lives to this profession so far as such a dedication is possible in this world, and who will bring sun-shine and zeal. We have made far too many experiments with our young men and women, but this one bids fair in its results to land us in a ruin from which there will be no escape for at least half a century. The whole thing is based on the notion that teaching is one of those arts for which no adequate training is necessary and that everyone is a born teacher. How a man of K. T. Shah's eminence comes to hold it is inexplicable. The idea is a freak idea bound to be tragic in results if applied. Again, bow can each and everyone train children in handicrafts, etc.?

Prof. Shah is well able to defend his proposition. But I would like to remind the writer that the existing teachers are not volunteers. They are hirelings (the word is used in its natural sense) working for their bread and butter. Prof. Shah's scheme does contemplate possession of patriotism, spirit of sacrifice, a certain amount of culture, and training in a handicraft, before they are taken up. His idea is

substantial, quite feasible, and deserves the greatest consideration. If we have to wait till we have born teachers, we shall have to wait till the Judgement Day for them. I submit that teachers will have to be trained on a wholesale scale during the shortest term possible. This cannot be done unless the services of the existing educated young men and women are gently impressed. It will not be unless there is a general willing response from that body. They responded, however feebly, during the civil disobedience campaign. Will they fail to respond to the call for constructive service against maintenance money?

Then the writer asks:

> (1) Are we not to allow for a great deal of wastage in raw materials when handled by little boys?
>
> (2) Are the sales to be effected by a central organization? What about the cost of this?
>
> (3) Are the people to be compelled to buy at these stores?
>
> (4) What about the cases of those communities which are at present manufacturing these? What will be the reaction on these?

My answers are:

1. Of course there will be wastage, but there will be even at the end of the first year some gain by each pupil.

2. The State will absorb much of the material for its own requirements.

3. Nobody will be compelled to buy the nation's children's manufactures, but the nation is expected to buy with pardonable pride and patriotic pleasure what its children make for its needs.

4. There is hardly any competition in the products of village handicrafts. And care will be taken to manufacture things which do not come into unfair competition with any indigenous manufacturers. Thus khadi, village paper, palm *gur* and the like have no competitors.

Harijan, 16-10-1937

435. PROHIBITION AND EDUCATION

Mr. J. G. Gilson is the Secretary of the Christian High and Technical School, Balasore, and Director of Industrial Arts and Vocational Education for A. B. B. O. Mission. In sending some valuable literature on 'Rural Sewage Disposal and the Natural Sewage Treatment Process', he writes:[1]

> . . . In general I find myself very much in agreement with your conclusions. I was especially pleased with your clear exposition of the fact that manual work, properly conducted, is the best means to intellectual development. I have found it hard to make teachers believe that anything else than textbooks and lectures and cramming for examination can contribute to this end. Your explanation of the point should help to make it clear to everyone. I was also pleased to note that you have appreciated the work done by a number of Mission schools in introducing the handwork curriculum in India.
>
> On the other hand I cannot agree with you that education can, or should, be made self-supporting by the work of the students. . . . If children are kept at such work for 4 hours per day under competent supervision, they can no doubt pay for their keep and perhaps for the supervision as well. But such work has no educational value. It may even become as dulling to the intellect as poring over textbooks and listening to lectures.
>
> In order for the children's work to have educational value they must be given a variety of work to do, and as soon as they have learned one operation well they must be allowed to go on to something new. . . . But the product of their work will not likely be sufficient to support the school. It may contribute something toward the costs of the school.
>
> But I see no reason why schools should be expected to be self-supporting. The education of the children, and continued education of adults, is a responsibility of the community, and it seems to me that in the present condition of India it should be the first and largest claim upon the public funds.
>
> It is very unfortunate that prohibition and education should have been linked together in the discussions, and that the American experience with prohibition should have been brought into it in a way which shows a lack of understanding of American conditions. . . . If the American example is to be

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

quoted let it be said that in America during the prohibition period there was no shortage of funds for education; indeed the schools were very rapidly improved during the period.

Prohibition in America was not a failure in accomplishing an improvement in the condition of the common people, with the possible exception of the big cities where the majority of the people are European-born and where public opinion would not allow the enforcement of the law. The great mass of the American people outside the cities are total abstainers and drinking is looked upon as a social and moral disgrace just as it is in India; or at least it was so until 1933. Already a strong reaction has set in against the excesses of these past four years.

Prohibition failed politically in America because of the political power of the big cities, and because the brewers and others who stood to gain by the sale of liquor were willing to spend millions of dollars in newspaper propaganda, while the mass of the people were quite indifferent to what had ceased to be, for them, a pressing problem. It is the case of the exploitation of the country by the wealthy of the cities. The same problem you have to face in making prohibition a success in India. . . .

I do not wonder at Mr. Gilson's scepticism about education through an industry being made wholly self-supporting, if it is at the same time to develop the mind of the pupil. This point is dealt with by me in another column[1]. His testimony about American prohibition will be read with interest.

Harijan, 16-10-1937

436. IN SUPPORT

I completely agree with, nay, even humbly plead for your suggestion of teaching a child a useful handicraft scientifically and culturally and enabling it to produce from the moment it begins its training. No doubt it is a revolutionary proposal, but I agree with it completely. Its moral, cultural and economic value will be immense to the individual and to the nation. Not only will it promote dignity of labour, but self-reliance and proper-creative values of life. Our aim should be to promote a child's intellectual, physical, moral and vocational needs. The last will teach the general principles of all the processes of production and at the same time give the child or youth practical training in the use of the simplest tools of all industries. Our ideal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

should be a combination of instruction with productive work on the part of the young generation. This means a linking up of manual work with general instruction, and aims at giving a broad idea of the chief branches of industry with which manual work can be co-ordinated. Physical labour combined with an intellectual and moral effort should be our educational outlook. There should be no cleavage between brain work and manual work.

We should include in our system of primary or elementary education:

1. Mother tongue
2. Arithmetic
3. Natural science
4. Social science
5. Geography and history
6. Manual or polytechnical work
7. Physical culture
8. Art and music
9. Hindustani

The only question which, however, arises here is at what age a child's education should begin. If it be at 5 or 6, can it be possible to start a useful handicraft at that age? What about the expenses in teaching it? It will not be easier and less expensive than spreading literacy. I would start a handicraft at the age of 8 or 10, because the use of implements requires a grasp and a steadiness in handling and applying them to the object in view. But primary education must at least begin at the age of five or six. A child cannot be made to wait longer. We must have a ten years' curricula to take the child to the matriculation standard in addition to the polytechnical training we intend to give it. I am, however, doubtful about the economic value of the products of these children especially in their early stages. They will not be saleable in a country where free trade and advanced fashions prevail and when the products themselves will not be durable or finished ones. If the State were to purchase them or take them in return for the service or aid rendered, what will it do with them? It would be better for the State to spend money directly on the education of children than to adopt this process. Of course the products of advanced boys, say, between 12 and 16 may be made marketable and therefore become an important item of income.

I would rather treat the problem of literacy on a different footing and face boldly the taxation and expenditure necessary for it.

The idea of a useful handicraft can be well developed in the advanced

stages of primary (or secondary) education. It should be attempted to be made at least partly self-supporting, and after experience gained, fully self-supporting, if possible, on the basis of the value of its products. Only one danger will have to be guarded against, that cultural education of the body, mind and spirit does not become subordinated completely to the economic motive and economics of the school.

I also agree with your further suggestion of primary education being made equal to the present matriculation standard less English, but plus Hindustani (I would add). It means you include also secondary education in the system of primary education. Your idea is a complete scheme of school education of, say, ten years. I would add in this that it must be imparted through the mother tongue and through no other language. This will liberate the mind of the child and create in it a living interest in the problems of knowledge and life and give it a creative turn and outlook.

I admit here that education was largely self-supporting in mediaeval times, and could be made so in a general way if our social, economic and political organization and outlook were to remain mediaeval, that is, addicted to the old and narrow values of class and caste economy, society and polity. But today in a democratic, national and socialistic conception of life which has pervaded us, it cannot become so. The only organized power of the community with sanctions and resources behind it is the State. Hence it has to undertake this work. The old power groups—caste, class, guild, college, Church—have lost their power, sanction and resources, and do not exist in that larger sense of the old times. People also have no faith in them. All social power has shifted to the political group which is also the economic and social force even in India. Therefore two ideologies, one mediaeval and one modern, one pluralistic and functional, and the other unitary and territorial, cannot work together.

There was no universal education in the past, no democratic unitary State, no national equalitarian outlook.

The idea of conscription for educational service is not now a novel one but is worth following. Let the Congress and its Provincial Ministers in their official capacity appeal to the intelligentsia of the country and call upon all who have the education of the people at heart to rally to the assistance of new Governments for the spread of literacy, culture and education. It will establish a mass contact on a new basis, and not merely on an economic and political basis. It will also serve the higher purposes of awakening, consolidation and organization of mass power and intelligence.

When I first wrote on self-supporting primary education thro-

ugh an industry I had invited educationist fellow-workers to favour me with their opinions. Professor S. V. Puntambekar was among the first, to send me his. He sent me a long reasoned reply. But for want of space I was unable to deal with it earlier. The foregoing is the most relevant portion of his opinion. For the sake of abridgement I have cut out portions dealing with literacy and college education. For at the forthcoming Conference on the 22nd and 23rd instant the main discussion will centre round self-supporting primary education through an industry.

Harijan, 16-10-1937

437. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 16, 1937

CHI. AMLA,

Khurshedbehn tells me you were complaining of absence of letters from me. You have never been out of my mind. I have not written because I thought you did not need to hear from me. I knew that you were getting on quite well. But do tell me all about you. Here things are much the same as you left them. Do drop in some time, if you can. Remember me to your mother.

Love.

Blessings from
BAPU[1]

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

438. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR2

October 16, 1937

No invitation from Nagpur[3] as yet. You may not prompt it. You will see before this the result of the Nariman case.[4]

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3822. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6978

[1] The subscription is in Gujarati.
[2] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.
[3] For the All-India Women's Conference
[4] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 16-10-1937

439. A LETTER

October 16, 1937

DEAR SISTER,

Thanks. I am well. Only fatigue overtakes me if I speak. I fancy that God does not want me to leave the work to which I feel He has called me. If it is my egoism that won't let me rest, I shall pay the deserved penalty.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

440. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 16, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

It will be a reflection on my art if you do not succeed. Vinoba, Maganlal, Chhotelal, Panditji, Kaka and Devdas have surpassed me each in his own field. You are still on the first step. Many other names occur to me. My task is to teach the *mantra* of truth and non-violence. He who assimilates it may soar in his own sphere and I stand apart. You need not write the weekly notes. You must train yourself in the use of your left hand. You will be able to train it more easily than I did. I am returning Prema's postcard. A cart or car will be required for Perinbehn tomorrow at 1 o'clock.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11578

441. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHAGANJ,

October 16, 1937

I am glad to be able to place before the public the statement[1] made by Mr. K. F. Nariman instead of the considered judgment at which D. N. Bahadurji and I had independently arrived in the Nariman-Sardar case. It was a painful duty that I had undertaken and then at my instance and request, D. N. Bahadurji. But for his most valuable assistance and extraordinary labour he put into the work, I might have with the present state of my health broken down under the

[1] *Vide* "K. F. Nariman's Statement"

burden. The evidence that was produced before me was voluminous. I have read every line of it but Bahadurji to whom I transferred all the papers not only read every line of the bulky papers but took elaborate notes, read the law about the intricate case of the election of 1934 and prepared the said judgment wholly independently of me. It occupies 14 foolscap sheets of close and condensed marshalling of facts and reasoning. He was good enough to come down to Segaon with that judgment and pass the whole of Thursday with me. I then wrote a concurring note.[1] I had hoped that Mr. K. F. Nariman would be with us on that day but he was unable to come. I then suggested that on his return to Bombay, Bahadurji should send for Mr. Nariman to show him his judgment and my concurring note and that if on reading them Mr. K. F. Nariman could out of conviction accept both the judgment and my note and himself make a public statement, we should simply be satisfied with giving copies of our judgment to the parties but withhold it from the public and let Mr. Nariman's statement take its place. My suggestion commended itself to Bahadurji. On Thursday night, I sent Mr. Mahadev Desai to Bombay with my notes to meet Bahadurji and Mr. Nariman. Mr. Nariman with his counsel went to Bahadurji's office and read our judgment and I am exceedingly happy to be able to place his statement before the public in the full hope that they and the Press will forget the past bitter and unseemly controversy that had robbed the public activity in Bombay of its usual zest and joy. I congratulate Mr. Nariman upon his thoughtful and wholehearted confession. I owe a debt of deep gratitude to Bahadurji for his having shared labours with me from a high sense of public duty and his unvaried affection for me.

The Hindustan Times, 17-10-1937

442. SELF-SUPPORTING EDUCATION

Government means the Congress Governments in the seven Provinces. But just because the Congress has formed Governments, there is no reason to believe that the attitude of the Congress-minded people would suddenly change. Even though the constructive programme of the Congress has gone on since the great change in 1920 it cannot be said that a lively interest has been created among

[1] *Vide* "Note on Nariman-Sardar Case",14-10-1937

Congressmen in this matter. What then can we say about those who are outside the Congress? Even though the constructive programme has not been as popular as the destructive (if one may without impropriety use the adjective "destructive" for a non-violent programme) or negative programme, the Congress has kept it up since 1920. The Congress never dropped that programme and quite a few Congressmen have adopted it. Hence, whatever could be achieved in this field has been achieved only by Congressmen, and progress too can be expected only where Congress Governments have been formed. But just because the Congress has taken up office, those who have faith in the constructive programme should not slaken their efforts. Nor should they become complacent. Now that the Congress has formed Governments, their duty is to be more alert, more industrious, more studious. Only if this happens can the hopes entertained of the Congress Governments be fulfilled. Congress Government means a democratic government responsible to the people. If the people want, they can throw out such a government. It is based on the will and authority of the people. Hence, if Congressmen are keen, they can, and unless they are keen they cannot, get the constructive programme accepted and implemented. The Government has no independent power, i. e., no physical force. The Congress has voluntarily given up that power. The British Government wields that power. When the Congress Government has to resort to the use of the British power, that is, physical force, it should be regarded as the lowering of the tricolour. It should be regarded that, from that day the Congress Government has ceased to be. But if the people do not follow the Congress, that is, the Congress Governments, or if non-violence has not entered their hearts, the Government which today appears glorious will lose its glory tomorrow.

And so, Congressmen who have faith in the constructive programme should wake up. The scheme of education that I have presented is also a substantial part of the constructive programme. It is not my intention to suggest that the Congress has adopted the form I am giving it now. But I am firmly convinced that what I am writing now was implicit in everything I have said or written since 1920 about national schools, and now that the occasion has arisen, it has found prompt expression.

Now, if primary education is to be imparted through a craft, that task can be carried out for the present only by the people who have faith in the spinning-wheel and other village industries. For, on the

subject of the charkha, which occupies a central position in cottage industries, the Spinners' Association has collected considerable information and on other industries the Village Industries Association has been collecting it. Hence, in my view, whatever immediate provisions we can make can only be through the charkha and allied crafts. But all those who have faith in the charkha are not teachers. Every carpenter is no authority on carpentry. One who has no knowledge of the science of the craft cannot impart general education through the craft. And so, only those who are interested in the science of education and have faith in the charkha, etc., can introduce the scheme of primary education which I have suggested. I am reproducing the letter[1] from Shri Dilkhush Diwanji with the idea that it would be useful to such persons.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 17-10-1937

443. PASSING AWAY OF A WONDERFUL HARIJAN WORKER[2]

I had known Manilal Kothari even before the Harijan campaign gathered momentum. And from the day I came to know him I had never once noticed in him the faintest trace of a feeling of untouchability. He was always prepared to face the risks that are inevitable while trying to help Harijans. He had a flair almost unique for collecting funds for noble causes. This is no exaggeration. He had many capacities; but he will always be remembered for his ability to collect money for benevolent causes. He had collected large funds for Harijan work, and had offered to collect as much money as I wanted if he recovered. He used to receive requests from all quarters for collecting money. Manilal was a very sensitive man. Any altruistic work would interest him. His eagerness to serve made him plunge into any kind of danger. His death will no doubt be a great loss to his family, and also to Harijans. In many other spheres of service as well his absence will be felt for a long time.

May God grant peace to his soul.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 17-10-1937

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had been running a small craft-based school for the last two years. He whole-heartedly supported Gandhiji's ideas on education on the basis of his own experience.

[2] This appeared under "My Notes".

444. LETTER TO KIRBY PAGE

SEGAON, WARDHA, C. P.,
October 17, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I am glad you are liberally taking passages from C. F. Andrews's pen in your anthology of devotional literature. For Charlie Andrews is a man of prayer and deep faith. He is a Christian to the marrow, but his Christ is not the Jesus Christ of a narrow sect. His Christ is the Anointed of humanity. He sees Him in Ramakrishna, Chaitanya and many other teachers whom I can name, and who are of other faiths. We in India, who know him, call him Deenabandhu, friend of the afflicted. Our friendship is of long standing; we are like blood-brothers. There are no secrets between us. Charlie is as simple as a child, forgiving and generous to a fault. He is loving and lovable like a woman who is purity personified. In jest I call him half woman and half man—but I mean it.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

KIRBY PAGE, ESQ.
LA HABRA
CALIFORNIA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

445. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 17, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

They will expect you here at Segaon on the 31st—even if I have not returned. I am sure to return on the 1st or 2nd. I shall not be going to the Frontier without returning to Segaon first.

You have to regain here the weight you have lost. Obtain Jayaprakash's permission—for staying here. The cold has started here. Bring enough covering for the night, otherwise your blanket which is with me will go back to you. But it is a good deal worn out now. Chimanlal is all right now, though he is still in bed. Pyarelal's

sister, Sushila, is here. Surendra also arrived yesterday. Prema[1] is coming today. They will all have left when you come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3508

446. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SEGAON,
October 17, 1937

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I cannot swallow what you say in your letter. My conception of Swadeshi is not what you take it to be. I have no hand in bringing in Jairamdas. But I was not shocked at the mention of his name. They wanted someone from the Working Committee. And this is something for which it is good to have an outsider. The same thing had to be done at Kanpur. Our groups are not meant to suffocate us. They must be nurtured and in turn they must nurture others. What should Utkal, Assam or the Frontier Province do?

I should be held responsible for Brelvi. I had insisted on having him. I know his limitations. Who amongst us is without limitations? There should be definitely one Muslim member on such a Committee. And I could find none better than Brelvi. About the exhibition, I shall reply in *Harijan.* That will make things easy for you. Besides, that problem has become rather compli-cated. Do come on 22nd and 23rd if you can make it. I have asked them to send you an invitation. But you can consider this letter itself an invitation.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru memorial Museum and Library Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Premabehn Kantak

447. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,
October 17, 1937

Andamans prisoners may not be forgotten. To remind me that I have made promise to them that I would strain every nerve to secure their release, I have received three letters from three provinces telling me that treatment of prisoners who have been brought from the Andamans is worse than there, that there seems to be no prospect of their early release and that if no release was forthcoming they might have to fall back upon the only weapon open to them, that is, hunger-strike. I hope that they will not resort to hunger-strike so long as they know that the public is not supine about their welfare. For myself I may assure them that I am not sleeping over the matter. And I urge the public and the Press to keep a vigilant eye on this urgent matter. I would appeal to Provincial Governments which have received these prisoners to accord to them the treatment which the country expects them to give. Provincial Governments which are in such matters now responsible to the people may not disregard the popular wish. I expect that in this there is no difference between the Congress and other organizations.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-10-1937

448. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 18, 1937

MY DEAR UNTOUCHABLE,

Some people have the patience to wait for titles till they come to them. You have no patience and therefore your titles are generally well-chosen. Only the first was ill-chosen. Who will call you a rebel? Not I. Idiot, of course. But I forget. That was a title given to you. You willingly accepted it. Untouchable you are, as all of the princely blood are. I wonder what will be the next choice.

Today I am taking it easy. Instead of writing much, I am sleeping. The article I wrote last night.

I do not remember any question remaining unanswered. I am

too lazy to pull out a part of a letter I have kept. Rameshwari had a wonderful tour in Kathiawar. Her descriptive letters are all very good. And they are in very readable Hindi. Correspondents speak of her in glowing terms. The tour has almost ended. The Nariman confession you must have seen. The patients are well.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3823. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6979

449. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
4.30 p.m., October 18, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is the second letter I am writing to you today. This is to congratulate you on your progress in Hindi of which your Hindi letter is ample evidence. You will presently have a chaste style too. You must read *Ramayana* regularly and perhaps a Hindi newspaper. Never mind the newspaper however. What Shakespeare is to English, Tulsidas is to Hindi. Therefore I should be satisfied if you read Tulsidas only. Of course a good grammar is a necessity.

Yes, do not resist Shummy and stay there as long as he wants you to and keeps happy himself.

You would have more quiet too for your address[1] which should be original, terse and to the point. You must not be discursive. Do not take much time over the past work. But devote yourself to the future programme—bold, universal and constructive. Above all it must be practical and in terms of the villages and yet such as *your* members can reach. They won't work in the villages, they can for the villages. Is not this a good letter?

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3619. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6428

[1] As President at the All-India Women's Conference, Nagpur

450. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

SEGAON,
October 18, 1937

CHI. VIJAYA,

After your last postcard, there has been nothing from you. Why so? Mridulabehn[1] has requisitioned you. I have replied that if you are willing to join I will not dissuade you, but that I won't force you. Perhaps she has already met you. Premabehn arrived yesterday. The patients have all recovered.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. VIJAYABEHN
C/O NARANBHAI PATEL
VAROD, BARDOLI TALUKA
TAPTI VALLEY RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7074. Also C.W. 4566. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

451. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 18, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

I will see about Balwantsinha.

Today I am simply resting. I wish to write more, but it may not be possible. But you won't be short of matter. Sharda will go there in the conveyance which we have here. Please send her back in the same tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11579

[1] Mridula Sarabhai

452. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

October 18, 1937

CHI. KAKA,

Do send for all the three.[1] We shall admit them. I also like the suggestion regarding Gopalrao. But what you have written is all right. I am writing to Nayakam.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Accept Vora's suggestion. I have read about Armstrong[2] earlier. I shall make use of it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7707

453. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[After] *October* [*18,*][3] *1937*

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter.

What will you do about the khadi that has been produced?

Probably you don't get Nalwadi's *Sevavritta*[4]. I am sending a copy today. You will find in it surprising figures about the *takli.*

I had a letter from Rameshwaribehn. She can write in Hindi. I got the fourth letter yesterday describing her tour [of Saurashtra]. She has described the whole tour, and the entire description is interesting. Nanalal was here. He also praised your work very much. Introduce whatever changes are feasible in accordance with the articles

I am currently writing on the subject of education. Do you

[1] A marginal note runs as follows: "Who are these three? Gopalrao is one; who are the other two? Please send the names of all the three to Nayakamji."

[2] General Armstrong, founder of Hampton Institute; *vide* "Speech at Educational Conference-I", 22-10-1937

[3] From the reference to Rameshwari Nehru's tour; *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 18-10-1937

[4] *Gramsevavritta*

think there is anything worth taking from them for the Bal Mandir? What is the age-group of the children in the Bal Mandir?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have sent you a wire asking you to come here.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./Il. Also C.W. 8542. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

454. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 19, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

I observe silence for the most part in order to feel fresh for 22nd and 23rd. And I am using the right hand. So I had better give you a few lines.

Sir J[oginder Singh] is coming nearer as you will see from the enclosed. You may destroy it. I am not writing the foreword. I must not.

The news you give me about Charlie is bad. You will realize still greater limitations in me, if you will make me responsible for all the blemishes in all who come in contact with me, not excluding Idiots, Rebels, Untouchables and what not.

I suppose it is no use your writing to Mahmudabad[1]. Heaven knows what the upshot is going to be of all this mud-slinging.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3824. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6980

[1] Ruler of Mahmudabad

455. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 19, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I carefully went through your speech at Lucknow[1], and I felt deeply hurt over your misunderstanding of my attitude. My letter[2] was in answer to a specially private message you had sent to me. It represented my deepest feeling. The letter was purely personal. Were you right in using it as you did?

Of course, as I read it, the whole of your speech is a declaration of war. Only I had hoped you would reserve poor me as bridge between the two. I see that you want no bridge. I am sorry. Only it takes two to make a quarrel. You won't find me one, even if I cannot become a peace-maker.

This is not for publication, unless you desire it.[3] It is written in all good faith and out of an anguished heart.[4]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Hindustan Times, 16-6-1938

456. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 19, 1937

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

The money collected for the Gidwani Memorial was of course well spent. And I consider it a good omen for the stu-dents' hostel that the inauguration ceremony of the Bhangi Students' Hostel will be performed by Principal Anandshankar-bhai[5] on the *Dhanteras*[6] day. I

[1] As President at the 25th session of the All-India Muslim League held from October 15 to 18; *vide*"M.A. Jinnah's Speech at Lucknow", 15-10-1937

[2] *Vide*, "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 22-5-1937

[3] Gandhi-Jinnah correspondence was released to the Press on June 15, 1938.

[4] For the addressee's reply, *vide* "Letter From M. A. Jinnah", 5-11-1937

[5] Anandshankar Bapubhai Dhruv

[6] *Aso Vad* 13 of the Vikram era

hope that the citizens of Kheda will make this hostel their own and will go on helping it in every way.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3965

457. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 19, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have read Anandshankarbhai's manuscript again. Please glance through the changes I have made. If you have nothing to suggest regarding them, then wrap the thing in strong paper and despatch it by registered book post. The letter[1] is also enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11581

458. LETTER TO THAKOREDAS NANAVATI

October 19, 1937

BHAI THAKOREDAS,

Chi. Amritlal has no visible symptoms of any disease. He works and gets no fever at all. But he does not put on weight. He takes enough of ghee and milk. He has lost a little weight since coming here, but has more energy. There is of course no reason for worry. I have often suggested to him that he should go there but he does not feel inclined at all. I, therefore, do not force him. Thus what Amritlal wrote to you was not incorrect in any way. I do feel, however, that he did not give you all the facts. He should have informed you about his weight, etc. There is no point in concealing such things. Of course, if one has a slight headache one needn't write about it. And you don't expect it, either. Having said all this, I adviseyou not to worry. There is absolutely no need. Let him follow his own inclination.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10739

[1] This is not available.

459. LETTER TO DR. WILLIAM H. TANDY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 20, 1937

DEAR DOCTOR TANDY,

With reference to your hospital scheme, which you were good enough to explain to me today, you tell me that you propose to add family quarters for your patients' families who would desire to supply the patients with food prepared by them.

My experience, in what little hospital work I have done, has shown me that it is a harmful concession to prejudice. For the food cooked by private parties is rarely cooked according to directions. Doting relatives disregard restrictions, pamper patients, and retard recovery where their false affection does not prove fatal to the patients.

I would, therefore, strongly advise you, for the sake of the patients themselves, not to encourage private cooking for patients under your care, even as you would not allow relatives to administer to them drugs of their own choice.

If the patients bring families, they can see the former only at stated times and under proper restrictions.

I know that there are, unfortunately, so called higher castes, who observe untouchability as to food. In my opinion you cannot afford to pander to such prejudice, especially at a time when untouchability is fast dying.

What I hope you will do is to run a strictly vegetarian kitchen for those who would not on any account take flesh, meat or fish.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 4444. Courtesy: Dr. William H. Tandy

[1] A Hindi translation of this, signed by Gandhiji, was also enclosed as he thought it would be more useful to the addressee for showing it to the patients and their relatives.

460. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 20, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Pattani[1] has been most wonderful. I am not sending anything today. Tandy was here. We finished [the job] in half an hour. He seemed to be a very good man. No, I am not sending anything today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11582

461. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,

October 20/21, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

I have your note. You can help wanting to be near by being near me during the arranged times and being elsewhere outside those times. What cannot be cured must be endured cheerfully. In cold weather, you must be sufficiently wrapped no matter how unfashionable you look. How about hot water with salt and soda, linseed and the steam?

If you continue to insist on Khurshed being with you she will listen.

I do understand what you say about maidens. I have my own ideas too on the matter. Of that when we meet. I hope you have got rid completely of your cold. Anasuya[2] and Indumati[3] came in today from Ahmedabad and several others.

Love.

ROBBER

[PS.]

Yours of today. You won't want me in Nagpur for your own sake, if I have no invitation from there. But wait. It will come in its

[1] Prabhashankar Pattani

[2] Anasuya Sarabhai, a labour leader of Ahmedabad

[3] Indumati Chimanlal Sheth

own time. Don't force matters. Yes, Grace Lancaster will come when you are here. But why say "if"? Can there be an "if" if you go to Nagpur?

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3825. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6981

462. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 21, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Work only as much as you can. See that you don't fall ill. Give enough time to the Muslim friends who are coming. I have told Shankerlal also.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11583

463. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

[On or before *October 22, 1937*][1]

I am trying to keep myself fit for Calcutta. I am praying to God to keep me fit. After I am there, you will have to see that I have no appointments or visits save about the Andamans prisoners and the Working Committee business.

The Hindu, 22-10-1937

464. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 22, 1937

CHI. AMBUJAM,[2]

How I wish you were here today for the Educational Conference. But this is written for Kamala's sake. She has no desire to go to Madras for her mother's sake, but does want me to see to it that her mother does not suffer for want of medical assistance because of her

[1] The report is date-lined "Wardha, October 22".

[2] The superscription and subscription are in Hindi.

poverty. I would like you to see to this by finding out really whether she wants or not. And if she does, you help her to the extent of her want. All this commission I entrust to you in the belief that you will collect from me what you spend. What about the Director of Hindi Prachar? I hope you are all getting on well. I leave for Calcutta on 25th. Returning about 1st November.

Blessings from

BAPU[2]

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

465. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

October 22, 1937

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. I have torn it up. There is no possibility at all of my going to the Frontier before the 7th. I hope to return to Wardha on the 1st or the 2nd.

You may, therefore, certainly come over as planned.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3504

466. SPEECH AT EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE-I[1]

October 22, 1937

Gandhiji, after thanking all those who had come in response to the invitations, said whether he was there as Chairman or member, he had invited them in order to listen to their opinion and advice on the propositions[2] he had formulated, especially of those who were opposed to them. He asked for a free, frank and full discussion, as he regretted his inability to meet the friends outside of the pandal for reasons of health.

The propositions, he said, referred both to primary education and college

[1] This and the following item are reproduced from Mahadev Desai's article "The Primary Question". The Conference was held on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of Marwari Shiksha Mandal under the presidentship of Gandhiji. The morning session was held from 8.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m.

[2] *Vide* "Questions Befored Educational Conference"

education, but they would largely have to address themselves to a consideration of primary education. He had included secondary in primary education because primary education was the only education so called that was available to a very small fraction of the people in our villages, many of which he had seen during his peregrinations since 1915. He was speaking exclusively about the needs of these rural boys and girls, the bulk of whom were illiterate. He had no experience of college education, though he had come in contact with hundreds of college boys, had heart-to-heart chats and correspondence with them, knew their needs, failings and the disease they suffered from. But they might restrict themselves to a consideration of primary education. For, the moment that primary question was solved the secondary one of college education would also be solved.

He was deliberately of opinion that the present system of primary education was not only wasteful but harmful. Most of the boys were lost to the parents and to the occupation to which they were born. They picked up evil habits, affected urban ways, and got a smattering of something which may be anything else but not education. The remedy, he thought, lay in educating them by means of vocational or manual training. He had some experience of it having trained his own sons and the children on the Tolstoy Farm in South Africa[1], belonging to all castes and creeds, who were good, bad and indifferent, through some manual training, e. g., carpentry or shoe-making which he had learnt from Kallenbach who had training in a Trappist monastery. His sons and all these children, he was confident, had lost nothing, though he could not give them an education that either satisfied himself or them, as the time at his disposal was limited and his preoccupations numerous.

The core of his emphasis was not the occupations but education through manual training—all education, of letters, history, geography, mathematics, science, etc., through manual training. It might be objected that in the Middle Ages nothing else was taught. But the occupational training then was far from serving an educational purpose. In this age those born to certain professions had forgotten them, taken to clerical careers, and were lost to the countryside. As a result, go wherever we might, it was impossible to find an efficient carpenter or a smith in an average village. The handicrafts were nearly lost, and the spinning-wheel being neglected was taken to Lancashire where it was developed, thanks to the English genius for developing crafts, to an extent that was to be seen today This he said irrespective of his views on industrialism.

The remedy lay in imparting the whole art and science of a craft through practical training and therethrough imparting education. Teaching of *takli*-spinning, for instance, presupposed imparting of knowledge of various varieties of cotton,

[1] *Vide* "An Autobiography", sub-title "As Schoolmaster

different soils in different provinces of India, the history of the ruin of the handicraft, its political reasons which would include the history of the British rule in India, knowledge of arithmetic, and so on. He was trying the experiment on his little grandson[1] who scarcely felt that he was being taught, for he all the while played and laughed and sang.

He was specially mentioning the *takli* in order that they might put to him questions about it, and as he had much to do with it, and seen its power and its romance; also because the handicraft of making cloth was the only one which could be universally taught and because the *takli* required no expense. It had more than proved its worth. The constructive programme, to the extent it had been carried out, had led to the formation of the Congress Ministries in seven provinces, and their success also would depend on the extent to which we carried it out.

He had contemplated a seven years' course which so far as the *takli* was concerned would culminate in practical knowledge of weaving (including dyeing, designing, etc.). The custom for all the cloth we could produce was there ready.

He was very keen on finding the expenses of the teacher through the product of the manual work of his pupils, as he was convinced that there was no other way to carry education to crores of our children. We could not wait until we had the necessary revenue, until the Viceroy reduced the military expenditure, and so on. He asked them to remember that this primary education would include the elementary principles of sanitation, hygiene, nutrition, of doing their own work, helping parents at home, etc. The present generation of boys knew no cleanliness, no self-help, and physically were C 3. He would therefore give compulsory physical training through musical drill, etc.

The speaker had been accused of being opposed to literary training. Far from it. He simply wanted to show the way in which it should be given. The self-supporting aspect had also been attacked. Whereas, it was said, we should be expending millions on primary education, we were going to exploit the children. It was also feared that there would be enormous waste. This fear was falsified by experience. As for exploiting or burdening the children, he would ask whether it was burdening the child to save him from a disaster. *Takli* was a good enough toy to play with. It was no less a toy because it was a productive toy. Even today children helped their parents to a certain extent. The Segaon children knew the details of agriculture better than he, having worked with their parents on the fields, Whilst the child would be encouraged to spin and help his parents, with agricultural jobs, he would also be made to feel that he did not belong only to his parents, but to the village and to the country and that he must make some return to them. That was the only way. He would tell the Ministers that they would make children helpless by doling out education to them. They would make them self-confident and brave by their paying for their own education by their own labour.

[1] Presumably, Kanam; *vide* "Letter to Vidya A. Hingorani", 6-10-1937

This system was to be common to all—Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians. Why did he not lay any stress on religious instruction, he was asked. Because he was teaching them practical religion, the religion of self-help.

The State, continued Gandhiji, was bound to find employment, if they needed it, for all the pupils thus trained. As for teachers, Prof. Shah had suggested the method of conscription.[1] He had demonstrated its value by citing instances from Italy and other lands. If Mussolini could impress the youth of Italy for the service of his country, why should not we? Was it fair to label as slavery the compulsory enlistment of service of our youth for a year or longer before they began their career? The youths had contributed a lot to the success of the movement for freedom during the past 17 years, and the speaker would call upon them to freely give a year of their lives to the service of the nation. Legislation, if it was necessary in this respect, would not be compulsion, as it could not be passed without the consent of the majority of our representatives.

Gandhiji would therefore ask them to say whether this imparting of education through manual training appealed to them. For him to make it self- supporting would be a test of its efficiency. The children ought at the end of seven years be able to pay for their instruction and be earning units.

College education was largely an urban proposition. He would not say that it was an unmitigated failure, as primary education was, but the results were fairly disappointing. Why should anyone of the graduates have to be unemployed?

Takli he had proposed as a concrete instance because Vinoba had the largest amount of practical experience in it, and he was there to answer their objections, if any. Kakasaheb would also be able to tell them something, though his experience was more theoretical than practical. He had especially drawn Gandhiji's attention to Armstrong's *Education for Life,* especially the chapter on "Education of the Hand". The late Madhusudan Das was a lawyer, but he was convinced that without the use of our hands and feet our brain would be atrophied, and even if it worked it would be the home of Satan. Tolstoy had taught the same lesson through many of his tales. Gandhiji concluded by inviting the attention of the audience to the very fundamentals of his plan of self-supporting primary education:

We have communal quarrels—not that they are peculiar to us. England had also its Wars of the Roses, and today British Imperialism is the enemy of the world. If we want to eliminate communal strife and international strife, we must start with foundations pure and strong by rearing our younger generation on the education I have adumbrated. That plan springs out of non-violence. I suggested it in connection with the nation's resolve to effect complete prohibition, but I may tell you that even if there was to be no loss of revenue, and our exchequer was full, this education would be a *sine qua non* if we did not want to urbanize our boys. We have to make them true

[1] K. T. Shah's article appeared in *Harijan,* 31-7-1937.

representatives of our culture, our civilization, of the true genius of our nation. We cannot do so otherwise than by giving them a course of self-supporting primary education. Europe is no example for us. It plans its programmes in terms of violence because it believes in violence. I would be the last to minimize the achievement of Russia, but the whole structure is based on force and violence. If India has resolved to eschew violence, this system of education becomes an integral part of the discipline she has to go through. We are told that England expends millions on education, America also does so but we forget that all that wealth is obtained through exploitation. They have reduced the art of exploitation to a science and might well give their boys the costly education they do. We cannot, will not, think in terms of exploitation, and we have no alternative but this plan of education which is based on non-violence.[1]

Harijan, 30-10-1937

467. SPEECH AT EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE-II

October 22, 1937

In the afternoon Gandhiji opened the session[2] with answering some of the criticisms. *Takli* was not the only thing, but that was the only thing which could be universalized. There was paper-making, *gur*-making from palms, and so on. It would be the function of the Ministers to find out what handicraft would suit what school best. He would warn those who were enamoured of the machine that there was every danger of men being turned into machines with the emphasis on the machine. For those who wanted to live under the machine-age his scheme would be useless, but he would also tell them that it would be impossible to keep villagers alive by means of machines. Where there were 300 million living machines, it was idle to think of bringing in new dead machinery. Dr. Zakir Husain was not right when he said that the scheme was educationally sound, irrespective of the ideological background.[3] A lady who knew the project method was visiting Gandhiji the other day, and she said that there was a vast difference between the project method and Gandhiji's scheme. But he would not ask them to accept the scheme without conviction. If our own people acted

[1] This was followed by a discussion in which Zakir Husain, Abdul Huq, Saudamini Mehta, K. T. Shah, Tijare, Principal of Khamgaon National School, Bhagwat, Dr. Syed Mahmud, and Balubhai Thakore participated.

[2] Held from 2.30 p.m. to 5 p.m.

[3] Zakir Husain had opened the discussion in the morning with the remarks that he welcomed the proposals as a sound educational proposition no matter whether one believed in urban civilization or rural, violence or non-violence.

on the square, there would be no slaves but perfect artisans produced from these schools. Any labour taken from the children should certainly be worth two pice an hour.

But he warned them against accepting anything out of their regard for him. He was near death's door and would not dream of thrusting anything down people's throats. The scheme must be accepted after full and mature consideration so that it may not have to be given up in a little while. He agreed with Prof. Shah that a State was not worth anything which could not provide for its unemployed. But providing doles was not the solution of unemployment. He would provide every one of them with work and give them food if not money. God did not create us to eat, drink and be merry but to earn our bread in the sweat of our brow.[1]

Harijan, 30-10-1937

468. CIVIL LIBERTY

Gurudev has given the poetry of Civil Liberty.[2] It bears reproduction in a weekly journal like *Harijan,* although the statement has gone round the world. The reader will find it in another column. It is a paraphrase of "Work out thine own salvation",[3] or "Man is his own enemy and his own friend."

Civil liberty is not criminal liberty. When law and order are under popular control, the Ministers in charge of the Department cannot hold the portfolio for a day if they act against the popular will. It is true that the Assemblies are not sufficiently representative of the whole people. Nevertheless the suffrage is wide enough to make it representative of the nation in matters of law and order. In seven provinces the Congress rules. It seems to be assumed by some persons that, in these provinces at least, individuals can say and do what they like. But so far as I know the Congress mind, it will not tolerate any such licence. Civil liberty means the fullest liberty to say and do what one likes within the ordinary law of the land. The word 'ordinary' has

[1] Among those who spoke after Gandhiji were: Vinoba Bhave, Dr. P. C. Ray, D. B. Kalelkar, K. T. Shah, Deva Sharma, M. S. Hussain, Nana Athayale, N. R. Malkani, Nanabhai Bhatt, B. G. Kher, Subbarayan and Biswanath Das. After the first day's proceedings the Conference converted itself into a committee to consider the propositions formulated by Gandhiji.

[2] A message was sent by Rabindranath Tagore to the Conference on Civil Liberty in India held in London on October 17.

[3] *Bhagavad Gita,* VI. 5

been purposely used here. The Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code, not to speak of the Special Powers Legislation, contain provisions which the foreign rulers have enacted for their own safety. These provisions can be easily identified, and must be ruled out of operation. The real test, however, is the interpretation by the Working Committee of the power of the Ministers of Law and Order. Subject, therefore, to the general instructions laid down by the Working Committee for the guidance of Congress Ministers, the Statutory Powers, limited in the manner indicated by me, must be exercised by the Ministers against those who, in the name of civil liberty, preach lawlessness in the popular sense of the term.

It has been suggested that Congress Ministers who are pledged to non-violence cannot resort to legal processes involving punishments.Such is not my view of the non-violence accepted by the Congress. I have personally, not found a way out of punishments and punitive restrictions in all conceivable cases. No doubt punishments have to be non-violent, if such an expression is permissible in this connection. Just as violence has its own technique, known by the military science, which has invented means of destruction unheard of before, non-violence has its own science and technique. Non-violence in politics is a new weapon in the process of evolution. Its vast possibilities are yet unexplored. The exploration can take place only if it is practised on a big scale and in various fields. Congress Ministers, if they have faith in non-violence, will undertake the explorations. But whilst they are doing this, or whether they do so or not, there is no doubt that they cannot ignore incitements to violence and manifestly violent speech, even though they may themselves run the risk of being styled violent. When they are not wanted, the public will only have to signify its disapproval through its representatives. In the absence of definite instructions from the Congress, it would be proper for the Ministers to report, what they consider is violent behaviour of any member of the public, to their own Provincial Congress Committee, or the Working Committee, and seek instructions. If the superior authority does not approve of their recommendations, they may offer to resign. They may not allow things to drift so far as to have to summon the aid of the Military. In my opinion, it would amount to political bankruptcy when any Minister is obliged to fall back on the Military, which does not belong to the people, and which, in any scheme of non-violence, must be ruled out of count for the observance of internal peace.

One interpretation I put upon the India Act is that it is an unconscious challenge to Congressmen to demonstrate the virtue of non-violence and the sincerity of their conviction about it. If the Congress can give such a demonstration, most of the safeguards fall into desuetude, and the Congress can achieve its goal without a violent struggle, and also without civil disobedience. If the Congress has not impregnated the people with the non-violent spirit, it has to become a minority, and remain in opposition, unless it will alter its creed.

Harijan, 23-10-1937

469. INDIAN INDUSTRY

The question is often asked: What is an Indian industry? It is asked generally regarding Indian exhibitions. Formerly it used to be claimed that any industry that was conducted in India was an Indian industry. Thus a mill manned by non-domiciled Europeans bringing capital, skilled man-power and machinery from abroad was considered to be an Indian industry even though it could be proved to be harmful to the masses. From that we have travelled a long distance. An industry to be Indian must be demonstrably in the interest of the masses; it must be manned by Indians both skilled and unskilled. Its capital and machinery should be Indian and the labour employed should have a living wage and be comfortably housed, while the welfare of the children of the labourers should be guaranteed by the employers. This is an ideal definition. Only the A. I. S. A. and the A.I.V.I.A. can perhaps barely satisfy that definition. For even these Associations have much leeway to make up. Nevertheless complete conformation to the definition is their immediate goal.

But between that definition and the one that was the vogue even with the Congress before 1920 there are many shades of definitions. The Congress definition has generally been all goods other than mill-cloth manufactured in India. The great mill industry may generally be claimed to be an Indian industry. But, in spite of its ability to compete with Japan and Lancashire, it is an industry that exploits the masses and deepens their poverty in exact proportion to its success over khadi. In the modern craze for wholesale industrialization, my presentation has been questioned, if not brushed aside. It has been contended that the growing poverty of the masses, due to the progress of industrialization, is inevitable, and should

therefore be suffered. I do not consider the evil to be inevitable, let alone to be suffered. The A. I. S. A. has successfully demonstrated the possibility of the villages manufacturing the whole of the cloth requirement of India simply by employing the leisure hours of the nation in spinning and the anterior processes. The difficulty lies in weaning the nation from the use of mill-cloth. This is not the place to discuss how it can be done. My purpose in this note was to give my definition of Indian industry in terms of the millions of villagers, and my reasons for that definition. And it should be plain to everyone that national exhibitions should only be for those industries which need public support in every way, not those which are flourishing without the aid of exhibitions and the like, and which organize their own exhibitions.

Harijan, 23-10-1937

470. LETTER TO PRANJIVAN

October 23, 1937

BHAI PRANJIVAN,

If every school which has functioned for many years looked at its own history, it would find someone or the other [from among its students] who has ultimately risen to fame. So, as far as I am concerned, I would consider such a thing a mere accident. For an old school like yours the real occasion to feel elated would be when it takes measures leading to improvement and makes progress in such a way that it has no parallel in the field. What is there to be proud about accidental achievement?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[NATIONAL] SCHOOL

RAJKOT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

471. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEGAON,
October 23, 1937

CHI. KAKA,

I am returning herewith the letters that Kabit should read. He should give in writing whatever reply he wishes to give. You can see that he has attacked Ananda Babu very strongly. If he admits that there has been exaggeration in his attack, he should withdraw the charge and give the same publicity to his withdrawal as he gave to the charge. And if he does not withdraw it, he should be prepared to prove it. Why did he not make these complints to me? This also should be found out.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7709

472. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 23, 1937

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

Your letter. Keep on writing in this way.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6553

473. LETTER TO BHAGWAN DEVI[1]

October 23, 1937

DEAR SISTER[2],

The sum of Rs. 1,000 sent by you has been received. It will be utilized for Harijan work. It is the dharma of those whom God has blessed with wealth to give it away regularly keeping back only a minimum amount for the maintenance of their health. A regular

[1] G. D. Birla's sister

[2] The superscription is from the copy in Pyarelal Papers.

payment however little is many times more fruitful than large, sporadic gifts. God's whole creation would have come to a standstill had it not been regulated by its laws.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

474. SPEECH AT EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE1

October 23, 1937

Gandhiji in winding up the proceedings said he was grateful to all for having come and co-operated with him. He would look forward to further co-operation as the Conference was but the first of the many they would have to have. Malaviyaji had sent to him a warning telegram, but he could put him at ease by saying that there was nothing final about the Conference as it was a Conference of seekers, and everyone was invited to offer suggestions and criticisms. He had never the idea of carrying through anything by storm. The ideas of national education and prohibition were as old as non-co-operation. But the thing in its present shape came to him under the changed circumstances of the country.

Harijan, 30-10-1937

[1] Gandhiji placed before the Conference the resolutions prepared by the Committee for discussion. The following resolutions were passed:

(1) That in the opinion of this Conference free and compulsory education be provided for seven years on a nation-wide scale.

(2) That the medium of instruction be the mother tongue.

(3) That the Conference endorses the proposal made by Mahatma Gandhi that the process of education throughout this period should centre round some form of manual and productive work, and that all the other abilities to be developed or training to be given should, as far as possible, be integrally related to the central handicraft chosen with due regard to the environment of the child.

(4) That the Conference expects that this system of education will be gradually able to cover the remuneration of the teachers

475. NOTE TO PYARELAL

[After *October 24, 1937*][1]

I shall of course send your letter to Kishorelal. Just as he placed his views before you without fear, so must you before him. But you have not touched the main point of his letter at all. However, that does not matter. That you cannot express in Gujarati or Hindi what you can express in English is something to be thought over. It is not merely a question of language.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

476. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

[Before *October 25, 1937*][2]

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

If you too return to India, who will look after the work there? Is there anyone who will be able to take up the responsibilities of the Editor? Who has been assisting you on the Gujarati side? What religion does Christopher follow? Who was the priest officiating at the marriage ceremony? Have the two remained loyal to their respective religions or do they profess them merely as a form? I ask questions of this kind because a similar case has arisen here. It would be very good if Ramdas can settle down there perma-nently. Devdas is here for two or three days. I shall have to go to Calcu-tta for four or five days to attend the Working Committee meeting. Devdas will accompany me there and then proceed to Madras to fetch Lakshmi, and from there he will go to Delhi *via* Wardha. How many subscribers do you have? How many of them are Muslims, how many Hindus and how many Christians? Are there any Englishmen among them? Slossburg came

[1] This note has been written on the reverse side of a letter from the addressee dated October 24, 1937.

[2] From the reference to Gandhiji's proposed visit to Calcutta to attend the Working Committee meeting

and saw me. I found him a good man. What about Ritch? Does he keep in touch with you? Andrews is in India at present. He lives in Simla and is very ill.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4763

477. LETTER TO K. F. NARIMAN

1 WOODBURN PARK,
CALCUTTA,
October 29, 1937

MY DEAR NARIMAN,

I read your extraordinary statement made in Mysore with a great degree of pain. I did not write to you till now as I had asked Mahadev to find out from you whether the statement reported in the Press was a correct version of what you had said. He told me yesterday that you had confirmed the Press statement. Do you not realize that it is a gross distortion of facts? Surely, my health had nothing to do with your confession[1], for my work was finished, and my telegram to which evidently you have made reference made mention of my health in connection with your request to postpone decision. In suggesting a confession in place of the judgments, if you felt the truth of them, both Syt. Bahadurji and I had nothing but your own good in view. You were accompanied by your counsel. You even pleaded for some alterations in the draft submitted to you. Your alterations were accepted. Do you remember that you accompanied your confession with the following covering letter?

BOMBAY,
October 15, 1937

PUJYA GANDHIJI,

I have read the draft sent with Mahadevbhai and with some alterations in the handwriting of Syt. Bahadurji. I have signed it and hence I hope the findings will not be published. I am really sorry and apologize to you for

[1] *Vide* K. F. Nariman's Statement"

having been the cause of so much worry and trouble to you. I hope you will excuse me.

Yours,

K. F. NARIMAN

By your Mysore recantation you have proved yourself utterly unreliable. I need hardly tell you that you were and still are at perfect liberty to publish the judgment of which copies were posted to you on 16th October 1937. I have placed the Working Committee in possession of all the facts, and I am presently handing to the Committee copies of the judgments.

Yours sincerely,

A. I. C. C. File No. 747-a, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

478. INTERVIEW TO POLITICAL SUFFERERS[1]

CALCUTTA,
October 29, 1937

Gandhiji is understood to have told the deputation that he had taken up the matter very seriously and was determined to do whatever lay in his power. He added that he had come to Bengal mainly, if not wholly, for this purpose and was even prepared to see the Viceroy on this question. He appealed to the deputation not to do anything which might render a solution of the matter difficult.

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-10-1937

479. NOT TODDY BUT NIRO

Some persons are consciously or unconsciously imputing to me an approval of fermented toddy. I have made it perfectly plain that prohibition affects all intoxicating drinks and drugs without exception. Fermented toddy, therefore, can never be tolerated under any scheme of total prohibition. But what I have said and what I

[1] A deputation of political sufferers from Bengal and the Punjab waited on Gandhiji in the evening. The deputation is understood to have urged Gandhiji to make the question of release of political prisoners a major issue before the country and further urged that the Congress Ministries should go to the length of resigning if necessary over the issue in order to bring pressure on Government.

repeat is that sweet unfermented toddy, which is called *niro*[1], should not be prohibited, and that the drinking of it in the place of fermented toddy should be encouraged. How it can be done is for the Prohibition Ministers to determine.

Harijan, 30-10-1937

480. SOCIAL SERVICE CONSCRIPTION

This valuable thesis[2] does not mean that it contains the only scheme of conscription for social service. It shows the feasibility of conscription. It points the way to it.

> . . . Usually, conscription has hitherto been used in modern individualist communities for purposes of national defence or imperialist aggression. In this country, we would adopt conscription universally, for men as well as women, not for destructive, but for productive purposes of national service and social reconstruction.
>
> In some countries they allow certain exemptions from such compulsory gratuitous public service, and offer certain compensatory advantages to those who have rendered such service. In this country, too, we may have to use a similar device. To make this new factor in our national economy function effectively and smoothly, we may have to introduce it by stages. But the foundation must be laid immediately.
>
> This Social Service Conscription should commence with educated males of 18-25 years of age. Ancillary organizations of boy or girl volunteers comparable to the British Boy Scouts, or the Italian Ballila, might be set up to support the main force of conscript workers. The proportion of educated males in India is about 1 in every 5, and that of educated women 1 in 50. At the age, however, at which conscription should commence the proportion may be appreciably higher, say, 1 in every 3 males, and 1 in every 10 women. The term 'educated' is used in a very liberal, or even charitable sense, since it includes all those who fulfil the merest test of literacy in their own language. .
>
> . . It may be expedient to limit the number of conscripts to those of secondary school- leaving stage. Of the 15 lakhs of such young men available in a province like Bombay, barely 250,000 may be found to satisfy the minimum educational qualification, while less than 100,000 may be found to satisfy the higher qualification suggested above.
>
> We may well begin the experiment with this latter number. These

[1] Also called *neera*

[2] By K. T. Shah, of which only extracts are reproduced here

educated young men of 18 and over must regard the service rendered by them as a sort of personal ten per cent tax, paid in kind, those paying only who have the means to do so, and their superior education being treated as evidence of their ability. . . .

The 100,000 educated young men, with whom the experiment may be commenced in Bombay, for example, would be more than ample for our immediate objective, in the 21,484 villages of that province. Nearly 5 educated conscripts would be available for each village. There may be in addition about 25,000 young women who may supplement the effort later on.

The most urgent and immediate task of social service consists in: (a) liquidation of illiteracy and ignorance; (b) spread of elementary knowledge of health and hygiene; (c) aiding and improving village productive organization and occupation.

One of the most important sections in the Legislation for Conscription would have to define carefully the tasks to be allotted to the workers. . . . No scheme of conscription should be put into effect, until a comprehensive plan of the work to be done has been prepared and approved for each Province. . . . The social service conscripts, mobilized in India on the plan here advocated, would have to be given special training even more than the military conscripts of Europe, since the latter, in their ordinary elementary schooling, generally receive some element of practical training, too, before they join the colours. In India our educational system provides no such advantage for the average youth.

This training organization must be developed in each province out of the existing schools and colleges. The instructors in these institutions, particularly of the higher grade, are by no means overworked, or underpaid. From the highest to the lowest, in every faculty and branch of knowledge, this profession should be indented upon at least to the extent of one hour per day. Such training should be given intensively for 6 months in the one year of the service. Work should be assigned, or distributed, among the conscripts in accordance with the aptitude and previous training of each individual. . . .

Those conscripted in this manner both during training and during the period actually at work will not be paid anything by way of salary. But they must be maintained at public expense, and must be taken from their place of work to their homes, and vice versa, at public expense. This ought not, however, to cost the State such an amount as to be an insupportable burden, nor be out of proportion to the value of the service rendered.

. . . All those who willingly, and without any exemption, render such service, as and when it falls due, must at the time of seeking employment for

life, be preferred by all public bodies, and even by private employers on pain of losing such patronage or countenance from the State as is now becoming increasingly common between the State and Industry. The basic legislation for such conscription must clearly provide for such compensation.

. . . The advantages of conscription need not be detailed at any great length. In the first place, it would solve, in a great measure, the question of the cost of the indispensable and urgent social service we need in this country. At the same time, it would help to inculcate those habits of disciplined work and of concerted action—the so-called team-work—which are indispensable in a community intent upon making up the leeway that India is suffering from. Finally, thanks to such regimentation—the phrase may be used without any fear of misinterpretation—an increasing section of the community will automatically acquire those habits of personal cleanliness and healthful living which most people when left to themselves ignore, and consequently suffer in health, temper and efficiency

Harijan, 30-10-1937

481. A STEP FORWARD

A record of the work of the Educational Conference will be found elsewhere.[1] It marks an important stage in the presentation of my plan to the public and the Congress Ministers. It was a happy augury that so many Ministers attended. The objection and criticism centred round the idea of self-support even in the narrow sense I have mentioned. Therefore the Conference has made the very cautious declaration it has. There is no doubt the Conference had to sail on an unchartered sea. There was no complete precedent before it. If the idea is sound, it will work itself out in practice. After all it is for those who have faith in the self-support part to demonstrate it by working schools in accordance with the idea.

There was a remarkable unanimity so far as the question went of imparting full primary education including the secondary course less English through a vocation. The fact that the whole person in the boys and girls has to be developed through a vocation automatically saves the schools from degenerating into factories. For over and above the required degree of proficiency in the vocation in which they are trained, the boys and girls will have to show equal proficiency in the

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Educational conference-II", 22-10-1937

other subjects they will be expected to learn.

Dr. Zakir Husain's Committee's[1] labours will show how the scheme can be worked in practice and what exactly the boys and girls will be expected to know from year to year. Objection has been raised that the Conference's resolutions[2] were a foregone conclusion. It has no validity. In the nature of things it was impossible to invite educationists at random to pronounce their views all of a sudden on what to them is undoubtedly a revolutionary plan. The invitations had therefore to be restricted to those who as teachers had had at least something to do with vocational training. I had myself no idea that the co-workers in the cause of national education would receive the new idea with sympathy. The wider circle of educationists will undoubtedly be invited to consider the scheme when it comes before the public in a concrete and fuller form through the Zakir Husain Committee. I would request those educationists who may have helpful suggestions to make to send them at once to Shri Aryanayakam, the Convener and Secretary of the Committee at Wardha.

One of the speakers at the Conference emphasized the fact that education of little boys and girls could be more effectively handled by women than men and by mothers rather than maidens. From another standpoint, too, they are in a better position than men to answer Prof. Shah's conscription scheme. Here is undoubtedly an opportunity for patriotic women with leisure to offer their services to a cause which ranks amongst the noblest of all causes. But if they come forward, they will have to go through a sound preliminary training. Needy women in search of a living will serve no useful purpose by thinking of joining the movement as a career. If they approach the scheme, they should do so in a spirit of pure service and make it a life mission. They will fail and be severely disappointed if they approach it in a selfish spirit. If the cultured women of India will make common cause with the villagers, and that too through their children, they will produce a silent and grand revolution in the village life of India. Will they respond?

Harijan, 30-10-1937

[1] The Committee, appointed under the Chairmanship of Zakir Husain, was to prepare a planned syllabus on the lines of the resolutions passed at the Conference and submit its report to Gandhiji within a month. . . . Other members of the Committee were: E. W. Aryanayakam, Khwaja Ghulam Saiyidain, Vinoba Bhave, D. B. Kalelkar, Shrikrishnadas Jaju, J. C. Kumarappa, Ashadevi, Kishorelal Mashruwala and K. T. Shah.

[2] *Vide* footnote 1,"Speech at Educational Conference",23-10-1937

482. TALK WITH ANDAMANS PRISONERS[1]

[CALCUTTA,
October 30, 1937][2]

When Gandhiji visited the political prisoners in Alipur Jail[3] they were fresh from the Andamans, and were anxious to go back to hunger-strike if they were not released, or rather if Gandhiji declared that he had failed in his mission. But they promised to do nothing until Gandhiji definitely told them that he had failed. What was to be the position now? How long were they to wait? Gandhiji said to them:

There should be no hunger-strike on any account. Though there are circumstances conceivable in which a hunger-strike may be justified, hunger-strike in order to secure release or redress of grievances is wrong. And if you resort to it whilst I am carrying on negotiations, you will clip my wings. But why think of a hunger-strike when you have got me as a good substitute for a hunger-strike? My days are numbered. I am not likely to live long, maybe I may live a year or little more and let me tell you that much of that time is going to be given in order to secure your release. I want to see you discharged before I die. That is the word I am giving to you, and I want you to give me your word that so long as I live to work for you, you will not go on hunger-strike. I cannot have peace or comfort so long as I have not secured your discharge. You have to believe what I say. Man believes and lives. My function is not that of a lawyer but of a humanitarian and a votary of non-violence. Non-violence will not spread so long as you prisoners are kept in prison, and that is why I have staked my life for the mission. No thought, therefore, of hunger-strike please.

Harijan, 23-4-1938

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter."
[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 1-11-1937
[3] At 5 p.m.

483. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 31, 1937

MY DEAR UNTOUCHABLE,

Today I took silence at 12.10 to be ready for the W. C. tomorrow. As I write this I have your letter of 29th. I have not a moment's rest to even write a word under Mahadev's letter. I have been generally at the W. C. meetings then[*sic*].

I have kept as well as possible under the peculiar circumstances. Yes, I have seen the prisoners. I had two hours with them. The release is not going to be a simple or easy affair. I shall leave no stone unturned to secure it. But 'God disposes'.

I leave for Segaon tomorrow[1] and return here on 11th November to see the Governor[2] and all whom it may be necessary to see.

No more for the day.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3826. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6982.

484. LETTER TO NANDALAL BOSE

WOODBURN ROAD,
CALCUTTA,
October 31, 1937

DEAR NAND BABU,

Will you please examine the enclosed[3] article and the illustrations which are to accompany the article to be published by the writer in book form? I have been asked to write the foreword. I have no qualifications for it. I am therefore passing on the article to you for your opinion. If in your opinion the article has intrinsic merit, you will please give me your opinion which may be published as the

[1] However, on account of high blood-pressure Gandhiji had to postpone his journey; *vide* "Telegram to Abdul Ghaffar Khan", 1-11-1937

[2] Sir John Anderson

[3] Gandhiji here indicates with an asterisk "Separately, not by book post"

Foreword if the authoress desires it.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Please address Segaon.

From a copy: C.W. 9838

485. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 1, 1937

MY DEAR UNTOUCHABLE,

I penned a few lines yesterday. This is to supplement yesterday's lines. Yes, the drink manifesto may be published without waiting for more names. I presume however that there will be work at [the] back of it—you won't do it singlehanded! !

Your speech[1] was sent two days ago. As you must have seen, I made some vital amendments. You need not accept them, unless they appeal to you as sound. Your suggestions are all good. But will they be accepted and, if accepted, will they be acted up to? You will know your audience and deal with the programme as you think best.

Anasuya Kale and then Sarojini asked me what day I would attend. S. suggested the last day. I did not object. But you shall decide. All will be weather permitting. My programme is all upset. I have to be back here on 11th to see the Governor. He is not here. I can't go to Darjeeling in the present state of my health. I have to reach the Frontier Province on 17th and not later than 20th. Khan Saheb wants me there for 20 days. That means that I may not be back in Segaon before 10th December. I am sorry. What will you do? Could you not be in Simla till then, if Simla agrees with you? I have heard that Simla is at its best in the winter months. But you know what your body can stand.

Here I was interrupted and it has continued.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3827. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6983

[1] The Presidential address at the All-India Women's Conference. It appeared in *Harijan*, 8-1-1938, under "Notes", sub-title, "A Remarkable Address".

486. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

1 WOODBURN PARK,
CALCUTTA
November 1, 1937

DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Enclosed herewith is the judgement of the inquiry committee about the two issues raised by Shri Nariman in his correspondence with you and me.[1] I had thought that Shri Nariman's acceptance of my recommendation to make a confession[2] which was to take the place of the judgement was a fair ending to an inquiry which gave me many an anxious moment. But Shri Nariman's recantation of the confession which l first saw only in the Press alters the position and reveals the painful state of Shri Nariman's mind. The recantation contains a patent untruth as pointed out by me in my letter[3] to Shri Nariman which you will find in the enclosure.

I recall the fact that Shri Nariman himself courted the inquiry and deliberately wanted an investigation into the charge made on him by Sardar Vallabhbhai of a grave breach of trust in the matter of the Bombay election in 1934. In his letter addressed to you occurs the following sentence:

> If the verdict of such an independent tribunal and enquiry tends to blame me in the slightest degree, then I will willingly submit to any penalty which you or any other authority chooses to impose, but at the same time hoping and expecting that, if the blame is found elsewhere, similar indiscriminating judgment should follow regardless of personalities or personal considerations.

In his letters to me (I have not the copies with me), he went further and said that, if he was found guilty of the Sardar's charge, he would consider himself to be unworthy of holding any office of trust.

I am of opinion that by his conduct Shri Nariman has proved himself unworthy of holding any position of trust, not only because he has been found guilty of grave breach of trust in 1934 election and has failed to prove the charge brought by him against Sardar Vallab-

[1] *Vide* "Note on Nariman-Sardar Case", 14-10-1937

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 16-10-1937, and "K. F. Nariman's Statement"

[3] Dated October 29, 1937; *vide* "Letter to K. F. Nariman", 29-10-1937

hbhai, but by his subsequent conduct as betrayed in the correspondence, and especially by his unfortunate recantation of the confession freely given by him in the presence of his counsel.

Yours sincerely

M. K.GANDHI

SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

PRESIDENT, A. I C. C.

A. I. C. C. File No. 747-a, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

487. NOTE TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

November 1, 1937

I have come to the conclusion that it would be best if all [of you] resigned. Even if the others don't resign, you should. Jamnalal is sure to resign. Who will be left then? Rajendra Babu? And won't [it] be bankruptcy? Bhulabhai also will leave. But it will not matter even if he does not. I don't think that Maulana's support is necessary. If he does not resign, a time will come when he will be forced to resign. I have observed that Subhas is not at all dependable. Howevere, there is nobody but he who can be the President[1]. I thought hard last night and again now. Let others do what they like, I am convinced that you should resign. If each does not take care of his own interest nothing will be done and the whole game will be lost.

I will certainly bring up the Nariman issue. But he may not wish to do anything. All the same, let us know what the other members say. What do Deo[2] and Patwardhan believe? What is Bhulabhai's view? What weight can be attached to the opinion of one person alone?

The reasons for resigning are obvious. The Mysore chapter[3] and increasing differences of opinion . . .[4] You should make it clear that you cannot continue in the face of such strong differences in the Committee. Think over the whole thing carefully yourself. Nobody else's advice will help you in this matter. I see nothing but ignominy in your continuing. It will be well if you can retain control

[1] Of the forthcoming Congress session at Haripura

[2] Shankarrao Deo

[3] *Vide* "The A. I. C. C."

[4] Omission as in the source

of Gujarat, but don't mind if you lose even that. To let yourself be dragged by the current will be ruinous.

I have suggested that all of you should resign. You should all meet today and decide. The proceedings today were no good. Many other things also have happened which were not proper. He should be completely free to have his own cabinet. It wouldn't be proper for him to resign himself [instead of you all]. This also should be made clear to him. Rajendra Babu is arriving today. After listening to all this, I feel that all of you should resign. I have no time and no energy. I can barely keep myself alive. You yourself should talk over the matter tonight and decide. With so much untruth having infiltrated, what will you gain by continuing?[1]

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 217-8

488. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

November 1, 1937

Before leaving Calcutta I should like to tell the public what actually is the position regarding my efforts to secure the relief which I promised the Andamans prisoners I should make with all my heart.

In pursuance of these efforts and by the kind permission of the Bengal Government, I saw the repatriates from the Andamans on October 30.[2] I had spent nearly two hours with them.

I am in correspondence with the Government in the matter and I expect to return to Calcutta on the 11th instant, when I hope to see His Excellency the Governor and, if necessary, subject to the Government's permission, see both the prisoners and the detenus.

Meanwhile, I trust that the prisoners, wherever they may be, will not make the position difficult by resuming their hunger-strike. I have information that many prisoners are getting restive over the delay I can only give them the assurance that, so far as I am concerned, there shall be no remissness on my part in the effort. So far as the public are concerned, they should know that the public agitation for securing relief continues unabated.

The Statesman, 2-11-1937

[1] The text has been collated with the copy from the Manuscript Diary of Mahadev Desai.

[2] *Vide* "Talk with Andamans Prisoners", 30-10-1937

489. TELEGRAM TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

[On or after *November 1, 1937*][1]

UNUSUALLY HIGH BLOOD-PRESSURE AND FATIGUE PREVENTED MY GOING TO WARDHA. DOCTORS FORBID THE FRONTIER JOURNEY AND I HAVE INDEFINITELY POSTPONED IT. IT CAUSES ME GREAT SORROW BUT IT IS INEVITABLE AND I MUST FIX SOME OTHER TIME.

The Statesman, 4-11-1937

490. LETTER TO AMINA TYABJI[2]

1 WOODBURN PARK,
CALCUTTA,
November 4, 1937

MY DEAR SISTER,

I have purposely refrained from writing to you up till now because I wanted to have a chat with Maulana Saheb before writing to you. Merely sending you an acknowledgement I held to be unnecessary. I had a long chat with the Maulana. So far as I could see, he agrees with my reading of the Koran apart from traditional and sectarian interpretations. But as he may be the only divine in India to give the liberal and universal interpretation to the Koran, he does not want to come out as a radical reformer and thus impair his influence among the Indian Muslim world. He has therefore himself written to Habib[3] to come to Calcutta with Sohaila[4] whilst I am here. I have therefore telegraphed to Habib[5] to come here. Please believe me when I tell you that I have been always thinking of you, your difficulties and your sorrows ever since the Hamida[6] affair has cropped up. I have acted, will act and am still acting as if the living image of Abbas Saheb was in front of me, as witness of all I am doing. More than that I could not do. I will write to you again as soon as anything further has happened. I am here till at least the ninth. There is nothing to alarm

[1] Gandhiji's departure for Wardha was postponed on Monday November 1.
[2] Widow of Abbas Tyabji
[3] Addressee's son-in-law and daughter
[4] *ibid*
[5] Addressee's granddaughter
[6] Addressee's daughter

anybody about my health. The crisis is over. I am taking full rest. I hope you and Raihana[4] are keeping well.

Love.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 9690

491. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

I WOODBURN PARK,

CALCUTTA,

November 5, 1937

CHI. KAKA,

Please read the enclosed letter and give me your guidance. On Monday when half an hour was left for departure the doctor frightened everybody and got frightened himself. At last I had to submit to him and had to stay on. Now till the 8th I shall have to stick to this one floor. Let us see what happens after that. I hope to start from here on the 9th or the 10th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7689

492. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE[1]

November 6, 1937

The (Birla) Brothers will, whether with or without the help of friends, provide Rs. 1,000 per month, Rs. 800 being for the school of Indology and Rs. 200 per month for Nandababu's art school, as long as these departments continue satisfactorily.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] According to Mahadev Desai, the letter said that Gandhiji was sending Rs. 13,000—Rs. 10,000 for the Kala Bhavan and Rs. 3,000 for three months at the rate of Rs. 1,000 per month.

493. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

CALCUTTA,
November 8, 1937

DEAR GURUDEV,

Your messenger has brought your precious note with receipts.[1] I have done nothing. It is God's prompting; your labours and prayers have borne fruit. May you have complete rest from worry and toil over the financial difficulties.

I am well, thanks.

Love.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4648

494. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[2]

November 9, 1937

I had nearly two hours' talk with His Excellency at Barrackpore. Owing to my illness the interview was considerately arranged on the grounds. Naturally the talk was confined to relief to political prisoners and detenus. The public will not expect me to describe the conversations in detail for the sake of the common cause. I would ask the Press and public to be satisfied with my statement that I have placed my point of view to the best of my abilities and that it was fully discussed between His Excellency and myself. I would like the Press not to indulge in conjectures about the conversations which have to be in the nature of things private.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 10-11-1937

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Gandhiji issued this on his return from Barrackpore after meeting the Governor of Bengal.

495. TELEGRAM TO J. S. PILLAI[1]

[On or before *November 10, 1937*][2]

MY WARMEST CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR ELECTION TO MAYORALTY WHICH I HAVE NO DOUBT YOU WILL ADORN WITH DISTINCTION.

GANDHI

The Hindu, 11-11-1937

496. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,
November 10, 1937

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA WEST

STOOD STRAIN WELL. DATE DEPARTURE UNCERTAIN. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4198. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7834

497. LETTER TO DILKHUSH B. DIWANJI

SEGAON,
November 11, 1937

BHAI DILKHUSH,

I have your letter. I shall go through what you have sent me and I shall write to you if I have anything to say about it. I appreciate your keenness to complete the work. However, it should not be allowed to delay what you can give [now]. Not that I fear any unnecessary delay on your part. But some of my statements can easily be misconstrued, and so I think I should caution you. It sometimes becomes one's duty to offer a thing which, although incomplete, is a hundred per cent true and proved by experience. No single individual has a complete

[1] The addressee was the first Harijan to be elected Mayor of the Madras Corporation.

[2] The addressee received the telegram on November 10.

knowledge of all that I include in the science of khadi. But I don't despair on that account. However, I would certainly be sorry if someone who lacked a systematic knowledge of every branch of this science did not make an effort to acquire such knowledge. Despair I would still not know. Because so long as I have faith in myself, faith in khadi—and am trying, as best I can, to acquire knowledge of this science—why should I despair? This should be the attitude of those who have faith in khadi. Maybe there is not the slightest need to write to you all this. Even so, perhaps my doing so will prove helpful to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Motanan Man, p. 70

498. A NOTE ON PROHIBITION

This[1] is a valuable contribution to the discussion on prohibition. Whilst there are things which cannot be accepted, there are suggestions which are worthy of consideration. The writer adopts the slippery road of gradualness for the sake of revenue. That way lies utter failure. But the suggestion about State monopoly of manufacture and sale of intoxicants and about unfermented toddy is perfectly sound.

Harijan, 13-11-1937

499. THE A. I. C. C.

Congress Ministers have a fourfold responsibility. As an individual a Minister is primarily responsible to his constituents. If he is satisfied that he no longer enjoys their confidence or that he has changed the views for which he was elected, he resigns. Collectively the Ministers are responsible to the majority of the legislators who, by a no-confidence vote or similar means, may any moment drive them out of office. But a Congress Minister owes his position and responsibility to his Provincial Congress Committee and the A. I. C. C. also.

[1] An article by a "medical friend" which is not reproduced here

So long as all these four bodies act in co-ordination, Ministers have smooth sailing in the discharge of their duty.

The recent meeting of the A. I. C. C.[1] showed, however, that some of its members were not at all in accord with the Congress Ministries, specially that of C. Rajagopalachari, the Prime Minister of Madras. Healthy, well-informed, balanced criticism is the ozone of public life. A most democratic Minister is likely to go wrong without ceaseless watch from the public. But the resolution moved in the. A. I. C. C. criticizing the Congress Ministries, and still more the speeches, were wide of the mark. The critics had not cared to study the facts. They had not before them C. Rajagopalachari's reply. They knew that he was most eager to come and answer his critics. But severe illness prevented him from coming. The critics owed it to their representative that they should postpone the consideration of the resolution. Let them study and take to heart what Jawaharlal Nehru has said in his elaborate statement on the matter. I am convinced that in their action the critics departed from truth and non-violence. If they had carried the A.I.C.C. with them, the Madras Ministers at least would have resigned, although they seemingly enjoy the full confidence of the majority of the legislators. Surely, that would not have been a desirable result.

Much more offensive, in my opinion, was the Mysore resolution[2]; and the pity of it is that it was carried with practically nobody to speak out for truth. I hold no brief for Mysore. There are many things I would like the Maharaja to reform. But the Congress policy is to give even an opponent his due. In my opinion the Mysore resolution was *ultra vires* of the resolution of non-interference[3]. This, so far as I am aware, has never been repealed. On merits the A. I. C. C. was not out to deal with the State as a whole. It was dealing only with

[1] At Calcutta

[2] Which read: "This meeting of the A. I. C. C. expresses its emphatic protest against the ruthless policy of repression as indicated by the inauguration of various restrictive and prohibitory orders and political prosecutions launched in the Mysore State and also against the suppression of civil rights and liberties by denying the elementary rights of speech, assemblage and association. This meeting sends its fraternal greetings to the people of Mysore and wishes them all success in their legitimate non-violent struggle and appeals to the people of Indian States and British India to give all support and encouragement to the people of Mysore in their struggle against the State for right of self-determination."

[3] Passed at Lucknow in April 1936

the policy of repression. The resolution did not set forth the correct state of affairs, and the speeches were full of passion and without regard to the facts of the case. The A. I. C. C. should have appointed, if it was so minded, a committee even of one person to ascertain the facts before proceeding to pronounce judgment. The least it can do in such matters, if it has any regard for truth and non-violence, is first to let the Working Committee pronounce its judgment on them and then, if necessary, review them in a judicial manner. I have purposely refrained in the case of either resolution from going into details to prove my submission. I am saving my limited energy and am leaving the matter also to the good sense of the members of the A.I.C.C., which has since 1920 assumed a unique importance and doubly so after the office-acceptance resolution[1].

Harijan, 13-11-1937

500. LETTER TO ZAKIR HUSAIN

1 WOODBURN PARK,

CALCUTTA,

November 14, 1937

MY DEAR ZAKIR,

I wanted to dictate this days ago but could not manage it. The work[2] you did during the two days in Wardha was very good. When you next meet I would like you to give a course of studies for seven years. Without that your report would be incomplete. You should also say how much space would be required and the nature of buildings or building needed for the school, its cost and the material of which the construction is to be made. This need not be elaborate, but should be the groundwork of elaboration. I was sorry not to be with you when you were in Wardha. I specially wanted to meet Khwaja Ghulam Saiyidain[3]. How I wish I would be with you when you come again

[1] Passed on March 16, 1937; *vide* "Extract From A.I.C.C. Resolution", 16-3-1937 For Jawaharlal Nehru's reactions to this article, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Jawaharlal Nehru", 14-11-1937

[2] Zakir Husain Committee's Report on Basic Education

[3] Principal, Teachers' Training College, Aligarh; later Adviser and Secretary to the Ministry of Education, Government of India.

when you finish your report. I expect to leave here on Wednesday if my work is for the moment finished.

I am sending a copy of this to Aryanayakam.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

501. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

CALCUTTA,
November 14, 1937,

MY DEAR LOTUS-BORN,

I was not going to write to you just yet. I have been only dictating the most necessary correspondence. But the imperious singer won't rest till I promised to let you have a line. For I am told you are visibly growing in years and for us hope in wisdom too. Your birthday is nearing! May it find you full of health, fun and wisdom.

Love.

SLAVE-DRIVER

SHRI PADMAJA NAIDU
GOLDEN THRESHOLD
HYDERABAD DECCAN

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

502. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 15, 1937

MY DEAR UNTOUCHABLE,

After a lapse of three days I have two notes from you today. I still do not do any correspondence. Both the hands are weak. I work the right for *Harijan* articles on Mondays. But I must give you a few lines today.

G.W.[1] we leave here for Wardha on Wednesday returning here, if need be, after the new G's[2] taking office.

Nothing is wanted but complete rest to set me up. I hope to get

[1] God willing
[2] Governor

it in Segaon. I do not and cannot get it here. The detenu work occupies my thoughts and taxes my mental energy as it must while I am on the scene. That by itself sufficiently disturbs the mental relaxation I want so badly.

I say nothing about the result of my labours. For I do not know. I am not without hope. Do you remember you wanted me not on the opening day but the 2nd or the closing day? It makes no difference to me. Do not translate your address literally. Give a free rendering. You can omit parts and add where necessary. How about the ears and the forehead? How is Nabibux? Has Shummy benefited by the change of Simla?

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3828. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6984

503. LETTER TO NARESH NATH MOOKERJEE

1 WOODBURN PARK,
CALCUTTA,
November 17, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

With reference to your letter of the 16th instant, I am quite clear that no Congressman can attend farewell parties to the Governor and officials, no matter where and by whom given, that is, so long as the Congress ban lasts. My interview[1] with His Excellency as also with the Ministers whether at my host's place[2] or at their place[3], was not a social or official function. And what I, having ceased to be even a four-anna member, may do with impunity, Congressmen may not. The instance you have quoted bears no analogy to mine.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-11-1937

[1] On November 9
[2] On November 17
[3] On November 16

504. INTERVIEW TO UNITED PRESS[1]

KHARAGPUR,
November 17, 1937

For the present I have no intention of issuing any Press statement about my discussions with Bengal Ministers.

On being told that the Bengal Government proposed to issue a Press communique on their negotiations with Gandhiji tomorrow, Mahatmaji said:

If on seeing their communique, I feel that any statement is necessary from me, then I may issue one, but that can only be from Wardha.[2]

Gandhiji then informed the United Press that he was coming to Calcutta very soon.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-11-1937

505. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ON WAY TO WARDHA,
November 18, 1937

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I fancy I could read the personal letter in your eyes as you were hovering round me that awful Sunday night and silent Monday. The weakness has not yet left me. I need prolonged rest from all mental toil, but that perhaps cannot be had.

This I write to report to you what I have done about the prisoners in Bengal, and to ascertain whether it meets with your approval. The negotiations have been a taxing affair. Before entering upon them I had consulted the two Brothers[3] as to the desirability of securing relief through negotiations. It was possible to be indifferent as to the result and rely upon the growth of public opinion forcing release whenever it was to come. The Brothers were emphatically for negotiations, whilst public agitation continued. I unfolded my plan also and it was after the style of my telegram[4] to the Andamans

[1] Gandhiji reached Kharagpur Station at 4 p. m. A representative of the United Press approached him in the waiting room.

[2] *Vide* "Statement on Bengal Government's Communique", 21-11-1937

[3] Subhas Chandra Bose and Sarat Chandra Bose

[4] *Vide* "Telegram to Viceroy", 27-8-1937 and "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 3-9-1937

prisoners. And so I saw the repatriates[1], detenus brought back from Deoli and last night the Hijli prisoners. The Ministers have agreed to release what they call 'village and home domiciled' detenus almost forthwith, and inside of four months to release those in the detenu camps whom they may consider to be safe. For the rest they will accept my recommendation, if they are not earlier released. My recommendation will depend upon my ascertaining the present belief of the detenus. If I am able to say to the Government that they do not believe in methods of violence for the attainment of independence and that they will pursue such Congress activities as are approved of by the Congress from time to time, they will release them. A declaration of policy might be made any time. I need not go into the details of the conversations with the prisoners in the several prisons and in Hijli camp. I wonder if all this commends itself to you. If you strongly disapprove of it, I would like you to telegraph. Otherwise I shall await your letter.

The strikes in Ahmedabad of which I have no knowledge, except from what I gather from the papers, as also what the papers say about Sholapur,[2] disturbed me. If we cannot control the situation either because a section of the Congressmen would not submit to Congress discipline or because the Congress cannot control the activities of those who are outside the Congress influence, our holding of offices is bound to prove detrimental to the Congress cause.

The 'Bande Mataram' controversy has not yet died out. Many Bengalis are sore at heart over the W. C. decision.[3] Subhas told me he was trying to calm the atmosphere.

I expect to have to go back to Bengal soon after the assumption of office by the incoming Governor.

I hope you are keeping well. The paragraph in the newspaper

[1] On October 30

[2] *Vide* "Storm Signals"

[3] Some Muslims having objected to the practice of singing *Vandemataram* in certain legislatures, the Working Committee recommended that "whenever and wherever *Vandemataram* is sung the first two stanzas should be sung, with perfect freedom to the organizers to sing any other song of unobjectionable character, in addition to, or in place of *Vandemataram*"

about Sarup[1] was disturbing. Is her health unequal to the strain she is undergoing?

This is being written as we are nearing Nagpur. We arrive Wardha this evening.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi Nehru Papers, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A Bunch of old Letters*, pp. 247-8

506. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA,
November 18, 1937

CHI. NIMU,

I cannot write myself, and hence I am dictating this letter. I read your letter just now in the train. A student's dharma is difficult to perform. Even if it seemed selfish at first sight, if the. aim was altruistic it could be shown to be not selfish. The student's case is like that of a brave warrior who may not turn back from the battle field in the face of any obstacle, or a businessman who having gone to a distant land for earning wealth cannot return even though his family might be facing ruin. Here, circumstances are favourable for you to suspend your study. But credit lies in not being tempted by them. This is dharma. Whether or not you should follow it will depend on your strength. If you have understood this dharma and if you have the strength to follow it, forget the outside world and remain where you are. God is the Protector of us all. He takes care of everybody. I, therefore, see no reason for you to yield to *moha*[2]. Even if Sarita[3] invites you, I would advise you to decline to go. But please do not treat my advice as an order. I am only explaining to you what I consider to be dharma in such circumstances. But I don't insist that you too should regard that as the only true dharma.

I don't know where my ship is drifting. It is sailing on. The Captain is God. Why, then should I worry where it is going? And I am not worrying. It is bound to disappear some day. If so, why keep count of the days?

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Vijayalakshmi Pandit, addressee's sister

[2] Infatuation

[3] Addressee's mother

507. TEMPLE-ENTRY

The Executive Committee of the Harijan Sevak Sangh has passed the following resolution:

> The Executive Committee of the All-India Harijan Sevak Sangh notes with satisfaction the progress of the temple-entry campaign in Malabar district and Cochin State and the growing volume of public support in these places for temple-entry for Harijans, and gives full support to this work. This Committee further requests the Government of Madras and the Government of Cochin to help the rapid emancipation of Harijans by facilitating the declaration of all Hindu temples within their jurisdiction open to the Harijans.

It is hardly right to bracket the two Governments together. The Government of Cochin is a personal Government under a Hindu Prince who owns the temples of Cochin or who is the spiritual head of most of them. It is, therefore, within his right and, in my opinion, it is his duty to open the temples within his jurisdiction to the Harijans precisely as they are open to the so-called *savarna* Hindus. The appeal addressed to the Cochin Maharaja is, therefore, quite the proper thing.

But the Madras Government is a government responsible to the people of Madras which include all classes and creeds. It cannot, therefore, with any propriety pass legislation like the Cochin Durbar opening to Harijans all the temples within its jurisdiction. The temples can only be opened to Harijans either by the trustees of their own motion or at the instance of the *savarna* visitors who are in the habit of visiting particular temples. But the Madras Government can and ought to bring in enabling legislation. It has been contended that some judgment of a court of law prevents temples from being opened to Harijans even if all the *savarna* trustees desire it. At the time of the Guruvayur Temple agitation[1] I had discussed this judgment and expressed my doubt as to its validity and meaning. But it will be remembered that in order to remove any doubts an attempt was made in the Central Legislative Assembly to bring in an enabling bill. The attempt was unsuccessful.[2] But I apprehend that under the new Constitution the Provincial Legislatures have the power to bring in and

[1] In 1932-33

[2] *Vide* "Statement on Viceroys Decision", 24-1-1933

pass enabling legislation. The Congress Ministries are pledged to remove untouchability in every shape and form. *Savarna* Hindus were pledged at the time of the Yeravda Pact among many other things to fling open temples to Harijans.[1] At the very first opportunity, therefore, Congress Ministries have to bring in legislation, if it is legally within their power, to abolish untouchability in law and to enable trustees or temple goers to open the temples to Harijans and thus put an end to the age-long curse of untouchability. The Provincial Harijan Sevak Sangh can certainly mobilize *savarna* Hindu opinion in favour of the step. I observe that Harijans are already moving in the matter and rightly pressing for the opening of temples. I see too that Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah has a Bill to his credit. I hope that he will keep himself in touch with the Ministers and act in accordance with their advice. For he and they have a common cause to pursue.

Harijan, 20-11-1937

508. STORM SIGNALS

The Sholapur affair and the labour unrest in Cawnpore and Ahmedabad show how uncertain is the Congress control over forces of disorder. Tribes called criminal cannot be dealt with radically differently from the past practice without ascertaining how they will behave. One difference certainly be made at once. They may not be treated as criminals to be dreaded and shunned, but efforts should be made to brother them and bring them under the national influence. It is said that the red-flag men (Communists) have been at work among the men in the Sholapur settlement. Are they Congressmen? If they are, why are they not found by the side of the Congressmen who are Ministers at the wish of the Congress? If they are not Congressmen, do they seek to destroy the Congress influence and prestige? If they are not Congressmen and do seek to destroy the Congress prestige, why have Congressmen been unable to reach these tribes and make them proof against the blandishments of those who would exploit their traditional violent tendencies, so-called or real?

[1] *Vide* "Lest we Forget" ; also "Resolution at the Hindu Leaders" Conference, Bombay", 25-9-1932

Why are we living in Ahmedabad and Cawnpore in perpetual dread of lightning or unauthorized strikes? Is the Congress unable to influence organized labour in the right direction? We may not distrust Government notices issued in the provinces administered by Congress Ministers. It will not do to belittle their notices as we used to treat the irresponsible Government's notices. If we distrust Congress Ministers or are dissatisfied with them, they can be dismissed without ceremony. But while they are permitted to remain in office, their notices and appeals should receive the full-hearted support of all Congressmen.

On no other condition can the holding of offices by Congressmen be justified. If in spite of honest effort by Congressmen, forces of disorder cannot be brought under control without the assistance of the police and the military, in my opinion acceptance by the Congress of the burden of office loses all force and meaning, and the sooner the Ministers are withdrawn the better it would be for the Congress and its struggle to achieve complete independence.

My hope is that the outbreak in the Sholapur settlement and the labour unrest in Ahmedabad and Cawnpore are symptoms of the exaggerated expectations of radical betterment of the condition of labour and even of the so-called criminal tribes. Then the Congress should have no difficulty in checking disorders. If, on the contrary, they are signs of weakness of Congress control, the whole situation arising out of acceptance of office by Congressmen requires reviewing.

One thing is certain. The Congress organization needs strengthening and purging. On the Congress register there should be, not merely a few lacs of men and women, but every adult male or female above the age of 18, no matter to what faith they belong. And these should be on the register in order to receive a proper training or education in the practice of truth and non-violence in terms of the national struggle. I have always conceived the Congress to be the greatest school of political education for the whole nation. But the Congress is far off from the realization of the ideal. One hears of manipulations of Congress registers, and of bogus names being put in for the purpose of showing numbers. When the registers have been honestly prepared there is no attempt to keep in close touch with the voters.

The question naturally arises: Do we really believe in truth and non-violence, in sustained work and discipline, in the efficacy of the

fourfold constructive programme? If we do, sufficient has been achieved to show, during the working of the Congress Ministries for the past few months, that complete independence is much nearer than when offices were accepted. If, however, we are not sure of our own chosen aims, we need not wonder if one fine morning we discover that we had committed a grave blunder in embarking upon office-acceptance. My conscience as *a* or *the* prime mover in the direction of office-acceptance is quite clear. I advised it on the supposition that the Congressmen as a whole were sound not only on the goal but also on the truthful and non-violent means. If we lack that political faith in the means, office-acceptance may prove to be a trap.

Harijan, 20-11-1937

509. NOTES

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS AND HARIJANS

Thakkar Bapa sends the following for publication:

(a) The Executive Committee of the Harijan Sevak Sangh urges upon the Congress Provincial Governments to issue declarations of their policies regarding the removal of untouchability of Harijans at an early date.

(b) This Committee further requests Provincial Governments to create special departments and appoint special officers, where they do not already exist, to look after the uplift work of the Harijans in general and particularly to the removal of disabilities with regard to the use of common schools, public wells, tanks and water taps, and help the Harijans in the enjoyment of their civic rights.

(c) Further, this Committee requests the Provincial Governments to draw the attention of Municipal and other local bodies towards the deplorable living and service conditions of sweepers and scavengers employed by them and asks them to give the latter better amenities of life by providing them with better housing, water and lighting facilities and a decent and adequate pay and making their service permanent.

(d) This Committee further draws the attention of the Provincial Governments to clause 9 of the Yeravda Pact of September 1932 which is as follows, and requests them to give effect to the same:

"9. In every province out of the educational grant an adequate sum shall be earmarked for providing educational facilities to members of the Depressed Classes."

Why should the Committee only urge in (a) the Congress Provincial Governments to do their duty? I think the resolution of the Executive Committee of the Harijan Sevak Sangh applies to all the Governments. And where the Governments are supine or indifferent the Opposition should wake them to a sense of their duty.

Harijan, 20-11-1937

510. TELEGRAM TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

WARDHAGANJ,
November 20, 1937

SIR PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI
NEW DELHI

BLOOD-PRESSURE ERRATIC. EXTREME EXHAUSTION BUT NO ANXIETY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5956. Also C.W. 3273. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

511. STATEMENT ON BENGAL GOVERNMENT'S COMMUNIQUE

WARDHA,
November 21, 1937

The Government of Bengal deserve congratulations for the decision they have arrived at on the question of detenus. Congressmen will be wrong if they judge the communique[1] by Congress measures. The Bengal Ministry are not bound by the Congress election manifesto, nor do they share Congress ideology. Nevertheless, they have travelled along Congress lines to a considerable extent. It would be wrong not to make this admission. Even a political opponent is entitled to credit when this is due. In my opinion the Bengal Cabinet have responded to public opinion in a measure, though not to the extent I had expected.

I would be unfair if I did not mention the fact that H. E. the Governor was helpful in the matter. The Ministers could hardly have carried out their wishes but for the Governor's co-operation.

I regard the communique as an earnest of much more to come. I share the opinion, expressed in the communique, that much willdepend upon reaction to the Government's decision by the public and the 1,100 detenus who have been, or will be, released from all restraint. The requirement of supplying change of addresses to the police robs the release order of some of its grace. It betokens a timidity I wish the Government of Bengal had not betrayed.

But much need not be made of what, I hope, is mere formality.

[1] *Vide* "Bengal Government's Communique", 18-11-1937

I am sure that a full measure of relief will be forthcoming, if the atmosphere of non-violence is not disturbed, by the step taken by the Government. Even Congress insists on observance of non-violence; indeed, it is its political creed. Congress Ministers know that their existence, as such, depends solely on the observance of non-violence. I hope that the released detenus will so act as to materially help the creation and consolidation of a non-violent atmosphere, on which Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose has justly laid stress in his message on the eve of his departure for Europe for his health.

I hope that the released detenus will be no party to any public demonstration on their behalf and that the public, too, will exercise necessary restraint. I would urge the released men to quietly undertake some public service. The great business houses will, I doubt not, help those who may be in need of employment. Most of the men I met in the jails of Calcutta told me that their sole object in desiring release was to serve the public cause in the manner indicated by the Congress. They, one and all, warned me against entering into any bargain with the Government for securing their discharge. They would not give any undertaking to the Government. The assurance given by them to me should, they said, be regarded as sufficient test of their *bona fides*.

I told them that I would not be guilty of selling their honour or self-respect for the purchase of their liberty.

The public will recall that, at the very outset of my negotiations, I ascertained from the Andamans prisoners whether I could work on the assumption of their renunciation of violent methods for the attainment of independence.[1] I could not see my way to asking for relief without the ability to give such an assurance,[2] provided of course, that it represented the correct mentality of the prisoners.

I was not able to finish my work in Bengal. It was not possible for me to do more during my time there. I am grateful to the Government of Bengal for the facilities they gave me to see the prisoners and detenus as often as I liked without the presence there of officials. My talks are not yet finished. My Hijli (jail) friends wanted to have two or three days' talk with me instead of the two hours only which I was able to give them; but then, they saw from my face that I

[1] *Vide* ''Telegram to Viceroy", 27-8-1937

[2] The rest of the sentence is from *Harijan,* 27-11-1937.

was ill able to bear the strain of animated discussions. They were most considerate to me. I knew that I took them at a disadvantage for they could not talk to me with the freedom they would have, had I been well. I hope, as soon as my health permits me, to go back to Bengal to see each one of the unreleased detenus and prisoners.

The communique is silent on the question of the Andamans prisoners. I know that the Government draw a broad distinction between convicted prisoners and persons detained without trial.

The distinction is right. There are undoubtedly difficulties in the way. But at this stage I can only say that I have every hope, if all goes well and the public—especially the Bengal public—continues to help me as it has done hitherto, to secure these men's discharge also.

One statement in the communique is disturbing. It says that the success of the Government's policy "must, however, depend on the co-operation of the public and the leaders of public opinion in maintaining an atmosphere in which subversive movements will find no encouragement."

If by "subversive movements" they mean only violent activities, no difficulty arises and no difference of opinion exists. But, if in the phrase they include non-violent activities such as the Congress stands for, including even civil disobedience, the releases already made are a mistake and further releases will become an impossibility. Throughout my conversations with the Ministers I made it quite plain that I could only help in maintaining non-violence.

Non-violence is the only proper and honourable common ground between the Government and the people. Democracy must remain a dream in India without that bed-rock. I hope and believe that by "subversive movements" the Government mean no more than activities which are either themselves violent or which are intended to further violence.

The Statesman, 22-11-1937

512. LETTER TO JEHANGIR VAKIL

November 22, 1937

MY DEAR VAKIL,

I was able to read your letter only this morning. I cannot overtake my correspondence in time.

Your love I treasure, of your hate, I know nothing. But even if I had known it, I would not have minded it. How could one help acting according to one's nature? 'In Christ' and 'in God' have for years been convertible terms for me. I may not, probably will not, take the word in the same sense as most Christians do. But that matters little.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

513. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Silence Day [*November 22, 1937*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I want to see the resolution[2] about Mysore passed at Calcutta. This means a little more work for you. I should also like to see a copy of the letter you have written to Jawaharlal.[3]

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11580

514. LETTER TO PYARELAL

November 22, 1937

CHI. PYARELAL,

What have you done? Leaving me ill and Sushila weeping, you went away! But, then, didn't I let you? Yes, I did, but I made a condition, too. I shall know in time whether I did well or ill in giving

[1] From the reference to the addressee's letter to Jawaharlal Nehru dated November 19; (a). Silence Day after it fell on November 22.

[2] *Vide* footnote 1, "The A.I.C.C."

[3] For a subsequent letter from the addressee to Jawaharlal Nehru, *vide* "Letter from Mahadev Desai to Jawaharlal Nehru", 2-12-1937.

even such conditional permission. At present my worries have increased and Sushila is completely upset.

You have shouted down your mother and your brother, crushed your sister, shouted down Ba yesterday and didn't spare me, either, when leaving. Do you realize all this?

Do you remember what you said? If I let you go, you said, you would probably not be able to bear the separation and would return and lay your head in my lap. Hasn't that time come? Don't you feel these two days of separation as if they were two years? If you feel so, come back in response to this letter and send a wire. Only then can Sushila serve me and I can accept her services.

Do you know that I would consent even to your dreadful step if I could understand your arguments? Won't you wait till I have recovered or till I am dead? I will seize the first opportunity to discuss the matter with you if I recover from this illness. If you say that now there is nothing to be discussed, it will be like branding a man who has already sustained burns.

Your letter to Ramdas after the death of Chhotelal was not proper. It was unjust. You did not have the patience to read Kishorelal's letter. You have done him a terrible injustice. You failed in your duty by only reading the introductory part and leaving the rest of the material. Even if the whole world fails to understand you and does you injustice, your dharma is to bear it. "My honour is in your hands, O Lord, protect it." If you take the unworthy step, you will darken my life for ever. Don't let this happen to me. Return soon, or if you decide not to return send a wire reassuring me and Sushila. Write a letter, too.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

515. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHAGANJ,
November 23, 1937

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
74 WALKESHWAR
B[OMBAY] H[IGH]

DISTINCTLY BETTER SINCE YOUR TELEGRAM PYARELAL'S ARRIVAL. PRESSURE TO DAY 194/112. INFORM DOCTORS.

MAHADEV

From the original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

516. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

SEGAON,
November 24, 1937

Don't expect letters from me for the time being.
Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3830. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6986

517. A FOREWORD[2]

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 27, 1937

One can at once perceive in Acharya Kripalani's way of thinking and writing a quality of uniqueness. Anyone who has known him will recognize at once any piece of writing as his and his alone. This is the impression I had while reading this collection.

At a time when all kinds of new ideas are spreading in the country, this collection is likely to be of considerable help to those who want to study them. Acharya Kripalani has shown very convincingly that the programme the Congress adopted in 1920 is as useful now for attaining freedom as it was in 1920.

[1] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.
[2] To *Acharya Kripalanina Lekho*

Acharya Kripalani is quite correct in saying that there is no such thing as Gandhism. Insistence on truth is an eternal principle. While contemplating on it the jewel of non-violence was discovered and as a result of the experiments in non-violence emerged the programme of 1920. Trying to attain independence without it is as good as pounding chaff.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Acharya Kripalanina Lekho

518. LETTER TO K. NAZIMUDDIN

MAGANWADI, WARDHA, (C. P.),
November 28, 1937

DEAR SIR NAZIMUDDIN,

I must thank you for your exhaustive and kind letter[1] of the 24th instant.

I am still bed-ridden. But I must scribble down in pencil a reply which Mahadev Desai will copy for me.

Your confidence in me flatters me, but if it is not extended to those through whom alone I can hope to work with success, the work for which you and I are striving comes to a standstill. I have no power over the detenus or the Bengal public save through the accredited leaders. I can impose nothing on them. I have no other method but that of persuasion. I am in constant correspondence with Shri Sarat Bose in this matter. Without the assistance of the two brothers, I could have done nothing in Bengal. Of course you were right in permitting . Bidhan Chandra Roy and Sarojini Devi to visit the Hijli friends. Their visit will help. I may make one thing clear. Any recommendation

I may make will be, in so far as the Bengal Government are concerned, on my sole responsibility. I hope therefore that you will please reconsider your decision and allow Shri Sarat Bose on my behalf to visit the Hijli prisoners for the time being.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR K. NAZIMUDDIN
HOME MINISTER
WRITERS' BUILDING
CALCUTTA

From a copy: C.W. 7783. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] *Vide* "Letter From K. Nazimuddin", 24-11-1937

519. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

SEGAON,
November 28, 1937

There is a conspiracy ripening to remove me to a seaside place.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3833. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6989

520. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[2]

SEGAON,
November 29, 1937

You must not get ill. How I wish you had full nature cure. Hope the niece is better. 1 had a personal letter today from the Viceroy of good wishes. You must write daily. Please thank the Maharaja for the fruit. But tell him why foreign fruits when this land of ours has plenty of both fresh and dried fruit.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3834. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6990

521. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL[3]

SEGAON, *via* WARDHA,
November 29, 1937

Hope Mother is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] These are postscripts to Mirabehn's letters to the addressee.
[2] *ibid*
[3] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.

522. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

November 1937

I would use even foreign stuff. Powdered or condensed milk must be available in India. One would only have to spend some money. It is to be seen whether the Reception Committee[1] will be prepared to go that far. I would not at all like anything to be done merely in deference to my wishes. I am alive today but may not be tomorrow. Any suggestion should be acted upon only if it is good and convincing. Try your best. Is it not possible to dry the milk into powder? If we think it our duty to insist on cow's milk, the milk-powder available outside at a cheaper rate can also be used. These are, of course, only my suggestions. If they readily appeal to you all, you will certainly be able to procure cow's milk in some form from all parts of the country. I too may try, if you decide I should.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9113

523. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

December 5, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Here are two items. Shah's later.

Don't remove Durga straightaway. My fate is uncertain. To avoid any appearance of obstinacy, I am shifting to the sea-coast[2] and taking you also. But who knows whether we shall reach there safe? I advise you to let Durga stay where she is at present. Lilavati is happy there. But in the end we should trust in God. Let His will prevail. And, moreover, what value is to be put upon my judgment in the present circumstances?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11584

[1] For the Congress session at Haripura

[2] At Juhu in Bombay

524. NOTE TO DAMODARDAS MUNDHRA

[On or before *December 6, 1937*][1]

Please show this slip to Jamnalalji. There is no need to bring the engine. I am prepared to let myself be carried in a chair if I am not permitted to walk across the railway track.

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N. 3074-a

525. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Silence Day [*December 6, 1937*][2]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I believe that we have somewhere the resolution regarding the Indian States.[3] What you have written about Ratne is correct. Please ask Jamnalalji. Perhaps he will remember. Girdhari must have given you the two items which I sent last night.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11585

526. TALK WITH MAHADEV DESAI[4]

December 6, 1937

Gandhiji was averse to leaving Segaon, and as he told me the day we left Wardha,[5] he would not have left Segaon except to escape the charge of obstinacy.

I am accustomed to cold, and to sleeping under the sky in the severest weather. But if the doctor[6] insists that the cold is having a detrimental effect on the heart and hence on the blood-pressure, I should listen to what he says, if only to avoid the charge of obstinacy.

Harijan, 18-12-1937

[1] The date of receipt as recorded on the document is December 6, 1937.

[2] From the reference to "the two items"; *vide* letter to the addressee dated December 5, 1937.

[3] *Vide* "Letter From Mahadev Desai to Jawaharlal Nehru", 2-12-1937

[4] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Notes"

[5] On December 6

[6] Dr. Jivraj Mehta

527. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY,
December 7, 1937

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
JULLUNDUR CITY
ARRIVED. WELL NOW.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3839. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6995

528. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

December 8, 1937

CHI. LILAVATI,

Are you still your old self—agitated, restless, overstrung, emotional, sentimental, unsteady, unmethodical? What will you doafter I die? I would have brought you with me had it been in my hands. I couldn't easily leave any of you behind. But my sense of duty made me feel helpless. Write to me. I will get your letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9588. Also C.W. 6560. Courtesy Lilavati Asar

529. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

December 8, 1937

CHI. VIJAYA,

I understand your suffering. Have patience. Write to me. I will get your letter. Give me all the details. Don't worry. Learn everything carefully. Take full advantage of Vinoba's *satsang*[1] .

The rest[2] on the back.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7075. Also C.W. 4567. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

[1] Company of or association with the good

[2] This is a report by Kanu Gandhi on Gandhiji's health, especially the blood-pressure.

530. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

December 8, 1937

CHI. BHANSALI,

Spare some time for Sharda for teaching her English. She is such a girl that anything you give her will bear fruit. Though a child, she is mature and wise.

You have realized that all that I told you about spinning is essential for a votary of Truth.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8366. Also C.W. 7023. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

531. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

December 8, 1937

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I should like you to tell me why you have no peace of mind. What could be the cause? Whatever it may be, you must change. If you wish to go out for some time, when is it to be and for how long? Let me know your weight. Write about whatever other things you have omitted.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10742

532. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

December 8, 1937

CHI. SHARDA,

You dare not accept defeat. Remain calm. Keep on writing to me in detail. I could not [write] regularly. Only today 1 have taken up some letters. It would not be so always. Do all your work with scrupulous care.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9977. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

533. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

December 13, 1937

MY DEAR UNTOUCHABLE,

It is Monday, 7.55. I can't help giving you a few lines. You are packing for Nagpur[1] . You can't pack me. This pains me. I had hoped against hope that I would be with you to support you. But God had willed it otherwise. You will excuse me. I shall be with you in spirit. I may not send you a message to read or publish. But you don't want that. It is enough for you to know that during that difficult time I shall be praying for your success. You are not to worry about me. Really I am doing well and obeying the doctors and Jamnalalji. I see the niece's illness too worries you. Leave everything in His all- powerful hands. How I wish you were with me to watch Dinshaw Mehta's[2] massage, etc., and to have his treatment for yourself.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3844. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7000

534. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

December 13, 1937

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I have your letter. I understand. As suggested by you, we shall arrange about your going after I get back there. You will find much worth observing and worth learning at Saoli. But what I want from you is something different and original. Saoli and Nalwadi offer expert knowledge about the crafts. You probably have that in full. What you have to acquire is the art of weaving all other knowledge into the knowledge of the crafts. It can't be gathered from books. It will have to come out of your heart and your brain. When Vijaya goes to Saoli, you may accompany her.

Your weight must increase. You must not make the least reduction in your milk and ghee so long as you can digest them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10743

[1] To preside over the All-India Women's Conference

[2] Of Poona Healthatorium

535. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

JUHU,
December 13, 1937

CHI. SHARDA,

You must have received my letter and Pyarelal's. I hope you have understood the point clearly and started the treatment. Why is there no letter from you? I hope you are not in trouble and that everything is going on well. Blessings to all. If Balwantsinha and Parnerkar have come there, ask them to write to me. Rohit must now be playing a lot.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9978. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokha-wala

536. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

December 15, 1937

CHI. BHANSALI,

How can we speak of killing two birds with one stone? We may say that we bring down two fruits with one stone. You may bring down with one stone as many fruits as you like, but don't keep awake for long hours at the cost of sleep. True yoga is that which strengthens body, mind and soul, all the three. What you say about Sharda is correct. She is a wise girl. Give her as much as you can.

I am improving.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8297. Also C.W. 7024. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

537. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

December 15, 1937

CHI SHARDA,

Got your letter. I do not wish to play a trick on you by arranging classes for you. And is that possible in any case? Are you such a simple soul that you can be so easily caught? You have to do one thing. You must make your body strong as steel. Looking after the rest is my responsibility. If you have followed everything about Dinshawji's [treatment], start it. It would not take as much time as you fear. But spare whatever time may be necessary for it. Write to me regularly about the result.

Why do you find the atmosphere dull? Why should your mind be sad? It is your own fault. So many people, the cows and calves, the birds and bees, the shrubs and trees—one would be in blithe spirits with so much of company. They are all your kith and kin—even the trees. Why should you not play with the local children?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9979. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokha-wala

538. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

December 15, 1937

CHI. MRIDU,

I will not object if you can attract Vijaya and I will not interfere. Otherwise she gives good news about Mummy first at Calcutta and then on her way there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11206. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

539. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

JUHU,
December 16,1937

BAPA,

How can you afford to give way to despair like this? I had told you that even after we got complete independence, we should expect little help from the Government. Should we expect the Government or God to do what ought to be done by every caste Hindu, or, rather, should not every individual do his own duty? All the same, we shall see about the U. P. and Bihar.[1] But we shall deserve no credit if we get help from there. We can earn merit only by getting whatever every caste Hindu can give. I hope, therefore, that you will not slacken your labours in future. You have selected your sphere of service for your whole life. Poona is definitely not for you. You may certainly pay a visit to it every June. Let Ghanshyamdas say what he likes, but the Sangh cannot be wound up.[2] I am writing this from my sick-bed.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

540. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

JUHU,
December 17, 1937

CHI. LILA,

Do stay with Durga till I come. This is your duty for the present. Even if, therefore, you must go somewhere, you should postpone doing so. But in future also do only what is within your capacity. We may wish to do a good many things, but if we don't have that much strength we should give in.

I am doing fairly well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9368. Also C.W. 6643. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] The addressee had complained that the Ministers in U. P. and Bihar were not helping Harijans' education.

[2] G. D. Birla had suggested that since the Ministers were there to take up the responsibility of Harijan uplift work, the Harijan Sevak Sangh could be wound up.

541. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

JUHU,
December 17, 1937

CHI. PANDITJI,

My blessings to Yoga[1] and Soman[2] . May they be happy, live long and by their life add lustre to the Ashram. Tell Yoga that she has dried up after writing to me only one letter. Ask her to shake off her lethargy.

Lakshmibehn[3] must be quite all right now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4047

542. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

December 20, 1937

CHI. MANILAL—SUSHILA,

Don't worry about me at all. Don't believe the newspapers. If there is anything serious, you will no doubt get a cable from here.

What Sushila says is correct. You needn't thank her for any help she may give. It would be strange if she did not help. We used to sing a *bhajan* in Phoenix, one line in which ran: "A true lover's love is that which expects no thanks or return for courtesy shown". "*Vinayni purni*" means "thanks or return". Either of you will be starting soon now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4869

[1] Addresser's brother's daughter
[2] Ramachandra J. Soman
[3] Addressee's wife

543. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

December 20, 1937

CHI. VIJAYA,

You did well in coming back to Segaon on falling ill. But why did you at all fall ill after leaving Segaon? You must find this out. If you can't find the cause, you will be unfit to stay outside Segaon. What will you learn from Vinoba's words? What you learned from his work is what matters. If one could learn from words, wouldn't I have sent you to some great scholar? After you have recovered, go to Nalwadi, finish the work there soon and come back. Master the art of spinning on the *takli* and the spinning-wheel with good speed. Master carding, too. Why should you get tired out in eight hours? Have you grown old? Why should you get tired if you sit upright when spinning? The *Gita* verses are recited there with the purest pronunciation of the words. Probably you don't hear them recited. I suppose they recite the Marathi *Geetai*[1] there.

Blessings from

BAPU[2]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7076. Also C.W. 4568. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

544. LETTER TO J.P. BHANSALI

December 20, 1937

CHI. BHANSALI,

There is no doubt at all that in turning to the path of karma you have done the best thing possible. There is no other path at all while we live in the body. We shall be free only if we surrender everything to Lord Krishna. He who clings to Karma is attached to pleasure. He is the true yogi who goes on doing his work as a duty laid on him and as sacrifice, i. e., for the good of others, and remains unconcerned with the fruits of his work.

You may by all means go to Nalwadi for a few days . . .[3] after asking . . .[4] whether you can. Take more of milk if necessary. I am

[1] Metrical Marathi rendering of the *Bhagavad Gita* by Vinoba Bhave

[2] This is followed by a note which reads: "This should be sent to Segaon."

[3] The sourse is illegible here.

[4] *ibid*

very glad indeed that you are teaching Sharda.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8295. Also C.W. 7025. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

545. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

December 21, 1937

I have your letter. Don't believe newspaper reports unless you get a cable from me. If there is anything serious a cable will of course be sent.

What you think about me is not correct. I believe that I am more vigilant than any other leader. This is, as I understand, the straight and simple cause of my blood-pressure. My non-attachment is less than what is meant by the *Gita;* I am full of feeling. I am always pained by anybody's suffering. This is as it ought to be. And still I must remain non-attached. I have not yet mastered that art. It will not be non-attachment if I am not affected by others' sufferings. The *Gita* asks us to endure cold and heat, joy and sorrow. It doesn't say [in so many words] that a non-attached person never feels them. If, therefore, you said to me, 'Bapu, you are not obeying the teaching of Mother *Gita'*, your charge would be tenable. But, as for physical rest, such as the pampering of the body, etc., I have been taking more than enough. Know that my coming to Juhu is nothing but pampering. There are so many things to be done but I have forsaken them. My reasoning is clear, but I am not exercising it. You should, therefore, stop worrying about me. . . .[1]

If this is done, you two will be able to pay frequent visits here by turns. But the condition is that your health must become fine. You can collect the bills, can do composing and can even write something. One learns to do a thing by doing it. Nimu also will get useful experience there and can help in the work a great deal. Kanam is happy. You will read about all that in Ba's letter.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] The source is illegible here.

546. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

JUHU,
December 24, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I think of you as you are about to enter upon your task. May the Inner Light guide you and make your path smooth through all difficulties. I hope you are keeping well. Who is with you? Most probably Jamnalalji will be in Nagpur on 26th. I have no doubt you will invite him. Anyway ask him whether you could come for a few days to Juhu and if he says yes, and if you have not tied yourself down otherwise, do come.

I am expecting a full letter from you in reply to mine. If you want season's greetings, you have them by the cartloads. You were to be with me during the whole of the month!!![1] But—

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3620. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6429

547. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

December 27, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I must send you a line come what may. Of course nothing can come. I hope the weather is cool there and your task made light by your co-workers on the spot. 1 am with you in spirit all these days. I hope you had my letter[2] awaiting you on your reaching Nagpur. I am having ups and downs. But they don't worry me. And how is your eczema? The rest from Mira.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3621. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6430

[1] The addressee was to stay at Wardha before leaving for Simla.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

548. LETTER TO YOGA R. SOMAN

JUHU,
December 29, 1937

CHI. YOGA,

You will learn what is what, now that you are living with your husband. Tea for such a young girl like you! Why do you spoil milk in that manner? If you cannot digest milk, you can add some water to it, or palm-jaggery. And be sure you become proficient in music.

You will be able to learn much from Somanji if you mean to. You are not yet too old to learn. Build up a strong physique. Serve your mother-in-law as well as you can. I shall not be able to write a separate letter to Soman. I am not writing to Panditji either. You will show this to them, won't you? Has Rambhau[1] reformed himself completely?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4048

549. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

December 29, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

You seem to be quite a cunning woman. What excuses you offer for not writing! You are like a thief turning round and accusing the police. You went on your own, and now say that you had to leave and, therefore, feel no inclination to write. You had definitely promised me that you would write. You went alone. And even then no letter saying that you had arrived safe! And even if you don't care about me, what about poor Amtul Salaam? She inquires every day whether there has been a letter from you. She writes to you almost daily and you don't write even a few lines on a slip of paper in reply! What discourtesy? And what hard-heartedness! Tell me now what punishment you deserve, and in what measure. What do you do about milk there? You did well in going away, of course. About myself Amtul Salaam will write. You are often in the thoughts of us all. Do

[1] Narayan M. Khare's son Ramchandra

some reading and writing while you are there and serve Father in every possible way.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Don't be remiss now in writing to me.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3509

550. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

JUHU,

December 30, 1937

MY DEAR UNTOUCHABLE,

I have just been given your notelet. Can you give me a better diminutive? I did not know till after I had written to you that you had already been shut out. So you are now taking your revenge at my expense. But I understand. You shall certainly come later. I expect you fully at Haripura as I expect myself to be able to go there.

You wouldn't be an idiot, if you had answered my questions about your health. Now you *must* when you write again.

You will be interested to read the two cuttings herewith. Perhaps you had not seen them before.

About myself I say nothing because Mira keeps you fully informed.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3848. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7004

551. LETTER TO MADELEINE ROLLAND

December 30, 1937

MY DEAR MADELEINE[1] ,

I was glad to have your letter. I am getting on as well as may be. And whatever I do and do not do, I suppose I shall live on for a while, if God wants more work from me. His work goes on, we come in only when and to the extent He wants us. Yes, I remember those happy

[1] Sister of Romain Rolland

hours with you and the Sage. I wish they could be repeated.

I hope all of you are keeping well in spite of the awful political atmosphere surrounding you. These rapid communications have so reduced this tiny globe that what happens in one part of it reverberates throughout the length and breadth of it.

My love to you both.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 10589. Courtesy: Madeleine Rolland

552. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

JUHU,
December 30, 1937

CHI. VIJAYA,

I have your letter. It is surprising that spinning on the *takli* tires you out. Build up your strength so much and so well that you will not get fatigued no matter how long you spin. Find out the reason why you get fatigued. See that you don't fall ill again. Kanu and others will write about me. Ask Vinoba about yourself. If he and Vallabh leave perhaps you need not stay on at Nalwadi. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7077. Also C.W. 4569. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

553. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

December 30, 1937

CHI. SHARDA,

This is how one should sit. This bath consists of just lying in hot and cold water. The effect of hot and cold [water] alone is important. For this bath even small round tubs would do. But these we do not have. Have you understood it now? It is proper to begin Dinshawji's treatment only after fully understanding everything. Do you find time to read? Do you keep any accounts? Look after your health. How is the cold there?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Balwantsinha that it does not matter if he has suffered an injury. But let him not ignore it now. Let him go to the hospital if necessary. I have no energy to write to Nanavati today.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9980. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

554. CABLE TO EFY ARISTARCHI

[*1937*][1]

PRINCESS ARISTARCHI

HOTEL SKOTZKY

FRIEBURG, I.B. (GERMANY)

MATERIAL DISCOMFORT MUST NOT OVERWHELM YOU. YOU MUST REJOICE IN THIS SUFFERING. LOVE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

555. CABLE TO C. F. ANDREWS

[1937]

CHARLIE ANDREWS

PEMBROKE COLLEGE

CAMBRIDGE (ENGLAND)

YOUR SUGGESTION IMPROPER.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The source places this and the following cable along with the letters of 1937.

556. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[*1937*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I sent Pyarelal because of my utmost trust in you and love for you. I cannot say if I have acted rightly. It has only added to my anxiety and disturbed Sushila. If you cannot fully trust him you may send him back. What a burden you have taken upon yourself! I had only mentioned it in jest but the reality of it strikes me hard. It is a tremendous task for you not to miss a single meeting. Treat it as your obligation. You may see my letter to Pyarelal if he shows it to you. Whatever be the case send me a wire. Please do not hesitate to send him back at once, Of course if you can trust him you may retain him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

557. DISCUSSION WITH AN ITALIAN PROFESSOR[2]

[1937]

PROFESSOR: If we had in the world a people who practised ahimsa, could they keep themselves free from being slaves of others?

GANDHIJI: If one person can, surely a nation can. No man or group of men can hold any other man or group of other men slaves against their will. The slave-driver will say 'Do this' and they will refuse. It is possible to imagine that some day all nations will become sufficiently intelligent to act, even in the mass, as individuals do today.

Gandhiji then drew a vivid picture of the violent road for India, how she might murder and fight, and suffer reprisals, till out of 30 crores only one crore would be left.

[1] As placed in the source

[2] This report by Mirabehn appeared under the title "The way of God or the Way of the Devil" with the following introductory note: "Readers of *Harijan* will like to share with me the following dialogue between Gandhiji and an Italian Professor which took place in Segaon in 1937. I found it in my notebook as I was turning over old papers. It gives a fuller meaning to his Press message on the world situation." *Vide*, "Statement to the Press", On or before 27-8-1939.

But I decided that that was not the road for me. I rehearsed all these things in my mind, but I said to myself, 'This is the way of the Devil, not the way of God.' The thought of those twenty-nine crores of lives sacrificed would ever haunt me. The fact of the one crore of giants, trained in violence, who would have the whole of India to spread themselves in, would give me no satisfaction. I said to myself, 'I must take the way of non-violence, and take with me even the lepers and the lunatics.'

For, after all, are we not all more or less lepers and more or less mad? If we were all sane, we should be like gods. It is because we have a screw loose that we cannot succeed in being one with God.

Harijan, 9-9-1939

558. TALK WITH DOCTORS[1]

[On or before *January 7, 1938*][2]

The doctors wanted Gandhiji to continue the stay until the end of January, but a month out of Segaon was the most Gandhiji could give himself. Not that he has regained a condition of health enabling him to resume his normal activities. But as he put it to the doctors in his own unanswerable way:

If I cannot get well out of Segaon, I should prefer to face death in Segaon in the process of giving there to the country the work I think I am specially gifted to give.

Harijan, 15-1-1938

559. TALK WITH C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

January 7, 1938

"But why should you put so much passion in all your talk?" said C. R. to Gandhiji on the last day of our stay at Juhu. Laughing, Gandhiji said:

Because I have yet to learn the lesson of the *Gita* to be passionless. There is the desire to see that in whatever I am speaking about, to whomsoever I am speaking, truth—cent per cent truth—is speaking out.

[C. R.]But why can't you forget all work until you are fully well?

[1] This and the following item are reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Notes". The conversation took place before Gandhiji left Juhu for Segaon on January 7, 1938.

[2] *ibid*

[GANDHIJI]: There are things that cannot be given up even at the risk of life. One of them has become the question of the Andamans prisoners and the Bengal detenus.

[C. R.]Then why do you ask me to let others do their work and not to try to mind others' portfolios? All I say is that I have not acquired the art of controlling my *swabhava*.[1]

[GANDHIJI:] Even so must I obey the law of my *swabhava*.

"But why must you devote precious hours to what seems to us to be unimportant people and things?" said another friend.

[GANDHIJI:] They seem to you to be unimportant, not to me. For fifty years I have acted in the same way and I cannot change my spots now.

Harijan, 15-1-1938

560. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[2]

BOMBAY,
January 7, 1938

When asked whether he could stand the Segaon cold in his present delicate state of health, Gandhiji said in his clear silver voice that he was hopeful that Segaon would suit him. Gandhiji admitted that his 32 days' stay in Juhu had contributed much to his improvement.

Let me get back to Segaon and try that village. If I go down again, I will return to Juhu.

Asked why he could not continue the stay in Juhu for a few more weeks, instead of running a risk in Segaon, the Mahatma nodded his head, raised his hands and said:

Let me see what God has in store for me.

Mahatma Gandhi had a word of appreciation for the Press who had co- operated with him in carrying out the doctors' instruction regarding complete rest.

Asked to give a message about the Bengal detenus, Mahatma Gandhi said:

No messages, please.

The Hindu, 8-1-1938

[1] One's nature
[2] At the Victoria Terminus station

561. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
January 9, 1938

MY DEAR REBEL,

Your all letters have been duly received. Only I rarely write nowadays. Yours is the first letter I am writing after five or six days' abstention from writing. 1 am well and not well. The B. P. goes down to the ideal figure but jumps up on the slightest pretext. I dare not talk or even listen to any serious conversation.

You shall come on 1st February or 2nd as suits you best and stay as long as you can. I am expected to leave on 7th reaching Haripura on 9th instant. You will go with me. The W. C. meets here on 3rd February.

About 15th Lord Lothian comes to meet me[1] and then perhaps Ghanshyamdas to talk about the Bengal prisoners. This gives you all the information you may need. The weather is quite mild. The temperature is 60-64 during night, 72-76 during day.

You ought to keep well by treating yourself along the lines of naturopathy. I do wish you could have come earlier. However, one has to be thankful for small mercies. But do try to come earlier, if it is at all possible.

Did I tell you that last year's shawl you gave me has gone to Ba at her own instance. I know you don't mind that.

Love to you and Shummy.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3622. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6431

562. TALK WITH JAMNALAL BAJAJ[2]

January 9, 1938

"But you now know that you cannot put up with more than a certain amount of strain. Why should you invite that strain and let all the people feel that Segaon does not suit you?" said Jamnalalji, on Sunday, the day after our return to Segaon.

[GANDHIJI:] It would be wrong to say so. All I want you to do is to co-operate with me when I say to everyone that I must mend or end in Segaon and not go out anywhere else, that no outside doctors should be troubled to come here.

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with Lord Lothian", 20-1-1938
[2] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Notes"

But you have often assured us that you are making a conscious effort to live.

I have. But if someone were to tell me, in order to avoid death, to retire to the Himalayas until the end of this year, I should not do so. For I know that death is inevitable, no matter what precautions man deludes himself with. I would like you to appreciate that I am one of the very few among the public men in India who know how to preserve their health. God knows what work to take out of me. He will not permit me to live a moment longer than He needs me for His work.

Harijan, 15-1-1938

563. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

January 10, 1938

MOTHER LIVED NOBLY HAS DIED NOBLY. SHE WAS A MODEL WIFE WIDOW AND MOTHER. NO SORROW. LET OUR WOMEN COPY HER EXAMPLE. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 11-1-1938

564. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON,
January 10, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

Your letters are lying with me. I have read all of them carefully and with interest, for I was waiting for them practically every day. I wanted to write to you even before I received your first letter, but I was held back because I was afraid of you. The fear was that you, who were already angry with me, might get more so if I [inadvertently] wrote something which you didn't like. Despite this fear, however, I would have decided and summoned up courage to write were it not for my illness. I was happy to see no sign of anger in your letters. But I do believe that it was because of anger that you had abruptly discontinued writing to me. However, as is your wont, after some reflection you overcame your anger and started writing to me as before. Your letters are to me, what the rain is to the *chataka*[1]. In fact, I have never given up hope of you. I am sure that, before I die, you

[1] A legendary bird supposed to drink only rain drops

will again become one with me as you were before. This certainly doesn't mean that I want you to give up your study and run up to me. Do complete your study.

You did well in visiting Trivandrum. Saraswati was longing for you. You may come here only when you conveniently can.

The discussion with the teacher was very fine. You certainly have the power of reasoning. What about Tamil, Malayalam and Kannada? It will be quite easy for you to learn these languages. Amala knows thirteen languages and can even teach some of them. Max Mueller knew fourteen languages including Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Sanskrit. He could even correspond in Sanskrit. We, on the other hand, try to learn everything through English in order to master that language and as a result get exhausted and become incapable of doing anything else. In itself, knowledge of several languages is as useful as it is interesting and easy to acquire.

I hope you are taking care of your health. I am still not permitted to write letters. I think this is the first long letter Ihave written after I fell ill. Mahadev will correct me if I am making a mistake in this.

I am gradually improving. I do hope to recover completely. The only medicine is rest, and I am taking as much of it as I can.

Write to Devdas, as also to Manilal and Ramdas. Manilal or Sushila may be coming.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7332. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

565. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

January 10, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

The accompanying article won't do. Your reply is no reply. Is not the article in Hindi? Your reply also should be in Hindi. The manner of replying should be different, too. There is no hurry about it. We will think it over when we meet. We should also know who has sent you the article. Show it to Kaka. I think the writer is a friend of his.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

An article is enclosed. Send it on if you like it. Otherwise bring it back and discuss it with me.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11586

566. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

January 10, 1938

Don't worry for me. There is One who worries for you, me, and everybody. Why, then, should we worry at all? And now I am improving, even though slowly. Do not trust the newspapers—except

If you can live there peacefully, your health will improve even there. In any case, however, you will be able to earn a plain loaf of bread anywhere. If you become calm you will improve your health even there. Here you would feel embarrassed to eat as much as you wish while there everybody does and can do so. Such is the power of psychological atmosphere. How can one eat one's fill without a sense of guilt in this poverty-stricken country? There you are far away. In a distant land one should forget things back home and adjust oneself to the surrounding atmosphere. I have not come across any human being who remains unaffected by his surroundings. I for one think there can be no such person. If there is any such person in a million, he must be a *vatapi*, that is, one who lives only on air. How can such a one permit himself to eat anything else? Does God eat? With what mouth and with what body can He eat? I will write no more, otherwise the doctors will complain. Do not be anxious about Nimu and Kanam. Please have faith that everything possible is being done for everyone. If more is possible, I would certainly do it. But if we attempt anything beyond our capacity, we might violate our dharma and break under the strain.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

567. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, PRISONERS' RELIEF SOCIETY, LAHORE[1]

January 11, 1938

HOPE AGAINST HOPE PRISONERS WILL GIVE UP HUNGER-STRIKE WHILST I AM AILING. THEY DON'T GIVE ME A CHANCE.

The Hindu, 15-1-1938

[1] The addressee had informed Gandhiji of the hunger-strike by political prisoners in the Punjab jail.

568. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

January 11, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

1 did not like even the second article about relief and hence I am sending a fresh one altogether. If you do not need any such article, you may omit it.

I have revised the article[1] about non-violence. It is all right. Discuss the complexities of the subject some time. It is good that you get an opportunity to write on such subjects.

Send a telegram to Jawaharlal. The note about the Bill is all right.[2] The other thing also is all right. I should have a copy of the Bill.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11587

569. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

SEGAON,
January 13, 1938

1. Even if Nanabhai himself wishes to leave, I should like to know why. I would never agree to his leaving. What he has is something permanent. Why should he run after what is impermanent?

2. I have no doubts even about you.[3] You also cannot leave. I would study even that point[4] from every possible angle. Even if you were to devote all the 24 hours to the Harijan Ashram, there is so much work that every day there would be something left to be done. However, if you can do other work while looking after the Harijan Ashram, well and good. But as the author of this scheme of education I feel that you can experiment with it and develop it among the boys you have in the Harijan Ashram. I would prefer that.

3. What about your remark that we should regard this work as our own?

I have not been able to think about it even after perusing the

[1] Presumably "Training for Non-violence", published in *Harijan*, 15-1-1938

[2] The note on the Bombay Harijan Temple Worship Bill was published in *Harijan*, 15-1-1938, under the title "A Necessary Measure".

[3] This was addressed to Narahari D. Parikh.

[4] About running the school while remaining in the Ashram

papers you sent to me. We do not have sufficient equipment for that purpose. But I think that Maganbhai[1] should throw some light on the subject if he can. I do not think that we should do something anyhow even if we do not find the equipment we want. Let us avail ourselves of whatever our stray attempts may yield. We would be deceiving ourselves by attempting anything else.

Had it not been for Zakir Husain and [Arya]nayakam, I would have abandoned the implementation of my idea of education. That is in my very nature.

4. Atitkar has volunteered to start the work in Maharashtra. I cannot say how much he would be able to do. But he has shown the courage and offered to do something. Would it look proper if we were not able to do anything in Gujarat? The Government wants us to manage even the Basic Training College.

I have realized that. I would certainly feel ashamed if we did not show the courage and take up the challenge. But it would be disgraceful if we were able to do nothing after taking up the challenge. Hence, it seems to me that if, after careful consideration we cannot find someone who has self-confidence and who would also inspire confidence in us, we should keep quiet. Can we not take somebody from Balubhai's circle? What does Maganbhai say?

5. Maganbhai says that we should train some of the Visharad candidates in the Vidyapith as teachers.

Then let us do that. Let the Premchand Shala[2] continue to function as it is functioning now. Let the Government recognize and also finance the experiment in the Vidyapith.

6. When the matter of expenditure was first mentioned to the Sardar he had said that he would manage about the expenses. He was not in favour of asking financial help from the Government.

That would be my view too. But the position is this. The Government is keen to do something and wants to involve the officials in it. Since the Congress has recommended this experiment, every Congress Government must do something about it. Considering the matter from this point of view, how can we go to the Sardar for help? The answer was provided by Maganbhai. If Maganbhai and others feel more confident, let them proceed. Otherwise let us not utilize Government funds. Since it would run as a Government institution, we

[1] Maganbhai P. Desai

[2] Premchand Raichand Training College for primary teachers

would have Government teachers. And though we should enjoy many facilities, we would not be tied by the Government's red-tape, because the Government would put no restrictions on us.

7. What should we do about the principle of non-co-operation? Would it be proper to pass a resolution that it should be suspended so long as the Congress Governments are in power?

I think it would be wrong to pass such a resolution. So we shall not suspend it. But if we still regard it as British rule, then it is the Government that is co-operating with us and not we who are co-operating with the Government. In other words, we can co-operate with the Government without modifying the resolution in any way. I had myself drafted that resolution[1] without any hesitation. Even then I had said that if the Government offered its co-operation to us, we should accept it. Maybe that might prove a test for us. It remains to be seen whether thereby we gain or lose strength. At the height of the non-co-operation movement I had told Lord Reading that if he was agreeable to certain conditions I would myself enter the Legislature and yet consider myself a non-co-operator. I had said the same thing in my letter[2] to Lord Irwin. But this time such a question does not arise. To look at the matter that way is looseness of thinking or wrong use of a term. It is a result of our mental lethargy. Has not the Congress Minister issued an order that the Collectors have to work in co-operation with the Congressmen?

8. What do you think of the suggestions of Maganbhai and Vithaldas?

I have not read the suggestions so carefully. From a cursory glance l did not find them disconnected. You have called them stray thoughts. I too read them from that point of view. I have no time at all to subject them to a deep critical study.

9. Maganbhai suggests our joining the movement for Gujarat University and giving it greater impetus.

Wait a bit. We have not started discussing that point. I have not been able to understand Maganbhai's views about the University. In expressing his view about the matter Naraharibhai would seem to have usurped my own ideas and words. And, if he likes praise, I should say that he has expressed my ideas in better language than I could have done myself. The university of my conception has to evolve itself

[1] *Vide* "Draft Resolution on Non-Co-Operation",30-12-1920
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Irwin",2-3-1930

from this type of education. I went to the extent of telling Vallabhbhai that we must wind up whatever is being done in the Vidyapith today and engage all our teachers for this task. Then alone would we do credit to ourselves and to the Vidyapith. I think he was shocked at the moment. But I could not persuade him to think further about it. There were other things to be done. But if I could convince the teachers, I would at once put my idea into practice.

10. What should we do if we have to do something without winding up the present set-up?

It would mean doing something under compulsion. If Maganbhai has suggested any scheme I would think over it and make suggestions if necessary. You, Kishorelalbhai, had pointed out that we were neglecting primary education. Then we also passed a resolution. We have never been able to implement that resolution fully. We have an opportunity now, because it is our own Government and, moreover, such a good man as Kher is in charge.

11. (About securing a charter for the Vidyapith.)

I see a great danger in it. For, such a step would invite intense jealousy. It would also mean asking the Government to incur great expenditure. I would not be interested in this, as it would mean diversion of funds to ourselves. Our field is service of *Daridra-narayana*. In one way the task is difficult, in another it is easy. However, I shall certainly not stand in the way. Do I take any interest now in its management or do I meet anyone or know what is happening? As for the Wardha Scheme, I may be said to be its author and so I must devote some of my time to it. I do not consider myself of any importance in the matter of deciding the future of the Vidyapith. My heart is at present wholly in the villages. It is better to let it remain there. If you seek my help in thinking about the Vidyapith, you will be inviting unnecessary knocks because I would only be throwing stones from a distance.

12. Maganbhai says that at present the Gandhian view is accepted by the majority in the Congress but the general public opinion—particularly in the field of education—is against us. Is it proper, under these circumstances, to take advantage of our majority?

This seems to me fundamental from the point of view of satyagraha. The function of satyagraha is to educate public opinion. It is difficult to say at any time whether public opinion is in favour of a satyagrahi. So we give due importance to the question. It seems

perfectly all right to me [to take such advantage][1]. For in so doing, we serve the people. There is no coercion in it.

And if Maganbhai runs only a training college, then there is no difference of opinion left at all. But in that case, should not other things be wound up? It is my impression that Maganbhai does see the problem.

There would be very few—maybe only two or four—students in Maganbhai's Training College.

Maganbhai does not seem to have a proper idea of a training college. If he has the training college, he would require to do nothing else. I wish all of you to thoroughly study what is happening here. It is not perfect but it is worth studying.

13. Gandhiji indicated by a sign his approval of the Harijan Ashram and the Vadaj School being merged into one and Naraharibhai conducting it on the lines of the Wardha Scheme.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10738. Courtesy: Gomatibehn K. Mashruwala

570. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

January 14, 1938

I have read the telegraphic summary of the prisoners' message[2] to me. I have no difficulty in appreciating their reasoning, but my plea for patience is based on a personal but peremptory cause. If, going out of my way, I begin to move actively and undertake even long journeys, the common end may be defeated by my collapse which medical friends regard as a certainty. Therefore, I appeal to the hunger-strikers to suspend their strike and to give the country and especially me a chance to make an effort in the common direction. Let it not be said of them that they were foolhardy or obstinate.

The Hindu, 15-1-1938

[1] A few words here have faded out.

[2] Which was in reply to the telegram dated January 11; *vide* "Telegram to Secretary, Prisoners Refief Society, Lahore", 11-1-1938

571. DISCUSSION WITH EDUCATIONISTS[1]

[Before *January 15, 1938*]

[DR. ZILLIACUS:] I had been wishing all these years that leaders of opinion ought to turn their attention to education which alone can reconstruct society, and I cannot tell you how grateful I was when I found that you had turned your attention to education. We have studied your scheme and we must assure you of our heartfelt sympathy for its success.

[GANDHIJI:] I am grateful that so many educationists have blessed the scheme. There have been critics also, but when I launched the scheme I did not know that it would appeal to anyone beyond the circle of my co-workers. When I consider the masses of India and the masses situated as they are, I could not think of any other type of education. With them work must precede anything else, and the concern of the educationist is to make that work educative. Let every child feel that he creates something for use and also expands his mind and heart therethrough.

I agree. The great psychologist Dr. Adler, who could not express himself well in English, said: "All that education should do is to put the child on the useful side."

Harijan, 15-1-1938

572. TALK WITH A FRIEND

[Before *January 15, 1938*]

[GANDHIJI:] My idea is not merely to teach a particular profession or occupation to the children, but to develop the full man through teaching that occupation. He will not only learn weaving, for instance, but learn why he should weave in a particular fashion and not any other, why he should handle yarn in a particular fashion and no other, why he should himself know spinning and insist on a particular count for a particular kind of weaving. All these things the weaver-boy does not learn at home. The spinning-wheel is to him just what it was a thousand years ago. We make him learn the art of making a most efficient wheel and a loom, not so as to displace other labour but so as to make them more efficient than the existing

[1] Dr. Zilliacus, Prof. Bovet and Prof. Davies, members of the New Education Fellowship Delegation, had called on Gandhiji.

models. Your suggestion for different schools for different classes—weavers, spinners, carpenters and so on—would not answer my purpose. For I want to bring about an equalization of status. The working classes have all these centuries been isolated and relegated to a lower status. They have been Shudras, and the word has been interpreted to mean an inferior status. I want to allow no differentiation between the sons of a weaver, of an agriculturist and of a schoolmaster.

[THE FRIEND:] But should we not have different time-tables for different boys—I mean seasonal time-tables?

No, we need not have even different hours. The village is a composite whole. The vast majority of the rural population is agricultural. I need not conduct a separate type of school for the ten per cent of the non-agricultural population in India. I do not want to make every one of the boys and girls in the villages of India spinners or weavers, but I want to make of them whole men through whatever occupation they will learn. The village school will be turned into an educative workshop in as economical and efficient a manner as possible.

Therefore the school will not be a glorified workshop producing more or less the conditions of the present-day workshops. The workshop will not teach the children to produce anything and everything of conceivable use. Tobacco, for instance, is a commodity very largely in use throughout the world, it is cultivated in India as a money crop. But its harm to man's physical and moral fibre is patent. I should not teach in our school workshop *bidi*-making. It is in this respect that our schools will, 1 hope, differ radically from schools abroad which claim to give a sort of practical education. I read the other day about a school in England which trains boys to be efficient shop-keepers. England accepts no prohibition and does not look forward to its introduction in the near or distant future. English boys, therefore, have to be trained as workers in liquor-shops too. The English school in question has, therefore, applied for a liquor licence in order to be able to teach its pupils how to handle liquor for its consumers. In the event of a war England may turn its schools into ammunition factories. In a nation with ahimsa for its national policy such a thing should be inconceivable. Our schools will be turned into workshops, but workshops where they will learn things that are necessary for healthy living in accordance with the national ideal.

Harijan, 15-1-1938

573. LETTER TO MULK RAJ

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 15, 1938

BHAI MULK RAJ,

Please read the enclosed letter[1] and return it. Do you know anything about Lala Girdharilal? If what the enclosed letter says is true, a circular should be sent to the members and Lalaji's name removed from our rolls. If you agree please circulate this letter among the members for their opinion.

Kindly send me the names and addresses of the members as also the minutes of the next meeting.

Yours,
M.K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

574. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

WARDHAGANJ,
January 20, 1938

BABU RAJENDRA PRASAD
ZERADEI [SIWAN]
Via CHAPRA

WHAT IS THIS BLOOD POISONING[2]. WIRE CONDITION.

BAPU

From the original: Dr. Rajendra Prasad Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Not available

[2] Dr. Rajendra Prasad was in fact suffering from severe food poisoning which he had contracted during his tour of Kanpur and Lucknow. Following this illness he was bed-ridden for almost two months.

575. DISCUSSION WITH LORD LOTHIAN[1]

[*January 20*, 1938][2]

During his talk on the last day Lord Lothian mentioned Christian Science and asked for Gandhiji's opinion thereon:

Since man is inseparably related to God in proportion as he recognizes the indissoluble relationship to God he is free from sin and from disease. That is how faith heals. God is Truth and Health and Love.

GANDHIJI: And He is Physician too. I have no quarrel with Christian Science. I said many years ago in Johannesburg that I accept the doctrine *in toto*, but I do not believe in many Christian Scientists. It is one thing to have an intellectual belief and another thing to have a heart-grasp of the truth. I can quite endorse the statement that all illness is sin, that when a man has even a cough it is due to sin. My blood-pressure is the result of strain and overwork. But why should I have overworked myself? All overwork and hurry is sin. And 1 know only too well that it was perfectly possible for me to avoid all doctors. What I do not understand about Christian Scientists is that they make altogether too much of physical health and disease.

So long as one recognizes that disease is sin it is all right. Even the *Gita* says that one has to renounce the fruit of the five senses which is *maya*. God is Life and Love and Health.

I have put it somewhat differently. God is Truth, for as our scriptures say nothing *is* but Truth, which is the same thing as God is Life. And then I have said that Truth and Love are faces of the same coin, and Love is the means to find Truth which is the end.

Harijan, 29-1-1938

[1] This is reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Notes".

[2] Lord Lothian stayed in Segaon from January 18 to 20.

576. A MESSAGE[1]

SEGAON,
January 20, 1938

My ambition is to see the Congress recognized as the one and only party that can successfully resist the Government and deliver the goods. It is the only party which, from its inception, has represented all minorities.

If the British Government recognize this unique position of the Congress they will not hesitate to postpone inauguration of the Federation[2] till they have satisfied the Congress. It should not be difficult to do so if, before taking in the Princes, elementary rights of the States people are guaranteed and their representation takes place through election. In my opinion a crisis of the first magnitude may be precipitated if Federation is sought to be imposed.

The opposition to the Act will still remain even if the present difficulty is got over in the manner suggested. Peace, humanly speaking, can only be assured when a constitution drawn up by a Constituent Assembly supplants the present Act. Anyway, once the right status of the Congress is fully recognized the rest becomes easy.

This is my personal view which I have not discussed with any of my co-workers.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7791. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] This was written "For Lord Lothian and responsible statesmen only".
[2] As proposed in the Government of India Act, 1935

577. LETTER TO VICEROY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 21, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

I was much touched by your affectionate letter of good wishes about my health. I delayed acknowledging it till I was a little better. Though I have not crossed the danger zone, I am much better than when your kind note was received.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

578. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 21, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

Chander Singh Bhandari, an ex-Havildar Major of the Garhwal Regiment, is a prisoner in the Naini Central Prison, undergoing 14 years' imprisonment for disobedience of orders to fire at a crowd in Peshawar during the Civil Disobedience campaign of 1930. He has served more than half the sentence. He wrote recently a long letter in Hindi to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to be passed on to me urging me to try to secure his release which he expected together with the other prisoners discharged by the United Provinces Government. Before troubling you I wanted some information about the prisoner. This appears in the letter and the enclosure received from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.[1] On receipt of this I wired for reasons for this prisoner not

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru, in his letter to Gandhiji dated January 13, 1938, had recommended the case of Chander Singh, especially in view of the fact that, when in 1930 his companions of the Garhwal Regiment were contemplating not only refraining form shooting at their fellow-countrymen but also shooting at their British officers, Chander Singh had dissuaded them from this violent action, stressing the non-violent character of the civil disobedience movement.

being discharged by the United Provinces Government. Enclosed is the wire received from the United Provinces Premier. I venture to ask you, if it is at all possible, to secure the discharge of this prisoner. His expectation seems to me to be justified. He can see no distinction between the other discharged United Provinces prisoners and himself. He was guilty of no violence. It is true that insubordination is held by the military to be a very grave offence. But I feel that there were extenuating circumstances in this case. And in any event if the United Provinces Government enjoy real autonomous powers, their wishes in respect of such cases should be respected.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

579. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

January 21, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I began a fruitarian fast yesterday and I am feeling A 1. I needed it. I want to do it for eight days. But it would depend upon the progress I may make. Therefore don't you worry. But this is to inform you that I told Lord Lothian yesterday why you had refused to be on the Lady L.'s Tuberculosis Committee. This became necessary as Lady L. had sent through him a message asking me to lend my name to the project. She had also said that the connection of the King Emperor with the project was only temporary. I felt that she knew that I knew your objection. I therefore brought your name, told him that there were no secrets between you and me (was I not wholly right?), that therefore I hoped Lady L. had not taken it amiss that you had taken me in your confidence. I added that the initiative was wholly yours and I only knew of the deed after it was done but that your objections had made a forcible appeal to me. Now you will tell [me] if I have done the right thing. If you are overbusy, you will answer this question when we meet.

I gave your message to Lord Lothian. He said you were the ablest witness his Committee[1] and the other Committee[2] had to deal with.

More when we meet.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3623. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6432

580. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

WARDHAGANJ,
January 22, 1938

BABU RAJENDRA PRASAD

ZERADEI

SIWAN

LISTEN DOCTORS. TAKE FULL REST WITHOUT WORRY.

BAPU

From the original Dr. Rajendra Prasad Papers Courtesy : National Archives of India

581. TELEGRAM TO DR. SARAN

WARDHAGANJ,
January 22, 1938

DR. SARAN[3]

ZERADEI

SIWAN

THANKFUL YOUR WIRE PLEASE SEND DAILY TELEGRAMS.

GANDHI

From the original: Dr Rajendra Prasad Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] The Franchise Committee of 1932 before which the addressee had given evidence on behalf of Indian women

[2] The Joint Select Committee of the British Parliament which considered the new Constitution for India

[3] One of the two doctors from Patna who had rushed to Zeradei to see Dr. Rajendra Prasad

582. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

SEGAON,
January 22, 1938

Expecting you on 31st.
Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3624. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6433

583. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

[*January 23, 1938*][2]

WELCOME HOME. GOD GIVE YOU STRENGTH TO BEAR THE WEIGHT OF JAWAHARLAL'S MANTLE. LOVE.[3]

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-1-1938

584. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

January 23, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

I have your letter. I have not seen the resolution. Please send it to me so that I may make up my mind after reading it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7688

[1] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.
[2] The addressee had arrived at Karachi from London on this date.
[3] The source further reports: "In a separate telegram Mahatma Gandhi says that he is much better now."

585. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

January 30, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am returning your note. I have not been able to revise the note on non-violence. I will attend to it by and by. I hope you remember that Rajkumari is arriving there tomorrow evening. Send her here immediately. For her sake I shall start the silence somewhat earlier today. So you went out for a walk only for one day. This is not proper.

Prabhu Dayal wants to join the Congress. What impression did he make on you? Please ask Kumarappa. How is his performance in the paper department?

Post the accompanying letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11589

586. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

SEGAON,
January 30, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

I passed two days without writing to you. But today I have got to write. There should have been a letter from you today. You must be happy. You must be keeping well. I hope you are not finding it too cold. I must have your letters regularly and in detail. Did Devdas, Brajkisan and Pyarelal's mother meet you? Get well soon and come over. I am fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Blessings to Saraswatibehn.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9981. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

587. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

January 31, 1938

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

I take it that as in Lucknow so in Haripura there will be a guide to the exhibition with map, etc. Only it should be much better this time than the last.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Rajkumari comes tonight.

From a photostat: G.N. 10133

588. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON,
January 31, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

The accompanying article of yours is all right. Some addition is still possible. I gave you only the general framework. I could have shortened your other articles but it would have taken a good deal of time. Only if you continue such efforts, can I know whether you are able to digest my ideas. You should, therefore, go on writing even if I reject your articles a hundred times.

If everybody wishes to leave with me, who will be left behind? Whatever the pressure of work, I consider it essential that all three of you should start for a walk at the fixed hour. It is as necessary to spare time for walks as for meals.

Please remember to give Satyamurti's [letter] to Jawaharlal. Let him see the whole letter. Show it to Jamnalal and others too. I am returning Ghanshyamdas's also. I have read all the cuttings and am returning them. None, except one, seems bad to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Lancaster may meet me at night.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11588

589. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

SEGAON,
February 1, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

I have your first letter. You must have showed your swellings to Saraswatibehn. They must have subsided now. Do not be afraid to eat chapatis if you feel hungry. What works wonders is the bath, the earth and the climate of that place. There is a difference between how it works here and how it works there. I have sent you there because I felt it would do you good. I know you will not be tempted by wealth. God is protecting you.

The Lord pervades all that moves in this world. Enjoy it with a feeling of renunciation. Never covet another's wealth.[1]

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9982. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

590. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 3, 1938

DEAR MR. JINNAH,

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru told me yesterday that you were complaining to the Maulana Sahib about the absence of any reply from me to your letter[2] of 5th November in reply to one of 19th October. The letter was received by me when I was pronounced by the doctors to be seriously ill in Calcutta. The letter was shown to me three days after its receipt. Had I thought it necessarily called for a reply, even though I was ill I would have sent one. I have re-read the letter. I still think that there was nothing useful that I could have said in reply. But, in a way, I am glad that you awaited a reply. Here it is.

Mr. Kher told me definitely that he had a private message from you. He delivered it to me when I was alone. I couldhave sent you a verbal message in reply, but in order to give you a true picture of my mental state I sent you the short note. There was nothing to hide in it.

[1] *Ishopanishad*, *1*
[2] *Vide* "Letter from M. A. Jinnah", 5-11-1937

But I did feel, as I still do, that the way in which you used it came upon me as a painful surprise.

You complain of my silence. The reason for my silence is literally and truly in my note. Believe me, the moment I can do something that can bring the two communities together nothing in the world can prevent me from so doing.

You seem to deny that your speech was a declaration of war, but your latter pronouncements too confirm the first impression. How can I prove what is a matter of feeling? In your speeches I miss the old nationalist. When in 1915 I returned from the self-imposed exile in South Africa, everybody spoke of you as one of the staunchest of nationalists and the hope of both Hindus and Mussalmans. Are you still the same Mr. Jinnah? If you say you are, in spite of your speeches I shall accept your word.

Lastly, you want me to come forward with some proposal. What proposal can I make except to ask you on bended knees to be what I had thought you were. But the proposal to form a basis of unity between the two communities has surely got to come from you.

This is again not for publication but for your eyes. It is the cry of a friend, not of an opponent.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-6-1938

591. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

February 3, 1938

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

So you have written off 42 years of your life. Why limit your wish 25 more? Why not His will, not your wish? I have glanced through your booklet. But Brunton's[2] appreciation is not found in your letter.

I await your full letter about Malaviyaji. I think of him continually.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3205

[1] For the addressee's reply, *vide* "The Kottaoatam Summer School"

[2] Paul Brunton, author of *Search in secret India*

592. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI AND FAMILY

February 3, 1938

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA, SITA, ARUN,

Welcome to you all. When are you coming here? Akola is just on the way. Nanabhai[1] is not keeping well. Go to him first; it is like a pilgrimage. We leave for Haripura about the 7th or 8th instant. I take it you will accompany us. I am keeping well enough.

Blessings from

BAPU[2]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4870

593. LETTER TO RAJARAM R. BHOLE

WARDHA,
February 4, 1938

MY DEAR BHOLE,

Bapu had your earlier letter and also the p. c of the 2nd. He has read no books but he would ask you to get in touch with Shri Aryanayakam (Nawa Bharat Vidyalaya, Wardha) and Dr. Zakir Hussain, Jammia Millia Islamia, Karol Bagh, Delhi, who should be able to advise you competently. You may know that they are the President and Secretary of the Wardha Education Scheme Committee.

Yours sincerely,

MAHADEV DESAI

[PS.]

Bapu asked me to give you the message that he expects you to fulfil all the high expectations he has of you both in the Assembly and on the Committee.

From the original: R. R. Bhole Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Nanabhai I. Mashruwala, Manilal Gandhi's father-in-law
[2] Kasturba also conveyed her blessings along with this.

594. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

February 5, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

Please don't come today at any rate. Come at 3.00 the day after tomorrow. Do I have to draft the syllabus[1]? Or will it be the one you have brought from Aligarh? If it is the latter, I have already seen it. I find it difficult to write the introduction. I wish to leave on the 8th. I shall see if I can give it before that date. I shall sign and send over the Kamath [papers] after I have gone through them. Be sure that you at any rate come over. Kishorelal also may come if his health permits.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7690

595. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

SEGAON,

February 5, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

Received your letter. The blood-pressure is somewhat high, but there is no cause for anxiety. There is pressure of work too. We shall leave for Haripura on the 8th. It is well that you have had a waist-coat made for yourself. The body must be kept warm. You must walk a lot. When you write to me at Haripura address the letter to Congress Camp, Haripura.

Do you remain cheerful?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9983. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] Of studies, prepared by the Zakir Husain Committee

596. LETTER TO N. S. HARDIKAR

WARDHA,
February 5, 1938

DEAR MR. HARDIKAR[1],

Gandhiji has your letter of the 26th January.[2] As we are likely to meet at Haripura very soon, Gandhiji says you had better meet him and have a few minutes from him to discuss the future of the Seva Dal.

Yours sincerely,
MAHADEV DESAI

From the original: N. S. Hardikar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

597. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

February 6, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

Received your letter. Now that you have gone there, do not be in a hurry to return unless there is a setback in your health. You must attune your mind to the place where you have to stay. I shall of course continue to write to you from time to time.

What you write about Saraswatibehn is true. But then we should accept whatever good we find wherever we are.

You should not mind or feel shy if you sit long at your meal. You must eat only as much as you can and chew it well. Then there will be no trouble. If the pain does not subside, tell Saraswatidevi about it.

Do visit the sitar class and join it if you like it.

I can say I am keeping quite well—though I have to work hard at the moment. Tell S. D. that I shall answer any questions she asks me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9984. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] Chief of the Congress Seva Dal

[2] The addressee had "taken possession of the Seva Dal Training Academy buildings at Bagalkot" and had sought Gandhiji's guidance for further action.

598. DISCUSSION WITH JOHN DE BOER[1]

[On or before *February 8, 1938*][2]

Dr. John De Boer said the scheme had appealed to him most strongly, because at the back of it was non-violence. His difficulty was why non-violence figured so little on the syllabus.

[GANDHIJI:] The reason why it has appealed to you is quite all right. But the whole syllabus cannot centre round non-violence. It is enough to remember that it emerges from a non-violent brain. But it does not presuppose the acceptance of non-violence by those who accept it. Thus, for instance, all the members of the Committee do not accept non-violence as a creed. Just as a vegetarian need not necessarily be a believer in non-violence—he may be a vegetarian for reasons of health— even so those who accept the scheme need not be all believers in non-violence.

I know some educationists who will have nothing to with the system because it is based on a non-violent philosophy of life.

I know it. But for that matter I know some leading men who would not accept khadi because it is based on my philosophy of life. But how can I help it? Non-violence is certainly in the heart of the scheme, and I can easily demonstrate it, but I know that there will be little enthusiasm for it when I do so. But those who accept the scheme accept the fact that in a land full of millions of hungry people you cannot teach their children by any other method, and that if you can get the thing going the result will be a new economic order. That is quite enough for me, as it is enough for me that Congressmen accept non-violence as a method for obtaining independence, but not as a way of life. If the whole of India accepted non-violence as a creed and a way of life, we should be able to establish a republic immediately.

I see. There is one thing now which I do not understand. I am a socialist, and whilst as a believer in non-violence the scheme appeals to me most, I feel as a socialist that the scheme would cut India adrift from the world, whereas we have to integrate with the whole world, and socialism does it as nothing else does.

I have no difficulty. We do not want to cut adrift from the whole world. We will have a free interchange with all nations, but the present forced interchange has to go. We do not want to be exploited, neither

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Notes". Dr. John De Boer, incharge of an educational institution in South India, visited Gandhiji at Segaon before the latter's departure for Haripura on February 8.

[2] *ibid*

do we want to exploit any other nation. Through the scheme we look forward to making all children producers, and so to change the face of the whole nation, for it will permeate the whole of our social being. But that does not mean that we cut adrift from the whole world. There will be nations that will want to interchange with others because they cannot produce certain things. They will certainly depend on other nations for them, but the nations that will provide for them should not exploit them.

But if you simplify your life to an extent that you need nothing from other countries, you will isolate yourselves from them; whereas I want you to be responsible for America also.

It is by ceasing to exploit and to be exploited that we can be responsible for America. For America will then follow our example and there will be no difficulty in a free interchange between us.

But you want to simplify life and cut out industrialization.

If I could produce all my country's wants by means of the labour of 30,000 people instead of 30 million I should not mind it, provided that the thirty million are not rendered idle and unemployed. I know that socialists would introduce industrialization to the extent of reducing working hours to one or two in a day, but I do not want it.

They would have leisure.

Leisure to play hockey?

Not only for that but for creative handicrafts for instance.

Creative handicrafts I am asking them to engage in. But they will produce with their hands by working eight hours a day.

You do not of course look forward to a state of society when every house will have a radio and everyone a car. That was President Hoover's formula. He wanted not one but two radios and two cars.

If we had so many cars there would be very little room left for walking.

I agree. We have about 40,000 deaths by accidents every year and thrice as many cases of people being maimed.

At any rate I am not going to live to see the day when all villages in India will have radios.

Pandiit Jawaharlal seems to think in term of the economy of abundance.

I know. But what is abundance? Not the capacity to destroy millions of tons of wheat as you do in America?

Yes, that's the nemesis of Capitalism. They do not destroy now, but they are being paid for not producing wheat. People indulged in the pastime of throwing eggs at one another because the prices of eggs had gone down.

That is what we do not want. If by abundance you mean everyone having plenty to eat and drink and to clothe himself with, enough to keep his mind trained and educated, I should be satisfied. But I should not like to pack more stuff in my belly than I can digest and more things than I can ever usefully use. But neither do I want poverty, penury, misery, dirt and dust in India.

But Pandit Jawaharlal says in his autobiography you worship *Daridranarayana* and extol poverty for its own sake.

Gandhiji said with a laugh:

I know.

Harijan, 12-2-1938

599. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

February 8, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Here is the article. I have had a talk with the Japanese and the Bengali gentlemen. The Japanese will accompany us. The Bengali will follow later. He will stay in the Bengal camp. Which letters from Krishnachandra? I shall meet you at the station itself. I shall walk up to the level crossing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11590

600. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

SEGAON,

February 8, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

No letters from you for two days. Do not keep me like this without letters from you. We are leaving today. I expect to be back within a fortnight. You must be fit enough to stir about by that time. Remain calm where you are. Do not be dejected. I shall know more about you at Haripura.

You must have received the news of Panditji's demise.[1] He had gone to Haripura in connection with the Music Convention. There he caught pneumonia and it proved fatal. So transient is our mortal frame.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9985. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

601. SPEECH AT KHADI AND VILLAGE INDUSTRIES EXHIBITION

HARIPURA,

February 10, 1938

Bhai Shankerlal referred to the void created by Panditji's passing away. It is not surprising that I am pained because Panditji is no more among us.

When I sent the late Maganlal [Gandhi] to Pandit Vishnu Digambar [Paluskar] for acquiring for the newly established Satyagraha Ashram a good music teacher, the old Pandit knew whom he had to recommend. Pandit Khare justified his choice and filled the position to which he was called as no one else could have done. His death is likely to leave an unfillable gap. Few people who have devoted themselves to art are known to have achieved such a unique combination of devotion to art and a pure and blameless life. We have somehow accustomed ourselves to the belief that art is independent of the purity of private life. I can say with all the experience at my command that nothing could be more untrue. As I am nearing the end of my earthly life I can say that purity of life is the highest and truest art. The art of producing good music from a cultivated voice can be achieved by many, but the art of producing that music from the harmony of a pure life is but achieved very rarely. Pandit Khare was one of those rare people who had achieved it in full measure. There has been no occasion when I had the slightest doubt about his purity.

Let Gujarat continue to take the interest in music awakened by the late Panditji. I am hoping that his two children[2] will be worthy of him and I have no doubt that his brave wife[3] will give an example of

[1] Narayan Moreshwar Khare died on February 6 at Haripura.

[2] Mathuri and Ramachandra

[3] Lakshmibehn

what a dedicated life an Indian widow's can be. As for Panditji, though he died in the prime of his life, anyone would envy him his death which came to him whilst he was working in a sacred place like this, fully conscious that his sands were running out and so went with Ramanama on his lips and with the echoes of the sacred name about him. May Gujarat treasure his sweet memory.

When an exhibition of this kind was first opened at Lucknow[1] I had said that our exhibitions should be schools of instruction. Since then we have been progressing successfully towards the ideal and the exhibition I have just now been through and am declaring open is such an annual training school. It is not, as exhibitions of old used to be, a place of entertainment. It is a place of instruction for the hundreds of thousands of those who will be visiting it during the week or two that it will be on. It provides to the poor man who visits it a kind of victual for the next year's journey. It arms him with knowledge of an occupation which can carry him and his family through for the next year by his working at it for eight hours. It ensures the training in securing an honest livelihood to everyone who will use his or her hands and feet, no matter how ignorant or illiterate he or she may be.

I have spent an hour this morning at the exhibition. Please don't think for a moment that there should be nothing new in it for one who is the President of the All-India Spinners' Association and who is guiding the All-India Village Industries Association. Even if you think so, I am not such a simpleton as to entertain the belief. I would like to spend not one hour, but hours there learning something new every moment. But I confess that I should not be able to earn my livelihood from an occupation that I might pick up there. At the present moment I am begging for my livelihood, which perhaps is inevitable for one like me. But I am sure that it is possible for any able-bodied man or woman to choose one of the many industries exhibited here as a means of honest livelihood.

Shankerlal had suggested to me to point out any defects here. It is of course my duty to do so. One act of omission that I have noticed is that we do not preserve in the form of a book whatever we achieve in a year. I think we should preserve in book form pictures and detailed descriptions of new inventions and experiments so that a dynamic and experienced teacher may be able to teach a lot with its

[1] On March 28, 1936; *vide* "Speech at Khadi and Village Industries Exhibition, Lucknow", 28-3-1936

help. We should have the ability to do it. We should co-ordinate the crafts and put them before the public. We should learn this art of compiling a yearly textbook. We have not yet learnt it. Here perhaps we have not been able to fully demonstrate how every single exhibit is made. I have often said that if seven lakhs of the villages of India were to be kept alive, and if peace that is at the root of all civilization is to be achieved, we have to make the spinning-wheel the centre of all handicrafts. Thus my faith in the spinning-wheel is growing everyday and I see more and more clearly that the sun of the wheel will alone illumine the planets of other handicrafts. Now I go a step further and say that just as we go on discovering new stars and planets in the vast solar system, even so we should go on discovering fresh handicrafts everyday. But, for the sake of this thing we have to make the spinning-wheel the really life-giving sun.[1] I made the spinning-wheel in every home a necessary condition for the inauguration of the satyagraha in Bardoli in 1921, and though I knew that the condition was far from being satisfied, I yielded to the importunities of the late Vithalbhai and inaugurated the satyagraha. What followed, you know very well. Well, I would even today ask the people of Bardoli to fulfil that condition of one wheel in every home. That will help you supplement your small income and make you self-sufficient.

At many places in this exhibition you will see [the presence of] art. I cannot describe it to you. It will strike your eye. We shall get to see here how a particular thing could be displayed to the best advantage by exhibiting it in a certain way. Art is a means of bringing out the inner as well as the outer beauty of a thing. We have now amongst us our own Indian artist Nanda Babu[2] from the time of the Lucknow exhibition. He showed his artistic skill then and is ever progressing. But here we have artists from Gujarat also. Just as Panditji introduced music in Gujarat, Bhai Ravishankar[3] introduced art. Here you will see his art along with that of Kanu Desai. There are different departments of art and in each you will find it thoroughly applied. You will see the artistic skill of Vakilbehn in the khadi department.

Now do think many times over what I have said. Do see the exhibition as often as you can and gain all the knowledge it offers and delight yourselves. The big ones of the Congress will come here and run the show; but the true Congress is in the exhibition. We all cannot

[1] This sentence is from *Harijan*, 19-2-1938.

[2] Nandalal Bose

[3] Ravishankar Raval

become delegates but we can certainly do much of its work by studying and utilizing the exhibition.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 13-2-1938

602. TALK WITH WORKERS[1]

[*February 10, 1938*][2]

Gandhiji was taken to where some of the children in some of the national schools and ashrams in Gujarat were shown to be earning from spinning three to four annas a day.

That is nothing. So far as the schools are concerned, you have to concentrate on showing that we can teach everything through the handicrafts, e.g., that of spinning. Literary education plus training in a handicraft is no novel conception. The novel conception is that of making the handicraft the principal means of imparting literary training.

Then as regards the wage, he said:

You are sadly mistaken if you think that you have achieved the ideal. The ideal is one anna per hour, and when poor Maharashtra has been able to achieve the average wage of three to four annas per day, rich Gujarat cannot rest satisfied with giving its spinners that wage. You have to think in terms of the wages obtainable in your province and should not be satisfied unless you have reached eight annas as the minimum wage.

"But then the price of khadi will be prohibitive," said a worker.

That is no answer. You must make up your mind that eight annas has to be made the minimum wage, and leave no stone unturned until you have achieved it. Cut out the overhead charges, make the count finer and finer, but see that you reach the goal. That khadi will not be sold is a superstition. The same fear was expressed when we introduced the new spinning wage[3] and we know how that fear has been falsified.

Harijan, 19-2-1938

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Notes". The conversation took place when Gandhiji was being taken round the Khadi and Village Industries Exhibition after the opening ceremony; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] *ibid*

[3] *Vide* "Speech at A.I.S.A. Council Meeting", 13-10-1935 and "New Khadi Scheme"

603. TALK WITH VALLABHBHAI PATEL[1]

[*February 10, 1938*]

As we were returning from the exhibition, Gandhiji said with a sigh to Sardar Vallabhbhai:

What a tragedy it is that we are far behind other provinces in the matter of khadi, and yet we have no excuse. We produce the best cotton in India, and there is no reason why we should not be able to pay the highest minimum wage and cover Gujarat with khadi.

Harijan. 19-2-1938

604. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

CONGRESS CAMP, HARIPURA,
February 11, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

I have your beautiful letter. This is the third day since I came here. I have been keeping quite well. Vasumati[2] and Prabhavati are here. Lilavati and A. S. have stayed back. Balwantsinha has come [with us].

Tell Saraswatidevi that I am rather afraid of allowing you to eat the pips and skin of oranges. Once the pain in the stomach disappears, I would give you even orange pips and skin to eat if that is necessary for further improvement. Right now I have sent you there to cure you if possible by earth and water treatment and a diet of chapatis, etc. If you do not find appreciable improvement by the 22nd, come back with Saraswatidevi's permission.

Shakaribehn is here. I certainly propose to talk to her. From her face her health seemed to be good.

Keep writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9986. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] This is reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Notes".
[2] Vasumati Pandit

605. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

February 11, 1938

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,[1]

I have been writing regularly to you. I hope you are keeping well. For news of me, see the letter to Lila.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 395

606. SPEECH TO SANITATION VOLUNTEERS[2]

February 11, 1938

Mahatma Gandhi urged the volunteers to do the work of Bhangis earnestly. He added:

Don't think your work is inferior to that of Rashtrapati Bose or Jawaharlal Nehru. No, not an atom. They serve and you also serve and, in fact, I value your work more. I myself am an experienced Bhangi and a competent Bhangi. Do your work sincerely and earnestly. A large number of delegates will be shortly coming and if there are shortcomings in your work they will complain, though I cannot complain for I am not a delegate, nor do I intend to become one.[3]

You know that you are engaged in a work that I like most. The Bhangi has been the most despised of the Harjans, because his work has been regarded as the most degrading. Many forget the important social service rendered by Bhangis.[4] But we forgot that our mothers did that very work whilst we were babies innocent of all cleanliness. If that work was ignoble the Bhangi's would be ignoble, but if it was noble the Bhangi's work is also noble. But our mothers cleaned our filth because we were their babies, because they could not do otherwise, because they were wrapped up in us and adored their own selves in us. Their work was thus selfish. The volunteer Bhangi's work is unselfish and so nobler than that of mothers. And if I revere my mother and therefore the whole of womankind, is it not clear that I should adore the volunteer Bhangi even more?

[1] The superscription is in Gujarati.

[2] Under the leadership of V. L. Phadke and Jugatram Dave about 1200 volunteers were engaged in sanitation work at the Congress Camp at Haripura.

[3] This and the preceding paragraph are from *The Hindu.*

[4] This sentence is from *The Hindu.*

I am, therefore, happy that you have taken upon yourselves this noble work. But you must know how to do it. The work has to be done lovingly and intelligently. Lovingly because those who are responsible for dirt and filth know not what they do, and intelligently because we have to help them to reform their habits and improve their health. An ideal Bhangi is one who knows the principles of nutrition and can trace the quality of the excreta to the kind of health that is possessed by the owner. Thus only can you ennoble the profession. I say this because I am an expert Bhangi, I have been doing this work for over thirty-five years and I have done it in the proper spirit. I would, therefore, ask you to approach everyone with kindness and respect, especially because you will come across ignorant people, innocent of the principles of sanitation. You will speak to them gently and explain to them that cleanliness demands that they should observe the sanitation rules of the Congress. If you have achieved this art, I shall regard you as better than Congress delegates. This is not to disparage the delegates, but to tell you what exactly is Congress work. It was not for nothing that I retired from the Congress. I am not a delegate nor even an ordinary member but there is some *rahasya*[1] behind this.[2] I saw that I needed not to be a delegate of the Congress so much as I needed to do Congress work. And I hope to continue to do so, so long as my silent service is accepted by the people. For me, to turn the wheel, to be engaged in other handicrafts, to do scavenging and sanitation work in the Congress spirit, is to do Congress work and I should be content to bury myself in a village doing this work as long as God wants me to live on this earth.

Proceeding, the Mahatma observed that it was the primary duty of everyone to be clean and also keep his surroundings clean. Those who did the Bhangi's work should first be their own Bhangis.[3]

You must know the full technique of the work and do it in a civilized manner. I have done the work of the Bhangi and I have good experience of that work.

Your work does not require any degree. Any man with common sense can do it. It requires a pure and tender heart, as it requires clean and stout hands. If you have both, and address yourselves to this task, 1,200 stalwarts like you will be enough to win swaraj. I said this years

[1] Hidden meaning

[2] This sentence is from *The Hindu*

[3] This and the following paragraph are from *The Hindu.*

ago and I do not hesitate to repeat it now. But have you the required pure hearts?[1]

I have got a demand from volunteers for free admission to the exhibition and I have reserved the last day for them when other members of their community come here to witness the session. My advice is this, that you must concentrate on your work and refrain from going there; and if you are overanxious, borrow money from friends and see the exhibition. I don't think we should open this exhibition free to all; for these two annas benefit crores of people. Those who have money and still don't spend it will he considered thieves.

Harijan, 19-2-1938, and *The Hindu,* 12-2-1938

607. NOTE TO AMTUSSALAAM

[Before *February 13, 1938*][2]

The only course for you is to have patience. You will be able to massage with ghee when God wills it.[3] There is non-violence in living at the mercy of others. Ours is not to claim rights, but only to fulfil our duty.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 733

608. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

HARIPURA,
February 13, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

There has been no letter from you for two days. You must write at least a postcard. I constantly think of you. Did Mohanlal visit you? There is no letter from him here. There are crowds of people today, and also a lot of dust.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9987. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] What follows is from *The Hindu.*

[2] In *Bapuke Patra-8:- Bibi Amtussalaamke Naam,* this is laced before the letter dated February 13, 1938.

[3] The addressee on her return to the Ashram had asked Gandhiji when she could resume massaging his feet.

609. SPEECH AT EXHIBITION[1]

February 13, 1938

Goraksha—'cow-protection'—is not the proper word, *goseva*—the service of the cow—is our ideal. At the back of the present unfortunate state of things is our ignorance which in its turn is due to our lethargy. If we try to go to the root of the pure science of cloth-making, we will find that the spinning-wheel is the *sine qua non.* In the same way if you study the science of milk, you will find in India at any rate the service of the cow to be the *sine qua non.* My study of the science as well as my consultations with experts have shown to me that it is impossible to save both the cow and the buffalo. It is likely that after the cow has been saved the buffalo may also remain to a certain extent. But if you allow the buffalo to compete with the cow, both the buffalo and the cow will be extinct. What is necessary is to realize that the cow is really the more economic proposition as our own forefathers realized when they styled their kings as the protectors of the cow and the Brahmin. But mark that they mentioned the cow first, because even the existence of the Brahmins, i. e., the spiritual leaders of the community, depends on that of the cow. You in Bardoli have laboured under the superstition that the cow cannot be economic and that the buffalo alone is your mainstay. I tell you that it is a myth and that if you bestow on the cow the care that you do on the buffalo and try to understand the real economics of the cow, you will find in the long run that it is more economic than the buffalo.

We have wasted our energies so far in saving the cow from the butcher's hands. Why should we try to wrest it from the butcher's hands? The butcher has to pursue his profession. To blame the butcher is like blaming the doctor for your fever. We have allowed it to go into the butcher's hands because of our gross neglect, and we are wholly responsible for its slaughter. It is for us to make it economically unnecessary and so impossible to sell the cow to the butcher. This exhibition and the tannery you will see in the bigger exhibition will show you that it is impossible to do so.

Harijan, 19-2-1938

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Notes". Gandhiji visited the Exhibition pertaining to cattle-breeding and dairy keeping which was declared open by Vallabhbhai Patel.

610. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

HARIPURA,
February 13, 1938

CHI. LILA,

The blood pressure this morning was 172-106 and in the afternoon exerted myself a bit too much. I saw the *goshala*.[1] It is all right. The Congress President is coming today. People are flocking in large numbers.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9369. Also C.W. 6644. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

611. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

February 13, 1938

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I am happy. My letter[2] to Lila will give you the blood-pressure count. Zakir Saheb arrived today and had his meal with me. Nothing is known about the persons who are coming from the Frontier. It is very dusty here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 401

612. LETTER TO DUDABHAI DAFDA

HARIPURA,
February 15, 1938

BHAU DUDABHAI,

I got your letter just now. It is natural that you should grieve over Dani's[3] death. But let us remember that everybody passes away only at the appointed time and that all of us have to go sooner or later. This should console us. It is indeed nice that Dani passed away

[1] *Vide* the preceding item
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] Addressee's wife

with Ramanama on her lips. That you did not observe the superstitious customs does you great honour. If you can remain pure, do not marry again. God has blessed you with enough children.

I hope Lakshmi[1] does not grieve too much.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3248

613. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

February 15, 1938

CHI. LILA,

I write to you every day. But how is it that there is nothing from you? The blood pressure was 174-106 in the morning and 160-96 in the afternoon. I have started taking garlic from today. How is your health, mental as well as physical?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 396

614. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

February 15, 1938

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

What do you mean by complaining when letters have gone from here regularly to you two? How is your health? You will know about mine from my letter[2] to Lila.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 396

[1] Addressee's daughter

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

615. INTERVIEW TO AMIN[1]

HARIPURA,
February 15, 1938

Mahatmaji advised Indians in Africa to do everything they could for the advancement of the Africans. Gandhiji maintained that the Indians' fight for equality of status with other emigrant races could not be divorced from our responsibility to assist the progress of the Africans in all manner possible politically and in the matter of higher education of the Africans in arts and science

The Mahatma also discussed the question of the Highlands and the disabilities of the Indians in East Africa.

The Hindu, 16-2-1938

616. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

HARIPURA,
February 16, 193[*8*][2]

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I talked with Shakaribehn for one hour. I will tell you more when we meet. At the moment I feel that I have been able to satisfy her. For the present she will stay on in the Harijan Ashram. I have told her that if she wishes to see me she may certainly come once.

I am getting on all right. Sharma, Dahyalal and Parnerkar must be engrossed in their work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G. N. 10581

[1] General Secretary of the East African Indian Delegation

[2] The source has "1937". This seems to be a slip, since Gandhiji was in Haripura in 1938.

617. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

February 16, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

Received your letter. Give the accompanying letter[1] to Saraswati-devi. I am submerged in work. I talked for an hour with Shakaribehn. I feel she is satisfied. She will stay in Gujarat for the present. More when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W 9988. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

618. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

February 16, 1938

CHI. LILA,

The blood-pressure today has been, morning 194-108, afternoon 160/100 and late afternoon 142-96. I have done a good deal of work too.

Show this to all. I have taken serpina today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 397

619. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

February 16, 1938

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I hope it is all right the way I am writing to you, isn't it? You will have news of me from my letter[2] to Lila. It is not good that I have no letter from either of you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 397

[1] This is not available.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

620. SPEECH AT KHADI AND VILLAGE INDUSTRIES EXHIBITION

HARIPURA,
February 16, 1938

At the outset, Gandhiji satisfied himself by taking the vote of the audience that his speech in Hindi would be understood by them.[1]

A friend here has complained that if this speech had been arranged outside the exhibition, people could have attended it more easily and even the poor could have heard it. Here only those who have purchased a two-anna ticket have been admitted. I accept this is a drawback. But you should realize that I am helpless. My voice does not function properly, my body cannot work as hard as I would like it to. Hence, it is better that I work within certain limits. I am no longer fit to address large gatherings. But, after all I am a bania, and an Indian bania at that, hence I feel that I should promptly grab what I can even if it is only two annas. If people like to hear me, they will come and incidentally also visit the exhibition. And if they understand me properly, they will become my messengers and take my message to thousands of people. After all, how far can one man's voice reach? However great a mahatma I may be, I don't presume that I can move the whole of India by my own strength. I have never even dreamt of it. If people intelligently appreciate what I say and let it sink into their hearts and propagate it to others, our task is as good as accomplished. Please, therefore, do not complain that I address myself only to a few but understand that I expect to take work from all. If I can give my message to one person, through him I can reach crores of people. And I do wish to reach the crores.

Ever since I started the khadi movement, I have been saying that I was born to serve *Daridranarayana;* I live for it and wish to die for it. I shall regard myself as having fulfilled the mission of my life if I die while doing this work. I have the satisfaction that, if I have done nothing else, I have on this account collected money for the poor. This is also true of the evening prayers. If the attendance at these prayers is very large, we cannot pray in peace. And yet I would be happy, if I could hold the prayers in a place where hundreds of thousands of people can gather. But we have not yet educated ourselves to sit quietly through such occasions. No single group in

[1] This is from *The Hindu,* 16-2-1938.

India—Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians—should entertain the belief that their own faith alone is true and those of others are false. It would be a good thing if everyone prayed sincerely and with equal regard for all faiths. I pray thus for myself and include as many as are present here. This is by way of introduction. I spoke of one thing in Faizpur[1]. Today, I shall speak about another. There was a devout poet of Gujarat. We call him the first poet of Gujarat. His name was Narasinh Mehta. We know him not as a renowned poet but as a saint. He was a Nagar[2] belonging to Junagadh; he lived in poverty and was a great saint. He was a poet no doubt, but he did not write to become [famous as] a poet; he composed poems simply in devotion to God. I have not found in any other language the like of *prabhatiyan*[3] composed by Narasinh Mehta. In one of these he writes:[4]

> So long as we have not recognized the essence of our atman, all other striving is in vain.

In the case of khadi I want to apply this to mean that so long as we have not understood the principle underlying khadi, we should regard all our other work as futile. If 30 crores of people want to clothe themselves, why should they use the cloth made in the mills of Paris or Ahmedabad and not one made by the hands of the poor? Khadi may be worn by the devout as well as by the hypocrite or the treacherous; by the chastest of wives as well as by a prostitute. There was a time when only this cloth was made in India and no other, hence everyone used khadi and nothing else. It is not that there were no thieves or robbers then, or that there were no prostitutes, but they did not understand either the significance of or the principle underlying khadi.

Let me explain it to you. Ever since I started speaking of khadi, I have been saying that khadi is pure swadeshi. I have also been claiming that swaraj hangs by the handspun yarn; the latter is also the foundation of our independence. Some say that this is an exaggerated statement and that I speak of khadi in hyperboles like a bard who makes much of some petty thing. But I have never resorted to exaggeration. I claim to be a satyagrahi. Such a one does not tell a lie. Whether one describes a single thing as two or a hundred thousand, both involve falsehood. How then did I, a satyagrahi, make such a

[1] At the Congress session in December, 1936
[2] A Brahmin sub-caste
[3] Devotional songs sung in the morning
[4] Gandhiji here quotes the Gujarati original.

statement? After so many years I have again started repeating the same thing. Khadi can bring swaraj only if we are convinced of the principle underlying it. Swaraj cannot be won just by donning khadi without any understanding. What do the wealthy people of Ahmedabad know of business dealings? They just fill their own bellies, bring up their own children, and throw money to a few labourers. I claim to be a [real] businessman. I propose to bring dal, rice, *roti* and ghee to every Indian. I wish no one to remain unclothed. So long as this is not accomplished, my business is not worth its name. I shall be able to carry on true business if you carry out my suggestions.

The U.P. and Bihar Ministers are here having tendered their resignations. There is nothing very extraordinary about it. They accepted their offices in full knowledge of the fact that the Constitution is a bauble. What has happened in Bihar and the U.P. may happen tomorrow in Bombay and the day after in Madras. But I am going to tell you today why exactly the thing has happened. If I am a Minister it is within my power to release prisoners, no matter whether they are three or thirty. What right has the Governor to interfere? I am Minister because I have the majority of votes, and so long as I hold the office, there is no one to question my authority to release the prisoners. But the Governors of two provinces have interfered. Let me tell you why. *Pace* what the socialist friends may say, I hold that the Governors dared to interfere because we have not realized the implications of khadi.

Khadi has been conceived as the foundation and symbol of ahimsa. A real khadi-wearer will not utter an untruth. I am not talking about the hypocrites who don khadi nor about those who do it to fill their bellies. A real khadi-wearer will harbour no violence, no deceit, no impurity. To those who will say, 'If this is khadi, we will not wear it', I will say, 'You are welcome to do what you like, but then you must forget about winning swaraj by means of truth and non-violence. Nor would I compel you to observe truth and non-violence, nor even to win swaraj after my method'.

Seven and a half lakh rupees have gone into the making of Vithalnagar. There are many things here I have liked, but it lacks the spirit of khadi. Sardar and I are close to each other, we are as one, we work alike and we think alike, but it may be that even Sardar has not fully grasped the secret of khadi. Where there is the conscious endeavour to fulfil the spirit of khadi, there is no place for an expenditure of seven and a half lakhs. I had said that we should be

able to hold a village session at the outside expense of Rs. 5,000. Before the Faizpur Congress I told Deo[1] that he would be found wanting in my estimate if he failed to manage it with Rs. 5,000. And he did fail. Well, the idea has still not left my mind. If we cannot do this, we are not true soldiers of swaraj, we have not become real villagers. Rural-mindedness and electrical illuminations go ill together. Nor have motor-cars and motor-lorries any place there. They took me to Faizpur and they brought me to Haripura in a car. They would not allow me to walk. They would not even take me in a bullock-cart. That was reserved for Subhas Babu. If they had brought me in a bullock-cart, it would have meant some loss of time. But how does that matter? We have all become princes, and I am told some pedestrians waylaid cars and threatened satyagraha if they were not given cars. The seven and a half lakhs would not have been spent here if we were khadi-minded. Here there are petrol and oil engines and water-pipes, stoves and electricity, most of the modern city-dwellers' amenities, including the tooth-paste and the tooth-brush and scented hair oils. The villager is or should be unspoilt by these things. His brush is the fresh *babul* stick and his powder is salt and charcoal. You wear khadi, but what about the other things that surround you and are out of keeping with khadi?

After going round I have discovered five drawbacks, and I have informed Shankerlal [Banker] about these. Because we have not assimilated and lived the *mantra* of khadi, some socialist friends are impatient with us and say that Gandhi's days are gone and a new age is upon us. I do not mind this, in fact I welcome plain speaking. If you think that what I say deserves to be rejected, do by all means reject it. Do what you do for the sake of India, not for my sake. I am but an image of clay, which is sure to be reduced to cinders. If you wear khadi for my sake, you will burn khadi on the day you burn my dead body. But if you have fully understood the message of khadi, if you have thoroughly assimilated it, khadi will long outlive me. Khadi is not a lifeless image to be worshipped externally. True worship is not idol-worship, it is the worship of the God in the idol. If we miss the spirit of khadi and make only a fetish of it, we are no better than gross idolators.

For twenty years I have preached the cult of khadi to my countrymen. And this is the only message I have been carrying to one and all, all these twenty years. I want to preach the same cult today

[1] Shankarrao Deo

when I am at death's door. Khadi is no longer the old rag it looked like when it was born. It has all the health and beauty and vigour of youth, and I can therefore preach the cult of khadi with redoubled faith and vigour. Something within me tells me that in this I am not wrong. In khadi lies swaraj—Independence .

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 26-2-1938

621. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

HARIPURA,
February 16, 1938[2]

The Governor-General's interference with the proposal of the Bihar Ministers seems to be most unfortunate and uncalled for. I have read and re-read Section 126 (5) of the Government of India Act. It authorizes interference when there is a grave menace to peace and tranquillity in any part of India through any action proposed by Ministers. Surely the discharge of a few prisoners, even though they were convicted of crimes involving violence, for what they no doubt erringly believed to be the country's cause, so far as I could see, could not endanger peace and tranquillity. The Governor-General's interfer-ence would come properly if there was disorder consequent upon such release.

In the case which has brought about the interference, I understand the Bihar Prime Minister had been assured by the prisoners that they had changed their mentality and that they wanted to live, if they were discharged, as peaceful citizens.

The action of the Governor-General bewilders me and makes me suspect whether the proposal to discharge the prisoners in question was merely the last straw and that the Congress Ministers in general had fatigued the British authority. I hope that my suspicion is groundless, but, if it is so, I fail to understand the interference unless there are good grounds of which the public have no knowledge. How I wish it was possible for the Governor-General to retrace his step and avert a crisis whose consequences nobody can foretell.

Harijan, 19-2-1938

[1] Published under the title "Government Must Undo Mischief"

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 17-2-1938

622. RESOLUTION ON MINISTERIAL RESIGNATIONS

[Before *February 18, 1938*][1]

In accordance with the direction of the Faizpur Congress, the All-India Congress Committee decided in March, 1937, the issue of acceptance of office in Provinces and permitted Congressmen to form Ministries, provided certain assurances were given by or on behalf of the British Government. These assurances not being forthcoming, the leaders of Congress parties in the Provincial Assemblies declined at first to form Ministries. Thereafter there was a considerable argument for some months regarding these assurances and various declarations were made by the Secretary of State for India, the Viceroy and the Governors of the Provinces. In these declarations it was definitely stated, among other things, that there would be no interference with the day-to-day administration of provincial affairs by responsible Ministers.

The experience of office by Congress Ministers in the Provinces has shown that at least in two Provinces, the United Provinces and Bihar, there has in fact been interference in the day-to-day administration of provincial affairs as shown hereafter. The Governors, when they invited Congress members to form Ministries, knew that the Congress Manifesto had mentioned the release of political prisoners as one of the major items of the Congress policy. In pursuance thereof the Ministers began the release of political prisoners and they soon experienced delay, which was sometimes vexatious, before the Governors would endorse the orders of release. The way releases have been repeatedly delayed is evidence of the exemplary patience of Ministers. In the opinion of the Congress, release of prisoners is a matter coming essentially within the purview of day-to-day administration, which does not admit of protracted discussion with Governors. The function of the Governor is to guide and advise Ministers and not to interfere with the free exercise of their judgment in the discharge of their day-to-day duty. It was only when the time came for the Working Committee to give an annual account to the Congress delegates and to the masses of people backing them, that the Committee had to instruct Ministers, who were themselves sure of their ground, to order release of the political prisoners in their

[1] According to *The Bombay Chronicle*, 19-2-1938, the resolution drafted by Gandhiji was under discussion in the Working Committee meeting on February 18.

charge and to resign if their orders were countermanded. The Congress approves of and endorses the action taken by the Ministers of the United Provinces and Bihar and congratulates them on it.

In the opinion of the Congress, the interference of the Governor-General with the deliberate action of the respective Prime Ministers is not merely a violation of the assurance above referred to, but it is also a misapplication of Section 126 (5) of the Government of India Act. There was no question of grave menace to peace and tranquillity involved. The Prime Ministers had, besides, in both cases satisfied themselves from assurances from the prisoners concerned and otherwise of their change of mentality and acceptance of the Congress policy of non-violence. Indeed it is the Governor-General's interference which has undoubtedly created a situation that may easily, in spite of the Congress effort to the contrary, become such a grave menace.

The Congress has, during the short period that Congressmen have held office, given sufficient evidence of their self-sacrifice, administrative capacity and constructive ability in the matter of enacting legislation for the amelioration of economic and social evils. The Congress gladly admits that a measure of co-operation was extended by the Governors to the Ministers. It has been the sincere effort on the part of the Congress to extract what is possible from the Act for the public good and to strengthen the people in the pursuit of their goal of complete independence and the ending of imperialistic exploitation of the masses of India.

The Congress does not desire to precipitate a crisis which may involve non-violent non-co-operation and direct action consistent with the Congress policy of truth and non-violence. The Congress is therefore at present reluctant to instruct Ministers in other Provinces to send in their resignations by way of protest against the Governor-General's action, and invites His Excellency the Governor-General to reconsider his decision so that the Governors may act constitutionally and accept the advice of their Ministers in the matter of the release of the political prisoners. The Congress regards the formation of irresponsible Ministries as a way of disguising the naked rule of the sword. The formation of such Ministries is calculated to rouse extreme bitterness, internal quarrels, and further deepen the resentment against the British Government. When the Congress approved of acceptance of office, with great reluctance and considerable hesitation, it had no misgivings about its own estimate of the real nature of the Government of India Act. The latest action of the Governor-General

justifies that estimate, and not only exposes the utter inadequacy of the Act to bring real liberty to the people, but also shows the intention of the British Government to use and interpret it not for the expansion of liberty but for its restriction. Whatever, therefore, may be the ultimate result of the present crisis, the people of India should realize that there can be no true freedom for the country so long as this Act is not ended and a new constitution, framed by a Constituent Assembly, elected on the basis of adult franchise, takes its place. The aim of all Congressmen, whether in office or out of office, in legislatures or out of legislatures, can only be to reach that goal, even though it may mean, as it often must mean, sacrifice of many a present advantage, however beneficial and worthy it might be for the time being.

On behalf of the U.P. Governor it has been stated that the demonstrations organized to welcome the Kakori prisoners and the speeches delivered by some of them had interfered with the policy of gradual release of political prisoners. The Congress has always, discouraged unseemly demonstrations and other objectionable activities. The demonstrations and speeches referred to by the U.P. Governor were strongly disapproved by Mahatma Gandhi.[1] Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, President of the Congress, had similarly taken immediate notice of the indiscipline which was thus betrayed. Nor were they ignored by the Ministers. As a result of these corrective steps public opinion rapidly changed and even the persons concerned came to realize their mistake. And when six prisoners, one of whom was a prominent member of the Kakori group, were released subsequently, about two months after the release of the Kakori prisoners, no demonstrations were held in their honour nor any reception was accorded to them. Nearly four more months have since elapsed, and any delay in releasing the remaining fifteen prisoners, only on account of the demonstrations or the speeches connected with the prisoners who were released in August, is now utterly unjustified. The responsibility for the maintenance of law and order is that of the Ministers and they are entitled to perform their functions in such manner as they deem proper. It is their business to weigh all relevant factors in the light of prevailing circumstances, but their decisions once taken ought to be accepted and enforced. Any interference with them in the exercise of their powers in the normal day-to-day administration is bound to undermine and weaken their position. The

[1] *Vide* "Notes", sub-title, "Appeal to Discharged Prisoners"

Congress Ministers have more than once declared their determination to take adequate action in the matter of violent crime, and the risk run in releasing prisoners, especially when they have abjured the path of violence, is altogether imaginary.

The Congress has given during the past few months ample evidence of its desire to take severe notice of indiscipline and breach of the code of non-violence that the Congress has laid down for itself. Nevertheless the Congress invites the attention of Congressmen to the fact that indiscipline in speech and action, calculated to promote or breed violence, retards the progress of the country towards its cherished goal.

In pursuit of its programme of release of political prisoners, the Congress has not hesitated to sacrifice office and the opportunity of passing ameliorative measures. But the Congress wishes to make it clear that it strongly disapproves of hungerstrikes for release. Hunger-strikes embarrass the Congress in pursuit of its policy of securing release of political prisoners. The Congress, therefore, urges those who are still continuing their hunger-strike in the Punjab to give up their strike, and assures them that whether in Provinces where Congressmen hold ministerial offices or in other Provinces, Congressmen will continue their efforts to secure the release of detenus and political prisoners by all legitimate and peaceful means.

In view of the situation that has arisen in the country, the Congress authorizes the Working Committee to take such action as it may consider necessary and to take the direction of the All-India Congress Committee in dealing with the crisis whenever necessity arises for it.

Harijan, 26-2-1938

623. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

HARIPURA,
February 18, 1938

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,[1]

How shall I reproach you for not writing? What is the reason? I do hope to leave this place probably on the 20th or the 21st. I shall see the gain in your weight. Ramachandran did not turn up.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 394

624. INTERVIEW TO "THE DAILY HERALD"[2]

HARIPURA,
February 18, 1938[3]

The fear that I had entertained about the unwarranted interference by Governors or the Viceroy with the due course of provincial autonomy has been justified in an unexpected manner. I can only hope that what I regard as a grievous error may be somehow or other rectified. I hope that there is nothing to warrant another fear that has possessed me, namely, that the British authority has been getting tired, perhaps also alarmed, over the headway Congress and Congress Ministers are making along constructive lines. And yet it is most difficult for me to realize that the Viceroy would allow a grave crisis to be created over what must be in his estimation a paltry matter. I have read and pondered over Section 126 (5) of the Government of India Act. The Governor-General is authorized by that Section to use his discretion "for the purpose of preventing any grave menace to the peace or tranquillity of India or any part thereof". Many prisoners convicted for crimes of violence in pursuit of a political motive have been discharged before now and during the period of office of the Congress Ministries. I do not know that any menace grave or otherwise has been thereby created in respect of peace or tranquillity

[1] The superscription is in Devanagari.

[2] This and the following item appeared under the title "Government Must Undo Mischief".

[3] From *The Hindu*, 18-2-1938

in any single part of India. Congress Ministers throughout the seven Provinces have given ample testimony of their readiness and ability to cope with forces of disorder. The Congress stands more to lose than Government if during its regime in any Province disorders take place. I understand that the Ministers in the Provinces concerned have, previously to asking for discharge of prisoners, assured themselves of the change of mentality of the prisoners. Surely, it is they who according to law are in the first instance responsible for law and order. The Governor and the whole weight of British might is always in reserve, if in spite of the efforts of the Congress Ministers disorders take place, with its well-known efficiency in suppressing disorders when they actually take place. Surely, there was no warrant whatsoever for interference with the deliberate decision of the Congress Ministers in the matter under discussion. I cannot help thinking that the Ministers who have resigned have taken, under instruction from the Working Committee, the only honourable course open to them.

Harijan, 19-2-1938

625. INTERVIEW TO "THE LONDON TIMES"

HARIPURA,
February 18, 1938[1]

Gandhiji said that he could not understand the steps taken by the Governor-General. He said that it was just the kind of interference which he had dreaded on Congress acceptance of office and which fear had become justified by the recent events. He therefore infers from this interference that possibly British authority is alarmed over the rapid progress the Congress is making in its constructive policy, and in the hold it is strengthening over people. But surely that was only to be expected. He hopes, however, that the interference is wholly unjustified and that though the crisis has been precipitated by the Governor-General's action, somehow or other the mischief done will be undone. But it is of British making and the undoing has also to come from the British side. By the marvellous manner in which Congress Ministers have embarked upon social and economic legislation, the Congress has given ample proof of its desire to seriously work its office programme.

Harijan, 19-2-1938

[1] From *The Hindu*, 18-2-1938

626. LETTER TO SHAM LAL

HARIPURA,
February 20, 1938

DEAR LALA SHAM LAL[1],

Please tell the hunger-strikers that I feel deeply grieved that they have disregarded my appeal[2]. I wish they would still listen and give up the strike. I would try for their release even by going to the Punjab as soon as doctors give me the permission and I have fulfilled previous obligations. The Congress Resolution[3] too should induce abandonment of the strike. I do hope this appeal will not be in vain.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N, 1284

627. NOTE TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

VITHALNAGAR, HARIPURA,
February 20, 1938

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Devdas complained against your today's speech. Then came Jayaprakash. He was extremely unhappy about it. I think your speech was too aggressive. The Socialists cannot be won over in this manner. If you feel that you have made a mistake, please get Subhas's special permission and go up the dais, wipe their tears and make them smile. We ought not to give tit for tat. Forgiveness adorns the strong. Their tongue should not cut like a sword. I wished to talk to you but there was no time at all.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 218

[1] Member, Legislative Assembly

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Secreatary, Prisoners' Relief Society, Lahore", 11-1-1938, and "Statement to the Press", 14-1-1938

[3] *Vide* "Resolution on Ministerial Resignations", 18-2-1938

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

VICEROY'S SPEECH[1]

June 21, 1937

I dare say you will recall that when I spoke to you by wireless on the day I took charge of the office as Viceroy, I gave you my view that we should be wise not to expect that constitutional changes as profound as those into which we have now entered could come about altogether without difficulty. I want today to say a few words to you about those difficulties as they have emerged, and to try my utmost to make some contribution towards their final dissipation. As you read this message I would

ask you to bear in mind two things. The first, that while I am truly anxious not to be more formal or technical than my task requires . . . I should not attempt to shorten too much or to oversimplify the various matters I propose to discuss. The second, that, even though . . . my words may seem to you a little formal, this does not mean that my personal approach to these problems is in the least degree cold or unsymp-athetic. . . .

I have refrained hitherto from making any public statement of any sort on the constitutional issues which have been raised by the refusal of the party which commands a majority of the votes in the Legislatures to accept office in certain Provinces. My decision to do so was deliberate. . . . A point has now, however, been reached at which it will, I think, be of advantage that, for the benefit of the man in the street and the ordinary elector, I should myself take up the threads of this discussion in the light of the statements which have been made in Parliament by the Secretary of State, and in individual Provinces by the Governors, and that I should state comprehensively, in the most formal and public manner open to me, my attitude, which is equally the attitude of the Secretary of State and of the Governor of every Province in India, on the consititutional issues which have been brought to the fore in connection with this question of office-acceptance. . . .

Three months ago a great political party which commanded in six Provinces a majority in the Legislature felt that, even with the support of the majority in the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi", 21-7-1937, "Letter to Lord Lothian", 24-7-1937 and "Speech at Working Committee Meeting Wardha",6-7-1937 Only extracts are reproduced here.

Legislature, it could not wisely accept office under the provisions of the Act unless it received certain specific assurances from Governors. Three months experience of the operation of the Constitution, short as I agree that that period is, has conclusively shown from the practical point of view that, any legal difficulties in regard to the grant of such assurances apart, those assurances are not essential to the smooth and harmonious working of the Constitution . . . Those three months have shown equally and beyond question that the apprehensions—even if I see no foundation of fact for them—that Governors would seek occasions for interfering with the policy of their Ministers or for the gratuitous and uncalled-for exercise of the Special Responsibilities imposed upon them by the Act to impede or challenge the Ministers in the day-to-day administration of the Province, have no shadow of justification.

I have been intimately associated with the framing of the present Constitution . . . The Act, and the Instrument of Instructions which must be read with the Act, have been approved by Parliament. Taken together, they represent the intention of Parliament and the Instruction given by Parliament to Governors. Those documents make it clear beyond any possibility of question that, under Provincial Autonomy, in all matters falling within the ministerial field, including the position of the Minorities, the Services, etc., the Governor will ordinarily be guided, in the exercise of his powers, by the advice of his Ministers and that those Ministers will be responsible not to Parliament but to the provincial Legislature. The only qualifications of this rule are in respect of certain specific and clearly defined matters. The most important of these are those known as the Special Responsibilities; and of those Special Responsibilities again, the most important are the prevention of any grave menace to the peace or tranquillity of the Province or any part of the Province, the safeguarding of the legitimate interests of the miniorities and the securing to the Services and their dependents of any rights provided or preserved for them under the Act and the safeguarding of their legitimate interests. . . .

Within the limited area of his Special Responsibilities a Governor is directly answerable to Parliament, whether he accepts or does not accept the advice of his Ministers, But if the Governor is unable to accept the advice of his Ministers then the responsibility for the decision is his and his alone. In that event Ministers bear no responsibility for the decision and are entitled—if they so desire—publicly to state that they take no responsibility for that particular decision or even that they have advised the Governor in an opposite sense. But every Governor will be concerned to have the support of his Ministry or to know that he is not silghtly at variance with his Ministry . . . . He will listen with a mind open to conviction to the arguments on the other side. . . . If he regards those arguments as valid, he will modify his proposal . . . on the other hand, as invalid, he will do his utmost, before taking a final decision, to convince the Minister or the Ministry of the soundness of the

reasons for which he is unable to accept his or their view and if, in these circumstances, he still remains unable to influence their views in the direction he desires, he will take his decision . . . and, before passing it, he will have exhausted all methods of convincing his Ministry that that decision was the right one, given the obligation imposed upon him by the Act. . . .

I welcome for this reason the helpful suggestion recently made by Mr. Gandhi that it is only when the issue between a Governor and his Ministers constitutes a serious disagreement that any question of the severing of their partnership need arise. "Serious disagreement" is a pharse which it is possible to define and to interpret in various ways. But the general sense is clear enough to anyone with any political or administrative experience. The matter involved must be of such really major importance. It must, I would myself say, be of such a character that a compromise was ruled out by a particular action taken against their advice by a Governor in the discharge of his responsibilities under the Act, despite the fact that Ministers had no direct or indirect responsibility for that action and that a Governor had taken the utmost pains to satisfy his Ministry that he had no choice in the discharge of his responsibilities but to take the action in question. I readily agree that where, on such an issue arising and where the Governor and his Ministers have both approached the matter, as I am confident that they would with open minds and with a full sense of responsibility—the Governor, in so far as his Special Responsibiliies are concerned to Parliament, the Ministry to the provincial Legislature-no agreement could be reached, then the Ministry must either resign or be dismissed. As between resignation and dismissal, normal constitutional practice leans very heavily indeed to the side of resignation. Resignation is more consistent with the self respect of a Ministry and is an effective public indication of the attitude of Ministers towards the action of a Governor. Resignation equally is an act taken spontaneously by a Ministry. Dismissal, more unusual by far in constitutional practice, might seem to carry with it some suggestion which we are concerned at any cost to eliminate from the new constitutional arrangements. I ought perhaps to add that the suggestion that the Governor should in certain circumstances demand the resignation of his Ministers is not the solution provided by the Act, so that it will not be possible for Governors to accept it. Both resignation and dismissal are possible, the former at the option of the Ministers and the latter at the option of the Governors. But the Act does not contemplate that the Governor's option should be used to force the Minister's option and thus to shift the responsibility from himself.

I have deliberately dealt with the extreme case of a conflict involving resignation or dismissal, for it is the extreme case on which attention has been riveted. . . . I feel no doubt whatever myself that on that basis deadlocks need not be anticipated in view of the anxiety of all Governors, to which I can myself testify, not merely not to provoke conflicts with their Ministers, to whatever party their

Ministers may belong, but to leave nothing undone to avoid or to resolve such conflicts. I have been the more concerned to set out in some detail the position, as I see it, in that it is essential that those interests or communities or areas to which the Act extends the assurance of the Special Responsibilities should not, for a moment, think, or have the least ground for thinking, that any question will arise of sacrificing their interests for political reason. . . . What I am concerned to make clear is that, without any threat to those interests or any sacrifice of them, a Governor and his Ministers can, in my judgment, hope, within the provision of the Act, to operate the Constitution in the normal manner which the Act envisages and to avoid, save in circumstances which I find it not easy to contemplate, fundamental differences of opinion such as to endanger the relation between the Governor and his Ministry in that very limited area in which special obligations and responsibilities are imposed upon a Governor. . . .

Before I take leave of you, I feel that you would wish me, setting aside all technicalities, to speak to you for a moment or two as one who has had a good deal of Parliamentary experience and some share in the shaping of the new Constitution. Some of you, I know, hold and hold strongly, that the plan of reform does not go sufficiently far in the direction of complete self-government. I do not question the sincerity with which that view is held. But I am certain that every responsible person, in deciding his position on this vital matter does so with a genuine anxiety in the

best interests of India to take a balanced view and to reach a right decision as to what may best be done in the conditions of this time to serve those interests.

Let me at once assure you that in my best judgment and given goodwill on all sides this Constitution will work and that in experience it will be found to work well. It stands now as the law of the land. It stands too—and despite all the criticism that has been levelled against it—as the only complete and homogeneous scheme of political reform now before the country. I am convinced that the shortest road to that fuller political life which many of you so greatly desire is to accept this constitution and to work it for all it is worth. Of their nature, politics are ever dynamic and to imagine that their expression in terms of a written Constitution can render them static would be utterly to disregard the lessons of history and indeed the dictates of common sense. Again, it is my firm conviction that this Constitution will be found to offer immense opportunities for beneficent public service and in this connection I may venture a word upon a matter very close to my heart. It is my conviction that in the full working and development of this Constitution lies the best hope for that general and lasting amelioration in the condition of the rural population and of the humbler sections of society which all of us so ardently desire.

The discussions and debates of the last two months have, I think, placed before you every argument and point of view that bear upon this issue. The choice—a

choice fraught with so much of profound significance for the future of India—must shortly be made. I hope with all my heart that all, whether leaders or their followers, may find it their duty to choose the way of constructive effort. Whatever emerges, you may count upon me, in face even of bitter disappointment, to strive unstirringly towards the full and final establishment in India of the principles of parliamentary government. But if what I should regard as deplorable outcome should emerge from the present situation and if parliamentary and responsible government should, as a consequence, be suspended in a number of Provinces, it might, however much we might all of us regret it, be beyond the power of any of us rapidly to reverse the circumstances that must then supervene. In that event invaluable time will be lost, and I greatly fear, no little hurt inflicted upon the cause of progressive reform.

But I do not believe that these sad things will come to pass, for I have faith in you and in the destiny of India. The way we tread may seem dark and sometimes difficult. The star that guides our course may seem sometimes to flicker and almost to fall. Yet faith and courage are mighty forces. Let us summon them to our aid in this difficult hour and together move steadily towards the fulfilment of our hopes.

The Indian Annual Register, 1937, Vol. I pp. 264-70

APPENDIX II

VALLABHBHAI PATEL'S STATEMENT[1]

July 9, 1937

I have remained studiously silent regarding the unfortunate controversy that has been going on in the Press about the election of leader of the Congress Parliamentary Party in the Bombay Legislative Assembly. I feel that the time has now come for me to make a brief statement for the information of the public. Shri Nariman has suggested that I intervened in an unwarranted manner in the election of the leader. He has persisted in this charge, although Gangadharrao Despande and Shankarrao Deo, the two individuals most concerned, have emphatically repudiated it. As is well known, the bulk of the members of the Legislature have also repudiated the charge in writing. I now say with a full sense of responsibility that I have never, directly or indirectly, influenced this election. What happened was this: on the morning of the 4th of March, Nariman came to me and asked me for a private interview. I readily agreed. At his suggestion it was then arranged that we should go for a drive in the evening to Worli. Accordingly he came and took me in his car to Worli. He asked me to help him in the election. I told him I could not do so for

[1]*Vide* "Letter to K. F. Nariman", 14-7-1937 and "Letter to K. F. Nariman", 17-7-1937

reasons which I had already indicated to him. At the same time, I also told him that I would not use my influence against him, or support anyone else.

Certain telegrams sent by me to Shri Gangadharrao Deshpande and Shri Shankarrao Deo have been quoted as proof of my intervention against Nariman. Both Gangadharrao and Shankarrao have stated in unambiguons terms that the telegrams were not connected with the election of Nariman. It is a matter of common knowledge that I have frequently entrusted Nariman with responsible tasks, which I felt he was the right person to discharge. I have no personal grudge against him.

The suggestion that Nariman was not elected because he belonged to a minority community is false and malicious. I am glad that Nariman has himself admitted that there was nothing communal in the matter. Gangadharrao had informed Nariman on my behalf that if the allegations were to be investigated by a tribunal, I would abide by its award.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Vol. II, pp. 235-6

APPENDIX III

LIVERY OF FREEDOM[1]

I suggest, therefore, that meetings for this purpose be held all over India, in towns and villages, on a particular day, Sunday, August 1st, when the Working Committe's Resolution should be read out and explained and while offering *camaraderie* greeting to Congress Ministers, we should pledge ourselves anew to independence and removal of poverty of our people. On that day also the flag salutation ceremony should be solemnly performed everywhere. August 1st is a special significant day for us, the day dedicated to India's freedom. On that day seventeen years ago great Lokamanya passed away and on that very day India launched the non-co-operation movement and began wielding that weapon which has strengthened and vitalized our people so greatly. It is fitting, therefore, that this day be suitably celebrated and we should remember the past and we should look to the future with the same determination which has held us for so long.

I trust that as an earnest of his sympathy and goodwill every Indian who stands for India's freedom will wear khadi, the livery of our freedom, and will display and honour the National Flag. I trust also that the police force, which has so long been hostile to our people, will think in terms of India and not of alien masters and will seek the co-operation and goodwill of the masses. Congress Ministries, if they mean anything at all, mean that the interests of these masses will be dominant.

Harijan, 31-7-1937

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 30-7-1937

APPENDIX IV

THE QUESTION OF LANGUAGES[1]

1. Our public work should be carried on and State education should be given in the language of each linguistic area. This language should be the dominant language in that area. These Indian languages to be recognised officially for this purpose are: Hindustani (both Hindi and Urdu), Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Oriya, Assamese, Sindhi, and to some extent, Pushtu and Punjabi.

2. In the Hindustani-speaking area both Hindi and Urdu, with their scripts, should be officially recognized. Public notifications should be issued in both scripts. Either script might be used by a person in addressing a court or a public office, and he should not be called upon to supply a copy in the other script.

3. The medium of State instruction in the Hindustani area being Hindustani, both scripts will be recognized and used. Each pupil or his parents will make a choice of scripts. A pupil will not be compelled to learn both scripts but may be encouraged to do so in the secondary stage.

4. Hindustani (both scripts) will be recognized as the all-India language. As such it will be open to any person throughout India to address a court or public office in Hindustani (either script) without any obligation to give a copy in another script or language.

5. An attempt should be made to unify the Devanagari, Bengali, Gujarati and Marathi scripts and to produce a composite script suited to printing, typing and the use of modern mechanical devices.

6. The Sindhi script should be absorbed in the Urdu script which should be simplified, to the extent that is possible, and suited to printing, typing, etc.

7. The possibility of approximating the southern scripts to Devanagari should be explored. If that is not considered feasible, then an attempt should be made to have a common script for the southern languages—Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam.

8. It is not possible for us to think in terms of the Latin script for our languages, for the present at least, in spite of the various advantages which that script possesses. We must thus have two scripts: the composite Devanagari-Bengali-Gujarati-Marathi; and the Urdu-Sindhi; and if necessary, a script for the southern languages, unless this can be approximated to the first.

[1] *Vide* "Foreword to "The Question of Languages", 3-8-1937

9. The tendency for Hindi and Urdu in the Hindustani-speaking area to diverge and develop separately need not be viewed with alarm, nor should any obstruction be placed in the development of either. This is to some extent natural as new and more abstruse ideas come into the language. The development of either will enrich the language. There is bound to be an adjustment later on as world forces and nationalism press in this direction, and mass education will bring a measure of standardization and uniformity.

10. We should lay stress on the language (Hindi, Urdu, as well as the other Indian languages) looking to the masses and speaking in terms of them. Writers should write for the masses in simple language understood by them, and they should deal with problems affecting the masses. Courtly and affected style and flowery phrases should be discouraged and a simple, vigorous style developed. Apart from its other advantages, this will also lead to uniformity between Hindi and Urdu.

11. A Basic Hindustani should be evolved out of Hindustani on the lines of Basic English. This should be a simple language with very little grammar and a vocabulary of about a thousand words. It must be a complete language, good enough for all ordinary speech and writing, and yet within the framework of Hindustani and a stepping-stone for the further study of that language.

12. Apart from Basic Hindustani, we should fix upon scientific, technical, political and commercial words to be used in Hindustani (both Hindi and Urdu) as well as, if possible, in other Indian languages. Where necessary these words should be taken from foreign languages and bodily adopted. Lists of other words from our own languages should be made, so that in all technical and suchlike matters we might have a precise and uniform vocabulary.

13. The policy governing State education should be that education is to be given in the language of the student. In each linguistic area education from the primary to the university stage will be given in the language of the province. Even within a linguistic area, if there are a sufficient number of students whose mother tongue is some other Indian language, they will be entitled to receive primary education in their mother tongue, provided they are easily accessible from a convenient centre. It may also be possible, if the number is large enough, to give them secondary education also in the mother tongue, but all such students will have to take, as a compulsory subject, the language of the linguistic area they live in.

14. In the non-Hindustani-speaking areas, Basic Hindustani should be taught in the secondary stage, the script being left to the choice of the person concerned.

15. The medium of instruction for university education will be the language of the linguistic area. Hindustani (either script) and a foreign language should be compulsory subjects. This compulsion of learning additional languages need not

apply to higher technical courses, though a knowledge of languages is desirable even there.

16. Provision for teaching foreign languages, as well as our classical languages, should be made in our secondary schools, but the subjects should not be compulsory, except for certain special courses, or for preparation for the university stage.

17. Translations should be made of a considerable number of classical and modern works in foreign literatures into the Indian languages, so that our languages might develop contact with the cultural, literary and social movements in other countries, and gain strength thereby.

Harijan, 21-8-1937

APPENDIX V

THE KOTTAPATAM SUMMER SCHOOL[1]

While I was in Malaya I read a brief report in the papers of the Madras Government's ban on the Summer School at Kottapatam and the subsequent lathi charge on the students. Such a step would have been surprising and reprehensible even during the course of the civil disobedience movement. At the present moment it came as a shock to me. Since my return I have looked further into the matter and the sense of astonishment and shock has not lessened. This incident has illuminated, as by a flash of lightning, the real nature of the new Constitution and the way the Madras Ministry is functioning, for it is this Ministry that is obviously responsible for the steps taken. We see that this Ministry is as much a police ministry suppressing elementary rights of free speech and association as the previous Government was. We see what the new Act means to the people. The same intolerable state of affairs continues and all the soft words thrown out at us cannot stop the aggressive suppression of civil liberty or the use of the lathi on the bodies of our youth. The lathi remains still under the new Ministers as it was before the true symbol of Government.

Some other important considerations arise. The police reporters tried to force entry into the Summer School. Very rightly this was objected to. We have been giving facilities to police reporters at our public meetings but this does not mean that we admit their right to attend our committee meetings and summer schools and the like. This cannot be agreed to. Summer schools for the study of political and economic problems have been held in many places in India. This is a healthy development which I trust will continue, for only by study and discussions can we understand our problems and find the way to their solution.

Another question that arises is the right of an individual or group to refuse to obey an order which it considers objectionable. It is patent that civil disobedience

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 8-8-1937

having been suspended disobedience of orders is not desirable. Where such objectionable orders are made reference should immediately be made to superior committees for advice. But sometimes cases arise when immediate decisions have to be made and the burden of such decision must lie on the individual or group concerned and cannot commit the organization. I can conceive of instances of orders which are so derogatory to the dignity of the individual or of the Congress that the individual prefers to disobey them on his own responsibility. This has nothing to do with civil disobedience. It is the inherent right of an individual. This right however must be exercised with every care and so as not to injure the large purposes we have in view, and the individual must take the risk of being judged by the organization.

The Indian Annual Register, 1937, Vol. I, p. 229

APPENDIX VI

LETTER FROM C. CUNNINGHAM[1]

GOVERNOR'S CAMP,
NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE,
ABBOTTABAD,
August 17, 1937

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I have received a letter from His Excellency the Viceroy in which he has given me the gist of his talk with you on the 4th of August. His Excellency, I understood, told you that he believed there would be no objection to your paying a visit to the North-West Frontier Province, should you desire to do so. I have discussed this with my Ministers, and with their authority I write to inform you that there will be no objection to your visiting the Province. His Excellency, I know, told you that he felt it necessary to ask you to leave all affairs connected with the tribes severely alone during your visit; I understand that you accepted His Excellency's decision in this matter, and I know that you will scrupulously abide by this assurance.

Should there be an opportunity of our meeting, it will be a pleasure to me to renew the acquaintance we made when I was with Lord Halifax.

The question of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, about which you also spoke to His Excellency, is still under consideration by the Ministry; I anticipate that a decision will be reached within the next day or two.

Yours sincerely,
G. CUNNINGHAM

M. K. GANDHI, ESQUIRE
SEGAON, WARDHA

From a copy: C.W. 7991a. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. Cunningham", 24-8-1937

APPENDIX VII

CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION ON ANDAMANS PRISONERS[1]

The Working Committee has learnt with the deepest concern of the hunger-strike of hundreds of political prisoners in the Andaman Islands. The Committee has long been of opinion that the use of the Islands as a penal settlement, more especially for political prisoners, is barbarous. Official enquiries and reports have already condemned such use and non-official opinion has unanimously demanded that no prisoners be sent there. Repeated hunger-strikes by the political prisoners have demonstrated their desperation at the continuance of conditions which they cannot bear, and the present hunger-strike has brought matters to a head and grave consequences are feared. Public opinion all over India is agitated and strongly in favour of the release of the political prisoners there as they have already undergone many years of imprisonment under conditions which are far worse than those prevailing in Indian prisons. The Committee's attention has been drawn to the public statement issued by some ex-prisoners, who were till recently imprisoned in the Andaman Islands and have been now released, in which they have stated on their own behalf and on behalf of the other political prisoners there, their dissociation from and disapproval of the policy of terrorism. They have frankly stated that they have come to realize that such a policy is wrong and injurious to the national cause and they propose to have nothing to do with it. This statement has been confirmed from other sources also.

In view of all these circumstances the Committee is emphatically of opinion that the political prisoners in the Andamans should be discharged. The Committee is further of opinion that the non-political prisoners in the Andamans should be repatriated and the penal settlement in the islands closed. Any delay in taking adequate action is likely to lead to alarming consequences.

The Committee appeals to the prisoners in the Andamans to give up their hunger-strike.

Congress Bulletin, No. 6, September 1937. File No. 4/15/37, Home, Political. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Viceroy", 27-8-1937

APPENDIX VIII

NOTES

"SUFFICIENTLY ACQUAINTED"[1]

The very first question on which our Assembly Speakers may have to give their ruling will be what, in their opinion, is the meaning of "sufficient acquaintance" with English. For one of the most objectionable Sections of the Government of India Act, 1935, is Section 85, which reads:

> "All proceedings in the Legislature of a Province shall be conducted in the English language.
>
> Provided that the rules of procedure of the chamber or chambers, and the rules, if any, with respect to joint sittings, shall provide for enabling persons unacquainted, or not sufficiently acquainted, with the English language, to use another language."

The first part of the Section is eloquently emphatic of the fact that the Act was meant not for the millions unacquainted with the English language but for the very few acquainted with it. The insult to the millions is so obvious. The permissive proviso offers a kind of healing balm to the injury of the insult. In an Act framed by our own people the operative part of the Section would make the use of the language of the province or Hindi-Hindustani obligatory and the permissive proviso would be for the benefit of the unfortunate ones who might not know either the language of the province or the nation, and therefore must use "another language". That, of course, is by way of comment on the Section.

Those, however, who occupy the Speaker's chair cannot comment on the Section, they will have to interpret it for the members. A commentator of the Act has already anticipated a difficulty and says: "This is a facility (viz., the one offered by the proviso) not open to those who, knowing English, would, as a matter of national self-respect, insist upon using the vernacular language." We shall not quarrel with the commentator's own ignorance, here, of the correct use of the English language, or of the implications of "national self-respect". (Otherwise he would not have used the objectionable word "vernacular" and would have used the words "national language" or "the language of the province").

But apart from the question of "national self-respect" which is bound to be foreign to an Act, on the face of it so disrespectful, any commentator ought to address himself to the meaning of the words "sufficiently acquainted". Does "sufficient knowledge" mean a mere nodding acquaintance or even a working knowledge? Whilst the Speaker may not be guided by "national self-respect" and reverse the disrespectful

[1] *Vide* "Sufficiently Acquainted", 28-8-1937

spirit of the Acts he may certainly put a liberal interpretation on the proviso. "Sufficient" according to the Oxford Dictionary means "adequate, enough"; also "Competent, of adequate ability or resources"; and "adequate" means "proportionate to the requirements" of the case. Now what are the requirements here? Two, viz., that the member of the legislature may give adequate expression to all that he is filled with; and that the rest of the members understand all that he has to say. As regards the first of these requirements, does an ordinary knowledge of English enable one to express one's thoughts adequately? As I write this, I have before my mind's eye a vivid picture of a newly elected M. L. A. who had occasion to travel with Gandhiji some time ago. The M. L. A., as we found afterwards, had a double University degree, but lacked, if I may say without offence, the ability to express her thought either fully or correctly. She was exceptionally refined and cultured but she lacked this gift. She not only could not express herself fully or correctly, she failed to follow Gandhiji fully or correctly. Not knowing Section 85 of the Act, I said to myself, "Thank God she need not speak in the Assembly in English." But knowing the Section, I now ask, must she speak in English, because she is a double graduate and presumed to know English? I should think *not*. It should be open to our M. L. A.s to declare that it is not possible for them to express themselves adequately in English, or at any rate as well in English as they could in their own mother tongue. And this lady, in spite of her double degree, seemed to me to possess a right truthfully to make such a declaration. I am sure that there are many members who are in the same case as this sister.

Take now the second and equally important requirement of the case, viz., that the rest of the members should understand all that a member says. In Bombay, I am told, no less than twenty-two of the members of the Assembly do not know English at all. Are they to sit with their ears closed when a brother member addresses them in choice or indifferent English? The least they are entitled to, I think, is that whenever a member regarding himself as "sufficiently acquainted" with English speaks in English, he must also for the benefit of the non-English-knowing members explain the speech in the language of the province.

These two requirements of the case seem to me so obvious that any Speaker seeking to put a correct, not to say liberal, interpretation on the proviso is bound to have due regard to them.

Harijan, 31-7-1937

APPENDIX IX

K. F. NARIMAN'S STATEMENT[1]

I am grateful to Mahatma Gandhi and D. N. Bahadurji for having taken me into their confidence and shown me a copy of their findings and judgment in an inquiry made by them. I have studied them carefully and must accept them as findings arrived at by judges who were judges of my choice and whom I have the privilege of regarding as my friends. It is open to them to publish their judgment but they have generously offered not to publish it if I publicly declare that I am satisfied with their verdict. I accordingly do so and feel that in doing so I owe a statement to the public.

I am convinced that in the matter of the election of 1934 I neglected my duty as a responsible office-bearer of the Congress and gave some of my friends cause to feel that my neglect amounted to a grave breach of trust. In the matter of election of the leader of the Bombay Parliamentary Party in 1937, I am sorry to confess that I misjudged the general position and on the strength of the statement made by some of the legislators I felt a grievance which I allowed my friends and part of the Press to share with me. As a result, considerable bitterness was aroused and Sardar Vallabhbhai was even charged by a section of the Press with having acted through communal prejudice. I have publicly stated before and do so now that this charge was entirely unfounded and whatever the Sardar did or did not do, was from a sense of public duty. I am sorry that the agitation against Sardar should have taken a personal aspect and even a communal aspect and that I should have been the cause of taking up so much of the time of Mahatma Gandhi and Bahadurji over a grievance which the public have a right to say was more fancied than real.

Having said this I feel that I owe some kind of reparation to the public whom I have all these years claimed to serve. And in order that the confidence in me may be fully restored, I deliberately declare my intention not to seek on the expiry of my term of those offices re-election to all positions and places of trust that I now enjoy and my determination to serve the Congress and the public by being out of those offices in order that passions and bitterness may cease and peace and harmony may be restored.

The Hindustan Times, 17-10-1937

[1] *Vide* "Stateent to the Press", 16-10-1937. It is likely that this was originally drafted by Gandhiji; *vide* "Letter to K. F. Nariman", 29-10-1937

APPENDIX X

(*a*) *M. A. JINNAH'S SPEECH AT LUCKNOW*[1]

October 15, 1937

The Muslim League stands for full national democratic self-government for India. A great deal of capital is made as to phrases, more for the consumption of the ignorant and illiterate masses. Various phrases are used such as *purna swaraj*, self-government, complete independence, responsible government, substance of independence and dominion status. There are some who talk of complete independence. But it is no use having complete independence on your lips and the Government of India Act, 1935, in your hands. Those who talk of complete independence the most mean the least what it means. Was the Gandhi-Irwin Pact in consonance with complete independence? Were the assurances that were required before the offices would be accepted and the provincial constitutions could be worked consistent with *purna swaraj*, and was the resolution, after the assurances were refused, accepting offices and working the Constitution enacted by the British Parliament and forced upon the people of India by the imperialistic power, in keeping with the policy and programme and the declarations of the Congress Party? Does wrecking mean working?

The present leadership of the Congress, especially during the last ten years, has been responsible for alienating the Mussalmans of India more and more by pursuing a policy which is exclusively Hindu, and since they have formed the governments in six provinces where they are in majority they have by their words, deeds and programmes shown more that the Mussalmans cannot expect any justice or fair play at their hands. Wherever they are in a majority and wherever it suited them, they refused to co-operate with the Muslim League Parties and demanded unconditional surrender and signing of their pledges. . . .

. . . Hindi is to be the national language of India and *Bandemataram* is to be the national song and is to be forced upon all. The Congress flag is to be obeyed and revered by all and sundry. On the very threshold of what little power and responsibility is given, the majority community have clearly shown their hand that Hindustan is for the Hindus; only, the Congress masquerades under the name of nationalism whereas the Hindu Mahasabha does not mince words.

Here it will not be out of place to state that the responsibility of the British Government is no less in the disastrous consequences which may issue. It has been

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 19-10-1937 Only extracts are reproduced here.

clearly demonstrated that the Governor and Governor-General who have been given the special powers and special responsibility to safeguard and protect the minorities under the Constitution which was made so much of by . . . the Secretary of State for India . . . have failed to use them and have thereby been a party to the flagrant breach of the spirit of the Constitution and the instrument of instructions in the matter of appointment of Muslim Ministers. On the contrary they have been a party to passing off men as Muslim Ministers by appointing them as such, though they know fully well that they do not command the confidence of the Muslim representatives or the public outside. . . .

The Congress High Command speaks in different voices. One opinion is that there is no such thing as Hindu-Muslim question and there is no such thing as minorities' question in the country. The other High Command opinion is that if a few crumbs are thrown to the Mussalmans in their present disorganized and helpless state you can manage them. . . .

The All-India Muslim League certainly and definitely stands to safeguard the rights and interests of the Mussalmans and other minorities effectively. That is its basic and conditional principle. The Congress attempt under the guise of establishing mass contact with the Mussalmans is calculated to divide and weaken and break the Mussalmans and is an effort to detach them from their accredited leaders. It is a dangerous move and it cannot mislead anyone. All such manoeuvres will not succeed notwithstanding the various blandishments, catchwords and slogans. . . .

Then he warned the Congress against the inadvisibility of asking for a Constituent Assembly and admonished them to see that the All-India Federation Scheme embodied in the 1935 Act was not brought into being. He also warned the British empire against their attitude regarding Palestine and concluded by exhorting Mussalmans to fear nothing and to be true and loyal to stand by their decisions as one man.

The Indian Annual Register, 1937, Vol. II, pp. 403-5

(*b*) *LETTER FROM M. A. JINNAH*[1]

November 5, 1937

DEAR MAHATMA GANDHI,

I have received your letter dated October 19, 1937, on my arrival here. As regards publishing your letter from Teethal last May, I am of opinion that I was fully justified in doing so; but your letter means something different from what I understand it to mean. Surely, it was open to you to offer your explanation to the public. The letter was not marked as it is usual to do so when its publication is not desired by the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 19-10-1937

writer, and my message to you was not private. Even now you do not indicate how I have misunderstood your attitude or the contents of that letter. You merely say "I felt deeply hurt over your misunderstanding my attitude".

I am sorry you think my speech at Lucknow is a declaration of war. It is purely in self-defence. Kindly read it again and try and understand it. Evidently, you have not been following the course of events of the last twelve months. As to reserving you as a "bridge" and "peace-maker", don't you think your complete silence for all these months has identified you with the Congress leadership although I know that you are not even a four-anna member of that body?

In conclusion, I regret to say that I find nothing definite or any constructive proposal in your letter under reply, except that it is written in all good faith and out of an anguished heart, which I reciprocate.

Yours sincerely,

M. A. JINNAH

The Hindustan Times, 16-6-1938

APPENDIX XI

LETTER FROM JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

November 14, 1937

MY DEAR BAPU,

I have just read your article on the A. I. C. C. meeting. Regarding the Mysore resolution you have said that it was *ultra vires* of the A. I. C. C. If this was so then I had no business to permit discussion on it and should have banned it. I am not aware of any constitutional provision which leads to this result and only something in the nature of such a provision can bar a resolution moved in the ordinary way and supported by a majority of the A. I. C. C. Apart from the constitution itself, I am not aware of any previous decision of the Congress or the A. I. C. C. which lays down that such matters should not be considered. Even if there was some such resolution, I do not see how it could prevent the A. I. C. C. from considering a matter if it so chose, unless the resolution was embodied in a rule of practice. The A. I. C. C. is at complete liberty to consider a resolution which may go contrary to a previous resolution passed by itself. If however there is a rule of practice or procedure, this has to be acted upon till the A. I. C. C. does not alter it [*sic*]. There is no question of such a rule, but I do not even know of a resolution which lays down a policy which the Mysore resolution infringes. In statements issued by us in the past mention has been made that the Congress desires to follow a policy of non-intervention in the States.

[1] *Vide* "The A.I.C.C.",13-11-1937

Those statements cannot bar the A. I. C. C. itself from intervening if it chooses. I cannot understand how the legal phrase, *ultra vires,* can be made to apply.

Another question arises, what is intervention? Is a mention of a State in a resolution intervention? Is a demand for civil liberties or a condemnation of repression, intervention? If so, the Congress itself has been guilty of it in specific and unequivocal terms during the last two years.

The Mysore resolution of the A. I. C. C. is very badly worded and, in any event, I did not want it to be passed by the A. I. C. C. just then. But my feelings have little to do with the matter. I have to act as the president of a democratic assembly. The resolution was one of condemnation of repression in Mysore. Are we to refrain from condemning repression in a State in future whatever the nature of this repression? If this repression consists in attacking the Congress itself, insulting our Flag, or banning our organization, are we to remain silent? These matters must be cleared up so that our office and our organization might know definitely what line we are to take up.

You have said that the A. I. C. C. should not have passed the resolution without at least hearing the other side. Do you think that it is feasible for us to appoint inquiry committees to go to States? Will the States agree? on several occasions I have suggested this to States—not a committee but just an individual to go there and inquire from both sides. They have invariably turned this down.

This Mysore matter has been going on for a long time. The Karnatak P. C. C. has taken some steps in the matter. Their secretary has had a long interview with the Dewan of Mysore. I have repeatedly written to the Dewan and put a large number of specific cases before him. He has replied at length without, in my opinion, justifying the State policy. For months past I have been restraining Congressmen in Mysore from indulging in any disobedience of orders and, in fact, no orders have been disobeyed, except by Nariman recently. The Karnatak P. C. C. ultimately considered the situation and condemned the policy of repression in Mysore and asked us for further directions as to what they should do. It is hardly correct therefore to say that the A. I. C. C. condemned anybody unheard or *ex parte*. We pursued all the ordinary avenues open to us.

I am writing all this to you as I want to be clear in my own mind what our policy is. You have censured the A. I. C. C. and me for the course we pursued. I have not yet understood how and where I am wrong and so long as I do not understand it, I can hardly act otherwise.

Yours affectionately,

JAWAHARLAL

MAHATMA GANDHI

WARDHA (C. P.)

A Bunch of Old Letters, pp. 254 6

APPENDIX XII

BENGAL GOVERNMENT'S COMMUNIQUE[1]

November 18, 1937[2]

During the last session of the Provincial Legislature the Government of Bengal declared its policy of progressive release of detenus as the situation improved, and also gave an assurance that where adequate guarantees of good behaviour were forthcoming, any special cases would be separately considered. In the then prevailing circumstances, Government considered that a wholesale release of over 2,000 detenus might lead to difficulties and possibly a recrudescence of violence. Their policy of progressive release was enunciated in the Assembly on August 9 and was approved by the Chamber. In pursuance of this policy a large number of persons have already been released and many others have been placed under modified forms of restriction.

There have since been observed definite indications of a change for the better in the general atmosphere. Recent pronouncements by certain leaders also show that they are exerting themselves to discredit methods of violence. Mr. Gandhi has also assured Government that he would do his best to improve the political situation in Bengal by preaching his cult of non-violence and creating public opinion in favour of it. He has also offered to meet detenus with the object of persuading them not to resort to or assist terrorism or other subversive activities in future. In consideration of these circumstances and on a review of the present situation, Government have decided to accelerate the release of the detenus or the removal of restrictions on them, and have therefore issued orders for the immediate release of about 1,100 detenus subject only to the requirement that changes of address be communicated.

As regards the remaining detenus, no more than 450 in number, a large portion of whom are in camps and jails, Government propose to take up their cases in the near future. Mr. Gandhi has offered to interview individual detenus, a task which he intends to undertake in about four months' time and for which Government will gladly afford him every facility. Government hopes then to be in a position to grant immediate release to those detenus in respect of whom Mr. Gandhi may be able to give Government satisfactory assurances after seeing the individual detenus. In the mean while Government will continue to consider relaxation in individual cases and, if such action appears to be justified, complete release.

It is hoped that the steady development of the policy now set forth will result in the ultimate solution of this perplexing and difficult problem. Its success must, however, depend on the co-operation of the public and the leaders of public opinion

[1] *Vide* "Statement on Bengal Government's Communique", 21-11-1937

[2] From *The Statesman*, 19-11-1937

in maintaining an atmosphere in which subversive movements will find no encouragement. Government, who have throughout been most anxious to carry out the policy of release of detenus as rapidly as possible consistently with the public safety, cordially welcome Mr. Gandhi's offer of assistance in creating the favourable atmosphere that is essential for the success of this policy.

Harijan, 27-11-1937

APPENDIX XIII

(*a*) *LETTER FROM MAHADEV DESAI TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU*[1]

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,

November 19, 1937

MY DEAR JAWAHARBHAI,

Your letter of the 8th. I understand all that you say about Samuel's visit, and I am writing to Polak to say that you will gladly meet him if he desires to see you.

About Anupchand Shah's offer it was so good of you to have written to him about the existence of the Gandhi Seva Sangh. I am now writing to him.

Bapu would himself have replied to your letter of the 14th regarding his article[2] on the Mysore Resolution. But he was unable even to dictate his reply. He is so thoroughly washed out that the doctors think that it would be dangerous to allow him to exert himself. But I gave him the gist of your letter. He told me that he was clear that there was an infringement of the policy of non-intervention. He knows that the Congress has been guilty of intervention in the past, but he also knows that it was not proper, and he should not have written the article if he did not feel it imperative to cry a halt. He was glad you recognize that the resolution was badly worded and he is sure that if the other members of the Working Committee had taken care to invite your attention to the fact that the Resolution was *ultra vires*, you would have effectively prevented the speeches to the resolution which were much worse than the resolution itself. Bapu wants me to assure you that he never intended to censure you. You were immersed to the ears in work, and it was the duty of your colleagues on the W. C. to have drawn your attention. You are too good a disciplinarian to have disregarded their advice, but he feels that they failed in their duty.

This cold blunt language of mine fails to convey the feeling at the back of Bapu's mind. He was very deeply exercised over the resolution on the day of that breakdown[3] and he seemed to me to be in the same state as he was talking about the matter today. I stopped him and said I should convey to you what he thought about it as best as I could.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 22-111-1937
[2] *Vide* "The A.I.C.C", 13-11-1937
[3] On November 1

The blood-pressure has been behaving so erratically that the doctors think he ought not to be allowed to take liberties with himself. He wanted to go to Calcutta within a fortnight, but he himself recognizes that this is physically impossible. He has promised to stay in bed at any rate until the pressure keeps steady for a fortnight or more.

Yours,

MAHADEV

A Bunch of Old Letters, pp. 248-9

(*b*) *LETTER FROM MAHADEV DESAI TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU*[1]

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
December 2, 1937

MY DEAR JAWAHARBHAI.

I have your letter of the 27th. It was a surprise to me that you had written at all, and all the greater surprise that you could write at such length. I appreciate all that you say. I simply did not inflict an argument on you as I assumed that you did not want an argument but simply Bapu's opinion in the light of what you had urged in your letter.

There is no improvement in Bapu's condition and we are withholding all correspondence from him. But I decided that even in contravention of the doctors' orders I must read out your letter to Bapu. He was happy that I read it to him and if it had been at all possible for him to dictate a reply he would have done so. But it was out of the question and I must try to tell you in my own language what was at the back of his mind when he wrote that the Mysore Resolution was *ultra vires.* I wonder if you remember that Bapu said this very thing in the W. C. meeting too. (He had that impression and on asking Jamnalalji he corroborated him.) And he had trusted that the resolution would not be allowed. He was shocked when he found that it had been passed.

In your own letter you admit that the language of the resolution was bad. But I suppose you will say that does not make it illegal. Bapu thinks that it does inasmuch as it appeals to the people of British India to give all possible help to the people of Mysore. If this does not go against the spirit and the letter of the Lucknow Resolution[2] what else does it do? The Lucknow Resolution was arrived at after a good deal of discussion and deliberation, and reflected the declaration of policy made by Rajendra Babu on 1-8-1935 and adopted by the A. I. C. C. on 17-l0-1935. The relevant paragraph in this declaration was this: "It should be understood however that

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 22-11-1937
[2] Passed at the Congress Session held in April 1936

the responsibility and the burden of carrying on that struggle with the States must necessarily fall on the States people themselves. The Congress can exercise moral and friendly influence upon the States and this it is bound to do wherever possible. The Congress has no other power under existing circumstances, although the people of India whether under the British, the Princes or any other power are geographically and historically one and indivisible. In the heat of controversy the limitation of the Congress is often forgotten. Indeed any other policy will defeat the common purpose."

Now this declaration was but a reiteration of the policy that was being followed until then, and the Lucknow Resolution in laying down in the clearest possible terms that "the struggle for liberty within the States has, in-the very nature of things, to be carried on by the people of the States themselves", gave that declaration the status of a Congress enactment. The sponsors of the Mysore Resolution forgot the self-imposed limitation of the Congress and went against the spirit of the long-accepted policy of the Congress.

I come now to your other question. You say: "Bapu also refers to a violation of truth and non-violence by the A. I. C. C. resolutions. These are grave charges and should be substantiated," and so on. Naturally, when you were writing this, Bapu's article was not before you. The resolution (Masani's) and the speeches were, he has said, "wide of the mark". He explains how they were wide of the mark, and then asks them "to study and take to heart what Jawaharlal Nehru has said in his elaborate statement on the matter." Then follows the sentence: "I am convinced that in their action the critics departed from truth and non-violence." This is said more with reference to the speeches than the resolution itself. You yourself had to pull up several speakers and ask them to confine themselves to principle and policy. "Many political prisoners had been released and bans lifted," said Mr. Masani, "but there are still some prisoners in the Congress provinces." Is that enough to prove that the Ministers were identifying themselves with Imperialism or they were as bad as Haqs and Sikandar Hayat Khans? Is it true to say that the whole armoury of repression remained, when the Moplah Outrages Act was repealed within two months of the Congress Ministers' accepting office? I will not refer to the other speeches.

As regards the Mysore resolution, Bapu was of opinion that it was untruthful to characterize the policy of the Mysore State as repressive, when we deliberately went there and defied the law. "Abominable repressive measures" and "keeping printed orders ready to be served on those who passed through the State" is not truthful language.

As to the rest of your letter, Bapu deeply appreciated all that you have to say. There can be no question of your accepting anything from Bapu because it came from Bapu, and discipline can never mean "a meek acceptance of one's own view of the matter [*sic*]."

I do not know whether you will have issued your statement to the Press ere this. But if you have not, perhaps you would alter in parts in the light of

this letter, of which or parts of which you may make whatever use you like—though of course it is my letter and not Bapu's and I am posting is without showing it to him. If you feel that the statement should go as it is, you are at liberty to release it—i.e. to say, you may say that you have had an unconvincing answer and that you must act in accordance with the dictates of your own mind.

Regarding violation of truth and non-violence as evidenced in the activities of some of our ministers, Bapu would like you to write frankly and fully, regardless of his recent state of health. For that violation, no matter where it comes from, has to be denounced and if our Ministers are really guilty of it they would deserve to be turned out.

He understands all you say about the Bengal affairs. Far from expecting you to get "wildly excited" over the releases, all he wanted you to say was whether the way he had interviewed the Governor and the Ministers on the question of the release of prisoners and detenus met with your approval or not.

Yours affectionately,

MAHADEV

A Bunch of Old Letters, pp. 260-2

APPENDIX XIV

LETTER FROM K. NAZIMUDDIN[1]

Copy

WRITERS' BUILDINGS,

CALCUTTA,

November 24, 1937

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Thanks very much for your letter. I am sorry to learn about your indisposition. I hope you will soon completely recover your health.

In our opinion your statement is very fair and we thank you for it. The wording of the Government communique is not perhaps very happy as far as the four months' period is concerned. It certainly brings out the Government's point of view, namely, that only after the end of four months the question of a large-scale release of the remaining detenus will be considered whereas it misleads the public in giving the impression that you will take up the question at the end of four months. But there is nothing in the communique to prevent your coming and interviewing these people before the expiry of four months.

In your letter you have asked that Mr. Sarat Bose should be allowed to carry on the conversation with the detenus in your absence. I would like to make it

[1] *Vide* "Letter to K. Nazimuddin", 28-11-1937

quite clear that my objection to this suggestion is not based on personal grounds but on the question of principle. Govt. treat you differently from all other political leaders in India and therefore neither your purpose nor Govt.'s object will be served by anyone else but your interviewing the detenus. After your visit to Hijli, Govt. allowed Dr. B. C. Roy and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu to interview the State prisoners. Dr. Roy went there more in the capacity of a physician than a political leader and we made an exception for Mrs. Sarojini Naidu but as far as I am concerned I do not propose to allow any other political leader in future to interview the State prisoners.

I had presumed that personal touch between you and the individual detenu or State prisoner was necessary in order that you might be assured that the individual concerned had become a convinced adherent to the principles of non-violence, following upon a change of heart and as a matter of principle quite independently of personal or political advantage. It was a matter then not of bargaining between you. It was necessary for you of course to explain the principles of non-violence and persuade the subject to their acceptance. But so far as the prisoner was concerned, it was a matter of simple statement whether he had reached that position or not. This point of view has bearing on the question of the correspondence as well as that of interviews with the prisoners by persons other than yourself. We should not object to correspondence under sealed cover between you and any State prisoner or detenu provided that it is understood that such letters as you receive are shown to nobody else.

As long as I am Home Minister, you can rest assured that whatever may be the language of the communique everything that we agreed upon will —*insha-allah*—be given effect to provided nothing untoward happens in the mean time.

I agree with your explanation or amplification of the phrase "subversive movement". The only portion in the letter on which we differ is the reference to the convicted political prisoners. As you are aware we agreed to take certain steps in connection with the convicted political prisoners. I have issued instructions for action being taken on these lines but beyond this Government are not prepared to go. I agree with what you have stated in your PS. Repatriation will take place according to plan mentioned to you.

Yours sincerely,

K. NAZIMUDDIN

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.

SEGAON, WARDHA

From a copy: Birla Papers. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

APPENDIX XV

LETTER FROM M. A. JINNAH[1]

NEW DELHI,

February 15, 1938

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I have received your letter of the 3rd February 1938 which was redirected here. I did not complain to the Maulana Sahib about the absence of any reply from you. I only mentioned the facts as he was anxious that we two should meet. Anyhow, I am glad to hear from you. My message to you through Mr. Kher as I informed you in my last letter, was not private. It was only when Mr. Kher went to see you at Wardha that I did say that he should not mention the matter to anyone except you and that if you yourself were inclined in the first instance to take up the matter, then it will be more than half the battle won. On his return to Bombay Mr. Kher told me that it was difficult for you to give a reply as you were restricted not to disclose it to anyone or consult anybody else.

Thereupon I said that it was not intended to be a secret and that he was free and you were free to put your heads together and let me know whether at that juncture you were inclined to take up this matter with your powerful and overwhelming influence which you exercise over the Congress. Then he saw you again at Teethal and from that moment it ceased to be a private matter between two individuals; and he brought me your reply in writing which I had to publish because you know of the controversy between me and Babu Rajendra Prasad and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in the Press where it was sought to make out that I was putting every obstacle in the way of Hindu-Muslim settlement. As your letter was not marked confidential I used it. Besides, what is wrong in my saying that I had approached you on my own accord and that was a reply I received from you? I cannot understand why you feel so much about it. You say that I complained of your silence. Well, I do. But you further proceed to say, "Believe me the moment I can do something that can bring the two communities together, nothing in the world can prevent me from so doing." Now, what am I to gather from this? Am I right in interpreting that the moment is not come?

With regard to your opinion that my speech at the Lucknow session and my later pronouncements, which you are pleased to call a declaration of war, I can only repeat that it is in self-defence. Evidently, you are not acquainted with what is going on in the Congress Press—the amount of vilification, misrepresentation and falsehood that is daily spread about me—otherwise, I am sure, you would not blame

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 3-2-1938

me.

With regard to your saying that when in 1915 you returned from South Africa everybody spoke of me as one of the staunchest of nationalists and the hope of both the Hindus and Mussalmans, and you ask me a question, "Are you still the same Mr. Jinnah ?" and proceed further to say, "If you say you are, in spite of your speeches I shall accept your word." And you say that in my speeches you miss the old nationalist. Do you think that you are justified in saying that? I would not like to say what people spoke of you in 1915 and what they speak and think of you today. Nationalism is not the monopoly of any single individual; and in these days it is very difficult to define it: but I don't wish to pursue this line of controversy any further.

You conclude by saying: "Lastly you want me to come forward with some proposal. What proposal can I make except to ask you on bended knees to be what I had thought you were. But the proposals to form the basis of unity between the two communities have surely got to come from you." I think you might have spared your appeal and need not have preached to me on your bended knees to be what you had thought I was. As regards the formation of proposals which would form the basis of unity, do you think that this can be done by correspondence? Surely, you know as much as I do what are the fundamental points in dispute. In my opinion it is as much up to you to suggest ways and means of tackling the problem. If you genuinely and sincerely desire and you feel that the moment has come for you to step in and with your position and influence you are prepared to take the matter up earnestly, I will not fail to render all the assistance I can.

Yours sincerely,

M. A. JINNAH

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-6-1938

1. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

February 21, 1938

You may settle down there if Vidya keeps well and you have good work. Father you should forget. Not to do so is to irritate the boil.[1]

Ask Jeramdas to do it today.

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

2. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS [2]

February 23, 1938

I have read the Governor-General's statement[3] with the respect and attention it deserves. I had hoped that it would give some satisfaction, as was given at least to me and, if I may say so, a large number of Congressmen when he made a pronouncement upon the Congress demand for certain assurances as a condition precedent to the acceptance of ministerial responsibility by Congress members of the provincial Legislatures. It reads like a special pleading unworthy of a personage possessing unheard-of powers.

No one has questioned the propriety of examining the cases of prisoners to be discharged; but what I have questioned, and the Congress most emphatically questions, is the propriety of such examination by provincial Governors in provinces said to be enjoying complete provincial autonomy. That duty and the right of examination belong solely to responsible Ministers as I understand the Government of India Act and the convention in responsibly governed Colonies. The Governors' duty and right are to advise their Ministers on the question of broad policy and warn them of danger in their exercise of certain powers, but having done so to leave their Ministers free to exercise their unfettered judgment. If such were not the case, the responsibility would become a perfectly meaningless term, and the Ministers responsible to their electors would have as their share

[1] The addressee had consulted Gandhiji in connection with his stay at Nainital and his relations with his father.

[2] This appeared under the title "How Crisis Can Be Avoided".

[3] Dated February 22

nothing but odium and disgrace, if their responsibility had to be shared with Governors in the daily administration of affairs by law entrusted to them. It is hardly graceful for His Excellency to quote against the poor Ministers their non-exercise of their undoubted powers to prevent Governors from examining individual cases. The Congress Resolution[1] describes their forbearance as exemplary patience. I would venture to add that probably it was also the inexperience of the Ministers who were totally new to their task. I am afraid, therefore, that unless this crucial question is decided in favour of the Ministers, it will be difficult for them to shoulder the grave responsibility that the Congress has permitted them to take over.

I am glad that His Excellency has drawn public attention to the method I adopted in Bengal. He might have noted also the difference between Bengal on the one hand and the U.P. and Bihar on the other. In Bengal I was dealing with a Government which was not bound by the Congress manifesto in any shape or form. The Ministers there rightly or wrongly would not listen to a wholesale discharge of convicted prisoners. I was treading upon very delicate ground in pursuance of my promise to the prisoners. My motive was purely humanitarian, and the only weapon that I had at my disposal was an appeal to the human in the Bengal Ministers. And I am glad to be able to testify that I was not speaking to hearts of stone. The situation in the U. P. and Bihar is totally different. The Ministers there are bound by the manifesto which gave them victory at the polls. They had not only examined the cases of all prisoners whose release they were seeking but, being fully aware of their responsibility for the due preservation of peace in their provinces, had personally secured assurances from the prisoners in question that they no longer believed in the cult of violence.

One thing in His Excellency's statement gives me hope that the impending crisis might be prevented. He has still left the door open for negotiations between the Governors and the Ministers. I recognize that the notices were sudden, because in the nature of things they had to be so.[2] All the parties have now had ample time for considering the

[1] *Vide* "Resolution on Ministerial Resignations", 18-2-1938

[2] The Viceregal statement read: "In the case of Bihar the demand was received by the Governor at 1 p. m. and cabled for action by the Chief Secretary by 4 p. m. the same day. In the case of the United Provinces the time limit set for compliance was also brief to a degree."

situation.

In my opinion the crisis can be avoided if the Governors are left free to give an assurance that their examination of cases was not intended to be usurpation of the powers of the Ministers, and that since they had armed themselves with assurances from prisoners they were free to release them on their own responsibility. And I hope that the Working Committee will leave the Ministers free, if they are summoned by the Governors; to judge for themselves whether they are satisfied by the assurances they may receive.

One thing I must say in connection with the exercise by His Excellency of his powers under Section 126 (5) in the light of his argument justifying the use of sub-section 5 of Section 126. I have read the whole of it. It is entitled "Control of the Federation over Provinces in Certain Cases". Unless the sub-sections have no connection with one another and they are to be read independently of one another, my reading is that in the present case the exercise of powers under sub-section 5 of Section 126 is a manifest misapplication. But here I am treading on dangerous ground. Let lawyers decide the point. My purpose in making this long statement is to assist a peaceful solution of the crisis that has suddenly appeared.

Harijan, 26-2-1938, and *The Hindu*, 24-2-1938

3. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

February 23, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Your intention was not honest, nor was it correct. All the same, it is good that you did not come, since you also needed sleep.

Send the following telegram to Gosibehn.

"Health good. Hope Jalbhai makes steady progress. Love. Bapu."[1]

Who sent the wire to A. P. saying that I had not seen the statement? But it does not matter now.

The rest when you come in the evening.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] The text of the telegram is in English.

[PS.]

Suslhila brought a car when I had walked a little distance beyond the level crossing, and I got in.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11591

4. LETTER TO N. S. HARDIKAR

WARDHA, SEGAON,
February 24, 1938

DEAR DR. HARDIKAR,

I retain the same view that I held in 1920 as to volunteers. You know that at Ahmedabad the Congress had passed a resolution[1] embodying a pledge for volunteers and certain instructions to be followed by them. Experience has proved for me the correctness of the position I then took. It is true that there has not been the response that I wanted. The causes of the inadequacy of response I need not go into at the present moment. Our volunteers for me are, and should be, our non-violent army, irresistible and invincible. Therefore I would expect every adult person to undergo a practical volunteer training for at least three months. I would expect them to give at least one month every year to practical service. Now that in seven provinces the Congress runs the Government the thing should be easy. The first thing, therefore, is to prepare a textbook, giving in minute detail the course of instructions to be imparted to candidate volunteers and then begin the work of instruction not in cities but in villages. I would concentrate all effort on villiages. Whilst I note the marvellous mass awakening that has taken place, I am painfully conscious of the fact that a far greater and a far more solid awakening has to take place before we can confidently say that swaraj is ours for the asking. Any extraneous event may put power into our hands. I would not call that swaraj of the people.

If what I have said appeals to your head and to your heart, you should show this letter to Jawaharlal and if he approves, and only if he approves, you should take the next step. I say this with deliberation. I do not want to take a new step in life of a political nature unless I can secure his approval and co-operation. Secondly, there is not that meeting of our hearts which is necessary for me to give guidance. You

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Congress Session, Ahmedaad-I", 28-12-1921

know the reason why. I know that there is no such barrier between you and Jawaharlal. Therefore even though I may say something which appeals to your head and heart, in my opinion I should have Jawaharlal's hearty endorsement before you take any step on the strength of what I say.

I hope you are now keeping perfect health.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile: *Mahatma, Vol.* IV, between pp. 272 and 273

5. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 24, 1938

DEAR MR. JINNAH,

I thank you for your letter. I have read your letter to Jawaharlal also. I observe that both the letters invite, not written replies but a personal discussion. I do not know whether it will take place in the first instance between you and Jawaharlal or, now that Subhas Bose succeeds him, between you and the latter. If you desire that before this there should be a talk between you and me, I would be delighted to see you in Segaon any time which is convenient to you before the 10th of March after which, if health permits, I might have to go to Bengal. So far as I am concerned, just as on the Hindu- Muslim question I was guided by Dr. Ansari, now that he is no more in our midst, I have accepted Maulana Abul Kalam Azad as my guide. My suggestion, therefore, to you is that conversation should be opened in the first instance as between you and Maulana Saheb. But in every case regard me as at your disposal.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-6-1938

[1] For the addressee's reply, *vide* "Letter From M. A. Jinnah", 3-3-1938

6. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

February 25, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

I had your letter. Do stay there if you can remain peaceful. You have my permission to come over. Saraswatibehn is very keen that you should stay on for three months. You should definitely stay on if your health can really improve. I am likely to go that side in April. I have talked to Devdas about your music. He will get in touch with you. When you return you can surely come *via* Ahmedabad. I have already written[1] to you that I had a long chat with Shakaribehn. The whole of last night I dreamt about you. With great impatience and restlessness you said: 'Now please do get me married.' You even showed me the man. I did not know him, nor his name. You did not want to act against my wish but your insistence was tremendous. How is that?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9989. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokha-wala

7. LETTER TO ZAKIR HUSAIN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 27, 1938

MY DEAR ZAKIR,

I opened at Haripura the conversation about Hindu-Muslim unity. You were to have talked to me about it the next day if we could meet again. Unfortunately, I was unable to spare the time. I would like you, if you will, to put down your thoughts in writing and let me hear from you.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] On February 16; *vide* "Letter to Sharda C. Shah", 16-2-1938

8. TELEGRAM TO SHAM LAL

[On or before *March 4, 1938*][1]

PLEASE THANK AND CONGRATULATE THE PRISONERS ON THEIR DECISION IN RESPONSE TO MY APPEAL[2]. I SHALL LEAVE NO STONE UNTURNED ON THEIR BEHALF.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-3-1938

9. INTERVIEW TO REPRESENTATIVES OF SCINDIA STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY[3]

[*March 4, 1938*][4]

Three representatives of the Scindia Steam Navigation Company had an interview with Gandhiji at Segaon.... They seemed to be worried by the following among a number of things:

(1) The discrimination clauses.[5] They cited from Gandhiji's article in *Young India* entitled "The Giant and the Dwarf"[6] the following statements:

"To talk of no discrimination between Indian interests and English or European is to perpetuate Indian helotage. What is equality of rights between a giant and a dwarf? . . ." And again: "In almost every walk of life the Englishman by reason of his belonging to the ruling class occupies a privileged position.... The cottage industries of India had to perish in order that Lancashire might flourish. The Indian shipping had to perish, so that British shipping might flourish."

Is the shipping not to revive and rise to its full height in a free India?

(2) What are Indian or swadeshi companies? It has become a fashion nowadays to bamboozle the unwary public by adding "(India) Limited" to full-blooded British concerns. Lever Brothers "(India) Limited" have their factories here now. They claim to produce swadeshi soap, and have already ruined several large and small soap factories in Bengal. Then there is the Imperial Chemicals (India) Ltd. which has received valuable concessions. This is dumping foreign *industries* instead of foreign

[1] The report is date-lined "New Delhi, March 4," 1938.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Secretary, Prisoners' Relief Society, Lahore", 11-1-1938 "Statement to the Press", 14-1-1938, and letter to the addressee, "Leter to Sham Lal", 20-2-1938

[3] This is reproduced from Mahadev Desai's article "Swadeshi Industries and Discrimination".

[4] According to *Gandhi—1915—1948: A Detailed Chronology,* Shantikumar Morarjee and Gaganvihari Mehta met Gandhiji at Segaon on this date.

[5] In the new constitution under the Government of India Act of 1935

[6] *Vide* "The Giant and the Dwarf"

goods on us!

(3) Then there are companies with Indian Directorate with British Managing Agents who direct the Directorate. Would you call a company with a large percentage of Indian capital and a large number of Indian Directors on the Board, but with a non-Indian Managing Director or non-lndian firm as Managing Agents, a swadeshi concern?

Gandhiji dealt with these points fairly exhaustively in his reply which may be summarized below in his own words:

(1) On this point I am glad you have reminded me of my article written in 1931. I still hold the same views, and have no doubt that a free India will have the right to discriminate—if that word must be used—against foreign interests, wherever Indian interests need it.

(2) As regards the definition of a swadeshi company I would say that only those concerns can be regarded as swadeshi whose control, direction and management either by a Managing Director or by Managing Agents are in Indian hands. I should have no objection to the use of foreign capital, or to the employment of foreign talent, when such are not available in India, or when we need them, but only on condition that such capital and such talents are exclusively under the control, direction and management of Indians and are used in the interests of India.

But the use of foreign capital or talent is one thing, and the dumping of foreign industrial concerns is totally another thing. The concerns you have named cannot in the remotest sense of the term be called swadeshi. Rather than countenance these ventures, I would prefer the development of the industries in question to be delayed by a few years in order to permit national capital and enterprise to grow up and build such industries in future under the actual control, direction and management of Indians themselves.

(3) Answer to this is contained in my answer on the second point.

Harijan, 26-3-1938

10. TALK WITH A FRIEND[1]

[Before *March 5, 1938*]

[GANDHIJI:] The States resolution[2] is a call to the States people not to go to sleep but to start work in right earnest. The Congress is deeply concerned about the welfare of Indian States, as the Congress resolution[3] on the Federation should clearly show. We want the States people to carry on ceaseless work in the States, but not in the name of the Congress. The use of the name of the Congress may expose the Congress to insult. If insult could result in good to the States people, I would court it. But it is far from being so. The Congress cannot in the nature of things step into each and every Indian State and protect those who agitate there. It is better able to protect them by not allowing them to use its name. If the States people have begun to understand and respect the Congress it is a good thing, but then let them work with the moral support of the Congress but avoid the Congress name. Whenever the Congress can effectively help the States people it would do so not by actively meddling with their affairs but by acting as an intermediary. Co-operation from within the States is an impossible proposition, and therefore I have been deliberately advising the States people to refrain from having Congress Committees within the States. Some say: 'We would end the States.' Now this cry does neither these friends nor the Indian States any harm. But it would harm them if they were actively interesting themselves in States affairs and trying to work there in the Congress name. The prestige of the Congress would suffer and not gain by the use of the Congress name. Mysore is a case in point. It had *a bona fide* Congress organization but it could not prevent the Congress flag from being insulted.

"But," said the friend from the States, "all these things have happened in British India?"

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Notes"

[2] Passed at the Congress session at Haripura

[3] Which *inter alia* read: "The Indian States participating in the Federation should approximate to the Provinces in the establishment of representative institutions and responsible government, civil liberties and method of election to the Federal Houses. Otherwise the Federation as it is now contemplated will, instead of building up Indian unity, encourage separatist tendencies and involve the States in internal and external conflicts."

They have, and the Congress has always stood up to the insult. That is because in British India we can adopt civil disobedience for any good cause, but in the States it is impossible. The Congress Committees will have always to be at the mercy of the States and would be in no better case than, for instance, a Committee in Afghanistan, which would entirely exist on the mercy of the Government of Afghanistan. But of course this is my personal view and interpretation.

When I came to India, I had an offer from three Indian States to settle and carry on my work from there. I had to decline the offer.

But we do not ask for active help from the Congress. We want to organize under the aegis of the Congress. The onus of helping us would be upon the Congress, but we do not ask for the help.

There it is, whether you ask for it or not, the onus would be upon the Congress, and it is not able to discharge it. Without being able to render any active support, the aegis of the Congress would be a superfluous affair. A big organization like the Congress cannot allow itself to be stultified. This is all as plain as a pikestaff to me. I do not know how the States people fail to understand this. The best help that the Congress can render today is to destroy the delusion that it can actively help the Indian States. That will automatically mean that the States people must learn to rely on themselves for all internal reforms.

I understand this very well. But look at the resolution as finally passed. The new rider that has been added is absurd. We are allowed to have Committees in States but they will be allowed to do nothing. The position is anomalous.

It is, I am afraid. It was a concession to the States people, but a useless concession in terms of my interpretation.

Then, what shall be our position? Shall we stop enrolling Congress members and begin to organize a separate national organization which will join the Congress under the present restrictions?

The real job is to build up your own organization. But you may continue to be members of the Congress, attend it and keep in touch with it. But your real work will lie in the States. The resolution is permissive. You need not set up a Congress Committee in the States. But my advice is of no value. You must seek authoritative instructions from the Working Committee

Harijan, 5-3-1938

11. TELEGRAM TO MRS. GEORGE JOSEPH

[On or after *March 5, 1938*][1]

STAGGERING NEWS. WANT YOU TO BE BRAVE AND TRUST GOD'S LOVE IN EVERYTHING. SEND FULL PARTICULARS. LOVE FROM US ALL.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarclal

12. DISCUSSION WITH SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

March 6, [*1938*][2]

SUBHAS BOSE: Bapu, may I ask you a question? What is the future programme of the Board?[3]

[GANDHIJI:] The most immediate piece of work before the Board is the preparation of textbooks for teachers.

Next, the Board must approach the different Congress ministers and chalk out the plan of work for each province, with due consideration for the present limitations and capacity of work.

Thirdly, the Board must itself conduct an experimental centre to test the syllabus it has drawn up, and must revise its own recommendations at every step in the light of the experience thus gained.

Fourthly, the Board must organize and conduct as many training schools as possible. Every training school serves a double purpose. It may not only train future teachers, but every training school also means a demonstration school of basic education.

SUBHAS BOSE: What about the expenses of the Board?

[G.] We shall have to beg for it. I do not think it right to expect any financial contributions from the Congress governments, because that would provide an opportunity for the criticisms of the opposition party.

SUBHAS BOSE: Bapu, this is as regards the problem of rural basic education. What is your suggestion as regards the problem of basic education in urban areas?

[1] The addressee's telegram to Mahadev Desai, to which this telegram is a reply, is dated March 5, 1938. It read ",Joseph sinking. Inform Bapu."

[2] The source has these notes placed along with the letters of 1938.

[3] All-India Education Board

Some municipalities, e. g., the municipalities of Calcutta and Bombay, are doing some work in this direction and would like to extend their work in progressive primary education. What is your suggestion as regards the problem of primary education in cities?

[G.] According to my educational philosophy, there is no fundamental difference between the basic education in a rural and an urban area. The aim in both is the same—the development of the intelligence through a vocation. The system of training that is evolved for rural areas will also be applicable to urban areas.

I know from personal experience that the products of primary education in urban areas are good-for-nothing, but, for the present, I do not wish to divide the energies of the Board. If it succeeds in solving the problem of rural education, the other problem will also be solved. If ten years of work are devoted to rural education, you may consider that the whole problem of primary education whether rural or urban has been grappled with.

Subhas Bose next asked whether a representative of a city municipality with some experience of municipal education could not be a member of the Board, so that he could attempt, if he liked, to adapt the findings of the A. I. E. B. for the purpose of urban basic education.

[G.] Certainly. The Board will be a representative body. All the members of the Board are representatives of the city. Where shall I find real villagers as members?

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

13. TELEGRAM TO GLADYS OWEN

[*March 7, 1938*][1]

GLADYS OWEN
VINONA BUNGALOW
SHOLAPUR

COME ANY DAY BEFORE TWELFTH. LOVE.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 194

[1] The draft of the telegram was enclosed with the note to Jamnalal Bajaj, dated March 7, 1938; *vide* the following item.

14. NOTE TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

March 7, 1938

Subhas Babu can come tomorrow at or any time after 1 o'clock as it suits him. Despatch the enclosed telegram[1], the cost to be paid by Mahadev.

BAPU[2]

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 194

15. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

March 7, 1938

CHI, MAHADEV,

I am sending all the matter with this. I hope there will be no difficulty in deciphering my revisions. I shall give some time to Manilal. In any case, the time given by you I consider as given by me.

Gole's letter was rather amusing. Do you know that Bhansali has resumed eating? Vijava has had several letters from Nanavati. He is very much hurt. He may perhaps come some time next week.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11592

16. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
March 8, 1938

DEAR MR. JINNAH,

I thank you for your letter[3]. I hope you have completely got over your indisposition.

Your letter revives painful memories. I will not discuss at this stage, at any rate, the various debatable points raised in your letter.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] This is in the Gujarati script.
[3] *Vide* "Letter From M. A. Jinnah",3-3-1938

Suffice it to say that I am at your disposal. If you cannot come to Segaon and my health permits, I will gladly go to Bombay to meet you when you are there. At present I have to go to Bengal and then for a while to Orissa. This will take me through the whole of this month. The earliest, therefore, that we can meet will be in April.

Two questions arising from your letter demand a reply. You ask me whether I have now seen the light. Much to my regret I have to say "no". If I had, I would proclaim the news from the housetops. But that limitation does not debar me from taking advantage of the slightest opportunity of finding a way out of the present difficulty.

You expect me to be able to speak on behalf of 'the Congress and other Hindus throughout the country'. I am afraid I cannot fulfil the test. I cannot represent either the Congress or the Hindus in the sense you mean. But I would exert to the utmost all the moral influence I could have with them in order to secure an honourable settlement.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-6-1938

17. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

March 8, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

I intended writing to you earlier but could not. You must stay cheerfully in any place where you have got to stay. That is the meaning of a fusion of *shreya*, what is good, and *preya*, what is pleasant. You have the power of attaining such a fusion. Develop it still further. Now you must not come unless Saraswatidevi permits you or when you fear that your health is likely to suffer. Did you do anything about the sitar [lessons]?

I am bound to think about your marriage. Should I not worry about you since you have passed the worry on to me? How can it be that neither you nor I shall worry? And you do not have to worry at all. I mentioned the thing only in jest and to prove that I was not forgetting you.

[1] The addressee in his reply dated March 17, 1938, agreed to meet Gandhiji in Bombay some time in April.

You were to tell me about your talk with Hakimji. Why have you not written about it? Do not be lax about your work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9990. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokha-wala

18. LETTER TO LAKSHMI NARAIAN GADODIA

March 8, 1938

BHAI LAKSHMI NARAYANJI,

I have your letter. I shall recall Sharda only when you two relieve her. I certainly have faith in nature cure but it is not always that we come by the proper cures. I have not yet full faith in Hakimji's knowledge. Of course, I am keeping well.

How is the dairy going on?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5626

19. TALK WITH A PACIFIST[1]

[Before *March 12, 1938*]

[GANDHIJI:] For non-violence to permeate as we should have a living faith in God. Non-violence comes to us through doing good continually without the slightest expectation of return. It simply spends itself and it is its own reward, and done in that spirit it is done not merely for friends but certainly for adversaries. That is the indispensable lesson in non-violence. It was thrown my way by God in South Africa in an atmosphere which was as adverse as it well could be. I was in a country where I knew no European or Indian. I had gone there to make a career as a lawyer. But I succeeded in learning the eternal law of suffering as the only remedy for undoing wrong and injustice. It means positively the law of non-violence. You have to be prepared to suffer cheerfully at the hands of all and sundry, and you will wish ill to no one, not even to those who may have wronged you.

Just now a good many people are talking of world peace,

[1] This is reproduced from Mabadev Desai's "Notes".

promoting peace societies and passing resolutions. This is good as far as it goes. But it may not be non-violence. An army of non-violence exposes itself to all the risks that an army of violence does. Only the latter expects to retaliate even when it is not the aggressor. An army of non-violence runs risks without the wish to retaliate.

[THE PACIFIST:] But the war spirit is creeping slowly over us. How are we to combat it?

I know how difficult it is for you to combat it in England. You have to approach the problem with faith and determination even though you may be very few. I would recommend the study of Richard Gregg's book[1] on the practice of non-violence. A true pacifist refuses to use the fruit of arms—peace and order. So long as we eat a single grain of wheat grown under the protection of arms we participate in violence. When one realizes this one has to be an exile in one's own country and a rebel. But everything has to be done according to the measure of one's strength. A few people with the courage of their convictions can become perfect nuisances to the whole State. How far it is possible to reduce the whole thing to practice is for each individual to judge.

Our English movement for peace is growing. But shall we simply go on enrolling more and more members?

I am not enamoured of numbers. A peace army does not rely upon numbers unless they understand the implications of non-violence. I would, therefore, concentrate on a few becoming saturated with the spirit of non-violence and disciplining themselves for the utmost suffering.

How exactly to act in particular situations is a matter of waiting on God. The answer comes straight in response to prayer from the heart. Such prayer carries with it the anguish of the soul.

Harijan, 12-3-1938

20. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
March 13, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I have practically stopped writing these days. I sometimes write a couple of lines to someone like you. I have since long been meaning

[1] *The Power of Non-violence*

to write to you and I satisfy that desire today. As regards A. S., you have swung from one extreme to the other. This is violence. I can understand your unwillingness to keep up your relations with her. But why should it be that you cannot go to any place where she is? Why this cowardice? I do not see in her the faults that you see. She gives me no trouble. She has a number of good qualities. How can I send her away? When asked, Ramachandran told me that he could not see any defect in her. You should cultivate patience and generosity. She cannot ask me anything about you. Nor do I tell her anything. That does not mean that she doesn't keep thinking of you. Saraswati also seems to live in fear. Trust me, be calm and give up your unnaturalness. Do come to Orissa.

Prabha cannot go there. I will explain when we meet. The rest you will hear from Mahadev.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7333. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

21. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

SEGAON,
March 13, 1938

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I hope you do not expect the customary words of condolence from me. Hira has departed after repaying her debt and receiving her due. What is there for grief in this? Your duty is clear. You should bring up the child and not harbour even the thought of marrying again. If you find this beyond your strength, do what is possible for you. Do not deceive yourself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9518. Also C.W. 434. Courtesy: Shivabhai G. Patel

22. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

March 14, 1938

MY DEAR C. R.,

Read this[1]. I hardly think you can any longer refuse to release the prisoners. How are you? Going to Calcutta tomorrow.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2068

23. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
March 14, 1938

MY DEAR MALKANI,

Here is what you want.[2] Return soon, bringing with you what is best for you and the country.

I shall send your official letter to Mahavir Prasad.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 928

[1] In his letter to Gandhiji Sham Lal had written: "I am glad to inform you that all the terrorists have lost faith in violence. I had a talk with them. It is not a pretence on their part. I would request you to write to the Madras Premier about Madras political prisoners confined in the Punjab jail. He should have no hesitation in releasing them at once."

[2] *Vide* the following item.

24. TESTIMONIAL TO N. R. MALKANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
March 14, 1938

Professor Malkani had been teaching in the National College of the Gujarat National University. He is now in charge of the Delhi Industrial Home for the so-called untouchables of India. He is voyaging to travel in Europe for a time. Any assistance rendered to him by friends will be appreciated by the undersigned.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 929

25. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

March 14, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have added but little to your article. Is it all right? I had gone through yesterday's articles yesterday itself. I have made practically no changes this time in the writings.

We felt no tremors here. The reason may be that our floor is on level with the ground and the walls are of mud. However, such tremors are sometimes wholly local.

Blessings from
BAPU

P.S.

Pyarelal and others had felt the tremors.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11593

26. A DISCUSSION[1]

[On or before *March 15, 1938*][2]

Gandhiji was discussing with a friend and co-worker his reactions to the Haripura Congress. He said he would make these views known as early as possible for the information and benefit of those who would be responsible for the session in Mahakoshal.

The Congress is a striking testimony to the great organizing ability of the Sardar and his lieutenants as also his ability to command financial help from moneyed friends. But the scale cannot be, must not be, repeated. It is wrong to make lavish use of money even when it is plentiful. I am partly responsible for the use of electricity and motors and motor lorries. For Dev and Dastane's [3] importunity had weakened me at Faizpur. Sardar's thoroughness showed me the glaring absurdity of the use of these things for a village Congress. They made the Congress camp look like a bit of Bombay instead of the multiplied village it should have looked and was intended to look like.

Classes were retained at Faizpur. At Haripura the classification was intensified. There were the leaders, ministers, delegates visitors and the villagers. The division was not horizontal but vertical. The Congress is our political Mecca. The annual function is not a *tamasha* or a fair, but a *Haj,* a pilgrimage, at which all distinctions as between rich and poor, learned and illiterate, city-dweller and villager disappear. Why should Working Committee members have more conveniences than others? Why should they have food other than the villagers? Should a villager eat different food and be differently housed when he becomes a member of the Working Committee? Or why should a delegate who happens to be a Minister have a much multiplied hut? It is a wholly different thing when one is ill or is used to special food. Such persons should make their own arrangements or have them made by the Reception Committee by previous appointment. Indeed those who have frail bodies should abstainfrom attendance, unless their presence is urgently required in the interest of the

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Haripura Notes-V", 19-3-1938. Apparently this discussion took place before Gandhiji left Segaon for Calcutta on March 15.

[2] *Ibid*

[3] Vitthal V. Dastane

Congress. Vertical division of the camps into different classes sets a pernicious example to the vast number of villagers who attend the Con-gress. The Congress management has to go out of its way to show the villagers that before it there is no prince and no pauper and that all are equal. If these artificial differences disappear next year, much expense will be saved.

Electric lights are in no way necessary. Visitors should be expected to bring their own lanterns. The Reception Committee will confine itself to the lighting that may be required for the despatch of Congress work and for the safety of the camp. Much work must not be expected to be done after dark.

Motors and motor lorries are a nuisance, bad education for the villagers, disturbing of peace, a hindrance to the proper despatch of work, and conducive to the raising of dust. The distance of ten miles or less from a railway station must be negotiated on foot or in bullock-carts. None but pedestrian traffic should be permitted inside the camp.

The site selected for the Congress should be a solid square block as far as possible. This will ensure a compact camp avoiding long distance between one end of the camp and the other. The layout can be round the quadrangle where the open session is to take place.

There should be one common kitchen from where food should be served at stated prices per course, not to be eaten on the spot but to be taken to the place of residence of the diner.

If these precautions are not observed, the whole idea of villagers' Congress for their education and for establishing a living and national contact between the city-dweller and the villager is likely to be frustrated.

Harijan, 19-3-1938

27. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

CALCUTTA,
March 16, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

We arrived in Calcutta today. Your work must be going on in full swing. Is your pain any better? What food do you take? What do you read? What about sitar?

I am quite well. There was much disturbance from the crowds on the way.

My address here is: Care Subhas Babu, Congress President, Woodburn Park, Calcutta.

We shall start from here on the 24th to go to Delang, Orissa, for [the convention of] the Gandhi Seva Sangh there. We shall have to stay there till the 31st. Pyarelal, Mahadev, Kanu and Sushila are with me.

One letter from you should reach me here and two or three at Delang.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9991. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokha-wala

28. TALK WITH HARIJANS[1]

CALCUTTA,
March 18, 1938

The Congress which is in a minority today must come to power tomorrow or the day after in Bengal, as its programme is so broad-based as to attract all groups to its fold.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-3-1938

[1] Following Gandhiji's appeal to join the Congress, some members of the Scheduled Castes had asked him how their political and economic interests could be safeguarded if they joined the Congress which was not in power in the Province.

29. DISCUSSION WITH KRISHAK PROJA PARTY MEMBERS[1]

CALCUTTA,
March 19, 1938

In the course of the discussion the members of the Krishak Party are reported to have intimated to Mahatmaji their desire to see the political situation in Bengal changed and their readiness to work in co-operation with the Congress Party in the Legislature if the administration of the Province was run on purely national lines and on an economic basis.

Mahatma Gandhi wanted it to be realized that the main object of his visit to Bengal was the release of political prisoners and he would rather not be drawn into local politics. He, however, informed them that he intended returning to Calcutta by the 1st April next from Delang where he would have to attend the annual meeting of the Gandhi Seva Sangh. He proposed to concentrate all his attention during his present trip to Calcutta on tackling the problem of the release of detenus and political prisoners. But on return from Delang he would be free to devote his time and energy to the political problems peculiar to Bengal to which his attention had already been drawn.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 20-3-1938

30. OUR FAILURE

[Before *March 22, 1938*][2]

The communal riots in Allahabad—the headquarters of the Congress—and the necessity of summoning the assistance of the police and even the military show that the Congress has not yet become fit to substitute the British authority. It is best to face this naked truth, however unpleasant it may be.

The Congress claims to represent the whole of India, not merely those few who are on the Congress register. It should represent even those who are hostile to it and who will even crush it, if they could. Not until we make good that claim, shall we be in a position to

[1] Twenty members of the Bengal Legislative Assembly and two members of the Legislative Council had about an hour's discussion with Gandhiji in the afternoon.

[2] From the reference to this article in "Talk with Co-workers", 22-3-1938

displace the British Government and function as an independent nation.

This proposition holds good whether we seek to displace British rule by violent action or non-violent.

Most probably by the time these lines appear in print, peace would have been established in Allahabad and the other parts. That, however, will not take us further in our examination of the fitness of the Congress as an organization ready to displace British authority in its entirety.

No Congressman will seriously doubt that the Congress is not at the present moment capable of delivering the goods if it was called upon to do so. If it was capable, it would not wait for the call. But every Congressman believes that the Congress is fast becoming such a body. The brilliant success at Haripura will be cited as the most conclusive proof of the fact.

The riots and certain other things I can mention should make us pause and ask ourselves whether the Congress is really growing from strength to strength. I must own that I have been guilty of laying that claim. Have I been overhasty in doing so?

It is my conviction that the phenomenal growth of the Congress is due to its 'acceptance and enforcement, however imperfect, of the policy of non-violence. Time has arrived to consider the nature of Congress non-violence. Is it non-violence of the weak and the helpless or of the strong and the powerful? If it is the former, it will never take us to our goal and, if long practised, may even render us for ever unfit for self-government. The weak and helpless are non-violent in action because they must be. But in reality they harbour violence in their breasts and simply await opportunity for its display. It is necessary for Congressmen individually and collectively to examine the quality of their non-violence. If it does not come out of real strength, it would be best and honest for the Congress to make such a declaration and make the necessary changes in its behaviour.

By this time, i. e., after seventeen years' practice of non-violence, the Congress should be able to put forth a non-violent army of volunteers numbering not a few thousands but lacs who would be equal to every occasion where the police and the military are required. Thus, instead of one brave Pashupatinath Gupta who died[1] in the

[1] Mahadev Desai, however, reported in Harijan, 2-4-1938, that Pashupatinath Gupta, though seriously stabbed, was making satisfactory progress.

attempt to secure peace, we should be able to produce hundreds. And a non-violent army acts unlike armed men, as well in times of peace as of disturbances. They would be constantly engaged in constructive activities that make riots impossible. Theirs will be the duty of seeking occasions for bringing warring communities together, carrying on peace propaganda, engaging in activities that would bring and keep them in touch with every single person, male and female, adult and child, in their parish or division. Such an army should be ready to cope with any emergency, and in order to still the frenzy of mobs, should risk their lives in numbers sufficient for the purpose. A few hundred, maybe a few thousand, such spotless deaths will once for all put an end to the riots. Surely a few hundred young men and women giving themselves deliberately to mob fury will be any day a cheap and braver method of dealing with such madness than the display and use of the police and the military.

It has been suggested that when we have our independence riots and the like will not occur. This seems to me to be an empty hope, if in the course of the struggle for freedom we do not understand and use the technique of non-violent action in every conceivable circumstance. To the extent that the Congress Ministers have been obliged to make use of the police and the military, to that extent, in my opinion, we must admit our failure. That the Ministers could not have done otherwise is unfortunately only too true. I should like every Congressman, I should like the Working Committee, to ask themselves why we have failed, if they think with me that we have.

Harijan, 26-3-1938

31. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

WOODBURN PARK, CALCUTTA,
[On or before March 22, 1938][1]

CHI. SHARDA,

In my stupidity I did not bring ink and now I have to write with pencil. I hope you will be able to read my handwriting.

Stay there without bothering yourself. You are not going to lose

[1] Gandhiji left for Delang on March 24, 1938. And since he refers to the day of his departure by the date and not as 'tomorrow' it could not have been written on March 23.

my company now. Are you willing ever to leave my protecting wing? Are you going to abandon me when you get married? Chimanlal has of course put you in my charge. Shakaribehn too handed you over to me at Haripura. Moreover, I am constantly on the move at present, hence you cannot [always] be near me. And I have no occasion to take you round with me.

I am writing to Brijkrishna and Devdas that you have received the books. I can understand your hesitation. It is good that you are able to have some music [lessons].

There is nothing very alarming in your having had [too many] motions. The greatest art about eating consists in eating only what one can digest. Hence even if some unwholesome food is taken it should not do much harm. I am doubtful about uncooked gram. But it would do no harm if taken in quantities you can digest. The same is true about berries.

Does Maulvi Saheb come there? I have not heard from him at all. I am going to Delang, Orissa, on the 24th. I shall be back here on the 1st of April. I am all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

In the absence of my. . .[1], do you use the same one daily?

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9976. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokha-wala

32. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

CALCUTTA,
March 22, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

I stupidly did not bring the ink-pot and Kanu is not quite as thoughtful and solicitous as you. So I can only give you a pencil letter.

[1] One word is illegible.

The bath[1] has been most useful. That it might not have been with me but for your watchfulness was due to Kanu's thoughtlessness. He is still shaping.

I am really keeping extraordinarily well. I have hazarded an experiment for the love of a good man. That has disturbed the b. p. but I hope that it will come under control today. Sushila must describe the experiment if she will.

I am afraid the stay out of Segaon will be prolonged perhaps by a week. I must come back to C[alcutta] for the Working Committee. You must not feel disturbed. Resign yourself to God. When I can usefully take you with me you shall come. And of course you accompany me if I go away anywhere for months. I hope you are keeping well. How about salad greens?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6397. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9992

33. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,
March 22, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Either I write with a pencil or not at all. Kanu did not bring the ink-pot and I stupidly refrained. There is no fountain-pen by and there is no ordinary pen or ink in this household. This is a mere business letter, no time for more.

There is no likelihood of a vacancy in C. P. But what I suggest is that you may send in a general letter to the President and respective Premiers the names of those women who, in your opinion, are capable of holding responsible offices. There your function as President should end.

As to Delhi, Brijkrishna is worth his weight in gold, so far as honesty is concerned. But I discount his estimates of facts and events. But everything will be fixed up now that the Sardar and Shankerlal are there.

[1] In Bapu's Letters to Mira the addressee says: "A tin bath which used to be taken on journeys when no big bath was likely to be available for Bapu. To lie in hot water was part of the blood-pressure treatment."

My health is good. I have spoiled it a little by an experiment. I must describe it to you. As for my work here, I can report nothing conclusive.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3849, Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7005

34. TALK WITH CO-WORKERS[1]

[*March 22, 1938*][2]

I could not help writing that article[3]. I want you to read it. I feel ashamed that our Ministers had to call to their aid the police and the military. I am ashamed that they had to use the language that they did in reply to the Opposition speeches. I feel as if the Congress had lost and the British had won. Why does our non-violence fail on such occasions? Is it the non-violence of the weak? Even the goondas should not move us from our faith and make us say: 'We will send them to the gallows or shoot them down if necessary.' They too are our countrymen. If they will kill us, we must allow them to do so. You cannot pit against organized violence the non-violence of the weak, but the non-violence which the bravest alone can exercise. . . .[4] We have, you will say, been sufficiently non-violent. We were non-violent during the civil disobedience campaign, we received lathi blows and worse. My reply is this: We did, but not sufficiently. We could not get independence at the end of the Dandi March[5], as ours was not the unadulterated non-violence of the bravest. We did take many a step forward as a result of the sufferings we went through, but there was lurking in us violence. That was why I had to make that statement[6] in Patna in 1934, and I am sure that if I had not advised the calling off of the civil disobedience campaign, we should have been

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's article "Need for Self-examination"

[2] According to Mahadev Desai the talk took place three days before the annual session of the Gandhi Seva Sangh which began on March 25.

[3] Vide "Our Failure", 22-3-1938

[4] Omission as in the source

[5] In 1930

[6] Vide "Statement to the Press", 2-4-1934

thoroughly demoralized. We have been moving, since then, further forward step by step. . . .[1] But the time for searching self-examination has come.

Harijan, 2-4-1938

35. FOREWORD2

CALCUTTA,
March 24, 1938

I have read Sir Abdullah Suhrawardy's collection of the sayings of the Prophet with much interest and profit. They are among the treasures of mankind, not merely Muslims.

I am a believer in the truth of all the great religions of the world. There will be no lasting peace on earth unless we learn not merely to tolerate but even to respect the other faiths as our own. A reverent study of the sayings of the different teachers of mankind is a step in the direction of such mutual respect!

M. K. GANDHI

The Sayings of Muhammad

36. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

[AS AT] SEGAON, WARDHA,
March 24, 1938

DEAR MR. JINNAH,

Many thanks for your note. As soon as I reach Segaon I shall see the first opportunity of waiting on you in Bombay.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-6-1938

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] To The Sayings of Muhammad

37. AN APPEAL[1]

CALCUTTA,
March 24, 1938

I am sorry to have to interrupt the negotiations for the release of detenus and political prisoners as I must keep an appointment in Delang. I hope to return on April l, and resume the negotiations. I would urge workers and the public not to hold demonstrations, meetings and the like while the negotiations are going on. I would also urge the prisoners and detenus to be patient and feel sure that I shall leave no stone unturned to redeem the promise I have made for bringing about the desired relief.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 25-3-1938

38. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

BIRBOI,
March 25, 1938

AMTUL SALAAM
MAGANWADI, WARDHA

YOU CAN CERTAINLY GO BOMBAY.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 407

39. SPEECH AT VILLAGE INDUSTRIES EXHIBITION2

BIRBOI,
March 25, 1938

Can my voice reach where you are? If it does, please raise your hands. Can those standing over there hear me? (Many hands are raised.) Good. Now please be silent for a few minutes. I do not have

[1] Gandhiji issued the appeal before leaving Calcutta at 8 p.m. for Delang.

[2] Held under the auspices of the Gandhi Seva Sangh the Exhibition was declared open by Gandhiji at 8.15 a. m. after a prayer by Gopabandhu Chowdhary and flag-hoisting and the opening address by Vallabhbhai Patel. Some 50,000 people were present. The Hindi report has been collated with the version in Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter".

the strength to speak to you at any great length. You know that in the whole of our country the land of Orissa is the dearest to me. As soon as I returned to India I began to hear of Orissa's poverty and famine. We raised an amount and sent over Thakkar Bapa in the capacity of a servant of this afflicted province and organized famine relief. I also realized that if I could serve Orissa somewhat I would by so doing serve India. Thus Orissa became for me a place of pilgrimage—not because the temple of Lord Jagannath was there—for it was not open to me, as it was not open to the Harijans—but because I thought of a novel way of touring the country for the sacred mission of the abolition of untouchability. I had heard that the so-called sanatanists were enraged at my mission of removing untouchability and would even try to frustrate it with violence. If they were really so minded, I said to myself, I should make their work easy by discarding the railway train and motor-car and trekking through the country. Moreover, people don't go on a pilgrimage in cars and trains. They walk to the sacred place, with the name of God on their lips. Meditating on Him; they proceed along their way, forgetful of the fitful fever of the world, and mindful only of offering their homage to the Lord— the homage of service. At least for me it is not possible to be so engrossed in meditation while on a rail journey. And if there was trouble in Puri because of the anger of the sanatanists, we could not flee from their wrath. It does not behove a satyagrahi to run away. We must face it. I could not do all this in a car or a railway train, and so I decided to perform the rest of the Harijan pilgrimage on foot.[1] The temple of Lord Jagannath has the reputation of being the most famous in India, for there all human distinctions are supposed to vanish, and all sorts of people, Brahmin and pariah, brush shoulders with one another vying for the *darshan* of the Lord and even eat His *prasad* out of one another's hands. But evidently it had outlived that reputation and the description had become a fiction, for the priests would not admit Harijans, but throw them out of the doors of the Lord of the World. I said to myself that so long as these distinctions of high and low endured before the very eyes of the Lord of the World, that Lord was not my Lord, that He was the Lord of the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas who exploited his name and kept Harijans out, but certainly not the Lord of the World. My ambition of restoring its old reputation to the temple is yet unfulfilled, and you have to help me in fulfilling it. So

[1] In May 1934; vide "Statement to the Press", 8-5-1934

long as the doors of the Jagannath temple are closed to the Harijans, they are closed to me as well. Ever since my tour along with the local workers and Thakkar Bapa, my contact with the province has been very close.

The people of Orissa have the doubtful reputation of being opium addicts, even learned men not being free from the vice, as I found ten years ago. They are also indolent and lethargic. I know you will not mind my using this language, for you know the spirit in which it is being used. You know what great love I have for you. The people of Orissa are responsible for its poverty. Orissa is the land of poverty because of its opium, indolence and bigotry. The Exhibition gives me the hope that Orissa can rid itself of all these evils and be once again a land of happiness and plenty. After a round of the Exhibition the predominant thought in my mind is that if Oriyas can throw off their indolence they can get rid of poverty. The Exhibition is bound to be a revelation to the villagers attending it of the great capacities and potentialities of the province. All those who have come here should see the Exhibition not once but several times. When it was decided to hold the Exhibition in this place, no one had any idea that the Government might offer help. The workers' co-operation was taken for granted, for after all they are our own people. But the local Government is also ours. There is nothing surprising if they extended their co-operation. Yes, thanks certainly are due to them. The workers with the co-operation of the Government have been able to bring into being an exhibition which is well worth a close study by men and women, young and old. There are so many young people around who, if they chose to pick up a thing and make a study of it so as to learn how it was done, could earn their livelihood without great effort.

Man differs from the beast in several ways. As the late Madhusudan Das used to say, one of the distinctions is the differing anatomy of both. Man has feet and hands with fingers that he can use intelligently and artistically. If man therefore depended wholly and solely on agriculture, he would not be using the fingers that God has specially endowed him with. We will be worthy of being called human beings if we utilize our fingers. Moreover, mere agriculture cannot support us, unless it is supplemented by the work of the hands and the fingers. We see in the Exhibition what man's hands and fingers can produce and how they can supplement the income of the land. I would therefore ask every one of you to go to the Exhibition over and

over again, pick up a handicraft of your choice and help in casting off the poverty of the land.

The A. I. V. I. A. has come into being to turn every home into a workshop. You should visit the Exhibition with the aim of acquiring knowledge and, having learnt one or the other thing that serves your own purpose, serve the province at large.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Chaturth Varshik Adhiveshan (*Delang-Orissa*) *Ka Vivaran*, pp. 2-3, and *Harijan*, 2-4-1938

40. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING[1]

DELANG,
March 25, 1938

Does my voice reach you there where you are all sitting? Please let me know if you cannot hear me. People have been thinking that I am unwell and that is why I speak in a low voice. It is not so. This is a habit with me. Hence, I would ask you, if you find me inaudible, not to put up with it in order to be kind to me. Even when I was well, I seldom concluded in the same pitch in which I began. While speaking, I often forget that I am speaking to others. Then my voice drops and when I realize the fact I raise it again. When I was physically fit, I did not have to make use of a microphone. Today also, if you cannot hear me because my voice is too low, let me say that it is not my fault but that of the microphone. I have been told that the microphone has such power that the lower the voice the greater the number of people it reaches. Hence one should speak in a low voice into a microphone. The people who operate it are also our own people. They do this work in order to earn their livelihood. Please inform me if my voice is not audible to you.

Today, I am in a pitiable position. Although I have come here, I can take part neither in the Executive Committee nor in the convention. I have become a *dharmadhyaksha*[2] and am delivering a speech. This is contrary to my nature. I do not regard myself as a religious head. I am a votary of truth and I seek after truth. In this, you are my

[1] Gandhiji arrived at 4 p. m. and addressed the opening session. This is the gist of his speech.

[2] Religious head

fellow-seekers. The proper thing is to compare notes. If, after deliberations, we can arrive at a conclusion, well and good, if not, it matters little. Although today I have become crippled, so long as God keeps me on the earth I do learn something. And I do long to pass on to you what I possess, whatever knowledge I have acquired. I would like to pass it on to you first of all. But sometimes I become impatient. You will find in *Harijan* what I wanted to say in this regard.[1] There is nothing new in it, but it has been presented in a new form. There is not a trace of arrogance in what I am saying to you—I am impatient to pass on to you whatever occurs to me but does not occur to you. I am a worshipper of non-violence and so are you. Many amongst you have faith in it. I have been a worshipper and ser-vant of non-violence for fifty years. There is no exaggeration here. I shall complete seventy soon. My faith in non-violence and my conscious effort to achieve it has been there since I was fourteen or fifteen. Since then I have had my faith in non-violence, based on reason. And my worship of truth dates even further back. For more than fifty years I have, in all my dealings, been relying on truth alone. Only such dedicated conduct results in knowledge and wisdom. If a person who has always acted in accordance with truth and non-violence for more than fifty years makes the claim that he has this one thing, it cannot be called arrogance. Under this belief I also wrote out a brief article.

Although the doctors have forbidden me, I could not restrain myself because of what happened in Bihar and the U. P. This time, too, I wish to tell you many things, but only if I get an opportunity and, if the blood-pressure does not rise. Today I wish to put before you only that which is weighing heavily on me. You should give deep thought to it.

Before that I wish to tell you something about what Kishorelal[2] is going to read out to you. I have gone through his speech. Although weak in body, he has produced a hundred and twenty-three pages. It is in four parts. His idea is to deliver the speech in four instalments on four evenings. In one of these he has generally described our shortcomings and failings. I told him to deliver three of these. At my request, the fourth has been omitted. I shall put before you that which has touched my heart.

Truth and non-violence are the objectives of the Gandhi Seva

[1] *Vide* "Our Failure" 22-3-1938

[2] Kishorelal Mashruwala, President, Gandhi Seva Sangh

Sangh. But if we practise these only in our struggle against the Government and not in our private dealings or in inter-provincial relationships, what would we gain? This would imply that even members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh are not consciously truthful and non-violent in their dealings with one another. I am giving you a summary of his speech. He says that there are but a few persons in the Gandhi Seva Sangh, and yet there are differences of opinion resulting in mutual bickering. Quarrels as such are to be found throughout the world. But we should be careful about their consequences. Our duty is to keep up our efforts. If anyone says that formerly Mahadev was bad-tempered and arrogant but now he is not what he was a year ago, that now he is changed, has become somewhat humble, and if it is something which not only Mahadev but Durga and their son also feel, then it means the influence of non-violence is growing. But if he thinks that he has now attained perfection, and if he no longer has the thoughtfulness and vigilance which he formerly had, he would be making a grave error. A unique feature of truth and non-violence is that one must daily take some spiritual food. Have not the Upanishads said that this is like walking on the edge of a sword? I claimed that my spiritual striving extended beyond fifty years. If from this I conclude that there is no further need for me to be on my guard, it must be said that my downfall has started from that very moment. If I am lecturing to you, I am also doing it to myself. I do not say this only to impress you. I do not deliver speeches merely for the pleasure of it. I do what the *atman* bids me do. What I am saying to you will have its effect on me too. If that were not so, I would become as insignificant as a blade of grass. Nor should you conclude that I am using these words only to get my work done while sitting with friends. If in our dealings with friends we are not on our guard and do not practise truth and non-violence, but make use of them only in politics, it would amount to practising diplomacy. Truth can also be uttered diplomatically. I do not approve of the English saying "Honesty is the best policy". I do not wish to use truth and non-violence for diplomatic purposes. I am talking of ultimate values. If I am truthful and non-violent in my worldly dealings and if the world responds to me with contempt and if as a result I lose my faith in them, my non-violence is worthless. Then it is merely the best form of diplomacy. You should not take it for an ultimate value. If it is not such a worthless thing, there ought to be love between friends.

Kishorelal and I are sitting side by side. Should Kishorelal have

affection for me only if love is returned with love? I have become old, I lose my temper, I am not prepared to listen to anything; should he then forsake me? On the contrary, he should not be displeased, he should remain non-violent, he should have compassion for me. Non-violence, by increasing one's forbearance and love, teaches one truth. Love is not a matter of bargain or conditions. One who remains non-violent towards a non-violent person can hardly be called non-violent ! In this case, man follows his own nature. The world will call me courageous if I die in an encounter with a murderer. But I should not take this course in order to get such acclamation.

Kishorelal has also given some instances in his speech. But I have omitted them. What use have we for names? I was afraid that the mention of names and personalities might even have an adverse effect. Hence I have left these out. Now understand this. We should also put an end to provincialism. If the Andhras claimed that Andhra is for them alone, if the people of Orissa claimed that Orissa is only theirs, it will give rise to provincialism. The right thing for both Andhra and Orissa is to be prepared to sacrifice themselves for the country and the world. And India must offer herself at the altar of the world. That will be her true test. I am not advancing a new idea, I am only reminding you of it on a suitable occasion. The recent incidents in Kanpur and Allahabad have deeply affected me. Such incidents are not going to bring us swaraj. I have discussed the matter with Subhas Babu, Maulana Azad and others. The conclusion I have arrived at after Haripura is that if matters are as we saw them there, despite all our failings we may be able to see *purna* swaraj within my lifetime. If we can accomplish our task intelligently, the British will have to admit defeat at our hands. There will be only one power in India with whom they can discuss matters, and that power will be the Congress. There will be nothing left for them to do. They will be prepared to help if the people so desire. They will ask us what we expect from them. This strength can be generated within us through truth and non-violence alone. If we can develop this strength within us in a year, the Viceroy will have to invite Subhas Babu and ask him what the latter wanted from him. Even the British Government may send for Subhas Babu because the British are losing in power and prestige in Europe. But that is not what I have in mind. A non-violent person has no enemies. But if one who calls himself an enemy loses his strength, a non-violent person feels compassion for him. He does not wish to take advantage of the former's predicament to mount on his back. He resumes his

fight only when the former is out of his troubles. This is how I worked in South Africa. I found that it happened not only in the U. P. and in Allahabad, but in the Central Provinces and in other places also. Police and even military assistance had to be sought to put down the riots. I do not wish to say that the Ministers were to blame. What could poor Govind Ballabh Pant do? I am not criticizing him. He had to act in his capacity as a Minister. Whatever he did was correct. The fault lies with me. The conclusion which I drew from what I saw in Haripura was erroneous. I felt that we could accomplish whatever we wanted within a year and that we had developed the strength for it. But I now realize that I had made a mistake. I believe that if today the Viceroy sent for Subhas Babu, or Jawaharlal or me and asked us what we wanted, I would reply that I was not equal to the task. Today, we do not have the strength to respond. If we tell the Viceroy that we do not need the police or the army and that we can defend ourselves, that we have the weapon of non-violence, that the Muslims are our friends and so are the Pathans, that we shall ourselves tackle the Princes, that we shall bear with the Sikhs, he would conclude that I was out of my wits. This was not the state of affairs in 1920. When we are ready, we shall have within us the strength to come to a reasonable understanding with the Muslims, the Princes and the zamindars. Today, we have power neither over the Princes nor over the zamindars, neither over the Muslims nor over the Sikhs. Leaving aside others, do we have control even over those who are within the Congress? Not at all. I have seen that there were internal fights to acquire control over the Congress office. I find in the Congress names of persons who were not in the organization at all. But let it be.

I only wanted to say that if this state of affairs continued, we would not win swaraj in thirty years, let alone one. I feel that we cannot truthfully say that we can come to an understanding with all these people. And then again, if we have true non-violence in us we should have the strength to say these things and to act accordingly.

Hence I ask you, is our non-violence the non-violence of the coward, the weak, the helpless, the timid? In that case, it is of no value. A weakling is a born saint. A weak person is obliged to become a saint. But we are soldiers of non-violence, who, if the occasion demands, will lay down their lives for it. Our non-violence is not a mere policy of the coward. But I doubt this. I am afraid that the non-violence we boast of might really be only a policy. It is true that, to some extent, non-violence works even in the hands of the weak.

And, in this manner, this weapon has been useful to us. But, if one makes use of non-violence in order to disguise one's weakness or through helplessness, it makes a coward of one. Such a person is defeated on both the fronts. Such a one cannot live like a man and the Devil he surely cannot become. It is a thousand times better that we die trying to acquire the strength of the arm. Using physical force with courage is far superior to cowardice. At least we would have attempted to act like men. That was the way of our forefathers. That is because some people hold the view that the ancestors of the human race were animals. I do not wish to enter into the controversy whether Darwin's theory is tenable or not. However, from one standpoint we must all have originally been animals. And I am ready to believe that we are evolved from the animal into the human state. That is why physical strength is called brute force. We are born with such strength, hence if we used it we could be, to say the least, courageous. But we are born as human beings in order that we may realize God who dwells within our hearts. This is the basic distinction between us and the beasts. It is not that the serpent crawls on its belly, whereas we walk on our legs. The bullock has four legs, I have two. We have attained the human form. We are evolved gradually from such species as the serpent, etc., to the human state. Along with the human form, we also have human power—that is the power of non-violence. We can have an insight into the mystery of soul-force. In that consists our humanity. Man is by nature non-violent. But he does not owe his origin to non-violence. We fulfil our human life when we see the *atman*, and when we do so we pass the test. Now is the time for our test. God-realization means seeing Him in all beings. Or, in other words, we should learn to become one with every creature. This is man's privilege and that distinguishes him from the beasts. This can happen only when we voluntarily give up the use of physical force and when we develop the non-violence which lies dormant in our hearts. It can be awakened only through real strength. Do we really have this non-violence of the strong? If not, we are in the sorry plight of Trishanku[1]. The better thing would be to admit that ahimsadharma is an impracticable ideal and then to give it up and adopt violence. But now we are unable to advance even a step farther than the non-violence of the weak. Now we have no alternative but to choose between the two. If you do not decide this issue, who will? If you regard

[1] Who remained suspended in-mid-space between heaven and earth

non-violence as a principle and not a policy and if you live for it, it becomes your responsibility, although your number may be small, to give proof of true non-violence in your own lives. If your non-violence is genuine and not assumed just to disguise your weakness, the faults pointed out by Kishorelal will not arise at all. I have been saying this since 1920.

You will ask me—what then should we do? You should understand well what I tell you. There are several things you can do. I wish to take up one of these. That is the misunderstanding or hostility between Hindus and Muslims. Our mutual ill will is on the increase. What happened in Allahabad, what took place in the U. P. today, may happen tomorrow in Bombay and Calcutta. In Calcutta, it may even be worse than in Allahabad. This is not something new in our country. If this is solved, other issues will soon be resolved. In this lies our test. You, can ask me what you should have done in Allahabad had you been true followers of non-violence. I would say that Govind Ballabh Pant was not needed there. That issue should have been tackled by the Allahabad Congress Committee. It could have mustered ten thousand volunteers. I had presented a draft of their pledge in 1921[1] I had prepared it myself. The Congress approved of it and I had also put it before the Khilafat Committee. Hakim Saheb was in the chair. Hasrat Mohani opposed the motion. He said that I wanted to make slaves of the Muslims. They may well remain non-violent in word and deed but Islam does not ordain them to remain non-violent in thought. He accused me of wanting to dominate Muslim minds as well. The *ulemas*[2] who were present there understood what I wanted to convey. Maulana Azad is a very intelliigent person. He had understood me right at the beginning I told them that I did not wish to make myself or any other person the master. But I wished to give this status to non-violence. Finally, they adopted the draft pledge. This pledge is seventeen years old. Despite this, even today we have not formed such a band of volunteers. The pledge has not been annulled by the Congress. Our resolution is in the records of the Congress office. It must be lying with Kripalani. But it lies buried in files. In my opinion, not a word from it needs to be eliminated. If we had such bands of volunteers at Allahabad or the other places, Hindu-Muslim riots would not take place. If we had a batch of a thousand volunteers, they could

[1] Vide "Speech at Congress Session, Ahmedabad", 28-12-1921

[2] Muslim divines

go over to a thousand such localities. They would carry the sword of truth and the shield of non-violence. If there are a thousand goondas and if we are alone or only ten, we would go there and die, get killed. We are pledged to non-violence, Hitler's soldiers go to kill, we go to get killed, as Gupta[1] did. I would have preferred him to have died alone. Why did he go to find out a Muslim comrade? This is not to criticize him. This is just a point I am putting before you. This is because I claim to be an artist working with non-violence. I say that Gupta had no need to take along a Muslim with him. But then there was only one Gupta. The picture that I am painting before you is something far grander. Imagine that Sarup moves up in the Allahabad riots and I come to hear that she gets killed while trying to restore peace and that she gets killed without a trace of anger against the people—I would then dance with joy. I would say people have lost their sanity, Sarup has fulfilled her life. She got killed. If we had ten or twenty thousand such persons, would they not do anything? And what if we do not have ten or twenty thousand? Even if there is a single person, he should get killed. Even if there is only one person who has the faith, he should allow himself to be killed, but should not bow down to the fanatics, the goondas. Take the example of Sparta. Though they were an armed people and also few, they laid down their lives but would not leave their places. We should have much more courage than they had. If we think that we cannot accomplish this task without a thousand men, our non-violence is not worth the name. If we do not have such courage, let us not talk of non-violence; let us not defile it. Non-violence is a weapon against which neither the sword nor any other power can avail. Even if there are a crore of people on one side and a single votary of non-violence on the other, even then the latter would not say that he would surrender to the might of arms. He will demonstrate the fact that poisonous gases and other weapons are futile against non-violence. He will not bend as did Austria against Hitler. It is for this reason that I wish to place before you this [principle]. It is of primary importance. You should understand it and also discuss it here. If we put this non-violence into practice, Kishorelal's task would be lightened. First we shall examine our conduct towards one another and see whether we are indeed followers of such non-violence. And, on the strength of this non-violence, we shall also win over the Muslims.

[1] Pashupatinath Gupta; vide "Our Failure", 22-3-1938

This is one point I have mentioned to you. I have many more in my mind. This programme has been with us for the past seventeen years, and we have been sleeping over it with total indifference. I have reminded you of it. If I am as strong as I am today, I shall appear before you and you can ask questions about it. For me this is a very grave matter; my heart is full of it. I have direct experience of this kind of non-violence. If we have been unable to fulfil it during these seventeen long years, the fault lies with me. It is my belief that even in politics non-violence can work. In 1920 I had stated that through non-violence we could win swaraj within a year. I repeat that had it been an experiment with unadulterated truth and non-violence, I am sure a year would have been more than enough. If the country and the Congress feel that swaraj cannot be won through non-violence, they may well give me up. This does not imply that they are ready for violence right now. They will make use of truth or untruth, violence or non-violence, whatever is possible under the circumstances. That, however, will not be my programme. If there is truthfulness in you, and if we come to the conclusion that non-violence is a weapon of the weak, we ought to throw it away. If you are of the opinion that putting down riots by a non-violent army is an empty dream, you must also come to the conclusion that swaraj cannot be won through non-violence.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Chaturth Varshik Adhiveshan(*Delang-Orissa*)*Ka Vivaran*, pp. 5-12

41. DISCUSSION AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH

DELANG,
March 26, 1938

BAPU: I have not come to tell you anything. If anyone of you wants to raise any questions about the point that was made yesterday or about anything else, he may do so. Hence I shall not begin a discussion.

PRESIDENT: Kripalaniji wants to say something about what was discussed yesterday. I call upon him to start.

KRIPALANI: I would like to say something about the riots in Allahabad where two groups were engaged in a clash. Together with the police, the Congressmen also rushed to the scene. How could the Congressmen or the satyagrahis go where one man was blindly stabbing another? How would they know in advance who was going to pull out a knife and at which moment? In former days the Hindus at any rate used to listen to the Congress workers. As for the Muslims, their hatred of Congressmen exceeds their hatred of Hindus. Now when the Congressmen, impelled by sentiments, are risking their lives and getting killed, even the Hindus have started abusing them. What I want to know is: have we weighed our policy at all? We want to give our lives for the sake of Hindu-Muslim unity. But, if the Muslims slay our great leaders, will the Hindus have more hatred for them or less? If a great man sacrifices his life, will the consequences not be exactly the opposite? Supposing Bapu sacrifices his life tomorrow, I am sure the Hindus will never forgive the Muslims for the ghastly murder. And there will be no Hindu-Muslim unity for the next two thousand years. What happened to the Jews? Even today Christians all over the world despise them for crucifying Christ and persecute them. I urge Bapu to consider whether or not one should have a sense of proportion in sacrificing one's life. We shall never fulfil our purpose if we act without any thought of the Congressmen.

BAPU: Kripalani has raised very good points and they deserve your best consideration. If we do not or cannot have satisfactory answers to his questions, we must give up non-violence as I said yesterday. There certainly are solutions to Kripalani's problems even if he or you may not be satisfied with them. There is nothing new about the methods adopted in these riots. The same thing has been going on for years. What is new is that people are stabbed in the streets or under cover of darkness. I do not know how the riots started in Allahabad. But if they began with two groups of fifty men facing each other, we can certainly do something. We can go and stand

between them and allow ourselves to be killed. But when the riots give rise to widespread fear in the city, people confine themselves to their own localities. This is as good as an invitation to those so inclined to indulge in secret assaults. What can we do in the face of such secret assaults? This is Kripalani's problem. When this method of secret killing is adopted, shops are closed and people do not stir out. They avoid going into each other's localities. Will the poor creatures go there to be killed? It is a different thing if one goes out for some very urgent work or inadvertently, or if a Muslim disguises himself to go into a Hindu locality. In this case they may get killed. But no one goes out in order to get killed. No one wants to die. My conscience tells me that every Congressman should be trained to go into localities where people run away after stabbing. In countries like France and Germany, everyone is required to join the army. In these countries the law ordains that people should be prepared to die. If we too have such a band [of volunteers] who would be ready to sacrifice their lives during such riots, something could be done about these stabbings, although secret.

KRIPALANI: Bapuji, it may be so. The Congress workers should go into both the localities, and they do go. They have done it in Allahabad also. But they are not as safe as a Christian can be. The question is whether the Congress has developed such strength. We have got the courage to die. We are not cowards. But we are few in number. Did not the people who went to the Muslim localities in Allahabad die? The goondas did not spare them out of any consideration for the Congress. My question is whether the Hindus' hatred of Muslims will increase or decrease if Congress workers are killed in this manner.

BAPU: I merely wanted to show that we have a solution to the problem. If a few of our men or many of them are killed that way, it will ultimately serve the purpose. My opinion is not baseless. I am well aware of the difficulties involved. But we must know whether or not we have any solution. What do the British, German, French, Italian peoples do? They prepare for war in the same manner. They keep themselves well equipped to face any new power that may emerge. Should we be less alert than these countries? Should we not prepare ourselves fully for our non-violent struggle? Should we sit back and say that we are not strong enough? This is not a matter about which we can remain silent. It is a new experiment. Non-violence has not been tried in politics so far. Non-violence was practised in the olden days too. But it always remained a matter of individual pursuit. Such

people, later on, either fled into the mountains or lived in solitude in the villages. They took no interest in the public weal. I have started a new trend. Non-violence, if confined to an individual, cannot be the supreme dharma. I at any rate shall not worship a man who practises non-violence in a cave. Such non-violence has no use for me. I believe in that non-violence which can be practised in the world of practical realities. I am not interested in the liberation a man may get by practising non-violence after renouncing the world. I do not care for individual liberation which would leave others out. One can find liberation by serving others. That is why I have to come here and explain things to you. Now let us have a full understanding of our policy. Let us put ourselves to a test. We may describe our policy by any other name, but let us at least know what it is. If we have come to the conclusion that non-violence was useful to us at one time but that it is no longer so, we must make a public declaration of it. Let us at any rate not exhibit our inertia and ignorance. If we do not decide our policy in all seriousness we would be only betraying ignorance and fear. For, in such a situation we would not increase our strength even if we had an army of millions. And here, too, what really troubles me is that we would be doing harm to our millions. When the real time comes, the people will flee to their villages instead of fighting the danger. What worse can happen to our millions?

Those others who have no faith in non-violence will accuse me. They accuse me even today. They are blaming non-violence; they are blaming you. They exaggerate so much and say such things as I could not have thought of even in my dreams. They say that I have formed a sect. They think that the training I am giving in non-violence has proved very harmful for India. And some of them even go to the extent of saying that our real strength does not lie in non-violence. They say that this passive policy of non-violence has ruined us. In their view, the man who has done so much harm is as good as a thorn. And it would not at all be inconsistent with their policy to remove this thorn. I may be exaggerating, but is this not the gist of what they say? It is not that I am paying them a compliment. My thoughts are the same in public and in private. In their place, I would be probably more fiery than they are. But I never for a moment think that I am going along the wrong path. On the contrary, my faith is confirmed day by day. This is no small matter. We have a solution for this [problem]. We have not tried it in full measure. The solution is no doubt correct. But we have tried it on a very small scale.

We are not practising non-violence with conscious understanding. Right now, it is our duty to give it a fair trial once again. But we at any rate must be confident of our success. The test of our success is that no trouble should start from our camp. If it does we must admit that we cannot attain swaraj through non-violence. For us, the freedom struggle consists in the confrontation between the non-violent and the violent camps. This does not mean that the people on the other side are taking up arms right now. They too are brave and are willing to adopt non-violent means, as the Communists are. They are no less ready to get beaten up by the police. But our paths are not the same. They might say that they can remain peaceful while fighting with the Government but not in mutual quarrels. There are others who may say that they can adopt peaceful methods in the field of politics but not in Hindu-Muslim clashes. But we cannot talk in such terms. For us this problem is as important as the problem of achieving swaraj. If non-violence can serve no purpose during such riots, we must put it completely out of our minds. But I am certain that it can definitely work. We are unable to solve the problem because of the third power in the country. Hence, [it is said], let us first defeat the third power. Let us come to terms till then. After that the Hindus and the Muslims will confront each other and decide the issue. I have been hearing this since the year 1920. From that time on I have been thinking over the problem. I will never accept such a situation. It is true that the presence of the third power is one reason for the Hindu-Muslim differences. But I do not believe that these differences would be resolved merely by eliminating the third power. If we have not been able to extinguish [that fire] so far, it is time we searched some new way of doing it. I have only one way of attaining independence as well as Hindu-Muslim unity, and that is satyagraha. We adopted the path of satyagraha against the Government for the attainment of swaraj. And we did succeed to some extent. We offered the Salt Satyagraha[1] and refused to pay taxes to the Government. But we have done almost nothing with regard to this (Hindu-Muslim question). Whatever we have done is not particularly non-violent. We have had the Unity Conference. We had parleys with Mr. Jinnah. We had talks with the Ali Brothers. We arrived at a couple of agreements. But all these do not go to make the path of non-violence. All these are political methods. And then, they did not even make much headway.

[1] In 1930

For they were not backed by any real strength. We had the Lucknow Pact of 1916. But there has been no agreement of any consequence after that. I wrote to Jinnah that I would even go and meet him.[1] But what should I do even if I did so? Both the Hindus and the Muslims have in their hearts scant respect for the Congress. Under the circumstances, how can the agreement be successful? If in the event of a riot the goondas on both the sides declare that they would not attack those with white caps, if we ourselves have confidence that the Congress workers would not be attacked, then we may say that we have achieved something. This task would be accomplished if we can have a band of one or two thousand workers wedded to non-violence. And what if we cannot? Our success is not solely dependent on numbers.

Let us now come to the practical side. I never do anything without practical considerations, for I am a practical visionary. True, there is something in laying down one's life out of sheer devotion to duty. But that can be done even by a soldier pledged to violence. The reason why I think in practical terms is different. It is quite likely that if I go there, or Kishorelal and Kripalani go, or if I am killed, the goondas might get converted. I may not even go where this is not likely to happen. But those who lay store by faith will say that I am thinking in practical terms, and that I lack faith. But one practical consideration is always before us. For instance, Vallabhbhai is doing so much work that l would certainly not allow him to go and get killed. If I send Manilal, the poor chap will be killed. But I will not send Vallabhbhai as long as I can help it. I would send others. Let us thus carry on work while bearing in mind the practical aspect of it. I have some such practical consideration before me. If some two thousand outstanding Congress workers have to sacrifice their lives, I shall not think that we were not practical. History will not say that we had indulged in madness. I would only feel that we had fulfilled our vow. I am sure history will testify that non-violence is a weapon of the strong, and that we laid down our lives for our cherished principles. Such is my undying faith. We have been somewhat slack and off our guard. That is why we did not recognize the power of non-violence. For we have not had enough faith in it.

MATHURA BABU: What will you say in reply to the remark about Jesus Christ?

[1] Vide "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 8-3-1938

BAPU: Kripalani has put it upside-down.

SWAMI: What measures can we take to put a stop to secret assaults?

BAPU: I agree this is a very complex problem. Since we cannot save others from such assaults, we should get ourselves killed in such cases. These assaults do not stop when some people are killed because those people do not deliberately go there to get killed. And it is mostly the poor people who are killed. How is it that rich and respectable people do not go and get killed? It is a different matter if some of them are killed that way without their knowledge. We must visit the Muslim localities in the event of such secret assaults and killings. We must make it a point particularly to visit the houses of the suspects. We may go to Shaukat Ali. If he puts the blame on the goondas, we should ask him to accompany us and take out posters against the goondas. In the same way I had approached Chhotani[1]. The leaders of these goondas are supposed to be powerful, are they not? From this point of view, mass contact with the Muslim community acquires a new meaning altogether. The real way of making mass contact with the Muslims is that we should seek opportunities to know them and serve them. Serving the Muslim masses without any expectations is the only honourable and effective way of winning their hearts. I would like to give it priority even if I have to suspend political work. But it is not necessary to stop political work. We find easy opportunities of serving and knowing the Muslims. For instance, Mahadev and I often travel by trains. Often there are Muslim passengers in the compartment. But our people do not talk to them spontaneously. We do not offer them our food and other things. This is just one instance. There are so many other things. After hearing this some even amongst you might say that I am talking utter nonsense. Those who talk in this manner consider the Muslims as people of a different community. But I want to accept them as our own people. This is a question of a change of heart on our part. How can we express the love and respect that fill our hearts? I know there are quite a few Muslims who regard the Hindus as infidels and do not wish to associate with them. But all Muslims do not harbour such hatred in their hearts. There are enough Muslims who consider the Hindus as their compatriots and believe that it is only by living in amity that both these communities can look after their interests and make progress.

[1] Mian Mohammad Haji Jan Mohammad Chhotani

But we should not be frightened even by those Muslims whose hands hold knives and whose hearts are filled with hatred. We must win their hearts too, so that even they find it impossible to kill us. After all, is it that we alone are human beings and they are not? Even they are bound to appreciate human qualities some time. They are sure to understand our way some day or the other. This is a question of union of hearts. Communal trouble may be halted temporarily by means of some political compromise, but that will not bring about unity of hearts. I would like to tell each one of you that if there is any such trouble in the villages where you have settled down, you must sacrifice your lives there. There is this great difference between me and the socialists. They believe in first converting the whole world to their view and then taking up these things. Individual action is not part of their programme. This is not the way of non-violence. It can begin with individual action. I do not say that my work can start only when I have an army of a thousand workers. I live in Segaon. Should any such incident happen there, I must plunge into it. Wardha is at a distance of five miles from Segaon and quite a large number of Muslims live there. If something happens there and suppose Jamnalalji is unmoved, I must go there and jump into it. Now, if Kripalani asks me if I have given any practical thought to the matter, I would say that this was my practical consideration. Under these circumstances it would be my duty to die even if I were all alone. Similarly, this would be the duty of each individual. He has to be prepared to die. We should not ask whether we shall achieve swaraj by thus allowing ourselves to be killed in communal clashes. For us, there is no other way of achieving freedom except through non-violence. And it is my hope that we are developing that power, unless whatever has been done during these twenty years has been in vain.

KRIPALANI: To you, non-violence may be a matter of individual action and may bring liberation to your own self. But you are not content merely with that. You consider non-violence a means of social service as well. Not only this, you consider it also a social force. Under such circumstances, you have no right to miscalculate. You must understand that you may not do anything from which society cannot benefit. You say you should go and allow yourself to be killed. But you must remember that if the Muslims so completely lose their heads that they kill you, the Hindus will not forget this thing for the next two thousand years. They will regard the Muslims as the enemies of all mankind. They may forget this thing after two thousand years and unite, but as far as you are concerned, it cannot be gainsaid that from the point of view of society, you will have done a wrong calculation in thus

throwing away your life. Thus, in all matters we shall have to think out what is going to be our gain or loss.

KAKASAHEB: When there was trouble in Bombay during the visit of the Prince of Wales[1], you did take a practical view. You did not go to persuade the Parsis because you thought that your action would not produce any good results.

BAPU: I agree that I took a practical view. And, like that, I do make such calculations. But my calculations too can sometimes go wrong. Do I not have a right to commit blunders?

KRIPALANI: It is not only your right, it is your nature. You want to go against nature. You have no patience. I know that many people will hide their cowardice behind my argument. But, for that reason, why should we be foolish enough to sacrifice needlessly so many gallant lives? We must think about it from the national point of view.

KAKASAHEB: But who will decide this matter—you, society or Bapu?

JAMNALAL: Neither we nor Bapu. The nation, that is, the Working Committee will do it.

KRIPALANL: What I wish to say is that you have written to Jinnah that you do not find the atmosphere [favourable]. Under such circumstances, if you find yourself alone in the midst of a riot and if it becomes your duty to plunge into it, my only request is that you should not sacrifice your life.

BAPU: This consideration is irrelevant. Please forget me and Jawaharlal. You think of your own self and of the country. We claim to represent the entire country. Millions of Congressmen are ready to die for the country. What is their duty? The leaders will look after themselves. But I am talking to you about the duty of Congressmen in general. The instance of Jesus Christ will not be applicable in this case. The death of Jesus had no untoward effect on the world. Yet another difference is that Jesus did not go to die on his own. He was crucified. Yet, by his death, his teaching spread far and wide. Leave aside all these things. Think of it from the individual point of view. Social force is something that follows it. I have given my example only from that point of view. I have not done so with the idea that I am a leader or a general. When the occasion arose, I demonstrated my quality of leadership too. What I then did was but calculations. People were shouting why I was not coming out. They were probably calling me a coward too. I listened to everything in silence. The leader does not think of what other people may be saying. I was shouldering at that time the responsibility of leading a movement. But now we have to

[1] In November 1921

experiment in sacrificing our lives on a larger scale. I have not tried such an experiment so far. Whatever happens, cowardice must be discarded. Non-violence is not for the helpless and the timid. That was the reason why I wrote to an Andhra friend that if he could not remain non-violent and would die a gallant death, he should fight with physical force. Running away is cowardice. Even today I feel that I had suggested the correct way to him. I have still not tried and seen the result of sacrificing lives on a large scale. I wanted to tell him that it was quite plain that battles in the past were fought with the sword. What I mean is that I have not tried and tested remedy to prevent this. My understanding and my experiences in other fields suggest a remedy which I think will be successful. I am not ashamed to acknowledge my imperfections. But I am not so shameless that I would stop with mere acknowledgement. I make constant efforts to do away with my imperfections. What I am placing before you today is the result of this very effort. If your conscience does not accept what I am saying, just forget it. You need not hesitate out of respectfor me. In the matter of the Hindu-Muslim problem, our love will not be proved by argument or physical force. If our love proceeds from the heart, ours cannot be the way of the sword. We cannot answer abuse with abuse and fists with fists. The real test of love lies in sacrificing ourselves and thus answering the lack of love in others. The time has now come to try this experiment. I have given[1] you a call through *Harijan* and now personally. Consider this from the individual point of view. You can discuss it with me if you want and then present it in your own words. It is not as if I had tried this experiment and was now presenting it as an infallible remedy.

JAMNALAL: We must have more discussion on this point. The thing is not as simple as Bapuji thinks it to be. It must be considered from various points of view. Every man cannot be used everywhere. We have to have a certain sense of proportion here also. Take me, for instance. I was present at Banaras when communal violence raged there. I had to go into a troubled area for some personal work. But my friends prevented me and held me back. I was convinced by their arguments. And I did not go. Now you and I will have to decide whether what I did was right or wrong.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sangh ke Chaturth Varshik Adhiveshan(*Delang-Orissa*)*Ka Vivaran* pp. 18-26

[1] Vide “our Failure”, 22-3-1938

42. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING

DELANG,
March 27, 1938

You have just heard the resolution[1]. I suppose no one will have any objection to it. My task is to caution you on this issue and to explain its implications. Am I audible to all of you? If you ask me to interpret the resolution, I shall do so.

This resolution is not for the whole of India. It is also not meant for the Working Committee. It is meant only for those who have come here. And to them I wish to say that wherever they happen to be when a riot breaks out, whether they happen to be alone or in a group, whether they find a co-worker or not, they should be prepared to lay down their lives in order to put down the riots wherever they might have started. This does not mean that they should simply go and get killed. No doubt they should lay down their lives. But they must also think whether they are doing so in anger or out of love. If they do not have love in their hearts, their laying down their lives is pointless. You should try to understand this well. I would like to admit before you in all humility that what I say to you is meant also to myself. This is because I also keep thinking about what I say to others, what I have done, what its possible implications are, what my duty in the matter is. Even while having my meals, while discussing other matters, this issue weighs on my mind. Only yesterday, such matters came up before me, which I cannot mention now; and this is not the occasion for it. I shall speak of them on some other occasion. Today, I cannot even say what we should do in any given situation. We should of course be prepared to lay down our lives. But our task is not complete with that. Our desires and our actions should be based on understanding. What is it that inspires us to act? What will be its outcome? Is this the best

[1] The resolution on the methods to counteract communal riots is not available. It was decided not to pass such a resolution. The members, however, were urged . . . to take note of the following statement. "After considering pujya Bapuji's views and the members' discussions during the last four days on the subject of communal discord, a consensus was reached that the experience with regard to such strifes was not such as could enable the conference to formulate in the form of a resolution any opinion or scheme. However, in the interest of the country, it was imperative to remove communal differences and encourage friendship among the different communities. Members of the Sangh should make efforts in this direction following the guidance given by pujya Gandhiji."

possible path? Or can there be an even better path? That should be our line of thinking. It is thus that we can find the right path. We should engage ourselves in our work intelligently. As I was thinking along these lines, I found that there were many hurdles in our way. If you ask me how we can overcome all of these, I can give neither you nor myself a satisfactory answer. I would only say that if you believed in these principles you too should experiment with me. In that case, we shall certainly find the way. This resolution is before you. You should give much thought to it and then be prepared to discuss it. Because, if we do not wish to give up our tenet of non-violence, we should think over what we should do in such a situation and start preparing for it now. You do not have merely to pass this resolution, you have also to implement it. You have also to create a favourable climate for it. You should find a Muslim locality within your field of service and there create such an atmosphere. If anything untoward happens in this locality, you should accept the responsibility. Every individual cannot make the entire country his field of work. After all we have to know our limitations. In a city like Bombay you cannot take the responsibility even for the whole city. You should find out how many Muslims live in the locality where you happen to reside, get yourself acquainted with them, serve them, and do whatever you can. There should not be a single Muslim child whom you do not know. We should take each individual Muslim in our locality and build in his mind trust for us. If we resolved this issue fully, we shall develop the strength to solve other problems as well, for this is the biggest hurdle in our way. A satyagrahi alone can render such service. He should specially keep himself in the forefront of such service. You may ask what special service he can render. If you render sincere service there will be no such incidents in your locality. And if such a situation does arise in another locality and if you prepare to go there alone to resolve the dispute, the Muslim's in your locality will co-operate with you. At least they will take care of their own locality. You will be able to go to the other localities, and that too with greater courage and confidence. Today, I myself do not know how I am going to do all this work. I have explained the resolution all right but whom shall I invite to implement it? Those whose help is to be sought in this work will have to be trained in self-confidence. And that by itself will, again, not be sufficient. We shall also have to prepare them for the time when they will be tested.

It is for this reason that I explained to you how we could put this

resolution into practice. The second part of my speech deals with a question of the greatest magnitude. Let me caution you. Think well before you answer. I shall put the question to you in brief.

The question is whether your non-violence is that of the brave or of the coward? Is it the result of your weakness? If it is the result of your lack of strength, I insist you discard it. It will cripple and weaken us. That certainly is not the aim of non-violence. This does not mean that I am asking you to take up the sword right now. There is a place for non-violence in the war strategy of the weak also. But such unarmed opposition is not my non-violence. You may adopt even that. But before doing so you will have to renounce the non-violence in which I believe. Today, you and I bear the burden of this non-violence [of the strong]. If we openly renounce it, we shall relieve ourselves of that burden.

It is not because we are unarmed that we have adopted this non-violence. Ours is the non-violence of the brave. Although I have been experimenting with it for fifty years, I have no cut-and-dry answers to all the questions. When I start thinking what I would have done if I had been in Spain now or in China or Austria, and if Hitler had attacked these countries and I found men and money being drained away, my head starts reeling. You may well argue how much the non-violence that has made only this much progress even after fifty years' experience can help us in our struggle. If you think like this, you may give it up. For me, there is no question of giving it up. My faith in it is unwavering. I shall however ever regret that the Lord has not favoured me with such clarity of expression that I could explain my ideas to others.

I mean ours should not be the non-violence of the cowards who are afraid of war, of bloodshed, whose hearts 'tremble at the shouts of killers. Our non-violence should be the non-violence of the Pathans. I have lived with them. They are not afraid of killing or getting killed. I have cited this example so that I may compare myself to a Pathan boy. A Pathan boy is fearless. If there is bloodshed he does not hide himself in his house. He finds pleasure in fighting. He does not stop to think that he might be injured or even killed. He is never afraid of being hurt. I have seen one standing unmoved in the midst of blood gushing from his many wounds. I do not mean to say that all Pathans are like this. But I have seen such Pathans with my own eyes. What I wish to say is that experimenting with non-violence is the work of

such brave persons. I myself have not yet reached this stage. There is lot of cowardice in me. I talk of satyagraha, no doubt. But in the face of killings I cannot have the fearlessness of the Pathans. If I have to go and face such a situation, my heart's one wish would be to escape alive. If per force I do go, my heartbeats would quicken. And, in my heart of hearts I would be afraid lest a bullet or a stone should hit me. I reached Bombay (in 1921) when the riots were raging. Stones were being hurled. I wanted to save myself from the melee, but what could I do? I was the leader of the non-co-operation movement. I went in most unwillingly. At heart, I wished someone asked me to stay at home; that would have indeed been welcome. When I reached there the people were in a frenzy. Anasuyabehn was with me. She is a brave woman. Who was I to protect her? People had lost their heads. I saw mounted policemen advancing towards us. At the most, there must have been forty of them, but they were advancing with such unconcern as though there was not a man on the road. They were followed by officers in their cars. My heart trembled. We wanted to go to the Fort area. We reached Abdul Rehman Street *via* Pydhonie. There was heavy fighting in the area. My heart was thumping. I do not know how high the blood-pressure rose. As soon as the mounted police and army officers arrived the people who were till now in a riotous mood ran helter-skelter. I do not wish to take up your time narrating the whole incident. My idea is to tell you that you should give some thought to this. I have spoken of my own cowardice. But those who were brandishing knives and sticks turned out to be no braver. I have compared my own courage with a Pathan's. Non-violence is the weapon of such fearless persons full of courage.

This will show clearly how I should experiment. If there is real love in my heart and a feeling of oneness, why should I feel nervous to go there? Why did my heart thump so? This clearly implies that even in me the feeling of non-violence has not grown to the extent that would make me fearless and free of doubts. Fearlessness born of love is the general characteristic of non-violence. If it is not yet born in our hearts, this experiment is for that very purpose. While carrying on this experiment, we shall acquire the strength to face death smilingly. But we have fallen into complacency. When there is peace on all fronts we do not prepare ourselves for such eventualities. And when the occasion arises we do not know what to do. If we do not wish to try this experiment whole-heartedly and in all seriousness, I humbly request you to give it up. I also wish to point out to you that mere

debating will not resolve the issue. Open discussions do clear up our reasoning to some extent. It is true that on the question of non-violence also we shall have to exercise our reasoning till the last. But I must tell you that non-violence is not a matter solely of the intellect. It is a matter of faith and devotion. If you have no faith in the *atman* or in God and prayer, non-violence is not going to prove useful to you. If it is in fact the supreme dharma, as we believe it is, then it must work on every occasion and at every place. It has so much potentiality. If we cannot recognize it the fault lies with us. Realizing the whole range of the power of non-violence or having a vision of its whole power depends on our spiritual effort. If you are convinced of it and, after striving for 17 years, if you have developed this faith that whether or not we win swaraj, that irrespective of what happens to the world, we have achieved this one thing, you should try it intelligently. Your knowledge will grow with your *sadhana*. But you will not become omniscient. God alone is omniscient. He is not so stupid as to let all become omniscient and omnipotent. Thanks to our imperfections we can still aspire to it. God has assured us that when we realize our weakness and take refuge in Him, He is with us. The *bhajan* "Rama is the strength of the weak', is not a versification of some music teacher; it is a factual statement by someone who had experienced it.

If you have any doubts or hesitation you should not pass this resolution. Take at least one night to think over it. Pray to God to enlighten your intellect. This is not a resolution to be passed by a majority. Even if a single member amongst you stands up and says that he does not have this faith, he still has the right to tread the path of non-violence. You should certainly not pass it by a majority.

Now let us come to Jamnalalji's question. If we, who are members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh, accept ministerships, can we order firing? Today, in Allahabad Govind Ballabh Pant is a Minister. He is not a member of our Sangh. But is he for that reason less non-violent than we? I know him very well. But what could the poor man do? I want to tell you that had I been in his place I would have acted similarly. When I accept ministership, I take the responsibility for peace and honest administration. Of course, I could think this matter over before accepting the ministership. But I cannot ask any member of the Gandhi Seva Sangh not to accept ministership solely on this account. I am aware that this would mean lowering of my standard.

But after all my non-violence cannot deviate from what is practical. I wish to work through non-violence while yet solving the problems of everyday life. If while I am a Minister Hindus and Muslims start fighting amongst themselves, and if I realize that I can stop this violence and bloodshed by calling in the army and having a handful of men shot, I would have to resort to this course for the sake of restoring order. I will have to give orders to stop the massacre with the least violence.

I am opening my heart to you in order to explain all this to you. If outsiders hear what I am saying, I cannot say what interpretations they will put on it. There must be journalists present here, but they do not know their profession. They should not be cross with me, I too have been a journalist, and I too have experience of reporting. But these people do not wait to discriminate between fact and fiction since they must fill up a page and create a sensation. Hence I wish to state rather plainly that not a word from what I say shall go out.

Well, this was a digression. Now visualize Pant's position. The Hindus and Muslims of his city have lost their heads. They are butchering each other. Life and property are not safe. What then shall he say? Should he say to himself that although he is a votary of non-violence he sees no non-violent way of facing this situation? He examines the doctrine of non-violence, but finds it silent over the point—but he does have in his hands brute force; hence he should take recourse to it. He does not lack manliness, so he will not remain passive. He would again seek the help of non-violence and not use brute force. But if such an occasion arises again and he does not find a non-violent way, he should again act in the same manner. Pant should publicly declare that non-violence did not avail; the people did not help him and all the same they have made him a Minister. He should therefore do whatever suggests itself to him. You must have understood my point. It is now needless to discuss the issue any further. If you wish to ask any other questions please do so.[1]

Seven minutes are left. Let me answer Rajendra Babu's question in the mean time.

His point, as far as I can understand, is this: I now know all of you. Knowing you as you are, I should put something before you

[1] Rajendra Prasad then asked how the problem could be solved in the prevailing atmosphere of violence, while even members of the Sangh were no strong enough to try non-violence even though they might be convinced of its efficacy.

which you can do. Even if you thought for the whole night or, for that matter, for ten nights, you cannot know yourselves better than I know you. Hence I should put before you the minimum that I want. This is his question.

I have already shown the remedy. Rajendra Babu has said that even if we thought for ten nights we shall make no progress. Yet I would again ask you to think all night. Tell me tomorrow if you can. For this I may start my silence earlier today and break it earlier tomorrow, so that after thinking it over all night you can discuss it tomorrow. My point about cautioning you is to be found in the second part of my speech. In the first part I mentioned the minimum that you can do. I have said that we should increase our contacts with the Muslims in our village or locality in a spirit of service. We should widen our circle of Muslim friends. We should serve them with sincerity and not by flattering them. If they ask us to get this or that for them we should refuse to do so. We should apply our reasoning, cast off our fears and without flattering them go on doing what we regard as our duty. For instance, we should gather Muslim boys and give them milk; even if their parents have suspicions, I should like to prove through my conduct that I was not doing this in order to convert them to Hinduism. Gradually their suspicion will be removed. At least we shall come to know the boys. Now suppose a riot breaks out in the mean time. In that case after this experience we can go into that locality without fear. I have in this matter less experience but more faith. And now I have also lost my strength. Had it not been for this reason I would not be sitting like a fool doing nothing. Take up one locality and try the experiment. Nevertheless I must say one thing. If you carry out this experiment your self-confidence will grow a hundred fold. You will know your strength. We have only one weapon and that is non-violence. It. will be applied extensively and in many ways you will think of putting this remedy to many other uses. As you tread the path of non-violence, new weapons will come into your hands of which I am not aware.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sangh ke Chaturth Varshik Adhiveshan(*Delang-Orissa*)*ka Vivaran*, pp. 36-42

43. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

DELANG,
March 28, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have your two letters. Of course you shall, have all the guidance about the Mirza correspondence. Anasuya's[1] letter is typical of her. She seemed at one time to be satisfied with what had happened. Shariff[2] has certainly put up a good defence.

It is very hot here. Melting.

Ba and some of the party have gone to Puri. They return tonight.

You would have liked the Exhibition here. It is very well arranged. Over 12,000 people visited it yesterday.

Lilavati is here. So is Kanti.

You will have to be strict with Vijayasingh. It won't do to pamper him. I am hoping that your judgment about him would prove true. Your previous letter disturbed me a bit. You will neither be hasty nor dejected over the result of your efforts in the villages. It is an uphill task especially when it has to be done through paid agency.

Nothing yet from Sikander Hayat[3]. I have to see Jinnah in April in Bombay.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3850. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7006

[1] Anasuya Kale
[2] Minister of Law and Justice in the Central Provinces
[3] Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, Premier of the Punjab

44. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

DELANG,
March 28, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

I have a moment to spare. We are all melting. I suppose it is good for me for the b. p. is 160-96. Ba and some of the party have gone to Puri.

I am glad you are able to help Vijaya and Munnalal. It is good that M. himself wanted you to help him.

We return to Calcutta on 1st but may even on 31st. I shall know then when we may expect to leave for Segaon.

It is as well that Amtussalaam has gone to Bombay. Her brother's company will be some compensation and the humidity of Bombay may suit her. Let us hope.

They are giving me as much rest as they can here.

Tulsi Maher is here and so is Kanti. He has very long vacation. Frydman[1] and Uma Devi[2] too are here.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6398. Courtesy. Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9993

45. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

March 28, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. You have no reason to be unhappy. Who can be as happy as you? We have to do certain things as a matter of duty. Why feel unhappy over this? I certainly didn't like that you had to rush off all of a sudden. But in life we have to do a good many things like that. Let me know what special work you have to do there now. I shall be in Calcutta for three days if not more. I shall know after some decision is taken about the detenus. Write to me there. The address is: 1 Woodburn Park, Calcutta. Couldn't you have come with Jayaprakash?

[1] Maurice Frydman, a Polish engineer, and his wife who had adopted this Indian name

[2] *Ibid*

I am keeping good health. The blood-pressure rises sometimes, but comes down again.

Kanti must have given you the rest of the news.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3510

46. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

March 28, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA

You might think I had completely forgotten you. But it is only today that I have some time to write a few brief notes. You seem to be progressing well. Get completely all right by the time I return. Don't give up hip-baths and friction-baths. Go over to a diet of fruit juice as soon as you feel the slightest trouble.

I am keeping well enough. It is very hot here. But it does not trouble me. I hope you have not decided not to write to me if I do not write to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7078. Also C.W. 4570. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

47. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

March 28, 1938

CHI. BHANSALI,

I hope you are doing well. You will be glad to learn that these days while I do my sacrificial spinning the yarn rarely snaps. Of course, it does surprise me. You also should try to spin even, strong and unbroken yarn, though the quantity may be less, instead of spinning much and for many hours. It is good that you are taking the injections. Let us hope that will put you right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8354

48. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

March 28, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I have already sent the answers to your questions. Try to discover why you keep good health in Bombay without any effort while you barely manage to do so in Segaon. Is the cause psychological or external? If it is external, is it the food and water or the climate, or both? If it is food, you can eat the same food in Segaon as you do in Bombay. If the reason is psychological, [the cure] is in your own hands. If it is the climate and water, we are helpless. But I don't think that they count so much.

The date of my return will be decided in Calcutta.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10745

49. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

DELANG,
March 28, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

Today is my Silence Day. And I also have some time. It is pretty hot here. We are a goodly company. Ba, Lilavati, Manilal and his wife Sushila are with me. Kanti has come from Bangalore. Your letter should have arrived here. It has not yet arrived. It may come tomorrow. We shall reach Calcutta on the 1st or maybe on the 31st. My health has been good so far. I have cut down my intake of food. Now the blood-pressure has come to 160-96.

Prabhavati has gone to Patna, Amtul Salaam to Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9992. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

50. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING

DELANG,
March 28, 1938

Having heard the discussion we have had now and Kishorelal's brief report of the discussion in the afternoon—having heard it all I have come to the conclusion that this proposal should not be put before you. You should not conclude that this is a result of the argument advanced by a few friends. The discussion I heard here has also left the same impression on me. This does not mean that those who have faith in this may not act upon it. It only means that in this matter I do not wish to force anyone. But I certainly insist upon the principle underlying this proposal. It is not something unnatural. If you have understood my point it will gain weight when you act upon it and carry it out according to your capacity. [Passing] a resolution will not by itself suffice. Take [for instance] Jamnalalji's suggestion. He says that so long as Muslims do not become members of our Gandhi Seva Sangh, it will be futile to make efforts in this direction. What he says is true but we shall find the correct remedy after we have served them and our action has borne fruit in the form of a closer contact with the Muslims. Of what good will it be if one or two persons become members reluctantly? We shall achieve something only when our relationship with the Muslims becomes that of the servant and those whom he serves. So far the Congress has been doing what Jamnalalji suggests. What it did was good, no doubt. They got many Muslims enrolled as members. But they had to be coaxed into becoming members. This is a kind of flattery, or you may call it a politically motivated policy. What I have said today is not for political reasons, although it may well have a welcome political outcome. Today I place it before you solely from the standpoint of non-violence. If we are really experimenting with the non-violence of the strong, we ought to make an effort to bring about friendship between Hindus and Muslims. So far there has been no friendship. It was only an attempt to win them over through flattery. There was a policy behind all that. We maintained friendly relations merely from a practical point of view; it was like a businessman's practical policy. So far we have not put our non-violence to the test in regard to this issue. If today we can take this test in non-violence and pass it, we shall move a thousand steps forward on the path of winning freedom

through non-violent means. If you really believe that swaraj cannot be won without non-violence, you will also have to admit that our non-violent means will not be effective without Hindu-Muslim unity. As I delve deeper into this question many things come up before me. After all I am being guided by my intellect, am I not? Nowadays, I am relying solely on my intellect. But mere intellect makes one insane or unmanly. That is its function. In such a situation Rama is the strength of the weak. My innermost urge is for pure non-violence. My weakness is that I do not know how to make it work. I use my intellect to overcome that weakness. If this intellectual cleverness loses the support of truth, it will blur my vision of non-violence, for is not non-violence the same as truth? Mere practical sense is but a covering for truth. "The face of truth is hidden by a golden lid."[1] The reasoning faculty will raise a thousand issues. Only one thing will save us from these and that is faith. Hence Gangadharrao said that he did not feel weak. For him, the argument of weakness is hollow. But others have doubts whether non-violence can accomplish this. Kripalani had raised the doubt about what policy we could adopt where there are secret attacks on individuals. This is a kind of guerilla warfare as Prabhudas called it. There was in Banaras nothing but peace. In Sarnath however four Hindus were done to death. Now how can our non-violence help in such a situation? I say, think a little deeper. This is but a part of our war strategy. You despair that no friendship will help there. I tell you it certainly will. It is not that a handful of persons have lost their sanity. Its root lies in the fact that the atmosphere is vitiated. But then I cannot say right now how far it can be purified through our service. You must not reduce your service to a bargain. Non-violence cannot work in this way. In the case of non-violence we on our part start acting without any doubts. Take the instance of April 6, 1919[2] Where were the Congress Committees then? We announced a proposal. Millions responded to our call. Tell me how this could have happened. Everyone felt as if a miracle had occurred. People thought that at the bottom of all this there must have been a mighty scheme, but there had been no such thing. However, it was certainly supported by a lot of prayer. The same thing happened in the case of the Dandi March. Who had organized and planned it? I myself was not aware of

[1] Ishopanishad, 15

[2] "Directions to Demostrations", 5-4-1919

anything. There was faith and nothing else. I too did not know what God would do. I had only the faith that it would all turn out as it did. You have evidence that I had no clear idea of it. I do not know how it all really happened. This is how non-violence works. Today, we think of our weakness. Actually, it is not our weakness. The fact is that we have no faith in non-violence. This lack of faith makes us doubt whether non-violence can solve the problem. Millions have this faith in the matter of swaraj. But with regard to Hindu-Muslim unity we find not even a thousand such persons. What we need is that we should have faith in non-violence not merely as a means to swaraj, but independently as well. Whether we win swaraj through non-violence or not, we must achieve Hindu-Muslim unity. For us, it is not a means to swaraj. I have not been able even to create the climate for it. Not even a thousand persons share my views on this question. Just as I say that I do not want swaraj if it is to be won through untruth and violence, today I would also say that I do not want swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity. I say this because I want that in independent India Hindus should not suppress Muslims, nor Muslims Hindus. I want to see that all are equal. You may perhaps find this aspect of the problem rather new. If this is something new for you, so is it for me. I can see no straight way in front of me. There is total darkness ahead. Despite this, I have. the confidence that if I go forward with faith, I shall certainly reach my destination. If you realize this, you should start working on this even without a resolution. In a way this problem is even more difficult than that of swaraj. Millions of people today aspire for swaraj. Not even a handful of people care for Hindu-Muslim unity. We will have to solve this problem independently. There are many difficulties because we seek the welfare of the Muslims while serving them. We do not want to encourage their selfishness by pampering them. Take for instance the incident cited by Prabhudas. I totally disapprove of what he did. If a Muslim zamindar insists that the Hindus should not celebrate Holi, should I ask the Hindus to agree to it simply because these poor people listen to me? I will certainly not do it. You may say that to celebrate Holi would be suicidal. I would tell the Hindus that they should not give up their religious practice on this account. I would myself ask the zamindar to come forward and kill me, for I would light the Holi fire right in front of him. I would ask the Hindus not to break the heads of Muslims, but rather to sacrifice their own. We shall give up nothing through fear. I shall certainly do what I have a right to do and what I

may. If I have to fight for this, I shall do so in a non-violent manner. I went to make friends with Jinnah Saheb. But if for this reason I allow myself to be suppressed and do not fulfil my duty, it is no friendship. This is not a new approach. The important thing is that service should be the basis of friendship, and no other motive or self-interest as was the case with my childhood friendship. The friendship which I had then formed with the Muslim boy[1] was for the sake of meat-eating and ended with it. But today, I am asking you —you who make friends with the idea of service and who with your mature intellect believe in *atman* and *Paramatman*—to serve them. Such friendship will result in unity.

Now the question of girls. What should they do? Should they be scared at the sight of Muslims? That ought not to be. But it does not follow that they should enter the fray at the time of riots or become the victims of secret attacks as a matter of dharma. Of course, if there is a girl like Mridula it is another matter. She is not afraid of anyone. She does not care even if the Muslims kill her. Girls who are self-confident should go in. But those who are afraid, who lack this self-confidence, who do not have a strong heart should not go there. "But the man of doubt is lost."[2] If I am overcome by doubt I will hardly touch a serpent. Women who have doubts must never come out before Muslims. I know of many such instances. I tried to tell you about this in a way you would understand. You should not feel that the whole discussion has been futile. My mind too has become clear. You have drawn my attention to several difficulties. In spite of them, after this discussion, I am even more strongly convinced that this is what we should do and shall have to do. Let us not form any committee and so on. Each one is a committee by himself. Each is his own leader and his own soldier. The servant is himself the master. Where the climate does not exist, what is the use of forming committees? When the time comes we will lose our heads. The real thing is to keep our heads—our reasoning—clear. There is no question of any confrontation. Dastane asks me to appoint someone for the task. This is not a matter to be dealt with in this way. In the same matter what may be dharma for one person may be its opposite for another. Let us not betray our souls. Let us not corrupt our

[1] Sheikh Mehtab; vide "London Diary", 12-11-1888, and "An Autobiography" sub-title "A Tragedy"

[2] Bhagavad Gita, IV. 40

intellect. If we wish to strive for non-violence we should follow the *yamas* and *niyamas*[1]. This advice of our forefathers is absolutely correct. I am not placing anything new before you. I shall show what strength underlies our forefathers' advice. I have derived this from their own books. We cannot observe ahimsa without fulfilling the vows. This does not mean that whoever is morally depraved and given to drinking commits violence. But then it is certain that he does not sincerely observe non-violence. We must examine everything from this standpoint, viz., whether it helps or hinders non-violence. I too can drink alcohol but as medicine, provided a vaidya prescribes it for me. If this movement of ours is conducive to non-violence, let us at least demonstrate unity amongst all Hindus.

Why did I stretch this point? Because the other point that I wish to make follows from this. You must never forget one more fact regarding Hindu-Muslim unity. It is a test for every religion. Even if there be nothing special about Hinduism it must have something distinct about it. Otherwise how could it come to have the name Hindu? [Now] does this distinctiveness consist in playing Holi? Does the distinctiveness of Islam consist in hit-and-run tactics? Does Hinduism teach animality? And did the Prophet's religion teach lawlessness? My point is that you should first become a true Hindu and then go to the Muslims. Till then no unity is possible. I know there are many Muslims who believe that so long as Hindus do not recite the *kalmah* they will not be saved. But if we prove through purity in our life and perfection of conduct that one can be saved even without reciting the *kalmah*, the Muslims too will be impelled to have respect for the Hindus. Such true unity will not be achieved through any political agreement. Such business pacts are futile. What is needed is an understanding based on dharma, where there is no question of a bargain. For this, friendship between brave people and the non-violence of the strong are required. Even if a frightening *smashan*[2] interposes—such non-violence will fearlessly make its way through it. I do not claim that I have attained such non-violence. I am afraid of every [little] thing. Perhaps I am the weakest and the most cowardly of all. But I am all the same a devotee of true non-violence. I tell you that so long as we do not attain the non-violence of the strong and our conduct is not truly religious, the Muslims will have no respect for our

[1] The rules and regulations prescribed for the attainment of spiritual progress

[2] Literally, cremation ground; here death and desolation

religion and love for us.

GANGADHARRAO: If the resolution is withdrawn the consequence will not be good.

BAPU: I don't agree.

JAMNALAL: I had a special reason when I said that we should have Muslim members. Only a Muslim can persuade another Muslim if the latter misbehaves, and the same applies to Hindus. But I find that even the most respectable Muslim seldom raises his voice against the misdeeds of his community. On the other hand one can keep them in good humour only by justifying their every action, good or bad. I cannot tolerate this state of affairs. I cannot uphold what Prabhudas did. Must we stop our music for fear of losing the Muslims' friendship? Friendship does not imply that we give up resistance to injustice. But this, more or less, has till now been the policy of the Congress as well as the Gandhi Seva Sangh. In my opinion appeasement cannot bring about unity or love.

BAPU: If we have formed the notion that we should suffer the atrocities of the Muslims in mute submissiveness it is absolutely wrong. If until today I have not said that we must also resist injustice inflicted by them, here I say it now. We should now tell the Muslims also that they have been unjust and, if they beat us up for saying it, we should get beaten up. As for the resolution, we should have it after making some efforts and gaining experience in the matter. It is likely that experimenting on these lines someone may get some new inspiration. In that case we can call a special session of the Sangh before the end of the year.

DASTANE: If not this resolution, let us have another commensurate with our faith and strength.

BAPU: Yes, we can do it if you like. But in my opinion, it would be proper to do so only after making an experiment and gaining experience.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sangh ke Chaturth Varshik Adhiveshan(*Delang-Orissa*)*ka Vivaran*, pp. 50-5

51. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[After *March 28, 1938*][1]

I can say you are now doing my work. It was a great relief to me that you were looking after Amtul Salaam and that you saw her off.

You won't worry about me. I shall try to be there as early as I can.

Be patient with Lilavati.

Love.

From the original: C.W. 6423. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10018

52. SPEECH AT A. I. S. A. WORKERS' MEETING

BIRBOI,
March 29, 1938

Gandhiji proposed that efforts should be made to give eight annas as minimum wages to spinners working for eight hours a day, thus allowing at least fifteen rupees per month. Mahatmaji also said that the price of khadi should be so fixed as to bring more money from the rich and less from the poor. Gandhiji asked members seriously to ponder over his proposals.

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-3-1938

53. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING

DELANG,
March 30, 1938

This is the last day of the present session. I myself was not aware that I was going to speak today. Kishorelal told me that I was expected to speak. Later I also felt like it. Before I say what I wish to, I shall answer a question.

It has been asked whether every member of the Working Committee is not expected to put in 1500 hours of work in the Gandhi Seva Sangh every year. The question has been posed by Jethalal. Although the idea is very good it cannot be put into practice. Today, we must give up our insistence on this. Everyone should put in as much physical labour—not mental or intellectual—as possible.

[1] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Mirabehn", 28-3-1938

However, we cannot go so far as to expect daily four or five hours' work from the members. This is not an association of labourers. If it can become one, well and good. But today it is an association of educated people. If we wish to take five hours work daily from the Working Committee, we should ourselves do it first. How can those people find the time for all this at present? In this country the trouble is that those who are supposed to be big men get very little time. Where can Vallabhbhai find so much time? In that case we should ask him to quit. But then we cannot do without him. We ought to realize our limitations.

Yesterday I had decided to remain silent on what I am now going to say. But I changed my mind this morning. I am glad that Mahadev has told you something about what has happened, and now that he has said something I feel like speaking out all that is in me. The various items of constructive activity that you are doing are only outward expressions of truth and ahimsa. They only reveal how far they can carry you on the road of ahimsa and truth, and ultimately to freedom. The removal of untouchability is one of the highest expressions of ahimsa. It is my daily prayer, as it should be the prayer of you all, that if untouchability does not perish it were far better that Hinduism perished. This prayer found its most poignant expression during my Harijan tour of which the principal objective was the opening of the temples to Harijans. They tell me that the untouchables do not wish to enter the temples. Even if this is true, the reason behind this is that we have made such monsters of them that they no longer have any need for temples. Even if they do not care to go into the temples it should be our concern to permit their entry. And I have declared day in and day out that whoever believed in the removal of untouchability should shun temples which were not open to Harijans. Now, how could I bear the thought of my wife or my daughters having gone to such temples? I would plead with them, would go on bended knees to dissuade them from going to these temples, and might have to deny myself personal ties with them if my entreaties failed. I have tried to live up to this principle all these years, and I felt humbled and humiliated when I knew that my wife and two ashram inmates[1] whom I regard as my daughters had gone into the Puri temple. The agony was enough to precipitate a collapse. The machine recorded an alarmingly high blood-pressure, but I knew better than

[1] Durga and Velanbehn; vide "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 31-3-1938

the machine. I was in a worse condition than the machine could show. The *Gita* teaches us the lesson of detachment, but that detachment does not mean indifference to shocks of this kind—failure in duty on the part of one's dearest ones. The three who went were the least to blame. They went in ignorance. But I was to blame, and Mahadev was more to blame in that he did not tell them what their dharma was and how any breach would shake me. He ought to have thought also of its social repercussions. We should understand our individual as well as our social dharma. How did it affect me? I turned pale. My grandson says that the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* reports that Kasutrbai did not go in but waited outside. If that was so I would have leapt high. But how could she at all go there after having lived with me for fifty years? And why did the two other women go? Are they not my daughters? That too is my fault. This act of theirs has depleted our soul force. We ought to be more vigilant. By looking upon women as [mere] women we overlook such matters. That is not the way of non-violence. This is a matter of awakening. It was Mahadev's task to have reasoned with them. And, if they were not convinced, he should have brought them to me. I would have told them that I was their spiritual father and not opposed to their religion. I could be their spiritual father only if they and I belonged to one faith. If their faith could be identified with mine I could reason also with the people: "What is the use of [going to] such temples?" They were ignorant, I know, but we are responsible for their ignorance, and it is the reverse of ahimsa not to dispel their ignorance. I sent them to Puri not to go into the temple, but to stand just where the Harijans were allowed to go and refuse in protest to go beyond that limit. That would have been the right kind of propaganda, and they would that way have done Harijan service. To do scavenging work or to eat with Harijans or to feed them is not enough, if we do not deny ourselves the going to temples and the like so long as our kith and kin, the Harijans, are denied their use.

If we do not go even to the temples which have been regarded as sacred for hundreds and thousands of years, where such great men as Chaitanya[1] have gone in to offer worship, where we long to go, simply because our Harijan brothers are not allowed, it would be a great act of dharma and, if God really is in the temples, as we believe, it will

[1] Krishna Chaitanya Goswami, also known as Gauranga Mahaprabhu, founder of the Vaishnava sect in Bengal

certainly have its effect. The *pandas*[1] had come there and said that the Harijans could go along with us. Quite correct. For a *panda* the silver coin is God. I therefore prevented Rajendra Babu's sister from going in. Some may say that I exercised undue pressure. I would say I saved her from *adharma*. If I intruded it was in the name of religion. Like these three women many others must have gone and must be intending to go. I have expressed my feelings for the sake of these people. What can I say to those who cannot restrain themselves even after this?

There is another aspect of the case. The sanatanists believe that untouchability is part of Hinduism, and so do the Mussalmans and the Christians who think that Hinduism is nothing if not don't touchism. But the virus of untouchability has infected them too. They shun the Bhangis. You cannot finally solve the Hindu-Muslim problem until you have removed the stain of untouchability by non-violent means. The Muslims will then cease to regard us as unbelievers.

They will then say that we might be idolators but God is in the idols too. Hence, I have asked the idol-worshippers to befriend the Muslims. That is the path of courageous non-violence. Perhaps Maulana Saheb also believes that Gandhi is what he says he is, but the other Hindus are steeped in untouchability. It is our responsibility to change his opinion of us.

Then there are the Harijans themselves. How are we to carry to them the conviction that we are with them through thick and thin, that we are completely identifying ourselves with them, unless we can carry our families—our wives, our children, brothers, sisters, relatives—with us in our programme of the removal of untouchability?

Is it possible that a member of the Gandhi Seva Sangh might claim that his dharma is different from his wife's and sister's? This is neither religious tolerance nor is it non-violence. People will think we are hypocrites. Intense faith is what is called dharma. The essence of dharma is non-violence; it is another name for it. Its power is such that the sword would drop from the Englishman's hand. The Muslim's lawlessness would be held back. Patanjali has said that violence becomes ineffective when confronted by non-violence. If this has not happened till this day it is because our non-violence has been that of the weak and timid.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sangh ke Chaturth Varshik Adhiveshan(*Delang-Orissa*)*ka Vivaran*, pp. 65-7

[1] Priests

54. NOTE TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

[Before *March 31, 1938*][1]

I did not mean to say that you should not stay with me or accompany me. I cannot take every member of my family to other people's houses.

My health will not permit me to do much work in Calcutta. Even if Birlaji consults me I shall not give him much time;[2] it all depends on my health. Do only what Shankerlal asks you to do. I shall regain my health, if at all, only on my return to Segaon

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2470

55. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

DELANG,

[On or before *March 31, 1938*][3]

Gandhiji was asked in Delang what the Ministers' attitude should be over the appointment of Acting Governors in the Provinces. . . . He said that acting appointments should not be made from among the services in the Provinces.

Ministers will not relish the idea of a subordinate official suddenly becoming Governor to whom they have often to refer for guidance and who may even preside over their deliberations. Such a Governor cannot act with detachment nor can he command the respect and confidence of the Ministers. I should think that the Viceroy or the Secretary of State would think twice before making such appointments. Ministers would be right, indeed it might be their duty, to protest against such an appointment. I do not know that such an appointment might not be, *casus belli.* In the Colonies generally I have known the practice of Chief Justices of Supreme Courts acting as Governors in the absence of permanent ones.

Harijan, 2-4-1938

[1] From the addressee's letter to Gandhiji, as also from the contents of this letter, it appears that this was written from Delang which Gandhiji left on March 31, 1938.

[2] The addressee wanted to discuss with Gandhiji the Birla Mills labour problem.

[3] Gandhiji was in Delang till March 31.

56. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

March 31, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

What a gift so early in the morning! But if even one mistake is not corrected immediately, it will lead to a succession of others. All the same I will tolerate thousands of mistakes, but I can never part with you. Even death at the hands of a *bhakta* is preferable to salvation at the hands of those who have no love for one. There is, therefore, no question of your leaving.

Now I will list your mistakes.

I don't blame Durga or Velanbehn at all. Ba has already made atonement; not by fasting but by confessing her lapse to me with utter simplicity. She thus made holier yesterday our holy relationship of over fifty-five years.

But what did you do? Either your negligence or your blind love for Durga let her do a wrong thing. And afterwards when you came to know of my pain, you started a fast without thinking. Fasting is no remedy for thoughtlessness or wrong-thinking. The remedy lies in right-thinking. When I came to know about your fast, I tried to dissuade you, but to no avail. I advised you to think carefully instead of fasting. You did not do that. You did not even try to understand my point of view. Yesterday I asked you very tenderly whether you had understood what I said. The reply you gave then was not proper. Your behaviour was still worse. Instead of attending Maulana's speech, which it was your duty to do, you went away to cry. And as a result you threw a silly poem at me. Last night also you should have. given some time to Maulana, which you did not do. You did not, thus, fully avail yourself of the opportunity of serving a Mussalman. Had my words yesterday had their intended effect, you would have gone today to Puri with a band of workers and would have shaken up Puri. But perhaps I myself was not sufficiently serious, otherwise I should have thought of this right in the beginning. If your duty is as clear to you as daylight, I would even grant a day's leave and also let you take along with you anybody who might be ready to go. This may be done even today if it is possible.

You say that you 'interpret' me, but may I ask to whom? Is it not to Velanbehn?

Your poetic imagination sometimes blinds you to reality. There is nothing but cowardice in your letter. If you decide to leave me, will Pyarelal stay on? And if Pyarelal leaves, will Sushila stay? Of what use to me is her extraordinary intelligence? She has such intelligence that it sometimes pains me to think that it will rust if she stays with me. Why does it not occur to you that I could let all of them go if I let you go? They will all run away. Lilavati will simply go mad. I will suffer even that, if such be my lot. But I will never send away you or anybody else. And yet how can I prevent anybody from running away? Let this incident inspire poetry in your heart. Correct your error if you see hat you have made one. If you cannot see it, ask me to explain it to you. If you think that I have committed any error, correct me. This is no time for crying or fasting. You should read less, but think more. Study carefully all that has been done here. You yourself should utilize Sushila's and Pyarelal's talents and thus lighten the burden on you. Take work from Lilavati too. This incident shows me that being crushed under the weight of external activities, you think less. Thereby you will be able to do much less by way of 'interpreting' me.

How much more shall I go on writing?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am not revising. I have finished the letter just now.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11594

57. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

March 31, 1938

CHI. LILA,

I am sorry that I will not be able to speak today. But it is as well that it is so. I have already written to Ba and made my suggestion regarding Kanam. If she permits you to take charge of him, do so. If you do, you should give up the kitchen work. You may give some help if necessary. Mix well with Nanavati. Talk less. Don't speak thoughtlessly. Never shout at anybody. Our servants are not mere servants. Treat them as your own little brothers and sisters. Cultivate

cordial relations with Mirabehn. She is doing very good work at present.

Continue to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9370. Also C.W. 6645. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

58. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

March 31, 1938

CHI. AMTULSALAAM,

How are you? Would you not regard Sushila's letter as coming from me? You yourself wrote that I should not write [myself], that a letter from Sushila or anyone else would suffice. If you steadied your mind you must soon get well. I am all right. The rest from Sushila's letter. You did well to have your tonsils removed.

Keep on writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 398

59. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 31, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I got your letter. You will not receive any salary but I shall let you have time to read books on spirituality and so on. You will be posted nowhere but in Segaon. I see no inconvenience in your visiting your home once a year. I might send you to Wardha if any work comes up there. If you find these conditions acceptable, you may come over on the 15th April or even earlier depending on my reaching there. Remember, moreover, that my stay in Segaon is rather uncertain, although I shall certainly spend there the four months of the rainy season. Anyway, in Segaon you shall have ample *satsang*[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4290

[1] Literally, company of good men

60. LETTER TO SARASWATI

March 31, 1938

CHI. SARASWATI,

Ba and I were very sorry that you could not come, but what could be done? We have to live as God disposes, shouldn't we? I hope to send for you soon enough. Can you stand the heat? Will you keep up your studies? Reply promptly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N 6166. Also C.W. 3439. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

61. INTERVIEW TO RAJA OF PARLAKIMEDI

BIRBOI,
March 31, 1938

The Raja Saheb[1] requested Gandhiji to enlighten him on the policy of the Congress with regard to the zamindari system.

Gandhiji who is observing silence owing to ill-health wrote the following on a slip of paper:

I am glad you have come. I wish I were speaking and well enough for a fairly long discussion. You are quite right in saying that I do not wish the extinction of old zamindaris. All Congressmen do not think so. The remedy lies in the hands of zamindar friends. How it is so, I have shown through the articles I have written. Nevertheless, if you so desire, I will gladly set apart some time to meet your friends. That cannot be in Calcutta. I am hardly in a fit state to cope with the work I have there. I can, therefore, only see you at Segaon when I reach there unless there is a breakdown in my health.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-4-1938

[1] Ex-Premier of Orissa

62. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,
April 1, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
JULLUNDUR CITY
WIRE HEALTH TEMPERATURE

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3851. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7007

63. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[*April 1, 1938*][1]

CHI. AMTUSSALAAM,

You must not be in a hurry to leave the hospital. Leave only when the doctor permits. Restrain your eagerness to come to me. I am quite well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 715

64. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

CALCUTTA,
April 1, 1938

AMTUSSALAAM
EASTERVILLA
SANTACRUZ

GLAD YOUR DISCHARGE. HEALTH ALL RIGHT.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 408

[1] *Vide*, "Letter to Amtussalaam" , 31-3-1938 in which Gandhiji enquires after her health following an operation for tonsillitis.

65. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,
April 2, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
JULLUNDUR CITY
HEALTH ALL RIGHT. WRITING. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3852. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7008

66. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,
April 2, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I sent you a wire[1] yesterday and no reply as yet !!! I hope it is well with you. I do not like these frequent attacks. I know that earth and water are the two cures. Of course light and air are there; you have a fair dose of them. But not of the other two. You must take the hip, friction and sitz-baths and have abdominal and local earth bandages.

There is no set-back in my health. But Ba foolishly entered the Puri temple and it upset me terribly.[2] I must not give you the whole history. I have not yet got over the shock. The pressure therefore has just now steadied round 175-80 and 108-104. The mental fatigue I had lost has returned. I have lost perhaps 5 1b. in weight. As soon as I am free from the Calcutta business I shall make up for the losses. I impose long silences on myself and hope to continue them for the time being. This is being written during silence.

Prabhavati is with me. Jayaprakash was with me at Delang. He brought Prabhavati with [him].[3] He has gone to Dacca and will pick her up on his return. Probably there will be a note from her with this.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to amtussalaam", 1-4-1938

[2] This temple had not been thrown open to the Harijans.

[3] The source has: "He brought P. with me." ln Letters to *Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, however*, this has been changed to: "I brought P. with me."

I often thought of you in Delang and wished you were there. There was much to see and learn.

Love.

ROBBER

[PS.]

Wire just received.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3853. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7009

67. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

April 3, 1938

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I do not understand why you abandoned your work among the stone-breakers and the tongawalas. I stopped you from coming to Segaon for a short visit but it is different if you want to come for good for the sake of service. I am a little afraid that you will get tired quite soon; what will you do in Segaon? Take it that coming over merely to serve me is nothing but false attachment. I am weary of the overwhelming service I receive. I fear it may make a cripple of me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall accommodate Deka somewhere if he comes only to serve.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2469

68. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

April 3, 1938

My attention has been drawn to the press report purporting to give the gist of the conversations that took place between Sir Nazimuddin[2] and me on April 2. The conversations were strictly confidential and, therefore, the report can only come from a fertile journalistic brain. Ever since I have entered upon this self -imposed mission on behalf of political prisoners and detenus, I have made

[1] Published under the title " No Assurances Given"

[2] Khwaja Nazimuddin, Muslim League Home Minister of Bengal

known the terms upon which I have intervened. But the giving of assurances by prisoners or detenus as a price of freedom has never crossed my mind. As a civil resister, I would not be guilty of inducing any political prisoner to give such assurances. And I can also add that during my talks with the prisoners at Alipore and Howrah jails and the Regulation III prisoners at Hijli, they made it absolutely clear to me that they would give no assurance to anyone for the purpose of purchasing their freedom. I wish for the sake of the cause that the news papers will not anticipate events. Every unauthentic report adds to my difficulties which are already formidable.

Harijan, 9-4-1938

69. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

April 4, 1938

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

This is not a final draft[1]. I want you to read it sympathetically. I feel that unless we do some such thing, the tension must continue. Anyway at one o' clock I won't take all of you by surprise. I have discussed the subject with the Maulana at some length.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru papers, 1938. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

70. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,
April 4, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is a strictly business letter. You want a p.c. when. I am ill, I send you a letter to say I am really well. The breakdown was mental, not physical, due also to mental causes as you will learn from *Harijan*.[2] It is Mahadev's version of as he saw me and felt me. If he

[1] Presumably of the resolution on the C. P. crisis, which the Working Committee passed later at Calcutta

[2] Mahadev Desai's article "A Tragedy", published in Harijan, 9–4–1938, described Gandhiji's anguish at Kasturba's and Durga Desai's visit to the Puri Temple which was not open to the Harijans. For the text of Mahadev Desai's article, *vide* Appendix I.

missed my love in all I did, it was missing. Love to be love must be felt by the loved one at some stage or another.

I am taking the strain really well. I have done a lot of writing and I am none the worse for it. I may have to go to Delhi in a few days' time. You will hear if I have to.

Did I say anything about your offer to do some of my work in the Punjab? I fancy not. But how can I ask you to face the Lahore heat? How can I bear your separation from Shummy[1] whilst he is in Simla? And to what end? It may prove an utterly fruitless and thankless errand. I have not the courage to exploit you for the Punjab muddle. And where is the time? Your hands are already more than full.

My work here is not prospering. Only I do not lose hope.

If I go to Delhi it will be only for a few hours.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3625. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6434

71. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

CALCUTTA,
April 4, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

I am distressed that my return is being unduly prolonged. The suspense must be terrible for you. But if you have found your bottom, you won't be upset. In spite of what you may see from the papers or other sources, believe me I am quite well. Deep down in me there is the feeling that I shall stand the strain I have still to go through. The people spare me generously. The weather is not trying. I shall feel happy if I know that you are not worrying over the delay in returning or over my health. After [all] we are in God's hands for everything.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6399. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9994

[1] Col. Shumshere Singh, addressee's brother

72. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

1 WOODBURN PARK,
CALCUTTA,
April 4, 1938

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I have to thank for your letter[1]. I have delayed writing for a day. I did not know what to say, nor do I know now. My movement is so uncertain. I am in the hands of the Bengal Government. I should come as early as I can before the 18th instant. May I simply send by wire to P. S. V. the day of my arrival in Delhi without giving therein the sender's name? I may be able to leave even in a day or two.

Now about secrecy, I am bound to tell some of my friends what I am doing. I am anticipating such permission. I shall of course see to it that nothing goes to the Press. The fewest possible persons will be told.

I assume too that you refer to secrecy before we meet. Isn't secrecy impossible after we have met ?

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

73. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

[Before April 5, 1938][2]

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Yes, you may stay on while I am in Calcutta. What do you gain by placing so much faith in me? I am not perfect, nor am I free from passion. Only last night I had a dirty dream. This is not a good thing. What can you hope to gain by living with such a person? Know me as

I am. A Bapu who exists only in your imagination will not be of

[1] Dated March 31, in which the addressee had expressed a desire to meet Gandhiji once again and have a general talk with him, preferably before April 18, when the addressee was to leave Delhi on tour.

[2] The letter is entered in Mahadev Desai's Diary under the date April 5, 1938; *vide* however the following item which appears to refer to this.

any use to you. Whatever I have in me is known to the world. You can draw from it a good deal wherever you may be. You know my definition of freedom from passion, don't you? Such a man, even though virile, does not become sexually roused in thought word or deed, whether waking or asleep. I am striving to become such in this very life. If I succeed you will benefit by being with me. Let us see what God wills.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You can show this to anyone. Do show it to Mahadev and others.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2467

74. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

April 5, 1938

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I described myself as I saw myself.

Yes, you may go to Segaon whenever you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2468

75. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 6, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

Today is the fasting day[1] and I think of you all. I have decided provisionally that even though I may not finish my work, I shall leave here not later than 12th. May leave earlier. I shall hope to reach you not later than 16th. This is all unconscionably long but I have become perfectly helpless. A day out of Segaon is a day lost. But there it is and here I am. God will have His way.

[1] Since 1919, April 6 had been observed as Satyagraha Day—a day of fasting and prayer—to protest against the Rowlatt Act; *vide*" Telegram to Satyagraha Sabha, Bombay and "An Autobiography", sub-title "That Wonderful Spectacle"

I am well. Details from Sushila in so far as she gives them.

I hope Balkrishna is keeping well. If he feels the heat, he should have the tattis[1] to keep him cool. He must sit in water hip-bath. In the afternoon he may take abdominal bandage.

I hope you are not feeling the heat overmuch.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6400. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9995.

76. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,
April 7, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

You won't be disturbed over the news that S.[2] may give you today. Blood-pressure may help doctors. It is no help to patients. When they feel bad, they are bad. Such was my case last night. The same kind of pain in the back of the head. But gentle massage by S. brought me round in a few minutes and there is no return. B. P. was 154/98 at 12 noon. It rose again later to 170/98 or something like that. So you are not to worry. When the real alarm comes, you will hear after the event and then there must be no idle sorrow but greater dedication to service.

Love.

ROBBER

[PS.]

Did you observe 6th April ?

From the original: C. W. 3626. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6435

[1] Screens made of *khas*.

[2] Sushila Nayyar

77. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[After *April 7, 1938*][1]

CHI. SUSHILA,

What shall I write? You will have received my letter of yesterday. After I wrote it, I saw Pyarelal's letter. May God grant you courage and peace. If you cannot find peace there, you have always got my bosom such as it is.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

78. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

April 8, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

You must excuse the pencil hand. You should tell Paul that you are not interested in the tours he suggests, your time being solely occupied with your own affairs. You should send Rs. 100 telling him that you had not expected your donation to be treated as a yearly call. The present one should therefore be treated as final. Future calls will be treated on their own merits and your then commitments.

I like George. I have not yet read his pamphlet.

Sir Mirza's[2] herewith with correction.

Poor Prabha ! She had to go to Patna.

I am well in spite of the work. I may leave even tomorrow or on Monday.

Papers herewith.

Love. In haste.

TYRANT

[PS.]

George's pamphlet is all right. He may go on with the movement.

From the original: C. W. 3854. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7010

[1] This letter is written below a letter from Mirabehn to Gandhiji, dated April 7, 1938.

[2] Mirza Ismail, Dewan of Mysore.

79. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

CALCUTTA,
April 8, 1938

With a smiling face Mahatma Gandhi came out of the Presidency Jail at 5 p. m. after having been closeted with 14 state and four women political prisoners for about three hours. While leaving the jail gate, Mahatmaji was approached by the Associated Press. He said he had a long talk with the prisoners, but that was all he could say at this stage. Asked if he was going to see the prisoners again, Mahatmaji said:

I may, but not this time.

Further questioned, he said he might have one or two more meetings with Sir Nazimuddin, the Home Minister, to complete his negotiations, but there is no possibility of his meeting the Governor again now.

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-4-1938

80. THE CHOICE

My remarks arising out of the recent riots in U.P.[1] have attracted much attention. Friends have sent me cuttings from the Press. This is some of the criticism printed or spoken :

(1) My writing betrayed hysteria.

(2) I wrote without sufficient data.

(3) I had recanted my views on non-co-operation and civil resistance.

(4) I had been driven to the policy of the Liberals.

(5) Congressmen had never adopted non-violence as between themselves.

(6) I was expecting the impossible from human nature.

(7) If my position was accepted swaraj would never be obtained, for all India could never become non-violent.

There is much more I could cull from the criticism. I have only taken the relevant parts.

1. If my article betrayed hysteria, the symptoms still persist, for in spite of the criticism which I have studied with the care it demanded, I see nothing to change the position I have taken up. The

[1] *Vide* "Our Failure", 22-3-1938

critics should remember that my proposition was specific and narrow. Swaraj could not be obtained through non-violent means unless our non-violence was of the brave and such as to be able to deal effectively with violence. I have not maintained that it could not be obtained by other means. But if it could be so obtained we were not ready to deliver the goods, for we were not ready for matching our force against the British.

2. All the data required were that there were riots, no matter on how small a scale, that Congressmen were not able to deal with them non-violently, and that the aid of the police and the military had to be summoned. There was no dispute about these three broad facts. They were enough to enable me to draw the conclusion I did. In this there was no reflection on the Ministers. I have admitted that they could not have acted otherwise. The fact, however, remains that the Congress non-violence was not able to cope with the emergency.

3. There is nothing in my article to warrant the infe-rence that I had lost my faith in non-co-operation and civil resistance. All I need say is that it is brighter than ever. The two are quite enough to bring swaraj, provided that non-violence practised is of the bravest.

4. I wish I could be drawn towards the policy of the Liberals. I have many personal friends among them. But they have no sanction. I claim that I have an infallible sanction. My article was written to show that during the riots it was not the sanction that had failed, the failure was of the organization which had accepted the sanction, namely, active, constructive non-violence.

5. I can only refer the critics to the many resolutions of the Congress which do not confine the use of non-violence only towards Englishmen. Indeed I remember having many discusions at the Working Committee meetings at which the necessity of non-vio-lence among ourselves was emphasized.

6. Well, human nature has hitherto responded nobly to the call of non-violence. But I am concerned with the Congress nature. Congressmen have to sign a pledge which commits them to non-violence.[1] My question was and is—have they non-violence in them? If they have, is it of the brave? My thesis is that if it is of the brave, it should be enough for dealing with the riots and for delivering the goods.

[1] The practice was started in 1919 at the time of the satyagraha against the Rowlatt Act; *vide* "Instructions to Volunteers", 26-2-1919

7. This is answered in the foregoing.

But I have the fear that our non-violence is not of the kind required. Congressmen may not treat my warning lightly. After all I am supposed to be the Congress expert, however inefficient, on non-violence. I have confidence in my readings and my remedies. I cite Ahmedabad and Viramgam violences[1], Bombay violence during the Prince's visit,[2] and Chauri Chaura[3] on the eve of Bardoli. The results have amply justified the remedies applied at my instance, though on these occassions critics were not wanting who had expressed their strong disapproval of the suspensions. I have no doubt about my present diagnosis [or] about the remedies. The remedies are not beyond our ability if we have a living conviction about non-violence and its nature. Here are some of the remedies :

1. We must discover a solution for the Hindu-Muslim tension. I use that expression deliberately instead of 'communal'—for if we find this, the other will follow as a matter of course.

2. There must be a purging of the Congress registers so as to make them proof against bogus voters. From all accounts I receive, our registers contain too many bogus names to be called at all accurate.

3. Congressmen must not be afraid to find themselves in a minority.

4. Without delay every Provincial Congress Committee should raise a proper corps of volunteers pledged to non-violence in thought, word and deed. And there should be a manual of instructions as to training, etc., prepared for universal use.

There is nothing heroic or impracticable in these suggestions. But they are impracticable if those who lead have no living faith in non-violence. If they have not, the sooner non-violence is removed from the Congress vocabulary the better it is for the Congress and the nation. The alternative is certainly not unadulterated violence. The Congress is the only political organization in the world which has, at my instance, adopted unadulterated non-violence for the attainment of swaraj. It is its only sanction. I dare say that if its quality is not what it

[1] In April 1919 during demonstrations against Rowlatt Act ; *vide* "Press Statement on Suspension of Civil Disobedience", 18-4-1919

[2] On November 17, 1921; *vide*"A Deep Stain", 18-11-1921

[3] In February 1922; *vide* "The Crime of chauri Chaura"

should be, it will do great harm to the nation. In the last heat we may be found to be cowards instead of brave men and women. And there is no disgrace greater than cowardice for fighters for freedom. Surely there is nothing to be ashamed of in retracing our steps. If we feel that we shall not be able to displace the British power without a violent struggle, the Congress must say so to the nation and prepare accordingly. We must do what is being done all the world over—'forbear when we can, hit when we must'. If that is to be our creed or policy, we have lost precious seventeen years. But it is never too late to learn and mend. Seventeen years in the life of a nation is nothing. It will go hard with Congressmen if having received the warning they do not make the choice.

Harijan, 9-4-1938

81. TELEGRAM TO M. A. JINNAH

April 9, 1938

I AM LIKELY TO BE IN DELHI ABOUT 19TH. IF AT ALL POSSIBLE I SHOULD LIKE TO MEET YOU THERE INSTEAD OF IN BOMBAY IN ORDER TO SAVE TIME AND ENERGY. IF AGREEABLE MAULANA WILL ACCOMPANY ME.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-7-1938

82. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

April 9, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

If you can, stay on till I return. If you think it is your duty to leave, do so. If this is still not clear, ask Amritlal and do as he advises.

I hope to return in a few days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujrati: G. N. 7079. Also C. W. 4571. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

83. SPEECH AT KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR

April 10, 1938

Gandhiji said that he would like to spend at least a day in the Ashram, but he was unable to do so this time owing to his preoccupations in Calcutta. He found it difficult to express in words his love for the Ashram and the Ashramites, and urged them to carry on their mission of spreading the use of khadi amongst the masses.

Through Sodepur, he added, they were serving the entire Hindustan. Mahatma Gandhi hoped that their services would be more and more appreciated all over the country.[1]

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-4-1938

84. INTERVIEW TO P. R. THAKUR [2]

CALCUTTA,
April 10, 1938

Mahatmaji intimated his good wishes to Mr. Thakur and desired that he should follow in the footsteps of his noble grandfather, Sree Guru Chand Thakur, who devoted his life to the cause of the Scheduled Castes. He further added that the Congress would try its level best to stamp out the sin of untouchability from the soil of Bengal. He asked Mr. Thakur to visit the different Congress Provinces and study for himself the Congress work and activities for the uplift of the Scheduled Castes and make a propaganda in Bengal so that the Bengal Scheduled Castes might respond to the clarion call of the Congress for achieving India's political end.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 12-4-1938

85. MESSAGE TO PEOPLE OF MIDNAPUR

[Before *April 11, 1938*][3]

I hope that Midnapore will show that it stands for unadulterated non-violence. In my opinion that is our greatest need.

The Hindu, 12-4-1938

[1] Gandhiji's Hindi speech was translated into Bengali by Hemprabha Devi Das Gupta.

[2] P. R. thankur, M. L. A., had told Gandhiji that the Scheduled Castes in Bengal would willingly co-operate with the Congress if Harijan uplift programmes undertaken by the Congress Ministries were followed in Bengal as early as possible.

[3] The message was sent through Subhas Chandra Bose who visited Midnapur on April 11.

86. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

CALCUTTA,
April 11, 1938

DEAR DR. MAHMUD,

Please forgive the pencil hand.

I wish I could be with you to witness the enthusiastic response of the young men to your call. But that cannot be. I hope the enthusiasm will last and that soon illiteracy will be banished from Bihar.

Tell Begum Mahmud with my love that she has no right to invite me till she has given up the *purdah*. Has not the Prophet said that the real *purdah* lies in the woman's chasity?

I hope you are keeping well.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MR. SYED MAHMUD
MINISTER OF EDUCATION
PATNA, BIHAR

From the original: Dr. Syed Mahmud Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also G. N. 5083

87. TALK WITH PRISONERS[1]

[On or before *April 12, 1938*][2]

I am at the end of my resources and although I am ready to return to Bengal if the Government of Bengal wants me, very much, I am afraid, will depend on my health.

Harijan, 23-4-1938

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] According to *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 13–4–1938, Gandhiji paid his last visit to the political prisoners on April 12.

88. MESSAGE TO GURUKUL KANGRI

CALCUTTA
April 12, 1938

A serious problem faces the teachers and students of the Gurukul: How can the country and dharma be protected—by truth and non-violence or by untruth and violence? How nice it would be if the Gurukul could provide the answer to this question with its head as well as its heart.

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

89. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

April 12, 1938

Approached by waiting Pressmen as he came out,[1] Gandhiji said that he would be issuing a statement on the subject of their discussion either that evening or on the following day.[2] Pressed further as to whether any settlement was arrived at, Mahatmaji pointed out to Sir Nazimuddin and told the journalists to approach him.

Sir Nazimuddin, however, expressed his inability to state whether any agreement had been reached or not.

As he came out with Gandhiji, Sir Nazimuddin introduced Maulana Abdul Rashid Tarkabagish of Bogra as a leader of the Proja Party. At that Gandhiji humorously remarked that in that case he had got to please the Maulana.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 13-4-1938

90. TALK WITH CONGRESSMEN[3]

CALCUTTA,
[On or before *April 13, 1938*][4]

I have found my task here Herculean and I am sure any other person would have slunk away from it. I have the patience of a Job, but even that was on the point of being exhausted. But now I have a

[1] After the interview with Khwaja Nazimuddin.
[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 13-4-1938
[3] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Notes"
[4] Gandhiji left Calcutta on April 13.

ray of hope bright enough to light my path to Wardha. I now want your hearty approval, not mechanical consent to my suggestion to stop all demonstrations and receptions and addresses, in order that the ray of hope may be multiplied a hundredfold.

Harijan, 23-4-1938

91. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,
April 13, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA

REACHING DELHI TOMORROW NIGHT. LEAVING DAY AFTER. QUITE WELL.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3856. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7012

92. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

April 13, 1938

CHI. PRABHA

I had your letter. You must have received mine. I do not like your worrying all the time. You must regain perfect health.

I hope Jayaprakash is well. Write to me fully. Don't postpone writing till I write to you. I am going to Delhi for a day. I will leave there on the 15th and reach Wardha on the 16th. I am fairly well. The blood-pressure at present is 154/100. I observed a fast today[1],but didn't feel it.

The work here has remained unfinished. Perhaps I shall have to come back. I do hope that everything will be all right. But why need we concern ourselves with the result? Write to me regularly. Write to Ba also. And don't forget A. S.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3511

[1] It being Jallianwala Bagh Day

93. LETTER TO ANANDI BUCH

April 13, 1938

CHI. ANANDI[1] ,

Haven't you still got over the fatigue of nursing me? How is your home life? Have you set up house on your own? The amount of service which you two together render should be not twice but four times as much. There should be multiplication and not addition in such matters.

I had Puratan's[2] and Lalitji's letters. I am not writing to them separately. Won't this letter suffice ?

Both of you should daily read Chapter XII[3] [of the *Gita*] and ponder over it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9163

94. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[4]

CALCUTTA,
April 13, 1938

I regret to inform the public that the negotiations that I have been conducting with the Government of Bengal through Sir Nazimuddin have not yet been concluded. I must confess that my arrival in Calcutta was ill-timed, as the Ministers were all busy with the assembly work and as it was known that I should come back before the end of March, I felt it was unnecessary to ascertain Sir Nazimuddin's wishes about the time of my arrival. Had I taken the precaution of writing to him, I would not have found myself in Calcutta at an inauspicious moment. I have now to write a letter[5] to Sir Nazimuddin, summarizing my suggestions which, I am assured, will be considered by the Government as speedily as possible and definite decisions taken—a process which, it is expected, will be completed within one month. It is

[1] Daughter of Lakshmidas P. Asar

[2] Puratan Buch, addressee's husband

[3] Which describes the characteristics of a *bhakta*

[4] This was published in the *Harijan* under the title "Negotiations Not Concluded".

[5] *Vide* the following item.

hoped, however, that the decisions may be taken much earlier, and if it becomes necessary for me to return to Calcutta, I shall do so without hesitation, provided, of course, that my health permits it.

Meanwhile I must repeat that all agitation for the release of detenus and prisoners should be suspended while negotiations continue. I must also state that it is not conducive to the success of the negotiations if public demonstrations are held in honour of those who may be discharged. In my opinion, it is more dignified for Congressmen to exercise restraint. I have seen extracts of speeches and addresses as reported in the papers which do not betray any spirit of non-violence.

I may add that whilst I have been seeing the convicted prisoners and discussing with them their attitude to non-violence for my own guidance, the Government have made it plain to me that whatever the prisoners might state to me will not be allowed to determine their policy. They think that it will be improper for them to base their action on such assurances as I may issue. I fully appreciate the Government view. My talks with political prisoners therefore are purely for my own personal satisfaction.

In so far as the 14 Regulation prisoners are concerned, they gave me at the interview I had with them the following letter :

> During your last visit you expressed your desire to be acquainted with our definite views on certain things. After giving full consideration to the matter we can only reaffirm what we said then. As long as we are in detention we are unable to discuss our past and future and our political opinion. Particularly when the talk of release is in the air it affects our sense of self-respect to say anything that may have some bearing on the question of our own release. We hope you will appreciate our standpoint and readily concede that we mean no personal disrespect.

It was signed by nine. Four other prisoners had not signed the letter but they associated themselves with the sentiments expressed therein, and the fifth gave a letter very similar to the foregoing.

Harijan, 16-4-1938

95. LETTER TO KHWAJA NAZIMUDDIN

[*April 13, 1938*][1]

DEAR SIR NAZIMUDDIN,

In accordance with the understanding of yesterday, I submit herewith my suggestions :

(1) I understand that the detenus, including the Regulation III prisoners, will be discharged and all restrictions upon their liberty will be removed inside of one month from this date.

I can only hope that I shall not have to return to Calcutta in that connection. Should my presence, however, be required, I shall gladly come whenever wanted.

(2) With regard to the convicted political prisoners I suggest that—

(A) the ailing prisoners should be discharged forthwith irrespective of their terms of imprisonment;

(B) those who have less than 6 months to serve should be discharged forthwith;

(C) those who have 18 months or less, but over 6 months to serve, should be discharged within 3 months;

(D) those who have longer terms than 18 months to serve should be discharged within one year at the most.

(3) Those releases should be contingent upon a public understanding between the Government and the Opposition, that is, the Congress Party, to the effect that—

(A) there shall be no public demonstrations or processions in honour of those detenus or prisoners who may be discharged;

(B) there should be no agitation, directly or indirectly, initiated or countenanced by the Congress Party to depart from or improve upon the settlement that may be arrived at. In other words, so far as Bengal at any rate is concerned, the question of the release of detenus and political prisoners shall cease to be a Party question or a

[1] Although the addressee in his letter of April 17 to Gandhiji acknowledges this as of the 12th, this was obviously written after the "Statement to the Press", 13–4–1938; *vide* the preceding item.

matter of public controversy.

I have purposely refrained from entering into any argument in favour of the suggestions made herein. I have discussed them threadbare with you and you have very patiently listened to me.

Whatever the fate of the negotiations and suggestions, it is agreed between us that a final decision will be taken by the Bengal Government within a few days, certainly within one month from today.

You have told me that any assurances the prisoners or detenus may give me about non-violence could not or would not be allowed by the Government to influence their decision. But, as you know, I have interested myself in their cases on the strength of their disavowal of violence for the attainment of India's freedom. Therefore, for my own satisfaction, I discussed the question with them and whilst they did not want to make any statement for the sake of furthering their release, they assured me that they had no faith in violence for securing India's freedom. I believe in their assurance and it would be a pity if such men could not be discharged.

I forgot to mention one thing during our conversations of yesterday. The prisoners at Dum Dum asked me whether I had received the many messages they had sent me through the usual channels. I cannot recall having received any, except the messages from the Midnapur girl prisoners. Whatever may have happened in the past, I trust that in future you will kindly issue instructions so as to ensure the delivery of their messages to me, assuming, of course, that they are not objectionable.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindustan Times, 4-10-1938; also C. W. 9919

[1] In his reply dated April 17, the addressee wrote: "In view of the wording of the paragraph (1) of your letter which refers to detenus, I think it desirable, in order that there may be no misunderstanding, to repeat what I stated at the commencement of our interviews that proposals made by me personally as a basis of settlement in the course of negotiations were, and are, subject to, and, basis of settlement in the course of negotiations were, and are, subject to, and, conditional upon, the approval of the Government of Bengal as a whole.

"Secondly, what I endeavoured to convey at our last interview was simply this—that, subject to an agreed solution of the problem of convicted prisoners being arrived at, I felt sure you would not be dissatisfied with the action that the Government would in that event take regarding State prisoners and detenus."

96. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,
April 13, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

A wire has gone to you telling you I am well and going to Delhi and thence at once to Wardha. Of Delhi you will know from the papers and later from me or Mahadev after the work is finished.[1]

I am really well and have stood the strain in a wonderful manner.

The negotiations[2] have been difficult but I have hope of their being successful. Everything will depend upon the result of my appeal[3] for restraint. I might have to come again.

One of these days Mahadev or I must tell you all about the interview with the girls[4] but not before we meet.

It will be good if you can go to Ooty and pass a day with me on your way.

Mind I am likely to have to go to Bombay on 25th to see Jinnah.

So, Mrs. Subbaroyan is in the Assembly. I suppose you meet her often.

Of course there is no chance whatsoever of my arbitrating over the Shahidganj issue. It almost defies a reasonable solution.

This U. P. dacoity[5] is a disturbing affair. Heaven knows what is in store for this country.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3627. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6436

[1] Gandhiji was going to meet the Viceroy on April 15.

[2] With the Government of Bengal

[3] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 13-4-1938

[4] Presumably Bina Das and Ujjala Majumdar who were sentenced to nine and ten years' imprisonment respectively and whom Gandhiji met at Presidency Jail, Calcutta, on April 12.

[5] Staged by terrorists on April 11 at Pipribih, on the North Eastern Railway between Allahabad and Kanpur.

97. DISCUSSION WITH BENGAL CONGRESSMEN[1]

CALCUTTA,
[*April 13, 1938*][2]

The difference between your view and mine is based on the question whether the Zemindari system is to be mended or ended. I say it should be mended, and if it cannot be mended, it would end itself. You say that it is incapable of being mended.

In these words Gandhiji summed up the difference between the Socialist school and what may be called the Satyagrahi school, before an informal meeting of Calcutta Congressmen.

Q. The zemindars and *mahajans* are the instruments of the bureaucracy. They have always sided with it and are an obstacle to our progress and freedom. Why should not the obstacle be removed ?

A. They are indeed part and parcel of the bureaucracy. But they are its helpless tools. Must they for ever remain so? We may do nothing to put them away from us. If they change their mentality, their services can be utilized for the nation. If they will not change, they will die a natural death. If we have non-violence in us, we will not frighten them. We have to be doubly careful when the Congress has power.

Q. But can't we say the system of zemindari is an anachronism and should go, by non-violent means of course?

A. Of course we can. The question is: 'must we ?' Why can we not say to the zemindars, 'These are the evils which we ask you to remove yourselves'? I admit that this presumes trust in human nature.

Q. Would you say that the Permanent Settlement[3] should remain ?

A. No, it has to go. The way to make the *kisans* happy and prosperous is to educate them to know the reason of their present condition and how to mend it. We may show them the non-violent way or the violent. The latter may look tempting, but it is the way to perdition in the long run.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's article "Kisans and Zemindars". Among others who attended this informal meeting were Subhas Chandra Bose and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.

[2] From *The Hindu*, 14–4–1938.

[3] Introduced by Lord Cornwallis in 1793.

Q. But don't you agree that the land belongs to him who tills it ?

A. I do. But that need not mean that the zemindar should be wiped out. The man who supplies brains and metal is as much a tiller as the one who labours with his hands. What we aim at, or should, is to remove the present terrible inequality between them.

Q. But the mending process may be very long.

A. Seemingly the longest process is often the shortest.

Q. But why not parcel out the land among the tillers ?

A. That is a hasty thought. The land is today in their hands. But they know neither their rights nor how to exercise them. Supposing they were told neither to move out of the land nor to pay the dues to the zemindars, do you think their misery would be over? Surely much will still remain to be done. I suggest that that should be undertaken now and the rest will follow as day follows night.

That led up to the question of the Kisan Sabhas, their relations with the Congress, their scope and their function.

My opinion is clear-cut, having worked among the *kisans* and labour all my life. There is nothing constitutionally wrong in the Congress allowing the Kisan Sabhas to work independently nor in allowing the office-bearers of the Kisan Sabhas to be office-bearers of the Congress, for they will come in the usual way. But my study of separate *kisan* organizations has led me definitely to the conclusion that they are not working for the interests of the *kisans* but are organized only with a view to capturing the Congress organization. They can do even this by leading the *kisans* along the right channels, but I am afraid they are misleading them. If the *kisans* and their leaders will capture the Congress by doing nothing but authorized Congress work, there is no harm. But if they do so by making false registers, storming meetings and so on, it would be something like Fascism.

But the main question is whether you want the Kisan Sabhas to strengthen the Congress or to weaken it, to use the *kisan* organization to capture the Congress or to serve the *kisans*, whether the Sabha is to be a rival organization working apparently in the name of the Congress or one carrying out the Congress programme and policy. If it is really a rival organization and Congress organization only in name, its strength and energy will be utilized in resisting the Congress and those of the Congress will be utilized in resiting the Kisan Sabha,

with the result that the poor *kisans* will be ground between the two mill-stones.

Harijan, 23-4-1938

98. FOREWORD TO "THE PERSIAN MYSTICS"

April 14, 1938

Sir Jogendra Singh is to be congratulated on having given us his rendering into English of the "Sayings of the Mystic'' by Abdullah Ansari[1]. Islam has given the world mystics no less than Hinduism or Christianity. In these days when irreligion masquerades as religion, it is well to reminds ourselves of what the best minds of all the religions of the world have thought and said. We must not, like the frog in the well who imagines that the universe ends with the wall surrounding his well, think that our religion alone represents the whole Truth and all the others are false. A reverent study of the other religions of the world would show that they are equally true as our own, though all are necessarily imperfect.

M. K. GANDHI

The Persian Mystics

99. LETTER TO RATILAL MEHTA

April 14, 1938

BHAI RATUBHAI[2],

Maganlal[3] writes that Chhaganlal's[4] condition is pitiable. He has incurred debts and has suffered losses. Do you know about his real condition? Does he listen to you? I have written to him, but I don't expect a reply. I hope you are keeping well.

I write this in a moving train.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7176. Also C. W. 4672. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

[1] Sheikh Abdullah Ansari of Herat, 1005 A. D.-1090 A. D.
[2] Father-in-law of Chhaganlal Mehta
[3] Sons of Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta
[4] *Ibid*

100. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 14, 1938

CHI. NARANDAS,

Give the enclosed[1] to Ratubhai.

Kanaiyo is quite happy. I do feel unhappy that I am not able to pay the attention that I ought to pay him. If I could but manage it, I could take much work from him. I am fairly well. I am writing this in a moving train.

I hope everything is well with you. Are you quite satisfied with Kamala? I return to Wardha the day after tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III. Also C.W. 8543. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

101. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI,
April 14, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

You have done something really excellent.[2] Act in the same manner in future also. And now the answers to your questions[3].

1. It has not been my experience that in daily life it is untruth and dishonesty that always triumph. We of course come across instances of these sometimes winning, but if we look deep into the matter we shall see that the real triumph goes to truth.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The addressee had helped an old Mussalman fellow-passenger on the train who had lost his ticket (*Harijan,* 14-5-1938).

[3] These, briefly, were:

(I) Would it not have been proper for the ticketless passenger to evade the ticket-examiner? Didn't dishonesty often pay ?

(ii) How far was it proper for the addressee to advise him to be honest ?

(iii) What right had the ticket-examiner to let the passenger off ?

(iv) Not himself having any money to pay, how could the addressee have appealed to other passengers to pay the ticketless passenger's fare ?

(v) If the passenger could complete his journey to Madras, would it have been right for the addressee to see him out of the platform on a platform ticket ?

If, however, the victory of truth was always self-evident, what would be its value, and what would be the merit of adhering to it? Is not this the reason why the *Ishopanishad*, which is regarded as authoritative as the Vedas has this *mantra*, that the face of truth is covered with a golden lid? We are dazzled by the splendour of that lid.

2. Now the second question. It may not be our lot always to suffer, but that doesn't mean that we should't advise other people to follow the seemingly strait and narrow path of truth. Even if the old man had been able to hide himself and reach Madras, what would it have availed? Where was the guarantee that he would not have got caught somewhere? And why should we assume that he had to suffer because finally he had to get down? We don't always know what is for our good. We should, there-fore, proceed blindly on the asumption that the path of truth cannot but lead to our good.

3. It was certainly within the right of the ticket-examiner to let that man go. If, however, he did not think he had such a right, he could not have neglected his duty out of false pity. But even in that case he could have issued the man a ticket and paid for it from his own pocket or could have collected the money from other passengers.

4. Supposing the examiner did not let the man travel, nor issued him a ticket with his own money, and the old man had therefore to miss the train or go to jail, why should he have minded that? If he was a lover of truth, he should have faced that cheerfully. And we are thinking here about the duty of a lover of truth. Even though you are not maintaining yourself with money earned by yourself, on an occasion like this, which arises only once in a while, you could have paid something yourself and collected the balance from the other passengers. If the latter had paid anything, so far so good; but even if they hadn't, you would have done your duty. But I didn't feel, either, that even the little you did was not enough.

5. Had the examiner let the man travel to Madras, he could have informed the ticket collector there that he had used his discretion in letting him go. But supposing he had refused to do that, it would not have been right for the old man to get out of the station with the help of a platform ticket. However, the way out of that situation would have been easy. You yourself could have explained his condition to the ticket collector and if the latter had not been convinced he could have kept the man in custody. These days, however,

they don't follow that practice since it puts the railway company to a loss; the ticket collector merely shouts angrily at such persons and lets them go.

If you have any doubts even after reading these answers to your questions, ask me again.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7334. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

102. LETTER TO BAL KALELKAR

April 14, 1938

CHI. BAL,

I am writing this on a train to Delhi. I will leave Delhi tomorrow and reach Wardha the day after. You will have read about the visit before you get this.

I am writing this just to tell you that I have not forgotten you. I always wish that you should progress spiritually and in health even as you are cultivating the intellect. Progress in all the three spheres necessarily includes progress in each.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7969

103. INTERVIEW TO "PRATAP"[1]

KANPUR,

[*April 14, 1938*][2]

Q. Do you approve of the decision of the Congress Working Committee regarding the C. P. Ministerial crisis ?

A. I cannot say anything in this matter. I cannot describe the working Committee's decision as wrong.

Q. Do you think you have succeeded in your mission regarding the release of the Bengal political prisoners ?

A. Let us hope so.

Q. Have you been invited by the Viceroy to Delhi ?

[1] A Hindi daily of Kanpur

[2] Gandhiji passed through Kanpur on April 14 *en route* to Delhi.

A. It appears that the public knows more about it than I do.

Q. Are you expected to discuss the question of political prisoners at Delhi ?

A. I do not know what I shall do at Delhi.

Q. What is your purpose in going to Delhi ?

A. I am afraid I cannot say anything about it.

Q. Do you think that the Congress will accept the Federation, if certain changes were introduced in it ?

A. How can I say what the congress will do in this matter ?[1]

Q. What will you recommend to the Congress in case modifications are made ?

A. Let us see what these are.

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-4-1938, and *The Statesman*, 15-4-1938

104. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

April 14, 1938

MY DEAR ANGAD[2],

My heart goes out to you. What does it matter that on some things we do not see eye to eye? I must however ask one question. Did you think it lawful to sexually love the married lady or do you say that although it was wrong you could not help yourselves, and having fallen, the only honourable course for you was to marry ?[3] I need to know this, if I may, to see how far we have drifted from each other and what philosophy guides us. The fact that you are a seeker of Truth is enough to sustain the bond between us.

I hope you are completely cured.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] What follows is from the correspondent of *The Statesman.*

[2] The monkey-prince sent as a messenger by Rama to Ravana. Gandhiji gave the addressee this name as he had carried his letter of March 2, 1930, to the then Viceroy, Lord Irwin; *vide* "Letter to Lord Irwin", 2-3-1930

[3] The addressee had married Ethel Mannin, a divorcee.

105. TELEGRAM TO M. A. JINNAH

DELHI,
April 15, 1938

IF ON RETURN BOMBAY YOU CAN BREAK JOURNEY AT WARDHA FOR ONE DAY YOU WILL SPARE ME THE STRAIN OF UNDERTAKING THE JOURNEY TO BOMBAY. I NEED SOME UNINTERRUPTED PHYSICAL REST IF POSSIBLE. IN ANY EVENT COULD MAULANA AZAD ACCOMPANY ME AT THE INTERVIEW? PLEASE WIRE WARDHA WHICH REACHING TOMORROW.[1]

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-6-1938

106. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ON THE TRAIN,
April 16, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

We are moving towards Wardha. I am in a fit condition. I have started the day with 160-4/98—an unusual thing nowadays. And mark you, up to Gwalior the crowds won't let me rest. They would shout in my ears, as it were.

Mahadev I have sent to the Frontier to see things for himself. He should be there three or four days.

It was a nice chat with the Viceroy. Quite inconclusive. It was not meant to be conclusive. It was an exchange of ideas. More when we meet.

You must make yourself fit in Simla. You must take the hip-baths and exercise. It is criminal to tie yourself to the desk. Play tennis daily, if it suits you.

Sushila has remained in Delhi. She must have written to you.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3628. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6437

[1] In his reply the addressee telegraphed: "Extremely sorry unable change programme now. Will receive you at Bombay on 25th or thereafter as arranged. Would prefer to see you alone."

107. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

ON THE TRAIN,
April 16, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

Lately you have been figuring in my dreams. Shall I call it attachment or love? Be that as it may, you have become a big question-mark for me. "You have already taken one; you want to take the other one too ?" These words of Mother still echo in my ears. Her concern was justified. My duty is clear. At least today your place is not with me. If Pyarelal finds his moorings, it will be well. But if that does not happen I shall consider myself worthless. And what can a girl like you do by living with a worthless person? There is no strong reason for you to leave your mother's lap. I failed in my duty when I let you ignore the letter from Delhi. You should have accepted one of the jobs offered. Even now if the posts have not been filled, you may still write, 'It so happens that I can now entertain one of the pro-positions, if the posts or any of them be still open.'[1] Your duty is to be near Mother and earn. And even while you earn, increase your know-ledge as much as you wish. This is my considered view. Mahadev will say the same. I shall convey this to Pyarelal. If he has anything else to say, I shall write again.

Stop worrying about me. The night passed well. In the morning the blood-pressure was 164/102. Even otherwise I am feeling fine.

How can I forget the service I had from you? How can I reward it? How and why should a father reward a daughter? God will reward you. It will be reward enough if Pyarelal's mind becomes quiet. If that does not happen, what good will be a reward? You did your duty. Why should you be concerned with the fruits of it?

You must go on writing to me. God will show you the right path.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] In English in the source

108. LETTER TO PYARELAL

April 16, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Now you may know the reason why I feel light at heart. If I want to act on your letter, who is there to stop me? But you should know my decision. Sushila's pure love has showed me the way. For your sake she is starving herself. I was overawed when I learnt about it. There is no pretence, no outward show. I was terribly perturbed. If Sushila has to starve herself as she is doing, is my love so only in name or does it serve any purpose? Mother's tears made me resolve that if Pyarelal's life could be put on the rails then I would be qualified to keep Sushila. If that does not happen, I would stand disqualified in my own eyes. If my non-violence is not capable of melting your heart, how would it help in winning swaraj? You have become part of me. If I cannot keep you, I am worthless. Mother's words were not the words of an ignorant woman. Her candid words emanated from her great anguish. They went direct to my heart, and she was fully entitled to tell me all she did. When others hear such words of truth, it will only benefit them. Hence, at that time I lightened my heart by taking the decision that if Pyarelal cannot convince me of the justice of the step he wishes to take, he should give up his fast, whether complete or partial. If in his innermost heart he cannot be persuaded, he can by all means abide by his decision and then I will eat when he eats and starve when he starves. When he fasts I will fast too. If he should leave, my fast will commence from that very moment. This thought occurred to me after I heard about Sushila. I made my resolve after seeing Mother's anguish. She will tell you everything on reaching home. God has willed otherwise. If you go from here, you will be breaking your vow. I cannot quietly sit at Segaon till the visit to the Frontier Province materializes. And (at Segaon), you should start nothing until I am settled there (Segaon).

But this is making a mountain out of a mole-hill. A new phase has begun for me. My love for you will be as much asfor swaraj. If the spark that Sushila has kindled is enough, God will grant me the strength to quietly adhere to my resolve.

If you have become part of me, then your duty is clear. You must do as I say. By doing so, you will benefit yourself, me, Sushila and Mother, who is like a cow. Then all of us will strive together for

swaraj. The happiness and peace of many others like Mahadev, for instance depend on your peace of mind. If you can believe it, do this much in good faith. Nothing should be given up for fear that I may resort to fasting. Duty should never be forgotten. If you think that it is clearly your duty to go, who am I to stand in the way? If there is any room for the slightest doubt, give the benefit of it to me whom you have accepted as father.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

109. LETTER TO PYARELAL

Second letter [On or after *April 16, 1938*][1]

CHI. PYARELAL,

I had finished writing the enclosed[2] when Sushila gave me your letter. You did not quite understand. What I had decided is mentioned in the enclosed letter. Even if deep down Sushila has any misgivings as to what may be good for her, she must submit to Mother's love. But if she feels that it is to her good to be here she must remain firm and put up with Mother's lamentations. I wanted to take back the letter today. In my opinion, from all points of view, Sushila's good lies in being here. But even you may not agree on that point. I am not enamoured of medical degrees nor for that matter [education] in England. Those who learn do so after getting their degrees. But this is my position. I have written this to show how myviews about someone's good can appear distorted and short-sighted. Hence if there is any need for thinking, it has to be done only by Sushila.

Blessings form

BAPU

[PS.]

It is true that Mahadev should have informed me. But now that is over. Here we have a situation where Ba worships Sushila. What does anything else matter?

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the contents it would appear that this was written after the letter to the addressee dated April 16, 1938; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] Presumably the foregoing letter

110. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

[AFTER *APRIL 17, 1938*][1]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

What you say is correct from the economic point of view; but I look at it, and I ought to look at it, as a purely political issue.[2] We cannot enter into any agreement with Lancashire which will bind us to buy their cloth. The argument that Lancashire cloth is bound to come here anyway is irrelevant. There has been no change in the Congress position, as it has always been explained to the people, as regards Lancashire cloth. I think, therefore, that we cannot enter into the sort of agreement you suggest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Purushottamdas Thakurdas Papers, Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

111. TELEGRAM TO M. A. JINNAH

WARDHA,
April 18, 1938

THANKS. 25TH HAPPENS TO BE MONDAY. WILL REACH BOMBAY 28TH IF NOT INCONVENIENT.

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-6-1938

[1] The addressee in his letter dated April 17 had written: "I thought I might clear the point again as regards the Indo-British Trade Pact. The period of protection expires next March and in any case the amount of protection will be revised. I believe that Lancashire would in any case get a 5% reduction in the tariff. The question therefore is: should we give Lancashire a grant of 5% under the recommendations of the Tariff Board without asking for any *quid pro quo* or should we insist on a pact based on 5% reduction and a definite guarantee by Lancashire to purchase a large amount of Indian cotton? …Purely from the economic point of view, we would not think of giving a free gift of 5%. But from the political point of view there may be reasons for taking up such an attitude. I should like you therefore to send me, at your leisure, your arguments in favour of such a position which, you will agree, would appear to be anomalous from the economic point of view. Because under this position Lancashire will get what she wants without having to pay anything for it."

[2] *Ibid*

112. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

April 18, 1938

MY DEAR KU,

3 p.m. on 21st if that will suit the members. I know it is a hot time but I am helpless. Will you prefer 6.30 to 7.30 a. m., or have I to go to Wardha on 21st morning ?

You will talk to me about finances when we meet.

Yes, there must be a joint committee for the Museum.

Rajkumari comes on 22nd by the Calcutta Mail at 7 a.m. (is it?). Look up the time-table. Will you receive her and pack her off here? I may not be able to send anyone from here.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10134

113. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON,
April 18, 1938

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Pyarelal wrote to you yesterday. If you can come, we shall discuss a few things. But if you cannot it doesn't matter. I have had a talk about the land in Gujarat. I think it impossible to do anything more about Nagpur now. Let things take their own course. The entire policy requires careful consideration. In any case, I have to be there on the 28th to meet Jinnah. I intend to return the same day. Did you call on Jalbhai? Do you write to him. ?

I request you not to take me to the sea coast. And on May 6-7 your committee is meeting at Wardha. I am really keeping

fine health. Mahadev is expected back on the 20th or the 21st.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
PURUSHOTTAM BUILDING
OPP. OPERA HOUSE, BOMBAY 4

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 219

114. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON,
Silence day, April 18, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

Pyarelal told me that you had cried and my heart wept. A wicked person sees everyone as wicked. Do I also belong to the same category? How very perverted I must be to imagine even for a moment perversity in a pure-hearted girl like you? Why should you serve me? Where do I have the right to take service from you? Your duty is clear. Stay with Mother and do whatever work of service you can from there. It is too true that I have ruined the life of a saintly man like Pyarelal. Is that not enough? Am I a godfather to you or the opposite of one?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

115. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

SEGAON,
April 18, 1938

CHI. SUMI,

You write to me only rarely. Are you trying to pay me back in the same coin? Write to me a long letter in Hindi. Kanam is fine. He thinks of you sometimes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mis. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

116. TELEGRAM TO M. A. JINNAH

WARDHA,
April 20, 1938

IF NOT INCONVENIENT WOULD LIKE TO REACH YOUR HOUSE AT 11·30 A. M.

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-6-1938

117. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

SEGAON,
April 20, 1938

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

You are by . . . [1] doing credit to your birthday . . .[2] The policy of neglecting your health . . .[3] and carrying on somehow or other is immoral. Have no doubt about it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

[1] Some words are illegible here.
[2] *Ibid*
[3] *Ibid*

118. LETTER TO KHWAJA NAZIMUDDIN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
April 21, 1938

DEAR SIR NAZIMUDDIN,

I thank you for your letter.[1] Of course, I understand that everything has to go to the Cabinet before the final decision is taken. My suggestions were, therefore, intended to be independent and for examination on their merits. Only, I had felt that the policy so far as the detenus are concerned was a reiteration of that adopted by the Cabinet. I am anxiously awaiting your final decision. But before it is taken, if my presence is considered necessary you are only to send me a line—even a wire if necessary.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Hindustan Times, 4-10-1938; also C.W. 9921

119. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAY

SEGAON,
April 21, 1938

DEAR HARIBHAU,

Bapuji has received both of your letters. He says he had a talk with Jamnalalji about sending Ba. He will certainly send her if she can be sent. There is no objection from Bapuji's side.

About the prisoners he says that we have to await the decision regarding the Bengal prisoners. Only after that shall we know what can be done about the prisoners of the other provinces. About the prisoners there we shall discuss when there is an occasion for you to write about them.

Yours,
PYARELAL

From the Hindi original: Haribhau Upadhyay Papers, Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, "Letter to Khwaja Nazimuddin", 13-4-1938

[2] The addressee on May 6 replied: "The Muslim League Conferences made it impossible for the Assembly to meet in Darjeeling until April 20. The Cabinet at once took the matter into consideration and definite conclusions have been reached. I am afraid that, in any circumstances, a short delay may be inevitable before we are in a position to communicate with you further. This delay will not, I anticipate, be much, and you can rest assured that I and my colleagues have taken and are taking every possible step to expedite the matter."

120. SPEECH AT VIDYAMANDIR TRAINING SCHOOL, WARDHA[1]

April 21, 1938

Today the students of the Vidyamandir have taken a solemn pledge. It is a momentous pledge. Its fulfilment would seem well-nigh impossible. This pledge binds one to serve without a break for twenty-five years on a monthly salary of Rs. 15. The fact that more than five thousand applications[2] were received is proof that unemploment in our country has reached the extreme limit. Some persons, while working for high ideals cannot get even dal and rice; many persons cannot obtain work to fill their bellies.[3] It is also proof of the glamour that surrounds Government employment. I know that people apply for constableships or teacherships in the hope of adding to their legal pay in illegal ways. I hope that no one of you entertains any such hope. I do not know that with all my patriotism I could bind myself to serve as a teacher for Rs. 15 per month. You must dismiss from your minds the thought that there may be profits left over in your schools to be divided amongst you. If, therefore, there is anyone among you who repents of the contract, you will ask the Minister to relieve you. I promise to plead for you. Having said this, I tender my congratulations to those who hold to their contract. I hope that God will give you strength to abide by your pledge.

Yours is a self-sacrificing pledge. If you prove true to your pledge you will set a noble example before the world. If you do not succeed, both Ravishankar Shukla and I will be condemed by the world. So the weaklings had better withdraw now.

This scheme is wholly Indian. Its ideal was born in Segaon. Real India is enshrined in the seven lakhs of villages, whose plight is even worse than Segaon's. I want you to drive away illiteracy from these villages, find out means whereby villagers can obtain food and clothing, and take the message of winning swaraj through truth and non-violence to the villages. This responsibility rests on you. It is your

[1] The school, a combination of the Wardha Scheme and Ravishankar Shukla's Vidya Mandir Scheme, was to be conducted under the supervision of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh.

[2] Out of these 166 candidates were selected.

[3] The remaining part of the paragraph is from *Harijan*.

dharma to work with this ideal in view. I have presented my scheme after mature deliberation. If it fails, the teachers would be to blame. It is through handicrafts that instruction in geometry, history, geography and arithmetic will be given and an attempt will be made to meet the expenses of the school through the students' manual labour.[1]

You know that the scheme of this education has been drawn up in pursuance of the Congress programme. Now the Congress is pledged to win swaraj by non-violent and truthful means. Therefore the cultivation of these cardinal virtues is the foundation of the scheme. And if you do not show these in your daily contact with yourpupils and a character in keeping with them, you will fail and so will your school. You know what Hitler is doing in Germany. His creed is violence, of which he makes no secret. The other day we were told that the sword was their soul. The boys and girls there are taught the science of violence from the beginning. They are taught to hate the enemy even in their arithmetic, and you will find that the examples have been chosen with a view to inculcate the military spirit. If we endorse their creed, we must recognize the necessity of inculcating the spirit of violence from infancy. The same thing is happening in Italy. We must be honest even as they are honest. I have no doubt that if the scheme is worked with all its implications and becomes popular throughout India, a silent revolution will have taken place and swaraj will be a certainty.

Herr Hitler is achieving his goal through the sword, I through soul. Cast off the cloak of foreign thoughts and ideals, identify yourselves with the villagers. The Western world is giving us destructive knowledge; we want to impart constructive education through non-violence. May God give you the strength to reach your cherished goal and to fulfil the pledge which you have taken today.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 30-4-1938, and *Harijan*, 30-4-1938

[1] The following paragraph is from *Harijan*.

121. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

April 22, 1938

I observe that the forthcoming interview between Shri Jinnah and myself is not only attracting very wide attention, but is also inducing high hopes in some. Then there are friends who gravely warn me against this visit and against building any hope on the interview. It is better, therefore, for me to take the public into my confidence and tell them why and how I am waiting upon Shri Jinnah on April 28.

He has himself published my first letter[1] to him, showing my attitude on the question of communal unity, which is as dear to me as life itself. In that letter I clearly stated that all before me was darkness and that I was praying for light. If anything, the darkness has deepened and the prayer become more intense. Add to this the fact that for causes some of which I know and some of which I do not, for the first time in my public and private life I seem to have lost self-confidence. I seem to have detected a flaw in me which is unworthy of a votary of truth and ahimsa. I am going through a process of self-introspection, the results of which I cannot foresee. I find myself for the first time during the past 50 years in a Slough of Despond. I do not consider myself fit for negotiations or any such thing for the moment.

There is no need for any speculation as to the cause of my despondency. It is purely internal. It comes from within. It must be now clear that, if I regarded the forthcoming interview as between two politicians, I should not entertain it in my present depression. But I approach it in no political spirit. I approach it in a prayerful and religious spirit, using the adjective in its broadest sense.

My Hinduism is not sectarian. It includes all that I know to be best in Islam, Christianity, Buddhism and Zoroastrianism. I approach politics as everything else in a religious spirit. Truth is my religion and ahimsa is the only way of its realization. I have rejected once and for all the doctrine of the sword. The secret stabbings of innocent persons and the speeches I read in the papers are hardly the thing leading to peace or an honourable settlement.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 22-5-1937

Again, I am not approaching the forthcoming interview in any representative capacity. I have purposely divested myself of any such. It there are to be any formal negotiations, they will be between the President of the Congress and the President of the Muslim League. I go as a lifelong worker in the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity. It has been my passion from early youth. I count some of the noblest of Muslims as my friends. I have a devout daughter of Islam as more than a daughter to me. She lives for that unity and would cheerfully die for it. I had the son[1] of the late Muazzin of the Juma Masjid of Bombay as a staunch inmate of the Ashram. I have not met a nobler man. His morning *azan*[2] in the Ashram rings in my ears as I write these lines during midnight. It is for such reasons that I wait on Shri Jinnah.

I may not leave a single stone unturned to achieve Hindu-Muslim unity. God fulfils himself in strange ways. He may, in a manner least known to us, both fulfil himself through the interview and open a way to an honourable understanding between the two communities. It is in that hope that I am looking forward to the forthcoming talk. We are friends, not strangers. It does not matter to me that we see things from different angles of vision. I ask the public not to attach any exaggerated importance to the interview. But I ask all lovers of communal peace to pray that the God of truth and love may give us both the right spirit and the right word and use us for the good of the dumb millions of India.

Harijan, 30-4-1938

122. MESSAGE TO JAIPUR RAJYA PRAJA MANDAL[3]

[Before *April 23, 1938*][4]

Everyone who cares to study what is happening at the present moment in our country can see that what we want can be attained if we will but achieve the *mantra* of peace, the creed of non-violence. You cannot breed peace out of no-peace. The attempt is like gathering

[1] Abdul Kadir Bawazeer

[2] Call to prayer

[3] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly letter". The message was sent throught Jamnalal Bajaj who presided over the Conference.

[4] Although the message was read out at the Conference by Jamnalal Bajaj on April 30, this was obviously drafted before April 23; *vide* "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 23-4-1938

grapes of thorns or figs of thistles. The more I go into the question, the more forcibly the conclusion is borne in upon me that our first duty is to grasp this fundamental fact. There was a day when I used to flatter myself with the belief that I had mastered the key to learning that lesson. Today I am filled with doubt. I do not know that I have in me purification enough to realize true peace or non-violence. In that frame of mind I cannot think of any other thing, talk of any other thing. But whatever may be my condition, I have no doubt in my mind that there is no swaraj without non-violence, nothing that goes by the name of constructive work. Constructive work is a mild aspect of non-violence, but the true test of non-violence lies in acquiring the capacity to meet an innocent and unflinching death in the service of our cause. How to achieve it is the question. I want you to apply your minds to it.

Harijan, 4-6-1938

123. MARTIAL V. MORAL

It is often forgotten that the Congress has only moral authority to back it. The ruling power has the martial, though it often dilutes the martial with the moral. This vital difference has come to the fore since the assumption of office by the Congress in seven provinces. This office-holding is either a step towards greater prestige or its total loss. If it is not to be a total loss, the ministers and the legislators have to be watchful of their own personal and public conduct. They have to be, like Caesar's wife, above suspicion in everything. They may not make private gains either for themselves or for their relatives or friends. If the relatives or friends get any appointment, it must be only because they are the best among the candidates, and their market value is always greater than what they get under the Government. The ministers and the legislators of the Congress ticket have to be fearless in the performance of their duty. They must always be ready to risk the loss of their seats or offices. Offices and seats in the legislatures have no merit outside their ability to raise the prestige and power of the Congress. And since both depend wholly upon the possession of morals, both public and private, any moral lapse means a blow to the Congress. This is the necessary implication of non-violence. If the Congress non-violence is merely confined to abstention from causing physical hurt to the British officials and their dependants, such non-violence can never bring us independence. It is bound to be worsted

in the final heat. Indeed we shall find it to be worthless, if not positively harmful, long before the final heat is reached.

There is considerable force in the argument of those who have conceived Congress non-violence in that narrow light when they say that it is a broken reed.

If on the other hand non-violence, with all the implications, is the Congress policy, let every Congressman examine himself and reconstruct himself accordingly. Let him not wait for instructions from the Working Committee. After all the Working Committee can act only in so far as it interprets the public mind. And non-violence is not a quality to be evolved or expressed to order. It is an inward growth depending for sustenance upon intense individual effort.

I have received several letters offering the writers' names for enrolment as volunteers ready to immolate themselves at times of rioting and the like. To these writers I would suggest that they enlist co-workers themselves, form local corps, and begin training in accordance with the suggestion I have made. Let them not confine themselves merely to preparedness for emergencies, but for the daily walk of like in all its departments, personal, domestic, social, economic, political, religious. Only thus will they find themselves more than ready for dealing with emergencies in their own localities or beats. They may not aim, except indirectly, at influencing events happening hundreds of miles away from their scene of activity. That ability will come, if the right beginning is made in the first instance.

Harijan, 23-4-1938

124. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SEGAON,
Apirl 23, 1938

CHI, JAMNALAL,

I have written to Lilavati Munshi and said " No". Wait for me on the 28th morning. You must have seen the wire I have sent to Khan Saheb. A letter[1] for Vallabhbhai is enclosed. Read it and pass it on to him. If he is not there, post it to him wherever he is. Calm yourself.

[1] *Vide* the following item.

You may make any changes you like in the draft of the speech[1] I have sent to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:G.N. 2990

125. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON,

April 23, 1938

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter. Mahadev should be back here this evening. I hope to be there on the morning of the 28th. I may also meet the Governor informally on the same day. I can see him at 9 or 9.30.

I had a long talk with the Viceroy about Orissa, the land in Kheda, the detenus, etc. Orissa's case deserves consideration.[2] It will be possible to arrange a few days' stay in Gujarat at any time. Maybe I shall have to go to the frontier Province in May. I have sent a wire to Khan Saheb today. I shall know more when Mahadev arrives.

My health is good enough just now.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Read my statement[3] regarding Jinnah. If I don't meet him, it is bound to be misunderstood.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 220

[1] Which Gandhiji had drafted for the addressee who was to preside over the Jaipur Rajya Praja Mandal; *vide* "Message to Jaipur Rajya Praja Mandal

[2] In Orissa, Dain, a civilian, was appointed to act as Governor during the period of leave of Sir John Habback. *Vide* "Statement to the press", 29-4-1938

[3] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 22-4-1938

126. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

SEGAON,
April 23, 1938

CHI, MANUDI[1] ,

I get no time at all to write to you. But I do get news of you from time to time. I hope you will not stop writing to me because I do not write to you. Kanti and Saraswati have arrived today. They will stay for a month.

On the 28th I am leaving for Bombay for a day's stay. I shall probably return on the same evening. Come and see me. Bring Surendra[2] with you. I am keeping fairly well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1569. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

127. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

SEGAON,
April 23, 1938

CHI, SHARDA,

It seems you are being sensible. I had really thought that after my letter you had abandoned the idea of going to Ahmedabad, in which case you should have told me. You had my permission, but I would want to know. Now stay with Shakaribehn[3] to your heart's content. Also tell her from me that there is a lot of difference between what she told me and what she had in mind. She must talk to me without reserve. She must let me know through you what she wants. I do not intend doing anything against her wish. Stay there as long as necessary on condition that you maintain your health. Give me regular account of how you spend your time. You should not be too sure of a letter from me.

I shall write to Saraswatibehn when I have the time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9993. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] Daughter of Harilal Gandhi
[2] Addressee's husband
[3] Addressee's mother

128. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SEGAON,
April 23, 1938

I have your letter. Riots appear to be our fate.[1] At such a time there is special need for us to meet.[2] What is important is the urge that impels us to meet. I have today sent to the press a statement[3] which might have been drafted precisely to answer your questions. Read it and think over it.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 167

129. LETTER TO PRESIDENT, MYSORE STATE CONGRESS

April [*24*,][4] *1938*

DEAR FRIEND,

B. Chandrasekhara, D. Chandrasekharayya, B. Ramachandran have seen me with reference to the recent unfortunate arrests that have taken place in Mysore. I am sorry that Siddhalingaiya and seven other friends are in jail over what has been called the flag satyagraha. I had hoped that after the full talks I had with friends including Siddhalingaiya at Delang there would be no friction between the state and the Congress. With the concurrence of these friends and their hearty approval I had given Sir Mirza a fairly full summary of the conversation they had with me. Sir Mirza had been writing to me about developments, but I was loath to intervene unless I had heard from the State Congress.

I must also admit that my preoccupation in Bengal would have most probably prevented my doing anything even if you or any member had written to me. Today I had a full discussion with the friends above named. I feel that there has been some misunderstand-

[1] The reference is to Hindu-Muslim riots in Allahabad.

[2] Gandhiji is here referring to his proposed meeting with Jinnah.

[3] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 22-4-1938

[4] The source has "14". But on April 14, Gandhiji was on way to Delhi from Calcutta. Presumably it is a slip for "24'. The representatives from Mysore met Gandhiji at Wardha and they were in Bombay on the 26th on their way back to Mysore.

ing or some haste on the part of overzealous workers. Thus I had clearly advised at Delang that the confining of membership of the Mysore State Congress only to primary members of the Indian National Congress was wholly wrong and that in effect it made the State Congress an Indian National Congress organization even though it might be unaffiliated. In my opinion that is contrary to the spirit of the Haripura resolution[1] on the subject and, what is more, calculated to defeat the end you have in view. And as Sir Mirza was in possession of my opinion, the action of the State Congress in spite of my advice was evidently the first cause of misunderstanding and the hoisting of the flag was evidently interpreted as a challenge to the State and the State Flag. I am quite clear in my mind that such was not the intention of the authors of the demonstration but we may not expect the State authorities to go behind our action and interpret it in terms of our intention expressed or implied. On the contrary they would infer intention from action. I, therefore, suggest that necessary change is immediately made in the State Congress constitution and an unequivocal declaration is made to the effect that the hoisting of the National Congress flag is in no way intended as a hostile demonstration or insult to the State flag. If Mysore is an integral part of India, as it is, it should be equally proud of the All-India national flag as it must be of its own.

It will also be necessary for you to make it clear that you will not hoist the national flag on ceremonial occasions where persons other than registered Congress members are admitted, unless you also at the same time hoist the Mysore flag. Remember, you are not in a state of rebellion against the Maharaja. So far as I understand you do not aim at the destruction of the Principality of Mysore. You aim at

[1]. The relevant part of the resolution read:

"In view of the different conditions prevailing in the States and the rest of India, the general policy of the Congress is often unsuited to the States and may result in preventing or hampering the natural growth of a freedom movement in a State. Such movements are likely to develop more rapidly and to have a broader basis, if they draw their strength from the people of the State, produce self-reliance in them, and are in tune with the conditions prevailing there, and do not rely on extraneous help and assistance or on the prestige of the Congress name. The Congress welcomes such movements, but, in the nature of things and under present conditions, the burden of carrying on the struggle for freedom must fall on the people of the States. The Congress will always extend its goodwill and support to such struggles carried on in a peaceful and legitimate manner, but that organizational help will inevitably be, under existing conditions, moral support and sympathy."

radical reforms. If such is the case, you may not ignore the Mysore flag on ceremonial occasions, if you have also the all-India flag.

If, therefore, you could see your way to adopt my advice I should think that the State authorities will release the prisoners as they should. When the operating cause ceases there is no meaning in keeping political prisoners in jail. Please remember that satyagraha has to be full in thought, word and deed. If I have understood the situation correctly, I must confess that albeit entirely unconscious, from both truth and non-violence. Truth demanded the carrying out of what I had understood would be done and I had conveyed to Sir Mirza. I know it was open to the State Congress to reject my advice.

But in that case I should have been told so that I would have informed Sir Mirza accordingly. There was a flavour of violence because any hasty or thoughtless action is a breach of non-violence. I am well aware that such meticulous observance of non-violence and truth is not to be expected from the rank and file. But then satyagraha cannot be launched by the rank and file. It has to be launched by responsible persons who are versed in the law of satyagraha.

I understand there is to be a black-flag demonstration. It savours of violence. I hope if there has been any such idea, it will be abandoned.

I need hardly say that my letter carries no authority save what it may possess on account of my supposed expert knowledge of satyagraha. You are at perfect liberty to reject the whole of my advice if it does not commend itself to you and other members of the State Congress.

If you can get permission, you should see Siddhalingaiya and other prisoners and if it is at all possible arrive at a unanimous decision.[1]

The Hindu, 7-5-1938

[1] According to the source the letter was cancelled on receipt of news of the Mysore firing.

130. SPEECH AT HINDUSTANI TALIMI SANGH[1]

WARDHA,
April 24, 1938[2]

We have to make of this training school a school for winning freedom and for the solution of all our ills, of which the chief one is our communal troubles. For this purpose we shall have to concentrate on non-violence. Hitler's and Mussolini's schools accept as their fundamental principle violence. Ours is non-violence according to the Congress. All our problems have therefore to be solved non-violently. Our arithmetic, our science, our history will have a non-violent approach, and the problems in these subjects will be coloured by non-violence. When Madame Halide Edib Hanum delivered her address to the Jamia Millia Islamia on Turkey I remarked that whereas generally history is a chronicle of kings and their wars, the future history will be the history of man.[3] That can be or is only non-violent. Then we shall have to concentrate not on city industries but on rural industries, that is to say, if we want to keep all the 700,000 of villages alive,and not only a fraction of them, we have to revive our village handicrafts. And you may be sure that if we can impart scholastic training through those crafts we can bring about a revolution. Our text-books will have also to be prepared with the same end.

I want you to give your close consideration to what I am saying and reject what does not appeal to you. If what I say does not appeal to our Mussalman brethren, they may reject it summarily. The non-violence I want is not non-violence limited to the fight with the British but is to be applied to all our internal affairs and problems—true active non-violence from which will issue live Hindu-Muslim unity and not a unity based on mutual fear like the pact, for instance, between Hitler and Mussolini.

When the New Education Scheme was launched I was full of self-confidence in which I now feel I am lacking. My words had power of which they seem to be bereft today. This lack of confidence is due not to things without but to things within. It is not that my senses are paralysed. My intellect gives me good work for my age.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"
[2] From *The Hindu*, 25-4-1938
[3] *Vide* "Prisoners Condition", 10-10-1908

Nor is it that I have lost faith in non-violence. That faith is burning brighter than ever. But I have for the moment lost self-confidence. I would therefore ask you not to accept anything from me implicitly. Accept only what carries conviction to you. But I am sure that if we could conduct even two schools on the right lines I should dance with joy.

Harijan, 7-5-1938

131. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON,
April 25, 1938

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Here is a copy of Mahadev's notes on his Frontier Province visit. As I could not go and as we had disturbing news[1], I felt that he should be sent. I am not circulating the notes among all the members. I am sending copies to the Maulana and Subhas. The notes have made me disconsolate. Mahadev has more to say. I am sending a copy, of course, to the Brothers[2]. I hope you will feel impelled to use your great influence over the Brothers. I am of course in telegraphic communication. I may even visit the Province for a few days, if Khan Saheb wants me to go, in spite of the shock I have received. We seem to be weakening from within. It hurts me that, at this very critical juncture in our history, we do not seem to see eye to eye in important matters. I can't tell you how positively lonely I feel to know that nowadays I can't carry you with me. I know that you would do much for affection. But in matters of state, there can be no surrender to affection, when the intellect rebels. My regard for you is deeper for your revolt. But that only intensifies the grief of loneliness. But I must stop.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1938. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Presumably this is a reference to the tragedy at Mayar; *vide* "Speech at Mardan", 7-5-1938.

[2] Khan Brothers

132. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON,
April 25, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

You have become lazy in writing letters. Nowadays I eagerly await your letter. I couldn't bear the news that you had a fainting fit. Moreover, is it not my unworthiness that you couldn't remain calm this time although you were with me? I am not joking. These days I often feel my unworthiness. That hinders my work, too. You have to rely on your own efforts to attain peace of mind. Why do you want me to tear up your letters? Is there anything confidential in them? Since you wish, however, I do tear them up. But you should shake off this shyness. Write to me freely and let me know all your thoughts. I hope Father is keeping good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3512

133. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

April 25, 1938

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I understand your point.[1] It is also correct. Do give your approval, looking at it purely from the economic point of view. My point was that in case you wanted Congress approval later on, you would not get it. After all, economic and political interests should not be at variance. There is no difference between them. The rulers have taught us the difference.

I shall be needing Rs. 50,000 for rural education and maybe an equal amount for the A.I.V.I.A. The burden of the Harijan Sevak Sangh is already there. This needs to be discussed further. I hope Brijmohan is well and so is Krishna.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 7992. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] With reference to Gandhiji's letter (p. 31), the addressee had *inter alia* written: "I fear it will be very difficult for the Congress to justify its position if it took up the attitude suggested by you. I can understand refusing to conclude an agreement on econnomic grounds. But your grounds being purely political, it would look rather odd if after having kept silent for eighteen months, the Congress now comes out to denounce the resolutions which were taken up at their request."

134 . LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

April 25, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Do whatever you want after due deliberation. I shall certainly like it. May God give you peace.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the HIndi: G.N. 4300

135. MESSAGE FOR MYSORE

[*April 27, 1938*][1]

Do everything possible to keep the movement absolutely non-violent.[2] The death of a large number of pilgrims, if true, is too high a price to pay. If necessary, I am prepared personally to lead the movement in Mysore, wherever I happen to be in India.

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-4-1938

136. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHAGANJ,

April 27, 1938

I approach the Frontier visit[3] in fear and trembling. I dread the crowds that gather at stations. I have only limited physical energy. I would, therefore, urge all Congress Committees *en route* to prevent crowds from coming to platforms, making noisy demonstrations and even insisting on my getting up at all hours of night.

The Bombay Chronicle, 28-4-1938

[1] Mahadev Desai's telegram to the Press dated April 27 stated that Bhupal Chandrasekharayya, representative of the State people was leaving that evening for Mysore with Gandhiji's message.

[2] On April 26 at Viduraswatham village in Kolar District, when the people defied the order banning the hoisting of the national flag and prohibiting meetings, the police opened fire and as a result 32 persons were killed and 48 seriously injured.

[3] Gandhiji left for the Frontier province on April 29.

137. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

[Before *April 28, 1938*]

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

On receipt of your letter I sent you a wire advising postponement of publication.[1] See what Nawab M. I. Khan says. He feels hurt that you want publication. In the circumstances, it is best not to insist on publication till after my meeting with Jinnah. His reference to me also has the same meaning. It is no use publishing the correspondence if it increases bad blood. Don't you think it is wise to wait?

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

138. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

[Before *April 28, 1938*][2]

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I am getting restive about the talks with J. Are you hastening the matter? I am holding up some of my actions for that purpose.

I hope good news continue to come about Indu[3].

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Presumably of the correspondence between Jawaharalal Nehru and Nawab Muhamed Ismail Khan from November 10, 1937 to February 5, 1938 and between Jawaharlal Nehru and Jinnah from January 18, 1937 to April 16, 1938; *vide Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*, Vol. 8, p. 245.

[2] From the reference to talks with Jinnah, presumably on the Hindu-Muslim question which took place in Bombay on April 28, 1938; *vide* "Telegram to Amrit Kaur", 28-4-1938

[3] Indira Gandhi

139. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY,
April 28, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
C/O YWCA
ANANDAGIRI
OOTACAMUND

TALKS[1] NOT UNHOPEFUL. AM[2] WELL.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3857. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7013

140. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[3]

April 28, 1938

We had three hours' friendly conversation over the Hindu-Muslim question and the matter will be pursued further. The public will be informed in due course of its developments.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-4-1938

141. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKVASA

JUHU,
April 29, 1938

BHAI PAKVASA,

I only knew from a newspaper yesterday, as we were nearing Kalyan Junction, of the wrath that has descended on you. However, God's wrath is in fact an expression of His kindness. He takes back what He had given. I don't wish, therefore, to offer you any condolences. On the contrary, I want a promise from you that you will not lose fortitude. May this loss increase your devotion to service.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:C. W. 4679. Courtesy:Mangaldas Pakvasa

[1] With M. A. Jinnah.
[2] The source has "and".
[3] This was issued jointly by Gandhiji and M. A. Jinnah.

142. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

April 29, 1938

The appointment of Mr. Dain, a subordinate of the Orissa Government, to be the acting Governor threatens to precipitate a crisis of the first magnitude. The matter looked small on the surface. The fact that he is to retire after the termination of the acting appointment has been regarded as sufficient atonement for an admitted mistake. In my opinion it is no atonement. If he is reverted to his original permanent post, not only would there not be anything wrong but if the Ministers wanted to be churlish, they might take a secret delight in their quondam acting Governor becoming their subordinate. The whole of the sting lies in a subordinate official becoming an acting Governor of his Province with whom the Ministers are expected to work and almost daily submit documents for his signature and have him to preside at their meetings.

It is incongruous and unbecoming and reduces autonomy to a farce. If this autonomy is real, and is to blossom forth into full freedom, nothing should be done by superior powers after the previous style. Every one of their acts must conform to a rule or convention. It must not depend upon the caprice of the Governor-General or even the Secretary of state for India. Wherever the prestige of autocracy depended upon its exacting obedience, willing or unwilling, from the ruled, the prestige of the superior authority that has voluntarily divested itself of autocracy and conferred autonomy should consist in always carrying the majority party with it. There is no other way that I can think of for the healthy growth of autonomy and the avoidance of friction.

The Viceroy and the Governors have bestowed unstinted praise upon all the Ministers of India. They have given no cause for the exercise of the more than ample powers reserved under the Government of India Act. The prestige of the majority party depends upon never sleeping over the rights of the people, never allowing a single error on the part of the superior authority to escape their vigilant eyes. Looked at in this light, the Congress, it seems to me, cannot allow the appointment to pass unchallenged.

I hear that the Orissa Ministry has threatened to resign as soon

[1] This was published under the title "Acting Governorship of Orissa".

as Mr. Dain occupies the gubernatorial chair. I understand too that an interim Ministry will be appointed to carry on the Government. I suppose that as soon as the acting appointment is over and the Governor returns from leave, by some arrangement the present Ministry will be reinstated. That won't be fair play. The Congress will stultify itself to submit to any such arrangement. The governance of a province is not like a play of children. The Congress is discovering what a thankless task it is, how serious it is. The real Ministers, who represent the real majority of the Orissa legislators, cannot look unconcerned on the administration of their province passing into the hands of new irresponsible persons appointed at the will of the Governor or acting Governor as the case may be. I do hope, therefore, that the mistake will be undone before it is too late. There are many ways of doing it gracefully. But there must be a will before a graceful way is found. I hope it will be.[1]

Harijan, 7-5-1938

143. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[2]

April 29, 1938

I enjoy the privilege of friendship with Sir Mirza Ismail. I know that he is anxious to liberalize the administration of Mysore. I have found him to be willing to listen to the advice and suggestions of friends. And I know that the tragedy[3] which has been enacted in Mysore has filled him with distress.

I have read the communique issued by the Mysore Government. It does not read convincing to me. But for the advice that I am about to tender, I do not need an accurate knowledge of all the facts surrounding the tragedy. Seeing that I receive pressing letters, deputations and wires from representative people of Mysore for guidance, and seeing that I know so many workers of Mysore who look to me

[1] In response to this the Secretary to the Governor of Orissa issued the following communique on May 4, 1938: "In view of the instability of the political situation which he would be bound to leave to his successor, His Excellency the Governor of Orissa does not feel justified in proceeding with his original plan, and considers that he has in the interests of the province no option but to ask for the cancellation of the leave granted to him. The secretary of State has acceded to his request with the concurrence of the Governor-general."

[2] This was published under the title "Price for Gaining Liberty".

[3] *Vide* footnote 2, "Message for Mysore", 27-4-1938

for a solution of their difficulties, it would be wrong on my part at this critical juncture to content myself merely with sending letters or even telegrams of advice.

One or two facts stand out prominently. There has been firing upon an unarmed crowd, resulting in several deaths and many more being injured. I will assume, though the information received by me on behalf of the public is to the contrary, that there was some provocation. We can never know with absolute certainty whether the firing was justified. There is no code which can give an exact definition of justification. It must always be a matter of opinion, and opinions always have a knack of varying.

What I, therefore, venture to suggest to the Mysore Government is that they should not be satisfied with making an inquiry, however impartial it may be. The demonstration that is going on in Mysore about the national flag is a symptom of the time.

I must confess that I was not aware of a popular awakening in Mysore on a wide scale, as there undoubtedly is. It gladdens me, as I hope it gladdens the Mysore authorities. I suggest, therefore, that the best and only remedy for the Maharaja and his Adviser, Sir Mirza Ismail, is to divest the Government of its autocracy and to make popular representatives responsible for the administration of Mysore. The responsibility must be on the broadest scale possible if it is to ensure peace in Mysore. It has been suggested that the state being backward, responsibility can only be a plant of slow growth. I have never subscribed to that doctrine. It is not a compliment to the States. One would expect them, with all the natural advantages in their favour, to show much greater progress than in unwieldy British India.

To the leaders of the people of Mysore I will say:These tragic deaths and injuries inflicted upon innocent persons would be a small price paid for the liberty of the people. They may make an enquiry and the injured and the heirs to the deceased may receive compensation. But if I were a Mysorean, I would not lay stress on personal gains; I would use these sacrifices for gaining the liberty for which they had been made voluntarily or involuntarily. They should also remember that one condition of success is the retention of a truly non-violent spirit and atmosphere under every conceivable circumstance. I have been told that the people have been behaving with exemplary non-violence and that the crowd bravely suffered the

firing. If that is proved to be the case, I for one will rejoice over the loss of life. It is the necessary price paid for gaining liberty.

Harijan, 7-5-1938

144. DISCUSSION WITH VALLABHBHAI PATEL[1]

April 29, 1938

Sardar Vallabhbhai raised the question of the Lancashire Delegation coming out and asked Mahatmaji as to the lines on which the Congress is likely to approve of an agreement with U.K. Mahatmaji said that he could not see under what circumstances the Congress could be a party to agreeing to take cloth from Lancashire in return for cotton from India. He said that would be definitely against the whole creed of the Congress.

Sardar Vallabhbhai pointed out that the Advisory Committee was appointed on a recommendation of the Assembly and the report of the Advisory Committee and the recommendation of the Government of India thereon were, without division, demanded by the Assembly to be put before them. He, therefore, inferred that the Congress party in the Assembly were committed to negotiations with Lancashire, and he said that it would not be right for the Congress to go back on it. Mahatmaji said that he was not a party to these requests and demands, but he said that as far as the Advisory Committee were concerned, he would say to them as under :

1. The Advisory Committee may examine the trade pact from a purely economic point of view.

2. That if, on that examination, they could honestly recommend an agreement with U.K., including an arrangement with Lancashire, he saw no objection to their making such recommendation.

3. *Per contra*, if, on such examination, the Advisory Committee felt that they could not recommend such an agreement, he would not be sorry.

4. That any such recommendation made by the Advisory Committee, as constituted, would command his best attention, but he would advise the Advisory Committee to put in a paragraph at the end of their recommendation saying that they had examined the whole question only from an economic point of view and no other. Other points of view, viz., political, etc., were for the Government of India to consider and the Assembly to express an opinion on.

5. Mahatmaji, however, made it clear in unambiguous language that if the Advisory Committee felt that they could not put in any such observation out of what he calls self-respect, they may not do so. He said that, in that case, the Congress was quite capable of raising its own points. As I was leaving, he said:

[1] As reported by Purushottamdas Thakurdas

Do your best acording to your lights and leave us to do our best according to the political light.[1]

He added that both these expressions of opinion from different points of view would be equally valuable and consistent.

From Purushottamdas Thakurdas Papers. Courtesy:Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

145. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ON THE TRAIN TO PESHAWAR,
April 30, 1938

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Here, is a copy of the brief notes I have jotted down of the 3½ hours' talks with Jinnah. It may be that you and the other members may not like the basis. Personally I see no escape from it. My handicap today is that I do not move about the country, as you do, and a still more serious handicap is the inner despondency that has overtaken me. I am carrying on, but it is galling to me to think that I have lost the self-confidence that I possessed only a month ago. I hope that this is but a temporary phase in my life. I have mentioned this to help you to examine the proposals on their merits. I do not suppose the first will present any difficulty. The second is novel, with all its implications. You will not hesitate summarily to reject it if it does not commend itself to you. In this matter you will have to give the lead.

I expect to return on the 11th. Subhas in reply to my telegram suggesting that he should open formal negotiations with Jinnah telegraphs that he will be in Bombay on the 10th. I wish that you could also go there early. I am writing to Maulana Saheb in the same strain sending him a copy of this letter.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1938. Courtesy:Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to G. D. Birla", 25-4-1938

146. NOTE TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*April, 1938*][1]

I had a fairly long talk with Pyarelal last evening. He has agreed to shoulder the responsibility for dealing with all the letters that you may entrust to him. What I said was that Pyarelal and Kanu should open the letters, arrange them, pass on to you those that are for you alone to deal with and advise you as to the disposal of the rest. He should not take upon himself the responsibility of tearing up the letters; he should just write on them 'may be torn up', 'may be kept', etc. Only when something like this is done can your burden be made lighter, enabling you to work the way I want you to work. I do not know to what extent you have been able to assimilate the idea of non-violence. I am anxious to know this because it is necessary. That will be only when you have a variety of problems to tackle. More and more occasions present themselves each day. What can be done about the case of fanatical Muslims? How can we cope with it? I do not have a ready answer. But it is a thing to which you should give thought. In regard to N. W. F. P. your responsibility is of course great.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

147. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[*April, 1938*][2]

Now, what is to be done. Mataji says you cannot go. Yes, it is indeed a matter of health. Everbody must agree to that. Nobody will let you die here. Of course, I have been a little careless. Lost in my own worries, I have neglected your eating and drinking. To an extent, I also trusted you. Mirabehn's reason is altogether different. I have written her a letter saying that she spreads poison by talking to others about you and me. And so, she should not talk about you and me to

[1] From the contents, it appears that the letter belongs to April, 1938, when Mahadev Desai visited the Frontier Province.

[2] Inferred from the contents; *vide* Suppl. " Letter to Stretcher-Bearers", 24-4-1900

anyone. She has found this a hard condition. That is why she is silent. No doubt that is a good thing to happen.

From the Hindi original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

148. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

May 2, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
CARE YWCA
ANANDAGIRI
OOTACAMUND

HEALTH GOOD. WEATHER PERFECT. LEAVING FOR BOMBAY TENTH. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original:C. W. 7858. Courtesy:Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7014

149. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

PESHAWAR,
[*May 2, 1938*][1]

AMTUSSALAAM
CARE ABDUL WAHEED KHAN
MANSA

HEALTH GOOD. WEATHER PERFECT. LEAVING TENTH MORNING. LOVE.

From a photostat: G. N. 372

150. NOTE TO MAHADEV DESAI

May 2, 1938

Tell Khan Saheb that my health will not permit such a heavy tour programme. This time we should undertake only what can be done by staying at Peshawar. We may certainly go to Utmanzai for a day. We may leave out Khyber if necessary. Those who want to meet me should be given appointments in Peshawar. A women's meeting must be arranged. The programme for September or October can be

[1] A similar telegram was sent to Amrit Kaur on this date; *vide* " Telegram to Amrit Kaur", 2-5-1938

arranged right now. It may be a one-month programme if they want it. Impatience may damage my health and may prevent our finishing all the work that we propose to do. Even after considering this, if you wish to go ahead with the programme as shown to me, it may be done. The will of God shall prevail. The programme for Peshawar may be arranged for tomorrow, if possible.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy:Narayan Desai

151. LETTER TO AMRITAL T. NANAVATI

May 2, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

May you always remain a youth of eighteen or twenty-two. How could that be my condition? You don't know passion, but I was a slave of passion for thirty years and tried to satisfy it. Moreover, I recently discovered that I have not been able to subdue it at all. I don't remember having had an emission while awake at any time during the last fifty years. I am not referring here to the emission in dreams or those brought on by desire. But I was in such a wretched and pitiable condition that in spite of my utmost efforts I could not stop the discharge though I was fully awake.[1] I feel now that the despondency that I had been feeling deep down in me only foresh adowed this occurrence. After the event, restlessness has become acute beyond words. Where am I, where is my place, and how can a person subject to passion represent non-violence and truth? This turmoil goes on in my heart. I keep asking myself:am I worthy of you all who follow me, am I fit to lead you all? God will answer the question when He pleases. Is it not said that Rama is the strength of the weak?

There must be some place where you can settle down. We will think over the matter when I return. Think over what you would like to suggest.

A wire was sent to Vijaya. Now let us await her reply.

Mahadev will write about Surat.

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Mirabehn", 3-5-1938

If you have in mind an indigenous machine, you needn't ask anybody.

What you write about the weaving shed seems all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:G. N. 10747

152. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

PESHAWAR,
May 2, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

I have your letter. Stay there in peace. I shall reach Segaon by the beginning of June. May be a couple of days earlier. Do not let your health suffer. The Jains who visit the common temples follow Hinduism. Jain philosophy is not distinct from Hindu philosophy. A temple-goer should certainly keep away from any temple which the untouchables cannot enter, shouldn't he?

Are you studying anything there? I expect to leave the Frontier province on the 9th. I shall have to go to Bombay again. Your reply to this letter may be sent to Bombay. I shall be staying at Juhu. Let me know whatever talk you have with Shakaribehn. I am of course keeping well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original:C. W. 9994. Courtesy:Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

153. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

PESHAWAR,
May 3, 1938

SETH JAMNALAL BAJAJ
JAIPUR

FORGOT TELL YOU VALLABHBHAI CANNOT GO JAIPUR.[1] HE HAS TO GO MYSORE. HEALTH WELL CLIMATE EXCELLENT BUT TOUR PROGRAMME CANCELLED AS TOO HEAVY.

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 195

[1] For the Jaipur Rajya Praja Mandal Conference.

154. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

PESHAWAR,
May 3, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
OOTACAMUND

YOU CAN GO.[1] TAKE CAREFUL NOTES. FRAME CONCLUSION WITH ME. KEEPING WELL. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3859. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7015.

155. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 3, 1938

I like your letter for its transparent love. It tells me nothing new, but it comes at a moment when I am most receptive. The problem however is not so simple as you have put it. If complete *brahmacharya* under the conditions I am trying is like an attempt to climb the craters in the moon. What is the value of the species that requires the nine fortifications?[2] You are quite right in describing my experiment as new. So is my experiment in ahimsa. The two hang together. Remember that my experiment has natural limitations. I may neither tempt God nor the Devil. I have not the time to prolong the argument.

In your next letter you must tell me in concrete terms what definite changes I should make so as to fit in with your idea. Should I deny myself the service rendered by Sushila? Should I refuse to have *malish*[3] by Lilavati or Amtul Salaam for instance? Or do you want to say that I should never lean on girls' shoulders? Needless to say you won't pain me at all by telling me frankly whatever you think I should do to get out of the terrible despond-ency. Just now I am most in need of support from those who surround me with service and affection, undeserved as it seems to me, for the time being. In guiding me remember that what I am doing I have done all my life you may say. And my *brahmacharya* has become firmer and more

[1] To Mysore; *vide* letter to the addressee dated May 16, 1938.

[2] The reference is to the nine rules of behaviour known as "the nine-fold hedge or wall" for the protection of *brahmacharya*.

[3] Massage.

enlightened. Of course I have been far away from perfection. But I felt I was progressing. That degrading, dirty, torturing expe-rience of 14th April shook me to bits and made me feel as if I was hurled by God from an imaginary paradise where I had no right to be in my uncleanliness.

Well, I shall feel pride in my being parent to so many children, if any of them will give a lifting hand and pull me out of the well of despair. My faith in myself and my experiment will revive and will burn all the brighter.

Love.

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy:Narayan Desai

156. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

[AS AT] SEGAON,
May 4, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I am replying today; but this should not become a practice. Whenever there is an opportunity you should ask orally as it is easier for me to give oral answers. It saves time.

Your interpreting it as 'natural' is correct. All *vikaras*[1] need not be rejected. Even pitying a man is a *vikara*. Our distaste for something bad is also a *vikara* but not to be rejected. If it is desirable to carry on the business of the world, then the *vikara* needed for this is not only in order but is necessary. Of course vital fluid is discharged also when man and wife come together to procreate; but then it does not go waste. It may be a fall. The fall leads to new creation as a rise often does. It cannot be said that procreation is always harmful. Saying this would amount to finding fault with God. Those couples who come together only for the sake of a felt need for offspring and otherwise remain like brother and sister—can remain so without any *vikara*—deserve a million salutations; they are perfect *brahmacharis*.

What you have written about expenses is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi:G. N. 4291

[1] Mutations of the mind.

157. SPEECH AT ISLAMIA COLLEGE,PESHAWAR[1]

May 4, 1938

I have become a member of the Khyber Union without reading its constitution. It is the Pathan's trick. Our people tremble at the mention of the Pathan's name.

Continuing, Mahatma Gandhi said that he had been unable to participate in active discussion for the last two or three years.

I cannot speak standing. Even when I talk at length sitting, I get dizzy in the head. It is the Khan Brothers' love of me that has brought me here.[2]

It is well that you referred to the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity, and I would ask you to consider what you can do in furtherance of that great cause. There is no doubt that the work belongs essentially to you of the younger generation. We are now getting old and will soon be gathered to our fathers. You have therefore to shoulder the burden. How you can help in achieving the great object, you have yourselves shown in your address by your appreciative preference to non-violence and to Khan Saheb's work. I do not know if your reference was deliberate and if you knew the full implication of what you were saying. I do hope you knew what you were saying and that you fully weighed your words. If you have, then I should like to take you a step further.

After explaining the circumstances which had delayed his visiting the Frontier, Mahatma Gandhi said that when it was first known that he was to visit the Frontier people said that this man (Mahatma Gandhi) was going to make the people cowards. If non-violence means that, you should despise it.[3]

An Urdu newspaper has said that my mission in the Frontier Province is the emasculation of the Pathans, Whereas Khan Saheb has invited me here in order that the Pathans might hear the message of non-violence from my own lips and in order that I might see the Khudai Khidmatgars at close quarters and find out to what extent

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Frontier Notes-III". However, this has been collated with the report published in *The Hindustan Times*.

[2] This and the preceding paragraphs are from *The Hindustan Times*.

[3] This paragraph is from *The Hindustan Times*.

non-violence has permeated them.[1] That means that the Khan Saheb at any rate has no such fear as has been expressed by that Urdu paper. For he knows that true non-violence is mightier than the mightiest violence. If therefore you really know the essential nature of non-violence and appreciate Khan Saheb's work, you will have to pledge yourselves to non-violence, and that in spite of the fact that violence is so much in the air and we are talking day in and day out of military manoeuvres and aerial action, armaments and naval strength. You have to realize that the power of unarmed non-violence is any day far superior to that of armed force. With me acceptance of non-violence was instinctive, it was part of my training and home influence in childhood. I have been preaching the creed of non-violence for 50 years.[2] Its superior strength I came to realize in South Africa where I had to pit it against organized violence and racial prejudice. I practised it in South Africa, where everybody, like the Pathans, is armed and the Government has introduced conscription.[3] The people said how a handful of Indians could fight the African Government with that weapon. I returned from South Africa with a clear conviction of the superiority of the method of non-violence to that of violence. In India also, we have used it for gaining our rights and we have achieved some measure of success.[4]

If the method of violence takes plenty of training, the method of non-violence takes even more training, and that training is much more difficult than the training for violence. The first essential of that training is a living faith in God. He who has a living faith in God will not do evil deeds with the name of God on his lips. He will not rely on the sword but will rely solely on God. Lakhs of Muslims commit sins in the name of God and lakhs of Hindus who say "Rama" do likewise.[5] A genuine believer in God need not have a stick in his hand. One who repeats God's name and recites the *kalmah* may not be Allah's devotee. He alone is a man of God who sees God in every soul. Such a man would not be prepared to kill another. But you may say that a coward may also pass off as a believer in God saying he

[1] *The Hindustan Times* adds here: "There is no other reason. There are other small things, but they could not have brought me here. If you really understand non-violence, you will have to be non-violent throughout."

[2] This sentence is from *The Hindustan Times*.

[3] This and the following sentence are from *The Hindustan Times*.

[4] This sentence is from *The Hindustan Times*.

[5] This and the following four sentences are from *The Hindustan Times*.

does not use the sword. Cowardice is no sign of belief in God. The true man of God has the strength to use the sword, but will not use it knowing that every man is the image of God.

Islam, it is said, believes in the brotherhood of man. But you will permit me to point out that it is not the brotherhood of Mussalmans only but it is universal brotherhood, and that brings me to the second essential of the training for non-violence. We must not believe in non-violence as a policy, but as an article of faith.[1] The Allah of Islam is the same as the God of Christians and the Ishwara of Hindus. Even as there are numerous names of God in Hinduism there are as many names of God in Islam. The names do not indicate individuality but attributes, and little man has tried in his humble way to describe the mighty God by giving Him attributes, though He is above all attributes, Indescribable, inconceivable, Immeasurable. Living faith in this God means acceptance of the brotherhood of mankind. It also means equal respect for all religions. If Islam is dear to you, Hindusim is dear to me and Christianity is dear to the Christians. It would be the height of intolerance—and intolerance is a species of violence—to believe that your religion is superior to other religions and that you would be justified in wanting others to change over to your faith.

The third essential is the acceptance of truth and purity, for one claiming to have an active faith in God cannot but be pure and truthful.

Now let me tell you that your appreciation of Khan Saheb's services and of non-violence carries all these implications if the appreciation is genuine.

If you want to preach non-violence in India and the world at large, you must accept my advice in the matter based on long experience. If you forsake non-violence, you will have to forsake Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. He cannot go a step without your assistance. God also helps through people by moving their hearts. I have travelled throughout the world and seen that people do not realize and appreciate the full implications of the non-violence creed. We have to defend India's wealth with non-violence. Millions of our people will have to fully realize the implications of this creed. Non-violence is meant for all irrespective of faith.[2]

[1] This sentence is from *The Hindustan Times*.

[2] This and the following paragraph are from *The Hindustan Times*.

As votaries of non-violence we will forget violence. If Islam is dear to you and Hindusim is dear to me, sheer logic will force you to the conclusion that we must have equal respect for each other's religion.

Those who claim to lead have to live up to all the implications and express them in their daily life. Now, you will not be the rank and file, but you will be leaders of your people. As generals of non-violence you need special training than ordinary people, who can at best be soldiers.[1] Your non-violence will not be of the lunatic or the coward. It will be stronger than of one with the sword. If you can live up to the ideal, you may be sure that no one will have any excuse for saying that non-violence is going to emasculate you. Yours will be the non-violence of the bravest.

Harijan, 14-5-1938, and *The Hindustan Times*, 5-5-1938

158. DISCUSSION WITH CONGRESS SOCIALISTS[2]

PESHAWAR,
May 4, 1938

Mahatma Gandhi replied that the Socialists believing in the Congress creed could not be excluded from the Congress on account of their socialistic ideas. Gandhiji is reported to have pointed out that Pandit Nehru and Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose were Socialists. So long as the Socialists accepted the Congress creed and carried out the Congress programme he could not see there was any objection to their being admitted into the Congress organization. This, however, was his interpretation of the existing Congress practice. Whether different courses were warranted under particular local conditions in the Frontier Province, he was unable to say.

The Bombay Chronicle, 6-5-1938

[1] This and the following two sentences are from *The Hindustan Times*.

[2] A deputation of the local Congress Socialists, consisting of 11 persons, drew Gandhiji's attention to a Press report that the Frontier Congress leaders intended to exclude Congress Socialists from the Congress in view of the special circumstances obtaining in the Frontier.

159. SPEECH AT EDWARD'S MISSION COLLEGE, PESHAWAR[1]

May 5, 1938

Replying to the address in Hindustani, Mahama Gandhi said that his heart rebelled against speaking in English for the sake of a few Englishmen in the audience. He took strong exception to addresses being presented in English when he could well read Urdu and, if he felt any difficulty anywhere, he could consult Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. Continuing, Gandhiji said:[2]

Your address is one paean of praise of me. Well, I have never found it easy to appropriate such praise, but let me tell you that there was no time in my life when I was less able to appropriate such praise than I am today. For a curious sense of despondency has possessed me and I cannot yet get over it. Well, I came here not to make a speech, and I was told that I need not give more than five minutes. But a sentence in your address[3] compels me to devote a few minutes more than I had anticipated. The sentence about non-violent passive resistance at once took my memory back to Germiston in South Africa in 1907[4]. A meeting of European friends was convened to hear me speak on passive resistance, as the movement was then known. The Chairman of the meeting there expressed practically the same statement as you have made in the address, viz., that passive resistance was a weapon of the weak. The reference jarred on me and I immediately corrected the speaker. It is curious, if not also surprising, that you should have made the same mistake after all these years of satyagraha in India. We may be weak and oppressed, but non-violence in not a weapon of the weak.[5] It is a weapon of strongest and the bravest. Non-violence has greaterpower than Hitler's or Mussolini's force.[6] Violence may well be the weapon of

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Frontier Notes-III". This version has been collated with the report published in *The Hindustan Times*.

[2] This paragraph is from *The Hindustan Times*.

[3] Which read: "Born in a land where ahimsa was preached thousands of years ago it was left to you, Sir, to enunciate in your own remarkble way the doctrine of non-violent passive resistance as the most irresistible weapon in the hands of the weak and the oppressed."

[4] This should be '1909'; " Sprrvh sy Germistion", 7-6-1909

[5] The Hindustan Times reports here: "Non-violence is not a weapon of the weak because, when a weak man uses it, love does not come into the picture."

[6] This sentence is from *The* Hindustan *Times*.

the weak and the oppressed. Being strangers to non-violence nothing else is open to them. It is, however, true that passive resistance has been regarded as a weapon of the weak. That was why the name 'satyagraha' was coined in South Africa to distinguish the movement there from passive resistance.

Passive resistance is a negative thing, and has nothing to do with the active principle of Love. Satyagraha proceeds on the active principle of Love which says, 'Love those that despitefully use you. It is easy for you to love your friends. But I say unto you, love your enemies.'[1] If satyagraha was a weapon of the weak, I should be deceiving Khan Saheb, for no Pathan has yet confessed his weakness. It was Khan Saheb who told me that he never felt so strong and brave as when he, out of a free will, renounced the lathi and the rifle. If it was not the Supreme weapon of the brave, I should certainly have hesitated to place it before a brave community like the Pathans. It is with that weapon that Khan Saheb can bid fair to befriend and convert the brave Afridis and the other tribesmen. You know the Afridi does not fear death.[2] I have to make him braver, not a weakling. Otherwise Khan Saheb will despise me.

I am glad to have had this opportunity of correcting you. For the moment you realize it, you will enlist yourself as workers in the cause for which Khan Saheb and I are working. That it is difficult to carry conviction I agree. I find it difficult in spite of my conscious practice of it for the last 50 years. But it presupposes purity of the highest type. Infinite patience is required—even the patience of emptying the ocean with a blade of grass. If we want complete independence for India, it can be through non-violence alone.[3]

Harijan, 14-5-1938, and *The Hindustan Times*, 6-5-1938

160. SPEECH AT CHARSADDA[4]

May 6, 1938[5]

I really wanted to make the acquaintance of those of whom I had heard so much. I wanted to see with my own eyes how the Khudai

[1] St. Luke, 6. 28

[2] This and the following two sentences are from *The Hindustan Times*.

[3] This sentence is from *The Hindustan Times*.

[4] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Frontier Notes-IV". The meeting was held at 10 O'clock at night and was attended by over ten thousand people.

[5] From *The Hindu*

Khidmatgars live, move and work. The Khan Saheb was also keen that I must see all these and testify to what extent they had assimilated non-violence. That examination I am afraid cannot be carried on during this brief tour. But let me tell you that my desire to live in your midst has increased. To-night I am thankful that I have been able even to come to Utmanzai and Charsadda and to see you all. Khan Saheb and Dr. Khan Saheb I had seen much of even in Wardha, but I wanted to see *you* and make *your* acquaintance. A great responsibility rests on your and Khan Saheb's shoulders. You have deliberately chosen a name that carries mighty implications. You might have called yourselves Servants of the people, or of the Pathans, or of Islam; but you chose instead the name Khudai Khidmatgars—Servants of God, i.e., Servants of humanity which includes, Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians [of the] Punjab, Gujarat and other parts of India, and also other parts of the world. This very ambitious title implies the acceptance of non-violence. How can a man in the name of God serve humanity by means of the sword? It can be only done by means of a force that God has given us and which is superior to any other force that we can think of. If you do not understand this, you may be sure that the world will laugh at the Khan Saheb and me as vain hypocrites. Whilst therefore I am delighted at the sight of the Khudai Khidmatgars, I am also seized with a kind of fright. Many people have warned me against you, but that warning does not matter if you are true to your creed. Remember that you outnumber volunteers in the whole of India, and that you are more disciplined than volunteers in other parts of India. But unless the discipline is rooted in non-violence the discipline might prove a source of infinite mischief. I have rarely in my tours seen more orderly and quieter meetings. I congratulate you and expressmy gratefulness for all the affection you have showered on me. I shall conclude with the prayer that the Frontier Pathans may make not only India free, but teach the world, through an India made non-violently free, the priceless lesson of non-violence.[1]

Harijan, 21-5-1938, and *The Hindu*, 7-5-1938

[1] Gandhiji's speech was translated into Pushto by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan.

161. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

MARDAN,
May 7, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Sushila has been keeping you informed about me. I have not therefore worried to write to you. It has been an anxious time here.

Your analysis is good. Of course the experience was due to my "weakness, lack of faith".[1]

Let us all hope that I shall come out of the well of despair stronger and purer. There is as yet no sign of the end of the crisis. Darkness is still there. There is still an unaccountable dissatisfaction with myself. Moodiness is wholly unnatural to me. it creeps over me now and again. I suppress it by constant work. But the body does not respond to it as readily as I want it to. But I have not lost faith. There are signs that I shall get out of the slough. I may be deceived. I have patience. I do not fret over the delay. If it is to be a new birth, a regeneration all round, it must be preceded by adequate travail.

You are not to worry over my present condition. The sexual sense is the hardest to over come in my case. It has been an incessant struggle. It is for me a miracle how I have survived it. The one I am engaged in may be, ought to be, the final struggle.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3860. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7016

162 LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

May 7, 1938

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

What is it in the new orientation of the Gandhi Seva Sangh that has disturbed you? I must own that I am responsible for it. I should like you to tell me unhesitatingly what has disturbed you. If I have erred, you know that I shall retrace my steps as soon as I discover the error.

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Mirabehn", 3-5-1938

As to the general deterioration, I agree with you, though we may differ as to the weak spots.

More when we meet.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1938. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

163. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

MARDAN,
May 7, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

You must have got my reply. I think it would be best to use Gokuldas's[1] money for purchasing books.

I hope Chakraiyya will not lose the weight which he has gained.

It is sad that Vijaya is not improving. If she has not come there, write to her to come and see me in Bombay. I am also writing to her. Please inquire about the letter which got lost.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10746

164. SPEECH AT MARDAN[2]

May 7, 1938[3]

If what you have told me is a solemn promise, and if you can keep it, you may be sure that we will win not only the freedom of India but something more. When we can be ready to sacrifice any number of men in the cause of non-violence, we can easily bid fair to be spared the ghastly spectre of war that is now threatening Europe. We talk of doing everything in the name of God. We call ourselves Khudai Khidmatgars, we profess to have given up the sword, and yet if we have not put the sword and the dagger out of our hearts, we are sure to be disgraced and the name 'Khudai Khidmatgar' will be a term of reproach.

[1] Gokuldas Khimji of Mandvi, Kutch
[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Frontier Notes-IV"
[3] From *The* Hindu, 9-5-1938

I have not yet recovered from the shock of the story[1] I heard this afternoon. The Sikhs from Mayar told me of the tragedy that happened there in broad daylight. So far as I know the victims had done nothing to provoke the ire of the assassins. The assassins did the deed in broad daylight and bolted away without anyone trying to apprehend them. It is worth pondering over how such a thing could happen when we are all talking of non-violence. There were in the village Khudai Khidmatgars and others believing in the creed of non-violence. It was their duty to catch the culprits. It is their duty to prevent the recurrence of the deed. It is also your duty to befriend the bereaved and to assure the fear-stricken of your sympathy and succour. So long as things of this kind countinue to happen in our midst, our non-violence must be in doubt.

Harijan, 21-51938

165. SPEECH AT KALUKHAN[2]

May 7, 1938[3]

Your address is made up of two parts—one devoted to my praise and the other to non-violence. The first part may be ignored for I am sure that that is going to do good to nobody. In fact I am quite sure that if someone offered to sing my praises for twenty-four hours, he would get tired and I should fall fast asleep. What God may have enabled me to do is but a repayment of debt, and he who repays a debt deserves no praise. In fact if he fails to do so, he may be liable to prosecution.

What interests me more is what you have said about non-violence. Let me tell you that I should not have been able to sum up better the characteristics of a non-violent man. But let me tell you what you have not said in your address, and that is the implications of non-violence. You must have heard of the riots[3] I n Allahabad and

[1] At Mayar, a village about three kilometres from Mardan, three Sikhs—a boy of 11, an old man of 80 and a young man of 25—were murdered by three Pathans.

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Frontier Notes-IV"

[3] During March 1938

Lucknow. These would be impossible if there was really non-violence amongst us. There are thousands of members on the Congress register. If they were really non-violent, these riots would not have occurred. But we not only failed to prevent them, but even sought the aid of the military and the police to quell them. Some of our Congressmen argued with me that our non-violence was limited to our dealings with the Englishmen. Then I say that non-violence was not the weapon of the strong, but of the weak. Active non-violence of the brave puts to flight thieves, dacoits, murderers, and prepares an army of volunteers ready to sacrifice themselves in quelling riots, in extinguishing fires and feuds, and so on. you have said that non- violence automatically solves unemployment. You are right, for it rules out exploitation. The non-violent man automatically becomes a servant of God. He should be ready to render account to God of every minute of his time. May you all be true servants of God and true practisers of non-violence.

Harijan, 21-5-1938

166. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

PESHAWAR,
May 8, 1938

I hope you got my letter[1] in reply to yours on my bitter experience. My search still continues. It gives me joy. I rejoice in the pain that sometimes accompanies the labour. God who has never forsaken me is not going to do so now. I am therefore indifferent what comes out of the search. But you must continue to warn me so long as you think that I go astray in action.

Your brother-in-law's letter is very fine. Evidently your sister was a very superior woman—a rare type. I can understand your grief over such a loss. But such losses are a test of our faith. Nothing but a fixed faith that death for the good is a translation to a better state, and for the evil a beneficent escape, can reconcile us to the mystery of death.

Love.

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Dated May 3, 1938; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 3-5-1938

167. SPEECH AT POLITICAL CONFERENCE, PESHAWAR[1]

May 8, 1938

In all your three addresses[2] you have told me that you made a triumphant and unique demonstration of non-violence during the C. D. campaign, but I have to find out whether you have assimilated non-violence with all its implications. The principal purpose of my visit was to find out whether all that I had heard from the Khan Saheb about the Khudai Khidmatgars was true, and I am very sorry that I could not give all the time that was needed in order to find out the truth. One conviction I am carrying back with me, viz., the wonderful and affectionate allegiance of the people to the Khan Saheb as their general. Not only the Khudai Khidmatgars but I noticed wherever I went that every man, woman and child knew him and loved him. They greeted him most familiarly. His touch seemed to soothe them. And Khan Saheb was most gentle to whoever approached him. The obedience of the Khudai Khidmatgars was unquestioned. All this has filled me with boundless joy.

A general merits such obedience. Khan Saheb has it by right of love unlike the ordinary general who exacts obedience through fear. The question now is what use will Khan Saheb make of the tremendous power of which he finds himself in possession? I cannot answer the question now. Nor can the Khan Saheb. Hence it is that, if God wills it, I should like to revisit this wonderful Province about October, make a prolonged stay and study in detail the working of non-violence.

Harijan, 21-5-1938

168. INTERVIEW TO A PROFESSOR[3]

PESHAWAR,

[Before *May 9, 1938*][4]

A professor of Islamia College came with a question that was troubling him and is troubling many of the present generation—belief in God. What was the basis

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Frontier Notes-IV".
[2] Presented by Municipal and District Boards of Peshawar
[3] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Frontier Notes-III"
[4] Gandhiji left Peshawar in the morning on May 9.

of his belief if Gandhiji had it, as he knew he had it? What was his experience?

[GANDHIJI:] It can never be a matter for argument. If you would have me convince others by argument I am floored. But I can tell you this that I am surer of His existence than of the fact that you and I are sitting in this room. Then I can also testify that I may live without air and water but not without Him. You may pluck out my eyes, but that cannot kill me. You may chop off my nose, but that will not kill me. But blast my belief in God and I am dead. You may call this a superstition, but I confess it is a superstition that I hug, even as I used to hug the name of Rama in my childhood when there was any cause of danger or alarm. That was what an old nurse had taught me.[1]

But you think that superstition was necessary for you?

Yes, necessary to sustain me.

That is all right. May I now ask if you had anything like a prophetic vision?

I do not know what you call a vision and what you will call prophetic. But let me give you an experience in my life. When I announced[2] my fast of 21 days in jail I had not reasoned about it. On retiring to bed the previous night I had no notion that I was going to announce the next morning a fast of 21 days. But in the middle of the night a Voice woke me up and said: 'Go through a fast.' 'How many?' I asked. '21 days,' was the answer. Now let me tell you that my mind was unprepared for it, disinclined for it. But the thing came to me as clearly as anything could be. Let me tell you one thing more and I have done. Whatever striking things I have done in life I have not done prompted by reason but prompted by the instinct, I would say God. Take the Dandi Salt March of 1930. I had not the ghost of a suspicion how the breach of Salt Law would work itself out. Pandit Motilalji and other friends were fretting and did not know what I would do; and I could tell them nothing, as I myself knew nothing about it. But like a flash it came, and as you know it was enough to shake the country from one end to the other. One last thing. Until the last day I knew nothing about announcing the 6th of April 1919 as a day of fasting and prayer. But I dreamt about it—there was no Voice or Vision as in 1930—and I felt it was just the thing to do. In the morning I shared it with C.R. and announced it to the country, you know with what a wonderfully spontaneous response.[3]

Harijan, 14-5-1938

[1] *Vide* "An autobiography" sub-title " Glimpses of Religion"

[2] On April 30, 1933; *vide* " Statement on Fast", 30-4-1933

[3] *Vide* " Speeh at Chowpatty, Bombay", 6-4-1919

169. INTERVIEW TO A PROFESSOR[1]

PESHAWAR,
[Before *May 9, 1938*][2]

[PROFESSOR:] How is it that many of the English Pacifists are talking of defence and elaborate plans of defence?. . . May it not be possible to carry pacifism too far? Supposing Abyssinia had simply non-resisted and said to Italy, 'Do your worst', would the Italians have been ashamed and desisted from their design? Lansbury said they would.

[GANDHIJI:] I shall take up the Abyssinian question first. I can answer it only in terms of active resistant non-violence. Now non-violence is the activest force on earth, and it is my conviction that it never fails. But if the Abyssinians had adopted the attitude of non-violence of the strong, i.e, the non-violence which breaks to pieces but never bends, Mussolini would have had no interest in Abyssinia. Thus if they had simply said: 'You are welcome to reduce us to dust or ashes but you will not find one Abyssinian ready to co-operate with you', what would Mussolini have done? He did not want a desert. Mussolini wanted submission and not defiance, and if he had met with the quiet, dignified and non-violent defiance that I have described, he would certainly have been obliged to retire. Of course it is open to anyone to say that human nature has not been known to rise to such heights. But if we have made unexpected progress in physical sciences, why may we do less in the science of the soul?

Now about the English Pacifists. I know there are some great and sincere men amongst them, but they are thinking in terms of pacifism as distinguished from unadulterated non-violence. I am essentially a non-violent man, and I believe in war bereft of every trace of violence. An essentially non-violent man does not calculate the consequences. The English Pacifists you are talking of calculate, and when they speak of pacifism they do so with the mental reservation that when pacifism fails, arms might be used. With them not non-violence but arms are the ultimate sanction, as was the case with Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points[3]. No, someone has to arise in

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Frontier Notes-III". The Professor has not been identified in the source.

[2] Gandhiji left Peshawar on the morning of May 9.

[3] Outlined by him in a speech before the U. S. Congress on January 8, 1918, they became the basis of the armistice between Germany and the Allies and the subsequent peace treaty signed at Versailles.

England with the living faith to say that England, whatever happens, shall not use arms. They are a nation fully armed, and if they having the power deliberately refuse to use arms, theirs will be the first example of Christianity in active practice on a mass scale. That will be a real miracle.

Harijan, 14-5-1938

170. A TELEGRAM [1]

[On or before *May 9, 1938*][2]

TELL BOTH FAST HAS NO MORAL BASIS. IF PEOPLE FASTED AGAINST WRONGS, FANCIED OR REAL, AND THERE WAS ANY YIELDING ON ACCOUNT OF THE FAST, SOCIETY WOULD BE DISRUPTED.

Harijan, 21-5-1938

171. TELEGRAM TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

PESHAWAR,
May 9, 1938

NANAVATI
MAGANWADI
WARDHA

YOU CAN START WEAVING SHED. AM WELL. LEAVING TODAY. ARRIVING BOMBAY ELEVENTH.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10748

172. LETTER TO PYARELAL

May 10, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Mahadev's letter seems to explain everything. Resolve things there properly and come early. I do not insist on your bringing

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". This was in reply to a telegram from Salem that A. Manikkam, an "orthodox Congressman", was on a fast unto death and his pregnant wife had started a sympathetic fast.

[2] According to Mahadev Desai the telegram from Salem was received during the Frontier tour. Gandhiji left the Frontier Province on May 9.

Sushila. Do only what you think would be for her good and what she herself would like. Do not unnecessarily take a responsibility on yourself. Remember what I have said today, that is, what is at the root of all that is happening at present.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

173. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

BOMBAY,
May 10, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

I had been awaiting your letter. I had it yesterday. I found nothing in it that would do any harm if Mahadev read it. Mahadev read all the letters. What was there in it to add fuel to the fire?

Stupid girl! You are indeed stupid. For that reason I love you all the more. Your obstinacy does not hurt me. I will not let you remain stupid forever. You are not a goddess, nor is Mahadev a god. The future is bright if this illusion has been dispelled. I consider both of you simple-hearted. The only difference is that you have not experienced lust. Mahadev has done so in full measure. He is a married man after all. But the god of love is subtle. You were both unaware of his attack. You needlessly blame yourself. Desire had certainly taken possession of you. But you were not aware of it at all. For that matter even Mahadev was not aware of it. Mahadev was not careful. But he was not aware even of that.

Neither you nor Mahadev has given me any unhappiness. So long as your reason does not accept something, you must never accept it, however much it may hurt me or anybody else.

My advice is that you should now forget the past, and remaining cheerful by doing your present duty, free my mind from anxiety. Let me know your programme.

Dr. Gilder was here. The blood-pressure was 180/108. The climate is lovely. We expect to go to Wardha from here on the 17th.

I return your letter to Mahadev. I shall tear up the remaining letters. There is a churning going on in my heart. I am happy. God

alone knows what the outcome will be. Massages, etc., have been stopped. I bathe alone.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Are you laughing? I have not revised this letter. I have torn up all the letters.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

174. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW DELHI,
May 10, 1938

The Associated Press sought the opinion of Mahatma Gandhi regarding the terms of the settlement arrived at between the Mysore Government and the Mysore Congress over the flag trouble,[1] announced by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, when he arrived here this morning by the Frontier Mail on his way to Bombay.

Mahatma Gandhi said that he fully concurred with the terms of the settlement as he thought that it was the proper decision in the circumstances. When he was told that some Socialists objected to Sardar Patel's decision to allow the State flag to be hoisted by the side of the Congess flag, Mahatma Gandhi said that their objection was nevertheless not without reason; because they wanted to abolish the States, which was only possible by armed revolution to which creed he did not subscribe.

When questioned as to what should be the attitude of the general public towards the Congress flag and the Red (Socialist) flag in the case of the Congress sponsoring the labour cause in a strike, Gandhiji thought that with him the only flag that counted was the Congress flag. A labour union which had faith in the Congress should, in all circumstances, work under the Congress flag. If there were many flags, he feared that a clash was bound to occur.

[1] The terms of the settlement were: (1) Recognition of Mysore Congress; (2) declaration by the Mysore Government that it is open to the Reforms Committee to discuss and recommend responsible Government for Mysore State; (3) four Congressmen who resigned from the Reforms Committee to be renominated with three additional Congressmen to be selected by the State Congress; (4) the satyagraha to be called off by the State Congress; (5) general amnesty to political prisoners and withdrawal of all repressive orders; and (6) the flag dispute to be settled on the lines suggested by Mahatma Gandhi, namely, that the Congress flag should be flown along with the State flag on all ceremonial occasions. But at purely party functions of the Congress only the National flag is to be flown.

Regarding the release of the Delhi political prisoners, Mahatma Gandhi said that the question of their release was before him. He would do his utmost to secure it, but at the moment he could not say as to when he would take up the matter.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-5-1938

175. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

May 11, 1938

CHI. LILA,

I very much wanted to write to you, but how could I get the time? I have your letter telling me about your entering your 31st year. Little by little you are sure to achieve steadiness. You have certainly made progress. But you have still a long way to go. You will acquire steadiness by observing rules in all matters. I have left Pyarelal and Sushila in Delhi. They will return in a few days. A. S. joined us at Delhi. Kanti and Saraswati joined us at Agra. Ba will remain in Delhi for the present.

I am all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9371. Also C.W. 6646. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

176. LETTER TO PYARELAL

May 11, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Sushila is causing me considerable worry. I am afraid she may break down. It will be terrible if that happens. I would not in any way feel sorry if she were to find happiness by going away from me and this atmosphere. Then I would feel that I had no right to keep her. But, then, who am I? Do I know her? Or, if I know her, why am I not in a position to explain what I see? Your profound love can save her. Her bitter experiences here will be like medicine to her. Do not be hasty in anything. For the sake of Sushila, stay there as long as you must. It is possible that she has now understood a lot on her own and is calm and cheerful. In that case you can perhaps return early.

Mahadev has left a heap of letters with you. Deal with them there. Keep a list of the names of people to whom you write.

I am writing this letter on the train. Do write to me every day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Pepers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

177. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 11, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

How are things with you? When will you calm down? The 9th of May was auspicious for us as the 14th [of April].[1] The 9th had a special tranquillity. On the 14th I was very much upset. On the 9th I was miserable but calm. How nice it would be if you too could understand this in your heart.

Blessings form

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

178. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

BOMBAY,
May 12, 1938

JAMNALAL BAJAJ
SIKAR

HOPE YOUR APPEAL TO SIKAR PEOPLE WILL BE LISTENED. YOU SHOULD STAY THERE TILL REQUIRED.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 196

[1] For allusions to the incident on this day: *vide* Vol. LXVII pp. 58, 60-1, 80 and 166.

179. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY,
May 12, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
GUEST HOUSE
BANGALORE

ARRIVED SAFE. FRONTIER VISIT NECESSARY USEFUL. HOPE YOU KEEPING WELL. AM BOMBAY TILL SEVENTEENTH AT LEAST. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3861. courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7017

180. LETTER TO MERABEHN

May 12, 1938

Your letter is most helpful. I would have called it perfect if there had not been the usual exaltation. But I have no time to dissect your letter. Your own experience settles me. I must change my manners. There will be considerable response to your suggestions. I have been daily taxing myself about my course of action. I am not yet certain what shape the change will take.

About Lilavati I can't recall anything of what you say. But once I felt that I had put my arm around her neck. I asked her in the morning. She said she had no knowledge of any touch. Nevertheless from that day I asked her to sleep at a proper distance. Give me more details about the incident you relate.

You will continue to make whatever suggestions may occur to you. I must not interrupt the experiment, but there is room for revision. My problem is: "Had the awful experience of the 14th April anything to do with the contacts or has it any other meaning?"

Love (in great haste).

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

181. NOTE TO D. B. KALELKAR[1]

[Before *May 14, 1938*][2]

My silence should not in any case stand between us. I have nothing to say about Nanavati. I only wanted to know all that might be said about him. I have organized myself in such a way that his or anyone else's going will not inconvenience me. It is not necessary for Nanavati to stay here whenever I am here. When he serves you I consider it as service to me. Nanavati is staying here to know what village life is and to find out what part he can play in it. He is mainly useful as a musician and when everyone leaves Segaon he would stay on and die here. It is quite difficult to explain the usefulness of such a man. But it is enough if, even while staying with you, he remembers that he has to pass his life in Segaon. In this way he can retain his self-respect and keep his word too. So I think it is his dharma to go from here so long as you need him. But if deep down in his heart he has lost interest in Segaon, he should unhesitatingly take his mind off Segaon. His aim in life would then be to follow in your footsteps and take up Hindi. This is the proper age for him to fix his aim. I have very little use for him when I am in Segaon because for the most part Kanu takes up the responsibility for music. At present his main job in Segaon is to propagate weaving and to think of and experiment on village sanitation. These two tasks are very important. The result may not be visible today but eventually it will grow into a big tree. This aspect may however be ignored for the present. It is good I am observing silence, so that you can ponder over this note. Yet if you want to discuss something I am prepared to talk. Today's silence leaves room for such violations.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10786

182. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

May 14, 1938

CHI. MUNNALAL,

You shall certainly know about my agony. You may ask Mirabehn.

[1] The note was subsequently sent to Nanavati.

[2] The postmark bears the date May 14, 1938.

This is how you and Kanchan should live. You should not meet alone, nor touch each other. If either of you is aroused in the presence of the other, and if you are keen on observing *brahmacharya* at present, you should stay away from each other. Don't suppress passion forcibly. If you desire from the depths of your heart to observe *brahmacharya*, you will certainly be able to overcome your passion. If you are inspired to observe *brahmacharya* merely because it is good, it will not be enough. You may be certain that it can be observed only if you are convinced that without it you cannot shape your life aright.

The rest when we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8576

183. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

JUHU,
May 14, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I had hoped to see you in Bombay. Now that is over. You must build up your health. You should live on butter milk, milk, rice if you can digest it, and juicy fruits like *mosambis*. You need no medicine.

Mirabehn will write about my health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7080. Also C.W. 4572. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

184. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

JUHU, BOMBAY,
May 14, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

Do come to Bombay. I am at Juhu. If you let me know, somebody will go to the station to receive you. I shall most probaly leave here on the 17th or the 18th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9995. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

185. LETTER TO PYARELAL

JUHU
May 14, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have received your letters. I have had Mahadev read them all. You will learn more from Sushila's letter. It is a good thing for me that Sushila seems to be coming out of her stupor. A great burden will be off my mind if she returns to her original self and devotes herself to whatever she considers her duty.

After I had written the above, I got another letter from you. I can bear this distance because you are with Sushila. I would not have been able to stand it had she been alone in Delhi. I have compared her to a tender plant and the comparison is very apt. It was not in the least difficult for me to understand the purpose of Sushila's letter. I have never believed that she would deliberately resort to a lie in speech or action. Sushila acted as if in a stupor. With the exception of going to the toilet, every action of hers was in my view a lie. Once we accept the state of stupor, it is unnecessary to impute to her any other fault. The incident of that night only supports this contention. It has no other relevance.

Sushila is unnecessarily being angry with herself. There will be no time to write separately to her about it. Plead with her on my behalf and console her. Is she cheerful? Does she laugh? If she does

not laugh, how can she be stupid? If she accepts the adjective I have used for her, she must forget her unhappiness and prove her stupidity. Do not the foolish and the wise have some common characteristics?

If your understanding of [the incidents of] the 14th in day-time and of the 9th night is different, what is there in it to make you shudder or render you unhappy? Am I omniscient? My understanding has not always been correct. And on this occasion, I see myself distressed and senile; so what wonder if I act like a jaundiced man who sees everything yellow? Hence, have no fear about my being firm. Right now, I am beginning to give more importance to the view of the other party rather than to my own.Please therefore let me know your interpretation in clear terms and without any fear. If I find it acceptable, it will not take me long to change my view.

When would you prepare *rotis* for me? Sushila is confused. Only you can show her the straight path. Take whatever time is necessary to do that.

Blessings form

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope to leave here for Wardha on the 17th.

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

186. LETTER TO KHWAJA NAZIMUDDIN

BOMBAY,
May 15, 1938

DEAR KHWAJA SAHEB,

I thank you for your letter[1] of the 11th instant received yesterday. I showed it today to Subhas Babu. I must confess that it does not satisfy my expectations. At the same time, I fully recognize the labours given to the question by the Government. I can also appreciate their extreme caution. I am not, therefore, going to come to any hasty decision. But before I can examine the implications of the policy adumbrated in your letter, I should like to know the number of prisoners that will still remain to be dealt with after the operation of the first three clauses. And before I can come to any conclusion, it will be absolutely necesary for me to know how the prisoners will respond to the propositions laid down by the Government.

I can well understand from your standpoint that such a procedure may not be countenanced. But I am bound by a moral promise given to the prisoners and in pursuance thereof, if the whole programme is to work smoothly, it is necesary for me to know their mind. It would be a breach of promise on my part if I submitted without demur to anything less than almost immediate and unconditional discharge.

I am sure you will not ask me for this purpose to travel to Calcutta. I would, therefore, ask you kindly to grant permission either to Subhas Babu or to Sarat Babu to see the prisoners as my deputies.

Of course, your request for secrecy will be strictly respected.

Subhas Babu has not seen this letter. He is engaged in the Working Committee meeting away from where I am staying, but if he was here, I am sure he would share the views expressed herein.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindustan Times, 4-10-1938; also C. W. 9922

[1] *Vide* "Letter from Khwaja Nazimuddin"

187. LETTER TO VIJAYA GANDHI

May 15, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I have your beautiful birthday letter. I pardon you for not writing any letter till now. Last year you learnt the *Gita* by heart. What will you do this year? Does Purushottam pass your pronunciation? Finally, of course, it will have to be passed by me. He might even show partiality towards you. After all, isn't he your teacher? But when do you ever cross my way so that I may test you?

All of us are just near the sea and so have a very pleasant breeze.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

188. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

May 15, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

If you wish, I would take you and the children, and Manu also, to Delhi. You may stay there as long as you like.

BAPU

[PS.]

God has given enough to Surendra. And you have an independent hoard of your own. Moreover, boarding will be free.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1570. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

189. LETTER TO PYARELAL

VISHRAM VATIKA,
JUHU,
May 15, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

You will have received my letter of yesterday. Mahadev has been terribly hurt by your letter. He has been crying. He had already been anguished and given to crying. Your letter has added to his agony. However, it is just as well that you have expressed through this letter whatever was weighting on your mind. That is the only way to regain mental composure and to be cleansed of the kind of suspicions and prejudices lurking there. Mahadev has not written the letter "under pressure from me" as a last resort. Yes, the letter was the result of his discussion with me. But it was not written under pressure. His pen moved because he felt that his writing the letter would be justified. All arguments were his own.

Mahadev wrote to you on his own and the letter was full of anguish. That is why I did not allow it to go. It would have only intensified the misery and there would have been more misunderstanding. Now he has decided to stop writing to both of you for the time being. I have approved of this decision. You and Sushila may write if you feel like doing so. You can even write if the absence of Mahadev's letters irks you. Mahadev had told Sushila that he would write [to her] about my health. But for thetime being even that has been stopped. In any case, I would be writing almost every day. Hence, you would continue to get the news. This should not lead to the conclusion that I have suggested to Mahadev not to write to you, since the idea was Mahadev's. I have given it my approval for the time being. The past, except when it is essential for the present, needs to be forgotten. I wish to discuss the past only to be certain that I have not done any injustice either to Mahadev or to Sushila. No one has deliberately committed mistakes. That is sufficient consolation for me. It should be so for Mahadev and Sushila as well. Where there was no wrong at all, I saw wrong and insisted that all of you should also see it. I wish I had not committed such a grave sin. You can be of great help in my quest to find out. Do not conceal the truth from me by showing me undeserved pity. Of course I know that you will not stay on there a

moment longer than necessary and I am not therefore impatient. My blood-pressure is not checked every day. What daily news then can I give about my health? My own diagnosis says that my health is fine. I sleep well. I take my walks regularly. I eat well. Perhaps mangoes are a little difficult to digest. I do a fairly good amount of work. It does not show any adverse effect. I lie down in the bath-tub. I get sleep. My legs are massaged. My head and feet are massaged with ghee. A[mtus] S[alaam] gives me nourishment. She prepares *rotis* with her own hands. She is quite successful.

Kanti and Saraswati are here. Manilal and Sushila have arrived today.

There is a letter from Nazimuddin. I cannot say it is wholly satisfactory. I shall see what I have to do.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

190. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

VISHRAM VATIKA,

JUHU,

May 15, 1938

STUPID GIRL,

Should I dispense with the quotation marks? I shall do that if you can send me a telegram saying that you have calmed down and are abiding by your promise. Can you understand that there can be stupidity tempered with knowledge? May you always have that type of stupidity. Do suggest whatever you want with regard to my health. I shall need to have letters from you. Write to Rajkumari, Prabha, Mira, Kanu, A. S., etc. Now you must quickly make your life normal. More in the letter to Pyarelal. How is Mother? Is she in good cheer?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

191. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

JUHU,
May 16, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have all your letters from Bangalore. Of course, there is the other side. But there is no rest for Mirza except through responsible government. I shall go through the papers carefully.

I am keeping good health. Pyarelal and Sushila are in New Delhi—19 Raja Bazar Square. Write to them. I am sending them today three letters from Mira with instructions to forward them to you after perusal. You will destroy them. Robbed of Mira's hysteria, they are sound. I am contemplating some changes. I have not yet decided upon anything. You will make what suggestions you may like. The despondency is there but the inner peace is coming.

Talks with J.[1] are still going on. S.[2] is very patient. He is a good listener. He may succeed where others might have failed. I would like him to succeed.

No hasty resolution will be taken about Mysore.

Your visit to Mysore was after all a good thing. You have gained a rich experience.

Ba is in Delhi. Amtul Salam is with me. And she is looking after me.

Love.

ROBBER

[PS.]

Expect to leave for Wardha on 17th or 18th. So write to Wardha.

From the original: C.W. 3862. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7018

[1] M. A. Jinnah
[2] Subhas Chandra Bose

192. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

VISHRAM VATIKA,
JUHU (P.O. SANTACRUZ),
BOMBAY,
May 16, 1938

MY DEAR C. R.,

I have gone through the salty note. It you mean that I should take notice of the flagrant breach, I shall do so. If you mean anything more, please be clear. Are we breaking up by the sheer weight of our own folly or worse? You must give yourself a moment's leisure and think out where we are drifting to. Don't say you have no time. I want to go away tomorrow or as early as I can consistently with the business here.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2069

193. A LETTER[1]

Monday [*May 16, 1938*][2]

The violence that I see running through speeches and writings, the corruption and selfishness among Congressmen, and the petty bickerings fill one with dismay. In the midst of this, we who know must be unyielding and apply the golden rule of non co-operation.

Harijan, 21-5-1938

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The addressee has not been identified in the source.

[2] Monday prior to May 21 fell on May 16,

194. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

JUHU,
May 16, 1938

BA,

How could I expect any letter from you? There was no need for you to write when you were with Jamnalalji. I am all right. Kanti and Saraswati are here. Most probably they will go to Matunga. We shall be leaving for Wardha on 17th or 18th. It would be better if you went straight to Wardha. Devdas may perhaps go to Madras and take Lakshmi with him. He may have some relief from heat, too. If he should go to Dehra Dun, I feel that it would not be proper for him to stay there for more than a day or two. Pyarelal and Sushila are there in Delhi. Both of them or Pyarelal alone may perhaps accompany you. However, consult Devdas and do what you like. Manilal and Sushila also are here, and so is Rajagopalachari. He will go back to Madras in two or three days. Kanam must be fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 28

195. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

VISHRAM VATIKA,
JUHU,
May 16, 1938

STUPID DAUGHTER SUSHILA,

Forget your own unhappiness now and understand and share mine. In truth you have no reason at all to feel unhappy. I am sending Mirabehn's three letters by this same post.[1] Ignore the exaggerations, etc., in the letters and see the love, the truth they contain. Go through the letters patiently. Tell me what it is proper for me to do. Write to Mirabehn if you want. I need women's help in this matter. You can show the letter to anyone you wish.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to amrit Kaur", 16-5-1938

I am quite well of course. There is nothing new to write. We shall go to Wardha in a couple of days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

196. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 16, 1938

STUPID DAUGHTER SUSHILA,

I received Pyarelal's letter after I had already written to you. He writes that [you think] you have lost for ever the place you had in my heart and that consequently you have lost your lustre. This has disturbed me. Your place with me remains as it was. I cannot understand why you should think otherwise. You should cast the doubt out of your mind. The truth is that perhaps I am not the same to you now as I was. But I have no fear. If I am true, your doubt will be dispelled. I do have a fear that I may have unwittingly been unfair to you. But I am not writing this to tell you of my woes. You should at least believe this much, that you have not lost your place with me. I should have your reply by wire.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

197. LETTER TO PYARELAL

VISHRAM VATIKA,

JUHU,

May 16, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

There was no letter from you yesterday. It would be good if you did not keep me without letters these days. I am now putting out of my mind the distress of Mahadev and Sushila. It should now be considered entirely a matter of the past. I am sending today by book-post three letters from Mirabehn. Both you brother and sister

may peruse the letters and let me know your reaction. Is not Mirabehn's description similar to that of Ravana's palace by Tulsidas? Ravana is lying unconscious and his numerous queens are reclining around him in various states of undress. I laughed and cried when I read it. How could I have been affected in that way ? Disregarding Mirabehn's exaggeration, I was affected by what remained in the letter and I wrote that I would change my practice. What if the suffering witnessed on the 14th was the result of those physical contacts? So far I have not found any clear evidence to conclude that it could not have been so. Then have all these women become impure by my touch ? If that is so, have I been like that from the beginning. In that case, is the peace that some women and young men are supposed to have found by being close to me a delusion ? If that is the case, do I have a place in the world? Who am I to find fault with Mahadev and Sushila? Who can say that I may not be thrusting my own faults on them? What have you all gained from me? Is it only disappointment? Would it be proper for me to guide you? Such thoughts pass through my mind. I am maintaining my calm in the midst of this turmoil. My attention is centred on you. If you remain composed then I may regain my self-confidence. Your action will help me only if it is natural. Or, if I find that whatever steps you take express your sense of duty, then too I shall feel at ease. This means that I have found the guru that I have' been looking for. I shall consider myself fortunate if that happens. It is my belief that suchshould be the result of my training. I shall attain glory only if those who are my heirs have reached higher than I. Right now I see you, Mahadev, Sushila, etc., as occupying a loftier place. This does not mean that now I cannot guide you in any matter at all. But it does mean that if the experience of the 14th is indicative of my generally diseased mind, the situation in which all of you sustained yourselves would have reduced me to bits!

I shall not elaborate further.

If possible, decide about the time of your coming. After you receive this letter, write to me at the Wardha address.

Today's post has not yet arrived. I expect to hear that Sushila has regained her calm.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am sending "Thought for the Day" copied from the *Times of India* of today. The person who copied it is also a Sushila[1]. She is the headmistress of a high school at Rajkot.

Post Mirabehn's letters to Rajkumari. I have received your letter. Is Sushila so mad ? It is unbearable that she should lose her place with me. I am awaiting your detailed letter.

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

198. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

After *May 16, 1938*][2]

If you take it with a smile the pain will be lessened. Of course if you wish to make me cry you may wear the long face. I cannot put up with your looking sullen. Is not one Pyarelal enough?

If you have read Mahadev's letter to me you will know that I have told Leela nothing. I have told nothing to anyone. I told only Mirabehn that I had conveyed her complaint to both of you. What is your fault after all? I am at fault in having accused a young man likeMahadev and a pure girl like you. Is this not all that I can tell anyone? Why should you make me more unhappy by being unhappy about it? If you can bear with me, keep a cheerful face and absorb yourself in service. If there is even a little purity and love in me, Pyarelal will be saved and with him both of us will be saved too. Otherwise, both of us will be ruined.

Keep this letter with you. I am afraid of somebody reading it if it is left with me. Ultimately it has to be destroyed.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Sushila Pai
[2] *Vide* the preceding three items.

199. LETTER TO PYARELAL

May 17, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

How is it there is no letter from you today? Not a day should pass without a letter from you. At present, I am working sometimes for ten hours a day. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PYARELAL NAYYAR
19 RAJA BAZAR SQUARE
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

200. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 17, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

After reading Mahadev's letter, you must neither get angry nor abandon me. I have spared nothing in making you unhappy. I do not regret it. Whatever I did was for your good. If you remain unhappy there, it will be breach of promise. If you are not tired of me, both of you should come back at once. Pyarelal's parting from me is like Shravana's being snatched from his parents. I do not have so much right over you. If I remain alive, you will be convinced one day. For the present I shall be awaiting your letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

201. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY,
May 18, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA W

HEALTH PASSABLE. CAN'T LEAVE BEFORE TWENTIETH. DEJECTION DIMINISHING.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3863. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7019

202. LETTER TO PYARELAL

May 18, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Your letter to Mahadev is shocking. It would seem of all the people you are the most distressed. If anyone has to be distressed, it should rightly be I. I shall put up with your absence so long as you remain cheerful there. Otherwise it would be unbearable.

I for one feel that it will be good for you to come away. My state of health is described in the letter to Sushila. Even from that point of view it may be necessary for you to come. Maybe it would be inadvisable for me to be unrestrained.

I must definitely have your reaction. How would that distress me? You may be sure I am calm.

Mahadev's greatest sorrow is that he has lost his place with you. Unwittingly, he has caused you untold misery. I am persuading him. Wipe his tears if you can.

Do not deprive me of your letter even for a day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

203. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 18, 1938

STUPID DAUGHTER,

You have been proving your stupidity in every letter. Yes, I did say that if you were tired of Segaon then I had not been entitled to receive service from you. This could not in any way imply that you should not come to me. It did imply that you should hasten your return. If your mind cannot grasp such a simple thing, ask me again. In this context let me describe to you my condition. These two days have not passed well. Yesterday I worked for 12 hours. I was mentally exhausted. I had a terrible backache. I slept well. I was alert again. But the mental condition is not good. In such a situation I do feel your absence. But how can I send for you, how can I ask you to come so long as you do not feel drawn to this place? Would I have been able to work so much if you had been near me? Now do you understand what I want? But this certainly does not mean that you should come here at once under any circumstances.

Now your second question. I accept your version of what happened on the 9th night. There is no question of your account being incorrect. Those who see silver in a sea-shell are right at all times. But he who knows a sea-shell will see it only as a sea-shell, will he not? Oh, the things that sexual impulse makes us do! This does not even mean that I am in the right and what you thought was merely imagination. Believe me, I admit I may have been a prey to illusion; so you can stick to your own position. Indeed it is your duty to do so. Ponder that verse in the *Bhajanavali*. Only that is dharma which is followed by the learned and practised by the saintly and by peoplefree from attachment and hatred, and which your heart accepts as dharma. What the learned, the saintly and people free from attachment, etc., believe can never be acceptable to us if our heart does not accept it. I am neither a learned man, nor a saint; nor am I free from attachment, etc. I have only appointed myself your godfather. The words of such a man must be rejected unless your heart and mind accept them. Whatever you do, your position with me will always remain the same. In no way have you fallen in my estimation.

Yes, a man's words should be taken at their face value. But even

so, one must consider their context. That is to say, while it is necessary to exercise discretion, we must take it that if the reasons which dictate avoidance of physical contact are applicable to any other behaviour or gestures, such gestures, too must be avoided. So much for the literal interpretation. But even this much is not sufficient. To know the meaning of words it is also necessary to know their deeper significance. When you recite the *Gita* every day, you know the literal meaning of the words. But so long as you do not understand their deeper significance, going by the literal meaning of the words would be futile and burdensome. Does this fully answer your letter?

We shall probably leave here on the 20th. I have torn up your letter. Mahadev does not read your letters these days. He sees what I write. He continues to be miserable. That is in his nature. Time will do its work. Is not *Kaala*[1] one of the names for God?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

204. RESOLUTION ON MYSORE SETTLEMENT[2]

[*May 18, 1938*][3]

The Working Committee has read the popular and official versions of the recent firing that took place near Vidhuraswatham in Mysore on an unarmed crowd. The Committee deplores the fact that the State authorities felt called upon to resort to firing. On seeing that the Mysore government has appointed a tribunal to inquire into the causes that led to the firing, the Working Committee refrains from expressing any opinion on the tragedy. But the Working Committee thinks that H.H. the Maharaja should establish responsible government in his State so that the responsibility for law and order including firing, whenever it is deemed necessary, will be shouldered by a government answerable to the people. The Working Committee sends its condolences to the members of the bereaved families and expresses its sympathy with those who suffered injuries.

[1] Time

[2] According to *The Bombay Chronicle*, 19-5-1938 the resolution drafted by Gandhiji was discussed by the Working Committe on May 18 and passed the following day.

[3] *Ibid*

The Committee approves of the settlement effected by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Acharya Kripalani as between the Mysore State and the Mysore State Congress. The Working Committee notes with satisfaction that in furtherance of the settlement the Mysore Government have issued a communique,[1] and congratulates H. H. the Maharaja and his advisers on the prompt manner in which they are carrying out the settlement. The Working Committee hopes that the settlement will be strictly carried out also by the Mysore State Congress.

On the question of hoisting the national flag the Working Committee hopes that care will be taken not to do anything that may imply any disrespect to the State flag by the State Congress or the national flag by the State authorities.[2] The final status of the national flag will depend not upon the ability to exercise compulsion but upon the correct conduct of Congressmen and the progressive record of service that the Congress establishes in the country. It should further be borne in mind that the national flag is the symbol of non-violence and national unity to be brought about by means strictly truthful and non-violent. It should further be borne in mind that though there is a growing party among Congressmen who seeks the total abolition of States as a relic of the Middle Ages, the policy of the Congress as a whole has hitherto been and remains one of friendliness to the States in the hope that they will recognize the signs of the times and establish

[1] The communique of the Mysore Government dated May 17, stated that:

(i) The Government would recognize the Mysore State Congress provided it co-operated with the Government in the task of constitutional reforms and carried on its activities in a peaceful and constitutional manner.

(ii) The Government would add three new members selected by the Mysore State Congress on the committee on constitutional reforms.

(iii) On all ceremonial occasions the Mysore flag and the flag of Indian National Congress would be hoisted.

(iv) The Mysore State Congress would withdraw the civil disobedience and no-tax campaigns.

(v) All the political prisoners would be released and the prohibitory orders withdrawn.

[2] *The Hindu*, 20-5-1938, carried the following report: " Mahatma Gandhi has instructed the Mysore State Congressmen to hoist first the Mysore State flag, that is, give precedence to the Mysore flag on all ceremonial occasions when they hoist the national flag, as a mark of their loyalty to the Ruler and in order to avoid any conflict."

responsible government within their borders and otherwise extend and guard the liberty of the people under their jurisdiction.

Harijan, 21-5-1938

205. TELEGRAM TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

WARDHA,
May 19, 1938

SUSHILA
21 RAJA BAZAR SQUARE
NEW DELHI

THOUGH STILL FEEL UNWORTHY YOU ARE TO COME. SOONER THE BETTER. PYARELAL AGREES BRING SHARDA. GOD BLESS YOU. SOUNDARAM HERE. HOWEVER YOU CAN WAIT IF YOU WOULD RATHER SEE SOUNDARAM THERE.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

206. LETTER TO PYARELAL

May 19, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

There are no letters from you today. maybe they have gone to Wardha. I hope to get away from here tomorrow. Today the blood-pressure was 168/105. There is no time to write more.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI PYARELAL NAYYAR
19 RAJA BAZAR SQUARE
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

207. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

BOMBAY,
May 20, 1938

Sardar Prithvi Singh, who has been just taken in custody by the collector of Bombay Suburban District, is a life-sentence prisoner in connection with what is known as the first Lahore Conspiracy Case of 1915. He served part of the sentence in the Andamans, and when as a result of public agitation that criminal settlement was closed, Sardar Prithvi Singh was transferred to Madras and then to Rajahmundry. There, having grown tired of jail life, he made two attempts to abscond. He succeeded in the second attempt in 1922, and has ever since succeeded in eluding the police. He is a self-made man. He is a leading revolutionary and for some time has been revising his views on armed revolution, and ultimately decided in consultation with his friends to surrender himself to me and be guided by me. After having had a full conversation with him, I decided to take charge of him, and told him that according to my view of life there could be no secrecy and voluntary surrender to authorities was in itself a service to the country. He recognized the force of my opinion. He came to me on the morning of the 18th, and I wrote to the District Magistrate on the 19th, informing him that Sardar Prithvi Singh had surrendered himself to me, and that I was about to put myself in communication with the Government of India with a view to securing his discharge, and that if the District Magistrate could not legally allow Sardar Prithvi Singh to remain with me, he was at liberty to take him into custody. The District Magistrate wrote to me to say that he had no authority to leave him free. He himself accompanied by the Superintendent of Police arrested him today at 1 p.m. at our residence at Juhu.[2]

I have been given to understand that he will be treated as an A-class prisoner. I had asked Sardar Prithvi Singh to write an account of his career. It is a thrilling romance. So far as I can see, he has not been

[1] This was published under the title "A Fellow-pilgrim".

[2] Mahadev Desai in his "Weekly Letter", published in *Harijan* , 28-5-1938, commented: "Gandhiji was visibly moved as the Magistrate and the Police Superintendent bore him away, and after dictating the statement for the press, said: 'It is people like these who can be true satyagrahis.' "

guilty of anything of which he need be ashamed. He developed revolutionary ideas in Canada where he had migrated in his youth. He was witness to the illegal and shameful turning away of the *Coma Gata Maru* from the Canadian shore, and he and a band of Indian settlers in Canada decided to return to India and lead a revolution. After absconding he has evidently made himself useful to the nation in various ways. He is very powerfully built Rajput. Five months of hunger-strike in the Andamans and injuries received, whether in scuffles with the police or in escaping from custody, have left no visible trace of weakness on his body. He became a first-class gymnastics teacher and studied the science of physical culture and the art of massage, and gave training in physical culture in many schools.

To seek the relief of the political prisoners has come to me in the later years of my life as a God-sent mission. To strive for the early discharge of Sardar Prithvi Singh is the latest addition to this mission. He tells me that he is endeavouring to examine the method of non-violence for the deliverance of the country. He says that many of his past revolutionary companions are thinking along these lines. He has no other aim in life but the freedom of India. I was so much taken up by the sincerity with which he talked to me that I had no difficulty in taking his word at its face value, and I should love to have men like him as fellow-pilgrims in the pilgrimage to the temple of freedom,

Harijan, 28-5-1938

208. INTERVIEW TO JAMES A. MILLS [1]

JUHU,
[*May 20, 1938*][2]

I hope to live to see India united and independent. When that day comes I hope to carry out the long-cherished wish of visiting America.

The Hindu, 23-5-1938

[1] Special correspondent of the Associated Press of America, interviewed Gandhiji in Juhu just before his departure for Wardha on May 20.

[2] *Ibid*

209. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEGAON (WARDHA),
May 21, 1938

MY DEAR C. R.,

I had two hours and a half with friend Jinnah yesterday. The talk was cordial but not hopeful, yet not without hope. I must not enter into the details of the conversation, but he complained bitterly of Hindi having been imposed in particular areas of Madras in primary schools. What is exactly the position? Are Mussalman boys affected? Please send me as early a reply as possible and one that I could publicly use.

I had a long chat with Jawaharlal about the Communist party. I think we understand each other better than before on this particular question. He says [in] the Communist Party's programme, there is no violence, there is no secrecy. Why should it [be] banned therefore as such? If any communist or party resorts to violence openly or secretly or incites to violence they must be dealt with not because of allegiance to a particular party, but because of violence. Thus the author of the writing that you showed me can clearly be dealt with under law, not because there is a ban on the Communist [Party] but because the writing itself has a criminal taint. Have you anything against this argument? If the ban is lifted, what will happen?

I hope you have received the official reply from Subhas. It enables you to deal with your correspondent.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat; G.N. 2070

210. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEGAON, WARDHA,
May 21, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

Sardar Prithvi Singh is an old revolutionary who, belonging to a party that believed in armed revolution, was one of the odd hundred Indians, who being enraged over the treatment meted out to the passengers of the *Kamagata Maru* who vainly sought legal landing on the Canadian shore, took their passage to India with the avowed purpose, I believe, of causing trouble. Sardar Prithvi Singh was tried and sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment. He was then tried in what is known as the first Lahore Conspiracy case of 1915 and was sentenced to transportation for life, and was sent to the Andamans. When the penal settlement was broken up, he, with many other prisoners was transferred to Madras and thence to Rajahmundry. On the way he absconded — this was in 1922—and successfully evaded capture. All these years of hiding he passed in studying the science of physical culture, and was responsible for training hundreds of youths. But this life gave him no satisfaction. He fell in the company of those who believe in the non-violent method. He seems to have developed faith in non-violence. On the 18th instant, he surrendered himself to me, and put himself under my guidance. I told him that I would love to keep him with me, watch him, and engage him in constructive national activity if the Government left him free. But I told him also that I could not keep him without informing the Government of what I was doing. On the 19th instant, therefore, I wrote to the Collector of the Suburban District in Bombay (for I was living in Juhu) telling him that if he had no authority to let Sardar Prithvi Singh remain with me, the Sardar was ready to be arrested. Yesterday the District Magistrate came to Juhu and arrested Sardar Prithvi Singh and lodged him in Thana Jail as an " A" class prisoner.[1]

I have given only the bare outline of Sardar Prithvi Singh's activities. I feel that persons like Sardar Prithvi Singh should be given an opportunity of leading a useful life, instead of being kept in custody, especially when some person like me, known to the Government, is willing to keep them, and hold himself responsible for their

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 20-5-1938

peaceful conduct. I wonder if my presentation makes any appeal to you. If it does I would urge you to make my way smooth, and restore Sardar Prithvi Singh to me. I may tell you that my having interested myself in the discharge of political prisoners has brought me in touch with many revolutionaries. I entertained high hopes of their conversion, especially if I received hearty co-operation from the authorities concerned.

I do not know exactly whom or which department, or which provincial government I should properly approach. But I felt that aswe have come to know each other, and there is a friendly contact between us, I would approach you, the fountainhead.[1]

May I expect an early reply? I know how busy you are, but perhaps you realize the importance of the matter and will therefore forgive me for the trouble I am giving you.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

211. LETTER TO DR. N. B. KHARE

SEGAON *via* WARDHA,
May 21, 1938

DEAR DR. KHARE[2],

Though you are in trouble[3] I know you will not neglect the accompanying important newspaper article. As it professes to be authoritative it demands a reply. Will you kindly inquire and send a detailed reply in respect of each count in the indictment? How I wish Government will guide the forthcoming deliberations.[4] It requires

[1] In his letter of June 18, the Viceroy had said he was touched by the terms in which Gandhiji had pleaded Prithvi Singh's case, but that records revealed that Prithvi Singh had been guilty of crimes of exceptional violence, aggravated by deceit, and he could not properly ask the Governor to press his Ministers to release him.

[2] Then premier of the Central Provinces

[3] In the Central Provinces serious differences had arisen among the Ministers and three Ministers had resigned.

[4] The reference is to the meeting of the C. P. Congress Assembly Party scheduled to be held at Pachmarhi on May 24, called by the Parliamentary Committee "to compose the differences that had arisen among the Ministers and investigate certain charges that had been brought to the notice of the Working Committee".

bravery of a high type to insist upon cleaning one's own house and putting it in order.

May I expect an early reply to the indictments? At the time of sending it, please return the newspaper.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Newspaper separately posted.

Gandhi-Khare Papers, file No. 107, P. I. Courtesy : National Archives of India.

212. LETTER TO PYARELAL

May 21, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Yesterday I did not dictate any letter. I am writing this on the train. My health can be said to be good. I am under mental tension. What does Prakash intend doing? What does Ba propose doing? Will Devdas be going to Rajaji or not? Tell Devdas that it was unnecessary to send the long telegram. How is Sushila?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PYARELAL
19 RAJA BAZAR SQUARE
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

213. LETTER TO PYARELAL

May 21, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have sent off a postcard today after paying late fee. I got your note after I reached here.

I am feeling quite well. I had my weight taken. It was 106 lbs. It is not bad.

It is quite hot here, though it is not unbearable. Do not be slack in writing letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

214. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
May 22, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

A letter addressed to me at Calcutta in which you wrote about a young graduate, went from place to place and was received only yesterday. Your letter written on the train was duly received and was easily readable. And now has come yours of 19th.

I feel better and rested after reaching Segaon. I want mental rest. The mind has been overworked. I can take that rest only here, so I find from experience.

The heat is no doubt trying. But I feel the joy of being a co-sharer with the other inmates. I propose presently to take daily silence for a few hours.

My weight was found to be 106 yesterday—not much of a loss for retaining the health I was able to keep.

Yes, the Mysore communique[1] was distinctly good. You must have liked the W. C. resolution[2] . It was good you went to Mysore.

[1] *Vide* "Resolution on Mysore Settlement", 18-5-1938
[2] *Ibid*

I shall gladly revise what you may send.

What do you say to my exploit about Prithvi Singh?

I must send you a copy of what happened between Jinnah and me. He is a very tough customer. If the other members of the League are of the same type a settlement is an impossibility. But there is a way out for a unilateral undertaking. Settlements cannot be unilateral. I do not know that a unilateral undertaking will not be in the prevailing atmosphere a better mode of handling the situation. But every attempt must be made to arrive at a mutual understanding.

I have not yet written to the Mirza. I shall do so in a day or two. As for myself you are right. You and others can help me only through prayer. I feel that the cloud is lifting. What is happening to make me feel easy, I do not know. And why should I worry? God's ways are mysterious.

I had an hour's good chat with Jawaharlal on 19th. Your diagnosis is correct. The European visit will do him good. Of course he is at heart religious, though he denounces religion. He reads the *Gita*. He sports a Buddha head in his bedroom. Whatever he does and wherever he is, it is well with him.

Did I ever tell you that I did not deliver your letter to Jinnah? I did not like it. It should have made no mention of me but should have confined itselt to the question itself. But it does not matter.

How are you doing? What about the eczema? And the throat?

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3629. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6438

215. LETTER TO PYARELAL

May 22, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Have you and Sushila decided not to write to me? I have written to you that your letters are a necessity for me. You must at least do this much.

I may say I am getting along well. Pass on the enclosed letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

216. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

SEGAON,
May 23, 1938

I have your wire. I await letter. Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3864. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7020

217. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

May 23, 1938

CHI. JAMNALAL,

There is a wire from Gosibehn. She has lost her mother. I have sent a wire. You may send a wire or write a letter.

I hope Rajendra Babu is cheerful. Please let me know the temperature if anybody is coming this way.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a Photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2991

218. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
May 23, 1938

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I could reach your letter only today. May you live long and grow in your devotion to duty day by day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4727. Courtesy : Shantikumar N. Morarjee

[1] This is in the form of a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.

219. LETTER TO PYARELAL

May 23, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have your letter. I do not find in it any contempt for me. What you have done is scientific analysis. I agree with many of the points. I shall enclose with this the article I had written. You can tear it up after having Devdas read it. Nothing has been published. If I write anything afresh, I shall circulate it among friends. I am still not convinced that there is anything wrong about discussing such matters. To my knowledge, such discussions have been beneficial so far. I am not aware of the harm done. There will be a great deal of dirty discus-sions. How can filth be removed unless it is brought out through discussions? All this is unnecessary today. I submitted to Mahadev, Raja, etc., because I am a little scared of them myself. We shall see about it when I have acquired confidence in myself.

Does it not follow from your letter that it is not right that I should forbid others from taking the liberties I permit myself? I am not perturbed. I have almost regained my original calm. I am thinking impartially about everything, including the bitter experience of the 14th.

Can you indicate the date of your return

Blessing from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

220. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON,

May 23, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have received two of your envelopes together. Mahadev appears calm. But if his calm is genuine, he will not be distressed by your letters. I send him all your letters.

You certainly are stupid, but certainly not unfortunate and

undeserving. And why unfortunate? Have you lost my love? Have you lost Mahadev's love? Why undeserving? What have you done to make you undeserving? You certainly are stupid because you could not understand some simple things about the world. But it is I who make you stupid, What if I should be seeing my stupidity in you?

Now about the 9th night. Why are you suffering so much? Can it not be that my affliction is the result of my latent lust? Maybe it is not. Can it not be that it is the result of my delusions? I have not claimed divinity. If you can be in the wrong, why can I not be in the wrong too? Both are a matter of imagination, are they not? You have not experienced anything and I cannot know your heart. God alone is the ruler of the hearts of both of us. He alone knows our hearts. That is why as your godfather I command you to regard your conduct as having been absolutely innocent and to forget your anguish. My misconceptions are the cause of your anguish. Forget it; that you forgive me I can hardly ask.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

221. NOTE TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[*1.30 p. m. Monday, May 23, 1938*][1]

You have not to say anything. There is no need to take Jajuji. You have to go and sit there[2]. You should join in when you can contribute something. Otherwise remain silent. I have no doubt that it is your duty to go there. If the corruption cannot be removed you will have to leave the Provincial Committee[3].

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 2992

[1] Supplied by the addressee in *Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad*, "How Non-Violence Works"

[2] At the meeting of the C. P. Congress Assembly Party which was to be held at Pachmarhi on May 24; *vide* footnote 3, "Letter to Dr. N. B. Khare", 21-5-1938

[3] Nagpur Provincial Congress Committee, of which the addressee was President.

222. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

SEGAON,
May 24, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

So, learn a lesson now, that wherever we are we must not eat food that does not agree with us. When will you build up your health and be your old self again? If you prefer Amritlal to look after you, then keep him and send A. S. back. Anyhow, get well quickly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 7084. Also C. W. 4576. Courtesy : Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

223. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
May 24, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I wrote to you at considerable length yesterday. You have asked in your letter to Kanu as to what is being decided about you. He will no doubt write. I can only say that all that we are thinking of is your return. When will you be coming?

And what is there to, think about? You had said three weeks at least. I had thought it would be three weeks at the most. Deep within me I had felt that you yourself would not be able to stay away for three weeks. If you do not fix another date, I shall await your arrival on the 30th. Counting from the 9th, would not three weeks be over on the 30th?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

224. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
May 24, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

You will have received my letter of yesterday. Ba is enquiring when you will be coming back. Others are also enquiring, so am I. Whatever work you are doing there you can do here as well. You will be serving me besides. Vijaya is quite ill. So is Vasumati. Bhansali had seven glands taken out. You can certainly help in all these cases. Now you have been away sufficiently long. Think over it and write to me. Do you or do you not wish to come?

Whatever the case, you must cease your lamentations.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

C. S. had come today. The blood-pressure was 155/95 at 10 o'clock.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

225. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA
May 25, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have your letter. I understand from Mahadev's letter that you have not passed on some of my letters to Sushila. Now I know why some letters have remained unanswered. But I think you were right in withholding the letters. Only you can imagine Sushila's state of mind. It seems she is still suffering unnecessarily. Will she ever get over her suffering? What can I do from here to relieve her distress? Is it possible that she may recover if you bring her here even for a few days?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

226. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 25, 1938

STUPID DAUGHTER,

When will your sorrow end? In expressing your sorrow, you use words which pierce me like arrows. Have I ever worked for 12 hours in your presence?

Are you receiving Mahadev's letters now? Did I write to you that Mahadev had resolved to stop writing to you?

In today's letter you have reached the limit of your stupidity. Where is it laid down that if you see silver in a sea-shell once you will do so every time. And only yesterday I wrote that if something was possible in your case, it would be possible, in my case too. Could it not be that I saw silver in a sea-shell?

You will have to withdraw the adjective "undeserving". Would you be undeserving when I considered you so or would you believe it of yourself on your own? Do you wish to abandon me altogether by saying that? Now I am unable to bear your sadness because there is no cause for it at all. Can even Pyarelal not tell you such a simple thing? Forget your sorrow, if only for my sake. What can I do to comfort you? Granted that you have made me unhappy. But have I made you any less unhappy? Who should blame whom? Why should we not leave it to God to decide?

When shall I have a comforting letter from you? Rajkumari's letter is enclosed. Let Devdas also read it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

227. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
May 26, 1938

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL

How very business-like and prompt you are ! I am so glad you were able to go into the Gurgaon D. C. C.'s affairs. I hope your advice will be accepted by both parties, as it should be.

Today I have your letter about my notes of my talks with Jinnah.[1] I think my second talk with him was inevitable. I hope it won't do any harm. If you have time I would like you to give me a line about Jal after you have seen him. How I wish you will give yourself rest during your European tour and not rush as you have been doing here all the time.

Love.

BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, p. 279

228. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

May 26, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I learnt about your fever. Don't be disheartened. Every thing will be all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 7081. Also C. W. 4573. Courtesy : Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 30-4-1938

229. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 26, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

There is no letter from you today.

I was perturbed by Sushila's letter of yesterday. How can she be consoled? She seems to be hurt all the more by my letters. It seems that my letters, instead of healing her wounds, are keeping them raw. Why can you not console her? I am sure you understand my state of mind. As for the night of the 9th I have explained that I fully agree with what Sushila says. I have indeed said that her impression might not have been correct. By the same token, I also believe that my impression might not have been correct either. I am even going a step further. Sushila is witness to her purity of mind. I cannot even claim purity of mind. I am willing to admit that I might have had a dirty mind. Can it not be that my diseased mind might have aroused me and I might have seen the reflection of my own morbidity in that innocent girl and in her action? Why should Sushila feel unhappy when all this is possible? Why should she feel miserable on account of my morbidity, my delusion and my imperfection? Why should Sushila go on feeling unhappy in spite of my acceptance of all these possibilities? I am not accusing her of anything. If you are convinced by my argument, try to pacify Sushila in your own words and in your own way. I do not wish that she should be calm for my sake. I can be calm only if her mind accepts that there is no reason at all to feel perturbed. I have somehow started feeling that in all these incidents I alone have played the role of Satan and by imputing guilt to an innocent act have caused untold misery to Sushila, to Mahadev and even to you. Thus, while on the one hand I am beginning to feel calm under the intoxication of work, on the other hand, whenever there is free time, I keep analysing the incidents of the day of the 14th of April and the night of the 9th. I have found no clue so far. I do not know if I shallfind it at all. As Rajkumari says my faith in God is being tested. If Sushila cannot be pacified at all, I can see that it will be a terrible thing for me. But if she cannot be pacified what will you

do? What will poor Sushila do? As for me, I shall reap what I have sown.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You may use this if you really think it is proper. If I cannot reduce Sushila's misery, let me at least not add to it?

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

230. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 26, 1938

DEAR DAUGHTER,[1]

I am well. Sharda is looking after me well. Now you have to keep Vijaya there. Her temperature should come down.

I expect you have made proper arrangements for your food.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 399

231. LETTER TO SARASWATI

SEGAON,
[After *May 26, 1938*][2]

CHI. SARASWATI,

I am glad I got your letter at least. Keep on writing thus.

You have not been tested. You had once said 'no', but there is no harm if you wish to marry now. Your earlier decision was immature.I cannot understand the resentment of your uncle and Mother.

What a cunning girl you are! Kanti was sent there for a month and now you ask for two. Don't do so. Don't keep Kanti for more than a month.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6153

[1] This is in Urdu.

[2] From the contents it appears that this letter was written during the period of about a month that the addressee and Kantilal Gandhi had spent at Trivandrum. They had left Wardha for Trivandrum an May 26, 1938; *vide* also "Letter to Prabhavati", 27-5-1938 and "Letter to Prabhavati", 20-6-1938

232. LETTER TO KHWAJA NAZIMUDDIN

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
May 27, 1938

DEAR KHWAJA SAHEB,

I thank you for your exhaustive reply of the 24th instant.[1] Evidently my position has been misunderstood. I do not wish to suggest that my judgment or that of the Congress is to be made subservient to the opinion of the convicts, but before I could come to a final judgment, it would be necessary for me in the interest of the common cause itself to sound the prisoners' mind. If I had not, subject to confirmation after an examination of details, come to the preliminary conclusion that the solution suggested by the Bengal Government might be worthy of acceptance, I could not have thought of any interview with the prisoners. My idea is, after deeper examination of the solution, to convince the prisoners of the desira-bility of its acceptance. Before, therefore, I can finally accept the solution suggested, I hold it to be necessary to take the prisoners into confidence. I hope that you will agree with this opinion, for the sake, as I have already said, of the common purpose, viz., to ensure peace so far as this ticklish question of prisoners' release is concerned.

I take it that the question of detenus has been satisfactorily settled. I would appreciate a line as to how the matter stands.

yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindustan Times, 4-10-1938; also C. W. 9925

[1] The addressee in his letter had said that Gandhiji's suggestion that the proposals for release of political prisoners and detenus should first be discussed with the convicts would promote misunderstanding both among the prisoners and the public.

233. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
May 27, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

Kanti, Kanu and I wrote to you around the 15th. How are we to blame if you didn't get the letters?

Please continue to write to me. I am all right. A meeting is going on here just now. Kanti and Saraswati left for Trivandrum yesterday. Ba arrived from Delhi yesterday. The rest, after I hear from you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a Photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3514

234. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
May 27, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

What reply did you give Vinoba? Where did you catch the illness? But what has happened has happened. Now get well soon and return here. We shall forget the past.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7082. Also C. W. 4574. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

235. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 27, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

There has been no post from you yesterday and today. There are only three days before the 30th. I gather from Ba's broken sentences that you are planning to run away somewhere. I cannot believe it. But if you want to throw pepper into a raw wound you will

do that too. Think of it if you can. Is not my prestige in your hands?

You will have received my letter of yesterday. My mind at present is inclined in that direction. I am back in the same state of mind as I was in on the 14th. If that conclusion is correct, have I not been like the guilty person arraigning the policemen? Can you be of some help in this as well? I shall feel greatly relieved if Sushila's agitation subsides.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

236. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

[About *May 27, 1938*][1]

DEAR SUBHAS BABU,

This is Shri Dayal Singh. He says he is in search of national service. I have told him I have . . . [2]

From a copy: C. W. 4575. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

237. FOREWORD TO " BASIC NATIONAL EDUCATION"

SEGAON, WARDHA,
May 28, 1938

The fact that the first one thousand copies of this pamphlet have been sold out shows that what Dr. Zakir Husain and his committee have called Basic National Education is exciting fair interest in India and outside. A more correct though much less attractive description would be Rural National Education through village handicrafts. 'Rural' excludes the so-called higher or English education.'National' at present connotes truth and non-violence. And 'through village handicrafts' means that the framers of the scheme expect the teachers to educate village children in their villages so as to draw out all their faculties through some selected village handicrafts in an atmosphere free from superimposed restrictions and interference. Thus considered, the scheme is a revolution in the education of village children. It is in no sense an importation from the West. If the reader bears this

[1] This is written on the reverse of the preceding item.
[2] The letter is incomplete.

fact in mind he will be better able to follow the scheme to the preparation of which some of the best educationists have given their undivided attention.

M. K. GANDHI

Basic National Education

238. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

May 28, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

Today I am sending A.S. You must carefully follow all the instructions of the doctor. It is your duty to get back your health quickly. I have written today to Naranbhai and Manubhai.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7085. Also C. W. 4577. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

239. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 28, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

No letters from you for three days! I do not like it. You must be receiving my letters every day. The absence of your letters may also mean that both of you, brother and sister, will be arriving here on the 30th. In that case I shall forget the absence of your letters. You have sent all the luggage with Ba. That is an additional cause of worry. Have both of you deserted me? If the implication is as terrible as that, I have explained in my two previous letters what that would mean to me. Maybe I deserve only that! Hence, I am not in a position to write anything more this time. If you are still in Delhi when this letter reaches there and if you have not written any letters in the meantime, send me a telegram immediately. I shall await it on Monday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

240. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 28, 1938

CHI. A. S.,

I am comfortable. Vijaya has to stay there as long as the doctor does not allow her to move. If this is more than six days, I shall call you back.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

There is no reply from Jinnah.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 659

241. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[After *May 28, 1938*][1]

CHI. A. S.,

I have your letter. You had better not damage your health. Bring Vijaya only when the doctor permits. You may come over if someone can stay there for a few hours. Vijaya should be given butter-milk only if she feels hungry. Bhansalibhai can travel by car. So when Ba comes here, you may put him in the car or bring him in the car.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 631

242. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

May 29, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I hope you are better today. I intend to replace A. S. tomorrow. I am thinking of sending Lilavati. If you have any suggestion to make, let me know.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7086. Also C.W. 4578. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

243. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA

SEGAON,
May 29, 1938

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

I have your letter.You don't mention how many years you have completed. How can I say, therefore, how old you have grown?I got your gift. Today I am wearing the *kuchchha*[1] made from your khadi. There is still room for improvement in your handwriting, though, of course, you have tried to write with greater care.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9424.

244. LETTER TO PYARELAL

May 29, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Give the enclosed letter to Sushila if you think it proper. It will give you an idea of my present state. It seems by entering into Sushila's life I have embittered it at least for the time being. How should I punish myself for it?

I have not shown your letter to Mahadev. I have understood your point. So far, I should say, I have not made any changes yet. The conflict is still going on. I like Mirabehn's conclusion better than that of all of you. That is exactly what Sushila's great anguish suggests. I attributed guilt where there was none. Does this not point to my own morbid state of mind? Mirabehn is not even aware of that incident. Yet she has warned me as gently as she could. The direct implication of Sushila's anguish is this: "What sort of a father are you that you saw guilt in an innocent girl?" Even by deserting me she gives me the same warning. She is of course taking the whole responsibility on herself. But if I let her do it, would it not be the limit of my wickedness? If this conclusion is correct, would I not be doing penance by not taking service from any woman? This question is before me in spite of myself. I am perplexed. I cannot see my way. I cannot make up my mind. Who can help me in this matter? Hence I am praying to

[1] An article of underwear.

God that He may either guide me or take me away.

I have taken note of your programme. Even for the sakes of Prakash, Satya and Sushila, stay there as long as necessary. Do not desert me altogether. Ba's remarks have scared me.

I have given vent to the fire that burns me. However, do not think that I am in the least disturbed. I continue working as much as I can. All the things have been safely received. What tyranny? Why did you join in it?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

245. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 29, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

I received your two letters together. For three days I talked to you only through Pyarelal. I do not know whether you have seen those letters or not. Be that as it may. I am picking up the courage to write to you today.

You have written: "When I have the faith that you understand me and I too understand myself, the period of my separation will also end." When will you have the faith that I understand you? When will you understand yourself? When you understand yourself you will have attained to the farthest reaches of knowledge. Then, instead of your coming to me, the whole world will come to you. In short, I have lost you. You are not an undeserving daughter. What trouble have you given me? I have not had such a thought even in my dreams. I have already been proved an undeserving father. Have I not troubled you enough? Am I not the one who saw guilt in your innocent act? I had lost you at that very moment. I had even told you so that day. I am reaping as I sowed. You have returned everything. Some of those things were meant solely for you. The microscope, etc., were not bought for me. They were bought only for you. Permit me to return those things to you if you can accept them.

What else should I write? I do not deserve even a letter from you. I shall of course feel happy if you write.

I could not do you any good, but God will.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

246 LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 29, 1938

DEAR DAUGHTER,[1]

The question of sending Lilavati arises only if Vijaya has to stay there long. If she is released tomorrow, nothing need be done.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 400.

247. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 30, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

You will have received the letter I wrote you yesterday. It seems I forgot to mention that I had not shown your letter to Mahadev.

I would wish this to be my last letter concerning the Sushila-Mahadev episode. So far as I am concerned, the conclusion I have come to from the facts that have come to me is final.

Sushila's firmness has opened my eyes. I thrust my suspicion on Mahadev. Only what Mahadev said to me on the 14th was correct. Whatever he wrote and said since then has been done merely under my influence. Hence, I must treat it as cancelled. In the process, the innocence of both of them comes out clear before me. My love was full of suspicion. That is why I saw pure gold as brass. I attributed my morbid tendencies to both of them. It is my cussedness which is the cause of Sushila's tortured state of mind. I have now got to look into the source of this cussedness. The fact that Sushila has abandoned me because she feels that she is undeserving is due to her determination

[1] This is in Urdu.

not to see any cussedness in me. The result is of course good. I do not consider myself worthy even to touch Sushila. But would I thereby forget the anguish I have caused her? How can I expiate for maligning Mahadev? Did I not do the same with you in relation to Yoga? Your firm stand conquered me. I shall handle Mahadev. He cannot abandon me at all. When you could not abandon me, how can Mahadev do so?

You have been looking after Sushila. Bring her back into line.

Once your affairs are settled there you have got to come here. If you can give me a firm assurance about your coming, I can patiently wait.

Now about me. If I have caused anguish to Sushila even unknowingly, where do I have the right to serve women or be served by them? I cannot expiate for it by fasting. I cannot do it by suffering in any other way. My expiation can only be in one form and that to avoid the touch of women altogether and serve them from a distance in whatever way I can. In no sense have I been a *brahmachari* of my definition. I must make this known to my colleagues and do the necessary *sadhana* to approximate to my definition.

I do not know if my cussedness has gone that far. I am trying to carry on an impartial search in that direction. If it results in something, I shall inform you.

Neither you nor Sushila need be disturbed on reading this. I am certainly not perturbed. I am trying to understand myself in the light of the *Gita*. I am not troubled by my cussedness. I have not deliberately cultivated it. I was not aware of the stench I was carrying. But when Sushila's fragrance entered my nostrils I thought it was a stench. Such a feeling cannot develop in a day. The root must be lying deep somewhere. Who can unravel this tangle except God? He alone can pull us out of trouble. He will show me the way.

If Sushila can benefit by reading this letter, let her read it. Otherwise there is no need at all to show it to her.

I have already written to Mahadev something to this effect in the morning. I have said the same thing to him in a clear manner.

I do wish you would not feel upset. Nothing is to be gained by feeling upset at this time of trouble.

I am well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

248. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May 30, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I shall make no change in your time-table now. Talk less.

I shall release you from Sharda's tuition. I shall protect you. You have given me good warning.

Your food charges may well be met here. What you spend on books is too much. It would be good if you received books from home. Are you not satisfied with whatever books we have? Mahadev also has many books. You can look at them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4292.

249. CABLE TO AGATHA HARRISON[1]

WARDHA,
[*May 31, 1938*][2]

AGATHA HARRISON
2400 BATTERSEA
2 CRANBOURNE COURT
ALBERT BRIDGE RD., S. W. 1

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1501.

250. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

May 31, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I read your letter. Despatch my letter. I understand what you say. I have not failed to understand. Let me follow my own way for the present. I made my attitude clear only when I made up my mind. "One who has had the good fortune to see Rama has won all the three worlds." I see in this the boundless compassion of the Lord.

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's cable which read: "Is rumour you contemplate visit here shortly correct? Cable."

[2] On the addressee's cable Amrit Kaur has noted: "Sent Tuesday, May 31, 1938, 7.30."

"One who has had the good fortune to see Rama has won all the three worlds." I see in this the boundless compassion of the Lord.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11596.

251. LETTER TO PYARELAL

May 31, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have your letter. After writing to you yesterday, I think I can see my way clear.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PYARELAL NAYYAR
19 RAJA BAZAR SQUARE
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

252. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 1, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

I received your two letters together. Now everything is changed, is it not? My letters of yesterday and the day before will have made this clear. Now I have more or less decided that with the exception of Ba I will not accept from any other woman any service involving physical contact. After that, there is no question at all of an affectionate touch. I have made another discovery. In saying that I alone might touch women and that no one else might do so, I was guilty of a terrible error—and for how many years I persisted in the error! I should have known that I could claim no scientific sanction for the experiment. I was impelled solely by my terrible arrogance. Among all my colleagues I considered only myself entitled to break the restrictions of *brahmacharya*. As long as I am not willing to accept my colleagues touching women I have not the slightest right to touch a woman. I hope to settle everything in a day or two. I have

only your firmness to thank for making me see my error. In my viewthe restrictions I had laid down for you and Mahadev are no longer justified. What qualifies me to lay down such restrictions? When I admit that my accusing you was merely the reflection of my own failing, not yours or Mahadev's, where is the place for the restrictions set by me? To the extent I am involved in this affair, I am the guilty person, not you, nor Mahadev. I am writing all this dispassionately.

And what reward I gave you for your services! Now for Pyarelal. Mother's words were like nectar to me: "You have already taken away Pyare. Now you want to take away Sushila too?" She was right. I did not do you any good. What good have I done to Pyarelal? Pyarelal's future would be the test whether my acts were good or evil. As for you, I still consider you stupid. You have worked for me like a benign spirit. But for your resolute stand, my eyes would not have been opened. I would have still been in the slumber of my illusions. Mira-behn has rightly said that I would have died repenting. God has alerted me only through you. Even though you came to me as a daughter, you have acted like a mother. Not my merit but maybe yours will save your brother.

It is good that you are helping Brijkrishna. My advice is that you should take the place for the hospital. You must be fully recovered. But who am I to guide you? You have got a brother like Pyarelal. He is with you. Do only what he says. After all, how can God give you up? Who will be left for Him if He gives you up? You will always prosper. Do not worry about me. I am well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

253. LETTER TO PYARELAL

June 1, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

There is not enough time to write to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

254. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 1, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your questions are very pertinent. Our duty, as I understand it, is not to spend public funds and not to refuse the money which our relatives are willing to give us. However, if they give unwillingly and because they cannot help it, that money should be refused. You can judge for yourself in the present situation. If you consider it your duty not to take anything from there, then your expenses on food, dress, some little postage, etc., should be met from here. Now about books. If it is a matter of a rupee or two, I do not find any harm in taking that money from here. It would be desirable to consult me on such occasions.

I hope everything is clear now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4293; also S. G. 63.

255. TELEGRAM TO PYARELAL

WARDHA,
June 2, 1938

PYARELAL,
19 RAJA SQUARE
NEW DELHI

YOURS WAS WHOLLY UNPREPARED FOR REBELLION. SUSHILA'S RIGHT OF SERVING HAD BEEN SPECIALLY RESERVED. YOU MUST RELY ON YOUR ABILITY CONVINCE ME. IMPLORE YOU BOTH START. YOU WILL LEAVE WHEN YOU LIKE. IF YOU STILL WONT COME YOU WILL MAKE MY POSITION PRECARIOUS.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

256. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 2, 1938

DEAR SYED MAHMUD,

You are a long time coming. If you come now, I won't be able to provide for you even the comforts you would need for your health. You must now let the rainy season pass.

Hope your drive against illiteracy is making rapid progress.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: Syed Mahmud Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also G. N. 5111.

257. LETTER TO E. RAGHAVENDRA RAO

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 2, 1938

DEAR RAGHAVENDRA RAO,

I must thank you for your frank letter.[1] As you must have seen, such[2] of your objections as have force have been anticipated by the Working Committee. But it seems to me that you are judging a big institution by the shortcomings of individual members. The Congress has to be judged by its capacity of resistance to the foreign exploitation of the country. In that test I hope that even the present ministry won't be found wanting. I invite you to return to the Congress fold and fight impurity wherever you see it with all your might.[3]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile: *Madhya Pradesh aur Gandhiji*, pp. 131-2.

[1] *Vide* "A criticism"

[2] The source has "so much".

[3] *Vide* also "Letter to E. Raghavendra Rao". 10-6-1938

258. NOTE TO ASHRAM INMATES

Not Revised

June 2, 1938

I have been distressed since the 7th of April. I had a dirty dream that night. I did wake up before the crisis but I felt ashamed. After the experience I hardly slept that night. I was restless. I walked about on the terrace and calmed myself a little. I felt that I was not fit to accept service from Sushila and Prabhavati who slept close to my bed. After the prayer, I first recounted to them what I had been through and then told them that I would not be taking service from them. But both took this decision very badly. Within twelve hours I reviewed my decision and continued to take service from them. But my distress did not cease. On the 14th I had another type of experience which increased my shame and added to my anguish. I had not made any change in my outward behaviour. But consciously or unconsciously, my mind was preparing itself. While I was caught in that whirlpool, I had to meet Mr. Jinnah. I thought it was my duty to write something for the occasion. I wrote something and indicated my sense of shame in it.[1]

I had lost my self-confidence. I had shamed my *brahmacharya.* After a great deal of thought I have come to this decision. For the time being, and so long as I am able to bear such physical contact with other people, I should not take any service from women which involves physical contact, unless it is absolutely unavoidable. It is obvious that I must not touch them in jest or in affection. This change is very important to me. My whole life has been shaped in the belief that there is nothing wrong about innocent physical touch of women. Before I took the vow of *brahmacharya* and after, I touched numerous woman in a light-hearted way or in affection, I have not experienced any adverse effect thereby and have not known any woman who may have been sensually aroused.

But a doubt arose after my experience of the 7th April. Why have I not become free from passion in spite of my constant effortstowards *brahmacharya*? Why have my thoughts and my mind not become purer and purer? I can say that I have not felt myself free from carnal desire in India as much as I did in South Africa. Could the contact with women have obstructed my path in some subtle way? Who can answer that question? The only solution is that unless God Himself answers it, I should try to shun all physical touch and

[1] *Vide* also " Letter to E. Raghavendra Rao" 10-6-1938

understand my own mind and conquer it.

Yesterday it became clear to me as day that it was very wrong of me to prevent my colleagues from taking the liberties which I myself have taken. I still cannot understand how I allowed it to happen for so many years. It seems to me that behind that restriction was my pride. It was a failing. I should not have undertaken the experiment if it was so terrible. If it was worth undertaking, I should have encouraged all my colleagues to pursue it on my condition. My experiment was a transgression of the limits prescribed by *brahmacharya*. Only a sage like Shukadevji who was always pure in thought, speech and action would be entitled to exercise such freedom. Such thinking led me to the above decision yesterday.

I feel that the bitter experiences of Dahyabhai and others at Sabarmati had my experiment at their root. Who can say in how many cases my behaviour has led to wrong actions?

Only he who can observe complete *brahmacharya* can give complete training in non-violence. I am the self-appointed leader of the path of non-violence! What wonder if my non-violence is weak to the extent that I cannot pass the above test? Even then, I shall continue my experiment in non-violence so long as I feel convinced that even my imperfect *brahmacharya* has lent considerable support to non-violence. Otherwise too my behaviour would remain the same at least for the present. Who can say where the future will lead me? My strongest desire is to submit lovingly to God and let myself be driven whither He wills.

It was my clear duty to convey this much to my co-workers. I assume that any co-worker who wishes will let me know his reactions and point out any error he may find in my thinking.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

259. LETTER TO PYARELAL

June 2, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Your letter was received late. You had written ‘Shegaon’, which is not this Segaon. The letter went to some other Shegaon. If you write ‘Wardha’, I shall receive the letters regularly and intact. The postal service is bad here.

You must have read my letter to Sushila which I wrote yesterday. You will see that I have gone further ahead. Now what have I got to draw out of Sushila? The whole misunderstanding arose because of my misguided imagination and poor Sushila had to pass through an ordeal. I am not now feeling sorry about it. Whatever I did had been prompted by my love. But according to my definition I proved to be a father with sensual tendencies. How can such a father do justice even to his own children? He would see his morbidities in others. Where do you figure in this? According to my analysis, this entire tragic episode is the result of my mistaken thinking. Now my eyes have been opened and so things must calm down. Does my diagnosis now sound complete? The credit for everything goes to Sushila's firmness.

I have now understood about Sushila. Now why should I worry? Did my worry have behind it the fear that Sushila migh be harbouring a scorpion? Sushila having shown her crystal purity, why should I worry about her? She will shine wherever she settles.

I am enclosing a copy of the I note[1] have addressed to co-workers. I hope it will make everything clear. Give this to Devdas to read.

What should I say about you? My conclusion is clear. If I have to lose you, the blame will be entirely on me. I realize that in some matters I am slow-witted. I shall not go into a fresh analysis of myself If I lose you, I shall know myself as I really am. If I can have you back with me in the natural course, I shall feel reassured thatI was not an absolutely undeserving co-worker and father. I have written to Sushila that if my meritorious acts do not save me, hers will certainly save her. During this period of turmoil I have without a doubt obtained a jewel in the person of Sushila. By saying this, I am not undeservedly praising her. I am describing her as I see her at present. Your letter of today confirms that thought.

Sushila writes that l should get my blood-pressure taken twice a day and get my urine also examined twice a day. That will be possible when you come here and attend to it. I am myself not too keen about it. All that Sushila wants you can carry out. But definitely not right now. Only after you have settled everything there and settled Sushila well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 15-7-1938

260. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[On or after *June 2, 1938*][1]

STUPID DAUGHTER SUSHILA,

There is no letter from you. Then why should I write? But on second thoughts I decided to write.

My decision should not hurt you in the least. Though stupid, you are intelligent enough to see that my decision is absolutely independent and inescapable. How can I do what others could not do? How was it I did not understand such a self-evident thing, till today? Why was I so silly? And yet, I do not hesitate to call you stupid!

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

261. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[After *June 2, 1938*][2]

STUPID GIRL,

Are you trying to prove your stupidity? What did I know of your purity before Mahadev told me? Since then I have been taking service from you. If you too have experienced desire, it is as well. For then we are both in the same plight and we both ought to be on our guard. For me it is sufficient that I am on my guard. The day I have to save myself from you, you will only see my dead body, you will not see me alive. After my 69 years, the *vikara*[3] in you cannot affect me. I burn with my own *vikara*. Because of my *vikara* I regard myself unfit to take service from any woman. For that reason, you are free to abandon me, but you are always telling me that you do not want to leave me under any circumstances, so I must accept your services in

[1] From the contents it appears that the letter belongs to this period.

[2] This letter is written on the reverse side of the addressee's letter to Gandhiji dated June 2, 1938.

[3] Meaning here lustfulness

all humility.

Have you read the letters of others? No one has any complaint to make. Mirabehn had only imagined things. Even then there was no complaint against you. Only I have a complaint. But that is a different story altogether. You should forget these people.

You have to consider two questions. I must not take you away from your duty to Mother. Deep in your heart you desire to study. It is a good desire too. Should I make you give up that desire and continue taking service from you? These two questions are very pertinent.

About my experiment later. I can write now, but you must show pity for my hand.

BAPU

From the Hindi original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

262. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

June 3, 1938

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. You will understand everything by and by. Have patience for the present.

Don't run away from there in haste. Stay on till Durga has completely recovered. Here Kanchan is looking after everything quite well. The bread she makes is also quite good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9372. Also C. W. 6647. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar.

263. LETTER TO VIPIN D. PATEL[1]

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 3, 1938

CHI. BABA,

I got your letter only today. How old will you be on your next birthday? Why did you forget to write that? And shouldn't one who asks for blessings give something in return? What will you give? What new thing will you do in the new year?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 162.

264. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 3, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

It was not difficult for me to read even those portions in your letter which were scored out. You have harassed Sushila for no reason. But she has already passed through the ordeal. It was just as well that she was thus tested. You too should stop lamenting. My decision is based on entirely different grounds. It has nothing to do with Mira's argument. It is not possible that my argument would have occurred to Mira. If I see something wrong in a practice I have continued for forty years, shall I not say that there is the hand of God in it? That was why I did not wait for your and Sushila's letters. Now you can both see that even if it could be proved that Sushila was perhaps on the verge of succumbing to impure thoughts, my conclusion would remain unaltered. So long as I am not prepared to allow others to do what I do myself, why should I do it? This seems to me self-evident. I am now beginning to see this fault has a historical background. After my decision all of us must feel at ease. According to me everything has become clear.

I understand about the machines. Only you can put them to use. Right now I am not even in a position to tempt Sushila. When she comes on her own I shall of course embrace her in spite of my having

[1] Grandson of Vallabhbhai Patel.

stopped taking service from women. But right now her well-being does not lie with me. It lies in her settling somewhere. But it is not for me to decide. Only you two should jointly decide. I see from what you have scored out in your letter that you are shouldering a heavy responsibility there. I do wish you would leave as soon as the problems are solved. And if Sushila wishes to come, her place will be higher than it was. Where would you escape to by running away from me! Such words should not have come from your pen. I am returning your letter.

My health I should say is good.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Reply at Wardha address.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

265. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 3, 1938

STUPID DAUGHTER,

You are like a benevolent spirit but you unfailingly show your stupidity. What letters you write! Who can stop you if you are eager to rush back to an unjust father? I see that you were not in any way at fault. My own blunder is very clear to me. Even then you are trying to convince yourself that the fault was yours. Is it not stupidity? Now be calm. Take up some work there. When Pyarelal is ready to come, you may also come if you wish. Do not torment me by saying that you have lost your place with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

266. TELEGRAM TO PYARELAL

WARDHAGANJ,
June 4, 1938.

PYARELAL
19 RAJA BAZAR SQUARE
NEW DELHI

NO CASE CAN SUSHILA COME ALONE. MOST WELCOME IF BOTH COME. LOVE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

267. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 4, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have read your letter to Mahadev. Why so much lamentation now? Having taken the decision I am now absolutely at peace. Even Mahadev is calm as far as I can understand him. l am not worried about Sushila either. You are there. That particular incident has nothing to do with my decision. Although it provided the immediate pretext I have justified it independently of that incident. Even if Mahadev and Sushila had been proved guilty instead of innocent, I would still consider my decision right. Since they have been proved innocent my decision is of course correct. My decision is not at all by way of expiation. Whatever blame I am taking upon myself appears to me justified. It may well not be so. But even if the cause of the incidents of the 9th and the 14th is proved to be purely imaginary the legitimacy of my decision holds. Very often, a decision becomes necessary to open our eyes. Hence, let us stop lamenting. Let us forget the past and look after the present.

Sushila therefore does not have to come to pacify me or to find her peace of mind. I would certainly like to have Sushila by my side. I would take service from her in so many ways. But I would be afraid to let her come alone. She is a chain that binds. I. would not willingly

permit you to keep out. I wish your presence even without her. I would be very happy if she too accompanied you. That is why I have sent a telegram[1] today to let you know my state of mind. Now decide what seems right after taking into consideration what needs to be done there. I am in fine fettle.

What Sushila's instrument says or what the urine test indicates only Sushila or you will know. But I am sleeping well and eating well. My diet includes 10 to 12 oz. of milk, *roti*, vegetables, garlic, onions and fruit. This is sufficient. I am not taking jaggery for the present. In the afternoon I take juice of raw mango or lime withsoda. I have a tub-bath in the morning. I rub ghee on the soles of my feet twice a day. I massage my head with oil at night. As usual, I apply mud-pack to my abdomen morning and evening. This is for two to two-and-a-half hours altogether. I take light walks. I invariably sleep in the afternoon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

268. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEGAON,
June 4, 1938

CHI. MUNNALAL,

That my ideal is Shukadevji does not mean that I should like to have a face like his, to sleep, sit and eat like him and go to the Himalayas as he did. It only means that I should like to cultivate *brahmacharya* like his. And if you say that this can't be the ideal of one who wishes to live and serve in this world or that it cannot be attained by such a one, then *brahmacharya* like Shukadevji's is of little value. A perfect *brahmachari* should remain unaffected by passion in any circumstances. If you say that nobody has ever been, and nobody will ever be, able to cultivate such freedom from passion, then it means that we should abandon the struggle to cultivate *brahmacharya*. If this is correct, then it follows that one can never cultivate perfect ahimsa.

I am alarmed, or was, by my experience[2] because I was at a loss

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amritlal T. Nanavati", 2-5-1938

to know what to do. Now that I know, the reason for alarm has disappeared. Saying that I know does not mean, either, that physical contact with women was one of the causes or the only cause of my painful experience. But this has become clear to me as day that I should not have done what I was not prepared to tolerate in others. Now that I have given up the practice I shall discover whether it was physical contact with women that was obstructing my progress or whether there was some other cause. Hence, for fully assessing the result of the experiment of refraining from physical contact with women, I must avoid such contact completely, for the present at any rate. There is no question here of more or less contact.

I hope you will understand everything from this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8574. Also C. W. 7028. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah.

269. TELEGRAM TO PYARELAL

WARDHA,
June 5, 1938

PYARELAL
19 RAJA BAZAR SQUARE
NEW DELHI

READ LETTERS. BOTH START TODAY UNFAILINGLY. REPLY. LOVE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

270. LETTER TO PYARELAL

June 5, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I hope that before you get this letter, both of you will have arrived here. I had sent one telegram yesterday. Today I am sending another. I am sure you will not delay it. Both of you have understood me wrong. Nothing can be explained through letters. Poor Durga knows nothing. I do not think she has even the slightest suspicion. And now what is there to discuss? I have explained this in my letter of yesterday. But I shall not write anything more. I think I have not blundered. But if you can prove that I have, do you think I shall take long to make amends? You are unnecessarily putting the whole blame on Sushila. I have not exonerated Mahadev independently. What I am saying is that the scale by which I was measuring Mahadev was itselffaulty. He is innocent from that point of view. Right now, Mahadev has lost all capacity to decide whether or not he has committed a wrong. My wretched suggestions are responsible for that. What can poor Mahadev do? Hence it is useless if he considers himself innocent and a thousand times more so if he considers himself guilty. Sushila's case is different. But today's letter puts her in Mahadev's position. Both you and I are responsible for that. And even there do I not take the lead? Sushila's agony started with my intimation [of the happening] of the 14th. But I have not taken my decision on that basis at all. It does not involve any expiation. It involves awareness on your part. In your view it is utter ignorance. If you prove that to me I shall swallow my pride. I shall do what I did about Bardoli. Hence, if both of you have not already started, do so after seeing this letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

271. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

June 5, 1938

STUPID SUSHILA,

How stupid you are! Sitting there, you cry and make me cry!!! You are unnecessarily taking the blame upon your self. I have not given up taking service from Ba. Other women feel a little unhappy, but they are cheerful. They have also understood the point. A. S. does feel miserable. But I am also making her laugh quite a bit. She is more stupid than you. She too will calm down in a few days. I hope that abiding by my order, both of you will have arrived here. It is impossible to start today. I am writing this letter so that the day does not pass without communication in case you are unable to leave. Stop crying now. I am eager to see you laugh. You have committed no sin.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

272. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

Unrevised

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 5, 1938

CHI. MANILAL,

You will be leaving on Wednesday. You came but I feel as if you had not come at all. We had long enough conversations but I can't say that we talked at leisure. But, then where do I have such a thing as leisure? Whatever decision you take, do it calmly. If you can keep [*Indian*] *Opinion* going, do so. But remember the meaning of keeping it going, which I explained to you. I would not consider it being kept going if it is done through advertisements. This does not mean that you should now stop accepting advertisements. But it would be pitiable for the journal to be kept going on advertisements. Advertisements should be used for increasing the profits or for reducing the subscription rate. In the case of pice-newspapers a pice would not help to meet even the cost of the newsprint. But because they get advertisements they are able to reach lakhs of readers by charging a nominal price. If we accept the policy of taking in

advertisements we can justify it only in this way. The royal road for you, therefore, is that you should divide the total expenditure by the number of prospective subscribers and fix that figure as the subscription rate from the very beginning. If you don't get subscribers at that rate, then you should conclude that *I. O.* should be closed down. The rest you know. If you want to earn, settle down there. I won't consider that objectionable. If you wish to return to India, you should be content with whatever you get and decide to devote yourself to public service. Please treat all this as no more than my advice and do what you yourself wish.

Have an amicable talk with Kallenbach.

Don't carry with you any worries about Sushila and the children. Vijayalakshmi and Nanabhai are there to look after them. They will stay in Akola as long as they wish and then come here. You should also know that what the children will acquire in India in the ordinary course from the surrounding atmosphere they cannot acquire in a foreign country, despite all our efforts. You need not, therefore, worry about the children's education either. Sushila should come to Segaon early, because most probably I shall be in the Frontier Province in October. And I can't say how long I shall be there. My health is all right. Pyarelal and Sushila are still in Delhi. Maybe they will come after a few days. Don't be lazy in writing letters.

If my message[1] has not been sent already, it will be enclosed with this. Please give it to Ramdas. The enclosed letter[2] is for Ramdas.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4871.

[1] *Vide* "Message to Indians in South Africa", 6-6-1938

[2] This is not traceable.

273. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

June 5, 1938

CHI. PREMA,

How silly you are ! What a long letter you write when you should have just said: 'I want five rupees every month; please send the amount.'[1] Now say how you want me to make the remittance? Shall I send it by money order or in any other way I like? Shall I send the sum every month or every three or four months together?

I have no time to write more. I have torn up your letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10394. Also C. W. 6833. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak.

274. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[June 6, 1938][2]

CHI. MANILAL,

I forgot yesterday to enclose a letter for Kanam. Here it is. I am sending the message[3] also. I had almost forgotten about it.

Don't worry about me. You are bound to feel the pain of separation, but you should bear it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4874.

275. LETTER TO PYARELAL

June 6, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Notwithstanding all my explaining what anger, what misunderstanding and what lamentation! You even refuse to understand what in my belief is cent-per-cent truth. But I shall not write more. It is my hope that this letter will be proved superfluous, and honouring

[1] The addressee wanted this amount to meet her personal expenses.
[2] *Vide* following item.
[3] *Ibid*

my command, both you brother and sister will be on your way here. You have not fully understood my step. I hope to explain to you fully when you come. All of us cannot be mad at the same time. Either I shall be proved right or you two on your part will have to give up your obstinacy. Then why fear? We shall understand at once when we meet. If you have not left already, you must leave at once after seeing this letter. I do not know what will happen if you really do not come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

276. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

June 6, 1938

STUPID GIRL,

Is there any limit to your stupidity? How could I abandon you forever? Why are you raising me so high? The place you assign to me is not my place, though I certainly wish it was. My experience on the night of the 7th could not in any way have been influenced by the prurience of any of you. As for the incident of the 14th, I find only my own sensuality reflected in it. I shall explain it further when we meet. Why do you presume the existence of something in your heart which was not there? Your saying such a thing is a matter of shame for me. I constantly see that I am sensual. In that case why should we ignorewhat is evident and look for what is not evident? But you both will have left before this letter reaches Delhi.

Blessing from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

277. MESSAGE TO INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

SEGAON,

June 6, 1938

I can give only one message to the Indians in South Africa. We shall never be able to preserve our self-respect in South Africa without self-sacrifice. There can be no such distinctions as Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Madrasis, Gujaratis or Punjabis.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4872.

278. TO SEGAON WORKERS

June 6, 1938

The manager should copy out whatever I write herein and read it out to the others. This note-book should always be kept in front of me.

* * *

I have been asked if there are any rules here about anything. There are. For when winding up Sabarmati Ashram I had said that we would from then on be a mobile Ashram and carry with us wherever we went Ashram life and Ashram rules. Prayers, etc., thus stay as before as also the hour of rising. We may certainly introduce changes, excepting in principles, according as circumstances may warrant, as has been done here. We deliberately employ Harijan servants, because we want to serve the Harijans. But though we employ them as servants we have to treat them as our brothers.

* * * *

Therefore we must do even menial work that we can do ourselves. If we cannot do some particular work ourselves we may have it done by others. Only work that even others cannot do may we ask Harijans to do.

From Hindi: C. W. 4674; also G. N. 6866.

279. LETTER TO ATULANAND CHAKRABARTY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 8, 1938

MY DEAR ATULANAND,

I have not been able to overtake your letter of 20th May earlier. Yours of 22nd April I saw only today. The reason for this delay you know.

About the year-book, you have to do what Subhas Babu suggests. I may not, and must not take the lead. I can't issue invitations. The thing has got to be taken up by the Congress. What I said was that an accurate year-book would supply a felt want. It is not the work of any single individual, but you can make yourself responsible for it as editor if the Congress would entrust the work to you.

I am glad that you have dropped the idea of the monthly journal.

I hope your daughter is fully restored.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 1479. Courtesy: A. K. Sen.

280. LETTER TO KHWAJA NAZIMUDDIN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 9, 1938

DEAR KHWAJA SAHEB,

I am grateful for your letter of the 1st inst. If you will please refer again to my letter of 27th ultimo, you will find that the sentence referring to deeper conviction has been wholly misunderstood. You will see that it does not bear the meaning you have put upon it. It is clear from the context that if, after deeper examination of the solution suggested by the Government,[1] I should find it acceptable, I would like to convince the prisoners of the desirability of their acceptance. For deeper examination I must have more material, which is lacking and which I am seeking from you and other sources. If, before I or Sarat Babu or Subhas Babu went to the prisoners, we all three came to the conclusion that the Government's was a sound offer, I for one should stand by it, even if I failed to get the prisoners' acquiescence, unless they could convince me of the error of my judgment. I must however inform you that my deeper study is shaking my belief in the workability of the solution offered by the Government. Naturally I must weigh every solution in the scales I have set up for my guidance, and on the basis of which I submitted my propositions to you before leaving Calcutta. I do not mind through what formula or through what machinery the object of securing the release of every prisoner inside of one year or thereabouts is attained.

With reference to the detenus and the State prisoners I remember the paragraph you refer to in your letter of 17th April. I did not raise any objection to it, although I felt it to be a new introduction, because I had hoped that an early solution of the prisoners' question would be reached. I venture to remind you that in the very

[1] For the scheme proposed by the Government for the release of political prisoners, *vide* "Letter From Khwaja Nazimuddin", 11-5-1938

beginning of the conversations it was agreed that the detenus and the prisoners who were incarcerated without trial were to be separately considered from the convicted prisoners. In my opinion it would be a grave injustice if the discharge of the detenus and State prisoners is to be made contingent upon an agreed solution of the question affecting convicted prisoners.

May I also remind you that the policy about detenus has been already made public by you? It would be a thousand pities, therefore, if the release of detenus and State prisoners were delayed or indefinitely postponed because of the possible breakdown of the negotiations for the release of convicted prisoners.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C. W. 9927.

281. LETTER TO E. RAGHAVENDRA RAO

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 10, 1938

DEAR RAGHAVENDRA RAO,

I have your letter of 6th inst. Mahadev has already asked you to send a copy of your first letter.[1] I want to work at it without in any way disclosing your name.[2] All I wish to say at this stage is that you should send facts and figures to support your conclusions.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI,

From a facsimile: Madhya Pradesh aur Gandhiji, p. 130.

282. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 10, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Women may well be there, but I must nevertheless have a man by me. Whether I want support or not is not the question. I am trying to do without it but how can I say when I may have to have it?

I shall see about the massage. Sushilabehn knows every nerve and tissue of the body. That is why even she does not dare to give it

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to E. Raghavendra Rao", 2-6-1938
[2] *Vide* "A Criticism"

up too soon. You should learn how to massage by practising it on Kanu.

Blessings from

BAPU,

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4294; also S.G. 64.

283. TALKS ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION [1]

[Before *June 11, 1938*]

I had long been impressed with the necessity for a new departure as I knew the failure modern education had been through the numerous students who came to see me on my return from South Africa. So I started with the introduction of training in handicrafts in the Ashram school. In fact an extra emphasis was placed on manual training, with the result that the children soon got tired of the manual training and thought that they had been deprived of literary training. There they were wrong, for even the little that they gained was more than children ordinarily get in the orthodox schools. But that set me thinking, and I came to the conclusion that not vocation *cum* literary training, but literary training through vocational training was the thing. Then vocational training would cease to be a drudgery and literary training would have a new content and new usefulness. The acceptance of office by the Congress prompted me to place the thought before the nation, and I am glad that it was welcomed in many quarters.

English we decided to taboo, because we knew that most of the time of the children was taken up with memorizing English words and phrases, and even then they could not put in their own language what they had learnt, and could not properly follow what the teacher taught them. On the other hand they forgot their own language by sheer neglect. Education through vocational training seemed to be the only way to avoid both these evils.

I should make a start on the first day with finding out the calibre of the boys—whether they know any reading and writing, any geography, and then start with trying to add to their equipment through the introduction of the *takli*.

Now you might well ask me why I picked up the *takli* out of the many other existing handicrafts. Because *takli* was one of the first crafts that we found out and which has subsisted through the ages.In the earliest ages all our cloth used to be made of *takli* yarn. The

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Education through Vocation—A synthesis", Desai does not say when or where the talks were delivered

spinning-wheel came later, and [as] the finest counts could not be produced on the spinning-wheel, one had to go back to the *takli*. In devising the *takli* man's inventive genius reached a height that had not been reached before. The cunning of the fingers was put to the best possible use. But as the *takli* was confined to the artisans who were never educated, it fell into disuse. If we want to revive it today in all its glory, if we are to revive and reconstruct the village life, we must begin the education of children with the *takli*. My next lesson would therefore be to teach the boys the place the *takli* used to occupy in our daily life. Next I would take them into a little history and teach them how it declined. Then would follow a brief course in Indian history, starting from the East Indian Company, or even earlier from the Muslim period, giving them a detailed account of the exploitation that was the stock in trade of the East India company, how by a systematic process our main handicraft was strangled and ultimately killed. Next would follow a brief course in mechanics—construction of the *takli*. It must have originally consisted of a small ball of clay or even wet flour dried on to a bamboo splinter running through its centre. This has still survived in some parts of Bihar and Bengal. Then a brick disc took the place of the clay ball and then in our times iron or steel and brass have taken the place of the brick disc and a steel wire the place of the splinter. Even here one might expatiate with profit on the size of the disc and the wire, why it is of a particular size and why not more or less. Next would follow a few lectures on cotton, its habitat, its varieties, the countries and the provinces of India where it is at present grown and so on. Again some knowledge about its cultivation, the soil best suited for it, and so on. That would make us launch into a little agriculture.

You will see that this takes a fund of assimilated knowledge on the part of the teacher before he can impart it to his pupils. The whole of elementary arithmetic can be taught through the counting of yards of spinning, finding out the count of yarn, making up of hanks, getting it ready for the weaver, the number of cross-threads in the warp to be put in for particular textures of cloth and so on. Every process from the growing of cotton to the manufacture of the finished product—cotton picking, ginning. carding, spinning, sizing, weaving—all would have their mechanics and history and mathematics correlated to them.

The principle idea is to impart the whole education of the body and the mind and the soul through the handicraft that is taught to thechildren. You have to draw out all that is in the child through teaching all the processes of the handicraft, and all your lessons in history, geography, arithmetic will be related to the craft.

If such education is given, the direct result will be that it will be self-supporting. But the test of success is not its self-supporting character, but that the whole man has been drawn out through the teaching of the handicraft in a scientific manner. In fact I would reject a teacher who would promise to make it self-supporting under any circumstances. The self-supporting part will be the logical corollary of the fact that the pupil has learnt the use of every one of his faculties. If a boy who works at a handicraft for three hours a day will surely earn his keep, how much more a boy who adds to the work a development of his mind and soul !

Harijan, 11-6-1938

284. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 11, 1938

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I saw your letter[1] addressed to Mahadev. I can understand your pain. I hope the step I have taken will help to lighten your pain to some extent. I have drafted a statement[2] in English for newspapers, but I have not as yet published it. Your suggestion is certainly worth thinking over. My temperament inclined me to another course. I experience greater peace when I make such things public. The fear mentioned in your letter is based on practical considerations. I don't feel that I have lost the strength to stick to a step which I may have decided to take deliberately and as a matter of dharma. However, I won't publish the statement in a hurry. Even though I am putting it off, for non-Gujarati readers there must be a statement in English similar to the one in Gujarati.

I got the news yesterday through Gordhandas about Savitri[3] having given birth to a son. I am writing a few lines on a postcard to Lakshmanprasad[4].

Blessings from,

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2993.

[1] Not traceable. It had referred to the adverse comments by some of the Ashram inmates on Gandhiji's practice of resting his hands on shoulders of girls during his walks and his decision to give up the practice.

[2] Gandhiji had written an article on his decision for *Harijan* but it was never published as some of the Ashram inmates did not approve of making Gandhiji's decision a public affair.

[3] Addressee's daughter-in-law.

[4] Savitri's father. The letter is not traceable.

285. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

SEGAON,
June 11, 1938

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

Your letter is extremely good. It is pure. Your doubts are pertinent, even your fear is relevant and your caution is quite welcome.

The vow[1] of 1935 was worded in English, I had not seen the Gujarati or the Hindi translation. The purport of the original English is that I renounce the practice of placing my hands on the shoulders of women. I did not feel then that there was anything wrong about it, nor do I now. I gave up the practice only for the sake of public good. My heart never took it to mean that I would never place my hand on the shoulder of any girl whatsoever. I have no recollection of the particular girl with whom the practice was resumed in Segaon. But I do recollect that I fully remembered my vow of 1935 when I placed my hand on her shoulder. Possibly I could not resist her request, or may be I needed her support. I cannot of course say that the support became necessary because of my weak state for had that been the case I could have had the support of some man so as to keep the vow inviolate. But my vow never had such a wide meaning, at least for me. From the very begining I have regarded Sushilabehn in the same way as Ba, as an exception. My tender feelings are to account for that too. I would like to give up physical contact even with these two if it were possible, but I have no desire to do so at the cost of the deep hurt which I would be causing them while my heart feels no sin in the contact of these two. I took the decision only after much discussion with the girls here, after some laughter and some cajoling. I have caused Ba much pain. I still occasionally do, but I have no courage nor any desire to inflict any further pain on her. Sushila has observed *brahmacharya* since childhood but her observance does not include the exclusion of innocent contact with men. Pyarelal too is a *brahmachari* and one of the reasons for his joining me is that I do not advocate total avoidance of innocent contact between the two sexes and I have had a certain measure of success in this. Once I intended to give up all personal services from Sushila but within twelve hours my soft-heartedness had put an end to the intention. I could not bear the tears of Sushila and the fainting away of Prabhavati. I did not even want to. It is these brothers and sisters that my decision has affected most and that is why I summoned them by wire. I want their sincere

[1] *Vide*, "A Renunciation"

co-operation in my present task. Sushila has been present in the bathroom while I have bathed in the nude and in her absence Ba or Prabhavati or Lilavati have attended on me. But I see nothing wrong in it. It was necessary for someone to be there. I could call a male co-worker, too. Pyarelal has been in attendance occasionally but I have never felt any embarrassment in being seen naked by a woman. Still it would have to be a woman whose relations with me cannot come under any kind of suspicion.

Now for its implementation. As soon as I put my decision into practice the discussions arose. During the first round of discussions I started acting upon the decision the very next day though the step was to be taken only after 3-4 days. The discussions are inevitable as long as my mastery over the passions is incomplete, perhaps they are even necessary. Complete realization can be expressed best only through silence. Speech can never fully express thought. Ignorance denotes disorganization of thought which is why it needs the vehicle of speech. Thus you may take it for certain that the very necessity of any explanations and persuasions on my part proves my imperfection or proneness to passsions. My claim is and has ever been very small. I am striving incessantly to have full control over my thoughts, i.e., to remain unaffected in every circumstance. I am quite vigilant but the outcome lies with God which fact relieves me of worry. Do write to me if some points has still not been covered or a new doubt arises.

I return your letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1904.

286. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR [1]

[About *June 11, 1938*][1]

Your argument is welcome. I haven't the time for long argument with you.

S.[2] is out of the picture. She must be an exception being a doctor. But your objection is sound in that even one woman vitiated the experiment. I am struggling to exclude Ba, too. S. has put herself

[1] She had written to Gandhiji regarding his decision to give up touching women.

[1] There is a reference in the text to the article not having gone to the press. There is a similar reference in the "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj",11-6-1938, where Gandhiji says: "I won't publish the statement in a hurry." This letter therefore could have been written about June 11.

[2] Dr. Sushila Nayyar .

out. She wouldn't have what others can't. Therefore she is training a male nurse.

You are again right in saying that even a woman's proximity, speech, look, letter, etc., may work the evil as her touch might. But I had to think of myself. If I scented danger then I must put out my eyes, rather than have the animal in me be aroused.

You miss the crucial point. It is not the woman who is to blame. I am the culprit. I must attain the required purity. This experiment is but a way to be tried.

The article has not gone to the press. It may never go though the prohibition is in force. You will put yourself wholly in the wrong if you avoid me because of my decision. If you were here I would convince you of the necessity of the decision, in spite of your finding flaws.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai.

287. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

SEGAON,
June 12, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

I got your letter. It is a great crime to feel unhappy over a step which one may have taken as a matter of dharma. Therefore, forget the pain of separation. It is your duty to stay in Akola and mine to keep you there as long as your presence there is necessary for service. But if there is no such need, then stay in Akola long enough to satisfy Father and Mother and then come away here. Take care of your health, as also of the children's. If you have no special reason for being in Bombay, you may spend so much the more time in Akola.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SUSHILABEHN GANDHI
C/O MASHRUWALA
TOPIWALA BUILDING

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4875.

288. FOR SEGAON WORKERS

June 12, 1938

I hope, if I keep well, to join in the *takli-yajna* daily.

This *yajna* is not obligatory for anyone but I think it essential for all inmates of the institution. *Takli-yajna* is a social and public *yajna* and the charkha has no place in it. *Takli* teaches us silent service. The millions can perform the *yajna* only through *takli*. The noise of the spinning-wheel is a distraction in the *takli-yajna*. So those who understand its worth may ply the takli-exclusively.

The room we sit in is not arranged properly. Quite a few things there are superfluous. They should be removed after due examination. The case lying near my seat is quite out of place. Every-thing can be accommodated on the box. Our possessionss hould be the very minimum. We should remember that non-possession is one of the eleven vows.

BAPU

From the Hindi: C.W. 4674.

289. LETTER TO PRITHVISINGH

MAGANWADI,
WARDHA, C. P.,
June 13, 1938

DEAR PRITHVISINGH,

I was delighted to have your letter and am happy to learn that you are quite comfortable there.

You have rightly asked me how a prisoner wishing to observe truth and non-violence should behave in prison. Your present behaviour is quite commendable, but let me put down here a few principles:

(1) A votary of truth and non-violence may have nothing secret.

(2) He will observe all the jail regulations cheerfully.

(3) He may invite the attention of the authorities to such rules as may appear to him to be improper or hard.

(4) He has a right, and it may be even his duty, to disobey such rules as may offend his self-respect. But it is his duty first to make a representation to the authorities in respect of these rules, and he may

disobey them holding himself ready to suffer the consequences only after he has failed to obtain redress.

(5) Such a prisoner will never regard himself in any way superior to the rest, and will never agitate to secure facilities which are denied to others.

(6) Such a prisoner will regard the prison as a temple of freedom, and will therefore work for the development of his mind and his soul by serious study and thinking. He will not waste a single minute.

(7) Such a prisoner will regard all jail labour as his own work and will perform it with the same devotion. He will seize every opportunity to learn a new calling.

(8) Such a prisoner will always think of God, will never give himself up to despair, and will cheerfully put up with all hardships and sufferings.

What more can I say? I know you will fill in the details.

I am in correspondence with the authorities regarding your release. The result is in God's hands.

Do write whenever you can. I do get news about you from Shantilal and Jamnadas. Your father has been informed. I shall let you know when I have his reply.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal.

290. TELEGRAM TO M. A. JINNAH[1]

June 15, 1938

SURE PUBLICATION IS UNAUTHORIZED. BUT YOU MAY PUBLISH OUR CORREPONDENCE..

GANDHI

Hindustan Times, 16-6-1938.

291. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 16, 1938

BHAI JETHALAL,

Parnerkar explained to me all about your dairy activities. But what he told me about ghee, etc., was not at all encouraging. But his

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram of June 14 saying: "Publication correspondence Jawaharlal and myself is breach of confidence. Seems leakage is from Congress circles. I must release fully now your correspondence along with the rest. Hope you agree."

information was nine months old. What is the present position? He also told me that the dairy would need a capital of seven thousand rupees for running it efficiently. From where are we to get that? And even if it were found, one cannot be sure about any very big result being produced. You must, therefore, learn the art of being self-supporting with whatever is available. What are the activities at present?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 9865. Courtesy: Narayan J. Sampat.

292. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 17, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have never liked the idea of our women seeking foreign aid in their fight for freedom. Hence I do not want the League[1] to inquire into the position or condition of India's women. This kind of propaganda turns their attention from themselves. Their fight is not even against India's men. It is and must [be] among and against themselves. I have never relished the fight put up for women at the Round Table Conference. Such being my radical views you can understand my indifference to what the League does or does not do. But if I have to examine their viewpoint, I refuse to read colour prejudice where there are other cogent reasons to justify a particular course of action. I wonder if this is plain to you. You may not agree just yet, though you will in the end. For I am quite sure of my ground. The women in S. A. rose at a bound by their own action. And have [not] they, the village women, done likewise even here?

I had a long chat with Asha Lata about Parkinson's note. I think she has grasped my point.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3865. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7021

[1] Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

293. DISCUSSION WITH KALIDAS NAG[1]

[Before *June 18, 1938*]

KALIDAS NAG: Wherever I have been . . . non-violence is the question of questions. But it is just a question or a matter of doubt . . . But . . . has not Buddhism been responsible for widespread emasculation? And whatever may be the potency of non-violence, is it not impossible as a weapon of defence?

GANDHI: Do you want me to answer these questions or did you reply to them?

K.N. I have been replying to them after my own historical fashion, but I want you to answer them, for yours will be authentic answers. . . .

G. Well, the answer is being given in India in actual practice. It is no use citing the example of China and Japan. India is the only place where if an answer must come can come. Experience here is quite encouraging. Intellectually of course even many people in the West have come to recognize the futility of violence and begun to ask if non-violence may not after all be worth a trial. Dr. Stanley Jones has sent me a copy of his recent article, "Gandhian Solution of the Chinese Trouble"—and he has seriously discussed various forms of non-co-operation that may be successfully adopted. There was time when Dr. Jones had not much belief in non-co-operation, but he now seriously suggests it as a non-violent solution, and has pressed me to go to Europe to preach peace. But so long as my mission in India remains unfulfilled, my visit to the West on a peace mission must be a vain effort. Whilst it is true that non-violence has made much head-way in India, it is not of much value to an outsider and a critic at that.

K. N. What you say, Mahatmaji, is quite correct, viz., that the answer is being given, and if it is really given on such a scale as the size of our country it will be most effective. For their acceptance—even intellectual—of non-violence and non-co-operation is in a spirit of condescension.

G. It is impossible that a thing essentially of the soul can ever be imparted through the intellect. It is just like trying to impart faith in God through the intellect. It cannot be as it is essentially a matter of the heart. Faith can be turned into knowledge by experience, and it can come only through the heart and not the intellect. The intellect, if anything, acts as a barrier in matters of faith.

Harijan, 18-6-1938

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". Kalidas Nag had visited many foreign countries on cultural missions. This time he was going to Australia. On his way to Calcutta to board a ship, he stopped at Wardha to meet Gandhiji.

294. A CRITICISM

A C. P. correspondent sends me a bitter letter criticizing the C. P. Ministry.[1] I condense it below toning down the bitterest part:

> I have been wanting to write to you for some time but did not do so advisedly. I do so now as one interested in the good government of my province which, I take it, is also your adopted home for the rest of your life. We were led to believe that government by the representatives of the Congress would be so good as to escape calumny and be able to rule for all time merely by reason and by moral influence. But the main purpose of the Congress Ministry appears to us to be.
>
> (a) to worship your idol in public and break it in secret;
>
> (b)to worship the symbols of Imperialism in secret and denounce them in public;
>
> (c) to play the malefactor towards their opponents whom they cannot conquer by truthful and legitimate methods;
>
> (d) to carry on a brisk traffic in legislation and public offices.
>
> The government of a people cannot be run, as the Congress Ministers in the C. P. seem to imagine, by the common argument of promised boons and by corrupting the electorate with hope. During the past ten months your Ministers have left no stone unturned to shake the moral foundation of good government of this province. The Ministry and its component parts are honey-combed with intrigues and corruption. To sum up my conclusion, which I wish to convey to you, is that the Congress Party might have been deemed capable of governing had they never assumed power and responsibility. Next to assumption of power is the responsibility of relinquishing it. It is strange that your soul should not revolt against such a predatory Ministry for the creation of which the moral responsibility is entirely yours.

The Working Committee referred all the complaints against the Ministry to the Parliamentary Board which carried on an enquiry on the spot. Its report[2] is public property. The Congress is a wholly

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. Raghavendra Rao", 2-6-1938

[2] The Parliamentary Board which held a joint meeting with the C. P. Congress Legislature Party and the three Provincial Congress Committee presidents from the C. P. examined the various charges against the C. P. Ministry, including some of corruption. In a statement Vallabhbhai Patel and Abul Kalam Azad declared that while the Committee found no evidence to substantiate the charges of corruption it found certain complaints "not without justification". For instance, raising from Rs. 15,000 to 1 lakh the limit of the Debt Conciliation Act and appointing underserving persons to professorships in the University. They were glad to note among those concerned "a readiness to admit mistakes and make amends" and hoped that "under promise of prompt rectification all public criticism will cease."

democratic organization with the widest possible franchise. The Working Committee is its mouthpiece and has to work within the limits prescribed for it by the Congress Constitution. It was open to the C. P. Congress representatives to demand resignation from the Ministers, but they did not. On the contrary they wanted the present Ministers to compose their difference and carry on the Government. The Parliamentary Board could not disregard the wishes of the representatives. It had no power to do so. But it did all it could to rid the Ministry of whatever short-comings they had discovered. The Ministers, it must be admitted, offered no opposition to whatever the Board wanted to do. It now remains to be seen how the new arrangement works.

The point, however, that I wish to make is that the Working Committee does not hush up any evil that is found in the Congress organization. It is not afraid to impose discipline which is readily obeyed in most cases.

I wholly endorse the correspondent's proposition that the Congress can only rule "by reason and moral influence". He and critics like him may rest assured that the Congress will die a natural and deserved death if and when it substitutes reason and moral influence by goondaism.

One more point. The Congress is composed of ordinary mortals. They share the virtues and vices of the nation which they seek to represent. But after all is said and done, it will not be denied that it is the oldest political organization in the country, it is the most representative, it has drawn to itself the best talent in the country, it has the highest amount of sacrifice to its credit. Above all it is the one organization that has offered the greatest resistance to foreign rule and exploitation. Whilst all honest criticism is to be welcomed, I would like to remind the correspondent and other critics that it is open to them to join the Congress and criticize it from within and to try to rid it of all the removable limitations they may discover in it.

Harijan, 18-6-1938

295. QUALIFICATIONS OF A PEACE BRIGADE

Some time ago I suggested[1] the formation of a Peace Brigade whose members would risk their lives in dealing with riots, especially communal. The idea was that this Brigade should substitute the police

[1] *Vide*, "Our Failure"

and even the military. This reads ambitious. The achievement may prove impossible. Yet, if the Congress is to succeed in its non-violent struggle, it must develop the power to deal peacefully with such situations. Communal riots are engineered by politically minded men. Many of those who take part in them are under the influence of the latter. Surely it should not be beyond the wit of Congressmen to devise a method or methods of avoiding ugly communal situations by peaceful means. I say this irrespective of whether there is or there is not a communal pact. It cannot be that any party seeks to force a pact by violent means. Even if such a pact were a possibility, it would not be worth the paper on which it might be written. For behind such a pact there will be no common understanding. What is more, even after a pact is arrived at, it would be too much to expect that there would never be any communal riots.

Let us therefore see what qualifications a member of the contemplated Peace Brigade should possess.

(1) He or she must have a living faith in non-violence. This is impossible without a living faith in God. A non-violent man can do nothing save by the power and grace of God. Without it he won't have the courage to die without anger, without fear and without retaliation. Such courage comes from the belief that God sits in the hearts of all and that there should be no fear in the presence of God. The knowledge of the omnipresence of God also means respect for the lives of even those who may be called opponents or goondas. This contemplated intervention is a process of stilling the fury of man when the brute in him gets the mastery over him.

(2) This messenger of peace must have equal regard for all the principal religions of the earth. Thus, if he is a Hindu, he will respect the other faiths current in India. He must therefore possess a knowledge of the general principles of the different faiths professed in the country.

(3) Generally speaking this work of peace can only be done by local men in their own localities.

(4) The work can be done singly or in groups. Therefore no one need wait for companions. Nevertheless one would naturally seek companions in one's own locality and form a local brigade.

(5) This messenger of peace will cultivate through personal service contacts with the people in his locality or chosen circle, so that when he appears to deal with ugly situations, he does not descend upon the members of a riotous assembly as an utter stranger liable to be looked upon as a suspect or an unwelcome visitor.

(6) Needless to say, a peace bringer must have a character beyond reproach and must be known for his strict impartiality.

(7) Generally there are previous warnings of coming storms. If these are known, the Peace Brigade will not wait till the conflagration breaks out but will try to handle the situation in anticipation.

(8) Whilst, if the movement spreads, it might be well if there are some whole-time workers, it is not absolutely necessary that there should be. The idea is to have as many good and true men and women as possible. These can be had only if volunteers are drawn from those who are engaged in various walks of life but have leisure enough to cultivate friendly relations with the people living in their circle and otherwise possess the qualifications required of a member of the Peace Brigade.

(9) There should be a distinctive dress worn by the members of the contemplated Brigade so that in course of time they will be recognized without the slightest difficulty.

These are but general suggestions. Each centre can work out its own constitution on the basis here suggested.

Lest false hopes may be raised, I must warn workers against entertaining the hope that I can play any active part in the formation of Peace Brigades. I have not the health, energy or time for it. I find it hard enough to cope with the tasks I dare not shirk. I can only guide and make suggestions through corrspondence or these columns. Therefore let those who appreciate the idea and feel they have the ability, take the initiative themselves. I know that the proposed Brigade has great possibilities and that the idea behind it is quite capable of being worked out in practice.

Harijan, 18-6-1938

296. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

June 18, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending my two articles today. The one in Hindi should not be published. Publishing it may possibly harm Raja. What I have written below the Government note is enough for the present. Make a suggestion to Raja privately.

I am glad that you are training Babla. He should be fully satisfied. Please see that while he becomes proficient in English he does not forget Gujarati, Hindi or Sanskrit. Moreover, he should not

feel that all that is worth knowing is in English and that everything else is trash.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11597.

297. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[Before *June 20, 1938*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I hope you will be able to calm yourself now. Send a wire to Kanti as per enclosed draft. His ship is in mid-sea. "A thought for today" in today's *Times* deserves to be engraved in our hearts by us all. I have been reading the *Dhammapada*. It also is a book which can be of great help. The letters and articles are enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Details about blood-pressure will be given by Sushila. For Kanti: "Do come. Love. Bapu." I got your mail just now. I will now look into it. No note from you ! Well, let it be so, I forgot about the blood-pressure. Today 164/102. Yesterday also it was the same. In between it had risen to 176/106.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11600.

298. LETTER TO KOTWAL

SEGAON,
June 20, 1938

BHAI KOTWAL,

I don't seem to have got your precious letter. You should not remain unconcerned where Harijans are excluded. I feel that you can throw open the temple for Harijans if others co-operate with you. Somebody who knows the local law would be able to express a definite opinion.

You may come after the rains are over.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3602.

[1] This was obviously written before "Letter to Prabhavati", 20-6-1938, in which Gandhiji says "Kanti is expected to come with Saraswati in a day or two."

299. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 20, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

I have not been able to write to you myself lately. But what is the use of writing? Do you ever stay at one place for any length of time? You do not seem to have got the letters that I wrote to you at Sewan. And then you complain that I don't write to you. Now tell me what I should do? At what address should I write so that you may get the letters without delay?

You worry too much. But the *Gita* says that one should never worry. One should endure everything. One may try to remedy things wherever possible but one may not worry if one's efforts fail. I can guide you further if you write frankly.

Sushila is here. She has been giving me her services. I have dictated to her one letter. Amtul Salaam also is here and of course Pyarelal too.

I am all right. My diet is practically the same as it was. I take walks as usual and also work well enough.

Harijanbandhu is sent to you regularly.

Do you get the food you need?

When may I expect you here? Kanti is expected to come with Saraswati in a day or two.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3515.

300. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

SEGAON,
June 20, 1938

BHAI FULCHAND,

I got the letters of both of you. I have written to that gentleman. I will send the name if he permits. If he does not, why should we make

any inquiry? There can be no inquiry about anything which is not supported by definite evidence. I hope you are completely restored.

Blessings from

BAPU

FULCHAND KASTURCHAND SHAH
KELAVANI MANDAL
WADHWAN CITY, KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9200. Also C.W. 2853. Courtesy: Shardabehn Shah

301. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[After *June 20, 1938*][1]

CHI. PRABHA,

You are unnecessarily suffering. My statement will not be published as drafted. And why should you be unhappy even if anything is published? You need not go anywhere for solitude. Your solitude is with me. Come as soon as you can. I don't like your worrying. Continue to write to me regularly. Don't be remiss about it. Come out with all your suffering and lighten your heart. Kanti has left Saraswati here. She cannot stay without Kanti now. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3310.

[1] From the reference to Saraswati's arrival. Gandhiji wrote to the addressee on June 20: "Kanti is expected to come with Saraswati in a day or two."

302. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[After *June 20, 1938*][1]

CHI. PRABHA,

What an angry letter ! Your anger is the result of your suffering. That you are not educated means that I didn't educate you. Isn't that so? I don't repent of that. It is possible that you may not be useful there. I have not trained you for the work there. I have trained you for public service. I have trained you for work with me. There is no work here for which you are not fit. You can live in the midst of all types of people. I wouldn't hesitate to send you anywhere. I have no fear that you might do something wrong. You have got the strength now even to mount the gallows with a smile on your face. What more would you like to be? If you wish to learn English, you may do that whenever you like. I can certainly teach you. Do come in September if you can. I cannot bear to see you unhappy. You have no cause for unhappiness at all. It is your duty to stay there for the present and serve Jayaprakash in whatever way you can. When you have no work with Father and when Jayaprakash can let you come, you will certainly come away, your place finally is here. Work is waiting for you here. What more do you wish? Why do you unnecessarily make yourself unhappy?

I am well. The blood-pressure is under control. Just now I am experimenting with a diet of milk, dates and lemons. I take mangoes when available. I seem to feel better with this. It is only the third day today.

Saraswati is here. Kanti is in Bangalore. Sushila and Pyarelal are still here. Kallenbach's sister-in-law has come. The place is crowded. There is hardly room even to stand. A *takli-yajna* is going on daily and I join in it. I feel very happy doing so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a Photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3311.

[1] From the reference to Saraswati's presence in Segaon, this letter seems to have been written about the same time as the preceding one.

303. DISCUSSION WITH DELEGATES FROM CONGRESS PROVINCES[1]

WARDHA,
June 21, 1938

To questions from the Frontier delegate regarding the non-violence with special reference to foreign aggression, Mahatma Gandhi said that violence means a vicious circle of conquest and defeat. True freedom is only possible through non-violence and religion lives by non-violence.

Mahatma Gandhi further said that agriculture is not a craft dependent on social and political condition. Craft training is essential for Indian villages. A compact and a small area without previous schools and with national work as the background, is necessary for introducing the Wardha scheme which is primarily rural, and for urban areas the same principle with the necessary modifications.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-6-1938

304. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 22, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

I am deeply grateful to you for your letter.[2] It has caused me no disappointment. On the contrary, where mutual confidence is established, one is enabled to correct one's impressions based upon one-sided evidence.

I know you are on the eve of your departure for England. But if it is no undue tax on your time, and if my request is legitimate, I would like to have the evidence against Sardar Prithvi Singh, so that I may correct myself and know the step I should take.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] They had come for a fortnight's training as Educational Officers, under the Wardha Scheme of Education.

[2] In his letter of June 18, the Viceroy ha d said he was touched by the terms in which Gandhiji had pleaded Prithvi Singh's case, but that records revealed that Prithvi Singh had been guilty of crimes of exceptional violence, aggravated by deceit, and he could not properly ask the Governor to press his Ministers to release him.

305. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 22, 1938

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter. Replies tend to get delayed.

The reasons which you have mentioned also may be responsible for the scene on the 14th.[1] But a great experiment can be carried out only by enlisting the support of those who are most likely to respond, and only thus can one discover truth. I can now clearly see that it was a fundamental error on my part to have deliberately excluded other co-workers from my experiment. I should have tried to get a class of workers who would be able to carry on the experiment in accordance with conditions laid down by me. My taking it upon myself, instead of finding such a class of workers, was the result of abysmal ignorance and certainly of conceit, too. In consequence, while I would not tolerate even the most trivial departure from the conditions by my co-workers. I myself committed the most serious blunders. This was the limit of intolerance. The small-mindedness implied in this attitude fills me with disgust for myself; but on the other hand the generosity displayed by all of you co-workers delights me with its sweet fragrance. This, in brief, is the truth.

The new experiment[2] started on the 2nd. But it is only the beginning as yet. The ship has set sail and is slowly leaving port. It is not easy for one who has been used to sailing in one kind of weather continuously for 40 years to try to sail in weather of another kind. Hence the slowness of speed.

I am not in a position to advise you much in regard to Gijubhai. But I should certainly like you to consider one point. Gijubhai is a devoted follower of the Montessori system. I know its basic principle. We do not even make an attempt to follow it here. Narandas and you have understood the principles of the Wardha scheme and are convinced of the soundness of the scheme. Probably Gijubhai will not be able to co-operate with you. For, as far as I know him, he will not

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amritlal T. Nanavati", 2-5-1938

[2] Of not having any contact with grown-up girls. Gandhiji had decided not to take the support of girls during his walks.

be able to co-operate unreservedly in implementing the Wardha scheme.

Show this letter to Narandas. You may write to me or come here whenever you wish.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5544. Also *Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*, pp. 267-8.

306. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

June 23, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

My idea of boycott is that it can be a perfectly non-violent measure. When it is that, it becomes a duty. Hence boycott of Japanese goods does become a duty for those who consider Japan to be wholly in the wrong. And when it becomes a duty, it takes no account of consequences. And duty has to be performed whether one has company or not. Have you seen Stanley Jones's thesis on the subject?

No more today.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3630. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6439.

307. DISCUSSION WITH STUDENTS[2]

[Before *June 25, 1938*]

Gandhiji explained to them how almost since the beginning of his public life in South Africa he had been closely associated with labour. When he settled down to practise at the bar in South Africa he decided to give the whole of his spare time to work for the Indian settlers there, and the first man who came to him for assistance was an indentured labourer. This case at once put him in touch with labour. The labourers brought to him their troubles with their employers and also their personal and domestic worries, and that gave him a glimpse into their lives as nothing else could have done. Non-violence was the first thing he placed before them, and non-

[1] These two sentences are from the printed source.

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Notes". A group of university graduates after undergoing training in the organization of labour had come to see Gandhiji.

violence was the only thing that they had been pledged to observe when, at a critical stage in the satyagraha campaign, nearly 60,000 labourers downed their tools and faced imprisonment. They went through untold hardships, suffering, starvation, and some even died, but they adhered to non-violence until the end. Their condition was particularly difficult and in a sense worse than the workers' here. They were not free, but indentured, and they had to fight not only for justice from their employers but for the abolition of the opprobrious £3 tax which threatened them with extinction. But non-violence helped them to pull through. His work in Champaran and Ahmedabad was recent history. Regarding Champaran he said that the condition of the peasants there was almost the same as the indentured labourers', and that they had failed in their agitation for nearly half a century for there was no cohesive power of non-violence to hold them together. There had been several riots and their condition had grown worse every year. But the first taste of non-violence breathed new life into them, and at the end of a remarkably brief struggle they were emancipated.

Without that necessary discipline in non-violence, they would have internecine strife and would never be ready to develop the strength that is needed to enable them to realize the power that they possess. Organization, technical skill and everything else would follow the acceptance of the fundamental principle of non- violence. Class collaboration would also follow as a matter of course. They are strong in numbers and yet they feel so dependent, so very much at the mercy of their employers. That is because they do not know their own inherent strength. Otherwise what is there to prevent them from pooling their own resources and dictating terms as employers do now. The thing that they have to realize is that labour is as much capital as metal. That realization can come only through acceptance of non-violence.

But after that realization has come and they have come to their own, non-violence does not become superfluous. If they were to bid good-bye to it, they would be as bad as capitalists and turn exploiters themselves. The realizaton of their strength combined with adherence to non-violence would enable them to co-operate with capital and turn it to proper use. Then they will not regard it as a conflicting interest, they will not regard the mill and the machinery as belonging to the exploiting agents and grinding them down, but as their own instruments of production, and will therefore protect them as well as they would their own property. They will not steal time and turn out less work, but will put in the most they can. In fact, capital and labour will be mutual trustees and both will be trustees of consumers. The trusteeship theory is not unilateral and does not in the least imply

superiority of the turstee. It is, as I have shown, a perfectly mutual affair, and each believes that his own interest is best safeguarded by safeguarding the interest of the other. 'May you propitiate the gods and may the gods propitiate you, and may you reach the highest good by this mutual propitiation,' says the *Bhagavad Gita*. There is no separate species called gods in the universe, but all who have the power of production and will work for the community using that power are gods—labourers no less than the capitalists.

Harijan, 25-6-1938.

308. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

[Before *June 25, 1938*][1]

CHI. KAKA,

I want that book about marriage rites. Send two or three copies. I hope to marry Vijaya to Manubhai shortly. Nanabhai will most probably attend and he himself will perform the rites. But he says he would like to perform the rites according to your booklet. I therefore think it necessary to send a copy to him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7686.

309. TELEGRAM TO KANTILAL GANDHI

WARDHAGANJ,
June 25, 1938

KANTI GANDHI
HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH
BANGALORE

SARASWATI DISCONSOLATE. WANTS YOUR PRESENCE. SAYS CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT YOU. SUGGEST YOUR SENDING WIRE ASKING HER CARRY OUT PROMISE BUT DO WHAT YOU THINK BEST.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 7336. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 25-6-1938

310. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

Unrevised SEGAON,

June 25, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I am not regular nowadays about your letters. For I have not asked Mira to give a regular letter or p.c. But you shall have it if you want it.

There is no neglect on the part of the postal department about the letters. The thing is that I am writing this at night. It will be posted tomorrow but will bear the date the day after. I hate post-dating letters.

I have been forgetting always to tell you that the exception in favour of S. was dropped, she had to nurse me because of her skill. This is no favour but necessity which is protected in my note yet unpublished.

I have not yet been able to come to a final decision about the publication. My own inclination is to publish it. I have not yet given it final shape. I am in no hurry.

Yes, I read Sastri's address. I want to deal with it if I get the time.

Subhas is in Wardha. He is looking a picture of health. All he needed was work of the type he loves. He has got it and he is happy.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3866. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7022.

311. LETTER TO KHWAJA NAZIMUDDIN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 25, 1938

DEAR KHWAJA SAHEB,

I thank you for your letter of 18th June,[1] as also for the letters from prisoners, dated 21st and 26th May respectively. I wish the prisoners' letters could have been sent to me earlier. I am enclosing replies[2] to them, which I hope will be sent to them without delay.

With regard to the prisoners, I had the benefit of a fairly long chat with Subhas Babu. On his return he hopes to be able to see you, and then, if necessary, ask for permission to see the prisoners. As, very properly, his acceptance and that of Sarat Babu is regarded necessary, it is as well that further negotiations are conducted by one of them. Moreover this arrangement saves me another journey to Bengal. I am sorry to inform you that my health has again become very uncertain owing to the heavy strain of work I have been recently undertaking.

Before the proposed scheme can be accepted by us three it is necessary that even following out the method of the Government scheme, the result should approximate to what I have submitted in my letter of 13th April last. It I accepted anything less I would be guilty of a breach of faith with the prisoners to whom I gave an absolute assurance, often repeated, that, subject to their subscribing to non-violence, I should strain every nerve to secure early discharge for every one of them. I could, therefore, not be party to any scheme which does not imply such discharge of all prisoners. The method adopted for achieving the end would then cause no difficulty.

I hope that when Subhas Babu meets you, it will be possible to reach a satisfactory solution. If, at any time, you desire my presence, and if it is likely to facilitate matters, you will please not hesitate to drop me a line and, health permitting, I would gladly visit Bengal.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

THE HON'BLE KHWAJA SIR NAZIMUDDIN
7 HUNGERFORD STREET
CALCUTTA

From a copy: C.W. 9929

[1] In this the addressee had said that the Bengal Government were not standing still in the matter of the detenus and that they would gladly grant facilities for convincing the prisoners of the desirability of accepting the decision come to regarding their cases.

[2] These are not traceable.

312. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

June 25, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Please see Kanti's letter. Send the accompanying wire[1] to Ramachandran. Hope the wire[2] to Kanti was despatched yesterday.

Last night I took serpina. At 3.30 a.m. the blood-pressure was 190/112. Just now it must be less. Nothing need be done because of this. I shall have to reduce the work. Send the accompanying wire to Hanna[3].

Blessings from

BAPU

[P.S.]

Did you give Kaka the letter regarding marriage rites? Now at 6.30 a.m. it is 180/102.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11599.

313. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[After *June 25, 1938*][4]

CHI. KANTI,

I have been regretting having called Saraswati. She has been miserable ever since you left. She told Vasumati so the day before yesterday, and Vasumati told me. I had a long talk with Saraswati. She said: "I cannot live without Kanti. Send me to Bangalore." I got into a fluster. I said: "I certainly could not do that. It would interfere with Kanti's studies. It would also spoil your life and your parents would not approve of it. But I shall write to him. You too may write." But she was not satisfied with that. She told me this morning: "Call Kanti. Send him a telegram." I did not agree at first. Then I felt that I should at least inform you and so sent you a telegram. You must have received it. She goes on repeating: "If K. does not come, send me to

[1] This is not traceable.
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Kantilal Gandhi", 25-6-1938
[3] Niece of Kallenbach. The telegram to her is not traceable.
[4] From the contents; *vide* "Telegram to Kantilal Gandhi", 25-6-1938

Bangalore." I did not like your not having stayed on. I am now in a fix. I cannot trust her word. I do not even know what is in your mind. It is my firm opinion that you should make it clear to her that you two cannot live together till you are married. You certainly cannot abandon your studies and come away. It is a different matter if you marry immediately and live together. But none of her elders would be agreeable to that. Your firmness is absolutely essential in the interest of Saraswati's progress. Without that she would be completely ruined. And you too will not be happy. But this is only my opinion.

From a copy of the Gujarati : C. W. 7389. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

314. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[After *June 26, 1938*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

If sleep overcomes you let it. This time we need not worry about the editorial. Hanna will finish it in a little while. I do understand why you feel sleepy. Your mind is a little lighter. You certainly did well in not coming. There is no need for you at all to force yourself. I am returning the cheque.

Should I look for some assistant? It will be enough if you manage Lilavati. Here she is absolutely idling away her time and feels unhappy all the time—for having had to leave the kitchen. She will be somewhat happy if she goes there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11638.

[1] From the reference to Hanna who arrived on June 26.

315. TELEGRAM TO KANTILAL GANDHI

WARDHAGANJ,
June 27, 1938

KANTI GANDHI
HARIJANSEWAK SANGH
BANGALORE

YOUR LETTER. SARASWATI WANTS YOU TAKE LEAVE. BE FIRM. TELL HER SHE MUST FULFIL PROMISE STAY SEGAON. YOU CANNOT LEAVE BANGALORE. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 7335. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi.

316. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

June 27, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Again pencil hand. I am on my back with the earth bandage on the abdomen.

If you do not see the *Reformer*[1], look up the current number. You will find Hansa's article. Do you know anything of that movement?

We have a newcomer in Kallenbach's niece. She is an extraordinarily good woman. But our climate may floor her. She came in only yesterday.

The weather just now is cool.

My b. p. shoots up and goes down. Does not interfere with work.

Love

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3867. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur, Also G.N. 7023

[1] *The Indian Social Reformer*.

317. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

June 27, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

I read your letter, as also the article. If the article pertains to the work of *Talimi Sangh*, the sentence about Hindi should be omitted. But if it pertains to the work for the spread of Hindi, it cannot be omitted. The distinction is clear enough. More when we meet.

Who is Madan Mohan? He has given his address care of you. The reply[1] to him is enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7687.

318. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

SEGAON,
June 29, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

It is not your fault, either. Nor is it Amtul Salaam's. I had no other intention except that of changing Amtul Salaam if it was necessary for you to remain there for more than six days. You ought not to indulge in conjectures about my intentions. You may come only if the doctor gives full permission. Lilavati can be sent without any inconvenience.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 4579. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi.

[1] This is not traceable.

319. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

Silence Day [After *June 29, 1938*][1]

CHI. VIJAYA,

You must be all right. Manilalbhai will bring you here in the evening, if the doctor permits, that is.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7109, Also C.W. 4601. Courtesy: Vijayabhehn M. Pancholi

320. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
June 30, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

You won't mind the missing of a day now and again.

My statement is still hanging fire. It is still to be mended. I am having extraordinary opinions on it.

Did I tell you Kallenbach's niece had come here? She is very weak in body. She is most anxious to help. I wish you would see her. If she does not remain well, I shall have to pack her off.

Shanta has gone back.

Balkrishna is not bad.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3868. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur, Also G.N. 7024.

321. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

June 30, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter. I have done all that you wished and more. I have arranged for her coaching in Hindi, music, etc. I ask her to sit with me. I permit her to eat everything. I have permitted her to cook

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

her food with chillies, even offered to get it cooked for her. I have asked Vasumati and Sharda to keep her company. I give her a good deal of my time too. But she wants you. How can I give that?

You are safe because you can see your errors sooner or later. Being at my wit's end I have already sent a wire to Ramachandran. I have asked him or Govindan to come over. There has been no reply so far. It was your duty to let me know what happened there.

Now my advice. If you wish to save yourself and Saraswati you will have to be hard-hearted. You should plainly tell Saraswati that you will neither leave Bangalore nor permit her to come over there; that she will have to stay either at Segaon or at Trivandrum. She will submit to you. But she knows your weakness. She is, of course, a child but you, too, have proved to be a child. I had thought that you were mature and had ability to guide Saraswati. But my judgment has proved to be wrong. You seem to have become completely infatuated. If you find it impossible to overcome the infatuation, then there is no other way for you except to get married. But I would consider it an outrage for you to marry at present. I would not give my consent to it. But you do not need my consent. I would regard it as your duty to do that without which you cannot live. If I cannot give my consent to it because I don't like it, you should not feel unhappy.

Give up the idea of going to Nagpur. Complete the course there.

Permit Amtul Salaam to talk. It would be easy for me if you did so. You should trust me. I will not let Amtul Salaam violate propriety.

I will tell you an interesting thing that happened yesterday. In the morning Saraswati came and asked me to send you a wire stating: "I will be brave," etc. I asked her to write down the telegram. She, therefore, brought the enclosed. I told her that it being Sunday I would send it today. She was pleased. Before two hours had passed she brought another telegram, also enclosed. It was of course not sent. This is the position. Everything depends on you. I wish to give you all possible help. But all that should be within the limits of dharma. Be mature and steady of mind. At present you should live purely a student's life. Your life will be ruined if you yield to attachment.

May God show you the right. path. I will not be in a hurry to send Saraswati to Trivandrum.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7337. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi.

322. LETTER TO LAKSHMI GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 30, 1938

CHI. LAKSHMI,

When I do not write to you how can I expect you to write? Please write to Saraswati.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2027.

323. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

Segaon, Wardha,
June 30, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

I also have had a letter from Manilal. By all means stay there as long as you wish. Please remember that the law of life is that we should be governed by dharma rather than by our own desires. Most often desire and duty, *preyas* and *shreyas*, are opposed to each other. On such occasions we should follow *shreyas*. This, of course, need not be applied to your wish to stay there. It is all the same to me where you stay. I should like you to stay wherever you would be more cheerful and keep good health. From the point of view of service, perhaps it may even be your duty to stay there for some more time.

Sita also may stay there. What arrangement have you made for her education? Does Arun harass you much? Is there any improvement in your health? Why don't you write to Vasumati? If you do not write even though you get time to write, how can you hope to be excused?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4876.

324. LETTER TO GOSIBEHN CAPTAIN AND SISTERS

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 1, 1938

I thought I had never been one of the domestic circle and had never even tried to be one. There has been an invisible spiritual bond between us derived from the common loyalty to Dadabhai. I have regarded you as more than his descendants by blood. You have believed in him and his mission. His life was an inspiration to me when I was yet a boy. I came under his influence before I had known any other Indian leader. That influence has persisted. Soon after I returned to India Perin entered my life and it was more than a joy to me to find Dadabhai's granddaughter sharing my ideals. This contact grew. And it has become such that I instinctively feel and share the sorrows that overtake you when I come to know of them. I never came near enough to Jalbhai to know him so well as you four sisters. But I knew his great worth from many sources. I knew above all his quiet services. I realize therefore what a shock his death must be to you all. This is to supplement my wire. May the knowledge that I am a silent sharer in your grief lighten it somewhat.

With love to you all,

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal.

325. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON,
July 1, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I did not like your wire. How can we stand between Saraswati and her parents? How can we insist that she should never visit them at all? But now your wire has no meaning. The latest position is this. I had a talk with her about a great many things. I joked with her and I even assumed a stern tone, but Saraswati did not give up her obstinacy. Firmly she told me: "Get me married." I said: "I will never agree to that. I cannot attend such a marriage nor can I give my blessings. I do not approve of a girl of your age marrying. I am a reformer and therefore cannot give my consent to a thing which I

don't approve of. Moreover, I have every fear that Kanti's studies will suffer as a result of the marriage, and that is another reason why I cannot give my consent. But if your parents agree and Kanti also is willing, then I will not stand in your way and in that case you will not need my blessings." Saraswati was pleased and said at once: "Then I am ready to go to Trivandrum. You can arrange for that." I then asked: "Shouldn't we first ascertain your parents' and Kanti's views?'' So she asked me to write immediately. This conversation took place yesterday during my walk. There was no question of writing a letter then. In the morning I got your wire. I showed it to her and asked her how she could go to Trivandrum now and also how the marriage could take place. But she said: "Kantibhai is definitely ready for marriage. My parents also will not object. You should write a letter and after getting his consent send me to Trivandrum." When during our talk yesterday I agreed not to oppose the marriage to the extent of preventing it, she agreed even to study during the time she had to stay here. She has started learning English from Mr. Kallenbach's niece. Today she must have started even the Hindi lessons. This is the position.

The idea of Nagpur is absolutely useless. Mahadev has already written to you about that. I also have already given you my opinion. I had given my consent only with the hope that your relationship would be an ideal one. At the moment, I do not see any sign of that hope being realized. I said to Saraswati: "Kanti wants that you should be treated as Kanam." She vehemently protested: "I am not Kanam. I know my interests. I will not stay here without Kantibhai. Please call him for fifteen days." I cannot make Saraswati obey my orders as you think. I ought not to do that either. The key is solely in your hands. My advice is that you should let Saraswati go to Trivandrum, should flatly refuse to marry just now and should not go to Trivandrum yourself. You should sacrifice everything else for the sake of your studies. You should write all this to Saraswati very frankly. You ought not to leave your studies and come here. But this is, of course, my opinion. If it does not appeal to you and if you are ready to marry, you may by all means do so. You need not bother if I do not think that it will be for your good. Who can foresee the future? My fear may be unjustified and my reasoning may be wrong. You know best what is good for you. You should, therefore, decide as you think best without taking into consideration my opinion and inform me accordingly. In the mean time, I will do whatever may be

necessary to humour Saraswati. Yesterday I spared four hours for that girl. Vasumati is devoting a good deal of her time to her, but she frankly confesses: "The task is beyond me. How would a girl who does not listen to you listen to me?" Over and above this Kanu also gives some time to her. Lilavati, Sharda, etc., try their level best to make friends with her. But she is not easy to make friends with. It seems she feels somewhat at home with Vasumati, though. I still think that Amtul Salaam might be able to influence her.

Now do as God prompts you and write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7338. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi.

326. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEGAON,
July 1, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

I got your letter. I have already read through twice the letter to Maulana Saheb. I do not reject it but may have to redraft it completely. Hence the delay. I will redraft it as early as I can.

I understood Ramdevji's letter. If you come some day, you can persuade Mirabehn yourself. My persuading her will mean ordering her, which will not be right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7685.

327. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 1, 1938

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Your letter was excellent, because it was so frank. There was no reason at all for you to apologize for it. I fully remember the discussion at the Sabarmati Ashram. But my impression is the opposite of yours. I think also that the subject was discussed on two separate occasions. I have a faint impression that at the end of the discussion

on the first occasion some decision was arrived at regarding my practice of walking with my hand on a girl's shoulder. Kaka was not present at that discussion. When he came to know about it, he raised the subject again, for he approved of the principle behind my practice. At the end of the second discussion, my memory is that I had decided to maintain the *status quo*. Be that as it may, the main point is that I do not think I have failed to do what I had promised to do.

As regards the Wardha decision, you will see if you read *Harijan*[1] that the girls, while going in procession from Maganwadi to Mahilashram and from Mahilashram to Maganwadi, used to call at my hut and take me out with them. I walked with my hands on their shoulders by turns. This was observed by some people and became the subject of comment. I myself raised the matter for discussion and published the decision at which I finally arrived. It was not in my mind at all that I would never place my hands even on the shoulders of girls who live with me, for after writing that article I continued to use Manu and other girls as my walking-sticks. But that procession stopped, and the practice has not been revived and will not be revived. The reason for stopping it had nothing to do with my vow of *brahmacharya*. The only consideration was the good of society. In this instance, too, there is no question of my having failed to do what I had declared I would do. If I had made such a declaration and then failed to abide by it, knowing full well that I was doing so, I would be pained and feel humiliated in my own eyes. It would give me no pleasure to know that I had weakened in my determination to keep a vow. Yes, there may be self-deception sometimes; as, for instance, when I decided to drink goat's milk because my vow forbade me to use cow's or buffalo's milk, or when I compromised by counting several vegetables as one item in observing the vow of not consuming more than five items at any one meal. This is a painful memory for me. Even so, I have convinced myself that I have not violated the letter of my pledges and exercise the utmost strictness in observing a vow. I have no comment to make about Thakkar Bapa having been pained. You had no reply to give to the criticism of that *muni* of Kutch, for you had before you two instances of what you regard to be violation of pledges; you should, therefore, bear that criticism without resentment. Your only reply can be: 'Even we, who live with him, are puzzled by some of his actions. But we think we have lost nothing by

[1] *Vide* "A Renunciation"

our association with him, and so we cling to him. I will ask him about the comparision which you have made.' If you gave this reply, it was correct. If you kept quiet, that also was right. In any case, you can always give this reply: 'He has always touched girls with a pure feeling and never with a gross purpose. But a doubt having occurred whether, unknown to him, there might not be an impure feeling in his heart, he has temporarily given up the practice to end that doubt.'

Personally, I cannot compare the *muni's* conduct with mine. According to me, there is a serious error in it. If, however, his own conscience feels nothing wrong in his practice, he should continue it no matter what I do. This is so deep a matter that blind imitation of one another is likely to land one into serious error. Everybody, therefore, should cultivate a vigilant conscience and be guided by it, with God as witness.

I am trying to issue a statement explaining my position. I wish to satisfy as many co-workers as I can. Let us see if I succeed.

You do not seem to have understood the meaning of the remark "the ship is still in port"[1]. It only means that, though the experiment is going on, while discussion about it is still continuing it cannot be said that it is being carried on in thought, speech and action. I can observe its effects only if I go on with it silently. Just now, therefore, it is being followed only in action. As for thought and speech, we joke about the matter daily. This is enough for today.

I can say nothing about the Frontier Province just now. I shall see about it afterwards.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5547.

328. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

July 2, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

A new phase in my search has commenced. I do not know where it will end. The statement, if it is issued at all, will have no relation to the one you have seen. But you must be patient. I can say nothing yet. All I can say is that something is coming over me.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi",22-6-1938

Nothing alarming. Only the step I have taken is not drastic enough. In what way I shall have to shape it I do not know. God will guide me.

You seem to have had smooth sailing with your Board. I am anxiously awaiting your letter.

Love

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3869. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7025.

329. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

July 2, 1938

CHI. KANTI

Saraswati has just showed me your letter. One moment you are angry and the next moment you are pleased. How can anybody, therefore, feel happy when you are pleased or unhappy when you are angry?

Have I ever considered your attachment to Saraswati wrong? I felt unhappy because I did not see what I had expected of you. But what does it matter? It would be best that you appear to me exactly as you are.

Saraswati has been jubilant since the day before yesterday, for she has concluded from your letter that she will be marrying you in a few days. She was afraid that I would oppose the marriage. She was in high spirits the whole of yesterday. She showed me your today's letter to her. I feel afraid now that there will be some hitch again. I strain myself on her account. I give her as much time as I can and do my best to cheer her. But I see that whenever her mind gets fixed upon something it is impossible to do that.

Otherwise I very much like her innocence, her simplicity and her childlike nature. I will look after her as long as she stays here. I will watch what effect your letter has on her. She has not yet talked to me. I did ask her of course.

You are right when you say that wherever my conclusions are based on incomplete information, they are faulty. They must be so. It may be called a virtue in a votary of truth, for his conclusions ought to be strictly based on the facts in his possession. He should not be led astray by any consideration of self-interest and should preserve an objective attitude. I should be happy if my condition is such as you have described it. That is what it should be.

I have received a letter from Nagpur saying that yesterday was

the last day for filling the posts. There were only nine posts for one of which you were a candidate, and there were sixty applications for those nine. What would you have done in such a crowd?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7339. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi.

330. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

July 2, 1938,

CHI. KANAIYA,

I hurt you in the morning, didn't I? But did you realize or not that there was love behind my anger? I could not bear even that mistake on your part which I knew you would make. It is a good sign. I want to see you perfect. If you have patience, you will certainly become so.

Are you not Narandas's son? Emulate his patience and faith. You should never yield to despair.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U. /II

331. TESTIMONIAL TO LALJI PARMAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 2, 1938

Shri Lalji Parmar was under training in the music department of the Gujarat Vidyapith and he has acquired enough proficiency to enable him to teach a bit. Only his teachers can give a definite opinion regarding his progress. I have seen the testimonials given by the former music teacher and the head of the Gujarat Vidyapith. Shri Lalji Parmar is a Harijan and it would be good if the Bombay Government could grant him some aid.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3289

332. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

July [*4,*][1] *1938*

CHI. JAMNALAL,

The car was expected here today at 6 to take Balkrishna[2] to the hospital. If it has not left and if you can send it, please do. A note is going to the hospital too. The car will be required only if there is still time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2994.

333. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 4, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Nobody has yet come from there. Kaka is here and I am sending with him whatever is ready. An article by me and a note[3] on Sushila's findings concerning sugar are getting ready and will be sent by and by.

The conversation of the day before yesterday has greatly benefited me. It suggested some ideas to me, but there is no time to write about them here. We may discuss them tomorrow. I may have to visit Wardha at three o'clock. Tandonji and others are arriving. Inquire before coming here. A letter[4] for Kanti is also enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11601.

[1] From *Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad*

[2] Balkrishna Bhave, who was suffering from tuberculosis

[3] Presumably "Bad Teeth and Refined Carbohydrates", published in *Harijan*, 30-7-1938.

[4] *Vide* the following item.

334. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

July 4, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

You must have received my letter of yesterday. You are very cruel indeed, and also childish. You may write as rude letters as you can but they will not make me angry. But why do you get so angry? You are wise and are capable of self-sacrifice, but it pains me to know that you are eaten up by anger. The knowledge that you are harming yourself does wring my heart. I feel afraid of you. It does not do you credit that I should weigh my words when writing to you.

Your letter to Saraswati was bad. She has been terribly upset. Here is her letter to me. Why pit an army against a goat? It was you who ensnared her. What is the meaning, then, of your growling at her now if she cannot live without you? She is your helpmate, your partner in dharma, and not your slave or your property. It is not proper that you should first make a doll of her and then treat her as your property. Do not dismiss all this in a fit of anger. Remember that I am a man of experience.

I am afraid there is no way out except marriage. After the marriage you may do what you like. Do not worry if I do not give my consent to the marriage. It should be enough for you that I do not oppose it. It would of course be best if you two could bear separation and be content with writing to each other from time to time and meeting occasionally. But that seems impossible so far as Saraswati is concerned. Think over what you should do after the marriage. Discuss the matter with me. My feeling is that you will have to give up study afterwards. But I shall be happy if my fear is proved wrong and both of you study together, as Saraswati says you will. You may now think calmly and do what you please. Meanwhile I am tending Saraswati like a flower.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I had finished this letter before I sent you the wire[1], but kept it back on getting your letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7340. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi.

[1] The telegram is not traceable.

335. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 4, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

What a heavy mail today ! You must have received the material sent earlier with Kaka. I hope you have sent the wire to Kanti. My stars seem to be unfavourable. But if one knows how to offer up misfortunes also to the Lord, even unfavourable stars become favourable. I have yet to learn that. Two articles are enclosed. Giri's letter is there. Kanaiyo is going there for it. About the rest in the next letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11602

336. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[After *July 4, 1938*][1]

Does Balakrishna need an understanding person for 24 hours? Then that should be arranged. Talk about it with Chimanlal. One person can go at night. Both Krishnachandra and Sankaran are good workers. It may be necessary to have three shifts during the day. Among those who can be with him are Anand, Kanu, Bhansali, Krishnachandra and, if necessary, even Chakrayya and Raj Bhushan. See what can be done.

From the Hindi original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Inferred from Gandhiji's letter to Jamnalal Bajaj of July 4, 1938, on which day Balakrishna Bhave, who was suffering from tuberculosis, was to be taken to the hospital.

337. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

SEGAON,
July 6, 1938

QUESTION: What is the place of religious instruction in the Wardha Scheme of Education?

ANSWER: We have left out the teaching of religions from the Wardha Scheme of Education, because we are afraid that religions as they are taught and practised today lead to conflict rather than unity. But on the other hand, I hold that the truths that are common to all religions can and should be taught to all children. These truths cannot be taught through words or through books. The children can learn these truths only through the daily life of the teacher. If the teacher himself lives up to the tenets of truth and justice, then alone can the children learn that truth and justice are the basis of all religions.

When Mahatmaji was asked whether it was possible to teach children between the ages of seven and fourteen equal respect for all religions he said:

Yes, I think so. The truth that all religions are the same in essentials, that we must love and respect others' faiths as we respect our own, is a very simple truth, and can easily be understood and practised by children of seven. But, of course, the first essential is that the teacher must have this faith himself.

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-7-1938

338. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
July 8, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

What a question? Of course you pass through Wardha on your way to B[2]. That means you may be here when the W. C. meets. And here you will find yourself in a crowded room. But that you don't mind.

[1] The questions were asked by Educational Officers from Congress provinces who had come for a fortnight's training under the Wardha Scheme and who met Gandhiji twice during the training. *Vide* also "Discussion with Delegates from Congress Provinces", 21-6-1938

[2] Bangalore.

How you manage to lose your voice from time to time ! You must go to a place where you can't be pestered. Is it not Segaon [?] And now I can build for you also to your design !

J.'s[1] letter to S.[2] You have now, I hope. The talks have stopped of course. The reply has to go from W.C.

Yes, Jawaharlal is having a grand time. He is raising India in the estimation of the West.

It is perhaps as well that you will be the only member of your Peace Brigade. This work does not need thousands. True immolation of a few will do the trick.

You are wrong. I began work among women when I was not even thirty years old. There is not a woman in S.A. who does not know me. But my work was among the poorest. The intellectuals I could not draw. My appeals have always been from heart to hearts. I have felt like fish out of water in the company of intellectuals. Hence you are wrong in laying down the sweeping proposition you have. You can't blame me for not having organized the intellectuals among women. I have not the gift. And then my method of organizing is out of the ordinary, not necessarily superior. All I mean is that I have nothing to show on paper. But just as I never fear coldness on the part of the poor when I approach them, I never fear it when I approach poor women. There is invisible bond between them and me. And why do you miss the agony I am passing through? Is it not for woman kind? I am wringing my soul for adequate purity, to enable me [to] render greater service to them and through them to the whole of humanity. Ahimsa, which is my sheet-anchor, demands all this.

I expect your next letter to tell me you are well.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3631. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6440

[1] Jinnah's.

[2] Subhas Chandra Bose.

339. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

SEGAON,
July 8, 1938

DEAR LOTUS-BORN,

Hope you have been behaving yourself and that Bhopal air has done you good. But tell me if you are ever going to be fit enough to do active work. Don't tell me that you did excellent work about Hyderabad famine and the like.

Love.

PLAYMATE

From the original : Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

340. LETTER TO RAMNIK

July 8, 1938

CHI. RAMNIK,

I get from time to time news of your illness from your father. I understand that you are not recovering. To get well, to fall ill or to remain ill, all this is not in our hands. But it is in our power to preserve equanimity in all circumstances, not to forget God and not to lose the joy within. I hope you are preserving all this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8762. Also C.W. 1055. Courtesy: Champabehn Mehta

341. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 8, 1938

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

One point in *brahmacharya* is this that the vital fluid should not be wasted. It is supposed that it is not wasted when it moves upward. This is not correct. A man giving way to anger mis-spends it or rather destroys it, thus rendering it unfruitful. To that extent *brahmacharya* has been damaged. Similarly a man wastes his vital fluid when he indulges in intercourse for the sake of pleasure, as it is unproductive.

When a man has no desire for sensual pleasure and both the man and the woman desire a child and come together for that purpose, then alone is vital fluid completely fruitful. Such a couple are truly *brahmacharis*. But such a couple might be only one among crores. Apart from the one single occasion of copulation they live like brother and sister and refrain from any sensual indulgence in thought, speech, contact or any other way. Their intercourse for the purpose of procreation alone can in no way come under the category of gratification of the senses. This ought to clear your doubt.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1905

342. THE STATES

Events seem to have justified the wisdom of the Congress resolution of non-intervention in the affairs of the States. The constitution, however unjust, arbitrary and illogical it may be, is such that, legally and politically, every State, small or big, is an independent entity in its relation to the other States and that part of India which is called British in contradistinction from the States. The similarity common to all is that they are under the iron grip of British Rule. But geographically and ethnically the people of the States and the other parts of India are one and indivisible. We, the thirty-three crores of men and women, are blood relations who cannot be parted by any constitutional or military device. This natural relationship is working itself without let or hindrance because of the recognition of the constitutional fact while it lasts. That is the way of satyagraha or the way of non-resistance to evil. It is the aseptic method in which the physician allows the poison to work itself out by setting in motion all the natural forces and letting them have full play.

By its resolution of non-interference the Congress put the States people on their mettle, in other words set in motion the natural forces, i.e., the powers latent in the people themselves. In the few recent instances it has been found that the people having discovered their strength they used it without any aid from outside and won full victory. The result also was that the assistance of Congressmen was invoked by the States' authorities in order to settle the differences between themselves and their people. No doubt this method like every other known to mankind has its limitations. The Congress cannot

dictate unreasonable terms. The people must have a real grievance and they must approach it with pure hands. For the tool of satyagraha is ahimsa, i.e., self-suffering without inflicting suffering on the opponent for the vindication of a cause which must be absolutely just.

If only the people of the States can realize the full meaning and potency of satyagraha, i.e., of non-violence, they will win their relative freedom before India as a whole comes to its own. And they will have to before India has Independence. Thus they can have full liberty of non-violent speech, writing and action without having to deal with cumbersome British machinery. They can secure with comparative ease a more equitable, even if not an equal, distribution of the wealth produced in the States. They can, without much effort, regulate the privy purse of their Princes and can have cheap and pure justice guaranteed. They can deal with the problem of poverty and village reconstruction with infinitely greater ease than in unwieldy and bureaucracy-ridden British India. They can have real national education for the wanting.

This will be their swaraj—no doubt far short of the Independence that the Congress wants. But if the people of the majority of the major States attain their full height, the day of Independence will be hastened in a manner no one has dreamt of. Let not the reformers in the States therefore be unduly impatient; let them not forget their limitations and above all the conditions of success, viz., strictest observance of truth and non-violence. They must be ready to face bullets without flinching but also without lifting their little finger in so-called self-defence. A satyagrahi abjures the right of self-defence. Let it also be remembered that a satyagrahi's minimum is also his maximum.

Harijan, 9-7-1938

343. HIGHER EDUCATION

The Rt. Hon. Shri Srinivasa Sastri has criticized, as he had a perfect right to do, the views I timidly and very briefly expressed some time ago on higher education. I entertain a very high regard for him as man, patriot and scholar. It is therefore always painful to me when I find myself disagreeing with him. And yet duty compels me to re-express my views on higher education more fully than before, so that the reader may make out for himself the difference between his views and mine.

I admit my limitations. I have no university education worth the name. My high school career was never above the average. I was thankful if I could pass my examinations. Distinction in the school was beyond my aspiration. Nevertheless I do hold very strong views on education in general, including what is called higher education. And I owe it to the country that my views should be clearly known and taken for what they may be worth. I must shed the timidity that has led almost to self-suppression. I must not fear ridicule, and even loss of popularity or prestige. If I hide my belief, I shall never correct errors of judgment. I am always eager to discover them and more than eager to correct them.

Let me now state my conclusions held for a number of years and enforced wherever I had opportunity of enforcing them:

(1) I am not opposed to education even of the highest type attainable in the world.

(2) The State must pay for it wherever it has definite use for it.

(3) I am opposed to all higher education being paid for from the general revenue.

(4) It is my firm conviction that the vast amount of the so-called education in arts, given in our colleges, is sheer waste and has resulted in unemployment among the educated classes. What is more, it has destroyed the health, both mental and physical, of the boys and girls who have the misfortune to go through the grind in our colleges.

(5) The medium of a foreign language through which higher education has been imparted in India has caused incalculable intellectual and moral injury to the nation. We are too near our own times to judge the enormity of the damage done. And we who have received such education have both to be victims and judges—an almost impossible feat.

I must now give my reason for the conclusions set forth above. This I can best do, perhaps, by giving a chapter from my own experience.

Up to the age of 12 all the knowledge I gained was through Gujarati, my mother tongue. I knew then something of arithmetic, history and geography. Then I entered a high school. For the first three years the mother tongue was still the medium. But the school-master's business was to drive English into the pupil's head. Therefore more than half of our time was given to learning English and mastering its arbitrary spelling and pronunciation. It was a painful discovery to have to learn a language that was not pronounced as it was written. It was a strange experience to have to learn the spelling by

heart. But that is by the way, and irrelevant to my argument. However, for the first three years, it was comparatively plain sailing.

The pillory began with the fourth year. Everything had to be learnt through English—geometry, algebra, chemistry, astronomy, history, geography. The tyranny of English was so great that even Sanskrit or Persian had to be learnt through English, not through the mother tongue. If any boy spoke in the class in Gujarati which he understood, he was punished. It did not matter to the teacher if a boy spoke bad English which he could neither pronounce correctly nor understand fully. Why should the teacher worry? His own English was by no means without blemish. It could not be otherwise. English was as much a foreign language to him as to his pupils. The result was chaos. We the boys had to learn many things by heart, though we could not understand them fully and often not at all. My head used to reel as the teacher was struggling to make his exposition on geometry understood by us. I could make neither head nor tail of geometry till we reached the 13th theorem of the first book of Euclid. And let me confess to the reader that in spite of all my love for the mother tongue I do not to this day know the Gujarati equivalents of the technical terms of geometry, algebra and the like. I know now that what I took four years to learn of arithmetic, geometry, algebra, chemistry and astronomy I should have learnt easily in one year if I had not to learn them through English but Gujarati. My grasp of the subjects would have been easier and clearer. My Gujarati vocabulary would have been richer. I would have made use of such knowledge in my own home. This English medium created an impassable barrier between me and the members of my family, who had not gone through English schools. My father knew nothing of what I was doing. I could not, even if I had wished it, interest my father in what I was learning. For though he had ample intelligence, he knew not a word of English. I was fast becoming a stranger in my own home. I certainly became a superior person. Even my dress began to undergo imperceptible changes. What happened to me was not an uncommon experience. It was common to the majority.

The first three years in the high school made little addition to my stock of general knowledge. They were a preparation for fitting the boys for teaching them everything through English. High schools were schools for cultural conquest by the English. The knowledge gained by the three hundred boys of my high school became a circumscribed possession. It was not for transmission to the masses.

A word about literature. We had to learn several books of English prose and English poetry. No doubt all this was nice. But that knowledge has been of no use to me in serving or bringing me in touch with the masses. I am unable to say that if I had not learnt what I did of English prose and poetry, I should have missed a rare treasure. If I had, instead, passed those precious seven years in mastering Gujarati and had learnt mathematics, sciences, and Sanskrit and other subjects through Gujarati, I could easily have shared the knowledge so gained with my neighbours. I would have enriched Gujarati, and who can say that I would not have, with my habit of application and my inordinate love for the country and the mother tongue, made a richer and greater contribution to the service of the masses?

I must not be understood to decry English or its noble literature. The columns of *Harijan* are sufficient evidence of my love of English. But the nobility of its literature cannot avail the Indian nation any more than the temperate climate or the scenery of England can avail her. India has to flourish in her own climate and scenery and her own literature, even though all the three may be inferior to the English climate, scenery and literature. We and our children must build on our own heritage. If we borrow another, we impoverish our own. We can never grow on foreign victuals. I want the nation to have the treasures contained in that language, and for that matter the other languages of the world, through its own vernaculars. I do not need to learn Bengali in order to know the beauties of Rabindranath's matchless productions. I get them through good translations. Gujarati boys and girls do not need to learn Russian to appreciate Tolstoy's short stories. They learn them through good translations. It is the boast of Englishmen that the best of the world's literary output is in the hands of that nation in simple English inside of a week of its publication. Why need I learn English to get at the best of what Shakespeare and Milton thought and wrote?

It would be good economy to set apart a class of students whose business would be to learn the best of what is to be learnt in the different languages of the world and give the translation in the vernaculars. Our masters chose the wrong way for us, and habit has made the wrong appear as right.

I find daily proof of the increasing and continuing wrong being done to the millions by our false de-Indianizing education. Those graduates who are my valued associates themselves flounder when they have to give expression to their innermost thoughts. They are strangers in their own homes. Their vocabulary in the mother tongue

is so limited that they cannot always finish their speech without having recourse to English words and even sentences. Nor can they exist without English books. They often write to one another in English. I cite the case of my companions to show how deep the evil has gone. For we have made a conscious effort to mend ourselves.

It has been argued that the wastage that occurs in our colleges need not worry us if, out of the collegians, one Jagadish Bose can be produced by them. I should freely subscribe to the argument if the wastage was unavoidable. I hope I have shown that it was and is even now avoidable. Moreover, the creation of a Bose does not help the argument. For Bose was not a product of the present education. He rose in spite of the terrible handicaps under which he had to labour. And his knowledge became almost intransmissible to the masses. We seem to have come to think that no one can hope to be like a Bose unless he knows English. I cannot conceive a grosser superstition than this. No Japanese feels so helpless as we seem to do.

Nothing but a heroic remedy can deal with the deep-seated evil which I have endeavoured to describe. The Congress Ministers can, if they will, mitigate it if they cannot remove it.

Universities must be made self-supporting. The State should simply educate those whose services it would need. For all other branches of learning it should encourage private effort. The medium of instruction should be altered at once and at any cost, the provincial languages being given their rightful place. I would prefer temporary chaos in higher education to the criminal waste that is daily accumulating.

In order to enhance the status and the market value of the provincial languages, I would have the language of the law courts to be the language of the province where the court is situated. The proceedings of the Provincial Legislatures must be in the language, or even the languages of the province where a province has more than one language within its borders. I suggest to the legislators that they could, by enough application, inside of a month, understand the languages of their provinces. There is nothing to prevent a Tamilian from easily learning the simple grammar and a few hundred words of Telugu, Malayalam and Kanarese, all allied to Tamil. At the centre Hindustani must rule supreme.

In my opinion this is not a question to be decided by academicians. They cannot decide through what language the boys and girls of a place are to be educated. That question is already decided

for them in every free country. Nor can they decide the subjects to be taught. That depends upon the wants of the country to which they belong. Theirs is the privilege of enforcing the nation's will in the best manner possible. When this country becomes really free the question of medium will be settled only one way. The academicians will frame the syllabus and prepare text-books accordingly. And the products of the education of a free India will answer the requirements of the country as today they answer those of the foreign ruler. So long as we the educated classes play with this question. I very much fear we shall not produce the free and healthy India of our dream. We have to grow by strenuous effort out of our bondage, whether it is educational, economical, social or political. The effort itself is three-fourths of the battle.

Thus I claim that I am not an enemy of higher education. But I am an enemy of higher education as it is given in this country. Under my scheme there will be more and better libraries, more and better laboratories, more and better research institutes. Under it we should have an army of chemists, engineers and other experts who will be real servants of the nation and answer the varied and growing requirements of a people who are becoming increasingly conscious of their rights and wants. And all these experts will speak not a foreign language but the language of the people. The knowledge gained by them will be the common property of the people. There will be truly original work instead of mere imitation. And the cost will be evenly and justly distributed.

Harijan, 9-7-1938

344. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 9, 1938

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your pamphlet[1]. The *Rentia Baras* day is or should be the time for drawing up an annual balance-sheet of the progress of khadi work and thinking out ways and means of speeding it up. I see that your resolutions are increasing in number every year. But in comparison to what we have to achieve, even this increased number of resolutions are nothing. According to the saying, 'drop by drop fills the lake', we should content ourselves with doing the best we are capable of. Let all participants in this *yajna* remember that we should not rest satisfied till the daily income of all workers including the spinners reaches eight annas for a day of eight hours. And in order to achieve that we should be proficient in all aspects of the charkha science. In that way we shall be able to improve the quality of the khadi without raising the prices very much. If we master that science, we can prove that khadi, though apparently costly, is actually bound to be cheap.

I hope to be able to send someone for the *Rentia Baras* day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U./II. Also C. W. 8544. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

345. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEGAON,
July 9, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

I will read the Hindi book. It is not going to be easy. The whole policy will have to be reconsidered. If even one false step is taken, then there is serious danger of the whole structure which is being built falling to pieces. If you come on Tuesday we will think over it. Come in the afternoon if the time suits you. Write to me and let me know, when you get the time, what you thought after your talk with

[1] Issued on the 69th birth anniversary of Gandhiji; *vide* "Note to Narandas Gandhi", 9-7-1938

Tandonji. That will help me and also help you to clarify your thoughts.

Ponder carefully over what I have written[1] on education.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7684.

346. NOTE TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[About *July 9, 1938*][2]

It will be very good indeed if this is implemented.[3] Make some arrangement to ascertain whether everybody who makes the resolve keeps it.

[PS.]

I have already replied to your other points.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U./II. Also C. W. 8551. courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

347. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

July 10, 1938

CHI. LILA,

Do you expect a note from me every day? You should not be over-impatient to come here. You may come here whenever you get an opportunity in the normal course. I would also like your coming here, but you should not come at the cost of your work or health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9373. Also C.W. 6648. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] *Vide* "Higher Education"

[2] The note is written on the pamphlet mentioned in "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 9-7-1938

[3] The pamphlet carried an appeal by Narandas Gandhi to all the workers to take a vow of spinning 160 rounds of yarn a day, thus spinning 70,000 a year.

348. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

Unrevised SEGAON,
July 11, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I write this just as I got your letter and before destroying it. You must not allow your imagination to destroy your sanity. I have taken no drastic step. I shifted to Pyarelal's hole for giving Hanna the privacy she needed. She is wholly unaccustomed to our ways. I have now come back and you will occupy your usual corner. Sharda is my constant attendant. Amtul Salaam sleeps by my side, fans me and covers me when I need more covering. She feeds me. Lilavati is helping Mahadev, Shanta having gone back to England. You must not be quite so idiotic as you seem to have become over my travail. It is there. But my faith in my original conception is not shattered. Only I must learn how to realize it. Bad dreams must be avoided. There must be no repetition of 14th April.

Hanna has been sent by Kallenbach to gain experience and to know me personally as she has known me through him for years. She is most lovable but I fear she is too delicate to be able to stay here long.

I shall expect you on 23rd, the day of the meeting of the W. C. It is quite cool just now but the road is fearfully muddy. You will feel a little crowded. But that you won't mind.

You are criminally wasting your body. There is no occasion for all the neglect of which you are guilty. Some people deem it a merit to neglect their bodies. I wish you would have your name removed from the register of these illustrious criminals.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

You inquire about my health. I assure you that it is in good order and condition. Hakumatrai was here yesterday. You can ask him. It is true I have lost weight. But that is of no consequence in blood-pressure cases. I must not attempt to regain it in this weather. If I keep well otherwise, the weight will be regained, at any rate most of it.

T.

From the original: C. W. 3870. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7026.

349. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

July 11, 1938

CHI. LILA,

What a letter from you ! What is the point of your staying on there in such a condition? If you do not like to remain there, come over here. I do not want to keep you there against your wishes. If I have killed your individuality, what good has your staying with me done you? I did not at all like your letter. Why do you not understand that you are free to do what you like?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9374. Also C. W. 6649. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar.

350. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 11, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Have you read Lilavati's letter? If you have not, you will know about it from my reply. Kanti it seems could give you fairly good work. Read carefully what I have written today. I feel like writing about something else too, but I will restrain myself. Mirabehn is down with malaria.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am sending that draft for Jawaharlal. I have kept with me a copy each of the articles.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11603.

351. LETTER TO PYARELAL

July 11, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

You are at present ruling over me. I often feel like complaining but I dare not. How did I come to have so much fear?

I am perturbed by Hakumat Rai's warning. Sushila will not recover if she is forced to eat. She will recover only when the fear

which is lodged in her mind is removed. I have not seen such a woman anywhere. I cannot bear to look at her face. You see how unhappy Ba is.

I am trying hard to comprehend your idea of your duty but I am baffled. I find your fasts irksome. I shall suffer so long as you make me suffer. But is it not your duty to let me know?

Is my experience worth nothing at all? It is true that I no longer have the right to write like this after my lapse of April 14. But since you attach no importance to the lapse you should give my writing the importance it deserves.

I have freed you from all anxiety. If you must fast, I will not fast with you. Right now I am doing it without any deliberation. I am trying to follow whither God leads me. But who knows if it is notSatan rather than God guiding me? But I am carrying on in the belief that it is God who is guiding me. My wish is not to worry about you or Sushila. But that does not happen. I do worry about those who have become part of me. Free me from anxiety on your account if you can. Consider Sushila.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I do not think Sushila need see this letter. However, do what you think proper.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

352. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 12, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

For today I am sending Kanu. He will stay at least till Kanti leaves. And if you wish to detain him for tomorrow also he will stay on. I do not know whether you get Lilabhai's help or not. The burden should not be on you. I see that Deka is worth being trained. I have decided to observe silence as long as my heart-searching goes on. Of course if I grant an interview to anybody I will speak. The moment he leaves, I will stop speaking. I do not know how long I should keep this up. It will be all right if you do not come here in the present

atmosphere. Do not strain yourself to come. Come only if you can do so easily.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am enclosing the papers.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11604.

353. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

July 13, 1938

CHI. LILA,

I got your letter. You have not at all forfeited your right to come to me. You may certainly come whenever you are free. I will be perfectly content if you can preserve peace of mind there. Ultimately of course you will have to come here. Build up your health there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9589. Also C. W. 6561. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar.

354. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 13, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I send you herewith a letter from Agatha. Reply to it. Send Agatha's letter to Ghanshyamdas. It would be better to help her come here. Write about the fare, etc. Agatha may also write whatever she wishes.

Do not forget to bring *jamun* or, if they are not available, their stones.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11605

355. A MESSAGE TO "THE ARYAN PATH"

SEGAON,
[*July 14, 1938*]

I welcome your advertising the principles in defence of which *Hind Swaraj* was written.[1] The English edition is a translation of the original which was in Gujarati. I might change the language here and there if I had to rewrite the booklet. But after the stormy thirty years through which I have since passed, I have seen nothing to make me alter the views expounded in it. Let the reader bear in mind that it is a faithful record of conversations I had with workers, one of whom was an avowed anarchist. He should also know that it stopped the rot that was about to set in among some Indians in South Africa. The reader

[1] A special issue of *The Aryan Path* exclusively devoted to *Hind Swaraj*, then being planned, came out in September. The contributors included such eminent Western thinkers as Frederick Soddy, G.D.H. Cole, C. Delisle Burns, John Middleton Murry, Hugh I'Anson Fausset, Gerald Heard and Irene Rathbone. Though none of them found themselves wholly in agreement with the thesis advanced in *Hind Swaraj* they all nevertheless saw the great importance of the work. Frederick Soddy, for instance, though disagreeing with Gandhiji, suggested that "anyone who wishes to change the world would do well to study" the book. To G. D. H. Cole Gandhiji's case against the West looked "infinitely stronger" than it did in 1908, when "the ephemeral civilization of the West looked stable under Western eyes". C. Delisle Burns saw the highest merit of *Hind Swaraj* "in its emphasis upon moral issues and opposition to the pursuit of private wealth and power". John Middleton Murry considered *Hind Swaraj* a "great book", "one of the spiritual classics of the world", and compared Gandhiji's vision of real swaraj to the Christian vision of the Kingdom of Heaven. Gerald Heard thought *Hind Swaraj* was superior to Rousseau's *Social Contract* and Karl Marx's *Das Capital*, for it did not mark the end of an age but the beginning of a new order. Irene Rathbone found the book "enormously powerful", the language of which forced her "by its tremendous honesty to search my own honesty". She thought the work was "simple and logical, economical, condensed, poetic". Hugh Fausset summed up *Hind Swaraj* as a book whose purpose was "to save India, not from Englishmen, but from the modern civilization which is eating into the vitals of the West". He had enough trust in the indestructible vitality of the human spirit to be sure that it would not allow itself to be lastingly mechanized. The machine was exposing ruthlessly the consequences that must happen to men and nations who had lost their integrity. *Hind Swaraj* was an attempt at restoring man to his true estate, and was, for this reason, "one of the best modern handbooks of that real revolution which must happen in us all, if we are to fulfil the creative purpose of life".

may balance against this the opinion of a dear friend, who, also, is no more, that it was the production of a fool.[1]

M. K. GANDHI

The Aryan Path, September 1938, Vol. IX, No. 9, p. 423.

356. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SEGAON,
July 14, 1938

CHI. PREMA,

You have not asked for a reply to your letter,[2] but I felt like writing at least a postcard. Though I do not write to you, I naturally think of you on innumerable occasions. May you go on making steady progress. The rest from *Harijan*, and from Mahadev.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10395. Also C. W. 6834. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

357. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

[*July 15, 1938*][3]

MY DEAR IDIOT,

What a sad and wretched letter, yours of 11th. I am enjoying myself and you are sorrowing for nothing. When you come here, you will laugh at your own folly. My misery is superficial if there is any yet left. My peace cannot be permanently taken away by anything or anybody. You simply do not know me if you think that my experiences have undone me. If there is real attempt at purification, it must strengthen me and make me more joyful. But how can I help you if you must allow your imagination to run riot?

[1] Mahadev Desai in a preface to *Hind Swaraj* published by the Navajivan Trust wrote: "When Gokhale saw the translation, on his visit to South Africa in 1912, he thought it so crude and hastily conceived that he prophesied that Gandhiji would himself destroy the book after spending a year in India." (p. 14).

[2] The addressee had written to Gandhiji on her birthday for his blessings and had also asked some questions which she said Mahadev Desai could answer if Gandhiji was busy.

[3] According to the addressee the postmark on the envelope bears the date 16-7-1938.

You have to apologize about women. I could not organize intellectual women as such.[1] I have not organized intellectual men as such. But this thing does not lend itself to argument. I simply cannot subscribe to the charge that there has been any neglect on my part about organizing women. It may be that I have not had the qualifications for doing better. But that would [be] no charge against me. However I do not mind your complaint. I rather like it. It shows that there are things in which we look at things differently. And why not? True affection does not demand identity of outlook. But I do not even on this point despair of convincing you that I could not have done better than I have. My passion for *brahmacharya* has that meaning. I must be wholly pure if I have true love for womankind.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

I believe apricots did arrive—all rotten. Apples have come. I shall certainly eat them. You must be well quickly.

From the original: C. W. 3632. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6441

358. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 15, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Herewith some letters. I do not know if you brought liquid paraffin for Mirabehn yesterday. If you did not bring it, then please remember to bring it. If you do not come, send it with the person who comes. I hope you have asked Vyas about *jamun* stones and written to Bombay to discontinue sending fruit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11606

359. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

July 15, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

I am returning Rajaji's letter. He is filled with great despair from all sides. But his sense of humour saves him.

Blessing from

BAPU

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 8-7-1938

[PS.]

A letter from Rajkumari is enclosed.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10900

360. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

July 15, 1938

CHI. LILA,

Do take tea if you cannot maintain your health without it. If you can do without it, try to forgo it. But you have got to keep good health. If you apply mud-pack to the stomach at night, it should do some good. Instead of tea, one can take hot water and milk with jaggery or honey. About bananas Mahadev will have told you. Be it good things or bad things keep writing to me. It is desirable that you get rid of bad thoughts. But if they do come, it will only be to your good to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

361. SPEAKERS AND POLITICS

Some controversy has raged round the propriety of the Speakers of the various Provincial Assemblies taking an active part in politics. There has been the Speaker's ruling and a full debate and a resolution in the U. P. Assembly to the effect that the Speaker can consistently with the due discharge of the obligations of office take an active part in politics. Shri Sambamurti was with me for a few days and exhaustively discussed the question with me. He read to me copious extracts from authoritative treatises dealing with the Speakers' duties in the Parliaments of the world. And there has appeared an article in *Harijan* by Shri Satyamurti. I had a long discussion on the question with Shri Purushottamdas Tandon during his recent visit to Wardha.

After all these discussions and study of the subject I seem to hold a view perhaps different from those I have heard and read. Mine is derived from my conception of the acceptance of office by Congressmen. When I advised the Working Committee to authorize acceptance of office, the idea was that whilst the letter of the Government of

India Act should not be transgressed, its interpretation should be stretched to the farthest limit so as to widen the liberty of the people and to strengthen the Congress. The Act was not to be worked in the manner conceived by its authors, but while it lasted should be fully used for the advancement of the Congress goal and therefore in a manner least expected by its authors. Such being my conception of office acceptance, British and foreign precedents are of little use to me. Moreover, in the nature of things, they can help us but little for the simple reason that unlike ours the constitutions of the world's Parliaments are not imposed on the respective peoples but are their own creation.

A Congressman who is a member of an Assembly, no matter what office he occupies there, is subject to the discipline of the Congress and has to carry out its instructions from time to time. Therefore, so long as the Government of India Act does not in so many words prohibit it, the Congress may, if it thinks it necessary, require Speakers in the Congress Provinces to take an active part in the politics of the country.

But the Congress, as far as I know, has not considered the question. In my opinion Congressmen who are members of Assemblies, whether as mere members or Ministers or Speakers, have in every act of theirs to bear in mind the fact that they have, in virtue of the Congress constitution, to conform to truth and non-violence. Thus the conduct of a Congressman in an Assembly would have to be that of strictest honesty and courtesy in dealing with his opponents. He will not resort to shady politics, will not hit below the belt, will never take a mean advantage of his adversary. The greater his position in the Assembly, the greater is his responsibility in these matters. A member in the Assembly no doubt represents his constituency and his party but he also represents the whole of his province. A Minister no doubt advances his own party but never at the expense of the nation as a whole. Indeed he advances the Congress only so far as he advances the nation. For he knows that if he has no sword to give battle to the foreign ruler, he has it not to give battle to his adversary inside the nation itself. And since the Assembly is the place where all communities meet together willy-nilly, it is the place where by winning over his opponents he expects to forge sanctions which can be made irresistible. All the problems that affect the body politic including communal unity can be solved if the Assembly is regarded not merely

in terms of the Government of India Act but as an instrument to be used for solving questions which representatives of different communities composing the nation can be expected to solve if they had unrestricted powers. And the Government of India Act does not prevent the use of the Assemblies for solving the many problems which are outside its scope but which are necessary for national progress.

Looked at from the point of view here suggested, the Speaker's position assumes very high importance, greater than that of the Prime Minister. For he has to discharge the functions of a judge while he occupies the chair. He has to give impartial and just rulings. He has to enforce decorum and laws of courtesy between members. He has to be calm in the midst of storms. He has opportunities of winning over opponents which no other member of the House can possibly have.

Now if a Speaker outside the House ceases to be impartial and indulges in party polemics, he cannot possibly carry the weight he would if he observed impartiality and calmness everywhere. I claim that if a Speaker cultivates the habit of uniform impartiality outside his own very limited sphere, he will enhance the Congress prestige. He can, if he realizes the unique opportunity his office gives him, pave the way for the solution of the Hindu-Muslim tangle as also many others. Thus in my opinion the Speaker, if he has to be that not only inside but outside the House, must be a first-class Congressman. As a man too he has to have a character without reproach. He must be able, fearless, naturally just, and above all truthful and non-violent in thought, word and deed. Then he may stand on any platform he likes.

Harijan, 16-7-1938

362. SOME OBJECTIONS

A Muslim correspondent writes:

During the last four months opinions have been appearing in the Urdu Press regarding the Wardha scheme. As usual nobody seems to have read the report carefully or to have thought out the subject of basic educations. The objections centre round three points:

(a) that religious instruction has been completely ignored;

(b) that boys and girls are to be taught together; and

(c) that a respect for all religions is to be inculcated.

These objections have been culled from the Urdu Press.

Religious instruction in the sense of denominational religion has been deliberately omitted. Unless there is a State religion it is very

difficult, if not impossible, to provide religious instruction as it would mean providing for every denomination. Such instruction is best given at home. The State should allow enough time for every child to receive such instruction at home or otherwise. It is also conceivable that the State should provide facilities for private tuition by those denominations which may wish to instruct their children at school provided that such instruction is paid for by such denominations.

As for co-education, the Zakir Husain Committee has not made it compulsory. Where there is a demand for a separate school for girls, the State will have to make provision. The question of co-education has been left open. It will regulate itself according to the time-spirit. So far as I am aware the members of the Committee were not all of one mind. Personally I have an open mind. I think that there are just as valid reasons for as against co-education. And I would not oppose the experiment wherever it is made.

As to the necessity of teaching equal regard for all religions, I personally hold strong views. Till we reach that happy state, I see no prospect of real unity among all the different communities. I regard it as fatal to the growth of a friendly spirit among the children belonging to the different faiths if they are taught either that their religion is superior to every other or that it is the only true religion. If that exclusive spirit is to pervade the nation, the necessary corollary would be that there should be separate schools for every denomination with freedom to each to decry every other, or that the mention of religion must be entirely prohibited. The result of such a policy is too dreadful to contemplate. Fundamental principles of ethics are common to all religions. These should certainly be taught to the children and that should be regarded as adequate religious instruction so far as the schools under the Wardha scheme are concerned.

Harijan, 16-7-1938

363. A FALLACY

July 16, 1938

An A.I.S.A. agent asks what he is to say to his co-workers who have formed a union and presented him with terms. I regard the formation of such unions a fallacy. The workers have evidently missed the scope and the message of the A.I.S.A. It is a philanthropic organization formed by the Congress and has been given an autonomous charter for the specific purpose of developing the central village industry of hand-spinning and all it implies. Those who are

engaged in this voluntary organization not only derive no pecuniary advantage from it but are expected, if they can, to give their labour free of any hire. And since in this the poorest country in the world many persons cannot do so, a large number are paid an emolument only enough to sustain them. Whilst every attempt is made to make them comfortable, they are not regarded as employees in the ordinary sense. There are no profits shared by anyone. If there are share-holders or proprietors, they are the spinners, weavers and the like. Even the consumers are not beneficiaries. They are expected to wear khadi not because it is cheaper or better to look at than mill cloth, but because it gives employment to the largest number of half-starved half-employed persons, mostly women. The whole of the takings go to these dumb artisans after deducting the salaries and other expenses incurred in running this vast philanthropic organization.

If, therefore, any body of workers form unions as against the Association, they are against the artisans. What they take has to come out of the pockets of the artisans or the consumers. It would be manifestly absurd to tax the consumers in the interest of the workers. Will they, the workers, not realize that the agents are themselves as much workers as they themselves? In several cases the agents are purely honorary. It is of course a different thing where an agent is found to be going beyond his sphere of duty and acting as if he was the lord and master of, instead of being co-worker with, the men working with and under him. In such a case the workers have their remedy through the central office but surely not through unions after the orthodox style. In the one case they are a necessity, in the other they are not only superfluous, but they are, as I have said above, a fallacy and, if persisted in on a wide scale, they may kill the Association of which they are part creators and trustees.

Harijan, 16-7-1938

364. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
July 17, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This will be my last.

Your advice can't be accepted. You do not know the facts. You have exaggerated everything. I believe I am slowly finding my way. I have imposed silence on myself without limit of time, to be broken at

will. I do break it to see people to whom I must give appointments or to those here who may be ill or when I must speak to express my wants. This answers my purpose well. It enables me to conserve my energy and go through my work. Do not be alarmed. I shall break it to speak to you. I am quite sure that your sadness will leave you as soon as you reach Segaon. Of course you are coming here 23rd evening, if weather permits your coming.

There is nothing the matter with me. The B. P. keeps fairly steady. I take my walks regularly.

The rest from Sharda.

Vijaya went to her home yesterday. Balkrishna went to Varoda today.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3871. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7027

365. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

July 17, 1938

CHI. LILA,

You will have tried the remedies I suggested. Constipation must be cured.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11607

366. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 17, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

The article about khadi with my revisions is enclosed. I am sending other material also. Your notes are of course there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11607

367. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

July 17, 1938

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have read your note. I have forwarded to him the question arising out of the point you make. The rest seems all right. It is short and to the point. I am doing well. Taramati and the children will be well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

368. LETTTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 18, 1938

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Sheriff [1] spent nearly an hour and a half with me yesterday. He showed me during our talk the correspondence he has had with you. He wanted to know why you had not replied whether or not you had written to Sir Manmath[2] regarding him. I told him that you would never write to Sir Manmath. All the same I promised to find out from you. Please let me know now.

I have drafted the reply to be sent to Jinnah. You will read it when you come.

About the rest, Mahadev writes to you from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 221

[1] Minister for Law and Justice in the Congress Ministry of Central Provinces. He had recommended to the Governor the release, on ground of mercy, of certain persons convicted of rape of a thirteen-year-old Harijan girl. The working Committee had decided that he should resign from the ministry.

[2] Manmathnath Mukherjee, a retired judge of the Calcutta High Court, who had been entrusted, on Gandhiji's advice, with an inquiry into Sheriff's case. His verdict was against Sheriff.

369. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

SEGAON,
July 18, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

You must have reached there safely. I hope the journey was comfortable. Ba's verandah looks deserted without you. Sushila seems to have lost her occupation. Remember that crying is prohibited. I am awaiting your letter. Sushila and Arun arrived yesterday.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VIJAYABEHN
C/O NARANBHAI VALLABHBHAI
VAROD, *via* BARDOLI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7088. Also C.W. 4580. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

370. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

July 18, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. You are silly. Who told you that only the educated have intelligence? What is education? Do they not send you *Harijan*, etc., at Siwan? Today, of course, I am sending the copies from here. If you are eager to study, there is still time. You have not yet become old. Come here from Malabar if you can. Probably I shall be here then. Kanti has gone to Bangalore and Saraswati to Trivandrum.

You can find solitude, or whatever you call it, only here. Siwan, Patna, etc., may be all right for service, but during the rest of the time you should stay only here. I will cure you of your despondency. Do not ruin your health completely. I must hear from you once a week at least.

Manilal's Sushila came yesterday. Vijaya has gone to Bardoli with her father. There is thus rise and fall in the tide. Balkoba went away yesterday to live in the hut at Varoda. Anasuya gave birth to a son three days ago.

I am all right. I continue to take milk and fruit—mangoes, if available, otherwise prunes and *mosambis*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3516

371. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

July 18, 1938

CHI. MUNNALAL,

What you write about light is correct. But some inconveniences have to be endured. Often they are remedied by themselves while we put up with them. It is not proper that I should interfere in such matters. You yourself should find a way out patiently and with love. Don't you think this is the right thing?

I have written a letter to Nana after my talk with Kanchan.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8572. Also C.W. 7030. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah.

372. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON,
July 18, 1938

CHI. NIMU,

How can you afford to show yourself weak? On the contrary, you should be glad if Ramdas stays on in S.A. for some more time. More than anything else, he is bound to keep good health there. That is no small thing. Is it right for you to be unhappy for selfish reasons? Is it not better that Ramdas should be happy where he is and does what dharma requires of him rather than that you two were together and felt unhappy looking at each other? You are absorbed in your work and it is right that he should do there as he pleases. He will return when God wills that he should. If, therefore, you have not pulled yourself together, do so after you get this and smile at your foolishness.

I understand what you say about the books. I am making inquiries.

You are doing right by taking the medicines. If you do not improve your health, how will you be able to keep up your study? Sushila and Arun have arrived. Vijaya has left for her place with her father.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

373. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

July 18, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your question is relevant when considering *brahmacharya*. Whether procreation by itself is right or not is a separate issue. We can even question whether it is right for a *brahmachari* to engage in any activity at all. But the problem before us is to determine when *brahmacharya* is violated. I hold that no violation of *brahmacharya* occurs when a man does anything while remaining free of passion and attachment. The vital fluid is power and its proper use does not impair *brahmacharya;* this is the assumption underlying my interpretation.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4295; also S.G. 65

374. LETTER TO SARASWATI

July 18, 1938

CHI. SARU,

Your letter is very good. Continue thus to say what is in your heart. Remain cheerful. We should live as God wills. A few years will soon pass and then pangs of separation will be forgotten. You will in any case meet Kanti through the letters. This separation is only for the good of you two. You can come to me when you have become stabilized. Sending you away only gave me pain. I had built such high hopes. I was to teach you everything and listen to your singing but God willed otherwise.

What harm can there be in Sharda's reading your letters? Your letters are so innocent. But I shall withhold them from her unless you give your permission. Sharda is a serious-minded girl. She is not the

one to blabber unnecessarily.

Your health must be better. Sushila Gandhi has arrived with Arun. Sita is at Akola.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6167. Also. C.W. 3440. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi.

375. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 19, 1938

MY DEAR AGATHA,

Here is a letter received by Dr. Shaukatullah Shah from H.E.'s office about Harold Ansari. Poor Shaukatullah has not yet built up any practice worth the name. He has sent all the money he could scrape together. And now he has nothing. He and Zohra, Dr. Ansari's daughter, were with me for two days. Shaukatullah had drafted a reply which I advised him not to send. Now I would like you or Polak to find out and tell me what this Education Department is and what is its function. Does it help students in distress? I am anxious to find the money here. But this is a difficult case. In any case Harold's studies must not suffer. If therefore the Department can make an advance, they should do so in the hope of recovering it from the heirs or Harold himself when he begins to earn. If you know Harold and his mother, do please get in touch with them and guide me. I am writing to Harold too. I have never met the boy. Of course I knew nothing of Dr. Ansari's domestic affairs.

I am sending you the papers Dr. S. has left with me. Please return after use.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

376. LETTER TO NAWAB OF BHOPAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 19, 1938

DEAR NAWAB SAHEB,

Zohra and Shaukat were with me for two days. They left yesterday. It was distressing to learn from them that they were unable to discharge the obligations left by Dr. Ansari. His boy Harold has to finish his education. Harold's mother has to be supported. This means £35 per month for 3 years at the end of which Harold should finish his education. Dr. Ansari has left petty debts amounting to Rs. 12,000. I know the intimate friendship that existed between you and the late Dr. Ansari. I know too that you sent some help after Dr. Ansari's death.

But as Zohra and Shaukat were talking to me I could not help thinking of you and asking you to come to the rescue if it is at all possible for you to do so. I hardly need add anything by way of pleading this cause. For I know that you had known Dr. Ansari before I had the privilege of knowing him.

I hope you are keeping excellent health.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

377. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 19, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

You do not seem to have got the mail sent form here in the morning by the time you sent the mail from there. It contained four letters and a list of medicines for Sushila.

You did right in not coming. When there is no work, you can skip the day.

The Danish engineer has captivated my heart. One does not come across many such frank faces.

I am sending with this some other letters. "Skill overhead"[1] is all right. As we reduce "overhead charges", we increase "over-head

[1] *Vide* "Duty of Khadi-weavers", where Gandhiji has used this expression.

skill". But if "skill overhead" does not seem correct English, you may change it suitably after understanding the meaning.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11608

378. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 19, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I hope you reached there safely and are not worrying. It was very good indeed that you came. There was a long and fine letter from Saraswati. I knew only this time that she could write. She seems to feel quite at home with me. She feels the separation from you a good deal but is trying to bear it. Sushila and Arun have arrived. Do you not write to Prabhavati? Do write. She is in Patna.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7341. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

379. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

July 19, 1938

CHI. MANILAL,

I got your letters. So far I have not been able to write to you. It is now three days since Sushila and Arun arrived here. Arun is all the time asking to be taken to Akola. We hope he will calm down by and by.

I understand your anguish. Do what you think is proper. Consider calmly all the pros and cons and do what you feel it is best to do.

Do not worry about things here. It is good that Ramdas has come and stayed here for a few days.

My health, one may say, is quite good. Ba also is fine. Segaon is rather crowded just now. It is difficult to manage in the rainy season. There is not sufficient room for sleeping. But God helps us to manage somehow.

Hanna is unfit for this place. She has a very delicate constitution. She is not able to put up with any discomfort. She cannot digest the food either. She will leave on the third.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4877.

380. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON,
July 19, 1938

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have sent something[1] for *Harijanbandhu* as per your suggestion. It is a good beginning.

If the atmosphere there is congenial, it would be good to visit the Harijan colony and take up the welfare work. But this should be done only if persons other than those already engaged in the spinning *yajna* volunteer. All the activities are likely to fail if only one group tries to conduct them. Do not therefore take up anything unless it is supported by your own experience. I have merely suggested it for the sake of variety. Otherwise, the real object of celebrating *Rentia Baras* is to concentrate on the charkha alone during this period.[2]

About Purushottam[3], I will write in my letter to Jamna[4].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8545. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

[1] *Vide* "Notes"

[2] The programme chalked out by the addressee on the occasion of 69th birthday of Gandhiji called for 69 days' spinning.

[3] Addressee's son

[4] Addressee's wife

381. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

SEGAON,
July 19, 1938

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

If you had not asked the questions which you did,[1] I would have been really pained and you would have committed an offence.

I am in correspondence with Rajaji on the subject of popularizing Hindi. I also have not understood his policy. It would not be proper to rush to the Press before understanding his point of view.

Ministers many certainly be criticized in public, but the criticism should be balanced and well informed. No opinion should be formed on the basis of Press reports and, before criticizing, one should seek clarification from the Minister one wishes to criticize.

The shortcomings which you point out in the behaviour of satyagrahis really exist. Read the article[2] which I have written for the next issue of *Harijan* about the causes of such shortcomings.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5545.

382. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 19, 1938

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

These two friends belong to the Quilon Bank[3]. They wish to tell you their story and also want your advice.[4] Give them some time. It is a sad story.

They want to see Sir Purushottamdas also. I have given them a note.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 222

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 1-7-1938
[2] *Vide* "How Non-Volence Works"
[3] One of the larger banks of Travancore.
[4] *Vide* also "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 19-7-1938

383. LETTER TO SAMPURNANAND

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 19, 1938

BHAI SAMPURNANAND,

What is this news item about a Congress platoon of 10,000 to be formed in Farrukhabad? If an armed platoon is envisaged, is it compatible with the Congress creed of non-violence?

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From Hindi: C.W. 10132. Courtesy: Kashi Vidyapith, Varanasi

384. TO SEGAON WORKERS

July 19, 1938

A painful incident occurred today. A boy was grazing cows near our field. Balwantsinha tried to dissuade him and on his refusal gave him a push. This is a matter of shame for us. I have told the villagers that if Balwantsinha does this kind of thing again he shall leave Segaon. We must understand that we are servants not masters and we can live here only through the kindness of the villagers. We have no right at all to swear at or touch anyone.

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 4674

385. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

9 p.m., July 19, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Give the two friends from Travancore the accompanying two letters, one[1] is addressed to Vallabhbhai and the other[2] to Sir Purushottamdas.

The friend from Denmark seemed to me to be an excellent man. I have already written you this, but his face is still before my eyes and so you find me mentioning it again.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sampurnanand

[2] Not traceable

Some other letters also are enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Urgent

If two commodes can be spared from Maganwadi, send them here and also the two thin mattresses belonging to Nimu.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11609.

386. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

July 20, 1938

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

There is only one solution. You must swallow the bitter pill of yesterday[1] and keep up the effort to overcome your anger. Nothing is too much for the sake of *goseva*. No one can be angry by himself. Anger can be mastered only where it is generated. Do you not agree? We are servants. How can a servant raise his hand against the master?

I know Ganpatrai.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am returning your letter.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1907.

387. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

SEGAON,
July 21, 1938

CHI. DEVDAS,

A letter was published in *The Hindustan Times* about Shuaib which he has sent to me. He has also sent me a copy of his letter to you. That letter should not have been published without being shown to Shuaib. I have written to him that you must not have seen it at all. As far as possible, such letters should not be published without being shown to you. You must have now published, without giving Shuaib's name, the facts sent by him. If you have not, do so now. You must

[1] *Vide* "To Segaon Workers", 19-7-1938

have asked "Fair play" why he sent such a report. If he sticks to his report, you may then write to Shuaib and inform him accordingly.

We are after all in the midst of a raging fire.[1] You will see in the next issue of *Harijan* what I have been able to write ultimately.[2] I have completely changed the approach.

These days I am generally observing silence. I speak only when absolutely necessary. The practice suits me very well.

Sushila and Arun are here. Kallenbach's niece also is here. Rajkumari is coming here the day after tomorrow for three days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 20004.

388. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

July 21, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

You must have received my postcard. I got your letter. It was very good indeed that you did not get angry with Ramachandran. If we go deep into the matter we will find nothing over which to get angry with other people. And, therefore, how can anyone ever have the right to get angry? Is not anger described as a mild form of madness in English? And as the *Gita* says, its root is *kama*. I will keep on writing to Saraswati.

It will be very good if you concentrate on your studies.

All of us are well here.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope you read *Harijan*.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7342. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] Presumably the reference is to the ministerial crisis in C.P.
[2] *Vide* "Functions of the Working Committee", 6-8-1938.

389. WHAT IS SARVODAYA?[1]

SEGAON,
July 21, 1938

Sarvodaya is impossible without satyagraha. The word satyagraha should be understood here in its etymological sense. There can be no insistence on truth where there is no non-violence. Hence the attainment of sarvodaya depends upon the attainment of non-violence. The attainment of non-violence in its turn depends upon *tapascharya*. *Tapascharya*, again, should be pure. Ceaseless effort, discretion, etc., should form part of it. Pure *tapascharya* leads to pure knowledge. Experience shows that although people talk of non-violence, many are mentally so lazy that they do not even take the trouble of familiarizing themselves with the facts. Take an example. India is a poor country. We wish to do away with poverty. But how many people have made a study of how this poverty came about, what its implications are, how it can be removed, etc.? A devotee of non-violence, should be full of such knowledge.

It is the duty of *Sarvodaya* to create such means and not to enter into controversies. Editors of *Sarvodaya* should forget Gandhism. There is no such thing as Gandhism. I have not put anything new before India; I have only presented an ancient thing in a new way. I have tried to utilize it in a new field. Hence my ideas cannot be appropriately called Gandhism. We shall adopt truth wherever we find it, praise it wherever we see it, and pursue it. In other words, in every sentence of *Sarvodaya*, we should catch a glimpse of non-violence and knowledge.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7680.

390. NOTE TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEGAON,
July 21, 1938

Herewith the list of rules with my letter on the subject and an article[2] for *Sarvodaya*.

[1] Gandhiji sent this message for the first issue of *Sarvodaya* published by D. B. Kalelkar and Dada Dharmadhikari.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

You forgot here that article for *Harijan*. It is also sent herewith.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10909.

391. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

July 21, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

You must have got my postcard. Amritlal is sending the name of the medicine. Try to regain the lost weight. It is raining hard here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7089. Also C.W. 4581. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

392. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEGAON,
July 21, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I re-read your letter with care. I think that my answer should have sufficed. The only answer to the question as to when the desire for procreation may be regarded justified is when a couple desires offspring without desiring sexual pleasure. This was believed so in the case of Dasharatha. The whole process has been given the character of dharma.

What you write about the mastery over sexual passion is correct.

My interpretation of "हत्वापि स इमाँल्कान "[1] is that he who is wholly free from attachment will not kill at all. Thus the expression may be regarded as an exaggeration. My walking up to Wardha may not be called dharma but it is not *adharma* either. The same is true of the utterance on procreation.

Now this answers all your doubts. If not, put them to me in the form of questions and I shall answer.

[1] "Even though he slay all these worlds"—*Bhagavad Gita*, XVIII. 17 ; *vide* "Discourses on the "Gita"

One suggestion. My pronouncements should not be taken as authority. They are not all revelations. Some are empirical, some rational. Such utterances have the same status as every other utterance which means that any saying of mine which is not acceptable to your heart or mind may be totally rejected. There will be no need to compile my opinions if you act thus. Does anyone need to compile quotations to realize that the earth is round?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4296. Also S.G. 66

393. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

July 22, 1938

CHI. LILA,

If you think that by not writing to me you save my time, you are making a mistake. I would be satisfied if you wrote once in a while. If it is necesary for you to take tea for the bowels to move, you may take just enough for that purpose as medicine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9590. Also C.W. 6562. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

394. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 22, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter only today and am replying immediately. A letter for Jayaprakash is enclosed. If you want to resort to satyagraha, you must not do so without consulting me. And in any case you must not worry. Do not ruin your health. One's duty is but to try. Worries weaken us in our effort.

Navin has come today.

I am keeping good health. My diet these days consists of two pounds of milk, *mosambis*, as many as I can eat— at present I eat about ten or eleven daily—and garlic water with jaggery thrice day. I feel better with this diet.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3517

395. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 22, 1938

BHAI JAYAPRAKASH,

Prabha writes in great distress that you totally neglect your health. The decision to go to Malabar also seems to be cracking up. After all even for your own work preservation of health is necessary. I would request you to go for the sake of Prabha's peace if not for any other reason. Her health too is not good. But she will automatically improve when you get well.

I hope you will follow my advice.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 3518.

396. LETTER TO R.

July 22, 1938

BHAI R.[1],

Balkrishna conveyed to me your message. I find your case similar to that of a man living in the midst of fire yet pleading to be protected from fire. I think you should satisfy your sexual desire through G.[2] This is the way of the world. Those who want to be free of passion cannot do so by merely wishing it. The wish must be accompanied by incessant effort. This is beyond you. This is what I feel. If your heart indicates another way and you can master your sexual impulses I for one shall be extremely happy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 212.

[1] The names have been omitted.
[2] *Ibid*

397. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

8 p.m., July 22, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I forgot to give today three of the accompanying letters. I did not look into the pad.

I hope you remember that Rajkumari is coming tomorrow, the 23rd. She is arriving by the Grand Trunk Express. Come after making arrangements for receiving her at the station. If it is raining, she should be detained there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:S. N. 11610.

398. HOW NON-VIOLENCE WORKS

A Congress leader said to me the other day in the course of our conversation, "How is it that in quality the Congress is not what it used to be in 1920-25 ? It has deteriorated. Ninety percent of the members are not carrying out the Congress discipline. Can you not do something to mend this state of things ?''

The question is apposite and timely. I can't shirk responsibility by saying I am no longer in the Congress. I have gone out of it for the purpose of serving it better. I know that I still influence the Congress policy. As the author of the Congress constitution of 1920. I must hold myself responsible for such deterioration as is avoidable.

The Congress started with an initial handicap in 1920. Very few believed in truth and non-violence as a creed. Most members accepted them as a policy. It was inevitable. I had hoped that many would accept them as their creed after they had watched the working of the Congress under the new policy. Only some did, not many. In the beginning stages, the change that came over the foremost leaders was profound. Readers will recall the letters from the late Pandit Motilal Nehru and Deshbandhu Das reproduced in *Young India*. They had experienced a new joy and a new hope in a life of self-denial, simplicity and self-sacrifice. The Ali Brothers had almost become fakirs. As we toured from place to place, I watched with delight the

change that was coming over the Brothers. What was true of these four leaders was true of many others whom I can name. The enthusiasm of the leaders had infected the rank and file.

But this phenomenal change was due to the spell of 'swaraj in one year'. The conditions I had attached to the fulfilment of the formula were forgotten. Khwaja Saheb Abdul Majid even went so far as to suggest that, as the general of the satyagraha army, which the Congress had then become and still is (if only Congressmen realize the meaning of satyagraha), I should have made sure that the conditions were such that they would be fulfilled. Perhaps he was right. Only I had no such prevision in me. The use of non-violence on a mass scale and for political purposes was even for myself an experiment. I could not therefore dogmatize. My conditions were meant to be a measure of popular response. They might or might not be fulfilled. Mistakes, miscalculations were always possible. Be that as it may, when the fight for swaraj became prolonged and Khilafat ceased to be a live issue, enthusiasm began to wane, confidence in non-violence even as a policy began to be shaken, and untruth crept in. People who had no faith in the twin virtues or the khadi clause stole in, and many even openly defied the Congress constitution.

The evil has continued to grow. The Working Committee has been making some attempt to purge the Congress of the evil but has not been able to put its foot down and risk the loss of numbers on the Congress register. I myself believe in quality rather than quantity.

But there is no such thing as compulsion in the scheme of non-violence. Reliance has to be placed upon ability to reach the intellect and the heart—the latter rather than the former.

It follows that there must be power in the word of a satyagraha general—not the power that the possession of limitless arms gives, but the power that purity of life, strict vigilance, and ceaseless application produce. This is impossible without the observance of *brahmacharya*. It must be as full as it is humanly possible. *Brahmacharya* here does not mean mere physical self-control. It means much more. It means complete control over all the senses. Thus an impure thought is a breach of *brahmacharya*; so is anger. All power comes from the preservation and sublimation of the vitality that is responsible for creation of life. If the vitality is husbanded instead of being dissipated, it is transmuted into creative energy of the highest order. This vitality is continuously and even unconsciously dissipated by evil, or even

rambling, disorderly, unwanted thoughts. And since thought is the root of all speech and action, the quality of the latter corresponds to that of the former. Hence perfectly controlled thought is itself power of the highest potency and can become self-acting. That seems to me to be the meaning of the silent prayer of the heart. If man is after the image of God, he has but to will a thing in the limited sphere allotted to him and it becomes. Such power is impossible in one who dissipates his energy in any way whatsoever, even as steam kept in a leaky pipe yields no power. The sexual act divorced from the deliberate purpose of generation is a typical and gross form of dissipation and has therefore been specially and rightly chosen for condemnation. But in one who has to organize vast masses of mankind for non-violent action the full control described by me has to be attempted and virtually achieved.

This control is unattainable save by the grace of God. There is a verse in the second chapter of *Gita* which freely rendered means.: "Sense effects remain in abeyance whilst one is fasting or whilst the particular sense is starved, but the hankering does not cease except when one sees God face to face."[1] This control is not mechanical or temporary. Once attained it is never lost. In that state vital energy is stored up without any chance of escaping by the innumerable outlets.

It has been said that such *brahmacharya*, if it is at all attainable, can be so only by cave-dwellers. A *brahmachari*, it is said, should never see, much less touch a woman. Doubtless a *brahmachari* may not think of, speak of, see or touch a woman lustfully. But the prohibition one finds in books on *brahmacharya* is mentioned without the important adverb. The reason for the omission seems to be that man is no impartial judge in such matters, and therefore cannot say when he is or is not affected by such contacts. Cupid's visitations are often unperceivable. Difficult though therefore *brahmacharya* is of observance when one freely mixes with the world. it is not of much value if it is attainable only by retirement from the world.

Anyway, I have practised *brahmacharya* for over thirty years with considerable success though living in the midst of activities. After the decision to lead the life of a *brahmachari* there was little change in my outward practice, except with my wife. In the course of my work among the Indians in South Africa, I mixed freely with women. There was hardly an Indian woman in the Transvaal and Natal

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 59.

whom I did not know. They were so many sisters and daughters to me. My *brahmacharya* was not derived from books. I evolved my own rules for my guidance and that of those who, at my invitation, had joined me in the experiment. If I have not followed the prescribed restrictions, much less have I accepted the description found even in religious literature of woman as the source of all evil and temptation. Owing as I do all the good there may be in me to my mother, I have looked upon woman never as an object for satisfaction of sexual desire but always with the veneration due to my own mother. Man is the tempter and aggressor. It is not woman whose touch defiles man but he is often himself too impure to touch her. But recently a doubt has seized me as to the nature of the limitation that a *brahmachari* or *brahmacharini* should put upon himself or herself regarding contacts with the opposite sex. I have set limitations which do not satisfy me. What they should be I do not know. I am experimenting. I have never claimed to have been a perfect *brahmachari* of my definition. I have not acquired that control over my thoughts that I need for my researches in non-violence. If my non-violence is to be contagious and infectious, I must acquire greater control over my thoughts. There is perhaps a flaw somewhere which accounts for the apparent failure of leadership adverted to in the opening sentence of this writing.

My faith in non-violence remains as strong as ever. I am quite sure that not only should it answer all our requirements in our country, but that it should, if properly applied, prevent the bloodshed that is going on outside India and is threatening to overwhelm the Western world.

My aspiration is limited. God has not given me the power to guide the world on the path of non-violence. But I have imagined that he has chosen me as His instrument for presenting non-violence to India for dealing with her many ills. The progress already made is great. But much more remains to be done. And yet I seem to have lost the power to evoke the needed response from Congressmen in general. It is a bad carpenter who quarrels with his tools. It is a bad general who blames his men for faulty workmanship. I know I am not a bad general. I have wisdom enough to know my limitations. God will give me strength enough to declare my bankruptcy if such is to be my lot. He will perhaps take me away when I am no longer wantedfor the work which I have been permitted to do for nearly half a century. But I do entertain the hope that there is yet work for me to do, that the darkness that seems to have enveloped me will disappear,

and that, whether with another battle more brilliant than the Dandi March or without, India will come to her own demonstrably through non-violent means. I am praying for the light that will dispel the darkness. Let those who have a living faith in non-violence join me in the prayer.

Harijan, 23-7-1938

399. DUTY OF KHADI-WEARERS

July 23, 1938

I have before me several letters, some protesting against the constant rise in the price of khadi, and some piteously appealing to me to show the way to poor middle-class people for buying dear khadi.

The A. I. S. A. exists only for the betterment of the khadi producers, the majority of whom are poor women spinners. I hold that the Association cannot be satisfied till every woman who puts in an honest hour in spinning gets one anna per hour. We are on the point of reaching half an anna per hour, and if the consumers and the Congress Governments do their duty, the Association expects to give the anna per hour much earlier than most people expect.

This must mean some rise in the price of khadi, but not a proportionate rise. City people should know that ceaseless effort is being made to evoke greater skill among the artisans so that the whole of the increase in the wages may not fall upon khadi. Overhead charges are also being constantly reduced. Skill overhead increases with experience. But sixteen times increase in the wages of spinners cannot all be brought about merely by increased efficiency Therefore some rise in the price of khadi is inevitable with the increase in the wages. This is being unequally distributed among the different varieties so that the heaviest rise will take place in the khadi that is purchased by the monied classes. Everything that can be done to ease the burden on poor buyers is being done and will be done by the Association.

But khadi-wearers should know that the economics of khadi are different from the ordinary economics which are based on competition in which patriotism, sentiment and humanity play little or no part. Khadi economics are based on patriotism sentiment and humanity.

Before the new policy of the Association was laid down, its aim was to cheapen khadi, mostly in disregard of the wages of the

spinners, the most helpless artisans perhaps in the world. This continued for nearly a decade. It was a mistaken ploicy, but the mistake was unconscious and based on faulty reasoning. I must take the largest share of the blame for the mistake. Khadi-wearers had the sole benefit of the mistake. Is it right for them to complain when the mistake is being repaired and the spinners are gradually being paid what is their due ?

The Association has expected hearty co-operation from the khadi-wearers and I am glad to be able to say that on the whole the increase in the price of khadi has not been resented by them. Many consider it a privilege that they are partners in the tardy justice that is being done to the dumb sisters whose need is infinitely greater than that of the wearers of khadi.

I know that there are many middle-class persons who find it difficult to make the two ends meet, and for them every additional anna becomes a problem. And they will not spin. They have my sympathy. But they cannot have it both ways. If they will not spin, they should cut down their requirements or reduce other expenses. In this climate we do not need the clothes we use. Where there is a will there is a way.

A correspondent suggests that khadi is mainly supported by the poor middle class, and contends that if the prices are not brought down to the level at which they can buy it, it will not survive me. If that is the condition on which alone khadi can live, it deserves to predecease me. Happily there is a fallacy behind the argument. The question of cheapness mainly affects the city-dwellers. If all of them, rich and poor, took to khadi, they could hardly use more than ten percent of the possible production of khadi. The rest has to be used by the producers themselves who are villagers. The question of price does not affect them materially, if at all. It is true that khadi has not penetrated the villages to the extent expected. During the transition period, therefore, it has to depend upon the patriotic spirit of city dwellers both rich and poor. Those who believe in the message of khadi will not consider any price too dear for khadi. It is the only real insurance against famine and unemployment. Even if India were to be industrialized overnight, much of the unemployment would remain. In this country the problem is to find work for a whole nation which has one-fourth of her time without occupation. If pestilence, poverty and blood-shed are to be avoided, there is no remedy but khadi and

other village industries. Those who believe in this mission of khadi and who believe also in a living wage being paid to the spinners, will not grudge the increase that has to be made in the price of khadi. They may rely upon the Association moving with the utmost caution. The past two years' experience warrants the hope that the public welcome the increase in the wages that the spinners are receiving.

Harijan, 23-7-1938

400 . LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

July 23, 1938

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Pray don't come tonight. The weather is awful. Wet, wet, wet everywhere. Tomorrow you will come anyhow, unless of course you are ill and it is raining hard as it is now. Your corner is of course reserved.

Love.

BAPU

From the original:C. W. 3633. Courtesy:Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6442

401. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 23, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

You were wise not to come. It is wet all around. Khan Saheb wants to come for the night. It would be better for him not to. He may come tomorrow if it is dry or after the Working Committee meeting. Even the cot meant for him is not here. Rajkumari also should not come tonight. I think it is impossible to bring the car. It is certainly risky. She may come tomorrow during day-time. The letters are enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I completely forgot to send this letter. Fortuately for me, I am able to send it now.

From a photostat of the Gujarati:S. N. 11611

402. LETTER TO AMRITAL T. NANAVATI

July 23, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Since Vasumati has asked for time, you should tell her that you cannot spare more time. Give her fifteen minutes. Explain to her that she can get much in fifteen minutes if she works with concentration.

Do not worry if you cannot at present give help in preparing *bhaji*. Those who feel hurt by people's criticism become old prematurely. Such persons violate *brahmacharya* according to my definition of it and those who do so become old.

We should feel unhappy about our own shortcomings. When others impute faults to us we should laugh it away. If they are inclined to listen we can explain to them. It is our duty to explain to those who have formed a wrong opinion about us. We should treat others as if they were our kith and kin.

By all means take Sunday off. On that day you may help in preparing *bhaji*. Cultivate a sense of humour.

There were four or five mistakes in Dahyalal's *Gita* recitation yesterday. Observe all such mistakes and correct them. His recitation has certainly improved, but there is scope for futher improvement.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:G. N. 10749

403. LETTER TO PYARELAL

July 23, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

You were to write something on education. You have not done it yet. It will be good if you write. Why not give your own experience? You should not think that you cannot express yourself if you hold a view different from mine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

404. LETTER TO SARASWATI

July 23, 1938

CHI. CRAZY SURU,

What a letter ? You must have had my postcard and the letter[1] as also the telegram[2] I sent. How can I comfort you ? Even if I call you back here you will have no peace in Kanti's absence. I wanted to keepyou with me. You are deluding yourself to no purpose. Do not harass Kanti. Let him pursue his studies. There you have your father, mother, grandfather and uncle with you. What more do you want ? You will have no rest here even for a day. You will daily exhort me either to send for Kantibhai or to send you to him. What shall I do then ? Think well and give up this madness and folly. Do write to me daily if you want to. I never wrote to your uncle: "Save me from Saraswati." Why should I wish to be saved from you ? Are you not my beloved daughter ? I hope you can read my hand.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6168. Also C. W. 3441. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

405. TO THE KATHIAWAR HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH[3]

July 24, 1938

While sending the foregoing[4] Shri Narandas writes[5] :

Shri Narandas also suggests that one half of the amount collected may be donated to Harijan service work, one-fourth to khadi work and one-fourth to the National School. The suggestion has my approval. A total of Rs. 17,000 has already been donated to Harijan service in this manner. The quantity of yarn spun and the amount of

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Saraswati", 18-7-1938

[2] This is not traceable.

[3] This was published under "Notes".

[4] Not translated here. It was an appeal to khadi workers in Saurashtra for their co-operation in the spinning programme of 69 days to celebrate the 69th birthday of Gandhiji on *Bhadrapad Vad* 12, according to the Vikram calendar.

[5] Not translated here. Narandas had stated in the letter that the spinning programme had been inaugurated in the National School on July 15 with prayers and flag-salutation.

money collected have kept on increasing from year to year. If that happens this year, too, all the three causes will receive increased aid. There is, therefore, no doubt that if the men and women engaged in Harijan and khadi service do their work conscientiously, a substantial sum of money will be collected and greater interest will be created in spinning.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 24-7-1938

406. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

July 24, 1938

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I don't know whether it is your misfortune or mine. I wrote yesterday a note to you and by my stupidity it was left out. I have been waiting for you all the morning. If you come after 2 p.m. I shall have taken the weekly silence. I see Jivraj[1] is coming with you. I suppose he does not want to hear my voice. He wants to see my face and take the b.p. I hope you are quite fit. How nice if you could walk.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3634. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6443

407. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 24, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

What weather! I will keep myself ready tomorrow, at 2.45 p.m. I have sent a note to Subhas Babu saying that I am prepared to be present at the bungalow at that time. I would prefer that. I would not like so many dragging themselves here.

The cart is just leaving here. In the last resort Rajkumari may come in that cart. If she is not well, she need not. And if I have to go there tomorrow, she may as well stay there. Here it is wet all around. Navin[2] has drawn a life-like portrait of Ba. Why need Jivraj go in such

[1] Dr. Jivraj Mehta

[2] Son of Vrajlal Gandhi

weather! His health is more delicate than mine. Do not write too much. I do not like your keeping late hours. I am writing.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I do not understand why Rajagopalachari was to come. Vallabhbhai, therefore, may telegraph to him whatever he thinks proper. There is nothing special for which I should like to give him trouble. Ask Vallabhbhai to reply to me regarding Sheriff.[1] Let me also have his opinion about the will[2]. I hope he is dealing firmly with the C. P. affair. Take out enough from the fruit baskets for your use there.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11612

408. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 24, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

You must have got the two letters sent with the doctor.

Write to Narahari and tell him that Parnerkar cannot be spared. Apart from the moral consideration, he is busy at present in the farming and the co-operative dairy experiments. If he wants, he may have the man sent by Trivedi. You may send the thing to Jugatram over your signature[3]. Write to Krishnan and ask him to keep me informed. The Trivandrum affair was well settled. I did have fears about Khare. The cart must have reached by now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11613

[1] *Vide*"Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 18-7-1938

[2] Vithalbhai Patel's will in favour of Subhas Chandra Bose

[3] The source is obscure here.

409. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

SEGAON,
July 24, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I got your postcard. I might put up with your not improving here, but I cannot tolertate your not doing so there. Here I will have the satisfaction of giving you intelligent treatment. I do not have any faith in the treatment given to you there. Therefore, take every step after due deliberation. Living entirely on butter-milk is perfectly all right. I might be satisfied if you gave me the details of the vaid's treatment.

The blood-pressure is at my normal level. It remains at about 172/102. I take milk up to 2 1/4 lb. and 9 *mosambis*. Sometimes the number goes up to eleven. For the last two days I have been having peaches brought by Khan Saheb. He and Rajkumari have come here. They have not met yet because of the rains.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7090 Also C.W. 4582. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

410. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

July 24, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Desire for progeny has a place as service has. Some go to the length of prescribing that the seekers of *mukti* should refrain from any activity whatsoever. But we have not accepted this as our creed. The appointed work must be done without attachment. If a man in full mastery over passion desires offspring he may procreate. We cannot be arbitrary in our judgment.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4297. Also S.G. 67

411. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEGAON,
July 24, 1938

CHI. SHARMA,

Mahadev does keep writing to you. I can write very little these days. I have to take care of the body. Doing a lot of work in a short time necessitates giving up a great deal of work. There was no special occasion for my writing too. You have had the permission to go to Satis Babu.[1] I hope everything is going on well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi in *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere jivanke Solah Varsh*, facing p. 271

412. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

July 24, 1938

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

Water accumulates in a puddle in the southern verandah of Jamnalalji's cottage. Earth or sand should be spread there to form a slope as has been done in my verandah and there should be a gunny screen to keep off water.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1906

413. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 25, 1938

CRAZY DAUGHTER,

You created a fine scene today! You conclusively proved that we do not understand each other. I had said I would have *roti* today as also the vegetable though prepared separately. And you threw away the *roti* ? In what I said there was no suggestion of not taking the *roti* and vegetable served by you. Such anger! And for what crime! You will gain nothing by being so angry with poor me. It is as well that I

[1] The addressee was to go to Satis Chandra Das Gupta to learn about cheap remedies for villagers.

am observing silence. Now tell me what I should do ? Shall I fast ? Or give up all service from you ? What is a girl of such a temper not capable of ? Why do you not leave me if I am so unworthy ? Maybe it is best for you to leave me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 403

414. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

SEGAON,
July 27, 1938

MY DEAR MATHEW,

I have your letter. I shall watch your progress. Hope your mother is on the road to recovery. You left a good book with me.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1539

415. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

July 27, 1938

CHI. VALJI,

I saw your handwriting after a long time. Mahadev is trying to get that book. There is no truth in what the Bombay doctor says. Countless people protect their teeth with the *babul* twigs. Yes, there is one thing. Those who go on brushing the gums with a twig and that too without chewing it into a soft brush do cause their gums to recede. But this has no connection with the *babul* juice. The juice has the quality of strengthening the gums. Pyorrhoea is not caused by external infection but results from internal decay.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope the children are well

SHRI VALJI DESAI
GONDAL
KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7479. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

416. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

SEGAON,
July 27, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I got your letter. Balkoba has gone to Varoda. He is fine.

Get rid of your fever. Try to find out what medicine the vaid is giving you. It is no doubt an advantage to you that the milk there is thin. It means that there is less fat in it.

Khan Saheb has arrived in Wardha. When the work of the [Working] Committee is over, he will come to Segaon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7091. Also C.W. 4583. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

417. LETTER TO SARASWATI

SEGAON,
July 27, 1938

CRAZY DAUGHTER SURU,

There has been no letter from you for some three or four days. Write daily until until you are well. Remember God and recite the following *bhajan*:

दोऊ अक्षर सब कुल तारे वारी जाउँ उस नाम के।
तुलसीदास प्रभु राम दयाघन और देव सब दाम के॥[1]

and repeat Ramanama.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 3442. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] " I dedicate myself to that name, the two letters of which bring salvation to all. The Lord Rama of Tulsidas is like a cloud showering mercy, while all other gods need gratification."

418. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 28, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter. I am returning Saraswati's letters. She writes to me also in the same strain. I feel that you two should get married and after marriage, as you suggest, stay separately in Bangalore and observe self-control till your studies are over. But I see positive harm in keeping Saraswati in Bangalore without marriage. After you get married, Saraswati perhaps may not insist on staying with you and may come to me or go to Trivandrum. I am prepared to write to Ramachandran on hearing from you. I have discussed the matter with Navin. If Ramachandran put those questions, it is a painful thing.

If you have given up milk and ghee, you have certainly not done right. It would be *duragraha*. Resume normal food immediately. If necessary send me a wire.

Saraswati regularly writes to me, and so do I to her

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.W, 7343. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

419. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 29, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter and wire. This is just to tell you all is well here. Too busy to say more. I am in the midst of friends and work.

Hanna still on glucose and oranges.

Love there to the Tyabjis and for yourself.

Yours,

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3872. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur.Also G.N. 7028

420. LETTER TO C. A. TULPULE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 29, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

Though the fullest *brahmacharya* is unattainable whilst one is in the flesh a very near approach is perfectly possible in my opinion. The way to it is yet unexplored. So far as I am concerned I am exploring it in the hope of finding it. What progress I have made makes me hopeful.

The sphere of limitations simply means the limits nature has put upon us as fractions of the Divine. A fraction is not the whole.

If a person has as full control as is possible for a human, his willing affects his surroundings. I have personal experience of that in several instances. It may be argued that correspondence between the willing and the alleged response were mere coincidences. For such doubters I have no reply.

I hope this answers all your questions.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI C. A. TULPULE
TILAK ROAD
POONA CITY

From a copy:C.W. 2898. Courtesy:C.A. Tulpule

421. A CLARIFICATION

July 30, 1938

An ex-professor writes a long letter on my article on higher education[1] from which I take the following relevant extracts :

> There is need for further clarification of your views on higher education as they have appeared in the *Harijan* of the 9th inst. I agree with many of your views—especially those regarding the enormity of the damage caused by the foreign medium. I also feel that what passes as higher education today contains much brass mistaken for gold. I speak from experience as I was a teacher in the line of the so-called 'higher education' till very recently. It is

[1] *Vide* "Higer Education"

your third conclusion about general revenue and claims of higher education and its corollary, viz., that universities should be self-supporting, that has left me unconvinced. I believe that every country to be a progressive country must have sufficient faicilities for the pursuit of all branches of knowledge—not merely chemistry, medicine and engineering, but every kind of knowledge—literature, philosophy, history, sociology, both abstract and applied. All higher pursuits require many facilities which cannot be had without State support. A country depending only on voluntary effort for such pursuits is sure to fall behind and suffer. It can never hope to be free and be able to maintain that freedom. The State must be jealously watchful over the position of higher education in all fields. Voluntary effort must be there and we must have our Nuffields and Rockefellers[1]. But the State cannot and must not be allowed to remain a silent spectator. It must actively come forward to organize, help and direct. I wish you to clarify this aspect of the question.

You say at the end of your article:"Under my scheme there will be more and better libraries." I do not find the 'scheme' you speak of in your article, nor am I able to make out how 'more and better libraries and laboratories' will come into being thereunder. I am of opinion that such libraries and laboratories must be maintained and so long as donors and voluntary agencies are not coming forward in sufficient numbers, the State cannot divest itself of this responsibility.

My article is clear enough if the expression "definite use" mentioned in it is given its extensive meaning. I have not pictured a poverty-stricken Indian containing ignorant millions. I have pictured to myself an India continually progressing along the lines best suited to her genius. I do not, however, picture it as a third-class or even a first-class copy of the dying civilization of the West. If my dream is fulfilled, and every one of the seven lacs of villages becomes a well-living republic in which there are no illiterates, in which no one is idle for want of work, in which everyone is usefully occupied and has nourishing food, well-ventilated dwellings and sufficient khadi for covering the body, and in which all the villagers know and observe the laws of hygiene and sanitation, such a State must have varied and increasing needs, which it must supply unless it would stagnate. I can therefore well imagine the State financing all the education my correspondent mentions and much more that I could add. And if the

[1] Viscount Nuffield established the Nuffield Foundation fo medical, scientific and social research and John D. Rockefeller similarly endowed many charitable corporations for the advancement of learning.

State has such requirements, surely it will have corresponding libraries.

What, however, according to my view the State will not have is an army of B.A.s and M.A.s with their brains sapped with too much cramming and minds almost paralysed by the impossible attempt to speak and write English like Englishmen. The majority of these have no work, no employment. And when they have the latter, it is usually clerkships at which most of the knowledge gained during their twelve years of high school and college is of no use whatsoever to them.

University training becomes self-supporting when it is utilized by the State. It is criminal to pay for a training which benefits neither the nation nor the individual. In my opinion there is no such thing as individual benefit which cannot be proved to be also national benefit. And since most of my critics seem to be agreed that the existing higher education, and for that matter both primary and secondary, are not connected with realitites, it cannot be of benefit to the State. When it is directly based on realities and is wholly given through the mother tongue, I shall perhaps have nothing to say against it. To be based on realities is to be based on national, i.e., State, requirements. And the State will pay for it. Even when that happy time comes, we shall find that many institutions will be conducted by voluntary contributions. They may or may not benefit the State. Much of what passes for education today in India belongs to that category and would therefore not be paid for from the general revenue, if I had the way.

But the agreement of my critics on the two main points, medium and the realities, cannot lull me to rest. They have criticized and tolerated all these many years the existing system. Now that the opportunity for reform has come, Congressmen ought to become impatient. If the medium is changed at once and not gradually, in an incredibly short time we shall find text-books and teachers coming into being to supply the want. And if we mean business, in a year's time we shall find that we need never have been party to the tragic waste of the nation's time and energy in trying to learn the essentials of culture through a foreign medium. The condition of success is undoubtedly that provincial languages are introduced at once in Government offices and courts, if the Provincial Governments have the power or the influence over the courts. If we believe in the necessity of the reform, we can achieve it in no time.

Harijan, 30-7-1938

422. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

[*July 30, 1938*]

With regard to the recent ministerial crisis in C.P., it has been suggested that Dr. Khare was asked to sign a prepared draft containing humiliating admissions. I have no hesitation in saying that this suggestion is baseless. Dr. Khare accompanied by several members of the Working Committee, came to Segaon on July 25, and after discussion he prepared a statement to be issued to the Press.[1] I made corrections and additions to it, but after reading my corrections and additions he changed his mind and said that he would consult his friends and then decide whether to issue it or not. In my opinion there was nothing humiliating in it, if only because it contained nothing but facts. I hardly think Dr. Khare will dispute this. The best thing, however, is for the public to have the statement itself before it. I invite Dr. Khare to publish a facsimile of it. I have kept no copy of his own with my amendments. He took it with him to Nagpur.

Harijan, 6-8-1938

423. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 2, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Herewith a letter to Dr. Khare. Send with it a copy of my statement[2]. I hope you have gone through it closely. Send a copy to me also.

I hope Lilavati is feeling better. She must be wearing the glasses.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:S.N. 11615

[1] For the text of the statement and Gandhiji's corrections, *vide* "Statement of Dr. N. B. Khstr", 25-7-1938

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

424. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

July 30, 1938

CHI, JAMNALAL,

You have told somebody here that you wish to come and stay here. If you wish to come, everything is of course ready. But if you are not coming, I should like to keep Kishorelal here for some time. But this does not mean that you should drop the idea of coming. I will ask Kishorelal only if you are not coming. I wish you to visit Ramana Maharshi as early as possible.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:G.N. 2995

425. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 31, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is for the sake of telling you all well again. Khan Saheb is leaving tomorrow. Hanna the day after. Probably Kishorelal will come to stay here for a few days on Tuesday.

Your apples are still being eaten.

Jivraj brought a new thermos yesterday. That is the result of entrusting you with a mission—quite a paying thing !

Love

TYRANT

From the original:C.W. 3873. Courtesy:Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7029

426. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 31, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I had got word, before you brought it, that David would be coming at 3.

[1] The addressee called on Ramana Maharshi on August 19, 1938.

I am replying to Dr. Khare. Send the letter[1] today. What a pitiable condition!

Two other letters also are enclosed.

What *The Hindu* says about the Governor is strange. I wish to write even more strongly than that.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:S.N. 11616

427. LETTER TO SARASWATI

SEGAON,
June 31, 1938

CHI. CRAZY SURU,

I have your letter. I hope that you have calmed down now. Kanti's letters too keep coming and they cause me anxiety. Why do you despair ? Even as regards food you have to build up your health on a regular diet.

Manu has arrived. Sushila has stayed on for two or three days at the Mahila Ashram with Tari. It has stopped raining these days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi:G.N. 6169. Also C.W. 3443. Courtesy:Kantilal Gandhi

428. INSTRUCTIONS ON PRECAUTIONS AGAINST CHOLERA[2]

August 1, 1938

Segaon has cholera. Therefore nothing should be taken by anybody from Segaon. Those who have got cholera may be isolated where they are, unless they could be conveniently shifted elsewhere.

[1] Not traceable

[2] According to the source D.B. Kalelkar, Narhar Athavale, Pandurang Bhurke, Gajanan Dabke, Murlidhar Sabnis and Shripad Joshi had drunk of unfermented palm juice, *nira*, on July 30 and on July 31 developed symptoms which the Civil Surgeon of Wardha diagnosed as those of cholera. On August 1 Aryanayakum reported the matter to Gandhiji who wrote out these instructions. Athavale, Bhurke and Dabke later succumbed to the disease.

No one should be allowed near them except those who have been entrusted with nursing. The latter should be bare-bodied or have special clothes which should be put away when they come into contact with the outside world. They should wash themselves in permanganated water (rose coloured) every time they come in contact with others. All should drink only boiled water and have simple food, rather underfeed than overfeed. Those who have no scruples may be inoculated.

Send me report through Mahadev. He starts from Maganwadi at about 12.30 p.m. Did Kaka drink *nira* ? It should be stopped for the time being.

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-9-1938

429. LETTER TO HANNAH LAZAR[1]

[*August 1, 1938*][2]

If he has money to spare, he has to send you back when the climate is bearable and you have trained yourself in South Africa for the Indian life as you now know it—no risks can be taken here. And what is the use of your going away from me for three months? And if you have to go away, then off to the far south, that is to say, since you can't stay here in Segaon for three months, you have to go away. Therefore, the safest thing is to go to the far south, i. e., South Africa, and then, if all is well, you may return when the cold climate sets in.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

430. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 1, 1938

CHI, MAHADEV,

I have written a rather long article. The typing has not begun yet. It can therefore go only tomorrow. If possible I will send it tonight.

Dhiru is coming tomorrow. Navin will go there today. I have still to read the mail sent by you. I do not know when I shall be able to write about picketing. I am sending Nayakum's article. You will see

[1] Niece of Herman Kallenbach

[2] As noted by the addressee

that I have divided it into two parts. I will have no objection if they are combined.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11618

431. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*August 1, 1938*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Bablo also would require something. Please, therefore, have this. I suppose someone will give the ticket, etc., to Hanna when she goes there. She is to be sent off tomorrow.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:S.N. 11558

432. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

August 1, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I am in a very great hurry. It is good that you sent the names of the medicines. Observe the rule about writing on a fixed day in the week.

Hanna is leaving tomorrow. Khan Saheb has left. Kishorebhai and Manu are coming tomorrow. And so the number will remain the same.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7092. Also C.W. 4584. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

[1] *Vide* the following letter in which Gandhiji writes : "Hanna is leaving tomorrow."

433. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*After August 1, 1938*]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Cholera has broken out in Karanji. Help has been sent, but let this man take a note to C. S. He will bring from there medicines, the doctor, etc., whatever is available. Send the post. When will the oranges start coming ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:S.N. 11557

434. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

August 2, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

Kanu has frightened me. He says you flatly refuse to take medicine. This is not right. Sushila and Amritlal are going there. Having heard that Mahodaya needs help, I am sending Sushila. Take whatever medicine she gives, either oral or for external application. I have told her that she must give no medicine containing non-vegetarian or alcoholic ingredients.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:G.N. 10902

435. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

August 3, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

I have deliberately hardened my heart and am not coming there to you. You need not reply to this letter. Get well soon. Do send for me whenever you consider my presence necessary.

My *vandemataram* to Bhai Daftari.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:G.N. 10903

436. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

August 3, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

Pandurang and Dabke have gone where all of us will go sooner or later. I kept back this fact from you. But why keep it a secret ? It is necessary that you should not let the news affect you. Is not our study of the *Gita* tested in digesting such news calmly ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10904

437. TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT, BURMA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

[On or before *August 5, 1938*][1]

YOUR WIRE[2]. I DO NOT KNOW WHAT INFLUENCE I CAN HAVE ON BURMESE FRIENDS. THE RIOTS[3] ARE MOST DEPLORABLE WHAT-EVER THE CAUSE. THEY SHOW THAT WE BOTH HAVE NOT PASSED THE BARBAROUS STAGE. HOW I WISH THE HEADS OF BOTH COMMUNITIES COULD DEVISE WAYS AND MEANS OF AVOIDING A REPETITION OF SUCH TRAGEDIES.

The Hindu, 5-8-1938

[1] The news item reporting this is dated August 5.

[2] This read : "Happily with the services of Indian and Burmese elders peace is being restored. The Burma Congress Committee believes that a suitable public statement by you will go a great way in removing the misunderstanding, if any, and restoring the original cordial relations and amity between Indians and Burmans."

[3] Between Buddhists and Muslims which broke out on July 26. *Vide* also "Recent Riots in Burma", 20-8-1938.

438. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHAGANJ,
August 5, 1938

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
74 WALKESHWAR
BOMBAY HIGH

ARRANGE SALVATION ARMY SEND IMMEDIATELY TWELVE STERILE EGGS.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

439. LETTER TO SHAUKATULLA SHAH

August 5, 1938

MY DEAR SHAUKAT,

Since this was written I have your letter. I think we need not worry for the moment. Miss Harrison must have overtaken the immediate need. I am making my effort. Haven't heard from Bhopal.[1]

You must set Zohra right.

Love to you both.

BAPU

From a copy:Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy:Pyarelal

440. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON,
August 5, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

Mahadev has replied to your letters. I am writing this with the greatest difficulty. I have been thinking a great deal about you. From Saraswati's latest letter which I have received, it seems that she is calm. Ramachandran also writes to say that she is regaining poise. If so, it is very good indeed. I think it is best that Saraswati should stay at

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Nawab of Bhopal", 19-7-1938

Trivandrum at present. All the same I will be ready for all contingencies. You should stop worrying. Whatever is to happen will happen. Keep me informed. Give up your anger towards Ramachandran. Do not distrust him. Your respect for him should not diminish.

Kakasheb is down with cholera. Chances are he will survive. Chimanlal has been sent to the hospital for an operation for piles. Two very dear co-workers of Kaka died of cholera. Nana Athavale[1] is also down with it. Such is the position. Manu has come. She is very happy. Write sometimes to Ba.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:C.W. 7345. Courtesy:Kantilal Gandhi

441. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

SEGAON,
August 5, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Chimanlal has been sent to hospital for an operation for piles. Please send someone to find out if he requires anything. If you yourself can visit him, do so.

Kaka is all right I hope. Tell him that I have sent a telegram[2] to Bal three days back.

Look after your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10752

442. LETTER TO SARASWATI

August 5, 1938

CHI. SARU,

If I am not to call you crazy shall I call you wise ? Have you really grown wise ? Why would Kanti be uneasy if that were true ? Kanti's letters reveal that you are only crazy. Tell me now what I am to believe. Give me all the details:what your diet is, how many hours

[1] Narhar Lakshman Athavale, a worker of the Mahila Ashram
[2] Not traceable

you sleep, what you study and whether you play the *vina*. Do you go to school or study at home ? Do you keep cheerful ?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Manu has arrived. Kakasaheb has had cholera but I hope he will survive.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6170. Also C.W. 3444. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

443. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

August 5/6, 1938

CHI, VIJAYA,

I am writing this with great difficulty. As Kakasaheb is down with cholera, Amritlal is at Wardha nursing him. Chimanlal has been sent to the hospital for an operation of piles. Most probably Kishorelal will come tomorrow. Two very devoted young co-workers of Kaka fell victims to cholera and have left this world. Nana of Mahila Ashram has also fallen a prey. I have frequently to go to Wardha. Such is the position. I hope you are improving. Cholera has spread a little in Segaon too.

Blessings from

BAPU

KUMARI VIJAYABEHN
AT NARANBHAI VALLABHBHAI PATEL'S HOUSE
VARAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7093. Also C.W. 4585. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

444. FUNCTIONS OF THE WORKING COMMITTEE

August 6, 1938

Press cuttings on the ministerial crisis in C.P.[1] make most

[1] The crisis in the C. P. Ministry had begun soon after the assumption of office by the ministry headed by N. B. Khare. First a minister had made recommendation direct to the Governor concerning the release of certain convicts (*see* footnote 1, p. 178) and later there were differences among ministers leading to tension. In April the

instructive reading. That the resolution of the Working Committee condemning the action of veteran leader like Dr. Khare would come in for some severe criticism was a foregone conclusion.[1] But I was not prepared for the ignorance betrayed by the critics on the functions of the Working Committee.

Dr. Khare was not only guilty of gross indiscipline in flouting the warnings of the Parliamentary Board, but he betrayed incompetence as a leader by allowing himself to be fooled by the Governor, or not knowing that by his precipitate action he was compromising the Congress. He heightened the measure of indiscipline by refusing the advice of the Working Committee to make a frank confession of his guilt and withdraw from leadership. The Working committee would have been guilty of gross neglect of duty if it had failed to condemn Dr. Khare's action and adjudge his incompetence. I write these lines in sorrow. It was no pleasure to me to advise the Working Committee to pass the resolution it did. Dr. Khare is a friend. He has run to my aid as a physician when quick medical assistance was needed. He has often come to me for advice and guidance and has expressed himself to be in need of my blessings. I banked on this friendship when, on the 25th ultimo, I appealed to him bravely to stand down and work as a camp-follower. He himself seemed to be willing but he was badly advised, and not only declined to accept the Working Committee's advice but sent a letter instead, questioning the propriety of the whole of the action of the Working Committee in connection with his ill-advised and hasty resignation of office and equally hasty formation of a new Cabinet. I hope that on mature reflection he would have seen the error of his conduct and taken the action of the Working Committee in a sportsmanlike spirit. There is no moral turpitude involved in his action. He is a good fighter. He is free with his purse in helping friends. These are qualities of which anyone may be proud. But these qualities need not make the possessor a good Prime Minister

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Congress Parliamentary Committee managed at a meeting at Pachmarhi to resolve these differences and achieve a settlement. But Khare did not keep the terms of the settlement and continued to function without consulting the Working Committee or the Parliamentary Committee. In order to get rid of certain ministers he submitted his resignation to the Governor and asked the ministers concerned to resign. When they refused to oblige, the Governor dismissed them and later invited Khare to form a new ministry.

[1] The Working Committee condemning the action of Khare held him to be "unworthy of holding positions of responsibility in the Congress organization". For the text of the resolution, *vide* "Working Committee Resolution on C. P. Crisis"

or administrator. I would urge him as a friend to work for the time being as a camp-follower and give the Congress the benefit of the admitted qualities I have recited.

If Dr. Khare was impatient of his recalcitrant colleagues he should have rushed, not to the Governor, but to the Working Committee and tendered his resignation. If he felt aggrieved by its decision, he could have gone to the A. I. C. C. But in no case could any Minister take internal quarrels to the Governor and seek relief through him without the previous consent of the Working Committee. If the Congress machinery is slow-moving, it can be made to move faster. If the men at the helm are self-seekers or worthless, the A. I. C. C. is there to remove them. Dr. Khare erred grievously in ignoring or, what is worse, not knowing this simple remedy and rushing to the Governor on the eve of the meeting of the Working Committee to end his agony.

It is suggested that the men who succeed him are self-seekers and incapable, and can make no approach to Dr. Khare in character. If they are as they have been portrayed by their critics, they are bound to fail in the discharge of the onerous responsibility they have undertaken. But here again the Working Committee has to work within the limits prescribed for it. It cannot impose ministers on a province. After all they are elected members, and if the party that has the power to elect them chooses to do so, the Working Committee has no authority to interfere so long as they remain under discipline and are not known to be persons unworthy of public confidence. But the crisis should surely put the Ministers on their mettle. It is up to them to show by their conduct that the charges levelled against them are baseless, and that they are capable of discharging their trust ably and selflessly.

It speaks well for the impartiality of the Indian Press in that several journals found it necessary to condemn the action of the Working Committee in pronouncing the opinion it did on the part H. E. the Governor of C. P. played during the unfortunate crisis. I am not in the habit of hastily judging opponents. The criticism of the resolution has left me unconvinced of any injustice done to the Governor by it. In estimating his action, time is of the essence. In accepting the resignations of Dr. Khare and his two colleagues, in demanding resignations from the other three Ministers, in expecting an immediate answer, in summarily rejecting their explanation and

dismissing them, and for this purpose keeping himself, his staff and the poor Ministers awake almost the whole night, the Governor betrayed a haste which I can only call indecent. Nothing would have been lost if instead of accepting Dr. Khare's resignation there and then, he had awaited the meeting of the Working Committee which was to meet two days after the strange drama. In dealing with a similar crisis the Bengal Governor acted differently from the C. P. Governor.

Of course, the Governor's action conformed to the letter of the law, but it killed the spirit of the tacit compact between the British Government and the Congress. Let the critics of the Working Committee's action read the Viceroy's carefully prepared declaration which, among other declarations, induced the Working Committee to try the office experiment, and ask themselves whether the Governor was not bound to take official notice of what was going on between the Working Committee and Dr. Khare and his colleagues. These indisputable facts lead one to the irresistible conclusion that the Governor, in his eagerness to discredit the Congress, kept a vigil and brought about a situation which he knew was to be uncomfortable for the Congress. The unwritten compact between the British Government and the Congress is a gentleman's agreement in which both are expected to play the game.

The resolution therefore gives English administrators more credit than evidently the critics would give. Englishmen are sportsmen. They have ample sense of humour. They can hit hard and take a beating also in good grace. I have no doubt that the Governor will take the Congress resolution in good part.

But whether he does so or not, the Working Committee was bound to express what it felt about the Governor's action. It wishes to avoid a fight if it can; it will take it up if it must. If the fight is to be avoided, the Governors must recognize the Congress as the one national organization that is bound some day or other to replace the British Government. The U.P., the Bihar and the Orissa Governors waited for the Congress lead when a crisis faced them. No doubt, in the three cases, it was obviously to their interest to do so. Is it to be said that in C.P. it was obviously to the British interest to precipitate the crisis in order to discomfit the Congress? The Working Committee resolution is a friendly warning to the British Government that if they wish to avoid an open rupture with the Congress, the powers that be should not allow a repetition of what happened at Nagpur on the night of the 20th July.

Let us understand the functions of the Congress. For internal growth and administration, it is as good a democratic organization as any to be found in the world. But this democratic organization has been brought into being to fight the greatest imperialist power living. For this external work, therefore, it has to be likened to an army. As such it ceases to be democratic. The central authority possesses plenary powers enabling it to impose and enforce discipline on the various units working under it. Provincial organizations and Provincial Parliamentary Boards are subject to the central authority.

It has been suggested that, whilst my thesis holds good when there is active war in the shape of civil resistance going on, it cannot whilst the latter remains under suspension. But suspension of civil disobedience does not mean suspension of war. The latter can only end when India has a Constitution of her own making. Till then the Congress must be in the nature of an army. Democratic Britain has set up an ingenious system in India which, when you look at it in its nakedness, is nothing but a highly organized efficient military control. It is not less so under the present Government of India Act. The Ministers are mere puppets so far as the real control is concerned. The collectors and the police, who 'sir' them today, may at a mere command from the Governors, their real masters, unseat the Ministers, arrest them and put them in lock-up. Hence it is that I have suggested that the Congress has entered upon office not to work the Act in the manner expected by the framers but in a manner so as to hasten the day of substituting it by a genuine Act of India's own coining.

Therefore the Congress conceived as a fighting machine has to centralize control and guide every department and every Congressman, however highly placed, and expect unquestioned obedience. The fight cannot be fought on any other terms.

They say this is fascism pure and simple. But they forget that fascism is the naked sword. Under it Dr. Khare should lose his head. The Congress is the very antithesis of fascism, because it is based on non-violence pure and undefiled. Its sanctions are all moral. Its authority is not derived from the control of panoplied black-shirts. Under the Congress regime Dr. Khare can remain the hero of Nagpur, and the students and citizens of Nagpur, and for that matter other places, may execrate me or/and the Working Committee without a hair of the demonstrators' heads being touched so long as they remain non-violent. That is the glory and strength of the Congress—not its weakness. Its authority is derived from that non-violent attitude. It is

the only purely non-violent political organization of importance, to my knowledge, throughout the world. And let it continue to be the boast of the Congress that it can command the willing and hearty obedience from its followers, even veterans like Dr. Khare, so long as they choose to belong to it.

Harijan, 6-8-1938

445. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

MAGANWADI,
WARDHA (C. P.),
August 6, 1938

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

I have your letter of the first instant. I had the earlier letters also. Bapu had no opportunity to have a talk with the Maulana, because other important subjects engaged the whole of the time and attention of the w. c. Bapu thinks that no member of the Parliamentary Board has a right to dictate any important course of action without reference to the Working committee. You will therefore represent the matter to the Working Committee, who will consider it at the next meeting.

Yours sincerely,

MAHADEV DESAI

From the original : Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

446. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKVASA

SEGAON,
August 6, 1938

BHAI MANGALDAS,

I got your letter too late to be able to send you my blessings on the 3rd. You did not give either your son's or his bride's name. The marriage celebration must have passed off without any trouble. Please convey my blessings to both. May both of them devote themselves to service and may God grant them long lives.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4680. Courtesy: Mangaldas Pakvasa

447. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

August 6, 1938

I understand. I shall not keep you away from serving me. Do sleep when you feel sleepy. It will be good if you give up trying to get up at night. I shall wake you up if I feel the need. You must fix the quantity of your food. More on hearing the details regarding the piles.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4298. Also S.G. 68

448. TO SEGAON WORKERS

August 6, 1938

We should bear in mind the following:

1. Spittle is also excretion. Therefore we must never clean the untensils where we spit or wash our soiled hands.

2. We should not use water direct from the tap as it wastes water and not many poeple can use the tap at the same time. Therefore everyone must collect the water he needs in a *lota*.

3. No one should brush his teeth at the place meant for washing hands and mouth. The teeth must be brushed at a separate place and the mouth rinsed with water from a *lota*. Brushing of the teeth too should be done near a hedge or where people do not happen to walk.

4. We should never spit or blow the nose on the paths.

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 4674

449. LETTER TO H.J. KHANDEKAR

[Before *August 7, 1938*][1]

I would urge you not to enforce your threat.[2] It would be an abuse of satyagraha.[3] You cannot impose a Harijan on the Ministry. You can agitate in a peaceful manner for the inclusion of a Harijan in the cabinet, if you are satisfied that among the members of the C.P. Assembly there is a competent Harijan prepared to accept the Congress discipline, enjoying the confidence of the Harijan members and able to shoulder Ministerial responsibility. I am sure you will not insist that in every case and irrespective of merit a Harijan must have a place in the C.P. Ministry.

The Hindustan Times, 8-8-1938.

450. HARIJANS AND HINDU HOTELS

The strike of the Hindu hotel owners does credit neither to them, nor to Ahmedabad, nor does it afford protection to Hindusim. These hotel owners could close down their hotels if others did not go to their hotels because of the presence of Harijans there. But resorting to strike is tantamount to preventing the Congress Government from doing justice.

The question arises whether the Hindus on strike are on the side of the Congress or opposed to it. Are they enemies of Hinduism or are they its well-wishers? If they consider themselves supporters of the Congress, they should lovingly feed Harijans despite having to put up with difficulties. If, while doing so, other Hindus stop coming to their restaurants, they should put up with this. If all Hindu restaurant-owners practise this dharma, other Hindus would either be forced to take advantage of those very restaurants or wholly give up eating in such restaurants. In the latter eventuality the restaurant-owners should look for a new source of livelihood. They should on no account forsake their dharma.

If they are Congressmen—and they should be—they should

[1] The news item from which this has been extracted is dated August 7.

[2] This sentence is from a report in *The Hindu*, 8-8-1938.

[3] The addressee, a Harijan member of the C.P. Congress Committee, had threatened to start a satyagraha if a Harijan was not included in the C.P. Cabinet.

regard untouchability as *adharma* and, if that is so, it is evident that by resorting to strike they are practising *adharma*.

This strike indicates that the ordinary mass of Hindus share the opinion on the restaurant-owners. If that is so they are opposed to the Congress. But that cannot be so, because Ahmedabad has always sided with the Congress. How can they not be convinced that the practice of untouchability cannot survive in this age? Akha Bhagat has taught us that untouchability is a superfluous appendage and the cutting off of such a limb is beneficial.

Moreover, today, we find Hindus everywhere eating in all sorts of places. Their religion does not come in their way there. They frequent Irani restaurants. They freely visit English hotels. There is no prejudice against Harijans in those places.

If Harijans put on the caste mark on their foreheads, wear beads and go to restaurants without proclaiming their caste, who can prevent them? How can one find out about their caste? There is no doubt that many Harijans go to restaurants in this way. Is the strike then merely for the crime which the Government has committed in issuing the order to enforce its own law? If those who regard untouchability as their dharma actually wish to put it into practice, they should stop going to restaurants, taking foreign medicines; they should refrain from eating sweets whether foreign or Indian, as there is every possibility of Harijans having had a hand in their making. Foreign medicines are not made by Hindus and who knows how many Harijans may not have touched them before they reach the consumer? Today there are many vaids who do not practise untouchability. Is not their medicine polluted? And the less said about sweets the better. All this is worth considering. And those who do so will certainly come to the conclusion that those who practise untouchability should give up many other things. And, as that is not possible, they should realize the difficulty involved in it and tolerate the presence of Harijans in restaurants.

The path of those who regard untouchability as being opposed to dharma is simple. If no restaurant-owner opens the doors of his restaurant to them these people should start restaurants in whatever way it is possible and lovingly feed those visiting them. If anyone feels that Harijans are dirty, that their clothes are unclean, rules of cleanliness applicable to all can be enforced with regard to restaurants. Absence of cleanliness is not a monopoly of Harijans alone.

A few words about the duties of the Government. So long as public opinion is in favour of the Congress, the dharma of the latter is clear. On no account will it tolerate untouchability. It will sink or swim with Harijans. Even if the Congress can rule over the entire world by doing injustice to Harijans, it should regard it as dirt. Abolition of untouchability is an indispensable part of Congress policy. If no one starts a restaurant which would be open to all, either the municipality or the Government should run such places as required at its own expense. If such a restaurant does not find enough customers it could be closed down. But not a single Hindu restaurant should be allowed to function which does not permit the entry of Harijans.

Now a few words to the Harijans. Just as Congressmen and sanatanist Hindus have to practise their dharma, so have the Harijans. These men and women have to see to it that they do not lose the game which is almost theirs. I have before me letters written by some proven Harijan workers. In these they have mentioned that at some places either in order to show their enthusiasm or to show their gratitude towards the Government, or for some other reason, Harijans, in large numbers, had surrounded restaurants and attempted to enter them. They were not even properly dressed. Those who do so render no service to Harijans but rather do them harm. They misuse laws laid down by the Government. Some rights are such that they cannot be utilized fully as soon as they are given. Some time must elapse before they are fully enjoyed and we should patiently put up with it. This right to enter restaurants is of this nature. Not a single Harijan must visit them to assert a right. Any Harijan who is really hungry and is passing by a restaurant, who has the money and is clad in clean clothes, should certainly go to the restaurant. He should suffer any insult which he encounters while doing so, he should inform the Harijan Sevak Sangh of this without taking any offence and the latter will certainly take steps to ensure that he is not insulted again. And, finally, if steps outside of the law prove to be futile, he will resort to legal help. The statement made by Shri Muldas in this connection is very useful. Harijan men and women will see it published in the current issue and I hope that they will put it into practice.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 7-8-1938

451. LETTER TO DIRECTOR, THE TIMES OF INDIA, BOMBAY

SEGAON,
August 7, 1938

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your letter of 28th ultimo and a copy of *The Story of the World in Pictures*.

I do not consider myself in any way qualified to pronounce an opinion on ventures like yours. I would therefore ask you to excuse me for my inability to comply with your request.

Yours faithfully,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

452. LETTER TO PERINBEHN CAPTAIN

SEGAON,
August 7, 1938

DEAR SISTER,

Your letter was welcome. If you knew of my relations with Parsi women, you would not feel the distrust that you do. I cannot even dream of having ill will for Nariman.[1] I was responsible for bringing him in to the Working Committee. But my conscience still tells me that whatever happened as a result of the inquiry conducted to probe into the mistakes committed by him was perfectly right.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11562

[1] K. F. Nariman had accused Sardar Patel of using his influence to get B. G. Kher elected as the leader of the Congress Party in the Bombay Legislative Assembly in March, 1937. The matter was referred to a tribunal consisting of Gandhiji and Bahadurji. Their judgment went in favour of Sardar Patel. Nariman and his followers then accused Gandhiji of favouritism.

453. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

August 7, 1938

CHI. VALJI,

I have kept back both your articles. The one about Shankaracharya seems unnecessary. The argument does not sound convincing. The other about the *Manusmriti* is rather imaginative. It makes pleasant reading but it does not help much in understanding the meaning of the *Smritis.* What would you suggest?

How is Dudhibehn? How is the children's education going on? How is their health? And yours? Here Kaka and a few others have had cholera. Two workers have passed away.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7480. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

454. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 7, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I was told that Vijaya's letter was sent to you yesterday. Even though the doctor has given permission, let Kaka start eating gradually. Do not give him plum-water. Its effect is not good. Nothing can equal *mosambi* juice. Let him take semi-liquid porridge of sago, and that also only if he feels hungry. He may take a mixture of five *tolas* milk, five *tolas* water and one spoonful of sago. It is advisable to go slow. I hear that Dharmadhikari had been sent for. In any case he had been given permission. If that is so, I must apologize to him.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 10754

[1] *Vide* the following item.

455. LETTER TO NANA DHARMADHIKARI

August 7, 1938

BHAI NANA,

I thought that you had left without permission and that is why I was angry. I see now that you had been called away. No doubt I thus did you an injustice, though unintentionally. I make amends for it now by acknowledging my mistake through this letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 4754

456. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON,
August 7, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. I do not like your being ill. I should like Jayaprakash to come here after his work in Malabar is over. In the beginning of October I shall have to go to the Frontier Province. Here Kaka, Nana and some other workers have had cholera. Two very fine young workers have succumbed. Kaka barely survived. Cholera is raging all around. It is raging in Segaon, too. Sushila has been working hard. Manu is here. Navin and Dhiru also are here. I am arranging to send *Harijanbandhu* and *Harijan*.

Mirabehn, Ba and the rest are well. I am also keeping well. I take milk and eat *khakhra*, vegetables and fruit.

Rajkumari is coming on the 9th. She is in Poona. Kanti is in Bangalore. I am observing voluntary silence and it is going on. I speak only when necessary.

Rajendra Babu is going to the south in two or three days to see a sadhu, a *maharshi*.[1] You know him by name because you were to go to his ashram while returning from Travancore. His name is Ramana Maharshi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3519

[1] Rajendra Prasad visited Sri Ramana Maharshi's Asramam from August 14 to August 18. He then requested the Maharshi for a message for Gandhiji The Maharshi said: "*Adhyatma shakti* is working within him and leading him on. That is enough, what more is necessary?" (*Talks*, under 18-8-1938)

457. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

August 7, 1938

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I got your letter. I was much relieved. I am sending milk from here. Sushila, Pyarelal and I think that it would be better if you refrained from taking milk today. Fruit and lime juice will be enough. Do not worry about the weakness, but there should be no injury to the piles. For their quick shrinking it is better to avoid food.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10582

458. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

August 7, 1938

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I think that the women alone will not be able to cope with the vegetables. Two of them are guests. And the sick Ba should be left out of account. Mirabehn also is not there. You should, therefore, put the responsibility on a man. For the present let it be Navin. He shoud carry on with whatever help he may get from the women.

A bucket for everybody is too much. Everybody must have a *lota* of course. A lantern for everybody is also a luxury. We should always think of what the poor do and try as far as possible to live as they do.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8571. Also C. W. 7069. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

459. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

August 7, 1938

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

I shall want the motor-car tomorrow, Monday, at 12 o'clock, if it is not raining. Balkrishna is to be taken to Nagpur.

It was my fault that the car was kept here the whole day yesterday. I was sorry Kishorelal did not turn up yesterday. My heart cried and memory failed. What am I to do?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9123

460. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 7, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

If you cannot find Jayantiprasad's address there, please return the letter here. It is all right that you did not come. The story about . . .[1] has got a wide publicity from there. How did it happen? Please make an inquiry. From what Santok writes, what has happened is serious. This refusal has shocked me a good deal indeed. Such incidents test me fairly severely. 'In a man brooding on objects of the senses attachment to them springs up.'[2] I am cancelling the note about Sarvat. I do not wish to give him publicity in that way. I am returning the rest to you, believing that you will prefer to get it typed by Babla. If that is not so, return it early in the morning so that I may get it typed here.

There has been one more case of cholera here. Sushila, Kanu and Soptekar were therefore busy in the village from 6.30 to 11.30 in the morning. Eighty persons were inoculated. The man was on death-bed. May be he will survive.

For today I am sending milk for Chimanlal from here. Most probably I will do that every day.

There are many letters to be posted. Check the addresses on them. There is no need to despatch them urgently. Sushila and Balkrishna will leave tomorrow by the 1 o'clock train. I have already written to Radhakrishna Bajaj about the car. However, please inquire about it. If it is raining, then of course we will not let them go. Kishorelal has come. He does have some fever. Yesterday he had an attack of asthma too.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] The omission as in the source
[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 62

[PS.]

I do not have the courage to write about Manahar. If you have and if you wish to ask, you may. I am afraid there will be a negative reply from that quarter also.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11621.

461. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

August 7, 1938

Dharma says that you should not accept any money from your uncle. Whatever book I may sanction may be purchased with the public funds.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4299

462. TELEGRAM TO S. K. PATIL

August 8, 1938

S. K. PATIL
BOMBAY

WITH REFERENCE YOUR LETTER SORRY HAVING CAUSED WORRY CONFUSION PLEASE IGNORE ADVICE CONTAINED MY AND DO TELEGRAM WHATEVER YOU THINK BEST IN CONGRESS INTEREST.[1]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

463. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 8, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

It will be better to keep Kaka hungry rather than overfeed him. Do consult the doctor, though of course not about food—that you may ask me.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10755

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter regarding the suspension of the Joint Honorary Secretaries of the Girgaon District Congress Committee.

464. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

August 8, 1938

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I hope you are better. Go slow about food.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10583

465. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 8, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I would ask you to stop fasting on Mondays and Thursdays so long as you do not get over your weakness. If I am entitled to command you, this is my command, Your weakness is unbearable to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

466. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 8, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I could not wholly understand your letter. What have I or Sushila done to aggravate your uneasiness? I never at all interfere with your discipline. I am trying to root out the very desire to do so.

I am sure that you will not disregard my letter.

In what way are you in darkness? I really do not understand. Why do you not leave everying to God? But everyone does not worship Him in the same way. Your way of worshipping may be appropriate for you. I am trying to understand in what way it is so.

My orders are not unnatural. They certainly cannot be so in your case. That is why I wrote that I was commanding you only if I

was entitled to command you. It meant that the command should easily go down with you. It should have immediately occurred to you that what Bapu said was justified. Since that has not happened, take it that my order is withdrawn. I do not want to force it on you if it makes you unhappy. I only want to do what will bring you peace.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

467. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 9, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending whatever is ready. Hope you are well. Do not be too eager to come.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11643

468. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 9, 1938

CHI. MANILAL,

I got your letter. The practicability of Mr. Kallenbach's suggestion will depend on my ability to send teachers from here. But that is nil. It is difficult to get teachers who would satisfy me. Even if I come across such a teacher, he would have to be paid a salary which we cannot afford. Thus whatever arrangement you think of making will have to be made locally. My opinion, therefore, is that the plan of a school will not work.

So I have to think only about *I. O.*[1] If the people there give a clear guarantee to make good the loss, not oral but such as will satisfy the bankers, then it is your duty to keep it going.

If Rustomjee Trust offers some help, there is no harm in accepting it. But I would like only direct help from the people.

[1] Indian Opinion

If the *I. O.* can be kept going, Sushila must return there. I think that essential for helping you as also for her and your peace of mind. Sushila's presence by your side will by itself be a source of comfort, such as you cannot have from anything else.

I feel that if Sushila goes there, Arun should accompany her and Sita should stay here. Both of you should learn to bear such separation. I am considering here only the welfare of the children.

In case Sushila goes there, you should treat Phoenix as your home and stay there. You should overcome your desire of coming over here too often. It is, of course, a different thing if you get an unsought opportunity of coming.

You should overcome the desire to see your elders. If separation from one's people is one's dharma, one must cheerfully abide by that dharma.

Today this is enough. The other news Sushila may give if she wishes and knows how to.

If Ramdas can be tempted to stay there, then there is nothing better than that. In that case the children of both of you should also be trained to look after the work there.

About Hanna also, whatever Sushila may write.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4878

469. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

August 9, 1938

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I read your letter to Sharda. Do not take all the freedom about food that the doctors may give. Eat only as much as the body demands. If you do that you will be able to return early and there will be no complication.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10584

470. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 10, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

How wholly confidential? But you did right. Herewith is a telegram for Ramachandran. Sell the eggs to Bharatan and Nayakum. If they do not want them, send them to the hospital.

I went and saw Nana last night. While on the way, I got a note from him and so went on foot with Sushila. His condition at the time was good. The present report is not bad. From there I returned in the car.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11622

471. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 10, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

There is no change in Pyarelal's condition. At the moment there seems to be no danger. Kaka will regain strength slowly. Do not be impatient.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Kaur and Krishna, Jamnalal and Ramana Maharshi, Ba.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10763

472. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

August 10, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I got your letter and *rakhi*. I am writing this letter with the *rakhi* tied round the wrist. Congratulations on the improvement in your health. Kaka and Nana are fairly well. The danger seems to have

passed. I am doing well. The diet is practically the same. Girdhari and his wife (recently married) have come here for today.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Rajkumari arrived on Tuesday.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7094. Also C. W. 4586. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

473. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

August 10, 1938

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

You are right in taking less milk. I have nothing else to say.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10585

474. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 10, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

What tyranny is this! My claim as father and mother to you two, brother and sister, is absolutely nullified. Why did you go there? Why should you interfere if Sushila has patients on hand? But you were bent on going and you said that Sushila was free not to go if she did not want to.

So leaving the patients at God's mercy and yours, I have sent her to the hospital crying. Now explain to her her duty and pacify her if you can. Come back soon. It should not be necessary for me to go there.

Girdhari and Draupadi are sitting right in front of me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

475. LETTER TO UMABAI L. ATHAVALE

SEGAON,
August 11, 1938

DEAR SISTER,

I hope you are not brooding over Nana's[1] death. I am impressed by your courage. After seeing you, I am able to understand Nana's spirit of sacrifice and self-control better. Nana's body has perished, but his spirit will remain in the Mahila Ashram and will be a source of inspiration to the sisters.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuki Virat Vatsalata, p. 75

476. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 11, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Post tthe accompanying to Jairamdas at Hyderabad. Send the following telegram today, if possible:

"Jairamdas
Prem Bhavan
H'bad. (Deccan)
Girdharijidas had reported your health. You must leave Sindh. G. D. will suggest Nainital. Love.
Bapu."[2]

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11623

[1] Narhar L. Athavale, her son
[2] This is in English.

477. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

August 11, 1938

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

If Premji is well enough he should be ready to leave today. I shall write to Jhaverbhai about the piles, he will arrange about the operation.

Consult Munnalal about Bankelal, I have already done so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1908

478. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 12, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter. You should not be impatient. I am trying to help you according to my lights. I hope you will not spoil things by your impatience. Do not give up your faith in Ramachandran and others. If you slight him, my efforts will be wasted. I have had a letter from Saraswati about her having got dysentery and I have therefore wired to Ramachandran. I am not at all negligent in this matter.

What a silly thing to say? Why you didn't get cholera ! If you accept my diagnosis you will make rapid progress. Nana Athavale passed away yesterday.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7346. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

479. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 12, 1938

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You may certainly call a meeting of the A. I. C. C. in Bombay if you wish. Delhi will not suit. If you think my presence will be

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Umabai L. Athavale", 11-8-1938

necessary, call the meeting in Bombay. The best place, of course, will be Wardha. If you agree, consult Jamnalal by wire. From the point of view of facilities Bombay will probably be better. You need not consult my convenience. It will be better if the notice of the meeting is issued early. Do what you think best. On second thoughts, I am inclined in favour of Bombay. Allahabad also may be considered. We never hold meetings there. But this is only a suggestion for your consideration.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 223

480. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 12, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

At the moment I am unable to talk. If I try I am likely to burst into loud wailing. I cannot reason with you. You have thrown a new light on things today. No vows, no religion—since I know no satisfaction outside these, how can I understand?

Still, I shall talk with you when I am in a position to do so. In the mean time you may take the liquids that you like. If the stomach is still heavy with what you took in the afternoon, what can you drink? I have now given up insisting on anything. Do whatever brings you satisfaction. I had thought you were under my protection. But where do I have the purity for it? You are under the protection of God. Let His will be done.

Am I also not under His protection? I shall be guided by Him. Right now, the doors to light are closed. The light of love will shine when the time for it comes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

481. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 12, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

It is not right that you do not take liquids. What I am doing is not because I am angry with you. If I am angry, it is only with myself. I am not sorry that you are not taking glucose. Now I am thinking about my own duty. If you are inclined to help me, be calm and regain your health by taking whatever you want to while keeping within limits. I do not wish to force you to eat or drink anything against your will. I had only come to persuade you. During that visit I got a certain impression. How can I ignore it? It prevents me from holding you guilty. Could it be that it is I who am under the influence of evil stars? Or, if what I am doing is right, why bewail it? Hence I would urge you to take the necessary treatment. It is not at all right that just because I am not able to eat at present you also should not eat.

Blessings, from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

482. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 12, 1938

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Go through this and give me your opinion. I do not wish to use the money received from you on such matters without your approval. And it might not even be possible to divert such a large amount considering the expenditures I am incurring these days. Anyway, I want your free opinion about it. Dr. Shaukat has nothing at present. Begum Ansari owns some rural property over which Dr. Ansari's brother has staked a claim. Nobody wants to help Harold except Shaukat and Dr. Ansari's daughter Zohra. Ansari of course was

always giving him money. I am not very clear what it would be best to do. You should write to me unreservedly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C. W. 7994. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

483. LETTER TO SARASWATI

SEGAON,

August 12, 1938

CHI. SURU,

You are nothing but crazy. What a letter you write ! You are calm one day and agitated for the next several days. If you continue thus it will ruin your life as well as Kanti's. Everything can be accomplished by patience only. If you give up patience you will ruin everything. So, if you will but listen to me, you will compose yourself and get well. How can even I be of any help to you in your agitated state? I do want you to see Kanti soon but not by straying from the path of dharma, not by straying from propriety. Now, what would you like to do? Get well quickly. Get rid of the dysentery. Your letter this time has caused me considerable pain.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6171. Also C. W. 3445. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

484. IS VIOLENCE CREEPING IN?

Mahadev has passed on to me information containing complaints about violence being done by Congressmen. One complaint is that, in the name of peaceful picketing, picketers are resorting to methods bordering on violence, such as making a living wall beyond which no one can pass without being hurt or hurting those who make the wall. As the author of peaceful picketing I cannot recall a single instance in which I had encouraged such picketing. A friend has quoted Dharasana against me. I had suggested the occupation of salt works. But that is wholly inapplicable to the case under consideration. In Dharasana the objective was the salt works of which possession had to be taken and maintained as against the Government. The action could hardly be called picketing. But to prevent workers from going

to their work by standing in front of them is pure violence and must be given up. The owners of mills or other factories would be fully justified in invoking the assistance of the police and a Congress Government would be bound to provide it if the Congressmen concerned would not desist.

Another instance brought to my notice is that of a body of Congressmen having taken possession of the offices of a Congress Committee recognized by the Provincial Congress Committee. This is surely unpardonable unruliness.

The third instance is that of breaking up meetings by shouting and otherwise creating disturbances.

The fourth is that of reviling capitalists as a class and inciting people to loot them.

All these are clear instances of violence and indiscipline. I am told that such unruliness is on the increase. I have before me a letter which bitterly complains that whereas capitalists used to get justice during the old regime, now under the Congress regime they not only get no justice but are even insulted and humiliated.

There can be no doubt that the British system favours capitalism. The Congress, which aims at securing full justice for the famishing millions, cannot favour capitalism. But the Congress, so long as it retains non-violence as its basic policy, cannot resort to usurpation, much less allow any class of persons to be insulted or humiliated in any way whatsoever or allow any Congressman or a body of Congressmen to take the law into their own hands.

Nor can the Congress tolerate violent picketing or speeches inciting to violence.

If violence is not checked in time, the Congress will go to pieces purely from internal decay. It is up to the heads of provincial and subordinate committees to root out the evil without the least delay. If on the other hand Congressmen in general are tired of non-violence, the sooner the first article of the constitution is revised the better it will be for all concerned and the country. Let it not be said of the great organization that it used truth and non-violence as a cloak to cover untruth and violence.

Harijan, 13-8-1938

485. TWISTING OR INTERPRETING?[1]

A friend writes a long letter with reference to my article on 'Speakers and Politics'.[2] What is discussed in the letter can be put thus in the form of a question:

> When you say that the language of the Government of India Act should be stretched to the farthest limit, so as to give the greatest strength to the movement for Independence, do you imply that the Speaker should, or can, knowingly twist any section of the Act so as to give it the desired meaning?

I should be surprised if such an implication could be extracted from my article. It will amount to encouraging untruth. A Speaker who knowingly gives an interpretation contrary to the plain meaning of a text, renders himself unfit for the high office and discredits the Congress cause. He must, at all cost, preserve the Congress credit for honesty and integrity. What, however, I have meant is that where a section is manifestly capable of two meanings or more, he is bound to give that which favours the national cause. And when a section bears only one meaning which is manifestly restrictive of the people's liberty, he must unhesitatingly give that meaning. I have no doubt that such impartiality on the part of a Speaker will enhance his reputation and to the extent increase the moral prestige of the Congress. Having discarded violence, the strength of the Congress depends wholly upon the moral fibre and fearlessness of individual Congressmen.

Harijan, 13-8-1938

486. LETTER TO SHAUKATULLA SHAH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 13, 1938

MY DEAR SHAUKAT,

Here is another instalment from Miss Harrison. I have got no news from Bhopal. I do not know what should be done now. I am trying. But that takes time. Is anything possible about the village?

[1] This was published under "Notes".
[2] *Vide* "Speakers and Politics"

Even if I get something, I do not know that I can get £ 900 for which the guarantee is required.

How is Zohra doing?

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

At the time of replying please return the enclosures.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

487. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 13, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending these letters. Agatha's letter which should have gone with Ghanshyamdas's has been left out. I am now getting a copy made. Pyarelal has 100.6∞ temperature and feels quite weak. We can do nothing but wait and see what happens. You may come at your usual time. Treatment is going on.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Get a copy of Perinbehn's letter made there and bring it along.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11624

488. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

August 13, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

Once you are on your feet, we shall discuss about the change in your diet. I may say even now that your argument is not correct. If Amritlal shares everybody's food, he will not remain fit for your service. But we shall argue about it later on.

I will have a talk with Amritlal about ghee. Pyarelal's fever has gone up to 104.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 10905

489. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 13, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Hope Kaka passed the night comfortably. Here Pyarelal is laid up with typhoid.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10757

490. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 14, 1938

BHAI JIVANJI,

What kind of an article do you expect from me? Should you not leave me out of it? You should give me a reward if I can carry out even your other assignments.

I understand about the *Autobiography*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9946. Also C. W. 6921. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

491. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 14, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I saw your post just now. If worrying about me gives you peace of mind, by all means do so. This incident itself is such as will not allow me any peace of mind. I get a good deal of it, of course, through silence. I can see how shallow my non-attachment is. As for Pyarelal, after doing the best we can about his treatment, why need I worry about him?

I will go through your thing. Pyarelal has started with 101.2. He keeps cheerful. He had good sleep. He is still sleeping. Outwardly at

any rate he remains peaceful. He does not resist me in anything. Let us see what happens.

Send a wire to Mridu as under:

"Can come between seventeenth nineteenth. Hope Madan better. Love to all. Bapu."

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11625

492. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 14, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

The ghee is the same that we had. Ba says that if you heat it again, it will be all right.

We need not worry about Kaka getting loose motions. He will improve only gradually. Pyarelal seems better. At the moment of writing, i. e., at 8.45, the mercury shows 103.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Has not the loom been installed yet?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 10758

493. DISCUSSION WITH HENGCHIH TAO[1]

[Before *August 15, 1938*][2]

GANDHIJI: I am exceedingly sorry to receive you when I am in distress. I may not break my silence even to speak to you. But of course you will say whatever you want to. You may speak, I may not.

Prof. Tao explained that he was a member of the People's Council of Action of all China. This was a body of 140 or 150 drawn from all parties in China, under which the whole of China was united to meet Japanese aggression . . . . All parties. . . were

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Notes". Since Gandhiji was observing silence his part of the discussion was conducted in writing.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 15-8-1938, from which it would appear that Gandhiji had met Tao before that date.

united in fighting the common danger, under one supreme military command of Chiang Kai-shek. . . . Tao was happy that a Medical Mission from India was sailing to China as a token of India's sympathy, and he asked Gandhiji if he had any suggestions to offer in order to fight the war to a successful conclusion.

G. I do not know that I can throw any light on the problem at the present moment. My method is so radical that it is wholly inapplicable to your struggle. You cannot all of a sudden change the course of the struggle. A nation in arms cannot all at once give up arms and accept non-violence as its weapon.

Prof. Tao saw the difficulty and explained that the Chinese had not even time to think, the aggression was so sudden and so unprovoked. But he would like to discuss problems of national reconstructions. He had given up University work in order to take up peasants' education and he was deeply interested in the Wardha Education Scheme. "What exactly is the core of the Scheme?" he asked.

G. The central fact is some village craft through which the whole of the man or the woman in the child can be drawn out.

"But there was the difficulty of teachers," said Prof. Tao, and Gandhiji laughed. "We had the same difficulty. Would you have trained teachers to learn a craft or craftsmen to learn the art of teaching?" asked Prof. Tao.

G. The average educated man can be expected easily to master a craft. Our craftsmen will require much longer time to acquire the necessary general instruction than an educated man, say like you, can require to learn say, carpentry.

"But," said Prof. Tao, "our educated man is after fat jobs and money. How can he be interested in this?"

G. If the scheme is sound and appeals to the educated mind, it must prove attractive in itself and thus wean the educated youth from the lure of gold. It must fail, if it does not evoke sufficient patriotism from the educated youth. There is one advantage with us. Those who have received instruction through the Indian languages cannot enter colleges. It is just possible that they will find the scheme attractive.

Prof. Tao was deeply interested in our present political struggle. How were we going to acquire power at the centre?

G. If we are true to our salt in the seven provinces, the accession of strength that will come to us will put us on the way to power at the centre.

T. But the power is being felt everywhere, and the Congress prestige has risen. Has it not?

G. The Congress prestige has risen. The people have become conscious of their power and strength. The Government also recognize this. My fear is that this power may throw us off our balance.

Prof. Tao reverted to the question of mass education. He made an attempt to describe the Chinese system of "relay" teachers whereby each man or woman who had learnt something had to pass it on to the next one he or she came across. Even the child, the "little" teacher, had to share his or her learning with his illiterate parents, and the Chinese through this system were liquidating illiteracy and ignorance on a mass scale.

G. I have no doubt that it can. I would like you to write for me a short note on how the "relay" teachers and the "little" teachers are taught, how they teach and with what result.

Prof. Tao said he would gladly comply.

Prof. Tao would not go without a message from Gandhiji for the people of China. He explained that even a non-violent message would be welcome . . . . They were engaged in a war of self-defence, but in other respects they were observing non-violence . . . . On May 20 Chinese planes had flown over Japanese towns, and they might easily have spread death and destruction among the people of Japan in retaliation for the bombing of so many Chinese ports by Japan. But instead of raining bombs they rained handbills and leaflets showing the wrong of the war . . . .

G. But the self-inflicted restraint won't last when the real stress comes. The temptation will be irresistible. I shall not be surprised. It is inevitable. There is no love in war. We have got to come to the conclusion that either there is to be complete non-violence or undiluted violence. Is not this enough message?

Prof. Tao wondered if some day the Chinese might expect to have Gandhiji in their midst.

G. I almost came to your country when those who had invited me had to stop me from going owing to the disturbances that had taken place. I do want to see peace reigning in your land during my lifetime. Nothing will please me better than to visit your great country some day.

Harijan, 27-8-1938

494. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHAGANJ,
August 15, 1938

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
74 WALKESHWAR ROAD
BOMBAY HIGH

YOUR "ARGUMENT" SOUND. MISGIVINGS JUSTIFIED BUT INCLUSION SEEMS INEVITABLE.

BAPU

From the original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

495. LETTER TO C. P. RAMASWAMI IYER

[*August 15, 1938*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

In order better to guide R. and through him the State Congress and if at all possible to avoid friction between the State and the people, I am sending Shri Rajkumari Amrit Kaur to study the situation and to offer friendly assistance. She expects to leave here tomorrow and to proceed to Trivandrum after a day's stay in Madras. The Rajkumari will not address public meetings or do any public propaganda. I hope you will make full use of her services.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C. W. 4217. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7853

496. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 15, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Pyarelal's fever has risen to 104. It is futile to hope for it to come down soon. But one good sign is that, though today is Monday, he took *mosambi* and lime juice. He appears cheerful. Sushila devotes all her time to nursing him. Pyarelal would not accept service from

[1] In the text Gandhiji says about Amrit Kaur: "She expects to leave here tomorrow." Amrit Kaur left on August 16.

anybody except her. There is also the cholera work for her in the village. May God protect both !

I am sending one article. I have now finished another, on Burma.[1] The fingers refuse to work any longer now.

You yourself may write to Sarup. Send her what you can. Send a wire to Mathuradas as follows:

"Your arrangement sound. Misgivings justified but inclusion seems inevitable. Bapu."[2]

Bring the Australian friend. Since I gave so much time to Tao, why not to this gentleman?

The Burma article cannot be sent before tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11626

497. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 15, 1938

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You did very well in going to Rajkot. So long as your star is in the ascendent, such occasions are bound to arise. Chudgar[3] is following a wrong path. Let him do what he likes. If the subjects of the State have some salt in them, they would not try to fly in the air but fight on peacefully without looking for outside help. If they do so they cannot but win. And if the Congress does not abandon principles, it will become strong even in the States.

You were bound to fall ill. You are a sardar[4] of others, but seem to be a slave of yourself. A true sardar is one who commands himself. If you regulate your time and draw up rules for doing all your work, you will live long. Do not dismiss this suggestion, saying, 'Here is a pan laughing at a pot.' Mahadev also is paying for his carelessness.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 223-4

[1] *Vide* "Recent Riots in Burma", 20-8-1938

[2] This is in English.

[3] Popatlal Lavjibhai Chudgar, a barrister of Saurashtra

[4] Leader

498. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 15, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Why should I feel bad if you enquired about my blood-pressure? But what reply could I give? what is the way when anxiety is eating me? I continue my efforts. But what about my responsibility for whatever is happening? My constant thought is only that you should soon be well and leave your bed. Did I not write to you that illness would be unbearable to me? But I did not know how unbearable it would be. What can I do?

Blessings from

BAPU

[P.S.]

There is no need to reply to this. It will be sufficient if you have peace.

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

499. LETTER TO TARADEVI NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 15, 1938

DEAR SISTER,

What can I write? You will know everything from Sushila's letter. Pyarelal gets whatever service he needs. I have become quite useless. Pyarelal's illness is a test for me. It is a difficult test. I am sure Pyarelal will live. If not, I shall be responsible for his death.

Do come over if you want. Do not worry.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

500. NOTE TO PYARELAL

[After *August* 15, 1938][1]

PYARELAL,

It can take a little more jaggery. The skin should be cooked a little longer. The seeds should be cooked too. The seeds are not eaten. But their property is different. You can eat them if you like the taste.[2] How long did it take to cook in jaggery? I did tell you about cutting them, did I not? You can eat anything else you wish.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

501. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

[On or before *August 16, 1938*][3]

There are two things, I want you to do:

(1) To go to Travancore to set the quarrel right;

(2) To visit Kathiawar for the birthday celebrations which begin on 23rd September.

You can well tackle both. But if you don't feel like going, you shall not.

From the original: C. W. 4219. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7855

502. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 16, 1938

CHI AMRITLAL,

I hope Kaka is able to walk about a little. Pyarelal is better.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10759

[1] The note is written on the reverse side of a letter dated August 15, 1938.

[2] This sentence is in Gujarati.

[3] In the source the addressee has dated the note "Segaon, August 1938". She was in Segaon till August 16.

503. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

August 16, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I got your letter. Are you now planning to go to Ahmedabad and improve your health there? What more will you have there? It is a different thing, of course, if you wish to consult a doctor. But let that be. My only desire is that wherever you go you should get well. What a fine body you had and now it is so shattered. Hereafter write to meat Delhi. Address the letters: Harijan Nivas, Kingsway, Delhi. I shall be there for eight days at least. Ba will accompany me. Amritlal came here the day before yesterday. Nanabhai had also come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7095. Also C. W. 4587. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi.

504. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

August 16, 1938

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Send the milk early. Rajkumari is going to Travancore today. Pyarelal may be said to be better. But the fever is still there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10587.

505. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 16, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I would certainly feel happy if you allowed someone or other to sit with you by turns. As it is I find it difficult to take even a minute of Sushila's time. If while she nursed you, you had someone by your side it would not be so difficult. But what pleases you will please me. I

am letting you know what has been agitating me these last two days. Give your reply to Sushila.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

506. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHAGANJ,
August 17, 1938

RAJKUMARI
CARE AMMU SWAMINATHAN

MADRAS, CHETPUT

PYARELAL NOT BAD. I HAVE GAINED ONE POUND. HOPE YOU WELL.

LOVE

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3875. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7031

507. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
August 17, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

It was difficult to part with you in the state you were.

At the time of writing Pyarelal is not quite what he was yesterday. He had a restless night. But deep down in me there is the faith that he will pull through.

Shuaib Qureshi came the same time you went, by the same train.

You left your glasses and some papers which I enclose here with. Unless I hear from you to the contrary, I am keeping the glasses with me.

I hope you will keep well there. Do not overstrain yourself. Have no anxiety about the mission.

I am well. The diet and silence continue. the silence gives me the peace I need. More food I cannot do justice to at present.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3874. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7030

508. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

August 17, 1938

BHAI MUNSHI,

In your difficulties Girish's[1] fever is a great calamity indeed. It is difficult to understand so many relapses. As an antidote, I am sending the whole *bhajan* from which I had sent one line to Lilavati. To me that *bhajan* has given great comfort.

My opinion about the 'Rifle Club' is this: seek the opinion of the Working Committee about this matter. I think we cannot refuse the request outright. Licences may be given to all those who submit to rules and regulations. The Congress Government will not bear the expenses. Its policy will remain non-violent.

I will be ready to write in *Harijan*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7640. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

509. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 17, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I take it that you are daily writing to Bal. I was careless about writing to him regularly. Tell Kaka not to start thinking about the future from now. We shall think about everything after he has completely recovered.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Pyarelal is not quite well today. However, there is no cause for worry.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10760

[1] Addressee's son

510. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

August 17, 1938

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have learnt everything about the operation from Sushila. After the remaining complaint is completely cured, there should be no difficulty in building up the body. I hope you get milk regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Pyarelal is not quite well today. There is no cause for worry, though.

Tell Shankaran that I got his note. He wants a change. Ask him about his food, etc. Ask him to write to me again.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10588

511. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 17, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

There seems to be something. the matter with my health today. I could not even sleep at night. Could yesterday's conversation be the reason for it? I did not wish to express my opinion. But since you insisted I wrote it to you. Right now I have only one wish: not to entertain any thought, utter any word, write any sentence, that may hurt you. I am only counting days for you to recover fully. I hope for your part you will make full efforts. If you resolve to get well, you will certainly succeed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

512. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 18, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

It was really good news about Kaka. I hope the progress will continue. Pyarelal's ship is in mid-sea. The temperature is lower than in your case. It had risen up to 105 yesterday. One reason may be that he has a strong constitution.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

There is no letter from Vijaya. I have written to her.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10761

513. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

SEGAON,
August 18, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

You are quite lazy in writing letters. That will not do. Have you not promised to write every third day ? One must keep one's promise even unto death.

Pyarelal's typhoid still persists. In Segaon the cholera is raging. We can do nothing but wait and see. I am observing complete silence these days. That is the only way in which I can preserve my peace of mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7096. Also C.W. 4588. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

514. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

August 18, 1938

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I am glad the operation is sucessfully over. I understood about Shankaran. How long will you have to remain there ? Pyarelal's fever will go only when it has run its course.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10589

515. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

August 18, 1938

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Today if the rain stops, otherwise tomorrow under any circumstances. You yourself should go to see Gajanan . . .[1] having fallen ill. . . If he does not feel comfortable there, he may stay at the Harijan Ashram. Let him not . . . endanger his health . . . Ask him and find out if he wants anything. A co-worker of his has got cholera. Who is he? Where does he come from ?

Here all . . . carefully . . .

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8570

516. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*About August 18, 1938*][2]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have been thinking about Khare. Do give up the idea of writing the article. About Pyarelal, I will let God guide me.

[1] The letter is illegible at many places.

[2] About this day Pyarelal's condition was critical. In "Letter to Amritlal T. Nanavati", p. 259, Gandhiji wrote, "Pyarelal's ship is in mid-sea."

Herewith is a bottle containing Balkrishna's[1] sputum. If the bottle can be returned, he wants it back. We shall pay no attention to his fever just now. Let them send any medicine they think proper.

You need not worry about me. I have been forewarned. So there will be no trouble. Ultimately God's will must prevail. Read the letter addresssed to Shanta and give it to her.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

If Shantikumar can pay the money, let him do so. Let him not do so against his will at all.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11536

517. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 19, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I understand what you write about Maharashtra. We should stay where God ordains. How can we make any distinction between Maharashtra and Gujarat? However, you will not come to Segaon in an unnatural way. You will see your path clear before you if it becomes necessary for you to come.

Just now there is no need for you to come. There is enough work for you there. You have to attend to a hundred things there. What would you do here? What part would you play in the quarrels here? What service can you render to Pyarelal? What service can he ask of you? He does not accept much service from anyone except Sushila. He lets the others take turns by his side and shift the cot. But it is Sushila who does the real nursing. They are a wonderful pair, the brother and sister. I have not seen their like anywhere.

I understand about Lilavati. Her good lies there. Suffer her, therefore, and train her.

Tell Radhakishan that neither he nor anyone else need make any preparations about Sunday. As we refrain from opposing them,

[1] Balkrishna Bhave was suffering from tuberculosis at this time.

they will calm down.[1] It would be better if the Inspector-General of Police also does not come. What will he do even if he comes?

Shuaib will pass the night there, as it might rain in the morning. His luggage has gone to the station. If you need anything send for it. I have thought it better to lodge Shuaib with you. That is the only correct course for us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11627

518. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

August [*19*][2], *1938*

CHI. MANILAL,

I have only sent you my opinion[3] . If you get 200 subscribers who would pay £25 each or 100 who would pay £50 each, and if you get an assurance regarding the *I. O*. expenses and do not have to go about for collections, you ought to stay on there. You should increase your efficiency. If you become steady there, Sushila and Arun may go there and Sita may stay here. She seems to be progressing very well in her study at Akola. If Sushila goes there, you will of course get help and also peace of mind. I do feel that, when Sushila is living near me, I am observing silence and so cannot train her or get her trained as I should like to do. Moreover, as I take my meals by myself, I cannot watch what she and Arun eat. If I were in better shape, Sushila's swollen body and Arun's weak one also would certainly have improved. But what can we do? She can receive from me only as much as her fate permits. She can be said to have been freed from my clutches. It is no easy thing to get caught in my clutches. Well, God's will prevails in all things.

Just now Pyarelal is confined to bed. There have been three bad deaths. Now Pyarelal is in mid-sea. He is being nursed carefully, of course. I hope he will survive.

[1] The reference is to the Harijan satyagrahis who wanted a Harijan to be included in the C.P. Ministry; *vide* "Discussion with Harijan Satyagrahis", 27-8-1938 and "Letter to Mahadev Desai", After 27-8-1938.

[2] The date in the source reads "29", though perhaps Gandhiji intended to write "19".

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Manilal Gandhi", 9-8-1938

What you write about Ramdas is correct.

I have already told you that no school can be run in Phoenix.

Hanna must be an old face there now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4880

519. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

August 19, 1938

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Relieve Salekar so that he can go to fetch the medicine. Entrust his work to Rajbhushan. If there is any difficulty about this, let me know.

BAPU

[PS.]

Gunvant should not take it. Let him discuss with me. I did not read one of the letters. The telegram in reply to this is given just now so that it can be sent early tomorrow. You need not put yourself to inconvenience to come here in the morning. If you can come conveniently, you may. Perhaps that may be enough. This was one . . .[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8569. Also C.W. 7034. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

520. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 19, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

The mistake regarding plums should not be repeated. Nana Dharmadhikari should go only after the work for which he had come is over. He need not stay on because of Kaka. If the latter wants him, however, by all means let him stay. In fact what I said was just off hand, so there was no question of your being guided by it.

I will tie the *rakhi*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10762

[1] Omission as in the source

521. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

[*After August 19, 1938*][1]

CHI. NANAVATI,

Send detailed report about Kakasaheb. If there is a letter from Vijaya send that too. Ba has become more impatient than I. I had already told Mahadev that the Punjab tour was cancelled because of my illness. If the message has not been conveyed, please do it. If necessary send a wire tomorrow or write a letter. If Dharmadhikari has not returned admonish him and send him off. A public worker cannot leave his duty to visit his dear ones. He should know that there will be enough men to look after Kakasaheb.[2]

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10753

522. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

[After *August 19, 1938*][3]

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I have given instructions for sending you ghee. Add a few drops of ginger juice to Kaka's drink. If calomel does not suit him, one ounce of castor oil can be given every half hour. But ask Mahodaya about this. Have you not started giving glucose yet ?

Blessing from

BAPU

[PS.]

I tied the *rakhi*.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10764

523. HOW TO SAVE HANDLOOM WEAVERS

August 20, 1938

The statement that the handloom industry has defied mill competition is only partially true. There are not today half as many handloom weavers as there were, say, twenty-five years ago. There was a time when, as the spinning-wheel spun the whole of the yarn

[1] From the reference to Nana Dharmadhikari in the preceding item.
[2] The letter was signed by Kanu Gandhi, under instructions from Gandhiji.
[3] From the reference to *rakhi* in the letter of August 19 to the addressee.

required by the nation, the handloom wove all the cloth required. When the mills were established the spinning-wheel all but died out for the very simple reason that it gave a paltry return and was never a whole-time occupation. But the loom offered stubborn resistance, for the reason, among others, that it was a full-time occupation by itself and paid the weaver enough to eke out a living. When the spinning mill came, the weaver fell back upon it for his hanks of yarn. He even welcomed the change because he could get more evenly spun and stronger yarn. Little did he know that he was to become perfectly helpless if the mills for any reason could not supply him with yarn. Unlike the village spinner the millowner dictated the price of his yarn. By and by the weaver who wove simple patternless khadi could not withstand the mill competition and he died. And for the past few years the weaver of fancy cloth has felt the pressure from weaving mills. Public taste is slowly but surely changing. If the mills cannot exactly copy the patterns woven by the village weaver, they can, as they do, produce new patterns and by efficient advertising attract customers. Therefore several thousand Orissa weavers are idle for want of custom. A similar cry came to me the other day from Ahmednagar,a strong weaving centre. My advice to them all was that if these weaving families would but introduce carding and spinning in their homes, they could be wholly independent of mill yarn and enlist the never-failing assistance of the A. I. S. A. It might be that the weavers might not earn as much as before because of part of their time being given to spinning. But now, under the revised policy of the A. I. S. A. which aims at giving one anna per hour to the spinner and is actually giving one and half pice per hour, the weaver would hardly feel the reduction in his income. And in any case a reduced wage is surely better than starvation.

Let it be borne in mind that the weaver, in introducing spinning and carding in his family, has to go in for very little outlay. The wheel he already has. It will no doubt require some improvment. He has to invest in a carding-bow costing a few annas.

I understand that the Orissa Government is banishing mill yarn from their jails and restricting their cloth purchases to khadi. They deserve congratulations for conforming to the constructive programme of the Congress. Let the workers in charge of the organization remember the prescription herein suggested, and they will find that production of the yarn required will be the easiest by educating

the weavers to take up spinning. They will also by this method probably find that khadi can be, comparatively speaking, more cheaply produced than if they were to wait till they trained raw villagers to become efficient spinners. No doubt they will have to introduce spinning in all the villages. For that is the goal of the A. I. S. A. But they may not neglect the handloom weavers till the high purpose is accomplished.

Harijan, 20-8-1938

524. RECENT RIOTS IN BURMA

August 20, 1938

A telegram says :

> Burma riots deserve more attention than you paid. Whatever Government information, no peace till tenth, when I left Rangoon by aeroplane. Indians frightfully perturbed. They adopted your non-violence, suffered terribly. Effective steps urgently solicited.

The step that I took immediately on receipt of a wire from Rangoon was the only effective step I could then take.[1] I was not then even in possession of facts. Now there is before me a narrative of the cause of the Burmese fury. It appears that a Burman wrote a tract in disparagement of Islam some time ago. A Burman Buddhist who had become a convert to Islam wrote a counter-tract attacking the original and also attacking Buddhism. No Indian had a hand in the writing of the counter-tract. It did not attract notice at once, but the Burmese Press fiercely criticized it and inflamed the Burmese mind. The result was the savagery which took many precious, innocent lives and destroyed property worth, it is said, millions. Nor was it confined to Rangoon; it spread throughout Burma wherever there were Indian settlers.

If, as my correspondent says,"Indians adopted your (i. e., my) non-violence," I can only say they suffered less than they would have otherwise done. Non-violence has no limits. If a particular dose does not seem to answer, more should be administered. It is a never-failing remedy.

But why call it my' non-violence? Probably the wire is a gentle rebuke to me, so much as to say that my remedy failed. The pertinent question is whether they believed in non-violence as a sure remedy against violence, or was it undertaken because there was no help for it ? I, however, need not wait for a reply. If one is to believe the papers,

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to President, Burma Congress Committee", 5-8-1938

there was not complete non-violence practised by the Indians. I have, however, no difficulty in believing that a considerable number observed non-violence whether from belief or necessity.

The question for consideration, however, is: 'what of the future ?' There will no doubt be some kind of an inquiry. There may be some compensation paid to the losers. There would be some punish-ment meted out to the offenders who are not likely to be the prime movers but their dupes. I must confess that I am uninterested in these proceedings. There will be no insurance against future out breaks.

Indians in Burma should realize that they are at the mercy of the inhabitants of Burma. They have no Government in India that can really afford them protection. We know what is happening in the other parts of the world; nor is it to be wondered at. England will never go to war with any nation or country because it has insulted or wronged Indian settlers in that country. It may, it will, make representations, sincere of course; it will lodge energetic protests even. But there her help will end. And in a case like the Burmese riots, the relief that the Government of India can afford will be next to nothing. What does it do when riots take place in India itself ? It can do very little after they are over. The utmost it can do is to take measures to quell riots when they take place. What have even Congress Governments been able to do after the riots that have recently taken place in some Congress Provinces? They do not admit of relief being granted to the sufferers except in rare cases. What is possible in Burma I do not know.

I am concerned with attainment of permanent peace in so far as permanence is possible in this very impermanent life. When once religious animosity is roused, it has a knack of repeating itself with periodic regularity, if radical measures are not adopted by the communities concerned. One such measure is cultivation of mutual respect for the several religions professed by the parties. If the Buddhists of Burma have little regard for Islam and the Muslims for Buddhism, the seeds of dissension are there. They will take little watering to sprout into the savagery such as we saw the other day. I would, therefore, suggest a mutual understanding of these great religions.

My fear is that at the bottom of the riots there is an anti-Indian

feeling, due, perhaps to economic causes. For though Muslims seem to have suffered most, Hindus too seem to have come in for a fair share of the Burman fury. Therefore, Indian settlers must see to it that their dealings with the Burmans are fair and above board. It is said that everything is fair in trade, and that no turpitude attaches to a trader taking advantage of his customer's ignorance and demanding from him even an unconscionable price for his goods. That kind of dealings will surely acerbate feelings. Wherever we have gone, even before the British rulers took possession of our country, we have depended solely on the goodwill of those among whom we have lived and with whom we have traded. Such is the history of our relations with Zanzibar, Aden, Java, etc.

Times have however changed. The people all over the world have become conscious of their rights. Whereas formerly foreign settlers in other lands did questionable things with impunity, they cannot do so now. Honesty has never been so much proved to be the best policy as it is now for those who do not or cannot back their dishonesty with gunpowder and poison gas. If India is to escape that training and is to adopt, as a free nation, peace as her motto in every walk of life and in every country where her children go, they will have to practise strictest honesty in their human dealings.

To the Burmese friends one word. When I was in Burma some years ago, Burmese priests were good enough to invite me to their conference and honour me with their address under the shadow of the mighty Pagoda. They were good enough, as Buddhists, to claim me as one of them. It therefore hurt me when I read of the mob fury which knew no distinction of sex or age and wreaked vengeance on persons who could never have had anything to do with the offending pamphlet. I have the greatest veneration for the Buddha. He is one of the greatest preachers of peace. The gospel of the Buddha is gospel of love. It passes comprehension how representatives of that faith could give themselves up to savagery, and that on an apparently flimsy pretext. The pity of it is that, if the newspaper reports were true, even priests, the repositories of the Buddha's gospel, were to be seen among the mob, not stilling its fury, but actually taking part in loot, arson and murder. Would that the wise men among them would do a little heart-searching and take steps to prevent a recurrence of the tragedy which all right thinking persons must deplore !

Harijan, 20-8-1938

525. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
August 20, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
STATE GUEST HOUSE, TRIVANDRUM

YOUR WIRE. PATIENT BETTER. SELF WELL. PRAYING SUCCESS YOUR MISSION. ANXIOUS SARAS WATI'S CONDITION. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original : C. W. 3876. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7032

526. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

August 20, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

There must be a wire awaiting me at Maganwadi. I heard yesterday that you were to be State Guest. I do hope my letter[1] went through all right (or alright ?).

Pyarelal is decidedly better today. The temperature is only 101 against 103 at this time yesterday (8 a.m). If he is restored it would be a great and good thing.

I have no doubt that you will be able to fix up everything nicely. I had a visit yesterday from the President of the T [ravancorre] National Congress. Of course I was silent. He is an able man. He spoke with sweet reasonableness.

I hope you will keep well and drive to the Cape if you have time. Would like you to drop in at Tiruvannamalai for a day to see the Maharshi[2] on your return. My b. p. was 160/100 this morning.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original : C. W. 3635. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6444

[1] *Vide* "Letter to C. P. Ramaswami Iyer", 15-8-1938

[2] Ramana Maharshi. In *Letters to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur*, the addressee says : "But both Mahadev Desai and I refused to see him as we said our hearts were Gandhiji's and Gandhiji did not appreciate the argument."

527. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*August 20, 1938*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have asked the man to go there directly. Sushila says that no ice is required. And moreover he feels better today. Pyarelal said in the morning that probably the mercury would not rise tomorrow. Today he has started with 101. He also slept well in the latter part of the night.

Send this telegram[2] :

I understand about Maharashtra. Lilavati should not have minded not being permitted to come yesterday. If there is no special work today, do not come. From the letters sent herewith get a copy made of Limaye's letter. That has not been done here.[3]

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 11631

528. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

August 20, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

You have made a mountain out of a molehill. I only described my sorrow in the letter to Manilal. As long as I cannot make you sit down by my side for your meals, I would not suggest any change in your diet. The same is true about Arun. Moreover, as I do not speak I cannot joke with you either. I can suggest much even while joking.

I am not dissatisfied with you. Do I not believe you to be wise ?

When did I ever say that women were unfit for service ? Yes, I have declared myself unworthy. That unworthiness may perhaps be overcome. As you are ready to serve, you have earned the merit of having actually served.

It is not easy to please Ba. Have I not told you this ? But she is simple-hearted. We should, therefore, not mind what she says.

[1] From reference to Pyarelal's temperature, which came down to 101° on this date; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] For the text, which is in English, *vide* "Telegram to Amrit Kaur", 20-8-1938

[3] The letter is unsigned.

I do wish indeed that you should increase your reading and learn to write Gujarati articles for *Indian Opinion*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4879

529. LETTER TO PARVATIDEVI GHORPADE[1]

August 20, 1938

DEAR SISTER,

I learnt about you from Bhai Kaujalgi's letter to Gandhi Seva Sangh and also read the account of the concessions that you have given to the people of your state. I compliment you on your generosity. It is worthy of you. May god make you more generous still and grant you long life.

Blessing from

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 7454

530. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

August 20, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

I got your message. I have been writing as much as I can. I remember your suggestion. If God wills it, I will write before the incense burns out. But who permitted you to resume work ? If you exert your mind and body so soon, the weakness will be prolonged. Pyarelal is better.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10906

531. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 20, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Most probably the Nagpur students will come. If Mahadevi wants to come, let her come.

But what will she do ?

[1] Dowager queem of Mudhol State

I of course continue to observe silence. Who knows what I shall think it right to do when the students arrive ?

Blessing from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10765

532. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

August 20, 1938

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I understand about you. See that Shankaran does not fall ill. There is no change in Pyarelal's condition.

Blessing from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10590

533. LETTER TO DR. B. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

SEGAON,
August 21, 1938

DEAR PATTABHI,

Please make a searching inquiry into this complaint[1] and let me know the result. I do not want to publish the letter before knowing your verdict.

Your sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

534. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

August 21, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

As I start this letter, here is Sushila ready for massage. So I will be brief. You seem to be progressing very well. See also that the discharge of pus from the gums stops.

Pyarelal's fever persists, but he is improving. There is no danger so far. His mother came yesterday evening. I am well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

[1] Some people had been reported to have incited people to occupy land by force.

Chimanlal will be discharged [from the hospital] tomorrow or the day after.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7097. Also C.W. 4589. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

535. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

August 21, 1938

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Balwantsinha says that Bankelal does very little work. Please inquire. Ask the village . . .[1] about him. Get a full report. Make a thorough inquiry.

Who looks after Kuwadu ?

Install the loom in the new building. Nayakum has kept the bag ready.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

What did you do about Dahyalal yesterday ?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8568. Also C.W. 7036. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

536. REPLY TO NAGPUR DEPUTATIONISTS[2]

August 21, 1938

I realize your regard and support for Dr. Khare, I also have great love for Dr. Khare, but we who are fighting the independence battle have to forget family relations while doing our duty. After introspection I found that no wrong or injustice had been done to Dr. Khare. You have no material for comparison. I myself framed the Congress constitution in 1920 wherein the All-India Congress is the final appellate authority which everybody can approach. The Working

[1] A word is illegible here.

[2] A deputation of over 150 students and others led by V. A. Khare had come from Nagpur to see Gandhiji. They expressed support for Dr. N. B. Khare and demanded withdrawal of the Working Committee's resolution concerning him. Since Gandhiji was observing silence he wrote out this reply

Committee or leaders referred to, if found guilty, deserve punishment.

I advise you to prepare your case in favour of Dr. Khare to be placed before the A. I. C. C. I have said whatever I wanted to. I cannot address a public meeting at seventy. I have no desire to prove Dr. Khare's guilt, nor do I wish you to lessen your love for Dr. Khare. Time alone will tell and Dr. Khare will admit his mistake. I have patience. If I realize that I did injustice in this case unknowingly, I will apologize.

I do not wish to win independence through hooliganism which will destroy the Congress if it enters that body. Everybody has the right to criticize provided the criticism is fair, decent and truthful. No ban was imposed on Dr. Khare for contesting the election of the leadership of the C. P. Assembly Party nor did Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose threaten any member while exercising his right to vote, not did I deprive Dr. Khare of his right to contest the election.

The Working Committee's resolution against Dr. Khare was recommendatory, not mandatory. The charge of favouritism against the C. P. Ministry was inquired into, and the wrongs redressed, while the charge of bribery and corruption was not proved. The Working Committee can correct its mistake if it has committed any. If the members of the Working Committee had the right to attend the party meeting none could remove them. It could convene the meeting at Wardha. That resolution was drafted after consulting constitutionalists and lawyers who committed no mistake in framing it.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-8-1938

537. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 22, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending as much as is ready. I did not understand about the hotel. I went through all the articles yesterday and sent them to you. Only the article about Nagpur is left with me now. It does not contain your translations. I must have with me my replies. However, I will see at night. There is no time now during the day. I shall have to make several additions and omissions. If the article on the hotel is with you, you may insert your additions in it.

Sushila must have sent the articles about khadi. I had also given her your letter to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11628

538. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 22, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Your work must be flourishing. Pyarelal passed the night well. His mother has come. That has lessened my worry.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10766

539. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

August 22, 1938

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Probably you will be discharged today. Pyarelal passed the night fairly well. The rest from newspapers or . . . [1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10591

540. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 23, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Why need we reply to the *Sentinel's* canard[2] ? What a canard! I feel that falsehoods which no one is likely to believe should be ignored. If you feel otherwise, however, we may reply.

[1] A word or two are illegible here.

[2] The reference is to a canard spread by the Delhi correspondent of the *Daily Express* that Gandhiji was about to take *kayakalpa* or rejuvenation treatment. This was published by other newspapers also.

I will not, I cannot, send the report about the tourists with Prabhu Dayal. It will require time. I will, therefore, get it typed here.

Pyarelal passed the night fairly well.

Please send the ice.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Chimanlal is being discharged today. So if you are coming by car, bring him with you, or if anybody is coming from the bungalow he may come with him. In the last resort, he may come by tonga. If a tonga suits you better, you may hire one. But in any case the carriage will have to be arranged by you.

Telegram for Rajkumari:[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11629

541. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

[*August 23, 1938*][2]

CHI. AMRITLAL,

There is no cause for worry about Kaka. We shall have to proceed carefully. Ask Dr. Mahodaya if it would not be better to give two grains of calomel every half an hour eight times. Go on giving him glucose, as much as he can digest. Give him small quantities of *mosambi* juice. There are toxins in the body and they will remain for some time. If he commits no mistake in eating, all will be well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10767

542. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

August 23, 1938

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have entrusted to Mahadev the task of writing to you or sending anything to you. I assume that you will be ready to start as soon

[1] For the text of the telegram, *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 24-8-1938

[2] The date is as supplied by addressee.

as you get the call. If there is any change in the programme inform Mahadev.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10592

543. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHAGANJ,
August 24, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
GUEST HOUSE
TRIVANDRUM

GOD WILL SOLVE DIFFICULTIES. PATIENT PROGRESSING.

BAPU

From the original C.W. 3878. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7033

544. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

August 24, 1938

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Just time to send you love. All well.

BAPU

[PS.]

You see how considerate I have been. Say thank you.

From the original : C.W. 3877. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7034

545. LETTER TO PRITHVISINGH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 24, 1938

MY DEAR PRITHVISINGH,

I write to you in English so that you may get this earlier.

I had your letters. I am glad you are having good treatment and that you have mental peace. I know that non-violence in thought is the most difficult of attainment. And yet without the co-operation of thought, non-violence, in word and action does not become an all-

prevading irresistible force that it undoubtedly is. Such non-violence comes only through God's grace. And that grace descends only on those who make a ceaseless effort—much greater surely than what we make to attain material ends.

I am pursuing my work. Much depends upon the external atmosphere.

You will continue to write regularly to me.

A letter is being sent to your people. I have already told you they met me and I was pleased they came.

Pyarelal is suffering from typhoid. But he is on the mend.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 5630. Also C.W. 2941. Courtesy : Prithvisingh

546. LETTER TO M. VISVESVARAYYA

August 24, 1938

You may depend upon my doing all I can in behalf of your project[1].

SIR M. VISVESVARAYYA
BANGALORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

547. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 24, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Fresh ginger is needed for Pyarelal. I have of course made inquiries in Varoda. Rajaram will see about it. But if he is not able to procure it, please see to it yourself.

Ice and vegetable soup have been discontinued for the present. He will take whey.

If you have not written for grape-fruit along with pomegranates, do so now. Through God's grace my silence is continuing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11632

[1] Of setting up an automobile factory in India

548. LETTER TO S. GANESAN

SEGAON,
August 25, 1938

MY DEAR GANESAN[1],

you are mad. Can't you be at peace with yourself ? I am glad you withdrew your letter[2].

Yours,
BAPU

SHRI S. GANESAN
8 PYCROFT ROAD
TRIPLICANE
MADRAS

From a copy: C.W. 4347. Courtesy: D. C. Jha. Also G.N. 6614

549. A MESSAGE[3]

August 25, 1938

There will be no peace without non-violence in the hearts of many. There will be no non-violence without prayer, and prayer is vain without correspondent work.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

550. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

[*August 25, 1938*][4]

CHI. KAKA,

I am sending the article after revising it. The changes are self-explanatory. Did not Subnis drink *nira* ? Have you regained sufficient strength now to come ?

[1] Editor, *Swatantra Sangu*, Madras

[2] This seems to have expressed the anguish of workers at some of the provisions of the Temple-entry Bill then under consideration.

[3] This was sent to Muriel Lester for "Prayer for Peace in the World".

[4] There is reference in the letter to Pyarelal having started taking whey "from yesterday". In "Letter to Mahadev Desai", p. 279, Gandhiji mentions Pyarelal being given whey. This letter would thus appear to have been written on August 25.

Pyarelal is progressing. Fever is going down. He has started taking whey from yesterday.

Why do you make yourself unhappy because you are a Maharashtrian ? Atonement has to be made by all. It is better that the poison that is inside comes out. If we do not increase it by opposing it, it will spend itself.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You did not see Amritlal, did you ?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10911

551. TELEGRAM TO SATIN SEN

August 26, 1938

HELPLESS. SELF WORKING UNDER HANDICAP. SUFFERERS SHOULD CLUB TOGETHER AND FIND HONEST LABOUR.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

552. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

August 26, 1938

SHRI KUMARAPPA,

Please tell Bharatan I was pleased[1] to read his good article in the *Aryan Path*.

From a photostat G.N. 10135

[1] This word is not very clear in the source.

553. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM[1]

SEGAON,
August 26, 1938

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

You should have no worry on you while you are rebuilding your body. In this we may well copy Englishmen. Out of office they forget the office cares and every day come fresh to work. If they get ill they know that they must rest and trust that without them the nation's business will go on as usual. This is true *Gita* living. It is the soundest economy.

Yes, I remember the two girls.

Know that it was not Premi[2] who prompted my wire. I had made up my mind when Girdhari[3] gave me the account. Premi's letter added zest to the wording of the wire.

Premi made a definite promise to write to me in Hindi. She has now a rare opportunity of learning it there and so have you all. Premi will have no letter from me till she has redeemed her promise.

Love to you all and the Kripalanis.

BAPU

[PS.]

Pyarelal is decidedly on the mend.

From the original : C. W. 11043. Courtesy: Arjun Jairamdas

554. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 26, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Your presumption about ice is correct. It will not be needed now. Therefore do not be too sure of Rajaram's coming there. It has started raining now. Is it but God's wrath or is He weeping at our sins ?

[1] The first paragraph of the letter has been reproduced "Letter to Jairamdas Doulatram", 27-8-1938, under the date August 27, 1938.

[2] Addressee's daughter

[3] Girdhari Kripalani, nephew of J. B. Kripalani

Telegram to Ramachandran:

"Under circumstances you should act as you think proper without mentioning me. God be with you. Bapu."[1]

To Rajkumari:

"No sorrow over your so-called failure. Self well. Pyarelal rapidly progressing. Love. Bapu."[2]

If you have sent a wire in the morning in reply to hers, then do not bother about this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11633

555. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SEGAON,
August 26, 1938

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

What you write is quite proper. I only wanted to have your reaction. All money needed for the boy[3] will be provided by Bhopal.[4] The matter was weighing very heavily on my heart.

Yes, anarchy in the Congress seems to be on the increase. I am doing and will continue to do my utmost to check it, but the results rest with God. Anyway, the outcome can be nothing but good if our efforts are pure.

The news about Viyogi Hari has made me very happy. The weather here is very bad these days.

You should come and stay for a while in Segaon when it gets better. Jamnalalji's cottage is quite good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 7995. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] The telegrams are in English.
[2] *Ibid*
[3] Harold Ansari; *vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 12-8-1938
[4] The Nawab of Bhopal; *vide* "Letter to Nawab of Bhopal", 19-7-1938

556. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Night, August 26, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

We have to send money to Nimu. She has sent a reminder. Pyarelal's fever has practically gone. There is no other complaint.

Do not force yourself to come. The work should not accumulate but you should not strain yourself to finish it either. I constantly feel that we are going to have to bear a very heavy burden. I have been working rather hard. I cannot say how long I shall be able to continue in this manner.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

We forgot about the *Ramayana*. The enclosed was sent by Ramdas.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11634

557. LETTER TO PRABHU DAYAL VIDYARTHI

August 26, 1938

CHI. PRABHU DAYAL,

You should be patient. You alone can rectify the failing you have pointed out. Be an ideal [teacher] and impress the boys with your love.

Khadi can prove cheaper only if you spin the yarn yourself. They will be acquiring learning of another kind through spinning, etc., and you should explain the economics of Khadi through that activity.

I had even tried to prevent the police from going. But how could I compel them? The only thing I could do was not to put up with the thing and I did not. However, the newspapers have a way of saying all kinds of things.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 11687

558. MY SO-CALLED INCONSISTENCIES

During my student days improperly so called (for they properly began after the period of examinations and are not yet over for me) I learnt a saying of Emerson's which I never forgot. "Foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds," said the sage. I cannot be a little mind, for foolish consistency has never been my hobgoblin. My critics are shocked over my recent remarks on picketing. They think that in describing as a species of violence the formation of a living wall of pickets in order to prevent the entry of persons into picketed places, I have contradicted my sayings and doings during the civil disobedience campaign. If such is really the case, my recent writing must be held as cancelling my comparatively remote sayings and doings. Though my body is deteriorating through age, no such law of deterioration, I hope, operates against wisdom which I trust is not only not deteriorating but even growing. Whether it is or not, my mind is clear on the opinion I have given on picketing. If it does not appeal to Congressmen, they may reject it, and if they do, they will violate the laws of peaceful picketing. But there is no discrepancy between my past practice and the present statement. When civil disobedience was first orgainzed by me in South Africa, my companions discussed with me the question of picketing. The registration office had to be picketed in Johannesburg, and the suggestion made was that we should form there a living wall of pickets. I at once rejected the idea as violent. And pickets were posted in marked positions in a big public square so that no one could elude the eagle eyes of the pickets and yet everyone could go to the registration office, if he liked, without touching anyone. Reliance was put upon the force of public opprobrium which would be evoked by the publication of the names of 'black legs'. This method was copied by me here when liquor shops were to be picketed. The work was specially entrusted to the women as better representatives of non-violence than men. Thus there was no question of the formation of a living wall. Many unauthorized things were no doubt done during those days as they are now. But I cannot recall a single instance in which I countenanced the kind of picketing condemned by the article that has come in for sharp criticism. And is there really any difficulty about regarding a living wall of pickets as naked violence ? What is the difference between force used against a man wanting to do a

particular thing, and force exercised by interposing yourself between him and the deed ? When, during the non-co-operation days, the students in Benares blocked the passage to the University gates I had to send a peremptory message and, if my recollection serves me right, I strongly condemned their action in the columns of *Young India*. Of course I have no argument against those who hold different views from mine regarding violence and non-violence.

The other inconsistency imputed to me has reference to my advice to factory-owners to invoke the assistance of the police to defend themselves against what I have described as violent picketing. Having condemned the Ministries for calling in the aid of the police and even the military for suppressing riots, how could I advise employers of labour to ask for, and Ministers to supply, police assistance, ask my critics.

This is what I wrote[1] in *Harijan* about the Ministerial action in U.P.:

> It has been suggested that when we have our independence riots and the like will not occur. This seems to me to be an empty hope, if in the course of the struggle for freedom we do not understand and use the technique of non-violent action in every conceivable circumstance. To the extent that the Congress Ministers have been obliged to make use of the police and the military, to that extent, in my opinion, we must admit our failure. That the Ministers could not have done otherwise is unfortunately only too true. I should like every Congressman, I should like the Working Committee, to ask themselves why we have failed, if they think with me that we have.

Surely here there is no condemnation of the Ministers' action.I have deplored the necessity for it as I would deplore such necessity in the matter of picketing. But till the Congress has developed a peaceful method of dealing with violent crimes, its Ministers must use the police and, I fear, even the military, if they are to undertake the administration of the affairs of the country in the present stage of its career. But it will bode ill for them and the country if they do not devise methods of dispensing with the use both of the police and the military or at least of visibly reducing their use to such an extent that he who runs may notice the reduction. There certainly is a way. I have ventured to give a faint indication of it. But it may be that the Congress organization is not really fitted for the great task. Without a living faith in non-violence, neither the military nor the police can be supplanted.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sharda C. Shah", 22-3-1938

Cries come in from many quarters of growing insubordination, indiscipline and even open violence among Congressmen. I hope that the charge is untrue of the majority of Congressmen.

Harijan, 27-8-1938

559. LETTER TO GOSIBEHN CAPTAIN

August 27, 1938

I am developing ideas about dealing with the growing violence and untruth. The two go hand in hand.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

560. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

August 27, 1938

CHI. VALJI,

I read your third article and am returning all the three. The idea of composing a new *Smriti* is a tempting one, but I am not qualified. If I assume that I am qualified, I would require the leisure that is posible in jail. Outside I have no choice. I have to take up the work that comes to me and do it as best as I can. There is some freedom of choice in jail. If you wish to contribute in the compositon of a new *Smriti*, you will have to go deep into the thing. There are many interpolations in the *Smritis.* Some portions, though not interpolations, deserve to be rejected. Even in the Vedas everything contained is not eternal truth. The Vedas are a mixture of poetry, history and eternal verities. We should try to pick out the last. We should formulate rules of interpretation. And after that, we may place before the people our interpretations right from the Vedas to the Puranas, as the substance of Hinduism. You have got the necessary ability for this, but have I ? This task is beyond the ability of a single person. For this we should have a group from among ourselves. You will now get some faint idea about how my mind is working. I do know what is dharma, but I do not know how to put it as the Vedas do. I am not sufficiently well-versed in the Shastras. And the most important thing is that I am not completely free from attachment. I aspire to be so in this life. But I will not feel sorry if I fail. I am using all the strength God has given me to destroy attachment, etc. It is not impossible for me to attain to that state, but I do not know whether I have that much time left to me.

Please, therefore, do not give me anything raw just now. Your language is attractive, but I will not yield even to that attraction and accept all that you send just now. Please improve your healh if you can.

Is the politics there unbearable ?

Pyarelal is free from danger.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

561. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

August 27, 1938

CHI. DEVDAS,

I could not spare the time to reply to you. I also have formed the same impression about Khan Saheb that you say you have. However, he is so suspicious that one cannot know when he might do what. But being a man of God, he remains unharmed by mistakes and perhaps he may live his whole life in this way and remain blameless. He suffers from mental lethargy and so does not know what to do in particular circumstances. And, moreover, he is simple-hearted. He would believe everythng that a man whom he has come to trust told him, would not believe anything said by anyone against whom he is prejudiced, and get angry with those that did. Even so, he is a saintly person, and so one does not mind his faults.

Pyarelal has pulled through this time. Showing him what you have written would have an adverse effect. He is not fit enough just now to bear your jokes and it would not do showing him the letter after it has been edited ! If his temperature is not normal today, it will be so in a day or two. He follows my advice on most things. He gives me no trouble, and so you need not worry. My silence has benefited me so much that if and when I have to give it up, I shall find it hard to

do so. Most certainly there is anger in me. The silence eats it all up. After all, how much anger can I give vent to by writing ?

We are going through a period of wet adversity. Water is dripping everywhere. You will see evidence of it in this also. I fully realize now the meaning of living in a village.

I am enclosing Ramdas's letter.

Ramachandran is likely to be arrested in a day or two. Rajkumari will return from Travancore tomorrow. Poor woman, she did her very best. But after all we can only try, is not that so ? We have left, and should leave, credit or discredit to God. If we do not act thus, we would come to grief. I may not give you any more time now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2011. Also the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

562. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM,
August 27, 1938

CHI. MRIDU,

There is no harm in holding public meetings in support, provided the speeches at the meetings are courteous and not critical. The purpose should be to help the members representing the Congress. You yourself should write to Bhulabhai.

Mrs. Subbaroyan is very sensitive. Ask her why she felt insulted. I know her quite well. She was happy to find support in *Harijan*.[1] She has written a good letter to Mahadev. Do not be impatient.

I have instructed Mahadev to write to Bhulabhai. The Working Committee has not taken any decision in this matter. You should write to the President urging him to guide the legislators. That is all.

[1] Mrs. Radhabai Subbaroyan had proposed a bill to restrain polygamous marriages among Hindus. The Act as it was to be enacted, bad been spelt out in the *Harijan* of July 23, 1938.

Leena[1], Madan[2] and Mummy will be doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 11807. Courtesy : Sarabhai Foundation

563. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 27, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Do not be in a hurry to regain strength. If you can suck the pomegranate seeds without swallowing the stones do so. Stop all work until you are free from fever for 24 hours.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Addressee's sister

[2] Madan Mohan Mangaldas, husband of Leena

564. DISCUSSION WITH HARIJAN SATYAGRAHIS[1]

[*August 27, 1938*][2]

Harijan friends . . . calling themselves 'satyagrahis' marched to Segaon on Saturday last and demanded justice from Gandhiji. Gandhiji was of course silent, but he received them and asked them in writing if they would be content with written replies. They said they would. He asked them to explain the purpose of their visit.

"We gave you notice," their spokesman said, "that unless you could have a Harijan appointed as a Cabinet Minister we should go to Segaon and do satyagraha there. You asked us to desist. We did so and wrote to you to say so. But after that, having heard nothing from you we decided to fulfil our promise."

GANDHIJI: But what do you want, and what do you mean by satyagraha?

HARIJANS: We want a Harijan to be in the Cabinet and a seat reserved in the Cabinet for a Harijan as there is one reserved for a Mussalman.

G. But that is not in my power.

H. It is. You were prepared to lay down your life for the Harijans at Yeravda and your fast led to the Yeravda Pact. You can do everything for the Harijans.

G. I am doing all that is in my power. But let that be. What do you mean by satyagraha?

H. We will remain here without food until another party from Nagpur comes to relieve us.

G. You are welcome to do so. You want me to provide you with room. Well we are cramped for space, but you tell us where you will sit, and we will vacate the place for you.

H. We will be fasting, and five or six people will have to stay with us to attend to our needs whilst we are fasting.

G. I am not concerned with that. You select the place and we vacate it for you.

One of the Ashram inmates went out with them to show them over the place. He returned to say that they wanted a room adjoining a hut reserved for women and also the verandah in front of it.

G. Explain to them that that room is reserved for women and

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Notes"

[2] Desai says the Harijans met Gandhiji on "Saturday last". This would be August 27.

they might select some other place.

He did so, but came and reported that they would have no other place.

G. Vacate it then. Let not Ba be perturbed. She can come and occupy my room, and I will go there or in the house outside which is built for Aryanayakum.

Harijan, 3-9-1938

565. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[After *August 27, 1938*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Herewith both your articles.

You must have received one bundle of letters sent with Rajaram.

Herewith also I am sending a few letters which are ready. Rajkumari has reached safely. The 'satyagrahis' are quite well. They do not give any trouble.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11617

566. LETTER TO HANNA LAZAR

August 28, 1938

MY DEAR HANNA,

Just one line to tell you I have your letter from Mombassa with your carefully prepared notes with considerately made multiple copies.

I hope you had an enjoyable voyage and that you have regained lost health. You must make proper preparations for your next visit here.

Except from you no further letter from Johannesburg.

Love to you all.

BAPU

[PS.]

Pyarelal is normal today. How nice you were not here during the typhoid he was passing through.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] From the reference to satyagrahis; *vide* the preceding item.

567. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

August 28, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

I sent a note with Mahadev only yesterday about the medicine to be taken. Let us see what effect it has. Strength will return only by degrees.

Let C.S.'s statement be published. It will be enough for the present if your Marathi article appears in Hindi. Then we shall see. What a mountain is being made out of a molehill !

It would help if you have the legs and the body massaged. About the glucose injections, hot-water fomentation is the best remedy. However, you may try a mud-pack once. The rule for a patient is that he should not endure anything silently. That does not show his courage but betrays his ignorance. The doctor should know where you are having the pain. When he asks you to endure it, you should of course do so. Do not mind your having taken my time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7682

568. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

August 28, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

Bhogilal Parekh has specially sent some apples. I am sending six out of them for you. Pyarelal is well.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10907

569. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 28, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

What an argument! Anyone going from Maganwadi asks neither Bharatan nor Zaverbhai. This does not show lack of co-operation. It is

a question of procedure. What kind of co-operation would it be if a man on his way here visited Jamnalal, Kishorelal, Rajendra Babu, Jajuji and others and also Harijan Ashram, Aryanayakum, Mahila Ashram and Balkrishna and asked if they had any work! The rule is that a man should not go anywhere without reason. So I myself stopped sending a note to you. I have not considered it my dharma to send you all the news about this place. Is it clear now?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Vijaya does not seem to be writing everything to me.

BAPU

[PPS.]

I learnt only yesterday about Pyarelal's niece. Pyarelal is quite well.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10768

570. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 28, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

There is no question of ordering anybody. You alone understand Kaka's needs. You also know about the conditions here. So you alone can say best where you can be more useful or where you will have more satisfaction. Kaka himself is not able to decide because it is not as if he could not do without you. I cannot say because I do not have all the data. You alone can have that, so the burden naturally falls on you. I will approve of whatever decision you come to

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10769

571. MESSAGE TO HARIJAN SATYAGRAHIS

August 28, 1938

BROTHERS,

I am pained to see the troubles that you are taking because I do not know what useful purpose your troubles are going to serve. I

consider that your vow is born of lack of knowledge. Whatever that may be, your fast cannot effect a change in my views. We should not coerce anyone by resorting to fasts. I therefore appeal to you that you should give up the fast and then resort to any other kind of agitation.

At the same time I [do not] consider that agitation of any kind is necessary because it is the duty of every Congress Ministry to include a Harijan in the Cabinet if a capable Harijan is forthcoming.

The Bombay Chronicle, 31-8-1938

572. TELEGRAM TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

WARDHAGANJ,
August 29, 1938

BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA
KATRA KHUSALARI, DELHI

NO CAUSE SORROW.[1] GOD BLESS HER SOUL. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat G.N. 2466

573. LETTER TO P. C. GHOSH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 30, 1938

MY DEAR PROFULLA,

I am glad you are having an exhibition for khadi and allied village industries and hope that it will be a glorious success as well from the point of view of numbers who attend as of sales.

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

I am out of stock for palm-gur and need it badly for Pyarelal who is just convalescent. Please send the maximum quantity carried at the minium cost per railway parcel or postal, whichever is cheaper.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee had lost his mother on August 26.

574. LETTER TO LALI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 30, 1938

MY DEAR LALI,

It is good that you have trust in my judgment. But I must not abuse that trust. So instead of using it, I left it to you to decide where you would be happy. Now you will prove the wisdom of your choice by becoming a worthy lad both in character and cleverness.

You will give me at least a monthly detailed report of your progress.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

575. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 30, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I trust Lilavati did not suffer much. Ba was asking bitterly why I let her go.

Send a telegram to Jawahar:

"Wire Indu's health. Love all. Bapu."[1]

It has become a problem how to cope with the work. I wished to write for *Harijan* but found it impossible to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have read Kishorelal's article. Let it be published as it is.

BAPU

[PPS.]

Did you send the money to Nimu?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11635

[1] This is in English.

576. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 30, 1938

CHI. NARANDAS,

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was born in 1887 A. D. She is the only daughter of the late Raja Sir Harnam Singh. The late Raja Saheb was the uncle of the Maharaja of Kapurthala. The Rajkumari was educated in England for eight years. She has been taking a prominent part in the women's movement since 1928. At present she is President of the All-India Women's Conference. Her way of living is exceedingly simple. She has been wearing khadi for years. She is a member of the Spinners' Association and the Village Industries Association and takes great interest in both these activities. This information should suffice for you.

Tell Chhaganlal that if he wants to arrange a tour of Kathiawar for her for a few days, he may do so. It is not absolutely obligatory to arrange the tour. It may be dropped if the atmosphere at present is not favourable. I have prepared her for it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The Rajkumari is a Christian by birth, and a Hindu by conduct. She cannot be taken to a temple.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8546. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

577. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON,
August 30, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. Who can help one who makes herself unhappy without cause? Joy and sorrow are mental creations. I experience this every moment. If Jayaprakash does not go to Malabar at all, will it mean that you will not be permitted to come? When he goes to Malabar he may take you from here, or he may go directly there and

you may leave this place at the same time and join him there. My visit to the Frontier Province may perhaps start around the 20th September. In that case you will remain here. I shall have to be back from there around October 20.

Pyarelal has no fever now, but feels weak. The danger is over. My silence is for an indefinite period. God alone knows when it will be over. But you are not concerned with that. You will be able to talk to your heart's content, and I will reply to you by writing. But the truth is that you do not need to talk. It is enough for you to stay with me to have peace of mind. I need not worry about you then. Please, therefore, come if you can. I will see about your studying.

I am well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3520

578. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

SEGAON,
August 30, 1938

BHAI GOPICHAND,

Rajkumari showed me your letter. I understood you had asked my personal opinion. If no tangible service is possible by remaining in the Assembly and if the Congress M.L.A.s do not extend any help, it would be best to get out of the bother. Even as it is, I had not liked your getting into the Assembly.

Now I have had a letter from Dr. Dharma Vir. If he cannot at all meet the trustees, why not relieve him? There has been some difference of opinion here. Can't we find another doctor? In that case I feel he would have to be allowed a certain measure of freedom.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

579. LETTER TO S. GURCHARAN SINGH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 31, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

I am glad you are free. Your threat pains me and it is unworthy.Why should discharged political prisoners think that they have a right to expect the nation to support them and pay the expenses of the education of their relatives? Sacrifice loses all value when it demands its price with compound interest. And how should your threatened hunger-strike make wrong right?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

S. GURCHARAN SINGH
OVERSEER
EX-POLITICAL PRISONER

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

580. LETTER TO BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

August 31, 1938

MY DEAR BHARATAN,

Ramdas Gulati saw the museum for the spinning models. His engineer eyes saw defects in the building. I asked him to reduce them to writing. Here is his report[1]. You should study it and if the defects pointed out are really defects you should find who is responsible and, where possible, they should be remedied. How much progress in Hindi?

Love.

BAPU

Encl. 1

From a photostat G.N. 3595

[1] Not traceable

581. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 31, 1938

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Owing to my limited energy, I have been obliged to repress my desire to write to you.

I await your reply to my wire about Indu.[1]

I note your warning about federation. I discount the news, i. e., if it is more than a rumour. They won't call it without first securing Congress consent. This they can't get.

Then about the Jews. I feel entirely like you. I boycott foreign goods, not foreign ability. And I feel keenly for the persecuted Jews. As a concrete proposal I suggest your collecting the names of the most deserving ones and making it plain to them that they must be prepared to throw in their lot with us and accept our standard of living. The rest from Mahadev.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1938. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, p. 286

582. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON,
August 31, 1938

CHI. NARANDAS,

Please find enclosed a cheque from Gokaldas, Send him a receipt from there. I have not written to him from here. I hope jamna is calm.

What is the news about Harakhchand?

Manju has not replied to my letter. Can't Purushottam satisfy her love of music?

Blessings from
BAPU

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 30-8-1938

[PS.]

You have been covering years well. Cover many more and continue to serve.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8547. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

583. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 31, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I am sorry about the ghee. I did not know at all. There is a sort of chaos here. And moreover there was no note from you. As soon as I came to know, I arranged for it. Now you must have got it. Gajanan brought Kaka's letter only this morning, so there has been no delay in sending ghee. A reply to Prabhu is enclosed. It may go only if Kaka approves.

I got the *hundi* for Rs. 69. There seems to be a famine of ghee just now. Because of an epidemic among the cattle, the supply of milk has been reduced somewhat.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10770

584. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

August 31, 1938

DEAR RAJENDRA BABU,

It seems to me that we do not read in the right spirit what our opponents write. The point is not that the language is abusive. The socialists are carrying on massive activities for an ideal. We should not ignore them. There is some criticism of the Bihar Bill in the current *Congress Socialist.* There are other articles too. Read them. Write an article about the Bihar Bill in reply to the article in the *Congress Socialist.* If something has been written about the matter I should like to see it.

I am sending with this three Hindi weeklies. Glance through them. Somebody at least should read such things. We should not be unaware of all these ideas.

Leaflets should be distributed among the peasants on behalf of the Congress governments. This suggestion should be implemented at once.

Show this letter to Kishorelal and Mahadev.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original : Rajendra Prasad Papers. Courtesy : National Archives of India

585. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*August, 1938*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Please have this wire despatched: 'Dr. Zakir Husain. Hope new Institute will fulfil expectations. Gandhi.'

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 11614

586. A LETTER

[About *August 1938*][2]

For what is Rajaram going to Wardha? Are the *mosambis* over? Ba says that there are still many *mosambis* left. Find out correctly and tell me. How many are there? They are more than enough. Pyarelal would need very few or none at all. Who all are taking *mosambis?* Chimanlal, etc.? The point is that it should not be made a duty for Rajaram to go. If it can be managed, he should not be sent in such rains. I have been facing such problems from the days of South Africa. There too a particular man went to the city every day. I came to know about it. I took up cudgels and resolved that he should go only twice a week. Thereby, I saved energy, time and money. Any one

[1] As placed in the source

[2] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Vijaya N. Patel, "Letter to Chimanlal N. Shah" and "Letter to Mahadev Desai",24-8-1938

who observes non-violence should learn to put up with inconveniences. Creating only means of comfort is the religion of violent creatures. Hence, let it be made clear that Rajaram should not be sent unless there is a particular reason. It is not a question only of today. If it is necessary, he may go today. If he goes, and does not deliver the post, let the post be left behind. Let everyone understand this. Whatever advantages are given to me would mean that much of my time is saved.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 11323

587. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

August 31, 1938

CHI. SUMI,

Improve your handwriting still further. Write to me in Hindi sometimes so that I may know how well you write it. Kanam and Arun are quite happy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

588. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

August 31, 1938

CHI. NIMU,

I got your letter. You must have received the money. I can say nothing about my vow of silence[1]. I feel quite comfortable with it. It will be given up when God wills so. My silence does not inconvenience either me or anybody else. The cholera epidemic has almost subsided. Pyarelal's fever has left him. Tell Ramdevji that he will get a letter from me soon.

Do not worry about passing. It will be enough if you study as best as you can. What became of your plan of going to Hardwar?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Gandhiji had started observing silence from August 18, to regain lost health.

589. LETTER TO RAJKUMAR SINHA

[On or before *September 1, 1938*][1]

CHI. RAJKUMAR,

I have your second letter today. For my health I am working under enormous strain. Therefore delay in writing to [you] and other friends must not be interpreted as negligence on my part of the main work which has brought you and other friends in touch with me. Let this suffice for you that there can be no peace for me till every prisoner is accounted for.

Your soldier-like bearing and promptness when you came to me captivated me. I hope to enlist you as a true soldier of peace. But that later.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

RAJKUMAR SINHA
CAWNPUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *The Hindu*, *2-9-1938*

590. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE VICEROY

September 1, 1938

UNDERSTAND GOVERNMENT CONSIDERING CASE OF B. K. DUTT[2] POLITICAL PRISONER LODGED BIHAR PROVINCE AILING SERIOUSLY. HAVE PRESSING LETTERS ABOUT HIM. REQUEST HIS EXCELLENCY'S INTERVENTION EARLY RELIEF IF AT ALL POSSIBLE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The *Hindu* report carrying this item is dated September 1, 1938.
[2] Batukeshwar Dutt, a close associate of Bhagat Singh

591. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

September 1, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

Tell me who is the better person—Surendra or Manilal? Manu is never tired of praising Surendra. Have you seen any shortcomings in Manilal? Does he curb you in any way? So much for jest.

I certainly like it that Sita is coming over but will it not affect her studies? From my point of view, children do learn here but what they learn is of a different kind altogether. The two cannot be combined.

Do you and Manu mind my silence? I certainly feel like speaking for your sake, but silence is very important for my peace of mind and my work. Both of you, therefore, should willingly put up with it. Even though I do not speak, don't you both play with me? Show this to Manu and both of you give me your willing permission.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4881

592. LETTER TO PYARELAL

September 1, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Munnalal's letter was not meant to be read by you. You are still considered an invalid. Besides, you should not be upset by what Munnalal says, but should accept anything that may be good in it. In any case, the letter is not for Mother[1]. I would consider it sinful even to tell her anything. With you and Sushila around, I am not worried about Mother. I take it that there will be no hesitation in asking for whatever may be needed by her. I must know when she does not get what she asks for. The origin of Munnalal's letter lies in the conversation between Sushila and me. I had asked Sushila to keep an eye on things. She brought to my notice instances of uncleanliness. I made inquiries and then there was a certain improvement. The matter went further and it was desired that rather than make comments in front of

[1] Taradevi Nayyar

everybody one should put down things in writing. That was why Munnalal wrote that letter. Thus, knowing as I do his nature, I cannot find fault with him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

593. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 2, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Let Maulana Saheb come today at 2 o'clock. I will leave the *takli yajna* or finish it earlier according as I feel inclined at the time. When you come, bring some good vegetables for Mother[1] if available. Durga or Lila may go to the market.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11639

594. LETTER TO HARISHANKAR PANDYA[2]

[On or before *September 3, 1938*][3]

The Sardar is not going to foment trouble. He has been President of the Rajakiya Parishad. He has been honoured as a guest in several States. He owes a duty to his co-workers of the Parishad. He goes merely as a guide. It is strange that you should regard his coming as outside interference. I expect you to take advantage of his presence to produce harmony if the agitation is confined to a minority. You may depend upon the Sardar. Knowing as I do so many of the workers, I am unable to regard them as ill-meaning agitators. Please share this with Bhayats, Lohana Samaj and the Muslim Council, who have wired to me. I hope wiser counsels will prevail.

The Hindu, 3-9-1938

[1] Pyarelal's mother

[2] The addressee, as well as some others, had sent telegrams requesting Gandhiji to dissuade Vallabhbhai Patel from going to Rajkot in connection with the Kisan agitation there as the situation did not call for outside interference.

[3] The news item reporting this is dated September 3.

595. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

September 3, 1938

I have been in close touch with the prime movers affected by the tragedy which is now being enacted in Travancore, and I had hoped that I should be able to avoid having to make any public statement. After a study of the available evidence and interviews with representative men from Travancore, I have come to the conclusion that the Travancore Government are resorting to repressive methods, far in excess of the requirements, if there are any.

The Travancore Government contend that the Travancore State Congress activities are disloyal and subversive. I have studied the documents alleged to contain evidence in support of such a charge and have failed to find anything of that nature. On the contrary, I have seen emphatic repudiaton by the State Congress of the charge unless constitutional agitation for responsible government is to be called subversive.

I have, however, read the memorial of the Working Committee of the Travancore State Congress, making the most serious charges unsupported by any evidence against the able Dewan, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar. They should never have been made, even if the memorialists had evidence in support. Such evidence is irrelevant to the case for responsible government. It would have its place in a memorial for the removal of the Dewan. There is no doubt that these charges have harmed the memorialists and therefore the State Congress, though they cannot weaken the case for responsible government.

I have no doubt whatsoever that the case for responsible government will be strengthened by the frightfulness being committed by the Government of Travancore if only the people will not be demoralized and will continue to adhere to non-violence. If reports about violence by students are true, I appeal to the students to desist and allow the movement to develop non-violently.

Leaders who have been locked up should make amends by with drawing the charges against the Dewan.

I had the honour of meeting the young Maharaja and the Maharani. I have had the privilege of knowing Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar for many years. I appeal to them to retrace their steps and allow

the State Congress to function so long as its activities remain peaceful. Surely the common law of the State is enough to cope with individuals using violent language or resorting to actual violence. But at this hour of the day, to expect the people to submit to the suppression of free speech or of demands, however advanced these may be is to invite trouble.

In my humble opinion, the prevention of Shrimati Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya from entering the State was a first-class tactical blunder. it passes comprehension how Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, himself a foreigner, prohibited the entry of a distinguished Indian lady on the grounds, according to him, of her being an outsider. She was amenable to the State law if she had committed any breach thereof. I thought it was only reserved for the English administrators to treat Indians going from one province to another as foreigners. It ill becomes the Indian Princes and their advisers to follow the pernicious practice of the English administrators—a practice of which many Englishmen are heartily ashamed. The Government may, by the terrible repression they have resorted to, succeed in killing the movement for the time being, but it will never die and will leave a bitter memory behind. I hope that wiser counsels will yet prevail and the State Congress will be permitted to function properly.

Harijan, 10-9-1938

596. CHOICE BEFORE CONGRESSMEN

Since the publication of my article[1] on violence said to be creeping into the Congress ranks, evidence is coming in to corroborate the complaints made by my correspondents. Violence at Congress elections, they say, is on the increase. It looks as if Congressmen are not able to digest the power that has come to the Congress. Everyone wants to have a share in the spoils of office. And so there is an unhealthy competition to capture committees.

This is not the way to win swaraj, nor is it the way to work the office programme. The holding of any office in the Congress Government must be in the spirit of service without the slightest expectation of personal gain. If A is satisfied in ordinary life with getting Rs. 25 per month, he has no right to expect Rs. 250 on becoming a minister or obtaining any other office under the Govern-

[1] *Vide* "Our Failure", 22-3-1938

ment. And there are many Congressmen who are taking only Rs. 25 per month in voluntary organizations and who are well able to shoulder ministerial responsibility. Bengal and Maharashtra are teeming with able men who have dedicated themselves to public service on a mere pittance and who are well able to give a good account of themselves no matter where they are put. But they are not to be tempted to leave the fields they have chosen, and it would be wrong to drag them out of their invaluable self-chosen obscurity. It is true all the world over, and more true perhaps of this country, that as a rule the best and the wisest men will not become ministers or accept positions under Governments. But I have digressed.

We may not always get the best and the wisest men and women to run Congress Governments, but swaraj will become a distant dream if the ministers and other Congressmen holding offices are not selfless, able and incorruptible. We are not likely to have such men if congress committees become job-hunting arenas in which the most violent would win.

How to preserve the purity of the organization is the question. Anyone who subscribes to the credal article of the Congress and pays 4 annas can demand registration as a member. Many sign the congress pledge without believing in the necessity for observing truth and non-violence as conditions of attainment of swaraj. Let no one cavil at my use of the expressions 'truthful and non-violent' as synonymous with 'legitimate and peaceful'. From the very commencement of the Congress constitution I have used those adjectives without challenge. The word 'non-violence' was first introduced by me in the resolution on non-co-operation carried in Calcutta by the Congress. Can anything be untruthful and yet be legitimate, violent and yet be peaceful? Be that as it may, I claim that those who commit a breach of these two primary conditions, no matter by what adjectives they are known, can have no place in the Congress organization so long as it is governed by the present constitution.

Similarly those who do not use khadi as habitual wear have no place in any Congress committee. This condition should apply also to those who do not carry out vital resolutions of the Congress, A.I.C.C. or the Working Committee. My prescription would be that those who commit a breach of any of these conditions should automatically cease to belong to the Congress. It may be urged that the remedy is too drastic. It is, if it is regarded as a punishment. If it is the automatic

result of a particular act or omission of a person, it is no punishment. I know that thrusting my finger into a furnace will surely burn it and still I thrust it; my suffering is no punishment, it is the natural consequence of my action. Punishment depends upon the will of the judge. Natural consequences are independent of any person's will.

It will be urged that under these conditions the Congress will cease to be a democratic organization, it will become a close corporation.

I hold a wholly contrary view.

Democracy of the West is, in my opinion, only so called. It has germs in it, certainly, of the true type. But it can only come when all violence is eschewed and malpractices disappear. The two go hand in hand. Indeed malpractice is a species of violence. If India is to evolve the true type, there would be no compromise with violence or untruth. Ten million men and women on the Congress register with violence and untruth in their breasts would not evolve real democracy or bring swaraj. But I can conceive the possibility of ten thousand Congressmen and women who are cent per cent true, and free from having to carry the burden of innumerable doubtful companions, bringing swaraj.

Let us reflect upon the past a little. Over fifty years ago a handful of men and women took it into their heads to meet together and represent and speak in the name of the dumb millions. Time has proved the validity of their claim. Since then the prestige of the Congress has risen not in proportion to its numbers, not in proportion to the display of intellect on the platform or in committee rooms, but it has risen in proportion to the ability of Congressmen to suffer and sacrifice, themselves for the nation. No one will deny that when in 1920 the Congress definitely became a democratic, duly elected body having a large number of voters on its rolls, it found itself possessed of new power only because it deliberately adopted truth and non-violence as its means of reaching its goal. And even at the present day, the Congress has quite an insignificant number of men and women on its register compared to the tremendous power it wields. The reason to my mind is that it shows a measure of sacrifice cohesion and discipline unequalled by any other organization in India. But as an experienced servant and general I make bold to say that we shall have to show a much higher measure of these qualities if we are to win independence before many years are out. It is my deliberate conviction based on closest observation that we can secure all we want, within

much less time than perhaps any one of us imagines, simply by showing high efficiency and equally high honesty in every one of the Congress activities.

It would ill become us as truly brave men and women to wish ill to the British in order to gain our end. In non-violent warfare wishing ill to the enemy is not permissible A non-violent person relies upon his own strength and refuses to trade upon his opponents' weakness.

With all the earnestness I can command I, therefore, plead with every Congressman who believes in his pledge to make his choice: either to apply the purge I have suggested, or, if that is not feasible because of the Congress being already overmanned by those who have lost faith in its creed and its constructive programme on which depends its real strength, to secede from it for its own sake and prove his living faith in the creed and programme by practising the former and prosecuting the latter as if he had never seceded from the Congress of his ideal. If one or the other thing is not done, I see grave danger of the Congress collapsing by the weight of its own weaknesses.

It has given me no pleasure to pen these lines. But having felt the urge, I would have been untrue to the Congress if I had not uttered the warning. It is the voice of silence. For the reader should know I took silence over a fortnight ago for an indefinite period. It has given me peace I cannot describe, and it enables me to commune with Nature.

Harijan, 3-9-1938

597. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 3, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I wrote these yesterday. Today, I have been awake from 1.30. Since my mind has been possessed of the H. M. matter I have been writing about it. Please remember that you are not to come today before three. See that both the telegrams are sent without any mistake. It should not be necessary to tell you this, but I mention it considering the burden on you. The word 'mistake' should be interpreted in two senses—one, that the copy should be identical with the original and, two, if you think I have made any mistake, correct it. If there is any

doubt, ask me. If you wish to wait till you have shown it to V. you may do so. The urgency is about Travancore.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11620

598. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEGAON,
September 3, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

I did not even remember anything about Bombay. You may now do what you think proper.

Has Amritlal decided anything? I like what you say about the *Smriti*. If you can work with the others and select extracts, do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10908

599. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEGAON,
September 3, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Your health today makes me a little scared. Take care and regain your health. Do not give up fruit juice. Take also buttermilk. It will be some time before you can take vegetables. Barley can be started again.

You have seen the letter Sushila has written me. I did not want to involve you in the problem at this time, but now it seems it cannot be avoided.

Mother says that I should order Sushila to apply for that job. Sushila does not seem to like the idea. Whether she will have complete peace of course rests in your hands and mine. But whatever peace she can have depends only on her staying with both of us. Hence, in my view, Mother should let Sushila do what she wishes. If you agree with this, would you persuade her on my behalf? If you think this is beyond your capacity at the moment, then let me know. I will see about it. If you are entertaining a different idea, let me know, so that I

can think it over again.

We may have to go to Delhi from here around the 19th and then on to the Frontier Province. I hope you will be ready by that time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

600. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

September 3, 1938

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

My spirit was always with you. It is sad that you were not by Mother's bed-side at the moment of her death. But do we regard death as death? It is a great transformation. The body is constantly changing. When the self which had associated with it has deserted it, why lament over it? You can come here when you want. I shall shortly go to Delhi. Hence if you want to save the expense you may. The weather here is also not too good.

Blessings to all brothers from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2465

601. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 4, 1938

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

How long will you live on medicines? Which kingdom do you aspire to win? Go slow. Do only as much as you can. Take care of your health, otherwise you will be guilty of violence.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 224

602. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

September 4, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

About the first letter, I can only say that I never suspected the palate[1].

About the other, I can say that I allow the massage if I need it, otherwise I stop it in a few minutes. Why should I let Amtussalaam come when I do not need her services? I did not know that she woke you up every night. But you will have to sleep near me when Amtussalaam leaves me and when Lilavati will not be there. Then you will see how I box your ears. You must apologize to Munnalal. Beware of constipation.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4301

603. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

[*September 5, 1938*][1]

I have read Dr. Khare's own defence. The only part that directly concerns me I owe it to the public to answer. It is painful for me to have to contradict Dr. Khare.

He came to Segaon voluntarily. He came as a friend. There was no protest on his part when he came. It was not without full argument that he felt convinced of the charges I brought against him. When he realized the force of my argument, he said he placed himself unreservedly in my hands. I told him that as he had admittedly lost his balance, if he felt like consulting his friends whom I had named, he should do so. There was no desperate hurry. He said he was quite capable of deciding for himself and that there was no need to consult other friends. Then I said he should better write out himself what he had admitted. He suggested that I should draft a statement, as he was no draftsman. I said nevertheless that I wanted his language. If I felt it did not cover sufficiently what he had admitted, I would revise it or

[1] The Gujarati original has *swada*, which means relish of the palate.

[1] From *The Hindustan Times*

add to it.

After some hesitation he took pen and paper and drew up the draft. I then took it up and made the corrections and additions.[1] He read them twice or thrice and said he could never admit betrayal of trust and that in any case he would not make any statement there and then but would accept my suggestion that he should consult his friends. Three o'clock the following day was the time limit fixed for the receipt of his answer. I have consulted the President, Maulana Saheb and Sardar Patel, who are here, and they confirm my version.

Harijan, 10-9-1938

604. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 5, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Herewith a telegram for Devdas. We will not take anything in *Harijan* in that way. Your labour, however, has not been wasted.

I will get your note typed here. My article is almost ready. If it is ready earlier, or even otherwise, I will send it complete from here. Somebody will come.

Your letter was welcome. It is brave of you to write directly to me. I have torn up the letter after reading it. It is a strange story ! I will write when you come. There is nothing to worry about. The thing is so ridiculous. Do we have the time just now for such things? Do your duty without thinking about my blood-pressure. It would have been altogether wrong if you had not written the letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11640

605. LETTER TO PYARELAL

September 5, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Let no one hurt Mother's sentiments. You will not hurt

[1] For Khare's draft statement and Gandhiji's corrections, *vide* "Statement of Dr. N. B. Khare", 25-7-1938

Sushila of course.

Mahadev's letter about Rajkumari contained her views about all of you. My reply to your letter is still pending.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

606. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

September 5, 1938

BHAI RADHAKISANJI,

Bhai Chakrayya needs some handloom goods. You may give him whatever you can. How are Anasuya and the child? I have almost forgotten them both.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9124

607. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[Before *September 6, 1938*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Please send the following wire to Shankerlal: 'Suggested dates Delhi accepted. Hope you better. Bapu.' I am sending with this the bottle of honey. Lilavati forgot it as usual.

Mother has arrived there. She knows what is dharma but shrinks from acting accordingly. My advice is that you should tell her that she should decide the matter with me. If, however, you can see way clear, do guide her. Tell me also if you have any suggestions to make. I have intentionally kept you out of this. How much burden can I put on you? I feel no burden.

BAPU

[1] From the contents it appears that the letter belongs to the year 1938. The month and the date are presumed from Gandhiji's letter to Abdul Ghaffar Khan, wherein he says, "The date of the W. C. is now finally fixed"; *vide* "Letter to Abdul Ghaffar Khan", 6-9-1938

[PS.]

Please send this to Saxena[1]: 'Hope paper will always represent truth and non-violence. Gandhi.'

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 11642

608. LETTER TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 6, 1938

DEAR KHAN SAHEB,

The date ot the W.C. is now finally fixed. It meets at Delhi on 20th. I reach there on 20th. I hope you will attend. This means that I can go to the Frontier Province immediately after the Delhi meeting. You will now advise me please.

Will you also tell me whether you want me to take Amtul Salaam with me or not?

I hope you are doing well. Are you reading *Harijan* regularly? You should if you are not.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

609. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

September 6, 1938

I have read the Travancore Dewan's statement with the attention it deserves. I fear I cannot take shelter under ignorance of the Press messages published from time to time on the tragedy that is being continued in Travancore.[2] Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar's defence reads like an edition of the reports that used to be issued on behalf of the British Government during the civil disobedience campaign. Not even the massacre of Jallianwalla was justified exactly as the Travancore shootings are now being justified. Was not General Dyer's action subsequently condemned? So is it likely to be in this case.

[1] Mohanlal Saxena, General Manager, Associated Journals, Lucknow, the publishers of the *The National Herald*, the first issue of which appeared on September 9, 1938; *vide* also "Letter to Amtussalaam", 9-9-1938

[2] The Dewan in his statement had said, "Mahatma Gandhi is thoroughly unaware of the facts. . . "

I ask Sir C. P. Ramaswami to copy Sir Mirza Ismail and appoint an outsider of unimpeachable integrity to enquire into the whole affair. Let him declare a general amnesty and allow free expression of opinion. Instead of importing the military and a Special Officer to carry on repression, I invite the Travancore Government to request someone like the Rt. Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, if Congressmen are anathema, to go to Travancore and help them to re-establish peace there without further military action.

Harijan, 10-9-1938

610. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

September 6, 1938

This is no rebuke to you. You have done all this with the best of motives for the love of me. But without a knowledge of the manner of doing things, all our love may miscarry. Love waits, prays and is infinitely patient. You have been impatient to do good. If you have understood this you will dance with joy that you have in me a knowing friend whose love knows no bounds.

BAPU

From the original : C. W. 4218. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7854

611. LETTER TO HARSHADABEHN DIWANJI

September 6, 1938

DEAR SISTER,

I got your loving gift. I have heard that women are in the habit of concealing their age. Have you justified this belief by concealing yours? Be that as it may, live a full hundred years.

If you want my compliments for spinning a hundred rounds more, you have them. But where is the room for compliments when one is doing one's duty?

You may come whenever you wish to.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI HARSHADABEHN DIWANJI
KHAR
BOMBAY

From Gujarati : C. W. 9795

[1] The first three sheets of the letter are not traceable.

612. LETTER TO LORD BRABOURNE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 7, 1938

DEAR LORD BRABOURNE[1],

I am touched by your prompt and sympathetic reply to my wire about political prisoner B. K. Dutt. I thank you for it.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers, Courtesy : Pyarelal

613. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 7, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

You may begin in the morning with juice of fruits—either *mosambi* or grapes. Increase the quantity of milk by 8 oz. Take less rice. Eat more wheat instead. You do drink enough water. Stop walking too much, but do continue pacing about for two hours slowly and at uniform speed. The hour for retiring at night must be strictly observed. Do not worry if any work is left unfinished. A few things can be got done here. More in the next letter. Do not put yourself to any inconvenience for coming today.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11641

614. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

September 7, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I do not remember the letter in which you had asked questions. When it is necessary to reply to your letters or act on them, I do not hesitate even to send a telegram. Saraswati has been writing

[1] Governor of Bengal, then acting as Viceroy. He had acknowledged Gandhiji's telegram of 1-9-1938 and said he had agreed to the prisoner's release on grounds of ill-health subject to certain conditions.

to me and saying that she is perfectly peaceful. You should write to me about the unhappy circumstances in her family. If I can do something, I may try.

What Rajkumari writes about my health is not correct. I consider my health fine.

I would be satisfied if yours was as good as mine, barring the blood-pressure.

There is no time for more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7347. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

615. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

September 7, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

Who wants to get married, you or I? If you can wait, why need I be in a hurry? And as long as you are ill how can I give you away?

But please know that the treatment there is mere quackery. So, if you wish, come over here. But not in my absence. Go to Manjubehn. Let her examine you and suggest whatever remedy she likes. It would be better if you did not go to Maroli just now. I will not have your illness being prolonged there. I would bear it even if you were to die here because I would be sure then that scientific treatment had been given. Try Manjubehn first. Naranbhai will not now stand in your way.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7098. Also C.W. 4590. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

616. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

September 7, 1938

I have written to Vijaya. Manjula may examine her. She may go to Maroli if it is necessary. Let her not try quack remedies.

How is it that you too get fever? What is it due to?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10771

617. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

September 7, 1938

CHI. JETHALAL,

I got your fine letter yesterday. I finished reading it just now at 6.30 in the morning. I have now given it to Parnerkar to read.

If you are persuading the people to make ghee in their own homes, you should also show them the correct method of making it. I do not understand how you guard against adulteration.

Your second letter is based on hasty reasoning. But that does not matter. Experience will correct the errors of reasoning. Instead of judging the world, we should judge ourselves and do what we can. Bearing in mind that He who controls us all is perfect, we should be content with whatever we are able to do. Have faith that in the measure in which you are able to improve your village, other villages also will improve, and concentrate on that task. You do maintain accounts for everything, starting with cattle feed. Don't you? How much milk does a cow give? How much butter and ghee?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9866. Courtesy: Narayan J. Sampat

618. LETTER TO PYARELAL

September 7, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have told Sushila what I had to. Now her good lies in her doing what she thinks proper. She need not act under pressure from Mother. But if she is moved by Mother's love, she should not grumble. We do many things moved by parental love and find joy in doing them. I shall be content with whatever she does.

As for you, what can I say? I see that our ideas of duty differ. You see the same thing in one way, I in another way. So we must tolerate each other and pray that the veil of untruth may be lifted and we may both see the same truth.

What I wish is that, if possible, you should assure me and Sushila that you will not take any step at least while I am alive. Even that you should not do mechanically. Do it only if you can do so naturally.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

619. LETTER TO TARADEVI NAYYAR

SEGAON,
September 7, 1938

DEAR MATAJI,

You can write to me in Urdu. Your letter has pained me a great deal. Those who live with me never turn beggars. I. consider myself the richest person. Beggars are those who work for salaries, because they are always wanting more and more. They want promotions, no matter how. I urge you not to press Sushila. Persuade her by love and argument. Let her go her way if she is not convinced at heart. Parents who order their grown-up children about, commit a sin. Save yourself from such a sin. Pyare and Sushila are enjoying greater authority than you ever did. You had money power. Why delight in the memory of these things and why shed tears thinking about them? Did not Father do good to others? Can one do good only by securing a big job? Are not Pyare and Sushila doing altruistic work? Their life is full of it. Enough is enough. Listen to me and free Sushila of anxiety in good cheer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

620. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 7, 1938

MY DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I do not know what I should say; you repeat the same question which I have answered again and again. Bhansalibhai writes to me; but does he complain? Whatever I say reaches his head and heart.

Whatever I say to you does not satisfy you— I cannot discuss your food. If I ask you to strain less, you will exert more. If I ask you to sleep, you will not listen. Even if you try to sleep, your heart will protest that it is not correct advice. How can I know what was said to the Maulana? Tell me, how can I make you understand.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 728

621. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

[*September 7, 1938*][1]

DEAR HARIBHAU,

Ba and Bapuji have received your letters of the 2nd. Bapuji says that Ba is now no longer fit for such work and therefore should be spared.

We shall certainly meet in Delhi.

Yours,

MAHADEV

From the Hindi original. Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

622. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[After *September 7, 1938*][2]

STUPID GIRL,

Your letter of today has pained me much. Why are you so weak? How is it that you want to serve and at the same time lack self-confidence? Whatever happens, I do not wish to see you sad. Remember today's *bhajan*.

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the postmark

[2] This note is written on the reverse of a communication carrying the postmark "September 7, 1938".

623. A LETTER

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 8, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

I was unable to speak to Subhas Babu yesterday. But I have written to him.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat S.N. 11649

624. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

SEGAON,
September 8, 1938

MY DEAR AGATHA,

My capacity for work is very limited and work is daily mounting. Hence the delay in writing to you. But there has been not a moment's delay in action on this side. The whole sum is guaranteed. I gave Shuaib your address and he definitely promised to give the whole thing proper form and write to you. He was to send you or Harold £100 on a/c. I am now taking action.[1]

The rest from Mahadev.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

625. LETTER TO SHUAIB QURESHI

September 8, 1938

MY DEAR SHWAIB,

No news from you! Have you sent £100? The matter admits of no delay.

[1] *Vide* the following item.

What about your mission?

My right hand needs rest. This is with the left hand.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

626. LETTER TO SHAUKATULLA SHAH

September 8, 1938

MY DEAR SHAUKAT,

This is with the left hand as the right needs rest. Mahadev has been telling me everything. Poor Zohra!

I hope you are getting full assistance from Dr. Bidhan.

I have your warning about the guarantee for Harold. The idea is that the Bank should be put in funds and that £100 should be sent at once.

I am sure Ammijan is at perfect peace with herself.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

627. LETTER TO POTHAN JOSEPH

September 8, 1938

MY DEAR POTHAN,

I am on my back just now for the abdominal bandage. Hence the pencil hand.

I shall read your article.

You may fail ten times out of ten, and you will come to me as often as a penitent. What my word may have done for a moment it may also do permanently. There is nothing in me. But God may speak to you through me.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

628. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

September 8, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

There is falsehood, that is madness, in every line of Sheralekar's letter. Why reply to him?

You may come whenever you wish. Three o'clock will be the best time. How did Amritlal get indigestion?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10909

629. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

September 8, 1938

CHI. MUNNALAL,

The first decision you need to arrive at is whether you can dedicate your whole life to Segaon. The co-workers are what they are. I gave you those letters so that you might examine your heart. You yourself have engaged Govind, Dasharath, etc. It is your duty to live and work with them. You should spin and weave with them. You have to make yourself an expert in the science of khadi. This was your pledge from the very beginning and I have cherished that hope. You should ponder over Kanu's hint in this regard.

Do you reflect over all you read? I doubt it.

What does sitting with me mean? By all means sit if you have free time. The days are over when I could give you personal attention. I would be satisfied if I could cope with the work I have. But I feel that the body is bound to become weaker day by day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8591. Also C.W. 7031. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

630. LETTER TO SAMPURNANAND

September 8, 1938

BHAI SAMPURNANAND,

I agree with everything that you have said. The Congress has merely given a new name to the language. It has not made any other difference. No honest person would reject a word because of its Hindu or Muslim origin. What can we say of others? And it has become fashionable these days to oppose anything done by the Congress or Congressmen. Do you want to know my views on the subject or something else? Because I have spoken and written at length on this subject.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From Hindi: C.W. 10133. Courtesy: Kashi Vidyapeeth, Varanasi

631. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 8, 1938

You are quite mad. If I love you a lot I have also made you cry a lot. I do not know in what way you torment me. But if you are truly my daughter, worrying about you should be, as it is, a matter of joy to me.

Leave Mother to me. If you stay here, it will only be with her blessings, not otherwise.

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

632. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

[About *September 8, 1938*][1]

CHI. KAKA,

We cannot be sure about Sheralekar.

You did well in leaving the dentures there. There is so much humbug in the so-called Shastras that revised editions should be brought out. But who will do it?

Pyarelal can now move about.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10910

633. MESSAGE TO "THE NATIONAL HERALD"

[On or before *September 9, 1938*][2]

I hope the paper will always represent truth and non-violence.

The Hindu, 9-9-1938

[1] There is a reference to Sheralekar's letter in Letter to D. B. Kalelkar", 8-9-1938

[2] The first issue of *The National Herald* appeared on September 9.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM M. A. JINNAH[1]

NEW DELHI,
March 3, 1938

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I have received your letter of the 24th February, 1938. I am sorry for the delay in replying as I was not well. In your letter I missed the note of response, first whether you are of opinion that you see light now and the moment has come, and secondly, if so, whether you are prepared to take the matter up in right earnest, and thirdly, I find that there is no change in your attitude and mentality when you say you would be guided by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad as Dr. Ansari is no more. If you pursue this line you will be repeating the same tragedy as you did when you expressed your helplessness because Dr. Ansari, holding pronounced and die-hard views, did not agree and you had to say that although you were willing, but what could you do? This happened, as you know, before you went to the Round Table Conference. At the Round Table Conference the tragedy was repeated by you when you seemed to be willing to accept provisionally certain terms: but you there also expressed that you were helpless as the Hindus were unwilling and you, as a representative of the Congress, would have no objection, if the Hindus and Mussalmans came to an agreement.

We have reached a stage when no doubt should be left that you recognize the All-India Muslim League as the one authoritative and representative organization of the Mussalmans of India and on the other hand you represent the Congress and other Hindus throughout the country. It is only on that basis that we can proceed further and devise machinery of approach.

Of course, I shall be glad to see you, although I shall be equally glad to see Pandit Jawaharlal or Mr. Bose, [as] you may desire. The matter as you know will not be clinched without reference again to you by either of them. Therefore, I will prefer to see you first. In any case, I am sorry to say that I cannot come to Segaon to see you before the 10th March. I have to go to Bombay and also I have fixed various other engagements of my tour. But we can fix up the time and place that may suit us both.

Yours sincerely,

M. A. JINNAH

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-6-1938

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 24-2-1938

APPENDIX II

A TRAGEDY [1]

I proudly write in these columns about Gandhiji's health, discussing the causes of its breakdown, warning people, asking them to give him more rest. Ruthlessly I have turned out people wanting to see him, and have even interrupted talks and interviews, lest they should strain him over much and raise his blood-pressure. Fancy, therefore, my misery and my shame when I found one morning at Delang that what he considered a serious blunder on my part had raised his blood-pressure to the breaking point and might have brought about a catastrophe. Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday, 29th, 30th and 31st—which in that peaceful atmosphere of Orissa should have been the most blissful days—were the most miserable days I have ever had in my life. But they were, if anything, more miserable for Gandhiji, as I found from his heart-broken and heart-breaking utterance on the afternoon of the 30th. I thought I had made amends indeed at that morning's prayer by telling everyone present how I had been the cause of the terrible breakdown, but Gandhiji was not present when I spoke. But he knew that I had spoken about the incident, and so he devoted his speech to the incident. I bespeak the indulgence of the reader for inflicting on him this tale of personal woe. But I do it on public grounds, as he will find at the end of the story.

The circumstances were somewhat like these. My wife, who rarely attends the annual meetings of the Gandhi Seva Sangh, or for that matter any such meetings, came to Delang, especially, I was told, with a view to being able to go to Puri. And Gandhiji told me that I should make every arrangement for her going to Puri. Personally I disliked her having come for the sake of Puri, and had no heart to make any arrangements. I was once again asked if I had made the arrangements, and asked a third time. My wife to my surprise did not know that the Puri temple was not open to the Harijans. During Gandhiji's Harijan tour she was in jail. But that was no excuse for the ignorance. On the very first day in the course of his exhibition speech Gandhiji made it clear that the temple of the Lord of the World was not open to the Harijans, and so long as it remained so, the Lord was not, in his opinion, the Lord of the World, but the Lord of those who fed and feasted under His shelter. I had hoped that this speech would be a warning to all, including my wife, though I had a fear that she would go into the temple. I must also confess that I had a lurking suspicion thatGandhiji's repeated insistence on my making arrangements for her going to Puri sprang out of the depth of his ahimsa—the ahimsa that had made him serve liquor to Tommies in the Zulu Rebellion, and to serve meat to his friends at table in South Africa. I had also hoped that because she was going there with a number of other friends, including Gandhiji's second son Manilal, she would not go into the temple when the rest stood out. What I did not do was to din into her head that her going into

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn",4-4-1938

the temple would break Gandhiji's heart. As I have said, I was stupid enough not to realize the possible reaction and had even fancied that in the boundless charity of his heart he had found room for forgiving a temple-goer like my wife. I must therefore confess that even if she had definitely told me before going that she had made up her mind to go into the temple, I should not have resisted her. I did not want to disturb her faith to that extent. She knew that I was against it, she also knew that I have a horror of these temples—temples which even when they are opened to the Harijans, would not be better unless they were purged of the unscrupulous *pandas*. But if she thought it would do her soul good to go into the temple, I did not in my heart of hearts feel like standing in the way. As for Kasturba Gandhi, I must say that I had assumed she would stand out and her presence would perhaps act as a check on my wife and others. But as it happened, my wife went in, another friend went in, and also went in Kasturba. Some members of the party stayed out, including my little son who put up a plucky fight with the *pandas*.

On Monday evening when they returned and Gandhiji knew the whole story, he was sad. He had a sleepless night. He called Kasturba and my wife and me to account. The explanation, part of which is contained in the argument above, failed to satisfy him. It even irritated him. He held that I was primarily to blame. He held that I should have explained to them the history of the movement, how Gandhiji had gone to Puri in 1934, how violence was organized there, how he had to undertake the Orissa pilgrimage on foot, how reformers were warned not to go to the temple until Harijans were admitted, and if my wife still did not listen, Gandhiji's assistance should have been sought, and if then too she insisted on going she should have been free to go. He held hat I had not been watchful enough and that I had thus been unjust to him, my wife, myself and to the cause. And so he thus poured out his heart to the members of the Sangh :[1]

This pouring out of the agony of his heart was for me an added agony. He was so disconsolate. The next day he felt too weak to speak and went into silence for the whole day as a measure of precaution. What could I do in the circumstances? I was afraid lest I should make matters worse by entering into explanations and arguments. I felt like waiting until he had regained his normal pressure and strength. But the thought of my having been the cause of the collapse tormented me. If I was guilty of a grievous error of judgment, how could I continue to serve him? How could I correctly represent and serve the Harijan cause? What right had I to be his door-keeper? I had the hell of a night, and in sheer desperation I wrote to him a note imploring him to put me away. This exasperated him all the more and made the cross heavier to bear. He would prefer death, he said, at the hands of one who loved, to life at the hands of one who did not love him ! Instead of realizing my folly and repairing it by going to Puri with a band of satyagrahi pilgrims, he said, I had gone into hysterics over a well-meant rebuke ! Instead of serving my wife, he said, I had in my blind love of her

[1] For the full text of the speech, *vide* "Speech at Gandhi Seva Sangh Meeting", 30-3-1938

encouraged her superstition !

All this was too stunning for words. I felt that Gandhiji, who has performed several spiritual operations using the chloroform of love, had performed this one without that chloroform. In resentment I cried :

To live with the saints in heaven
Is a bliss and a glory,
But to live with a saint on earth
Is a different story.

May it not be that he had made a mountain of a molehill ?

But who am I to judge? As I write this I feel that I was perhaps too dense to probe into the workings of his highy sensitive mind. And after all he who had devoted half a century of vigilant endeavour to the pursuit of truth and ahimsa should be trusted to judge a situation better than I, ever liable to be swayed by passions and desires. What may appear to me to be trifles may be matters of life and death to him. I realized that however difficult life with him may appear sometimes, separation would be still more unbearable. He disclaims saintship. He claims to be no better than the smallest of us. I realized that I had grievously erred in associating even in thought those doleful lines with him. Whether he is a saint or a mere mortal, like all of us, I see that my cry for separation was a fit of frenzy. For when I look upon the note that I wrote to him, I feel I could not have gone five yards before returning as a penitent.

And after all is said and done, one thing stands out in bold relief—Gandhiji's uncompromising love of the Harijans and his anxiety to lay down his life for that cause. The poignant utterance became a call to greater dedication for the cause. The incident burnt into every one of those who attended the Sangh meeting this year the lesson that no one shall tamper with that most important item of the constructive programme and that everyone shall be wide awake. The week of retreat in sacred Orissa became more sacred with the cleansing effect of the electric shock that Gandhiji gave them, and the members went home with a message that they are not likely easily to forget.

M. D.

Harijan, 9-4-1938

APPENDIX III

LETTER FROM KHWAJA NAZIMUDDIN[1]

May 11, 1938

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I write to acquaint you with the conclusions which have been reached by the Government of Bengal in the matter of the premature release of terrorist convicts. In formulating these proposals, Government have given the most careful consideration to the suggestions which you were good enough to put forward in your letter of April 12.

It is necessary to emphasize at the outset that the scheme which is embodied in the succeeding paragraph is to be regarded as a connected plan, the different parts of which form a single and indivisible whole. As such, it is communicated not only for securing your own acceptance, but also the acceptance of Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee as well as the leader of the Congress party in the Assembly.

Government desire to commend the scheme to your most earnest consideration, because the declared acceptance by you, and by the Congress of Government's policy in this matter is a vital precedent condition to the adoption of the plan. In the absence of that acceptance Government will regard these proposals as null and void and will continue to discharge their responsibilities in this matter, according to the policy which has already been announced in the Legislature.

The scheme is as follows :

(1) To release forthwith terrorist convicts suffering from serious and continued illness.

(2) To release as soon as possible those convicts who have not been convicted of offences involving the actual commission of murder and serious violence, and have a comparatively short period of their sentences not in excess of 18 months still to serve.

(3) To place the cases of the remaining convicts before an Advisory Committee which will examine them on individual merits and make such recommendations in each case to Government as it thinks fit.

The decision as to the orders to be passed in each case, after consideration of the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, will rest with Government.

(4) The Advisory Committee will be appointed by Government and will consist of 9 members as follows :

(i) The President, a retired judicial officer of high standing;

(ii) A member of the Coalition Party;

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Khwaja Nazimuddin", 15-5-1938

(iii) A member of the Legislative Assembly from the Congress Party;

(iv) A member of the Legislative Assembly from amongst the representatives of the Scheduled Castes;

(v) A member of the Legislative Assembly from the Liberal Party;

(vi) A member of the Legislative Council from the Congress Party;

(vii) A European member of the Legislature;

(viii) One other Muslim member; and

(ix) An official.

The names of the members constituting the Committee will be announced as early as possible.

As an integral part of the scheme it shall be agreed and accepted between the Government, yourself and the Congress as follows :

(1) That no attempt will be made hereafter by the Congress, or by any other body with the support, tacit or open, of the Congress to secure an advance upon these terms, and the matter shall cease to be a political issue;

(2) That you and the Congress will actively discourage all forms of agita-tion for the accelerated release of prisoners, all attacks in the Press on the policy of Government in the matter of terrorist prisoners, all demonstrations and receptions on the release of such prisoners or thereafter, and all statements,writings and speeches favourable to terrorists or terrorism;

(3) That you and the Congress will take every step possible to create and maintain public opinion against hunger-striking and will publicly condemn such a course if adopted.

In proposing these terms and conditions, the Government of Bengal have gone to the utmost limit which they consider to be compatible with the discharge of their responsibilities for the eradication of this canker of terrorism, which has for so long been a recurrent factor in the political life of the Province. They have done so in the hope of mobilizing public opinion and of contributing to the creation and maintenance of the atmosphere calculated to render a recrudescence of terrorism unlikely. Government earnestly desire the active association with themselves of all who genuinely wish for the ordered and non-violent political development of the country. Your own support I claim with the confidence of one who knows how much you have the same object at heart.

I should be glad, therefore, if you will be good enough to communicate your views on these proposals as early as possible, and I would suggest that it would be appropriate if you would communicate with Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose and the Leader of the Congress Party in the Legislative Assembly, Bengal, with a view to obtaining their acceptance. . . .

The Hindustan Times, 4-10-1938

APPENDIX IV

STATEMENT OF DR. N. B. KHARE[1]

July 25, 1938

I have already admitted an error of judgment committed by me in presenting my resignation to the Governor on the eve of the meeting of the Working Committee. I admit that I have been guilty of indiscipline. I, as an old Congressman, should have known the value of discipline. I realize now[2] the enormity of the error, which has resulted in the dismissal of the Congress Ministers by the Governor under his constitutional powers under the Act[3].

I am sincerely sorry for what has happened on account of this loss of balance and I think that it is my duty to relinquish all positions of trust in the Congress, whose cause I have put in jeopardy by my action. I shall be content if I am permitted to serve as a camp-follower. I shall do everything in my power to retrieve the prestige which the Congress has lost through my action.

I hope that all Congressmen will rally round the Working Committee in its endeavour to form a united and stable ministry, for there are rumours of a split in the Province between Maharashtra and Mahakoshal. I hope that good counsels will prevail and we shall not think in terms of Maharashtra and Mahakoshal. I shall try my best to prevent any such split.

The Hindu, 3-9-1938

APPENDIX V

WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION ON C. P. CRISIS[4]

After having heard the Parliamentary Sub-committee and given anxious consideration to the events that have happened since the agreement arrived at in Pachmarhi between the Ministers in the presence of the members of the Parliamentary Sub-committee and the Presidents of the three Provincial Congress Committees concerned, and after having had several interviews with Dr. Khare, the Working Committee have reluctantly come to the conclusion that by the series of acts committed by Dr. Khare, culminating in his resignation of his charge and demanding the resignation of his colleagues of their charge, Dr. Khare was guilty of grave errors of judgment, which have exposed the Congress in the C. P. to ridicule and brought down its prestige. He was also guilty of gross indiscipline in that he

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 30-7-1938 and "Statement to the Press", 5-9-1938

[2] "Now" was deleted by Gandhiji.

[3] "Under the Act" was deleted by Gandhiji.

[4] *Vide* "Functions of the Working Committee", 6-8-1938

acted in spite of warnings against any precipitate action.

His resignation was the direct cause for the exercise, for the first time since office-acceptance by the Congress, by a Governor of his special powers, whereby Dr. Khare's three colleagues were dismissed. The Working Committee note with satisfaction that these three Congress Ministers showed their loyalty to the Congress by declining, without instructions from the Parliamentary Sub-committee, to tender their resignations which were demanded by the Governor.

Dr. Khare was further guilty of indiscipline in accepting the invitation of the Governor to form a new Ministry, and, contrary to the practice of which he was aware, in actually forming a new Ministry and taking the oath of allegiance without reference to the Parliamentary Sub-committee, and the Working Committee, specially when he knew that the meetings of these bodies were imminent.

By all these acts of his Dr. Khare has proved himself unworthy of holding positions of responsibility in the Congress organization. He should be so considered till, by his services as a Congressman, he has shown himself well balanced and capable of observing strict discipline and discharging the duties that may be undertaken by him.

The working Committee have also come to the reluctant conclusion that H. E. the Governor of the C. P. has shown, by the ugly haste with which he turned night into day and forced the crisis that has overtaken the province, that he was eager to weaken and discredit the Congress in so far as it lay in him to do so. The Working Committee hold that, knowing, as he must have, what was going on among members of the Cabinet and the instructions of the Parliamentary Sub-committee, he ought not to have, with unseemly haste, accepted the resignation of the three Ministers and demanded the resignation of the other three, dismissed them on their refusal to resign, and immediately called upon Dr. Khare to form a new Ministry and sworn in the available members of the new Ministry without waiting for the meeting of the Working Committee which was imminent.

Harijan, 30-7-1938

1. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 9, 1938

DEAR DAUGHTER[1],

The account of the work is good. Engross yourself wholly in these activities. Think about nothing while thus occupied. If you do not have the courage to go to the Frontier Province, you need not go. Overcome your sorrow. What do you eat?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 410.

2. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 9, 1938

CHI. MANILAL,

You must have got the cable I sent as desired by you. I assume that you will do nothing in haste. I feel that you cannot close the *I. O.*, and it will be best if it is not closed. But if there is no other way, let it be closed.

You will read about the other things from Sushila's letter.

My health can be considered excellent. The fluctuation in blood-pressure is no cause for alarm. My silence is continuing and that is good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4882

3. LETTER TO RATILAL

September 9, 1938

BHAI RATILAL,

I was glad to read the news in your letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7177

[1] The superscription is in Urdu.

4. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

September 9, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

The tongue does not readily utter '*tu*'[1] addressing the boys and '*tum*'[2] addressing the girls. It is something of a family tradition.

Make any change you think necessary in your diet but never for the sake of taste. Instead, enjoy whatever you have to eat.

It would be better not to accept anything even from your uncle. Do not discriminate between big and small books. It would be appropriate to give up collecting even books. Be content with the books available here.

As you are not coming with me you have to draw your contentment from within yourself. Wherever I may be my home is here, is it not? This ought to suffice.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4303; also S.G. 69

5. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

September 9, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Yes, you have to go to Balkoba. You may also do enthusiastically any other work entrusted to you.

The card is enclosed.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4302

6. CONGRESSMEN BEWARE !

I have been inundated with letters and wires complaining of what the senders have regarded as the Madras Premier's terrible, misdeeds. I pick out two which have been the subject of adverse comment in many quarters in India. They are his policy about Hindustani and his employment of the Criminal Law Amendment Act for abating the picketing nuisance.

[1] Thou
[2] You

My correspondents evidently think that I am the keeper of the Premier's conscience and that I have but to send instructions and they will be obeyed. They know my relations with Rajagopalachari. But I am not the keeper of anybody's conscience, much less of Rajaji's. Let the reader share the secret with me that nobody among those who regard the Congress acceptance of truth and non-violence as the rule of their lives fights me as strenuously as he does. But he has one essential virtue of a soldier. I became my own general of satyagraha and my first recruit in 1906. When I announced my generalship in 1918 in India, Rajaji was among those who enlisted themselves at the very commencement. It was under his roof that the inspiration of the hartal of 6th April came to me. From that day to this his loyalty to his general has been beyond reproach or compare. And if as general I asked him to give up his premiership he would do so without demur. He may not even agree with my judgment. But in battle he knows that a private has no judgement but his general's.

But in spite of the exemplary loyalty that Rajaji gives me in common with many others, I will not issue the instructions my correspondents demand. Let the complainants know that we rarely correspond with each other. I know he has no time and he knows I have equally little for such correspondence. The law of satyagraha forbids such action. If he has to resign, he will do so in the constitutional manner. And there will be no fuss, no complaint. What is more to the point, I have boundless faith in his wisdom, his uprightness, and his unsurpassed ability as a parliamentarian among Congressmen at least. He has to his credit no mean achievements. And those who think that he is wallowing in the constitution gutter are vastly mistaken. We have in our ranks no abler fighter in satyagraha. I see nothing wrong in a satyagrahi winning victories without bluster, without wrangling but by conversion, by carrying conviction. The world will perhaps never know what Congress Premiers have been doing by forcing conviction upon Governors. Rajaji has been in the forefront among these. The greater the peaceful penetration, the greater the virtue of satyagraha. There is little room for tamasha in a fight for truth with truth and nothing but truth.

It hurts me, therefore, when Congressmen decry him and think that he is so enamoured of office that he is afraid to do the right thing. All Congress Ministers naturally come in for trenchant criticism from those who dislike Congress politics. Whatever is sound in such criticism must be accepted with gratefulness. There is criticism that springs from party motives. Even that has to be borne. But when Con-

gressmen take up the same cry, it becomes embarrassing. They have their remedy. They can complain to their Provincial Committees, and failing redress they can go to the Working Committee and finally to the A.I.C.C. Surely there is no room for criticism if all these remedies fail. But my greatest complaint against these critics is that they are too hasty or too lazy to acquaint themselves with facts. There is no sin greater than ignorance. I see daily verification of this great saying.

My first advice then is that my numerous correspondents and those who think like them should first study facts as Rajaji and his Cabinet see them. If then they are not satisfied, they should move for redress in the manner indicated by me.

I can give no direct help. There are limitations to the use of my influence with Congressmen. My retirement does mean non-interference with individual Congressmen in the discharge of their daily duty and even with the Working Committee except when it seeks my help or advice. Thus when Dr. Khare came to me for guidance, I twice refused, saying that he should approach the Parliamentary Sub-committee. Shri Shukla and Mishra were in urgent need. But to them also I had to say the same thing as I said to Dr. Khare. If I do not observe these broad limitations, my retirement becomes meaningless. Indeed I do not follow the day-to-day doings of Congressmen now-adays, whereas when I was in the Working Committee nothing escaped me and I used to scan everything and give guidance in detail in so far as my health permitted. But now I do not even study all the resolutions of the Working Committee.

Let me now say a word about the two main grievances against Rajaji.

There is nothing wrong in making a knowledge of Hindustani compulsory, if we are sincere in our declarations that Hindustani is or is to be the *Rashtrabhasha* or the common medium of expression. Latin was and probably still is compulsory in English schools. The study did not interfere with the study of English. On the contrary English was enriched by a knowledge of the noble language. The cry of “mother tongue in danger” is either ignorant or hypocritical. And where it is sincere it speaks little for the patriotism of those who will grudge our children an hour per day for Hindustani. We must break through the provincial crust if we are to reach the core of all-India nationalism. Is India one country and one nation or many countries and many nations? Those who believe that it is one country must lend Rajaji their unstinted support. If he has not the people behind him, he

will lose his job. But it is strange, if the people are not behind him, that he has his great majority with him. But what if he had not the majority behind him? He must give up office but not his deepest conviction. His majority is worth nothing if it does not represent the Congress will. The Congress is wedded not to a majority; it is wedded to all that which will make this nation great and independent in the least possible time.

And the picketing? It is insufferable that youngsters or even grown-up people should assail homes and offices and howl unmentionable imprecations against those who are shouldering their burden amid the greatest difficulty. Until we have found the correct remedy in terms of satyagraha the Ministers must be permitted to deal with such offences in the manner they consider best. If they are not, the freedom that is possible under Congress Raj will soon dege-nerate into goondaism, pure and undefiled. That is the way not to salvation but it is the easiest road to perdition. And the Minister who is worth his salt will resolutely refuse to be a cause of the country's perdition.

Lastly, the Criminal Law Amendment Act. We may not make a fetish of Congress resolutions. The Congress has objection not to the name but to the contents of an Act going under that name, and then, too, not to every word or section of the Act. I have never studied it but I see from Rajaji's public declarations that it contains a few sections which suit the new situation that the Congress is facing. If such is the case, Rajaji will be foolish if he does not make use of them. But he will be equally foolish, if not something worse, if he does not summarily repeal the obnoxious clauses of the Act without delay. It is a monster created by the fertile brain of the repressor of the country's liberty. It was used as such against satyagrahis. The sooner, therefore, those clauses go the better for Rajaji and the country. But let Congressmen beware of hanging their trusted servants before they are tried and found wanting.

Harijan, 10-9-1938

7. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 10, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Poor Sushila was ready at 5 o'clock, but I did not let her go. I am sending her just now. If you are not feeling well, you may detain her. You ought not to have let the thought enter your mind at all that you were down with a serious illness. Now take complete rest. I for one would put you on fruit juice and try water and earth treatment. But Sushila and other doctors know best. I am after all a sinking ship. Who would choose to sail in such a ship?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11644

8. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

September 10, 1938

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

My opinion is clear. If we are unable to maintain cows we must admit defeat and close down the dairy. I kept the cows because of your presence here. Now you and Parnerkar must find a way. We should give up anything that you both do not endorse. We should not have two departments.

Yes, you have also to consider if the calves, etc., can be housed at a different place.

I do not enlarge the establishment. Quite a few are only temporary inhabitants and none of them will stay on after my death. So we need have no worry on that account.

I want a detailed budget of the medicines and other things required. In everything we have to bear in mind that all our activities are conducted with public funds.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1909

9. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

SEGAON
September 10, 1938

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I have been regularly getting the fruit sent by you. I did not write to you because of lack of time. Is Ratna the final examination or will there still be something left?

What happened about the *Ramayana*[1]?

I shall spend the whole of October out of Segaon. Do come and spend a few days with me some time.

Do you receive letters from Kamala?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

10. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 10, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

What must I do to please you? I gave you the cutting to make you laugh. It only hurt you. I showed you Mahadev's letter to make you see what I feel. Even that hurt you.

Why are you so sensitive? If Mother does not see your good the way I see it, how can I keep you? Even you agree that Mother should be kept happy.

Now be calm. Whatever has to happen will happen. If you cannot have peace by staying with me, then leave me. If you think it is in your interest to stay with me, what does it matter to you. . .[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] She had been working on a Tamil version of Tulsidas's *Ramayana*.
[2] Illegible in the source

11. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 11, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

It is just now striking 9. Sushila has not returned and so I feel a little worried about your health. For the present let the post come unopened. You need not carry any load. I am thinking about future arrangements for *Harijan*. I am not at all worried. The Great Editor[1] will do whatever is necessary.

I am having hearty talks with Mother. She is a flawless jewel.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11645

12. LETTER TO PYARELAL

Unrevised *September 11, 1938*

CHI. PYARELAL,

Yesterday I had a long talk with Mother. As I see it she will not be at peace till Sushila goes to Delhi. It also seems to me that although Sushila's heart is here, she cannot stay here in peace so long as Mother is not at ease. And that is how it should be. Children can hardly find peace by making the parents miserable. That would require a special reason involving a religious principle as it was in the case of Prahlad. Sushila does not have such a reason. My idea of Sushila's good is irrelevant here. Hence I feel that Sushila must decide in favour of Delhi. Mother insists that I should send a letter to Sushila. So if you brother and sister agree with my view I shall send the letter.

There is no cause for worry about my health. I shall take care of it. I certainly do not desire to end my life.

Mahadev being an invalid I certainly wish to take work from you. But can you work like him in your present state of mind? I do not wish to burden you. At the same time, we have to decide what you should do when Mahadev recovers. If it is necessary for you to be in Delhi for the sake of the peace of mind of Sushila and Mother, you

[1] God

must be there. It seems to me that none of us, especially I, have given any thought to Mother. Only this time I have been able somewhat to understand her. I can understand every feeling of hers and I appreciate it. Hence, from now on, in whatever I think about the two of you, I shall always keep in mind Mother's feelings.

Do not hurt her feelings. Talk to her patiently and cheer her up.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

13. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[After *September 11, 1938*][1]

This letter is also a madness. Living with me, you shall not continue to be silly. How can you be affected by whatever other people may say or do? Yes, if Mother's feelings are hurt even slightly, it should be intolerable to both of us. Criticism from others has got to be faced.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

14. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 12, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have not been able to touch the mail at all today. After it has been passed on to me, is not your responsibility over? I will do what I can and be content. Go through today's articles. I have not revised the one about violence. I have omitted from your Notes the one about the Frontier Province. I will now see your today's editorial. I have already discussed that subject from another point of view. I am attending to the other things also. And the many responsibilities here, too, take a good deal of my time. If you are fully restored it will be great good news indeed for me. In any case you and I have had a warning.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11646

[1] The note is written on the reverse side of a letter from the addressee, dated September 11, 1938.

15. A CIRCULAR LETTER[1]

September 12, 1938

I hear that the inmates of the Ashram have been complaining quite a lot about the way Sushilabehn serves me. One complaint is of partiality. The other is that I am crossing my limits. For instance, I lean on her shoulders while walking, which cannot be part of the service. Even when Krishnachandra is present I prefer Sushila's shoulders to lean on. I let Sushila have her bath just when I am myself having my bath. And I cover myself with her *sari* when there is no need for it.

I feel that those who have been talking in this way have betrayed me. It is the clear duty of those who have any grudge in this regard to tell me so at once.

I have never been conscious of any sin in my physical con-tacts with women. That is why when I accepted service from Sushila, I did not want to exclude my leaning on her shoulders. l con-sider service from Sushila necessary for me if it is available. No one should have the slightest suspicion of partiality in this. I have an im-pression that I had made all this clear when I discussed this matter the last time.

There are two new points. Why does Sushila have her bath in the same bathroom when I am lying in the bathtub? The suggestion was mine. I have to be in the bathtub for about 15 minutes. If she can get herself ready by that time, it is convenient to me and she can then have her meal early. The bathing arrangement is this: she bathes in the space behind the bathtub and while she is bathing I keep my eyes-tightly shut. I do not know the manner of her bathing—whether she bathes naked or with her underwear on. I can tell from the sound that she uses soap. I have seen no part of her body which everybody here will not have seen. What can be terrible is that she massages me while I am lying naked. So long as I have not become wholly free from passion I have to be very alert while I bear with that massage. In the hospital, an Englishwoman used to bathe me. She had to clean myprivate parts too. It never embarrassed me. For, I have a somewhat different conception of *brahmacharya*. It is not *brahmacharya* which cannot bear physical contact with women when it is called for. But this is a digression.

[1] This was intended for, persons, mentioned at the end, each of whom was required to read it and pass it on to the next person on the list.

Now about the *sari*. When I was returning after seeing the patients, I had on only my short dhoti. I felt cold. Therefore I used Sushila's *sari*. I did the same thing on a rainy day. There was an umbrella too, but I did not use it. These things are natural with me and Sushila. Let no one complain against Sushila. She is grown up, but so far God has not made her experience passion. This is what she says and I take her at her word. I have been further convinced by many other instances of her behaviour. I know two other such girls. I have not come across a fourth in thousands.

Now anyone who wants to say anything about this matter should write to me frankly. But no one must discuss the matter among themselves.

This must be returned to me after the following persons have read it: Pyarelal, Sushila, Chimanlal, Shakaribehn, Sharada, Vasumati, Sushila Gandhi, Manu, Kanubhai, Bhansali, Munnalal, Krishnachandra, Sankaran, Chakraiya, Nanavati, Ba, Mirabehn, Raj-kumari, Amtussalaam, Balwant Singh, Panerkar, Parnerkar's mother.

From the Hindi original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

16. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

[After *September 12, 1938*]

You do sometimes talk as if you were a child without knowledge of the world.

A common malady does not yield to heroic treatment. Concubinage is a common malady. Only when women learn self-respect will concubinage go. In this both are equally guilty.

Congress can take up Hindu legislation up to a point.

Unless you have some hard-working and learned women tackling the problem there will be no solid legislation. I can guide a woman or women who have industry, ability and also faith in my instinct. When it is optional, where is the harm? If a husband becomes a leper or contracts that vile disease due to his unfaithfulness, why should the poor wife be condemned to live with him? You must not raise fine objections. I think infectious disease also should allow a woman. Why do you put an undue strain on either?

From the original: C.W. 4222. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7858

[1] Written on a used envelope with the postmark bearing the date "12-9-1938"

17. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[After *September 12, 1938*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am dictating this letter. Enclosed are the letters for despatch. I am sending two articles for *Harijan*. You must have sent that advertisement about Gandhi Jayanti to *Harijan Sevak*.

Take complete rest. I will not have the courage to take you to Delhi in your present state of weakness. In all there are eighteen postcards and envelopes. Do you want the manuscript of Maithili-sharan's poem?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have dictated this with the help of that board. I shall be ready to carry on with signs even if both my hands get disabled.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11647

18. LETTER TO KHWAJA NAZIMUDDIN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 13, 1938

DEAR KHWAJA SAHEB,

I am thankful for your letter[2] of the 8th instant regarding the political convicts. Much as I should like, if only for the trouble you have taken in the matter, to fall in with your proposal, it would be a breach of faith on my part to do so. For, as you know, I am bound by a solemn promise made to these friends when, at my instance, they suspended their hunger-strike. Consistently with that promise I have to make every reasonable attempt to secure their early release. This I cannot do if I identify myself with your proposal.

I cannot agree with you that if you fixed a time-limit it would be

[1] According to *Gandhi—1913-1948*, Gandhiji in order to give rest to his hands began dictating letters by pointing to letters on a board about this date.

[2] In this the addressee had referred to interviews he had given to Subhas Chandra Bose and said that the latter refused to support the Government's plan about political prisoners unless a time-limit was set for the release of all the prisoners. He had asked Gandhiji whether he accepted the Government scheme, and, if he did not, sought his consent to making public the correspondence on the subject.

inconsistent with the reference of the very thing to a tribunal. Surely there is nothing inconsistent with such reference to say that you expect the tribunal to regulate the dates of discharge within a parti-cular period. Under the terms of your reference the judges need never discharge a single prisoner if, in their opinion, the enormity of their crime did not merit any consideration. However theoretical my objection may appear, it is impossible for me to run risks.

Perhaps the Bengal Government and their advisers have missed one big factor in the consideration of the question of release. These prisoners have no sense of guilt. The crimes, however bad in themselves, were not committed for personal gain. The prisoners, having changed their views on violence, feel their detention an intolerable hardship. They are fretting for public service. The public estimate also in this matter is of a different character from that of the Government. But since yours is admittedly a Government responsible to the people, you are bound to give considerable weight to public opinion which, so far as one can judge, emphatically demands their release.

Though you have, and I admit properly, ruled out the idea of exploiting my influence with the prisoners and the public for the preservation of public peace, I urge that there is nothing inherently wrong in using it if there is a reasonable chance of its telling on the side of public peace. But I may not labour this point.

For the considerations mentioned by me in this letter and in my previous letters and during the talks between ourselves and between your good self now and Subhas Babu who, in this matter, was acting as my representative, I must regretfully withhold co-operation from the Government in the projected scheme. But that does not in any way mean that I should obstruct you in your endeavour to accelerate the process of discharge. My action will largely depend upon the pace with which the discharges take place. My measuring rod will always be my letter of the 13th April, 1938.

I trust that in the interest of the common cause the facilities for correspondence and interviews with prisoners which you have hitherto afforded me will be continued.

I can have no objection to the correspondence that has taken place between us being published. I entertain the hope that this very important question will be kept by all concerned above party politics. I venture also to hope that the Press and the public will write or do

nothing that may give a violent turn to the agitation that may become necessary to procure the prompt discharge of the prisoners.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

KHWAJA SAHEB SIR NAZIMUDDIN
BENGAL SECRETARIAT
CALCUTTA

From a copy: C.W. 9933

19. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

September 13, 1938

DEAR SUBHAS,

I hope the statement will be soon published.

I suppose it will be issued in pamphlet form. Of course the poison is there but as the agitation is wholly false it is bound to die out. Maharashtra can never be lost for the Congress province and I would feel unmoved if in doing right all the provinces were lost. The thing needful is that the present ministry acts on the square. You will give me your reaction to my letter[1] to Sir Khwaja Nazimuddin.

Yours,
BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

20. LETTER TO CARL HEATH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 13, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter is quite like you.[2] It is not easy for the Congress to make a statement offhand. Whatever has to happen will happen as a result of negotiations between parties. Let this be made clear that there is no real difference between Jawaharlal and me. Our language often differs but we arrive at the same conclusion. The present British policy

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The addressee in his letter had expressed his concern at the impasse on the Federal question and suggested a common statement being made by Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhas Bose and other known leaders on the question so as to make an impression on British public opinion.

seems to be to do nothing through negotiation. There is something to be said for it.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

FRIEND CARL HEATH

From a photostat: G.N. 1031. Also Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1938. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

21. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 13, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

This is the result of overworking. You must now stop working altogether and take complete rest. You will perhaps get more peace of mind if you come over here. If you do not come, keep Sushila there.

I am not at all worried.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11650

22. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 13, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I completely forgot. Let those C. I. D. men come. I believe they have been coming for the last three nights. Whatever is ordained as Natesan's fate will happen tomorrow.

I think you should send wires to the doctors that they should not take any trouble. I also believe that Calomel has done you good. I cannot cope with the mail, but, unlike you, I will not be overeager to finish the work by keeping awake the whole night. You may go on sending the mail without any qualms.

Gibbon may come for a few minutes if he wishes. I am signing the cheque and sending it to you.

Send a telegram to Sir Nazimuddin:

"Thanks letter. Reply posted. Gandhi." Send a telegram to Subhas also:

"Reply Government posted. Sending you copy. Bapu." The rest tomorrow.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11648

23. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON,
September 13, 1938

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got Chhaganlal's letters. A good many letters are lying unanswered. I get no time and Mahadev gets attacks of giddiness. He has the same illness that I had. Tell Chhaganlal that I shall have no objection to starting a khadi society provided Shankerlal approves of it. The financial arrangement may be as you have suggested.

My message is as follows:

"Congratulations to all those who participated in this charkha *yajna*. Let us hope that hand-spinning will spread so widely that everybody will be wearing khadi."

I understand about Purushottam. If even men like him cannot subsist on what they get, whom can we expect to cling to spinning, Harijan work, etc.? In saying this I am not blaming Purushottam. The prevailing wind may drive a man along, even against his will.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8548. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

24. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON,WARDHA,
September 13, 1938

CHI. NARANDAS,

You seem to be progressing very well indeed. Read my letter to Manjula and give it to her. What is the difficulty about the music teacher?

Convey my humble *pranams* to Gokibehn and tell her that she is often in the thoughts of us all. How is she keeping? How is Kumi

doing? Has Gijubhai's Mandir started? How many childrenare enrolled in it? Does it have any connection with your school?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Pyarelal is down with typhoid. Cholera too is fairly wide-spread here.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8549. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

25. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

September 13, 1938

CHI. MUNNALAL,

With regard to your previous letter, since you had said you would be coming over I kept silent. The views that you have expressed are correct. As long as you do not hear the inner voice, you should come to no decision. You should, however, try very hard to come to a definite decision.

I am not weak-minded in regard to my resolutions. My reputation is just the opposite of that. But when I myself have a doubt, a resolution made in the past cannot be regarded irrevocable. Whatever I did here was in the nature of an experiment and there are bound to be changes in an experiment. I had no misgiving about my behaviour because it was the result of fifty years of disciplined habit. I therefore felt that I should make no distinction between Mataji[1] and Parnerkar's mother. I have observed that my physical touch has some special effect on men and women. Mataji had been deeply pained on my account. I could remove her pain by putting my hand on her. I had not been able to go to see Parnerkar's mother, but that is not because I did not care for her. As the treatment was being carried out under my supervision, I expressed my love for her by putting my hand on her and made her feel at once that I had not been indifferent to her.

Is there danger of my being pierced with Cupid's arrows in my letting myself be massaged naked, or in a thousand naked women bathing by my side when I am blind? I do feel afraid of myself in letting the pure-minded Sushilabehn massage me. But if I am lying blind-folded and those two are bathing, I would feel no fear at

[1] Pyarelal's mother

all. By all means let those who are as minutely scru-pulous as I am make themselves perfectly blind and permit some Rambha[1] to bathe near them. But anybody who lets himself be massaged is sure to be maligned. If he is sure of himself, however, let him by all means copy my example. I think I have replied to all your questions.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: G.N. 8565. Also C.W. 7040. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

26. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

September 13, 1938

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Explain fully to Kashinath the contents of the enclosed. If he does not have a copy of the Gram Panchayat Act, ask him to get one from the Government. After he has got it, we shall advise whether a court should be constituted.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8567. Also C.W. 7039. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

27. NOTE TO RAGHUNATH GANESH PANDIT SHELOLIKAR[2]

September 13, 1938

We can hope to see that scene only as a result of the pure *tapashcharya* of thousands of us.

I found the recitation from the *Gita* very pleasing.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2794-1

[1] Celestial courtesan

[2] The addressee had asked: "When shall we see the first seven Congress Premiers doing their work in the glorious tradition of the Congress, i. e., the people commending their work? "

28. LETTER TO THE NAWAB OF BHOPAL

September 14, 1938

DEAR NAWAB SAHEB,

I have your kind message through Shuaib. I understand.

I am sure you will see to prompt arrangements being made for Harold Ansari. He is in dire need. And he won't gain admission to the Hospital if the fees are not guaranteed.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile: *Madhya Pradesh aur Gandhiji,* p. 125

29. LETTER TO M. C. RAJAH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 14, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

I must apologize for the delay in replying to your letter.[1] I have been overwhelmed with work. Now I have your wire.

I wish you would trust C. R. to do his best. He should be allowed to do the thing in his own way. If you cannot trust, naturally you will take the course which commends itself to you. All I know is that Harijans have no better friend than him. Go to him, reason with him and if you cannot persuade him, bear with him. That is my advice.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

M. C. Rajah Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] In his letter dated August 25 the addressee had complained to Gandhiji that Rajagopalachari had opposed the Temple Entry Bill moved by him although he had himself drafted it and said that Harijans were exercised over this question "and contemplating repudiation of the Poona Pact."

30. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

MAGANWADI,
WARDHA,
September 14, 1938

MY DEAR JAWAHARBHAI,

Kripalani sent me the other day copy of your letter to him in which you said you want some more definite expression of opinion than this that "Bapu was happy" to read your letter. I was in a hurry. Bapu was in substantial agreement with all that you had said and indeed he felt that you had amplified certain points in a way he would never be able to do. Will this do as a definite opinion? The enclosed will help to confirm what I have said.

Yours affectionately,
MAHADEV

[PS.]

Bapu is as well as he can be with the overwhelming burden of work that he has to carry. I hope Indu is quite well now and that Sarupben is flourishing.

From a copy: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

31. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 14, 1938

DEAR MAHADEV,

Shall we say you have a mania for work? That is why I had to write severely. We should admire the British in this respect. Don't you know that if you were to be disabled, I would be a bird without wings? If you become bed-ridden, I would have to wind up three-fourths of my activities. Although I had not apprehended that you would fall ill, I had made up my mind as to what activities to curtail in case you were bed-ridden and had thus lightened my mind. But would not curtailing work in this manner be like a stab in my heart? So I wrote to you to take complete rest and recover fully soon. Follow me in the matter of hip-bath as much as you do in drinking milk. Surely taking hip-bath is not my sole prerogative.

Sushila did not give Jivaraj's letter to Shivdas. Now it is being sent with Shuaib.

I sent the letter for Rishikesh directly with Radhakisan. Thus I do save your labour. The note about the letter was sent by an oversight.

I wanted to send the telegram to Raja yesterday, but forgot about it, Here it is:

"Tortures inconsistent with your rich humour. You must not be grieved over anything. Love. Bapu."[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11651

32. LETTER TO PYARELAL

September 14, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have already told you as well that Mother had placed the responsibility on me. I see therein her sincerity and efficiency. It also shows her faith in me. I must on my part shoulder the responsibility.

As a result, I have started wondering whether Sushila should be sacrificed for the sake of serving me. It is an agonizing thought. Parents, even should they be on death-bed, get work from paid servants rather than hinder the studies of their children. Should I do otherwise?

I am afraid you too have been intoxicated by the idea of serving me. Hence, you have been deceiving yourself with regard to Mother's state of mind. Mother has conveyed to me in clear terms that she wishes to see Sushila become a doctor. She must have a degree and also the financial benefit that the degree may bring. She tolerated a son becoming a fakir; she cannot the daughter too becoming a fakir. There is much weight in this argument. Moreover Sushila's mind is oscillating between renunciation and pursuit of medical skill as the world sees it. You sowed the seed of renunciation in her. I watered it. In all this the only thing tying her to me is the personal service I take from her. Should I spoil her future by accepting her? I hold the view that it is in her interest to stay with me. It can hardly be that you agree with the view. Poor Mother is not even aware of it. Does Sushila's boundless love for me stifle her? What can I decide in such a difficult situation? Think about it if you can.

I shall keep you informed of whatever I write about Sushila.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] This is in English.

33. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 14, 1938

CHI. RAMAD,

Today I just feel like addressing you as I did when you were a little child . . .[1] is still not ready with me. You have returned[2] and you are welcome. I will leave from here for Delhi on the 19th. I shall be there for atleast eight days. You may therefore go to Delhi directly from there or accompany me from here. I wish you to come here so that we may go to Delhi together. A conch-shell or a flute instead of [a clock][3] will do for Kanam for his [bag][4]. You will then be safe. Bring from there a small conch-shell or flute. Let him blow the conch-shell or play on the flute. Bhansalibhai teaches him with all love. More when we meet. I am quite well. I keep unbroken silence these days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru

34. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 14, 1938

MY DAUGHTER,

I do not like your way of working. It is difficult even to suggest a cure for you. Where was the necessity of your waking up at 3 o'clock? You should have rest. You should give up the charkha and take such treatment as Sushila prescribes. It would be good if you went to Bombay. There can be no question of your going to Delhi if Khan Saheb sends a refusal. Even otherwise you cannot possibly go to the Frontier afflicted with piles.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 409

[1]A word here is illegible in the source.

[2]According to a note at the top of the letter, Ramdas had returned from South Africa and was in Bombay at the time.

[3] The two words are indistinct.

[4] *ibid*

35. LETTER TO PRABHU DAYAL VIDYARTHI

September 14, 1938

CHI. PRABHU DAYAL,

Write whatever you want to after obtaining Nayakumji's opinion.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 11686

36. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[After *September 14, 1938*][1]

If you have faith in me, it does not become you to be obstinate. Khan Saheb was only joking. However, you will not be able to stay in the Frontier Province alone. I therefore advise you to go to Bombay; improve your health there and come back here fully restored when I return. You cannot always accompany me on my tours. Can one obey orders and be obstinate at the same time?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 679

37. LETTER TO ATULANAND CHAKRABARTY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 15, 1938

DEAR ATULANAND,

I see no inconsistency between my letters[2] to you. Your note read like giving stone when bread was wanted. I have in mind the growing distrust and bitterness which no writing can possibly remove. I have told you you have to be your own missionary. I have written as I have felt. Please be patient with me and go your way.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 1480. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

[1] This was obviously written after "Letter to Amtussalaam", 14-9-1938. By that date, the addressee had not heard from Abdul Ghaffar Khan.

[2] For earlier letters to the addressee, *vide* "Letter to Atulanand Chakrabarty", 23-6-1937, "Leter to Atulanand Chakrabarty", 28-8-1937 and "Letter to Atuanad Chakrabarti", 8-6-1938

38. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 15, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

You must have duly received all the material sent yesterday. Prabhu Dayal's report for today is good.

Manu had high fever yesterday. Today she is better. The ups and downs thus continue. I am sending as many letters as are ready.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11653

39. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

September 15, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

If you write frankly instead of being vague, you would have your desire fulfilled earlier. If I have to go to the Frontier Province, I shall not be able to call over Saraswati. All the same, I am going to try from today. You should go on supplying me with the necessary material.

You must have received my previous letter. It is good that you are devoting yourself to study, but it is foolish to do so by reducing exercise and food. You may become a first-class doctor but will you consider yourself rewarded if the very next day of your being recognized as such you were to leave the world? Degrees, etc., are but a means; they are certainly not the end. And if you become a sort of permanent invalid, what service would you be able to render to me?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7348. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

40. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 15, 1938

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have not received the programme from Chhaganlal. Will anyone take charge of Rajkumari at Viramgam? She will be travelling second class. She will be accompanied by her attendant. R. K. eats

very simple food. Nobody should press delicacies on her. It will be enough if she is provided with a commode and facility for bathing in private.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U/II. Also C.W. 8550. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

41. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

September 15, 1938

BHAI PURUSHOTTAMDAS,

Do come to Segaon towards the end of October. Most probably I shall have returned from the Frontier Province by that time.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Gujarati original: Purushottamdas Thakurdas Paper. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

42. LETTER TO LAKSHMI GANDHI

September 15, 1938

CHI. LAKSHMI,

I cannot say who will be accompanying me but these names are certain: Mahadev, Kanu, Pyarelal, Sushila, Ba and Kanam. As regards my special requirements, goat's milk, for one thing, will be there. Are all these arrangements to be your responsibility? I shall remain there for a week at least. Ba and Kanam will be staying longer. May be Ramdas too will accompany us. He will be reaching Bombay on the 17th instant.

Manu had fever but she is all right now. If Sushila, Sita and others are ready to come I shall bring them.

I shall try to send a wire finally. Mahadev is slightly unwell. So Chandrashanker too may be with us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2010

43. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 15, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have sent the mail in the morning so today I was not in a hurry to send this. Important letters must be despatched. I understand about work. There is no objection to your working in moderation. Are you following Sushila's instructions on walking about on the terrace twice a day?

I have learnt a new thing from Durga: that the remedy for scorpion-sting is a *bhajan*. What kind of scorpion would it be that permits one to sing a *bhajan*? And what a singer she must be who can sing a *bhajan* despite the pain of a scorpion-sting?

I did not ask Shuaib to post Jivaraj's letter. He was to give it to you so that you could send it after affixing the late fee stamp. When two persons do a job which should be done by one, it is bound to be spoiled. I am making this criticism in order that you may have the benefit of our experience here.

I remember to have sent you yesterday a telegram for Parameshwaran. But the memory of a man of 69 cannot be very trustworthy. On the back of one telegram a reply was written. The remaining were in a letter. Please do inquire.

I understood from Sushila that what I had written in my letter to Jivaraj was what you desired.

Behnji was not the cause of my circular. It was Mirabehn. That day she had lectured Pyarelal and Sushila. Though warned she had misunderstood Amtul Salaam. There was a violent quarrel. I, therefore, thought that if I did not clarify things the poison would spread and so I sent round the circular. I see that most of the people here, poor fellows, know nothing. So my conclusion is that Mira was the sole cause of the ill-feeling which has been generated. That is part of her nature. What can we do about it? I will show you the circular as also the replies received. You need not worry about this matter. Despite such shocks, the blood-pressure seems to be behaving normally.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The following for Parameshwaran:

"Your coming unnecessary. BAPU."

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11652

44. TELEGRAM TO HUMAYUN KABIR

[On or after *September 15, 1938*][1]

PROFESSOR HUMAYUN KABIR
36 AHIRIKUPUR ROAD
CALCUTTA

GLADLY MEET YOU 24TH AFTERNOON. PLEASE REMEMBER I AM OBSERVING SILENCE BUT THAT DOES NOT MATTER. I CAN WRITE ANSWERS.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

45. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[Before *September 16, 1938*][2]

You should completely stop talking to him. What is the use of unnecessary harassing? Tell everyone to sit with him for a while, but he should not be allowed to talk.

As long as Pyarelal is ill, I would not enjoy the massage, etc. Where do you even have the time? I consider it sinful to take two hours of your time. Therefore, I wish that for the time being, you should stop the massage on your own. As for bathing, I shall do it myself.

You must think over all that should be done for Balakrishna. Tell Krishnachandra what should be done. He would send daily reports to you and Mahadev and also to David if necessary. Perhaps Mahodaya can pay even daily visits to Balkoba. Discuss everything with him.

From the Hindi original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The addressee's telegram is dated 15-9-1938.

[2] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Munnalal G. Shah", 21-8-1938 & "Letter to Prabhavati", 16-9-1938

46. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

[*September 16, 1938*][1]

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I like your idea. It should be given some practical shape. The building meant for Nayakum will have to be vacated. Vacate it whenever he asks for it. If you can accommodate yourself in the spinning-shed which we are putting up, do so. The best course is as follows. You should find some plot for yourself from the surrounding land and the three of you together should build a cottage and try to live in it. I am very much afraid that you may fall ill. It is not without some thinking that I have given you the freedom in regard to food.

The third woman is Amtul Salaam. As you asked for the name I give it. I will have to assure myself further about her. If necessary, I will make a change.

Nobody can come up to her in devotion.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have given these two as examples . . .[2] selected . . . [3] they are . ..[4] Even to A. S. also.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8373. Also C. W. 7041. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

47. CABLE TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHAGANJ,
September 16, 1938

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
INDIA LEAGUE
165 STRAND, LONDON

JUST RECEIVED NOTE. ALREADY WROTE[5] HEATH. THOUGH OUR LANGUAGE DIFFERENT WE MEAN SAME THING NO DOUBT MY MIND. WRITING. LOVE..

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1938. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] In a note the addressee says that he received the letter on this date immediately after it was written.

[2] Illegible in the source

[3] *ibid*

[4] *ibid*

[5] *Vide* "Letter to Carl Heath", 13-9-1938

48. LETTER TO B. K. DUTTA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 16, 1938

DEAR DUTTA,

I was delighted to hear from you. I hope you will quickly build up your shattered body.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI B. K. DUTTA
C/O SHRI RAJKUMAR SINHA
THE MALL, CAWNPORE

From a photostat: G. N. 9281

49. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

September 16, 1938

MY DEAR C. R. ,

You must have got my wire.[2] Why should anything torture you? So long as you can easily wear the thorny crown, you may wear it. But if those who have thrust it on you are jealous of your wearing it, it would be good riddance for you. Anyway your philosophy must not desert you. Was your letter a sign only of momentary weariness?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2071

[1] The addressee, a political prisoner, was released from a Bihar jail on ground of ill-health; *vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to the Viceroy", 1-9-1938 and "Letter to Lord Brabourne", 7-9-1938

[2] *Vide* " Letter to Mahadev Desai", 14-9-1938

50. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 16, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Has the complaint on the reverse been investigated into and found to be without substance? If you have not written to the Maulana to that effect, please do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11654

51. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

September 16, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Whenever necessary, you must not hesitate to write to me or speak to me. Hesitation may even be *adharma*.

Ba is accompanying me. And even if I do not go to the Frontier Province, Ba will stay in Delhi for one month. You may, therefore, occupy Ba's room. Carry on the classes there. If you have any effects, you may put them in her bathroom.

I am thinking of taking over J.'s House. Let us see what happens. All my plans are indefinite. I can decide something if I know what my place in the Frontier province is.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10772

52. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

September 16, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

I assume that you have reached Malabar and that Jayaprakash's treatment has started. Prithuraj, Shamjibhai, etc., are there. See them.

Ba, I and others will reach Delhi on the 20th. We shall be there for about eight days. Thereafter I will go to the Frontier Province. Ba

will remain in Delhi. Ramdas will land in Bombay tomorrow.

I am all right. Manu had fever but she is well now. Pyarelal has fully recovered. I hope to return by the end of October.

Do not be remiss in writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3521

53. LETTER TO AVANTIKABAI GOKHALE

[*September 16, 1938*][1]

DEAR SISTER,

The gift from you two sisters comes unfailingly. I shall certainly wear it on my head. Why is Gokhaleji[2] ill?

Ramdas should be reaching there tomorrow. Nirmala studies at the Kanya Gurukul, Dehradun. I am aware of numerous attacks on me. I do not read them. The praises too are full of exaggerations. Then why not the attacks? Praise does not raise us. Condemnation does not take away anything from us. Then why should we be happy or miserable about it? We shall reap as we sow.

I gather from your other letters that you too, were ill. Do not strain yourself beyond capacity.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

54. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

[On or after *September 16, 1938*][3]

I cannot take the credit of deciding without consultation. I had told Sushila to have a talk with you. She informed me that you were prepared to devote your whole time there after I left.

Amtul Salaam was so ill yesterday that she had to be served. I claim that I can massage better than any of you, including Sushila.

[1] From the contents, specially from the reference to Ramdas's arrival, presumably in Bombay; he reached there from South Africa on September 17, 1938; *vide* "Letter to Purushottamdas Thakurdas", 13-9-1938 and "Letter to Prabhavati", 16-9-1938

[2] Baban Gokhale, addressee's husband

[3] *Vide* footnote 2 on the following page.

I gave a massage to Amtul Salaam for a few hours yesterday. If you too fall ill as a result of your foolhardiness I may have to give you a massage too, but it is hardly a very desirable thing. Amtul Salaam has many virtues but she is obstinate in an equal measure.

BAPU

[PS.]

There is very little to learn in this book. I am doing what little it recommends. *Chhilta* water.[1]

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4304

55. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

[On or after *september 16, 1938*][2]

All this can be said only after my death. Let us see where God takes me.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4567

56. THE STATES AND RESPONSIBILITY

The partial success of the people of Mysore, instead of liberalizing the other States, seems, so far as one can conclude from known facts, to have stiffened them against the movement for internal responsible government. I have called the Mysore success only partial for nothing has yet been gained in substance by the people. The Maharaja and his cultured Dewan have recognized the State Congress, they have instituted an impartial inquiry into the recent tragic happenings and appointed a Reforms Committee with ample powers. With patience and reasonableness on the part of the Mysore State Congress and with real good will and understanding on the part of the Mysore Government, we may see a large measure of, if not full, responsibility in the government of Mysore.

But the psychological effect of the Mysore events has been exceedingly great. The people of the States have begun to see a new vision of liberty. What seemed to them to be a distant goal now appears to be an event to be realized almost in no time. I believe that

[1] The significance of this is not clear.

[2] Gandhiji had scribbled this on a letter dated September 16 from the addressee who had touchingly described Amtussalaam's joy when Gandhiji gave her a massage.

if the awakening among the people is genuine and widespread no repression can possibly stay their inevitable march to their cherished goal.

I have said enough of the Travancore frightfulness. I can call it by no other name. Here is an extract from a letter from a Travancorean whose testimony I have never had occasion to doubt. He says:

> A careful study of the Dewan's statement shows that he is trying to cloud the issue and mislead outsiders who are not aware of the sequence of events that he narrates. Excepting the threats of 'civil war' alleged by the Dewan, all the other events or occurrences happened subsequent to the promulgation of the proclamation and the declaration of the State Congress as an illegal body. How post-war occurrences justify the war itself, it is difficult to understand.
>
> As regards the violence which we all deplore, the stone-throwing and the burning of buses are attributed to rowdies set up by the police according to one version; but without a thorough inquiry, which is impossible under the present circumstances, it is difficult to say what is the truth. Anyhow, do you not think that it is rather surprising that though all these occurrences took place in clear daylight and at meetings at which large numbers of police and military forces were present, it was not possible to prevent any of them or arrest a single one of the offenders? The explanation of the supporters of the State Congress is that the police dare not arrest any as they and their hirelings commit these atrocities. I cannot say how far the explanation can be accepted. A volunteer who was subjected to a severe lathi charge at the Quilon meeting says in an interview to the *Hindu* correspondent (published in *The Hindu* of 4th Sept.) that he saw with his own eyes some policemen throwing stones. Such allegations are generally made by the State Congress members. Meetings are being held and speeches made in all parts of the country but the arrests are very few. The present policy seems to be to disperse meetings by force. This leads to firing and death of innocent persons. After the Quilon meeting there was firing again at Puthupally, a village about five miles away from Kottayam. One or two died and some were wounded. The actual number is not yet known. All the provisions of the new Regulation are being openly disobeyed by the people. But the Government are not able to bring the offenders to book as there is only one jail in the State and that is already full. If the Government desire to arrest and punish all the offenders, then they will have to build more jails as the number willing to court arrest and imprisonment is very large already and is increasing day after day.

And I am inundated with telegrams describing the fearful repression going on in several parts of Travancore. I do not ask that this testimony should be believed as against the State communiques. But I do suggest that there are, as usual, two sides to the question and that there is a strong case for an impartial inquiry.

But whether there is an inquiry or not, the duty of the Travancore State Congress is clear—on the one hand to see that there is no violence of any sort done by them or their sympathizers, and on the other to go on with their programme of direct action till the Travancore Government relent or the last member is accounted for.

I should like here to state one limitation of ahimsa. If a wrongdoer banks upon the ahimsa of his victim and goes on heaping wrong upon wrong till every one of the victims is crushed, a cry from the surrounding atmosphere rises and the force of public opinion or the like overtakes the wrongdoer. But no satyagrahi should think that he has never to suffer unto death. His victory lies in the defiance by his unconquerable spirit of death and loss of property. The wrongdoer's certain defeat lies in his utter failure to bend or break the spirit of his victim.

If the States persist in their obstinacy and hug their ignorance of the awakening that has taken place throughout India, they are courting certain destruction. I claim to be a friend of the States. Their service has been a heirloom in my family for the past three generations, if not longer. I am no blind worshipper of antiquity. But I am not ashamed of the heirloom. All the States may not live. The biggest ones can live only if they will recognize their limitations, become servants of their people, trustees of their welfare and depend for their existence not on arms, whether their own or British, but solely on the goodwill of their people. Frightfulness will feed the fire of violence that one feels smouldering everywhere. If the States are badly advised and they rely upon organized violence for resisting the just demands of their people, ahimsa, so far generated in the country as a means of redressing social injustice, will not protect them. If it had grown into a Himalayan oak, it would have passed any test however severe. But, sad to confess, it has not gone deep enough into the Indian soil.

The Hyderabad communiques have therefore come upon me as a painful surprise. Sir Akbar is a great educationist. He is a philosopher. It was a pleasure to read his recent convocation address to the Dacca University. It is passing strange that he should have lent himself to the reactionary declarations which condemn an organization even before it has begun to function. What can be the meaning of communalism in a state which is overwhelmingly one population according to religion? What can communalism mean in, say, Kashmir or the Frontier where the population is predominantly of one faith? The doctrine of minority is a good hobby to ride up to a point. But it

must be at least numerically a fair minority. Even a minority of one can expect perfect justice. But it has no status in the political field. When a person belonging to an insignificant minority mounts to power he does so not as a represntative of his group but by sheer merit. The State Congress in Hyderabad can never be communal in the sense in which the word is understood in India. An institution in the Frontier Province need not be dubbed communal merely because it has no Hindu member. Of course an organization may be frankly communal in outlook. But the Hyderabad communiques make a subtle distinction and aver that there is presence in the State Congress of persons predominantly communal in outlook. What is more, the State Congress has come out with a statement totally repudiating the suggestion of communalism.

And then comes even the erstwhile progressive Rajkot, Only the other day it had a representative Assembly elected under universal suffrage, and it had complete liberty of speech under its late lamented ruler. One may hope that after the recent display (so far as I can see, wholly uncalled for) of force, the political organization of Rajkot will be not only permitted to function undisturbed but that its demands will be met in a spirit of justice.

Whatever happens in the three States named or on any other, let the people of the States recognize that their salvation depends wholly on their own strength whose generation in turn depends upon an exhibition in action of complete non-violence and truth. They must realize that it is utterly impossible openly to organize along violent lines large masses of mankind deprived of arms and almost from time immemorial brought up as a non-military nation.

Harijan, 17-9-1938

57. ACCUMULATING EVIDENCE

A man reaps as he sows. Having written on violence, I am getting evidence from all parts of India supporting my statement. The saddest case to come under my observation is that of a Congress Committee having incited the ryots of a zemindari simply to take possession of the lands of that zemindari. This act of spoliation was preceded by speeches of Congressmen reeking with violence. I sent the papers to Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya for investigation. He confirms generally the complaints made by my correspondent. I am hoping

that the District Committee or the Provincial Committee will be able to right the wrong. Failing that, of course, Rajaji's Government has to give redress. In saying this I do not wish to suggest that the land does not belong to the worker on it. I endorse the socialist theory of possession. But no socialist that I know has defended the usurpation practised in Andhra. If all the land in India is ever to belong to or be possessed by the worker alone, it would be either by a bloody revolution or by equitable legislation. It must be clear to every sane man that the act of confiscation will never last. Had it not been for the Congress Government, the spoliation could never have taken place. The Congress Government will dig its grave if it fails to restore the land to the legal possessor. I may add in parenthesis that the dispossessed zemindar is reputed to be a docile man with pro-Congress tendencies.

The other piece of evidence is choice cuttings from the U. P., C. P. and Bombay press. The singularity of the U. P. cuttings is that they contain incitement to violence in poems and prose. A lady writer waxes eloquent over the misdeeds of the zemindars and the wrongs of the kisans. She draws a terrible contrast between the opulence of the haves and the penury of the have-nots. Having prepared the ground she invites the kisans to a feast of blood and thunder. "Take any weapon you get hold of, strike and strike hard. Don't be cowards. It is all yours and you must seize it by your powerful arms." This is a mild rendering, all too brief, of the red original. Had not the lady's name stared me in the face as writer, I would not have thought a daughter of India to be capable of incitement to such merciless violence. I must confess that even if I screwed myself up properly I could not fill the three columns that she has done with invective. If no one has had his head turned by the writing, it is certainly not her fault. Fortunately the millions to whom it is addressed cannot read.

The C. P. and Bombay cuttings contain unthinkable falsehoods. There is no restraint on the pen. No language is foul enough to blacken the character of persons. Some of the things said are patent inventions. The writings easily come under the law of libel. But what can libel proceedings do? They invite libel proceedings. These advertise the papers. Defence would be an additional opportunity for invention. There are veiled incitements too. And even without incitement, why should not youths reading the portraiture of persons in blackest colours take it into their heads to go and kill the 'lepers' described in the columns? To many, their newspapers are their Bible. They believe in them. And some of these papers are supposed to represent the Congress policy. The evil is on the increase during the

Congress regime. It is well that what was inside is now coming out. But this is not civil liberty; it is criminal licence. Swaraj will not come by way of falsehoods and violence. And we shall do a double wrong if we do all these things in the name of truth and non-violence. I adhere to the advice I have tendered to the Congress and Congressmen.

Harijan, 17-9-1938

58. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 17, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

The enclosed is for Durga.[1] I have not the wish nor the courage to do anything that will make her unhappy. Has Brijkrishna's post-card been answered? If not, it should be done on Monday. Please tell Babla. You have to tell him how many people and "Yes" about the laying of the foundation. You should be able to sleep. Do not let your mind be oppressed by thoughts of work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

59. LETTER TO DURGA DESAI

September 17, 1938

CHI. DURGA,

Though there is not the slightest cause for worry, still Mahadev's health will require watching. He cannot of course resume work right away. Jivaraj says you would not like Mahadev to go to Delhi. Is that your wish? If your mother and son want to accompany me to Delhi I am willing to take you along. If my health permits me to go to the Frontier Province, you can stay on in Delhi for the time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the following item.

60. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

September 17, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

Where did you learn all this cunning? There are criticisms on three heads and still you say it was only for my information. What a way of putting things ! But you have the right to write whatever you like. Chimanlal had asked me whether or not to give you the figure. The expenses here are certainly on a royal scale. I could not preserve my health without that. The experiments in ghee, etc., also mean some expense. So the expenses here are not a standard for anybody to follow. If anyone were to tell me that friends give me money and I squander it I would listen and laugh. No doubt there is scope for improvement but it can be effected only if I get a wise manager like you. But you are not going to stay here for ever. The figure was not given you so that you might pay the amount. You may pay only according to your capacity. I have already told you that I will not mind even if you do not pay. It would be better, however, to pay as long as you can afford.

It would be more accurate if you described me as lazy. Would you consider Chimanlal, Munnalal, Nanavati, Balwantsinha, Parnerkar, Kanu, Sharda and Shakaribehn lazy? The others are only staying there. Bhansalibhai certainly cannot be considered lazy. Krishnachandra is ill but otherwise he is a saintly person. Shankaran has to be trained up. I make do with whatever work Anand does. Even so, because of my incapacity I put up with some laxity. I have only mentioned the names that occurred to me. You may explain to me in greater detail giving particular names.

You did not reply to me. There is no question of your forcing anything on me. In spite of my being not free from passion, do you and Manudi desire that I should let myself be ministered to by and should touch women? This question is an important one. Manudi will not understand it but you can. All of you can say: ‘So long as Bapu is not free from passion, let him be served only by Sushila and Ba.’ Or you can say: ‘When he puts the burden on us, we do wish that he would let us touch him. What effect can his passion have on us?’ Either stand can be justified. The first is safer from all points of view. In fine, the experiment which I had commenced with a particular aim

can be said to have ended, and I invite the views of you all regarding any new step I may take. I do not want to act in haste. I will do only what I can with objective detachment. I believe you to be wise. You are thoughtful. In such matters you can guide me as a woman. Please, therefore, give me your independent opinion.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: G.N. 4883. Also C.W. 7042. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

61. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

September 17, 1938

CHI. MANUDI,

Consider yourself fortunate that you have arrived when I am observing silence. That silence is for the whole country. You have the benefit of being a witness to it. The silence is not an expression of diminished love. Love does not care for words uttered by the tongue.

I will certainly write to you when you go to Bombay. You should write, too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 1572. Courtesy: Surendra B. Mashruwala

62. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

September 17, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Teach Sharda music to her fill. If others also ask for help in learning to recite the *Gita* or music, help them without any hesitation.

Do take care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10773

63. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

September 17, 1938

CHI. JETHALAL,

I got your postcard, etc. I got Lakshmidas's letter today, which I am sending. I have been collecting literature which can be helpful to you and sending it. You may leave out of it whatever is not useful. It is not necessary to reply to me. Where is the need for replying to what I send to you for you to think over?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati : C. W. 9867. Courtesy : Narayan J. Sampat

64. NOTE TO RAGHUNATH GANESH PANDIT SHELOLIKAR

September 17, 1938

If you could prolong your stay here by a few more days you could correct Sharda's recitation of the *Gita*.

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 2794-2

65. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[Before *September 18, 1938*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Sushila says that if you can go to Bombay today, you should. I think that will mean unnecessary rushing about. If they[2] are coming here, they may examine you here. The main thing is rest. If you go, you should stay on in Bombay and then join me at Delhi. If you decide to go, you must leave tomorrow. It will be better if you do not carry the burden of *Harijan* with you. Don't worry about what will happen for two weeks.

Now you will willy-nilly have to . . .

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 11630

[1] *Vide* the following item, where Gandhiji mentions Drs. Jivaraj Mehta and Gilder having examined Mahadev Desai and advised him complete rest.

[2] Drs. Gilder and Jivaraj Mehta

66. TO THE READERS

[*September 18, 1938*][1]

The readers of *Harijan* will share my sorrow that Mahadev Desai has become very ill. Drs. Gilder and Jivaraj Mehta, who with their usual kindness came specially to examine him, have come to the conclusion that he must take prolonged rest. He has had the same warnings that I had. The doctors think that prolonged overwork has brought about the illness which, if neglected, may bring about paralysis of all activity. Let the numerous friends of Mahadev not be alarmed over the news of his illness. There is nothing to be alarmed about. Only nature has issued a stern warning which he and I may not disregard except at our cost. I include myself as an object of warning, for if I do not insist on Mahadev's taking rest, he is quite capable of cheerfully taking his last breath with the pen in his hand. If I am wise and true, he will take the needed rest. Therefore, for the time being, the readers must miss the familiar and copious writings over the initials M. D.

I am writing this note during the small hours of Sunday morning, having got up at 1.30 a. m. for finishing *Harijan* work. But I dare not repeat such liberty without the danger of a sudden collapse. I have only limited physical energy left in me. It has therefore to be sparingly used.

The third person who can do *Harijan* work is Pyarelal. He has been *hors de combat* for some time and just now he is convalescing after the recent attack of enteric fever.

Harijan is not a newspaper, it is a 'views'-paper representing those of one man. Even Mahadev and Pyarelal may not write anything independently whilst I am alive. I am myself daily growing in the knowledge of satyagraha. I have no text-book to consult in time of need, not even the *Gita* which I have called my dictionary. Satyagraha as conceived by me is a science in the making. It may be that what I claim to be a science may prove to be no science at all and may well prove to be the musings and doings of a fool, if not a madman. It may be that what is true in satyagraha is as ancient as the hills. But it has not yet been acknowledged to be of any value in the solution of world problems or rather the one supreme problem of war. It may be

[1] The Sunday preceding September 24

that what is claimed to be new in it will be proved to be really of no value in terms of that supreme problem. It may be that what are claimed to be victories of satyagraha, i.e.,ahimsa, were in reality victories not of truth and non-violence but of fear of violence.

These possibilities have always been in front of me. I am helpless. All I present to the nation for adoption is an answer to prayer or, which is the same thing, constantly waiting on God. Such being the case, whilst I am alive *Harijan* can only be continued so long as I am able to write or Mahadev or Pyarelal can interpret me from week to week.

The readers need not think that there are not others who can take the place of these two workers. There are. But they are all engaged in the respective tasks allotted to them and it would be wrong to remove them from their spheres of work. Satyagraha will not stop for want of *Harijan*, but it will for want of workers to carry on the mighty constructive programme.

Therefore, whilst Mahadev's illness lasts, the readers will overlook the gaps they will notice in the editing of *Harijan*. This illness induces a reflection. I have often expressed the opinion among friends that in the matter of capacity for detachment Englishmen are far in advance of us. No matter how important national affairs may be, they will keep their meal hours and hours of recreation. They are not unnerved in the face of dangers or impending calamity. This may be called working in the spirit of the *Gita*. Among the political workers in India there are very few who come up to the Englishmen's standard.

This English detachment is worthy of emulation. That it is used for the exploitation of the so-called uncivilized or semi-civilized races of the earth is another matter. It would be a distinct gain to the national cause if the leaders and workers strictly keep their hours. No man is expected to do more than he really can. If at the end of the day there is surplus work left or he cannot get through it without missing a meal or encroaching upon the hours of sleep or recreation, there is mismanagement somewhere. I have no doubt that if we cultivate the habit of punctuality and acting according to programme, the index of national efficiency will go up, our advance towards our goal will be repaid and the workers will be healthier and longer-lived.

In conclusion, the readers and correspondents will extend their indulgence if they find, as they will more than heretofore, that they

are not served in time or at all. The correspondence is increasing, the work to do is also on the increase. The capacity for coping with both is diminishing. God's will be done.

Harijan, 24-9-1938

67. NOTE TO RAGHUNATH GANESH PANDIT SHELOLIKAR

September 18, 1938

The fight was directed against the very party before which I had taken the vow.

This did not violate the vow and my fast was aimed at Hindu society, not the English. I believe that had the Award not been changed the Harijans would have become a separate community, which was the object of the Award.

If the work I am doing is in consonance with dharma and for the furtherance of dharma, it should be pursued even at the risk of public disapprobation.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2795

68. NOTE TO AMTUSSALAAM

[Before *September 19, 1938*][1]

There is no limit to your obstinacy. If I do not take you after having agreed to it, would it not be because it cannot be helped? I know you will not be able to put up with life in the Frontier Province. Therefore it is no use taking you there. If your health continues to be as bad as it is now I shall have to look after you rather than you looking after Mahadev. I continue to take service from you only to avoid a quarrel. I know your body can no longer give service. If you had had yourself massaged for three nights running you would have become stronger and you would have been in good humour, but that was not to be.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 701

[1] This and the following two notes to the addressee, all undated, have been placed according to the order in which they occur in *Bapuke Patra–8 : Bibi Amtussalaamke Naam*. They were evidently written before Gandhiji left Segaon to visit the N. W. F. P. on September 19.

69. NOTE TO AMTUSSALAAM

[Before *September 19, 1938*]

What a letter you have written! I have included you in my entourage but you may stay back if you want to. I sent your name to Khan Saheb also against my wish. Do you wish to go as a favour to me or because you cannot bear to stay back ?

There was no other thought in my mind about what happened at night.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 675

70. NOTE TO AMTUSSALAAM

[Before *September 19, 1938*]

You are only proving what was said to Maulana Saheb. Why do you pester me now? If you wish to come along you have my permission but if you do not I shall not compel you. Please stop harassing me. You are turning to nought all my cajolings. I have not said anything and still you are quarrelling with me. I cannot understand such behaviour. Now stop writing and do whatever you want to do.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 726

71. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

[Before *Monday, September 19, 1938*][1]

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Whatever physical service or some such thing is being rendered [to Balkrishna] should continue. Sleeping near [him] should also continue as I have said.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4327

[1] The letter bears the addressee's note : "Monday morning, September 19", presumably, the date of receipt.

72. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[On or before *September 19, 1938*][1]

MY DEAR AGATHA,

At last I have a copy of your personal letter. It is exhaustive. Of course you will come when you are ready. I am writing to G.[2] about your passage. You must not be angry with your friends about their writing to me. But I am at ease now that I have your assurance that you will always let me know your wants no matter whether I can supply them or not.

You are having an anxious time there. Nothing but good can come out of these contacts. I look forward to your account of the happenings.

Here the federation discussion does not worry me. The question of the release of political prisoners [3] does. I have not yet made an impression upon the powers that be that their release cannot but make for peace. Their declaration of non-violence needs to be taken at its face value. I can certainly work upon it and hold the declarants to their promise. But the authorities are timid. However, I am patiently working at it and have not lost hope that they will be released before it is too late. I am well, considering the strain I am going through.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy : C. W. 7829. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

73. A NOTE [4]

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI
September 19, 1938

I stopped on the night of Saturday (17-9-38) the experiment involving physical contact with women that I had been carrying on. I had been thinking of it for some time but I was not able before that

[1] The letter seems to have been written before Agatha Harrison left England in October 1938 and since Gandhiji had left Segaon on September 19, 1938, this letter is likely to have been written on or before that date.

[2] Presumably G. D. Birla

[3] Of Bengal

[4] This was sent as an enclosure to "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 8-10-1938.

date to come to a decision. That night, however, I had an experience that made me decide to discontinue it. While the experiment went on I had a certain freedom. But it has never been my luck to enjoy this kind of freedom. Now my responsibility increases.

During the experiment I had the opportunity to do a great deal of thinking. I also had some new experiences. I will write about them if I get the time. Writing, however, is not so necessary. It may provide little guidance to others.

I cannot say that I have become more *nirvikara*[1] as a result of this experiment. Some friends had feared that it might result in adding to the *vikara*[2] since my mind would be perpetually occupied with the thing. Nothing of the sort has happened. It is not my habit to continue to brood over a decision I have taken. The decision works of itself. It is not a burden on the mind—it should not be.

The stopping of the experiment does not mean that things will go on the way they did before. I cannot say that I shall remove myself somewhere.

This, however, I can say that I will not deliberately renounce the service of the few sisters in the Ashram, sisters who are so close to me. I shall take from them the service I require. I had never renounced such physical contact with them as I considered necessary for taking service from them. My practice of resting my hands on their shoulders will continue as before. The restriction that I had been observing during the period of the experiment will be slackened. What I wrote about it in *Harijan* stands as it should. No time limit had been set as regards this practice.

I must add that in giving up this experiment I felt no joy. I gave it up out of a sense of dharma. I have however been able to discover that the harmless physical contact with women which was habitual with me over many years has not done any harm to my practice of *brahmacharya*. The imperfection of *brahmacharya* in me has some other cause. But, as is my nature, when a doubt arose in my mind regarding this it became necessary to make the experiment.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7868

[1] Free from passion
[2] Passion

74. LETTER TO PYARELAL

September 19, 1938

Read this with a calm mind when you have the leisure.

CHI. PYARELAL,

One day I had a talk with Mother and then this letter began to take shape. Last night I came to the conclusion that if I did not write to you, I should be deceiving you.

I decided to write this yesterday because of Mahadev's illness,

If you can, you should work whole-heartedly for *Harijan* and [other] papers. For this to be possible there is something that needs tobe done. Mother said: "Marry Sharada to Pyarelal. She will agree if I persuade her. But you must take up this responsibility." My immediate reaction was that I do not have that much influence over you these days. Still, should I not convey to you what appears to me in the best interest of you, me and many others? I spoke to Sharada. She is of course willing. I suggested to her that in that case she should herself write to you. She said: "I do not know how to do it. You may write and I will sign. When I have placed myself in your hands, what is the difficulty?" Sharada does not seek to gratify any sensual desires. She is keen to serve. Seeing that you had suffered a terrible shock, Chimanlal thought of entrusting Sharada to you and, moved by a similar feeling, Sharada went along with the idea. Knowing you as I did, I dissuaded him. This of course you know. Now I am approaching you with a different motive altogether. Three or four different people were approached for Sharada. She was turned down because of her weak health. This quite shocked me. In such a state Mother's suggestion was quite a help. It is our duty to accept the hand of someone whom nobody accepts. What does it matter that Sharada is weak of health? I do not consider her weak. I see many qualities in her. She wants a teacher for husband, somebody who will educate her at home. Such a husband should make her overcome her-desire to be a mother. If he does not do so she has the strength to remain calm.

You will not be betraying Yoga by accepting the hand of a girl like Sharada. I have already suggested that the Yoga of your imagination whom you have wedded remains what she is. Supposing that Yoga was named Sharada? But if that be not the case, you may not give Sharada a child. So long as you give her knowledge, you give her your love, she will be content. If you can understand this much, my

task becomes easy. And the broken strings of your heart are made whole again. But if you are not convinced at heart, I would certainly not insist that you should abide by what I say.

Sushila told me that the assurance I gave you at the time of your fast, which I later withdrew, had not become inoperative. I have already written you to say that it no longer holds. If you wish you may pursue your fast under my supervision. So, this need not become a hindrance to your *Harijan* work.

My statement that you and I had different ideas of dharma represented a conclusion drawn from your letter. My sending blessings to Yoga on her engagement distressed you. I feel it was my duty to bless her. I was under the impression that you had also taken the same view. I am not convinced in my heart that Panditji[1] or Lakshmibehn[2] used coercion with Yoga. I did not simply follow the custom in sending my blessings.

I shall not write anything more now. By accepting Sharada's hand you will be bringing a cow home. It is just possible that she may turn out a *Kamadhenu* for all of us. I for one notice such qualities in Sharada. Do not refuse her hand.

I am not able to break my silence. You have risen from the death-bed. It is a sign from God. You will have truly risen when you come out unscathed from the burning forest in which you are caught and make your full contribution to the *yajna* of non-violence. My silence will easily end if you accept my suggestion. Right now, it is a refuge for one distressed.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

If you do not like my suggestion, feel free to ignore it. Do not make yourself unhappy.

From the Gujara ti origin al: Pyarel al Papers . Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y. Courte sy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushil a Nayyar

[1] Narayan Moreshwar Khare

[2] Wife of N. M. Khare

75. NOTE TO PYARELAL

[Before *September 20, 1938*][1]

Right now I am full of thoughts, so many as to drive a man crazy. One of them is that when we go to Delhi you should go to the Frontier Province. I am deciding about the rest.

From the Gujara ti origin al : Pyarel al Papers . Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y. Courte sy : Belade vi Nayyar and Dr. Sushil a Nayyar

76. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

DELHI,
September 20, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
RASHTRIYASHALA
RAJKOT

ALL REACHED WELL. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original : C. W. 3879. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7036

77. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

DELHI,
September 20, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Better a pencil letter than none.

I have sent you a wire. Mahadev took the journey well. Poor Shraddha was bad. The train reached Wardha 4 hours late.

I hope you are having a good and useful time there. You will insist on keeping well.

No more for the day.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3880. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7036

[1] From the contents; *ibid*

78. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 20, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

All reached well 4 hours late. Mahadev took the journey quite well. Poor Shraddha was bad.

This is a furnace. Not a breath of air.

I hope you are getting the post all right.

Can't say more today.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6402. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9997

79. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

September 20, 1938

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter as also the book sent by you. But before I could even begin it, Kaka carried it away. I do hope to glance through it when he returns it.

I expect to return from the Frontier Province by the end of October. Raosaheb and you may come then.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10396. Also C.W. 6835. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

80. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

September 20, 1938

CHI. BABUDI,

Write to me daily. Be careful about food. If there is any trouble let me know. You will have started getting the menses. If not, sitting in warm water will certainly bring them on.

Pyarelal's room is sufficiently bright. You should strip yourself there, plaster your body with mud and walk about for a while. Then when the mud is dry take a bath in the opposite room. This will regularize the menses.

I have detained Dadasaheb only for your sake. Recite the *Gita* properly. Learn music from Nanavati and English from Bhansalibhai.

Keep the kitchen, etc., very clean.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9996. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

81. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

September 20, 1938

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

You must have heard the story about the true mother and the false claimant. The false claimant agreed to having the baby cut up in two with one portion each being given to the two claimants. But the true mother told the judge that if that was the only way out she would withdraw her claim and let the other woman have the baby. It would at least be alive then. Now, let us see who proves to be the true *go-sevak*. Both of you may be such or both may turn out to be worthless or one true and one false. The problem thus poses three questions for me. Never say die.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1910

82. NOTE TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

[After *September 20, 1938*][1]

My mind does not work as regards the ashram. If its existence is needed it may be put on its feet by begging for donations locally. But you should give up the whole idea until you have acquired self-confidence for doing something here on your own. I have already agreed to your living with me and we shall further see in Segaon what you can do. As regards Hardhyan Singh's house I am writing to Shaukat.

Here is the draft of your will:

[1] Gandhiji arrived in Delhi, where this and the following three notes were evidently written, on September 20. They have been assigned G.N. numbers in reverse order, a procedure followed with regard to all the photostats of the year.

"I hereby bequeath to my surviving brothers all my share in the paternal estate."[1]

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2464

83. NOTE TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

[After *September 20, 1938*]

I have to think about your going to the Frontier Province. I do not wish to do anything that may seem improper. Anyway you should be prepared.

You have given up the thought of restricting your field of service here, I hope.

You may adopt what attitude you please toward Satyavati. There can be no harm done when the heart is pure.

I would like your separating from your brothers though they may continue to give you Rs. 100 per month as long as they can.

There is no difficulty from my side to your living with me. We shall see how far you can preserve your health in Segaon.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2463

84. NOTE TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

[After *September 20, 1938*]

But there are many such things. How can I check them? Even in cases where I do try to check things, do I succeed? You are to go only if you wish to, not otherwise.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2462

85. NOTE TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

[After *September 20, 1938*]

It is not a question of inconvenience. I do not know who are going with me. I have said be prepared. Ba said she wanted to go. I said yes to her. Amtul Salaam has taken herself for granted. If there is overcrowding I shall leave you behind. I do not wish to place too

[1] This is in English.

heavy a burden on Khan Saheb. Probably I shall know for certain by this evening.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2461

86. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[Before *September 21, 1938*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

The time for *takli yajna* is drawing near as I am writing this. I have read *Shivasankalpa*. I like it, too. I will try to read it again. Dreams are unusual for me. But for the last six or seven days, I have had numerous dreams and all concerning you. Last night, there was a break. Let me describe the last one also. You said your legs ached at night and poor Durga and Babla could not go on massaging them all the time. You therefore asked me to send Kanu at least for the nights, so that he might massage them properly. I said our understanding was that if walking twice was too much for your strength, you should walk only once and that overexerting yourself for walking would not be desirable. At this point,"I wake up and see that the world does not exist."[2] When will these fancies about you stop? Where should I send you? How? If I am not free from passion, will your going away improve my condition?

There is no hysteria in all this constant thinking about you. Sushila has not got the medicine. Herewith a copy from the *Reformer* for Khan Saheb. . . .[3]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11636

[1] This was written before *Rentia Baras* which fell on September 21, 1938.
[2] Gandhiji is quoting a line from Narasinha Mehta.
[3] The letter is incomplete.

87. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

September 22, 1938

CHI. MARY,

I am glad you were none the worse for the experience. Find out exactly what you are expected to do as Commissioner and then certainly accept if it appears worth while. Your letter to Amtul Salaam is excellent. I have handed it to her.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Here up to 29th.

From a photostat G.N. 6071. Also C.W. 3401. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

88. DRAFT OF RESOLUTION FOR A.I.C.C.[1]

[Before *September 23, 1938*]

Inasmuch as people including a few Congressmen have been found in the name of civil liberty to advocate murder, arson, looting, and class war by violent means, and several newspapers are carrying on a campaign of falsehood and violence calculated to incite the readers to violence and to lead to communal conflicts, the Congress warns the public that civil liberty does not cover acts of or incitement to violence or promulgation of palpable falsehoods. In spite, therefore, of the Congress policy on civil liberty remaining unchanged the Congress will, consistently with its tradition, support measures that may be undertaken by the Congress Governments for the defence of life and property.

Harijan, 1-10-1938

[1] This was drafted by Gandhiji; *vide* "Discussion with Communists", Before 11-11-1938. The resolution was passed by the Working Committee, which met in Delhi from September 23 to September 25 and later, on September 26, by the A.I.C.C. when a group of people walked out. *Vide* also "That Unfortunate Walk-out", 5-10-1938.

89. TELEGRAM TO TRIVANDRUM LAW COLLEGE UNION[1]

[On or before *September 23, 1938*][2]

THE PRICE OF LIBERTY IS HEAVY. ARE YOU NON-VIOLENT IN MIND, WORD AND DEED? IF YOU ARE, SUFFER TO THE UTMOST AND LIBERTY IS YOURS.

The Hindu, 24-9-1938

90. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

September 23, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I got your letter. Do certainly take tub-baths. It is good indeed that you have left off medicines. That you are not able to sleep is too much. Give up everything except water for a day, and see what happens. The cause of insomnia can be nothing but indigestion.

CHI. VIJAYABEHN
C/O RAMBHAI HIRABHAI PATEL
SAURASHTRA SOCIETY NO. 25
ELLIS BRIDGE
AHMEDABAD, B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7099. Also C.W. 4591. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

91. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE

[*September 23, 1938*][3]

Mahatma Gandhi began by thanking the members for expressing their views on the questionnaire that he had written out in the last two days. He was sure that the members would have read his articles during the last two months in the *Harijan* on the increase of violence in the Congress organizations. He had thought over the subject very carefully.

First, said Mahatmaji, he had noticed that several Congressmen, who had

[1] This was in reply to the Trivandrum Law College Union's message regarding the situation in Travancore.

[2] The news item carrying the report is dated September 23.

[3] From *The Bombay Chronicle* and *Gandhijiki Dilli Diary*, Part II

joined the Congress and signed the pledge without understanding or believing in the necessity for observing truth and non-violence as essential steps to achieve swaraj, had committed breaches of these two conditions. He had recently noted many Congressmen writing leaflets or making speeches in the name of civil liberty, inciting others to violence. Such speeches and writings, which were retarding the progress of the Congress towards its goal, should be stopped. The Working Committee could do it by defining civil liberty in a resolution. Any incitement to violence in the name of civil liberty should be treated as a breach of Congress discipline and as such severely dealt with by the disqualification of the guilty members from holding offices or posts of responsibility in the Congress. It was open to the Working Committee to accept his suggestion, but he would emphasize the strict enforcement of discipline in the ranks. He would go even to the length of expelling those who committed breaches of discipline from the Congress.

Gandhiji continued that there should be no compromise with violence or untruth. The Congress today was actually manned by those who had lost faith in the creed of non-violence and the constructive programme of khaddar, [removal of] untouchability, prohibition and Hindu-Muslim unity. The real strength of the Congress depended on these twins, non-violence and constructive programme. When certain power was captured by Congressmen, there was an unhealthy competition to divide the spoils, which indicated that Congressmen were not able to digest power. This unseemly rush to capture committees by violence and corrupt methods would make swaraj a distant dream. This was not the way to win swaraj; this was not the way to work the office-acceptance programme. The ministries had been accepted by the Congress in a spirit of service. It was, therefore, necessary to apply the purge, as otherwise the Congress would collapse under its own weakness. Incitement to violence should be checked. Otherwise it would soon degenerate into undignified goondaism.

So far as Congress organizations were concerned, Mahatma Gandhi suggested that only those who had been in the Congress registers for five years should be eligible to hold offices or posts of responsibility in the Congress. He is reported to have added that the yarn franchise which was abandoned in 1926 should be restored. All office-bearers in Congress organizations should annually contribute 5,000 yards of hand-spun yarn to the Congress. He would make yarn franchise a compulsory clause. He knew that it was found unworkable in 1926 by many Congressmen but he would not care for the volume of Congress membership. He would not mind a fall in membeship of the Congress. Ten thousand true and non-violent Congressmen could bring swaraj and work wonders rather than ten million Congressmen on the rolls committing violence.

It had been argued, said Mahatma Gandhi, that Congress would cease to be a democratic organization and would be reduced to a closed corporation. Democracy, he said, would not live in the atmosphere of untruth and violence. It would flourish only if truth and non-violence existed. Congressmen should develop a higher degree of non-violence. The Provincial Ministers should soon develop peaceful methods of

dealing with violence. The Peace Brigade was one of such methods. Until a correct remedy was found, the Ministers would be permitted to deal with offences in the manner they considered best, but they could not depend on the military to quell riots for long. If they were unable to establish peace by non-violent methods in the near future, they should resign their offices. The idea of the military was opposed to the Congress creed of non-violence and should be supplanted by stages.

When asked how non-violence could check foreign aggression, Mahatma Gandhi is reported to have replied that if India had one crore of non-violent volunteers, he was confident that no nation could conquer India. If they failed in their attempt to prevent aggression, then the fault was theirs, not in the philosophy of non-violence but in their methods of practising it. Mahatma Gandhi was convinced that non-violence, if properly applied, could not only solve India's problems but also the world's.

Gandhiji concluded that these were his views. The members could ponder over them and tell him whether they could accept and work them. If they were not in agreement with his views, they were at liberty to reject them.

The Hindu, 24-9-1938

92. CORRUPTION IN THE CONGRESS

It is difficult to cope with the correspondence that I am having from several places about violence, untruth and corruption in the Congress. Whilst I must continue to publish typical correspondence about the weaknesses of Congresmen, I must issue a warning against hasty deduction being drawn that all is ill with the Congress. I know it is not. But it is true that violence, untruth and corruption have made inroads enough to warrant drastic measures in order to prevent decay overtaking the great organization.

Here are extracts from two typical letters :

(1) Perhaps you are aware how the enrolment of bogus Congress members is going on unimpeded everywhere, and how rich and unscrupulous persons are controlling the affairs of the Congress organization, keeping skilfully the genuine and devoted workers out of their way. Some are paying the membership subscription of annas 4 for others under their control out of their own pockets, and some are going a step forward and are not paying a single pie to the Congress committees and instead making the primary committees under their clutches prepare false accounts of their apparent collections and thereby evading the supervising eye of the sub-divisional as well as district committees.

Primary committees having less than 25 members are not required, under the rules framed by it, to pay anything to higher committees out of the membership fee. The result is that a good many paper committees are being

set up with less than 25 members to deprive the sub-divisional and district committees of their quota of the membership subscription as also to secure a larger proportion of representation in these Committees.

(2) It is my duty to bring to your notice the open and scandalous corruption in enrolling Congress members. The Congress authorities here, especially the Executives, know this state of things well, but it is difficult to know why the necessary steps are not being taken. If steps are not taken, things will go from bad to worse and the whole Congress institution will be disgraced and the hold on people will be lost.

(i) Every party is trying to capture the Congress office—whether Primary, Sub-divisional, District or Provincial. And for this purpose bogus members are being enrolled by practically every group.

(ii) There are a good many names of persons on the Congress rolls, but on scrutiny it can be easily found out that there are no such persons in existence at all. During election time the same group of persons is mobilized at elections of primary Congress committees of different wards.

(iii) The members are enrolled sometimes without their own signatures on application forms and in most cases without taking payment of the annual subscription of four annas.

(iv) The question arises how the account of collection of subscription by the primary, sub-divisional and district Congress committees is maintained. In almost all cases where a group is in possession of the office and necessarily the office account, collection of the annual subscription for all the bogus members is shown to the credit side, and at the same time nearly the whole amount is shown to the debit side on the different heads of expenses, such as travelling expense, meeting expense, allowance expense, etc. Really they do not collect the subscription and maintain a false account.

I do not know how all these corruptions can be stopped. There wil be, I hope, changes of rules at the next A. I. C. C. meeting at Delhi. Some steps should be immediately taken to stop the corruption. Identification of Congress members, signatures of the members on the application forms, actual realization of subscription from the members and true accounts should be enforced.

These statements have been made by responsible parties. The letters are meant for publication. But I have purposely suppressed the names of my correspondents as also of the province in which the corruption is said to exist.

It is to be hoped that the Working Committee and the A. I. C. C. will deal with this as well as the other serious questions that will come

up for discussion and decision. It would be a tragedy if the session of the A. I. C. C. were to be frittered away in orations or mutual wranglings.

Harijan, 24-9-1938

93. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

DELHI,
September 24, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Narandas is a worker, not a writer. Therefore the description of things has to come from you and no one else. Chh.[1] does write but he won't have the time to give me details. And they are all afraid to burden me with descriptions.

Well, if your suggestion had been received by me it would have helped me. However I accept your apology. Only don't do it again.

The weather for me is ideal. The blood-pressure is ideal, almost always 160-164/100-104.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original : C. W. 3881. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7037

94. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

DELHI,
September 24, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

Here it is all dry, there all wet. This prolongation of wet weather is a ruinous thing. And yet we may not grumble. It is all God's doing. Only we don't know Him. To grumble is also a Áfl·ÿ[2]. It won't abate till we know Him face to face.

Both Mahadev and I are keeping ideal health. No strain is put upon me. My silence has done the trick.

You need not worry about the wires. I hope to enclose with this a note to the P. M.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C. W. 6403. Courtesy : Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9998

[1] Chhaganlal Gandhi
[2] Gratification of sense

95. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

September 24, 1938

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. If you write 'Personal' no one will read your letter. Do write whatever you have in mind. Are you going on with the *Gita* and music? You have not said anything about your health. Give me full details.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati : C. W. 9997. Courtesy : Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

96. INTERVIEW TO F. S. YOUNG[1]

September 24, 1938

I[2] first of all related the whole position to Gandhiji and then asked Young to say what he had to say. He then at great length stated the whole position and asked Gandhiji's help. The first two paragraphs are in reply to that.

(1) All I can say is that somehow or other the authorities should be made to see that in Seth Jamnalalji and Pandit Hiralal they have men who are true as steel and who believe in non-violence as their creed.

(2) Surely it will be unwise to imprison them instead of holding them as willing hostages for peace. To ban the Praja Mandal is to invite trouble where there is none today.

In reply to the first two paragraphs, Young said that there was no question of imprisoning anyone. That position had not yet arrived and he hoped that it would never arrive. To this Gandhiji replied in the third paragraph.

(3) You will reach that stage in a moment, if you have an organization which is working [un]constitutionally and with which they are identified. I do not think they can surrender the right to agitate for responsible government. The authorities may or may not grant it. But they should not ban an activity which is in its nature peaceful. You may take all precautions to ensure peace.

[1] D. B. Kalelkar explains : "By the efforts of Shri G. D. Birla a meeting was brought about between Gandhiji and Mr. Young, I. G. P., Jaipur State, to talk about the Jaipur Rajya Praja Mandal. Gandhiji gave his answers in writing. Later Shri G. D. Birla prepared a note explaining Gandhiji's answers. . . ."

[2] G. D. Birla

In reply to this, Young pointed out the activities of the Mandal in enlisting Congress members. He said the Council had a suspicion that the Praja Mandal was only another name for the Congress and after having seen the disturbances in Travancore and Mysore, they were rather afraid of Congress creating trouble in Jaipur. Could not the Praja Mandal keep itself separate from the Congress? The fourth paragraph is in reply to that.

(4) You can't prevent natural affinities. People are drawn towards the Congress. You seek its assistance in order to promote peace as Sir Mirza did wisely and as Sir Akbar is already doing and Sir C. P. will do presently.

In reply to this, Young said, "But what if they start trouble? If their consitution is something different, then there should be no difficulty in recognizing it but with this constitution, if they start trouble, peace might be disturbed." The penultimate and the last paragraph are in reply to this.

(5) You can ask them to meet you a long way as to how they should shape their activity. You stifle opinion if you say they may not even ask for responsible government. You should shed the fear of the Congress.

(6) What I have suggested is this. Don't interfere with their objective but regulate the speed with which they move. You may, for instance, regulate the demonstrative part of their programme. You will control their language. But to ask them to change their objective is like asking a man to change his religion.

In the end, Mr. Young profusely thanked Gandhiji and made a request for taking the notes with him as a sort of souvenir to which Gandhiji agreed subject to his being provided with a copy of the same. The last three lines are in reply to my question whether Sir Akbar had already written for help and whether C. P. also had applied for help.

I whould like you to give me a copy of the notes.

I have Sir Akbar's letter asking for help.

More than a hope. He has wired to Pattabhi asking him to meet him. (This is about C. P.)

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 382-3

97. SPEECH AT THE FOUNDATION-LAYING OF PRAYER HALL

September 25, 1938

I am sorry I am not able to speak on this occasion. For many years now it has been my view that following a death the rich indulge

in a lot of expenditure which serves neither utility nor dharma. I therefore welcome the present occasion. Janakidevi[1] was a godly woman. She passed away a short while ago. The family she left behind is large and well known. Her sons together thought of doing some work of Harijan service in her memory. So they resolved with the concurrence of the directors of this institution[2] to build a prayer hall. I have been entrusted with the pleasant task of laying the foundation of this prayer hall. I lay the foundation-stone in the presence of you all and hope that the prayer hall will be of benefit to the pupils of the institution. I also hope that others also will similarly honour the memory of their dear departed by undertaking work of Harijan service.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 2508

98. DRAFT OF RESOLUTION FOR A. I. C. C.[3]

[On or before *September 26, 1938*]

The A. I. C. C. notes with sorrow and dismay the repression that has been going on in Travancore for some days. The evidence that has come to the Congress office, if it is to be believed, goes to show that the movement led by the State Congress in Travancore is strictly constitutional and for a constitutional purpose, viz., attainment of responsible government under the aegis of His Highness the Maharaja. The repudiation published on behalf of the State is categorically contradicted by the spokesmen of the Stage Congress.

In the circumstances the A. I. C. C. recommends to the Travancore Government for adoption the following policy, viz., assurance on the one hand that the State Congress is free to carry on the movement for responsible government in a constitutional manner; appointment of a commitee containing, among others, representatives of the State Congress to explore the possibility of granting responsible government, and an inquiry conducted by a jurist outside the State of unimpeachable impartiality into the recent happenings including the charges made by the State of provocations justifying the State mea-

[1] Mother of Brijkrishna Chandiwala

[2] Harijan Nivas. Brijkrishna Chandiwala in his book, *Gandhijiki Dilli Diary*, Part II, writes that a suggestion to build a prayer hall in Harijan Nivas had come from Viyogi Hari.

[3] Published in *Harijan* under the title "Indian States". This was drafted by Gandhiji; *vide* "Note to Jamnalal Bajaj", 26-9-1938

sures including firing on unarmed people resulting in deaths and injuries, and an amnesty to the prisoners.

The A. I. C. C. regrets that the Hyderabad State has issued ordinances which appear to give to the State power altogether in excess of requirements.

The A. I. C. C. has also received complaints of severe repression in the States like Dhenkanal, Talchar and Kashmir. In all these cases the people of the States have appealed to the Congress for advice, guidance and help.

The A. I. C. C. can but reiterate its policy of non-interference, and, consistently with the resources, to help the people in every way open to the Congress. The policy of non-interference is an admission of the limitations of the Congress. The Congess policy has been one of friendliness to the States. In spite of the declarations of some Congressmen to the contrary, the corporate policy of the Congress, so long as it holds by truth and non-violence, must be one of continuous attempt to convert the Princes to the view that their true welfare consists in a voluntary surrender of power to the people so as to bring them in a line with the people of the so-called British India, consistently with the existence of the constitutional heads of the respective States.

Harijan, 1-10-1938

99. LETTER TO PYARELAL

September 26, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I am quite perturbed by your letter. Of course, the perturbance is now gradually diminishing. My interpretation of your letter is that you want to say no but have no courage to say no. So you are planning to write a long letter. Why should I place such a burden on you? I certainly do not want to force you. Moreover, where is the question of coercion in such matters?

Hence I take your letter to mean that you are unable to agree to my proposal. Mother has expressed to me, in a few words, her distress. It is an unbearable thought that I should be instrumental inbringing about your ruin and now Sushila's ruin. It is comforting that whether happy or unhappy, Sushila remains engrossed in her studies and in the hospital work. Hence, if my impression is correct that you are

unable to accept Sharada's hand, then it is also your view that my duty is to give up Sushila's services. Do not misunderstand me. I cannot think of anything else. My heart cries when I look at Sushila. How can I bear to see her life being ruined at my hands?

If your life can be rebuilt Sushila's life will be rebuilt too. In that case, am I not solely responsible for her? She too would want to live with us. Mother would be satisfied. But I see darkness all round if your life is not rebuilt. But what can you do about it? Nothing can be achieved by unnatural means. No good can come of it. You will understand the reason for my haste.

This would mean that Sushila should be free here. I should take possession of my own body. Till Mahadev is ready, you should look after my physical needs and his work in the Frontier [Province] and elsewhere. This much is not beyond your capacity. Once Mahadev is all right, whatever is to be done will be done. There is talk going on about Swami and Chandrashankar. In my view that is not at all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Belade vi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

100. NOTE TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

HARIJAN NIVAS,

[DELHI,]

September 26, 1938

The resolution I have drafted regarding the Princely States has assumed importance. Have a look at it and if you do not like it do not forward it. I have suggested a committee in it. Withhold it also if you do not like the names. Show it to Vallabhbhai.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 3074

101. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

September 27, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

You do not seem to have started the music lessons for Sharda. Do not wait for her to request you. It is intolerable that Chakraiya should go on losing weight. Think over this. I have kept the question of his pay pending. Please have a talk with him and decide.

Vijaya's health does not seem to have improved. You must be keeping up your health.

Let me know the arrangements for work there. And about sanitary work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10774

102. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

DELHI,
September 27, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. It is good that at last [Jayaprakash] has gone there. Please keep me informed about the treatment. Give me details about the diet there. I hope the handwriting will not get smudgy.Write to me about the estimated expense there, so that I may arrange for the amount to be sent. I should like you to bring Saraswati along with you when you return from there. I will write to her. I am leaving this place for the Frontier Province on the 30th. Address your letters: c/o Dr. Khan Saheb, Peshawar. I am all right. Amtul Salaam, Mahadev, Pyarelal, Sushila are with me. Mahadev is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 3522

103. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

September 27, 1938

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

If what Chi. Sharda writes is true, it is a serious matter. You must not tolerate such lawlessness. You can ask those who do not work to leave. The remedy is simple. Tell such persons : "Go to Wardha for the present and return when Bapu returns. I must carry on with the work entrusted to me by Bapu. In this I realize that I cannot get on with you." You are at liberty to do this, and it is also your duty to do it. That will lighten your heart. Do not force yourself to do anything. Do not break your health and make suffering which is easy to endure more difficult to endure.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I will be ready to accommodate all those whom you send here.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10593

104. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

DELHI,
September 27, 1938

CHI. BABUDI,

What a letter you have written ! Carry on for a month somehow. I have got to go to the Frontier Province. There seems to be an exaggeration in your statement that nobody is doing any work. Go into the matter and let me know. Krishnachandra may not be doing the work. What about Shankaran and Amritlal? There should not have been any insistence about the spinning-wheel. How long can the spinning-wheel last if it is taken up because of insistence? Consider everthing properly and then write to me. I have destroyed your letter after reading.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I shall be leaving for the Frontier on the 30th. Shankaran must be provided with a torch if he needs one. If you feel the need you may cover yourself with a blanket during your menses. I do not think it is necessary.

From Gujarati : C. W. 9998. Courtesy : Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

105. LETTER TO SARASWATI

DELHI,
September 27, 1938

CHI. SARU,

If you are willing to come to me, you may show this letter to Paparamma and your grandfather and take their permission. You can come with Prabhavati who is in Malabar. Meet your uncle and your father if you wish to and secure their approval. You are not able to study there. So it would be better if you came over. Of course there is the condition that you will remain calm here. If you cannot, your

coming here will be futile.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Ba is with me. I shall leave for the N. W. F. P. on the 30th. Ba will stay on here. You should continue to write to Wardha.

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 6172. Also C. W. 3446. Courtesy : Kantilal Gandhi

106. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
September 29, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
STATE GUEST
AMRELI

YOUR WIRE. AM EXTAORDINARILY WELL. NOT PROCEEDING FRONTIER TOMORROW. MAHADEV WELL. SUSHILA DOWN WITH FEVER. LOVE.

BAPU

From th original: C. W. 3882. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7038

107. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 29, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

You have been as usual good in writing to me. I am glad you have been able to make all those acquaintances. I am waiting for detailed account.

Mahadev is steadily getting better. I am in first-class health. Am going through a lot of work. Sushila is down with fever. She is better today.

As the W. C. is sitting continuously, I am held up here. And may be here when you arrive.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3636. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6445

108. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 29, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

I am wiring today to say the post should be directed here. The W. C. is sitting continuously and therefore I may not leave for the Frontier.

I am keeping wonderfully well. The b. p. has never been so steady and low as now.

The nights are superb here just now. I hope you are keeping perfect health. If you have any remarks to offer about management there, you will do so.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6404. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9999

109. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

September 29, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I have torn your letter into pieces. I have written to Saraswati and Prabha. I have called Saraswati to Wardha. I do not feel inclined to put her with Saundaram. If she wishes to learn nursing, she can do so afterwards. It is for her good that she should stay with me, whatever the circumstances. I agree with you that anybody who lives with me may soon become lazy. But you will not find many such instances. However that may be, as you have left the problem to me, I have called her to Wardha.

Do not spoil your health. Mahadev is better.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7349. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

110. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

September 29, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

I got your letter. You did quite well in deciding to stay on. Ramdas has gone to Dehra Dun. Mahadev and I are well. I have been detained here longer than I had expected. I may perhaps start on the 2nd.

Sita and Arun must be fine.

Schlesin writes: "Entrust Phoenix to Pragji." Does it appeal to you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4885

111. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

DELHI,
September 29, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You did well in giving up jaggery. Do not worry about the weakness. The c*hhilta* water will bring back strength.

You shall certainly continue to serve me. Do not expect letters from me. I hope Balkrishna is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4305

112. FOREWORD TO " PRAYERS, PRAISES AND PSALMS"

[*September 1938*][1]

Shri Natesan has gone to the wrong man for a foreword to his collection of *Prayers, Praises and Psalms*. For I am no Sanskrit scholar. I have not read much of the translations or the originals. Nevertheless the collection presented in this volume does enable even one like me to know how our ancestors prayed to the One Supreme Lord of the Universe and in what words they derived solace in the

[1] The first edition of the book came out in September 1938.

hour of their trial or gave praise in the hour of their so-called triumph. May this collection help the reader to dispel his unbelief or strengthen his belief.

M. K. GANDHI

Prayers, Praises and Psalms

113. FEDERATION

A well-known correspondent tells me that in London the common talk is that Gandhi counts for everything and it does not matter what the Congress or Congressmen may say or do. The critics embellish the statement by saying that there is a wide difference of opinion between Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and myself, and that while he will not touch Federation with a pair of tongs, I am prepared to submit to it if some trifles are conceded. I have paraphrased in my own words a longish letter[1] giving details which I may not share with the readers at least at the present juncture.

Evidently my critics know more of me than I seem to know myself. For instance I know how little I count among Congressmen; the critics know how much I count among them. Whatever influence I still possess among Congressmen is solely due to my constant appeal to reason and never to authority. But if I had the influence the critics attribute to me, I make bold to say that India would have gained her independence long ago and there would be no repression that is going on unchecked in some of the States. I know the art of winning independence and stopping the frightfulness of which one reads in the papers. If I had my way with the Congressmen, there would be no corruption, no untruth and no violence amongst them. If I had my way with them, they would all be enthusiastic khaddarites and there would be no surplus khadi in the A.I.S.A. bhandars.

But I am going astray. I had intended to write about Federation. In the first place, in all my talks, which have been very few, I have made it clear that I represent nobody and that I have not even aired my views to any Congressman. I have also made it clear that what the Congress says and does is of consequence, whatever I may say is of no value unless it represents the Congress view. As a matter of fact, too, I have said that the Congress will never have Federation forced upon it, and that there was no hope of peace in India till there was indepen-

[1] The reference presumably is to a letter from Carl Heath; *vide* "Letter to Carl Heath", 13-9-1938

dence in virtue of a constitution framed by a duly convened Constituent Assembly. I have also made it clear that so far as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and I are concerned, though we may talk in different language, we are one in most things that matter to India. On the question of Federation there never has been any difference of opinion between us. And I have made a rule for myself that so far as the Congress in concerned, if there is an unbridgeable gulf between him and me his view should prevail. And this for the very good reason that I am not in the Congress and he is in the centre of it, and very much in touch with everything relating to the Congress.

Harijan, 1-10-1938

114. NON-INTERVENTION

Congress non-intervention in the affairs of the States was conceived in 1920 and has been more or less its policy since that time in spite of many onslaughts made on it. But I see that it has become the fashion in the States to quote against the Congress and Congressmen the self-imposed restraint even when there is any attempt to criticize or offer advice or help. It is therefore necessary to examine the implications of non-intervention. It was never regarded as a principle. It was a limitation imposed on itself by the Congress for its own sake and that of the people of the States. The Congress had no sanction behind its resolutions regarding the States. Its advice might be ignored, its intervention resented and the people of the States might be harassed without gaining anything. There was certainly a friendly motive behind that policy. It was a wise recognition of the limited capacity of the Congress for doing good. The restraint exercised by the Congress in this and many other ways has given it a prestige and power which it would be unwise for it not to use. Any hesitation in this respect would be like that of the foolish steward who would not use the talents which were placed at his disposal. Up to a point the States are beginning to recognize the power of the Congress be it ever so reluctantly. It is becoming sufficiently clear that the people of the States are looking to the Congress for guidance and help. I think that it is the duty of the Congress to give them the guidance and help wherever it can. I wish I could convince every Congressman that the prestige and power of the Congress are in exact proportion to its inner purity, its sense of exact justice and its all-round goodwill. If the

people of the States feel safe in entrusting their welfare to the Congress, the Princes should feel equally safe in trusting the Congress. All the prestige built up by patient effort of years will certainly be undermined if the warnings uttered by me to the Congressmen go unheeded.

Even at the risk of tiresome repetition let me say to the people of the States that they must not set much store by the Congress help. It is not enough that they are truthful and non-violent. It is necessary also for them to know their own capacity for suffering. Liberty is a dame exacting a heavy price from her wooers. And unless there are many who are prepared to pay the price, the few enthusiasts that are to be found everywhere would do well to conserve their energy. They will do well to undertake constructive service of the people without having an ambitious political programme. The ability to gain political ends will surely come from constructive service. Wisdom and patience will give them a power which in time will become irresistible.

Harijan, 1-10-1938

115. DRAFT OF STATEMENT FOR JAMNALAL BAJAJ[1]

[*October 1, 1938*][2]

I have seen many rumours regarding my resignation from the working Committee. It is perfectly true that I have sent in my resignation. It has no connection whatever with any differences with the Working Committee. My reason is purely personal. Indeed I have sent in resignations from several positions of responsibility retaining only those which I dare not give up without injuring the institutions with which I am connected.

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 393; also G.N. 3075

116. LETTER TO PYARELAL

October 1, 1938

I do not see any good in taking away Sushila at the cost of incurring Mothers displeasure. It is another matter if Sushila just cannot live away from me. I have never intended to keep her here

[1] The draft is in Gandhiji's hand in the G.N. source.

[2] According to an entry in the diary kept by Jamnalal Bajaj and published under the title *Bapu-Smaran*. Gandhiji rewrote Jamnalal's resignation on October 1, 1938.

against her will. But is it not also a problem to decide what to do in her present state of health? It seems Mother desires that she should remain here at least for the present. Mohanlal also appears to have postponed his departure. Hence that is also a point to be considered. If he is destined to undertake the fast, it will be only under my protection.

I have written this bit by bit in the midst of a lot of work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

117. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

October 3, 1938

Correspondents have been writing and wiring to me about the events in Travancore[1]. Shri Changanacheri K. Parameswaran Pillai has been specially to see me and acquaint me with the situation. He has erred in giving his version of my talk with him. Whilst the situation remains delicate, every word has to be weighed before it is uttered. Shri Pillai was clear that mob violence in the shape of stone-throwing had occured. He, however, made it perfectly clear that the State Congress people had no part in it and that it was contrary to their wish. I have wires denying mob violence and definitely saying that violence was instigated by *agents provocateurs*. I am unable to decide between the two opposite versions. But I can say this that satyagraha demands extraordinary caution, even to the extent of suspension of civil disobedience, if the resisters have not full control over forces of violence.

What exactly should be done I cannot advise from this distance. The responsibility for right decision must be shouldered by local leaders. In coming to their decision they will remember that any the slightest deviation from truth and non-violence, whether in themselves or by connivance in others, is bound to affect the movement adversely.

As to the charges against the Dewan, I telegraphed[2] the

[1] Where the demand of the State Congress for responsible government had been met with shootings and imprisonments on a large scale with the State Congress itself having been declared a subversive organization; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 6-9-1938 and "The states and Responsibility", 17-9-1938

[2] This telegram is not traceable.

imprisoned leaders who were responsible for making them. This is their reply:

Your kind telegram advising withdrawal of the State Congress memorandum. We consulted T. M. Verghese and others. The Working Committee feels satisfied that the Dewan's continuance in office is detrimental to the people's interests. The withdrawal of the memorandum may unmeritedly discredit the State Congress and cause an irretrievable setback to the movement. Pray for support and guidance.

I appreciate the spirit behind the reply. The leaders would be lowered in my estimation if, for the sake of purchasing their liberty, they withdrew the charges. But if the conviction has gone home that in a demand for responsible government such charges could have only a subordinate place, if any at all, and if they saw with me that persistence in them, especially without the ability to prove them, can but seriously harm the movement, it is their clear duty to withdraw the charges and thus free the movement of the initial blunder and handicap. There is no discredit greater than the refusal to acknowledge errors.

I have wires alleging tortures by the authorities. It is hard to believe them. I hope they are baseless, and if isolated cases have happened, I should hope that the Travancore Government will prevent any future recurrence.

I observe that the movement promises to be protracted if only because of violence, whether spontaneous though unconnected with the Congress, or engineered as alleged. I can only entertain the hope that the authorities will relent and magnanimously allow the movement to run its course without the ban which I consider to be wholly unnecessary. A movement in itself wholly noble, which claims cultured men and women as willing and enthusiastic sufferers, should be fostered. It can never be crushed.

Harijan, 8-10-1938

118. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

DELHI,
October 3, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
PALITANA

BOTH MAHADEV SELF QUITE WELL. LEAVING TOMORROW. MAHADEV REMAINING DELHI. LOVE. LILAVATI ALSO.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3883. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7039

119. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

NEW DELHI,
October 3, 1938

MIRA
MAGANWADI
WARDHA

LEAVING TOMORROW. POST UTMANZAI.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6405. Courtesy : Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10000

120. LETTER TO SHUAIB QURESHI

October 3, 1938

MY DEAR SHUAIB,

Shaukat is writing to you about Harold[1]. The best method is what I have pointed out. Authorize Agatha Harrison to draw according to needs. All I am anxious about is that Harold should not suffer for want of funds.

You will have seen what I was able to do about the League. In view of the Sind meeting they thought postponement was impossible.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I leave for the Frontier Province tomorrow.

From a facsimile : *Madhya Pradesh aur Gandhiji*, p. 126

121. NOTE TO P. SREEDHARAN NAIR[2]

DELHI,
October 3, 1938

In Segaon there is nothing to learn. It is labour for those who will labour. Otherwise it is idleness. You can take the Village Indus-

[1] Harold Ansari; *vide* letters to Nawab of Bhopal, 19-7-1938 and 14-9-1938

[2] The addressee had asked Gandhiji where he could find God and whether his staying at Segaon would be any help. It being Gandhiji's silence day, he wrote out this answer.

tries course in Wardha. For God you have to search within and find Him in His numberless works. There is no faculty there.

From a copy: C.W. 9941. Courtesy: P. Sreedharan Nair

122. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

DELHI,
October 4, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I write this while I am eating. I got your Amreli letter today. I am not satisfied with the way you seem to have treated your body.

Mahadev is staying behind. You will do what you like with him.

I have not kept so well as I am now for years. Sushila is weak but without fever. A. S.[1] is coming Ba is not well. She stays behind. I am taking Brijkrishna with me. Address me Peshawar.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3884. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7040

123. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

DELHI,
October 4, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

It is good you are interesting yourself in Balkoba's health. It is well you are taking quinine. The letters to be posted to Utmanzai till further instructions. Though Mahadev is staying here, his letters too must be sent to my address.

I am keeping extra well. It is a wonder to me. Nothing seems to worry me, though there are enough things to worry about. The weather has become extra hot. Quite unusual for Delhi at this time of the year.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6406. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10001

[1] Amtussalaam

124. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

DELHI,
October 4, 1938

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Just now I can only send you the letter you want me to write. If you approve, please forward. You will see my article in *Harijan* in which there is reference to Spain[1] also.

I hope Indu is rapidly progressing and Sarup[2] is having the full benefit of the change.

What a peace at the cost of honour![3]

I wish I had time to write at length.

Mahadev is staying behind for rest. I leave for the Frontier Province.

Love to you three.

BAPU

From Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1938. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

125. LETTER TO GLADYS OWEN

SEGAON, WARDHA,[4]
October 4, 1938

MY DEAR GLADYS,

It is with difficulty I can cope with the correspondence. I hope you have profited by the treatment there.

Peace has been preserved but at the cost of honour.

Muriel should soon be in India. Mahadev is decidedly on the mend.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 6194

[1] *Vide* "Logical Consequences"

[2] Vijayalakshmi Pandit

[3] The reference is to the Munich Pact signed on September 30. 1938. Chamberlain, describing the Munich Pact, had called it "peace with honour". Under the terms of this pact, Czechoslovakia was forced to cede to Germany all those districts of Bohemia and Moravia which had a 50 per cent German-speaking population; *vide* also "If I were a Czech", 6-10-1938

[4] Permanent address

126. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

DELHI,
October 4, 1938

CHI. VALJI,

My work is increasing so much that unless I do it myself it will remain undone. Mahadev's share has been taken over by Pyarelal for the present. You can never be a burden to me. But what can I entrust you with after taking you away from what you are doing just now? If You can get some inspiration from what I am writing in *Harijan* and take up something, you are welcome to try. You will be really tested after my death. Dudhibehn and the children must be fine. I am leaving for Peshawar today. Mahadev will stay here.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VALJI GOVINDJI DESAI
GONDAL, KATHIAWAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7482. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

127. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

DELHI,
October 4, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

You must have got one letter I wrote you. This is the second. We are today leaving for the Frontier Province. Mahadev stays behind, as also Ba. Pyarelal, Sushila, Amtul Salaam, Kanaiyo and Brijkrishna will accompany me.

Manilal's statement is correct. I do remember having sent the Diwali message. I may be mistaken though. But now there is hardly any time for a message to be sent. If there is, here is the message.

"When a Holi is raging on all sides, how can we celebrate Diwali? Wherever we look, we see hatred and bitterness. If, therefore, anybody wants to celebrate Diwali, he should try to lessen the hatred and bitterness and, having purified himself, plunge into the swaraj *yajna*."

How is Sita[1]? And Arun[2]? Sita was going to write to me. What happened?

Ba has been slightly ill. She is feeling better today.

[1] Addressee's daughter
[2] Addressee's son

How is Manudi[1]? Is she still there?

Ramdas came yesterday from Dehra Dun.

Nanabhai[2] must be well. Did Shanti benefit by the fast?

Write to me and address the letters to Peshawar.

Blessings from

BAPU also BA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4886

128. LETTER TO MATHURIBEHN KHARE

DELHI,
October 4, 1938

CHI. MATHURI[3],

I got your letter.

Do finish your course there and become well-versed in what you study.

You must be keeping fine health. We are leaving for the Frontier Province today. Mahadevbhai and Ba will stay on here. Mahadev is now all right.

Address Peshawar.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MATHURI KHARE
SEVA SADAN
790 SADASHIV, POONA CITY

From Gujarati: C.W. 272. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

129. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

DELHI,
October 4, 1938

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your letter. If your heart is no longer there, by all means leave. Following that way, you will some day find peace of mind. "No well-doer, O loved one, meets with a sad end."[4]

[1] Manubehn Mashruwala, Gandhiji's granddaughter
[2] Addressee's father
[3] Daughter of Narayan Moreshwar Khare
[4] *Bhagavad Gita*, vi. 40

You may go either to Ramana Swami at Tiruvannamalai or again to Aurobindo Ashram. Jankiprasad did find peace.

Have a talk with Kanchan. In short, do whatever will bring you peace of mind.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8566. Also C.W. 7044. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

130. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

October 4, 1938

CHI. BABUDI,

I have been receiving your letters regularly. Sushilabehn says that you need not worry about the irregular monthly periods. It can happen sometimes. Take more milk and cream if possible. How much do you take? What else do you take? Remain calm. We are leaving today.

What is going on about your music? Now you will recite the *Gita* properly, won't you?

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9999. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

131. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

DELHI,
October 4, 1938

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I hope the writing will not fade. I am lying with a mud-pack on my stomach, hence the pencil.

Your telegram has put me in a dilemma. For one thing, I do not favour marriage within the caste. Manganlal's family is setting to nought all his ideals.[1] Under these circumstances, I am unable to give my whole-hearted approval to the idea. How can I convoy all this in a telegram? You will understand my reservations. The marriage must

[1] Maganlal Gandhi's son, Keshavlal, had been betrothed to Bindumati, daughter of addresee's wife's sister.

have been fixed. If possible, you must dissuade them also from asking for my approval. But, surely, it is not necessary to have my approval in every matter. You can show this letter to them. Taramati should not feel hurt.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

132. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

October 4, 1938

I should have given my opinion on the Bengal Government's communique[1] on the question of the release of the political convicts earlier. But pressure of work made it physically impossible for me to do so. Though the Bengal Government have not seen their way to accede to my proposal contained in my letter[2] of 13th April last, I gratefully recognize that from their own standpoint they have endeavoured to make an approach to the letter of 13th April.

But having paid this tribute to the Bengal Government I must say that their rejection of my proposal is a severe disapointment to me. For I claim that my proposal was made after considering and weighing the Bengal Government's difficulties. The decision seems to me to be due to their failure to recognize three factors.

However reprehensible the crimes committed by the prisoners were, there can be no doubt that the crimes were not a result of personal or selfish motive, the motive behind them was purely political.

Whatever the limitations of the Government of India Act, it has transferred power to a parliament responsible to the people and elected under a fairly wide franchise. Apart, therefore, from the declarations of non-violence made by the prisoners, the transfer of power to a popularly elected legislature takes the ground from under the feet of the advocates of terrorism.

In as much as the Congress has chosen to enter the legislatures and even to accept ministerial responsibility, Congressmen are bound to examine the possibilities of the machinery to respond to the popular will. In this particular instance, as we have seen in what may

[1] *Vide* "Lettter to Khwaja Nazimuddin", 11-5-1938
[2] *Vide* "Lettter to Khwaja Nazimuddin", 13-4-1938

be described as Congress provinces, the Provincial Governments have been able to release political prisoners. What has been possible in these provinces is possible in Bengal, if the popular will is sufficiently expressed.

The third factor is the Bengal Government's reference to the existence of the two well-known parties connected with terrorist methods. The reference seems to suggest that these parties function for their original purpose. I know, and I had given the Khwaja Saheb the required assurance, that the organizations no longer functioned in the old way. Comrades belonging to groups do not change names of their groups or loyalties because the methods which the labels originally stood for have become obsolete. I would, however, advise amalgamation and the use of another name for the combination, if they must preserve their separate status.

Not only have the Bengal Government failed to take any or adequate notice of these three factors, they have failed to give due weight to the positive assurances of non-violence given by the prisoners, which those who have been discharged seem to have carried out faithfully.

I therefore renew my appeal to the Bengal Government to respond to my proposal of 13th April, and release all the prisoners by 13th April, 1939. I do not mind what procedure they wish to adopt. They can have the committee announced by them and through it regulate the dates of discharge of the prisoners. One thing, so far as I am concerned, is undoubtedly common cause if there is to be a complete clearance, viz., that the atmosphere of non-violence is retained and that those who are discharged carry out the self-imposed obligation about non-violence.

I would appeal to the Press and the public to restrain them-selves in their criticism of the action of the Bengal Government in the matter and not embarrass them by bitter criticism.

It must be said to the credit of the Bengal Government that they have certainly not treated it as a party question. Though the release is an integral part of the Congress programme only, it has more or less become an all parties' question. And I have no doubt that the quickest method of securing early release is never to allow the question to become a party question.

I would appeal to the prisoners not to be disturbed by the Bengal Government's communique. Having been myself a prisoner over half a dozen times under varying circumstances, I know how apart from the hardships of jail life, the uncertainty of his fate gnaws

into a prisoner's whole being especially when he is fretting to go out and serve. But I would ask them to treat 13th April or thereabouts as still the last date of their discharge. It is contrary to my nature to import 'thereabouts' in fixing time-tables, but the prisoner friends should extend to me the concession due to old age and its physical limitations. I can give this assurance that 'thereabouts' does not mean years. It can only refer to months. They will please remember that they will hamper the effort of those who are trying to secure their release by resort to hunger-strike. I have given them myself as a hostage. So long as there is life in me, I hope by God's grace to stand by my promise not to relax the effort to secure their discharge. There is no rest for me till every one of the prisoners is discharged. They nobly responded to my call for an assurance of non-violence. I will keep my faith.

Some of my correspondents seem to think that I can work wonders. Let me say as a devotee of truth that I have no such gift. All the power I may have comes from God. But He does not work directly. He works through his numberless agencies. In this case it is the Congress. All the prestige that I have is derived from that of the Congress. The latter derives it from its creed. If Congressmen deny the creed of truth and non-violence, the Congress loses prestige. I assure them that my virtues, real or so called, will not count for anything, if I did not represent the Congress mind.

Friends of prisoners outside Bengal and sometimes the prisoners themselves write to me complaining that I confine my attention only to the Bengal prisoners. In a way this is true. I am bound to them by a written contract. But in another way it is not true. I do interest myself in their discharge also. But the full suceess depends largely upon what happens in Bengal. Let them, however, know that my efforts for their release continue, even apart from the Bengal prisoners.

Harijan, 8-10-1938

133. LETTER TO M. C. RAJAH

ON THE WAY TO PESHAWAR,
October 5, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

I am working under great difficulty. Even this I am writing on the train taking me [to] Peshawar.

Of course you will publish the correspondence between us

whenever you think it necessary.

Your latest letter shows that you are on the wrong track. I am not partial to Rajaji. But I know that he is as firm on untouchability as I am myself. I must therefore trust his judgment as to how to do the thing. From this distance I can't judge his action.

Do you not see that the whole of the movement is one of conversion of the *sanatani* heart? You cannot force the pace except to the extent that reformers immolate themselves. This process is going on vigorously.

This temple-entry question is a mighty religious reform. I would like you to apply your religious mind to it if you will give your whole-hearted support to Rajaji and make his move a thorough success.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

M. C. Rajah Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

134. LETTER TO PRITHVISINGH

AS AT UTMANZAI,

October 5, 1938

DEAR PRITHVISINGH,

I am on the train taking me to the Frontier Province. I am likely to be there for a month. During that time I must try to send one of my party to meet you. I would like you therefore to keep the nearest visiting day free of other visitors. You will let me know at Peshawar the day on which the visit may take place.

I am not worrying about changing your class from A to B. I am therefore glad that you are not worrying yourself.

I must get hold of the new type of wool-spinning charkha.

Mahadev having become ill, has stayed away in Delhi. Pyarelal is with me and is well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 563. Also C.W. 2942. Courtesy : Prithvisingh

135. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

October 5, 1938

CHI. RUKHI,

I was happy to see your handwriting after a long time. Shanta has been to see me. She told Ba that you get fainting fits and do not keep good health. Is this true?

I am writing this on a train bound for Peshawar. Perhaps I may spend one month in that part. Mahadev needs rest, so Durga and he have stayed back at Delhi. Ba also is there. With me are Pyarelal, Kanu, Doctor Sushila, Amtul Salaam and Brijkrishna. You can write to me at Peshawar.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. RUKMINI DEVI BAZAJ
TATHERI BAZAAR
BENARES CITY

From a Gujarati : C.W. 9793. Courtesy : Benarsilal Bazaj

136 LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

October 5, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

I am writing this in the train. You did well in writing a personal letter to Maulana. Even if all the seeds that we sow do not sprout, they help those that do.

Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha has no right to change its object. If it exercises that right, its spiritual connection with the central institution must also end. In my opinion, such a change is not necessary either. I have paid no attention to what has been happening.

It is also not correct that I have been gradually leaving off the use of the word 'Hindi'. The Congress cannot use any other word. But I do not believe that a Congressman working in another institution cannot do so.

I will think about writing when I get the resolutions of the conference. Amritlal is attending to weaving, teaching, music and sanitation. It remains to be seen whether he can fit into Nayakum's mould. Will this suffice for now? Write at Utmanzai.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7975

137. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

October 5, 1938

CHI. ANAND,

Got your letter only today. I am writing this on a moving train. Now [I think] there is no need of a preface. And why so much burden on me? How can I bear it?

I am glad to know that both are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy : National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

138. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVLEKAR

ON WAY TO PESHAWAR,
October 5, 1938

BHAI SATAVLEKAR,

What a nice letter you have written to me ! I am writing this in a moving train. The Prince may certainly come in November.[1] For some days now I shall be in the Frontier Province.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi : C.W. 4779. Courtesy : S. D. Satavlekar

139. THAT UNFORTUNATE WALK-OUT

The walk-out at the last A.I.C.C. meeting of the opponents of the Civil Liberties Resolution[2] was an unfortunate and hasty act. What was their protest against? I understand the President went out of his way to let them make as many and as long speeches as they liked. Therefore the protest was against the majority refusing to accept amendments which cut at the root of the resolution which was regarded as vital to the existence of the Congress in its present form.

[1] The Prince of Aundh visited Gandhiji at Segaon on 29-11-1938 and 1-12-1938.

[2] *Vide* "Draft of Resolution for A.I.C.C.", Before 23-9-1938

The walk-out has served one good purpose. It has brought out in clear light the fact that the Congress is not today the homogeneous body it used to be. It has members and parties who have no faith in its creed or its constructive programme, specially khadi and prohibition.

In these circumstances the Congress must cease to be a compact fighting organization engaged in a life-and-death struggle against the most experienced and organized corporation in the world. It has been since 1920 like an army in action having one will, one policy, one aim and exact discipline. All this must go if the protesters can have their own way. In the first place there can be no amendment of or protest against accepted policies. But even if such is permissible, there should be perfect and willing obedience after the rejection of amendments and protests. Opposition in the Congress is not to be compared to the opposition, say, in the Central Assembly. There the opposition has little in common with the Government. In the Congress there can only be those who willingly and whole-heartedly subscribe to its creed. Those who do not want independence cannot become its memebrs nor can those who do not believe in truth and non-violence, khadi or communal unity or total abolition of untouchability among Hindus or total prohibition of drink and intoxicating drugs.

It is up to those who do not believe in the fundamental policy of the Congress seriously to consider whether they would not serve the Congress and the country better by remaining outside the Congress and converting the people to their view of conducting the campaign rather than by remaining within and obstructing those who do not see eye to eye with them and yet are in the unfortunate position of having the majority on their side. It is equally the duty of the majority to consider how best to deal with those who will resort to obstructive tactics. My opinion based on experience is that if, after a friendly discussion with the obstructionists (if the use of that word is permissible to describe them), it is found that they believe it to be their duty to continue obstruction, it would conduce to the good of the country to hand over the reins to the minority and themselves follow the existing Congress programme without using the Congress name. All this can succeed beyond expectations if it is done without huff, without malice, without bitterness, and merely to meet a situation that is becoming impossible.

If chaos is to be prevented, proper measures must be taken in time.

PESHAWAR, October 5, 1938

Harijan, 15-10-1938

140. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

October 5, 1938

If absence of letters means neglect, then I have neglected you. The fact is these days you are ever before me. You see I have come out of my shell and begun to speak to Europe. It is a peace without honour.

SJT. C. F. ANDREWS
BANGALORE

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

141. LETTER TO LALA GIRDHARILAL

October 5, 1938

DEAR LALA GIRDHARILAL,

You are needlessly suspicious. There is no change in me or my form.

I still advise you to resign. It is surely wrong to refuse when your colleagues want you to. They can't take the work from you that they want.

Yours sincerely,
M. K.GANDHI

SJT. LALA GIRDHARILAL
C/O SJT. A HOON, BAR-AT-LAW
55 CANTONMENT
CAWNPORE

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

142. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

PESHAWAR,
October 5, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Everybody here asks 'Where is Mahadev'? Chhajjuram wants me to send a wire and call you here and promises to keep you at his place in perfect peace. The climate is fine. I do feel like asking you to come over. But I will not act in haste. I am certainly attracted by the

idea of Simla. The matter will be decided one way or the other tomorrow. I will daily look forward to your letters. We are at Peshawar for three days at least. After that, the programme is uncertain. We had no trouble at all during the journey. At Lahore there was a crowd but I was behind a line of army men. I did not like that at all. My blood-pressure now seems to have become quite steady. In the train and here it had been 160/98. I wrote a heap of letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Preparations for our bath are still going on.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11655

143. IF I WERE A CZECH

If I have called the arrangement with Herr Hitler "peace without honour", it was not to cast any reflection on British or French statesmen. I have no doubt that Mr. Chamberlain could not think of anything better. He knew his nation's limitations. He wanted to avoid war, if it could be avoided at all. Short of going to war, he pulled his full weight in favour of the Czechs. That it could not save honour was no fault of his. It would be so evey time there is a struggle with Herr Hitler or Signor Mussolini.

It cannot be otherwise. Democracy dreads to spill blood. The philosophy for which the two dictators stand calls it cowardice to shrink from carnage. They exhaust the resources of poetic art in order to glorify organized murder. There is no humbug about their word or deed. They are ever ready for war. There is nobody in Germany or Italy to cross their path. Their word is law.

It is different with Mr. Chamberlain or M. Daladier[1]. They have their Parliaments and Chambers to please. They have parties to confer with. They cannot maintain themselves on a perpetual war footing if their language is to have a democratic accent about it.

Science of war leads one to dictatorship pure and simple. Science of non-violence can alone lead one to pure democracy. England, France and America have to make their choice. That is the challenge of the two dictators.

[1] Edouard Daladier, then Prime Minister of France

Russia is out of the picture just now. Russia has a dictator who dreams of peace and thinks he will wade to it through a sea of blood. No one can say what Russian dictatorship will mean to the world.

It was necessary to give this introduction to what I want to say to the Czechs and through them to all those nationalities which are called 'small' or 'weak'. I want to speak to the Czechs because their plight moved me to the point of physical and mental distress and I felt that it would be cowardice on my part not to share with them the thoughts that were welling up within me. It is clear that the small nations must either come or be ready to come under the protection of the dictators or be a constant menace to the peace of Europe. In spite of all the goodwill in the world England and France cannot save them. Their intervention can only mean bloodshed and destruction such as has never been seen before. If I were a Czech, therefore, I would free these two nations from the obligation to defend my country. And yet I must live. I would not be a vassal to any nation or body. I must have absolute independence or perish. To seek to win in a clash of arms would be pure bravado. Not so, if in defying the might of one who would deprive me of my independence I refuse to obey his will and perish unarmed in the attempt. In so doing, though I lose the body, I save my soul, i.e., my honour.

This inglorious peace should be my opportunity. I must live down the humiliation and gain real independence.

But, says a comforter, 'Hitler knows no pity. Your spiritual effort will avail nothing before him.'

My answer is, 'You may be right. History has no record of a nation having adopted non-violent resistance. If Hitler is unaffected by my suffering, it does not matter. For I shall have lost nothing worth [preserving]. My honour is the only thing worth preserving. That is independent of Hitler's pity. But as a believer in non-violence, I may not limit its possibilities. Hitherto he and his likes have built upon their invariable experience that men yield to force. Unarmed men, women and children offering non-violent resistance without any bitterness in them will be a novel experience for them. Who can dare say that it is not in their nature to respond to the higher and finer forces? They have the same soul that I have.'

But says another comforter, 'What you say is all right for you. But how do you expect your people to respond to the novel call? They are trained to fight. In personal bravery they are second to none

in the world. For you now to ask them to throw away their arms and be trained for non-violent resistance, seems to me to be a vain attempt.'

'You may be right. But I have a call I must answer. I must deliver my message to my people. This humiliation has sunk too deep in me to remain without an outlet. I, at least, must act up to the light that has dawned on me.'

This is how I should, I believe, act if I was a Czech. When I first launched out on satyagraha, I had no companion. We were thirteen thousand men, women and children against a whole nation capable of crushing the existence out of us. I did not know who would listen to me. It all came as in a flash. All the 13,000 did not fight. Many fell back. But the honour of the nation was saved. New history was written by the South African Satyagraha.

A more apposite instance, perhaps, is that of Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the servant of God as he calls himself, the pride of Afghan as the Pathans delight to call him. He is sitting in front of me as I pen these lines. He has made several thousands of his people throw down their arms. He thinks he has imbibed the lesson of non-violence. He is not sure of his people. Elsewhere I reproduce the pledge that his soldiers of peace make. I have come to the Frontier Province, or rather he has brought me, to see with my own eyes what his men here are doing. I can say in advance and at once that these men know very little of non-violence. All the treasure they have on earth is their faith in their leader. I do not cite these soldiers of peace as at all a finished illustration. I cite them as an honest attempt being made by a soldier to convert fellow soldiers to the ways of peace. I can testify that it is an honest attempt, and whether in the end it succeeds or fails, it will have its lessons for satyagrahis of the future. My purpose will be fulfilled if I succeed in reaching these men's hearts and making them see that if their non-violence does not make them feel much braver than the possession of arms and the ability to use them they must give up their non-violence which is another name for cowardice, and resume their arms which there is nothing but their own will to prevent them from taking back.

I present Dr. Benes[1] with a weapon not of the weak but of the brave. There is no bravery greater than a resolute refusal to bend the knee to an earthly power, no matter how great, and that without

[1] Eduard Benes, President of Czechoslovakia

bitterness of spirit and in the fulness of faith that the spirit alone lives, nothing else does.

PESHAWAR, October 6, 1938

Harijan, 15-10-1938

144. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

PESHAWAR,
October 6, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

We reached quite well. The pressure behaved well in the train also.

Better address letters Peshawar.

There is no cold here as yet. The nights are very good.

My silence continues giving me great peace and saving so much time and energy.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3637. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6446

145. FILTH IN LITERATURE

A Travancore headmaster of a high school writes:

> You know the political atmosphere of Travancore is very unhappy just at present. Even high School pupils are going on strike and picketing others. There is feeling among pupils that you are in favour of 'students' strikes' and even 'pupils' strikes'. I would like to get a communication addressed to pupils in general about your opinion on the matter. It will clarify the situation.

I think I have written often enough against strikes by students and pupils except on the rarest of occasions. I hold it to be quite wrong on the part of students and pupils to take part in political demonstrations and party politics. Such ferment interferes with serious study and unfits students for solid work as future citizens. There is one thing, however, for which it is the duty of students and pupils to strike. I have received a letter from the Hon. Secretary, Youths'Welfare Association, Lahore, giving copious specimens of obscene and erotic passages from the text-books prescribed by various universities. They make sickening reading. Though they are from prescribed

text-books, I would not soil these columns with a reproduction of the extracts. I have never come across such filth in all the literature that I have read. The extracts are impartially given both [*sic*] from Sanskrit, Persian and Hindi poets. My attention was first drawn to such writings by the girls of Mahila Ashram, Wardha, and recently by my daughter-in-law[1] who is studying in the Kanya Gurukul at Dehra Dun. Though she is not illiterate, she had never come across such obscenity as she found in some of her text-books. She appealed to me for assistance. I have been moving the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan authorities. But big institutions move slowly. Monopolies grow up. Self-interest of authors and publishers prevents reform. The altar of literature claims incense. My daughter-in-law suggested, and I at once fell in with her suggestion, that she would risk failure at her examination and omit to learn the obscene or erotic passages. This is a mild strike on her part, but a quite good and wholly effective one for herself. But this is an occasion which not only justifies a strrike on the part of students and pupils, it is in my opinion their duty to rise in revolt against such literature being forced on them.

It is one thing to defend the liberty to read what one likes. But it is a wholly different thing to force on young minds acquaintance with literature that cannot but excite their animal passions and an unhealthy curiosity about things which, in due course and to the extent necessary, they are bound to learn. The evil becomes accentuated when it comes in the guise of innocent literature bearing the *imprimatur* of great universities.

An orderly strike on the part of students is the quickest way of bringing about the much-needed reform. Such a strike would not be boisterous. It would simply consist in the students notifying boycott of examinations which require a study of objectionable literature. It is the duty of every pure-minded student to rebel against obscenity.

The Association asks me to appeal to the Congress Ministers to take such steps as may be possible to remove text-books or passages which are objectionable. I gladly make the appeal hereby not only to them but [to] the Education Ministers in all the provinces. Surely all are equally interested in the healthy growth of the student mind.

PESHAWAR, October 7, 1938

Harijan, 15-10-1938

[1] Nirmala Gandhi

146. UNCERTIFIED KHADI

Reports have come to me showing that even responsible Congressmen use khadi that is sold in uncertified bhandars. No khadi is guaranteed pure that is sold in uncertified stores of which unfortunately there is quite a number, and which has increased since the phenomenal rise given by the A.I.S.A. in the wages of spinners.

It is not often that workers get better wages without asking. And when that happens enough unscrupulous persons will be found who will exploit the poverty or ignorance of the workers, pay them the old low wages, and sell their manufactures at prices lower than those charged under the raised rate of wages. Then again, cloth is sold under the name of khadi which has its warp made of mill-spun yarn. Pure khadi is that khadi which is hand-woven out of hand-spun yarn and for which wages have been paid according to the A.I.S.A. scale. Such khadi can be had only at certified stores.

Unfortunately Congressmen, out of ignorance or because they do not believe in khadi, buy cheap cloth for make-believe at the uncertified stores and thus thwart the Congress policy about khadi and, to the extent of their purchase, defraud the spinners of the rise in the wages. Let the public realize that every rise in the price of khadi means at least that much more paid to the spinner, I use 'at least' advisedly. For the whole of the rise in wages in not charged to the buyers.

Those Congress leaders who open khadi stores without reference to the A.I.S.A. or without being asked by it, certainly harm their own institution, encourage fraud and violate the Congress policy; whereas it should be the duty and pride of every Congressman to help in every way the effort of the A.I.S.A. to better the lot of the most helpless of humanity.

PESHAWAR, October 7, 1938

Harijan, 15-10-1938

147. SEVEN COMPLAINTS

A Muslim friend writes:

> You will be pained to hear that in my province the matters have gone from bad to worse. The Muslims are extremely agitated and invite your immediate attention. A Council of Action is formed and we desire to take a leaf from your own book of truth and non-violence.

1. The Government is persisting in the Vidya Mandir Scheme.

2. Mother tongue is defined as mother tongue of the area—which is divided into Hindi and Marathi—thus excluding Urdu.

3. Urdu schools used to be inspected by Urdu Inspectorate alone; the system is discontinued.

4. My amendment to include Urdu or Hindustani in the recognized languages of the Assembly is turned down.

5. My University Bill demanding representation for Muslims and Depressed Classes in the university is turned down.

6. Hon'ble Biyani held a conference in Chandur in Berar where his procession was taken with music past a mosque during Juma prayers and the flag was worshipped.

7. Your title as Mahatma is officially recognized by a Government circular, your birthday declared as a holiday, and consequently the Local Board in Amraoti has issued orders to take your image in a procession and to worship your image. Gandhiji, you may permit me to say, we are not idolatrous and we do not recognize you as Mahatma or our religious and political leader.

Whatever the nature of the complaints, if the correspondent and his followers pursue the path of truth and non-violence. all will be well, and it will be found at the end of the contemplated action that both the parties have come closer together and that the cobwebs of misunderstanding have all been removed.

As to the complaints, I must warn the correspondent and others who expect the impossible from me that while I am ever ready to use whatever influence I may possess for the promotion of good and goodwill, I have grave limitations. I could not live for two days if I shouldered the burden of investigating every complaint against every Congress Minister. For that purpose there is the Parliamentary Sub-Committee created by the Working Committee.

But I can say generally about the complaints as follows:

1. I see nothing wrong in the scheme as far as I know. I know that the name 'mandir' has been objected to by some Muslims. Shuklaji has made it plain that if Muslim boys or their parents object to attend the schools merely because they are called Vidya Mandirs, it would be open to them to attend schools which will bear an Arabic name. But surely this is a matter for adjustment. The word 'mandir' has no exclusive religious significance. When it has and qualifying adjective it simply means a house. Nor is such use rare.

2. I do not know what actually has been done. But the mother

tongue of an area is surely the tongue which the inhabitants generally speak.

3. If Urdu inspectors have been discontinued because they know only Urdu, on the face of it, it seems to be wrong.

4. As to the amendment about the recognition of Urdu or Hindustani, I do not know the merits.

5. The same is true of the Bill.

6. If music was played before the mosque whilst the Juma prayers were being said, it was certainly wrong. But I will want very strong proof to support the allegation.

7. This is a complaint and an assertion. With both I am in hearty concurrence. It was wrong to give 'Mahatma' official recognition. I registered my protest as soon as it was brought to my notice. I would support any movement to drop altogether the use of the word 'Mahatma' before my name. My simple name sounds sweet without the adjective. The latter often stinks as when it is applied to promote violence or untruth, smoking or drinking or the sale of spurious khadi. To declare my birthday a holiday should be classified as a cognizable offence. The only use of my birthday that I have approved of is intensive spinning or some such national service. That day must be all work and no play. I cannot imagine any Local Board being so foolish as to issue orders to take my image in procession and worship it. I am hoping that my correspondent was wholly misinformed. I should imagine that the issue of such orders would be illegal. As to the assertion and repudiation, I tender my congratulations to my correspondent for them, for I have never aspired after leadership whether religious or political.

PESHAWAR, October 7, 1938
Harijan, 15-10-1938

148. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

PESHAWAR,
October 7, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I got your letter. Yes, that is true. We must master adverse circumstances.

I have been enjoying great peace of mind here, Khan Saheb does not let anyone near me. The post is wandering behind me, and so

I have been writing articles to my heart's content. I have started a dialogue with Europe. I will not mind if they decide that I am a fool and leave me alone. The title is "If I Were a Czech". Pyarelal also has written one article. In a way I am keeping all right. But passion and attachment have increased in strength and that pains me. I am hoping that they will lose their strength.

I hope you are taking Durga for a walk every day. You must regain enough strength for walking. At least meet Saraswati[1]. Let her try her remedies.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

How is . . .[2]

I do not understand at all why Rajkumari's letter has gone astray.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11656

149. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

PESHAWAR,
October 7, 1938

BA,

If you have not written and given news of Lakshmi's[3] health and yours, do it now. We arrived here in great comfort. The cold has not yet started. I am keeping up my silence. We are in Peshawar just now. So dictate the letter at the Peshawar address. The heat there must have gone down. Nobody sees me. Khan Saheb does not permit anybody to come to me. Sushila is perfectly well. Ask Kanam to write. And send him for a walk every day.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 28-9

[1] Saraswati Gadodia
[2] The rest of the sentence is illegible.
[3] Wife of Devdas Gandhi

150. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

PESHAWAR,
October 7, 1938

CHI. NIMU,

We have arrived at Peshawar. Now that Ramdas has returned, do you think you need not write to me? He has complained about your health. Do not do anything at the cost of your health. Do you not get the money regularly? That responsibility is entrusted to Mahadev. He has been left behind in Delhi. You may therefore write to him. Ba and Kanam also are in Delhi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

151. LOGICAL CONSEQUENCE

One must feel happy that the danger of war has been averted for the time being. Is the price paid likely to be too great? Is it likely that honour has been sold? Is it a triumph of organized violence? Has Herr Hitler discovered a new technique of organizing violence which enables him to gain his end without shedding blood? I do not profess to known European politics. But it does appear to me that small nationalities cannot exist in Europe with their heads erect. They must be absorbed by their larger neighbours. They must become vassals.

Europe has sold her soul for the sake of a seven days' earthly existence. The peace Europe gained at Munich is a triumph of violence; it is also its defeat. If England and France were sure of victory, they would certainly have fulfilled their duty of saving Czechoslovakia or of dying with it. But they quailed before the combined violence of Germany and Italy. But what have Germany and Italy gained? Have they added anything to the moral wealth of mankind?

In penning these lines my concern is not with the great powers. Their height dazes me. Czechoslovakia has a lesson for me and us in India. The Czechs could not have done anything else when they found themselves deserted by their two powerful allies. And yet I have the hardihood to say that if they had known the use of non-violence as a weapon for the defence of national honour, they would have faced the whole might of Germany with that of Italy thrown

in. They would have spared England and France the humiliation of suing for a peace which was no peace; and to save their honour they would have died to a man without shedding the blood of the robber. I must refuse to think that such heroism, or call it restraint, is beyond human nature. Human nature will only find itself when it fully realizes that to be human it has to cease to be beastly or brutal. Though we have the human form, without the attainment of the virtue of non-violence we still share the qualities of our remote reputed ancestor, the orang-outang.

These are not idle words I am writing. Let the Czechs know that the Working Committee wrung itself with pain while their doom was being decided.[1] The pain was quite selfish in a way. But on that account it was the more real. For though numerically we are a big nation, in terms of Europe, i.e., in terms of organized scientific violence, we are smaller than Czechoslovakia. Our liberty is not merely threatened, we are fighting to regain it. The Czechs are fully armed; we are wholly unarmed. And so the Committee sat to deliberate what its duty was by the Czechs, what part the Congress was to play if the war cloud burst on us. Were we to bargain with England for our liberty and appear to befriend Czechoslovakia, or were we to live up to the creed of non-violence and say in the hour of trial for afflicted humanity that, consistently with our creed, we could not associate ourselves with war even though it might ostensibly be for the defence of Czechoslovakia whose very existence was threatened for no fault of hers, or for the only fault that she was too small to defend hereslf single-handed? The Working Committee had almost come to the conclusion that it would deny itself the opportunity of striking a bargain with England but would make its contribution to the world peace, to the defence of Czechoslovakia and to India's freedom by declaring to the world by its action that the way to peace with honour did not lie through the mutual slaughter of the innocents, but that it

[1] The Congress Working Committee's resolution on Czechoslovakia read: "The Working Committee has been following with great interest the events as they have been developing in Europe. It views with great concern the unabashed attempt that is being made by Germany to deprive Czechoslovakia of its independence or reduce it to impotence."

"The Working Committee sends its profound sympathy to the brave people of Czechoslovakia in their struggle to preserve their freedom. Being themselves engaged in a war—non-violent but none the less grim and exacting—against the greatest Imperialist Power on earth, India cannot but be deeply interested in the protection of Czechoslovak freedom. The committee hopes that the better part of humanity will still assert itself and save humanity from the impending catastrophe."

lay only and truly through the practice of organized non-violence even unto death.

And this was but the logical and natural step the Working Committee could have taken, if it was to prove true to its creed. If India could gain her freedom through non-violence, as Congressmen are to believe they can, she could also defend her freedom by the same means, and hence a *fortiori* could a smaller nation like Czechoslovakia.

I do not know what actually the Working Committe would have done if the war had come. But the war is only postponed. During the breathing time, I present the way of non-violence for acceptance by the Czechs. They do not yet know what is in store for them. They can lose nothing by trying the way of non-violence. The fate of Republican Spain is hanging in the balance. So is that of China. If in the end they all lose, they will do so not because their cause is not just, but because they are less skilled in the science of destruction or because they are undermanned. What would Republican Spain gain if it had Franco's resources, or China if she had Japan's skill in war, or the Czechs if they had the skill of Herr Hitler? I suggest that if it is brave, as it is, to die to a man fighting against odds, it is braver still to refuse to fight and yet to refuse to yield to the usurper. If death is a certainty in either case, is it not nobler to die with the breast bared to the enemy without malice against him within?

Harijan, 8-10-1938

152. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

PESHAWAR,
October 8, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA

DELIGHTED MAHADEV WITH YOU. GOING UTMANZAI TOMORROW. WELL. HOPE YOU FIT. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3885. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7041

153. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

PESHAWAR,

October 8, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I am glad my wire went to you before your letter and wire came into my hands.

I offer no apology for not telling you anything about the closing of the experiment[1]. I had prepared you for it. And then I wrote a note[2] announcing the termination. There was no desire to keep it from you. A copy of the note herewith. Mahadev may not have it handy. He must read it to you, if you can't. It is Kanu's hand.

No apology either for suppressing Mahadev's letter. Mahadev had guessed (wrongly) that something which I forget had happened on the basis of your talk with him. As it had not, and as Mahadev had told me not to deliver it to you if his guess was wrong, I did the right thing. It would have been wrong on my part even to have mentioned the thing to you and taken your time [and] my time for nothing. Supposing somebody swears at you thinking that you had been painting your face every day, I would correct the person but would certainly not feel the call [*sic*] that that person had done you an unintentional wrong. Now you understand, I hope. I won't ask for your apology.

I have never enjoyed so much rest as Khan Saheb gives me. No visitors, no talks practically even on slips of paper. The result is I have been able without effort to write five articles for *Harijan*.

You will give me your reaction to the articles on the European situation.

Your estimate of N. N. Joshi is correct. He prevaricates without knowing that he is doing so. But he is a good worker.

This tour has taught me one lesson. I must not put such heavy

[1] Involving physical contact with women

[2] *Vide* "A note", 19-9-1938

burdens on you. What I had hoped would be a light thing evidently was a serious drain on your energy. I hope that you will soon regain your lost health such as it is.

I know that Mahadev & Co. will flourish under your grandmotherly care. I was anxious for M. to accept your invitation. And Shummy is there—first class for such occasions. I shall look forward to your daily bulletin.

We are flourishing. There is no cold yet. I have never been so fit as I have felt latterly. There is an interruption because the old devil in the shape of animal passion is at me. When he assails me, I do feel worried. But the thing will wear away. So you see the most relevant thing I do share with you. But you are not to disturb yourself over this. It worries without disturbing me or making me morose. I seek the presence of God.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3638. Courtesy: Amrit kaur. Also G.N. 6447

154. NOTE TO MAHADEV DESAI

[Before *October 15, 1938*]

Translate this[1] for *Harijan*. Good work is being done in this village and it deserves to be noticed.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11661

155. TALK TO KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS–I

[On or before *October 15, 1938*][2]

Gandhiji told them that though it sounded to him as an overbold statement for them to make, still, as was his wont, he would take them at their word.[3] He explained to them in detail what his conception of the nature and implications of non-violence was. It was comparatively easy to maintain a passive sort of non-violence, when the opponent was powerful and fully armed. But would they remain non-violent in their dealings amongst themselves and with their own countrymen, when there was no extraneous force to restrain or check them? Again, was theirs the non-violence of the strong or that of the weak? If theirs was the non-violence of the strong, they should feel the stronger for their renunciation of the sword. But if that was not the case with them, it was better for them to resume their weapons which they had of their own free will discarded. For it was much better for them to be brave soldiers in arms than to be disarmed and emasculated. He remarked:

A charge has been levelled against me and Badshah Khan that we are rendering India and Islam a disservice by presenting the gospel of non-violence to the brave and warlike people of the Frontier. They say that I have come here to sap your strength. The Frontier Province, they say, is the bastion of Islam in India, the Pathans are past masters in the use of the sword and the rifle and mine is an attempt to emasculate them by making them renounce their arms and thus undermine the citadel of the strength and security of Islam. I wholly repudiate the charge. My faith is that by adopting the doctrine of

[1] This was a letter addressed to Mahadev Desai from Pipodara. It gave a report of the Gandhi Jayanti celebrations in that village from 21-9-1938 to 2-10-1938, which included a round-the-clock spinning programme. For Gandhiji's comments, *vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 15-10-1938

[2] Gandhiji addressed the last batch of Khudai Khidmatgars of Peshawar on October 15.

[3] The Khudai Khidmatgars had said that even if Abdul Ghaffar Khan gave up non-violence, they would never do so.

non-violence in its entirety you will be rendering a lasting service to India and to Islam which, just now, it seems to me, is in danger. If you have understood the power of non-violence, you ought to feel the stronger for having put away your arms. Yours will be the spiritual strength with which you can not only protect Islam but even other religions. But if you have not understood the secret of this strength, if as a result of renouncing arms you feel weaker instead of stronger than before, it would be better for you to give up the profession of non-violence. I cannot bear to see a single Pathan turn weak or cowardly under my influence. Rather than that I would that you returned to your arms with a vengeance.

Today the Sikhs say that if they give up the *kirpan* they give up everything. They seem to have made the *kirpan* into their religion. By discarding it, they think, they will become weak and cowardly. I tell them, that is an idle fear and I am here to tell you the same. I have read the Koran with as much care and reverence as I have read the *Gita.* I have read other important books on Islam too. I claim to have as much regard in my heart for Islam and other religions as for my own, and I dare say with all the emphasis that I can command that although the sword has been wielded in the history of Islam and that too in the name of religion, Islam was not founded by the sword nor was its spread due to it. Similarly in Christianity the sword has been freely used. But the spread of Christianity was not due to its use. On the contrary, the use of the sword has only tarnished its fair name. Millions in Europe swear by Christianity. But contrary to the teachings of Jesus, they are engaged in a fratricidal orgy of bloodshed and murder, which is a negation of true Christianity. If you can assimilate what I have been telling you, your influence will travel far and beyond your borders and you will show the way to Europe.

Today a force of 17,000 British soldiers is able to rule over us because they have behind them the power of the British Government. If Khudai Khidmatgars really felt within themselves the upsurge of soul force as a sequel to their renouncing arms, not even 17,000 would be needed to win India her freedom, because they should have the strength of God behind them. As against it if a million of them professed non-violence while there was violence lurking in their hearts, they would count as nothing. You should renounce the sword because you have realized that it is the symbol not of your strength but of your weakness, because it does not make for true bravery. But

if you put away your sword outwardly but there is the sword in your hearts, you shall have begun the wrong way and your renunciation will be devoid of any merit. It may even prove dangerous.

What is the meaning of eradicating violence from the heart?

He next asked and proceeded to explain that it meant not merely the ability to control one's anger but its complete eradication from the heart.

If a dacoit inspires anger or fear in my heart, it means that I have not yet purged myself of violence. To realize non-violence means to feel within you its strength, otherwise known as soul force, in short, to know God. A person who has known God will be incapable of feeling or harbouring anger or fear within him, no matter how overpowering the cause for it may be.

A Pilgrimage for Peace, pp. 57-9

156. TALK TO KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS–II

[On or before *October 15, 1938*][1]

A Khudai Khidmatgar, Gandhiji told them at one place, had first to be a man of God, i. e., a servant of humanity. It would demand of him purity in deed, word and thought and ceaseless, honest industry, since purity of mind and idleness are incompatible. They should, therefore, learn some handicraft which they could practise in their homes. This should preferably be ginning, spinning and weaving as these alone could be offered to millions and in their own homes.

A person who renounces the sword dare not remain idle for a single minute. An idle man's brain, as the popular proverb says, is the devil's workshop. Idleness corrodes the soul and intellect both. A person who has renounced violence will take the name of God with every breath and do his work all the twenty-four hours. There will be no room for an idle thought.

Moreover, every Khudai Khidmatgar must have an independent means of livelihood. Today many of you have land, but your land can be taken away from you, not your craft or your manual skill. It is true that God provides to His servant his daily bread but only if he performs bread labour. If you work not, neither shall you eat, is nature's law and should be yours too. You have adopted red shirts as your uniform. I had hoped you would have adopted khadi too which is the livery of freedom. But I see that very few among you wear

[1] Gandhiji met the last batch of Khudai Khidmatgars of Peshawar on October 15.

khadi. The reason perhaps is that you have to provide your own uniform and khadi is dearer. That would not be so if you spin for yourself.

They should further, he told them, learn Hindustani, as that would enable them to cultivate and enlarge their minds and bring them in touch with the wider world. It was up to them also to learn the rudiments of the science of sanitation and first-aid, and last but not least, they should cultivate an attitude of equal respect and reverence towards all religions.

It is not the wearing of the red shirt that makes a Khudai Khidmatgar, nor standing in serried ranks but to feel within you the strength of God which is the opposite of the strength of arms. You have yet only arrived at the portal of non-violence. Still you have been able to achieve so much. How much greater your achievement will be when you have fully entered its holy edifice! But as I have said before, all that requires previous preparation and training. At present you lack both.

A Pilgrimage for Peace, pp. 60-1

157. TALK WITH ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

[On or before *October 15, 1938*][1]

ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN: There are some Pathans in the villages here who persecute Khudai Khidmatgars beyond endurance. They beat them, seize their lands and so on. What are we to do against them?

GANDHIJI: We have to meet their high-handedness with patience and forbearance. We have to meet their atrocities in the same way as we used to meet the Britishers', not answer violence by violence, nor abuse by abuse, nor harbour anger in our hearts. If we do that it is sure to melt their hearts. If it fails, we shall non-co-operate. If they seize our lands, we shall refuse to provide them the labour even though we may have to starve. We shall brave their wrath but refuse to submit or go against our conscience.

A. K. Would it be permissible for us to lodge a complaint against them before the police and get them punished?

G. A true Khudai Khidmatgar won't go to a law-court. Fighting in a law-court is just like physical fighting. Only, you use force by proxy. To get the police to punish the aggressor is only a form of

[1] The talk took place at Utmanzai where Gandhiji spent a few days at Khan Saheb's country-house before proceeding on a tour of Mardan and Nowshera on October 15.

revenge which a Khudai Khidmatgar must abjure. Let me illustrate my meaning by a personal instance. At Sevagram some Harijans came to me and told me that unless I could get a Harijan included in the C. P. Congress Ministry, they would offer 'satyagraha' by staging a hunger-strike.[1] I knew it was all the doing of a mischief-maker. The Police Superintendent wanted to post some police force as he was afraid that the hooligans might do some mischief. But I said 'no' to him and told the Harijans that they need not sit outside in the sun; they could occupy any room they liked in the ashram. I offered to feed them too if they wanted. They chose my wife's bathroom. I let them occupy it. We looked after their needs and when one of them fell ill, we nursed him. The result was that they became our friends.

A Pilgrimage for Peace, pp. 61-2

158. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

UTMANZAI,
October 15, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

It seems from the translation of this letter[2] that many details have been omitted, and the report, therefore, does not read well. Did 18 persons besides the children take part? That is, in all 22+18? How many Muslims among them? Was there only one spinning-wheel kept working non-stop? What was the count of the yarn spun? Is Somabhai a teacher or a worker? If there are Muslim children in the school, how many? What is the population of Pipodara? What was the highest speed? And the highest count? What is the average strength? If you wish to send this letter itself, you may do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

The tour starts from today, and so the wonderful peace I have been enjoying will end. I hope nevertheless that my health will continue to be as fine as it has been. The first stage of the programme is enclosed. The next has also been chalked out. We are here up to 8th

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with Harijan Satyagrahis", 27-8-1938 and "Message to Harijan Satyagrahis", 28-8-1938

[2] *Vide* "Note to Mahadev Desai",15-10-1938

November at any rate.

Khan Saheb has only one thing to occupy him: how to give me complete rest and how to feed the others.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PPS.]

Tell Rajkumari that I am not writing to her today.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11662

159. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

PESHAWAR,
October 15, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

I have all your letters. Although Dr. Benes is practically banished,[1] your letter should go to him even if it has not. If he imbibes the spirit, exile need not matter.

Here we have superb weather. There you have abnormal rains. So had Bombay. I suppose the crops are destroyed.

I am sorry I can't leave this Province before 9th November. You will see the programme in the Press. It remains to be seen how I keep my health during the tour.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6409. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 1000

160. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

PESHAWAR,
October 15, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Jivraj writes to say that you should not climb uphill. You also say that it does not produce a good effect. There are rickshaws there. One can use them in illness. You may get into a rickshaw wherever there is a climb. In this way you can go to a new place every day for a

[1] Following occupation of Sudetenland by Nazi Germany, Eduard Benes was forced, on October 5, to resign as President and leave the country. *Vide* also If I were A Czech"

walk. I see nothing wrong in this. This is the only way of deriving full benefit from your stay in Simla. Shummy seems to be advising exactly the opposite in regard to Durga. If so, my advice should be disregarded. If I were present there, I would of course wrestle with Shummy.

You know that when there are letters for others along with letters addressed to me, I do not read them. This is my nature. There were two letters by you to Sushila in reply to the same letter. I read them. I can give for this no excuse other than curiosity. From your previous letter, I have forgotten everything except the drawing of the moon. Yesterday's letter I regard as important. I do not know what Sushila wrote to you regarding physical passion, but for me it has become a question of my veracity. You have told her that my last statement[1] should reassure them all. This pricked me. We cannot be complacent regarding physical passion in anybody's case, but, as for myself, I should say that had I, at the time of my last statement, been having such experiences as I am having now, I would most certainly have not issued it. I cannot say, either, whether I would have stopped my experiment. Hence neither you nor anybody else can remain complacent regarding me. I see no need as yet to withdraw the last statement or issue a revised one. This does not mean that any of you should start worrying. For the present, I will not go further than this. I found the time to write this much as being necessary in the interest of truth. You will naturally be curious to know more. But restrain your curiosity.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Rajkumari about physical passion so that I need not write to her separately.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11663

[1] *Vide* "A Note", 19-9-1938

161. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

PESHAWAR,
October 15, 1938

BA,

You are causing me a good deal of worry this time. I keep swinging between my concern for you and my sense of dharma. The mind prompts me to run down to you. Dharma tells me to remain where I am and finish the work here. If you get well soon now, my worry may end.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 29

162. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

PESHAWAR,
October 15, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I got your two letters together.

Pay up Rs. 25 to Soptekar. I have already written to you about teaching Vatsala. Chakraiya had written to me about the book. I have replied to him and asked him to tell you. Do what you think proper. How is the newly-arrived friend[1] faring?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10776

[1] Rajbhushan

163. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL[1]

PESHAWAR,
October 15, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

What a girl you are! No letter from you at all? I see from Amrit-lal's letter that you have not rallied. I wrote to you and asked you to go to Maroli. When I return to Segaon you will come back there whatever the condition of your health. But do not spoil it your-self. Do as I have advised you in my letter. If there is any difficulty in going to Maroli, let me know. I must hear from you regularly. Address your letters to Peshawar. Ba has fallen ill in Delhi.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VIJAYABEHN
C/O SHRI RAMBHAI HIRABHAI PATEL
SAURASHTRA SOCIETY
ELLIS BRIDGE, AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7100. Also C.W. 4592. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

164. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

PESHAWAR,
October 15, 1938

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. It is bound to take more than a month. We are scheduled to be here till the 9th. I can understand your anxiety. My heart is there, but the work here is so heavy that I should not be im-patient. Be patient, whatever the future may be. You want to do service whether you marry or not. And for that you wish to acquire more knowledge. I know that you would bear even blows from me, because they would have been inspired only by love. I do not wish to keep you away from my eyes even for a moment. But I am helpless.

[1] The letter, addressed to Ahmedabad, was redirected to Dakshinamurti in Saurashtra.

You are right about Munnalal. He will leave. It seems it is in his interest to leave.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10022. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

165. LETTER TO H. P. RANGANATH AIYENGAR

PESHAWAR,
October 16, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

Mirabai has sent me both your letters. I am sorry I won't be able to avail myself of your assistance, for which however I must thank you.

I think you should remain where you are and do such service as comes your way. Shri Mahadev Desai is better.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI H. P. RANGANATH AIYENGAR
B.A., LL.B.
930 NAIDOO STREET
CHICKNAGALUR P. O.
MYSORE STATE

From a photostat: G.N. 1335

166. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

PESHAWAR,
October 16, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I had two letters awaiting me on our return to Peshawar. I see the right hand must rest a little. It is having more work than it can comfortably manage.

My health still remains ideal. What it will be during the tour I do not know. The silence will help me.

Joshi's letter is quite typical of him.

Tell Mahadev I got a wire yesterday saying Shukla[1] is dead. He was one of my oldest friends, i. e., of English student days. He was practising in Rajkot.

They are still having rains in Segaon. Here it is perfectly dry.

Kanti's letters herewith for Mahadev. They are interesting. You should ask Mahadev to give you a summary of what he has to say.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3640. courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6449

167. SPEECH AT NOWSHERA[2]

October 16, 1938

I accept *in toto* your assurance that you have fully understood the principle of non-violence and that you will hold on to it always. I congratulate you on it, and I further say that if you can put the whole of that doctrine into practice, you will make history. You claim to have one lakh Khudai Khidmatgars on your register which exceeds the total number of Congress volunteers as it stands today. You are all pledged to selfless service. You get no monetary allowance. You have even to provide your own uniforms. You are a homogeneous and disciplined body. Khan Saheb's word is law to you. You have proved your capacity to receive blows without retaliation. But this is only the first step in your probation, not the last. To gain India's freedom, the capacity for suffering must go hand in hand with the capacity for ceaseless labour. A soldier for freedom must incessantly work for the benefit of all. The resemblance between you and the ordinary soldier begins and ends with the cut of the uniform and perhaps their nomenclatures which you have adopted. But unlike them the basis of all your activity is not violence but non-violence. Therefore, your training, your preoccupations, your mode of working, even your thoughts and aspirations must necessarily be different from theirs. A

[1] Presumably Dalpatram Shukla; *vide* "An Autobiography" sub-title "London at Last and "An Autobiography" sub-title" My Choice"

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-II". The Khudai Khidmatgars of the place presented a written address to Gandhiji and assured him that their faith in non-violence was absolute and unqualified and they would never go back upon it.

soldier in arms is trained to kill. Even his dreams are about killing. He dreams of fighting, of winning fame and advancement on the battle-field by the prowess of his arms. He has reduced killing to an art. A satyagrahi, a Khudai Khidmatgar, on the other hand, would always long for opportunity for silent service. All his time would be given to labour of love. If he dreams, it will not be about killing but about laying down his life to serve others. He has reduced dying innocently and for his fellowmen to an art.

But what shall be the training that will fit you out for this sort of work? It must be training in various branches of constructive work.

With one lakh Khudai Khidmatgars trained in the science of constructive non-violence, he told them, trans-border raids should become a thing of the past.

You should consider it a matter of utter shame if a single theft or dacoity takes place in your midst. Even the thieves and trans-border raiders are human beings. They commit crime not for the love of the thing itself but because they are driven to it largely by necessity and want. They know no other. The only method of dealing with them that has been adopted so far has been that of employing force. They are given no quarter and they give none. Dr. Khan Saheb feels helpless against them because the Government has no other way of dealing with them But you can make a non-violent approach to the problem, and I am sure you will succeed where the Government has failed. You can teach them to live honestly like yourselves by pro-viding them cottage occupations. You can go in their midst, serve them in their homes and explain to them things in a loving and sym-pathetic manner, and you won't find them altogether unamenable to the argument of love. There are two ways open to you today, the way of brute force, that has already been tried and found wanting, and the way of peace. You seem to have made your final choice. May you prove equal to it.

Harijan, 29-10-1938

168. SPEECH AT HOTI MARDAN[1]

October 16, 1938

Gandhiji explained to them that non-violence could not, like the curate's egg, be accepted or rejected in parts, it had value only when it was practised in its entirety.

When the sun rises the whole world is filled with its warmth, so that even the blind man feels its presence. Even so when one lakh of Khudai Khidmatgars are fully permeated with the spirit of non-violence, it will proclaim itself and everybody will feel its life-giving breath.

I know it is difficult; it is no joke for a Pathan to take an affront lying down. I have known Pathans since my South African days. I had the privilege of coming into close and intimate contact with them. Some of them were my clients. They treated me as their friend, philosopher and guide, in whom they could confide freely. They would even come and confess to me their secret crimes. They were a rough and ready lot. Past masters in the art of wielding the lathi, inflammable, first to take part in riots, they held life cheap, and would have killed a human being with no more thought than they would a sheep or a hen. That such men should have, at the bidding of one man, laid down their arms and accepted non-violence as the superior weapon sounds almost like a fairy tale. If the one lakh of Khudai Khidmatgars became truly non-violent in letter and in spirit and shed their violent past completely as a snake does its outworn skin, it would be nothing short of a miracle. That is why in spite of the assurance of your faith in non-violence that you have given me, I am forced to be cautious and preface my remarks with an 'if'. My diffidence is only a measure of the difficulty of the task. But nothing is too difficult for the brave and I know the Pathans are brave.

The crucial test by which I shall judge you is this: Have you befriended and won the confidence of each and all in your locality? Do the people regard you with love or with fear? So long as a single individual is afraid of you, you are no true Khudai Khidmatgar. A Khudai Khidmatgar will be gentle in his speech and manner, the light

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal Nayyar's report "At Mardan". In reply to his usual question to the Khudai Khidmatgars whether they would remain non-violent in all circumstances, one of them replied that they could put up with every kind of provocation except the abuse of their revered leaders.

of purity will shine forth from his eyes, so that even a stranger, a woman or even a child would instinctively feel that here was a friend, a man of God, who could be trusted. A Khudai Khidmatgar will command the co-operation of all sections of the community, not the sort of obedience that a Mussolini or a Hitler can command through his unlimited power of coercion, but the willing and spontaneous obedience which is yielded to love alone. This power can be acquired only through ceaseless, loving service, and waiting upon God. When I find that under your influence people are gradually giving up their dirty and insanitary habits, the drunkard is being weaned from drink and the criminal from crime and the Khudai Khidmatgars are welcomed everywhere by the people as their natural protectors and friends in need, I shall know that, at last, we have got in our midst a body of men who have really assimilated the spirit of non-violence and the hour of India's deliverance is close at hand.

Harijan, 5-11-1938

169. LETTER TO SHAMLAL

MARDAN,
October 17, 1938

DEAR LALA SHAMLAL,

I have your letter. I do not know what I shall be able to do[1].

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

LALA SHAMLAL, M. L. A.
7 BEGUM ROAD
LAHORE

From a photostat: G.N. 1285

[1] Regarding the Punjab prisoners; *vide* "Letter to Sham Lal", 20-2-1938

170. LETTER TO SIKANDAR HAYAT KHAN

AS AT PESHAWAR,
October 17, 1938

DEAR SIR SIKANDAR,

I have just received a piteous letter from prisoner Inderpaul's wife who tells me her husband, who has already served 8 years, is suffering from paralysis. May I plead for his release?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR SIKANDAR HAYAT KHAN
PRIME MINISTER
LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy Pyarelal

171. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

AS AT PESHAWAR,
October 17, 1938

DEAR BROTHER,

I got your letter from Mahadev only yesterday. How I wish I could respond as you wish! Do you know that I sent Rajkumari specially to intercede[1]. But she could make no headway. Sir C. P. won't have any outsider to intervene. I implored him to invite you to inquire into the whole affair.[2] There was no response. Shamelessly I have again wired to him to allow me to send a representative. Indeed I would go myself if he tolerated me. But he won't listen to reason. Pardon me. That is how I look at his conduct of this business. Nothing has shaken my conviction that the movement is sound and so far as the leaders are concerned, non-violent. Now tell me what I should do. I hope you are keeping fit.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 8820

[1] With the Travancore authorities; *vide*, "Letter to C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer", 15-8-1938

[2] *Vide*, "Statement to the Press", 6-9-1938

172. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

MARDAN,
October 17, 1938

CHI. NARANDAS,

Did Kamala resent your guidance in any matter? On what grounds can khadi work or National School get a share of the Palitana or Porbandar money? Explain this to me.

Write about the movement that is going on there.

What has Purushottam[1] finally decided?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8552. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

173. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

October 17, 1938

CHI. LILA,

I got your letter. I wish you not to be in a hurry to go to Segaon. Increase your weight there. Come when I return there.

My health is fine. Don't expect more at present.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9376. Also C.W. 6651. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

174. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

PESHAWAR,[2]
October 17, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I got all your three letters. I can see no flaw in your arguments. They are well set out, too. I am sure it is not your view that, in case there is war, we should come to no compromise with the British.

[1] Addressee's son
[2] As in the source. However, Gandhiji was not in Peshawar on this date.

Moreover, our refusal to take part in the war on any terms would in itself be a harassment to them. We can, however, adopt no other course, that is, if the Congress listens to me.

But I do not think it desirable that you should divert your mind even to this from your study. You will continue to reflect on the matter of course, and you will come to definite conclusions. But I think it desirable that you should not waste your time in explaining your views to others.

Your health causes me worry. You may be certain that there will be no harm at all if for the sake of your health you take one more year. Health, once lost, will not return. You have built up your body with exercise. Your constitution itself is strong. Let it not be undermined. Come to Segaon. Stay there for some time and build up your body there if you can with good food and rest. Listen to me in this matter and do not be negligent. Do not be over-confident and assume that you will somehow be able to improve your health afterwards.

I have written to Saraswati's grandfather.[1] I have written to Prabha too. If she comes I will look after her. Do not be overeager about nursing. After she is trained up, we shall see about other things. I hope that if she stays with me, her intellect will improve and develop. You will admit that that has happened to others who have stayed in the Ashram. It is true that the information they gather in their minds is little, for the curriculum is not planned with that end in view. But the intellects of those boys and girls who have stayed there work well enough in the subjects selected by them.

Write to me if this seems unconvincing to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

We shall be here up to November 9 at any rate.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7350. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] This letter is not traceable.

175. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

MARDAN,
October 17, 1938

I have two letters from schoolmasters, besides others from laymen, complaining of students' rowdyism in Travancore. The Principal of C.M.S. College, Kottayam, says that the students blocked the passage of those who wanted to attend the classes. They twice turned away girls who did not listen to them. They rushed at the classes and made noises, making classes impossible.

This violent participation by students in a struggle which its authors claim to be absolutely non-violent, makes progress difficult, if not impossible. So far as I know, the leaders of the movement do not want the students, even if they wish to participate, to depart in any way from the non-violent way. Obstruction, rowdyism and the like are naked violence. I am credited with influence over students. If I have any, I would ask them to observe non-violence in thought, word and deed. If, however, the forces of violence cannot be controlled by those who are in charge of the movement, it may be a question for them whether in the interest of the movement itself it is not wise to suspend civil disobedience.

I must not presume to lay down the law from this distance, but I do feel from the evidence before me that the leaders would incur grave risk if they allowed students to think that their violence would help the movement or that it is secretly liked by the leaders.

Harijan, 22-10-1938

176. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SWABI,
October 17, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is merely for love's sake. During the tour I must conserve time and energy.

You will give me your reaction to the 2nd article[1] on the European situation.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3641. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6450

[1] *Vide* "Local Consequence",8-10-1938

177. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SWABI,
October 17, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am writing this at night in Swabi. Last night we slept in Mardan. I have been having long talks these days with the office-bearers of the Khudai Khidmatgars. Except for this, I observe silence all the time. Do resist the temptation to write for *Harijan.* But send me your comments on it for my information. If there are mistakes in proof-reading draw Chandrashanker's attention. Pyarelal will send you a copy of the letter. I have written to Sastri.[1] Give the enclosed letter to Rajkumari.

Lila has become impatient to go to Segaon. Restrain her. She should go there after I return. Let her improve her health while in Rajkot.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11664

178. SPEECH AT SWABI[2]

[*October 17, 1938*][3]

Gandhiji's speech here was a passionate appeal to the Khudai Khidmatgars to turn the searchlight inwards. They had proved their mettle by marching to jail in their hundreds and thousands. But that was not enough, he told them. Mere filling of the jails would not bring India freedom.

Even thieves and criminals go to prison, but their prisongoing has no merit. It is the suffering of the pure and innocent that tells. It is only when the authorities are compelled to put into prison the purest and the most innocent citizens that a change of heart is forced upon them. A satyagrahi goes to prison, not to embarrass the authorities but to convert them by demonstrating to them his innocence. You should realize that unless you have developed the moral fitness to go to prison which the law of satyagraha demands, your jail-going will be

[1] *Vide* "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 17-10-1938
[2] Extracted from Pyarelal Nayyar's report "At Mardan"
[3] Gandhiji was at Swabi on this date.

useless and will bring you nothing but disappointment in the end. A votary of non-violence must have the capacity to put up with the indignities and hardships of prison life not only without retaliation or anger but with pity in his heart for the perpetrators of those hardships and indignities. I would, therefore, today ask you to examine yourselves in the light of my remarks, and if you find that you cannot or do not want to go the full length, to drop your badge of non-vio-lence and request Khan Saheb to release you from your pledge. That will be a species of heroism. But if you have full faith in the creed of non-violence as I have described it, then know it from me that God will arm you with the required strength in your hour of trial.

Harijan, 5-11-1938

179. LETTER TO ROY KUMAR SING

October 18, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

All the points raised by you have surely been dealt with in my articles. Of course, I would have England and France to give up arms, if they have the courage. And of course, I maintain that the law of the lower animal world is not the law of human beings. Brute nature has been known to yield to love.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. ROY KUMAR SING
ZAMINDAR
NATHNAGAR P. O.
DT. BHAGALPUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

180. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

October 18, 1938

BA,

I see from Ramdas's and Devdas's letters that you may now be said to be free from danger. When Sushila came to know that I was worried on your account, she asked me to let her go. I replied: "What is the use of sending you? There are many nursing Ba. I wish to be

present by her bedside for my own peace of mind and Ba also would wish it. But I ought to harden my heart and obey the dharma of staying on here." But God seems to have been kind. Lakshmi and the children will be fine.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 30

181. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

UTMANZAI,
October 18, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

The accompanying is for your information. What can it mean? It has produced no effect on me. What was there in the letter to Prema?

I hope you are all right. Your health must have been completely restored. Bal is with you. Isn't he? I had got his postcard.

The climate here is excellent. The peace is beyond description. One will not get such peace anywhere else.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7683

182. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

ON TOUR,
October 18, 1938

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

I am in a position to answer your letter only today. I could not read the book but entrusted the work to Nanavati. I read it[1]. I accept its evidence. It is not necessary to uphold the language of Nanavati's criticism, since I am talking only of Swamiji's writings. Nanavati has quoted Swamiji's words to prove that the book, which constricts Hinduism, is disappointing. In my opinion, this debate should not be con-

[1] Presumably a note prepared by Nanavati

tinued. Whatever the merits of the book, it cannot denigrate Swamiji, for who can forget the work that he has done? Swamiji's fame is beyond the confines of the book. I think I have served the Arya Samaj by making these two statements. Even after saying all this, if doubts persist, you may write to me for clarifications.

It will be better if you write direct to Nanavati. He will keep me informed of whatever he writes. I trust him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 828

183. HINDUSTANI, HINDI AND URDU

It is a great pity that bitter controversy has taken place and still continues regarding the Hindi-Urdu question. So far as the Congress is concerned Hindustani is its recognized official language designed as an all-India language for inter-provincial contact. It is not to supplant but to supplement the provincial languages. The recent resolution of the Working Committee should set all doubt at rest. If the Congressmen who have to do all-India work will only take the trouble of learning Hindustani in both the scripts, we shall have taken many strides in the direction of our common language goal. The real competition is not between Hindi and Urdu but between Hindustani and English. It is a tough fight. I am certainly watching it with grave concern.

Hindi-Urdu controversy has no bottom. Hindustani of the Congress conception has yet to be crystallized into shape. It will not be so long as Congress proceedings are not conducted exclusively in Hindustani. The Congress will have to prescribe the dictionaries for use by Congressmen and a department will have to supply new words outside the dictionaries. It is great work, it is work worth doing, if we are really to have a living, growing all-India speech. The department will have to determine which of the existing literature shall be con-sidered as Hindustani, books, magazines, weeklies, dailies, whether written in Urdu script or Devanagari. It is serious work needing a vast amount of plodding if it is to achieve success.

For the purpose of crystallizing Hindustani, Hindi and Urdu may be regarded as feeders. A Congressman must therefore wish well to both and keep in touch with both so far as he can.

This Hindustani will have many synonyms to supply the varied requirements of a growing nation rich in provincial languages. Hindustani spoken to Bengali or Southern audiences will naturally have a large stock of words of Sanskrit origin. The same speech delivered in the Punjab will have a large admixture of words of Arabic or Persian origin. Similar will be the case with audiences composed predominantly of Muslims who cannot understand many words of Sanskrit origin. All-India speakers will have therefore to command a Hindustani vocabulary which will enable them to feel at home with audiences drawn from all parts of India. Pandit Mala-viyaji's name comes uppermost in this connection. I have known him handle Hindi-speaking and Urdu-speaking audiences with equal case. I have never found him in want of the correct word. The same is true of Babu Bhagwandas who uses synonymous words in the same speech, and he sees to it that it does not lose in grace. Among the Muslims at the time of writing I can think of only Maulana Mahomed Ali whose vocabulary was varied enough to suit both audiences. His knowledge of Gujarati acquired in Baroda service stood him in good stead.

Independently of the Congress, Hindi and Urdu will continue to flourish. Hindi will be mostly confined to Hindus and Urdu to Muslims. As a matter of fact, comparatively speaking, there are very few Muslims who know Hindi well enough to be called scholars, though, I expect, in Hindi-speaking parts, to Muslims born there, Hindi is the mother tongue. There are thousands of Hindus whose mother tongue is Urdu and there are hundreds who can be aptly described as Urdu scholars. Pandit Motilalji was one such. Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru is another. Illustrations can be easily multiplied. There is therefore no reason for any quarrel or unhealthy competition between the two sisters. Healthy competition there always must be.

From all accounts I have received it seems that, under the able guidance of Moulvi Saheb Abdul Haq, the Osmania University is rendering great service to the cause of Urdu. The University has a big Urdu lexicon. Scientific treatises have been and are being prepared in Urdu. And as the teaching is being honestly imparted through Urdu in that University, it must grow. And if, owing to unreasoning prejudice today, all Hindi-speaking Hindus do not profit by the literature that is growing there, it is their fault. But the prejudice has to die. For, the present disunion between the communities is, like all diseases, only temporary. For good or for ill, the two communities are wedded to

India, they are neighbours, sons of the soil. They are destined to die here as they are born here. Nature will force them to live in peace if they do not come together voluntarily.

And as with the Hindus so with the Muslims. It is the latter's loss, if they will not take advantage of the fruits of the humbler labours of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan and the Nagari Pracharini Sabha. It is a pity they have not taken note with pride and pleasure of the big (for the Sammelan) step taken by it in defining Hindi as the language spoken in the north by Hindus and Mussalmans and written in Urdu or Devanagari script. Thus, so far as the definition is concerned, it answers the Congress definition of Hindustani.

I know that there are some who dream that there shall be only Urdu or only Hindi. I think it will always remain a dream and it is an unholy dream. Islam has its own peculiar culture, so has Hinduism its own. India of the future will be a perfect and happy blend of both. When that blessed day comes, their common speech will be Hindustani. But Urdu will still flourish with a predominance of Arabic and Persian words, and Hindi will still flourish with its abundant Sanskrit vocabulary. The language of Tulsidas and Surdas cannot die, even as the language in which Shibli wrote cannot die. But the best of both will be quite at home with Hindustani speech.

UTMANZAI, October 19, 1938

Harijan, 29-10-1938

184. FOREWORD TO "DADABHAI NAOROJI"

UTMANZAI,
October 19, 1938

It was on 4th September, 1888, that I sailed from Bombay with three letters of introduction, the most precious being for the G. O. M. of India, Dadabhai Naoroji. The letter was given by a Maharashtrian doctor, a friend of the family. The worthy doctor told me the G. O. M. did not know him personally, in fact he had never even had the *darshan* of the G. O. M. "But," said the doctor, "what does it matter? Everyone knows him and adores him as India's great son and champion. He has exiled himself for us. I claim to know him by his service of India. You will see that my letter will serve you just as well as if I had known him personally. The fact is, you need no

introduction to him. Your being an Indian is sufficient introduction. But you are a youngster, untravelled and timid. This letter will give you courage enough to go to the G.O.M. and all will be smooth sailing for you." And so it was. When I reached London, I soon found that Indian students had free access to the G.O.M. at all hours of the day. Indeed he was in the place of father to every one of them, no matter to which province or religion they belonged. He was there to advise and guide them in their difficulties. I have always been a hero- worshipper. And so Dadabhai became real Dada[1] to me. The relationship took the deepest root in South Africa. For, he was my constant adviser and inspiration. Hardly a week passed without a letter from me to him describing the condition of Indians in South Africa. And I well remember that whenever there was a reply to be expected, it came without fail in his own handwriting, in his inimitably simple style. I never received a typed letter from him. And during my visits to England from South Africa I found that he had for office a garret perhaps 8 feet by 6 feet. There was hardly room in it for another chair. His desk, his chair and the pile of papers filled the room. I saw that he wrote his letters in copying ink and press-copied them himself.

I have not read Shri Masani's sketch. But if he has at all done justice to the life so noble and yet so simple, his work needs no introduction from me or anybody else. May it be an inspiration to the reader even as Dadabhai living was to me.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 4875

185. LETTER TO RUSTOM MASANI

UTMANZAI,
October 19, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

Here is the promised foreword[2]. I hope it is quite in time.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[1] Grandfather
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[PS.]

I am just now reading during spare moments your *The Religion of the Good Life*, a copy of which you kindly sent me.

I see you want my photo. You will be surprised to learn that I keep none myself.

M. K. G.

Incidents of Gandhiji's Life, p. 170

186. DISCUSSION WITH ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

[*October 19/20, 1938*][1]

An important stage in Gandhiji's Frontier mission was reached when in his quiet retreat at Utmanzai he devoted two days to confabulate and compare notes with Badshah Khan after his tour of the Khudai Khidmatgars in Peshawar and Mardan districts. He asked Badshah Khan:

What is your impression? How do the Khudai Khidmatgars stand with regard to non-violence?

[A. G. K.] My impression, Mahatmaji, is that as they themselves admitted before us, the other day, they are raw recruits and fall far short of the standard. There is violence in their hearts which they have not been able altogether to cast out. They have their defects of temper. But there is no doubt as to their sincerity. Given a chance they can be hammered into shape and I think the attempt is worth while. . . . If we could assimilate and put into practice the whole of the doctrine of non-violence as you have explained it to us, how much stronger and better off we should be. . . .

Gandhiji suggested to Badshah Khan that if non-violence was to receive a fair trial, the Khudai Khidmatgars must be prepared to go through a rigorous course of training in constructive non-violence which he had in mind for them.

[A. G. K.] My idea, Mahatmaji, is to make Utmanzai into a model village. The spinning and weaving centre will serve as a sort of permanent exhibition for the education of the villagers. At the home for Khudai Khidmatgars we shall set before us the self-sufficiency ideal. We shall wear only the clothes that we ourselves produced, eat only such fruits and vegetables as we raise there and have a small dairy to provide us with milk. We shall deny ourselves what we cannot ourselves produce.

[G.] Good. May I further suggest that the Khudai Khidmatgars should take their due share in the building of the huts too that are to house them?

[1] From Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-IV" published in *Harijan*, 12-11-1938

[A. G. K.] That is our idea.

To train the first batch of workers, Gandhiji suggested that some Khudai Khidmatgars whom Badshah Khan might select might be sent to Wardha, where, besides becoming adepts in the science of khadi, they would also get a grounding in first aid and hygiene, sanitation and village uplift work and in Hindustani. They would also be initiated there into the Wardha Scheme of education so that on their return they would be able to take up the work of mass education. Gandhiji then said:

But your work will not make headway unless you take the lead and yourself become an adept in all these things.

Lastly, your work will come to nought unless you enforce the rule of punctuality in your retreat. There must be a fixed routine and fixed hours for rising and going to bed, for taking meals and for work and rest, and they must be rigorously enforced. I attach the greatest importance to punctuality; it is a corollary to non-violence.

They next proceeded to discuss the *modus operandi* by which the Khudai Khidmatgars, when they had become sure of their non-violence, would fulfil their mission of coping with the trans-border raids. Badshah Khan was of the opinion that the task was rendered infinitely difficult by the presence of the police and the military who were not fully under popular control and whose presence there brought in all the evils of double rule. "Either the authorities should whole-heartedly co-operate with us or they should withdraw the police and the military from one district to begin with, and we shall then undertake to maintain the peace of that district through our Khudai Khidmatgars." But Gandhiji held a different view. He remarked:

I frankly confess that I do not expect the authorities whole-heartedly to co-operate with us. They would distrust our ability, if not our motive. It is too much to expect them to withdraw the police on trust. Non-violence is a universal principle and its operation is not limited by a hostile environment. Indeed its efficacy can be tested only when it acts in the midst of and in spite of opposition. Our non-violence would be a hollow thing and nothing worth if it depended for its success on the goodwill of the authorities. If we can establish full control over the people, we shall render the police and the military innocuous.

And he described to Badshah Khan how during the Bombay riots on the occasion of the Prince of Wales's visit, the police and the military found their job gone because the Congress immediately regained control and peace was restored.

[A. G. K.] But the difficulty is that the raiders are mostly bad characters, who have absconded from British India. We cannot make contact with them because the authorities won't permit us or our workers to go into the tribal territory.

[G.] They must, and I tell you they will when we are fully ready. But for that we shall need to have a body of Khudai Khidmatgars who are really and truly servants of God, with whom non-violence is a living faith. Non-violence is an active principle of the highest order. It is soul force or the power of the godhead within us. Imperfect man cannot grasp the whole of that Essence—he would not be able to bear its full blaze—but even an infinitesimal fraction of it, when it becomes active within us, can work wonders. The sun in the heavens fills the whole universe with its life-giving warmth. But if one went too near it, it would consume him to ashes. Even so is it with godhead. We become godlike to the extent we realize non-violence; but we can never become wholly God. Non-violence is like radium in its action. An infinitesimal quantity of it imbedded in a malignant growth, acts continuously, silently, and ceaselessly till it has transformed the whole mass of the diseased tissue into a healthy one. Similarly, even a tiny grain of true non-violence acts in a silent, subtle, unseen way and leavens the whole society.

It is self-acting. The soul persists even after death, its existence does not depend on the physical body. Similarly, non-violence or soul force too, does not need physical aids for its propagation or effect. It acts independently of them. It transcends time and space.

It follows, therefore, that if non-violence becomes successfully established in one place, its influence will spread everywhere. So long as a single dacoity takes place in Utmanzai, I will say that our non-violence is not genuine.

The basic principle on which the practice of non-violence rests is that what holds good in respect of yourself holds good equally in respect of the whole universe. All mankind in essence are alike. What is, therefore, possible for me is possible for everybody. Pursuing further this line of reasoning, I came to the conclusion that if I could find a non-violent solution of the various problems that arise in one particular village, the lesson learnt from it would enable me to tackle in a non-violent manner all similar problems in India.

And so I decided to settle down in Sevagram. My sojourn in Sevagram has been an education for me. My experience with the Harijans has provided me with what I regard as an ideal solution for the Hindu-Muslim problem, which does away with all pacts. So if you can set things right in Utmanzai your whole problem would be solved. Even our relations with the English will be transformed and

purified if we can show to them that we really do not stand in need of the protection for which their police and the army are ostensibly kept.

But Badshah Khan had a doubt. In every village there is an element of self-seekers and exploiters who are ready to go to any length in order to serve their selfish ends. Would it not be better, Khan Saheb asked, to ignore them altogether or should an attempt be made to cultivate them too.

[G.] We may ultimately have to leave some of them out, but we may not regard anybody as irreclaimable. We should try to understand the psychology of the evil-doer. He is very often victim of his circumstances. By patience and sympathy, we shall be able to win over at least some of them to the side of justice. Moreover, we should not forget that even evil is sustained through the co-operation, either willing or forced, of good. Truth alone is self-sustained. In the last resort we can curb power of the evil-doers to do mischief by withdrawing all co-operation from them and completely isolating them.

This in essence is the principle of non-violent non-co-operation. It follows, therefore, that it must have its roots in love. Its object should not be to punish the opponent or to inflict injury upon him. Even while non-co-operating with him, we must make him feel that in us he has a friend and we should try to reach his heart by rendering him humanitarian service whenever possible. In fact it is the acid test of non-violence that in a non-violent conflict there is no rancour left behind, and in the end the enemies are converted into friends. That was my experience in South Africa with General Smuts. He started by being my bitterest opponent and critic. Today he is my warmest friend. For eight years we were ranged on opposite sides. But during the Second Round Table Conference it was he who stood by me and, in public as well as in private, gave me his full support. This is only one instance out of many that I can quote.

Times change and systems decay. But it is my faith that in the result, it is only non-violence and things that are based on non-violence that will endure. Nineteen hundred years ago Christianity was born. The ministry of Jesus lasted only for three brief years. His teaching was misunderstood even during his own time, and today's Christianity is a denial of his central teaching— "Love your enemy". But what are nineteen hundred years for the spread of the central doctrine of a man's teaching?

Six centuries rolled by and Islam appeared on the scene. Many Mussalmans will not even allow me to say that Islam, as the word im-

plies, is unadulterated peace. My reading of the Koran has convinced me that the basis of Islam is not violence. But here again thirteen hundred years are but a speck in the cycle of Time. I am convinced that both these great faiths will live only to the extent that their followers imbibe the central teaching of non-violence. But it is not a thing to be grasped through mere intellect, it must sink into our hearts.

A Pilgrimage for Peace, pp. 71-8

187. NOTES

MR. AND ESQUIRE *V.* SHRI, MOULVI, MAULANA, JANAB AND THE LIKE

Some friends told me on my putting 'Shri' before 'Jinnah' instead of 'Mr.' in my statement made before I visited him in Bombay that it must have offended him. I demurred and said that if he was offended he would have given me a gentle hint, I would have apologized and used an adjective he liked best. The readers will remember, in the heyday of non-co-operation the terms 'Mr.' and 'Esq.' were dropped by Congressmen and the nationalist Press, and 'Shri' was the title largely used for all irrespective of religion. Though the practice has largely fallen into desuetude, I have never given it up. But for our bad habit, I was going to say slavish mentality, we would never have used 'Mr.' and 'Esquire' before or after Indian names. In Europe an Englishman never addresses foreigners as 'Mr.'or 'Esquire' but uses the adjectives current in the respective countries. Thus Hitler is never called 'Mr.', he is 'Herr' Hitler. Similarly Mussolini is neither 'Mr.' nor 'Herr', he is 'Signor'. Why we should have dropped our own nomenclature I do not know. But a moment's detachment from the prevailing habit should show us that the use of 'Mr.' and 'Esquire' before or after Indian names sounds ludicrous.

I must, however, admit that the use of 'Shri' before Muslim names, in these days of mutual suspicion, may not please Muslim friends. I have discussed the matter with some Muslim friends. They told me the word 'Moulvi' was the usual adjective. 'Janab' I have heard often in the South. Anyway I can say that in using 'Shri' for Muslim Indian names, I have had no idea except the friendliest. When anybody calls me 'Mr.' the use of the word jars on me. The happiest Hindu usage is 'ji' at the end of the name. 'Saheb' is synonymous

with 'ji'. I remember I always used to address the late Hakim Ajmalkhan as Hakimji. Some Muslim friend told me that Hakim 'Saheb' would be preferred by Muslims. I had not known before of any such preference. But since the correction, except for inadvertent use of 'ji', I always addressed the deceased patriot as Hakim Saheb. I could not address him as 'Mr.' Ajmalkhan even if somebody deposited five salted canes on the naked back. It seems that we become 'Misters' and 'Esquires' after we receive English education!!! Will readers learned in this kind of lore help me and persons like me by giving the uncontaminated usages in vogue in India?

UTMANZAI, October 20, 1938

Harijan, 29-10-1938

188. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 20, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

My post is going abegging. Hence for four days I am without any news from you. I know it is well with Mahadev and yet one wants the written letter. Ba, whose health has caused me anxiety this time, is out of danger. Perhaps Mahadev too gets the news independently.

At this end it is all well. I am having good chats with the Khudai Khidmatgars. The more correct description would be to say that I have been giving them discourses which Khan Saheb translates with rare zeal. He puts his whole soul into the thing. Silence has become second nature with me.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Utmanzai which we leave tomorrow not to return during this tour.

From the original: C.W. 3642. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6451

189. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

October 20, 1938

CHI. BRAJKRISHNA

We get no time to talk.[1] My prescription is good for you, for me and for the country. You would get the freedom you seek. Your capital is neither silver nor gold, nor intellect; your capital is your infinite love. You can trade it here to your heart's content. I shall not be able to find for you a better field of service. You may accept it if you like.

I got the impression from S.'s[2] letter that she had given up the thought of F.[3] If she wants to marry him you should caution her fully. You should also tell F. that it would not be a proper thing for him to take on a married woman.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2460

190. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

PESHAWAR,
October 20, 1938

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. Write about your experiences in Calcutta. Satis Babu has grown weak. Do something for him if you can. Or have you lost touch with nature cure? I am only joking. I shall be here till November 9. Then Segaon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, facing p. 272

[1] The addressee was with Gandhiji at Utmanzai.
[2] The names have been omitted.
[3] *Ibid*

191. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

KOHAT,
October 21, 1938

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have replied to your telegram. Even if you go to Travancore as a private citizen, you will succeed. Meet the prisoners. There is a good deal of falsehood in the air. I have received heaps of telegrams from the Congress[1] totally denying the charge of violence by it. But there are other telegrams, too, which say that there has undoubtedly been violence. The truth can be ascertained only if somebody goes there personally. You know the attitude I have adopted. The people should withdraw the allegations against C. P. or make them the main issue. If they adopt the latter course, then there is no need for satyagraha. It is for the local workers to make the choice. If C. P. Offers to invite a judge from outside to try the cases, the people should accept the challenge. If they refuse to do that, the fight will lose its moral basis. You must have seen my last advice. If violence is going on for whatever reason, civil disobedience must be suspended unconditio-nally. Let those imprisoned remain in jails. Excepting civil disobedi-ence, the rest of the programme may continue. You may, however, decide what you think best after a personal visit. See Ramachandran first and then the prisoners.

Read the accompanying wire from Balkrishna[2] of Kanpur. I have wired back saying I knew nothing of the matter. The Parliamentary Board, I assume, must have agreed to intervene on the Minister's advice. Even if that is not the case, the Provincial Committee is free to handle the affair as it likes. I suppose all this is not out of your mind.

I hope your health is all right. I am keeping well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Why should you resign from the Gandhi Seva Sangh? Jamnalalji is practically an invalid at present. Even if he resigns, however, won't he continue to give his services? Nothing is going to improve by your

[1] Travancore State Congress
[2] Balkrishna Sharma, a leading Congress worker of Kanpur

resigning.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 226-7

192. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

October 21, 1938

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

It is 12.45 a. m. I do not have a pen. But since this is a good opportunity I am writing in pencil on mill-made paper. I am late in replying to you. I am helpless. The doctor won't allow me to work at night. Today, for some reason, I am not able to sleep. That is how I can write to you. I hope you will not find my handwriting difficult to decipher. Or maybe I shall ask Kanu to copy it out in ink.

Give me time till the end of this tour. Do not mind if this season is wasted. What do the poor do? There is nothing improper in what you say. I am certainly not angry but I am not amused either. I respect your language because you speak or write just what comes to your mind. Maybe I am in the dark. It is more probable because I know nothing of these matters. I have caught hold of one thing. Both of you love the cow. You are more industrious. You have greater love for the cow. Parnerkar has more scientific knowledge. In this situation, I thought I should do something which would allow scope for both. I shall then know who is right. This may entail some loss and I shall suffer it.

However, I approve of your suggestion. I should not involve myself in these complications but should appoint an arbitrator who should listen to both sides and give a decision. His verdict should be accepted. Could Chimanlal, Nanavati or Mirabehn serve the purpose? I am inclined to suggest Kishorelal, but why should I put him to this strain? I do not mind troubling Radhakisan. If Parnerkar approves of these names, the matter can be decided soon. You need not wait till I return. You may mention this to Parnerkar. I think I have now answered all your points. Be patient.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1911

193. THE CONFISCATED LANDS

It would be wrong on my part if I allowed it to be said that the Bill to provide for the restoration of lands forfeited during the Civil Disobedience Movement just passed by the Bombay Legislature, miscalled expropriatory law, would not have been passed if I had my will. I must make the confession that I had some hand in the Ministers' bringing in the Bill. Indeed I felt that any other course would be less than correct. Any parley with those who had bought the lands would be either coercion on behalf of the Government or blackmail by the so-called owners. If it was right to restore the lands to the true owners, it should be done by law. If the Government had not the power under the Government of India Act even to pass such an innocent and necessary relief measure, it was worse than the critics had described it to be. I hold that the Bombay Bill is more than just. The clause providing for compensation to the so-called owners to the extent of their outlay plus interest makes it more than just. The provable facts about these lands are that they were bought in collusion with the authorities. Indeed it was difficult for them to find purchasers. The lands were sold to terrorize the people. It was part of the repressive policy, and they were sold in some cases for a song. When the Government that resorted to such terrorism gave place to those who were its victims, surely they must be credited with magnanimity when, instead of confiscating the lands purchased collusively and in the teeth of strong and overwhelming popular opposition, they offered compensation.

Had the fight between the Government and the people been violent instead of non-violent, the victorious party coming into power would certainly have restored without compensation all property to the legal possessors forcibly taken away from the rightful owners. Surely, the situation could not be altered because the fight was non-violent and there was a semblance of legal procedure about the transfers. The public should know that the lands were first confiscated by the then Government and when the confiscation did not seem to break the spirit of the fighters, the unworthy means of selling the lands was resorted to. But they seemed to be terrified of their own enormity and they desisted from selling further lands. I would far rather draw the curtain over the painful past. I have raised it just to let

the reader know that the Bombay Government have not been guilty of injustice.

KOHAT, October 22, 1938
Harijan, 29-10-1938

194. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

KOHAT,
October 22, 1938

BIRLA
ROYAL EXCHANGE
CALCUTTA

KOHAT UP TO MONDAY. POSTING PROGRAMME. FINISH NINTH NOVEMBER.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 7799. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

195. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

KOHAT,
October 22, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I got all the five letters yesterday at Peshawar during the 4 hours' halt.

Tyrants would not be tyrants if they did anything but injustice. But thank God for this tyrant you acquit him of conscious injustice. Mahadev says you felt like fainting the other day. Why? And why do you persist in working even when you faint? Or do you want it to be said of you after your death (may it be after many many years) that you were so conscientious that you worked away even though you fainted? In my language it would be called folly. You must not faint. There is no medicine for Shummy save love, more and yet more *ad infinitum.* I must not say more if I am to keep my appointments. Your Kohat letter has come.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3643. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6452

196. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 22, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

We arrived in Peshawar yesterday at 8.30 and started out again at four. Five days' mail had accumulated in Peshawar. I got all your letters only yesterday.

Why did you feel that your letters might be a burden to me? It is not at all so. The fact is that whenever there is no letter from you, I feel very uneasy. And if the letter is short, I get angry and wonder what could keep you so busy that you had to be content with only two lines.

About Bablo, Rajkumari writes to say that he should be given full scope for mental development. I also believe that this should be done, either through the current method, i.e., through the high school, etc., or the other method, of coaching at home. The development through home coaching will be in one direction, and through the college, etc., it will be in another direction. Think over this with Rajkumari. If you can think of anything different from what is being done at present, we may do it. Bablo also may suggest.

I have already written to Lilavati. The only purpose behind asking you also to write to her was that she might hear the same opinion from all sides. She has given me no notice that she will not stay with you now. Nor do I feel so. All the same, we will not keep her there forcibly. But since at present your plans are uncertain why need we think about the matter?

Pothan has been writing to me about Travancore. Generally a man's obituary is written after his death. In your case, this is done before your death. So why should you concern yourself now what will be written after your death? Later on a new and revised edition of your biography will be brought out. If not Pothan, somebody else like him will write a revised obituary.

I may not write more today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11665

197. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

KOHAT,
October 22, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

I have already written you two letters. In one I sent a note to Shamjibhai for Rs. 300.[1] You must have received it. You should respect Jayaprakash's wishes. Go with him if you are required to do so. Even in that case, however, bring Saraswati with you. Leave her at the nearest station. I will arrange for somebody to escort her from there. This means, of course, that you will have to go to Trivandrum. There is no time for more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3523

198. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KOHAT[2]

October 22, 1938

I have given over one hour today to acquaint myself with your difficulties and woes. But I confess to you that I am no longer fit to tackle such matters. While, on the one hand, old age is slowly creeping over me, on the other my responsibilities are becoming more and more multifarious and there is danger that if I have too many irons in the fire, I may not be able to do justice to the more important of my responsibilities. And among these, the responsibility that I have undertaken in respect of the Khudai Khidmatgars is the more important, and if I can carry it out to my satisfaction, in collaboration with Khan Saheb, I will feel that my closing years have not been wasted.

People laugh at me and at the idea of Khudai Khidmatgars becoming full-fledged non-violent soldiers of swaraj. But their mockery does not affect me. Non-violence is a quality not of the body but

[1] The letter to Shyamji Sunderdas however mentions Rs. 200; *vide* "Letter to Shayamji Sunderdas", 12-10-1938

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-III". At the meeting addresses were presented to Gandhiji by the District Congress Committee on behalf of the citizens of Kohat. The meeting was attended by about 5,000 people.

of the soul. Once its central meaning sinks into your being, all the rest by itself follows. Human nature in the Khudai Khidmatgars is not different from mine. And I am sure that if I can practise non-violence to some extent, they, and for the matter of that anyone else, can. I, therefore, invite you to pray with me to the Almighty that He may make real my dream about the Khudai Khidmatgars.

Harijan, 5-11-1938

199. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

KOHAT,
[*October 22/23, 1938*][1]

CHI. BRAJKRISHNA,

I feel on reading your letter that this time at any rate you have to stay in Delhi. All the tasks suggested are a must for you.

I shall write to the Meerut people.

You may do whatever seems proper regarding S. Shall I write to F.?

I certainly gave you permission to live with me but take it that this desire is born of attachment. It would not do simply to assert that Ramana Maharshi and Aurobindo are one-sided while I am all-sided. One who is one-sided but understands his mission and pursues it has merit. One who claims to be all-sided but is only experimenting has even less worth than broken almond shells. Only God knows where I stand. I am an aspirant while they are known to be, and perhaps are, realized souls. Anyway their followers attribute to them full self-realization.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2459

[1] Gandhiji was in Kohat on these dates.

200. TALK TO KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS

KOHAT,
[*October 22/23, 1938*][1]

In the course of his talk before the Khudai Khidmatgar officers at Kohat, he impressed upon them the tremendous nature of the step which they had taken. He had often said before that if the Pathan, famed in the world for the prowess of his arms, really took to non-violence, renouncing arms, it would be a red-letter day in the history of India and the world.

For good or for ill, the Pathan today has come to be regarded as a bogey man by the average person in India. In Gujarat and Kathiawar children turn pale at the very mention of the Pathan. At Sabarmati Ashram, we try to inculcate fearlessness among the children. But I am ashamed to confess that in spite of all our efforts we have not succeeded in making them eradicate the fear of the Pathan from their hearts. I have not been able to impress upon our ashram girls that they have no need to fear a Pathan. They try to make a show of bravery. But it is only a make-believe. During a communal disturbance they dare not stir out of their homes if there is a report of even a casual Pathan being about. They are afraid they would be kidnapped .

I tell them that even if they are kidnapped they must not be frightened. They should appeal to the kidnapper's sense of honour to behave chivalrously towards one who should be as a sister to him. If in spite of their entreaties he persists in his evil intentions (since all must die some day), they can put an end to their life by biting the tongue but not submit. They answer, 'What you say is right. But it is all new to us. We have not the confidence that at the proper time we shall be able to do what you tell us.' If such is the case with the Ashram girls, what must it be with others? When, therefore, I hear that a body of Khidmatgars has arisen among the Pathans, who have completely renounced violence, I do not know whether to believe it or not.

What are the implications of renouncing violence and what is the mark of a person who has renounced violence?

One did not become a Khudai Khidmatgar by adopting that name or by putting on the Khudai Khidmatgar's uniform, he told them. It needed systematic training in non-violence. In Europe where they had glorified killing into a noble profession,

[1] Gandhiji was in Kohat on these two days. However, according to the source this talk took place before "Talk to Khudai Khidmatgars", 23-10-1938

they spent millions on perfecting the science of destruction. Their best scientists were pressed into its service. Even their educational system was centred on it. They spent stupendous sums too on luxuries and means of physical comforts, which formed a part of their ideal. By contrast, the mark of a man of God or a Khudai Khidmatgar should be purity, industry and unremitting hard labour in the service of God's creation.

In the course of serving your fellow creatures you will get a measure of the progress you have made in non-violence and of the power that is in non-violence. Armed with this power, a single person can stand against the whole world. That is not possible with the sword.

Hitherto, non-violence had been synonymous with civil breach of laws and taking the penalty for the same non-violently. But he wished to tell them that, although civil disobedience was included in the programme of non-violence, its essence as he had pointed out at Swabi, was the moral right or fitness which it presupposed in the civil resister and which accrued to one who trained himself in the practice of non-violence.[1] In the satyagraha fight 'civil disobedience is the end, not the beginning. It is the last step, not the first.' People used to have a craven fear of the Government. As a remedy, he had prescribed satyagraha or civil disobedience. It was a sharp medicine.

Unless a physician, who administers powerful drugs, knows exactly when to stop, he loses his patient. That is why I promptly called off civil disobedience, confining it to myself alone when the situation demanded it.[2] It was just in time. So I would like you, for the time being, to forget civil disobedience.

He next proceeded to explain that service of God could only be performed through service of His creatures. He had made it his habit to try to see always the hand of God in everything even at the risk of being considered superstitious. Thus he saw the hand of God in the name that Badshah Khan had given them. Badshah Khan had not called them *satyagrahis* but servants of God.

But how to serve God since He is incorporate and needs no personal service? We can serve Him by serving His creation. There is an Urdu verse which says: 'Man can never be God but in essence he is not different from Divinity.' Let us make our village our universe. We shall then serve God by serving our village. To relieve the distress of the unemployed by providing them work, to tend the sick, to wean people from their insanitary habits, to educate them in cleanliness and

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Swabi", 17-10-1938

[2] In April 1934 Gandhiji had advised all Congressmen to suspend civil disobedience for swaraj as distinguished from civil disobedience for specific grievances; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 2-4-1934

healthy living should be the job of a Khudai Khidmatgar. And since whatever he does is in God's service, his service will be performed with far more diligence and care than that of paid workers.

He ended by giving a few practical hints as to how to cultivate non-violent strength.

A Khudai Khidmatgar will keep a strict account of every minute of his time which he will regard as God's trust. To waste a single moment of one's time in idleness or frivolity is a sin against God. It is on a par with stealing. If there is even a tiny little bit of land available, he will occupy himself with growing something on it—food or vegetables for the destitute and needy. If he should feel inclined to sit idle and do nothing because his parents have enough money to enable him to purchase food and vegetables from the bazaar, he will argue to himself that by drawing upon the bazaar supplies, he deprives the poor of the same and steals what belongs to God. Before he purchases or uses anything, a Khudai Khidmatgar will ask himself whether there is not somebody else whose need may be greater than his. Supposing somebody places a sumptuous dish before him and a starving person appears on the scene, he will think of the latter's need first, feed him and then alone partake of the dish.

A Pilgrimage for Peace, pp. 83-6

201. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 23, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

As the ink in Sushila's pen is exhausted, I am writing with a pencil to save time. This was given to me by Brijkrishna. I am sending the accompanying letter only for your information. I have written to Agatha and asked her to come here directly. My return may be delayed and it does not seem proper that she should keep wandering from place to place. Here some of the sights are so charming that I cannot help thinking about you. The climate of course is excellent. I will not write to Rajkumari today.

There is a heap of letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11667

202. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

October 23, 1938

CHI. LILA,

I have your letter. You will feel uneasy at Segaon in my absence. It would be better if you waited till I returned. Is there not enough work of service in Rajkot? What about the struggle there? Let me have your experiences.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

203. TALK TO KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS

HUNGOO,

[*October 23, 1938*][1]

Gandhiji referred to an address of welcome that had been presented to him at Nasarat Khel on the way, at the foundation laying ceremony of the Khudai Khidmatgars' office. In it there was a reference to "our last struggle". He remarked:

Let me tell you that civil disobedience may come and go, but our non-violent struggle for freedom goes on and will continue till Independence is attained. Only the form has changed.

I know that to 90 per cent Indians, non-violence means that and nothing else.[2] It is good so far. There is bravery in it. But you and particularly the Khudai Khidmatgar officers must clearly understand that this is not the whole of non-violence. If you have really understood the meaning of non-violence, it should be clear to you that non-violence is not a principle or a virtue to be brought into play on a particular occasion or to be practised with reference to a particular party or section. It has to become a part and parcel of our being. Anger should disappear from our hearts altogether, otherwise what is the difference between ourselves and our oppressors? Anger may lead

[1] According to Pyarelal's report in the Frontier Province-III published in *Harijan*, 5-11-1938, Gandhiji visited Hungoo on October 23, 1938.

[2] The address had mentioned that the Khudai Khidmatgars had not been and would never be cowed down by repression.

one person to issue an order to open fire, another to use abusive language, a third one to use the *lathi.* At root it is all the same. It is only when you have become incapable of feeling or harbouring anger in your hearts that you can claim to have shed violence or can expect to remain non-violent to the end.

He then proceeded to explain the difference between civil disobedience and satyagraha.

Our civil disobedience or non-co-operation, by its very nature, was not meant to be practised for all time. But the fight which we are today putting up through our constructive non-violence has a validity for all time; it is the real thing. Supposing the Government were to cease to arrest civil resisters, our jail-going would then stop but that would not mean that our fight is over. A civil resister does not go to jail to embarrass the jail authorities by indulging in the breach of jail rules. Of course, there can be civil disobedience in jail too. But there are definite rules for it. The point is that the civil resister's fight does not end with his imprisonment. Once we are inside the prison we become civilly dead so far as the outside world is concerned. But inside the prison our fight to convert the hearts of the Government's bond slaves, i. e., the jail officials, just begins. It gives us a chance of demonstrating to them that we are not like thieves or dacoits, that we wish them no ill, nor do we want to destroy the opponent but want only to make him our friend, not by servilely obeying all orders, just or unjust— that is not the way to win true friendship—but by showing them that there is no evil in us, that we sincerely wish them well and in our hearts pray that God's goodness may be upon them. My fight continued even when I was lodged behind prison bars. I have been several times in prison and every time I have left only friends behind in the jail officials and others with whom I have come in contact.

It is a speciality of non-violence that its action never stops. That cannot be said of the sword or the bullet. The bullet can destroy the enemy; non-violence converts the enemy into a friend and thus enables the civil resister to assimilate to himself the latter's strength.

By their civil disobedience struggle, he continued, they had demonstrated to the world their determination no longer to be ruled by the British. But they had now to give proof of valour of another and higher type. During the Khilafat days tall, hefty Pathan soldiers used to come and meet the Ali Brothers and himself secretly. They used to tremble at the thought of their visit being discovered by their superior officers and resulting in their dismissal from service. In spite of their tall stature and

physical strength they used to cower and become servile when confronted by a person physically stronger than they.

I want strength which will enable me to submit to none but God, my sole Lord and Master. It is only when I can do that, that I can claim to have realized non-violence.

He then proceeded to expatiate on another speciality of non-violence, viz., one need not go to a school or a *pir* or a guru to learn its use. Its virtue lay in its simplicity. If they realized that it was the most active principle that worked all the twenty-four hours without rest or remission, they would look for opportunities for its application in their homes, in the streets, in relation to their foes no less than friends. They could begin to practise it in their homes from that very day. He had disciplined himself sufficiently never to feel angry with the enemy, but he confessed that he sometimes lost temper with friends. Such discipline in non-violence as he had, he told them, he had at home from his wife. And with that he unfolded in poignant detail, a chapter of his domestic life. He used to be a tyrant at home, he said. His tyranny was the tyranny of love.

I used to let loose my anger upon her. But she bore it all meekly and uncomplainingly. I had a notion that it was her duty to obey me, her lord and master, in everything. But her unresisting meekness opened my eyes and slowly it began to dawn upon me that I had no such prescriptive right over her. If I wanted her obedience, I had first to persuade her by patient argument. She thus became my teacher in non-violence. And I dare say, I have not had a more loyal and faithful comrade in life. I literally used to make life a hell for her. Every other day I would change my residence, prescribe what dress she was to wear. She had been brought up in an orthodox family where untouchability was observed. Muslims and untouchables used to frequent our house. I made her serve them all regardless of her innate reluctance. But she never said 'no'. She was not educated in the usual sense of the term and was simple and unsophisticated. Her guileless simplicity conquered me completely.

You have all wives, mothers and sisters at home. You can take the lesson of non-violence from them. You must, besides, take the vow of truth, ask yourselves how dear truth is to you and how far you observe it in thought, word and deed. A person who is not truthful is far away from non-violence. Untruth itself is violence.

Referring to the month of Ramzan that had just set in, he told them how it could be used to make a start in non-violence.

We seem to think that the observance of Ramzan begins and ends with abstention from food and drink. We think nothing of losing

temper over trifles or indulging in abuse during the sacred month of Ramzan. If there is the slightest delay in serving the repast at the time of the breaking of the fast, the poor wife is hauled over live coals. I do not call it observing the Ramzan, but its travesty. If you really want to cultivate non-violence, you should take a pledge that come what may, you will not give way to anger or order about members of your household or lord it over them. You can thus utilize trifling little occasions in everyday life to cultivate non-violence in your own person and teach it to your children.

He took another instance. Suppose somebody hit their child with a stone. Usually the Pathan tells his child not to return home to whine but to answer back with a bigger stone. But a votary of non-violence, said Gandhiji, would tell his child not to meet a stone by a stone but by embracing the boy who threw the stone and making friends with him.

The same formula, i. e., to banish anger completely from the heart and to make everybody into one's friend, is indeed enough to win India her independence. It is the surest and the quickest way, too, and it is my claim that for winning Independence for the poor masses of India, it is the only way.

A Pilgrimage for Peace, pp. 87-91

204. THE NATIONAL FLAG

Here is a letter from a correspondent:

It has become a far too common occurrence and therefore deserving of notice at your hands to set up the national tri-coloured flag in such a manner as to indicate rivalry with or predominance over the religious flags and other symbols exhibited on occasions of religious worship and festivities. While we all desire that the national flag should be a symbol of unity and determination to achieve uninterrupted progress in all directions, we should be undoing this very purpose by trying to make rivalry between the national flag and other flags and symbols connected with religion which should predominate on occasions of religious ceremony. The enthusiasm of some of our workers leads them to error in this respect and in fact to develop an opposition in some quarters to the national flag which did not exist before.

Sometimes, again, private interests and factions seek to make use of the national feeling in respect of the flag and exploit it for their own purposes by mixing up a quarrel with the national flag and confusing the issues in regard to incidents.

It seems as if ever so many of the movements for which you were

responsible are liable to be misconstrued and misdirected, unless you are always ready to re-explain, re-interpret and prevent misdirection. I particularly fear the consequences of doing anything to create a rivalry between the national flag and the religious symbols of either Hindus or Mussalmans or of others. The tendency of setting up the national flag on temple cars and temple towers offends my sense of the universality of religion and the incongruity of trying to nationalize God.

As the author of the idea of a national flag and its make up which in essence the present flag represents, I have felt grieved how the flag has been often abused and how it has even been used to cover violence. The flag has been designed to represent non-violence expressed through real communal unity and non-violent labour which the lowliest and highest can easily undertake with the certain prospect of making substantial and yet imperceptible addition to the wealth of the country. But today it must be confessed that from that standpoint it is merely a piece of tricolour cloth not always khadi and is not proud of [*sic*] and a living emblem of communal unity and equalizing labour in which all participate. The spinning-wheel does hum in thousands of village huts. But compared to what should be, the result is poor.

Moreover the national flag, if it is a symbol of non-violence must also mean humility. If I had my way I would not exhibit it at any meeting which is not a purely Congress meeting if a single person objects to it. The dignity of the flag cannot be lowered by yielding even to a single objector at a non-Congress meeting. Its dignity will be lowered when it is hauled down for fear of the power we want to oust. The dignity will be still more lowered when we exhibit it at meetings or on Congress offices though we have no living faith in communal unity and the spinning-wheel with all its implications. Since the flag is not a religious symbol and represents and reconciles all religions, in religious processions, or temples or religious gatherings it has no place. Everything has its value when it is in its place. It has none when it is out of its place. Bullion and banknotes have no value whatsoever in the desert of Sahara. Indeed in the present state of tension, I would not hoist it on Government buildings or municipal offices unless it is accepted not merely by an overwhelming vote but unanimously. I have no hesitation in saying that even one vote cast against it, maybe mischievously, should have its weight, if the flag is a symbol of non-violence and humility.

My correspondent has evidently more faith in the power of my pen than I have. I write not because I believe that my word would carry weight where it is intended to carry. But I may not reject the correspondent's appeal. His argument and facts I accept. I may not restrain myself simply because of the fear that my word may miscarry. Anyway, it does me good to redeclare my faith in the flag with all the implications I have mentioned.

BANNU, October 24, 1938

Harijan, 5-11-1938

205. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

BANNU,
October 24, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

You must do with the pencil hand and on mill-made paper—the pencil does not move well on the glazed hand-made.

Your two letters were awaiting me when we reached Bannu. 'A Woman's Letter'[1] I may use for *Harijan*. Your Kathiawar thing[2] will go in this week with the last paragraph or two cut out.

It is not likely that my articles on the European situation will bear fruit immediately. But they will, if India develops non-violence. There are grave doubts about its possibility. My own impurity is probably the chief stumbling-block. My word has lost its power as it appears to me. It should, according to my views of purity. However, I push on in faith. I must detach myself from the results of my thought, word or deed. I am not going to judge myself and condemn me to inactivity because I cannot get rid of the impurity in spite of incessant effort. Now perhaps you will understand my disbelief in my power to reach the woman's heart. But this is a long story. So much has come in spontaneously. You won't worry because I do not worry at all. I do not brood over my impurity. I see the snake is there. I know his fangs worse than a krait's. I am therefore on my guard. The best test of no worry is my uniformly steady b. p.

I wish you would show this to Mahadev. When I began the letter I did not know that it would be a serious business. It is good in a way.

[1] *Vide* "Woman's Special Mission",5-11-1938

[2] *Vide* "Kathiawar Notes", 4-11-1938.

I have simply given you a few lines for love's sake.

Love.

TYRANT
OTHERWISE WARRIOR
ACCORDING TO THE
LATEST HONOURS' LIST

From the original: C.W. 3644. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6453

206. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

BANNU,
October 24, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

At the moment I have no pen and so I am writing with a pencil. Rather than write nothing, is it not better to write with a pencil and use even mill-made paper?

I got both your letters on arrival here today. What you write about Kanti's letter is correct. If I can, I will make use of it. I shall see. Rajkumari was to be shown that portion only, that is, the substance, so that she might be pleased to know that Kanti's ideas were developing well.

What you say about her—Rajkumari's—virtues is correct. Such contacts serve to make us humble and increase our spirit of service. From this point of view, such occasions arising without our seeking should be welcomed. When I have completed the tour, we shall think about what you should do. We shall be leaving here on November 10 at the latest. It may even be sooner. Even that Lilavati will consider too late. I do feel, therefore, that if you like the place there, and Rajkumari is ready to stay and have you as her guest, you should stay on. Simla is really at its best in November-December. I do not believe it possible that you can start working by November 10. This rest will not be wasted. You are paying a long-accumulated debt and so, if not to Simla, you must go somewhere else for rest. You may consult Rajkumari about Jullundur.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11668

207. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

BANNU,
October 24, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

I have received your letter. But I have no time today to write you a long reply. Now the days you have to count are becoming fewer and fewer, aren't they?

I shall have to come and make some changes in your diet. I cannot do it from here. Do you have to nurse Bhansalibhai any time? Do you go for your walks alone? Does Shakaribehn[1] go out?

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10001. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

208. WOMAN'S SPECIAL MISSION

THE EDITOR, *Harijan*
Sir,

I have read your articles on the recent European crisis with great joy. It was only natural that you should speak to Europe now.

How could you restrain yourself when humanity was on the very verge of destruction?

Will the world listen? That is the question.

There is no doubt—judging from letters from friends in England—that people there went through absolute agony during that ghastly week. I am sure the same applies to the whole world. The mere thought of war—modern warfare—with its devilish ingenuity and consequent pitiless butchery and bestiality—definitely made people think as they had never thought before. "The sigh of relief that was breathed and the gratitude to God that went up from every heart when the news came through that war had been averted are something that I can never forget as long as I live," writes an English friend. And yet is it just the fear of unspeakable suffering, the dread of losing one's nearest and dearest, of seeing one's country humiliated, that cause one to detest war? Are we glad war has been averted even at the humiliation of another nation? Would we have felt differently if the sacrifice of honour had been demanded of us? Do we hate war because we realize it is the wrong way to settle disputes or is our hatred of it part and parcel of our fear? These are questions

[1] Addressee's mother

that must be answered in the right way if war is really to vanish from the earth.

The crisis over, however, what do we see? A more strenuous race than before for armaments, a more comprehensive and intensive organization than ever of all the resources available—of men, women, money, skill and talent—in the event of war ! No avowed declaration that "War shall not be" from anywhere! Is this not a recognition that war —however averted today—is still hanging over our heads as the proverbial sword of Damocles?

To me, as a woman, it is painful to realize that my sex has not contributed to world peace the quota that should be ours by instinct and prerogative to contribute. It pains me to read and hear of women's auxiliary corps being organized, of women being commandeered and volunteering to take their full share in the actual field as well as behind the lines. And yet, when war comes, it is the women's hearts that are wrung in agony—it is their souls that are scarred beyond repair. It is all so inexplicable. Why is it that we have not chosen the better part through all the ages? Why have we, without murmur, bowed the knee to hideous, soulless, brute force? It is a sad commentary on our spiritual development. We have failed to understand our high calling. I am quite convinced that if women could only have a heart understanding of the power and glory of non-violence all would be well with the world.

Why cannot you inspire and organize us, women of India? Why will you not concentrate on having us as your "sword arm"? How often have I longed for you to undertake an all-India tour just for this purpose? I believe that you would have a wonderful response, for the heart of Indian womanhood is sound and no women, perhaps in the world, have finer traditions of sacrifice and self-effacement behind them as we. Perhaps if you would make something of us we may, in however humble a manner, beable to show the way of peace to a sorrowing and stricken world. Who knows?

22-10-1938 A WOMAN

I publish this letter not without hesitation. The correspondent's faith in my ability to stir the woman heart flatters me. But I am humble enough to recognize my limitations. It seems to me that the days of my touring are over. Whatever I can do by writing I must continue. But my faith is increasing in the efficacy of silent prayer. It is by itself an art—perhaps the highest art requiring the most refined diligence. I do believe that it is woman's mission to exhibit ahimsa at its highest and best. But why should it be a man to move the woman heart? If the appeal is addressed exclusively to me not as man but as the (supposed to be) best exponent of ahimsa to be practised on a mass scale, I have no urge in me to go about preaching the doctrine to the women of India. I can assure my correspondent that there is no want of will in me that deters me from responding to her appeal. My

feeling is that if men of the Congress can retain their faith in ahimsa and prosecute the non-violence programme faithfully and fully, the women would be automatically converted. And it may be that there shall arise one among them who will be able to go much farther than I can ever hope to do. For woman is more fitted than man to make explorations and take bolder action in ahimsa. For the courage of self-sacrifice woman is any day superior to man as I believe man is to woman for the courage of the brute.

BANNU, October 25, 1938

Harijan, 5-11-1938

209. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

BANNU,
October 25, 1938

DEAR MOTI BABU,

I had your affectionate wire. But this I write not to give you thanks which I have done through the Press, but to tell you how heavy the burden of the debt owing by the P. Sangh to the A. I. S. A. lies on me. For I am chiefly responsible for the transaction. Such was my faith in your business-likeness and of course integrity. Both of us are public institutions and I suggest to you that on that account our mutual dealing should be much more correct than those among private businessmen. Do please see to the debt being discharged.

Love.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

But address Wardha.

From a photostat: G.N. 11050

210. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

BANNU,
October 25, 1938

BA,

I put off writing to you as you have now recovered. As we are touring at present, I hardly get time even to write a postcard. But you ought to write or send a message. Everything is going well here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2215

211. LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

BANNU,
October 25, 1938

CHI. VIDYA,

I have a letter from you after a long time. I am glad. Whenever you want you can come to Mahila Ashram after taking Jamnalalji's permission. The rules are a bit changed now. I will reach Wardha probably on November 12. I had seen Anand's letter to Mahadev. As far as possible I avoid writing letters.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

212. SPEECH AT BANNU[1]

October 25, 1938

Perhaps you know that for over two months I have been observing complete silence. I have benefited by it, and I believe it has benefited the country too. The silence was originally taken in answer to an acute mental distress, but subsequently I decided to prolong it

[1]At the meeting, which was largely attended, addresses of welcome to Gandhiji were presented by the Bannu District Congress Committee and the Seva Samiti, Chandni Chowk. The report of the speech was also published in *The Hindustan Times* and *The Bombay Chronicle.*

indefinitely on its own merits. It has served me as a wall of protection and enabled me to cope with my work better than before. When I came to this province, I had resolved to relax my silence only for the purpose of having talks with the Khudai Khidmatgars, but I had to yield to Khan Saheb's pressure.

Your addresses have eulogized me and thanked me for having come here. I do not think I deserve any praise or thanks. I know that I can do very little to satisfy your expectations. My visit to the Frontier Province is purely to meet the Khudai Khidmatgars and know for myself their understanding of non-violence. Visit to your town is a by-product.

I gave many hours today seeing deputations and studying papers presented to me. The recent raid of Bannu and the happenings during the raid have touched me deeply. This province is peculiarly placed, and is different from the other provinces inasmuch as on one side it is surrounded by a number of border tribes containing men whose profession is raiding. So far as I have been able to know they are not actuated by communal considerations. The raiders' motive seems to be satisfaction of primary needs. That the Hindus are more often their victims is probably due to the fact that they generally possess more money. The kidnappings too appear to have the same motive.

Continuation of the raids is in my opinion a proof of British failure in this part of India. Their Frontier policy has cost the country crores of rupees and thousands of lives have been sacrificed. The brave tribesmen still remain unsubdued. If all the accounts I have heard today are substantially correct, and I believe they are, life and property are not secure in most parts of the province.

A number of people whose relations or dear ones have either been killed or kidnapped and held to ransom by the raiders, saw me today. As I listened to the harrowing tales of distress my heart went out to them in sympathy. But I must confess to you that with all the will in the world, I possess no magic spell by which I could restore them to their families. Nor should you expect much from the Government or the Congress ministry. No Government can afford, and the present British Government lacks even the will, to mobilize its military resources every time one of its subjects is kidnapped, unless the person kidnapped happens to belong to the ruling race.

After studying all the facts I have gained the impression that the situation in respect of border raids has grown worse since the

inauguration of Congress Government. The Congress Ministers have no effective control over the police, none over the military. The Congress ministry in this province has less than the others. I therefore feel that unless Dr. Khan Saheb can cope with the question of the raids it might be better for him to tender his resignation. There is danger of the Congress losing all prestige in this province if the raids continue to increase. Apart from my opinion, you have to say for yourselves whether in spite of the handicaps I have mentioned, you would rather have the Congress ministry or some other. After all, the Prime Minister is your servant. He holds office under the triple sufferance of his electorate, the Provincial Congress Committee and the Working Committee.

Some of those who met me today asked me if they could seek safety by migrating from the Frontier Province. I have told them that migration is a perfectly legitimate course to adopt when there is no other way of living with safety and honour. A complaint has further been brought to me that the Muslim populations in the affected places no longer give help against the raiders which they used to formerly, before certain sections of Frontier Crime Regulation Act were repealed, and that has encouraged the raiders. While that may be true, let me warn you that if you depend for your protection on the armed assistance of others you must be prepared sooner or later to accept the domination of these defenders. Of course you are entitled to learn the art of defending yourselves with arms. You must develop a sense of co-operation. In no case should you be guilty of cowardice Self-defence is everybody's birthright. I do not want to see a single coward in India.

The fourth alternative is that of non-violent approach which I am here before you to suggest. It is the surest and infallible method of self-defence. If I had my way, I would go and mix with tribes, and argue it out with them and I am sure they would not be impervious to the argument of love and reason. But I know today that door is shut to me. The Government won't permit me to enter the tribal territory.

The tribesman cannot be the bogey man that he is represented to be. He is a human just like you and me and capable of responding to the human touch which has hitherto been conspicuous by its absence in dealing with him. A number of Waziris came and saw me today at noon. I did not find that their nature was essentially different from human nature elsewhere.

Man's nature is not essentially evil. Brute nature has been known to yield to the influence of love. You must never despair of human nature. You are a community of traders. Do not leave out of your traffic that noblest and most precious of merchandise, viz., love. Give to the tribesmen all the love that you are capable of, and you will have theirs in return.

To seek safety by offering blackmail or ransom to the raiders would be a direct invitation to them to repeat their depredations and will be demoralizing alike to the giver and the tribesmen. Instead of offering them money, the rational course would be to raise them above penury by teaching them industry and thereby removing the principal motive that leads them into the raiding habit.

I am having talks with Khudai Khidmatgars in this connection and evolving a plan in collaboration with Khan Saheb. If the plan bears fruit, and the Khudai Khidmatgars truly become what their name signifies, the influence of their example like the sweet fragrance of the rose will spread to the tribes and might provide a permanent solution of the Frontier question.

Harijan, 5-11-1938

213. TALK TO KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS

BANNU,
[On or before *October 26, 1938*][1]

Gandhiji explained the difference between non-violence of the strong and non-violence of the weak and the difference between constructive work, taken up as a philanthropic activity or as a political expedient, and constructive work linked to non-violence, when it becomes an emancipative force with tremendous potency. He recalled how the movement of non-violence was launched in India. Millions at that time felt that they would not be able to fight the British Government with the sword as the latter was infinitely better armed. He told them that even if they went forth to fight, sword in hand, they had to be ready to face death. If the sword broke in their hand, death would be a certainty. Why should not they then learn the art of dying without killing and pit against the enemy the strength of their spirit? The Government might imprison them or confiscate their property or even kill them. What did it matter? The argument went home. But in their heart of hearts, said Gandhiji, many had the feeling that if only they had sufficient armed strength they would resort to fighting. They accepted non-violence because there was nothing else. In other words, there was violence in the heart. Only it was given up in action. It was non-violence of the weak, not of the brave. Even so it had made them stronger. He

[1] Gandhiji left Bannu on October 26.

was there to tell them that it was a big mistake to regard non-violence as a weapon of the weak or to adopt it as such. If the Khudai Khidmatgars fell into that mistake, it would be a tragedy.

If you give up the sword at Badshah Khan's word, but retain it in your hearts, your non-violence will be a short-lived thing—not even a nine days' wonder. After a few years you will want to revert to it but, maybe, you will then find that you have got out of the habit and are lost to both the ideals. Nothing will, in that event, remain to you but vain regret. What I want of you is a unique thing, i. e., that you will disdain to use the sword although you have got the capacity and there is no doubt as to victory. Even if the opponent is armed with a broken sword, you will oppose your neck to it. And this, not with anger or retaliation in your hearts but only love. If you have really understood non-violence in this sense, you will never want to use the sword because you will have got something infinitely superior in its place.

You will ask, 'How will all this have any effect on the British Government?' My reply is that by uniting all the people of India in a common bond of love through our selfless service, we can transform the atmosphere in the country so that the Britisher will not be able to resist it. You will say that the Britisher is impervious to love. My thirty years' unbroken experience is to the contrary. Today 17,000 Englishmen can rule over three hundred millions of Indians because we are under a spell of fear. If we learn to love one another, if the gulf between Hindu and Muslim, caste and outcaste, and rich and poor, is obliterated, a handful of English would not dare to continue their rule over us.

Just as there are laws of armed warfare, there are laws of non-violent warfare too. They have not been fully discovered. Under violence you punish the evil-doer, in non-violence you pity him, and regard him as a patient to be cured by your love.

What must you do then to drive out the British by the non-violent method? If you want to adopt the method of violence, you have to learn to drill and to become adept in the use of arms. In Europe and America even women and children are given that training. Similarly those who have adopted the weapon of non-vio-lence have to put themselves through a vigorous discipline in non-violence.

And with that he came to the constructive programme and its place in the scheme of non-violence as a dynamic force. He had placed the programme of non-violence before the country in 1920, he explained. It was divided into two parts, non-co-operation and constructive programme. The latter included establishment of

communal unity, abolition of untouchability, prohibition, complete eradication of the drink and drug evil and propagation of khadi, hand-spin-ning, hand-weaving and other cottage industries. But all these things had to be taken up not as a political expediency but as an integral part of the programme of non-violence. This last made all the difference. For instance, Hindu-Muslim unity regarded as an expedient was one thing and quite another when adopted as an integral part of non-violence.

The former, by its very nature, cannot be lasting. It will be discarded as soon as the political exigency that suggested it is over. It may even be a stratagem or a ruse. When it is taken up as a part of the programme of non-violence it will have nothing but love at its root and will be sealed with one's heart's blood.

In the same way the charkha or the spinning-wheel had to be linked to non-violence.

Today there are millions of unemployed destitute in India. One way to deal with them is to allow them to die off so that, as in South Africa, there might be more per capita land for the survivors. That would be the way of violence. The other way, the way of non-violence, is based on the principle of 'even unto this last'. It requires us to have equal regard for the least of God's creation. A votary of this path will deny to himself what cannot be shared with the least. That applies even to those who labour with their hands—the relatively better off among the labouring class must seek to align themselves with the less fortunate.

It was this line of thinking, said Gandhiji, which had led to the discovery of the charkha on his part.

I had not even seen a charkha when I first advocated its use. In fact I called it a handloom in *Hind Swaraj*, not knowing a spin-ning-wheel from a handloom. I had before my mind's eye the poor, landless labourer without employment or means of subsistence, crushed under the weight of poverty. How could I save him—that was my problem. Even now while I am sitting with you in these comfortable surroundings, my heart is with the poor and the oppressed in their humble cottages. I would feel more at home in their midst. If I allowed myself to succumb to the love of ease and comfort, it would be my undoing as a votary of ahimsa. What is it then that can provide a living link between me and the poor? The answer is the charkha. No matter what one's occupation or rank in life is, the charkha, taken with all that it signifies, will provide the golden bridge to unite him to the poor. For instance, if I am a doctor, while I draw the sacrificial thread it will make me think how I can assuage the suffering of the destitute

instead of the royalty in rich palaces with the prospect of fat fees. The charkha is not my invention. It was there before. My discovery consisted in linking it to the programme of non-violence and independence. God whispered into my ear: 'If you want to work through non-violence, you have to proceed with small things, not big.' If we had worked the fourfold constructive programme in its completeness during the last twenty years as I had envisaged it, we should have been our masters today. No foreign power would have dared to cast its evil eye upon us. No enemy from outside would have dared to come and do us harm if there had been none within. Even if one had come we would have assimilated him to ourselves and he would not have been able to exploit us.

It is this type of non-violence that I want you to attain. I expect you to be twenty-four-carat gold, nothing less. Of course, you can deceive me. If you do that, I shall blame myself only. But if you are sincere, you have to prove by your action that nobody need be afraid of a Red Shirt or know fear while there is a Red Shirt alive.

A Pilgrimage for Peace, pp. 97-101

214. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

October 26, 1938

I tender my congratulations to His Highness, Her Highness and the Dewan for the general amnesty granted to civil disobedience prisoners in Travancore on the Maharaja's birthday. It is to be hoped that in order to make the amnesty fruitful and peace permanent it will be followed up by the appointment of a committee of inquiry into past events and another into the nature of responsible government to be granted under the aegis of the Maharaja.

There remain still allegations against the Dewan. I would repeat my suggestion for withdrawal. Withdrawal need not mean disbelief in their truth by the authorities. They should withdraw in the higher interest. The case for responsible government must not be mixed up with the allegations which pale into insignificance compared to the question of the transference of power into the hands of the people.

Harijan, 29-10-1938

215. SPEECH AT LAKKI[1]

October 26, 1938

I am here to tell you, with fifty years' experience of non-violence at my back, that it is an infinitely superior power as compared to brute force. An armed soldier relies on his weapons for his strength. Take away from him his weapons—his gun or his sword, and he generally becomes helpless. But a person who has truly realized the principle of non-violence has the God-given strength for his weapon and the world has not known anything that can match it. Man may, in a moment of unawareness forget God, but He keeps watch over him and protects him always. If the Khudai Khidmatgars have understood this secret, if they have realized that non-violence is the greatest power on earth, well and good; otherwise it would be better for Khan Saheb to restore to them their weapons which they have discarded at his instance. They will then be at least brave after the manner of the world that has today made the worship of brute force its cult. But if they discard their old weapons and at the same time remain strangers to the power of non-violence, it would be a tragedy for which I for one am not and, so far as I know, Khan Saheb too is not prepared.

Harijan, 19-11-1938

216. A DENIAL

With reference to my note headed 'Seven Complaints'[2] Shri Brijlal Biyani writes:

> In the issue of *Harijan* dated 15th October there is something which concerns me in your article headed 'Seven Complaints'. The complaint is that I was taken in procession with music past a mosque during Jumma Prayers.
>
> Such a complaint was made directly to me and I issued a statement on October 12, a copy of which I am herewith enclosing.
>
> The procession passed the mosque when the prayers were over. Kazi Saheb Saiyad Mohammad Ali who led the prayers agrees that theprayers were over and that he was in some shop while the procession passed.

In his Press statement I notice the following very relevant sentence:

> I am one of those who religiously believe in tolerance and respect for

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-V"

[2] *Vide* "Seven Compliants"

all religions and who believe in Hindu-Muslim unity for the attainment of swaraj in India.

LAKKI, MARWAT, October 27, 1938

Harijan, 5-11-1938

217. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

LAKKI, MARWAT,
October 27, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

One letter I posted today to catch the local post. This is for tomorrow and to send you letter from Junagadh. After you have seen it, please send it to Narandas—have sent a sweet letter in Gujarati to the Dewan[1]. You will of course write.

This I am writing in the midst of the Khudai Khidmatgars to whom I shall presently speak. They are coming in.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

I am sending the cheque to N.[2]

From the original: C.W. 3886. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7042

218. TALK TO KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS[3]

LAKKI,
[*October 27, 1938*][4]

The principles on which a non-violent organization is based are different from and the reverse of what obtains in a violent organization. For instance, in the orthodox army, there is a clear distinction made between an officer and a private. The latter is subordinate and inferior to the former. In a non-violent army the general is just the chief servant—first among equals. He claims no privilege over or superiority to the rank and file. You have fondly given the title

[1] Dewan of Junagadh; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 27-10-1938
[2] Narandas
[3] Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-V"
[4] *Vide* the preceding item.

‘Badshah Khan’ to Khan Saheb. But if in his heart of hearts he actually began to believe that he could behave like an ordinary general, it would spell his downfall and bring his power to an end. He is Badshah in the sense only that he is the truest and foremost Khudai Khidmatgar and excels all other Khudai Khidmatgars in the quality and quantity of service.

The second difference between a military organization and a peace organization is that in the former the rank and file have no part in the choice of their general and other officers. These are imposed upon them and enjoy unrestricted power over them. In a non-violent army, the general and the officers are elected or are as if elected when their authority is moral and rests solely on the willing obedience of the rank and file.

So much for internal relations between the general of a non-violent army and his soldiers. Coming to their relations with the outside world, the same sort of difference is visible between these two kinds of organizations. Just now we had to deal with an enormous crowd that had gathered outside this room. You tried to disperse it by persuasion and loving argument, not by using force and, when in the end we failed in our attempt, we withdrew and sought relief from it by getting behind closed doors in this room. Military discipline knows nothing of moral pressure.

Let me proceed a step further. The people who are crowding outside here are all our friends though they are not Khudai Khidmatgars. They are eager to listen to what we may tell them. Even their indiscipline is a manifestation of their love. But there may be others besides them elsewhere who may not be well disposed towards us, who may even be hostile to us. In armed organizations, the only recognized way of dealing with such persons is to drive them out. Here, to consider the opponent, or, for the matter of that, anybody, even in thought, as your enemy would, in the parlance of non-violence or love, be called a sin. Far from seeking revenge, a votary of non-violence would pray to God that He might bring about a change of heart of his opponent, and if that does not happen he would be prepared to bear any injury that his opponent might inflict upon him, not in a spirit of cowardice or helplessness, but bravely with a smile upon his face. I believe implicitly in the ancient saying that “non-violence real and complete will melt the stoniest hearts.”

He illustrated his remarks by describing how Mir Alam Khan, his Pathan

assailant in South Africa, had ultimately repented and become friendly.[1]

This could not have happened if I had retaliated. My action can be fitly described as a process of conversion. Unless you have felt within you this urge to convert your enemy by your love, you had better retrace your steps; this business of non-violence is not for you.

'What about thieves, dacoits and spoilers of defenceless women ?' you will ask. Must a Khudai Khidmatgar maintain his non-violence in regard to them too? My reply is, most decidedly 'Yes'. Punishment is God's, Who alone is the infallible Judge. It does not belong to man "with judgment weak". Renunciation of violence must not mean apathy or helplessness in the face of wrongdoing. If our non-violence is genuine and rooted in love, it ought to provide a more effective remedy against wrongdoing than the use of brute force. I certainly expect you to trace out the dacoits, show them the error of their ways and, in so doing, brave even death.

Harijan, 19-11-1938

219. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

TOURING,
October 27, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

I have all your letters I think. Sushila has discussed with me your proposal about avoiding typhoid. She says there is no difference between Nayakum's well and ours. She says the only safety lies in using only boiled water not merely for drinking but also for washing pots from which we eat and drink and uncooked fruits which [we] handle and eat. She thinks we ought to be able to ensure a proper supply of fool-proof boiled water. But when we meet we shall discuss all the suggestions you have made. Williams did send all the plans. But I came to the conclusion that it was beyond us. In my opinion we must revert to my original plan. We must use buckets and turn night-soil into manure in some distant spot. Even so where we have water rising to the surface there is no absolute safety. I am writing this in the midst of a meeting. So no more.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6410. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10005

[1] *Vide* "Satyagraha in South Africa"

220. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 27, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I got your letter yesterday as we were leaving Bannu. Why do you think that you are away from me? How do you know that you are not coming nearer? A wall separates two guests in a hotel. Who can say whether you are separated from me only by the thickness of nine to twelve inches of a wall or by a distance of miles and miles? And are there not people who feel near enough even though they may be separated by a distance of miles? This much is certain, however, that you will be so well restored through rest that you will get energy for more work. A still greater benefit will be that your life will become regular in every particular. Observe the hours of food and rest with as religious a strictness as you do the hours of prayers. Is not eating also for the sake of *yajna* only? In any case, it should be so. If you forget one *yajna*, you forget. all. As long as you like being there, you must stay on. My returning to Wardha must not concern you in any way just now. The solitude and comfort and good company that you are enjoying there, you will not be able to enjoy elsewhere. So stay there or at Jullundur. If Rajkumari feels that you are overstaying or if she has to go away somewhere else and therefore you cannot stay there, it will be a different matter. My blood-pressure yesterday evening was 136/84. Whose is better—yours or mine?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The name of the place where we are today is Gathari or something like that. At 1 we start for Dera Ismail Khan.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11669

221. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

ON TOUR,

October 27, 1938

CHI. NARANDAS,

The enclosed cheque for Rs. 750 is from the Junagadh Durbar. It was received on the occasion of the anniversary celebration. You

may spend the money in the manner we have decided. He will give Rs. 750 more for the local Harijan committee. I have sent a letter[1] to this effect to Rajkumari. She will forward the cheque to you. You need not send any acknowledgment. But write to me of course.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8553. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

222. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

DERA ISMAIL KHAN,
October 27, 1938

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have gone through your note on the murder, etc., in Gunda. It has produced no effect on me. It is not enough to assert that the murder was not the result of a private feud. Did Savji take part in politics? Had he attracted anybody's attention? Has there been a regular practice in Rajkot of beating up people in this manner? You should get—there should be—some evidence showing that the State authorities had some connection direct or indirect with the murder. You cannot jump to a conclusion on the basis of mere suspicion. The people will believe anything you say, but you should try and get evidence which would compel even opponents to believe the charge. Mere inference will not help. It also does not seem right to say that none of the culprits can be traced. And even if that is true, it does not warrant the conclusion that the State authorities had a hand in the murder. If, despite all efforts, the culprits cannot be traced, an inquiry should be held into the circumstances of the murder and the results should be placed before the public. Your beginning is almost hair-raising, but as one proceeds further one feels that this must be one of those incidents which are all too frequent in the world. But all this is only for your benefit. As for the world, it will go on as it has always done.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5546

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 27-10-1938

223. LETTER TO M. R. MASANI

DERA ISMAIL KHAN,
October 27, 1938

BHAI MASANI,

I was pained to read your reply to my article. You seem to say that socialists believe in khadi, in prohibition and in non-violence and that the Committee has no evidence of speeches inciting to violence having been made. I have talked not with one socialist but with many of them. I have read their writings and their speeches. They have not . . .[1] non-violence, have ridiculed khadi and said that prohibition is only a waste of money. As for the evidence of the use of force, I get it almost daily. This being the case, how can I change my opinion?

I have sent to Father the foreword[2] to *Dadabhai Naoroji.*

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4130. Also C.W. 4888. Courtesy: M. R. Masani

224. MONSTROUS IF TRUE

A correspondent writes:

> Here in Nasik there is a Police Training School. Police officers are made in this school. They are expected to have their meals in a common mess and they are obliged to partake of fleshmeat and wines. Let alone meat-eating, how far is it consistent with the prohibition policy of the Government to train its police officers in wine-drinking? These officers may well be required to take part in the prohibition drive. Perhaps you do not even know that meat-eating and wine-drinking is compulsory in this school.

I must confess my ignorance of the compulsion. It is only the assurance with which my correspondent writes that has induced me to publish the letter. If the information is true, it is surely monstrous that meat-eating and wine-drinking should be considered a necessary part of a police officer's training. This rule excludes vegetarians and non-drinkers from training as police officers. The rule is a grave injustice in a country in which tens of thousands are vegetarians by religion. I

[1] Not clear in the source
[2] *Vide* "Forword to "Dadabhai Naoroji", 19-10-1938

can only hope that the information is incorrect and that if it is true, the glaring wrong will be redressed without delay.

DERA ISMAIL KHAN, October 28, 1938

Harijan, 5-11-1938

225. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

DERA,
October 28, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is merely to tell you this is a lazy day for me in one way and a very busy day in another way.

Did you ever receive my letter in which I asked you to send me some khadi sheets? Whether you did and forgot to send, or whether you never got it, pray do not send any now, as Chandrashanker has sent four pads. They will see me through.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3645. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6454

226. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

October 28, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

Yesterday's letter was written in a village. This is from Dera where we are for full three days. I got your draft letter to E.[1] here. It is also good but for the last paragraph. The last para shows mental fatigue. You will see it is disconnected and wholly unnecessary. It will be insulting for England well armed to honour a little nation for her throwing away arms. If Czechs could do the thing, the nations of the earth including Germany will be awe-struck.

You must attend to your eyes at once. You have the right helper in Kri[shna]chandra.

[1] Presumably Emil Hacha, who had succeeded Benes as President of Czechoslovakia, on November 30, after the latter had resigned on October 5 and left the country

I have no recollection of having authorized tube well.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6411. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10006

227. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

DERA,
October 28, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending the accompanying letter, which you may like to read. Don't worry about it after reading it. I have even sent a brief note[1] on the Nasik School. They have spared me today and tomorrow for *Harijan* work. With Khan Saheb in command, no one is permitted to come and disturb me. And moreover I am observing silence. Hence I am in an ideal place here, just as you are there. We tour in a lorry. It contains a bed for me. Khan Saheb does not crowd the lorry with too many people. Tell Rajkumari whatever of this you think may interest her.

Tell Bablo to write sometimes to me even under a false pretext. What does he think regarding himself ?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11670

228. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

DERA ISMAIL KHAN,
October 28, 1938

CHI. MANI,

You have been forced to write to me after many years. The letter is full of news indeed. Continue to write in the same way. Assuming the report about the Nasik Police School to be true, I have written a note on it. Also talk to Kher[2] or Munshi[3] if you happen to meet them.

If the officials there do not work sincerely for enforcing

[1] *Vide* "Monstrous If True", 5-11-1938
[2] B. G. Kher, Premier of Bombay
[3] K. M. Munshi, Home Minister of Bombay

prohibition, the Ministers should protest to the Governor in strong language. But they must be convinced that the officials do not have the heart in the work.

About lands, I had written even before I received Vallabhbhai's letter. Send me a report of the debate on the subject in the Assembly.

I have not said that no steps can be taken against pornographic literature. I did give my opinion. Of course, I am afraid that people have come to like obscene literature and it cannot, therefore, be easily stopped. It will stop only when learned men themselves are disgusted with such literature. I do believe that pornographic writings should be stopped by law if it can be done. But please remember that there is a great difference between forcing students to read such things and the publication of obscene writing in newspapers.

What is happening in Rajkot is wonderful. If the tempo is kept up, there is no doubt that the people will get what they want. Father has done the correct thing in regard to Travancore. There was no harm in his having called Ramachandran. Before Father's letter arrived, however, I had already issued my statement[1]. I feel that it was necessary to issue one. Now there is no immediate need to go to Travancore.

The constant flow of mucus from the nose into the throat is not at all good. It must be stopped.

I understand about Baroda. Let me know what happens in Bhadaran.

I hope to reach Wardha about the 15th. The tour here will be over by the 9th.

What is happening regarding Subhas Babu is not out of my mind. That is why I discussed it in the Working Committee. But Father was of the view that we should wait till Jawaharlal's arrival, so I kept silent. There is bound to be some difficulty this time in electing the President. Let Father think over the suggestion[2] I have made in *Harijan*. I am of the view that letting the present state of affairs continue will be harmful.

I have now replied to both your letters. Show this to Father when he has some free time.

I keep really excellent health. Father should visit this Province,

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 26-10-1938

[2] *Vide*, "That Unfortunate Walk-out"

in Maulana's company.

Blessings from
BAPU

MANIBEHN PATEL
PURUSHOTTAM BUILDING
OPP. OPERA HOUSE, BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 119-21

229. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

October 28, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I got your three letters together—one addressed at Delhi, one from Segaon and the third directly.

It is very good indeed that you have gone there.[1] Congratulations on your health having improved. I feel now you are your normal self. So why should I worry?

I am doing very well indeed. The climate suits me. The cold is such as I can bear. Mahadev is flourishing in Simla. You must be getting the news about the sickness at Segaon. How is Nanabhai? How are you getting on there? What work are you doing?

We shall arrive at Segaon about the 15th.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7101. Also C.W. 4593. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

230. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

October 28, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

It is good that you have started helping Mirabehn. She has her faults; but she is very devout and you will reap rich benefit from all your service. You will learn from her pure and practical lessons in *brahmacharya.*

[1] The addressee was at this time in Gram Dakshinamurti, a rural education centre near a village Ambla in Bhavnagar district of Saurashtr

I have already written to you about other matters.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4307

231. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, DERA ISMAIL KHAN[1]

October 28, 1938

I thank you for the purse which you have presented but you should know that *Daridranarayana,* whose representative I claim to be, is not so easily satisfied. My business is with the crores of semi-starved masses, who need relief sorely. We have to tackle through khadi the question of a huge annual drain from India for cotton purchase. Through khadi the A. I. S. A. has already distributed over four crores of rupees as wages among the needy, poor, Hindu and Mussalman spinners and weavers. Then there is the question of Harijan uplift—an equally Herculean task. Your donation ought to be commensurate with the magnitude of the task for which it is intended. Yours is not a poor city. The donors are mostly merchants. Surely, you could have done better.

Referring next to the Khudai Khidmatgars and to the strained relations between them and the local volunteers which he had noticed, he proceeded:

These differences are unfortunate. If, however, Khudai Khidmatgars live up to their creed as they have now understood it, the differences and quarrels will be things of the past. They are on their trial. If they come out victorious they will be instrumental in bringing about communal unity and establishing swaraj. I know, to banish anger altogether from one's breast is a difficult task. It cannot be achieved through pure, personal effort. It can be done only by God's grace. I ask you all to join me in the prayer that God might enable the Khudai Khidmatgars to conquer the last traces of anger and violence that might still be lurking in their breasts.

Harijan, 19-11-1938

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-V". A purse of Rs. 5,753 was presented to Gandhiji. He rebuked the people for such a meagre sum as Rs. 5,000 of the total amount was a single donation.

232. THE PEOPLE'S EDUCATION MOVEMENT

When Dr. Hengchih Tao visited me some time ago I invited him to give me a note on the remarkable People's Education Movement going on in China. He has now sent the following instructive note[1] which cannot but be useful to us in India.

Harijan, 29-10-1938

233. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

DERA,
October 29, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Though you both say you don't expect me to write daily, you do expect to hear from me!!

I say nothing about myself because I have never kept better. The weather, food and peace have combined to bring about the results. I have nobody to quarrel with except Amtussalaam. But my silence is an effective check on that too.

There was an interruption after I had written the foregoing lines. And when I write with the left hand, everything moves slow, the brain included. It is a good thing.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3646. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6455

234. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

DERA,
October 29, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

The right hand needs some rest. The accompanying is for your information. If you wish, you may write a few lines to Dorothy.

Have you heard about Bhansali and Rajendra having had typhoid in Segaon? Does anyone in Segaon write to you directly?

[1] Not reproduced here

Bhansali is quite well now. Rajendra is still having fever.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11672

235. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

October 29, 1938

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

I got your letter. You have my blessings, of course, for the New Year's Day and for the whole year.

I was certainly pained when I heard about your desire to give up public service. But I consoled myself with the thought that you would do nothing without thinking. What guidance can I give you? Don't do anything through false shame or under pressure from anybody. Do only as much as the strength of your heart permits. There is no sin at all in giving up public service and working for money. Doing service is not something that everybody can digest. If we eat anything that causes indigestion, it cannot but result in disease. It would be much better instead, to eat only what one can digest.

It is good indeed that for the present you are staying on. Maybe, by and by, your economic condition will cease to trouble you. Please remember that it is good to live in poverty. Poverty shapes a man's character. In plenty one does not know at all where one is going. Moreover, most of the world lives in poverty. We see very few living in plenty. I have never envied such people. Sometimes I pity them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

236. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

DERA,
October 30, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

It is nearing 8 p. m.—my time for walking out.

The last of three deputations has just left me.

What did I say about S.'s prescription for Durga?

You are right. If I gave up Segaon altogether, it would be unjust to Aryanayakum. But I am not giving up Segaon. If all goes well, part of the year I must spend there. Let us see. Heaven's Light my Guide.

I am well.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Do you remember where you left Ku's book which I gave you for revision?

From the original: C.W. 3887. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7043

237. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

DERA,
October 30, 1938

MY DEAR KU,

Your complaint is just. I have taken up too much on my shoulders. The more correct statement is I have been overwhelmed. And so what could stand by naturally got neglected. I now send you my draft[1] which I hope you will be able to decipher without difficulty. Before making it final please show it to Shankerlal and Jajujee. Your book I gave to R. K. in despair.[2] I have written to her.

How are you all doing?

I expect to leave Peshawar on 10th.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10136

238. INTERPRETATION OF MEMBER'S PLEDGE

[*October 30, 1938*][3]

The pledge was purposely drawn as it is of a general character. It is a gentleman's pledge, each member being put upon his or her honour as to the interpretation of the expression 'the best part of my

[1] *Vide* the following item.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] *ibid*

energy and talents to the furtherance of its object which is the all-round welfare of the villagers of India'.

Members are also pledged not only to work for the furtherance of the object but also 'to strive to live up to the ideals' and 'prefer the use of village manufactures to any other'.

Recommending members of the Board will therefore see to it that the candidate for membership has, in everything he does, the welfare of the villagers at heart. It follows that such a person will give to village work at least some time every day not necessarily in villages but may be for villages. Thus a member living in a city, who on a particular day sells to or induces a person to buy village manufactures, has done some village work for that day.

The member recommending will also see to it that the candidate wherever possible uses articles of village manufacture, e.g., khadi in the place of mill-cloth, village earthen pots instead of factory-made china, reed-pen instead of steel-pen, handmade paper instead of ordinary paper, wholesome *babul* or *neem* or such other tooth-brush instead of the very insanitary and injurious tooth-brush, leather goods made in villages out of village-flayed cattle instead [of] tanned hide, the ordinary village gur instead of factory sugar, hand-pounded whole rice instead of mill-polished rice, etc.

For Ku

The Board would draw the attention of agents, workers and the public to the importance of dead cattle hide as an article of trade and village manufacture. Workers are advised to study in their own areas the method of disposal of the dead cattle and its preparation from flaying to tanning and report to the Board their observations. Public are invited to prefer the use of only such leather goods as are prepared in the villages.

Things to Remember

Agent's appointment of Hardhyansingh, Delhi. Accurate description of the areas of work of members of Board and agents.

From a photostat: G.N. 10137 and 10138

239. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

DERA,
October 30, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I think you will like to see the accompanying letter.

Today the tour started at 12 and we returned at 4. We visited a village called Kulachi. Tomorrow we are going to Tank.

Even now there is no cold in the air at all. We sleep in the open.

We leave for Segaon on the 10th.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Does Brijkrishna write to you regularly?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11673

240. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

DERA ISMAIL KHAN,
October 31, 1938

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
74 WALKESHWAR ROAD
BOMBAY HIGH

MEET AGATHA HARRISON ARRIVING SECOND OR THIRD. GIVE HER MY LOVE. TELL HER FINISH BOMBAY. AWAIT MY RETURN WARDHA ABOUT TWELFTH.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

241. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 31, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is just when we are ready to start.

What is the difference between radio news and the paper news?

Both are equally unreliable. My health has suffered no set-back. I am inclined to think that I can flourish even in midwinter. But I may be over-enthusiastic. The rest from Mahadev.

Love.

WARRIOR
ALIAS TYRANT
ALIAS ROBBER
WHAT NEXT ?

From the original: C.W. 3647. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6456

242. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 31, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have told Brijkrishna to write to you every day. He alone knows how much love and interest he pours in what he writes.

I cannot give you quite definitely the date of our departure. We are trying to leave on the 9th from Kambalpur or Rawalpindi or Taxila. You should reach Delhi latest by the 10th. It will be better if you can reach on the 9th.

I will not let you stay in Wardha just now. I like the idea of a sea voyage, with Durga and Babla accompanying you, unless Durga likes and wants to stay at Bulsar. I should like you to make a trip as far as Singapore. You may even spend a few days in Singapore. You should resume work on January 20 at the earliest. If you wish to write anything in the mean while, you may do so. I have no fear at all of your time being wasted anywhere. And you will return to work a fitter man.

I am allowing your notes to go as they are. Ask back the article about Massingham. It is very fine indeed. It is poetry, but it is not for *Harijan*. Moreover, though there is poetry in it, it contains nothing of value to learn from our point of view. Is there anything common between their villages and our villages? Even at the time when those villages were formed, the people there were armed pirates and free booters. The villages were signs of this fact. Our villages are so many dung-hills. The king took interest in them only for the purpose of robbing them. The Vaishyas only gathered money. The Shudras and Atishudras slaved. Your article, therefore, can provide us no inspiration. Would it not be sheer ignorance for any superficial observer to see poetry in our villages? And if you take out extracts from the

Vedas and place them beside extracts from modern English, we would have to hang our heads in shame. Elaborate this criticism of mine further and understand my point. If there is any error in my view, let me know. I read the article today at three in the morning. But you may send it to *Modern Review* or the *Hindustan Times* if you wish.

We have to march out immediately. I am writing this while eating. I am eating fruit with a fork.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11674

243. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, TANK[1]

October 31, 1938

They[2] feel that the existence of a microscopic Hindu minority in the midst of the predominantly Mussalman population in this area can be rendered possible only if the latter will be as true *hamsayas*—neighbours—to them and they have asked me to appeal to Khudai Khidmatgars to fulfil their natural role in respect of them. I entirely endorse their feeling and their appeal and I am convinced that it is within your power to set them at their ease if you will but fulfil the expectations you have raised in me. As I observed on a previous occasion, the Hindus, the Mussalmans and the Englishmen in this province are being weighed in the balance. History will record its verdict about the Englishmen's deeds. But Hindus and Mussalmans can write their own history by being correct in their mutual dealings. For the Khudai Khidmatgars their course of action has been determined. They have to become a living wall of protection to their neighbours.

A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of history. It has happened before and it may again happen if the non-violence of Khudai Khidmatgars is unalloyed gold, not mere glittering tinsel.

Harijan, 19-11-1938

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-V"

[2] The Hindus, who had met Gandhiji in deputation and complained about the state of general insecurity in which they had to live

244. TALE TO KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS[1]

TANK,
October 31, 1938

If in your heart of hearts there is the slightest inclination to regard your non-violence as a mere cloak or a stepping-stone to greater violence as suggested by this friend[2], nay, unless you are prepared to carry your non-violence to its ultimate logical conclusion and to pray for forgiveness even for a baby-killer and a child-murderer, you cannot sign your Khudai Khidmatgar's pledge of non-violence. To sign that pledge with mental reservations would only bring disgrace upon you, your organization and hurt him whom you delight to call the Pride of Afghans.

But what about the classical instance of the defenceless sister or mother who is threatened with molestation by an evil-minded ruffian, you will ask. Is the ruffian in question to be allowed to work his will? Would not the use of violence be permissible even in such a case? My reply is 'no'. You will entreat the ruffian. The odds are that in his intoxication he will not listen. But then you will interpose yourself between the intended victim and him. Very probably you will be killed but you will have done your duty. Ten to one, killing you unarmed and unresisting will assuage the assailant's passion and he will leave his victim unmolested. But it has been said to me that tyrants do not act as we want or expect them to. Finding you unresisting he may tie you to a post and make you watch his rape of the victim. If you have the will you will so exert yourself that you will break yourself in the attempt or break the bonds. In either case, you will open the eyes of the wrongdoer. Your armed resistance could do no more, while if you were worsted, the position would likely be much worse than if you died unresisting. There is also the chance of the intended victim copying your calm courage and immolating herself rather than allowing herself to be dishonoured.

Harijan, 19-11-1938

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-V"

[2] The reference is to a Pathan's question quoted by Gandhiji in his article "Khudai Khidmatgars and Badshah Khan"; *vide* "Khudai Khidmatgars and Badshah Khan", 19-11-1938

245. TALK TO KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS[1]

October 31, 1938

It has touched me deeply and also humbled me to find that at a time when, owing to the Ramzan fast, not a kitchen fire was lit in the whole of this village of Mussalman homes, food had to be cooked for us in this place. I am past the stage when I could fast with you as I did in South Africa to teach the Mussalman boys who were under my care to keep the Ramzan fast. I had also to consider the feelings of Khan Saheb who has made my physical well-being his day-and-night concern and who would have felt embarrassed if I had fasted. I can only ask your pardon.

Harijan, 26-11-1938

246. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

[*October 1938*][2]

CHI. LILA,

I hope you are bringing credit to me and yourself there. Give no thought to my experiment. I have started the experiment to be able to render greater service to womankind. That includes you. In a note written in jest and a little anger, I called you 'Lila'. You liked it. Your father used to call you 'Lili', and so you demanded that I should also call you 'Lili'. For, you had started showing me the same affection as you did for your father. That alone would make your love for me greater than that for your father. If you cannot understand this, ask Mahadev. Replying to one of his letters, I had told him that I would call you 'Lili' when I had qualified myself to do that. This experiment is also to gain that eligibility because you are also a woman. While being there, think that you are with me not because you have gone there to do your work, but because I have sent you there to do my work. And my work means that you should relieve Mahadev's burden as much as possible. Hence, do not waste Mahadev's time talking about your happiness or unhappiness. Your duty is to go on

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-VI". Gandhiji gave the talk in a small village near Dera Ismail Khan.

[2] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Lilavati Asar", 17-10-1938, "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 17-10-1938 and "Letter to Mahadev Desai",22-10-1938

doing unquestioningly whatever work Mahadev or Durga may entrust to you or what you can carry out yourself. And you will do your work silently because I cannot give you here what you would be able to learn there. It is true that you cannot gain there what you can gain here. But since I have sent you there to do my work, you will easily get the benefit of having stayed with me.

Eat well and build up your body. If you do that you can occasionally come here for a brief visit. But do not keep waiting for opportunities to come here. Devote yourself to putting things in perfect order there. You have got to give time to Bablo. Do write to me whenever you wish. And whenever you write, try to make your handwriting beautiful. Do not write with a pencil. And do not follow Mahadev's example of writing with a fountain-pen. I tolerate Mahadev's fountain-pen because Mahadev is a scribe. You are not a scribe and are not going to be one. So, I shall not, and I should not tolerate the fountain-pen in your case.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C. W. 11289. Courtesy : Lilavati Asar

247. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

November 1, 1938

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I hope you had a comfortable voyage.

On second thoughts I decided to stop you from coming here. During the last days of the tour I could have given you not a moment and Khan Saheb would not be available to you during that period. You will have seen all you could wish of Bombay during these few days.

More when we meet.

Love.

BAPU

Peshawar which we reach this evening.

From a photostat: G.N. 1505

248. TALK TO KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS[1]

PANIALA,
[*November 1, 1938*][2]

I have now had the assurance from your own lips of what I had from Khan Saheb already. You have adopted non-violence not merely as a temporary expedient but as a creed for good. Therefore, mere renunciation of the sword, if there is sword in your heart, will not carry you far. Your renunciation of the sword cannot be said to be genuine unless it generates in your hearts a power the opposite of that of the sword and superior to it. Hitherto revenge or retaliation has been held amongst you as a sacred obligation. If you have a feud with anybody, that man becomes your enemy for all time and the feud is handed down from father to son. In non-violence even if somebody regards you as his enemy you may not so regard him in return, and of course there can be no question of revenge. Who could be more cruel or blood-thirsty than the late Gen. Dyer? Yet the Jallianwala Bagh Congress Inquiry Committee, on my advice, had refused to ask for his prosecution. I had no trace of ill will against him in my heart. I would have also liked to meet him personally and reach his heart, but that was to remain a mere aspiration.

At the end of his talk he was presented a poser by one of the Khudai Khidmatgars who had followed his address closely: "You expect us to protect the Hindus against the raiders and yet you tell us that we may not employ our weapons even against thieves and dacoits. How can the two go together?" Gandhiji replied:

The contradiction is only apparent. If you have really assimilated the non-violent spirit, you won't wait for the raiders to appear on the scene, but will seek them out in their own territory and prevent the raids from taking place. If even then a raid does take place, you will face the raiders and tell them that they can take away all your belongings but they shall touch the property of your Hindu neighbours only over your dead body. And if there are hundreds of Khudai Khidmatgars ready to protect the Hindu *hamsayas* with their lives, the raiders will certainly think better of butchering in cold blood

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-VI"

[2] According to *Gandhi—1915-1948: A Detailed Chronology,* Gandhiji was at Paniala on this date.

all the innocent and inoffensive Khudai Khidmatgars who are non-violently pitched against them. You know the story of Abdul Quadir Jilani and his forty gold mohurs with which his mother had sent him to Baghdad. On the way the caravan was waylaid by robbers who proceeded to strip Abdul Quadir's companions of all their belongings. Thereupon Abdul Quadir, who so far happened to be untouched, shouted out to the raiders and offered them the forty gold mohurs which his mother had sewn into the lining of his tunic. The legend goes that the raiders were so struck by the simple naivete of the boy, as the saint then was, that they not only let him go untouched but returned to his companions all their belongings.

Harijan, 26-11-1938

249. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

November 2, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

All being well we reach there[1] on 11th including Mahadev. These illnesses have made me impatient to reach you.

Your second letter to Dr. B.[2] was quite good.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3612. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10007

250. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

AHMADBANDH,
November 2, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I got your letter. The other mail must be waiting in Peshawar. We shall reach there at 5. We shall start from there not on the 6th but on the 5th, and instead of returning here, we shall take a train on the 9th from some station on the way. So we are definitely reaching Delhi on the 10th. We don't intend to break journey at Delhi. We shall, therefore, reach Wardha on the 11th. The illnesses at Segaon have set me thinking. I feel that as long as the water there does not improve, the

[1] Segaon
[2] Dr. Benes

place should be abandoned and only as many people as are absolutely necessary should be retained and the rest asked to go. But why should I make you worry about it now?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Bandh is a small village.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11675

251. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

November 2, 1938

BA,

Only nine days remain now, and God willing, we shall meet. We shall leave for Segaon the same day. I forgot to reply to one remark in your letter. You said that while leaving I did not even put my hand on your head. As the motor started I also felt that, but you were away from me. Do you require outward signs? Why do you believe that because I do not show my love by outward signs, it has dried up? I assure you that my love has increased and goes on increasing. Not that it was less before, but what was there is becoming purer day by day. I do not look upon you merely as a clay doll. What more need I say? If you also, like . . .[1] ask for outward signs, I will comply.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 30

252. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

November 2, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

As you are an expert in nursing the sick, you have got such opportunities without seeking them. So far your cases improve and bring you credit. May this be ever so.

It is desirable that Rajbhushan should go home. It is not proper

[1] Omission as in the source

that he should stay in Segaon at the cost of his health. But now I shall be returning there soon. I am counting the days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10777

253. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

November 2, 1938

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I feel worried because of the illnesses. I think you, Shakaribehn, Parnerkar and others should leave Segaon for the present. It is not right to risk your lives. But I hope to arrive there on the 11th. Meanwhile think over this. If I can make Segaon healthy, I would call all of you there. This is a new problem facing me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am not writing to Babudi today. I have no time at all.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10594

254. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

November 2, 1938

BAPA,

I got your letter. It is desirable that the money sent to you from here should be spent in this region. I have not been able to study the matter carefully. You should tour this region. If you can bear the cold, then come this very month, otherwise in March next year. It is extremely cold here in December, January and February. It is said that there are eight lakhs of Harijans in this Province. I saw your sharp rejoinder to Ambedkar. But who can wake up a person pretending to sleep?

Who said that you were old? When you pass away, you will pass away in full youth. He is old whose mind is old. Ramdas, for instance, has become an old man in the prime of youth. He has no zest for anything at all.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N, 1179

255. MESSAGE ON OPENING OF KHADI EXHIBITION, PESHAWAR[1]

[Before *November 3, 1938*][2]

Do not be misled by names. A piece of Japanese cloth cannot become swadeshi merely by being labelled 'Swadeshi'. Only an article that is wholly manufactured in India by the hands of millions of villagers and out of raw materials grown in India deserves the name of swadeshi.

Khadi alone, it will be seen, fully satisfies this test; all other cloth is a travesty of swadeshi. Just as there can be no dawn without the sun, so there can be no genuine swadeshi without khadi.

Judged by this test, Peshawar is left far behind in the race for swadeshi. There is only one khadi bhandar here and that too is being run at a loss. I hope that one result of this Exhibition will be to put the khadi bhandar on a firm footing, and to preclude the possibility of its having to close down.

Harijan, 10-12-1938

256. SPEECH AT OPENING OF KHADI EXHIBITION, PESHAWAR[3]

November 3, 1938

Dr. Gopichand has thanked the Ministers for the help that they are giving to khadi work. But I find that neither all the Ministers nor all of the Congress M. L. A.s here use khadi as habitual wear. Some wear it only in the Assembly. Some do not do even that. This is contrary to both the spirit and the letter of the Congress constitution. Even the Red Shirts have yet to become khadi-clad. . . . If they all take to khadi, the one lakh of them will in less than no time make the whole province khadi-clad. This province is rich in the resources for the manufactures of khadi but it comes last in respect of khadi work

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Peshawar Khadi Exhibition"

[2] The Khadi Exhibition was inaugurated on November 3 but the message was printed in advance and was circulated among the visitors.

[3] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Peshawar Khadi Exhibition". Among those present on the occasion were Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Dr. Khan Saheb and a number of Congress M. L, A.s.

actually done.

I would like you all to visit the Exhibition in a spirit of inquiry and study. Khadi organization work, unlike textile mill industry, does not require lakhs of capital and highly specialized technical skill. Even a layman can take it Up. I hope that this first Khadi Exhibition in the Frontier Province will be followed by many more in the near future.

Harijan, 10-12-1938

257. KATHIAWAR NOTES

The following notes[1] were prepared for me by Shri Rajkumari Amrit Kaur on finishing her recent tour in Kathiawar for Harijan and khadi work. The notes are valuable not only for the workers in Kathiawar, but contain reflections which are of all-India importance. I hope that workers will profit by the experiences recorded by the Rajkumari. There is one suggestion she has made, which can be immediately given effect to, if what she says of the Princes is true, as I think it is. She has credited the Princes with the opinion that they have no belief in untouchability and that they will fling open all temples to Harijans, if their people desired it. Her suggestion, therefore, is that they need not wait for any expression of opinion on the part of their people but should build and open temples which are accessible to all. The Princes can make it a point of visiting only these temples to the exclusion of those whose gates are barred against Harijans. And if these temples are built and situated attractively and are well managed, they will be a powerful aid to the breaking down of untouchability. It is possible to extend the principle to all the institutions which, for fear of wounding orthodox susceptibility, they would not dare to open to Harijans. This is the line of least resistance. There is not much meaning in a pious declaration of disbelief in untouchability, if the princes cannot or will not take the cautious step suggested by the Rajkumari.

PESHAWAR, November 4, 1938

Harijan, 12-11-1938

[1] Not reproduced here. The notes dealt with the disabilities suffered by Harijans in the various States visited by the author, such as Rajkot, Vankaner, Morvi, Jamnagar, Porbandar, Dwarka, Junagadh, Bilkha, Dhani, Amreli, Lathi, Bhavnagar, Palitana and Wadhwan. The notes also said that khadi worth Rs. 1,000 was sold during the tour.

258. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

November 4, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

You seem to be quite busy nursing Balkrishna. Mahodaya seems to have been a little negligent.

The cleaning of the village also seems to have made good progress. Write to Vijaya and tell her that I am hard pressed for time and so she should not complain about the absence of letters from me. I hope you are doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10778

259. NOTES

AUNDH REFORMS

I congratulate both the Rajasaheb and the people of Aundh on the grant of responsible government. This small State has always been progressive. The ruler of Aundh has but anticipated the wants of his people and has even been in advance of them in social matters. The declaration of full responsibility was the natural result of the past acts of the ruler. I hope that the rights conferred by the proclamation will not in any way be whittled down in drawing up the constitution. I would suggest that the privy purse should on no account exceed rupees thirty-six thousand. There should be a definition of fundamental rights, i. e., equality of all in the eye of the law, abolition of untouchability and liberty of speech. The last para of the proclamation is appealing. It truly says that"self-government implies self- control and self-sacrifice", and adds: "in the new era that is coming to Aundh, and we hope to the whole of our country, the strong will serve the weak, the wealthy will serve the poor, the learned will serve the illiterate."

It is to be hoped that the noble example of Aundh will be copied by the other States and that its people will by their conduct prove themselves in every way worthy of the responsibility that is to devolve on them. The fact that in the heir to the gadi they have one who, from all accounts I have received, is a true servant of the people,

must be a great help at the time of the inauguration of responsible government. The Western education received by him has not spoiled him. He is reported to be a votary of truth and ahimsa. He himself takes part in village uplift, does road cleaning himself in common with other volunteers and handles the spade and the basket with as much ease as they. He wields the pen. He takes pride in doing the scavenging work including the removal of night-soil.

ARYA SAMAJ AND FILTHY LITERATURE

Shri Dharma Dev Shastri of Kanya Gurukul, Dehra Dun, and then Acharya Dev Sharma Abhaya of Gurukul Kangri have written to me to say that my reference in my article "Filth in Literature"[1] to my daughter-in-law, who is studying in the Kanya Gurukul and who wrote to me about the filth she found in certain text-books prescribed for her examination, has been interpreted in some quarters to mean that the Arya Samaj authorities countenance such literature. Both the friends repudiate the suggestion in emphatic terms. Acharya Dev Sharma Abhaya tells me that the Gurukul authorities were so meticulous about the matter that even for the works of classical poets like Kalidas they insisted on expurgated editions being printed before they would allow their students to study even a celebrated classic like *Shakuntala.* What has, however, happened is that, of late, they have allowed their students to prepare for Sahitya Sammelan examinations which tolerates books containing unclean literature. I understand that the Gurukul authorities have brought the matter to the notice of the Sammelan management and asked them to withdraw the text-books which contain objectionable references. I hope that they will not rest satisfied till they have succeeded in their battle against unclean literature forming part of students' text-books.

TO CORRESPONDENTS

No matter what warnings I issued, my correspondence is daily growing. Even at the risk of a breakdown, I cannot cope with the whole of it. Nor can Pyarelal, even though he often burns midnight oil. Though Mahadev Desai is decidedly on the mend and is even being permitted to write what he feels impelled to and can write without an effort, he cannot be given any correspondence to deal with. I must not put his health in jeopardy again. Even a well regulated life

[1] *Vide* "Filth in Literature", 15-10-1938

like his has limitations which must not be disregarded. It is therefore a question if he can ever again be burdened with correspondence which is not strictly connected with *Harijan.* Let the readers, please, recognize my difficulty. I have a file of papers unread. Some has been read and remains undisposed of. Thus there are long statements complaining against the Bihar Ministers, longer still from Malabar complaining against Rajagopalachari. I have cursorily glanced through them. I am wholly unable to deal with them. I may not even send them to the accused Ministers unless I am prepared to give the necessary time to them. I have neither the time nor the inclination. The Working Committee is the proper tribunal for such matters. If I began to handle such complaints it would be an unwarranted interference with the Ministers concerned and with the functions of the Working Committee.

But this solid reason for non-interference is irrelevant to this note. The decisive reason is my utter inability. Therefore, these and such correspondents will forgive me for not even sending them personal acknowledgements. Then, there are letters complaining against the fancied or real misdeeds of Congress Committees in various provinces. These correspondents attribute to me powers and influence I do not possess. But here again the physical inability is the peremptory cause for my silence. Then there is the unread correspondence. Heaven knows what is contained in it. There are, too, personal letters which I would gladly deal with if I could. I know I can give some help or comfort to these correspondents, if I can deal with their letters as I should like to. As it is, I must plead my inability to handle such correspondence. What energy I have left in me has to be reserved for the general causes which, I fancy, I can still serve. Therefore, correspondents who are awaiting answers will forgive me if they never receive any reply. These who are in the habit of writing to me will help me much if they will restrict their correspondence only to such questions as may lend themselves to discussion or advice through the columns of *Harijan.* In other words *Harijan* should, as far as possible, be my only letter or message to those who seek to know my views on matters which interest them and which are also of importance to the public.

PESHAWAR, November 5, 1938

Harijan, 12-11-1938

260. WHY NOT GREAT POWERS?

In the criticisms on my recent writings on the plight of Czechoslovakia,[1] I have observed one thing which demands ananswer.

Some critics argue that if the non-violent remedy I have suggested for the Czechs is only for comparatively weak because small nations like them and not for the great powers like England or France or America, it cannot be of much value, if any.

Now if the critics will reread my article, they will see that I have refrained from suggesting it to these big powers because of their bigness, in other words, because of my timidity. But there was a more potent reason for my not addressing them. They were not in distress and therefore in no need of any remedy. To use a medical-expression, they were not ailing as Czechoslovakia was. Their existence was not threatened as Czechoslovakia's was. Any appeal from me therefore to the great powers would have amounted to an empty and unwanted sermon.

By experience I have also found that people rarely become virtuous for virtue's sake. They become virtuous from necessity. Nor is there anything wrong in a man becoming good under pressure of circumstances. It would be no doubt better if he becomes good for its own sake.

The Czechs were given a choice either to surrender peacefully to Germany's might or to fight single-handed and risk almost certain destruction. It was at this moment that it became necessary for one like me to present an alternative which had proved its effectiveness under somewhat similar circumstances. My appeal to the Czechs was in my opinion as appropriate as it would have been inappropriate in the case of the great powers.

My critics might have, however, well asked why I had gone out of my self-prescribed orbit to speak to a Western nation when I could not show cent per cent success of non-violence on the Indian soil,—more especially now, when I had begun to entertain serious doubts as to whether Congressmen were really living up to their creed or policy of non-violence. Indeed I had in mind the limitation and the present state of uncertainty about the Congress position. But my own faith in

[1] *Vide* "If I were a Czech", 15-10-1938 and "Logical Consequence", 8-10-1938

the non-violent remedy was as bright as ever when I wrote that article. And I felt that in the supreme hour of its trial it would be cowardly on my part not to suggest to the Czechs the non-violent remedy for acceptance. What may ultimately prove impossible of acceptance by crores of people, undisciplined and unused till but recently to corporate suffering, might be possible for a small, compact, disciplined nation inured to corporate suffering. I had no right to arrogate to myself any belief that India alone and no other nation was fit for non-violent action. I must confess that I have believed and still believe that India was the fittest nation to enforce non-violent action for regaining her freedom. In spite of signs to the contrary, I have the hope that the whole mass of people, who are more than the Congress, will respond only to non-violent action. They are the readiest of all the nations of the earth for such action. But when a case for immediate application of the remedy presented itself before me, I could not restrain myself from suggesting it to the Czechs for their acceptance.

It is however open to the great powers to take it up any day and cover themselves with glory and earn the eternal gratitude of posterity. If they or any of them could shed the fear of destruction, if they disarmed themselves, they will automatically help the rest to regain their sanity. But then these great powers have to give up imperialistic ambitions and ex-ploitation of the so-called uncivilized or semi-civilized nations of the earth and revise their mode of life. It means a complete revolution. Great nations can hardly be expected in the ordinary course to move spon-taneously in a direction the reverse of the one they have followed, and according to their notion of value, from victory to victory. But miracles have happened before and may happen even in this very prosaic age. Who can dare limit God's power of undoing wrong? One thing is certain. If the mad race for armaments continues, it is bound to result in a slaughter such as has never occurred in history. If there is a victor left the very victory will be a living death for the nation that emerges victorious. There is no escape from the impending doom save through a bold and unconditional acceptance of the non-violent method with all its glorious implications. Democracy and violence can ill go together. The States that are today nominally democratic have either to become frankly totalit-arian or, if they are to become truly democratic, they must become courageously non-violent. It is a blasphemy to say that non-violence can only be practised by individuals and never by nations which are com-posed of individuals.

PESHAWAR, November 5, 1938

Harijan, 12-11-1938

261. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

PESHAWAR,
November 5, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

Evidently you had the call perhaps at the same hour that I felt you will have it. As far as my recollection goes, I wrote to you also that if you felt the urge I would let you go. Of course the idea originated not with me, but with Rajkumari; and I wrote to her suggesting that she should write to you directly. But in view of your letter, all this becomes past history. We will discuss ways and means when I am there which I hope will be on the 11th. I hope I shall find Agatha there on my arrival. If the final decision is for you to go, what I feel is that the sooner you can go the better, if you can stand the continental winter. I do not want you to risk your health. It may be that if you reconcile yourself to sterile eggs you might be able to stand the cold better, but of course you shall be the sole judge.

I am already moving with reference to the financial part of it. I have relaxed temporarily the silence rule. Hence I have been able to dictate this while munching grapes.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6413. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10008

262. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

PESHAWAR,
November 5, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Your decision to stay on is all right. I like it too and I certainly liked the idea about a sea voyage. I like Kallenbach's suggestion very much indeed. You may go and see the field of my battles. I should like you very much to see Phoenix, Tolstoy Farm, the house in which I used to stay in Durban, the Johannesburg office, etc. Manilal will dance with joy. But it might be difficult to take Durga and Bablo as far as that. I should like Bablo to remain with me. And moreover, a visit to South Africa would mean at least four months. South Africa is not less big than India. Go and see the four Colonies. And you must

not miss the Victoria Falls. When you go so far, you cannot return immediately. It is worth going there even if only for the sake of meeting Miss Schlesin. Kallenbach will perhaps have a time that he will remember for ever. The climate there is beyond praise. Think over it. If you feel inclined, I am certainly ready to send you.

If Mirabehn wishes to go, I am ready to let her go. Her going can do no harm at all. While she has to suppress herself with me, in the West she can work independently. There is no limit to her courage.

I completely forgot to write to you about Muirhead. If I had had some talk, I would certainly have written to you. But I think he did not have the courage to discuss anything with me. Or maybe his only aim was to see me. I gave him no encouragement at all. I had no desire to. What was there to talk about? If the corruption in the Congress can be got rid of, we can get swaraj today without any discussion with anybody. If it is not got rid of, swaraj is an impossibility. I will stop my pen now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11676

263. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

PESHAWAR,
November 5, 1938

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I can find nothing wrong in your letter. I am convinced that the Congress is on the decline. Falsehood, violence, intrigue and selfishness are growing. The present seems to be the time when those who are devoted to the twin doctrines of truth and non-violence should serve the Congress from outside. I am writing frankly that if there is no improvement, the Congress will lose even my moral support and I will stop guiding it. But I will not use coercion. God Himself will make my way clear.

You must express your views firmly and if you want to come out you should do so. You must continue in the municipality only if you can control it naturally. But do not ruin yourself. There are countless activities for a pure-hearted person like you. Rather than involve yourself in dirty things I would prefer that you lived a private life and

earned a living by honest means. Whenever you feel convinced about your duty to leave, do so. The future is in the hands of God.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You must have done the needful about Agatha Harrison.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

264. SPEECH AT MEETING OF BAR ASSOCIATION, PESHAWAR[1]

[*November 5, 1938*][2]

Gandhiji, in a witty little speech, while thanking them for the honour that they had done him, observed that he was hardly entitled to that privilege, in the first place because, as they all knew, he had been disbarred by his own Inn, and, secondly, because he had long forgotten his law. Of late he had more often been engaged in breaking laws than in expounding or interpreting them in the courts of the land. Still another and, perhaps, his most vital reason was his peculiar views about lawyers and doctors which he had recorded in his booklet, *The Indian Home Rule. A* true lawyer, he told them, was one who placed truth and service in the first place and the emoluments of the profession in the next place only. He did not know whether they had all adopted that ideal but if they pledged themselves to render service through their legal acumen in an altruistic spirit, he would be the first to pay them his homage.

Harijan, 26-11-1938

265. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

November 6, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Travelling practically for the whole day by a motor lorry, we arrived at Haripur in the evening.

What you write about Massingham is correct, but the way you applied it to conditions in India did not seem right to me. The article has no place in *Harijan.* Just as dazzling light in a small is room out

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-VI"

[2] From *Gandhi*—1915-1948

of place, so is the case with your article. Massingham wrote a poem but we are doing things. Only accounts of active work being done have a place in it. But why go on arguing about this? When we meet, we shall discuss it if we have time and if it is necessary to do so. It happens only rarely when what you say does not convince me and what I say does not convince you. I should, therefore, certainly like to avoid arguing about this. I had thought of giving that article to you in Delhi. Now I will post it to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11677

266. TALK AT BIBHUTI[1]

November 6, 1938

The Khudai Khidmatgars is an organization with its headquarters at Utmanzai. Anyone who signs their pledge and can speak Pushtu can enrol himself as a Khudai Khidmatgar. The only condition is that he cannot simultaneously be on the register of any other organization. You are, therefore, absolutely free to enrol as Khudai Khidmatgars if you like and no special permission is needed for it.

The Khudai Khidmatgars have proved their undoubted capacity for organization. The presence of a picked body of Khudai Khidmatgars at a public meeting makes all the difference between order and disorder. The principle of non-violence requires that they should make the people do, through their power of love, all those things that the police does through the power of the *lathi* and the bullet. When the seed of love sprouts forth in our hearts our petty quarrels and mutual bickerings will become things of the past. Take today's incident of the calf that was accidentally overrun by our motor-bus.[2] Love should have prompted the chauffeur to stop the car immediately so that adequate arrangements might be made for the care and

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-VI". The local Pushtu-speaking people had requested Gandhiji that they should be allowed to join the Khudai Khidmatgar movement although politically and geographically they belonged to the Punjab.

[2] While Gandhiji was being driven to Bibhuti, a calf had been knocked down and partly run over by Gandhiji's car. The local Congressmen put the blame on the opponents or the Government.

treatment of the injured animal. One of our party showed what seemed to me as unseemly haste in naming the so-called opponents as the deliberate authors of the accident. In non-violence, we must not be in a hurry to ascribe motives to the opponent or regard him with suspicion unless we have proof positive for it. When love fills the hearts of the Khudai we shall have independence. But independence will not come to Khidmatgars us till our love shines out in our littlest acts.

We must send someone to the place where the accident occurred, to offer compensation to the owner of the animal and to take the calf for treatment to a vet.

Harijan, 26-11-1938

267. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, HARIPUR[1]

November 6, 1938

Scientists tell us that we are descended from the orang. That may be so, but it is not man's destiny to live and die a brute. In proportion as he cultivates non-violence and voluntary discipline, he is contradistinguished from brute nature and fulfils his destiny. One of the obligations that non-violence places upon us is to respect the rights even of the weakest, even a child's.[2]

. . . We must meet abuse by forbearance.[3] Human nature is so constituted that if we take absolutely no notice of anger or abuse, the person indulging in it will soon weary of it and stop. We should harbour no resentment against those who tried to create the distur-bance which, without their meaning it, has taught us a valuable little lesson in forbearance. A satyagrahi always regards the 'enemy' as a potential friend. During half a century of experience of non-violence I have not come across a case of enmity persisting to the end in the face of absolute non-violence.

Harijan, 26-11-1938

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-VI"

[2] The reference is to a "gentle complaint" from the head master of a local school that the local congress authorities had not taken his permission for holding the meeting in the school.

[3] The reference is to the walk-out of a "socialist" delegation shouting unseemly slogans because they were not allowed to present an address to Gandhiji as the meeting had already commenced when they arrived.

268. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

HARIPUR,
November 7, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Did you notice the recrudescence of riots in Burma?[1] It is a sad thing. The secret of the monks taking a leading part in them we shall perhaps never know.

We visited the famous gurdwara in Hasan Abdal. You should if you have not. Whilst the building is majestic, the Spirit of Nanak was absent.

There was nothing from you yesterday. I expect to have your letter at Abbottabad.

We take the train on 9th at Taxila.

Love.

WARRIOR

From the original: C.W. 3648. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6457

269. LETTER TO DEV PRAKASH BHATIA

November 7, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

You have been as good as your word.

Prayer is an intense longing to have communion with our Maker. It is an effort not of the intellect but of the heart. The communion may come soon or it may take years or even ages. It is enough if the effort is sincere and heart-felt.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI DEV PRAKASH BHATIA, B.A., LL.B.
PESHAWAR CANTT.

From a photostat: G.N. 1538

[1] *Vide* "Recent Riots in Burma", 20-8-1938

270. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

ABBOTTABAD,
November 7, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

This is the last I can write from this province. This is a beautiful place except for its associations. Tell Munnalal I shall discuss his letter when I meet [him]. No time today.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABEHN
SEGAON ASHRAM
SEGAON, WARDHA, C. P.

From the original: C.W. 6414. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10009

271. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

November 7, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

This is a . . .[1] letter. If you have reached Delhi, it will follow you. With it is Mani's. Pyarelal's letter seems queer. Let us see what happens.

Don't decide too hastily to remain in Wardha. If nowhere else, go and stay in Bombay or Bulsar. If you can have the courage to go to South Africa, it will be best. But I would not insist. Follow your own inclination. If you cannot feel at ease anywhere outside Wardha, I won't oppose your plan. Let us not take any risk. What has happened to you is something similar to what had happened to me in Nipani,[2] confining me to bed for six months. Maybe, considering your age, you will not have to take that much rest.

I am sending Radhakrishna's letter also for you to read and then tear up. I have carefully preserved your article. After I know your wish, I shall send it or hand it over personally. How can we afford to lose it?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11678

[1] The source is illegible here.
[2] *Vide* "Discussion with Dr. Wanless", 26-3-1927

272. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

ABBOTTABAD,
November 8, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I got your telegram. About money I have already decided that we cannot put that burden on Ramachandran. It is my impression that even when she went I myself gave the money. But if it was not so, I shall see when she comes. It is your duty, however, to talk to Ramachandran as I have suggested. Not to tell him is to betray his trust and will not be to Paparamma's good.

It is wise on your part that you resist at present the temptation of entering into a discussion. If convincing reasons occur to you and they are borne out by experience, then when your time comes your arguments will have greater force. It is enough for the present that you consider my path the right one and wish to follow it in your life, too. If you remain firm in this, it will be more than enough.

Don't let your health suffer in any way. Don't have the false confidence that you will be able to manage it afterwards. Whatever the disease, trivial or serious, it must be got rid of as soon as it makes its appearance.

The Frontier Province is worth visiting from the point of view of understanding human nature. There is also some beautiful scenery.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7351. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

273. TALK TO KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS[1]

MANSEHRA,
[*November 8, 1938*][2]

It has become the fashion these days to say that society cannot be organized or run on non-violent lines. I join issue on that point. In a family, when a father slaps his delinquent child, the latter does not think of retaliating. He obeys his father not because of the deterrent

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-VII"
[2] The date is from *Gandhi—1915-1948*.

effect of the slap but because of the offended love which he senses behind it. That in my opinion is an epitome of the way in which society is or should be governed. What is true of family must be true of society which is but a larger family. It is man's imagination that divides the world into warring groups of enemies and friends. In the ultimate resort it is the power of love that acts even in the midst of the clash and sustains the world.

I am told that the Red Shirts here are Red Shirts only in name. I hope the allegation is baseless. I know that Khan Saheb is seriously disturbed at the infiltration of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement by undesirable and self-seeking elements. I share with him this feeling that mere accession of numbers, unless they are true exponents of the creed which they profess, will only weaken instead of adding strength to the movement.

The Red Shirt movement today has drawn attention of the whole of India and even outside. And yet what it has achieved is only a small fraction of what has to be achieved. I implicitly accept the assurance given by the Khudai Khidmatgars that they are anxious to understand and practise the doctrine of non-violence in full. There are tremendous heights lying before them still to be scaled. The programme of constructive non-violence that I have placed before them is self-acting when it is once started well. Its enforcement will be a sure test too of the earnestness and sincerity of the Khudai Khidmatgars.

Harijan, 3-12-1938

274. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MANSEHRA[1]

November 8, 1938

Gandhiji replying assured them that he set great store by what they had already achieved in the field of non-violence. But believing as he did in the old adage that from him who gives much more is expected, he warned them that he would not rest satisfied till they had fulfilled their mission of achieving through their non-violence not only their own freedom but the freedom of India. He had visited their province a second time to know them more intimately and to understand how non-violence

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-VII". The local citizens in their address had assured Gandhiji that the Pathans would in a short time constitute "the spear-head of India's non-violent fight for freedom".

worked in their midst and it was his intention to return to them a third time when he hoped once more to pick up the threads of various problems where he had left them.

Harijan, 3-12-1938

275. TALK TO MINORITIES' DEPUTATION[1]

ABBOTTABAD,
[*November 8, 1938*][2]

Gandhiji in reply told them that whilst he could support their demand that licences for keeping fire-arms should be freely issued on application, it would be too much to expect the Government to distribute fire-arms free amongst the entire border population. They could raise a fund for free distribution of fire-arms if they wanted, but he had his doubts whether free distribution of and training in the use of fire-arms would solve the question of transborder insecurity. If the experience during the recent raid at Bannu was any guide, such a step would prove to be an expensive pedantry. During the Bannu raid, he was told, only one gun on the part of the citizens was in play although there was no lack of fire-arms in the city at the time of the raid and even that gun occasioned more casualties among the public than among the raiders. He, however, agreed with them with regard to what they had observed about the duty of the majority community. Khan Saheb was trying to prepare the Khudai Khidmatgars for discharging . their duty of protecting citizens against raids.

Harijan, 3-12-1938

276. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, ABBOTTABAD[3]

[*November 8, 1938*][4]

I thank you for the address that you have presented to me. You have in your address expressed your gratification at having in your midst 'the greatest man on earth'. I wondered as I listened to your address as to who that gentleman could be. Certainly it could not be I. I know too well my shortcomings. There is a celebrated story told

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-VII". The deputation among other things suggested to Gandhiji that in view of the growing menace to security, fire-arms and training in the use of them ought to be provided free to the minority population settled in the border to facilitate self-protection.

[2] From *Gandhi—1915-1948*

[3] Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-VIII". At the meeting several addresses and a consolidated sum of Rs. 1,125 on behalf of the whole district were presented to Gandhiji.

[4] From *The Hindustan Times*, 9-11-1938, and *The Hindu*, 9-11-1938

about Solon the great law-giver of Athens. He was asked by Croesus, who was reputed to be the wealthiest man of his age, to name the happiest man on earth. Croesus had fondly hoped that Solon would name him. But Solon replied that he could say nothing as no one could be adjudged happy before his end. If Solon found it difficult to pronounce on a man's happiness during his lifetime, how much more difficult it must be to adjudge on a man's greatness? True greatness in the world is not found set upon a hill, for the vulgar crowd to see. On the contrary, my seventy years' experience has taught me that the truly great are often those of whom and of whose greatness the world knows nothing during their lifetime. God alone is judge of true greatness, because He knows men's hearts. . . .

Not only the inhabitants of Abbottabad but even the sun, the moon and the stars here were eager to have a glimpse of me! Am I to understand, my good friends, that your city has all to itself a set of sun, moon and stars which do not shine upon Wardha or Segaon? In Kathiawar we have a class of people known as Bhats or professional bards who make it their job to sing the praises of their chieftains for money. Well, I won't call you Bhats. Banter apart, I want you to realize the mistake of indulging in hyperbolic praises of your leaders. It neither helps them nor their work. I would like you once for all to forget this practice of presenting laudatory addresses. At three score and ten I for one have no desire to let what little time God has still left me be frittered away in vain theatricalities. If an address must be presented, I would like it to be descriptive of the defects and shortcomings of the recipient of the address so that he might be helped to turn the searchlight inward and weed them out.

Ever since my arrival in this province I have been trying to expound to the Khudai Khidmatgars the doctrine of non-violence in all its uncompromising completeness, abating not a jot, holding back nothing. I do not claim to have understood the meaning of non-violence in its entirety. What I have realized is only a small and an insignificant fraction of the great whole. It is not given to imperfect man to grasp the whole meaning of non-violence or to practise it in full. That is an attribute of God alone, the Supreme Ruler who suffers no second. But I have constantly and ceaselessly striven for over half a century to understand it and to translate it in my own life. The Khudai Khidmatgars have no doubt set a most brilliant example in the practise of non-violence, to the extent to which they have understood it. It has

earned them universal admiration. But they have now to move a step further. Their conception of non-violence has to be broadened and their practice of it, especially in its positive aspects, to be made fuller and more intense, if they are to come out successful in the final heat. Non-violence is not mere disarmament. Nor is it the weapon of the weak and the important. A child who has not the strength to wield the *lathi* does not practise not-violence. More powerful than all the armaments, non-violence is a unique force that has come into the world. He who has not learnt to feel it to be a weapon infinitely more potent than brute force has not understood its true nature. This non-violence cannot be "taught" through word of mouth. But it can be kindled in our heart through the grace of God, in answer to earnest prayer. It is stated that today there are one lakh of Khudai Khidmatgars who have adopted non-violence as their creed. But before them as early as 1920, Khan Saheb came to recognize in non-violence a weapon, the mightiest in the world, and his choice was made. Eighteen years of practice of non-violence have only strengthened his faith in it. He has seen how it has made his people fearless and strong. The prospect of losing a paltry job used to unnerve them. They feel different beings today. At three score and ten, my faith in non-violence today burns brighter than ever. People say to me, "Your programme of non-violence has been before the country now nearly for two decades, but where is the promised independence?" My reply is that although the creed of non-violence was professed by millions, it was practised by but a few and that, too, merely as a policy. But with all that the result that has been achieved is sufficiently striking to encourage me to carry on the experiment with the Khudai Khidmatgars and God willing it will succeed.

Harijan, 10-12-1938

277. LETTER TO SARASWATI GANDHI

[Before *November 9, 1938*][1]

CHI. SARASWATI,

You must have received my letters and given my letter to Grandfather. I am awaiting your letter. I hope you are physically well and mentally calm. Is there any difficulty in deciphering my handwri-

[1] Gandhiji left the Frontier Province on November 9, 1938.

ting? I shall be here till November 9.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Ba had been taken ill. She is in Delhi and is slightly better. Write to her at the Harijan Nivas, Kingsway.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 3427. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi. Also G.N. 6154

278. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

November 9, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

I know that you like to live in Akola. It is indeed your dharma to serve Nanabhai[1]. You are the best judge of how long you should stay there for that. If you are not urgently required there for that purpose, your duty is to go to Natal. The earlier you reach there, the better.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope Nanabhai is better. Write to me at Segaon.

I am writing this in a moving train.

SHRI SUSHILABEHN GANDHI

C/O SHRI NANABHAI MASHRUWALA

AKOLA, BERAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4888

279. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

November 9, 1938

CHI. MANILAL,

I owe you an apology. While on tour, I always leave you out. The work is heavy and my energy is relatively limited. I, therefore, content myself with the fewest possible letters. I realize, all the same, that 1 ought to write to you. I will try once again to be regular in

[1] Nanabhai Mashruwala, the addressee's father

writing or dictating letters to you. I have been feeling that I am not doing my dharma towards you fully. Though I may not be able to do anything in that direction, still even my letters to you have a value of their own.

I wrote long back to Sushila that her dharma was to be by your side. She has decided to stay on here for a month or so. I have again written today that if she is not required to stay there for nursing Nanabhai, she should immediately return.[1] I will do everything possible to send her.

If you find it necessary to sell any portion of Phoenix and if the trustees agree, you may sell it.

Schlesin's suggestion is certainly worth thinking over.

I am sending your letter to Chhaganlal but I do not think he will want to go. The person who would have benefited by going and staying there was Ramdas, but he does not feel so inclined. The best way is for you and Sushila to do the best you can and be content. It will certainly be good if Schlesin gives whatever help she can. I will have no objection if Pragji takes charge. You should be guided by your experience. Don't do anything which your experience does not suggest as advisable.

Ba has completely recovered now. So also has Mahadev. Today I am travelling in a train bound for Wardha. Ba will meet me in Delhi and join us there.

Dr. Sushila, Pyarelal and Amtul Salaam are with me. Kanaiya also is there. My health is excellent.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4887

280. LETTER TO M. R. MASANI

November 9, 1938

BHAI MASANI,

You must have seen that Dr. Khan Saheb has released a good many people. He wishes to release the remaining prisoners also but there are difficulties in the way. I have written to the local Secretary in

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

this connection and asked him to send a Copy of that letter to you. You must have received it.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4129

281. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

November 9, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I got your letter. It would please me if you stayed there as long as you could. I am writing this letter in a train. I will reach Segaon on the 11th. Ba will join me at Delhi.

You have given good information.

Manubhai has done well in deciding to stay on there.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

SHRI VIJAYABEHN
GRAM DAKSHINAMURTI
AMBLA, *via* SONGADH
KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7102. Also C.W. 4594. Courtesy; Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

282. LETTER TO PYARELAL

[After *November 9, 1938*][1]

CHI. PYARELAL,

I had given you two items to be condensed for *Harijan*. I shall do the condensing myself if you pass them on to me. I can see that you are overburdened.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] This letter is on the reverse side of another dated November 9, 1938

283. MESSAGE ON DEATH OF KEMAL ATATURK[1]

November 10, 1938

THIS DEATH IS A GREAT LOSS TO TURKEY. MAY THEY COME OUT SAFE THROUGH THE CRISIS.

The Hindu, 11-11-1938

284. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

DELHI,
November 10, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is Satis Babu's latest production.[2] He is making vast strides in this direction.

Your two letters came in today, the first without anything from M[3].

What could I say but from the heart about your pathetic appeal? If the message comes to me nothing on earth would deter me. I have told you, perhaps, I have not the requisite purity to penetrate the woman heart. There must be a distance between her and me so long as I have the विकार[4] snake in me. You can but pray. But the effort has to be mine. Therefore don't feel angry or sorrowful if I can't answer your expectations.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3649. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6458

285. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

November 10, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I had got your letter at Taxila. I received one here also. An earlier letter of Rajkumari I got today, in which I did not see your

[1] President of the Turkish Republic. He died on November 10, 1938.

[2] The reference seems to be to the paper on which Gandhiji was writing the letter.

[3] Mahadev Desai

[4] Carnal desires

handwriting. I understand about South Africa. We will now think about something else when you return. Don't mind if you sleep less now. It has taught us a lesson that even now you have to be very careful. What Gilder says is quite true. If it is necessary to stay on beyond the 19th, do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have no time for more.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11679

286. DISCUSSION WITH COMMUNISTS[1]

[Before *November 11, 1938*][2]

COMMUNISTS: We confess, we do not understand what it is exactly you stand for. We oppose you, not necessarily because we always differ from you but because we do not know your mind and so regard your actions with vague fear and distrust. Faith would become easier if we understand you. So we have come to you. Possibly you too might find that some of your opinions about us needed revision, if you knew us.

And by way of illustration, they cited the resolution on civil liberty[3] that had been adopted by the A. I. C. C. at Delhi and which had occasioned the much talked of walk-out on the part of a group of members.[4] They could not understand why the "High Command" should be so anxious to steamroll that resolution through the house in spite of strong protest.

G. I must confess that I did not like the walk-out. Did it mean that you wanted the Congress to condone incitement to violence?

C. No, we have again and again made it clear that we do not want any condonation of violence or incitement to violence. What distresses us is this. Whereas there was enlargement of civil liberty on Congress taking office, since the Haripura Congress civil liberty has actually suffered curtailment under the Congress ministries. We are driven to feel that this cry about abuse of civil liberty has been raised merely as a convenient pretext to shield the Ministers, some of whom have been behaving exactly like the old bureaucrats.

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "A Sporting Offer". Gandhiji, Pyarelal says, made several additions in the writing to bring out his meaning clearly.

[2] From a reference in the text it is clear that Gandhiji was not at Segaon at the time of this discussion. He left Delhi for Segaon on the 11th.

[3] *Vide*, " Draft of Resolution for A. I. C. C.", 23-9-1938

[4] *Vide*, "That Unfortunate Walk-out", 15-10-1938

G. I am more than glad that you have come to me, because you have come to the real culprit. I must confess that I am the sole author of that resolution. It is based upon unimpeachable evidence in my possession. But you should have known from my writings that they were meant to help Ministers to avoid action against those who have incited to violence and even actually committed it. Instead of Ministers taking action against them my purpose was to create public opinion against violent speeches, writings or acts. The resolution was a substitute for legal action. I want you to accept my assurance that I would not screen a single Minister who interferes with civil liberty or acts contrary to Congress resolutions. If you have Rajaji in mind, I am prepared to give you full satisfaction or ask him to resign.

C. We feel puzzled. You have said that coercive measures should be used to put down incitement to violence. Is it right to use Government violence to check the so-called incitement to violence by Congressmen?

G. The question is badly put. But my answer is there. There should be no Government violence. But if a man kills a little child and robs it of its ornaments and if I deprive him of the liberty to repeat the performance, I would not call my act violence. It would be violence if my act was meant to be a punishment.

I would like to make my position clearer still. You cannot have the cake and eat it. Assuming that there has been violence of speech, it has to be noticed by the Congress or the Congress Ministers. I have suggested the former course. The resolution was in pursuance of that course. Of course you may question the validity or sufficiency of proof in the possession of the Working Committee. In that case, you could have called for proofs and accepted the resolution subject to the production by the Working Committee of the proof in its possession. If you admit that violent speech or writing does not come under the protection of civil liberty, there should have been no walk-out. Surely he who runs may see that in the Congress provinces latitude of speech and writing is allowed such as has never before been enjoyed.

C. All the same, we cannot reconcile ourselves to the bias which the High Command has persistently shown against us. We have put ourselves under Congress discipline. We have joined the Congress because it is the only body that can raise a popular movement. If we misbehave, we may be put out and should lose caste with the people. As a people's party we must move with the people or go out. These Ministers, on the other hand, are seeking to set themselves above the people to make themselves immune to democratic influence. We are wedded to no dogma. Tell us what we can do together in immediate practice. Our motives may differ but practice will

count.

G. You should also admit that neither the resolution[1] nor, I think, my article[2] makes mention of socialists or communists. Violence is no monopoly of any one party. I know Congressmen who are neither socialists nor communists but who are frankly devotees of the cult of violence. Contrariwise, I know socialists and communists who will not hurt a fly but who believe in the universal ownership of instruments of production. I rank myself as one among them. But here I am not thinking of myself but of others whom I have the good fortune to know.

What you have said, however, makes it clear to me that you do not put the same stress as I do on the means. But I understand your argument. Our minds are working at cross purposes. I want to occupy a corner in your hearts, if I can. But some of you have told me frankly that it is impossible, for they look at things from opposite poles. The utmost they can do is to tolerate me because they credit me with some capacity for sacrifice and influence over the masses. Now I make a sporting offer. One of you or all of you can come to me at Segaon when I return there, study me, see all my papers, look at the correspondence, ask me questions, and decide upon the course you would adopt in your dealings with me. There is no secrecy with me. My mission is to convert every single Indian to my view of the means of liberation. If only that happens, complete independence is ours for the having.

They next questioned Gandhiji as to the possibility of the Communist Party being legalized. "We do not *want* violence," they explained. "It is true that we have not made non-violence our creed. We are not pledged to non-violence at all cost and for all time to come, but for the time being and in the immediate future we see no necessity for violence. Our method is thus, just now, the same as that of the Congress. We are forced at present to function as a secret organization because we are under ban. If the ban is removed, the necessity for secrecy should cease. For the rest we can only give the assurance that should we in the future find it necessary to drop non-violence, we shall make a clear and open declaration about it.

G. If you mean that you do not as a party believe in violence, then you should make that statement. All your literature that I have studied clearly says that there is no independence without resort to force. I know that there is a body of communists that is slowly veering

[1] *Vide* "Draft of Resolution for A. I.I.C.", 23-9-1938

[2] *Vide,* "That Unfortunate Walk-out", 15-10-1938

round to non-violence. I would like you to make your position absolutely plain and above board. I have it from some of the literature that passes under the name of communist literature that secrecy, camou-flage and the like are enjoined as necessary for the accomplishment of the communist end, especially as communism has to engage in an unequal battle against capitalism which has organized violence at its beck and call. I would, therefore, like you, if you can, to make it plain that you do not believe in these things I have mentioned.

The communist friends promised to send Gandhiji an authoritative statement setting forth the position of their party.

G. You may think over what I have said, keep yourself in touch with me, correct me when you think I go astray, and try to understand me. Do not distrust me. When you have doubts express them fearlessly. And I suggest that we leave the discussion at that. But I should be glad to think that we part with the determination to understand one another and but to meet again.

Harijan, 10-12-1938

287. KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS AND BADSHAH KHAN

Whatever the Khudai Khidmatgars may be or may ultimately turn out to be, there can be no doubt about what their leader whom they delight to call Badshah Khan is. He is unquestionably a man of God. He believes in His living presence and knows that his movement will prosper only if God wills it. Having put his whole soul into his cause, he remains indifferent as to what happens. It is enough for him to realize that there is no deliverance for the Pathan except through out and out acceptance of non-violence. He does not take pride in the fact that the Pathan is a fine fighter. He appreciates his bravery but he thinks that he has been spoilt by overpraise. He does not want to see his Pathan as a goonda of society. He believes that the Pathan has been exploited and kept in ignorance. He wants the Pathan to become braver than he is and wants him to add true knowledge to his bravery. This he thinks can only be achieved through non-violence.

And as Khan Saheb believes in my non-violence, he wanted me to be as long as I could among the Khudai Khidmatgars. For me I needed no temptation to go to them. I was myself anxious to make their acquaintance. I wanted to reach their hearts. I do not know that I

have done so now. Anyway I made the attempt.

But before I proceed to describe how I approached my task and what I did, I must say a word about Khan Saheb as my host. His one care throughout the tour was to make me as comfortable as the circumstances permitted. He spared no pains to make me proof against privation or discomfort. All my wants were anticipated by him. And there was no fuss about what he did. It was all perfectly natural for him. It was all from the heart. There is no humbug about him. He is an utter stranger to affectation. His attention is therefore never embarrassing, never obtrusive. And so when we parted at Taxila our eyes were wet. The parting was difficult. And we parted in the hope that we would meet again probably in March next. The Frontier Province must remain a place of frequent pilgrimage for me. For though the rest of India may fail to show true non-violence, there seems to be good ground for hoping that the Frontier Province will pass through the fiery ordeal. The reason is simple. Badshah Khan commands willing obedience from his adherents said to number more than one hundred thousand. They hang on his lips. He has but to say the word and it is carried out. Whether, in spite of all the veneration he commands, the Khudai Khidmatgars will pass the test in constructive non-violence remains to be seen.

Though Pyarelal has been giving a faithful record of the tour in the Frontier Province I must even at the risk of repetition in places give in my own way a resume of what has been done.

At the outset both Khan Saheb and I had come to the conclusion that instead of addressing the whole of the Khudai Khidmatgars at the various centres I should confine myself to the leaders. This would save my energy and be its wisest use. And so it proved to be. During the five weeks, we visited all the centres, and the talks lasted for one hour or more at each centre. I found Khan Saheb to be a very competent and faithful interpreter. And as he believed in what I said, he put into the translation all the force he could command. He is a born orator and speaks with dignity and effect.

At every meeting I repeated the warning that unless they felt that in non-violence they had come into possession of a force infinitely superior to the one they had and in the use of which they were adepts, they should have nothing to do with non-violence and resume the arms they possessed before. It must never be said of Khudai Khidmatgars that once so brave, they had become or been made cowards

under Khan Saheb's influence. Their bravery consisted not in being good marksmen but in defying death and being ever ready to bare their breasts to the bullets. This bravery they had to keep intact and be ready to show whenever occasion demanded. And for the truly brave such occasions occurred often enough without seeking.

This non-violence was not a mere passive quality. It was the mightiest force God had endowed man with. Indeed, possession of non-violence distinguished man from the brute creation. It was inherent in every human being, but in most it lay dormant. Perhaps the word 'non-violence' was an inadequate rendering of ahimsa which itself was an incomplete connotation of all it was used for conveying. A better rendering would be love or goodwill. Violence was to be met by goodwill. And goodwill came into play only when there was ill will matched against it. To be good to the good is an exchange at par. A rupee against a rupee gives no index to its quality. It does when it is matched against an anna. Similarly a man of good will is known only when he matches himself against one of ill will.

This non-violence or goodwill was to be exercised not only against Englishmen but it must have full play even among ourselves. Non-violence against Englishmen may be a virtue of necessity, and may easily be a cover for cowardice or simple weakness. It may be, as it often is, a mere expedience. But it could not be an expedience when we have an equal choice between violence and non-violence. Such instances occur in domestic relations, social and political relations among ourselves, not only between rival sects of the same faith but persons belonging to different faiths. We cannot be truly tolerant towards Englishmen if we are intolerant towards our neighbours and equals. Hence our goodwill, if we had it in any degree, would be tested almost every day. And if we actively exercised it, we would become habituated to its use in wider fields till at last it became second nature with us.

The very name Khan Saheb had adopted for them showed that they were to serve, not to injure, humanity. For God took and needed no personal service. He served His creatures without demanding any service for Himself in return. He was unique in this as in many other things. Therefore servants of God were to be known by the service they rendered to His creatures.

Hence the non-violence of Khudai Khidmatgars had to show itself in their daily actions. It could be so exhibited only if they were

non-violent in thought, word and deed.

And even as a person who relied upon the use of force in his daily dealings would have to undergo a military training, so will a servant of God have to go through a definite training. This was provided for in the very foundation resolution of the special Congress of 1920. It was broadened from time to time. It was never toned down to my knowledge. The exercise of active goodwill was to be tested through communal unity, shedding of untouchability by Hindus, the home and hand-manufacture and use of khadi—a sure symbol of oneness with the millions—and prohibition of intoxicating drinks and drugs. This fourfold programme was called a process of purification and a sure method of gaining organic freedom for the country. This programme was followed but half-heartedly by Congressmen and the country, thus betraying a lack of living faith in non-violence, or faith in the method devised for its daily practice, or both. But Khudai Khidmatgars were expected and believed to have a living faith in non-violence. Therefore they would be expected to follow out the whole of the constructive self-purification programme of the Congress. I have added to it village sanitation, hygiene and simple medical relief in the villages. A Khudai Khidmatgar will be known by his works. He cannot be in a village without his making it cleaner and affording help to the villagers in their simple ailments. Hospitals and the like are toys of the rich and are available for the most part only to the city-dwellers. Efforts are no doubt being made to cover the land with dispensaries. But the cost is prohibitive. Whereas the Khudai Khidmatgars could, with a little but substantial training, easily give relief in the majority of cases of illnesses that occurred in the villages.

I told the leaders of the Khudai Khidmatgars that civil disobedience was the end of non-violence, by no means its beginning. Yet I started in this country at the wrong end in 1918. I was overwhelmed by necessity. The country had not come to harm only because I, claiming to be an expert in non-violent technique, knew when and how to retrace our steps. Suspension of civil disobedience at Patna was part of the technique. I have just as much faith in the constructive programme of 1920 as I had then. I could not lead a campaign of civil disobedience in terms of *purna* swaraj without due fulfilment of the programme. The right to civil disobedience accrues only to those who know and practise the duty of voluntary obedience to laws whether made by them or others. Obedience should come not from

fear of the consequences of the breach but because it is the duty to obey with all our heart and not merely mechanically. Without the fulfilment of this preliminary condition, civil disobedience is civil only in name and never of the strong but of the weak. It is not charged with goodwill, i. e., non-violence. Khudai Khidmatgars had shown in unmistakable terms their bravery in suffering during the civil disobedience days as did many thousands in the other provinces. But it was not proof positive of goodwill at heart. And it would be a deterioration in the Pathan if he was non-violent only in appearance. For he must not be guilty of weakness.

The Khudai Khidmatgars listened to all I said with rapt attention. Their faith in non-violence is not as yet independent of Khan Saheb. It is derived from him. But it is none the less living so long as they have unquestioning faith in their leader who enjoys un-disputed kingdom over their hearts. And Khan Saheb's faith is no lip profession. His whole heart is in it. Let the doubters live with him as I have all these precious five weeks and their doubt will be dissolved like mist before the morning sun.

This is how the whole tour struck a very well-known Pathan who met me during the last days of the tour:

> I like what you are doing. You are very clever. (I do not know that cunning is not the right word.) You are making my people braver than they are. You are teaching them to husband their strength. Of course it is good to be non-violent up to a point. That they will be under your teaching. Hitler has perfected the technique of attaining violent ends without the actual use of violence. But you have bettered even Hitler. You are giving our men training in non-violence, in dying without killing; so if ever the occasion comes for the use of force, they will use it as never before and certainly more effectively than any other body of persons. I congratulate you.

I was silent and I had no heart to write out a reply to disillusion him. I smiled and became pensive. I like the compliment that the Pathans would be braver than before under my teaching. I do not know an instance of a person becoming a coward under my influence. But the friend's deduction was deadly. If in the last heat the Khudai Khidmatgars prove untrue to the creed they profess to believe, non-violence was certainly not in their hearts. The proof will soon come. If they zealously and faithfully follow the constructive programme, there is no danger of their fulfilling the prognostication of

the critic. But they will be found among the bravest of men when the test comes.

ON THE TRAIN BETWEEN DELHI AND WARDHA,

November 11, 1938

Harijan, 19-11-1938

288. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ON THE TRAIN (BHOPAL),
November 11, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Yes, the lines you have sent me were copied for me by you before also. I shall have them recited by Babla when he comes. You should ask him to remind me.

I hope you got my letter[1] written from Taxila and one[2] from Delhi where I had a very busy day, seeing people up to the last moment. But the pressure remained quite good, 166/100.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3888. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7044

289. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

ON THE TRAIN,
November 11, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am writing this after leaving Bhopal. Shuaib had come. He inquired after you and added that you had promised him that on your return you would break journey at Bhopal for two or three days. I feel that it would be good from every point of view, if you gave him two or three days. Durga and Babla will enjoy seeing a good many things there.

As Sushila's bag had been left behind, Pyarelal got off. He will come tomorrow.

Herewith your letters, sent by Mirabehn, which I had opened. I

[1] This is not traceable.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 10-11-1938

am sending the letter addressed to me also.

Ba is with me. She was tempted to stay on till your return, but I dissuaded her. Nimu came and saw me. She will now go to Lakhtar for a few days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11680

290. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

ON THE TRAIN,
November 11, 1938

DEAR SISTER,

The Kanya Gurukul celebrates its Annual Day towards the end of December at Dehra Dun. Acharya Ramdev invariably asks for someone to be sent for the occasion. I wanted to send Rajkumari, but she would be at the Women's Conference. You also must be going. But it would be good if you could spare a day at Dehra Dun. Perhaps you already know about the Kanya Gurukul. It is a good institution.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 3081. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru. Also G.N. 7985

291. TELEGRAM TO R. S. RUIKAR[1]

November 11, 1938

I STRONGLY URGE YOU TO ABANDON FAST. ON REACHING WARDHA, I SHALL DO MY BEST. WIRE REPLY.

The Hindu, 12-11-1938

[1] Mr. R. W. Phulay, General Secretary of the Provincial Trade Union Congress, was asked to convey this message telegraphically when he came to see Gandhiji at Nagpur station to draw his attention to the textile workers' strike at Rajnandgaon and Mr. R. S. Ruikar's fast since October 29.

292. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[On or after *November 11, 1938*][1]

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

Your very kind and full letter of 31st October was sent to me by Mirabai, whilst I was touring in the Frontier Province. I knew that she had acknowledged it. But I had fully intended to express my thanks for the considerate manner in which you dealt with the question of distress in Hissar.[2] Yes, I know that the Punjab Government is doing all it can. Not knowing the working of the railway system, I approached the fountain-head.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

293. MASS LITERACY CAMPAIGN IN BIHAR

Dr. Syed Mahmud[3] has sent me a copy of his note on the progress of Mass Literacy Campaign in Bihar. Below will be found all the relevant paragraphs[4] of the instructive note. I commend to the Minister's attention Dr. Tao's note[5] on a similar movement in China. He will find in it perhaps much to copy.

Harijan, 12-11-1938

294. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
November 12, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Agatha is sitting in front of me.

[1] Gandhiji returned to Segaon after his Frontier tour on November 11, 1938.
[2] The reference is to a famine in the Punjab.
[3] Then Minister for Development and Employment in Bihar
[4] Not reproduced here
[5] This was published in *Harijan*, 29-10-1938, 5-11-1938 and 19-11-1938.

The rest from Mahadev's letter[1]. This is just not to miss the post.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3839. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7045

295. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

November 12, 1938

MY DEAR KU,

You must see me some time before 17th for 30 minutes, when I shall be on speaking terms. Of course it is joint action which has resulted in the appointment of trustees. Is it not so?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10139

296. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

November 12, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Poor Lila had made preparations for you.

Mirabehn has changed her mind. She has decided to go to the Frontier Province. I have approved of her plan. Khan Saheb also wished that she should go. I have now written to him for his consent. The climate is fine here. Agatha is sitting in front of me. I have still not broken my silence. I will break it at two. You must have received my letter written at Itarsi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11681

297. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

November 13, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I got your letter. Your second article is lying with me. It is certainly going as the leading article. The other one is still lying with

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 13-11-1938

me. I will take it out today. Now I will return it to you here. I don't want to send it by registered post, and I am afraid of sending it by ordinary post. There is no hurry at all. It is "evergreen".

Rajendra is from U. P. He has been here for the last four or five months. He is a good man. There is no time for more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11682

298. NOTE TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

Sunday, November 13, 1938

I could not reply to your letter. But if Munnalal[1] goes and you don't wish to stay in the Mahila Ashram, you may come here.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8564

299. THE CONGRESS AND KHADI

I have letters from Bombay, U. P., Bengal and Sind bitterly complaining that the khadi clause of the Congress constitution is honoured more in the breach than in the performance. I have mentioned the four provinces not to have it inferred that in the other provinces things are better. I have simply referred to these provinces because there are complaints from them. People in the other provinces have not perhaps thought it worth while to draw attention to the evil which is widespread. It may well be that correspondence on the matter from other provinces has not been brought to my notice.

The correspondents' chief complaint is that in selecting Congress candidates for municipalities or local boards, the Congress officials do not enforce the khadi clause for such candidates. One correspondent says that the obligation of wearing khadi is waived because the Congress officials do not find competent enough candidates among khadi wearers. This would be a sound reason, if the dearth of proper khadi-clad men can be proved, for altering the clause, surely not for committing a deliberate breach of the Congress constitution. A writer justifies the waiver by arguing that there is no connection between swaraj and khadi. This again may be a good reason for a change in the constitution but not for disregarding it.

[1] Munnalal G. Shah, addressee's husband

Every Congressman is a potential civil-resister. The right of civil-disobdience accrues only to those who perform the duty of voluntarily obeying the laws of their State, more so the laws of their own making. Therefore, the Congressmen are taking grave risks when they commit wilful breaches of the constitution.

And is there no connection between swaraj and khadi? Were the Congressmen who made themselves responsible for the khadi clause in the constitution so dense that they did not see the fallacy which is obvious to some critics? I have not hesitated to say, and I make bold to repeat now, that without khadi there is no swaraj for the millions, the hungry and the naked, and for the millions of illiterate women. Habitual use of khadi is a sign that the wearer identifies himself with the poorest in the land, that he has patriotism and self-sacrifice enough in him to wear khadi even though it may not be so soft and elegant in appearance as foreign fineries nor as cheap.

But my argument has perhaps no force with many Congressmen when anarchy reigns supreme among them. There is another batch of letters in my file which continue to give me fresh evidence of corruption among Congressmen so called. One correspondent says bogus members are increasing on a wholesale scale. The cry comes from Orissa that Congressmen do not hesitate to spread lies in order to enlist members. A Calcutta correspondent tells me that there are original members who have not paid their own subscriptions. When asked, they say they cannot spare four annas per year. The correspondent indignantly protests that these same men spend many four-anna pieces per year on cinemas. My point however is not that these men can afford to pay and do not. My point is that if they have not paid their subscriptions they are not Congressmen and that the register containing their names requires to be purged of them. A U. P. correspondent says bribery and corruption are spoiling the good name of the Congress. He says that Congressmen do not hesitate to use their influence with Collectors and other officials to have all sorts of injustices perpetrated for the sake of themselves or their relatives. And he adds that the services are ill able to resist the pressure. And he says the growing evil may be worse than the evil that existed when the services did wrong under instructions from British officials. This charge is most damaging if it is true. It requires careful investigations by the U. P. Government and the provincial Congress command. Indeed, the whole of the irregularities I have lumped together in this

note require careful and immediate handling by the Working Committee and the Provincial Congress Committees. If the Congress is not purged of illegalities and irregularities, it will cease to be the power it is today and will fail to fulfil expectations when the real struggle faces the country.

SEGAON, November 14, 1938

Harijan, 19-11-1938

300. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
November 14, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have your letter. I hope I misunderstood your letter of yesterday. I loved you all the more for the deep cut I thought you had made. My love can weather storms and misunderstandings. My regret was and is that my reaction should hurt you. The scars left by loved ones never last. They heal as soon as they are made. If they did not, my love would suffer diminution. I hope therefore that on your part you will laugh at your folly and lack of faith or my stupidity in putting in your letter a meaning you had not intended. You must not make yourself sick over this passing episode.

Of course you could not attend Aryanayakum's meeting. But let us hope next year your programme will be better arranged.

Of course I shall write to you about the doings of the Travancore delegation.

Love.

WARRIOR

From the original: C.W. 3650. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6459

301. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

November 14, 1938

MY DEAR KU,

Can you come tomorrow, Tuesday? Bring your work and take your meal here though not with me. You should take it after or before me so that you can talk the whole time. I am having my meal which [I] take between [*sic*] 10.30 or thereabouts. You can have a quiet

corner for your work.

Love

BAPU

[PS.]

You need not worry about Travancore Deputation.

From a photostat: G.N. 01401

302. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

November 14, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Vallabhbhai came today. The problem of Rajkot has become fairly complicated.[1] But so long as his stars are favourable, even things that seem to go against him will end well. Mani has been showing her mettle.[2] I have never seen another daughter like her.

Your second article is going today. I will hand over to you personally the one rejected for *Harijan.* I will go through the one received today. Chandrashanker is really very ill. I am alarmed.

Mirabehn is going ahead with her preparations for the Frontier Province in anticipation of Khan Saheb's consent.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am sending two things shown to me by Mirabehn. You will understand both.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11683

[1] The people of Rajkot had started an agitation against the autocratic rule of the Prince Dharmendrasingh and his Dewan Virawala. The leaders of the State were in consultation with Vallabhbhai Patel, who in turn was guided by Gandhiji.

[2] She toured the villages of the State and "sustained the peasants in their struggle".

303. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON,
November 14, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I got both your letters. If I could send you copies of all my labours, you would give me the first rank. But let it be enough for you that I have done all that was possible for me. At last I got the accompanying reply. Ramachandran is coming tomorrow, when I will try again. I will not give up. But it is a great handicap that one cannot discuss things with him. There ought to be no secrecy in this regard. Saraswati is free in such matters. All children are free. I am also returning the letters you wanted me to return. Don't be perturbed. Have patience. I will spare no effort.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7352. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

304. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SEGAON,
November 14, 1938

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I should be happy if both the scripts were made compulsory. There is no question of you or anyone else coming to replace Mahadev. In a way, those who do their duty in their respective positions are also helping.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHETH MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
74 WALKESHWAR ROAD
BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

305. LETTER TO PYARELAL

November 14, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I expect regularity from you. Being regular about food will not interfere with work. In the same way, you should have attended to your leg. When you do not do things properly, Ba, Sushila and I do certainly get upset. About *Harijan*, etc., do whatever you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

306. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

November 14, 1938

CHI. RAMDAS,

I got your letter. The Mysore job seems to me rather a difficult one. The Sardar thinks so too. He arrived today. Now we will discuss the matter tomorrow.

It will be good if you build up your body.

I will await a letter from you.

Kanam is doing fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

307. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 15, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

What you say about the Ataturk is all true. Why don't you write a public letter about his removing the *purdah?*

Agatha will be here probably till J.[1] returns. She is doing well. We are discussing things in a leisurely manner.

So M.[2] leaves you on 19th. He is in ecstasies over your affectionate attention. The Travancore deputation is due now. Hence I must close this.

Love.

WARRIOR

From the original: C.W. 3651. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6460

308. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

November 15, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I read your note about N. It cannot be sent anywhere for publication. Not that your argument is incorrect, but why give so much importance to N.? We know his ideas. Moreover, to reply to him is to raise up a hornet's nest. What is the advantage in publishing N.'s name? His arguments may be analysed and an indirect reply may be given to him as is often done by me. I can do this myself but his arguments do not have sufficient substance to deserve that. The proofs cited by you are worth using. I will see what can be done. I am, therefore, not returning the article. Treat this letter as the last I shall be sending. I will write tomorrow, however. If you have already left, Rajkumari will forward it. I am not sending the other things. As you will start on the 19th, I assume that you will arrive on the evening of the 21st.

Madgavkar is arriving tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11684

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru

[2] Mahadev Desai; *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 16-11-1938

309. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 15, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I had a talk with R. He knows everything. He first heard about it from his father. R. has not made a full inquiry, but from what inquiry he has made, he feels that there is no truth at all in the matter. P. has completely denied the story and she says that P. could be believed guilty of such misconduct only if she also could be believed so. According to him, S. has seen everything through prejudiced eyes. But he says he will inquire into the matter further and will write to me. He has asked me not to worry about S. at all. In this situation, I have become completely helpless. If S. has committed no errors, she should boldly narrate what happened, as Devdas did in regard to Manilal. I would now advise you not to take any further interest in the matter. Don't worry. R. has assured me that he will not let S. come to any harm. Just now she will stay with her grandparents. She will continue to write to me and will accept whatever I finally decide.

I would also advise you to write to R. You may even write through me. If you handle the situation with detachment and calm, the truth will come out and S. can be saved.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Just now there are several deputations and so there is a good deal of pressure on me.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7353. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

310. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SEGAON,
November 15, 1938

CHI. PREMA,

I saw your letter after many days. Is it any wonder that you win people's appreciation wherever you go ?

Patwardhan may come whenever he can. The family responsi-

bilities are always a problem. Illnesses and accidents are bound to happen. You at any rate ought never to fall ill. The golden remedy for this is obedience to rules in all things.

You may certainly bring your new friend with you.

Kishorelal had talked to me also. I myself have not been able to read the book[1], but I read the letter[2] which has been objected to. I have found no substance in the objection. Its publication is likely to do me no harm. I would be harmed only if I failed to do what I ought to do and did what I ought not to. I need therefore withdraw nothing. There is one letter among them which perhaps I would not have permitted to be published and that too only because of the prevailing social attitudes.

I am sure, moreover, that you had taken all necessary precautions while publishing the letter.

What Kishorelal has written is well meant.[3] Don't take it to heart. Explain courteously your position to him.

I am well.

Khan Saheb has asked for one woman social worker. Your name was almost on my lips, but I did not like to draw you away from your present work. I, therefore, dropped for the moment the idea of sending you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 6836. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak. Also G.N. 10397

[1] *Vatsalyachi Prasaddiksha,* a Marathi translation of Gandhiji's letters to the addressee numbering about 90

[2] This was the one dated 21-5-1936; *vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 21-5-1936

[3] Kishorelal had been pained by the storm raised over the book and had written to the addressee criticizing her action in publishing the letters.

311. TALK TO TRAVANCORE STATE CONGRESS DEPUTATION[1]

November 15, 1938

I have received reports that there has been violence on a considerable scale in Travancore. On the other hand I have received wires from the State Congress dictators saying that there has been no violence whatever for which they can be held responsible, that whatever violence there has been was instigated by the authorities. It has been alleged too that there has been secret endorsement of violence by the State Congress people though they are not directly responsible for it. What I say is that if there has been mob violence, by whomsoever wrought, it shows that the State Congress has not acquired sufficient control over the masses. In that case civil disobedience has to be suspended even as was done by me more than once. I admit you were behind the prison bars when most of the alleged cases of violence took place. I appreciate also the fact that you did not get a chance of educating the masses into discipline. 1 entirely endorse your view that the fight should not be merely to wrest a few concessions from the authorities but for establishing real responsible government. But all that, to my mind, makes out a case for doing more spade-work among the masses. You must build from below.

You tell me that you regard the removal of the Dewan would help your movement as he is the chief obstacle in your way. If you persist in the charges, you must be prepared to prove them. But in my opinion it will have the inevitable result of pushing the question of responsible government into the background by bringing to the fore a purely personal issue. I call that playing the enemy's game. And you would give the wrong lead to the people. I do not want you to withdraw the allegations because they are not true, if you believe in them. I want those allegations to be withdrawn because you have a far bigger issue at stake. The greater includes the less. Removal of the Dewan by itself would not give you responsible government. A clever dewan might choose to slip out and remain in the background till the storm has blown over and in the mean time use a substitute to crush the movement. Such things have happened before and will

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Why the Withdrawal". The deputation had gone to see Gandhiji at Segaon. This, Pyarelal says, is the substance of the talk.

happen again. On the other hand responsible government includes the power to dismiss ministers according to the popular will. You can therefore say, without abating an iota from your charges, you do not want to dissipate your energy by pursuing these charges. There are the two alternatives before you, both of them perfectly legitimate. You have to make your choice. You should know best the psychology of your people. It may be such that the fight can be best conducted through agitation to remove the Dewan. Personally, when I weigh the pros and cons of the matter, I feel like saying you should swallow the bitter cup and concentrate on getting the reins of power into your hands.

But whatever the decision about the allegations, I would advise you not to restart civil disobedience just now. You should put your own house in order. If you keep unadulterated non-violence at the back of your minds, you would not say, "Let us take time by the forelock, and now that there is all this energy bubbling forth, let us consolidate our gains." You would not capture power by madly frittering away the energy generated. That way lies danger. You will, if you follow that, only pave the way for the political schemers who may exploit the situation for furthering their own designs. I would therefore ask you to go slow, steadily gathering all the threads into your hands. You should become a homogeneous and disciplined mass by undergoing training in constructive work and non-violence. You may not take another forward step without canvassing public opinion inside and outside Travancore first.

Apparently there may be no connection between constructive work and non-violence; but there is an internal logic connecting the two when constructive work is taken up as a part of a non-violence programme. The National Flag, for instance, was conceived as a symbol of unity, purity and non-violence. It is the place that we have given it in our non-violence programme that gives it its significance and importance; by itself it has no virtue. In prosecuting your constructive programme, you must always keep the background of non-violence before your mind.

Then I should ask students to remain apart from the civil disobedience part of the struggle and should not carry on any propaganda in their midst. It is not proper to ask students of school-going age to do such work. It is a sign of weakness. It is like asking children to undergo suffering for their parents.

But the students can and ought to take part in the struggle by

becoming adepts in charkha and other items in the constructive programme, as the Chinese students are doing while the fight against Japan is going on. The Chinese students are working to preserve the essentials of Chinese culture through their programme of New Education. They are helping to create a national spirit which will remain unsubdued irrespective of the fortunes of the Chinese arms on the battle field.

The satyagraha struggle in British India had two aspects, non-violent non-co-operation with the Government and co-operation among the people themselves. Both these aspects should constantly be kept before the mind's eye. The constructive programme that I have set before you necessitates perfect co-operation among all the sections. You will therefore go among the Pulayas and the Pariahs, fraternize with them and appeal to them as fellow countrymen and equals to come out and take their due share in the sacred fight along with the Brahmins, Ezhawas, Christians and others. You must all become one. You dare not leave out or antagonize a single section or community without stultifying yourselves and damaging your fight.

Then there is the prohibition work. You would not picket just now, but you would visit the drunkards in their homes and strive with them. Even if you do not succeed in producing immediate tangible results, it will put your struggle on a moral plane and add strength and momentum to it.

Travancore people, both men and women, are so simple in their habits. They wear white and need very little cloth to protect them against the elements. They can easily produce all the khadi they need. Travancore need not import a single yard of cloth or even khadi from outside. This means that there should be a spinning-wheel in every home.

And khadi should be linked with liberty. All the time you are spinning, you would not think in terms of your own requirements but in terms of the requirements of the nation. You will say, 'I want to clothe the whole nation that is naked and I must do it non-violently.' Each time you draw a thread, say to yourselves, 'We are drawing the thread of swaraj.' Multiply this picture millionfold and you have freedom knocking at your door.

Harijan, 28-1-1939

312. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 16, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Why do you say when Mahadev leaves you you won't have to write to me (I suppose you mean so regularly)? If you have the time I do want you to write regularly. I may fail to do likewise. But you have always permitted me that latitude.

I hope you will have a kind of relaxation after his departure. Though it was a pleasure to you to have him with you it was undoubtedly a tax on your attention and energy.

The Travancore deputation was finished today. They appeared to be good men. They have real difficulty in withdrawing the allegations. But they have not given me a conclusive answer. They will put the pros and cons before their W. C. and then come to a decision. How I wish you could have been present during the conversations. I gave them four hours. Ramachandran is still here.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

If Mahadev is there when this is received tell him he sh give a day or two to Bhopal if he can.

From the original: C.W. 3890. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7046

313. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON,
November 16, 1938

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I hope both you and Indu have benefited by the voyage. I am expecting you to be in Wardha about 20th. But of course you will come as early as you wish. You have tough problems awaiting solution.

Love to you both.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1938. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

314. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 16, 1938

MY DEAR LOTUS-BORN,

So 17th Nov. is your birthday! Many happy returns. But for us these returns can never be happy unless they provide us with fresh scope for service. And you are going to Hyderabad specially to render service. You will write to me of your doings. You are under promise not to overstrain yourself.

Love.

Yours,
PLAYMATE

SHRI PADMAJA NAIDU
ZAHEER MANZIL
RED HILL
HYDERABAD DECCAN

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

315. DRAFT OF STATEMENT FOR THAKORE SAHEB OF RAJKOT[1]

[Before *November 19, 1938*][2]

1. After having observed the growth of popular feeling and the regrettable sufferings of our people during the last few months for the redress of what they understood to be their grievances, and after having discussed the whole situation with the Council and Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel, we are convinced the present struggle and sufferings should end immediately.

2. We have decided to appoint a committee of ten gentlemen who should be subjects or servants of our State, three of whom will be State officers and seven subjects of our State whose names will be declared hereafter. The President of the committee will be a person

[1] This was signed by Dharmendrasingh, Thakore Saheb of Rajkot on December 26 after talks with Vallabhbhai Patel.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 19-11-1938, where Gandhiji mentions having drafted the statement.

appointed by His Highness.

3. This committee shall draw up by the end of January, after proper investigation, a report to us recommending a scheme of reforms so as to give the widest possible powers to our people consistently with our obligation to the Paramount Power and with our prerogatives as a Ruling Chief.

4. It is our desire that our Privy Purse shall henceforth be regulated in the manner laid down in the circular of the Chamber of Princes.

5. We desire furthermore to assure our people that we intend to consider and give effect to the scheme that may be reported to us by the said committee.

6. It being understood that all unconstitutional agitation shall immediately cease, as a necessary prelude to restore peace and goodwill, we hereby grant full amnesty and release immediately all political prisoners and remit all fines and withdraw all repressive measures.

Harijan, 4-2-1939

316. PROHIBITION IN SALEM DISTRICT

The Syndicate of the Annamalai University deputed Shri C. Jagannathachari to study the problem of prohibition in Salem District under the guidance and direction of Professor B. V. Narayanaswami Naidu. I have been favoured with a summary of the report from which I take the following excerpts[1].

Harijan, 19-11-1938

[1] These are not reproduced here.

317. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
November 19, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA WEST

HOPE DESPONDENCY GONE CHEERFULNESS RETURNED. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3891. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7047

318. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 19, 1938

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Please study the statement[1] which I have drafted after discussions with Anantrai[2] and Nanabhai. If you approve of it, the Thakore Saheb may act accordingly and satyagraha should be withdrawn. Decide the names of the members of the Committee in consultation with Bhai Anantrai. The people's representatives should be in a majority in the Committee. If this is accepted, I think we should be satisfied. There is no mention of responsible government in my draft, but I think it is clearly implied.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
PURUSHOTTAM BUILDING
OPP. OPERA HOUSE, BOMBAY 4

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 227-8

[1] *Vide* "Draft of Statement for Thakore Saheb of Rajkot", 19-11-1938
[2] Anantrai Pattani, Dewan of Bhavnagar

319. THE JEWS

Several letters have been received by me asking me to declare my views about the Arab-Jew question in Palestine and the persecution of the Jews in Germany. It is not without hesitation that I venture to offer my views on this very difficult question.

My sympathies are all with the Jews. I have known them intimately in South Africa. Some of them became life-long companions. Through these friends I came to learn much of their age-long persecution. They have been the untouchables of Christianity. The parallel between their treatment by Christians and the treatment of untouchables by Hindus is very close. Religious sanction has been invoked in both cases for the justification of the inhuman treatment meted out to them. Apart from the friendships, therefore, there is the more common universal reason for my sympathy for the Jews.

But my sympathy does not blind me to the requirements of justice. The cry for the national home for the Jews does not make much appeal to me. The sanction for it is sought in the Bible and the tenacity with which the Jews have hankered after return to Palestine. Why should they not, like other peoples of the earth, make that country their home where they are born and where they earn their livelihood?

Palestine belongs to the Arabs in the same sense that England belongs to the English or France to the French. It is wrong and inhuman to impose the Jews on the Arabs. What is going on in Palestine today cannot be justified by any moral code of conduct. The mandates have no sanction but that of the last war. Surely it would be a crime against humanity to reduce the proud Arabs so that Palestine can be restored to the Jews partly or wholly as their national home.

The nobler course would be to insist on a just treatment of the Jews wherever they are born and bred. The Jews born in France are French in precisely the same sense that Christians born in France are French. If the Jews have no home but Palestine, will they relish the idea of being forced to leave the other parts of the world in which they are settled? Or do they want a double home where they can remain at will? This cry for the national home affords a colourable justification for the German expulsion of the Jews.

But the German persecution of the Jews seems to have no parallel in history. The tyrants of old never went so mad as Hitler

seems to have gone. And he is doing it with religious zeal. For he is propounding a new religion of exclusive and militant nationalism in the name of which any inhumanity becomes an act of humanity to be rewarded here and hereafter. The crime of an obviously mad but intrepid youth is being visited upon his whole race with unbelievable ferocity. If there ever could be a justifiable war in the name of and for humanity, a war against Germany, to

Can the Jews resist this organized and prevent the wanton persecution of a whole race, would be completely justified. But I do not believe in any war. A discussion of the pros and cons of such a war is therefore outside my horizon or province.

But if there can be no war against Germany, even for such a crime as is being committed against the Jews, surely there can be no alliance with Germany. How can there be alliance between a nation which claims to stand for justice and democracy and one which is the declared enemy of both? Or is England drifting towards armed dictatorship and all it means?

Germany is showing to the world how efficiently violence can be worked when it is not hampered by any hypocrisy or weakness masquerading as humanitarianism. It is also showing how hideous, terrible and terrifying it looks in its nakedness.shameless persecution? Is there a way to preserve their self-respect, and not to feel helpless, neglected and forlorn? I submit there is. No person who has faith in a living God need feel helpless or forlorn. Jehovah of the Jews is a God more personal than the God of the Christians, the Mussalmans or the Hindus, though, as a matter of fact in essence, He is common to all and one without a second and beyond description. But as the Jews attribute personality to God and believe that He rules every action of theirs, they ought not to feel helpless. If I were a Jew and were born in Germany and earned my livelihood there, I would claim Germany as my home even as the tallest gentile German may, and challenge him to shoot me or cast me in the dungeon; I would refuse to be expelled or to submit to discriminating treatment. And for doing this, I should not wait for the fellow Jews to join me in civil resistance but would have confidence that in the end the rest are bound to follow my example. If one Jew or all the Jews were to accept the prescription here offered, he or they cannot be worse off than now. And suffering voluntarily undergone will bring them an inner strength and joy which no number of resolutions of sympathy passed in the world

outside Germany can. Indeed, even if Britain, France and America were to declare hostilities against Germany, they can bring no inner joy, no inner strength. The calculated violence of Hitler may even result in a general massacre of the Jews by way of his first answer to the declaration of such hostilities. But if the Jewish mind could be prepared for voluntary suffering, even the massacre I have imagined could be turned into a day of thanksgiving and joy that Jehovah had wrought deliverance of the race even at the hands of the tyrant. For to the godfearing, death has no terror. It is a joyful sleep to be followed by a waking that would be all the more refreshing for the long sleep.

It is hardly necessary for me to point out that it is easier for the Jews than for the Czechs to follow my prescription. And they have in the Indian satyagraha campaign in South Africa an exact parallel. There the Indians occupied precisely the same place that the Jews occupy in Germany. The persecution had also a religious tinge. President Kruger used to say that the white Christians were the chosen of God and Indians were inferior beings created to serve the whites. A fundamental clause in the Transvaal constitution was that there should be no equality between the whites and coloured races including Asiatics. There too the Indians were consigned to ghettos described as locations. The other disabilities were almost of the same type as those of the Jews in Germany. The Indians, a mere handful, resorted to satyagraha without any backing from the world outside or the Indian Government. Indeed the British officials tried to dissuade the satyagrahis from their contemplated step. World opinion and the Indian Government came to their aid after eight years of fighting. And that too was by way of diplomatic pressure not of a threat of war.

But the Jews of Germany can offer satyagraha under infinitely better auspices than the Indians of South Africa. The Jews are a compact, homogeneous community in Germany. They are far more gifted than the Indians of South Africa. And they have organized world opinion behind them. I am convinced that if someone with courage and vision can arise among them to lead them in non-violent action, the winter of their despair can in the twinkling of an eye be turned into the summer of hope. And what has today become a degrading man-hunt can be turned into a calm and determined stand offered by unarmed men and women possessing the strength of suffering given to them by Jehovah. It will be then a truly religious resistance offered against the godless fury of dehumanized man. The German Jews will score a lasting victory over the German gentiles in

the sense that they will have converted the latter to an appreciation of human dignity. They will have rendered service to fellow-Germans and proved their title to be the real Germans as against those who are today dragging, however unknowingly, the German name into the mire.

And now a word to the Jews in Palestine. I have no doubt that they are going about it the wrong way. The Palestine of the Biblical conception is not a geographical tract. It is in their hearts. But if they must look to the Palestine of geography as their national home, it is wrong to enter it under the shadow of the British gun. A religious act cannot be performed with the aid of the bayonet or the bomb. They can settle in Palestine only by the goodwill of the Arabs. They should seek to convert the Arab heart. The same God rules the Arab heart who rules the Jewish heart. They can offer satyagraha in front of the Arabs and offer themselves to be shot or thrown into the Dead Sea without raising a little finger against them. They will find the world opinion in their favour in their religious aspiration. There are hundreds of ways of reasoning with the Arabs, if they will only discard the help of the British bayonet. As it is, they are co-sharers with the British in despoiling a people who have done no wrong to them.

I am not defending the Arab excesses. I wish they had chosen the way of non-violence in resisting what they rightly regarded as an unwarrantable encroachment upon their country. But according to the accepted canons of right and wrong, nothing can be said against the Arab resistance in the face of overwhelming odds.

Let the Jews who claim to be the chosen race prove their title by choosing the way of non-violence for vindicating their position on earth. Every country is their home including Palestine not by aggression but by loving service. A Jewish friend has sent me a book called *The Jewish Contribution to Civilization* by Cecil Roth. It gives a record of what the Jews have done to enrich the world's literature, art, music, drama, science, medicine, agriculture, etc. Given the will, the Jew can refuse to be treated as the outcaste of the West, to be despised or patronized. He can command the attention and respect of the world by being man, the chosen creation of God, instead of being man who is fast sinking to the brute and forsaken by God. They can add to their many contributions the surpassing contribution of non-violent action.

SEGAON, November 20, 1938

Harijan, 26-11-1938

320. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 20, 1938

MY DEAR LOTUS-BORN,

No letter from you. I hope no news is good news both about your health and your mission. You are not to wear yourself out on the mission work. I shall never excuse myself if you damage your health by overwork.

Love.

PLAYMATE

SHRI PADMAJA NAIDU
ZAHEER MANZIL
RED HILL
HYDERABAD
DECCAN

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

321. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

November 20, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I had got your letter. You must have got mine. After writing to you, I discussed the matter with R. I have not been able to convince him. He says that there must have been some mistake in what S. saw and that the same charge was levelled against you regarding your relations with P. Ultimately it was proved that there was nothing in it. All the same, says R., he will make a full inquiry. But he adds: "Suppose my sister has fallen, is it not S.'s duty to bring her mother to her senses? Was it right for her to run down to you? Have we, who have brought her up, who have given her love, and separation from whom has made her shed tears, ceased to be of any value? If you order, I will certainly bring S. before you even to tell her this." In these circumstances, how could I insist any further? Now it is for S. to show courage. She should boldly prove P.'s misconduct, and having shown that she cannot reform P. She should try to come to me. P.

may have gone astray but all the others cannot be like her. Don't become impatient. It is not proper that you should give up hope of P. Her love for you has not diminished. If it has, cannot the betrothal be cancelled even after it has been made public? But he does not even dream of such a step. You have become a part of that family. You should believe that there is still room for further inquiry in this matter. However that be, I do not want you to let this affair trouble you or take your time. Whatever type of woman P. may be, S. is certainly not going to be affected. It will be enough if she remains engrossed in her duty. Write to her and ask her to write to me as frankly as she does to you. If she is afraid that someone might read her letters, I will tear them up after reading them, as I do R. K.'s. Her letters are given to me unopened, as also others which are marked "Private""Personal", or anything to that effect. I want that not you but I should worry about S. You are also not right in believing that it was wrong to have made your betrothal public.

I hope you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Jawaharlal arrives tomorrow.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7354. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

322. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

November 20, 1938

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Send Rs. 251/- to Thakkar Bapa for the Harijan Sevak Sangh. His address: Harijan Nivas, Kingsway, Delhi.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

74 WALKESHWAR ROAD

BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

323. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

November 21, 1938

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I do hope you had my note[1] in Bombay. I could not take silence before 2 o'clock. I hope you will have a little quiet till then and enjoy it after the strenuous time in Bombay. Hope Indu is well.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1938. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

324. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 21, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

In a few minutes Jawaharlal will be here. I seize them for these few lines. The doleful strain still runs through your letters. Long or short, your letters are welcome and they get read in spite of heavy work.

Your note[2] on Kemal I had to amend in parts. You will see the corrections which I know you won't mind.

Mira will be going on Wednesday to Bombay for her eyes and thence to the Frontier P[rovince]. I think it is better she goes there first.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3652. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6461

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru"; 16-11-1938

[2] This was published in *Harijan*, 26-11-1938, under "Notes", sub-title, "The Late Kemal Ataturk".

325. LETTER TO GIRDHARILAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 21, 1938

DEAR LALA GIRDHARILAL,

There is no question of distrust.[1] We all feel that you cannot possibly do justice to your position, being continuously absent from Amritsar. The work suffers. But you can come and explain before your resignation is submitted to the Board. But then you should not be long in coming. I shall not be in Segaon in January. It would be better if you can come before 15th December.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

326. FOREWORD TO "THE BROTHERHOOD OF RELIGIONS"

These essays of Sophia Wadia show at a glance how much similarity there is between the principal faiths of the earth in the fundamentals of life. All our mutual quarrels centre round non-essentials. Sophia Wadia's labours will be amply rewarded if people belonging to different faiths will study faiths other than their own, with the same reverence that she has exhibited in her essays. An understanding knowledge of and respect for the great faiths of the world is the foundation of true Theosophy—Wisdom about God.

M. K. GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA, November 23, 1938

The Brotherhood of Religions

327. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON,
November 24, 1938

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your note. I knew that once you were in harness you won't be master of your own time. I shall be satisfied with what I get.

[1] *Vide*, "Letter to Lala Girdharilal", 5-10-1938

Here is a letter delivered through messenger from Gurudev. I have replied saying my personal opinion was that he needed to be free from the Presidential work, if he was to rid Bengal of corruption. I have no doubt Gurudev will write to you directly or talk to you. You will give your own opinion.

I hope Indu was none the worse for the journey.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1938. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, p. 298

328. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
November 25, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I had intended during the day to write to you but I could not. You must regain full control over your sleep. You must learn the art of producing a blank in the head at night. I understand what you say about Shummy. May everything turn out as it should.

Did I tell you that the programme is to pass January in Bardoli? You are to come to Bardoli. The whole of December will be spent here.

I had good talks with Jawaharlal on all sorts of topics. But I must not describe them. Most of my time is passed in giving interviews.

Mahadev is not extra well. For the time being he stays here.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3892. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7048

329. NOTE ON LETTER TO DR. N. B. KHARE[1]

November 25, 1938

Evidently the writer of the letter at the back addressed yours to me by mistake, and you must have received what was meant for me. Anyway, the mistake enables me to know that you have been ailing

[1] The letter addressed to Dr. Khare by a student from Kanpur had been posted to Gandhiji by oversight.

and hope that this finds you fully restored.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-12-1938

330. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

November 25, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

I see no need for withdrawing the 1100 copies of Prema's book[1] and issuing a new edition. When the time comes for a new edition, we may think of omitting something. Prema's argument appears correct to me. I think we should see what effect the 1100 copies have.

Chandan[2] may now go to Delhi whenever she wishes. The earlier she goes, the better. Bal's letter was interesting. Let him retain possession as a trustee. He may even be given a special right in that capacity. It is desirable that he should keep nothing as heir.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Send the accompanying[3] to Bal, if you approve it.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7977

331. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 26, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I won't be satisfied till you can report that you are getting good sleep without difficulty.

This according to your instruction goes to Jullundur.

Your letter to Barnabas is good but very hastily drafted. They may join the Congress in their thousands but why may they not have a separate organization of themselves to consider many questions that specially affect them. For social and religious uplift they need an organization. If they do not have it, they are likely to tire of the Congress for the Congress won't contribute to their all-round uplift. I am therefore not dealing with it in *Harijan.* You should discuss this with

[1] *Vatsalyachi Prasaddiksha; vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 15-11-1938

[2] Chandan Parekh, who later married the addressee's son, Satish

[3] Not traceable

me when you come.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

How I wish I had known that the toga had to be kept for you! However you do not mind Indu wearing it.

From the original: C.W. 3893. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7049

332. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON,
November 26, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

I hope you had mine of yesterday. This is just to tell you that now that you are gone everybody misses you. Your room is more than full. Mahadev is not going anywhere, for the time being at any rate.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

B. P. 160/98

SHRI MIRABEHN
C/O SETH MATHURADAS TRICUMJEE
74 WALKESHWAR ROAD
BOMBAY

From the original: C.W. 6415. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10010

333. LETTER TO HANNAH LAZAR

November 26, 1938

MY DEAR HANNA,

I had your letter from Kimberley but not the letter you want to write.

You must not only keep well but be robust.

I am not writing to your mother or young Isele.

But my love to all of you.

BAPU

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

334. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 26, 1938

MY DEAR FLY,

Who is most distinguished daughter of Bengal and equally distinguished daughter-in-law of Andhra.

Though you are so distinguished, you are still a fly, thank God.

I have already written to Padmaja without in any way mentioning you for the journey. You are past praying for. Much love till we meet on or about 8th Dec.

Yours,
LITTLE SPINNER,
SPIDER, ETC.

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

335. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 26, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I am trying to call over S. in my own way.

When the time for your medical studies comes, I shall see about your increased expenses.

I am trying to find Dharmdevji's letter. If I find it, I will reply to him, otherwise I will ask for a copy.

Take care of your health. Learn the art of preserving it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev has arrived. He will take time to resume work. He is in Segaon just now.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7355. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

336. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

November 26, 1938

CHI. ANAND,

I have sent your letter on to Father and have also written him a good letter. He will melt. Hope Vidya is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

337. NON-CO-OPERATORS

Several letters have been lying on my file from Congressmen who non-co-operated during the non-co-operation days. Among these were those also who resigned Government services. Some of these are now agitating for reinstatement. They quote in support my appeal to the public including Government servants tonon-co-operate. Among the sufferers who have, to my knowledge, not agitated for restoration are the resisters who were fined, the relatives who lost their bread-winners, the lawyers who gave up their practice and were reduced to penury, and the students who gave up their studies and consequent prospects. They think the suffering voluntarily undergone was its own reward and demands no further compensation.

If all these were to claim restoration from the Congress Ministers, the latter's lot would be truly unenviable and they would have little work to do save that of adjudging claims. They would also have to raise money for discharging claims that must amount to seve-ral crores. Moreover, it would be difficult for the discharged Government servants who gave up their jobs whether compulsorily or voluntarily to show that the cases of other sufferers were less hard thantheirs.

In my opinion these ex-Government-servants as a class were the least sufferers. And if they have been without work all these years, they can hardly become efficient servants of the State. Government service for Congressmen is not an avenue to material advancement; it should be an avenue to service. Therefore only those Congressmen may enter Government service whose market value is higher than that they can get from the Government. They can be employed only when

they are wanted. There should be no such thing as Congress patronage.

A war, whether violent or non-violent, loses its thrill and its grandeur if the warriors are insured against all loss. A satyagrahi to be worthy of the name stands to lose all without expectation of any compensation in the future. His merit lies in his undergoing the uttermost sacrifice. Indeed the Congress machinery will fall to pieces if men come to it to better their prospects in life. And if the Congress Ministers are expected to satisfy personal ambition they will be themselves discredited and bring down the prestige of the Congress in the end.

I hope the reader will not fail to note the difference between this and the restoration of lands which were vindictively sold for a song by the preceding Government administration. There the restoration was easily possible and was a duty. It was like restoring a bit of country taken away by the victor.

If another civil disobedience campaign becomes necessary, the Government will think fifty times before selling people's land and unpatriotic persons will not dare to profit at the expense of patriots.

SEGAON, November 27, 1938

Harijan, 3-12-1938

338. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
November 27, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is for the sake merely of telling you that I have your letter and that all is well. Mahadev seems to be progressing. I wish you could say the same of you.

Here is the Aundh party coming. Jairamdas has also come in. He is looking much better.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3894. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7050

339. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON,
November 27[1]*, 1938*

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter. I shall attend to all your instructions. I do hope your eyes will be so suited as not to cause any trouble for some years to come. Govind[2] may go astray. Kaka offered him a job but he has not even put in an appearance. A mission has begun operations here and Govind has offered his services. I hear he has now gone to Nagpur to satisfy his would-be employers. He may prove an enemy of his people and Segaon. I do not want you to worry about him. I shall do all I can to wean him. But the lure of money is too great a temptation for poor peoples. Everything else is going well. Mahadev is well. Verrier and his sister came in today. They are passing the afternoon here.

I have been taking silence from 7 p.m. to 2 p.m. next day. So the speaking is confined to 5 hours. But it is incessant for those hours. I must cut off that too, if I am to have the full benefit.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6416. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10011

[1] In the source '28' seems to have been corrected to '27'.
[2] An inmate of the Ashram working with the addressee

340. STATES AND THE PEOPLE

The almost simultaneous awakening in the various States is a very significant event in the national struggle for independence. It will be wrong to think that such awakening can be due to the instigation of one person or a body of persons or any organization. It is just possible that the Haripura resolution of the Congress put the people of the States on their mettle and they realized as never before that their salvation depended upon their own labours. But above all it is the time spirit that has brought about the awakening. It is to be hoped that the Princes and their advisers will recognize it and meet the legitimate aspirations of the people. There is no half-way house between total extinction of the States and the Princes making their people responsible for the administration of their States and themselves becoming trustees for the people, taking an earned commission for their labours.

I hope, therefore, the rumour is not true that the British Government are likely, at the instance of some Princes or their Dewans, to announce a change in the policy recently enunciated by Earl Winterton, about the ability of the Princes to grant responsible government to their people. If any of them have asked the British Government to reverse the policy, they have undoubtedly done a disservice to themselves. And if the British Government respond to the unworthy wish, they will precipitate a first-class crisis whose magnitude it is difficult to foretell. I must refuse to believe that the British Government can commit such a blunder. Earl Winterton's announcement was but an endorsement of past practice. They are not known to have ever interfered with the States giving powers to their people, however wide they might be.

I go a step further. Even as the British Government, as the Paramount Power, are bound to protect the Princes against harm from outside or within, they are equally or a *fortiori* bound to ensure just rule on the part of the Princes. Hence it is their bounden duty, when they supply the police or the military to any State, to see that there is a proper emergency justifying the request and that the military or the police will be used with becoming restraint. From Dhenkanal have come to me stories of fiendish cruelty exercised by the State myrmidons under the shadow of the police supplied by the Paramount Power. I asked for evidence in support of some of the unnamable

cruelties. And I have enough to inspire belief.

Indeed, it is a question whether responsible Ministers in the provinces have not a moral responsibility in respect of the people of the States in their respective provinces. Under the Constitution, the Ministers have no power over them. The Governor is the agent of the Viceroy who is the representative of the Paramount Power. But the Ministers in autonomous provinces have surely a moral responsibility regarding what happens in the States. So long as the States and the people are satisfied, Ministers have no worry. But have they none if there is, say, a virulent epidemic in the States which, if neglected, may easily overtake the province in which they are situated? Have they none when there is a moral epidemic which seems to be raging in Dhenkanal?

I understand that the persecuted people are taking refuge in British Orissa. Can the Ministers refuse them shelter? How many can they take charge of? Whatever happens in these States affects for better or for worse the province as a whole. I do believe, therefore, that the Ministers by reason of the heavy responsibility resting on their shoulders have the moral right, within strict limits, to assert themselves for the sake of internal peace and decency. They cannot look on with unconcern while the people of the States—an arbitrary creation of the Paramount Power—are being ground to dust as they in Dhenkanal are reported to be.

One reads in the papers that some concessions have been given to the people of Dhenkanal. I do not know whether the report is true and whether the relief answers the purpose for which the people of Dhenkanal are fighting and suffering. It is, however, irrelevant to the issue raised by me. I feel that the Ministers in the provinces are morally bound to take notice of gross misrule in the States within their borders and to tender advice to the Paramount Power as to what, in their opinion, should be done. The Paramount Power, if it is to enjoy friendly relations with the provincial Ministers, is bound to give sympathetic ear to their advice.

There is one other matter which demands the urgent attention of the States and their advisers. They fight shy of the very name Congress. They regard Congressmen as outsiders, foreigners and what not. They may be all that in law. But man-made law, if it is in conflict with the natural law, becomes a dead letter when the latter operates in full force. The people of the States look up to the Congress in all matters

affecting their interest. Many of them are members of the Congress. Some like Shri Jamnalalji hold high offices in the Congress organization. In the eyes of the Congress there is no distinction between members from the States and from India called British. It is surely detrimental to the interests of the States to ignore the Congress or Congressmen, especially when it or they seek to render friendly assistance. They must recognize the fact that the people in the States are in many cases guided by the Congress. They know that I am responsible for the policy of non-interference hitherto followed by the Congress. But with the growing influence of the Congress it is impossible for me to defend it in the face of injustice perpetrated in the States. If the Congress feels that it has the power to offer effective interference, it will be bound to do so when the call comes. And if the Princes believe that the good of the people is also their good, they would gratefully seek and accept the Congress assistance. It is surely in their interest to cultivate friendly relations with an organization which bids fair in the future, not very distant, to replace the Paramount Power, let me hope, by friendly arrangement. Will they not read the handwriting on the wall?

SEGAON, November 28, 1938

Harijan, 3-12-1938

341. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 28, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I shall be ready to write to S.[1] as soon as you free me from the restraint. The suspense should cease, if it is at [all] possible. Today is *Harijan* day. Your absence is most felt on Mondays. Of course you can do a lot if you could be here and kept fit.

I understand about Narandas. I am sending him your note, which is sweet.

Mahadev is well.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3895. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7051

[1] Shumshere Singh

342. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 28, 1938

DEAR MOTI BABU,

My sympathies are with you but equity and justice make me lean towards the A.I.S.A. I relied upon your integrity and business ability. If you must have reduction please start payment and rely upon getting it when you have paid what you contemplate. Is not that right and fair? But I would still plead with you to ask the co-workers to put forth redoubled effort to pay the debt due to a sister Association, which is run wholly for *Daridranarayana*.

Love.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 11052

343. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 28, 1938

CHI. NARANDAS,

I had got your letter. On the basis of it I wrote a couple of lines, not to complain but for information. I am enclosing the reply to that. Destroy the letter after reading it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

If you see anything to criticize in the movement, please regard it as your duty to let me know about it.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8554. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

344. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 28, 1938

CHI. MANI,

I have got your letter. I had not expected that you would be able to write in the midst of so much pressure of work. I am watching your exploits even from this distance. You seem to have earned great merit in your previous life. I never had any doubt about your courage. As far as possible, don't court imprisonment. That is the Rajkot people's job.

I hope you are taking care of your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

MANIBEHN PATEL
NEAR TELEGRAPH OFFICE
RAJKOT

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 122

345. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON,
November 28, 1938

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I am enclosing a letter from Bhavnagar. I have sent a wire asking the man to await a letter before sending any more batches. Participation by students in this manner seems to me altogether improper.

It also does not seem proper that subjects of other States should send batches from places outside Rajkot. This is completely contrary to our policy. That batch does not want and will not get swaraj. Its going to Rajkot will increase ill will and cover up the weaknesses of the Rajkot people if there are any. What will we gain by their weaknesses being covered up? The mettle of the people of Rajkot will shine only as much as it is worth. We may help it to shine brighter, but that can be done only by promoting growth among the Rajkot people

themselves. If you agree with this, stop the batches from outside and stop all students from joining. I can write much more, but where is the time? It doesn't matter, though.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 229

346. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SEGAON,
November 28, 1938

CHI. MATHURADAS,

The idea for my article came from your letter. There were other letters but I did not write anything. Now see the enclosed reply. If you have any comments to make, do so. Otherwise return it to me as it is. If the corruption does not go I must retire. I am of course carrying on talks.

Read the enclosed letter and do the needful. I take it that you will be receiving Muriel Lester. How can she stay with the Naoroji sisters at this time? You may put her up at Bhulabhai's place if you like. Let her leave for Wardha the same day. Somebody will receive her at the station on the 9th. There will be no time for you to send a telegram. There may not even be sufficient time to catch the train. If you cannot personally go or send someone to receive her then drop her a letter as desired by her. Do you have time to attend to such things? Do warn me if you do not have the time. In that case I shall not burden you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Is there an equivalent term for 'Municipal Councillor' in Gujarati?

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum sad Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

347. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 29, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

A letter for Jayaprakash is enclosed. I hope it will reach in time. I am writing this letter at 3.45 a. m. Take care of Jayaprakash's health. I do not know how yours is. I see that you both could see kanti. I am glad. Didn't I inform you that we would be going to Bardoli on January 1? We will be there for a month. You may come there. Jayaprakash also may come. But he is a fakir, absorbed in himself and lost in his own dreams. How can I expect him to pass some time with me? He will not be able to get anything from me and he may not even like some aspects of my life. What is the remedy? I am glad that you remain busy in his service. My health is fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3524

348. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

SEGAON,
November 29, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I am writing this before the morning prayer. My health is excellent. Ba is fairly well. It is great news indeed that you have recovered. Now you need not come here at present for I expect to be at Bardoli on the 2nd of January. You are already there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7103. Also C.W. 4595. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

349. LETTER TO SHUAIB QURESHI

November 29, 1938

MY DEAR SHUAIB,

Zakir telegraphed Big Brother's death.[1] What happened? I wrote to him only the other day about his daughter's death. I tried to come near him but failed. Cannot his death be turned to the end for which in his best moments he tried his utmost? This death is a tragedy. It will be doubled if no steps are taken to bring the two together. How it can be done is more than I can say. I am working at it in my own way. But that is not enough.

Love.

BAPU

From a facsimile: *Madhya Pradesh aur Gandhiji,* p. 127

350. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

November 29, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

The cause of yesterday's suffocation was that the water was too hot. I also had such experience. If the heat is gradually increased, no discomfort is felt. It is desirable to begin with near-body temperature. The bucket of hot water should be kept just near. This is, of course, to be followed by cold water. It would be best to take the hip-bath in the afternoon. This will cost you some time but let not that worry you.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11685

351. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 29, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

Read the accompanying letter and send it to Manilal. Don't change the January date. You may stay there as long as you desire.

[1] Shaukat Ali died on November 27, 1938, at Delhi.

Whenever you wish to run up here, you will have every right to do so. I was thinking only of Nanabhai and Vijayalakshmi. You also would naturally desire to stay with your parents.

In my present condition, I can give you nothing. I cannot spare even a minute for talking with you. And I would not wish that you should come here only in order that I could see your face every day and smile at you. Ba would not accept service from you. She is no longer ill. Having regard to all this, I leave it to you whether you should come here. I will leave this place on January 1 for Bardoli. If you wish to come there, you may do so for three or four days.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Kishorelal and Gomati came and met me. Why does not Sita write? How is her health? How is Arun?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4889

352. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 30, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is the first letter I take up at 3.30 a.m.

I have your time-table. This is therefore being posted to Delhi.

Mahadev is having better nights than in Simla showing that the improvement continues. Perhaps the intense cold of Simla might not have agreed with him. Here unlike as before, he is sleeping under the open sky. The weather is quite mild. For three or four days I slept on the verandah. S. has permitted me to come out. How long the permission will last, one does not know.

Ever since Mira's departure I have been silent between 7 p. m. to 2 p.m. the day following. Hence there are only 5 speaking hours.

It will be good if Shummy finally makes up his mind to go to Europe. The change is likely to do him good and you will be able without anxiety to be with me. But Mahadev will say, what about the dog? He has been describing with what care that precious member of the family is being looked after.

I am just now engaged in hammering into shape the Aundh

Constitution. The Raja Saheb's son is a delightful boy.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3653. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6462

353. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

November 30, 1938

CHI. DEVDAS,

You did well in sending a copy of the report of Viceroy's talk with Bharatan. It is difficult to say how this catastrophe will end. Also read and think over what I have written about the States.[1] As Anantrai has intervened, the Rajkot matter will perhaps be settled. But how will that help? That will involve all the States. And that is what should happen.

Lakshmi and the children will be well. I am writing this letter before the morning prayer. My health is excellent—at present at any rate. I am taking proper care of it. Ba is fairly well and so is Mahadev. These days the atmosphere at Segaon is quite good. There goes the bell.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2007

354. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 30, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

I do not mind your having spent the money. I do not want you to be ill for want of warm clothing or other things that may be necessary for keeping the body fit. I have no fear of the cold of the Frontier injuring you. I shall watch your career there with anxiety.

My silence up to 2 p. m. continues. There are thus only 5 speaking hours per day which are all practically given to interviews.

[1] *Vide* "States and the People", 3-12-1938

Mahadev wrote to you yesterday. He is steadily improving.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6417. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10012

355. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 30, 1938

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

The Chinese friends came and instead of five minutes they took thirty-five. I had ultimately to say as gently as I could that they had overstayed their time seven times.

Here is your copy of Agatha's report of the interview with the Viceroy. My message was merely to say that he was to regard me as a friend of the English people, etc. It had nothing to do with politics.

I hope you duly received my letter[1] enclosing Gurudev's letter about Subhas.

Hope you are not killing yourself with work and that Indu is doing well.

Sarup[2] should be relieved of the heavy work she is doing. She should rebuild her shattered body.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1938. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, p. 303

356. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 30, 1938

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

Mahadev has just now placed your letter in my hand. If I said I knew your father it would be an understatement. We were as close to each other as members of a family. It will not be strange, therefore, if

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 24-11-1938

[2] Vijayalakshmi Pandit

I unveil his statue. But even if I do not do so, will it detract from our bond? Does one unveil the statue of one's brother? I have lost all heart in such ceremonies. Please, therefore, do not take it ill at all. Try to understand my point of view fully and leave me out. Let the statue be unveiled on the same day on which the opening ceremony of the building takes place and let that be done by Sardar. Will you not excuse me?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 4728. Courtesy: Shantikumar N. Morarjee

357. A LETTER

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 30, 1938

CHI. LAMBUS,

'Lambodar' means 'long belly'. It is the name of God Ganapati. I should have named you 'Lambus'. Was it not kind of you to write to me after such a long time?

Amtul Salaam, Lilavati and Sharda are here. All of them are very well.

You sisters seem to be doing good work.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1752

358. LETTER TO PREMI JAIRAMDAS

SEGAON,
November 30, 1938

CHI. PREMI,

Your Hindi is not good, but I like it better than your English. Further efforts would improve it. Father has arrived here. He writes better Hindi than you do.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 9250. Courtesy: Jairamdas Doulatram

359. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

[*November 1938*][1]

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have heard that Govind is taking up a job in a Christian mission. The mission intends to plant its flag in Segaon or has already done so. Find out the facts without making too much fuss.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8378

360. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

[*November/December 1938*][2]

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

How are things there? Is everybody well? What about the cows? How much milk is left? How is Bhansali? Is Parnerkar happy? Does Shakaribehn feel lonely? Here the cold is not much to speak of. Sharada is fine.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: G. N. 10663

[1] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 27-11-1938
[2] *ibid*

361. TELEGRAM TO LOCAL SECRETARY, JALLIANWALA BAGH MEMORIAL FUND[1]

[After *December 1, 1938*]

HOLD MEETING THIRTEENTH WARDHA THREE AFTERNOON.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

362. LETTER TO RANCHHODLAL PATWARI[2]

[Before *December 2, 1938*][3]

I am lucky to receive your handwriting today after several years. It is difficult to address you when you tender me *"dandavat"*.

I am glad to hear about your ceaseless efforts to achieve my expectations. I never thought that the Rajkot public were presenting a united front single-handed, exhibiting unique solidarity. Vain are our impressions. God willing success is positive. If the unfavourable circumstances are reduced to dust, God may bless your services with singular success.

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-12-1938

363. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 2, 1938

MY DEAR LOTUS-BORN,

Your letter is clear. I knew your worth when you sent me that masterly report of yours on the famine condition. This one can't be compared with that. But it is good. The other was for the public. This is hurriedly drawn for me. You are doing good work. My condition is do not kill yourself over it. If you will only behave yourself, you are

[1] This was in answer to the addressee's letter of December 1, asking if he might convene a meeting of the Memorial Fund at Wardha during the meetings of the Congress Working Committee there.

[2] Ex-Dewan of Morvi, Palanpur and Gondal States. The letter was presumably in Gujarati.

[3] The news report carrying this item is dated December 2.

capable of giving first-class work. You will take extra care to be accurate about your facts. I shall bear your caution in mind. There won't be a hasty word on my part. Continue to write regularly.

Hope you got my second letter.

Love.

PLAYMATE

[PS.]

Shall send for you when it is absolutely necessary. How is Father and the other members?

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

364. A CAUTION

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's and Shri Damodardas's requests respectively to non-Rajkot people and non-Hyderabad people not to take part in satyagraha are timely and deserve to receive hearty response. It is the essence of satyagraha that those who are suffering should alone offer it. Cases can be conceived when what may be termed sympathetic satyagraha may be legitimately applied. But so far as I see there is nothing in the Rajkot or Hyderabad satyagraha to warrant outside participation. Indeed it is likely to acerbate the authorities. The idea underlying satyagraha is to convert the wrongdoer, to awaken the sense of justice in him, to show him also that without the co-operation, direct or indirect, of the wronged, the wrongdoer cannot do the wrong intended by him. If the people in either case are not ready to suffer for their causes, no outside help in the shape of satyagraha can possibly bring true deliverance.

SEGAON, December 3, 1938

Harijan, 10-12-1938

365. TELEGRAM TO PATTOM THANU PILLAI

WARDHAGANJ,
December 3, 1938

THANUPILLAI
STATE CONGRESS
TRIVANDRUM

REGARD STATEMENT MADE BY SEBASTIAN OTHERS ABOUT INTERVIEW INCORRECT. SHALL I ISSUE TRUE VERSION?[1]

GANDHI

From the original: Pattom Thanu Pillai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

366. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

December 3, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

I also wished to open the subject of the budget, but I forgot. We shall have to discuss the matter a little. A copy is enclosed. Come down on Tuesday. I will spare some time at 2 o'clock.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7979

367. LETTER TO PRABHU DAYAL VIDYARTHI

December 3, 1938

CHI. PRABHU DAYAL,

Your narration is prolix. You have not cited any evidence in it.[2] What you have to say could easily have been put on one sheet. A factual narration has no need of adornment. Write it again. I will send it to U. P. You must furnish evidence in support of what you write.

[1] For Gandhiji's version, *vide* "Statement to the Press", 10-12-1938, and for the interview, *vide* "Talk to Travancore State Congress Deputation", 15-11-1938

[2] The addressee had complained against the Congress.

Give the names of persons who are your sources. Omit such phrases as "I hope" and the like. You should learn to be precise in writing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 11519

368. DISCUSSION WITH JOHN R. MOTT[1]

[On or before *December 4, 1938*][2]

Dr. Mott . . . wondered if the world, including the world of missionaries, had advanced since they had last met.[3] He was going to preside over the deliberations of the International Missionary Council meeting in Madras during the month, and he wanted to share with Gandhiji the plans of the meeting, and wanted Gandhiji's "intuition and judgment on things to be discussed at the Convention."

He said: " . . . This is a unique Convention where 14 councils of the younger churches of Asia, Africa and Latin America, and 14 of the older churches of Europe, America and Australia will be represented by over 400 delegates. We want this to be a help and not a hindrance to India. . . . Am I, I ask, right in thinking that the tide has turned a little bit on the great things you impressed on me?. . . Is there not a clearer recognition of these evils? . . .

GANDHIJI: What I have noticed is that there is a drift in the right direction so far as thought is concerned, but I do feel that in action there is *no* advance. I was going to say "not much advance", but I deliberately say "*no* advance". You may be able to give solitary instances of men here and there, but they do not count. Right conviction to be of use has to be translated into action.

JOHN MOTT: Take the first question, viz., that of the Communal Award. Has there been no progress?

G. No progress at all.

J.M. I have been studying the manuscript of the life of K. T. Paul, to which I have been asked to write a foreword. Don't you think there has been an advance since his time? The attitude of the Roman Catholics is hostile, but what about Protestant Christians?

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Dr. Mott's Second Visit". John Mott's part of the conversation has been slightly abridged.

[2] Desai gives no dates. *Vide*, however, "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 5-12-1938, where Gandhiji says, "Mahadev wrote yesterday for five hours on the Mott visit."

[3] *Vide* "Discussion with John R. Mott", 13/14-11-1936

G. If Protestant Christians are at one on this question, they can have the Award changed, so far as they are concerned. But there is no solid action in the matter.

J. M. I did not know that they could have an exception made in their behalf.

G. They can.

J. M. Take the next question. Is not taking advantage of people's disabilities being avoided now? I must say I was terribly pained to read of the McGavran incident[1] and greatly relieved to know that the misunderstanding has been cleared up.

G. Even on this question, whilst some friends, I agree, are in earnest, so far as action goes, there has been no change.

J. M. You mean to say there is not action enough?

G. No, there is *no* action at all. I have plenty of evidence to prove what I say. I do not publish all the correspondence I get. Mr. A. A. Paul, whom you may know, convened a conference some time ago. The proceedings were revealing. Their resolutions were half-hearted. As far as I am aware, there was no unanimity about any definite action.

J. M. I was encouraged by a resolution of the National Christian Council which insisted on pure motives and pure practice.

G. You may cite the resolution but you will not be able to show corresponding action.

J. M. I understand. Without action no decision is anything worth. This lesson was burnt on my mind even as a student when Foster's great essay on the *Decision of Character* helped me more than anything I had read.

G. I assure you you will find confirmation of what I say. I would say that there is not even concrete recognition of the danger of taking an undue advantage of people's disabilities. They will never give up what they call the right of mass conversions.

J. M. They are now talking of conversion of groups and families. I am not quite clear, though, as to what in certain cases the word 'group' implies.

G. I am quite clear. It is mass conversions called by another name.

J. M. That is strange. How can groups or families be converted *en masse?* Conversion in my family for instance came first with my father, then my oldest

[1] Mc Gavran had contributed to *World Dominion* a fabricated report of the talk between Gandhiji on the one hand and Bishops Pickett and Azariah on the other.

sister, then youngest sister, then I. It is an individual matter, a matter entirely between one and one's God.

G. So it is. On this matter of untouchability, I may tell you that for years I could not carry conviction to my own wife. She followed me willy-nilly. The conviction came to her after long experience and practice.

J. M. In dealing with the holiest of things we should use the purest methods. But you will pardon me if I reiterate that I am hopeful of the tide having turned. Discerning Christian leaders to my knowledge are not only thinking of these things keenly but sincerely addressing themselves to fostering right practice. On the third question of the wise use of money I see signs of encouragement.

G. But it is a virtue of necessity. The Indian Christians are thinking aloud and of doing things themselves. They are talking of their own responsibilities and saying, "Thank God, American money can't come."

Then came a rather long digression on the wise and unwise use of money. The topic had engaged their attention on the occasion of the last visit too and Gandhiji had put the matter most forcefully when he said:

"I think you cannot serve God and Mammon both, and my fear is that Mammon has been sent to serve India and God has remained behind, with the result that He will one day have His vengeance."

He had made it also clear that there was all the difference in the world between money *given* and money *earned*

J. M. But your own example proves that there are wise uses of money. What do all the organizations I saw this morning testify?

G. You see a contradiction between my theory and practice? Well, you must see the background. With all my experience and ability to collect money I am utterly indifferent in the matter. I have always felt that when a religious organization has more money than it requires, it is in peril of losing its faith in God and pinning its faith on money. There is no such thing as 'wise' or 'unwise' use of money. You have simply to cease to depend on it. You don't even depend on bread, and bargain with God saying you won't pray until God gives your bread!

J. M. I am arguing this at some length as I want to understand you and not to misquote you.

G. Then I will illustrate what I say by two telling illustrations. In South Africa when I started the satyagraha march there was not a

copper in my pocket, and I went with a light heart. I had a caravan of 3000 people to support. 'No fear', said I. 'If God wills it He will carry it forward.' Then money began to rain from India. I had to stop it, for when the money came my miseries began. Whereas they were content with a piece of bread and sugar, they now began asking for all sorts of things.

Then take the illustration of the new educational experiment. The experiment I said must go on without asking for any monetary help. Otherwise, after my death the whole organizations would go to pieces. The fact is the moment financial stability is assured, spiritual bankruptcy is also assured.

J. M. But you wisely used the money.

G. Not metal, but bread; and even the dog, under God's Providence, has not to go hungry.

Then came the last question of untouchability. Dr. Mott wondered if there was no quickening of the conscience all the world over. There had been, he said, battles royal between groups in America, conventions refusing to go to hotels where the Negroes were not received? there were Christians in Germany who had gone to prison for protesting against the inhuman treatment of the Jews. There was gold coming out of dross. What about India?

G. No advance in action, I say again. The British are a fair test. The racial feeling instead of declining is rising. In South Africa the tide of prejudice is rising high, declarations made by former Ministers are being disregarded. Similar stories come from East Africa. But I remain an optimist, not that there is any evidence that I can give that right is going to prosper, but because of my unflinching faith that right must prosper in the end.

J. M. Well, in South Africa too are there not people like Hoffmeyr and Edgar Brookes? There is certainly a turn of the tide on the part of certain individuals.

G. It would be wrong to draw conclusions from a handful of individual instances. Our inspiration can come only from our faith that right must ultimately prevail. But on this matter, as I have said, there is an advance in the thought world, but not in action.

Dr. Mott began the next day with these prefatory remarks: "You put in your quite original way your views on the questions I asked. I value it more than I can say. I was impressed by your recognition that there was a certain amount of advance in thought but not in action. . . . I could show you, too, that there are certain things actually concretely on foot. But, today, I want to engage your attention on another matter. What to do with 'gangster' nations, if I may use the expression frequently used? There was individual gangsterism in America. It has been put down by strong

police measures both local and national. Could not we do something similar for gangsterism between nations, as instanced in Manchuria—the nefarious use of the opium poison—in Abyssinia, in Spain, in the sudden seizure of Austria, and then the case of Czechoslovakia. Now, in this connection, let me say, I was deeply impressed by what you wrote on the Czechoslovakian crisis[1] and on the Jewish question[2]. Can we bring something like international police into being?"

G. This question is not new to me.

J. M. I judge not.

G. I have to deal with identical questions with reference to conditions in India. We have had to quell riots, communal and labour. The Ministries have used military force in some cases and police in most. Now whilst I agree that the Ministers could not help doing so, I also said that the Congress Ministries had proved themselves bankrupt with their stock-in-trade, I mean their avowed weapon of non-violence. Even so, I would say in reply to the question you have asked, viz., that if the best mind of the world has not imbibed the spirit of non-violence, they would have to meet gangsterism in the orthodox way. But that would only show that we have not got far beyond the Law of the Jungle, that we have not yet learnt to appreciate the heritage that God has given us, that in spite of the teaching of Christianity which is 1900 years old and of Hinduism and Buddhism which are older, and even of Islam (if I have read it aright), we have not made much headway as human beings. But whilst I would understand the use of force by those who have not the spirit of non-violence in them, I would have those who know non-violence to throw their whole weight in demonstrating that even gangsterism has to be met by non-violence. For, ultimately, force, however justifiably used, will lead us into the same morass as the force of Hitler and Mussolini. There will be just a difference of degree. You and I who believe in non- violence must use it at the critical moment. We may not despair of touching the heart even of gangsters, even if, for the moment, we may seem to be striking our heads against a blind wall.

J. M. How may the Missionaries and Christians in general help in constructive activities like the village industries movement, the new educational movement and so on?

G. They should study the movements and work under or in co-operation with these organizations. I am happy to be able to say

[1] *Vide* "If I Were A Czech", 15-10-1938

[2] *Vide* "The Jews"

that I have some valued Christian colleagues. But they can be counted on one's fingers. I fear that the vast bulk of them remain unconvinced. Some have frankly said that they do not believe in the village movement or the education movement as they are conducted by the associations you have named. They evidently believe in industrialization and the Western type of education. And the missionaries as a body perhaps fight shy of movements not conducted wholly or predominantly by Christians.

If I get in my activities the hearty and active co-operation of the 5000 Protestant missionaries in India, and if they really believed in the living power of non-violence as the only force that counts, they can help not only here but perhaps in affecting the West.

J. M. Happily there are a goodly number amongst them who see eye to eye with you.

G. I know.

J. M. What have been the most creative experiences in your life? As you look back on your past, what, do you think, led you to believe in God when everything seemed to point to the contrary, when life, so to say, sprang from the ground, although it all looked impossible?

G. Such experiences are a multitude. But as you put the question to me, I recalled particularly one experience that changed the course of my life. That fell to my lot seven days after I had arrived in South Africa. I had gone there on a purely mundane and selfish mission. I was just a boy returned from England wanting to make some money. Suddenly the client who had taken me there asked me to go to Pretoria from Durban. It was not an easy journey. There was the railway journey as far as Charlestown and the coach to Johannesburg. On the train I had a first-class ticket, but not a bed ticket. At Maritzburg where the beddings were issued the guard came and turned me out and asked me to go to the van compartment. I would not go and the train steamed away leaving me shivering in the cold.[1] Now the creative experience comes there. I was afraid for my very life. I entered the dark waiting-room. There was a white man in the room. I was afraid of him. What was my duty, I asked myself. Should I go back to India, or should I go forward, with God as my helper, and face whatever was in store for me? I decided to stay and suffer. My active non-violence began from that date. And God put me through the test during that very journey. I was severely assaulted by the coachman

[1] *Vide* "An Autobiography" sub-title "On The Way To Pretoria"

for my moving from the seat he had given me.

J.M. The miseries, the slaps after slaps you received burnt into your soul.

G. Yes, that was one of the richest experiences of my life.

J. M. I am grateful to you for sharing this experience with me.

J. M. What has brought deepest satisfaction to your soul in difficulties and doubts and questionings?

G. Living faith in God.

J.M. When have you had indubitable manifestation of God in your life and experiences?

G. I have seen and believe that God never appears to you in person, but in action which can only account for your deliverance in your darkest hour.

J. M. You mean things take place that cannot possibly happen apart from God?

G. Yes. They happen suddenly and unawares. One experience stands quite distinctly in my memory. It relates to my 21 days' fast for the removal of untouchability.[1] I had gone to sleep the night before without the slightest idea of having to declare a fast the next morning. At about 12 o'clock in the night something wakes me up suddenly, and some voice—within or without, I cannot say—whispers, 'Thou must go on a fast.' 'How many days?' I ask. The voice again said, 'Twenty-one days.' 'When does it begin?' I ask. It says, 'You begin tomorrow.'I went quietly off to sleep after making the decision. I did not tell anything to my companions until after the morning prayer. I placed into their hands a slip of paper announcing my decision and asking them not to argue with me, as the decision was irrevocable.

Well, the doctors thought I would not survive the fast. But something within me said I would, and that I must go forward. That kind of experience has never in my life happened before or after that date.

J. M. Now, you surely can't trace such a thing to an evil source?

G. Surely not. I never have thought it was an error. If ever there was in my life a spiritual fast it was this. There is something in denying satisfaction of the flesh. It is not possible to see God face to face unless you crucify the flesh. It is one thing to do what belongs to it as a temple of God, and it is another to deny it what belongs to it as to

[1] *Vide* "Statement on Fast", 30-4-1933

the body of flesh.

Dr. Mott concluded his visit in 1936 with a question on silence. He had done so during a brief flying visit to Ahmedabad in 1928 and during this visit too he asked if Gandhiji had continued to find it necessary in his spiritual quest.

G. I can say that I am an everlastingly silent man now. Only a little while ago I have remained completely silent nearly two months and the spell of that silence has not yet broken. I broke it today when you came. Nowadays I go into silence at prayer time every evening and break it for visitors at 2 o'clock. I broke it today when you came. It has now become both a physical and spirtitual necessity for me. Originally it was taken to relieve the sense of pressure. Then I wanted time for writing. After, however, I had practised it for some time I saw the spiritual value of it. It suddenly flashed across my mind that that was the time when I could best hold communion with God. And now I feel as though I was naturally built for silence. Of course I may tell you that from my childhood I have been noted for my silence. I was silent at school, and in my London days I was taken for a silent drone by friends.

J. M. In this connection you put me in mind of two texts from the Bible:

"My soul, be thou silent unto God."

"Speak Lord, for Thy servant hearkeneth."

I have often sought silence for communion even during my noisiest time . . .

I am sorry to have overstayed my time. I lose all sense of time when I am with you. I am more grateful than I can say.

SEGAON, December 5, 1938

Harijan, 10-12-1938

369. HOW TO POPULARIZE KHADI

A valued khadi worker writes a letter in Hindi which freely translated means:

> Compared to mill-cloth khadi is not an economic proposition in terms of prices. To compete with mill-cloth you have to drop the cost of hand-ginning, carding and spinning. Even for self-spinners, therefore, it is not a paying proposition. No doubt you have evolved new economics of khadi. But till the people at large appreciate them, khadi cannot be universal. Even

the Congress Ministers do not understand or appreciate your new economics. In the circumstances, will you not guide khadi workers and even the Ministers and Congressmen in general? Your faith seems to be so strong that you would straightway give eight annas per day to spinners for eight hours' honest and skilled work if we, your co-workers, will let you. Frankly we do not possess your faith.

There is no doubt that khadi cannot compete with mill-cloth, it was never meant to. If the people will not understand or appreciate the law governing khadi, it will never be universal. It must then remain the fad of monied people and cranks. And if it is to be merely that, the labours of a huge organization like the A.I.S.A must mean a waste of effort, if not something much worse.

But khadi has a big mission. Khadi provides dignified labour to the millions who are otherwise idle for nearly four months in the year. Even apart from the remuneration the work brings, it is its own reward. For if millions live in compulsory idleness, they must die spiritually, mentally and physically. The spinning-wheel autoatically raises the status of millions of poor women. Even though, therefore, mill-cloth were to be given gratis to the people, their true welfare demands that they should refuse to have it in preference to khadi, the product of their labours.

Life is more than money. It is cheaper to kill our aged parents who can do no work and who are a drag on our slender resources. It is also cheaper to kill our children whom we do not need for our material comfort and whom we have to maintain without getting anything in return. But we kill neither our parents nor our children, but consider it a privilege to maintain them no matter what their mainte-nance costs us. Even so must we maintain khadi to the exclusion of all other cloth. It is the force of habit which makes us think of khadi in terms of prices. We must revise our notion of khadi economics. And when we have studied them from the point of view of the national wellbeing, we shall find that khadi is never dear. We must suffer dislocation of domestic economy during the transition stage. At present we are labouring under a heavy handicap. Cotton production has been centralized for the sake of Lancashire and, if you will, for the sake of Indian mills. Prices of cotton are determined by the prices in foreign lands. When the production of cotton is distributed in accordance with the demands of khadi economics, cotton prices would not fluctuate

and, in any case, will be, in effect, lower than today. When the people, either through State protection or through voluntary effort, have cultivated the habit of using only khadi, they will never think of it in terms of money, even as millions of vegetarians do not compare the prices of flesh foods with those of non-flesh foods. They will starve rather than take flesh foods even though they may be offered free.

But I recognize that very few Congressmen have this living faith in khadi. The Ministers are Congressmen. They derive their inspiration from their surroundings. If they had a living faith in khadi, they could do a great deal to popularize it.

Khadi was an integral part of the original swaraj programme of 1920. In 1921-22 thousands of Congressmen repeated from hundreds of platforms that swaraj for the millions depended upon the spinning-wheel humming in every village. The late Ali Brothers used to say, at the numerous meetings they addressed, that without the charkha in every cottage and the loom in every village there was no freedom. Maulana Mahomed Ali used to say in his picturesque language that our charkhas were our instruments of war and the cones of yarn turned out by them were our ammunition. He said this with a conviction that went home to his audiences. But the faith of those early days was not sustained. Congressmen in general have ceased to connect khadi with swaraj. Shri Jawaharlal Nehru has called khadi the livery of our freedom. For how many does it bear that meaning? If Congressmen could have that belief, khadi itself would be current coin. Freedom is never dear at any price. It is the breath of life. What would a man not pay for living? The Congress flag was designed to represent not civil disobedience which is but a phase, but it was designed to represent the essentials of freedom. Its background is khadi. The spinning-wheel covers and sustains it. Its colours show how necessary communal unity is for the attainment of freedom. Given the fulfilment of these conditions, civil disobedi-ence and the suffering it implies may not be at all necessary. To wear khadi is for me to wear freedom.

Given a full-hearted acceptance of this meaning of khadi, I am able to say what the Congress Ministers and, for that matter, all the Ministers, khadi workers and Congressmen can and should do.

There may be a Minister whose sole business would be to look after khadi and village industries. There should, therefore, be a department for this purpose. The other departments will co-operate. Thus

the Agricultural Department will frame a scheme of decentralization of cotton production, survey the land suitable for cotton production for village use and find out how much cotton will be required for its province. It will even stock cotton at suitable centres for distribution. The Stores Department will make purchases of khadi available in the province and give orders for its cloth requirements. The Technical Departments will tax themselves to devise better wheels and other instruments of hand production. All these departments will keep in constant touch with the A. I. S. A. and the A. I. V. I. A. using them as their experts.

The Revenue Minister will devise means of protecting khadi against mill competition.

Khadi workers will with unremitting zeal investigate the laws governing the science of khadi and seek to make it more durable, more attractive and believe themselves to be responsible for discovering means of making khadi universal. God helps only those who are ever watchful and who devote all their talents to their mission.

Congressmen in general will spread the gospel of khadi among their neighbours by themselves wearing it not ceremonially but habitually, by spinning themselves, and by helping khadi workers whenever they are called upon to do so.

SEGAON, December 4, 1938

Harijan, 10-12-1938

370. HARIJAN WELFARE IN TATANAGAR[1]

I have before me a full and lengthy report of the function performed at Tatanagar by the Bihar Minister, Shri Jaglal Choudhury, of opening the new extension of the Dhatkidih Harijan School. The manager, Shri J. J. Ghandy, who takes a personal interest in Harijan welfare, in the course of his address requesting the Minister to perform the opening ceremony among other things said:[2]

SEGAON, December 4, 1938

Harijan, 10-12-1938

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

[2] The speech is not reproduced here. The speaker gave an account of the Tata Iron and Steel Company's efforts to promote the education of Harijan children.

371. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 4, 1938

CHI. NIMU,

Personally I think that you should respect what Ramdas says. Read the accompanying letter[1]. As it is, you keep indifferent health. By all means you may study but only after you are better. It will be possible to arrange for your *sitar*[2] [lessons] in Poona. Should you go to Dehra Dun and thereby hurt Ramdas? The two girls could stay here. Do as you both wish. I see your good in your giving up the idea of Dehra Dun for the present. For myself, I certainly like your staying in Dehra Dun. Decide only after going to Poona what you will do. Do not decide on the basis of the letter alone.

You do not seem to have received the letter I had dictated for you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

372. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

December 5, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

For the last three days I have neglected you so far as writing is concerned. You have been simply crowded out. So this I am writing before the morning prayer. But though I do not write there is enough here to make me think of you often enough every day.

I wonder how you are getting on in body, mind and soul? I am anxiously waiting to hear from you.

Of the news here I must ask Sharda to write to you.

Love.

BAPU

[1] Not available
[2] A stringed musical instrument

[PS.]

I have at last your letter from Peshawar. I am quite well B. P. is in order. The cold has begun here.

From the original: C.W. 6418. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10013

373. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

December 5, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I wrote two letters to you at Delhi. One was, by my folly, sent to 12 instead of 4 Bhagwandas Road. I hope, nevertheless, it reached you.

Everything seems to be going well here. The pressure of interviews continues. Anand is having a week's fast with a break on the 4th day with lemon and banana.

Mahadev wrote yesterday for five hours on the Mott visit.[1]

The rest from Sharda.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

This goes to Lucknow.

From the original: C. W. 3896. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7052

374. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

SEGAON,
December 5, 1938

MY DEAR KU,

I have read the *Gram Udyog Patrika*—both the editions.

Are we in a position to show to the villagers the way to get unpolished rice cheaper than polished?

Has unpolished rice been proved to be digestible by delicate stomachs? I have in mind Chhotelal's and Babasaheb's experiences. Have we an apparatus we can present to the villagers for husking rice? If the C. P. Government offered us a post to organize introduction of

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with John R. Moti", 4-12-1938

unpolished rice in every village, can we shoulder the burden? If not, how will they manage it?

Who has written the Hindi Patrika? It is bad Hindi whoever the writer may be.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10141

375. LETTER TO. N. R. MALKANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 5, 1938

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I rarely read anything outside my beat. But last week and this week your articles in *Chronicle* weekly riveted my attention and [I] could not leave them unfinished. Let us straighten out a few more wrinkles.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 933

376. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 5, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

I am glad your first impression is favourable. I think it will abide. Did you visit the Islamia College, Edward College? Did Ramdas or Chandrabhai seek you out? Of course Pushtu you have to learn. And you will find no difficulty. Give the enclosed to Khan Saheb with letter from Mehr Taj[1].

Love.

BAPU

[1] Abdul Ghaffar Khan's daughter

[PS.]

Did you not say that Angad's[1] book was received? I can't trace it. What was its name?

From the original: C.W. 6419. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10014

377. LETTER TO SHAMLAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 5, 1938

DEAR LALA SHAMLAL,

I wrote about Inderpal from the Frontier Province. I have now written again.

Please let me have the history of the other prisoners you mention. Are they under the Provincial Government jurisdiction or the Central Government?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1286

378. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

December 5, 1938

CHI. DEVDAS,

Don't hesitate to write whenever necessary.

You did well in sending the cutting. I will reply to the argument if I can spare the time. They will not give Ramdas the agency as readily as you think.

Jamnadas has left. I also would not like the Mysore job. But I attach no importance to the possibility of my being criticized. Let Ramdas accept the job if he can get peace of mind thereby. This is my position. He will not be able to live without work nor will he take up honorary or half-honorary work. You should keep on writing to him. He will certainly respect your advice.

Ramdas is pining for Nimu. He is calling her to Poona. He wants her also to be treated there. I have, therefore, advised her to go to Poona for the present. After the treatment is over, you may certainly

[1] Reginald Reynold's

make arrangements for her in Banaras. I like your idea too, though I also like the plan about Dehra Dun. After she has passed the examination for Ratna, she is bound to get more pay. I do not think it impossible that she may get even Rs. 150. She will have to trust her luck, of course. She can get sixty rupees in any circumstances. How-ever, I would certainly like her to learn *sitar*.

Ba is quite well.

V[allabhbhai] wants that I should spend the whole of January in Bardoli. I have accepted his request. Mahadev also is quite well. As for me, God keeps me going.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You or Lakshmi should drop a few lines to Ba from time to time. She yearns, and naturally, for the love of you all. Where should I address the letter so that you may get it earlier—at the office or at Harijan Niwas?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2008

379. LETTER TO VAIKUNTHLAL L. MEHTA

December 5, 1938

BHAI VAIKUNTH,

Chandrashanker[1] had sent your article here. I have already sent it for publication. Chandrashanker cannot publish articles on his own responsibility. Hence to save time please send articles, etc., to me directly. Mahadev is well. He still needs rest, though.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VAIKUNTHBHAI LALLUBHAI MEHTA

SIR LALLUBHAI SAMALDAS'S BUNGALOW

ANDHERI, B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1365

[1] Chandrashanker Shukla, editor of *Harijanbandhu*

380. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 5, 1938

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

When I happen to be there some time, you may take me to your office. If I send you a message, I shall have to send messages to others too. If friends excuse me, others too may. Such rules cannot, of course, be observed as vows. If you are keen on a message from me, I will not disappoint you.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SHANTIKUMAR NAROTTAM MORARJEE
JUHU
P. O. SANTA CRUZ
B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4729. Courtesy: Shantikumar N. Morarjee

381. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

December 5, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Sushilabehn was saying that the latrines remained unserviceable and that Bankelal[1] did not seem to be doing any work. She said that the twenty rupees paid to him could be used in some other way. Think over this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10780

[1] Sweeper at Segaon

382. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 5, 1938

CHI. MANI,

Your account was true. You can always be trusted to acquit yourself well in whatever you undertake. Follow my advice and get your body massaged, or massage it yourself, with oil. The soldier who does not keep his body fit renders himself liable to punishment. And that is as it should be.

If the people have understood the lesson of ahimsa and suffer beatings, etc., they will never be defeated. Mahadev is here of course. He is quite well. He purposely writes less. This time I permitted him to write a good deal for *Harijan.* But I will not do that very often. It is desirable that he should have no responsibility at all. I keep very well these days.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. MANIBEHN PATEL
NEAR TELEGRAPH OFFICE
RAJKOT

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 122-3

383. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

December 5, 1938

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I feel that we should not have two goshalas. Expanding the present one will not endanger your health. To say that the goshala will swallow us up means that we will have to spend more and more on it. And if all the land is used for the cattle, that will be the only activity remaining to us. I would, therefore, advise Amritlal, Munnalal, Parnerkar, Balwantsinha and you to discuss the matter among yourselves and put your decision before me. What will be the total expenditure we shall have to incur? It is absolutely necessary to have some outward limit. I can arrange for the cattle which are not required.

Is it true that we shall not be able to increase the yield of milk any further? Have you stopped buying milk from neighbours?

I suppose we shall not now be able to supply ghee to any-body.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10595

384. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

December 5, 1938

CHI. AMALA,

You will never be Margarete Spiegel to me, but will always remain Amala. How is your health? Please do come some day and let me see how you are.

Did you read what I wrote about the Jews?[1] Did you like it?

Mahadev is improving. He lives in Segaon at present.

Herewith my autograph.

All are well here. I hope the dog is fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

385. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 5, 1938

DEAR SISTER,

Your last letter was answered by Pyarelal. Your letter from Rajgarh is before me. You are doing good work. I could prepare an account of the tour from your letters but I have not the time. Therefore do send an account for *Harijan* when you have completed the tour. If it is in Hindi we shall translate it into English and if it is in English we shall have it translated for *Harijan Sevak*. Give a brief description of the towns visited and all that was done there.[2] The

[1] *Vide* "The Jews"

[2] An account of Rameshwari Nehru's tour in Central India was published in *Harijan* in seven instalments, beginning with the issue of 18-3-1939.

demands presented to Bhopal are quite legitimate. Something must come about there.

You have to go to Dehra Dun for a day. It will be good to prepare the speech beforehand. Kakasaheb and Ba too expect to reach there.

I hope Bapa is keeping well and so are you.

Did you collect any funds anywhere?

Mahadev is here.

Everything is going on well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7986. Also C.W. 3082. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

386. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 5, 1938

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your very candid letter. A tabloid machine costing Rs. 30 may be purchased. I shall provide the money.

As regards earning a living I do not believe that you can make a success of this venture. I fear that in one way or another your expenses will go up. The true purpose, which is that you should live simply, will be frustrated. Carrying on a business and doing good to others cannot go together. You should sit down with Draupadi and work out a limit to your expenses and you should make up your mind that you will not go beyond it. If you do that your monthly expenses can be drawn from some institution.

What can I say about the debt of Rs. 850? The mistake was made at the outset in incurring the debt. I can only say that so long as you have not repaid the debt you should forget all about helping others and take up a job so that you can meet your expenses and repay the debt. If you have jewellery or other property in the family you can even dispose of it to clear the debt. This is a drastic cure but I am sure it is also the most effective cure. You should resolve also not

to incur any debts again.

The question then remains as to what should be done about the task you have undertaken. I am myself baffled. You can always come and join me of course but what we have to consider is whether you can face living in society.

The little girl is all right, I hope.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 274 and 275

387. LETTER TO HARSARAN VERMA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 5, 1938

BHAI HARSARAN VERMA,

Do you wish me to forward your letter to Ranjit Pandit?

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 91

388. NOTE TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

SEGAON,
[*December 5, 1938*][1]

People may not accept my statement. But I do claim that I take ample rest and regulate my life. The blood-pressure was not due to overwork. I have not got the mental poise prescribed by the *Gita*. A certain class of events generally considered trivial upsets me as nothing else can. There was just such an event. People may laugh at it but for me it was no laughing matter.

From the original: C. W. 11044. Courtesy: Arjun Jairamdas

[1] As noted down by the addressee himself

389. TELEGRAM TO PADMAJA NAIDU

WARDHA,
December 6, 1938

PADMAJA NAIDU
ZHEER MANZIL
RED HILL
HYDERABAD DN.

HOPE YOU FATHER DOING WELL. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

390. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

SEGAON, WARDHA,[1]
December 6, 1938

MY DEAR SLAVE,

I am sorry to hear about Father's and your illness. I sent you a wire which I hope you received.[2] I am yearning for good news from you. Having undertaken the great mission, you must keep yourself fit.

What a brave letter you have written. It is quite worthy of you. May your mission be crowned with success!

I knew it is a difficult task. But nothing is difficult for God. If He wills it, you will pull through with credit.

SLAVE-DRIVER

SHRI PADMAJA NAIDU
ZAHEER MANZIL
RED HILL
HYDERABAD DECCAN

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] This is in Hindi.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

391. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 6, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

There is no letter from you today. You had prepared me for the absence.

I hope you are having a profitable time in Lucknow. I shall expect to have full news about Sarup and J. L. Of the latter you will hardly see anything. I hope you won't be tired out.

I don't write to S.[1] before 10th.

I am still keeping well and so is Mahadev. Balkoba is going to Nagpur for X-ray examination tomorrow.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3897. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7053

392. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

December 6, 1938

MY DEAR KU,

Here is the amended draft.

I hope Satis Babu's certificate won't make you bulkier than you are. The book is still lying untouched. Those who wait and watch have their patience rewarded before they die.

Your answer about rice is very like giving me polished rice when I wanted the whole unpolished.[2] We must show how to eat unpolished rice and show how a whole village can dehusk. What should I do in Segaon, say? You have to probe deeper. What you have told me is not new. I want you to tell me something that is new and telling.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10142

[1] Shummy; *vide* " Letter to Amrit Kaur", 10-12-1938
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to J. C. Kumarappa", 5-12-1938

393. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

December 6, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Today the *Gita* was recited in several tunes. If your tune could not mingle with Lilavati's, you ought to have let her recite by herself. Sushila's tune also sometimes mingled with yours and sometimes broke off. The result was that I perspired listening to such cacophony. That did not matter since it gave me some warmth, but what about Mother *Gita*? How must she have felt?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10781

394. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

SEGAON,
December 6, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I am writing this just to drop you a few lines. Thank God you are keeping well.

Nanabhai[1] must be all right. I hope you don't feel nervous. Do you insist on his taking proper care about his food, etc.? If he can live on fruit juice for some days, he will certainly benefit. At his age, he should require very little of other food. If he is accustomed to taking tea, it should be the colour of hay, that is, tea-leaves should be placed in the strainer and boiling water should slowly be poured through it. He should be content with the colour that this gives. The tea-leaves should never be immersed in the water.

Everything is all right here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7104. Also C.W. 4596. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

[1] Addressee's father

395. DISCUSSION WITH D. TAKAOKA[1]

[*December 7, 1938*][2]

It can be possible if Japan ceases to throw its greedy eyes on India. No doubt you do not bring your army to India, but you employ your matchless skill, and your ability to hide the truth and your knowledge of the weaknesses of Indians, in order to flood India with your goods which are often flimsy. You have copied the rulers of India in their methods of exploitation and gone even one better. Now, from the Japanese standpoint you cannot afford to lose the millions of rupees that you get from India. And if you cannot get them voluntarily, you will be quite capable of doing so by force of arms. But that would not be the way of bringing Japan and India together. What can bring them together is a moral bond based on mutual friendship.

But there is no basis for that friendship today. Take your art. I like it. I read a fascinating account of Japan and Japanese life by Edwin Arnold many years ago. That picture has remained with me. I want to assimilate all your good points, but unfortunately no one comes here to give us the good things of Japan. You believe only in dumping your goods on us. How can I take a single yard of Japanese cloth, however fine and artistic it may be? It is as poison to us, for it means starvation for the poor people of India. You have left the West far behind in diplomacy, in skill, in cheap manufactures, in armed warfare, in exploitation. How then can there be friendship between you and us, so long as you see nothing wrong in exploitation?

Mr. Takaoka wondered if Gandhiji could give a message to the new party in Japan which stands for Asia for the Asiatics. Gandhiji said:

I do not subscribe to the doctrine of Asia for the Asiatics, if it is meant as an anti-European combination. How can we have Asia for the Asiatics unless we are content to let Asia remain a frog in the well? But Asia cannot afford to remain a frog in the well. It has a message for the whole world, if it will only live up to it. There is the imprint of Buddhistic influence on the whole of Asia, which includes India, China, Japan, Burma, Ceylon and the Malay States. I said to the Bur-

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "A Japanese Visitor". Takaoka was a member of the Japanese Parliament and wanted to know how unity could be brought about between India and Japan.

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 8-12-1938

mese and the Ceylonese that they were Buddhist in name; India was Buddhist in reality. I would say the same thing to China and Japan. But, for Asia to be not for Asia but the whole world, it has to relearn the message of Buddha and deliver it to the world. Today it is being denied everywhere. In Burma every Buddhist monk is being dreaded by the Muslims. But why should anyone who is a true Buddhist be dreaded by anyone?

You will therefore see that I have no message to give you but this, that you must be true to your ancient heritage. The message is 2,500 years old, but it has not yet been truly lived. But what are 2,500 years? They are but a speck in the cycle of time. The full flower of non-violence which seems to be withering away has yet to come to full bloom.

Harijan, 24-12-1938

396. REPLY TO GERMAN CRITICS

I was not unprepared for the exhibition of wrath from Germany over my article[1] about the German treatment of the Jews. I have myself admitted my ignorance of European politics. But in order to commend my prescription to the Jews for the removal of their many ills, I did not need to have an accurate knowledge of European politics. The main facts about the atrocities are beyond dispute. When the anger over my writing has subsided and comparative calmness has returned, the most wrathful German will find that underlying my writing there was friendliness towards Germany, never any ill will.

Have I not repeatedly said that active non-violence is unadulterated love—fellow-feeling? And if the Jews, instead of being helplessly and of necessity non-violent, adopt active non-violence, i.e., fellow-feeling for the gentile Germans deliberately, they cannot do any harm to the Germans and I am as certain as I am dictating these lines that the stoniest German heart will melt. Great as have been the Jewish contributions to the world's progress, this supreme act of theirs will be their greatest contribution and war will be a thing of the past.

It passes comprehension why any German should be angry over my utterly innocuous writing. Of course, German critics, as others, might have ridiculed it by saying that it was a visionary's effort

[1] *Vide* "The Jews"

doomed to fail. I therefore welcome this wrath, though wholly unmerited, against my writing. Has my writing gone home? Has the writer felt that my remedy was after all not so ludicrous as it may appear, but that it was eminently practical if only the beauty of suffering without retaliation was realized?

To say that my writing has rendered neither myself, my movement, nor German-Indian relations any service, is surely irrelevant, if not also unworthy, implying as it does a threat; and I should rank myself a coward if, for fear of my country or myself or Indo-German relations being harmed, I hesitated to give what I felt in the innermost recesses of my heart to be cent per cent sound advice.

The Berlin writer has surely enunciated a novel doctrine that people outside Germany may not criticize German action even from friendliest motives. For my part I would certainly welcome the interesting things that Germans or other outsiders may unearth about Indians. I do not need to speak for the British. But if I know the British people at all, they, too, welcome outside criticism, when it is well-informed and free from malice. In this age, when distances have been obliterated, no nation can afford to imitate the fabled frog in the well. Sometimes it is refreshing to see ourselves as others see us. If, therefore, the German critics happen to see this reply, I hope that they will not only revise their opinion about my writing but will also realize the value of outside criticism.

SEGAON, December 8, 1938

Harijan, 17-12-1938

397. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

December 8, 1938

BHAI MUNSHI,

It is some days since Pyarelal sent you a reply regarding the querns. Maybe the letter went astray. You may use mechanical querns in prisons.

If Dharmanand Kosambi can work for Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan without letting the work of the Buddha Mandir suffer, he may certainly do so.

If the Ministry continues for any length of time,[1] you will have to give up many more loves, besides that of home. I have received a complaint against you that you are ruining your health through overwork. You will have to give up this form of attachment too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7642. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

398. LETTER TO DAMODARDAS MUNDHRA[2]

December 8, 1938

BHAI DAMODAR[3],

Both the replies are very long. But long or short there is no need to send them. They are all right for my information.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 10154. Courtesy: Secretary, Andhra Pradesh State Committee, Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, Hyderabad

399. SOME QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Friends have sent me two newspaper cuttings criticizing my appeal to the Jews. The two critics suggest that in presenting non-violence to the Jews as a remedy against the wrong done to them I have suggested nothing new, and that they have been practising non-violence for the past two thousand years. Obviously, so far as these critics are concerned, I did not make my meaning clear. The Jews, so far as I know, have never practised non-violence as an article of faith or even as a deliberate policy. Indeed, it is a stigma against them that their ancestors crucified Jesus. Are they not supposed to believe in eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth? Have they no violence in their hearts for their oppressors? Do they not want the so-called democratic powers to punish Germany for her persecution and to deliver them from

[1] The addressee was Home Minister in the Congress Ministry of Bombay Province.

[2] The letter was written on the reverse of a letter from the addressee with which he had enclosed a letter received from Padmaja Naidu and his reply to it as well as one from Jamnalal Bajaj.

[3] Jamnalal Bajaj's secretary

oppression? If they do, there is no non-violence in their hearts. Their non-violence, if it may be so called, is of the helpless and the weak.

What I have pleaded for is renunciation of violence of the heart and consequent active exercise of the force generated by the great renunciation. One of the critics says that favourable public opinion is necessary for the working of non-violence. The writer is evidently thinking of passive resistance conceived as a weapon of the weak. I have drawn a distinction between passive resistance of the weak and active non-violent resistance of the strong. The latter can and does work in the teeth of the fiercest opposition. But it ends in evoking the widest public sympathy. Sufferings of the non-violent have been known to melt the stoniest hearts. I make bold to say that if the Jews can summon to their aid the soul power that comes only from non-violence, Herr Hitler will bow before the courage which he has never yet experienced in any large measure in his dealings with men, and which, when it is exhibited, he will own is infinitely superior to that shown by his best storm troopers. The exhibition of such courage is only possible for those who have a living faith in the God of Truth and Non-violence, i. e., Love.

Of course, the critics can reasonably argue that the nonviolence pictured by me is not possible for masses of mankind, it is possible only for the very few highly developed persons. I have combated that view and suggested that, given proper training and proper generalship, non-violence can be practised by masses of mankind.

I see, however, that my remarks are being misunderstood to mean that because I advise non-violent resistance by the persecuted Jews, by inference I expect or would advise non-interference by the democratic powers on behalf of the Jews. I hardly need to answer this fear. Surely there is no danger of the great powers refraining from action because of anything I have said. They will, they are bound to, do all they can to free the Jews from the inhuman persecution. My appeal has force in the face of the fact that the great powers feel unable to help the Jews in an effective manner. Therefore it is that I have offered the prescription which I know to be infallible when taken in the right manner.

The most relevant criticism, however, which I have received is this: How do I expect the Jews to accept my prescription when I know that India, where I am myself working, where I call myself the self-appointed general, has not accepted it *in toto*. My answer is: ‘Blessed

are they that expect nothing.' I belong to the category of the blessed, in this case at least. Having got the prescription and being sure of its efficacy, I felt that I would be wrong if I did not draw attention to it when I saw cases where it could be effectively applied.

Hitherto I have refused to deal with European politics. My general position still remains the same. I presented my remedy almost in suppressed tones in the case of Abyssinia. The cases of the Czechs and the Jews became more vivid to me than the case of the Abyssinians. And I could not restrain myself from writing. Perhaps Dr. Mott was right when he said to me the other day that I must write more and more articles like those on the Czechs and the Jews, if only because they must aid me in the Indian struggle. He said that the West was never more prepared than now to listen to the message of non-violence.

SEGAON, December 9, 1938

Harijan, 17-1 2-1938

400. RED TAPE

A distinguished Indian, who had been watching Ministers Kher and Munshi working at breakneck speed, told me the other day how they seemed to have aged, and warned me that the nation would lose them before their time if I did not prevent them from overworking themselves. I wish I had the influence over them which the friend credited me with. If I had, I would certainly prevent them from committing suicide by inches. What applies to these two Ministers applies to the others. A few days after the visitor, came a high official who has been specially entrusted with responsible work by Shri Kher. He said, "I want to fulfil Shri (of course he used 'Mr.') Kher's expectations. But I do not know how I am to give him satisfaction. I believe I have always been a conscientious worker and kept myself busy. But now since the advent of the Congress Ministry our work has increased. For they give themselves no rest and give us none. The result is an ever-increasing pile of files. It is almost impossible to clear the desk from day to day. And now I have been given work which demands thinking out and planning. I must study. And I do not know what to do with these files." I promptly answered, "Burn them." I meant it too.

The third visitor, who followed quickly after the second, was a

socialist friend. He said: "We are much misunderstood. Your article on the walk-out[1] has added to the misunderstanding. I assure you we want to help, not to hinder, the Congress work and the Ministers, reserving to ourselves the right of constructive criticism. But look at our difficulty. There is the Karachi resolution and the Congress manifesto[2]. We honestly feel that the promises made in them about economic relief are not being fully carried out. I do not want to underrate the Congress Ministers' difficulties. But mere tinkering with the problem won't do. There are forces at work which no one can stop. Advantage is being taken of the situation to put up the masses against the Congress. The masses have the vote. They are becoming otherwise conscious of their power. And if we do not take care, the Congress may one fine morning discover that it has lost its hold (at least temporarily) on the masses."

I agreed in general with the friend and I said, "The reason for dissatisfaction is plain to me. You have a philosophy of your own. The Congress Ministries today are not of the socialist hue. They are supposed to be of the 'Gandhian' hue, whatever it may mean. Now, yours is a clear-cut programme. You have textbooks to go by. But I myself do not know what is the Gandhian hue. I am sailing on an uncharted sea. I have to take frequent soundings. If such is my pitiable condition, the Ministers' is much worse. They are so tied down to red tape that they have no time to think. They have no time to see me or discuss things with me and, what is more or worse, knowing their condition, I have no heart to inflict even letters on them. And I must not speak at them through the columns of *Harijan.*"

I have touched on many topics in the foregoing paragraph. But my main purpose in this article is to deal with red tape. If the Ministers are to cope with their new responsibility, they must discover the art of burning red tape. The old order could only live by and on red tape. It will strangle the new order. The Ministers must see people on whose goodwill alone they can exist. They must listen to petty and serious complaints. But they need not keep a record of all these or the letters they receive nor even of all the decisions they give. They have only to keep sufficient record to refresh their memory and to preserve continuity of practice. Much of the departmental correspondence

[1] *Vide* "That Unfortunate Walk-Out"

[2] *Vide* "Extracts from the congress election Menifesto", 22-4-1936

must cease. The Ministers are not responsible to the India Office several thousand miles away. They are responsible to the millions of their masters who do not know what red tape is and care little. Many of them can't read and write. But they have primary wants to be fulfilled. They have been accustomed by Congressmen to think that immediately the Congress comes into power there won't be a hungry mouth in all India nor a naked person who wants to cover himself. The Ministers have to give their time and thought to such problems, if they are to do justice to the trust they have undertaken. If they are of the so-called Gandhian hue, they must find out what it is, not from me but from within by searching inward. I may not always know what it is. But I do know that if it is properly investigated and followed, it is radical and revolutionary enough to satisfy all the real wants of India. The Congress is a revolutionary body. Only its revolution is to be distinguished from all the other political revolutions known to history. Whereas the previous ones have been based on violence, this one is deliberately non-violent. If it was violent, probably much of the old form and practice would have been retained. But, for the Congress most of the old forms and practices are taboo. The most potent is the police and the military. I have admitted that so long as Congressmen are in office and they cannot discover peaceful ways and means of preserving order they are bound to make use of both. But the question ever present before the Ministers must be: is such use indispensable, and if it is, why is it so? If, as a result of their inquiry—not after the old style, costly and more often than not useless, but an inquiry costless but thorough and effective—they find that they cannot run the State without the use of the police and the military, it is the clearest possible sign, in terms of non-violence, that the Congress should give up office and again wander in the wilderness in search of the Holy Grail.

SEGAON, December 9, 1938

Harijan, 17-12-1938

401. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 9, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This letter is going to Jullundur. I have your letters. I am glad you had the talk with Pantji. The matter of curruption is becoming too serious to be neglected. I am going to discuss the whole thing at the forthcoming meeting.

Mahadev is well.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3898. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7054

402. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

December 9, 1938

MY DEAR KU,

Fix any dates[1] you like after 20th December and let me know.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10144

403. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 9, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

Just a line to say all well here. Muriel and Dorothy came in this morning. Mary is also here. Shanta will be married in a few days to an Indian in London. She is happy and expects to return with her husband.

Sardar is also here and so is Jairamdas.

I hope the cold won't prove too severe for you.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6420. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 10015

[1] For the meeting of the A. I. S. A. Council

404. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

December 9, 1938

CHI. LILA,

I was very much pained by today's incident. But how could you help your nature?

However, my purpose in writing this is different. I have noticed that you and Amtul Salaam cannot tolerate S.[1] sleeping with me. Whatever may be the cause, I do not want to carry on my experiment by displeasing you two. I, therefore, want to tell both of you that I have discontinued my experiment for the present. The fault is not yours. I believe it is entirely mine. But I do not wish to discuss the matter with you, nor do I want you to reply. I have simply informed you.

Show this letter to Amtul Salaam.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I wanted to write and give this letter in the morning, but I could find no time.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9794. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

405. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

December 9, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

It would be wonderful of course if one could completely lose oneself in meditation. This means that the person who is the object of one's devotion, has transcended the body. Why watch the activities of one who has left the body? But have I attained to that state? Therefore even the ears cannot be shut. It is not an artificial process. You have to strive towards perfect meditation. My efforts are known to you; there is nothing in them. I am a very imperfect person, I have good deal of intolerance, also anger. I am able to master these but that is nothing so great.

[1] The name has been omitted.

While plying the *takli* fix your mind on the thought that it is God who is doing it, that He is hidden in every fibre of the yarn. See Him with the inner eyes.

Then spinning, which now seems secondary to you, will become the primary thing. In the language of satyagraha the means become identified with the end.

You ought to grasp it by now that observing outward activities is only self-indulgence.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4566; also S.G. 71

406. A NOTE

[About *December 9, 1938*][1]

It is my advice that the Mewar satyagraha should be suspended for the moment. Take Rameshwari Nehru for the khadi exhibition. She is a good lady. Rajkumari has gone to Jullunder at the moment. Hence she cannot be taken.

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11320. Courtesy: Not known

407. A.I.V.I.A. TRAINING SCHOOL

From the report of the certificate-giving function of this Training School I cull the following: [2]

> Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel presided at the sessional gathering of the A. I. V. I. A. Training School for village workers, which was held at Maganwadi, Wardha, on Thursday 17th November. . . . The Superintendent, Sjt. J. P. Patel, . . . welcoming the President and the guests said among other things:
>
> ". . . The industries that are taught at present are paper-making, oil-pressing, bee-keeping, gur-making, paddy-husking and flour-grinding. The course of the Vidyalaya is for five months. . . .
>
> "Rural economics, book-keeping and health and hygiene are also taught. . . .

[1] From the reference to satyagraha in Mewar, where there had been repression during this period and also from the mention of Rajkumari Amrit Kaur's having gone to Jullunder; *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur" and "Mewar", 18-2-1939

[2] Only extracts are reproduced here.

"In admitting students our main object is to see that after finishing the course here they devote themselves to some form of village service. . . .

"The instruction is given through the medium of Rashtrabhasha. . . ."

I would advise the management to keep a register of all outgoing students, to keep a living contact with them, and carry on with them a kind of post-graduate correspondence class. So far as it is humanly possible not one of the students should lapse into the old rut or feel despondent because he can make no headway.

Harijan, 10-12-1938

408. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 10, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I hope you have received all my letters. J. L. and Maulana came in last night. We had 2_ hours together only on the question of Presidentship. Subhas must have arrived in the evening.

I hope you are none the worse for your wanderings. My letter to Shummy goes today.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3899. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7055

409. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

December 10, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I chanced to see Kanam's nails today. Look at them and see how dirty they are! Is not the teacher responsible for the cleanliness of his nails, ears, teeth, etc? He does not still take part in the Ramadhun. How is that? At this age he should be able even to sing *bhajans*.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10782

410. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 10, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter and Jayaprakash's.

I have to go to Bardoli on the 1st of January. Come there both of you if you can. The treatment for your hand is steam, hip-bath and a diet of milk and fruit. I will cure you completely if you come to Bardoli.

Ba may perhaps go to Rajkot. Mahadev is better. Please tell Jayaprakash that I should be glad if he could spend some days with me. I sincerely wish that we should understand each other correctly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3525

411. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

December 10, 1938

Having obtained the permission of the President of the Travancore State Congress, I am now able to tell the public what advice I gave the deputation that saw me on November 13 and 14.[1] I told them that their cause would be damaged by persistence in the charges against the Dewan and that the question was not one of the truth or otherwise of the charges.[2] It was one of political insight. Allegations were made that the struggle was personal. The demand for responsible government made it impersonal and raised it to a higher level. I could not be a party to the conduct of a struggle which must engage and exhaust time and energy in pursuit of a personal matter to the exclusion of the most important one of swaraj. If they concentrated on the allegations, responsible government was bound to recede into the background.

[1] The deputation actually saw Gandhiji on the 15th; *vide* "Talk to Travancore State Congress Deputation", 15-11-1938

[2] *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 3-10-1938

Though my conviction about the correctness of my advice was unshaken, the members were to be guided by their own, if it conflicted with mine, for the burden of conducting the struggle rested on them. I also told them that if violence continued, no matter how it occurred, they were bound to suspend civil disobedience; for violence on the part of the public, even though instigated, showed that the State Congress influence was not adequate. This in no way meant suspension of the struggle. It meant merely a change of the emphasis on the instruments. An instrument of permanent value was a constructive programme. The employment of civil disobedience had well-defined limitations and required suspension as the occasion demanded.

Harijan, 17-12-1938

412. DISCUSSION WITH CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES[1]

[Before *December 12, 1938*][2]

One of the questioners asked Gandhiji what his motive in life was, "the thing that leads us to do what we do", whether it was religious, or social or political.

GANDHIJI: Purely religious. This was the question asked me by the late Mr. Montagu when I accompanied a deputation which was purely political. "How you, a social reformer," he exclaimed, have "found your way into this crowd ?" My reply was that it was only an extension of my social activity. I could not be leading a religious life unless I identified myself with the whole of mankind, and that I could not do unless I took part in politics. The whole gamut of man's activities today constitutes an indivisible whole. You cannot divide social, economic, political and purely religious work into watertight compartments. I do not know any religion apart from human activity. It provides a moral basis to all other activities which they would otherwise lack, reducing life to a maze of sound and fury signifying nothing!

QUESTION: Seeing the influence you wield over the people, may we inquire whether it is the love of the cause or the love of the people that moves you?

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Non-violence and World Crisis". The missionaries included William Paton, Secretary of the International Missionary Council, Leslie B. Moss, Secretary of the Conference of Missionary Societies in North America, Dr. Smith of the British and Foreign Bible Society and John Mott. They were in India to attend the International Missionary Conference which opened at Tambaram on December 12, 1938.

[2] *ibid*

ANSWER: Love of the people. Cause without the people is a dead thing. Love of the people brought the problem of untouchability early into my life. My mother said, 'You must not touch this boy, he is an untouchable.' 'Why not?' I questioned back, and from that day my revolt began.

Q. You would expect us Christians to copy your example. Should we allow our religious motive to plunge us into politics?

A. Those who come from different parts of the world into this country cannot say: 'We shall have nothing to do with the politics of the country.' They would not be true to their faith if they bargained with the Government in order to supersede their fellow-feeling with the people. Supposing the Government does a grievous wrong to the people of the soil and the missionaries are told that they must not lift a finger to prevent it, surely, the least they can do is to leave the country by way of signifying their displeasure at the perpetration of the wrong. If a missionary puts himself out for service, opportunities will come: today it may be in the economic sphere, tomorrow in the social, next time it may be in the political field. You cannot then say, 'I shall confine myself to this or that work and do nothing else.' When I went to South Africa I knew nothing about that country. I was bound to my client only. Yet, within seven days of my reaching there, I found that I had to deal with a situation too terrible for words.

Gandhiji was next asked in what relation his non-violence stood to the Pacifist attitude, "which we Westerners are trying to adopt without much success."

GANDHIJI: In my opinion non-violence is not passivity in any shape or form. Non-violence, as I understand it, is the activest force in the world. Therefore, whether it is materialism or anything else, if non-violence does not provide an effective antidote it is not the active force of my conception. Or, to put it conversely, if you bring me some conundrums that I cannot answer I would say my non-violence is still defective. Non-violence is the supreme law. During my half a century of experience I have not yet come across a situation when I had to say that I was helpless, that I had no remedy in terms of non-violence.

Take the question of the Jews on which I have written.[1] No Jew need feel helpless if he takes to the non-violent way. A friend has written me a letter objecting that in that article I have assumed that the

[1] *Vide* "The Jews"

Jews have been violent. It is true that the Jews have not been actively violent in their own persons. But they called down upon the Germans the curses of mankind, and they wanted America and England to fight Germany on their behalf. If I hit my adversary, that is of course violence, but to be truly non-violent, I must love him and pray for him even when he hits me. The Jews have not been actively non-violent or, in spite of the misdeeds of the dictators, they would say, 'We shall suffer at their hands; they knew no better. But we shall suffer not in the manner in which they want us to suffer.' If even one Jew acted thus, he would salve his self respect and leave an example which, if it became infectious, would save the whole of Jewry and leave a rich heritage to mankind besides.

What about China, you will ask. The Chinese have no designs upon other people. They have no desire for territory. True, perhaps, China is not ready for such aggression; perhaps, what looks like her pacifism is only indolence. In any case China's is not active non-violence. Her putting up a valiant defence against Japan is proof enough that China was never intentionally non-violent. That she is on the defensive is no answer in terms of non-violence. Therefore, when the time for testing her active non-violence came, she failed in the test. This is no criticism of China. I wish the Chinese success. According to the accepted standards her behaviour is strictly correct. But when the position is examined in terms of non-violence, I must say it is unbecoming for a nation of 400 millions, a nation as cultured as Japan [*sic*], to repel Japanese aggression by resorting to Japan's own methods. If the Chinese had non-violence of my conception, there would be no use left for the latest machinery for destruction which Japan possesses. The Chinese would say to Japan, 'Bring all your machinery, we present half of our population to you. But the remaining two hundred millions won't bend their knee to you.' If the Chinese did that, Japan would become China's slave.

And in support of this argument he referred to Shelley's celebrated lines from *The Mask of Anarchy*, "Ye are many, they are few":

> Stand ye calm and resolute,
> Like a forest close and mute,
> With folded arms and looks which are
> Weapons of unvanquished war.
> And if then the tyrants dare
> Let them ride among you there,

Slash, and stab, and maim and hew—
What they like, that let them do.
With folded arms and steady eyes,
And little fear, and less surprise,
Look upon them as they slay
Till their rage has died away.
Then they will return with shame
To the place from which they came,
And the blood thus shed will speak
In hot blushes on their cheek.
Rise like Lions after slumber
In unvanquishable number,
Shake your chains to earth like dew
Which in sleep had fallen on you—
Ye are many—they are few.

It has been objected, however, that non-violence is all right in the case of the Jews because there is personal contact between the individual and his persecutors, but in China, Japan comes with its long-range guns and aeroplanes. The person who rains death from above has never any chance of even knowing who and how many he has killed. How can non-violence combat aerial warfare, seeing that there are no personal contacts? The reply to this is that behind the death-dealing bomb there is the human hand that releases it, and behind that still, is the human heart that sets the hand in motion. And at the back of the policy of terrorism is the assumption that terrorism if applied in a sufficient measure will produce the desired result, namely, bend the adversary to the tyrant's will. But supposing a people make up their mind that they will never do the tyrant's will, nor retaliate with the tyrant's own methods, the tyrant will not find it worth his while to go on with his terrorism. If sufficient food is given to the tyrant, a time will come when he will have had more than surfeit. If all the mice in the world held conference together and resolved that they would no more fear the cat but all run into her mouth, the mice would live. I have actually seen a cat play with a mouse. She did not kill it outright but held it between her jaws, then released it, and again pouched upon it as soon as it made an effort to escape. In the end the mouse died out of sheer fright. The cat would have derived no sport if the mouse had not tried to run away. I learnt

the lesson of non-violence from my wife, when I tried to bend her to my will. Her determined resistance to my will on the one hand, and her quiet submission to the suffering my stupidity involved on the other, ultimately made me ashamed of myself and cured me of my stupidity in thinking that I was born to rule over her, and in the end she became my teacher in non-violence. And what I did in South Africa was but an extension of the rule of satyagraha which she unwillingly practised in her own person.

But one of the visitors objected: You do not know Hitler and Mussolini. They are incapable of any kind of moral response. They have no conscience and they have made themselves impervious to world opinion. Would it not be playing into the hands of these dictators if, for instance, the Czechs following your advice confronted them with non-violence? Seeing that dictatorships are unmoral by definition, would the law of moral conversion hold good in their case?

GANDHIJI: Your argument presupposes that the dictators like Mussolini or Hitler are beyond redemption. But belief in non-violence is based on the assumption that human nature in its essence is one and therefore unfailingly responds to the advances of love. It should be remembered that they have up to now always found ready response to the violence that they have used. Within their experience, they have not come across organized non-violent resistance on an appreciable scale, if at all. Therefore, it is not only highly likely, but I hold it to be inevitable, that they would recognize the superiority of non-violent resistance over any display of violence that they may be capable of putting forth. Moreover the non-violent technique that I have presented to the Czechs does not depend for its success on the goodwill of the dictators, for, a non-violent resister depends upon the unfailing assistance of God which sustains him throughout difficulties which would otherwise be considered insurmountable. His faith makes him indomitable.

The visitor retorted that these dictators wisely refrain from using force, but simply take possession of what they want. In the circumstances what can non-violent resisters do?

GANDHIJI: Suppose they come and occupy mines, factories and all sources of natural wealth belonging to the Czechs, then the following results can take place: (1) The Czechs may be annihilated for disobedience to orders. That would be a glorious victory for the Czechs and the beginning of the fall of Germany. (2) The Czechs might become demoralized in the presence of overwhelming force. This is a result common in all struggles, but if demoralization does

take place, it would not be on account of non-violence, but it would be due to absence or inadequacy of non-violence (3) The third thing that can take place is that Germany might use her new possessions for occupation by her surplus population. This, again, could not be avoided by offering violent resistance, for we have assumed that violent resistance is out of the question. Thus non-violent resistance is the best method under all conceivable circumstances.

I do not think that Hitler and Mussolini are after all so very indifferent to the appeal of world opinion. But today these dictators feel satisfaction in defying world opinion because none of the so-called Great Powers can come to them with clean hands, and they have a rankling sense of injustice done to their people by the Great Powers in the past. Only the other day an esteemed English friend owned to me that Nazi Germany was England's sin and that it was the Treaty of Versailles that made Hitler.

QUESTION: What can I as a Christian do to contribute to international peace? How can international anarchy be broken down and non-violence made effective for establishing peace? Subject nations apart, how can nations at the top be made to disarm themselves?

ANSWER: You as a Christian can make an effective contribution by non-violent action even though it may cost you your all. Peace will never come until the Great Powers courageously decide to disarm themselves. It seems to me that recent events must force that belief on the Great Powers. I have an implicit faith—-faith that today burns brighter than ever, after half a century's experience of unbroken practice of non-violence—that mankind can only be saved through non-violence which is the central teaching of the Bible as I have understood the Bible.

Q. You have said that so far as India is concerned you are hopeful that it will stick to non-violence. What are the omens of that hope?

A. If you ask for outward proofs, I cannot give any. But I have an instinctive feeling that the country is not going to take to anything else. You must remember that just now I am filled with what I saw in the North-West Frontier Province. I was not prepared for what I saw. They are in dead earnest about the thing, and there is a deep-rooted sincerity in their hearts. They themselves see light and hope in non-violence. Khan Saheb told me that before that it was all darkness. There was not a family but had its blood feuds. They lived like tigers in a den. Though the Pathans used to be always armed with knives,

daggers and rifles, they used to be terrified of their superior officers, lest they should lose their jobs. All that has changed now with thousands. Blood feuds are becoming a thing of the past among those Pathans who have come under the influence of Khan Saheb's non-violence movement and, instead of depending for their livelihood on paltry jobs, they have turned to the soil for cultivation, and soon they will turn to industry if their promise is kept.

Q. What is your method of worship?

A. We have joint worship morning and evening at 4.20 a. m. and 7 p. m. This has gone on for years. We have a recitation of verses from the *Gita* and other accepted religious books, also hymns of saints with or without music. Individual worship cannot be described in words. It goes on continuously and even uncon-sciously. There is not a moment when I do not feel the presence of a witness whose eye misses nothing and with whom I strive to keep in tune. I do not pray as Christian friends do. Not because I think there is anything wrong in it, but because words won't come to me. I suppose it is a matter of habit.

Q. Is there any place for supplication in your prayer?

A. There is and there is not. God knows and anticipates our wants. The Deity does not need my supplication, but I, a very imperfect human being, do need His protection as a child that of its father. And yet I know that nothing that I do is going to change His plans. You may call me a fatalist, if you like.

Q. Do you find any response to your prayer?

A. I consider myself a happy man in that respect. I have never found Him lacking in response. I have found Him nearest at hand when the horizon seemed darkest—in my ordeals in jails when it was not all smooth sailing for me. I cannot recall a moment in my life when I had a sense of desertion by God.

Harijan, 24-12-1938

413. MESSAGE TO C. K. GIBBON[1]

[On or before *December 12, 1938*][2]

I wish you success in your endeavour to wake up the Anglo-Indian community to a sense of their duty as citizens of free India.

The Bombay Chronicle, 13-12-1938

414. HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

I read suggestions about a memorial to the late Maulana Shaukat Ali.[3] As soon as I learnt about the wholly unexpected death, I wrote to some Muslim friends sharing with them my innermost thoughts. One of them writes thus:

> There can be no two opinions about the extreme urgency and essential necessity of a sincere and lasting Hindu-Muslim unity. And the sooner it is brought about the better it will be for all concerned. Delay in this matter can only be fraught with consequences which nobody can contemplate without serious concern. The present drift may lead to most tragic developments which must, if at all possible, be avoided. I know that Shaukat was in his own way genuinely anxious to bring about real Hindu-Muslim understanding, and nothing will please his spirit more than to know in its rest in heaven that one of the objects after which he strove in this world was at last achieved. There may be people who may doubt this, but knowing him and the working of his mind most intimately as I do, I can assert it with confidence.

I entirely endorse the opinion that, in spite of his outbursts at times to the contrary, deep down in the Maulana was the same longing for peace for which he used to speak and work eloquently during the Khilafat days. I have no doubt whatsoever that the truest memorial to his memory will be a joint determination on the part of both the communities to bring about not a paper-unity but a heart-unity, based not on suspicion and distrust but on mutual trust. No other unity is worth having. And without that unity there is no real freedom for India.

SEGAON, December 12, 1938

Harijan, 17-12-1938

[1] General Secretary of the Anglo-Indian Civil Liberties Association

[2] The news item carrying the message is dated December 12, 1938.

[3] Shaukat Ali died on November 27.

415. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

December 12, 1938

MY DEAR KU,

I think 5 p. m. will be the ideal time.[1] If any other is more suitable, I shall suit myself to it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10146

416. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 12, 1938

MY DEAR L. B.,

Your letter and the files just to hand.

You must go slow. If you are a true and willing slave, you have to listen to the slave-driver. And so you will go with Lilamani[2] to Delhi, have the bracing air there, be strong and then come to me for a little work and much play.

Tell Lilamani that love always finds and even makes time. How are she and Surya faring? What about the latter's big scheme?

Love.

PLAYMATE

SHRI PADMAJA NAIDU
ZAHEER MANZIL
RED HILL
HYDERABAD DECCAN

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* "Letter to J. C. Kumarappa", 9-12-1938
[2] Addressee's sister

417. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

December 12, 1938

CHI. AMALA,

I received the five rupees. Even if you sign Margarete Spiegel, you will be only Amala to me. I will address the envelope as you desire.

I hope you are keeping fine.

It will be good if you study Gujarati, even if only a little.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

418. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

December 12, 1938

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

Your anger will eat up both you and the cow. I am unable to see to everything myself. So I have entrusted this work to others. You have no plan. I would have closed my eyes and let you spend as you wished if I had unlimited funds. But I must know where to draw the line. I do not consider you an expert, but I have full confidence in you and also patience, so I go on. Yes, I want to keep more than a hundred cows but where do I have the plan?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

If you cannot patiently argue with your colleagues, how do you expect to serve?

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1912

419. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 12, 1938

CHI. BRAJKRISHNA,

What I did cannot apply in the case of your brother. I took no medicine except soda and I lived entirely on fruit juice. Massage, hip-baths, etc., were continued. If I tried to eat anything in the mean while my condition became worse. In the end it was goat's milk that saved my life.

Carry on whatever treatment is possible there. See if Saraswati can do anything. If you are so inclined you may take him to Poona.

The problem of Satyavati is a difficult one. She will not even take the full treatment.

It is surprising that there is no reply from the Meerut people. I am writing to them.

Mahadev and I are keeping well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am not able to suggest anything with regard to the mills except that we should organize the mill-hands.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2458

420. LETTER TO HARSARAN VERMA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 12, 1938

BHAI HARSARAN VERMA,

I have your letter. It is good you wrote to me. You should also submit to the Congress Committee all that you have written to me.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 90

421. A NOTE

[Before *December 13, 1938*][1]

In my view, we should not interfere with whatever the Princes are doing. But why should not all the obnoxious portions of the Criminal Law Amendment Act be removed? Let only the absolute minimum be retained.

X X X

Such a protest should be considered thoughtless. We want to do away with all that is bad in the [Criminal Law Amendment] Act. But why should we give up what is good in it? The Working Committee should have the courage to lend its support to this much. We must see the spirit [of the Law]. Why should we see only the letter of it? I have been purposely silent because I could not have written fully in favour of the Princes. I would be willing to write in their favour if they are agreeable to my suggestions. Even there the condition would be that after reading the Act, you approve of my suggestions. I do not know for certain that the [present] use of the sections is necessary. If it is necessary, I would certainly say so.

From the Hindi original: Rajendra Prasad Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] The note has been placed in the source among items of 1938. It appears from the contents that it was written before the Working Committee's resolution on Indian States drafted by Gandhiji on December 13, 1938; *vide,* "Draftof Congress Working Committee Resolution on Indian States", 13-12-1938

422. INTERVIEW TO CELESTINE SMITH[1]

[Before *December 13, 1938*][2]

I had never thought of a girl coming. To take the responsibility of a girl so far away from her home would perhaps be a bit too much. But as you can see I have plenty of girls around me here, and if a girl did come from America like that, I should not mind it a bit, i. e., if she could put up with the incredibly simple life here as it would appear to her. What she can learn from here and take back is the secret of simple living. However simple life may be in America, it cannot come anywhere near the simplicity of life here. I do not know if America can assimilate such simplicity, or wants it. The other thing that she could take back is the spirit of non-violence, to the extent that she can assimilate it without the help of any words or speeches, if there is non-violence in the atmosphere here. If there is no non-violence in the atmosphere, no written or spoken word can make her understand it or grasp it.

Harijan, 31-12-1938

423. DRAFT OF CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION ON INDIAN STATES[3]

December 13, 1938

The Working Committee welcome the awakening of the people of Indian States in many parts of the country and consider this as a hopeful prelude to the larger freedom, comprising the whole of India, for which the Congress has laboured. The Committee support the demand for civil liberty and responsible government under the aegis

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". Celestine Smith was the Secretary of the Negro Section of the Young Women's Christian Association, New York. She was impressed with the Wardha scheme of education and wanted to know whether she could send one of her girls and, if she did, what she would learn and take back to America.

[2] A photograph of Gandhiji with Celestine Smith was published in *The Bombay Chronicle* of December 13, which would indicate that they had met before that date.

[3] *The Indian Annual Register,* in the Chronicle of Events, notes under the date December 13 that Gandhiji drafted this resolution.

of the Rulers in the States and express their solidarity with these movements for freedom and self-expression. While appreciating that some Rulers of the States have recognized this awakening as a healthy sign of growth and are seeking to adjust themselves to it in co-ope-ration with their people, the Committee regret that other Rulers have sought to suppress these movements by banning peaceful and legitimate organizations and all political activity and, in some cases, resorting to cruel and inhuman repression. In particular, the Committee deplore the attempt of some Rulers to seek the aid of the British Government in India to suppress their own people, and the Committee assert the right of the Congress to protect the people against an unwarranted use of military or police forces, lent by the British authorities, for the suppression of the legitimate movement of the people for responsible government within the States.

The Committee desire to draw attention afresh to the resolution of the Haripura Congress which defines Congress policy in regard to the States. While it is the right and privilege of the Congress to work for the attainment of civil liberty and responsible government in the States, existing circumstances impose certain limitations on this work, and considerations of prudence prevent the Congress from interfering organizationally and directly in the internal struggles of the States. This policy was conceived in the best interests of the people, to enable them to develop self-reliance and strength. It was also intended as a measure of the goodwill of the Congress towards the States and of its hope that the Rulers, of their own accord, would recognize the spirit of the times and satisfy the just aspirations of their people. Experience has proved the wisdom of this policy. But this was never conceived as an obligation. The Congress has always reserved the right, as it is its duty, to guide the people of the States and lend them its influence. With the great awakening that is taking place among the people of the States, there must be an increasing identification of the Congress with States' people.

The policy laid down by the Haripura Congress, which has been so abundantly justified, must continue to be pursued. While, therefore, the Working Committee welcome the movements in the States for the attainment of responsible government, they advise the people not belonging to the States concerned against taking part in civil disobedience and the like. Participation by such people will bring no real strength to the movement, and may even embarrass the people of the

States concerned and prevent them from developing a mass movement on which strength and success depend.

The Committee trust that all movements in the States will adhere strictly to the fundamental Congress policy of non-violence.

Indian National Congress, February 1938 to January 1939, pp. 69-70

424. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

December 13, 1938

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

You understand now that I pleaded with Chimanlal on your behalf that cows need not be kept in two places. What I want to have is an estimate of the expenditure on and income from a herd of cows and calves numbering up to a hundred. You are a worker but a person who has to collect funds must have a plan. Therefore I said that if the workers here could together prepare a scheme I could think over it. It would have made my path easier if you and Parnerkar could get on well together. I want to expedite this matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi; G.N. 1915

425. TELEGRAM TO PATTOM THANU PILLAI

WARDHA,
December 14, 1938

THANUPILLAY

STATE CONGRESS

TRIVANDRUM

AM QUITE CLEAR THAT IN SPITE PROSECUTION YOU SHOULD WITHDRAW ALLEGATIONS BEFORE HEARING COMMENCES. IF COURT PERSIST YOU STILL REFUSE DEFEND SAYING THAT UNDER ADVICE WHICH ON SECOND THOUGHTS YOU CONSIDER TO BE SOUND YOU HAVE DECIDED NOT TO PURSUE THEM AS BEING INCONSISTENT WITH PURSUIT OF LARGER POLICY OF ATTAINMENT RESPONSIBLE GOVT.

GANDHI

From the original: Pattom Thanu Pillai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

426. LETTER TO BHULABHAI J. DESAI

SEGAON,
December 14, 1938

BHAI BHULABHAI,

I read Nariman's letter. Personally I feel that a great injustice has been done to him. If there is nothing else apart from that letter and if my view is correct, I should like you yourself to make amends when we meet tomorrow. I write this so that you may think about the matter beforehand. I wrote to Vallabhbhai from the car itself. But I see that I ought to write to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: Bhulabhai Desai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

427. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 16, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

I read your postcard addressed to Ba. I should certainly like to drag you here, but now I will not send for you. Stay at Bardoli as long as you can. Here I cannot even raise my head; what is the use of having you here then?

The swelling produced by the vaccination must have subsided.

I trust Nanabhai is well. Will it be too early for you to join me on the 1st itself?

Here we have a stream of visitors coming and going these days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4890

428. TELEGRAM TO ZAINAB[1]

[*December 16, 1938*][2]

JAMNALALJI'S WIRE BRINGS SAD NEWS. MY DEEPEST SYMPATHY AND PRAYER WITH YOU ALL. I KNOW YOU ARE BRAVE. HOPE DOCTOR'S TRADITION WILL BE FULLY KEPT UP BY FAMILY. LOVE.

BAPU

The Bombay Chronicle,17-12-1938

429. TELEGRAM TO PATTOM THANU PILLAI

WARDHA,
[*December 17, 1938*][3]

THANUPILLAY
PRESIDENT STATE CONGRESS
TRIVANDRUM

ADVISE YOU EMPHATICALLY NOT TO RESIST PRESENT BAN ON CONTEMPLATED CONFERENCE NEAR TRIVANDRUM AND ON DEMONSTRATIONS DURING FORTHCOMING VICEREGAL VISIT ALSO ADVISE TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE EVEN IN FACE OF PROVOKING RESTRICTIONS. SUCH WILLING OBEDIENCE TO IRKSOME RESTRICTIONS ON FREEDOM WILL BE A LESSON IN ART OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE.

GANDHI

From the original: Pattom Thanu Pillai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Widow of Dr. Rajab Ali Vishram Patel, a well-known freemason. During the non-co-operation movement in 1921 he had donated Rs. 50,000 and handed over the amount to Gandhiji for use at his discretion.

[2] Dr. Rajab Ali died on December 16, 1938.

[3] The original telegram as delivered has only "17". However the Viceroy arrived in Travancore on January 9, 1939, and hence the telegram is placed under this date.

430. TELEGRAM TO PATTOM THANU PILLAI

WARDHA,
December 17, 1938

THANUPILLAY
PRESIDENT STATE CONGRESS
TRIVANDRUM

WITHDRAWAL MAY BE AS FOLLOWS. AFTER SERIOUS AND PRAYERFUL CONSIDERATION WE HAVE COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THE ALLEGATIONS MADE AGAINST THE DEWAN IN THE MEMORANDUM SUBMITTED TO HIS HIGHNESS SHOULD BE UNRESERVEDLY WITHDRAWN IN THE INTEREST OF THE LARGER STRUGGLE FOR RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT. BUT WHILST THEREFORE WITHDRAW THE ALLEGATION FULLY AND UNEQUIVOCALLY WE WOULD BE UNTRUE TO OURSELVES TO THE CAUSE AND TO THE PUBLIC IF WE DID NOT STATE THAT THE ALL EGATIONS WERE MADE BY US WITH A FULL SENSE OF RESPONSIBILIT AND WITH A BELIEF IN THEM AS FULL AS IT IS POSSIBLE TO HAVE IN A STATEMENT BASED UPON ONE-SIDED EVIDENCE. OUR BELIEF IN THE TRUTH OF THE ALLEGATIONS MADE PERSISTS BUT THE OPINION HAS FORCED ITSELF UPON US THAT FOR US TO PERSIST IN THOSE ALLEGATIONS WOULD BE TO HARM THE GREAT STRUGGLE FOR RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT IN TRAVANCORE. WE THEREFORE WITHDRAW THE ALLEGATIONS AND ASK THE PUBLIC NOT TO BE AFFECTED BY THE ALLEGATIONS OR BY OUR BELIEF IN THEM. IN CASE PROSECUTION IS PURSUED IN SPITE OF ABOVE WITHDRAWAL ADD LATER IN COURT AS FOLLOWS. WE ARE SORRY THAT THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR IS NOT SATISFIED WITH OUR WITHDRAWAL OF THE ALLEGATIONS. WE SHALL CHEERFULLY UNDERGO ANY SENTENCE THAT MAY BE IMPOSED UPON US FOR OUR UNCONDITIONAL WITHDRAWAL MEANS THAT WE HAVE WITHDRAWN THE ALLEGATIONS NOT TO EVADE THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE LAW BUT FOR HELPING THE LARGER CAUSE OF RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT. WE THEREFORE DO NOT PROPOSE TO ENTER UPON ANY DEFENCE AND AS WE HAVE WITHDRAWN THE ALLEGATIONS IT IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR US TO PLEAD GUILTY.

GANDHI

From the original: Pattom Thanu Pillai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

431. MESSAGE TO ALLAHABAD UNIVERSITY UNION[1]

[Before *December 18, 1938*][2]

I believe nothing except non-violence can solve our difficulties.

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-12-1938

432. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

Strictly Confidential SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 1938

MY DEAR SUBHAS,

I must dictate this as I am wilfully blind. Whilst I am dictating this Maulana Saheb, Nalini Babu[3], and Ghanshyamdasji are listening. We had an exhaustive discussion over the Bengal Ministry. I am more than ever convinced that we should not aim at ousting the Ministry. We shall gain nothing by a reshuffle. And probably we shall lose much by including Congressmen in the Ministry. I feel, therefore, that the best way of securing comparative purity of administration and continuity of a settled programme and policy would be to aim at having all the reforms that we desire carried out by the present Ministry. Nalini Babu should come out, as he says he would, on a real issue being raised and the decision being taken by the Ministry against the interests of the country. His retirement from the Ministry would then be dignified and wholly justified. I understand that so far as the amendment of the municipal law is concerned, separate electorate for the scheduled class is given up. There is still insistence on separate electorate for Mussalmans. I do not know whether opposition should be taken to the breaking point. If the Mussalman opinion is solid in favour of separation, I think it would be wisdom to satisfy them. I would not like them to carry the point in the teeth of the Congress opposition. It would be then a point against the Con-gress.

If my opinion is acceptable to you, the release of the Prisoners becomes a much simpler matter than it is today. And if this opinion

[1] This message was sent on the occasion of the unveiling of Gandhiji's portrait-painting in the Senate Hall of the University.

[2] The report carrying this message is dated December 18, 1938.

[3] Nalini Ranjan Sarkar, then Finance Minister of Bengal

commends itself to you there should be an open declaration about the new policy. This ought to result in easing the tension that prevails in Bengal, and Bengal will be automatically free from the state of suspended animation. Maulana Saheb is in entire agreement with this opinion and so are Nalini Babu and Ghanshyamdas.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 7784. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

433. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[After *December 18, 1938*][1]

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have gone through the papers. They are dreadful. If the Thakore Saheb remains firm, the problem can be solved in no time. But I doubt if he will remain firm. How much use can we make of the information gathered from the papers? If you receive an invitation, do go. I think if you go you should see the Resident[2] also and tell him the truth. The Ruler's invitation should not be kept a complete secret. If he does not have that much courage, it may not be worth while going to Rajkot.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
PURUSHOTTAM BUILDING
OPP. OPERA HOUSE, BOMBAY 4

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 230

[1] The papers referred to in the text consisted of correspondence Thakore Dharmendrasinhji of Rajkot had initiated with the addressee for a settlement. The addressee in his letter of December 18 to the Thakore Saheb had said, "I would come immediately—on receipt of your letter—and persuade the people to agree to the termination of the struggle." This therefore must belong to some date after December 18.

[2] E. C. Gibson

434. NOTES

COMPLAINT AGAINST CONGRESSMEN

I have a letter from the Rangoon Khadi Bhandar and another from Karnatak complaining that Congress committees have certified khadi which was decertified by the A. I. S. A. There is no doubt whatsoever as to the truth of the complaint. I have copies of the certificates issued by two Congress bodies. Congress committees should know that these certificates are illegal. The only authority that can issue certificates about khadi is the A.I.S.A. No Congress committee has been, or can be, given the right unless the Congress resolution constituting the A. I. S. A. is changed.

There is no such thing as certified khadi. It is impossible to certify every piece and every article made of khadi; only shops and persons can be authorized to sell khadi approved by the A. I. S. A. The original definition of khadi has been broadened to ensure an adequate wage for the manufacturers of khadi. Those who sell any other khadi, deprive khadi workers of the wage that the A. I. S. A. has, of its own accord, ensured for them. Let it not be said of any Congressman and Congress committee that they are interfering with the vast experiment in nation-building that the A. I. S. A. is conducting and which bids fair to put life and lustre in the dying bodies of millions of sisters whom no agency ensures even two pice per day. I hope, therefore, that the Congress committees and Con-gressmen will not only not interfere with the work of the A.I.S.A., but will give their full-hearted co-operation to numerous organiza-tions of the A. I. S. A., especially in the sale of khadi. If there was a steadily increasing demand, it would be possible to provide remune-rative work in every famine area.

HINDUSTANI ONLY

A Muslim friend who calls himself an old Congress worker says:

> *The Times of India,* in its issue of the 12th September last, published an abstract of your article from the *Harijan* under the caption 'Congressmen Beware!'[1]. The cogent explanation you have given of the position caused by the anti-Hindi agitation in Madras and the use of the Criminal Law Amendment Act is remarkably convincing. I have no doubt that the sound advice you have

[1] *Vide* "Islamic Culture", 28-1-1939

offered to the agitators will go a long way in satisfying them and that they will be brought round to the right way of thinking. But in this connection I should like to draw your attention to an anomaly which seems to have crept in inadvertently regarding the 'Rashtrabhasha' for India. To the best of my knowledge the Congress resolution on the subject contains the word 'Hindustani' and not 'Hindi'. You yourself, in all your speeches and writings, have always used the word 'Hindustani'. It is therefore to be regretted that a majority of Congressmen have, in contravention of the Congress resolution, been using the word *'Hindi'*.

This use of the wrong word has given rise to considerable misunderstanding and contention among the members of the differentcamps of the Congress. To my mind it should be neither 'Hindi' nor 'Urdu', and all Congressmen when referring to the Rashtrabhasha should use the word 'Hindustani'.

I endorse the suggestion whole-heartedly. Rashtrabhasha has only one name, i.e., Hindustani.

SEGAON, December 19, 1938

Harijan, 24-12-1938

435. PROHIBITION

Prohibition in the Congress provinces is not going on in the spirit in which it was conceived. It is perhaps no fault of the Ministers. Public opinion is not insistent. Congress opinion is equally dormant. Congressmen do not seem to see that prohibition means new life for many millions. It means new and substantial accession of moral and material strength. They do not realize that honest prohibition gives a dignity and prestige to the Congress which perhaps no other single step can give. They do not see that prosecution of prohibition means identification with the masses and a resolute determination to refuse to have anything to do with the drink revenue. Even such a confirmed prohibitionist like Rajaji has not had the daring to set apart the drink revenue purely for the purpose of fighting the drink evil. He has proved in this matter too cautious for me. Congressmen have learnt to count no cost too dear for winning freedom. Our freedom will be the freedom of slaves if we continue to be victims of the drink and drug habit. Is any cost too much to establish complete prohibition in all the provinces?

And yet one finds Ministers drawing up prohibition programmes in a proper bania spirit. They think of their deficits. I wonder

what they will do if all the winebibbers and opiumeaters suddenly give up their drinks and drugs ! They will manage somehow, it may be answered. Why will they not do so voluntarily? Surely, merit lies in doing the right thing voluntarily, not compulsorily ! The Bihar Government did not come to a standstill, when the earthquake swallowed more than their annual income. What do the Governments all over India do, when famines and floods ruin people and materially reduce the State revenue? I maintain that the Congress Governments break the spirit, if not the letter, of their pledge, when they delay prohibition for the sake of revenue.

They can and must make an honest attempt to raise money by fresh taxation. The drink curse is most prevalent in urban areas. It is in these areas that they can resort to fresh taxation. Prohibition gives direct help to the employers of labour. They can surely afford to bear the loss of revenue caused by prohibition. The few months of prohibition in Ahmedabad have put money into the pockets both of the employers and the labourers. There is no reason whatsoever why the employers should not pay for this inestimable service. Many similar sources of revenue can easily be thought of.

I have not hesitated to suggest a grant or at least a loan without interest from the Government of India where it can be proved that the raising of additional revenue is not a practical proposition.

The only valid reason for not having immediate prohibition is want of previous experience and hence the need for caution. I viewed the Salem experiment in that light. The Madras Government wanted to take the first step with great deliberation and did not want to take any risk of failure. The success of the Salem experiment should be sufficient encouragement to go on with the whole scheme. But it is not impossible to understand the desire of each Government to go in for prohibition in stages so as to have local experience. It was for that reason that the Working Committee fixed three years as the period to bring about complete prohibition. The time is running fast. And if India is to be free of the curse within the period fixed, there should be no delay for want of money or for fear of deficit in revenue. And if the programme is prosecuted with single-minded zeal, there is no doubt that the other provinces and the States will follow.

SEGAON, December 19, 1938

Harijan, 24-12-1938

436. DISTRICT BOARDS

It has often been borne in upon me that District Boards and Municipal Councils are excrescences involving a useless tax upon the people's purses. This became patent to me during the non-co-operation days in Mehmadabad. I had then advised the people that, if they boycotted their council or whatever it was called, they could do their own sweeping and lighting and conduct their schools without fuss and without much expense and avoid wrangling into the bargain.

The truth of my remark became clear to me a few days ago when a member of the Surat District Board came to me, showed me a circular issued by the Board, and asked me for my blessing on their scheme. The scheme was extra-official. There are about forty members of the Board. I write from memory. They have really no work except to meet at stated intervals and hold debates on certain items of expenditure. As the Board has a sweeping Congress majority and as some of the members are conscientious, they do not know how to use their time for the service of the people. The Board has an income altogether inadequate for the expenditure required to keep all its departments in good order and condition, especially the roads. The circular, therefore, contained a pompous advertisement that the members and the officials would work during the National Week in April at road repairs, etc. On the strength of the proverb that something is better than nothing, certainly the National Week idea was commendable. But it was not good enough for me. I said, "If you want my blessing, you must begin work now and not merely for one week as a holiday, but for the whole term of your office and regularly as if you were members of the paid staff—no doubt consistently with your domestic and other obligations. In other words, you should constitute yourselves into a national service. You will meet officially only to vote items you must, but never to hold long debates or wrangle over petty appointments and the like. But your real and solid work would be extra-official. You would take pride in having first-class roads which you will have built yourselves. You will run your schools efficiently. You will see that your district has its proper supply of water, and your fields are well manured and grow crops that are useful from the national standpoint. You will teach the people proper methods of sanitation and ensure voluntary prohibition by weaning the people from the drink habit. You will run night-schools for adults. If you are

in earnest about your duty, you will be too few for the task. You will set an example to the other boards and you will justify the choice of the electors. The result will be that the electors themselves and the others will become a voluntary brigade of workers who will revolutionize the life of the people around you. If you take to heart what I am telling you, you will find at once that you cannot do without hand-ginning, hand-carding, hand-spinning and hand-weaving This will give full occupation during leisure hours to every boy, girl, man and woman who is not disabled for light labour, and you will immediately add a good few lacs of rupees to your income as a district. When you have achieved this programme you will have my blessings. I shall become your advertising agent. If you cannot do this, do not play with your work by having a spectacular demonstration of your holiday patriotism.

I fear, however, that the District Boards in India will not quite approve of the programme of voluntary service I have sketched above. I, therefore, suggest that at least the Congress provinces have a model and novel legislation constituting municipal, local and district boards on the basis of efficiency. I would have them elected, but there would be very few men and women capable of doing administrative, plodding work. Each one of the members will have his work cut out for him. I should impress the services of the paid officials side by side with the elected members who will be at once their masters and co-workers. This is but the barest outline of Boards of my notion. The Congress is a revolutionary body in the widest and the wisest sense. It must be original. All its activities must be derived from its creed of non-violence. There must be a perfect chain linking the smallest to the biggest unit after the same pattern, so that he who runs may see that it is an artistic whole designed to answer the main purpose. This presupposes one united mind and will in the Congress—not the mind and will of one man but the minds and wills of many men and women acting as one mind and one will.

SEGAON, December 19, 1938

Harijan, 24-12-1938

437. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 19, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have not been able to give you a line.

Yes, I shall not part with the blanket designed for me. I do not know whether I am wearing the old or the new. I shall inquire and get the new. What shall I do with the old?

Of course you will have a copy of the Aundh Constitution when it is ready.

If K.[1] has responsible government, why can't you be its first Minister and shape its destiny at will? But we shall discuss when you come.

I fear I must leave for Bardoli on 1st Jan. The W. C. meets there on 7th, so you should come *via* Ahmedabad. If you leave on 3rd, you will reach Bardoli on 6th. No time for more.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3654. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6463

438. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 20, 1938

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I cannot let your sweet note go unanswered. I know what Xmas means to the English people. All my good wishes accompany you.

I knew you would understand Mira's letter. Yes, do keep in touch with her. She is in God's good hands.

You will come as often as you like and stay as long as you like.

Nobody gave you fudge today! Some goes with this.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1506

[1] Kapurthala

439. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

December 20, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

This is just to tell you that I remember you. There is a terrible pressure of work, but that seems to be God's pleasure. I do not work beyond the time fixed. I hope your stay is proving fruitful. Amtul Salaam is badly ill—malaria. There is a large crowd—Pannalal, Gangabehn, Nanibehn have come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11686

440. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

December 20, 1938

CHI. BRAJKRISHNA,

Here is the reply from Vichitra[1]. What should be done now? I hope your brother is better.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2457

441. LETTER TO N. M. JOSHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 21, 1938

MY DEAR JOSHI,

I am very grateful to you for your two letters containing an exhaustive reply to my letter. I am glad too that Parulekar took the trouble of writing out his speech. Though the sentences marked do not appear in the speech, there is hot stuff enough in it, perilously going near to the sentiments ascribed to Parulekar in the report I sent to you. Mark the following:

[1] Vichitra Narayan Sharma, a khadi worker of Meerut. He had stated in his letter of December 14 that starting khadi work in famine-affected areas was bound to result in financial loss while expanding the work to include Delhi was inconvenient.

> They often described British bureaucracy as Satanic. I must find out a stronger term than the word "Satanic", as this act is more devilish. . . . They know that the Bill is not in your interest and, therefore, they are afraid of you. They feel nervous. They think that you will throw away their Gandhi caps. This "Gandhi Cap Government" has shown by its acts that they are not the friends of the poor. They are there to work in the interests of the rich. . . . If they postpone the discussion they will have to discuss the Bill in Bombay who are politically conscious. The workers in Bombay will take out monster demonstrations and will create such a row that those who are responsible for the Bill will not be able to enjoy sound and comfortable sleep. The workers can be compared to a sleeping lion. I warn Government not to wake him up. Let them not tease him. Let them not attack him. They must realize that if they provoke him the working class has enough strength to retaliate on the strongest Government. . . . This Bill is a deadly poisonous pill coated with sugar. We must scratch the sugar and leave the poison to be swallowed by the framers of the Bill.

I should not like such language in the mouth of a member of the Society.

As to your remark about the danger to civil liberty, I would like you to give me some concrete suggestion for a Provincial Government to be at least able to know what public men are saying and doing. Or, do you suggest that they ought not to concern themselves with the sayings and doings of public men? I am not now thinking of the possible punishment that might be inflicted upon those who make speeches inciting to violence or whatever is considered contrary to law. I am thinking of peaceful action such as warning to reckless speakers and establishing contact with organizations to which they belong. So far as Paruleker is concerned, I am making further inquiry. In any case I am quite clear in my mind that there should be no prosecution against him and I am writing to Kher accordingly.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

442. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 21, 1938

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Maulana Saheb does not want the crown of thorns. If you want to try again please do. If you won't or he won't listen, Pattabhi seems to be the only choice.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1938. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

443. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

SEGAON,
December 21, 1938

MY DEAR PRITHVI SINGH,

I have your two letters. I have been too busy to write to you earlier, but Pyarelal has been attending to every one of your requirements. The wool is being taken up and I shall have it woven and of course make use of it myself, unless I make better use of it by using it for exhibition purposes. I have not decided.

Though I do not want to publish your letter as the authorities may not like its publication whilst you are still a prisoner, I am going to make judicious use of it amongst those who are still unconvinced of the matchless superiority of non-violence over violence. So far as your own case is concerned you may depend upon my doing everything in my power. You need not do anything there till I advise you otherwise.

I have a very fine portrait of you taken by Kanu which Pyarelal is sending to your brother, but he will be writing independently to you.

Mahadev is quite well now, though I do not want him to return to his regular work.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5632. Also C.W. 2943. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

444. LETTER TO SHAMLAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 21, 1938

DEAR LALA SHAMLAL,

Your letter surprises me, for in your previous letter you said that while the prisoners were not ready to give the assurance to the Government, they were ready to give it to me. You now tell me they will not. Why this change? Please bring this to the prisoners' notice that if they cannot give this assurance even to me, so far as I am concerned, I am powerless.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1287

445. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 21, 1938

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I had both your letters. I had acted on the first. Why do you insist on my acting on the second, too? You need not attend the Jallianwala Bagh Committee. Keshavdevji may well attend. There will be no need of a vote. Don't take it into your head that your health is bad. The body only needs rest. If you get it, your health will be all right. It will be enough if you travel a little in India or Ceylon. Give up all worry about work.

Are Rajabali's affairs being properly administered? How is Janakibehn?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2996

446. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 21, 1938

CHI. MANUDI[1],

Do come to Bardoli if you can.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 1573. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

447. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 21, 1938

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

The Maulana has flatly refused, and it does not, therefore, seem proper to press him further. I think it will be best to think of Pattabhi.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 230

448. MESSAGE TO ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE[2]

[Before *December 22, 1938*][3]

Women alone can emancipate themselves not men. If women will, they can help in the fulfilment of ahimsa. Through the charkha, they can serve the cause of their poor sisters. By wearing khaddar, they can bring help to the homes of the poor. They can bring about Hindu-Muslim unity. They can abolish the purdah and drive away the ghost of untouchability.

[1] Gandhiji's granddaughter

[2] The Conference opened in Delhi on December 28. Amrit Kaur presided. Gandhiji's message according to *The Bombay Chronicle*, 29-12-1938, was in Gujarati.

[3] *Vide* the following item.

Will the Women's Conference at Delhi undertake to fulfil any of these causes?

The Hindustan Times, 28-12-1938. Also from a copy: C.W. 10362. Courtesy: All-India Women's Conference

449. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 22, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I am just now managing things through deputies. I can't cope with work otherwise. You are going to keep well in Bardoli.

Herewith a letter for Tai and a message[1] for the Conference. You having had one, naturally she also wants one.

I hope you left Shummy in a good condition. I am glad you liked my letter.

Mahadev should return on 24th.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Herewith draft reply to the Jewish appeal.

From the original: C.W. 3900. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7056

450. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 22, 1938

CHI. MANI,

Mridula and you make a good pair. I got both your letters. Take complete rest. I am very glad that you spin. Write about food, etc., if you are permitted to do so. How does Mridula spend her time?

Mahadev has gone for four days to see the goshala near Calcutta. He is expected to return on the 24th. I am keeping excellent health. Ba has not yet got the permission to go there. She is going to

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

Dehra Dun for the Kanya Gurukul. I am leaving for Bardoli on the 1st of January.

Blessings to you and Mridula from

BAPU

SHRI MANIBEHN PATEL

STATE JAIL

RAJKOT—KATHIAWAR

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 123

451. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 22, 1938

CHI. NIMU,

I received your letter. I do not mind your having stayed on. Didn't you get my letter there? Take the treatment as long as you wish and see that the body becomes all right. It will certainly mean expense but the expense will not go waste. Let me know the result.

Ba will leave for Dehra Dun tomorrow. She will meet me in Bardoli. Dharamdevji will be able to come in February. For the whole of January, I will be in Bardoli. Kanam will stay with me. He gives no trouble at all. He has come to be perfectly at ease with me. Neither you nor Ramdas need worry about him.

Tell Ramdas that Sardar has found a job for him in the Scindia.[1] He does not seem to be happy at Mysore. Ask Ramdas to write to me what he thinks in the matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The Scindia Steam Navigation Company

452. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

December 22, 1938

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

I gave much thought to your letter. You did make a mistake, but who doesn't? Your simplicity of nature consists in that you readily admit your mistake. The service of the cow and the good of all of us, including you, now lies in sticking to the decision that has been taken. If your anger really subsides everything will turn out well in the end. You and Parnerkar will have been tested. Give whatever help Parnerkar asks for. Find out what else can be done and tell me. You have to be in good cheer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1913

453. LETTER TO TARADEVI NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 22, 1938

DEAR SISTER,

At least you have written a letter today. I am sending this through Ba. On receiving the letter from Prakash, for a moment Sushila was inclined to go there. But I did not approve of her going for just a few days. Right now, Sushila is serving me. She is also helping me with the letters, etc. This she has been doing for the last two or three days. I do not like to send her away all of a sudden. It is another matter if you want to call away Sushila for good. In that case I have no authority to hold her. I keep Sushila with me because I trust your words. I have no doubt a selfish purpose in keeping her. But I am also convinced that staying with me is good for Sushila from every point of view. I also consider it necessary that Sushila should be near Pyarelal. Sushila will not be at peace staying in Delhi or away from me. Think of all this and write to me frankly. Come to Bardoli if you can. I shall feel happy if you do.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

454. SPEECH AT SCOUTS RALLY[1]

SEGAON,
[*December 22, 1938*][2]

I congratulate you on the demonstration of the drill that you have given. It is a necessary part of your training. But while you have made a fine beginning, you have still much ground to traverse.

The object of mass drill is to enable large bodies of people to perform any movement rhythmically and swiftly and with absolute precision. What a saving in national time and energy it would mean if we could do that in our public meetings and functions ! There is a silent music in disciplined movement of masses of men and women. Just now I asked you to move a little towards me so that my low voice may reach you. Had you advanced far enough in your drill, you would have been able to perform that movement with ease without any noise or confusion. There is a rhythm and music in drill that makes action effortless and eliminates fatigue. If the whole nation of 300 millions could be drilled so as to move together and act together and if necessary to die together as one man, we should attain independence without striking a blow and set an example of a peaceful revolution for the whole world to emulate.

I was particularly glad to note that the Khoja Boarding House at Wardha had sent its quota of scouts to participate in your rally. This is as it should be. Boy scouts' training has been incorporated in the Wardha Scheme of Education. It would be nothing worth if it did not serve to remove all mutual distrust and suspicion and foster among the various sections and communities a perfect spirit of camaraderie which is an integral part of that scheme, although it is not set down in so many words in the Zakir Husain Committee's report. The Wardha Scheme of Education does not aim merely at imparting literary training to the students; its object is to give an education for life that would answer the need of our millions. It is calculated to be a living and life-giving experiment. Teachers, who have in their turn to become torch-bearers of this education, have need, therefore, of a broader and

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The rally was held at the end of a 21 days' training course in scoutcraft conducted at Wardha for pupil teachers under the Wardha Scheme of Education.

[2] The date is from *The Hindu*, 23-12-1938.

wider training. And scoutcraft is an important and useful part of that training.

I know something of the work of the old Seva Samiti founded by Revered Malaviyaji. I know also Pandit Hridayanath Kunzru's work on it; and I have come in contact with Shri Bajpai, the organizer of the Samiti. If, therefore, I offer a few remarks by way of suggestions, they must be taken as those of a friend. As I watched the flag salutation ceremony, there seemed to be an air of unreality about it. Your song is composed in highflown language. You have in that song expressed your readiness to lay down your lives for that flag which you have envisioned as one day floating over the whole world. Could you seriously mean it, I asked myself, as you sang that song. I venture to suggest that such sentiments as are expressed in that song may not be associated with any other than the national flag—if they are not to remain a mere pious wish calculated to begin and end with the singing of that song. People cannot die for many flags. If you must have a separate flag and a hoisting ceremony, your song should be pitched in a lower key. Then, again, I see you have your inscription on the flag in English. That seems to me an anomaly. You should have on your flag Hindustani inscription. Scouting must aim not merely at the training of the body but that of the brain and heart too. It would be a poor performance if it confines itself to mere externals and ignores the internal.

A word to the pupil teachers who are assembled here. As the first batch, on them rests a heavy responsibility. It is not merely they but the scheme of education which they are out to work that is going to be put on its trial. It therefore behoves them to be punctilious and exact in every little thing that they say or do. They must weigh every word that they utter and take care never to utter a word in vain. It is a new and untried experiment that they are going to launch upon, i.e., to give the whole education through a craft. Success will be the reward of unremitting exercise of intelligence in all their acts. Nothing will be more detrimental to it than insincerity in speech, thought or action.

Harijan, 31-12-1938

455. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 23, 1938

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I find that Residents in certain States are discouraging Ruling Chiefs from having any dealings with Congressmen such as Sardar Patel. I have unimpeachable evidence in two cases. Of these I am free to mention one. That is in connection with Rajkot. I do not wish to tax you with details. I hope it is not the intention at the headquarters to discourage ruling Chiefs from cultivating friendly relations with Congressmen.The States people have always looked to the Congress for guidance and advice. With increasing awakening among the States people, there should be no wonder if Chiefs seek Congress advice and assistance in settling their differences with their people. Discouragement by Residents amounts to orders to them. Recent declarations in London seem to show that there is no intention, on the part of the superior authority, to interfere with the Chiefs in such matters. If my impression is correct and if on enquiry you find that the statement I have made about Rajkot is borne out, may I expect that you will instruct Residents in general not to interfere with the Ruling Chiefs who may choose to seek the assistance of Congressmen in solving the difficulties that face them?

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Lord Linlithgow Papers: Microfilm No. 107. Courtesy: National Archives of India

456. LETTER TO J.C . KUMARAPPA

December 23, 1938

MY DEAR KU,

I am glad you went to Bombay. It would have been a mistake if no one had gone. No doubt you were the best man for our purpose. I would like you to tell me more about your doings on 30th if possible. But you may anticipate the date if you think it necessary.

I would like Sir P. to come to Bardoli on the earliest day after 3rd January.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10147

457. LETTER TO S. RADHAKRISHNAN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 23, 1938

DEAR SIR RADHAKRISHNAN,

As you know I have always aimed at a redistribution of Provinces on a linguistic basis. The cue was taken from the Andhra movement. I should therefore be more than glad if Andhra could have its status as a Province recognized even now.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile in *Mahatma,* Vol. VI, between pp. 352 and 353

458. LETTER TO INDU N. PAREKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 23, 1938

CHI. INDU,

I got your letter. I had got the previous one also. In both you are carried away by your emotions. Be patient and search for a job there or come to me in Bardoli. We will think it over. Why do you lose heart? I will leave for Bardoli on January 1.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6256

[1] At this time the addressee was in Segaon to persuade Gandhiji to prevail upon Rajaji not to make Hindi compulsory in Madras schools. *Vide* "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 24-12-1938

459. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

SEGAON,
December 23, 1938

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

I have gone through your letter carefully. It is good. But I notice that you cannot bear to be separated from the cows. You should take it that the separation is in the interest of greater service to the cow. I shall gain some experience and so will you. You have doubts as to the propriety of what is being done. It is not right. For if you have doubts it denotes a lack of knowledge behind your renunciation. From what you told me yesterday I thought your heart was cleansed and you had realized that what was being done was all to the good. I never attributed to you any baseness of spirit. I did mention your pride and that too by way of praise. I even said that in your devotion to the cow you have no equal, not even Parnerkar, and the same applied to your capacity for hard labour. Your experience too is considerable, for you have been familiar with agriculture and cattle-keeping from childhood. But I also said that notwithstanding all this your knowledge was not systematic or scientific and consequently you would not be able to make further progress in animal husbandry and that your anger would consume you as well as the cow. At the same time I asked Parnerkar to examine his heart and to take posse-ssion of the dairy only if he was confident of himself. He has been given charge only under this stipulation and these conditions. I have had a talk with Nayakumji. He will discuss the matter with you. Do not commit yourself definitely to any work for the present. Have a little rest; give some quiet thought to what has been and is being done; read and ponder a little and do whatever Ashram tasks naturally come your way. Consult Chimanlal and take up any job for which he is hard-pressed. There can never be any want of work in our institution for a worker like you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1914

460. LETTER TO SARASWATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 23, 1938

CHI. SURU,

I have your letter. I do not remember about your earlier letters but I have replied to them all. I talked at length with Uncle[1] and strongly requested him to send you to me. If you continue your request he might send you. Keep writing to me. Uncle knows everything. You should speak to him fearlessly.

Ba has gone to Dehra Dun today to attend the Kanya Gurukul function. We all leave for Bardoli on January 1, to spend a month there. I hope that you will be reaching there.

I am keeping well, Kanti keeps on writing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: *G.N.* 6174. Also C.W. 3448. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

461. NON-VIOLENCE THE ONLY WAY

I share with the reader the following letter[2] from Mr. Gregg, the author of several books on khadi and non-violence. He is an industrious and accurate student of world events. The reader may know that Mr. Gregg was in India long enough to study things in India.

Harijan, 24-12-1938

462. WANTED A GUIDE BOOK

Shri Mridulabehn has sent me a letter which freely translated means:

[1] G. Ramachandran

[2] Not reproduced here. Richard B. Gregg, after describing the horrors resulting from "modern methods and weapons of war", had argued that it was "not bravery but utter folly" to pretend to fight that kind of thing. He had also forwarded a copy of Russell's *Which Way to Peace*? to reinforce the argument that war could not end war and that complete pacifism was the only practical possibility.

A beginning has been made in forming girl volunteer brigades. Naturally they require lessons in drilling, salutation to the flag, national songs, etc. If there was a book of instructions covering these important matters, we should have uniformity of practice throughout India. At present there is anarchy. Every gymnasium teaches what it likes, uses or coins its own technical words, and in many cases orders are given in English. Imagine village girls being given orders in English which they do not understand. This is essentially for the central office to handle, and that too with the quickest despatch. If the book suggested by me is published immediately, it will be useful for the instruction of the corps that are being formed in view of the coming Congress session in Mahakoshal.

I commend this letter to the central office. It ought not to be difficult to bring out the required book inside a week. The material is there in a scattered form. Dr. Hardikar has, I think, published some literature on the subject. Pandit Malaviyaji's organization must have also issued some instruction book. I know that Prof. Manikrao of Baroda has taken great pains to produce simple technical terms in Hindustani answering most of the requirements. It ought to be a simple matter to bring out an authoritative book out of this material.

In this connection I would remind the Mahakoshal Reception Committee of the suggestion I had made at Haripura that there should be a guide book for Congressmen and visitors in simple Hindustani, written in Devanagari and Urdu scripts, about sanitation, etc. Generally the visitors are left to their own resources. They do not even know where to find the places they want to go to or the things they need. A guide book with a map of the Congress Nagar for the help of those thousands of people who attend the Congress session from year to year is a necessity.

SEGAON, December 24, 1938

Harijan, 31-12-1938

463. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 24, 1938

MY DEAR C. R.,

Sir Radhakrishnan was here yesterday. He said that anti-Hindi agitation was on the increase. He had suggested to you that you should accept a conscience clause, exempting those children from learning Hindi whose parents stated in writing that they had a conscientious objection to their children learning Hindi. I suppose you remember that such a suggestion was made in *Harijan* in the initial stages of the agitation. I think that it is not too late to give effect to it. It should not matter to you even though the concession may be interpreted as concession to unreasonable agitation. You will do what appears to you to be best.

What about separation of Andhra as a separate province? You had made some statement that you were moving in the matter. Are you? How are you keeping otherwise?

Love.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2079

464. INTERVIEW TO H. V. HODSON[1]

[Before *December 25, 1938*][2]

Mr. Hodson expressed the opinion that the solution of the Hindu-Muslim question was made difficult by the fact that, owing to its very nature, the Congress tended to take on the nature of a "totalitarian party" and acted as if it were the one and the only party in the country that mattered, instead of regarding itself simply as one of the principal parties.

GANDHIJI: It is a very wrong view to take of the Congress. The Con-gress does claim to be the one and the only party that can deliver the goods. It is a perfectly valid claim to make. One day or the other some party has to assert itself to that extent. That does not make it a totalitarian party. It is the ambition of the Congress to become all-re-

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" dated December 25. H. V. Hodson was the editor of *Round Table.*

[2] *ibid*

presentative of the entire nation, not merely of any particular section. And it is a worthy ambition in keeping with its best tradition. If you have studied Congress history, you will find that since its very inception the Congress has sought to serve and represent all sections in the country equally without any distinction or discrimination. Thus it used to have Rajas and Maharajas on the Reception Committee, and has defended the cause of the States against the Paramount Power as in the case of Kashmir and Mysore. It would love to be absorbed by the Muslim League if the Muslim League would care to absorb it, or to absorb the Muslim League in its turn, so far as the political programme is concerned. For religious and social activity, of course, every community can have its separate organization.

HODSON: But if the Congress has the ambition of absorbing other political organizations, it cannot help being a totalitarian party.

GANDHIJI: You may try to damn it by calling it totalitarian. Absorption is inevitable when a country is engaged in a struggle to wrest power from foreign hands; it cannot afford to have separate, rival political organizations. The entire strength of the country must be used for ousting the third and usurping party. That is what is happening in India today. Where there is no common danger to oppose, there must be separate parties representing different schools of thought. You should bear in mind that the Congress does not impose its will on others. Its sanctions are non-violent.

HODSON: Would not the march to full responsible government be more rapid if the Muslims were taken along?

GANDHIJI: Of course it would be. Personally I do not want anything which the Muslims oppose. But I have faith that the solution of the Hindu-Muslim tangle will come much sooner than most people expect. I claim to be able to look at the whole position with a detached mind. There is no substance in our quarrels. Points of difference are superficial, those of contact are deep and permanent. Political and economic subjection is common to us. The same climate, the same rivers, the same fields supply both with air, water and food. Whatever, therefore, leaders, Mahatmas and Maulanas may say or do, the masses, when they are fully awakened, will assert themselves and combine for the sake of combating common evils.

The effect of the Socialist and Communist propaganda too is to bring the masses of both the communities together by emphasizing identity of interests. I have my differences with them, but I cannot

withhold my admiration for their endeavour to demolish the superstition that keeps the different communities apart.

Harijan, 31-12-1938

465. MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT, TRAVANCORE STATE CONGRESS

[On or before *December 25, 1938*][1]

On receipt of a telegram from the President of the Travancore State Congress, Gandhiji said he was delighted that personal allegations against the Dewan were withdrawn. He added that civil disobedience should also be suspended in order to examine the whole position afresh. He hopes that in view the of withdrawal of the allegations prosecutions will be withdrawn by the State and prisoners will be set free.

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-12-1938

466. MANIBEHN AND THE SPINNING-WHEEL

Manibehn is a *mani*[2]. I know of only one Mani in India who has sacrificed her all in order to serve her father and who has readily accepted spinsterhood for his sake. She left for Rajkot at one single word from her father and the strength that she had derived from her incomparable devotion is amazing. She is now in prison.[3] She keeps writing letters to me. Some of them deserve to be published. But, nowadays, I just cannot write for *Harijanbandhu*. I find no time for it. But I cannot help quoting the last sentence of her latest letter from jail. It is in praise of the spinning-wheel. It runs as follows:

> It is after a long time that I have found such leisure to work on the spinning-wheel. And when I can spin so peacefully, I do not need anything else. I find incomparable joy in this. I feel that I should spin enough to make up for the many days when I could not spin.

We do not come across many persons who combine so well in themselves love of the spinning-wheel, sacrifice, devotion to one's father and courage of the highest order. But, when I do come across one, my heart dances with joy.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 25-12-1938

[1] The report carrying the message is dated December 25, 1938.
[2] Gem
[3] Manibehn Patel was arrested on December 5, 1938, for participating in the Rajkot satyagraha.

467. DRAFT OF STATEMENT FOR HYDERABAD STATE CONGRESS[1]

[Before *December 26, 1938*][2]

The Working Committee of the Hyderabad State Congress after great deliberation has decided upon a temporary suspension of satyagraha, which was launched recently and which has already resulted in the imprisonment of more than 400 satyagrahis. Sentences range from one month to 3_ years.

The public would like to know the reasons that have prompted this decision.

The State Congress has come in for a great deal of misrepresentation. It has been called a communal body. Its activities have been mixed up with those of the Aryan Defence League and the Hindu Civil Liberties Union. Unfortunately the movements of the A. S.[3] and the Hindu M. S.[4] synchronized with the civil disobedience of the State Congress. The decisive cause has been the advice given by Gandhiji, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and other Congress leaders that in order to make our position absolutely clear it was essential that we should suspend C. D. They say suspension would give the Government of H. E. H. the Nizam an opportunity to review the situation. We could not disregard the advice of the leaders whose sympathy and support are always a valuable asset in the conduct of the struggle for swaraj within the State.

We suspend C. D. in the hope that it will not need to be revived. But whether it will have to be revived, and if so when, will depend wholly upon the attitude of the State authorities. It is not without a wrench that we are suspending the struggle when more than 400 of our comrades are undergoing imprisonment ranging from 4_ years to two months [*sic*]. We have more than 2000 persons on our list as volunteers for C. D. The list is daily increasing. Every fresh arrest brings an addition to the list. We have had embarrassing offers of volunteers from outside the State. We have been obliged to decline the offers as we realize that the movement in order to remain strictly non-

[1] Except for the first two paragraphs the draft is in Gandhiji's hand.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Akbar Hydari", 26-12-1938
[3] Arya Samaj
[4] Hindu Maha Sabha

violent must depend upon internal strength and support.

But we have no desire to use our strength and undergo suffering, if we can achieve our end through negotiation and entreaty. We hope therefore that the Government of H. E. H. will recognize the wholly peaceful and loyal motive underlying the suspension. We hope that they will release the C. D. prisoners and lift the ban on the S. C. and its activities and pave the way to the inauguration of a scheme of responsible government consistently with reasonable safeguards for the rights of minorities.

Here we would draw the attention of the members of the State Congress that there are two arms to a non-violent swaraj movement, the remedial and constructive. C. D. is remedial and therefore in its nature temporary. The other is constructive and permanent. We hope that the people will never lose sight of the permanent arm. Indeed our fitness for C. D. increases in the same measure as the intensity of the constructive programme. The constructive activities include hand-spinning, hand-weaving and like productive pursuits, activities promoting heart unity between the different communities composing the subjects of H. E. H. the Nizam, removal of untouchability, total abstinence from intoxicating drinks and drugs and kindred reforms. For a non-violent movement for gaining free-dom must necessarily be a process of purification and social and economic reform. No one should run away with the idea that sus-pension of C. D. is suspension of movement for responsible govern-ment. Indeed its constructive nature should be doubly strengthened because suspension of C. D. frees the mind for constructive work.

In conclusion we wish to thank all those friends who have helped us by their advice and even material assistance.

From a copy: C. W. 101529

468. STUDENTS' SHAME

There is a most pathetic letter from a college girl in the Punjab lying on my file for nearly two months. Want of time was but an excuse for shirking the answer to the girl's question. Somehow or other I was avoiding the task, though I knew the answer. Meanwhile I received another letter from a sister of great experience, and I felt that I could no longer evade the duty of dealing with the college girl's very real difficulty. Her letter is written in chaste Hindustani. I must

try to do as much justice as I can to the letter, which gives me a perfect picture of her deep feeling. Here is my rendering of a portion of the letter:

> To girls and grown-up women there come times, in spite of their wish to the contrary, when they have to venture out alone, whether they are going from one place to another in the same city or from one town to another. And when they are thus found alone, evil-minded people pester them. They use improper or even indecent language whilst they are passing by. And if fear does not check them, they do not hesitate to take further liberty. I should like to know what part non-violence can play on such occasions. The use of violence is of course there. If the girl or the woman has sufficient courage, she will use what resources she has and teach miscreants a lesson. They can at least kick up a row that would draw the attention of the people around, resulting in the miscreants being horse-whipped. But I know that the result of such treatment would be merely to postpone the agony, not a permanent cure. Where you know the people who misbehave, I feel sure that they will listen to reason, to the gesture of love and humility. But what about a fellow cycling by, using foul language on seeing a girl or a woman unaccompanied by a male companion? You have no opportunity of reasoning with him. There is no likelihood of your meeting him again. You may not even recognize him. You do not know his address. What is a poor girl or a woman to do in such cases? By way of example I want to give you my own experience of last night (26th October). I was going with a girl companion of mine on a very special errand at about 7.30 p. m. It was impossible to secure a male companion at the time and the errand could not be put off. On the way a Sikh young man passed by on his cycle and continued to murmur something till we were within hearing distance. We knew that it was aimed at us. We felt hurt and uneasy. There was no crowd on the road. Before we had gone a few paces the cyclist returned. We recognized him at once whilst he was still at a respectful distance. He wheeled towards us, heaven knows whether he had intended to get down or merely pass by us. We felt that we were in danger. We had no faith in our physical prowess. I myself am weaker than the average girl. But in my hands I had a big book. Somehow or other courage came to me all of a sudden. I hurled

the heavy book at the cycle and roared out, "Dare you repeat your pranks?" He could with difficulty keep his balance, put on speed and fled from us. Now, if I had not flung the book at his cycle, he might have harassed us by his filthy language to the end of our journey. This was an ordinary, perhaps insignificant, occurrence; but I wish you could come to Lahore and listen to the difficulties of us unfortunate girls. You would surely discover a proper solution. First of all, tell me how, in the circumstances mentioned above, can girls apply the principle of ahimsa and save themselves. Secondly, what is the remedy for curing youth of the abominable habit of insulting womenfolk? You would not suggest that we should wait and suffer till a new generation, taught from childhood to be polite to their womenfolk, comes into being. The Government is either unwilling or unable to deal with this social evil. The big leaders have no time for such questions. Some, when they hear of a girl bravely castigating ill-behaved youth, say, 'Well done. That is the way all girls should behave.' Sometimes a leader is found eloquently lecturing against such misbehaviour of students. But no one applies himself continuously to the solution of this serious problem. You will be painfully surprised to know that during Diwali and such other holidays newspapers come out with notices warning women from venturing outdoors even to see the illuminations. This one fact should enable you to know to what straits we are reduced in this part of the world! Neither the writers nor the readers of such warnings have any sense of shame that they should have to be issued.

Another Punjabi girl to whom I gave the letter to read supports the narrative from her own experiences of her college days and tells me that what my correspondent has related is the common experience of most girls.

The other letter from an experienced woman relates the experiences of her girl friends in Lucknow. They are molested in cinema theatres by boys sitting in the row behind them using all kinds of language which I can only call indecent. They are stated to resort even to practical jokes which have been described by my correspondent but which I must not reproduce here.

If the immediate personal relief was all that was needed, no doubt the remedy that the girl who describes herself to be physically weak adopted, i. e., of flinging her book at the cyclist, was quite

correct. It is an age-long remedy. And I have said in these columns that when a person wants to become violent, physical weakness does not come in the way of its effective use, even against a physically powerful opponent. And we know that in the present age there have been invented so many methods of using physical force that even a little girl with sufficient intelligence can deal death and destruction. The fashion nowadays is growing of training girls to defend themselves in situations such as the one described by my correspondent. But she is wise enough to know that even though she was able to make effective use for the moment of the book she had in her hand as a weapon of defence, it was no remedy for the growing evil. In the cases of rude remarks, there need be no perturbation but there should be no indifference. All such cases should be published in the papers. Names of the offenders should be published when they are traced. There should be no false modesty about exposing the evil. There is nothing like public opinion for castigating public misconduct. There is no doubt that, as the correspondent says, there is great public apathy about such matters. But it is not the public alone that are to blame. They must have before them examples of rudeness. Even as stealing cannot be dealt with unless cases of thieving are published and followed up, so also is it impossible to deal with cases of rude behaviour if they are suppressed. Crime and vice generally require darkness for prowling. They disappear when light plays upon them.

But I have a fear that the modern girl loves to be Juliet to half a dozen Romeos. She loves adventure. My correspondent seems to represent the unusual type. The modern girl dresses not to protect herself from wind, rain and sun but to attract attention. She improves upon nature by painting herself and looking extraordinary. The non-violent way is not for such girls. I have often remarked in these columns that definite rules govern the development of the non-violent spirit in us. It is a strenuous effort. It marks a revolution in the way of thinking and living. If my correspondent and the girls of her way of thinking will revolutionize their life in the prescribed manner, they will soon find that young men, who at all come in contact with them, will learn to respect them and to put on their best behaviour in their presence. But if perchance they find, as they may, that their very chastity is in danger of being violated, they must develop courage enough to die rather than yield to the brute in man. It has been suggested that a girl who is gagged or bound so as to make her powerless even for struggling cannot die as easily as I seem to think. I

venture to assert that a girl who has the will to resist can burst all the bonds that may have been used to render her powerless. The resolute will gives her the strength to die.

But this heroism is possible only for those who have trained themselves for it. Those who have not a living faith in non-violence will learn the art of ordinary self-defence and protect themselves from indecent behaviour of unchivalrous youth.

The great question, however, is why should young men be devoid of elementary good manners so as to make decent girls be in perpetual fear of molestation from them? I should be sorry to discover that the majority of young men have lost all sense of chivalry. But they should, as a class, be jealous of their reputation and deal with every case of impropriety occurring among their mates. They must learn to hold the honour of every woman as dear as that of their own sisters and mothers. All the education they receive will be in vain if they do not learn good manners.

And is it not as much the concern of professors and school masters to ensure gentlemanliness among their pupils as to prepare them for the subjects?

SEGAON, December 26, 1938
Harijan, 31-12-1938

469. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI[1]

SEGAON,
December 26, 1938

DEAR SIR AKBAR,

I have purposely refrained from troubling you over the Hyderabad affairs. But as I have played an important part in shaping the decision of the H. S. Congress, I feel I should write to you. I do hope that you will appreciate the wisdom of the suspension[2] and return a generous response to their action.

I hope you are fully restored.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6841

[1] Dewan of Hyderabad

[2] Of civil disobedience. *Vide* "Draft of Statement for Hyderabad State Congress", 26-12-1938

470. NOTE TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

December 26, 1938

We shall talk for some time tomorrow, or, if you can stay on for a day or two, do so. I think the remedy for your disease is quite simple. There is no need to get alarmed. You are certainly not fated to be destroyed. But I do admit your blemishes, for I have gone through all such experiences. At the moment I will say only this, that you should go only after solving the problem.

I will write this very evening.[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2997

471. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Unrevised

SEGAON,
December 26, 1938

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Recently there was a thought for the day in English. It means: Man should not think about his shortcomings but should think about his virtues, for man becomes as he thinks. This does not mean that one should not see one's faults. One must see them, but one should not brood over them and lose one's balance of mind. We find the same advice in our Shastras. You should, therefore, have confidence in yourself and be sure in your mind that you will be an instrument of good. You have already been so.

You should overcome excessive greed. You should give up private business even if it is intended to help you in public service. If you cannot do that, you must lay down strict limits. You should try to retire from politics. If you think that you must remain in it, and if you can do so on your own terms, you should devote yourself exclusively to the advancement of the C. P. But your real field is altruistic business. Hence you should again use all your ability for the Charkha Sangh. That activity can make full use of your intellect, your moral qualities and your business acumen. In politics lots of dirty things go on. You are not likely to get much satisfaction from it. If the Charkha Sangh succeeds fully in its object, we shall easily get *purna* swaraj. If

[1] *Vide* the following item.

you take up that work, you can also do some work for village industry, eradication of untouchability, etc. But that depends on your inclination. I have said this only to dissuade you from excessive greed and to suggest to you work which would give you heart-felt satisfaction.

The other thing is impure thoughts. This is a rather difficult problem. If I understand you rightly, I feel that you should stop the practice of being nursed by women. All cannot digest it. In our circle, it can be said that I am practically the only one who follows such a practice. The measure of my success or failure will be judged after my death. For me the thing is still an experiment. I cannot confidently claim that I have succeeded. I yearn to reach the condition of Shukadevji[1]. I am miles away from such a condition. If you have confidence in yourself I have nothing to say. But if you don't have it, and if I understand you rightly, you should examine yourself deeply and make the necessary change. I am not suggesting here stopping of women's service.

If none of these things find an echo in your heart, you need not do them. Continue to consult me on the matter. There is no cause at all for despair. You are not a fallen person, you are a votary of truth. There is no possibility of a fall for such a person.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2998

472. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[*December 27, 1938*][2]

CHI. MIRA,

Your daily post is an eagerly awaited event for me. My heart and spirit are with you. The spirit is hovering round you. You must not accept defeat. You should learn the art of saying everything to K. S.[3] in the gentlest manner possible. You must keep your health and keep it there. There means the Frontier Province. I am prepared to

[1] Son of Vyasa, regarded as the supreme example of one who has risen above body-consciousness.

[2] As given in *Bapu's Letters to Mira.* The source, however, has no date.

[3] Khan Saheb

risk your death there rather than that you should return to Segaon to live. You will be all right in Peshawar. You may pass the week-end in Peshawar, if you cannot keep well in Utmanzai. You should have the three things. You must be able to go out, you must have a boy or a girl exclusively to yourself. Tell K. S. you do not expect him to spend money after you. I hope to send you some tomorrow.

I told Agatha to ask Jardine to invite you. Of course you could go to Hindu homes. But I do not want you to do that just yet, unless K. S. himself suggests.

Anyway see if my suggestion commends itself to you that you are going to do or die there. Of course I shall be there in March. It may not be before the middle because the Congress does not meet before 10th March.

Mahadev returned yesterday. He broke down the last day of his stay in Calcutta. He is looking quite well but has something wrong in his head. He needs rest and proper dieting. He overdid it in Gosaba.

I have a crowd of visitors. But I am keeping my times fairly well. I do not need the silence as completely as I used to have. You should not worry about me. I am really keeping quite well, even becoming steadily better.

Here is Holmes's[1] letter. There is a letter from Lothian which I shall deal with in *Harijan*.[2]

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6421. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10016

[1] John Haynes Holmes

[2] *Vide* "Working of Non-violence", 6-2-1939.

473. LETTER TO DR. ABRAHAM PAUL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 28, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your long letter.[1] I do not need to give you a detailed reply and I have not the time if I wish to. Now that the allegations are withdrawn any controversy about them can only be theoretical. If responsible government comes quickly, maladministration goes or should go. If it does not come quickly maladministration should be dealt with separately and probably civil disobedience will be wholly unnecessary for removing the grievance.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 10975. Courtesy: Dr. Abraham Paul

474. INTERVIEW TO AMERICAN TEACHERS [2]

[Before *December 29, 1938*][3]

TEACHER: How would you, an old and experienced leader, advise young men to throw away their lives in the service of humanity?

GANDHIJI: The question is not rightly put. You don't throw away your lives when you take up the weapon of satyagraha. But you prepare yourself to face without retaliation the gravest danger and provo-cation. It gives you a chance to surrender your life for the cause when the time comes. To be able to do so non-violently requires previous training. If you are a believer in the orthodox method, you

[1] The addressee in his letter to Gandhiji, explaining the substance and nature of the allegations contained in the memorandum submitted by the Travancore State Congress against the Dewan, G. P. Ramaswamy Iyer, had written: "You have said in one of your earlier statements that these allegations should find a place in a memorial to remove the Dewan and not in a memorial for responsible government, and in another statement you said that the remedy for maladministration if the allegations are true lies in responsible government." *Vide* also "Telegram to Pattom Thanu Pillai", 17-12-1938 and "Message to President, Travancore State Congress", 25-12-1938

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" dated December 29

[3] *Ibid*

go and train yourselves as soldiers. It is the same with non-violence. You have to alter your whole mode of life and work for it in peace time just as much as in the time of war. It is no doubt a difficult job. You have to put your whole soul into it; and if you are sincere, your example will affect the lives of other people around you. America is today ex-ploiting the so-called weaker nations of the world along with other powers. It has become the richest country in the world, not a thing to be proud of when we come to think of the means by which she has become rich. Again, to protect these riches you need the assistance of violence. You must be prepared to give up these riches. Therefore, if you really mean to give up violence, you will say, "We shall have nothing to do with the spoils of violence, and if as a result America ceases to be rich, we do not mind." You will then be qualified to offer a spotless sacrifice. That is the meaning of preparation. The occasion for making the extreme sacrifice may not come if you as a nation have fully learnt to live for peace. It is much more difficult to live for non-violence than to die for it.

T. The friends wanted to know if non-violence as enunciated by Gandhiji had a positive quality.

If I had used the word 'love', which non-violence is in essence, you would not have asked this question. But perhaps 'love.' does not express my meaning fully. The nearest word is 'charity'. We love our friends and our equals. But the reaction that a ruthless dictator sets up in us is either that of awe or pity according respectively as we react to him violently or non-violently. Non-violence knows no fear. If I am truly non-violent, I would pity the dictator and say to myself, 'He does not know what a human being should be. One day he will know better when he is confronted by a people who do not stand in awe of him, who will neither submit nor cringe to him, nor bear any grudge against him for whatever he may do.' Germans are today doing what they are doing because all the other nations stand in awe of them. None of them can go to Hitler with clean hands.

T. What is the place of Christian missions in the new India that is being built up today? What can they do to help in this great task?

G. To show appreciation of what India is and is doing. Up till now they have come as teachers and preachers with queer notions about India and India's great religions. We have been described as a nation of superstitious heathens, knowing nothing, denying God. We are a brood of Satan as Murdoch would say. Did not Bishop Heber in

his well-known hymn "From Greenland's Icy Mountains" describe India as a country where "every prospect pleases, and only man is vile"? To me this is a negation of the spirit of Christ. My personal view, therefore, is that if you feel that India has a message to give to the world, that India's religions too are true, though like all religions imperfect for having percolated through imperfect human agency, and you come as fellow-helpers and fellow-seekers, there is a place for you here. But if you come as preachers of the 'true Gospel' to a people who are wandering in darkness, so far as I am concerned you can have no place. You may impose yourselves upon us.

T. What is India's real message to the world?

G. Non-violence. India is saturated with that spirit. It has not demonstrated it to the extent that you can go to America as living witnesses of that spirit. But you can truthfully say that India is making a desperate effort to live up to that great ideal. If there is not this message, there is no other message that India can give. Say what you may, the fact stands out that here you have a whole subcontinent that has decided for itself that there is no freedom for it except through non-violence. No other country has made that attempt even. I have not been able to influence other people even to the extent of believing that non-violence is worth trying. There is of course a growing body of European opinion that has begun to appreciate the possibilities of the weapon of non-violence. But I want the sympathy of the whole world for India if she can get it while she is making this unique experiment. You can, however, be witnesses to that attempt only if you really feel that we are making an honest effort to come up to the ideal of non-violence and that all we are doing is not fraud. If your conviction is enlightened and deep enough, it will set up a ferment working in the minds of your people.

T. This is an admirable charge.

G. Take that charge with you then.

Harijan, 7-1-1939

475. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
[*December 29, 1938*][1]

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have your love notes. I am going through terrible rush. But I am keeping quite fit. I do not read Sharda's letters. What was there disturbing?

Do you say I sent you no message for Nagpur? It was wrung from me. And only you could have performed the trick. But having landed me in it, there was no getting out when the summons came from Tai. I can only call that your making.[2]

Your health causes me anxiety. The sooner you come to me the better.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3901. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7057

476. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 29, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

It is strange you have not yet heard from Jardine. Did I ask you to tell K. S. that if he was invited to see the Governor he should not say 'no'? You are also likely to be invited. I am glad you are having the pupils fairly regularly now.[3] It is a great thing that is being done.

Mildred has come in today, two days in advance of the Muriel party.

No winter here now. There has been hardly any cold this winter. Rs. 25 herewith.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6422. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10017

[1] The date is in the addressee's handwriting.
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 22-12-1938
[3] She was teaching carding and spinning to the Khudai Khidmatgars.

477. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 29, 1938

CHI. CHANDAN,

I have sent the money to Shankar. If you have not written to Anantbhai, write a nice letter of thanks. Send a copy of it to me.

Herewith is a letter from H.[1] Think over it. If there is any possibility of your both being innocent, give the benefit of it to H. If there is none, you may give whatever reply you wish to. Send the letter to me. Keep a copy of it.

You promised to write to me but have not kept the promise. If you had kept it, you would have written to me as soon as you arrived there.[2] I naturally desire to know how things are going there. And you alone can give me news about Ba. She herself is a cripple, so to say. So long as she is there, you can write on her behalf.

It is never too late to mend. Fulfil your promise even now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 945. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

478. SPEECH AT OPENING OF MAGAN SANGRAHALAYA AND UDYOG BHAVAN[3]

WARDHA,
December 30, 1938

Maganlal Gandhi was one of those few spirits who chose to face a precarious future by casting their lot with me in South Africa when I decided to give up my legal practice in order to embrace the ideal of

[1] The name has been omitted.

[2] The addressee on her return from America had gone to Dehra Dun Kanya Gurukul to teach English to the girls and study Hindi herself. D. B. Kalelkar and Kasturba had accompanied her.

[3] Extracted from Pyarelal's "A Dream Fulfilled". The function was attended by a large gathering which included over thirty economists who had come to take part in the Economic Conference being held at Nagpur. Gandhiji spoke in Hindustani.

voluntary poverty and service. He became a foundation member of the Phoenix Settlement, and took charge of the printing press when *Indian Opinion* was shifted there from Durban. Although he had gone there primarily with the intention of earning money, he sacrificed his ambition and decided to sink or swim with me and he never turned back.

He was, in my opinion, a genius. He had a versatile mind. His life was well ordered and disciplined. This enabled him to pick up anything new with ease and facility. Although not a mechanician by training, he soon made himself master of the printing machinery that was set up at Phoenix. On returning to India he made the service of the masses the passion of his life. He laid the foundation of the science of khadi by writing his *Vanat Shastra.* This book still holds its place as a classic although the science of khadi has made great progress since Maganlal's death. Although he had not specialized in all the various crafts that are at present being tackled by the A. I. V. I. A., his khadi activity, by providing the nucleus round which the village industries movement has since grown up, became its precursor.

A word about the buildings. Although, as Shri Kumarappa has observed, they follow the rural style, they are still far above the rural standards of living as they obtain in our country today. They stand there as a futurist symbol of what artisans' dwellings should be and would be in the rural India of the A. I. V. I. A.'s dreams. This much assurance, however, I can give you in this connection, that no pains have been spared to enforce the stingiest economy and simplicity commensurate with the purpose that they are intended to serve. The worst that can be said about the organizers of the Association is that they did not know their job as well as they might have. The Association is always ready to admit mistakes and to regard them as stepping-stones to knowledge. The one thing that it dreads is ignorance that masquerades as perfection.

So much for the externals. Proceeding to the exhibits inside the Museum, a critic may object, 'How can reversion to these primitive appliances and methods of production lead to swaraj? These village crafts have been with us always. Can they win the race against the industrial competition of the West and achieve anything like what the Western countries with their latest inventions of science and engineering skill have been able to achieve?' My reply is that although village crafts have been with us always, our forefathers were not aware of the

tremendous possibilities that lie hidden in them and, they were never plied by awakened masses as a means for attaining freedom. I admit that in terms of orthodox and stereotyped standards of economics, as that science is understood and taught in our colleges today, and in a society governed by these standards, village industries including spinning have perhaps no chance, and to revive them might appear like reversion to Middle Ages. But I would like you to enter the Udyog Bhavan with a fresh and unsophisticated mind that has shed its prejudices. Envisage this spinning-wheel as a spinning mill in minia-ture, that enables a person to earn two annas daily in his home in this land of chronic and nationwide unemployment and starvation when otherwise he would not be earning two pice even. Picture this mill planted in lakhs of homes, as it is capable of being planted, and I see nothing in the world which can compete with it.

And yet two annas a day by no means exhausts its income-yielding capacity. If only I get the co-operation of our intelligentsia, I hope, before I close my eyes, to see it bring a wage of eight annas a day to the spinner. Show me another industry or industrial corporation in the world that has in the course of eighteen years of its activities put four crores of rupees into the pockets of lakhs of the neediest and most deserving of men and women, with the same capital expenditure that the A. I. S. A. has done. And this money has been evenly distributed among Hindus and Mussalmans, caste and the outcaste, without any distinction, uniting them in a common economic bond. Imagine what this would mean in terms of swaraj if many helped to cover the entire seven lakhs of our villages with this life-giving and unifying activity. You need not be highly specialized engi-neers or technicians to take part in this work of industrial revolu-tion. Even a layman, a woman or a child can join in it.

I would like you to regard the Magan Museum and the Udyog Bhavan not as the 'old curiosity shop' but as a living book for self-education and study.

Harijan, 14-1-1939

479. DISCUSSION WITH ECONOMISTS[1]

WARDHA,
December 30, 1938

I want you to criticize what you have seen, and tell me the defects you may have discovered. Praise won't help me. I know where I deserve praise. Do not tell me *ex cathedra* that the whole thing is doomed to failure, as some economists have done before. Such condemnation would not impress me. But if after a close and sympathetic study you discover flaws and point them out to me, I shall feel thankful.

Q. Are you against large-scale production?

A. I never said that. This belief is one of the many superstitions about me. Half of my time goes in answering such things. But from scientists I expect better knowledge. Your question is based on loose newspaper reports and the like. What I am against is large-scale production of things villagers can produce without difficulty.

Q. What do you think of the Planning Commission ?

A. I cannot say anything. I have not studied it. It was not discussed in my presence in the Working Committee. Because I still continue to tender advice to the Working Committee whenever my advice is sought, it does not mean that everything that emerges from the Working Committee bears my *imprimatur* or is even discussed with me. I have purposely divested myself of responsibility, so far as the general body of decisions are concerned.

Q. It has your blessings?

A. What can be the use of my blessings in a thing I do not know, or in which I am not interested.

Q. Do you think that cottage industries and big industries can be harmonized ?

A. Yes, if they are planned so as to help the villages. Key industries, industries which the nation needs, may be centralized. But then I would not choose anything as a 'key industry' that can be taken up by the villages with a little organizing. For instance, I did not

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The economists, some thirty in number, had been attending the Economic Conference at Nagpur and had gone to Wardha to meet Gandhiji and to attend the opening of Magan Sangrahalaya.

know the possibilities of hand-made paper. Now I am so hopeful that I believe that every village can produce its own paper, though not for newspapers, etc. Supposing the State controlled paper-making and centralized it, I would expect it to protect all the paper that villages can make.

Q. What is meant by protecting the villages?

A. Protecting them against the inroads of the cities. At one time cities were dependent on the villages. Now it is the reverse. There is no interdependence. Villages are being exploited and drained by the cities.

Q. Don't the villages need a lot of things that the cities produce ?

A. I wonder. In any case, under my scheme, nothing will be allowed to be produced by cities which can be equally well produced by the villages. The proper function of cities is to serve as clearing houses for village products.

Q. Can we harmonize cloth-mill activity with handloom production?

A. So far as I know, my answer is an emphatic 'no'. All the cloth we need can easily be produced in the villages.

Q. But the number of mills is increasing.

A. That is a misfortune.

Q. But that is one of the things that the Planning Commission has set itself to do.

A. It is news to me. In that case the Congress will have to scrap its resolution on khadi.

Harijan, 28-1-1939

480. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 31, 1938

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You know Shambhushankar. He is hoping to win self-rule for Palitana. I have of course written to the Durbar. Shambhushankar is a man of fairly independent nature. He hopes to be able to achieve his aim with God's help only, but he certainly expects the blessings of respected leaders. I have told him that if he can and does fight with such faith he is bound to have their blessings. A votary of truth and ahimsa cannot but command the blessings of all. But he won't be

satisfied with such an assurance. He insists on having your blessings. Hear him and give him your blessings.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
PURUSHOTTAM BUILDING
OPPOSITE OPERA HOUSE
BOMBAY 4

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 231

481. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

December 31, 1938

"JAMNALALJI

Fill in the Address[1]

DELHI

Wire. No worry about order. If possible come Bardoli. Bapu."[2]

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

Please send off this wire tomorrow.[3] The letter is also enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You must have got the message regarding the arrangements to be made for Muriel Lester. Send her here tomorrow at 3 o'clock.

From a photostat: G.N. 3039

[1] Instructions in Gujarati to Radhakrishna Bajaj

[2] This is in English. What follows is in Hindi.

[3] In the mean while a telegram from Jamnalal Bajaj had been received and Gandhiji asked Pyarelal to write to Radhakrishna Bajaj to send the following wire instead: "Your wire. Will gladly meet you Jaipur friends Bardoli fourth. Bapu" *(Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad,)*.

482. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEGAON,
December 31, 1938

CHI. SHARMA,

You are right in saying that time is against us. It is a matter of great satisfaction to me that you do not think that our ways of thinking differ. What pleases me, more than anything else, however, is your decision. It is not your dharma to sell ghee. Your dharma consists in curing patients by nature cure or other acceptable treatment. It is good that you will now earn a living in the city practising nature cure. स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः says the *Bhagavad Gita*. It is part of a verse[1] and means that even death in the pursuance of one's own dharma is good. There is only fear in another's dharma, never profit.

If you like you may also bring out a small magazine making a mention of the statement you made while withdrawing your books,[2] and outlining your future course. Keep me informed.

You have to pass one test. You have to master the art of getting on well with everybody, especially those with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, pp. 274-5

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 35

[2] This had appeared in *Harijan*, 14-12-1934, with a comment by Gandhiji. *Vide* "Notes", 14-12-1934.

483. INTERVIEW TO TIMOTHY TINGFANG LEW[1]

December 31, 1938

Rev. Lew, . . . in conveying thanks for the Indian medical mission to help the Chinese, remarked:

"We appreciate it as an expression of India's sympathy and goodwill towards China. China's struggle is not merely for China but for the whole of Asia. . . .

"We are not afraid of material destruction, . . . but of cultural destruction. The first bomb in Shanghai hit a library. Colleges have been wiped out. Professors have been killed. . . .

"Even worse is the moral injury. . . .

"We want your message. . . . We look to you for spiritual guidance."

GANDHIJI: I was once asked by a Chinese friend from Santiniketan to give a message to the Chinese people. I had to ask him to excuse me. I gave him my reasons. If I merely said I sympathized with the Chinese in their struggle, it would be not of much value as coming from me. I should love to be able to say to the Chinese definitely that their salvation lay only through non-violent technique. But then it is not for a person like me, who is outside the fight, to say to a people who are engaged in a life-and death struggle, "Not this way, but that". They would not be ready to take up the new method, and they would be unsettled in the old. My interference would only shake them and confuse their minds.

But whilst I have no 'message' to send to the Chinese people who are engaged in fighting, I have no hesitation in presenting my viewpoint to you. I was almost going to ask you as to what you meant by being culturally ruined. I should be sorry to learn that Chinese culture resided in brick and mortar or in huge tomes which the moths can eat. A nation's culture resides in the hearts and in the soul of its people. Chinese culture is Chinese only to the extent that it has become part and parcel of Chinese life. Your saying, therefore, that your culture and your morals are in danger of being destroyed, leads

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "A World in Agony". Rev. Timothy Tingfang Lew was a member of the Chinese delegation to the Missionary Conference at Tambaram. Lew was a member of the Legislative Yuan of China. He had gone to Segaon to see Gandhiji along with two other Chinese delegates, Y. T. Wu, editor of Association Press of Y. M. C. A., Shanghai, and P. C. Hsu, author of several works on Confucious. There were also delegates from Rhodesia and one from Japan—a "world in miniature", as Gandhiji described them; *vide* "Letter to F. Mary Barr", 7-1-1939

one to think that the reform movement in your country was only skindeep. Gambling had not disappeared from the people's hearts. It was kept down not by the tone set by society, but by the penalty of the law. The heart continued to gamble. Japan is of course to blame and must be blamed for what it has done or is doing. But then Japan is just now like the wolf whose business it is to make short work of the sheep. Blaming the wolf would not help the sheep much. The sheep must learn not to fall into the clutches of the wolf.

If even a few of you took to non-violence, they would stand forth as living monuments of Chinese culture and morals. And then, even if China were overwhelmed on the battlefield, it would be well with China in the end, because it would at the same time be receiving a message which contains a promise of hope and deliverance. Japan cannot force drugs down unwilling throats at the point of the bayonet. It can only set up temptations. You cannot teach people to resist these temptations by replying to Japanese force by force. Whatever else force may or may not be able to achieve, it cannot safeguard Chinese morals or save Chinese culture.

If you feel the truth of my remarks, you will become a living message to China. You will then tell the Chinese people: "No matter what material destruction Japan inflicts, it cannot bring about China's cultural destruction. Our people must be sufficiently educated and warned to resist all the temptations that Japan may devise. Monuments and cities may be razed to the ground. They are but a passing show that is going one day to be claimed by time as its own. If they are destroyed by the Japanese, it will only be a morsel taken out of time's mouth. The Japanese cannot currupt our soul. If the soul of China is injured, it will not be by Japan."

The Chinese friend was of opinion that only the economic collapse of Japan could save China. He wanted to know what the prospects of a boycott of Japanese goods by India were.

GANDHIJI: I wish I could say that there was any great hope. Our sympathies are with you but they have not stirred us to our very depths, or else we should have boycotted all Japanese goods, especially Japanese cloth. Japan is not only conquering you but it is trying to conquer us too by its cheap, flimsy machine-made goods. The sending of the Medical Mission was good as a gesture of friend-ship and goodwill which there are in abundance. But that does not give me much satisfaction when I know we could do much more. We too are a

big nation like you. If we told the Japanese: 'We are not going to import a single yard of your calico nor export any of our cotton to you,' Japan would think twice before proceeding with its aggression.

Harijan, 28-1-1939

484. NOTE TO PADMAJA NAIDU

[*1938*][1]

If you have run away, correspond with me freely but not at the risk of your health. I was asking the old woman whether you could go or can she go to Hyderabad. If you can make an authorized statement merely of facts, you may do so if you are sure of your facts. I could not deal with it more than I did. I will gladly write more, if you prompt me by raising questions better in the form of a signed letter. Have you any status with Mr. Akbar?[2] All I can say for the present is that one should sit still and watch. If an opportunity occurs, intervention may take place. No use plunging in unknown waters.

You assure. . .[3] that I don't want to interfere with anything at all.

I certainly do not want to confiscate a single article of jewellery, nor do I want Sarup to feel constrained to wear khaddar sari even today, much less tomorrow. She is her own mistress today and so shall she remain tomorrow. I quite agree with you that things should be finished smoothly—I have only given my opinion today on one matter and that too when asked.

From the original : Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

485. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

[*1938*][4]

CHI. SHARDA,

It can be said only now that you have come in my grip. It is just that you have fallen into my clutches. Have you come knowingly and

[1] From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Chhanganlal Gandhi", 23-1-1902, "Letter to D. B. Shukla", 25-1-1902, "Speech at Calcutta Meeting" and "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", 30-1-1902

[2] Akbar Hydari, Dewan of Hyderabad.

[3] Illegible in the source.

[4] From the suggestion in the post-script that the addressee was learning music; *vide* "Letter to Balwantsinha", 20-9-1938

of your own free volition? I have, of course, said that you are not one to yield easily. Well, now you have come to me, but after what a long wait? Had I not been trying for several years? Dinshaw's treatment requires that put your feet in hot water. The vessel containing hot water would be placed between two bath-tubs. One with hot water and one with cold must be placed opposite each other. The feet would be already in hot water and you will have to move from one tub to the other.

I am not writing to Nanvati, Chimanlal, Dahyalal and Manjula.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You must acquire good knowledge of notes.

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 9974. Courtesy: Sharadabehn G. Chokhawala

486. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[*1938*][1]

CHI. A. S.,

What can I say! There is 'I' in whatever you do. I do not complain of that. Your inability to eat yesterday proves that I have no influence over you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 612

487. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[*1938*][2]

DAUGHTER,

You can do anything to improve your health but nothing if you find excuses to put it off. I shall be very happy if you get well,

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 613

[1] From the placing of the letter in *Bapuke Patra-8: Bibi Amtussalaamke Nam*
[2] *ibid*

488. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[*1938*][1]

I cannot write anything today. Do what Sushila says in her letter. Do not let your health deteriorate.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 614

489. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[*December 1938*][2]

I have already said that you should stick to the timings that have been fixed. This is meaningless pity. The better thing would be for you to regard Segaon as the hospital and go there at a fixed hour. You will have to work for one hour here and one hour there. Everything will go on well once the people get used to it. Hence fix your time either in the evening or morning. Then we shall see. Of course, one point to consider while deciding about the village is that we are not permanent residents here. Being temporary, it does not seem proper to go for 15 days and then stop.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the placing of the letter in *Bapuke Patra-8: Bibi Amtussalaamke Nam*
[2] As placed in the source

490. NOTE TO PYARELAL

Sunday (at night) [*1938*][1]

CHI. PYARELAL,

Herewith a list in pursuance of the talk we had earlier in the evening. You can start taking from tomorrow whatever you chose from it. Experience will suggest any changes necessary.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

491. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[*1938*]

CHI. SUSHILA,

Write to Mahodaya[2]. After the spinning sit down with the teacher who came in the morning and will be coming again. I had quite forgotten. I hope you had not forgotten.

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

492. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[*1938*]

Why are you tormenting me? Crying is forbidden and you have accepted it yourself. You do not even know the full details. I wish you would calmly try to find out the cause of my present pain. I wanted to sleep, but what can I do when I cannot sleep? I even walked for about half an hour. I have never given up *Ramanama*. What is there to cry over? Be sensible.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] This and the following eleven items have been placed in the source in 1938.

[2] Dr. Mahodaya

493. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[*1938*]

If I say that I did not get any sleep last night, you may attribute it to my sinfulness. Today's blood-pressure is also due to the same thing. Till one o'clock I alternated between sleep and wakefulness. At the moment no worry torments me nor am I troubled by anything external. Partly I understand what has happened and partly I do not understand. I am not worried. But I must tell you people about the turmoil through which I am passing.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

494. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[*1938*]

Something must be done about Mathew. Advise him to leave the place.

You have not been looking after Anand. You must spend a minute or two with him every day. Note down how much urine he passes, what his weight is, and so on.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

495. INSCRIPTION IN AUTOGRAPH-BOOK[1]

[*1938*]

This is rich man's toy. Let the poor not imitate the bad habits of the rich.

From the Hindi original: C. W. 10991. Courtesy: Erkula Kumarila Swamy

[1] Written for Erkula Kumarila Swamy, who was studying at the Ashram as a teenager. Swamy had borrowed 12 annas to buy an autograph-book and Gandhi came to know about it.

496. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[*1938*]

You have to bring one more tin of prunes from Nagpur. If Pyarelal considers it necessary to stay on for one more day, he may do so.

Leave to me the question how L. and A. S.[1] are to sleep. But if you have no interest, if you have no confidence in yourself, you may withdraw. This experiment has become important to me. But I can carry out the experiment only if I have your full co-operation. You will certainly discuss it with Pyarelal. You may also discuss it with Mahadev. I do need Pyarelal's full co-operation and understanding.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

497. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[*1938*]

If something is written down wrongly, must one read it wrong? Today at least we must give proper thought to the matter and assign a suitable description. to the chapter. There is surely a mistake about it because it is Ch. V that is described as the *Sanyasayoga* and there cannot be two chapters bearing the same description.[2]

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

498. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[*1938*]

All this is pervaded by the Lord.[3] God fills everything. Hence, everything is yours if you will use things in a spirit of renunciation. Nothing is yours if you want to use things solely for yourself.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Amtussalaam

[2] The reference obviously, is to Ch. IV of the *Bhagavad Gita* which is called the *Jnana-Karma-Sanyasayoga*, Ch. V being described as the *Karma-Sanyasayoga*.

[3] The line quoted here from *Ishopanishad*, 1, in Sanskrit reads ईशावास्यामिदं सर्वं तेन त्यक्तेन भुंजीथा

499. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[*1938*]

Where did you get wet? Even the blessing of someone with a disordered mind is terrible. When will your disorderliness go? To leave one's meal and go away is an insult to *Annadevata*. You could have asked me if it was to be fetched immediately or after the meal. I shall have to be more strict now. I shall eat only when you are ready. And once you sit down to eat you shall get up only after finishing the meal. I eat early for the convenience of both of us. You can get ready to eat with me. You must plan your life with some thought. If you do that, you can have more time at your disposal; you can perform your duty better and you can acquire more experience and knowledge.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

500. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[*1938*]

You make Pyarelal's bed but when does he ever sleep? He was awake till one o'clock. What is the condition of the latrines here? Why do you not have earth kept there? That is not right. There are so many . . .[1] There is not enough care shown and not enough effort. I am too busy in my own work, otherwise I would take care of all the latrines and clean them myself or have them cleaned. I would say you might do something even now.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

501. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[*1938*]

That you would go to the toilet only when I did is also part of your disorderliness, is it not? There is no peace of mind, no stability. Doing things haphazardly. Going to the toilet, eating, sleeping—everything, only if you have the time. The rest is all duty, is it?

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar.

[1] The rest of this sentence and the one following are not clear.

502. ENLIGHTENED ANARCHY—A POLITICAL IDEAL

Political power, in my opinion, cannot be our ultimate aim. It is one of the means used by men for their all-round advancement. The power to control national life through national representatives is called political power. Representatives will become unnecessary if the national life becomes so perfect as to be self-controlled. It will then be a state of enlightened anarchy in which each person will become his own ruler. He will conduct himself in such a way that his behaviour will not hamper the well-being of his neighbours. In an ideal State there will be no political institution and therefore no political power. That is why Thoreau has said in his classic statement that that government is the best which governs the least.

[From Hindi]

Sarvodaya, January, 1939

503. DISCUSSION WITH MAURICE FRYDMAN[1]

[On or before *January 1, 1939*][2]

FRYDMAN: What attitude should I, as a realist, adopt with regard to the tide of industrialization that is sweeping over the world?. . . Is it not waste of energy merely to oppose it? Would it not be better to try to change its direction ?

GANDHIJI: You are an engineer. You will therefore appreciate an illustration from mechanics. You know the parallelogram of forces. There the forces do not neutralize each other. Each force acts freely along its own line and we get the resultant which indicates the final direction of motion. It is the same with the problem you have mentioned. As I look at Russia where the apotheosis of industriazation has been reached, the life there does not appeal to me. To use the language of the Bible, "What shall it avail a man if he gain the whole world and lose his soul?" In modern terms, it is beneath human dignity to lose one's individuality and become a mere cog in the machine. I want every individual to become a full-blooded, fully

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". Frydman, commonly known as Bharatanand, was a Pole. He was the head of the Government Electrical Workshop at Bangalore. He took a keen interest in Indian politics and philosophy.

[2] Gandhiji was in Segaon, where Frydman visited him, till January 1.

developed member of society. The villages must become self-sufficient. I see no other solution if one has to work in terms of ahimsa. Now I have that conviction.I know there are others who believe in industrialization.I work with all my being for my conviction. The process of adjustment goes on all the time. I do not know what the outcome of it will be. But whatever it is, it will be to the good.

F. But, is no compromise with industrialization possible without imperilling the ideal of self-sufficient villages?

G. Oh yes, Railways are there, I do not avoid them. I hate motor-cars, but I make use of them willy-nilly all the same. Again, I dislike fountain-pens, but just now I am making use of one though I carry a reed pen about in my box. Every time I use the fountain-pen it hurts me and I think of the neglected reed pen in my box. Compromise comes in at every step, but one must realize that it is a compromise and keep the final goal constantly in front of the mind's eye.

F. When I turn from the busy West to masses in the Indian villages, I seem to be moving in a different world altogether in which stagnation reigns.

G. Yes, so long as you look on the surface. But the moment you talk to them and they begin to speak, you will find that wisdom drops from their lips. Behind the crude exterior you will find a deep reservoir of spirituality. I call this culture. You will not find such a thing in the West. You try to engage a European peasant in conversation, and you will find that he is uninterested in things spiritual. In the case of the Indian villager an age-old culture is hidden under an encrustment of crudeness. Take away the encrustation, remove his chronic poverty and his illiteracy and you have the finest specimen of what a cultured, cultivated, free citizen should be.

Harijan, 28-1-1939

504. LETTER TO S. VELU PILLAI[1]

WARDHA,
January 1, 1939

Your telegram made painful reading. I have given the best advice I was capable of giving. I have no partiality for the Dewan. I

[1] This was in answer to the addressee's telegram saying that the Dewan had not responded to the withdrawal of the allegations by the State Congress, that the Travancore fight had resulted in nothing, that arrests were continuing and that there was unrest everywhere in the State.

repeatedly told the friends who came here that they were not to withdraw the allegations, unless they felt that my advice was thoroughly sound. I never said they were to be withdrawn against the express wish of the people. After all you, as leaders, were expected to know the wishes of the people. In spite of your telegram, I hold that withdrawal of the allegations was sound. If now the prosecutions continue, your course is clear. If there is unrest, you the leaders should be able to allay the unrest by showing the wisdom of the step you have taken. If the movement is really sound and the people are backing it with knowledge, it should be now stronger than it ever was. The burden of the allegations being removed, your course is absolutely clear and if you can control the forces of violence there is no difficulty in the way of your launching civil disobedience. My own conscience is absolutely clear. My advice is still at your disposal.

The Hindu, 16-1-1939

505. LETTER TO SAMPURNANAND

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 1, 1939

BHAI SAMPURNANANDJI,

Dr. Zakir Husain was here with me for a few days. He has prepared a memorandum on the Hindu-Muslim question. I send you the portion concerned with U.P.[1] I like the suggestions he makes. Please go through it and implement what it is possible to implement. If you wish, you may write direct to Dr. Zakir Husain. I have known him for many years. He is a good man.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi original: Sampurnanand Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] In this Zakir Husain had suggested Government help being extended to the various Muslim educational institutions in U. P. He had also recommended that assistance should be provided to libraries and societies doing literary work in Urdu.

506. INTERVIEW TO TINGFANG LEW, Y. T. WU AND P. C. HSU[1]

[*January 1, 1939*][2]

The Chinese delegates put searching questions. . . . One of them asked: "Is it not necessary that individuals should practise non-violence first in their own person, in their relations with other individuals?"

GANDHIJI: It would be a delusion to think otherwise. If one does not practise non-violence in one's personal relations with others and hopes to use it in bigger affairs, one is vastly mistaken. Non-violence like charity must begin at home. But if it is necessary for the individual to be trained in non-violence, it is even more necessary for the nation to be trained likewise. One cannot be non-violent in one's own circle and violent outside it. Or else, one is not truly non-violent even in one's own circle; often the non-violence is only in appearance. It is only when you meet with resistance, as for instance when a thief or murderer appears, that your non-violence is put on its trial. You either try or should try to oppose the thief with his own weapons, or you try to disarm' him by love. Living among decent people, your conduct may not be described as non-violent. Mutual forbearance is not non-violence. Immediately, therefore, you get the conviction that non-violence is the law of life, you have to practise it towards those who act violently towards you, and the law must apply to nations as to individuals. Training is no doubt necessary. And beginnings are always small. But if the conviction is there, the rest will follow.

Q. In the practice of non-violence, is there not danger of developing a 'martyrdom complex' or pride creeping in?

A. If one has that pride and egoism, there is no non-violence. Non-violence is impossible without humility. My own experience is that whenever I have acted non-violently I have been led to it and sustained in it by the higher promptings of an unseen Power. Through my own will I should have miserably failed. When I first went to jail, I quailed at the prospect. I had heard terrible things about jail life. But I

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "A World in Agony"

[2] Pyarelal says the Tambaram Conference delegates were in Segaon "on the last day of the dying year and the New Year's Day". Also that Lew saw Gandhiji separately on the first day and that the whole group had discussion with him "later", which presumably meant January 1.

had faith in God's protection. Our experience was that those who went to jail in a prayerful spirit came out victorious, those who had gone in their own strength failed. There is no room for self-pitying in it either, when you say God is giving you the strength. Self-pity comes when you do a thing for which you expect recognition from others. But here there is no question of recognition.

Another friend thus placed his dilemma: "I am a firm believer in non-violence. Eight years ago, I read your *Experiments with Truth* and . . . translated the book into Chinese. And then came the Japanese invasion. My faith in non-violence was put to a severe test. . . . On the one hand, I felt I could not preach non-violence to my people who . . . believed that resistance with force was the only way out. . . . But on the other hand, when I try to take a sympathetic attitude and try to do something helpful in such a situation, I find I am giving moral and material support directly and indirectly to something which is against the highest that I know. . . ."

G. Yours is a difficult situation. Such difficulties have confronted me more than once. I took part on the British side in the Boer War by forming an ambulance corps. I did likewise at the time of what has been described as the Zulu revolt. The third time was during the great war. I believed in non-violence then. My motive was wholly non-violent. That seemingly inconsistent conduct gave me strength. My example cannot be used as a precedent for others to follow. Looking back upon my conduct on those three occasions, I have no sense of remorse. I know this too that my non-violent strength did not suffer diminution because of those experiences. The actual work I was called upon to do was purely humanitarian, especially during the Zulu revolt. I and my companions were privileged to nurse the wounded Zulus back to life. It is reasonable to suggest that but for our services some of them would have died. I cite this experience not to justify my participation however indirect it was. I cite it to show that I came through that experience with greater non-violence and with richer love for the great Zulu race. And I had an insight into what war by white men against coloured races meant.

The lesson to be learnt from it by you is that, placed as you are in a position of hopeless minority, you may not ask your people to lay down their arms unless their hearts are changed and by laying down their arms they feel the more courageous and brave. But whilst you may not try to wean people from war, you will in your person live non-violence in all its completeness and refuse all participation in war. You will develop love for the Japanese in your hearts. You will examine yourself whether you can really love them, whether you have not

some ill will towards them for all the harm they are doing. It is not enough to love them by remembering their virtues. You must be able to love them in spite of all their misdeeds. If you have that love for the Japanese in your hearts, you will proceed to exhibit in your conduct that higher form of courage which is the hall mark of true non-violence and which your Chinese friends will not fail to detect and recognize as such. You will not wish success to Japanese arms because you 'love' the Japanese. At the same time you will not pray for the success of Chinese arms. It is very difficult to judge, when both sides are employing weapons of violence, which side 'deserves' to succeed. You will therefore pray only that the right should prevail. Whilst you will keep yourself aloof from all violence you will not shirk danger. You will serve friend and foe alike with a reckless disregard for your life. You will rush forth if there is an outbreak of an epidemic or a fire to be combated and distinguish yourself by your surpassing courage and non-violent heroism. But you will refuse to call the curses of heaven upon the Japanese. If by chance some Japanese soldiers or airmen fall into the hands of the Chinese and are in danger of being lynched by an infuriated Chinese mob or otherwise ill-treated, you will plead for them with your own people and if necessary even protect them with your life. You know the story of Emily Hobhouse. Though an Englishwoman, she courageously went to the Boer concentration camps. She exhorted the Boers never to lose heart, and it is said that if she had not steeled the hearts of the Boer women as she did, the war might have taken a different turn. She was full of wrath against her own people for whom she had not a good word to say. You would not copy her unmeasured wrath which somewhat vitiated her non-violence, but you will copy her love for the 'enemy' that made her denounce the misdeeds of her own countrymen. Your example will affect the Chinese and might even shame some Japanese who will become bearers of your message among the Japanese.

A very slow process, you will perhaps say. Yes, possibly, under the existing adverse circumstances to begin with. But it will gather momentum and speed in an incalculable manner as you proceed. I am an irrepressible optimist. My optimism rests on my belief in the infinite possibilities of the individual to develop non-violence. The more you develop it in your own being, the more infectious it becomes till it overwhelms your surroundings and by and by might over-sweep the world.

Q. I, a believer in non-violence, often find that I am actuated by mixed motives. So does a war general have mixed motives. Is it not possible to fight with love for the enemy in one's heart ? May we not shoot out of love ?

A. We do often have mixed motives. But that would not be non-violence. There can be degrees in violence, not in non-violence. The constant effort of the votary of non-violence is to purge himself of hatred towards the so-called enemy. There is no such thing as shooting out of love in the way you suggest.

The last to place before Gandhiji his problem was Mr. P. C. Hsu.

P. C. HSU: I can say honestly, I have no feeling of hatred towards the Japanese people but I feel their military system is an evil. . . . I had hoped that at Tambaram, at any rate, an international link between the two countries on the basis of mutual goodwill and peace would be forged. But I was disillusioned. . . . Our difficulty is this: While sincerely believing in non-violence, we have not found a way of making it effective.

G. Should that present a difficulty? A person who realizes a particular evil of his time and finds it overwhelms him, dives deep in his own heart for inspiration, and when he gets it, he presents it to others. Meetings and group organizations are all right. They are of some help, but very little. They are like the scaffolding that an architect erects—a temporary and makeshift expedient. The thing that really matters is an invincible faith that cannot be quenched.

Faith can be developed. Only, the way it can be developed and in which it works differs from that in the case of violence. You cannot develop violence through prayer. Faith, on the other hand, cannot be developed except through prayer.

Non-violence succeeds only when we have a living faith in God. Buddha, Jesus, Mahomed—they were all warriors of peace in their own style. We have to enrich the heritage left by these world teachers. God has His own wonderful way of executing His plans and choosing His instruments. The Prophet and Abu Bakr trapped in a cave were saved from their persecutors by a spider which had woven its web across the mouth of that cave. All the world teachers, you should know began with a zero!!

Q. Whilst we have isolated individuals who have the mind of Jesus, because they are not united, not organized, theirs remains a mere cry in the wilderness. The question that arises in my mind is: Can love be organized, and if so, how ?

A. Organization in the orthodox sense may not be possible. But there is no bar to united non-violent action. I am trying to show by a series of experiments that it is possible. It has its own technique.

Q. If China wins the war, will she be worse off or better off for her victory ?

A. If China wins and copies Japanese methods, she will beat Japan hollow at her own game. But the victory of China will not mean a new hope for the world. For China will then be a multiple edition of Japan. But whether Chine wins or goes down, your line of action is clear. If Chine is defeated on the battlefield, your non-violence will remain undaunted and will have done its work. If China wins, you will go to the gallows in the attempt to wean China from copying Japan's methods.

Hariian, 28-1-1939

507. INTERVIEW TO S. S. TEMA[1]

[*January 1, 1939*][2]

TEMA: How can my people make their Congress as successful as the Indian National Congress?

GANDHIJI: The Congress became successful for the simple reason that it was inaugurated by the most selfless and cultured people that could be found in that age. They made themselves the representatives of the people and captured their imagination by reason of service and self-sacrifice. They were from the people and of the people. You have not, as far as I am aware, a band of Africans who would be content to work and live in impecuniosity. Among those who are educated there is not that absolute selflessness. Again, while most of your leaders are Christians, the vast mass of the Bantus and Zulus are not Christians. You have adopted European dress and manners, and have as a result become strangers in the midst of your own people. Politically, that is a disadvantage. It makes it difficult for you to reach the heart of the masses. You must not be afraid of being 'Bantuized' or feel ashamed of carrying an assagai or of going about with only a tiny clout round your loins. A Zulu or a Bantu is a well-built man and need not be ashamed of showing his body. He need not dress like you. You must become Africans once more.

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "A World in Agony-II". Rev. S. S. Tema of D. R. Mission, Johannesburg, was a Negro and a member of the African Congress. He was one of the delegates to the Tambaram Conference who had come to see Gandhiji after the Conference was over.

[2] The delegates were in Segaon on December 31 and January 1. On December 31 only Lew saw Gandhiji. Tema presumably met him on January 1.

T. Of late there has been some talk of forming an Indo-African united non-white Front in South Africa. What do you think about it?

G. It will be a mistake. You will be pooling together not strength but weakness. You will best help one another by each standing on his own legs. The two cases, are different. The Indians are a microscopic minority. They can never be a 'menace' to the white population. You, on the other hand, are the sons of the soil who are being robbed of your inheritance. You are bound to resist that. Yours is a far bigger issue. It ought not to be mixed up with that of the Indian. This does not preclude the establishment of the friendliest relations between the two races. The Indians can co-operate with you in a number of ways. They can help you by always acting on the square towards you. They may not put themselves in opposition to your legitimate aspirations, or run you down as 'savages' while exalting themselves as 'cultured' people in order to secure concessions for themselves at your expense.

T. What sort of relations would you favour between these two races?

G. The closest possible. But while I have abolished all distinction between an African and an Indian, that does not mean that I do not recognize the difference between them. The different races of mankind are like different branches of a tree—once we recognize the common parent stock from which we are sprung, we realize the basic unity of the human family, and there is no room left for enmities and unhealthy competition.

T. Should we adopt violence or non-violence as a means for our deliverance ?

G. Certainly, non-violence under all circumstances. But you must have a living faith in it. Even when there is impenetrable darkness surrounding you, you must not abandon hope. A person who believes in non-violence believes in a living God. He cannot accept defeat. Therefore, my advice is non-violence all the time, but non-violence of the brave, not of the coward.

T. Your example has shed so much influence upon us that we are thinking whether it would not be possible for one or two of our young men, who we are hoping will become leaders, to come to you for training.

G. It is quite a good and sound idea.

T. Do you think Christianity can bring salvation to Africa?

G. Christianity, as it is known and practised today, cannot bring salvation to your people. It is my conviction that those who today call themselves Christians do not know the true message of Jesus. I wit-

nessed some of the horrors that were perpetrated on the Zulus during the Zulu Rebellion. Because one man, Bambatta, their chief, had refused to pay his tax, the whole race was made to suffer. I was in charge of an ambulance corps. I shall never forget the lacerated backs of Zulus who had received stripes and were brought to us for nursing because no white nurse was prepared to look after them. And yet those who perpetrated all those cruelties called themselves Christians. They were 'educated', better dressed than the Zulus, but not their moral superiors.

T. Whenever a leader comes up in our midst, he flops down after a while. He either becomes ambitious after money or succumbs to the drink habit or some other vice and is lost to us. How shall we remedy this?

G. The problem is not peculiar to you. Your leadership has proved ineffectual because it was not sprung from the common people. If you belong to the common people, live like them and think like them, they will make common cause with you. If I were in your place, I would not ask a single African to alter his costume and make himself peculiar. It does not add a single inch to his moral stature.

Harijan, 18-2-1939

508. RAJKOT

Hitherto I have said hardly anything about the Rajkot struggle which has just ended[1] as brilliantly as it began. My silence was not due to lack of interest. That was impossible owing to my intimate connections with the place. Apart from my father having been the Dewan of the State, the late Thakore Saheb looked up to me as to a father. My silence was due to the fact that Sardar Vallabhbhai was the soul of the movement. To praise him or his work would be like self-praise.

The struggle showed what non-violent non-co-operation could do, if there was adequate response from the people. I was wholly unprepared for the unity, grit and capacity for sacrifice that the people showed. They showed that they were greater than their ruler, and that

[1] The settlement about establishing responsible government was reached on December 26, 1938. The main terms were: (1) All repressive measures should be withdrawn; (2) all political prisoners should be released; (3) satyagraha should be called off; (4) to draft the constitution a committee of 10 persons should be appointed, seven of whom should be those suggested by Vallabhbhai Patel.

even an English Dewan was powerless before a people united in non-violent action.

The Thakore Saheb deserves congratulations for taking the reins in his own hands and overruling the English Dewan's advice and the known wishes of the Resident.

From documents in my possession I know that Sir Patrick Cadell, supported by the Resident, cut a sorry figure as servant of the Thakore Saheb. He acted as if he was the master. He traded upon the fact that he belonged to the ruling race and his appointment was subject to the sanction of the central authority, and thought that he could do what he liked. At the time of writing I do not know whether he has wisely retired or what has happened. The correspondence in my possession shows that the ruling chiefs have seriously asked themselves whether it is wisdom to have Europeans as their Dewans. The central authority has to keep watch over Residents if its declarations are to be carried out as well in the letter as in the spirit.

It is to be hoped that the ruling chiefs who stand in awe of Residents will know from the Rajkot example that if they are straight and if they have their people really at their back, they have nothing to fear from the Residents. Indeed they should realize that the Paramount Power resides not in Simla, not in Whitehall, but in their people. An awakened people who rely upon non-violent strength are independent in the face of any conceivable combination of armed powers. What Rajkot could do in three months every State can do if the people show the qualities that the people of Rajkot showed.

But I do not claim that the people of Rajkot had developed the rare type of non-violence that would stand true in the face of all odds. But Rajkot did show what even ordinary non-violence by a whole people in an organization could do for it.

But great as was the work done by the people of Rajkot, as civil resisters their real test is yet to come. Their victory, if it is not followed up by a sustained exhibition of the same qualities that secured it, may prove also their undoing. By a long course of training Congressmen all over India have shown their capacity for offering civil resistance, but they have yet to show capacity for constructive non-violence. Civil disobedience may well be adulterated with much incivility, i. e., violence, and yet pass current. But construction is very difficult. In it detection of violence is easy. And existence of violence may even turn victory into a trap and prove it to have been a delusion. Will the

people exhibit the requisite selflessness and self-denial? Will they resist the temptation to serve themselves and their dependants? Any scramble for power will rob the people at large of what they should really get if there was wise and resolute leadership that would command ready and willing obedience. Kathiawar is noted for its intrigues. It contains a race of politicals whose one aim in life is self-advancement, if it is also known to contain stuff of which heroes are made. If the politicals gain the upper hand, there will be no *Ramraj* in Rajkot. *Ramraj* means renunciation all along the line. It means discipline imposed by the people on themselves. If constructive non-violence is displayed by the people, it is possible for Rajkot to radiate an influence that can easily make Rajkot an example to follow.

Let the victory, therefore, be a time for humility, heart-search and prayer instead of self-satisfaction and vain rejoicings. I shall watch, wait and pray.

ON THE TRAIN TO BARDOLI, January 2, 1939

Harijan, 7-1-1939

509. IS NON-VIOLENCE INEFFECTIVE?

In dealing with my answer[1] to the criticism that the Jews had been non-violent for 2,000 years, *The Statesman* says in the course of an editorial:

> The whole world has heard of Pastor Niemoeller[2] and the sufferings of the Lutheran Church; here many Pastors and individual Christians bore themselves bravely before People's Courts, violence and threats; without retaliation they bore noble witness to the truth. And what change of heart is there in Germany? Buried in prisons and concentration camps are today, and have been for five years, members of the Bible Searchers' Leagues who rejected Nazi militarism as conflicting with Christ's Gospel of peace. And how many Germans know of them or, if they know, do anything about it?
>
> Non-violence, whether of the weak or of the strong, seems, except in very special conditions, rather a personal than a social gospel. A man's salvation may be left to himself; politicians are concerned with causes, creeds and minorities. It is suggested by Mr. Gandhi that Herr Hitler would bow before a courage "infinitely superior to that shown by his own Storm

[1] *Vide* "Some Questions Answered", 17-12-1938

[2] Martin Niemoeller, anti-Nazi Protestant theologian, who had been arrested by the Gestapo and imprisoned in a concentration camp

Troopers". If that were so, one would have supposed that he would have paid tribute to such men as Herr von Ossietzky[1]. Courage to a Nazi, however, seems a virtue only when displayed by his own supporters: elsewhere it becomes the impudent provocation of Jewish-Marxist *canaille.* Mr. Gandhi has produced his prescription in view of the inability of the Great Powers effectively to move in the matter, an inability we all deplore and would see remedied. His sympathy may do much for the comfort of the Jews, but seems likely to do less for their enlargement. Christ is the supreme example of non-violence and the indignities heaped upon Him at His tortured death proved once and for all that in a worldly and temporal sense it can fail hopelessly.

I do not think that the sufferings of Pastor Niemoeller and others have been in vain. They have preserved their self-respect intact. They have proved that their faith was equal to any suffering. That they have not proved sufficient for melting Herr Hitler's heart merely shows that it is made of a harder material than stone. But the hardest metal yields to sufficient heat. Even so must the hardest heart melt before sufficiency of the heat of non-violence. And there is no limit to the capacity of non-violence to generate heat.

Every action is a resultant of a multitude of forces even of a contrary nature. There is no waste of energy. So we learn in the books on mechanics. This is equally true of human actions. The difference is that in the one case we generally know the forces at work, and when we do, we can mathematically foretell the resultant. In the case of human actions, they result from a concurrence of forces of most of which we have no knowledge. But our ignorance must not be made to serve the cause of disbelief in the power of these forces. Rather is our ignorance a cause for greater faith. And non-violence being the mightiest force in the world and also the most elusive in its working, it demands the greatest exercise of faith. Even as we believe in God in faith, so have we to believe in non-violence in faith.

Herr Hitler is but one man enjoying no more than the average span of life. He would be a spent force if he had not the backing of his people. I do not despair of his responding to human suffering even though caused by him. But I must refuse to believe that the Germans as a nation have no heart or markedly less than the other nations of the earth. They will some day or other rebel against their

[1] Carl von Ossietzky (1889-1938), German pacifist and writer. He was arrested as an enemy of the State and imprisoned. While in jail he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace. Hitler was so enraged that he prohibited Germans thenceforth from accepting such awards.

own adored hero, if he does not wake up betimes. And when he or they do, we shall find that the sufferings of the Pastor and his fellow-workers had not a little to do with the awakening.

An armed conflict may bring disaster to German arms; it cannot change the German heart even as the last defeat did not. It produced a Hitler vowed to wreak vengeance on the victors. And what a vengeance it is! My answer, therefore, must be the answer that Stephenson gave to his fellow-workers who had despaired of ever filling the deep pit that made the first railway possible. He asked his co-workers of little faith to have more faith and go on filling the pit. It was not bottomless, it must be filled. Even so I do not despair because Herr Hitler's or the German heart has not yet melted. On the contrary I plead for more suffering and still more till the melting has become visible to the naked eye. And even as the Pastor has covered himself with glory, a single Jew bravely standing up and refusing to bow to Hitler's decrees will cover himself with glory and lead the way to the deliverance of the fellow Jews.

I hold that non-violence is not merely a personal virtue. It is also a social virtue to be cultivated like the other virtues. Surely society is largely regulated by the expression of non-violence in its mutual dealings. What I ask for is an extension of it on a larger, national and international scale.

I was unprepared to find the view expressed by *The Statesman* writer that the example of Christ proved once and for all that in a worldly and temporal sense it can fail hopelessly!! Though I cannot claim to be Christian in the sectarian sense, the example of Jesus' suffering is a factor in the composition of my undying faith in non-violence which rules all my actions, worldly and temporal. And I know that there are hundreds of Christians who believe likewise. Jesus lived and died in vain if he did not teach us to regulate the whole of life by the eternal Law of Love.

ON THE TRAIN TO BARDOLI, January 2, 1939

Harijan, 7-1-1939

510. TELEGRAM TO SUPERINTENDENT, TELEGRAPH OFFICE, MADRAS

January 3, 1939

SUPERINTENDENT
TELEGRAPH OFFICE
MADRAS

IF CABLE RECEIVED FOR SOGA TO REPEAT DREISLER METHODIST MISSIONARY HOME 22 CLUB BACK ROAD BYCULLA BOMBAY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

511. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

[On or after *January 4, 1939*][1]

PLEASE CONVEY MY HEARTFELT CONDOLENCE FOR THE UNTIMELY DEMISE OF MR. RAMAN MENON TO THE BEREAVED FAMILY. SETH JAMNALAL BAJAJ JOINS.

The Hindu, 6-1-1939

512. TELEGRAM TO KRISHNASWAMY[2]

January 5, 1939

WIRE REDIRECTED. MY OPINION SUCH CANDIDATE INELIGIBLE BUT YOU SHOULD SECURE AUTHORITATIVE RULING FROM PROVINCIAL COMMITTEE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Raman Menon died on January 3. Jamnalal Bajaj arrived in Bardoli, where Gandhiji was, on January 4.

[2] The addressee had asked whether producers and weavers of uncertified khadi were eligible to stand for election as delegates to Tripura Congress.

513. LETTER TO SHUAIB QURESHI

BARDOLI,
January 5, 1939

MY DEAR SHUAIB,

Zakir Husain was with me for four or five days. In the course of our conversations I learnt that the aid that was given to the Jamia Millia by Bhopal had been stopped. Is there any reason for the stoppage except the pressure on the purse? If there is not, I would like you to think of some retrenchment for the sake of the Jamia. It seems to supply a felt want. It seems to be the only institution manned by Muslims which has selfsacrificing workers who are staunch Muslims and equally staunch nationalists.

Now that I have disburdened myself of the load that was weighing on me, I leave the matter in your safe hands.

I hope Gulnar and baby are doing well.

Love to you all.

BAPU

JANAB SHUAIB QURESHI SAHEB

BHOPAL

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

514. LETTER TO RANCHHODLAL PATWARI

BARDOLI,
January 6, 1939

RESPECTED BROTHER,

I have received your letter . What you write is quite true. The real test is yet to come.[1] I have shown your letter to Sardar. He has just left for Bombay. However, he has left word that your fear is out of place.

My going to Ahmedabad is not in the programme.

Salutations from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4123. Also C.W. 2789. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] The reference is to the Rajkot Satyagraha; *vide* "Letter to Ranchhodlal Patwari", 2-12-1938

515. TELEGRAM TO PATTOM THANU PILLAI

BARDOLI,
January 7, 1939

PRESIDENT STATE CONGRESS
TRIVANDRUM

GLAD DEMONSTRATIONS CANCELLED AND PROHIBITION LAUNCHED. DELIGHTED PROSECUTIONS WITHDRAWN.[1]

GANDHI

From the original: Pattom Thanu Pillai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

516. TELEGRAM TO G. RAMACHANDRAN

[*January 7, 1939*][2]

WHY NOTHING FROM YOU? LOVE.

BAPU

Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

517. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA[3]

January 7, 1939

IN JAMNALALJI'S LETTER JAIPUR STATE THERE IS REFERENCE TO YOUR TELEGRAM DATED OCTOBER TWELFTH ADVISING THAT REMAINING SIKAR PRISONERS WILL BE RELEASED THIRTEENTH. YOUR NAME NOT MENTIONED BUT MAY HAVE TO BE IF CHALLENGED. HAVE YOU ANY OBJECTION? WIRE BARDOLI.

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 209

[1] This was in reply to the Acting President R. Sankar's telegram dated January 3, 1939, informing Gandhiji of the launching of a prohibition campaign.

[2] This was written on the same sheet on which the telegram to Pattom Thanu Pillai, the preceding item, was drafted.

[3] This was sent to Pilani.

518. DRAFT OF PRESS STATEMENT FOR JAMNALAL BAJAJ[1]

BARDOLI,
January 7, 1939

Rumours have been going the round as to what I am going to do about the ban on my entry into Jaipur State—my birth-place and ancestral home. The ban is as much a surprise to me as to my friends. My whole life has been passed in the interests of peace in all walks of life. Whatever else non-violence may be with Congressmen it is my creed and I try as much as it is in my power to live up to it. I am no enemy of States. I have always maintained a friendly attitude towards them. I have always believed the States to be capable of responding to the new awakening that has taken place in India. I am now carrying on correspondence with a view to find out the secret lying behind the ban. The wording of the order in no sense applies to me. I do not wish to act in haste. I have no desire to embarrass the Jaipur State authorities. But if every honourable effort to have the ban removed fails the public may depend upon my doing my duty.

My present and immediate object is to afford through the Mandal[2] relief to the famine-stricken in Jaipur State. I hope that the ban will not be allowed to disturb the would-be donors. I am making arrangements for all eventualities. Indeed my main reason for going to Jaipur was to devise measures for famine relief.

My second immediate concern is to try to secure the release of the nine prisoners during the recent crisis in Sikar. One of them is convicted and eight are still awaiting trial. I had good grounds for hoping that they would come in for general amnesty. I can only assure them that I shall leave no stone unturned to secure their release while I am still free.

From a photostat: G.N. 3077

[1] The draft was in Gandhiji's hand.
[2] Jaipur Rajya Praja Mandal

519. DRAFT OF LETTER FOR JAMNALAL BAJAJ[1]

CAMP BARDOLI,
January 7, 1939

TO
THE PRESIDENT
COUNCIL OF STATE, JAIPUR

SIR,

The attached order dated 16th December last was served on me on the 28th of the same month at Sawai Madhopur whilst I was on my way to Jaipur.

The order came as a painful surprise to me. At the station I had over an hour's chat with Mr.F.S.Young,I.G.P.,who was persuading me not to commit a breach of the order. I did not need much persuasion as in a discussion with Gandhiji, of the possibility of such an order being served on me, he had advised me not to break the order immediately but to consider the whole situation in consultation with him before taking any final step.

Accordingly I suspended my journey and proceeded to Delhi. After having conferred with friends and fellow-workers and finally Gandhiji, I have come to the conclusion that on the 1st of February next I should commit a breach of the order unless, before then, it is unconditionally revoked.

The authorities know that a public appeal was issued by me on 1st November last on behalf of the Jaipur Rajya Praja Mandal, of which I am President, that as famine had overtaken Shekhawati and other areas, relief work was to be undertaken by the Mandal to the exclusion of all other activity. They were also aware that on a newspaper report having appeared to the effect that civil disobedience was to be started in Jaipur I had issued a flat contradiction.

I do not know what had happened on or before the 16th December to warrant the passing of the order in anticipation of my seeking to enter Jaipur State. I note that on the same date a notification was published in the State Gazette to the effect that "an emergency has arisen which makes it necessary to provide against insti-

[1] The draft was prepared and twice revised by Gandhiji. The first draft in Gandhiji's hand is available in G.N, 3076.

gation to illegal refusal to the payment of certain liabilities". Seeing that the order against my entry was passed the same day, it is reasonable to assume that in the opinion of the authorities I would be connected with the feared movement of illegal refusal of taxes. Surely if the authorities had any fear of my leading such a movement, they might have at least ascertained from me as to the truth or otherwise of the information in their possession. They knew me sufficiently to feel sure that I would not conceal the truth from them.

Indeed the authorities know I rendered help to them also during the recent crisis in Sikar consistently with my obligations to the people. They know that my offices were used entirely on behalf of peace.

My surprise may therefore be better imagined than I can describe it when I learnt from the order that "your (my) presence and activities are likely to lead to a breach of the peace", and that, therefore, "it is considered necessary in the public interest and for the maintenance of public tranquillity to prohibit your (my) entry within the Jaipur State." I have no hesitation in saying that the notice belies the whole of my public career.

I observe that I have been described as of Wardha. I hope this is a slip. For the Jaipur State, surely I am of Jaipur. I do not cease to be of Jaipur because I have interests in Wardha and elsewhere.

It has become a serious question for my co-workers and me to consider our position in the State.

The Praja Mandal was started in July of 1931 and reorganized in November 1936. It has a constitution. It has many distinguished men of Jaipur State as its members. It has hitherto carried on its activities within the four corners of the Jaipur law and submitted even to irksome and illiberal restrictions regarding meetings and processions.

But the order served on me has opened the eyes of the Mandal. It has come to the conclusion that it must resort to civil disobedience if civil liberty is not guaranteed and meetings and processions and forming of associations are not allowed without let or hindrance so long as they observe strict non-violence.

I should define the scope of our activity. There is no mistake as to our goal. We want responsible government under the aegis of the Maharaja. We must therefore tell the people what it is and what they should do to deserve it. But we do not propose to offer civil disobedience for it. We must, however, seek the redress of the grievances of

all classes of the people; we must carry on constructive and educative activities. The Mandal has no desire whatsoever to preach non-payment of taxes at this stage. If we secure the co-ope-ration of the State in our essentially peaceful and life-building activi-ties and in the redress of admitted grievances there never need be any resort to non-payment of taxes. But should it unfortunately become a necessity, the Mandal will give the State authorities ample notice of its intention to do so. For the Mandal stands for open, honourable and strictly non-violent methods. Therefore, what I am pleading for is full liberty to the Mandal to carry on its perfectly legitimate and non-violent activities without let or hindrance. If, however, this reasonable request is not granted before the 31st day of this month, I shall reluctantly be compelled to attempt to enter the State in spite of the order, and the Mandal will hold itself free to take such steps as it may deem necessary for self-expression consistent with human dignity.

I hold that to do less will be to commit civil suicide. I trust that the Council of State will not put an unbearable strain upon my loyalty and that of the members of the Mandal.

I have, etc.,

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 393-6; also G.N. 3076

520. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

BARDOLI,
January 7, 1939

CHI. MARY,

Of course your letters are business letters, but business letters, when the business is the service of God's creatures, become love letters. Therefore there need be no apology for your letters being business letters.

I can't think of any woman who will suit the purpose mentioned by you.

Muriel brought a party of 18 persons. I called it a world in miniature.[1]

Though it is quite a formal thing, let me reciprocate the good wishes for this year.

Love to you and Mira.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6074. Also C.W. 3404. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] *Vide* footnote on "Interview to Timoothy Tingfang Lew", 31-12-1938

521. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

BARDOLI,
January 7, 1939

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

How are you getting on? What are you doing? Are you keeping cheerful? Tell me everything.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1916

522. LETTER TO PRABHU DAYAL VIDYARTHI

BARDOLI
January 7, 1939

CHI. PRABHU DAYAL,

I have your letter. I hope your feet are all right now.

I wrote a letter regarding what you had said about Basti and the matter has been fully investigated. I even received a reply from there. Ask me about it when we return. I will show you the letter if it is lying somewhere.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 11688

523. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

January 7, 1939

The murder of Major R. L. Bazalgette,[1] the Political Agent of Orissa States, is most unfortunate and comes as a rude shock. I tender my sympathy to the bereaved family. I hope that the subedar, who accompanied the deceased, will recover from the wounds. The Praja Mandal is expected to carry on the strictest investigation and find out the cause of the murder. It should be a warning to all workers to be

[1] Bazalgette was killed by a mob in Rampur State in Orissa on January 5, 1939.

most careful in conducting mass agitations. They should realize that the slightest departure from non-violence is bound to harm the movement for freedom, whether in the States or all India.

Harijan, 14-1-1939

524. UNCERTIFIED DEALERS[1]

The Secretary of the Tamil Nad Spinners' Association has sent us a complaint which he has received from the Kerala Branch of the Spinners' Association. The complaint gives conclusive proof that some merchants of Tiruppur are dumping cloth under description '*shuddha* khadi' and even making use of the name of the Spinners' Association. Two labels have been sent by the Secretary which were affixed to the cloth thus sold, and the labels show the names of 'S. Mariasusai Chettiar, Khaddar Store, Tiruppur' and 'M. K. Chidambaram Chettiar and Brother A. Palaniappa Mudaliar, Khaddar Store, Tiruppur', and the description is '*shuddha* khadi, certified by A.I.S. A'.

S. Mariasusai Chettiar has never been certified by the A. I. S. A. for dealing in khadi, and A. Palaniappa Mudaliar was decertified some four years ago. Such deception can certainly be punished under the ordinary Indian Penal Code. It would, however, be much better for the merchants as well as for the public if the public demand for khadi were not thus exploited, and if merchants who have not been certified abstain from such business, or at least abstain from fraudulently using the name of the Spinners' Association.

BARDOLI, January 8, 1939

Harijan, 14-1-1939

525. SARDAR PRITHVI SINGH[2]

Sardar Prithvi Singh writes to me to say that he is keeping well and that his requirements are being supplied by the authorities and friends as the case may be. I am in constant correspondence with him. He tells me that many friends are desirous of meeting him. He wishes me to thank them all but also to tell them that they need not take the trouble to go all the way to Rawalpindi to meet him. And when they do wish to do so, they should not feel disappointed if they are not

[1] These appeared under "Notes".
[2] *ibid*

immediately given a date. The visiting days generally remain full. He would like all friends desiring to visit him to correspond with me so that I might guide them. Whilst I convey this wish to the would be visitors, and whilst Pyarelal, or Mahadev as soon as he is permitted to take up full work, will gladly make arrangements, this will be possible only in a few cases. For nothing will be possible without correspondence with the authorities. This means taxing work to which those who are helping me are hardly equal in the present state of my health.

BARDOLI, January 9, 1939

Harijan, 14-1-1939

526. TRAVANCORE

A Travancore Christian friend writes:

> There is a great misunderstanding about you among the Christian circles of Travancore that you are absolutely against the interests of Christians, and this has originated since you have begun to insist on the withdrawal of the memorial to the Maharaja. The trend of public opinion as has been expressed to me by many friends is something like this:
>
> By the influence of the Travancore Maharani and Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer you are wrongly made to understand that the present movement in Travancore is only a rising of the Christians for absolute supremacy over the Hindus of Travancore. It is with this impression in the background of your mind that you are today working against the Travancore movement. Besides, due to the famous temple-entry proclamation, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer has done agreat service to the Hindu community as a whole, and therefore you want to save him from any blemish and personal charges, whatever be his shortcomings. It is with this end in view that you are so strongly pressing the State Congress to withdraw the memorial. Otherwise there is no reason why you should adopt one policy for Rajkot and another for Travancore. For in the case of Rajkot Vallabhbhai Patel and many others have made so many personal charges against the Dewan, and recently Vallabhbhai even threatened to start another fight for the removal of the present Dewan. You simply approve of all this. While in the case of Travancore, even though it is absolutely impossible for you to understand the situation on the spot being so far off, you simply dictate terms on the memorial question and keep mum over all the unjust actions of the Government. Even after the memorial has been withdrawn the leaders are kept in prison and arrests are being continued in large numbers, and peopleare terrorized all over the State even though the movement is almost dead. All this you view in silence without uttering a word. This is a further evidence of your partiality in siding with the Travancore

Government.

Similar communications, more strongly worded, have also been received by me. It might clear the atmosphere a little if I answer the charges. My conscience is quite clear. I claim that in no other State movements have I taken so much interest as in the Travancore movement, for the simple reason that I was pressed to do so by Shri G. Ramachandran who belongs to the Sabarmati Ashram and in whose wisdom, courage, sincerity and non-violence I have very great faith. He threw himself into the struggle after receiving my consent. He had told me that there were all sections interested in the struggle. It was at his instance that I requested Shrimati Rajkumari Amrit Kaur to go to Travancore and do what was possible by way of negotiation.

I have been against the mixing up of the struggle for responsible government with the charges against the Dewan. But I have been equally insistent that the leaders need not withdraw them unless they realized the soundness of my advice, for they had to bear the brunt of public opposition, if there was any. They could not do so, unless they could speak with conviction. I told them too that they would be justified in prosecuting the charges, if they made the dismissal the only issue, as they well might. But if they insisted on responsible government, there was no meaning in proceeding with the charges. It would divide the country's attention, and in the event of prosecution their time and resources would be employed in proving the charges. Whereas, if they got responsible government, which they were bound to if they were united and strong in their faith in non-violence and truth, they would have control over all the Dewans, present and future. The charges have been withdrawn, therefore, only because the leaders, as I see from the acting President's statement just received by me, were fully convinced of the advisability of with-drawing the charges.

The comparison with Rajkot is ignorant. I never guided the movement there. There was no occasion for my guidance. The Sardar was in no need of it. If he needed it, it was always at his disposal. There was no question there of dismissal of the Dewan. The Sardar resolutely refused to have anything to do with the charges, if the fight was to be for responsible government. Of course all sorts of people who opposed the struggle came under his lash, but that was wholly different from making dismissal of an official a plank in the struggle.

And my guidance in the Travancore struggle has never been

lacking. But the critics should understand that I am not conducting the struggle. I advise when I am referred to. Nor need or can all my advice and all my work be before the public gaze. Much of my work is behind the curtain. It is not therefore secret. I have nothing to hide. But many things need to be done silently, even secretly (in the right sense of the word), in the interest of the cause.

Lastly, let my critics understand that I am not interested in the present Dewan retaining his office. If I have been in correspondence with the Dewan, it has been only for the sake of the cause, pleading for justice. And as for the Maharani, I have never been in correspondence with Her Highness throughout the struggle. I claim to be and have always been above partisanship. I know no distinction between Christians and non-Christians in terms of politics. I do in terms of religion, and then, too, I hold the Christian religion and the other religions in the same respect as my own.

BARDOLI, January 9, 1939

Harijan, 14-1-1939

527. THE BAN ON JAMNALALJI

The ban on Jamnalalji makes curious reading. Here it is:

TO

SETH JAMNALAL BAJAJ

OF WARDHA (C. P.)

Whereas it has been made to appear to the Jaipur Government that your presence and activities within the Jaipur State are likely to lead to a breach of the peace, it is considered necessary in the public interest and for the maintenance of public tranquillity to prohibit your entry within the Jaipur State.

You are, therefore, required not to enter Jaipur territory until further orders.

By order of the Council of State

(Sd.) M. ALTAF A. KHERIE

Secretary, Council of State, Jaipur

He is the last person whose presence anywhere can be a danger. He has ever been known as a peacemaker. He has enjoyed the happiest relations with the official world. His worth was so much recognized that he was awarded the title of Rai Bahadur in 1916 or thereabouts. This he returned during the non-co-operation days. He is

one of the best known merchants in the commercial world. He is a banker besides being a commercial magnate. Though an ardent Congressman he has never been known as "an agitator". He is foremost in constructive work and social reform. True he has the courage of his convictions and has more than once staked his all for these. He is never afraid of prison. Obviously the description given in the order served upon Jamnalalji is false and wholly inapplicable to him. It will be probably urged that the wording is a mere formality, and that without it the order could not be legally served upon him. If that be so, it proves conclusively that persons like Jamnalalji were never meant by the law to be affected by it. It is an abuse, pure and simple, of the law to keep a person like Jamnalalji out of Jaipur or any other part of the country.

And the humorous part of it all is that Jamnalalji had to be described in the order as "of Wardha". As a matter of fact he belongs to the Jaipur State, has property there, and has many relations residing there.

It is to such an order that Jamnalalji has submitted wholly on my advice. There was a rumour that he might be arrested if he attempted to enter Jaipur. He had therefore consulted me as to his duty if an order was served on him. His co-workers of Jaipur had held that he should defy any such order there and then. I held a contrary opinion. And I have no cause to regret my opinion. The order, I reasoned, would be a mad act. Mad people should not be taken at their word. They should be given time to cool down. I understand that great preparations were made in anticipation of the arrest. There must have even been a kind of disappointment when the arresting party discovered that they were not to have their prey.

Jamnalalji has lost nothing by waiting and reasoning with the authorities[1] and telling them that they have acted wrongly and hastily. As a responsible man and Jaipur subject, it was perhaps his duty to give them time to reconsider their decision. If they do not, and Jamnalalji decides, as he must, to defy the order, he will do so with added moral strength and prestige. And it is moral strength that counts in non-violent action.

Let it be known that the Maharaja is merely a tool in the hands of his Ministers who are all outsiders and some of them English. They know nothing of the people or the country. They are, as it were, imposed upon them. Jaipur talent is at a discount, though before the

[1] *Vide* "Draft of Letter for Jamnalal Bajaj", 7-1-1939

foreigners came, Jaipur was somehow or other able to hold its own as a State. I had reason to remark last week on the sorry figure the English Dewan cut in Rajkot during his very brief term of office. At least the act of the Jaipur Council consisting of outsiders is a sorry exhibition of irresponsibility and ineptitude. The externment of one man, however great, may appear to be insignificant. But events may prove that it was a foolish and costly affair, if not much more. For the reader may not know that there is a Praja Mandal in Jaipur which has been working under Jamnalalji's inspiration for the past six years. Jamnalalji is its present President. The Mandal is a strong organization containing responsible men as its members and has a good record of constructive work to its credit. The Mandal will have to do its duty if the ban is not removed. For the ban is, it is said, a precursor of stopping even the constructive and constitutional activities of the Mandal. The authorities cannot brook the growing influence of a body which aims at responsible government in Jaipur under the aegis of the Maharaja, no matter by means howsoever honourable. It seems to be the precursor also of a ruthless policy of stopping all activities of bodies having political ambition in any shape or form. And rumour has it that it is a concerted policy on the part of the Rajputana States. Whether it is true only of Jaipur or all the other States, it is sufficiently ominous, and Jamnalalji and the people of Jaipur are in honour bound to resist it with all the strength at their command, no doubt consistently with the Congress creed of non-violence and truth.

BARDOLI, January 9, 1939

Harijan, 14-1-1939

528. TELEGRAM TO AKBAR HYDARI[1]

BARDOLI,
January 9, 1939

SIR AKBAR HYDARI
HYDERABAD DN

THANKS WIRE ADVISING CERTAIN RELEASES. LETTER NOT RECEIVED.

GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10094. Courtesy: Government of Andhra Pradesh

[1] A photostat of the telegram was displayed at the Gandhi Darshan Exhibition held in New Delhi in 1969-70.

529. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[*January 9, 1939*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

G.'s telegram has been received.[2] He has consented. The letter has been sent by registered mail.[3]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2999

530. AUNDH CONSTITUTION[4]

There are several startling things in the Aundh constitution. For the moment I am concerned with only two things—the qualifications for the vote and the courts of justice.

I have myself hitherto sworn by simple adult franchise as well for the illiterate as the literate. My observation of the working of the Congress constitution has altered my opinion. I have come round to the view that a literacy test is necessary for two reasons. The vote should be regarded as a privilege and therefore carry some qualification. The simplest qualification is a literacy test. And if the ministry appointed under the literacy franchise is sincere and solicitous about the disqualified illiterates, the much desired literacy would come in no time. The Aundh constitution has made primary education free and compulsory. I have been assured by Appasaheb that he will see that illiteracy is driven out from Aundh State inside of six months. I hope, therefore, that there will be no opposition in Aundh to the literacy test.

The second important departure from the ordinary practice is the making of justice in the lower court free and incredibly simple. What would, however, displease critics is not the freeness or the simplicity as such but the abolition of intermediate courts and the fate of litigants and persons charged with offences being made to depend on

[1] The date is in a hand other than Gandhiji's.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to G. D. Birla", 7-1-1939

[3] The reference presumably is to the letter to President, Council of State, Jaipur; *vide* "Draft of Letter for Jamnalal Bajaj", 7-1-1939

[4] This appeared under "Notes".

a High Court presided over by one person. In a population of 75,000 a multiplicity of judges would be both unnecessary and impossible. And if the right type of person is chosen as the Chief Judge, he is as likely to deal out unadulterated justice as a bench of highly paid judges. This simplification contemplates abolition of the cumbrous procedure and the use of tomes of law books including hundreds of law reports used in British law-courts.

BARDOLI, January 10, 1939

Harijan, 14-1-1939

531. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

BARDOLI,
[*January 11, 1939*][1]

CHI. KAKA,

I have been observing silence for the last three days and hence I can do justice to correspondence.

The enclosed is about Sanjiva Kamat.

Shanker's letter is enclosed for your information. Write to him again. I have already written to Nanavati. After careful thinking, I have instructed him to pass the night in Segaon and the day with you. But if you need him in the tour, he may remain with you all the time. I consider your need more important.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

My coming there will be delayed.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10917

532. NOTE TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

BARDOLI,
January 11, 1939

It has always been my firm view (and it still holds complete sway over me) that in every province, except for one or two selected leaders, all the others should observe silence. When this is not possible, they

[1] The date is in a hand other than Gandhiji's

should read out at meetings carefully considered, short, simple written speeches. Everybody should remember that the people are getting increasing power in their hands now. In such circumstances no thoughtless word should escape the lips of the people's leaders.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 232

533. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

BARDOLI,
January 12, 1939

CHI. KAKA,

I saw your letter to Mahadev. Have I changed my policy? In Calcutta what has happened has happened. We should take our hands off that class. He will be paying Vamanchand's wages today, won't he? Not to start a separate class at present will perhaps be better. We shall discuss this matter when I come. I am afraid of internal disputes.

You must have received my letter[1] of yesterday.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

The enclosed is for Shriman.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10918

534. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

BARDOLI,
January 12, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I do not have a minute to spare. Even this I am writing with difficulty.

The most powerful aid to *brahmacharya* is purification of the heart. In this external measures are to a certain extent helpful.

Prayer can go on even unconsciously, which means that when a person is engrossed in prayer he is not conscious of praying. It is like

[1] *Vide* "Letter to D. B. Kalelkar", 11-1-1939

a man in deep slumber not being aware that he is asleep. Ramanama in its scope includes Krishnanama also. Even the plying of charkha can be regarded as Ramanama. Only so much for today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4309. Also S.G. 72

535. LETTER TO SRI PRAKASA

BARDOLI,
January 12, 1939

BHAI SRI PRAKASA,

Why an invitation to tea on the occasion of your father's completing 70 years? I was very pained to receive your letter. What is the relation between tea and snacks and your father's religious life? I find the two very contradictory.

For me this auspicious day is meant for religious activity and thanksgiving. And whatever is to be done, why should it be from your side? Is there no public life in Kashi? Would not the public do anything?

In spirit I shall be there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 11162. Courtesy: Sri Krishna Nath

536. DISCUSSION WITH TOYOHIKO KAGAWA[1]

[*January 14, 1939*][2]

Now for his talk with Gandhiji.

Your reputation has preceded you, Dr. Kagawa.

With these words Gandhiji stood up to greet Dr. Kagawa. . . . The preliminary questions were about the drought in South India and famines and the co-operative movement. Was the movement flourishing in India?

GANDHIJI: I can't say that it is flourishing. It is going on

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Dr. Kagawa's Visit". Kagawa, a Japanese social reformer, evangelist and author, had come to India to attend the Tambaram Conference.

[2] From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary

somehow. It was initiated by the British Government. It did not come from within, but was superimposed upon the people. It is managed after a certain stereotyped pattern and has therefore no room for growth according to the exigencies of time. Whereas I know you have a big co-operative movement.

KAGAWA: Yes, it is growing every day. There are 3,50,000 producers' co-operatives organized by themselves. There are national health insurance co-operatives, harvest insurance co-operatives and storage co-operatives.

G. What is the feeling of people in Japan about the war?

K. I am rather a heretic in Japan. Rather than I express my views, I would like to learn from you what you would do if you were in my position.

G. It would be presumptuous for me to express my views.

K. No, I would like very much to know what you would do.

G. I would declare my heresies and be shot. I would put the co-operatives and all your work in one scale, and put the honour of your nation in the other, and if you found that the honour was being sold, I should ask you to declare your views against Japan and in so doing make Japan live through your death. But, for this, inner conviction is necessary. I do not know that I should be able to do all that I have said if I were in your position, but I must give you my opinion since you have asked for it.

K. The conviction is there. But friends have been asking me to desist.

G. Well, don't listen to friends when the Friend inside you says, 'Do this.' And friends, however good, can sometimes well deceive us. They cannot argue otherwise. They would ask you to *live* and do your work. The same appeal was made to me when I took the decision to go to jail. But I did not listen to friends with the result that I found the glow of freedom when I was confined within the four solid walls of prison. I was inside a dark cell, but I felt that I could see everything from within those walls, and nothing from outside.

K. Have you some irrigation co-operatives in India?

G. I do not think so. Of course you have all these things. You have done marvellous things, and we have many things to learn from you. But how can we understand this swallowing alive of China, drugging her with poison and so many other horrid things that I read about in a book called *What War Means* which Pandit Jawaharlal has given me. How could you have committed all these atrocities? And then your great poet calls it a war of humanity and a blessing to China!

Dr. Kagawa is a student of religions. He wanted to know how Gandhiji's

ahimsa teaching could be reconciled with the *Bhagavad Gita.* Gandhiji said it could not be discussed in a brief interview, but he would ask him to read his introduction to the *Gita* where he had answered the question. The answer had just come to him as part of his experience, and the interpretation was, as he thought, not laboured in any way.

K. I am told you recite the *Bhagavad Gita* daily?

G. Yes, we finish the entire *Gita* reading once every week.

K. But at the end of the *Gita* Krishna recommends violence.

G. I do not think so. I am also fighting. I should not be fighting effectively if I were fighting violently. The message of the *Gita* is to be found in the second chapter of the *Gita* where Krishna speaks of the balanced state of mind, of mental equipoise. In 19 verses at the close of the 2nd chapter of the *Gita* Krishna explains how this state can be achieved. It can be achieved, he tells us, after killing all your passions. It is not possible to kill your brother after having killed all your passions. I should like to see that man dealing death—who has no passions, who is indifferent to pleasure and pain, who is undisturbed by the storms that trouble mortal man. The whole thing is described in language of beauty that is unsurpassed. These verses show that the fight Krishna speaks of is a spiritual fight.

K. But there was actual fighting then, and your interpretation is your own peculiar interpretation.

G. It may be mine, but *as mine* it has no value.

K. To the common mind it sounds as though it was actual fighting.

G. You must read the whole thing dispassionately in its true context. After the first mention of fighting, there is no mention of fighting at all. The rest is a spiritual discourse.

K. Has anybody interpreted it like you?

G. Yes. The fight is there, but the fight as it is going on within. The Pandavas and Kauravas are the forces of good and evil within. The war is the war between Jekyll and Hyde, God and Satan, going on in the human breast. The internal evidence in support of this interpretation is there in the work itself and in the *Mahabharata* of which the *Gita* is a minute part. It is not a history of war between two families, but the history of man— the history of the spiritual struggle of man. I have sound reasons for my interpretation.

K. That is why I say it is your interpretation.

G. But that is nothing. The question is whether it is a reasonable interpretation, whether it carries conviction. If it does, it does not matter whether it is mine or XYZ's. If it does not, it has no value even

if it is mine.

K. To my mind Arjuna's ideas are wonderful. Krishna has found some excuse for him, and it was natural and necessary before Christianity.

G. This interpretation is even historically wrong. For Buddha existed long before the Christian era, and he preached the doctrine of non-violence.

K. But Arjuna's views seem to me to be superior to Krishna's.

G. Then according to you the disciple was greater than the master !

K. But I agree with what you say, with your teaching of non-violence. I shall read the *Gita* again, bearing your interpretation in mind. . . .

Dr. Kagawa again turned to his great theme—agriculture and cooperation which he has studied carefully. "You get famine once in every *ten* years," he said.

G. We get it every year, famine is our constant friend.

K. Then you should have more tree culture, more trees for fuel and for cattle fodder. Rice and barley are not enough, you need more protein trees. . . .

G. No. We need a change in the method of government!

It was a great pity that Dr. Kagawa had to go away to Bombay the same evening. . . . Even for a detailed discussion of his co-operative programme he might have stayed longer with the leading men in India. But Gandhiji appealed to him on a different ground.

How can you leave India without seeing Santiniketan?

K. But I have read the Poet's poems, and I love them.

G. But you have to love the Poet.

K. If I can repeat the *Gitanjali* every day, I can see the Poet every day and do I not love him? Maybe he is greater than his poems.

G. Sometimes the reverse is the truth, but in the case of the Poet he is infinitely greater than his great poems. Now, another question. Have you included Pondicherry in your programme ? If you want to study modern India, you must see both Santiniketan and Aurobindo Ghose's Ashram. I wonder who your tour advisers are. I wish you had appointed me your adviser in this matter!

K. No. You are a good guide for life.

Dr. Kagawa asked what other books Gandhiji read every day. Gandhiji mentioned the *Ramayana* in which he said there was supposed to be enough blood and thunder, *"but not for me"*. Dr. Kagawa said he too loved it for the story of Sita—the ideal of chastity.

G. But there are other fine things also in that unique poem. I have not read the original which is great. But the Hindi rendering

done by a great devotee is the scripture for the masses of India. In the North India Tulsi *Ramayana* has been the inspiration of many a home for four centuries.

Dr. Kagawa discussed Shankaracharya and Ramanuja, and Gandhiji expressed his predilection for the former, and for his direct and marvellously logical way. But Gandhiji reverted again to his itinerary and expressed his great regret that Rev. Hodge who had been in charge of it had, out of his partiality for him (Gandhiji), included Bardoli, but not Santiniketan! [He said:]

You are going to Calcutta and not Santiniketan! It is a great pity. You say you are going to Gosaba. Well Gosaba is Gosaba, but Santiniketan is India.

Harijan, 21-1-1939

537. JAIPUR

Jaipur authorities will not be happy until they have brought the Jaipur patriots to their senses. For they have now banned the Jaipur Rajya Praja Mandal of which Jamnalalji is the President. Jamnalalji has released for publication his letter[1] to the President of the Jaipur Council of State. The readers will find it elsewhere in these columns. That letter should induce withdrawal of the order. But evidently the Jaipur Council, which I erroneously described as entirely composed of outsiders in my last week's article[2], but which I understand does contain four members from the State, is intent upon wiping out of existence every activity whether social, humanitarian or other with which Jamnalalji or his co-workers are connected.

This is the newest method of dealing with people whom the authorities do not like. I can only hope against hope that the Jaipur authorities will shrink from precipitating an all-India crisis. For there are three reasons which might well give the Jaipur question that character. Jamnalalji is himself an institution. He is, moreover, a member of the Working Committee of the Congress and its Treasurer. The method being adopted in Jaipur is too drastic to be suffered without a desperate struggle. If it goes unchallenged, it may mean a death-blow to every activity in the States when it is even remotely connected with the legitimate political aspirations of their people.

The curious thing about Jaipur is that the real ruler is a

[1] *Vide* "Draft of Letter for Jamnalal Bajaj", 7-1-1939
[2] *Vide* "The Ban on Jamnalalji", 14-1-1939

high-placed Englishman[1] and not the Maharaja. Can it be that he represents the wishes of the central authority? If he does, what becomes of the recent declarations? If he does not, may an English Dewan initiate policies that may in the end spell disaster to the State itself? I understand that the Jaipur treasure chest is over-full. If the worst happened, it could stand a prolonged boycott by the people, that is, assuming that the modern weapons of destruction do not tame the people into submission. It is time for the Princes and the Central Government to evolve a common policy of action. Or is the Jaipur method the common policy of action, as some tell me it is? I can only hope that it is not.

BARDOLI, January 16, 1939

Harijan, 21-1-1939

538. DRINKING METHYLATED SPIRITS[2]

A correspondent writes:[3]

The correspondent's letter deserves the attention of those who are engaged in prohibition work.

BARDOLI, January 16, 1938

Harijan, 21-1-1 939

539. VIOLENCE V. *NON-VIOLENCE*

Everywhere in India there is a duel going on between the method of non-violence and that of violence. Violence like water, when it has an outlet, rushes forward furiously with an overwhelming force. Non-violence cannot act madly. It is the essence of discipline. But when it is set going, no amount of violence can crush it. For full play, it requires unsullied purity and an unquenchable faith among the leaders. Therefore, if non-violence seems to fail in the duel, it will do so because the leaders lack the purity or the faith or both. There seems, however, to be reason to believe that non-violence will triumph

[1] Sir W. Beauchamp St. John, Prime Minister of Jaipur

[2] This appeared under "Notes".

[3] The letter is not reproduced here. It stated that with the introduction of prohibition drink addicts had started drinking diluted methylated spirit and suggested that its sale should be controlled.

over violence. Things seem to be shaping so that the workers will see for themselves the futility of violence.

But a well-known public worker writes:[1]

> "The States' method of dealing with satyagraha seems to be different from the British method. The methods adopted in some States are too inhuman and brutal. Will non-violence succeed against such brutal methods ?. . .
>
> I have carefully read and re-read your views[2] on the murder of the Political Agent of Orissa States. I was rather pained to find that you made no reference to the terrible atrocities committed on the poor State subjects of Orissa. . . . If the mob was wrong in using violence against the Political Agent, was the latter justified in firing on the mob and thus provoking them to violence?. . .
>
> . . . I fail to understand why you as the greatest apostle of truth and non-violence should not have also conveyed a warning to the Political Department of the Government of India, and especially the Eastern States Agency, that they should not adopt brutal methods in dealing with the States subjects' fights? I feel that the Eastern States Agency has been most brutal in dealing with the States subjects' fights, and murder of the Political Agent is the climax of the brutal repression carried on by the Eastern States Agency. . . . And if we are to show sympathy for the loss of life of the Political Agent, what about the two persons who died on the spot as a result, possibly of the police violence?. . .

Of course the right of self-defence is there and so is the right of armed rebellion. But after deep deliberation the Congress has abjured both and that for valid reasons. Non-violence is not worth much if it is worsted in the face of the greatest provocation. Its true test consists in its capacity for standing any amount of provocation. If there were eye-witnesses of the rapes and if the witnesses were non-violent, why are they alive? If the rapes became known after the event, of what use is violence ? The non-violent method is still open. The men may be tried or they may be brought up before the bar of public opinion, if there was any. To expose the criminals to mob fury would be barbarity.

The argument about the murder of the late Political Agent of the Orissa States is irrelevant to the issue. I was not called upon to adjudge the merits of the action of the ruler and the Political Agent on the one hand and the people's action on the other. It was enough for

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 7-1-1939

me at the time to condemn in unqualified terms the murder of the Political Agent not merely as a mark of sympathy, though that was deserved, but as an act of gross indiscipline and breach of the fundamental Congress policy. The misdeeds of the rulers have been exposed often enough in these columns. But they have not been mentioned for the purpose of drawing the wrath of the people upon the doers, but for the sole purpose of showing the people the way of dealing with them non-violently. Things were shaping themselves well in Orissa. I can quote chapter and verse in support of this assertion. This murder has disturbed the even course of the movement. Ranpur is a howling wilderness. The people, both innocent and guilty, are in hiding. They have deserted their homes in order to escape repression. For it will not be merely the actually guilty persons who will suffer. The technique of frightfulness in some shape or other is no doubt being applied and the whole of India has to be helpless witness of it. The authorities know no other way of dealing with murders of their officials, especially when they are Europeans. The non-violent method has been slowly educating them to know the new way. But I need not prolong the argument. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. Both methods are being tried out in India. The workers have to make their choice. I know that India's freedom is possible only through non-violence. Those workers in the Congress who think or act otherwise are wronging themselves and the Congress.

BARDOLI, January 16, 1939

Harijan, 21-1-1939

540. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

BARDOLI,
January 16, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

I have been unable to write a single letter during these exacting days. Today I worked at *Harijan* till after 5 p. m. Now I have a minute or two before going to the evening prayer.

Of course you will pay Jurab as you suggest. He will be worth all that and more, if he gives you full satisfaction.

I am glad your recent letters have been hopeful. Had they been otherwise, I would have made time to send you, if it was only a line.

Sushila has been writing to you daily. So you know all about my health. So far as the feel goes, it is excellent.

Events are fast shaping themselves. You will see the coming *Harijan* to show you what is happening.

I hope you are now having the food you need.

Devdas and Laxmi are here just now. Ramdas came in yesterday. He leaves tomorrow for Poona. Kallenbach lands on Saturday.

There are numberless visitors here. There is no such thing as the quiet of Segaon. But Sardar protects me against intruders.

Ramdas is looking none too well. Premabehn came in today. Mridula has been here for the past four days.

There is nothing to report about Agakhan's visit. He wants the Congress to settle with Jinnah if it is at all possible.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6424. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10010

541. NOTE TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

BARDOLI,
January 16, 1939

This should be credited to the Harijan fund and a receipt sent to me.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1181

542. LETTER TO SIR W. BEAUCHAMP ST. JOHN

BARDOLI,
January 18, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

My first thought was to publish the accompanying letter purporting to describe your attitude with regard to the ban on Seth Jamnalalji's entry into Jaipur State. But on second thoughts I felt that my purpose would be better served by sending you a copy of Shri Chudgar's[1] letter and inviting your opinion on it. My purpose is to

[1] Barrister and legal adviser of Rao Rama of Sikar; *vide* "Jaipur"

promote harmony between the Princes and the people who are obliged in one way or the other to come in contact with them to secure justice wherever possible by friendly negotiation. And now that I have felt the necessity of writing to you, whatever may be your opinion on Shri Chudgar's letter, I would like to suggest to you that the bans upon Seth Jamnalalji and his organization might be removed without endangering the peace of Jaipur State. Indeed, I feel that peace is certainly endangered by the bans.[1]

Yours sincerely,

SIR W. BEAUCHAMP ST. JOHN

DEWAN, JAIPUR STATE JAIPUR

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 397-8. Also C.W. 7809. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

543. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES[2]

BARDOLI,
January 18, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and the newspaper cutting. The heading is a misrepresentation of the purpose of my article.[3] This is clear even from the cabled summary. But when you read the original you will discover what a cruel misrepresentation it is.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MINISTER

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

NEW YORK CITY

From a photostat: C. W. 11074. Courtesy: Roger W. Holmes and Francis L. Brown

[1] For Sir Beauchamp's reply, *vide* "Jaipur"

[2] 1879-1954; American clergyman; founder-member of American Civil Liberties Union and the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People; editor of *Unity*; author of *My Gandhi* and books on religion and social subjects

[3] The reference, it appears, is to the article "The Jews", dated November 20, 1938 and the criticism it generated in Germany; *vide* "The Jews" , "Reply to German Critics", and "Some Questions Answered"

544. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

BARDOLI,
January 18, 1939

CHI. CHANDAN,

I have your letter. I am forwarding the letter which you have written to H. Nanabhai has also met me. He has left Dakshinamurti because of my letter. Thus H. has agreed to the first alternative. He is, however, firm about his innocence. But since he has left Dakshinamurti and withdrawn himself from women's education, nothing more remains to be done.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 946. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

545. LETTER TO RAVINDRA R. PATEL

BARDOLI,
January 18, 1939

CHI. RAVINDRA,

I have your letter. If you have had enough of that place and are giving up all thought of making money you can embrace poverty and serve the country. I shall consider it a success.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7455

546. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

BARDOLI,
January 18, 1939

BAPA,

A cheque for Rs. 5,000 was sent to you from the Frontier Province. Shri Jasaram writes that it was meant for khadi work. The amount may therefore be remitted to Dr. Gopichand. I hope to raise money from the same person for Harijan work when I go again to the Frontier Province.

BAPU

[PS.]

I received just now your letter about Orissa. It is very difficult for Sardar to go there. Rajendra Babu will certainly go. He is doing that work from here also. Will you be able to spare 15 days for prohibition in Khandesh? Dr. Gilder has promised to get 12 shops closed provided you come. If you can, come immediately. Send a telegram.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1182

547. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

BARDOLI,
January 18, 1939

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

I return your old letter. Your handwriting is better than it was but there is still much scope for improvement. Do not cram the sheet too full. There should always be a margin on the left side and the words should be spaced well. The pen should be finely pointed. You must take a vow that you will effect these improvements for the sake of mother cow. You know the importance of vows, don't you?

The account you have sent could not but be good. There was never any doubt about your sincerity and your unselfishness.

It is good that you are at peace. Make yourself strong and improve your knowledge of Hindi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1917

548. LOVE A UNIVERSAL VIRTUE

An Indian Christian writes:[1]

> Your article "The Jews"[2] has evoked considerable comment of varying nature. I propose to confine myself to the criticism that the love that Jesus taught was a personal, not a social or collective, virtue.
>
> To deny that Jesus' way of life was meant for all—collectively no less than individually—is surely to deny the basic truth of the religion of Christ.

[1] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.
[2] *Vide* "The Jews"

He was utterly dissatisfied with the existing order; the hypocrisy and pride of the Scribes and Pharisees riled him sufficiently for him to call them a 'generation of vipers' and 'whited sepulchres'; he openly protested against bribery and corruption when he 'upset the tables of the money-changers' and accused them of having made his house 'a den of thieves'; he denounced the sin of untouchability by dining with outcastes and speaking words of comfort to prostitutes.

His preaching roused the anger of the people because it was revolutionary and universal; otherwise why should those in authority have cared to arrest and condemn to the extreme penalty of the law a man in whom even the judge who tried him could find no 'sin'?

They sensed in his teachings a power which, if exercised by those who believed in them, would surely cause to fall the whole framework of their society. To 'turn the other cheek' to him who smites you on one, to love the enemy, to rejoice in suffering, to love your neighbour as yourself, to remove the beam from your own eye before pointing to the mote in another's, to pray for those who persecute you, to forgive the offender until seventy times seven, to serve the poor, to leave all and follow Jesus, are of the essence of a universal gospel for which he lived and died. That he asked his disciples to let the world see this message by virtue of their own example, that the disciples themselves felt the call to recreate a new order, bears ample evidence in the very formation, through their martyrdom, of the early Church which is termed to be the body of Christ. One of the most beautiful passages in the New Testament, the 13th Chapter of *I Corinthians,* was written by St. Paul at a time when the Church of Corinth was torn by internal dissensions. The message of love therein was the message for collective action. The 'Church Militant', as it is called, is surely the emblem of Christian society trying to war against the powers of evil by means of love which 'conquers all things'.

But while it may be convenient, because of the lack of courage and faith within us, to set aside the central teaching of the religion of Christ as a mere rule for personal conduct, it is a dangerous doctrine which has brought the so-called Christian nations to a sorry pass today.

No doubt the result of non-violence is not always visible to the naked eye. That the way of love—for what is non-violence except boundless love—is not easy to pursue is only too true. But to rule love out as a social virtue is to deny the existence of not only the religion of Jesus but of all the great religions of the world and to give way to fear which is the ruling passion in the world today.

Non-violence on a national or international scale has not yet been sufficiently tried; where it has been tried by Gandhiji it has met with success. Is not Europe, by subordinating her mind to the doctrine that 'Might is Right', giving a direct lie to the teaching of Jesus ? This is the question before

Christendom today. Does the greatest measure of freedom consist in being able to resist force with the weapons of force, or may it not be that its highest and eternal form will be born out of the blood willingly shed by one nation or many nations?

Oh cross that liftest up my head,
I may not ask to flee from thee,
I lay in dust, life's glory dead.
And from the ground there blossoms red
Life that shall endless be.

This letter should convince honest doubters that the love that Jesus taught and practised was not a mere personal virtue, but that it was essentially a social and collective virtue. Buddha taught and practised the same thing six hundred years before Jesus.

BARDOLI, January 20, 1939

Harijan, 4-3-1939

549. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

BARDOLI,
January 20, 1939

DEAR SIR AKBAR,

I have your wires and your letter of the 5th instant, with enclosure which came later. The two documents were redirected from Wardha and then I had to see the State Congress friends before I could reply. Hence the delay which please forgive.

At the outset I must thank you for the friendly tone of your letter. Nothing else and nothing less was expected of you.

Nevertheless the letter has not given me satisfaction. The only thing relevant to my request was the statement issued by the State Congress manifesto[1] calling off civil disobedience and its language. If it left nothing more to be desired, the immediate result should have been the discharge of the prisoners who had offered civil disobedience from within and as members of the State Congress.

Even Shri Kashinathrao Vaidya's statement was irrelevant. The State Congress manifesto was not before him. Had he known the implications of the manifesto, he should not have courted imprison-

[1] *Vide* "Draft of Statement for Hyderabad State Congress", 26-12-1938

ment at all. But his case needs to be condoned by the State Congress manifesto. Perusal of Shri Kashinathrao Vaidya's statement did not confirm the impression created by your letter. His statement I regard as mild and subdued. There is no threat in it. He has endeavoured calmly to argue the position of the State Congress and brought out the facts to the date of his conviction. It is noteworthy that he has accepted the fact of suspension and exhorted the State Congress members to desist from civil disobedience.

The Aryan League and the Hindu Mahasabha activities should not be confused with that of the State Congress. There never was any intention of amalgamation on the part of the State Congress.

Do you want me to find out what Sardar Patel, Shri Deo or Shri Bhulabhai said or did? As a matter of fact I have not even showed your letter to the Sardar though I am living with him at present. Not that I would not share your letter with him, only he has his work cut out for him as I have mine. But I could find out what they said if their opinion was relevant to my purpose or to the argument. If, however, you want me to, I shall gladly do so.

You were quite right in dismissing from your mind the suggestion that I had secretly advised anyone against the attempt to reach a settlement between Hindus and Muslims. Baba it was who brought Shri Narasingh Rao with him. Maulvi Bahadur Yar Jung was also to be of the party. But he could not come. They had come to a standstill. I, therefore, advised them to proceed no further but await Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's advice and be guided by him. Maulana Saheb is now in correspondence with you.

Now about "Bande Mataram". Some students did come to me. I told them that "Bande Mataram" was no religious prayer but that they had a perfect right to say it in their rooms or their prayer room. I told them too that by proper representation they would get redress and that till they had the redress they should remain without their studies unless they could go elsewhere. I have seen the explanation issued by the Osmania University authorities. It has not given me satisfaction. I do think that this is a matter you should set right without delay. If I have erred, not having all the facts before me, you will please correct me. But, of course, this question stands on its own footing.

I have not interested myself in it. The students are not under my guidance. And I told those who came to me that I had no time to

study their question, important though I admitted it to be.

You say that drunkards and the like have sought imprisonment. My informants say that if such people have courted imprisonment they were unauthorized and had nothing to do with the State Congress.

I believe I have now covered all the points in your letter.

If my argument has any substance in it, I repeat the request for the discharge of all the State Congress prisoners and for permission for the State Congress to pursue such activities, political or otherwise, that are constitutional.

I hope this finds you in the possession of the best of health.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6846

550. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

BARDOLI,
January 20, 1939

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I was ashamed of your letter to Banker[1]. I enclose a copy received by me. Is your notion of agency so low and the worth of khadi so poor as to make you write what you have done? I would far rather let khadi die in Sind than be treated with such contempt as you have been betrayed into showing. Surely your other work should be subordinate to khadi. I do not want you to retort that Choithram and even Jairamdas did worse than you had contemplated. Then it was an evil of necessity.

I am deeply hurt.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 930

[1] Shankerlal Banker, Secretary, All-India Spinners' Association

551. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

BARDOLI,
January 20, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

Your letters are all works of art whether brief or long. I am glad you are getting on so well with John. If you will be patient, you will find that the Pathan grows on you. He is an admirable fellow—open if he once trusts you.

You need not worry about my health. I am taking all the care I can. I am taking the rest that is possible. B. P. is under control. Jumpy, I fear, it will remain unless I lead the forest life and cease all outward activity. But that would be wrong. I must discover the art of living long though full of activity to the end. I shall never completely master it, having dissipated so much of my life in youth. We have to be thankful for what God vouchsafes of the rest of my life.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6425. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10020

552. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

BARDOLI,
January 20, 1939

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Kakasaheb's letter was sent to you yesterday. Everyone here has been distressed to hear that you will have to go. Music that was considered a permanent feature will now be discontinued. No one likes this idea. It also makes me unhappy. If your health permits, this is my suggestion. You should walk down at 6 in the morning every day after partaking of milk and fruit. You can easily be with Kakasaheb at 7.15. You can start work at 7.30 and go on till 5 or 4.30 and reach Segaon at 6 or 6.30 every evening. If you can do this, both the purposes will be served. The exertion is not too much for a healthy man. In South Africa I lived at a distance of 7 miles from my office and used to go there and come back either on foot or on bicycle. But I do not wish to overburden you. Think it over. Show this letter to Kakasaheb and do

what is right. Think about other things having in mind that your decision to go to Kakasaheb is a firm one. I do not think that Kakasaheb wants you with him all the 24 hours. But if it is so, the question does not arise. Or even if he desires you to tour with him, then also there is no question of doing any work in Segaon. I have written in the dim light.

Everything else must be going well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10783

553. A NOTE

[After *January 20, 1939*][1]

It is not easy to take away the girl [after the wedding]. After coming here they will have to fast, perform *yajna*, etc. Do not, therefore, keep them there. Send them away directly, if they stay on after the ceremony. Let them spend a night or two at Wardha and give them *kheer* to eat.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10988. Courtesy: Ramakrishna Bajaj

554. TELEGRAM TO BALKRISHNA

BARDOLI,
January 21, 1939

BALKRISHNA
"PRATAP" OFFICE
CAWNPORE

AM GIVING ALL ATTENTION[2] GUIDED BY MEHTAB[3].

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The note is written on the back of a letter from Bombay dated January 20, 1939.

[2] The addressee, in his telegram, had described the sufferings of the refugees in Dhenkanal satyagraha camp.

[3] Harekrushna Mahtab

555. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

BARDOLI,
January 21, 1939

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

You should not write but ask someone else to write. Somehow I feel it is wrong to go to Hyderabad. Mothers are often more affectionate than wise. But if not to fulfil her wishes disturbs you, I suppose you must go to Hyderabad. Is Indore not possible? Why not Matheran? Nasik or Deolali are good. So is Sinhagadh for that matter and you have Dinsha Mehta's help there. How I wish you could make up your mind soon.

Don't write.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 9253. Courtesy: Jairamdas Doulatram

556. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

BARDOLI,
January 21, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have just now received your letter. Since I am continuing my silence I can answer it. If the reason for stopping you is merely sentimental, then it is certainly better for you to go to South Africa. By your going there, Manilal will certainly be helped. You are worried about Sita. I am not. She will certainly learn at least something there also. Hence my opinion is this: if your services are not essential at Akola you may gladly go to South Africa. It is your duty. Since you have stayed on, write to Manilal and know his views. This is the right course.

Does Sita read the book she has received?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4891

557. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

BARDOLI,
January 21, 1939

CHI. CHANDAN,

I have your letter. Did I send you the money or not? Kanu is not here. I do recollect that I had already instructed him.

I send herewith H.'s letters lying with me. You may preserve them. Now we do not need to make them public. He left both Dakshinamurti and women's education. That was exactly what we wanted him to do. Let me know what impression these letters make on you. Now you need not write to H. However, if you still feel like it, you may write and send the letter to me. If I think it proper I shall forward it. Now the H. episode should not trouble you.

Absorb yourself in your study. Be careful about your health. Take long walks. Do you get fruit? Abstain from spices and oil.

Improve your handwriting. There is scope for improvement even in the Gujarati. There certainly is in the English. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The sweet letter from Shankar was in acknowledgement of the receipt of the money.

From Gujarati: C.W. 947. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

558. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

BARDOLI,
January 21, 1939

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

The reason you have given for selling to the Government at a lower price is not a valid one. We can reduce the price for everyone if we get a large order, as executing it will also cost less. Since you have already written, it is all right. I have made the suggestion for future guidance. Discuss with Shankerlal the merits and demerits of my

suggestion. Ultimately in the face of your experience, my own opinion will be of only secondary importance to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10840. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

559. LETTER TO SIR W. BEAUCHAMP ST. JOHN

BARDOLI,
January 22, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your prompt reply to my letter of the 18th instant.

I had expected your version of the interview, if you repudiated Shri Chudgar's version. The matter is too important to be dropped by me. I shall gladly publish your version together with Shri Chudgar's if you so wish.[1]

SIR W. BEAUCHAMP ST. JOHN

DEWAN, JAIPUR STATE, JAIPUR

Yours sincerely,

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p.399. Also C. W. 7809. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

560. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

BARDOLI,
January 22, 1939

MY DEAR MALKANI,

Just now Mahadev is out of work. And the cashier Kanu[2] is yet too boyish to shoulder the burden. He is a good boy but mere goodness without attention to one's duty is of no value. I gave him Chandwani's cheque to be sent to you as soon as it came. He forgot to send it. Then went on leave. On asking him today, he shamelessly said he forgot all about it. The fault is mine, not his. I have trained him badly.

[1] For the addressee's reply, *vide* "Jaipur"
[2] Kanu Gandhi

Please forgive. You will find the cheque herewith.

Return it, if you cannot give undivided attention to the village construction work. I must be faithful to Chandwani. If you cannot concentrate on this work do not look to me for the monthly payment. Of course I shall send you money for three months in any case.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 931

561. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

BARDOLI,
January 22, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

I could read Manilal's letter fully only yesterday. I am enclosing it. It seems to have come direct. On reading that letter I felt that you should leave by the first available steamer. I cancel what I wrote yesterday. This is the first letter from Manilal which satisfied me. Ordinary letters from you both are drab and empty. Letters should reflect the life of the writer. I like this letter so much that I want it back. Ba is of the opinion that you should immediately go to Manilal. I do think about the needs of Akola.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4892

562. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

BARDOLI,
January 22, 1939

CHI. MANUDI,

Will it be all right if I do not write but dictate a letter to you? I dictated one to Sharda yesterday. Grandmother was angry and said, "Manu pines for a letter from you and you have no time to write to her." You know better whether you pine or not, but you can have this letter. You never write about yourself nor about Surendra.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1574. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

563. LETTER TO RAMIBEHN K. PAREKH

BARDOLI,
January 22, 1939

CHI. RAMI,

I saw your handwriting after many months—or is it years? I should be happy if you kept on writing. Even if I do not write, being too busy, you must. Hope you and the children are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9727

564. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

BARDOLI,
January 22, 1939

BHAI DAHYABHAI,

I had received your letter. Your action cannot be defended morally. You cannot be considered a cultivator. It can be said that you conspired to be listed as a cultivator. But you did not find any immorality in your action and so nothing remains to be done for the present. It would perhaps be proper if you withdrew from the Board at the earliest. You may seek some lawyer who can legally interpret such matters and act according to his advice. That seems the best way.

I do not intend to reply to the complainant. He will not understand such intricacies.

Understand about Ramjibhai.

I do not remember about leather and dead animals. Write again if the matter is important.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2710. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

565. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

BARDOLI,
January 21, 1939

CHI. MATHURADAS,

On second thoughts I feel that you should give the enclosed letter to Jairamdas to read. Then let me know what he thinks. I am quite worried about him. He is very shy. So he will not ask for help. His letter is enclosed. You will understand his situation from it. There is no question at all of taking his time. it will be good if Jivaraj, Bharucha, etc., also go.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

566. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

BARDOLI,
January 22, 1939

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. What can I say? Ba is of course unhappy. She wants you to come soon. I do not want that. I want you to stay on if you have work there. You must visit your brothers also. You are crazy not to be able to live away from me. Anyway, do what you think best.

What can I say about my suspicion? I cannot free myself of it. Time alone can do that. It came of itself and it will disappear of itself if that is to be. If you can become stable and discharge your duties the suspicion is bound to disappear. You will continue to get an occasional letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 411

567. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

BARDOLI,
January 22, 1939

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your two letters.

I hope your brother is better. I understand about the . . .[1] of Delhi.

If Dr. Gopichand wants to work in the neighbourhood of Delhi, he may.

What is the harm in the Harijan Ashram contributing the major portion towards the construction of the prayer hall? You should be agreeable. It does not require any deliberation.

My health is good. Here I have more than enough work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2476

568. THE STATES

The movement for liberty within the States is entering a new stage. History is going to repeat itself. Talcher and Dhenkanal have led the way in repression. It is no small matter that 26,000 out of 75,000 all told have migrated from Talcher to British Orissa. Prof. Ranga has published harrowing details of the sufferings of these refugees. His narrative is supported by Thakkar Bapa, the great social reformer and philanthropist, who responds to the call of distress no matter from what quarter it comes. They have been in exile for two months. I had hoped that they would have returned to their homes. But there seems to be no peace for these people as yet.

It is not possible for Orissa alone to tackle the relief work. The Government of Orissa has not much money to spare. I hope that the Marwadi Relief Society will take up the relief work bearing in mind that labour should be found for the refugees.

Ranpur has murdered a political agent.[2] And the police and

[1] Obscure in the source

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 7-1-1939

military are having a merry time at the expense of innocent men and women. I hope the Government of Orissa will firmly handle the situation and not let the Imperial Power deal with the situation as it chooses. The Imperial Power loses its head when it loses one of its own class in the circumstances attending the unfortunate murder of Major Bazalgette. This murder should show us that there is nothing to be gained by the people by such acts.

Jaipur will not tolerate even the education of the Jaipurians to ask and fit themselves for responsible government and would presently bury alive one of its foremost sons.

The advisers of the Thakore Saheb of Rajkot think nothing of making him eat his own words and commit a breach of his promise solemnly made to his people. The Resident of the Western States is party to this breach, if evidence in my possession is to be relied upon. To him the Congress and Sardar are anathema. Ground is being prepared in Rajkot for fomenting quarrels between Hindus and Muslims and the people in general and the Bhayats. None of these have hitherto quarrelled. It is to be hoped that the Muslims and the Bhayats will not prove enemies of their own deliverance. The reformers' course is clear. They must avoid all clash. They must be prepared to die at the hands of their own people if the occasion arose. They have tried with marvellous success the weapon of non-violent non-co-operation. They can enforce it fully and simply sit still. The people are the paymasters, and the Prince and the officials are their servants who have to do the will of their masters. This is literally true of an awakened and enlightened people who know the art of thinking and acting as of one mind.

I would urge the people in the other States to hasten slowly. Liberty is theirs if they will have patience and self-restraint. Let them everywhere knit themselves together and have a consciousness of their strength. They should not have internal dissensions. They must know how to combat the maxim of irresponsibility—divide and rule. It is easy enough if the reformers master the technique of non-violence.

Travancoreans had better be on their guard. I have sufficient evidence in my possession to show that attempts are being made to create divisions between Hindus and Christians and Ezhawas. If they are to have responsible government, they must forget that they are of these different communities. They must learn that they are one and indivisible political unit, and they must attain control over all forces of

violence. They must take full responsibility for peace throughout Travancore without the aid of the police, if they are to win freedom through non-violent means. Meetings and processions are necessary for propaganda among ignorant masses. They are not necessary for a people awakened to a sense of their duty as citizens. Swaraj is for the awakened, not for the sleepy and the ignorant.

BARDOLI, January 23, 1939

Harijan, 28-1-1939

569. INTERNAL DECAY

My time and that of co-workers is largely taken up in wading through complaints about corruption among Congressmen. The latest typical letter received is from a Bombay Congressman:[1]

> Tripuri Congress delegates' elections took place last Sunday in Bombay. The voting was to start at 8 a. m. in the morning. I reached Congress House at nearly 8.45 a. m., but to my consternation I found that I had already been impersonated in the short span of forty-five minutes. Scores of others had the same experience. I tried to trace the source, and though (as expected) I could not trace the miscreant I found that this impersonation business was regularly organized and practised on a mass scale as soon as the polling had started. Naturally those who came even half an hour late were disappointed, they having been impersonated meanwhile.
>
> Many suggestions have been made to you to abate this nuisance, but in my humble opinion unless we introduce the system of asking the prospective voters to *produce their membership cards* to be duly stamped by the issuing officers before slips are issued to them, nothing will do the trick . . . .

The correspondent's suggestion is quite sound. I should have thought that every voter had to produce an identification card before being allowed to register his vote.

My purpose, however, in reproducing the correspondent's letter is not merely to draw attention to the impersonation in Bombay and the method of dealing with it. The letter is a pointer. Besides impersonation there is the wholesale tampering with the Congress registers which contain bogus names. These registers have as much value as a box containing counterfeit coins though it is claimed to contain rupees. Strife at Congress elections is becoming a common occurrence. The indiscipline of Congressmen is on the increase everywhere.

[1] Only an extract from the letter is reproduced here.

Many of them make irresponsible, even violent, speeches. Many fail to carry out instructions. Bihar is a notable example. Kisans of Bihar are supposed to be Congressmen. Their leaders are Congress-men. Bihar Ministers live in perpetual dread of kisan risings and kisan marches. Only two days ago I had a wire from Khandesh of a contem-plated march to the Collector's bungalow by kisans headed by a well known Congress worker. Such instances can be multiplied.

Rome's decline began long before it fell. The Congress, which has been nursed for over fifty years by the best brains of the country, will not fall the moment it has begun to decay. It need not fall at all, if the corruption is handled in time.

In my opinion the greatest work before the Congress will be to deal with this fourfold process of decay. We are yet far from our goal. We shall be no nearer it if we are not sure of our means and their meaning and implications. When the real time comes we shall be found wanting. If I was called upon to lead, say, an army of civil resisters, I should be unable to shoulder the burden. This is a big admission to make. But I should be guilty of cowardice and worse if I did not make it. Though there is non-violence enough among the masses, there is not enough among those who have to organize the masses. Even as a banker cannot run a bank if he has nothing in his chest, so can a general not lead a battle if he has no soldiers on whom he can rely implicitly.

Let no Congressman blame me for thinking aloud. Though I am not in the Congress, I have not ceased to be of it. Congressmen still expect me to give the call when in my opinion the time for action has come. What is more, if God so wills it, I feel I have enough strength and energy in me to lead a battle much more strenuous than any I have fought. But there are Saharas in the way. I have mentioned one which Congressmen can see, touch and handle. The Congress would not be harmed by my having lifted the curtain and exposing our uglinesses to the public gaze. It would be harmed if knowing the truth I hid it from the public.

Out of the present condition of the Congress I see nothing but anarchy and red ruin in front of the country. Shall we face the harsh truth at Tripuri?

BARDOLI, January 23, 1939

Harijan, 28-1-1939

570. 'WHAT A MAN OF GOD!'

The much-travelled Miss Muriel Lester, my East End hostess during the Round Table days, who is in the Frontier Province at the time of writing this, having met Badshah Khan, thus writes of him:

> Now I have got to know Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, I feel there is not likely to be another such honour in my life so far as meeting wonderful people goes. He is an Old Testament prince with the New Testament gentleness. What a man of God ! Thank you for making it possible for us to know him.
>
> He is taking us tomorrow to Utmanzai. It will be a pleasure to see Mira again.

I would not have published this private testimony if I had thought it to be the exaggeration of an unbalanced mind. It is true that Muriel Lester readily sees the bright side of those whom she meets. It is not a fault but a virtue. There is no one without faults, not even men of God. They are men of God not because they are faultless but because they know their own faults, they strive against them, they do not hide them and are ever ready to correct themselves. Such is Khan Saheb who prides himself in calling himself a servant of God. He is a devout Muslim who never misses his prayers and fasts. His interpretation of the Koran is the most liberal I have known. He had to make a choice of one from among the workers whose services I had offered him for introducing spinning, etc., among Khudai Khidmatgars. He deliberately chose Mirabai, Madeleine Slade. She was until recently living under the same roof as Khan Saheb and is now living in rooms adjoining Khan Saheb's residence where she conducts her class. She writes to me almost daily. I am glad to be able to say that her letters, though she does not spare those whom she loves, bear out Muriel Lester's first impression of this noble fakir. And yet the English officials have no use for him. They fear him and distrust him. I would not mind this distrust so much if it did not hamper progress, did not harm India and England and therefore the world.

BARDOLI, January 23, 1939

Harijan, 28-1-1939

571. ISLAMIC CULTURE

A great Muslim asked me what appeared to me strange questions the other day. Strange, because I should have thought that every Muslim who knows me, and this great Muslim knew me, could answer them for me. Here is the dialogue:

Q. Are you the same to Muslims now that you used to be in South Africa—their friend, father and guide?

A. I never claimed the privilege of being father to them or anyone in South Africa. But I certainly was their guide and friend. (I may state in passing that I was addressed as Bhai— brother—by them and others.) I am absolutely the same as I was in South Africa, twenty-four years ago. I regard Muslims like other Indians as blood brothers entitled to the same rights and privileges as any other Indian.

Q. Then do you cherish their culture as you would cherish your own Hindu culture?

A. Of course I do. I cannot do otherwise, as I believe Islam and other great religions to be as true as my own. India is the richer for the cultures that Islam and Christianity brought with them. I regard the present antagonisms as a passing phase.

Q. Let me be plain. I do not believe in Akbar's dream. He aimed at fusing all religions into one and producing a new faith. Do you have some such aim?

A. I do not know what Akbar dreamt. I do not aim at any fusion. Each religion has its own contribution to make to human evolution. I regard the great faiths of the world as so many branches of a tree, each distinct from the other though having the same source.

Q. I would like you to tell me what you mean by Hindustani. Do you favour a common dictionary ?

A. I have anticipated you. I understand that Maulvi Abdul Haq Saheb has produced a dictionary which has taken all the Urdu words that are to be found in the Benares Hindi Lexicon and Hindi words from the Osmania Lexicon. I have recommended to the Congress the adoption of the Maulvi Saheb's dictionary. And for new words have suggested a board composed of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Rajendra Babu.

Q. What about the Border Tribes? You know they are being crushed under the British heel. Will you favour their relations with India being regulated by the Frontier Province?

A. I would most decidedly. I have been moving in that direction. I have publicly stated more than once that India has to trust and befriend them and not regard them as her natural enemies. I have been trying to go in their midst myself and secure the same permission for Badshah Khan.

There were other questions also asked, but they are not of such public interest as the ones I have dealt with. And they are not matters of controversy so far as I know. I should like to add here that I have not lost my faith in communal unity. My life is still dedicated to it. Though a political pact has to come, it will never satisfy me without a heart unity. And a heart unity is inconceivable without non-violence as the basis of permanent friendship or brotherhood.

BARDOLI, January 23, 1939

Harijan, 28-1-1939

572. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

BARDOLI,
January 23, 1939

JAMNALAL BAJAJ

CARE KANORIA

CALCUTTA

TIME RESERVED.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, P. 210

573. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

BARDOLI,
January 23, 1939

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your letter, but what a letter! You bite even from a distance! Why should I worry about you? God takes care of all. It is surprising that you could not meet Mridulabehn. I am well. The reading was 160/94 at noon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 412

574. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

BARDOLI,
January 23, 1939

DEAR SISTER,

I have both your letters. The articles will be published in *Harijan.*[1] I had myself asked for them—hadn't I? I was only awaiting the second. I hope your daughter-in-law is well. Ba is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

RAMESHWARI NEHRU

PAKPATTAM

PUNJAB

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7987. Also C.W. 3083. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

575. INTERVIEW TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"

BARDOLI,
January 24, 1939

In reply to the correspondent's question as to what Gandhiji meant by saying in the last week's *Harijan* that an all-India crisis would occur if the Jaipur authorities persisted in prohibiting the entry of Seth Jamnalal Bajaj into the State,[2] Gandhiji replied:

Seth Jamnalal is an all-India man, though a subject of Jaipur. He is also a member of the Congress Working Committee, and essentially and admittedly a man of peace. He is the president of an organization which has been working and has been allowed to work in Jaipur for some years. Its activities have always been open. It contains well-known workers who are sober by disposition and who have done much constructive work, both among men and women. There is at the head of affairs in Jaipur a distinguished politico-military officer. He is shaping the policy of the State in connection with the ban pronounced against Jamnalalji and his association, the Jaipur Rajya Praja Mandal. I

[1] They were published in *Harijan,* 18-3-1939, 1-4-1939, 15-4-1939, 29-4-1939, 6-5-1939 and 20-5-1939.

[2] *Vide* "Jaipur"

take it that Sir Beauchamp St. John, Prime Minister of Jaipur, would not be acting without at least the tacit approval of the Central authority, without whose consent he could not become the Prime Minister of an important State like Jaipur.

If the action of the Jaipur authorities precipitates a first class crisis, it is impossible for the Indian National Congress, and therefore all India, to stand by and look on with indifference whilst Jamnalalji, for no offence whatsoever, is imprisoned and members of the Praja Mandal are dealt with likewise. The Congress will be neglecting its duty if, having power, it shrank from using it and allowed the spirit of the people of Jaipur to be crushed for want of support from the Congress. This is the sense in which I have said that the example of Jaipur, or say Rajkot, might easily lead to an all-India crisis.

The policy of non-intervention by the Congress was, in my opinion, a perfect piece of statesmanship when the people of the States were not awakened. That policy would be cowardice when there is all-round awakening among the people of the States and a determination to go through a long course of suffering for the vindication of their just rights. If once this is recognized, the struggle for liberty, wherever it takes place, is the struggle for all India. Whenever the Congress thinks it can usefully intervene, it must intervene.

In answer to a further question how the Congress as an institution and the Congress Ministries in the various provinces were justified in precipitating a crisis on an issue which exclusively concerned a State, Gandhiji said:

Supposing in a particular district in British India the Collector butchered the people of that district, is or is not the Congress justified in intervening and precipitating an all-India crisis? If the answer is 'yes', then it applies to Jaipur also for examining the conduct of the Congress in terms of intervention. If there had been no non-intervention resolution by the Congress, this question really would not have arisen. Therefore, unthinking people very often blame me for having said that constitutionally Indian States were foreign States. I do not accept that blame at all. I was wandering about in the States and I knew as a matter of fact that the people of the States were not ready.

The moment they became ready, the legal, constitutional and artificial boundary was destroyed. This is a tremendous moral question. Constitutionalism, legality and such other things are good enough within their respective spheres, but they become a drag upon human progress immediately the human mind has broken these

artificial bonds and flies higher. That is precisely what is happening before my eyes. Without any spur from any outside agency I saw at once that there must be intervention by the Congress of the type you see today. And it will go on from stage to stage, if the Congress remains the moral force that it has become—in other words, if the Congress lives up to its policy of non-violence.

People say that I have changed my view, that I say today something different from what I said years ago. The fact of the matter is that conditions have changed. I am the same. My words and deeds are dictated by prevailing conditions. There has been a gradual evolu-tion in my environment and I react to it as a satyagrahi.

The correspondent next drew Gandhiji's attention to recent developments in Rajkot and in Baroda, where the minorities were protesting against the Congress dictation. Gandhiji said in reply that he was unperturbed by those developments. He said:

The movement for liberty cannot possibly be withdrawn or arrested because there are at the moment so-called communal splits. I see that history is repeating itself and the power that is losing ground is becoming desperate and fomenting trouble and dissension within, hoping to drag on its existence by means of these dissensions. If the people know how to work the non-violent technique, the powers that are acting in this manner will be confounded and the people will rise victorious.

The Muslims in Rajkot, for instance, have everything to gain by the people of Rajkot securing liberty. They are today depending upon the sweet will, not of the Rulers, but of the advisers of the Rulers; tomorrow they will share power with the people because they are of the people. But I really do not believe that there is real Muslim opposition in Rajkot. They have enjoyed the best relations with the Hindus. I know this from personal experience myself. During the three months' brief but brilliant struggle there was no dissension between the Hindus and the Muslims in Rajkot. Though many Mus-lims did not court imprisonment, the Muslims as a community remained at the back of the agitation.

I really do not understand this unfortunate squabble in Baroda. I am as yet too paralysed to get a full grasp of the situation. There again, what can Maharashtrians lose if there is self-rule in Baroda? They are powerful enough to assert themselves. It is not as if they will be crushed by the so-called Gujarati majority, and if the majority gets

its share of the crumbs of office, that should not be a matter for non-participation by the Maharashtrians in the struggle for liberty. Hence, though I have not been able to fathom the bottom of this quarrel, I have no misgivings so long as the reformers remain non-violent and do not harbour any ill will against the Maharashtrians for their action. The question dwindles into insignificance so far as Baroda is concerned when it is remembered that against its population of 2,500,000 there are only a few thousands of Maharashtrians, mostly to be found in Baroda city itself.

The Times of India, January 25, 1939, and *Harijan*, 28-1-1939

576. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

BARDOLI ,
January 25, 1939

CHI. MANILAL,

Enclosed is a cheque for £100. It is for the repairs of the library building—is it not? Why should you be afraid of the astrological prediction ? Now it is certainly time for me to leave the world. Do not weep if you hear the news of my demise tomorrow. Both of you may look after my work. You should shine as my heir. Add to the inheritance. Money is something that comes and goes, but if I have some virtues those are your inheritance. Add to them and be happy. All are sharers in this inheritance.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4893

577. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

BARDOLI,
January 25, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

Your letter does you justice. It came to my hand at 6.30. It is 7.50 now. I only think of your good. How can I claim to be a father otherwise? It is wrong for you to stay back for fear of your dreams and forecasts coming true. One should not deviate from one's duty even if the forecast is trustworthy. What does it matter if I or anybody

at Akola dies when you are not here? If your presence here is necessary for some service, it becomes your duty to stay back. Otherwise, your place is by Manilal. You are his wife, his *vamangini*, which means the left side of the body. You are his better half. Your place is where Manilal is. Go without hesitation and with a light heart. That is your duty.

The enclosed is for Manilal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4894

578. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

Confidential BARDOLI,

January 26, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

Your clear reply of the 4th inst. in reply to mine of the 23rd ultimo emboldens me to bring to your notice certain happenings as I see them.

In Orissa things seem to be worst.[1] Public opinion there is not so strong as elsewhere and the most unfortunate murder of Major Bazalgette in Ranpur has complicated the situation. The Orissa Government, as has been officially admitted, has rendered every assistance it could have. This unfortunate event apart, out of a total population of 75,000 souls in Talcher, 26,000 have been compelled by sufferings said to be indescribable to migrate to British Orissa.

I feel that it is the clear duty of the Resident to see that the cause of this migration is investigated and redress given to the people.

The Resident in Kathiawad, as far as I can see, has made the Thakore Saheb of Rajkot break his solemn pact with his people published in the form of an official Notification.[2]

The struggle has, therefore, been resumed in Rajkot.

The British Prime Minister of Jaipur is said to have vowed to crush Seth Jamnalalji, a well-known banker, philanthropist and social reformer, and socio-political organization of which he is the President[3]. Their crime consists in aiming at responsible government

[1] *Vide* "The States"
[2] *ibid*
[3] *Vide* "The States"

in Jaipur under the aegis of the Maharaja.

I take it that the Central Government cannot escape responsibility, if the information given herein is trustworthy.

This means that the people of the States have to fight not only their rulers who by themselves cannot resist their people but they have also to combat the unseen and all too powerful hand of the Central authority.

I venture to present this awful problem to you. I call it awful because I do not know how far it will commit both the Central authority and the Congress which has a moral duty by the people of the States. I can understand the treaty obligations of the Paramount Power to protect States against danger from without and anarchy within. Is not the corollary equally true, that if the States suppress their people, the latter have also to be protected by the Paramount Power? Can a State suppress free speech, meetings and the like, and expect the Paramount Power to help it in doing so, if the afflicted people carry on a non-violent agitation for the natural freedom to which every human being in decent society is entitled ?

I do not expect any reply to my letter unless there is anything to tell me. I know how every moment of your time is occupied. It is enough for me to know, as I do know, that my letters receive your personal attention.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm of a printed copy: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp.* 401-2

579. LETTER TO JAMES A. H. MILLS

MAGANWADI,

WARDHA (C. P.),

BARDOLI,

January 26, 1939

DEAR MILLS,

Gandhiji has your letter of 18th inst.

Since you disown all responsibility for what appeared in the Press there is nothing more to be said about it, though he is still unable to understand how such a

wholesale misrepresentation of what you reported could take place. He is sorry he has not got that cutting with him to send to you but surely, you will be able to procure it for yourself and have a look at it. Anyway, Gandhiji desires me to say that if he is pure he will outlive all propaganda that ignorance or malice may set on foot against him.

Yours sincerely,

PYARELAL

JAMES A. H. MILLS, ESQ.
ASSOCIATED PRESS OF AMERICA
DJIBUTI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

580. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

BARDOLI,
January 26, 1939

CHI. CHANDAN,

I have asked Kanu to send you Rs. 30. I am sorry this was overlooked.

You should take it for certain that H. would not have left had it not been for the episode in which you figured. Do not forget the purport of your first letter. You wanted that H. should give up women's education. That has been done. To do anything more is cruelty. Your purpose is served. I do not hold you guilty. You wanted such justice from me, did you not ? If I hand over the papers to Jamnalalji and others and if they hold you guilty, will you accept the verdict? Are you so foolish? But that is the meaning of your letter. You write that you will accept the verdict if they hold you guilty. This statement lacks wisdom. When I have acquitted you, what more is there for you to do? But I have done more for you. I pronounced you not guilty and made H. give up Dakshinamurti and women's education. What more would you gain by making him accept his guilt? A prisoner is punished but he is never forced to confess the guilt. You are really exhibiting your foolishness. Have you or have you not given me the right to call you foolish? Write your reply with an easy mind. If you insist, I shall certainly give trouble to Jamnalalji and others.

I advise you to forget about H. and absorb yourself in your

work. If you do not find the food suitable, cook yourself. It will take 15 minutes in a cooker.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 948. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

581. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

January 26, 1939

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

You will have received my letter. Your question is pertinent. But the solution is not to be found in what happened. We must find out why it happened. There is plenty of violence in the Aryan League. Who will counteract it? The substance of what you say is that the Muslims are more given to the gospel of violence. What is the non-violent person to do when two violent parties fight? When he is powerless to do anything he should pray, keep away from the conflict and seek for an opportunity to sacrifice himself.

About *The Hindustan Times* you should speak to Devdas.

The newspapers here do not contain any news of the riot. Was there anything in *The Statesman?*

I have not read the letter to Kripalani. I gave it to Pyarelal to forward to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2475

582. SPEECH AT MEETING OF PEASANTS[1]

BARDOLI,
January 26, 1939

I went through the resolutions you have passed before coming here. Let me congratulate both the parties on it. Sardar has said that you have passed these resolutions with God as your witness. You have already had some experience of what happens when a man breaks his vow. I do hope that you will fully adhere to these resolutions. Quite often, when people do not make such resolutions of their own accord, law compels them to do so, which carries with it some kind of punishment. It is a good thing that you have passed these resolutions of your own free will. It is not an ordinary thing that the Dublas have ceased to be serfs and have become free. Of course, these resolutions gave me an impression that the peasants in this part are big businessmen for, through these resolutions they have indeed struck a big bargain. What is so great about paying fair daily wages to the Dublas for the full quota of work whereas formerly they were made to work as much as the owners desired? I am not greatly impressed by it. According to me, any man or woman must get the minimum wage of 8 annas for 8 hours of work. God willing, such conditions will be created in my lifetime. You may find 8 annas a big thing; but it really is not so big. But you have fixed 3 annas as the wages for a woman labourer, whereas you will take the same amount of work from her. Do you think

[1] The meeting, with an attendance of between 10 and 15 thousand landowners and Halis or Dublas, was held to approve the recommendations made by a committee of farmers and village workers, formed in the previous year to consider the question of the emancipation of Halis whose status was that of serfs. The committee had made the following recommendations:

(1) Every Hali to be emancipated, the wages from 26th January 1939 to be as. 4/6 (for males) and as. 3/- (for females); (2) every Hali who has worked on his master's farm for twelve years or more is automatically free from all his debts to him; (3) such Halis as may have worked for less than twelve years to have credited to their account a twelfth of the debt for every year that they have worked; (4) an anna per day to be deducted from the wage, in the case of men, until the debt is repaid; (5) everyone to be declared free from debt on expiry of 12 years, whether the debt be paid or not; (6) every debt to expire with the debtor's life; (7) a Dubla may engage himself on an annual wage of Rs. 80, and Rs. 15 may be deducted from his wage for repayment of a debt due if any; (8) a village committee to be appointed to settle all questions pertaining to debts.

those people will run away from you? Hence, even while congratulating you, I tell you that you have struck a bargain.

I would like to insist that you should not take the resolution too literally. Do not think that you can never pay more than 4_ annas and 3 annas. The very fact that you have made them free implies that they are free to work wherever they choose and earn the wages they can. The great significance of this resolution is that they will remain where they are and your relations will be pure. The fact that a Dubla ceases to be a serf and becomes a ploughman does not mean that the farmer will not plough the land. The plough will belong to the farmer and the Dubla will use it for him. But the real ploughman, in fact, is the tiller of the land and the ideal condition will be that in which both the farmer and the serf become ploughmen. Further, the resolution does not mean that even when it has been a good year and there are bumper crops you will pay only 4_ annas as wages. If you do so, I would say that you have not carried out your resolution.

You had taken the great vow of independence in 1921. You have not yet fulfilled the major part of it. What you have done now should have been done in 1921. This means that you delayed what should have been done many years ago. Nevertheless, I congratulate you as this is a meritorious act.

Agriculture is our basic occupation. But we are not very good agriculturists, because our farming does not keep us busy throughout the year. Nor does it give us enough to eat. That is why I have described the charkha as Annapurna and praise it even today as much as I did formerly. Hence, if the farmers want to make progress, they will have to supplement their income by taking to the charkha. Thus you should devote all your free time to the charkha.

I hope the resolutions will be implemented by both the parties.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 19-2-1939

583. LETTER TO SIR W. BEAUCHAMP ST. JOHN

BARDOLI,
January 27, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for yours of the 25th inst.

I am afraid I cannot sympathize with you in your hesitation.

The report Shri Chudgar has sent is too valuable not to be published. My concern was to see that I did not give currency to a report whose accuracy could be successfully challenged.

I am in correspondence with Shri Chudgar and if he adheres to the report he has given to Seth Jamnalalji, I may feel compelled to publish it in the interest of the cause of the people of Jaipur.

I have not understood the meaning of "suitable action" to be taken by you in the event of publication of Shri Chudgar's version.

Yours sincerely,

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 400-1. Also C.W. 7809. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

584. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 27, 1939

CHI. AMTUSSALAAM,

I am puzzled. I did not say no. I only explained my predicament. You made the suggestion and I accepted it. You are so unpredictable. If you are not worried over the lack of my contact but only about the refusal from Maulana, why is the letter so full of that topic? But I do not wish to get into an argument with you. There is no need for you to go to Mridula.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 669

585. TELEGRAM TO BISWANATH DAS

[Before *January 28, 1939*][1]

PRIME MINISTER

CUTTACK

THAKKAR BAPA SAYS TALCHER REFUGEES STARVING AND SUFFERING. WANT MEDICAL ASSISTANCE. PLEASE GIVE RELIEF.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] From the reference to the plight of Talcher refugees; *vide* "The States", 23-1-1939

586. TELEGRAM TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

BARDOLI,
January 28, 1939

JANKIDEVI BAJAJ
WARDHA

DON'T GO JAIPUR NOW TILL CERTIFIED BY DOCTORS AND ME AS PERFECTLY FIT AND CHEERFUL

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 210

587. DRAFT OF STATEMENT FOR JAMNALAL BAJAJ[1]

BARDOLI,
January 28, 1939

The Prime Minister of Jaipur is reported to have vowed to crush the Jaipur Rajya Praja Mandal and me. In pursuance of that policy I have been put out of harm's way as they may think. Presently the same fate will overtake the members of the Mandal. But if we are true to ourselves and our self-imposed trust, though our bodies may be imprisoned or otherwise injured, our spirits shall be free.

As I go into enforced silence let me reiterate what we are fighting for. Our goal is responsible government under the Maharaja but our civil disobedience has not been taken up so as to influence the Durbar to grant us responsible government. Civil disobedience is aimed at asserting the elementary right that belongs to all societies, to speak and write freely, to assemble in meetings, to take out processions, to form associations, etc., so long as these activities remain non-violent. We have been forced to resort to civil disobedience because this elementary right has been denied to us. The moment this right is restored civil disobedience should be withdrawn.

Hence there is no question as yet of mass civil disobedience or a no-tax campaign.

Seeing that the Mandal has been virtually declared an illegal

[1] This was to be issued by Jamnalal Bajaj at the time of his arrest. The draft in Gandhiji's hand is available in G.N. 3078.

body, let us regard our existing register to be abrogated. A new register should be opened if possible within the State and without if necessary. Those only will become members who know that there is risk today even in becoming members of the Mandal. It is to be hoped, however, that there will be a large number of Jaipurians living within the State or without who will become members of the Mandal and thus at least show their disapproval of the ban.

The names, addresses and occupations of these members will be registered and published from time to time.

The affairs of the Mandal will in my absence be managed by . . .[1] and they will exercise all the powers of the Mandal and the President as if the constitution was in operation. This council of five will have the right to substitute others in their respective places. In all matters of civil disobedience the council will whenever necessary seek and be guided by the advice of Gandhiji.

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 403-4. Also G.N. 3078

588. DISCUSSION WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF MUNICIPALITIES AND LOCAL BOARDS[2]

BARDOLI,
January 28, 1939

The first question they asked related to the question of taxation:

The Congress is pledged to the policy of reducing the burden of taxation. Yet when Congressmen enter the local boards and municipalities, they required more money for carrying out their programme of beneficent municipal activity. How can this be done without fresh taxation which the people naturally dislike? How is the dilemma to be solved?

A. If I were a tax-payer within the jurisdiction of a local board or a municipality, I would refuse to pay a single pie by way of additional taxation and advise others to do likewise unless the money we pay is returned fourfold. Those who enter local boards and municipalities as people's representatives go there not to seek honour or to indulge in mutual rivalries, but to render a service of love, and that does not depend upon money. Ours is a pauper country. If our

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Municipal Service and Non-violence". About 200 representatives of municipalities and local boards had met Gandhiji to discuss the various knotty problems relating to their day-to-day work.

municipal councillors are imbued with a real spirit of service, they will convert themselves into unpaid sweepers, Bhangis and road-makers, and take pride in doing so. They will invite their fellow-councillors, who may not have come on the Congress ticket, to join them, and if they have faith in themselves and their mission, their example will not fail to evoke response. This means that a municipal councillor has to be a whole-timer. He should have no axe of his own to grind. The next step would be to map out the entire adult population within the jurisdiction of the municipality or the local board. All should be asked to make their contribution to municipal activity. A regular register should be maintained. Those who are too poor to make any money contribution but are able-bodied and physically fit, can be asked to give their free labour. Real India consists not of a few big cities and our Presidency towns, but of seven lakhs of villages. It is there that the real problems of India have to be faced and solved. We require better roads, better sanitation, better drinking water supply for our villages.

We shall never be able to get through even a fraction of this stupendous work if we proceed on a money basis. But India has an inexhaustible reserve of manpower. If we can mobilize that, we can transform the entire look of the country in an incredibly short time.

And the charkha is a means *par excellence* for effecting this mobilization of our labour resources. It is a natural symbol of non-violence too, which is the soul of all voluntary life-giving corporate activity. The popularization of the charkha thus has a definite place in any scheme of municipal work, whether it relates to the liquidation of rural unemployment and the consequent penury and appalling conditions of existence under which vast sections of our rural population live, or whether it refers to the amelioration of slum life that is the shame of our big cities.

But this presupposes a living faith in the charkha, a faith that should lead to an intelligent study and mastering of the science of spinning and its allied processes. As it is, we today love to kill our time by going to cinemas and picture houses or even in idle talk. Pursuits of making money without work interest us, but not the charkha. Yet it is my faith that we shall advance towards our goal of non-violence to the extent we succeed in universalizing the charkha.

By following the plan of work outlined above, we shall be able to return to the ratepayers whatever taxes they may have paid,

multiplied manifold, in the form of vastly improved services and municipal amenities, and they will not grudge the levying of additional taxes, too, should that become necessary.

A member of the Jambusar Municipality asked: "In our municipality there are 17 members, out of whom eight have been returned on the Congress ticket, the remaining nine are non-Congress. They can always outvote us and thwart our plans. What should we do?"

G. That should present no problem. If they want to proceed in the orthodox style and fill up their time with speechifying and so on and so forth, you need not imitate them, or waste your time like them; you may just put in your appearance at these meetings, but need not waste your time by taking part in idle controversy. Instead, you should occupy all your time with useful service of the ratepayers, by yourself wielding the bucket and the broom, by working with the spade and the basket, by nursing and rendering medical aid to the sick and ailing, and by teaching the ratepayers who are illiterate, and their children, to read and write. As a result, two things may happen. Either your opponents will be infected by your example and will align themselves with you and there will be an end to all controversy. Or the ratepayers will learn to know the sheep from the goats, and at the next election all the seventeen seats will be filled by Congressmen. That is the non-violent way of liquidating opposition. It eliminates all conflict and clash and makes our way clear irrespective of what the other party may or may not do.

Q. Since in many places in Gujarat the National Week is being observed by inviting the people to take part in rural uplift or municipal service work, would it not be desirable to alter the dates of the celebration so that the week should fall within the bright phase of the moon? This will enable mass operations to continue even after nightfall and economize lighting.

A. A multitude of calendars are at present in vogue in different parts of the country. But for a national celebration it is desirable to follow a calendar which is universal. If your civic zeal is not a vain show, beginning and ending with the National Week, you will have a series of municipal service weeks in addition to the National Week. The dates for these weeks in each place can be fixed according to the requirement of the activity suited to that particular place.

"Which form of taxation is better for municipal purposes, direct or indirect?" asked a city father from Surat.

G. Indirect taxation is found to be more popular with the ratepayers, because its incidence is not directly felt. But the direct

taxation has more educative value and will be found more handy when the object is to make the ratepayers municipal-minded.

A friend from Kheda District complained: "We would like to introduce the Wardha scheme of basic education in the primary schools run by local boards. The local bodies are willing, but the Inspectorate and the higher officials of the Education Department are still old-fashioned in their outlook. They have not developed faith in the Wardha principles. How shall we circumvent this handicap ?"

G. That does not surprise me. I should be surprised if the higher educational authorities developed faith in the Wardha scheme of education all at once. Faith will follow experience. In the mean time all I can say is that where there is a will there is a way. I do not think there is any legal difficulty in the way of the Education Minister instructing his Director of Public Instruction to help, in every possible way, those who might wish to give effect to the Wardha scheme of education. The C. P. Ministry has not found any difficulty in making the Education Department to fall into line with them. But if a legal or technical difficulty is discovered, it can be removed in a legal way.

Q. In our schemes for adult education, should the aim be to promote the spread of literacy or to impart 'useful knowledge'? What about the education of women?

A. The primary need of those who are come of age and are following an avocation, is to know how to read and write. Mass illiteracy is India's sin and shame and must be liquidated. Of course, the literacy campaign must not begin and end with a knowledge of the alphabet. It must go hand in hand with the spread of useful knowledge. But municipal bodies should beware of trying to ride two horses at a time, or else they are sure to come a cropper.

As for illiteracy among the women, its cause is not mere laziness and inertia as in the case of men. A more potent cause is the status of inferiority with which an immemorial tradition has unjustly branded her. Man has converted her into a domestic drudge and an instrument of his pleasure, instead of regarding her as his helpmate and better half ! The result is a semi-paralysis of our society. Woman has rightly been called the mother of the race. We owe it to her and to ourselves to undo the great wrong that we have done her.

"You have expressed varying opinions on certain subjects at different times," asked a friend from Kapadwanj, Kheda Dist. "These are sometimes exploited by our opponents to oppose our current policies. What should we do under these circumstances?"

G. The contradiction in these cases is only in appearance and

easily capable of being reconciled. A safe rule to follow would be that the latest utterance, in order of time, should be given precedence over all the previous ones. But no utterance of mine, whether late or early, need bind you if it does not appeal to your heart and head. That would not mean that my standpoint was wrong. But it would be wrong to accept a standpoint which you cannot appreciate or assimilate.

Q. How to deal with people who commit nuisance by using any and every place for evacuations? They defend the practice on the ground that it is enjoined by their religion. Again, how to cope with the nuisance of flies, mosquitoes, rabid dogs and monkeys, etc.? Their extermination is objected to by some on the ground of ahimsa.

A. With regard to the first, there are two ways of dealing with the problem—the apparently violent, and the non-violent. You can enforce the penalty of law against those who may infringe the laws of sanitation. I have used the word 'apparent' advisedly. Religious freedom, like liberty, becomes licence when it is indulged in at the expense of the health and safety of others, or in contravention of the principles of decency or morality. If you want to claim unrestricted and absolute liberty for yourselves, you must choose to retire from society and take to solitude. I call the practice of making evacuations anywhere and everywhere, regardless of the health and convenience of others, a travesty of ahimsa. Where there is filth, whether physical or moral, there is no ahimsa.

The other way is to seek out the religious heads of the sects that indulge in these insanitary practices and to try to touch their heart and reason by patient argument.

As for the nuisance of flies, mosquitoes, street dogs and monkeys, etc., I in my individual capacity may choose to put up with it, but society as a whole cannot afford to do so if it at all wants to exist. These pests are a result of our misdeeds. If I feed the monkeys in a public place and thereby make life impossible for others, it is I who commit *himsa*, and society will have no choice but to exterminate the pest that my *himsa* has created. The criterion of ahimsa is the mental attitude behind an act, not the mechanical act by itself. A citizen who lets loose pests on others by indulging in a mistaken humanitarian sentiment is guilty of *himsa.*

Shrimati Mridulabehn Sarabhai, who is a keen social worker and founder of the Jyoti Sangh, an institution for the uplift and emancipation of women at Ahmedabad, put Gandhiji a few leading questions on the position of women in society: "The awakening of civil and political consciousness among Indian women has created a

conflict between their traditional domestic duties and their duty towards society. If a woman engages in public work, she may have to neglect her children or her household. How is the dilemma to be solved?"

Basing his reply on a celebrated text of the *Gita*, Gandhiji remarked that it was always wrong to run after the 'distant scene' to the neglect of the more immediate duties that might have accrued to one naturally. Neglect of present duty was the way to destruction. The question was whether it is a woman's duty to devote all her time to domestic work. More often than not a woman's time is taken up not by the performance of essential domestic duties but in catering for the egoistic pleasure of her lord and master and for her own vanities.

G. To me this domestic slavery of women is a symbol of our barbarism. In my opinion the slavery of the kitchen is a remnant of barbarism mainly. It is high time that our womankind was freed from this incubus. Domestic work ought not to take the whole of a woman's time.

MRIDULABEHN: At the elections your Congressmen expect all manner of help from us, but when we ask them to send out their wives and daughters to join us in public work, they bring forth all sorts of excuses and want to keep them close prisoners within the four domestic walls. What remedy do you suggest?

G. Send the names of all such antediluvian fossils to me for publication in *Harijan.*

SEGAON, February 7, 1939
Harijan, 18-2-1939

589. LETTER TO GENERAL SHINDE

BARDOLI,
January 29, 1939

DEAR GEN. SHINDE,

I am obliged to you for your letter of the 25th inst.

I want unity between Maharashtrians and Gujaratis. There is no reason whatsoever for a split.

If you have copies of Sardar Vallabhbhai's speeches at Bhadran and Ena,[1] I would like to see them. Sardar is not the man to foment dissensions between the two communities.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee in his letter had charged Sardar Patel with fomenting dissensions between Gujaratis and Maharashtrians by his speeches at Bhadran and Ena and by his Press statements.

590. LETTER TO MAHARAJA OF MYSORE

BARDOLI,
January 29, 1939

DEAR MAHARAJA SAHIB,

I had intended long since to thank you for the woollen shawl you were good enough to send me through Shri Rangaswami. I hope that the relations between the State and the people are happy and that the forthcoming reforms will inaugurate an era of peace and prosperity.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

MAHARAJA OF MYSORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

591. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 29, 1939

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your two letters.

How can I order you? I have already said that you are free to do as you like as I do not know what is in your best interest. It would be absurd for me to express any opinion under such circumstances. So the best thing would be for you to do what you think proper. I shall be content with that. I write this neither in grief nor in anger, only with your good at heart.

I hope everyone there is well, including yourself.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 413

592. SPEECH AT MEETING OF PEASANTS[1]

VARAD,
[*January 29, 1939*][2]

There can be no two opinions that this is an auspicious occasion. There was a time when we were faced with confiscation of our lands and when they were actually confiscated we declared times without number in our speeches that the Government would not be able to retain them, that they would be returned to the owners. And now these lands have been returned. Do not think that we have been able to get them back by our ceaseless efforts. You would be making a great mistake if you thought so. We have succeeded to the extent we adhered to truth and non-violence. Chitta Patel[3] remained firm and never came to Varad. He therefore completely fulfilled his pledge. It is not that Chittabhai alone had taken such a pledge. India abounds in such men and it is owing to their merit alone that we have got back our lands.

But we must know how to lose them again should an occasion arise. To believe that restoration of lands means that we have won swaraj or that we have become fit for it is to commit a sin. It suggests that for winning swaraj we have to tread the path which we have trodden so far. Let us not delude ourselves that nothing remains for us to do now. If we play the game guided by self-interest and pecuniary motives, we are bound to lose. I wish to warn you that a greater ordeal is yet to come.[4]

Let us in all humility pray to God that He may bless us with strength a hundredfold of that which He has bestowed on us up to now, so that we may be able to stand more fiery ordeals. We have had the courage to go to jail, to lose our homes and lands. Let us now pray for the courage to go to the scaffold cheerfully or to become ashes in a consuming fire. When we have exhibited that courage, swaraj will be ours, and no one dare rob us of it. But if we forget the lesson today, we shall lose the battle and be bankrupt. I hope and pray that none of us may be found wanting when the supreme test comes.

Harijanbandhu, 26-2-1939, and *Harijan,* 18-2-1939

[1] On the occasion of restoration of confiscated lands. The text has been extracted from Mahadev Desai's reports in Gujarati and English under the heading "Bardoli".

[2] From *Gandhi*—1915-1948

[3] Chitta Patel had vowed not to enter the British territories until the confiscated lands were restored.

[4] The paragraph that follows is from *Harijan.*

1. RAJKOT

The struggle in Rajkot has a personal touch about it for me. It was the place where I received all my education up to the matriculation examination and where my father was Dewan for many years. My wife feels so much about the sufferings of the people that though she is as old as I am and much less able than myself to brave such hardships as may be attendant upon jail life, she feels she must go to Rajkot. And before this is in print she might have gone there.[1]

But I want to take a detached view of the struggle. Sardar's statement[2], reproduced elsewhere, is a legal document in the sense that it has not a superfluous word in it and contains nothing that cannot be supported by unimpeachable evidence most of which is based on written records which are attached to it as appendices.

It furnishes evidence of a cold-blooded breach of a solemn covenant entered into between the Rajkot Ruler and his people.[3] And the breach has been committed at the instance and bidding of the British Resident[4] who is directly linked with the Viceroy.

To the covenant a British Dewan[5] was party. His boast was that he represented British authority. He had expected to rule the Ruler. He was therefore no fool to fall into the Sardar's trap. Therefore, the covenant was not an extortion from an imbecile ruler. The British Resident detested the Congress and the Sardar for the crime of saving the Thakore Saheb from bankruptcy and, probably, loss of his *gadi*. The Congress influence he could not brook. And so before the Thakore Saheb could possibly redeem his promise to his people, he made him break it. If the news the Sardar is receiving from Rajkot is to be believed, the Resident is showing the red claws of the British lion and says in effect to the people: 'Your ruler is my creature. I have put him on the *gadi* and I can depose him. He knew well enough that he

[1] Kasturba Gandhi was arrested at Rajkot on February 3 on entering the State to offer satyagraha.

[2] *Vide* Cold-Blooded Breach of A Solemn Covenant

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 26-1-1939, and also "The States",

[4] E. C. Gibson

[5] Sir Patrick R. Cadell

had acted against my wishes. I have therefore undone his action in coming to terms with his people. For your dealings with the Congress and the Sardar I shall teach you a lesson that you will not forget for a generation.'

Having made the Ruler a virtual prisoner, he has begun a reign of terrorism in Rajkot. Here is what the latest telegram received by the Sardar says:

> Becharbhai Jasani and other volunteers arrested. Twenty-six volunteers taken at night to a distant place in the Agency limits and brutally beaten. Volunteers in villages are similarly treated. Agency police controlling State agency and searching private houses in civil limits.

The British Resident is repeating the performances of the British officials in 'British India' during the civil disobedience days.

I know that if the people of Rajkot can stand all this madness without themselves becoming mad, and meekly but resolutely and bravely suffer the inhumanities heaped upon them, they will come out victorious and, what is more, they will set free the Thakore Saheb. They will prove that they are the real rulers of Rajkot under the paramountcy of the Congress. If, however, they go mad and think of impotent retaliation and resort to acts of violence, their state will be worse than before and the paramountcy of the Congress will be of no effect. The Congress paramountcy avails only those who accept the banner of non-violence, even as the paramountcy of Britain avails only those who subscribe to the doctrine of 'might is right.'

What then is the duty of the Congress when the people of Rajkot have to face not the Ruler and his tiny police but the disciplined hordes of the British Empire?

The first and natural step is for the Congress ministry to make themselves responsible for the safety and honour of the people of Rajkot. It is true that the Government of India Act gives the ministers no power over the States. But they are governors of a mighty province in which Rajkot is but a speck. As such they have rights and duties outside the Government of India Act. And these are much the most important. Supposing that Rajkot became the place of refuge for all the *goondas* that India could produce, supposing further that from there they carried on operations throughout India, the ministers would clearly have the right and it would be their duty to ask the Paramount Power through the British Representative in Bombay to set

things right in Rajkot. And it will be the duty of the Paramount Power to do so or to lose the ministers. Every minister in his province is affected by everything that happens in territories within his geographical limit though outside his legal jurisdiction, especially if that thing hurts his sense of decency. Responsible government in those parts may not be the ministers' concern, but if there is plague in those parts or butchery going on, it is very much their concern; or else their rule is a sham and a delusion. Thus the ministers in Orissa may not sit comfortably in their chairs, if they do not succeed in sending 26,000 refugees of Talcher to their home with an absolute assurance of safety and freedom of speech and social and political intercourse. It is insufferable that the Congress, which is today in alliance with the British Government, should be treated as an enemy and an outsider in the States which are vassals of the British.

This wanton breach, instigated by the British Resident in Rajkot, of the charter of the liberty of its people is a wrong which must be set right at the earliest possible moment. It is like a poison corroding the whole body. Will H. E. the Viceroy realize the significance of Rajkot and remove the poison?

BARDOLI, January 30, 1939

Harijan, 4-2-1939

2. THE MODERN GIRL

I have received a letter written on behalf of eleven girls whose names and addresses have been sent to me. I give it below with changes that make it more readable without in any way altering the meaning:

> Your comments on the letter of a lady student captioned 'Students' Shame' and published in *Harijan* on the 31st December, 1938[1] deserve special attention. The modern girl, it seems, has provoked you to the extent that you have disposed of her finally as one playing Juliet to half a dozen Romeos. This remark which betrays your idea about women in general is not very inspiring.
>
> In these days when women are coming out of closed doors to help men and take an equal share of the burden of life, it is indeed strange that they are still blamed even when they are maltreated by men. It cannotbe denied that

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Akbar Hydari", 26-12-1938

instances can be cited where the fault is equally divided. There may be a few girls playing Juliets to half a dozen Romeos. But such cases presuppose the existence of half a dozen Romeos, moving about the streets in quest of a Juliet. And it cannot or should never be taken that modern girls are categorically all Juliets or modern youths all Romeos. You yourself have come in contact with quite a number of modern girls and may have been struck by their resolution, sacrifice and other sterling womanly virtues.

As for forming public opinion against such misdemeanours as pointed out by your correspondent, it is not for girls to do it, not so much out of false shame as from its ineffectiveness.

But a statement like this from one revered all over the world seems to hold a brief once more for that worn out and unbecoming saying 'woman is the gate of Hell.'

From the foregoing remarks, however, please do not conclude that modern girls have no respect for you. They hold you in as much respect as every young man does. To be hated or pitied is what they resent much. They are ready to mend their ways if they are really guilty. Their guilt, if any, must be conclusively proved before they are anathematized. In this respect they would neither desire to take shelter under the covering of 'ladies, please', nor would they silently stand and allow the judge to condemn them in his own way. Truth must be faced; the modern girl or 'Juliet', as you have called her, has courage enough to face it.

My correspondents do not perhaps know that I began service of India's women in South Africa more than forty years ago when perhaps none of them was born. I hold myself to be incapable of writing anything derogatory to womanhood. My regard for the fair sex is too great to permit me to think ill of them. She is, what she has been described to be in English, the better half of mankind. And my article was written to expose students' shame, not to advertise the frailties of girls. But in giving the diagnosis of the disease, I was bound, if I was to prescribe the right remedy, to mention all the factors which induced the disease.

The 'modern girl' has a special meaning. Therefore there was no question of my restricting the scope of my remark to some. But all the girls who receive English education are not modern girls. I know many who are not at all touched by the 'modern girl' spirit. But there are some who have become modern girls. My remark was meant to warn India's girl students against copying the 'modern girl' and complicating a problem that has become a serious menace. For, at the

time I received the letter referred to, I received also a letter from an Andhra girl student bitterly complaining of the behaviour of Andhra students which from the description given is worse than what was described by the Lahore girl. This daughter of Andhra tells me the simple dress of her girl friends gives them no protection, but they lack the courage to expose the barbarism of the boys who are a disgrace to the institution they belong to. I commend this complaint to the authorities of the Andhra University.

The eleven girls I invite to initiate a crusade against the rude behaviour of students. God helps only those who help themselves. The girls must learn the art of protecting themselves against the ruffianly behaviour of man.

BARDOLI, January 30, 1939

Harijan, 4-2-1939

3. JAIPUR

The reader should know the distinction between the Jaipur struggle and the Rajkot one.

The Rajkot struggle is frankly for responsible government within the State and is now for redeeming the Ruler's promise to his people. Every man and woman of Rajkot, if they have any stuff in them, will be reduced to dust in resisting the dishonourable conduct of the British Resident.

The Jaipur struggle is on a very small and narrow issue. The one political association of Jaipur has been virtually declared illegal for the offence of pleading for responsible government, and its President, himself a resident of Jaipur, has been put under a ban. The civil disobedience struggle will cease the moment the bans are lifted and the right of free association, holding public meetings, etc., is conceded. But here again the British lion has opened out his big claws. The British Prime Minister of Jaipur had a chat with Barrister Chudgar, legal adviser of the Rao Rana of Sikar. He reported to Seth Jamnalalji the following purport of the talk:

> I understand it my duty to inform you that during my interview with Sir Beauchamp St. John, Prime Minister of Jaipur, in connection with Sikar affairs on the 9th inst. (January), at about 11 a. m. at his bungalow Natanika Bagh, I had some discussion with him regarding the Jaipur situation. The

following is the substance of the discussion:

I told Sir Beauchamp that the ban against your entry into Jaipur State territories came as a painful surprise to millions of people all over India, particularly because you are well-known to be a man of peace andyour mission was to supervise and direct famine relief activities in the famine-stricken parts of Jaipur State. To this Sir Beauchamp replied that he agreed that you are a man of peace, but you and your men's visit, he thought, would bring you and your men in contact with the masses in the famine-stricken areas, and this he did not like for obvious political reasons. I told him that you cannot be expected to submit to the order for an indefinite period, and that it would be better in the interests of the State and the people, in view of the statement you have published in the Press after you had been served with the order, if the order were recalled so that unnecessary trouble may be avoided. He was adamant, and he said that he was prepared to meet any situation that might arise if you disobeyed the order. He said that the Congressmen are out for a revolution by means of a non-violent struggle. But non-violence, he said, was a force as powerful or perhaps more powerful than violence. He further said Indians were playing upon the humane instincts in the English race, but if there was Japan or Herr Hitler instead of the English in India we could not have succeeded so well with our non-violence.

He then said that it was his considered opinion that non-violence, however strict, must be met by violence, and his reply to the non-violent movement in Jaipur would be the 'machine-gun'. I pointed out to him that all Englishmen were not of his way of thinking and even the English race as such would not agree with him. He said, "That may or may not be so," but personally he was of the opinion that there was no difference between non-violence and violence, and that there would be nothing wrong in using violence against non-violence.

If you or Mahatmaji desire to make use of this statement, I have no objection.

I considered this to be so startling that I referred it to the Prime Minister in the following letter (18-1-1939):[1] The Prime Minister replied as follows (20-1-1939):

I write to acknowledge your kind letter of the 18th instant, enclosing a copy of a letter from Mr. Chudgar to Seth Jamnalal Bajaj. Your hesitation in publishing it before you had ascertained the correctness of its contents was a wise step, which I personally much appreciate, as I am now able to inform

[1] For the text of the letter, *vide* "Note to Amritlal V. Thakkar St. John"

you that its description of my views is completely erroneous. I am unable to understand how Mr. Chudgar so misunderstood me, as I may say that this incident confirms me in my hesitation to grant any such interviews in future.

Now that you are aware of the facts, I am sure your reluctance to publish such a letter will be confirmed. Should, however, you decideotherwise, I shall be glad if you can inform me as soon as practicable so that I can take suitable action.

With renewed thanks for your consideration.

I replied as under (22-1-1939):[1]

To this there came the following reply (25-1-1939):

Many thanks for your letter of the 22nd instant.

I am sure you will sympathize with me in my natural hesitation to make a record of an interview which was understood to be private and personal when the other party to the interview has already threatened to publish an erroneous version. Such a procedure can, as I am sure you will agree, only lead to acrimony, and so far as I can see, serve no useful purpose.

Should, however, Mr. Chudgar see fit to publish his erroneous version, I am sure you will give me due warning so that, as I have already said, I may take suitable action.

To this I replied again as follows (27-1-1939):[2]

I referred the correspondence to Shri Chudgar and he has sent me the copy of the following letter he has addressed to Shri Jamnalal (28-1-1939):

I have read the correspondence between Mahatmaji and Sir W. Beauchamp St. John ending with Mahatmaji's letter to him dated the 27th inst. I have carefully read my letter to you dated the 15th inst. again, and I say that what I have stated in that letter is a substantially correct reproduction of the conversation between me and Sir Beauchamp.

The Prime Minister's letters have made strange reading. I had asked for bread, he has sent me a stone. He will pardon me if I believe Shri Chudgar's version, unless he can give his own. His mere denial accompanied by a threat carries no weight;

The Congress cannot wait and watch whilst it has the power, and allow the people of Jaipur to die of mental and moral starvation, especially when this denial of a natural right is backed by British

[1] For the text of the letter, *vide* " Letter to Sir W. Beauchamp"

[2] For the text of the letter, *vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 27-1-1939

might. If the Prime Minister has no authority to do what he is doing, let him at least be recalled.

BARDOLI, January 30, 1939

Harijan, 11-2-1939. Also C.W. 7809. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

4. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

BARDOLI,
January 30, 1939

CHI. KANTI,

I had messages sent to you. Ba, I and others were worried because there was no letter from you. It was received today. I am all right. You should not miss sending at least one postcard every week.

I have had a long talk with Ramachandran. I have just received his letter. He is now convinced. I am of course still trying to persuade him to send Saraswati. S.'s help is essential in this matter.

It is time for prayer and so I stop now.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am leaving for Segaon on the 1st.

From Gujarati: G. W. 7357. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

5. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

January 30, 1939

CHI. KANTI,

I do not make any suggestions of my own these days. P.'s name was mentioned to me and that was the only name. I had expressed my objection to re-election.

You must have received my letter of yesterday.

Saraswati writes to me occasionally.

Take care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7356. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

6. 'KICKS AND KISSES'

The reader will read with painful interest the following account, said to be authentic, of the meeting recently held in Bombay of the Chamber of Princes:

> H. H. the Maharaja of Bikaner opened the discussions by narrating the events at Rajkot where, he said, the trouble was due to the absence of influential jagirdars, the want of demarcation between the Privy Purse and the State Expenditure, and the smallness of the Kathiawar States. It was regarded as a test case by the Congress, and they had selected Rajkot for various reasons, the principal ones being that Rajkot, small and with limited resources, would not be able to withstand for long the onslaughts of the Congress, that the ground was ready for the delivery of such an attack, that the Congress was virile and active in Kathiawar and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was near at hand to direct operations and conduct the campaign. H. H. the Maharaja of Bikaner then mooted the suggestion of a common Police force for a group of States, as the resources of individual States, particularly of small ones, are not extensive and, therefore, totally inadequate to face the common danger. Such also was the indication of the Paramount Power and of its representatives. No great reliance, he said, could now be placed on co-operation and help from adjoining British territories as Congress was supreme there and they naturally would not like to help Indian States. On the other hand their sympathies either tacitly or actively are on the side of Indian State subjects or foreign agitators. This was actually evidenced by the attitude of the Orissa Government when help was demanded by the States in Orissa which had to face this trouble.
>
> Continuing, he stated that the Congress would devote increasingly greater attention to Indian States. Up to now its policy, as embodied in the resolution of the Haripura session and before, was of non-intervention and the Indian States people were directed to be self reliant. The reason is manifest. The Congress was actively busy with British Indian problems, and it wanted to generate strength in Indian States subjects and foster self-help in them. Now the Congress had practically established its sway in British India and would naturally mobilize its energy and influence towards Indian States.

There was another point. In order to distract attention from the differences that are creeping into Congress ranks, it is necessary to unfold the plans of a campaign. This is a subtle but short dictum of statecraft. This is one of the reasons of the Italian conquest of Abyssinia and the Austrian and Sudeten campaigns of Germany. It enables the powers to draw attention away from cleavages in the party and creates enthusiasm amongst its followers. We have also to bear in mind the attitude of the Paramount Power. In this connection reference must be made to the recent utterances of Mr. Gandhi on this subject. In my opinion greater reliance should be placed on our own strength than on any outside agency whose support is, at best, precarious and inadequate.

After a survey of Rajkot affairs, His Highness discussed the problems of the Rajputana States and outlined for the benefit of the Princes the policy he pursued with regard to his own State, Bikaner. He stated that he started the State Assembly in 1913, and it discussed the State expenditure. Bikaner had a *Raj-patra—State* Gazette. He discriminated between the agitators from outside and from amongst his own subjects. This, he said, was important and the distinction must ever be borne in mind. Foreign agitators, who have no stake in the State and who assume this role merely to be dubbed leaders and to be in the public eye, deserve short shrift. No consideration should be shown to them. Their continued activities are a menace to the State; their presence constitutes a danger. The remedy is deportation from the State and their entry should be banned. The agitators in the State, though equally obnoxious to the State and its ordered peace and progress, however, stand on a slightly different footing. They have an interest in the land; they probably sometimes advocate grievances which are to a certain extent legitimate, and such should be redressed as far as possible so that the wind may be taken away from the sails of their agitation which they advocate and foster. Legitimate grievances so far as possible should be redressed and agitation should be silenced. If the agitators are genuine and come from the ranks of the educated unemployed, an effort should be made to give them suitable State employment and to close their mouths, acting on the adage "it is better to sew the mouth with a morsel."

The question of Praja Mandals was then discussed. In this connection H. H. the Maharaja of Bikaner, Sir Kailashnarain Haksar, R. B. Pandit Amar Nath Atal of Jaipur, Pt. Dharmanarain of Udaipur and Major Harvey of Alwar made valuable contributions to the discussions. Mr. Robertson of Bundi and Mr. McGregor of Sirohi also asked a few questions. Mr. Atal narrated at great length the origin and growth of the Praja Mandal at Jaipur. It was evident that the founders and promoters of these Praja Mandals were disgruntled subjects

and dismissed petty officials of the State. A note of caution and warning was sounded. It was agreed that they should be watched very carefully and their activities, however slight or extensive, should be fully reported. It was stated that these Praja Mandals should be crushed immediately and that they should not be allowed to gather strength or to attain the status of an influential body. If they had gained any, an effort should be made to direct adroitly their activities into social channels such as the Sarda Act, etc. On the other hand it was urged that the formation of genuine and healthy advisory bodies of the States people should be encouraged. which should form the nucleus for the training of the people for so-called responsible government in the States. The Praja Mandals located outside the States should be ignored.

As regards responsible government in the States advocated by Congress leaders like Messrs Gandhi and Patel, it was felt that the States people are not at all ready for it, and to concede it, therefore, would be detrimental to the States and the people and fatal to ordered progress and peace. The position was summed up in the dictum, 'Be responsive, but no responsible government.' H. H. the Maharaja of Bikaner was emphatic in his policy towards the Congress, and his words can be crystallized in the following mottos: Be just, but be firm; follow the policy of repression and reconciliation as stated in the famous letter of Lord Minto in 1908, 'the policy of kicks and kisses'. It will require all the tact and discretion possible to adjust when to be gentle and when to be firm and how to mix the two. The decision must depend on the situation which confronts the State and the merits of the individual problem. It was, however, very clear in their discussions that the Praja Mandals, as such and as political bodies, should never be allowed to be formed in the States, and if in existence, should be crushed and banned and their activities very carefully and closely watched. No hard and fast rules could be laid down as to how they should be repressed. Individual States will devise and evolve their own plans and lay down the *modus operandi.*

The tentative conclusions arrived at were: 1. Group Police for States; 2. Praja Mandals to be crushed immediately; 3. Legitimate grievances to be redressed; 4. Foreign agitators to be severely dealt with and deported; 5. Encourage social activities but not political; 6. Encourage genuine States People's Advisory Bodies; 7. Policy of 'Reconciliation and Repression'; 'Be just, but be firm'.

If the report is an accurate summary of the speeches delivered at the Conference, it shows that there is a nefarious plot to crush the movement for liberty which at long last has commenced in some of the States. Kisses are to go hand in hand with kicks. This reminds me

of the Latin proverb which means: "I fear the Greeks especially when they bring gifts!" Henceforth Rulers' favours are to be suspected. Reforms when they are made are to be made not for the sake of making the people happy, but in order to sew the mouth with a morsel. But man's proposals are often confounded even though his may be a crowned head. God has been found often to have disposed of his proposals in a way contrary to his expectations. If the people have shed fear and learnt the art of self-sacrifice, they need no favours. Kicks can never cow them. They will take what they need and assimilate it.

BARDOLI, January 31, 1939

Harijan, 4-2-1939

7. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

January 31, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

Shri K. M. Munshi, Sir Purshottamdas and now Shri G. D. Birla tell me that my writings in *Harijan* about the States have been causing you embarrassment—more especially about Jaipur. I have, therefore, suspended publication of the accompanying article[1] which I had already sent to the Manager of *Harijan* at Poona.

I need hardly say that I have no desire whatsoever to do anything that would cause you embarrassment, if I could avoid it. My purpose is to secure justice for the people concerned.

How I wish it were possible for you to take effective action in the three cases mentioned by me in my previous letter[2]!

May I expect a line as to what you would have me do about the article under suspension?

I am,

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 7806. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] *Vide* "Jaipur"

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 26-1-1939

8. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

BARDOLI,
January 31, 1939

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

Here are a few words[1] about Panditji.

I hope you are keeping good health.

Do write sometimes about Kusum, Manju and others.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

9. IN MEMORY OF NARAYAN M. KHARE[2]

BARDOLI,
January 31, 1939

I like to write about Panditji. I have many sweet memories of him. But I do not have the time to record them. The essence of all those memories is that I have seen very few persons combining purity and music. It was found in a great measure in Panditji. It was Panditji who created a taste for good music in Gujarat. For this, Gujarat will remain ever indebted to him.

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

10. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[3]

BARDOLI,
January 31, 1939

Shri Subhas Bose has achieved a decisive victory over his opponent, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya. I must confess that from the very

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] He had died on February 6, 1938, at Haripura.

[3] This appeared in the source under the title "I Rejoice in This Defeat" and was also published in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 1-2-1939, *The Hindu*, 31-1-1939, *The Hindustan Times*, 1-2-1939, and various other papers.

beginning I was decidedly against his re-election for reasons into which I need not go. I do not subscribe to his facts or the arguments in his manifestos. I think that his references to his colleagues were unjustified and unworthy. Nevertheless, I am glad of his victory. And since I was instrumental in inducing Dr. Pattabhi not to withdraw his name as a candidate when Maulana Saheb withdrew, the defeat is more mine than his. I am nothing if I do not represent definite principles and policy. Therefore, it is plain to me that the delegates do not approve of the principles and policy for which I stand.

I rejoice in this defeat. It gives me an opportunity of putting into practice what I preached in my article[1] on the walk-out of the minority at the last A. I. C. C. meeting in Delhi. Subhas Babu, instead of being President on the sufferance of those whom he calls rightists, is now President elected in a contested election. This enables him to choose a homogeneous cabinet and enforce his programme without let or hindrance.

There is one thing common between majority and minority, viz., insistence on internal purity of the Congress organization. My writings in the *Harijan* have shown that the Congress is fast becoming a corrupt organization in the sense that its registers contain a very large number of bogus members.[2] I have been suggesting for the past many months the overhauling of these registers. I have no doubt that many of the delegates who have been elected on the strength of these bogus voters would be unseated on scrutiny. But I suggest no such drastic step. It will be enough if the registers are purged of all bogus voters and are made fool-proof for the future.

The minority has no cause for being disheartened. If they believe in the current programme of the Congress, they will find that it can be worked, whether they are in a minority or a majority and even whether they are in the Congress or outside it.

The only thing that may possibly be affected by the changes is the parliamentary programme. The ministers have been chosen and the programme shaped by the erstwhile majority. But parliamentary work is but a minor item of the Congress programme. Congress ministers have after all to live from day to day. It matters little to them whether they are recalled on an issue in which they are in agreement

[1] *Vide* "That Unfortunate Walk-Out"
[2] *Vide* "Internal Decay"

with the Congress policy or whether they resign because they are in disagreement with the Congress.

After all Subhas Babu is not an enemy of his country. He has suffered for it. In his opinion his is the most forward and boldest policy and programme. The minority can only wish it all success. If they cannot keep pace with it, they must come out of the Congress. If they can, they will add strength to the majority.

The minority may not obstruct on any account. They must abstain when they cannot co-operate. I must remind all Congressmen that those who, being Congress-minded, remain outside it by design, represent it most. Those, therefore, who feel uncomfortable in being in the Congress may come out, not in a spirit of ill will, but with the deliberate purpose of rendering more effective service.

Harijan, 4-2-1939

11. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

BARDOLI,
January 31, 1939

Appeals are being made to me not to precipitate matters in the States. These appeals are unnecessary. After three months of non-violent struggle by the people of Rajkot an honourable understanding was arrived at between the Thakore Saheb-in-Council and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel representing the people, and the struggle was closed amid general rejoicings. But the noble work done by the Thakore Saheb and the people has been undone by the British Resident.[2]

Honour demanded that the people should fight unto death for the restoration of the covenant between the Thakore Saheb and his people. The struggle now is not between the Ruler and his people, but in reality it is between the Congress and the British Government represented by the Resident, who is reported to be resorting to organized *goondaism*. He is trying thereby to break the spirit of innocent men and women, who rightly resent the breach of faith.

It is a misrepresentation to suggest that Rajkot has been made a

[1] This appeared under the title "Rajkot and Jaipur", and was also published in *The Hindu, The Hindustan Times* and *The Bombay Chronicle*.

[2] For the Government of India communique in reply to this, *vide* Government of India's Statement on Rajkot", 1-2-1939.

test case.[1] There is no planned action with reference to Kathiawar States. What is happening is that those who feel that they are ready for suffering come to the Sardar for advice and he guides them. Rajkot seemed ready and the fight commenced there.

Jaipur's case is incredibly simple and different from that of Rajkot. If my information is correct, the British Prime Minister there is determined to prevent even the movement for popularizing the ideal for responsible government.[2] Civil disobedience in Jaipur is being, therefore, offered not for responsible government but for the removal of the bans on the Praja Mandal and its president Seth Jamnalal Bajaj.[3]

In my opinion it is the duty of the Viceroy to ask the Resident in Rajkot to restore the pact and to ask the British Prime Minister of Jaipur to lift the bans. Such action by the Viceroy can in no sense be interpreted to mean unwarranted interference in the affairs of States.

Harijan, 4-2-1939

12. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

WARDHAGANJ,
February 2, 1939

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA

NEW DELHI

QUITE WELL. TAKING NEEDED REST. NO ANXIETY.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 7802. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

13. LETTER TO J. C. KUAMARAPPA

SEGAON,
February 2, 1939

MY DEAR KU,

I came in today. I should not have taken such a long time to produce the accompanying.[4] I wanted to go through the whole book but it was impossible. And now I am laid up. That is to say the doctors

[1] *Vide* "Kicks and Kisses"
[2] *Vide* "Jaipur"
[3] *ibid*
[4] *Vide* the following item.

say unless I want to commit suicide, I must be on bed and do as little work as possible. Complete silence is enjoined. I shall break it therefore only when I must. In these circumstances I thought I must give you a few lines at once. Here they are with a thousand apologies.

I hope your committee is flourishing and Sita[1] is proving her worth.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10148

14. FOREWORD

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 2, 1939

It is a good sign that *Why the Village Movement* is required to go through the third edition. It supplies a felt want. Prof. J. C. Ku[marappa] answers almost all the doubts that have been expressed about the necessity and feasibility of the movement. No lover of villages can afford to be without the booklet. No doubter can fail to have his doubts dispelled. It is of no use to those who have made up their minds that the only movement worth the name is to destroy the villages and dot India with a number of big cities where highly centralized industries will be carried out and everyone will have plenty and to spare. Fortunately as yet there are not many who belong to that school of destruction. I wonder if the village movement has come just in time to prevent the spread of the movement of despair! This booklet is an attempt to answer the question.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 10149

15. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 2, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

I have neglected you for many days but Sushila has instructions

[1] Wife of Bharatan Kumarappa, younger brother of the addressee

to write to you daily. I have to take complete rest from physical toil but also as much as possible from mental. You won't worry. Bury yourself in your work.

Ba going to Rajkot. So she stayed behind[1].

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6426. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10021

16. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

SEGAON,
February 2, 1939

BA,

Why are you uneasy? Do not worry about me. Improve your health. Recite Ramanama. Rest assured we shall win the battle by dint of the devotion of many. That includes yours too.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 31

17. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON,
February 2, 1939

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am writing this letter from Madalasa's place. I have come here directly from the station. I rested a lot during the journey. Lilavati cried constantly. All her frailties are now becoming apparent.

I have received your letter. You are definitely coming to Segaon if you do not feel well there. You have gone there because of the letter that came. It is well that you have gone. But you are certainly coming when the occasion arises. Work has already piled up.

I shall look after the rest and write later.

[1] At Bardoli

You should not worry about me at all. Tell this to Ghanshyamdas also. I am definitely going to have rest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

18. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 2, 1939

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your wire. How is it you have gone there? I take it to mean that from there you will be going to Delhi. You will have received my reply.

I spoke to him today. He says that there is some misunderstanding. I shall not discuss the matter further. We shall meet if there is time.

I have initiated the changes. Nobody will sleep beside me. I shall have enough distance for my hand not to reach anyone sleeping there. I am giving up taking personal service involving touch.[1] Lilavati decided this morning to go either to Nadiad or Wardha. This evening she said that for about six months she would study only here. So that is how it is.

You will be getting on well. My swelling has considerably subsided. Walking is discontinued, I sleep a lot. Do not worry. I am observing silence. It gets disturbed of course.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* the following item; also "Letter to Lilavati Asar", 9-12-1938

19. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 2, 1939

CHI. SHARMA,

The work at Bardoli was so much that I fell ill and returned only today. Hence the delay in answering your letter. There is no cause for anxiety. I shall be all right.

February 3, 1939

But I could have asked someone to send you a line saying that the reply would be delayed. I did not do it, because I was hopeful of being able to write soon.

Destruction and construction are simultaneous processes. Your destruction seems to be of a kind which may become unbearable for you. It should not turn out that you do one thing today and another tomorrow.

I cannot write the pamphlet. You have rightly said that everything is useless until construction has commenced. The pamphlet probably has no place in what is going on.

An earlier letter from you mentioned a principle: namely, that society and family are distinct entities and should be so. However, if you think they are identical but cannot reach the ideal today, why talk about it? Once you show in practice that there is no difference between you and those living with me I shall consider my job done.

The comparison with the dog is harsh but quite apt. We are all in a way like dogs in that we lack tolerance, but living in society and being intolerant are incompatible things.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 177 and 178

20. LETTER TO SAMPURNANAND

[After *February 2, 1939*][1]

BHAI SAMPURNANANDJI,

I received your letter but could not acknowledge it promptly. I hope you have also written to Dr. Zakir Husain what you wrote to me.

Your letter regarding the flag and *Bande Mataram* was received at a time when I was travelling. What you have said in it is correct. I am working on the same lines.

The problem of those who have entered Councils is becoming difficult day by day. But after all it is nothing but a symptom of the malaise. I see clearly that the Congress is going downward each day. Selfishness, infighting, untruth and violence have crept into the Congress and are on the increase. I fear we are destroying ourselves because of our inner failures. Let us see what God wills.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi original: Sampurnanand Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

21. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[2]

SEGAON,
February 3, 1939

The communiques[3] issued by the Government of India and the Jaipur Government on my statements[4] on Rajkot and Jaipur are remarkable for sins of omission and commission and suppression.

It was no part of the Sardar's duty to publish the Thakore Saheb's letter about the composition of the Committee. It was for the Thakore Saheb's convenience that a condition as to the composition

[1] This letter seems to be connected with that written to the addressee on 1-1-1939. Gandhiji returned to Segaon on this date.

[2] This appeared under the title "Not a War of Words", and was also published in *The Hindu, The Bombay Chronicle,* and *The Hindustan Times,* all of 4-2-1939.

[3] For the Government of India communique, *vide* Government of India's Statement on Rajkot", 1-2-1939.

[4] *Vide* "Rajkot", 2-1-1939 and 30-1-1939, "Jaipur", 16-1-1939 & 30-1-1939.

of the Committee was embodied in a separate letter. This is a well-known procedure adopted in delicate negotiations. Surely the Thakore Saheb's understanding of his note, which admits of no double interpretation, is wholly irrelevant.

I aver that this understanding is an afterthought, discovered to placate the Resident, who was angered that the Thakore Saheb should have dared to deal with a Congressman and give him a note of which he had no advice. Those who know anything of these Residents and States know in what dread the Princes stand of even their secretaries and peons. I write from personal knowledge.

There is sufficient in the appendices to the Sardar's statement[1] on the recrudescence of the struggle to show how the whole trouble is due to the Resident's displeasure. It is wrong to suggest that the Sardar did not give reasons for his refusal to alter the names of the Committee. A translation of his letter is one of the appendices.

When the Thakore Saheb agreed to nominate those whom the Sardar recommended, Mussalmans and Bhayats were before his mind's eye. But it was common cause that all rights would be guaranteed under the reforms. The proper procedure would have been to lead evidence before the Committee. I suggest that, as happens everywhere in India, the Mussalman and Bhayat objection to the personnel of the Committee was engineered after the event.

I have not asked that the Thakore Saheb should be asked to do this or that. He has no will. His will is pledged to the Resident. The Thakore Saheb once dared to act against his suspected wishes. He was on the brink of losing his *gadi*. What I have asked is that the Resident should restore the pact and help to honour it. If it is a matter purely of names to placate interests, I undertake to persuade the Sardar to make the accommodation provided that its other parts are carried out to the full.

But the communique adroitly omits the most relevant fact that the terms of reference too have been altered out of shape. These were agreed to by the Thakore Saheb-in-Council, of which the British Dewan was a member. I have never known such a dishonourable breach of a pact signed on behalf of a Chief. I do suggest that the Resident, who should be the custodian of the honour of the Chiefs within his jurisdiction, has, in this case, dragged the Thakore Saheb's

[1] *Vide* "Cold-Blooded Breach of a Soleman Covenant", 15-1-1939

name in the dust.

I repeat the charge of organized *goondaism.* The Agency police are operating in Rajkot. Wires received by the Sardar show that civil resisters are taken to distant places, there stripped naked, beaten and left to their own resources. They show further that Red Cross doctors and ambulance parties have been prevented from rendering help to those who were injured by lathi-charges in Halenda. I call this organized *goondaism.* If the charges are denied, there should be an impartial enquiry.

Let me state the issue clearly. I seek no interference in the affairs of the State. I seek non-interference by the Resident in Rajkot. The Resident is directly responsible for the strained relations between the State and the people. It is the duty of the Paramount Power to see that the solemn pact is fulfilled to the letter and in spirit.

If the objection about Muslim and Bhayat representation has any honesty about it, it can be removed. I once more appeal to His Excellency the Viceroy to study the question more deeply than he has done. Let not a grave tragedy be enacted while whitewashing communiques are being forged in the Delhi Secretariat. This is not a war of words. It is a war in which the people who have hitherto never been to jail nor suffered lathi blows are exposing themselves to all risk.

As for Jaipur, I have only one word. I do know that the British Prime Minister[1] is one member of the Jaipur State Council. My submission is that he is all in all. He has vowed vengeance against the Praja Mandal and Seth Jamnalalji. And in spite of the forest of words about action in respect of the Praja Mandal, I claim that virtually it is declared illegal. If not, let the authorities leave Seth Jamnalalji free to enter Jaipur and let him and his Mandal educate unmolested the people in the art of responsible government. Let them be punished if they inculcate violence, directly or indirectly.

Harijan, 11-2-1939

[1] Sir W. Beauchamp St. John

22. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ[1]

[On or before *February 3, 1939*][2]

STICK TO YOUR PLANS. MY BLESSING IS WITH YOU AND SUCCESS IS YOURS.

The Hindu, 5-2-1939

23. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

WARDHA,
February 3, 1939

GHANSHYAMDAS
BIRLA HOUSE
ALBUQUERQUE ROAD
NEW DELHI

SWELLING MUCH REDUCED. TAKING PRACTICALLY FULL REST. BLOODPRESSURE 156/98 LAST NIGHT. JAMNALALJI MUST NOT WAIT WITHOUT WRITTEN REQUEST FROM AUTHORITIES.[3] HAVE MADE STATEMENT ABOUT JAIPUR GOVERNMENT COMMUNIQUE WHOLLY UNSATISFACTORY.[4]

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 7803. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

24. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 3, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter from Peshawar is crowded with news. You are in the thick of it now. You must keep your health at any cost. Cover your

[1] This was evidently in reply to the addressee's telegram of February 3, saying: "Ghanshyamdas pressing delay re-entry" into Jaipur State, which Bajaj intended to effect in defiance of the ban imposed by the State.

[2] In his diary Bajaj mentions under the date February 3, having received a telegram from Gandhiji. Presumably this was the telegram.

[3] This was in answer to the addressee's telegram suggesting that Jamnalal Bajaj might wait another fortnight before returning to Jaipur.

[4] *Vide* the preceding item.

feet well. Insist on the food you need. Do not overdo it. And do not go beyond your depth. Then all will be well.

Have no worry on my account. God will keep me on earth so long as He needs me. It is well whether I am here or elsewhere. His will, not ours, be done.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6427. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10022

25. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 3, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

After the election and the manner in which it was fought, I feel that I shall serve the country by absenting myself from the Congress at the forthcoming session. Moreover, my health is none too good. I would like you to help me. Please do not press me to attend.

I hope the rest at Khali has done you and Indu good. Indu ought to write to me.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also A *Bunch of Old Letters*, p. 307

26. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

February 3, 1939

CHI. KAKA,

The necessary arrangements have been made for the poet Khabardar[1]. Ambalalbhai will pay or collect for him Rs. 200 every month.

Booke asks for more information about him. He needs an

[1] Ardeshar F. Khabardar

X-Ray of his chest. There is little hope of his being able to help much. Have you written to Parvati?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10919

27. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

February 3, 1939

CHI. KAKA,

I am feeling thoroughly washed out at present. You may come. But I do not know what I shall be able to do. The trainees are here up to the 3rd or 4th. I hope to write about the Roman script.[1] Do the needful about Hindi *pracharak*. I do not see my way clearly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10920

28. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
February 3, 1939

MY DEAR VALLABHBHAI,

Whatever changes I am making are dictated by your abundant love. I am doing it against my own inclination. This is to tell you that as from today I have been compelled to stop taking service from girls. Lilavati, A. S., etc., have certainly not liked it. Sharada and Vijaya have not liked it either. The last two are sensible and so they are not feeling sad. Prabhavati came yesterday. She may be doing something or the other but even she is looking on in silence. Sushila is continuing to serve me. She has not the heart to stop doing it while I am ill. But I feel that I should stop it when I get well. As from yesterday I have stopped sleeping close to them. That is, the girls sleep far enough to be out of reach of my arms. Sushila hardly slept near me. Now no girl or man sleeps close to me. Sushila spreads her bed

[1] *Vide* "Roman Script *v*. Devanagari"

perpendicularly at my head. So does Rajkumari near my feet. I am not at all sorry about these changes. Maybe I am unhappy on account of the girls. I say 'maybe' because that is not the impression I get. It is my way to abandon things for the sake of my colleagues. I like to make such sacrifices, because thereby I can know myself better. I know that you have made your suggestion in order to protect me. You have of course considered the interests of the girls. It remains to be seen if their interest will be served by this sacrifice. Lilavati is lying utterly exhausted right now. She is planning to study. I am encouraging her.

If you send this letter to Mahadev, Devdas will also see it.

I have replied to the Viceroy's statement.[1] It is a harsh reply but there was no other alternative. It seems it is going to be a terrible battle. It cannot be predicted how far it will take us. It has to be seen how long my body can take the strain. The swelling is of course reduced. There is silence most of the time. Ba will have left.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original. Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

29. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

SEGAON,
[After *February 3, 1939*][2]

BA,

I have your letter. You have now become a State guest. Take care of your health. I am not worried since Mani[3] is with you. I must have letters. I shall bear your point in mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 32

[1] For Gandhiji's statement regarding the struggle in Rajkot and the breach by the ruler of the covenant entered into with his people; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 3-2-1939

[2] Kasturba Gandhi was arrested on entering Rajkot on February 3, 1939.

[3] Manibehn Patel

30. DISCUSSION WITH TEACHER TRAINEES[1]

February 3/4, 1939

It is the fashion these days to talk of the rights of minorities. Therefore, although those who understand English only are here in a hopeless minority, I shall speak today in English.[2] But I warn you that I shall not do so at the next meeting. You must go back with a firm resolve to learn Hindustani. It is impossible to put into practice the idea of basic education—an idea which is calculated to answer the educational requirements of our millions—if the mind works only through the English medium.

A number of questions were put to him by the delegates. The first question expressed a doubt as to whether the Wardha scheme was likely to stand the test of time, or if it merely was a measure of temporary expediency. Many prominent educationists were of opinion that sooner or later the handicrafts would have to give place to whole-hog industrialization. Would a society educated on the lines of the Wardha scheme and based on justice, truth and non-violence, be able to survive the severe strain of the process of industrialization?

GANDHIJI: This is not a practical question. It does not affect our immediate programme. The issue before us is not as to what is going to happen generations hence, but whether this basic scheme of education answers the real need of the millions that live in our villages. I do not think that India is ever going to be industrialized to the extent that there will be no villages left. The bulk of India will always consist of villages.

"What will happen to the scheme of basic education if the Congress policy changes as a result of the recent presidential election ?" he was asked next.

Gandhiji replied that it was misplaced fear. A change in the Congress policy was not going to touch the Wardha scheme.

It will affect, if it at all does, higher politics only. You have come here to undergo three weeks' training course, so that you may be able to teach your students along the Wardha method on your return. You

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Wardha Scheme under Fire". About seventy-five delegates from all over India had attended a three weeks' course at the Teacher Training Centre at Wardha. Before leaving for their respective provinces they met Gandhiji.

[2] Gandhiji, at the suggestion of Asha Devi, had started to speak in Hindi and some of the delegates had not been able to follow.

should have faith that the method will answer the purpose intended.

Although schemes for industrialization of the country might be put forth, the goal that the Congress has set before it today is not industrialization of the country. Its goal is, according to a resolution[1] passed by the National Congress at Bombay, revival of village industries. You cannot have mass awakening through any elaborate scheme of industrialization that you may put before the *kisans.* It would not add a farthing to their income. But the A. I. S. A. and A. I. V. I. A. will put lakhs into their pockets within the course of a year. Whatever happens to the Working Committee or the ministries, personally I do not sense any danger to the constructive activities of the Congress. Although started by the Congress, they have been having an autonomous existence for a long time, and have fully proved their worth. Basic education is an offshoot of these. Education Ministers may change but this will remain. Therefore, those interested in basic education should not worry themselves about Congress politics. The new scheme of education will live or die by its own merits or want of them.

But these questions do not satisfy me. They are not directly connected with the scheme of basic education. They do not take us any further. I would like you to ask me questions directly pertaining to the scheme, so that I may give you my expert advice.

Before going to the meeting, a friend had asked him if the central idea behind the scheme was that teachers should not speak a word to the pupils that could not be correlated to the *takli.* Gandhiji, answering this question in the general meeting, remarked:

This is a libel on me. It is true I have said that all instruction must be linked with some basic craft. When you are imparting knowledge to a child of 7 or 10 through the medium of an industry, you should, to begin with, exclude all those subjects which cannot be linked with the craft. By doing so from day to day you will discover ways and means of linking with the craft many things which you had excluded in the beginning. You will save your own energy and the pupils' if you follow this process of exclusion to begin with. We have today no books to go by, no precedents to guide us. Therefore we have to go slow. The main thing is that the teacher should retain his

[1] *Vide* "Notes", sub-title "Hindustani Only"

freshness of mind. If you come across something that you cannot correlate with the craft, do not fret over it and get disheartened. Leave it and go ahead with the subjects that you can correlate. Maybe another teacher will hit upon the right way and show how it can be correlated. And when you have pooled the experience of many, you will have books to guide you, so that the work of those who follow you will become easier.

How long, you will ask, are we to go on with this process of exclusion? My reply is, for the whole lifetime. At the end you will find that you have included many things that you had excluded at first, that practically all that was worth including has been included, and whatever you have been obliged to exclude till the end was something very superficial that deserved exclusion. This has been my experience of life. I would not have been able to do many things that I have done if I had not excluded an equal number.

Our education has got to be revolutionized. The brain must be educated through the hand. If I were a poet, I could write poetry on the possibilities of the five fingers. Why should you think that the mind is everything and the hands and feet nothing? Those who do not train their hands, who go through the ordinary rut of education, lack 'music' in their life. All their faculties are not trained. Mere book knowledge does not interest the child so as to hold his attention fully. The brain gets weary of mere words, and the child's mind begins to wander. The hand does the things it ought not to do, the eye sees the things it ought not to see, the ear hears the things it ought not to hear, and they do not do, see, or hear, respectively, what they ought to. They are not taught to make the right choice and so their education often proves their ruin. An education which does not teach us to discriminate between good and bad, to assimilate the one and eschew the other is a misnomer.

Shrimati Asha Devi asked Gandhiji to explain to them how the mind could be trained through the hands.

G. The old idea was to add a handicraft to the ordinary curriculum of education followed in the schools. That is to say, the craft was to be taken in hand wholly separately from education. To me that seems a fatal mistake. The teacher must learn the craft and correlate his knowledge to the craft, so that he will impart all that knowledge to his pupils through the medium of the particular craft that he chooses.

Take the instance of spinning. Unless I know arithmetic I cannot report how many yards of yarn I have produced on the *takli,* or how many standard rounds it will make, or what is the count of the yarn that I have spun. I must learn figures to be able to do so, and I also must learn addition and subtraction and multiplication and division. In dealing with complicated sums I shall have to use symbols and so I get my algebra. Even here, I would insist on the use of Hindustani letters instead of Roman.

Take geometry next. What can be a better demonstration of a circle than the disc of the *takli?* I can teach all about circles in this way, without even mentioning the name of Euclid.

Again, you may ask how I can teach my child geography and history through spinning. Some time ago I came across a book called *Cotton—The Story of Mankind.* It thrilled me. It read like a romance. It began with the history of ancient times, how and when cotton was first grown, the stages of its development, the cotton trade between the different countries, and so on. As I mention the different countries to the child, I shall naturally tell him something about the history and geography of these countries. Under whose reign the different commercial treaties were signed during the different periods? Why has cotton to be imported by some countries and cloth by others? Why can every country not grow the cotton it requires? That will lead me into economics and elements of agriculture. I shall teach him to know the different varieties of cotton, in what kind of soil they grow, how to grow them, from where to get them, and so on. Thus *takli*-spinning leads me into the whole history of the East India Company, what brought them here, how they destroyed our spinning industry, how the economic motive that brought them to India led them later to entertain political aspirations, how it became a causative factor in the downfall of the Moguls and the Marathas, in the establishment of the English Raj, and then again in the awakening of the masses in our times. There is thus no end to the educative possibilities of this new scheme. And how much quicker the child will learn all that, without putting an unnecessary tax on his mind and memory.

Let me further elaborate the idea. .Just as a biologist, in order to become a good biologist, must learn many other sciences besides biology, the basic education, if it is treated as a science, takes us into interminable channels of learning. To extend the example of the *takli,* a pupil teacher, who rivets his attention not merely on the mechanical

process of spinning, which of course he must master, but on the spirit of the thing, will concentrate on the *takli* and its various aspects. He will ask himself why the *takli is* made out of a brass disc and has a steel spindle. The original *takli* had its disc made anyhow. The still more primitive *takli* consisted of a wooden spindle with a disc of slate or clay. The *takli* has been developed scientifically, and there is a reason for making the disc out of brass and the spindle out of steel. He must find out that reason. Then, the teacher must ask himself why the disc has that particular diameter, no more and no less. When he has solved these questions satisfactorily and has gone into the mathematics of the thing, your pupil becomes a good engineer. The *takli* becomes his *Kamadhenu*—the 'Cow of plenty'. There is no limit to the possibilities of knowledge that can be imparted through this medium. It will be limited only by the energy and conviction with which you work. You have been here for three weeks. You will have spent them usefully if it has enabled you to take to this scheme seriously, so that you will say to yourself, 'I shall either do or die.'

I am elaborating the instance of spinning because I know it. If I were a carpenter, I would teach my child all these things through carpentry, or through cardboard work if I were a worker in cardboard.

What we need is educationists with originality, fired with true zeal, who will think out from day to day what they are going to teach their pupils. The teacher cannot get this knowledge through musty volumes. He has to use his own faculties of observation and thinking and impart his knowledge to the children through his lips, with the help of a craft. This means a revolution in the method of teaching, a revolution in the teacher's outlook. Up till now you have been guided by inspectors' reports. You wanted to do what the inspector might like, so that you might get more money yet for your institutions or higher salaries for yourselves. But the new teacher will not care for all that. He will say, 'I have done my duty by my pupil if I have made him a better man and in doing so I have used all my resources. That is enough for me.

Q. In training pupil teachers, would it not be better if they are first taught a craft separately and then given a sound exposition of the method of teaching through the medium of that craft? As it is, they are advised to imagine themselves to be of the age of 7 and relearn everything through a craft. In this way it will take them years before they can master the new technique and become competent teachers.

G. No, it would not take them years. Let us imagine that the

teacher when he comes to me has a working knowledge of mathematics and history and other subjects. I teach him to make cardboard boxes or to spin. While he is at it I show him how he could have derived his knowledge of mathematics, history and geography through the particular craft. He thus learns how to link his knowledge to the craft. It should not take him long to do so. Take another instance. Suppose I go with my boy of 7 to a basic school. We both learn spinning and I get all my previous knowledge linked with spinning. To the boy it is all new. For the 70-year-old father it is all repetition but he will have his old knowledge in a new setting. He should not take more than a few weeks for the process. Thus, unless the teacher develops the receptivity and eagerness of the child of 7, he will end up by becoming a mere mechanical spinner, which would not fit him for the new method.

Q. A boy who has passed his matriculation can go to college if he wishes to. Will a child who has gone through the basic education syllabus too be able to do so?

G. Between the boy who has passed his matriculation and the boy who has gone through basic education, the latter will give a better account of himself because his faculties have been developed. He would not feel helpless when he goes to college as matriculates often do.

Q. Seven has been put down as the minimum age for admission of children to a basic education school. Is it to be a chronological or mental age?

G. Seven should be the average minimum age, but there will be some children of a higher and some of a lower age as well. There is physical as well as mental age to be considered. One child at the age of 7 may have attained sufficient physical development to handle a craft. Another one may not be able to do so even at 7. One cannot therefore lay down any hard and fast rules. All the factors have to be taken into consideration.

Many questions show that many of you are filled with doubts. This is the wrong way of going about the work. You should have robust faith. If you have the conviction that I have, that Wardha education is the thing required to give training for life to millions of our children, your work will flourish. If you have not that faith, there is something wrong with those in charge of your training. They should be able to imbue you with this faith, whatever else they may or may not give you.

Q. The basic education scheme is supposed to be for the villages. Is there no way out for the city-dwellers? Are they to go along the old rut?

G. This is a pertinent question and a good one, but I have answered it already in the columns of *Herijan.* Sufficient for the day is the good thereof. As it is, we have a big enough morsel to bite. If we can solve the educational problem of seven lakhs of villages, it will be enough for the present. No doubt educationists are thinking of the cities too. But if we take up the question of the cities along with that of the villages, we will fritter away our energies.

Q. Supposing in a village there were three schools with a different craft in each, the scope for learning may be wider in one than in the other. To which school out of these should the child go?

G. Such overlapping should not occur. For the majority of our villages are too small to have more than one school. But a big village may have more. Here the craft taught in both should be the same. But I should lay down no hard and fast rule. Experience in such matters would be the best guide. The capacity of various crafts to become popular, their ability to draw out the faculties of the student, should be studied. The idea is that whatever craft you choose, it should draw out the faculties of the child fully and equally. It should be a village craft and it should be useful.

Q. Why should a child waste 7 years on learning a craft when his real profession is going to be something else, e.g., why should a banker's son, who is expected to take to banking later on, learn spinning for 7 years?

G. The question betrays gross ignorance of the new scheme of education. The boy under the scheme of basic education does not go to school merely to learn a craft. He goes there to receive his primary education, to train his mind through the craft. I claim that the boy who has gone through the new course of primary education for seven years, will make a better banker than the one who has gone through the seven years of ordinary schooling. The latter when he goes to a banking school will be ill at ease because all his faculties will not have been trained. Prejudices die hard. I will have done a good day's work if I have made you realize this one central fact that the new education scheme is not a little of literary education and a little of craft. It is full education up to the primary stage through the medium of a craft.

Q. Would it not be better to teach more than one craft in every school? The children might begin to feel bored of doing the same thing from month to month and year to year.

G. If I find a teacher who becomes dull to his students after a month's spinning, I should dismiss him. There will be newness in every lesson such as there can be new music on the same instrument. By changing over from one craft to another a child tends to become like a monkey jumping from branch to branch with abode nowhere. But I have shown already in the course of our discussion that teaching spinning in a scientific spirit involves learning many things besides spinning. The child will be taught to make his own *takli* and his own winder soon. Therefore, to go back to what I began with, if the teacher takes up the craft in a scientific spirit, he will speak to his pupils through many channels, all of which will contribute to the development of all his faculties.

SEGAON, February 9, 1939

Harijan, 18-2-1939 and 4-3-1939

31. TELEGRAM TO MAHADEV DESAI[1]

WARDHA,
[*February 4, 1939*][2]

MAHADEV DESAI
BIRLA HOUSE
NEW DELHI

THOUGH DO NOT LIKE YOUR SUGGESTION NOT KNOWING FULLY AM ADVISING JAMNALAL FOLLOW YOUR INSTRUCTIONS. HEALTH GOOD.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 212

[1] The addressee in his telegram of February 4 from New Delhi had said "Inasmuch as police officer in charge Jamnalalji verbally requested him give authorities time reconsider may I ask Jamnalalji address letter to authorities mentioning police officer's request absurdity of communique and giving them time until eighth? Am sending him draft suitable letter. If you agree advise him send letter."

[2] *Vide* the following item.

32. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[*February 4, 1939*][1]

JAMNALAL
CARE LAKINSURE
AGRA

YOUR WIRE. MAHADEV HAS WIRED YOU CERTAIN SUGGESTIONS. CARRY THEM OUT. HEALTH GOOD. BA MANIBEHN DETAINED STATE GUESTS.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 404

33. LETTER TO INDIRA NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 4, 1939

CHI. INDU,

How can you think of me now? I was happy to learn that Almora had benefited you. I pray to God that you may soon be well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9801. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

34. LETTER TO GENERAL SHINDE

SEGAON,
February 4, 1939

DEAR GENERAL SHINDE,

Many thanks for your letter and enclosures.[2]

I see nothing objectionable in the excerpts you have sent me.

[1] As given in the source
[2] *Vide* "Letter to General Shinde", 29-1-1939

As to the printed circular, if what is stated therein is true it is evidence of a tragic situation. It is up to the wise heads in Baroda to find out the truth.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

35. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

February 4, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

If you cannot stay away, you can stay here even after your marriage. I made haste because you wished it. There is nothing certain about me. I am moreover weak of health. Therefore, I thought it better to pay off this debt with my own hands. You can return after staying for only a few days at your husband's place. You may, of course, come if you are in bad health. You can do as you like. I do wish you to join the work at Bardoli.

Where is the cloth? But would it not be better if you took a new piece out of what I keep for my wear for a petticoat or upper garment where white will pass? What about the charkha ? All the books will be available. I have already prepared the maxims. Staying away, you will serve me by doing my work.

Reply to yesterday's letter could not be covered in the letter to Sardar. I advise you to convey your views in this matter to Sardar.

Ask me again about religious reading.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10003. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

36. ROMAN SCRIPT v. *DEVANAGARI*[1]

I understand that some of the tribes in Assam are being taught to read and write through the Roman script instead of Devanagari. I have already expressed my opinion that the only script that is ever likely to be universal in India is Devanagari, either reformed or as it is.

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

Urdu or Persian will go hand in hand unless Muslims, of their own free will, acknowledge the superiority of Devanagari from a purely scientific and national standpoint. But this is irrelevant to the present problem. The Roman cannot go hand in hand with the other two scripts. Protagonists of the Roman script would displace both. But sentiment and science alike are against the Roman script. Its sole merit is its convenience for printing and typing purposes. But that is nothing compared to the strain its learning would put upon millions. It can be of no help to the millions who have to read their own literature either in their own provincial scripts or in Devanagari. Devanagari is easier for the millions of Hindus and even Muslims to learn, because the provincial scripts are mostly derived from Devanagari. I have included Muslims advisedly. The mother tongue of Bengali Muslims, for instance, is Bengali as is Tamil of Tamil Muslims. The present movement for the propagation of Urdu will, as it should, result in Muslims all over India learning Urdu in addition to their mother tongue. They must, in any case, know Arabic for the purpose of learning the Holy Koran. But the millions whether Hindus or Muslims will never need the Roman script except when they wish to learn English. Similarly, Hindus who want to read their scriptures in the original have to and do learn the Devanagari script. The movement for universalizing the Devanagari script has thus a sound basis. The introduction of the Roman script is a superimposition which can never become popular. And all superimpositions will be swept out of existence when the true mass awakening comes, as it is coming, much sooner than anyone of us can expect from known causes. Yet the awakening of millions does take time. It cannot be manufactured. It comes or seems to come mysteriously. National workers can merely hasten the process by anticipating the mass mind.

SEGAON, February 5, 1939

Harijan, 11-2-1939

37. NO APOLOGY

I have two letters from Jewish friends protesting against a remark of mine in a dialogue reported in *Harijan* over the Jewish question. Here is one of the letters:

My attention has been called to a paragraph[1] in *Harijan* of December 24th, 1938, in which you are reported to have said that "The Jews called down upon the Germans the curses of mankind, and they wanted America and England to fight Germany on their behalf." I can hardly doubt that you have been misreported, for there is nothing that could possibly justify such a statement. But as the paragraph muchdistressed me, I should be glad to receive from you a word of reassurance

I am sorry to say that I cannot give the reassurance required. For I did make the remark put into my mouth by Shri Pyarelal. Hardly a paper comes to me from the West which does not describe the agony of the Jews who demand retribution by the democratic Powers for German atrocities. Nor do I see anything wrong in the attitude. The Jews are not angels. My point was they were not non-violent in the sense meant by me. Their non-violence had and has no love in it. It is passive. They do not resist because they know that they cannot resist with any degree of success. In their place, unless there were active non-violence in me, I should certainly call down upon my persecutors the curses of Heaven. It is not contended by my correspondents that the German Jews do not want the big Powers like England, America and France to prevent the atrocities, if need be, even by war against Germany. I happen to have a Jewish friend living with me. He has an intellectual belief in non-violence. But he says he cannot pray for Hitler. He is so full of anger over the German atrocities that he cannot speak of them with restraint. I do not quarrel with him over his anger. He wants to be non-violent, but the sufferings of fellow Jews are too much for him to bear. What is true of him is true of thousands of Jews who have no thought even of 'loving the enemy'. With them as with millions 'revenge is sweet, to forgive is divine.'

SEGAON, February 5, 1939
Harijan, 18-2-1939

38. LETTER TO RAMDAS AND NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 8, 1939

CHI. RAMDAS AND NIMU,

I got your letter. You need not worry about Ba. Since Ba went[2]

[1] *Vide*"Discussion With Christian Missionaries", 12-12-1938

[2] To Rajkot, to take part in the satyagraha there against the Thakore who had broken the agreement he had made with Vallabhbhai to appoint a committee to draft a constitution for a form of responsible Government for the State.

of her own accord, I felt no hesitation in letting her go in spite of her indifferent health. You should be pleased. You too, will do the same when you are faced with a similar duty. Just now, your duty lies in improving your health and earning something. When you achieve satisfaction in that field, you will certainly plunge into the field of public service, I am quite sure of that.

Kanam is enjoying himself. He has gone to visit uncle Nanavati. Teaching work is looked after by Lilavati, Kanchan, etc. He does sometimes think of Ba during the night. I have him sit before me at meals. A.S.[1] bathes him and washes his clothes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

39. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

SEGAON,
February 5, 1939

MY DEAR SUBHAS,

I hope you had my personal letter as also yesterday's.[2]

I had a wire from Maulana Saheb suggesting his and others' withdrawal from Working Committee.[3] I replied saying it might be embarrassing to you. Now comes a letter from Rajen Babu making the same suggestion supporting it by the argument that you would be helped if you had the resignations in your hands now so that you could choose a temporary cabinet to help you to frame your future programme. Rajen Babu's argument commends itself to me. So far as I can judge the old colleagues whom you consider as rightists will not serve on your cabinet. You can have their resignations now, if that would be more convenient for you. Their presence would be unfair to you and to them. You should be left free to frame your own programme and expect the rightists (I wish you would choose better and indigenous terms to designate the parties of your imagination) to support where they can and abstain without obstructing where they

[1] Amtussalaam
[2] These letters are not available.
[3] For the resignation letter of members of the Working Committee, *vide*

cannot see eye to eye with you.

I have just read your statement[1] in answer to mine[2]. Though it demands a reply, I must refrain. I do not want to enter into a public controversy with you so long as I can avoid it.

This letter you may show to friends, if you find it necessary. I am sending copies to Maulana Saheb, etc.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

40. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

February 5, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

This copy[3] for your information.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

41. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 5, 1939

CHI. MAHADEV,

There is no letter from you today. Acting on your telegram, I have sent a telegram to J.[4] that he should follow your advice. But he does not seem to like the advice. Let him enter the field then. I consider the Viceroy's statement pretty bad. You will have seen my reply. Things will take their own course. Do not worry. You must regain your health.

Both Vijaya and Sharada will be married here at 3 o'clock

[1] *Vide* "Statement of Subhas Chandra Bose"
[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 31-1-1939
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.
[4] Jamnalal Bajaj

(by my watch) on the 7th.[1] Nanabhai[2] will conduct the ceremony. Nanabhai will be coming here tomorrow with Manubhai. Gordhandas will arrive on the 7th morning. No guests have been invited. We do not want to invite any. The poor people of Segaon will witness the wedding. The altar will be built under a mango tree.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

42. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

[*February 5, 1939*][3]

CHI. JANAKIBEHN,

Nanabhai and Manubhai will be arriving tomorrow. It would be better to let them come to Segaon. We are not so crowded here these days. And why should I trouble you unnecessarily when Munnalal will be going to receive them? Probably five more persons will be coming on Tuesday and I want them too to come to Segaon. If changes are to be made, I shall see. It is good that Jamnalalji has been arrested.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The marriage rites will be performed by Nanabhai but Vyasji may certainly come.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3002

[1] Vijaya Patel had been betrothed to Manubhai Pancholi and Sharada Shah to Gordhandas Chokhawala.

[2] Nrisinhaprasad Kalidas Bhatt

[3] From the reference to Jamnalalji's arrest and the weddings of Vijaya Patel and Sharda Shah which took place on Tuesday, February 7, 1939

43. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

[On or after *February 5, 1939*][1]

Contradictory is wholly inapplicable. I mean that there is nothing wrong in an ordinary man wanting God to punish the wrongdoer. Non-violence is a new thing. It would be wrong for a non-violent man to call down the wrath of God or man. But a non-violent man must not see anything wrong in a persecuted man retaliating and seeking the assistance of others. You should try to understand the argument.

From the original: C.W. 4209. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7845

44. INTERVIEW TO SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN STUDENTS[2]

BARDOLI,
[Before *February 6, 1939*][3]

"What should we, South Africa-borns, do to preserve our Indian culture in our country of adoption?" they asked Gandhiji. "What other languages would you ask us to learn besides English ?"

Gandhiji answered by first twitting them for giving the first place to English. He advised them instead to learn Hindustani, which should contain all words of Sanskritic as well as Persian or Arabic origin, that are used by the man in the street. The Hindus dared not neglect the study of Sanskrit, nor the Muslims of Arabic, not only because the study of these languages was necessary to give them access to their scriptures in the original, but also because these two tongues contained the grandest poetry that the world has ever produced. He concluded:

But above all you should jealously retain the essential simplicity and spirituality which is the hallmark of Indian culture.

Their other question was whether they should carry on the struggle for their rights in South Africa through satyagraha or through constitutional agitation.

[1] The note is written on the back of a telegram from Damodar to Bachhraj, Wardha, dated 5-2-1939.

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "A World in Agony-II", 6-2-1939. The students were in India to pursue medical studies and wanted Gandhiji to help them gain admission in medical college.

[3] *Ibid*

GANDHIJI: If the South African Indian community had guts in them, I would say satyagraha, and they are bound to win. I am hoping that some day from among Indian youths born in South Africa a person will arise who will stand up for the rights of his countrymen domiciled there, and make the vindication of those rights his life's mission. He will be so pure, so cultured, so truthful and so dignified in his bearing that he will disarm all opposition. The whites will then say, 'If all Indians were like him, we should have no objection to giving them an equal status with us.' But he will answer, 'It is not enough that there is one representative of the Indian community whom you are ready to recognize as your equal. What I am, other countrymen of mine too can be, if instead of calling them names and putting them under all sorts of disabilities you give them a sporting chance in the matter of educational and other facilities which are today denied them.' Such a one, when he appears, will not need to be coached by me. He will assert himself by his sheer genius.

Harijan, 18-2-1939

45. MAHATMA'S STATUE[1]

Correspondence has been pouring in upon me protesting against the Mahatma's statue said to be in course of construction on the Congress ground at a cost of Rs. 25,000. I know nothing of this statue. I have enquired about it. But I must not wait for confirmation. Assuming that such a statue is in course of construction, I reinforce the protest of my correspondents and I agree with them that it will be waste of good money to spend Rs. 25,000 on erecting a clay or metallic statue of the figure of a man who is himself made of clay and is more fragile than a bangle which can keep by preservation for a thousand years, whereas the human body disintegrates daily and undergoes final disintegration after the usual span of life. I have learnt from my Muslim friends, among whom I have passed the best part of my life, my dislike of statues and photographs of my figure. And I should like the Reception Committee, if the report is true, to desist from the unfortunate enterprise. Let them save what money they can. If it is a mere rumour, let these lines serve as a warning to those who want to honour me by erecting statues and having portraits of my figure, that I heartily dislike these exhibitions. I shall deem it ample

[1] This was published under the heading "Notes".

honour if those who believe in me will be good enough to promote the activities I stand for and at least divert the money they would use for statues and portraits to the work of the Harijan Sevak Sangh, A. I. S. A., A. I. V. I. A., or Hindustani Talimi Sangh.

SEGAON, February 6, 1939

Harijan, 11-2-1939

46. WHY KASTURBA GANDHI?[1]

I had not intended to say anything about my wife having joined the Rajkot struggle. But some cruel criticism I have seen about her intervention prompts an explanation. It had never occurred to me that she should join it. For one thing she is too old for such hardships as are involved in being in civil disobedience struggles. But strange as it may appear to critics, they must believe me when I say that though she is illiterate, she is and has been for years absolutely free to do what she likes. When she joined the struggle in South Africa or in India, it was of her own inner prompting. And so it was this time. When she heard of Manibehn's arrest, she could not restrain herself and asked me to let her go. I said she was too weak. She had just then fainted in her bathroom in Delhi and might have died but for Devdas's presence of mind. She said she did not mind. I then referred her to Sardar. He would not hear of it either.

But this time he melted. He had seen my grief over the breach of faith by the Thakore Saheb induced by the Resident. The reader must realize my ancestral connection with Rajkot and the intimate personal relations I had with the present Ruler's father. Kasturba is a daughter of Rajkot. She felt a personal call. She could not sit still whilst the other daughters of Rajkot were suffering for the freedom of the men and women of the State. Rajkot is no doubt an insignificant place on the map of India. But it is not insignificant for me and my wife. As a child she was brought up in Rajkot though born in Porbandar. And, after all, neither she nor I can be unconcerned in a struggle which is based on non-violence and in which so many reliable co-workers are involved.

The success of the struggle in Rajkot will be a stage forward in the fight for freedom. And when it ends in success, as it must sooner

[1] This was published under the heading "Notes".

or later, I hope that Kasturba's share will count as a humble contribution towards it. Satyagraha is a struggle in which the oldest and the weakest in body may take part, if they have stout hearts.

SEGAON, February 6, 1939

Harijan, 11-2-1939

47. WORKING OF NON-VIOLENCE

I have been very much interested in reading the recent numbers of *Harijan* and your observations on the European crisis and the N. W. F. Province. But there is one aspect of the non-violence problem, which I should have discussed with you at Segaon[1] if there had been time, to which you seldom or never refer. You say that non-violent non-co-operation, as you have developed it, is the answer to the violence which is now threatening the whole world with ruin. There is no doubt as to the immense effect such spirit and action could produce. But must not the non-violent spirit of selfless love for all, enemies and friends alike, express itself, if it is to succeed, in a liberal, democratic and constitutional form of government? Society cannot exist without law and government. International peace cannot exist unless the nations accept a system of constitutional government which will give them unity and law and end anarchy among them. No doubt some day the law of God will be so "written on the hearts and minds" of men that they become individually the expression of it, and will need no human law or government, But that is the end. The beginning of progress towards that heavenly goal must take the form at first of a willingness among races, religions and nations to unite under a single constitution, through which their unity and membership one of another is established, the laws under which they live are promulgated after public discussion and by some form of majority decision and are enforced, where it is not voluntarily obeyed, not by war but by police force, where persuasion and example have not sufficed. As between sovereign nations the operation of a constructive non-violence spirit must lead to some form of federation. It cannot succeed until it has done so. The proof that it exists effectively will be the appearance of a federal system. Thus the only real solution for the European problem is the federation of its 25 peoples and nations under a single democratic constitution which will create a government which can look at and legislate for the problems of Europe, not as a set of rival and conflicting nations but as a single whole with autonomous parts. In the

[1] Lord Lothian was at Segaon from January 18 to 20, 1938; *vide* "Discussion with Lord Lothain", 20-1-1938

same way the only solution to the Indian problem is the substitution of a democratic constitution for the control of Great Britain. And what is true for Europe and India is true, in the long run, for the whole world and is the only final method of ending war.

Non-violent non-co-operation may be the best, perhaps the only, method of bringing about the change of mind and heart which will make acceptance of a federal democratic constitution by the nation possible. But attainment to democratic federation is the necessary attainment whereby its success is assured and without which it cannot succeed. It is always a matter of interest and indeed of surprise to me that you appear to think that non-violent non-co-operation is enough in itself, and that you never proclaim that a democratic system of government unifying men, races, religions and nations is the goal to which it must lead, though that attainment is only possible as the result of a spiritual change of heart and cannot be reached by force or violence or chicanery.

I do not write this as a kind of indirect argument for the Indian constitution, though it obviously has a bearing on that problem also. The Government of India Act is clearly a very imperfect application of the principle of democratic federation and must necessarily evolve rapidly if it is to work. The main argument I have always urged for it is that in present conditions it represents the only constitutional compromise uniting Provinces, States, Muslims and Hindus which can be made to work and that it has far more seeds of evolution within it than is generally recognized. If your spiritual gospel informed the people, it would rapidly and easily evolve. My object is not to elicit any opinion from you about the constitutional problem but an answer to the larger question set forth in the early part of the letter.

Thus writes Lord Lothian. The letter was received early in January, but urgent matters prevented my dealing earlier with the important question raised in it.

I have purposely refrained from dealing with the nature of government in a society based deliberately on non-violence. All society is held together by non-violence, even as the earth is held in her position by gravitation. But when the law of gravitation was discovered the discovery yielded results of which our ancestors had no knowledge. Even so when society is deliberately constructed in accordance with the law of non-violence, its structure will be different in material particulars from what it is today. But I cannot say in advance what the government based wholly on non-violence will be like.

What is happening today is disregard of the law of non-violence

and enthronement of violence as if it were an eternal law. The democracies, therefore, that we see at work in England, America and France are only so called, because they are no less based on violence than Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy or even Soviet Russia. The only difference is that the violence of the last three is much better organized than that of the three democratic powers. Nevertheless we see today a mad race for outdoing one another in the matter of armaments. And if when the clash comes, as it is bound to come one day, the democracies win, they will do so only because they will have the backing of their peoples who imagine that they have a voice in their own government whereas in the other three cases the peoples might rebel against their own dictatorships.

Holding the view that without the recognition of non-violence on a national scale there is no such thing as a constitutional or democratic government, I devote my energy to the propagation of non-violence as the law of our life—individual, social, political, national and international. I fancy that I have seen the light, though dimly. I write cautiously, for I do not profess to know the whole of the Law. If I know the successes of my experiments, I know also my failures. But the successes are enough to fill me with undying hope.

I have often said that if one takes care of the means, the end will take care of itself. Non-violence is the means, the end for every nation is complete independence. There will be an international League only when all the nations, big or small, composing it are fully independent. The nature of that independence will correspond to the extent of non-violence assimilated by the nations concerned. One thing is certain. In a society based on non-violence, the smallest nation will feel as tall as the tallest. The idea of superiority and inferiority will be wholly obliterated.

It follows from this that the Government of India Act is merely a makeshift and has to give way to an Act coined by the nation itself. So far as Provincial Autonomy is concerned, it has been found possible to handle it somewhat. My own experience of its working is by no means happy. The Congress Governments have not that non-violent hold over the people that I had expected they would have.

But the Federal structure is inconceivable to me because it contemplates a partnership, however loose, among dissimilars. How dissimilar the States are is being demonstrated in an ugliness for which I was unprepared. Therefore the Federal structure, as conceived by the

Government of India Act, I hold to be an utter impossibility.

Thus the conclusion is irresistible that for one like me, wedded to non-violence, constitutional or democratic government is a distant dream so long as non-violence is not recognized as a living force, an inviolable creed, not a mere policy. While I prate about universal non-violence, my experiment is confined to India. If it succeeds the world will accept it without effort. There is, however, a big BUT. The pause does not worry me. My faith is brightest in the midst of impenetrable darkness.

SEGAON, February 6, 1939

Harijan, 11-2-1939

48. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

SEGAON,
February 6, 1939

BA,

Herewith are letters from Akola. I hope you are well. The marriages of both the girls[1] will take place tomorrow. We all feel your absence. I have to do the giving away and that too in your absence.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 31

49. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

February 7, 1939

CHI. JANAKIBEHN,

You must not worry. Those who worry are not warriors. There is no point in going to Jaipur. Therefore, you have to stay here and do your duty. Let it be as God wills.

I am keeping the telephonic message with me.[2] I wish to make some statement. I am not detaining the car.

[1] On February 7, Vijaya Patel was married to Manubhai Pancholi and Sharda Shah to Gordhandas Chokhawala.

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 8-2-1939

Why do you want to come here in your present condition?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3000

50. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 7, 1939

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. What is happening in Limdi is terrible, but it does not surprise us. More, and worse, will happen. That will test the people. Our path is straight. I intend to write about this. Since I arrange my work with due care for my health, I am not able to attend to everything as I would wish to. I very much like what Subhas Babu is doing. We have had a narrow escape. See about Rajendra Babu.

I am ready for a meeting whenever you desire it.

I have received a letter from Mani, which is enclosed. I am writing this after performing the marriages of both the girls. The simplicity was absolute. Nobody was invited. The village Harijans and others were present. I was very much pleased.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 232-3

51. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 7, 1939

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your letter as also the wire. If you ate not allowed to have the needed rest there, rush down here. You will definitely get rest here. There is at least some peace of mind. The changes I introduced have not been received well. But the student of the *Gita* must find peace of mind wherever he goes.

I am getting along. I am trying to reduce as much as possible the burden on Vallabhbhai. But he has a worrying temperament. Let us see what happens. *The Statesman* cannot write anything else.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Now it is almost time to go to the marriage *mandap*.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

52. TELEGRAM TO CHANDRABHAL JOHRI[1]

[On or after *February 7, 1939*]

JAMNALALJI IS SAFE WHEREVER HE IS.[2] TRYING ISSUE STATEMENT. KEEP ME INFORMED.

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 213

53. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

[On or after *February 7,1939*][3]

R[AJENDRA PRASAD]
SADAQAT ASHRAM
PATNA

HAVE NOT CONVENED CONFERENCE. NO SUCH SUGGESTION BEFORE ME. DO YOU WANT CONFERENCE ?

From a copy: Jamnalal .Bajaj Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram of February 6, 1939, received on February 7, expressing his anxiety about Jamnalal's whereabouts after the latter's arrest on February 5, 1939.

[2] Jamnalal had been taken to Bharatpur State and released there on February 7.

[3] This along with the preceding item was drafted on the reverse of the telegram from Chandrabhal Johri; *vide* the preceding item.

54. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

[After *February 7, 1939*][1]

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your two letters. If you write 'Private', etc., at the top, no one will read your letters. I will tear them up after reading.

Do not get frightened. Obtain permission and come away to me immediately. We shall talk about everything at length. Your experience is no unusual story.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You may use the accompanying letter[2] if you wish.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10021. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

55. LETTER TO GORDHANDAS CHOKHAWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[After *February 7, 1939*][3]

CHI. GORDHANDAS,

If Sharda feels ill at ease there, send her away here to me for some days. She has never been away from home and so it is likely that she may feel a stranger there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10084. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] This was obviously written some time after the addressee's marriage, which took place on February 7.

[2] *Vide* the following item.

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

56. TELEGRAM TO THE LIMDI PRAJA MANDAL

[Before *February 8, 1939*][1]

IN THE HAPPENINGS IF THE PEOPLE REMAIN NON-VIOLENT AND BRAVE SUFFERING TORTURES LOSS OF PROPERTY LIMBS AND LIFE, VICTORY IS THEIRS. KEEP ME INFORMED .

The Hindustan Times, 10-2-1939

57. TELEGRAM TO JETHANAND

WARDHA,
February 8, 1939

RAIBAHADUR JETHANAND
DERAISMAILKHAN

DEEPLY REGRET RIOTS. AM HELPLESS THOUGH WIRING[2] PREMIER. HAVE MAHOMEDANS BEEN KILLED AS REPORTED PAPERS.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

58. TELEGRAM TO DR. KHAN SAHEB

WARDHA,
February 8, 1939

DR. KHANSAHEB
PESHAWAR

ARE YOU DOING ANYTHING EFFECTIVE ABOUT DERA RIOTS.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The news report carrying this item is dated February 8.
[2] *Vide* the following item.

59. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 8, 1939

DEAR MOTI BABU,

Better to send instalment directly to A. I. S. A.

The convocation address not yet received.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: G.N. 11053

60. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

SEGAON,
February 8, 1939

BA,

You are being put to a severe test. You must let me know about the difficulties you face. You are born to suffer and hence your discomforts cause me no surprise. I have sent a telegram to the Government. I do not wish to publish anything about your difficulties in the Press. God is certainly even there by your side. He will do as He wills.

Kanam is well. He remembers you at night. Do not worry in the least. Amtul Salaam is here. She takes care of Kanam.

Chi. Mani, how nice that you are there!

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 31

61. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 8, 1939

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your letter. Let me compliment you on keeping good health.

Your dialogue is good. Your suggestion is correct. I am sending

the telegram. I may issue my statement tomorrow. I shall not write anything more because there is a lot to do.

I have got the point about Hameed Ali. Subhas wants to meet me. I am not keen. He is getting good publicity.

Lilavati seems to be at ease today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum arid Library. Courtesy:. Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

62. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 8, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You should not expect a long letter from me. Only he is a *brahmachari* who can remain unmoved even while conducting a wedding. One who feels disturbed watching a wedding need not do so. I did not invite anyone.

You should salute A. B. from a distance and forget the rest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4310; also S.G. 73

63. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

WARDHA,
February 8, 1939

The following telephone report[2] has been received about Seth

[1] The statement was also published in *The Hindu* and *The Bombay Chronicle* of February 9 and in a slightly modified form in *Harijan* of February 11 under the heading "Barbarous Behaviour". It turned out, however, that the report used by Gandhiji in the statement was not wholly accurate; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 12-2-1939

[2] The report was in Hindi, which Gandhiji translated; *vide* "Statement to the Press",12-2-1939

Jamnalalji who, when he was arrested a second time, was accompanied by his son, his secretary and a servant:

> Seth Jamnalalji was detained at Ajmer Road station, 50 miles from Jaipur, and kept in the dak bungalow there. Mr. Young went to Sethji in person and asked him to enter his car. Sethji declined saying, "You wish to put me out side the border of Jaipur State. I wish to enter Jaipur. I will not accompany you." Mr. Young thereupon said, "We are taking you to Jaipur. Come with us." Sethji replied, "I cannot rely on your word." Mr. Young then said, "I have orders. You will have to come with me." Sethji asked to be shown the order, but it appears that there was no order in Mr. Young's possession. At length, Mr. Young again told Sethji that he would be taken to Jaipur. "If we do not take you there, you can have it printed in the newspapers that after promising to take you to Jaipur, we took you elsewhere." Sethji was not inclined to believe anything that was said to him. He said, "I will not accompany you willingly. You can take me by force, if you so desire."
>
> This conversation took nearly an hour. In the end, five men forcibly put Sethji in a car and took him away. In this process of using force, Sethji was injured on his left cheek below the eye. He was taken to Alwar State. Sethji here said, "You cannot act like this. You are not at liberty to deposit me in another State. If you do so I will run a case against you." On this Mr. Young brought Sethji back again into Jaipur State. But we do not know his present whereabouts.

The only remark I have to offer is that this is barbarous behaviour. The sacredness of person, legal procedure and liberty are thrown to the winds. That a British Inspector-General of Police should resort to deception and then to personal injury to one who was his prisoner is what I call organized *goondaism.* But I know that nothing will break Jamnalalji's spirit. He will enter Jaipur either as a free man or prisoner.

The Hindustan Times, 9-2-1939

64. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

WARDHAGANJ,
February 9, 1939

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
LUCKY
CALCUTTA

I THINK BEST LEAVE JAMNALALJI DO ACCORDING HIS INSTINCT. I DO NOT APPRECIATE SENDING NOTICE. LET HIM SUFFER IF HE MUST.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 7804. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

65. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHAGANJ,
February 9, 1939

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
ANAND BHAWAN
ALLAHABAD

ALL THINGS CONSIDERED I THINK IT WOULD BE WISE POSTPONE LUDHIANA CONFERENCE TILL AFTER CONGRESS. PRINCIPAL WORK[ER]S ENGAGED IN STRUGGLE GOING ON VARIOUS STATES.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

66. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
February 9, 1939

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I understand your letter.[1] It satisfies me. I shall send you

[1] *Vide* also letters to the addressee, "Letter to N. R. Malkani", 20-1-1939 and "Letter to N. R. Malkani", 22-1-1939

Rs. 200 as soon as Kishorelal returns. You will operate on Rs. 300 cheque.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N, 932

67. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 9, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter. I understand your analysis. Subhas wired saying he wants to come to Wardha. Let us see what happens. Of course I shall take no hasty decision. I am glad Sarup[1] is coming soon. I am hoping that the quiet of Segaon will suit her.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

68. LETTER TO HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 9, 1939

MY DEAR MAHTAB,

Your letter. You can come on 16th inst.[2]

Yours,
BAPU

From the original: H. K. Mahtab Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

69. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 9, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

Marriage is a sacrament. It should, therefore, lead not to indulgence but to restraint. We have four stages of life.

[1] Vijayalakshmi Pandit

[2] The addressee had wanted to meet Gandhiji to discuss the affairs of the Princely States in Orissa.

Grihasthashrama[1] is the second stage. In family life enjoyment has no place but service has an important place. Service and begetting of progeny cannot go hand in hand. Progeny, however, has a place in married life. If there is an intense desire for progeny sexual union is permitted. This union should result from deliberation, not passion. If this principle is accepted, husband and wife should not share the same bed. There should be no love play. Nothing should be done which would turn their minds to the sexual act. In these days it is a difficult dharma. May God grant you both the strength to perform it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10004. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

70. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

SEGAON,
February 9, 1939

BA,

I have your letter. I do not like your being constantly ill. But be brave now. You will get the facilities. But what does it matter even if you don't? Mani should read aloud the *Ramayana,* even if she cannot sing well. What are our troubles as compared to those of Rama and Sita? For the time being I have given up taking help from the girls. Do not feel uneasy. Do not worry. I shall see what to do. Sushila of course continues to look after me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 31-2

71. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 9, 1939

CHI. MAHADEV,

I hope you have the wire I sent yesterday. It was meant

[1] Householder's state

especially to be shown to Laithwaite[1]. Of course, it could be interpreted as you suggest. So it may be as well if you have not shown it to him. Besides, since Devdas has brought out the facts in the Press, there is no need for that.

I do not think it right to send for Jamnalal. It is better to let him do as he wishes. If there is coercion then Jamnalalji should certainly protest. I am not very clear about the matter but I approve of Jamnalalji's opposition. What else could he do? When there is one against many he can only protest in this way. I have done it. I remember how, when the driver of the coach had tried to put me down. I had held on to the perch. I had received many blows. Had not the other passengers felt ashamed and checked the driver I would have lost my grip and my life too. I still do not consider this act of mine as having been violent. Jamnalalji has acted similarly. I have sent him a wire that he should act as he thinks right.

You will have seen my statement.[2] Agatha is sitting beside me. She brings news from Orissa. Nothing unusual. She is indeed working hard.

Jawahar's letter has come, he is neutral.

I understand what you write about Maulana. I do not think it proper to say anything at the moment, even if falsehood goes round. Subhas wants to come here. If he does, we shall see.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

72. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[3]

WARDHA,
February 9, 1939

Critics of my recent writings on Rajkot and Jaipur have accused me of being guilty of untruth and violence. I owe them an answer. Such accusations have been made against me before now, indeed since

[1] Sir J. G. Laithwaite, Private Secretary to the Viceroy

[2] *Vide* "Letter to the Press", 9-2-1939

[3] This was also published in *The Bombay Chronicle* and *The Hindu* of February 10 and in *Harijan* of February 18 under the heading "Not Guilty".

my entry into public life. I am happy to be able to say that most of my critics have later been obliged to acknowledge that I had not been guilty of either untruthful or violent language and that my statements were based on my belief in them and made without malice.

Even so is the case in the present instance. I am fully aware of my responsibility. I know that many of my countrymen put implicit faith in my statements. I have been asked for proofs in support of my statements I have given them.

Sardar Patel has reproduced in his statement[1] on Rajkot the remarks of the Resident reported to have been made by him about the Congress and himself. The memorandum of the conversation between the Resident, the Thakore Saheb and councillors, including Sir Patrick Cadell, is in my possession. It is too long to be published, but it will be, if occasion requires it.

As for organized *goondaism,* the facts have been published.[2] I connect the Resident with it, because he has sent the Agency police to the State and must be held responsible for the acts of his agents.

Similarly, the British Prime Minister is responsible for everything that is happening in Jaipur. The making of Seth Jamnalalji a football to be kicked out of Jaipur every time he dares to exercise the right of entering his birth-place is surely worse than unseemly.

I am not guilty of violence of language when I correctly characterize action. I would be guilty of violence if I harboured any ill-feeling against the Kathiawar Resident or the Jaipur Prime Minister. For ought I know, they may be most estimable men to meet, but their being estimable does not help the people of Rajkot or Jaipur. As a votary of truth and ahimsa, my business is to state the naked truth without fear but without ill will against the wrongdoers. My non-violence does not require any gilding of a bitter pill. I must, therefore, plead not guilty to the charge of racial animosity.

I cannot succeed in weaning people from the path of violence by hiding or dressing the naked truth; I hope to wean them by telling them and, what is more, showing by my conduct that it is not only right but profitable to wish well to the wrongdoer in spite of his wrongs, however grievous these may be.

Protection of the Princes is a duty the Paramount Power owes to

[1] *Vide* "Cold-Blooded Breach of a Solemn Covenant"
[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 3-2-1939

them, but surely it is equally its duty to protect the people living in their jurisdiction. It seems to me that it is also their duty to withhold support from Princes when it is proved that a ruler is guilty of breach of faith with his people as in Rajkot or when it is proved that his people are denied ordinary civil liberty and one of his citizens is driven from pillar to post and practically denied access to courts of justice as in the case of Jaipur.

The more I think of what is happening in the States in India, I see nothing but a dark future for this unhappy land, if the Paramount Power remains a helpless witness to the tragedy that is being enacted in the Princes' India. For what is happening in Rajkot and Jaipur is but a sample of what is going to happen presently in the other States. The Maharaja of Bikaner was right when he advised concerted action among the Princes.[1] Only His Highness gave the wrong lead.

The doctrine of kicks and kisses will lead the Princes nowhere. It has sown bitterness and strife. The people of States may not be able to take concerted action as the Princes can, but the latter will not be able to treat the people from States other than their own or those from British India as foreigners. There is sufficient awakening among the people of the States to withstand the pressure even from a concert among the Princes.

The Hindustan Times, 10-2-1939

73. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[On or after *February 9, 1939*][2]

JAMNALALJI

SAINIK, AGRA

YOUR TELEGRAM. SEND DEFINITE CORRECTIONS MY VERSION. WILL THEN PUBLISH REVISION. QUITE CLEAR YOU SHOULD CROSS BORDER IF POSSIBLE ON FOOT WITH SMALL PARTY WITHOUT GIVING NOTICE. JANAKIDEVI MUST NOT LEAVE WARDHA. SHE IS UNFIT PHYSICALLY AND KAMALA'S APPROACHING DELIVERY MAKES IT DANGEROUS FOR HER LEAVE WARDHA. IF SHE WENT

[1] *Vide* "Kicks and Kisses's

[2] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram of February 9, for the text of which, *vide* "Statement to the Press", 12-2-1939

SHE MUST THROW HERSELF INTO STRUGGLE AND CAN NEVER COME BACK BEFORE STRUGGLE OVER. AM CONVINCED TIME HAS NOT ARRIVED FOR HER TO DO SO. EVEN IF SHE WAS WELL AND OTHERWISE FREE TO LEAVE WARDHA I SHOULD DISCOUNTENANCE HER LEAVING BUT WOULD RESERVE HER FUTURE WHEN STRUGGLE IN FULL SWING.

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 214

74. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 10, 1939

CHI. MAHADEV,

You will be keeping good health. Today's letter from Mirabehn will greatly delight you. I am enclosing it. Send it back to me. I keep receiving Ba's letters.

I am getting on quite well. There is still a little swelling.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

75. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

SEGAON,
February 11, 1939

CHI. MARY,

You are considerate always. But if you had come you would have caused me no worry. Yes, you will stay with me if I go to the Congress.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6075. Also C.W. 3405. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

76. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 11, 1939

I have your wire and letter. I understand your position about the conference and the W. C. I cannot think of causes without the persons who handle them. I wrote about postponement on the strength of what I had heard from Balwantrai Mehta. He is engrossed in the Kathiawar struggle. Achintram could not do without him. So I wired to you. I know nothing about the situation in Ludhiana.

I am sorry about Sarup. I was looking forward to her passing a few days with me.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

77. LETTER TO L. M. PATIL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 11, 1939

DEAR PATIL,

I have your letter. Where the Directors are Indians having an effective voice in the management of the concern and the concern itself is wholly in the interests of India I would call it swadeshi even though the whole of the capital may be foreign. Thus if I had full control of, say, a hand-spinning concern but I employed skilled white men under me and employed also European capital with or without interest I would claim that concern to be wholly swadeshi.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

78. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 11, 1939

MY DEAR C. R.,

I would have you to continue what you are doing about employment in spite of adverse comment. We do not need to copy

anybody.

Who is this lady at the back of the anti-Hindi propaganda?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2073

79. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 11, 1939

CHI. KANTI,

I may be said to be quite ill. Prabha will write. If I cannot show Saraswati's letter to Ramachandran it will be difficult to send for her here. How can we help one who hides her misery ? I have, however, written to Ramachandran to send Saraswati here. But to send for her is one thing and to do so in order to save her from abuses and beatings is another. So you should give me full freedom. You should not lose your peace of mind.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7358. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

80. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

SEGAON,
February 11, 1939

BA,

I read about your transfer in the newspapers. Stay free of care wherever you are placed. Do not worry. God is certainly with you wherever you go. The doctors have come to examine me. They advise rest. I do take rest. A letter has gone to you from here every day.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 32

81. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 11, 1939

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got the papers sent by you.

I cannot believe the report about Mani having been separated from Ba.

If the meeting of the Working Committee on the 22nd is arranged here, what about Bardoli? Jamnalal writes to say that the meeting on the 22nd will be held here. Why not stay here for the present?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Forward the enclosed.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 233

82. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 11, 1939

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your letter. Quite a few of us have gathered in the room: Gilsler[1], Jivaraj[2], Agatha[3], . . .[4], Pattabhi[5], Kishorelal[6], Frydman[7], etc. Others are sitting outside. The doctors have warned me that I should take care of my health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Dr. M. D. D. Gilder
[2] Dr. Jivaraj Mehta
[3] Agatha Harrison
[4] The name is not decipherable
[5] Pattabhi Sitaramayya
[6] Kishorelal Mashruwala
[7] Maurice Frydman, a Polish engineer, who bad become Gandhiji's follower and come to be known as Bharatanand

83. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 11, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

So long as you have not acquired equimindedness it is best to observe the restraint I have suggested. But it does not at all mean that you are not to render even the necessary services to her or speak to her when the occasion demands it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4311; also S.G. 74

84. HYDERABAD

Hyderabad State Congress people are getting restive. As they have been acting under my advice some of them came to me and said, "We have suspended civil disobedience at your and other leaders' instance. You had held out the hope that, if we suspended civil disobedience, most probably the prisoners would be released and the State Congress recognized. Neither the one nor the other has happened. How long are we to remain out and vegetate while our co-workers are rotting in the State jails where life is none too easy? What will you have us do?"

As these friends have to deal with a large number of colleagues I had better give a summary of my answer to them. I said:

I sympathize with you. In your place I should feel like you. But satyagraha is not a simple affair. It is a way of life. It requires discipline. It demands infinite patience and capacity for uttermost suffering. Civil disobedience, which is but a phase of satyagraha, has to be suspended even though colleagues may have to suffer imprisonment, hardships attendant upon jail life, and even worse. And they have to do all this with good grace, joyfully and without malice towards those who are responsible for subjecting them to such suffering. Remember, too, that a true satyagrahi, being outside, goes through greater mental suffering than the one who has gone behind prison bars. The latter has done his task for the time being. His mind is free. He fulfils his immediate mission if he behaves like a model

prisoner and cheerfully submits to the sufferings he might have to go through. Whereas the former has to bear the brunt of managing the struggle, thinking out plans, and responding to the programme as it may be given from day to day.

I have to ask you to prolong your suspension if only for the simple and decisive reason that two bodies are offering civil disobedience for purposes wholly different from yours, however worthy their purpose may be. The Arya Samaj civil disobedience is purely religious in the sense that it is being offered for the vindication of the exercise of their religion. The Hindu Mahasabha is, I suppose, supporting the Arya Samaj. And, therefore, the struggle has assumed a communal colour. If you resume civil disobedience, it will be very difficult for you to retain your nationalistic character. You will expose yourselves to needless suspicion. Your methods too may not be identical with theirs. You will create an embarrassing situation without advancing your cause.

Thus the situation demands delicate handling. It is my conviction that your restraint will largely disarm suspicion, and to that extent you will be making a definite advance towards your goal. Meanwhile I can give you the assurance that whatever friendly offices can do is being and will continue to be done. Having heard my argument, you will act as may seem best to you. You must reject my advice if it does not appeal to your head and heart. If you accept it, remember that every member will be expected to devote himself whole-heartedly to the constructive programme as I have explained it to you.

SEGAON, February 12, 1939

Harijan, 18-2-1939

85. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEGAON, WARDHA, C. P.,
February 12, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I duly received your letter of the 5th inst. redirected from Bardoli.

I am grateful for the pains you have taken to explain your position so fully, frankly and fairly. After much consideration I felt

that it was a duty to publish the article returned by you. Even if Shri Chudgar has been guilty, consciously or unconsciously, of having misreported[1] Sir Beauchamp St. John, the truth could only be ascertained by publication of the correspondence. As I have the moral conviction about the accuracy of Shri Chudgar's report I felt that it would be wrong to withhold it from the public. I note in passing that although I asked the Prime Minister of Jaipur, if he denied Shri Chudgar's version, to give me his own, he would not do so.[2] But the question of wisdom or otherwise of publishing the correspondence pales into insignificance in the presence of the tragedy that is going on in Jaipur, Rajkot and Orissa.

In spite of your letter suggesting the possibility of it being erroneous, what is happening in these places has deepened the belief expressed by me in my letter to you of the 26th ult.

If you think that by a meeting you could clear my mind of the disquiet and show me that my belief is erroneous, I would be glad to run up to Delhi even though medical friends have enjoined complete rest for some time if I am not to collapse altogether. But I would gladly risk my health if I can be shown my error or if I could convince you that delay in action on your part is dangerous.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 10388. Courtesy: Pyarelal

86. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

SEGAON,
February 12, 1939

BA,

I have your letter. You are kept informed of all the news. Stop worrying. I learn that you have duly received the enema can. What medicine would you want sent from here? The doctor now visits you there. If you feel the need you may take the medicine he prescribes. I will of course continue to write to you every day. Be brave.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 32

[1] *Vide* "Jaipur"

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Sir W. Beauchamp St. John", 22-1-1939 and "Letter to Sir W. Beauchamp St. John"., 27-1-1939

87. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 12, 1939

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

What happened about the article that Chudgar was to write for me? I want it soon. I have received a long letter from the Viceroy. I will send you a copy of the reply[1] I have sent.

Send me a copy of the Princes Protection Act referred to in the accompanying notification.

Mani was first removed and then again brought back to Ba. What is all this? I don't understand at all. Who is the doctor, and the nurse?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 234

88. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 12, 1939

CHI. MAHADEV,

There should be no mistakes of proportion in such experiments. You will have been on the right track by now. There is no cause for worry if you have to cut down on walking. Why worry if you are able to sleep well and work?

I shall see about sending the money to Anand. I am enclosing a copy of my letter to the Viceroy.[2]

Subhas will come on the 15th. You will have seen the newspaper reports about Ba.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 12-1-1939
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 12-2-1939

89. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

WARDHA,
February 12, 1939

On reading my Press statement regarding his second expulsion from Jaipur State, Seth Jamnalalji telegraphed to me as follows:

> On the 9th instant I saw that your statement on my version regarding Mr. Young was incorrect owing to confusion in the telephonic message. The correct version appeared in *The Hindustan Times* of the 8th and 9th.[2] I hope you will do the needful.

I had not then seen *The Hindustan Times* referred to by Sethji. I have now seen both issues and I find that I have unconsciously done injustice to Mr. Young, whom, in my Press statement, I accused of having practised deception upon Sethji. I made the accusation on the strength of the telephone message received by his son in Wardha, of which I gave a literal translation in my statement. Sethji's son had no doubt whatsoever as to what he received through the telephone. But neither his accuracy nor my faithful translation can excuse the error into which I was betrayed. I, therefore, tender my unqualified apology to Mr. Young and I shall be extra careful henceforth in making use of telephone messages.

I see that not only was Mr. Young not guilty of any deception, but that he was careful to say that he was performing a painful duty in obedience to the orders of a superior authority. And in the execution thereof he was as courteous and as careful as it was possible for him to be in the circumstances.

Having made these amends, I must say that *The Hindustan Times* report, confirmed by Sethji, shows that his ill-treatment was much worse than was conveyed in the telephone message. All that night journey in the cold of Rajputana winter was a cruel and unnecessary torture. Even if expulsion was necessary for the preservation of peace in Jaipur, the night journey could surely have been avoided, as also the use of force.

The Hindu, 12-2-1939

[1] Published in *Harijan*, 18-2-1939, under the title "My Apology"; this also appeared in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 13-2-1939, and other newspapers.

[2] It also appeared in *The Tribune*, 8-2-1939, in the form of a statement by Damodar Das and showed that Young had never given any assurance to Jamnalal Bajaj that he would not be taken outside Jaipur State.

90. UNTRUTH IN NEWSPAPERS

A State official writes:

I have read your several articles in the *Harijan* about Congress activities in general and those in the States in particular. One[1] of these deals with corruption in the Congress ranks and at least, by implication, with other undesirable activities quite inconsistent with the spirit which you have tried to infuse into the mass of Congress workers.

It has occurred to me to draw your attention to the fact that much violence to truth and, therefore, harm to the cause you have at heart is being done by certain newspapers which live by abuse and which depend upon so-called 'Congress workers' for the unmitigated falsehoods they publish.

So far as the States are the targets of attack, legitimate criticism which rests on incontrovertible facts must be wholesome and should be helpful. You would, however, agree that nothing but the truth should be published.

What is happening, in fact, is that some people who nurse a sense of injury against the State to which they belonged or where they lived in the past, finding themselves driven away as a result of their activities to which the Government of the State took objection, are trying to pay off old scores and for such a purpose they imagine their position greatly fortified by their having joined the Congress fold. The papers they feed, in their turn, live by their diatribes, while for them those papers are the needed medium for the discharge of stored-up venom. The unfortunate result is that however these vernacular papers may succeed in inflaming the uninformed public, responsible people remain unaffected by their denunciations.

It is a pity that things that may be usefully brought to light in the honest spirit of awakening the administrations of the States to their responsibilities are, for want of knowledge, never published. What is published is either in the nature of a gross exaggeration of facts of no vital importance or, as is more often the case, some pure inventions and, therefore, an utter lie.

Your present policy seems to me to be that where the people desire to manage their own affairs, it is the duty of the Congress to help them in the attainment of that aim. I venture to think that it is not your policy to replace the contentment of the people with discontent, in pursuit of the ideal of responsible government throughout India.

Above all, I take your policy to be to disseminate and propagate the

[1] *Vide* "Internal Decay"

truth, and to wage a ceaseless war against untruth. In that belief, I venture to suggest that an article or two in the *Harijan* on the responsibility of newspapers that depend for what they publish upon 'Congress workers' and that of those workers might help to purge the Congress movement of some destructive germs and thereby make it more effective alike for the uplift of the downtrodden masses and for serving the highest cause of the country.

I have no difficulty in agreeing with the correspondent that newspapers which indulge in untruth or exaggeration harm the cause they profess to espouse. I admit, too, that there is enough untruth in enough newspapers to warrant action. But my experience is that no amount of public criticism will affect the policy of newspapers which make their livelihood by such policy.

I would like, however, to point out to my correspondent and others like him who are connected with States that the public must not be blamed for believing untruths if the State officials, under a false sense of security, will not deign to correct untruths or render explanations. And sometimes when they condescend to give explanations they are more untruthful than the untruths of the newspapers. The latest instance is that of Talcher. The Chief denied even the truth of a telling photograph in *The Statesman* of the refugees and has received a well-deserved snub from its Editor. I have a Talcher bulletin sent to me by Thakkar Bapa for me to laugh or weep over. Its denial is a shameful perversion of truth. I am publishing in this issue startling news about Mewar.[1]

I would like an authentic contradiction of the news or strong action against the police if they acted in disregard of instructions. But I write this in no way to condone untruths in newspapers. I am quite clear that if newspapers weighed every word that is printed therein, we should have a speedier removal of abuses whether in the States or elsewhere.

SEGAON, February 13, 1939

Harijan, 18-2-1939

[1] *Vide* "Mewar"

91. TARVANCORE

Though I have been apparently silent about Travancore, the workers may rest assured that I have not been neglectful. Sometimes silence is more telling than speech. All I am free to say is that I have been usefully silent. I am sorry that all has not gone well. I had hoped that when the State Congress withdrew the allegations against the Dewan things would run smoothly and the movement for responsible government would be allowed full play.[1] But the bulletin[2] reproduced elsewhere shows that there is no such luck for the Travancoreans. The unseating of 19 prominent members of the Travancore Assembly seems to be vindictive.[3] Have they done anything dishonourable? Not that I know of.

I have before me a letter describing the ill-treatment of Shrimati Akkamma Cherian, a political prisoner. If what she declared in court is true, her treatment was surely disgraceful. She is a cultured woman. She gave up the headmistress-ship of a school in order to join the struggle for liberty. It hurts one to think that in an advanced State like Travancore, which boasts of an enlightened Prince, an equally enlightened Maharani, his mother, and an experienced Dewan, liberty is being choked by rude repression.

But another letter tells me that this repression is taking place in the name of Hinduism and for the sake of saving a Hindu State ! It has been suggested that the idea is to repress the Christians who are playing a prominent part in the struggle for freedom.

It is surely late in the day to talk of Hindu States and Muslim States. And what is the test? Is Kashmir a Hindu State because a Hindu Prince happens to rule a territory which has an overwhelming majority of Muslims as its inhabitants? Or is Hyderabad with its overwhelming Hindu population a Muslim State because a Muslim Prince rules their destiny? I regard this kind of talk as a libel on nationalism. Is India a Christian State because a Christian king rules over her destiny? But if India is Indian no matter who rules, the States are also Indian no matter who happens to be the ruler. And the present Rulers and their

[1] *Vide* "Talk to Travancore State Congress Deputation", 15-11-1938, and "Travancore"

[2] "Travancore Bulletin" by G. Ramachandran

[3] These members, all belonging to the State Congress, had been disqualified on the ground of their having been convicted under the Criminal Law Amendment Regulation.

successors will rule only by the grace of an awakened people. The awakening that has taken place has come to stay. Every day quickens the pace. The Rulers and their advisers may succeed for the time being in suppressing the spirit of the people. They will never succeed in killing it. To succeed would be to kill the spirit of the people of India. Is anyone in India so shortsighted as to feel that independence is not coming soon? And is it possible to conceive that an independent India will for one moment tolerate repression in any single spot, be it ever so big or ever so small? There is room, in my conception of an independent India, for States with Princes as constitutional trustees, as in Aundh.[1] There is room for Englishmen as fellow-servants of the people, never as masters. Therefore, the only way in which the Princes can live in a free India is for them now to recognize the time spirit, bow to it and act accordingly. Let it be the boast of the Hindu Prince, his Hindu mother and their Hindu Dewan that they were not afraid of their Christian citizens. Supposing there was responsible government in Travancore, what could the Christians or the Hindus or the Muslims do? Whoever the legislators, they will be responsible to the voters. There is no room for fear, there is no hitch in the process. But in the present repression, there is much to fear and there are many hitches.

SEGAON, February 13, 1939
Harijan, 18-2-1939

92. THE ETHICS OF IT

A friend suggests that I have perhaps departed from correct conduct in publishing the confidential correspondence[2] between Thakore Saheb and Sir Patrick Cadell and extracts from the interview between Thakore Saheb-in-Council and the Resident. I have no such feeling at all. I claim to be very sensitive to points of honour. My worst critics have credited me with the capacity to respect confidence and bury secrets entrusted to me. But I have never regarded it any part of my duty to protect breaches of promises against disclosure or to cover crimes of which I have notice in due course. I do protect confessions made to me in confidence as I did when I was asked, on pain of being punished by a court of law, to disclose the names of criminals during the unfortunate riots in Ahmedabad at the time of the Rowlatt Act agitation. In the case in question there is no such point

[1] *Vide* "Notes", sub-title "Aundh Reforms"
[2] *Vide* "Cold-Blooded Breach of A Solemn Covenant"

of honour. Regard for truth and the popular cause demanded publication of the correspondence and the extracts. The documents were received by the Sardar in ordinary course. They were handed by those who were in legal possession. There was, therefore, so far as I can see nothing dishonourable about getting possession of the documents and, as I have said, nothing incorrect, much less dishonourable, about their publication. Without such publication the popular case could not be proved.

SEGAON, February 13, 1939

Harijan, 18-2-1939

93. MEWAR

A correspondent sends the following business-like note[1]:

First incident: Date of happening: 14th December, 1938. Place of happening: A wayside bridge in the British territory of town Deoli. Mewar territory: At a distance of about 12 yards.

. . . Shri Mathura Prasad Vaidya, a worker of the Mewar Praja Mandal, . . while distributing Praja Mandal literature . . . was all of a sudden attacked by two constables of Uncha Police in Mewar. One of them snatched away the literature . . . The other knocked him down on the ground and then both of them forcibly dragged him in a semi-conscious state to the nearby territory of Mewar only at a distance of about 12 yards . . . Vaidya Mathura Prasad was severely beaten by those policemen on the way to Uncha police station. He has now been sentenced for nine months.

Second incident: Date of happening: 2nd February, 1939. Place of happening: On the outskirts of Deoli, British territory.

. . . Shri Maniklal Varma, secretary of the Mewar Praja Mandal, had gone to Deoli . . . In the evening at about 6.30 p.m., he with four other colleagues of his was all of a sudden attacked on the outskirts of the town by 15 men of Mewar police with lathis. All the five persons were badly wounded, and Maniklalji was then forcibly dragged through bushes and thorns in a most inhuman way to the Mewar territory which was at a distance of at least a few hundred yards. The Deoli police was informed during the mishap but no notice was taken, and the Dewan of the police station could not be found even after a good search, as if the whole thing was prearranged. Maniklalji was arrested

[1] Of which only extracts are reproduced here

and taken to the Uncha police station in Mewar.

The correspondent adds:

> Shri Maniklalji belongs to Bijolia. He has been devoting himself to the service of the peasantry for the past 20 years. He founded the Praja Mandal a year ago. But it was declared illegal within a few days. Therefore he started civil disobedience some months ago. I send you these incidents as you have begun to write publicly about States' affairs. Will you kindly guide us workers also what should be done in such circumstances?

This news is strange, if it is true. It is difficult to understand why the police did not arrest these workers within the Mewar border. Or was it that the workers' friends were avoiding the Mewar territory? In any event the arrests seem to me to have been illegal. The dragging amounted to an assault. The only advice I can give is that this is essentially a case for legal proceedings. The Praja Mandal should take itup.

But civil resisters of the States should remember that the real battle has yet to come. The States, big or small, seem to be taking concerted action. They are copying the methods adopted by the British in British India during the satyagraha struggle and are likely to improve upon them in frightfulness. They fancy that they have no fear of public opinion, for there is none in the States except in rare cases. But civil resisters who are worth their salt will not be deterred by any frightfulness.

SEGAON, February 13, 1939

Harijan, 18-2-1939

94. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

WARDHA,
February 13, 1939

GHANSHYAMDASJI
LUCEKY
CALCUTTA

GILDER JIVARAJ EXAMINED YESTERDAY BUT DR. ROY[1] HAS RIGHT COME WHEN HE LIKES.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 7805. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy

95. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*February 13, 1939*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

All your letters are good and works of art. Your report of the interview is graphic. Let us hope it will bear fruit.

The money I hope you received in good time.

I shall try to come as soon as I can.

The rest from Sushila.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6428. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10023

96. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

February 13, 1939

BA,

You have now had good experience of Staying alone also. But I forget. When were you alone? Rama has always been with you. And when He is there, it does not matter whether others are or not. But now there are two, Mridu and Mani. Be cheerful. They may also write.

Blessings to you all from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 32

97. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 13, 1939

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letters. The Garasias are not likely to forgo readily what they regard as their *garas*[2]. If we go on suffering silently everything will end well.

The problem about Ba was quickly solved. Mani is a resourceful

[1] From the postmark
[2] Share in State lands

girl. She has mastered the art of doing the right thing at the right time.[1] She is living up to her name.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 234

98. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 13, 1939

CHI. SHARMA,

Did you get the wire I sent? The reply received here was:

"Many Sharmas, wire undelivered."

There is only one point you want answered. We need not give such a deep meaning to nature cure. Only he is entitled to it who has put it into practice in its popular meaning. We cannot all say: "I am the Brahman." When it is time for you to go to jail God will open a way. Anyway, what I am envisaging for you is not jail-going. So keep yourself immersed in your work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapaki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 278 and 279

99. DISCUSSION WITH DR. CHESTERMAN[3]

SEGAON,
February 13, 1939

. . . He said he had been overwhelmed with the perplexity of Indian problems and naturally the medical ones had taken first place in his mind. When he heard that 2

[1] On being separated from Kasturba, Manibehn had refused to take food till she was taken back to her.

[2] 'Mani' means a jewel.

[3] Extracted from Amrit Kaur's "A Good Samaritan". Dr. Chesterman was the medical secretary of the English Baptist Mission and had come to India to attend the International Missionary Conference at Tambaram and to visit various mission hospitals.

lakhs of women die yearly from child-birth, 1 lakh from smallpox, 36 lakhs from indiscriminate fevers, that there are 10 lakhs of lepers and 6 lakhs of blind persons, he confessed he was appalled with the immensity of the task of both preventive and curative medicine. He was not sure whether Gandhiji was aware of the fact that there were 266 mission hospitals and 500 dispensaries in India, 254 European and 350 Indian doctors, 300 European and 800 Indian nurses, 2 million patients seen and 5 million treated per annum in these hospitals, that half of the T. B. work and almost the entire work of lepers was in the hands of missions. While, of course, the work of conversion was there, and he knew Gandhiji's opinion on this subject, he wanted to draw attention to the fact that three quarters of their medical work lay in areas where there was no response to religious teaching . . . He would, therefore, much like to have Gandhiji's opinion on how the work could be most fruitfully developed and how far they could count on support and co-operation.

In reply Gandhiji said that the answer was difficult and yet simple at the same time.

I hold peculiar views on the function of medicine. I expressed these very forcibly years ago, and nothing in all the course of my long experience since has made me change them in essence. But there is no need for me to expound these to you now. I have visited many mission hospitals, seen the wonderful work of the missionaries among lepers. This work may be called their monopoly and speciality, for practically no one else has come in to take it up. I know the Leper Home in Cuttack. I have spent quite a long time in the Purulia Leper Asylum and been very struck with the work there. Then I have seen Mrs. Higginbotham's work in Allahabad and several other places, too, for I love to visit leper homes. But in spite of all this admiration of mine for the work of medical missionaries there has always been mental reservation and criticism within me. I have felt that these good and weh-intentioned missionaries have not touched the fringe of the question. Certainly good work has been done for lepers, for the blind, for sufferers from T. B. and other ailments, but the help has not really touched the suffering millions of this great land. Medical aid has been made available in the main to those who live in or near the cities—whereas the bulk of India's population in our villages has been untouched. Provincial Governments, even Congress Governments, are appalled at the need of the villager. They do not know what to do and nothing great has yet been done in spite of various experiments. Therefore, if I were asked to advise missionaries or Mission Boards, I would ask them not to try to transplant the entire system of Western

medicine into India. We cannot afford it. There is ever so much to be gleaned and had from the study of indigenous drugs and medicines, but practically very little work has been done in this department. No one has made it his business to go out into our fields and search and much of the indigenous talent, simply because it is not considered original or scientific, is running to waste. I will give you an incident which happened only today. As you may know, I have had a little swelling on one foot for some days now which has alarmed the doctors because they feel that it is a sign denotative of commencing disintegration of the heart and kidneys. One of my co-workers here—you may call him almost an illiterate man—was very troubled, as all are, about me and tells me he could not sleep last night. This morning he brought me a green leaf and told me that it had cured his father of the same trouble and begged of me to try it also. I had no hesitation in acceding to his proposal—whereas if I had had a bewildering prescription given me by a highly qualified doctor my reaction would not have been the same. I feel, therefore, that in these simple ways lies relief for the villager. I do not say that the leaf will answer the purpose. But there should be an agency that can say with certainty what these herbs are and what is their quality.

Gandhiji then went on to explain that he had no prejudice against Western medicine or doctors. He had today sent for glucose for Mr. Kallenbach, a South African friend of his who was lying ill with malaria and who was refusing to take quinine, a drug in which Gandhiji himself had implicit faith.

Here, Dr. Chesterman interposed and said that quinine was an indigenous drug to which Gandhiji replied that though that was so it was a monopoly and therefore very expensive and utterly beyond the reach of the villager.

I should, therefore, like to see missionaries as medicine vendors for the villages, confining themselves, as far as they can, to indigenous medicines. There will certainly not be gold medals or knighthoods from Government forthcoming for them for this valuable research work. But, in my opinion, they will obtain what is of far greater value, a knighthood from Jesus Christ.

Proceeding, Gandhiji said that he had felt for a long time that the medical faculty in India should manufacture a short course of training for village workers, and had told Surgeon General Hooten of Bombay so, many years ago. Village school-teachers should be utilized for this purpose. They should look upon the entire village as under their jurisdiction from the point of view of health and teach the simple laws of hygiene and prevention of disease to the inhabitants. Their schools

could be used as dispensaries for the distribution of ordinary medicines for simple ailments. He gave the analogy of the useful six weeks first-aid training which he himself had had to undergo before he could form and lead the ambulance corps which he did during the Boer War.

. . . Dr. Chesterman then asked Gandhiji his opinion on expenditure on buildings and elaborate equipment for hospitals. Gandhiji replied saying that he had always been opposed to this and was invariably trying to wean people from spending on what was unnecessary when for so much that was urgently needed money was lacking. Big hospitals did not help the poor man in the long run for they did not educate him to understand how he ought to look after his health once he left the hospital.

DR. CHESTERMAN: What contribution can medical missionaries make towards the raising of ethical standards in professional life?

GANDHIJI: They can help, but I do not feel they can do much according to my measurement. You may think me uncharitable, but so long as the mental reservation is there that medical missionaries would like all their patients and co-workers to become converts to Christianity, so long will there remain a bar to real brotherhood. Then there is the additional handicap that they belong to the ruling race and that is responsible for their aloofness. Missionaries have not learnt the maxim 'When you go to Rome do as Rome does'. They retain everything of the West in their daily lives forgetting that clothes and food and modes of life are in response to climate and to surroundings and adjustment, therefore, becomes necessary. They have not stooped to conquer. The gulf of mutual distrust exists and there is, therefore, no easy passage between the medical missionary and the medical profession in India.

Dr. Chesterman disputed this statement. He maintained that there was any amount of goodwill also. He had met a Hindu friend in Bombay who had definitely assured him that there was need for mission hospitals because Indians got greater consideration and greater compassion there than in Government institutions.

Asked whether mission hospitals were justified in taking fees from those able to afford them, unlike Government institutions where money was generally extracted by the subordinate staff in undesirable ways, Gandhiji said he saw no reason against it.

The last question Dr. Chesterman asked was whether Gandhiji's objection to conversion applied to areas like the Kond Hills where the aboriginal races were animists. The unhesitating reply was:

Yes. It does apply, because I know that in spite of being

described as animists these tribes have from time immemorial been absorbed in Hinduism. They are, like the indigenous medicine, of the soil, and their roots lie deep there. But you can only endorse this if you feel that Hinduism is as true as Christianity. I hold that all religions are true but imperfect inasmuch as they are presented through human agency and bear the impress of the imperfections and frailties of the human being. My quarrel with missionaries is that they think no religion other than Christianity is true.

In parting from Gandhiji, while thanking him for the time he had given and hoping the conversation had not unduly tired him, Dr. Chesterman implored Gandhiji to continue to appeal to the best that was in them. The feeling answer that greatly touched Dr. Chesterman was:

I am making that appeal incessantly from the innermost recesses of my heart. That is of far more value than the written word although I have indulged in that also.

Harijan, 25-2-1939

100. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON,
February 14, 1939

CHI. NARANDAS,

Is your work going on well? How did you manage to fall ill ?

A letter for Shaikh Chandbhai is enclosed.

If there is anything which you think might interest me, write to me.

I am not quite well, but there is no cause for worry just now.

Can you or Gokibehn get permission to see Ba?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8555. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

101. LETTER TO GULAM RASOOL QURESHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 14, 1939

CHI. QURESHI,

Amtul Salaam had a talk with me but I completely forgot to write to you. There is no need to feel hesitant about accepting money for social service. I have already talked about it. You can start drawing money the moment you are relieved from the perfumery business. You have to bear in mind that you are not to incur debts.

I have already explained to you about the children, haven't I? You can give them religious education at home and general education along with other children. Sultana might perhaps study in the Harijan Ashram as the other girls do. I could not ask Narahari whether you could get a place in the Ashram and later forgot about it. I am now having him consulted.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10765. Courtesy: Gulam Rasool Qureshi

102. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

February 14, 1939

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your letter. The President is coming today. On the 16th Swarup[1] and Appa[2] (Aundh) are also coming. Kallenbach is on death-bed. I am just watching God's greatness. Chesterman[3] arrived yesterday. He is an efficient doctor. Now he has started on his routine.

[1] Vijayalakshmi Pandit
[2] Appasaheb Pant
[3] Dr. Chesterman was the medical secretary of the English Baptist Mission and had come to India to attend the International Missionary Conference at Tambaram and to visit various mission hospitals.

For the sake of Kallenbach he has postponed his departure. Otherwise we had decided to call a specialist from Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

103. LETTER TO SURESH SINGH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 14, 1939

BHAI SURESH,

I have not so far considered civil disobedience nor do I find an atmosphere for it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8691. Also C.W. 2893. Courtesy: Suresh Singh

104. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 15, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

I had your second letter. Time will put everything right. Have patience. Everything, since it is new to you, must appear strange. Ultimately you will get used to things. Have courage. You must have received my letter.

Mr. Kallenbach was seriously ill but is better now. Your absence is often felt here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10009. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

105. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 15, 1939

CHI. VIJAYA,

We have already begun feeling lonely without you. One misses your voice at the prayer. But that is the way of the world. Meeting, parting, again meeting, and again parting will go on and we should remain unaffected by them.

You should now understand your dharma. Conjugal dharma is easy as well as difficult. It is easy for one who understands it. You should become one with Manubhai and Manubhai should become one with you. But there is no scope for bargaining. There can be no bargaining in dharma. Dharma has to be performed by oneself. So it is certain that you have to become one with Manubhai who may or may not become one with you. This means that your entire spiritual riches should be surrendered to him. And so you both should lift each other higher and higher but never bring each other down. Brighten up the atmosphere there as you filled the house with joy here. If you have understood the *Gita* you will be cheerful in whatever condition you may be placed.

Absorb yourself in the school work. There can hardly be any news to give, seeing that it is not quite two hours since you left. But Prabha will come tomorrow. This will also be despatched tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4599. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

106. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

[Before *February 16, 1939*][1]

BA,

I have your letter and Mani's. You must go through all the tests.

[1]*Vide* "Letter to Kasturba Gandhi", 16-2-1939, in which Gandhiji says, "Kallenbach is better."

Letters have already gone from here. Enquire from the officer there. Mr. Kallenbach has fallen ill. It is a severe illness. Lilavati observes fast on Mondays. I am not writing separately to Mani.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 33

107. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 16, 1939

MY DEAR C.R.,

If you can, you should give him notice about the passages marked by me and ask him to apologize and promise not to repeat the performance. But you will be right in prosecuting him straightway.

Do read the enclosed from Tatachar. You can't govern by mere cold reason. But you are the man on the spot. You must act according to your lights not mine.

Pray don't ask me to cover the spinning prices. Do listen to those who ask you to take care of your health.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2174

108. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

February 16, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

Is it my fault that you do not receive the letters I write you? I hope you have become calm now. Vijaya left yesterday, crying. Many others have come. Among them are Yashoda and Sarup.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10005. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

109. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

February 16, 1939

BA,

I write to you every day. What can I do if you do not get my letters? Just as there is now no cause for worry about you, there was never any cause for worry about me. Subhas Babu has already arrived. Others keep coming and going. Mr. Kallenbach is better. Kanam is well. He not only eats with me but also sleeps with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 33

110. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 16, 1939

CHI. MANI,

I have received your long letter and other letters. I have been impressed by all your actions. I can find no fault. I see that you have understood the principle of satyagraha very well. I am therefore completely at ease.

I don't get a telegram from Government every day. I have had two or three. From here letters have gone every day. In the beginning I wrote at the address you gave. Then I wrote to the Government as to why my letters were not reaching you. They sent me a telegram advising me to route my letters through the First Member. I now act accordingly.

I do receive a letter from your end every day. I am therefore content.

I do not write separately to Mridu. She should not worry. Is the burden of work there so little that she should take up that of the Congress, too?

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. MANIBEHN PATEL
STATE PRISONER
C/O FIRST MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL
RAJKOT (KATHIAWAR)

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro- 4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 124

111. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 17, 1939

CHI. BABUDI

If you do not receive my letters Sent to you at the Bombay address given by you, is it my fault or yours? I have even the dates with me. It will be better if you come here now. It is not good to fall ill. My going to Bardoli has been cancelled.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I myself open your letters.

From Gujarati: C.W. 10006. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

112. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

WARDHA,
February 18, 1939

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
LUCKY
CALCUTTA

TELL BIDHAN BARDOLI CANCELLED. NO ANXIETY.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 7808. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

113. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

SEGAON,
February 18, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letters. I have written or asked somebody to write to you almost every day. It is difficult to forget you. My eye always turns towards where you used to sleep, but to what good? It won't do your having a chronic fever. If it persists, you had better come to me in good time. If you do not use a mosquito-net, start

using one now. I am quite well. But do not keep me worried about you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati. C.W. 10007. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

114. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

SEGAON,
February 18, 1939

BA,

Letters have been sent to you every day. But if you do not get them what can one do? You need not worry about me. Even if I am in a really bad way I shall expect you to say: 'If it is willed that he should die during separation, he will. I on my part will stay where my children are being tortured. I shall be even more happy if I am sent to jail. All of you should help me in making Thakore Saheb fulfil his promise. I would prefer to die in Rajkot, if you do not make use of my services.' Since you have gone there of your own accord, you may voice these sentiments if they arise in your heart. You should think on these lines.

You are always telling me to take service from the girls. But I have altogether given that up now. Sushila does the massage. That also will have to be abandoned, won't it? I have not been able to give it up because of my present bad health. Do not worry about me even in this respect. Is not God my ultimate support?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 33

115. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 18, 1939

CHI. VIJAYA,

I hope you are completely at ease and happy there. I would not like your being the least bit unhappy; it will be a blot on my training. There should not be the slightest resistance to mutual adjustment.

Write to me a detailed letter. How are you settled ? How do you find the climate and the surroundings?

Amritlal had a little fever today. Even a slight change has its effect. There is nothing to worry about. Mr. Kallenbach is fairly improved although the fever is still there.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Write a letter to Ba.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7108. Also C.W. 4600. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

116. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL AND MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEGAON,
February 18, 1939

CHI. . MANI AND MRIDULA,

It is God's grace that you both are there. I would be happy if all three of you were here together. But we have to live as God wills.

You do not have to worry about Subhas Babu and others. As far as that is concerned you are in jail. I shall act as God directs me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro- 4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 125

117. NOTES

JAIPUR

After all the Jaipur Durbar has been obliged to arrest Seth Jamnalalji. It is reported that he is decently housed though kept in an out-of-the-way place under a strong guard. There seems to be secrecy about everything. I suggest that the authorities make a public statement as to his whereabouts, the facilities given to him and the conditions as to correspondence and interviews. Is medical assistance

easily available?

But if what one hears about Shekhavati is true, the detention and treatment under detention of Sethji is of minor account. In the absence of detailed news on behalf of the State the public are bound to give credence to the statements appearing in the Press.

SEGAON, February 20, 1939

TRUE SWADESHI

If I have to use the adjective 'true' before swadeshi, a critic may well ask, 'Is there also false swadeshi?' Unfortunately I have to answer 'yes'. As, since the days of khadi, I am supposed to be an authority on swadeshi, numerous conundrums are presented to me by correspondents. And I have been obliged to distinguish between the two kinds of swadeshi. If foreign capital is mixed with indigenous, or if foreign talent is mixed with indigenous, is the enterprise swadeshi? There are other questions too. But I had better reproduce the definition I gave to a Minister the other day. "Any article is swadeshi if it subserves the interest of the millions, even though the capital and talent are foreign but under effective Indian control." Thus khadi of the definition of the A. I. S. A. would be true swadeshi even though the capital may be all foreign and there may be Western specialists employed by the Indian Board. Conversely, Bata's rubber or other shoes would be foreign though the labour employed may be all Indian and the capital also found by India. The manufacture will be doubly foreign because the control will be in foreign hands and the article, no matter how cheap it is, will oust the village tanner mostly and the village *mochi*[1] always. Already the *mochis* of Bihar have begun to feel the unhealthy competition. The Bata shoe may be the saving of Europe; it will mean the death of our village shoemaker and tanner. I have given two telling illustrations, both partly imaginary. For in the A. I. S. A. the capital is all indigenous and the whole of the talent also. But I would love to secure the engineering talent of the West to give me a village wheel which will beat the existing wheels, though deep down in me I have the belief that the improvements that indigenous talent has made are by no means to be despised. But this is a digression. I do hope that those Ministers and others who guide or

[1] Cobbler

serve the public will cultivate the habit of distinguishing between true and false swadeshi.

SEGAON, February 20, 1939

Harijan, 25-2-1939

118. TRAVANCORE AGAIN

I take the following from Shri Ramachandran's letter to the Rajkumari:

> I know there is nothing we can expect unless we burn ourselves out peacefully and truthfully for the cause for which we stand. You must have seen how at the last meeting of the Working Committee of the State Congress we laid down a time limit of six weeks before commencing a programme of civil resistance. God is witness that we are anxious for peace. But there has been no enquiry into shootings which took place in nine places. Many lawyers convicted during the last campaign have been debarred from practising for two years. 19 members of the State Congress Party in the Legislature have been disqualified just on the eve of the present session now sitting. Government had ample time to notify disqualification earlier and order has been made to destroy the State Congress volunteer organization under another iniquitous regulation brought into force for that specific purpose. Just now there are over 200 political prisoners. Many respectable people have been arrested under section 90 meant for security proceedings against *goondas*. Fresh accommodation has been added in the central jail. Over 1,000 special police have been recruited from among bad elements at the astounding monthly salary of Rs. 5. Can anything beat that? And as though the Travancore police trusted cannot beto do the dirty work, numerous police constables have been recruited from outside Travancore. The Government's policy of repression has gone on unabated, without fuss and without precipitating a frontal battle. That is why we feel compelled to lay down a time limit of six weeks. I wish you to study carefully the papers I have sent to Bapu—specially the two resolutions we passed at the last meeting of the Working Committee. I am oppressed with the idea that Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyer's policy will create a gulf between the Ruler and the people.

I have refrained from giving in these columns the resolutions and the preface referred to in the letters. It is well for the reader to have these before him to enable him to judge what the State Congress is doing. They will be found elsewhere in this issue.

The documents make painful reading. What has happened since

the amnesty has robbed it of the grace that should accompany generous amnesties as this one on the birthday of the Maharaja was claimed to be. It was a spontaneous gesture. After events seem to suggest that it was no gesture of generosity, but that it was a part of the tactics adopted by the authorities to allay the agitation that was rising against the Travancore Durbar and to divide the people in Travancore. If the information given by Shri Ramachandran is correct, the second object has not been gained and the first was partly- achieved. For the Indian Press was inclined to believe, after the release of prisoners, that the fight was over.

I would love to think that there was no sinister motive behind the partial amnesty. If so, it seems to me to be quite easy to conciliate the State Congress, unless crushing, not conciliation, is the aim of the authorities. Let the amnesty be completed and Reforms Committee be appointed in consultation with the State Congress, and peace between the Prince and the people is assured.

But there may be no such good fortune either for the people or the Prince. In that case the State Congressmen should remember that satyagraha, if it is the greatest force in the world, requires also the capacity for the greatest suffering with a heart without anger or malice. Whilst it is right to publish the news about the doings of the oppressor, there must be infinite patience for endless suffering and yet a burning faith in the ultimate success of truth.

It is well that the Congress has fixed upon a six weeks' limit. But if it is found that six weeks are not enough for ensuring non-violence as far as it is humanly possible and for also ensuring continuity of constructive work, there would be no shame but additional credit in taking further postponement. If thoughtless persons and unkind critics regard such postponement as a sign of weakness, the fighters need not mind such imputations. After all the soldier knows when to stay his hand and when to move on. He knows that often there is action in so-called inaction and imprudent action is worse than real inaction. And weak is not he who is so called but he who feels that he is weak. Let the members of the Working Committee realize that the technique of non-violent action requires general and effective control over forces of violence, no matter how or by whom instigated. If and when the struggle is resumed, I hope that in answer to my wires I will not be told that the State Congress is not responsible for violence if it breaks out. Does not responsible government mean that the people,

instead of a dictator appointed by a Paramount Power, are responsible for all the acts of the people? Let them realize that if violence breaks out on any appreciable scale, it might, very probably will, be a call for another suspension, even as there was suspension in Bardoli, though violence broke out in far-off Chauri Chaura.[1]

SEGAON, February 20, 1939
Harijan, 25-2-1939

119. LAWLESS LIMBDI

Limbdi is a Kathiawar State. It had the reputation of being progressive. I have the good fortune to know many of its workers. They are wise, self-sacrificing and capable of doing hard work. In common with many States, Limbdi also had a great awakening among the people. The workers used to boast of their progressive Yuvraj. But they have now discovered that he has imbibed some curious notions of the dictatorships of the West. He would let the reformers have a free run of little Limbdi. But they must not go to the villages. In the villages he was to make his own experiments unhindered by anybody. The Limbdi reformers thought that they had as much right as the Yuvraj to work among the villagers, especially as they had already established connection with them. They therefore dared to go to the villages, with the result mentioned in the following telegram:

> At least eighty persons, armed with lathis, *dharias*, native guns, swords, axes, attacked village Pansina midnight fifth. Entrances of village were guarded by batches of three to five persons. Two batches of twenty persons went round village and selected houses of Prajamandal workers and sympathizers for dacoity. First of all they went to the Prajamandal office and chained it from outside so that volunteers could not go out. Then one batch went to house of Chhotalal, prominent merchant and Prajamandal worker, and brutally assaulted him and his wife. She received serious injuries including on her sex organs. President of local branch attacked with sword and received punctured wound in lungs. About thirty persons are seriously injured. Ornaments, cash and goods worth about sixty thousand rupees taken away from ten to twelve houses of active members of Prajamandal. Dacoits continuously carried on firing in air and at houses for about two hours. After

[1] *Vide* "The Crime of Chauri Chaura"

this they went to another village, Ralol, two miles away from Pansina and repeated process there. Three goldsmiths and one bania sympathizing with popular movement have been seriously wounded and property worth ten thousand rupees taken away. One bania Jeychand Valji was attacked today with knife, stabbed at four places and plundered in Siani; his sister also beaten. People have strong grounds to suspect State Officers' hand in dacoity. Some dacoits were identified as Pagis and Pasayatas of State. Prajamandal workers and sympathizers were actually being threatened since last week by State Pagis, Pasayatas that they will be robbed and beaten. Stolen property removed in about eight motor-cars and two buses which could not have been supplied by private individuals. Dacoits continued firing in air for two hours using number of cartridges which could not have been supplied by private individual. State police has not started any investigation as yet. Even *panchanamas* have not been made. No medical aid sent by State from capital. Thakore Saheb even though approached has not taken any strong action. Threats of similar dacoity are being given by State Pasayatas in other villages. Previous incidents of *goondaism* strengthen this suspicion. Attacking Bhaktiba's car with lathis in Jambu by Mukhi's men, smashing Prajamandal car and beating its driver and worker in Siani, beating members of Prajamandal in village Raska, threatening head of volunteers in Siani by village Pasayatas with death, free movement of about thirty *goondas* with lathis, *dharias*, knives in Siani and number of such incidents have left no doubt here that organized *goondaism* is started by State to suppress recently started popular movement. Attention of Thakore Saheb has been drawn to these incidents times without number but in vain. As protest against last act of dacoity about 400 to 500 persons including Nagarsheth Lalchandbhai and prominent citizens like Durlabhji Umedchand, Amulakh Amichand have started hunger strike and are sitting day and night before Palace. About three thousand other persons have joined this morning. Great indignation prevails against State. People observing remarkably non-violent attitude and are prepared for any contingency.

They also dared to announce a meeting of their Parishad with the result embodied in the following message received by me:

Sitting Praja Parishad arranged tomorrow. To break Praja Parishad many *goondas* imported Limbdi. People suspect hand of State officials in this. Strong grounds for this suspicion. Procession of *goondas* armed with lathis, naked swords, guns, *dharias*, marching through town for whole day. Some of these tried to assault certain women. Seth Amulakh Amichand, prominent merchant of Bombay, intervened and asked them to beat him rather than women. Seth Durlabhji Umedchand and Bhagwanlal Harakhchand rushed to

scene with six male volunteers. Male volunteers were brutally assaulted with sticks and beaten. At another place *goondas* caught hold of Prahladrai Mody, pleader of Bhavnagar, and released him only when they knew that he was not Prajamandal worker. Bhogilal Gandhi was threatened with death by *goonda* armed with naked sword. Manubhai Thakar was given one lathi blow. *Goondas* are shouting before Prajamandal office. Batch of *goondas,* headed by Tapubha of Siani who is State servant and who beat Prajamandal volunteers in Siani two days before, have stationed themselves outside Sthanakvasi Bhojanshala where peasants from villages are sleeping. They threaten anybody who comes out with death. Different batches of *goondas* are marching streets. Practically state of siege amounting to virtual martial law by State prevails. People feel that State is responsible for this. Narubha, superintendent of police, was seen talking with some of these by respectable people. Many peasants are forcibly brought from villages and made to parade streets in procession headed by these *goondas*. People have adopted remarkably non-violent attitude and have decided to suffer anything for asserting their right to meet in Parishad.

I have since learnt that Durbar Gopaldas Desai and his wife Bhaktiba were surrounded by the same gentlemen described in the message. Both suffered minor injuries. The *goondas* had the satisfaction for a time of preventing the meeting of the Parishad. I have no reason whatsoever for disbelieving the messages which describe the events with a wealth of detail that carries conviction. What is more, they are sent by parties whom I hold to be incapable of conscious exaggeration or of invention.

In spite of this lawlessness, the reformers will win if they have grit enough to be ground to the dust and if they really represent the wishes of the people. The public outside will help them. The Paramount Power is also bound by treaty obligations to help them as has been amply proved by Pyarelal in the extracts produced from Lee Warner. But let the satyagrahis know that salvation comes from within. They will have to lose all, if they will save their souls and gain the freedom which is their birthright.

SEGAON, February 20, 1939

Harijan, 25-2-1939

120. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 20, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. I see that you are getting wiser. With patience all will be well. You have done well in getting rid of the fever. Engage yourself in work now. Take the diet which suits you.

My tour of the Frontier Province is likely to be after the 12th. I am well. It does not seem probable that I shall be going for the Congress session.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10008. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

121. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

SEGAON,
February 20, 1939

BA,

Be alert. Take care of your health. Everybody has come so I shall not write much. Nanavati has gone to stay with Kaka today.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 34

122. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 20, 1939

CHI. VIJAYA,

You must have received my letters. How bad you are! Why should you feel giddy? Why should you feel so unhappy going to your own house? Be wise and do your duty cheerfully. Your constantly falling ill won't do. Write to Ba. Address the letter care of

the First Member. Write to others also.

Amritlal has gone to live with Kakasaheb today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7110. Also C.W. 4602. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

123. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA SHARMA

SEGAON, WARDHA,

February 20, 1939

BHAI BALKRISHNA SHARMA,

What have they been doing in Kanpur? Why all this rioting?[1] Did not another Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi[2] offer himself as a sacrifice ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7516. Also C.W. 4993. Courtesy: Parasuram Mehrotra

124. TELEGRAM TO AKBAR HYDARI[3]

WARDHA,

February 21, 1939

SIR AKBAR HYDARI

HYDERABAD DN

IN REPLY YOUR TELEGRAM HAS BEEN RECEIVED FROM SHOLAPUR. NARAYANSWAMI INTERVIEWED AFTER PERMISSION BY OUR REPRESENTATIVE SUNDERPERSHAD ON SEVEN-

[1] There had been communal riots in Kanpur from 11th to 13th February, 1939.

[2] Editor of *Pratap;* he had been killed during the Hindu-Muslim riots in Kanpur in March 1931.

[3] Photostats of these items were displayed at the Gandhi Darshan Exhibition held in New Delhi in 1969-70. Illegible in the source *Vide* "Letter to Akbar Hydari"

TEENTH GULBARGA JAIL . . . .[1] WITH CONVICT DRESS AND IRON RING IN HIS FOOT.

GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10097. Courtesy: Government of Andhra Pradesh

125. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 21, 1939

DEAR SIR AKBAR,

Here is a letter on the Arya Samaj satyagraha. Their demand seems to me to be reasonable. But I do not want to say anything in public till I hear from you.

I still await your reply to my letter[4] about State Congress.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10096. Courtesy: Government of Andhra Pradesh

126. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 21, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I am much obliged to you for your cordial and frank letter.[1] In the circumstances I shall await the time that you may consider appropriate for our meeting.

I am,
Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also C.W. 7810

[1] In his letter of February 19, the Viceroy had referred to Gandhiji's letter to him of February 12 and said he did not "in the least misunderstand your decision to publish the article which you were kind enough to let me see." (This was the one entitled "Jaipur", 30-1-1939, which Gandhiji in his letter of 31-1-1939, had said he was not publishing and which evidently he decided later to publish.) He had also referred to Gandhiji's suggestion that they might meet and said he did not see the time was appropriate but nevertheless if Gandhiji still felt they might meet it would be a great pleasure to him to see Gandhiji again but would prefer that it should be after his Rajputana tour.

127. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 21, 1939

MY DEAR PLAYMATE,

I hope you are making substantial progress. Await me in Delhi. I have to be there for the Hindu Temple on 18th March.[1]

Love.

SLAVE-DRIVER

SHRI PADMAJA NAIDU
20 CURZON ROAD
NEW DELHI

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

128. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

SEGAON ,
February 21, 1939

BA,

I get your letters regularly. My letters are despatched regularly from here. I shall find out why they are not delivered to you in time. Take proper care of your health. I must get a detailed report. Prabha will write the rest. I have not been able to look after Sushila's diet. You did well in cautioning me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 34

[1] Gandhiji had been invited to perform the opening ceremony of the Lakshmi Narayan Temple and the Buddha Vihar; *vide* also "Statement to the Press", 18-3-1939

129. TALK TO HYDERABAD STATE CONGRESS DELEGATION[1]

SEGAON,
February 21, 1939

A satyagrahi will, like a general, always choose his own time and ground for fight. Satyagraha should be kept in reserve until all other means of advancing the cause are exhausted. Even in armed warfare, suspensions and withdrawals are the recognized tactics.

Suspension does not exclude facing imprisonment if in the course of legitimate, peaceful and constructive activities people are arrested. These will not constitute civil disobedience. Your decision to continue the suspension is a wise one. You have lost nothing by suspension. There is nothing to prevent you from resuming the satyagraha when the situation again demands it and there is ample cause to compel you to revive satyagraha.

The Hindu, 22-2-1939

130. A MISCHIEVOUS SUGGESTION

A correspondent sends the following cutting from *The Bombay Chronicle:*

> Mr. Rushbrook Williams in a letter to *The Manchester Guardian* declares that during the last few months of last year there was a definite progress by the Right Wing elements of the Congress High Command towards a position in which Mahatma Gandhi would have found it possible to approach the authorities with suggestions in relation to the Central Government, roughly corresponding to those which he so successfully carried through in connection with the Provincial Governments. What was then regarded as the approach of Federation compelled the Congress to reckon up its forces. It had little Muslim support and without such support, thanks to the Muslim League, and unless it found new allies, it will be unable to form a Government in the Centre. Therefore it was necessary to concentrate on Indian States in order to secure that the representations of States should be drawn from elements sympathizing with the Congress programme.

[1] The Delegation had informed Gandhiji of the State Congress decision to continue suspension of the satyagraha for some time more. The satyagraha was suspended on or about 26-12-1938. *Vide* "Draft of Statement for Hyderabad State Congress", Before 26-12-1938, and "Letter to Akbar Hydari", 26-12-1938

He adds: "It is not without significance that Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya is intimately associated with the States Subjects' Conference, but the election of Mr. Bose has been a blow to the Right Wing and apparently has postponed any *rapprochement* with the authorities as the High Command had in mind. Mr. Bose does not like the States, but he also does not like Federation. He can, therefore, have little sympathy with an endeavour to convert States into allies of the Congress in preparation for a Congress domination over the new Central institutions. In fact he desires to keep them at arm's length to secure a settlement of British Indian destinies by British India and eventually no doubt to expel the Princes and absorb the States into the new self-governing India he projects."

Mr. Williams is an old 'enemy'. During the non-co-operation days he edited an official Year Book, in which he drew upon his imagination and gave his own colour to facts which he could not avoid. He has played the same role again in his letter to *The Manchester Guardian*, assuming that he is correctly quoted. It is wrong to say that there was a definite or any progress by the Right Wing elements of the Congress High Command towards the position pictured by Mr. Williams's imagination. The suggestion about Muslim support is malicious. I know my own mind and so far as I know the Congress mind, neither it nor I ever dreamt that there could be any federation without Muslim support. Indeed so long as there is opposition to federation by the Muslims, the Congress has no need to worry about federation coming. Therefore, unless there is perfect communal unity, no Congressman can think or talk of federation whether of the Government mint or cent per cent swadeshi mint.

About Dr. Pattabhi, the whole of India knows that his candidature was thought of at the last moment when Maulana Saheb withdrew and as Dr. Pattabhi was the only candidate left besides Subhas Babu. His connection with the States People's Conference has been a convenient fact for building up Mr. Williams's case.

As for the innuendos about Subhas Babu, he is well able to look after himself. But throughout one year's intimate connection with him I never once heard him say of the States what Mr. Williams attributes to him. I am quite certain that if the States come to terms with the Congress about the treatment of the people in their jurisdiction, Subhas Babu will be quite as keen as any Congressman to close the bargain but not in anticipation of federation.

I have come into the States agitation by accident. Responsible

government in the States is a goal by itself and independent of federation which may never come. It won't come till the Congress and Muslims are ready for it. But liberty of the States people has to Come in any and every case. They cannot be in chains and what is called British India become free.

SEGAON, February 23, 1939

Harijan, 4-3-1939

131. TELEGRAM TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI[1]

[*February 23, 1939*][2]

RT. HONOURABLE SASTRI

MADRAS

NEVER KNEW ANYTHING WAS SERIOUS IN YOUR UNIVERSITY. FULL LETTER RECEIVED YESTERDAY GAVE ME SHOCK. MY HEART WENT OUT TO YOU. I PITY STUDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN SO UNWORTHY OF YOUR GREAT STEWARDSHIP.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

132. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

SEGAON,
February 23, 1939

BA,

You always complain about my not writing, but today there is no letter from you. What about that? All is well here. Nothing to worry about.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 34

[1] At this time Vice-Cancellor of Annamalai University
[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press? 23-2-1939

133. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

February 23, 1939

I continue to receive daily wires about hunger-strikes in Rajkot over the treatment, said to be inhuman, of prisoners and others in villages. The Rajkot matter is becoming daily graver because of the breach of faith on the ruler's part with which the second struggle started. Agitated inquirers should know that I am in telegraphic correspondence with the State authorities. I hope to take them into confidence in the near future. In the mean time let the satyagrahis understand that the first thing they have to show is an infinite capacity for suffering with inward joy and without malice or anger.

The Hindustan Times, 24-2-1939

134. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

February 23, 1939

The news of Lord Brabourne's death has grieved me deeply.[2] I had the privilege of close friendship with him.

The Hindu, 24-2-1939

135. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[3]

February 23, 1939

I saw yesterday a letter[4] from Annamalai University, addressed to a colleague, giving a detailed description of the students' strike. According to the letter, the strikers prostrate themselves in front of the entrances to prevent non-strikers from attending classes and when the classes are held, they enter the class-rooms, shout, and otherwise make holding of classes impossible. The letter ends by saying that the strikers are likely to give up the strike if they know that, in my

[1] This was also published in *Harijan*, 4-3-1939, under the title "Gandhiji's Statement on Rajkot".

[2] Lord Brabourne had served as Governor in Bombay and Bengal. He died in Calcutta on February 23.

[3] This was also published in *Harijan*, 4-3-1939, under the heading "Students' Strike at Annamalai".

[4] *Vide* "Is It Non-violent?"

opinion, the methods adopted by them are contrary to non-violence.

If the description reproduced by me is correct, I have no hesitation in saying that the methods adopted by the strikers are not only not non-violent but positively violent. I would implore the strikers to desist from the methods they have adopted and allow those who want to attend classes to do so without any obstruction.

The Hindu, 23-2-1939

136. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE VICEROY

February 24, 1939

PRIVATE SECRETARY TO HIS EXCELLENCY VICEROY

NEW DELHI

HAVE WIRED TO FIRST MEMBER RAJKOT AS FOLLOWS:[1] PLEASE PLACE THIS BEFORE HIS EXCELLENCY.

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7811. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

137. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

SEGAON,
February 24, 1939

BA,

You should be receiving letters regularly now. I take as much service as necessary from the girls. Keep up patience and courage. All will be well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 34

[1] For the text of this telegram, *vide* "Statement to the Press", 25-2-1939

138. TALK WITH AN ASHRAM INMATE[1]

SEGAON,
February 24, 1939

Who knows. But somehow I think it would not happen that way. I expect this visit to be brief. My relations with the Rajkot ruling family are such as to warrant a frank talk. Either the Thakore Saheb will restore the pact or he will refer me to the Resident and I shall settle it up with him in no time. The case is so clear that I do not expect any serious resistance. It will be a test of my ahimsa too. People may think that I am gone crazy in my old age to give so much importance to a small State like Rajkot. But I am made that way. When the moral fibre in me is touched to the quick I simply cannot sit still.

Harijan, 25-3-1939

139. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

[Before *February 25, 1939*][2]

CHI. VIJAYA,

I am now coming nearer you. It does not mean that you both have to come over to Rajkot. Take care of your health. Do not fall ill. I hope you are cheerful now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7105

140. WORK INSTEAD OF ALMS[3]

To those who are hungry and unemployed God can dare reveal Himself only as work and wages as the assurance of food.

I do not want to humiliate the naked by giving them clothes of

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "The Rajkot Fast". On hearing about Gandhiji's decision to go to Rajkot an Ashram inmate had asked him when he expected to return and whether there was not a chance of his being made a 'State guest' at Rajkot like Kasturba.

[2] Gandhiji left for Rajkot on February 25.

[3] This was originally published in *Sarvodaya*, a monthly organ of Gandhi Seva Sangh.

which they have no need. Instead I will give them work which they need very badly. I will never commit the sin of becoming their benefactor. But having realized that I had a hand in their ruination, I will give them a respectable place in society. I will never give them left-overs and discarded things. I will share with them my best food and clothes and help them in their work. My ahimsa will not tolerate giving free food to a healthy person who does not put in honest labour. If I had my say I would close down all charitable institutions and alms-houses. It is because of them the country has fallen and such vices as laziness, hypocrisy and crime have got encouragement.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 25-2-1939

141. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 25, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

My telegram to the Rajkot State of yesterday was wired to you last night.[1] Nevertheless I attach a copy of it as also of the Rajkot answer and my reply thereto.

For me Rajkot has become a moral issue of tremendous importance. I am sure you recognize it and will give me all the help you can.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to the Viceroy", 24-2-1939 and "Statement to the Press", 25-2-1939

142. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI[1]

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 25, 1939

DEAR SIR AKBAR,

I am obliged to you for your two letters of the 16th and one of the 21st inst.

About the State Congress, for the time being, we must agree to differ. You will have seen my advice[2] to the State Congress. In order to make assurance double sure I enclose herewith the relevant cutting. You will have also seen the manifesto of the State Congress accepting my advice. I suppose you will say even that is not enough. I am hoping, however, that some day you will see eye to eye with me and release the State Congress prisoners and let the organization function normally.

As to Mahatma Narayanswami I realize what you say and I am glad that I referred the matter to you.[3] I am now trying to persuade my informants to correct the mistake they have made, I hope, quite unconsciously.

With reference to your letters about the prisoners I am unable to agree with you that ghee is a luxury. But I am going to bear your suggestion in mind and must think out the name of someone whom I can ask to visit your jails.

I am glad you are restored to health and that you are Working at the proposed reforms which I hope will answer the time spirit.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10098. Courtesy: Government of Andhra Pradesh

[1] A photostat of the letter was displayed at the Andhra Pradesh Pavilion at Gandhi Darshan Exhibition held in New Delhi in 1969-70.

[2] *Vide* "Draft of Statement for Hyderabad State Congress", 26-12-1938

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Akbar Hydari", 21-2-1939

143. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

February 25, 1939

The following wires have been exchanged between the First Member[2] of the Rajkot State Council and myself:[3]

Hear satyagraha prisoners Rajkot jail fasting. For Sardhar prisoners said to be inhumanly treated. Could you enlighten me?—Gandhi (dated 20-2-'39).

Your telegram. Personally visited Sardhar yesterday. No truth absolutely whatsoever regarding ill-treatment to prisoners. First Member of Council (dated 21-2-'39).

Thanks wire. You are silent about hunger-strike. Have again long wire about atrocities which difficult to disbelieve. Every day urge growing that I should myself plunge. Agony of Ruler's breach of faith, coupled with growing tales of terrorism, becoming unbearable. Have no desire embarrass Thakore Saheb or Council. Would like you listen to voice of old man claiming to be Rajkot's friend.—Gandhi (dated 22-2-'39).

Absolutely no truth in allegations of ill-treatment to Sardhar prisoners. Whole thing nothing but fabrication. Regular programme of daily diet, bedding, etc., nearly on same lines as Rajkot arranged. Written information to above effect given to prisoners on hunger-strike in local jail by me. In spite of these they unreasonably insist continue fasting. Assure you everything humanly possible being done give fair treatment. Please have no anxiety.—First Member (dated 23-2-'39).

If all reports are fabrication, it is serious for me and co-workers. If there is substance in them, it is serious reflection on the State authorities. Meanwhile, the hunger-strike continues. My anxiety is unbearable. Therefore, propose start for Rajkot tomorrow night taking with me medical attendant, secretary and typist. I come in search of truth and as peacemaker.

Have no desire to court arrest. I want to see things for myself and shall make ample amends if my co-workers have been guilty of fabrication. I shall also plead with Thakore Saheb to repair breach of faith with his people. I shall ask people to

[1] This was also published in *Harijan*, 4-3-1939, under the heading "Gandhiji's Statement on Rajkot".

[2] Khan Bahadur Fateh Mohammed Khan

[3] None of the telegrams quoted here are available from any other source.

avoid demonstrations and am asking Sardar, pending my effort in Rajkot, to suspend satyagraha by persons in Rajkot or from outside.[1] If by any chance Thakore Saheb and Council can restore pact intact, subject to adjustment of members, and prisoners are immediately set free and fines restored, I naturally cancel my proposed departure. You can send official with full authority to negotiate adjustment as to personnel. Majority of Sardar's nominees will be a condition. May God guide Thakore Saheb and his Councillors. May I expect express wire?—Gandhi (dated 24-2-'39).

Since your telegram you must have received information that hunger-strike has been discontinued since last night having no justification, as telegram sent to you by Nanalal Jasani and Mohanlal Gadhadawala must have convinced you. His Highness does not consider there has been any breach of faith on his part and is only anxious that representative Committee appointed by him should be able to start working in calm atmosphere, so that he may be in a position to introduce as soon as possible such reforms as may be found by him to be required after fully considering the Committee's recommendations. His Highness feels sure that in the circumstances explained, you will appreciate that no useful purpose could be served by your coming here now. He wishes once again to assure you that no atrocities or terrorism have been or will be allowed. —First Member (dated 24-2-'39).

Your wire is no answer to my heart-felt entreaty. I leave for Rajkot today on my mission of peace.—Gandhi (dated 25-2-'39) .

These wires tell their own tale. I am glad the fast is broken. That certainly removes one cause of anxiety. But the charge of fabrication abides. I know personally many of the workers in Rajkot. They and I must make full reparation if they have resorted to falsehood in order to make out a case of atrocities against the authorities. The struggle in Rajkot, as in other States, is part of the struggle for the liberation of India. Mutual mud-flinging cannot advance the cause. Truth must be ascertained.

The telegram of the First Member denies the charge of breach of faith. It baffles me. I do not know what is meant by the denial. The notification announcing the pact and the notification announcing the

[1] On February 25, Vallabhbhai Patel issued a statement suspending the satyagraha.

breach with Sardar Patel are clearly contradictory as one reads the plain language of the two.

I have suggested that the Resident at Rajkot is responsible for the breach.[1] I have been told that I have been hasty in bringing this charge and that there is another side. If there is, it is my duty to know it. I shall make it a point to seek an interview with him and if I find that I have done an injustice to him, I shall tender a public apology. I feel that it is wrong on my part to allow the sufferings to continue in the midst of mutual recriminations. The least I can do is to go to Rajkot and find out the truth and invite the Thakore to repair what is a palpable breach of faith, unless I discover that the repudiation of this charge is somehow justified.

If the statements made by the workers about atrocities are true, there must be found a way of avoiding such exhibitions of man's worst passions. He must be helped against himself, if it is at all possible. It is part of the struggle for liberty, if it is non-violent, to reclaim even the *goondas*, whether they are to be found among the people or those in authority. By going to Rajkot, I want to exert myself to the utmost of my capacity and find out the way of dealing with the *goonda* element in society. In this respect Rajkot is a test case. I go to Rajkot because I am the same friend of the States that I have always claimed to be.

It hurts me that by force of circumstances, all of which perhaps I do not know, the Ruler of Rajkot has been made to break his word given to his people. I hold that it is the duty of the Princes of Kathiawar, if not of all India, and their advisers to help to rectify the wrong, if it is done. An honourable mutual understanding is impossible if faith becomes a valueless article. Life to me becomes a burden when I find myself witness to a breach of faith, as I happen to be in this case. Let it be recalled that I was the author of the draft[2] that the Ruler of Rajkot signed with but a slight modification. I know that Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel left no stone unturned to ensure that it was signed with the fullest understanding.

As I go to Rajkot purely as a messenger of peace, I have asked Sardar Patel to suspend the Rajkot civil resistance whilst, under God's guidance, I make the humble effort to end the agony. The public will

[1] *Vide*"Rajkot" and "Statement to the Press", 3-2-1939

[2] *Vide* "Draft of Statement for Thakore Saheb of Rajkot", 19-11-1938

please remember that I am an invalid so far as the body is concerned. They will avoid demonstrations at the stations. In Rajkot the citizens will carry out the instructions of the State authorities during the suspension period. I shall need freedom from turmoil during my negotiations. I want the silent prayers of all who believe in them. Though Rajkot is a tiny place on the map of India, the principle forthe vindication of which I go to Rajkot is one without which society must disintegrate.

The Hindu, 25-2-1939

144. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 25/26, 1939

CHI. MANILAL,

I received your letter yesterday. How good you are at deciphering! And Schlesin! Why did you not read 'M.A.' instead of 'ma'? Where was there any talk of sending a woman? I have acted on the advice of Schlesin. The person who was to be sent is the brother-in-law of Nirmala, Mahadev's sister. You should have sent a cable to ask.

February 26, 1939

However, I hope that Mahadev has written to you all the details. Even if he has not, you now know them. If you cannot pay his salary there, there is provision for payment from here. He can take up the work in Gujarati, English, etc. Your burden will be reduced. Cable to me about what you wish to do now. If you do get the permission to call him, wire accordingly.

Mr. Kallenbach has recovered now. He has to be careful, however. I am leaving for Rajkot. Don't worry about it. I hope to return only after solving the problem. I am going at God's command. I shall act according to His directions. Ba is fine. Don't worry about the Congress. It is enough if you can remain absorbed in your work.

Pyarelal, Sushila and Kanaiyo are accompanying me. Rami, Manu, etc., had come to see me. Rajkumari is at Segaon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4895

145. QUESTION OF HONOUR

On my way to Rajkot, going *via* Bombay, I have to wait a whole day for the Kathiawar mail. I am passing the time in writing for *Harijan.* And I read the following note:

> Ramdurg—a small State in the Bombay-Karnatak, area 169 sq. miles, population 33,997, revenue Rs. 2,69,000—was hard hit by famine and scarcity conditions, and also depression due to fall in prices for some years past. On 20th March 1938 some agriculturists from villages gathered together in front of the palace and requested the Rajasaheb to grant some concessions in respect of land revenue. It was alleged on behalf of those assembled at the Palace that they were dispersed by lathi charge by the Ramdurg police. On the other hand these allegations were denied by the State authorities. It seems that no definite demands were made on behalf of the people, nor was there any organization to speak for them. Some time later some of the people of the State approached Shri Yalgi, a Congressman and one of the Secretaries of the Karnatak Provincial Congress Committee, and requested him to visit Ramdurg and see the situation for himself. Accordingly, Shri Yalgi visited Ramdurg in April and advised the people there to organize a committee to place their demands before the authorities. In accordance with his advice, a body named Ramdurg Sansthan Praja Sangh was established and on its behalf demands were formulated and submitted to the Rajasaheb.
>
> A Conference of Deccan States' People took place at Sangli on 22nd May 1938, presided over by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. He left Sangli on the 22nd. But the Conference continued under the presidentship of Shri Gangadharrao Deshpande.
>
> On the 23rd, the question of Ramdurg was taken up and it was decided that a committee, consisting of (I) Shri Gangadharrao Deshpande, President, K. P. C. C., (2) Shri Shankarrao Deo, Member of the Congress Working Committee, (3) Shri Munoli, President, Ramdurg Praja Sangh, (4) Shri Kanabur, Secretary of Deccan States People's Conference, (5) Shri Andaneppa Doddameti, M. L. A., (6) Shri K. S. Patil, M. L. A., (7) Shri Ari, Pleader, Hubli, a subject of the State, was appointed to investigate and report on the Ramdurg affair. In the mean time the Ramdurg Durbar, on their own initiative, had issued a proclamation and announced certain concessions. But the people were not satisfied with these concessions and the agitation was assuming a serious turn. . . .
>
> Then on the 5th June 1938 the Committee appointed at Sangli visited Ramdurg and instituted an enquiry. It was felt by the Committee and also by the prominent representatives of the Ramdurg Praja Sangh that a mere enquiry

and report would not serve the purpose. Therefore the latter requested the Committee to bring about a settlement in respect of the demands which were submitted to the Ramdurg Durbar.

The matter was discussed for two hours and on the 6th of June Shri Deo was entrusted with the sole authority of settling the differences. Shri Deo, in accepting the responsibility, made clear to the people all the implications of what they were doing. Shri Deo, on behalf of the Committee, formulated the demands and submitted them to the Rajasaheb. After some discussions the matter was postponed at the desire of the Rajasaheb. However, most of the suggestions, with slight modifications, were conceded by the Rajasaheb. Shri Deshpande wrote to the Sardar as to what had happened. He also informed him of the demands of the Praja Sangh and the offer of Rajasaheb. In reply, Sardar wrote to Shri Deshpande on the 11th June 1938 to say that the terms offered by Rajasaheb could not be improved upon, that they were quite good and that the people should be advised to accept them.

Though Shri Deo was entrusted with full powers to negotiate and settle the terms, he on the 21st June 1938 took Shri Munoli and all the members of the Managing Committee of the Praja Sangh into confidence, and after long discussion secured their assent to the terms settled between himself and Rajasaheb. The members of the Committee appointed by the Sangli Conference with the exception of Shri Shastri, who was absent, also agreed. The acceptance of the terms was communicated to Rajasaheb. The same evening durbar was held in the palace to which the President and representatives of the Praja Sangh and leading men of Ramdurg were invited. The Rajasaheb in his opening speech surveyed the history of his rule and gave the outlines of the terms of settlement. The Dewan, Rao Bahadur Pradhan, then read out the proclamation embodying the terms of the settlement. Thereupon the President of the Praja Sangh, on behalf of the Sangh, thanked the Rajasaheb in suitable terms. After the durbar was over, Shri Deo and others went to the public meeting. The meeting was attended by more than 12,000 persons. The President of the Praja Sangh presided. When Shri Gangadharrao Deshpande was explaining the terms of the settlement, a slight disturbance was noticed in one corner of the meeting. It was ascertained that they belonged to Sureban and were weavers. Shri Andaneppa Doddameti went to that corner and successfully tried to restore peace. After Shri Deshpande, Shri Andaneppa spoke for more than one hour and fully explained all the details of the terms and defended them very vigorously. He carried conviction to the audience and concluded his speech amongst enthusiastic cheers. Shri Deo also made a short speech asking people to organize and strengthen their position by working

the reforms granted. Shri Munavalli, the President in his concluding speech, which was very touching, defended all the terms settled and asked the audience whether they had confidence in him. The audience with one voice replied in the affirmative. He then asked them to accept the terms and they assented. At the conclusion of the meeting a paper, containing the terms of the settlement, was brought to the President for his signature by an officer of the State. Shri Munavalli, the President, again asked the audience whether he should sign it and with concurrence of not only the large audience but of the representatives of the Praja Sangh, signed the document.

The Council of the Karnatak Provincial Congress Committee passed the following resolution:

"The Council congratulates the people of Ramdurg, Jamkhandi, Miraj Sr. and Jr. and Mudhol for the success they have achieved in their struggle for redress of their grievances and trusts that they will strengthen their organizations by non-violent and peaceful means for the attainment of full responsible government in the near future.

"This Council expresses its sense of appreciation of the Rulers of the above States for readily responding to the demands of their subjects and trusts that the terms of the settlement will be implemented by both the portions without delay. It also requests the Rulers of all the States in Karnatak to follow the liberal policy followed by the above-mentioned States.

"This Council, however, notes with extreme pain that anti-propaganda is being carried on by some people and especially by some Congressmen on the plea that the settlement was arrived at by the efforts of prominent Congress leaders between the people and the Prince of Ramdurg. This Council while requesting them not to carry on anti-propaganda is definitely of opinion that the good of the people will advance only by standing by the settlement."

I have omitted some part irrelevant for my purpose. It appears that an attempt is now being made on behalf of the Ramdurg Praja Sangh to terrorize the Ruler into making further concessions[1]. He refrains from taking action against the mischief-mongers for fear of losing Congress sympathy. The question I am asked is, "What are Congressmen involved in the settlement to do?" Assuming the correctness of my information, my unequivocal answer is that they have to keep at any cost the plighted word of the Provincial Committee. I am going to Rajkot to entreat H. H. the Thakore Saheb of Rajkot to keep his word. The breach, as I interpret his action, has

[1]*Vide* also "Popular Violence in Ramdurg", 24-4-1939.

shaken me to my depths. I can think of no other answer with regard to the Congress. Rajkot represents the Princely order. Its shame or credit would be the shame or credit of the whole order. If a representative Congressman breaks his word, the reputation of the whole Congress is at stake. How much more so, if a Provincial Congress Committee cannot redeem its word? The Congress claims to represent the whole nation. Its transactions must be above reproach.

In these days of awakening, all kinds of forces must rise up. Demands, even extravagant, will be made by new additions to the Congress. If they are in excess of Congress commitments and if the Congress credit is to go up day after day, they must be checked. I do not know what the Ramdurg Praja Sangh claims. It may be that the claim is intrinsically sound. But they cannot enforce it by rowdyism and threats even before the ink is dry on the settlement paper. The representative Congressmen in Karnatak have to stand by the Ramdurg Chief and see that the settlement is honoured by the people even though in battling with them they should lose their lives.

BOMBAY, February 26, 1939

Harijan, 4-3-1939

146. KHADI AS FAMINE RELIEF

This letter[1] shows conclusively what a relief khadi is to famine areas. Those, therefore, who buy relief khadi help the famine-stricken and themselves. In addition they give not doles but wages and these at khadi market rates for spinning which are higher than for any other relief work. I hope, therefore, that this appeal will receive a generous response from the public.

BOMBAY, February 26, 1939

Harijan, 4-3-1939

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had said that because of drought and failure of crops in certain taluks of Coimbatore district, the farmers there had taken up spinning and so there was a surplus stock of khadi in Tamil Nadu. He had requested Gandhiji to appeal to the readers of *Harijan* to buy the khadi produced in the drought-hit areas.

147. IS NON-VIOLENT?

Below is an extract from a letter from a teacher in the Annamalai University:[1]

> Some time in November last, a group of five or six students organizedly assaulted the secretary of University Union, a fellow student. Shri Srinivasa Sastri, the Vice-Chancellor, took a serious view of it and punished the leader of the group with expulsion from the University and the rest with suspension till the end of this academic year.
>
> Some sympathizers and friends of these punished students wanted to abstain from attending classes and strike work. . . .
>
> The next day, about 20 per cent of the students stayed away from the classes; the remaining 80 per cent attended the classes as usual. I may add, the strength of this University is about 800.
>
> The student who was expelled next day came inside the hostel to direct the strike. Finding the strike unsuccessful he adopted other methods in the evening, as for example, bodily Iying across the four main outlets from the hostel, locking some gates of the hostel, locking up some of the young boys inside their own rooms. . . . In this way in the afternoon, the rest of the students were prevented from coming outside the hostel gates by fifty or sixty people.
>
> The authorities thus finding the gates closed wanted to make an opening in the fencing. But when they started pulling down the fence with the help of servants of the University, the strikers prevented the other students from passing through the breaches to attend college. . . . The authorities finding the situation unmanageable requested the police to remove the expelled student from the hostel premises . . . which the police did. This naturally irritated some more of the students who began to show sympathy with the strikers. . . . Shri Srinivasa Sastri then closed down the University for a long vacation of 1_ months from November 29th to January 16th. He gave a statement to the Press appealing to the students to come back from home in a chastened and happier mood for study.
>
> But the college reopened with renewed activities on the part of the strikers who had extra advice during the vacation from . . .[2] They wentto Rajaji, it appears, but he asked them to obey the Vice-Chancellor, and declined to interfere. . . .
>
> The picketing is still going on. . . . The strikers are about 35 to 45 in

[1] Only extracts from the quotation are reproduced here.
[2] Omission as in the source

mumber. They have got about 50 sympathizers who dare not come into the open and strike with them, but from within they create trouble. Every day they come in a body and lie down in front of entrances to classes, and on the stairs leading to classes on the first floor and thus prevent the students from entering the classes. But the teachers shift from place to place and hold classes before the picketers can reach there. . . .

Yesterday there was a new development. The strikers came into the classes, rolled on the floor and uttered shouts. Some strikers, I heard, began writing on blackboards before the teacher could come. If any teachers are known to be meek, some of the strikers try to intimidate them also. In fact they threatened the Vice-Chancellor with 'violence and bloodshed', if he did not accede to their demands.

One other important point I ought to tell you is that the strikers get help from some outsiders, employ *goondas* to enter the University premises and disturb the work there. . . .

Now the point I am driving at is this: We have all been feeling, i. e., several teachers and a large number of students, that these activities are not truthful and non-violent and so are against the spirit of satyagraha.

I learn reliably that some of the striker students persist in calling this non-violent. They say that if Mahatmaji declares this to be violent they will stop these activities.

The letter is dated 17th February and addressed to Kakasaheb Kalelkar whom the teacher knows intimately. The portion not printed by me seeks Kakasaheb's opinion whether the conduct of the students can be called non-violent and deplores the attitude of unruliness which has become rampant among so many students in India.

The letter gives the names of those who are inciting the strikers to persist in their behaviour. On the publication of my opinion[1] on the strike, someone, presumably a student, sent me an angry telegram saying that the behaviour of the strikers is perfectly non-violent. Assuming the correctness of the version reproduced by me, I have no hesitation in saying that the attitude of the students is essentially violent. Surely, if someone blocks the passage to my house, his action is violence just as much as if he pushed me bodily from the doorstep.

If students have a real grievance against their teachers, they may have the right to strike and even picket their school or college but only to the extent of politely warning the unwary from attending their

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 23-2-1939

classes. They could do so by speaking or by distributing leaflets. But they may not obstruct the passage or use any coercion against those who do not want to strike. And the students have struck against whom? Shri Srinivasa Sastriar is one of India's best scholars. He had become renowned as a teacher before many of the students were born or were in their teens. Any university in the world will be proud to have him as Vice-Chancellor as well for the greatness of his learning as for the nobility of his character.

If the writer of the letter to Kakasaheb has given an accurate account of the happenings in the Annamalai University, Sastriar's handling of the situation seems to me to have been quite correct. In my opinion the strikers are harming themselves by their conduct. I belong to the old school which believed in reverence for teachers. I can understand not going to a school for whose teachers I have no regard. But I cannot understand disrespect towards or vilification of my teachers. Such conduct is ungentlemanly, and all ungentlemanliness is violence.

BOMBAY, February 26, 1939

Harijan, 4-3-1939

148. TELEGRAM TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

RAJKOT,
February 26, 1939

RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ
JAIPRAJA
AGRA

NO HARTAL JAIPUR CITY.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 214

149. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI[1]

February 26, 1939

You must not be anxious. I miss you on this journey. I am going there as God is taking me there. Within me is joy, hope. Who knows if the prospect is no more than a mirage? I know that I will not return from Rajkot with hope blasted.

Harijan, 11-3-1939

150. LETTER TO SATISH D. KALELKAR[2]

February 26, 1939

CHI. SHANKER[3],

I had no-time to reply to your letter. I liked it. Chandan is quiet and happy. It should be sufficient that she has been proved innocent, that is, truthful. We should not be interested in proving a person guilty. So long as H.[4] does not admit his guilt, it does not seem fair to give a final verdict about him. Ninety-nine per cent he is no longer innocent. I think now he will not indulge in backbiting against you. Doing anything more will be like killing a man who is already down. It will be good if you can forget this incident. I should like it even better if you can see that my viewpoint is correct.

Take care of your health.

Poor Chandan came here to go to Rajkot. I feel as if I was going there on her behalf. I am writing this in the train. Chandan is accompanying me. She will go to Bhavnagar from Viramgam. There she will wait and watch.

What Chandan has written above was really my test. I wanted to see whether she would respond to my advice or not. She may be said to have scored $33^{1}/_{3}$ per cent marks in the test.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 949. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "A God-given Fast". The letter, which was presumably in Gujarati, is not available from any other source.

[2] This was written below a letter Chandanbehn wrote to the addressee, whom she later married.

[3] Son of D. B. Kalelkar, who later changed his name to 'Satish'.

[4] The name has been omitted.

151. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

February 27, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

The journey up to now has been quite pleasant and uneventful. This is being written at Viramgam. You bore yourself bravely on parting. The same bravery must continue. It is strange that responsibility for the secretariat work should rest solely upon you sosuddenly. You had not bargained for it. You will expect a wire from Rajkot either today or tomorrow.

You will keep well both in body and mind.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3903. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7212

152. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

VIRAMGAM,
February 27, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

We reach Rajkot about 2.50 p. m. Train going, so good-bye.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6429. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10024

153. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI[1]

February 27, 1939

How mysterious are the ways of God! This journey to Rajkot is a wonder even to me. Why am I going, whither am I going? What for? I have thought nothing about these things. And if God guides me, what

[1] Extracted from, Mahadev Desai's "A God-given Fast". The letter, which was presumably in Gujarati, is not available from any other source.

should I think, why should I think? Even thought may be an obstacle in the way of His guidance.[1]

The fact is it takes no effort to stop thinking. The thoughts do not come. Indeed there is no vacuum—but I mean to say that there is no thought about the mission.

Harijan, 25-3-1939

154. INTERVIEW TO THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

February 27, 1939

A few minutes prior to his arrival at Rajkot, Mahatma Gandhi told the Associated Press special correspondent travelling with him that he had no specific plans with regard to his "mission of peace in Rajkot".

Asked how long he would be at Rajkot, Mahatma Gandhi said:

I really don't know how long I will be here. I have to be here till I finish my work.

QUESTION: Does that mean that you will not be able to go to Tripuri Congress ?

ANSWER: Well, if my work in Rajkot detains me, I am afraid I will not be able to go to Tripuri.

On being told that despite the suspension of satyagraha in Rajkot State the authorities have continued the arrests and the auctioning of houses for the purpose of recovering fines, Mahatma Gandhi said:

I myself heard of an instance just now in the train. If this is true, it is most unfortunate.

The Hindustan Times, 28-2-1939

155. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

RAJKOT,
February 27, 1939

RAJKUMARI
MAGANWADI
WARDHAGANJ

BORE JOURNEY WELL. TALKS BEGUN. LOVE. LASTSENT TELEGRAM FIRST MEMBER NOT RECEIVED HERE. INQUIRE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3902. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7211

[1] For Shri Ramana Maharshi's comments on this, *vide* "Sri Ramana Maharshi's Comments on Gandhiji's Description of his State of Mind"

156. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

RAJKOT,
February 27, 1939

MIRABEHN
CARE BADSHAHKHAN
CHARSADDA

BORE JOURNEY WELL. TALKS BEGUN. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6430. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10025

157. INTERVIEW TO THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

February 27, 1939

I am a born optimist. I hope that as a result of my visit to Rajkot there will be an honourable settlement.

I had a friendly exchange of views with Khan Saheb Fateh Mahomed and Durbar Virawala. They have offered me full facilities to visit the jails and see prisoners and also to visit the villages. I am seeing the prisoners tomorrow afternoon, The Muslims and Garasias (landholders) have asked for an appointment and I expect to meet them tomorrow.

The negotiations are likely to take a few days. Although I am most anxious to attend the Tripuri Congress, I am afraid work in Rajkot will take me some time.

The Hindustan Times, 28-2-1939

158. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

February 27, 1939

. . . I do not know how long I may stay here. I have no ready plan. I desire to study the situation and interview the Ruler and Mr. Gibson and do my best to restore the Pact between the Administration and the Praja Parishad, I am doubtful of my visit to Tripuri. If I finish my mission in time, I shall go to Tripuri. Otherwise I may have to miss it.

The Hindu, 27-2-1939

159. TELEGRAM TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ[1]

[On or after *February 27, 1939*]

HARTAL SHOULD BE ABANDONED WHEN VICEROY ENTERS. BUT YOU MUST BE FINAL JUDGES.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapake Ashirvad, p. 215

160. TALKS TO REPRESENTATIVES OF MUSLIM COUNCIL OF ACTION[2]

February 28, 1939

But surely, you do not mean to ask for separate electorate without reservation of seats ? The former without the latter would be meaningless. You must, therefore, have that too. Having made that unilateral offer, may I take the liberty of telling you that if you chose to represent your interests through the Parishad, the latter would be bound to safeguard your religion and culture and protect every legitimate Muslim interest? But I agree that so long as the atmosphere is vitiated with mutual distrust and suspicion you are entitled to ask for and have separate representation.

Harijan, 25-3-1939

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram of February 27, 1939, which read: "Received. Jaipur hartal spontaneous and continues in connection Viceroy visit. We favour hartal. Wire if you disapprove."

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "The Rajkot Fast". Pyarelal says: "The representatives of the Muslim Council of Action met him at 7 a. m. They told him that during the last civil disobedience struggle in Rajkot the Muslim community had given its passive support to the movement. Gandhiji at the very outset of the conversation set them at their ease by telling them that he would gladly agree to have their two nominees on the committee. They also insisted on separate electorate. He conceded that too."

161. DISCUSSION WITH DEPUTATION OF GARASIA MANDAL[1]

February 28, 1939

As in the case of the Muslim Deputation, Gandhiji set them completely at their ease by telling them at the very start that they would have their one nominee on the Committee. In reply to further questions on their part, he told them that if they expected to be confirmed for all time in all the privileges that they had up till now enjoyed, they were doomed to disappointment. That was neither right nor feasible. If the condition of India's countless destitute masses was to be ameliorated, the privileged class shall have to divest itself of some of its privileges in favour of *Daridranarayana.* If the Garasias would only understand the spirit of the times, become one with the toiling masses and make the latter's interests their own, their legitimate interests would be safeguarded. He would therefore give them the advice he had given to the Princes, viz., to make themselves true servants of the people and not want to ride on their backs. They should hold their wealth as a trust to be used wisely in the interest of the people. They were entitled to a reasonable emolument for themselves but only in return for service rendered.

"We are bitterly attacked by a certain section of Congressmen, we are even called names. Would not you protect us?"

You should know that there is today in the Congress a considerable and growing section that wants to do away with all vested interests altogether, because they have no faith in the possibility of their conversion. My capacity to protect you will, therefore, entirely depend on your willingness to adopt and live up to the ideal of trusteeship that I have placed before you. I would not be able to help you unless you co-operate with me.

Harijan, 25-3-1939

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "The Rajkot Fast"

162. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

RAJKOT,

February 28, 1939

Gandhiji in an interview stated that the day began with a cordial exchange of views with representatives of Muslims.[1]

After the meeting with the Muslim representatives, I went to the Resident's bungalow, and there was a very friendly conversation between us two. At 2 p.m. I met representatives of the Garasia Association with whom also I had a cordial talk.[2] Later I visited the jails of the State in the company of Col. Daly, Lt. Col. Aspinal and Khan Saheb Fateh Mahomed Ahmed, who were all present at the interviews with the prisoners. At Rajkot Jail, I met men and women satyagrahi prisoners for an hour and then drove to Sardhar Jail where I spent an hour and a half.

Asked about his impressions of his talks with prisoners in the two jails, Gandhiji refused to commit himself to any definite opinion until he had had a discussion with Khan Saheb Fateh Mahomed. Continuing, Gandhiji said:

From the Sardhar Jail, I went to Tromba where I met Kasturba, Mridulabehn and Manibehn. I had my meal there. On returning to the capital, I went to the Thakore Saheb and spent nearly an hour and a half with him.

Replying to a question about the chances of his going to Tripuri, Gandhiji said:

I still entertain the hope that there will be an honourable settlement, and I am making desperate efforts to go to Tripuri as early as possible. It is, however, difficult for me to say whether I will be able to leave before the week-end.

The Hindu, 1-3-1939

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Radhakrishna Bajaj", 27-2-1939

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

163. A TELEGRAM[1]

RAJKOT,
March 1, 1939

I AM UNABLE TO SAY ANYTHING. I AM MAKING DESPERATE EFFORTS. POSTPONE THE OPENING DATE OF THE EXHIBITION TO MARCH SIXTH.[2] INFORM SETH GOVINDDAS.

The Hindu, 2-3-1939

164. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[3]

RAJKOT,
March 1, 1939

In the morning, I saw peasants from Halenda Khari, Hodthali and several other places who had complaints to make about the delivery of the State's portion of the crops and against lathi charges and the like. There were nearly one hundred and fifty of them including about twenty to twenty-five women. I did not know that I was going to meet them this morning. Therefore, I had not informed the Khan Saheb[4]. Happily he dropped in after I had proceeded with the conversation. He was able to listen to what the peasants had to say and asked them certain questions also. At this stage I do not want to go into the details of these allegations.

[1] This was sent "in response to a request" from the Reception Committee of the 52nd session of the Indian National Congress at Tripuri. The telegram was presumably addressed to Shankerlal Banker. In "The Rajkot Fast [–I]" (*Harijan*, 25-3-1939), Pyarelal explains: "There was a desperate S. O. S. from Shankerlal Banker and Seth Govinddas [Chairman, Reception Committee] telling Gandhiji that his presence alone at Tripuri would help to pull the Reception Committee through a number of financial and other difficulties and even if he could reach there by sixth, they would be satisfied. . ."

[2] Gandhiji was to open the Khadi and Village Industries Exhibition on March 3. As Gandhiji could not leave Rajkot, Jawaharlal Nehru opened the exhibition on March 6.

[3] The source says that "after the evening prayers Gandhiji reviewed the day's work".

[4] Fateh Mohammed Khan, First Member, Rajkot State Council.

After the talk with the peasants, I had a prolonged conversation with the Khan Saheb, as usual of a friendly character.

In the afternoon I saw co-workers and had a full discussion with them for an hour and a half over the questions agitating the public mind. The discussion with the workers was very interesting in that they asked some penetrating questions and I endeavoured to put before them my view of what the implication of true satyagraha were. I believe that they are working with a full sense of their responsibility. In this connection, I am glad to be able to say that the authorities allowed some leaders, who are in jail, to come to me because I needed their assistance for the purpose of carrying on negotiations. They were kept with me for a few hours, and taken back to their respective quarters at about 6·30 p.m.

Gandhiji told the Associated Press Special Correspondent that his talks tonight with Durbar Virawala[1] were inconclusive and that he was waiting to hear from him tomorrow to resume the talks.

The Hindu, 2-3-1939

165. LETTER TO DHARMENDRASINH[2]

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
March 2, 1939

MAHERBAN THAKORE SAHEB[3],

I write this letter not without hesitation, but duty compels it.

You know the reason for my coming here. For three days I had conversation with Durbar Virawala. He gave me cause for intense dissatisfaction. He seems to be incapable of keeping his resolutions from moment to moment. Such is my opinion based upon my three days' contact with him. In my opinion, his guidance has harmed the State.

Now I come to the object of this letter. At the time of leaving Wardha I had resolved that I would not leave Rajkot without inducing fulfilment of your promise. But I had never thought that I would have to be here for more than one or two days or that I would have to suffer what I have suffered.

[1] Dewan of Rajkot State
[2] The letter appeared as "translated from original Gujarati by Gandhiji".
[3] The addressee was the Ruler of Rajkot State.

My patience is exhausted. I should hasten to Tripuri if it is at all possible. If I do not go, over a thousand co-workers will be disappointed and lakhs of poor people will become disconsolate. Time, therefore, has a special value for me at this juncture.

I beseech you, therefore, to adopt with a full heart the following suggestions of mine and free me from anxiety by speeding me on my return journey tomorrow.

1. You should announce to the people that our Notification No. 50,[1] dated 26th December, stands.

2. You should cancel your Notification No. 61[2], dated 21st January. Names 2, 3, 5 and 7 of the Reforms Committee announced by you should stand and you should accept on behalf of the Rajkot Rajakiya Praja Parishad the following names ;

1. U. N. Dhebar,
2. P. P. Anada,
3. V. M. Shukla,
4. J. H. Joshi,
5. S. V. Modi.

The underlying motive of this suggestion is that the Parishad should have a majority on its side.

3. Shri U. [N.] Dhebar should be appointed as President of the Committee.

4. You should appoint three or less than three officials as guides and advisers to the Committee. They should be such as I could accept on behalf of the Parishad. They should have no vote in the proceedings of the Committee.

5. You should issue instructions to the heads of the several departments of the State to furnish to the Committee such papers, figures and other material and assistance as it may need. You should appoint for the use of the Committee suitable quarters in the Secretariat.

[1] This was drafted by Gandhiji, *vide* "Draft of Statement for Thakore Saheb of Rajkot", 19-11-1938

[2] According to *Harijan*, 4-2-1939, the Notification had given the names of the following "seven gentlemen, representing all important interests in the State, to work along with the three officers of the state. . . to draw up, after proper investigation, . . . a scheme of reforms with a view to associating the people more closely with the administration of the State": (1) P. P. Anada, President, Praja Parishad Sabha, (2) J. J. Dhirubha, (3) D. H. Valimohmed, (4) P. D. Malaviya, (5) M. M. Tank President, Municipal Corporation, (6) Dr. D. J. Gajjar and (7) H. Abdul Ali.

6. My advice is that the advisers whom you may appoint in terms of Clause 4 should form the Executive Council and that Council should be responsible for the management of the State in the spirit of the Notification of the 26th December so as not to do anything likely to be injurious to its main purpose. One of them should be the President of the Council. You will unhesitatingly endorse the actions of the Council. If you deem it fit to appoint other persons than the advisers of the Committee as Councillors, the appointment should be made in consultation with me.

The Committee should commence its proceedings on the 7th instant and finish them by the 22nd instant. The enforcement of the recommendations of the Committee should take place within seven days of their being in your hands.

7. The satyagrahi prisoners should be discharged tomorrow. Fines and execution orders should be stopped and fines already collected and confiscations should be returned.

I gather from the conversation with Mr. Gibson[1] that he will not interfere with whatever you may do in connection with the Notification of the 26th December.

If you cannot see your way to accept my suggestions before noon tomorrow, my fast will commence from that time and will continue till after acceptance.

I trust that you will not regard the language of my letter to be stiff. And if I do use stiff language or my action appears to be such, I claim that right in connection with you. My father had the privilege of serving the State when your grandfather was its Chief. Your father regarded me as a father to him. Indeed at a public meeting he called me even his guru, but I have been guru to no one; therefore, I have never regarded him as a disciple. You are therefore as a son to me. It is possible that you do not regard me as father. If you do, you will accept joyfully my submission in a moment and, in addition, you will express your regret for what has befallen your people after 26th December. You will please not consider me your or the State's enemy. I can never be anybody's enemy and have never been. I have implicit faith that in the acceptance of my submission to you lies your good, your prestige and your duty. If you will observe that in some of my suggestion I have gone outside the four corners of the

[1] E. C. Gibson, Resident of Rajkot State

Notification of the 26th December, such departure will be found to be merely superficial. You will note that in not interfering with your nominations of the persons outside the Parishad I have had solely in view your prestige. Thus the departure is purely in favour of the State. If the other departures may not be so considered, they are solely due to, what I have considered, your breach of promise. In my view they are for the protection of both the parties and the people and for the purpose of preventing another breakdown of the Settlement.

In conclusion, I give you my word of honour that if I am then alive, I shall critically examine the report that the Reforms Committee may prepare. If I am not, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel may do so, and the examination will be such as to make sure that no damage is done to your prestige or to the State or your people.

I am sending a copy of this[1] letter to Mr. Gibson. I am not handing this letter to the Press and I entertain the hope that you will kindly adopt my suggestion so that I may never have to publish this letter.

May God bless you and give you right guidance.[2]

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

Harijan, 11-3-1939

166. LETTER TO VIRAWALA

March 2, 1939

What am I to do? I am writing this after having remained awake half the night. During the last three days, you have made me pass through a very bitter experience. I could see no desire on your part to adhere to any statement you made. All the time you appeared anxious to get out of every commitment. Last night's talk was the culmination, and I am now able to understand why it is that the citizens of Rajkot stand in terror of you.

You have invited me to study your whole career. I accepted that

[1] The source, however, has "your"; *vide* also "Letter to E.C. Gibson", 2-3-1939

[2] In "The Rajkot Fast [–I]", Pyarelal explains: "Gandhiji forbade all discussion as to the merits of his step. He only remarked, 'I want the note to be delivered to the Thakore Saheb by 12 noon today. That to me is the God-appointed time and the hour'." For the addressee's reply, *vide* "Letter from Dharmendrasinh", 3-3-1939

invitation. But you have really not left very much for me to investigate. God has not given me that much strength, that much purity and that much non-violence for, otherwise I would have been able to enter your heart. I feel ashamed and sad that I have been unable to win you over. I believe that the influence you have over the Thakore Saheb is not an influence for his good. My heart wept night before last when I saw his mental helplessness and I hold you responsible for it.

I have just addressed a letter[1] to the Thakore Saheb and am sending this at the same time to you. You will no doubt see that letter and, therefore, I am not sending you a copy of it. Although you had given me your final decision, I would still request you to advise the Thakore Saheb to accept my suggestions. May God enter your heart.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Vol II, p. 346.

167. LETTER TO E.C. GIBSON

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
March 2, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

With the deepest sorrow but as a matter of sheer duty, I have just sent to H. H. the Thakore Saheb a letter[2] of which I enclose a copy herewith. I have not been able yet to translate it. In order to save time, therefore, I have sent you only a copy of the Gujarati original. I hope, however, to send [an] English translation in the course of the day. You will then please regard it as the only authorized translation or, as if it were, the original.

May I bespeak your full-hearted co-operation, in so far as it lies in your power, in the prosecution of my proposal?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Harijan, 11-3-1939

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dharmendrasinh",2-3-1939
[2] *ibid*

168.TALK TO SATYAGRAHI VOLUNTEERS[1]

March, 2, 1939

After the evening prayer Gandhiji gave a talk to satyagrahi volunteers. They had distinguished themselves by their bravery and proved their non-violent mettle. But that was not what had brought him to Rajkot. What filled him with concern was the growth and spread of the cult of goondaism. In Travancore, in Talcher, in Dhenkanal, and finally in Rajkot itself, he had noticed that the continuance of civil resistance was provoking more and more violence on the part of the authorities and brutalizing them progressively. He had therefore called a halt to civil resistance and taken upon himself the entire burden of the fight. He hoped through Rajkot to find a remedy for this cult of the cudgel and the hired bravoes with which the civil resister was being confronted. [He said:]

I see the hand of God in this. I could not have chosen a purer or a nobler means for this than the Rajkot issue. It is essentially a moral issue.

Nothing could be clearer, no breach of promise could be more flagrant needing rectification.

He advised the satyagrahis to be extremely wary and beware of having any truck or making any compromise with violence. There could be no 'united front' between violence and non-violence; the two were incompatible. If, therefore, in any place, those who did not believe in non-violence were in preponderance, the satyagrahis should isolate themselves from them and refuse to be drawn into civil resistance in conjunction with them.

One of the satyagrahi volunteers, referring to what some of them had been put through by the State authorities, asked if satyagraha required them to submit to illegal and inhuman treatment to which very often they were subjected. For instance, if a police officer put a satyagrahi under arrest and ordered him to enter a prison van, the latter was bound to obey the order. But supposing he was ordered to enter a bus in order to be taken to a distant place in the jungle, there to be bundled out after a beating without even a pretext of a trial or legal procedure of any kind, was he still to obey the policeman in question? Gandhiji replied:

A satyagrahi courts suffering and submits to it willingly and cheerfully in the hope therethrough to melt the heart of the opponent. He does nothing out of compulsion. Prahlada did not hesitate when ordered by his father to be tied to a red-hot iron post. On the contrary

[1] This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast [–I]".

he eagerly embraced it and the legend says that he remained unhurt. An ideal satyagrahi would as a matter of fact be insensible to all the bodly tortures that might be inflicted upon him and experience nothing but exultation and joy under them. I know that I am far from having attained that ideal myself. But a worthy heir always adds to the legacy that he receives, and satyagraha presents infinite scope for research and further development.

A satyagrahi may, however, not obey an order that offends against his moral sense or hurts his self-respect even though it may cost him his life. Nay more, it may be one's duty to put an end to one's life, if that is the only way of protecting one's honour. Such an act would not be termed suicide. It would be the triumph of immortal spirit over the 'muddy vesture of decay' that our physical body is.

It has been my unvarying experience that God never tries a satyagrahi beyond his capacity. Somehow the strength comes to us when we need it most if we utterly rely on Him. But this needs intense preparation and self-discipline through ceaseless labour of love. Jail-going is only a small step and by no means the most important. Unaccompanied by the spirit of service, courting imprisonment and inviting beatings and lathi charges becomes a species of violence. I would therefore expect every satyagrahi to keep a regular diary and account for every minute of his time in terms of constructive service. The path of satyagraha is sharp as a razor's edge. A satyagrahi has to be ever vigilant, always in harness and never for a moment idle. Numbers do not matter in satyagraha. Even a handful of true satyagrahis, well organized and disciplined through selfless service of the masses, can win independence for India, because behind them will be the power of the silent millions. Satyagraha is soul-force. It is subtle and universal in its action. Once it is set in motion it goes forward with gathering momentum and speed till it bursts through all physical barriers and overspreads the whole world.

At the end of it he suggested to those in charge that the volunteer camp might now be dissolved and such volunteers as were not strictly required for the local work in hand might be sent back to their respective homes.

Harijan, 25-3-1939

169.STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

March 2, 1939

I am sorry to have to say 'yes' in answer to your question. I am also sorry that the information has leaked out before its time. I do not wish as yet to publish my letter.[2] All that I would like to say at this critical juncture is that it cost me a night's rest before I came to the conclusion that if the suspended struggle was not to be revived, and if the atrocities of which I have heard so much and of which I was obliged to make mention in my Press note[3] were also not to be revived, I must adopt some effective remedy to end the agony, and God gave me the remedy.

The public should not laugh at my connecting God with the proposed step. Rightly or wrongly, I know that I have no other resource as a satyagrahi than the assistance of God in every conceivable difficulty, and I would like it to be believed that what may appear to be inexplicable actions of mine are really due to inner promptings.

It may be a product of my heated imagination. If it is so, I prize that imagination as it has served me for a chequered life extending over a period of now nearly over 55 years, because I learned to rely consciously upon God before I was 15 years old.

One thing more. The weapon of fasting, I know, cannot be lightly wielded. It can easily savour of violence unless it is used by one skilled in the art. I claim to be such an artist in this subject.

It should be remembered that I am intimately connected with Rajkot and its Rulers. Regarding the Thakore Saheb as my own son, I have every right to evoke the best in his nature by means of self-suffering. If my fast, which I hope will be avoided, is to be interpreted as pressure, I can only say that such moral pressure should be welcomed by all concerned.

A breach of promise shakes me to my root, especially when I am in any way connected with the author of the breach. And if it costs my life, which after all at the age of 70 has no insurance value, I

[1] The statement is extracted from "The Fiery Ordeal", in which it appeared with an explanatory note that "a group of Press correspondents approached Gandhiji" to confirm the rumour about his decision to go on a fast. In "The Rajkot Fast [– I]", Pyarelal explains that the statement was "dictated" by Gandhiji.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dharmendrasinh",2-3-1939

[3] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 25-2-1939

should most willingly give it in order to secure due performance of a sacred and solemn promise.

Harijan, 11-3-1939

170. MESSAGE TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL[1]

March 2, 1939

You must not be perturbed over my decision. It was taken purely in answer to the voice of God. But reason too dictated no other course. I would not like you to mention this thing to anybody. If Durbar Virawala allows the Thakore Saheb to accept my proposal, let the Thakore Saheb have the full credit for it.

You may not leave your post . . . [2] It should suffice for you that I am here to shoulder the burden of the Rajkot issue.

I would have liked even to save all telephonic charges in this crisis. But knowing your temperament as I do, I would not stint telephonic communications, if there are any developments to report.

Harijan, 25-3-1939

171. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[3]

March 3, 1939

I release my letter[4] to the Thakore Saheb with a heavy heart, but I have had the misfortune many a time to perform painful duties. This is one of them. I would like all friends and sympathizers rigidly to refrain from embarking on sympathetic fasts, even for one day. I know that fasting, like satyagraha, is very much abused nowadays. One finds people fasting on the slightest pretext. Often there is violence behind such fasting. If for no other reason, than for this

[1] This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast [–I]". Pyarelal says that Gandhiji conveyed the message over the telephone.

[2] As in the source

[3] This is extracted from "The Fiery Ordeal".

[4] *Vide* In "Diary of the Fast-II" (*Harijan*, 1-4-1939), Pyarelal says : "As suggested by Gandhiji the Press . . . came . . . at 9 a.m. as by that time he expected . . . the Thakore Saheb's reply . . . Gandhiji was still hopeful that a satisfactory reply would come and the fast would be obviated. . . . At 11.15 a.m. Gandhiji's last meal was served . . . . At one minute to 12 no reply had come. Gandhiji was going to hand the text of his letter . . . he had his favourite hymn *Vaishnavajana* sung first . . . *Ramadhun* was sung next. At the end of it Gandhiji released the text of his letter . . . and straightway began dictating a statement to the Pressman . . . "

practical reason of preventing thoughtless imitation, I was most reluctant to undertake this fast. But an inner urge brooks no denial. I can only therefore warn the people, who may wish hereafter to fast for redress of grievances, real or imaginary, against imitating me. Fasting like some very potent medicines can only be taken on rare occasions and under expert guidance. It is wrong, it is sinful for everybody to consider himself an expert.

Let the public know that at a very early age I began fasting for self-purification and then I took a prolonged fast[1] for an erring son of mine. This was soon after followed by a still more prolonged fast[2] for an erring daughter of a very dear friend. In both these cases the results justified the fast. The first public fast[3] that I undertook was in South Africa in connection with sufferings of the indentured who had joined the satyagraha struggle in South Africa. I have no recollection of a single experiment of mine in fasting having been a fruitless effort. In addition, I had the experience of priceless peace and unending joy during all those fasts, and I have come to the conclusion that fasting, unless it is the result of God's grace, is useless starvation, if not much worse.

The second thing I would like to say is that there should be no bitter speeches or writings either in connection with the Thakore Saheb or his advisers or the Resident. I have used strong language in connection with the Resident and actions of State officials. If I find that I have in any way wronged them, I know how to make reparations. Any harsh language used in connection with the Thakore Saheb or other actors in the tragedy will mar the effect the fast is intended to produce.

The breach of a solemn pact does not require any harsh or bitter language in order to enhance the enormity of the evil consequences of such breaches. What the public and the Press can usefully do is, by a dignified disapproval of the Thakore Saheb's action, to bring home to him the pressure of enlightened public opinion.

[1] Presumably, the references are to the week-long fast in 1913 for the moral lapse of two inmates at Phoenix Settlement, and the 14-day fast in 1914; *vide* "An Autobiography", Fasting As Penance.

[2] *ibid*

[3] On December 21, 1913, Gandhiji announced his decision to eat only once a day as "mark of inward mourning" for Indians shot dead during the strike by the indentured Indians in Sourth Africa.

All satyagraha and fasting is a species of *tyaga*[1]. It depends for its effects upon an expression of wholesome public opinion, shorn of all bitterness. Let there be no impatience to produce the desired result because of fasting. He who has urged me to undertake the fast will give me strength to go through it, and if it is His will that I should still live for a while on this earth to carry on the self-chosen mission of humanity, no fast, however prolonged, will dissolve the body.

I am painfully conscious of the fact that my fast[2] in connection with the late Mr. MacDonald's decision on the communal question induced many persons to act against their will. I hope no such thing will happen in connection with this fast. If there are public men who think that I have erred in characterizing the Thakore Saheb's Notification of January 21 as a breach of the promise made by the Notification on December 26, they will perform a friendly act by condemning my characterization, as also the fast. It is designed undoubtedly to melt the Thakore Saheb's heart, but it is in no sense designed to coerce public opinion into bringing pressure to bear upon the Thakore Saheb or those in whose opinion his action may be free of all blame.

Another thing I would like to mention is the first paragraph of my letter[3] in which I have criticized Durbar Virawala. I can truthfully say that I am slow to see the blemishes of fellowbeings, being myself full of them and therefore being in need of their charity. I have learnt not to judge anyone harshly and to make allowances for defects that I may detect.

What has happened about Durbar Virawala is that I have been inundated by very bitter and serious complaints against him. In my conversations with him I had even made mention of those complaints, and let me say to his credit that he invited me to investigate those complaints. I told him that I would do so, and but for the intervention of the fast it was fully my desire to undertake this investigation.

I had already invited friends to put me in possession of evidence in support of specific allegations against him; but prolonged conversations with him for three days confirmed the impression that the complaints against him had produced upon me, so much so that I

[1] Sacrifice

[2] In 1932; the "fast unto death", commenced on September 16, was broken on September 26.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Dharmendrasinh"

felt that the evidence that the conversations gave me was sufficient proof of the heavy indictment against him.

What I have said in the first paragraph of my letter is a deliberate understatement of my opinion. It gave me much pain to write that paragraph, but it was necessary for my mission to warn the Thakore Saheb of the overpowering influence that he exercises over His Highness. Sober and influential persons, not few but many, have repeatedly told me that so long as Durbar Virawala exercises that influence upon the Thakore Saheb there is no peace for the people.

I myself feel that there is very considerable truth in this statement, and it would be wrong on my part whilst I am embarking upon the fast to suppress this relevant truth from the public. I have sent a private and personal letter to him, which, so far as I am concerned, shall never see the light of day. But I do make a humble appeal to him, and I would like those who know him to join me in the appeal, that he should refrain from influencing the Thakore Saheb, although the latter may find it difficult to free himself from that influence. I can say much more, but I must not.

Although I have been in exile from Kathiawar for more than a generation and a half, I know how turbid Kathiawar politics is. This unfortunate sub-province is notorious for its intrigues. I have felt its deadly influence even during these four days. How I wish that my fast may contribute, be it ever so little, to the purification of Kathiawar politics. I therefore invite the Princes and politicians of Kathiawar to use my fast to rid Kathiawar of the deadening influence of the poisonous atmosphere that makes healthy living in Kathiawar so difficult.

Harijan, 11-3-1939

172. TALK WITH FIRST MEMBER, RAJKOT STATE COUNCIL[1]

March 3, 1939

GANDHIJI: It only adds fuel to the fire. I shall formally reply to it later. But may I, in the mean time, suggest to you that you should

[1] This and the following item are extracted from "Diary of the Fast–II". Pyarelal explains that "the First Member arrived with the Thakore Saheb's reply" when Gandhiji had just completed his statement to the Press; *vide* the preceding item. For the Thakore Saheb's reply, *vide* "Letter from Dharmendrasinh", 3-3-1939

advise the Thakore Saheb that all satyagrahi prisoners may now be released? Now that I have commenced the fast there can be no resumption of civil resistance on this issue during my lifetime. The news of my fast is bound to perturb them and they might launch on a sympathetic fast. As prisoners it may be difficult to control or check them.

FIRST MEMBER : If they are not released, will the civil disobedience be resumed?

No. My fast has rendered the suspension absolute.

But must you fast? Is there no alternative? I would far rather have any amount of civil disobedience than this fast on your part.

I know that. But if at the ripe age of seventy I have to reconsider a decision taken after so much introspection and waiting upon God, I shall have lived my three score and ten years in vain. I launched upon the fast when there was no other course open to me. Can you suggest any other ?

Harijan, 1-4-1939

173. NOTE TO KASTURBA GANDHI[1]

March 3, 1939

I hope you are all calm and collected. But if you cannot remain at peace there[2] , you can come to me.

Harijan, 1-4-1939

174. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[3]

March 3, 1939

I am sorry for this reply. I cannot help saying that the Thakore Saheb has been badly advised. The reply adds fuel to the fire. Considerations urged in the letter became irrelevant when he gave the following note[4] to the Sardar :

[1] Pyarelal explains that the note was sent "with the First member" after his talk with Gandhiji; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] The addressee was under detention at Tramba.

[3] This appeared under the title "Adds Fuel to the Fire" as Gandhiji's comments "on the Thakore Saheb's reply"; *vide* Appendix I. In "Diary of the Fast-II", Pyarelal says that the statement was "dictated" by "Gandhiji after the First Member had left the place with the note to Kasturba Gandhi; *vide* the preceding item.

[4] Dated December 26, 1939; *vide* "Letter From Dharmendrasinh", 3-3-1939

[It is] agreed seven members of the Committee mentioned in Clause 2 of the State announcement of today's date[1] are to be recommended by Sardar [Vallabhbhai] Patel and they are to be nominated by us.

The language is unequivocal and emphatic. The Thakore Saheb, in giving that note, divested himself of the responsibility of choosing the nominees. The responsibility of nomination rests with the Thakore Saheb, but the nomination is conditioned by the fact that the names had to be recommended by the Sardar. Therefore the responsibility for making suitable recommendations devolved upon the Sardar and that devolution took place at the will of the Ruler of Rajkot. It was open to the Ruler and his advisers to negotiate with Sardar, if they did not find his recommendations suitable and to induce him to make other recommendations but if the Sardar could not be so persuaded, the Thakore Saheb, having divested himself of the responsibility to choose a nominee, had to accept the Sardar's recommendations. Reason also suggests that if the reference to the committee was to be made good it must be a Committee of the choice of those for whose sake the Notification containing the reference had become necessary. Otherwise, what was given with one hand could not be taken away with the other.

If the choice is left to the Ruler and his advisers, there is nothing to prevent them from appointing a committee which would make recommendations such that they would completely nullify the spirit of the reference. However, the matter is past argument. If the Thakore Saheb's letter is the last word, my fast has to continue to the end of my time on this earth. I shall undergo the ordeal, I hope, with a cheerful heart, and I know also that what may not take place in my lifetime will take place without the shadow of a doubt after the sacrifice.

Harijan, 11-3-1939

[1] The source, however, has "said announcement of this date". For the "State ann-ouncement", *vide* "Letter to Dharmendrasinh", 14-4-1939

175. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

RAJKOT,
March 3, 1939

MIRABAI
CARE BADSHAHKHAN[1]
CHARSADDA

FAST BEGUN WITH PRAYER AND REJOICING. IT IS LIKELYBE PROLONGED. YOU MUST NOT WORRY BUT CONTINUE WORK. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 5431. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 10026

176. TELEGRAM TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

RAJKOT,
March 3, 1939

KHANSAHEB ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN
CHARSADDA

FAST BEGUN GOD'S NAME. CAUSE FOR JOY. LOOK AFTER MIRABAI. KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS SHOULD DO SPINNING OTHER CONSTRUCTIVE WORK. LOVE..

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

177. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

RAJKOT,
March 3, 1939

RAJKUMARI
MAGANWADI, WARDHA

FAST BEGUN UNDER GREAT JOY. MAY BE PROLONGED. YOU SHOULD ALL BE ENGROSSED WORK. HOPE LOWER HOUSE[2] CONTINUES WELL LOVE..

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3904. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7213

[1] Abdul Ghaffar Khan, whom the addressee was helping in teaching spining to Khudai Khidmatgars in the Frontier Province

[2] Hermann Kallenbach; Gandhiji used to address Kallenbach as 'Lower House' and called himself 'Upper House'. *Vide* "Letter to H. Kallenbach", 18-9-1932

178. TELEGRAM TO GOVINDDAS

[*March 3, 1939*][1]

FAST BEGUN. LITTLE HOPE OF AN EARLY END. COMING TO TRIPURI SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE. SORRY.

GANDHI

The Hindu, 4-3-1939

179. LETTER TO DHARMENDRASINH[2]

RASHTRIYASHALA, RAJKOT,
March 3, 1939

MAHERBAN THAKORE SAHEB,

Your letter[3] is painful. You seem to attach no value to a promise. You are acting like a man who promises donation and then goes back upon the promise. Have you not given much by your Notification[4] of 26th December? Donations are but one of the attributes of princeship as they are also its ornament. By that Notification you promised a big donation. Its very core includes surrender of the right of making the choice of names of members of the Reforms Committee. But in the case in point you surrendered[5] that right by a special letter addressed to Sardar Vallabhbhai in his capacity as Representative of the Parishad. Your letter of today cancels that surrender. This action of yours does not befit you. I believe that compliance with my suggestion contained in my yesterday's letter is necessary for the due fulfilment of your promise.

May God move you to such compliance. It behoves you to give effect to the suggestion I have sent you today through the Khan Saheb. Inasmuch as civil disobedience now remains definitely

[1] From the reference to the fast; *vide* also the three preceding items.

[2] The letter appeared as "translated from original Gujarati by Gandhiji". In "Diary of the Fast-II", Pyarelal explains that Gandhiji sent the letter after he had "slept peacefully and long in the afternoon".

[3] *Vide* "Letter from dharmendrasinh", 3-3-1939

[4] *Vide* "Draft of Statement for Thakore Saheb of Rajkot", 19-11-1938

[5] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 3-3-1939

suspended it seems to me to be your obvious duty to discharge the civil-disobedience prisoners.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

Harijan, 11-3-1939

180. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

March 3, 1939

There is a misunderstanding about a certain telegram received by me at Segaon, of which I made use in the first Press Note[2] I issued on the eve of my coming to Rajkot. I did not think it was necessary for me to refer to that telegram. On my attention being drawn to the fact, I immediately discovered that I should have inserted in my Press Note the telegram received from shri Nanalal Kalidas Jasani Rangoonwalla on February 24 reading :

> The State granted our request to allow Mohanbhai Gadhadawala and myself to visit the Trumba, Sardhar and Rajkot jails. There were inconveniences which were mended by the State authorities. There shall be no differentiation in treatment between the Sardhar and Rajkot prisons. Glad to inform you that fasting has terminated.

It will be recalled that one of the telegrams received by me from the First Member made mention of this telegram and said that the telegram received from Shri Nanalal would show that the fasting was unjustified.

On my coming here I discovered that the omission by me to reproduce this telegram gave rise to the rumour that Shri Nanalal had come to the decision that the fast was not justified. There was no mention in this telegram to me to the effect that the fast was not justified. It was unnecessary to say in the telegram that the fast was justified because the sender of the telegram and other friends were trying to find out a remedy for dealing with the situation.

It has become necessary for me to clear this misunderstanding because there is an atmosphere of suspicion and disturbance, which

[1] This appeared under the title "A Misunderstanding Cleared". In "Diary of the Fast-II", Pyarelal explains that Gandhiji had an "informal talk" with "a group of journalists".

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 25-2-1939

may interfere with the working of the satyagraha machinery. Therefore, it has become necessary for me, in the interest of the cause, to inform my co-workers that there is absolutely no cause for suspicion that Shri Nanalal had come to a hasty decision about the fast. His whole reason for intervening was to find out if he can be of any assistance in terminating the hunger strike of the prisoners, and we now know the result of this intervention.

Harijan, 11-3-1939

181. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

March 3, 1939

The longer words should be more widely spaced. Anyway the improvement is considerable and it will be good if it is sustained. If I have my way you shall turn out into a true and expert *gosevak*.

This letter[1] reached me here today, having been forwarded from Bardoli.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1919

182. TELEGRAM TO C. F. ANDREWS[2]

[On or after *March 3, 1939*][3]

ALL WELL. ANXIETY COMPLEX NOT ALLOWED. LOVE.

MOHAN

Harijan, 11-3-1939

[1] Gandhiji had written on the back of the letter from the addressee, who had requested him to make corrections in it.

[2] This and the following item are extracted from the addressee's article "Ordeal by Fire". C. F. Andrews explains that the telegram was "sent to me at Delhi." He had already "started when it came to Bolpur".

[3] According to the addressee, the telegram was in reply to the one he had sent to Gandhiji on receipt of a telegraphic message about the fast.

183. TELEGRAM TO C. F. ANDREWS[1]

[On or after *March 4, 1939*]

YOUR COMING UNNECESSARY AT PRESENT. KEEPING WELL. LOVE. TELL MAHADEV OTHERS.

MOHAN

Harijan, 11-3-1939

184. TELEGRAM TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

[On or before *March 4, 1939*][2]

GURUDEVA

YOUR LOVING MESSAGE. KEEPING WELL. HOPE YOU WILLNOT THINK OF RUNNING TO ME AS BEFORE. I KNOW I HAVE YOUR BLESSING AND LOVE.

GANDHI

The Hindu, 5-3-1939

185. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

RAJKOT,[3]
March 4, 1939

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

KEEPING WELL FIT. STEP WAS INEVITABLE.

From a photostat: C. W. 10887. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan

186. TELEGRAM TO HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB

RAJKOT,
March 4, 1939

HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB[4], M. L. A.
CUTTACK

ONLY ADVICE I GIVE IS GO ON WITH WORK

[1] *Vide* the preceding item. C. F. Andrews explains : "This was in answer to an express telegram I had sent on the train Journey asking him to advise me whether I should come to Rajkot or remain in Delhi."

[2] *ibid*

[3] The telegram was reported under the date-line "Santiniketan, March 4".

[4] Chief Ministr of Orissa, 1946-50 and 1957-61; Minister of Commerce and Ind-ustry, Government of India, 1950-52; Governor of Bombay, 1955-56

WITHINCREASING DEVOTION AND WE SHALL SOON COME THROUGH.

BAPU

H. K. Mahtab Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

187. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

RAJKOT,
March 4, 1939

MIRABAI
CARE BADSHAHKHAN
CHARSADDA TAHSIL

KEEPING WELL. HAVE NO ANXIETY. INFORM KHAN SAHEB.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6432. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 10027

188. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON[1]

RASHTRIYASHALA, RAJKOT,
March 4, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

I woke up early this morning and felt like sending to the Press what I am about to write down here. I then felt like wiring the contents to H. E. the Viceroy[2]. At last the correct thing appeared to me, to pass on my thoughts to you with the request that you should wire them to His Excellency with such remarks as you may choose to make thereon.

It seems to me that in regarding the Thakore Saheb as a responsible thinking Ruler, I am, or shall I say we are all, giving currency to a fraud. I felt this when I sent him day before yesterday my letter[3] embodying my suggestions. I do not know if he was allowed even to read it, and if he was, whether he understood it in all its bearings. I am hoping that my own and my ancestral connection

[1] In "The Rajkot Fast-III" (*Harijan*, 8-4-1939), Pyarelal explains that Gandhiji dictated the letter at 5.30 a.m. after "a very peaceful night".

[2] Lord Linlithgow

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Dharmendrasinh", 2-3-1939

with his father and grandfather may provoke him to a sense of his duty. Durbar Virawala is the Virtual Ruler of Rajkot. As I have already Remarked in my letter to the Thakore Saheb, he is utterly unreliable. He does not like the first Notification[1]. If he could, he would undo it by packing the reforms Committee with a majority of his nominees. At the present moment he holds no office in the State, and yet his will is the supreme law. He even issues written orders and has in the Rajkot palace his nephew who alone has access to the Thakore Saheb at all times. Sir Patrick Cadell, as you are aware, had no trust in him and had even prohibited him from remaining in Rajkot or having any connection with the Thakore Saheb. You may not know that Col. Daly had to pull him up for entering Rajkot during the first struggle. I cannot recall a parallel to such a chaos as exists in Rajkot. I do feel that this is a case for the immediate intervention of the Paramount Power so as to induce fulfilment of the promise made by the Thakore Saheb.

Nomination by the Thakore Saheb of the names recommended by Sardar Patel, of unofficial members of the Reforms Committee, is part of the transaction of 26th December. Moreover as I have said in my letter[2] of yesterday to the Thakore Saheb, without some such precaution the Notification could be easily made a dead letter. I enclose herewith a copy of Thakore Saheb's letter[3] and copy of translation of my reply thereto.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C. W. 10137. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

189. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[4]

March 4, 1939[5]

It has grieved me to read the Rajkot Durbar's communique. Those who have studied the documents already published will have no hesitation in agreeing with me that the communique is full of evasions and misrepresentations of facts. I have neither the energy nor the wish

[1] Dated December 26, 1938

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dharmendrasinh", 3-3-1939

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Dharmendrasinh", 3-3-1939

[4] The statement appeared under the title "An Unkind Cut" as Gandhiji's comments "on the Rajkot Durbar's communique on the 5th instant". However, in "The Rajkot Fast-III", Pyarelal refers to it among the events of March 4.

[5] *ibid*

to examine the communique in detail. But one omission in my letter to the Thakore Saheb and in the Press statements requires explanation. That is in connection with my reference to atrocities in my telegrams which brought me to Rajkot. The omission was due to my desire to be absolutely fair to the Khan Saheb and his subordinates, who are primarily responsible for dealing with the actions of civil resisters. But the fact that the omission, instead of being appreciated, has been turned against me,[1] compels me to put the actual state of affairs before the public.

After my visit to the two jails I told the Khan Saheb that I was much moved by the statements made by the prisoners. I told him that I was inclined to believe the allegations made by the prisoners, some of whom were personally known to me and many of whom enjoyed in society a status which entitled them to have their evidence believed until it was proved to be untrue. I therefore told the Khan Saheb that the allegations were so serious, covered such a wide field, and affected so many persons that the only way I could do justice to the State was to suggest a judicial inquiry by an impartial tribunal. For his own part, he at once accepted the suggestion and, at my request, even mentioned the names of certain English officials to conduct the judicial enquiry. And it was agreed between us that I should prepare a charge-sheet which he would examine and answer and, on his part, he would prepare a counter charge-sheet which I would examine and answer. After this process had been gone through and agreed charges eliminated, the balance, if any was left, would be referred to the tribunal.

The Khan Saheb also asked me what reparation I would make if the charges of utter falsehoods which he proposed to make against the civil resisters were found to be true. I said that if a representative of the civil resisters was proved to be guilty of falsehoods I would entirely withdraw from the struggle, and so far as I was concerned, I would treat the claim for responsible government by persons capable of falsehoods to have lapsed. The Khan Saheb seemed to be more than pleased over the unhesitating reparation that I had offered.

I hope to make good the promise I have made to the Khan

[1] According to Pyarelal, it was "misconstrued as meaning that Gandhiji's enquiries and inspections of Rajkot had satisfied him of the 'falsity of these allegations' and Gandhiji was accused of withholding due expression of regret for the allegations in question".

Saheb if I survive the ordeal that I am going through. Even on my sick-bed I am organizing collection and collation of evidence already received. I have before me more than 175 statements made by sufferers and others.

The charge against me of breach of faith is an unkind cut. My fast I hold to be part of my mission. At the end of it, whatever happens, there will be peace. The alternative to the breakdown of negotiations would have been a revival of the struggle with increasing bitterness of strife.

Harijan, 11-3-1939

190. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

RAJKOT,
March 4, 1939[2]

Whilst there is still strength in me, I want to thank all those who have been overwhelming me with their kind messages. I know that many hearts are praying for the right thing to be done. He in whose name the fast has been undertaken will guide India and the Paramount Power in the right path. I am dictating this message, however, in order to warn Congress workers against forgetting Tripuri. I have made every effort that is humanly possible to go to Tripuri. But God willed it otherwise. All whose duty it is to go, should unhesitatingly attend the session, and, with combined effort, cut their way through the difficulties which will confront them.

I have implored Subhas Babu not to defy medical advice, but humbly submit to it and regulate proceedings from Calcutta.

In my opinion, the one and only task before the Congress is to make supreme efforts to clean the Congress house of proved corruption and impurities. The strongest resolutions that the Congress may pass will be of no value if there should be no incorruptible organization to enforce them. I shall pray, whilst I lie on my back, that Congressmen will jealously guard the reputation which has been built up by painful effort during the past 52 years.

The All-India Spinners' Association and the All-India Village

[1] The statement appeared under the title "The One and Only Task" and was dated "Rajkot, March 6". However, in "The Rajkot Fast-III", Pyarelal says it was dictated by Gandhiji at 6 p.m. on March 4.

[2] *ibid*

Industries Association, which are an appendage to the Congress, stand apart, and are untouched by internal politics [of the Congress. But even these may be affected by the corruption that has crept into the organisation][1]. I hope that, as usual, it will be attended by tens of thousands of people. Tamil Nadu, Bihar and Hissar have proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that khadi not only revives villages and village craft, but is also the finest form of famine insurance. The phenomenal increase made by the All-India Spinners' Association in the wages of spinners has given a new hope to millions of women in the villages. They flock to the All-India Spinners' Association depot for work, but there is surplus stock of khadi. Will not the Congressmen and others denude the khadi stores of khadi and enable the A. I. S. A. to take all women who are eager to do spinning under the new wages scheme, which has succeeded beyond all expectations? Here also let us be true to ourselves and to the dumb millions whom the two Associations are designed to serve. The wages scheme cannot work if unscrupulous men sell khadi or village articles are produced at starvation wages. The only security lies in the public refusing to buy khadi and village articles except from duly certified stores.

My fast must not unhinge the minds of Congressmen at Tripuri, but if we are to work out our own salvation by truthful and non-violent means, it is essential to attend to the smallest detail. Whilst I prize the unbounded affection of the people, let them realize that my life is not worth keeping if anxiety to save it deflects the attention of the nation from the main purpose.

Harijan 11-3-1939; also *The Hindu*, 5-3-1939

191. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI[2]

March 4, 1939

You are worrying for nothing. You ought to rejoice that God has sent me an opportunity to do His will. How could I consult you or anybody else before undertaking the fast when I myself was not aware that it was coming? God gave the signal, and what else could I do than

[1] From *The Hindu.* The *Harijan* version has : "The Congress may even be affected by corruption that has crept into the organization."

[2] This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast–III". Pyarelal says that Dr. Sushila, Vijayabehn and Narandas Gandhi met the addressee at Tramba in the evening. "She was disconsolate . . . She had addressed a pathetic note to Gandhiji mildly reproaching him for not even consulting her before launching on his fast."

obey? Will there be any stopping to consult you or anybody when the final peremptory summons comes as some day it must come?[1]

Harijan, 8-4-1939

192. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

RAJKOT,
March 5, 1939

CHI. MANI,

Why are you uneasy? Are such experiences new to you? You have exceeded my expectations in this matter. I have come on my own. I thought it my duty. God has inspired me to come. Do not be in the least unhappy. I am not writing any letters now, excepting one[2] to Ba and this to you.

BAPU

SHRI MANIBEHN PATEL
PRISONER
C/O FIRST MEMBER
RAJKOT

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro- 4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 125

[1] Pyarelal says further: "Dr. Sushila conveyed to Shrimati Kasturba an oral message too that Gandhiji has sent through her. Did she want him to entreat the State authorities to allow her to be with him during the fast?Her unhesitating reply was: 'No, by no means. I shall be quite content if they will let me have daily news of him. God who has taken care of him during all his previous trials will pull him safely through this too. But may not one expose oneself to risk once too often?' The remark being conveyed to Gandhiji, he observed; 'Yes, that may happen. But a spiritual fast is justified not by its result but by unquestioning and joyous surrender to His will of which it is the expression. Even death should be welcome if it comes in the performance of one's highest duty'."

[2] *Vide* the preceding item. It was, however, written on March 4.

193. TELEGRAM TO MAHADEV DESAI[1]

RAJKOT,
March 6, 1939

MAHADEV DESAI
BIRLA HOUSE
NEW DELHI

IMPLICATIONS GIBSON LETTER ARE THAT VIRAWALA SHOULD BE REMOVED THAKORE SAHEB MADE SIGN MY TERMS OR ANY OTHER ACCEPTABLE AND NEW GOOD DEWAN OR COUNCIL APPOINTED TO CARRY ON ADMINISTRATION IN SPIRIT NOTIFICATION DECEMBER TWENTY-SIXTH PENDING INAUGURATION REFORM CONSTITUTION. ALTERNATIVE FORMULA IS IF PARAMOUNT POWER GIVE PUBLIC ASSURANCE OF CONSTITUTION IN TERMS OF TWENTY-SIXTH NOTIFICATION AS WOULD SATISFY CONSTITUTIONAL LAWYER I WOULD ACCEPT ANY COMMITTEE IMPARTIALLY CHOSEN BY NEW INTERIM ADMINISTRATION SELECTED AS SUGGESTED ABOVE. ANOTHER ALTERNATIVE IS THAT I SHOULD ACT AS MEMBER WITH ANOTHER APPOINTED BY THE VICEROY SAY MR. GIBSON WITH REFERENCE IN EVENT OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN US. I DO NOT THINK THE POSITION AS SUGGESTED BY "STATESMAN" IS NECESSARY. CURTAILMENT OF POWERS IS NECESSARY.

BAPU

From a copy: C. W. 10134. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar. Also Gandhi Nidhi File (August 1976). Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

[1] In "The Rajkot Fast-IV" (*Harijan*, 15-4-1939), Pyarelal reports: "In reply to a wire from Mahadev Desai, Gandhiji wrote down the implications of his letter to Mr. Gibson of 4th March," *Vide* "Letter to E. C. Gibson", 4-3-1939

194. TELEGRAM TO GEORGE S. ARUNDALE

[*March 6, 1939*][1]

THANKS FOR YOUR WIRE[2]. IF MY FAST IS DIVINELY INSPIRED AS I HAVE CLAIMED IT CANNOT BE TERRORISM. IF IT IS ONLY A PRODUCT OF MY IMAGINATION MY LIFE IS NOT WORTH PRAYING FOR NOR WORTH SAVING. IN ASKING THE THAKORE SAHEB TO KEEP HIS PROMISE I DO NOT ASK HIM TO YIELD HIS PRINCIPLES. I FEEL I HAVE COURAGE ENOUGH TO BREAK THE FAST IF I DISCOVER A FLAW WARRANTING A BREACH. IF YOU HAD STUDIED ALL THE FACTS PERHAPS YOU WOULD NOT HAVE CHARACTERIZED MY ACTION AS YOU HAVE DONE. NEVERTHELESS I THANK YOU AND YOUR ASSOCIATES FOR THEIR OUTSPOKENNESS. YOU HAVE RAISED A PUBLIC ISSUE OF THIS. IF DESPITE MY REPLY YOU MAINTAIN YOUR OPINION IT MAY BE PUBLIC SERVICE FOR YOU TO PUBLISH YOUR WIRE WITH MY REPLY. I HAVE NO GOD TO SERVE BUT TRUTH.

The Hindu, 9-3-1939

195. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

RASHTRIYASHALA, RAJKOT,
March 6, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

In reply to your letter[3] of even date, will you please wire to H. E. as follows?

"I am grateful for your wire. My actions especially my fasts are

[1] From "The Rajkot Fast-IV" by Pyarelal.

[2] Dated March 4, According to Pyarelal the addressee had asked Gandhiji, "Whe-ther his fast did not amount to violence since its net effect would be to compel the Thakore Saheb either to give up his 'principles' or to face the prospect of becoming the most hated man in India by allowing Gandhiji to fast himself to death. He ended by exhorting him to abandon his fast 'with your own great courage and thus preserve your life for India and the Thakore Saheb's honour for his convictions'."

[3] *Vide* "Letter from E. C. Gibson", 6-3-1939

never taken mechanically. They are promptings of the inner call. The call to fast came to deal with an emergency. There could be no waiting, no consultation with anybody. As to police excesses, my observations so far have led me to think that they have been far in excess of my fears. Moreover there have been so far as I can see gross illegalities and irregularities. I invite your attention to my Press statement[1] on the matter. But they did not cause the fast. Breach of promise is the determining factor. If I get your clear assurance that the substance of the terms of my letter[2] to the Thakore Saheb of 3rd instant will be satisfied, I shall gladly break the fast. The strain of the fast is nothing compared to the uncertainty of the immediate future. I may run no risk. There is anarchy in Rajkot. If I survive to tell the tale I shall relate it. Durbar Virawala should be removed. Thakore Saheb is a cipher. He does not rule. Durbar Virawala's will is law. A sympathetic Dewan should be appointed who need not have Thakore Saheb's signature to documents. Prisoners should be released before I can leave Rajkot. I have never seen things like what I have seen, and am daily seeing, in Rajkot. I appreciate your anxiety to end my fast. I have great regard for you. I feel that there is a sympathetic bond between us. I feel too that I could rely upon your honour. But if I do not at once respond to your kind suggestion, you know the importance I attach to what to me is a calculated breach of honour and all the dark things that have come under my observation during these days of agony."[3]

This being my silence-day, I could not dictate this letter. I am writing it lying on my bed. But in order to enable you to read it with ease I am asking Miss Harrison to type it for me. The typed copy will accompany this. Miss Harrison will carry this to you.

I know how anxious these days are for you. I am sorry that I am the unwitting cause.

Yours sincerely,

PS.

After finishing this I saw your note to Miss Harrison. I shall be

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 3-3-1939

[2] *Vide* "Letter tp Dharmendrasinh", 3-3-1939. The letter was released to the Press on March 3.

[3] For the Viceroy's reply, *vide* "Letter to E. C. Gibson", 7-3-1939

glad to see you tonight at 8 p.m. when my silence breaks, i.e., if that hour is convenient to you.

M. K. G.

From a copy: C. W. 10139. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

196. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 6, 1939

CHI. NARANDAS,

Please examine Kanaiyo's[1] method of keeping accounts and give your opinion on it as an expert; if you find it necessary to teach him account- keeping, please do so. The walls and doors in the school are dirty and there are cobwebs. The walls must be cleaned and the cobwebs, etc., removed.

The walls should be whitewashed up to four or five feet. Start the work immediately from tomorrow.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U./II. Also C. W. 8556. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

197. DISCUSSION WITH AGATHA HARRISON[2]

RAJKOT,
March 6, 1939

Somehow I am able to draw the noblest in mankind and that is what enables me to maintain my faith in God and human nature.

I know Kathiawar, the land of Kathis, very brave soldiers, but full of intrigue and corruption. How could I clean these Augean stables except through this vicarious suffering? If I was what I want to be, the fast would not have been necessary. I would not then need to argue with anyone. My word would go straight home. Indeed, I would not even need to utter the word. The mere will on my part would suffice to produce the required effect. But I am painfully aware of my limitations. That is why I have to undergo all this to make myself heard.

[1] Also called Kanu; son of the addressee

[2] This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast-IV". Pyarelal explains that this followed Gandhiji's 20-minute interview to Gibson.

The other way, namely, that of civil resistance, I deliberately ruled out in this case, because from what I could see it would have, under the existing circumstances, only served further to arouse the brute in those in power. The aim of a satyagrahi, on the othere hand, always is to put the brute in everyone to sleep. By suffering myself I have saved the suffering on the part of the people which would have been inevitable in case civil resistance was revived.

There is nothing but an indescribable peace and spiritual exultation within me. There is no trace of ill will in my heart against anybody. I am making a ceaseless, strenuous effort not to be irritated. My heart is overflowing. with goodwill even for Virawala. My fast will be worth while if it serves to move him and the Thakore Saheb to a sense of their responsibility. And, if the Viceroy should in the end decide not to concede my demand, I shall not misunderstand him. I know how difficult it is for Englishmen to grasp the meaning of the fasting method.[1]

Harijan, 15-4-1939

198. TELEGRAM TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

[On or after *March* 6, 1939][2]

SHANKERLAL BANKER

EXHIBITION

TRIPURI

SEND POONA DIRECTLY JAWAHAR'S EXHIBITION OPENING ADDRESS[3] WITH COPY DELHI.[4]

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Agatha Harrison had a long talk with Gandhiji the previous morning also. For her report, *vide* "Discussion with Agatha Harrison", 5-3-1939

[2] From the reference of Jawaharlal Nehru's inaugural address at Khadi Exhibition, Tripuri, on March 6, 1939

[3] Presumably for publication in *Harijan* and other allied editions. An "abridged summary of the speech in Hindustani" appeared in *Harijan*, 18-3-1939.

[4] Gandhiji wanted to proceed to Delhi after the fast; he however reached there on March 15.

199. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

RASHTRIYASHALA, RAJKOT
March 7, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

I have received your kind letter, and as I wanted some points to be cleared you were good enough to come to me and discuss them. In my present state I want to conserve my energy and therefore I do not want to reduce them to writing. I will ask you please to wire the following message to His Excellency:

"I am grateful to you for your prompt reply[1] which was delivered to me at 10. 45 today. Although naturally it leaves several things unsaid, I regard your kind message as sufficient warrant for breaking the fast and ending the anxiety of millions who are following the fast with their prayers and such effort as they can make to hasten the settlement.

It is only proper for me to say that those things [which] are not mentioned in your message are not waived by me but that I should expect satisfaction on them. They can however await mutual discussion.

As soon as the doctors permit me to undertake a journey to Delhi I shall do so.

I thank you once more for taking up so promptly and so sympathetically the matter that necessitated the fast.

I hope that the prisoners will be released as soon as possible today.

I await your reply as to publication before breaking the fast."[2]

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 10141. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

[1] *Vide* "Letter from E. C. Gibson", 7-3-1939. In "The Rajkot Fast-IV", Pyarelal explains that "after peru-sing the note" Gandhiji remarked : "It does seem to provide a basis for breaking the fast, but I must clear up certain points with Mr. Gibson." Gibson arrived at 11.30 a.m. and was closeted with Gandhiji for 20 minutes.

[2] Pyarelal says further that the addressee's reply of even date was received at 2 p.m. It read: ". . . Thakore Saheb is issuing immediate order for the release of prisoners. I. . . appreciate your decision about releasing for publication only today's letters containing the Viceroy's last message to you and your reply . . . . His Excellency agrees that these can now be released for publication" (C.W. 10142).

200. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

March 7, 1939

In my opinion this good ending is an answer to the prayers of millions. I claim to know my millions. All the 24 hours of the day I am with them. They are my first care and last, because I recognize no God except the God that is to be found in the hearts of the dumb millions. They do not recognize His presence; I do. And I worship the God that is Truth or Truth which is God through the service of these millions.

But I also know I had the prayers and sympathy of others all the world over. And there was a persistent effort of the intelligentsia in order to bring about an honourable understanding and a speedy end of this fast. Englishmen have co-operated as well as Indians. Politically speaking, it is His Excellency the Viceroy who is responsible for the settlement.

I know Englishmen do not understand the method of fast, especially on what would appear to be a purely political issue. They often feel disgusted with such method. I know also there are Indians who do not appreciate the method of fast. I hope, when I am strong, to write[1] about 'The Fast Method', because over 50 years' experience has convinced me that in the plan of satyagraha it has a definite place.

The reason why I bring fast here is because I want to give full valuation to the Viceregal gesture, and he represents the English mind. It was open to him—and I at least would have justified his action—If he had said: 'I do not understand this man's actions. There seems to be no end to his fasts. There must be a stop somewhere. He will give no guarantee that this is his last fast. We propose even this time not to parley with him until he has broken his fast.'

I know that, ethically speaking, he would have been wrong if he had taken up that attitude, but, politically speaking and examining the position from the English standpoint, I would have justified his action if he had been unbending. I am hoping that such a good ending and appreciation even of a method which the English mind cannot

[1] This appeared under the title "A Good Ending". In "The Rajkot Fast –IV", Pyarelal reports : "The fast was broken with the usual ceremonies at 2.20 p.m. From 2.30 to 3.20 Gandhiji dictated a long statement to the Press."

[1] *Vide* "Fasting"

understand will produce not merely the righting of what I have held to be a primary wrong, but it will clear the atmosphere and help also in the general solution of the States' problem.

I do not mean to say that all States will have to follow the Rajkot precedent. Rajkot is a speciality and must be regarded as an isolated case. There are States whose problems must be considered on their merits. But public attention is rivetted on the problem of the States. I hope it will be recognized that it is a problem which does not brook delay.

I would like the Princes to believe me when I assure them that I came to Rajkot as their friend and as a cent percent peacemaker. I saw that civil resisters in Rajkot were, and could not but be, unyielding. Their honour was at stake. I had tales of atrocities poured into my ears. I felt that the basest human passions would be let loose if I allowed civil resistance to go on from day to day. That would have resulted in a bitter feud not merely between Rajkot and the civil resisters but—as the human mind works and even jumps from the particular to the general—there would have been a bitter feud between the Princes and the people.

I know that, even as it is, there is a growing school of public opinion in India which is convinced that the Princes are beyond reform, and that there would be no free India unless this 'relic of a barbaric past' is done away with. I honestly differ with them, and, as a believer in non-violence and therefore in the goodness of human nature, I could not do otherwise. They have a place in India. It is not possible to wipe out all the traditions of a hoary past. I therefore hold that if the Princes will read from the lessons of the past and will respond to the time spirit, all will be well. But it will not do to tinker with the problem. They will have to take heroic measures. They need not follow the Rajkot model, but they will have to part with real and substantial powers in favour of the people.

There is, so far as I am aware, no *via media* of saving the situation and saving India from a terrible blood feud. I dare not publish the letters that I have received about the Princes, but of this I shall have to speak more later. In my present weak state of health it is an effort to give this statement. And yet whilst the effect of the fast is on me and whilst I am full of what I call spiritual exultation, I must give out the best of my thoughts just now.

Then there are the Bhayats[1] and Garasias[2] . They pleaded with me their case. I told them that they had my sympathy. They could count upon me as their friend. I want them also to live as Garasias and Bhayats, but they will also have to march with the times. They will have to remodel their lives. They will have to feel one with the people over whom they exercise a kind of sway.

Our Mussalman friends came to me, and I had no hesitation in telling them without any argument that their special interests would be safeguarded, that if they wanted separate electorates in Rajkot with reservation of seats I would see to it that they got them. Without their asking they would have had ample guarantees for the fullest protection of their religious freedom. And I told them that if they insisted upon their nominations, I would not resist them. It is necessary for me to say this in order to ease their minds and to ease the minds of the Mussalmans throughout India. I want them to feel that neither I nor the Congress can ever be guilty of diminishing an iota of the safeguards that they may need for their full growth and for the protection of their faith and culture.

I must explain why I have released for publication only the Viceregal telegraphic message received today at 10·45 a.m. and my reply. There is an allusion to previous messages in these two communications. With the full consent of the Viceroy, I am refraining from publishing those communications. His Excellency has not prevented me from publishing them. I know that he does not believe in sending secret communications to public men, but, for reasons which I need not go into, I felt the force of the argument that, for the sake of the cause, it is not wise to publish them. I hope that it will never be necessary to publish them. There are in my communications allusions which were relevant, but they are not for the public. Hence the responsibility for withholding previous communications is solely mine.

One word about the Congress. My heart is there, but I see that I will not be able to reach there. I am still too weak but, what is more, if I am to give the finishing touch to the Rajkot matter and what it implies, I must not divide my attention between Tripuri and Rajkot. I must concentrate my attention solely on Rajkot at present. I have work

[1] Kinsmen; brothers, etc., of the ruling chief

[2] Holders of gifted land; a caste of Rajputs

to do here. I must hasten to Delhi as soon as I am able. I only hope that all will go well in Tripuri.

It is a strange experience for me to miss the Congress session through all these years. But it is a good thing. Why should I be so proud as to think that nothing serious can be done without me? There are leaders in Tripuri who are every whit as courageous, as self-sacrificing and as devoted as I am. I have no doubt, therefore, that though another policy may be evolved, there will be no acrimony and there will be no violence in their thoughts, in their words and in their deeds.

The last thing I would like to say is that I want to thank the Press correspondents who have been with me during all these anxious days. I have felt proud of them. They have carried out the best traditions of good journalism. They have not been newsmongers but they have been fellow-messengers of peace with me. They have shown me the greatest consideration. They have never pestered me.

I should like also publicly to thank my medical friends who have so ungrudgingly attended upon me.

I hope that the prayers of those who believe in them will still continue. In a way, my work begins from now. I begin to lead an earthly life. I have to carry on delicate negotiations. I do not want to lose the goodwill with which I am surcharged at the present moment. I think of the Thakore Saheb, I think of Durbar Shri Virawala. I have criticized them. but only as a friend. I repeat that I am in the place of a father to the Thakore Saheb. I have done no more towards him than I could have done to my truant son. I would like them to understand the significance of what has gone on in front of them, and it would be a noble ending to this fast if I discover that they have appreciated all that I have said as from a friend, and that there will be the response from them that I expect.

Rajkot is the hub of Kathiawar, and if Rajkot is given a popular government, other States in Kathiawar will of their own accord and without any further civil resistance fall in line. There is no such thing as perfect coincidences on this earth. Its beauty lies in its multitudinous variety. There will be, therefore, variety of constitutions in Kathiawar States. But let the trunk be true.

Harijan, 11-3-1939

201. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

RAJKOT,
March 7, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

I broke the fast, gave a message[1] to the Press and now send you my thanks for your warm letter[2]. Let me hope this contact is a foundation for lasting friendship.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 10143. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

202. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE[3]

[*March 7, 1939*][4]

BROKE FAST. THANK GOD.[5]

BAPU

The Hindu, 8-3-1939

203. TELEGRAM TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

RAJKOT,
March 7, 1939

MRS. BRIJLAL NEHRU
LAHORE

FAST BROKEN. THANK GOD.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 7988

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] *Vide* footnote 1, "Statement to the Press", 7-3-1939
[3] The addressee was the Congress President.
[4] Inferred from the contents. The telegram was reported under the date-line "Tri-puri, March 8". *Vide* also the two following items.
[5] The addressee's reply read : "Your telegram. Whole country is happy and relieved."

204. TELEGRAM TO WOMEN'S INDIAN ASSOCIATION, MADRAS[1]

[*March 7, 1939*][2]

FAST BROKEN. THANK GOD.

BAPU

The Hindu, 8-3-1939

205. TELEGRAM TO GOVINDDAS[3]

[*March 7, 1939*][4]

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO REACH THERE IN TIME. DOCTORS INSIST ON SOME DAYS' REST AND AS SOON AS THEY PERMIT I MUST PROCEED TO DELHI TO FINISH THE RAJKOT WORK. MAY GOD GUIDE THE CONGRESS DELIBERATIONS.

The Hindu, 8-3-1939

206. ITS MEANING

A critic may say: 'What have you gained to warrant the breaking of your fast? Not one of the terms of your ultimatum to the Thakore Saheb has been fulfilled except the release of prisoners. But you never took the fast for their release.'

On the surface this argument is perfect. It is consistent with a vengeance. My answer is, 'The letter killeth; the spirit giveth life.' The life-giving fact is that Rajkot has become an all-India issue and the place of the Thakore Saheb has been taken up by the Viceroy whose word I have no reason to doubt. Even if the Thakore Saheb had granted all my terms, I should not have been sure of due fulfilment,

[1] The telegram was reported under the date-line "Madras, March 8", as released by S. Ambujammal, Honorary Secretary, Women's Indian Association. It was in reply to the Association's telegram dated March 6, which read : "Women's Indian Association feels intensely grieved, anxious at decision. Prays Almighty to give strength and success." *Vide* also the two preceding items.

[2] *ibid*

[3] The telegram was reported under the date-line "Tripuri, March 8". It was in reply to the addressee's of March 7, which he had sent "on behalf of the Reception Committee".

[4] *ibid*

though I would have been obliged to accept them. What I have deliberately put in doubt is the meaning of the famous letter[1] given to the Sardar. In my ultimatum I had acted on the assumption that it bore only one meaning. But as a satyagrahi I must always allow my cards to be examined and re-examined at all times and make reparation if an error is discovered. Hence my reading of the settlement is that God has given me much more than I had ever expected. Time will show whether my claim is justified.

RAJKOT, March 8, 1939

Harijan, 11-3-1939

207. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

RAJKOT,
March 8, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

I hope you have bravely borne the fast which has enriched me perhaps more than the previous ones. I am quite happy. Strength too is coming. No more just now.

LOVE. BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6434. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10029

208. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

RAJKOT,
March 8, 1939

CHI. PREMA,

Sushila is sitting by my side. She does her work absent-mindedly. I was in fact in perfect bliss. As for the rest of the news, Sushila has written to you. To write more would mean disobeying doctors.

Blessing from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10398. Also C.W. 6837. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] The reference is to the draft of statement for Dharmendrasinh; *vide* "Draft of Statement for Thakore Saheb of Rajkot", 19-11-1938

209. TALK WITH AGATHA HARRISON[1]

March 8, 1939

Agatha had an interesting talk with Gandhiji in the morning and then in the afternoon. In the course of it she asked him the question, "Now that the Paramount Power has been appealed to intervene, would it be consistent with this attitude to go on with the anti-imperialist cry? In other words, would it be right from your viewpoint to make use of the machinery set up by the imperialist power whilst you are pledged to the anti-imperialist goal ?"

Gandhiji explained to her that the inconsistency to which she referred was in appearance only. Non-violent non-co-operation did not mean mechanical isolation or complete avoidance of contact with the opponent under all conditions. In seeking intervention of the Paramount Power he had put the Paramount Power on the trial and given it a chance to do the right thing.

The Paramount Power has so far constantly been helping the Princes in their misrule. But it owes also an obligation to the people. The people of Rajkot have now asked the Paramount Power to meet that obligation. Not to do so when an opportunity occurs would be not non-co-operation, it would be folly. It may even lead to the strengthening of the Paramount Power. Although non-co-operation is one of the main weapons in the armoury of satyagraha, it should not be forgotten that it is after all only a means to secure the co-operation of the opponent consistently with truth and justice. The essence of non-violence technique is that it seeks to liquidate antagonisms but not the antagonists themselves. In non-violent fight you have to a certain measure to conform to the traditions and conventions of the system you are pitted against. Avoidance of all relationship with the opposing power, therefore, can never be a satyagrahi's object, but transformation or purification of that relationship. The people of Rajkot would never be able to end the dominance of the Paramount Power through non-violent means if they said, 'We shall not touch it even with a pair of tongs; we shall refuse to meet it even for the sake of converting it.'

The field of co-operation between the Paramount Power and the people of the States was likely to grow rather than diminish with the growth of non-violent strength and consciousness among the people. In fact he foresaw a time when the Residents and Political Agents in Indian States would become true trustees and servants of the people on behalf of the Paramount Power and be made use of by them

[1] This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast–V" by Pyarelal.

as such.

The Congress had advised the country to boycott the reformed legislatures at the beginning of the non-co-operation movement. It regarded them as a trap and a snare. But as a result of phenomenal awakening that had taken place among the masses as a result of the schooling they got through successive civil disobedience campaigns, and the ensuing relative transformation of relationship between them and the Government, in 1937 it decided to capture the machinery of Government in the seven provinces where the Congress commanded a majority.

His seeking the intervention of the Paramount Power in the present case, therefore, did not necessarily imply any fundamental change in his outlook. On the contrary it was a further step towards the ending of that system as it exists and functions today.

Harijan, 29-4-1939

210. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE[1]

[On or before *March 9, 1939*][2]

DOCTORS ADVISE ME NOT TO LEAVE BEFORE THE THIRTEENTH INSTANT. YOU DEFIED DOCTORS I DARE NOT.

The Hindu, 9-3-1939

211. TELEGRAM TO K. M. MUNSHI[3]

[On or before *March 9, 1939*][4]

PLEASE WELCOME WAFDIST DELEGATION ON MY BEHALF. HOPE THEY WILL HAVE A NICE TIME. THEIR VISIT WILL FORGE AN INDISSOLUBLE LINK BETWEEN EGYPT AND INDIA.

The Hindu, 9-3-1939

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram which read : "Strongly feel your presence indispensably necessary here. That is also the general feeling here" (*The Hindu*, 8-3-1939).

[2] The telegram was reported under the date-line "Tripuri, March 9."

[3] The addressee was the Home Minister of Bombay.

[4] The telegram was reported under the date-line "Bombay, March 9". Also, according to the source, "the Egyptian Wafdist Delegation to the Tripuri Session of the Indian National Congress" arrived in Bombay from Cairo on March 9.

212. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

RAJKOT,
March 9, 1939

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
TRIPURI CONGRESS
[JABALPUR]

IT WILL BE FIRST CLASS BLUNDER IF RESOLUTION NOT TAKEN TO RID CONGRESS OF INTERNAL CORRUPTION. POWER SHOULD BE GIVEN TO A. I. C. C. TO MAKE REQUIRED CHANGES IN CONSTITUTION WITHOUT NECESSITY THEIR BEING SUBMITTED TO CONGRESS. KEEPING WELL.[1]

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

213. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

RASHTRIYASHALA, RAJKOT,
March 9, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

As I am now comparatively less weak, I have begun to gather threads of information. You will agree that repressive measures, whether by way of Notifications or acts done under them or reprisals outside Notifications, should be cancelled. I collect a few out of a long list submitted to me.

1. Bans on persons.
2. Bans on newspapers.
3. Bans on organizations.
4. Confiscations and fines.
5. Closing of schools and dispensaries.
6. Sale of movable and immovable property.
7. Grains belonging to the cultivators not allowed to be removed.

[1] According to *The Hindu*, 11-3-1939, an identical telegram was sent to Subhas Chandra Bose. It was read out by Sarat Chandra Bose in the Subjects Committee meeting as the former could not attend it owing to bad health. Sarat Chandra Bose said that Subhas Chandra Bose "Whole-heartedly endorsed Gandhiji's view".

8. Increase in student's fees and water charges.

9. Deprivation of freeships.

You will please see to the rectification of these matters. If you think that it is necessary to see me before you could take any action I am at your disposal.

Doctors have prohibited journeying before Monday next. I, therefore, propose to leave for Delhi on Monday evening.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 10145. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

214. APPEAL TO PEOPLE OF RAJKOT[1]

March 9, 1939

Through the grace of God, the object of my coming to Rajkot has been fulfilled. The Thakore Saheb, and with his consent the Paramount Power, have given assurance that the Thakore Saheb's word will be honoured and Rajkot will have a constitution in terms of the Notification of 26th December 1938. This is the simple and common-sense interpretation of the telegraphic communications between H. E. the Viceroy and myself. The result has surpassed all my expectations. The honour of both the Ruler and the ruled has been vindicated and the sufferings of the people have borne fruit. Let us all offer our thanks to the Almighty. Such a happy ending would have been impossible without His grace and intervention.

I would not go into the other points mentioned in my letter to the Thakore Saheb. I gave not given them up. It should be sufficient for all concerned to know that I am aware of the fact that restrictions on the Press and other repressive measures have not been withdrawn. My efforts for their withdrawal continue, and I am sure they will go shortly.

Let us not indulge in exultation over this settlement. The real work will begin now only. Responsible government will come, but will the people be able to shoulder the burden and rise equal to their task? If they are to give a proper account of themselves, they will have to begin preparing from today. They would not need, for this purpose, to hold meetings and deliver speeches. If meetings are held at all, they

[1] This appeared under the title "To the People of Rajkot" as originally "issued in Gujarati".

should be for the purpose of educating the public. Every citizen of Rajkot will have to contribute his or her mite if success is to crown our efforts.

1. There should be real Hindu-Muslim unity.

2. The canker of untouchability and the distinction between high and low must be uprooted from the heart of the Hindu community.

3. It should be realized that we have no other sanction at our disposal except that of truth and non-violence. We should, therefore, understand their working in our everday dealings.

4. The public should cultivate the spirit of corporate service.

5. Young men and women in thier numbers should come forward to dedicate their lives to the service of the people.

6. We must rid ourselves of petty jealousies and bickerings and learn to be disciplined.

7. The people should shed their lethargy and occupy themselves with some useful activity like spinning, etc. Everyone should take the vow of khadi.

8. Those who are educated should help their illiterate brethren to read and write.

Harijan, 18-3-1939

215. TALK WITH RAJKOT PRAJA PARISHAD WORKERS[1]

March 9, 1939

One of the workers had admitted in the course of his talk that he accepted non-violence as a policy, not as his creed. Gandhiji explained to him that he could be satisfied with that provided the acceptance was whole-hearted and sincere. It must be without any mental reservations. The greater danger was that although many people professed to believe in non-violence, not all of them meant the same thing by that term. *Himsa* did not merely mean indulgence in physical violence; resort to trickery, falsehood, intrigue, chicanery and deceitfulness—in short, all unfair and foul means—came under the category of *himsa*, and acceptance of ahimsa whether as a policy or a creed necessarily implied renunciation of all these things.

A votary of ahimsa had therefore to be incorruptible, fair and square in his

[1] This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast-VI" by Pyarelal.

dealings, truthful, straightforward and utterly selfless. He must have also true humility. It was of the utmost importance, therefore, that there should be no confusion or misunderstanding as to the meaning or implications of non-violence. The controversy about 'creed' or 'policy' could be put aside if there was a clear, common understanding on this point.

Harijan, 20-5-1939

216. TELEGRAM TO NAHAS PASHA[1]

[After *March 9, 1939*][2]

THOUSAND THANKS FOR YOUR WARM KINDLY MESSAGE. I RECIPROCATE EVERY SENTENCE.

GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-3-1939

217. TELEGRAM TO EGYPTIAN DELEGATION[3]

RAJKOT,
March 11, 1939

EGYPTIAN DELEGATION
REST HOUSE
JABALPUR

DELIGHTED YOUR AFFECTIONATE WIRE. I HOPE YOU ARE FINDING YOUR EXPECTATIONS SOMEWHAT REALIZED. REACHING DELHI FIFTEENTH. HOPE MEET YOU THERE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This was in reply to a message from the addressee, the leader of the Wafd Party, which read: "Please accept Wafd's heartfelt thanks and mine for kind message of welcome to Egyptian Deputation. Egyptians, united to their Indian brethren by sacred bonds of common ideal and efforts to realize them through channels of suffering and abnegation, have ever been inspired by your great example. May God give you strength to pursue your mission for salvation of downtrodden humanity." The Egyptian delegation landed in India on March 9; *vide* "Telegram to K. M. Munshi", p. 42, and also the following item.

[2] *ibid*

[3] This was in reply to a telegram dated March 11 from the delegation, who wanted to meet Gandhiji in Delhi or at any other place chosen by him.

218. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

[*March 11, 1939*][1]

THANKS FOR WIRE[2]. DO CONSERVE HEALTH AND ENERGY. MAY GOD BE WITH YOU ALL. AM PROG-RESSING.

BAPU

The Hindu, 12-3-1939

219. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

RAJKOT
March 11, 1939

AMTUSSALAAM
GANDHI SEVASANGH
WARDHA

SHOULD GO PATIALA. HEALTH GOOD. GETTING STRONGER.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 414

220. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

March 11, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

I am daily getting stronger. Therefore there should be no anxiety. I reach Delhi on 15th and know not how long I shall have to stay there. There is just a possibility that I would have to come back to Rajkot. I must think of nothing else before Rajkot is set on its feet.

Ba goes with me to Delhi without Kano[3].

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6435. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10030

[1] The telegram was reported under the date-line "Rajkot, March 11".

[2] Of even date which read: "Have communicated to Subjects Committee your telegram [*vide* "Telegram to Jawaharlal Nehru"] . . . Hope the Committee will follow your advice. Myself attended Subjects Committee on 8th and 9th. Yesterday, medical board banned activity . . . Hope you are improving."

[3] Also called Kanam, son of Ramdas Gandhi.

221. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

RAJKOT,
March 11, 1939

Having been out of touch with everything since my leaving Segaon, that is, for nearly a fortnight, I do not feel competent to give a decisive opinion upon the impending resumption of civil resistance in Travancore. But I have no difficulty in stating certain general principles. The first indispensable condition precedent to any civil resistance is that there should be surety against any outbreak of violence whether on the part of those who are identified with civil resistance or on the part of the general public. It would be no answer in the case of an outbreak of violence that it was instigated by the State or other agencies hostile to civil resisters. It should be obvious that civil resistance cannot flourish in an atmosphere of violence. This does not mean that the resources of a satyagrahi have come to an end. Ways other than civil disobedience should be found out. The second condition is that disobedience should not be destructive, that is, harmful to the country. The laws to be picked up, therefore, should be those which are harmful to the people or laws whose breach will not harm the people but are likely merely to make more work for the authorities. Thirdly, it must be a movement in which the largest number of people can take part. Fourthly, students should not be invited or allowed to take part in civil resistance. There should be no secrecy. Civil resisters must conform to the minimum requirements that may be laid down for the sake of discipline or otherwise.[2]

Asked why he called the students to come out of the colleges and schools in 1921 and to participate in non-co-operation and why he was opposed now to students' participation in the civil resistance movement, Gandhiji explained that the position then was different. He asked the students to empty the colleges and schools as signifying complete non-co-operation with the Government. The moment a student came out of the college, he became a citizen—when he was free to participate in the movement. Gandhiji would have no quarrel if students left the colleges altogether and participated in the movement.

Harijan 18-3-1939; also *The Hindu*, 11-3-1939

[1] In *Harijan* this appeared under the title "Travancore" with an explanatory note that Gandhiji made this statement when he was shown the report about the Travancore State Congress having resolved on reviving civil resistance on March 25.

[2] What follows is from *The Hindu.*

222. *TALK WITH WORKERS OF RAJKOT PRAJA PARISHAD*

March 12, 1939

I think the initial mistake was made when all Kathiawaris were permitted to join Rajkot Satyagraha. That step introduced an element of weakness in the fight. Thereby we put our reliance on numbers, whereas a satyagrahi relies solely upon God who is the help of the helpless. A satyagrahi always says to himself, 'He, in whose name satyagraha was launched, will also see it through.' If the people of Rajkot had thought in these terms, there would have been no temptation to organize big processions or mass demonstrations and probably there would have been no atrocities such as Rajkot has had to experience. A genuine satyagrahi proceeds by setting the opponent at his ease. His action never creates panic in the breast of the 'enemy'. Supposing as a result of rigid enforcement of the rules of satyagrahis Rajkot satyagraha had been confined to a few hundred or even a few score true satyagrahis and they had carried on their satyagraha in the right spirit till their last breath, theirs would have served as a heroic example.

I shall soon be going to Delhi as your representative. I shall not be able to proceed with my work with self-confidence or to speak with authority unless I have the confidence that we shall be able to vindicate and do justice to the devolution of power into the hands of the people that we are fighting for. As a lifelong devotee and votary of truth, I know that my pleading will be ineffectual, it will lack power, unless it has the double backing of faith on my part in the inherent justice of the cause that I represent and in the capacity and sincerity of purpose of those who represent this cause. The question that you must seriously set yourself to answer is: 'What shall we do with swaraj, supposing we got it today?'[1]

You want democracy—the rule of the people, by the people, for the people. Surely, all the 75,000 people of Rajkot cannot become rulers or administrators. Democracy must in essence, therefore, mean the art and science of mobilizing the entire physical, economic and

[1] This and the preceding paragraph are extracted from "The Rajkot Fast-VI" by Pyarelal; what follows is from "The Rajkot Fast—VII" (*Harijan*, 27-5-1939).

spiritual resources of all the various sections of the people in the service of the common good of all.

Service of the family has been the motive behind all our activities hitherto. We must now learn to broaden our outlook so as to include in our ambit the service of the people as a whole.

We are familiar with several conceptions of village work. Hitherto it has mostly meant propaganda in the villages to inculcate upon the village masses a sense of their rights. Sometimes it has also meant conducting welfare activitiy among them to ameliorate their material condition. But the village work that I have now come to place before you consists in educating the villager in his duties.

Rights accrue automatically to him who duly performs his duties. In fact the right to perform one's duties is the only right that is worth living for and dying for. It covers all legitimate rights. All the rest is garb under one guise or another and contains in it seeds of *himsa*.

The swaraj of my conception will come only when all of us are firmly persuaded that our swaraj has got to be won, worked and maintained through truth and ahimsa alone. True democracy or the swaraj of the masses can never come through untruthful and violent means, for the simple reason that the natural corollary to their use would be to remove all opposition through the suppression or extermination of the antagonists. That does not make for individual freedom. Individual freedom can have the fullest play only under a regime of unadulterated ahimsa.

We cannot afford to have discord in our midst if we are to educate the people. We must all speak with one voice. If we want to weld the various sections into one people—and that is the *sine qua non* of democracy—we may not, in rendering service, make any distinction between those who took part in our struggle and those who did not.[1]

Harijan, 20-5-1939 and 27-5-1939

[1] *Vide* also "Appeal to People of Rajkot", 13-3-1939

223. FASTING

Fasting in an institution as old as Adam. It has been resorted to for self-purification or for some ends noble as well as ignoble. Buddha, Jesus and Mahomed fasted so as to see God face to face. Ramachandra fasted for the sea to give way for his army of monkeys. Parvati fasted to secure Mahadev Himself as her Lord and Master. In my fasts I have but followed these great examples no doubt for ends much less noble than theirs.

I do not propose to discuss the merits of my recent fast beyond answering a suggestion whether I left Segaon with the knowledge that I was going to fast. I have become a coward of late for fasting. My fast in August 1933though short-lived was a perfect torture to me. I had prepared for death the very day I was discharged. I had made over many of my medical stores to the nurse in charge. Since then I have dreaded fasts. The twenty-four-hour annual fasts of 6th[1] and 13th[2] April have shown me since then that my system is ill able to undergo any protracted fasting. Therefore when I left Segaon there could be no question of my light-heartedly thinking ahead of any fast in Rajkot. Had I made any such resolution, I was bound by a promise to friends that I should give them due notice. Thus there could be no pre-meditation. It came upon me all of a sudden and out of the intense agony of the soul. The days preceding the fast were days of deepest prayer. The experience of the night before the determination to take the fast had choked me. I did not know what to do. The morning following told me what I was to do, cost what it might. I simply could not have taken the resolution but for the belief that God wanted me to take it.

So much for the Rajkot fast.

Fasting is a potent weapon in the satyagraha armoury. It cannot be taken by everyone. Mere physical capacity to take it is no qualification for it. It is of no use without a living faith in God. It should never be a mechanical effort nor a mere imitation. It must

[1] The week was observed as 'National Week' in memory of the total hartal on April 6, 1919, in protest against the Rowlatt Act (Bill No. 29, 1919) and the Jallianwala Bagh massacre on April 13 of the same year.

[2] *ibid*

come from the depth of one's soul. It is therefore always rare. I seem to be made for it. It is noteworthy that not one of my colleagues on the political field has felt the call to fast. And I am thankful to be able to say that they have never resented my fasts. Nor have fellow-members of the Ashram felt the call except on rare occasions. They have even accepted the restriction that they may not take penitential fasts without my permission, no matter how urgent the inner call may seem to be.

Thus fasting though a very potent weapon has necessarily very strict limitations and is to be taken only by those who have undergone previous training. And, judged by my standard, the majority of fasts do not at all come under the category of satyagraha fasts and are, as they are popularly called, hunger strikes undertaken without previous preparation and adequate thought. If the process is repeated too often, these hunger-strikes will lose what little efficacy they may possess and will become objets of ridicule.

RAJKOT, March 13, 1939
Harijan, 18-3-1939

224. APPEAL TO PEOPLE OF RAJKOT [1]

March 13, 1939

In swaraj based on ahimsa people need not know their rights, but it is necessary for them to know their duties. There is no duty but creates a corresponding right, and those only are true rights which flow from a due performance of one's duties. Hence rights of true citizenship accrue only to those who serve the State to which they belong. And they alone can do justice to the rights that accrue to them. Everyone possesses the right to tell lies or resort to goondaism. But the exercise of such a right is harmful both to the exerciser and society. But to him who observes truth and non-violence comes prestige, and prestige brings rights. And people who obtain rights as a result of performance of duty, exercise them only for the service of society, never for themselves. Swaraj of a people means the sum total

[1] This appeared under the title "To the People of Rajkot" as "the translation" of Gandhiji's second appeal. For the first appeal, *vide* "Appeal to People of Rajkot", 9-3-1939

of the swaraj (self-rule) of individuals. And such swaraj comes only from performance by individuals of their duty as citizens. In it no one thinks of his rights. They come, when they are needed, for better performance of duty.

Whilst I was expounding these views to a meeting of workers it was decided that volunteers should be called for who would go to the villages and tell the people what under swaraj they would be expected to do. Thus men or women who would go to the villages would tell the village people that it would be their duty to keep their village clean and make them self-supporting. They must not expect the swaraj government to do these things for them. Our villages are on the verge of destruction owing to the disappearance of village industries. They can be revivified only by a revival of village industries. Among these industries the spinning-wheel occupies the centre. The others easily arrange themselves around the wheel. If the people of Rajkot realize their duty, they would wear khadi of their own spinning. Thus everybody will learn the value of industry, and if all will engage in industries conducive to the welfare of the State, several lakhs of rupees will be saved for the people by the people. And it can be shown that by putting into practice the ideal of self-help and self-sufficiency they will have to pay the lowest taxes and realize a greater degree of happiness in the sum than is possible under any other system. Those who labour for the State pay their taxes just as much as those that pay them in coin. Coins are but a measure of labour performed. They have no other value. If I buy a rupee worth of flour, I have paid for the labour of cultivation, carrying and grinding. Therefore, the real owner of wealth is one who puts in a certain amount of labour with a conscious productive aim. It is the same thing whether I pay the State one rupee or its equivalent of labour as tax. Often it will be found that payment in labour is of greater value to the State than payment in coin. Payment in labour invigorates the nation. Where people perform labour voluntarily for the service of society, exchange of money becomes unnecessary. The labour of collecting the taxes and keeping accounts is saved and the results are equally good.

Every man and woman should be educated along the lines mentioned above. The property of the State is the property of the people, the Thakore Saheb is their trustee. As trustee the Thakore Saheb and other members of his family should perform their duty. Through the performance of their duty to the State they earn the right of taking a certain amount of money from the State. If the Ruler and

the ruled perform their duty in this way, there is no room for mutual bitterness.

Under responsible government everyone, from the king to the poorest citizen, must prosper. Under swaraj based on non-violence nobody is anybody's enemy, everybody contributes his or her due quota to the common goal, all can read and write, and their knowledge keeps growing from day to day. Sickness and disease are reduced to the minimum. No one is a pauper and labour can always find employment. There is no place under such a government for gambling, drinking and immorality or for class hatred. The rich will use their riches wisely and usefully, and not squander them in increasing their pomp and worldly pleasures. It should not happen that a handful of rich people should live in jewelled palaces and the millions in miserable hovels devoid of sunlight or ventilation.

Hindu-Muslim differences, untouchability, vertical differences between high and low, these must not be. I have referred to these in the previous leaflet. It is necessary here, perhaps, to say a word about the Girasias and the Bhayats. They are also a limb of the people. Swarajists have to show to them that they have nothing to fear from the former. In non-violent swaraj there can be no encroachment upon just rights; contrariwise no one can possess unjust rights. In a well-organized State, usurpation should be an impossibility and it should be unnecessary to resort to force for dispossessing a usurper. But some Garasia friends have begun to fear the Congress. But if they use their *garas* as trustees and are or become industrious, they have no cause for fear. The congress cannot keep its prestige if it tramples upon just rights. Its prestige is solely due to its ceaseless efforts to secure universal good. The conference of the Garasias is in session at Rajkot at the present moment. They had an orderly procession today, part of which I witnessed from my bed. A volunteer wrote down for me the maxims inscribed on their banners. They are so good as to arrest attention. Here they are :

1. Educate yourselves, abstain from spirituous liquors and cultivate simplicity.
2. Garasdars believe in constructive programme.
3. Say not mine is right, but say what is right is mine.
4. Avoid pomp, jealousy and bad habits.
5. We do not believe in encroaching upon other people's rights.
6. It is our duty to protect the afflicted.

7. Forgiveness is the virtue of the strong.
8. Speak only that which has value and never a word thoughtlessly.
9. Be manly if you will be free.

May the association have the strength to put their maxims into practice.

The programme that I have sketched above can be carried out only if Rajkot puts forth worthy young men and women for it. They must have faith in it. We have not sufficiently cultivated the habit of silent service. We must cultivate it. I asked for a band of such silent workers at yesterday's meeting. They gave me their names. If they have a living faith in truth and non-violence and will do their work with full concentration, the people of Rajkot will certainly be able to shoulder the responsibility that is coming to them. The names that were given to me are as follows :

1. Shri Uchharangrai N. Dhebar,
2. Shri Jethalal H. Joshi
3. Shri Popatlal P. Anada,
4. Shri Ramjibhai Manekchand Doshi,
5. Shri Saubhagyachand Virchand Modi,
6. Shri Jamnadas Shah.

The reader will see from the names that those who have not an abiding faith in truth and non-violence have wisely kept themselves aloof. But they have assured me that they will not oppose the programme to be chalked out by this band in terms of this leaflet. They have further assured me that they will willingly perform such tasks as may be entrusted to them if they can conscientiously do so. I congratulate these workers upon their restraint and patriotism.

Harijan, 18-3-1939

225. A LETTER

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
March 13, 1939

I have put you to much trouble. God will compensate you for it.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 223

226. DISCUSSION WITH HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA AND OTHER WORKERS [1]

March 14, 1939

Gandhiji, after giving them a careful hearing. explained to them his idea about 'intensification'. They had broken virgin soil in launching upon satyagraha in Jaipur. The popular response had exceeded their anticipations and even expectations. So far so good. But it was bad horsemanship to run a good horse to death. Instead of seeking further to spread out the volume they should now set to deepen the foundations and inculcate inward strength. He proposed some stringent tests and preparatory training as an indispensable condition for participation in satyagraha hereafter. Pending the attainment of the minimum standard laid down by him the civil disobedience part of satyagraha might remain suspended; that would not mean suspension of satyagraha itself. He invited them to Delhi for further discussion, if it was thought necessary.

Harijan, 27-5-1939

227. MESSAGE TO PEOPLE OF JAIPUR

March 14, 1939

I am told the people of Jaipur have maintained peace during the satyagraha. Let everyone remember that the individual or groups that fully observe truth and ahimsa in the pursuance of their aim are ever victorious.[2]

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji aur Rajasthan, p. 76

[1] This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast—VII". Pyarelal explains: "Haribhau Upadhyaya and some other workers met Gandhiji on the train and discussed the Jaipur situation with him. A stalemate had set in there. They wanted.. . the movement to be 'intensified'".*Vide* also the following item.

[2] *Vide* also the preceding item.

228. LETTER TO SIR REGINALD M. MAXWELL

NEW DELHI
March [*15*][1] *, 1939*

DEAR SIR REGINALD,

Owing to the facilities kindly given to me I was able to see the three prisoners on hunger-strike in the Delhi Jail and I am glad to be able to say that they accepted my advice and gave it up—perhaps it is more correct to say suspended it. I tried to persuade them to give the assurance required by the Government. But they said they did not want to purchase their freedom by giving any undertaking. They were prisoners without any trial and so they should be discharged without any condition as so many others have been discharged. I felt the force of their objection. But I told them that in order to enable me to work for their release, they should give me satisfaction that they believed in the Congress policy of non-violence and that they would work under the Congress. This they readily agreed to do, and they gave me, too, a letter reducing their assurance to writing. But they wanted to make it plain to me that I was not to use that letter for securing their freedom, nor to ask the Government to discharge them on the strength of that letter. I wish you could see your way to discharge these prisoners unconditionally. If you do so it will strengthen my hands in the prosecution of my mission of non-violence on the political field.

I see in the letter that was sent to me by Mr. Puckle[2] another condition that they should not enter this or that province. Surely it is a superfluous condition. If the Governments of the provinces concerned do not want them to remain within their Jurisdiction they would issue orders of prohibition. Why should the Government of India attach those conditions?

I am sending this letter with Mahadev Desai so that he can give you, if you require it, a graphic description of the conversation that

[1] Inferred from the reference to this letter in the following item. The sources, however, has "16".

[2] F. H. Puckle, Home Secretary

took place between the three prisoners and myself.

Yours sincerely,

THE HON. SIR REGINALD M. MAXWELL, C..S. I., ETC.
HOME MEMBER, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

From a copy: C.W. 7814. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

229. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
March 15, 1939

1. I had hoped to send you this letter in the afternoon. But from the Viceroy's House[1] I went directly to the prisoners in the Delhi Jail who were hunger-striking. Contrary to my expectations I had to be with them for full two hours. I am happy to be able to say that they listened to me and broke their fast in my presence. They were being forcibly fed. I am now writing[2] to Sir Reginald Maxwell about their discharge.

2. I now reduce to writing what I tried to explain in the course of our conversation. As I read your telegram[3], the Chief Justice[4] is to interpret the letter[5] given to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel on the 26th December last by the Thakore Saheb. Assuming that it accords with our contention, the Committee has then to be set up with seven nominees of the Sardar and three officials nominated by the Thakore Saheb, the Thakore Saheb selecting the President of the Committee out of the ten.

3. The next thing contemplated in your telegram is that if there is a difference of opinion between the Sardar's nominees on the one hand and the officials on the other[6] as to the meaning of the

[1] In "The Rajkot Fast—VII", Pyarelal explains that Gandhiji had a two hour mee-ting with the Viceroy.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] Conveyed through E. C. Gibson, Resident; *Vide* "Letter from E. C. Gibson", 7-3-1939

[4] Sir Maurice Gwyer

[5] In the source, Viceroy's marginal note reads: "Right, I don't know what the C. J. will do; e. g., C. J. may interpret Notification as meaning President in addition to ten members".

[6] Viceroy's marginal note reads: "No. Any members. Not between this or that group(see my wire). The question of a majority decision is very definitely within the terms of the remit to the C. J. I don't know what he may say."

Notification of 26th December, the Chief Justice is to be the referee whose decision will be final. This as I read your telegram is its technical meaning, so far as the two references to the Chief Justice are concerned. So far as the framing of the constitution is concerned, the majority decision should prevail.

4. This letter need not go further so far as my promise to write to you on the two points raised by me is concerned. But perhaps it is fair to you for me to draw your attention to the fact that the advisers of the Thakore Saheb have committed[1] him to certain nominations, from which commitment it might be embarrassing even for the Paramount power to recede. I refer to the nominations of two Mussalman members and one Bhayat. Perhaps you are aware of this difficulty and also of the several ways out that I have suggested. If you are not, I shall be glad to explain them to you. As I reflect upon our conversation, it seems to me that it was inconclusive in more ways than one. Consideration for your time was weighing heavily upon me, and as everything else, as I thought, appeared to you to be smooth-sailing, I did not wish to tax you any further. You will agree that there should be no misunderstanding about the several steps that have to be taken for implementing the conditions in terms of which I broke the fast. It would be terrible if it becomes my duty to object to any step after it is announced. I therefore suggest that I should be made aware beforehand of the announcement or announce-ments[2] that may have to be made in connection with the Rajkot affair.

5. And there are, as I mentioned to you, several other matters brought out by me in what has been termed my ultimatum to the Thakore Saheb and about which assurance has been given to me in your two telegrams. Another conversation between us seems to me to be necessary for a proper and final elucidation of the various points arising out of the interchange of the telegrams between us[3]. As I think over the hurried talk that you gave me about the States in general and the policy you contemplate to adopt in the immediate future, a feeling of disturbance creeps over me. I do not want to reduce to writing, unless you desire otherwise, the vague fear that is seizing hold of me

[1] Viceroy's note reads: "We are back on the Notification of December 26th and Thakore's letter to Sardar Patel."

[2] Viceroy's note reads: "What 'announcement'? I contemplate none."

[3] The rest of the paragraph is from the C.W. source.

on the assumption that I have understood you correctly. I would therefore like to have the interview for this purpose also.

Could you please send me a time?[1]

I am,

yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm; Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also from a copy: C. W. 7813. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

230. DISCUSSION WITH PHILIPOSE [2]

DELHI,

March 15, 1939

Satyagraha does not begin and end with civil disobedience. Let us do a little more *tapascharya* which is the essence of satyagraha. Suspension thus conceived can never do harm to the movement. The opponent will find that his battery is exhausted when we do not act up to his expectation, refuse to have any firework displays or put ourselves at his disposal for brutal assaults of his goondas. We must meet all his provocative and repressive measures with a coolness and an exemplary self-restraint even at the risk of being charged with cowardice. If there is no cowardice in us, we are safe; ours will ultimately be reckoned an act of rare bravery.

Meanwhile we should watch how things shaps themselves. I am thinking out new plans of conducting the movement in view of the terrorist methods that some States seem to have adopted, We have to develop that technique of rendering futile the employment of hired hooligans against peaceful citizens.

An able general always gives battle in his own time on the ground of his choice. He always retains the initiative in these respects and never allows it to pass into the hands of the enemy.

In a satyagraha campaign the mode of fight and the choice of tactics, e. g., whether to advance or retreat, offer civil resistance or

[1] According to Pyarelal, on March 16, "Gandhiji had. . . another interview. . . from 5 to 7.30 p. m. The interview was conclusive... "

[2] The discussion is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast—VII". Pyarelal explains that the discussion which took place in the afternoon was "about the Travancore situation."

organize non-violent strength through constructive work and purely selfless humanitarian service, are determined according to the exigencies of the situation. A satyagrahi must carry out whatever plan is laid out for him with a cool determination giving way to neither excitement nor depression.

For a satyagrahi there can be only one goal, viz., to lay down his life performing his duty whatever it may be. It is the highest he can attain. A cause that has such worthy satyagrahi soldiers at its back can never be defeated.

Harijan, 27-5-1939

231. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

NEW DELHI,
March 16, 1939

MIRABEHN
UTMANZAI
CHARSADDA TAHSIL

NOT GOING RAJKOT. HERE SOME DAYS. YOU CAN COME IF YOU LIKE. KEEPING WELL.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6436. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 10031

232. LETTER TO SIR REGINALD M. MAXWELL

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
March 16, 1939

DEAR SIR REGINALD,

Mahadev Desai has given me a gist of his talk with you when he delivered my letter[1] to you. I thank you for giving him the time you did. He told me of the suggestion you made. As I wanted to take no step without knowing the prisoners' wishes I sent him to them. And I am able to say that I am satisfied that they have no belief in violence as a method for achieving India's freedom, and they have no intention of joining any organization whose activity is violent. I hope that on the strength of this letter you will be good enough to

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Reginald M. Maxwell", 15-3-1939

announce the release of the prisoners unconditionally. I hope, now, that the condition about movement from province to province will be entirely waived.

Yours sincerely,

THE HON. SIR REGINALD M. MAXWELL, C. S. I., C. I. E.
HOME MEMBER, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

From a copy: C. W. 7812. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

233. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

DELHI,
March 16, 1939

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. I deliberately do not want to write much. It is my firm belief that we should not increase our demands. We may withdraw civil disobedience if the Praja mandal is recognized unconditionally and civil liberties are granted.[1] Of course the prisoners must be released.

I hope you are keeping well and mentally also you are at your best.

Do you do any reading? Do you spin? What is your weight? You should take fruit, etc. It is *moha*[2] to be obstinate about this. We may not pander to the palate, but we should give to the body what it needs as a medicine.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3001

[1] The Praja Mandal suspended civil disobedience on March 23.
[2] Ignorant attachment

234. INTERVIEW TO GOBIND BIHARI LAL[1]

[*March 16, 1939*][2]

Gandhiji started the interview about America and my personal experience in my adopted country... He talked to me in Hindustani, the national language of India. He said:

You have not forgotton our language? Not even after a quarter century spent in the United States? That is gratifying indeed.

In reply to my first question... Gandhiji tensely retorted :

India is not far from political independence, pure and simple.

Mahatma Gandhi said not a word of anger against the British Government. He emphasized the fact that now the real problem of India's freedom and advancement was one of self-organization... He pointed out :

The outsiders may not realize the fact that the majority of the provinces of British India (as distinct from the parts ruled by the Princes) are now administered by the Nationalists, by Ministers of the Congress Party. That roughly shows that the Nationalist movement is already in the seats of political power in this country.

The great question now was of the Government of India as a whole. When the Central or Federal Government came into the hands of the Indians, India would become like Ireland—virtually an independent country. But according to Mahatma Gandhi, and the Nationalists, the scheme of Federation evolved by the British Government in 1935 was not the one to give self-government to India. He said :

The present Federation scheme cannot be accepted without damaging the cause of India's independence. The Viceroy will try to have the scheme accepted. The Nationalists, many of the Princes, religious fanatics and others will oppose it—for diverse reasons. It is a very tense situation. The Indian atmosphere is in fact heavy with impending storms.

QUESTIONS : What will Nationalist India do if war comes?

GANDHIJI : I cannot answer in advance. But this is certain that a

[1] The interviewer was Science Editor of the Hearst Newspapers. He represented the International News Service at the Tripuri Congress. Gandhiji received him in the afternoon.

[2] Bihari Lal explains that the day before the interview Gandhiji received a donation of Rs. 10,000 from a woman. According to *Gandhi—1915-1948: A Detailed Chronology*, this donation was made on March 15.

free India will join hands with other real democracies, and will always help in promoting the cause of democracy and humanism throughout the world.

I was curious to know how under his guidance, employing a new technique of non-militant rebellion, he has integrated millions of Indians in a fervent struggle for "self-rule". He explained :

Real self-rule is emancipation from India's own traditional inequalities as well as from those imposed from outside.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-5-1939

235. DISCUSSION WITH HYDERABAD ARYASAMAJ LEADERS[1]

March 16, 1939

Mixing up of motives is damaging in any species of satyagraha, but in religious satyagraha it is altogether inadmissible. It is fatal to use or allow religious satyagraha to be used as a cloak or a device for advancing an ulterior political or mundane objective.

As with regard to the goal so with the means, unadulterated purity is of the very essence in this species of satyagraha. The leader in such a movement must be a man of deeply spiritual life, preferably a *brahmachari*—whether married or unmarried. He must be a believer in—as in fact everybody participating in such a movement must be—and practiser of the particular religious observance for which the movement is launched. The leader must be versed in the science of satyagraha. Truth and ahimsa should shine through his speech. All his actions must be transparent through and through. Diplomacy and intrigue can have no place in his armoury. Absolute belief in ahimsa and in God is an indispensable condition in such satyagraha.

In religious satyagraha there can be no room for aggressiveness, demonstrativeness, show. Those who take part in it must have equal respect and regard for the religious convictions and susceptibilities of those who profess a different faith from theirs. The slightest narrowness in their outlook is likely to be reflected magnified

[1] This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast—VII". According to *The Indian Annual Register, 1939*, Vol.I, "The Deputation including Lala Deshbandhu Gupta and Professor Sadhikar waited on Gandhiji with regard to Aryasamaj Satyagraha in Hyderabad State."

multifold in the opponent.

Religious satyagraha is, above all, a process of self-purification. It disdains mere numbers and external aids since these cannot add to the satyagrahi's self-purification. Instead, it relies utterly on God who is the fountain-head of all strength. Religious satyagraha, therefore, best succeeds under the leadership of a true man of God who will compel reverence and love even of the opponent by the purity of his life, the utter selflessness of his mission and the breadth of his outlook.[1]

Harijan, 27-5-1939

236. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
March 17, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I now return the draft reference to the Chief Justice of India which you kindly gave me yesterday. I showed it to Sardar Patel and neither he nor I wish to add anything to it. I have taken a copy of the document.

I tender my apology again for having taken so much of your time yesterday. I hope, however, that you think as I do that it was well spent, if only for avoiding, as far as it is humanly possible, any further misunderstanding on the Rajkot matter.

I thank you once more for introducing me to Lady Linlithgow.[1]

I am,
Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : C. W. 10149. Courtesy : D. B. Kalelkar

[1] Pyarelal adds: "Miss Agatha Harrison, who came shortly afterwards, asked . .. 'Is it true, Gandhiji, that genuine satyagraha can never provoke reprisals?' 'Yes,' replied Gandhiji. 'Genuine satyagraha is a spiritual exercise. As such it can only evoke the best, not the worst, in man'."

[1] Aknowledging this on March 18, the Viceroy said: "Thank you very much... for sending me back the Terms of Reference to the Chief Justice. I am glad that you should have no comment on them."

237. LETTER TO YESHWANTRAO HOLKAR

DELHI,
March 17, 1939

MAHARAJA SAHEB[1],

I have not forgotten the sweet memories of Hindi Sahitya Sammelan[2]. I hope that the work of setting up a Hindi University in Indore is making progress.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

238. A HARIJAN TOUR

The following account by shri Rameshwari Nahru of a tour undertaken by Shri Thakkar Bapa and her in the Central India and South Rajputana states will be read with interest.[3]

Harijan, 18-3-1939

239. TELEGRAM TO U. N. DHEBAR [4]

NEW DELHI,
March 18, 1939

UCHHRANGRAI DHEBAR, VAKIL
RAJKOT
EXPEDITING THINGS HERE.[5] MEANWHILE SUBMIT TO WHATEVER MAY HAPPEN. KEEP ME INFORMED.

BAPU

Harijan, 3-6- 1939. Also from a copy : C. W. 10147. Courtesy : D. B Kalelkar

[1] Of Indore.

[2] From April 20 to 23, 1935

[3] Rameshwari Nehru, Vice-President, All-India Harijan Sevak Sangh, reported: "The object of the tour was to consolidate the work of the Harijan Sevak Sangh wherever it existed, to start new centres where our work did not exist and to do propaganda for the removal of untouchability." The report, which subsequently appeared in four fortnightly instalments, is not reproduced here.

[4] This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast—VIII".

[5] The C. W. source has: "Expedite everything." *Vide* also the following item.

240. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
March 18, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I hope you will not say, 'Oh ye of little faith'. My faith in you is abundant, but I am filled with the fear that you have not visualized my difficulty about Rajkot. There is an air of unreality about the freedom to come. The people of Rajkot are used to the utmost freedom of expression of opinion and of action, so long as it is non-violent. But today on the eve of getting self-government they have practically no liberty. A copy of a telegram[1] received from there is already in front of you. Here is copy of another :

> Khan Saheb (First Member of the Council) orally informs that he considers Seva Mandal literacy campaign undesirable in existing circumstances and desires its stoppage till negotiations over. Dhebar.

If the people of Rajkot cannot enjoy ordinary liberty today, how will they two or three weeks hence get full liberty? In order that the whole thing may not end in a catastrophe, I suggest that you ask the Resident to take full charge and make himself responsible for preparing the way for popular control. Supposing that there is a proper constitution framed, there is no one in Rajkot to deliver the goods, the invisible hand of Durbar Virawala will deliver nothing. I suppose you know that he has no official status, if he told me the truth.

Pray pardon me for this infliction, and that too on a Sunday. But you should know the reality as I see it.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : C.W. 10135. Courtesy : D. B. Kalelkar

[1] The telegram, which was from U. N. Dhebar, said: "State's policy unchanged. Gives Izara for fruit selling. Azad chowk foundation being dug two workers not allowed to remain in Kherdi. Cultivators being pressed for fine and removal charges. Permission disallowed to carry their own share. Third instead fourth share demanded from sympathetic cultivators."

241. MESSAGE TO EGYPT[1]

March 18, 1939

I have nothing new. I would repeat what I said in my telegram[2] to you on your arrival that there must be a real bond of friendship between India and Egypt. It is not a mere courteous wish. It is a wish from the heart. There is such a lot which is common between the cultures of the two countries. Besides, India has such a big Muslim population. Friendship between India and Egypt should help to solve many of our domestic troubles.[3]

Harijan, 27-5-1939

242. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[4]

March 18, 1939

These two temples have been constructed at the instance of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and are the result of the munificence of the House of Birlas, principally of Shri Jugal Kishore Birla who is parti-cularly inclined in this direction. It would have been in the fitness of things if the temples had been opened by Malaviyaji who inspired their construction. But as he is not here, it has fallen to my lot to perform the ceremony.

It is my hope that both these temples will make a special

[1] This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast—VII", Pyarelal explains that the Egy-ptian Delegation, which met Gandhiji "at noon", requested for "a message to Egypt".

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to K. M. Munshi", 9-3-1939

[3] Concluding, Pyarelal adds: "The message was translated into Egyptian language by an interpreter to the leader of the Deputation. At parting he... said in Egyptian: 'We pray for your long life, as you are the hope not of India only but of the whole world. The work that you are doing is for the whole of the Orient.' 'That is my hope at least,' replied Gandhiji."

[4] This appeared under the title "Equal Respect for Religions" with an explanatory note which read: ". . . Gandhiji performed the opening ceremony of the Lakshmi Narayan Temple and the Buddha Vihar. . . in Delhi. The vast concourse of people. . . made it difficult for Gandhiji to enter the Temple precincts and the microphone arrangements broke down. He therefore . . . later issued to the Press what he would, under normal conditions, have spoken."

contribution to promote the religious sense of the worshippers. The temple of Buddha admits of no untouchability. But even in the temple of Krishna untouchability and the idea of high and low are taboo. For me, untouchability and the idea of high and low have no room in Hinduism. There are the varnas, but none of the varnas is superior to the other.Varna does not connote superiority ; it connotes different functions and different duties.

Whoever has more of the earthly or spiritual goods has to perform more service to the community, has to be more humble. The moment untouchability and the sense of high and low crept in, Hinduism began to decline. Hinduism is based on the firm foundation of truth and non-violence and, therefore, there is no room in it for conflict with other religions.

It must be the daily prayer of every adherent of the Hindu faith that every known religion of the world should grow from day to day and should serve the whole of humanity. I hope that these temples will serve to propagate the idea of equal respect for religions and to make communal jealousies and strife things of the past.

Harijan, 25-3-1939

243. NOTE TO JAIPUR SATYAGRAHA COUNCIL

March 19, 1939

My opinion is that the departure of the batch of satyagrahis for Jaipur should be postponed till I have further considered the matter.

M. K. GANDHI

From Hindi: C.W.6166. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also *The Hindustan Times,* 20-3-1939

244. REQUISITE QUALIFICATIONS

The four days' fast set me thinking of the qualifications required in a satyagrahi. Though they were carefully considered and reduced to writing in 1921[1] they seem to have been forgotten. As satyagraha in the form of civil disobedience is being offered or contemplated in several States, it is necessary to reiterate the qualifications and to dispel false ideas that seem to be prevalent

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Congress Session, Ahmedabad"-I

among many workers.

Moreover the greatest care is necessary at the present moment when violence, not non-violence, seems to pervade the air. Indeed it may be reasonably argued that in an atmosphere surcharged with violence there is no scope for non-violence. This argument may be carried too far, so far that non-violence may be made wholly ineffective; whereas it is claimed to be the only effective force for counteracting violence no matter how terrible. But when violence pervades the air the expression of non-violence may not be through civil disobedience. And if it is to be civil disobedience, it must be hedged in by adequate restrictions. In satyagraha, It is never the numbers that count; it is always the quality, more so when the forces of violence are uppermost.

Then it is often forgotten that it is never the intention of a satyagrahi to embarrass the wrongdoer. The appeal is never to his fear; it is, must be, always to his heart. The satyagrahi's object is not to convert, not to coerce, the wrongdoers. He should avoid artificiality in all his doings. He acts naturally and from inward convictions.

Keeping these observations before his mind's eye, the reader will perhaps appreciate the following qualifications which I hold are essential for every satyagrahi in India :

1. He must have a living faith in God, for He is his only Rock.

2. He must believe in truth and non-violence as his creed and therefore have faith in the inherent goodness of human nature which he expects to evoke by his truth and love expressed through his suffering.

3. He must be leading a chaste life and be ready and willing for the sake of his cause to give up his life and his possessions.

4. He must be a habitual khadi-wearer and spinner. This is essential for India.

5. He must be a teetotaller and be free from the use of other intoxicants in order that his reason may be always unclouded and his mind constant.

6. He must carry out with a willing heart all the rules of discipline as may be laid down from time to time.

7. He should carry out the jail rules unless they are specially devised to hurt his self-respect.

The qualifications are not to be regarded as exhaustive. They are illustrative only.

NEW DELHI, March 20, 1939

Harijan, 25-3-1939

245. DRAFT TELEGRAM TO R. SANKAR[1]

March 20, 1939

R. SANKAR[2]
TRAVELLERS' BUNGALOW
MADURA

WAS NOT UNPREPARED FOR ARRESTS. THEY WILL BENEFIT CAUSE. ISSUING STATEMENT[3].

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also Pattom Thanu Pillai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

246. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

NEW DELHI,
March 20, 1939

MY DEAR C.R.

Read this[4] from Satyamurti and do what you think is right. The conscience clause does appeal to me as right. But my 'right' may be your 'wrong' and *vice versa.*

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 10889. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram of even date informing Gandhiji of the arrests of Pattom Thanu Pillai, President, Travancore State Congress, and G. Ramachandran, Member of A. I. C. C. and Travancore State Congress Working Committee, and other members.

[2] President, Kerala Provincial Congress Committee.

[3] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 20-3-1939

[4] *Vide*"Letter from S. Satyamurti to Mahadev Desai", 20-3-1939

247. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

NEW DELHI,
March 20, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Shaukat has just brought your note. The news you give me is astounding. I only hope that there is a misunderstanding. Did you get the name of the Congressman?[1] I am inquiring.

I hope Maulana Saheb[2] is much better. Please give him my love and tell him I am anxious to see him. I shall do so as soon as I can safely leave.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi—Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

248. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

DELHI,
March 20, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

How are you? Are you quiet now? I do not find time to write. But what about you? What did you observe in the Congress? Are you keeping good health? We shall be in Delhi for a couple of days more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 10020. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] In his reply dated March 22, the addressee, *inter alia*, said: "I do not know the names of the Congressmen who are supposed to have approached a Government official in Delhi. The names have not been mentioned to me."

[2] Abul Kalam Azad

249. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

March 20, 1939

CHI. KAKA,

I have been able to attend to letters properly for the first time only today. I went through your letters carefully. Do not, for the present, send the letter to Baburamji. I am returning It. I hope Jamnalalji will be released shortly. We shall arrange to get this work done through him. In case we fail, resignation is certainly there as the last resort.

I have not replied to Gopinath. However I will do that, saying that in view of the prevailing circumstances he may carry on with the Roman script for some time. I would be glad if the government of Bombay were to do what you want it to do.

Could not Diwakar be made President of the Hindustani Board? Or co-opt Shankarrao and make him the President. Perinbehn perhaps may not do justice to the office of President. Kazi is not necessary. I would certainly like Brelvi. He is a straightforward man. But Dev's objection does deserve consideration. Narahari cannot be burdened with this responsibility.

I am not writing separately to Amritlal. You must be taking care of your health. My programme is uncertain. I am in Delhi for the present and staying at Birla House.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7974

250. DISCUSSION WITH TRAVANCORE SATYAGRAHIS[1]

March 20, 1939

Suspension should never bring despondency and weakness in a satyagraha struggle. Even though people may be ready and non-

[1] This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast—VIII". Pyarelal explains that the Travancore satyagrahis who called on Gandhiji in the afternoon feared that "indefinite suspension of civil disobedience would bring in depression from which it would be difficult for the people to recover".

violence ensured, and suspension is ordered through a miscalculation of the general, it cannot jeopardize the future of the movement. Satyagraha means readiness to suffer and a faith that the more innocent and pure the suffering the more potent will it be in its effect. Helplessness is thus ruled out in satyagraha. Suspension of civil disobedience, if it resulted in an accentuation of repression, would itself become satyagraha in its ideal form.

Today the opponent is afraid of your numbers. You cannot expect him to show a change of heart while he is filled with panic. He senses in your action a spirit of retaliation which irritates him the more. It thus becomes a species of violence.

Your struggle hereafter may have to be restricted to a few men only, but their satyagraha will tell. While we are playing with non-violence we are only giving a chance to the powers that be in Travancore to organize the brute in man. This must not be.[1]

Harijan, 3-6-1939

251. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[3]

NEW DELHI,
March 20, 1939

I observe that Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar[3] had no better use for the two Travancore stalwarts, Shri Thanu Pillai and Shri Ramachandran, than to send them to prison. They will give a good account of themselves in prison as they have done outside. But I cannot congratulate the Travancore Durbar on their action.

When I was in Rajkot I had seen Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar's statement in condemnation of what he was pleased to term outside interference. May the Princes summon whatever outside assistance they may choose, and not the people? There is no restriction on the outside help the Princes may take. The popular party has put many voluntary restrictions on such help. After all, what am I doing except to give advice as an expert in the science of satyagraha? By doing so I promote the spirit of non-violence and the cause of peace. The connection between the people of the States and of the so-called

[1] *Vide* also "Discussion with Philipose", 15-3-1939
[2] The statement appeared under the title "Read the signs".
[3] Dewan of Travancore State

British India is organic, vital and indissoluble. There is no such connection between the Princes who are and who pride themselves on being independent of one another. The common tie between them is that of subservience to the Paramount Power, without whose permission, implied or explicit, they cannot move a blade of grass.

But the Paramount Power itself growingly lives on the will of the nation, including the people of the State. If the nation realizes that it can develop invincible strength through truth and non-violence, the Paramount Power will be voluntarily replaced by the power of the people. It, therefore, seems to me that Sir C. P. Ramaswami and those Dewans who think like him are bad advisers of their Princes and ill serve them. The effort to ignore the Congress and Congress workers and to prevent its natural influence working in the States is like that of a child who by the little palm of his right hand tries to stop an onrushing flood. This attempt to stifle the legitimate aspirations of the people of the States surely sows seeds of bitterness on the one hand between the people of the States and their Princes to whom they want to be loyal, and on the other between the Princes and the Congress which wants to help them if it is allowed to do so.

I ask the Princes and their advisers to read the signs of the times and march with them. They may succeed by frightful measures in sending for a time the freedom movement underground, but they will never be able to crush it altogether. I venture to think also that the Paramount Power will have to shed their nervousness and overcautiousness. If they owe a duty to the Princes, surely they owe a duty to their people. The days when the people could be ignored are gone.

If the Princes will not listen, let the Paramount Power tell them in plain terms that they may not expect the latter's assistance in suppressing their people. The Paramount Power who draw Ministers in many Provinces from the Congress may not sit still when neighbouring states heap insults upon the Congress. It is an anomaly that demands quick handling.

To the people of Travancore I suggest that the cause has benefited by the premature arrests of the two stalwarts. The benefit can only accrue if they will use the arrests wisely. If there is the slightest risk of violence breaking out, let there be no demonstration by way of processions and the like. Let them all devote themselves to constructive work. The date of launching out upon civil disobedience must not be anticipated. If I am to continue to advise, let me study the

situation and let them await my opinion[1] before resuming civil disobedience. Civil disobedience is but a minor part of satyagraha. Let the people, including the most illiterate and the downtrodden, be knit in a common bond by silent service. In this work even the students can take their due share. Let the satyagrahis remember that haste is waste. Their freedom was assured when they took the solemn vow of fighting for it through truth and non-violence, that is, through enlightened and disciplined self-suffering. For I know that they will never go back upon their vow.

Harijan, 25-3-1939

252. DICUSSION WITH JAIPUR SATYAGRAHIS [1]

March 20, 1939

Provoking lathi charges or receiving lathi blows on your body in a spirit of bravado is not satyagraha. True satyagraha consists in the readiness to face blows if they come in the course of performing one's duty.

Today the whole atmosphere in the country is reeking of violence as was evidenced at Tripuri. Under violence I include corruption, falsehood, hypocrisy, deceit and the like. If our satyagraha is to survive this atmosphere, we ahimsaites shall have to be more strict with ourselves. Let only the purest and the most innocent go to jail. It does not matter if they have to remain immured behind the prison bars for a whole lifetime. Their sacrifice will fill the prison with a sweet fragrance and its influence will even travel outside and subtly transform the entire atmosphere. They will never long for their release nor doubt that their sacrifice is being 'wasted'. They will realize that a consecrated resolve is more potent in its action than mere physical action can ever be. The discipline that they will be acquiring in prison will help the non-violent organization of the people outside and instil fearlessness among them.

So much for those who are in prison, what about those outside? They must engage in constructive work as the embodiment of the active principle of ahimsa. If it does not appeal to them, it will only

[1] *Vide* "Statement Suspending Travancore Satyagraha", 23-3-1939

[1] This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast—VIII".

betray their lack of faith in ahimsa.

The other thing is internal. They must cultivate a living faith in God—an attitude of utter reliance on Him to the exclusion of all external aids. A single satyagrahi imbued with such faith will inspire the whole people by his example and may induce a heart change even in the opponent who, freed from fear, will the more readily appreciate his simple faith and respect it.[1]

Harijan, 3-6-1936

253. INTERVIEW TO "THE NEW YORK TIMES"[2]

NEW DELHI,
[Before *March 23, 1939*][3]

Asked what advice he would give the Congress regarding his attitude, should the Paramount Power become involved in a European war, Mahatma Gandhi pleaded that that was too difficult to answer at that time.

He demurred also to a question whether he wished India to take her independence within the British Commonwealth of Nations or outside it. Gandhiji said :

That again is difficult. I cannot exactly tell where I myself stand on that. Both are difficult questions.

CORRESPONDENT : But don't they go to the root of the situation?

GANDHIJI : Wise journalists never go to the root.

When asked if he was content with the result of the Tripuri Congress, the Mahatma was still smilingly evasive:

Contentment is bliss. That is one of your proverbs, isn't it?

C. Then let me ask : Is India making progress to your liking?

G. (Thoughtfully) Yes, it is. I get frightened sometimes; but there is progress at the bottom and that progress is sound.

The greatest difficulty is Hindu-Muslim differences. That is a serious obstacle. There I cannot say I see visible progress, but the

[1] Pyarelal adds: "As a result of the talk it was decided to suspend the Jaipur Satyagraha indefinitely." *Vide* also the preceding item.

[2] The newspaper was represented by its special correspondent, F. E. Birchell. The interview, which was reported by Reuter, appeared under the date-line "New York, March 23", as "an Associated Press message from New Delhi". A brief report of the interview was also reproduced in "The Rajkot Fast— VIII".

[3] *Ibid*

trouble is bound to solve itself. The mass mind is sound if only because it is unselfish. The political grievances of both the communities are identical, so are the economic grievances.

During further conversation, the correspondent asked Mahatma Gandhi if in the present unrest he had got some message which he might carry across the world, moving men's hearts towards peace. His eyes gleamed at the word "peace" and he bent his head in thought.

G. I don't see at the moment an atmosphere which would carry my voice to all nations. Perhaps I am far in advance of the times.

C. Might not it be said with equal truth that the times are falling behind you?

G. If you like. I am thinking over your suggestion. Should I again allow myself to become the laughing-stock, as has some-times been the case? Should I? But why not? Laughter is wholesome. Perhaps it may be a good thing. So take this as coming from me :

I see from today's papers that the British Prime Minister is conferring with Democratic Powers as to how they should meet the latest threatening developments. How I wish he was conferring by proposing to them that all should resort to simultaneous disarmament. I am as certain of it as I am sitting here, that this heroic act would open Herr Hitler's eyes and disarm him.

C. Would not that be a miracle?

G. Perhaps; but it would save the world from the butchery that seems to be impending. Isn't that enough for one morning?

The Hindustan Times, 24-3-1939

254. TELEGRAM TO U. N. DHEBAR

NEW DELHI,
March 23, 1939

U.N. DHEBAR, VAKIL
RAJKOT

AUTHORITIES HERE SUGGEST THAT YOU SHOULD PUT BEFORE RESIDENT ALL FACTS YOU TELEGRAPHED HERE AND ANY OTHER COMPLAINT AND SEEK RELIFE. YOU CAN SHOW HIM THIS IF NECESSARY.

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10136. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar.

255. LETTER TO SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI,
March 23, 1939

MY DEAR SARAT,

Your letter[1] makes me sad. I have shown it to the Sardar and Kripalani and asked them to give me their reaction. I am on the train taking me to the Maulana who wants me and who is too disabled to come to Delhi. I am going to show it to him and Jawaharlal also and ask them to let me have their reaction.[2] You shall have their statements.

With so much that you have to say against your erstwhile colleagues and they against you both, how can I act, what can I do? Do you know that I have no official notice of the resolution? I have not even seen the full text. But even if I had official notice, what could I do so long as the terrible mutual distrust lasted?

I therefore suggest either a meeting of all of you so that you can pour out your hearts to one another and come to an understanding or, if the poison has gone too deep to be eradicated, I suggest Subhas's (when he is restored to health) telling the A. I. C. C. that he cannot work with the old Working Committee and that he should be relieved of the command or be left a free hand to choose his own cabinet.

In any event I think an early meeting of the A. I. C. C. should be called to consider the situation. I feel too that something should be done for the interim administration. What that something should be, I do not know.

You say I had said to Subhas that I would advise the Sardar and others not to obstruct Subhas. I did say so to Sardar. The Sardar when he read your letter flatly denied that there was any obstruction on the part of old colleagues. On the contrary, he says there was every attempt made to smooth Subhas's way. I am sorry you are also ailing. I hope you will rest and be soon your old self again.

I have assumed that your letter represents Subbas's sentiments also.[3]

Love.

BAPU

Status, June 30, 1985

[1] Presumably of March 21, 1939, complaining against "some of the ex-members of the Working Committee" who, he alleged had carried "malicious" propaganda against Subhas Chandra Bose at the Tripuri Congress; *vide Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*.

[2] For Jawaharlal Nehru's reactions, *op. cit.*,

[3] *Vide* also "Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose", 24-3-1939

256. STATEMENT SUSPENDING TRAVANCORE SATYAGRAHA [1]

NEW DELHI,
March 23, 1939

I have had long Chats[2] with Shri Philipose about the situation in Travancore. I have also carefully studied the resolution of the last Working committee of the State Congress and the well-thought-out elaborate plan of action to be taken all over Travancore together with great precautions embodied in it to ensure non-violence. I have also read the telegram received by Shri Philipose wherein he is told that if civil disobedience is further suspended, there will be much heart-burning and disappointment.

But after having weighed the pros and cons I have come to the conclusion that it will be in the interest of the cause not to start civil disobedience on March 25 and to suspend it till I advise resumption.

In satyagraha there is no such thing as disappointment or heart-burning. The struggle always goes on in some shape or other till the goal is reached. A satyagrahi is indifferent whether it is civil disobedience or some other phase of the struggle to which he is called. Nor does he mind if, in the middle of the civil disobedience march, he is called upon to halt and do something else. He must have faith that it is all for the best. My own experience hitherto has been that each suspension has found the people better equipped for the fight and for control over forces of violence. Therefore in advising suspension, I dismiss from my mind the fear that it may lead to desertion and disbelief. If it does, I should not feel sorry, for it would be to me a sign that the deserters did not know what satyagraha was and the movement was better without those who did not know what they were doing.

The reasons that have prompted me to tender this advice are these: If it is true that the Travancore Durbar have drafted untrained raw men as police in order to strike terror among satyagrahis, it

[1] The statement appeared under the title "Suspend Civil Disobedience". In "The Rajkot Fast— VIII", Pyarelal explains that Gandhiji issued the statement "after final consultation with Travancore friends".

[2] *Vide* "Discussion with Philipose", 15-3-1939

behoves the satyagrahis not to tempt the Durbar whilst suspension is a possibility. In view of the inhumanities which I believe have been perpetrated in various States, I am myself thinking out a new orientation of civil disobedience. I may fail. But if I am to succeed at all, I must have the quiet which can be produced only by suspension of civil disobedience wherever I am guiding it.

This suspension gives one a chance of mobilizing public opinion in favour of the movement for liberty in Travancore. It gives also an opportunity to the Travancore Durbar to reconsider their view of satyagrahis and their demands.

The Princes are themselves agitated over the tremendous awakening that has taken place among the people in the States. Suspension in Travancore and elsewhere gives them breathing time and an opportunity of thinking out their course of action free from the burden of dealing with civil resistance.

Lastly, it is wise to allow the recent Viceregal message to the Princes to work itself among them.

The satyagrahis of Travancore should know too that I have advised[1] suspension of civil disobedience in Jaipur for similar reasons and I am likewise holding the hands of workers in other States. But I give my assurance to Travancoreans and all concerned that I shall not sit idle during suspension, nor shall I be long in coming to a final decision, assuming that in the mean while no relief has come in the States in which civil disobedience was going on and is under suspension.

Harijan, 1-4-1939

257. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

ON THE TRAIN,
ADDRESS AS AT BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI
March 24, 1939

MY DEAR SUBHAS,

I Do hope this will find you steadily progressing towards complete recovery.

I enclose herewith copy of Sarat's letter to me and my reply. If it represents also your sentiments, then and then only my suggestions

[1] *Vide* "Discussion With Jaipur Satyagrahis", 20-3-1939

are applicable. Anyway, the anarchy at the Centre should end. In accordance with your request, I am keeping absolutely silent, though pressure is being put upon me to give my opinion on the crisis.

I saw the resolution[1] for the first time in Allahabad. It seems to me to be quite clear. The initiative lies with you. I do not know how far you are fit to attend to national work. If you are not, I think you should adopt the only constitutional course open to you.[2]

I shall have to be in Delhi still for a few days.

Love.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5- 1939

258. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI,
March 25, 1939

RASHTRAPATI BOSE
JEALGORA

YOUR WIRE[3]. WAS YESTERDAY IN ALLAHABAD SEE MAULANA AS HE WAS ANXIOUS FOR TALK. POSTED

[1] The resolution, sponsored by Govind Ballabh Pant in the Subjects Committee at the Tripuri Congress, read: "In view of various misunderstandings that have arisen in the Congress and the country on account of the controversies in connection with the Presidential election and after, it is desirable that the all-India Congress Committee should clarify the position and declare its general policy. The Committee declares its firm adherence to the fundamental policies of the Congress which have governed its programme in the past years under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi and is definitely of opinion that there should be no break in these policies and that they should continue to govern the Congress programme in future. The Committee expresses its confidence in the work of the Working Committee which functioned during the last year and regrets that any aspersions should have been cast against any of its members. In view of the critical situation that may develop during the coming year and in view of the fact that Mahatma Gandhi alone can lead the Congress and the country to victory during such crisis, the Committee regards it as imperative that the congress executive should command his implicit confidence and requests the President to nominate the Working Committee in accordance with the wishes of Gandhiji."

[2] *Vide* also the following items.

[3] Dated March 24, which read: "In view of your suggestion to Sarat regarding Congress work and impossibility of my meeting you immediate future consider necessary start consultations with you through post. Am writing."

LETTER[1] FROM TRAIN. AWAITING YOUR COMMUNICATION. HOPE PROGRESS STEADY. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

259. TELEGRAM TO DR. SUNIL BOSE

[*March 25, 1939*][2]

YOUR WIRE[3]. GOD SAVE ME FROM NEWSPAPER[4] INVENTIONS AND THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN THEM.

The Sunday Statesman, 26-3-1939

260. TELEGRAM TO R. K. JHA

March 25, 1939

JHA
DRUG CONGRESS

IT DOES.[5]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

261. BOMBAY THE BEAUTIFUL

'Handsome is that handsome does' is a neat proverb. I have often said that it is wrong to call Bombay beautiful only because of

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary.

[3] Which read: "Doctors have not the slightest objection to your visiting Subhas at Jealgora. In fact, your kind visit will be most heartily welcomed." According to the source, this was "in connection with a Press report from New Delhi that doctors had objected to Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose receiving visitors, and that, therefore, Gandhiji was unable to visit him at Jealgora."

[4] The manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary has "Press".

[5] The addressee, in his telegram dated March 25, had asked Gandhiji whether the statement suspending Travancore satyagraha (*Vide* pp.78-9) contemplated similar action in Nandgaon State. According to *The Indian Annual Register, 1939*, Vol. I, satyagraha in Rajnandgaon and Chhuikhadan States in Chattisgarh division was suspended on April 10. *Vide* also "Letter to Mulkraj", 5-4-1939

the fine approach to the harbour or for its many beauty spots so long as it contains dirty *chawls*, overcrowded lanes and uninhabitable hovels, which serve as dwelling places for its Harijans. But when Bombay goes dry,[1] as it will very soon, it will become truly beautiful even for this one singularly beautiful act and it will deserve the title in spite of the blemishes I have mentioned. For when its labouring population has the temptation of drink removed from them, with the improvement in their condition which always follows the exorcism of the drink devil, it must become easier for the Bombay Municipality to deal with the problem of providing better habitations for the poor classes. The Bombay Govern-ment, and especially Dr. Gilder, deserve the thanks of the citizens of Bombay, nay of the whole Province, for the courage with which they have approached their task. I know that many Parsis who depend upon drink traffic for their living will be affected. Bombay is the stronghold of the Parsis. Then there are its fashionable citizens who think they need their spirituous drinks as they need water. I have every hope that they will all rise to the occasion, think of their poor brethren, even if they do not appreciate abstinence for themselves, and set an example to all India and make good the claim of Bombay not only to be beautiful but also the first city in India.

Prohibition in Bombay will mean a big fall in revenue. The Finance Minister has to balance his budget. He has to find money. He has to levy new taxes. Let there be no complaint from those who will have to bear the burden. Dislike of taxes, be they ever so reasonable, is proverbial. I understand that the Finance Minister has met all just objections. Why should those who will have to bear the burden not feel a pride in being given the privilege of contributing to the great experi-ment? It will be a proud day for Bombay if prohibition is ushered in amid the rejoicings of the whole population. Let it be remembered that this prohibition is not a superimposition. It is being introduced by Govern-ments that are responsible to the people. It has been a plank in the national programme since 1920. It is coming, therefore, in due fulfilment of the national will definitely expressed nearly twenty years ago.

NEW DELHI, March 26, 1939

Harijan, 1-4-1939

[1] Prohibition came into force in Bombay on August 1, 1939.

262. 'SUSPENSION SHOULD CONTINUE'

Shri Philipose has received the following telegram from Trivandrum :

> Arrests continue. Kunjukrishna Pillai and others arrested.Kuzhitharai Krishna Pillai, President, arrested today (24th).Korah nominated President. Inform Gandhiji.

I had not expected that arrests would continue even after the suspension of civil disobedience. But of course my expectations need not be fulfilled. Suspension was advised for reasons publicly stated by me. If Travancore authorities consider it necessary to continue arrests, satya grahis may not complain. Civil disobedience gives cause for arrest or makes some action by the authorities necessary. Therefore, as a rule, suspension without any previous understanding with the State is generally followed not only by discontinuance of arrests but even by discharge of those convicted for disobedience. If the Trivandrum wire is correct, authorities in Travancore have adopted an unexpected course. Their action need not perturb or perplex satyagrahis. Suspension should still continue. I have no doubt that such arrests will help the popular cause more than if civil disobedience was continued, assuming, of course, that there was no cause for arrest other than that the arrested persons were satyagrahis. Since suspension has been declared I hold it to be unnecessary to appoint a President instead of the one arrested. The object of appointing successive Presidents in place of those arrested no longer subsists. There must be a provision in the ordinary constitution of the State Congress for conduct of business in the absence of the President.

I am painfully conscious of the fact that satyagrahis were unprepared for the exigency created by my advice. Let them console themselves, if they can, by the fact that though they may not just now appreciate or understand what may to them appear to be new technique, it has been advised by one who claims to know the science of satyagraha. It calls for infinite patience and boundless faith in its efficacy. Everything comes right for those who watch, wait and pray.

Since writing the foregoing I have seen the official reaction to suspension. An Associated Press message says that official opinion seems to be that civil disobedience is neither given up nor even suspended. If there was any ground for suspicion, it should be dispelled by the State Congress second President, Shri N. Srikrishna

Pillai, who, according to another Associated Press message, says :

> Civil disobedience has been suspended at the instance of Mahatmaji,[1] and it will be resumed only with his sanction, whatever time it may take. My instruction to the country is that the State Congress workers should preach the technique of non-violence (as different from non-violent direct action) to the masses as well as the message of khadi and swadeshi. The State Congress, as it stands at present, does not contemplate any direct action without command from Mahatmaji. I know that picketing of liquor shops is not breaking of any law and it is not prohibited by Government. Yet, fearing trouble and misunderstanding, we are not launching even that.

This emphatic statement puts the matter beyond any suspicion. I am hoping that civil resisters who were eagerly looking forward to the resumption of civil disobedience will conform to the letter and the spirit of the presidential instructions and thus show that if they understood what 'disobedience' was they understood equally well what 'civil' meant.

I am convinced that much of our trouble has arisen from our not putting due emphasis in our actions on the implications of the word 'civil' which is the very opposite of criminal, uncivil and violent. Let the suspension enable the members of the State Congress and the Travancore public in general to realize the tremendous implications of non-violence, and I promise that its practice in thought, word and deed will hasten the progress towards their goal as nothing else will.

NEW DELHI, March 26, 1939

Harijan, 1-4-1939

263. JAIPUR CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

The cry comes from Jaipur that some civil resisters are disappointed over the suspension and are not as enthusiastic to tackle the constructive programme, which is chiefly the spinning-wheel and khadi, as they were for fight. If this is the general feeling, the suspension is doubly justified. For the reluctance betrays lack of appreciation of ahimsa without which resistance becomes a species of violence. Those who lightly talk of freedom in the States and hope to attain it through civil resistance, evidently do not know what they are talking about. Will thay not learn the lesson of the Provinces?

[1] *Vide* "Statement Suspending Travancore Satyagraha", 23-3-1939

Provincial Autonomy[1] such as it is, has been won by civil resistance however inferior it may have been. But do they not realize that it is likely to break down if Congress Ministers cannot carry on without the aid of the Police and the Military, i.e., without British guns? If the partial autonomy was won by non-violent means, it must be held also by such means and no other. From recent experiences it seems clear that the country is not ready to hold power through non-violent means. Though for the past twenty years—the period of the greatest mass awakening—the people have been taught to abjure the use of arms including brick-bats and the lathi, and to rely upon non-violence pure and simple, we know that Congress Ministers have been obliged to resort to violence to suppress popular violence real or imaginary. It is clear also that the country cannot be made ready for the use of violence without training. Was our non-violence that of the weak? Hindu-Muslim tension is to me the acid test. The Congress corruption is a sure sign of violence. Swaraj within the States is not to be obtained by any non-violent trick. It will be won, if it is to be won, by non-violence of the strong, i. e., by hard work, patient and mute suffering, service of the poor, the hungry and the forsaken of society, and a voluntry obedience to the laws of the State and society in so far as they are not repugnant to public and private morals. Unless non-violence of the strong is really developed among us, there should be no thought of civil disobedience for swaraj, whether within the States or in British India. And as an indispensable test—by no means infallible—of non-violence I adhere to habitual spinning and habitual use of khadi by the would-be civil resister. The Jaipur satyagrahis, if they desire to take part in any civil disobedience struggle that may take place in future, should understand the implications of non-violence and apply themselves with zest to the fulfilment of the minimum conditions I have prescribed. Let them also know that what applies to them applies to all future satyagrahis that I may have to deal with.

This, however, does not mean that the fight for swaraj stops. It only means that civil disobedience is not to be so cheap as I fear I have, indirectly if not directly, made it. But I am never too old to learn. One is ever young in the felt presence of the God of Truth or Truth which is God. But if civil disobedience is henceforth to be a very dear commodity, I hope, God willing, to show that it will prove to

[1] Granted under the Government of India Act of 1935.

be infinitely more effective and faster moving than the alloy with which we have so far contented ourselves.

NEW DELHI, March 27, 1939

Harijan, 1-4-1939

264. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI,
March 27, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JEALGORA

AWAITING YOUR LETTER. AS YOU SAY IN YOUR STATEMENT IT IS DESIRABLE WE MEET. RAJKOT AFFAIR TIES ME DOWN TO DELHI OR I WOULD RUN TO YOU DESPITE WEAKNESS. I SUGGEST YOUR COMING HERE AND LIVING WITH ME. UNDERTAKE NURSE YOU TO HEALTH WHILE WE ARE SLOWLY CONFERRING. LOVE..

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

265. LETTER TO SIR MAURICE GWYER

March 27, 1939

I had kept my reply ready[1]. In the mean time, I got your letter.

[1] In the source Mahadev Desai explains: "Bapu had already kept his brief reply ready last night [March 26]. Next morning, he was going through a few changes suggested in it. He was about to despatch the letter at 11 a. m. when in the mean time he got Chief Justice's letter saying 'you should write in detail as I do not wish to give *prima facie* ruling on preliminary objections."

In "The Rajkot Fast—VIII", Pyarelal reports the following under March 26: "Although Sardar had sent in his submission as required by the Chief Justice on the 17th instant, further proceedings had been held up because no statement had been received on behalf of the Rajkot Durbar. This delay was irksome to a degree but it could not be helped. Durbar Virawala at last arrived yesterday to represent the Rajkot Durbar before the Chief Justice. He submitted a statement covering forty typed foolscap sheets. A copy of it was sent to the Sardar for reply. The Durbar's statement was full of vituperation against the Sardar. It questioned the validity of the Thakore Saheb's letter to the Sardar of December 26th which it alleged had been obtained by the Sardar from the Thakore Saheb 'under duress' and by 'fraudulent means'. The Sardar's reply to it was brief, barely covering half a sheet. The bulk of the Rajkot Durbar's submission, he pleaded, consisted of irrelevant and libellous statements, unsupported by evidence. These he requested should be ordered to be expunged. As for the Thakore Saheb's letter of even date with the notification No. 50 of December

Even then, it does not warrant any change. Let me add that I repudiate[1] the story regarding fraud[2]. in fact, the question does not arise at all.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

266. INSCRIPTION IN A BOOK [3]

Ramanavami, March 29, 1939

Life is only for *yajna.*

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

267. DISCUSSION WITH AGATHA HARRISON [4]

March 29/30, 1939

The thing[5] is incredibly simple. But the simplest things have the knack sometimes of appearing to us as the hardest. If our hearts were opened, we should have no difficulty. Non-violence is a matter of the heart. It does not come to us through any intellectual feat. Everyone has faith in God though everyone does not know it. For, everyone has

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26th, it was self-explained and admitted of only one meaning, and extraneous evidence was inadmissible for its interpretation. He therefore prayed that the Chief Justice give his interpretation of the said Note of 26th December last without permitting any further procrastination. The hearing took place at half past three in the afternoon at the Chief Justice's residence. At the request of the Chief Justice the Sardar gave a brief narrative of the events from the time he came into the picture till the signing of the Thakore Saheb's note to him of December 26th. The judgment was reserved for another date" (*Harijan,* 3-6-1939)

[1] In the source, these two words are transliterated.

[2] *Ibid*

[3] Gandhiji wrote this on a copy of the *Bhagavad Gita,* which G. D. Birla had brought with him when he went to seek Gandhiji's blessings on his birthday.

[4] The discussion is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast— VIII". Pyarelal explains that "Agatha Harrison was discussing the difficulties experienced in training people in non-Violence".

[5] *Ibid*

faith in himself and that multiplied to the nth degree is God. The sum total of all that lives is God. We may not be God but we are of God—even as a little drop of water is of the ocean. Imagine it torn away from the ocean and flung millions of miles away. It becomes helpless torn from its surroundings and cannot feel the might and majesty of the ocean but if someone could point out to it that it is of the ocean, its faith would revive, it would dance with joy and the whole of the might and majesty of the ocean would be reflected in it. Even so it is with all non-violent activities. Take spinning for half an hour daily. It is nothing unless it is tacked on to non-violence. Take the counting of beads. A monkey also can count them but devotees count them to get nearer to God. I want everybody to spin as a token of his faith in non-violence, as a token of his identification with the dumb millions. Then alone shall we feel the upwelling of non-violent strength in us.[1]

The non-violence that we have offered hitherto has not been the non-violence of the brave. As a weapon of the weak, as an expedient, it was good enough. It did answer its purpose for a while. But how long can the non-violence of the weak last? I have not been able to answer for Europe because I have not worked it out in India. And yet I would not rewrite those chapters in our history. God fulfils Himself even through the weakness of His instruments sometimes. But if we now do not overhaul the basis of our non-violence and if we continue to drift in the old style, It would be nothing short of a catastrophe. We shall not have evolved the non-violent strength and courage, and, faced with a crisis, might behave like cowards.

Harijan, 3-6-1939

268. TELEGRAM TO DR. SUNIL BOSE

NEW DELHI,
March 30, 1939

DR. SUNIL BOSE
JEALGORA

VIEW YOUR WIRE[2] I UNRESERVEDLY WITHDRAW MY SUGGESTION.[3] ON NO ACCOUNT WILL I ENDANGER

[1] According to Pyarelal, what follows was said on March 30.

[2] Dated March 29, which *inter alia* read: "From experience. . . feel . . . long journey . . . will cause. . . set back . . . aggravation . . . suggest you both correspond . . . urgent problems leaving other problems for future discussion."

[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Subhas Chandra Bose", 27-3-1939

PROGRESS TOWARDS RECOVERY. I WILL ACCEPT YOUR SUGGESTION AND SHALL DEAL BY CORRESPONDENCE WITH QUESTIONS RAISED IN SUBHAS'S LETTER. TELL HIM THIS WITH MY LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

269. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI,
March 30, 1939

MY DEAR SUBHAS,

I have delayed my reply to your letter of 25th[1] instant for the sake of having your reply to my wire[2]. I got Sunil's wire last night. I have now got up before morning prayer time to write this reply.

Since you think that Pandit Pant's resolution[3] was out of order and the clause relating to the Working Committee is clearly unconstitutional and *ultra vires*, your course is absolutely clear. Your choice of the Committee should be unfettered.

Your several questions on this head, therefore, do not need any answering.

Since we met in February, my opinion has becomes strengthened that where there are differences on fundamentals, as we agreed there were, a composite committee would be harmful. Assuming, therefore, that your policy had the backing of the majority of the A. I. C. C., you should have a Working Committee composed purely of those who believe in your policy.

Yes, I adhere to the view expressed by me at Segaon at our February meeting that I would not be guilty of being party to any self-suppression by you, as distinguished from voluntary self-effacement. Any subordination of a view which you may strongly hold as in the best interests of the country would be self-suppression. Therefore, if you are to function as President, your hands must be unfettered. The situation before the country admits of no middle course.

[1] The source, however, has "26th".
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose", 27-3-1939
[3] *Vide* footnote 1, "Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose", 24-3-1939

So far as the Gandhi-ites (to use that wrong expression) are concerned, they will not obstruct you. They will help you where they can, they will abstain where they cannot. There should be no difficulty whatsoever, if they are in a minority. They may not suppress themselves if they are clearly in a majority.

What worries me, however, is the fact that the Congress electorate is bogus and that, therefore, majority and minority lose their full meaning. Nevertheless, till the Congress stable is cleansed, we have to manage with the instrument we have for the time being. The other thing worrying me is the terrible distrust among ourselves. Joint work is an impossibility where the workers distrust one another.

I think there is no other point in your letter that needs answering.

In all you do, may you be guided by God. Do be well quickly by obeying the doctors.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

So far as I am concerned, our correspondence need not be published. But you have my permission to publish it, if you think otherwise.

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

270. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

NEW DELHI,
March 30, 1939

DEAR SIR AKBAR[1],

I am grateful to you for your kind letter.

Dr. Moonje's letter is striking. You may depend upon my not rushing to print without first reference to you on matters relating to Hyderabad. I expect great things from you. I cannot forget our talks on our return journey from London. We were to have embarked on a joint mission of peace between the two communities, but God had willed otherwise. I was to go to prison instead. But though seemingly we could not work together, the wish has persisted with me, as I am sure it has with you. You have opportunities, which I have not, to fulfil that wish. I am watching you with a friend's interest. I am looking

[1] Dewan of Hyderabad State.

forward to the reforms adumbrated in your letter.

Every day I look for the news that you have discharged the State Congress Prisoners. You Know that I have prevented resumption of satyagraha by that body. Unless you have definite information to the contrary, I would like you to believe me when I tell you that if you treated them with sympathy, they will help and not hinder you in your effort to open a new era in Hyderabad.

I thank you for your reference to my fast.

I hope you are well.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 6842

271. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

NEW DELHI,
March 30, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I had your two letters[1]. Both were good.

I send you copies of correspondence.

The events in U. P. disturb me.[2] My solution is that you should become Prime Minister or dissolve the Ministry. You must get control over the unruly elements.

I have had three days heart-to-heart conversations with the socialists who were here. Narendradev will report to you. If he does not of his own accord, you should make him.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A Bunch of Old Letters,* p. 354

[1] Dated March 22 and 24, forwarding copies of correspondence with Subhas Chandra Bose. Jawaharlal Nehru had also informed Gandhiji of his telegram to S. C. Bose that ". . . Gandhiji . . . keenly feels Congress work suffering owing lack direction office arrangements also national international crises demand ceaseless vigilance. . ." .(Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939).

2 In "The Rajkot Fast— VIII", Pyarelal explains: "Communal riots in Allahabad exercise Gandhiji's mind very much." *Vide* also the following item.

272. A DISCUSSION[1]

March 31, 1939

QUESTION : What would you do in Allahabad, if you were there?

ANSWER : I would scrap the existing Congress machinery. It is a burden today. If there were half a dozen genuine Congressmen only on the Congress register today, they would be real messengers of peace. But today their effort is smothered under the weight of numbers. If all Congressmen whose names are on the Congress register today were worth their salt, they would offer themselves to be cut to pieces before the communal trouble proceeds any further. But today each wants to use the dagger against his fellow. We have either to revise everything in terms of non-violence or give up non-violence and rebuild the organization.

Harijan, 3-6-1939

273. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI,
March 31, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JEALGORA

YOUR LETTER[2]. REPLY[3] FIRST LETTER POSTED YESTERDAY. ALL-INDIA MEETING MUST HAVE PRECEDENCE. PROCEDURE RULE TWO SAYS EMERGENCY MEETING REQUIRES SEVEN DAYS' NOTICE WHICH CAN BE GIVEN THROUGH PRESS. LOVE.[4]

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

[1] This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast—VIII" by Pyarelal. who explains: "Today when the little 'domestic group' at Birla House met as usual at 7 a. m., naturally the communal situation at Allahabad came in for discussion".

[2] Dated March 29, which informed Gandhiji of the addressee's proposal to call for the A. I. C. C. and the Working Committee meeting in Calcutta about April 20. Subhas Bose had requested Gandhiji to decide whether they should hold the meeting before or after the Gandhi Seva Sangh Conference scheduled to meet in Bihar at about the same time.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose", 30-3-1939

[4] The addressee's telegram of even date, *inter alia,* read: ". . . any date after 20th preferable. . . . shall be guided by your wishes."

274. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
March 31, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your wire was duly received. I needed it. The headache must go. Kallenbach went today. He was fretting. He well take the steamer to Aden and thence to Durban. The house is empty. Here is a copy of letter from Subhas.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3905. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7214

275. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

NEW DELHI,
March 31, 1939

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

Your dear letter is before me. How I wish I could give you and Ammajan the fullest satisfaction and occupy the place I used to have in the family. I live in the hope that I shall be restored some day. That is my heartfelt prayer.

Love to all who may be with you and send it to Saroj[1].

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 9674

276. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 31, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I do get your letters but I have simply no time. In order to preserve my strength I have almost given up writing letters.

Tell Balkrishna that he must gain more weight. The strength will return. My programme for the present cannot be certain. I have no idea when I may return to Segaon.

[1] Saroj Nanavati

How are Chakrayya, Rajbhushan getting on with their work? Is Balvantsinha in good cheer? Is Parnerkar keeping good health? And how are Bhansalibhai, Chimanlal and Shakaribehn? Yashodhara should be given some more time. How is Mathew and what is he doing? Please write.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4312; also S.G. 75

277. LETTER TO NARAYANI DEVI

NEW DELHI,
March 31, 1939

DEAR SISTER,

Keeping in view the present situation I think the satyagraha, or the preparations for it, going on in the Indian States should be suspended. It would be good, therefore, if in Mewar too the satyagraha was suspen-ded.[1] Constructive work must of course go on and what I write these days should be studied.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRIMATI NARAYANI DEVI[2]
MEWAR

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9132

278. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

March 31, 1939

CHI. LILA,

I got your letter after a long wait. I expect your letter every day, but I am thankful for it whenever it comes. It is to your good that you have not come. Study a lot. Continue spinning. It seems you are pestered by scorpions. What remedy have you tried? My plans are all in suspense. It does not appear that I shall be going to the Frontier

[1] According to *The Indian Annual Register, 1939,* Vol I, this was done on April 4.

[2] Secretary, Mewar Praja Parishad

right now. Come for the Gandhi Seva Sangh.[1] We shall at least meet there.

It will be good if your brother can be convinced. I am closing now as I have some visitors.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

279. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI,
April 1, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JHARIA

YOUR WIRE[2]. FIX DATE THAT SUITS YOU BEST. I SHALL ACCOMMODATE MYSELF TO YOUR DATE. LOVE.[3]

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

280. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
April 2, 1939

MY DEAR SUBHAS,

I Have yours of March 31, as also the previous one.[4] You are quite frank and I like your letters for the clear enunciation of your views.

The views you express seem to me to be so diametrically

[1] The fifth session of the Sangh was to be held at Brindaban (Bihar) from May 3 to 7, 1939.

[2] *Vide* footnote 4, "Telegram to Subhas Chandra Bose", 31-3-1939

[3] The addressee, in his reply of even date, suggested April 28 for the Working Committee meeting and the 30th for the A. I. C. C. meeting.

[4] For the addessee's letters of March 29 and 31, *Vide* "Letter From Subhas Chandra Bose", 29-3-1939

opposed to those of the others and my own that I do not see any possibility of bridging them. I think that each school of thought should be able to put forth its views before the country without any mixture. And if this is honestly done, I do not see why there should be any bitterness, ending in civil war.

What is wrong is not the differences between us but loss of mutual respect and trust. This will be remedied by time, which is the best healer. If there is real non-violence in us, there can be no civil war, much less bitterness.

Taking all things into consideration, I am of opinion that you should at once form your own Cabinet fully representing your views, formulate your programme definitely and put it before the forthcoming A. I. C. C. If the Committee accepts the programme, all will be plain-sailing and you should be enabled to prosecute it unhampered by the minority. If, on the other hand, your progamme is not accepted you should resign and let the Committee choose its President. And you will be free to educate the country along your own lines. I tender this advice irrespective of Pandit Pant's resolution.

Now for your question. When Pandit Pant's resolution[1] was produced, I was on my bed. Mathuradas, who happened to be in Rajkot that day, one morning brought me the message that there was to be a resolution expressing confidence in the old horses. I had not the text before me. I said it would be good so far as it went, for I had been told at Segaon that your election was not so much confidence in you as censure of the old horses, especially the Sardar. After this, I saw the actual text only in Allahabad when I went to see the Maulana Saheb.

My prestige does not count. It has no independent value of its own. When my motive is suspected or my policy or programme rejected by the country, the prestige must go. India will rise or fall by the quality of the sum total of the acts of her many millions. Individuals, however high they may be, are of no account except in so far as they represent the many millions. Therefore, let us rule it out of consideration.

I wholly dissent from your view that the country has been never so non-violent as now. I smell violence in the air I breathe. But the violence has put on a subtle form. Our mutual distrust is a bad form of violence. The widening gulf between Hindus and Mussalmans

[1] *Vide* footnote 1,"Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose", 24-3-1939

points to the same thing. I can give further illustrations.

We seem to differ as to the amount of corruption in the Congress. My impression is that it is on the increase. I have been pleading for the past many months for a thorough scrutiny.

In these circumstances, I see no atmosphere for non-violent mass action. An ultimatum without an effective sanction is worse than useless.

But, as I have told you, I am an old man, perhaps growing timid and over-cautious, and you have youth before you and reckless optimism born of youth. I hope you are right and I am wrong. I have the firm belief that the Congress, as it is today, cannot deliver the goods, cannot offer civil disobedience worth the name. Therefore, if your prognosis is right, I am a back number and played out as the generalissimo of satyagraha.

I am glad you have mentioned the little Rajkot affair. It brings into prominent relief the different angles from which we look at things. I have nothing to repent of in the steps I have taken in connection with it. I feel that it has great national importance. I have not stopped civil disobedience in the other States for the sake of Rajkot. But Rajkot opened my eyes; it showed me the way. I am not in Delhi for my health. I am reluctantly in Delhi, awaiting the Chief Justice's decision. I hold it to be my duty to be in Delhi till the steps to be taken, in due fulfilment of the Viceroy's declaration in his last wire[1] to me, were finally taken. I may not run any risk. If I invited the Paramount Power to do its duty, I was bound to be in Delhi to see that the duty was fully performed. I saw nothing wrong in the Chief Justice being appointed the interpreter of the document whose meaning was put in doubt by the Thakore Saheb. By the way, Sir Maurice examines the document not in his capacity as Chief Justice but as a trained jurist, trusted by the Viceroy. By accepting the Viceroy's nominee a judge, I fancy I have shown both wisdom and grace and, what is more important, I have increased the Viceregal responsibility in the matter.

Though we have discussed sharp differences of opinion between us, I am quite sure that our private relations will not suffer in the least.

[1] *Vide* "Letter from E. C. Gibson", 7-3-1939

If they are from the heart, as I believe they are, they will bear the strain of these differences.

Love.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939; also *Crossroads*, pp. 140-2

281. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI,
April 2, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

JEALGORA

POSTED FULL REPLY[1] YOUR LETTERS. MY ADVICE THEREIN IS IRRESPECTIVE OF PANDIT PANT'S RESOLUTION AND IN VIEW DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSITE VIEWS HELD BY TWO SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT YOU SHOULD FORTHWITH FORM YOUR OWN CABINET FULLY RE-PRESENTING YOUR POLICY. YOU SHOULD FRAME AND PUBLISH YOUR POLICY AND PROGRAMME AND SUBMIT SAME TO A. I. C. C. IF YOU SECURE MAJORITY YOU SHOULD BE ENABLED TO CARRY OUT YOUR POLICY UNHAMPERED. IF YOU DO NOT SECURE MAJORITY YOU SHOULD RESIGN AND INVITE A. I. C. C. TO ELECT A NEW PRESIDENT. GIVEN HONESTY AND GOODWILL I DO NOT FEAR CIVIL WAR. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

282. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

NEW DELHI,
April 2, 1939

DEAR GURUDEV,

I have your letter full of tenderness.[2] The problem you set before me is difficult. I have made certain suggestions[3] to Subhas. I

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The addressee's letter dated March 29 read: "At the last Congress session some rude hands have deeply hurt Bengal with ungracious persistence. Please apply without delay balm to the wound with your own kind hands and prevent it from festering."

[3] *Vide* the two preceding items.

see no other way out of the impasse.

I do hope you are keeping your strength.

Charlie is still in the hospital.

With love.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat; G. N. 4650

283. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

NEW DELHI,
April 2, 1939

DEAR SIR AKBAR,

I hope you had my letter[1]. I have been conferring[2] with Aryasamaj leaders about their satyagraha. Their demands seem to be so small that they should lend themselves to easy adjustment. Is not this possible?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat; G. N. 6843

284. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
April 2, 1939

No time to send anything more than love. Copies of Subhas Correspondence of course.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3906. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7215

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Akbar Hydari", 30-3-1939

[2] *Vide* "Discussion with Hyderabad Aryasamaj Leaders"

285. NOTE TO LADY RAZA ALI[1]

April 2, 1939

There is no God but Truth.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 7750

286. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

April 2, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

It is not proper that you don't write to me. I am fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10010. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

287. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

NEW DELHI,
April 2, 1939

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

You are asking for a message for the Matunga [Khadi] Exhibition.[2] What message can I give? I am of course crazy about khadi and will remain so till I die. Hence I pray that everyone becomes as crazy about khadi as I am. Know that if this craze spreads among our millions, swaraj is at our door step.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10841. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

[1] As given in the G.N. Register. Raza Ali was Agent of the Government of India in South Africa, 1935-38.

[2] *The Bombay Chronicle*, 6-4-1939, reported Gandhiji's message with a note : "The Tirupur Famine Relief Khadi Exhibition will be opened at the Nappoo Hall, Matunga, under the auspices of Khadi Sales Depot today at 8 a.m. by Mrs. Gosibehn Captain. The Exhibition will remain open till April 16."

288. THE STATES

A clear understanding of the suspension of civil disobedience in the States is necessary if the people are to reap the full benefit of it. One result—not unexpected—seems to have been that some States have stiffened their attitude and are resorting to repression they had not perhaps thought of before suspension. Where this happens there is no cause for losing heart. Repression itself affords a training in satyagraha, even as an unsought war affords a training for the soldier. Satyagrahis should discover the causes of repression. They will find that repressed people are easily frightened by the slightest show of force and are unprepared for suffering and self-sacrifice. This is then the time for learning the first lessons of satyagraha. Those who know anything of this matchless force should teach their neighbours to bear repression not weakly and helplessly but bravely and knowingly. Thus, for example, a State declares an association illegal. The members may submit either because of fear of punishment or knowingly because they do not yet wish to offer civil disobedience. In the latter case, they husband their energy and develop the will to resist non-violently. Individual members of the association will still carry on activities that may not be regarded as in themselves illegal. They will also carry on constitutional agitation to secure legal recognition for their organization. And if in spite of voluntarily working within the four corners of the local laws workers are arrested or otherwise illtreated, they would cheerfully submit to the sufferings involved. So doing they will examine themselves whether they bear any ill will or anger towards their persecutors, they will ask themselves whether they feel the presence of God as their true Helper and Guide in their difficulties. Indeed such training if properly and persistently taken will generate in the learners a power of calm, non-violent resistance which in itself will become invincible and therefore may render further effort by way of civil disobedience wholly unnecessary.

I am afraid I must plead guilty to being over-confident and hasty in launching previous civil disobedience campaigns. No harm seems to have accrued to the country because I had always my hand on the pulse of the country and, thank God, had no hesitation in retracing the step taken if I scented danger or discovered an error of

judgment or calculation. This much harm must, however be admitted. The people having become used to laxity about previous preparation now find it irksome to conform to the strictness in the observance of the unexciting rules of preparation. And yet they are much the most important part of satyagraha training. Potent and active non-violence cannot be cultivated unless the candidate goes through the necessary stages which require a lot of plodding. If, however, I have succeeded in showing the repression, if properly understood, evokes natural and spontaneous resistance in a satyagrahi, perhaps this knowledge will rob[1] the constructive effort and the waiting of their seeming insipidity. Indeed the fact that these things appear insipid betrays want of appreciation of satyagraha and the beauty and efficacy of non-violence. In other words, the spirit of satyagraha has not sunk deep and violence still lurks even though unconsciously in the seeker's breast.

I hope, therefore that repression, wherever it is resorted to, will not depress the repressed people but will accelerate the pace of the constructive effort. It is necessary so far as it is possible to convince the powers that be of our absolutely non-violent intention. Such conviction is half the battle won. In order to carry this conviction home there must be sufficient curb on our speech and writing as our action must be non-violent beyond doubt.

NEW DELHI, April 3, 1939
Harijan, 8-4-1939

289. TELEGRAM TO U. N. DHEBAR

NEW DELHI
April 3, 1939

UCHHRANGBHAI DHEBAR, VAKIL
RAJKOT

OUR POSITION COMPLETELY VINDICATED.[2]

BAPU

The Hindu, *4-4-1939. Also C.W. 10167. Courtesy: D.B. Kalelkar*

[1] The source has "role".

[2] The reference is to Sir Maurice Gwyer's judgment in favour of Vallabhbhai patel on the interpretation of the terms of the "Settlement" of December 26, 1938. In *Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel*, Vol. II, pp. 356-7, Narahari D. Parikh explains: "Virawala personally argued his case. Sardar Patel, on his part, narrated briefly the story leading up to the Settlement of the 26th December. After reading the statements of both and hearing their arguments, Sir Maurice Gwyer delivered his judgement on the 3rd of April. The following extracts from the judgment will show how completely the Sardar was vindicated: '. . . In my opinion, the true construction of each document is that the Thakore

290. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

BIRLA HOUSE,
April 3, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I learn that the belated Award[1] will be sent today to the Political Department. I wonder if I could have a copy today? And will you please send me an appointment for discussing the next step?[2]

I am,Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India.

291. LETTER TO GOPINATH BARDOLOI

NEW DELHI,
April 3, 1939

DEAR BARDOLOI[3],

You are embarking on a great experiment[4], perhaps the greatest for Assam. You have my prayers for the success of your experiment. If Assam can really get rid of the opium habit, the face of its people

[1] Saheb undertakes to appoint the persons whom Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel may recommend, and that he does not reserve to himself any discretion to reject those whom he does not approve. . . .' The judgement went on to say that one could not build up such an argument solely on the basis of the word 'recommend'. . . And in the opinion of the Chief Justice, the statement in the Notification that Shri Vallabhbhai Patel would recommend the names of the members of the Committee was intended to convey the meaning that the names so recommended would be accepted by the Thakore Saheb."

[2] Viceroy's reply of even date read: "Many thanks for your letter of today which I have just received. I am at once passing your request to the Political Department. I have as little knowledge myself as you have of the Chief Justice's time-table or the arrangements he contemplated. I shall of course be delighted to see you whenever you like; but I suggest that you may prefer to consider the situation further in the light of the terms of the Award whatever it may be, before we make any definite arrangement."

[3] Premier of Assam

[4] The opium prohibition movement to be launched by the Assam Government in Sibsagar and Dibrugarh on April 15.

will be changed. But before that happens you will have to add to prohibition much constructive effort. You will require skilled medical assistance to enable you to find out a substitute for opium which will kill the craving and rebuild the shattered bodies of the opium-eaters. May you be blessed with all the strength and wisdom you would need.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *The statesman*, 24-4-1939

292. TELEGRAM TO B. G. KHER

NEW DELHI,
April 4, 1939

KHER, PREMIER
BOMBAY

HOPE YOUR LITERACY CAMPAIGN WILL SUCCEED FULLY. SARDAR JOINS.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *The Hindu*, 5-4-1939

293. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI
April 4, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JEALGORA

NEWSPAPER CORRESPONDENTS ASKING ALL KINDS QUESTIONS ABOUT OUR CORRESPONDENCE. HAVE REFERRED THEM ALL TO YOU. I HAVE DISCLOSED NOTHING TO ANYONE EXCEPT COLLEAGUES AND CO-WORKERS.

LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

294. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
April 4, 1939

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
JULLUNDUR CITY

THANK GOD ONE STEP FINISHED. HOPE YOU ARE BETTER. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3907. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7216

295. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

NEW DELHI
April 4, 1939

I have read long accounts of a great Parsi meeting in Bombay protesting against prohibition in Bombay. I note that Parsi ladies also took part in the meeting. I have also some letters from Parsi friends appealing to me, as the author of prohibition as a chief plank in the Congress programme, to ask the Bombay Ministry to desist from their policy of prohibition.

It is not clear whether the objection is to prohibition as such or to the new taxation. All India knows the intimate connection that subsists between the Parsis and me. It hurts me to think that this race of the greatest philanthropists in the world should ally itself to a campaign against a cause whose basis is purest philanthropy. The hurt is all the greater for the knowledge that even Parsi ladies have allied themselves to the campaign. I see that unworthy threats were used at the meeting and the rights of minorities were pleaded. I can only hope that all the heat shown at the meeting was due to the momentary passion, and that the innate philanthropy of the Parsis will assert itself. I venture to suggest that the Parsis will be among the first to benefit by the prohibition policy. It is wrong to suggest that drink has done or is doing no harm to the Parsis. The Parsis will be the gainers for the

[1] This appeared under the title "Prohibition and Parsis". The statement was also published in *The Hindustan Times*, 5-4-1939.

diversion of Parsi liquor-sellers to some other means of livelihood.

Let me remind the objectors that prohibition does not affect unfermented toddy which is called *nira*. Therefore no Parsi will be deprived of his *nira* which, I admit, is as healthy as sugarcane juice and perhaps cheaper if a means can be discovered of preventing quick fermentation which *nira* undergoes more than other sweet juices.

The objectors departed from truth when they raised the cry of attack on religion. I have read the carefully drawn prohibition rules which provide for special permits for the use of spirituous liquors for *bona-fide* religious rites. The rules also provide for their use for medicinal purposes. And so far as taxation is concerned it ill behoves philanthropists to grumble at taxation for a cause so noble as prohibition which means the welfare of ignorant millions. I hope, therefore, that the nobler element, of which there is so much among the Parsis, will assert itself and help the glorious movement which promises to deliver the labouring population from a curse which is destroying them body and soul.

Harijan, 8-4-1939

296. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

NEW DELHI,
April 4, 1939

Shri Philipose, who is specially with me to keep me informed of events in Travancore, has received a revealing wire from the President of the Travancore State Congress. It appears that though the leaders who were arrested and imprisoned in anticipation of the contemplated civil disobedience were released, arrests of others on some pretext or another continue. These are active, well-known workers. What is worse, special police, who are without uniforms and are untrained, are reported to be acting like goondas. They break up meetings by creating rowdyism, and beating drums. They molest parties of workers doing constructive work. Thus a party of 11 persons led by Shri Verghese, a well-known lawyer, was brutally assaulted in Quilon on March 31, and robbed of their cash. Several were seriously injured and are laid up.

[1] This appeared under the title "Repression in Travancore". The statement was also published in *The Hindu*, 5-4-1939.

Assuming that the information furnished to me is correct, it is a serious reflection on the authorities. I can only hope that such repression will die out if only for want of retaliation on the part of the people. Let the workers realize that they have one fruit of civil resistance in spite of its suspension. They have the privilege of undeserved suffering. And, if they can undergo it without malice and anger, they will find themselves nearer their goal than hitherto. At least I have no reason for revising my opinion[1] as to the necessity of suspension. Indeed this thoughtless repression proves the wisdom of suspension.

Harijan, 8-4-1939

297. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI
April 5, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JEALGORA

YOUR WIRE[2]. NO DATE GIVEN OUT FROM HERE. MISSED CONFIRMING YOUR WIRE[3]. FORGIVE. LEARN TODAY GANDHI SEVA SANGH POSTPONED[4] OWING PLAGUE. FIX ANY DATE CONVENIENT TO YOU. AS TO PUBLICATION LEAVE ENTIRELY TO YOU. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

298. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI
April 5, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JEALGORA

NEWSPAPERS HAVE KNACK OF HIDING TRUTH. THEY MANUFACTURE NAMES PLACES OF ORIGIN ALSO IMAGINE

[1] *Vide* Statement Suspending Travancore Satyagraha", 23-3-1939

[2] Of even date, which read: "... My view publicity should be arranged in [the] fulness [of] time by our mutual agreement. Papers report from New Delhi All-India Congress Committee fixed twenty-eight but no reply received from you."

[3] *Vide* footnote 3, "Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose", 2-4-1939

[4] The Sangh held its meeting at Brindavan (Bihar) from May 3 to 7.

THINGS. DON'T KNOW WHAT HAS HAPPENED "PATRIKA" OFFICE. I CAN ONLY ASSURE YOU THAT NO ONE TO MY KNOWLEDGE HERE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR NEWS.[1] TELL ME WHAT YOU WOULD HAVE ME DO. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times 14-5-1939

299. LETTER TO R. K. JHA

NEW DELHI
April 5, 1939

BHAI JHA,

Have received your letter. The telegram could not be replied to. I wish satyagraha at both the places, Rajnandgaon and Chuikhadan, to be suspended for the time being. I am writing[2] in *Harijan*. It should be carefully read and people should be educated.

M. K. GANDHI

The Hitavada, 12-4-1939

300. LETTER TO MULKRAJ

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
April 5, 1939

MY DEAR MULKRAJ,

I have your note of 26th ultimo.

With regard to the reinvestment of Jallianwala Bagh Memorial Fund that is lying in fixed deposits in the Central Bank of India and the Punjab National Bank,[3] I am of opinion that it should be deposited half and half in the Central Bank of India and the Bank of India

[1] In his telegrams of even date, Subhas Bose had said that according to A. P. I. United Press was issuing forecasts concerning their correspondence; also that reports in *Amrita Bazar Patrika* and *The Leader* bore "clear indications" of news leaking from Delhi. *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 4-4-1939

[2] *Vide* "The States"

[3] The addressee, Secretary of Jallianwala Bagh Memorial Fund, informed Gandhiji that money was lying with The Punjab National Bank, without fetching any interest.

respectively. The deposit in[1] the Punjab National bank should be withdrawn.

I would like you to send me the respective rates of interest paid by the Central Bank of India and the Punjab National bank.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

301. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

April 5, 1939

CHI. MUNNALAL,

There has been no letter either from you or from Kanchan. Why so? I may expect letters from you both, may I not? As for me, things are hanging in mid-air just now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8562. Also C. W. 7047. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

302. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

NEW DELHI,
April 5, 1939

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

You know I do not write letters these days. Do come for the Gandhi Seva Sangh. I learn today that it has been postponed on account of the plague. The date will be announced later.

I understand about the dictionary. You should not mind such things. It is true that I was trying to avoid giving Shankaran a separate dictionary but one must get the things one needs. Study well. It will be good to learn Urdu as well. The health, of course, has to be improved. I have no idea when I shall be arriving.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1920

[1] The source has “from”.

303. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

NEW DELHI
April 5, 1939

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. I never even dreamt that I had anything more to do or say after all that had happened. I only quote your own words here. Yes, Raihana, I do admit that Mother and you people are not deceitful and this I admit sincerely. I never believed that you people could ever be deceitful. Is Saroj with you?

I am happy to hear that Mother is well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: S. N. 9675

304. MESSAGE FOR THE NATIONAL WEEK

NEW DELHI
[On or before *April* 6, 1939]

The best way to celebrate the National week is for everyone to manufacture or buy as much khadi as possible and thus help the needy and famine-stricken millions, whether Hindu or Muslim. Remember that genuine khadi can only be had from stores certified by the A. I. S. A.

The Bombay Chronicle, 6-4-1939

305. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

NEW DELHI,
April 6, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Who can help feeling distressed over the turn things are taking?[1] Let us hope that the cloud would be soon lifted.

The Rajkot Award[2] is but one step towards the objective. I have

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru, in his letter of April 1, had referred to a riot that broke out on March 29 at Baradari Hall, Lucknow, and had commented that communal riots were becoming political and superficial, with no passion or emotion about them. He thought that the local leaders of the Muslim League must be held responsible for what was happening.

[2] *Vide* footnote 2, pp."Telegram to U. N. Dhebar", 3-4-1939

still to watch the next step. However, I telephoned to Dr. Khan saheb today. He has promised to telephone and tell me if he wants me. I was agitated over the raids that have become a feature there. I have to see the Viceroy today. I might have to go Rajkot in connection with the committee.

My love to Indu. I take it that Krishna[1] is also going. This means that you will be in Bombay on 15th?

Love.

BAPU

[P.S.]

I note what you say about the tension there.[2]

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939, Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

306. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI,
April 7, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE
JEALGORA

YOUR TELEPHONE MESSAGE. RAJKOT WORK TAKES ME RAJKOT TONIGHT. COULD NOT POSTPONE WITHOUT SACRIFICING IMMEDIATE DUTY BUT MOMENT I CAN DISENGAGE MYSELF FROM RAJKOT I SHALL BE AT YOUR DISPOSAL. MEANWHILE URGE YOU ACCEPT MY ADVICE. FORM YOUR CABINET AND PUBLISH YOUR PROGRAMME. REACHING RAJKOT SUNDAY MORNING. LOVE.[3]

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

[1] Krishna Hutheesing addressee's sister.
[2] The reference is to the communal tension in Allahabad.
[3] *Vide* also the following item.

307. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI,
[*April 7, 1939*][1]

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE
JEALGORA

YOUR WIRE[2]. AM HELPLESS. MUST PROCEED RAJKOT. SUGGEST YOUR SENDING SARAT OR OTHER REPRESENTATIVE RAJ-KOT. HE CAN FLY. DO NOT EXPECT RELEASE FROM RAJKOT FOR TEN DAYS. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

308. TELEGRAM TO MR. PATHER[3]

April 7, 1939

PATHER CHAIRMAN
CARE RUSTOMJEE
DURBAN PIETERMARTZBURG

SIR RADHAKRISHNAN'S MESSAGE MUST IMPROVE RELATIONS EUROPEANS INDIANS SOUTH AFRICA.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarel al Papers . Courte sy : Nation al Archiv es of India

309. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

NEW DELHI
April 7, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I must thank you for your letter[4] received and the full and

[1] From *The Hindu*, 13-5-1939

[2] Of even date, in which the addressee requested Gandhiji to arrange for their meeting before leaving for Rajkot. *Vide* also the preceding item.

[3] This was in reply to a request by Mr. Pather, Chairman of the newly-instituted Gandhi-Tagore lecturership, for a message for the inaugural lecture under its auspices by Sir S. Radhakrishnan on April 10, 1939.

[4] The viceroy in his letter of even date said : "I have taken time further to consider our conversation of yesterday, with every desire to assist you and with full appreciation of your attitude. But with much regret I am clear, after careful and earnest thought, that it would not be possible for me to accept your view in regard to the appointment of an official chairman; and I see nothing for it but that the Committee as agreed between the Thakore Saheb and Mr. patel, constituted in the light of the Chief Justice's ruling, should proceed with its work. Let me, however, repeat what I told you yesterday, that so far as I have undertaken to be responsible for the actions of the Thakore Saheb on this whole case, I will implement that promise to the full through my Resident, and that you need have no doubts on that point and that in my judgement all arrangements should be made in Rajkot and not here."

unequivocal assurance contained therein. Armed with it, I leave tonight in the confidence that there will be no hitch in the due. fulfilment of terms of the Thakore Saheb's Notification of 26th December last.

My reply will be incomplete if I did not express my regret that it was not possible for you to accept my suggestion that question whether your wire to me of 6th March last cancelled that of the 5th or whether it merely explained and amplified the latter, should be referred to the Chief Justice of India.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 7818. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

310. A LETTER[1]

NEW DELHI,
April 7, 1939

I hope that you will have a successful meeting. There is no doubt hat the proposed measure[2], if it becomes law of the Union of South Africa, will mean slow death of the Indian community in the Transvaal. It is the fashion of the day to condemn many of Hitler's acts as so many breaches of Pacts. What is it the proposed measure is not an attempt to commit a flagrant breach of the Cape Town Settlement of 1914 and subsequent declarations of the Union Government?

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

311. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

April 7, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Yours. I am off to Rajkot. Mahadev will tell you all about it. Of

[1] This was, presumably, addressed to Bhawani Dayal, President of the Natal Indian Congress who, according to *The Indian Annual Register, 1939,* Vol. I, visited India at this time and held meetings at several places with a view to enlightening the Government and the people about the conditions in South Africa.

[2] According to *The Indian Annual Register*, 1939, the reference is to "the Asiatics (Transvaal) Land and Trading Bill, which required that Indians must agree to live in lands separate from others, that they must not be allowed to acquire lands in 'European quarters' and that they must ply their trades in non-European quarters."

course there is no Brindavan[1] now. The Talimi Sangh will meet on 12th, 13th, 14th. I can't attend. I shall try to go to Subhas if I can from Rajkot. I am quite fit.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3908. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7217

312. LETTER TO M. M. MALAVIYA

NEW DELHI
April 7, 1939

BHAI SAHEB,

I got your letter through Sundaram. I got the wire too. It will be a pilgrimage for me to come for your *darshan*. I shall try my best.

I am trying to do something about Bannu. It is a difficult matter.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From Hindi: C. W. 10229. Courtesy: Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi

313. LETTER TO DINESH SINGH

NEW DELHI
April 7, 1939

CHI. DINESH,

I had your letter and your mother herself arrived. She stayed with me for a couple of days. My efforts are continuing. You should not worry but concentrate on studies.

Blessings from
BAPU

[P.S.]

Mother's health was improving. She has also taken some medicines from here.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 8673

[1] The reference is to the Gandhi Seva Sangh Meeting; *vide* "Letter to Balvantsinha", 5-4-1939

314. HAVE I ERRED?

Some friends have been expostulating with me for involving myself in the Rajkot affair. I sum up their argument below:

> In giving so much attention to Rajkot to the exclusion of all else you seem to have lost all sense of proportion. It was your obvious duty to be at Tripuri. If you had been there, things would have taken a different turn. But you chose to undertake an indefinite fast. You had no right thus to disturb national life without notice. Why should you fast to make a Prince keep his promise? The people of Rajkot were offering civil disobedience. They would have become stronger in any case if you had not suddenly stopped the movement. Surely, democracy cannot be built by your method. And then you, who taught India to shun Viceroys and Governors and such other functionaries who used to fill us with awe, are now found dancing attendance on the Viceroy and awaiting His Excellency's pleasure when great affairs demand your attention elsewhere. You are believed to oppose Federation, but you recognize the Chief Justice of the Federal Court and will not leave Delhi till His Lordship has delivered his Award. Truly the ways of mahatmas are strange.

To the hasty reader this argument must make a forcible appeal. But one who goes a little deeper into the subject and knows the working of satyagraha should have no difficulty in seeing the falsity of the argument. Nor is there anything new in what I have done and am doing about Rajkot. Geographically Rajkot is a tiny spot on the map of India, but the disturbance which I felt called upon to deal with was symptomatic of a universal malady. My endeavour in Rajkot was meant to nip the evil in the bud. I am of opinion that the result of the endeavour has so far benefited the whole of India. I acted the part of a wise general who never disregards the slightest weakness in his defences. Kheda and Champaran are but instances in point. Whilst they lasted they occupied the attention of the whole of India, and whilst the fight was going on I had to devote the whole of my time and attention to them. It is a rare occurrence to have to deal with the whole front at the same time. We must distinguish between preparations for war and actual outbreak of a skirmish, be it ever so insignificant in itself. Tripuri was a preparation, Rajkot was a Skirmish.

The fast is a most efficacious weapon in the armoury of non-

violence. That it can be used only by the fewest possible persons is no objection to its use. It would be foolish for me not to use the talents given to me by God on the ground that others or all do not possess some of them. I have never heard it said that use of special talents placed at the service of democracy can retard its even growth. I hold that such use stimulates it as the Rajkot fast undoubtedly has. And why is the Rajkot fast to be condemned, if the nation benefited by the previous fasts? It is open to the critics to say that the previous ones were also criticized. So they were. But my point is that the nation gained by every one of them. What does arrest the growth of the democratic spirit is the outbreak of violence. I must ask the public to believe me when I say that if my fast did nothing else, it prevented much violence.

I have no sense of shame about going to H. E. the Viceroy. I had invited him as the Crown Representative to perform his duty by intervening to enforce performance of a promise by a tributary of the Crown. I had not gone as a petitioner depending upon his mercy. It would have been churlish on my part to have sought his intervention and yet not to respond to his invitation to see him to discuss things. I have already acknowledged the handsome manner in which he acted during the fast. It was open to him to disregard it and take his time in deciding whether and when if at all he should intervene. But he did not do so. He recognized the nation's anxiety. And I have no doubt that his humane instinct, too, had a share in cutting short his tour in Rajputana in order to determine his action with sufficient quickness. I have no apology to offer for my attendances on the Viceroy. It is part of satyagraha to lose no opportunity of converting one's opponent or coming to terms with him on strictly honourable lines. I repeated on a small scale with Lord Linlithgow what I did with Lord Halifax when as Lord Irwin he was Viceroy of India.

Lastly, as to my acceptance of the Chief Justice of India as the interpreter of the Thakore Saheb's letter of 26th December last sent to Sardar Vallabhabhai Patel. The Thakore Saheb interpreted it one way, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel another way. The Viceroy suggested interpretation by the Chief Justice of India. What was I to do? Was I to say he must not because he was Chief Justice of a Court which was a creation of the Government of India Act? My sense of propriety would rebel against any such objection. Federation has come no nearer by my accepting Maurice Gwyer's nomination as judge of the meaning of a document. If it comes as an imposition, it will come

because of our impotence born of our inability to bring into non-violent subjection the forces of violence that are growing in the country and the increasing indiscipline and corruption in the Congress against which I have been raising my voice for the past twelve months.

It may interest the reader to know that Sir Maurice did not interpret the document in his capacity as Cheif Justice of the Federal Court but as a jurist of established repute. He who reads the judgement cannot fail to notice the pains he bestowed upon it.

ON THE TRAIN FROM DELHI TO RAJKOT, April 8, 1939

Harijan, 15-4-1939

315. TELEGRAM TO DHARMENDRASINH[1]

AJMER STATION,
April 8, 1939

HIS HIGHNESS THAKORE SAHEB
RAJKOT

REACHING RAJKOT SUNDAY MORNING CONNECTION WITH ACTION TO BE TAKEN PURSUANCE AWARD.

GANDHI

Harijan, 22-4-1939

316. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

ON THE TRAIN,
April 8, 1939

CHI. KAKA,

I got your letter. I am on my way to Rajkot. Only God knows when it will all end. I have a fear that you yourself tore up the papers relating to the budget. Prepare it afresh and send it. It is only in May that we shall now be able to attend to the Gandhi Seva Sangh affairs. It will be excellent if the Hindi propagation work in Assam is properly organized. We should meet their request for free teachers. The money for that can be raised in Calcutta. Why not ask all the Provinces to give an account of the Hindi work done? I don't think you will get any.

[1] This is extracted from "Rajkot Events".

How can they send any when there is no account to give?All the same you may try. Do you take proper care of your health?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7973

317. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI [1]

[*April 8, 1939*][2]

CHI. AMRITLAL,

How is your health? I hear from Krishnachandra that Rajbhushan is not making much progress either in Hindi or in spinning. Is there any letter from Vijaya?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7973

318. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

[*April 8, 1939*][3]

CHI. BRAJKISAN,

Why such a long letter? I admit my mistake. My nature is responsible for it. Only those who demand insistently get anything from me. I have not the ability to judge everyone. Nevertheless, my confessing my error does not in any way reduce your own. Your lack of method is terrible though you are not at all careless. Your attachment, too, is equally terrible. That is why you have not finished any work. Let the brothers alone even now. Where do you have any money to give? Do not take even a pie from the family. Beg for Jugatramji. Take up a job and live on the salary. You will thus set an example for the brothers.

Forget me, and surrendering yourself to God make an effort.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

How much did you spend on having the watch repaired?

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2474.

[1] This and the preceding item are written on the same sheet.

[2] *Ibid*

[3] The date has been inferred from information supplied by the addressee.

319. WHAT TO DO?

Here is an important letter[1] from a Principal who wishes to remain anonymous:

A troubled conscience seeks the reasoned opinion of others to help to solve the following pressing question: Is the carrying out of the pledge of the Peace Pledge Union (the late Dick Shepard's organization for opposing war by the refusal to resort to violence under any circumstances whatever) a right and a practicable course of action in the present conditions of our world ?

On the side of 'Yea' there are the following arguments:

1. The world's greatest spiritual teachers have taught and exemplified in their own lives that an evil thing can only be destroyed by good means, and never by evil means, and any sort of violence . . . is undoubtedly an evil means, whatever may be the motive. . . .

2.The real causes of the present violence and misery can never be removed by war. . . .

3. . . . War . . . even if it ends in victory, means. . . destruction of such liberties as remain to us. . . for no modern war can be waged . . . without the complete regimentation . . . It is better to die in conscientiously resisting oppression non-violently, than to live as a pawn in the regimented society . . .

On the side of 'Nay' there are the following arguments:

1. Non-violent resistance can only be effective in resisting people who are capable of being moved by moral and humanitarian consideratons. Fascism . . . has no scruple . . . in employing any degree of brutality . . .

2. To refuse co-operation in violent resistance. . . in defence of democratic liberty, is tantamount to helping those who are destroying that liberty. Fascist aggression has undoubtedly been encouraged by the knowledge that the democracies contain numbers of people who are unwilling to fight in their defence, and who would even oppose (and thus obstruct) their own Governments ... This being so, the conscientious objector to violent means of defence becomes not merely ineffective in promoting peace, but actually helpful to those who are breaking it.

3.War may destroy liberty, but if the democracies survive there is at least some possibility of regaining part of it, whereas if the Fascists are allowed to rule the world, there is no chance at all. . . .

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

> The solution of this question is obviously terribly pressing ... But is it not really just as pressing for those in other countries, say South Africa, Egypt, or Australia which may have to face the possibility of invasion, or in an India which in the event of 'complete independence' might be faced with the possibility of invasion by Japan or by a pan-Islamic combination?
>
> In the face of such possibilities (say rather probabilities), ought not even every keen conscience (whether in a young body or in an old) to be certain exactly what is the right and practical way of action?...

Nothing need be said about the arguments in favour of the Peace Pledger's resistance. Those against resistance deserve careful examination. The first argument, if it is valid, cuts at the very root of the anti-war movement. It is based on the assumption that it is possible to convert Fascists and Nazis. They belong to the same species as the so-called democracies or, better still, war-resisters themselves. They show in their family circles the same tenderness, affection, consideration and generosity that war-resisters are likely to show even outside such circles. The difference is only of degree. Indeed Fascists and Nazis are a revised edition of so-called democracies if they are not an answer to the latters' misdeeds. Kirby Page in his brochure on the toll of the late war has shown that both the combatants were guilty of falsehoods, exaggerations and inhumanities. The Versailles Treaty was a treaty of revenge against Germany by the victors. The so-called democracies have before now misappropriated other people's lands and have resorted to ruthless repression. What wonder if Messrs Hitler and company have reduced to a science the unscientific violence their predecessors had developed for exploiting the so-called backward races for their own material gain? It is therefore a matter of rule of three to find out the exact amount of non-violence required to melt the harder hearts of the Fascists and the Nazis, if it is assume, as it is, that the so-called democracies melt before a given amount of non-violence. Therefore, we must eliminate from consi-deration the first and the fatal argument if it could be proved to have any content in it.

The other two arguments are practical. The pacifists may not do anything to weaken their own Governments so as to compel defeat. But for fear of so doing they may not miss the only effective chance they have of demonstrating their undying faith in the futility of all war. If their own Governments go mad and make martyrs of war-resisters, they (the Governments) must, suffer the consequence of the unrest of their own creation. The democracies must respect the liberty

of individual non-violent conscience however it may be. From that respect there will spring hope for the world. This means that they put their conscience and truth before their country's so-called interest. For regard for one's conscience, if it is really such, has never yet injured any legitimate cause or interest. Therefore, it comes to this that a pacifist must resist when he feels strongly that, whether so-called democracies live or die, the tug of war will never end war and that it will only end when at the crucial moment a body of pacifists have at any cost testified their living faith by suffering, if need be, the extreme penalty. I know the point for me to consider is not how to avoid the extreme penalty but how to behave so as to achieve the object in view. Where the very disturbing but potent factor of faith is part of one's conduct, human calculations are of no avail. A true pacifist is a true satyagrahi. The latter acts by faith and therefore is not concerned about the result, for he knows that it is assured when the action is true.

After all, what is the gain if the so-called democracies win? War certainly will not end. Democracies will have adopted all the tactics of the Fascists and the Nazis including conscription and all other forcible methods to compel and exact obedience. All that may be gained at the end of the victory is the possiblity of comparative protection of individual liberty. But that protection does not depend upon outside help. it comes from the internal determination to protect it against the whole world. In other words, the true democrat is he who with purely non-violent means defends his liberty and therefore his country's and ultimately that of the whole of mankind. In the coming test pacifists have to prove their faith by resolutely refusing to do anything with war whether of defence or offence. But the duty of resistance accrues only to those who believe in non-violence as a creed—not to those who will calculate and will examine the merits of each case and decide whether to approve of or oppose a particular war. It follows that such resistance is a matter for each person to decide for himself and under the guidance of the inner voice, if he recognizes its existence.

RAJKOT, April 9, 1939

Harijan, 15-4-1939

320. LETTER TO DHARMENDRASINH[1]

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
April 9, 1939

MAHERBAN THAKORE SAHEB,

You must have received my wire[2] sent from Ajmer yesterday.

It is necessary now for you to appoint the Committee in terms of Sir Maurice's Award[3].

It seems to me that you will desire to include the four names you have already notified. So long as the Sardar's nominees have a bare majority on the Committee, he will gladly accept those names. Thus, if the four names remain and the three officials are to have the right to vote, the Sardar will have to nominate eight members.

If you withdraw the four names, the Sardar will have to give seven names. Will you kindly let me have your opinion? Will you please also let me know who the three officials will be and of them who will be the president of the Committee?[4]

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

Harijan, 22-4-1939

321. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
April 9, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

I arrived here this morning in connection with the fulfilment of the terms of the Thakore Saheb's Notification. Sardar Patel too flew here this morning on my invitation.

I belive that His Excellency has sent you certain instructions in connection with the matter. If you think that we should meet I am at your disposal whenever you like.

[1] The letter is extracted from "Rajkot Events" in which it appered as a "translation".

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Dharmedrasinh", 8-4-1939

[3] *Vide* footnote 2,"Telegram to U. N. Dhebar", 3-4-1939

[4] For the addressee's reply, *vide* "Letter to dharmendrasinh", 10-4-1939

I have sent a letter[1] to the Thakore Saheb of which I send you copy of translation herewith.[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K.G.

From a copy: C.W. 10171. Courtesy: D.B. Kalelkar

322. LETTER TO BHOLANATH

RAJKOT,
April 9, 1939

BHAI BHOLANATH[3],

I have your letter of March 23. I have fully discussed the matter[4] with Haribhau Upadhyaya. Kindly consult him.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1310

323. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

RAJKOT
April 10, 1939

MY DEAR SUBHAS,

Your letter[5] of 6th instant has been redirected here.

I suggested a meeting of the foes to have it out among themselves without any reservation. But so much has happened since that I do not know if it is worth while. They will only swear at one another and bitterness will become more bitter. The gulf is too wide, suspicions too deep. I see no way of closing the ranks. The only way seems to me to recognize the differences and let each group work in its own manner.

I feel myself utterly incompetent to bring the warring elements

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] In his reply, the addressee expressed concern for Gandhiji's "hot and tiring journey" from Delhi to Rajkot, and indicated his readiness to meet him "at any time".

[3] A Congress worker of Alwar

[4] The reference is to the refusal of the Alwar administration to register the Alwar Praja Mandal.

[5] *Vide* "Letter From Subhas Chandra Bose", 6-4-1939

together for joint work. I should hope that they can work out their policies with becoming dignity. If they do so it will be well with the country.

Pandit Pant's resolution I cannot interpret. The more I study it the more I dislike it. The farmers meant well. But It does not answer the present difficulty. You should, therefore, give it your own interpretation and act accordingly, without the slightest hesitation.

I cannot, will not, impose a Cabinet on you. You must not have one imposed on you, nor can I guarantee approval by A. I. C. C. of your Cabinet and policy. It would amount to suppression. Let the members exercise their own judgment. If you do not get the vote, lead the opposition till you have converted the majority.

Do you know that I have stopped civil disobedience wherever I have influence? Travancore and Jaipur are glaring examples. Even Rajkot I had stopped before I came here. I repeat that I breathe violence in the air. I see no atmosphere for non-violent action. Is not the lesson of Ramdurg[1] enough for you?In my opinion it has done immense injury to the cause. It was, so far as I can see, premeditated. Congressmen are responsible for it as they were in Ranpur. Do you not see that we two honestly see the same thing differently and even draw opposite conclusions? How can we meet on the political platform? Let us agree to differ there and let us meet on the social, moral and municipal platform. I cannot add the economic, for we have discovered our differences on that platform also.

My conviction is that working along our lines, in our own way, we shall serve the country better than by the different groups seeking to work a common policy and common programme forged out of irreconcilable elements.

I sent you wires[2] from Delhi about my utter inability to go to Dhanbad. Rajkot I dare not neglect.

I am well. Ba is down with malignant malaria. This is the fifth day. I brought her with me when she had already commenced it.

I wish you will conserve your health by taking decisive action, leaving the result to God. Your reference to your father is touching. I had the pleasure of meeting him.

[1] Ramdurg Praja Sangh had resorted to violent means to compel the Ruler to give them more concessions. *Vide* "Lawless Limbdi"

[2] *Vide* "Khudi Khidmatgars and Badshah Khan"

I forget one thing. Nobody put me up against you.[1] What I told you in Segaon was based on my own personal observations. You are wrong if you think that you have a single personal enemy among the Old Guard.

Love.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

324. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

SHREE RASHTREEYASHALA, RAJKOT,
April 10, 1939

DEAR SIR AKBAR,

Shri Ghanshyamsinh Gupta and Shri Deshbandhu Gupta have followed me to Rajkot to seek my advice after the utter breakdown of negotiations between the Government and the Aryasamaj by reason of H. E. H's Government's denial of the reports about negotiations.

I may state that for some time I have been advising the Aryasamaj friends who have regard for my opinions to suspend the civil disobedience part of their movement and give a chance to negotiations. I need not go into the reasons that actuated me to give the advice. The friends were seriously considering my advice, when a door seemed to them to open to its acceptance on grounds other than those I had advanced. I refer to the negotiations. They thought that if their minimum demand could be satisfied they would discontinue the civil disobedience. But as stated, their hope was frustrated. Now they want me to guide them as to the next step. They wanted to issue a manifesto stating their ground for entertaining the opinion that actual negotiations had started.

On reading the manifesto I felt that before I could give them guidance I should write to you myself and know your own opinion.

If the information I gather from the manifesto is true, the Nizam Government's denial is inexplicable. Here are the relevant paragraphs from the draft manifesto which has been with-held for the time being at my instance:

> About the last week of February, the Divisional Commissioner and the

[1] The addressee had said: "At Tripuri the Old Guard cleverly dropped out of the picture and more cleverly pitted me against you."

Collector of Gulburga interviewed Mahatma Narain Swami Maharaj, the leader of the movement, in Jail with a view to ascertain the grievances of the Aryas, and promised to move the higher authorities to explore the possibilities for an amicable settlement.

On the 27th March, 1939, Mr. S. T. Hollins, the Director-General of Police and Jails, Hyderabad State, Nawab Ghos Yarjang Bahadur, Commissioner, Gulburga Division, Mr. Razvi, the Collector, Gulburga District, and the Superintendent, Gulburga Jail, interviewed Mahatma Narain Swamiji Maharaj, Kunvar Chand Karanji Sharda, Lala Khushalchandji and Swami Vivekanandji in the Gulburga Jail and Mr. S. T. Hollins made certain proposals, the substance of which was that H. E. H. The Nizam's Government would take no objection whatever to the hoisting of the *om* flags, that no permission would be required for building *yajnashalas* and *havan-kundas* and all Aryasamajs and Mandirs at present existing without any permission having been obtained would be recognized, and in the matter of building new temples, machinery would be povided to secure the granting of sanction within 15 days of the application, sanction not to be withheld on any ground other than the ground of its location being such as to give rise to communal disturbances and full liberty of preaching religious doctrines (*dharma-prachar*) with due regard to the feelings of the followers of other faiths would be secured.

Mahatma Narain Swamiji and his colleagues expressed their wilingness to recommend the above proposals as the basis for negotiating the settlement, provided the settlement conformed to the spirit of the Sholapur Resolutions. Swamiji made it clear to Mr. Hollins that the authority to call off the satyagraha movement rested with the Serva Deshik Sabha.

Mr. Hollins thereupon undertook to arrange a meeting of the representatives of the Sarva Deshik Sabha and the Government Officers concerned at Hyderabad and also to arrange for the transfer of Swamiji Maharaj and his three colleagues to Hyderabad for participating in the discussions. On the request of the Swamiji, Mr. Hollins and the Commissioner Nawab Ghos Yarjang Bahadur promised that the representatives of Sarva Deshik Sabha would not be molested and their records would not be seized or otherwise interfered with.

Swamiji Maharaj, having been thus assured, called Swami Swatantranandji, Secretary, Satyagraha Committee, Sholapur, by telegram and also forwarded the notes recording the substance of the above conversation duly countersigned by Jail Superintendent, to the President, Secretary and some other members of the Sarva Deshik Sabha. On the 7th instant when I,

Messrs G. S. Gupta and Deshbandhu Gupta saw Narain Swamiji in Gulburga Jail, the Jail Superintendent told us that before putting his own signature he had shown the notes of the conversation contained in Swamiji's letters to the Talukdar, Gulburga, and had got his approval.

Swami Swatantranandji went to Gulburga and interviewed Narain Swamiji Maharaj who asked the former that an emergent meeting of the working committee of the Sarva Deshik Sabha should be immediately convened at Sholapur before 10th April 1939.

Swami Swtantranandji convened the meeting at Sholapur and wrote to Sir Akbar Hydari sending him a copy of the gist of the conversation Narain Swamiji Maharaj had with Mr. Hollins and his colleagues and informing him that the representatives of the Sarva Deshik Sabha would be reaching Hyderabad to meet the state representatives on the 9th April to discuss the question and requesting him to communicate the time and place of the meeting. In a letter dated the 1st April, 1939, Swami Swatantranandji also wrote to the Superintendent, Gulburga Jail, informing him that in addition to the members of the Executive body of the Internatinal Aryan League, the gentlemen named in the letter would represent the Sarva Deshik Sabha at the Hyderabad meeting.

Swami Swatantranandji received a letter No. 2697, dated the 3rd April, 1939, from the Superintendent, Central Jail, Gulburga, which is very important, as it throws considerable light on the present controversy; it reads as follows:

"With reference to your letter No. 37060, dated the 31st March, '39, received today, I write to inform you that it has been decided to hold the meeting of your representatives with Mahatma Narain Swami, Mr. Khushalchand and others at Gulburga but not at Hyderabad. Please get all your representatives to Sholapur and send to Gulburga by the morning mail of the 7th April, 1939, so that they may see Mahatma Narain Swami and others beforehand and be ready for the 8th instant to talk with the State officers."

"I assure you that your representatives would never be harassed by police nor would your papers be seized here provided there would be no demonstration on your part. Kindly let me know the date and time of their arrival at Gulburga by telegram so that necessary arrangements may be made here. I am writing this to you with the approval of the First Talukdar, Gulburga."

The letter speaks for itself and shows that the Jail Superintendent wrote with full authority because he distinctly states that the deputation was to meet the State officials on the 8th April, 1939.

While the leaders of the Aryasamaj were on their way to Hyderabad, Hyderabad Government issued the surprising communique that the news

published in certain sections of Press that H. E. H. the Nizam's Government were negotiating with the International Aryan League with a view to arrive at some settlement or compromise was totally incorrect.

The letter dated 3rd instant and signed by the Superintendent of the Central Jail, Gulburga, seems to be conclusive. I suggest that even if Mr. Hollins and other officials were over-enthusiastic and went beyond their authority, their action should be endorsed by H. E. H.'s Government for the sake of the good name if for nothing else. Public confidence in the word of such a great Government as H. E. H. the Nizam's ought not to be shaken, but perhaps there is a sound answer to what *prima facie* appears to be unanswerable. May I expect an early reply?I am fixed up in Rajkot at present.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C. W. 10216

325. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
April 10, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

I thank you for your kind note[1]. Thanks, I am none the worse for the journey.

Today is my silence day. May I come to you at 3 p.m. tomorrow?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10172. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

326. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

RAJKOT
April 10, 1939

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. Fasting can do you no good. It appears that

[1] *Vide* footnote 2, "Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose",

here everything will turn out right. Qureshi, too, must not worry. No one need come. Sushila's letter will tell you about Ba.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 415

327. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

RAJKOT,
April 11, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

"As you were" sums up my position here. No end of difficulties in the midst of honeyed words. I am glad I sent for the Sardar. He being by my side I feel a kind of safety which I would not in his absence. He must know and endorse every step I may take.

Here is copy of further correspondence with Subhas Chandra Bose. What is one to do? Resoluteness seems to be the only answer if one has faith in one's judgement.

Ramdurg is a pointer. No more civil disobedience till non-violence has asserted itself.

I hope you have got rid of your cough and headache. I am quite fit. Ba has sixth day of malaria. It is steadily decreasing.

I am off to Gibson's now. This is being finished in the 'liberary'[1]. Very little letter-writing. It is an eternal round of interviews.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3909. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7218

[1] Gandhiji used this expression for lavatory.

328. TELEGRAM TO JIVANSINH D. JADEJA

Express RAJKOT,
April 12, 1939

JADEJA JIVANSINHJI DHIRUBHA[1]
PRIVATE SECRETARY
SANAND

HAD EXPECTED SEE YOU HERE. IN SPITE OF CHIEF JUSTICE AWARD HAVING GONE AGAINST THAKORESAHEB'S CONTENTION HE DESIRES HIS NOMINATION OF YOU AS MEMBER REFORMS COMMITTEE BEING INCLUDED IN SARDAR'S LIST. THUS HE DISOWNS HIS OWN RESPONSIBILITY. THEREFORE YOUR NAME WILL DROP OUT UNLESS YOU ACT AS SARDAR'S NOMINEE AND UNDERTAKE TO WORK AS ONE TEAM ALONG WITH HIS OTHER NOMINEES SUBJECT OF COURSE TO ASSURANCE THAT BHAYATS' JUST RIGHTS WILL BE PROTECTED BY THEM. PLEASE WIRE REPLY AS I MUST SEND LIST BY TOMORROW LATEST.[2]

GANDHI

From a copy: C. W. 10175. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

329. LETTER TO GARASIAS

[On or before *April 13, 1939*][3]

It is understood that Mahatma Gandhi has written a letter to the Garasias (Bhayats), stating that he is unable to include a Bhayat on the Reforms committee, for which seven representatives are to be nominated by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel according to the Gwyer Award.

It is stated that Mahatma Gandhi had pointed out that, in view of the decision of the Thakore Saheb not to increase the number of members of the Reforms committee, if the Bhayats'representative is included among the seven nominees of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, then what is majority for the Parishad, according to the

[1] He was nominated by the President, Rajkot Bhayats and Garasdars Samaj, to represent the Bhayats and zamindars of Rajkot on the Reforms Committee which the Thakore Saheb had agreed to appoint.

[2] *Vide* also the following Item.

[3] The letter was reported under the date-line "Rajkot, April 13".

Gwyer Award, would be reduced to a minority. He is also stated to have pointed out that his assurance[1] to the Bhayats early in March was never unconditional, and that it had always been understood that the Parishad should have a majority on the Reforms Committee.

Mahatma Gandhi regrets to note that the Bhayat Association has not thought it necessary to continue the negotiations to find out a *via media.*[2]

The Hindu, 13-4-1939

330 TELEGRAM TO B. R. AMBEDKAR

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
April 14, 1939

DOCTOR AMBEDKAR, M. L. A.
BOMBAY

SO FAR AS I CAN SEE AT LEAST FOUR MEMBERS WILL FULLY REPRESENT DEPRESSED CLASS INTERESTS. NAMES BEING CHOSEN BY SARDAR.

GANDHI

From a copy: C. W. 10176. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

331. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

RAJKOT,
April 14, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JEALGORA

MINE[3] CROSSED YOUR LETTER.[4] CAN ADD NOTHING HELPFUL. CONVINCED BEST COURSE NATIONAL INTEREST

[1] In "The Rajkot Fast—VI" Pyarelal explains: "In the middle of a crowded programme on March 11, a letter from the Bhayats was handed to Gandhiji asking for permission to wait in deputation upon him to request him to give them an assurance regarding their representation on the Reforms Committee similar to what he was believed to have given to the Mussalmans. Gandhiji, anxious to save their time and his own for which he was hard pressed, sent them a laconic, hurried note which would have the effect of placing them on a level with Mussalmans, so far as the question of their representation on the Reforms Committee was concerned". *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 15-4-1939

[2] *Vide* also the preceding item and "Letter to Ranjitsinh", 15-4-1939

[3] Of April 10; *vide* "Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose", 10-4-1939

[4] Of April 10, recapitulating principal points of previous letters

FOR YOU IS TO FORM CABINET OF YOUR UNFETTERED CHOICE AND FORMULATE PROGRAMME. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

332. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

RAJKOT,
April 14, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JHARIA

YOUR WIRE[1]. GANDHI SEVA SANGH THIRD MAY TO TENTH. BETTER IF WORKING COMMITTEE TWENTY-EIGHTH INSTANT A. I. C. C. TWENTY-NINTH. SHALL MAKE DESPERATE EFFORTS ATTEND. BA'S FEVER ABATED. NO DANGER. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

333. LETTER TO DHARMENDRASINH[2]

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
April 14, 1939[3]

NAMDAR THAKORE SAHEB,

I am able to answer your letter[4] dated April 10, 1939, only today.

It pains me to note that you have shaken your responsibility off your shoulders. The Muslim and the Bhayat names to which you refer were nominated by you. My promise therefore meant and could be

[1] Dated April 14, which read; "Am perturbed by persistent Press reports yourself not coming Calcutta during A. I. C. C. meeting and Gandhi Seva Sangh Conference being postponed till second week may. Your presence during A. I. C. C. meeting absolutely necessary. Will first week May for A. I. C. C. meeting suit you better ?"

[2] These letter is extracted from "Rajkot Events", in which it appeared as a "translation" along with a note by Vallabhbhai Patel, which read: "This letter is written by my consent and the names given here should be taken as submitted by me".

[3] According to *The Hindu*, 17-4-1939, the letter is dated April 15.

[4] *Vide* "Letter from Dharmendrasinh", 10-4-1939

interpreted to mean only that I on my part would help you to fulfil your promise even if the Chief Justice's Award went against you. It passes my understanding how anyone can interpret my promise to give what I had no power to give. I am acting only as the Sardar's and the Parishad's trustee. It is obvious that I may not give anything outside the terms of my trust. Therefore, my promise can only mean that if you desire to retain the names in question, I would help you on behalf of the Sardar to do so subject to the majority of the Sardar's names remaining intact. I hold that it is impossible to put more meaning into my word. Unfortunately you have taken an extraordinary step and thrust upon me the responsibility of accommo-dating in the Sardar's list the names of your nominees. What pains one is that you should misconstrue my promise in a manner that would render nugatory the right secured by the Sardar.

Therefore, although after your letter the only thing that remained for me was to send you seven names on behalf of the Sardar, I entreated three out of the four nominees named by you to allow themselves to be included among the Sardar's nominees and to work as one team with the rest. But my entreaty has ended on failure. I have exhausted all effort to honour your nominations if it were at all possible. You have mentioned a fourth name in your letter. I did not think it necessary to put Shri Mohan Mandan to the trouble of coming to me to discuss things, as he is not a Harijan.

The exclusion of the above four names, however, dose not mean that the representatives nominated by the Sardar will not guard the special and legitimate rights of Muslims, Bhayats, Harijans or any other section. These members recognized no caste distinctions so far as the Committee and service of the people are concerned. They have before them only the cause of the Rajkot people as a whole. They are on the Committee because the party they represent conducted the fight for the rights of the Rajkot people. You appreciated their endeavour and gave the right of nominating the names of seven Rajkot State subjects outside the officials to the Sardar or the Parishad. These names are as below :

1. Shri Popatlal Purushottam Anada[1] B.A., L L. B.,
2. " Popatlal Dhanji Malaviya[2]
3. " Jamnadas Khushalchand Gandhi,[3]

[1] Member of the Kathiawar Bar and of Praja Pratinidhi Sabha

[2] Member of the mercantile community, President of the local Social Service League

[3] Principal. Rajkot Rashtriya Shala (national school); participated in satyagraha in South Africa

4. " Becharbhai Walabhai [Wadher][1]
5. " Jethalal [Harikrishna] Joshi,[2]
6. " Vrajlal Mayashanker Shukla,[3]
7. " Gajanan Bhawanishanker Joshi[4] , M.A., L L.B.

Let me once more entreat you to listen to me. You say that you are unable to enlarge the Committe. This is not right. The Chief Justice's Award does not mean any absolute obligation to limit the number of the Committee to ten. The two parties can make any alterations by mutual agreement. The Sardar is still desirous of helping you to keep your four nominess. The only condition is that the Parishad's majority should not be affected in the extended Committee. According to the Chief Justice's Award, the Sardar has a majority of four at present. Instead of that, for your sake and for the sake of avoiding bad blood, the Sardar is willing to reduce it to a majority of one.

Can you expect anything more?

In your Notification of December 26th, the time-limit for the Committee to complete and submit its report to you was fixed at one month and four days. May remind you that the limit may not be exceeded?

During the second satyagraha struggle there were confiscations, fines and other repressive measures. It is hardly necessary to remind you that these should be now cancelled.[5]

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

Harijan, 22-4-1939

[1] A constructive worker; had taken interest in Harijan service

[2] Teacher, Rashtriya Shala; Secretary of the local Social Service League

[3] Teacher in Rashtriya Shala

[4] Secretary, local Ramakrishna Mission

[5] According to *The Hindustan Times*, 19-4-1939, the addressee replied, *inter alia*: "I very much regret to find that in spite of what I wrote to you no representation whatsoever on the Committee has been given to the Mahomedans or the Bhayats and that the representative for the Depressed Classes has also been omitted although about his qualifications a special recommendation was made. I write to say that according to the opinion of the Legal Adviser of the State only one gentleman out of the seven, viz., Mr. Bechar Wala Wadher, happens to be the subject of Rajkot; the other six do not appear to enjoy that status. I have, therefore, to request you to let me know in detail the grounds on which you hold them to be eligible for appointment on the said Committee."

334. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

RAJKOT,
April 14, 1939

CHI. CHANDAN,

I got your letter. I wrote one letter to you at Dehra Dun. You don't seem to have received it. Write to me now.

Ba has completely recovered now. You needn't, therefore, come for her sake.

If you feel inclined to go to Bihar, do go. There is of course plenty of work to be done there. But it may be desirable now to wait for Shankar[1].

. *Blesings from*
BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 950. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

335. LETTER TO KHWAJA HASAN NIZAMI

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,[2]
April 14, 1939

KHWAJA SAHEB,

I am grateful to you for sending me the Koran in Hindi. I have high regard for Urdu, am trying to learn it and want it to prosper.

I am of the opinion that those Hindus who want to serve both [the communities] should know Urdu and should read Urdu newspapers and books. Similarly those Muslims who want to serve both [the com-munities] should know Hindi and should read Hindi newspapers and Hindi books.

From a copy of the Urdu: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Satish D. Kalelkar, who later married the addressee
[2] As in the letter-paper

336. LETTER TO RANJITSINH

April 15, 1939

I have received your letter[1] of the 14th instant. I have personally explained to you that you are giving an entirely different meaning to my written promise. If the meaning which you have given is the real meaning of it, the result would be that I took a vow to give what I did not possess. I was then going to Delhi to obtain a decision from the Chief Justice. If that decision was against the Sardar I had nothing to give, because your representative was well protected. But if the decision was in favour of the Sardar and if the Sardar raised protest against the appointment of more than seven representatives. obviously your representative's name would vanish. Only those persons could be in the list of the Sardar who could work as part of a team. Having this fact in view, I wrote a letter to you that you were safe because the Sardar would not protest if his purpose was served, and the Thakore Saheb would keep your name intact. The only meaning of my promise was that the Sardar would not raise any protest if his purpose was served. Where had I any authority to give a promise to others which would carry a meaning contrary to the above?[2]

It appears to me to be quite clear as daylight that, if your representative is not prepared to work as one team, it would be very clear to you that he cannot be included in the list of the Sardar. Therefore, if you intend to have your representative included in the

[1] In this. the addressee, President of the Kutch-Kathiawar-Gujarat Garasia Association, had said: ". . . You were firm in your opinion that one of the Bhayats can remain as a member of the Committee only if he works in team with Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel. If we agree to it, we lose our right to an independent vote, and no one who has got self-respect can agree to this suggestion. You have given us a promise to give one seat to the Bhayats without any condition. We strongly believe that there is no other meaning to it, and we still hold this view. If a Bhayat of Rajkot is not appointed on the Committee, the Bhayats have decided to offer satyagraha, and, the Rajkot Bhayats' Garasia Samaj being part of the Kutch-Kathiawar-Gujarat Association, we shall have to uphold the decision of the central body, and in that contingency, we fear the situation in Rajkot will become worse. . ." According to the source, an English translation of the Gujarati correspondence between Gandhiji and the addressee was "released to the Press on behalf of the Garasia Association".

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Garasias" 13-4-1939

Committee, you should request the Thakore Saheb to do so, and I have already written to him a letter[1] . As a friend I tell you that your threat about agitaion and satyagraha, etc., is out of place.[2]

The Hindu, 18-4-1939

337. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS [3]

April 15, 1939

There has been for me unusual delay in sending on behalf of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel names of seven representatives to sit on the Reforms Committee in terms of the Thakore Saheb's Notification of December 26 last and in terms of the Chief Justice's Award. The delay shows the measure of my anxiety as well as Sardar Patel's to include in the list the Thakore Saheb's four nominees whose names he had published in his now defunct Notification of 21st January last. In accordance with the Award his nominees automatically dropped out, but the Thakore Saheb could have retained them with the co-operation of Sardar Patel. My first act on arrival in Rajkot on the 9th was to offer to His Highness in writing the Sardar's co-operation in retaining the names. To my regret and to my astonishment the offer was summarily rejected. The public knows from the Thakore Saheb's reply, which was handed to the Press on his behalf, in what terms it was rejected. He has allowed to be inferred that the Award left no scope for increasing the number of members of the Committee. On the face of it this is not right. With mutual consent there is ample scope for adjustment. The Thakore Saheb is not bound by the Award not to increase or even decrease the number on the Committee, if in wanting to do so he secures the Sardar's co-operation.

When this unfortunate decision became known to me, with the fullest co-operation of the Sardar I set about exploring means of accommodating at least two Muslim representatives and one Bhayat representative among the seven. This could not be done unless they could see their way to agree to work as one team with the Sardar's other nominees. If this condition could not be fulfilled, the very object of giving the Sardar, *i.e.*, the Parishad, the right to select all the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dharmendrasinh", 14-4-1939

[2] According to the source, "in the course of a lengthy reply" the addressee "asserted that Gandhiji's promise to give one seat to the Bhayats was unconditional."

[3] This is extracted from "Rajkot Events". The statement appeared in *The Hindustan Times* and *The Hindu* on April 16.

seven members could be easily frustrated. But in spite of making all efforts it was humanly possible both for the Sardar and me to make, we failed and, therefore, the public will find that all the four nominees of the Thakore Saheb have been omitted.

This, however, does not mean that the Committee will not represent all interests that could have been covered by the four nominees and several other interests, not specifically represented, for I have not known a single such committee in the world which could cover specifically and sectionally all imaginable interests. The very essence of democracy is that every person represents all the varied interests which compose the nation. It is true that it does not exclude, and should not exclude, special representation of special interests, but such representation is not its test. It is a sign of its imperfection.

I do not claim perfection for the Rajkot committee, but any attempt on the part of the Sardar to accommodate all the special interests,without the indispensable safeguard that I have suggested, would have failed to produce a constitution which could be satisfactorily worked in the interests of the whole of the people of Rajkot. I venture to suggest that the Sardar's nominees have been selected after fulfilling the first indispensable condition of team-work, so that they would all make a conscientious effort to represent each in his own person the whole of the interests of the people of Rajkot. Therefore, it will be doubly the duty of the seven members to safeguard and protect all the special and legitimate rights of the Muslims, the Bhayats and the Harijans of the Rajkot State.

As to the Harijan representation, I may say that Shri Mohan Mandan, the fourth nominee of the Thakore Saheb, an estimable citizen of Rajkot though he is, is in no sense a Harijan any more than the seven nominees whose names have now been submitted to the Thakore Saheb on behalf of the Sardar.

The Garasia Association has accused me in forcible language of a breach of promise in excluding their representative from the list of seven. All I can say is that they have hopelessly misread and misunderstood my letter[1] of March 11. I do not propose at present to go into the immediate circumstance in which I hastily penned my reply to their note, but it has got to be read in conjunction with the

[1] *Vide* footnote 3, "Letter to Garasias", 13-4-1939

statement[1] with which I left Wardha on what I have described as a mission of peace. I then stated, as an indispensable condition of acceptance of any permutation and combination that might be offered for the composition of the Committee, that on it Sardar's nominees should have at least a bare majority of one. The letter of March 11 has got to be read together with that condition. Nothing whatsoever happened on March 11 to make me waive that condition.

Assuming for the moment that I forgot to incorporate the condition in my letter, the Garasia friends would be expected to read my letter with the missing condition. But I go a step further, that to read into my letter the meaning that the Garasia Association gives it, is to frustrate the very object which was sought to be secured by the Thakore Saheb's letter to the Sardar. With the meaning that he attached to it and which meaning the Chief Justice's Award has fully upheld, I had no right to throw away that precious right. I should be guilty of a breach of trust if I did so. It should be remembered that the fast was taken for the purpose of vindicating the Sardar's position and, therefore, if you like, to repair the breach of faith which I had imputed to the Thakore Saheb. The Award has done it. Is it to be expected that at a time when I was proceeding to Delhi in the full expectation of the Sardar's contention being upheld, I was to undo in advance the effect of such a happy termination of the Delhi visit? I have more than fulfilled my promise contained in my letter of March 11 addressed to the Garasia Association by offering to reduce to one the majority of four which the Award gives to the Sardar's nominees. I think I deserved better treatment from the Association. All their appeal should have been to the Thakore Saheb to seize the opportunity given by me of rehabilitating his nominees. Instead of choosing that obvious course, they have chosen the wrong course. I have reminded the Garasias that, when I returned from my self-imposed exile, at the end of 1914, I gave them ample proof of my friendship and concern for them. They had first met me in Bhavnagar. Since then they have been off and on seeking my guidance and advice. Many of them know that it has been always at their disposal. But no mischief is yet done. As I have said, they may rest assured that all their just rights will be respected by the Sardar's nominees.

Harijan, 22-4-1939

[1]*Vide* "Letters From Subhas Chandra Bose", 29-3-1939

338. TELEGRAM TO A. I. KAJEE[1]

April 16, 1939

KAJEE
DURBANSUB
SUGGESTION DIFFICULT. WHOLE THING DEPENDS YOUR EFFORT.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarel al Papers . Courte sy : Nation al Archiv es of India

339. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

RAJKOT,
April 16, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

As I know that you were in possession of my letter[2] of yesterday to the Thakore Saheb, I gave myself time to write to you informing you of my having sent the letter. It has been a most anxious and taxing time for me. I have been experiencing difficulties I had little thought of. But of this when the proper time comes.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 10177. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

340. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO RANJITSINH[3]

April 16, 1939

What I have written has been written as a duty. There is not the slightest intention to throw off my responsibility in writting that I am working on behalf of Sardar Patel. I, however, showed the legal position. It did not at all mean that I was in the least prevented by the

[1] This was in reply to a telegram of May 11, 1939, from Mr. Kajee, Secretary of the South African Indian Congress and Natal Indian Congress, requesting Gandhiji to appeal to General Herzog and General Smuts to postopone the Asiatics (Transvaal Land and Trading) Bill and agree to a Round Table Conference.

[2] presumably, a reference to the letter dated April 14; *vide* "Letter to Dharmendrasinh", 14-4-1939

[3] According to the source, this was in reply to the addressee's letter dated April 15; *vide* footnote 3, "Statement to the Press", 15-4-1939

Sardar. The use of the word 'trustee' only meant that I cannot give a promise beyond my authority.

You have written also about other matters to which it is possible to reply, but I did not wish to take your time. A time will come when you will agree that, in whatever I have written or said, there is no breach of promise, nor any disregard for your comrades. The words which you put in the mouth of the Sardar are nothing but an illusion[1]. I have asked those who were present at that time. They heard like this: What guarantee can be believed regarding the rights of the Bhayats when the Paramount Power is investigating the rights of Princes?' The meaning was that there is no permanency of rights in respect of anyone. Therefore, when you have a guarantee from the Parishad, you should accept it. You have misconstrued also my innocent words at the end. But what wonder is there that words uttered by either of the parties are misconstrued when mutual confidence is lost?

The Hindu, 18-4-1939

341. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

April 16, 1939

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your letter. I learnt a great deal from my talk with Laithwaite. It is a difficult matter. I do not remember ever having gone through anything like what I am now experiencing. I am in the midst of a forest fire. I am being tested. It is good that Sardar is with me. I cannot say where I stand now and where I shall end up. The article in the *Statesman* has had a tremendous effect. You are going to join me in Calcutta. Why don't Durga and Bablo go to Simla? Will they come to Brindaban?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: Pyarel al Papers . Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y. Courte sy: Belade vi Nayyar and Dr. Sushil a Nayyar

[1] The source explains that the addressee had referred to "threats which Sardar Val-labhbhai Patel used to the Association's deputation in Gandhiji's presence on the 14th instant". Ranjitsinh had said: ". . . when Mr. Dhebar started to talk about the statement of the rights of Bhayats by the Durbar that such rights would be preserved, we told Mr. Dhebar that nobody can touch our rights. At that time Sardar Patel said, 'Who are they (Garasias and Bhayats) when the Rulers are made to bend down ?' "

342. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

April 16, 1939

What has hurt me most about this evening's demonstration[2] is that the demonstrators chose what was for me a solemn hour of the day. For years all India knows I have offered without practically a breach my evening prayers in open congregation. Why did thay seek my prayer time to molest me, and what had the numerous men, women and children, who at the end of the day had come to offer their humble prayers to the one and only God of us all, done to deserve such inter-ference? Why was it not enough, seeing that I do not go out except for prayers, to shout their slogans and wave black flags as I entered the prayer ground? Even that would have been bad enough. But they continued vigorously to shout their slogans throughout the prayers. And they were all my countrymen. Their cries pierced me like arrows whilst I was trying to concentrate my mind on the words of the prayers. I have not attained the power of meditation which makes one impervious to all disturbances from without. They knew that if they had invited me to attend their meeting in order to witness their hostile demonstration and their wrath, weak as I have been, I would have gone there and tried to appease them.

I maintain I have not committed any breach of promise. To my knowledge, throughout my public and private career, I have never broken a promise. Here the very motive for a breach of promise is lacking. But lest I might have made a promise, however hastily, which could bear another meaning than one I had put upon my letter to the Bhayats of March 11, I asked as many legal friends in Rajkot as I could get together and warned them to give their unbiased opinion and told them that their reputation would be lost if they sought to support without full cause my own reading of my letter. I have their reasoned and unanimous opinion in my possession, fully supporting my meaning to the exclusion of any other.

I fear the demonstrators have not served their cause by their unwarranted interference with the prayer of innocent men and women. There are tremendous difficulties in the way of getting due

[1] This is extracted from "Rajkot Events". The statement appeared in *The Hindustan Times* and *The Hindu* on April 17.

[2] For Pyarelal's account of the incident, *Vide* "The Way of Satyagraha"

fulfilment of the Award of the Chief Justice. I am not free to go into these difficulties at the present stage. But I appeal to those who feel grieved at my conduct in excluding certain names from the Sardar's list to bear with me. They may adopt all the just means to redress their grievances. The method they adopted today was very far from being just.

Harijan, 22-4-1939

343. UNHAPPY TRAVANCORE

The following is the substantial translation of the resolutions passed by the Working Committee of the Travancore State Congress in the first week of the month[1]:

> The working committee records its appreciation of the decision taken by the Acting President and the Council of Action to suspend civil disobedience pursuant to the advice[2] of Mahatma Gandhi. The working Committee desires to emphasize the need at this juncture for local and taluk committees to concentrate on the constructive work and strengthen the organizational side of the movement....
>
> Khadi: The working Committee appoints a sub-committee consisting of Sjts. Elankath Ramakrishna Pillai(Convener), G. Ramachandran and K. M. Bhoot-halingam Pillai to submit an exhaustive report on the facilities available in the State for the spinning and weaving of khadi and to submit a scheme for the same. This committee is further directed to choose and recommend further centres where work can be immediately commenced.
>
> Indigenous weaving: For the purpose of encouraging indigenous weaving (which is an important industry in the State), the Working Committee constitutes Sjts. R. Shankar (Convener), K.S. Thangal and M.G. Koshi as a sub-committee to submit scheme for the same.
>
> Official goondaism: The Working Committee view with deep concern the rowdyism that is being inspired to suppress the State Congress activities. The Committee recalls the hooliganism instigated by the police in the State Congress meetings during the months of May and June last year. Until the release of political prisoners in November last, State Congress meetings were sought to be prevented either by prohibitory orders or by hooliganism or by declaring the State Congress illegal. After the release, though numerous

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

[2] *Vide* "Statement Suspending Travancore Satyagraha", 23-3-1939

meetings were held before the middle of January, there were no disturbances whatever. In the mean time the Government began recruiting what is called the special police. These special policemen have no uniform and their pay was fixed at Rs. 5 per month. Towards the middle of January 1939, these special policemen commenced attending meetings at Neyyattinkara and Parurtaluks. These so-called policemen and the rowdies under them have since been endeavouring to break up State Congress meetings. . . . Even after annonucing on the 22nd the suspension of satya-graha,volunteer *jathas* and meetings for constructive work have been subjected to goondaism. . .

Exhortation to workers: Last November, when the political prisoners were released, it was believed that we had at least secured the liberty to hold public meetings. The present situation, however, is worse than what existed in August last when the State Congress was declared illegal. The committee deeply appreciates the firm faith in non-violence evinced by those who attended the recent State Congress meetings. This rowdyism is the result of the persistent policy of repression continued by Government even after the suspension of satyagraha. Not only is the Government unwilling to grant any of the demands of the State Congress but it is continuing to arrest State Congress workers on some pretext or other and endeavouring to obstruct even the carrying out of the constructive programme of the Congress. Whatever be the force of the repression and the extent of rowdyism that the Government may release, the State Congress will continue its work awaiting further instructions from Gandhiji. While protesting against the hooliganism inspired and encouraged by the Government the Committee exhorts the people to carry on the work of the Congress with courage and with non-violence.

I would like the workers to realize that events there have more than justified suspension of civil disobedience. The authorities have provided them with ample opportunity for the exercise of patience and restraint. They have also provided them with opportunity for suffering without civil disobedience. If, therefore, the workers can go through the ordeal without losing faith or heart and prosecute quietly and resolutely the constructive programme, swaraj will come automatically. This is a bold statement; some will call it ridiculous. Nevertheless it comes from the deepest conviction.

What worries me, however, is the statement in the concluding paragraph that “the State Congress will continue its work awaiting further instructions from Gandhiji.” This declaration of faith in me is both touching and embarrassing. Let the workers know that whilst my

advice and guidance are always at their disposal, I have no further instructions to give till new light dawns on me. I have prescribed a well-tried remedy. And I am quite capable of saying, "Go on repeating it, for it is never-failing.' I am not likely easily to advise resumption of civil disobedience. There is too much violence and untruth in the air to warrant resumption anywhere. And in the case of Travancore, as I have said resumption is superfluous.

With reference to the alleged goondaism by the State, the public are bound to put implicit faith in the allegations, unless there is an impartial inquiry made. Surely the mere denial by the authorities, no matter how often repeated, can carry no conviction. Nor will it serve the intended purpose if a local white-washing commission is appointed. Confidence can be restored and truth brought to light only if the inquiry is made by outside judges of unimpeachable impartiality.

RAJKOT, April 17, 1939

Harijan, 22-4-1939

344. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

RAJKOT,
April 17, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JEALGORA

YOUR LETTER WIRE[1]. PLEASE RETAIN DATE MEETING A. I. C. C. TWENTY-NINTH. SHALL ATTEND. IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME IMPOSE COMMITTEE ON YOU. IF YOU WILL FORM ONE LET A. I. C. C. DECIDE. COMPOSITE CABINET SEEMS TO ME IMPRACTICABLE. AS YOU HAVE LIFTED BAN SHALL TRY ISSUE PUBLIC STATEMENT IF I GET TIME. LOVE.[2]

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

[1] The addressee in his two communications of April 15 had said that he could not give effect to Gandhiji's advice regarding a homogeneous Cabinet and that the only alternative was for Gandhiji to nominate the Cabinet.

[2] The addressee's telegram of even date in reply to this read: "If you issue statement, kindly permit me release correspondence. My last letter posted fifteenth."

345. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

RAJKOT,
April 17, 1939

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
JULLUNDUR

THOUGH IN HELL FEEL GOD'S PRESENCE AND AM WELL. NO CAUSE ANXIETY. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3910. Courtesy; Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7219

346. DRAFT TELEGRAM TO S. SATYAMURTI[1]

April 17, 1939

SATYAMURTI, M..L.A.
NEW DELHI

AM AGAINST PROCLAIMING DAYS FOR GRIEVANCES.

GANDHI

From the original ; Pyarelal papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

347. LETTER TO RANJITSINH[2]

RAJKOT,
April 17, 1939

KUMAR SHRI RANJITSINHJI,

I have seen the handbill issued by the Rajkot Bhayats and Garasdars's Committee. The allegations made therein are serious. What has come to my notice is completely the reverse of it. There is only one solution for it. We both may appoint an arbitrator and obtain his decision on all complaints.

The object of my walking, instead of going in car, was plain, i.e., the processionists may have an opportunity to say and do what they might want to. In deciding to go on foot I was confident that they did not desire to cause any injury to my person. But, in case they were

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram dated April 16, seeking Gandhiji's blessings for observing May 14 as 'Kenya Day'.

[2] This appeared as "a correct rendering in English of the correspondence... in Gujarati". The superscription and the subscription are reproduced from *The Hindustan Times*.

inclined otherwise, I wanted them to feel that they had me wholly at their disposal.

There is no Congress here. There is only Praja Parishad. No handbill was issued by it. Of course, I have issued a public appeal[1] which is sent herewith[2].

Yours,

The Hindu, 19-4-1939; also *The Hindustan Times,* 19-4-1939

348. LETTER TO RANJITSINH

April 17, 1939

I notice in the papers that you intend to obtain the interpretation of my letter through the Chief Justice and that you have appealed to the Viceroy for it. I do not think that this is a fit case for the Chief Justice to be bothered with. Nor is there any room for persuasion on the part of the Viceroy in this behalf so far as I am concerned. If you people should desire it and the Chief Justice is agreeable, I, on my part, am always ready. My suggestion is that we may place this case before any Judge in Bombay. If reference to an arbitrator will satisfy you, I am quite game for it. But, there is one more condition and that is that, pending the reference to and decision by the arbitrator, the work of the Committee should not be held up. If your interpretation is accepted, I shall accept your representative by withdrawing one of the Sardar's nominees from the Committee.

[PS.]

While I was writing this letter, I received your second letter. The answer to it is included in the foregoing. But even if the Chief Justice takes up your reference, would it not be necessary to have an arbitrator to go into the allegations made in your handbill?[3]

The Hindu, 19-4-1939

[1] The reference is to Gandhiji's statement to the Press on the demonstration; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 16-4-1939

[2] For the addressee's reply, *vide* "Letter from Ranjitsinh", 17-4-1939

[3] In his letter of even date, the addressee acknowledged receipt of Gandhiji's "reply written in the afternoon to my letter of the morning" and thanked him"for agreeing to obtain the decision of an arbitrator". He informed Gandhiji that a telegram was sent to the Viceroy "to get this matter decided by Sir Maurice Gwyer". Ranjitsinh also assured Gandhiji : ". . . I am taking steps for cessation of all kinds of demonstration started by Bhayats against you."

349. LETTER TO RANJITSINH[1]

RAJKOT,
April 17, 1939

KUMAR SHREE RANJITSINHJI,

I have received your letter. May a misunderstanding never arise between us hereafter. As soon as I saw in the papers I decided to write[2] to you that if you would be satisfied by the appointment of an arbitrator there could possibly be no objection to it on my part.

I suggest that we may select for the purpose some Judge in Bombay. I have no objection against the Chief Justice, but I am not prepared to give him all this trouble. It seems to me to be improper. That means that if you persist in it, you have to obtain his consent.

Whoever is appointed as arbitrator, my condition should not be forgotten. The Committee's work should not be held up till the arbitrator's decision.

You have not replied to my other request[3], viz., that we should obtain an arbitrator's decision on the allegations made in your today's handbill.

Yours,

The Hindu, 19-4-1939; also *The Hindustan Times,* 19-4-1939

350. LETTER TO M. VISVESVARAYA

RAJKOT,
April 17, 1939

DEAR SIR VISVESVARAYA[4]

Perhaps you will like to read the enclosed. It was so good of you to respond to the call of poor Orissa.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 10211. Courtesy: Government of Mysore

[1] This appeared as "a correct rendering in English of the correspondence... in Gujarati". The superscription and the subscription are reproduced from *The Hindustan Times*.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] *Vide* postscript to the preceding item.

[4] Dewan of Mysore State, 1912-18

351. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

RAJKOT,
April 17, 1939

CHI. NARAHARI,

I don't get a single minute free. I am writing this in the "library'.

Ramji's letter is enclosed.

Qureshi's salary may be raised. It would not be right for Sardar to pay his debt. That will not be to his good either. Let him give up other activities and mind the store only and pay off his debt. According to me he will be doing public service and will be contributing to Hindu-Muslim unity even by doing that. It wouldn't be desirable that he should become altogether dependent on others. You may show all this to him. If, however, you yourself hold a different view, please let me know.

You must take whatever freedom may be necessary for your health. Why not consult the vaid who is treating Vasumati? Sometimes the remedies of such vaids succeed. Consult Dinshaw also. Don't be negligent about regaining your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9117

352. TELEGRAM TO RANJITSINH

[After *April 17, 1939*][1]

IF SIR MAURICE GWYER CONSENTS TO ARBITRATE I AM WILLING.

The Hindu, 2-5-1939

353. THE TRAGEDY OF TALCHER

The reader will recall the twenty to twenty-five thousand refugees of Talcher State in Orissa[2]. They are, living under great difficulties in the forests of Angul in British Orissa. I rely upon these figures because they are vouched for by Thakkar Bapa and Shri Harekrushna Mahtab. Both of them have a reputation to lose. Moreover Thakkar Bapa is purely a humanitarian and social reformer of long standing. He does not dabble in politics.

[1] Inferred from the reference to Maurice Gwyer; *vide* letters to the addressee, The telegram appeared under the date-line "Rajkot, May I".

[2] *Vide* "Interview to Deputation of Victualers Association", 2-6-1939

Only a few days ago it was announced in the Press that a settlement had been arrived at and that the refugees were about to return to their homes. This news was immediately contradicted and it was stated that the Raja of Talcher had refused to honour the pact entered into by Major Hennessey, Assistant Political Agent for Orissa States North.

This was the pact signed on 21st March last:

1. Reduction of the Miscellaneous Cess from five annas to three annas per rupee of rent, and an undertaking that after the settlement to be started about next November, the combined rent and cesses will not be higher than the Angul rent and cesses with the same classes of land.

2. The abolition of monopolies on the necessaries of life except hides, skins, horns, *ganja*, opium, bhang and liquors.

3. State administrative machinery should not be used for enforcing fines, etc., levied by Ecclesiastical Courts and Panchayats.

4. Compulsory labour (*bethi*) should be abolished except when necessary for public purposes and then on payment of wages at ordinary rates.

5. The abolition of special taxes (poll-tax) on industrial castes.

6. There should be no victimization of refugees on their return to the States.

7. Constitutional Reforms enabling the people to participate in the administration through their representatives will be introduced as soon as the schemes are approved by the Political Department.

8. There shall be no interference with freedom of speech and meeting provided that there is nothing subversive or disloyal to the Ruler or his administration in those speeches or meetings.

9. People should be allowed to kill wild animals in the State on their own property without any penalties or fees.

There were present at the time Major Hennessey, F.R.S.A., I.A., BAR-AT-LAW, Major Gregory of the Military Intelligence Department, Shri Harekrushna Mahtab, Adjutant Woods of the Salvation Army, and the Revenue Commissioner representing the Orissa Government.

Major Hennessey, I understand from Thakkar Bapa, was quite confident that he had the authority of the Raja of Talcher to sign the pact. How the Raja can now refuse to endorse it is difficult to understand.

But the mystery deepens when on recalls the terms of the *sanad* under which the Raja holds Talcher. Here are the relevant clauses of

the *sanad* issued to the small Orissa States by the present Viceroy on 26th February 1937 :

> 3. That you shall do your utmost to suppress crime of all kinds in your State.
>
> 4. That you shall administer justice fairly and impartially to all alike.
>
> 5. That you shall recognize and maintain the rights of all your people and on no account oppress, or suffer them in and way to be oppressed, and that, in particular, you shall charge yourself personally with the welfare of the aboriginal population of your State.
>
> 6. That you shall act in accordance with such advice as may be given to you by the Agent to the Governor-General, Eastern States, or such other Political Officer as may be vested with authority in this behalf by H. E. the Viceroy.

Under Clause 6 of the *sanad* the Raja is bound to act in accordance with such advice as may be given to him "by the Agent to the Governor-General, Eastern States, or such other Political Officer as may be vested with authority in this behalf by H. E. the Viceroy".

The Raja has therfore no option but to carry out the wishes of the Assistant Political Agent. The question is, why is there all this delay in carrying out the pact? The interests of over 20,000 refugees living on sparse food and practically without shelter are at stake. Delay is not only dangerous; it is criminal.

RAJKOT, April 18, 1939

Harijan, 22-4-1939

354. TELEGRAM TO LORD LINLITHGOW

RAJKOT,
April 18, 1939

MAY I REMIND YOU OF 20,000 TALCHER REFUGEES ?[1]

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy; National Archives of India

[1] The Viceroy's reply dated April 25 read: ". . . I am . . . most anxious to see a satisfactory solution . . . without delay, and all possible assistance is being given by my representatives in securing this." *Vide* also the preceding item.

355. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

RAJKOT,
April 18, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JEALGORA

CERTAINLY PUBLISH CORRESPONDENCE[1] WHICH WOULD RENDER STATEMENT UNNECESSARY. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

356. TELEGRAM TO MULKRAJ

RAJKOT,
April 18, 1939

MULKRAJ
JALLIANWALABAGH MEMORIAL FUND
AMRITSAR

INVEST AT ONCE BANKS RECOMMEDED[2] AT THEIR RATE.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

357. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

RAJKOT,
April 18, 1939

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I get your letter; but how can you know my predicament? How do you expect me to send you a telegram, send you some [note], when I cannot even go to sleep till 1 o'clock at night. Others do not expect such things from me.

Why should I have to worry over your fast? You began it in the name of God. He was watching over you. Was that not enough?

I am reasonably well. Some discomfort is there but I keep cheerful. The rest from Sushila's letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 417

[1] *Vide* footnote 2, "Telegram to Amrit Kaur", 17-4-1939
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Mulkraj", 5-4-1939

358. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

RAJKOT,
April 19, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JEALGORA

LEAVING DEFINITELY TWENTY-FOURTH. REACHING CALCUTTA TWENTY-SEVENTH MORNING. MIGHT STAY AT SODEPUR. HEMPRABHA DEVI HAS ALWAYS INSISTED. DR. ROY HAD ANOTHER SUGGESTION FROM MEDICAL STANDPOINT. SINCE YESTERDAY AM LAID UP WITH FEVER WHICH IS INCREASING. HOPE IT WILL BE UNDER CONTROL BEFORE DEPARTURE. DESPITE MANY SUGGESTIONS CONTAINED IN YOUR LETTERS FEEL HELPLESS CARRY OUT TERMS PANT'S RESOLUTION IN THIS ATMOSPHERE OF MUTUAL DISTRUST SUSPICION AND IN FACE OF MARKED DIFFERENCES OF OPINION BETWEEN GROUPS. I STILL MAINTAIN YOU SHOULD BOLDLY FORM COMMITTEE. IT WOULD BE UNFAIR TO YOU WITH THE VIEWS YOU HOLD. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

359. TELEGRAM TO YESHWANTRAO HOLKAR

RAJKOT,
April 19, 1939

MAHARAJASAHEB HOLKAR
INDORE

HAD LONG CHAT WITH ADC LAST NIGHT. GAVE HIM PERSONAL LETTER. THANKS FOR SENDING HIM.

From a Copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

360. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
April 19, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

I am lying on my back with severe headache and slight temperature which has up to now been diagnosed as gastric flu which seems to be raging about in Rajkot and especially in the house in which I am accommodated.

I came here on the 9th instant. It is the 19th today. A matter which need not have taken more than a day has taken ten days. Unfortunately, we hold different view about the cause. I become confirmed in my opinion that Durbar Virawala is at the back of all this delay. I have proof enough which may not hold water in a court of law but it is enough for all practical purposes and certainly enough for me. I have no grudge against Durbar Virawala. I would love to convert him. It would be a triumph of non-violence if I could do so. And I could, if I had your active co-operation. But I know you cannot give it so long as you hold the very high opinion you do of his ability, efficiency and straight forwardness.

I send you herewith copy of the latest letter[1] from the Thakore Saheb. It speaks for itself. If the proposition laid down in the letter were to be acted upon, there would never be a committee formed in terms of the Award of the Chief Justice of India. The whole plan laid out in Delhi bids fair to be completely frustrated if you, as the local representative of the Paramount Power, do not actively intervene. I invite your attention to the fact that in the Thakore Saheb's letter to the Sardar dated the 12th January four out of the seven names were accepted. In an Appendix to the voluminous papers attached to the Thakore Saheb's case, signed by Durbar Virawala as his political adviser, occurs the analysis of all the seven names recommended by the Sardar. Only two have been objected to because of their residential disqualification. How is it that now suddenly the qualifications of all but one have been challenged? And if I am to bear the burden that is sought to be placed upon me, there will be no end to the preliminaries and there will be no enquiry.

I do not like the idea of troubling you or seeking the intervention of the Paramount Power. But I see there is no way out of

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, "Letter to Chandan Parekh", 14-4-1939

the difficulty.

The Bhayats and Garasias Association has also taken up what I consider to be a most unreasonable attitude. As soon as I read in the papers that they wanted my so-called promise to be submitted to impartial scrutiny, I wrote[1] at once accepting the proposal. But as I sensed danger of interminable delay I said the proceedings ought not to interfere with the Committee's work and that if their contention was upheld, the Bhayats' nominee would immediately be accepted and one name withdrawn. The Association, however, would not listen to my proposal. They would hold up the formation of the Committee till the Judge was selected and his award was available. Acceptance of my proposal would not have resulted in the Committee functioning before the award but it would certainly have resulted in the case being decided expeditiously enough. I have given the opinion that the Chief Justice of India ought not to be troubled over the issue though I should have no objection to Sir Maurice adjudicating if the Government of India could be induced to invite him to do so and if he accepted the invitation. I have suggested instead a Judge of the Bombay High Court. I have no doubt that you could manage this thing easily. I suppose the Judge could fly here tomorrrow or the day after. I have not much to submit to him nor can the Bhayats have much either. The Judge need not take long to give his judgement. What I fear and suspect is that there is no desire anywhere to play the game. You do not mind my thinking aloud before you. I would be less than just to you if I suppressed my innermost thoughts whilst I looked up to you as the local Crown Representative to see that the Committee was properly set up and its work proceeded with, smoothly and without delay.

I must leave Rajkot on the 24th instant by the 1.10 afternoon train and hasten to Calcutta, thence to Brindaban. I would return here at the earliest possible moment which cannot be before the 7th proximo. Meanwhile Shri Dhebarbhai will be acting on my behalf. But I hope that during the five days that I am here, much work will have been done.

May I remind you that my fast was only suspended and if all my efforts fail and no headway is made I must resume it? It won't be without serious reflection. I do not want to do so. I have not the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Ranjitsinh", 17-4-1939

physical energy for it. But a peremptory call of duty knows no mundane difficulty. The matter is so serious that I would like you to convey at least the substance of this letter to His Excellency. I am loath to interfere with his much-needed rest. If you think that there is substance in my complaint and that you have the will and the powers to deal with it I would much rather that His Excellency were kept undisturbed.

Of course I am at your disposal, if you think that a personal talk is necessary; in that case you need not mind my fever. I will come. I have an appointment with Dr. Ambedkar for half past eleven.

For the moment I am not replying to the Thakore Saheb's letter[1].

From a copy: C.W. 7820. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

361. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
April 19, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

Thank you for your prompt reply. My fever is still rising. Therefore I must not rebel against the good doctor. The fever went up to 101.2 at half past twelve. I shall therefore hope to call on you tomorrow at 2 p. m., if that hour is convenient.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C. W. 10179. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

[1] The addressee, in his reply of even date, said: "I am very sorry indeed to hear that you are ill . . . of gastric flu. . . I know how trying they are . . . I shall be very glad to have a talk with you. . . Any time that suits you will suit me (preferably not between 5 and 7 p.m.) but I hope you won't think of coming unless your doctors approve" (C. W. 10180).

362. TELEGRAM TO VIRCHAND PANACHAND SHAH[1]

RAJKOT,
April 20, 1939

VIRCHAND PANACHAND
PARISHAD
JAMNAGAR

SORRY. SUFFER SILENTLY WITHOUT IRRITATION ALL REPRESSION. NO PARISHAD IN THIS CONDITION.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

363. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
April 20, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

This is the offer which you admitted as sporting, and which I made at our interview. I must confess that it was born of despair. I am tired of fighting unseen forces in Rajkot—a situation I have never been obliged to face throughout my life. The offer is that Parishad should withdraw from the proposed committee altogether and that the Thakore Saheb should nominate his own committee in terms of the Notification, that this committee should be formed at once and should present its report to the Thakore Saheb within one month and four days from its formation.

If the Constitution that will be framed by the committee is not in terms of the Notification, the Rajkot Rajya Praja Parishad, represented by the seven nominees, should have the right to dissent from it and the Committee's report, and the dissenting report should be submitted to the Chief Justice of India as if the Parishad was represented on the Committee in terms of the Award.

I had expected to send the note at once but as I told you my offer might create consternation among the Parishad people and so it did. The method I have adopted is a novel method. As I said in my

[1] This was in reply to a telegram of even date from the addressee, who had informed Gandhiji of the situation in Jamnagar.

letter[1] of yesterday, the Parishad was entitled to have the terms of the Chief Justice's Award enforced by the Paramount Power. The suffocating atmosphere made me suddenly think of the drastic remedy I suggested to you. The offer I made to you carried no reservation but I did not want to do violence to my colleagues and therefore I gave time for discussion, telling them that it was open to them to repudiate my offer, for I had no such absolute powers as I arrogated to myself during our talk. I could have said, though I felt like it when making the offer I did, I should consult my colleagues before I gave my final word. I did not feel like taking that precaution. Such was the strength of my conviction as to the correctness of the position I took up. There seemed to me no way out of the hopeless unreality of the situation. I am happy to be able to say that my colleagues, though they are filled with grave doubts, recognize the correctness of the position.[2]

From a copy: C. W. 10182. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

364. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
April 21, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

I have just received your note for which many thanks. I am not aware of any amplification unless you regard the deprivation of Parishad representation as such.

Of course I shall be glad to meet D. S. Virawala whenever he has time to come to me. Perhaps you and he desire that we three should meet. I am willing anyway.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C. W. 10184. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. C. Gibson", 19-4-1939

[2] In his reply dated April 21, the addressee said: ". . . you have given in fuller detail and with certain amplifications the proposal which you outlined at the time of our discussion yesterday . . ." *Vide* also the following item.

365. TELEGRAM TO MULKRAJ

RAJKOT,
April 22, 1939

SECRETARY
JALLIANWALABAGH MEMORIAL FUND
AMRITSAR

ONE LAC FIFTY THOUSAND CENTRAL REST PUNJAB NATIONAL SIX MONTHS[1].

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

366. TELEGRAM TO MULKRAJ [2]

RAJKOT,
April 22, 1939

SECRETARY
JALLIANWALABAGH [MEMORIAL FUND]
AMRITSAR

I APPROVE.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

367. STATEMENT TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA [3]

April 22, 1939

We had a friendly conversation and lot of ground was covered. We discussed several proposals.

The Hindustan Times, 23-4-1939

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Mulkraj", 5-4-1939 and "Telegram to Mulkraj", 18-4-1939

[2] This was in reply to a telegram of even date from the addressee, who had proposed some arrangement for the reinvestment of the Fund. *Vide* also the preceding item.

[3] According to the source, Gandhiji gave this statement "on behalf of himself and Virawala", after their discussion in the "evening". *Vide* also the two following items.

368. ABSTRACT OF LETTER TO VIRAWALA

[*April 23, 1939*][1]

Mahatma Gandhi, in a letter to Mr. Virawala, declines to have the Reforms Committee elected on the basis suggested by Mr. Virawala.

In the course of his letter, Mahatma Gandhi points out that if four out of the seven seats are reserved for certain communities, then the present majority would be converted into a minority.[2]

The Hindu, 24-4-1939

369. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

RAJKOT,
April 23, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

I had full five hours' discussion yesterday with Durbar Shri Virawala and the enclosed rejection of my sporting offer is the result. The Parishad Committee hangs in the air. And the formation of the committee promises to be still further delayed pending the investigation of the meaning of my promise so-called, whereas my consent to the reference to arbitration is conditional upon the formation of the committee not being delayed.

I take it that if the question of determining the meaning of the expression "State subjects" is referred to the Judicial Commissioner the reference will be shown to my representative Shri Dhebarbhai and that the Parishad will have the right, if necessary, to be represented by

[1] Inferred from the addressee's reply to this letter published in the source.

[2] The source added that, in his reply, the addressee said: "I have received your letter of today's date, from which it is clear that the proposal discussed last night, which was based on the principle that the members of the Reforms committee should be elected, is not acceptable to you. . . Thakore Saheb feels that it is impossible to accept the other proposal which we discussed (the reference here is to Gandhiji's proposal that the Thakore Saheb should nominate his own Committee and that the Rajkot Praja Parishad, as represented by Sardar Patel's nominees, should have the right of submitting a dissenting report, if necessary, to the Chief Justice of India) . . . His Highness has sent the statement showing reasons for eligibility of six persons proposed on the committee. . . for examination; and if . . . any doubt exists, the matter will be referred, as agreed by you, to the Judicial commissioner of Western India States Agency. . . . "*Vide* also the following item.

counsel. All this need not be necessary if the pure legal point is referred to the Judicial Commissioner on a joint statement of the case.

Lastly, the question of remission of fines, etc., still remains and is passed over.[1]

Yours sincerely,

[PS.]

I take it that the correspondence between us may be released for publication.

From a copy: C. W. 10185. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

370. SPEECH AT PRAJA PARISHAD WORKERS' MEETING, RAJKOT[2]

April 23, 1939

As you know for the last fifteen days I have striven hard to find a solution to the Rajkot tangle. But I am sorry to have to confess to you that in this I have failed. I am most grieved over our failure to arrive at a settlement with the Bhayats and the Mussalmans. But I have the conviction, and I want you to share that conviction with me, that our labour has not been wasted. Providence has its appointed hour for everything. We cannot command results ; we can only strive. And so far as I am concerned it is enough satisfaction for me to know that I have striven my utmost to dicharge the duty that rested on me.

In making my 'sporting offer' to Mr. Gibson yesterday[3], I know I was making a big surrender; I could have demanded that the Thakore Saheb be made to implement his promise in full, and if I had insisted on it, the Paramount Power would have probably been forced to intervene.

But I felt that such a course, though legitimate, would under the circumstances not be the best course for any of the parties concerned.

[1] *Vide* also the two preceding items.

[2] This appeared under the title "Heart-searching" in *Harijan*, which reported only "a gist of Gandhiji's talk" at the meeting held in the evening. The *Harijan* version used here has been collated with the Gujarati test published in *Harijanbandhu.*

[3] *Harijanbandhu* has "day before yesterday". However, Gandhiji appears to have made the "sporting offer" at an interview with Gibson in the evening of April 20. *Vide* footnote on "Letter to E. C. Gibson", 19-4-1939; also "Letter to E. C. Gibson", 20-4-1939

And so I chose instead the alternative of putting your head into the lap of the 'enemy'.

Let me explain to you the working of my mind in making that offer. I hold it to be an axiomatic truth that true ahimsa never fails to impress itself on the opponent. If it does, to that extent it is imperfect. All the time that I have been engaged in the Rajkot question, this question has been forcing itself upon me: 'Why has our ahimsa failed to gain recognition from the State authorities ?' In South Africa whatever the Indians had won as a result of satyagraha did not leave any ill-feeling behind it. For eight long years General Smuts fought uncompromisingly against the claims of the Indian community. But in the end he recognized the justice of the claims and became my lifelong friend. He helped me a great deal even in London during the Round Table conference and had he his way he would have helped me to get everything. When the final settlement was arrived at in South Africa he had said: "I on my part had inflicted severe hardships on Gandhi's men but they had borne them silently. How long could I inflict severities on such people ?"

Do not believe that it is more difficult to win over Virawala than it was to win over General Smuts. Time and again the question arises in my mind: 'Why should what was possible in South Africa be not possible here? Why can't Virawala say the same thing which General Smuts had said?' What was possible in South Africa should be possible in Rajkot too. There we were a handful of Indians pitted against the entire Boer population. Here numbers are on your side. There our fight was against a Government and the governments are always fettered by rigidity. But here you have only to gain entrance into the heart of one man. Surely there must be something seriously wrong about us and our ahimsa if we cannot do even that. I want you to put your supreme effort into this. To say that there can be no peace in Rajkot so long as Durbar Virawala is there, is to speak not the language of ahimsa but of *himsa*. The attribute of ahimsa is to run straight into the mouth *himsa*. If the cows had wisdom they would in full understanding run straight into the mouth of a lion and if they did so it is possible that the lion would lose the taste for cow's flesh.

I have been holding a silent court of enquiry within myself. How is it that I came to Rajkot on a mission of peace but have ended by antagonizing Durbar Virawala and the State authorities? I had banked upon the ancestral family relationship existing between me

and the Thakore Saheb, but instead I had to seek the intervention of the Paramount Power. 'What a lapse from grace is this?' I said to myself. I feel crestfallen and humbled. Should I absolve the Paramount Power altogether from its promise? Or should I confess my folly from the house-tops? I have been thinking furiously on these lines. But my self-confidence seems to have deserted me for the moment. However, I leave the thoughts with you for what they are worth to ponder and think over. Capacity to convert the heart of Durbar Virawala is the acid test of your ahimsa as it is of mine.

The discovery I have made after introspection is this. No matter what concessions you succeed in getting from the State authorities, it is only to the extent they are the result of a true heart-conversion on their part that you will be able to enjoy or digest them. But if you wish to launch a successful satyagraha to win your rights, your speech must improve. If you do so, your actions and general behaviour will take a different form. Ahimsa is not the weapon of the coward. It is the highest manly effort. It is the dharma of the brave. If you wish to be a satyagrahi you should get rid of ignorance, indolence and the like. You must cultivate constant vigilance. There should not be any trace of inertia in you. Only then can ahimsa function. When you have imbibed true ahimsa, your speech, action and general behaviour will reflect love and willy-nilly your enemies will have to recognize it.

Let me explain my meaning further by an illustration. Yesterday I was engaged for five hours in a talk with Durbar Virawala. He was the same as before. But I had gone there with the dawn of a fresh spirit, as a result of my heart-searching, upon me. My reaction to him this time was different. 'We are after all what nature has made us, and it is no use quarrelling with nature', I said to myself, and I tried to get as much as I could to get under his skin, to view questions from his own angle. I did not mince matters and even told him some home truths. Gently, in my own language, I gave him a glimpse of his crookedness. But there was no irritation on my part or resentment on his. It was a different atmosphere. He said: " It is my bad luck that I cannot convince you of my inability to give you more than this". I replied; " I agree that I am prejudiced against you. I am afraid of you. But I am prepared to be locked up with you in a room till we arrive at unanimity Please remove my fears." Khan Saheb Fateh Mohammad Khan was also present on the occasion. He also joined the discussion and pressed Durbar Virawala somehow or other " to find a solution for the agitation. People are tired of it."

I have not the time to share with you all the pleasant recollections of this interview. But there was one thing in this interview that galled me and to which I draw your attention. He had an unmixed contempt for the Parishad people. I had noticed that before too but I had laughed it away. But now it hurt me. Why should your satyagraha excite his contempt of all things? I can understand ahimsa inspiring a kind of fear, the sort of fear that a mother feels when her child gets offended and goes to sleep hungry. But genuine satyagraha should never excite contempt in the opponent even when it fails to command regard or respect. This is not super-refinement on my part. Satyagraha is nothing if not a ceaseless quest after perfection. A satyagrahi therefore turns the searchlight inward relentlessly to weed-out the defects that may be lying hidden there still. Thereby he increases his capacity to serve the cause he has espoused a thousand fold.

Tell me if this definition of ahimsa is beyond you and you are free to choose your own path. I will render all possible help from outside.

I have asked you always to rely upon your own inner strength instead of banking upon outside help. But I now want you to go a step further and wish to see a different kind of strength in you. you must now cease to look for guidance from without. Satyagraha should become to you an independent inspiration. It should be intolerable for you and me both that you should depend in every little thing on my advice. I am therefore going away, throwing the whole burden on you. You must make a firm resolve that you will now arrive at a settlement according to your inner light and conviction and that, too, with Durbar Virawala, not without him. Now you will have to make your choice between ahimsa and *himsa.* You may drop ahimsa if you find that it does not suit you or is likely to make cowards of you. I only wish that you should never become cowards. It is possible that some day you will come to learn pure ahimsa from disciplined *himsa*. But it is a dangerous condition if you, like Trishanku, keep on hanging in mid air between *himsa* and ahimsa. The country is also faced with this same problem as you are. You should solve it for yourself immediately. If you cling to ahimsa, that ahimsa should not be the one bequeathed by me but should orginate from independent inspiration. But if you decide to follow the path of ahimsa, then you should know that it will be an empty name unless it aims at the conversion of the heart of the opponent.

Let me offer you a few concrete suggestion in this connection. If you accept the approach that I have indicated, I would like all the seven of you, whom the Sardar has nominated, to go to Durbar Virawala and tell him that you have decided to relieve me of all responsibility in connection with Rajkot, that you would also like to relieve the Paramount Power too of its responsibility in this behalf and rely instead entirely on your capacity to induce him to implement the Notification of December 26. Ask him to tell you as to what you should do to win his heart. Hold yourself in readiness to drain to the last the bitter cup of personal indignities and humiliations. It was only when I had learnt to reduce myself to a zero that I was able to evolve the power of satyagraha in south Africa.

Ahimsa must express itself through acts of selfless service of the masses. I cannot think of a better symbol of it or medium for its expression than the spinning-wheel.

Ahimsa is a science. The word 'failure' has no place in the vocabulary of science. Failure to obtain the expected result is often the precursor to further discoveries. It is in that spirit that you should approach and pursue your present mission.

Harijan, 6-5-1939, and *Harijanbandhu*, 14-5-1939

371. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

RAJKOT,
April 24, 1939

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
JULLUNDUR CITY

GOING TODAY CALCUTTA[1] WITH BA VIA BOMBAY. BOTH TOLERABLY WELL. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3911. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7220

[1] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, Mirabehn explains that Gandhiji was going to Calcutta "for negotiations with Fazlul Haq's Ministry with regard to the political prisoners who had been put in jail under the Bengal Ordinance".

372. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

RAJKOT,
April 24, 1939

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
CARE LUCKY
BENARES

DR. BIDHAN SUBHAS CONSENTED MY STAY SODEPUR. MOST ANXIOUS MEET MALAVIYAJI. IMPOSSIBLE BREAK JOURNEY GOING CALCUTTA. WILL BREAK ON RETURN.

BAPU

From a copy: C. W. 7821. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

373. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

RAJKOT,
April 24, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

A thousand apologies for the enclosure referred to in my yesterday's letter[1] having been omitted. I am practically on my back. I had left the matter to one of my helpers. It goes herewith.

Yes, the procedure will naturally be left to the Judge. But the parties can decide whether this is to be given on written pleadings or by personal appearance. That is how I conceive the thing.

I shall respect your suggestions about release of correspondence.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C. W. 10186. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

374. LETTER TO MANEKLAL AND RADHA KOTHARI

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
April 24, 1939

CHI. MANEKLAL AND RADHA,

May Chi. Manu's wedding pass off smoothly, and may they be

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. C. Gibson", 23-4-1939

happy and be an ideal couple.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIII

375. LETTER TO VIJAYA GANDHI

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
April 24, 1939

CHI. VIJAYA,[1]

Which birthday of yours will it be? English girls conceal their age. Are you also doing something of that kind? Be that as it may. May you live long and still remain young for ever ! But you must not neglect spinning. You must do more spinning this year than you did last year.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

376. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS [2]

ON THE TRAIN TO BOMBAY,
April 24, 1939

Rajkot seems to have robbed me of my youth. I never knew that I was old. Now I am weighed down by the knowledge of decrepitude. I never knew what it was to lose hope. But it seems to have been cremated in Rajkot. My ahimsa has been put to a test such as it has never been subjected to before.

I have given fifteen precious days to have the Committee, contemplated in the Award of the Chief Justice of India. But I seem to be as far from it as ever. I have found unexpected difficulties in my path. The Award was acclaimed throughout India as a complete victory for the Sardar. But it has been effectively used against me for accusing me of a breach of promise to the Muslims and the Bhayats.

[1] Narandas Gandhi's daughter-in law and wife of Purushottam Gandhi

[2] This appeared under the title "I Am Defeated". The statement was published in *The Hindustan Times* and *The Hindu* on April 25.

The promise that the Thakore Saheb had made was on my return from Delhi transferred to my poor shoulders. The plain meaning of all I had said could only be that I should help the Thakore Saheb to carry out his promise, though, according to the Award, I need not. Whatever the reason might be, both the Muslims and the Bhayats relieved the Thakore Saheb of the duty of fulfilment of the promise.

Failing to placate the Muslims and the Bhayats, I sent the Thakore Saheb seven names of the Parishad. In reply I was called upon to prove that six out of the seven names were Rajkot State subjects. One would have thought that I would at least be given an inkling of the objections. If every statement made by men presumed to be fairly honourable could be challenged, it might take a year to finish an inquiry into the facts of each case. But I have sent the required proofs.

When I seemed to have come to the end of my resources and my patience, I sent a letter of complaint to the Resident as the local representative of the Paramount Power seeking his aid in terms of the Viceregal assurances given to me. He invited me to an interview. And whilst we were discussing the ways and means an idea flashed across my mind that I should end the agony by forgoing the right of nomination of members of the Committee, and so I made what I thought, and the Resident admitted, was a sporting offer. It was that the whole Com-mittee should be selected by the Thakore Saheb to report in accordance with the terms of the Notification of 26th December last, provided that its report should be shown to the Parishad, and that if they found that the report did not carry out the terms of the Notification, their dissenting note and the original report should be sent to the Chief Justice for his decision. The Resident sent my offer to Durbar Shri Virawala, but H. H. the Thakore Saheb has turned it down.

Agonizing experiences of the fifteen days have resulted in my making the discovery that my ahimsa should be voted down as failure if the Thakore Saheb and Durbar Shri Virawala were to feel that they had to give anything under pressure from above. My ahimsa demanded that I should remove that feeling. And so when the opportunity came to me, I tried to assure Durbar Shri Virawala that I took no delight in invoking the assistance of the Paramount Power. Apart from ahimsa, my connection with Rajkot should impose that restraint on me. I assured him that my spontaneous offer to

Mr. Gibson was an effort in that direction. He immediately retorted:"But if you are not satisfied with His Highness's Committee's report, you claim the right to scrutinize the report in the light of the Notification, and if the Parishad dissents you want to have the report and the dissent to be examined by the Hon. the Chief Justice of India. Do you call this removing the feeling of pressure? Why not turst His Highness and his adviser through and through? You may not get all you want, but whatever you get will be charged with his goodwill and will carry a promise of full delivery. Do you know what the Parishad people have said about the Thakore Saheb and me? Is that the way of a people desiring reforms from their Prince?" There was bitterness in his speech and contempt for the Parishad people. But with the sudden consciousness of my imperfect handling of ahimsa, instead of carrying the blow, I recognized the force of his argument as showing want of faith in the essential goodness of human nature and littleness of my own belief in ahimsa. And so our conversation went on and covered many proposals. But it was inconclusive. I was no nearer solution of the tangle. Nevertheless, I parted with the feeling that we had come to know each other better, and that in trying to woo Durbar Shri Virawala I was on the right track.

And so I presented[1] this new line of approach to my co-workers. They had more than once told me that Durbar Shri Virawala was the source of all the evil that had descended upon Rajkot and that his removal would mean for them full swaraj. I had no difficulty in showing them that what they were thinking of was good government, not self- government. At this meeting, which only took place yesterday, I told them that if they accepted my explanation of ahimsa, they would have to set their heart not on getting rid of Drubar Shri Virawala, but on converting him. This they could do only if they would set about finding his good points and working at them. They must develop infinite faith in the capacity of ahimsa to neutralize every person of *himsa*. True ahimsa lay in running into the mouth of *himsa*. If cows could be credited with intelligence, it is conceivable that given a sufficient number of such cows who would run into the tiger's mouth, the latter would lose the relish for cow flesh and change his nature. They must, therefore, shed their fear of Durbar Shri Virawala and their disbelief in the power of ahimsa to achieve the seemingly impossible.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Praja Parishad Workers' Meeting, Rajkot", 25-4-1939

They listened to this (to them) new doctrine with attention. I did not ask them whether they were convinced. I hope they were. They would quite legitimately have asked me: 'Are you yourself so convinced of the correctness of this extraordinary attitude you have commended to us as to tear the Award to pieces and simply rely upon the goodness of Durbar Shri Virawala's heart?' If they had asked this question, I would have been obliged to say: 'I have not yet found the requisite courage. Ahimsa accrues only to the courageous.'

And so I have left empty-handed, with body shattered, hope cremated. Rajkot has been to me a priceless laboratory. My patience has been sorely tried by the tortuous politics of Kathiawar. I have asked the workers to confer with Durbar Shri Virawala, to forget me and Sardar Patel, and if they get enough to satisfy their least wants, they may accept the offer without reference to either of us. I have told Durbar Shri Virawala, ' I am defeated. May you win. Placate the people by giving as much as possible and wire to me so as to revive the hope which I seem to have lost for the moment.'

Harijan, 29-4-1939

377. POPULAR VIOLENCE IN RAMDURG

I have said not a word about Ramdurg up to now. I had a wire from Dr. Hardikar not to commit myself till I had heard from him. And Rajkot left me not a moment for any other work. I have only now on the train read the report prepared by Shris Diwakar, Kaujalgi and Hardikar. I have also a revealing note from Shri Diwakar. I have studied Shri Ganga-dharrao Deshpande's note on the tragedy. I had a visit from Shri Munnavali, President of the Praja Sangh, and Shri Magadi. The report of Shris Diwakar, Kaujalgi and Hardikar is a dispassionate document and satisfactory in so far as it goes. This is its conclusion:

> In the end we feel that the officers have acted tactlessly to a great extent and allowed the police to have their way. We believe that they could have controlled the situation if they had acted a little more patiently and put the workers of the Praja Sangh on their honour as they had done many a time. But though there was provocation, we do not think that it was so great as to arouse the brute in man and it must be laid at the door of the highly inflammable temper of the people. They seemed to have readily believed the rumours and

got infuriated.

But there is absolutely no justification for any kind of violence even under the greatest provocation. In fact, the greater the provocation the greater is the opportunity and necessity for showing a non-violent spirit. That being our ideal we cannot defend any the slightest violence under any circumstances. The events only show that the Praja Sangh had no control over the forces of violence which were hiding in the people. It is a matter for the deepest regret, and this tragedy is sure to act detrimentally against all popular movements in States. It is a clear warning to all workers in the field and everyone must realize that before one feels sure that the people are rightly trained and disciplined in non-violence it is unwise to begin any great mass movement.

A study of the evidence before me leads me to the conclusion that whatever the provocation, the popular fury was wanton, cruel and deliberate. Over two thousand villagers had collected with the set purpose of wreaking vengeance. They were intent upon releasing the President and the other prisoners. Congressmen cannot escape blame for the savagery of the people. The villagers were having the wrong lesson given to them. Ranpur in Orissa was the first finger-post. Ramdurg is the second. No one has denied the fact that the Raja Saheb of Ramdurg was a friend of the Congress. He deserved better treatment. I am not just now concerned with the turth or otherwise of the evidence on provocation. There are grave enough charges. But it has never been the Congress policy to plead provocation, howsoever grave, in justification of popular violence. We shall lose all if we play with this fundamental provision of the Congress. I had remarked before the Ramdurg outbreak that I smelt violence in the very air I was breathing. I am very sensitive to the slightest exhibition of violence or untruth. They are twins.

I am quite clear that the Provincial Congress Committees as well as the Working Committee when it is formed must take strong measures to purge the Congress ranks of violence in thought, word and deed. What little I read of the public Press shows that there is often a departure from truth and non-violence. How this evil can be remedied I do not know. The Press managed or owned by Congressmen might be amenable to moral control. I am, however, inclined to think that the greatest mischief is done by Congressmen working in the villages. It ought not to be difficult to bring these under rigid discipline.

I suggest an impartial enquiry into the events. The Karnataka

Provincial Congress Committee should entrust it to a High Court Judge. If the Raja Saheb will help, the task will be easy. But even if he does not, there should be no difficulty in getting at the truth.

There is another untoward result of the Ramdurg movement. It has taken communal turn. There are two parties, Brahmin and non-Brahmin. My own feeling has hitherto been that Karnataka had remained fairly free from the curse. But the cuttings and papers that have been sent to me show that the evil has gone deep enough to demand an immediate remedy. I have been asked to offer guidance in the matter. It would be presumptuous on my part to give any guidance without a proper study on the spot of the tension. I can only suggest that if there are enough Brahmins and non-Brahmins interested in removing the tension, they should tour the affected area, find out causes and deal with them. The tension is a symptom of the growing spirit of violence in the country.

ON THE TRAIN TO BOMBAY, APRIL 24, 1939

Harijan, 29-4-1939

378. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

BOMBAY,
April 25, 1939

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
LUCKY
CALCUTTA

AFTER FULL DISCUSSION SARDAR AND I HAVE DECIDED THAT HE SHOULD NOT ATTEND CALCUTTA MEETING[1]

BAPU

From a copy: C. W. 7822. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Of the A. I. C. C. *Vide* also "Interview to "The Statesman", 27-4-1939

379. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA,
April 25, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

Well, I am going from the frying pan into the fire.[1] What a test for me ! You will have seen my Rajkot statement[2]. It gives you a glimpse into my mental state. To be in Bombay was like breathing fresh air—Bombay which I used to avoid.

I am on grape juice and glucose. That alone keeps the fever and many complications down. I do not know how long I shall have to prolong the fruit diet.

Your long letter is deeply interesting. You are making your way. You will conquer difficulties if you keep your health.

Ba, Navin[3] and Dhiru[4] are with me. Kanam remained with Ramdas. He was disinclined. He wept. But it was much the best. Ba herself is none too well. I expect to reach Brindaban on 3rd and Rajkot about 12th. I can come to the Frontier Province only after finishing Rajkot.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6437. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 10032

380. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ON THE CALCUTTA TRAIN,
April 25, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

You won't think I have neglected you. There was no time to do anything else. My latest note[5] on Rajkot will give you slight idea of the torture I have gone through. And it is not yet over.

I have a nasty cough which won't leave me. I am keeping otherwise fit only by restricting myself to fruit juices. No milk. I am keeping my strength remarkably well. Have no anxiety. The cough does not interfere with my sleep.

[1] *Vide* footnote on "Telegram to Amrit Kaur", 24-4-1939
[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 24-4-1939
[3] Sons of Vrajlal Gandhi
[4] *ibid*
[5] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 24-4-1939

Ba is with me and so are Navin and Dhiru. They have made wonderful progress. Amtul Salaam was in Bombay. She is going to Ahmedabad.

Don't expect more from me. I am washed out. I expect you in Brindaban on 3rd May. The best route is for you to go to Patna, there cross the river and take the train at Sonepur for Bettiah.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3912. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7221

381.INTERVIEW TO "THE STATESMAN"[1]

April 27, 1939

QUESTION: Had Mr. Gandhi come to Calcutta on a peace mission seeing that he had advised Sardar Patel not to come to Calcutta?

ANSWER : Yes. The reason for Sardar Patel not coming was that it was in the best interests of the country to absent himself from Calcutta.

Q. Had Mr. Gandhi found a way out of the conflicting demads?

A.. I have not come with a solution in my pocket. I have no pocket. I cannot say what will be the result of my talks with Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose. What is the use of forecasting when the result will be known soon ?

Q. Had Mr. Gandhi heard it said that Mr. Bose was an undesirable man?

A.. I never heard that. He was elected by the Congress. He could not be in the Congress so long if he was an undesirable man. I have no reason to believe that Mr. Bose is "undesirable".

Q. Has Mr. Bose shown a desire to be more accommodating since the Tripuri vote?

A.. He is acting in accordance with certain principles he holds.

Q. Can the latest note— 34 pages—from Mr. Bose form a basis of peace talks?

A.. Thirty-four pages? I did not count them. The correspondence must form the basis of our conference.

[1] The source reported that Gandhiji, "who was slightly ill and bore signs of fatigue", gave the interview "while travelling on the Bombay Mail between Kharagpur and Calcutta".

Q. Had Pandit Nehru reported to him on his recent talks with Mr. Bose at Dhanbad?

A.. Yes.

Q. Were they favourable?

A. Always. All Congress people work for peace.

Q. Would a final rupture with Mr. Bose divide the Congress?

A. Of course it would. But why should there be a rupture? I am hoping for a settlement.

Q. Has it been the case that Mr. Bose's orders have been disobeyed by subordinate Congress bodies?

A. I do not know of single case of disobedience, and if I did, I would be greatly surprised. He is the congress President.

Q. Was he, Mr. Gandhi, not responsible, indirectly, for this as, when during his fast, Congress Ministries threatened to resign independently of directions from Mr. Bose?

A, There could be no resignations without reference to the President. There is no question of insubordination.

Q. Has the non-existence of the supreme Congress executive, the Working Committee, for such a long time delayed Congress decisions on larger issues like Federation, formulation of its policy and war?

A.. There has been some delay. The non-existence of the Committee is a cause, and delay in that case is inevitable.

Q. Is it true that during the Munich crisis the Committee was in continuous session at Delhi to decide on Congress attitude to war?

A., Yes. We discussed thoroughly our policy of non-violence.

Q. Can the present "tangle" be said to be weakening the Congress bargaining power with the British?

A.. I should not say "bargaining" but "settlement".

Q. Since the Congress impasse there has been no Parliamentary Committee to control the work of the Congress Provincial Ministries. Has this led to independent action by the Ministries?

A.. Not to my knowledge.

Q. What is the present machinery to give advice to the Ministries? Do they ask for your or Sardar Patel's advice?

A. The machinery is the President. Sardar Patel's or my

opinions are not asked for. I have been out of it since my retirement[1] from the Congress.

Q. Would the Central Congress be able to get the Congress Ministries to work in the same spirit under a new Parliamentary Committee, when it is formed, as of old?

A. I see no reason why they should not.

Q. Has it not been a good thing that the Provinces have regained independence of action?

A. They have not regained it. The President is there with as much power as the old Board had.

Q. Apart from purging the Congress of corruption, what would he suggest as necessary to set up the Congress as a well-knit party organization?

A. The purging of corruption is the first indispensable condition to the smooth running of the Congress. Once the corruption is banished the Congress will carry on its great work.

Q. Would it be better for the Congress to have a really democratic constitution, or to be entirely subject to a leader?

A. The Congress does not lack democracy. The Congress is dem-ocratic.

Mr. Gandhi then gave the following special message to the *Statesman* readers :

I can assure them all that we are not going to discuss personalities but policies. Mr. Bose discussed principles only in his correspondence with me. So far as I recollect, there were no personalities or grievances in his communications to me. But I have vivid recollections of seeing principles and policies in the letters.

Mr. Gandhi then repeated his Rajkot statement :

> Ahimsa accrues only to the courageous and so I have left Rajkot empty-handed with body shattered and hope cremated. I have told Mr. Virawala: "I am defeated. May you win. Placate the people by giving as much as possible and inform me so as to revive the hope which I seem to have lost for the moment."
>
> Rajkot seems to have robbed me of my youth. I never knew that I was old. Now I am weighed down by the knowledge of decrepitude. I never knew what it was to lose hope. But it seems to have been cremated in Rajkot.

Mr. Gandhi went on to say :

I am broken down. I am now conscious of old age. It was useful when people said, "Hello, 70 years—no, 17". Now I feel myself to be even 80.

[1] In October 1934

Mr. Gandhi has developed a cough and, commenting on this, said:

I am a stranger to a cough. Yet this has been persisting for 15 days.

The reporter then asked Mr. Gandhi if there was going to be a war. His reply was to the effect that the journalist would probably know more about that than he himself. However, Mr. Gandhi went on to say in his opinion the best way for peace was to disarm. [He said:]

If I could get the three great nations. Great Britain, France and the U.S.A with a tithe of my faith in non-violence there would be no war.

He did not agree that in the event of the nations disarming, Germany and Italy would march into other countries and even take British colonies.

The people of Germany and Italy would not want war. Their leaders would realize that too. The leaders dare not go to war. Peace will reign in the universe. If I were a leading statesman in England, I would shudder at the prospect of war.

At the close of the interview, Mr. Gandhi gave the following message:

I am fighting for peace, I shall die for peace, peace in the Congress, peace in the States, peace on earth and goodwill amongst men. To set the seal upon that, if I feel the power, I am quite capable of fasting unto death to prevent Western humanity, which is getting ready to embark upon suicide on a scale hitherto unknown to the history of the world.

Referring to his talks with Mr. Bose, he said:

All India hopes and I hope that there will be no rupture.

The Statesman, 28-4-1939

382. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

CALCUTTA,
April 27, 1939

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have read your letter. You should go away from Segaon for some time. Perhaps that will give you peace of mind. I hope you will not suffer the same fate as Janakiprasad did. Would you like to go to Pondicherry? Or to Ramana Maharshi? I think you should do some such thing. But if you don't fell inclined to leave the place and go anywhere, then live where you are and learn to be content.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8559. Also C. W. 7056. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah.

383. 'AN INSULT TO INTELLIGENCE'

The following[1] from a correspondent will be read with interest and profit by those who oppose prohibition.

Harijan, 29-4-1939

384. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,
April 29, 1939

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE, SIMLA WEST

EXPECT YOU BRINDABAN THIRD. LEAVING HERE MONDAY NIGHT. YOU CAN JOIN PATNA. FAIRLY WELL. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3914. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7223

385. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

SODEPUR
April 29, 1939

MY DEAR SUBHAS,

You have asked me to give you in terms of Pant's resolution the names for the Working Committee. As I have told you in my letters and my telegrams, I feel myself utterly incompetent to do so. Much has happened since Tripuri. Knowing your own view, knowing how you and most of the members differ on fundamentals, it seems to me that if I give you names, it would be an imposition on you. I have argued this position at length in my letters to you. Nothing that has

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent, who described the arguments advanced in favour of alcoholic drinks to be "an insult to intelligence", had explained that "the loss of revenues from liquor will be more than offset by increased revenue from other sources".

happened during the three days of closest conversation between us has altered my view. Such being the case you are free to choose your own Committee. I have told you, too, that you could discuss with the ex-members the possibility of mutual approach and that nothing would please me better than to know that you were able to come together. Into what has happened since, I need not go. You and the ex-members present will make the position clear before the A. I. C. C. Only it has been matter of the greatest grief to me that a mutual settlement has not been possible. I hope, however, that whatever is done will be done with mutual Goodwill.[1]

With love.

Yours,

BAPU

A. I. C. C. File No. 1145, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

386. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SODEPUR
April 29, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I hope you do not feel neglected. I have been sending you wires which you must have received.

I have carefully gone through your notes of the interview with G. It is a good account. We must now allow things to run their course. You should not mind my being discredited or misunderstood. That is no novel experience for me.

Since sending you the telegram[2] I find that my route may be changed. And I see that you could get a direct train to Bettiah from Lucknow. It is worth considering. I may send you another wire.

Sushila returns tonight. She must tell you all about my health.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3913. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7222

[1] According to a report in *The Hindu*, 29-4-1939, Subhas Bose read out this letter at the A. I. C. C. meeting the same day, in the evening, before he announced his resignation.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Amrit Kaur", 29-4-1939

387. A LETTER[1]

SODEPUR, CALCUTTA,
April 29, 1939

DEAR SISTER,

I learnt from Chi. Krishnachandra's letter that your daughter is no more and that you are grief-stricken. But why grieve over death? One who is born must die. Some will die today, some tomorrow. That is why the wise tell us that birth and death are in the hands of God. We should remember it and put up with death. But the death of the dear ones must certainly teach us to remember their virtues and also emulate them.

May God grant you peace.

Your brother,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4313; also S.G. 130

388. JAIPUR PRISONERS

The Jaipur Durbar communique on the treatment of Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj and the other prisoners reads like a laboured defence of the *status quo*. The question about Sheth Jamnalalji is simple. It is admitted that he is locked up in an out-of-the-way place[2] where the water is said to be 'heavy' according to the Indian notion. It is admitted that the place is difficult of access. He has been given no companion. Why this isolation? Is he a dangerous character? Is he an intriguer? One can understand detention as he chose to defy the ban on his entry into his own birth-place.

The Authorities know that Shethji is an ideal prisoner. He believes in meticulous observance of Jail discipline. It is cruel to isolate him as he has been isolated from the outside world. The greatest want of prisoners is the companionship of their equals in thought, manners and customs. I suggest that without much ado he be transferred to a place which is easily accessible and healthy and where he is allowed company.

[1] This was presumably addressed to Krishnachandra's mother;*vide* "Letter to Krishnachandra", 8-5-1939

[2] Moransagar

The special pleading with reference to the satyagrahi prisoners in Lamba is much worse. They admit that the place selected for their incarceration is an old snake-infested fort. But they point out that in spite of the place being snake-infested no one has as yet been bitten by the reptiles! Must the Jaipur Durbar's cosnscience wait for snake-bites before it is stirred to action? It should be remembered that these pris-oners were transferred to Lamba because they had the presumptuousness to hunger-strike for better treatment. The strike would have continued but for my intervention.

The much larger question of the object of satyagraha still remains unsolved. And yet it is not at all large. It is aimed at getting the Praja Sangh recognized. The Durbar have laid down the impossible condition of recognition. viz., that its officials should not be members of any political organization out-side the State. Thus Sheth Jamnalalji himself could not remain President of the Sangh because he is connected with the National Congress. Satyagraha has been suspended at my instance[1] in Jaipur as in many other States. It would not remain suspended for ever. I entertain the hope that the States concerned will placate the advanced and awakened section of their people. And I suggest to the Jaipur Durbar that they are going the wrong way by keeping them locked up even though their satyagraha has been suspended. In any case what I must call the inhuman treatment of the prisoners, including Sheth Jamnalalji, might surely stop at once.

SODEPUR, April 30, 1939

Harijan, 6-5-1939

389. TELEGRAM TO DHARMENDRASINH[2]

CALCUTTA,
April 30, 1939

H. H. THAKORESAHEB
RAJKOT

GRATEFUL YOUR WIRE[3]. NOTHING WILL PLEASE ME

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with Jaipur Satyagrahis", 20-3-1939

[2] This and the following item are extracted from "Rajkot Correspondence".

[3] Dated April 29, which read: "I am sincerely grateful to you for rightly advising the leaders of agitation to approach me as a Ruler together with other members representing various interests. ... If they do so, I assure you, I and my officers will do our utmost to meet their legitimate and reasonable demands. ... My ardent desire is to come to a settlement as early as possible. ..."

BETTER THAN TO FIND THAT YOU AND YOUR PEOPLE HAVE COME TO HONOURABLE UNDERSTANDING WITHOUT ANY OUTSIDE INTERVENTION. MY WIFE AND I KEEPING FAIRLY WELL.

GANDHI

Harijan, 6-5-1939

390. TELEGRAM TO VIRAWALA[1]

CALCUTTA,
April 30, 1939

DURBAR VIRAWALA
RAJKOT

I SHALL NOT MISUNDERSTAND YOU AND SHALL HOLD YOU TO YOUR PROMISE TO COME HONOURABLE SETTLEMENT. ASK YOU NOT BE ANGRY DHEBARBHAI WHO IS GOOD MAN. NEITHER SARDAR NOR I HAVE ANY DESIRE INTERFERE WITH MUTUAL HONOURABLE SETTLEMENT BETWEEN HIS HIGHNESS AND PEOPLE. EXPECT REACH RAJKOT ABOUT TWELFTH UNLESS MEANWHILE YOU SEND ME GOOD NEWS.

GANDHI

Harijan, 6-5-1939

391. INTERVIEW TO SANTI ROY AND OTHERS[2]

SODEPUR,
April 30, 1939

They pointed out to Gandhiji that the political prisoners were asked not to start any agitaion till April 13 pending his negotiations with the Bengal Government; the date had expired, but a large number of young men were still rotting behind prison bars.

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram of April 29, which read ; "Am grateful for letter twenty-sixth. My statement being of prior date kindly request not to misunderstand. Am doing utmost for settlement.... Dhebar going to Bombay consult Vallabhbhai.... brings Vallabhbhai in again in spite of your advice to keep him aloof. Most earnestly request Vallabhbhai not to interfere and delay settlement.... "

[2] This appeared as reported "in the course of a statement to the Press by Santi Roy, Convener of Political Prisoners' Release Day Committee, who along with Niranjan Sen and Anukul Chatterjee had met Gandhiji".

In reply, Gandhiji said that he quite remembered that the date had expired but as Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose and Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose were doing their utmost in this connection he could not do anything without consulting them. In course of the talk, says Sjt. Santi Roy, Gandhiji incidentally remarked that the attitude of the Bengal Government in this respect was "illogical".

The Hindustan Times, 10-5-1939

392. NOTE TO PYARELAL

[*April 1939*][1]

Do not worry about it. That letter is there of course; but that does not mean that we need not consider all the attendant circumstances. What was the fate of Thakore Saheb's[2] letter? Virawala[3] presented a voluminous case. We can present one even more voluminous if we want. Is there any doubt about it?

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

393. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

1.20 a. m., *May 1, 1939*

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Such hard *tapascharya*[4] as you desire to do is not to be undertaken in haste. He who wishes to know what ahimsa is must first learn to practise the *yamaniyamas*[5]. That is no small matter. Do all observe them with real sincerity? How many pray? How many spin and card, or show love to their neighbours? How much love do we show each other in Segaon? We learn the lessons of ahimsa and truth from such seemingly small details. My rigidity also arises from my imperfection. That is why I have so far tolerated the laxity of co-workers. Ponder over the difficult vows of *yamaniyamas, shama*[6], *dama*[7], etc., mentioned in the verse cited by you.

[1] The note is placed in the source among items of April 1939.
[2] Thakore Saheb Dharmendrasinh of Rajkot
[3] Durbar Virawala, Dewan of Rajkot State
[4] Self-suffering as moral discipline
[5] Rules of moral discipline and religious observances
[6] Overcoming
[7] Suppressing

We are shortly leaving for Brindaban.

Blessings from
BAPU

from a photostat of the Gujarati; G. N. 8563. Also C. W. 7049., Chimanlal N. Shah

394. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

May 1, 1939

CHI. KANTI,

I am sending with this a copy of Ramachandran's letter. I do not know whether you wrote to him as I had advised. If you have not written, do so now. It is your duty to pacify Ramachandran. Does Saraswati write to him? You cannot treat that family as your enemy. If you sincerely repent of your error, you will keep advancing. Your obstinacy and ego ought to lose their excessive strength and Saraswati should become mature. If you don't write to me at all, I shall keep worrying.

We are at the moment busy getting ready for the journey to Brindaban.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 7359. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

395. TELEGRAM TO U. N. DHEBAR

CALCUTTA,
May 1, 1939

U. N. DHEBAR
RAJKOT

YOU MUST NOT LOSE HEART. YOU SHOULD RESOLUTELY FOLLOW OUT YOUR OWN PLAN TILL MY RETURN[1].

BAPU

From a copy: C. W. 10187. Courtesy: D.B. Kalelkar

[1] Gandhiji was going to Brindaban; *vide* the two preceding items.

396. TELEGRAM TO U. N. DHEBAR

MOTIPUR,
May 2, 1939

DHEBARBHAI, VAKIL
RAJKOT

YOUR WIRE. HAVE WIRED KALIDASBHAI CO-OPERATE WITH PARISHAD PEOPLE. YOU SHOULD YIELD UTMOST CONSISTENTLY WITH YOUR CAPACITY SHOULDER BURDEN. DOING ALL I CAN FROM HERE. IF FINAL SETTLEMENT NOT REACHED RETURNING FOR CERTAIN. WIRE BRINDABAN CHAMPARAN.

BAPU

From a copy: C. W. 10188. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

397. TELEGRAM TO VIRAWALA

BRINDABAN, CHAMPARAN,
May 3, 1939

DURBAR SHRI VIRAWALA
RAJKOT

YOUR WIRE[1]. MY WIRES MUST BE READ TOGETHER. AM MYSELF DEVELOPING NEW TECHNIQUE. MY DESIRE NOT TO INTERFERE DOES NOT MEAN MY REFUSAL GUIDE THOSE WHO SEEK GUIDANCE BUT I WANT DHEBARBHAI OTHER PARISHAD PEOPLE RELY ON THEIR OWN RESOURCES AND ACT INDEPENDENTLY OF ME OR SARDAR. IT WILL BE OUR TRIUMPH AND YOURS WHEN THEY DO SO BUT THEY WILL NOT DO SO IF YOU TREAT PARISHAD PEOPLE WITH CONTEMPT AND REGARD THEM AS LOAFERS. DHEBARBHAI MAY NOT BE STATE SUBJECT IN TERMS NOTIFICATION BUT IS NO OUTSIDER. MOREOVER HE REPRESENTS ME AND IS ONLY PERSON I KNOW WELL ENOUGH FOR PUR-POSE. I ASK

[1] Virawala's telegram of May 3 read: "... It has been a painful surprise to His Highness and myself to read the publication of your telegram to Dhebar stating that he should resolutely follow out his own plan till your return. This telegram is contradictory to your instructions for direct settlement between His Highness and his people... "

YOU TRUST HIM. HE HAS ONE DEFECT. HE LEANS TOO MUCH ON SARDAR OR ME. SARDAR HAS TOLD HIM HE MUST REFER ONLY ME IF HE MUST. I AM TRYING MAKE HIM SELF-RELIANT. I DON'T WANT COME TO RAJKOT BUT MY NOT COMING DEPENDS UPON YOUR BEING JUST AND GENEROUS AND CARRYING OUT YOUR PROMISE TO SEE THROUGH SETTLEMENT NOT BY SLIGHTING HONOURABLE PEOPLE BUT BY TREATING THEM AS SUCH.

GANDHI

From a copy: C. W. 10190. Courtesy; D. B. Kalelkar. Also C.W. 7825. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

398. SPEECH AT OPENING OF VILLAGE INDUSTRIES EXHIBITION, BRINDABAN [1]

May 3, 1939

BROTHER AND SISTERS,

Very few sisters have come, of course, but let those who have come hear me. I have been told that a notice was sent out yesterday, in the name of Prajapati Babu[2] though not actually by him. The notice said that plague had broken out here and hence there would be no meeting of the Gandhi Seva Sangh and no exhibition. There would also be no provision for water, and even if there was, people should not drink it. This notice was distributed by a friend here. One can only call him a friend, for how could he be called an enemy? This led to a fear that people perhaps would not turn up. They would think that the exhibition had been postponed. It was suggested to me that it might be advisable not to open the exhibition today but to postpone it till tomorrow. I said the exhibition should be opened, even if only five persons turned up. At least we have arrived. As you see, the arrangements here have been made with a large audience in mind. I had only a brief look at the exhibition. I could not see it thoroughly. Doctors have prohibited me from making public speeches. Hence, I

[1] The exhibition held at Kumar Bagh was organized by the Gandhi Seva Sangh. Present on the occasion were Kasturba Gandhi, Rajendra Prasad, Vallabhbhai Patel and Kishorelal Mashruwala, President of Gandhi Seva Sangh. The meeting was held in the morning.

[2] Prajapati Misra, Organizer, Gandhi Seva Sangh

shall not be able to say much. I was even advised not to come here. But, having come here after so many years, I could not resist the temptation of seeing you and speaking to you. It is now many years since I first came to champaran. Many of you were not even born at the time. Then also I had emphasized the point that you must put your spare time to some use. In those days we had selected the loom. We had no knowledge of the spinning-wheel then. We did not know how to spin. Chhotelal[1], the man through whom this work was started, was summoned from Kochrab. He was a very industrious man. He did whatever work was entrusted to him. But even for him the task was difficult. Poor Chhotelal is no more and his work has remained undone. But though his work remained incomplete, it brought good results. The atmosphere in those days was one of despair. People were frightfully lazy. And the people of Champaran were inclined to be lazy, too. They would sit round me and harass me. I would tell them that they should learn some industry. And so Chhotelal was called. But who would listen to poor Chhotelal? Chhotelal is dead, but his work remains to be done. I am reviving for you Chhotelal's sacred memory.

That is why I am inviting you all to see the exhibition. It is not a very big exhibition. I have not come out of it particularly inspired. But it is a useful thing for Champaran. Let the people of Champaran have an idea of the things that are being made. For instance, the use of innocent leather. I call that leather innocent which does not involve slaughtering of cattle. After the cattle are dead, they are split open and their bones, their flesh, their hide, everything is utilized. A *bhumihar*[2] Brahmin is carrying on this work. I was very happy to see that, when nobody knew how to make string-gut, this man had made even that and made it well. I even saw in the exhibition a tool for making *taklis.* It is a small tool. It is not a big thing. He makes six or seven *taklis* in a day and just manages to live. He may be making four annas a day. Perhaps he is satisfied with that much. But how can I be satisfied? I would like to give one anna for an hour's work. But how to provide work for all?They would have work when all of you think honestly and start wearing khadi and realize that you have to serve *Daridranarayana.* But this place is now flooded with textiles from the

[1] Chhotelal Jain, who committed suicide on August 31, 1937; For an obituary, *vide* "A Slient Co-Workers Gone", 1-9-1937

[2] Landless

mills of Japan, England and Ahmedabad. You buy that cloth thinking it is cheap, while you find the khadi prepared by the poor expensive. I can then only say that you do not deserve to live in India. You call the things made by the rich cheap. My economics does not accept this. If you realize this, You must know where your duty lies. My economics consists in buying the things made by the poor people at a higher price.

There are a number of such things in the exhibition. There is paper from Nepal, the like of which you will find nowhere else in India, or in the world. No other hand-made paper can compare with it. It is like silk. It is worth seeing. You can use it for air-mail if you wish.

There is yet another thing. You can have a drink there. It is called *nira*. There are millions of palm-trees in Bihar. This is a juice extracted from those trees. It can be converted into liquor also. But *nira* is not liquor. I have a Brahmin boy living with me. He has devoted his whole life to it. It has no alcoholic content at all. Liquor can be made from almost anything. It can be made from grape juice. It can also be got from steeping rice and fermenting it. We can make *gur* from *nira* which tastes like honey. It is better than the *gur* made from sugar-cane. The sugar-cane *gur* is too sweet. This is much better. You can make crores of rupees worth of such *gur.* Cane sugar is a bad thing. It is not fit to eat. *Gur* is good. It provides salts. *Gur* is never harmful for the system. Sugar is. I recommend that you should go and see how *gur* is made from *nira*. People say that palm-*gur* is intoxicating. This is a wrong impression. I suggest you should definitely taste it. Doctors have recommended that I should take *gur.* I take this same *gur* every day. But I am never tired of it. Sugar-cane juice is very sweet. This is not so sweet. Nature has seen to it that it cannot be processed in a factory. It is prepared in Andhra Pradesh where palmyra trees grow in thousands. There are millions of these trees in Bihar, and that *gur* could be prepared here as well. We can completely eradicate our poverty through it. This is the only remedy for our poverty.

You can see the exhibition by paying the entrance fee of one anna. There is another thing worth seeing. They extract oil there. There are many such things that can be produced in villages. If we revived all those things, we would not become affluent but we would be able to get rid of our poverty. Today we do not have enough to eat. Women do not have enough clothes to wear. These things would

then be available. We would not get silver and gold and money. But silver, gold and money are worth nothing compared to this wealth. The nation which can produce things like these possesses real wealth. Such a nation alone is truly prosperous. If you visit this exhibition you will realize all this. Now that I have said this much, please take it that I have opened the exhibition.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Panchama Varshik Adhiveshan (Brindaban, Bihar) ka Vivaran, pp. 2-4

399. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING, BRINDABAN[1]

May 3, 1939

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You have just heard Kishorelalbhai. I do not intend to comment today on the topics he has covered in his speech. Nor do I intend doing so later. I would like to dwell briefly on the four or five questions that were placed before me last evening. But even before I proceed to do this perhaps if I recapitulate here what I have written about Rajkot it will help to clarify my position today. I would like to draw your attention to a point on which Kishorelal has dwelt in the course of his speech. He has said that if we are truly non-violent, the heart of the person who considers himself our enemy will, in the face of our non-violence, gradually melt. It is in the very nature of non-violence to rush into the jaws of violence. And it is the nature of violence to rush forward to devour anything that comes its way. Non-violent people cannot practise non-violence among themselves, because they are all non-violent. The test for a non-violent person comes when he has to face a violent person. I have assumed all this from the beginning and I have been conducting various experiments in non-violence in my own life. But I cannot say that I have always been successful—successful in the sense of melting the heart of the opponent. I even doubt if I have been able to carry on these experiments exactly in accordance with my idea of non-violence. the

[1] The fifth session of Gandhi Seva Sangh was held at Brindaban from May 3 to 7, 1939. The speech as summarized by Mahadev Desai, appeared under the title "The New Technique" in *Harijan,* 13-5-1939

realization that I had not been able to reach the point I had intended came to me with added force in Rajkot.

I repeatedly asked myself the question why we had failed to melt Durbar Virawala's heart. The simple answer I got was that in our dealings with him we had not been wholly non-violent. Even those who considered themselves satyagrah is abused Virawala. I have myself been saying things. I could not control the tongues of all. I have no doubt been trying to control my own tongue. But I could not control the tongues of my colleagues. Many satyagrahis do not even realize that in giving tongue to such things we violate non-violence. It is my laxity that I have ignored this. Take the Ali Brothers for instance. Their tongues were sharp. I knew them intimately. Even today I can certify that there was time when they never held back anything from me. When we were touring in connection with the Khilafat they used to tell me frankly whatever they had in their hearts. Even if they had some terrible thought they would express it to me. I still cherish many such sweet memories of them. Subsequently their opinion of my non-violence and my love for Muslims changed considerably. The bitter experiences of the later times have not diminished the sweetness of our earlier relations. They created considerable bitterness among Muslims with regard to truth and non-violence. But I have forgotten all those things. There were other collea-gues too who similarly used harsh words. They said what they liked of opponents.

In short, I have not been as firm in this matter as I should have been. So long as our people did not go beyond words I paid no attention to what they said. I remained indifferent to violence in speech. Later this became a habit and I even stopped taking notice of it.

I suddenly saw a new light when I proposed to Mr. Gibson at Rajkot that the Thakore Saheb should form a Committee of his own choice. Even Mr. Gibson admitted that I had made a sporting offer. Whatever I had been doing prior to that was self-evident in my life. In trying to accomplish my purpose I even showed the British Government there duty. I pointed out that it was its duty to protect its subjects. That was the reason why I wired to the Viceroy. I did not beg for anything from the British Government. I just made them do their duty. But one great flaw in this was that I brought Government pressure to bear on the Thakore Saheb, or say, Durbar Virawala. The

feeling came to me again and again that the experiment I was conducting was fraught with risks. So I went to Mr. Gibson and told him that the Thakore Saheb should form his own Committee. This was a new thing for me and for the country. I acquired a new tool and a new method. It was like changing my house.

But even today I am not prepared to tear up the Gwyer Award. I wish to make use of it. Such is my weakness. But what am I to do? I can only follow the dictates of my heart. But, if I can summon the strength to obey the dictates of non-violence, I would tear to bits or burn the Award. I should have reassured Virawala. I should have told him: 'See, I have torn up the Gwyer Award. I shall have nothing to do with the British Government. If I have to resort to satyagraha now it will be against you. And the experiment will be my sincere effort. What would it matter even if I had to die in my attempt to convert the Rajkot authorities? As yet I have not been able to persuade myself that I do not want British help in the Rajkot matter. But this thing is boiling inside me. Now Rajkot is for me the wonderful laboratory of pure non-violence. My reason prompts me to conduct my experiment in total non-violence in that very place. Let the world say I am mad. Let people mock at me for throwing away a thing I had got with such great difficulty. My reason says that is what I should do. The heart is still not ready. This is my weakness. This means that there is still something lacking in our non-violence. That is why our experiment in Rajkot was not pure and did not succeed. The blame does not entirely lie with Virawala. Let us see what he can do when we offer pure non-violence, I cannot conduct such an experiment in pure non-violence, just sitting here in Champaran. I shall have to turn Rajkot into my laboratory. But right now my heart does not prompt me to do such a thing. This is a sign of my weakness. There is no doubt that we are making some mistake somewhere in the matter of Rajkot. We must have the courage to correct that mistake.

What applies to Rajkot applies also to the Congress. There are dissensions in the congress, and for these too we are responsible. Those who call themselves Gandhians are not less so. I say to you once again that you should not call yourselves Gandhians. It is meaningless label. Call yourselves votaries of non-violence. Gandhi is worthless—imperfect, a mixture of good and bad, strength and weakness, power and impotence. Let your claim therefore be that you pursue truth, are votaries of truth, you pursue non-violence, are votaries of non-violence. That claim is sufficient. The term

‘Gandhian’ is meaningless. Non-violence does not contain any such mixture. If you search your hearts from the point of view of non-violence, you would realize that the responsibility of the rift within the Congress lies with us and none else. Can you truthfully say that you have followed non-violence within the Congress? Did you bare your chests to the arrows of your opponents? Did you not try to turn and shoot them in this direction and that? Did we welcome criticism from others? No. We challenged it with our tongues. We were pleased when other people criticized the critics. All this is a sign of violence. You can say that so far I had not set such a harsh test. My words, too, occasionally tend to be harsh. But the fault lies with me, not with non-violence. You can also say that you have never claimed to have followed non-violence to this extent. But this too is the fault of my method of working. I have been somewhat lax in this regard. Let us acknowledge these faults as our own and not ascribe them to non-violence. Let us not bring non-violence to ridicule for faults which are ours. Let us look upon the faults of our colleagues in the Congress as bits of straw or as dust particles and get on with them; let us see our own faults a mountains. Even if others consider us their opponents, let us not consider them so. We are as much full of violence as they are. It is the nature of a serpent to hiss. But we have taken a pledge of non-violence. We wish to conquer that propensity of ours. We assert that we shall protect, not devour, the Princes. We even talk of converting them. But I am afraid that we talk of converting them. But I am afraid that we talk of converting them because it has become a fashion to do so. Deep in our hearts we do not believe in it. This is a sign of violence in us. Truly speaking we do not have the slightest hope that the Princes will ever be converted. We feel the same about our colleagues in the Congress. I must frankly tell you that this is a sign of violence, and it is precisely because of this that there is so much dissension in the Congress.

This is what I am constantly thinking and that is why I am trying out new technique with Durbar Virawala. Please believe me when I say that I am not going to run away like a coward from the Rajkot problem. I am not going to let down my co-workers thus. Nothing so perverse will happen. If I do any such thing, you can take it that I have lost my reason. I have certainly grown old. But there is not as yet any evidence of mental decay. I am doing my work with great care. In the last resort we are going to fight. But we shall have to change our strategy. We shall have to revise the logistics of our forces. So I am

working to strengthen the position of our co-workers in Rajkot. I have dwelt on this point at some length so that you may understand it.

I shall now say few things about the Sangh. From what I have said you will understand the way my mind is working. I have a feeling that we shall have to retrace our steps a little. I had said[1] at Hudli that we must expand our field a little, that we should also take part in politics. But, even if we have plunged into politics, we must practise non-violence in that field too. We must be very firm in this. Don't mind if on that account only twenty members are left in place of today's two hundred. I also find that the Sangh too is not free from the faults which are in the Congress. The Congress is a big organization, the Sangh is small. The evils that are found in the Congress in a larger measure are to be found in the Sangh in a smaller measure. There are mutual jealousies, quarrels and also conceit. I do not see people working with one heart, one mind. I am not saying this from personal experience. I do not even know all the members. I do not recognize all the faces. I do not know the names of many. I do not know where each of them comes from and what work he is doing. I am saying this on the strength of the material I have received. It is a pity that Jamnalalji is not present here today. He is connected with a number of institutions. He keeps on telling me about his difficulties. Why do we have to face so many difficulties in running institutions? Why do all these faults creep in? If two hundred individuals could work with one mind, one heart, we could, without mentioning any particular worker, call any one of them and tell him, 'Go to Travancore and achieve success in the work there'. But Kishorelal today does not have the courage to say this. He has to consider the qualifications, temperament and inclination of each individual worker.

I am not saying all this to find fault with you. This speaks of the shortcomings of all of us. It seems to me that we shall have to give thought to this matter. We shall have to be more firm in the principles and in observing the rules of our institution. If this leads to a depletion in our membership, it cannot be helped. I have already stated that the strength of satyagrahis lies not in numbers but in the spirit, in other words, in God.

Hence it is that I expect every satyagrahi to have a living faith in God. A satyagrahi possesses no other strength. One can derive

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Hemprabha Das Gupta", 25-1-1931

strength from God only if one has boundless faith in Him. How can one ever offer satyagraha without such faith in God? Anyone who says that he has no such faith in God should leave the Sangh and forget about satyagraha. I would like to ask how many of you have a living faith in the spinning-wheel. About the spinning-wheel, I have said boldly and unashamedly that it is the infallible means to swaraj. It is a unique symbol of non-violence. You may become a great expert with the spinning-wheel, but your working at it would be futile if you did not regard it as a symbol of non-violence. If we have a living faith in the spinning-wheel we shall find in it immeasurable strength. I regard the spinning-wheel as a greater symbol of non-violence than civil disobedience. In civil disobedience there is a possibility of jealousy and violence. But the spinning-wheel is faultless. Some people may make fun of it. The spinning-wheel can evoke ridicule but never violence. Even those who ply the spinning-wheel and ply it with diligence and faith do not regard it as a symbol of non-violence. Those who have entered politics do not regard it as a symbol of non-violence. They ply it as a ritual. I have been lax in this respect too. Now I am paying the price. I had expressed my faith in the spinning-wheel way back in 1920. Now 1940 is approaching. I repeat on the strength of my experience of twenty years that there is nothing so effective as the charkha for demonstrating the power of non-violence and winning swaraj. Today I have acquired knowledge also along with faith. This combination of faith and reason has strengthened my conviction. I stand by whatever I have written so far on the subject of the spinning-wheel. I would once again tell those who want to be satyagrahis but have no faith in the spinning-wheel that they should forget about satyagraha.

Prajapati Misra said that spinning-wheels are being plied in five villages. This is just a mockery. Why is not the spinning-wheel plying in every home in Champaran? I can make fun of the spinning-wheels plying in five villages, and if I so choose, I can also make you cry. There is nothing very exciting even in the exhibition here. Poor Laxmi Babu and Mathuradas are doing some spade work. But how is that going to satisfy me? Bihar has so many wonderful workers. Why is the charkha not plying in every house in Champaran? When they realize that the spinning-wheel is a thing that can give them extraordinary strength, the whole face of Bihar will be transformed. But the few workers that are there are not enough. There are thousands of women plying the charkha today—women to whom I

cannot pay a wage of eight annas. They do it for their bread. I do not speak of those who do it for a living. I speak of those who will ply the spinning-wheel, considering it a symbol of non-violence. The spinning-wheel will transform the life of the individual who becomes a votary of non-violence and truth. He will render an account of his every minute. He will consider it sinful to waste time. God alone is witness to one's thoughts. But such a man will have no useless thought in his mind. His speech will have a unique quality and everything pertaining to him will have a divinity about it.

The spinning-wheel possesses all this power. But it is not self-evident. Outwardly the spinning-wheel is a lifeless object. It acquires power from determination. Let us look at it with devotion. What is there in clay? But if a devotee shapes a lump of it into a ball and decides that Lord Shankara is residing in it, that same lump of clay can become a *Kamadhenu*[1]. What is there in mere clay? Another man would just throw it away. Shankara does not reside in the clay. It is the faith that is Shankara. What is in Ramanama? What is the secret of the power it possesses today? Millions of people have uttered the name of Rama with great faith. It is the power or their devotion. Thousands of people are in the habit of repeating Ramanama. They derive no benefit out of it, because they have no devotion in their hearts. In *Kaliyuga.* even Ramanama can deceive. But the spinning-wheel can never deceive. It will at least produce yarn. I have got hundreds of people who would stand witness to the fact that even physical desire loses its edge if one sits down to spin with determination. Prabhashanker Pattani is dead. He was not a man who could have ever deceived me. He had written to me that when he sat with the spinning-wheel at night, he forgot all mundane affairs. The miracle of the spinning-wheel was revealed to him. It is another matter if he could not stick to it for good.

It was necessary to say this much in praise of the spinning-wheel because it is the most important among all the weapons that we possess. Let all of you make a resolution. That is why so much emphasis is laid on it. That is the reason why it has become so essential for the satyagraha of my conception. I wrote *Hind Swaraj* in 1909[2]. Its language may be crude but even today my pen is not prepared to polish it. I had not seen even a single spinning-wheel at

[1] A mythical cow that was supposed to give whatever was asked of her

[2] The source has "1908

the time. Not only this, I had even confused a loom with a spinning-wheel. That was exactly why I had mentioned the loom rather than the spinning-wheel in that book. But I have continued to have faith in the spinning-wheel right from those days. It has been for me a symbol of non-violence from that time on. Today I have this much strength that I can tell those who do not share this belief to quit. If those people from Travancore or Mysore or Jaipur tell me that they do not believe in such a thing, I would tell them that I cannot carry on the satyagraha with their help. They may offer satyagraha on their own responsibility, but I cannot help them.

Thus, I have presented this thing to you in a new form. Each one of us has come here to perform a *yajna* for five or six days, to purify his thoughts, and subject himself to rigorous introspection. He will tell himself that judging by the language, he gave way to anger, showed malice towards this or that person, betrayed the Sangh. Many of those who realize their errors will voluntarily remove themselves and serve the Sangh from outside, even as I am serving the Congress from outside. I claim to serve the Congress more than I did when I was a four-anna member. I have absolutely no doubt about it. Similarly let some people serve the Sangh from outside. Let those who choose to remain inside constantly examine their thoughts. All of us are probably aware that some people have got into the Sangh who have proved to be conceited and corrupt. We certainly cannot claim that everybody who has got into the Sangh has got a stamp of purity. I do hope some members of this kind will go out of their own accord. They will be serving better from outside.

Let me now come to the circular[1]. I do not wish to find fault with it. Whatever has happened has happened. Let the members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh be in the Congress. Let Sardar, Rajendra Babu, etc., be in the Congress. Let other members support them. It is their business. But the Gandhi Seva Sangh as an institution should not get involved in this. This is not within the purview of the Sangh. If the members of the Gan-dhi Seva Sangh feel called upon to interfere in

[1] The circular issued by Kishorelal Mashruwala explained that out of seven Congress Working Committee members who recommended Pattabhi Sitaramayya for the Congress Presidentship, six belonged to the Gandhi Seva Sangh and that the members realized Gandhiji's interest and involvement in the election only when he declared (*vide* "Its Implications") that he considered Pattabhi Sitaramayya's defeat as his own. The circular reminded the members of the Sangh that it was their primary duty to stay together, sinking all differences. It also condemned the wild allegations against Vallabhbhai Patel as false and mischievous vilification, adding that Gandhiji found him absolutely irreproachable.

political matters let them do so on their own responsibility. But even here it can only mean their carrying out the tenets of truth and non-violence. We shall no doubt face defeat if we do not remain within the limits of truth and non-violence. We cannot be party to all the things that are permissible there, because, being members of the Sangh, we become trustees of truth and non-violence. We can certainly allow those members to function who enter politics carrying with them the yardstick of truth and non-violence. But the function of the Gandhi Seva Sangh is altogether different. The Sangh is not concerned with what happened at Tripuri or who voted in whose favour. That is not our field. That is the field of Sardar, or those who went to Tripuri.

So much for the circular. Let me now come to the corruption within the Congress. The best remedy for the corruption is first for us to become pure. Let us make the atmosphere as clean as we can through our personal contact, because the Congress too wants to attain independence with truth and non-violence. The Congress too is a non-violent orga-nization and, if I can have my way, I would lay down strict conditions for it. But the Gandhi Seva Sangh is not opposed to the job of purifying the Congress. From one point of view the burden of our heads is light and also heavy. Those of us who wish to shoulder the burden of purifying the Congress may well do so. But that burden does not fall on everybody. On the other hand, our responsibility is very heavy because we have made ourselves the self-appointed trustees of non-violence. Thirteen of our members are on the Congress Working Committee. They will look after the task of purifying the Congress. If they do not, they will be proved worthless.

I shall now take up the question of the spread of Gandhian thought. Gandhian thought can hardly spread through books. Indeed it will be propagated best through being lived. Truth and non-violence are propagated in this manner. If we place a million books on one side and a living example on the other, the value of the example will be grater. Books are lifeless. I do not suggest that we should write no books at all. We may write books and also publish newspapers if we wish. But I want to suggest that they are not a necessary means for us. Intellectual growth of a satyagrahi depends on his following his principles. We go on repeating ‘ahimsa’, ‘ahimsa’ with our tongues but do nothing to sharpen our intelligence. We have become somewhat lethargic. The *Gita* says that there should be unity between mind and heart. When the mind and the heart are untied, we become unconquerable. The mind acquires the powers to solve all question.

We do not become non-violent simply because we do not hit anyone. We indulge in violence through our thought and reasoning. This is not a sign of a sharp intellect. Keeping ourselves alert is an

indication of sharp intelligence. When we are faced by an opponent, we should understand his viewpoint. Let us see what Jayprakash there is saying. There is an ocean of difference beween him and me. But non-violence means that we must have the patience to listen to the opponent. This is the characteristic of non-violence. This is what is meant by rushing into the mouth of the enemy. A non-violent person tells his opponent not to trouble himself too much for he is going to him on his own. It does not mean that we should become soft. We must keep our intelligence sharp. If we can, we should reply to the arguments of our opponent. We should try to understand his agruments from his point of view, and accept whatever may be acceptable. if I try to understand the point of view of my opponent, it does not mean that I have accepted everything he has said, or that I have flattered him. If we train our mind thus, we can continue to propagate truth and non-violence all through our life. This cannot be done through a monthly or bi-monthly or quarterly. My co-workers will tell you how carelessly *young India* used to be brouhgt out by me. *young India* did serve a useful purpose. In the end it just died, but satyagraha did not die. My work did not stop where *Young India* ceased publication. A satyagrahi knows that he cannot depend on external aids. Rather, He depends on inner strength. He who has faith in God will go ahead with faith in himself.

It has also been asked what we should do in the face of considerable opposition to Gandhian thought and the needlesss poisoning of the minds in Maharashtra. I have already answered this question. We should purify ourselves. If things are going wrong in Maharashtra, let us kill Shankarrao Deo. If things are going wrong in Karnataka, let us kill Gangadharrao. Do you agree, Shankarrao, Gangadharrao?[1] What more can I say in this matter?

I have been asked my opinion of the Aryasamaj satyagraha. After much testing I must tell you what I feel about it. What is going on in Hyderabad in the name of satyagraha is not dharma. Nor is it being conducted for the defence of dharma. There is much fraud in it. No one who believes in truth and non-violence can participate in it. I have got enough evidence. I have passed it on to Guptaji. The poor man had come to me. He is very much upset.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Panchama Varshik Adhiveshan (Brindaban, Bihar) ka Vivaran, pp. 7-5

[1] They nodded their headsx in agreement.

400. CABLE TO Y. M. DADOO[1]

May 4, 1939

DOCTOR DADOO
47 ENDSTREET
JOHANNESBURG

YOU HAVE TO SUFFER NOT I. THEREFORE LET GOD ALONE BE YOUR GUIDE[2]

GANDHI

From a photostat : C. W. 11353. Courtesy : E. S. Reddy; also *South Africa's Freedom Struggle*, p. 296

401. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

BRINDABAN, CHAMPARAN,
May 4, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

I hope you got my letter or letters(I forget). Khan Saheb is here and will be till 7th. I leave on 8th for Rajkot *via* Benares breaking the journey for the night in Benares to see Malaviyaji. How long I shall have to be in Rajkot I do not know.

Khan Saheb told me you were happy and were doing your work.

Here it is not all village work or village atmosphere. Plenty of motors and city amenities. These jar on one. You will be surprised to know that there is no mosquito to be found in this camp. This is due not to man's effort but nature's disposition.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6438. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 10033

[1] Leader of the Passive Resistance Committee in South Africa. "Who is Dadoo?", Gandhiji enquired later of Manilal, writing to him on June 25; *vide* "Letter to Chhanganlal Gandhi", 25-6-1939. For his acknowledgement of the identity of the addressee, *vide* "Statement to the Press", 4-4-1939

[2] This was in reply to the addressee's wire of May 2, 1939, which read : "Union Government introducing interim bill tomorrow. Community resolved offer satyag-raha. Expecting your blessings and guidance."

402. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

BRINDABAN,
May 4, 1939

MY DEAR AGATHA,

This is just to tell you I have been thinking of you.

On the Federation[1], so far as I can see, it has receded into the background. If it comes, it will be an imposition. If the governing world in England really wants to part with power, much can be done. I hope to send to A. Moore[2] a longish letter in answer to his questions. I shall send you a copy.

The war is a difficult question for me to tackle. I do not know myself what advice I can give Congress.

The letter[3] to Hitler has not yet formed itself. It won't be long.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Love to all the friends.

From a photostat: G. N. 1507

403. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH[4]

BRINDABAN,
May 4, 1939

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Take Mathew to Nagpur and get him admitted to David's dispensary if possible. Why need you stay in Nagpur for three months? Can't he be treated in Wardha? If [you think] it is absolutely

[1] The reference is to "Federation of India" embodied in the Government of India Act of 1935.

[2] Arthur Moore, Editor, *The Statesman* .

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Adolf Hitler", 23-7-1939.

[4] The letter is damaged at several places.

necessary to stay, think how . . . and send me . . . at this address up to the 8th . . . and after that wire at Rajkot . . .

[*Blessings from*]

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8561. Also C. W. 7050. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

404. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

May 4, 1939

MY DEAR MATHEW,

You have become a problem. I have ask [ed][1] Munnalal to take you to Dr. David and see if you can be kept in Nagpur or whether you can be kept in Segaon or simply sent to Nagpur for treatment. You should be patient and not worry. Whatever happens has to be suffered cheerfully. If you have any suggestion of your own don't hesitate to make it.

Love .

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1550

405. SPEECH AT TEACHERS' TRAINING CAMP, BRINDABAN[2]

May 4, 1939

I should like to tell you what I saw today. First I visited the exhibition.[3] It is very good. They say in size it is one-fourth of the Tripuri exhibition. The one-fourth that I saw pleased me immensely. It does not mean that my happiness would have been four time as much if I had seen the whole exhibition. In the Tripuri exhibition, the major contribution was from the Jamia Millia of Delhi, while here they have contributed nothing. Their contribution was indeed very large. I was able to visit the exhibition today only for a few minutes. It is certainly very large. If I had a whole day I would have seen the whole of it and could have gained much. I would have seen to what point

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The camp was organized by the All-India Talimi Sangh to prepare teachers under the Wardha Scheme of Education.

[3] This was organized by Ashadevi Aryanayakam to demonstrate the various aspects of basic education.

they have taken basic education, how much they have succeeded in planning education through a craft and how they correlate the craft with other subjects.

I would like you to study this exhibition. Observe everything very carefully. Let me give you only one example. We did not know that a carding-bow made from *munj* grass can be so efficient. It is so good that in some respects it is even better than the bow made of catgut. For fine carding it is excellent. Every fibre of the cotton is separated. Besides it is not harmful to health. Even a person like me whose heart has become weak can comfortably card his cotton with it. It is also nice to look at. No effort is required in plying it. One derives only pleasure. This is just an example to show what progress we can make in such small things. It is the invention of someone who has devoted all his mind and inventive genius to it.

I should like you to study and assess the exhibition from this point of view. There is no limit to the progress we can make. We are not good teachers if we are not able to develop originality in us through this kind of education. Education through a craft is the pivot of basic education. You must cultivate your creative instinct to be able to develop your mind through various crafts and teach innumerable things by putting your creative genius and resourcefulness to use and discover new things.

Today we are dependent on only two crafts. Let us take these. We have found two men who could develop their minds through these crafts. That is why Ashadevi and Aryanayakam could carry on their work. We found Vinoba for the *takli.* And we have found another gentleman to show us how one can develop one's mind through cardboard-making. These two men showed us how full of possibilities the two crafts are. If you cannot do as they did you will never develop creative instinct. If such men were not there neither Zakir Saheb nor Ashadevi could have achieved anything. I would like you to see the exhibition with a view to developing creative instinct through this system of education. It is not our aim to teach industry and handicraft in the traditional way. We want to make crafts a living medium of education.

I then went to the school. I found the teacher quite intelligent. All the boys were plying *taklis.* I claim that I know the science of the *takli*, the charkha and the loom very well. Although I lack skill in working them, I know much about them. I immediately noticed that

there was something wrong somewhere. Either the teacher himself did not know how to spin on the *takli* or the boys were taught wrong. I detected the flaw immediately. The boys were taking four times as long over an operation that should take half a minute. They kept on twisting the *takli.* when they drew the thread. That is not the right method of drawing yarn. The yarn should get the twist as we draw it. There is no need to give any further twist. The yarn instead of becoming strong becomes useless if it is twisted even just a little more than necessary. And also one can never increase one's speed.

I also noticed a few more shortcomings which I do not mention here. I have told Nayakamji that a teacher who is not doing well in his craft should be considered useless, however intelligent he may be. However much he may have read of the science of the charkha and the loom, he is not fit to be a teacher if he cannot spin well. He cannot even become a clerk. He is utterly useless. It is our claim that the mind can be developed through a craft and that is our yardstick. That is the central point of our scheme.

I will therefore first see the quality of the teacher's yarn—whether it is even or not, whether it is strong or not. If it has these qualities I will say that he is a good artisan but if his proficiency in the craft does not help him to develop his intellect, he will not have originality. He will go on plying the charkha and the loom for generations and never make any improvements. That has been the history of India. That is so because there was no correlation between the hand and the mind. Artisans never paid any attention to the improvement of their tools and methods of work and those who did mental work were not concerned with the crafts. So both lost their creative instinct.

I will test the intelligence of the teachers also from this point of view. They should learn their craft in this way and take pleasure in it. The scheme will come to naught if teachers do not train themselves in this manner. If it gets known that the scheme has failed in this manner, the people will laugh at them. However, that is not what I am afraid of. I will be satisfied only when I see that things are happening as I had wished. If they are not, then even if the whole world praises us for our work I will not be deceived. I am feeling apprehensive although the basic education scheme is much admired today. The teachers working under the scheme are feeling Jubilant. But maybe we are deceiving ourselves. I should like you to learn the art of gaining

knowledge through a craft. That art and knowledge is a rare thing. You must utilize your knowledge of B. A. and M. A. degrees to this end. It should be your duty to make education, which is a dull and drab affair today, a lively and fascinating subject. It is my claim that by the method I have suggested a rare enlightenment will be produced.

To me intellectual education and bookish education are not the same thing. In my opinion a man whose intellect is not correlated with his hands is not intelligent. Would you call a man an authority on the Vedas if he has memorized words from the Vedas and has learnt by heart its commentaries? What I would ask is how far he has assimilated the real meaning of the Vedas. His conduct will be an indication. I have set before you the main idea behind this scheme.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 8-7-1939.

406. TELEGRAM TO K. P. PILLAI

May 5, 1939

KAINIKKARA PADMANABHA PILLAI
KRISHNAVILAS, KUNNUMKUZHI
TRIVANDRUM

REACHING RAJKOT TWELFTH. CAN MEET RAJKOT AFTER TWELFTH.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

407. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING, BRINDABAN–I

May 5, 1939

Here are some questions received from Annada Babu. He says he is asking the questions not for himself but for others.

QUESTION: Your statement[1] after Subhas Babu's election has somewhat changed the situation. Why did you not issue any statement at the time of the election? Some people are of the view that the present situation would not have arisen if you had issued a statement at the time of the election.

ANSWER: It is true that I did not issue any statement. According to Annada Babu that has changed the situation. What he means is that the

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 31-1-1939

situation would not have taken the turn it did if I had issued a statement earlier. But the statement issued by Sardar Vallabhbhai and others contained a small sentence which suggested that I too was connected with it. Moreover, there was no particular occasion then. I saw no need to issue a statement at the time. It became necessary subsequently. It is a long story. I shall not go into it. It was not a question of my having been sluggish. Nor was there any mistake in explaining the situation to the country. I had conveyed to Subhas Babu what I felt. That is the way I work. In the end all that remains is for me to put up with any misunderstanding that may have arisen. If there are any more questions from anyone on the point they will be welcome.

Some people are under the impression that you were not in favour of the Pant resolution. What was your reaction when you first knew about the resolution? Why did you write to Subhas Babu that the more you thought of it the more you disliked it? Kindly explain.

First of all, you are all aware that I was confined to bed at the time. It is not my way to interfere in something with which I am not concerned. That is why I remained indifferent to the developments at Tripuri. So much so that I even avoided reading the newspapers in those days. My mind was preoccupied with Rajkot. Someone reported to me that Pantji intended to move some such resolution. I understood at the time that the resolution would express confidence in the old Working Committee. I stated that while expression of confidence was all right I would have done something more if I was there. I had said even at Wardha that if they had the courage they should bring a motion of no-confidence against Subhas Babu. It would have been a straightforward thing to do. If the delegates to the Congress felt that they had made a mistake in electing Subhas Babu, this was the only civilized way open to them. But probably the atmosphere was not quite favourable then. I had a feeling that Subhas Babu would form his own Working Committee. But that did not happen. Then it was that the Pant resolution came up. All I heard was that the resolution expressed confidence in the people who had gone out. I said if that was all there was in the resolution it was all right. But I had nothing to do with it. I saw the resolution later. Then followed an exchange of letters with Subhas Babu. The letter to which Annada Babu has referred is not before you. When I read the Pant resolution, I found that it contained a suggestion that Subhas Babu should be guided by me. I thoroughly disapproved of the idea. So much so that I refused

to do anything of the kind. I stuck to my refusal to the end. It is possible that this may lead to some misunderstanding. I shall have to put up with it. How can I do a thing which I consider wrong? I told him that he should form a Working Committee of his choice, formulate a programme and implement it. I would clear the atmosphere if I could. If not, the work would go on and gradually we would be able to change the atmosphere. That is why when at Calcutta I was asked to name the Working Committee I found the idea repugnant. There I had some material, in view of which I felt it would be wrong to do so. Nobody had such material at Tripuri. Subsequent exchange of letters further confirmed me in my opinion. Later on I also came to know about the ill-feeling generated. How could I announce any names under those conditions? It would be subjecting Subhas Babu to coercion. Can the ship of the nation sail smoothly if I subject Subhas Babu to coercion? It would be like sinking it. I said I would not do it. I also said that if they wanted to have the old members of the Working Committee back, they should consult among themselves and if they were agreeable both sides could work together. But I would not be party to imposing any names on Subhas Babu. The more I think about that resolution, the more I dislike it. I cannot serve the nation according to the terms of that resolution. However much anyone may insist, I just cannot choose names for the Working Committee. My doing so would be coercion against Subhas Babu. And coercion is violence. How can I resort to it? I have told you of my feelings as to the Pant resolution. Even if people think that I have served the country well it surely does not give me the right to use coercion against anybody !

What was the difficulty in giving the names when Subhas Babu himself had agreed to accept any names you suggested?

What the question means is that through the Pant resolution Tripuri ordered me to do a certain thing and ordered Subhas Babu to do a certain thing. Subhas Babu was willing to do as ordered, then why did I defy it? Where was the question of coercion in giving the names for the Working Committee in pursuance of that order? Seemingly the argument is attractive. But it is fallacious. Supposing somebody were to come to me tomorrow and say that I had been ordered to abuse him and hit him as I please? When there was such a gulf between me and Subhas Babu, would it have been civilized behaviour to inflict some names on him merely by virtue of that right? Having a right surely does not mean that I should exercise that

right in utter disregard of my sense of proportion. If someone were to behave with me thus I would not like it. Supposing tomorrow I am given the right to abuse everybody, would it then become my duty to exercise that right? There is a distincion between right and duty. The exercise of right depends on one's sense of duty. It is my duty to follow dharma. I do not think only of my own importance. It is of no consequence to me. I think in terms of the nation. I do what I consider my duty.

Cannot your correspondence with Subhas Babu be published? If not, will you please explain why?

At one stage it had been decided to publish the correspondence. Later on, after Jawaharlal's arrival it was decided to withhold the publication. It was also decided that I should not issue any statement. It would not be in the interest of the nation. In this my attitude was that Subhas Babu should do only what suited him. This should be our only attitude if we are non-violent. It is none of our concern to publish any correspondence. We should withhold the publication as long as we can. It becomes our duty to publish the correspondence only when someone does something contrary to what he has written in a letter. There is no such question here. That is why I have left it to Subhas Babu. If any misunderstanding arises from the correspondence not being published, it will not bring any particular harm. The other person will publish it when he thinks it is necessary to do so. When it becomes ancient history, it will be abandoned.

Let me now come to Shankar Rao's two questions. I shall take up the second question first because it is related to the same topic.

You have mentioned in one of the letters to Subhas Babu that there are fundamental differences between you and him. What are those differences ?

It would be better for me not to mention the correspondence between us. That would make the explanation too long. I shall explain the thing briefly. I think he still holds the view he had expressed at Jalpaiguri. I saw that I could not associate myself with any part of it. It includes giving an ultimatum to the Government. He holds that we possess enough resources for a fight. I am totally opposed to his views. Today we possess no resources for a fight. Today the whole atmosphere is so steeped in violence that I cannot think of fighting. How did the violent incidents take place at Ranpur in Orissa and Ramdurg in Karnataka? Pantji could not control things at Kanpur. We have no control at all over the Shias and Sunnis in Lucknow. There is

no limit to communal strife. We cannot carry on by controlling just a handful of Congressmen. It had ever been our boast that the whole country was with us. Today we are not able to control more than a handful of people. Workers and peasants too were supposed to be entirely with the Congress. We do not have the same hold among the peasants of Bihar as we used to. Is this a situation favourable for starting a struggle? There is a difference between the work of the congress and that of the people who believe in violence. If today I am asked to start the 'Dandi March', I have not the courage to do so. How can we do anything without the workers and peasants? The country belongs only to them. I am not equipped to issue an ultimatum to the Government. The country would only be exposed to ridicule. But Subhas Babu thinks that we are ready for the struggle. This is a great and fundamental difference of opinion. We differ in our ideas of the resources needed for the struggle. My conception of satyagraha is not his. Is this difference of opinion not fundamental? I cannot give out all these things to the Press right now, because it would not do any good. I shall write about it when the time comes. So much for the fundamental differences. It has been covered in our letters also. I have put the matter to you simply. It has nothing to do with personal differences.

The same is true of the corruption in the Congress. There the difference between me and him is one of degree. He also agrees that there is corruption. But he feels that it is not of such proportion as to cause worry. But in my view, we shall not be able to do anything so long as this corruption persists. For me there is no difference between civil disobedience and office-acceptance. Both are part of the satyagraha movement. Thus my point of view and assessment of the situation are altogether different from his. He does not mean the same thing by satyagraha as I do. Hence, sometimes even the difference of degree becomes a fundamental difference. I have become so impatient of the corruption prevailing in the Congress that I should not hesitate to bury the organization if the corruption cannot be removed. In a non-violent organization there can be no place for some of the things that pass in a violent organization. The example of a violent war cannot apply here. Now you will have understood what I mean by fundamental differences.

Are not your differences with the socialists and Jawaharlalji also fundamental? Would you take up a similar attitude with regard to them?

No. My differences with the socialists are of a different kind. Do not confuse the two. They differ with Subhas Babu on the question of giving an ultimatum to the Government. I do not know who exactly sup-ports him on the point. That is why in spite of my having sharp and even fundamental differences with the socialists my attitude towards them is different. Moreover, we cannot put the socialists and Jawaharlal in the same category. Jawaharlal does not lend his name to any socialist group. He believes in socialism. He mixes with the socialists and consults them. But there is considerable difference between their methods of work. The differences between me and the socialists are widely known. I believe in change of heart and in working for it. They do not. They make fun of the spinning-wheel. But even so the socialists are coming nearer to me every day. Or, you may say that I am moving nearer to them. Or, that we are moving nearer to each other. I cannot say how long it will continue. It is quite likely that one day our ways will part. The same thing happened with Subhas Babu. The Jalpaiguri resolution brought our differences to the fore. There are certainly differences between Jawaharlal and me. But they are not significant. Without him I feel myself a cripple. He also feels more or less the same way. Our hearts are one. This intimate relationship between us has not started with politics. It is very much older and deeper. We shall leave it at that.

I shall come now to Gangadharrao's question.

The socialists say that while you are tolerant and liberal, we others are intolerant and narrow-minded. For instance you might be prepared to take them on the Working Committee but we would not agree to it. What is the reason for this?

How can I say? How can I answer that? You should search your own hearts for the reason. I can only say that in this matter you must follow me. You must be as gentle of speech as I am. The socialists come to me frowning, but they leave smiling. This does not mean that I do not express to them my differences with them. I tell them frankly what is in my heart. I do not flatter them, but try to enter their hearts. I have faith in their honesty. I try to understand their point of view. I find time to talk to them. You should treat them with the same courtesy. I can go so far to help you.

Now one more question remains. But it is very important. Other things are of only passing importance. You are all in Gandhi Seva Sangh. I have read its constitution. It contains many things. You believe in certain principles. If the question Annada raised had been

raised on the Congress platform it would have been a different matter. But when it is raised on the Sangh platform I feel a little grieved. Why should you entertain such doubts? The differences between me and Subhas Babu are of a passing nature. But if this leads to bad blood between us, the country will be ruined.

Differences of opinion should never lead to bitterness. You are all believers in religious tolerance. I would suggest that you must broaden the definition of religious tolerance. We must also include in it the moderates and the radicals. We must see equality between the moderates and the radicals. We should have respect even for those who call themselves radicals. We must look at the views of the radicals from their angle and those of the moderates from theirs. We should see our dharma with our eyes and those of others with theirs. This is religious tolerance. This means that we must emphasize the points on which there is agreement between us. We should not stress the points of difference. Just because I respect Islam and Christianity I do not become a Muslim or a Christian. What I mean to say is that I respect these religions as much as I respect my own religion. But I would not be converted to either Islam or Christianity. What is the sense in my reading the Koran or the Bible, if I remain intolerant? This is not the correct meaning of the expression 'religious tolerance'. In politics too let us take our differences in the same light. Let us regard the socialists too in the same way. If we take this attitude our differences would be only temporary and we would try to end the quarrels as far as possible. If we do not do so, we shall become narrow minded. We shall get entangled in small quarrels. Man shapes himself after the dharma he follows. If we forget larger issues and remember only the small points which cause differences, the country will be completely ruined.

Why is it so difficult to discover the points of agreement? The royal road of non-violence consists of mutual trust and willingness to understand another's point of view with an unprejudiced mind. In this connection I take up once again the matter of that circular[1]. I have read it again. The central point in it is the same. The central point is the Sardar. Many people have a feeling that the Sardar does not work properly. Deep down in their hearts they feel that he has been unfair in the cases of Nariman, Khare and Subhas. But they should frankly

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, "Speech at Gandhi Seva Sangh Meeting, Brindaban", 3-5-1939

express themselves. This is the inviolable dharma of the votaries of ahimsa. This is our dharma in relation to the whole world. If we feel distrust or anger for anybody, it is our duty to go straight to that person and understand his point of view. We should remember two statements from the Bible. In the matter of morality the word of the Bible or any other scripture should be considered as authentic as that of the Vedas. One of these statements is: "Agree with thine adversary quickly"[1] and the other statement is: "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath"[2]. To me these utterances are as precious as anything in the Vedas. This is the very root of ahimsa. Indeed ahimsa has to rush into the mouth of *himsa*. If you feel that the Sardar has been unfair to Subhas Babu, unfair to Nariman and unfair to Khare, let me say that the blame for the Khare affair and the Nariman affair lies with me. I am not saying this to protect the Sardar. I am making a statement of fact. But it is now irrelevant. I call myself a seeker of truth, a speaker to truth and a satyagrahi. I will not therefore deliberately give support to those reso-rting to injustice. But if you have anything against the Sardar in your hearts, you should go and speak to him. If you are not satisfied with his explanation or if there is still something rankling in your heart, it becomes your duty to relieve the Sardar from the Sangh. Thereby he would not cease to belong to the Gandhi Seva Sangh. I freed myself from the Congress and continued to serve the Congress. Your relieving the Sardar from the Sangh would not mean that you have become his enemies or he has become your enemy.

What I say of the Sardar I say of everyone. We have Appa Patwardhan here. He is a great mathematician. With the help of mathematics he can explain the mechanism of the charkha in great detail. He has faith in the charkha, he believes in khadi and ahimsa. But supposing he begins to have doubts, he loses confidence in the honesty of the members, must he then continue in the Sangh? Must he necessarily cease to serve like other members of the Sangh simply because he is no longer a member? Or because he cannot be a member of the Sangh, does it mean that he is worse than the rest of us? But when there is mutual distrust there cannot be any Sangh. Only so long as we honestly believe that no one belonging to the Sangh can deliberately act improperly will our path be easy. As soon as a doubt

[1] *St. Matthew,*
[2] *Ephesians,*

arises in our heart we must seek mutual explanations. I do not wish to suggest that those who thus suspect the Sardar are bad while the Sardar is good. I would never utter such a thing. I have merely indicated the way. The Sardar himself has been saying that if there are any suspicions concerning him he would not like to remain in the Sangh. You may be aware that a few days ago there was a heated exchange of words between the Sardar and Jamnalalji. Jamnalalji said he would leave the Sangh. The Sardar said Jamnalalji had created the Sangh. Why should he leave? Rather, he himself would leave. Then both of them wanted to be relieved assuring they would continue to work for the Sangh. But neither of them left because at heart they had nothing against each other. Whatever misunderstanding was there, was cleared. There was no question of bad blood. Similarly the Sardar is seeking to be relieved today. If there is even the slightest suspicion concerning him in our hearts we must drive it out. If a large number of people have suspicions about him he must go out.

But there should not be a single person who has distrust about any member. These things do not seem very important so long as they are limited in extent. But if they become widespread the Sangh will be destroyed. Then the conclusion to be drawn will be that in the present age no organization of satyagrahis and votaries of ahimsa can be formed. But it is my claim that it is very easy to organize those who believe in truth. Im my life I have made special attempts to make a collective dharma of truth and non-violence. But if distrust becomes widespread in our organization, if, even at the end of fifty years, I have to confess that the believers in truth and non-violence cannot be brought together as an organization; then I shall declare it—confess it shamelessly—and say that after fifty years I have come to the conclusion that the unique idea I had developed in my life cannot be worked through an organization, that it is not capable of being organized. Then the Sangh will have to be discontinued. But today I have hope in my heart. I consider it my supreme dharma to see truth and non-violence organized .

Now I come to Deo's first question. It is the principal question.

In what way are the constructive programme and non-violence closely related? kindly explain.

If the constructive programme is not closely related to non-violence, what else can be? Hindu-Muslim unity, removal of untouchability, prohibition and the fourth is charkha. The relation of the first

three items with non-violence is very clear. How can any-one who believes in non-violence regard anybody as untouchable even for a mo-ment? How can he allow his mind to degenerate by taking alcohol? How can he have feelings of hostility against the Muslims or any other religious group? There cannot be any mass satyagraha unless all this is taken for granted. This is true for me and for Subhas Babu. Even Subhas Babu cannot start a satyagraha unless these conditions are fulfilled.

Now for the charkha. To me the charkha is the symbol of non-violence. As I have already said, its basis is dedication. The same is true of Ramanama. Ramanama has no independent power. It is not a quinine pill, which has a power of its own. One may or may not trust that power. It is as effective when A has malaria as when B has it. It destroys mal-aria germs wherever they may be. Ramanama has no such independent power. A *mantra* acquires power through dedication. *Gayatri* is a *mantra* for me. I have willed *moksha* through it. For a Muslim his *kalma* is the *mantra*. There is a great difference in a Muslim reading *kalma* and my doing so. When a Muslim reads *kalma* he becomes a different man, because he has willed his *moksha* through it.

The Charkha has no independent power that will give you swaraj. But if I am resolved that I shall learn the lessons of non-violence through charkha and secure swaraj through it, it becomes for me a tangible means for attaining swaraj. The place that Gandhi Seva Sangh has given to the charkha is not merely to provide a little money to the poor. What is the economic necessity of having mass spinning for half an hour? And where is the need for silence? After all, how much are you going to spin in half an hour? The nation resolved in 1920 to attain swaraj through non-violent means. We have filled the charkha with the power of that resolve. Since then this process has been continuing. Impelled by that resolve we ply the charkha here. The charkha is thus a symbol of the resolve of all of us—Hindu and Muslim, rich and poor, young and old. What closer relation can I point out? So long as every house does not have a charkha, so long as there is not total prohibition, so long as there is no Hindu-Muslim unity and complete removal of untouchability we cannot have the mass satyagraha which Subhas Babu wants and which I also want. Till then we cannot be fit for civil disobedience.

The right of civil disobedience will come only when we have

learnt willingly to obey the laws we ourselves have created. Today I do not feel like telling Deo to go and offer satyagraha at Kolhapur, or telling Ramachandran and Radhakrishna to start satyagraha in Travancore and Jaipur. Two months ago I was willing to give them the permission. Things which did not appear to me ugly two months ago appear ugly to me now. That was why I had given permission to Jamnalalji. But certain things to me have assumed today a greater importance and greater value.

I discovered these things in the laboratory of Rajkot. The great strength I acquired through that experiment brought very happy consequences. I can make you laugh by describing things that happened at Rajkot. I am drinking deep the elixir of the strength I acquired at Rajkot. I am beginning to gain control over the atmosphere. My task is becoming easier. I cannot get work out of many people, because I have become more strict. But what does it matter if I can only find five persons at Rajkot? I shall complete the work with their help. If there are five persons, I can start my campaign only with them. I had said in 1920 that we could start the work even if there was only one true satyagrahi available, and we would definitely be victorious. Probably Vallabhbhai will testify to this. It is my endeavour to become such satyagrahi.

When the question of the Rowlatt Act arose I said that there was a way out, but that I could not all by myself do anything. For I was an imperfect satyagrahi. I might be able to do something if some people joined me. Then Shankerlal came, Horniman, Sarojini, Jamnadas Dwarkadas and Umar Sobhani—the poor man is dead now—all came. I got support from all these people. It was such a conglomeration—but it awakened India and added to my strength. I want warmth and help from everyone. In trying to get co-operation from all and organizing them I increase my own strength. My power of introspection is increasing. I am a very selfish person. I do not merely watch you when I give you time. I place much value on my time. If I feel that by giving you time I would not be bringing some benefit to myself I would not be doing any such suicidal thing. I give you time because I find that I stand to gain something by doing so. It is of no consequence to me whether you gain something or not. What I am concerned with is whether I gain anything. I see if I am not heading for a downfall. I do not give you time in order to entice you. I only increase my strength. And my strength has increased that way. I have reached the age of seventy years. But my powers have not

dimmed. I realize my responsibility. I would keep my vow, whatever it may be. What does it matter if I am left alone? I did the same thing in the Transvaal. I had taken a vow that I would give a fight to the Transvaal Government even if I was the only one to do so and win. The concept of satyagraha was not even born yet. Millions of people can thus be organized by a mere act of will. I have countless proofs of this. What happened when we decided to have the hartal[1] on April 6? We had not organized anything. But people fasted and responded to the call of hartal throughout the length and breadth of the country. That was the beginning of swaraj for the country. That task was accomplished by sheer determination. But because of lack of training in constructive work it could not be continued. So long as you do not value the constructive programme and are not convinced that civil disobedience cannot be carried on without it, you will ever be disappointed. The constructive programme may take time but there is no other way.

We cannot make satyagraha complete without the constructive programme. An atmosphere of non-violence cannot be created without it. This is the only way of my working. That is why when Surendra went to Gujarat I told him that if nobody wanted his services, if nobody came to him he should think of the charkha and spin for all the twenty-four hours. If we did it with a resolute mind that alone would be an act of service. I have absolutely no doubt about it. My conviction is becoming stronger and stronger day by day.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Panchama Varshik Adhiveshan (Brindaban, Bihar) ka Vivaran, pp. 30-40

408. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

BRINDABAN,
May 6, 1939

SUBHAS BOSE
CALCUTTA

RELEASE CORRESPONDENCE. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindu, 13-5-1939.

[1] In 1919, against the Rowlatt Bill

409. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ON THE TRAIN,
May 6, 1939

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have received your two letters. Who told you about the cabinet? I have not even heard the mention of Pu. 's[1] name in that connection. When the thing itself is not there, why talk about it? I have not understood the purport of the second letter. I do not even know what Pu. has done. Can you not have such things cleared up with V.[2]? He will be knowing everything. You should understand that in public life and in democratic functioning everyone has the experiences that you have had. We must be made of sterner stuff.

I gather from Mahadev that you are not keeping good health. It seems you are also having blood-pressure. In that case, you must take rest. What has happened to Taramati?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

410. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING, BRINDABAN–II

May 6, 1939

I have here some slips which the President has passed on to me. One of them is from Appasaheb Patwardhan. I shall first deal with his question .

QUESTION: In what way can the members try to put into practice the principle of a living wage?[3]

°ANSWER: There is no harm in adopting any means which is morally proper. One individual may take to carpentry for a living. He can earn Rs. 15 from this work. Or, he can take to carding or tailoring. A member of the Gandhi Seva Sangh would choose only

[1] Presumably Purushottamdas Tandon
[2] Vallabhbhai Patel
[3] According to the source Gandhiji misunderstood the question and interpreted "living wage" as work for a living.

those occupations which are available to thousands of people earning their livelihood by doing manual work. But he will not work merely to earn his livelihood. He is aware of the hardships people have to undergo while earning their livelihood. But as far as he himself is concerned, as he earns his livelihood he also renders some service. Apart from these occupations, members can also supplement their income through teaching. Anyone who requires more and who also has Appa's knowledge of mathematics can even become a professor[1] . But these are exceptions as far as I am concerned. I would always prefer manual work for a livelihood.

I am either unable to understand your theory of trusteeship or my reason cannot grasp it. Will you kindly explain it ?

It is the same thing whether you are unable to understand it or your reason does not accept it. How can I explain such an important principle in a few minutes? Still I shall try to explain it in brief. Just imagine that I have a crore of rupees in my possession. I can either squander the amount in dissipation or take up the attitude that the money does not belong to me, that I do not own it, that it is a bequest, that it has been put in my possession by God and that only so much of it is mine as is enough for my requirements. My requirements also should be like those of the millions. My requirements cannot be greater because I happen to be theson of a rich man. I cannot spend the money on my pleasures. The man who takes for himself only enough to satisfy the needs customary in his society and spends the rest for social service becomes a trustee.

Ever since the idea of socialism became popular in India, we have been confronted with the question as to what our attitude should be towards the Princes and millionaires. The socialists say that the Princes and the millionaires should be done away with, that all must become workers. They advocate confiscation of the properties of all these people and say that they should be given the same wages as everyone else—from Rs. 5 to eight annas a day or Rs. 15 a month. So much for what the socialists say. We too assert that the rich are not the owners of their wealth whereas the labourer is the owner of his labour. He is, therefore. from our point of view, richer than the rich. A zamindar can be recognized as the owner of one, two or ten *bighas* of land. That is to say, of as much as may be necessary for his livelihood.

[1] Gandhiji has used the English term.

We also want that his wages should not be higher than those of the labourer, that he should maintain himself on eight annas a day and use the rest of his wealth for the welfare of society. But we would not take away his property by force. This is the most important point. We also wish that the Princes and the millionaires too should do manual work and maintain themselves on eight annas a day, considering the rest of their property as national trust.

At this point it may be asked as to how many trustees of this type one can really find. As a matter of fact, such a question should not arise at all. It is not directly related to our theory. There may be just one such trustee or there may be none at all. Why should we worry about it? We should have the faith that we can, without violence or with so little violence that it can hardly be called violence, create such a feeling among the rich. We should act in that faith. That is sufficient for us. We should demonstrate through our endeavour that we can end economic disparity with the help of non-violence. Only those who have no faith in non-violence can ask how many trustees of this kind can be found.

You may say that such a thing can never happen. You may consider it as something not in keeping with human nature. But I cannot believe that you are not able to understand it or that your reason cannot grasp it.

I fully endorse your view about varnadharma. But putting it into practice is a really complicated matter. Will you please elucidate ?

Today castes have become mongrelized. Varnas have disappeared. In such a situation how should those believing in the varnas proceed? This is what this question implies. Today there is only one varna. Call it the Shudra varna. We cannot say Atishudra since we do not believe in untouchability. We do not believe in a fifth varna. Hence only the fourth varna, that is, Shudra is left. Let all of us consider that we are Shudras. Then there will be no feeling of high or low left. Envy and discrimination will automatically disappear. This is the only thing that would be fitting in the prevailing atmoshpere. Brahmins are a rarity these days. Who possesses learning which is unique and will make for the welfare of the world? And where is the man who will expect nothing for that learning? As for the Kshatriyas there are none left in India. If there had been any, the country would not have lost its freedom. India would not remain in her present condition if great learning and great valour could be found here. So

far as the Vaishyas are concerned, Vaishyadharma is a varnadharma. It is not merely an occupation to earn money. It is a duty, not a right. They should use their wealth for the benefit of society. Many of the occupations which the Banias follow are immoral. Earning too much money is also immoral. Many of these occupations cannot be included in varnadharama. This means that today even the Vaishyas are not there. Only some money-grubbing professional people are left. Three varnas have thus passed out. That leaves us the Shudras. They possess no learning. They consider themselves slaves. They do not serve with knowledge. That is to say, there are not really even Shudras left in India. In other words, we cannot say that even one of the four varnas is still extant. Even so, since we believe in varnadharma, let us accept the dharma of service. Let us adopt Shudradharma. This does not mean that we should discard learning. We should acquire as much learning as we should. We should acquire as much valour, that is, fearlessness as we can. We must develop commerce and industries to the greatest possible extent. If we do all these things out of a sense of service and devotion, true Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas may be born amongst us. Then there would be no feeling of high or low among them. If we do something like this something may happen in future. When such varnadharma prevails, all the bickerings that go on in the name of communism, socialism, Congressism, Gandhism, casteism, etc., would be over. Now there are a few questions from Balubhai.

When shri Thakar and I started village uplift work, Gandhiji had laid down an important condition, that the people of the area we want to serve should furnish us free accommodation as a proof of their desire for our service. Now, I would go further and lay down the condition that we should go only to those villages where people are eager for village reforms and, when the time comes, the village leaders are prepared to do physical work and spend money from their own pockets. Where the village leaders are not co-operative, no improvement is possible—no matter how long the village workers stay there. I would like to know how far this opinion of mine is valid.

There are many other social workers like Balubhai and Thakar in Maharashtra. They were very optimistic when they first started work. But now they say that however much they work, so much poison has spread there that persons wearing Gandhi caps are looked upon with contempt. Even the services of the people wearing Gandhi caps are forsaken. It is possible to feel disheartened under these circumstances. Many years ago Balubhai and Thakar had come to consult me before starting their work. I had suggested to them that

one test of whether or not the villagers were keen about their services would be that they should at least provide the material for building a hut. Now Balubhai feels that this condition is not enough. He suggests that some more conditions should be laid down. But I am not prepared to go beyond this. This condition does not lay down a limit. If the village people also give us food, why should there be any objection from my side? I have only suggested the minimun condition we should lay down. And we must consider it the maximum. There is no need to go beyond this.

The same thing happened to me at Sevagaon. I asked the people in the village whether I should shift to their village. Land was provided by Jamnalalji. Our people are very courteous. They talked to me very respectfully. But they said whatever they had to say. An old man came to me and said: "You can come to Sevagaon. You will be doing us an honour. But we shall not allow the untouchables to enter the temples. You should not expect any such thing from us." Despite this I went there and have stayed there. If the people fulfil our one condition and give us some place to stay we should not feel disheartened.

How long can poison last? The newspapers say all sorts of things about the Gandhians, about me and about the Sardar. If we are as they represent us, then they are right in saying what they do. We must then confess everything. Why should they accept our services if we are really that bad? They would not accept even medicine from our hands. They would be having a lurking fear that we might give them poison along with the medicine. If there is an unworthy motive in our giving them medicine, they can refuse to have it saying they would rather die. If someone comes to serve me but harbours a secret wish to kill me in the end I would not trust such a man and tell him so. If people really have such suspicions about us, we must remove them by dedicated service. We must create confidence among the people that our intention is only to serve, and we mean no harm to them. If we turn back in disappointment in the face of their protests, then we are not giving them even a chance to test our *bona fide*. The test for us would be only when we persist in our work. If we stick on even when they have burnt down our hut, then the wrong impression about us will be removed. They will relent when they see that we are not perturbed even when they burn our hut, beat us, abuse us or stop our water.

The newspapers are publishing all sorts of things about us; but

why should we feel ashamed? Yes, we should feel ashamed of whatever truth there may be in those reports, and should try to rid ourselves of the blemishes. If we are not as evil as they paint us, why should we be bothered? And, why should we be afraid of confessing to anything evil that may be in us? If the *Vividhavritta*[1] reports that a particular person is a drunkard or this or that, whatever truth there may be in the report should be admitted. The person concerned should acknowledge that he does take a stealthy drink at night, and occasionally indulges in sensuous pleasures. If we admit our faults and know that they exist, there is a chance of our correcting ourselves.We must tell the people that we have certain faults in us, and would gradually overcome them. Escaping from a situation can never be part of our code of behaviour. That is not the way a satyagrahi can follow his duty. If our faith is complete, there is no reason to despair.

Now you may ask what you should do about a livelihood while you are staying in the villages. Appa had asked the same question. You should do manual work. You can sweep the approaches to the village or do some other things, and maintain yourself on the few pice you may earn. If you get foodgrains in lieu of money, you should manage with that. You may not always get money from the Gandhi Seva Sangh. What does it matter if your body is ruined? One who has determination will face any hardships that may come his way and this will bring him hope out of despair.

The next question is from Achyut Deshpande.

When a small clan in a Princely State claiming the right of conquest or kinship with the ruler not only opposes the people's fight for justice but helps the ruler in crushing such a movement, even violently attacking those who participate in the movement, the people come to have the same attitude towards it as towards the ruler. Is this not natural? What can one do to heal the breach thus caused between two sections of the population? Would it not be practicable for a time to ignore this problem? Is it wrong to think that the problem would be more easily solved through being ignored?

I have not been able to understand this question fully. But the answer to what little I have understood has been furnished in the discussion we have been having for the past two or three days. This precisely is the reason why I have suspended the campaign in the States and why I do not have the courage to start a countrywide

[1] Marathi weekly published from Bombay.

movement. Where there is a danger of ill will or violence being generated it is our duty not to start any agitation. For it will not last. It will create misunderstandings. People will stray into erroneous paths. It will not be enough for us ourselves to be non-violent.

Take an example. I stay at Segaon. Suppose there is a snake there. I will have to remove that snake from there and confine it to a place where people will not feel endangered by it. Or, suppose there is an outbreak of the plague somewhere. I go there to help. For myself I depend on the protection of God. But should I, for that matter, go to the people without bathing or washing myself? There is the risk of people catching the contagion. My non-violent duty consists in my going to others only after washing myself. Then suppose smallpox breaks out in a village. A few among us do not believe in vaccination and so do not get themselves vaccinated. Still they want to serve the people. We are convinced that vaccination has failed. But it would not be proper to be carriers of the disease among the people whom we want to serve. Hence our non-violent duty lies in either getting ourselves vaccinated or quitting the place. The lesser dharma of not getting ourselves vaccinated disappears in front of this paramount dharma. I was asked to give my view about the legislation concerning vaccination in Bombay and Madras. I told Dr. Varki that those who did not believe in vaccination should either leave the area or get themselves vaccinated. This is ahimsa. In a way it is easy, in another way it is not so easy.

Take another example. We have planted a small orchard at Sabarmati. Monkeys come and pillage it. People feed these monkeys. So they stay on there. You go to Mathura and Brindaban. There are so many monkeys around that people cannot live in peace. But in the adjoining cantonment area there is not a single monkey. It is not ahimsa dharma thus to feed the monkeys. It is unjust to other people. The same is true of our campaigns. Not only our opponents, but also our supporters are full of violence. Other people want to destroy swaraj altogether. This means that there is no real co-operation from the people. If we launch a movement for swaraj they want to attack us. If we insist on continuing satyagraha under such conditions we would be postponing swaraj. The answer to the question is clear, Our small groups of five or ten members should give up the idea of satyagraha. We shall never be destroyed because we are ready to be destroyed. But their opposition will die out. Those who oppose swaraj want to destroy the poor. So they lose nothing if we continue our movement in an

atmosphere of violence, whereas the poor would be completely ruined. We are prepared to be ruined ourselves but we do not wish the poor to be ruined.

I am conducting the same experiment in Rajkot. That is why I say that Rajkot has become my laboratory. I have suspended the satyagraha there—or rather the civil disobedience. The word satyagraha is not appropriate here. Today I have suspended civil disobedience every- where and I am concentrating on constructive programme, because it does not involve this kind of risk.

Bapu, part of my question still remains unanswered. You have just explained that today, when there is so much violence in the air, there is a danger of communal and other disturbances. Those who are in the movement may very well face beatings and suffer hardships, but those who are not prepared for it should not be made to do so. Hence civil disobedience should be suspended and we should concentrate on constructive programme. All this is clear; but even while engaging ourselves in the constructive programme, it is necessary to increase our strength and teach non-violence to the people who want to join the movement. Now, suppose we want to hold a meeting or take out a procession. Now this meeting or procession is harmless, and there is no question even of violent words. Even then a section of the people (such as Garasias in Rajkot, some Maharashtrians in Baroda, some Muslims in Hyderabad) under the impression that we are not loyal to the Government and want to harm that section loses its temper, abuses us and assaults us. Thus our movement arouses anger in them and a wall rises between them and the supporters of the movement. Under such circumstances, because there already is a lot of misunderstanding, our attempts to arrive at a compromise or establishing closer contacts with them will be like pouring oil over the flames.

Under these circumstances, am I correct in saying that instead of forming Hindu-Muslim or Garasia and non-Garasia unity committees, and thus making vain efforts at unity, it would be better and more practicable for us to keep off the whole thing ?

Yes, that is correct.

This question has been asked by Moolchand Agarwal. He has been putting questions to me over a long period of time.

There is no awakening among people on account of child-marriages, funeral feasts, *purdah* and untouchability. But some people believe that we must concentrate only on political work, for social-reform activities serve no purpose. They say that social reforms will automatically follow once political rights are realized. Will you kindly explain the place of social reforms in the work of nation-building ?

This is a much-delayed question. It should have been asked in

1920. In my view there is no special political field which is not related to social reform. They are both interrelated. If we do not earnestly go about the work of social reform, no political reforms are possible. I would, therefore, give the first place to the work of social reform and only the second place to purely political work, If there is such a thing. I took help from the sanatanists, whether for Gujarat Vidyapith or for the khadi work. But when they said that I should abandon my work for the removal of untouchability I told them that I would rather do without their help. The Mulji Jetha Market promised Rs. 35,000, but on some such condition. I told them that they could keep their money, I would do without it; but as for the removal of untouchability, I wanted it immediately. Till today I have not received the Rs. 35,000 from them. But the work for swaraj did not stop. It is dangerous to allow such things to find a place in our hearts. Let us not allow even such notions as 'social' and 'political' any place in our thinking. Let us not hinder national progress.

It is true some sense of discretion will have to be shown. It would not be proper to go and resort to satyagraha when someone in our community calls people for dinner. It is enough if we avoid going to that feast ourselves. There are so many areas of social-reform activity that can go on side by side with political work. There too we shall stick to non-violence. But satyagraha is a mighty weapon. It cannot be used everywhere. Its use has to be limited.

Now, There is a question from Mahavir Prasad Poddar.

Should a person who has not been able to convince his family or neighbours about sharing food with the Harijans be a member of the Gandhi Seva Sangh?

So long as he has not set right the behaviour of his family members towards the Harijans or has not been able to do so he cannot be a member of Gandhi Seva Sangh. Till such time as he has not settled the quarrel at home, he should serve from outside. Must he then go on quarrelling with the members of his family and his wife? Should he beat his wife and turn her out of the house? Certainly not. Let him not accept untouchability for himself. He should patiently put up with the protests of his family. He should win them over through non-violence. For him, his house itself becomes a laboratory. He cannot come to Gandhi Seva Sangh till he has won over his wife through love.

RADJALROSJMA NAKA: Should the path of satyagraha be considered closed to those who do not honestly believe that only persons with faith in God should join

satyagraha, or to those who are socialists or atheists ?

I am sorry, but I shall have to say, 'Yes'. God alone is the strength for a satyagrahi. He wants to walk on his own legs. He does not want a stick for support. He does not depend on any strength from outside. Faith in God is an inner strength. Hence the path of satyagraha is closed to those who do not accept this. They must take the path of unarmed protest. They can even be non-co-operators. But they can never be satyagrahis. Because anyone who does not believe in God will be defeated in the end. Should I then admit that there can be no victory through non-violence? On the contrary, I would say that with non-violence there never can be any defeat. Faith in God is itself the power behind non-violence. Hence we must put up with it even if somebody feels hurt. But it should be made absolutely clear that this path is not meant for the people who do not believe in God. There is no other way. The socialists who do not understand my point of view would say that I have worked out a trick for getting rid of them. I cannot help it. I shall face even that charge. You may say that this will keep out many gallant co-workers while hypocrites professing faith in God but without any evidence of it in their practical life will get in. But I am not talking about hypocrites. I am rather talking of those people who are ready to sacrifice their all in the name of God.

Instead of asking me such a question you should have asked me why I had been sleeping for the last twenty years. You should have asked me why I have taken so long to wake up. I would plead guilty to such a charge. I would only say that after all I am not a perfect satyagrahi descended from heaven. I have not come with a ready-made technique of satyagraha. Nor have I brought any book from heaven to which I can refer and tell everything in advance. I am with you in the midst of society. I place before you any new thing which I may happen to discover through my experiments with and my experience of satyagraha.

KRIPALANI: Does this mean that the non-believers like the Jains and Buddhists cannot join the satyagraha movement?

If there are some Jains or Buddhists who do not believe in the *atman* they cannot join satyagraha. But these people do believe in the *atman*. And those who believe in the *atman* believe in God. Their quarrel is only with a particular idea of God. I do not want any disputation over it. A certain Jain even asked me at Rajkot. I gave the same reply. He then remembered that the Jains too believed in Divine

Power. Anyone who accepts the existence of a Power that helps us in all situations is not a non-believer. He is a believer in God. What does it matter if he is a Jain or a Buddhist? But if some Jains and Buddhists themselves say that they cannot join satyagraha because they do not believe in God I shall not argue with them. I shall say that they are right.

KRISHNAN NAIR: What is the criterion for judging whether a person does or does not believe in God? If an individual accepts God as a metaphysical probability but not as a mysterious Power, will he be called an atheist ?

This is a subtle question. It is not even necessary to go so deep into it. I do not insist that everybody should have the same idea of God as I have and describe Him in the same vocabulary that I use. There is no ready-made test to determine whether somebody does or does not believe in God. Still, it is possible to test it. But this point will be settled tomorrow,[1] since today my time is over.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Panchama Varshik Adhiveshan (Brindaban,Bihar) ka Vivaran, pp. 50-9

411. TALK TO RURAL RECONSTRUCTION WORKERS[2]

May 6, 1939

It is a tragedy that many of you should be coming from cities or should be accustomed to life in the cities. Not unless you switch your minds off the cities to the villages can you serve them. You must realize that it is not cities that make India, but the villages, and that you cannot reconstruct them unless you revive the village life with its defunct handicrafts. Industrialization cannot bring life to the moribund villages. The peasant in his cottage home can be revived only when he gets back his craft and depends for his necessaries on the village and not on the cities as he is compelled to do today. If you do not grasp this basic principle, all the time that you give to rural reconstruction work will be wasted.[3] Build your villages anew. Infuse new blood in villages which are in the grip of ruin. Save the teeming

[1] *Vide* "Answeres to Questions at Gandhi Seva Sangh", Meeting, Brindaban-III", 7-5-1939

[2] This is extracted from "Gandhi Seva Sangh–IV". Mahadev Desai explains that "the rural reconstruction workers were engaged by the Bihar Government".

[3] The rest of the paragraph is reproduced from *Amrita Bazar Patrika.*

millions who need your assis-tance.

There is one thing more that I would ask you to bear in mind. Whoever wants to qualify himself for the service of the village must go about with his mind and his eyes pure and must look upon every woman as his mother or sister.

Harijan , 24-6-1939; also *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 8-5-1939

412. IS NIRA OBJECTIONABLE ?

Among the fourteen points that Parsi friends have raised against the prohibition campaign, there occurs this strange passage :

> Mahatamaji persuades the Parsis to drink *nira.* (sweet, unfermented toddy), but the Parsis very well know the properties of *nira.* Moreover the British Government had already tried this *nira*- drinking experiment free of tree-tax, but it failed because *nira* produces cold, flatulence, diarrhoea, etc. The experiment was already tried in Mahatmaji's Ashram at Segaon and there fatal results were pronounced.

I do not know what the Bombay Government tried. But I do know what *nira* is doing and has done to those who are trying it. It is wholly wrong to say that the experiment at Segaon Ashram failed and that it produced fatal results. It has never been known to have produced any of the bad results ascribed to it by the writer. On the contrary *nira* is still being freely drunk by many in Segaon and that with profit to their health. Moreover it is turned into syrup or *gur*, and in that condition I and many others use it almost daily. As *gur* it is sold in large quantities. It is better relished than sugar-cane *gur* because of its being less sweet. As to the deaths that occurred in Wardha, not in Segaon, the investigations have clearly showed that the deaths were due not to *nira*-drinking but to cholera. Nothing has been shown to establish any connection between the deaths and *nira.* Supposing the patients had developed cholera without drinking *nira*, would it have been right to say that cholera was induced by the ordinary food that they had eaten? I may mention that several people had taken in Segaon with impunity the same *nira* that had been taken in Wardha.

If the thirteen other points are based on as weak a foundation as this (No. 13) is, surely there is no case against prohibition. And I make bold to say that the rest are no stronger. I have picked out the thirteenth in the hope that my personal testimony may put the

opponents on their guard againt making statements they cannot substantiate. Opposition based on reason must always command respect. This one seems to me to lack that essential quality.

BRINDABAN, May 7, 1939

Harijan, 13-5-1939

413. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

May 7, 1939

CHI. VALJI,

If Chitre spins yarn worth Rs. 10, he will certainly get that much. If he engrosses himself in the work, his problems will be solved. The Wardha rates are the highest. I am ready to assess the value of his yarn at those rates.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VALJI GOVINDJI DESAI
GONDAL
KATHIAWAR

From Gujarati: C.W. 7484. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

414. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 7, 1939

DEAR DAUGHTER,[1]

I received your letters. I also answered them. What can I do if my letters do not reach you? Today I am sending you a telegram [2] as well. I pass through Ahmedabad on the 12th on way to Rajkot. Sushilabehn is of course with me and Mahadevbhai also will be there .

You are keeping well, I hope. I also had talks with Mridulabehn about you.

I hope something has been settled about Qureshi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 418

[1] The superscription is in Urdu.
[2] This was sent on May 8; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 8-5--1939

415. LETTER TO LAKSHMI NARAYAN GADODIA

May 7, 1939

BHAI LAKSHMI NARAYANJI,

Balvantsinhaji is a member of the Segaon Ashram. He is devoted to the cow. He has served the cow since his childhood. Please depute someone to guide him to the dairy and also arrange for him to visit the Government farm.

Has the dispute regarding the mosque been settled?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2627

416. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING, BRINDABAN–III

May 7, 1939

Let me begin with Radhakrishna's question which I took up yesterday[1] but could not finish. The question about God had been more or less dealt with. A discussion on it was going on. Shri Krishnan Nair had raised a subtle point. But it does not allow much scope for discussion. I am indifferent about the names or attributes which a man may apply to God. I had made a general statement that any man who had no faith in God could not stay a satyagrahi to the end. What I had meant was that so long as the satyagrahi is not convinced that there is some great subtle Power that would give him strength in all situations, he cannot face tyranny, strife and humiliations and sustain his non-violence. These days we do not suffer anything which may be described as torture. Nobody places us on burning coals or pierces us with needles. This would be the extreme form of cruelty. But in the face of even such torture not to have any malice against the torturer is non-violence. Man cannot show such supreme non-violence in the face of such suffering relying on his own efforts. So long as he does not have faith in some Power and feel the presence of that Power behind him he will not have the strength calmly to put up with such tyranny. This Power that thus sustains is God. Not to bear any malice towards the tyrant even on such occasions is another name of faith in God.

[1] *Vide* "Answeres to

QUESTION: Can those persons who habitually wear khadi but do not spin nor feel inclined to spin join the satyagraha movement ?

ANSWEER : No. Those people cannot be chosen for civil disobedience. Listen carefully. I am talking about civil disobedience, not satyagraha. Satyagraha is a universal term. Civil disobedience requires special preparation. Satyagraha includes even constructive programme. Those who do not spin can be satyagrahis, but they cannot take part in civil disobedience.

What should we tell those who do not wear khadi but who feel for the country—lawyers who are prepared to abandon their practice, men and women who want to come forward selflessly to put up with hardships?

Millions of people cannot join civil disobedience. Civil disobedience is meant for those who have purified themselves and who have learnt to obey laws in humility. Only they can determine which law should be disobeyed and how and when. They willingly obey not only the laws of the State but of all other organizations. They do so not out of fear of punishment but deliberately out of a sense of duty. That alone gives them the right to break laws. It is like taking a dose of poison. If a man takes a dose of poison without proper knowledge about it , he dies. The more I think the more I realize that civil disobedience is no ordinary weapon. Everyone cannot use it. Everyone can certainly insist on truth. All those who have joined civil disobedience today are not people of this kind. Except those who are qualified for civil disobedience other people do not offer real civil disobedience. They indulge in angry, violent disobedience. Quite likely they are all good men. Maybe they are better than we are. But they do not fit into our pattern. Hence they should keep away.

What should be the criterion of complete faith in truth and non-violence? He who has faith in truth and non-violence should wholly keep away from violence and falsehood in his daily life. Under these circumstances, can someone in whose house there is a business of foreign cloth or mill-cloth or who, in some way or the other, helps in diverting Indian money out of the country, or who is harming the interests of the country by some other act, be a satyagrahi? Should his professed faith in truth and non-violence be accepted or should further investigation be made ?

In my view no person indulging in such practices can join civil disobedience. Should he be kept out of civil disobedience or should he be allowed to join? I have myself been rather weak on this point. I have not exercised as much firmness as was necessary. I am facing the consequences and the country is paying for it. Such a person cannot

join civil disobedience. He can be of help in other ways. What is the point in investigating in the case of a person whose actions speak for themselves ?

How should the character of a person be investigated?

This question has already been answered in the above discussion.

What should be considered the limit of non-addiction? Should *bidi*, pan and tea be regarded as addictions ?

It is a difficult question. I have drawn the line at taking of intoxicants. He who takes intoxicating things suffers from intellectual degeneration. How can he insist on truth? So in this matter the limit is quite clear. But I have not the heart to get rid of a man who, though he smokes, is a great devotee of God. I can take a bold stand in the matter of prohibiting the use of opium, *ganja*, bhang, alcohol, etc. So I have drawn the line at these things. I am a staunch enemy of tobacco also. I do not like even tea. I feel disturbed when I see people chewing pan the whole day. But this is my personal view.

Should one resort to fast and similar methods in jail in the face of inhuman conduct—not necessarily humiliating—such as bad food and harassment?

In this matter it is difficult to lay down any rigid rule. A satyagrahi is born to face all kinds of difficulties. He should not every time be thinking of honour and humiliation. He who is over-sensitive or is too delicate of body should not go to jail. As a rule, any person who joins civil disobedience should be prepared to face all kinds of difficulties in jail. He should not agree to anything which is opposed to his self-respect and integrity. Those who have delicate hearts should remain outside. Fasting normally should not be resorted to.

Once the satyagraha is launched, newspapers are stopped. Bulletins are stopped. People joining *prabhat pheris* are liable to be arrested. Under these conditions do you not think that propaganda would cease if no persons except those who are permitted to be satyagrahis are allowed to join the *prabhat pheris*, distribute bulletins or join any other activity which may be liable to lead to the arrest of these persons?

I do not think the adoption of such a policy would lead to the stoppage of all propaganda. So long as a few individuals go to jail, their incarceration itself would mean a lot of publicity. I believe that this is the true propaganda for civil disobedience. It does not matter much if newspapers, bulletins and *prabhat pheris* are stopped. I have seen that an attempt to continue these things anyhow involves the

danger of all types of persons being drawn into civil disobedience. The Yeravda Prison became filled with people during the satyagraha of 1931. I was able to meet a few of the detenus and freely talk to them. They told me that good people had come in the beginning. But those who came later looked like goondas. They broke jail rules, used abusive language and indulged in physical fights. The question was not what they did. The question was what they did not do. A boy may get up, distribute a bulletin and go to jail. What purpose would be served by carrying on the satyagraha with the help of such people? I find lack of faith, lack of courage behind such questions. What have we got to do with crowds of people? It is our belief that even if there is one true satyagrahi, swaraj is bound to come. Why should we be so impatient? Swaraj may come now or later.

Given the above conditions only very few people would be qualified to go to jail. But what about those people who cannot fulfil those conditions and yet are desirous of serving the country? What should they do?

This question has been already answered.

What should we do when people go to *prabhat pheris* without informing us or do other propaganda work and get arrested?

We must keep on telling these people that they are harming the cause of satyagraha by their actions. What can we do if they do not heed us? Let us leave them to their fate. Some of them will go to jail. Of those some will tender apologies and come out. Others would do their terms of imprisonment. What can we do about them?

Propaganda is a means of public awakening. How will this be possible in the absence of propaganda and demonstrations ?

If we are true and honest, true propaganda would go on even when we have gone to jail. Let us not worry about the propaganda that would be stopped. Propaganda is of two kinds: violent and non-violent. There is no harm if the propaganda which consists in bitter things being written and abuses being hurled against the adversary is stopped. There is no need to do any propaganda from our side in the face of violent propa-ganda against us. I am told that the newspapers are showering abuses on me and the Sardar. They abuse others as well. Should we bring out papers in order to retaliate and waste our money, effort and time in it? Should we set up an organization to explain our stand? How long can we go on answering every single thing that may be said against us? A satyagrahi cannot do such a thing. Such criticism is like a storm. Storms come and also

earthquakes. Let them come. They will go as they come. That storm is worse then a natural storm. But why should we fight against it? It has got to be faced. At the most, we may die trying to put up with it. We shall continue our work with this resolve.

Following the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, people were permitted to collect salt for a year. The Government has recently promulgated an order that it will be possible to collect salt only within the limit of time it may fix from year to year. Till now people could carry salt on their heads anywhere they chose. Now this facility has been limited to the villages near the sea-shore, with the result that people are not in a position to benefit from this facility. What should we do under these circumstances?[1]

In this matter I should frankly tell you that our own people are responsible for this order. We have not abided by the restrictions laid down under the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. Hence these excesses. They reap what they sow. There are no such obstruction where people observe certain conditions. Such things are happening because people have started trading in salt.

Do you believe that the philosophy of the Aryasamaj encourages violence?[2]

I have never said that. What I say is that they consider the use of both violence and non-violence legitimate even as an ordinary *sanatani* Hindu does. According to them, it is wrong to remain non-violent when it becomes one's duty to resort to violence. We, on the other hand, believe in only non-violent resistance. This is the distinction between us.

But even you considered it a duty to have calves and dogs killed?[3]

Then you should say it does not lie in my mouth to talk of non-violence. I would accept it. I shall agree. I am willing to pull my ears for it. You are familiar with the cases of the calf and the dogs incident. I have already said what I had to say in the matter.

A resolution about the Aryasamaj satyagraha in Hyderabad too was shown to me. I had given my frank opinion in the matter. I had made it clear that whatever I had said was not meant for the Press. In my view, that satyagraha is not in keeping with dharma, nor is it conducted in the spirit of dharma. Those who do not regard non-violence as the supreme dharma can go only so far with non-violence. Those who do not possess a non-violent outlook cannot offer non-

[1] This was asked by A. Vedaratnam.

[2] This was asked by Moolchand Agrawal.

[3] *Vide* "The Fiery Ordeal"

violent satyagraha. I am conscious of the limitations of civil disobedience. But it would not be right for me to issue any such statements in the newspapers that may bring harm to somebody. I am a worshipper of satyagraha. Why should I unnecessarily express my views about something with which I am not concerned? Why should I criticize everything that may be happening anywhere? This is not the way of non-violence. I do not wish to indulge in such irrelevant action. Of course, I do try to persuade my co-workers to give it up. What is going on today does not add to the prestige of the Aryasamaj or religion. I would appeal even to Sir Akbar Hydari that he should change his attitude. I am doing everything that the duty of a friend may demand. I am doing nothing more. The day I feel it is my duty to make a public statement, I shall do so. But the members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh should not go beyond the limits I have set.

Then there is one last point. Prajapati Babu has done much work for this covention. But there has been much unnecessary expenditure too. This is a blot on our work. There is gas-lighting here, even electric lighting. At this rate there will be no limit left. We must fix certain limits. On the other side arrangements about lavatories etc., are not of the best. According to my conception of the Gandhi Seva Sangh, this is not an annual celebration. This is an educational institution for us. We should never forget that we have to proceed every day in the direction of simplicity, a rural outlook, of sanitation and cleanliness. We do not come here for having a celebration or an excursion. This convention is a training camp for us. It provides us a wonderful opportunity for introspection, for exchanging notes about one another's experiences and having training in restraint and discipline. The accommodation and sanitation here should be so perfect that even if we have to stay here for seven months instead of seven days, we should not feel like going back. But after only six days here I feel impatient to get away. Why should this be so? I have a fear that if I do not run away from here soon the place will become more unclean. Thus we have to work very hard, for we are still far away from the ideal I have set.

The fact that people have turned up here in such large numbers is an indication of their love. Expression of love is good up to a point. But even in this there should be some restraint which is not to be found here. This too is a matter of practice

I do not mean to say that nothing here is deserving of praise. I appreciate good things. You have done much work, gone to much

trouble. But I do not have to praise, you for it. You have not done these things in the expectation of praise have you? If you have done these things for praise, my praise by itself would be the fruit of your work. My job is to criticize. I cannot say how these shortcomings can be overcome. I can only criticize. Sanitary conditions in our conventions should be perfect. Arrangements about meals, etc., should be clean and hygienic. Please take my comments in the right spirit. Try to see that wherever this convention meets next year, these shortcomings will not be there.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Panchama Varshik Adhiveshan (Brindaban, Bihar) ka Vivaran, pp. 63-9

417. SPEECH AT ALL-INDIA VILLAGE INDUSTRIES BOARD MEETING, BRINDABAN

May 7, 1939

If, judging from the small attendance here, you and others thought that the Village Industries Board was a failure it would not be surprising. For the annual meeting of any organization, an attendance of eighteen would be considered small. But I would not be surprised or pained even if we had to manage with less, even fewer than eighteen, or do wholly without them. This is what I feel about this Board. We must keep its constitution and organization a little strict. Too many people cannot be fitted into it. Many names were therefore omitted because the rules were not being observed. Such an organization as the Village Industries Board should be judged not by its numerical strength but by the work it does. Of course it has not done much work so far. But whatever little work has been done is done thoroughly and after a few years you will see the deep effect of that work. The office-bearers are sincere workers. I can assert that they devote their entire energy to the work.

These days people's eyes are fixed on the towns. So there is a slackness in the work of the Village Industries Board. It is also difficult in the present circumstances. Millions of the poor cannot subsist on the little money they can get. We want to give them, through village industries, sufficient for their maintenance. We have taken up this activity with that aim.

The office-bearers of the Village Industries Board have faith

that the salvation of India lies in the salvation of the villages which in turn depends on the revival of village industries and not on big machinery. By effecting improvement in the old village industries we can provide crores of rupees to the hovels of the poor.

You will find the Village Industries Board a very small organization compared to the Charkha Sangh[1]. And compared to the latter the work done by it is also very little. There is a reason for that. The Charkha Sangh is many years old now. The method of its working is now well established. Besides this, another reason for the successful working of the Charkha Sangh is that they are concerned with only one industry. But there are so many industries in villages. So the Village Industries Board has to be concerned with many industries. It is easier to become an expert in the work of the Charkha Sangh. In the Village Industries Board we shall require many experts. Our universities should produce experts who can scientifically bring about improvements in the village industries. Today we do not get such experts and therefore it is difficult to increase our activities. We have to find our experts among the oil-men, carpenters, etc., in the villages. They do not come from high schools and colleges. It is difficult to achieve success on a large scale as long as we do not get men entirely devoted to village industries who are at the same time intelligent *ghani*[2] experts and paper-making experts. Now I would like to associate these activities with ahimsa. This activity appears to be very uninteresting. But the result is interesting if we have patience. I will be happy if those who are members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh dissociate themselves from politics and concentrate on the activities of the Village Industries Board. You seem to be happy that the Working Committee is full of Gandhians. But I am not happy about it. That has increased our responsibility. We have become overburdened. What is there in it to be happy about? Yesterday Rajendra Babu was telling me that they were facing more difficulties and putting up with more trouble because of our men, that Gandhians quarrelled among themselves, contested elections against one another. This is hypocrisy. This is madness.

The question before us is how we can save ourselves from this kind of thing. My answer is that there is work to do in the Charkha Sangh, in the Village Industries Board and in the Talimi Sangh.

[1] All-India Spinners' Association.
[2] Oil mill.

Engage yourselves whole-heartedly in that work and hypocrisy will disappear. Swaraj will come quicker through that work than through elections. We cannot win swaraj through today's politics. We have a mountain of *himsa* before us. Many people today are quarrelling in the name of Gandhi. One man says 'I want to go;' and another man says 'I want to go'. Such people make a laughing-stock of Gandhism. If you wish to save yourselves from such things, you should withdraw from politics. There are so many activities for you. If you engage yourselves in these activities, the progress of both will be quicker.

In my opinion the Hindu-Muslim tension can also be removed by these activities. If village industries are revived, millions of villagers will get full wages. Here the interests of Hindus and Muslims do not clash and both the communities will be saved from conflicts that characterize politics. If the activities of the Village Industries Board are carried on in such faith, we can never give them up. We will go on working for all the twenty-four hours. That is why I told you in the beginning that though this thing appears so small and unrewarding I see nothing wrong in that. I only see good coming of it.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 8-7-1939.

418. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BRINDABAN[1]

May 7, 1939

Just a few decades ago, I never knew what Hindustan was nor did Hindustan know what I was. I came to Champaran in 1917 with a view to redressing the grievances of the peasantry who were mere toys in the hands of the planters. I came here with my heart open and had no other instrument for the fight except the armament of truth and non-violence. Today you love me and adore me. I accept your loyalty with gratitude. But there was nothing extraordinary in me. There was sincerity and devotion in me to lift you up from the economic, social and political morass. I only wish that you could also follow the principles I follow. What I said to you in 1917 still holds good. The indigo curse was removed because you were non-violent. You have

[1]*Amrita Bazar Patrika* reported that the meeting, held in the afternoon, was attended by about 50,000 people, and "a purse of Rs. 20,000 was presented to Gandhiji on behalf of Champaran as a mark of its respect and loyalty to him". A short summary of the speech was reported by Mahadev Desai in *Harijan*, 20-5-1939.

the same weapon at your disposal. The need for it greater today than in 1917.

Do not idle away your time and do not waste the national wealth through foreign purchases. Try to increase the national wealth through the introduction of spinning-wheel which is the panacea for all ills.

Have faith in yourselves. Approach the Congress Government for what you want. Strive hard. Speak nothing but the truth. Always be non-violent. Be ready for service and sacrifices. March ahead with the *mantra* of ahimsa.

I am but a representative of the *Daridranarayana.* India is the poor and humble abode of millions, famished, hungry and illiterate. We have taken the vow to lift them up and give them food and education and bring them happy and prosperous days. Do not neglect the masses who are so many *Daridranarayanas.* Be ready to face privations and destitution to serve them.

The money will be utilized for giving bread to the hungry and clothes to the naked. The money will be spent for Champaran and its neighbours. It is for the service of the *Daridranarayana* that the money will be spent.

It pains me to hear the *kisans* resorting to violence. They fight with zamindars. If you want to abolish zamindari, it is well and good. Do so through non-violence. Why do you terrorize zamindars? Co-operate with zamindars and tell them that they were to serve the tenantry. There should be no abuse, no filth, no violence, no beating of *amlas* by *kisans.* you must learn to love one another. The protection of ahimsa and its use will give you back what you have lost. Muslims and Hindus should live in amity. They must live as brothers. They must spin. They should cultivate tolerance and devotion for service and sacrifice. If this is done, independent India is not a distant possibility.[1]

I think it is obvious enough that Hindu-Muslim unity, prohibition and abolition of untouchability are impossible without non-violence. There remains only the spinning-wheel. How does it become the symbol of non-violence? As I have already explained, the essential thing is the spirit in which you regard it, the attributes you

[1] What follows is reproduced from *Gram Udyog Patrika,* which reports that Gandhiji then answered a question: "What is the relation between constructive work and ahimsa?"

invest it with. It is not a quinine pill, which has certain inherent properties in it apart from what you think about it. The spinning-wheel has no such inherent property. Take the *Gayatri Mantra*. It cannot have the same effect on non-Hindus as it has on me, nor can the *kalma* have the same reaction on me as it has on the Muslims. Even so the spinning-wheel in itself has nothing which can teach ahimsa or bring swaraj. But you have to think it with those attributes and it is transformed. Its obvious value is the service of the poor, but that does not necessarily mean that it should be a symbol of non-violence or an indispensable condition for swaraj. But we, since 1920, connected the wheel with swaraj and non-violence.

Then there is the programme of self-purification with which the spinning-wheel is again intimately connected. Coarse homespun signifies simplicity of life and therefore purity.

Without the spinning-wheel, without Hindu-Muslim unity and without the abolition of untouchability there can be no civil disobedience. Civil disobedience presupposes willing obedience of our self-imposed rules, and without it civil disobedience would be a cruel joke. This is what came to me with redoubled conviction in the laboratory at Rajkot. If even one man fulfils all the conditions, he is capable of winning swaraj. I am still far from being that ideal satyagrahi. I said the same thing at the time we met to organize a satyagraha campaign against the Rowlatt Act. When it was started we had only a handful of men, but we built up a considerable organization out of that handful. As I am an imperfect satyagrahi I want your co-operation. In the process of organizing and seeking your co-operation. I myself grow, for my introspection never ceases. Even the time I am now giving you is as much in my own interest as in yours, or at least in my own interest, if not in yours. For as I examine myself I am growing and evolving. No one is too old to grow, certainly not I. In the Transvaal, satyagraha was born; but a few thousands wielded it there. Millions have wielded it here. Who knew that on the 6th of April 1919 millions would rise up like one man in response to the call I had made from Madras? But the constructive programme is essential for the ultimate success. Indeed today I think we should be untrue to the nation if we did not fulfil the programme of the spinning-wheel as a symbol of non-violence, no matter how long it takes.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 9-5-1939; aslo *Gram Udyog Patrika*, June 1939

419. DISCUSSION WITH RAJENDRA PRASAD AND OTHERS[1]

BRINDABAN,
[On or before *May 8, 1939*][2]

GANDHIJI : You won't count nearness to Patna an advantage. We want to go to the village. Is Bihar going to drag us back?

RAJENDRA PRASAD: Time is very short, the city affords various conveniences, there would be less expenditure.

But that means that we change the policy we have been carrying out for the last three years? Why not Brindaban itself?

Sonepur was discussed but it is a glorified village.

I want you in the heart of a village. Don't emulate Haripura and Faizpur. You should excel both in simplicity and in freedom from splendour.

Visitors are a problem, especially in Bihar where we would have lakhs of them.

You should make arrangements for them as the Aryasamajists do. They ask everyone to come with their provisions, lanterns and so on. They only provide them accommodation (under the trees) and water. For this last no water-works are necessary. Whatever you do, do not accept defeat and run to Patna. No need for electricity at all, and as we meet in winter no fans would be needed. Start work from 8 to 11, and then from 2 or 3 to 7. A little winter's sun would be more agreeable than otherwise. No, you must try your best to change your decision for Phulwari. Everyone must be asked to bring his or her own lantern. You can say beforehand you can give so much and no more.

Even so we should have to spend a lot on construction. We must afford protection against cold?

Why not use your grass for warmth both above and below? There should be no need for cots excepting for the ill and the infirm.

[1] This is extracted from "Gandhi Seva Sangh-IV" by Mahadev Desai, who explains: "Rajendra Babu and other Bihar workers had discussion with Gandhiji on the venue of the next Congress which is to be in Bihar. Phulwari Shareef, which is only four miles from Patna and is said to have various other advantages, had proposed."

[2] Gandhiji left Brindaban on May 8, 1939.

And we won't get money. Both zamindars and *kisans* are against us. Gate-money will be much less.

I do not agree. Have it somewhere but not near a city. And you have had tube-wells here very cheaply.

We will have tube-wells, but we have to cope with the need of nearly 60,000 gallons per hour. But electric light may be dispensed with.

I hate it. We must not think in terms of illumination. Make the place attractive in other ways during the day. Don't copy what is bad. No one will blame you if you have no fireworks and no illuminations. You want cleanliness and simple wants satisfied. Give the simplest food. But I agree that you must spend on water. Collect one pice per head from each of the 70,000 villages and satisfy your needs. Then it will be a Congress worth going to or seeing. Decide on the principle of a village. I don't mind where it may be, and you will gain strength by getting every village to contribute its mite. Volunteer corps must be enough and efficient. They must be experts in sanitation. No smell and no dirt must be allowed. Organization of this must begin early.

The volunteer corps will cost us a good deal—probably Rs. 50,000.

I don't mind it, but the ultimate benefit accruing will be great. There should be no wastage in training. We may forget uniforms, etc., which go to waste, but the body of youth for our service is for all time an asset of no mean value. Therefore don't stint in water and volunteers.

Even the simple huts put up here have cost a lot.

I hear so. But there must have been some mismanagement somewhere if it has become so expensive.

Our problem is of rain which generally comes then. Patna would have been convenient from that point of view. We could shift into pukka buildings in case of need.

There is no escape from it now. Manage somehow. Don't give hot water, don't give fruit, don't give any delicacies. Give me the contract for fruit. If anyone comes to me for it, I shall ask him to return to Bombay.

Harijan, 24-6-1939.

420.TELEGRAM TO VIRAWALA

[*May 8, 1939*][1]

YOUR WIRE[2]. HAVE BASED MY REMARK ON YOUR STATEMENTS ABOUT THE PARISHAD PEOPLE BUT THAT IS A MINOR MATTER. WHAT WORRIES ME IS THE FACT THAT YOU SHOULD TURN MY ASPIRATION INTO A PRESSING REQUEST THAT I SHOULD NOT COME TO RAJKOT WITHOUT BEING INVITED BY HIS HIGHNESS. I MAY NOT DESERT MY COMRADES. YOU MAY EXPECT ME TO USE MY NEW LIGHT FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL CONCERNED. I MUST THEREFORE REACH RAJKOT ON THE TWELFTH INSTANT. PRAY EXCUSE. THIS WIRE IS NOT FOR PROPAGANDA. IT IS A FRIENDLY APPROACH.

The Hindu, 10-5-1939 .

421. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

BRINDABAN, CHAMPARAN,
May 8, 1939

AMTUL SALAAM
HARIJAN ASHRAM, SABARMATI
AHMEDABAD

WROTE SEVERAL LETTERS.[3] WELL. PASSING THROUGH AHMEDABAD TWELFTH MORNING. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 419

[1] From *the Indian Annual Register, 1939*

[2] Dated May 5, 1939, which read: "Your wire of third. I wonder what led you to suggest that I did not give proper treatment to Parishad people. All my sincere and *bona-fide* efforts to get their co-operation have failed as Dhebar differed from all who met on fourth . . . My personal view and appeal to you . . . is that . . . you should come to Rajkot only when invited by His Highness and not before. Your coming now will prejudice direct settlement. Let Sir Maurice Gwyer's Award have its natural course without any outside interference including yours if settlement fails."

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 7-5-1939

422. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 8, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

I have both your long letters. Both are important.

I had a long chat with Khan Saheb. He has doubts about Kishanchand's scheme. He said he won't be happy about anything till I was in the Frontier Province. You will therefore go slow. If Kishanchand can secure Khan Saheb's approval and goodwill without using my name, by all means go on with your or his project. Let there be the clearest possible understanding. We may not rush things.

We go today to Benares to see Malaviyaji, we leave on 10th for Bombay, leave Bombay on 11th for Rajkot, go to Ahmedabad on 3rd June for Working Committee; leave Ahmedabad on 7th for Rajkot or Frontier.

I am well and have stood the strain well. I expect Sushila has been giving you details about my health.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6439. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 10034

423. LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL[1]

AS AT RAJKOT,
May 8, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

How I wish I could accept your very kind invitation. But Rajkot still holds me. And as soon as I finish Rajkot, I am bound to go to the Frontier Province. You will therefore please excuse me and plead for me before His Highness too.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 2181

[1] Dewan of Mysore State.

424. LETTER TO RAVINDRA R. PATEL

BRINDABAN,
May 8, 1939

CHI. RAVINDRA,

I got your letter. Personally I like your decision to settle there. If you take proper interest in the work you will learn much there. You should know that there is no shame at all in earning money by honest means.

I hope you are leading a studious life. Don't let a single moment be wasted.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7456

425. A LETTER

[*May 8, 1939*][1]

I am merely going on a pilgrimage. If his[2] health is all right, I will talk a little about Hindi. The rest you will have to attend to. If you think it necessary to send any wires, you may do so.

It will all depend on how I fare in Kashi.

I shall be reaching there tomorrow at 1 p.m. and will spend the night there.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7972

426. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May 8, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You will have got my letters. I had sent a letter[3] for Mother too.

Do help Lilavati to the extent you can but do not reduce the time devoted to carding.[4]

Why not get Hari's wife treated at the leprosy hospital there?

[1] From the reference to "Kashi", where Gandhiji arrived on May 9.
[2] Madan Mohan Malaviya's; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 4-5-1939
[3] *Vide* "A Letter", 29-4-1939
[4] *Vide* "Letter to Lilavati Asar", 11-5-1939

I have written[1] about Mathew. It was by mistake that Mahadev directed that no post should be sent there. Now a telegram has been sent. The newspapers should come to you, so also the mail and you can then forward the things you think worth forwarding. Social activity is as necessary as individual activity. Each one of us is unique as an individual but we are also social beings. If there is no society we too are nothing. That is why it is our dharma to take part in community prayers and community *yajnas*.

Today we leave for Kashi, then on to Bombay and from there to Rajkot. Jayabehn will go straight on to Wardha with someone.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4317. Also S. G. 77

427. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

May 8, 1939

DEAR DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

I got your sweet letter. Even my defeat is my victory, is it not? I lost to Virawala but I am now trying to win him over. Yes, I must say that in all my life I had never experienced such despair. But has not Manilal Nabhubhai said that "Among lacs of disappointments there is eternal hope hidden"? So there is no reason for you to feel disheartened. My faith in God will ever be with me.

You and Saroj are a unique pair ! Saroj is at one place and you at another. Yet you can write on behalf of both !

Yes, you have the privilege to fully open your heart to me. It is even your duty. Many salutations from me to Mother. We leave for Rajkot today.

Love and blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: S. N. 9673

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Munnalal G. Shah", 4-5-1939

428. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

ON THE WAY TO BENARES,
May 9, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I purposely restrained myself from troubling you whilst you were touring and taking part-holiday.

Many thanks for your prompt reply[1] about Talcher. The condition there defies analysis. One day hope rises high and then it is dashed to pieces. It is not now the Raja's plighted word, it is that of the represe-ntative of the Paramount Power that is being weighed. The people won't understand the fine distinctions as to when an official speaks with authority and when he speaks without. I know you are watching and feel confident that you will see that the people of Talcher are freed from harassment well before the rains begin.

The very simple affair of Jaipur still hangs fire. I just understand that some prisoners have been discharged. Civil disobedience having been discontinued there seems to be no cause for keeping any prisoners and that too in a snake-infested old fort. Nor is there any meaning in keeping Sheth Jamnalalji practically in solitary confinement, the cause for his detention having disappeared. The authorities were afraid that he was entering Jaipur State to promote civil disobedience. And the demand of the people is less than elementary. They would be satisfied if they have the guarantee of civil liberty. I should have thought that Jaipur would present no difficulty.[2]

Lastly, Rajkot. The Award has been a halter round my neck. This situation has taxed and is still taxing all my resources. I am applying what appears to me to be a new and difficult technique. Though I am not giving up the support of the Paramount Power, I am keeping it as much as I am able in the background and am trying to woo Durbar Shri Virawala. On going back to Rajkot from Delhi I saw that I had a mountain of difficulties to face owing to the Award itself. They are all still there. And they are piling up. But I see that even for decency's sake I must not run to you or your representative on every pretext. I shall come when I must. Meanwhile, I shall try to woo Durbar Shri Virawala and see if I can get anything approaching the

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, "Telegram to Lord Linlithgow", 18-4-1939
[2] *Vide* also"Jaipur Prisoners"

Notification of the Thakore Saheb. If you have leisure you will watch what is happening in Rajkot. I must say that my experiences of the working of the political department are not happy. I observe that the Viceroy, no matter how strong he may be, is not powerful enough to carry out his intentions even as the Congress President is not with his voluntary departments. You will not mind the comparison. A knowledge of our little difficulties enables me to send out my sympathy to you instead of blaming you for what appear to me to be innumerable pin-pricks.

Having wandered in Calcutta and Brindaban, an out-of-the-way village in Champaran, I return to Rajkot hoping to reach there on 12th instant.[1]

I am.
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

429. A MESSAGE

[On or After *May 9, 1939*][2]

I observe that Senapati Bapat is reported to have said that I approved of his plan of drowning himself because India had not attained swaraj within the time stipulated or expected by him. When I saw the report I gave no credence to it. But I am overwhelmed by correspondents asking me whether I was consenting party and, If I was, on what grounds. I must say that I have no recollection whatsoever of having approved of the contemplated step. I do remember his having discussed the proposal among many other things. But I cannot conceive of my consenting to anybody drowning himself for the sake of winning swaraj. If I have any influence over Senapati Bapat I would urge him not to take the fatal step, assuming that he is correctly reported. I would urge him and his disciples to live for swaraj and embrace death when it comes to them naturally and in due course.

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] For the Viceroy's reply, *vide* "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 15-5-1939

[2] Gandhiji had scribbled the message on the back of a telegram dated May 9, 1939, which was addressed to him.

430. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

KANTI,
May 10, 1939

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
CARE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER
LUCKNOW

READ. UNDERSTAND DECISION WRONG UNNECESSARY. HOPE COUGH BETTER. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3915. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7224

431. LETTER TO HABIB KESHAVJI

May 10, 1939

BHAI KESHAVJI[1],

I have preserved your letter of August 13, 1938. I came upon it while looking through some old letters in the train.

You are right. The problem here is a difficult one. But please believe me I am the same man that I was there. Even today I would lay down my life if thereby I could bring about Hindu-Muslim unity. I did fast once for 21 days. My efforts are continuing.

What shall I write about the conditions there? Since I cannot guide you brothers [there] from this distance, I merely watch the developments helplessly.

Do write to me. May God bless you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 979. Courtesy: Habib Keshavji

[1] A South African Indian. He had in his childhood met Gandhiji in South Africa.

432. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

BOMBAY
May 11, 1939

MIRABEHN
C/O PREMIER
PESHAWAR

ACT ACCORDING MY LETTER[1] POSTED FROM BRINDABAN. GOING RAJKOT TONIGHT.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6441. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 10036

433. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

BOMBAY,
May 11, 1939

CHI. LILA,

Your complaint is justified. I have not been able to write to you as often as I should have done. I shall be more careful henceforth. Jaya must have reached there safely. Mahadev is accompanying me. Pay careful attention to your study. In that lies your good. Don't mind Mathew having left. Learn what English Krishnachandra can teach you.[2] Hari's condition is a pitiable one. Ba will stay here for four or five days for her treatment and then join me at Rajkot. Keep on writing to me.

Ask Jaya to give me an account of her experiences.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9377. Also C.W. 6652. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Amtussalaam", 8-5-1939
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Krishnachandra", 8-5-1939

434. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

BOMBAY,
May 11, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter. Yes, it would be good if you could rid yourself of your fondness for books. You can certainly purchase on my behalf any religious book you may need, but for the rest you should seek your brother's help. What I mean is: have just one book. Draw all your wisdom from that one book. What better do you need than the *Ramayana*, the *Gita* or *Ishopanishad*?

Balkrishna's fever causes concern. Sushila will write about it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev will remain with me.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4314. Also S. G. 76

435. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[1]

May 11, 1939

To one of the Pressmen who enquired about his health Gandhiji said:

I am so so. I can't say my cough has left me.

QUESTION: What is your next step with regard to Rajkot?

GANDHIJI: Naturally it would be to take up the threads where I left them and where they are left.

Knowing that the last words of the sentence were significant, one of the Pressmen repeated: "Where you left them and where they are left?" Gandhiji clarified the words without delay.

You are all aware that something has happened between the time I left Rajkot and the present moment.

[1] The source says: "Resting on a cot covered with khadi in a spacious room in Birla House, Mahatma Gandhi received a batch of Pressmen this afternoon, with a pleasant smile on his face, remarking with a twinkle in his eye: "Here comes the gang.' In spite of a strenuous journey last night, Mahatma Gandhi looked exceedingly fit and cheerful. He was busy reading a bundle of letters as the pressmen were ushered in. They squatted on the ground close to the cot and started the process of "pumping', as Gandhiji referred to the interview."

He referred to the discussion of the scheme of reforms between the State people's representatives and the Rajkot authorities. He added :

This scheme has not yet been found acceptable to the Praja Parishad.

It was asked if this scheme of reforms suggested by Durbar Virawala did not amount to a breach of promise made by the Thakore Saheb in his Notification of December 26 last, according to which the conferring of the widest powers on the people had been promised.

Mahatmaji replied in the negative. He said that Durbar Virawala was not offering anything in terms of the December Notification. It was an independent offer. There was no question of a breach of promise as it was a scheme under discussion between the two parties. If the parties concerned accepted it, it would be a mutual settlement.

Q. Are the terms of reference suggested by Durbar Virawala in his telegram to you on the question of representation of Muslims and Bhayats on the Reforms Committee acceptable to you?

G. No.

Referring to this query further, he said that the complainants and he would present their cases to the Chief Justice. Pleadings would contain prayers of parties. Gandhiji added :

Perhaps they are [seeking] a way to avoid any terms of reference.[1]

You have had enough for the day.

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-5-1939.

436. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

May 12, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

We arrived in Rajkot today. I got your letter. You shouldn't worry. Don't let yourself rust. Do prepare for the Kovid examination. Give the help asked of you. Go prepared for lessons every day so that you can teach well. Procure a book of Hindi grammer. The text to be taught would be a prescribed one, so you should have no difficulty.

[1] Here the source says that as "the Pressmen were just settling down to the interview in right earnest", Mahadev Desai reminded them of the strenuous journey Gandhiji had and he suggested "that it was better the interview was cut short."

For the present I shall have to stay in Rajkot. In June I shall have to go to Bombay for two or three days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 10011. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

437. SPEECH AT PRAJA PARISHAD WORKERS' MEETING, RAJKOT[1]

May 12, 1939

I wonder why my statement of 24th[2] April should have perturbed some of you. I said nothing new in it. It was a summary of what I had told[3] you in detail just before I left Rajkot.

So far as Vajubhai[4] and his colleagues' statement is concerned, let me tell you I have rather liked it inasmuch as it has served to bring out in clear relief the fundamental differences between his group and me. The Council of Action, it is stated, was constituted by the Parishad for the specific purpose of conducting the civil disobedience fight. Now that it has been called off *sine die*, its function has lapsed. I can quite understand the objection to negotiating a settlement in its name. But I am not conducting the negotiations in the Council's name.

Let me explain my own position in this matter. When the Award was first announced, under the exultation of the moment I allowed myself to say that the result of my Rajkot fast had exceeded my expectations. But I now find that the Chief Justice's Award has become a halter round my neck .

I did not come here at your invitation. I came here because Rajkot is the home of my childhood and because I felt I would be able to keep its Ruler to his promises. In the various steps which I have taken since my arrival here, I had been guided solely by my inner

[1] This is extracted from "New Light" by Pyarelal, who had summarized the speech "for the sake of brevity". Pyarelal says: ". . . Gandhiji had learnt that . . . some Parishad workers . . . felt perturbed at the idea of negotiating a settlement with Durbar Virawala. . . A few. . . had declared their disbelief in the philosophy of 'converting your enemy'. Some others were of opinion that . . . the December 26 Notification should be insisted upon. Gandhiji elucidated his own position . . . within two hours of his arrival in Rajkot . . . "

[2] The source, however, has "23rd"; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 24-4-1939

[3] *Vide* "Spech at Praja Parishad Workers Meetng, Rajkot", 23-4-1939

[4] Vajubhai Shukla.

light and the logic of circumstances. Nobody is under any obligation to join me in my present experiment. Anybody who feels differently from me is perfectly free to go his way, and if the people of Rajkot decide to carry on the fight by following different methods, I would not mind it. I am humble enough to know that there may be a different way and a better way than mine of doing a thing. In no case do I want to see our people turn into cowards.

I welcome too the suggestion about calling the Parishad and obtaining its mandate with regard to the future lines of action. But I would like you not to shut your eyes to the realities of the situation. I am trying the delicate and difficult technique of negotiating a settlement with Durbar Virawala by appealing to the better self in him, while at the same time I am pursuing the stages contemplated in the Award. The Rajkot issue is not so simple or superficial as it might appear at first sight. Behind it are ranged other and powerful forces.

Eighteen days have elapsed since I discussed[1] with you the new line of approach to the Rajkot question. The passage of time has confirmed my opinion. I confess I was guilty of impatience when I wrote to Mr. Gibson[2] about the interminable delays and to the Bhayats[3] about their suggestion to refer to the Chief Justice the meaning of my assurance to them. Such impatience reflects little credit on my ahimsa. My legal position was correct. But ahimsa does not go by legal rights.

I have now realized that I must be content to plod on with infinite patience. It is no mango trick that can be performed in the twinkling of an eye. It calls for a more potent force even than civil disobedience, viz., the application of the active principle that lies at the core of ahimsa. This is the new light that I sense I have seen. I see it but dimly. And I am therefore unable to define it.

I should very much like, if I could, altogether to give up the shelter of the Award before proceeding with the work of appeasing Durbar shri Virawala. But that requires courage, fearlessness and ample faith. If I had these, I should not hesitate to plunge into a blazing fire. But such faith cannot come by mechanical means. One must wait and pray for it. I had no idea of what jail life was like when I launched on satyagraha in South Africa. But once inside the prison

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Praja Parishad Workers Meeting, Rajkot", 23-4-1939
[2] *Vide* "Letter to E. C. Gibson", 19-4-1939
[3] *Vide* "Letters to Ranjitsinh", 17-4-1939

it become to me like a palace, a sanctuary, a place of pilgrimage, where I learnt things which probably I would not have outside.

If I had to act only for myself, I would not probably have hesitated to take the plunge. But as a custodian of the people's interests I wonder if I should run any risks. Thus has conscience turned me into a coward and I am vacillating between doubt and faith.

My ahimsa tells me that I must tear up the Award. But the reason is not yet fully convinced. 'What is the meaning of not seeking aid from the Paramount Power,' I argue to myself , 'when you are trying to secure the co-operation of Durbar Shri Virawala and the Thakore Saheb? Are they not all parts of one and the same system?' Thus I am caught in the net of my own reasoning. All this I know is a sign of lack of faith on my part.

I cannot, while there is this conflict between the head and the heart within me , offer to take you along with me or be of much use to you as a 'guide'. I have no set theory to go by. I have not worked out the science of satyagraha in its entirety. I am still groping. You can join me in my quest if it appeals to you and you feel the call.

A representative is bound to consult his principals and take his instructions from them at every step. But a physician cannot afford to do so regarding his patients. He must be guided solely by his instinct and vary his treatment according to his reading of the symptoms as they might develop from moment to moment. He cannot accept dictation of the patient. I stand in a dual capacity in relation to you. I am your spokesman whom you have also accepted as your physician. You must implicitly follow the treatment laid down by your physician so long as you have faith in him. If he no longer commands your confidence, you must appoint in his place another who does.

Only a prospective mother knows what it is to carry, The onlookers notice her illness and pity her. But she alone knows the travail. It is I who have conceived satyagraha. Mine alone, therefore, must be the travail and the suffering. I am not joking. I am in dreadful earnest. I shall enter the fiery gates and pursue my mission even if I am the only person left to do so—I am resolved to try and exhaust every resource of satyagraha to convert Durbar Virawala. If I succeed, you will all share the fruit. If I fail, the responsibility will be entirely mine and what I do will in no way affect you.

When I was little child, there used to be two blind master performers in Rajkot. One of them was musician. When he played on his instrument, his fingers swept the strings with an unerring instinct

and everybody listened spellbound to his playing. Similarly there are chords in every human heart. If we only know how to strike the right chord, we bring out the music.

Durbar Virawala in no exception to the rule.

Have I set Durbar Virawala completely at his ease? Have I applied truth and ahimsa only in my dealings with him? Have I not threatened him with the Award?

We want to set up democracy in Rajkot. A born democrat is a born disciplinarian. Democracy comes naturally to him who is habituated normally to yield willing obedience to all laws, human or divine. I claim to be a democrat both by instinct and training. Let those who are ambitious to serve democracy qualify themselves by satisfying first this acid test of democracy. Moreover, a democrat must be utterly selfless. He must think and dream not in terms of self or party but only of democracy. Only then does he acquire the right of civil disobedience. I do not want anybody to give up his convictions or to suppress himself. I do not believe that a healthy and honest difference of opinion will injure our cause. But opportunism, camouflage or patched-up compromises certainly will. If you must dissent, you should take care that your opinions voice your innermost convictions and are not intended merely as a convenient party cry.

Today our democracy is choked by our internecine strife. We are torn by dissensions—dissensions between Hindus and Mussalmans, Brahmins and non-Brahmins, Congressmen and non-Congressmen. It is no easy task to evolve democracy out of this mobocracy. Let us not make confusion worse confounded by further introducing into it the virus of sectionalism and party spirit.

I value individual freedom but you must not forget that man is essentially a social being. He has risen to this present status by learning to adjust his individualism to the requirements of social progress. Unrestricted individualism is the law of the beast of the jungle. We have learnt to strike the mean between individual freedom and social restraint. Willing submission to social restraint for the sake of the well-being of the whole society enriches both the individual and the society of which one is a member.

Harijan, 27-5-1939.

438. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

RAJKOT,
May 12, 1939

Gandhiji said that he was deeply grieved that the Union Government seemed to have no finality about their policy[1] in respect of Asiatics. Their past declarations were being disregarded and some of the recommendations made by their own Commission were also being set at naught.

There was no wonder, he said, that a section of British Indian settlers in South Africa resented this policy, and in despair were thinking of resorting to civil disobedience. He could only hope that wiser counsels would prevail and that the Union Government would retrace their steps and respect the rights acquired by British Indian settlers.[2]

The Hindu, 13-5-1939.

439. TALK WITH PRAJA PARISHAD WORKERS[3]

RAJKOT,
[On or after *May 12, 1939*][4]

The statement I made on leaving Rajkot correctly represented my state of mind. The views I expressed are, if anything, stronger today. I own that I was impatient. The Award which was a tainted fruit made me impatient. That impatience was a slur on my ahimsa. It was that impatience that made me say to the Bhayats and Mussalmans that I was not prepared to wait for Sir Maurice Gwyer's Award on their reference, the work of the Committee must go on. There was no committee then, but impatience made me speak so.

There is no doubt in my mind that the Award must be renounced. How can I woo Durbar Virawala and also keep the sword of the Award hanging over his head? But where is the courage? The faint-heartedness is unworthy of a satyagrahi who must have nothing but faith in God to sustain him.

Harijan, 27-5-1939.

[1] *Vide* footnote 2, "A Letter", 7-4-1939

[2] *Vide* also "Message to Indians in south Africa", 23-5-1939

[3] The talk is extracted from "A Momentous Decision" by Mahadev Desai, who explains: ". . . on May 12. . . in a personal letter to Durbar Shri Virawala . . . Gandhiji mentioned 'the double game' he was playing and . . . he loathed it. . . he lost no opportunity of thinking aloud before co-workers."

[4] *ibid*

440. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

RAJKOT,
May 13, 1939

DEAR DR.. GOPICHAND,

Please fix up with T. Bapa about the donation referred to by you.

Yours,
BAPU

DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA, M.L.A.
LAHORE

From the original: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

441. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

RAJKOT,
May 13, 1939

CHI. JAMANALAL

I heard about your having been taken to Jaipur. Improve your health fully. The weight should not go down any furhter. You must eat fruit in sufficient quantity. Don't eat anything between meals. You may take some Ayurvedic medicines if you wish. Write to me at Rajkot. For some time now I shall have to stay here. You needn't worry about things here. Mahadev is with me. He is keeping well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3003

442. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

RAJKOT,
May 13, 1939

CHI. PRABHA

I have your letter. You did a very good thing in visiting the patient. Do keep me informed from time to time. Write to him that I

often inquire after his health. Take proper care of your health also. Sushila will write to you in detail about it. Her health has gone down considerably .

Ba is in Bombay and will come here after four or five days. I am well. The nights are cool here, and so we don't feel the heat very much.

The struggle will drag on. There is no cause for worry.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3532

443. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

RAJKOT,
May 13, 1939

DEAR DAUGHTER,[1]

I have your letter. It was for your own good that I did not bring you up to Viramgam. For your sake I drank the mango juice you had prepared even though I had no desire for it. What can I do if you go on fidgeting unnecessarily? You have no faith either in God or in me. Your heart is full of misgivings which consume you. You are always in a harassed state. I tell you, you must do the work you have been doing. You will gain everything through it.

I am quite well. There is no cause to worry about the Hindu-Muslim problem.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G, N. 416

[1] In the source, the superscription is in Urdu.

444. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL[1]

RAJKOT,
May 13, 1939

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI
BHAVNAGAR

DUMB-FOUNDED. GOD WILL GUIDE US. HOPE NANABHAI[2] OTHERS WELL. AWAITING FURTHER PARTICULARS.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

445. LETTER TO AMBALAL SARABHAI

RAJKOT
May 14, 1939

DEAR BROTHER,

I have your letter. I have known Juthabhai for many years. He is industrious. He is honest. If you want him to handle large amounts, I would suggest that you start entrusting him with responsibility little by little. I have no idea about his ability to handle large amounts.

I fully endorse Juthabhai's charitable activities. But I do not personally collect money for all my colleagues. In many cases, I give them the responsibility of collecting money. This has brought good results. They get the training. They gain respect independently, and my burden of raising funds becomes lighter.

Saralabehn met me in Bombay.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujara ti origin al: C. W. 11127. Courte sy: Sarabh ai Founda tion

[1] This was sent on hearing about an unsuccessful attempt on Vallabhbhai Patel's life in Bhavnagar.

[2] Nrisinh prasad Kalidas Bhatt.

446. INTERVIEW TO TRAVANCORE NATIONAL CONGRESS DEPUTATION[1]

May 13/14, 1939

The deputationists first explained to Mahatmaji in detail the changes introduced by the Government in the electoral system of Travancore.

Mahatmaji said that he understood the system as it existed and also the present change, and asked :

Is this all that you have to discuss with me?

Mr. Kainikkara said that they would like to discuss everything concerning the political situation in Travancore.

GANDHIJI: Do you know the charge against you?

KAINIKKARA: We know there is a great deal of misrepresentation about us and that we are under a cloud.

G. It is said that your organization, the Travancore National Congress, is a bogus organization, that you are not an independent body and that you are an instrument of the Government. What do you say to this?

KAINIKKARA: We repudiated the charge. We need only say that most of us in the Travancore National Congress have been in the political field from the days of the Non-co-operation Movement. That cannot be said of many of the members of the State Congress.

G. If that be so, what have you to say regarding the treatment of the lady, Miss Annie Mascarene? Why is it that Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar refuses to enquire into that matter?

KAINIKKARA: Regarding Miss Mascarene, we do not wish to say anything. We would rather not discuss her . . . . We could not demand an enquiry for we know from actual experience the outrages perpetrated by the followers of the State Congress . . .

Mahatmaji asked us whether therefore we are justifying all the arrests, etc., made by the Government.

KAINIKKARA: We are not. Some arrests may be right and some may be wrong. But how can we throw the whole blame on the Government? It is well-known that Chengannoor is a State Congress stronghold. There . . . huge banyan trees were cut

[1] Extracted from a report of the statement which, according to the source, was issued by the deputationists, Kainikkara Padmanabha Pillai, M. L. A., Kottoor Kunjukrishna Pillai, M. L. C., and K. P. Kayyalakkal, "with the approval of Gandhiji". E. John Philipose of Travancore State Congress was also present.

down to obstruct traffic, and culverts and bridges were broken . . . Can it be said that none of the State Congress workers saw this? . . . Why did they not at least help to find out the culprits? . . . It may be better for Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar to institute an enquiry . . . but we who know the actual facts by experience cannot make the demand.

G. Do you say that it is the measures adopted by the Government that re-established peace?

KAINIKKARA : No. You did it. Peace was established with the stopping of civil disobedience. If civil disobedience were to be started again all the disturbances would recur.

G. Then you admit that, at the worst, the mistake on the part of the State Congress was that they had no control over their followers.

KOTTOOR : No, not only that. Their first fault is that they started civil disobedience without assuring themselves of their control. Their next fault is that they did not stop it even when they found their real position, and their gravest fault is that they never seriously checked their followers for the fear that they would lose their followers . .

Then Mahatmaji asked us what our fundamental difference was with the State Congress.

We told him that we had been demanding Responsible Government for the last twenty years . . . At that time, the Christians opposed the demand for Responsible Government. In 1932, the Christian-Ezhava-Muslim agitation for communal representation gave a new turn to Travancore politics. . . Now that the legislature is decidedly based on communal representation and the Christians dominate the communal clique, they are demanding Responsible Government.

G. Therefore you question the good faith of the Christians.

KAINIKKARA : We do.

G. At the beginning I put a sharp question about you. Now I put another question about them. We are trying to reach the truth.

KAINIKKARA : Yes, we do question the good faith of the Christians.

G. Suppose they agree to nationalize the legislature, then what objection do you have?

KAINIKKARA : Then we have no objection.

On the next day we met at 8 p. m. after prayers. . . . Mahatmaji then explained the position of the State Congress as he had understood it. He said that the State Congress, including the Christian section in it, was not anti-national. The far-seeing Christians, even those that might have been at one time communal, have seen that communal arrangement and pacts will not serve them in the end. He illustrated it by

the experience of the Muslims in Bengal. He said that therefore the sinister motives that they alleged against the Christians were not real and the State Congress was national and would be prepared to nationalize the constitution of the legislature.

Mr. Philipose explained that the attitude of the Christians in the State Congress was entirely national. He also said that the organization was not communal and that all communities were in it.

KAINIKKARA : It is enough that we make our position clear and definite, Our position is this: We object to communal representation and Responsible Government going together. We insist on the reorganization of the legislature on purely national lines. By nationalizing we mean the removal of nominations and reservations and the application of a common principle in respect of franchise, delimitation and system of voting.

G. That is reasonable. Now my task will be to wait for the others. How I wish to have at least one of you with me till they arrive.

KOTTOOR : But Mahatmaji, you have not told us your opinion about the change in the voting system.

G. It does not very seriously concern me. For, after all, it does not solve the difficulties.

KOTTOOR: I hope, however, that you do not consider the change anti-national.

G. The position is this. The arrangement that subsisted was anti-national. You think that by this change at least one evil is removed. But in my view what is left is still anti-national . The whole thing must be changed. It must be made national.

PHILIPOSE : It would be good, if it came before the elections.

KAINIKKARA : We have no illusions about Responsible Government coming within three weeks.

G. Let Responsible Government take its own time. If the present anti-national system could be changed before that, even that would be a great thing.

Mr. Kayyalakkal said that for the last many years they, the Ezhavas, had been trying to remove social and religious inequalities. Realizing that temple-entry alone could solve the problem, his brother-in-law, Mr. T. K. Madhavan, placed the matter at Gandhiji's feet. By the grace of H. H. the Maharaja and the blessings of Mahatmaji, they had got it now. Now Gandhiji must bless them and help them to live as one with the rest of the Hindu and to contribute their share for the prosperity and well-being of the Hindu community as a whole.

G. Blessings you always have in plenty. Help I have given. Now you have to help yourselves.

Just then the clock struck and Gandhiji smilingly said: "The curfew tolls", and Mr. Kainikkara completed, "the knell of parting day". Gandhiji repeated :

Yes, exactly, the knell of parting day.

The Hindu, 2-6-1939.

447. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
May 15, 1939

DEAR SIR AKBAR,

I have to acknowledge your kind letters of 11th and 25th ultimo.

As you are aware, during the eighteen days before the 12th instant, Calcutta and Brindaban in Champaran claimed my attention. I was unable to see the Aryasamaj friends during those days. But they waylaid me on the 10th as I was journeying back to Rajkot. This accounts for the unavoidable delay in acknowledging and dealing with your important letters. I don't propose to go into the past nor into the replies the Aryasamaj friends have favoured me with.

The minimum requirements of the Aryasamajists are:

1. Absolute freedom for the practice and preaching of the Vedic religion and culture, with due regard to the feelings of the followers of other faiths.

2. Full freedom for starting new Aryasamajas and building of new Aryasamaj *mandirs yajnashalas, havankundas* and the repairing of the old ones without obtaining any premission from the Ecclesiastical or any other department of the State.

Your letters lead me to think that you have no serious objections to conceding these. If my reading is correct, why wait for the reforms or the establishment of the ecclesiastical court? You will considerably enhance the cause of peace, if you could possibly make the suggested gesture. The Aryasamajist civil disobedience will then stop at once.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 8016

448. LETTER TO BHAVANRAO SHRINIVASRAO PANT[1]

RAJKOT,
May 15, 1939

DEAR RAJA SAHIB,

I do hope that things are shaping well. Transition stages are always difficult. You have taken a long step. But the heart does not always keep pace with the intellect. I would urge you therefore never to doubt the wisdom of the step taken by you. Let the things go forward, even though they may seem to go too fast.

I see you are going to Badrinath. I hope you will have a happy time there from the spiritual standpoint.

Yours sincerely,

THE RAJA SAHIB OF AUNDH

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

449. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

RAJKOT,
May 15, 1939

Nanabhai had given me news of you. I am glad that you have gone there and that Manubhai[2] is with you. Do come here on your way back. But don't be impatient. Ba is not here at present.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G, N. 7111. Also C. W. 4603. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

450. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

RAJKOT,
May 15, 1939

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,[3]

I sent you a letter[4] from here. You saw what happened in Bhavnagar?[5] The lesson it has for you is that you must stay in

[1] *Alias* Balasaheb Pant Pratinidhi.
[2] Addressee's husband.
[3] In the source Gandhiji had added here: "Harijan Ashram".
[4] *Vide* "Telegram to Vallabhbhai Patel", 14-5-1939
[5] *Vide* "Telegram to Vallabhbhai Patel", 14-5-1939

Ahmedabad and do the work of service. That will result one day in Hindu-Muslim understanding.

I am all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 420

451. A NOTE

May 15, 1939

This is a foolish letter. You will rid yourself of this foolishness if you do some work. It is improper to stay on here. It is uncivilized to hang around at other people's homes. Please go away.

M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi origin al: Pyarel al Papers . Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y. Courte sy: Belade vi Nayyar and Dr. Sushil a Nayyar

452. TALK WITH PRAJA PARISHAD WORKERS [1]

[*May 15, 1939*][2]

What is it that prevents me from throwing the Award overboard? It is not only faint-heartedness but it smacks of diplomacy. If I want Durbar Virawala to act on the square I must relieve his fears too. Why should he have to remain in fear of the Paramount Power and not do what he can of his own free will? I am talking so much of ahimsa, but I am not walking fearlessly into the mouth of *himsa.* A satyagrahi seeks no adventitious aid—not of worldly forces, not of the Paramount Power. He deals directly wih his opponent and wins him by love and utter self-surrender to God. The very difficulty of implementing the Award, the very fact that it has proved a Pandora's box shows that God wants me to throw it away, however seemingly fruitful of future good it may be. God seems to be speaking to me in strident tones; 'Your victory was no victory. Throw it away !' You want me to go on with the work of the Award, because it belongs to

[1] The talk is extracted from "A Momentous Decision" by Mahadev Desai, who narrates it in sequence with Gandhiji's talks to "his co-workers"; *vide* "Talk with Praja Parishad Workers", 12-5-1939. By way of introduction Mahadev Desai explains that "in three days, Gandhiji had advanced a few more steps", presumably, after he arrived in Rajkot on May 12.

[2] *ibid*

you. But how can I go on with it when my courage fails me, my hands are shaking and I am faltering? It is a moral issue with me. The consciousness of the wrong of the initial step I took oppresses me and I cannot go on with it, however much you may want me to go on with it. What will you do with such a halting, faltering general? I must throw the Award overboard and you in your turn may throw the general overboard.

Harijan, 27-5-1939

453. TALCHER

Talcher promises to be much worse than Rajkot. In Rajkot it was the Ruler's word that was broken. In Talcher it is the Paramount Power's. In Rajkot the State atrocities were not the subject of scrutiny. In Talcher the sorry condition of the numerous refugees is almost everything. Hence delay is criminal and may mean loss of one year's crop to several thousand cultivators. The other relief promised by the Political Agent, Major Hennessey, relates to paltry things so far as the Ruler of Talcher is concerned but they are serious enough for the people.

It has been whispered to me that I have been guilty of injustice to Major Hennessey and hence to the Paramount Power by attributing to them breach of promise; for, it is said, Major Hennessey promised nothing, he merely undertook to convey to the Ruler the wishes of the people concerned. It is further said that even if it is proved that he made any such promise he did so without authority.

I cannot admit either of the pleas. Major Hennessey signed the document without any reservations. Shri Harekrushna Mahtab described the tragedy with a wealth of detail which compels conviction. He has been an eye-witness of the events narrated by him. So far as I am aware Major Hennessey himself has never denied or has not been given an opportunity of denying the allegations made about him.

There seems to be no doubt that the Ruler of Talcher is in no mood to do justice to his people unless he is made to act according to the *sanad* I have already reproduced[1] in these columns. The representative of the Paramount Power can even require the smaller

[1] *Vide* "The Tragedy of Talcher"

States of Orissa to perform acts in the interest of their people. Can there be any doubt as to the necessity of redressing every one of the injustices mentioned in the memorandum signed by Major Hennessey? Indeed redress has been long overdue. Why is the Ruler being humoured by the Political Department in his wholly indefensible attitude? Why is the welfare of several thousand refugees being lightly regarded? Is not the prestige of the Paramount Power being used to sustain the admitted evils? Surely there is something radically wrong somewhere in all this.

RAJKOT, MAY 16, 1939.

Harijan, 20-5-1939.

454. TELEGRAM TO KANTHI

May 17, 1939

KANTHI
K. P. C. C. MEMBER
HUBLI

MY WRITING CAN PERMIT NO COERCION.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

455. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

RAJKOT,
May 17, 1939

I said[2] at Calcutta on the 24th ultimo that Rajkot had proved a laboratory for me. The latest proof of the fact lies in the step I am now announcing. After an exhaustive discussion with my co-workers I have come to the conclusion at 6 o'clock this evening that I should renounce the advantages accruing from the Award of the Chief Justice.

I recognize my error. At the end of my fast I had permitted myself to say that it had succeeded as no previous fast had done. I now see that it was tainted with *himsa*. In taking the fast I sought immediate intervention of the Paramount Power so as to induce fulfilment of the promise made by the Thakore Saheb. This was not

[1] This appeared under the title "Confession and Repentance". The statement was also published in *The Hindustan Times* and *The Hindu* of May 18.

[2] *Vide* "Popular Violence in Ramdurg". Gandhiji was on his way to Calcutta.

the way of ahimsa or conversion. It was the way of *himsa* or coercion. My fast to be pure should have been addressed only to the Thakore Saheb and I should have been content to die if I could not have melted his heart or rather that of his adviser, Durbar Shri Virawala. My eyes would not have been opened if I had not found unexpected difficulties in my way. Durbar Shri Virawala was no willing party to the Award. Naturally, he was in no obliging mood. He therefore took advantage of every opportunity to cause a delay. The Award, instead of making my way smooth, became a potent cause of angering the Muslims and Bhayats against me. Before the Award we had met as friend. Now I am accused of having committed a breach of promise, voluntarily and without any consideration, made by me. The matter was to go to the Chief Justice for decision as to whether I was guilty of the alleged breach of promise. The statements of the Muslim Council and the Garasia Association are before me. Now that I have taken the decision to renounce the Award, there is no occasion for me to answer the two cases. So far as I am concerned, the Muslims and Bhayats can have anything the Thakore Saheb may be pleased to give them. I must apologize to them for having put them to the trouble of preparing their cases.

I owe an apology to the Viceroy for the unnecessary strain I have put upon him in my weakness. I apologize to the Chief Justice for having been the cause of putting him to the labour which had I known better, he need not have gone through. Above all, I apologize to the Thakore Saheb and Durbar Shri Virawala. So far as the latter is concerned, I must also own that, in common with my co-workers, I have harboured evil thoughts about him. I do not here pause to consider whether the charges made against him were true or not. This is not the place to discuss them. Suffice it to say that the way of ahimsa was not and had not yet been applied to him.

And let it be said to my discredit that I have been guilty of playing what may be called a double game, i. e., hanging the sword of the Award over his head and wooing him and expecting him of his own free will to advise the Thakore Saheb to grant liberal reforms.

This method I admit is wholly inconsistent with ahimsa. When all of a sudden I made what is known as a sporting offer to Mr. Gibson on 19th April, I discovered my weakness. But I had not the courage then and there to say, ‘I do not want to have anything to do with the Award.’ Instead I said,‘Let the Thakore Saheb appoint his own Committee and then the Parishad people will examine the report

in terms of the Award, and if it is found defective it can go to the Chief Justice.' Durbar Shri Virawala detected a flaw and very properly rejected the offer, saying: 'You are still hanging the Award over my head and want to become a court of appeal over the Thakore Saheb's Committee. If such is the case, you must take your pound of flesh and no more'. I saw the force of his objection. I told him, too, that I lacked the courage then to throw the Award overboard, but I would still plead with him to come to terms with the people as if the Award was not in existence and as if the Sardar and I had also withdrawn. He promised to try. He tried in his own fashion but not with a large heart. I do not blame him. How could I expect large heart when he knew my faint-heartedness in clinging to the Award?

Only trust can beget trust. I lacked it myself. But at last I have regained my lost courage. My faith in the sovereign efficacy of ahimsa burns brighter for my confession and repentance.

I must not do an injustice to my co-workers. Many of them are filled with misgivings. My exposition of ahimsa is new to them. They see no cause for my repentance. They think that I am giving up a great chance created by the Award. They think too that as a political leader I have no right to play fast and loose with the fortunes of 75,000 souls, maybe of the whole of the people of Kathiawar. I have told them that their fears are unjustified, and that every act of purification, every accession of courage, adds to the strength of the cause of a people affected by a movement of satyagraha. I have told them, too, that if they regard me as the general and expert of satyagraha, they must put up with what may appear to them to be my vagaries.

Having now freed the Thakore Saheb and his adviser from the oppression of the Award, I have no hesitation in appealing to them to appease the people of Rajkot by fulfilling their expectations and dispelling their misgivings.

Harijan, 20-5-1939.

456. DISCUSSION WITH MAHADEV DESAI[1]

[*May 17, 1939*][2]

MAHADEV DESAI: How was it wrong to ask the Paramount Power to intervene? You did not insist on the letter of your vow. Otherwise you might have said you could not break the fast until your demand was satisfied. But you were content with the arbitration of the Chief Justice. Even so in 1918[3] when you fasted during the Ahmedabad labour strike you did not insist on the 35 percent increase in wage but you contented yourself with the mill-owners consenting to an arbitration. In fact, if the Thakore Saheb had yielded to your demand without the intervention of the Paramount Power, he might have charged you with having coerced him. But here the arbitration which was the result of the fast ought to have been given [to] you even without the fast.

GANDHIJI: You are right. But why don't you see that in 1918[4] the arbitration was offered by the mill-owners? If the Thakore Saheb had offered arbitration of his own accord, it would have been splendid. But here I appealed to the Paramount Power. That is why the arbitration has been infructuous. I had no business to be impatient. Instead of waiting on God and allowing my fast to work itself I sought outside aid. It was a grave blunder.

But why not wait until Sir Maurice Gwyer gives his decision on the new reference? Let not the Mussalmans and Bhayats have the pretext of saying you fought shy of the Chief Justice's decision.

Why must I wait to take the right decision? It cannot await a moments's delay. I know that the reference is mischievous and we must win. That might give greater value to the renunciation. But I am not renouncing the Award in order that the world may acclaim the act. By no means. I am freeing myself from a terrible oppression . I have made my decision and am feeling free as a bird.

Harijan, 27-5-1939.

[1] The discussion is extracted from "A Momentous Decision". Mahadev Desai explains that they had the discussion after the statement to the Press "was ready. . . and before it was typed"; *vide* the preceding item. Vallabhbhai Patel was also present.

[2] *ibid*

[3] The source, however, has "1917"

[4] *ibid*

457. TALKS WITH CO-WORKERS, RAJKOT[1]

[Afrer *May 17, 1939*][2]

I proved myself of little faith. If I had staked my all on my faith in God and on the efficacy of my fast in melting the Thakore Saheb's and Durbar Shri Virawala's heart, the worst that could have happened would have been my death. But it would have been a worthy death. And if the Thakore Saheb and Virawala had not let me die, they would have come to me as friends and given me what I wanted. In any event the result would have been better than the breach of my faith in God and making Durbar Virawala my enemy by appealing to the Viceroy to intervene and even to turn him out. I am amazed at my own folly in thus antagonizing him and still expecting to convert him. His own generosity is, I think, out of proportion to the provocation I had given him.

My hands are shaking and my steps faltering.

The very possession of this Award has made me a coward, and I am afraid if I were to retain it, it would make cowards of you too. A satyagrahi does not depend for his strength on external means. His strength comes from within, from his reliance on God. God becomes his shield when he throws down all his earthly weapons. But if he were to hide a fire-arm in his pocket, his inner strength would go and he would cease to feel invulnerable. The Award was very like a fire-arm in the pocket of a votary of ahimsa like me. It stood between me and my God. It shamed me and made a coward of me. I have thrown it away as Christian did his load of sin, and I am feeling again free and invulnerable and one with my Maker.

You ought to understand and appreciate the rejection of the Award. It was well-nigh impossible for you to have (to use the legal language) that decree executed. I could have got it done, but at the cost of enormous labour and time and the legal talent that I still possess. Meanwhile your energies would have been rusting, and your hands would have been crippled. You would have learnt nothing from

[1] The talks are extracted from Mahadev Desai's first three articles serialized under the title "The Decision and After". The first four paragraphs are reproduced from the first article of the series, the last four from the third of the series, and those in between from the second.

[2] Gandhiji had taken the "decision" to renounce the Gwyer Award on May 17, 1939; " Statement to the Press", 17-5-1939

the skill with which I should have been tackling the fresh hurdles that were being daily placed in my way. I have saved you from the burden of my sin. You are, at worst,'as you were'. if you want foolishly to march to jail, you are now free. Only you must not look to me. I can carry you forward along my own lines. It may be that I am unfit to lead you. You can then discard me, and you have every right to do so. You may not tolerate a general who changes his tactics every now and then. But if you will have me, you must have me on my terms.

I have not yet known a general who has not altered time and again the plans of his campaign and made eleventh-hour alterations in his orders. The ordinary fighting soldier knows nothing of these plans. In fact they are closely-guarded secret unknown to all but the general himself. That is why Tennyson wrote those immortal lines— "Theirs not to reason why, theirs not to make reply, theirs but to do and die". But these words apply, if you please, to a satyagrahi army more appropriately than to the ordinary army. For a military general may change his plans in view of the changing situation every day. A military strategy depends on the changing tactics of the enemy. The satyagrahi general has to obey his inner voice, for over and above the situation outside he examines himself constantly and listens to the dictates of the inner self. But both in satyagraha and military warfare the position of the soldier is very nearly the same. He knows no rest, no certainty of movements, the only certainty for him is to face heavy odds and even death. His promise to be under discipline and to obey the general's command applies even during the period of suspension of hostilities. But I have not asked for this kind of discipline. I have always tried to carry conviction to my co-workers, to carry their hearts, and their reasons with me. I shall go on doing so always, but where you cannot follow, you will have to have faith. In ordinary warfare one soldier cannot reason why. In our warfare there is enough scope for reasoning, but there is a limit to it. You will go on arguing until you are convinced, but when no conviction comes, you must fall back on faith.

There is now the way of negotiation open to you, but if you cannot think of it, it is open to you to fight. In fact if I had not cast away the Award, the fight would have been long delayed. I have saved you a few months. But you can overthrow my leadership and be free. From the point of view of satyagraha there is nothing but good coming out of the decision. A general is none the worse for

realization of his weakness and for atoning for his sin. In fact sin, ignorance, weakness are synonymous, and in asking for the Viceroy's intervention and clinging to the Award I was guilty of all the three. When a general purifies himself as I have done, far from weakening his army he adds to its strength enormously.

There should not be the least little suspicion in your mind that Durbar Virawala cannot be converted, no matter how non-violent you may be. Do you mean to say that he is the concentrated essence of evil in Kathiawar? Let me assure you that we in his position might have done no better. Every one of us is a mixture of good and evil. Is there not plenty of evil in us? There is enough of it in me and I always pray to God to purge me of it. The difference that there is between human beings is the difference of degree, and you must always try to place yourself in the position of the man you are about to judge. Virtue lies in discovering the best in your opponent and in appealing to it.

This depends on individual workers cultivating non-violence in thought, word and deed, by means of a concentrated effort in the fulfilment of the fourfold constructive programme. Maximum of work and minimun of speech must be your motto. In the centre of the pro-gramme is the spinning-wheel—no haphazard programme of spinning, but scientific understanding of every detail, including the mechanics and the mathematics of it, study of cotton and its varieties, and so on. There is the programme of literacy. You must concentrate exclusively on it, and not talk of any other thing. The work should be systematic and according to time table. Don't talk of politics—not even of non-violence—but talk to them of the advantages of literacy. There is prohibition of drink and intoxicating drugs and of gambling. There is medical relief by means of the propagation of simple rules of hygiene and sanitation and elementary preventive measures, and of cheap home remedies and training intelligent village folk in these.

There should not be one house in Rajkot with which you have not established contact from the point of view of pure service. You have to cultivate the Mussalmans, serve them unselfishly. There are the Harijans. Establish living contact with them.

All this constructive work should be for its own sake. And yet be sure that it will develop the quality required for non-violent responsible government. That is how I began my work in South Africa. I began with serving them. I did not know myself that I was training them for civil disobedience. I did not know myself that I was

so training myself. But you all know what happened in the end.

This constructive programme may go on endlessly. Why should you be tired of it? Do you know the Hundred Years' War in England? If they fought for a hundred years, we should be prepared to fight for a thousand years, inasmuch as we are a continent. That we will have given our contribution to the fight for freedom, will be our reward

That is the mass constructive programme I want you to do, and that is the basis of the training for the non-violence of the brave. It is whole and indivisible, and those who do not believe in it whole-heartedly must leave me and work according to their own lights.

Q. If the situation is different, if the people in a State are to a man ready to offer the utmost they can?

A. Then I would say to them: "Be reduced to ashes'. But that will be on one condition, viz., that you have reached the state of non-violence of my description. If I can have that assurance, I would say that though it is unequal battle you may fight single-handed in spite of opposition from the Paramount Power and the States. I would be the last person to cool the zeal and ardour of the people.

Q. But would it not suffice if the workers were pledged to carry out the programme and carried it out faithfully?

A. Hardly. For you have to give a visible demonstration of the fact that the whole of the State obeys your discipline. You want responsible government for all, not merely for the workers.

Gandhiji gave two instances. In 1922 he was sent to jail. He gave express instructions[1] to the effect that there should be no hartal, no demonstrations, work should go on as usual. A Secretary of State had described the situation in his derisive way: "When Gandhiji went to jail not a dog barked". But Gandhiji accepted it as a compliment and said that he was responsible for the quiet that prevailed. The people had literally carried out his instructions. Another instance: In 1921 there were the riots in Bombay. Gandhiji declared a fast until the rioters came to their senses.[2] Mian Mahomed Haji Jan Mahomed Chhotani was then living. He had complete control on the mischievous element, and he said to Gandhiji: "Please break the fast. I know these men, they are under my control and I assure you they will be quiet." Gandhiji said:

You should be able to say that with regard to all whether they belong to your party or not. To acquire that control the people should

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. R. Jayakar", 10-3-1922 and "Interview to Indulal Yagnik", 11-3-1922

[2] *Vide* "Appeal to Bombay Citizens", 19-11-1939

fulfil the constructive programme in all its details. Non-violence has failed in exact proportion to the failure of the charkha. There are other items—prohibition, Hindu-Muslim unity, removal of untouchability. It is difficult to submit individuals to the test in these items. There is room for self-deception. Not so in the matter of the wheel. The work can be measured from day to day.

You have to take up the programme with apostolic zeal. I cannot give you a new programme. Civil disobedience is for the few who are saturated with the spirit of non-violence and are ready for the utmost sacrifice. Constructive programme is for all. It is to be accepted by all actively and not as a lip profession. It has got to be worked or not worked. Khadi is worn or not worn. Let this fourfold programme be the acid test of your followers. Otherwise of course don't the cinema companies and cigarette sellers have a large enough following? Don't be deluded by those who gather about you and shout '*Inquilab zindabad*'[1] or swear at someone or other.

Banish all idle thoughts from your hearts and concentrate only on the thoughts you must have. You will thus obtain marvellous control over yourselves and others. A good man's thought never goes in vain. Thought-control means maximum of work with minimum of energy. If we had that control, we should not have to put forth the tremendous effort we do. Non-violent action does mean much silent work and little speech or writing. These will always be necessary because thought- control is not an easy thing. Nevertheless we have to cultivate that habit if we will have non-violence reigning supreme in this land and if we are to have responsible government through unadulterated non-violence.

CO-WORKER : Whether we stand the test or not, you alone can say, not we.

GANDHIJI: No, I cannot presume to say that. If you can affirm that you have living faith in God, no matter how you define God, it should be enough. You believe in some principle, clothe it with life, and say that it is your God and you believe in it. I should think it enough. I fasted apparently with complete faith in God. But instead of God I called the Viceroy to my aid. The satyagrahi has no other stay but God. For the moment my faith in God was dead.

Q. But then an atheist like Bradlaugh[2] may have the capacity to sacrifice all.

[1] "Long live the revolution."

[2] Charles Bradlaugh (1833-1891), English free-thinker and radical who became known as a free-thought lecturer under the name of "Iconoclast".

But you would rule him out as a satyagrahi?

A. I am afraid I would. Such a man is worthy of my reverence; but such a one would himself say he is not a satyagrahi of my definition. But I may be doing an injustice to his memory. I never had the privilege of meeting him. He might have had a living faith in an indefinable, self-acting Power whilst he declared himself an atheist.

Harijan, 3-6-1939, 10-6-1939 and 17-6-1939.

458. INTERVIEW TO STEEL[1]

RAJKOT,
[After *May 17, 1939*][2]

STEEL: What is your idea of independence?

GANDHIJI : By independence I mean complete withdrawal of British power from India. It does not exclude partnership between two nations enjoying equal independent status and terminable by either at will. It need not be different from Dominion Status. But perhaps Dominion Status won't be a happy term to use for a continent like India which is ethnologically and politically different from other Dominions like South Africa. Canada, Australia etc. But perhaps this term is as elastic as the English Constitution. And if Dominion Status could be so defined as to cover a case like India and if India could come to an honourable agreement with England, I would not quarrel about words. If British statesmen feel it convenient to use the word Dominion Status about India rather than any other, in order to describe that honourable agreement, I will not quarrel.

S. But there are elements in the Congress like Subhas Bose and his group who want absolute independence outside the British Empire.

G. It is only a question of terminology. I won't admit any difference between Subhas Babu and myself on this point though we may use different language. Supposing such free and equal partnership as I have postulated were feasible, Subhas Babu won't say 'No' to it. But today if such a proposition were put to him, he will probably say, as he well may, it is ruled out for him. For he would say

[1] Of *The New York Times*. The interview appeared under the title "No Quarrel about Words" by Pyarelal.

[2] From steel's concluding question and Gandhiji's answer to it, it is evident that the meeting took place after Gandhiji had renounced the Gwyer Award on May 17.

the British are not likely to yield so easily as some might think. If he talks to me like that, I won't combat him but would say that I prefer to use the language that I use as being more suited to my temperament and my faith in the essential identity of human nature.

Gandhiji's interviewer next wanted to know if there were any negotiations going on between him and the authorities in connection with the 'Federation'.

G. None whatsoever. All suggestions to this effect that one sees in the Press are mere figments of imagination. The present Viceroy is not made that way. He does not believe in doing things secretly. He puts all his cards on the table and likes taking the public into his confidence. At any rate that is my impression. I think he does believe that no cause is damaged by open negotiation.

But I feel certain that the 'Federation' won't come whilst it is not acceptable to the Congress or the Mussalmans or the Princes. I am inclined to think that the British statesmen wont't impose Federation upon an unwilling and dissatisfied India, but will try to placate all parties. That, at any rate, is my hope.

It would be first-class tragedy if it is imposed upon India. The federal structure cannot be brought into being in the midst of sullenness and opposition. If the 'Federation' is not wanted by any of the parties, it would be the height of impudence to force it.

S. What is the alternative?

G. The alternative may be to offer something that would be acceptable to all or either of the three parties.

S. But you do not believe with Subhas Bose that the best alternative would be to issue an ultimatum?

G. That is the fundamental difference between Subhas Babu and myself. Not that the ultimatum is in itself wrong, but it has to be backed by an effective sanction and there are today no non-violent sanctions. If all the parties come to an honourable understanding, an effective sanction could be easily forged.

Referring next to the communal situation, Mr. Steel asked whether, in Gandhiji's opinion, the Hindu-Muslim situation was getting worse.

G. Apparently yes, perhaps. But I have every hope that ultimately we are bound to come together. The interests that are common to us and that bind us together are so tremendous that the leaders of both the sections must come to terms. Force of circumstances will compel them to do so. That we appear to be farthest apart from one another today is a natural outcome of the awakening that has taken place. It has emphasized the points of

difference and accentuated prejudices, mutual suspicions and jealousies. Fresh demands that are coming into being every day with the new leadership have further made confusion worse confounded. But I hope out of chaos order is going to emerge.

S. Are not the differences between the Muslim League and the Congress unbridgeable?

G. The differences are insubstantial.

S. You think the time is not ripe for an ultimatum; what then should the next move be?

G. To put our own house in order. Immediately we have done that and brought the various elements together, we should be ready.

S. What help do you expect from the U. S. A.?

G. I expect a lot of help from the U. S. A. by way of friendly criticism, if it must be criticism. What I find today is that it is either excessive praise of Indian effort of hopelessly unenlightened criticism. Your Press has made very little effort to enlighten American opinion on the right lines.

S. Does your renunciation of the Award imply an abandonment of effort?

G. By no means. On the contrary, having eased myself of the burden of error, I feel as light as a bird and freer to continue my effort to solve the problem of the Indian States.

Harijan, 24-6-1939.

459. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA

RAJKOT,
May 18, 1939

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

I got your loving gift quite a few days ago, but have not been able to write till now. May you live long and prove yourself a good woman. I wear the *Kachha* [1] sent by you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9425

[1] Underwear.

460. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

RAJKOT,
May 18, 1939

CHI. NIMU,

I got your letter only today. I have only a few minutes to spare and I give them to you. As for Kanam, he is here and is flourishing. Ba came the day before yesterday and brought him. They could not manage him in Bombay. For one thing, he is full of pranks, then he has also got the bad habit of extracting money from people. Ramdas therefore decided to send him away with Ba. He will not be a burden here. Kanu will look after his education.

I have discussed the matter with Ramdas. He is unable to decide. For the present, he will remain where he is. He is thinking of going to Bhavnagar after some time. All that I want is that you should complete your studies. Sumi must have fully recovered now.

I might now be able to leave Rajkot in a few days. You must have seen my statement[1]. The nights here are quite fine. The heat during the day is also not unbearable.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: Mrs. Sumitr a Kulkar ni Papers . Courte sy: Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y

461. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

May 18, 1939

CHI. SUMI,

I got your letter. You have deformed your handwriting. Write to Kanam. Will the sores caused by small-pox remain? Write to me regularly. Segaon is almost deserted these days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: Mrs. Sumitr a Kulkar ni Papers . Courte sy: Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 17-5-1939

462. DISCUSSION WITH KASTURBA GANDHI[1]

[*May 18, 1939*][2]

GANDHIJI (smilingly) ; But why would you not plead my case?

KASTURBA: But how can I? I do not myself understand.

But you must understand. You remember the time in South Africa when you were dying and the doctor said you would not live unless you took chicken broth?

Oh yes, I remember.

Well, if you do, don't you also remember that though I allowed you to do as you liked you said you would prefer to die but you could not take chicken broth?

Yes.

That was because you were firm in your faith in God. You knew that God would keep you if He so willed, but that you would not care to live by breaking your vow not to touch meat.

Yes.

Even so I should have fasted until the Thakore Saheb and Durbar Virawala had come to me relenting and saying, 'Please break your fast. We are going to fulfil our promise'. Instead I wavered. I thought I must seek the aid of the British Government, lest I should die. It was a sin. And if I got the Award by committing the sin, I must give up the fruit of sin.

But Thakore Saheb and Virawala are placing obstructions in the way. If they were not doing so, the Award would work all right and there would be an end to all the trouble. They are so obstreperous.

They are so, because of my initial blunder. I irritated them and I have no right to expect better treatment from them. It is not they

[1] This is extracted from "A Momentous Decision". Mahadev Desai explains: "Gandhiji's aged sister, ignorant and unlettered but a devout soul, was terribly perturbed over the decision and was disconsolate as she had heard someone say that Gandhiji had been defeated. The news had come to Kasturba with a shock; she also perhaps shared the sister's feelings. She pleaded with Gandhiji to console the aged sister."

[2] According to Mahadev Desai, the discussion was on "the next day" after the one he had with Gandhiji on May 17; *vide* "Discussion with Mahadev Desai", 17-5-1939

who are putting the obstacles. It is God acting through them who is putting the obstacles. It is God who has thus opened my eyes and shown me the way. And the sooner I wash my hands of the sin the better. Don't you think so?

Yes. But what of the repressive ordinances, the fines, etc.? We have given up everything and they are still going on as usual.

What does that matter? We have to do our duty, trusting them to do theirs. Why don't you see that because I failed in my duty and was impatient to reap the result of my fast or to break it soon that God has punished me thus? But I am not defeated. Tell sister there is no defeat in the confession of one's error. The confession itself is a victory.

Harijan, 27-5-1939.

463. TALK WITH A CHILD[1]

[On or after *May 18, 1939*][2]

GANDHIJI: The Award was a cobra. And when we have a cobra in the house how do we feel?

CHILD: We are afraid.

Well then so long as the Award was there both Durbar shri Virawala and I were afraid of it, and were trying to dodge it. But It would not be dodged. I have gently put it out of the house and we are both now free from fear.

I see that it was necessary to discard the Award, but what have we gained?

Is it a small gain to have been rid of a venomous cobra and thus rid of fear? It was a cobra in the house. We can now live in the house like a happy family. Durbar Shri Virawala and I not only sought to dodge the cobra but we used to shun each other. We at least meet each other now as friends !

But what is it worth? What is there in Durbar Shri Virawala to draw out?

What is there in you? Well, if there are any virtues in you, even so there are in Durbar Shri Virawala. And if I hug you as my own child, why should I not hug Durbar Shri Virawala as a member of the family? I know you; I do not know Durbar Shri Virawala. But we have to be friends with him and to make the best of the virtues that he surely has. As you have *atman* in you, even so has he. Indeed there is

[1] & [2] This talk is extracted from "The Decision and After—I". Mahadev Desai explains: "As much light was shed on the situation by his talk with a child the other day as was done by his talks with Kasturba [*vide* the preceding item]. The child had no doubt about the rejection of the Award. But he was wondering what we had gained by the rejection."

no human being but has something valuable in him, some quality of the *atman,* if we can but observingly distil it out.

But what are we to do after the cobra is gone? With the cobra seems to have gone even the house—all that we had won.

No, nothing else is gone. The Notification is still there. And we are the wiser for the experience of the past three months. I had taken a wrong route, I have retraced my step. We thought that we could achieve much by hard swearing. We know that it had a contrary result. We have examined the quality of our ahimsa. It was poor. We had made enemies of our opponents. We have to win them by love, and the way is now clear for us. Our fight for freedom is not over. It cannot be over. But we are now free to carry it on in a better atmosphere and with cleaner weapons.

Harijan, 3-6-1939.

464. MESSAGE TO INDIAN MERCHANTS' CHAMBER

[On or before *May 19, 1939*][1]

May the new habitation of the Indian Merchants' Chamber prove a blessing to the whole of India. I have many pleasant recollections of Lalji Naranji[2]. I am glad his memory is being honoured.

The Hindu, 20-5-1939.

465. ABSTRACT OF LETTER TO PRESIDENT, RAJKOT STATE MUSLIM COUNCIL

[On or before *May 19, 1939*][3]

A moral question cannot be decided by a third person. It can only be decided by one's own conscience.

Gandhiji adds that what was to be decided by the Chief Justice was their claim to secure a right based on Gandhiji's words. Now there remained nothing for them to claim, inasmuch as he had renounced the Gwyer Award itself.

As for the charge of breach of promise, Gandhiji says that, if he had the least suspicion of having committed a breach of promise, they would not have had to go to an arbitrator. He was fully aware of what he had said. All that was however now a matter of the past.[4]

The Hindu, 20-5-1939.

[1] The message was reported under the date-line "Bombay, May 19".

[2] A commercial pioneer.

[3] The letter was reported under the date-line "Rajkot, May 19".

[4] In his reply, the addressee said: "We regret to note that you have dexterously evaded the important points raised in our letter . . . issue of 'breach' of a promise given to Muslims cannot be ignored."

466. TELEGRAM TO TANZEEM-UL-MOMININ[1]

[On or after *May 19, 1939*][2]

MY CONSCIENCE CLEAR. DEPUTATION CAN COME ANY DAY EXCEPT MONDAY BEFORE TWENTY-FOURTH.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

467. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

RAJKOT,
May 20, 1939

MY DEAR AGATHA,

Don't say I have neglected you. I was in travail and could not write letters, etc. Now that the burden is off my mind I can think of writing to you and other co-workers.

About Federation don't expect much from me. I am where I was. In practice there is no essential difference between, say, Subhas and me so far as opposition is concerned. In theory, I suppose, there is.

About the States my opinion is in a flush. The latest Rajkot statement[3] may assist you somewhat.

My position in the event of war would be personally no participation. What course the Congress will take, it is difficult to say. You will probably know it before this reaches you.

Talcher is shaping badly.[4] Charlie is distressed if not disgusted. There has been a betrayal. Let us hope the Viceroy will see it through.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1508

[1] & [2] The telegram was in reply to the one dated May 19, 1939, from the Tanzeem, an association of Muslims, which sought an interview with Gandhiji to a deputation of Shias in connection with the Shia-Sunni trouble that broke out in Lucknow on April 7, when about 600 Shias were arrested for publicly reciting *Tabarra.* According to *The Hindustan Times,* 24-5-1939, a deputation consisting of the "President, Secretary and members of the Executive Committee of Tanzeem" arrived in Rajkot on May 23. *Vide* also "A Letter", 23-5-1939

[3] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 17-5-1939

[4] *Vide* also "Talcher"

468. LETTER TO KISHANSINH CHAWDA

RAJKOT,
May 20, 1939

BHAI KISHANSINH[1],

I am feeling a little lazy after the agony of the last few days. I am therefore dictating the letters lying in bed.

I got your letter. I am not surprised at what you tell me. But it is a mark of a non-violent man that he will not hurt even a violent person. The latter will either change or destroy himself through his own violence.

The future alone will show what the result of my experiment is.

You should not have helped Harilal. He has lost all sense of shame. He begs for help from everybody, and spends the money on drink. His habit of begging could perhaps be pardoned if he used the help well.

Weren't you saved by God? May you live long now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 9835

469. TALK TO CO-WORKERS[2]

[On or after *May 20, 1939*][3]

Have I ever in my life been guilty of flattery? Have I ever resorted to flattery even in Public interest? I declared years ago that I would not sell truth and non-violence even for the freedom of my country, and I have repeated it many times since. Would he who said it resort to flattery? When Durbar Shri Virawala invited me to go to the palace, he even said that I had justified my claim to be as the father of the Thakore Saheb, that the latter would gladly come and see me, but that he would be happy if I went there. He said I need not attend the Durbar which was to be held, but that he would ask the people to wait a while to see me when I went there. I saw what he meant, but I was

[1] A Gujarati writer.

[2] The talk is extracted from "The decision and After—I". Mahadev Desai explains that some of the Parishad workers were angry with Gandhiji for attending the Durbar at the palace. According to *Gandhi—1915-1948 : A Detailed Chronology*, Gandhiji attended the Durbar on May 20, 1939.

[3] *ibid*

determined to attend even the Durbar if he had so desired. I would have attended it even if he had told me that it was in celebration of the Thakore Saheb's victory and my defeat. I had offended him by having secured the Award over his head, and I owed it to him to wipe out the offence by attending the function. It was a debt I owed and I was in honour bound to repay it with interest. He might have asked for even an act of humiliation from me, and I might have done anything short of sacrificing my sense of self-respect or honour. But he asked me to do nothing of the kind. The invitation was natural and polite. The Durbar was held to announce the repeal of repressive legislations, etc. and the formation of the Reforms Committee. He who atones for sins never calculates; he pours out the whole essence of his contrite heart. I may tell you that my atonement is not yet over. I know that I am speaking in a language that is beyond you, but if you have had even a slight glimpse of true ahimsa, you should feel that all that I am doing now is the most natural thing for me.

A non-violent fight is sharp as the edge of the sword, sharpened on the whetstone of the heart. A straight fight in an equal battle takes some bravery; but braver is he who, knowing that he is fighting an unequal battle, knowing that he would have to sacrifice 95 as against 5 of the enemy, faces death. That is why we still extol the prowess of Pratap and Shivaji. But a satyagrahi risks all and offers of himself a willing and pure sacrifice. Without the will and the purity the sacrifice is nothing worth. I assure you that what I have done is what every true satyagrahi ought to do. "Whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. "

Harijan, 3-6-1939.

470. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

RAJKOT,
May 21, 1939

MY DEAR PRITHVI SINGH[1] ,

I was delighted to receive your letter. I did receive the previous letter, and I have been in correspondence with Shantilal about your

[1] A revolutionary, who surrendered to Gandhiji after absconding arrest for 16 years; was sent to jail but later got discharged; *vide* "The Old Revolutionary", 25-9-1939.

book[1] . There is a hitch about the book being released for publication. I think there is no hurry about it.

I see that you have finished one year, and am glad that you have gained considerable inward experience. You must have seen from my recent writings how much value I attach to spinning as an aid to the growth of the spirit of non-violence, that is to say when spinning is done as a symbol of non-violence. Mechanically considered too, a person who spins for hours together, takes delight in it, will not be easily ruffled. He is able to meditate all the while he is spinning, provided his wheel is in perfect order, when the music of the wheel is an aid to contemplation. And he is no spinner who has no control over his wheel. I do wish that your second year is commenced with the resolution to achieve perfection in spinning as an aid to the development of non-violence. Your experience and experiment will help me considerably, as I believe you to be accurate in reading your own heart. Not many are able to do so. Men are more self-deceived than deceiving.

I am glad you like my first statement[2] on Rajkot. Now you have before you the second[3] . It was a difficult statement, but now the whole burden is off my shoulders.

Mahadev is now completely restored, and is with me. jamnadas is at Bombay.

With love,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 5634. Also C. W. 2945. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

471. ABSTRACT OF LETTER TO KHENGARJI SAVAI[4]

[Before *May 22, 1939*][5]

Gandhiji, it is stated, has pointed out in his letter that the satyagraha conducted by the Cutchi Prajakiya Parishad was suspended at his instance, but he has since come to know that there has been interference in the day-to-day activities of the Parishad.

Gandhiji hopes that better counsels will prevail and steps will be taken to ease the present tension.

The Hindu, 22-5-1939.

[1] The addressee's autobiography, *Kranti Pathka Pathik,* written in jail

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 24-4-1939

[3] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 17-5-1939

[4] The addressee was the ruling chief (Maharao) of Cutch.

[5] The letter was reported under the date-line "Cutch-Bhuj, May 22".

The Managing Editor of *Jewish Frontier,* published at 275 Seventh Avenue, New York City, was good enough to send me a copy of the March number of the magazine with the request that I should deal with its reply to my article[1] on the Jews in Germany and Palestine. The reply is very ably written. I wish I had space for reproducing the whole of it. The reader will, however, find the main argument reproduced[2] in this issue of *Harijan.*

Let me say that I did not write the article as a critic. I wrote it at the pressing request of Jewish friends and correspondents. As I decided to write, I could not do so in any other manner.

But I did not entertain the hope when I wrote it that the Jews would be at once converted to my view. I should have been satisfied if even one Jew had been fully convinced and converted.

Nor did I write the article only for today. I flatter myself with the belief that some of my writings will survive me and will be of service to the causes for which they have been written. I have no sense of disappointment that my writing had not to my knowledge converted a single Jew.

Having read the reply more than once, I must say that I see no reason to change the opinion I expressed in my article. It is highly probable that, as the writer says, "a Jewish Gandhi in Germany, should one arise, could function for about five minutes and would be promptly taken to the guillotine". But that will not disprove my case or shake my belief in the efficacy of ahimsa. I can conceive the necessity of the immolation of hundreds, if not thousands, to appease the hunger of dictators who have no belief in ahimsa. Indeed the maxim is that ahimsa is the most efficacious in front of the greatest *himsa.* Its quality is really tested only in such cases. Sufferers need not

[1] *Vide* "The Jews"

[2] In his reply entitled "We Are Treated as Subhumans : We Are Asked to be Superhuman", Hayim Greenberg had said: ". . . the spiritual leader of young India . . . blames us for not exhibiting the heroism of militant pacifism in those lands where Jews are persecuted . . . he accuses us of following an aggressively nationalist . . . policy in Palestine and of a desire to deprive the Arabs of their fatherland . . . I cannot avoid the suspicion that so far as Palestine problem is concerned, Gandhi allowed himself to be influenced by the anti-zionist propaganda being conducted among fanatic pan- Islamists. . . . "

see the result during their lifetime. They must have faith that if their cult survives, the result is a certainty. The method of violence gives no greater guarantee than that of non-violence. It gives infinitely less. For the faith of the votary of ahimsa is lacking.

The writer contends that I approached the Jewish problem "without that fundamental earnestness and passionate search for truth which are so characteristic of his usual treatment of problems". All I can say is that to my knowledge there was lack neither of earnestness nor of passion for truth when I wrote the article. The second charge of the writer is more serious. He thinks that my zeal for Hindu-Muslim unity made me partial to the Arab presentation of the case, especially as that side was naturally emphasized in India. I have often said that I would not sell truth for the sake of India's deliverance. Much less would I do so for winning Muslim friendship. The writer thinks that I am wrong on the Jewish question as I was wrong on the Khilafat question. Even at this distance of time I have no regret whatsoever for having taken up the Khilafat cause.[1] I know that my persistence does not prove the correctness of my attitude. Only it is necessary for everyone concerned to know where I stand today about my action in 1919-20

I am painfully conscious of the fact that this writing of mine will give no satisfaction either to the Editor of *Jewish Frontier* or to my many Jewish friends. Nevertheless I wish with all my heart that somehow or other the persecution of the Jews in Germany will end and that the question in Palestine will be settled to the satisfaction of all the parties concerned[2].

RAJKOT, May 22,1939.

Harijan, 27-5-1939.

473. WITHDRAWN

In *Harijan* of December 24 there is a long report of my talk[3] with missionary friends from Tambaram on non-violence and the world crisis. When during the talk I took the illustration of the Jews, I am reported to have said:

> It is true that the Jews have not been actively violent in their own persons.

[1] For Gandhiji's view on the Khilafat.

[2] *Vide* also the following item.

[3] *Vide* "Discussion with Christian Missionaries", 12-12-1938

But they called down upon the Germans the curses of mankind, and they wanted America and England to fight Germany on their behalf.

On reading the last sentence a dear friend wrote to me a fiery letter and challenged me to produce my authority for my remark. He said that I had been hasty in making the statement. I did not realize the importance of the rebuke. I did, however, want to produce support for my statement. I put Pyarelal and later Mahadev on the search. It is not always an easy task to find support for impressions one carries when speaking or writing. Meanwhile I received a letter from Lord Samuel supporting the contradiction of the friend referred to above. Whilst I was having the search made I got the following letter from Sir Philip Hartog:

May I take the opportunity of saying that I agree with what my friend Mr. Polak and Lord Samuel tell me they have written to you about the attitude of the German Jewish refugees, of whom I have myself seen hundreds since 1933? I have never heard one of them express publicly or privately the desire for a war of vengeance against Germany. Indeed such a war would bring further misery to the hundreds of thousands of Jews still in Germany as well as untold suffering to millions of other innocent men and women.

I put greater diligence in my search. The searchers were not able to lay hands on any conclusive writing. The manager of *Harijan* put himself in correspondence with the Editor of the *Jewish Tribune,* Bombay, who sent the following characteristic reply:

This is not the first time that I have come across the imputation made against Jews that they urge countries like England and America to go to war against Germany on account of its persecution of Jews. Jews have never urged the democracies to wage war against Germany on account of its persecution of the Jews. This is a mischievous lie that must be nailed to the counter. If there is a war, Jews will suffer more than the rest of the population. This is a fact gleaned from the pages of history. And the Jew is a great lover and advocate of peace. I hope you will refute any such allegation that is made against them.

In the face of the foregoing weighty contradictions now enforced by the Editor of the *Jewish Tribune* and of the fact that I cannot lay my hands on anything on the strength of which I made the challenged observation, I must withdraw it without any reservation. I only hope that my observation has not harmed any single Jew. I know

that I incurred the wrath of many German friends for what I said in all good faith.

RAJKOT, May 22, 1939.

Harijan, 27-5-1939.

474. MESSAGE TO INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA[1]

RAJKOT,
May 23, 1939

It has been a matter of grief to me that the Union Government have not respected their own agreement regarding their treatment of British Indians. There has been a policy of progressive stringency in their anti-Asiatic drive. One had hoped that what is known as the Smuts-Gandhi Agreement of 1914 was the last word in this matter. It was also hoped that with virtual restriction of Indian immigration, there would be progressive amelioration in the condition of domiciled Indians. But that hope was dashed to pieces. Much deterioration has taken place since. There have been Round Table and other conferences, agreements have been reached, but never has any finality been felt by the Indians. Evidently the Union Government would not be happy till they have either driven away Indians whom they have given legislative protection or reduced their status to such an extent that no self-respecting Indian would care to remain in South Africa. I have therefore not discount-enanced their reported decision to fight this latest menace of segregation through civil resistance, if necessary. There must be perfect cohesion and union among the Indians who are divided into groups. And their resistance will be vain if they are not resolute in self-suffering. Public opinion in India including that of Europeans will, I hope, back the Indians in their unequal fight and call upon the Indian Government to exert its influence with the Union Government. Lastly, I appeal to the best mind of South Africa to see that simple justice is not denied to the Indian settlers who have done no wrong to the country of their adoption.[2]

Harijan, 27-5-1939.

[1] This appeared under the title "The Latest Menace". The message was also published in *The Hindu*, 24-5-1939.

[2] *Vide* also "Interview to Associated Press of India", 12-5-1939

475. A LETTER[1]

RAJKOT,
May 23, 1939

DEAR FRIENDS,

I am sorry that you had to come all the way from Lucknow with regard to the Shia-Sunni trouble. You have asked me to study the case and give you my opinion on it. Though I am ill able to shoulder any further burden, I cannot resist your appeal. I shall try to find out from the other party also what their side is and give my opinion as early as I can. However my wish will be that some mutual adjustment would be possible and I shall be absolved from the necessity of giving my opinion.[2]

From a copy: Pyarelal papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

476. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK[3]

RAJKOT,
May 23, 1939

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter only today. Immediately after reading it I passed it on to Narandas. I had read about Deo in the papers. The remedy is patient endurance and time. You need not even reply to the charges, nor attend their meetings. If Deo had not attended the meeting, Dr. Khare would not have got so excited. If the opponent is not present, the critic finds no interest in abusing him.

I see no need for you to give up associating with Deo. So long as the hearts of both of you are pure and your association is exclusively for service, I see no necessity at all for you to give up Deo

[1] This was presumably addressed to the office-bearers of the Tanzeem; *vide* "Telegram to Tanzeem-ul-Mominin", 19-5-1939

[2] For Gandhiji's opinion, *vide* "Letter to President, Tanzeem-ul-Mominin", Before 4-8-1939.

[3] In *Bapuna Patro—5 : Ku. Premabehn Kantakne,* the addressee explains that Dr. Khare, after resigning from the Central Provinces Ministry, had gone to Poona and made a public speech criticizing the Congress and Shankarrao Deo, who was then a member of the Congress Working Committee, with such vehemence that the audience got infuriated and manhandled Shankarrao Deo. The next day Shankarrao Deo addressed a public meeting. Dr. Khare's followers tried to disrupt the meeting by hooting. They questioned also the character of the addressee and the propriety of her relations with Shankarrao Deo.

or change your work. Maybe it is necessary for you to change your outward behaviour. That is for you to judge. I might be able to judge if you were to see me and I could have a heart-to-heart talk with you.

I am hoping to arrive in Bombay on the 2nd.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10399. Also C.W. 6838. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

477. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, RAJKOT[1]

May 23, 1939

I have come here to give an account of myself. I want to render account not before the Parishad alone, but before all the people of Rajkot belonging to all groups.

I came to Rajkot with no good thoughts about Mr. Virawala. I believed that the Thakore Saheb had broken his promise and from within I was prompted to undertake the fast. But my mind weakened and the very next day I wrote to the Viceroy for intervention. Now I see that it was an act of sin. Its outcome was the Award, and its consequences are known to you. As time went on, I realized my error and immediately renounced the Award.

I believe I have opened a new page in the history of Rajkot by my repentance and by the frank admission of my failure. In this I require your help. I cannot go on single-handed. If the ruler and the ruled both join hands and do their duty, this apparent failure would turn into a victory. This necessitates unity among the people.

Unity is the root of strength and progress. The Parishad must embrace and convert every section of the people. Some may not join hands with the Parishad owing to their weakness and others due to differences of opinion, even then they are with us.

I want the Parishad people to realize the implications of ahimsa. Ahimsa trusts the opponent, ahimsa does not attribute motives, it harbours no evil thoughts as I did in the case of Durbar Shri Virawala. Whether he really answered to the description that was being given of him or not, was beside the point. I shamed my ahimsa by suspecting him; whereas if I wanted to convert him, my love for him should have

[1] The meeting was held in the evening at Arya Chowk.

increased every day. If I had to use harsh words for him, they should have been such as I might have used only for my father, mother, wife or son. And you behaved no better. The Parishad workers put no curbs on their tongue and indulged in unrestrained language. You have now to begin a new chapter. You must bid good-bye to this inclination to indulge in unrestrained language. You have to understand ahimsa as you have not understood it before. Ahimsa means that you have to trust those whom you have come to regard as untrustworthy. Unless you do so, you can never convert them. Mahadev Desai and Mohanbhai who have been having daily talks with Durbar Shri Virawala tell me that his attitude has undergone a complete change. Don't tell me that this change may be only momentary. The momentary change may well become permanent some day. Ahimsa has no limits, and patience too has none. We lose nothing thereby. What I did lose was when I allowed my ahimsa or soul to be besmirched. I began the process of self-Purification by discarding the Award. That Process is still going on and it was for me but a step in the process to attend the Durbar.[1]

If you want to follow me you must have the faith that you could enter into the heart of your adversary by ahimsa. If you are true and confident of yourself, you may not think ill of Mr. Virawala. If you do, your ahimsa is not perfect. I ask you to have trust in me who has been a devotee of ahimsa for over fifty years.

Gandhiji referred to the anomaly of the State issuing another notification continuing the ban on the newspapers which he considered illegal and painful to the people. Gandhiji advised the people not to be disheartened over such matters. He asked them to stop reading papers which indulged in violent language, and advised them to boycott them if they embarrassed the cause by using such language, He also appealed to the press to refrain from writing anything which might increase bitterness. Gandhiji appealed to the State also to have faith in the good sense of the people. He added:

There is not a single person in the whole world who does not deserve our love. To achieve unity of soul is the greatest *purushartha*.[2] I wish both the Ruler and the ruled in Rajkot may arrive at an understanding and thus become happy. I wish your administration to be such as to make it ideal. The late Thakore Sir Lakhajiraj has laid a

[1] This paragraph is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "The Decision and After—I" in *Harijan.*

[2] Goal of human life

strong foundation on which you can easily build an ideal structure.

I hope the [Reforms] Committee would work on the basis of the Notification No. 50 of December last. As for me, I have laid down all my weapons. Hence I can only make a request. I advise the Parishad workers to give full co-operation to the Committee and place before it their evidence and aspirations. I am still groping in the dark. I have not yet sufficiently found light. When I am fully enlightened I will place my programme before you and guide you, if you would want my guidance. Otherwise I will remain in my humble home.

Gandhiji said that there must be some Muslims as well as Bhayats present at the meeting. They had said a lot of things and bitter, too, about him.

However, I would wish they would carry my message. What brought me to Rajkot to make peace?

Replying himself, he recalled that he was closely connected with Rajkot and its ruling family. He was brought up in Rajkot. His father had served as Dewan in the State and lastly he was closely connected with the late Thakore Sir Lakhajiraj who had considered him as his guru.

The Hindustan Times, 24-5-1939, and *The Hindu*, 24-5-1939

478. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

ANAND BHUWAN, RAJKOT
May [*23*][1] */24 , 1939*

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I thank you for your letter[2] of 15th instant.

Without wishing to enter into any controversy, I would like to say about Talcher that the whole of the evidence supplied by Shri Harekrushna Mahtab and enforced by Miss Agatha Harrison and others goes to show that, so far as the known facts go, there was the clearest possible belief that Major Hennessy was acting with authority. But whatever the fact may be, I hope that the poor ryots would not have to suffer long.

But the main purpose of this is to tell you formally what you must have seen from my public statement[3], that I was obliged, for conscience's sake, to renounce the Gwyer Award. It took me some time to detect that I had erred in asking Mr. Gibson[4] to send you the

[1] From the last sentence of the letter
[2] *Vide* "Letter From Lord Linlithgow", 15-5-1939
[3] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 17-5-1939
[4] *Vide* "Letter to E. C. Gibson", 4-3-1939

wire of 4th March. And having detected the error, I took further time to summon courage enough to throw away the obvious advantages of the Award and all it meant. But at last I saw that even though I was acting for the public, I must discard a gain which from a moral point of view had appeared to me to be unlawful. Fast I have held too sacred a weapon to be used lightly. I betrayed unworthy weakness—a sure sign of violence—when instead of allowing the fast to run its course I invoked your assistance. From that moment it ceased to be a spiritual act. I would see nothing wrong in seeking your assistance if I was fighting along purely constitutional lines. Indeed the rich experiences I have gained during my travail show that if the Paramount Power is to do its legal duty it is bound to take a much more active part than it has hitherto taken about the rights of the ryots in the States. But this is by the way. My object just now is to apologize to you for all the trouble I caused you by my weakness. And may I ask you also to convey my apology to Sir Maurice Gwyer for the labours that he had to go through for delivering his Award? I know that the correct procedure for me was to let you have me recantation before the world knew anything about it. But I was having daily talks with Durbar Shri Virawala through Mahadev Desai. Every hour's delay added to my agony. I was dying to put myself right with him. I could accept nothing until I had disengaged myself from what I have stigmatized as a double game. And then too there has been delay in sending you this apology as my dealing with the aftermath of the recantation with my weak body left me little time for composing this letter. I wanted some leisure for it. I stole it partly last night and the rest this morning.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

479. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

RAJKOT,

May 24, 1939

CHI. CHANDAN,

Why did you fall ill? Take the medicine suggested in the letter which Sushila is writing to you. But make this change in it. What you are suffering from is not dysentery but an infection which you have

contracted here.[1] To cure it you should live for some time only on fruit juices and glucose. The fruits should include pineapples, pomegranates, *musambis*, oranges and grapes. Take about 50 ounces of juice and 2 to 4 ounces glucose. If you do this you will be able to keep up your strength. If you cannot drink this quantity of juice, you may drink less. If you think that the quantity of glucose also is too much, take less. Put a mud-pack of clean earth on the abdomen at night, cover it up with a piece of dry cloth and then wrap a piece of khadi round it. Remove the khadi piece when you wake up at night. Keep me informed. Get well soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 951. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

480. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

RAJKOT,
May 25, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Balkrishna is not going away for years and I shall be back only by the middle of July. Therefore there would have been no harm even if you had accompanied Balkrishna. Anyway your decision was good enough. Balkrishna's going is taking so much time that very soon it may get cold there and then it will be no use going. Anyway whatever is deemed best should be done. I must know soon about it.

About the books for you I said what I did after full thought. Sushila is laid up with fever.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

We reach Bombay on the 2nd and thence to the Frontier Province around the 5th.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4316

[1] The addressee explains that conditions in Rajkot were so bad that most of the workers accompanying Gandhiji were stricken with one disease or another.

481. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

RAJKOT,
May 26, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Of course I will give you the time you may need for explaining all you wish. But you must cease grieving. Weeping and brooding over injustices done to oneself is no virtue, it is definitely a vice. It is better cheerfully to submit to injustices than even unwittingly to do any injustice to anyone.

I forgot to tell you that P. was better after my severe talking to him. Only boundless love can cure him of his malady. I lack it. I lose patience with him as with no one. Have I ever told you that somehow or other I never spoke to Chhotelal or Pyarelal without losing temper? The wonder to me is that Ch. never resented my explosions. He is gone. I feel responsible for his suicide. My harsh treatment of P. when I discovered his love for Y. must be held to be unforgivable. Had I treated him sympathetically things would have taken a different turn. As it was, I had practically banished him to Orissa. My ahimsa failed me. But neither Ch. nor P. ever complained. On the contrary they read love in every act of mine. If Mahadev has time he must tell you what I mean.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3655. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6464

482. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

RAJKOT,
May 26, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

How did you fall ill? Did you make a mistake about food? Shakaribehn must have called on you. You may keep her there as long as you wish.

Sushilabehn has fallen ill. She has low fever and diarrhoea.

We will leave this place on the 1st and reach Bombay on the 2nd morning. We shall have to stay in Bombay for three days. If you wish to stay with us during those days, join us at Surat. You will have got well by that time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10012. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

483. LETTER TO SHAMALDAS GANDHI

RAJKOT,
May 26, 1939

CHI. SHAMALDAS[1],

Can't you improve the language of *Janmabhoomi?* If you accept the policy of ahimsa, it is very necessary that you should make a conscious effort to change your language. If ahimsa is to find its way through the violence that is spreading all around, the newspapers which believe in ahimsa must transform themselves completely. Think over this. I don't wish that you should do anything for my sake, but if you are sincerely convinced of what I am saying, make the change.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 5802

484. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
May 26, 1939

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. Sushila is having fever. Nothing more remains to be done for that student. However please ask or write to Rajendra Babu about the matter. Tell him that it is not your job to collect money for them.

It is certainly good that you are having medical treatment.

[1] A nephew of Gandhiji and editor of *Janmabhoomi,* a Gujarati daily published from Bombay

Sushila thinks that you must get your private parts examined by a woman doctor. Without such examination it will not be possible to prescribe the right treatment. Get yourself examined, therefore. Do continue milk and fruit. It would be very nice if you come to Segaon when I return there. We shall be starting from here on the 1st. After staying there for three or four days, we shall go to the Frontier Province. Kanti is here, and of course Saraswati too. Amtul Salaam is in Ahmedabad. Ba's health is all right and so is mine.

What have you done about your plan for studying?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3513

485. TELEGRAM TO CANTONMENT ASSOCIATION

RAJKOT,
May 27, 1939

CANTONMENT ASSOCIATION
ALLAHABAD

TELL BRIJMOHAN HIS FAST UNWARRANTED. HE SHOULD BREAK IT.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

486. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

RAJKOT,
May 27, 1939

CHI. KANTI,

Your letter too seems thoughtless to me. There is anger in it also. There is arrogance given in your manner of asking for forgiveness. But then how can you change your nature? Do you consider your marrying in this way a marriage? You are deceiving yourself by believing so. How many people you have hurt by your action you do not know, and you do not feel sorry for that. It seems even the sorrow you expressed before me was momentary. However one cannot swallow what one has spat out. If you would release me, I am ready to be released. I am sure you will continue to receive money

from Devdas. At present you get it through me. But it would suit me if he sends it directly to you. Your writing to me that I should forget you shows your impertinence. You know that I cannot forget you. Yes, the hopes which you had encouraged me to build on you seem to have been shattered. No matter how much you slight me, I will not cease to be your well-wisher. Wake up and shed your cruelty, be straightforward and humble, learn gentleness and get rid of the poison in you. Look upon all those who flatter you and please you by their sweet words as your enemies. You have hurt a good many people. Don't pride yourself on having made Saraswati your slave. Think of the pain caused to Ramachandran.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7360. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

487. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

RAJKOT,
May 27, 1939

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I had received the letter regarding Bal. I got Kaka's wire. I think the problem is over now. I shall be in Bombay from the 2nd to the 5th at any rate. It may perhaps be possible to meet during those days. God alone knows whether I shall get the time. From Bombay to the Frontier Province.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10788

488. LETTER TO MANU SUBEDAR

May 27, 1939

BHAI SUBEDAR,[1]

I got your letter. You have suggested a very difficult way. It seems almost impossible to harmonize mutually contradictory points of view and run the Government. It is one thing to do justice to all points of view and be generous to those holding the minority view, but

[1] An economist

to include all parties in the Ministry seems another matter altogether. I have made no attempt at all to study the working of the different Ministries and do not know their problems. All the same I intend to put your suggestion before the Bombay Ministry. But before doing that I intend to put your letter before Sardar. You do not object to that, do you? I will not proceed further before I hear from you.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

From Gujarati: C.W. 5803

489. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

May 27, 1939

BAPA,

I have read the cutting sent by you. Will they let me set right the affairs of the Comilla Ashram? Bengal politics are in a curious state. They wouldn't eat themselves nor let others eat. In such circumstances what can one do?

The Talcher chapter[1] has become complicated. Let me see.

Vandemataram from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1183

490. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

RAJKOT,
6.20 a.m., May 28, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is the fourth letter I am writing without the break of a day. I can't feel happy till I have convinced you that we are all authors of our own misery. If we have imbibed the first principle of ahimsa we must learn to put up even with real injustices from dear ones and that without grief. We do nothing strange when we require felt love. But our love becomes potent when we rejoicingly suffer felt injustice. This really resolves itself into what I started this letter with, that justice and injustice have no existence apart from our feeling. I want you

[1] *Vide* "Talcher"

therefore to imbibe this first lesson of ahimsa and assure me that there will be no more of weeping or harbouring secret and silent sorrow and grief. If you cannot learn this from me, you will learn nothing.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

7.30 a.m.

Khurshed has written to you about Women's Congress. I would favour the idea, if it appeals to you.

From the original: C. W. 3656. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6465

491. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

RAJKOT,
May 28, 1939

CHI. MANILAL,

This note will be brought by an old client of mine, Shaikh Farid. He had a store in Pietermaritzburg. He has to go there because of the death of his brother. But he doesn't know anybody now in Pietermaritzburg. Ascertain his need and introduce him to somebody if you can or do whatever else may be necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MANILAL GANDHI
"INDIAN OPINION"
PHOENIX

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4896

492. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

RAJKOT,
May 28, 1939

CHI. SHARMA,

When did we ever decide that I was to answer you each time you wrote? I was so tied up that I had no alternative. My health is good.

We set out from Rajkot on the 1st. We shall be in Bombay till the 5th or 6th and then on to the Frontier Province. How did you get the stomach trouble and what did unboiled milk have to do with it?

Some books on physiology, etc., had been ordered for you. Send me the titles and other details. How useful did they prove to you? A worker at Segaon needs similar books.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 279 to 280

493. LETTER TO RANJIT

May 28, 1939

BHAI RANJIT,

I have your letter. In the West, boys in many schools take their bath completely naked. Perhaps in your school they are imitating some of their ways. If that is so, it should not be considered sinful. The whole question deserves careful thinking. You should try to ascertain more facts.

Blessings from

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

494. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

RAJKOT,
May 29, 1939

MIRABEHN
CARE MANGALSAIN BANKERS
ABBOTABAD

HOPING LEAVE BOMBAY SIXTH JUNE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6443. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10038

495. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

RAJKOT,
May 29, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter arrived today after unexpected absence. But I was not worrying. There is enough here to occupy me. Heat is your enemy. Stenches and crowds add to the difficulty. From your telegram I infer that you are safely in Hazara. I hope it is cooler or rather less hot there. I expect to get away on 6th from Bombay for the Frontier Provice. But God disposes.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6442. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10037

496. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
May 29, 1939

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

It is perfectly true that you do not get justice. I cannot myself manage to write. I have asked Kanu. I have tried numerous arrangements, but when I myself am lax how can I blame anybody else? I will see if I can be regular now.

I have been trying to do what I can about the problem there.[1] It will be good if I get regular reports from there. Do you think the movement will go on well?

What does the fact that you didn't get permission for even one assistant indicate? I had thought that it would be child's play for Manilal to secure such permission.

I am all right. We leave this place on June 1 and go to Bombay. After four or five days there, we go to the Frontier Province.

The rest if someone writes.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4897

[1] The reference is to the South Africa Union's policy of segregating Indians; *vide* "Message to Indians in South Africa", 23-5-1939

497. LETTER TO VINODINI AND SAMYUKTA GANDHI

RAJKOT,
May 29, 1939

CHI. VINODINI AND SAMYUKTA[1],

I have your joint letter. I am glad that you wrote to me. You must follow the doctor's advice. But the real support is Ramanama. That is the only true remedy. I will arrive in Bombay on the 2nd.

I am not writing separately to Jaya. She must be regaining strength.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

498. TO PARSI FRIENDS

Parsi friends continue to favour me with their letters, some of which do not err on the side of politeness. Some are affectionate and so simple that they believe me to be capable of performing wonders. Among these writers there is one who writes with a lacerated heart and sends me cuttings which contain palpable falsehoods. He asks me to appeal to the Parsis with a view, at least to purging the opposition of indecency. The language used in the cuttings is not translatable. The families of those who have incurred their ill-will have not been left alone. Vulgarity is too mild a term for characterizing some of the writings. One writer uses language of violence which certainly brings him within penal laws. But the writers have no fear of the law. The writings before me are in fair sample of 'civil' liberty. I call these writings terrorism of minorities. One writer has given the prohibition campaign of communal turn and has not hesitated to say that Congress Hindus have plotted to ruin the Parsis !

Surely abuse is no argument. Let the Parsis who are interested opposing prohibition carry on whatever agitation they like. But let it be decent, non-violent and within bounds.

Must one hundred thousand Parsis hold up an overdue reform which promises to bring a ray of hope in the dungeons of the labouring population which far outnumbers the whole of the Parsi

[1] Daughters of Jaisukhlal Gandhi, a nephew of Gandhiji

population? Every legitimate ground of complaint has been removed by Dr. Gilder. No Parsi whose health requires the use of spirituous liquors will be deprived of them. If Parsi religious rites really demand the use of the fiery liquid, they shall be supplied. Then there is the economic question. Many poor liquor dealers will be hard hit by the deprivation of their means of livelihood. I understand that the Ministers are taxing themselves to devise some legitimate method of dealing with them. But it will surely be very difficult, if not impossible, for them to do anything, if the wild ferment is kept up and terrorism short of physical violence is applied. Not that the Ministers should not do justice because of terrorism, but it incapacitates them for taking effective action. For instance, it is necessary for the heads of the Parsi Panchayat to confer with the Ministers and in consultation with them think out a plan whereby prohibition in Bombay can be inaugurated with the least possible hardship.This can be done only if all parties recognize that prohibition has come to stay.

My correspondents have asked me to use my influence with the Ministers for withdrawing their measure. They should know that I have my limitations. If I have any influence, it is due to my never crossing the boundary line. Let all concerned know that I have never interfered with the Congress Ministers although many of them have been and are my valued co-workers. Having withdrawn from the Congress, it would ill become me to interfere with their work. The very purpose of my withdrawal would be defeated. What is more, I am most interested in prohibition. No one in India perhaps knows its beneficial effect as well as I do and therefore no one feels its necessity as keenly as I do. I have seen with my own eyes people otherwise sane lying in the gutter. Having indentified myself with labour, I know what ruin drink has brought to the homes of labourers given to drink. I know that they will not touch liquor if it was not within reach. We have contemporaneous evidence that drinkers themselves are in many cases asking for prohibition. Have I not my eldest son who was intelligent, brave, patriotic and capable of sacrifice, and who has been ruined by the drink habit and who is today lost to his parents and lost to society and exists on the misplaced charity of generous donors? This is not an exception. It is a typical case, as I can say from a knowledge of sons of persons in the so-called higher walks of life. As I write these lines, illustrations of unimpeachable authenticity crowd on my memory. I can therefore only ask my Parsi correspondents and others like them in return to help the Ministers in their noble and

philanthropic mission; for I feel convinced that whatever may be said for or against Congress Ministers about their popular measures, their prohibition programme, if they are able to put it through to the end, will go down to posterity as unquestionably the noblest measure of all. It is no vote-catching device. Prohibition is an integral part of the programme of national self-purification. Twice has it been demonstrated what was possible in the shape of closing of liquor shops even through voluntary efrort. Let the great Parsi community, men and women, discarding the unbecoming vituperation, rise to the occasion and help the great reform movement which, if it succeeds, will not only enrich India morally and materially but will serve as an impetus to similar effort in the Western world. Many eyes outside India are watching this experiment anxiously and prayerfully.

I grant that many Parsis drink moderately and without any visible bad effect. That is an argument not for opposing prohibition but for ensuring that they get their drink if it is proved to be a medical necessity. They should be patriotic enough to recognize that as against their limited experience is the universal exprience of the deadly effect of the drink habit.

RAJKOT, May 30, 1939
Harijan, 3-6-1939

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I[1]

COLD-BLOODED BREACH OF A SOLEMN COVENANT

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel issued the following statement on January 25th:

It is with the deepest regret that I have to announce resumption of the struggle in Rajkot which seemed to have ended so happily. Resumption has become a duty in order to vindicate the honour of the State and the self-respect of the people of Rajkot.

The public will recall that the settlement announced in the Rajkot State *Gazette* of 26th December was a result of discussions between the Thakore Saheb and his Council consisting of Sir Patrick Cadell, Rao Saheb Maneklal Patel and Shri J. Jobanputra. The discussions which took place on the evening of December 25th lasted for nearly eight hours ending at 1.42 a.m. On the day of the settlement the Thakore Saheb gave me the following note:

AMARSINHJI SECRETARIAT, RAJKOT STATE,

December 26, 1938

It is agreed that seven members of the Committee mentioned in Clause 2 of the State announcement of today's date are to be recommended by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and they are to be nominated by us.

(Sd.) DHARMENDRASINH

THAKORE SAHEB, RAJKOT

It should be remembered that I had gone to Rajkot at the Thakore Saheb's invitation.

Soon after the settlement Sir Patrick Cadell retired....

I must state with the greatest reluctance that the Thakore Saheb has been ill served by those who have eaten his salt. Among the worst of these advisers has been Durbar Virawala who has ruined the State and drained it empty by his hopeless mismanagement. He has cast a spell over the Thakore Saheb which the latter cannot resist even if he would. It was he who brought Sir Patrick Cadell. When the latter realized that Durbar Virawala was the evil genius of the State, almost his first act was to have him banished from Rajkot with the help of the Agency. Sir Patrick Cadell might not have been obliged to leave if he had not traded upon his prestige as a member of the ruling race. Durbar Virawala would not brook the presence of a Dewan who had brought about his banishment.

[1]*Vide* "Speech at Meeting of Peasants", 29-1-1939

Though he was banished he pulled the wires from Bagasra. His son Bhojvala and his nephew Valeravala are still with the Thakore Saheb. Realizing that he could not successfully resist the contemplated settlement, he played the role of a friend and seemed to assist the settlement. Soon after the settlement, when Sir Patrick Cadell was about to go, Durbar Virawala found himself in Rajkot and began his operations which have never ceased. The Resident's note and the Political Agent's note will be read with interest.

I needed a few days to enable me to select, in consultation with those who were in charge of the movement, seven names of the committee that had to be given in terms of the settlement. I sent the following seven names on the 4th January:

1. Shri Popatlal Dhanjibhai Malaviya
2. Shri Popatlal Purushottam Anada
3. Shri Mullan Valiji Abdulalli
4. Dr. D. J. Gajjar
5. Shri Jamnadas Khushalchand Gandhi
6. Shri Vrajlal Mayashanker Shukla
7. Shri Uchharangray Navalshanker Dhebar

Notification of the appointment of the committee should have followed at once. But nothing happened for some days.

On the 28th December there was a consultation between the Resident and the Thakore Saheb-in-Council. I have authentic notes of that interview taken by one of those present. The remarks made by the Resident about the Congress and me will be read with interest. He could not conceal his dislike of the settlement, the Congress or me.

It seems that the Resident and Durbar Virawala are responsible for the breach of the solemn undertaking the Thakore Saheb gave to his people As evidence of Durbar Virawala's influence over the Thakore Saheb, the letter of thanks received by me from him makes interesting reading.

It is necessary to compare the present one-sided arbitrary notification with the one which was issued in terms of the settlement. The second notification cancels four of my nominees. It also cancels the terms of reference and is vague, whereas the first was precise. The former contemplates publication of the report before the 31st instant and effect being given to it by the Thakore Saheb. The latter fixes no time-limit for the report.

Before the last announcement I received a letter from Rao Saheb Maneklal Patel. It is noteworthy that whereas that letter had accepted four of my nominees the notification has only three. To this I sent a reply in Gujarati of which the translation will be found.

I had heard so much of Durbar Virawala's influence on the Thakore Saheb and his interference that I had to say in my said letter that Durbar Virawala could not in any event be accepted on the committee. I wanted no loophole left.

This flagrant breach of a solemn settlement leaves but one course open before the people of Rajkot. It now remains for me to invite the people of Rajkot to resume the self-chosen course of suffering for vindicating their liberty and saving Rajkot and the Thakore Saheb from utter ruin. It is best to anticipate and provide for the worst. The worst that can happen is frightfulness of the extreme type, including torture not unknown in Kathiawar and setting up of internal quarrels. Of the latter we have evidence in inspired agitation from some Muslim brethren. We have to show them by our conduct that they have at least as much to gain as the rest of us by settled government under their own control. Rajkot has been made bankrupt through hopeless mismanagement and corruption. These dissensions, if they persist, can prolong the struggle, never defeat the end in view, if the people at large cohere, show capacity for enduring suffering, no matter how great or protracted, and also show capacity, in spite of pecuniary losses, for going through the items of non-violent non-co-operation. On no account must students take part in civil disobedience or strikes. They can and should do constructive work if they believe in it. They can by house-to-house visits alleviate suffering which is bound to be inevitable as the struggle proceeds.

Non-violence has to be observed in thought, word and deed. It has to be observed as well among co-workers as with opponents and neutrals, as well in the jail as outside it. The measure of our non-violence will be the measure of our success. We must have faith in the possibility of our non-violence turning the Thakore Saheb's face in the direction of his people. Today he is a Ruler in name only; it must hurt every one of his people to find the young Prince committing a deliberate breach of the solemn covenant he made with his people.

I have said seemingly bitter things about Durbar Virawala. But truth has to be sometimes bitter and harsh. I have said nothing that I do not believe about him. We must love him in spite of his glaring blemishes and expect our love to convert him and those who are working under his influence and direction.

I am sorry the Resident resents my intervention and the influence of the Congress in shaping the policy and programme of the people of Rajkot. The people of the States have always been guided by the Congress. They owe allegiance to it. Indeed in the early stages the Princes also looked to the Congress for its support. The Congress adopted the policy of non-intervention in the sense of direct participation in the matters affecting questions arising between the people and the Princes. This was nothing but recognition of the limitations of the Congress. But when the people became conscious of their strength and were prepared to suffer, the Congress would be

untrue to its mission if it failed to help them to the best of its ability. As for poor me I happen to have been a President of the Kathiawar Rajkiya Parishad and as such owe a duty to the people of Kathiawar as also to the Princes and dare not refuse help when they need it. In Rajkot the people in the first instance and then the Ruler sought my assistance which I claim has been unstintingly given. I fail to see anything wrong in this or to be resented by the Resident or the Imperial Power. This is a question which it would incidentally be Rajkot's proud privilege to be the cause of having decided.

For the time being the civil resistance will be confined to Kathiawaris only. The people of Kathiawar are so inter-related that for practical purposes it would be difficult to exclude any Kathiawari from participation on moral grounds.

THAKORE SAHEB'S LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

AMARSINHJI SECRETARIAT,
RAJKOT STATE,
December, 1938

MY DEAR SARDAR VALLABHBHAI,

Thanks for your note received just now.

I shall be-delighted if you come and have tea with me at 5 p. m. today.

We shall then discuss the present question in presence of my Council Members.

Yours sincerely,
DHARMENDRASINH

LETTER FROM SIR PATRICK CADELL TO THAKORE SAHEB

AMARSINHJI SECRETARIAT,
RAJKOT,
October 1, 1938

YOUR HIGHNESS,

I yesterday asked you to allow me to see you not later than 8 o'clock. I had affairs of great importance to talk about. I suggested this late hour though inconvenient to myself, in order to suit you. You sent your Private Secretary to tell me that you would see me at 8.30. I was present at that time and was told that you were in your bath. I waited till 9 o'clock, and was told that you might be another quarter or half an hour late. I then left.

I now write to inform Your Highness that I have no intention of allowing

myself to be treated in this grossly discourteous manner. I had no idea when I left England to help you that you would be capable of such behaviour. I cannot allow it to be continued.

I had intended to tell you last night that in any case the present situation cannot go on. The condition of affairs in the State is very serious. Many of the complaints against the State are based on your behaviour. It is believed that you spend too large a share of the State's revenue, that most of your expenditure is on unworthy objects, and that you take no part in the administration of the State. I do not wish to make any reference at present either to the amount of money you spend, or the way you spend it. But it is certainly true that you take no part in the administration and show no interest in the welfare of your people. This is all the more noticed because it is so different from the system which your father followed. It is not fair to your officers to expect them to bear the burden of repressive methods while you do nothing. You must take some share. I therefore propose to you the following action.

(1) I understand that you are to take part in the *yajna* ceremony at one, and perhaps two, of the temples this evening at 7.30. If there is time for you to agree to this, I request that after you have done this, you will drive through the city and that you will allow me to accompany you.

(2) The Huzur Office is closed today as it is a holiday, but it is open on Monday. I suggest that you should promise *on your word of honour* to come to the office on Monday, not later than 6 p.m. to hear petitioners for about an hour.

I am sure that these two actions will have a good effect in the city.

I must also make a third request.

(3) Whenever I have to see you on any day, you will promise to see me on that day not later than 7.30 p.m. and you will promise *on your word of honour* not to be more than a quarter of an hour late.

If you are unable to accede to these suggestions, I shall be obliged to inform the Hon. the Resident that I cannot carry on and that 1 propose to return to England as soon as possible.

If I have to do so, I fear that this may have unfortunate consequences both for your State and for yourself. I can assure you that the Government of India are not likely to look with favour on your conduct. I should be sorry if you were to suffer, but I cannot continue if Your Highness behaves like this.

I should be obliged if you would let me know before 5.30 this evening whether

Your Highness agrees to drive through the city this evening and to allow me to accompany you.

Yours sincerely,

PATRICK CADELL

LETTER FROM THAKORE SAHEB TO SIR PATRICK CADELL

Confidential

RANJIT VILAS PALACE,

RAJKOT,

October 2, 1938

DEAR SIR PATRICK,

I am exceedingly sorry to receive your letter of yesterday, and I must say that I do not like the tone of it. I cannot accept that the complaints against me are based on facts. The present agitation is only a wave spread by the Congress for the initiation of responsible government in the States, and I believe that to be the reason why they have selected Rajkot in Kathiawar, as they have done with Mysore, Travancore, etc., as States in which people already enjoy greater share of public liberties.

It was with a view to put down the situation that I had requisitioned your services I have still a wish to smoothen your task as much as possible and will come to the office any day at my convenience after Dasera.

I strongly object to your remarks that if you have to go it may have unfortunate consequences both for my State and myself, and that the Government of India are not likely to look with favour on my conduct. In this connection I must definitely let you understand that it is I who has appointed you as my Dewan, and that if as a result of any disagreement with you I have to ask you to be relieved, neither the Hon. the Resident nor H. E. the Viceroy will have any cause to look upon me with disfavour. Whatever information you may be able to gather with regard to my State and myself is made available to you because you enjoy my confidence, and I need hardly say that you cannot utilize any of my State records without my permission, and much less against myself. Any information which the Hon. the Resident has thought it necessary to receive about anything relating to my State has been sought for through my Dewan, only if I am agreeable to give it. I might also tell you that I have done nothing to lose any share of the confidence which I enjoy both with the Hon. the Resident and H. E. the Viceroy to its fullest extent. I would therefore wish you to reconsider your decision and express your agreement to act in a manner consonant with my dignity and policy.

Yours sincerely,

DHARMENDRASINH

LETTER FROM THAKORE SAHEB TO SIR PATRICK CADELL

RAJKOT,

October 16, 1938

DEAR SIR PATRICK,

You are, I am sure, fully aware of the present situation. It has not been improved in any way and so far as I can see it is getting worse every day and has reached a climax by now. The other day when we called a meeting we agreed to give the people certain concessions, but it failed to ease the situation and bring about any desired result. I am myself getting convinced that we failed to take proper steps at the proper time, which should have removed my anxiety. The situation, in short, is decidedly getting out of control and adding immensely to my troubles. The agitation is getting more and more intense with little hope of its being brought under control in the near future. My people feel and are led to believe that you have been sent by the Government and that I have lost the position which I had hitherto enjoyed. They now refuse to extend to me the same love and loyalty which they used to extend before your arrival. Nay they even seem to think and carry the impression that not I but you are the Ruler.

I should say that though this feeling is not created by you but I must say that anyway it is there which they are not in a mood to shake off obviously. Diwali holidays are drawing nearer and Ijaras must as usual be given but the people have boycotted them. They are further determined to boycott sales of grain also, and it is possible that no sale of grain could be made this year due to their non-co-operation. This would mean a financial ruination of the State and a crisis which had better be imagined than stated. This state of things, I feel, I, as the Ruler, am bound to prevent at any cost or sacrifice in the interests of the State and its subjects.

The people, as you know, have now adopted a defiant attitude and are suffering. I must, therefore, see that this unfortunate situation must be thoroughly eased and some sort of definite settlement should be arrived at between them and me at the earliest possible opportunity. I feel I am unable to do anything in this matter so long as my people do not recognize me as their *de facto* Ruler. As a well-wisher of the State you would also wish and agree that such state of things should not be permitted to continue any more. It is therefore my bounden duty to see that I must have my position as the real and benevolent Ruler re-established in the eyes of my people, in order that I may be able to carry conviction and settle with them and win their love and confidence.

I had asked D. S. Virawala to know your views in this matter. He tells me that he saw you on the 13th instant and you told him that in your view the fight should be

continued as long as the State's finances would permit and we should see whether they or we would ultimately win.

Besides, your letter dated 1st October 1938 gives me to understand that in so far as you are concerned you are definitely of the view that I am myself, more or less, the cause of these troubles. I have denied the charges by my reply. Considering the allegations made in your letter and your attitude, I have little doubt in my mind that we would not be able to pull on together in the interests of my State and its subjects and also my rights, dignity and position of the Ruler, as nobody realizes the extremely disastrous situation more than I do.

It is my definite desire to myself settle the domestic dispute between my State and its subjects as early as possible and before the Diwali holidays. This would not, in my view, be possible unless we part at the earliest. This is a very unfortunate position and no one would be more sorry than myself, but it could not be helped as the interests of myself and my State are at stake. I need hardly assure you that it is not my desire to make your position awkward in any way, and hence I leave it to you to decide how you should arrange to leave and retire, as I am anxious to see that just as you came as a friend you should also part as a friend. I had engaged your services for six months certain and hence I am instructing the State Treasury to pay your salary accordingly. I am also instructing Mr. Bhat, the Revenue Secretary, to relieve you at your convenience.

Yours sincerely,

DHARMENDRASINH

LETTER FROM E. C. GIBSON TO THAKORE SAHEB

Confidential

THE RESIDENCY,

RAJKOT,

October 26, 1938

D. O. No. C/134-38

MY DEAR THAKORE SAHEB,

You will remember that on the evening of October 16th you wrote to inform me that you desired to dispense with Sir Patrick Cadell's services and you enclosed a copy of the letter which you already sent to him. On the following morning we had a discussion. I then strongly advised you to reconsider the matter and to refrain from taking a step which from every point of view must inevitably be very prejudicial to the interests of your State and yourself. I also pointed out that when, on August 25th, you wrote to me asking me to obtain the necessary sanction to Sir Patrick Cadell's appointment, you stated very definitely that the appointment was to be for a minimum period of six months in the first instance. On this understanding I referred

your request to the Political Secretary to His Excellency the Crown Representative's approval of the proposal.

I need not repeat here the views which I explained fully when we discussed the matter on October 17th and again on October 22nd. After our discussion on October 17th, as you are unwilling to accept the advice which I offered, I forwarded to the Political Secretary a copy of your letter of October 1 6th.

When we met on October 22nd I told that I had been instructed to inform you that His Excellency the Crown Representative trusts that in the interests of your State and yourself you will lose no time in reversing the action taken by you. Since then I have been hoping to hear that you have accepted and acted upon this advice. As however I have received no intimation from you to this effect, I write to ask you kindly to let me know as soon as possible the action you have taken in the matter since I saw you on October 22nd.

Yours sincerely,

E. C. GIBSON

LETTER FROM THAKORE SAHEB TO E. C. GIBSON

Confidential *October 2, 1938*

MY DEAR MR. GIBSON,

I am very thankful for your confidential D. O. C/134-38 dated 26th instant.

In view of the desire of His Excellency the Crown Representative and your earnest advice and recommendation, I have decided to continue Sir Patrick Cadell in my service, although I maintain that the constitutional aspect of this question is in my favour.

I am very anxious that proper steps should be taken as soon as possible and have decided to form a strong council consisting of Sir Patrick Cadell and two of my officers to carry on the State, so that peace and tranquillity and respect for law is properly maintained.

At the time of my interview with you on the 17th instant you approved of my suggestion of forming a council. Accordingly I have decided to have one of the following members in charge of the departments shown against their names:

Ist member and Vice-president: Sir Patrick Cadell: 1. Law and Justice, 2. Political, 3. Finance, 4. Police and 5. Praja Pratinidhi Sabha and Municipality.

2nd member: Rao Saheb Maneklal C. Patel: 1. Finance, 2. Industries, 3. Revenue, 4. P. W. D. and 5. Bardashi.

3rd Member: Mr. Jayantilal L. Jobanputra: 1. Medical, 2. Jail, 3. Education and 4. Stables and other unspecified departments.

As regards the future steps to be taken to control the present situation, they will be decided by the council with my approval and in all other important questions the above procedure is to be adopted.

I will issue detailed instruction hereafter. I think the formation of such a strong council will remove my anxiety about the present situation, which is increasing day by day.

On hearing from you, I shall inform Sir Patrick Cadell accordingly.

I am so sorry for the trouble I gave you in the matter.

Yours sincerely,

DHARMENDRASINH

LETTER FROM E. C. GIBSON TO DURBAR VIRAWALA

THE RESIDENCY, RAJKOT,

November 25, 1938

MY DEAR VIRAWALA,

Thanks for your letter. I did hear when I returned to Rajkot this morning that you were here, and I must say that I was very much surprised to hear it. I should have thought that if Mr. Anantrai Pattani wanted to see you he could have asked you to go to Bhavnagar or could himself have gone to Natwarnagar which is, I believe, much nearer to Bhavnagar than Rajkot is. I cannot understand why he felt it incumbent on him to make this extraordinary request, and I certainly think that it is a pity that you complied with it after the advice I gave you. I can understand that you were reluctant to come here. These long journeys must be very bad for your health at a time when you require rest and quiet for recuperation after your long illness. I am glad that you are feeling better today, and I strongly advise you to take more care of your health in future.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

E. C. GIBSON

VALA SHRI VIRA MULU,

TALUKDAR OF NATWARNAGAR, RAJKOT

LETTER FROM POLITICAL AGENT TO DURBAR VIRAWALA

Personal RAJKOT,

November 29, 1938

DEAR VALA SHRI,

Your personal letter of yesterday. I am sorry Col. Aspinall thought the journey had been trying to you, particularly as you told me you were feeling so unwell after it.

I was naturally extremely surprised, after your assurances that you would see nobody in Rajkot pending a reply to my reference to the Hon. the Resident, to learn that you had been to the Palace.

I can only assume that you will realize that, in your own interests, this was hardly wise, and that you will, pending your return to Natwarnagar, not again depart from the attitude you had offered to adopt, i. e., complete aloofness from local affairs and not to meet anybody.

I trust that you have now completely rested and will not suffer from your return journey to Natwarnagar tomorrow.

Yours sincerely,

C. K. DALY

LETTER FROM THAKORE SAHEB TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

AMARSINHJI SECRETARIAT,

RAJKOT STATE,

December 27, 1938

MY DEAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL.

I am very thankful to you for coming to Rajkot.

I appreciate very much the way in which you helped me in ending the impasse.

I think you are fully aware by now that Dewan Saheb Virabhai has been most loyal to me and my State. All along his career he has done his best for the good of my people.

In safeguarding the interests of myself and my State he had to suffer also.

Now I request you to do your best to remove any misunderstanding existing in the minds of my people against him.

I shall feel very thankful for the same.

Yours sincerely,
Dharmendrasinh
THAKORE SAHEB, RAJKOT

EXTRACTS FROM NOTES OF TALKS AT THE RESIDENCY

December 28, 1938

Present: The Hon. Mr. Gibson,
The Thakore Saheb,
Sir Patrick R. Cadell, Members of the
Rao Saheb M. C. Patel, State Council
Mr. Jayantilal L. Jobanputra

The Hon. Mr. Gibson started by saying to the Thakore Saheb to the effect that the agreement made by him had stirred up all the Princes. He would like to know how Vallabhbhai Patel had come to Rajkot and whether he was invited by him.

THAKORE SAHEB: He had come of his own accord and asked for meeting me, and I had invited him to tea.

MR. GIBSON: Well, he is a very unreliable man. You know that the Government of India's wishes were that no outside interference should be allowed. By settling with him, you have lost sympathies of your brother Princes and the Government. Although the Government of India do not mind what you do, you have erred in settling through Patel. Even amongst the Congress workers, Mr. Patel is the most untrustworthy. However, as it appears from the Notification, the wordings of the settlement are not so bad but for the words "widest possible powers" which are capable of any interpretation. It may mean that you will be reduced to a figurhead. On the strength of these words, they would demand full responsible government at the very start and you will find yourself in a very awkward situation.

THAKORE SAHEB: No, I have only appointed a committee.

MR. GIBSON: Yes, but who will appoint the members of the committee? And the report as received has to be given effect to.

THAKORE SAHEB: Well, Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel will suggest names.

MR. GIBSON: That is it. That means Congress workers, who will demand full responsible government in view of the words "widest possible powers".

SIR PATRICK: How is Mr. Patel to suggest names? Are we to write to him?
THAKORE SAHEB: No, he will send names.

MR. GIBSON: In one of the clauses, you have agreed to give full effect to the

report. That is very bad. You have given up your cards.

As regards the appointment of the President of the Reforms Committee, Mr. Gibson asked the Thakore Saheb as to who will be the President of the Committee.

THAKORE SAHEB: Durbar Virawala.

MR. GIBSON: No, he cannot come.

THAKORE SAHEB: Why ? He will come after his leave period is over.

MR. GIBSON: No. He is a talukdar. He cannot come. I would not let him come now.

THAKORE SAHEB: No. He can come after Sir Patrick has gone.

MR. GIBSON: That will be seen after Sir Patrick is gone.

RAJKOT GAZETTE NOTIFICATION

RAJKOT DARBARI GAZETTE EXTRAORDINARY,

Saturday, January 21, 1939

NOTIFICATION

NO. 61 OF 1938-39

As observed in the Notification No. 50, dated the 26th December '38, we are hereby pleased to appoint the following seven gentlemen, representing all important interests in the State, to work along with the three officers of the State, whose names will be announced hereafter, to work on a committee to draw up, after proper investigation, a report recommending to us a scheme of reforms with a view to associating the people more closely with the administration of the State:

I. Mr. Popatlal Purushottam Anada, President, P.P. Sabha,

2. Jadeja Jivansinhji Dhirubha,

3. Sheth Dada Haji Valimohmed,

4. Mr. Popatlal Dhanjibhai Malaviya,

5. Mr. Mohanlal M. Tank, President, Municipal Corporation,

6. Dr. D. J. Gajjar, and

7. Sheth Haptubhai Abdulali.

The Committee is expected to submit its report after full and thorough inquiry.

DHARMENDRASINH

THAKORE SAHEB, RAJKOT STATE

LETTER FROM MANEKLAL PATEL TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

Confidential

RANJIT VILAS,
RAJKOT,
January 12, 1939

DEAR SARDAR SAHEB,

I am desired by H. H. Thakore Saheb to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 4th instant, recommending the seven names to be nominated by him to the proposed Reforms Committee.

You must have learnt from the newspapers that the names suggested by you were already out by the time your letter was received by His Highness, He regrets that it should have been so, because such an exposure places you and His Highness in somewhat awkward position.

While H. H. would very much wish to select all the names suggested by you, you would also appreciate that he cannot ignore the requests made by important classes of his subjects, and should see that the committee consists of such persons as would command the confidence of all important groups of his subjects. In fact, His Highness has received representations from the Bhayats and Muslim Council and a petition from the Depressed Class, and has therefore desired me to write to you as under.

While here, you very rightly said to H. H. that you did not know who the real leaders were and therefore postponed suggesting names until after you had consulted others.

His Highness approves of the gentlemen numbered 1, 2, 4 and 5.

While number three owns immovable property and resides here since about 40 years and is a respectable citizen, he could hardly be expected to be useful with independent opinion to work on a committee of this nature.

You would agree that the Mahomedans form a very important unit and are now too well organized to be ignored so lightly. In their representation submitted as a result of the unanimous resolution of the Muslim Council, they have requested that three out of seven should be Mahomedans. This demand of theirs is of course unreasonable, but including the Bohras they should be given two seats and the President of their Council should be one of them. In view of your vast experience in British India, you will appreciate that if their legitimate request were not met, they may make a row and may create unhealthy atmosphere, which we all wish to avoid. There is no doubt that we all want a committee which would represent all sections of

the people, be impartial and work harmoniously and with sagacity.

As regards numbers six and seven, it appears that they would not come strictly within the scope of the definition of the "subject" as referred to in the notification.

Mr. V. M. Shukla was neither born in the State nor has he been staying within the jurisdiction of the State since his birth for as many as about forty years. Possession by his ancestors of some property in Sardhar Pati does not entitle him, according to the definition, to be considered as a Rajkot State subject. He is neither born, nor domiciled, nor naturalized in the State.

As regards Mr. U. N. Dhebar, His Highness feels that the same objection would come in the way. As is understood, he originally belongs to the Jamnagar State and his father spent the major portion of his life in Bombay. He himself is said to have received his schooling in Rajkot and was residing in the Civil Station when he started practice as a pleader. He has been living within the State limits since about two years. He has also purchased land in the State last year. His Highness feels that he should restrict his nomination to the definition, so as not to create any ill-feeling amongst other leading gentlemen, who have always been recognized by the State, since the time of the late Thakore Saheb, as leaders of the public.

It may also be brought to your notice that the Bhayats have also approached His Highness, and very rightly,with a request that at least one of them should be on the committee, as they represent a very important and considerable unit in the State. His Highness therefore considers it essential that one of them should be on the committee.

It is His Highness's wish, as you will readily understand, that the committee should consist of the best brains who would also be representative of all important classes of his subjects.

If any suggestions are to be made in the light of what has been said above, His Highness will then declare the personnel of the committee, inclusive of three officials besides the President of the committee.

Yours sincerely,

M. C. PATEL

LETTER FROM VALLABHBHAI PATEL TO MANEKLAL PATEL

CAMP, BARDOLI,

January 15, 1939

DEAR SHRI MANEKLAL PATEL,

I have your letter of the 12th instant. It has pained me. It is indeed regrettable that the names I proposed were published, but it is not always possible to keep

anything private in which a number of persons are concerned. And then in spite of publication, alteration can certainly be made therein if there are valid reasons.

I am afraid I cannot accept your recommendation regarding the names of Bhayats and Mussalmans on the committee. There was a definite intelligible object behind the settlement entitling me to suggest the names. That object would be frustrated if I were to accept your recommendation. The names have been suggested to achieve the object which can be fulfilled only by having on the committee men of integrity holding particular views. The seven members whose names I have suggested will surely bear in mind the interests of Bhayats and others. More than this may not be expected.

I regret you have seen fit to object to certain names on the ground of their not being State subjects. But you have a right to do so; If on further consideration you should adhere to the view that Shri Dhebazbhai does not come within the definition, rather than argue with you I am prepared to withdraw his name and to suggest instead the name of Shri Gajanan Joshi Vakil. I maintain that Shri Vajubhai Shukla comes within the definition.

H. H. the Thakore Saheb's notification can only mean that the chairman of the committee had to be from the committee of ten, and I must say that Darbar Virawala may not be appointed chairman. He has sent me word that he does not intend to hold any office, but in order to avoid any possible accident I have thought it proper to mention this.

I cannot help saying that the appointment of the committee has been greatly delayed. Their report has got to be published by the 31st January. I therefore hope that the committee will be appointed immediately on receipt of this letter. If unfortunately the appointment continues to be delayed, there is every fear of the struggle being resumed by the people. I must also add that I have in my possession copies of correspondence that has taken place between H. H. the Thakore Saheb and Sir Patrick Cadell, and of the summary of an interview with the Resident. If the settlement breaks down, I am afraid it will be my duty to publish, in public interest, these and other documents in my possession. But I hope I may have to do nothing of the kind, and the committee will be appointed and begin work immediately.

May I expect a wire from you in reply?

Yours sincerely,
VALLABHBHAI PATEL

Harijan, 4-2-1939

APPENDIX II

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA'S STATEMENT ON RAJKOT[1]

NEW DELHI,

February 1, 1939

1. Attention has been drawn to Mr. Gandhi's statement to the Press in regard to the recent events in the Rajkot and Jaipur States.

2. In the case of Rajkot, Mr. Gandhi states that "an honourable understanding arrived at between the Thakore Saheb-in-Council and Sardar Patel, representing the people, has been undone by the Resident", and he expresses the opinion that "it is the duty of the Viceroy to ask the Resident in Rajkot to restore the pact."

3. The facts are that the Thakore Saheb-in-Council reached an agreement with Sardar Patel that a committee should be appointed to investigate and make recommendations for constitutional reform. The terms of this agreement were published on December 26, in the State *Gazette*. The number of official and non-official members who were to serve on the committee were stated in this announcement. No further indication was given as to the committee's composition or the basis of its selection. It appears that simultaneously a private exchange of letters took place between the Thakore Saheb personally and Sardar Patel, to which no publicity was given. In this correspondence, the Thakore Saheb wrote to Sardar Patel as follows:

AMARSINHJI SECRETARIAT,

RAJKOT STATE,

26-12-'38

It is agreed that seven members of the Committee mentioned in Clause 2 of the State Announcement of today's date are to be recommended by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and they are to be nominated by us.

(Sd.) DHARMENDRASINH,

Thakore Saheb, Rajkot

The Thakore Saheb claims that this letter was intended to leave him at liberty to accept or not the names put forward by Sardar Patel. Sardar Patel contends that its intention was to bind the Thakore Saheb to accept whatever names he put forward.

REFORMS COMMITTEE PERSONNEL

Of the names put forward by Sardar Patel, the Thakore Saheb accepted three. In

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 31-1-1939

the interests of securing adequate representation for the Mohammedans and the Bhayats in the State, both of which parties submitted their claims to be represented, he found himself unable to accept the remaining four names. On his instructions, his Minister so informed Sardar Patel. Sardar Patel, however, in his reply, did not address himself to the merits and refused to acquiesce in the Thakore Saheb's proposals for the representation of the interests mentioned above, and merely intimated that he would be content with nothing less than the names which he had put forward irrespective of the considerations advanced by the Thakore Saheb, in acting as he has acted of his own free will. The Resident has no knowledge of the correspondence which had passed and was not a party to it.

Mr. Gandhi's suggestion is that the Thakore Saheb should now be required to accept a different construction which Sardar Patel has placed on his letter. It would clearly be most improper to bring pressure on the Thakore Saheb to accept a construction which he evidently did not intend and is not now prepared to accept.

Mr. Gandhi states that the Resident is reported to be resorting to "organized *goondaism*". Mr. Gandhi has not indicated the source of this report, which has no foundation whatever in fact.

In the case of Jaipur, the Jaipur Government will no doubt issue whatever statement they see fit in answer to Mr. Gandhi's observations.

The Hindu, 2-2-1940

APPENDIX III

RESIGNATION LETTER OF CONGRESS WORKING COMITTEE MEMBERS[1]

[*February 22, 1939*][2]

DEAR SUBHAS,

We were all deeply pained to hear of your illness. It was not to be thought that you should come to Wardha at the risk of your health. We hope that you will be soon restored to complete health.

We have thought over the recent events carefully and have also read your various statements in connection with the Presidential election. Your unfortunate illness and the consequent cancellation of our meeting deter us from expressing our views on your statements.

It should be sufficient at this stage for us to say that we, the undersigned, feel it our duty to tender our resignations as members of the Working Committee, and we

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose", 5-2-1939
[2] From Brijkrishna Chandiwala's *Delhi Diary*

hereby tender the same. We feel [*sic*] to choose your Cabinet that represents your views.

We feel that the time has come when the country should have a clearcut policy, not based on compromise between different and incompatible groups of the Congress.

It is but right, therefore, that you should select a homogeneous Cabinet representing the views of the majority. You may trust us to give you all possible co-operation in matters where we see eye to eye with you in the policies that you may put before the country. In order to allay public suspense, we are sending this letter to the Press.

Yours sincerely,
Sd/- ABUL KALAM AZAD
SAROJINI NAIDU
VALLABHBHAI PATEL
RAJENDRA PRASAD
BHULABHAI DESAI
PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA
SHANKARRAO DEO
HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB
KRIPALANI
ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN
JAMNALAL BAJAJ
JAIRAM DOULATRAM

The Hindustan Times, 23-2-1939

APPENDIX IV

STATEMENT OF SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE[1]

I have read the statement of Mahatma Gandhi on the recent presidential election with all the attention that it deserves. It grieves me to find that Mahatma Gandhi has taken it as a personal defeat. I would respectfully differ from him on this point. The voters, that is the delegates, were not called upon to vote for or against Mahatma Gandhi. Consequently the result of the contest does not in my view and in the view of most people affect him personally.

[1]*Vide* "Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose", 5-2-1939

Much has been said in the Press during the last few days about the Right and Left wings in the Congress. Several persons have interpreted the result of the election as a victory for the Leftists. The fact is that I placed before the public two main issues, namely, the fight against Federation and free and unfettered choice for the delegates in the matter of choosing their president. These issues must have greatly influenced the voting, and over and above these, the personality of the candidates might have had some effect. In the circumstances, I feel that while analysing the significance of the election we should not draw on our imagination nor should we read into it more than it contains.

Assuming for argument's sake that the result of the election implies a victory of the Left, we should stop to consider what the Leftists' programme is. For the immediate future the Leftists stand for national unity and unrelenting opposition to the Federal scheme. In addition to this, they stand for democratic principles. Leftists will not take the responsibility of creating a split within the Congress. If a split does come, it will come not because of them, but in spite of them.

Personally I am definitely of the opinion that there is neither reason nor justification for a split within the ranks of the Congress. I, therefore, earnestly hope that there will be no occasion now or in the near future for the so-called minority party to non-co-operate with the so-called majority party. I need hardly add that I shall try till the last to avert a split whenever any such likelihood appears before us.

A certain amount of apprehension has been caused in the minds of many as to the policy which people like myself will follow in future. Let me make it quite clear that there will be no violent break with the past in the parliamentary or in the extra-parliamentary sphere. So far as the parliamentary programme is concerned, we shall only try to implement our election pledges and our parliamentary programme with greater speed than in the past. In the extra-parliamentary sphere, we shall endeavour to rally all our strength and resources for combating Federation and for pushing on towards *purna* swaraj. And we shall, of course, act in accordance with the principles and policy of the Indian National Congress.

In this connection I should also like to say that I have on some occasions felt constrained to differ from Mahatma Gandhi on public questions, but I yield to none in my respect for his personality. If I have understood him correctly, he too would like to see people think for themselves, even though they may not always agree with him. I do not know what sort of opinion Mahatmaji has of myself. But, whatever his view may be, it will always be my aim and object to try and win his confidence for the simple reason that it will be a tragic thing for me if I succeed in winning the confidence of other people but fail to win the confidence of India's greatest man.

The Hindustan Times, 5-2-1939

APPENDIX V

SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI'S COMMENTS ON GANDHIJI'S DESCRIPTION OF HIS STATE OF MIND[1]

The Maharshi referred to the following passage of Gandhiji's in the *Harijan* of the 11th instant:

"How mysterious are the ways of God ! This journey to Rajkot is a wonder even to me. Why am I going, whither am I going? What for? I have thought nothing about these things. And if God guides me, what should I think, why should I think? Even thought may be an obstacle in the way of His guidance.

"The fact is, it takes no effort to stop thinking. The thoughts do *not* come. Indeed there is no vacuum—but I mean to say that there is no thought about the mission."

He remarked how true the words were and emphasized each statement in the extract. Then He cited Thayumanavar in support of the state which is free from thoughts:

"Bliss will reveal itself if one is still. Why then is this illusory *yoga* practice ? Can it (i. e., bliss) be revealed by directing the intellect in a particular way?"

D. Is not what Gandhiji describes the state in which thoughts themselves become foreign?

M. Yes. It is only after the rise of the 'I' thought that all other thoughts arise. The world is seen after you have felt "I am". The 'I' thought and all other thoughts had vanished for him.

D. Then the body-sense must be absent in that state.

M. The body-sense also is a thought whereas he describes the state in which "thoughts do not come".

D. He also says, "It takes no effort to stop thinking".

M. Of course no effort is necessary to stop thought whereas one is necessary for bringing about thoughts....

D. Gandhiji adhered to *Satya* (Truth) so long and won realization of the Self.

M. What is *Satya* except the Self ? *Satya* is that which is made up of *sat*. Again *sat* is nothing but the Self. So Gandhiji's *Satya* is only the Self....

The Upanishadic Text is the eternal Truth to which everyone who has realized owes his experience. After hearing the Self to be the Brahman the person finds the true import of the Self and reverts to it whenever he is diverted from it. Here is the whole process of Realization.

Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi, pp. 734-9

[1]*Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 27-2-1939

APPENDIX VI

LETTER FROM DHARMENDRASINH[1]

AMARSINHJI SECRETARIAT
RAJKOT STATE
March 3, 1939

MY DEAR MAHATMA GANDHIJI,

I received your letter yesterday and noted the contents with greatest regret. As you have already been assured that the Notification No. 50 which I published on 26th December will stand good, the suggestions you make regarding personnel of the Committee are not in accordance with the terms of that Notification, and I do not feel justified in accepting them or your other suggestions. The responsibility of ensuring that the Committee shall consist of suitable members truly representative of various interests of the State rests on me as Ruler of Rajkot, and it is a responsibility of which I cannot divest myself. In the best interests of my State and my people it is impossible for me to allow anyone else to have the final decision in a matter of such vital importance. As I have previously assured, it is my earnest hope that the Committee may be able to start work in a calm atmosphere at the earliest possible moment so that there may be no delay in introducing such reforms as may be found to be necessary

Yours sincerely,
DHARMENDRASINH

Harijan, 11-3-1939

APPENDIX VII

LETTER FROM E. C. GIBSON[2]

THE RESIDENCY, RAJKOT,
March 6, 1939

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I telegraphed what you wrote in your letter of March 4th to His Excellency the Viceroy and have now been instructed to convey the following message from His Excellency to you:

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dharmendrasinh", 2-3-1939, "Statement to the Press", 3-3-1939, "Talk with First Member, Rajkot State Council", 3-3-1939, "Statement to the Press", 3-3-1939, "Telegram to Amrit Kaur", 3-3-1939 and "Statement to the Press", 4-3-1939

[2] *Vide* "Letter to E. C. Gibson", 6-3-1939

I was very glad to receive your message today and am sorry indeed that you did not communicate with me before taking your present decision. The two points which, from the papers you sent me, I thought you were principally interested in were

(a) alleged misconduct by police, etc.,

(b) alleged breach of undertaking by Thakore Saheb of Rajkot.

I trust that your own investigations satisfied you that there is nothing material under the first head. As regards the second, which is, I gather, now your chief difficulty, you will, I am sure, be glad to know that the Thakore Saheb has [to] preside over the Committee. That I will readily arrange, and it will, I take it, meet what I have no doubt is your chief anxiety, viz., to ensure fair play in the fulfilment of the Thakore Saheb's Notification of December 26th. But in any case I should like myself to talk things over with you as soon as possible and I hope, therefore, that you will come and see me as soon as may be convenient to yourself.

I expect to arrive in Delhi on the morning of Monday the 6th, and will be very glad to see you at any time after that if you will let me know. I hope myself that through personal discussion between us such misunderstanding as may exist will admit of being cleared; and on personal grounds, too, I should greatly deplore any decision on your part, as arising out of such misunderstanding, to continue a fast which cannot but be a great strain on you.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C. W. 10138. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

APPENDICES VIII

LETTER FROM E. C. GIBSON[1]

THE RESIDENCY, RAJKOT,
March 7, 1939

MY DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I wired your reply to the Viceroy yesterday and am now instructed to convey the following message to you from His Excellency:

> Thank you very much for your message which I have just received. I understand your position. It is clear from what you tell me that what counts with you essentially in this matter is your feeling that there has been a breach of faith. I realize that doubts may be entertained as to the meaning which should be attached to the Thakore Saheb's Notification, as amplified by his subsequent letter to Sardar Patel, and it seems to me that the best way in which

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 6-3-1939, "Telegram to Shankerlal Banker", 6-3-1939, "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 15-3-1939 and "Telegram to Subhas Chandra Bose", 2-4-1939

these doubts can be resolved is to refer their interpretation to the highest judicial authority in the land, that is to say, the Chief Justice of India. I would, therefore, propose with the consent of the Thakore Saheb, which I understand is forthcoming, to consult this high authority as to the manner in which the Committee should be composed in accordance with the terms of the Notification and the Thakore Saheb's letter referred to above. After this the Committee would be set up accordingly and it would further be provided that should any difference subsequently arise between the members of the Committee as to the meaning of any part of the Notification on which they were to make their recommendations, this question would also be referred to the same high authority whose decision would be final. I fully believe that this, combined with the Thakore Saheb's assurance that he will carry out the promise contained in his Notification, and with my own assurance that I will exert my influence to see that he does so, will be sufficient to allay any apprehensions which have assailed you and that you will join with me in feeling that every precaution has been taken to ensure fair dealing and that you will allay the anxiety of your friends by abandoning any further strain upon your health. As I have already told you I shall be very glad to see you here and discuss matters with you so that any misapprehensions may be removed.

Yours sincerely,

E. C. GIBSON

From a copy: C. W. 10140. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar. Also *Harijan,* 11-3-1939

APPENDICES IX

DISCUSSION WITH AGATHA HARRISON[1]

March 5, 1939

I raised the question of "next steps" and asked what was being done to explore a way out of the impasse. Since the correspondence that was passed between the parties concerned, it would appear that nothing was being done officially—the general opinion being that any move now must come from Delhi.

In answering, Gandhiji took up the question of the Sardar. He said if there was definite proof given to him by an impartial enquiry that the Sardar had employed dishonourable means to obtain the Thakore Saheb's consent to the agreement he would repudiate the Sardar and drop his demands. He spoke of the character of the

[1]*Vide* "discusstion with Agatha Harrison". The talk has been extracted from the notes made by Agatha Harrison.

Sardar and said he was not a diplomat and was often misunderstood. We then dropped this matter and went on to the main question of the conditions that would enable him to break his fast.

I asked Gandhiji if Zetland's statement in England and the Viceroy's here changed the situation in any way. If in view of these statements the Paramount Power undertook responsibility for seeing the agreement was implemented, and appointed a Committee without reference to the Present controversy on personnel, would this satisfy him?

Gandhiji said "Yes"; if the Paramount Power gave the assurance that they would see he got the constitution in terms of the December 26th Notification and selected a Committee he could accept, he would not insist on the personnel named in his letter to Thakore Saheb. But this assurance would have to be given publicly and in writing.

Alternatively, Gandhiji suggested that he would, with a nominee of the Thakore Saheb's choice, who was trusted and respected, undertake to draft a constitution. If any points of difference arose they could be referred to an umpire.

I asked Gandhiji if, in the event of some move being made as above, he would drop the point he made in his letter to Gibson yesterday for the removal of Virawala. He replied this was possible, if the Paramount Power made itself hostage, not only for the production of the constitution in terms of the December 26th agreement, but also that the recommendations of the Committee would be carried out in full.

From a copy: C. W. 10193. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

APPENDICES X

LETTER FROM S. SATYAMURTI TO MAHADEV DESAI[1]

NEW DELHI,
March 20, 1939

MY DEAR MAHADEO,

I told Mahatmaji that I would send him a note on the amendments to the Congress constitution. I am sending that note herewith. I also want that, on the lines we discussed this matter when we last met at Birla House, you should place before Mahatmaji my views on the urgent and important need of the anti-Hindustani agitation in Madras being met by the Government of Madras. I recognize that the agitation is factitious, is unreal in the sense in which it is fighting for something which it need not fight for and is being exploited by unscrupulous persons against the Ministry. At the same time, I am of the opinion, which you expressed in the columns of the *Harijan*, that from the point of view of truth and non-violence compulsion in

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jawahralal Nehru", 20-3-193

any matter of this kind might well be postponed for the present, and till public opinion is more universally in favour of it. If a conscience clause were granted, I am sure that not more than ten percent will take advantage of it, and only in some districts, and that ten percent may be soon reduced to one percent by continuous and vigorous propaganda. As a matter of fact, the Madras Government have made a concession in that students taking up Hindi are not compelled to sit for an examination. This, I think, practically takes away the value of compulsion; rather I would insist on an examination passing which will alone enable a student to be promoted to a higher class, and we may give this conscience clause.

Moreover I do not like the use of the Criminal Law Amendment Act[1] in view of our definite election pledge that the Congress stands for the repeal of all repressive laws. This Act was placed on the Statute Book by the fiat of the Governor-General against the express wishes of the Indian Legislative Assembly. This matter is very urgent, and I should like you to place it before Mahatmaji before he leaves Delhi. If he wants to discuss it further with me, I shall be glad to discuss it with him.

There is just one other matter of extreme urgency which I am sure is already exercising Mahatmaji's mind. The present deadlock in the Congress ought not to be allowed to continue. The Working Committee must be formed and formed at once. There are several provinces in which the Congress work is at a standstill and the Working Committee starting functioning alone will solve all these provincial and other problems. I hope that Mahatmaji will be able to get Srijut Subhas Chandra Bose to nominate the members of the Working Committee according to his wishes. But if there be any difficulty in the matter, I suggest that a very early meeting of the All-India Congress Committee may be summoned, which according to the constitution is entitled to meet the new situation and will meet it by appointing a Working Committee recommended by Mahatmaji.

I am sending you this letter just now and I shall be at Birla House this evening (Monday, 20th) at 6.30 p. m. Any other hour between 5.30 and 8 p. m. will suit me. Please send a line in reply per bearer who will wait for the same, to meet you and have a few words with you. I trust you will find it possible to meet me at that time.

With kind regards,

Yours very sincerely,

S. SATYAMURTI

SJT. MAHADEO DESAI

From a photostat: C. W. 10888. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan

[1] Of 1908, under which certain associations were declared unlawful

APPENDICES XI

LETTERS FROM SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE[1]

JEALGORA P. O.,
March 29, 1939

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I received your letter of the 24th instant from the train, along with the enclosures.

Firstly, my brother, Sarat, wrote to you on his own. You will see from his letter that he got your telegram on his return to Calcutta from here and then he wrote to you. If he had not got your telegram, I doubt if he would have written.

There are, of course, certain things in his letter which echo my feelings. But that is a different matter. The main problem appears to me as to whether both parties can forget the past and work together. That depends entirely on you. If you can command the confidence of both parties by taking up a truly non-partisan attitude, then you can save the Congress and restore national unity.

I am temperamentally not a vindictive person and I do not nurse grievances. In a way, I have the mentality of a boxer, that is, to shake hands smilingly when the boxing-bout is over and take the result in a sporting spirit.

Secondly, in spite of all the representations that I have been receiving, I take the Pant resolution as it has been passed by the Congress. We must give effect to it. I myself allowed the resolution to be moved and discussed, despite the *ultra vires* clause in it. How can I go back on it ?

Thirdly, there are two alternatives before you: (1) Either to accommodate our views with regard to the composition of the new Working Committee, or (2) to insist on your views in their entirety. In the case of the latter, we may come to the parting of the ways.

Fourthly, I am prepared to do all that is humanly possible for me to expedite the formation of the new Working Committee and the summoning of the Working Committee and A. I. C. C. But I am so sorry that it is not possible for me to come to Delhi now. (Dr. Sunil has wired to you this morning on this point. I got your telegram only yesterday.)

Fifthly, I was surprised to learn from your letter that the A. I. C. C. office had not sent you a copy of Pant's resolution. (This has since been done.) I was still more surprised that the resolution had not been brought to your notice till you came to Allahabad. At Tripuri, the air was thick with the rumour that the resolution had your fullest support. A statement to that effect also appeared in the daily Press while we were at Tripuri.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Subhas chandra Bose", 24-3-1939 and "Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose", 2-4-1939

Sixthly, I have not the slightest desire to stick to office, but I do not see any reason for resigning because I am ill. No President resigned when he was in prison for instance; I may tell you that great pressure is being brought to bear on me to resign. I am resisting because my resignation will mean a new phase in Congress politics which I want to avoid till the last. I have been attending to urgent A. I. C. C. work during the last few days.

I shall write to you again tomorrow or the day after.

I am progressing. I hope your blood-pressure will soon be down again.

With *pranams*,

Yours affectionately,
SUBHAS

PS.

This letter is not exactly a reply to yours, I have just jotted down the points which were in my mind and which I wanted to convey to you.

MAHATMA GANDHI
BIRLA HOUSE
NEW DELHI

JEALGORA
March 31

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I saw your telegram[1] to Sunil which you sent in reply to his long telegram regarding my health. When you wired suggesting my going to Delhi, I thought it best to let the doctors speak out their mind on the subject. So Sunil wired you.

I have been pondering over the various points in your letter of the 24th instant to me (from the train) and your letter to Sarat of the same date and over the situation in general. It is really unfortunate for me that I fell ill at such a critical time. But events have so moved in rapid succession that I have not had a chance of quick recovery. Besides, both before Tripuri and after, I have not been treated in certain influential quarters (there is no reference to you at all in this—let me make it clear) with the consideration that was due to me. But there is no reason for me to resign on account of my illness. As I stated in my letter[2] of yesterday (my second letter to you), no President, to my knowledge, resigned when he was in prison, even for a long time. It may be that I shall have to resign after all, but if that takes place, it will be due to quite different reasons.

I think I said in my second letter that though pressure was being brought to bear on me to resign, I was resisting. My resignation would mean the beginning of a new phase in Congress politics which I want to avoid till the last . If we come to the

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Dr. Sunil Bose", 25-3-1939
[2] Dated March 29 above

parting of the ways, a bitter civil war will commence and—whatever be the upshot of it—the Congress will be weakened for some time to come and the benefit will be reaped by the British Government. It is in your hands to save the Congress and the country from the calamity. People who are bitterly opposed for various reasons to Sardar Patel and his group, still have confidence in you and believe that you can take a dispassionate and non-partisan view of things. To them you are a national figure—above parties and groups—and you can, therefore, restore unity between the warring elements. If for any reason that confidence is shaken—which God forbid—and you are regarded as a partisan, then God help us and the Congress.

There is no doubt that there is today a wide gulf between the two parties (or blocs) in the Congress. But the gulf can yet be bridged—and that by you. I cannot say anything about the mentality of our political opponents. Tripuri has given us a very bad experience of them, but I can speak for our side. We are not vindictive and we do not nurse grievances. We are prepared to "forgive and forget"—as they say—and join hands once again for the sake of the common cause, viz., the political and economic emancipation of India. When I talk of 'our side', I exclude the official Congress Socialist Party. We discovered for the first time at Tripuri what a small following the official Congress Socialist Party had. The Congress Socialist Party has now split—the rank and file and several provincial branches having revolted against the official leaders, because of what is called their vacillating policy. A large section of the Congress Socialist Party will move with us in future, in spite of what the top leadership may do. If you have any doubts on this score, you have only to wait and see.

The letter of my brother Sarat to you shows that he is feeling very bitter. This I presume, is due largely to his experiences at Tripuri, because he had no such feeling when he left Calcutta for Tripuri. Naturally, he knows more about the happenings at Tripuri than I do, because he could move about freely, meet people and obtain information. But though I was confined to bed, I got enough information from several independent sources regarding the attitude of responsible circles politically opposed to us, to make me feel thoroughly sick of the whole affair. I may say further that when I left Tripuri, I felt such a loathing and disgust for Congress politics as I have not done for the last nineteen years. Thank God, I have got over that feeling now and have recovered my composure.

Jawahar in one of his letters (and possibly Press statements) remarked that the A. I. C. C. office had deteriorated under my presidentship. I resent that remark as unfair and unjust. He did not perhaps realize that in trying to damn me, he has damned Kripalaniji and the entire staff. The office is in the hands of the Secretary and his staff and if it deteriorates, it is they who are responsible for it. I am writing to Jawahar at length on this point. I am mentioning this to you because you have said something

about the interim administration in your letter to Sarat. The only way in which we can help the office is to appoint a permanent Secretary at once, even if there is delay in appointing the rest of the Working Committee. But if the Working Committee is going to be appointed soon, we need not appoint the General Secretary in advance.

I shall be grateful if you could let me know your reaction to Pant's resolution. You are in this advantageous position, that you can take a dispassionate view of things provided, of course, you get to know the whole story of Tripuri. Judging from the papers, most of the people who have seen you so far seem to belong to one school—namely, those who supported Pant's resolution. But that does not matter. You can easily assess things at their proper value, regardless of the persons who visit you. You can easily imagine my own view of Pant's resolution. But my personal feelings do not matter to public considerations. As I have said in a previous letter, whatever one may think of Pant's resolution from the purely constitutional point of view, since it has been passed by the Congress I feel bound by it. Now, do you regard that resolution as one of no-confidence in me and do you feel that I should resign in consequence thereof? Your view in this matter will influence me considerably.

Perhaps, you are aware that at Tripuri it was given out by those who were canvassing in support of Pant's resolution that telephonic conversation had taken place with Rajkot and that resolution had your full support. A report to that effect appeared in the daily Press also. It was further given out in private conversation that nothing short of that resolution in its entirety would satisfy either you or your orthodox followers. Personally, I did not and do not believe in such reports, but they undoubtedly had their vote-catching value. When Pant's resolution was shown to me for the first time by Sardar Patel, I suggested to him (Rajen Babu and Maulana Azad were also there at the time) that if certain changes were made, the resolution in the amended form would be passed by the Congress unanimously. The amended form of the resolution was also sent to Sardar Patel, but there was no response from his side. Their attitude seemed to be not a word, not a comma, should be changed. I suppose Rajkumari Amrit Kaur has handed over to you the amended form of the resolution. If the object of Pant's resolution was to reiterate faith in your principles and your leadership and guidance, that was provided in the amended resolution, but if the object was to avenge the result of the presidential election, then of course the amended resolution did not suffice. Personally, I do not see how Pant's resolution has enhanced your prestige, influence and authority. One hundred and thirty-five votes were cast against you in the Subjects Committee, and in the Open Session, whatever interested parties may say, my information from various independent sources is to the effect that, in spite of the neutrality of the Congress Socialist Party, at least 800 votes, if

not more, out of about 2,300[1] were (would have been ?) cast against you. And if the Congress Socialist Party had voted as they did in the Subjects Committee, then the resolution would have been defeated. In any case, the result of the voting would have been problematical. With slight changes in the resolution not one vote would have been cast against the resolution and your leadership would have had the unanimous support of all Congressmen. Your prestige before the British Government and before the whole world would have gone up like a shot. Instead, your name and prestige were exploited by those who wanted to wreak vengeance on us. Consequently, instead of enhancing your prestige and influence, they have dragged it down to an unimaginable depth—for the whole world now knows that though you or your followers managed to get a majority at Tripuri, there is in existence a powerful opposition. If matters are allowed to drift, this opposition is bound to gain in strength and in volume. What is the future of a party that is deprived of radical, youthful and progressive elements? The future is similar to that of the Liberal Party of Great Britain.

I have said enough to acquaint you with my reaction to Pant's resolution. I shall now be grateful if you kindly let me know what your reaction is. Do you approve of Pant's resolution, or should you rather have seen it passed unanimously in an amended form on the lines that we had suggested?

There is one other matter to which I shall refer in this letter—that is the question of our programme. I submitted my views to you on February 15, at Wardha. What has happened since then has served to confirm my views, to justify my prediction. For months I have been telling friends that there would be a crisis in Europe in spring which would continue till summer. The international situation as well as our own position at home, convinced me, nearly eight months ago, that the time had come for us to force the issue of *purna* swaraj. Unfortunately for us and for the country, you do not share our optimism. You are obsessed with the idea of corruption within the Congress. Moreover, the bogey of violence alarms you. Though I am at one with you in your determination to root out corruption within the Congress, I do not think that, taking India as a whole, there is more corruption today than before and, so far as violence is concerned I feel sure there is far less of it today than before. Previously, Bengal, the Punjab and the United Provinces could have been regarded as the hope of organized revolutionary violence. Today there is much more of the spirit of non-violence there. And, speaking for Bengal, I can say with full authority that the province was never more non-violent during the last 30 years than today. For these and other reasons we should lose no time in placing our National Demand before the British Government in the form of an ultimatum. The idea of ultimatum does not appeal to you or to Pandit Jawaharlal. But in all your political

[1] The *Crossroads* version has “2200”.

life, you have given any number of ultimatums to the authorities and have advanced the public cause thereby. The other day at Rajkot you did the same thing. What objection can there be, therefore, to submitting our National Demand in the form of an ultimatum? If you do so and prepare for the coming struggle simultaneously, I am sure that we shall be able to win *purna* swaraj very soon. The British Government will either respond to our demand without a fight—or, if the struggle does take place, in our present circumstances it cannot be a long-drawn one. I am so confident, and so optimistic on this point, that I feel that if we take courage in both hands and go ahead, we shall have swaraj inside of 18 months at the most.

I feel so strongly on this point that I am prepared to make any sacrifice in this connection. If you take up the struggle, I shall most gladly help you to the best of my ability. If you feel that the Congress would be able to fight better with another President, I shall gladly step aside. If you feel that the Congress will be able to fight more effectively with a Working Committee of your choice, I shall gladly fall in line with your wishes. All that I want is that you and the Congress should, in this critical hour, stand up and resume the struggle for swaraj. If self-effacement will further the national cause, I assure you most solemnly that I am prepared to efface myself completely. I think I love my country sufficiently to be able to do this.

Pardon me for saying that the way you have been recently conducting the States' people's struggle does not appeal to me. You risked your precious and valuable life for Rajkot and, while fighting for the Rajkot people, you suspended the struggle in all other States. Why should you do so? There are six hundred and odd States in India and, among them, Rajkot is a tiny one. It would not be an exaggeration to call the Rajkot struggle a flea-bite. Why should we not fight simultaneously all over the country and have a comprehensive plan for the purpose? This is what millions of your countrymen think, though out of personal reverence for you, they may not say so openly.

In conclusion, I may say that many people like myself cannot enthuse over the terms of the Rajkot settlement. We, as well as the Nationalist Press, have called it a great victory but how much have we gained? Sir Maurice Gwyer is neither our man nor is he an independent agent. He is a Government man. What point is there in making him the umpire? We are hoping that his verdict will be in our favour. But supposing he declares against us, what will be our position? Moreover, Sir Maurice Gwyer is a part and parcel of the Federal Scheme we have resolved to reject. In the case of a conflict with the British Government, if we decide to have a High Court Judge or a Sessions Judge as umpire, we can always have a settlement with the British Government. But what shall we gain from such a settlement? Further there are many people who fail to understand why after the interview with the Viceroy, you should be waiting in Delhi. Perhaps, in view of your weak health a rest was necessary before

undertaking another long journey. But to the British Government and its supporters it may appear as if you are attaching too much importance to the Federal Chief Justice and thereby enhancing his prestige.

My letter has become too long, so I must stop here. If I have said anything which appears to you to be erroneous, I hope you will pardon me. I know you always like people to speak frankly and openly. That is what has emboldened me in writing this frank and long letter.

I have been progressing steadily, though slowly. I do hope this will find you better and your blood-pressure much lower.

With respectful *pranams,*

Yours affectionately,

SUBHAS

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939; also *Crossroads,* pp. 134-40

APPENDIX XII

LETTER FROM DHARMENDRASINH[1]

PALACE RAJKOT,
April 10, 1939

DEAR MAHATMA GANDHIJI,

I am in receipt of your letter of 9th instant. You are right in supposing that I should wish for the inclusion in the Committee of the four gentlemen who were appointed by me to represent the Mahomedan community, the Bhayats and the Depressed Classes. I consider it to be of the utmost importance that these communities should be effectively represented and these particular representatives were selected after the most careful consideration. At the same time the expedient suggested by you, viz., the enlargement of the Committee merely to give Mr. Patel's nominees a majority, is hardly now practicable. What now has to be done is to take action in fulfilment of the terms of my Notification No. 50 dated 26th December 1938, in the light of the Award of the Hon'ble the Chief Justice of India who has observed that the Notification restricts the members of the Committee to ten. As stated above it is certainly most essential that the important Mahomedan and Bhayat communities should, like other communities, have proper representation. It was with this object in view that I included in the list published in my Notification No. 61 dated 21-1-1939 the names of two suitable representatives of Mahomedan community and one of Bhayats. That you shared this view is clearly evident from the assurances

[1] *Vide* These letters are extracted from “Rajkot Events”.

which you gave to the deputations of Mahomedans and Bhayats which came to see you on February 28th and the letter you wrote to the President of the Garasias' Association on March 11th. These assurances were, as you will remember, to the effect that the representatives already nominated on their behalf would certainly be included in the Committee. In view of these assurances I have no doubt that you will advise Mr. Patel to include these names in the list of seven non-official members who, in accordance with the Chief Justice of India's decision, are now to be recommended by him.

I also earnestly hope that the name of Mr. Mohan Madan will be included in his list as this gentleman, besides being a representative of the Depressed Classes, has for seven years been the elected chairman of the Rajkot Municipal Corporation and is obviously a person who should be on the Committee.

I am sure you will agree that the matter of primary importance is not to secure a majority for any particular party but to ensure that a really representative Committee, effectively representing the various interests in the State, may now be set up consisting of persons fully qualified to undertake the very responsible duties which will devolve on them.

I am awaiting Mr. Patel's recommendations and when I have received them, I shall appoint the three official members, who will of course have the right to vote, and decide who shall be the President of the Committee.

Yours sincerely,

DHARMENDRASINH

Harijan, 22-4-1939

APPENDIX XIII

LETTER FROM SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE[1]

JEALGORA,

April 6, 1939

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

In one of your letters to Majdada, my brother Sarat, you suggested a heart-to-heart talk between the leaders of both parties with a view to clearing the ground for united action in future. I think it is a magnificent idea, and I am fully prepared to do my best in this matter, regardless of what has happened in the past. Will you kindly let me know if you would like me to do anything in this behalf and if so, what? Personally, I feel that your influence and personality could achieve much in this endeavour to bring about unity. Will you not make one last supreme effort to bring

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose", 10-4-1939

everybody together before we give up all hope of unity? I would beg of you once again to remember in what light the country still regards you. You are not a partisan and people, therefore, still look up to you to bring together all the warring elements.

I have been pondering deeply over the advice you have given me regarding the formation of the Working Committee. I feel that your advice is a counsel of despair. It destroys all hope of unity. It will not save the Congress from a split—on the contrary, it will make the path safe for such a contingency. To advise a homogeneous Cabinet in the present circumstances will mean advising the parties to part company now. Is that not a terrible responsibility? Do you feel quite sure that joint work is impossible? On our side we do not think so. We are prepared to do our best to "forgive and forget" and join hands for the sake of the common cause and we can look up to you to bring about an honourable compromise. I have already written and spoken to you that the composition of the Congress being what it is—and there being no possibility in the immediate future of any remarkable change—the best course would be to have a composite Cabinet in which all the groups would be represented, as far as possible.

I understand that you are against this idea of a composite Cabinet. Is your opposition due to grounds of principle (viz., joint work is impossible in your view), or is it because you feel that the "Gandhi-ites" (I am using this expression in the absence of anything better, and you will please pardon me for doing so) should have a larger representation on the Cabinet? In the latter case, please let me know, so that I may have an opportunity of reconsidering the matter. In the former case, please reconsider the advice you have already tendered in the light of what I am submitting in this letter. At Haripura, when I suggested inviting the socialists to serve on the Cabinet, you told me distinctly that you were in favour of my doing so. Has the situation changed so materially since then as to induce you to insist on a homogeneous Cabinet?

You have referred in your letters to the two parties being so “diametrically opposed”. You have not amplified the point and it is not clear if the position you refer to is based on programme or on personal relations. Personal relations are in my view a passing phenomenon. We may quarrel and fight, but we can also shake hands and make up our differences. Take, for instance, the Swarajist episode in recent Congress history. As far as I am aware, after a period of opposition the relations between Deshbandhu and Pandit Motilalji with yourself became as sweet as humanly possible. In Great Britain, the major parties can always join hands and work on the same Cabinet when an emergency arises. In Continental countries like France every Cabinet is normally a composite Cabinet. Are we less patriotic than Britishers and Frenchmen? If we are not, then why cannot we have composite Cabinets functioning effectively?

If you think that your opposition is based on programme, etc., rather than on personal considerations, I should like very much to have your view in this matter. Wherein do you think that our programmes differ, and that too so fundamentally, that joint action is not possible? I know that we have certain differences—but, as I wrote to my ex-colleagues of the Working Committee in reply to their letter of resignation, our points of agreement are, in my view, more numerous than our points of difference. I still adhere to this view—Tripuri notwithstanding.

You have said in one of your letters in connection with my idea of an ultimatum on the issue of swaraj that there is no atmosphere for non-violent mass action. But did you not have non-violent mass action in Rajkot? Are you not having it in some other States also? These States' peoples are comparatively untrained in the practice of satyagraha. We in British India can claim more experience and training—comparatively speaking at least. If the States' peoples can be permitted to resort to satyagraha in their struggle for civil liberty and responsible Government, why not we of British India?

Now take the National Demand resolution passed at the Tripuri Congress with the support of the Gandhi-ites. Though it has beautifully vague phrases and several pious platitudes, it has, in a certain sense, much in common with my idea of an ultimatum and preparing for the coming struggle. Now, do you approve of this resolution? If you do, then why cannot you go a step further and accept my plan?

I shall now come to Pandit Pant's resolution. The important part of it (last portion, I mean) contains two points: Firstly, the Working Committee must command your confidence—implicit confidence. Secondly, it must be formed in accordance with your wishes. If you advise a homogeneous Cabinet, and such a Cabinet is formed, one could perhaps say that it has been formed "in accordance with your wishes". But could it be claimed that it commands your confidence? Will it be open to me to get up at the meeting of the A. I. C. C. and tell the members that you have advised the formation of a homogeneous Cabinet and that the new Cabinet commands your confidence? On the other hand, if you advised the formation of a Cabinet which does not command your confidence, will you be giving effect to the Pant resolution—will you be *doing* the right thing, from your point of view? I would beg of you to consider this aspect of the question. If you take cognizance of the Pant resolution, you will not only have to communicate your wishes regarding the new Working Committee, but you will, at the same time, have to advise the formation of such a Committee as will command your confidence.

You have not yet said anything as to the merits of the Pant resolution. Do you approve of it? Or would you rather have had a unanimously passed resolution, more or less on the lines suggested by us which would reiterate faith in your principles and confidence in your guidance, without the controversial clauses? Then, again, what is

the President's position regarding appointing the Working Committee after this resolution was passed? I am again asking this question because the present constitution is practically your handiwork and your opinion in the matter will carry great weight with me. There is another question, in this connection, which I have been asking you. Do you regard this resolution as one of no-confidence in me? If so, I shall resign at once and that too unconditionally. Some papers have criticized this question of mine in my Press statement on the ground that I should decide for myself what the significance of the resolution is. I have sense enough to give my own interpretation, but there are occasions when personal interpretations would not be one's sole guide. Speaking quite frankly, I feel that my stand has been justified by the result of the Presidential election. I have now no desire whatsoever to stick to office for one day, unless I can thereby advance the public cause, as I understand it. The hesitation or the delay that has arisen on my side is because it is not so easy to decide. Among my supporters there are two schools of thoughts: one holding that I should strive to the last to maintain unity: the other holding that I should break off negotiations at once, as being a hopeless effort, and tender my resignation. The latter have been bringing great pressure to bear on me, but I am resisting. I want to be clear before my own conscience that I have striven till the last to preserve unity within our ranks. Moreover, I know what my resignation will mean in the present circumstances and what its consequences will be. I should add here that the first school—viz., those who want me to exhaust all possibility of a compromise—believe that you will be able to take a thoroughly non-partisan view of things and thereby bring the two parties together.

I must explain further why I say that I shall resign automatically if you feel that Pant's resolution signifies no-confidence. You know very well that I do not follow you blindly in all that you say or believe, as so many of my countrymen do. Why then should I resign if your opinion is that the resolution signifies no-confidence? The reason is plain and simple. I feel it as galling to my conscience to hold on to office if the greatest personality in India today feels—though he may not say so openly—that the passing of the resolution should automatically have brought in my resignation. This attitude is perhaps dictated more by personal regard for you and your opinion in this matter.

Perhaps, as some papers suggest, you have an idea that the Old Guard should be put back into office. In that event I would beg of you to come back to active politics, become a four-anna Congress member and assume direct charge of the Working Committee. Pardon me for saying so, and I say this without meaning offence to anybody—there is a world of difference between yourself and your lieutenants, even your chosen lieutenants. There are people who will do anything for you—but not for them. Will you believe me when I say that at the Presidential election even some

Gandhi-ites in several provinces voted for me against the direction of the Old Guard? If your personality is not dragged into the picture, I shall continue to have their support—the Old Guard notwithstanding.

At Tripuri, the Old Guard cleverly dropped out of the picture and more cleverly pitted me against you. (But there was no quarrel between yourself and myself.) Afterwards they said that Tripuri was a great victory for them and a defeat for me. The fact of the matter is that it was neither a victory for them nor a defeat for me. It was a victory for you (without any cause of a fight with you at all) but a Pyrrhic victory—a victory purchased by a certain loss of prestige.

But I am digressing. I wanted to appeal to you to come forward and directly and openly conduct the affairs of the Congress. This will simplify matters. Much of the opposition against the Old Guard—and opposition there certainly is—will automatically vanish.

If you cannot do this, then I have an alternative suggestion to make. Please resume the national struggle for independence, as we have been demanding, and begin by delivering the ultimatum to the British Government. In that event, we shall all gladly retire from our official positions, if you so desire. We shall gladly hand over these positions to whomsoever you like or trust. But only on one condition—the fight for independence must be resumed. People like myself feel that today we have an opportunity which is rare in the lifetime of a nation. For that reason we are prepared to make any sacrifice that will help the resumption of the fight.

If till the last you insist that a composite Cabinet is unworkable and a homogeneous Cabinet is the only alternative before us and if you want me to form a Cabinet of my choice, I would earnestly request you to give me your vote of confidence till the next Congress. If, in the mean time, we fail to justify ourselves by our service and suffering, we shall stand condemned before the Congress and we shall naturally and quite properly be kicked out of office. Your vote of confidence will mean the vote of confidence of the A. I. C. C. in the present circumstances. It you do not give us your vote of confidence—but at the same time ask us to form a homogeneous Cabinet—you will not be giving effect to Pant's resolution.

Once again I would beg of you to let me know if your opposition to a composite Cabinet is due to considerations of principle or to the fact that you should like the Old Guard to have a larger representation on the Cabinet than I suggested in my first letter to you, dated the 25th March.

Before I close this letter, I shall refer to one or two personal things. You have remarked in one letter that you hope that, whatever happens, "our private relations will not suffer". I cherish this hope with all my heart. May I say in this connection that if there is anything in life on which I pride myself, it is this that I am the son of a gentleman and as such am a gentleman? Deshbandhu Das often used to tell us, "Life is

larger than Politics." That lesson I have learnt from him. I shall not remain in the political field one single day if by doing so I shall fall from the standards of gentlemanliness, which are so deeply ingrained in my mind from infancy and which I feel are in my very blood. I have no means of knowing how you view me as a man—in a way, you have seen so little of me. And my political opponents have carried so many tales against me to you. In recent months I have come to know that for the last few months I have been the victim of a subtle but sinister propaganda carried on against me from mouth to mouth. I would have brought this matter to your notice long ago, but I could not get sufficiently tangible evidence of what was being said and by whom. Latterly, I have come to know much as to what has been said, though I am still in the dark as to who exactly the propagandists are.

Once again I have digressed. In a letter you expressed the hope that in whatever I did, I would "be guided by God". Believe me, Mahatmaji, all these days I have been praying for only one thing, viz., for light as to the path which would be best for my country and my country's freedom. I have asked for strength and inspiration to completely efface myself—should the need and occasion arise. It is my firm conviction that a nation can live only if the individuals composing it be ready to die for its sake whenever it is necessary. This moral (or spiritual) *hara-kiri* is not an easy thing. But may God grant me the strength to face it whenever the country's interests demand it.

I hope you will maintain your improvement. I am progressing steadily.

With respectful *pranams*,

Yours affectionately,

SUBHAS

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

APPENDIX XIV

THE WAY OF SATYAGRAHA[1]

At the end of five days' heart-to-heart talks with the Muslim friends, often continuing till midnight, and shorter talks with the Bhayats and having failed with them, Gandhiji put his signature to the letter[2] to the Thakore Saheb submitting seven names of the Sardar's representatives. His hand shook as he did so. He never dreamt at that time that within thirty-six hours of the despatch of his letter, his faith in God and ahimsa would be put to test. Ever since his arrival here on his mission of peace, Gandhiji had made it a point to hold daily the congregational evening prayer on the

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press",16-4-1939
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dharmendrasinh", 14-4-1939

Rashtriyashala grounds. The practice was kept up during the fast.

On the evening of the 16th instant a report was brought to Gandhiji that the Bhayats and Mussalmans of Rajkot were going to hold a black-flag demonstration at the evening prayer. There was also a report that a garland of shoes had been got ready for the occasion. He made light of the fears of those who brought the report. He had full faith in the Mussalman and the Bhayat leaders who had friendly discussions with him during the last five days. But in case the worst came to the worst he would welcome it. Accordingly, he gave peremptory instructions that anybody approaching him, no matter with what intent, should be given free access and not obstructed in any way.

He motored as usual to the Rashtriyashala prayer ground. Almost simultaneously with it the demonstrators, too, numbering about 600, arrived on the scene with black flags and placards bearing inscriptions some of which were highly offensive. They lined the fence enclosing the prayer ground from the main road. The Sardar happened to be away at Amreli that day and so missed the show.

Gandhiji bowed to the demonstrators, as is his wont, before he sat down to prayer, which was conducted as usual. All the time the prayer was going on, the processionists kept on an unseemly demonstration of shouting and yelling. The creation of disturbance at the prayer time under the very eyes of the Bhayats and Mussalman representatives who had sat with him in conference only the other day was for him the "unkindest cut of all". The prayer over, he rose to go. The demonstrators had by now begun to pour in through the entrance of the narrow passage leading to the prayer ground. Gandhiji, instead of going by car as usual, decided to walk through the crowd so as to give the demonstrators full chance to say or do to him whatever they pleased. At the entrance the crush was too great to allow further progress. The pushing and jostling by the demonstrators at the rear on either side of the gangway was growing apace. The dust and the din added to the confusion. Friends tried to form a protective cordon. But Gandhiji waved them off. “I shall sit here or go alone in their midst,” he told them. All of a sudden he was seized by an attack of indescribable pain in the region of the waist, and felt as if he would faint. This is an old symptom in his case that seizes him whenever he receives an acute mental shock. For a time he stood in the midst of that jostling crowd motionless and silent, his eyes shut, supporting himself on his staff, and tried to seek relief through silent prayer, a remedy that has never failed him on such occasions. As soon as he had sufficiently recovered, he reiterated his resolve to go through the demonstrators all alone. He addressed a Bhayat, who stood confronting him and who, he subsequently learned, was besides a police officer in plain clothes, “I wish to go under your sole protection, not co-workers'.” Some Bhayats had already noticed his condition. They now bade the rest to make way for him, and leaning on the shoulder of the Bhayat

friend in question, Gandhiji walked to the waiting car. "This is the way of satyagraha," he remarked as the car drove off, "to put your head unresistingly into the lap of your 'enemy', for him to keep or make short work of just as he pleases. It is the sovereign way, and throughout my half a century of varied experience it has never once failed me."

Two Mussalman representatives from the Civil Station came to see him soon after, according to previous appointment. "You were less than fair to yourself and to us in exposing yourself to such a risk. Anything may happen in a motley crowd," they remarked to him with reference to the happenings of the evening.

Gandhiji in reply described to them how such risk-taking had become a part and parcel of his life. There were at least half a dozen occasions in South Africa and in India when he had risked his life like that, and he had never regretted doing so. In all cases the assailant or the would-be assailants had ended by becoming his friends. "But should the worst happen after all," he concluded, "what privilege can be greater for a satyagrahi than to fall with a prayer in your heart for those whom you wanted to serve but who under a delusion took you for an 'enemy'?"

PYARELAL

RAJKOT, April 18, 1939

Harijan, 22-4-1939

APPENDIX XV

LETTER FROM RANJITSINH[1]

April 17, 1939

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I have received your letter written on the morning of the 17th instant. I have understood from your letter that you have seen the handbill issued by the Rajkot Bhayats' and Garasias' Samiti and you have felt the allegations about breach of promise as serious.

The remedy that you have suggested is that all such cases should be referred to an arbitrator for his decision. May I suggest to you, in this connection, that your letter dated the 11th March be referred to Sir Maurice Gwyer for interpretation? If you agree to arbitration in this matter, I venture to submit that we can hardly find a person better fitted to act as an arbitrator than Sir Maurice Gwyer. If you accept my proposal I shall make all arrangements in this behalf, and let you know at the earliest

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Ranjitsinh", 17-4-1939. This appeared as "a correct rendering in English of the correspondence". The superscription and the subscription are reproduced from *The Hindustan Times.*

opportunity.

If you had explained beforehand your object in going on foot instead of proceeding by car to the leaders of the procession, they would have certainly listened to you. You need not have the least cause for suspicion in this respect. On the contrary, all our activities are and shall ever be non-violent and peaceful. If anybody has implanted in your mind any suspicion that we contemplate any physical injury to you, I assure you that it is absolutely out of place. I go further and say that if you or anybody else are under any such impression, 50 or 25 volunteers from among our Bhayats and Garasias will remain with you during the whole of your stay in Rajkot.

The reference made in the Rajkot Bhayats' handbill to the Congress instead of to the Praja Parishad is only a slip of the pen. Wherever the word "Congress" is, it is used for the Praja Parishad. We have received the printed appeal sent by you.

Yours,

RANJITSINH

The Hindu, 19-4-1939; also *The Hindustan Times,* 19-4-1939

APPENDIX XVI

LETTER FROM LORD LINLITHGOW[1]

VICEREGAL LODGE, SIMLA,
May 15, 1939

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Many thanks for your friendly letter of 9th May which I appreciate all the more because I realize the pressure under which you have been working and the fact that you were writing on the train. Let me thank you, too, for leaving me free from business so far as you are concerned during my holiday.

2. I have read with interest what you say about the three problems you mention, and I think it is only courteous that I should say a word or two to you about the position as I see it at the moment, though I do so merely to put you in possession of my point of view, and not for a moment because I want to trouble you to comment on what I say, or because I think we could usefully enter upon prolonged correspondence about these cases.

3. I have been watching events in Talcher very closely. I am satisfied myself that the Assistant Political Agent, when he interviewed the refugees in Angul, made it clear that he was not in a position to give them any promises or come to any agreement. That, however, is now past history, and as you will have heard, the Raja

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linithgow", 9-59-1939 and "Letter to Lord Limithow" 23-24-1939

recently made an announcement which appeared to me satisfactorily to meet the remaining grievances of any importance of which the refugees complained. I am no less disappointed than you are that this should have failed to produce the desired result, but further enquiries have been set on foot and I hope that the trouble will soon be at an end.

4. As regards Jaipur, you will no doubt have heard that conversations have recently taken place between the Jaipur authorities and Seth Jamnalal Bajaj, and here again I hope that a suitable solution of the difficulties will soon be forthcoming.

5. As regards Rajkot, I have been very sorry to learn of the difficulties with which you have to contend. Owing to the various conflicting interests involved, the matter appears to have become highly complicated, but I hope that in the absence of any other solution, the Committee will be set up without any further considerable delay. I understand that the question whether certain of the Sardar's nominees are state subjects has now been decided by the Judicial Commissioner, and that the only other preliminary point to be settled is whether the assurances which you gave to the Muslims and the Bhayats were conditional or unconditional. I understand that it has been agreed that this should be referred to an independent judicial authority, and that it now remains only to decide who the judicial authority is to be and what should be the precise terms of reference. I will, I need not assure you, continue to watch developments in Rajkot with close attention.

6. I do not in the least misunderstand your sympathetic reference, and we both of us have our troubles! But it is only fair to say I have no misgivings as to the loyalty of the Political Department in carrying out my instructions.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

LINLITHGOW

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy : National Archives of India

1. TELEGRAM TO APPASAHEB PANT

RAJKOT,
May 31, 1939

APPASAHEB PANT,
AUNDH

CAN SEE FOR FEW MINUTES ANY DAY FROM SECOND TO SIXTH AT BOMBAY EXCEPTING MONDAY.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

2. SPEECH AT KATHIAWAR POLITICAL CONFERENCE, RAJKOT[1]

May 31, 1939

It is growing upon me every day that we shall have to lower our key, our demand for full responsible government will have to remain in abeyance for some time. Not that we are not entitled to it, but it is clear to me that we have not the will for it, we are not ready to pay the price. There is an awakening, but it is not the awakening of active non-violence of the brave. Not that I have suddenly realized this point. The realization was there, the will to face the conclusion was not there, and I am reaping the fruit of that weakness of the will. I have been weak-willed ever since Bardoli onwards, but my co-workers deluded themselves into the belief that we had attained the requisite non-violence and I shared their delusion.

I do not repent of this. It is likely that if we had acted otherwise there would not have been the awakening we see today. But that seems to lead one to a rather dreadful conclusion, viz., that compromise with non-violence was necessary for a widespread awakening ! But that is not the conclusion. The conclusion is that God chooses as his instruments the humblest and weakest of His creatures to fulfil Himself.

Today with [this] great realization I would not lead another Dandi March. The breach of the salt laws was a perfect proposition, but violence of the mind had crept in almost from the beginning. All that we had learnt then was that it was expedient to refrain from the

[1] This is extracted from "The Decision and After-III" by Mahadev Desai. Gandhiji was speaking at the Executive Committee meeting.

use of physical violence. This was the non-violence of the calculating Bania, not of the brave Kshatriya. This non-violence of the calculating Bania has not, could not have, carried us far. It could not possibly avail to win and retain swaraj, to win over our opponent who believed in the use of arms.

Today I sense violence everywhere, smell it inside and outside Congress ranks. In 1921 even goonda element outside the Congress was more or less under our control. Perfect non-violence is difficult. It admits no weakness. It made me take the false step of approaching the Viceroy in order to end my fast. It was unpardonable on the part of a general who claims to derive his whole strength from God. But God gave me that courage to retrieve the blunder, and we are all the stronger and purer for it.

I am not tired of repeating again and again that we should be non-violent in thought and word and deed. We had been saying so, but there was no emphasis on the first of these. A dissolute character is more dissolute in thought than in deed. And the same is true of violence. Our violence in word and deed is but a feeble echo of the surging violence of thought in us.

Are you prepared to go with me so far? Does all that I say carry conviction? If so, violence should be eschewed from the innermost of our thoughts. But if you cannot go with me, do go your own way. If you can reach your goal in any other way, do so by all means. You will deserve my congratulations. For I cannot in any case stand cowardice. Let no one say when I am gone that I taught the people to be cowards. If you think my ahimsa amounts to that, or leads you to that, you should reject it without hesitation. I would far rather that you died bravely dealing a blow and receiving a blow than died in abject terror. If the ahimsa of my dream is impossible, you can reject the creed rather than carry on the pretence of non-violence.

Fleeing from battle—*palayanam*—is cowardice, and unworthy of a warrior. An armed fighter is known to have sought fresh arms as soon as he loses those in his possession or they lose their efficacy. He leaves the battle to get them. A non-violent warrior knows no leaving the battle. He rushes into the mouth of *himsa*, never even once harbouring an evil thought. If this ahimsa seems to you to be impossible, let us be honest with ourselves and say so, and give it up.

For me there is no laying down arms. I cannot do so. I am trying to be the warrior of my description and, if God wills, I may be that during this life. Such a warrior can fight single-handed.

Let me give a bit of my own experience in South Africa. When thousands joined the movements, I had not spoken to them, not even seen them. Papers they could not read. My heart was working in unison with them. Living faith is all that is necessary. It is evident that I have not the capacity today to inspire faith in the millions. This needs superior living faith in non-violence and in God. This faith is self-acting, and illumines man's life more and more every day. In the pursuit of my earnest research I may seem to act strangely. I should not grumble if everyone left me in the honesty of his conviction. Let no one stick to me in the blind faith that something will happen. Such [faith] will hinder rather than help the cause.

Harijan, 17-6-1939

3. TALK WITH A MUSLIM FRIEND[1]

[*May 31, 1939*][2]

I have been talking of non-violence these 20 years but I have made unlawful compromises with myself. My mind goes back to the days of Khilafat agitation. I had the friendship of thousands of Muslims then. When at a meeting of the Muslim League before 1920 I asked for the supreme sacrifice, two or three names were given by Khwaja Saheb Abdul Majid, but I believed that many would come forward at the right time. And they did. But looking back upon those times I see that I compromised non-violence. I was satisfied with mere abstention from physical violence.[3]

The fact is I have never placed unadulterated ahimsa before the country. If I had done so, there would have been complete Hindu-Muslim unity. No doubt I kept on saying there would be no swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity, but I should have seen that there was no Hindu-Muslim unity because there was not that insistence on unadulterated ahimsa on the part of all, whether Hindu or Muslim. No wonder my new technique puzzles many. But I must go on. If I am right, the puzzles will be solved.

Harijan, 17-6-1939

[1] The talk is extracted from "The Decision and After-III". Mahadev Desai explains that Gandhiji was "speaking on another occasion", and includes this after his report of the speech at Executive Committee meeting of Kathiawar Political Conference; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Here Mahadev Desai has omitted "instances" given by Gandhiji.

4. MESSAGE TO NAWANAGAR STATE PEOPLE'S CONFERENCE[1]

May 1939

If you cannot do anything else, at least wear pure khadi and identify yourselves with the poor.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Sevamoorti: Shri Virchand Panachand Shah, p. 121

5. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

RAJKOT,
June 1, 1939

VALLABHRAM VAIDYA
DHANWANTARI BHAVAN
RAIPUR, AHMEDABAD

PLEASE MEET KATHIAWAR MAIL[2] TONIGHT AHMEDABAD STATION.

GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 2905. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya

6. LETTER TO NRISINHPRASAD K. BHATT

ON THE TRAIN,
June 1, 1939

BHAI NANABHAI,

I wanted to write to you as soon as I got your wire, but could not do so. Now I am writing this in the train. The path of those who worship ahimsa under all circumstances is straight. Such a person will not indulge in fighting even in self-defence. But he who does not have that strength has but to run away—that is, play the coward—if he does not attack the attacker. Cowardice is worse than violence because cowards can never be non-violent. So such people should learn to

[1] According to the source, the third session of the Conference was held some time in "May, 1939".

[2] By which Gandhiji travelled to Bombay.

defend themselves. Under its constitution members of the Parishad[1] can be said to be wedded to non-violence. But here such ahimsa is of no use. A person who has full faith in non-violence should be a thousand times more fearless than an armed man. Such fearlessness is not gained by joining some organization. Hence every member of the Parishad should find an independent way for himself. It is the duty of every believer in ahimsa to see that cowardice is not propagated in the name of non-violence. So we must frankly tell the common people that we are unable to guide them. It is not proper that they should look to us. If they can independently think of non-violent ways they will not ask us and if they do ask us we should give them only one guidance that they should not be weak under any circumstances. They should learn to deal with the attacker. It is possible that if they observe restraint and if a handful of us can manifest true ahimsa, the attacker too may turn to ahimsa.

Please explain all this to all our workers there. The talk of secret settlement that is going on in Bhavnagar is harmful. Settlement can be with straightforward people. Here there is nothing of the sort.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

7. DISCUSSION WITH TRAVANCORE STATE CONGRESS DEPUTATION[1]

ON THE TRAIN,
[*June 1, 1993*][2]

QUESTION: What about swaraj that we have been fighting for? How does Gandhiji's faith in non-violence burning brighter than ever help those who want swaraj here and now? Does not the emphasis on non-violence of his conception make of swaraj a very remote vision hardly to be fulfilled?

GANDHIJI: For me, it is true, as I have often declared, ahimsa comes before swaraj. I would not care to get power through anarchy and red ruin, among other things, because I want freedom and power even for the least among the people. This can only be when freedom is won

[1] Kathiawar Political Conference.

[2] The discussion is extracted from "The Decision and After—IV". According to *The Bombay Chronicle,* 2-6-1939, the deputationists, Pattom Thanu Pillai, Verghese and Philipose, were travelling with Gandhiji from Rajkot to Bombay. *Vide* also "Statement on Travancore", 4-6-1939.

[3] *ibid*

through non-violence. In the other case the weak must go to the wall, only the physically strong and fit will remain to seize and enjoy power.

But you too cannot help putting ahimsa before everything else if you really mean business. *Ahimsa must be placed before everything else while it is professed. Then alone it becomes irresistible.* Otherwise it will only be an empty hulk, a thing without potency or power. A soldier fights with an irresistible strength when he has blown up his bridges, burnt his boats. Even so it is with a soldier of ahimsa.

Q. But how will this lowering of the pitch work out in action? How will it help us in attaining our goal of responsible government?

G. Today when we talk of responsible government, it frightens the States authorities. The Paramount Power too do not like it. They think it will result in red ruin and anarchy. The argument is unsound but let us give them credit for honesty. If you follow my advice, therefore, you will say, 'We, for the time being, forget swaraj. We shall fight to vindicate the elementary rights of the people, to remove corruption.' In short, you will concentrate your attention on details of administration. The auth-orities won't be frightened, and it will give you the substance of responsible government. That has been the history of all my work in India. If I had only talked of swaraj, I would have come a cropper. By attacking details we have advanced from strength to strength.

What did I do at the time of the Dandi March? I reduced our demand for complete independence to my eleven points.[1] Motilalji was at first angry with me."What do you mean by lowering the flag like this?" he said. But he soon saw that if those points were con-ceded, indepen-dence would stand knocking at our door.

Let me explain to you the working of my mind. As I have already told you, I had thought that responsible government in the States was within easy reach. We have now found that we can't at once take the masses with us along non-violent lines. You say that violence is committed by a few hooligans only; but capacity to obtain non-violent swaraj presupposes capacity on our part to control the hooli-gans too as we temporarily did during the non-co-operation days. If you had complete control over the forces of violence and were ready to carry on the fight with your back to the wall in defiance of the Paramount Power, looking neither to me nor to the Congress outside

[1] *Vide* "Clearing the Issue", 30-1-1930.

for guidance or help, your would not need to lower the key temporarily even. In fact you will not be here to seek my advice at all.

But that is not your case, on your own admission. Nor, so far as I know, is it the case anywhere else in India. Otherwise people would not have suspended civil disobedience in many places even without my asking.

Harijan, 24-6-1939

8. INTERVIEW TO DEPUTATION OF VICTUALLERS' ASSOCIATION[1]

BOMBAY
[*June 2, 1939*][2]

Gandhiji congratulated them on the restrained language of their representation. They had every right to go to him, as he was specially attached to the Parsis [He said:]

What I gather from your representation is that far from being opposed in principle to prohibition, you have pointed out the difficulties and hardships involved. But I am afraid you have come to the wrong man. I never interfere with the work of the Ministries. But on prohibition I am keener even than the Ministers. I confess I have not studied the economic aspect of the question. With me it is a creed and I would, if I could, fulfil it at any cost. If I had the administration in my own hands, I should study all the figures you have given. I am sure the Ministers have studied them, and you should approach them. They would gladly discuss the whole question with you and try to show the way out the difficulties you have pointed out.

[1] This and the following item are extracted from "The Anti-Prohibition Deputations" by Mahadev Desai, who explains that "the first deputation consisted of representatives of toddy, country liquor and foreign liquor dealers". Their representation addressed itself mainly to the hardships and sufferings that would be the result of several thousand Parsi families being thrown out of employment; their being reduced to poverty and even bankruptcy; illicit sales and clandestine breaches of the law; impossibility of disposing of 50 to 60 lakhs of rupees worth of material by August 1; the loss on having to dispose of costly furniture. *The Bombay chronicle,* 3-6-1939, reports that the deputation, which met Gandhiji in the afternoon, was led by M. B. Baria. It included R. R. Patel, R. D. Shroff, Phirozeshaw Shroff, J. D. Crawford and M. M. Surve.

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle,* 3-6-1939; also *Gandhi*—1915–1948

They also raised the question of short notice. The Congress Election Manifesto,[1] they said, did not contain this programme, and the decision to introduce it in August had come upon them as a bolt from the blue. In reply to this Gandhiji said:

The Congress Election Manifesto is principally a political document and naturally does not contain the prohibition programme. But prohibition has been in the forefront of the Congress programme since 1920. With me it has been a passion ever since my close contact with the Indian immigrants in South Africa and also with the South Africans. I have seen with my own eyes the terrible scourge drink can be. It has ruined people morally, physically, economically and it has destroyed the sanctity and happiness of the home. My heart bleeds as I think of the disaster that comes in its wake and I have really pined for the immediate introduction of prohibition. When the Congress decided to accept offices, I thought it had a golden opportunity to introduce it at once, but it was the Ministers who pleaded for fixing the time-limit at three years. To my mind, therefore, there is no question of short notice. It is coming several years too late. Hundreds and thousands of women have in the past picketed liquor shops, suffered insults and assaults. In one case a woman volunteer was so hit on the forehead that the evil effect still persists. There was no compulsion. It was all peaceful persuasion, and it had succeeded so remarkably that in some provinces the excise revenue was almost reduced to zero. As for its effects here in India I would like you to study the condition of workmen in factories, and I would like to tell you also the boon prohibition has been to them in Ahmedabad.

One of the gentlemen in the deputation said that 12 to 15 thousand tappers would be adversely affected and that fresh toddy had great medicinal value.

It is *nira* you are referring to. For I agree it is a refreshing drink, and we make *gur* out of it.[2]

If the tappers took to tapping the juice for *gur*-making, there was no question of their unemployment. In Bengal tons of *gur* was prepared from *nira* and in South India *arrack* was prepared from *gur* made out of fresh juice.

But the gentleman maintained that it was impossible to draw fresh *nira* from a tree more than ten times during a season and that *gur* was not a feasible proposition. Gandhiji said that the evidence in his possession was to the contrary. He would, however, inquire.

Harijan, 10-6-1939

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Extracts from the Congress Election Manifesto", 22-8-1936.

[2] Then Gandhiji offered them a plate of palm-juice and date-palm juice.

9. *INTERVIEW TO PARSI DEPUTATION*[1]

[*June* 2, 1939][2]

The gravamen of their charge was that the prohibition policy was tantamount to coercion as the community had for centuries indulged in drink without being any the worse for it. There was the argument of dislocation of trade and financial and economic structure of the province, of the hardships it would cause to traders and tappers, and the interference with the religious rites of the people. They said they also resented the distinction between Asiatics and non-Asiatics, and even suggested that not only the Parsis but Mussalmans and Hindus were also opposed to the policy!

Some of the gentlemen have been friends of Gandhiji for years, especially Sir Cowasji. And so he was the most vehement in his attack, but the utmost friendliness prevailed during the discussion.

COWASJI: Drunkenness is bad, not drink. And for the sake of a few who drink, why penalize the whole community? I take two or three glasses of sherry every day and I know hundreds of others who talk of prohibition but who do drink and will do so in spite of prohibition.

There was obvious defiance in his voice, but Gandhiji disarmed it by ultimately reminding Sir Cowasji how he had helped him (Gandhiji) in the past at various junctures, and how he expected him to stand by him at this!

Sir Cowasji had a hearty laugh.

Mr. Khareghat, the veteran temperance reformer who, said Gandhiji, reminded him of Dadabhai by his silvery beard, entered a curiuos plea :

I do not drink, nor am I dealer in drinks. But this policy will ruin thousands, and I want you to realize your error and do as you did in Rajkot. I would then honour you with all my heart. According to our religion it is the duty of the host to offer the guest good bread and good wine.

GANDHIJI: But it must be unfermented wine. Whatever it may be, one wonders how this can be a *religious duty* at all! What would a poor man do?

SAKLATWALA: I do not drink, and thank God I have enough property to enable me to pay the property tax. But why should others regulate my life? I tell you, although, I do not drink, if someone came and told me I might not drink, he would make my blood boil.

GANDHIJI (smilingly): Even so you do not steal, and yet there is the law against thieving. Would you therefore steal to defy the law?

[1] Mahadev Desai explains:"The deputation was headed by Sir Cowasji Jehangir and its other members were Sir J. C. Koyaji, Sir H. P. Modi, Messrs Khareghat, A. D. Shroff and Saklatwala." *Vide* also the preceding item.

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 3-6-1939

H. P. MODI: We do not believe in prohibition. Why do you tempt us to break the law? We want to be exempted. Drink has become part of our social habit, our daily life, and we *want* to drink.

GANDHIJI: As I told[1] the deputation that preceded you, you have come to the wrong man. There is a wide gulf between you and me. It was Dadabhai Naoroji who taught me prohibition and the distinction between prohibition and temperance. Individual liberty is allowed to man only to a certain extent. He cannot forget that he is a social being, and his individual liberty has to be curtailed at every step. I would appeal to you to consider one thing. What is your population? One lakh at the most in a population of 35 crores. You have become famous in the world not as residents of Persia but as Indians. I want you to consider not in terms of your one lakh but in terms of India, not the narrow interest of your whole community but of the large interests of the whole country. How can you interrupt and ruin a noble experiment? You say you cannot get rid of this, so very much you are wedded to it! You are not fair to yourselves there. You have given up so many things. You gave up your language and adopted Gujarati, you changed your dress, you changed many of your manners and customs. Why must you then stick to this one infirmity? You may plead your weakness, but for Heaven's sake don't advance the plea of individual liberty. There you have given away the whole case. You have sacrificed much for India, sacrifice this bad habit too. I have seen men and women wallowing in gutters in South Africa and families ruined.

H. P. MODI: Where do you see the ruin in India?

[GANDHIJI:] I tell you I have seen it with my own eyes. There is the tragic case of my own son. 60,000 men in Ahmedabad are blessing the prohibitionist. I claim that the moral conscience of the public is with me. The issue between us is the narrowest possible. Do you want to press the question of a few individual consciences to the extent of ruining a whole country?

But are there not other evils? There is gambling, for instance.

None so disastrous as this, and this breeds the rest. But I am for the abolition of gambling too. This evil, however, ruins the victim body and soul.

The same thing would happen if you were to overeat ! You are talking of the 60,000 mill-hands in Ahmedabad. Why not listen to the appeal of 50,000 Parsis of Bombay? Drunkenness is unknown amongst us.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

Let us assume that for a moment. It proves that you are temperate. Well, then why will you not carry temperateness a little further and co-operate in this the greatest of all moral reforms in India? And remember there is ample provision for those who need drink for their health or religious rites. I suggest your working along these lines but not seeking to ruin the reform.

But why draw the line between Europeans and Indians?

Call it my weakness, and agitate for including the Europeans too in the prohibition. They will, like us, profit by being included in the general law. Their health will not suffer for they will have all the drink they may need for their health.

Harijan, 10-6-1939

10. TELEGRAM TO SIR RAZA ALI [1]

June 3, 1939

SIR RAZLI
CECIL
SIMLA

AM CONSTANT TOUCH OUR COUNTRYMEN SOUTH AFRICA.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

11. STATEMENT ON TRAVANCORE [2]

BOMBAY
June 4, 1939

I have had prolonged conversations[3] with Shri Pattom Thanu Pillai, Shri Verghese and Shri J. Philipose over the situation in Travancore. My rich experiences in Rajkot show me that civil disobedience in Travancore was suspended at the right time. The Rajkot recantation teaches me that it is not enough to have with-drawn the charges

[1] This was in response to a telegram from Sir Sayed Raza Ali, received on June 3, 1939, which read: "Indians meeting Johannesburg tomorrow to consider civil resistance. Am advising them against it as premature India too weak to help them. Please cable your advice Congress care Gabaco Johannesburg."

[2] In *Harijan,* this appeared under the title "New Technique in Action". The state-ment was also publised in the *The Hindu,* 4-6-1939, and *The Bombay Chronicle,* 5-6-1939.

[3] *Vide* "Discussion with Travancore State Congress Deputation", 1-6-1939.

against Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer. But it is necessary to recognize that Travancoreans have not only to reckon with the Maharaja, but also with his Dewan. I also observe that several Travan-corean critics have asserted that suspension has led to greater repression. These critics do not know that suspension was not advised in order to avoid repression, nor even in expectation of its being stopped. It was advised in order to avoid popular violence, no matter how caused or by whom instigated, if it was instigated. It was also advised in order to avoid brutalization of human nature. These two objects may be said to have been attained in a fair measure. It was also advised in order to pave the way for an honourable understanding with the authorities and to educate the people in the true way of ahimsa. These objects have still to be worked for. Here my new light, which I seem to see dimly, enables me to tender advice which, but for the light, I would perhaps not have been able to give with as much confidence as now.

I am convinced that direct negotiations should be opened with the authorities. Hitherto the State Congress people have talked at the authorities and the latter at them. The result has been a widening of the gulf between the two. It would not do for a satyagrahi to argue that the approach must be mutual. That assumes the existence of the spirit of satyagraha in the authorities, whereas satyagrahia is offered in respect of those who make no claim to be satyagrahis. Hence the first and the last work of a satyagrahi is ever to seek an opportunity for an honourable approach. Now this is impossible so long as the heart is steeled against a belief even in the possibility, let alone advisability, of such approach. And hitherto the impossibility has been unquestionably assumed. I have been a tacit party to it. I now know better. If the leaders have active ahimsa in them, they must cultivate a belief in the perfect possibility and necessity of such approach. And if they have that belief, the way will surely be open to them. In my own person, it is well known, I have always acted on that principle. In making such an approach it would be necessary to lower the key of our note. Our aim must remain what it is, but we must be prepared to negotiate for less than the whole so long as it is unmistakably of the same kind and has in it inherent possibility of expansion. I have found that nowhere, with the only exception of Aundh [1], are the Princes ready to part with

[1] The reformed Aundh constitution became law on January 21. It aimed at total transfer of power to the people.

all the power in favour of the people. Nor is the Paramount Power anxious for the people in the States to receive full responsible government. If I interpret its mind correctly, assuming that an institution can have a mind, it would be sorry if any State of importance copied the example of Aundh. But, what is most important of all, the States people themselves, as a mass, are nowhere prepared to pay the price. There is no mistaking the awakening that has taken place in the States. But it is not enough for the great purpose to be attained. It will be well to recognize this fact. In aiming beyond our capacity we are likely to lose all. I would give much to have in all the States a reign of law instead of the reign of a person or persons, however well-meaning they may be. I can then see my way to build up responsible government on the solid foundation. But responsible government, which is only a gift without the will and the power of the people behind it, will be a mere paper responsibility, hardly worth the paper on which it may be printed.

The second object of suspension is closely related to the foregoing. If it is a fact that the atmosphere for immediate responsible government among the States is not propitious and that the people are not ready to pay the price, it follows that they should have the proper training for it. I am not likely, lightly and in the near future, to advise mass satyagraha anywhere. There is neither adequate training nor discipline among the people. I have not the shadow of a doubt that the people at large should pass one or more positive tests. Mere abstention from physical violence will not answer our purpose. In the centre of this programme of positive tests I unhesitatingly put the spinning-wheel and all it means. If there is quick response, this can be a short course. But it may well be a long course if the people do not make an enthusiastic response. I know no other programme than the fourfold constructive programme of 1920. If the people do not take it up whole-heartedly, it is proof enough for me that they have no ahimsa in them, or not the ahimsa of my conception, or, say, they have no confidence in the present leadership. For me there is no other test but what I have ever put before the nation since 1920. The new light tells me that I must not weaken as I have done before in exacting the discipline I have mentioned. I can quite clearly see my way to advise civil disobedience wherever the conditions mentioned are amply ful-filled. That civil disobedience will be individual but in terms of ahimsa far more effective than any mass civil disobedience of the past. I must own that the past movements have been more or less tainted. I have no

regret for them. For I knew no better then. I had the sense and humility to retrace my steps whenever I discovered blunders. Hence the nation has gone forward from step to step. But the time has come for a radical change in the direction indicated.

Thus my opinion on Travancore has resolved itself in the enunciation of my present mental condition and its reaction on the Travancore situation.

To sum up: (1) suspension of mass civil disobedience should be indefinite; (2) there should be the will among the State Congress people to open a way to honourable negotiation with the authorities; (3) there should be no anxiety about those satyagrahis who are in prison or new ones. If the spirit of satyagraha is rightly assimilated, these imprisonments and disabilities should hearten the people; (4) the pitch of the immediate demands should be lowered if necessary, in order to quicken the progress towards the final goal; (5) the condition precedent to any civil disobedience is the fulfilment by the general mass of the constructive programme as a test, if nothing more, of their coming under the discipline of the State Congress.

It is hardly necessary for me to say that it is open to the workers to reject my advice. They should adopt it only if it appeals to their heads and their hearts and tallies with their own reading of the local situation of which I own they must be better judges.[1]

BOMBAY, June, 4, 1939

Harijan, 10-6-1939

12. TELEGRAM TO C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYER

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY
June 5, 1939

SIR C. P. RAMASWAMI
TRIVANDRUM

HOPE IF STATE CONGRESS ADOPT MY ADVICE[2] YOU WILL MAKE GENEROUS RESPONSE.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In "The Decision and After—IV", Mahadev Desai explains that the Working Committee of the Travancore State Congress passed the following resolution: "We accept Gandhiji's advice, and our acceptance fully warranted by the circumstances; but the responsibility for acceptance is entirely our own."

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

13. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY
June 5, 1939

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR

SIMLA

NOT EVEN ABLE WRITE THREE DAYS. ALL WELL. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3916. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7225

14. TELEGRAM TO PHIROZSHAH DAMRI

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
June 5, 1939

PHIROZSHAH DAMRI

BHAVNAGAR

READ DAILY PRESS AND "HARIJAN". DOING MY BEST.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

15. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY
June 5, 1939

DEAR SIR AKBAR,

Many thanks for your letter of 30th ultimo and telegram.

I am pleading with the Aryasamajists to give up civil disobedience and with you to grant their minimum request. It is unfortunate that the talks with Mr. Hollins broke down.[1] I would still suggest your making a gesture. Of course new constructions should be subject to permission which should be governed by fixed rules and times. You alone can end the agony. Why wait for the constitutional reform?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 6844

[1] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Speech at Gandhi Seva Sangh Meeting, Hudli-III", 20-4-1937.

16. LETTER TO KUNVAR SIR JAGDISH PRASAD

June 5, 1939

DEAR SIR JAGDISH,

Many thanks for your full letter of 31st ultimo on the S. A. Indian question. I share the hope with you that H. M.'s Government will make effective representations. The expression Commonwealth of Nations, has no meaning for us if what is going on in S. A., Kenya, etc., is its connotation. I had a full chat with Sir Girjashanker[1] . . .[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

17. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

BOMBAY
June 5, 1939

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I wish your function success. You certainly have the blessings of us both.

Blessings from
BAPU

MITHUBEHN PETIT
KASTURBA SEVASHRAM
MAROLI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

18. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI AND SUMITRA GANDHI

BOMBAY,
June 5, 1939

CHI. NIMU,

I received your letter. I am not sending over Kanam to you. You need not therefore wait for the day I leave. You should complete your studies there. The figure of expenditure you have put down for your books is correct. You may take charge of Kanam after you are free from there. Do not worry about him. You may send for Usha.

[1] Sir Girjashanker Bajpai
[2] Omission as in the source

CHI. SUMI,

I got your letter. Improve your handwriting, but however indifferent it may be, do keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI NIRMALABEHN GANDHI
KANYA GURUKULA
DEHRA DUN
U.P.

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

19. LETTER TO BHOLANATH

BOMBAY,
June 5, 1939

BHAI BHOLANATH,

I got your letter. The aims should not be changed now. Developments in Jaipur and other places may be awaited.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1376

20. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY,
June 6, 1939

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA W.

FRONTIER VISIT POSTPONED. REACHING SEGAON EIGHTH MORNING. EXPECT YOU THERE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3917. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7226

21. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

BOMBAY,
June 6, 1939

MIRABEHN
CARE POSTMASTER
MANSEHRA

AGAIN HELD UP[1] TILL END MONTH.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6444. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10039.

22. INTERVIEW TO KOLHAPUR STATE PRAJA PARISHAD DEPUTATION

BOMBAY,
June 6, 1939

That he would not object to any State, which is really ready for it, resorting to the direct step of civil resistance towards achieving responsible government and that he always recommended it to such States but that he would not be willing to allow any State to launch satyagraha unless he was satisfied that the State was fully prepared for it, was the view expressed by Gandhiji. The deputation asked Gandhiji several questions to which he gave answers. The following are some of the questions and answers :

Q. Even in spite of the fact that at present the Kolhapur State authorities are not in a mood to negotiate with the Parishad workers, in view of your latest statement[2] on the Travancore State should negotiations be started with the State authorities?

A. My statement is meant only for the Travancore State. I know more than anyone that the State authorities in any state are never willing to have negotiations with their people. This I have realized from the talks I had with Mr. Virawala in Rajkot. Negotiations should always be started in an honourable way and for such negotiations there should be a suitable and proper atmosphere. If that is not possible in your State, it is far better for you not to start negotiations at an immature time. I found that opportunity and I have issued that statement concerning Travancore only.

[1] The reference is to the postponement of visit to the Frontier Province; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* "Statement on Travancore", 4-6-1939.

Q. What should the workers do on whom notices have been served by the Durbar to be present before the court failing which their properties will be confiscated?

A. There is no objection in being present before a court. But it would be noble to lose the properties remaining outside the State and to work for ideals, like Garibaldi, Mazzini, etc. It is a sin even to hold properties in a State where no law prevails. Here you may think that the people will think in a different way about your staying outside the State and they will get demoralized. But if you really lose your property and if the people are convinced that you work sincerely for them, you need not fear demoralization of any kind in them. You should always be sure that self-sacrifice carries public support.

The Hindu, 10-6-1939

23. NOTES

LEADERS MUST LEAD

A Cutch worker came in yesterday and said :

Some leaders in Cutch are telling the people there that but for your stopping civil disobedience they would today be enjoying responsible government or something near it.

I must deny having stopped civil disobedience in Cutch or for the matter elsewhere. All I gave was my opinion. I had told Shri Mulraj who had come to consult me that the workers should weigh my opinion in the light of their own personal experience of things and adopt it only if it coincided with their own experience. I should be noted that my opinion was not given publicly. If it was not acceptable to the local leaders, it need never have been published. Even now in Cutch as elsewhere responsible leaders are free to act according to their own judgment. We should never develop the requisite qualities of leadership, unless leaders shoulder responsibility and even dare to commit mistakes in acting contrary to the advice of persons like me. Here there would be no question of indiscipline, for I am not in active command anywhere. I give advice as an expert when reference is made to me. Those who seek my advice will wrong themselves and those whom they lead, if they will suppress their own judgment when it seems contrary to mine, especially when mine is not based on direct local knowledge.

JAIPUR AGAIN

Things are moving much too slow in Jaipur. The papers reported that a settlement between the Durbar and the people was imminent

and that Seth Jamnalalji and his co-workers would be free. The matters in dispute seem to be incredibly simple. Civil disobe-dience was decided upon only to vindicate civil liberty. It was resorted to when even the right of the Praja Mandal to function for the purpose of educating the people in a constitutional manner to agitate for local responsible government in the State was questioned. Some time ago a communique was issued by the Durbar setting forth the conditions for the recognition of the Praja Mandal. Surely the Durbar could easily have adjusted the conditions to suit the civil disobedience leaders. Thus, for instance, the condition that "no office-holder of the local association shall be also an office-holder of any political association outside the State" seems to be vexatious. Why should Seth Jamnalalji be disqualified from being President of the Praja Mandal by reason of his being a member of the Working Committee of the National Congress? Or is the condition specially aimed at him? An explana-tion is necessary. There are other conditions which too require eluci-dation. The last two are :

> 1. That the Association shall undertake to represent aspirations and grievances of the people of the Jaipur State through the proper channel as they develop from time to time under the constitution established by His Highness the Maharaja Saheb Bahadur, and
>
> 2. That membership shall be restricted to persons domiciled in Jaipur State.

Both are vague. Why should the people not be free to advocate reforms in advance of what the State is prepared to grant? But the meaning of the penultimate condition seems to restrict this natural right. And the term 'domicile' is a risky legal term of little political use. Why should not the homely word 'resident' be used instead?

BOMBAY, June 7, 1939

Harijan, 10-6-1939

24. LETTER TO SATYANAND

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 8, 1939

MY DEAR SATYANAND[1],

Pyarelal has preserved many letters for me to read when I can. I can just now find yours of 31st March in this bundle. I have devoured its contents with avidity simply because it is your letter.

[1] S. E. Stokes, Christian missionary, social worker and close associate of C. F. Andrews; an American naturalized as a British subject, married an Indian Christian and lived in Kotgarh near Simla; a Congress worker; was arrested in 1921.

I never knew that you had gone to Vienna. What was the operation for? Was it not successful? I have never appreciated the homage paid to the Vienna surgeons. However this is all by the way. I do hope your incapacity is not permanent.

As to the great question raised by you, my reading of *Gita* and interpretation of ahimsa is different from yours. I do not believe that killing in war can never be done without anger or zest. As I believe in unadulterated ahimsa I am groping as to India's duty. I am shirking the national solution. I discuss without coming to a decision. My own indi-vidual conduct is determined. But I quite agree with you that national can be exactly the opposite. My present mood is to ask the Working Committee to decide for itself. It was not without cause that God prom-pted me to cease even to remain a four-anna member of the Congress. Hence there is no moral obligation on me to give an opinion. At the same time if I felt the call, I should not hesitate to announce my opinion. As it is I am praying for light.

How is Mrs. Stokes? What are the children doing? How long were you away?

Mahadev was ailing as you might have known. He is fully restored now. He is with me. Pyarelal has stayed in Bombay for his teeth.

We all go back to Bombay on 21st.

Love.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

25. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

SEGAON,
June 8, 1939

CHI. NARAHARI,

Amtulbehn seems to have engrossed herself there in working among the Muslim women. Guide her and give her whatever help you can. She has taken the money with her and will credit it there, but see that the work is not held up for want of funds. Either Sardar or I will remit the money. Mridulabehn[1] is going to talk to Sardar about it.

I have told Ramjibhai that if he does not trust you, he should not expect any guidance from me.

His letter is enclosed.

Blessings from
BAPU

[1] Mridula Sarabhai

[PS.]

We will be returning to Bombay on the 22nd.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9116

26. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEGAON,
June 8, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I could not write to you from Bombay. We reached Segaon today. Pyarelal has stayed back for nursing Manjula and attending to his own teeth. We are going again to Bombay on the 20th. Thence probably by the 1st of July to the Frontier.

What I wrote[1] to you was not in the spirit of fault-finding. It was to give expression to my own feelings. The desire to stay with me is not at all a wrong thing. It is only when such desire comes in the way of service that it should cause concern. There was no such problem in your case.

You have to stay there with Balkrishna as long as it suits him. Balvantsinha says you can go to Panchgani whenever necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4318

27. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 9, 1939

DEAR SATIS BABU,

Your letter and enclosures make sad reading. Distribution of a few thousand rupees among the people would be a false salve for conscience. The work you may provide would be a fraud for they will eat only Rangoon rice. The case presented by Hemprabha is one not for finding temporary work for a few but it is for an agitation for banishing rice mills and Rangoon rice. To this end you should see Subhas Babu, Dr. Ray, and the Premier. You will not hesitate to see the other Ministers if found necessary. You should put before them a faithful picture of the condition of the villagers and trace the cause of the misery. You will equally strongly present your remedy. You will

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chandan Parekh", 24-5-1939.

find perhaps that all the parties will take up the cause and you will have solved a ticklish problem without much difficulty. Should it prove otherwise you will still have done the only possible thing. Your diagnosis must be faultless and your remedy perfect. Could you give the villagers any of the processes in match-making, road-making, tank-digging or any other work of public utility?

Who are the villagers? If they are Muslims your work will be easier. If my idea does not commend itself to you and you need funds for starting relief, you should go to the Marwari Relief Society and Ghanshyamdasji.

Tell Hemprabha that I read up the papers she sent me regarding Annada. Annada has a reply for everything she has to say.

Love.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

28. LETTER TO BINODE KANUNGO[1]

[On or after *June 9, 1939*][2]

What can I do about the undoubtedly improper appointments? If a proper complaint is made before the Working Committee something may be possible. Where public opinion is unsound and non-existent the things you describe will happen.

Yours.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal.

29. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
June 10, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have your letter. Absence of wire from you had prepared me for your 'No'. Though we were all expecting you last evening for certain and I had made all sorts of preparations for you, your letter makes it clear that you did well in not coming, not because I had no work for you but because your work there which is also mine is more

[1] The letter was in reply to a joint letter dated June 9 from Binode Kanungo and Gurchandra Das who had protested against the appointment of Gobinda Misra, Bansidhar Ratha and Godassi Mahapatra as Inspectors of Orissa Pradesh Congress Committee.

[2] *ibid*

important than what I had devised for you. It would be better for you to be with me in August when I expect to return from the Frontier.

I am not going to Kashmir unless J. L. comes and takes me there.

I wish you will cease to think that I misunderstand you. Whatever be the truth, you *must* be cheerful.

Love. TYRANT

[PS.]

Sharda came in today from Surat.

From the original: C.W. 3918. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7227

30. MEANING OF PROHIBITION

His Grace the Archbishop of Bombay has been kind enough to send me letter[1] and a copy of his address to the Rotary Club against prohibition. I have read both with the respect and attention their author deserves.

My study of His Grace's letter and address at once revealed a serious flaw for which I must be held primarily responsible. The word prohibition is a misnomer for what the Bombay Government and the other Provincial Governments where the Congress controls the Ministries are doing regarding the liquor trade. What the Governments are in reality doing is not prohibiting drink but they are closing liquor shops which are absolutely under Government control. The shop-owners have no statutory protection save what they get from year to year. Every owner of a liquor shop knows that his licence may not be renewed next year. He may be even outbidden if he possesses a country liquor or toddy licence as these are auctioned every year. Therefore the licensees have no vested interest in their licences beyond the year for which they are held and then too subject to the observance of the stringent conditions laid down for them. Therefore I claim that the law for the abolition of liquor licences "is an ordinance of reason for the common good made and promulgated for the community by the competent authority." All that the State is doing is to remove from the drinker the temptation or the facility which the State considers is harmful to him except for medicinal purposes.

The Archbishop says: "To win the allegiance of body, of mind

[1] The letter dated June 1, from T. D. Roberts, the Archbishop, was published separately in the same issue of *Harijan*.

and of heart needed by any law . . . that law must be just", that is to say,"the conscience of millions must say this is just." I have no difficulty in endorsing the proposition. Viewed in the manner indicated by me the State does not need to carry with it the conscience of millions. But I hold that India is the one place in the world where the conscience of the millions would justify the law of abolition of the State trade in intoxicating liquors and drugs. There is no need to take any referendum. It consists in the overwhelming number of legislators approving of the law. Let me remind His Grace of the past history of this great reform movement. It began with the grand old man, Dadabhai Naoroji. In 1920 it became an integral part of the Congress constructive programme. In the absence of political power the Con-gress arranged an elaborate programme of picketing liquor and opium shops. In this programme thousands of men and women took part all over India. All communities including Parsis took part in the picketing programme. Attempts were made even in the days of Non-co-operation to induce the authorities to undertake the abolition legislation. Without exception they pleaded financial inability, never the impropriety of so-called interference with the right of the people to be supplied with liquor by the State. Indeed one Minister told me that If I would help him to raise the revenue needed to make up for the loss caused by the drop in the drink revenue, he would introduce prohibition at once. It is an open secret that the reform has been delayed simply for the sake of the revenue. In other words, the people have been tempted to drink for the sake of raising the revenue. The black history of the opium trade bears out the truth of this statement.

Those who speak in the name of individual freedom do not know their India. There is as much right of a person to demand drinking facilities from the State as there is to demand facilities for the supply of public women for the satisfaction of his animal passion. I hope that those who pride themselves on their moderation in drinking will not feel hurt by the illustration I have taken. In this country we are not used to legislation for the regulation of vice. But in countries like Germany the houses of women who sell their virtue are licensed. I do not know what will be more resented in those countries, the stopping of the licences for the houses of ill fame or the houses of drink. When woman realizes her dignity she will refuse to sell her virtue and those members of the sex who are jealous of its honour will move heaven and earth to have legalized prostitution abolished. Will it be then contended that such abolition will go hard with the prostitutes

and their dependants whose only means of livelihood depended upon this calling?

I plead that social workers cannot work effectively so long as licensed liquor dens continue to lure the drinkers to enter them. It is curious that in all India any opposition to prohibiton comes from the Parsis. They pride themselves on their temperance and resent what they call encroachment upon their personal liberty. They also make it a grievance that the Europeans have been given facilities, thus constituting a bar sinister against Asiatics. I have already pleaded[1] with the Parsis that they should rise superior to their habit and allow the great reform to proceed with their active co-operation. As to the alleged bar sinister let me point out that a bar sinister is imposed from without. In the case in point we the Asiatics voluntarily recognize the limitations of the Euro-peans. But even they have to secure exemption and submit to regulations. The proper course for the Parsi friends would be to agitate, if they wish, for the removal of the discrimination, not use it for securing similar exemption for themselves.

His Grace has further argued that if the price to be paid for removing the temptation of drink from the drunkard "is out of all proportion to the good attempted", the reform is harmful.The proposition is well stated, but it is a matter of opinion whether the price to be paid is out of all proportion to the good attempted. I have endeavoured to show that the whole of the excise policy has been not to supply any felt want but to increase the revenue. I would invite the Archbishop to study the history of the excise administrtion. He will find that all the advanced legislators have condemned the policy in unmeasured terms. The price that is being paid for the attempted reform is insignificant if the history is borne in mind. And even the insignificant price will not have to be paid, if the Archbishop and the influential Parsi friends will lead an agitation for the reduction in the wholly indefensible army expenditure and free the money thus saved for the purpose of bringing about all-India abolition of the liquor traffic. It is an overdue reform. They should congratulate the Bombay Ministers on their courage in levying a tax which was the easiest to be borne. But I have no doubt that the Ministry will gladly remit the tax, if they are helped by the Central Government. Only they could not delay the reform whilst they were fighting the Central Government single-handed. Let all the parties recognize the necessity of the reform

[1] *Vide*"Interview to Parsi Deputation", 2-6-1939.

and demand justice from the Central Government and the hardship referred to by the Archbishop will be reduced almost to a nullity.

There is a curious question asked of Dr. Gilder[1]. To do the Archbishop justice I must copy the question in his own words:

> Does he admit that there are several kinds of intoxication which have nothing at all to do with drink? Drunkenness paralyses the reason and wrecks homes. But the intoxication of false ideals is now wrecking whole nations and the world itself. Moreover, does Dr. Gilder admit that such intoxication is highly infectious? He will hardly deny it, knowing as he does the recent history of the nations. Then will he tell us, 'Is India necessarily immune from the infection of false ideals which intoxicate?'

This suggests that the exercise by the State of the undoubted discretion to stop the issue of drink-shop licences is a false ideal which intoxicates and which has infected Dr. Glider. Of course everything is possible in this world. But I venture to suggest that this abolition being a half-century-old national cry is not likely to be a false, intoxicating and infectious ideal. An ideal that is false and intoxicating and highly infectious must in its nature be temporary.

The last paragraph of the address is a question addressed to me. The half dozen lines are packed with suggestions which hardly answer known facts. Thus His Grace suggests, among other things :

> Prohibition tends to be regarded by its advocates not as one possible course but as the only possible religion.

Nobody has called it a religion. After having stated the proposition His Grace ends:

> The author of the creed of truth and non-violence will not resent this last question: 'Is he still quite certain that all religions are true?'

In any other mouth I would consider the question to be unpardonable. But I do not expect a busy administrator like the Archbishop of Bombay to study all a man like me may say or to verify his quotations. His question to tally with what I have said should have been: 'Is he still quite certain that all the known great religions of the earth are equally true?' My answer to this revised question would be, 'Emph-atically yes.' Only the revised question is obviously irrelevant to the Archbishop's thesis.

His Grace has propounded a conundrum in his letter which now hardly needs a separate answer. So far as I know the Ministers have no qualms of conscience. They are robbing no one. All trade is pre-

[1] Dr. D. D. Gilder, Health and Excise Minister of Bombay

carious. Liquor trade is doubly so everywhere. The Bombay Government are straining every nerve to see that poor traders do not suffer avoidable hardships.

There is one sentence in the letter which makes me pause:

> The last few-months have convinced me that the cause of charity in Bombay is threatened with a shattering blow.

All the Archbishop's beliefs have been based, as I think I have shown, on unproved assumptions. I should want proof for this unqualified assertion. If the cause of charity is threatened as stated, I would request him to produce the proof before the Ministers and I doubt not that they will soon set the thing right.

The Archbishop's last paragraph in his letter is worthy of his high office. Only his offer appears to be conditional.[1] Let him and his assistants and disciples unconditionally become total abstainers and help the noble cause of temperance. They will lighten the task of the law-giver and help to make of the abolition of liquor traffic the success that it deserves to be in this land where the public conscience, i.e., the conscience of the dumb millions, is undoubtedly in favour of the abolition.

SEGAON, June 11, 1939
Harijan, 17-6-1939

31. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 12, 1939

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I have your letter.

Of course everything is forgiven you. The fact is I have not felt offended against you. My love burns as bright as ever. It is little worth if it cannot stand the heart pourings of loved ones. I simply gave you my reactions[2] to your letters. You are as much wanted here as ever. You will find me not in the least altered or if altered, it will be for the better. I shall know how much more tender you are than I had believed you to be.

[1] The Archbishop had said: ". . . I would gladly promise—as so many thousands of priests have done—never to drink alcoholic liquor except at the times when we believe its use enjoined by God in His own temple . . ."

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 26-5-1939, "28-5-1939, and 10-6-1939.

Navin is in Bombay tending his sister. His address is care Dr. Shah, Polyclinic, Queen's Road, Bombay.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3919. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7228

32. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 13, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have your two letters the same day. Not having been able to write to you for three days I have sent you [a] wire in Hindi which I hope you had no difficulty in understanding.

Of course I shall try to soothe. . . [1] . But she is a most difficult person to please. But my effort continues after my own style.

I have written to Sir Kailash[2]. Copy of the letter Mahadev will send with this.

I do hope you are more composed than before.

Syed Mahmud and his children were in Segaon for three days. They went this evening.

No more just now.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3920. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7229

33. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 13, 1939

DEAR DAUGHTER,[3]

I got your letter. I do not know how to keep you happy. I have told you that I accept financial responsibility to the tune of Rs. 2,000. I have also told you that you can say you recognized me alone and no

[1] The name is illegible in the source.

[2] Kailash Narain Haksar, Personal Adviser to the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir. Gandhiji was to visit Kashmir as Haksar's guest. The visit was, however, cancelled; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 22-7-1939.

[3] The superscription is in Urdu.

one else [as the source of the money]. But I did not say nor did I mean that I would not take the money if Sardar gave it. How can I accept such restrictions? I am not different from Sardar. Why should it take so much of my time to explain such a simple thing? I have said you can spend moderate amounts on medicines. Have I not made everything clear now? Don't make a mountain out of a mole-hill.

I am well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

This will be posted on the 14th.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 421

34. INTERVIEW TO MYSORE CONGRESS REPRESENTATIVES[1]

SEGAON,
June 13, 1939

If the proposed reforms are unacceptable as your fear they are likely to be, you may take no part in working them. But regarding offering any opposition to them you must be the best judges. What I have said in my statement[2] on Travancore does not apply wholly to any single State. You must study the general principles laid down in it and do what you think fit. Do not ask me to judge whether Mysore is well organized or ill-organized. You are the best judges. Facts themselves are opinions. If you are ready, you are ready, irrespective of what I may say.

[1] The interview is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "The Decision and After—IV" in *Harijan. The Hindu* reported: "H. C. Dasappa, President, Mysore Congress, acquainted Gandhiji with the present political situation, struggles undergone, agreements entered into at Sardar Patel's and Mr. Kripalani's intercession, Government's recent denial of agreement itself and how the State Congress had to withdraw from Reforms Committee and constitutional bodies. He referred to uncontradicted forecasts of reforms recom-mended by Reforms Committee which contemplates introducing a very dilute diarchical form of government and which is quite disappointing and unacceptable. Mr. Dasappa said: 'Considering all circumstances, it is impossible to achieve responsible government without struggle and the country (State subjects) was prepared for carrying the struggle on strictly peaceful lines.' "

[2] *Vide*"Statement of Travancore", 4-6-1939.

The readiness may be of two kinds. You may be able to embarrass Government sufficiently by making a big enough demonstration which invites shooting or compels them to yield. But the demonstration may not be non-violent as I am defining it. Not that my definition has changed. There is only a difference of emphasis. I formerly compromised non-violence in the belief that thereby India would progress further on the path of non-violence, but that belief was not fulfilled. So the non-violence that you display may appear to be effective but it may not be unadulterated non-violence in thought, word and deed. If it is not, I should rule it out. What I would *not* rule out today I cannot say. I have come up to the point of saying, in the language of the Vedic seer, *'neti', 'neti'* ('not this', 'not this'), but I have not yet been able to say, 'it is this', 'it is this'. That is because I have not seen the full light yet.[1]

That school says, 'We believe both in violence and non-violence, for sometimes non-violence answers, and we resort to non-violence because it appears to be best under the circumstances.' But for me means and ends are convertible terms, and non-violence and truth are therefore the end, so long as the end conceived has not been attained. But in Rajkot I compromised the means; I was weighed in my own scales and found wanting. But no harm has been done because I retrieved my error immediately I saw it. My surrender was not due to weakness, it was a surrender out of the fullness of strength. It came out of non-violence which for me is the weapon of the bravest and not of the weak. I will not be guilty of encouraging cowards amongst us, or of allowing people to hide their weakness under cover of non-violence.

You will say that you will not make a declaration about non-violence or satyagraha or civil disobedience. It need not on that account be the reverse of any of these. But you will say, 'After having read all that Gandhiji has written, or has been written about in *Harijan*, we have come to the conclusion that we must not bandy about these technical expressions. Whether you call it violent or non-violent, we offer what resistance we can and what we feel our people are ready to

[1] Referring to "this middle course" which is neither violence nor non-violence, Mahadev Desai explains: "Mr. Case gave the appropriate word for it—*Non-violent Coercion*—which he made the title of his book. . . . In fact there is a school of thought in India which makes no secret of it, and says, 'Satyagraha of Gandhiji's definition is not for us, non-violent coercion is what we understand.'!"

offer.' If you want further guidance, you should approach Vallabhbhai who has been handling this movement and Pandit Jawaharlal who is the Chairman of the States Committee. I come in as author of satyagraha, but for the moment I am bankrupt. My faith is brighter than ever but I have not seen the full light. I am advising Travancore, Rajkot, and to a certain extent Talcher, as I have been constantly guiding them. But even with regard to them I have been tendering my advice which it is for them to accept or reject.

But I would ask you to see the Sardar who has a marvellous capacity of separating wheat from chaff. He is no visionary like Jawaharlal and me. For bravery he is not to be surpassed. If he had any sentiment in him, he has suppressed it. Once he makes up his mind he steels it against all argument. He has all the making of a soldier. Even I do not argue with him, but of course he allows me to lay down the law. He will always be the people's man. He cannot hit it off with the people in power. See him. He has studied the situation, and he may be able to make concrete suggestions. Have the setting from Jawaharlal and the concrete suggestions from the Sardar.

I love Mysore and Mysoreans. I like spending days together at Belur and Halebidu but I cannot go there for sightseeing. I can go there only if duty calls.[1]

Harijan, 24-6-1939; also *The Hindu,* 16-6-1939

35. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 14, 1939

DEAR PRITHVI SINGH,

Your letter of 27th May is very good. It shows that you have no difficulty in understanding the working of ahimsa. There are many who swear by ahimsa [but] have not understood my step.

I have not given up the attempt to secure possession of your book.

Attempts continue to be made about the release of the political prisoners. There are difficulties [in] the way. But for those who only know the non-violent way, success is contained in the effort itself. And

[1] This paragraph is reproduced from *The Hindu,* which added: "It is understood that Gandhiji received an invitation also from Sir Mirza Ismail, Dewan of Mysore, to take a trip to Mysore for health, which also Gandhiji found impossible to accept."

prisoners who believe in non-violence regard prison-life and the outside with indifference. They serve whether in prison or outside.

I hope to go to the Frontier Province early July when both Mahadev and Pyarelal will be with me. One of them will surely see you.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5635. Also C.W. 2946. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

36. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

SEGAON, WARDHA
June 14, 1939

CHI. CHANDAN,

I have your letter. Now that [Amritlal] Nanavati is with you, get well soon.

There is no harm in your having written to your distant cousin about Harbhai. Send me more details about the Home School when you get it. I shall certainly be surprised if you again start teaching the girls. Do go to Ahmedabad for treatment if you think it necessary to do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 952. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

37. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

SEGAON,
June 14, 1939

It is a pity that Shri Sarat Chandra Bose and Lalit Chandra Das had to resign from the Prisoners' Release Advisory Committee[2] when they found that they could not make further headway and that their views differed from those of their colleagues and of the Government.

[1] This is extracted from "Bengal Political Prisoners". According to the source the statement was given "in releasing the letter" dated May 31, 1939, from Sarat Chandra Bose, Leader of the Opposition, Bengal Legislative Assembly; *vide* Appendix "Letter from Sarat Chandra Bose", 31-5-1939.

[2] Appointed by the Bengal Government; it started working from December 1938.

They had no option. I had hoped, when the Committee was formed, that they would evolve a joint scheme whereby the question of political prisoners would be solved on an all-India basis and on non-party lines. Provincial autonomy should have meant at least the release of all political prisoners throughout India especially when they declared their faith in non-violence as the vast majority, if not all, have done. The releases already effected have shown that there is no dan-ger of revival of terrorism such as the country has known. Therefore I would suggest that Shri Sarat Chandra Bose and Lalit Chandra Das be reinvited to serve on the Committee and a formula be found so as to satisfy their viewpoint. It would be unfortunate if a hurricane agitation were to be restarted on an issue which does not warrant any such agitation and which is capable of being decided by mutual accommodation. I hope that my appeal[1] to the Government of Bengal not to abandon the policy of conciliation they had adopted on this very important question of the release of political prisoners will not go in vain. It ought to be enough for them that the prisoners have declared their faith in non-violence. I hope that the prisoners will not be restless but will allow friendly effort to take its course without the interruption of a hunger-strike or the like. I would ask them to continue the dignified restraint they have so wisely observed.

Harijan, 24-6-1939

38. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

WARDHAGANJ,
[*June 15, 1939*][2]

MIRABAI
CARE BIRLA HOUSE
NEW DELHI

COME SEGAON EIGHTEENTH OR REACH BOMBAY TWENTY-FIRST

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6440. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10035

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 13-4-1938 and 4-10-1938; also "Statement on Bengal Government's Communique", 21-11-1937.

[2] The postmark is illegible in the source. *Vide*, however, the following item.

39. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 15, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I wonder if I ever told you that you were to write to Sardar Datar Singh, your dairy friend, whether he is now prepared to receive Balvantsinha in his dairy near Lahore and give him the necessary training. You will remember that he said he would gladly take him as soon as he had put his branch dairy in Lahore in order. You will tell him all about Balvantsinha, that he has considerable practical experience of handling cattle but that he has no knowledge of English. He belongs to Khurja and hence his mother tongue is Hindi. He is now picking up Urdu.

Lilavati[1] went today to Bombay for her matriculation. She was wavering but I told her it was the best thing to do. Sharda has come in. I have no doubt that she is bearing. She is likely to be in Segaon for a few months. Shankaran is not overwell.

Mira seems to have become ill on the high altitude and is due in Birla House tomorrow. I am asking[2] her to see me in Bombay.

I hope you are well and that you had a good time at the educational meeting.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3921. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Aslo. G.N. 7230

[1] Lilavati Asar
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

40. LETTER TO KAPILRAI PAREKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 15, 1939

BHAI KAPILRAI,

I have your letter. Let us hope that there will be no partiality in Bihar. But I cannot interfere. I think you should personally go and see Munshiji in Bombay.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI KAPILRAI PAREKH
GORJI'S BUNGALOW
RAIKHAD, AHMEDABAD

From Gujarati: C.W. 9828. Courtesy: Kapilrai Parekh

41. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 15, 1939

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I am sending Captain Gokhale's lectures in a separate cover. You have to think about only one point in those lectures. You need not read them if you do not want to. He says that schools should be run only from 7.00 am to 11.30 a m., so that the health of the pupils is not harmed by the sun. Is this possible in Bombay? If the health of the students demands it it should be made possible.

How many Parsis are likely to be affected by the new levy? How far is it a valid argument that it will adversely affect the charities? I feel that an estimate can be obtained only from your end. Have it prepared. This argument should be effectively answered. If there is no answer, the mistake should be corrected.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] For Gandhiji's article on the resistance of the Parsi community to the liquor policy of the Congress; *ibid.*, pp. 387-9.

42. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 15, 1939

DEAR DAUGHTER,[1]

I have your letter. Everything will work out well. Be patient. Don't worry yourself over money. Keep in touch with the Muslim Leaguers. When you were invited by them to a dinner, you should have gone. You should not be angry with them even in your heart. Propagation of khadi is our mission. Do not forget the vow to wear khadi. One may spin thin yarn and weave fine and coloured cloth. If we gave up the vow to wear khadi, we would be lost.

Take care of your health.

Ba and Kanam[2] may perhaps go there when I leave for the Frontier. Give the enclosed to Lakshmidasbhai[3].

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 402

43. A LETTER

June 16, 1939

For me if ahimsa is not applicable to all walks of life, it is no use. My experiments therefore must have that end in view. I may correct myself a thousand times but I am not likely to give up an experiment in which visible results have been attained. This earthly life is a blend of the soul and the body, spirit and matter. We know the soul only through the body and so shall we know true ahimsa through its action in the daily life.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] The superscription is in Urdu.
[2] Son of Ramdas Gandhi; also called "Kana" and "Kano"
[3] Lakshmidas Asar

44. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 16, 1939

CHI. DEVDAS,

I had carefully preserved your letter of the 30th. I could reach it only today. I could never be unmindful of Jawaharlal's feelings. But when it becomes one's dharma to express a certain view, what else can one do? When saying something becomes absolutely necessary, it would be violation of truth to suppress it for anybody's sake. I restrain my pen to a great extent for the sake of Jawaharlal. I had long talks with him and even showed him your opinion. One may say that as a result we came to understand each other better. The differences, however, persist. We will bear with each other. You also should do the same. Time will do its work.

I understand your views regarding the people around me. Let me deal with the problems in my own way.

The programme is as follows: [From June] 21 [to] July 1, Bombay, then most probably in the Frontier Province.

Ba and Kanam will most probably go to the Harijan Ashram, Sabarmati. Today[1] Lilavati left for Bombay for her studies.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2031

45. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 16, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have read all your letters. Whether the climate there suits Balkrishna's health can be judged only after an adjustment of diet. Wai has less rains and you can perhaps get good milk there. If Wai suits you better you can go there. It is said that Panchgani is good for T. B. patients despite the rains. We have to be guided by Balkrishna's reactions. If he does not feel better there, come over here. We are leaving for Bombay on the 20th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4319

[1] *Vide,* however, "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 15-6-1939.

46. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 17, 1939

CHI. AMRIT,

Yes, a tyrant I am, but non-violent. My tyranny too arises from love. Therefore it only does good to the victim, does it not?[1]

I hope you had no difficulty in deciphering my wire. I purposely wrote the wire in Hindi to make it ununderstandable save by you. It was my first or second attempt to send my wire in Hindi. If it was tyranny, it was tyranny of love.

The draft Muslim League resolution[2] on Basic Education is revealing.

If I succeed in going to the Frontier, you will join me at some station during my return journey and have the luxury of travelling third class with me on your line !!!

I understand . . . 's[3] message. I am writing to him.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3922. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7231

[1] This paragraph is in Hindi

[2] The resolution which rejected the Wardha Scheme of Basic Education was passed by the Working Committee meeting of the League held in Bombay on July 2 and 3.

[3] The name is illegible in the source.

47. LETTER TO ATULANAND CHAKRABARTY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 17, 1939

DEAR ATULANAND,

I have your letter. I can make no suggestions. My mind somehow runs in a different direction. The disease has gone too deep for books to help. Some big action is necessary. What, I do not know as yet. I wish you could see this very obvious thing.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI ATULANAND CHAKRABARTY
166/A JATIN DAS ROAD
P. O. KALIGHAT, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: C. W. 1481. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

48. LETTER TO VANAMALA PARIKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 17, 1939

CHI. VANAMALA,

Your friend is sitting near me and I have heard from her plenty of stories about your sense of humour. I hope you are adding to it there. I have your letter. Guess who this friend of yours is. Perfect your Urdu.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5787

[1] Reproducing a part of this letter in *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi,* p. 338, Louis Fischer explains : "Atulanand continued to concentrate on the Hindu-Muslim tension and suggested a book about it". *Vide* also "Letter to Atulanand Chakrabarty", 28-8-1937.

49. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 17, 1939

CHI. SUMANGAL,

I have your letter. Do write what you feel you must. It is not as if you had to follow my advice. You must follow the dictates of your inner voice.

t is good you decided to get married. I have no girl in view. Only your own endeavour can bear fruit. You must be patient.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Museum and Library

50. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI AND SUMITRA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 17, 1939

CHI. NIMU-SUMI,

I got your letter. Kanam is here sitting with me. He keeps me talking to him. So how am I to complete this letter? For the present, you should continue with your studies there. Do not worry about Kanam. We will think about the matter after I return from the Frontier Province.[1] Ba will go to live in the Harijan Ashram for the present. Kanam will study there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorials Museum and Library

[1] Gandhiji returned from a tour of the Frontier Province on July 27, reaching Segaon on the 28th.

51. A LETTER

June 18, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

I delayed writing to you in the hope of being able to send you a more helpful reply to your kind letter of the 15th ultimo. But I cannot go beyond saying that you should act in accordance with your lights. You should be the sole judge of the situation there and seeing that our own non-violence has been found to be skin-deep, I have not the courage to propose anything worthy of your consideration. This does not mean that my faith in non-violence has suffered any diminution.

Yours sincerely,

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

52. LETTER TO S. SATYAMURTI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 18, 1939

MY DEAR SATYAMURTI,

I am quite at one with you about Congressmen not being able to belong to any other political organization. But nobody will go so far. Your other suggestions are also worthy of consideration. My influence is limited as it should be. After all I am not in touch with the working of the organization. I suggest your pressing your points at the A. I. C. C. meeting[1]. But you must not come at the sacrifice of your health. I am keeping your letter with me. I shall let Rajen Babu and others see it.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original: S. Satyamurti Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also C. W. 10199. Courtesy: Government of Tamil Nadu

[1] This was to be held in Bombay from June 24 to 27.

53. LETTER TO KAKALBHAI KOTHARI[1]

June 18, 1939

BHAI KAKALBHAI,

I got your misty vapourings about Rajkot. I glanced through the thing. I saw nothing in it but rhetoric. But isn't rhetoric your life? How then can you help yourself? If you have patience, one day you will realize the truth of these remarks of mine.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

54. LETTER TO MULRAJ

June 18, 1939

BHAI MULRAJ,

I have your English letter. I thought you could write in Gujarati. I am sure you will be able to read this. Otherwise ask someone to read it to you. I adhere to my view. Even in Travancore and Jaipur where I have some control over the movement, I give advice only when asked. What else, then, can I do for Kutch? Please, therefore, understand that I [accept] no responsibility for stopping civil disobedience in Kutch.[2] The responsibility rests entirely on you workers. You may make public use of this letter.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

55. HOW FAR ?

With reference to my advice[3] to the States people to lower their demands if necessary, a correspondent asks :

> How far are the people to go and what reduction if any is suggested or contemplated, for instance, in the Jaipur demand which has been practically

[1] Congress worker of Saurashtra and editor of Gujarati daily, *Prabhat*, published from Ahmedabad

[2] *Vide* also "Notes", subtitle,"Leaders Must Lead", 7-6-1939

[3] *Vide* "Statement on Travancore", 4-6-1939.

framed by you?

This question would never have arisen if my language had been properly attended to. In the first place, I have added the proviso 'if necessary'. This must be clearly proved and each committee should judge the necessity and the extent of the reduction. In the second, there can be no question of reduction where the people are ready for the sacrifice involved in the development and the consolidation of the strength to enforce the demand. Take the case of Rajkot itself. Award or no award, if the people in general had the capacity for the required measure of sacrifice and if they had been ready for swaraj, nothing would have kept them from their prize.

It would be wrong to say or believe that but for my mistake the people of Rajkot would have got what they wanted. My mistake has been admitted. But it must not be held responsible for the failure of the famous Notification. The talk of demoralization resulting from my 'bad handling' of the situation is nonsensical. In satyagraha there is no such thing as demoralization. Those who are truthful, non-violent and brave do not cease to be so because of the stupidity of their leader. Of course there would be demoralization or rather ex-posure, if the three virtues were put on for the occasion and were to fail on the real test being applied. People who are strong by nature displace weak leaders and go about their business as if they never needed a leader. If they needed one, they would soon elect a better one. Workers in the States should try to understand the Rajkot case, if they will profit by it. If it is too compli-cated for them, they should leave it alone and go forward as if it had not happened. Nothing will be more misleading than to think that before my so-called mishandling of the Rajkot case the Princes were so trembling in their shoes that they were about to abdicate their powers in favour of their people. What they were doing before I even went to Rajkot was to confer among themselves as to the ways and means of meeting the menace, as they thought it to be, to their very existence. We know what Limbdi did.[1] The talk of combining with the Muslims, the Garasias and even the Depressed Classes against the Congress workers was in the air. My action has resulted in the discovery of the unholy combination. A true diagnosis is three-fourths the remedy. The workers are today in a position to devise remedies to combat the combination. It simply resolves itself into the

[1] *Vide* "Lawless Limbdi", 20-2-1939.

necessity of Congressmen or satyagrahis gaining control over the forces arrayed against them. They are as much out to gain liberty for the Muslims, Garasias, Depressed Classes and even the Princes as for themselves. The satyagrahis have to show by cold reasoning and their conduct that the Princes cannot remain autocrats for all times, and that it is to their interest to become trustees of their people instead of remaining their masters. In other words, what I have done by correcting myself in Rajkot is to show the true way to the satyagrahis. In following it, they may find it necessary to lower their immediate demands but only so as to really hasten their progress to their goal. Therefore there can be no lowering out of weakness. Every lowering must be out of due appreciation of the local situation and the capacity of the workers to cope with it. Here there is no room for demoralization and rout. In cases like Jaipur of course there can [be] no question of lowering. The demand itself is in the lowest pitch. There is no room in it for lowering anything. In essence it is one for civil liberty. Civil liberty consistent with the observance of non-violence is the first step towards swaraj. It is the breath of political and social life. It is the foundation of freedom. There is no room there for dilution or compromise. It is the water of life. I have never heard of water being diluted.

Another question has been raised by another correspondent. He says :

> You expect us to work by negotiation. But if there is no wish on the other side and the only wish is to humiliate the party of freedom, what is to be done?

Of course nothing is to be done except waiting and preparing for suffering and promotion of constructive work. Absence of wish for negotiation by authority may mean despise or distrust of the party of freedom. In either case silent work is the remedy. Negotiation has been mentioned as a substitute for the ignoring of, i.e. the despise of, the

constituted authority whether it is the Dewan or any other. And what I have pleaded for is desire and readiness for negotiation. It is not inconceivable that the stage of negotiation may never be reached. If it is not, it must not be for the fault of the satyagrahis.

SEGAON, June 19, 1939

Harijan, 24-6-1939

56. WILL KHADI KILL KHADI ?

When the increase in the spinners' wages was decided upon by the A. I. S. A., the Maharashtra Branch was the foremost in giving enthusiastic support to the proposal. It has the direct guidance of Shri Vinoba. It has worked out the increase programme with a precision not approached by the other provinces. The result is that the other provinces not having increased the wages to the same extent as the Maharashtra Branch are able to undersell the latter's khadi and do not hesitate to send their stock to the areas covered by the Maharashtra Branch. Unscrupulous merchants are not slow to take advantage of the situation. Thus uncertified stores have sprung up in Nagpur, Wardha and elsewhere. The unwary public, not knowing the new arrangements and eager to buy cheap khadi, prefer to patronize uncertified stores, thus doing great damage to the Maharashtra Branch stores. The result is that the Maharashtra Branch has either to reduce wages or to close down its business. This would amount to khadi killing khadi. Khadi-lovers should know that the economics of khadi are different from and often contrary to the ordinary economics of the competitive system which is not governed by the principle of the greatest good of all, i. e., of the least among the downtrodden. Thus I have endeavoured to show in these columns that if khadi is to fulfil its mission,

1. There must be progressive increase in the rise of the wages of the spinners till the minimum of one anna per hour is reached.

2. The ideal is that each village should produce and use its own khadi. From this it is clear that the least that should be done at present is that each province should produce enough and no more for its own requirements, permission being given for the sale outside its limits of such khadi as can only be produced by that province. For instance, Andhra can export, say, 80 counts khadi outside its limits but not coarse khadi no matter how cheap it is.

3. No profits can be made for the sake of profits. The wage-earners are the shareholders and the proprietors in this the greatest co-operative organization in the world. If, therefore, there happen to be profits made in any single year, the proper use to make of them is to devote them to increase the number of spinners so long as there are any to be provided for, otherwise to increase the wages of the existing spinners.

4. Any province that makes an attempt to increase the wages of spinners to the desired level should be encouraged by the other branches and khadi-lovers.

5. The general public should restrict their use of khadi to the khadi produced in their own provinces although it is dearer than in the other provinces. They must trust the A. I. S. A. to do its best for every province.

6. The policy of the A. I. S. A. no doubt should be to reach uniformity of wages and prices throughout India. But till that ideal condition is reached the public should have humanitarianism enough to know that they have a duty by the wage-earners of their own province. It is almost as bad to have inter-provincial competition as it is to have competition with the outside world.

The immediate thing to be wished for is that all uncertified stores should be closed. Congressmen and others should warn the public against buying from such stores, and provincial branches should resolutely refuse to sell their stock outside except at the instance of the provincial agencies concerned of the A. I. S. A.

SEGAON, June 19, 1939

Harijan, 24-6-1939

57. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 19, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have read the titbits in your letter to Mahadev Desai. What is to be done with the Princes? Gods confound those whom they want to destroy. It may be that their days are numbered. Only as believers in ahimsa we have to so act that we do not become directly or indirectly instruments of their destruction.

You have asked me to pray for you not in the letter before me but in the previous ones. I am doing it daily. I do not want to find fault with your logic or, which is the same thing, your reason. But we shall talk to our hearts' content when we meet, not even fearing explosions and storms. They clear the air. You must therefore reserve all your tears. Do not spend up all behind closed doors. I smiled to myself to read your reference to Hansa. You successfully hid your grief even from her as from everybody else. Shall I bestow one more title[1] on you? Can you guess?

Love,

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3657. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6466

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 29-6-1939.

58. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 19, 1939

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

Now that I write to you quite regularly, you can't complain. What was all the fight there about? Who were the persons involved? I suppose you have written and given me this information. You would certainly get help from here if the [Indian] community there had strength of its own.

My health is good. Ba's indifferent. We are leaving for Bombay tomorrow. From there we shall perhaps go to the Frontier Province. Ba may go to Sabarmati and stay there during that period.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4898

59. ITS IMPLICATIONS

I am sorry that my recent statements about States have perplexed even those who have hitherto had no difficulty in under-standing my writings or my actions. But the Rajkot statements, my actions in Rajkot, and the statement on Travancore have made 'con-fusion worse con-founded'. Pyarelal and latterly Mahadev have been manfully trying to interpret for the readers of *Harijan,* both my writings and doings. I know that they have somewhat helped to clear misunderstandings. But I observe that something is required from me directly. I must therefore try to give the implications as I understand them of my recent writings and actions.

I had better first say what they do not imply. Thus my ideas on civil disobedience—individual, group or mass—have not changed, nor have my views about the relations between the Congress and the Princes and the people changed. Nor has my view undergone any change that it is essential for the Paramount Power to do its duty towards the people of the States—a duty which it has woefully neglected all these years. My recantation had reference only to my distrust in God, in whose name the fast was undertaken, and my seeking to supplement His work by Viceregal intervention. For me to rely upon the Viceroy, instead of God or in addition to God, to act upon the Thakore Saheb, was an act of pure violence which the fast was never conceived to imply or use in the remotest degree.

The positive implication of the Rajkot chapter in my life is the discovery that the non-violence claimed for the movement since 1920, marvellous though it was, was not unadulterated. The results though brilliant would have been far richer if our non-violence had been complete. A non-violent action accompanied by non-violence in thought and word should never produce enduring violent reaction upon the opponent. But I have observed that the movement in the States has produced violent reaction on the Princes and their advisers. They are filled with distrust of the Congress. They do not want what they call interference from it. In some cases the very name 'Congress' is anathema. This should not have been the case.

The value of the discovery lies in its reaction upon me. I have definitely stiffened in my demands upon would-be satyagrahis. If my stiffness reduces the number to an insignificant figure, I should not mind. If satyagraha is a universal principle of universal application, I must find an effective method of action even through a handful. And when I say I see the new light only dimly, I mean that I have not yet found with certainty how a handful can act effectively. It may be, as has happened throughout my life, that I shall know the next step only after the first has been taken. I have faith that when the time for action has arrived, the plan will be found ready.

But the impatient critic will say, 'The time has always been there for action; only you have been found unready!' I cannot plead guilty. I know to the contrary. I have been for some years saying that there is no warrant for resumption of satyagraha.

The reasons are plain.

The Congress has ceased to be an effective vehicle for launching nation-wide satyagraha. It has become unwieldy, it has corruption in it, there is indiscipline among Congressmen, and rival groups have come into being which would radically change the Congress programme if they could secure a majority. That they have failed hitherto to secure it is no comfort to me. The majority has no living faith in its own programme. In any case satyagraha through a majority is not a feasible proposition. The whole weight of the Congress should be behind any nation-wide satyagraha.

Then there is the ever-growing communal tension. Final satyagraha is inconceivable without an honourable peace between the several communities composing the Indian nation.

Lastly, there is the provincial autonomy. I adhere to my belief

that we have not done anything like justice to the task undertaken by the Congress in connection with it. It must be confessed that the Governors have on the whole played the game. There has been very little interference on their part with the ministerial actions. But the interference, sometimes irritating, has come from Congressmen and Congress organizations. Popular violence there should not have been whilst the Congressmen were in office. Much of the ministerial energy has been devoted to dealing with the demands and opposition of Congressmen. If the Ministers are unpopular, they can and should be dismissed. Instead they have been allowed to function without the active co-operation of many Congressmen.

It will be contrary to every canon of satyagraha to launch upon the extreme step till every other is exhausted. Such haste will itself constitute violence.

It may be said in reply with some justification that if all the conditions I have mentioned are insisted upon, civil disobedience may be well-nigh impossible. Is that a valid objection? Every measure carries with it conditions for its adoption. Satyagraha is no exception. But I feel within me that some active form of satyagraha, not necessarily civil disobedience, must be available in order to end an impossible situation. There must be either effective non-violent action or violence and anarchy within a measurable distance of time. I must examine this position on a future occasion.[1]

SEGAON, June 20, 1939

Harijan, 24-6-1939

60. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 20, 1939

CHI. KAKA,

Please find enclosed a letter from Amritlal. Return it to me today along with the prescription.

The very next day after your visit I gave instructions to Jivanji to print the *Autobiography* in the Nagari script and sell it at one anna less.

There is no reply from Sardar. I will insist on getting one. I will

[1] *Vide* "Non-violence *v.* Violence", 4-7-1939.

be going to the Mahila Ashram at 4 and to Jamnalalji's bungalow at 4.30. Vinoba will be there. Have you agreed to keep Prabhu Dayal?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10922

61. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

June 20, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

Why did you not come to the station? Observe the rules about eating, sleeping and going for walks. I want your letters every day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

62. TELEGRAM TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

BOMBAY,
June 21, 1939

NANAVATI
CARE PAREKH BROTHERS
BHAVNAGAR

CONSULTED SUSHILA SEGAON. SHE SAID JIVRAJ SHOULD NOT BE WORRIED IN ANY CASE. IF DIAGNOSIS COR RECT TREATMENT NOT LIKELY TO BE DIFFERENT FROM THERE. MY EMPHATIC OPINION IS CHANDAN SHOULD HAVE AYURVEDIC TREATMENT. THEREFORE SHE SHOULD PROCEED AHMEDABAD. SEVERAL AYURVEDIC PHSICIANS THERE. WELL-EQUIPPED HOSPITALS ALSO THERE. WEATHER THIS TIME FAVOURABLE. OTHER RESPECTS ALSO BOMBAY UNDESIRABLE. CAN GIVE NO PERSONAL ATTEN- TION. ACCOMMO DATION BIRLA HOUSE IMPROPER. ONLY PROPER PLACE FOR ALLOPATHIC TREATMENT WOULD BE HOSPITAL. ALL THINGS CONSIDERED MY CHOICE IS AHMEDABAD UNLESS CHANDAN AND HER FATHER HAVE FAITH IN NATURECURE IN WHICH CASE SHE SHOULD BE SENT POONA TO TAKE TREATMENT UNDER DINSHA MEHTA WHERE KAKASAHEB AND BAL TREATED.

BAPU

From a copy: C. W. 953. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

63. LETTER TO AMRITLAL SHETH

June 21, 1939

BHAI AMRITLAL,

I was pleased to see your letter. I did not even know for certain where you were living and what you were doing. I hope you keep good health.

I cannot guide you in the Limbdi affair. Perhaps the right course will be to obey the dictates of your heart.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

64. LETTER TO NATHALAL

June 21, 1939

BHAI NATHALAL,

Your letter came into my hands only today. I cannot see the post every day as soon as it comes. Your unhappiness is completely imaginary. You should forget that woman. Let her stay at her father's if she wishes. If it is necessary to give something for her maintenance, send her a fixed amount. Why should you be unhappy because of her shortcomings? We believe that a wife is our property. But in fact she is not. What difference does it make even if she is married to you? If you wish to divorce her and if that is possible, you may do so. Do not be deterred through any false regard for society. Even the parents' authority will be of little use in this matter. You should, therefore, stop being unhappy. Cast off the load from your mind.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

65. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

June 21, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

You will have received the letter I sent you yesterday from the station. I shall expect your letter tomorrow. Come soon. Manju has

returned from the hospital. You will be well. Lilavati has not met me yet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

66. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

BIRLA HOUSE, MALABAR HILL,
BOMBAY,
June 22, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I thank you for your letter of 16th instant.

Though it is a pity that prisoner Prithvi Singh cannot be discharged, I have no difficulty in understanding your decision. I must await another opportunity.

The case of Jaipur is hanging fire. I wonder if a solution may be expected. As far as I know the Maharaja himself was quite willing to set free Sheth Jamnalalji and the other prisoners, to recognize the People's Association and to respect full civil liberty so long as it did not cross the bounds of non-violence.

There is one other matter which I had better mention in this letter. I understand there are Princes who are desirous of seeing me but they have hesitation in doing so for fear of the disapproval of the Political Department. As I had said during our talks[1] in New Delhi, I am of opinion that they should be free to meet any person so long as they do so openly. It would be a good thing if a declaration of your policy on this subject were made either openly or privately as may be thought advisable. I feel that it would not be enough if the permission is given in individual cases like mine. Seeing that the people of the States have intimate connection—political and social—with Congressmen and others all over India, is it not wise and proper to encourage the practice of Princes establishing friendly relation with those who have influence over their people? To treat Congressmen and others as outsiders seems to be so unnatural that the barrier cannot last long. It would be a pity if it is broken after a clash and creation of bad blood.

[1] On April 4, 1939

I wonder if you have noticed that some States have invited or welcomed visits of anti-Congress personalities. I do not complain of this but it is in striking contrast to the opposition fostered often by the Political Department to the visits of Congressmen.[1]

Yours sincerely,

H. E. THE VICEROY
SIMLA

From a copy: C. W. 7827. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

67. LETTER TO UMA DEVI

BOMBAY,
June 22, 1939

MY DEAR UMA[2],

Why did you think I would not give my blessings? The friend said he was satisfied with the talk I gave. And in proof of what I say here is [the] thing duly signed. I hope you are flourishing. My going to the Frontier is uncertain.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI UMA DEVI
ISHAR HILLS
SRINAGAR, KASHMIR

From a photostat: G. N. 1201. Also C. W. 5096. Courtesy: Uma Devi

68. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

June 22, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

You were not there and I woke up at 2 o'clock last night. Then I could not sleep, so I got up and started writing letters. Now what would you say?

The rest from Pyarelal'a letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] For Lord Linlithgow's reply to this, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 1-7-1939.

[2] Wanda Dynowska, a Polish lady.

69. ADVICE TO CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE

June 22, 1939

It is understood that Gandhiji suggested that any amendment to the Constitution which was being given effect to should find favour with the general body of Congressmen in the country. His opinion seems to have been that such changes of far-reaching importance should not be decided by a mere majority vote. This suggestion of Gandhiji is regarded in responsible Congress circles as a hint particularly to drop the Clause[1] for the present.

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-6-1939

70. A. I. C. C. RESOLUTIONS

[*June 23, 1939*][2]

1. The All-India Congress Committee views with grave concern the measures proposed by the Ceylon Government with reference to their Indian employees and hopes that it may be possible to find a way to avoid the most undesirable and grave conflict that, as a result of these measures, is threatened between such near and ancient neighbours as India and Ceylon.

[1] The reference is to the proposed amendment to Article V (c) of the Congress Constitution. In his Presidential Address at the A. I. C. C. meeting on June 24, Rajendra Prasad said: "With the object of tightening up the Congress organization, attempts have been made to amend the Constitution. The Tripuri Congress gave special authority to the A. I. C. C. for this purpose. . . . Among the recommendations made by the Constitution Sub-committee was the addition of some words to Article V(c) of the Constitution so that the rule applying to communal organization might also be applied to other anti-national organizations. The Working Committee agreed with this recommendation. . . . It appeared to the Working Committee that there was a fear in the minds of some Congressmen that the proposed change in Article V(c) was intended to be used to penalize opinion or to suppress organizations. This fear was entirely unjustified. . . . When, however, any organization is continually being attacked and run down by another organization, it is improper for the same person to be a member of the executives of both organizations. This produces not only conflict between the organizations but continuous internal conflict within them. It was with a view to avoid this and thus to have greater harmony even between the organizations that the amendment to Article V(c) was suggested. But in view of the suspicions some members have, the Working Committee have decided not to press for the change . . ." (*The Indian Annual Register, 1939,* Vol. I, pp. 355-6).

[2] The resolutions were drafted by Gandhiji on this date; *vide* the following item. These were passed by the A. I. C. C. at its session held in Bombay from June 24 to 27.

The Committee cannot contemplate without much concern a quarrel between the two countries which are separated only by a strip of water but which have a common culture and which have been intimately connected from times immemorial. The Committee desires to explore every means of avoiding conflict and, therefore, appoints Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to go to Ceylon and confer with the autho-rities and representative associations and individuals on behalf of the Working Committee and do all that may be possible to effect a just and honourable settlement.

2. The A. I. C. C. regrets the attitude of the Union Government towards Indian settlers. It betrays utter disregard of the obligations undertaken by the predecessors of the present Government. The policy[1] just initiated by them is in direct breach of the Smuts-Gandhi Agreement of 1914,[2] the Cape Town Agreement of 1927,[3] the Feetham Commission of 1932[4] and the subsequent undertakings on behalf of the Union Government. The A. I. C. C. notes with pride and satisfaction the firm stand taken up by the Indians of South Africa. They will have the sympathy of the whole Indian nation behind them in their fight for self-respect and honourable existence. The A. I. C. C. trusts that there will be no dissensions among them and that they will present a united front. The A. I. C. C. appeals to the Union Government to retrace their steps and carry out the promises of their predecessors to adopt a policy of progressive amelioration in the status of the Indian nationals in South Africa, 80 percent of whom are born and bred in that sub-continent and to whom South Africa is their only home.

3. This meeting of the A. I. C. C. resolves that no Congressman may offer or organize any form of satyagraha in the Administrative

[1] *Vide* 2nd footnote of "A Letter", 7-4-1939.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "The Indians Relief Act, 1914", .

[3] *Vide* "Sir Habibullah Deputation", 10-2-1927 and "Honourable Compromise", 24-2-1927.

[4] Also called the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Act Commission under the Chairmanship of justice Feetham, appointed by the Union Government of South Africa, "to enquire into the occupation by Coloured persons of proclaimed land in the Transvaal." As the Commission "was unable to finish its work before April 30, 1935, as had been hoped, the Union Government of South Africa took steps early in the year to amend the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Act of 1932, so as to extend the protection provided by it to April 30, 1937" (*India in 1931-32*, p. 85 and *India in 1934-35*, pp. 92-3).

Provinces of India without the previous sanction of the Provincial Congress Committee concerned.

4. The Working Committee has repeatedly laid stress on the desirability of co-operation between the Congress Ministry, the Congress party and the Provincial Congress Committee. Without such co-operation misunderstandings are likely to arise with the result that the influence of the Congress will suffer. In administrative matters the Provincial Congress Committee should not interfere with the discretion of the Congress Ministry, but it is always open to the executive of the Provincial Congress Committee to draw the attention of the Government privately to any particular abuse or difficulty. In matters of policy if there is a difference between the Ministry and the provincial Congress Committee, reference should be made to the Parliamentary Sub-committee. Public discussion in such matters should be avoided.

5. This Committee views with grave concern the prolonged strike at Digboi and expresses its sympathy with the strikers in their distress.[1] The Committee regrets that the Assam Oil Company has not seen its way to accept the modest suggestion of referring the question of the method and time of re-employment of the strikers to a Conciliation Board to be appointed by the Government of Assam.

In the opinion of this Committee no Corporation, however big and influential it may be, can be above public criticism or Government supervision and legitimate control. Moreover as was declared at the Karachi session the Congress policy is that there should be State ownership or control of key industries. The oil industry is undoubtedly a vital key industry. This Committee therefore hopes that better counsels will prevail with the Company and that its directors will accept the modest suggestion made on behalf of the Committee by the President of the Congress. If, however, the directors do not see their way to do so, the Committee advises the Assam Government forthwith to undertake legislation for making the acceptance of the decisions of Conciliation Boards obligatory and further give notice to the Company that the Committee may reluctantly be obliged to take such steps as may be necessary to stop renewal of the lease to the Company on its termination. At the same time that this Committee urges the Company to fall in with the just suggestion made by the Committee, it

[1] The workers of Assam Oil Company, Digboi, had been on strike since April 3 on account of the discharge of some 63 workers from service.

hopes that the Labour Union will be ready to listen to the Committee's advice and if they were to retain Congress and public sympathy they will be ready and willing to abide by the advice that may be tendered to them by the Committee.

6. The All-India Congress Committee is strongly of opinion that immediate steps should be taken for the formation of a separate Andhra Province.

Harijan, 1-7-1939

71. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY,
June 23, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

It is just 6 a. m. Amtul Salaam is as busy as ever doing nothing useful and wasting her time in preparing my breakfast. She is disconsolate because I can't give her hours. She defies analysis. She baffles me. There is something wrong in my handling her.

Mira is here silently watching everything. She is without occupation as she has not to go to the Frontier. I am now considering what use to make of her talents.

Jawaharlal is quite convinced that I have put back the clock of progress by a century or thereabout by my Rajkot misdeeds. I am equally sure that I have rendered great service by my good deeds in Rajkot. We have not found an umpire. Therefore we are none the wiser for our assertions. He thinks I am impossible for an organization. He is right there. But I am helpless. Of course there is this thing possible. I can voluntarily retire from all activity. It may come but only by a call from God. I am praying.

This news must not disturb you. I am as cheerful as ever. The differences do not worry me. I am drafting resolutions[1] for the Committee and Jawaharlal is drafting a statement. There is no coolness between us. Perhaps we have come nearer for the discovery of the wide divergence of views.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3658. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6467

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

72. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

June 23, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have received your letter. I slept a lot last night. Yes, Ba is unhappy. She has a cough. For her sake your absence irks me. Be here by Sunday if you can do so.

Have I told you that we are co-existing with snakes and scorpions? God protects us. Have you got the antidote for snak bite?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

73. LETTER TO PATTOM THANU PILLAI

BIRLA HOUSE,
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, BOMBAY,
June 24, 1939

DEAR THANU PILLAY,

You have all the copies of the wires exchanged between the Dewan and me. My suggestion is, you or he who is considered the most suitable amongst you should write to Sir C. P. referring to the wires and seeking an appointment as a preliminary to establish direct contact to enable you to answer and clear out the charges made against the Congress in Sir C. P.'s wires. This you will do, if you have assimilated the new technique. The new technique is not a mere idle expression. It has great potency. You will closely follow the columns of *Harijan.* If you have understood it, there must be new access of faith, courage and hope.

BAPU

From a photostat: Pattom Thanu Pillai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

74. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

BOMBAY,
June 24, 1939

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Today I must write to you. Sharda is all right. When she goes to Surat, Shakaribehn may go and stay with her, or she may come away after watching for some time how Sharda feels at Surat. I see no cause at all for worrying.

I had expected some information about Balvantsinha today. Permission for him to go to Lahore has been received.

I got Munnalal's letter. Let the book remain there for the present.

Ba is still weak, though she is a little better today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10597

75. LETTER TO DADACHANJI

June 24, 1939

DADACHANJI,

This morning I saw the monthly that you left yesterday. I read Baba's article. I just glanced through the other articles also. As I understand it, Baba's wish seems to be that if I approve of what he says in his article I should myself translate it. But there are many Gujarati translators more proficient than I am. I cannot say 'I approve of it' nor would I say 'I do not', for either way it would be presumption. So, in other words, 'I am just wondering what all this is.' Send me the other issues also. I admit that my curiosity for understanding Baba and his works has increased. If Baba agrees, I wish to send one of my co-workers to Meherabad. Thus, after getting to know him in my own way, if [his articles] appeal to me, I shall certainly translate them. I will be guided by God in this. Let me know through a postcard after meeting Baba or even otherwise whether I should send one of my co-workers to Meherabad.

Vandemataram from

DADACHANJI
SORAB BHARUCHA HOUSE
VINCENT ROAD, DADAR, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

76. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

BIRLA HOUSE,
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, BOMBAY,
June 24, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter. I have wired that Balvantsinha be sent to Panchgani and he may have reached there by now.[1] If he has not arrived and you intend to stay there till I return to Segaon, I have no objection. You may do what you consider proper. I received no letter from you today.

Sushila may reach here tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4321

77. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

BIRLA HOUSE,
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, BOMBAY,
June 25, 1939

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. There is no need to consult a lady doctor. You may engage a tutor. I will pay up to Rs. 25 for him. But then please see that you plunge yourself whole-heartedly in your studies. After engaging a tutor, you will not be free to move from place to place. If your household chores also take up too much of your time, engaging a tutor will serve no purpose. When the tutor devotes one hour you must devote four hours for studying by yourself. Only then will you benefit by it. Let me know what you finally decide. But take care of your health whatever you do.

My tour of the Frontier Province is still not certain. I am here up to July 1 at any rate. Sushila will return from Segaon tomorrow. She is better now. Ba is ill, though. She has a cough.

I am all right. The diet remains the same, one and a half pounds

[1] Balvantsinha did not go to Panchgani as the wire was not dispatched; *vide* "Letter to Balvantsinha", 26-6-1939.

of milk. Amtul Salaam is with me. Lilavati has joined a high school for study. Would you like to do the same?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photstat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3476

78. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

BIRLA HOUSE,
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, BOMBAY,
June 25, 1939

CHI. MANILAL,

You must have read the resolution[1]. It is not proper that I have not received any information about the fight there. There is no news about the struggle either. Everyone believes that I am being kept informed. But there has been no information from that side. Who is Dadu[2]? There was a cable from him. After that there has been nothing. I am preparing the ground for whatever help can be given. But if I get no regular news from there at all, nothing can be done.

Ba is with me. She keeps indifferent health. Ramdas and Devdas also are here. Lakshmi is here on her way to Madras.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4899

79. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

BIRLA HOUSE,
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, BOMBAY,
June 25, 1939

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Only today Kanu told me about Krishnadas's health and I was shocked to hear the news. He says he is staying with Radha and has got very much emaciated, and that tuberculosis is suspected. How did this happen to him? If you wish you may take him to Rajkot. Dr. Variava there is a very kind and efficient doctor. If you get all the

[1] Of A. I. C. C. on the attitude of the Union Government towards Indian settlers; *vide* "A.I.C.C. Resolutions", 23-6-1939.

[2] He was leader of the Passive Resistance Committee in South Africa; *vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi", 19-6-1939.

requisite facilities there, let him stay on. There is no harm in proceeding on the assumption that he is suffering from tuberculosis. Let him drink plenty of milk and eat as much butter as he can digest. Also green vegetables and fruits. Garlic is considered very good for tuberculosis. He had better go to Ahmedabad and get himself X-rayed. Give me all the details. I am here till July 1. It should be kept in mind that rest is the main thing. Talking and movement also should be reduced to a minimum. Manojna must be all right. You and Kashi should not get alarmed. Ba is with me. She gets slight fever daily.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 10090. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

80. NOTES

INDIA'S AMBASSADOR OF PEACE TO CEYLON

The A. I. C. C. has done well in choosing its best man[1] to proceed to Ceylon as the nation's Ambassador of peace. It is, at least it should be, impossible for India and Ceylon to quarrel. We are the nearest neighbours. We are inheritors of a common culture. There is daily contact between the two countries. From Rameshwar one almost steps on to Ceylon and finds that one is on no foreign land. But even as blood brothers sometimes differ, so do next-door neighbours. And like brothers, they usually adjust their differences and are often more closely knit together after the clearance. So may it be between Ceylon and India through the efforts of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

No better man could have been chosen for the task. The Indian side is clear. Several thousand men who have been in Government service for years, whether as day workers or other it does not matter, are being dismissed for no fault save that they are Indians. Private firms have been, it is said, told to copy the Government. Now this procedure seems to be extraordinary, arbitrary and unjust. But we do not clearly know the other side. It will be for the Pandit to study the Ceylon Government case and make due allowance for everything that might be justly pleaded on their behalf. Let us hope that both the Ceylon Government and the Indians in Ceylon will make the way smooth for an honourable settlement.

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru; *vide* "A.I.C.C. Resolutions", 23-6-1939.

I must confess that these acute differences come upon me as a revelation. I have a vivid recollection of my visit[1] to Ceylon. There seemed to be most cordial relations between the Indians and the Ceylonese. The monks and the laymen of Ceylon vied with the Indians in lavishing their affection on me. I do not remember anybody having complained to me about acute differences between the two. Why has the partial responsible government that Ceylon enjoys made all the difference that we witness today? It will be for the Pandit to unravel the mystery.

RAJKOT—WAS IT A BETRAYAL?

> I have always felt that whatever Gandhiji done at any time from his spiritual standpoint, has been proved to be correct from the practical point. He is not great for his enunciation of spiritual theories which are to be found in the scriptures of all countries. His contribution to the world is his showing the way to put into practice, in the ordinary day-to-day life, those great spiritual theories. For me, if any of Gandhiji's actions done from a spiritual point of view failed to prove that it was *the* correct thing to be done from a practical standpoint, then he would be considered to have failed to that extent. Let me apply that test to what he did in Rajkot.
>
> When he discovered that his fast became vitiated by his having requested H. E. the Viceroy to intervene, he renounced the Gwyer Award. The practical effect was to free him from Rajkot. But did his renunciation free the Viceroy from the obligation of seeing that the Rajkot Notification was acted upon according to the Chief Justice's interpretation? In my opinion Gandhiji's renunciation casts a double duty on the Viceroy. And if the Viceroy does not perform his duty, the people of Rajkot are free to act as they choose, and the Congress will have a powerful case against the Viceroy if the Notification proved abortive.

This is an abridgement of an article sent by a noted Congressman for publication in *Harijan*. He has built up an elaborate case in defence of my action regarding Rajkot, in reply to the criticism that I had betrayed the cause of the Rajkot people. The heading of this note is the correspondent's. I need not weary the reader with the whole of his argument. After all, time alone is the true test. It will finally show whether my action was right or wrong. But the abridgement is given for the novelty of the thought about the Viceroy's duty. I had no thought of the consequence of the renunciation. As soon as I

[1] In November 1927.

saw that my fast had become tainted for my seeking Viceregal intervention, I renounced the Award. But now that my correspondent mentions it, I must admit the force of his reasoning. My renunciation should act as a double spur to the Viceregal duty of seeing that the Rajkot Notification No. 50 is carried out according to the interpretation put upon it by the Chief Justice. So far as I am concerned my renunciation debars me, in this instance, from invoking Viceregal intervention. I also endorse the correspondent's statement that if any action of mine claimed to be spiritual is proved to be unpractical it must be pronounced to be a failure. I do believe the most spiritual act is the most practical in the true sense of the term.

BOMBAY, June 26, 1939

Harijan, 1-7-1939

81. SOUTH AFRICA RESOLUTION

It is a matter of congratulation that the South Africa Resolution[1] of the A. I. C. C. escaped complete disfigurement which the learned Dr. Lohia's amendment would have caused. I tender him my thanks for having listened to Pandit Jawaharlal's advice to respect the opinion of an expert like me who had passed the best part of his life in South Africa and who had not lost touch with that great country after retiring from it. This incident is an illustration showing that mere learning, mere humanitarianism divorced from actual experience may spell disaster to the cause sought to be espoused. Dr. Lohia's amendment had as much place in the resolution as mine would have in a resolution framed by him as an authority on socialism to meet a socialist difficulty. If I made any such attempt, he would very properly say, 'Don't pass the resolution if you don't like it, but don't disfigure it. It would defeat the purpose for which it is framed.' What I have said about the South Africa resolution applies more or less to the Working Committee's resolutions. That Committee is the expert body on matters relating to the Congress. It is dangerous to tamper with its resolutions unless reason convinces the Cabinet of the soundness of alterations suggested by members of the A. I. C. C. Acceptance of this practical advice, which I tendered more than once when I was a member of the Working Committee, would facilitate the despatch of national business.

[1] *Vide* "A.I.C.C. Resolutions", 1-7-1939.

Having said this let me say for the information of Dr. Lohia and his fellow humanitarians that I yield to no one in my regard for the Zulus, the Bantus and the other races of South Africa. I used to enjoy intimate relations with many of them. I had the privilege of often advising them. It used to be my constant advice to our countrymen in South Africa, never to exploit or deceive these simple folk. But it was not possible to amalgamate the two causes. The rights and privileges (if any could be so called) of the indigenous inhabitants are different from those of the Indians. So are their disabilities and their causes. But if I discovered that our rights conflicted with their vital interests, I would advise the forgoing of those rights. They are the inhabitants of South Africa as we are of India. The Europeans are undoubtedly usurpers, exploiters or conquerors or all these rolled into one. And so the Africans have a whole code of laws specially governing them. The Indian segregation policy of the Union Government has nothing in common with the policy governing the African races. It is unnecessary for me to go into details. Suffice it to say that ours is a tiny problem compared to the vast problem that faces the African races and that affects their progress. Hence it is not possible to speak of the two in the same breath. The A. I. C. C. resolution concerns itself with the civil resistance struggle of our countrymen on a specific issue applicable solely to them. It is now easy to see that Dr. Lohia's amendment, if it had remained, would have been fatal to the resolution which would have become perfectly meaningless. The appeal to the Union Government would have lost all its point.

But good often comes out of evil. The amendment, wisely withdrawn, shows to the Africans and to the world in general that India has great regard and sympathy for all the exploited races of the earth and that she would not have a single benefit at the expense of the vital interest of any of them. Indeed the war against imperialism cannot wholly succeed unless all exploitation ceases. The only way it can cease is for every exploited race or nation to secure freedom without injuring any other.

My examination of the South Africa resolution would be incomplete if I did not warn the Indians in South Africa against building much on the resolution itself. It is a potent resolution only if the Indians take the contemplated action. The motherland will not be able to protect their self-respect, if they are not prepared to protect it themselves. They must therefore be ready to suffer for it. The struggle may be prolonged, suffering great. But they will have the moral backing of

the whole nation. In this Hindus, Muslims, and all political parties including Europeans are united. The Government of India may feel powerless. I fancy they are not so powerless as they imagine. I am reminded of the 'Thought for the Day' in *The Times of India* of the 24th instant. It begins, 'We have more power than will.' I know their sympathy is with the Indians. If they have the strength of will, they have the power. Our countrymen in South Africa know the conditions of satyagraha. The foremost condition is unity among themselves.

To the Union Government I would say, "You have never proved your case. Your best men have admitted that there is no difficulty in your absorbing the two hundred thousand Indians in your continent. They are but a drop in the ocean. Remember that 80 percent of them are born in South Africa. They have adopted your manners, customs and costume. They are intelligent. They have the same feelings and emotions that you have. They deserve better treatment than to be regarded untouchables fit only to be relegated to ghettos. This is not playing the game. And you should not wonder if, at last, Indians say, 'We shall rather die in your jails than live in your segregation camps.' I am sure you do not want to go to all that length. Let it not be said of you that you had no respect for your promises."

BOMBAY, June 26, 1939

Harijan, 1-7-1939

82. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

BOMBAY,
June 26, 1939

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter just now. To me also you are just a girl of ten. May you always remain the same. I am submerged in work here. I shall be here up to the 1st.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10400

83. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
June 26, 1939

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I got your letter. Consent for the dairy was received four days ago. I had drafted a telegram about Panchgani and given it to Pyarelal but I learn today that it was not dispatched. What shall I do? After all our family is what it is ! Every moment I realize that I am personally responsible for this confusion. But I cannot overcome this shortcoming at this stage.

I shall not send you to Panchgani now. Get ready for Lahore. Sardar Sir Datar Singh has agreed to make all arrangements. When will you leave? If you let me know, I shall send him word.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1921

84. THE NATIONAL FLAG

The question of the use of the national flag still continues to agitate the public mind. It was designed when non-co-operation was at its height.[1] It was accepted without reserve, without opposition, by all communities. The Muslims and others vied with the Hindus in hoisting, carrying and honouring it. I recall having listened to the Ali Brothers enthusing over its praises from many a platform. It was conceived as a symbol of the peaceful revolt against imperialistic exploitation of a nation pledged to non-violence through a mighty, constructive and united effort through the spinning-wheel and khadi signifying out-and-out swadeshi and identity with the poorest in the land. It also symbolized unbreakable communal unity, the colours being specially and deliberately designed and chosen. That flag can admit of no competition as national flag. At national gatherings it should command unquestioned and universal respect. But it has to be admitted that it does not command that respect today. Instead of being a symbol of simplicity, purity, unity, and through these a determined revolt against exploitation, moral, material and political, it nowadays often becomes a signal for communal quarrels. Even among Congressmen attempt is sometimes made to prefer the red flag

[1] *Vide* "The National Flag", 13-4-1921; also "My Notes", 13-1-1929.

to the tricolour. Some Congressmen do not even hesitate to run it down.

In these circumstances I personally would like to remove it from public gatherings and not unfurl it till the public feel the want and impatiently demand to see it restored to its original and unique place. But the vast majority of Congressmen who have suffered under this well-tried banner and drawn inspiration and strength from it will not go the length I would like them to. I therefore suggest that where there is any opposition in a mixed gathering, the flag should not be hoisted. This can happen in schools, colleges, local boards, municipal councils and the like. The flag should not be insisted on when there is opposition even from one member. Let it not be called the tyranny of one person. When one person among many offers opposition and if he is allowed to have his way, it is proof of magnanimity or farsightedness on the part of the overwhelming majority. I have no doubt that this is the most effective non-violent way of dealing with the question. My advice applies even to those places where the flag is already flying. It was triumphantly flown in many places when the nation was offering non-co-operation on a scale perhaps hitherto unknown in history. Times are changed. Opposition wherever it is offered is fomenting communal dissensions. Surely it is wisdom on the part of those who treasure the flag and unity to submit to the opposition of a minority be it ever so small.

What I have said about the flag applies *mutatis mutandis* to the singing of the *Vandemataram*[1]. No matter what its source was and how and when it was composed, it had become a most powerful battle-cry among Hindus and Mussalmans of Bengal during the partition days. it was an anti-imperialist cry. As a lad, when I knew nothing of *Anandmath* or even Bankim, its immortal author, *Vandemataram* had gripped me, and when I first heard it sung, it had enthralled me. I associated the purest national spirit with it. It never occurred to me that it was a Hindu song or meant only for Hindus. Unfortunately now we have fallen on evil days. All that was pure gold before has become base metal today. In such times it is wisdom not to market pure gold

[1] The song occurs in *Anandmath* by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee. In 1937, the Congress Working Committee meeting in Calcutta passed a resolution that "Whenever and wherever *Vandemataram* is sung only the first two stanzas should be sung, with perfect freedom to the organizers to sing any other song of unobjectionable character in addition to, or in the place of, *Vandemataram* song."

and let it be sold as base metal. I would not risk a single quarrel over singing *Vandemataram* at a mixed gathering. It will never suffer from disuse. It is enthroned in the hearts of millions. It stirs to its depth the patriotism of millions in and outside Bengal. Its chosen stanzas are Bengal's gift among many others to the whole nation. The flag and the song will live as long as the nation lives.

BOMBAY, June 27, 1939

Harijan, 1-7-1939

85. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 27, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Sushilabehn is here now. She will write everything in detail. Balvantsinha's letter is enclosed. I shall not send him there now. You may stay there for the present. If you need anyone's help, you may take it. We shall see what can be done after I return [to Segaon]. As long as you stay there, you must be at ease. I have forgotten to write about the book. Ask for it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4320

86. LETTER TO PURATAN J. BUCH

BOMBAY,
June 28, 1939

CHI. PURATAN,

Amtulbehn has been working among the Muslim women. Both of you should help her as much as you can without allowing your Harijan work to suffer.

I did not like it at all that Anandi[1] did not come along beyond the Sabarmati station. I very much wanted to enjoy a few minutes' fun with her and was disappointed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9173

[1] Addressee's wife

87. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

VISHRAM VATIKA, JUHU,
June 28, 1939

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

I had received your earlier letter. Now I have the second one. As long as there is the least hope from the Viceroy, we should neither think nor write about the breakdown of negotiations.

A copy of my letter[1] to the Viceroy must have been sent to you the same day; but perhaps I could not instruct anyone. If it has not been received, you will get a copy now with this. The reference to waiting on the Premier should be overlooked.

Keep me informed about the satyagraha by Muslims.

Jamnalal's knee causes anxiety. The main thing is rest. Does he take enough fruits? It is also necessary to take green leafy vegetables. Oil should be eschewed. What about the vaid who used to treat him? Is the hospital all right? Send the leg X-ray for Sushila's examination.

I may leave for the Frontier Province on the 2nd. Mahadev has been sent to Rajkot. The work which was progressing there is, I am afraid, likely to suffer a set-back.

Ba is slightly unwell. She will be all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a Photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9125

88. TELEGRAM TO SIR J. G. LAITHWAITE

June 29, 1939

HAVE BEEN JUST SUPPLIED WITH TALCHER'S REVISED DECLARATION. HAVING STUDIED IT CAREFULLY MUST SAY IT DOES NOT MEET SITUATION. GIVES NO HOPE REFUGEES. I CONCLUDED THAT DECLARATION IS THE BEST HIS EXCELLENCY CAN SECURE FROM RULER. IF SO I MUST ADVISE REFUGEES HOWEVER RELUCTANTLY TO CONTINUE SUFFER TILL DESIRED RELIEF IS FORTH-COMING. BUT BEFORE MAKING PUBLIC DECLARATION I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW IF I MAY WHETHER HIS

[1] Dated June 22; *vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 22-6-1939.

EXCELLENCY CAN DO ANYTHING FURTHER REDEEM HOPE CONTAINED IN DOCUMENTS SIGNED BY POLITICAL OFFICERS.[1]

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

89. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

VISHRAM VATIKA, JUHU,
P. O. SANTA CRUZ, BOMBAY,
June 29, 1939

MY DEAR DECEIVER[2],

Your ban about your letters renders it impossible for me to answer all questions. They are either passed on to Mahadev or destroyed as soon as I have read them.

I have advised you about Jawaharlal Nehru's invitation. In my opinion the whole of his planning[3] is a waste of effort. But he can't be satisfied with anything that is not big.

Here there is interruption and if I am to catch the post I must stop.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3659. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6468

[1] The addressee's telegraphic reply dated July 2 read: "Your telegram of 29th June, and my interim reply of 30th Talcher refugees. According to His Excellency's information Raja's latest declaration supplementing his previous announcement fulfils substantially all expectations held out to refugees. Position has been fully explained to a responsible Minister of Orissa Government who has undertaken to do his best to get refugees to return on these terms. It seems to His Excellency that genuine well-wishers of refugees should unite in offering this advice so that they may return to their homes before weather conditions increase their difficulties. Any other course means sacrificing their interest for a purpose which it appears clearly impossible to justify."

[2] New title given to Amrit Kaur; *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 19-6-1939.

[3] Jawaharlal Nehru was Chairman of the National Planning Committee appointed by the Indian National Congress in 1938.

90. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR[1]

June 30, 1939

Just a line to say you will not grieve over your mother's death. Living faith in God is tested on these occasions.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 6076. Also C. W. 3406. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

91. LETTER TO SAIYID ASGHAR HASAN

July 1, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 19th ultimo. As I get the time, I try to read the literature you have sent me. It is a difficult job for me. I have so many things on hand that I cannot do justice to the study required. Meanwhile it grieves me that the matter[2] cannot be adjusted by the united effort of the two sections. Adjustment seems to me, an outsider, to be simple.

From your letter I gather that nothing emerged from your visit to the Maulana Saheb.

JANAB SAIYID ASGHAR HASAN SAHEB

RETIRED SESSIONS JUDGE
TANZIMAL M. VICTORIA STREET
LUCKNOW, U. P.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

92. INDIANS IN BELGIAN CONGO

The case of our countrymen in Belgian Congo does not admit of easy treatment. It consists in the prosecution, alleged to be political, though technically under the Gold Law of Belgian Congo, of certain Indian settlers for being in possession of illicit gold. In the case as stated in the circulated pamphlet it is suggested that the accused were arrested without just cause. Witnesses for the Crown are said to have been perjured. Every obstacle is being placed in the way of the accused being properly defended. The expectation of our country-

[1] This was written by Gandhiji on Mirabehn's letter dated June 30, 1939, to the addressee; *vide* also "Letter to F. Mary Barr", 4-7-1939.

[2] This was in connection with the Shia-Sunni differences; *vide* also "A Letter", 23-5-1939.

men in Congo is that we should send eminent counsel from here to defend them. Representations have been made to the Government of India on their behalf. This is essentially a case, however hard in itself, in which effective public action is hardly possible. But it is undoubtedly a case in which the Government of India can do much. It can through the Foreign Office in England ascertain the exact position. The British Consul can be instructed to watch the case and see that the accused get a fair trial. Indeed British Consuls have been known to have been instructed to engage counsel to watch cases on behalf of their proteges. I hope that the Government of India are giving attention to this hard case of the Indians of Belgian Congo.

BOMBAY, july 3, 1939

Harijan, 8-7-1939

93. LETTER TO VITHAL L. PHADKE

BOMBAY,
July 3, 1939

CHI. MAMA,

We shall start[1] on Wednesday the 5th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3841

94. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKWASA

BOMBAY,
July 3, 1939

BHAI MANGALDAS,

As I made some important changes, I got the draft retyped. The original draft also is enclosed. I am here till the 5th at any rate. If you think it is necessary to see me, do come. I have not checked the revisions in the copy retyped.

Blessings form
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 4683. Courtesy: Mangaldas Pakwasa

[1] For the Frontier Province

95. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

BOMBAY,
July 3, 1939

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have both your letters. The last one was excellent. Learning to remain untouched by either respect or disrespect is the first lesson to learn. Without laws the sun and the other heavenly bodies would not move and even the trains would not run and hundreds of thousands of people would die. Nothing in this world can function without laws. Hence wherever you go, you will have to abide by certain rules. And when we consider ourselves smaller than even a particle of dust, by whom would we feel insulted or pained? Having said this, I should add that I believe your good lies in staying where you have peace of mind. If you do not get peace in Segaon, then you may assume that my company is not *satsang*[1] for you. You are bound to derive peace from *satsang*. That is why I suggested[2] that if you got no peace in Segaon, you should go to Aurobindo Ashram or Ramanasramam. I see that many people who have not found peace with me have found it with them. Just now your duty lies in Segaon only.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Sharda went yesterday to live with her husband. She is still in Bombay. They will leave for Surat this evening. Tell Shakaribehn that Sharda benefited a lot by staying here.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8573. Also C. W. 7029. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

96. PARSIS AND LIQUOR TRAFFIC

How I wish Parsis will shed their anger and look at the liquor policy of the Congress square in the face. If they have made it a principle to resist by all means at their disposal the Government's undoubted right to refuse to auction or sell liquor licences, there is no argument left to be advanced. It is the assertion of a principle against principle. But I hope they have taken up no such uncompromising

[1] Company of good men
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Munnalal G. Shah", 27-4-1939.

attitude. The deputation of licensees and tappers took up no such attitude.

But apart from the question of principle there are objections raised against the working out of the policy. They are chiefly about :

(a) the right to use wines for religious purposes.

(b) the right to have liquor on medical, i. e., health grounds,

(c) racial discrimination,

(d) compensation to those who will be thrown out of employment, i. e., tappers, contractors and liquor-dealers, etc.,

(e) the effect of the property tax on charities.

All these are pertinent questions demanding clear answers. Ministers are bound to remove every valid objection that can be advanced against the working out of the policy.

The right to use wines on religious or health grounds has always been recognized by Dr. Gilder.

I understand that in law there will be no racial discrimination. It may appear to be in the administration of the law. No one will be entitled to have the permit for the asking, not even the Europeans, if only so that the law might not be evaded. Every case will be examined on merits. Even Europeans will be expected to respect the liquor policy of the

country and, wherever they can, to refrain from asking for permits. The Archbishop of Bombay, in spite of his unconvincing opposition[1] to the closing of liquor shops, has gracefully announced that he and many under him are not going to ask for permits for their personal use. Many Protestant divines, I understand, have already announced similar self-denial. I should not be surprised if many European laymen copy the estimable example of the European divines. Nevertheless there is no doubt that in the administration of the law there will be more indulgence to Europeans than to those like Parsis for whom India has been their home for centuries. But I have not the shadow of a doubt that every genuine case will be considered with sympathy. May not the Parsis be expected to fall in with the general sentiment, especially when it conduces to the conservation of the social and economic welfare of the labouring classes? Enlightened Parsis must surely recognize the necessity of checking the drink evil while there is still time.

[1] *Vide* "Meaning of Prohibition", 11-6-1939.

The points (d) and (e) cannot be dealt with at all satisfactorily without the hearty co-operation of the parties concerned. Thus, so far as the charities are concerned, it is surely up to the trustees of these charities to support their case with facts and figures. Some hardship no doubt there will be. Every tax is a hardship. But I should be surprised if any single charity is seriously affected. After all, the tax calculated to bring in from the city of Bombay about Rs. one crore is so widely distributed that no individual or corporation will be hit beyond endurance. But it is for those who contend otherwise to prove their case.

Liquor-dealers have to present their case with full detail so as to enable the Government to deal with it. I understand that most owners of stocks of wine have not even furnished the information asked for by the Government. How is the Government to deal with them, if they will sullenly refuse to help the Government to help them? I know that the Government are taxing themselves to meet every case of proved and avoidable hardship. I use the word 'avoidable' purposely. The 'Taj' will certainly be affected, but that is as much as saying that the liquor shopkeepers will be affected. The 'Taj' is a mighty liquor-dealer. The house of Tata is resourceful enough to devise other and better ways of supporting the many charities for which it is so justly famed. I dare say that the charities themselves will bear richer fruit for their being purged of the questionable income from the drink traffic. Let it not be said of the Parsis, known the world over as the greatest philanthropists as a class, that they lagged behind, nay actually obstructed a reform which was urgently needed for the sake of saving the helpless labouring population from social and economic ruin.

BOMBAY, July 4, 1939

Harijan, 8-7-1939

97. NON-VIOLENCE v. *VIOLENCE*

I must resume the argument about the implications of the Rajkot step, where I left it the week before.[1]

In theory, if there is sufficient non-violence developed in any single person, he should be able to discover the means of combating violence, no matter how widespread or severe, within his jurisdiction. I have repeatedly admitted my imperfections. I am no example of per-

[1] *Vide* "Its Implications", 20-6-1939.

fect ahimsa. I am evolving. Such ahimsa as has been developed in me has been found enough to cope with situations that have hitherto arisen. But today I feel helpless in the face of the surrounding violence. There was a penetrating article in *The statesman* on my Rajkot statement. The editor had therein contended that the English had never taken our movement to be true satyagraha, but being practical people they had allowed the myth to continue though they had known it to be a violent revolt. It was none the less so because the rebels had no arms. I have quoted the substance from memory. When I read the article, I felt the force of the argument. Though I had intended the movement to be pure non-violent resistance, as I look back upon the happenings of those days, there was undoubtedly violence among the resisters. I must own that had I been perfectly tuned to the music of ahimsa, I would have sensed the slightest departure from it and my sensitiveness would have rebelled against any discord in it.

It seems to me that the united action of the Hindus and the Muslims blinded me to the violence that was lurking in the breasts of many. The English who are trained diplomats and administrators are accustomed to the line of least resistance, and when they found that it was more profitable to conciliate a big organization than to crush it by extensive frightfulness, they yielded to the extent that they thought was necessary. It is, however, my conviction that our resistance was predominantly non-violent in action and will be accepted as such by the future historian. As a seeker of truth and non-violence, however, I must not be satisfied with mere action if it is not from the heart. I must declare from the house-tops that the non-violence of those days fell far short of the non-violence as I have so often defined.

Non-violent action without the co-operation of the heart and the head cannot produce the intended result. The failure of our imperfect ahimsa is visible to the naked eye. Look at the feud that is going on between Hindus and Muslims. Each is arming for the fight with the other. The violence that we had harboured in our breasts during the non-co-operation days is now recoiling upon ourselves. The violent energy that was generated among the masses, but was kept under check in the pursuit of a common objective, has now been let loose and is being used among and against ourselves.

The same phenomenon is discernible, though in a less crude manner, in the dissension among Congressmen themselves and the use of forcible methods that the Congress Ministers are obliged to adopt

in running the administrations under their charge.

This narrative clearly shows that the atmosphere is surcharged with violence. I hope it also shows that non-violent mass movement is an impossibility unless the atmosphere is radically changed. To blind one's eyes to the events happening around us is to court disaster. It has been suggested to me that I should declare mass civil disobedience and all internal strife will cease, Hindus and Muslims will compose their differences, Congressmen will forget mutual jealousies and fights for power. My reading of the situation is wholly different. If any mass movement is undertaken at the present moment in the name of non-violence, it will resolve itself into violence largely unorganized and organized in some cases. It will bring discredit on the Congress, spell disaster for the Congress struggle for independence and bring ruin to many a home. This may be a wholly untrue picture born of my weakness. If so, unless I shed that weakness, I cannot lead a movement which requires great strength and resolution.

But if I cannot find an effective, purely non-violent method, outbreak of violence seems to be a certainty. The people demand self-expression. They are not satisfied with the constructive programme prescribed by me and accepted almost unanimously by the Congress. As I have said before, the imperfect response to the constructive programme is itself proof positive of the skin-deep nature of the non-violence of Congressmen.

But if there is an outbreak of violence, it would not be without cause. We are yet far from the independence of our dream. The irresponsibility of the Centre, which eats up 80 percent of the revenue, grinds down the people and thwarts their aspirations, is daily proving more and more intolerable.

There is a growing consciousness of the terrible autocracy of the majority of the States. I admit my responsibility for the suspension of civil resistance in several States. This has resulted in demoralization both among the people and the Princes. The people have lost nerve and feel that all is lost. The demoralization among the Princes consists in their thinking that now they have nothing to fear from their people, nothing substantial to grant. Both are wrong. The result does not dismay me. In fact I had foretold the possibility of these results when I was discussing with the Jaipur workers the advisability of suspending the movement, even though it was well circumscribed with rules and restrictions. The demoralization among the people shows that there was not non-violence in thought and word, and therefore when the

intoxication and excitement of jail-going and the accompanying demonstrations ceased they thought that the struggle was over. The Princes came to the hasty conclusion that they could safely consolidate their autocracy by adopting summary measures against the resisters and placating the docile element by granting eye-wash reforms.

Both the people and the Princes might have reacted in the right manner—the people by recognizing the correctness of my advice and calmly generating strength and energy by quiet and determined constructive effort, and the Princes by seizing the opportunity afforded by suspension, of doing justice for the sake of justice and granting reforms that would satisfy the reasonable but advanced section among their people. This could only happen, if they recognized the time-spirit. It is neither too late for the people nor the Princes.

In this connection I may not omit the Paramount Power. There are signs of the Paramount Power repenting of the recent declarations about the freedom to the Princes to grant such reforms to their people as they chose. There are audible whispers that the Princes may not take those declarations literally. It is an open secret that the Princes dare not do anything that they guess is likely to displease the Paramount Power. They may not even meet persons whom the Paramount Power may not like them to meet. When there is this tremendous influence exercised over the Princes, it is but natural to hold the Paramount Power responsible for the unadulterated autocracy that reigns supreme in many States.

So if violence breaks out in this unfortunate land, the responsibility will have to be shared by the Paramount Power, the Princes, and above all by Congressmen. The first two have never claimed to be non-violent. Their power is frankly derived from and based on the use of violence. But the Congress has since 1920 adopted non-violence as its settled policy and has undoubtedly striven to act up to it. But as Congressmen never had non-violence in their hearts, they must reap the fruit of the defect, however unintentional it was. At the crucial moment the defect has come to the surface and the defective method does not seem to meet the situation. Non-violence is never a method of coercion, it is one of conversion. We have failed to convert the Princes, we have failed to convert the English administrators. It is no use saying that it is impossible to persuade persons willingly to part with their power. I have claimed that satyagraha is a new experiment. It will be time to pronounce it a failure when Congressmen have given it a genuine trial. Even a policy, if it is honestly pursued, has to be

pursued with all one's heart. We have not done so. Hence Congressmen have to convert themselves before the Paramount Power and the Princes can be expected to act justly.

But if the Congressmen can or will go no further than they have done in the direction of non-violence, and if the Paramount Power and the Princes do not voluntarily and selfishly do the right thing, the country must be prepared for violence, unless the new technique yields a new mode of non-violent action which will become an effective substitute for violence as a way of securing redress of wrongs. The fact that violence must fail will not prevent its outbreak. Mere constitutional agitation will not do.

BOMBAY, July 4, 1939

Harijan, 8-7-1939

98. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

BOMBAY,
July 4, 1939

CHI. MARY,

I wrote a few words[1] on Mira's letter to you. I have a few minutes to write more fully. If you feel the call to go and serve your father, you will answer it without hesitation. You will do what is possible for the continuity of work begun in Central Provinces. I know you will give a good account of yourself wherever you are. It will be risky to bring out Father to India. He won't stand the climate of this country.

Your letter to Narandas is interesting. If you are not to go, you will be safe in taking up the rural reconstruction committee. I hope to leave for the Frontier Province tomorrow. Ba is likely to go with me. She is quite well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 6077. Also C. W. 3407. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr. Also *Bapu—Conversations and Correspondence,* p. 178

[1] *Vide* letter to the addressee, 30-6-1939.

99. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BIRLA HOUSE,
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, BOMBAY,
July 4, 1939

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I am writing to Mary Barr.

The note you gave me about khadi is still lying with me. I shall dispose of it at leisure. Is anything special going on there?

A letter from Manju is enclosed.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

We are leaving for the Frontier Province tomorrow. Ba will probably accompany me.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C. W. 8557. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

100. ENTRY IN VISITORS' BOOK[1]

July 4, 1939

I was delighted to visit the Indian enterprise.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-7-1939

101. FOREWORD TO "THE LATEST FAD"

I have gone through these pages from beginning to end. The booklet will supply a felt want. It is an attempt to answer the many doubts that have assailed inquiry about what has been called my 'latest fad' and that too in the domain of education ! Acharya Kripalani who has spent many years as an educationist has tried to show that this 'fad' has a sound bottom to it.

M. K. GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN, July 6, 1939

The Latest Fad

[1] The source reported that "Gandhiji, accompanied by Vallabhbhai Patel, Devdas Gandhi and Dr. Sushila Nayyar, paid a visit to the Chemical and Industrial and Pharmaceutical Laboratories (CIPLA) Ltd.", Bombay, in the afternoon.

102. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ON THE TRAIN,
July 6, 1939

MY DEAR DECEIVER,

I have simply not been able to write to you as regularly as I had liked. Even the 'library' claimed other work. You tell me you asked me a question about non-violence. I have forgotten all about it. Please repeat. I have assumed that Mahadev deals with the questions he can, for your letters are given to him as soon as I have done with them. If you permit me to retain them with the note at the top 'Not to be read' and trust that then they will not be, I would be better able to cope with your questions.

I hope all the patients are better if not well and that your flu was a passing affair.

I am writing to Datar Singh. I should have written earlier. But as you were protecting me, I did not hurry.

You should have sent me copy of your letter to Jawaharlal.[1]

I do not like your repeating you are dead. You are not dead. You have to give me much work. Any time I might have to send you to Travancore or some such place. As it is you are doing khadi and Harijan work there. Your contribution to the Education Board is quite effective. And if you have better perception of things and do not feel any conscious injustice on my part, surely there is no occasion for this deadness !

We are only four travelling—Mahadev, Bablo[2], Kanu and I. Pyarelal had a little throat operation which will detain him for three or four days. Ba won't come without Sushila and the latter could not come leaving Pyarelal to his fate. They three will follow later if I find that my stay in Frontier Province will be prolonged.

Nothing is certain about my movement. Ordinarily I should return to Segaon when you will join me. Nothing is certain about Talcher.[3] The latest from the Viceroy[4] means cutting off all contact with me. Mahadev should send you a copy of his letter and of my reply[5], if I draft it today.

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 29-6-1939.

[2] Narayan Desai, son of Mahadev Desai

[3] *Vide* "The Tragedy of Talcher", 18-4-1939 and "Talcher", 16-5-1939.

[4] *Vide* Appendix- "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 1-7-1939.

[5] Gandhiji sent a brief reply on July 12, 1939.

The question of my retirement has been exploded for the time being at any rate.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3923. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7232

103. LETTER TO S. K. BOLE

ON THE TRAIN,
July 6, 1939

DEAR RAO BAHADUR,

I have read your letter to the Prime Minister with great care.[1] I think that if you will help the Ministry you will find that no tapper need give up his tapping and there need be no unemployment. The whole of the *nira* can be turned into *gur*. Those who are used to alcoholics won't be statisfied with non-alcoholic *nira.*

I am sorry for the threat issued in your last paragraph. Request for help and threat go ill together.[2]

Yours sincerely.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 4879

104. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

ON THE TRAIN,
July 6, 1939

CHI. KANCHAN,

Though I do not write to you I do think of you. I hope you remember what I told you. I hope you are calm. Study well. Take full advantage of the quiet you have got just now and improve your knowledge. Who conducts the prayers at present? What prayers are sung in the morning and in the evening?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8292. Also C. W. 7051. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] A group of forty Bhandaris, led by the addressee, met Gandhiji on July 5 at Bombay Central and gave him a copy of their petition addressed to the Premier of Bombay; *vide* also "Bhandaris and Prohibition", 7-7-1939.

[2] The addressee subseqently sent an explanation; *vide* "An Explanation", 7-8-1939.

105. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

ON THE TRAIN,
July 6, 1939

CHI. MRIDULA,

I have spoken to Amtussalaam. For the present, I shall let Lakshmidas have Rs. 2,000 for khadi work. That work should be carried on under the name of the Jyoti Sangh or under any other name, but under the supervision of Lakshmidas. I would advise you only to collect the yarn till you are able to train a woman worker. The yarn should be tested by Lakshmidas. This he will have to do.

Sardar will speak to you about the work of training. Right now I have advised him to give you Rs. 1,000. This he will probably do. I have not had time to speak to him at length. Write to me whatever you want. Come and stay with me when you can. Do not do anything in haste.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11208. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

106. LETTER TO PYARELAL

ON THE TRAIN,
July 6, 1939

CHI. PYARELAL,

I shall wait till your next letter. Get the thing corrected by Doctor. If you quit writing for *Harijan*, Mahadev and I will be crushed under the burden. And of course you are going to shoulder the burden of the correspondence. Otherwise, Mahadev or, maybe, both of us, will have a break-down. Leave the dream state. Whatever, He wills will be; why grieve over anything? Things will happen at the appointed hour as He desires. Why should we devise schemes, nurse dreams or worry?

Sushila should give the accompanying letter to Lilavati and also comfort her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

107. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

ON THE TRAIN,
July 6, 1939

CHI. LILA,

What weakness you are displaying! It is now that you are being tested in your life. Matriculation is only an excuse God has provided. You have been sent to Vanita Vishram on that pretext. If you fail there, your ashram life will have gone in vain and my hopes will have been destroyed. Why should you be defeated by minor inconveniences? Even if you help the lady who is looking after things there, you will be doing admirable work and satisfying your needs also in the right way. But you must have that much love within you; you must have patience and courage. Bear it in mind that your [matriculation][1] is in Vanita Vishram, not in New Era[2].

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

108. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

ON THE TRAIN,
July 6, 1939

DEAR DAUGHTER,[3]

You have only to place the spinning work at Ahmedabad on a sound footing. Do whatever Lakshmidasbhai suggests in this connection. Do not spend more than Rs. 2,000 this time. Help Mridulabehn in every possible way. Do not bribe anyone into doing work. You have to do the work while preserving your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 422

[1] The source is demaged here.
[2] New Era High School, Bombay, which the addressee had joined for studies
[3] The superscription is in Urdu.

109. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[Before *July 7, 1939*][1]

STUPID DAUGHTER,

Stupid is an apt adjective for you. And how stupid? It was nothing yesterday. Do you think there was any malice in what Devdas said? If there was any it was directed towards me. And whatever he says is for the good of all of us. Where was then any place in it for anger? How you cried—and for no reason! You must shed the habit. Why so much touchiness? Send me a telegram that you have calmed down. Abandon this stupidity. Ask Devdas's forgiveness. This does not mean that you should do everything that Devdas says. Do only what you think proper. Persuade him patiently. I want a letter from you every day. I shall send you a telegram from Abbottabad to say what you should do. Keep writing to Vijaya and others.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

110. BHANDARIS AND PROHIBITION

As the train taking me to the Frontier Province was steaming out of the station, Rao Bahadur Bole handed me a copy of the petition of the Bhandaris of Bombay addressed to the Prime Minister. He pressed me to read it and send him my reply. I read the petition after resting my tired limbs and sent him my reply.[2]

The petition is an interesting document and deserves public notice. According to it the Bhandaris got the concession to tap trees as early as 1672 as a mark of favour for military services rendered to the then British Power. Then they lost the concession. But they were able to continue their occupation, and to the present that is the occupation of about 8,000 people.

The petitioners say they are not against prohibition but they plead for gradualness extending to a few years.

[1] The date has been inferred from the sentence "I shall send you a telegram from Abbottabad". Gandhiji was in Abbottabad from July 7 to 26, 1939.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to S. K. Bole", 6-7-1939.

Then comes the sting at the very tail end. It runs :

> If the Government fail to pay heed to all these entreaties and leave the Bhandaris to their fate as it falls upon them, we do not know what course these poorly educated and uneducated people may follow in their sheer disappointment. We are afraid they may even go to the length of adopting not only Congress methods of seeking relief but adopting more drastic measures in their frenzy.

The threat, in my opinion, vitiates a good case and raises grave doubts about the *bona fides* of the signatories. Are the Government to yield to cold reason or to the cold steel?

If the Bhandaris have a good case, why do they not rely upon its commanding public sympathy? Let me inform the public that the Ministers are trying their best, in spite of threats, to remove every kind of injustice. In these days of the growing violence of the mind, threats must be regarded as the ordinary lot of Ministers elected under the extensive democratic franchise. They may not be deterred even at the cost of their offices or lives from doing what they hold to be their duty, nor can they afford to be angry and refuse to do justice because as in the case under consideration, the petition for justice ends by issuing an ugly threat. I have, therefore, pleasure in informing the public that the Ministers are applying themselves to the task of keeping every tapper employed at the very work to which he has been used. Only the tappers have got to help the Ministers to apply the remedy. It consists in the tappers tapping *nira* during the *nira* season and turning it into *gur*. This requires honest care and attention. The pots have to be treated as has been pointed out in these columns. The *nira* need not be drunk. Pure *nira* cannot take the place of toddy which contains a certain percentage of alcohol and which therefore changes in quality. Pure *nira* is food even as sugar is. Toddy, even sweet, is not in the same sense and to the same extent as *nira*. Hence *nira* will be turned into *gur* which can compete with the ordinary *gur* which is often dirty, adulterated, full of grit. Palm *gur* is any day more tasty than sugarcane *gur*. It can be eaten raw whereas sugarcane *gur* being much sweeter does not admit of being eaten raw. And palm *gur*, when it is manufactured under State supervision, will always carry with it the guarantee of being pure. Many sweets can be manufactured out of palm *gur*. But in order to accomplish this great task wholehearted co-operation of the Bhandaris is necessary. If they are in earnest, they will help the Government and help themselves. What to do during the

off-season will be a question. I have not been able to study the condition under which toddy is drawn. But this is a matter of detail and adjustment.

ON THE WAY TO PESHAWAR, July 7, 1939

Harijan, 15-7-1939

111. CABLE TO GENERAL J. C. SMUTS[1]

ABBOTTABAD,
[On or after *July 7, 1939*][2]

WHY IS AGREEMENT OF 1914 BEING VIOLATED WITH YOU AS WITNESS? IS THERE NO HELP FOR INDIANS EXCEPT TO PASS THROUGH FIRE ?[3]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

112. WAR SPURS INVENTION OF NEW MACHINE

The invention of a revolutionary type of spinning machine that will raise the daily output of the individual Chinese spinner from its present standard of one pound of yarn a day to an average of between twenty and thirty pounds, by Mr. Kanya Nieh, of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and a graduate of Cornell University and the Massachussetts Institute of Technology, was announced in Chingkiang on May 26. The invention, stimulated and hastened by the demands of China's war-time economy, represents the fruit of six years of research and experimentation, during the last twenty-two months of which the inventor was constantly moving about the country as he followed the National Government in its transfer to the interior of the province. . . .

Mr. Nieh's new frames are based somewhat remotely on the old native spinning methods of China. He studied and analysed according to modern principles all the motions that go into the process of spinning until he had reduced each one to its essential scientific function—then he constructed a machine which utilized and intensified all the useful motions in the old process of spinning, and which discarded the useless motions which serve

[1] Jan Christiaan Smuts (1870-1950); South African soldier and statesman; Prime Minister, 1919-24 and 1939-48

[2] Gandhiji reached Abbottabad on July 7, 1939.

[3] *Vide* also "A Letter", 7-4-1939, "Message to Indians in South Africa", 23-5-1939 and "A.I.C.C. Resolutions", 23-6-1939.

only to waste the individual's energy and time. The machines that Mr. Nieh has built according to these principles of scientific analysis are strong, sturdy machines that are at the same time extremely cheap. They are built basically of wood, with copper used as the chief metal. Iron and steel are used only at a few key parts, while the cogs are made of hard wood. The new machine is so made that it works almost automatically with a minimum of exertion on the part of the operator. The energy to operate the machine is supplied by a foot treadle which the operator keeps in motion. . . .

The actual introduction of the new machine to the people will fall to the lot of the Chinese Industrial Co-operatives and several private concerns. The Chinese Industrial Co-operatives plan to establish in the coming year over 10,000 co-operatives, of which at least thirty percent will be textile co-operatives. It is the belief of the Co-operatives that of the normal consuming capacity of Free China of 10,000,000 bolts of cloth a year, at least, 3,000,000 will be produced by its co-operatives within the next twelve months. In the production of these textiles, the new spinning frames will play an important part. It is planned to introduce the new machine to its users at the rate of two machines per family. Cotton yarn, now selling in the interior at 2.30 dollars per pound, will be reduced to a fraction of its former cost.

The foregoing[1] was received by Shri Aryanayakam[2] from a friend in China. I wish I could give more details about this invention. For me its merit lies in China finding it necessary to introduce village, in the place of town, production.

Harijan, 8-7-1939

113. JAIPUR

Those who are interested in Jaipur affairs have been living in suspense for they had learnt that some talks were taking place between the Prime Minister[3] of the State and Sheth Jamnalalji. I regret to have to inform them that nothing worth has come out of the talks. Therefore the struggle continues. Even civil disobedience continues in a way though it is suspended in regard to further formation of *jathas*[4] for courting arrest. Those who courted arrests remain in the State prisons. They have not sought release. They will come out in due

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.
[2] E. W. Aryanayakam, Secretary, Hindustani Talimi Sang.
[3] Sir Beauchamp St. John
[4] Batches

course on the termination of their sentences. Shethji's detention[1] is indefinite. And he will not come out by undertaking to leave the State on release, and the authorities will not permit him to remain in Jaipur as a free man in spite of the fact that further courting of arrests has stopped. Thus they will not allow Shethji even to do constructive work among the people. They know that they have no fear of any secret propaganda or his part on his saying one thing and doing the contrary. His reputation for [the] strictest honesty is too well established to admit of any doubt.

Some complication has arisen because Shethji is suffering from pains in the knees. The State Medical Officer advises Shethji to go to Europe or at least to the seaside for treatment. He is himself doing all he can, but he is of opinion that change of place is indicated. Shethji whilst he is under detention would not go out of Jaipur even for the sake of getting well. He thinks that self-respect requires unconditional release. He will not think of a change so long as he is under a ban for which he feels there is no justification. Since civil disobedience is suspended there is no warrant whatsoever for detain-ing Jamnalalji in custody. Why won't the authorities release him and arrest him when he commits an offence against the laws of the State? To say the least there is something uncanny about the treatment of Sheth Jamnalalji. It is the duty of the Jaipur authorities either to justify the indefinite detention or to release him unconditionally.

The Jaipurians have been asking me how long the embargo on their civil resistance will last. I can only answer, as long as the atm-osphere demands suspension. Meanwhile let them carry out the constructive programme. I retain the opinion that no one is fit for offering civil disobedience who has not satisfied the conditions I have laid down. And there is always a saving clause about all my advice. No one need follow it unless it appeals to his head and heart. No one who has honestly the inner call need be deterred from obeying it because of my advice. In other words, it applies only to those who are not conscious of any inner call and who have faith in my riper experience and soundness of my judgment.

Though the talks have broken down, the authorities are not absolved from the duty of finding a solution for the impasse. Absence of civil disobedience does not mean cessation of agitation in some

[1] In Jaipur jail

form or other for securing the rudiments of freedom for which the fight was undertaken. Public opinion will give the authorities no rest. Let the Jaipurians, therefore, know that so long as they have the will they have the power. And it increases with every effort to keep it under check. Every power is not meant to be immediately used. Garnering it often makes it far more effective than if it is used the moment it is generated.

ABBOTTABAD, July 8, 1939.

Harijan, 15-7-1939

114. TO THE PRINCES

Several persons interested in the States have asked me what in my opinion is the minimum that all States should guarantee in order to come in line with the enlightened opinion in what is called British India. I cannot vouch for what the Congress would say if it had to give any such opinion. Perhaps it would be wrong for the Congress to have or to give such opinion. A democratic body can only pronounce opinion on events as they happen. Be that as it may, the opinion I am about to give is only my own and binds no one but me.

The minimum then that all States great and small can give is :

1. Full civil liberty, so long as it is not used to promote violence directly or indirectly. This includes freedom of the Press and freedom to receive newspapers which do not promote violence.

2. Freedom to the people of the States to form associations and educate public opinion in favour of establishing responsible government in their own States.

3. Freedom for Indians outside particular States to enter them without let or hindrance so long as their activities are not directed towards the destruction of the States in question.

4. The privy purse should be limited so as not to exceed one-tenth of the income where it ranges between Rs. 10 to 15 lakhs per year, and in no case should the purse exceed Rs. 3 lakhs per year, and should include all the private expenses of the Ruler (e. g., palace expenses, cars, stables, the Ruler's guests) except those which have reference to performance of public duty which should be clearly defined.

5. Judiciary to be independent and permanent and free of all interference. In order to ensure uniformity of practice and strict impartiality, there should be an appeal to the High Court of the Province within which the State in question is situated. This may not be possible without a change in the law governing the High Courts. It can, I imagine, be easily altered if the States agree.

I have purposely avoided reference to constitutional reform. This will depend upon the situation as it exists in every State. I should assume that where local public opinion demands it, the Ruler is bound to respond.

The most contentious part of my minimum is perhaps the right of appeal to the High Courts. And yet unless some such arrangement is made, pure justice cannot be guaranteed in the States whatever may be said to the contrary. This is one institution which the British have built up with patient care. No doubt the High Court procedure is expensive and far from expeditious. The poor of the land cannot reach it. The processes are cumbersome. Often the unscrupulous win. With all their faults, however, and except where high politics have come in, the decisions of High Courts have been just and fearless. I can think of no easy and ready-made check save that of the High Courts on the vagaries, and sometimes subservience to the executive, of the judiciary in the States. But I am not wedded to my solution. If something else equally effective can be devised, I should have no objection.

One thing seems to me to be clear. If the transfer of power from the Princes to the people is to take place without violence, and if the Princes are to live as such, they will have to adapt themselves to the changed circumstances. Very few people have faith in my plan, viz., the plan of Princes voluntarily parting with power and becoming real trustees.The critics say it is Utopian and against human nature. I must advocate it so long as I believe in its practical possibility. The world is inevitably moving to self-destruction or to a non-violent solution of all its ailments, moral, social, economic and political. The threatened world war will bring us nearer the desirable solution if a respectable part of it survives the impending catastrophe. Whoever recognizes that the only escape from the impending fate is a non-violent solution will, therefore, apply it to his own problems, whether they are domestic, communal or any other. Non-violence is a universal law acting under

all circumstances. Disregard of it is the surest way to des-truction. It is only a question of time.

The Princes would not solve the riddle by the proposed combination with Garasias, Muslims, Scheduled Classes, and their own subjects who are too cowed down to resist. It is a combination that is bound to break under its own weight. It is itself an inflammable mixture. And a combination against whom? The Congress which seeks to represent all these not excluding the Princes themselves? The Congress will die a natural death when it ceases to be national in every sense of the term. It has that unbroken tradi-tion for the past fifty years. Whatever transformation it under-goes, it is the only institution[1] that will succeed British Imperialism whose days as imperialism are numbered. British politicians realize this. They would not resist, do not want to resist, its transformation or destruction. The imperialism is increasingly becoming a dead weight if only because it is based on highly organized violence. The Princes may ignore the Congress for a time. But they cannot for all time. Some are reported to have said that after all it was composed of Banias who would show the white feather on a few knock-out blows on the head by the strong combination pictured above. I would like respectfully to point out that the Congress is not composed of Banias who can be counted on one's fingertips. The millions who took part in the civil disobedience fights were not Banias. I do not thereby mean to imply that they were desirous of giving blow for a blow. Many could. But they had forsworn violence. Many Congress heads were broken by something severer than knock-out blows. All I wish to imply is that the Congress is not composed of mere cowards. Non-violence and cowardice go ill together. I can imagine a fully armed man to be at heart a coward. Possession of arms implies an element of fear, if not cowardice. But true non-violence is an impossibility without the possession of unadulterated fearlessness.

I beseech the Princes not to underrate the Congress as a force in the country. Its policy still remains non-violent. I admit it is fast tending towards violence. I and a few of my companions are putting forth every effort in favour of non-violence. I ask the Princes,for their own sakes and for the sake of the country that has given them birth, to throw in their weight in favour of non-violence. It seems to be touch-and-go with the Congress. It will either become growingly non-violent or will presently become a violent organization, not necessarily doing

[1] The source, however, has "constitution".

immediate deeds of violence but preparing itself for ultimate violence. It would not harbour cowards. If it does, it will cease to be the power it has become. Every Indian, high or low, (there is no high and no low for the Congress) has to make his choice.

ABBOTTABAD, July 8, 1939.

Harijan, 15-7-1939

115. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 8, 1939

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE, SIMLA WEST

ARRIVED LAST EVENING. ALL GOOD CONDITION. WEATHER MODERATE. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3924. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7233

116. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 8, 1939

MY DEAR DECEIVER,

I sent you a wire today as letter would have taken long. I hope you had my letter[1] written on the way. I met Balvantsinha in Delhi. He will follow the instructions. Let us hope the experiment[2] will be a success. Lilavati's[3] may not be. She is not happy in the place where she is boarding. She is not able to put up with any inconvenience. However, I have spoken to her and implored her not to give in without an effort.

The weather here is ideal for us all. During the day a punka becomes necessary. I sit bare-bodied, nothing but a thin woollen blanket was needed during the night.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 6-7-1939.

[2] Balvantsinha was to join Datar Singh's dairy near Lahore; *vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 15-6-1939.

[3] She went to Bombay for her matriculation.

I had a long letter from Haksar[1] pressing me to go to Kashmir while he is there. I have not yet acknowledged it. I hope to, tomorrow. I shall send it[2] to you when I have done with it.

I hope you have got rid of your flu and that the other patients are also doing well.

Love.

Tyrant

From the original: C. W. 3925. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7234

117. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

ABBOTTABAD,
July 8, 1939

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. We arrived here yesterday. Mahadev, Bablo and Kanu are with me. Pyarelal has had to have an incision made under his tongue and has had to stay on in Bombay. And so Ba and Sushila also have stayed back. All the three of them will come over here when Pyarelal is discharged. Mirabehn must have reached Patna. She will work there for the present. You will of course see her. She is likely to attend the Congress meeting. We shall probably be here for a month. Sushila is all right now. Amtul Salaam will do khadi work in Ahmedabad. Jayaprakash had met me. He will probably come to see me here also. We had talked about you. He says you are to be the leader of women volunteers. But in that case your study will suffer. But that will not matter. Do the duty that comes to you unsought. The other things discussed were about our reunion. But he will not accept khadi. And I am not likely to give it up. That makes our working together difficult. Ba is keeping well. I am of course all right. There is no change in the diet. I keep fairly good strength. The weather here is not so cold. It is not too hot either. Give the enclosure to Mirabehn.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3533

[1] *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 13-6-1939.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 9-7-1939.

118. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 8, 1939

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have only a few minutes today. You must have received the letter[1] which I wrote on the way. We are all well. There is no cold here. It is quite warm. But no hot breeze.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 423

119. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[2]

ABBOTTABAD,
July 8, 1939

I observe that political prisoners of Bengal in Dumdum and Alipore jails are determined upon hunger-strike for their unconditional release. I would urge them strongly not to take to hunger-strike. I am sure Sarat Babu, who is handling the case, thinks likewise. I would ask the prisoners to be guided by Sarat Babu.[3]

Harijan, 15-7-1939; also *The Hindu* , 9-7-1939

120. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS [4]

ABBOTTABAD,
July 8, 1939

I have carefully read Sir Raza Ali's condemnation of my advice[5] to Indians in South Africa not to embark upon a non-European front. My advice may be bad on merits but does not become bad because I have been absent from South Africa for a quarter of a

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 6-7-1939.

[2] In *Harijan*, this appeared under the title "Bengal Political Prisoners".

[3] *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 14-6-1939, and "Telegram to Secretary, Political Prisoners' Release Sub-Committee", on or before 9-7-1939

[4] This is extracted from "Notes" in *Harijan*. According to *The Hindu*, Gandhiji made this statement "on being shown Sir Raza Ali's statement on A. I. C. C. resolution regarding South Africa"; *vide* "A.I.C.C. Resolutions", 23-6-1939.

[5] *Vide* "South Africa Resolution", "26-6-1939.

century. I have no doubt about the soundness of my advice. However much one may sympathize with the Bantus, Indians cannot make common cause with them. I doubt if the Bantus themselves will as a class countenance any such move. They can only damage and complicate their cause by mixing it up with the Indian, as Indians would damage theirs by such mixture. But neither the A. I. C. C. resolution nor my advice need deter the Indians from forming a non-European front if they are sure thereby of winning their freedom. Indeed, had they thought it beneficial or possible, they would have formed it long ago.

Harijan, 15-7-1939; also *The Hindu*, 9-7-1939

121. MESSAGE TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

[On or after *July 8, 1939*][1]

Congratulations on the opening of the Meenakshi Temple for Harijans.[2] Hope you are well.

Love.

BAPU

The Hindu, 11-7-1939.

122. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, POLITICAL PRISONERS' RELEASE SUB-COMMITTEE [3]

ABBOTTABAD,
[On or before *July 9, 1939*][4]

BE GUIDED BY SARAT BABU. HUNGER-STRIKE, I CONSIDER, IS BAD AND INADVISABLE IN ANY CASE.[5]

The Hindu, 9-7-1939

[1] From the reference to Meenakshi Temple, which was thrown open to Harijans on July 8

[2] *Vide* also "Meenakshi Temple Open", 12-7-1939.

[3] Of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee

[4] The telegram was reported under the date-line "Calcutta, July 9".

[5] *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 8-7-1939.

123. LETTER TO SIKANDAR HYAT KHAN

ABBOTTABAD,
July 9, 1939

DEAR SIR SIKANDAR[1] ,

Parsi friends told me with glee that you had described the prohibition programme of the Bombay Ministry as a 'madcap scheme'. Can this be true? If so, why do you consider it to be such?

I have been receiving letters telling me that you contemplate introducing separate electorates for Harijans at Municipal elections! I wonder if there is truth in this information.

I observe that your scheme[2] is already before the public. I have not had a moment to give to its study. I hope early next week to take it up and the papers you were good enough to leave with me.

I hope your backache has subsided. I would strongly recommend nature cure as a permanent remedy. It consists in strict diet, vapour baths and cold hip-baths. Abdominal mud bandages help considerably. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur has some experience of this treatment. She has tried it herself off and on. She is your neighbour. Do discuss it with her.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

124. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 9, 1939

MY DEAR DECEIVER,

I wrote yesterday. But the post has not gone yet. So this will be in the packet.

J. L.'s letter is good. I hope you will give him your opinion of *Hind Swaraj*. The deadness must go. Eczema, laryngitis are your two enemies. You must drive them out. You have to be in Segaon, the

[1] Premier of the Punjab

[2] Alternative scheme for Federation, which was finally published on July 30; *vide*, "Letter to Sikandar Hyat Khan", 17-7-1939.

moment I reach there. Both the maladies can be brought under control in Segaon. Nothing is certain about Talcher. I am hoping that I won't have to go there. J. L.'s letter herewith. Haksar's also. I am telling him I would try to go to Kashmir.[1] His letter is good though difficult to understand.

Nothing can be done by you about the Viceregal letter. Things should be allowed to take their own course. I do not yet know when Ba will come. There is no reply to my wire. Mira has gone to Patna on Rajen Babu's wire. She will be happy there. She has made several friends among Englishmen and Indians. It is a pity she could not hit it off with Khan Saheb and could not stand any altitude. However she might come back in October. I leave these parts by 5th August.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3926. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7235

125. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

ABBOTTABAD,
July 9, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

I am glad that you are keeping good health.

We are likely to spend at the most one month in this district.

As a small incision was made under Pyarelal's tongue, he had to stay behind. Hence Ba and Sushila also stayed on. They are likely to return in about three days. Ba is not going to Sabarmati. I am in excellent health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10013. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] *Vide* also Letter to Amrit Kaur", 8-7-1939.

126. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

ABBOTTABAD,
July 9, 1939

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I read here today your letter of the 4th. Your complaint is justified. It is strange that there is no letter from Sushila. Shakaribehn is bound to feel hurt. If I were in your place I also would feel hurt. A calamity like this is an example of my mismanagement. I hold myself responsible for the mismanagement among those around me. Shankaran had a narrow escape. He is better. He will perhaps take a month to get well. If Sushila did not write about the old man's dressing, it was a serious lapse on her part. I think she would not commit a mistake like that. I hope you will continue to hear from her. Lilavati's address is: New Era High School, Bombay. She is staying in Vanita Vishram but she is not happy there. Let us see what happens. Amtul Salaam is at Sabarmati Harijan Ashram. She seems likely to prove a good worker.

As an incision has been made under Pyarelal's tongue, Ba, Pyarelal and Sushila are expected to come after about four or five days. The weather here is better than at Segaon. It is neither too cold nor too hot.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8353. Also C. W. 7052. Courtesy: Chimanlal N. Shah

127. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

ABBOTTABAD,
July 9, 1939

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I hope you reached the dairy farm today on time. About your expenses there, I have written to Sardar Saheb that I shall be responsible for whatever expenses are incurred.

It is hot here too; but no hot breeze. I sit bare-bodied.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1922

128. INTERVIEW TO L. W. JARDINE[1]

ABBOTTABAD,
[*July 9, 1939*][2]

GANDHIJI: That is the only correct position, and no other is possible. If you have followed my writings, you know that I have declared that no one is competent to offer satyagraha unless he has a living faith in God. I had formerly not the courage to say so bluntly to my co-workers. I knew it was difficult to get a heart-response to this thing. For there are many who say they have living faith and yet are not godfearing, and others who scoff at the idea of believing in God and yet are at heart godfearing. But I said it did not matter how difficult it was, I must put it forward as I know it.

[JARDINE:] You came only recently to the conclusion that you must insist on the condition?

G. Yes. I felt I must make it an indispensable condition. I knew it, I practised it, but had not declared it for acceptance by all. I knew some resented this and even imputed to me motives of excluding them from the chosen circle. But I said I must take even the risk of being misunderstood, but must declare the truth at all cost. How to reduce the whole thing to practice I do not know.

J. That is simply terrific. To hear you say that it is difficult is tremendous, for it is an encouragement to me. There is a kind of hero-worship that attributes to you superhuman powers. It is something to hear that you have difficulties and are human, and thus to feel kinship with you.

Then there is another thing that has come home to me. You must not think of taking but always of giving something.

G. That is right in a sense, but you can't give without taking, and to go on saying that you will always give would be humbug.

[1] Revenue Commissioner, Frontier Province; President, Oxford Movement. The interview is extracted from "The Oxford Group and Moral Rearmament" by Mahadev Desai, who explains : "We have found them refreshingly frank . . . On some of the basic principles we found ourselves in complete agreement . . . The friend who met Gandhiji described the object of the movement as the 'eradication of fear by bringing people under the guidance of God'."

[2] *Vide* the following item.

Honesty, purity, unselfishness and love are their fourfold principles, and the friend said that whilst the first two would come under the heading 'truth', the other two would come under the heading 'non-violence or bravery'. . . . Gandhiji asked:

How is a civilian who is trained not to establish any human contact with the ruled to fare under this rule? Perhaps you will not admit that they are so trained ?

J. No

G. Well, you will by and by. I do not make a charge of it. It was worldly wisdom that dictated the course to those who organized the Service. How could they allow them to live on terms of familiarity with those over whom they had to rule, especially when the rulers were only a handful?And yet if you accept the creed of the Oxford Group, you have to establish human contact with me. And if you do it with me, you must do it with others. You will have to contact the whole of India through me, and I with all Englishmen through you. That at any rate is what the Oxford Group must stand for, otherwise it would be like many other similar movements.

J. You are right, and that is why I kept out of freemasonry. We have to meet under God, and we shall not make demands from another which are inconsistent with the guidance of God.

G. Anyway, I have expressed my difficulty.

J. A programme of moral rearmament for the world cannot fail to lessen the dangers of armed conflict. Such moral rearmament must receive support on a world-wide basis.

Gandhiji was invited to put his signature to a "response" to President Roosevelt's message.[1]

[1] Mahadev Desai explains: ". . . President Roosevelt advocated, before four thousand persons assembled in Constitution Hall in America, moral rearmament as a means of maintaining world peace. . . . Two of the paragraphs in it read thus:

'MRA means first of all a change of heart. It means admission of our responsibility for the past, a frank acceptance by nations as by individuals of the standards of honesty, purity, unselfishness and love daily listening and daily obedience to God's direction.

'At this fateful hour we pledge ourselves to give the last full measure of our devotion—the service of heart, mind, will—to the Moral and Spiritual Rearmament of our nation—to building the world of tomorrow, the world of new men, new nations, where every resource of human genius is liberated under God's leadership to enrich the heritage of all mankind.' "

With all deference to those in India who had signed this "response" Gandhiji said he could not in all conscience sign this. He could not endorse a falsehood. How can India accept responsibility for the past?

All this has no application to me. The whole paragraph applies to exploiting nations, whereas India is an exploited nation. The second paragraph too applies to nations of the West and not to us. The whole appeal is so unreal. I can think of moral rearmament, but that would be in a different setting. I can think of communal unity through moral rearmament. As a member of an exploited nation I can have a different moral rearmament programme, and I may invite China to it, but how can I invite the West or Japan? And just as it would be unreal for me to invite the West, it would to that extent be unreal for the West to invite India. Let them shed their exploitation policy and their immoral gains first.[2]

Harijan, 12-8-1939.

129. TELEGRAM TO PYARELAL

ABBOTTABAD,
July 10, 1939

PYARELAL
BIRLA HOUSE
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD
BOMBAY

IF YOU ARE WELL START INSTANTLY.[1] WIRE

BAPU

From a photostat: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. 8ushila Nayyar

[1] *The Bombay Chronicle*, 13-7-1939, reported: "Jardine had a further interview with Gandhiji" on July 12.

[2] The addressee who had had a small incision made under his tongue, could not accompany Gandhiji when he left Bombay on July 5 for the Frontier Province.

130. LETTER TO MAURICE FRYDMAN

ABBOTTABAD,
July 10, 1939

MY DEAR FRYDMAN,

I am only today able to deal with your letter of 18th May. You say there should be no self-torture, self-compulsion, self-violence in the practice of non-violence. This is a profound error. There is no salvation without the cross. Self-torture is only so called. The right word is self-purification. The flesh must be subdued. The flesh has gained such mastery over us that it has to be dislodged. We are born slaves of the flesh. Freedom from that bondage is mastery over the flesh, the self. All *tapasya* is self-torture. All restraint is self-tourture. It is a surgical operation which has got to be performed. The fleshly mantle divides you from me. I must destroy it if I love you, i. e., if I want to be one with you. Its destruction in this life means its complete subjection. Is this not quite clear? Love to you and Appu.

BAPU

From a copy: C. W. 11330

131. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

ABBOTTABAD,
July 10, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

I have your second letter. I gave Jardine yesterday one hour. He was quite satisfied. He said he would come again if he felt the call. He spoke very nicely of you. Your host here whom Mahadev has met adores you. Kazi Saheb wanted to know why you had left and why you had not returned. I told him about the climate and the altitude.[1] I told him too that if you were needed you would return in October. Badshah Khan was present during the conversation. So far as I can fathom him, he does not want to lose you.

Kisenchand Bhatia came in today (Monday). The talks begin tomorrow. Badshah Khan is away keeping an appointment. He remains as lovable as before to me. But that is nothing. What you feel is the only right [thing] for you.

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur" 15-6-1939 and 9-7-1939.

Mahadev Desai has gone to inspect Nathiagali. The hostess[1] here is anxious for me to go there. I am not anxious to change. This place is good enough and cool enough for me.

There is no news from Pyarelal as to when they are coming.

I am still keeping well. You can easily imagine from my having to use the left hand how much writing the right must have done. Jayaprakash came in today.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6445. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 10040

132. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

ABBOTTABAD,
July 10, 1939

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

I got your letter when I was very busy. I could not, therefore, call for Ambashankar Vaidya. I do not know if he had come of his own accord.

Ba was to have gone to Sabarmati, but the plan was changed at the last minute. She is not with me, either, but she will soon join me. I will not trouble you at present on her account.

I am very happy that Chandanbehn is improving, because it was I who had insisted on putting her under your treatment. You may now keep her as long as necessary and send her back after she is completely cured.

Vijaya doesn't seem to have completely recovered. That responsibility, therefore, still remains with you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2906. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya

[1] Mrs. Parmanand

133. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

ABBOTTABAD,
July 10, 1939

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I hope Chandan is improving. I have had a letter from her. Shankar was improving rapidly. Aren't they both, Shankar and Chandan, fortunate? Shankar should be arriving there soon now.

You had asked for Kaka's opinion, but he has left the decision to me. If Chandan does not require your presence now and you also feel the same, please return to Wardha.

Ba has fully recovered. But, as a small incision was made under Pyarelal's tongue, Sushila and Ba had to stay back. They will be leaving in a day or two.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10789

134. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

ABBOTTABAD,
July 10, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I am worried for there has been no news from you since Wednesday. If you have not written anything by the time you get this letter, send a telegram. I hope Balkrishna is well, and your worry has ended. At the moment your duty is to stay put. We shall see what can be done when I come down.

Sushila, Pyarelal, Ba are still in Bombay.

I hope you have found a good help.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4322

135. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

ABBOTTABAD,
July 10, 193 [*9*][1]

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have been writing regularly. How about you? I hope your health is all right. We are all well.

Ba and others have not arrived yet. A telegram intimating their departure is expected today or tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 237

136. LETTER TO MIRABEHN[2]

ABBOTTABAD,
July 11, 1939

MIRABEHN
C/O KHADI BHANDAR
MADHUBANI

YOU CAN REMAIN IF HEALTH CONTINUES GOOD.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6446. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 10041

[1] The original, in Gandhiji's hand reads "1930"; but Gandhiji was not at Abbottabad in that year.

[2] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira,* Mirabehn explains: "The long delay in Bapu's coming to the Frontier had told severely on my health and at last I returned to Sevagram. Knowing that Bapu wanted me to work independently, I mustered up courage and went on to Bihar. In the mean time, Bapu's long-postponed visit to the Frontier materialized, and the sorrow in my heart became further accentuated."

137. LETTER TO SHAMLAL

ABBOTTABAD,
July 11, 1939

DEAR LALA SHAMLAL,

I kept your letter of 6th April till today. I was glad you were able to make up your mind. I hope the vow is being kept and that keeping of it is doing you good.[1]

Yours,

BAPU

LALA SHAMLAL, M. L. A. (CENTRAL)

From a photostat: G. N. 1288

138. LETTER TO VIDYAVATI

ABBOTTABAD,
July 11, 1939

CHI. VIDYA,

I had your letter of June 13. I could not reply earlier.

My health is now all right. Do come over when I reach Segaon.

Tell me all about the conditions there. If you write to Rajendra Babu and others, they will all listen to you.

Where is Lakshmi these days? What does she do? Have you fully recovered? I shall be here till the end of this month, if not longer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati File. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

[1] Acknowledging the addressee's reply dated July 13, Pyarelal wrote (G. N. 1289): "Bapu was very glad that you had taken to spinning regularly and were feeling attached to it. He would like you to learn spinning on the *takli*."

139. NOTES

A REPUDIATION

Janab Yusuf Meherally, President, Cutch Prajakiya Parishad, writes:

> In a recent issue of the *Harijan*, under the caption "Leaders Must Lead"[1], you have made reference to Cutch which raises one or two points that need to be cleared up. The note has it that a Cutch worker informed you that "some leaders in Cutch are telling the people there that but for your stopping civil disobedience they would today be enjoying responsible government or something near it."
>
> We were not a little surprised to read this, for to the best of my knowledge none of our responsible workers in Cutch has said this. Since the suspension of the satyagraha by us under your advice on April 1, I alone must have addressed over 200 meetings all over Cutch. My other colleagues in Cutch have similarly done a great deal of touring. But nowhere have our leading workers given expression to such sentiments. In fact, at a public meeting in the capital town of Bhuj, which is our headquarters, I asked the large gathering present if any among them had heard these or similar words. The unanimous reply was in the negative. I asked again if there were any person in the audience who had recollection of hearing anything that even resembled this. Not one such person was there. I do not wish to labour the point any further. But we could not help feeling hurt that you should have lent the weight of your name to a statement which on further enquiry you would have found to be incorrect.

I gladly publish this repudiation. But I must say that there was no occasion for the President to feel hurt. Had I mentioned names, I would certainly have referred to him before writing the note. But when a responsible worker asked me if I had stopped civil disobedience in Cutch and wanted a public declaration from me, I could not wait for confirmation before giving my answer. Nor does the present repudiation take the matter any further than where it was left by my note except that Janab Meherally and those whom he asked did not make the statement alluded to. The proper procedure is to challenge my informant to produce the names of those whom he knew had made the statement imputed to them or unreservedly to withdraw his

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 7-6-1939.

allegation. I may inform the reader that I have adopted the procedure myself and asked my informant to produce the names or to withdraw his allegation. Meanwhile my note has served a very useful purpose in the other States if not in Cutch. The leaders have a greater sense of responsibility and realize that my opinion should have no weight with them except to the extent that it appeals to their heads and hearts. They are solely responsible for any action they take. And naturally. They alone know the situation at first hand within their own spheres of action.

THE WAY TO DO IT

Narandas Gandhi is khadi-mad. He is a good teacher after my style and an able accountant, but has been for years a staunch believer in the gospel of khadi. He devotes about four hours daily to spinning. His output gives him khadi enough for his house-hold. Five years ago he conceived the idea of popularizing khadi and raising funds for public services by dedicating as many days as my years at the time of my birthday. He began with my 66th year. I attach the greatest importance to my service of the poor through khadi. I do not regard it as a mad man's mad idea. It cannot be so mad when it is remembered that it has put into the pockets of Hindu and Muslim spinners and weavers nearly five crores of rupees. Though, therefore, Narandas Gandhi's enterprise is connected with my name, I do not hesitate to advertise it year after year. His ambition rises as years roll by. And it has been always hitherto more than fulfilled. He began by asking co-workers to contribute in all 66,000 yards of yarn and collecting 66 coins from those who would care to give them. Collection of yarn was made from all over India. Collection of coin was naturally confined to Rajkot for it was matter of door-to-door begging. This time Narandas Gandhi hopes to receive, instead of seventy thousand, 70 lakhs of yards of yarn. Is there anything which the determination of the good cannot achieve?[1] It should not be difficult of fulfilment if 100[2] volunteers spin 1,000 yards of yarn daily from 2nd August for seventy days. The programme commences on 2nd August and finishes on 10th October. A fast spinner would do 1,000 yards in three hours. But an average spinner would easily do it in four hours. If Narandas secures the co-

[1] This sentence is from the Gujarati leaflet, "Note on *Rentia Baras*", written by Narandas Gandhi (C. W. 8566).

[2] The source has "700" and "7,000" a misprint; *vide* also "Notes", 6-8-1939.

operation of 1,000[1] volunteers, the output need not be more than 100 yards per day. That means giving less than thirty minutes daily. And of course merit lies in an increasing number of volunteers responding every year. The virtue of khadi lies in bringing the distribution of the work of spinning as near the individual use of khadi as possible. The spinning provides the best and the easiest method of voluntary and useful co-operation. India has man-power in crores and that is why it does not require giant soul-less machines.[2] Given the co-operation of crores of people, it would be child's play for them to produce cloth for their own use. That would save the drain of crores of rupees to foreign countries and the wealth would automatically be distributed among crores of people. Let me hope Narandas Gandhi will secure the association of many volunteers in his enterprise. They should send their names and addresses to him as early as possible. The money contributions and the proceeds from the sale of yarn or khadi as the case may be, though they will be nominally presented to me, will be returned by me to be equally divided in three parts for Harijan and khadi work in Kathiawar and the Rajkot Rashtriyashala.

ABBOTTABAD, July 12, 1939.

Harijan, 22-7-1939

140. MEENAKSHI TEMPLE OPEN

I have before me Rameshwari Devi's address to the Tamilnad Provincial Harijan Temple-entry Conference held at Madura on 13th June last. I had a letter from her describing how successful her tour seemed to have been from the numbers who attended her meetings and the enthusiasm they showed. She had also expressed the hope that the famous Meenakshi temple was likely soon to be opened to Harijans. Little did I then know that the temple was to be opened so soon. But the wonderful event happened on the 8th instant.

It is a great event in the campaign against untouchability and the movement for the opening of temples to Harijan. The Proclamation opening the State temples of Travancore was no doubt a very big step. But it was the prerogative of the Maharaja. He had in his Dewan a wise adviser. The Maharaja, the Maharani and the Dewan brought about

[1] The source has "700" and "7,000" a misprint; *vide* also "Notes", 6-8-1939.

[2] This and the following two sentences are from the Gujarati.

the transformation. But the opening of the celebrated temple of Madura is a greater event in that it is the popular will that has brought about the happy consummation. It reflects a decided conversion of the temple-goers of the Meenakshi temple. Shri Vaidyanatha Aiyar and his co-workers deserve all the praise for the ceaseless effort that they have put forth in educating public opinion.

Let us hope that this opening will be followed up by the opening of the other great temples of the South. There should be no hurry, no hustling of the public. The opinion of the temple-goers is of the greatest value. Theirs should be the deciding voice. The workers will consolidate every gain so as to prevent any set-back. Every opening of a temple to Harijans should mark greater purification inside and outside the temple opened. The sanctity of such temples should on no account be marred. No political capital should be made out of what is, and is intended to be, a purely religious act.

Harijans too should be taught to understand the religious significance of the opening of temples for them.

There were fifteen useful resolutions taken at the Conference. Of these the following three attract special attention:

1. This Conference notes with deep regret the recent action of the Mysore Government in having withdrawn their order permitting Harijans into the Sravana Belagola temple even up to the limits where non-Hindus are allowed.

2. This Conference resolves that the Provincial Boards of the Harijan Sevak Sangh should take up the organization of a Provincial Sevak Service with the following objects:

(a) There should be a whole-time worker in charge of every institution run by the Harijan Sevak Sangh, as schools, hostels, etc.

(b) The sevaks should undertake to serve for at least five years.

(c) They should be paid an allowance ranging from Rs. 15 to Rs. 30 according to the needs of the individual and the circumstances of the locality.

(d) The sevak shall be attached to any one of the centres allotted to him by the Provincial Board.

(e) The qualifications of the sevak and the pledge to be given by him shall be the same as that of the Central Board sevaks, with this additional qualification that he should have passed at least the third form and must have been for at least three years in Harijan work, and should possess full faith and confidence in th ideals set forth by Mahatmaji and the Harijan Sevak Sangh.

(f) The Provincial Board, though solely responsible for the salary of the sevaks, the institution to which he is attached will also undertake to pay at least half his allowance.

(g) The Provincial Board in consulation with the district or local committees shall select the sevaks under the scheme who will abide by the conditions laid down by the Provincial Board from time to time.

(h) The sevaks attached to each Provincial Board shall meet at least once a year.

3. Resolved that a short workers' training camp extending about a month be organized by the respective Provincial Boards in any of the following centres, viz., the Ramakrishna Vidyalaya of Coimbatore, the Vinayashram in Guntur and the Kengeri Gurukul in Mysore. Shri Avinasilingam, Ramachandran, Bapineedu and Gopalaswamy be requested to draft a scheme for their training and circulate the same to all the Provincial Boards.

The first is surprising and demands an answer from the Mysore authorities. I hope that there is some misunderstanding somewhere. A concession once given is not withdrawn lightly.

The second resolution is very important. The Conference has thereby taken a big step. The third is also a substantial resolution. Let us hope that whatever has been undertaken by the Conference will be duly carried out. Our resolutions often begin and end with being printed and advertised in the Press. They have value only if they are reduced to practice.

ABBOTTABAD, July 12, 1939.

Harijan, 22-7-1939

141. TELEGRAM TO PYARELAL

ABBOTTABAD,
July 12, 1939

PYARELAL
BIRLA HOUSE
BOMBAY

MAY LEAVE KANAM[1].

BAPU

From a photostat: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Kano, son of Nirmala and Ramdas Gandhi

142. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

ABBOTTABAD,
July 12, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I am much obliged to you for your letter[1] of 1st instant and the wires about Talcher.

I thank you, too, for your inquiry about my health. It continues to be good.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

143. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

ABBOTTABAD,
July 12, 1939

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

Your letter is very good. Everything is plain. This is what a letter ought to be. You will learn something but teach much more. In a few days, your way will become clear. Only today I have a letter from Sardar Saheb[2]. He wishes to send you to his bigger farm also. Keep cow's milk separate for removing butter. Conversion into curds hastens the process. With patience, everything will be all right.

I shall send your letter to Rajkumari who will send it to Ashram whence it will reach Surendra. I am not writing anything to Sardar Saheb. Ba, Pyarelal and Sushila will entrain from there on Friday. This letter will reach you after that.

Blessings from
BAPU

[1] *Vide* Appendix - "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 1-7-1939.
[2] Datar Singh

[PS.]

According to Sardar Saheb's estimate, you will need $2\frac{1}{2}$ months there. Let us wait and see.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1923

144. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 12, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Strange to have no letter from you for three days on end. I hope you are keeping well.

Here is a letter from Balvantsinha. Read it at leisure. It shows that all is not gold that glitters. But of course he might have to revise his first impressions. It cannot be quite as bad as he paints it. Of course I don't want you to say anything to Sardar Saheb. He has sent a sweet letter. I have written in reply. After all they did not meet at the station. Balvantsinha did not go by the Frontier Mail as it had no third class.

Mira has already reached Patna. She contemplates staying till the Congress is over.

Ba and company are expected to reach here on Friday. Everything is in order here. Mahadev has found an able dentist here, probably better than the expert in Bombay.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Please forward Balvantsinha's letter after use to Segaon.

From the original: C. W. 3927. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7236

145. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

ABBOTTABAD,
July 12, 1939

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

See that the place where we take our meals is paved. Shankaran is improving. There has been no news at all of Balkrishna. Ba, Pyarelal

and Sushila will reach here the day after tomorrow. They will start today.

I got Munnalal's letter. I am not worrying. Tell Bhansalibhai not to eat more than one *tola* of garlic. The dose is only one ounce.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI CHIMANLALBHAI

SEGAON ASHRAM
SEGAON, WARDHA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10599

146. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 12, 1939

CHI. LILA

I have your letter. By and by everything will be all right. Win over the girls through love. Persuade them gently not to be boisterous. They will certainly listen to you. Show this to them. Do not be impatient in your study. Take interest in it. The knowledge you gain will not go in vain. Passing the examination is only an excuse.. The main aim is that you should acquire knowledge, though examinations also are necessary for progress. Keep calm and go on studying. Never mind whether or not you pass.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9591. Also C. W. 6563. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

147. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

ABBOTTABAD,
July 12, 1939

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I got your letter. You never take care of your health. This is no good. If you wish to be treated by Vijaya's vaid[1], do so. You have to get well for the sake of your work.

Ba and others will arrive day after tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 424

148. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

ABBOTTABAD,
July 12, 1939

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

I have your letter. Prison does not seem to agree with Jamnalal. But let things take their own course. He has to recover there and nowhere else. It would be all right if they release him on their own. You will see my article[2]. I have nothing much to say about diet. He should take as much milk and fruits as he can easily digest and very little starch. He may add soda to as many things as he can. He can take as much as 60 grammes.

I have understood [what you say] about the Muslims.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9126

[1] Vallabhram Vaidya
[2] *Vide* "Jaipur", 8-7-1939.

149. LETTER TO SHAMLAL

ABBOTTABAD,
July 12, 1939

BHAI SHAMLAL,

I have started action in respect of Lala Mohanlal's letter. If such a Bill is introduced we will be forced to oppose it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1180

150. A GOOD SAMARITAN

As will appear from the following letter received by me from Shri A.S. Wadia of Poona, he has been truly a good samaritan to the poor people who eke out a bare living by heaving up to the Mahabaleshwar Hill loads of wood from the plains below for the use of the summer visitors. Here is the extract from Shri Wadia's letter: [1]

I went to Mahabaleshwar to get that isolation and quiet I wanted to write my new book on Southern Rhodesia. But while there my mind and energies were unexpectedly diverted to looking into a grievance of the village people who came up to Mahabaleshwar from the valleys below with heavy loads of hay and firewood and sold them for a mere pittance in our bazaar. . . . Whenever I happened to talk to them, they invariably complained of the awful condition of the tracks by which they came up, as the pointed stones cut their toes and blistered their feet. . . . On inquiry I found that the tracks came to be made by constant use and were never touched by the hand of man ever since Mahabaleshwar was discovered by General Lodnick a hundred years ago.

Realizing that the grievance of the village people was just and needed immediate attention, I put away the writing of my Rhodesia and engaged a gang of coolies and systematically took to the smoothening and broadening of the tracks, breaking up obstructive stones and lopping off branches which came in the way of their long loads of firewood. Off and on the work was continued for eight weeks, during the course of which I must have employed altogether about a thousand coolies. Counting small and big, a dozen tracks must have been made, re-made and in some cases re-aligned. . . .

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

Now I come to the main purpose of my writing you these notes. It is to ask you if Government is not bound to keep in good condition these tracks that I have made for the use of the villagers just as much as they are bound to maintain in good condition the roads for vehicular traffic. . . .

While conversing with the villagers I gathered a few more facts which might interest you:

1. They all complained that the soil of their cultivated fields was deteriorating year after year so that their crops came to about half of what they used to have ten years ago.

2. The Congress Government, they said, had again imposed on them a tax of four annas on each head of cattle after exempting them from the tax for the last two years.

3. The waste lands round the villages should be given them for cultivation and small areas of forest reserve should be opened for grazing their cattle.

I wish you, Mahatmaji, would do something to help the 'Adijans', as I call these poor villagers of the valleys round Mahabaleshwar, in whose welfare and well-being I am personally interested.

I forwarded the letter to the Bombay Ministers, and I am happy to be able to inform the reader that the matter has been taken up by them. The Bombay Government will keep in good repair the foot-paths so considerately smoothed down and made safer than they were before by Shri Wadia. They will also attend to the other matters referred to by my correspondent. I wrote to him asking for further particulars of his enterprise. It appears that he laboured with the labourers himself and constituted himself their road engineer. He paid from his own pocket over Rs. 200 which were supplemented by two friends to the extent of Rs. 125. I am quite sure that Shri Wadia has lost nothing by suspending the writing of his book which it is highly probable will now bear the impress of his very practical philanthropy. It is fashionable to give something to charities out of one's superfluous cash. But not many give their labour as well as money. Those who do, ensure the best use possible of their donations. It is to be hoped that the other hill-goers will copy Shri Wadia's good example by studying and ameliorating the condition of the poor who uncomplainingly labour for them often on starvation wages.

ABBOTTABAD, July 13, 1939.

Harijan, 22-7-1939

151. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

ABBOTTABAD,
July 13, 1939

I have read Subhas Babu's statement[2] on the Bombay prohibition with pain and sorrow. He had discussed the question with me when I was in Bombay. I had told him to confer with the Bombay Ministers. I do not know whether he did so. But I was unprepared for his public statement. He has used the arguments of the opponents of prohibition. He was President of the Congress last year, and having been duly elected for the second year he chose to resign[3] owing to differences with his colleagues. He is still head of the Bengal Congress Executive. He is identified with the prohibition policy of the Congress. His responsibility has not ceased because he is no longer in the Working Committee. Had he been a member, he could not have spoken as he has done. His statement because of his position is calculated to discredit the Bombay Ministry in a manner the avowed opponents of prohibition could never hope to do. I can only hope that in this matter Subhas Babu does not reflect the opinion of any other responsible Congressman, and that the general public will con-tinue to support the Bombay ministerial policy with as much enthusiasm as hitherto.

The Ministers' duty is plain. They have to pursue their programme undeterred by any opposition, if they have faith in it. Prohibition is the greatest moral reform in the Congress programme. Previous Governments too had given their lip assent to it, but having been irresponsible they had neither the courage nor the will to carry it out. They were not willing to forgo revenue which they could get without effort. They did not stay to examine its tainted source. The Congress Governments have the backing of public opinion. The Working Committee after very careful deliberation issued its mandate on prohibition. The Ministers have all over taken it up to the best of their ability. The manner of execution was naturally left to the respective

[1] This appeared under the title "A Dangerous Game". The statement was also published in *The Hindu*, 13-7-1939, and *The Hindustan Times*, 14-7-1939.

[2] Of July 10; for extracts, *vide* Appendix - "Statement By Subhas Chandra Bose", 11-7-1939.

[3] On April 30, 1939

Ministries. The Bombay Ministers have been courageously pursuing their programme with every prospect of success. Theirs is a difficult position. They were bound to tackle Bombay some day or other. They would be faced with the same opposition as today from the interests directly affected by the prohibition policy. It is not open to any Congressman to embarrass the Ministers as Subhas Babu has done.

The communal question does not arise at all. Subhas Babu has rendered a great disservice to the Congress by raising the communal cry and the cry of minorities. Independence of India is impossible if causes great or small are to be discredited and ruined on the altar of the minority cry. Subhas Babu has played a most dangerous game by mixing up the communal question with such a purely moral reform as prohibition. It is as much the concern of a Muslim or a Parsi or a Christian as of a Hindu to look after his less fortunate countryman who happens to be a labourer and falls a victim to drink. The Bombay property-owners will pay one crore rupees as additional tax not because they are Parsis or Muslims but because they are property-owners. It is altogether misleading to suggest that the tax-payer, himself a non-drinker, will pay the tax for saving the drunkard. He will pay the tax for the education of his children whereas hitherto the drinker has been made by him to pay for that education. The additional tax will be a tardy but very small reparation for the wrong done by monied men to the poor. And the poor have no class. They irrespective of their caste and creed make by themselves a downtrodden class. Their enforced creed is wretched poverty.

Parsis are philanthropists of the world. Why should they be behindh and in this the greatest philanthropy? And if theirs is the greatest contribution, it is but in accordance with their best tradition. And they will be thrice blessed. Many of them will be weaned from a trade which corrupts the morals of their countrymen less fortunately placed than they. They will themselves be weaned from the drink habit. However mild it may be for them, I know, from having lived in intimate contact with them, that the drink does leave an indelible mark on them. Thirdly, monied men amongst them will have paid for the long-delayed reform. The cry of minorities is a calumny. It is a Parsi Minister to whose lot has fallen the privilege of introducing prohibition. Dr. Gilder's is a job which brings him no money and it brings him drudgery and loss of a princely medical practice. Another

equally disinterested physician[1] is the Sheriff of Bombay. A third learned Parsi is Vice-Chancellor[2] of the University, and a fourth businesman is the Mayor[3] of Bombay. I do not know that there has been such a happy conjunction before in the history of Bombay. If the Congressmen and the Congress Ministry of Bombay were communally minded and were indifferent to the minorities, this unique event would not have taken place.

And I suggest that without the willing co-operation of the Muslim population of Bombay the movement in Bombay could not have been introduced. I am quite sure that the best Muslim mind in all India is with the Congress in this Bombay project.

The piecemeal solution flung by Subhas Babu would not work. For one thing it would lack the psychological background. I therefore invite Subhas Babu to retrace his steps and join me in making an appeal to the great Parsi community and those others who may oppose the reform to help it to become the success which it deserves to be. It is his duty as Rajen Babu's immediate predecessor to help the Bombay Ministry which is bravely pursuing the policy laid down for it by the Congress.

Harijan, 22-7-1939.

152. LETTER TO C. A. TULPULE

ABBOTTABAD,
July 13, 1939

DEAR TULPULE,

You have raised a very important question. My mind whirls when I try to find a solution. But it will come in its own time. Meanwhile let us hold ourselves in patience.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI C. A. TULPULE
TILAK ROAD, POONA

From a photostat: C. W. 2900. Courtesy: C. A. Tulpule

[1] Dr. Pheroze C. Bharucha.
[2] R. P. Masani.
[3] Behram Naorosji Karanjia.

153. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 13, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

If your letter had not been received today, I would have wired. I was impatient to know the cause of the long silence—long for you. I am glad Dalip is on the mend. You will have to come to Segaon to get strong. I hope from here my way will be to Segaon without a break.

I do wish you will firmly cancel Sangli[1] no matter how insistent Tai is. You must tell her you are under treatment which must not be interrupted. You must give the doctor a chance.

Yes, you may go to Jaipur on your way to Segaon. That may be considered when my movement is fixed. Except Talcher there is nothing on the horizon to keep me from Segaon.

We wish systems to die, not their authors or victims. We must hope whilst there is life. If I suddenly lost my head, you won't wish for me to die but you will pray that I may regain my sanity and live. Does this answer your question? Recall what I said about Dyer.

The information you give me about the States and Travancore is interesting and instructive.

I sent you yesterday Balvantsinha's letter.[2] I have heard again from the Sardar Bahadur in reply to my own letter. He says the very fact of my sending Balvantsinha would [be] sufficient charge for his board and lodging. Is this Punjabi courtesy or Sikh courtesy or personal to him? This was in reply to my offer of payment.

Ba and company are due tomorrow. Ba was impatient to come. She was detained only because I would not bring out Sushila, leaving Pyarelal alone. And Ba could not be brought along without Sushila. I could not attend to her personally and she does need medical adjustment every now and then and she has taken to Sushila. Ba is not bringing Kanam this time. He will be left with his maternal uncle. Nirmala is likely to go to Wardha soon. In that case of course Kanam will join here. Now comes an interruption.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3928. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7237

[1] Where the All-India Women's Conference was to be held on July 29

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Balvantsinha", 12-7-1939.

154. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

ABBOTTABAD,
July 13, 1939

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I must write for the sake of writing to you. Sometimes I must give myself this relaxation.

For Ceylon I instinctively thought of sending a Congressman and my mind at once rested on Jawaharlal Nehru. But South Africa is not Ceylon. Sarojini can't do the thing. You are perhaps the only person to do the thing if you can draw Mott and others. It is the Boer mind that has to be touched. You can be spared just now. Perhaps the voyage will do you good. And you might be able to bring the warring[1] Indians together. But you must not go, if you do not feel the inner call or if your health won't stand the strain.[2]

All this has come when I took up the pen, it was to be only a love letter. Mahadev is with me. Pyarelal and Sushila and Ba come tomorrow.

Yours,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G. N. 1298

155. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

ABBOTTABAD,
July 13, 1939

MY DEAR MATHEW,

I am sorry your recovery is not so rapid as you had expected. Let this sickness teach you patience. I am here till the end of the month at least.

Love.

Yours

BAPU

[1] *Vide* "Message to Indians in South Africa", 23-5-1939.

[2] A handwritten note by the addressee at the bottom of the letter reads : "This clearly means I must go as soon as the monsoon is over."

[PS.]

Pyarelal, Ba and Sushila join me here tomorrow.

SHRI P. G. MATHEW
GRAM UDYOG LODGE
NATH MAHAL, NAGPUR

From a photostat: G. N. 1541

156. NOTES

VANDEMATARAM

Some students in Hyderabad complain that my note[1] on *Vandemataram* has created confusion in their minds. They read an extract from it in some local papers from which the words "at a mixed gathering" were omitted so as to leave the impression that it was not to be sung even in gatherings of their own, though such an interpretation was absurd. I was being quoted in support of the con-tention that the students should not be allowed to sing *Vandemataram* in their own rooms or the prayer hall set apart for their section who had not only no objection but who regarded it as part of their prayer to sing it. My note is quite plain. If at any mixed gathering any person objected to the singing of *Vandemataram* even with the Congress expurgations, the singing should be dropped. But it was never intended to apply to gatherings in which there was no objection raised. Such an objection would amount to interference, unlawful and intolerant. If objections could be carried to such lengths, even the performance of religious worship would become impossible. And I know that for many patriots the singing of *Vandemataram* amounts to a religious duty.

THAT OBSTINATE DISEASE

Thus writes Shri Tatachar who is an ardent lover of Harijans:

> Some time ago there was a riot at Nallathur Cheri. Caste men attacked the Adi-dravida *bhajanai* and inflicted injuries on several members of the party. In this riot caste men received a few injuries. Adi-dravidas complained of the riot to the police. The police took no notice of their complaint. Caste men filed private complaints in court against five Adi-dravidas. These five Adi-dravidas

[1] *Vide* "The National Flag", 27-6-1939.

were convicted and fined Rs. 25 each and one month's rigorous imprisonment in default. Appeals were filed and heard on May 26, 1939. Judgment was reserved and was pronounced today in favour of the appellant accused. In accordance with the directions of the appellate court, the appellants asked the trying court on May 27, 1939, to postpone the recovery of the fines, until judgments were pronounced in the appeals. The lower court refused to grant them time and sent them to jail. . . . This grave act of injustice must satisfy you that the problem of the removal of untouchability is not going to solve itself.

He has sent me also copious notes which I have read with painful interest. The letter from which I have quoted bare facts is filled with biting strictures of the police and the first court which is reported to have refused to stay execution although appeal was admitted and the appellate court is said to have recommended stay of execution.

I have asked Shri Tatachar for further particulars. Allegations that the police refused to register the complaints of the Harijans while private complaints against them were readily entertained and that the trying magistrate refused to suspend execution of sentences, are serious enough to warrant a departmental enquiry. There is no doubt that if the virus of untouchability is to be eradicated, ceaseless vigilance by the central authority is necessary.

ABBOTTABAD, July 14, 1939.

Harijan, 22-7-1939

157. PROVINCIAL AUTONOMY OR PROVINCIAL JEALOUSY

Shri Jamshedji Mehta writes:

> After the introduction of provincial autonomy one is pained to observe the growth of provincial exclusiveness and jealousies in matters big or trivial. I often wonder if provincial autonomy has not come upon us as a curse rather than a blessing. Instead of the nationalistic spirit having increased, provincial exclusiveness seems to have flourished. Before autonomy 'my country' used to mean India. Now it means 'my province'. Will you not warn the country against the danger before it becomes too deep-rooted to be dealt with?

The letter is naturally in Gujarati. I have given a very free rendering of the thought and the grief running through the original.

Shri Jamshedji's complaint has justification for it. Provincialism of a healthy type there is, and always will be. There is no meaning in having separate provinces, if there were no differences, though healthy, between them. But our provincialism must never be narrow or exclusive. It should be conducive to the interest of the whole country of which the provinces are but parts. They may be likened to tributaries of a mighty river. The tributaries promote its mightiness. Their strength and purity will be reflected in the majestic stream. It must be thus with the provinces. Everything that the provinces do must be for the glory of the whole. If the great contribution of Rabindranath glorifies Bengal, it glorifies also India. Does not his influence pervade the whole of India? Dadabhai lived not merely for the Parsis, not merely for Bombay, but for the whole of India. There is no room for exclusiveness or jealousy between province and province, unless India is to be dismembered into warring countries each living for itself and if possible at the expense of the rest. The Congress will have lived in vain if such a calamity descends upon the country. Every attempt at dividing India into watertight compartments must be resisted. India's destiny is to become a strong, independent nation making her unique contribution to the world's progress. Our patriotism is at no stage exclusive. We do not desire prosperity at the expense of the other nations of the earth. A time must come when we will be able to say, 'We are no less citizens of the world than we are citizens of India'. But the time will never come unless we know the art of being citizens of an independent India. We cannot learn the art if we develop poisonous provincialisms. The right national life has to begin with the individual. I wish to be strong and free so that not only I but my neighbour also may benefit by my strength and freedom. We as individuals or provinces must bring our best fruit to the altar of the motherland.

ABBOTTABAD, July 14, 1939.

Harijan, 22-7-1939

158. TELEGRAM TO A. VAIDHYANATHA IYER

ABBOTTABAD,
July 14, 1939

VAIDHYANATHA IYER
HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH
MADURA

RECEIVED HARROWING WIRE FROM NATESIER OF VARNASHRAMA SANGH. WIRE HOW MATTERS STAND.[1]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

159. TELEGRAM TO NATESA IYER

ABBOTTABAD,
July 14, 1939

PRESIDENT, VARNASHRAMA SANGH
MADURA

YOUR WIRE UNBELIEVABLE. HAVE UNHAPPY EXPERIENCES OF VARNASHRAMA SANGH'S PREVIOUS EXAGGERATED UNPROVABLE CHARGES. HINDU PUBLIC OPINION SEEMS WHOLLY FAVOUR TEMPLE-ENTRY BY HARIJANS.[2] ASK YOU NOT IMPEDE LONG OVERDUE REFORM.[3]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also the following item.

[2] The reference is to the Meenakshi Temple in Madurai; *vide* "Meenakshi Temple Open", 12-7-1939.

[3] In his telegraphic reply dated July 15, the addressee asserted that every word of his wire was true and that Gandhiji could make enquiries from Minister Ramanathan and others; *vide* "Telegram to Ramanathan", 15-7-1939.

160. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 14, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I forgot to answer one question yesterday.[1] Yes, your Hindi is very good. The letters are perfectly formed. Why don't you continue? If you don't care to write wholly in Hindi, do it half and half.

The reply from Sir Mirza is an utter disappointment. However we must continue to appeal to the best in him. There is no doubt that the State Congress people have not behaved well with the Dewan.

The other letter is characteristic. I have not yet studied Sir S[ikandar Hyat Khan]'s scheme.[2] No time left after dealing with the day's work. I shall have to make time.

Rest from Mahadev.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Sir Gokul Chand just waiting to come in. I go to the 'library' and then see him. Herewith Sardar Datar Singh's letter for you to read and keep for me.

From the original: C. W. 3929. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7238

161. LETTER TO UMA DEVI

ABBOTTABAD,
July 14, 1939

MY DEAR UMA,

You can come here whenever you like. You won't be a burden on anybody. But it is fairly hot here. And my stay is uncertain. I am likely to come to Kashmir after 23rd if not earlier.[3] Now do as you like.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 13-7-1939.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Sikandar Hyat Khan", 17-7-1939.

[3] The visit was, however, "cancelled; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 22-7-1939.

You need not go to Poland. Security can be given regarding your mother by transferring your cash to me. Other ways also may be devised. These will be thought out when we meet.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1202 and 8056. Also C. W. 5097 Courtesy: Uma Devi

162. LETTER TO GLADYS OWEN

ABBOTTABAD,
July 14, 1939

MY DEAR GLADYS,

You have taken long to get rid of your disease. Of course you are welcome to Segaon whenever you wish to come. I am not sure, however, whether the life there will satisfy your ambition. But you have a vast field. You will stay where you find greatest self-expression.

You will send your letter to Wardha. I hope to leave this part of India in the beginning of August.

Love to you and all the others.

BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev is with me quite restored.

From a photostat: G. N. 6195

163. LETTER TO G. V. GURJALE

ABBOTTABAD,
July 14, 1939

DEAR GURJALE,

I was glad to hear from you. You must not give in. If the medical work progresses, well and good. Otherwise you must live on what the goodness of neighbours brings you. Have no hedge and no gardening. Let the people know that you do not resent their depredations.

Yours,
BAPU

SWAMI NIRMALANANDA BHIKSHU
GANDHIKUPPAM
TIRUVENANALLUR P. O., INDIA

From a photostat: G. N. 1387

164. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

ABBOTTABAD,
July 14, 1939

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

I have your letter. I should say let well alone. Do the best you can.

Yours,
BAPU

DR. GOPICHAND, M. L. A.
PUNJAB
LAHORE

From the original: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

165. NOTES ON NIRA

Shri I. S. Amin, Chief Chemist and Technical Superintendent of the Alembic Chemical Works of Baroda, has made important observations during the past two years and arrived at certain conclusions in the experiments on the collection and preservation of *nira*. He has

now furnished me with the results which are too technical for the reader. He has appended useful notes to the results which are given below.[1]

Harijan, 15-7-1939.

166. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS [2]

ABBOTTABAD,
July 15, 1939

Some women are inundating me with wires and letters about the hunger-striking prisoners in Bengal. One telegram peremptorily asks me to discharge my responsibility by myself joining the hunger-strike. Another lays the whole burden on my shoulders of leading the agitation on the ground that the prisoners had suspended their hunger-strike on my assurance. I have returned suitable replies where necessary, but the matter is too important to be disposed of by personal replies. I fear my fair correspondents are damaging the cause they represent by expecting me to do what I cannot do. They are damaging it also by encouraging hunger-strikers. I have no doubt that the hunger-strike is wrong. No person should free himself from prison by refusing to take food. The women who are corresponding with me, and others who are agitating for their release, should persuade the hunger-strikers to give up their fast. The exercise of pressure of public opinion is a legitimate method and if it is wisely applied, it will become quite effective. No government nowadays can afford to be indifferent to popular opinion. Therefore, I implore those who are organizing public opinion to persuade the hunger-strikers to give up the hunger-strike, and not to mislead the public by expecting me to do the impossible.

At the same time I would urge the Bengal Government to put an end to this particular agitation by releasing the prisoners although, as I have admitted, the prisoners have put themselves in the wrong by resorting to hunger-strike. The release is long overdue. Rightly or wrongly, and I think rightly, the public had expected their release on the transfer of power to a responsible legislature. That expectation should have been fulfilled long ago. The Government will lose

[1] The notes are not reproduced here.

[2] This is extracted from "Notes". The statement also appeared in *The Hindu*, 16-7-1939.

nothing and will certainly gain much by yielding to popular pressure in this matter of release of political prisoners.[1]

Harijan, 22-7-1939

167. TELEGRAM TO RAMANATHAN

ABBOTTABAD,
July 15, 1939

RAMANATHAN, MINISTER
SECRETARIAT
MADRAS

NATESIER MADURA SAYS[2] YOU WILL CONFIRM HIS CHARGE MEENAKSHI TEMPLE ENTERED STEALTHILY AND SAYS OPENING WAS IN DEFIANCE PUBLIC OPINION. WIRE CORRECT POSITION.[3]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

168. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 15, 1939

CHI. LILA,

I got all the news about you. Without getting nervous try and overcome your difficulties. You should study only as much as you can digest. You should take proper rest. Take part in the girls' games. See that you don't get brain-fag. It is good that you go to school walking.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9592. Also C. W. 6564. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] *Vide* also "Telegram to Secretary, Political Prisoners release Sub-Committee", on or before 9-7-1939.

[2] *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Telegram to Natesa Iyer", 14-7-1939.

[3] In his reply, the Minister denied the charge; *vide* "Telegram to Natesa Iyer", 17-7-1939.

169. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD [1]

ABBOTTABAD,
July 16, 1939

RASHTRAPATI RAJENDRA PRASAD
RANCHI

SEE MY STATEMENT[2]. WE MUST SAY UNEQUIVOCALLY FASTING FOR FREEDOM FROM IMPRISONMENT INDEFENSIBLE. MATTER REQUIRES SERIOUS CONSIDERATION. IF MY OPINION ACCEPTABLE GUIDE CORRESPONDENT ACCORDINGLY.[3]

BAPU

From the original: Rajendra Prasad Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India.

170. CABLE TO GENERAL J. C. SMUTS [4]

ABBOTABAD,
July 16, 1939

IMPLORE YOU PREVENT INDIAN TRAGEDY BY REFRAINING FROM NEEDLESS WOUNDING OF THEIR SELF-RESPECT. IT TAKES VERY LITTLE TO PLACATE THEM. YOU HAVE GREAT POWER. MUST YOU USE IT AGAINST A HANDFUL. WHO HAVE DONE UNION NO INJURY.

GANDHI

South Africa's Freedom Struggle, p. 299

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram which read: ". . . ninety hunger-striking political prisoners Bengal appealed to me as President for help. Much feeling their favour. Unable find any effective steps. Shall appreciate advice."

[2] Of July 15; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 15-7-1939*Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 19-7-1939.

[3] The Prisoners agreed on August 3 to suspend their fast for two months in response to Subhas Chandra Bose's appeal; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 6-8-1939.

[4] Gen. Smuts' cable in reply dated July 19, 1939, read:"...Government has whole question under careful consideration and will communicate in due course with Indian Government. I hope our proposal will remove causes of existing friction."

171. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

ABBOTTABAD,
July 16, 1939

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I got your letter and the estimates of expenditure given by Bhai Sukhabhai[1]. I see no profit at present from the investment of Rs. 1,645. The estimate does not mention either how much khadi is likely to be produced. Nevertheless we will let him try for this one year. The expenditure may be treated as part of the Ashram expenses. Get a *hund*[2] from Mahadev.

I hope the man who had lost his leg is all right now. Why does Parnerkar[3] fall ill so often? He has not learnt the art of preserving his health. How much rain have you had there? What is the condition of the road? Is the temporary bridge ready? It is a matter for serious concern that the water of the well has not yet become pure.

You must be hearing from Sharda[4]. Does Lilavati[5] write to you? Doesn't Bhansali[6] show any effect, good or bad, of the garlic?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10600

172. TELEGRAM TO RAJARAM

ABBOTTABAD,
July 17, 1939

RAJARAM RAJAH SAHEB[7]
TANJORE

CONGRATULATIONS ON BIG TEMPLE BEING OPENED TO HARIJANS.[8]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Sukhabhau Chaudhari of the Charkha Sangh
[2] Bill of exchange
[3] Yeshwant Mahadev Parnerkar
[4] Addressee's daughter, Shardabehn G. Chokhawala
[5] Lilavati Asar
[6] Jaikrishna P. Bhansali
[7] A "senior Prince and hereditary trustee of the Tanjore palace Devasthanams"; *vide* also "Notes", sub–title, "More Temples Thrown Open", 29-7-1939.
[8] The Brihadiswara Temple in Tanjore was thrown open to Harijans on July 16, 1939.

173. TELEGRAM TO NATESA IYER

ABBOTTABAD,
July 17, 1939

NATESIER
VARNASHRAM SANGH
MADURA

MINISTER RAMANATHAN CATEGORICALLY DENIES YOUR CHARGES[1] SAYING ALL CLASSES INCLUDING HARIJANS VISIT TEMPLE.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

174. TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT, KARACHI DISTRICT CONGRESS COMMITTEE

ABBOTTABAD,
July 17, 1939

PRESIDENT
CONGRESS COMMITTEE
KARACHI

WISH SUCCESS PROHIBITION PROGRAMME.[2] HOPE PICKETING PURELY EDUCATIVE PEACEFUL.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

175. TELEGRAM TO PATTOM THANU PILLAI

ABBOTTABAD,
July 17, 1939

THANU PILLAI
STATE CONGRESS
TRIVANDRUM

YOUR REPLY PERFECT.[3]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Ramanathan", 15-7-1939.

[2] The Karachi District Congress Committee had begun its prohibition campaign by holding meetings to urge the Sind Government to introduce prohibition.

[3] The addressee, President, Travancore State Congress, had a discussion with Gandhiji on Travancore Satyagraha; *vide* "Discussion with Travancore State Congress Deputation", 1-6-1939.

176. CABLE TO GENERAL J. C. SMUTS [1]

ABBOTABAD,
July 17, 1939

GENERAL SMUTS
CAPETOWN (SOUTH AFRICA)

WHY IS AGREEMENTOF 1914 BEING VIOLATED WITH YOU AS WITNESS? IS THERE NO HELP FOR INDIANS EXCEPT TO PASS THROUGH FIRE ?

GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 11354. Courtesy: E. S. Reddy; also *South Africa's Freedom Struggle,* p. 299

177. LETTER TO SIKANDAR HYAT KHAN

ABBOTTABAD,
July 17, 1939

DEAR SIR SIKANDAR,

Many thanks for your letter of 12th instant. You have forgotten to answer my question about separate electorates[2] for Harijans.

I have now carefully gone through your scheme and your remarks upon my draft[3] about Hindu-Muslim unity.

The scheme is too complicated for me to form an opinion. I must own to you that I never studied the Government of India Act in the manner required for a proper evaluation of your scheme which I see is designed, so far as the Federal structure is concerned, to replace the Act.

I see that you contemplate zonal legislatures in between the provincial ones and the Federal legislature. The Government of India scheme itself is much too expensive and complicated for me. Yours seems to add to the expense and the complication.

Then you suggest that the composition of the army should not be disturbed except under the contingency mentioned therein. For an

[1] Who cabled his reply on July 19 thus: ". . .situation is being carefully examined and there is no intention to violate 1914 agreement. . ."

[2] This and other points raised by Gandhiji were met by the addressee in his letter dated July 20; *vide* Appendix- "Letter from Sikandar Hyat Khan", 20-7-1939.

[3] The Congress Working Committee which met at Bardoli on January 11, 1939, had discussed Gandhiji's new draft on the minorities question.

out and out believer in non-violence like me, I would disband the army altogether. An army and non-violence go ill together. But I am painfully conscious that in this extreme view of non-violence I have no partner. How far those who believe in the necessity of the country having an army even after it has come to its own will accept your proposition is more than I can say.

Then you have enunciated Dominion Status as an accepted fact. It is a bitter pill for Congressmen to swallow.

But I see that your solution of the communal tangle is your scheme including the proposal about the army. Yours is the only proposal of a constructive character on behalf of the league. I congratulate you on the great pains you have bestowed upon it. I am glad that you have decided to publish it in full.[1] I must thank you for having taken me into your confidence and asked me to give you my opinion upon it.

As to my draft solution, as I have already told you, it is in no sense adopted by the Working Committee. But it does still represent my views. I prize your criticism upon it. And if it ever formed a basis for the solution of our difficulties, I should adopt many of your suggestions.

Your solution for representation of minorities on services causes difficulty. What are the minorities? Is there a final list? I am therefore very uneasy about communal representation in the services. If we make much of the minorities question in the services, we shall not only endanger efficiency but we shall endanger purity and impartiality in the administration of affairs of the country. But I heartily endorse your suggestion that all the backward members of the nation should be levelled up to the forward ones.

I do not want to burden this letter with the other points arising out of your criticism. They are easy of adjustment, If we all make up our minds to meet with the determination not to part without reaching a settlement.

Yours sincerely,

SIR SIKANDAR HYAT KHAN
PRIME MINISTER
LAHORE

Gandhi–Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] It was published on July 30, 1939.

178. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 17, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Of course you can come to Kashmir as Sir Kailash's[1] guest as I should also be his guest. Therefore you will naturally stay with me. The incongruity will be in my carting you from place to place. From your remembering the word I see that you do not see eye to eye with me in this matter.

I have heard today from Sir Kailash. I enclose his letter herewith. You will see he mentions your name. We leave here on 25th for Kashmir for a week's stay at the outside.[2] You will pick us up some-where on the route, I suppose, unless you go there in advance and receive the party. I am wiring to Sir Kailash just now.

I do hope you will cancel Sangli.[3]

Yes, we are Mrs. Parmanand's guests or fellow-inmates.

I do not want you to mention Balvantsinha's experiences to Datar Singh because it would be wrong to do so. I am sure things have righted themselves by now. It would be ungrateful to mention such things. I would not even have thought of the thing. Probably he has not even seen the house in which he was put.

Love.

TYRANT

Enclosure 1.

From the original: C. W. 3930. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7239

179. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 17, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

I have your booklet[4] full of news. Of course the Biharis are lovable. I would not remove you from them if you will keep your health.

[1] Kailash Narain Haksar, Personal Adviser to the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir.

[2] The visit was, however, cancelled; *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 21-7-1939.

[3] Where the All-India Women's Conference was to be held on July 29.

[4] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, the addressee explains this as "long letter".

Don't deceive yourself that you are well when you are not. Watch yourself and do whatever comes your way.

Don't be hasty in your judgments. You jump to conclusions without enough data.

We leave for Kashmir on 25th and stay there seven days at the outside.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6447. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 10042.

180. LETTER TO SHAMLAL

ABBOTTABAD,
July 17, 1939

DEAR SHAMLALJI,

Bapu has asked me to convey to you his remarks, on your letter of 13th inst. He was very glad that you had taken to spinning regularly and were feeling attached to it. He would like you to learn spinning on the takli. Once you become an expert, takli-spinning affords you pleasure which even the spinning-wheel cannot equal. Moreover you won't need to interrupt your spinning when you have mastered your takli and it is no exaggeration to say that takli is your best friend and helper when you are faced with the prospect of a long and tiresome argument. I wonder whether you know that at Nalwadi under Vinoba's supervision no youngster, after a month's training only, spins less than 100 rounds in half an hour on the takli. The maximum speed is over 350 rounds in half an hour and the average does not fall below 160 rounds.

Bapu's health is fair in spite of all the handicaps. We are here at least till the 25th instant, when we may go to Kashmir. But this is not for publication.

Yours sincerely,
PYARELAL

From a photostat: G. N. 1289

181. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

ABBOTTABAD,
July 17, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

What shall I write to you? Are you not going to take care of your health so long as you are away from me? Does it mean I should

keep both of you with me or that you should take a divorce? It will not do for you to fall ill so often. Has there been any change in your diet?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10014. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala.

182. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

ABBOTTABAD,
July 18, 1939

RASHTRAPATI RAJENDRA PRASAD
RANCHI

IF MEETING[1] NOT IN WARDHA MAY BE PATNA OR ALLAHABAD WHATEVER SUITS BETTER. AM GOING KASHMIR TWENTY-FIFTH. AFTER WEEK'S STAY RETURN WHERE REQUIRED.

BAPU

From the original: Rajendra Prasad Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India.

183. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

ABBOTTABAD,
July 18, 1939

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Your years are flying like the wind. I cannot imagine that you have now entered the thirty fourth year. You look the same that you did when I saw you first. That also is good. May you keep young and go on doing service. It does not matter if Chandan's[2] improvement is slow. It is enough if ultimately she is completely cured. Vijaya[3] must write to me in detail. Did she come away because she fell ill or for some other reason?

I do not understand the cause of Kakasaheb's despondency.

Blessings from
BAPU

[1] The Congress Working Committee met at Wardha from August 9 to 12.
[2] Wife of Satish D. Kalelkar
[3] Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

[PS.]

We are going to Kashmir on the 25th. We shall stay there for seven days at the most and then return. Where we shall go thereafter is not yet decided.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10790

184. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

ABBOTTABAD,
July 18, 1939

CHI. NIMU,

I have your letter written in Urdu. You should improve your handwriting further. Write to Amtussalaam in Urdu. Her Urdu characters are excellent. Reading good handwriting helps one to improve one's own handwriting . . .[1] Kanam's letter is enclosed. He is not likely just now to come away from here . . .[2] He is dancing about. You may take charge of him when you come. It will certainly cost you more by way of fare to come to Wardha *via* Bombay. But that expense may be justifiable in your case. When will you be free from there?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

185. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 18, 1939

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have read your entire letter. What can I do if you do not get your post? I am writing regularly these days. It is difficult to find room in Harijan Ashram for those who come forward to work. Why insist on the Lal Bungalow[3]? There are other buildings too

[1] A few words at the two places are illegible in the source.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Of Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta, near the Harijan Ashram, Sabarmati

nearby. If the work grows, we can build houses. But what could we do if you keep falling ill? You are the cause of your illness. Ba is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI AMTUL SALAAMBEHN[1]
HARIJAN ASHRAM[2]
SABARMATI[3]

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 425

186. NOT GUILTY

Dr. Lohia has sent me a long, well-reasoned letter on the current controversy on the Congress resolution[4] on Satyagraha. There is a portion in it which demands public discussion. Here it is:

> You will not permit the slightest separation of the principle of Satyagraha from your own specific programme. Is it not possible to universalize the principles of Satyagraha, to make it the bed-rock of programmes other than your own? Perhaps, it is not; but I have this argument against you that you have not permitted and encouraged any such experiment. The people today do not regard your own programme of ministerial action and constructive activities as wholly adequate; they are experimenting with such programmes as those of peasant action. These newer programmes entail an amount of local and isolated action even during such times when there is no general satyagraha. Will you stop these little satyagrahas till you have found the formula for a general satyagraha? In such a course of action there is the danger of anarchy that arises out of suppression. Non-violent collective action is among the rarest and most precious gifts received by mankind in all history; we may not, however, know how to treasure it and continue it.

Not only have I not prohibited separation of the principle of Satyagraha from my own specific programme, I have often invited new programmes. But hitherto I have not known a single case of any new programme. I have never suggested that there can never be any departure from or addition to my programme. What, however, I have

[1] The source has these in Gujarati.
[2] *ibid*
[3] The source has this in English.
[4] *Vide* "A.I.C.C. Resolutions", 23-6-1939.

said and would like to repeat here is that I cannot bless or encourage a new programme that makes no appeal to me. My programme, I claim, is a deduction from the satyagraha of my conception. It is, therefore, likely that if there was any such vital activity favouring the growth of satyagraha, it would not escape me.

I am painfully conscious of the fact that my programme has not made a general appeal to the Congress intelligentsia. I have already pointed out that the reason for the apathy of Congressmen is not to be sought in any inherent defect in the programme, but that it is due to the want of a living faith in ahimsa. What can be more patent than that we should have complete communal harmony, eradication of untouchability, sacrifice of the drink revenue by the closing of liquor-shops and the replacement of mill-cloth by khadi? I suggest that non-violent Swaraj is impossible if Hindus, Muslims and others do not shed their mutual distrust and do not live as blood brothers, if Hindus do not purify themselves by removing the curse of untouchability and thus establish intimate contact with those whom they have for ages put beyond the pale of society, if the wealthy men and women of India will not tax themselves so that the poor who are helpless victims of the drink and drug habit may have the temptation removed from them by the closing of drink and drug shops, and, lastly, if we all will not identify ourselves with the semi-starved millions by giving up the taste for mill-cloth and revert to khadi produced by the many million hands in the cottages of India. In all that has been written against the constructive programme, I have not come across a single convincing argument against either its intrinsic merit or its merit in terms of non-violent Swaraj. I make bold to say that if all Congressmen concentrate themselves on this constructive programme, we shall soon have the requisite non-violent atmosphere throughout the length and breadth of the land for cent-per-cent satyagraha.

Take the peasant action suggested by Dr. Lohia as a possible new programme. I regret to have to say that in most cases the peasants are not being educated for non-violent action. They are being kept in a state of perpetual excitement and made to entertain hopes which can never be fulfilled without a violent conflict. The same may safely be said about labour. My own experience tells me that both the peasantry and labour can be organized for effective non-violent action, if Congressmen honestly work for it. But they cannot, if they have no faith in the ultimate success of non-violent action. All that is required is the proper education of the peasantry and labour. They

need to be informed that if they are properly organized they have more wealth and resources through their labour than the capitalists through their money. Only capitalists have control over the money market, labour has not over its labour market, although if labour had been well served by its chosen leaders it would have become conscious of the irresistible power that comes from proper instruction in non-violence. Instead, labour in many cases is being taught to rely on coercive methods to compel compliance with its demands. The kind of training that labour generally receives today leaves it in ignorance, and relies upon violence as the ultimate sanction. Thus it is not possible for me to regard the present peasant or labour activity as a new programme for the preparation of Satyagraha.

Indeed what I see around me is not preparation for a non-violent campaign but for an outbreak of violence, however unconscious or unintended it may be. If I was invited to hold myself responsible for this ending to the past twenty years' effort, I should have no hesitation in pleading guilty. Have I not said as much already in these columns? But my admission will not take us anywhere, unless it results in the retracing of our steps, the undoing of the wrong already done. This means having a reasoned faith in the non-violent method as the only means of gaining complete independence. When we have that faith, all bickerings within the Congress will cease, there will be no longer an ungainly scramble for power, and there will be mutual help instead of mutual mud-flinging. But it may be that Congressmen have come to believe that non-violence of my definition is played out or is not possible of attainment. In that case there should be a conference, formal or informal between all Congress groups or a special meeting of the A. I. C. C. to consider the question whether time has not come to revise the policy of non-violence and the consequent constructive programme, and to find out and frame a programme in consonance with and answering the present temper of Congressmen. It is up to every Congressman to carry on a fierce search inward and deal with this central problem. It is not safe or dignified for the Congress to follow the policy of drift. I would like such a meeting to forget that the members belong to different groups and to remember that they are first and last servants of the nation pledged to fight the nation's battle of freedom with one mind. The Congress today is a house divided against itself. It must not be.

ABBOTTABAD, *July 19, 1939*

Harijan, 29-7-1939

187. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS [1]

ABBOTTABAD,
July 19, 1939

I observe from the Press that the hunger-striking prisoners[2] have sent me a letter and also made a public appeal. There is no doubt that they have public opinion solidly behind them. I would beseech them to be satisfied with this backing and to give up the hunger-strike. They are brave. I suggest to them that their hunger-strike is misplaced and is no part of their bravery. Let them bravely suffer till public opinion makes the Government release them. They may rely upon my doing all I can to secure their release in an honourable manner.

Harijan, 22-7-1939

188. CABLE TO Y. M. DADOO

July 19, 1939

DR. DADOO

POSTPONE PASSIVE RESISTANCE TILL FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS.[3]

GANDHI

From the original: C. W. 11355. Courtesy: E. S. Reddy; also *South Africa's Freedom Struggle*, p. 300

189. CABLE TO MANILAL GANDHI

July 19, 1939

[MANILAL] GANDHI
INDIAN OPINION
PHOENIX (NATAL)
SOUTH AFRICA

POSTPONE PASSIVE RESISTANCE TILL FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS. CABLED DADOO.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 11356. Courtesy: E. S. Reddy; also *South Africa's Freedom Struggle, p. 300*

[1] The statement appeared under "Notes", sub-title, "Give up Hunger-strike". It was also published in *The Hindu*, 20-7-1939.

[2] In Bengal; *vide* "Telegram to Rajendra Prasad", 16-7-1939.

190. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 20, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your Hindi continues to be good.

I await your further letter about Dhami[1]. How I wish you could find out the truth about this affair ! It is bad in every way.

I am sorry to have to tell you that I had to withdraw acceptance of state hospitality in Kashmir. The people won't tolerate any such thing. This is unfortunate. But I did not want to create bitterness. I therefore yielded. So I shall be the people's guest, whatever that may mean. Your programme need not suffer any alteration. You will be Haksar's guest though you will stay with me. Only I would like you to precede me if only by a day. All this, of course, if Dhami can spare you. That affair must occupy the first place with you.

Nirmala[2] Kanam's mother, comes here today to fetch Kanam.

Here is another letter from Balvantsinha. So you will see he is getting on. I am glad Sardarsaheb has taken everything in good part. You will send the letter as before to Segaon with instructions to pass on to Kishorelal and Surendra.

The weather continues to be hot although we had a good shower.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3931. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7240

[3] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 29-7-1939.

[1] A hill State, 22 kilometres from Simla, where, on July 17, police had opened fire on a crowd that attempted to march into the Palace of Rana Saheb to present a petition seeking redress of their grievances. *Vide* also "Minority Administration", "Minority Administration", 22-7-1939, and "Lesson of Dhami", 30-7-1939.

[2] Ramdas Gandhi's wife; also called Nimu

191. LETTER TO DUNICHAND

ABBOTTABAD,
July 20, 1939

DEAR LALA DUNICHAND[1],

It is no want of time that prevents me from going to the Punjab. But I feel utterly powerless to do any good. In other words, it is lack of confidence that keeps me.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 5585

192. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 21, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I don't like this persistent sadness about you. It is so inconsistent with faith in God, faith in human nature, faith in unbreakable friendship. However, enough of argument. The sadness will go in time.

The visit to Kashmir stands cancelled. I am not sorry. I hope to leave here on 26th for Wardha. The Working Committee will meet there. Hence I am likely to be a fixture in Segaon for some time at least, I hope till the Congress time. Will you join the party or join me in August early?

Dhami is a bad thing. I hope you will reach the truth. Why not see the Rana yourself? Study and pursue this case to the end. I am writing on it. You will have a typed copy.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3932. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7241

[1] Member, Punjab Legislative Assembly

193. MINORITY ADMINISTRATION

The Chief of Chamba is a minor. The State is therefore under direct British administration. And the administrator acts virtually as the Chief and exercises all his powers. A correspondent from Chamba writes :

> Ours is a minority-administered State being directly under the control of the
>
> Paramount Power. We have been pressing for the repeal of the liberty-penalizing laws which have been enforced during the minority administration, and we do wish that popular element be introduced in the temporary administrative council at least during the minority of the Raja . . . . [1] In a case like ours the Paramount Power cannot say that it can't intervene. If it has to safeguard the rights of the Ruler, has it not any liability towards the people ?. . . [2]Will you throw some light on the question?

The question is pertinent. There is no reason whatsoever why the people of administered States should not enjoy all the liberty that those in British India enjoy. Indeed a wise and liberal-minded administrator of a State has within his jurisdiction greater opportunity for doing good than one in British India proper. A State administrator has much greater latitude than an official working under the routine of a Province. The latter is subject to a series of superiors and has only limited powers. An administrator of a State is much more than a Governor in his own little State. He is subject only to general supervision of the Resident of the Agency to which his State belongs. Therefore there is no excuse whatsoever for any misrule or failure of justice in administered States, if the Paramount Power's policy is declared in unambiguous terms and followed in its entirety. But if the administration is not all it should be, it shows that there is no well-defined policy of the Paramount Power so far as the people of the States are concerned. There is no insistence on the right being done by the States towards their people. There should be no such thing as policy of non-interference by the Paramount Power in so far as the elementary rights of the people are concerned. The policy of non-interference can remain unchallenged only so long as the States people are ignorant of their strength. But there is nowadays too much consciousness among the people of the States to permit of the policy

[1] Omissions as in the source
[2] *Ibdi*

of non-interference being successful any longer. Denial of justice in administered States should be unthinkable. Let the people of Chamba publish unvarnished facts about the state of things there. I have little doubt that if there is any unjustice done there, force of public opinion will secure the needed redress.

Absence of declared policy by the Paramount Power about the rights of the people of the States is perhaps glaringly demonstrated by the happenings in the little hill State of Dhami. The shooting that took place there would have been impossible if the policy of the Paramount Power was known. The communique issued by the Political Agent should not be the last word on the tragedy. He had no material before him to enable him to form a correct judgment. Every such firing should be followed up by an open, quick, judicial inquiry. The Chiefs who get easily frightened and resort to firing ought not to possess the power they have today over the lives of their subjects. But the public who have to form an opinion do not have a fair chance of doing so. They cannot set up an authoritative inquiry. And a Political Agent's communique is no true guide. Take the Dhami communique. I need not challenge the statements made in it. For aught I know every word in it may be true. But it cannot command implicit confidence. In its very nature, it is a one-sided document. The Political Agent can produce no legal proof in support of his statements. He does not give the sources of his information. To inspire confidence there should be a judicial enquiry carrying necessary consequences for the wrongdoer or doers whether the wrong done is on the part of the State or the people. Thus, if the people sought to overwhelm the Rana, it was undoubtedly wrong as it was if there was defiance of the order against Shri Bhagmal. It was wrong too if outsiders joined the alleged demonstration. The lightning ultimatum, if it was that, was a preposterous thing deserving severe condemnation. Responsible government is made of sterner stuff. If the principality consists of only 5,000 persons and the revenue is Rs. 30,000, responsible government is a meaningless term. If people in every principality will take the law into their own hands, they will do irreparable damage to the cause. The All-India States Conference is there to guide them. Every Praja Mandal should put itself under its guidance in order to enable it to frame its case for freedom. There seems to be little doubt that there has been undue haste on the people's side.

But what about the Rana? Has he been dealing justly by his people? Was he really in danger of his life to warrant firing in self-

defence? Every crowd is not necessarily a hostile crowd. Firing ought not to be treated lightly. Human life should have the same value in a State as in British India. Every firing should be followed by the closest scrutiny and by suitable action both of a punitive and of a preventive character. It is the duty of the Paramount Power to deprive Chiefs of powers of which they do not know judicious use. The whole question regarding the place of the States in Greater India requires over-hauling.

A new epoch has come replacing the old. With the change of the times there must be a change in the manners of all parties—the Paramount Power, the Princes, their people, and last but not least the Congress if it survives the internal crisis that has overtaken it. It will be a mistake for the Paramount Power or the Princes to ignore the Congress, a body under whose shadow the people of the States from the commencement have been accustomed to grow and flourish. The Congress must guide them. Any resenting by the Princes or the Paramount Power of guidance of the people by the Congress must result in an inevitable but wholly unnecessary clash. How can people who are one in blood and bound together by the closest social and economic ties be artificially kept apart for any length of time? Instead of suspecting or fearing the Congress, surely the proper thing for all concerned is to welcome the Congress aid whenever it is available for the common good of both the Princes and the people.

No doubt the Congress will have to recognize its own limitations. It can hope to work with effect only if its work is of a friendly and peaceful nature. It has to hold the scales evenly between parties. It must avoid all show of force or coercion. Thus the reported participation by non-Dhami-ites in the demonstration should have been impossible under the Congress aegis. The Congress influence can be effectively exercised only if it retains its non-violence. Its only capital is its moral authority. Any other position must lead to internecine feud and bloodshed. Dhami has a lesson which Congressmen have to take to heart. This I say quite apart from the admitted fact that we do not yet know exactly what happened and where the blame actually lay. In the absence of a proper judicial inquiry, right action becomes impossible.

ABBOTTABAD, July 20, 1939

Harijan, 29-7-1939

194. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

ABBOTTABAD,
July 22, 1939

I regret to say that for unavoidable reasons I have been obliged to cancel my Kashmir visit. I must apologize to those who were led to expect my visit to India's fairyland.[1]

The Hindu, 22-7-1939

195. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

ABBOTTABAD,
July 22, 1939

CHI. PRABHA,

Your letter arrived here yesterday *via* Peshawar. It is all right that you wrote to Rajen Babu, but you must improve your health. Otherwise you will not be of any use at all. Why do you keep worrying? We are leaving this place on the 26th and shall reach Segaon on the 28th. Could you not come to Segaon by that time?

Rajkumari is in Simla. Her address is: Manorville, Simla. She will perhaps come to Segaon when I go there. Amtul Salaam is at Sabarmati. Lilavati has joined New Era School, Bombay. Balkoba[2] is in Vadilal Sarabhai Sanatorium, Panchgani, and Krishnachandra is there with him. Sushila will stay on in Delhi and gain more experience in her old hospital for a month. After that she will go to Segaon. Nimu came here two days ago. She will return to Dehra Dun tomorrow with Kanam. After that she too will go over to Segaon. Balvantsinha is getting experience in a dairy near Lahore.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3534

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 29-7-1939.

[2] Balkrishna Bhave

196. MY NOTES

HOW TO ATTAIN TRUTH

Lab Bibando, Chashma Bando, Gosh Band

Gar Nabini Sirre Haq, Bar Ma Bikhand

Keep your lips, eyes and ears closed and laugh at me then if you do not reach the heart of Truth.

This is a couplet by Maulana Rumi. Off and on Chaman Kavi of Kutch sends me such valuable verses. When I was at Rajkot, he sent me the above verse along with its meaning. I liked it so much that I wanted to place it before the readers of *Harijanbandhu*. At times when we talk nonsense, listen to falsehood or filth and look at objectionable things, this couplet ought to pierce our heart like a pointed arrow. The quest for Truth demands a heavy price. We may not actually close our lips, ears and eyes although we would lose nothing by closing them. We can, however, certainly do this much. Instead of uttering false or bitter words or hearing defamatory or useless things or watching lustful scenes, we may speak the truth at all costs, chant the name of God, hear His songs, observe the magic of His creation, have *darshan* of the saints and hear only such things as will help our progress. It is only he who does this that will attain the Truth. He alone can be a true satyagrahi and through his *tapascharya* we can get a glimpse of peaceful Swaraj. The rest is all in vain.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 23-7-1939

197. MESSAGE TO BOMBAY GOVERNMENT PROHIBITION BOARD[1]

ABBOTTABAD,
July 23, 1939

I hope that good sense for which Bombay is famous will ultimately prevail and all will combine to make the brave reform under-

[1] This is extracted from "Notes" in *Harijan*, which reported that the message was "in connection with the introduction of prohibition in Bombay on August 1".

taken by the Bombay Ministry the success it deserves to be. I am quite sure that the removal of the curse of intoxicating drinks and drugs will confer lasting benefit on the country.

M. K. GANDHI

Harijan, 5-8-1939; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 31-7-1939.

198. LETTER TO S. K. BOLE

ABBOTTABAD,
July 23, 1939

DEAR RAO BAHADUR,

I thank you for your letter of 20th instant. I understand your explanation. I had to deal with the memorial[1] as it was drawn up. The last paragraph was incapable of any other meaning. In the circumstances I imagine it is unnecessary to say anything further on my article. But if you think otherwise, I shall insert any explanation[2] you may think fit to send. It should be brief and to the point.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 4880

[1] The reference is to the Bhandaris' petition to the Bombay Premier; *vide* "Bhandaris and Prohibition", 7-7-1939.

[2] *Vide* "An Explanation", 7-8-1939.

199. LETTER TO DR. B. S. MOONJE

ABBOTTABAD,
July 23, 1939

DEAR DR. MOONJE[1],

I like your frank letter.[2] But I cannot make the response you desire, for our ways are so hopelessly different.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. B. S. MOONJE
19 ORTHODOX QUARTER
CARD ROAD, SIMLA

B. S. Moonje papers. File No. 24/1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

200. LETTER TO ADOLF HITLER[3]

AS AT WARDHA, C. P., INDIA,
July 23, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

Friends have been urging me to write to you for the sake of humanity. But I have resisted their request, because of the feeling that any letter from me would be an impertinence. Something tells me that I must not calculate and that I must make my appeal for whatever it may be worth.

It is quite clear that you are today the one person in the world who can prevent a war which may reduce humanity to the savage state.

[1] Of the Hindu Maha Sabha

[2] Dated July 20, which read: ". . . . owing to corruption and rise of violence in the Congress and the country generally and particularly owing to non-achievement of Hindu-Muslim unity, you do not feel justified in advising the Congress to start mass civil disobedience for exercising pressure on the Government to modify the present Federation according to your wishes . . . . and yet the Congress is not prepared to accept this Federation. The Government on the other hand not being pressed or coerced to modify the Federation according to your wishes will remain indifferent in the matter, though it may be tempted to modify it to suit the conveniences of the Muslim League. The result will be that the Muslim communalism will be still further strengthened and the hope for Hindu-Muslim unity will disappear for ever . . . Will it not be wise to accept the present Federation in spite of all its defects and use it as a jumping-ground for further quarrels and gains ?. . . "

[3] The Government did not permit this letter to go.

Must you pay that price for an object however worthy it may appear to you to be? Will you listen to the appeal of one who has deliberately shunned the method of war not without considerable success? Anyway I anticipate your forgiveness, if I have erred in writing to you.[1]

I remain,
Your sincere friend,

HERR HITLER
BERLIN
GERMANY

From a photostat: G. N. 1510

201. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

ABBOTTABAD,
July 23, 1939

MY DEAR AGATHA,

Further contacts with Lord Linlithgow will come in their own time. I must hold myself in readiness but must not force the pace. There is nothing wrong with or in his letter. Only he thinks, he has gone as far as he could in the matters in which I am interested. I must not therefore tax him any longer on those matters. I am now trying to educate public opinion and showing all the parties how the new technique can work.

About Federation the position is absolutely clear so far as I am concerned. It is perfectly true that if my conditions were fulfilled, I would accept Federation and so would the Congress, I feel sure. But there is no atmosphere for the fulfilment of those conditions. There is no strength behind my 'demands'. And the British Government cannot give what cannot be taken and held by the grantee. I want you to believe that everything will come right in its own time. Herewith copy of my letter[2] to Hitler just going.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1509

[1] *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 5-9-1939.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

202. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

ABBOTTABAD,
July 23, 1939

CHI. NIMU,

You left and I got this wire in today's mail. So there is no cause to worry about Ramdas any more. I was not happy that you felt vexed here. But such things will happen. You should put up with them and not feel hurt. You should not in the least take them to heart. Kanam must be doing well. I had a comrade in him. I take it that you will meet me in Delhi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

203. SPEECH AT ABBOTTABAD

[*July 23, 1939*][1]

I hardly thought, when I came here, that you would present me with an address even this time too, on my third[2] visit to your province. I had thought I had sufficiently identified myself with your province to be entitled to be regarded as one of you and therefore above the need of such formalities as the presentation of an address. Should I suppose that I have still to win my spurs? Last time you gave me an address *and* a purse. But this time you have given me only an address and *no purse.* May I inquire how I have merited this 'fall from grace'?

I have more than once heard the complaint that the establishment of Hindu-Muslim unity is being delayed owing to lack of sufficient effort in its behalf on my part, that if only I would concentrate myself on it exclusively it could be realized today. May I assure you that if I do not *seem* to be doing that today, it is not because my passion for Hindu-Muslim unity has grown less. But I have realized, as I had never done before, my own imperfection as an instrument for this high mission and the inadequacy of mere external means for the attainment of big objects. I have learnt more and more to resign myself utterly to His grace.

[1] From *The Hindustan Times. Harijan*, however, has July 24.

[2] The two earlier visits were in May and October-November, 1938.

If you could dissect my heart, you would find that the prayer and spiritual striving for the attainment of Hindu-Muslim unity goes on there unceasingly all the twenty-four hours without even a moment's interruption, whether I am awake or asleep. I want Hindu-Muslim unity if only because I know that without it there can be no Swaraj. Let no one imagine that because the Hindus constitute the majority community they can win Swaraj for India or even for themselves by organizing civil disobedience without the backing or support of the other communities. Civil disobedience of the purest type, as I have often repeated, can be effective even if it is confined to a few. But then these few must represent in their persons the united will and strength of the whole nation. Is it not the same in armed warfare? The fighting forces need the backing and co-operation of the entire civil population. Without it they would be crippled. I must be impatient for Hindu-Muslim unity because I am impatient for Swaraj. And I have full faith that true and lasting heart-unity between the Hindus and Mussalmans, not a merely patched-up political compromise, will come sooner or later, sooner perhaps than later. That dream has filled my being since my earliest childhood. I have the vividest recollection of my father's days, how the Hindus and Mussalmans of Rajkot used to mix together and participate in one another's domestic functions and ceremonies like blood brothers. I believe that those days will dawn once again over this country. The present bickerings and petty recriminations between the communities are an unnatural aberration. They cannot last for ever.

The greatest of things in this world are accomplished not through unaided human effort. They come in their own good time. God has his own way of choosing his instruments. Who knows, in spite of my incessant heart-prayer I may not be found worthy for this great work. We must all keep our loins girt and our lamps well trimmed; we do not know when or on whom his choice may fall. You may not shirk your responsibility by shoving it all on me. Pray for me that my dream may be fulfilled in my lifetime. We must never give way to despair or pessimism. God's ways are more than man's arithmetic.

It has grieved me to find that internal squabbles have begun to fill the Congress ranks in this province too. Yesterday I was closeted for over an hour with the members of your Provincial Congress Committee. They asked me to show them a way out. I suggest to you that the solution lies in your own hands. You have adopted Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan as your uncrowned chieftain. You have

given him the proud titles of 'Badshah Khan' and 'Fakhr-e-Afghan'. Let his word be law to you as it was before. He does not believe in argument. He speaks from his heart. You must learn to sink your individual differences and work together like a team under him if the titles that you have bestowed upon him are to be vindicated, and not remain as mere lip compliments.

Then there is the question of poverty among the Frontier masses. I am told that many of them hardly get enough to eat. It is a humiliating reflection that a sturdy race like the Pathans should be in that plight. But here again the remedy lies largely with you. You must teach the people to work with their hands and realize the dignity of labour. The Ministry can and will, of course, provide facilities. But the spade-work will have to be done by volunteers.

May God show you the right way. I know that even when we quarrel amongst ourselves it is only to hasten the advent of independence in the fond hope that independence will prove a solvent of all our ills. May our passion for independence prove a uniting bond stronger than all the differences that divide us.

Harijan, 5-8-1939; also *The Hindustan Times*, 24-7-1939

204. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 24, 1939

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
SIMLA WEST

CAN YOU JOIN ME DELHI TWENTY-SEVENTH WAY WARDHA? TELL HIMALAYAN PRAJA MANDAL[1] I CAN SEE THEM DELHI TWENTY-SEVENTH. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3933. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7242

[1] Of Dhami; *vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 20-7-1939 and 21-7-1939.

205. TELEGRAM TO DR. D. D. GILDER

ABBOTTABAD,
July 24, 1939

DR. GILDER
EXCISE MINISTER
BOMBAY

MATTER REGARDING SABBATH WAS FORGOTTEN. WIRING[1] JEWISH TRIBUNE" TODAY. REGARDING DOLES YOU ARE RIGHT.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

206. LETTER TO N. S. HARDIKAR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 24, 1939

DEAR DR. HARDIKAR[2]

I am quite clear in my mind that we need a strong volunteer organization. But I know that I cannot tackle the problem. You should consult Jawaharlal. He is the man to guide. I retain the opinion that before we can have a central body, we should have provincial bodies. We can't create a centre out of nothing. The tragedy is that we have not in any single province an organization that can be a pattern for the rest.

You must become well.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original: N. S.Hardikar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The telegram sent by Mahadev Desai read: "Kindly supply Dr. Gilder, Excise Minister, religious directions about Sabbath use of wine by Jews with authorities." *Vide* also "Notes", 10-9-1939, sub-title, "Intoxicating Wines and Judaism."

[2] Organizing Secretary, Hindustani Seva Dal

207. LETTER TO HANNA LAZAR

[AS AT] WARDHA,
July 24, 1939

MY DEAR HANNA,

I was delighted to have your letter after so many months. I have gone through your old letter of which you have sent me a copy. Just at present you need no guidance. Your story is incomplete. But you will soon complete it. Whatever may be the story, the remedy is the same. As in the body so in the spirit though the diseases are various the cause is one and so is the remedy one, so in the spirit world, the cause of distemper is one and therefore the remedy also is one. Every spiritual distemper is a fleeing away from God. The surest remedy therefore is to seek the presence of God so much so that we see Him face to face. In the presence of God, there can be no sin, no sorrow, no anger, no malice, no falsehood. In His presence there is no fear, no external affliction can put us out. If this lesson of lessons is learnt there is no question, no doubt left.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

208. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 25, 1939

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA WEST

STAYING WITH ZOHRA ANSARI NEAR HARIJAN COLONY. PRAJA MANDAL MAY MEET TWO. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3934. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7243

209. TELEGRAM TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

ABBOTTABAD,
July 25, 1939

DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA
LAHORE

LEAVING TWENTYSIXTH FRONTIER MAIL. JOIN US JHELUM.

GANDHI

From the original: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

210. CABLE TO Y. M. DADOO [1]

July 25, 1939

DADOO
47 ENDSTREET
JOHANNESBURG (S. AFRICA)

POSTPONEMENT ADVISED BECAUSE DELICATE NEGOTIATIONS PROCEEDING. RESULT EXPECTED SOON. ANNOUNCE POSTPONEMENT DUE MY ADVICE IF PEOPLE IN EARNEST. NOTHING LOST BY SHORT POSTPONEMENT. TREAT THIS CONFIDENTIAL.

BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 11357. Courtesy: E. S. Reddy; also *South Africa's Freedom Struggle,* p. 301

211. LETTER TO SIKANDAR HYAT KHAN

ABBOTTABAD,
July 25, 1939

DEAR SIR SIKANDAR,

Pray accept my thanks for your very clear letter[2] of 20th instant. I accept your suggestion that I may consult the Working Committee and give you its opinion. The Committee is likely to meet on the 9th

[1] This was in reply to a cable from Y. M. Dadoo and Manilal Gandhi, dated July 22, 1939, saying that unless there were "sound reasons for postponement our position with people will be precarious". They had further requested Gandhiji to give them full details of his reasons for postponement of the passive resistance campaign

[2] *Vide* Appendix-"Letter from Sikandar Hyat Khan", 20-7-1939.

proximo.

As to the Harijan electorates, I do hope that separate electorates will not be countenanced. It is one thing to have separate electorates for Muslims, but wholly different to have such divisions among the same community.

Yours sincerely,

SIR SIKANDAR HYAT KHAN

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

212. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 25, 1939

CHI. LILA,

I have your letter. You are unnecessarily making yourself miserable. Mend the situation in which you are placed. You may as well spend your time in improving the living conditions of girls. I have told you that under the pretext of matriculation God is shaping you. Vyas[1] has been praising you no end. While you are there, do the work which the matron is not doing or is unable to do. Whenever you find the atmosphere dirty, try to change it. Clean up the filth with your own hands. Others will automatically follow you. Think that you are yourself the matron. Think that I have sent you there for reforming Vanita Vishram, and it is for that that you are going to get your certificate. In the same process, you will also pass your examination. Do not worry. Study only as much as you can. Everything will come out right. Let this conviction lighten your burden. Balwantsinha has passed through a similar condition. Now he is happy. He was put in charge of a place where even an animal would not have stayed. But having learnt to bear hardships, he has improved.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] M. T. Vyas, Acharya of New Era High School

213. DISCUSSION WITH CHARLES FABRI [1]

ABBOTTABAD,
[On or before *July 26, 1939*][2]

GANDHIJI: It is a difficult thing to explain fully what I do when I pray. But I must try to answer your question. The Divine Mind is un-changeable, but that Divinity is in everyone and everything—animate and inanimate. The meaning of prayer is that I want to evoke that Divinity within me. Now I may have that intellectual conviction, but not a living touch. And so when I pray for Swaraj or independence for India I pray or wish for adequate power to gain that Swaraj or to make the largest contribution I can towards winning it, and I maintain that I can get that power in answer to prayer.

FABRI: Then you are not justified in calling it prayer. To pray means to beg or demand.

Yes, indeed. You may say I beg it of myself, of my Higher Self, the Real Self with which I have not yet achieved complete identification. You may therefore describe it as a continual longing to lose oneself in the Divinity which comprises all.

And you use an old form to evoke this?

I do. The habit of a lifetime persists, and I would allow it to be said that I pray to an outside Power. I am part of that Infinite, and yet such an infinitesimal part that I feel outside it. Though I give you the intellectual explanation, I feel, without identification with the Divinity, so small that I am nothing. Immediately I begin to say I do this thing and that thing, I begin to feel my unworthiness and nothingness, and feel that someone else, some Higher Power, has to help me.

Tolstoy says the same thing. Prayer really is complete meditation and melting into the Higher Self, though one occasionally does lapse in imploration like that of a child to his father.

[1] This appeared under the title "A Dialogue with a Buddhist" by Mahadev Desai, who explains: ". . . .an archaeologist. . . Dr. Fabri . . . has been in India for many years. He was a pupil of Prof. Sylvain Levi and came out as assistant to the famous archaeologist, Sir Aurel Stein . . . He is a Hungarian and had in the past corresponded with Gandhiji and even sympathetically fasted with him. He had come to Abbottabad specially to see Gandhiji . . . . He was particulary exercised about the form and content of prayer and would very much like to know what kind of prayer Gandhiji said. Could the Divine Mind be changed by prayer? Could one find it out by prayer?"

[2] Gandhiji left Abbottabad on July 26, 1939.

Pardon me, I would not call it a lapse. It is more in the fitness of things to say that I pray to God who exists somewhere up in the clouds, and the more distant He is, the greater is my longing for Him and [I] find myself in His presence in thought. And thought as you know has a greater velocity than light. Therefore the distance between me and Him, though so incalculably great, is obliterated. He is so far and yet so near.

It becomes a matter of belief, but some people like me are cursed with an acute critical faculty. For me there is nothing higher than what Buddha taught, and no great master. For Buddha alone among the teachers of the world said: 'Don't believe implicitly what I say. Don't accept any dogma or any book as infallible.' There is for me no infallible book in the world, inasmuch as all were made by men, however inspired they may have been. I cannot hence believe in a personal idea of God, a Maharaja sitting on the Great White Throne listening to our prayers. I am glad that your prayer is on different level.

Let me remind you that you are again only *partially* true when you say my prayer is on a different level. I told you that the intellectual conviction that I gave you is not eternally present with me. What is present is the intensity of faith whereby I lose myself in an Invisible Power. And so it is far truer to say that God has done a thing for me than that I did it. So many things have happened in my life for which I had intense longing, but which I could never have achieved myself. And I have always said to my co-workers it was in answer to my prayer. I did not say to them it was in answer to my intellectual effort to lose myself in the Divinity in me! The easiest and the correct thing for me was to say, 'God has seen me through my difficulty.'

But that you deserved by your karma. God is Justice and not Mercy. You are a good man and good things happen to you.

No fear. I am not good enough for things to happen like that. If I went about with that philosophical conception of karma, I should often come a cropper. My karma would not come to my help. Although I believe in the inexorable law of karma I am striving to do so many things; every moment of my life is a strenuous endeavour which is an attempt to build up more karma, to undo the past and add to the present. It is therefore wrong to say that because my past is good, good is happening at present. The past would be soon exhausted, and I have to build up the future with prayer. I tell you karma alone is powerless. 'Ignite this match,' I say to myself, and yet I cannot if there is no co-operation from without. Before I strike the

match my hand is paralysed or I have only one match and the wind blows it off. Is it an accident or God or Higher Power? Well, I prefer to use the language of my ancestors or of children. I am no better than a child. We may try to talk learnedly and of books, but when it comes to brass tacks—when we are face to face with a calamity—we behave like children and begin to cry and pray and our intellectual belief gives no satisfaction!

I know, very highly developed men to whom belief in God gives incredible comfort and help in the building of character. But there, are some great spirits that can do without it. That is what Buddhism has taught me.

But Buddhism is one long prayer.

Buddha asked everyone to find salvation from himself. He never prayed, he meditated.

Call it by whatever name you like, it is the same thing. Look at his statues.

But they are not true to life. They are 400 years later than his death. Well, give me your own history of Buddha as you may have discovered it. I will prove that he was a praying Buddha. The intellectual conception does not satisfy me. I have not given you a perfect and full definition as you cannot describe your own thought. The very effort to describe is a limitation. It defies analysis and you have nothing but scepticism as the residue.

What about the people who cannot pray?

'Be humble,' I would say to them,'and do not limit even the real Buddha by your own conception of Buddha.' He could not have ruled the lives of millions of men that he did and does today if he was not humble enough to pray. There is something infinitely higher than intellect that rules us and even the sceptics. Their scepticism and philosophy does not help them in critical periods of their lives. They need something better, something outside them that can sustain them. And so if someone puts a conundrum before me, I say to him,'You are not going to know the meaning of God or prayer unless you reduce yourself to a cipher. You must be humble enough to see that in spite of your greatness and gigantic intellect you are but a speck in the universe. A merely intellectual conception of the things of life is not enough. It is the spiritual conception which eludes the intellect, and which alone can give one satisfaction. Even monied men have critical periods in their lives; though they are surrounded by everything that money can buy and affection can give, they find at certain

moments in their lives utterly distracted. It is in these moments that we have a glimpse of God, a vision of Him who is guiding every one of our steps in life. It is prayer.'

You mean what we might call a true religious experience which is stronger than intellectual conception. Twice in life I had that experience, but I have since lost it. But I now find great comfort in one or two sayings of Buddha: 'Selfishness is the cause of sorrow.' 'Remember, monks, everything is fleeting.' To think of these takes almost the place of belief.

That is prayer.

What would you say to the right of man to dispose of his life? Life as life I hold of very little importance.

I think that man has a perfect right to dispose of his life under certain circumstances. A co-worker[1], suffering from leprosy, knowing that his life was as much an agony for those who had to serve him as it was for him, recently decided to end his life abstaining from food and water. I blessed the idea. I said to him: 'If you really think you can stand the trial you may do so.' I said this to him for I knew how different it is to die by inches from, say, suddenly killing oneself by drowning or poisoning. And my warning was fully justified, for someone tempted him with the hope that there was one who could cure leprosy, and I now hear that he has resumed eating and put himself under his treatment!

The criticism seems to me to be that if one's mind is completely obscured by pain, the best thing for him would be to seek *nirvana*. A man may not be ill but he may be tired of the struggle.

No, no. My mind rejects this suicide. The criterion is not that one is tired of life, but that one feels that one has become a burden on others and therefore wants to leave the world. One does not want to fly from pain but from having to become an utter burden on others. Otherwise one suffers greater pain in a violent effort to end one's agony. But supposing I have a cancer, and it is only a question of time for me to pass away, I would even ask my doctor to give me a sleeping draught and thereby have the sleep that knows no waking . . . . [2]

Now according to you I should have no business to stay if I feel I have finished my task. And I do think I have finished mine!

[1] Parachure Shastri

[2] Here, Mahadev Desai explains: "Dr. Fabri got up to go with the parting wish that there may be many more years of helpful activity left for Gandhiji."

No. I am convinced that you can serve humanity for many years. Millions are praying for your life. And though I can neither pray nor desire anything—

Yes, the English language is so elastic that you can find another word to say the same thing.

Yes, I can unselfishly opine that you have many years before you.

Well, that's it. You have found the word! Here too let me tell you there is the purely intellectual conception of a man being unable to live. If he has not the desire to live, the body will perish for the mere absence of the desire to live.

Harijan, 19-8-1939

214. LETTER TO SAMPURNANAND

ON THE TRAIN,
July 26, 1939

BHAI SAMPURNANANDJI[1]

I got your wire last night. The decision to open 2,000 schools for basic education is indeed glorious. I feel that your effort will be crowned with success. I congratulate you on this enterprise.

Yours ,

M. K. GANDHI

From Hindi: C. W. 10259. Courtesy: Kashi Vidyapeeth

215. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

DELHI,
July 27, 1939

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
CARE CONGRESS
G[IRGAUM], B[OMBA]Y

YOU HAVE DONE BRAVELY AND SPIRITEDLY.[2]

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Education Minister, United Provinces

[2] The addressee had just returned from his Ceylon tour. *Vide* also "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 29-7-1939.

216. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

ON THE TRAIN,
July 27, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA, STUPID GIRL,

I shall be counting days. You will devote yourself to the work there with a steady mind. Devdas was asking me if you would talk to him. I said you certainly would. Now it would be nice if you took the initiative yourself. Listen calmly to all that he says and satisfy him. There must be no anger shown.

Do not worry about Pyarelal. 1 shall see about him. You must stay there cheerfully. You will not quarrel with Mother. You will write regularly to Vijaya, Prabha, Lilavati, A. S., etc.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

217. SPEECH AT HARIJAN INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL, DELHI[1]

July 27, 1939

I congratulate myself that I am here to give away the certificates to the first batch of students leaving the school which was established in 1936. But the fact that they have won the certificates throws a good deal of responsibility on their as well as my shoulders—mine because my blessings, which are being given from the depth of my heart, must bear fruit. That only time can show. Shri Viyogi Hari will have to maintain contact with the boys who are going out today. It will have to be a contact as close as that between parents and children. The parents' interest in the children is all the more when the children go away from them for work in distant places. He will keep me informed of your progress.

[1] This appeared under the title "Among Harijan Boys" by Mahadev Desai, who explains that Gandhiji presided over the first convocation of the school which imparted a system of education-cum-manual training comprising carpentry, tailoring, leather work and paper-making. *The Hindustan Times*, 28-7-1939, reported that Viyogi Hari, Superintendent of the school, read out the report, and that Gandhiji, before his speech, gave away certificates to all the 21 students and then presented some spinning-wheels made by the institution to those who had distinguished themselves in spinning.

The responsibility will be no less yours to be worthy of the training you have received, of the clean life you have lived, and of the uplifting contacts you have formed here. My blessings will be no use if you will not fulfil your trust. Your responsibility is enhanced by the fact that you will go out as representatives of Harijans and you will have to reflect in your life there the life you have lived here. Your contribution to the destruction of untouchability will be in proportion to the cleanness and purity of the life you live and the service you will render to your community. Hinduism, you will remember, cannot live if untouchability remains, and you will have to make yourselves volunteer workers in the sacred cause.

Shri Viyogi Hari said that it was difficult to make the tailoring department self-supporting. There must then be something wrong with the training given. Every craft is being taught, or ought to be taught, on a self-supporting basis. You students ought to ascertain from time to time from Viyogiji whether the work you turn out is paying enough and if not where in lies the defect. Only then will you be able to make your school an ideal industrial school. If you pay for your training through your work, you will never have difficulty in after life in earning your bread.

Those who leave the institution ought to get work wherever they go; and if those who are fully qualified fail to get work, it is the duty of the industrial school to find work for them. Let no one think that they get here an inferior kind of training fit only for the poorest people. The training they receive is in my opinion superior to what the most well-to-do boys receive elsewhere. It will depend on you to show by the work you do that it is in no way inferior to similar training imparted by any other institution. It is my firm opinion that useful as the other activities of the Harijan Sevak Sangh are, its educational activity in a home like this is the most useful. For if this institution throws up even a few boys of sterling worth who would give themselves to the service of the Harijans, they will solve the problem of untouchability in a most substantial manner.

May you live straight and clean lives, and thus be the representatives not only of the Harijans but of the millions of non-Harijans who want to serve the Harijans.

Harijan, 5-8-1939

218. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

ON THE TRAIN,
July 27, 1939

CHI. RADHAKISAN[1],

I shall reach Wardha tomorrow. Write all details to that address.

Is it necessary to send Mahadev for a meeting with Jamnalal? Shankerlal[2] has sent a telegram. Mahadev has been sent to Calcutta in connection with the prisoners.[3] On his return I can send him if necessary. How is Jamnalal's health now ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9127

219. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

ON THE TRAIN,
AFTER ITARSI,
July 28, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

At Mathura yesterday I posted you a letter. You will have received it. I asked you to meet Devdas. You should not worry about anything. Keep writing to me. There have been many visitors every night.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Son of Jamnalal Bajaj's brother
[2] Shankerlal Banker
[3] *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 19-7-1939.

220. SUMMARY OF INDUSTRIAL SURVEY COMMITTEE REPORT[1]

An Industrial Survey Committee was appointed by the Central Provinces Government on 15th December last on the following terms :

1. To review the work done in the province by the Department of Industries since its establishment.

2. To supervise the collection of data relating to large, small and especially cottage industries from previous publications and reports by an officer appointed for the purpose.

3. To advise the officer-in-charge as regards the lines on which the industrial survey of the province should be undertaken and to review its progress from time to time.

4. To visit typical villages, study their economic condition and examine the possibility of reviving cottage industries, and in doing so to take the advice and guidance of the All-India Spinners' Association and the All-India Village Industries Association.

5. To report on the industrial possibilities of the raw materials available in the province, with special reference to the forest and mineral resources.

6. To report on the measures which Government can undertake to promote industrial development within the province, especially of cottage industries in the villages, and to suggest methods for financing the same or otherwise promoting them.

The Committee consists of the following ten members :

Chairman: Shri J. C. Kumarappa, Wardha.

Members: Shri Chaturbhujbhai Jasani, M. L. A, Gondia; Shri V. V. Subhedar, M. L. A., Saugar; Shri K. P. Ghaira, General Manager, Central Provinces Syndicate, Limited, Nagpur; Shri R. N. Jha, Secretary, Berar Chamber of Commerce, Akola; Shri K. P. Sagreiya, I. F. S., Sylviculturist, Central Provinces and Berar; Dr. A. N. Kapanna, Demonstrator of Chemistry, College of Science, Nagpur; Shri Walter Dutt, Bar-at-Law, Nagpur; the Director of Industries, Central Provinces and Berar; Dr. R. S. Thakur, Officer on Special Duty in connectio with Laxminarayan Institute of Technology, Nagpur University, Nagpur. He will also act as Secretary to the Committee.

The Committee is empowered to appoint sub-committees and to co-opt

[1] This appeared under the title "An Original Report" in six instalments. The item is placed here under the date of publication of the last instalment in the series. Only relevant portions from the extracts summarizing the report are reproduced here.

members for specific purposes.

To this number the following two more were added under the *Gazette* Notification of Resolution No. 175-89-A-VII, dated the 12th January, 1939:

Shrimati Sarahamma Ittyerah, M. A. Wardha (late Professor of Economics, Lahore); Shri E. R. Mahajani, Managing Director, Shri Laxmi Oil Mills Company, Limited, Akola.

The Proceedings of the Committee were inaugurated on 15th January last. The survey began on 21st January and was finished on 6th February. 207 students including eight women volunteered their services. 14 persons were co-opted to lead the survey party. The party was divided into groups of 10 students each. It surveyed 606 villages covering a population of 15 lakhs paying an annual revenue of over 11 lakhs. The survey cost was Rs. 3,000 in round numbers, i.e., Rs. 5 per village. The whole expense amounted to one tenth of the estimates.

The report covers 46 pages of hand-made paper, foolscap size.

The party travelled third class, but when some members saw during their survey that old women were picking grass seeds for food they declined to draw even the third-class fare. The party satisfied itself with such lodgings and food as the villagers had. Nothing was specially prepared for them.

Prof. Kumarappa says to me in a covering note :

1. Ours is not an academic survey where mathematical accuracy is the one goal.

2. Neither is it a propagandic survey to gather 'evidence' to prove preconceived theories.

3. Nor is it a clinical survey to further the knowledge of the science of economics.

4. It is a diagnostic survey done in a short time with the set purpose of saving the patient's life by a suitable prescription, and this is national planning—not planning for a whole country as such, but planning the economic activity of each individual in relation to the raw material available within the field of our operations.

One member of the staff, an M. A. in economics, argued that without detailed statistics it would be impossible to prove whether the villagers are poor and are getting poorer. I took him with me into the villages, showed him the houses in disrepair and one three-storeyed house, half fallen down, and the goldsmiths sitting idle.

This is no doubt a rough and ready argument. But if most of our villages contain ruins of well-built houses and artisans without occupation, surely the evidence of poverty is more complete and convincing than cold statistics which may prove everything or nothing.

The report which is Part I of Vol. 1 (Vol. 2 and Part II are to follow) contains six chapters and three short dissenting notes by Drs. Thakur and Kapanna and Shri Sagreiya. The dissenters chiefly emphasize the necessity of industrialization though they acknowledge that village industries need the help recommended by the main report.

Chapter two dealing with "General Considerations" stamps the report as an original document and shows that it is not to be pigeonholed as most such reports are but should be given effect to without delay. The only way to do so is, as pointed out in the report, to invite the A. I. S. A. and the A. I. V. I. A. to help the Government to carry out the recommendations.

I give below a full summary[1] of the chapter on "General Considerations". . . .

The reader might have thought that my examination of the Kumarappa Committee's report on the Industrial Survey of the Central provinces was concluded. The fact is that constant travelling and preoccupations disabled me from pursuing the examination with the regularity I had intended. The long journey to the Frontier Province has provided the opportunity to continue and finish the examination.

The last instalment brought up the examination to the chap-ter two. The third is no less important. The survey of 606 villages revealed to the Committee the painful fact that the average income of the villager per head was no more than Rs. 12. This need not startle the arm-chair scientist who relies for his figures on books, and who has been taught to believe that it is anything between Rs. 60 to Rs. 80. Both are right from their own standpoints and data. The figure of 65 to 80 is an all-India average which includes the income of millionaires, middlemen and zamindars. The figure has a purpose of its own. But for the Kumarappa Committee the figure 65 would be wholly

[1] This appeared under eight sub-headings: "Functions of the State", "Taxes and Expenditure", "Capital and Labour Wealth", "Mercy and Barter Economics", "Barter and Government Funds", "Raw Materials, Production and Profit", "Administrative or Creative Efficiency" and "Impediment to Production".

false. The figure 12 is accurate and truly scientific. That Committee was concerned with the average income of the villagers only. The Committee says :

> Our survey showed that most of the industries are tottering. There are hardly any which can be said to be even in a normal state. The taxable capacity of the people is rapidly going down and if the matter is not taken in hand immediately, the time is fast approaching when the Government will get nothing from the people . . . .

The meagreness of the income shows itself in the diet of the people. Thus the report says.

> . . . Their food is largely rice or some other grain, sometimes taken as gruel to fill themselves up with water, but the tragedy of the situation is that even this little amount of rice that is available to them is polished rice making their diet even worse. They hardly get the chaff. This makes its incumbent on the Government to see that at least the rice is given to the poor people has all its nutritive elements left in it. . .

There are other valuable hints on the subject of diet for which I must refer the reader to the original.

There is a brief reference to agriculture. Here is an excerpt from it :

> . . . We have, in a way, already touched upon the question of payment of revenues. In addition to this, the land tenure appears to us to require careful examination. . . . . A great deal of harm has been done and is being done because of the unscientific dues taken without careful planning. During our survey we found that very little attention is being paid to renew the fertility of the soil. . . . . It is time that the Agricultural Department took this function of re-fertilizing the soil on its own shoulders and supplied to the farmers manure from various depots in the villages at the proper season, getting back their return at the time of their harvest. Manufacture of artificial fertilizers should form a key industry. Seeds also may be given out . . . .

On the methods of production the Committee says:

> . . . large-scale organized industries are rendered various services and are granted concessions by the Government which enable them to produce cheaply, while village and cottage units hardly get even the recognition of their existence, not to mention services and concessions. . . Cottage and village industries, as long as their natural tendency is to distribute wealth, have a definite unchallengeable place in the economy of a nation and more especially in that of our country. A careful examination will reveal that any cheapness in production in large-scale industries or any economies that may be effected are not necessarily inherent in the method of production. It is

largely due to expenditure which should be debited to this method of production being spread over the whole country.

Chapter four deals with the Department of Industries. The report has some trenchant remarks on it. Here is a summary :

. . . As it is organized today, the department is not equipped to direct industries, it is nothing but a glorified inspectorate. . . . The organization of a department of this kind should be such that every villager will turn to it naturally for help and advice. . . . This department should be the pivot round which the production of the masses should revolve. It should provide direct help in every way—scientific, financial and technical . . . .

The suggestion that has been made here is on the lines on which the All-India Village Industries Association and the All-India Spinners' Association are already working successfully. At the headquarters of the All-India Village Industries Association at Maganwadi, Wardha, various types of village industries are being carried on. Students are trained in the industries and for village work. A certain amount of scientific research is made. The goods produced are marketed in a shop organized by the Association. There is attached to it the Magan Sangrahalaya which is a museum of the type that is described herein after. The Spinners' Association has emphasized all these points and, in addition, has organized the village producers, and built up a network of shops all over the country to find outlets for the products of the organization in the villages . . . .

It is worthy of note that the Director of Industries who is a member of the Committee, has endorsed these remarks about his department. He deserves congratulation for his detached and impartial outlook.

The following instructive analysis of the distribution of expenditure deserves more than a passing attention :

Education		0-3-5 $\frac{1}{2}$
General Administration		0-3-0
Collection of Revenues		0-3-0
Police and Jails		0-3-0
Justice		0-1-3
Medical and Public Health		0-1-0
Agriculture, Veterinary, Civil Works		0-1-1
Co-operative Credit		0-0-1
Industries		0-0-1 $\frac{1}{2}$
	Re	1-0-0

Where industries, i. e., village economy takes only $1\frac{1}{2}$ pies there is surely something rotten in the State of Denmark. And, as the Committee has truly observed, this money is spent largely on mere administrative work. If this department was run as it should be, the villages will be prosperous, and to that extent they would add to the prosperity of the State. It is wrong for the State to absorb three annas out of 16 for general administration and police and jails respectively.

The fifth chapter which deals with the survey is really introductory to the sixth and last which describes the village industries in detail. The condition of the villages is thus described :

> . . . The primary needs of the people suggest that sanitary surroundings and fresh and wholesome water-supply must form a first charge on the revenues of the villages as it affects the health of the people. Unfortunately, water-supply has been neglected, especially the supply of water to the Harijan families. Whatever may be said against social customs, we cannot wait until these have been reformed to enable these downtrodden communities to get water. . . .

The report has the following remarks on the condition of the industries in the villages :

> . . . In our survey we noticed everywhere all manner of industries interposed without any policy or plan. The result of it all is that today we find the villages disintegrating . . . .

This shows that the villages have been criminally neglected in the past. If the Congress Governments will carry out the professed intention of the Congress, they will reconstruct the lives of the villagers and make them utilize their time so as to supply most of their own wants. As the report points out, the Governments have to do two things: (1) to prevent interference with the village economy by preventing foreign goods from entering the villages, and by preventing our own merchants from introducing milled flour, rice, oil, etc. These impose idleness on the villagers, and the polished, devitalized food products undermine their health. Secondly and side by side with these preventive measures must go improvement in the methods of conducting the existing industries so as to make them more paying, and introduction of new industries in accordance with the condition of particular villages in regard to raw material. And if the venture is to succeed, the planning will have to include the taking up by the State of the goods produced by the villagers not for self-consumption but for sale outside the villages of production.

Among the village industries noted by the Committee are paddy-husking, flour-grinding, oil-pressing, *gur*-making, sugar manufacture, bee-keeping, pottery, glass-work, soap-making, cotton processes (i.e., picking, ginning, carding, spinning, weaving), washing, dyeing, wool-spinning, weaving, sheep-breeding, carpentry, smithy, sericulture, mat-weaving, rope-making, tanning, disposal of carcasses, pisciculture, poultry-breeding, dairy-farming, shoe-making, brass and metal wares, toy-making, goldsmithy, paper-making, transport, lac industry, bamboo, match manufacture, etc. Among the industries is *bidi*-making. This is what the Committee has to say on this industry :

> *Bidi* manufacture is a very lucrative but a harmful industry in this province . . . . Naturally, as other industries are not available to those who are willing to work this industry attracts labour at very low rates considering the subsistence level of wages. At all events they are able to make two and a half annas to three annas a day which, as wages go in the villages today, is high. . . .

The Committee has made practical suggestions on all the industries. No summary can do justice to the hints given under each heading. The curious must procure the report and study it. The Government should issue a cheap and handy edition, and have a translation in Hindustani at least. The report is useful for other pro-vinces also. The Government in the other provinces should therefore procure copies and instruct their Directors to study and act in the spirit of the report. I hope that the Central Provinces Government will carry out in full the recommendations made by the Committee.

Harijan, 20-5-1939,3-6-1939,15-7-1939, 22-7-1939 and 29-7-1939

221. NOTES

MORE TEMPLES THROWN OPEN

Raja Shri Rajaram Raja Saheb is the senior Prince and hereditary trustee of Tanjore Palace Devasthanams. He has 90 temples under his charge including the famous temple called Shri Brihadishwara. He has thrown open all these temples to Harijans as a purely voluntary act of reparation to Harijans and thus hastened the process of purification that Hinduism is going through. It is a great and good thing that the Raja Saheb has done. He deserves the congratulations of all those who believe that untouchability is a blot on Hinduism. The accounts I have received from Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru of the enthusiasm she has

witnessed in the South in favour of opening temples to Harijans, show that the reform is genuine and is going to be lasting. She is a very careful observer. She says her meetings are attended by thousands of persons who follow every word of what she has to say. This is done through able interpretation. And she says that her listeners gladly endorse her sentiments. All this is a distinct improvement upon the past. Thus, though much has been done, much more remains to be done before Hindu reformers can rest on their oars. Temple reform has to go side by side with temple-entry. If the reform is not superficial but is an index of the desire for purification of Hinduism and Hindus, it must be accompanied by purification of the temples in every respect. Their sanctity and popularity should increase. The admission of Harijans to the temples should mean an automatic uplift in their lives. These things will not happen unless Harijan sevaks increase their vigilance, redouble their zeal and feel themselves uplifted by the reform they have helped to bring about. Reforms like the throwing open of temples to Harijans should bring with them a general levelling up in the lives of those who are engaged in and affected by them.[1]

SEGAON, July 29, 1939

Harijan, 5-8-1939

222. TELEGRAM TO SIKANDAR HYAT KHAN

SEGAON,
July 29, 1939

SIR SIKANDAR HYAT KHAN
SIMLA

THANKS WIRE[2] NO NEED APOLOGY SUCH THINGS COMMON LOT OF PUBLIC MEN.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also "Meenakshi Temple Open", 12-7-1939

[2] In this, dated July 27, the addressee expressed apology for the unseemly demonstration by the Shias at Lahore Railway Station on July 26.

223. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA
July 29, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Instead of guiding the Dhami people I have passed them on to you.[1] I feel that you should discharge this burden without any interference from me. The idea in the States seems to be to isolate and ignore the Congress and hence the States Conference. I have already suggested[2] in *Harijan* that no State Association or Mandal should act on its own without reference to your committee[3]. I should act, if at all, through you; i.e., when you refer to me, I should give my opinion as I do in respect of the Working Committee. I told the Gwalior people also likewise yesterday. You will have to reorganize your committee a bit, if it is to function properly.

After all I could not go to Kashmir. Sheikh Abdullah and his friends won't tolerate the idea of my being State guest. Banking on my past experience, I had accepted State offer in anticipation of Sheikh Abdullah's approval. But I saw that I was mistaken. I therefore cancelled the acceptance of the State hospitality and accepted the Sheikh's. This embarrassed the State. So I cancelled the visit altogether. I was guilty of double stupidity—in daring to think of going there without you and in not getting Sheikh's permission before accepting the State offer. I had thought that I would serve the people by accepting the State offer. I must confess that I was not pleased with my contact [with] the Sheikh and his friends. They seemed to all of us to be most unreasonable. Khan Saheb reasoned with them. But it was to no purpose.

Your visit to Ceylon was glorious. I don't mind what the immediate outcome is. Saleh Tyabji asks me to send you to Burma and Andrews thinks of you in connection with South Africa. For Ceylon the idea of a Congress deputation came to me spontaneously, not so

[1] A deputation on behalf of the Himalayan States People's Conference met Gandhiji at Delhi on July 27, and apprised him of the firing in Dhami.

[2] *Vide* "Minority Administration", 22-7-1939.

[3] Standing Committee of All-India States Peoples's Conference, of which Jawaharlal Nehru was President.

these two even after the promptings. But of these when we meet. I hope you are fresh and that Krishna[1] is enjoying herself.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A Bunch of Old Letters,* pp. 377-8.

224. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON,
July 29, 1939

STUPID GIRL,

I wrote to you twice during the train journey. Shankaran is well. He is not allowed to go up and down. He eats well. Mathew[2] is at Balkrishna's[3] place. He appears well. He came walking all the way here.

You will have met Devdas. I am getting on well. Kanu gave me massage and I dozed off. It is difficult to stop Ba from working. You were able to stop her. Ba also was free from care, Now she has to tend me. Let us see what happens. There is no rain here. People are distressed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

225. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON,
July 29, 1939

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

You hurt me and I hurt you. This is a good bargain, isn't it? A letter was dispatched to you every day. Yes, I used to show your letters to Sushila. It was my mistake. Please forgive me. Henceforth I shall destroy them as soon as I get them. But then how would I be able to reply?

[1] Krishna Hutheesing, addressee's sister
[2] P. G. Mathew
[3] Balkrishna Bhave

Yes, it will indeed be good if you visit Ramana Maharshi.

When you are free in August, will you go to Patiala or to Bombay?

I would probably stay here throughout August. But then God alone knows. Sushila has stayed back in Delhi and will remain there for a month.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 426

226. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

SEGAON,
July 29, 1939

I have been in telegraphic correspondence with Dr. Dadoo, leader of the Passive Resistance Committee in South Africa. I have no hesitation in asking the Passive Resistance Committee to postpone, for a time, the proposed launching of the struggle[2] on 1st August. I do so because I have some hope of an honourable settlement. I know that the Government of India as well as the British Government are trying to obtain relief. I have put myself in touch with the Ministers. In the circumstances I think a brief postponement of the struggle to be necessary. I am fully aware of the enthusiasm of the resisters. They have proved their mettle before, and they will do so again if it becomes necessary. But it is a code with passive resisters to seize every opportunity of avoiding resistance, if it can be done honourably. Every cessation in search of peace adds strength to real fighters. Let them remember that the Cape Town Settlement of 1914 was the outcome of a cessation of struggle for the sake of peace. I hope that the proposed cessation will lead to a similar result. Should it unfortunately prove otherwise and should the struggle begin, let Dr. Dadoo and his fellow-resisters know that the whole of India will be at their back.

Harijan, 5-8-1939

[1] This appeared under "Notes", sub-title, "Postpone the Struggle". The statement was also published in *The Hindustan Times*, 30-7-1939.

[2] The movement was proposed as a protest against the Asiatic (Transvaal) Land and Trading Act, 1939, which aimed at virtual economic extinction of the Indian community in the Transvaal. *Vide* also Vol. "A Letter", 7-4-1939. According to *The Bombay Chronicle*, 31-7-1939, Dadoo had issued a statement acceding to Gandhiji's appeal to postpone the Passive Resistance movement, pending further advice from him.

227. LESSON OF DHAMI

We have not heard the last of Dhami. The truth is not yet out. The necessarily one-sided version of the Political Agent has been challenged by the Himalayan States Praja Mandal. Their statement shows how absolutely necessary it is to have an open judicial inquiry into the events that led to firing by the Rana of Dhami.

Some members of the Himalayan Mandal came to see me during my brief stay in Delhi. Dhami had made me think furiously. Was nothing possible to prevent such tragedy? I had much to say about it to the deputation, but I felt it would be wrong on my part to shoulder the burden of guiding the Himalayan States Praja Mandal. The responsibility was great. The issues at stake were equally great. I therefore felt that the matter should be handled not by me but by the Standing Committee of the All-India States People's Conference. The question of the States is daily assuming bigger and bigger proportions. The ruling Chiefs are becoming free with their rifles. They feel that they are safe so far as the Paramount Power is concerned. The Congress has not much prestige with them. Many of them are now evolving measures to crush the growing spirit of their people and make it impossible, if they can, for the Congress to give effective guidance to them, let alone to interfere. Nevertheless the Congress has a duty to perform. I do not exactly know the constitution of the Conference, but I presume that in some shape or other it is connected with the Congress. Anyway it is the only body which is specially designed for guiding the States people. It would be wrong for the States to resent such guidance. They should also realize that any resentment would be futile. The Congress cannot give up its duty of guiding the States people in the hour of their need. Time was when the Congress was guiding and protecting the rights of the States as against the Paramount Power. If the Congress friendship was desired and welcomed by the States in need, it hardly becomes them to demur at their people seeking Congress advice, guidance and protection. That the Congress may not always be able to give the people effective assistance is unfortunately too true. The Congress has to forge the necessary sanction by putting the organization on a firmer footing and by wise restraint to acquire credit for impartiality and strictest justice. If the Congress is to discharge its function in a becoming manner, it will

have to insist upon the workers learning to be more accurate than they have been hitherto in preparing their cases. In order to ensure accuracy, the Standing Committee will have to subject to strict scrutiny everything coming to it. If unchallengeable accounts of the doings in the States where even simple justice is denied are published, they will afford a foundation for action.

I have merely indicated a line of approach. The Standing Committee will no doubt lay down its own policy and method of dealing with problems as they arise from time to time. My object in writing these lines is to warn workers in the States against coming to me and expecting me to advise them. They should approach the Standing Committee. Even as I do not guide Congressmen on general matters falling within the function of the Working Committee but hold myself at the disposal of that body, so shall I henceforth act in respect of new State problems. I may not give up guiding those with whom I am already directly concerned. I need hardly add that I shall continue to do what my special aptitude in matters affecting States may enable me to do without being involved in the general direction of popular movements in them. I would ask workers in the States not to take up any forward movement without previous reference to any sanction of the Standing Committee. It must be the duty of the Congress acting through the States People's Conference to avoid, if at all possible, a quarrel with the States.

SEGAON, July 30, 1939

Harijan, 5-8-1939

228. NOTES

ONE SCRIPT FOR DAUGHTERS OF SANSKRIT

The question of having one script for the Indian languages which are daughters of Sanskrit by birth or adoption has been before the public for a number of years. Yet in these days of aggressive provincialism, perhaps, any plea for one script will be regarded as an impertinence. But the literacy campaigns raging all over the country should compel a hearing for the advocates of one script. I have been one such for years. I remember having even adopted in South Africa Devanagari script for my Indian correspondence with Gujaratis in select cases. Inter-provincial intercourse will be much facilitated by such adoption, and the learning of the various provincial languages

will be made infinitely easier than it is today. If the educated people of the land were to put their heads together and decide upon one script, its universal adoption should be an easy thing. To the millions who are illiterate it is a matter of indifference what script is prescribed to them. If the happy consummation comes to pass, there will be only two scripts in India—Devanagari and Urdu, and every nationalist will deem it his duty to master the two scripts. I am a lover of all Indian languages. I have tried to learn as many scripts as possible. And if only I had the time, even at the age of seventy I have energy enough to learn more Indian languages. That would be a recreation for me. But in spite of all my love for the languages I must confess that I have not learnt all the scripts. But if the sister languages were written in one script, I should pick up a workable knowledge of the principal languages of the provinces in very little time. And Devanagari has nothing to be ashamed of in point of symmetry or beauty. I hope that those who are engaged in the literacy campaigns will give a passing thought to my suggestion. If they will adopt Devanagari script, they will save for the future generations tons of labour and time and earn their blessings.

SEGAON, July 30, 1939

Harijan, 5-8-1939

229. A HARIJAN SEVAKS' CONFERENCE

There was held on 4th to 7th June last at Poona a conference of Western and Central India Harijan sevaks. Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru, the Vice-President of the All-India Sangh, presided at the Conference. I am sorry that it was not possible to notice before now some of the important resolutions of the Conference. But they bear publication even though they were passed nearly two months ago. Here are the most important of them[1] :

It is to be hoped that the resolutions addressed to the Indore and Gwalior States will bear fruit. I have omitted similar ones about Devas and Kathiawar States in order to avoid repetition. Indeed if the Princes will do their duty by the despised portion of India's humanity, they should not need any reminder from the Sangh. They do not, like the sanatanists, defend untouchability. With

[1] *Vide* Appendix-"Harijan Sevaks' Conference Resolutions", 4/7-6-1939.

them the neglect to make provision for Harijans can only be ascribed to indifference. Let us hope that the appeal made by the Conference will not fall on deaf ears.

SEGAON, July 30, 1939

Harijan, 5-8-1939

230. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEGAON,

July 30, 1939

CHI. KAKA,

A letter for Maganbhai[1] is enclosed. If you like it, send it on along with your comments.

I send herewith an article[2] about a single script. If you wish to suggest any changes in it, send your suggestions as soon as possible. If you do not like the article, I am ready to cancel it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10923

231. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 30, 1939

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. What should I say? If you can break your vow, then do what you like. I shall not give the money to anyone else. I cannot keep Akbar[3] here without you and how will you come here without breaking the vow? Meet and talk to Shankerlalbhai and do what seems proper.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 427

[1] Maganbhai Prabhudas Desai

[2] *Vide* "Notes", 30-7-1939.

[3] Akbarbhai Chawda

232. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA
July 31, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I had no time to write earlier. I was immersed in Harijan work. The heap of correspondence still lies before me.

We had and exacting journey—crowds unusual everywhere. There was no rest till reaching Gwalior, i.e., 2 a. m. I have not got at the bottom of this sudden manifestation.

Mahadev is still in Calcutta.

Mira came in yesterday without notice. I knew that she was to return but did not know when. The place is filling up.

Aryasamajists occupy much of my attention.[1]

We are all keeping well. Mira has a bad cough and constipation.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3935. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7244

233. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA
July 31, 1939

CHI.. JAISUKHLAL,

I have your letter, and also Sanyukta's[2]. I am not writing separately to her. By God's grace Kasumba[3] is improving. I cannot think of anything for you. You may write to Jamnalaji if you wish. Cases like yours deserve to be carefully considered. I do know what your

[1] The reference is to the 'Arya Satyagraha' against the anti-Hindu policy of the Nizam Government, which ultimately announced a scheme of reforms that conceded in substance their religious demands. *The Hindustan Times*, 28-7-1939, reported: "On July 27, a deputation consisting of Mr. Ghanshyamsingh Gupta, Speaker of Central Provinces Assembly, Mr. Vinayak Rao and Mr. Deshabandhu Gupta met Gandhiji and placed before him the correspondence which passed between Mr. Ghanshyamsingh Gupta and Sir Akbar Hydari, Prime Minister of Hyderabad State, regarding the doubts expressed by the Aryasamajists on Hyderabad reforms." *Vide* also "Notes", sub-title, "The Arya Samaj", 14-8-1939.

[2] Addressee's daugher

[3] Addressee's wife

dharma is and it will always seem difficult to practise. So you may try all means of earning whatever you can there. Contact Vithaldas. Don't insist on a particular sum as salary. Think further about the matter after Kasumba has recovered.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI JAISUKHLAL GANDHI
SIR HARKISONDAS HOSPITAL
NEW CHARNI ROAD, BOMBAY

Form a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

234. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA
July 31, 1939

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got both your letters. You will see in *Harijanbandhu* that I have acted upon your suggestion.[1] I have also made the correction[2] suggested by you. I am apt to commit such arithmetical errors. It could have been avoided if I had made the calculation on a sheet of paper. Mahadev had checked the figures, but he too failed to detect the error. He of course had some suspicion which was later on removed.

That statement[3] about the resolve of a good man is correct. Your own resolve would work; my blessings in this regard are out of place. The resolution about seventy lakh [yards of yarn] is yours and there is strength of character in that resolution itself.

I do hope to supply you 700 yards at least. Ba also will give the same quantity.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] *Vide* "Threat of Famine", 2-8-1939.
[2] *Vide* "Notes", 6-8-1939.
[3] *Vide* "Meenakshi Temple Open", 12-7-1939.

[PS.]

Bhagwanji's case is rather delicate. I think we shall have to pay him more. I will explain further if I get time. For the present make the payment.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8558. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

235. LETTER TO DEVADAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 31, 1939

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your letter. It did not upset me. The fact that a difference of opinion has arisen between us does pain me, but I hope that it will disappear in the course of time. You may take as much of my time as you wish. I meant well in asking you to get the opinion of Sardar and of others. Their opinions may perhaps have some effect on me. Do not forget one thing. You and I don't see eye to eye. You believe that my treatment kills the patient. I believe it keeps him alive. Now what shall we do about this difference of opinion? It is because of this that I am waiting patiently. One day one of us will be able to see who was in the wrong.

Meet Sushila and talk with her lovingly. I have of course told her the same thing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 2049

236. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 31, 1939

CHI. JIVANJI,

When is the Devanagari edition of the *Autobiography* likely to be published?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9944. Also C. W. 6919. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

237. LETTER TO PYARELAL

July 31, 1939

CHI. PYARELAL,

You have not done the correct thing if you have not eaten today. What adjective should be used for you for your not replying to Ba at all? It would be good if you ate even now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

238. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON,
July 31, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have written you three letters. I could not write yesterday. I have received your letter. It does not acknowledge receipt of my letters. I wrote from Mathura, Betul and Segaon. You must stay there and give your whole heart to the work. It is good that you are finding some novelty in the atmosphere there. Kanu gives me massage every day. I also bathe regularly. The blood-pressure is not checked every day. Today Mahodaya checked it. The reading was 155/90.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

239. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEGAON,
July 31, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have received your letters. It is time for the post. I shall not write much today. I am thinking about you. There have been no rains here. People are anxious.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4323.

240. TELEGRAM TO LORD LINLITHGOW [1]

WARDHA,
August 1, 1939

HIS EXCELLENCY VICEROY
VICEROY'S CAMP

EXCEEDINGLY SORRY CANNOT REACH DELHI FIFTH INSTANT ESPECIALLY AS THERE IS NO PARTICULAR PURPOSE FOR MEETING. URGENT WORK DEMANDS. EXHAUSTING JOURNEY FROM FRONTIER PROVINCE. ANY DATE AFTER TWENTIETH INSTANT WILL SUIT.[2]

From a copy : C.W. 7830 a. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

241. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
August 1, 1939

NARANDAS GANDHI
RASHITRIYASHALA
RAJKOT

HOPE INAUGURATION RENTIA YAGNA[3] SUCCESSFUL. IF DROUGHT CONTINUES SEVENTY PER CENT SHOULD BE DEVOTED FAMINE RELIEF. THEREFORE THERE SHOULD BE SPECIALLY EXTENSIVE RESPONSE IN MONEY AND YARN.

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./II. Also C. W. 8559. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter dated July 28, which, *inter alia*, read : "I write to say that it would give me very great pleasure to see you again if it was by any chance convenient for you to be in Delhi on Saturday, the 5th August. . . . There is no special subject which I want to raise with you but it is now some months since we have met and I would welcome an opportunity of seeing you again."

[2] For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix-"Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 2-8-1939.

[3] Initiated by the addressee in honour of Gandhiji's birthday, also known as *Rentia Baras*, observed with non-stop sacrificial spinning from *Bhadarua Vad* 12 (Gandhiji's date of birth according to Vikram calendar, usually falling in the second half of September) to October 2; *vide* also "Notes", 10-9-1939, sub-title, "Surplus Khadi"; and "Meenakshi Temple Open", 12-7-1939.

242. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEGAON,
August 1, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I am trying to send Shakaribehn or Kanchanbehn. Balkrishna should never be left alone. Today also I have no time for more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4324.

243. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 1, 1939

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

There was no letter from you yesterday. Your present address is not known, hence I am sending this letter with Lakshmidasbhai[1]. I did not expect such behaviour from you. It only shows that no responsibility can be entrusted to you. Well, His will be done. This will teach a new lesson. I hope you will stay there till Mridulabehn[2] returns.

All are well here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 428

244. THREAT OF FAMINE

There have been no rains yet at many places in Kathiawar. Shri Chhaganlal Joshi writes.[3]

This news is alarming. We do hope that Kathiawar will escape this calamity; but if it does not, my second hope is that those who have foodgrains and fodder, or can manage them, will not take advantage of the situation and make profit, and will sell them at cost

[1] Lakshmidas Asar

[2] Mridula Sarabhai

[3] The letter is not translated here. It described how people and cattle were starving. Chhaganlal Joshi along with Narandas Gandhi thought that 70 percent of the amount collected during Gandhi Jayanti week should be spent on relief work.

price. My third hope is that the Rulers will fulfil their duty by rendering the people as much help as possible, and the fourth hope is that the volunteers will rush out to offer help at various places. The spinning *yajna* will be observed for seventy days with effect from 2nd August, under the auspices of the Rajkot Rashtriyashala. It has been suggested that during the *yajna* workers should increase their speed of spinning and from the produce 70 percent should be used for helping the famine-stricken people. In the meanwhile, if it rains and Kathiawar escapes the danger, the yarn may be utilized for its original objective[1]. The main idea at this moment is to raise production. It can be raised by collecting funds and spinning more cotton. It is expected that those who did not normally participate in the spinning *yajna* would do so this time. If the atmosphere for spinning is created it will be easier to give the work to the famine-stricken. Thereby proper help will be given to them and their self-respect will also be preserved. In order to procure adequate help, the spinning work will have to be taken up on a large scale and for that the formation of a committee of right persons is essential.

My fifth and the last desire is that the khadi produced through the spinning *yajna* performed by the famine-stricken people will be disposed of easily. If the khadi is not sold immediately, the calamity cannot be met and overcome by the spinning-wheel.

SEGAON, August 2, 1939

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 6-8-1939

[1] That is, to use it equally for Kathiawar Harijan work, khadi work and Rajkot Rashtriyashala; *vide* "Meenakshi Temple Open", 12-7-1939.

245. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 2, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

I received your two letters together. At least you received all my letters. I am keeping well. I have good sleep. I go to bed at 9.30 p. m. You must put on still more weight.

I am thinking about your hospital.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

246. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS [1]

The hunger-striking prisoners of Dum Dum Jail have sent me some questions through Shri Mahadev Desai. It will serve the cause better if I give a public answer. I am sorry that I can fix no date for their release nor give any other undertaking. I would if I had the power. The only power I have is to plead their cause with all the force at my command. But they give me no chance whatever by continuing their hunger-strike. In so far as it was intended to rouse public attention it has served its purpose. Any prolongation of the fast will now defeat that purpose. There are many who would work actively for their release if the strike is given up. I do feel very strongly that this fast is not justified. The strikers are giving a bad lead to those who are similarly situated. Such hunger-strikers, if they are largely copied, will break all discipline to pieces and make orderly government impossible. The prisoners' cause is essentially just, but they are weake-ning it by their persistence. I would ask them to live and listen to the advice of one who claims to be an expert in fasting and who claims also to know the science of political prisonership. Let them not hamper one whom they consider to be their best advocate. I make bold to say that had the fates not been against them and me, they would certainly have been discharged before 13th April last. But I do not propose to go into the past. Suffice it to add that their refusal to give up the strike

[1] This appeared under the title "To Bengal Prisoners". The statement was also published in *The Hindu,* 2-8-1939, and *The Hindustan Times,* 3-8-1939.

will embarrass the Working Committee in whatever effort it might wish to make to secure their release.

SEGAON, August 2, 1939

Harijan, 5-8-1939

247. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 3, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have not had a moment for writing to you. I gave you a wire[1] about Dhami. Jawaharlal is already on the war path.

Of course, you will bring the cooker and everything else you may need. But why cooker? You are going to take your meals with me as before. The delay is unfortunate. It is not only the work for which you are coming. However don't delay any longer.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3936. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7245

248. LETTER TO POTTI SRIRAMULU CHETTY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 3, 1939

MY DEAR SHRIRAMULU[2],

I have your letter.

I must not write to Rajaji. You should go to the Kodambakkam Ashram[3] and offer your services as a volunteer. They will accept you if you are a steady worker.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 112

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Amrit Kaur", 24-7-1939.

[2] A Congressman of Nellore who fasted to death in 1953 for the formation of a separate Andhra State

[3] Harijan Ashram

249. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

August 3, 1939

CHI. KAKA,

The letter for Maganbhai was posted promptly.

Come over at 3 o'clock today for giving me your report about Meher Ashram.

A bill for a fairly large sum has been sent by Wanless [Sanatorium] regarding that gentleman. Ask for it from me.

I have written[1] to Jivanji inquiring about the *Autobiography*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7971

250. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 3, 1939

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. Since Rajendra Babu is so keen, take up the responsibility and do whatever you can. God will give you the needed strength. Sushila's address is: Dr. Sushila Nayyar, Lady Hardinge Hospital, New Delhi.

You can write to Uncle: Sheth Jamnalalji Bajaj, State Prisoner, Jaipur.

There is no cause for worry about Vidyavati[2] if there is no bleeding. The remedies for her are: mud packs, hip-bath, bland un-spiced food without oil, and plenty of greens like *bhaji,* cucumber, *turiya,* etc., also oranges, *mosambi,* pomegranates, grapes, etc. Fried things should be avoided. Very little rice. She may eat *khakhara* but no food at night. She should drink plenty of water.

I am here for the present.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jivanji D. Desai", 31-7-1939.

[2] Addressee's sister, the eldest daughter-in-law of Rajendra Prasad

[PS.]

Give this letter to Sumangal[1] after reading it.

From a photopstat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3535

251. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 3, 1939

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

Shankerlal tells me that you are not keeping well. You are suffering from indigestion and blood impurity. These can certainly be cured by hip-bath, mud treatment and change in the diet. If this regimen is not possible there then stay in Wardha. I would like to keep you in Segaon but here I shouldn't be able to provide the amenities you would want. Everything will be done for you in Wardha and at the same time you will be under my care. You cannot but get well.

Pass on the enclosed letter to Gulzarilal. I hope Bhabhi is all right and is not fretting about the tumour.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32819

252. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 3, 1939

CHI. SUMANGAL,

Would you like to marry Maitri, the daughter of Dal Bahadur Giri? She is a good girl. Prabha knows her. You have also seen her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Sumangal Prakash

253. LETTER TO PRESIDENT, TANZEEM-UL-MOMININ [1]

[Before *August 4, 1939*][2]

DEAR FRIEND,

I have sufficient papers in front of me to enable me to formulate a tentative opinion upon the Shia and Sunni controversy. I have a long letter from Pantji[3] and printed papers giving me what purports to be an unbiased version.

This much seems to stand out clearly. Whereas the *Madhe Saheba* is to praise the elected Caliphs, the *Tabarra* is a curse pronounced upon the first three Caliphs. Whilst one can understand the right of publicly praising people, is there such a thing as right of pronouncing a curse on dead men? The right of *Tabarra* cannot be derived from the holy Koran for the simple reason that the Caliphate came into being only after the death of the holy Prophet. I would like you, therefore, to enlighten me on the religious duty of saying the *Tabarra*.

I would also readily grant that there can be no religious duty in praising the Caliphs specially in public places and in the presence of those whom the recital is known to offend. Therefore, subject to what you might say to the contrary, I would advise you, for the sake of peace, to withdraw the civil resistance[4] and stop the public recital of *Tabarra* unconditionally, leaving it to the good sense of the Sunnis so to act as not to wound the susceptibilities of their Shia brethren.

I have not written this letter for publication. You have been good enough to ask me to give my candid opinion and I have given it tentatively. If it helps you in announcing your decision in accordance with my advice, you are at liberty to publish this letter.I am not sending a copy of this opinion to anyone. It is simply meant for you and friends who accompanied you and on whose behalf you had come.

The Hindu, 5-8-1939

[1] The source reported that a deputation of Tanzeem-ul-Mominin "recently waited on Gandhiji to seek his advice regarding the Shia-Sunni dispute" on the right to recite, in public, *Madhe Saheba* by Sunnis and *Tabarra* by Shias. The agitation had started as early as March. *Vide* "Telegram to Tanzeem-Ul-Mominin", on or after 19-5-1939 and "A Letter", 23-5-1939.

[2] The letter was reported under the date-line "Lucknow, August 4".

[3] Govind Ballabh Pant, Premier and Minister of Home Affairs and Finance of the United Provinces

[4] Started by the Shias in early June

254. INTERVIEW TO GOVERDHANLAL SHUKLA

[On or before *August 4, 1939*][1]

Gandhiji told Mr. Shukla[2] that he was not treating the question of the release of political prisoners, both of the Punjab and Bengal, lightly. He pointed out that the hunger-strike by the political prisoners in Bengal jails had been causing difficulties in finding a solution.

Gandhiji declared that the problem of the political prisoners was coming up before the Congress Working Committee.

Gandhiji pointed out that, with a solution found for the problem of political prisoners in Bengal, the question relating to the Punjab prisoners would be solved immediately and automatically.

Gandhiji, it is stated, then asked Mr. Shukla to furnish him with particulars about the prisoners belonging to the Punjab, and the attempts made for their release, on receipt of which he would do what lay in his power.

The Hindu, 5-8-1939

255. WELL DONE BOMBAY!

From all the accounts I have received it seems that Bombay surpassed itself on the 1st of August, the day of the inauguration of prohibition. An eye-witness of the demonstration tells me that the procession that took the mortal remains of the immortal Lokamanya to the Chowpaty sands, huge as it was, was far outdone by the crowds that gathered together on the Azad Maidan. He tells me that all Bombay was present there. The labourers, who were the chief persons to benefit by the measure and who were at the same time the most affected by prohibition, attended in their thousands with their wives. They rejoiced in the deliverance from the devil from whose grip they could not disengage themselves without external assistance. Had they gone to express their gratefulness to the Ministers for their courage in persisting in their benevolent measure in the teeth of the opposition of vested interests?

It was not a mere labour demonstration. All classes took part in it. At that huge meeting there was not a jarring note. Men and women had turned up in their thousands to take part in thanks-giving to God for the successful inauguration of prohibition.

The great Parsi community deserves congratulations for the

[1] The interview was reported under the date-line "Wardha, August 4".

[2] Of Kanpur

restraint it observed in spite of its bitter opposition to the measure. Evidently wiser counsel prevailed and no hostile demonstration appears to have been staged by them. My hope that Parsi philanthropy will get the better of the opposition, appears to have been justified. Is it too much to expect whole-hearted support from the Parsis in making the measure a complete success? Let them remember, the glory of the effort in Bombay will be reflected not only throughout the province but it will be reflected all over India. I make bold to say that although they feel that they have been unjustly dealt with, the future generation of Parsis will bless Dr. Gilder as their true represent-ative and benefactor. Surely Parsis should be proud, as India is proud, that they have produced in Dr. Gilder a man who has stood firm as a rock in the midst of fiercest opposition including threats of boycott and worse.

Indeed the whole of the Ministry deserves hearty congratulations on the steadfastness with which they have pursued this great moral reform. The demonstration of 1st August shows that they had and have practically the whole of Bombay behind them. No constructive measure promoted by the Congress has had such enthusiastic support as this great moral reform.

It is a matter of regret that a Muslim procession of protest, not against the measure but against the property tax, was organized the same day and resulted in a clash with the police. But it only enhanced the value of the public meeting, for the procession had no effect whatsoever on the great and irresistible demonstration. Bombay had one mind at the Azad Maidan.

Let us hope the brilliant beginning has momentum enough in it to lead to a brilliant end. Much constructive effort will be required in order to consolidate the advantage gained by the closing of liquor-shops. It removes the temptation from the drinker but not the craving for drink. His mind has to be directed into the right channel. He must have healthy refreshment at a place where he can rest his tired mind and limbs. Workers among the labourers should deem it their duty to study their lives and help them to conquer the craving for drink. The Government alone won't be able to cope with this consolidation work. They could close the liquor-shops with a measure of popular goodwill. But they will need the active co-operation of a band of volunteer workers to supplement the official effort to help the drinker to lose his craving for drink.

SEGAON, August 4, 1939

Harijan, 12-8-1939

256. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 4, 1939

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I am not sending you a telegram. What could I say? If you are determined to come, you will come. How could you do a job which you are unable to do? You had vowed that you would return when Mridula and Lakshmidasbhai let you go. Now Shankerbhai is there. Meet him and do what appears proper. I have, of course, written to Lakshmidasbhai about Akbar. I don't have the courage to keep him here. A Muslim lady doctor arrived here yesterday. She belongs to Central Provinces. Her father is also a doctor. She will stay for a month. She seems to be a good person. She is doing Sushila's work.

Nimu is of course here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 429

257. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 4, 1939

FOOLISH GIRL,

Your two letters have arrived together. I do write to you every alternate day. Shirin arrived here yesterday. She seems to be a good girl. It was she who checked my blood-pressure today. It was 135-88. Pyarelal's reading was the same. Then there is now a prisoner from Bengal. Nimu is there of course. I go to bed after 9.00 p. m. Right now it is 3.00 p. m. I am Iying with a mud-pack on my stomach. I have been taking dates for the past three days. They are very nice. I remember you. People here are anxious because it has not rained. Do not worry about me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

258. DISCUSSION WITH V. V. SATHE [1]

SEGAON,
August 5, 1939

GANDHIJI : If you are a satyagrahi, I too am a satyagrahi, and as I have been told by many friends that you are a reasonable man and a man of restraint, I shall show you that you are wrong.

Well then, you ought to have exhausted all the constitutional means. You must remember that the Bombay Congress Ministry is under four Congress Committees—Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Bombay. You should have lodged your complaint before them. Failing satisfaction you should have gone to the Working Committee, failing there to the A.I.C.C., and then to the open session of the Congress. And if you accept my authority as an expert in satyagraha, then you should have come to me, but not with a decision to fast.

SATHE: I do not accept you as the final authority, but I would certainly take your advice. But let me ask you one question. Whether all these Congress Committees give an opinion in my favour or not, what if the Ministers say they have violated the Congress principles?

Do they say so?

Yes. But they will not resign, they say, unless they are asked to resign. But they have broken the promises given in election manifestos.

There is no rigidity about the manifestos. You may say many things but you may not be able to carry them all out.

My own Sadashiv Peth, which is one of the constituencies, did resolve that the Ministry had not fulfilled the promises.

Well then, let that committee approach the A.I.C.C. But why this fast? You must exhaust all the natural steps.

The natural steps take years. It is a cumbersome machinery.

Not years, but it may take a year. That should not matter.

[1] The discussion appeared under the title "A Satyagrahi *v.* A Satyagrahi" by Mahadev Desai, who explains: "Shri V. V. Sathe is a seasoned faster and a Congressman. He fasted in jail for the right of cooking his own food. . . remained without clothes. . . because he would not be allowed to wear khadi. He is a downright honest man but often it would seem his logic gets the better of his common sense. . . He came to Segaon on the morning of the 5th, determined to go on a fourteen-day fast. . . . He feels that the Bombay Ministry grievously erred in certain things, e.g., orders about processions, security demanded from Presses, and firing. He had come determined to fast in Gandhiji's presence because he said, Gandhiji was 'the God of the Congress' and had the resignations of the Congress Ministries in his pocket. . .

I do propose to go to the open Congress, for the Congress is an authority above you.

I am no authority. I have a certain amount of moral influence.

But you do not exercise it.

How do you know? You must place all the facts before me and convince me that I have not done all in my power.[1]

But you do not expect me to express my judgment on these matters?

I do.

How can I? Your reading out the texts of orders to me and placing all the facts in your possession before me does not take me further. I must hear the Ministers also.

But that you can easily do. You are the High Command.

How am I the High Command?

You have said that the Ministers' resignations are in your pocket.

When did I say so? Produce my statements.[2]

No, seriously, if I made any such preposterous statement, it would be bravado. You do not find my name mentioned anywhere in the constitution. I can exercise my moral authority certainly, but that only when I see that there is something which ought to be done (morally) by the Working Committee or the Ministry.

Then you will study the case while I go on with my fast.

How can you, when you have yet to convince me of the justifiability of your fast?

I am fasting only to arrest your attention.

You will if you do not fast. The moment you begin your fast you distract my attention, you paralyse my capacity for unbiased judgment. I could not enjoy my meals if I knew that someone was fasting without cause. And then you must know that this is a colony of fasters. There is Bhansali, the greatest faster I have known, Vinoba had fasted, and so has Kakasaheb. You had better see them, talk to them, and see if they approve of your going on fast.[3]

[1] Mahadev Desai says: "Shri Sathe now proceeded to give the details of his grievances on the three scores. . . the details of the orders about the processions and how people dodge them, and so on."

[2] Sathe laughed in reply.

[3] Mahadev Desai explains: "Shri Sathe now turned to the second of his counts—the demand of security from the papers. The British Government may have done it, but for the Congress Government to do so was the height of injustice. Why

I do not take your view. If we have a national government, and we have papers that simply thrive on prosecutions, what are we to do? But that only means that there are fundamental differences between us. We have got to examine everything. If you want me to use my moral authority, I must have certain conviction that the Ministers have gravely erred in all the three matters you have mentioned. And if the conviction goes home, I would certainly like to speak to the Ministers and the Working Committee. But to do all this I must examine your allegation at leisure. And you may be sure that though I have very little time I would study the papers you send me, just for your sake.

But in the mean while I may fast.

No. You can place the whole case before the Working Committee if you like.

What right have I?

Everyone has a right. The Working Committee is there to listen to every Congressman and non-Congressman with a grievance. But now that you have asked me to study the case perhaps you may not want to put it before the Working Committee. After I have given my decision, you may reason with me, plead with me, and then if you find me obstinate, you can fast against me.

You are a student of the *Gita?*

I am.

Well then, I tell you your fast would be the third kind of *tapas* described in the seventeenth chapter[1]—*tamasa tapas* born of ignorance and perverseness.

So I may fast a month hence, if I am not satisfied?

Yes, but if I want more time, you will give me.

Certainly.[2]

Harijan, 12-8-1939

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should the editors not be prosecuted? No security should be demanded without prosecution."

[1] Verse 19

[2] Mahadev Desai adds: "Shri Sathe is a man of simplest habits and very few wants. He was a head master of a national school for some time, and Gandhiji tried to persuade him to stay on here, study the various activities and give his time to whatever activity appealed to him. His few wants could be easily met here. But he was not to be so easily fished. He preferred to go back to Poona."

259. LETTER TO RAKHAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 5, 1939

BHAI RAKHAL,

I was happy that you came to Segaon and stayed here for some days. I wish that the faith in truth and ahimsa, which has grown in you, may also grow in the hearts of all revolutionary brothers and sisters. Those whom I met gave me this assurance. I know that we will never be able to achieve independence without truth, ahimsa and so on.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 4667

260. AM I ALL-POWERFUL?

Two Congressmen came to me during the week. One of them said :

> We in the Central Provinces think that you can do everything you want. You can remove the Ministry at will and you can make them do what you like.

The other said :

> You are the Working Committee. Every Congressman therefore blames you for the present corruption. You showed us that moral authority was the supreme authority. You taught us to think that the existing system was Satanic. You taught us that when the Congress reigned there would be no devilry, there would be purity in every walk of life. But we find today quite the reverse. The Congress reigns in many provinces and yet corruption is rampant. Congressmen quarrel among themselves. There is marked deterioration. Devilry is not gone. You do not rely upon numbers. You have often said that even a few true and good Congressman can, by their moral worth, represent the whole nation and real democracy can be evolved. But instead of quality the cry everywhere is for quantity. The amendments recently made are of no use. They won't remove the growing corruption nor reduce the unmanageable size of the Congress. If you say that you cannot have your way with the Working Committee, let us know it. As it is we believe you to be all-powerful and are therefore filled with wonder that you allow things to go from bad to worse. Look at your Khadi Clause. It is responsible for extensive hypocrisy in the Congress. Very few believe in Khadi and therefore use it only for show. Khadi therefore stands for falsehood and worse. You who brought the

country to a moral height are now bringing it down. Presently the Congress will become the laughing-stock of the country, if things go as they are doing. If you cannot mend the Congress, why don't you leave it alone?

This second critic is a well-known Congressman and organizer. He spoke feelingly. I promised to reproduce in these columns the substance of the answer I gave him.

I am not all-powerful whether with the Central Provinces Ministers or with the Working Committee. I know very little of the doings of the Ministers. I never interfere with their work. I have never regarded that as my function. Occasionally I have to correspond with them on matters such as the village industries, basic education or the like precisely as any citizen would do. I have invariably refused to interfere with their work. I would not have the time for it even if I had the wish. It would mean usurpation of the function of the Parliamentary Sub-committee of the Working Committee.

So far as the Working Committee is concerned, I do attend its meetings whenever I am required to do so. I do influence its decisions in the matters that may be referred to me and never in any others. Many sittings of the Committee I do not attend at all. Of many of its resolutions I have no knowledge except after they are passed and that through the Press. This was the arrangement when I first severed[1] my legal connection with the Congress. What hold I have on the Committee is purely moral. My opinion prevails only to the extent that I carry conviction. Let me give out the secret that often my advice makes no appeal to the members. For instance, if I had my way, the Congress would be reduced to the smallest compass possible. It would consist of a few chosen servants removable at the will of the nation but getting the willing co-operation of the millions in the programme they may put before the nation. But this is too drastic and too undemocratic for Congressmen.

I admit that the Khadi Clause has led to much falsehood and hypocrisy. If I had my way, it would have gone long ago. I sought to have the clause removed[2] even when I seceded from the Congress. I have repeated the attempt more than once but with no success. The argument has been that the Congressmen in general will not listen to the removal of the clause.

[1] In 1934; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 30-10-1934.

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 17-9-1934.

Similarly I have endeavoured[1] to have the words 'peaceful and legitimate' removed from the Constitution but again without success. I can multiply instances in which I have failed to carry the Working Committee with me. I do not mention these failures by way of complaint against the Working Committee. The members had weighty reasons for not listening to me. I have not felt called upon to sever the moral tie with the old colleagues. I do not arrogate to myself any superiority over them. It has been a privilege to work with them. They are as good and faithful servants of the nation as I claim to be myself. I cling to them because I have the hope that one day they will be converted to my point of view or that I shall be converted to theirs.

Nor do I subscribe to the charge that the old regime was purer than the present. Whilst I admit that much corruption has crept into the Congress organization, that there are many self-seekers in it, it is my conviction that the Congress administration is comparatively purer than the old one. It is also my conviction that the Congress administration is responsible for several measures for the amelioration of the condition of the masses. I regard prohibition as the greatest of them all. But there is no doubt that a vast deal still remains to be done. I hug the hope that some day the Augean stables of the Congress will be swept clean and that the fears of the second critic of the Congress will be dispelled. It is not to be denied that he has grounds for his fears. Being an irrepressible optimist, things do not dismay me to the extent that they dismay him. They are serious enough to rouse every Congressman to a sense of his duty. The Congress will surely be undone if it does not stand exclusively on the solid rock of its moral worth.

SEGAON, August 6, 1939
Harijan, 12-8-1939

261. NOTES

SHETH JAMNALALJI

Sheth Jamnalalji is an extraordinary prisoner. He believes that as a prisoner he has not to care about his body beyond what the doctors provided for him do. And so I have only now come to know the true state of his health. Shri Shankerlal Banker, who happened to go to Jaipur to see Jamnalalji, got concerned about his health and told me how bad it was.

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 17-9-1934

For the moment I refrain from publishing the correspondence which has come into my hands. According to the Jaipur Civil Surgeon his is a case for special treatment. If it is, the onus is on the State to release him unconditionally, leaving it to Jamnalalji whether he will take special treatment within the State or without. It is futile to suggest to Jamnalalji that he should undertake to leave Jaipur if he is discharged. He will rather die in prison than be free under the very condition for the breach of which he has courted imprisonment. As I have already pointed out,[1] there is no fear of Jamnalalji promoting civil disobedience in the State. For it stands indefinitely suspended. The authorities know that Jamnalalji is essentially a non-violent man. They also know him to be a man of his word. To me his detention is a mystery and, in the present state of his health, a crime.

The public generally do not know that though the place where he is detained is good and accessible, it is a haunt of ferocious animals. Under what appear to me to be barbarous shikar laws of Jaipur State, these animals are protected under pain of heavy fines being inflicted on the persons killing them. Tigers and their brood, it is said, eat men and animals with impunity. My purpose here, however, is not to deal with these shikar laws, inhuman as they appear to me to be. My purpose is to protest against Jamnalalji being kept in a tiger-infested place. I understand that even his keepers are not very happy over their job. There is no fear of Jamnalalji running away. If he must be kept in prison, why should he not be kept in an unobjectionable place where medical and other assistance is easily available?

There is also another point which calls for notice. Though repeated requests have been made, he has not yet been permitted to keep a companion. He has been given no nurse. Instances are on record when he was badly in need of night attendance. That he himself has made no complaint is no reason for the authorities' negligence in not providing necessary attendance. Their attention has been drawn to the matter more than once by Shethji's secretary.[2]

IN IMITATION OF KATHIAWAR

Shri Sitaram Sastri, having read about the spinning programme[3] of seventy days set up by Shri Narandas Gandhi of Rajkot Rashtriyashala, has decided to imitate him and he has begun his pro-

[1] *Vide* "Jaipur", 8-7-1939.

[2] Jamnalal Bajaj was released on August 9.

[3] *Vide* "Meenakshi Temple Open", 12-7-1939.

gramme of having from co-workers twenty-five lacs yards of yarn by the 2nd of October next. I wish him every success. Its secret lies in having previously the names of spinners and the quantity they would spin and having weekly reports of the work done. Naturally the spinners, being volunteers, will be expected to spin as strong, even and fine a yarn as they can with minimum waste. The idea behind all such effort should be that they will prove experts in their own localities and be an example to their neighbours.

A CORRECTION

Shri Sitaram Sastri points out an error that crept into my note[1] on the Kathiawar spinning programme. In it I mentioned that 700 spinners spinning 1,000 yards per day would be required to spin 70 lacs of yards in 70 days, and 7,000 spinners if they spun 100 yards per day. '700' should read 100, and '7,000' should read 1,000. Whilst I gladly correct the error, I may say that no harm will be done if 700 or 7,000 spinners take part in the sacrificial spinning. The more the better.

SEGAON, August 6, 1939
Harijan, 12-8-1939

262. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

August 6, 1939

CHI. VALJI,

I got your letter yesterday. But I did not have time to reply immediately. I am of course writing to Chitre, but will he do your work? I am writing to Ramachandran[2] at the same address. You will get this letter before Chitre leaves. If, therefore, you approve of what I write, send a wire to Chitre to stay on. This is only a suggestion. You know Chitre much better. As he is greatly devoted to you, he may prove useful. How did your health break down? Have you been careless about your diet? I hope you will return after getting com-pletely cured.

Blessings from
BAPU

PROF. V. DESAI
SANATORIUM
P. O. VANIVILAS MOHALLA, MYSORE

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7485. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1] *Vide* "Meenakshi Temple Open", 12-7-1939
[2] G. Ramachandran

263. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 6, 1939

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have your long letter full of news. It will be of help to me.

Here the work is going on at full speed. There has been some delay as your Prime Minister is away. I will keep you informed if there are any special developments. But what counts and will count is your strength. I had a cable from Nana saying that I did a good thing in advising postponement. I have not replied to the cable. Can't the differences there be patched up? Who are the persons behind the threat of murder? How did the matter reach that stage?[1]

What makes you think it would be to your advantage if there was no Agent-General at all? It would be easy to withdraw him. However, as it will not be possible to post one again, we should decide after careful thinking.

I must be kept informed about developments there.

A letter from Ba is enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4900

264. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 6, 1939

CHI. AMRITLAL,

You will be pleased to read the accompanying[2].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10791

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Manilal Gandhi", 25-6-1939.

[2] A letter from Chandanbehn Parekh to Gandhiji thanking him for sending a kind and patient man like the addressee to take care of her

265. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON,
August 6, 1939

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM[1],

I got your two letters together. I have already written to you to do what you please. If you wish to come over here, do so. Discuss the matter with Shankerlalbhai.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 430

266. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 6, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I got your letter. Shakaribehn[2] had agreed but still she is a bit hesitant. I have therefore postponed sending her. I am on the look-out for some other person. I am making as much haste as possible. Why has the mattress been placed in that manner? The cot does not belong to [the sanatorium]. Give the enclosed letter to Bachharajbhai[3]. I hope [Balkrishna's] ear is properly cleaned. Give all details to Sushilabehn. Her address is : Lady Hardinge College Hospital, New Delhi. Balkrishna must get completely cured there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4325

[1] The superscription is in Gujarati.
[2] Wife of Chimanlal N. Shah
[3] Bachharaj Seth, who had adopted Jamnalal Bajaj

267. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 6, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. I have given to Ba your letter to her. Shirin checks my blood-pressure quite frequently. It is going a little high. It was 160/99 this afternoon. She herself must be writing. My weight is 103_ lb. It seems to have gone down a bit. I feel full of energy. I get good sleep.

Shankaran has been taken ill. He has fever. It was 102° yesterday. Shirin is looking after him. She is doing all the work with keen interest. She is even learning to spin.

I hope you are being careful about your food. Do you have to work at night?

Blessings from,

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

268. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA
August 7, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

No doubt I want to build you a hospital. But it will be for the patients. I cannot have the hospital functioning without you. By your being here it may be possible to help the people in the neighbourhood and we may acquire some knowledge whereby we can provide cheap medicines to the villagers. It is with this idea in mind that I am thinking of building a hospital.

I am sending by book-post Shankaran's letter for you to read. He has no fever today. He was not given anything to eat. He was given only orange juice. Shirin of course gave him quinine.

There is a letter about Valjibhai. I am enclosing it. You can write to him direct. What has happened? You must also write to the doctor of the Sanatorium.[1]

[1] The T. B. Sanatorium at Mysore where Valji G. Desai was being treated

You are all well educated. Then do you think Shakuntala will remain uneducated? Who values Hindi?

I am having sufficient sleep. There is only a difference of half an hour.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

269. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

SEGAON,
August 6, 1939

I congratulate Shri Subhas Babu on having succeeded in persuading the hunger-strikers to suspend their fast even for two months and on having undertaken to move the B.P.C.C. to take the necessary action for the release of the prisoners. I have also a wire from the prisoners in Alipore Jail informing me of the suspension and asking me to resume my effort. I need hardly assure them that what little I can do will be done to secure their release. I can say that the suspension gives me some hope that my effort will produce some effect. I hope too that the Bengal Government will use the occasion for a generous gesture and end the agony.

Harijan, 12-8-1939

270. MESSAGE ON INAUGURATION OF BASIC EDUCATION[2]

[On or before *August 7, 1939*][3]

The decision to open 1,700 schools for the new system of education is a great undertaking. I hope this will be successful in every respect. My congratulations on this bold step.

The Hindu, 7-8-1939

[1] This appeared under the title "Bengal Prisoners". The statement was also published in *The Hindustan Times* and *The Hindu* on August 7.

[2] The message was reported under the date-line "Allahabad, August 7" with the following note: "A big educational experiment will begin in the United Provinces tomorrow with the inauguration of the basic scheme of education by the Premier, Pandit G. B. Pant. . . . "

[3] *Ibid*

271. AN EXPLANATION

I gladly publish the foregoing letter[1] and accept the explanation. Without it the concluding paragraph of the petition could only be interpreted as a threat. Better than the explanation, however, will be the help the Bhandaris could render in the prosecution of the prohibition programme. Let them be true soldiers of the Congress Government and the nation as they were of the East India Company, who were foreigners come to exploit the country. If they will heartily assist the Government in their arduous task, they will find that they will also assist themselves in a manner they never otherwise could have done.

SEGAON, August 7, 1939
Harijan, 12-8-1939

272. MILLS V. CHARKHA

The A.I.V.I.A. has been issuing for some time a monthly bulletin called *Gram Udyog Patrika* at Maganwadi, Wardha, for the annual subscription of 12 annas. The July number contains an interesting article on national planning. I must refer the curious to the *Patrika.* I wish here only to draw attention to the following[2] striking figures:

> . . .we would need Rs. 300 crores of capital employing 33 lakhs of people if we supplied all our requirements by mill production, while we would require about Rs. 72 crores of investment employing 800 lakhs of people if our supply were to come from cottage units. The two methods have their undoubted advantages. . . . We are poor but we have an ocean of labour wealth. Therefore an intelligent plan will find the cottage method fit into the scheme for our country. . . . Any planning in our country that ignores the absorption of labour wealth will be misplaced. Our analysis has shown that centralized method of production, whatever may be its capacity to produce, is incapable of

[1] This was dated "Bombay, July 31, 1939" from S. K. Bole, who *inter alia,* said: "The signatories to that memorial acted *bona fide* and they never intended to offer any threat to the Bombay Ministry. The last paragraph of the said memorial was a frank expression of the Bhandari Committee of its apprehensions about the probabilities that might ensue from the enforcement of the prohibition policy under the circumstances then prevailing." *Vide* "Message to Bombay Government Prohibition Board", 23-7-1939.

[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

finding employment for as large a number of persons as we have to provide for. Therefore it stands condemned in this country.

The figures need no comment. If they cannot be challenged, they make an overwhelming case for the charkha and, by parity of reasoning, perhaps, for village production as against factory production. But I invite experts to examine the figures and challenge them if they can seriously do so.

SEGAON, August 7, 1939

Harijan, 12-8-1939

273. ANOTHER TEMPLE OPENED TO HARIJANS

The Secretary, Harijan Sevak Sangh, Ilanji, informs me that the Courtallam Temple was thrown open to Harijans by the manager of 26th ultimo. He is to be congratulated on his having done his duty. The President of the local Sangh was responsible for indu-cing the manager to open the temple. I hope that the worshippers at the *mandir* had no objection to the opening.

SEGAON, August 7, 1939

Harijan, 12-8-1939

274. LETTER TO TOTARAM HINGORANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 7, 1939

MY DEAR HINGORANI,

It gives me great joy to find that you are reconciled to Anand[1] and Vidya[2] and that they are near you to render you such filial service as you may need.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI TOTARAM HINGORANI
KARACHI

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India, and Anand T. Hingorani.

[1] Addressee's son and daughter-in-law
[2] *ibid*

275. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August, 7, 1939

CHI. ANAND,

I like your decision. It is not at all bad to do business to earn one's living. It is the duty of a son to fulfil the desire of his father unless it is impure. Father's desire that you do some business and stand on your own feet is proper. I believe that a person who earns his living and supports his family by honest means also renders service to the nation. Therefore I want you to do your business with interest. Make Father happy and while doing your business render service to Harijans as far as possible.

Whatever money you send to me I will digest. But if you are unable to send any, I shall not starve. Do as it suits you.

Give the enclosed[1] to Father.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India, and Anand T. Hingorani

276. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 7, 1939

CHI. PRABHA,

If you can relieve your tutor, you had better do so. If not, then complete one month and start working after that. Do only as much work as you can. Get yourself released from the work, if Rajendra Babu agrees, and continue your study. Who is the tutor, what does he teach and for how long?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3527

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

277. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 7, 1939

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I got your complaint. I have been writing regularly. You should complain to the postmaster. I have already written to you saying that you can do as you wish. Consult Shankerlalbhai. That is why I am not sending a telegram.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 431

278. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

SEGAON,
August 7, 1939

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. Tell Vanu[1] what a timid girl she is! Doesn't Amtul Salaam stay with you?[2] Ba is all right though she is weak. There has been no rain here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 431

279. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[3]

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 7, 1939

My attention has been drawn to the A. P. I. message purporting to report the conversations between Dr. Khan Saheb[4] and Qazi Ataulla

[1] Vanamala N. Parikh

[2] Gandhiji had written this letter after writing to Amtussalaam; *vide* the preceding item.

[3] This appeared under the title "A Denial". The statement was also published in *The Hindu,* 8-8-1939.

[4] The Premier and the Minister of Education in the North-West Frontier Province

Saheb[1] whilst I was in Abbottabad. The conversations were confidential. I have no recollection whatsoever of Dr. Khan Saheb having complained of any conspiracy of Hindu members or of my having agreed about their expulsion. The thing is on the face of it impossible, for I could not endorse such a proposition without first seeing those against whom such serious complaints are made. Nor would Dr. Khan Saheb expect me to do such a dishonourable thing, nor have I any recollection of the Qazi Saheb having any discussion with me on the question of services. How I wish the newspaper reporters would have weighty matters confirmed by the parties concerned before giving them for publication. I understand that the Hindus of the Frontier Province are much perturbed over this report.

Harijan, 19-8-1939

280. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 8, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. It is good news that you are restored. Is any mark left behind? Here all the rooms are getting full. Durgabehn[2] arrived today. Dhebarbhai[3] has come. Nanavati also is here today. Two more have come from Sojitra. They want to stay for some time. Bhansalibhai is at present busy teaching. Mathewji lives in Balkoba's hut. In place of Sushila, another lady doctor of the same college has come. She is a very good person. Nimu and others are of course here. Haven't I filled the letter with enough news now? I am quite well. Ba is all right.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10015. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] The Premier and the Minister of Education in the North-West Frontier Province

[2] Wife of Mahadev Desai

[3] U. N. Dhebar

281. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 8, 1939

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. Now you will hear from me regularly.

It would only be a needless waste of time to file a suit against the Congress workers and it would also create bitterness. If, instead, all of you go on doing your work, your strength willincrease and the Congress also will help you indirectly. Even if it does not help, it will not matter. You may not remember, but Christopher probably will, that I had deliberately kept the Congress and the British Indian Association separate. I established the Passi Resistance Association and it got the help of the Congress and the other bodies from time to time. The workers did not court im-prisonment, they did not sacrifice their incomes and at the same time helped me with funds. The Agent will recognize your Association and respect it.

I may perhaps write[1] in *Harijan* about this. The enclosed will be useful to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

There are two letters[2] on the reverse.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4901

282. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

SEGAON,
August 8, 1939

CHI. SITA,

I got your note. If you too go to jail, who will run the *Indian Opinion*!

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4901

[1] *Vide* "Notes", sub-title, "Indian Struggle in South Africa", 14-8-1939.
[2] *Vide* the two following items.

283. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

SEGAON,
August 8, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

Medh[1] writes and informs me that you also have decided to go to jail. But what if there is a settlement? Will you see that you keep fit enough to go to jail?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4901

284. LETTER TO DILKHUSH B. DIWANJI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 8, 1939

BHAI DILKHUSH,

I have your letter. If you wish to borrow, when will you return the amount? What is the minimum you require? What will you do with the khadi produced? Is there enough demand? It would be fine if none of the women spinners were turned back. They must observe our rules. All the yarn you get spun there must also be woven there.

Blessings form

BAPU

[PS.]

If the weavers are too few, we can train some more.

DILKHUSH DIWANJI
GANDHI KUTIR
KARADI, *via* JALALPUR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 2642

[1] Surendra Medh

285. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHANA BAJAJ

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 8, 1939

CHI. RADHAKRISAN,

I have your letter. Please read my article[1]. Kamalnayan has given me some papers. They contain a fragment of a description of ferocious animals[2]. The other part is missing. I want the whole story. How is Jamnalal's health now?

Kamalnayan[3] has gone to Calcutta as Savitri's[4] confinement is expected soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9128

286. LETTER TO GOPABANDHU CHAUDHARI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 8, 1939

BHAI GOPABABU[5],

Read the enclosed letter[6]. Can something be done about it?

Were you indisposed?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2793

[1] *Vide* "Jaipur", 8-7-1939.
[2] *Vide* "Notes", 6-8-1939.
[3] Son and daugther-in-law of Jamnalal Bajaj
[4] *Ibid*
[5] President, Utkal Provincial Congress Committee
[6] Dated August 4, 1939, from Mukunda Prasad Das, Speaker, Orissa Legislative Assembly. It read: "The quarrels amongst Congressmen of Orissa should be made up. . . . Can you write to Shri Gopabandhu Chaudhari to intervene? He has the confidence of all groups."

287. LETTER TO DR. JIVRAJ N. MEHTA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 9, 1939

BHAI JIVRAJ,

I wanted to write to you just at the time when you had a talk with Sushila[1] at Bardoli but it could not materialize because of the continuous rush of work and then I allowed the matter to drop. I am prompted to write this because of the criticism from you in Lilavati's presence. Your criticism has pained her. She ought to have promptly expressed her feelings and asked for clarification.[2] What is the use of fretting and fuming? I do believe that you are the guardian of my right conduct as well as of my bodily health. You would be pained if I were to commit something I ought not to. Also it is your duty to bring it to my notice. Hence if you have found anything in my conduct which deserves criticism or censure, please let me know, without hesitation. I will look upon it as true friendship. I know, these days the newspapers carry a lot of abusive references to me. I don't read them; I come to hear about them. All this abuse is not going to affect me in any way, although I should really want to know if anything weighs on the minds of friends like you. My life is an open book. I have never had any secrets, so you can ask me about anything you wish to. I hope to take a lot of work from friends like you which I might not be able to do if my life were veiled in secrecy.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: Jivraj Mehta Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Dr. Sushila Nayyar
[2] *Vide* also the following item, and letter to the addressee, "Letter to Dr. Jivraj N. Mehta", 15-8-1939.

288. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 9, 1939

CHI. LILA,

I have your letter. I see no need for girls to go begging on the Balev[1] Day or on any other occasion. Their services should not be used in this manner. Collecting money is the work of the management.

Keep yourself fully absorbed in your study. Do not be restless. Do your best and be content with the outcome.

Why did you take quietly what Dr. Mehta told you? Suppose he had been only joking? If there was any sting in it, you could have removed it.[2] You could have asked whether a daughter sleeping by the side of her father and a girl in an institution lying on top of another were the same thing. I think your keeping quiet itself implies your admission of some guilt. Your previous letter, however, suggests some feeling of shame about what is happening. In that case you would of course not be able to say anything. How can you, then, blame Dr. Jivraj? Even if somebody makes an offensive remark about me, it produces no effect on me whatever. But if I ever do something blameworthy, I would shrink into myself with shame even if nobody criticized me.

Blessings from

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 10091. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

289. LETTER TO TARA JASANI

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
August 9, 1939

CHI. TARA,

I don't feel like going for walks without all my [walking-] sticks. Kanu[3] , Bablo[4] are busy, and so they do not come out with me.

[1] Also known as *Rakshabandhan* celebrated on the full-moon day of *Shravana,* when a girl ties a string called *rakhi, rakhadi,* or *raksha* round the wrist of her brother and receives from him some gift as a token of his promise to protect her

[2] *Vide* also the preceding item.

[3] Son of Narandas Gandhi

Instead of my giving you a description of the mountains, you may see them with your own eyes some day.

What work will you do if there is a drought? How much will you contribute to spinning *yajna*?

It is good that you attend Kanji Muni's[1] discourses. Your revered parents always used to listen to him with rapt attention.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9834, Courtesy: Tarabehn Pratap

290. LETTER TO R. L. HANDA

SEGAON,
August 10, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

I have seen your letter[2] and the accompanying articles[3] on Kathiawar States. Both are welcome. While your letter to me is appearing in the next issue of the *Harijan*, the articles will be published at a later date as soon as space is available. Your approach to the problem of States I consider, on the whole, as rational and workable.[4]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Leaves from a Diary, p. 77

291. LETTER TO SURENDRA B. MASHRUWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 10, 1939

CHI. SURENDRA,

Isn't my writing to Manu the same as writing to you? I assume that you two are as warp and woof to each other that there is no need for me to write anything to cheer you both. Hence though you are

[4] Narayan Desai, son of Mahadev Desai
[1] A Shvetambar Jain *muni*
[2] *Vide* "Confederation of Small States", 14-8-1939.
[3] For extracts, *vide* Appendix-"Kathiawar States", 30-9-1939.
[4] *Vide* also "Kathiawar States", 11-9-1939.

constantly in my thoughts, I save my time by not writing to you. As Manudi has stayed with me for a long time, she naturally expects letters from me and I, therefore, write to her and assume that it is as good as writing to you.

Manu told me that your work was progressing well. I hope you are keeping good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5049. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

292. CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION [1]

[*August 11, 1939*][2]

The Working Committee has given the most anxious consideration to the action of Shri Subhas Chandra Bose[3] the erstwhile President of the National Congress, in connection with two resolutions[4] of the last meeting of the A. I. C. C. known as "Satyagraha in Provinces" and "Congress Ministries and the P. C. C.s". The Working Committee has also considered the long letter[5] of Shri Subhas Babu, appended hereto. The Working Committee with great sorrow and reluctance has come to the conclusion that Subhas Babu has wholly missed the main point raised by the President of the even though he differed from the ruling of the President. It was open to him, if he felt aggrieved by the ruling, to appeal to the Working Committee or the A. I. C. C. But he was bound, so long as the Presi-dent's instructions stood, to carry them out faithfully. This is the first condition of the proper functioning of any organization, much more so of a vast organization like the National Congress which is engaged in a life and death struggle with the world. If, what seems to be Subhas Babu's contention in his letter, that every member is free to interpret the Congress Constitution as he likes, prevails, there will be perfect anarchy in the Congress and it must break to pieces in no time.

[1] Drafted by Gandhiji; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 23-8-1939.

[2] From *Gandhi—1915-1948: A Detailed Chronology*

[3] He had asked the people to observe July 9, 1939, as 'Protest Day'.

[4] *Vide* "A.I.C.C. Resolutions", 23-6-1939.

[5] Addressed to the Congress President; *vide* Appendix-"Letter from Subhas Chandra Bose to Congress President", 7-8-1939.

The Working Committee has come to the painful conclusion that it will fail in its duty if it condones the deliberate and flagrant breach of discipline by Subhas Babu. The Working Committee therefore resolves that for his grave act of indiscipline Shri Subhas Babu is declared disqualified as President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee for three years as from August 1939. The Working Committee trusts that Shri Subhas Babu will see the error of his ways and loyally submit to this disciplinary action.

The Working Committee has taken note of the indiscipline of many other Congressmen including responsible officials. But it has refrained from taking any action as the members acted under the inspiration of Shri Subhas Babu. The Working Committee, however, leaves it open to Provincial Organizations to take action if they think it necessary for the proper observance of discipline and especially if the offending members do not express regret for their indiscipline.

The Committee further empowers the President to take disciplinary action against such members who, instead of expressing regret by their speech or conduct for the indiscipline, persist in it.

The Indian Annual Register, 1939, Vol. II, pp. 212-3

293. TELEGRAM TO DR. DADOO [1]

August 11, 1939

PENDING FINAL DIRECTION RATHER DELICATE NEGOTIATIONS STILL GOING. PLEAD FOR PATIENCE. WE MUST LOSE NO CHANCE SETTLEMENT. WILL NOT WASTE TIME.

GANDHI

South Africa's Freedom Struggle, pp. 303-4

[1] This was in reply to a cable dated August 9, 1939 from the addressee, which *inter alia read* : ". . . .Handful Indian anti-passive resisters misconstruing object postponement struggle. Desirable pray cable in detail, precise nature and basis negotiations and fix time limit for postponement. We are not informed what negotiations transpiring".

294. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 11, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I was half inclined to talk to you in the presence of the Working Committee (for want of other time) about the Planning Committee.[1] Shankerlal came this morning after his chat with you bringing with him copy of a letter written by him to Kripalani[2] in the matter. I sympathized with him in his objection. I have never been able to understand or appreciate the labours of the Committee. I do not know that it is working within the four corners of the resolution creating the Committee. I do not know that the Working Committee is being kept informed of its doings. I have not understood the purpose of the numerous sub-committees. It has appeared to me that much money and labour are being wasted on an effort which will bring forth little or no fruit. These are my doubts. I seek light. I know your mind is in China.[3] If you think Shah[4] can express your mind, I shall try to learn from him. Or I shall wait till you return from your great mission. May God protect you and bring you safe to the motherland.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A Bunch of Old Letters,* pp. 378-9

295. LETTER TO GHULAM RASUL QURESHI

SEGAON,
August 11, 1939

CHI. QURESHI[1] ,

I have your letter. I take it that the instalment of Rs. 100 has started. I am glad you got out of *Sugandhi*.

Blessings from
BAPU

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 19-6-1939.
[2] J. B. Kripalani, General Secretary, A. I. C. C.
[3] Jawaharlal Nehru was to go to China; he actually left on August 20.
[4] K. T. Shah
[1] Also spelt Koreishi

[PS.]

If Amtul Salaam is still there, tell her that I have not written to her thinking she must have left.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10773. Courtesy: Ghulam Rasul Qureshi

296. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

WARDHA,
August 11, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

I could not write to you for two days, Shirin may be going. She has to reach there on the 16th. She may come back if she gets a job here. I am doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
LADY HARDINGE COLLEGE HOSPITAL
NEW DELHI

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

297. HUNGER-STRIKE

Hunger-strike has positively become a plague. On the slightest pretext some people want to resort to hunger-strikes. It is well, therefore, that the Working Committee[1] has condemned the practice in unequivocal terms, so far at least as hunger-strike for discharge from imprisonment is concerned. The Committee should have gone further and condemned also the practice of forcible feeding. I regard forcible feeding as an undue liberty with the human body which is too sacred to be trifled with, even though it belongs to a prisoner. No doubt the State has control over the bodies of its prisoners but never to the extent of killing their soul. That control has well-defined limits. If a prisoner decides to starve himself to death, he should, in my opinion, be allowed to do so. A hunger-strike loses its force and dignity, when it has any, if the striker is forcibly fed. It becomes a mockery if

[1] At its meeting held from August 9 to 12

somehow or other sufficient nourishment is poured down the throat, whether through the mouth or the nose. Of course, the mind instinctively revolts against feeding through the nose. But I under-stand that after a few day's practice the process ceases to offend the subject himself. Where a prisoner offers violent resistance, the matter becomes difficult. But cases of such resistance are rare. It is not possible to keep up effective resistance for any length of time. A determined resister will of course die at the very first attempt and thus frustrate it. But such resistance requires great daring and reckless defiance of death. In any case it is my firm conviction that the method of forcible feeding should be abandoned as a relic of barbarism. I know that some prisoners welcome forcible feeding for the empty glory of being regarded as hunger-strikers. Jailors have often told me that such prisoners would deplore stoppage of forcible feeding. I am told that under the existing law jail authorities are bound to resort to forcible feeding if reasoning fails. I would recommend amendment of such legislation if any.

It is also worthy of consideration whether a rule should not be passed by the Working Committee making a public and political hunger-strike without permission a breach of discipline. I do not like restraint on the liberty of the individual except for his own good and that of the society of which he is a member. Hunger-strike has, however, become such a nuisance that it will be as well for the Work-ing Committee to adopt measures to check it before it assumes dangerous proportions. A Working Committee resolution in such matters means expression of considered public opinion and is likely to prove a deterrent against an abuse of the practice. It may never need to be enforced.

SEGAON, August 14, 1939
Harijan, 19-8-1939

298. CONFEDERATION OF SMALL STATES

May I take the liberty of writing to you with a view to draw your attention to the problem of Kathiawar States? A close study of the States comprising the Western India Agency will convince anyone that the real problem of Kathiawar is not that of responsible government in individual States. That, in fact, is a demand very much beyond the ken of economic possibility. None of these States, with the exception of five or six, can afford to be genuine, separate, self-government units. Economic considerations apart, their geographical contiguity, and cultural and linguistic unity positively point towards the desirability of grouping them all adminis-tratively. A

confederation of these States alone can bring their people on a par with the people of Bombay Province or, for that matter, any other province in British India.

As to the fear that the Princes might strongly dislike such a move, it might be said that one cannot hope to go through any scheme of reform embodying real transference of power to the people without being confronted by the most dogged opposition from those quarters. And when at all events a fight (of course a non-violent one) has got to be waged against that opposition, it is only prudent and politic on our part to fight on an issue which should be our main and ultimate demand. Whatever our immediate and minimum demands, the final objective must not be lost sight of. And may I suggest in the case of Kathiawar, as also some three-fourths of the States in India, the final goal of all political reformers must be a confederation on the lines roughly foreshadowed in the appended printed articles?

I hope you will see that this idea, though by no means new or original, deserves to be popularized. For, collective agitation by a group or cluster of States in favour of confederation has certain obvious advantages which agitation for reform in a single State cannot have. How much I wish you had worked for the propagation of this idea while you were actively engaged in the Rajkot struggle. Even now one word of support from you—of course, only if you generally agree with this view—will place this idea on a sound footing.

This important letter[1] was received by me in Abbottabad. The articles[2] appended are cuttings from *The Tribune* of Lahore specially dealing with the problem. The articles contain an interesting analysis of the Kathiawar States and corroborative quotations from the Butler Committee's Report[3] and a recent pronouncement[4] by the Viceroy. For the moment I must content myself with heartily supporting the proposal. I do not share the fear of my correspondent about much opposition from the smaller States if they are sympathetically approached. They will soon realize that their safety lies in some kind of confederation and sharing of power with the people. The chief thing is a dispassionate representation of the problem and creation of public opinion that cannot be answered or opposed.

SEGAON, WARDHA, August 14, 1939
Harijan, 19-8-1939

[1] From R. L. Handa, *vide* "Letter from R. L. Handa", 10-8-1939

[2] For extracts, *vide* Appendix-"Kathiawar States", 30-9-1939.

[3] According to *India's Struggle for Freedom,* Vol. I, p. 459, the committee, under the chairmanship of Harcourt Butler, "recommended the setting up of special tribunals for adjusting a number of important matters which affect the Indian States and British India alike".

[4] The reference, presumably, is to the Viceroy's address at the annual session of Chamber of Princes in New Delhi on March 13, 1939.

299. NOTES

THE ARYA SAMAJ

It was a happy ending[1] to the Arya Satyagraha. I have hitherto not written a word about this struggle. The matter seemed too delicate for public treatment by me. The country knows that I have a special way of dealing with things public or private. Some even call it quixotic. Thus my public silence over the Arya Satyagraha did not mean that I was not deeply interested in the struggle. I was keeping myself in touch[2] with both the Arya Samaj leaders and the Muslim friends who could have any thing to do with Hyderabad affairs. Of course I was acting in concert with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. My sympathies were with the Aryas so far as their demands were con-cerned. They seemed to me to be so simple and so elementary. But I was averse to their Satyagraha from my own standpoint which I had explained to them. I was, however, nonplussed when they suggested that it was no worse if it was no better than the satyagraha I had led. They must not be expected, they added, to appreciate and follow my new method or requirements. I saw that I had no right to put any pressure upon them beyond that of reason. Then I was anxious not to embarrass H. E. H. the Nizam's Government as long as I could help it. It is, therefore, a matter of great joy to me personally that the Arya struggle has ended in a friendly manner. Both the Nizam Government and the Arya Samaj[3] deserve congratulations. Let me hope that the dignified statement issued by Shri Ghanshyamsingh Gupta will receive from the Aryas the response it deserves. There is no doubt that much bitterness has been engendered during the struggle. If the Aryas act in the spirit of Shri Gupta's appeal and the Nizam's Government in the spirit of their own communique[4], the bitterness will die out and there never will be any occasion for resumption of the struggle so far as simple religious and cultural freedom is concerned.

[1] On August 8

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 31-7-1939.

[3] "Sabha" in the source

[4] According to *The Indian Annual Register, 1939,* Vol. II. p. 14, the communique contained "clarification of certain points in the official communique of July 17, 1939, in which the Government's attitude regarding the religious liberties in the State was set out as well as of the points raised by the, *Government Gazette* Extraordinary on July 19, 1939, announcing the reforms."

THE PUNJAB CONGRESS

Dr. Satyapal[1] has needlessly quoted me in order to go out of public life. If it is an inner urge, the decision is sound. If it is due to my innocent postcard[2] to Lala Dunichand, the doctor is hopelessly wrong. In the first place the postcard has to do with the whole Congress atmosphere in the Punjab which has resulted in a distrust not of this or that individual but of myself. A critic may call it cowardice if he likes. But whether it is cowardice or want of self-confidence, I am useless as a mediator so long as my malady persists. So, when Sardar Mangal Singh and other friends from Ludhiana came to Wardha armed with authority from Dr. Satyapal, I told them that I was useless, but that Rajendra Babu as the head of the Congress organization was the proper person to go to the Punjab. He has consented to go as soon as his health and other engagements permit. But I have suggested to these friends that there is no help equal to self-help. They must, by their own exertion, put their house in order. If Dr. Satyapal has not gone out in obedience to the inner urge, he will not be able to keep himself out for any length of time. His nature will revolt against the artificial self-suppression. I therefore suggest a better course. Let him cease to be a party man. Let him forget old quarrels and let him be intent on producing real solidarity in the Punjab. I cannot say how this can be done. I have not even the data for laying down a plan of action. He must devise it himself. All I can say is that if he really wills it, he can do the thing. Everybody knows that he has a following in the Punjab, that he is an indefatigable worker and has sacrifice to his credit. If, therefore, anybody can bring about peace among Congressmen in the Punjab, it is certainly Dr. Satyapal. But whether it is he or anybody else, that one will have to efface himself and put the people's cause, which is the Congress cause, before his own or his party's. Behind my diffidence must be read an intense wish that the Congressmen in the Punjab should unite without mental reservations and act as one man.

INDIAN STRUGGLE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Whether our countrymen in South Africa have to take up passive resistance or not, there is no doubt that they will not be able to vindicate their position if they cannot close their ranks and act as one man and act unselfishly. Their corporate existence cannot be main-

[1] Member of the Punjab Legislative Assembly
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dunichand", 20-7-1939.

tained with honour, if individuals in order to serve their selfish ends compromise the community's interest and honour. There is, at the time of writing these lines, a cleavage between the local Congress and the passive resisters. The resisters seem to have the bulk of the Indian population with them. But the name and prestige of the South African Congress is with the non-resisters. Now there is a prospect of a lawsuit over the possession of the Congress books, funds and offices. I would warn the resisters against falling into the legal trap. Let them follow my example. The equivalent to the Congress in my days was the British Indian Association. From the very commencement of passive resistance, I recognized that all Indians would not and could not join the struggle although all might be, as they actually were, in sympathy with it. Although it was open to me, being secretary, to utilize the name and prestige of the Association, I founded a separate organization[1] leaving the British Indian Association free to act as it might within constitutional limits. It was possible by this arrangement to protect the non-resisters from harm, retain their sympathy and save the resisters from the embarrassment that would undoubtedly be caused by non-resisters if they were members of the same body. Let the present passive resisters work along their own lines and rely upon getting more than prestige by their strength, sacrifice and capacity for suffering. A passive resister should have a generous heart and represent not only his own companions but even his opponents. Whatever rights he secures, he will secure for all. He is a friend of all and enemy of none. That is the first condition of successful passive or civil resistance.

KHADI AS FAMINE INSURANCE AND MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

There has been a full discussion among the khadi workers at the meeting of the A. I. S. A. held at Wardha on the 12th instant and thereafter. It has been claimed for khadi that it has at least three definite functions. It provides a supplementary occupation to the semi-starved and semi-employed millions of India on a scale unequalled by any other occupation. It provides, with the least possible loss, work in famine areas; and it is the best medium of instruction for the boys and girls of India in the primary stage.

But there is one definite condition for the success of khadi as famine insurance or medium of instruction in the primary stage.

[1] The Natal Indian Congress; *vide* Vol. I.

What is to be done with the khadi produced in famine areas and in the schools? If khadi cannot be sold, it is as useless as the stones broken in many parts of India during famine time. I have suggested often enough in these columns that all the khadi produced under the last two heads must be taken up by the State. This can be most easily done through the A. I. S. A., if the State guarantees the losses as it guarantees today railway dividends and many other things. Considering price, khadi is undoubtedly dearer than mill-cloth. Therefore it commands a market only among patriots and philanth-ropists. But those who have no spare cash will not be easily actuated by philanthropy or patriotism. They will go to the cheapest market. It is therefore the business of the State to shut out or tax heavily enough such goods as compete with those which, for the general good, should command a market. I think it can be taken as proved that khadi comes under such goods. The administration of eight provinces is virtually in Congress hands to an extent enough to protect khadi and the like. There is no reason why the other provinces should not follow the Congress provinces in matters like protection of khadi on which there is no difference of opinion. Hindu-Muslim unity may not come as early as many of us wish. But even as we breathe common air and drink the common water supplied by the rivers, wells or waterworks, surely we might agree on a common policy regarding other necessaries of life, without in any way interfering with our differences, if we must unfortunately hug these and use them for warring against one another. But whether the other provinces fall in line or not, it is necessary for the Congress provinces to confer with the A. I. S. A. and the A. I. V. I. A. and evolve a line of action whereby the difficulty I have pointed out can be solved without delay.

SEGAON, WARDHA, August 14, 1939
Harijan, 19-8-1939

300. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 14, 1939

BHAI JIVANJI,

What sort of an article do you expect from me? Hadn't you better leave me out? You should give me a reward even if I am able to

do all the other work you have given.

I understand about the *Autobiography*[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAI JIVANJI,
P. O. BOX 105, AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9947. Also C. W. 6921. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai.

301. LETTER TO RAVI SHANKAR SHUKLA[2]

August 14, 1939

BHAI SHUKLAJI,

To this I have replied thus:[3] "I have your ultimatum. Please know that your proper course is to ask the Prime Minister or the Parliamentary Board."

Do you have anything to say?

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

302. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 14, 1939

STUPID GIRL,

You are really stupid. You sit there and are afraid. You even forget that time is doing its work. And why should you be scared when someone attributes to you a failing you do not have? Why do you not learn this much from me that we should not allow ourselves to be affected however much we may be criticised or condemned? May be when you come here, you will face neither criticism nor condemnation.

The reply to Dr. Young is enclosed, He used to accompany me to the Working Committee meetings. Once Pyarelal and Shirin came along.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jivanji D. Desai", 31-7-1939.

[2] This was in reply to a letter from the addressee, Premier, Central Provinces, who had forwarded to Gandhiji a telegram from H. J. Khandekar, M. L. A., Secretary, Depressed Classes Satyagraha Committee, Nagpur. Khandekar had threatened to resume "Segaon Satyagraha" unless demand for a Harijan Minister in Central Provinces Ministry was conceded within a fortnight. *Vide* also Letter to H. J. Khandekar", 7-8-1938 and "Discussion with Harijan Satyagrahis", 27-8-1939.

[3] In the source the following two sentences are in English.

It will not do to be careless about food and sleep. It would be good if you did not spoil your eyes by falling to the lure of films. But if the craving is too strong, go and see them.

Nimu left for Bombay yesterday Krishnachandra will be coming in a day or two. Kundar[1] has gone to Ba.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

303. LETTER TO LAKSHMISWAR SINHA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 15, 1939

MY DEAR LAKSHMISWAR[2],

I hope you will not take the final step without consultation with Aryanayakam[3]. I would like to see you with him, if that is at all possible.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C. W. 1473. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

304. LETTER TO DR. JIVRAJ N. MEHTA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 15, 1939

BHAI JIVRAJ,

I got your frank letter only today. I am immensely pleased. I had not expected anything different. I understand what you say. Maybe, I might not fully implement your advice. Would you object even if I had a massage in the nude at the hands of a man? Do you believe that it is injurious to health if people slept side by side even in the open air? Please examine this question independently of the

[1] Kundar Diwan

[2] Author of *Teachers' Handbook of Basic Education through Cardboard Mode-ling.* Sinha was working at the Basic Teachers' Training Centre, Wardha, and had requested Gandhiji to allow him to quit the Centre.

[3] E. W. Aryanayakam, Secretary, Hindustani Talimi Sangh. At Gandhiji's instance, he had invited the addressee to draft a syllabus in respect of basic crafts to be included in the Zakir Husain Committee's report.

supposed inpropriety of a woman sleeping by the side of a man.[1]

I have developed the habit of reading, etc., in the latrine since many years ago. You can look upon it as a kind of addiction. It is a pitiable condition that my bowels move freely only if I have some worth-while reading material with me and that in its absence I am constipated. But I am only taking advantage of the fact that I have to rush along. It would be just as well if you could frighten me out of this bad habit.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati original: Jivraj Mehta Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

305. LETTER TO ARORA SINGH

August 16, 1939

I have come to know that what you fear about Hon'ble M. Y. Nurie is groundless.[2]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

306. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

August 16, 1939

CHI. LILA,

You will see that the doctor's letter is very clear. He is not blaming me in any way. You had, therefore, no cause to be unhappy. Isn't his report of his conversation with you correct? How I shall tackle the problem[3] is a different question. You need not worry about that.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9593. Also C. W. 6565. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] *Vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Dr. Jivraj N. Mehta", 9-8-1939.

[2] The addressee had complained that Nurie, a Congress Minister, had amassed too much wealth.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Lilavati Asar", 9-8-1939.

307. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

August 16, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Sit down for an hour and spin; join me on the walks. Then do whatever job falls to your lot. Anyone, including Tarabehn, may learn Hindi from you to their heart's content.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4326

308. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA GANJ,
August 18, 1939

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
ANAND BHAVAN
ALLAHABAD

MAY YOUR CHINESE MISSION BE CROWNED WITH SUCCESS. MAY GOD BE WITH YOU AND BRING YOU SAFE HOME. REGRET SRI PRAKASA. HE SHOULD SUSPEND ACTION TILL AFTER YOUR RETURN.[1] PROPOSE ISSUING A STATEMENT[2] ON CRISIS AND WAR RESOLUTION UNLESS YOU WISH OTHERWISE. SEND YOUR CHINESE ADDRESS. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

309. DRAFT TELEGRAM TO MULKRAJ[3]

August 18, 1939

TRANSFER FUND BANK OF NAGPUR WARDHA THROUGH IMPERIAL BANK WARDHA.

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Sri Prakasa wanted to resign from the Congress. *Vide* also "Telegram to Sri Prakasa", 26-8-1939.

[2] *Vide* "A Statement", 20-9-1939.

[3] Secretary, Jallianwala Bagh Memorial Fund Committee; *vide* "Letter to Mulkraj", 5-4-1939; "Telegram to Mulkraj", 18-4-1939 and 22-4-1939.

310. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 18, 1939

MY DEAR C. R.,

What a sad letter to Mahadev Desai! What does it matter, what Srinivasa Iyengar says, when you have a clear conscience?[1] It is one and the same thing whether you are in or out. You have to labour in either case.

I hope Laxmi[2] and the children are doing well.

Mahadev is in Simla for the Punjab prisoners.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 2075

311. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 18, 1939

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. I will write more if I get time. Tell Chhaganlal[3] that I have not been able to write to him. I shall arrange to send somebody if the drought[4] continues. Whom should I send on the *Rentia Baras* Day? How about Mirabehn?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C. W. 8560. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] On August 7, Rajagopalachari introduced in the Madras Legislative Council "The Temple-entry Authorization and Indemnity Bill" as passed by the Assembly. T. C. Srinivasa Iyengar, who expressed the view that it should not be left to the trustee to gauge public opinion, suggested that a representative commission might be set up to ascertain public opinion by means other than the ballot box.

[2] Addressee's daughter

[3] Chhaganlal Joshi

[4] In various parts of Kathiawar; *vide* also "Threat of Famine", 2-8-1939.

312. MESSAGE TO DEPRESSED CLASSES CONFERENCE [1]

[On or before *August 19, 1939*][2]

I received the invitation to attend the Conference. I wish it all success.

The Hindu, 24-8-1939

313. LETTER TO N. S. HARDIKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 19, 1939

DEAR DR. HARDIKAR,

You are having unnecessary trouble. We have landed on evil times. But, if we keep straight, the clouds will pass. I adhere to the statement signed by me. I am sorry for the distortions in the extracts sent by you. My advice is not to retort. You should contradict falsehoods where necessary and insist upon truth even though for the time being you have to incur unpopularity.

Yours Sincerely,

From a copy: N. S. Hardikar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

314. LETTER TO ISWAR SARAN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 19, 1939

DEAR MUNSHIJI,

Your letter is very interesting. I am glad you are making rapid progress.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Form the original: C. W. 10200. Courtesy: Municipal Museum, Allahabad

[1] According to the source, the message was read out at the All-India Depressed Classes National League Conference, held in Delhi on August 19, with Karan Singh Kane, Parliamentary Secretary to the Education Minister, United Provinces, in the chair.

[2] *Ibid*

315. LETTER TO N. S. VENKATAKRISHNAN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 19, 1939

DEAR FRIEND[1],

The portion you object to is inoffensive in terms of non-violence of the type the Congress has reached. Moreover Congress Governments have to represent both Congressmen and non Congressmen.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10973. Courtesy: N.S. Venkatakrishnan

316. LETTER TO Y. M. DADOO

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 19, 1939

MY DEAR DADOO,

It has stirred me to find you leading the Satyagraha band. Manilal and Medh have together given me a good account of you. It makes me glad to know that you are son of a valued client[2] of mine.

You know that I am watching your movements as closely as I can. You have done well in sending me the relevant literature. There is just a ray of hope that we shall reach a settlement. But you will not expect anything heroic nor will you promose great things. If you have to fight it will be a fight for honour. You won't get anything very substantial. Too much has already been surrendered during these years. You are engaged in a very hard struggle. And if as a result of the present effort, a handful of you make the mission of your life to serve the cause there, you will gradually build up a prestige that will stand you in good stead.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 11346. Courtesy: E. S. Reddy; also *South Africa's Freedom Struggle,* p. 305

[1]A Congress worker who had objected to the last paragraph of the Congress Working Committee's War Resolution of August, 1939, on the ground that it breathed violence and was repugnant to the non-violent creed of the Congress: *vide* Appendix-"Congress Working Committee Resolution", after 18-7-1939

[2] Mahomed Mamuji Dadoo

317. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 19, 1939

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

I have your letter. It will make me very happy indeed if Chandan-behn[1] is completely cured. If you have the courage to treat Vijaya's[2] father[3], go and visit him even without being sent for and examine him. Vijaya should be in Varad. There has been no letter from her for some time.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VALLABHRAM VAIDYA
MANDVINI POLE, DEVNI SHERI
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 2907. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya

318. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 19, 1939

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I have your letter. I think Vijaya is still in Varad. Again there has been no letter. I am forwarding the vaid's letter to Varad.[4]

She had not gone to Bombay at all. Naranbhai had gone to Bombay before she left.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10793

[1] Chandan Parekh who married Satish Kalelkar
[2] Vijayabehn Pancholi and Naranbhai Patel
[3] *Ibid*
[4] *Vide* also the preceding item.

319. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 19, 1939

DEAR SISTER,

I have already given you the blessing that your operation may be successful. I satisfy myself by seeking news of you from anyone who comes and knows you. You know how much I respect you. But this letter is to convey my good wishes to Ambalalbhai. Your operation will certainly go off without any trouble. I am even praying that both of you should always be happy and go on doing public service. There is no need to answer this letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11148. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

320. SPINNERS' WAGES

The following is the translation of the resolution adopted by the A. I. S. A. at its meeting on the 15th instant at Wardha:

The A. I. S. A. has for the past four years recognized the duty of making a progressive rise in the wages payable to the spinners. In the performance of this duty, the Maharashtra Branch of the Sangh has paid the highest rate of all the branches. But the result of this experiment of the Branch has been that khadi has proved unable to bear the burden and the sales have considerably gone down. The rise in wages should not result in a diminution in the capacity of khadi to provide work for the unemployed. It seems that in view of the existing circumstances it is necessary to postpone the insistence on giving the spinners more than three annas for eight hours' spinning. There is much unemployment. There is a sufficient number of spinners eager to work for less than one anna for eight hours' spinning. Other people are ready to give them work at such low wages to the detriment of the principle laid down by the Sangh. Apart from the Sangh providing them also with work, there seems to be no other way of combating the evil. Thus there are two duties before the Sangh: one that of raising the spinners' wages to eight annas for an eight-hour day, and the other of finding work for the unemployed sisters. There comes an interim period before reaching the simultaneous performance of the two duties.

Moreover there is a danger of famine overtaking some parts of the country. The spinning-wheel is being proved to be of the greatest help at such times. But

question arises whether it is necessary to make the scale of wages lower than even three annas. A third problem arises from the fact of the production of yarn in the schools conducted according to the Wardha scheme of education.

Taking all these things into consideration the Sangh has come to the following conclusion :

Generally the scale of three annas for eight hours' work of the fixed standard be not touched for the time being. But it should be open to any branch to rise higher than the scale, provided that it takes over the responsibility of sustaining its sales under the higher scale. In the event of the necessity being felt of lowering the wages of artisans in the famine areas, the decrease may be made with the previous permission of the Secretary. The Sangh should take over from the respective Governments the sales of khadi prepared in famine areas and in schools conducted under the Wardha scheme of education, provided that these Governments bear the losses sustained in the disposal of such khadi.

This is an important resolution. It marks a slowing down of the speed with which I was goading the Sangh to rise to eight annas wages for an eight-hour day for the spinners. I knew that the goal was not to be reached in one jump. I had, however, nursed the hope that every few months would show a progressive increase in the wages. But reports from the different branches and the partial failure of the ex-periment carried on under my nose by Shri Jajuji[1] under the guidance of Shri Vinoba with high hopes of going forward with the rise, have opened my eyes to the stern and grim reality that this country is so terribly poor that it cannot afford to pay a wage of eight annas per day of eight hours to millions of women. Generally nowhere in rural areas do village labourers or artisans earn eight annas for eight hours' work. Spinners could not earn eight annas without all the other classes doing likewise. And the purchasing classes simply have not the money to pay an all-round wage of eight annas per day unless conditions are radically altered. The crushing and unproductive military burden drains the country dry. Add to this the inordinately high salaries and correspondingly high pensions paid, and spent abroad. There are other internal causes also for this gnawing poverty. But I must not stray from the purpose of this article.

Be the cause or causes what they may, the painful fact has been brought home by khadi workers that in spite of all the will in the world the middle-class khadi buyer simply has not the money to buy khadi at the increased price necessitated by the rise in wages beyond the point

[1] Shri Krishnadas Jaju

of three annas. They report that for the time being at any rate that is the saturation point. The resolution is a recognition of this painful fact.

But even the scale of three annas cannot be sustained if the Provincial Governments do not come to the rescue. They can do so both through legislative and administrative effort. This they will only do if they will use the A.I.S.A., the A.I.V.I.A. and the Hindustani Talimi Sangh as their own expert, voluntary and honorary agencies. I present them with the prospect of putting several lakhs of rupees into the pockets of the famishing villagers by providing them with employ-ment during leisure hours. But no progress can be made if the manu-factures of the villagers do not become current coin.

SEGAON, August 20, 1939

Harijan, 26-8-1939

321. NOTES

AMONG 'CRIMINAL TRIBES'

Shri H. S. Kaujalgi of the Karnataka Branch of the A.I.S.A. sends me beautiful slivers and equally good yarn prepared and spun by the women in the'criminal tribes' settlement near Bijapur and writes :

> The women are not criminals themselves, but they are the immediate dependants of the habitual criminals that are placed under certain restrictions in the settlement. The manager of the settlement asked the A.I.S.A. Karnataka Branch to try to introduce spinning in the settlement. As spinning was unknown to these women, they had no prejudices for any particular kind of spinning-wheels or carding process. So we thought it in the best interest of the spinners to introduce Andhra methods of spinning and carding. We began on the 19th of July. Five women are attending the class. They belong to the Bhat, Corvi and Waders communities. They are paid one anna and six pies per day as stipend during the course of spinning. They can now spin 500 yards in three hours. The cotton used is Jayawant and the yarn spun is between 30 and 40 counts. We are continuing the class till the end of August, after which time we shall be providing them with cotton and purchasing yarn from them. If the experiment succeeds, we are introducing spinning in other criminal settlements also. Shri Dhruva, the Backward Class Officer, Poona, is enthusiastic about it.
>
> Towards the end of August we are holding a competition in spinning. We are giving a sari as a present to all those who spin more than three hundred yards of 30 counts yarn in one hour. As the women are quick and intelligent it is possible that every one of the five spinners will get a sari.

This is a good beginning. If the Provincial Governments will take the fullest advantage of the three expert constructive bodies, viz., A.I.S.A., A.I.V.I.A. and Hindustani Talimi Sangh, they will find the maximum amount of productive work with the minimum expen-diture of money and energy. But of course they have to face the problem of the sale of goods manufactured through the activities of these three bodies. Such a question arises only in this unfortunate land. In other countries the State sees to it that the people use the goods that are manufactured by or under State supervision. The Pro-vincial Governments have the opportunity, though to a limited extent, of putting things right.

SEGAON, August 20, 1939

Harijan, 26-8-1939

322. LETTER TO VIJAYABHEN M. PANCHOLI

WARDHA,
August 20, 1939

CHI. VIJAYA,

It is very unkind of you not to write to me these days. I hope you received the letter sent yesterday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7112. Also C.W. 4604. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

323. WANTED PURCHASERS

The following is taken from a letter from the Gandhi Ashram, Meerut :

> The A.I.S.A. is giving work today to more than three lakhs of people. Its operations extend to 13,000 villages. 2,571 workers are engaged in this great nation-building activity. The quota of the United Provinces is no mean one. We have more than 40,000 spinners on our registers. The number of other artisans, weavers, washermen, carders, etc., is 4,780. Nearly 3,043 villages are covered by our activities, and 600 workers carry the message of khadi to different parts of the province. It brings all the creative forces of the nation into play. We learn to combine, plan, co-ordinate and build. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has been reported to have said in the Working Committee that the spinning-wheel cannot fulfil all

> our needs of cloth today. I feel this statement underrates the possibility of the spinning-wheel. I can say from our experience that we have not been able to touch even the fringe of the problem. Production can be multiplied a thousand times within a very short period provided we have a ready market for the khadi we manufacture.

I have omitted the portion containing an appeal for sales. I hope that their effort will meet with the success it deserves. But what I wish to consider here is the reason for the sales not keeping pace with the production. Propaganda undoubtedly has its place. But more than propaganda is wanted scientific research. There is no doubt that our people use on an average 15 yards of cloth per head per year. There is is no doubt that this cloth costs the country a figure approaching 100 crores of rupees, meaning less than three rupees per head, coun-ting India's population at 35 crores. It is easy enough to say that the sales can be effected if the State protects khadi. That khadi deserves protection is in my opinion a self-proved proposition.[1] But have the khadi workers who have the qualifications found out whether we have done all we could to command sales even without protection? There are two obstacles. Mill-made cloth is said to be much cheaper than khadi, and has a variety of colour, design and finish which khadi does not possess. The second has been largely overcome, but more is perhaps required to be done. There must be a limit beyond which probably khadi cannot go. If there is, we must frankly confess it. But my fear is that sufficient research has not been made as to the prices. Professor Kumarappa has put forth a startling claim for the spinning-wheel. He has produced figures in support of it.[2] But the man in the street asks the questions: 'Then why is khadi dearer than mill-cloth?' This question has to be satisfactorily answered. The obvious answers I would not consider to be satisfactory. The answers themselves have to be thoroughly examined and the way to overcome the difficulties discovered and pursued till khadi comes to occupy its natural supremacy.

It is a shame that we who grow more cotton than we need should have to send it abroad for being turned into cloth for us. It is equally a shame for us that we who have in our villages unlimited unused labour, and can easily supply ourselves with village instru-ments of

[1] *Vide* also "Notes", sub-title, "Khadi as Famine Insurance and Medium of Instruction", "Letter to Jivanji D. Desai", 14-8-1939.

[2] *Vide* "Mills v. Charkha", 7-8-1939.

manufacture, should send our cotton to the mills of our cities for it to be manufactured into cloth for our use. We know the history of the shame. But we have not yet discovered the sure way to deal with the double shame beyond a patriotic appeal to the public. The latter have returned an encouraging response. But the recent resolution seems to show that we have reached the limit of the patronage. We may not be satisfied until khadi becomes an article of universal wear. It may be that in the prosecution of our search we may find, as some suggest we shall, that khadi can never become an economic pro-position. We should then have no hesitation in making the admission, however it may hurt our pride and demolish the proposition we have hitherto advanced with so much confidence. But the admission cannot be made till we have made every search that is possible for a human being to make so as to yield an unequivocal answer to the questions propounded by me.

SEGAON, August 21, 1939

Harijan, 26-8-1939

324. NOTES

WHY ONLY PROHIBITION?

A correspondent thus twits me:

> It was all very well for you to have insisted on prohibition. Do you suppose that the *'satta'* in the share market, the *'ank farak'*, the dens of gambling, the races and the cinemas do less damage to the morals and the pockets of the people than the drink evil? I hear you have never gone to the cinema. Do go, if only once, and you will see things on the stage and among the spectators that will set you athinking. I assure you that the institutions I have mentioned demand your attention as much as the drink monster.

This is the substance of a fairly long indictment in Gujarati. There are other things packed into the letter. But I have given in my own words the relevant portions.

I have no difficulty in agreeing with the correspondent that the evils named by him are serious and should be dealt with. But who will bell the cat? If I could have, I should have dealt with the lady long ago. I have my limitations. I have only recently shown[1] that I am not so

[1] *Vide* "Am I All-Powerful", 6-8-1939.

powerful as some people imagine. The drink evil has been recog-nized as such by the people of this land. But the other evils are more or less fashionable. If I led an agitation against the share gambling, I should be in danger of losing some of my willing and regular donors. If I incited people against the races and the infernal gamble that goes on there, all the high personages from the Viceroy downward would be up in arms against me. And those who patronize the race specials? If I led a raging compaign against the cinemas, I should lose caste among educationists and reformers. They have often sought to con-vert me by pleading that cinemas are a fine medium of education and that churches and reformers in the West give them their patronage in an ever-increasing measure. Therefore if I treated these evils as I have treated the drink evil and if I began to organize picketing in respect of them, I should lose caste, lose my mahatmaship, and even lose my head which of course has very little value at this time of my life. But as I do not wish to suffer the triple loss, I must allow my corres-pondent and others like him to think that I am shirking an obvious duty. I know the evils. I hope that greater reformers than I will deal with them. For me one step is enough.

A FRAUD ON KHADI

The Secretary, A.I.S.A., Punjab Branch, writes:

> I am sending per separate parcel an advertisement of Butala khadi. They were our certified centre till the end of 1937. Some suspicion then arose regarding the purity of yarn used by them. The matter was investigated and the Ahmedabad Office decided that they must keep an A.I.S.A. inspector for their centre to watch that no mill-yarn was used. They refused to abide by that decision, on which their certificate was cancelled. They are now exploiting our certificate that was given to them while they were working as a certified centre. They do not say that their certificate has been cancelled since, but quote the old certificate giving a false impression to the public that they have still got the patronage of Mahatma Gandhi, Shri Jamnalal Bajaj and other leaders of esteem. I feel something might be done to remove this impression.

I have omitted the advertisement. The action complained of in the letter is obviously a fraud on khadi. It is probably an actionable wrong. Though the A.I.S.A. has followed the policy of relying upon public opinion to protect khadi against fraud, the wrong-doers should know that the A.I.S.A. has taken no vow not to seek legal protection if it became necessary. I hope that the party making use of a cancelled certificate will wisely give up the practice, return the certificate to the Association, and refrain from dealing in khadi in contravention of the

rules of the A.I.S.A. The Secretary of the Branch should warn the wrong-doer against the wrongful use of the cancelled certificate and report the result to the Central Office.

SEGAON, August 21, 1939

Harijan, 26-8-1939

325. LETTER TO M. MUJEEB

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August, 21, 1939

MY DEAR MUJEEB,

Have you read the pamphlet issued by the Jamiat-ul-Ulema? They sent a copy to the Working Committee. Rajen Babu read extracts from it. One of them attacked the Wardha Scheme by saying that it was wrong to say that non-violence was an integral part of Islam and that Islam taught equal respect for the known religions—it taught toleration. Another suggested that Hindustani was merely another word for Urdu.

If you have not seen the pamphlet please procure it and if you have it, please send me your reaction to these extracts which I have quoted in my own words. I have not the original before me.

What about your finances? How are you otherwise doing? Is there any effect being produced on the attendance at the Jamia? How is Zakir[1] progressing?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 1465

[1] Zakir Husain

326. LETTER TO KUNVAR SIR JAGDISH PRASAD[1]

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 21, 1939

DEAR SIR JAGDISH,

I know you have been putting up a good fight on behalf of the Indians in S. A. I have been staying their hand. But they are getting restive. They won't be satisfied with any patch-work settlement. I know, too, that nothing brave is to be expected from here. It is therefore doubly necessary not to prolong the agony. If you can, you should tell Rama Rau[2] to keep himself in touch with the Passive Resisters. As you know there are two parties there. He should take the P. R. s into his confidence. They complain that he does not even recognize them. I can hardly believe this of Rama Rau. I am making inquiry. But I thought you should know what I am getting from S.A.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

327. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 21, 1939

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Kaka's letter is enclosed. Bear your burden well. Personally I am of the opinion that he should stop travelling. I can stop him only by ordering him, but you can reason and plead with him. What he writes is perfectly true. The only amendment needed is that he has always been like a child and has not become childish through senility. You should write to Vijaya as you have been doing. She had suggested that you should write the full name of Naranbhai. There has been no letter from her. This suggests that she is in a fix. But she will be able to manage. I

[1] Sir Jagdish Prasad wrote to Gandhiji on July 13 and 21, 1939. In the first letter, he suggested that the move by some Indians in South Africa to embark on passive resistance would be a grave mistake. In the second letter, he expressed gratitude to Gandhiji for asking Transvaal Indians to postpone passive resistance.

[2] Sir Benegal Rama Rau, Agent-General of India in South Africa

am sure I shall get a letter from her in a day or two.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10794

328. LETTER TO SANYUKTA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 21, 1939

CHI. SANYUKTA,

Why should I write to you? Are you not included in Jaisukhlal? Very well then; I won't include Jaisukhlal in you. You will certainly benefit from all the service you are rendering. Kasumba is getting a new lease of life. Let us see what other exploits you claim now.

Jaisukhlal should try to do only what he can there and rest content.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

329. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 21, 1939

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

Now you will have no occasion to complain about the absence of letters from me. But that will be because of the struggle. Remember that both of you have to sacrifice your all there. Once the struggle starts it won't end soon. What will you do about the children? You must have thought about every contingency. If you cannot keep them there, then Sushila will perhaps have to keep out of the struggle and bring over the children here. Or, if she has the ability, she may single-handed run *Indian Opinion*. Thus think out your plans beforehand.

Here everything is all right. And, besides, what time can you get now to wonder about what is happening here?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4902

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Jaisukhlal Gandhi", 31-7-1939.

330. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SEGAON,
August 21, 1939

CHI. JAMNALAL,

What is to be done about what you say regarding the Punjab National Bank? I have already sent over the information regarding Nagpur [Bank].[1]

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

331. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

August 21, 1939

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Do you know anything about this?[2] What is this talk about printing the Vedas? And what contributions is he [3] talking about?

I hope you got my note of yesterday.

Blessing from

BAPU

[PS.]

Please credit the enclosed cheque to my account. As for particulars, you can mention that it is from Magan Jerajani towards famine [relief] or some such cause.

BAPU

SHRI KISHORELALBHAI

From the Gujarati original: Gandhi Nidhi File. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

[1] From *Bapu Smaran; vide* also "Draft Telegram to Mulkraj", 18-8-1939.

[2] The reference is to a quarterly work report, dated August 20, 1939, from Tummala Basavayya, a member of the Gandhi Seva Sangh, stating, *inter alia,* that he had spent eight days outside Vinayashram (where he lived) in order to collect funds for the publication of the Vedas. The letter is written at the back of the report.

[3] *Ibid*

332. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 21, 1939

CHI. PYARELAL,

Every day I want to have a talk with you, but I have not been able to do so. There must be some hidden fear behind it. Otherwise the wish would be fulfilled somehow. I cannot bear your fasting at all. It does disturb my work. You may be endowed with indefatigable energy, but the very knowledge that you are fasting prevents me from freely taking work from you. How nice it would he if you would forget about fasts, etc., and give greater importance to your duty towards me! The adjectives Devdas employs may be inapt but there is some justification in what he says. I am tolerating your philosophy but I do not understand it and I burn within. You can quench the fire if you so wish. That would bring peace to me. It would bring peace to Sushila and it would be good for her. Write a brief letter to Devdas.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

333. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 21, 1939

STUPID GIRL,

I have been wanting to write to you every day but can find no time. Today I have sat down to write this after my morning meal though it is *Harijan* day. I did not like your last two letters. They were hysterical. Why are you so restless? Why are you so much afraid of Devdas and the people here? Why should you tremble at the thought of coming here? What has happened to your knowledge of the *Gita* and all the talks we have had? On the one hand you are proclaiming to the world what you plan to do here and on the other you have doubts about your continuing to stay here. What stupidity! Free your-self of it. Why are you dying before your death?

Your description of your talk with Devdas is good. your answers were also good. This dialogue has certainly done good. I hope you did not show any anger during the talk. The misunder-standing will be further cleared with more talks.

There is an Agrawal Eye Hospital at Daryaganj. Go and see it. I hope you are well and you observe rules in the matter of food.

There is always trouble from Pyarelal in the shape of fasts and so on. You are mischievous. Young wrote to me only because you gave him the occasion. If you had said you could not wait till after August, he surely would not have written? When the needs of the patients there are mentioned, how can I refuse? You yourself could not have refused. Now l am waiting for the 16th. What should I do? We shall see about your hospital after your arrival here. Shirin has not come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

334. NOTE TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[Before *August 22, 1939*][1]

You must of course go. Seeing the ways of Om I can only advise that she should be married off as quickly as possible. She is not old enough in years but physically and mentally she is quite mature. I doubt very much if she can restrain herself any more. Of course you must consider well before settling the marriage. You must then leave it to her. In the end she will do as her fate dictates. If a suitable young man comes along do not wait too long. Consult Om again and again. Tell her of my distrust of her. Take her a letter from me if you wish.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10990. Courtesy: Ramakrishna Bajaj

[1]From the reference to Om who was betrothed on August 22, 1939

335. LETTER TO POPATLAL CHUDGAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 22, 1939

CHI. CHUDGAR[1],

Sardar is in sole charge of everything. I will approve of whatever he decides, if at all my approval is necessary.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI POPATLAL CHUDGAR
BARRISTER
RAJKOT CITY
KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9831. Courtesy: Popatlal Chudgar

336. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

August 22, 1939

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I am writing to Lakshmidas. . . .[2] Do not enter [anything] concerning Jamnalal in the account books. Leave it for the present.

As I have not been able to digest what you say about forgive-ness, try to convince me. If not now, whenever you have the time. I shall understand even if you write a few words.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Gandhi Nidhi File. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

[1] Barrister; legal adviser of the Rao Rana of Sikar
[2] Illegible in the source

337. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

SEGAON,
August 23, 1939

I continue to receive letters, mostly abusive, about what may be called the Subhas Babu resolution[2] of the Working Committee. I also saw a letter addressed to Rajendra Babu, which can hardly be sur-passed in the use of filthy language. I have seen some criticisms about the war resolution[3].

I owe it to the public to make my position clear about both these resolutions. I must confess that the Subhas Babu resolution was drafted by me. I can say that the members of the Working Committee would have shirked the duty of taking action if they could have. They knew that there would be a storm of opposition against their action. It was easier for them to have a colourless resolution than to have one which was no respecter of persons. Not to take some action would have amounted to abdication of their primary function of preserving discipline among Congressmen. Subhas Babu had invited action. He had gallantly suggested that if any action was to be taken it should be taken against him as the prime mover. In my opinion the action taken by the Working Committee was the mildest possible. There was no desire to be vindictive. Surely the word vindictiveness loses all force and meaning when the position of Subhas Babu is considered. He knew that he could not be hurt by the Working Committee. His popularity had put him above being affected by any action that the Working Committee might take. He had pitted himself against the Working Committee, if not the Congress organization. The members of the Working Committee, therefore, had to perform their duty and leave the Congressmen and the public to judge between themselves and Subhas Babu. It has been suggested that Subhas Babu has done what I would have done under similar circumstances. I cannot recall a single instance in my life of having done what Subhas Babu has done, i.e., defied an organization to which I owed allegiance. I could understand rebellion after secession from such an organization. That was the meaning and secret of the non-

[1] This appeared under the title "The Two Resolutions". The statement was also published in *The Hindu*, 23-8-1939, and *The Hindustan Times*, 24-8-1939.

[2] *Vide* "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 11-8-1939.

[3] *Vide* Appendix-"Congress Working Committee Resolution", after 18-7-1939

violent non-co-operation of 1920.

But I am not penning these lines so much to justify the action of the Working Committee as to appeal to Subhas Babu and his suppor-ters to take the decision of the Working Committee in the right spirit and submit to it while it lasts. He has every right to appeal to the A.I.C.C. against the decision. If he fails there, he can take the matter before the annual session of the Congress. All this can be done with-out bitterness and without imputing motives of the worst type to the members of the Working Committee. Why not be satisfied with the belief that the members have committed an error of judgement? I fancy that if a majority of the A.I.C.C. members signify in writing their disapproval of the action of the Working Committee, the latter will gladly resign. By imputing motives whenever there are differences of opinion, Congressmen pull down the structure that has been built up by the patient labour of half a century. Indeed, even if a bad motive is suspected, it is better to refrain from imputing it, unless it can be proved beyond doubt. It is necessary for the sake of healthy public education that leaders of public opinion should judge events and decisions on their merits.

On the war resolution I had a conclusive defeat. I was invited to draft a resolution, and so was Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. I was proud of my draft, but my pride went before destruction. I saw that I could not carry my resolution unless I argued and pressed for it. But I had no such desire. We then listened to Jawaharlal's. And I at once admitted that it represented more truly than mine the country's opinion and even the Working Committee's as a whole. Mine was based upon out-and-out non-violence. If the Congress heartily believed in non-violence in its fullness even as a policy, this was its testing time. But Congressmen, barring individual exceptions, do not believe in such non-violence. Those who do, believe that it is the right thing only for a fight against the Government for wresting power. But the Congress has no non-violent message for the world. I would fain believe that the Congress had such a message. The conclusion to both the resolutions need not have been radically different. But the motive power being different the same conclusion would bear a different meaning in a different setting. In the face of the violence going on in India itself and in the face of the fact that Congress Governments have been obliged to fall back upon

military and police assitance, a declaration to the world of non-violence would have seemed a mockery. It would have carried no weight in India or with the world. Yet, to be true to myself, I could not draft any other resolution than I did.

The fate, to which I was party, of my resolution proved the wisdom of my withdrawal of official connection with the Congress. I attend the Working Committee meetings not to identify myself with its resolutions or even its general policy. I attend in the pursuit of my mission of non-violence. So long as they want my attendance I go there to emphasize non-violence in their acts and through them in those of Congressmen. We pursue the same goal. They all of them would go the whole length with me if they could, but they want to be true to themselves and to the country which they represent for the time being, even as I want to be true to myself. I know that the progress of non-violence is seemingly a terribly slow process.[1] But experience has taught me that it is the surest way to the common goal. There is deliverance neither for India nor for the world through clash of arms. Violence, even for vindication of justice, is almost played out. With that belief I am content to plough a lonely furrow, if it is to be my lot that I have no co-sharer in the out-and-out belief in non-violence.

Harijan, 26-8-1939

338. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 24, 1939

CHI. NARAHARI,

I understand that Amtul Salaam's Hanif[2] is under your charge and that he is learning carding. If the man is promising, then it is our duty to turn him into a fine craftsman. It will be a fine thing if he becomes a good craftsman and an expert. I should like him to be trained to learn all processes up to weaving. We have with us very few who are experts in all the processes. A lot of work can be done if we can give such training to one or two Muslims. Just as in Godhra I wanted that a cobbler or carpenter should take the chair, similarly I do

[1] The source, however, has "progress".
[2] A khadi worker of the Punjab

believe that Hindu-Muslim unity can be achieved through ordinary Muslims. I would, therefore, be happy if persons like Hanif and Akbar also chance to come our way. However, you should be guided by your own experience and ability.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9115

339. LETTER TO AZAM ABED

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 24, 1939

BHAI AZAM ABED,

I have your letter. I got the cuttings, including the one about the late Nawab Khan. I don't think anything can be done from here about Nawab Khan. I was sorry to read the news about him.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 815

340. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI N. PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 24, 1939

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

I see that your *yajna* is becoming a very great one. We will be able to solve the problem of disposing of khadi only if we go deep into the matter and study it carefully. This will require collection of figures.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9010

341. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 24, 1939

STUPID GIRL,

Pyarelal has gone to Nagpur with Krishnadas to visit David. Prakash arrived yesterday. He has taken her also with him to show her the clinic, etc. I have got two patients here—Durga and Asha Devi—for whose sake I do feel the need of your presence. Durga is afraid she may have appendicitis and Asha Devi has been suffering from fever for the past two months. But what can you do about this? However, I am so perturbed that twice in my dreams I spoke to you about it, telling you that you had neglected your duty by staying on there—had there not been work enough here? When I woke up I said to myself'after all what could you have done?' Young compelled you and you passed the responsibility on to me! I could take only one decision. The dream was the expression of my anxiety. Why so much anxiety? That shows inadequate practice of the *Gita*! You must be free of all worry and complete your work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

342. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

[Before *August 25, 1939*][1]

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I have your letter. You may come over whenever you can. There has again been no letter from Vijaya but I think she is in Varad. I enclose a postcard for her. There is some blank space in it. Utilize that for writing. I have forgotten the name of Naran Patel's father. Send it. If the father's name is not written, the letter miscarries.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] From the reference to absence of any "letter from Vijaya", and the enclosed "postcard for her" which had crossed her letter to Gandhiji; *vide* "Letter to Vijayabehn M. Pancholi", 25-8-1939.

[PS.]

Post the accompanying postcard after entering the complete address on it.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10792

343. PLEA FOR VOLUNTARY FEDERATION

Imposed federation is likely to divide India more than it is today. It would be a great step if the British Government were to declare that they would not impose their federal structure on India. The Viceroy seems to be acting in that fashion if he is not saying so. If my surmise is correct, I suggest that a clear declaration will add grace to his action and will probably pave the way for real federation and therefore real unity. That federation can naturally never be of the Government of India Act brand. Whatever it is, it must be a product of the free choice of all India.

But before that political and legalized federation of free choice comes, there should be voluntary federation of parts, to begin with, if not of the whole. This reflection arises from famine conditions today in parts of lesser Gujarat and the whole of Kathiawar. I have received angry protests from correspondents drawing my attention to what they have termed the heartless policy of the Bombay Government in prohibiting the movement of fodder and grain. I could not believe my correspondents. I knew that the Sardar was moving heaven and earth to cope with the distress both in Gujarat and Kathiawar. But in order to make assurance doubly sure, I wired to the Prime Minister. Immediately on the same day came the following answer :

> Removal of fodder from six districts not permitted without the permision of Collector as the necessities of our Province must be first considered. Excess will be permitted to be removed.

The wire was followed by a letter enclosing a copy of the Bill about to be introduced in the Bombay Assembly. It simply controls the movement and prices of grain and fodder during times of famine or scarcity. This is no policy of prohibition but it is one of control over and regulation of the movement of fodder and grain so as to prevent hoarding in speculators' hands or disposal to the extent of starving the places where it is grown and stored. The Premier's letter contemplates collection of grain andfodderfrom available sources outside the Province and its distribution in famine areas including Kathiawar. The Bombay measure I consider not only to be necessary but conducive to the interest as well of the whole of the States part of the Province as of

the British part. I call it an act of voluntary fede-ration. The reader must not quarrel with the stretch of the mean-ing of the word.

This little act introduces the reader to what can become a big act of voluntary federation. I reproduced[1] the other day a letter from a correspondent suggesting a federation of the Kathiawar States in many matters of common interest. The correspondent's ultimate aim was political federation. What I contemplate has nothing to do with politics. My present and ultimate aim here is purely humanitarian.

If the Kathiawar States would voluntarily federate, say, for water, forests and roads, purely for saving life, there would be no danger of a water famine such as threatens the cluster of States. There are States rich enough who can provide water for the whole of Kathiawar. I know it cannot be done in a day. But the dog-in-the manger policy followed in Kathiawar has made impossible any scheme of big waterworks. Kathiwar has fairly good rivers and hills. There is no limit to the possibility of artesian wells. If only all the States will combine and the rich ones will use their riches for the common good, they will be saved the awful prospect of people and cattle having to die of thirst. I have faith that it is possible for Kathiawar to ensure a proper supply of water even in dry years. But no common waterworks will answer the purpose for all time unless there is a long-view scheme of afforestation. There are practically no forests in Kathiawar. The Princes and the people have to combine to plant trees on an extensive scale. This cannot be done unless the States and the people regard the whole of Kathiawar as their joint and common land and have wisdom enough to desire to live on their land without the perpetual dread of having to die of thirst when the god of rain stops supplies.

SEGAON, August 25, 1939
Harijan, 2-9-1939

344. MOTOR v. *CART*

Gram Udyog Patrika for August examines the respective merits of motor-vans and carts for village propaganda. Those who will read the whole argument should send for the *Patrika.* I give below the most

[1] *Vide*"Confederation of Small States", 14-8-1939.

important part of the argument.[1]

> We have been asked whether District Boards and such other local bodies, who wish to set apart a certain amount of money for village work, will do well to invest in motor-vans for propaganda work of various kinds in villages. . . .The question is whether speeding up matters by the use of motor-vans which can visit more than one village in a night will suit the purpose.
>
> In all our expenditure, especially when that expenditure is undertaken expressly for the benefit of the village people, it is necessary to see that the money spent goes back to the villager. District and local Boards obtain their money from the people, and their purchases must be such as will help to circulate money among the people. . . .
>
> What the villager needs above all is profitable employment. We steadily deprive him of employment by buying imported articles, and by way of compensation give him lectures, magic-lantern shows and tinned music all at his expense, and pat ourselves on the back that we are working for his welfare. Can anything be more absurd?
>
> Compare with this what happens if in the place of the motor-van the much despised bullock-cart were used. . . . It can reach the most remote villages which a motor-lorry cannot do. It costs only a fraction of the money required for a van, so that many bullock-carts can be bought, if necessary, to serve groups of villages in the district. The money spent on them goes to the village carpenter, blacksmith and cart-driver. Not a pie of it need go out of the district. . . .
>
> Rural work and motor-vans appear, therefore, to go ill together. What is required is steady, constructive effort, not lightning speed and empty show. We would commend to local Boards and public institutions genuinely interested in village welfare to start by using only village-made goods, to study the conditions which are steadily producing poverty in the villages, and concentrate on removing them one by one. When every side of village life needs intensive, well-considered effort, it seems a waste of public money to throw it away on methods which attempt to bring about village uplift overnight.

It is to be hoped that those who interest themselves in village welfare will take to heart the obvious argument advanced in favour of the cart. It will be cruel to destroy the village economy through the very agency designed for village welfare.

SEGAON, August 25, 1939

Harijan, 16-9-1939

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

345. LETTER TO SHIVJI DEVSHANKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 25, 1939

BHAI SHIVJI,

I got your letter. Since people attach excessive importance to my words, I write only what is absolutely necessary. Despite that if once in a while a mistake remains, should not people overlook it?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

346. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 25, 1939

CHI. VIJAYA,

You must have received the letter I wrote to you before I got yours. I am here for the present. If, therefore, you can free yourself from there, come over immediately. I hope you are keeping good health. Naranbhai must be improving.

Here owing to the rains everything is fine. The fear of drought has disappeared. I hope everything is all right there too.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VIJAYABEHN
C/O NARANBHAI VALLABHBHAI PATEL
VARAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7113. Also C.W. 4605. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

347. MACHINE OIL AND "GHANI" OIL

The village *ghani*, the village *chakki*, the village loom and charkha, and the village sugar-cane-crusher were once inseparable parts of the village. The A.I.S.A. and the A.I.V.I.A. are trying to

revive some of them. We know fairly well how the loom and the charkha can be revived. Khadi has become a science to be mastered in all its aspects. Maganlal Gandhi laid the foundation of that science. The village *chakki* and the village sugar-cane-crusher have yet to discover their science men. But the *ghani* has. Shri Jhaverbhai Patel of Maganwadi is studying the *ghani* in all its aspects with the zeal and precision of a scientist. He has made improvements which he claims have lessened the labour of both men and animals who work at the *ghani* and have at the same time increased the output of oil. He has studied the oil market and the movement of seeds. The result is that he is today able to sell his oil at almost the bazaar rates and therefore commands a ready market. His oil is superior to the machine product which is, as a rule, adulterated and never fresh. But Shri Jhaverbhai is not satisfied merely because he competes successfuly with the local market in Wardha. He has found out why the machine oil is at all cheaper than the *ghani* oil. He gives three reasons, two of which are unavoidable. They are capital and the ability of the machine to extract the last drop of oil and that too in a shorter time than the *ghani*. These advantages are neutralized by the commission. The owner of the mill has to pay to the middleman. But Shri Jhaverbhai cannot cope with the third reason, adulteration, unless he also takes to it. This naturally he will not do. He therefore suggests that adulteration should be dealt with by law. This can be done by enforcing the Anti-adulteration Act if there is one or by enacting it and by licensing oil mills.

Shri Jhaverbhai has also examined the cause of the decline of the village *ghani*. The most potent cause is the inability of the oilman to command a regular supply of seeds. The villages are practically denuded of seeds after the season. The oilman has no money to store the seeds, much less to buy them in the cities. Therefore he has disappeared or is fast disappearing. Lakhs of *ghanis* are today lying idle causing a tremendous waste of the country's resources. Surely it is the function of the State to resuscitate the existing *ghanis* by conserving seeds in the places of their origin and making them available to the village oilman at reasonable rates. The Government loses nothing by giving this aid. It can be given,so Shri Jhaverbhai contends, through co-operative societies or panchayats. If this is done, Shri Jhaverbhai is of opinion, based on research, that *ghani* oil can compete with the machine product and the villager can be spared the infliction of the adulterated oil he gets today. It should be borne in

mind that the only fat the villager gets, when he gets any, is what the oil can give him. To ghee he is generally a stranger.

SEGAON, August 26, 1939

Harijan, 2-9-1939

348. A MAHARJA'S THREAT

I received some weeks ago an important letter from Patiala. It contained such grave statements attributed to the Maharaja Saheb of Patiala that I referred them to him for confirmation or otherwise. It is now more than three weeks since I wrote to him. But I have no reply.[1] I therefore presume that the statements reported by my correspondent are substantially true. Here is the main part of the letter :

> The Patiala State Praja Mandal launched satyagraha against the *Hidayat* of 1988[2], a lawless law curtailing the civil liberties of the people. On our advice the satyagraha was suspended unconditionally. The Publicity Officer, Patiala, on behalf of H.H.'s Government, stated in a Press communique dated 15th April that the Government would repeal or withdraw the aforesaid *Hidayat* within three to four weeks, and further stated that the Government had constituted a Committee to go into its provisions and submit an early report. But the announcement has remained up till now a dead letter. And instead, H.H. has by *Ijlas khas* orders dated 25th May ordered the strict enforcement of the *Hidayat* for a period of another six months. In view of this, no propaganda of any kind can be carried on by the Praja Mandal workers, the provisions of the *Hidayat* being very wide and sweeping. The workers arrested in connection with this agitation are still in jail and others are being tried. Apart from this there is at present another movement going on within the State, i.e., between landlords and tenants.
>
> Some of the Praja Mandal workers were allowed an interview with H. H. on the 18th instant. During the interview H. H. addressed them as follows :
>
> "My ancestors have won the State by the sword and I mean to keep it by the sword. I do not recognize any organization to represent my people or to speak on their behalf. I am their sole and only representative. No such organization such as Praja Mandal can be allowed to exist within the State. If

[1] For the Maharaja's reply, which was received subsequently and which appeared along with this, *vide* Appendix-"Letter from Yadavindra Singh", 9-9-1939. Also for Gandhiji's note appended to these, *vide* "Remarks on 'A Maharaja's Threat'", 12-9-1939.

[2] Of Vikram calendar, corresponding to 1932 A.D.

you want to do Congress work, get out of the State. The Congress can terrify the British Government, but if it ever tries to interfere in my State it will find me a terrible resister. I cannot tolerate any flag other than my own to be flown within my boundaries. You stop your Praja Mandal activities, otherwise I shall resort to such repression that your generations to come will not forget it. When I see some of my dear subjects drifting away into another fold, it touches the very core of my heart. I advise you to get out of the Mandal and stop all kind of agitation; or else remember I am a military man; my talk is blunt and my bullet straight."

It may be that my letter never reached the Maharaja Saheb, and that if it had, he would have disputed the correctness of my correspondent's letter. If any repudiation is received by me, I shall gladly publish it. But I must say that my correspondent is a respon-sible person.

Assuming then that the Maharaja did make the remarks quoted, it is a serious thing for any Prince, no matter how powerful he is, to use the threats the Maharaja is reported to have done. With due respect to him, I suggest that there is too much awakening among the people throughout India to be suppressed by threats and even corresponding action. The days of unadulterated autocracy are gone for ever. It is possible perhaps by intense frightfulness to suppress the rising spirit of the people for some time. But I am quite sure that it cannot be suppressed for all time.

I have no desire to eliminate the Princes. Friends have complained to me that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has, however, made such a statement although the Congress has enunciated no such policy. I have not had the opportunity of asking him about the alleged remark. But assuming that he did make the statement, it can only mean that some Princes are so acting as to bring about their own elimination. It is wrong to judge him by newspaper reports. His considered opinion is to be gathered from his statement on behalf of the Standing Committee of the All-India States People's Conference. Therein he has even warned people against hasty action. He is much too loyal a Congressman to contemplate any action in advance of known Con-gress policy. Therefore the fear and hatred of the Congress on the part of some Princes are misplaced and are calculated to injure rath er than help them. The Congress is not seeking to interfere directly in the affairs of any State. But the Congress does guide the States people. They are part of the Congress organization. They derive strength and

inspiration from their connection with the Congress. I do not know how this organic relationship can be avoided. To wish its termination is like an attempt to make children disown their parents. For better or for worse it is well to recognize the fact that

just as the vast mass of people of British India look up more to the Congress than to the Government for the removal of their woes, even so do the people of the States look to the Congress for their delive-rance. It is under the Congress advice and inspiration that the people of the States say that they want to grow to their full height under the aegis of their respective Princes. I hope, therefore, that the Maharaja Saheb of Patiala and those Princes who hold the opinion attributed to him will revise their views and welcome the movement of their people for liberty to grow to their full height and not regard the reformers in their States as their enemies. It will be well if they will seek Congress aid in the settlement of their people's demands. But they need not do so, if they distrust Congress friendship. It is enough if they will placate the advanced section of their people by granting substantial reforms.

What is worse in my opinion, however, than the alleged threat of the Maharaja is the breach of the promise referred to in my correspondent's letter. There is no doubt so far as I can see that the promise of withdrawal of the *Hidayat* of 1988 was made; there is equally no doubt that the promise has been broken. It is a dangerous thing even for a rich and powerful Prince to break his plighted word. Breach of a promise is no less an act of insolvency than a refusal to pay one's debt. I plead with the Maharaja Saheb to redeem the promise and hope that his counsellors will advise him to do so.

SEGAON, August 26, 1939

Harijan, 16-9-1939

349. TELEGRAM TO SRI PRAKASA

SEGAON,
August 26, 1939

DELIGHTED. JUST LIKE YOU.[1] AWAITING YOUR LETTER.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee had withdrawn his resignation from the Congress; *vide* also "Telegram to Jawaharlal Nehru", 18-8-1939.

350. LETTER TO MULKRAJ

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 26, 1939

DEAR LALA MULKRAJ,

I had a wire from Shri Mookerjee about Punjab National. I have not replied as I have sent you the papers about the Nagpur Bank. There is now no question of banking the money elsewhere. I hope therefore that you have given effect to my instructions.[1]

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

351. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 26, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

Your letter is dated the 22nd. I wrote to you on the 24th. You must have received the letter. I am greatly rushed, of course I find comfort in the thought that Pyarelal writes to you every day.

My health of course is all right. Prakash and Pyarelal came from Nagpur yesterday. What Krishnadas has is not T.B. but pyorrhoea.

Prakash gave me news of Mother. Since you were with Mother, has something been done about her teeth? What is the diagnosis? Does is mean additional responsibility for you? Should I also give it a thought?

Mahadev reached here at 3 o'clock

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* "Draft of Telegram to Mulkraj", 18-8-1939.

352. NOTES

BOMBAY CORPORATION AND HARIJANS

The following important resolutions were carried by the Bom-bay Municipal Corporation on 17th and 18th August respectively:

> That the attention of the Commissioner be invited to the absence of bathing and washing facilities for the Municipal Labour Staff, particularly the Health Department sweepers and Drainage Department cleaners, after they finish their work on the streets, and he be requested to report as to whether it would not be desirable to construct a number of special bathrooms and washing places near their centre of work so that they can wash and clean themselves after finishing their day's duties and return home tidy and refreshed.
>
> That the attention of the Commissioner be invited to the fact that the dress used by the municipal sweepers and similar other menial staff gets extremely dirty as a result of their condition of work, and that the continuous use of such dress by this class of employees even during off-duty hours presents a very shabby appearance and is harmful to their health, and he be requested to report whether it would not be desirable to provide these employees with working suits which they may put on just before starting their work and take out at the end of their duty.

The resolutions should have been carried long ago. Both the points covered by the resolutions are important as well for the employees as the citizens. Sanitation of a big city like Bombay is dependent largely upon the efficiency of the those who are employed to attend to it. And yet all over India they are the least looked after. I needed a Congress majority in the Corporation to pass these necessary resolutions. Let us hope that the Commissioner will report favourably without delay. There can be no objection to the reforms in principle. The objection so as I can see can only be on the score of finance. But in matters such as the sanitary welfare of the city, financial objection can have little weight. Assuming that the report is favourable and not delayed, there will still be another stage to be gone through before the reforms become accomplished facts, for the necessary sanction of the Corporation will be required. I hope the mover and the seconder of the resolutions will, therefore, not rest till they see washing places and working dresses provided for the sweepers, cleaners and the other members of the labour staff.

SEGAON, August 27, 1939

Harijan, 9-9-1939

353. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

SEGAON,
[*August 27, 1939*][2]

A sister from London wired on the 24th instant :

Please act. World awaiting lead.

Another wire from another sister in London received today says:

Urge you consider immediate expression of your unshakable faith in reason not force to rulers and all peoples.

I have been hesitating to say anything on the impending world crisis which affects the welfare not of a few nations but of the whole of mankind. I have felt that my word can have no effect on those on whom depends the decision whether there is to be war or peace. I know that many in the West believe that my word does carry weight. I wish I shared their belief. Not having such belief I have been praying in secret that God may spare us the calamity of war. But I have no hesitation in redeclaring my faith in reason, which is another word for non-violence, rather than the arbitrament of war for the settlement of disputes or redress of wrongs. I cannot emphasize my belief more forcibly than by saying that I personally would not purchase my own country's freedom by violence even if such a thing were a possibility. My faith in the wise saying that what is gained by the sword will also be lost by the sword is imperishable. How I wish Herr Hitler would respond to the appeal of the President of the United Sates and allow his claim to be investigated by arbitrators in whose choice he will have as effective a voice as the disputants.

Harijan, 2-9-1939

[1] This appeared under "Notes", sub-title, "The Impending Crisis". The statement was also published in *The Hindu*, 29-8-1939.

[2] *Vide* the following item. The source, however, has "August 28"

354. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SEAGON, WARDHA,
August 27, 1939

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

Your illness disturbs me. I think this—the latest attack—is a warning from God that the South African visit should be given up altogether. The very fact of your brooding over it will retard your recovery. It really amounts to this that you should confine yourself to India, going to England for health's sake whenever necessary.

Dorothy Hogg and now Agatha have sent me cables[1] for a word on the situation. Here is a copy of what I am sending to the Press. Please thank Jesudasan for his letter. I am not writing to him sepa-rately.

Love.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 1299

355. A LETTER [2]

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 27, 1939

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. You are hasty in your judgments. How can you identify the Ministers with what appears in the *Nagpur Times* even though it is a ministerial organ? Those who care to render public service have got to put up with criticism, both fair and unfair. Much of the writing you have sent me is simple banter.

I do not know what impropriety Shri Bhulabhai Desai committed. I undersand that his appointment[3] was welcomed by the leaders of the

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The addressee, presumably, was Anasuyabai Kale, Deputy Speaker, Central Provinces Legislative Assembly.

[3] According to *The Indian Annual Register, 1939,* Vol. II, pp. 215-6, Bhulabhai Desai was appointed by the Congress Working Comittee to investigate into certain allegations made by some M.L.A.s against D. P. Mishra, Minister of Local Self-Government, Central Provinces. The enquiry had hardly lasted for two days when the complainant's representatives T. J. Kedar and others sought withdrawal from the enquiry "on the grounds that Bhulabhai Desai (1) shut out some evidence to which they attached

complaining group. But you must not expect me to interest myself in such matters which are for the Working Committee to deal with.

I know nothing about Dr. Sonak and you will not expect me to enquire into what is after all a purely private affair. If I were to undertake such a mission I should be of no public use. What little energy is left in me must be reserved for dealing with questions which have become my life-work. My withdrawal from the Congress was deliberate act to save myself, among other things, from attention to administrative details. All the three things you mention are matters of administrative detail.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 6902

356. LETTER TO INDU N. PAREKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 27, 1939

CHI. INDU,

Is there no limit to your foolishness? If you would listen to me, get out of all this entanglement and plunge yourself in whatever little service you can do. This is the only way to come up. Your brothers will look after themselves. Tell Bapasaheb about the shortage. Of course you will certainly speak to the Sardar. Personally I should like you to free yourself at the earliest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6257

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importance, and (2) did not admit official documents under the plea of the Official Secrets Act. . . .B. Desai reasoned. . . .as to the groundlessness of their apprehensions and urged them to proceed with the inquiry. . . . They, however, declined to do so. . . . Thereupon the inquiry was suspended."

357. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 27, 1939

CHI. VIJAYA,

I will respect your wishes regarding the *rakhadi,* even though it is of silver. Even if you apply a mud-pack on the throat, you will be able to take the steam through the mouth as Rajkumari used to do. For food, take only fruit juices. But you will not be able to do all this by yourself. If the vaidya takes the responsibility, follow his advice. Otherwise follow Bhaskar's[1]. To get your ears pulled for getting angry come here as soon as you can. But so long as it is your duty to stay there, I don't want you to do anything else.

Blessing from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7114. Also C.W. 4606. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi.

358. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 27, 1939

CHI. NIMU,

I got your letter after a long wait. I for one like your idea about Bhavnagar. It would be proper for you to settle down there only and let Ramdas return at his convenience. He will not willingly let you come here. He will be thinking of you all the time. And if he does let you come here, you will be able to profit by your stay only if he lets you remain for a year. If you can manage that, you may depend upon me to make the necessary arrangements for your stay. But surely you must agree to stay for at least a year, shouldn't you? It is possible Ramdas may not agree to such a long period.

Krishnadas has returned. He is being examined. He has no trace at all of consumption but he feels extremely weak. He is staying at the Mahila Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Dr. Bhaskar Patel

359. KHADI IN TAMIL NADU

The extracts from the half-yearly report of khadi work in Tamil Nadu ending 30th June, published elsewhere in this issue, should be read with interest. The report was followed up by a personal letter from Shri Aiyamuthu, the indefatigable secretary of the Tamil Nadu Branch of the A.I.S.A. Relevant extracts from the letter being very instructive are given below:

> Three years have passed since the first attempt was made for determining a minimum living wage for the spinners. The second step has also been taken since the Ist of this month. There has been a definite increase in the earnings of spinners, though it is not exactly the same as we aim at. A lot of spade-work has been done towards improving the spinning and carding efficiency of the spinner. Use of machine-ginned lint has been given up and *kapas* has been made the basis of all spinning. Improved implements have been distributed. The age-old village charkha has been rejuvenated by the addition of a transformer. The time has now come to pause and consider all the changes that have resulted from this step.
>
> You have always visualized khadi only as part of the home economics of the villager. Our ancients gave us the small wheel and the spindle as their heritage for all posterity. In this their idea was that each home should spin enough for its own immediate requirements. They viewed production only from the viewpoint of the natural consumer, that is, the producer and his family or at the most the village. May be the village weaver took a few cloths to the *shandy*[1]. But the commercial aspect of utilizing the spinning-wheel for catering to the needs of distant consumers never occured to them.
>
> Till 1935, when the first step towards increasing the wages of spinners was taken, the Association had been looking more to the interest of the consumer than to that of the spinner. The Association always aimed at bringing down the price of khadi, thereby enabling more and more people to purchase it. It acted as a check against individuals entering the field and trying to exploit the consumer. Very few persons were willing to take to khadi business and the few who entered the field fell back as soon as they found that khadi did not pay them up to their expectations.
>
> The spinner till 1935 was able to earn on an average only four annas per lb. as spinning wages. Spinners who spun yarn above the average quality

[1] Market

were paid a little more, the maximum being six annas per lb. In those days when a spinner was fined a mere pice she felt the loss so keenly that sometimes she burst into tears. In the same way, the addition of a copper or two to her expectations brought forth a ray of smile on her face. A copper more or less made all the difference in her outlook. It appeared so big.

In 1936, without her asking for it, the spinning wage has been increased far beyond her wildest expectations. While in 1935 the average spinning wage per lb. of yarn was only four annas, in 1938 it is Re. 0-12-3, i e., her wage has been increased by 200 per cent. This should naturally have resulted in inducing her to spin better, to spin more twisted and even yarn. But this has not been the case. The only reaction to our efforts at improving the standard of living of the spinner has been that in a vague way she feels that she is being paid more, vastly more, than is due to her labour. So much so that when she is penalized for spinning yarn of an inferior quality she does not feel it at all. We pay the full wages only for yarn that meets all our rigid tests. The spinner feels it is not a loss to her to be paid ten annas per lb. She is not sorry if she is paid only eight annas. She does not care even if it is only six annas since it is a 50-per-cent increase on her own estimate of her labour and there is always a man who is willing to purchase it at that price. He does not use the rigid tests of the Association. He is always glad to purchase it at that value. It is the uncertified dealer, who pays 50 per cent of the wages paid by us and markets the cloth produced of that yarn at 75 to 80 per cent of our standard rates. Since 1936 we have interested ourselves more in the spinner than in the consumer. We have aimed at getting the maximum out of the consumer and paying it to the spinner. And the uncertified dealer (his number is increasing day by day) is given a free hand to exploit both the spinner and the consumer. The result is that in spite of an increase in wages and that without her asking for it, we are not able to show a corresponding improvement in the quality.

The increase in spinning wages has resulted also in more women registering themselves as spinners. Till 1935 spinning wages were not attractive enough to make the spinner sit at the wheel as a full-time worker. But with the increase of wages she has found spinning a profitble whole-time work. The value of our production has risen from Rs. 6 lakhs in 1936 to Rs. 16 lakhs in 1938. With the capital resources we have, it is not possible to purchase all the yarn that is produced. Nor have the sales increased in corresponding degree. We are forced to reject yarn from many who naturally sell their yarn to the uncertified dealer on his own terms, thus enabling him to undersell us.

Since 1936 we have always held the view that the producer should be the prime consumer, and that what is produced in excess of the producers' needs should alone be marketed. With this end in view the spinners have been asked to deposit with us a portion of their output for their own use and the balance alone is being purchased. This deposit has increased from 13 per cent of the total production in 1936 to 31 per cent in 1938. This percentage can be raised to any limit but for the trouble with the uncertified dealer. Perhaps his activities are at its worst in this case. He is not above purchasing the cloth thus distributed by us at a low price and selling the same elsewhere at a profit. In this instance he is doing more harm than even the vendor of mill-cloth.

The remedy for all this lies perhaps in localizing khadi. Khadi must not be made a commercial product, produced in villages to be sold in distant towns. As at present the spinner thinks she is spinning not so much for her own requirements and that of her family as for selling the yarn for an unknown destination. As such she does not understand, nor does she want to, what quality of yarn she has to spin. We are not able to control the count of the yarn to suit our requirements. If we are to produce khadi only for sale, we are bound to study the requirements of the consumer. We have to study what is required and how much to produce and in what quality. In the case of an organized industry like the mill, it is possible to so regulate the production that only what is wanted is produced. The entire spinning is done in a limited space and the spindles are inanimate things working to a definite motion and spinning what is wanted. In the case of khadi it is not so. The spinner and her spindle are different entities. She lives and thinks independently of us. But if she is induced to spin only for her own immediate wants, she will understand what she needs, what quality of yarn to spin and how much of it to spin. And if there is any surplus, it can be collected by a central organization which will find a market for it. It may be that the village panchayat can be authorized to hold in deposit the surplus yarn produced in the village and to sell it at the price which will ensure the spinner a standard wage for the hours of work she has put in producing the same.

A workers' conference was held at Tirupur on 27th June when Shri Shankerlal Banker addressed the workers. The question of a further increase in spinning wages was raised. Of the 93 workers who had assembled only two were for an enhancement. The rest were opposed to it, not because they were averse to giving the spinner something more but becuase such enhancement does not bring the desired result. The increased wage does not improve the quality of production. Not only that. That uncertified dealer is given greater

scope to exploit both the spinner and the consumer. We feel helpless, not being able to control nefarious activities of the uncertified dealer. We were not able to clarify our position well to Shri Shankerlalji. We are not sure that we have fared any better now. We would only request you to view the problem from our point of view and realize our difficulties.

Perhaps the only remedy for this is for the Government to step in and give the spinner the protection that is her due. She must be saved in spite of herself. It may be that the price of hand-spun yarn should be determined by an act of legislation and it be made an offence against the State to purchase yarn at a lower rate. It may also be made an offence for anybody to purchase yarn from a spinner, when the spinner herself is in need of the same for her clothings. The village panchayat or on its behalf the A.I.S.A. may be authorised to hold in deposit the surplus yarn in the village for sale at the scheduled rates. With the Congress Ministries at the helm of affairs in the different provinces it is not impossible to bring in this piece of protective legislation. We only pray that you give the matter your consideration and advise the different Ministries to bring suitable legislation.

The secretary is an impatient enthusiast. Both enthusiasm and impatience are good up to a point in any great venture. Khadi is the greatest I have been able to conceive inasmuch as it conserves the simultaneous good of millions of human beings without regard to status or religion. It can therefore take in as many impatient enthu-siasts as will come to it provided that they are honest, pure, incorrup-tible and unselfish. And impatient enthusiasts will have to remember that in the end only coolness, patience and tireless research will win.

Let me now examine Shri Aiyamuthu's difficulties.

1. Uncertified dealers are a curse; they are enemies of their own sisters which the spinners are; they are enemies of progress and ulti-mately of themselves. But the royal road to neutralize their mis-chievous activities is to buy all the yarn that the spinners produce. This is a matter of pure arithmetic. Shri Aiyamuthu is the sole con-troller of higher prices. He can pay even eight annas per day to the choicest spinners. They are useful for his laboratory work. He will regulate their number. He will buy up all the other yarn at the price lower, than under the increased scale, if the spinners are willing to sell their yarn. He will thus automatically eliminate the uncertified dealer, so far as yarn is concerned. I know that is a dangerous experiment, if the experimenter is not always, in all that he is doing, thinking solely of the spinners and the ideal wage he is anxious to pay to each one of them. If he fulfils this

condition, having got hold of every spinner and eliminated the uncertified dealer, he will educate the former in the art of getting a better wage for her work. In the end she will know with whom she should deal and she will be a willing pupil. Then the secret sale of khadi meant for the spinners' use will automatically stop.

2. I wholly endorse the proposition that khadi should be decentralized to the extent that each village produces its own cotton and manufactures its own cloth. If there is a surplus, it should be sold where it is wanted, e.g., in the cities or places where cotton is not grown and where it will be cheaper to take khadi from the nearest khadi centre. This deal will only be reached when each branch selects one village and attempts to carry out the experiment which will require the best expert. I settled in Segaon in order to carry out this among other ideals, but I must confess that I seem to be as far from it as when I came here three years ago. They need not expect miracles to take place immediately they go to villages; and they should take heart from the fact that if I could show little or nothing after three years of stay in a village, they need not despair nor be ashamed if after *due* effort they cannot *show* results.

3. It will induce lethargy among workers if they expect Congress Governments to work wonders.

Unscrupulous men will run a coach and four through any legislation. Congress Governments have their limitations. At the same time some help is possible through legislation. I have already pointed out the direction in which legislation can help. Dealing in khadi by uncertified vendors should be penalized. Khadi can have protection through subsidy as was done in the case of the Tatas, and the subsidy can be raised by taxing the sales of mill manufactures. The fines collected from uncertified dealers may also, subject to deduction for expenses, be paid to the A.I.SA.

4. The question of sales is undoubtedly a problem. I have discussed this question in a previous article[1]. But there is no doubt that Congressmen should make all their purchases of cloth from khadi bhandars. By properly handling the whole question, Government—Congress and non-Congress—can help khadi and thus themselves in

[1] *Vide* "Wanted Purchasers", 21-8-1939

the shape of giving employment to the unemployed with the mini-mum of expenditure.

SEGAON, August 28, 1939

Harijan, 2-9-1939

360. NOTES

WILL THEY LEARN ?

Hirdaynath Baijal was a medical student in Agra. Whenever I pass through big stations after a lapse of time there are as a rule wild demonstrations. For causes I have not been able to divine, there were wilder demonstrations during my recent journey to the Frontier Province and wilder still on return from there. Such a demonstration took place at Agra on the 27th ultimo. My ears cannot cope with the noises however affectionate they may be. Plugging with cotton wool does not answer. I have to plug them with my fingers as hard as I can in order to deaden the noise. The demonstrators are themselves so lost in their frenzy that they do not listen to the piteous appeals I and my companions make to them. It is not their fault. They do not know what is being said to them. And they cannot understand why persons in whose honour demonstrations are made should resent them. They make no distinction between night and day. This Agra demonstration took place at night. Among the demonstration was Hirdaynath. He boarded the train in order to reach me and get my autograph. Before he could come near my compartment he slipped and fell. The train moved and ran over him, and he had to lose his legs.

A correspondent suggests that the railway authorities could have or should have managed the crowd, that the train should have been stopped in time, and that first aid was not provided as it should have been. Be that as it may, the fact of the injury to Hirdaynath remains. Kind correspondents kept themselves in touch with me after the accident. Hirdaynath's father too wrote to me. I was thus able to write a word of cheer to the young man and give such consolation as I could to his father and his friends. Unfortunately in spite of the best treatment he breathed his last on the 22nd instant. My heart goes out to the deceased's father and his friends. The reason why I pen these lines is to warn the public against these demonstrations in which no order is kept. If demonstrations there must be, and I suppose there will be, they must

be regulated either by the demonstrators themselves or the police. This is the second accident within the past few months. One took place on my return from Brindaban[1]. There also the injured party was a student. Fortunately he has lived, though without a leg. Hirdaynath seems to have been a student of exceptional qualities and a great favourite with the students. I suggest to the students that the very best way in which they can treasure the memory of their dear comrade is by organizing a discipline brigade whose mission would be to introduce order in demonstrations, meetings and other crowds. With ever-increasing mass awakening we need to know the laws governing the conduct and movement of crowds so as to enable vast masses to gather together without fuss, noise or disturbance.

SEGAON, August 28, 1939

Harijan, 2-9-1939

361. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

WARDHAGANJ,
August 28, 1939

RASHTRAPATI RAJENDRA PRASAD
RAMGARH
(HAZARIBAGH)

MOST INCONVENIENT LEAVE WARDHA BUT WILL GO ANYWHERE FOR YOUR HEALTH. WARDHA PERHAPS BEST FOR YOU BUT LET DOCTORS DECIDE.

BAPU

From the original: Rajendra Prasad Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India.

[1] Where Gandhiji attended the Gandhi Seva Sangh conference in May 1939.

362. CABLE TO Y. M. DADOO [1]

August 28, 1939

MAKING EFFORT. HAVE INFORMATION SAYING UNION GOVERNMENT WILL CONCILIATE INDIAN OPINION. NOTHING RELIABLE. WILL SOON GIVE DEFINITE NEWS.

GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 11351. Courtesy: E. S. Reddy; also *South Africa's Freedom Struggle*, p. 307

363. LETTER TO JUGLAL CHOWDHARY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 28, 1939

MY DEAR JUGLAL,

I have a copy of your letter to Kripalani. Three years is the limit. If Ministers can bring about prohibition in a year, they are expected to do so. Conversely, if in spite of great effort they cannot finish the programme within the prescribed period, they will not be blamed. Three years should be counted from the date of the Congress resolution. But of course the President's ruling should be your guide.

Yours sincerely,

HON. JUGLAL CHOWDHARY
MINISTER
PATNA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In reply to the addressee's cable received on August 27 which read: "Reliable information that Union Government rejected Indian Government offer for Round Table Conference. Union Government intimated that advance copy contemplated legislation shall be forwarded to Indian Government. Appeal negotiations proceeding on future legislation. Concerned no mention Act 1939 on which we pledged struggle. Pray inform progress".

364. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 28, 1939

CHI. PYARELAL,

I do not interpret it the way you do. Here, what Devdas said had nothing to do with Sushila. He only referred to the fact that you were causing worry to everyone. If you have any doubt about it, you must ask Devdas. However wrong his ideas may be, his letter is frank. Even I agree with his comment about the fast. Ba said that even Prakash was crying today over your fast. It irks me that you seem to derive some pleasure in making people cry like that. You have not even replied to my letter. To whom should I reveal my pain? Should I cry like Sushila and Prakash? What would I gain by crying? Who can measure the pain you are causing through this fast? I long for a solution to this affair. I am daily praying to God for it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

365. LETTER TO PYARELAL

[After *August 28, 1939*][1]

CHI. PYARELAL,

What you have written about Sushila is not correct. If it is not her duty to remain in Delhi on account of Mother, she has to pass her test here. In that alone lies her good. Devdas says that there is no need to think about him. Ba is pining for her. That is sufficient for Sushila. She is asking me every now and then when Sushila will be coming. My saying that you find pleasure in making a person cry is to be understood in terms of popular expression. When we make someone cry through our action, it is said, and rightly, that we find pleasure in making them cry. Should it not be said that at Abbottabad I derived pleasure from making Sushila cry?[2] No matter how much I myself may have cried at heart.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the contents; *vide* preceding item

[2] Gandhiji was in Abbottabad from July 7 to 26, 1939.

366. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

August 29, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I thank you for your letter[1] of 26th instant. I reciprocate your wish that the world will be spared the calamity of war. But if it comes and you think my presence necessary in Simla, of course I shall come.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India.

367. LETTER TO A. GUPTA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 29, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I am entirely at one with you that imputation of motives is a frailty common to all. If you will re-read my statement[2] you will find that it is of a general character. I have just read in today's paper that there was a black-flag demonstration against Subhas Babu at Patna. I was sorry to learn of it.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI A. GUPTA
BENGALI ASSOCIATION
DINAPORE, BIHAR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers, Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Which, *inter alia,* said: ". . . though I have no justification for thinking war inevitable, you will agree with me that international situation is very ominous and should war by any chance break out it has been in my mind to invite you to come to see me at once. . . . should wiser counsels not prevail and should we find ourselves in war, I hope that you will not misunderstand it if I send you a telegram . . . to come to see me."

[2] Which, *inter alia,* said: ". . . though I have no justification for thinking war inevitable, you will agree with me that international situation is very ominous and should war by any chance break out it has been in my mind to invite you to come to see me at once. . . . should wiser counsels not prevail and should we find ourselves in war, I hope that you will not misunderstand it if I send you a telegram . . . to come to see me."

368. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 29, 1939

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter only today. The *rakhadi* was tied by Amtul Salaam and now I am writing this letter.

First your question. Why don't you hand over the sum of Rs. 125 to Deo[1]? There should be no objection to accepting anything which somebody might give for the book[2]. You may hand over to Deo whatever you receive or a part of it.

I fully agree with Deo's argument, that his expenses should be met by Maharashtra itself. If Maharastra does not bear them, it means the province does not want his services.

Patwardhan[3] may come and stay with me whenever he wants. It is always crowded here, of course.

Come over for a visit whenever you can. There is no question of overcrowding in your case. Rest assured that if you come over here you will get well. Yes, there is one risk, or course, that meanwhile I may have to go out. But what even if I have to? You will immediately know if that happens.

Kelkar[4] and I alone know what efforts I have made to win him over. It was I who got him appointed on the Working Committee, the sole reason being that he was regarded as Lokamanya's heir. I thought it my duty to accommodate him as much as I could and do my best to win him over. I still think so. Despite my differences with Lokamanya, I regard myself as his devotee. I had the highest regard for his learning, patriotism and courage.

There is no truth at all in Swami Satyadev's statement. I could never say such a thing. If I did, my truth and ahimsa would stand disgraced. I do believe, of course, that he would resort to untruth and violence for the sake of the country. He himself told me so. We had some correspondence too about the matter. He had advocated *shatham prati shaathvam*[5], against which I had asserted *shatham prat-yapi satyam*[6]. Didn't you know this?

[1] Shankarrao Deo
[2] *Kama ane Kamini,* a novel written by the addressee
[3] P. H. Patwardhan
[4] N. C. Kelkar
[5] 'Roguery against a rogue' and 'Truth even against a rogue'; *vide* also "Speech on Satyagraha Movement", Trichinopoly", 25-3-1939.
[6] *Ibid*

I think I have answered all your questions.

I was eagerly waiting for your letter. I have no comments to make on your activities which you have described. I don't believe that you should consult me in everything you do. What even if you make a mistake? I am confident that you bear in mind, and will always bear in mind, the Ashram vows in all that you do.

Yes, Rajen Babu did ask about you.[1] I told him that you were certainly capable of shouldering the responsibility and that if you agreed to do so I would not oppose. It would, I said take a heavy load off his shoulders, but I added that I would not press you and suggested that he should address the request for you to Deo, as you are working under him. Are you satisfied now?

The letter from Sushila is enclosed. I will use the dhoti[2] when I get it, no matter of what quality it is.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10401. Also C.W. 6840. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

369. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 29, 1939

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. I am asking Kanu to send you Rs. 50. I had a talk with Rajen Babu. He said that he did not insist as you were ill. The choice has fallen on Prema from among all the names considered. It has been decided that you will help Prema as much as you can. There was a letter from Prema today saying that she would go there in October[3]. Kanti is studying in Mysore. He does not write to me. Nor does Saraswati[3]. She is expecting. It is nearly five months now and she must have gone to her father's place. He is studying in the Medical College at

[1] It was about sending the addressee to Ramgarh, Bihar, to organize the women volunteers; *vide* also the following item.

[2] The addressee had resolved to send two hand-spun dhotis to Gandhiji every year specially on his birthday. She sent them in 1939 for the first time and kept her resolve till the end.

[3] *Vide* also the preceding item.

Mysore. In my view he has fallen to a great extent. May God bless him. Sushila is in Delhi. The present arrangement is that she will stay there up to the 15th of September. Her address is: Lady Hardinge Medical College, New Delhi. Amtul Salaam and Rajkumari are here. Krishnadas[1] and Manojna[2] have come here to stay for some time. Krishnadas is ill. I am fairly well. Ba also is all right. The Ashram is full. Amtul Salaam has brought a Muslim girl also.

Take proper care of your health. Send me a specimen lesson. Carry on study for the present. See that your brain is not overburdened.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3531

370. LETTER TO VIJAYABHEN M. PANCHOLI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 29, 1939

CHI. VIJAYA,

It is not right on your part not to write to me regularly. What did you decide to do finally? Don't you wish to call in Vallabhram? I have written to him that, if he has the courage, he may go to Varad even uninvited and examine you. I am not particularly enthusiastic about your going to Patna, but if Father or you are, it would be your duty to go. I hope you are not worried [about Father].[3]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7115. Also C.W. 4607. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

[1] Younger son of Chhaganlal Gandhi, and his wife
[2] *Ibid*
[3] *Vide* also "Letter to Vijayabehn M. Pancholi', 11-9-1939.

371. MESSAGE TO THE POLES

[Before *August 30, 1939*][1]

TO ALL THOSE IN POLAND WHO BELIEVE THAT ONLY TRUTH AND LOVE CAN BE FOUNDATIONS OF BETTER DAYS FOR HUMANIT AND WHO ARE DOING THEIR BEST TO SERVE THOSE IDEALS WITH THEIR LIFE I SEND MY GOOD WISHES AND BLESSINGS.

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 31-8-1939

372. LETTER TO A. VAIDYANATHA IYER

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 30, 1939

DEAR VAIDYANATHA IYER,

Under separate cover I send you the papers received from Shri Prasada Rao. I would like you to give me your reply to his allegations. He seems to be a seasoned co-worker. Why is it difficult to win him over if his allegations are untrue? If they are true, there is something wrong about the whole affair. Have the Brahmins and the orthodox non-Brahmins boycotted the temple[2]?

Yours,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

373. LETTER TO V. M. PRASADA RAO

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 30, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

I have carefully read all the voluminous papers you have sent me. You won't expect me to express an opinion without knowing what those have to say against whom you have brought serious charges. I am

[1] The message was reported by the London correspondent on August 30, as "appearing in tonight's issue of *Wiodomosci Literackie*, a Polish newspaper from Warsaw". *Vide* also "Cable to Paderewski", 8-9-1939.

[2] The reference is to the Meenakshi Temple, Madura, which was thrown open to Harijans on July 8.

therefore sending the papers in the first instance to Shri Vaidyanatha Iyer.[1] But I observe that you have been a co-worker with all those against whom you feel aggrieved. I suggest, therefore, that it is your duty to see their viewpoint and discover a basis for common service. You can still adopt this course.

As for the Rao Bahadur, I asked the very parties to whom he had referred me and they point-blank repudiated his statements.

I took him at his word and naturally believed his referees.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI. V. M. PRASADA RAO
WEST AVANI MOOLA STREET
MADURA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

374. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

MAGANWADI,
WARDHA (C.P.),
August 30, 1939

MY DEAR LOTUS-BORN,

You are a brick! I shall make wise use of your labours. You will, I know, continue to do the needful in the difficult times there. Keep well. And how about the old lady?

Love

PLAYMATE

SHRI PADMAJA NAIDU
ZAHEER MUNZIL, RED HILLS
HYDERABAD, DECCAN

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

375. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

SEGAON,
August 30, 1939

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I received your gift. It is not good that you are not getting well. Write to me what Dr. Erulkar says. Bhabhi's fever should abate now. Is that doctor still there?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI ANASUYABEHN
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD
BOMBAY

[PS.]

If Shankerlal is there, tell him that I have sent a message for Tirpur paper.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 3282

376. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 30, 1939

CHI. VALJI,

If you feel heavy after a meal, certainly reduce the amount. The doctor will not object. The patient should eat only as much as he can digest. Sometimes you may take only milk and fruit and see how you feel. I see some point in what Chitre says. Don't be careless about your health. The easiest remedy for stone is to get it removed. I feel there is nothing wrong if the sanatorium bears Chitre's expenses as regards food. If the sanatorium does not and if you can easily bear them, you may do so, but not at the cost of any hardship to yourself. I am not writing separately to Chitre.

Blessings from

BAPU

PROF. V. DESAI
SANATORIUM
P. O. VANI VILAS MOHALLA
MYSORE

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7486. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

377. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON ASHRAM,
August 30, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

I read your long letter last night. The scene at Abbottabad rose before my eyes when I had scolded you and you had cried. I cannot forget your face as it looked then. Now when I think of my heart-lessness my heart cries. Your answer to D. was correct.

You are faced with three questions: coming to me, fear as to what would happen if you came and your duty towards Mother. Your fear is meaningless. If you can learn to be tolerant, what do you have to fear and why? Can you not be content with serving me, and looking after the sick and working in the mess?' The problem concerning Mother is very important. It is your duty as well as mine to thin about it independently. But I do not have anything on which to base a decision. Pyarelal can be of little help in the matter. You alone should think calmly over it. You must also assess your own strength. My feeling is that Mother will have to come here and be with you. Not now. Let your dispensary be ready; let me have a room built for you. Then, too, there will be the question whether Mother can leave Mohanlal. You have to carry a great burden. You can decide the matter even after coming here on the 16th. Do not be afraid. God will be your guide. You do not have to get away before the 15th. Com-plete what you have undertaken.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Why are you not writing to Ba? She is yearning for you.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

378. NOTES

RURAL *v.* URBAN

An educationist writes :

If you do not take care, you will find that basic education in urban areas will take a different form from the rural areas. For instance English will be introduced to the injury of the mother tongue and a kind of superiority complex developed.

I must confess that my scheme was conceived in terms of the villages, and when I was developing it I did say that some variation will be necessary in applying the scheme to the cities. This had reference to the industries to be used as media of instruction. I never thought that English could ever find place in the primary stage. And the scheme has so far concerned itself only with the primary stage. No doubt the primary stage is made equivalent to the matriculation, less English. To inflict English on children is to stunt their natural growth and perhaps to kill originality in them. Learning of a language is primarily a training in developing memory. Learning of English from the beginning is an unnecessary tax on a child. He can only learn it at the expense of the mother tongue. I hold it to be as necessary for the urban child as for the rural to have the foundation of his development laid on the solid rock of the mother tongue. It is only in unfortunate India that such an obvious proposition needs to be proved.

SEGAON, August 31, 1939

Harijan, 9-9-1939

379. LIMBDI

Though I have had protracted correspondence with the Limbdi people, I have refrained for a long time from saying anything about their woes. My silence was due to the hope that those who were trying to bring about peace between the Ruler and the people would succeed. But it was a vain hope. Much has happened since the beginning stages of that struggle. Perhaps nowhere has the policy of ruthlessness been pursued with so much precision and persistence as in Limbdi. If the reports received by me are to be believed, and I have no reason to disbelieve them, the peasants have been hunted out of their homes. The heaviest blow has been aimed at the hated Bania who was at one time the State's friend, favourite and main supporter. But he was to be crushed because he dared to think and talk of responsible govern-ment, dared to go amongst the peasantry and tell them what was due to them and how they could get it. The shops and houses of these merchants who have performed *hijrat*[1] are practically looted. I cannot use any other term. There has not even been, so far as I know, any legal formality observed. The will of the administrator of the policy of ruthlessness is the supreme law.The idea is to terrorize the people into

[1] That is, those who have migrated

subjection. No wonder some have weakened. I would advise those who are in charge of the movement not to try to keep them from surrendering. Of course they should be told what is in store for them. But there are people who prize possessions before honour. They can only be a burden on a freedom movement. Free-dom is always won by a few brave self-sacrificing souls who will stake everything for the sake of honour. Those who understand the value and the necessity of sacri-fice, whether they are few or many, should feel glad that their posse-ssions in Limbdi have been taken away. They should not live in sus-pense nor entertain any hope of immediate settlement. They should engage in healthy pursuits outside the State, always in the firm faith that a day must come when the people of Limbdi will come into their own. When that day comes, as it must, it will have come because of the sacrifice and the bravery of those who will have refused to bend before repression, however severe. Let them remember Thoreau's immortal words that possession is a vice and poverty a virtue in a tyrannical State.

So much on reliable evidence before me. But should Limbdi be a tyrannical State? If there is exaggeration in the statements made to me, let the State authorities send me a contradiction. I would gladly publish it. Better still will be an impartial judicial inquiry into the allegations made, if they are disputed. I wish to make a public appeal to the Thakore Saheb of Limbdi. I have the privilege of knowing him. I have enjoyed his hospitality. He has the reputation of being a pious, Godfearing man. It is not right that there should be this estrangement between him and his people, some of whom are well-known people with a reputation to lose and a stake in Limbdi. It would be wrong to regard them all as a discontented lot. They have no axes to grind. They have not earthly gain to make by ranging themselves against the State. They have incurred much material loss by becoming exiles from their own home. A wise ruler will think fifty times before facing the discontent of such people. He will conclude from it that there must be misrule and injustice on the part of his officials. He will summon the discontented people, listen to their complaints and pacify them. The Thakore Saheb has not adopted that course. It is not too late for him to do so even now.

SEGAON, August 31, 1939

Harijan, 9-9-1939

380. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

August 31, 1939

GHANSHYAMDAS
LUCKY
CALCUTTA

MY FIRM ADVICE IS COMMERICAL COMMUNITY[1] SHOULD REMAIN SILENT TILL ACTUAL RESULT IS KNOWN.

From a copy: C.W. 7833. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

381. TELEGRAM TO MULKRAJ[2]

August 31, 1939

IF TRUSTEE'S PERMISSION NECESSARY FOR TRANSFER, CIRCULATE MEMORANDUM CONTAINING JAMNALALJI'S AND MY OPINION NAGPUR BANK.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In his letter dated August 26 to Mahadev Desai, G.D. Birla said: "I am enclosing herewith a manifesto which may be issued under the signature of various businessmen, in case war breaks out. I should like to know immediately, if necessary by wire, if Bapu has got any comments to make on the same. The contents of the manifesto express our own independent views, and our own feeling is that it is not incompatible with the attitude taken up by the Congress. However, we would not like to do anything in case Bapu thinks otherwise. . ." G. D. Birla made the same request in a telegram dated August 30 to Mahadev Desai.

[2] This is extracted from a letter of even date from Amrit Kaur to the addressee which read: "I am desired by Gandhiji to acknowledge your letter of the 27th instant. He wishes to tell you that all the points raised by you were duly considered." *Vide* also "Draft Telegram to Mulkraj", 18-8-1939 and "Letter to Mulkraj", 26-8-1939.

382. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

SEGAON ASHRAM, WARDHA,
August 31, 1939

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

It is a great thing that Sir Radhakrishnan has become Vice-Chancellor[1]. I hope you all will insist on Malaviyaji taking rest.[2]

Love to you both.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3185

383. LETTER TO PATTOM THANU PILLAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 31, 1939

MY DEAR THANU PILLAI,

I wish you had given me more time but I suppose you could not.

I do not like the Dewan's reply. I think that you should make your own position clear. You should see that the State Congress does not propose to do anything in secret. Whilst, therefore, its decisions will be its own and it will not bring any outsider inside the State, it will, whenever necessary, seek the advice and guidance of persons outside Travancore. You would also make it clear that whilst any scheme that might be hammered into shape by mutual consultation will be loyally worked by the Congress, the end in view in working the scheme will always be to make an advance, even through the scheme, towards responsible government.

If these two positions are in any way left in doubt negotiations should be dropped and you should do such work, constructive and other, as is possible to do.

In all your talks and writings offensive and highflown language should be scrupulously eschewed. And in season and out of season

[1] Of the Banaras Hindu University

[2] Madan Mohan Malaviya resigned from the Vice-Chancellorship on August 29, on health grounds.

you should reiterate the two conditions above made. They should be held good for all time.

You should cease to think of the prisoners. The fact of their being in jail is their unique contribution, provided that they appreciate the fact that being in jail as model prisoners is part of their struggle.

I hope the forthcoming meeting will be successful and that those who gather together at Kayankulam will more and more appreciate the efficacy of self-imposed restraint and quiet, silent, persistent constructive work, however small it may appear to be.[1]

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10201. Courtesy: Government of Kerala. Also Pattom Thanu Pillai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

384. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

SEGAON ASHRAM, WARDHA,
August 31, 1939

CHI. MANUDI,

Your time for delivery is nearing. Where do you intend to go? What about Rajkot? Write to me and give me all details. Do you keep good health? What do you eat?

Ba is sitting by my side. She sends her blessing to you all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2671. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

[1] This paragraph was published in *The Hindu,* 7-9-1939.

385. LETTER TO PURSHOTTAMDAS A. PATADIA

SEGAON ASHRAM, WARDHA,
August 31, 1939

BHAI PURSHOTTAMDAS,

I got your letter. You must have received the wire I sent you. Sardar also has made some arrangement. You must have got the required fodder. I don't think you need any more.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

DR. PURSHOTTAMDAS AMERSHI PATADIA
WADHWAN CAMP
KATHIAWAR

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2687. Courtesy: Dr. P. A. Patadia

386. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SEGAON ASHRAM, WARDHA,
August 31, 1939

BAPA,

Before you write to me about your doings, I mostly get to know about them. Whatever may be the case with others, we have benefited by the Congress Raj. Harijan work has progressed fairly well. If they mean to, they can do a lot more. Shantilal has sent me Barve's letter. Instead of writing in *Harijan*, I am directly dealing with Kher[1] in order that the work may be done more expeditiously. Barve will meet me on the 7th. Won't you take some rest?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1184

[1] B. G. Kher, Premier of Bombay

387. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 1, 1939

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I got your wire. It was a deliverance for Kasumba. Even if she had lived on, she would have remained ill all the time. Thanks to the doctor's hard efforts, she lived a little longer. She took from you what you owed her and went her way. None of the girls should weep.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

388. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SEGAON ASHRAM
WARDHA,
September 1, 1939

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Give my condolences to the relatives of the late Lakshmidas Tairsi. I only have sweet memories of his company. I had once written to him. I had also received a reply.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHETH MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
74 WALKESHWAR ROAD
BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Payarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

389. THAT UNBECOMING DEMONSTRATION

The first I heard of the black-flag demonstration against Subhas Babu on his visit to Patna was through a courteous letter received from the Secretary of the Bengali Association of Bankipore.[1] I then saw a

[1] *Vide* "Letter to A. Gupta", 29-8-1939.

notice of it in the Press. To make myself sure of what had happened I wired to Shri P. R. Das for an authentic and up-to-date account. He replied from Dhanbad saying he was away from the scene and knew nothing. The newspapers reported that there was stone-throwing and hurling of shoes resulting in injuries to Swami Sahajanand and others.

Allowing for exaggeration, if any, there seems to be little doubt that there was a hostile demonstration of an unseemly nature which brought no credit to the Congress.

I have read Rajendra Babu's eloquent statement on the unhappy incident. It is so true and so heart-stirring that it admits of no addition or embellishment. I endorse every word of that noble pronouncement. It is reproduced below this article.[1]

The demonstrators showed an unworthy intolerance. Subhas Babu has a perfect right to agitate against the action[2] of the Working

Committee and canvass public opinion against it. The disciplinary action frees him from any liability for restraint save what every Congressman, pledged to the credal article of the Constitution, is bound to put on himself. That action should save him from any further demonstration of public displeasure. And those who disapprove of the action of the Working Committee are certainly entitled to join any demonstration in favour of Subhas Babu. Unless this simple rule is observed we shall never evolve democracy. In my opinion the black-flag demonstrators have rendered a disservice to the cause of freedom. It is to be hoped that the Patna demonstration will prove to be the last of such acts by Congressmen. The question may be asked, 'How are those who endorse the action of the Working Committee and dis-approve of Subhas Babu's propaganda to show their disapproval?' Certainly not through black flags and disturbing of meetings in honour of Subhas Babu. They can express their dis-approval by holding counter meetings, not at the same time as the others but either before or after them. These meetings, both for and against, should be regarded as a means of educating public opinion. Such education re-quires calm surroundings. Black flags, noisy slo-gans, and hurling of stones and shoes have no place in educative and instructive propa-ganda.

[1] The statement is not reproduced here

[2] *Vide* "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 11-8-1939.

Apropos of the ugly demonstration I must refer to a complaint I have received that some Congress Committees have threatened action against those Congressmen who may take part in receptions to Subhas Babu. I hope that the complaint has no foundation in fact. Such action will betray intolerance and may even be a sign of vindictiveness. Congressmen who dislike the Working Committee's action are bound to take part in receptions to Subhas Babu. It is im-possible to gag them by threats of disciplinary measures. Such action loses its value if it is resorted to on the slightest pretext. If it is true, as it is true, that no organization can do without such powers, it is equally true that no organization that makes free use of such powers has any right to exist. It cannot. It has then obviously lost the public backing.

SEGAON, SEPTEMBER 2, 1939

Harijan, 9-9-1939

390. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

WARDHAGANJ,
September 2, 1939

RAJENDRA PRASAD
RAMGARH
(HAZARIBAGH)

YOUR WIRE. LEAVING FOR SIMLA TONIGHT VICEROY'S INVITATION. PERHAPS BETTER HOLD MEETING[1] AFTER HEARING FROM ME FROM SIMLA. VENUE ACCORDING YOUR HEALTH.

BAPU

From the original: Rajendra Prasad Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] The reference is to an emergency meeting of the Congress Working Committee. It was ultimately held at Wardha from September 8 to 15.

391. TELEGRAM TO LORD LINLITHGOW

WARDHAGANJ,
September 2, 1939

SORRY TERRIBLE NEWS.[2] TAKING EARLIEST TRAIN. ARRIVING SIMLA FOURTH MORNING.

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

392. NOTES

TEXT BOOKS

The craze for ever-changing text books is hardly a healthy sign from the educational standpoint. If text books are treated as a vehicle for education, the living word of the teacher has very little value. A teacher who teaches from text books does not impart originality to his pupils. He himself becomes a slave of text books and has no opportunity or occasion to be original. It, therefore, seems that, the less text books there are the better it is for the teacher and his pupils. Text books seem to have become an article of commerce. Authors and publishers who make writing and publishing a means of making money are interested in frequent change of text books. In many cases teachers and examiners are themselves authors of text books. It is naturally to their interest to have their books sold. The selection board is again naturally composed of such people. And so the vicious circle becomes complete. And it becomes very difficult for parents to find money for new books every year. It is a pathetic sight to see boys and girls going to school loaded with books which they are ill able to carry. The whole system requires to be thoroughly examined. The commercial spirit needs to be entirely eliminated and the question approached solely in the interest of the scholars. It will then probably be found that 75 percent of the text books will have to be consigned to the scrap-heap. If I had my way, I would have books largely as aids to teachers rather than for the scholars. Such text books as are found to be absolutely necessary for the scholars should circulate among them for a number of years so that the cost can be easily

[2] Germany invaded Poland on September 1 and war was consequently declared by England and France on September 3.

borne by middle-class families. The first step in this direction is perhaps for the State to own and organize the printing and publishing of text books. This will act as an automatic check on their unnecessary multiplication.

DIVIDED LOYALTY?

Shri Appa Patwardhan writes :

> The Bombay Government spend a large sum in helping weavers. They have appointed a marketing officer and salesmen. They give loans. Yet the weavers cannot compete with mills and in my opinion the expenses incurred do not bear fruit. Moreover the weavers use foreign yarn as well. Side by side with this fruitless help the Government render some help to khadi also. I do not know how far this divided loyalty is justified.

I have always held the opinion that help to the weavers who use foreign or Indian mill-yarn is a waste of money and effort. Experience has not changed the view. Nor does it change because in certain provinces the Congress rules. I hold this view because the disappearance of the weaver of mill-yarn is a question of time only. In the nature of things it cannot be otherwise. The weavers' only hope lies in a universal revival of hand-spinning. Hand-spinning and hand-weaving are interde-pendent, never hand-weaving and mill-spinning. I have, therefore, suggested that if hand-spinning cannot immediately supply the weavers' requirements, they should be induced to introduce hand-spinning, carding, etc., in their own families if they will not become spinners themselves. Now that in several provinces the Congress rules, the saving of the weaver becomes casier. Thus the Government can encourage spinning on a wide scale, guarantee the loss in khadi sales as the State guarantees the foreign railway companies. It is the primary duty of the State to guarantee employment of his choice to everyone in need of it. This includes the weavers also. If during the transition stage it is found impossible to guarantee weaving for every weaver, the State has to find him some other employment, profitable alike to the State and the individual. It should be borne in mind that the possibilities of hand-spinning have not yet been explored by any Government. I am of opinion that such investigation will yield startlingly encouraging results. My argument undoubtedly assumes the elimination of all mills from conside-ration. No industry, indigenous or foreign, can be allowed to increase un- employment and thus harm the true interest of the community as a whole.

Though the most terrible distress that was feared has been averted by the falling of rains, however belated, some distress is bound to continue for a few months, and it will be unwise for relief agencies to go to sleep. What is more, time is now more propitious for devising measures for making permanent provisions for preventing distress caused by scarcity of water. I have already made some cardinal suggestions in this direction. The Secretary of the Saurashtra Seva Samiti sends me a business-like report of the elaborate steps taken by that body for enlisting helpers and providing relief. I need not detain the reader over them. He also suggests preventive methods. As these are still seasonable I give below the substance, the original being in Gujarati:

1. The States should refrain from auctioning their stock of grass but they should store it as a precaution against dry year. The store should be replaced when fresh store becomes available. There is nowadays danger of the stacks being destroyed by incendiaries. The States should have no difficulty in protecting them. They may even allow private collectors to deposit their stores in such areas.

2. The existing banks should be renovated and flood water should be banked.

3. In the places where cattle are moved during famine times, measures should be taken to ensure proper water supply for the cattle.

4. There should be control over the cultivation of money crops to the detriment of food crops. Thus people nowadays sow ground-nuts in the place of most valuable fodder and food crops, i.e., *jawari* and *bajri*.

5. Existing forests should be preserved, indiscriminate cutting of trees should be made punishable, and people should be encouraged to plant trees according to plan.

6. The management of pinjrapoles should be put on a sound basis and they should become efficient famine insurance agencies for cattle. They should become castration depots.

7. The State should encourage khadi as a famine insurance measure.

All these suggestions seem to be sound and deserve the collective consideration of the States and the people of Kathiawar. In this

humantarian project all can and should combine in spite of political differences and struggles.

SACRIFICIAL SPINNING IN ANDHRA

Shri Shankerlal Banker sends me a letter he has received from the Andhra Branch of the A.I.S.A. I take the following from it :

> On seeing Mahatmaji's note in *Harijan* dated July 22, 1939,[1] we concieved the idea of performing sacrificial spinning (*sutra yajna*) on the lines followed by Sjt. Narandas Gandhi of Rajkot Rashtriyashala. Accordingly we sent an appeal on July 29, 1939, to the local *Krishna Patrika*[2] and the *Andhra Patrika*[3] for publication, calling for applications from khadi lovers who would participate in the *sutra yajna* performed under the auspices of the Andhra Branch in connection with the ensuing Gandhi Jayanti. All participants are requested to offer 14,000 (70 × 200) yards of self-spun yarn or 70 coppers (Rs. 1-1-6) in terms of his present age. We find a ready response to our call. Till now we have received 500 applications. Many applicants offer 14,000 yards of yarn or Rs. 1-1-6 in cash. But some poor spinners offer only 7,000 yards of yarn and we accept their offer in consideration of their poverty, though they fall short of the minimum fixed in our appeal. Now we are going to issue a special appeal to the spinners in the Andhra Desh to contribute 7,000 yards (nearly one warp) as a birthday gift to Mahatmaji on his 71st birthday. In our appeal all A.I.S.A. workers were requested to give yarn contributions only. In our central stores and central office sacrificial spinning has been going on for the last 15 days since August 2, 1939. Some have been spinning on the *takli* and some others on the improved charkha. The workers are asked to improve and note the quality and quantity of their yarn. We have requested the Andhra Povincial Congress Committee to help us in enlisting volunteers for *sutra yajna* and see that all members of Congress committees participate in it. In compliance with our request they issued a circular to all Congress members to enrol themselves as volunters for *sutra yajna* and help the khadi movement to the best of their ability. We hope to enlist at least 1,000 volunteers before Gandhi Jayanti.

I have letters from other quarters also showing that Shri Narandas Gandhi's example has caught on. I hope that the organizers are carrying out strictest economy in organizing sacrificial spinning. They may not, for instance, move the yarn spun from place to place resulting in the cost of postage being incurred. Yarn should be collected by appointed agents so that there can be hand to hand

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 12-7-1939.

[2] Telugu weekly published from Masulipatam

[3] Telugu daily founded by K. Nageswara Rao and published from Madras

delivery. If an authentic account is kept and published, it should be accepted as completion of the *yajna*. Those who intend to account to Narandas Gandhi for their spinning need only send him certificates of their spinning. I suggest too that as far as possible yarn should be locally woven. It is against the spirit of the khadi movement to concentrate weaving in fixed places. As spinning has to be universal in every home, weaving should be universal in every village.

ON THE TRAIN TO SIMLA, September 3, 1939

Harijan, 9-9-1939

393. CASE FOR INQUIRY

I published some time ago facts relating to Nallathur Harijans.[1] Shri K. Tatachar sent me some time ago the notes from his diary of the no less serious ill-treatment of the Harijans of Tenpatnam Cheri. I publish them[2] below in full.

This seems to be a case of gross failure of justice and the matter, though comparatively old, requires investigation. There has been no remissness on the part of the people or their friends to secure redress. But if Shri Tatachar's recital is accurate, justice was denied to the Harijans because they were Harijans. The police belonging to the lowest grade should be taught that they have to serve Harijans equally with the others. Harijans ought to be able to feel that during the Congress regime at least they can get justice.

ON THE TRAIN TO SIMLA, September 3, 1939

Harijan, 9-9-1939

394. NOTES

THE RICH ARE TRUSTEES

A friend writes :

> You will be glad to know that your view about the trusteeship of the rich was anticipated 1,300 years ago. The following verse occurs in the sacred *Hadis* :
>
> Whatever is possessed by people is my property, the poor are my family, the wealthy are the trustees of the riches they possess. Therefore the wealthy

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 14-7-1939.

[2] Not reproduced here

persons who will not spend on behalf of my poor children, will go to *Hadis.* And I will not worry about them.

My correspondent's letter which is in Gujarati gives in Gujarati script the whole verse with its translation in Gujarati contained in a newspaper whose name he has not given. Here is the original text in Devanagari :

अल मालु माली वल फकराओ अयाली वल अग्नियाओ वक्लाई
फमन बखलाब माली अला अयाली उदखलुहुन्नार वला उबाली

The curious reader will observe that twenty-five per cent of the words are easily understood by a Gujarati reader. In other words, they have become current in the language.

September 3, 1939

Harijian, 23-9-1939

395. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

DELHI,
September 3, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

Just a line to send love to you all.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABEHN
SEGAON, WARDHA

From the original: C.W. 6448. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10043

396. REPLY TO MEMBERS OF OXFORD GROUP [1]

[After *September 3, 1939*][2]

It is no use dragging the Metropolitan to Wardha, but youths may come; for, for them I have no mercy.

Harijan, 7-10-1939

[1] This is extracted from "A Word to the Oxford Groupers" by Mahadev Desai, who explains: "As soon as the war broke out, a wire was received by Gandhiji asking for an interview with him by several members headed by the very Rev. the Metropolitan Bishop of Calcutta." *Vide* also "Discussion with Members of Oxford Group", "Discussion with Members of Oxford Group", 23/24-9-1939.

[2] *Ibid*

397. TELEGRAM TO C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR

September 5, 1939

SIR RAMASWAMI
TRIVANDRUM

RECEIVED STARTLING TELEGRAM SAYING YOU HAVE PROHIBITED ALL MEETINGS PROCESSIONS AS PRECAUTIONARY WAR MEASURE.[1] I UNDERSTAND PROJECTED STATES PEOPLES' CONFERENCE BEING HELD WITH KNOWLEDGE AND YOUR PERMISSION. DO HOPE CONFERENCE WILL BE EXCEPTED FROM BAN.[2]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *The Hindu*, 7-9-1939

[1] *The Hindu* reported: "It is officially stated, on September 4, the Travancore Government have called upon the organizers of the Karunagappalli Conference and other similar bodies to postpone, if not stop, all assemblages at the present juncture in view of the preparations that are reported to have been made for processions and demonstrations."

[2] According to *The Hindu* a "gist of the reply to Gandhiji" read: "Sorry, you are misinformed again. Meetings, processions not prohibited. No ban imposed. Suggestion made to leaders of the State Congress not to have processions, demonstrations and controversial resolutions especially as there is a strong local party antagonistic to the local organizers of the Conference. In the above circumstances and the possibility of controversial resolutions and possible disturbances, suggestion was made for postponing the Conference for the time being. Surprised that, in such a matter, you should be appealed to on inaccurate information and misleading data. Have issued a communique deprecating any occasion for giving room to public excitement in view of the present international situation." *Vide* also "Telegram to Pattom Thanu Pillai", 8-9-1939.

398. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ[1]

[*September 5, 1939*][2]

IF EASILY POSSIBLE YOU SHOULD ATTEND MEETING WARDHA EIGHTH.[3]

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 222

399. LETTER TO DR. JIVRAJ N. MEHTA

SIMLA,
September 5, 1939

BHAI JIVRAJ,

You are keeping good watch over my health from all that distance. Ramjibhai[4] showed me your telegram. I was aware that I should not climb any heights and had therefore intended to swallow the bitter draught of riding in a rickshaw. Your wire put the seal on it.

BAPU

[PS.]

I am returning to Segaon today.

DR. JIVRAJ MEHTA
KHAMBHATTA HALL
ALTAMOUNT ROAD
BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Jivraj Mehta Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] In the source, quoting this in his "confidential" Hindi letter dated "Jaipur, September 5, 1939", the addressee says: "Today I tried to contact Simla through trunk call but was unable to get Rajkumaribehn's number. . . .So I have sent an express telegram: 'Arrange Mahadevbhai or Rajkumari phone tonight Jaipur 67 personal. Urge Viceroy if possible for Indian Minister for Jaipur. Inform programme phone number.'. . .I met Shri Maharaja Saheb twice. I will be seeing him again at 12.30 p. m. tomorrow. I hope the ban on the Praja Mandal will be lifted. It is likely that the question of releasing the *kisan* prisoners and removal of the ban on newspapers would also be settled tomorrow. If that is so, I will try and come over. Otherwise, there are good chances of settlement of many of the problems because of the mutual faith and love between us. Perhaps, my absence at this stage may cause some disturbance. So I feel that I should stay put. The help that I want from you for Jaipur is that if you are able to convince the Viceroy that an Indian Dewan should be appointed, then most of the problems can be solved by co-operating with him. . . ." *Vide* also "Jaipur Satyagraha", 17-9-1939.

[2] The telegram was received by the addressee on this date at 8.45 p. m.

[3] *Vide* also "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 6-9-1939.

[4] The source, however, has "Ramibhai".

400. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

SIMLA,
September 5, 1939

At Delhi, as I was entraining for Kalka, a big crowd sang in perfect good humour, to the worn-out refrain of "*Mahatma Gandhiki jai*" . "We do not want any understanding". I had then my weekly silence. Therefore I merely smiled. And those who were standing on the footboard returned the smile with their smile, whilst they were admonishing me not to have any understanding with the Viceroy. I had also a letter from a Congress Committee giving me similar warning. Neither of these counsellors knew me. I did not need the warning to know my limitations. Apart from the Delhi demonstration and a Congress Committee's warning, it is my duty to tell the public what happened at the interview[2] with H. E. the Viceroy.

I knew that I had no authority to speak for any person except myself.[3] I knew that I had no instructions whatsoever from the Working Committee in the matter. I had answered a telegraphic invitation and taken the first train I could catch. And what is more, with my irrepressible and out-and-out non-violence, I knew that I could not represent the national mind and I should cut a sorry figure if I tried to do so. I told His Excellency as much. Therefore there could be no question of any understanding or negotiation with me. Nor, I saw, had he sent for me to negotiate. I have returned from the Viceregal Lodge empty-handed and without any understanding, open or secret. If there is to be any understanding,[4] it would be between the Congress and the Government.

Having, therefore, made my position vis-a-vis the Congress quite clear, I told His Excellency that my own sympathies were with England and France from the purely humanitarian standpoint. I told him that I could not contemplate without being stirred to the very depth the destruction of London which had hitherto been regarded as impregnable. And as I was picturing before him the Houses of Parliament and the Westminster Abbey and their possible destruction, I

[1] This appeared under the title "The Simla Visit". An A.P.I. report of the statement was also published in *The Hindu,* 5-9-1939, and *The Hindustan Times,* 6-9-1939, as released by Gandhiji in the "afternoon prior to his departure" from Simla.

[2] On September 4, 1939

[3] This sentence is from *The Hindustan Times.*

[4] With reference to the war, which broke out on September 3

broke down. I have become disconsolate. In the secret of my heart I am in perpetual quarrel with God that He should allow such things to go on. My non-violence seems almost impotent. But the answer comes at the end of the daily quarrel that neither God nor non-violence is impotent. Impotence is in men. I must try on without losing faith even though I may break in the attempt.

And so, as though in anticipation of the agony that was awaiting me, I sent on the 23rd July from Abbottabad the following letter[1] to Herr Hitler.

How I wish that even now he would listen to reason and the appeal from almost the whole of thinking mankind, not excluding the German people themselves. I must refuse to believe that Germans contemplate with equanimity the evacuation of big cities like London for fear of destruction to be wrought by man's inhuman ingenuity. They cannot contemplate with equanimity such destruction of themselves and their own monuments. I am not therefore just now thinking of India's deliverance. It will come, but what will it be worth if England and France fall, or if they come out victorious over Germany ruined and humbled ?

Yet it almost seems as if Herr Hitler knows no God but brute force and, as Mr. Chamberlain says, he will listen to nothing else. It is in the midst of this catastrophe without parallel that Congressmen and all other responsible Indians individually and collectively have to decide what part India is to play in this terrible drama.[2]

Harijan, 9-9-1939

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Adolf Hitler", 23-7-1939.
[2] *Vide* also "Source of My Sympathy", 11-9-1939.

401. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

DELHI,
September 6, 1939

CHI. JAMNALAL,

The Dewan affair is a little difficult. The matter was not mentioned at all in Simla. If you think that your stay there will prove more beneficial, do stay there. Come if you conveniently can.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 3004

402. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON,
September 7, 1939

What you said yesterday was not right. You have to understand your duty. You have to understand what Mother says. You must come only after pacifying her. I hope you are in good health. It pains me that you are unnecessarily making yourself unhappy. May God grant you peace.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

403. TELEGRAM TO PATTOM THANU PILLAI

SEGAON,
September 8, 1939

RECEIVED LONG WIRE.[2] DEWAN SAYING NO PROHIBITORY ORDER ISSUED ONLY ADVICE GIVEN. POSTING TEXT.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also "Telegram to Jamnalal Bajaj", 5-9-1939 and "Jaipur Satyagraha", pp17-9-1939.

[2] *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Telgram to C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar", 5-9-1939.

404. CABLE TO PADEREWSKI[1]

SEGAON,
September 8, 1939

OF COURSE MY WHOLE HEART IS WITH THE POLES IN THE UNEQUAL STRUGGLE IN WHICH THEY ARE ENGAGED FOR THE SAKE OF SAVING THEIR FREEDOM. BUT I AM PAINFULLY CONSCIOUS OF THE FACT THAT MY WORD CARRIES NO POWER WITH IT. I WISH I HAD THE POWER TO STOP THIS MAD DESTRUCTION THAT IS GOING ON IN EUROPE. I BELONG TO A COUNTRY THAT HAS LOST ITS INDEPENDENCE AND IS STRUGGLING TO BE FREE FROM THE YOKE OF THE GREATEST IMPERIALIST POWER ON EARTH. IT HAS ADOPTED THE UNIQUE METHOD OF NON-VIOLENCE TO REGAIN ITS LOST FREEDOM. THOUGH THE METHOD HAS PROVED ITS EFFICACY TO AN EXTENT, THE GOAL SEEMS FAR OFF. ALL THAT I CAN THEREFORE SEND TO THE BRAVE POLES IS MY HEARTFELT PRAYER FOR THE EARLY TERMINATION OF THEIR FEARFUL TRIAL AND FOR THE GRANT OF THE REQUIRED STRENGTH TO BEAR THE SUFFERING WHOSE VERY CONTEMPLATION MAKES ONE SHUDDER. THEIR CAUSE IS JUST AND THEIR VICTORY CERTAIN. FOR GOD IS ALWAYS THE UPHOLDER OF JUSTICE..

Harijan, 16-9-1939

405. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEGAON,
September 8, 1939

CHI. LILA,

I have your letter. You seem to have formed the habit of

[1] This appeared under the title "To the Brave Poles", as Gandhiji's reply to a "cable from Morges (Switzerland) from Paderewski, the aged ex-President of the Polish Republic and celebrated pianist", which read: "On behalf of a nation who is today defending the sacred right to remain free against a cruel and nameless tyranny, I appeal to you as one of the greatest moral authorities of the world to use your noble influence with your countrymen to gain for Poland their sympathy and friendship. Throughout the thousand years of its history, the Polish nation has always stood for the highest ideals of humanity, for faith, for justice, and peace. In this terrible hour when innumerable innocent women and children are massacred daily, a word of sympathy and encourag-ement from you, great teacher of your own nation, would profoundly move the heart of every Pole." *Vide* also "Message to the Poles", 30-8-1939.

whining and complaining. I was relieved after Mahadev had told me the facts about you. You have no difficulty even in Vanita Vishram. Overcrowding, etc., have got to be put up with. You have all the facilities for studying, the teachers take good care of you and you have plenty of scope for working hard. Despite all this, if you still remain unhappy, there is nothing for you and me to do but endure it. Never mind if you could not come. Come during the long vacation. Give the benefit of the short vacation to your brother and sister-in-law and spend the time in studying.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev has been sent to Ranchi. He is expected back tomorrow.

SHRI LILAVATIBEHN ASAR
C/O SHRI ACHARYA [M. T.] VYAS
NEW ERA SCHOOL
HUGHES ROAD, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10092. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

406. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 8, 1939

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

You must have got my letter. You can go to the Delhi dairy in October. Ishwardas has written to me. If you want to try him for ten days or longer, please do so. He is a capable man. I met Sardarji[1] at Simla. Mahadev has gone to Ranchi to see Rajendra Babu. He may come here tomorrow. We are all well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1924

[1] Datar Singh

407. LETTER TO R. R. DIWAKAR

SEGAON ASHRAM,[1]
September 9, 1939

MY DEAR DIWAKAR,

Of course ahimsa can be organized. But the method of organizing ahimsa is wholly different from that of organizing *himsa.* That I have failed badly shows my own unworthiness. My *sadhana*[2] is incomplete. This does not cause despair in me. I must have and do have infinite patience. Faith without patience is an empty thing.

What our conduct in terms of non-violence should be you will see developed in *Harijan.*

Yours,

BAPU

From a facsimile: *Mahatma,* Vol. V, between pp. 200 and 201

408. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON ASHRAM,
September 9, 1939

STUPID GIRL,

I got up by 3.30 a. m. Then I could not sleep. Though invisible, you have been before me ever since we met in Delhi. You will have received my letter. Ba's first question was: Hasn't Sushila come? Last night she asked when you would come. Babudi Sharada writes to ask: Hasn't Sushilabehn come? When will she come? Lila asks the same thing in her letters. All this from this side. As for myself what shall I say? But you are not to concern yourself with thoughts of me or of this place. You must consider independently what your duty is. You will come only with Mother's blessings, not after quarrelling with her. It is your duty to please Mohanlal. I must not do anything to make you neglect their happiness on my account. Your first duty is towards them. The second point concerns your letter to Pyarelal. You have mentioned your doing M. D. You have praised the life there. There is nothing wrong in it. It is only natural. You are free to do M. D. Even if you want to take up the study today, you should not think of me. If your coming here does not give you contentment, you should not

[1] The source has this in Hindi.
[2] Effort, spiritual striving

come. It would be proper to come here when your duty compels you to do so. If you come I shall be very happy. If you cannot come, I shall understand that your duty is to be there, not here. It would be a shame if you got scared of the atmosphere here. Now it is prayer time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

409. NOTES

SURPLUS KHADI[1]

Under the impulse of the phenomenal rise in the spinners' wages, voluntarily made by the A. I. S. A., there has been a great output of yarn. It has been difficult everywhere to cope with the khadi thus produced. In Tamil Nadu alone khadi production shot up to nearly 15 lakhs from about five and a half lakhs and the sales increased to only 11 lakhs from nearly nine lakhs. I have already dealt with the difficulty in the U. P.[2] These are only typical instances. The difficulty is almost universal. I have suggested that khadi experts should study this aspect of it in a scientific manner and discover the remedy. This research work, like all other research work, will take time. Meanwhile the surplus stock must be cleared. It is up to the patriotic public to come to the assistance. I have no love for the celebration of my birthday. Any other day is as good or as bad as a birthday. My parents, so far as I recollect, never celebrated the birthdays of their children. I remember the date of my birthday only because I had to take the birth certificate for the London examination. But I never thought of the date until after the rebirth of khadi. Khadi-lovers made the date of my birth an occasion for pushing khadi sales. I did not mind such exploitation of my birthday but tried with more or less success to give it the name of *Rentia Jayanti* so far as the Gujarati-speaking public was concerned. For it was they who first set the vogue for celebrating the date. Ever since, the Khadi Week has been celebrated in many parts of India for popularizing khadi and

[1] In *The Hindustan Times*, 29-9-1939, this appeared as Gandhiji's "appeal", reported by the Assistant Secretary, A. I. S. A., "on the occasion of Gandhiji's 71st birthday".

[2] *Vide* "Wanted Purchasers", 21-8-1939.

village products. Khadi-lovers are setting much store by the forthcoming 2nd October according to the Christian calendar and the 10th October according to the Vikram Samvat. U. P., Tamil Nadu and other provinces have issued khadi *hundis* for which they expect a heavy demand in expectation of the coming celebration. Special fuss is being made because I shall have completed seventy years on those dates, assuming of course that I shall survive till then. But whether I do or not the dates will come unfailingly. And if it is of any value to the public to know it, let them know that my spirit, whether embodied or disembodied, will certainly rejoice to think that there are sufficient men and women in India who will combine always to take up, for the sake of *Daridranarayana*, all the khadi that can be produced by the semi-starved villagers. Let no one plead the war as an excuse for not buying khadi. War or no war, so long as there is life in us, we shall need to feed and clothe ourselves. What can be better than that we cover ourselves with cloth produced through the labours of the needy sisters and brothers of the villages?

PLEA FOR SELF-DENIAL

Shri Banker writes to say that the prices of foreign dyes have considerably gone up owing to the war. In order to make khadi attractive, the A. I. S. A. have allowed the use of foreign dyes for colouring khadi cloth. Now if the use of foreign dyes is continued, there will have to be an increase in the price of khadi. The best way of avoiding the increase is for khadi depots to drop the use of foreign dyes and restrict themselves to the use of indigenous dyes and be satisfied with such colours as can be produced therefrom. But this can be done only if the public will, by simplifying their taste, encourage the A. I. S. A. in the experiment. If they will, it is just possible that necessity will be the mother once more of many inventions in the matter of producing beautiful colours from indigenous dyes.

NOT AUTHORITATIVE

The Secretary of the A. I. S. A. draws my attention to my article "Spinners' Wages"[1] in *Harijan* of August 26th regarding the purchase of underpriced yarn of quality below standard. He says in effect:

> Many people take your word as authoritative, more so in matters of khadi since you are President of the A. I. S. A. Will

[1] *Vide* "Spinners Wages", 20-8-1939.

you not therefore state clearly that your opinion, expressed in *Harijan,* does not in any way affect or alter the resolutions of the A. I. S. A., and that those who have occasion to take up your advice have to do so subject to the previous permisson of the Secretary in accordance with the recent resolution of the A. I. S. A. on the subject of prices of yarn?

I need hardly say that I endorse every word of what is said by the Secretary. Whatever I write in *Harijan* has as much authority as any editorial writing has and no more. It must be treated as an individual opinion, always subject to the resolutions passed by competent authority on the subject in question.

INTOXICATING WINES IN JUDAISM

When I saw that a claim was registered, and accepted by Dr. Gilder,[1] for the use of spirituous liquors on behalf of Jews, I was much disturbed. For my experience of Jews among whom I had many friends in Johannesburg was wholly against the claim made in Bombay. I therefore wrote to my friend Herr H. Kallenbach to send me an authoritative opinion from the Chief Rabbi in Johannesburg. Here is Dr. Landau's opinion :

> I beg to state that the orthodox Jew may use only specially prepared (*kasher*) wine for the sanctification of the Sabbath or holidays in the Synagogue after Divine Service and at home before meals, and on the two eves of the Passover Festival.
>
> The wine need not be fermented.
>
> I may state that the use of wine is not a law but a tradition which the orthodox Jew cherishes, as it is referred to both in the Talmud and in Jewish Codes of Law.

If the Jews of Bombay accept this opinion as authoritative, they should withdraw their claim and be satisfied with the juice of fresh grapes which I understand is the original meaning of the word wine. It is worthy of note, too, that even this use has the authority, not of the Jewish scriptures but of tradition only.

SEGAON, September 10, 1939

Harijan, 16-9-1939

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Dr. D. D. Gilder", 24-7-1939.

410. LETTER TO HARIVANSH SINGH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 10, 1939

SIR,

I have your letter. I do not find anything alarming in the magazines that you have sent. I am trying my level best to see that there is no harassment by the *kisans.* But the landlords should be prepared to render full justice. I shall try to write on this in *Harijan.*

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI HARIVANSH SINGH
TIRWA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

411. SOURCE OF MY SYMPATHY

The statement[1] made by me just after my interview with H. E. the Viceroy has had a mixed reception. It has been described as sentimental twaddle by one critic and as a statesman-like pronouncement by another. There are variations between the two extremes. I suppose all the critics are right from their own standpoint and all are wrong from the absolute standpoint which in this instance is that of the author. He wrote for no-body's satisfaction but his own. I abide by every word I have said in it. It has no political value, except what every humanitarian opinion may possess. Interrelation of ideas cannot be prevented.

I have a spirited protest from a correspondent. It calls for a reply. I do not reproduce the letter as parts of it I do not understand myself. But there is no difficulty in catching its drift. The main argument is this :

> If you shed tears over the possible destruction of the English Houses of Parliament and Westminster Abbey, have you no tears for the possible destruction of the monuments of Germany? And why do you sympathize with England and France and not with Germany? Is not Hitler an answer to the ravishing of Germany by the Allied Powers during the last war? If you were

[1] *Vide* "statement to the Press", 5-9-1939.

a German, had the resourcefulness of Hitler and were a believer in the doctrine of retaliation as the whole world is, you would have done what Hitler is doing. Nazism may be bad. We do not know what it really is. The literature we get is one-sided. But I suggest to you that there is no difference between Chamberlain and Hitler. In Hitler's place Chamberlain would not have acted otherwise. You have done an injustice to Hitler by comparing him with Chamberlain, to the former's disadvantage. Is England's record in India any better than Hitler's in another part of the world in similar circumstances? Hitler is but an infant pupil of the old imperialist England and France. I fancy that your emotion at the Viceregal Lodge had the better of your judgment.

No one perhaps has described English misdeeds more forcibly, subject to truth, than I have. No one has resisted England more effectively, perhaps, than I have. And my desire for and power of resistance remain unabated. But there are seasons for speech and action, as there are seasons for silence and inaction.

In the dictionary of satyagraha there is no enemy. But as I have no desire to prepare a new dictionary for satyagrahis, I use the old words giving them a new meaning. A satyagrahi loves his so-called enemy even as his friend. He owns no enemy. As a satyagrahi, i.e., votary of ahimsa, I must wish well to England. My wishes regarding Germany were, and they still are, irrelevant for the moment. But I have said in a few words in my statement that I would not care to erect the freedom of my country on the remains of despoiled Germany, I should be as much moved by a contemplation of the possible destruction of Germany's monuments. Herr Hitler stands in no need of my sympathy. In assessing the present merits, the past misdeeds of England and the good deeds of Germany are irrelevant. Rightly or wrongly, and irrespective of what the other Powers have done before under similar circumstances, I have come to the conclusion that Herr Hitler is responsible for the war. I do not judge his claim. It is highly probable that his right to incorporate Danzig in Germany is beyond question, if the Danzig Germans desire to give up their independent status. It may be that his claim to appropriate the Polish Corridor is a just claim. My complaint is that he will not let the claim be examined by an independent tribunal. It is no answer to the rejection of the appeal for submission to arbitration that it came from interested quarters. Even a thief may conceivably make a correct appeal to his

fellow-thief. I think I am right in saying that the whole world was anxious that Herr Hitler should allow his demand to be examined by an impartial tribunal. If he succeeds in his design, his success will be no proof of the justness of his claim. It will be proof that the Law of the Jungle is still a great force in human affairs. It will be one more proof that though we humans have changed the form we have not changed the manners of the beast.

I hope it is now clear to my critics that my sympathy for England and France is not a result of momentary emotion or, in cruder language, of hysteria. It is derived from the never-drying foun-tain of non-violence which my breast has nursed for fifty years. I claim no infallibility for my judgment. All I claim is that my sympathy for England and France is reasoned. I invite those who accept the premises on which my sympathy is based to join me. What shape it should take is another matter. Alone I can but pray. And so I told His Excellency that my sympathy had no concrete value in the face of the concrete destruction that is facing those who are directly engaged in the war.

SEGAON, September 11, 1939

Harijan, 16-9-1939

412. KATHIAWAR STATES

The other day I referred[1] to the series of articles in *The Tribune* suggesting a scheme of confederation of States with special reference to Kathiawar. I had kept the cuttings containing the articles by R. L. H.[2] for the purpose of giving, when the pressure on *Harijan* columns admitted it, a reproduction of the most important extracts from the articles which appeared in *The Tribune* dated 5th and 7th July. The extracts[3], published elsewhere in this issue, should interest both the Princes and the people of Kathiawar. The writer is evidently a friend of the States. He desires reform, not destruction. His scheme is worthy of serious consideration by all who are interested in the question of the administration of the States.

SEGAON, September 11, 1939

Harijan, 30-9-1939

[1] *Vide* "Confederation of Small States", 14-8-1939.

[2] R. L. Handa, *vide* 10-8-1939.

[3] *Vide* Appendix "Kathiawar States", 30-9-1939.

413. LETTER TO G. N. KANITKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 11, 1939

DEAR BALUKAKA[1],

I excuse you for sending me your long letter and you should excuse me for my inability to follow you. Show the public some tangible result and you will have success. In the days of yore you were doing something even though it was . . . .[2] Now you are propounding schemes and delivering lectures.

What a fall !

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI BALUKAKA KANITKAR
HIND MATA MANDIR
341 SADASHIV, POONA 2

From a photostat: C. W. 968. Courtesy: G. N. Kanitkar

414. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 11, 1939

CHI. NARANDAS,

I note what you say regarding your birthday. Give the enclosed letters to the persons concerned.

Soon you will have come to the end of your *vanavasa*[3]Time is flying. Since you keep an account of every moment of your time and are spending it well, you have no problem how to pass it. You still have a lot of work to do. God will grant you a long life for that.

It is enough that you have followed my point about the *Praveshika*[4]. I am in no great hurry about it.

[1] Also known as Sevananda

[2] A word is illegible here.

[3] Literally, 'life in the forest'; here, being away from Gandhiji and doing his duty sincerely.

[4] The reference seems to be to a booklet on the science of khadi which Gandhiji had asked the addressee to write; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 10-8-1939.

Kanaiya[1] is really keeping good health. He is always engrossed in some work or other. Pyarelal also entrusts a good deal of work to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U./II. Also C. W. 8561. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

415. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 11, 1939

CHI. VIJAYA,

I got your letter. Now our only wish should be that Father should be released from his suffering. My advice is that he should be given no food. Let him drink as much water as he can. If he likes, he may take *mosambi* juice, but not milk. This will reduce his suffering to the minimum. See that he sleeps in a properly ventilated room. Encourage him to keep repeating Ramanama. You should sing *bhajans* to him. Persuade Mother to be patient. If you do not lose courage, the others will automatically gain courage. Keep up a smiling face till the end. He who has faith in God never cries. Ba and I are all right. I had been waiting for you. But now I give up that hope.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VIJAYABEHN OF SEGAON
C/O NARANBHAI VALLABHBHAI PATEL
VARAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7116. Also C. W. 4608. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

416. REMARKS ON 'A MAHARAJA'S THREAT [2]

As doubt was raised whether my letter to His Highness the Maharajadhiraja was received or not, I sent a telegram to inquire

[1] Addressee's son, Kanu
[2] *Vide* "A Maharaja's Threat", 26-8-1939.

whether it was received. As the reply[1] came saying that the letter was not received, I recalled the foregoing article which had already been sent to the manager of *Harijan.* Owing to great pressure under which all who are assisting me are working, the article sent for *Harijan Sevak* (Hindustani) was not recalled. Hence I thought that the ends of truth would be served by publishing both my English article and His Highness's reply to my letter. The reply speaks for itself. It substantially confirms what my correspondent said about the *Hidayat* of 1932. It is to be hoped that the *Hidayat* will be repealed at an early date. When the very war which is going on is claimed to be fought for democracy, it ill becomes any prince to curtail the liberty of the people without just cause.

SEGAON, September 12, 1939
Harijan, 16-9-1939

417. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 13, 1939

CHI. VIJAYA,

What a silly girl you are! You must have received my letter[2] and stopped crying. If you lose heart, then all the others in the family will keep crying and there will be no peace in the house. Thus it depends entirely on you whether or not peace prevails. You have faith in God. For such a person, to die, to live or to be born, all these things are the same. All the three things are momentary. If you understand this much, you will dance with joy all the time. As for Father I have sent a wire. You must have received it. Tell him not to lose courage and to prove himself worthy of the name he bears. Let him return Home with Narayana's—Rama's—name on his lips. Whatever state he attains after death he will have nothing but peace. Ask him not to worry in the least about those whom he would be leaving behind. Water is the food for him and Ramanama the best medicine. For the present write to me daily.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7117. Also C. W. 4609. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Yadavindra Singh", 9-9-1939.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Vijayabehn M. Pancholi", 11-9-1939.

418. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 13, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

Ba is becoming impatient. Everybody is asking: "Is Sushilabehn coming on the 16th?" I therefore advise you to come within the stipulated time, But if Mother feels unhappy you should do what you consider to be your duty. Maybe you can make your final decision after coming here. l have great need of you for Krishnadas.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

419. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

SEGAON,
September 15, 1939

The Working Committee's statement on the world crisis took four days[2] before it received final shape. Every member expressed his opinion freely on the draft that was, at the Committee's invitation, prepared by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. I was sorry to find myself alone in thinking that whatever support was to be given to the British should be given unconditionally. This could only be done on a purely non-violent basis. But the Committee had a tremendous responsibility to discharge. It could not take the purely non-violent attitude. It felt that the nation had not imbibed the non-violent spirit requisite for the possession of the strength which disdains to take advantage of the

[1] This appeared under the title "Gandhiji's Comment on the Manifesto". *The Hindu,* 16-9-1939, reported: "When the *Hindu* representative and other Pressmen approached Gandhiji for his views on the Working Committee's statement, Gandhiji agreed to make a statement and invited them to Segaon for the purpose. Sitting down soon after evening prayers, Gandhiji began drafting his statement. . . .After an hour the statement was ready and as Mr. Mahadev Desai began reading it out, a little party gathered round the hurricane lantern. Gandhiji also joined and, as Mr. Desai proceeded, touched up and corrected the language of the statement here and there. . . .When Mr. Desai had finished reading, one of the Pressmen asked, 'Is that all ?' 'Is that not enough? replied Gandhiji with a smile and retired." For the text of the Manifesto, *vide* Appendix "Working Committee's Manifesto", 23-9-1939.

[2] From September 10 to 14

difficulty of the opponent. But in stating the reasons for its conclusion the Committee desired to show the greatest consideration for the English.

The author of the statement is an artist. Though he cannot be surpassed in his implacable opposition to imperialism in any shape or form, he is a friend of the English people. Indeed he is more English than Indian in his thoughts and make-up. He is often more at home with Englishmen than with his own countrymen. And he is a humanitarian in the sense that he reacts to every wrong, no matter where perpetrated.[1] Though, therefore, he is an ardent nationalist his nationalism is enriched by his fine internationalism. Hence the statement is a manifesto addressed not only to his own countrymen, not only to the British Government and the British people, but it is addressed also to the nations of the world including those that are exploited like India. He has compelled India, through the Working Committee, to think not merely of her own freedom, but of the freedom of all the exploited nations of the world.

The same time that the Committee passed the statement, it appointed a Board[2] of his choice with himself as Chairman to deal with the situation as it may develop from time to time.

I hope that the statement will receive the unanimous support of all the parties among Congressmen. The strongest among them will not find any lack of strength in it. And at this supreme hour in the history of the nation the Congress should believe that there will be no lack of strength in action, if action becomes necessary. It will be a pity if Congressmen engage in petty squabbles and party strife. If anything big or worthy is to come out of the Committee's action, the undivided and unquestioned loyalty of every Congressman is absolutely necessary. I hope too that all other political parties and all communities will join the Committee's demand for a clear declaration of their policy from the British Government with such corresponding action as is possible amidst martial conditions. Recognition of India, and for that matter of all those who are under the British Crown, as free and independent nations seems to me to be the natural corollary of British professions about democracy. If the war means anything less, the co-operation of dependent nations can never be honestly voluntary, unless it were based on non-violence.

[1] The source, however, has "perpetuated" .

[2] With Abul Kalam Azad and Vallabhbhai Patel as members

All that is required is a mental revolution on the part of British statesmen. To put it still more plainly, all that is required is honest action to implement the declaration of faith in democracy made on the eve of the war, and still being repeated from British platforms. Will Great Britain have an unwilling India dragged into the war or a willing ally co-operating with her in the prosecution of a defence of true democracy? The Congress support will mean the greatest moral asset in favour of England and France. For the Congress has no soldiers to offer. The Congress fights not with violent but with non-violent means, however imperfect, however crude the non-violence may be.

Harijan, 23-9-1939

420. LETTER TO DUDABHAI DAFDA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 16, 1939

BHAI DUDABHAI,

I got your letter. I was pained to hear that you married a woman who had already been married once. Try to do whatever you can from there. I am helpless.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3246

421. LETTER TO PYARELAL

September 16, 1939

CHI. PYARELAL,

I was distressed to read your letter. You say that it was not part of your duty to send for the medicines, that you only had to instruct Krishnadas ! If it was not your duty why did you not entrust the task to me? Why did you not ask me who should fetch the medicine or have it fetched? Why did you not immediately entrust it to Mahadev? Why did you wait for three days? Other people accusing you is one thing; what I myself observe is something else. You may as well say that you are neither willing nor able to undertake any responsible job. If this was made clear, then I would consider my wrath out of place. I would consider it proper to say that I should never get angry under any circumstances at all. But it is impossible to stop being angry with

one's dear ones. Thus the images of people who provoke my anger are always present before me. Let us see when this can be remedied. I accept, the implied meaning of your letter that I am facing the consequences of my own unfair actions. Hence I am just watching much of it and I know I have to go through it. On occasion I lose in a moment whatever I have gained.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

422. JAIPUR SATYAGRAHA

Jaipur satyagraha has ended satisfactorily as announced in Sheth Jamnalalji's public statement. He had had several interviews with the Maharaja Saheb. The result has been that the regulation regarding public meetings and processions has been withdrawn. So has the ban on newspapers. Amelioration in several other matters has been assured.[1] For this happy result both the Maharaja and Sheth Jamnalalji deserve to be congratulated—the Maharaja for his just-mindedness and Shethji for his wisdom and moderation in conducting the negotiations on behalf of the Jaipur Praja Mandal. It is a happy ending to a struggle which was conducted with great restraint and calmness. It is a triumph of non- violence. From the very beginning the demands were restricted to the barest minimum necessary for self-expression and political education. The goal of responsible govern-ment has been always kept in view, but it has never been offensively or aggressively advanced as if the insistence was on an immediate grant of full responsibility. The Praja Mandal has wisely recognized its own limitations and the backward state of the people. Practically no political education has been hitherto allowed in many of the Rajputana States. It will be solid gain if civil liberty in its real sense is assured to the people of Jaipur. For this, as much will depend upon the wisdom with which it is used by the people as upon the restraint of the Jaipur authorities.

[1] According to *The Indian Annual Register, 1939*, Vol. II, pp. 229-30, the main terms of the settlement were: (1) the release of political prisoners, (2) the lifting of the ban on all newspapers, and (3) satisfactory amendment of the Public Societies Act so as to render unnecessary for a society to get itself registered.

In this connection Sheth Jamnalalji has raised a most important question. He insists that no European should be appointed Dewan. I have had to perform the painful duty of criticizing the administration of the State by one of its English Dewans[1]. I have no doubt that an English Dewan is any day a misfit in an Indian State. He has to serve an Indian Chief. But retired English officials from whom Dewans are chosen are not by habit used to take orders from Indian Chiefs. They cannot understand the caprices of Indian Princes and will not accommodate themselves to them. The Chiefs themselves never feel at home with English Dewans. Moreover no matter how conscientious they are, Englishmen can never understand the people of the States or have patience with them. And the people can never take the same liberty with them that they can and will with men who are drawn from among themselves. Thus an English Dewan is a double handicap in an Indian State and robs it of what little scope there is left in it for indigenous development. Add to this the fact that the appointment of English Dewans in States is a cruel encroachment upon the very narrow field left for the expression of Indian administrative talent. Supposing Dewanships had been a preserve of retired English officials, we would have missed Sir T. Madhao Rao or Sir Salar Jung, to mention only two among the well-known Dewans of Indian States.

It is to be hoped, therefore, that if H. H. the Maharaja has really a free choice, he will select an Indian known for his integrity, ability and sympathy for popular aspirations. It is to be hoped further that if the choice has to be made by the British Government, they will not impose a European Dewan on the Maharaja.

SEGAON, September 17, 1939

Harijan, 23-9-1939

423. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 17, 1939

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

I have read through the correspondence between you and Bhai Lakshmidas Naye Gandhi[2]. It seems you have not replied to him. Do

[1] ¯Sir W. Beauchamp St. John.

[2] In *Bapuna Patro–7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*, p. 399, Lakshmidas Gandhi, a

send your reply if you can. Why did the person who copied it write only on one side? That involves wastage of paper and additional postage.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10857. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

424. NOTES

SIROHI

Sirohi is a Rajputana State with a population of 1,86,639 and revenue of Rs. 9,70,000. It has figured in the Press for its lathi charge said to be wholly unprovoked. I have authentic information of the event from Shri Gokulbhai Bhatt who belongs to Sirohi. He has gained a reputation as an efficient teacher and a devoted Congress worker. He is saturated with the spirit of non-violence. He has been recently staying in Sirohi attempting to gain elementary rights for the people. He thus writes about the lathi charge to Shri Kishorelal Mashruwala :

> The events of the 8th instant in Sirohi make it a memorable day for its people. The police swooped down upon a meeting all of a sudden, began to pull down the Praja Mandal flag and delivered a lathi charge. This was not the national flag. When the Hon. Resident, Mr. Lothian, was in Sirohi last February he suggested that we could use the Praja Mandal flag in our office, in our processions and at our meetings. And we were acting accordingly.
>
> On the 3rd instant the Dewan Saheb prohibited its use in our processions. In order to avoid a breach of the order, we discontinued the procession. There was no prohibition against its use at meetings, so we had it at our meeting. Suddenly appeared the police in great style and, without warning, without any order, began to pull down the flag. Some of the workers held on to it. They could not, however, keep their hold for long against the superior police force. They were separated. I had

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co-inmate of Chhaganlal Joshi in Thana Jail, has been described as “a satyagrahi of Bombay known as ‘Naye Gandhi”.

somehow retained my hold. So they dragged me with the flag. They caught me by the neck and beat me. Then began an indiscriminate lathi charge on the audience. Some notabilities are said to have been inciting the police not to spare the people who said, "You may beat us as much as you like. We will not leave the meeting." Women were also bravely taking part in this struggle. The charge must have lasted about seven minutes. The meeting continued to the end. The event has not demoralized the people. It has put heart into them.

Knowing Shri Gokulbhai as I do, I have no reason to disbelieve his account which is in Gujarati. It reflects no credit upon the Sirohi authorities. I have before me a long list of the grievances of the people. They are trying, in a perfectly constitutional manner, to seek redress. But instead of granting redress the authorities are evidently trying to crush their spirit. If, however, the people have imbibed the right spirit of non-violent resistance, they are bound to gain their end, lathi charges notwithstanding.

A POLISH SISTER'S[1] AGONY

In spite of all I am going to try to reach Poland, sailing tonight to Basra in Iraq, then through Turkey and Rumania. The inner call is irresistible. It may seem madness from the ordinary human point of view. Now I am not going for my mother's sake nor for my dearest friends who are now on the battle-fields—ready to die at any moment—it is for Poland itself. I believe countries have also souls. Souls of nations are a reality, not a theory, for me. If I reach the soil of Poland I will feel satisfied, even if I do not find those whom I love. It is the soul (and body) of the nation itself that is in its supreme hour of martyrdom. I believe Poland bleeds and struggles not only for her own rights but for the right, the just, the true; for the freedom of all nations, India including. I feel Hindu to the bottom of my heart; Indian as much as Pole, both Motherlands are to be in my soul to the last day of my life. But I could not live if I would not do what is humanly possible to reach the feet of the Mother who is now bleeding in agony of pain. I shall write from the way, but not when I reach the war zone; I shall only think often about you and send mental messages as well as I can. Bapuji, do pray in all fervour of your great loving heart for those thousands of innocent people who suffer incredible pain and misery in Poland. It is these that need most sympathy and blessings and tender thoughts.

[1] Wanda Dynowska, also known as Uma

This is the letter a Polish sister wrote from Bombay harbour. I have known her for some years. She has become as much Indian as she is Polish. She had decided to work at Maganwadi in the Magan Museum.[1] But the rumours of war upset her. She has an aged mother in Poland whom she could not bring out owing to passport difficulties. When the war actually broke out, she calmed down so far as her mother was concerned. But her highly strung nature would not let her rest whilst her nearest and dearest were in peril of their lives for no offence of theirs. She is herself a believer through and through in non-violence. But her very non-violence made her restless. Her whole soul has rebelled against the wrong, as she thinks, that is being perpetrated against her motherland. So she has gone to find the Poland of her imagination fighting to the last ditch, not for merely preserving her own freedom but for the freedom of all those nations who have lost it. And in this she naturally includes her second love, India. May her dream prove true. If Poland has that measure of uttermost bravery and an equal measure of selflessness, history will forget that she defended herself with violence. Her violence will be counted almost as non-violence.

SEGAON, September 18, 1939

Harijan, 23-9-1939

425. TEMPLE-ENTRY

I had a complaint from a sanatanist in Madura regarding the manner in which the celebrated Meenakshi temple was opened. I had forwarded the complaint to Shri Vaidyanatha Aiyar and sent it to another friend too. I got a categorical refutation from the latter.[2] He added in his letter that Shri Vaidyanatha Aiyar was so persecuted by the sanatanists that his nerves were shattered. Thereupon I sent him a long wire urging him not to take to heart what his persecutors may say or do, and that as a religious reformer he had to work with perfect detachment keeping himself unruffled in the midst of persecution and worse. To my wire he sent the following consoling reply :

[1] The Magan Museum of khadi and other village crafts was opened by Gandhiji on December 30, 1938, in memory of Maganlal Gandhi. Besides khadi, there were *gur*-making, paper-making, soap-making, oil-pressing and tanning sections in the museum.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to V. M. Prasada Rao", 30-8-1939.

With Shri Meenakshi's grace and your blessings acquired usual calmness. Continuing work. Expecting other big temples will follow shortly. Your love and blessings my strongest support.

The reply is characteristic of this great reformer. He is one of the humblest and the most silent among the workers in the cause of removal of untouchability. He is a godfearing man. This is what Shri Brijkrishna Chandiwala of Delhi, who had gone on a pilgrimage to the South, writes of his experience in Madura :

I stopped seven days in Pondicherry, five in Ramanashram and went as far as Rameshwar. I had a great desire to visit the temples of the South. But I would not enter those that were closed to Harijans. I did, however, see the temples in Madura and Tanjore. The others I contemplated from without. I tarried awhile in front of many of them—and for the first time I realized what the bar sinister must mean to the tens of thousands of Harijans who, though eager for *darshan*[1] could never cross the precincts of the great temples. We who have the right to visit them never think of entering. But this time I was overwhelmed. I felt a longing to visit them and prayed from the depth of my heart that God might move the sanatanists to open the other temples to Harijans so that I too could visit them. I saw, too, at Shri Vaidyanatha Aiyar's house, what temple-entry costs reformers like him. Had I not seen with my own eyes what has been happening to Shri Vaidyanatha Aiyar, I could never have believed that human nature could descend so low as I discovered in Madura. The conduct of the sanatanists towards him has been most unseemly. One of the ways adopted by them is to spread lies about Shri Vaidyanatha Aiyar. But both he and his wife are bearing this persecution bravely.

Only four days ago I had a letter from some ladies of Kumbakonam complaining of the treatment meted out to them by reformers. They asked for an appointment. In the midst of my work I sent them an early appointment, warning them of my views on untouchability. They repented of their wire and said that since I had taken no notice of their complaint, they did not propose to come. I have since read the report in *The Hindu* of the happenings in Shrirangam. Dr. Rajan has given a graphic account of the disgraceful behaviour of the so-called sanatanists there. I have no reason to doubt Dr. Rajan's account. It is a shame that innocent women are being exploited for supporting a wrong. I have a vivid recollection of what used to happen to me during my Harijan tour. No lie was too bad to be spread about me or

[1] Sight of a person or thing considered to be holy

my tour. So far as I could see, the opposition was confined to a handful only. I never opened a temple until I was satisfied that there was no opposition worth the name from the temple-goers. But the organizers of the opposition resented the very propaganda I was conducting. No doubt their opposition proved fruitless. My point, however, is that it was unscrupulous and violent. If I survived the year's tour, it was no fault of theirs; it was God's grace. Sixty-four charges were recorded against me. Not one of them was true. I am therefore loath to believe the complaints now made about the campaign in the South. I have not found any of them substantiated. Untouchability is itself a lie. Lies are not known to have been supported by truth, even as truth cannot be supported by lies. If it is, it becomes itself a lie. There is no wonder, therefore, that from everywhere evidence continues to pour in that the sanatanist opposi--tion is confined to a few and that the few do not hesitate to resort to any method, however unscrupulous it may be.

Nevertheless the case against untouchability is not to be sustained by the weaknesses of opponents. It has to be supported by purity of character, industry and strictest honesty of reformers and a limitless capacity for sacrifice. For I should not wonder if the wrath of the opponents takes a heavy toll of the lives of reformers. No sacrifice, however great, will deter the reformers from pursuing the God-given mission of ridding Hinduism of the curse of untouchability. For I must repeat for the thousandth time that Hinduism dies, as it will deserve to die, if untouchability lives. Only let the reformers know that impatience will be fatal to success. They must not open a single temple where a clear majority of temple-goers to a particular temple are demonstrably opposed to its opening. Untouchability will not be removed by the force even of law. It can only be removed when the majority of Hindus realize that it is a crime against God and man and are ashamed of it. In other words, it is a process of conversion, i. e., purification of the Hindu heart. The aid of law has to be invoked when it hinders or interferes with the progress of the reform as when, in spite of the willingness of the trustees and the temple-going public, the law prohibits the opening of a particular temple.

SEGAON, September 18, 1939

Harijan, 23-9-1939

426. TELEGRAM TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 18, 1939

MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD
C/O MINISTER HAFIZ IBRAHIM
LUCKNOW

HOPE BY GOD'S GRACE AND YOUR EFFORT SHIA-SUNNI QUARREL WILL BE AMICABLY SETTLED.[1]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

427. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 18, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Here is my letter to Chiang Kai-shek. The letter became longer than I had wanted it to be. Perhaps it will be well to send a typed copy with the original.

Mahadev went to Madras yesterday.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also A *Bunch of Old Letters,* p. 380

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to President, Tanzeem-ul-Mominin", 4-8-1939.

428. LETTER TO RAMAKRISHNA DHOOT

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 18, 1939

MY DEAR RAMAKRISHNA,

The analysis is not what I wanted. It is argumentative. I want an unvarnished examination showing categorically on one sheet of paper what is bad. Your analysis does not absolve me from having to read the original ponderous papers. But need anything be done now? Will not everything be hung up during the war?

Yours,

BAPU

SHRI RAMKISHEN DHOOT
HYDERABAD STATE CONGRESS
SULTAN BAZAR
HYDERABAD DECCAN

From the original: C. W. 10155

429. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

SEGAON,
September 18, 1939

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

Please see that I get a car for Gosibehn at the latest at 1.30 p. m. She has to transact business at Maganwadi and then entrain for Bombay. I hope Devi and Premi have arrived safe and sound.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 11046. courtesy: Arjun Jairamdas

430. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

MAGANWADI,
WARDHA (C. P.),
September 18, 1939

DEAR LOTUS-BORN,

I have your beautiful letter in font of me unanswered. Well, you are playing the game. But don't overwork yourself nor be overstrung. Take things calmly. Don't take them to the breaking point.

Love.

PLAYMATE

SHRI PADMAJA NAIDU
ZAHEER MUNZIL
RED HILLS
HYDERABAD, DECCAN

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

431. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

September 18, 1939

CHI. AMRITLAL,

You must have got Vijaya's and Uttamchand's letters which I sent with Shriman[1] yesterday.

It is time for Sushila to arrive but one cannot say when she will come. There is no news from her.

Bisen[2] should take hip-baths as also sun-baths. He is sure to benefit from them. I would certainly try and see how far they are helpful to him if he comes here some time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10795

[1] Shriman Narayan

[2] Shiv Balak Bisen, who later became Gandhiji's private secretary for some time.

432. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 18, 1939

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. I hope to be here for the present. I cannot say when and where I may be required to go.

I understand what you say about Brother[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2473

433. LETTER TO Y. M. DADOO

SEGAON,
September 19, 1939

MY DEAR DADOO,

I was glad to have your reply. Of course there is no absolute reason why passive resistance should be stopped because war has broken out in Europe. But wisdom may dictate that course. Of this you should be the best judges. I am trying my best to have the enforcement of the obnoxious law postponed. As the letters are delayed, you will use the cable when necessary.[2]

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 4903. Also C. W. 1316. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

[1] Addressee's brother, who was ailing
[2] *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 29-7-1939.

434. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON,
September 19, 1939

CHI. NARANDAS,

My blessings on your birthday. You seem to be making fairly rapid progress. The girls also seem to be doing good work. If, however, the people are tempted to pay money only by the sight of the girls, you should consider how far it is desirable to send them out. You can know more by asking the girls themselves. This is only for you. Satish Babu will certainly come. But not Ba. I will think about Mirabehn. Rajkumari is not enthusiastic. I shall consider how the money should be used[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Is Shambhu Shankar still in prison? What did he do? What is the state of affairs in Palitana? Dhebarbhai may be able to tell you.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C. W. 8562. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

435. LETTER TO RAMASINHA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 19, 1939

BHAI RAMASINHAJI,

Only today I could reach your letter of August 28. The letter is excellent. If the Garasia brethren really take up the work which you

[1] *Vide* also "Notes", 12-7-1939 .

have described, both they and Kathiawar would forge ahead.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5228

436. LETTER TO SURENDRA B. MEDH

SEGAON,

September 19, 1939

CHI. MEDH,

I have your letter. You will see [for yourself] from the letter[1] to Bhai Dadoo that I understand what you say. I am doing all that I can. Manilal must be getting these letters, so I won't be particular in writing to him. What is this about somebody in Boksberg having been killed? There seems to have been some report to that effect in *The Rand Daily Mail*. It seems there too a terrorist gang has come into existence.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4904

[1] *Vide* Letter to Y. M. Dadoo", 19-9-1939.

437. DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURES [1]

[*September 20, 1939*][2]

This Assembly regrets that the British Government have

[1] K. M. Munshi explains: "With the declaration of war, Central encroac-hment on Provincial autonomy was inevitable. Sardar Patel, therefore, issued a circular letter to all the Congress Prime Ministers advising them on the attitude they should adopt, pending a decision by the A. I. C. C. or the Working Committee. . . . The Working Committee met on September 9 and continued their deliberations till September 15. . . . Gandhiji, at first, was for supporting the British unconditionally, but ultimately he yielded to Jawaharlal Nehru. . . . The Congress Ministries in the Provinces simply could not continue in office for a long period during which they were bound to accept the direction of a Central Government with which they felt no sense of identity. . . . During the time. . . my relations with Sir Roger Lumley, the Governor, had become friendly. . . I tried to prevail upon Sir Roger Lumley to convey to Lord Linlithgow that there should not be any difficulty in meeting the Congress demands, viz., (1) clarification of war aims, (2) assurance as to India's future, and (3) the immediate steps to ensure Congress participation at the Centre. . . . The outlook became gloomy when, on September 18, Kher, like other Congress premiers, received a letter from Sardar Patel intimating that the Working Committee's statement [Appendix X] should be taken as the background for the time being; that the Ministries should do nothing inconsistent with it and, in particular, should not allow their responsibility as Provincial Governments to be overridden. . . . The more important part of the letter was a directive: Provincial legislatures, or, in default of legislatures, Provincial Governments, should as early as possible pass a resolution, a draft of which was appended. . . . Sir Roger realized the grave implications of the resolution and told me that a resolution of this character would create the impression that the Congress had given up the intention to co-operate in the war. He, therefore, strongly urged that I should point out to Sardar the implication of the course advocated in the letter. I gave Sir Roger's message to Sardar Patel. He, however, told me that the letter had been drawn up by the Congress War Sub-committee and that he could not cancel it without the consent of the other members of the Sub-committee, namely, Nehru and Maulana Azad. He, therefore, advised me to go at once to Wardha and see Gandhiji and Rajendra Prasad who was still there. I left for Wardha the same evening and returned on September 21. Gandhiji gave me a patient hearing, spinning the charkha all the time. I remember to have argued the case at length. When I finished, he told me: 'Munshi, you have presented your case well, but the country will not accept the course of action recommended by you'. He was, however, prepared to modify the peremptory attitude reflected in the resolution. He gave me a statement defining his views on the situation. . . Gandhiji also gave me a draft of the resolution which be passed by the Provincial legislatures if a satisfactory solution on the lines indicated was not acceptable to the British Government. . . .As a result of my inteview with Gandhiji on September 20 . . . instructions were issued to the Congress Ministries postponing action on the proposed resolution for a week."

[2] *Ibid*

declared India as a participant in the war between Great Britain and Germany, without the consent of the Indian people and without consulting this Assembly. The Assembly considers this declaration, made in complete disregard of the opposition from Indian opinion, a contravention of the spirit of Provincial autonomy, as also further measures adopted and laws passed in England and India limiting the powers and activities of Provincial Governments.

The British Government have stated that the war is for the preservation of democracy, but their policy in India militates against this profession. While this Assembly has the fullest sympathy for the cause of democracy and freedom, and condemns the aggression of the Nazi Government on Poland, it cannot offer co-operation in the war, unless the principles of democracy are applied to India and her policy is guided by her people. The Assembly invites the British Government to make a clear declaration that they have decided to regard India as an independent nation entitled to frame her own Charter of Freedom, and to accompany this declaration by suitable action, in so far as this is possible, even in the prevailing war conditions. The Assembly is further of opinion that no war measure or other activity should be undertaken in this Province except with the consent and through the medium of the Provincial Government.

Pilgrimage to Freedom (1902-1950), p. 58

438. A STATEMENT [1]

[*September 20, 1939*][2]

1. I (Gandhi) know that my views in regard to unconditional co-operation are not shared by the country. The resolution of the Working Committee reflects the Congress opinion properly.

2. Since the Congress is unable, owing to past experience, to give unconditional co-operation, it can only co-operate if it is able to convince the country that it has in substance achieved its purpose and that therefore there is a complete understanding about it between the British Government and the Congress.

3. If there is a real understanding between the British Government and the Congress, it follows that there must be corresponding action even during the war. Thus Ministries must not be mere regis-

[1] Foot note no. 1 of draft resolution for provincial legislatures, 20-9-1939.
[2] *Ibid*

tering agencies of the measures coming from the Centre. Hence there must be some method at the Centre of having a Congress representation sufficient to give it a majority.

4. The only constitutional way in which the Ministries can declare their position is to obtain the necessary authority of their respective legislatures by getting them to adopt this resolution[1], unless in the mean time they can convince their legislatures that circumstances in terms of 2 and 3 have come into existence which render such resolution unnecessary.

5. If the British Government are serious in their profession that they are fighting for democracy, they cannot marshal the moral opinion of the world in their favour except by declaring that India will be a free and democratic country at the end of the war and that in the mean time it has taken steps to implement the assurances so far as it is practicable under martial conditions.

6. If for some reason, the British Government takes a different view, the Ministries will find it impossible to function.

7. The resolution may be kept back for a week if the members of the War Sub-committee agree. But it must be clearly understood that before the A. I. C. C. meets, the Working Committee which meets on the 4th (October) must have definite material to enable it to give the lead to the A. I. C. C. and the country.

Pilgrimage to Freedom (1902-1905), p. 57

439. LETTER TO C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR

WARDHA,
September 20, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

A friend unconnected with politics writes to me to say that the labouring population living near the sea and the back-waters are suffering great privations due to want of employment. The writer thinks that if I drew your attention to the matter, relief was likely to be given to these people.

Yours sincerely,

SIR C. P.
TRIVANDRUM

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

440. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

WARDHA,
September 20, 1939

DEAR SIR AKBAR,

There is Krishna Sharma of the State Congress under a ban. Should not the ban be now removed? He is suffering distress.

Yours sincerely,

SIR AKBAR HYDARI
HYDERABAD

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

441. LETTER TO PATTOM THANU PILLAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 20, 1939

MY DEAR THANU,

I drop 'Pillay' a bit for brevity. I have gone through all your papers. I am filled with admiration and amazement. You are keeping calm in the midst of the gravest provocation. It is all to the good. It is the most solid progress towards the goal. Therefore go on as you are doing. Make sure that you have no dross in your gold. It does not matter if you are only a few. Rely only on quality. You will quicken the pace of progress. Keep me informed.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 10202. Courtesy: Government of Kerala. Also Pattom Thanu Pillai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

442. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEGAON,
September 20, 1939

CHI. MRIDU,

I have your letter. Come whenever you want. I was under the impression that I had explained the situation to you. I have no money. Amtussalaam was to collect the money but she was to use it in my name. Rs. 600/- belonging to her was lying with me. Now that she has

abandoned the work, she has also lost the ability to collect funds. Now tell me what I should do. Surely, it was not as though I trusted A S. and did not trust you or Lakshmidas? How could that be? But you should not give up the work you have undertaken. Shankerlal is here. I will consult him. I will discuss the matter with you if you come. I was very happy to read about Mummy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11210. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

443. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 21, 1939

CHI. VIJAYA,

I get your letters regularly. You must be growing calmer day by day. Think and realize that birth and death are one and the same thing. This is the normal thing. Death follows birth—birth follows death. In this manner the two ever keep changing places. Why then should we rejoice at one and grieve over the other? The coming of night is the death of day, but we know that day comes after night and so we are not surprised by the way it goes on. Our grief, therefore, is only on account of the separation. But separation is only one member of a pair. Union and separation—separation and union, go hand in hand. This is only an intellectual statement. But it is worth understanding. It will strengthen your faith. What I want to say, is that your presence there should have this effect, and no one should grieve and Father should leave with a smile on his face. He had better take only water. I hope Manubhai[1] will not be permitted to come there. Nanabhai[2] cannot spare him even for a second. What will he do even if he comes?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7118. Also C. W. 4610. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

[1] Manubhai Pancholi, the addressee's husband who was himself ill
[2] Nrisinhprasad Kalidas Bhatt

444. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

WARDHA,
September 22, 1939

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

See the telegram about Rajkot. Please forward it. I think you should stay here, so that your burden may be lightened and we may be able to meet every day and exchange views.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
BIRLA HOUSE
5 ALBUQUERQUE ROAD, NEW DELHI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 235

445. LETTER TO RAMAKRISHNA BAJAJ

SEGAON,
September 22, 1939

CHI. RAMAKRISHNA,

May you live long and bring credit to Father's[1] name.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 3063

[1] Jamnalal Bajaj

446. DISCUSSION WITH MEMBERS OF OXFORD GROUP[1]

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 23/24, 1939

How I wish I had the same enthusiasm that fires you. Of course I have the experience of listening[2] not merely of trying to listen. The more I listen, the more I discover that I am still far away from God. While I can lay down rules, the observance of which is essential for proper listening, the reality still escapes me. When we say we are listening to God and getting answers, though we say it truthfully, there is every possibility there of self-deception. I do not know that I am myself altogether free from self-deception. People sometimes ask me if I may not be mistaken, and I say to them, 'Yes, very likely, what I say may be just a picture of my elongated self before you."

And then see how one may claim to be God-guided in taking a particular course of action, and another may make the same claim in taking an opposite course of action. I will give you a good illustration. Rajaji, whom you know, at any rate whose name you have heard, is I think unsurpassed in godliness or God-mindedness. Now when I took the 21 days' purificatory fast in the Yeravda Jail in 1933[3] and proclaimed that it was in answer to a call from God, Rajagopalachari came all the way from Madras to dissuade me. He felt sure that I was deluding myself and that I should probably die and, if I did not, I should certainly be demented. Well, you see that I am still alive and of

[1] This is extracted from "A Word to the Oxford Groupers"; *vide* footnotes 1 and 2 of " Reply to Members of Oxford Group", 3-9-1939. Mahadev Desai explains: ". . . six friends came to Wardha on the 23rd of last month. These included a barrister and his wife, an American journalist, a European who was a railway official, and a gifted lady, daughter of a one-time army officer. . . ."

[2] The word 'listening' had special meaning in the language of the Oxford Group. Mahadev Desai says: "Their mission may be described in common parlance as one of thinking aloud and, in their language, of 'spiritual sharing'. 'There is good somewhere in all', said one of the members, 'and there are different ways of finding that out. For us it is by sharing. . . .' Another member said: 'You have always been listening to God. We feel that the solution of those problems for which you have worked would be reached if all the millions of India would start listening to God. We feel we have a place in this plan and have therefore come to you in joy.' Some of the members described their experiences of changes having come over the lives of men and women by this 'listening in'. . . . 'Whereas people of old used to use the word 'prayer', 'listening in' is the modern word. . . . There was a discussion and Gandhiji spoke out his mind to them."

[3] *Vide* 23-41933 to 21-8-1933.

a sound mind. And yet perhaps Rajaji still thinks I was deluded and it was by an accident that I was saved, and I continue to think that I fasted in answer to the still small voice within.

I say this in order to warn you how unwise it may be to believe that you are always listening to God. I am not at all against the endeavour, but I warn you against thinking that this is a kind of 'open sesame' which has just to be shown to the millions. No one will contradict me when I say I have tried my very best to make India listen to the way of God. I have had some success but I am still far away from the goal. When I listen to the testimonies you have given I become cautious and even suspicious. In South Africa a preacher came who after his sermon got people to sign their names under a pledge, which was published in a book, binding them not to drink. Well, I have been witness to numerous of these promises being broken. It was no fault of these people. They signed the pledge under the temporary influence of the preacher's moving eloquence.

This I know that all that glitters is not gold, and also that if a man has really heard the voice of God, there is no sliding back, just as there is no forgetting it by one who has learnt to swim. The listening in must make people's lives daily richer and richer.

Let me not appear to damp your enthusiasm; but if it is to be built on solid rock, it is better that listening in is also based on solid rock.

This listening in presupposes the fitness to listen, and the fitness is acquired after constant and patient striving and waiting on God. Shanka-racharya has likened the process to the attempt to empty the sea by means of a drainer small as the point of a blade of grass. This process thus necessarily is endless being carried through birth after birth.

And yet the effort has to be as natural as breathing or the winking of the eyes, which processes happen without our knowing them. The effort coincides with the process of living. I commend to you this process of eternal striving which alone can take us face to face with God[1].

What is India as a nation to do at this juncture? What would you want her to do? How is she to repent? India may say she has committed many sins for which she is suffering and would pray to be

[1] According to Mahadev Desai, the members of the Oxford group returned the next day and "produced another word begging the same rigorous definition and spiritual striving as 'listening in', viz., 'repentance'."

given the strength to wipe them out. Or is there anything else at the back of your minds?[1]

Harijan, 7-10-1939

447. HORIZONTAL v. VERTICAL

Prof. J. C. Kumarappa has contributed a thought-provoking article to the *Gram Udyog Patrika* for September. I take from it the following extracts[2] with slight unimportant alterations.

> According to the conception of the economic organization on which the A. I. V. I. A. is based, the villager is taken as the centre around whom the universe revolves. What contributes to his welfare is primary and everything else is secondary. Whatever the merits of a plan may be, if it fails to give employment and thereby direct a due share of the wealth produced towards the villager, it will stand condemned. The result or end of economic activity is wealth production for consumption by the producers. Wealth is usually produced by the intelligent use of the means of production and the application or employment of human talent or power. Planning, in the first instance, consists in the rational coordination of these three factors. We may express this mathematically thus: W = E + M.
>
> Here W stands for wealth, E for employment of human talent and M for means in the shape of tools, equipment or capital. In this equation, keeping W constant, if M is large, E will have to be small, and *vice versa*, that is, E and M vary inversely. Therefore, in planning, our first step will have to be the ascertaining of the availability of E and M. . . .
>
> When we look around our country we find E in abundance while M is very scarce and, therefore, if our planning is to be effective, we have to lay our foundation-stone on labour and not on capital. . . .
>
> Most people seem to think that all will be well as long as we produce large quantities of standardized goods. They cannot see that the method of large-scale production can only be employed as a hand-maiden of the cottage and village industries, the former supplying the basic needs of the latter on a service basis. . . .
>
> Properly conceived, the State should serve the citizen. The citizen may work for his profit but not so the State. Similarly, the decentralized units may work for profit but not so the centralized units. . . .

[1] Mahadev Desai adds: "There was no satisfactory reply. 'We should begin listening to God as a whole,' was their reply . . ."

[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

It does not do to plan vertically, i. e., emphasizing the functions and thus making them into separate industries, e. g., banking, insurance, etc., which is the way of capitalism. The other way is to take the industries horizontally and study their processes and apply the functional aid at suitable points. The plan of work of the All-India Spinners' Association is a good example of a horizontal system of planning, while a spinning mill is an example of vertical planning. There can be no compromise between these two methods.. . . .

ON THE TRAIN TO SIMLA, September 24, 1939

Harijan, 18-11-1939

448. AN INTERESTING STUDY

Shri Shankerlal Banker has sent me the following figures :

DAILY PRODUCTION 38,400 SQ. YDS., ABOUT 11,000 LB.

MILL		KHADI	
Cost at 8.5 as. Per Ib. ($3\frac{1}{2}$ sq. yds.)	Rs. 5,843	Cost at 30 as. per lb. ($3\frac{1}{2}$ sq. yds.)	Rs. 20,625[1]
Note. Cotton including 16% wastage	4 as.	Note. Cotton	4 as.
All-inclusive charges : spinning	2 as.	Spinning and carding wages	15 as.
All-inclusive charges : weaving	2.5 as.	Weaving wages	8 as.
		Washing, etc.	1 a.
		Establishment charges	2 as.
Total	8.5 as.	Total	30 as.

DETAILS RE. COST

Cotton including 16% wastage	Rs. 2,750	Cotton	Rs. 2,750
All-inclusive charges : spinning	Rs. 1,375	Spinning and carding wages	Rs. 10,313
All-inclusive charges : weaving	Rs. 1,718	Weaving wages	Rs. 5,500
		Washing wages, etc.	Rs. 687
		Establishment charges	Rs. 1,375
	Rs. 5,843		Rs.20,625[2]
Wage at 2 as. per lb.	Rs. 1,375	Wages	Rs. 16,500
Interest on Rs. 23.1 lacs at 3% for one day	Rs. 190	Interest on Rs. 13.5 lacs	Rs. 111

[1] The source, however, has "20,575".
[2] *ibid*

$$\text{Ratio in the case of wages} = \frac{\text{K } 16,500}{\text{M } 1,375} = 12 \text{ K: } 1 \text{ M}$$

$$\text{Ratio in the case of interest} = \frac{\text{M } 190}{\text{K } 111} = 1 \text{ K: } 1.7 \text{ M}$$

This is a most revealing study. The cost of converting one lb. of cotton into calico in a mill is 8.5 as. whereas that of converting it into khadi is 30 as. In the one case the spinner and the weaver get between them 4.5 as.; in the other, i. e., khadi, they get 24 as. Which is better to buy—khadi though it seems dear, or the calico though it seems cheap?

ON THE TRAIN TO SIMLA, September 24, 1939

Harijan, 2-12-1939

449. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 24, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

The enclosed wire for you to dispose of. It is your special department.

I am off to Simla again.[1] I go only to act as intermediary. You will send me instructions if any. I do hope you will be ready to answer invitation, if it comes.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

450. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 24, 1939

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

My blessings are always there for as many khadi bhandars as are opened and for as much khadi as is sold. Moreover Sardar is opening your bhandar. So it is bound to be a success.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of Gujarati: C. W. 10842. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

[1] The Viceroy had invited Gandhiji for a second round of talks.

451. LETTER TO PYARELAL

MAGANWADI,
NAGPUR,
WARDHA,
September 24, 1939

CHI. PYARELAL,

1 was considerably disturbed to leave you behind. I could not decide whether 1 should leave you or take you along. I am not at all happy about your mental condition. But what can I do? It seems I am suffering the consequences of my own actions. What request can I make to you? Do I have the right to request you any more? May God grant you peace. It would suffice even if He inspires you to think about Sushila. Look after Ba, Krishnadas, Prithvisingh.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

452. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

NAGPUR,
September 24, 1939

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Don't ask Lilavati[1] or Hansabehn[2] yet about Rajkot.[3] I have written to Perinbehn[4] and asked her to go. I felt I must write to her. Wadia has not refused so far. I have written to Perinbehn that if Wadia refuses I should like her to go. I will write to you and let you know after I hear from her. I have asked for a telegram at Simla.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2:Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 235

[1] Lilavati Munshi
[2] Hansabehn Mehta
[3] To go to Rajkot Rashtriyashala during *Rentia Baras*
[4] Perinbehn Captain

453. IS INDIA A MILITARY COUNTRY?

In the interesting broadcast delivered by the Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Forces in India on the 5th instant there occurs this passage :

> India is a military country and I am a soldier. It will, therefore, perhaps not be amiss if I give you some personal impressions of what the effect of modernization will be on the personnel of the future army in India. They are not just guess-work but based on what has already been done. With new scientific weapons and with modern vehicles, there will inevitably come new ideas and a new outlook. Modernization is likely to give increased impetus to the already high rate of education in the Indian Army; and when nearly every solider on discharge returns to his home with a knowledge of motor-cars and machinery, there may well be a perceptible effect upon the age-old methods of agriculture and ways of living. Modernization in the army may therefore have a considerable indirect effect upon the life of India. Many of those who hear me will regret the passing of the horse. No one regrets it more than myself. But as a soldier who knows the fate which awaits the horse in modern warfare, I rejoice for its sake, that one of the greatest and best of friends of man is in future to be spared the horrors of war.

I must wholly, though respectfully, dissent from the view that India is a military country. And I thank God that it is not. It may be that the Commander-in-Chief has a special meaning for the term which I do not know. Or is it that his India is composed of only the Defence Forces under his command? For me the Defence Forces are of the least importance in the make-up of the nation. I need not be reminded that life would be in constant peril if the forces were withdrawn. The forces notwithstanding, life is not free from peril. There are riots, there are murders, there are dacoities, there are raids. The Defence Forces avail little in all these perils. They generally act after the mischief is done. But the gallant Commander-in-Chief looks at things as a soldier. I and, with me the millions are untouched by the military spirit. From ages past India has had a military caste in numbers wholly insignificant. That caste has had little to do with the millions. This, however, is not the occasion for examining its contribution to the making of India. All I want to state, with the utmost emphasis at my command, is that the description of India as a military country is wrong. Of all the countries in the world India is the least military. Though I have failed with the Working Committee in persuading them, at this supreme moment, to declare their undying

faith in non-violence as the only sovereign remedy for saving mankind from destruction, I have not lost the hope that the masses will refuse to bow to the Moloch of war but will rely upon their capacity for suffering to save the country's honour. How has the undoubted military valour of Poland served her against the superior forces of Germany and Russia? Would Poland unarmed have fared worse if she had met the challenge of these combined forces with the resolution to face death without retaliation? Would the invading forces have taken a heavier toll from an infinitely more valorous Poland? It is highly probable that their essential nature would have made them desist from a wholesale slaughter of innocents.

Of all the organizations of the world the Congress is the best fitted to show it the better way, indeed the only way, to the true life. Its non-violent experiment will have been in vain if, when India wakes up from the present fear, she does not show to the world the way of deliverance from the blood-bath. The criminal waste of life and wealth that is now going on will not be the last if India does not play her natural part by showing that human dignity is best preserved not by developing the capacity to deal destruction but by refusing to retaliate. I have no manner of doubt that if it is possible to train millions in the black art of violence which is the law of the beast, it is more possible to train them in the white art of non-violence which is the law of regenerate man. Anyway if the Commander-in-Chief will look beyond the Defence Forces, he will discover that the real India is not military but peace-loving.

Nor do I contemplate without uneasiness the prospect of Indian soldiers, trained after the modern manner, taking the motor spirit to their homes. Speed is not the end of life. Man sees more and lives more truly by walking to his duty.

ON THE TRAIN TO SIMLA, September 25, 1939

Harijan, 30-9-1939

454. CONUNDRUMS

Thus asks a well-known Congressman :

1. What is your personal attitude towards this war consistent with non-violence?

2. Is it the same as or different from your attitude during the last war?

3. How could you with your non-violence actively associate with and help the Congress whose policy is based on violence in the present crisis?

4. What is your concrete plan based on non-violence to oppose or prevent this war?

The questions conclude a long friendly complaint about my seeming inconsistencies or my inscrutability. Both are old complaints, perfectly justified from the standpoint of the complainants, wholly unjustifed from my own. Therefore my complainants and I must agree to differ. Only this let me say. At the time of writing I never think of what I have said before. My aim is not to be consistent with my previous statements on a given question, but to be consistent with truth as it may present itself to me at a given moment. The result has been that I have grown from truth to truth; I have saved my memory an undue strain; and what is more, whenever I have been obliged to compare my writing even of fifty years ago with the latest, I have discovered no inconsistency between the two. But friends who observe inconsistency will do well to take the meaning that my latest writing may yield unless, of course, they prefer the old. But before making the choice they should try to see if there is not an underlying and abiding consistency between the two seeming inconsistencies.

So far as my inscrutability is concerned, friends should take my assurance that there is never any attempt on my part to suppress my thought when it is relevant. Sometimes it arises from my desire to be brief. And sometimes it must be due to my own ignorance of the subject on which I may be called upon to give an opinion.

To give a typical instance, a friend[1] between whom and me there never is any mental reservation, thus writes[2] in anguish rather than anger :

> In the not-improbable event of India being a theatre of war, is Gandhiji prepared to advise his countrymen to bare their breasts to the enemy's sword? A little while ago I would have pledged my word he would do so, but I am not confident any more.

I can only assure him that, notwithstanding my recent writings, he can retain his confidence that I would give the same advice as he expects I would have given before, or as I gave to the Czechs[3] or the

[1] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri
[2] In a letter dated September 22, addressed to Mahadev Desai
[3] *Vide* "If I were a Czech", 6-10-1938.

Abyssinians[1]. My non-violence is made of stern stuff. It is firmer than the firmest metal known to the scientists. Yet, alas, I am painfully conscious of the fact that it has still not attained its native firmness. If it had, God would have shown me the way to deal with the many local cases of violence that I helplessly witness daily. This is said not in arrogance but in the certain knowledge of the power of perfect non-violence. I will not have the power of non-violence to be underestimated in order to cover my limitations or weaknesses.

Now for a few lines in answer to the questions :

1. My personal reaction towards this war is one of greater horror than ever before. I was not so disconsolate before as I am today. But the greater horror would prevent me today from becoming the self-appointed recruiting sergeant that I had become during the last war. And yet, strange as it may appear, my symapthies are wholly with the Allies. Willy-nilly this war is resolving itself into one between such democracy as the West has evolved and totalitarianism as it is typified in Herr Hitler. Though the part that Russia is playing is painful, let us hope that the unnatural combination will result in a happy though unintended fusion whose shape no one can foretell. Unless the Allies suffer demoralization, of which there is not the slightest indication, this war may be used to end all wars, at any rate of the virulent type that we see today. I have the hope that India, distraught though it is with internal dissensions, will play an effective part in ensuring the desired end and the spread of cleaner democracy than hitherto. This will undoubtedly depend upon how the Working Committee will ultimately act in the real tragedy that is being played on the world stage. We are both actors in and spectators of the drama. My line is cast. Whether I act as a humble guide of the Working Committee or, if I may use the same expression, without offence, of the Government, my guidance will be for the deliberate purpose of taking either or both along the path of non-violence, be the step ever so imperceptible. It is plain that I cannot force the pace either way. I can only use such power as God may endow my head or heart with for the moment.

2. I think I have covered the second question in answering the first.

3. There are degrees of violence as of non-violence. The

[1]*Vide* "Message on Italo-Abyssinian Crisis", on or before 1-8-1935; "Statement on Italo-Abyssinian Crisis", on or before 1-8-1935.

Working Committee has not wilfully departed from the policy of non-violence. It could not honestly accept the real implications of non-violence. I felt that the vast mass of Congressmen had never clearly understood that in the event of danger from without they were to defend the country by non-violent means. All that they had learnt truly was that they could put up a successful fight, on the whole non-violent, against the British Government. Congressmen have had no training in the use of non-violence in other fields. Thus, for example, they had not yet discovered a sure method of dealing successfully in a non-violent manner with communal riots or goondaism. The argument is final inasmuch as it is based on actual experience.

I would not serve the cause of non-violence, if I deserted my best co-workers because they could not follow me in an extended application of non-violence. I therefore remain with them in the faith that their departure from the non-violent method will be confined to the narrowest field and will be temporary.

4. I have no ready-made concrete plan. For me too this is a new field. Only I have no choice as to the means. It must always be purely non-violent, whether I am closeted with the members of the Working Committee or with the Viceroy. Therefore what I am doing is itself part of the concrete plan. More will be revealed to me from day to day, as all my plans always have been. The famous non-co-operation resolution[1] came to me within less than 24 hours of the meeting of the A.I.C.C. at which it was moved in Calcutta in 1920; and so did practically the Dandi March.[2] The foundation of the first civil resistance under the then known name of passive resistance was laid by accident at a meeting of Indians in Johannesburg in 1906[3] con-vened for the purpose of finding the means of combating the anti-Asiatic measure of those days. I had gone to the meeting with no preconceived resolution. It was born at the meeting. The creation is still expanding. But assuming that God had endowed me with full powers (which He never does), I would at once ask the English to lay down arms, free all their vassals, take pride in being called "Little Englanders" and defy all the totalitarians of the world to do their worst. Englishmen will then die unresistingly and go down to history as heroes of non-violence. I would further invite Indians to co-operate with Englishmen in this

[1] *Vide* "The Non-Co-Operation Resolution", 5-9-1920.

[2] On March 12, 1930.

[3] *Vide* "The Mass Meeting", 11-9-1906.

godly martyrdom. It will be an indissoluble partnership drawn up in letters of the blood of their own bodies, not of their so-called enemies. But I have no such general power. Non-violence is a plant of slow growth. It grows imperceptibly but surely. And even at the risk of being misunderstood, I must act in obedience to *"the still small voice"*

ON THE TRAIN TO SIMLA, September 25, 1939

Harijan, 30-9-1939

455. THE OLD REVOLUTIONARY

Readers of *Harijan* know that after twenty-five years, part of which was spent in jail and sixteen in hiding as an absconder, Sardar Prithvi Singh finds himself a free man. He cannot call a life of freedom those sixteen years of dodging the C. I. D., assuming new names and new dresses as circumstances demanded. The reader will recall that Prithvi Singh made up his mind to discover himself to me last year when I was convalescing in Juhu, to confess his past sins and regulate his future under my guidance. I advised him to surrender himself to the police and purge his past by becoming a prisoner amenable to prison discipline by choice. I had told him that though I would try to secure his discharge, he must not bank upon my success but should be content, if necessary, to pass the rest of his life in prison. Quite cheerfully and light-heartedly he showed his preparedness to face life imprisonment. With sincere conviction he accepted the truth that voluntary imprisonment might be as good service of the country as life outside.

I am glad to be able to say that he was true to his word. The readers know from Mahadev Desai's description of him after his visit to the Sardar in Rawalpindi prison that he was a cent percent model prisoner. He endeared himself to his jailors who never found misplaced the trust that they had reposed in him. He learnt wool-spinning and cotton-spinning and worked at the first so assiduously that even his powerfully built body had to take relaxation from strenuous labour. First Pyarelal's and then Mahadev Desai's enthusiastic testimony in favour of Sardar Prithvi Singh's exemplary conduct in the jail decided me. Mahadev Desai felt confident that he could plead the cause successfully before Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan. I let him go. Sir Sikander made a generous response. He was impressed with the truth of Mahadev's description, fortified as it was by the uniformly good reports from the officials in charge of Sardar Prithvi Singh. Mahadev knocked also at the Viceregal gates. The result was

that Sardar Prithvi Singh was delivered to me by the authorities on the 22nd instant.

I greeted him with the remark that he had transferred himself from one jail to another and harder. He smiled a hearty assent. He knows that he is on his trial. He has been a staunch believer in violence as the only way to the deliverance of his country. He has to his credit examples of daring which may be equalled by some but surpassed by no revolutionary. His life is rich in romance. But by patient introspection he discovered that fundamentally his was a life of falsity, and that true deliverance could never come out of falsity. In spite of the glamour that surrounded his life of hiding and the adoration of his companions who marvelled at his exploits, he had wearied of the false life and the hiding. The gymnastic lessons he gave to hundreds of young men had given him no satisfaction. Fortunately he had companions like Nanabhai of Dakshinamurti. They guided his footsteps towards me. I have told him I will not be satisfied unless he becomes a better example of ahimsa in action than I could ever be. I was never full of *himsa* in action except the *himsa* of a coward. He was *himsa* in action personfied. If now he has assimilated ahimsa, his non-violence should be infinitely richer in romance than his past violence. He should by God's grace be a modern exemplar of the proverb: "The greater the sinner the greater the saint." He has shown me authenticated leaves from his diary in which he describes his first night as a voluntary prisoner as death. I pick up the following striking passage from it:

> Today is the day of my surrender when under divine guidance I surrender everything I can call my own. For a period of 25 years I had faced all perils and worked hard to acquire the light which could guide me in the field of service. As a revolutionary of good experience I used to look upon my achievements with pride. 19th May is an eventful day in my life—the day when I realized that by treading the trodden path I would not enrich my nation nor make any contribution to the uplift of humanity. This 19th May is the day of the greatest adventure of my life. The present life has no charm, no meaning for me. I must have a new life. How can I have it without embracing death? But to embrace death is not the objective. A new life is the objective. But how could I come to it except through death? There was not much room for reason. It was faith which led me to make my choice.

May the freedom the Sardar now enjoys prove that his notes were no creation of a heated imagination but were an expression of a yearning soul.

ON THE TRAIN TO SIMLA, September 25, 1939

Harijan, 30-9-1939

456. LETTER TO S. SATYAMURTI AND LAKSHMI

Unrevised

ON THE TRAIN,
September 25, 1939

MY DEAR SATYAMURTI,

I reach your letter of 31st ultimo only today.

Much of your argument perhaps now needs no reply.

You are unnecessarily perturbed about Jawaharlal. In spite of his limitations he is as good as gold. Have we all not our own limitations? You do not know how much members of the Working Committee need him. I cannot impose myself on anyone. My services are ungrudgingly given when they are needed.

I am with you for the most part in the matter of the Parliamentary programmes. But there are great difficulties. Let us see.

I hope you are steadily improving.

Love to Lakshmi[1] .

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI[2]

CHI. LAKSHMI,

Hope you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the original: S. Satyamurti Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Satyamurti's daughter

[2] What follows is in Hindi.

457. LETTER TO P. KODANDA RAO

ON THE TRAIN,
September 25, 1939

MY DEAR KODANDA RAO,

I have your and your partner's letters of good wishes. I know you too well to underrate your affection. I treasure it. About non-violence, I work in faith and I hope with the detachment prescribed in *Gita.*

My love to you both.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI KODANDA RAO
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
POONA 4

From a photostat: G.N. 6285

458. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

ON THE TRAIN,
September 25, 1939

CHI. KAKA,

I have read the accompanying. We should get help. I have assured Margarete.[1] You should write in detail. Remind me when we meet. Shankar must have met you. Wake up Chandan.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7970

459. LETTER TO PYARELAL

ON THE TRAIN,
September 25, 1939

CHI. PYARELAL,

You will have received the letter I wrote you from Nagpur. This is another. I find your absence irksome. Why am I afraid of you? Why this fear of writing or saying anything? Do you know the

[1] Margarete Spiegel

reason? I think I know it. Having frightened you many times I have myself become frightened. Perhaps I have no remedy for this fear. Is it that you too do not have the remedy? In that case the situation is doubly tragic. What has happened to my non-violence? What can non-violence have to do with fear? Think about it and send me a telegram if you can calm down and are able to forget my remarks.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

460. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

ON THE TRAIN,
September 25, 1939

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

Hope you are calm. Keep cheerful and take care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 678

461. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

ON THE TRAIN,
September 25, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

I didn't like going away from you. I will try to return soon. Let God's will be done. Keep cheerful. Serve everyone.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10016. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

462. LETTER TO KANCHANBEHN M. SHAH

ON THE TRAIN,
September 25, 1939

CHI. KANCHAN,

I am sorry that I was not able to talk with you. After I return I will find time at the first opportunity. Try to befriend Amtul Salaam. I hope Munnalal is calm.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8291. Also C.W. 7055. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

463. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

ON THE TRAIN,
September 25, 1939

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I got your letter. It is good. Sardarji has also written. We shall talk when we meet. The story of the Muslim brothers is interesting. By the time you return from Asafpur, you will know about [the] Delhi [dairy]. You will return home only after finishing the job. I am going to Simla. I shall be there for two or three days. I hope Ishwardas is doing good work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1925

464. LETTER TO Y. M. DADOO

ON THE TRAIN [TO WARDHA],
September 27, 1939

MY DEAR DADOO,

Haji Ismail Bhabha writes complaining that satyagrahis are acting violently, that they had gone to the June meeting taking lethal weapons with them, that they were exploiting Muslim women, etc. I have written to him saying that I am writing to you. I suggest your seeing him. Our duty is to see even the opponent's viewpoint and

meet him wherever we can.

I hope things are shaping and proceeding well there.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 4905. Also C.W. 1318. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

465. LETTER TO LADY RAZA ALI

[AS AT] SEGAON,
September 27, 1939

MY DEAR POORVI,

I am writing this on a moving train. Sir Raza[1] told me that you were ailing. I promised to write to you and in order that I may not forget I am writing this now. I hope this will find you fully restored.

Love to you all.

BAPU

LADY RAZA ALI
78 JONES STREET
KIMBERLEY, S. AFRICA

From a photostat: G.N. 7749

466. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 27, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

I arrived this morning. I am leaving for Wardha this evening. You will come, won't you? The car is coming to take you. Come with your luggage. You can keep the car waiting for a while. You will have the opportunity to see Mother and others, won't you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Syed Raza Ali, who was the Agent of the Government of India in South Africa, 1935-38; Member, Central Legislative Assembly, since 1939

467. HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

During my last journey to Simla my attention was drawn to the bitterness with which, it was alleged, the Muslim League and its doings were being criticized in some Congress organs. I have not seen any such criticism for the simple reason that I do not see the papers except for a few moments daily. But if there is any ground for such complaint, it should certainly be removed. The Muslim League is a great organization. Its President was at one time an ardent Congressman. He was the rising hope of the Congress. His battles with Lord Willingdon cannot be forgotten. The Jinnah Hall of the Bombay Congress is a standing monument of the President's labours for the Congress and a mark of Congressmen's generous appreciation of his services. The League contains many members who were wholeheartedly with the Congress during the memorable Khilafat days. I refuse to think that these erstwhile comrades can be as bitter in their hearts towards their fellow-workers of yesterday as their speeches and writings of today will show. It is, therefore, wrong of Congressmen and Congress organs if they are bitter against the League or its individual members. The Congress policy of non-violence should put an easy restraint upon the speech, writings and actions of Congressmen in their dealings with the League and its members. They must resolutely believe and hope that sooner or later, and sooner rather than later, there is to be communal unity, not superficial but real and lasting.

Zahid, the late Big Brother's[1] son, who met me in Simla said, "We must not quarrel. Blood is thicker than water. We are of the same blood. You must work for unity." Other Muslim friends who met me during the journey said: "You must bring about unity. You alone can do it. Heaven help us if unity is not achieved in your lifetime." I have a similar message from a great Muslim.

All this may flatter my vanity. But I know that it does humble me. I wish God had given me the power to realize the hope genuinely expressed by so many Muslim friends. I assure them that not a day passes but I think of and pray for the unity. It is neither for want of will nor effort that I have to be a helpless witness of so much bitterness and quarrelling between the two. I have not lost hope that I shall live to see real unity established between not only Hindus and Muslims but

[1] Shaukat Ali, who died on November 27, 1938

all the communities that make India a nation. If I knew the way to achieve it today, I know that I have the will and the strength to take it, however difficult or thorny it may be. I know too that the shortest and the surest way lies through non-violence. Some Muslim friends tell me that Muslims will never subscribe to unadulterated non-violence. With them, they say, violence is as lawful and necessary as non-violence. The use of either depends upon circumstances. It does not need Koranic authority to justify the lawfulness of both. That is the well-known path the world has traversed through the ages. There is no such thing as unadulterated violence in the world. But I have heard it from many Muslim friends that the Koran teaches the use of non-violence.

It regards forbearance as superior to vengeance. The very word Islam means peace, which is non-violence. Badshah Kha[1] a staunch Muslim who never misses his *namaz* and Ramzan, has accepted out-and-out non-violence as his creed. It would be no answer to say that he does not live up to his creed, even as I know to my shame that I do not. If there is difference in our actions, the difference is not one of kind, it is of degree. But argument about non-violence in the holy Koran is an interpolation, not necessary for my thesis.

I hold that for the full play of non-violence only one party need believe in it. Indeed if both believe in it and live up to it, there is no appreciation or demonstration of it. To live at peace with one another is the most natural thing to do. But neither party gains the merit that the exercise of non-violence carries with it. Unfortunately, at the present moment, those Hindus who do not know the use of violence, though they have it in their hearts, are sorry for their incapacity and would fain learn the trick—I won't call it the art—of violence, so as to be able to match what they describe as Muslim violence. And if peace is to be brought about by both parties being equally matched in the use of violence both offensive and defensive, I know that peace will not come in my lifetime and, if it came, I should not care to be witness of it. It will be an armed peace to be broken at any moment. Such has been the peace in Europe. Is not the present war enough to make one sick of such peace?

Muslim friends who hope much from me will perhaps now recognize my agony for the unattainment of peace in spite of the travail that I have gone through and am still going through. They

[1] Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan

should also see that my principal work lies through teaching at least the Hindus to learn the art of non-violence unless I can bring the Muslims to the position the Ali Brothers and their associates took up during the Khilafat days. They used to say: "Even if our Hindu brethren cut us to pieces, yet will we love them. They are our kith and kin." The late Maulana Abdul Bari used to say: "Muslims of India will never forget the ungrudging and unconditional support that Hindus have given to us at this critical period of our history." I am sure that both Hindus and Muslims of those days are the same today that they were then. But times have changed and with them have changed our manners. I have no shadow of a doubt that our hearts will meet some day. What seems impossible today for us God will make possible tomorrow. For that day I work, live and pray.

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA, September 28, 1939
Harijan, 7-10-1939

468. NOTES

A STRIKING THOUGHT

A Pathan friend who met me during the journey, talking about violent deeds, said: "You know the Government is strong enough to put down any violence however organized it may be in our country, but your non-violence is uncanny. You have given our country a wonderful weapon. No Government in the world can put down non-violence." I complimented my visitor on the striking thought he gave me. In one sentence he presented the matchless beauty of non-violence. If only India can understand the full implications of the remark so naturally, so effortlessly made by the Pathan friend, she will become unconquerable in the face of any combination of invaders. Ten to one there will be no raid on a people trained in non-violence. Indeed the weakest State can render itself immune from attack if it learns the art of non-violence. But a small State, no matter how powerfully armed it is, cannot exist in the midst of a powerful combination of well-armed States. It has to be absorbed by or be under the protection of one of the members of such a combination. Well does Badshah Khan say, as reported by Pyarelal during my last tour in his province :

> We would have fared ill if we had not learnt the lesson of non-violence. We have taken it up quite selfishly. We are born fighters and we keep up the

tradition by fighting amongst ourselves. Once a murder takes place in a family or a clan it becomes a point of honour to avenge it. There is no such thing generally as forgiveness among us. And so there is avenging and re-avenging and re-re-avenging. And thus the vicious circle never ends. This non-violence has come to us as a positive deliverence.

What is true of the Frontier Provice is true of all of us. Without knowing it we move in the vicious circle of violence. A little reflection and corresponding practice should enable us to get out of the circle.

NARSINGHGARH

The reader knows that at the invitation of the Dewan of Narsinghgarh and with the consent of the Secretary of the Central India States Conference I had sent Rajkumari Amrit Kaur to inquire into certain allegations made against the State. The Rajkumari was given every facility by the State to make what inquiry she liked. Shri Kanhaiyalal Vaidya was present during the enquiry. The Rajkumari's way was made easy by the State giving her every facility. The immediate cause of complaint was soon settled to the satisfaction of all concerned. The Maharaja has given cautious assurances of civil liberty. The people of these States have hitherto been strangers to civil liberty and all it means. I hope the Maharaja and his advisers will remember that civil liberty means the fullest liberty, consistent with non-violence, to speak, write and do what the people like, even though it may mean strong criticism of the acts of the State. He has, however given full permission to Shri Vaidya to do khadi, Harijan and other constructive work. He has also requested the Rajkumari to send Shri Shankerlal Banker or a representative of the A.I.S.A. to the State in order to explore the possibilities of khadi work in the State which grows plenty of cotton. He has also shown interest in other village industries and basic education. I hope that the beginning so well made will continue uninterrupted, and that the people of Narsinghgarh will show political, economic, social and moral progress on an ever-increasing scale. From the correspondence I had with the Dewan, I have reason to hope for the best. Much will depend upon the sym-pathy of the Maharaja and his advisers towards all-round progress and the restrained manner in which the workers use the liberty given by the State. I must congratulate the Maharaja and the Dewan on having shown wisdom and courage in calling in the Congress aid (for my aid is virtually Congress aid) for settling their domestic difficulty. This is perhaps the second instance of its kind.

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA, September 28, 1939
Harijan, 7-10-1939

469. ANSWER TO QUESTION[1]

September 28, 1939

I am an optimist, I have pinned my faith in hope. The world lives on hope and so do I.

I am sure that I shall get something.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-9-1939

470. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS [2]

SEGAON,
September 28, 1939

An advance copy of Reuter's summary of the Lords' debate on Indian affairs has been shown to me. Perhaps silence on my part at this juncture would be a distinct disservice both to India and England. I was unprepared for the old familiar flavour in the debate in the shape of drawing comparisons unflattering to the Congress. I maintain that the Congress is an all-inclusive body. Without offence to anybody it can be said of it that it is the one body that has represented for over half a century, without a rival, the vast masses of India irrespective of class or creed. It has not a single interest opposed to that of the Mussalmans or that of the people of the States. Recent years have shown unmistakably that the Congress represents beyond doubt the interests of the people of the States. It is that organization which has asked[3] for a clear definition of the British intentions. If the British are fighting for the freedom of all, then their representatives have to state in the clearest possible terms that the freedom of India is necessarily included in the war aim. The content of such freedom can only be decided by Indians and them alone. Surely it is wrong for Lord Zetland to complain as he does, though in gentle terms, that the Congress should, at this juncture when Britain is engaged in a life-and-death struggle, ask for a clear declaration of British intentions. I suggest that the Congress has done nothing strange or less than

[1] The source reported that "when Gandhiji passed through Nagpur *en route* to Wardha", he was asked by some people "about his interview with H.E. the Viceroy".

[2] This appeared under the title "Open a New Chapter". The statement was also published by the *The Bombay Chronicle* and *The Hindu* on September 29.

[3] *Vide* Appendices "Congress Working Committee Resolution", after 18-7-1939; "Working Committee's Manifesto", 14-9-1939; and "A.I.C.C. Resolution", 14-10-1939.

honourable in asking for such a declaration. Only a free India's help is of value. And the Congress has every right to know that it can go to the people and tell them that at the end of the war India's status as an independent country is as much assured as that of Great Britain. As a friend of the British I, therefore, appeal to English statesmen that they will forget the old language of imperialists and open a new chapter for all those who have been held under imperial bondage.

Harijan, 7-10-1939

471. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON,
September 29, 1939

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter after I had sent you the wire. However, I intend to send Rajkumari as I informed you in the wire. She will certainly be of some use. She will see Mr. Gibson and Virawala Saheb, do the work which I have suggested from a humanitarian point of view and such other things. She will visit other places if she likes. Please arrange about her stay, etc. She will not like to run about very much, and, therefore, don't make her do that. Arrange to send her back on the 10th or the 11th.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I got Chhaganlal's letter. I will make arrangements for the money only after consulting you. I will send with Rajkumari whatever yarn I have spun. The rest with anybody who happens go to that side later.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8563. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

472. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

SEGAON,
September 29, 1939

CHI. KUNVARJI[1],

How are you? I had made inquiries regarding Dharampur. Nobody recommends it. The climate of Dharampur is certainly good, but the sanatorium is not reputed to be good. It would be difficult to get accommodation at Almora. It is reserved only for patients from the United Provinces. If you don't feel comfortable there, we can arrange something in Nagpur. Show this to Jugatram[2] and then write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9728

473. LETTER TO MANUBEHN AND SURENDRA MASHRUWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 29, 1939

CHI. MANUDI, SURENDRA,

Ba gave me the news about Surendra's illness. How is he now? I could not reply to your letter. I am enclosing a letter[1] to Kunvarji. You will forward it to him, won't you? I will be going again to Delhi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1575. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

[1] Husband of Rami, Harilal Gandhi's daughter
[2] Jugatram Vaidya
[1] *Vide* the preceding item

474. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

September 29, 1939

CHI. AMRITLAL,

There can be no post from Simla today. I therefore, do now know what the position is. There is no letter fromVijaya. Shankar was to come. Why didn't he? Let him have his meal here tomorrow. I will talk with him at 11.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10796

475. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON,
September 29, 1939

CHI. NIMU,

I get no time to write to you. Ramdevji came to see me. He could not speak and broke down. Vidyavati too was present. All of them asked after you. I arrived here yesterday. I will be going to Delhi again on Sunday. Are the children all right? Ba told me that you had fallen ill. You ought to use a mosquito-net—you, Ramdas and the children, all of you. Mosquito-nets manufactured by the Calico Mills are good. Have you taken away the Gujarati 'General Knowledge about Health'? If you have, return it to me. I have made some changes in it. If you want another copy, I will send it on.

I am not writing separately to Ramdas. Take this letter to be for both of you. Write to me. Ramdas also should write. How are things with you ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

476. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

September 30, 1939

CHI. MUNNALAL,

There may or may not be any sin in touch, but violation of a pledge is a very great sin indeed. If, however, the pledge is violated

again, you and Kanchan should quietly leave the Ashram. To enable you to keep the vow, you should not talk with each other, nor work together or take service from each other. I would advise you to go away for some time to Ramana Maharshi's Ashram. If you think that the self-control suggested above is beyond your capacity, you should give up ambition to cultivate it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8560. Also C.W. 7054. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

477. NOTE TO PYARELAL

September 30, 1939

You cannot write an article without knowing anything about the kind of paper for which you intend to write. You can write one thing for the *Modern Review*, another thing for the *Chronicle* and yet another for the *Harijan*. You do not even know where the paper is. Is it some obscure print-out or a reputed paper? The article in question can only be for a paper like the *Statesman*. It is good as an article. But it is not accurate. It is only in praise of the experiment at Segaon. Mentally I decry it every day. I will not support what you write. There is exaggeration in the article and, in avoiding the mention of the shortcomings of the people living at Segaon, it has become wholly false. Anyone coming here with the impression gathered from that article would go back disappointed. Hence, so long as the other side too is not presented it would he mere untruth.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

478. TELEGRAM TO G. V. GURJALE[1]

[*September 1939*][2]

RECEIVED LETTER, WIRE. NO RIGHT INTERFERE YOUR RESOLVE.[3] MAY GOD GUIDE YOU KEEP YOUR HEART FREE FROM ANGER.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

479. NOTES

THANKS

Sir Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan has made much of my seventy-first birthday. He has sent me his book[4] of praises from friends, known and unknown to me. With it he has been good enough to send also a covering letter of further appreciation. I do not know when I shall have the time to go through all the tributes collected in the volume. I can only pray that God may give me the capacity to live up to the contributors' picture of me whatever it may be. To Sir Sarvepalli and all those who have sent me their blessings and greetings, I return my thanks hereby. It is impossible for me to send personal acknowledgements.

One warning I should like to issue to my admirers. Some would like to erect my statues in public places, some others would have portraits, yet others would proclaim my birthday as a public holiday. C. Rajagopalachari knows me well and so he has wisely vetoed the proposal to declare my birthday a public holiday. These are days of dissensions and discord. I should feel deeply humiliated if my name became in any way an occasion for accentuating them. Avoidance of such opportunity is a real service to the country and me. Statues, photographs and the like have no place today. The only praise I would like and treasure is promotion of the activities to which my life is dedicated. He or she who does a single act to produce communal harmony or to destroy the demon of untouchability or to advance the cause of the villages, brings me real joy and peace. Workers are

[1] Also known as Bhikshu Nirmalananda

[2] In the source the telegram is kept among the September 1939 items; *vide also* "Letter to G. V. Gurjale", 18-10-1939.

[3] According to Pyarelal, the addressee had decided to go on an indefinite fast unless the trustees of the Sri Kripapuriswarar temple allowed Harijans to enter the temple in accordance with the public wish.

[4] *Mahatma Gandhi—Essays and Reflections on Mahatma Gandhi*

striving during these days to dispose of the khadi stock that has accumulated in various khadi bhandars. I can conceive no greater or more tangible blessing to me than to know that the whole of the surplus khadi stock was taken up by the people during the khadi week or fortnight mis-named after me. I am nothing without or apart from my activities.

FURTHER FALSEHOODS

I had the misfortune to remark the other day[1] on the sanatanist propaganda being supported by falsehoods. I have the following wires from Madura and Kumbakonam respectively :

> Srirangam temple being forcibly entered today. Armed Madura temple peons dispersing opposing orthodox worshippers. This is waging war during world war. Pray issue immediate instructions suspending such high-handedness. We have after all to live together. K. R. VENKATARAMA IYER.

> Minister Rajan threatening Harijan-entry Srirangam with police. Pray interference to avoid bloodshed. Inform Rajaji. KUPPUSAMI.

Rajaji happened to be in Wardha when these wires were received. He gave the following reply :

> There is no Harijan-entry being tried in Srirangam. This is impossible without Government consent, and the Government has not yet given any such consent.

In the face of this flat denial I can only regard the wires as figments of imagination. It is noteworthy that there is no complaint from Srirangam itself. Madura and Kumbakonam are too far from Srirangam to know first-hand what may happen there. Trichy is the only town near enough to Srirangam to know events there, if the people interested themselves in the happenings in that temple town. An opposition that requires palpable falsehoods to support it, must be on its last legs. I have seen correspondence which shows that Meenakshi temple has not been boycotted by anybody except a few orthodox Brahmins. It is as popular as ever with the vast mass of temple-going population.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, October 1, 1939

Harijan, 7-10-1939

[1] *Vide* "Temple Entry", 18-9-1939.

480. LACK OF SENSE OF HUMOUR

I cannot resist publishing the following very frank and well-meaning letter addressed to the Editor :

> I earnestly request you to be kind enough to give me a few minutes to clear some of my doubts. I write this letter not as a critic. I am an ardent seeker after truth and one of the many 'Ekalavyas' of Bapuji.
>
> I am rather very much pained to read the following in this week's *Harijan* in the course of a note under the caption "Why Only Prohibition"[1] written by Bapuji: "Therefore if I treated these evils as I have treated the drink evil and if I begin to organize picketing in respect of them, I should lose my caste, lose my mahatmaship and even lose my head which of course has very little value at this time of my life. But as I do not wish to suffer the triple loss, I must allow my correspondent and others like him to think that I am shirking an obvious duty."
>
> I was not prepared for the above note, especially the portion quoted by me, along with his previous writings and my reading of his life. For, I was, and am still, of the opinion that Bapuji stands for 'Truth' and he would be ready to lose any donation whatever it may be, his mahatmaship, his caste and, if necessary, even his head for the sake of Truth, i. e., God.
>
> Now let us examine some of his writings. In his *Autobiography* (Part V, Ch. X) he says when he accepted Dudabhai, an untouchable, and his family, "All monetary help, however, was stopped. . . . With the stopping of monetary help came rumours of proposed social boycott. We were prepared for all this."[2]
>
> This clearly indicates that he was not ready to accept donations or maintain his caste at the cost of his principle, i. e., Truth.
>
> In an article "Truth *v. Brahmacharya*" (*Young India*, February 25, 1926) he says: "My mahatmaship is worthless. It is due to my outward activities, due to my politics, which is the least part of me and is therefore evanescent. What is of abiding worth is my insistence on truth, non-violence and *brahmacharya*."[3] In yet another article he has tried to show the "Handicap of Mahatmaship"[4] (*Young India*, Nov. 8, 1928).
>
> What else is necessary to show that he cares naught for his mahatmaship?

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 21-8-1939.
[2] *Vide* "An Autobiography-PartV, On The Anvil", Chapter X,.
[3] *Vide* "Truth v. *Brahmacharya*", 25-2-1926.
[4] *Vide* "Handicap of Mahatmaship", 8-11-1928.

Moreover he says in the course of a conversation reported in *Harijan*, August 29, 1936: "I am here to serve no one else but myself, to find my own realization. . . . Man's ultimate aim is the realization of God, and all his activities, social, political religious have to be guided by the ultimate aim of the vision of God."[1] In another place (*Young India*, October 11, 1928) he says: "I know too that I shall never know God if I do not wrestle with and against evil even at the cost of life itself."[2]

I hope that these are enough to prove that he stands for Truth and not for anything else. It may be perhaps that he does not recognize these evils, viz., gambling, race, cinema, etc., as such or so dangerous as the evil of drink or untouchability to lead an agitation against them, "to wrestle with and against them at the cost of life itself".

Anyhow I am sure that there will be a number of readers of *Harijan* like me who will not be prepared to read a statement like this from the pen of Bapuji. Now I ask you what does he stand for? For donations, caste, mahatmaship, etc., at the cost of Truth, or for Truth at the cost of all these? Will you kindly refer this to Bapuji and correct the misunderstanding created by the above note ?

If the writer, who is manifestly a close student of my writings and is himself a schoolmaster, took seriously my note in *Harijan* about gambling, etc., there must be quite a number of other readers who too had the same doubts as the correspondent. The correspondent has quoted enough from my writings to enable him to know that the note was written in a humorous vein. But unfortunately many of us have no sense of humour. Therefore, in order to secure appreciation, humour evidently has to be boldly labelled as such. The reader should have known that by writing the note I had expressed my disapproval of cinemas, races, share market, gambling and the like. I had tried to show also that these vices were fashionable and therefore were not capable of being dealt with like prohibition. I claim to be a practical reformer. I know almost instinctively what vices are ripe for being publicly dealt with. Of course it may be that I lack the courage to tackle the others and cover my cowardice by pleading untimeliness. No man can get over his limitations beyond a point.

But my correspondent has shown from my writings that at the time I had the courage to the face unpopularity and loss of everything. Let those who might have been disturbed by my innocent note

[1] *Vide* "A Discussion with Maurice Frydman", on or before 25-8-1936.
[2] *Vide* "God Is"11-10-1928.

reassure themselves that I retain the same spirit as before to face difficulties and trials in the prosecution of public causes. Time has not weakened it in any way; it has, if possible, strengthened it. But I am humble enough to restrain my ambition and to feel thankful to God for what capacity He has vouchsafed to me for the service of the country and humanity.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, October 1, 1939

Harijan, 14-10-1939

481. LETTER TO GOBIND DAS CONSUL

ON THE TRAIN,
October 1, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

I have just glanced through your production for five minutes. I have nothing whatsoever to say against the front page or the contents. You have every right to express your views in the manner that may seem best to you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile: Mahatma Gandhi—The Great Rogue of India, between pp. 4 and 5

482. UNFORTUNATE PEOPLE OF TRAVANCORE

An evil fate seems to dog the career of the people of Travancore in so far as they are represented by the State Congress. The Congress is composed of some of its bravest and most self-sacrificing men. But unfortunately there never have been happy relations between them and the able Dewan of the State. The charges brought against him by the Congress in the preliminary stages of the movement for responsible government somehow or other acerbated the relations. The framers of the charges, as I happen to know from personal conversations with them, honestly believed in them. But when I reasoned with them that they were bound to withdraw them if their cause was the attainment of responsible government, and not the removal of the Dewan—a case in which India could not be interested—they saw the wisdom of my advice and promptly acted upon it. This cleared the

ground for them and made their case unassailable. But I feel that the estrangement created by the charges between the Dewan and the leaders has persisted. I wish it has been otherwise. Though civil disobedience has been discontinued and personal talks between the Dewan and the leaders have taken place, cordiality between them has been lacking. On the contrary there has been a ring of distrust about their talks. The Dewan has kept himself at a safe distance from the leaders. Negotiations after a struggle are generally preceded by discharge of prisoners and withdrawal of prosecutions and removal of other disabilities. In Travancore these things have not happened. Cancellations of lawyers' *sanads* and suspension of elected members of the Assembly remain. In fact there is not much sign of an advance by the State towards the leaders. And now comes like a bombshell suspension of negotiations for political reform. These are the words of the Travancore communique[1] :

> For reasons which must be obvious and which have, for instance, influenced the Government of India in their decision[2] regarding the Federal negotiations, no conversations can possibly take place regarding any constitutional reforms until normal conditions are restored and the position is stabilized.

This is followed by the following minatory warning :

> With reference to the statement to the Press issued by the President of the Travancore State Congress and his letter to the Dewan, Government wish to point out while they do not intend to curb or put a check upon ordinary activities of political organizations and while their ideas are unaltered as to consultations with political organizations and leaders as soon as conditions permit, they cannot possibly allow an organized scheme of agitation to be conducted at this juncture, in view of the present situation and especially the likelihood of increased unemployment owing to war conditions and the public excitement that may be caused by the situation regarding foodstuffs and other commodities. Such a scheme of agitation is bound to give rise to serious repercussions and results, and the Government, who have a duty to protect the law-abiding inhabitants of the State, cannot possibly take the risks involved thereby nor can they at present devote any attention to questions relating to constitutional demands. Government desire to warn the Travancore State

[1] Dated September 23, 1939

[2] Addressing a joint session of both the Houses of the Central Legislature on September 11, the Viceroy had announced that the work in connection with the preparations for Federation were held in suspense in view of the war.

Congress and other organizations with similar programme that they will be forced to take steps both under the ordinary law and under the Defence of Travancore Proclamation and Rules for maintaining normal conditions and a peaceful atmosphere in the State.

The reason for suspension of contemplated reform is wholly unconvincing. So far as I know in no State has such suspension been thought necessary. Indeed I venture to suggest that the offer of the States to the British Government lacks the spirit assumed to be behind the aims of the Allies, viz., the saving of democracy for the world. The States' offer to be consistent with the time spirit has to carry with it the will and the co-operation of their people. This is clearly impossible if the people of the States do not feel that they are partners with the Princes in the administration of the States. Viewed in this light, the grant to the people of the greatest measures of responsibility consistent with their own safety becomes a first and first-class war measure so far as the States are concerned. And who will say that the people of Travancore, where education has for years been given to the people on a liberal scale, are ready for shouldering the burden of managing their own affairs? The responsibility in large States can mean no more than that of a big corporation in the Provinces. This suspension of political advance in Travancore on the ground of war comes as a shock and a surprise. What connection political reform in the States has with the suspension of Federation is not easy to understand. But for the opposition of the Princes, the Muslim League and the Congress, Federation would have come long ago; and I make bold to say that the British Government would gladly bring it in today if the three parties desire it. Political reform in the States is overdue and has to come irrespective of Federation.

I mean no offence to the Princes when I say that generally speaking they may in a sense be compared to Herr Hitler. The difference is that they have not his dash, energy, resourcefulness and capacity. Every one of the Princes has the powers of absolute autocrats, and they have times without number exercised such powers. In their own sphere they enjoy powers which the British monarchs have not possessed for centuries. The present British King is merely the first citizen of his country. He cannot arrest a single person at his mere wish. He cannot administer corporal punishment to a single person without coming like any other citizen under the law of the State. This severe limitation on the British monarchy is rightly the envy of the world. But every Indian Prince is a Hilter in his own State.

He can shoot his people without coming under any law. Hilter enjoys no greater powers. If I am not mistaken, the German Constitution does impose some limits on the Fuhrer. Great Britain's position as the self-constituted guardian of democracy is compromised so long as it has more than 500 autocrats as its allies. The Princes will render Great Britain a real service when they can offer their services not as so many autocrats but as true representa-tives of their people. I venture, therefore, to suggest to Sir C. P. Rama-swami Aiyar, the distinguished constitutional lawyer that he is, that he has ill served the people and the Prince of Travancore and the British Government by suspending political reform and threatening the State Congress with dire consequences if it dares to carry on the contemplated agitation for political advance during these times.

NEW DELHI, October 2, 1939

Harijan, 7-10-1939

483. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

BIRLA HOUSE, ALBUQUERQUE ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
October 2, 1939

CHI. AMRIT,

This is just to send you love. We had a boisterous journey—crowds throughout. The Gwalior crowd was the worst. I was calm. I had to take care of my silence. You must not overstrain yourself. I have gone through most of the letters in the file.[1]

Majid must have come. I trust the other files are being looked into. The mail received up to Monday, i. e., of two days, could have been despatched.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3937. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7246

[1] The rest of the letter is in Hindi.

484. MESSAGE TO BRITISH PEOPLE[1]

October 3, 1939

It will be a very serious tragedy in this tragic war if Britain is found to fail in the very first test of sincerity of her professions about democracy. Do those declarations, or do they not, include the full freedom of India according to the wishes of her people? This is a very simple and elementary question asked by the Congress. The Congress has the right to ask that question. I hope that the answer will be as it is expected by the Congress and, let me say, all those who wish well by Great Britain.

The Hindu, 4-10-1939

485. CABLE TO AGATHA HARRISON

NEW DELHI,
October 5, 1939

AGATHA HARRISON
2 CRANBOURNE COURT, ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD
LONDON

RECEIVED[2]. HAVE WRITTEN REGULARLY AIRMAIL. UNHOPEFUL.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1512

486. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA,
October 6, 1939

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have Sushila's letter. No matter what happens and how it happens, we must patiently and cheerfully bear it and do our duty. The letter for Medh is enclosed. Knowing that my Diwali greetingss may not reach you with this, I intend to send a few words by cable.

[1] This was sent through *The Manchester Guardian* correspondent in India.

[2] The reference is to the addressee's cable (G.N. 1511) of September 30, which read: "My birthday wish is increased strength your peace work for India and world. Hampered by lack direct information from you."

Have the two organizations there come together? Manilal and the children must be well now. We shall reach Wardha this evening.

The accompanying is for Medh.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4906

487. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

ON THE TRAIN,
October 6, 1939

CHI. VALJI,

I agree with what Chitre writes about [your] diet. I see you have gained nothing special by staying there. If you come over to Wardha, we can try some other ways. You must get all right. If my suggestion appeals to you, start immediately. If you have no money, borrow some from someone there. I could not understand Chitre's question regarding money.

Blessings from

BAPU

PROF. V. G. DESAI
T. B. SANATORIUM
P. O. VANIVILAS MOHALLA
MYSORE

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7488. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

488. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

ON THE TRAIN,
October 6, 1939

CHI. LILA,

I have your letter. Where do I have the time to write to my heart's content? You should complete what you have taken in hand. Do not think of coming before the long vacation. I may not be able to write, but you should keep on writing. Dwarkadas, Damayanti and the children will be well. We shall be reaching Wardha today.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI LILAVATIBEHN ASAR
NEW ERA SCHOOL
HUGHES ROAD
BOMBAY-7

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

489. LETTER TO SARASWATI GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN,
October 6, 1939

CHI. SURU,

I have your letter, but only one. No matter how displeased I may be, I do expect a letter from you both. Is not my displeasure born of my love? There has been no letter from Kanti. That is just like him and so I do not mind. All I want is that both of you remain happy, healthy and pure. May God help you rise.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SARASWATI GANDHI
C/O SHRI PILLAY
NEYATINKARA
TRAVANCORE

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6177. Also C.W. 3451. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi.

490. LETTER TO KUNDAR DIWAN

ON THE TRAIN,
October 6, 1939

BHAI KUNDAR,

I do not write to you because Krishnachandra has been writing. Balkrishna will certainly gain strength. Rest and diet are normal prescription. He complains about lack of sleep. I am thinking of doing something about it. I may ask him to come over to Segaon during the cold season. I shall consult the doctor.

What suggestions can I give you regarding the *takli*? We are reaching Wardha this evening.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 215

491. AN EYE-OPENER

The following note on the development of khadi work in the Ernad taluk up to the end of June 1939 should open the eyes of sceptics as to the possibilities of khadi as a ready-made means of giving remunerative employment to the needy millions :[1]

> Hand-spinning was started by the A.I.S.A. in Ernad taluk as an experimental measure at Pulickal in June 1937. The area has had no tradition for hand-spinning. Therefore, all those who took to hand-spinning had to be taught the art of spinning and carding afresh. . . .
>
> This successful experiment conducted at Pulickal encouraged the A.I.S.A. to include in the Government grant for khadi for 1938-39 a scheme for starting four more centres in the taluk, viz., Nediyiruppu, Pandikkad, Randhani and Tirurangadi. . . By the end of June 1939 there were 1,233 spinners trained up in the taluk. . . .
>
> The total expenditure. . . . has come to Rs. 5,830-8-10. . . The cost of implements itself comes to Rs. 3,482-0-6, the whole of which was met out of the Government grant. . . . Rs. 488-15-9 was spent out of A.I.S.A. funds in the initial stages at Pulickal and other centres. . . .
>
> Due to . . . proper training to spinners, the quality of yarn produced is of a very high standard. . .

[1] Only extracts from the note by C.K. Karth, Secretary, A.I.S.A., Ernad, are reproduced here.

From February 1939, while we insisted on quality, we also increased the spinning wages by 17.19 per cent of the cost of yarn. . . .

Efforts are being made to induce the spinners to be habitual wearers of khadi. To facilitate this work yarn deposits are collected from each spinner. . . . Khadi. . . . at nearly cost price is being issued to spinners in exchange for yarn thus deposited. . . .

A khadi weaving centre is being started at Tirurangadi. . . . There is still a demand from different places for introduction of hand-spinning. A separate scheme for further development of khadi work in the taluk has been submitted as part of the scheme of utilization of the Government grant for 1939-40.

Harijan, 7-10-1939

492. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
October 7, 1939

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I missed you last night. But I was glad to learn that you had gone to fulfil your mission.[1] You will keep your health in proper order and condition. I found the papers in extraordinarily good condition. You will leave there on 11th instant and report yourself in Segaon on 13th. Of course a car will await you at the station.

More from Mahadev.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3660. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6469

[1] The reference seems to be to her visit to Morvi; *vide* "Famine Work in Morvi", 16-10-1939; also "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 29-9-1939.

493. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 7, 1939

CHI. NARANDAS,

I hope the *Rentia Baras* programme will pass off well under Rajkumari Amrit Kaurbehn's chairmanship. I very much like your decision to make the spinning *yajna* a permanent feature, and I hope large numbers of men and women will welcome it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8567. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

494. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 7, 1939

CHI. VIJAYA,

I have a letter from you after a long time. Do not be so slack again. It is all right if you have gone to Varad. As long as one breathes, one should not lose hope. Both the views are correct. The best thing is to rely on Ramanama. And it is also good to put in best efforts. I am sending your letter to Amritlal. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7119. Also C.W. 4611. Courtesy: Vijaybehn M. Pancholi

495. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 7, 1939

CHI. JAMNADAS,

What have you been doing? Why don't you make enough effort to build up your body? How can you afford to feel old at this age? Now stay there and take rest and leave Rajkot only after you have fully recovered your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8565. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

496. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 8, 1939

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I got your postcard. I had made arrangements for you at Nagpur. But since you went to Miraj, I wired to you not to come away in haste. The poor have but to put up with common hardships. I, therefore, encouraged you to stay on. Now patiently overcome the other difficulties that may arise and see if you derive any benefit. If you do not improve write to me immediately. Keep me informed about your progress. Do not send for the children. The best plan would be for Bali[1] to take them to Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Surendra will write more from Bombay.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9729

497. INDIA'S ATTITUDE

On the 27th August last, i.e., just before the senseless war broke out, Shrimati Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya wrote to me as follows :

[1] Balibehn M. Adalaja, sister of the addressee's mother-in-law

I have sent you an appeal through *The Bombay Chronicle,* asking you to voice the attitude of India and of the exploited peoples of the East on the present situation. What I meant was not mere reiteration of our old position that we can have nothing to do with this imperialist war, but something more than that. The present conflict is mainly centred round the usual scramble for colonies, or spheres of influence as they are now called in polite phraseology. On this question the world thinks there are only two opinions, for it hears only two views: one which believes in the maintaining of the *satus quo;* the other which wants a change but on the same basis, in other words, a redistribution of the loot and the right to exploit, which of course means war. It is in the very nature of things that such a redistribution can never come about without an armed conflict. Whether there will be anyone or anything left to enjoy, of course, is another question. But the world is mainly torn between these two. If the thesis of the one is accepted, then that of the other should also be. For, if England and France have the right to rule over large tracts and big nations, then Germany and Italy have an equal right. There is as little moral justification in the former countries crying halt to Hitler as there is in his what he calls his rightful claims.

That there is a third view the world hardly seems to think, for it rarely hears it. And it is so essential that it should find expression: the voice of the people who are mere pawns in the game. Neither Danzig nor the Polish corridor is the issue. The issue is the principle on which the whole of this present Western civilization is based; the right of the strong to rule and exploit the weak. Therefore it is centered round the whole colonial question, and Hitler and Mussolini are never tired of reminding the world of that. And that is exactly the reason why England has raised the cry of the Empire in danger. This question therefore vitally concerns all of us.

We are against the *status quo.* We are fighting against it for we want a change in it. But our alternative is not war for we know that the real solution does not lie there. We have an alternative to offer which is the only solution of this horrible muddle and the key to future world peace. It is this which I would like to be placed before the world. It may seem today like a cry in the wilderness; still we know that it is the voice which will ultimately prevail; and it is those hands which seem so feeble before these mailed fists that will finally reshape a battered humanity.

You are eminently fitted to give voice to it. India has, I think, a peculiar place today in the colonies of the world. It has both a moral prestige and organizational strength enjoyed by few colonies. The others look to it for a lead in many matters. It has already shown to the world a superior technique

of struggle whose moral value the world is bound to appreciate some day. India has therefore to tell a very distraught and maddened world that there is another path humanity must tread if it would save itself from these periodical disasters and bring peace and harmony to a bleeding world. It is only those who have suffered so much against this system and who are bravely struggling to change it that can speak with all the conviction and moral basis necessary, speak not only for themselves but all the exploited peoples of the world.

I am sorry I had not seen Shrimati Kamaladevi's letter to the *Chronicle*. Try as I will, I simply cannot do adequate justice to the reading of newspapers. The letter then remained on my file for want of time to deal with it. But I think delay has not affected the object of her letter. Perhaps this is the psychological moment for me to express what is or should be India's attitude. I agree with Kamaladevi's analysis of the motives of the parties to the war. Both are fighting for their existence and for the furtherance of their policies. There is, however, this great difference between the two; however incomplete or equivocal the declarations of the Allies are, the world has interpreted them to mean that they are fighting for saving democracy. Herr Hitler is fighting for the extension of the German boundaries, although he was told that he should allow his claims to be submitted to an impartial tribunal for examination. He contemptuously rejected the way of peace or persuasion and chose that of the sword. Hence my sympathy for the cause of the Allies. But my sympathy must not be interpreted to mean endorsement, in any shape or form, of the doctrine of the sword for the defence even of proved right. Proved right should be capable of being vindicated by right means as against the rude, i.e., sanguinary, means. Man may and should shed his own blood for establishing what he considers to be his 'right'. He may not shed the blood of his opponent who disputes his 'right' India as represented by the Congress has been fighting in order to prove her 'right', not by the sword but by the non-violent method. And she has carved out for herself a unique place and prestige in the world although she is yet far—let us hope, not very far—from the independence of her dream. Her novel method has evidently struck the imagination of the world. It has the right to expect India to play a decisive part in this war, which no people of the world have wanted, by insisting that the peace this time is not to be a mockery designed to share among the victors the spoils of war and to humiliate the vanquished. Jawaharlal Nehru, who has a right to speak for the Congress, has said in stately language that the peace must mean freedom for those who are held in bondage by

the imperialist powers of the world. I have every hope that the Congress will also be able to show the world that the power the armaments give to defend right is nothing compared to the power that non-violence gives to do the same thing and that too with better show of reason. Armaments can show no reason, they can make only a pretence of it.

SEGAON, OCTOBER 9, 1939

Harijan, 14-10-1939

498. TWEEDLEDUM AND TWEEDLEDEE

In dealing with the situation in Travancore last week[1] I omitted to refer to the controversy between the Dewan and the State Congress as to the source of the information on the basis of which I had wired[2] to the Dewan hoping that his notice did not ban the conference that was to be held in Travancore by the State Congress. Shri Thanu Pillai had said that neither he nor any other member of the State Congress was responsible for suggesting that there was any ban. He could not, therefore, say that my telegram to the Dewan was based on such information. In saying this he was quite correct. As a matter of fact, however, my wire was certainly based upon the information contained in Shri Verghese's wire[3]. But there was no suppression of fact by Shri Verghese. Shri Thanu Pillai made his position clear in his letter to the Dewan dated the 23rd ultimo thus :

> In the letter under reference, Government seem to disbelieve my statement that no one from the State Congress informed Gandhiji that there was a ban on the conference. Your contention is at best an inference from a telegram from Gandhiji while my assertion is confined to facts within my knowledge. The following is the substance of the Government communique as communicated by wire to Gandhiji by the Chairman of the Reception Committee: 'Government sprung surprise in issuing Press note this noon in view outbreak war state of emergency arisen necessitating measures safeguarding public peace and avoiding incidents likely creating public excitement or large concourses. Regarding conference preparations being made for processions and demonstrations and as large crowd may gather at conference, Government in public interest call upon conference organizers and

[1] *Vide* "Umfortunate People of Travancore", 2-10-1939.
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar", 5-9-1939.
[3] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 4-4-1939.

all political or other organizations in the State to postpone or stop assemblages at present juncture and until further notice.' Gandhiji might have taken the Government communique calling upon the organizers of the conference and all political or other organizations to postpone or stop such assemblages at the present juncture and until further notice as virtually amounting to prohibiting all meetings and processions. If Government still persists in their contention that the State Congress misled Gandhiji, they should in fairness substantiate it.

The language according to the Travancore legal form may not mean a ban. I could give it no other meaning. Whether it was technically a ban or not, its effects was that the Congress authorities felt obliged to cancel processions and the other demonstrative part of their programme. If, therefore, there is any difference between the language used by the Dewan in the Government communique and a ban, it is the same that exists between Tweedledum and Tweedledee. It is also suggested that the communique had to be issued because of objections taken to the holding of the conference. Why should a big organization be prevented from functioning properly merely because somebody objects to its so doing? I can only appeal to the Dewan not to harass the leaders of the State Congress beyond the point of endurance. They should not be made useless even for constructive constitutional activities. This is their humble programme :

This conference resolves that the immediate programme of the State Congress will be :

1. Intense, systematic and countrywide propaganda for educating the people on the issue of responsible government.

2. The strengthening of the State Congress organization throughout the State and putting the same on self-reliant and permanent foundations.

3. Real and effective mass contact through a carefully planned programme, emphasizing a mass literacy campaign, khadi and swadeshi and prohibition.

4. Establishment of a permanent volunteer and *desh-sevika* service.

5. Opening of centres or camps for a minimum period of training for workers in the various programmes outlined above.

In order to leave no room for doubt, this conference has to point out that the above programme will be wholly constitutional, and that the State Congress has no intention of creating a conflict with Government in the prosecuting of the above programme. The object of the above programme is to make the constitutional demand of the people irresistible.

They do not ask for immediate responsible government. Surely they have every right to educate the people along the lines of

responsible government. It should be a proud day for the Travancore Maharaja and for his people when it can be said of the latter that by patient and quiet training they made themselves fit to shoulder the responsibility of managing the affairs of their State.

SEGAON, October 9, 1939

Harijan, 14-10-1939

499. A MINISTER'S DREAM

> If you can give a message or direction to the Provincial Governments and the people to see that spinning and weaving are made compulsory for boys and girls in all the schools, I have no doubt that within a short time the children of schools will be wearing cloth made by themselves. This will be the first step. I have not lost faith in your ideals and I am hoping to see that each home will make its own cloth and each village will become self-sufficient not only with regard to cloth but also every other article of necessity under your village industries scheme and education scheme. I believe with you that real swaraj in this land can be established only when the budget of the villager is balanced alongside of the budget of the Provincial Government or that of the Government of India which is brought about by artificial adjustments and manipulations generally.

Thus writes a Congress Minister. If I had the powers of an autocrat, I would certainly make hand-spinning compulsory in at least the primary schools. A Minister who has the faith should do so. There are several useless things made compulsory in our schools. Why should not this most useful art be made compulsory? But nothing can be made compulsory in a democratic system, if it is not widely popular. Thus compulsion in democracy is only so called. It removes laziness, it does not force will. Such compulsion is an educative process. I suggest a milder preliminary course. Let there be prizes given to the best spinner. This competition will induce many if not all to take part in it. No plan will succeed if the schoolmasters themselves have no faith in it. If basic education is accepted by the Provincial Governments, hand-spinning and the like is not merely part of the curriculum, it is the vehicle of education. If basic education takes root, khadi surely becomes universal and comparatively cheap in this afflicted land of ours.

SEGAON, October 9, 1939

Harijan, 14-10-1939

500. THE UNBRIDGEABLE GULF

The following letter comes from a friend :

> In the *Harijan* dated 30-9-1939, on page 1 at the end of your article[1], you write: "Speed is not the end of life. Man sees more and lives more truly by walking to his duty."
>
> And then you subscribe: "On the train to Simla". I am surprised that, with all the fund of humour you possess, you could not see how the words "On the *train* to Simla" pointed the finger of ridicule to the statement "Man sees more and lives more truly by *walking* to his duty."

Time was when this friend used to believe in my method and was a valuable supporter. Somehow or other I have now fallen from grace. He should have had no difficulty in following the rich humour behind the writing which he exposes to ridicule. But I must deprive the ridicule of its sting by informing my friend that I was in my senses when I wrote the note referred to. I might easily have avoided the exact place where it was penned. But I wanted to add point to my remark and to discover to the reader the vast gulf that separates me from my ideal. Let the waverers take heart from the fact that though my note containing the flat contradiction of the ideal has provided my friend with mirth, I have got the credit for trying my best to live up to the ideals, I may profess. If I am to make an ever-increasing approach to my ideal, I must let the world see my weaknesses and failures so that I may be saved from hypocrisy and so that even for very shame I would try my utmost to realize the ideal. The contradiction pointed out by the friend also shows that between the ideal and practice there always must be an unbridgeable gulf. The ideal will cease to be one if it becomes possible to realize it. The pleasure lies in making the effort, not in its fulfilment. For, in our progress towards the goal we ever see more and more enchanting scenery.

Coming, however, to the friend's gibe let me tell him and the reader that I could pen those lines because it is never a pleasure to me to travel by motor or rail or even a cart. It is always a pleasure to walk. Nor should I mind in the least if every rail was removed and men, except the sick and the maimed, had to walk to their businesses. I can not only imagine but am working for a civilization in which possession of a car will be considered no merit and railways will find no place. It would not be for me an unhappy event if the world

[1] *Vide* "Is India a Military Country", 25-9-1939.

became once more as large as it used to be at one time. *Hind Swaraj* was written in 1909[1]. Since then it has undergone many editions and has been translated in many languages of the world. I was asked last year by Shrimati Sophia Wadia to write a foreword[2] for the edition that she was bringing out. I had the pleasure, therefore, of having to re-read it carefully. The reader may know that I could not revise a single idea. I had no desire to revise the language. It is a fair translation of the original in Gujarati. The key to understand that incredibly simple (so simple as to be regarded foolish) booklet is to realize that it is not an attempt to go back to the so-called ignorant, dark ages. But it is an attempt to see beauty in voluntary simplicity, poverty and slowness. I have pictured that as my ideal. I shall never reach it myself and hence cannot expect the nation to do so. But the modern rage for variety, for flying through the air, for multiplicity of wants, etc., have no fascination for me. They deaden the inner being in us. The giddy heights which man's ingenuity is attempting, take us away from our Maker who is nearer to us than the nails are to the flesh which they cover.

Therefore even whilst I am travelling at the rate of 40 miles per hour, I am conscious that it is a necessary evil, and that my best work is to be done in little Segaon containing 700 souls, and in the neighbouring villages to which I can walk. But being a highly practical man I do not avoid railway travelling or motoring for the mere sake of looking foolishly consistent.[3] Let the reader know that during the hurricane Harijan tours[4] that Thakkar Bapa had arranged for me I had gently suggested to him that I would like to do the whole of the years's tour on foot. He would not listen. And we had violent demonstrations during the tour. Twice or oftener we escaped serious injury and it might have been even death. When we reached Puri[5], there was fear of bloodshed. So I put my foot down and insisted on performing the remaining pilgrimage on foot. Thakkar Bapa readily consented.[6] Well, the demonstrators who were prepared only for

[1] The source, however, has "1908".

[2] *Vide* "A Message to *The Aryan Path*", 14-7-1938.

[3] In "Self-reliance", R. W. Emerson says: "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines. With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do."

[4] From November 7, 1933 to August 2, 1934

[5] On May 7, 1934.

[6] Gandhiji commenced his walking tour from May 9, 1934.

demonstrations by rail and motor could not overtake the pilgrims who covered only 8 to 10 miles per day in two stages. This was the most effective part of our tour. The awakening was solid. Our experiences were rich. And the demonstrators had no excitement left for them. They had no desire to kill me in cold blood. They were out for sensations. Sensations are not to be had with non-violent men and women walking to their mission without any fear of man and in the certain knowledge of having God as their infallible Guide and Protector.

SEGAON, October 10, 1939

Harijan, 14-10-1939

501. ON TRIAL

In the course of the conversation with the members of the Working Committee, I discovered that their non-violence had never gone beyond fighting the British Government with that weapon. I had hugged the belief that Congressmen had appreciated the logical result of the practice of non-violence for the past twenty years in fighting the biggest imperialist power in the world. But in great experiments like that of non-violence, hypothetical questions have hardly any play. I myself used to say in answer to questions that when we had actually acquired independence we would know whether we could defend ourselves non-violently or not. But today the question is no longer hypothetical. Whether there is on the part of the British Government a favourable declaration or not, the Congress has to decide upon the course it would adopt in the event of an invasion of India. For, though there may be no settlement with the Government, the Congress has to declare its policy and say whether it would fight the invading host violently or non-violently.

So far as I can read the Working Committee's mind after a fairly full discussion, the members think the Congressmen are unprepared for non-violent defence against armed invasion.

This is tragic. Surely the means adopted for driving an enemy from one's house must, more or less, coincide with those to be adopted for keeping him out of the house. If anything, the latter process must be easier. The fact, however, is that our fight has not been one of non-violent resistance of the strong. It has been one of passive resistance of the weak. Therefore there is no spontaneous response in

our hearts, at this supreme moment, to an undying faith in the efficacy of non- violence. The Working Committee, therefore, wisely said that they were not ready for the logical step. The tragedy of the situation is that, if the Congress is to throw in its lot with those who believe in the necessity of armed defence of India, the past twenty years will have been years of gross neglect of the primary duty of Congressmen to learn the science of armed warfare. And I fear that history will hold me, as the general of the fight, responsible for the tragedy. The future historian will say that I should have perceived that the nation was learning not non-violence of the strong but merely passivity of the weak and I should have, therefore, provided for Congressmen's military training.

Being obsessed with the idea that somehow or other India will learn true non-violence, it would not occur to me to invite my co-workers to train themselves for armed defence. On the contrary, I used to discountenance all sword-play and the display of stout lathis. Nor am I even now repentant for the past. I have the unquenchable faith that, of all the countries in the world, India is the one country which can learn the art of non-violence, that if the test were applied even now, there would be found, perhaps, thousands of men and women who would be willing to die without harbouring malice against their persecutors. I have harangued crowds and told them repeatedly that they might have to suffer much including death by shooting. Did not thousands of men and women brave hardships during the salt campaign equal to any that soldiers are called upon to bear? No different capacity is required from what has been already evinced, if India has to contend against an invader. Only it will have to be on a vaster scale.

One thing ought not to be forgotten. India unarmed would not require to be destroyed through poison gas or bombardment. It is the Maginot line that has made the Siegfried line necessary, and *vice versa.* Defence of India by the present methods has been necessary because she is an appendage of Britain. Free India can have no enemy. And if her people have learnt the art of saying resolutely 'No' and acting up to it. I dare say, no one would want to invade her. Our economy would be so modelled as to prove no temptation for the exploiter.

But some Congressmen will say: 'Apart from the British, India has so many martial races within her border that they will want to put up a fight for the country which is as much theirs as ours'. This is perfectly true. I am, therefore, talking for the moment only of

Congressmen. How would they act in the event of an invasion? We shall never convert the whole of India to our creed unless we are prepared to die for it.

The opposite course appals me. Already the bulk of the army is manned by the Mussalmans of the North, Sikhs and Gurkhas. If the masses of the South and the Centre wish to become militarized, the Congress, which is supposed to represent them, will have to enter into competition with them. The Congress will then have to be party to an enormous military budget. There may be all these things without the Congress consent. It will make all the difference in the world whether the Congress is party to them or not. The world is looking for something new and unique from India. The Congress will be lost in the crowd if it wears the same old outworn armour that the world is wearing today. The Congress has a name because it represents non-violence as a political weapon *par excellence*. If the Congress helps the Allies as a representative of non-violence, it will give to the Allied cause a prestige and a power which will be invaluable in deciding the ultimate fate of the war. But the members of the Working Committee have honestly and bravely not made the profession of such non-violence.

My position is, therefore, confined to myself alone. I have to find out whether I have any fellow-traveller along the lonely path. If I am in the minority of one, I must try to make converts. Whether one or many, I must declare my faith that it is better for India to discard violence altogether even for defending her borders. For India to enter into the race for armaments is to court suicide. With the loss of India to non-violence that last hope of the world will be gone. I must live up to the creed I have professed for the last half a centrury and hope to the last breath that India will make non-violence her creed, preserve man's dignity, and prevent him from reverting to the type from which he is supposed to have raised himself.

SEGAON, October 10, 1939

Harijan, 14-10-1939

502. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 10, 1939

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I have your letter. You seem to have done good work.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Ashrami Kelavani, p. 70

503. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 10, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

All the way through I kept thinking of you. Why am I not able to make you understand my point? Maybe my love is imperfect or, which is the same thing, impure. It is acceptable to me that you have come to me for my sake and you are going to stay also for the same reason. But those who come only for my sake also do my work and at times there is separation. But that is only for the sake of my work, not otherwise. This much in brief. Your interpretation of it has no place in it. You will be well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

504. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

Tuesday [*October 10, 1939*][1]

I am observing silence today. I may break it at 3 o'clock. But it is impossible to find time today. Tomorrow is the meeting of the Working Committee. It would depend on how much time it takes. Mahadev will find out and tell you. Bharati can certainly meet me on Thursday. You will of course stay on till we can meet.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11209. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

[1] From the contents it appears that the letter belongs to October, 1939. It is written on the back of a letter from the addressee to Gandhiji dated October 9, 1939, a Monday

505. DISCUSSION WITH A FRIEND[1]

SEGAON,
[On or after *October 10, 1939*][2]

FRIEND: We have been out-and-out Gandhji-ites for several years and we do not know what we are to do at this juncture. The Working Committee's resolution has puzzled us.

GANDHIJI: But let me know what you mean by 'out-and-out Gandhi-ites'.

Those who are prepared to follow your principles through thick and thin.

Well, then let me tell you, I am not one myself, for in my practice I am far from what I have conceived as the ideals of truth and non-violence.

I quite see what you mean. I simply wanted to say that in our humble way we were trying to do constructive work as shown by you. What are we to do if civil disobedience comes? We voted for the A.I.C.C. resolution[3] because it was the official resolution sponsored by Rajendra Babu, Sardar and others. But when we think of non-violence we do not see how we could have voted for it.

There was nothing against non-violence in voting for the resolution. What you will do is of consequence. And, as you will see from the next *Harijan*, I am writing[4] for friends like you. You will see the position developed from week to week. But I can sum it up for you. There is no question of civil disobedience for there is no atmosphere for it—at any rate there is no question of civil disobedience in the aggressive sense as we launched in 1930 and 1932. We might have to offer it if all constructive work was made impossible, that is to say, if grave irritation was given by Government. I fear no such thing. At any rate I will not keep 'Gandhi-ites' in the dark. You should make a point of following carefully what I write every week.

But my difficulty is this. We believe implicitly in developing strength through constructive work which is non-violence in action. But as we are part and parcel of the Congress, they may come down with a heavy hand on our ashrams and

[1] The discussion is extracted from "Out-and-Out Gandhi-ite" by Mahadev Desai, who explains: "A friend who is running a rural work centre for some years, and who having come for the A.I.C.C., had come to Segaon to see Gandhiji." The A.I.C.C. session was held in Wardha on October 9 and 10.

[2] *Ibid*

[3] *Vide* Appendix "A. I.C.C. Resolution", 18-10-1939.

[4] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 13-10-1939.

take possession of them as they did in 1930.

It will depend on what the Congress will do. Supposing what is unlikely happens and the Congress decides upon a course of aggressive civil disobedience, for which as I have said there is no atmosphere, you will have to isolate your ashram from the Congress, that is to say, you may have to secede from the Congress even at the risk of being labelled as 'cowards'.

I see, I see. There is one thing more about which I wanted to ask you. We have quarrels in the course of our day-to-day work in the ashram.

Therefore, you see, you are far from being 'out-and-out Gandhi-ites'.

No, but we have implicit faith in your teachings, and it is only in that sense that I used that term.

But if in spite of that faith they quarrel, then they have not understood even the A.B.C. of 'Gandhism'. What is faith worth if it is not translated into action.

We may not go about parroting truth and non-violence and steering clear of them in daily life. Take the law of gravitation. The discovery of the law led to numerous other discoveries based on the law. Even so unless you go on discovering new applications of the law of non-violence you do not profit by it. You have to reduce it to a science. To say that you have bickerings in the ashram which make smooth work impossible or difficult, is to say that non-violence is not being practised. Don't you go away with the impression that we have no bickerings here in Segaon. We have them, and that is why I said that I was not an 'out-and-out Gandhi-ite'. But if I seriously thought that these bickerings would make communal life impossible, I might close down the institution. It is not an improbability. I should not shirk that duty if the idea possessed me. Well, that is only to say that the difficulties are enormous everywhere. Let God guide you and me and us all.

Harijan, 28-10-1939

506. LETTER TO HARIBHAU G. PHATAK

SEGAON,
October 12, 1939

MY DEAR HARIBHAU,

You have done well in writing as you have. What Tatyaji[1] told you is an old complaint. There is no arrogance in me. I do not plead guilty. I do not even understand his allusions. What is this about parties given to me? I have tried to woo him and his friends. I have walked to Savarkar's house. I have gone out of my way to win him over. But I have failed. Having heard me, it is now for you to tell me what I should do to conquer them.[2]

I shall glance through your book as soon as I receive it.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 2802. Courtesy: Haribhau G. Phatak

507. LETTER TO DR. B.C. ROY

October 12, 1939

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I know your partiality for me. But I feel utterly unable to shoulder the burden.[3] Jawaharlal is the only man with drive to take my place. His difference of outlook will be softened. But what does it matter, if he carries your minds with him in his new ideas? We shall not get a more open and sincere man than Jawaharlal with his driving power. Make therefore what use you can of me through him. I have hitherto influenced the country through the Committee. Now I must do so to the extent that I influence Jawaharlal. Don't you agree?

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Presumably N. C. Kelkar. This honorific was also given to V. D. Savarkar, President of the Hindu Mahasabha.

[2] V. D. Savarkar, Chimanlal Setalvad, Cowasji Jehangir, V. N. Chandavarkar (Liberals), N. C. Kelkar and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar had issued a statement from Bombay on October 2, expressing the view that the Congress and the Muslim League did not represent the whole or even the bulk of India and that any constitutional or administrative arrangement arrived at between the Government and the Congress and the Muslim League could not be binding on the Indian people.

[3] The addressee had insisted that Gandhiji himself should take over the command of the Congress.

508. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 12, 1939

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I have your letter. If you are feeling better there, it is certainly advisable to stay on. If you ask Rami to leave you, what will you do about your meals? If you can make some arrangement for that, you may let her go. There is no sanatorium in Nagpur. But the T. B. specialist is a competent, experienced and philanthropic doctor. Balkoba and Mathew were treated by him. You will stay at Wardha, i.e., in Segaon, or wherever else I arrange. Hence if you do not feel better, come over. Let the doctor there examine you. If you come here, Rami need not accompany you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9730

509. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 12, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

You are not unhappy about what you said about massage at the time of bathing? Would you feel happy? Did you like the telegram that was sent to Delhi? Are you calm?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

510. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

SEGAON,
October 13, 1939

I regard the recent resolution[2] of the A.I.C.C. on the situation as moderate and wise. It was bound to reiterate the Congress demand for an unequivocal declaration. Its merit lies in not fixing any time-limit for the declaration. It is noteworthy that the resolution was carried by a majority of three to one. It is to be hoped that the British Government will appreciate the friendly spirit in which the Congress is approaching the situation. It is to be hoped also that the Europeans of India will range themselves alongside of the Congress. But the greatest help can only come from Congressmen themselves. If they do not act on the square, no external sympathy and even help will be of any avail. I see that impatience has seized some Congressmen who want to be doing something to signify their opposition to a war which they believe to be for defending imperialism. I suggest to them that they will be defeating the common purpose by acting in opposition to the Congress decision expressed in the only way open to a democratic organization. They had their say at the A.I.C.C. meeting. They are in honour bound to defer direct action till the Working Committee or the A.I.C.C. decides otherwise. No reliance can be placed upon an organization which is not able to exercise effective control over its members. Imagine an army whose soldiers, under the false belief that they are advancing the common cause, adopt measures in defiance of those taken by the head-quarters. Such action may well spell defeat. Therefore I beseech Congressmen at this critical juncture to desist from any action that would savour of indiscipline or defiance. They should surely see that by such action they undermine Congress prestige and weaken its influence.

Harijan, 21-10-1939

[1] This appeared under the title "Notes", sub-title, "The A. I. C. C. Resolution". The statement was also published in *The Bombay Chronicle* and *The Hindu* on October 14.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "A.I.C.C. Resolution", 14-10-1939.

511. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 13, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

If Prithvi Singh can do the massage, you must tell him. Kr[ishna] Ch[andra] must be told about bathing. Both of them have to be seen on the first day. If I have to do all that myself, it would be a great burden on my silence. It would be difficult to write down the instructions for them every time. Hence, in these modifications I need your complete co-operation.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy Dr. Sushila Nayyar

512. FALLACY ABOUT SUGAR

The following article by Shri Gajanan Naik on the superiority of palms over cane and beetroot for the purpose of yielding sugar is presented for the criticism of sugar experts:[1]

Sugar in its pure form is composed of carbon, hydrogen and oxygen (C_{12} H_{22} O_{11}). As such it does not take anything from the soil, but the crops now mainly cultivated for extracting sugar, viz., the beet and the cane, require for their development a number of substances from the soil in which they grow. Therefore their culture exhausts the soil. What is worse still is that the space now occupied by the beet in Europe and the cane in the tropics, might and ought to serve for the culture of food and fodder crops. . . .

But people must have sugar. Is there a way of getting it without encroaching on the soil fit for superior crops? Yes—according to the opinion expressed by Mr. Devry at the Congress of Giessen. (Watt's *Dictionary of the Economic Products of India,* Vol. I, pp. 301-4.) He says that palms can supply the required sugar for they can be grown on inferior soil where even to try to grow cereals would be a vain endeavour.

The statement throws much light on the place of the palm for the *gur* industry. It would be wrong to take it only as a philanthropic proposition for exploring avenues of employment for the toddy-tappers who will be rendered idle through prohibition. . . . It has immense potentialities in the economics of national agriculture. . . .

[1] Only extracts from the article by Gajanan Naik, Head of the Gur Department, A.I.V.I.A., are reproduced here.

Sugarcane cannot be grown with profit in the same field year after year. It has to be rotated with some cereal. . . . Cane has to be cultivated year after year while palms once planted yield sugar for 20 to 50 years. Heavy manuring and regular watering are required for cane while palms require neither. . . . Palm plan-tations are not affected by wind, flood or shortage of rain. Moreover, and this is very important, factory-made apparatus, such as crushers are indispensable in cane *gur* making while the accessories necessary for palm *gur* manufacture are procurable locally in villages, and their cost is negligible as compared with those used for cane *gur*.

Harijan, 14-10-1939

513. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 14, 1939

DEAR MAULANA SAHEB,

We must declare our policy in this matter[1] or do something.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The reference is to a letter dated October 9 from Mahomed Yunus, leader of the Muslim Independent Party in the Bihar Legislative Assembly who had said: "In continuation of my previous correspondence of the subject of Hindu-Muslim unity, may I again draw your attention to what I have been writing and if you settle the following questions, I think, the time is now ripe for us to immediately come to an agreement: (1.) Recognition of the right of every individual to exercise his civil rights unhampered and uninterfered with, provided he does not do anything in a manner which may offend his neighbour. (This will include right of every community to take out processions on roads, to kill any animal for sacrificial or other purposes and right of every community to offer prayers in any manner that community likes). (2.) Now that the total number of Muslim population has increased to almost one-third in the whole of India, a representation of one-third in all Central Legislatures and allotment of similar proportion of seats under the Government of India. These are some of the suggestions which I am making, and I am requesting you to kindly take up this question now in all seriousness for immediate solution. I have been writing to you for nearly two years and I hope you will not think it impatient on my part if I earnestly beseech you to kindly expedite matters specially in the present situation." *Vide* also the following item.

514. LETTER TO MAHOMED YUNUS

[*October 14, 1939*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

You will never tire me. Only I have no powers of an autocrat, whatever may be said to the contrary. The question is no one man's job. I am forwarding your letter to Maulana A. K. Azad.

From a copy: Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

515. LETTER TO N. S. HARDIKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA (C. P.)
October 14, 1939

DEAR DR. HARDIKER,

I have seen the Mysore friends. I am in correspondence with the Dewan. If anything comes out of it, I shall let you know.[2]

Please tell Diwakar not to go to Mysore at the present moment. I hope you are better.[3]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: N. S. Hardikar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] From the reference to the addressee's letter, which was forwarded to Abul Kalam Azad on this date; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] According to *The Indian Annual Register, 1939,* Vol. II, p. 277, the State Government failed to fulfil the promises made by the agreement arrived at in 1938 between the Dewan, Sir Mirza Ismail and Vallabhbhai Patel and J. B. Kripalani. The State Congress was not prepared to acquisce. However, in order to explore all means of avoiding struggle, they sought interviews with the Dewan but with no response from him. The time limit fixed for launching civil resistance, viz. September 1, 1939, having expired without any response from Government, the fight was launched. *vide* also "Letter to N. S. Hardikar", 21-10-1939.

[3] *Vide* also "Letter to N. S. Hardikar", 21-10-1939, and "Fragment of Letter to People of Mysore", 24-11-1939.

516. LETTER TO A. EASWARAN[1]

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 14, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

The best use I can think of is for basic education.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 778

517. LETTER TO TATACHAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 14, 1939

MY DEAR TATACHAR,

C. R. says: "Why does not Tatachar see me?" Do go and see him but don't take his time. What he cannot do no one else can. I know I cannot, in the matter of Harijans[2] at least. There are certain things we must put up with. I shall take up the next step in *Harijan* when the spirit moves me. This is in answer to yours of 9th.

Love.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Treasurer, Cochin Teachers' Association, Chittur
[2] *Vide* "Case for Inquiry", 3-9-1939.

518. LETTER TO SYED FAIZUL HASSAN

SEGAON,
October 14, 1939

DEAR SYED SAHIB,

You have done well in writing to me. But I would suggest your writing to the Minister in charge of the Department. I can do nothing without referring[1] the matter to him. This I can do through the Parliamentary Board. This means waste of time. Will you take up my suggestion?

Yours sincerely,

SYED FAIZUL HASSAN SAHIB
PRESIDENT, DISTRICT MUSLIM LEAGUE
BALAGHAT, C. P.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

519. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

October 14, 1939

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

In the present state of communal feeling it is impossible to do anything.[2]

Yours,
BAPU

From the original: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

520. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 14, 1939

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Please read the accompanying letter[3] and after inquiring into the matter reply to the writer. I have sent him a very brief reply asking

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] The addressee in his letter dated October 11 had requested Gandhiji, on behalf of some eminent persons, to give a concrete shape to the proposal for a Jallianwala Bagh Memorial.

[3] From Syed Faizul Hassan

him to write to the Minister. But that is not enough. We should look into such matters in great detail.

Kishorelal told me yesterday that you said I had handed over all of you to Jawaharlal and that, therefore, you would have to obey him now. I suppose you were joking. I have not handed over any of you. I had a long discussion yesterday and the day before with the people living here. It will not do if all of you refrain from using your freedom and then hold me responsible for that.

Did Rajendra Babu leave yesterday?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 236

521. LETTER TO REHMAN JIVABHAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 14, 1939

BHAI REHMANJI,

I have your letter. I am pained but not surprised by what you write. Nowadays there is so much mutual distrust that a Hindu is afraid to employ a Muslim who is a stranger. That fear is bound to disappear. Please do not lose heart.

Meet Mridulabehn. Show her this letter.

Regards from

M. K. GANDHI

DRIVER REHMAN JIVABHAI
TOY MARKET, PANKORE NAKA
AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 9654. Courtesy: Mulubhai Nautamlal

522. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

October 14, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have perhaps not understood your words. Your place is secure. What more?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4328

523. LETTER TO INDIRA NEHRU

SEGAON,
October 15, 1939

MY DEAR INDU,

I had thought that you had forgotten me altogether. Your letter has belied the fear, thank God. I hope you are keeping well. In a way, I envy you for the experiences you are having there[1].

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 9802. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] In Europe

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM SARAT CHANDRA BOSE [1]

May 31, 1939

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

You have probably learnt from the papers that I and Sjt. Lalit Chandra Das, M. L. C., my colleague on the Prisoners' Release Advisory Committee, felt compelled to resign from this Committee. The reason we gave the Home Minister for doing so was that our approach to the question of release of the convicted prisoners differed fundamentally from that of most of the other members of the Committee. This became clear to us during the last few weeks, more particularly in course of the discussions following the interviews with a number of prisoners which took place on May 6, 7, 8 and 9. Those discussions showed that the attitude of the majority of the members of the Committee was very stiff in the case of prisoners convicted in the more serious cases, and that they were not prepared to release them either on the assurance contained in your letter of the 13th April 1938 or on the reiteration by the prisoners of what they had told you when you met them. It became apparent to us that the majority of those prisoners stood no chance of being released until they had served or practically served out their term. As regards the rest it became apparent that the most that the majority of the members of the Committee were prepared to do was to recommend reduction of sentences in some cases and conditional release or release on giving specific undertakings in some other cases.

To the Home Minister we gave our reasons for our resignation in general terms only. But I feel I ought to give you more details as well as a resume of what we did during the time we served on the Committee.

You probably remember that when the proposal for an Advisory Committee for the release of political prisoners was put forward and I was requested by Sir Nazimuddin to suggest names from the Congress Party, I was not quite sure in my mind as to what we should do. I asked Subhas to seek your advice and he discussed the matter with you when he met you at Delhi towards the end of September or beginning of October last. You were of opinion that I should accept membership of the Committee. Accordingly, I made the position of the Congress Party in regard to the question of releasing political prisoners perfectly clear to Sir Nazimuddin, and communicated to him our decision to serve on the Committee in the hope that

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 14-6-1939.

theGovernment would release the prisoners within a short time. Copy of my letter to Sir Nazimuddin (dated October 23, 1938) is set forth below :

> Kindly refer to D. O. No. 3810 dated the 26th September from Mr. R. H. Hutchings to me, in which he asked me on your behalf to suggest the name of a member of the Bengal Legislative Assembly and also that of a member of the Bengal Legislative Council from the Congress Party who might be invited by Government to serve on the Advisory Committee regarding release of political prisoners.
>
> You are well aware as a result of the conversations you had with Mahatma Gandhi and with the President of the Congress that the Congress Party cannot identify itself or agree with the Government policy in respect to political prisoners. Mahatma Gandhi's letter[1] of the 13th September to you has also made that clear.
>
> At the same time, I feel that we should not obstruct any endeavour to bring about the release of these prisoners. It is out of this feeling that I am responding to your request for assistance. I earnestly hope that Government will see their way to set at liberty all the political prisoners at a very early date.
>
> I would suggest the name of Sjt. Lalit Chandra Das, M. L. C., from the Congress Council Party. As regards the Congress Assembly Party, I am prepared to represent it on the Committee. You may issue invitations to Sjt. Lalit Chandra Das and myself.

After this the work of the Committee began and we made some progress. Naturally, the less difficult cases came up for consideration first, and we were able to bring round our objecting or hesitating colleagues to our point of view, so that recommendation for unconditional release were sent to Government, resulting in the release of 112 prisoners, including all the women prisoners. But as we proceeded with our work, a cleavage of opinion made itself distinctly felt. It became obvious that the Government were not prepared to follow the recommendations of the Committee in all cases. The unanimous recommendation of the Committee, in which the initiative was taken by the Chairman himself (who, I may tell you, had always been over-cautious rather than under-cautious) was referred back to the Committee. It also came to my ears that in some cases the Government were imposing conditions (not recommended by the Committee) when it was perfectly well known that prisoners were not prepared to submit to any conditions or give any assurance except the one they had given to you.

This attitude of the Government had its reaction on the members of the Committee. In the first place, they shrank from making recommendations even when they were satisfied about the attitude of the prisoners. Of this, the case of Sjt. Purnananda Das Gupta. who was convicted in connection with

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Khwaja Nazimuddin", 13-9-1938.

the Inter-Provincial Conspiracy Case, is a good example. There was a consensus of opinion among the members of the Committee that he had made a perfectly frank statement disavowing faith in terrorism. Yet the majority of the Committee did not venture to make the necessary recommendation for his release but accepted the suggestion of the official member on the Committee that a further report be called for from Government about him. Secondly, there was insistence on individual declarations which amounted to a specific undertaking for good behaviour. While most of the prisoners were prepared to reiterate their declaration to you, and actually did so, they resented fresh individual undertakings and were not prepared to give them. I and Lalit Babu considered that the prisoners had said enough in their statements to you and, by reiterating their adherence to those statements, had given convincing indication of a change of heart. After the interview I told the Committee that I was perfectly satisfied that the prisoners had abjured violence for good and all of them should be released. But my views did not find favour with the majority of the Committee. They were not prepared to accept that kind of declaration as satisfactory.

I also noticed an increasing restiveness among the prisoners in respect of the interviews as well as the assurances required. This restiveness and impatience had been present in greater or lesser degree from the very first. But we had been able by tactful management to keep it from becoming obtrusive. It was, however, impossible to overcome the reluctance of the prisoners when they found that guarantees of a more hard and fast character were required of them. In such circumstances, their hostility to the procedure of the Committee came to the surface, and we became convinced that sooner or later its work was bound to come to something like a deadlock.

This is in short what we saw and thought as members of the Committee. Besides this, the general attitude of the Government in regard to the remaining convicted prisoners had also to be taken into account. It was clear to us that the Government were not prepared to release all the prisoners, no matter how favourable the atmosphere was. In these circumstances I did not think it advisable for us to remain on the Committee any longer.

After our resignation, the Government issued a communique, copy of which is set out below :

> The Committee appointed by Government to advise on the release of terrorist convicts has considered 183 cases. Government have passed orders on the recommendations of the Committee in 112 cases and in 68 the recommendations of the Committee are about to be submitted to Government. Three cases are under consideration by Government, and 56 cases remain to be examined by the Committee. The Committee have recently interviewed a large number of prisoners individually before disposing of their cases in particular. All the female prisoners appeared before the Committee and were recommended

for release after giving satisfactory assurance as to their future conduct. They have since been released. Government regret to have to announce that two members of the Committee, Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose and Mr. Lalit Chandra Das, have tendered their resignations which have been accepted. The two members gave as the reason for their resignation that their approach to the question of release of the convicted prisoners differed fundamentally from that of most of the other members of the Committee.

The question now is, what should be done to procure the release of the remaining prisoners. I would very much like to have your advice as to how we should proceed. What I am apprehensive of is that the prisoners may commence a hunger-strike. If they do so, the situation will become extremely complicated. At the same time, I do not know what hopes I can hold out to them.

I hope you are better now. My health is still below par.

With *pranams,*

Yours affectionately,

SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

Harijan, 24-6-1939

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM LORD LINLITHGOW[1]

VICEREGAL LODGE, SIMLA
July 1, 1939

DEAR MR. GANDHI

Thank you very much for your letter of 22nd June. It raises one or two points on which I should like to touch in my reply.

2. As regards Jaipur, the Durbar have, I am quite sure, no desire to detain Seth Jamnalal Bajaj any longer than is necessary. Indeed, as you will remember, they were at considerable pains to avoid detaining him in the first instance. Seth Jamnalal has been made fully aware of the conditions on which the Durbar are ready to take the desired action now in regard to him and the other prisoners, and to the best of my knowledge the position has not altered since the departure of H. H. the Maharaja.

3. I have read with close attention what you say in the last paragraph of your letter, and I am very grateful to you for letting me know your views. I think it is fair to say that the Political Department have given no moreencouragement to "anti-Congress personalities", to use, if I may, your own phrase, than to pro-Congress personalities to establish contacts with Rulers and their subjects.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 22-6-1939, "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 6-7-1939 and Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 12-7-1939.

I hope you keep well.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

BOMBAY

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also from a copy: C. W. 7828. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

APPENDIX III

STATEMENT BY SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE[1]

Prohibition by stages is a feasible scheme. It will make both the public as well as the Excise Department experienced in the task of handling problems out of the enforcement of prohibition. Moreover, it will be financially a success and it will release for the nation-building activities that portion of the revenue derived from extra taxes like property tax, sales tax, etc.

Speaking generally, I may say that the motives actuating the Bombay Government are quite laudable, but the methods they have been hitherto following or intend following in future in connection with the problems of the property tax and the sales tax are neither scientific nor conducive to the end they have in view. . . .

The defects in the Prohibition Scheme are more than one . . . . Illicit distillation will increase and there will be a rush of men to the wet zone every evening and particularly during every week-end.

Prohibition is a measure of social reform and no social reform can be successfully brought about without winning. . . . the goodwill of the people. . . . The fact that consistent opposition is being offered by some influential sections of the community shows that the Government have not yet been able to carry with them the approval and goodwill of the people in general.

Mahatma Gandhi did the right thing when he opined that prohibition should not be forced on Europeans in India because they did not believe in it and it would amount to coercion to force it on them. The same principle of non-violence should be applied to Asiatics and Indian people as well both in theory and in practice. Why should we force prohibition on non-Indian Asiatics who do not believe in it, if we do not force it on Europeans? It would be wrong to make a distinction between Europeans and Asiatics in this respect either in law or in actual administration.

Now turning to the economic side of the question, I may say that it is difficult to approve of a method which involves the sudden imposition of an additional tax over a crore of rupees on Bombay alone in order to make good the loss of excise revenue. With millions of half-filled stomachs, with hundreds of thousands dying every year of preventible diseases and with 92 percent of our people still unable to read or write. I

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 13-7-1939. Only extracts are reproduced here.

consider it no part of statemanship to raise additional money by heavy taxation, not one rupee of which would go towards the better fulfilment of stomachs or saving human lives or making our people more literate. I am, therefore, inclined to think that the introduction of prohibition by stages is the more appropriate and scientific method. This would not involve heavy taxation for financing prohibition, would save a portion of the taxable capacity of the people for future requirements and would not involve a sudden change in our national economy.

Nobody who has eyes to see in Bombay can fail to be impressed with one important aspect of the Government policy. It unfortunately happens that one small community in Bombay which for many years past has been extensively engaged in the liquor trade is being directly affected by this policy. The Parsis are a small but influential community. Who does not know of the many beneficial institutions and activities which have been brought into existence and conducted by them? The overwhelming majority of the community have been opposing this policy and as a minority community the Parsis are entitled to be heard. I understand that the Parsis are apprehensive that the sudden launching of immediate and total prohibition in Bombay will throw into the streets a large number of families and would prejudicially affect the income of the charity trusts many of which are for the benefit not of Parsis alone but of the Indian community in general.

Besides the Parsis, the Muslims of Bombay are also affected by the programme. While they are not opposed to prohibition on principle, they have objection to the 10 percent property tax, which is required for financing prohibition. It is urged on their behalf that the 10 percent property tax subjects them to exorbitant taxation as compared with their population and they resent being taxed in order to force non-Muslims to abstain from drink.

The effect of prohibition on our general economy is of greater consequence than even its effect on the Parsis or Muslim community. To give a small instance, a large number of hotels and restaurants will be badly hit and may have to close down. Not only will their owners suffer loss but the employees will also be thrown out of employment. It is not impossible that migration from the prohibited area to outside places may take place and the importance of the port of Bombay may also be affected. The fact is that while piecemeal introduction of partial prohibition is possible, piecemeal introduction of total prohibition is next to impossible. . . .

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-7-1939

APPENDIX IV

LETTER FROM SIKANDAR HYAT KHAN[1]

SIMLA,
July 20, 1939

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

Many thanks for your letter of the 17th July which I received this morning. This has crossed my letter of the 18th July.

I am sorry I overlooked to answer your query about the representation of Harijans in the proposed Lahore Corporation. I have made enquiries from the Minister concerned and am informed that no provision has been made in the bill to provide separate electorates for Harijans. The method of election and representation is at present embodied in the rules and it is proposed to leave th is matter to the rules in the new measure also. I am almost certain that the question of separate representation for Harjans will be raised in the Assembly when the bill is under consideration as several representations have been received from Harijan organizations. So far as Government is concerned, they do not contemplate at the moment to make a departure from the existing practice unless the Harijan representatives in the Assembly press for a revision and, if so, it would largely depend upon what view the Assembly takes regarding this matter. Personally, as you are aware, I am not averse to joint electorates; but unfortunately the trend of events during the past few years has made it even more difficult to achieve this ideal in the absence of genuine *rapprochement* between the two major communities.

I am grateful to you for careful consideration to my alternative scheme of Federation. Allow me to remove one or two misapprehensions which seem to have arisen due to the reason that you have not had time to make a comparative study of my scheme with the one embodied in the Government of India Act. My proposals do not contemplate a wholesale rejection of the scheme adumbrated in the Government of India Act. At the most it would necessitate modification of about half a dozen sections in the Act and the addition of perhaps two or three new sections. It would of course involve a revision of the Federal, Provincial and the concurrent lists as you will have noticed from the revised list which I sent with my letter of the 18th July. As regards the 'Zonal' Legislatures contemplated in my scheme, there again seems to be some misapprehension. You must have noticed that I do not contemplate any executive authority for the 'zones', and the legislative powers delegated to the Regional Legislatures are meant only to bring the various units in a 'zone' closer together in order to bring about mutual confidence and trust between the various units. It would

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sikandar Hyat Khan", 17-7-1939 and 25-7-1939.

not involve any additional expenditure since the members of a Regional Legislature would also be members of the Federal Legislature and will collectively constitute the Federal Legislature. No separate building or organization will be required. If and when necessary, they will meet together to ratify or pass a measure on which the units in a particular 'zone' are agreed. As a matter of fact, my scheme would be comparatively less expensive as I have suggested a unicameral instead of a bicameral Federal Legislature.

As regards the composition of the Army, I have suggested no more than retention of the *status quo* so far as the peace-time strength of the Army is concerned. As I explained to you in the course of our conversation, my insistence on this provision is actuated by a desire to create mutual confidence, and in the interests of national harmony and solidarity.

I appreciate your remarks regarding acceptance of Dominion Status. I am aware that all the important political organizations in the country have now adopted 'complete independence' as their final goal. But I am sure you will agree with me that in the circumstances it would be inadvisable to clutch at a shadow and discard the substance if it happens to be within our grasp. After all, what we want is complete control over the administration and affairs of our country and this will be obtained if we get Dominion Status. I am fully aware of the fact that some of our fellow-countrymen would prefer to chase a will-o'-the-wisp rather than give up their demand for complete independence; but it would be for an eminent patriot and leader like you to persuade them to accept the substance and leave alone the shadow.

You mention in your letter that "Yours is the only proposal of a constructive character on behalf of the League." Let me hasten to make it quite clear that my scheme has got nothing to do with the League. It has been formulated by me alone and without consultation with any member of the League or for that matter of any other party in the country. It has been conceived with the intention of providing a solution of our communal and political problems and I trust it will be examined and studied by all concerned in the spirit in which it has been conceived.

As regards your draft solution of the communal problem and my comments thereon, I shall be grateful if you would kindly give me some more definite indications of your views, if you desire me to[1] proceed with the matter further. I quite realize that the draft represents only *your* views; but that is quite sufficient for my purpose provided you approve of my suggestions with reference to the various items of the draft. I can then proceed to sound important Muslim leaders and the Working Committee of the League and let you know their reactions. It would be no use my trying to bring them round to my point of view unless I am assured of your whole-

[1] The source, however, has "or".

hearted approval and support in regard to the points mentioned in my note which I handed over to you at Bombay. I need hardly assure you that the correspondence between us will be treated as strictly confidential. Perhaps, you would like to consult the Working Committee of the League and other prominent Muslims. If there is agreement on these points, then we could bring the representatives of the two Working Committees together to approve and ratify them informally.

As regards services, I do not think we need worry about the number of communities which would fall under the category of 'minorities'. The obvious course would be to fix the share of the majority community in each province and leave the balance to be distributed amongst the minorities. This is what we have done in the Punjab We have given 50 per cent to the Muslims and 50 per cent to non-Muslims. The proportion (7 per cent) surrendered by the the majority community was added on to the share of the smaller minorities in the shape of weightage. So the problem is not so complex as it appears to be at first sight. What we need is a genuine change of heart and once this is achieved there should be no difficulty in adjusting differences. I am afraid my letter has become somewhat lengthy; but in view of the issues involved I have taken the liberty of encroaching on your time by answering the points raised in your letter in some detail.

With best wishes and kind regards,

From a copy: Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX V

HARIJAN SEVAKS' CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS[1]

June 4/7, 1939

1. This Conference of Harijan sevaks resolves that Harijan sevaks should not visit those temples which Harijans are not allowed to enter. It should be clearly understood that Harijan sevaks are not to enter such temples, not only for the purpose of worship but also for sight-seeing, provided that this rule is not intended to come in the way of doing service to Harijans. Similarly Harijan sevaks are not to attend public meetings which are not open to Harijans.

2. The Western and Central India Harijan Sevaks' Conference held at Poona very much appreciates the organization of Harijan welfare work in Holkar State as explained by Prof. R. K. Yardye, Hon. Secretary of the Indore H. S. S., but considers that the grant of Rs. 7,000 is too low for the purpose and therefore requests His Highness the Maharaja Holkar and his Government to raise the grant considerably to enable the work to be organized efficiently. This Conference is also of the opinion that the object of the State regarding Harijan emancipation will be better served by

[1] *Vide* "A Harijan Sevaks' Conference", 30-7-1939.

the appointment of a special officer, as is done in Bombay, Mysore, Travancore and Cochin, to look after Harijan interests.

3. The report of the Harijan Sevak Sangh, Gwalior State, submitted by the Secretary to this Conference, shows that the cause of Harijans suffers on account of the utter lack of practical support by the Government of Gwalior. Considering the views of His Highness the Maharaja Saheb as expressed repeatedly in his public speeches, it is most regrettable that such indifference should exist. This Conference respectfully draws the attention of the Administration and the Ruler of the Gwalior State to the necessity of taking an active part in the work of the amelioration of the conditions of Harijans, as well as the removal of untouchability. For this purpose this conference requests the appointment of a special officer or that of a Committee with an annual grant of a substantial sum of money in the annual budget. This Conference is also of opinion that a public declaration of the State policy granting civic rights to Harijans for the use of public wells, tanks, temples, conveyances and schools should be issued forthwith.

4. The universal disinclination to do physical work, particularly work involving the handling of dirt, is one of the causes that are responsible for the custom of untouchability. For example, scavenging, flaying of dead cattle, tanning, leather work, barber's work and similar duties are regarded as causing pollution. Similarly personal service and hospitality rendered to a member of a so-called lower caste is forbidden.

To achieve total eradication of untouchability, it is necessary to remove as early as possible this false feeling of detestation towards socially beneficial occupations. This Conference therefore appeals to all Harijan sevaks and persons interested in the cause of Harijan uplift that they should feel no hesitation in doing with their own hands the aforesaid duties and thereby demonstrate to the world that they involve no indignity or pollution.

This Conference further appeals to all Hindu sisters and brothers to remain absolutely certain that no individual loses his caste by virtue of personal service of any description. Bearing this religious principle in mind they should extend to guests of whatsoever caste coming under their roof the same cordial hospitality that they render to their own caste people. One need not have a guilty conscience in rendering service to such guests.

A growing tendency is to be noticed among self-respecting Harijans to abandon their hereditary occupations because these are socially despised. Although this Conference does not regard any honest occupation as low, it fully appreciates the feelings of Harijans and declares that they have every right to give up these occupations if they so choose, and that it would be unjust on the part of caste Hindus to coerce them into doing such tasks.

5. With a view to remove untouchability and bring about a speedy uplift of Harijans, this Conference requests all Provincial Boards of the H.S.S. concerned to take necessary steps in order that elementary education is made free and compulsory at least for Harijan children in those places where there are already schools of a District School Board or a Municipal School Board.

6. This Conference takes this opportunity to point out to the managers of Harijan students' hostels of the H.S.S. that segregation is not the object of conducting Harijan hostels, and that therefore an endeavour should be made to secure the admission of Harijan boys and girls of all Harijan sub-castes and also of a few caste Hindu boys and girls in the Harijan hostels, provided that no monetary burden is thrown on the resources of the Sangh in respect of caste-Hindu pupils.

7. This Conference is of opinion that it is necessary to afford legal protection to Harijans who are subjected to social boycott on account of their enjoying a common civic right, and recommends to the Bombay Government, as a measure of partial protection, that the Government should undertake, along with other legislation contemplated by Government, suitable legislation to provide that refusal on the part of a shopkeeper or a regular dealer in articles which are necessaries of life, to sell such articles to a Harijan or his servants or his family dependants as an item of social boycott on the ground of such Harijans trying to enjoy or having enjoyed any common civic rights, should be made a punishable offence.

8. It is resolved by this Conference that the various Provincial Boards should request the Municipalities in their jurisdiction to start welfare work for their Harijan employees on the lines of the Bombay Municipal Corporation, and the Municipalities may be requested to use at least the Fine Funds for this purpose.

The line of work can be suggested on the following fundamental points: recreational, educational, social, economical. And the welfare work will also include the work of a labour officer, i. e., to receive complaints about the working conditions of the employees and to redress them.

9. This Conference urges the Provincial Boards and the Local Committee of the H.S.S. to make concerted and special efforts for securing to Harijans the enjoyment of civic rights in respect of wells, hotels, etc.

10. This Conference is of opinion that the Government of Bombay should take necessary steps to provide for free studentships to all deserving Harijan students in the secondary grant-in-aid schools in the Bombay Presidency as soon as possible.

11. Whereas in various Harijan localities, there are no grocery shops and the Harijans have to purchase corn and other provisions from shops belonging to otherpeople at a very high price, this Conference requests the Harijan Sevak Sanghs to endeavour to open such shops on a co-operative basis in those villages where the Harijan population is sufficiently numerous.

12. This Conference requests all Harijan sevaks that they should try their best to enlist active co-operation of women workers in the cause of service to Harijans.

13. Whereas it has been found by experience that in multi-member constituencies for legislatures and local bodies where seats are reserved for Harijans, votes are not, as a rule, mutually given by caste-Hindu voters and Harijan voters, and whereas it is necessary with a view to foster brotherly feelings and to fulfil the real purpose of the Poona Pact[1] that the votes should be mutually given, this Conference calls upon all caste-Hindu voters to exercise at least one vote in favour of Harijan candidates, and Harijan voters to exercise at least one vote in favour of caste-Hindu candidates. This Conference is further of opinion that the distributive system of voting is better suited than the cumulative system to achieve the end in view.

SEGAON, July 30, 1939

Harijan, 5-8-1939

APPENDIX VI

LETTER FROM LORD LINLITHGOW[2]

VICEROY'S CAMP, INDIA (PURI),

August 2, 1939

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Many thanks for your telegram which I have just received. I quite realize your difficulty in getting away at this moment, and I had indeed been a little afraid that it might, as has happened, be impossible for you to do so. I should be most reluctant to impose the least strain on you, and I hope that you will never hesitate to let me know if you feel that any suggestion of mine for a meeting is likely to have that effect; and I shall not in the least misunderstand your doing so.

2. It is very kind of you to suggest that we might meet later this month. I have in fact, as I said, nothing very special to talk about, and my invitation to you to meet me at Delhi was merely in pursuance of my desire to keep in touch with you and maintain contact from time to time. Nor do I want to give you the trouble of the tiring journey to Simla. I think therefore that we might leave matters as they are for the moment, and I will look forward to seeing you a little later in the year when I am again back from the hills.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI, Esq.
SEGAON

From a copy: C. W. 7831. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Of September 1932, *vide* Appendix "Agreement between Depressed Classes Leaders and Caste Hindu Leaders", 26-9-1932.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Lord Linlithgow", 1-8-1939.

APPENDIX VII

KATHIAWAR STATES[1]

The Western India States Agency, comprising all the 284 States in Kathiawar, is, numerically, by far the biggest Agency under the administrative control of the Political Department. The Kathiawar States, Between themselves account for just half the number of States in India, the total being computed at 562. These States present the greatest possible variety in size and government. At one end of the scale are Cutch with an area of 8,250 square miles and Bhavnagar with an annual income of about Rs. 15 million; at the other end of the scale. . . Vejanoness which has an area of 0.29 square mile, a population of 206 souls and an income of Rs. 500 a year. . . . Sir George Macmunn must have had these statelets in mind while writing his famous book *The Indian States and Princes.* In the very first chapter he says:

> The Ruling Princes of India number between five and six hundred, and their principalities vary from that of the Nizam, as large as a third of France, to others no larger than Battersea Park.

The real demand of the States subjects, it must be presumed, is self-government or responsible government and not merely good government. Nothing short of extensive democratization of the administrative machinery is likely to satisfy them. As democratization must of neccessity involve certain financial commitments, it is neither helpful nor politic to demand it from Rulers of States whose annual income is less than, say, Rs. 50 lakhs. Joint administration is, therefore, the only alternative to the existing arrangement for such States.

Joint administration for small States is no novel or visionary suggestion. His Excellency the Viceroy himself, than whom none can claim to be more solicitous for the welfare of the Princes, is responsible for propagating this view. The germs of this theory, however, are traceable in the Butler Committee Report, 1928-29. Dealing with the classification of States, the Report says:

> The petty States of Kathiawar and Gujarat, numbering 286 of the total of 327 in the third class, are organized in groups called *thanas* under officers appointed by local representatives of the Paramount Power, who exercise various kinds and degrees of criminal, revenue and civil jurisdiction. As the cost of administration rises, the States find it necessary to distribute it over larger areas by appointing officials to work for several States. Already there is talk in some of the larger States in Kathiawar of appointing a High Court with powers over a group of such States.

[1] *Vide* Letter to R. L. Handa", 10-8-1939; "Confederation of Small States", 14-8-1939 and "Kathiawar States", 11-9-1939. Only extracts are reproduced here.

He Excellency's views on this question may be gathered from the following extract from his address delivered on the occasion of inaugurating the session of the Chamber of Princes in March last:

> In no case is the need for co-operation and combination more patent, more pronounced and more immediate than in the case of the smaller States. Those States whose resources are so limited as virtually to preclude them individually from providing for the requirements of their people in accordance with modern standard, have indeed no other practical alternative before them. I would take this opportunity to impress upon the Rulers of such States, with all the emphasis at my command, the wisdom of taking the earliest possible steps to combine with their neighbours in the matter of administrative services so far as this is practicable.

Though the principle of combination enunciated by the Viceroy can apply to smaller States all over India, it is particularly suitable in the case of Kathiawar States. One peculiar feature of these States is that, unlike their neighbours, the Gujarat States or the Central India States, they are geographically one compact province. . . . The process of combination or grouping or to be a little bolder, of confederation, is immensely facilitated by this continuity. The total area of all these States is just over 40,000 square miles and the total population is 42,29,494. The total annual income is estimated at about Rs. six crores.

During the last three months the Kathiawar Princes have met a number of times and . . . they were reported to have discussed the feasibility of having a combined police force, common Excise, Medical, Public Health, Public Works and Forest Deparments and a common High Court. . . . It is so easy to see the futility of combined administration in these important spheres without providing for a combined legislature. For, the question arises, to whom will these common administrations be responsible? Certainly not to all one score Princes and their Governments. You cannot earnestly be responsible to twenty authorities unless confusion is their aim and to bungle your wish.

Harijan, 30-9-1939

APPENDIX VIII

LETTER FROM SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE TO CONGRESS PRESIDENT[1]

August 7, 1939

I am exceedingly sorry for the delay in replying to your letter of the 18th July, from Ranchi. You have asked me for an explanation of my action in protesting against certain resolutions of the All-India Congress Committee passed at Bombay.

[1] *Vide* "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 11-8-1939.

In the first place, one has to distinguish between protesting against a certain resolution and actually defying it or violating it. What has so far happened is that I have only protested against two resolutions of the A.I.C C.

It is my constitutional right to give expression to my opinion regarding any resolution passed by the A.I.C.C. You will perhaps admit that it is customary with a large number of Congressman to express their views on resolutions passed by the A.I.C.C. when a particular session of that body comes to a close. If you grant Congressmen the right to express their views on resolutions passed by the A.I.C.C., you cannot draw a line and say that only favourable opinions will be allowed expression and unfavourable opinions will be banned. If we have the contitutional right to express our views then it does not matter if those views are favourable or unfavourable. Your letter seems to suggest that only expression of unfavourable views is to be banned.

We have so long been fighting the British Government among other things for our civil liberty. Civil liberty, I take it, includes freedom of speech. According to your point of view we are not to claim freedom of speech when we do not see eye to eye with the majority in the A.I.C.C. or in the Congress. It would be a strange situation if we are to have the right of freedom of speech as against the British Government but not as against the Congress or any body subordinate to it. If we are denied the right to adversely criticize resolutions of the A.I.C.C. which in our view are harmful to the country's cause then it would amount to denial of a democratic right. May I ask you in all seriousness if democratic rights are to be exercised only outside the Congress but not inside it ?

I hope you will agree that when a resolution is once passed by the A.I.C.C., it is open to us to have it reviewed or amended or altered or rescinded at a subsequent meeting of that body. I hope you will also agree that it is open to us to appeal against the A.I.C.C. to the higher court of appeal, namely, the open session of the Congress. You will agree further, I hope, that it is open to a minority to carry on a propaganda with a view to converting the majority to its point of view. Now how can we do this except by appealing to Congressmen through public meetings and through writings in the Press? The Congress today is not an organization of a handful of men. Its membership has, I believe, reached the neighbourhood of 45 lakhs. We can hope to appeal to the rank and file of the Congress and to convert them to our point of view only if we are allowed to write in the Press and also to hold meetings. If you maintain that once a resolution is passed in the A.I.C.C. it is sacrosanct and must hold good for ever, then you may have some justification for banning criticism of it. But if you

grant us the right to review or amend or alter or rescind a particular resolution of the A.I.C.C. either through that body or through the open session of the Congress, then I do not see how you can gag criticism, as you have been trying to do.

I am afraid you are giving an interpretation to the word 'discipline' which I cannot accept. I consider myself to be a stern disciplinarian and I am afraid that in the name of discipline you are trying to check healthy criticism. Discipline does not mean denying a person his constitutional and democratic right.

Apart from the fact that it is our constitutional and democratic right to protest against resolutions which in our view are harmful to the country's cause, a consideration of the merits of the two resolutions will show that such protests were really called for. In our view these two resolutions, if given effect to, will serve to accentuate the drift towards constitutionalism, to increase the influence, power and authority of the Provincial Ministries at the cost of the Congress organizations, to isolate artificially the Congress from the general public as also the A.I.C.C. from the rank and file of the Congress. Moreover, they will serve to undermine the revolutionary spirit of the Congress. Consequently, in the best interests of the country, these two resolutions should be immediately held in abeyance and ultimately altered suitably or withdrawn.

In this connection I cannot help drawing your attention to certain incidents at the time of the Gaya Congress in 1922 and after. Please do not forget what the Swaraj Party did in those days. Please do not forget either that when the A.I.C.C. amended the resolution of the Gaya Congress, the Gujarat P.C.C. resolved to defy it.

Lastly, please do not forget that Mahatma Gandhi wrote[1] in *Young India,* if my recollection is correct, that the minority has the right to rebel. We have not gone so far yet as to actually rebel against the decision of the majority. We have simply taken the liberty of criticizing certain resolutions passed by the majority in the teeth of our opposition.

I am really surprised that you have made so much of what we regard as our inherent right. I hope you will accept my explanation as satisfactory. But if you do not do so, and if you decide to resort to disciplinary action, I shall gladly face it for the sake of what I regard as a just cause. In conclusion, I have to request that if any Congressman is penalized in connection with the events of the 9th July, then you will also take action against me. If the observance of an All-India Day of the 9th is a crime then I confess, I am the arch-criminal.

With kindest regards,

The Indian Annual Register, 1939, Vol. II, pp. 219-20

[1] *Vide* "Notes - Congress A Fetish", 2-3-1922.

APPENDIX IX

CONGRESS PRESIDENT'S DECLARATION [1]

July 6, 1939

I have been much surprised to read in the papers Shri Subhas Chandra Bose's statement fixing the 9th July for protesting against resolutions passed by the All-India Congress Committee at Bombay. It is well known that the resolution was passed after prolonged debate by a very large majority against the opposition of Shri Subhas Chandra Bose. If Committees subordinate to the All-India Congress Committee and office-bearers of such Committees or minorities within the Congress begin to defy such resolution and organize and hold protest meetings against decisions arrived at after full deliberation by the All-India Congress Committee or the Congress, there will be an end to all discipline within the Congress and a complete disruption of the organization. I therefore desire to impress on all Congress Committees and their office-bearers that the policy and practice of the Congress no less than loyalty to the Congress organization require that they should carry out and give effect to the resolutions passed by the All-India Congress Committee, and participation in and organizing of protests and condemnation against such resolution will be a breach of discipline. I trust the Congress Committees and their office-bearers will desist from organizing or participating in such protests and demonstrations.

The Indian Annual Register, 1939, Vol. II, p. 219

APPENDIX X

LETTER FROM CONGRESS PRESIDENT TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE [2]

July 18, 1939

A delicate and difficult situation has been created by your action in organizing protests against certain resolutions of the All-India Congress Committee, passed at Bombay. As I made clear in the statements which I issued before the meetings of the 9th July were held, it appears to me that it will be impossible for the Congress organization to function if subordinate Committees and office-bearers of the Congress, whose duty it is to carry out and give effect to the resolution of the A.I.C.C. and the Congress, were, instead of doing that, to organize protests and

[1] *Vide* "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 11-8-1939.
[2] *ibid*

demostrations against these resolutions. I personally look upon any such action on their part as not only destructive of all discipline but fraught with the gravest consequences for the future of the Congress organization. I shall therefore place the whole matter before the Working Committee for consideration and such action, disciplinary or otherwise, as it may think fit to take. But in order that the Committee may have your explanation of your action and your point of view also before it. I shall be obliged if you will let me have it at an early date.

The Indian Annual Register, 1939, Vol. II, p. 219

APPENDIX XI

CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION [1]

The Working Committee have given their earnest consideration to the critical international situation and to the danger of war that overhangs the world. In this world crisis the sympathies of the Working Committee are entirely with the people who stand for democracy and freedom, and the Congress has repeatedly condemned Fascist aggression in Europe, Africa and the Far East of Asia as well as the betrayal of democracy by British imperialism in Czechoslovakia and Spain. The Congress has further clearly enunciated its policy in the event of war and declared its determination to oppose all attempts to impose a war on India. The Committee are bound by this policy of the Congress and will give effect to it so as to prevent the exploitation of Indian resources for imperialist ends. The past policy of the British Government as well as the recent developments demonstrate abundantly that this Government does not stand for freedom and democracy and may at any time betray these ideals. India cannot associate herself with such a Government or be asked to give her resources for democratic freedom which is denied to her and which is likely to be betrayed.

At its meeting held in Calcutta on May 1, 1939, the All-India Congress Committee reiterated this policy of the Congress and expressed its disapproval of the despatch of Indian troops to foreign countries. In spite of this clear expression of opinion, the British Government has sent, or is sending Indian troops to Egypt and Singapore against the declared will of the Indian people. Even apart from the war situation, the Central Legislative Assembly has previously declared that no Indian troops should be sent abroad without the consent of the Legislature. The British Government has thus flouted the declaration of the Congress and the Assembly and

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 23-9-1939; 28-9-1939; 18-10-1939; "A Statement", 20-9-1939; "Unconditional Support?", 30-10-1939 and "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 22-11-1939.

has taken steps which might inevitably lead to India's entanglement in a war. It has further prolonged the life of the Central Assembly by another year. The Working Committee cannot accept these decisions of the British Government and must not only dissociate themselves from them but also take such steps as may be necessary to give effect to the Congress members of the Central Legislative Assembly to refrain from attending the next session of the Assembly.

The Committee further remind Provincial Governments to assist in no way the war preparations of the British Government and to keep in mind the policy laid down by the Congress, to which they must adhere. If the carrying out of this policy leads to the resignations or removal of the Congress Ministers they must be prepared for this contingency.

In the event of a war crisis leading to danger to any part of India from the air or otherwise it may be necessary for protective measures to be taken. The Committee will be prepared to encourage such measures if they are within the control of the popular Ministries in the Provinces. The Committee are however not agreeable to such protective measures being used as a cloak for war preparations under the control of the Imperial Government.

The Indian Annual Register, 1939, Vol, II, pp. 214-5

APPENDIX XII

LETTER FROM YADAVINDRA SINGH [1]

RANBIR VILLA, CHAIL,

September 9, 1939

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I thank you for your letter dated the 30th ultimo enclosing a copy of the letter reported to have been despatched to me on the 3rd August which, as I intimated you in my telegram dated 28th ultimo, was never received by me. I was somewhat surprised to learn of the publication in the vernacular Press of the letter from your correspondent together with your comments and was inclined to think that since you did not consider it worthwhile to await my reply before releasing to the Press your correspondent's letter, it was unnecessary for me to reply to your letter. However, I have since received your message conveyed through my vakil at Simla informing that whereas an intimation had been given in time to the English Press to withhold publication of this matter, owing to rush of work similar instructions could not be conveyed to the vernacular Press. I am, indeed, thankful to you for intimating me that the comments that have already appeared in the vernacular Press will be revised or withdrawn in case it was considered necessary on receipt of my reply.

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 23-9-1939and "Remarks on *A Maharaja's Threat*", 12-9-1939. Only excerpts are reproduced here.

Your correspondent's letter deals with two issues, namely, (a) the *Hidayat* of 1988 and (b) the threatening language alleged to have been used by me during the course of an interview I gave to the deputation that waited upon me on the 18th July. .

The main criticism against the *Hidayat* has been that since it was intended to meet a special situation, its retention as a permanent law of the land was not justifiable. The communal disturbances, as you will agree, were precisely the kind of special situation to meet which the Government have to keep themselves armed with such special legislation. It will appear, therefore, that it is the abuse, by those who were responsible for disturbing intercommunal harmony, of the liberty conferred on them, which was responsible for the subsequent order enjoining the enforcement of the provisions of the *Hidayat.* The fact that this unfortunate occurrence rendered it necessary for me to invoke the provisions of the *Hidayat,* was appreciated even by those who had earlier organized agitation against this enactment, as is evident from their voluntary decision to abide by the order issued by me on the 25th of May. The period for which the enforcement of the *Hidayat* was enjoined is not yet over; however, as the communal situation has since eased considerably and I have exercised clemency and withdrawn cases against those involved in this communal clash. I would have considered the desirability of revising the provisions of the *Hidayat,* but as you are aware, war has since broken out and while for the successful prosecution thereof emergency measures curtailing civic rights and liberties are being enforced, this emergency legislation has of necessity to be retained on the statute-book. I have not the least intention of going back over the assurance that was given by the District Nazim, Sunam, but I am obliged to await more favourable circumstances to do the needful.

As regards the version of what transpired at the interview I gave to the deputation on the 18th July, I am sorry your correspondent has twisted what I told the deputationists and his letter contains several half-truths and mis-statements. I had assured them that while I was most anxious to redress the genuine grievances of my subjects, I did not approve of their being misled by those who were actuated by motives not wholly impersonal. I do not precisely remember the words I used, but I think I told them that I would readily respond to all legitimate wishes of my people but would not be intimidated by any agitation engineered by those not directly interested in the points at issue nor would I accept any dictation from any outside agency.

In view of what I have stated above, I feel your comments that have appeared in the vernacular Press do not seem to be called for and I trust you will be good enough to withdraw them. I thank you for the courtesy you have shown me in inviting my comments on your correspondent's letter.

Yours sincerely,
YADAVINDRA SINGH

Harijan, 16-9-1939

APPENDIX XIII

WORKING COMMITTEE'S MANIFESTO[1]

1. The Working Committee have given their earnest consideration to the grave crisis that has developed owing to the declaration of war in Europe. The principles which should guide the nation in the event of war have been repeatedly laid down by the Congress, and only a month ago this Committee reiterated them and expressed their displeasure at the flouting of Indian opinion by the British Government in India. As a first step to dissociate themselves from this policy of the British Government, the Committee called upon the congress members of the Central Legislative Assembly to refrain from attending the next session. Since then the British Government have declared India as a belligerent country, promulgated ordinances, passed the Government of India Act Amending Bill, and taken other far-reaching measures which affect the Indian people vitally, and circumscribe and limit the powers and the activities of the Provincial Governments. This has been done without the consent of the Indian people whose declared wishes in such matters have been deliberately ignored by the British Government. The Working Committee must take the gravest view of these developments.

2. The Congress has repeatedly declared its entire disapproval of the ideology and practice of Fascism and Nazism and their glorification of war and violence and the suppression of the human spirit. It has condemned the aggression in which they have repeatedly indulged and their sweeping away of well-established principles and recognized standards of civilized behaviour. It has seen in Fascism and Nazism the intensification of the principle of imperialism against which the Indian people have struggled for many years. The Working Committee must therefore unhesitatingly condemn the latest aggression of the Nazi Government in Germany against Poland and sympathize with those who resist it.

3. The Congress has further laid down that the issue of war and peace for India must be decided by the Indian people, and no outside authority can impose this decision upon them nor can the Indian people permit their resources to be exploited for imperialist ends. Any imposed decision, or attempt to use Indian resources, for purposes not approved by them, will necessarily have to be opposed by them. If co-operation is desired in a worthy cause, this cannot be obtained by compulsion and imposition, and the Committee cannot agree to the carrying out by the Indian people of orders issued by external authority. Co-operation must be between equals by mutual

[1] *Vide*" A Statement", 20-9-1939; Statement to the Press", 15-9-1939; 28-9-1939; 18-10-1939; "The Only Way", 19-11-1939 and "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 22-11-1939.

consent for a cause which both consider to be worthy. The people of India have in the recent past, faced great risks and willingly made great sacrifices to secure their own freedom and establish a free democratic State in India, and their sympathy is entirely on the side of democracy and freedom. But India cannot associate herself in a war said to be for democratic freedom when that very freedom is denied to her, and such limited freedom as she possesses taken away from her.

4. The Committee are aware that the Governments of Great Britain and France have declared that they are fighting for democracy and freedom and to put an end to aggression. But the history of the recent past is full of examples showing the constant divergence between the spoken word, the ideals proclaimed and the real motives and objectives. During the war of 1914-18, the declared war aims were the preservation of democracy, self-determination and the freedom of small nations, and yet the very Governments which solemnly proclaimed these aims entered into secret treaties embodying imperialist designs for the carving up of the Ottoman Empire. While stating that they did not want any acquisition of territory, the victorious Powers added largely to their colonial domains. The present European war itself signifies the abject failure of the Treaty of Versailles and of its makers, who broke their pledged word and imposed an imperialist peace on the defeated nations. The one hopeful outcome of that Treaty, the League of Nations, was muzzled and strangled at the outset and later killed by its parent States.

5. Subsequent history has demonstrated afresh how even a seemingly fervent declaration of faith may be followed by an ignoble desertion. In Manchuria the British Government connived at aggression; in Abyssinia they acquiesced in it. In Czechoslovakia and Spain democracy was in peril and it was deliberately betrayed, and the whole system of collective security was sabotaged by the very Powers who had previously declared their firm faith in it.

6. Again it is asserted that democracy is in danger and must be defended, and with this statement the Committee are in entire agreement. The Committee believe that thepeoples of the West are moved by this ideal and objective and for these they are prepared to make sacrifices. But again and again the ideals and sentiments of the people and of those who have sacrificed themselves in the struggle have been ignored and faith has not been kept with them.

7. If the war is to defend the status quo—imperialist possessions, colonies, vested interests and privileges—then India can have nothing to do with it. If, however, the issue is democracy and a world order based on democracy, then India is intensely interested in it. The Committee are convinced that the interests of Indian democracy do not conflict with the interests of British democracy or of world democracy. But there is an inherent and ineradicable conflict between democracy for India or elsewhere and imperialism and Fascism. If Great Britain fights for the maintenance and extension of democracy, then she must necessarily end imperialism in her own possessions, establish full democracy in India, and the Indian people must

have the right of self-determination by framing their own constitution through a Constituent Assembly without external interference, and must guide their own policy. A free, democratic India will gladly associate herself with other free nations for mutual defence against aggression and for economic co-operation. She will work for the establishment of a real world order based on freedom and democracy, utilizing the world's knowledge and resources for the progress and advancement of humanity.

8. The crisis that has overtaken Europe is not of Europe only but of humanity and will not pass like other crises or wars leaving te essential structure of the present-day world intact. It is likely to refashion the world for good or ill, politically, socially and economically. This crisis is the inevitable consequence of the social and political conflicts and contradictions which have grown alarmingly since the last great war, and it will not be finally resolved till these conflicts and contradictions are removed and a new equilibrium established. That equilibrium can only be based on the ending of the domination and exploitation of one country by another, and on a reorganization of economic relations on a juster basis for the common good of all. India is the crux of the problem, for India has been the outstanding example of modern imperialism, and no refashioning of the world can succeed which ignores this vital problem. With her vast resources she must play an important part in any scheme of world recognization. But she can only do so as a free nation whose energies have been released to work for this great end. Freedom today is indivisible and every attempt to retain imperialist domination in any part of the world will lead inevitably to fresh disaster.

9. The Working Committee have noted that many Rulers of Indian States have offered their services and resources and expressed their desire to support the cause of democracy in Europe. If they must make their professions in favour of democracy abroad, the Committee would suggest that their first concern should be the introduction of democracy within their own States in which today undiluted autocracy reigns supreme. The British Government in India is more responsible for this autocracy than even the Rulers themselves, as has been made painfully evident during the past year. This policy is the very negation of democracy and of the new world order for which Great Britain claims to be fighting in Europe.

10. As the Working Committee view past events in Europe, Africa and Asia, and more particularly past and present occurrences in India, they fail to find any attempt to advance the cause of democracy or self-determination, or any evidence that the present war declarations of the British Government are being, or are going to be, acted upon. The true measure of democracy is the ending of imperialism and Fascism alike and the aggression that has accompanied them in the past and the present. Only on that basis can a new order be built up. In the struggle for that new world order, the Committee are eager and desirous to help in every way. But the Committee cannot associate themselves or offer any co-operation in a war which is conducted on

imperialist lines and which is meant to consolidate imperialism in India and elsewhere.

11. In view, however, of the gravity of the occasion and the fact that the pace of events during the last few days has often been swifter than the working of men's minds, the Committee desire to take no final decision at this stage, so as to allow for the full elucidation of the issues at stake, the real objectives aimed at, and the position of India in the present and in the future. But the decision cannot long be delayed as India is being committed from day to day to a policy to which she is not a party and of which she disapproves.

12. The Working Committee therefore invite the British Government to declare in unequivocal terms what their war aims are in regard to democracy and imperialism and the new order that is envisaged, in particular, how these aims are going to apply to India and to be given effect to in the present. Do they include the elimination of imperialism and the treatment of India as a free nation whose policy will be guided in accordance with the wishes of her people? A clear declaration about the future, pledging the Government to the ending of imperialism and Fascism alike, will be welcomed by the people of all countries, but it is far more important to give immediate effect to it, to the largest possible extent, for only this will convince the people that the declaration is meant to be honoured. The real test of any declaration is its application in the present, for it is the present that will govern action today and give shape to the future.

13. War has broken out in Europe and the prospect is terrible to contemplate. But war has been taking its heavy toll of human life during the past year in Abyssinia, Spain and China. Innumerable innocent men, women and children have been bombed to death from the air in open cities, cold-blooded massacres, torture and utmost humiliation have followed each other in quick succession during these years of horror. That horror grows, and violence and the threat of violence shadow the world, unless checked and ended, will destroy the precious inheritance of past ages. That horror has to be chcked in Europe and China, but it will not end till its root causes of Fascism and imperialism are removed. To that end, the Working Committee are prepared to give their co-operation. But it will be infinite tragedy if even this terrible war is carried on in the spirit of imperialism and for the purpose of retaining this stucture which is itself the cause of war and human degradation.

14. The Working Committee wish to declare that the Indian people have no quarrel with the German people or the Japanese people or any other people. But they have a deep-rooted quarrel with systems which deny freedom and are based on violence and aggression. They do not look forward to a victory of one people over another or to a dictated peace, but to a victory of real democracy for all the people of all countries and a world freed from the nightmare of violence and imperialist oppression.

15. The Committee earnestly appeal to the Indian people to end all internal conflict and controversy and, in this grave hour of peril, to keep in readiness and hold

together as a united nation, calm of purpose and determined to achieve the freedom of India within the larger freedom of the world.

WARDHA, September 14, 1939

Harijan, 23-9-1939

APPENDIX XIV

A. I. C. C. RESOLUTION[1]

The declaration of war in Europe has created an international situation of the gravest import to the world and to India, and the A. I. C. C., charged with the heavy responsibility of guiding the people of India in this moment of world crisis, has sought guidance from the principles and declarations of the Congress in considering this grave situation. The Congress has been guided throughout by its objective of achieving the independence of the Indian people and the establishment of a free democratic State in India wherein the rights and interests of all minorities are preserved and safeguarded. The means it has adopted in its struggles and activities have been peaceful and legitimate, and it has looked upon war and violence with horror and as opposed to progress and civilization. In particular, the Congress has declared itself opposed to all imperialist wars and to the domination of one country over another.

In spite of the repeated declarations of the Congress in regard to war, the British Government have declared India a belligerent country without the consent of the Indian people and various far-reaching measures have been hurried through the legislatures and promulgated in the form of ordinances, vitally affecting them and circumscribing and limiting the powers of the Provincial Governments.

The A. I. C. C., however, does not wish to take any final decision precipitately and without giving every opportunity for the war and peace aims of the British Government to be clarified, with particular reference to India. The committee approves of and endorses the statement issued by the Working Committee on September 14, 1939, on the war crisis, and repeats the invitation contained therein to the British Government to state their war and peace aims.

While the Committee condemns Fascism and Nazi aggression, it is convinced that peace and freedom can only be established and preserved by an extension of democracy to all colonial countries and by the application of the principle of self-determination to them so as to eliminate imperialist control. In particular, India must

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with a Friend", on or after 10-10-1939; "Statement to the Press", 28-9-1939; 13-10-1939; and 18-10-1939.

be declared an independent nation, and at present application must be given to this status to the largest possible extent. The A. I. C. C. earnestly trusts that this declaration will be made by the British Government in any statement that it may make in regard to its war and peace aims.

The Committee desires to declare afresh that Indian freedom must be based on democracy and unity and the full recognition and protection of the rights of all minorities to which the Congress has always pledged itself.

The Committee approves of the formation by the Working Committee of the War Emergency Sub-Committee and authorizes the Working Committee to take such steps as may be necessary to give effect to this resolution and to their statement on the war crisis.

Harijan, 14-10-1939

1. LETTER TO INDIRA NEHRU

[After *October 15, 1939*][1]

CHI. INDU,

You must have now lost the habit of writing Hindi. But I must write, mustn't I, in the *rashtrabhasha* ?

Have you gone there for studies or for falling ill? How did you contract pleurisy? I have suffered the pangs of pleurisy. May God restore you soon to health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 9805. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

2. NOTES

A POSER

A Britisher has written to Deenabandhu Andrews a letter on the war expounding his own views. He is an ardent pacifist. Deenabandhu has shared the letter with me. In it occur the following paragraphs:

> For India too I think that this is a very critical time. The danger I see is that Britain may promise full Dominion Status or something of the kind, and as a result India will raise an army and become one more military-minded nation. Her witness for the way of non-violence and soul-force would then be largely discounted.
>
> How can Gandhiji as a believer in non-violence ask for clarification of war aims with a view to getting India's support for Britain in this way of war? The only thing that he can do and that we should all be doing is to build up an army of men and women who are committed to the way of love and forgiveness and to receive but never to return violence. We have to work this out to see how it will alter our daily life as well as all our thinking and acting towards other communities and nations. We have to be disciplined in this and also to

[1] In her book, *With No Regrets*, Krishna Hutheesing explains that the addressee went hiking during the autumn of 1939, got soaked and caught a chill which developed into pleurisy. In a letter dated November 6, 1939, Jawaharlal Nehru had written to the addressee that he had a joint cable "from Agatha and Bhandari that you are going to Europe". She went to Leysin (in Switzerland) after having spent some time in Middlesex Hospital. *Vide* also the preceding item and "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru". 25-10-1939.

learn to act together as one man. Along this line I see tremendous possibilities.

Of course we should also use all the influence we can to urge Britain to acknowledge and put into practice full democracy in India as it is a high principle quite apart from whether India helps Britain in the war or not.

The danger that the writer senses is real. I dealt with it last week.[1] The writer cavils at my sympathy with the Allies. I have shown it as an out-and-out believer in non-violence, even because of my belief. Whilst all violence is bad and must be condemned in the abstract, it is permissible for, it is even the duty of, a believer in ahimsa to distinguish between the aggressor and the defender. Having done so, he will side with the defender in a non-violent manner, i.e., give his life in saving him. His intervention is likely to bring a speedier end to the duel and may even result in bringing about peace between the combatants. Applying the argument to the present war, if the Congress actively sides with the Allies in a non-violent way, the Congress assistance will lift the Allied cause to a high moral plane and the Congress influence will be effectively used in the cause of peace. What is more it will be the special business of the Congress to see that, if the war is fought to a finish, no humiliation is heaped upon the vanquished. That is the role I have conceived for the Congress. The declaration of independence has become a necessity. The question having been raised, the Congress cannot help Britain if Britain is secretly fighting for imperialism while it declares to the world that the fight is for saving democracies. For Britain to be in the right a clear declaration of her war aim is a necessity, irrespective of the Congress policy.

SEGAON, October 16, 1939

Harijan, 21-10-1939

3. THE FICTION OF MAJORITY

It is painful to find the British Press and Britishers advancing the minority claim to prevent the declaration suggested[2] by the Congress, if I may say so, in the common interest. If the force of the Congress suggestion has not been overwhelmingly felt, the declaration will not

[1] *Vide* "On Trial", 10-10-1939.

[2] *Vide* Appendices "Working Committee's Manifesto", 14-9-1939 and "A.I.C.C. Resolution", 14-10-1939.

come. There need be no dejection among Congressmen if it does not. We shall get our independence when it is deserved. But it would be well for the British Government and the Allied cause, if the minority argument were not flung in the face of a credulous world. It would be honest to say that the British desire to hold India yet awhile. There will be nothing wrong in such a desire. India is a conquest. Conquests are not surrendered except when the conquered successfully rebel, or under an awakened conscience the conqueror repents of the conquest, or when the conquered territory ceases to be a profitable concern. I had hoped and still hope that the British, having become war-weary and sickened over the mad slaughter involved in the present war, would want to close it at the earliest possible moment by being above board in every respect and therefore in respect of India. This they can never be, so long as they hold India in bondage.

I know that many have been angry with me for claiming an exclusive right for the Congress to speak for the people of India as a whole. It is not an arrogant pretension. It is explicit in the first article of the Congress. It wants and works for independence for the whole of India. It speaks neither for majority nor minority. It seeks to represent all Indians without any distinction. Therefore those who oppose it should not count, if the claim for independence is admitted. Those who support the claim simply give added strength to the Congress claim.

Britain has hitherto held India by producing before the world Indians who want Britain to remain in India as ruler and arbiter between rival claimants. These will always exist. The question is whether it is right for Britain to plead these rivalries in defence of holding India under subjection or whether she should now recognize the mistake and leave India to decide upon the method of her own government.

And who are the minorities? They are religious, political and social: thus Mussalmans (religious), Depressed Classes (social), Liberals (political), Princes (social), Brahmins (social), non-Brahmins (social), Lingayats (social), Sikhs (social?), Christians—Protestants and Catholics (religious), Jains (Social?), Zamindars (political?). I have a letter from the Secretary of the All-India Shia Conference registering their claim for separate existence. Who are the majority in this medley? Unfortunately for unhappy India even Muslims are somewhat divided and so are the Christians. It is the policy of the

British Government to recognize every group that becomes sufficiently vocal and troublesome. I have drawn no fanciful picture of the minorities. It is true to life. The Congress itself has been obliged to deal with every one of the groups I have mentioned. My list is not exhaustive. It is illustrative. It can be increased *ad libitum.*

I know that the fashion is to talk of the Hindus forming the majority community. But Hinduism is an elastic, indefinable term, and Hindus are not a homogeneous whole like Muslims and Christians. And when one analyses the majority in any provincial legislature it will be found to consist of a combination of the so-called minorities. In other words and in reality so far as India is concerned, there can only be political parties and no majority or minority communities. The cry of the tyranny of the majority is a fictitious cry.

I observe that Janab Jinnah Saheb has said, in reply[1] to Rajen Babu's letter[2] offering to refer the League's grievances against the Congress Governments to an arbitration tribunal, that he has

> already placed the whole case before the Viceroy and Governor-General and requested him to take up the matter without delay as he and the Governors of the Provinces have been expressly authorised under the Constitution and entrusted with the responsibility to protect the rights and the interests of the minorities.
>
> The matter is now under His Excellency's consideration, and he is the proper authority to take such action and adopt such measures as would meet our requirements and would restore complete sense of security and satisfaction amongst the Mussalmans in those Provinces where the Congress Ministries are in charge of the administration.

It is unfortunate that he had rejected Rajendra Babu's reasonable proposal. Is it rejection of the proffered hand of friendship? Be that as it may, nobody can have anything to say against the Viceroy investigating and adjudicating upon the charges brought against Congress Ministries. Let us hope he will soon conduct the investigation. Whether the Muslims are regarded as minorities or otherwise, their as well as any other community's rights and privileges, religious, social, cultural and political, must be regarded as a sacred trust to be jealously guarded. And the independence of India will make no difference to the protection of those rights. In fact they will

[1] Dated October 6, 1939
[2] Dated October 5, 1939

be better protected in every way, if only because in the framing of the Charter of Independence by the nation's representatives the Muslims and other minorities, real or so-called, will have an effective voice.

Consider for one moment what can happen if the English were to withdraw all of a sudden and there was no foreign usurper to rule. It may be said that the Punjabis, be they Muslims, Sikhs or others, will overrun India. It is highly likely that the Gurkhas will throw in their lot with the Punjabis. Assume further that non-Punjabi Muslims will make common cause with the Punjabis. Where will the Congressmen composed chiefly of Hindus be? If they are still truly non-violent, they will be left unmolested by the warriors. Congressmen won't want to divide power with the warriors but will refuse to let them exploit their unarmed countrymen. Thus if anybody has cause to keep the British rule for protection from the stronger element, it is the Congressmen and those Hindus and others who are represented by the Congress. The question, therefore, resolves itself into not who is numerically superior but who is stronger. Surely there is only one answer. Those who raise the cry of minority in danger have nothing to fear from the so-called majority which is merely a paper majority and which in any event is ineffective because it is weak in the military sense. Paradoxical as it may appear, it is literally true that the so-called minorities' fear has some bottom only so long as the weak majority has the backing of the British bayonets to enable it to play at democracy. But the British power will, so long as it so chooses, successfully play one against the other calling the parties by whatever names it pleases. And this process need not be dishonest. They may honestly believe that so long as there are rival claims put up, they must remain in India in response to a call from God to hold the balance evenly between them. Only that way lies not Democracy but Fascism, Nazism, Bolshevism and Imperialism, all facets of the doctrine of 'Might is Right.' I would fain hope that this war will change values. It can only do so, if India is recognized as independent and if that India represents unadulterated non-violence on the political field.

SEGAON, October 16, 1939

Harijan, 21-10-1939

4. FAMINE WORK IN MORVI

Referring to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur's visit to Morvi during the *Rentia Jayanti* celebrations, the Dewan writes as follows:[1]

> His Highness the Maharaja Saheb has been giving for some years Rs. 10,000 every year during the Gandhi Jayanti for the benefit of the Harijans and khadi. Sometimes the amount is sent to you as was done last year, and many times the amount is spent in Morvi for Harijans and for the encouragement of khadi.. ..
>
> This year we are hard hit by famine. We have organized relief measures on an extensive scale.. .. Cheap grain and grass depots are opened throughout the State where food and fodder are distributed on cash and credit.. .. Agriculturists are given food and fodder on credit.. .. and.. . are helped to grow fodder crops by giving loans for seeds.
>
> Every available source of water is used for irrigation by setting up small pumping plants.
>
> You will be glad to learn that one of the activities of famine relief is to produce khadi. The Famine Department purchases raw cotton, and all operations from carding to weaving are paid for at reasonable rates. The State takes all the khadi that is being produced. It is hoped that this will give the much required employment to a large section of the people—most of them Harijans—at their doors.
>
> This year His Highness has decided to distribute khadi worth Rs. 1,000 to the needy, and owing to scarcity conditions many will need free help of clothing. This will be his usual donation on Gandhi Jayanti.. . .
>
> Bhangis and Meghwars would not use the common tank for taking their water and the State had closed it till their differences were composed. During the period of the existing stress they have made up their differences and now they use the common tank.
>
> During the year the State has provided two measures for the benefit of the lower ranks of State service which include Harijans—one is to give them loans without interest, and the other is to give female servants the benefit of one month's maternity leave on full pay.

Seeing that generally it falls to my lot to criticize the States, it is a pleasure to be able to record the good work done in Morvi in connection with famine. I congratulate the Maharaja Saheb on the

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

effort that is being put forth to alleviate distress. As to khadi I would like to suggest that if it is to become a permanent insurance against famine, the Maharaja Saheb and the people of Morvi have to use khadi for their personal and domestic use. Morvi grows good cotton enough for its requirements. Its people can produce all the khadi they need. Those who are too poor to pay the higher price at which khadi must be sold if it is to give an adequate wage to the spinners, should become spinners themselves. Shri Narandas Gandhi's yearly experiments have shown progressively the immense possibilities in this direction. But these latent virtues of khadi cannot be brought out so long as the Maharaja Saheb and the people of Morvi remain distant patrons instead of becoming lovers and wearers themselves of khadi. It is suicidal economy to buy cheap mill-cloth even though the people can easily produce enough khadi in their own homes without much extra effort or outlay of capital.

SEGAON, October 16, 1939

Harijan, 21-10-1939

5. BAPA JAYANTI

Thakkar Bapa, the father of Harijans and all those who are almost like them and classified as semi-civilized races, animists and what not, completes his seventy years on 29th November next. The inmates of Harijan Nivas in Delhi have planned to celebrate the event in a manner that must delight Thakkar Bapa's heart. They want to collect the modest sum of Rs. 7,000 to be presented to Thakkar Bapa on his birhtday for the Harijan cause. They want me to bless and advertise the effort. I have written to them accusing them of little faith. Thakkar Bapa is a rare worker. He is unassuming. He wants no praise. His work is his sole satisfaction and recreation. Old age has not slackened his zeal. He is himself an institution. I once suggested that he might take a little rest. Immediately came the answer, 'How can I rest when there is so much to do? My work must be my rest.' He puts to shame every young man around him in the energy he expends upon his life mission. A purse of Rs. 7,000 is an insult to the cause and to him who carries on his broad shoulders its heavy burden. The workers must aim at collecting nothing less than Rs. 70,000 from all India. Even that amount is nothing for the cause and its father. But it is a respectable enough sum to be collected inside a month. How I wish it was possible to collect coppers from Harijans and Bhils. They

know him. But the monied and middle-class men too know Bapa and love him. I have no doubt that they will subscribe liberally to the fund both for the cause and for the geat *sevak* who represents it. Subscriptions may be sent to (1) Harijan Nivas, Kingsway, Delhi, (2) Harijan Ashram, Sabarmati, or (3) Segaon *via* Wardha.

SEGAON, October 16, 1939

Harijan, 21-10-1939

6. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 16, 1939

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I hope you got my wire. Deeper consideration made it clear to me that I must not force the pace. Therefore I am not sending Mahadev. God will guide every one of us. You are right in not rushing to Calcutta. Your place is clearly there where you are. You will [avoid][1] all anxiety.

Love.

MOHAN

[PS.]

Amrit says, "there" means Calcutta. Hence the addition.

From the original: C. W. 10203. Courtesy: Visvabharati, Santiniketan

7. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO HORACE ALEXANDER

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 16, 1939

DEAR MR. ALEXANDER,

.. .. I am commissioned by Bapu who is overwhelmed with work to write and acknowledge yours of the 3rd instant duly received. He is grateful for the greetings from your college staff and sends you all his love.. . .

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

From a photostat: G. N. 1431

[1] The source is illegible.

8. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 16, 1939

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have sent your article[1] to *Harijanbandhu*. I have written[2] as much as I could in *Harijan*. I have had no time for further embellishment. What is your suggestion regarding how the money collected should be used? I understand your difficulty. What cannot be cured must be endured.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U/II. Also C. W. 8567. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

9. A SILENCE-DAY NOTE

[On or after *October 16, 1939*][3]

I thought that you were keeping a daily count. You should study my article carefully. It answers all difficulties. Even the majority can't function without the British bayonet. The whole agitation is bluster to force as much as they can from the so-called majority.

From the original: C.W. 9263. Courtesy: Jairamdas Doulatram

10. NOTES

HINDU-MUSLIM CLASHES

If proof were wanted to show that the non-violence of the Congress was in effect violence in suspension or inactive violence, it is furnished by the effective though quite indisciplined violence exhibited in Hindu-Muslim clashes. Had the thousands of Hindus and Muslims who took part in the Khilafat agitation been non-violent at

[1] The addressee's article *"Rentia Jayanti in Rajkot"* appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 22-10-1939.

[2] *Vide* "Notes", 12-7-1939.

[3] From the reference to "article", presumably, "The Fiction of Majority", pp. 258-61.

heart, they could never have been violent towards one another as they are continually found to be. Nor can it be said that those who take part in the clashes are not Congressmen. If we rule out all those who resort to violence as non-Congressmen, the Congress will cease to be a mass organization. For the combatants in these clashes are derived from the masses. More over one finds today violence resorted to by rival Congressmen at Congress meetings. The gross indiscipline and fraud practised at Congress elections are all illustrations of Congress violence. It is difficult to say, therefore, who, if any, are non-violent Congressmen. If they were in a majority in the Congress and if they played an effective part in Hindu-Muslim clashes, they could stop them or at least give their lives in stopping them. If the bulk of Congressmen were truly non-violent, Muslims would be obliged to confess that Congressmen could not be accused of anti-Muslim bias. It is not enough for Congressmen to say that they have not been found guilty of incorrect attitude. I may be proved to be legally correct but may fail miserably if my action was examined in non-violent scales. But this non-violence has to be non-violence of the brave and the strong. It must come from inward conviction. I have, therefore, not hesitated to say that it is better to be violent if there is violence in our breasts than to put on the cloak of non-violence to cover impotence. Violence is any day preferable to impotence. There is hope for a violent man to become non-violent. There is no such hope for the impotent.

NOT TOO LATE

Rashtrapati Rajen Babu, Acharya Kirpalani, Shri Shankarrao Dev, Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ghosh and Shri Jairamdas had remained behind for two or three days after the meeting of the A. I. C. C. All of these except Rajen Babu gently complained that I had wronged them by saying that the whole of the Working Committee was against me in the interpretation I had put upon their action in terms of non-violence. They said that they had hitherto given team work. They had always followed Rajen Babu and the Sardar at the meetings of the Working Committee. It must be said for them that they had whispered in my ears that they were with me in the interpretation I had put on non-violence. I had remonstrated that that was not enough. They had boldly to assert themselves at this critical juncture. But their humility would not allow them to do so.

But even their vote, if they had cast it in favour of my interpr-

etation, would have been in their individual and not representative capacity. As I have made clear in my note on Hindu-Muslim clashes, it is not possible to claim non-violence for the Congress masses. Those Congressmen who believe in non-violence as a creed, to be enforced as much in Hindu-Muslim quarrels as in defending India, have to begin with the alphabet of non-violence and find out how many Congressmen are with them. It is highly probable that they will have to retire from the Congress and, like me, serve and convert the Congress from without. The new road is straight enough but difficult to negotiate. It is overlaid with the bones of lonely seekers. They died without finding the way, but they had the inward satisfaction of having lived and died for their faith. When I wrote[1] on the formation of peace brigade I had adumbrated a programme for them. The brigades died as soon as they were born but the programme abides. It is a programme of courting death in preventing Hindu-Muslim clashes and the like. It is a programme of dying to prevent violence. Such death, however, will count as criminal suicide if the suicide has not a heart free from impurity and malice.

SEGAON, October 17, 1939

Harijan, 21-10-1939

11. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 17, 1939

CHI. NARANDAS,

Please find with this a letter from Chhaganlal. Please read it and send me your suggestion. Chhaganlal's suggestion about the money collected appeals to me. But all the same, let me know your view.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U./II. Also C.W. 8568. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* "Qualifications of a Peace Brigade", 18-6-1938.

12. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

The Viceregal declaration[2] is profoundly disappointing. It would have been better if the British Government had declined to make any declaration whatsoever. The long statement made by the Viceroy simply shows that the old policy of divide and rule is to continue. So far as I can see the Congress will be no party to it, nor can the India of Congress conception be a partner with Britain in her war with Herr Hitler. The Indian declaration[3] shows clearly that there is to be no democracy for India if Britain can prevent it. Another Round Table Conference is promised at the end of the war. Like its predecessor it is bound to fail. The Congress asked for bread and it has got a stone. What the future has in store for India I dare not foretell. I do not blame the Viceroy or the leaders of Britain for the unfortunate result. The Congress will have to go into the wilderness again before it becomes strong and pure enough to reach its objectives. I have no doubt that Congressmen will await the Working Committee's decision[4].

SEGAON, October 18, 1939

Harijan, 21-10-1939

13. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEGAON, WARDHA,

October 18, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I must thank you for your kind letter enclosing an advance copy of your pronouncement[5]. I suppose it had to be. I have just

[1] This appeared under "Notes", sub-title, "Disappointing". The statement was also published in *The Hindu*, 18-10-1939.

[2] *Vide* Appendices "Viceroy's Declaration", 17-10-1939.

[3] *Vide* Appendices "Congress Working Committee Resolution", after 18-7-1939, "Working Committee's Manifesto", 14-9-1939 and "A.I.C.C. Resolution", 14-10-1939.

[4] *Vide* Appendix "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 22-10-1939.

[5] *Vide* Appendix "Viceroy's Declaration", 17-10-1939.

issued a Press statement[1] of which a copy is enclosed herewith.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

14. LETTER TO M. R. MASANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 18, 1939

MY DEAR MASANI,

I want the co-operation of everyone. But the question is whether our agreement is superficial or solid. The Viceregal declaration[4] will soon show where we are.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4131. Also C.W. 4889. Courtesy: M. R. Masani

15. LETTER TO G. V. GURJALE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 18, 1939

MY DEAR BHIKSHU,

I had your wire and now have your letter. I hope things will shape themselves as you expect.[2]

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1388

16. LETTER TO HARISHCHANDRA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 18, 1939

BHAI HARISHCHANDRA,

I got your letter of good wishes. Thank you.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5679

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] *Vide* also "Telegram to G. V. Gurjale", September 1939.

17. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON,
October 18, 1939

CHI. PRABHA,

I did write to you. How is it that you did not get the letter? Jayaprakash came and saw me afterwards. We have decided that you should come and stay with me. I am eagerly waiting for you. Saraswati has gone to Trivandrum, and Kanti also will go. Rajkumari has come here. Vijaya and Sharda are here. Sharda is pregnant; it is the seventh month. Radha also is here at present and so is Krishnadas Gandhi. Ba is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3529

18. LETTER TO SURENDRA AND MANUBEHN MASHRUWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 18, 1939

CHI. SURENDRA AND MANUDI,

I have your letter. I am in correspondence with Kunvarji. I have written[1] to him and advised him to stay there as long as he feels some improvement. Otherwise he may come over here. There is no facility for staying in Nagpur. The doctor is competent. If he comes, I shall make some arrangement for him to stay either at Segaon or Wardha. Manudi must be fine. I hope she is taking care of her health. Does she read the books prescribed for her?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SURENDRA MASHRUWALA
BALKIRAN, SOUTH AVENUE, SANTACRUZ

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2672. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Kunvarji K. Parekh", 12-10-1939.

19. LETTER TO KANCHANBEHN M. SHAH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 18, 1939

CHI. KANCHAN,

I have your letter. What a girl you are! In your letter you have mentioned Segaon as your address, and have not given your correct address there. I got it from Munnalal. I did not even know that you were unwell. But thank God you have reached there safely. Now stay there in peace. Write to me regularly.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI KANCHANBEHN
C/O SHRI MAGANLAL KALIDAS SHAH
VALOD, *via* MADHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8290. Also C.W. 7060. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

20. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 18, 1939

CHI. NAJUKLAL,

I was glad to have your letter after a long time. Moti[1] should get well.

There is no question of violence or non-violence on the part of God. Prahlada's non-violence, however, remained inviolate. If the whole world were non-violent there would be no Hiranyakashipu[2] or his like. But if there should be any, then there would be many more like him. God will always use them. However, they do not cease to be violent. How do we know for whose destruction Hitler was born? But will Hitler's violence ever count as non-violence?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12153

[1] Addressee's wife
[2] Prahlada's father who defied God

21. LETTER TO B. P. RUSTOGI[1]

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 19, 1939

DEAR SIR,

Please give me the Dewan's name, his salary, etc. What is your occupation? Are the previous dictators in jail? If they are, what is their sentence? How many are in prison?

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

22. LETTER TO KANTI N. PAREKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 19, 1939

CHI. KANTI,

You have taken a great many pledges before and broken many of them. May God grant you the strength to keep the latest one.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 6274

23. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 19, 1939

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I read your letter to Mahadev. Will the work you have done ever be undone? There is no need for newspaper publicity. What do you intend to do now ?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U./III

[1] The addressee was Joint Secretary, Pataudi State Praja Mandal.

24. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

SEGAON,
October 19, 1939

CHI. KANAIYO,

Your birthday note is lying in front of me. May you rise higher every day and grow stronger in body and mind. May your angularities get smoothed out in the course of time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

25. LETTER TO TARA JASANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 19, 1939

CHI. TARA,

You have made no mistake. Being dubbed a 'mahatma', I have two birthdays. Greater ones still may have three birthdays. You must find out a nd let me know how I have two and others may have three or more birthdays.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. TARABEHN JASANI
ANANDKUNJ
RAJKOT, KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9833. Courtesy: Tarabehn Pratap

26. SPEECH AT CONFERENCE OF LOCAL BODIES' REPRESENTATIVES, WARDHA[1]

[*October 19, 1939*][2]

I am glad that you have asked me this question. I had better answer it by saying that the present system of primary education was devised without any thought of the economic advancement of the country. The State gets no return whatsoever for the money it is spending on primary education. That we get a few administrators like Shuklaji[3] as products of the so-called higher education is no justification for the waste on primary education. It only brings into painful relief the pathetic superstition that we cannot carry on the affairs of India except through men with English degrees or possessing a knowledge of English. Directors of Public Instruction have admitted that the present system of primary education is a colossal waste, that a very small percentage of the pupils reach the higher classes, that there is nothing like permanency in the literacy imparted and that, even as it is, it touches but a small fraction of the vast rural areas. What a small fraction of the C.P. villages, for instance, have even these primary schools? And the few schools that there are in the villages bring no kind of return to them.

The question that you have asked me, therefore, really does not arise. But the new scheme is claimed to be based on sound economics, for all education will be through the medium of a craft. It is not education plus training in a craft, but it is all education by means of a craft. Therefore a boy who receives education, say, through weaving, will surely and must be better than a weaver as a mere craftsman. And nobody can say that a weaver is an economic waste. This weaver will know the various tools and the technique of all the processes and will produce better results than a weaver-craftsman. The economic results of the system as it has been carried out during the past few months had better be studied in the facts and figures collected by Shrimati

[1] This is extracted from "C. P. Local Bodies Give the Lead" by Mahadev Desai, who explains: "A conference of the representatives of the local bodies in the Central provinces and Berar.. .. invited Gandhiji to address them.. .. Gandhiji did so confining himself to a general question put to him by one of the members, viz., 'How was the Basic Education Scheme calculated to contribute to the economic and political advancement of the country ?'"

[2] From *The Hindu*, 20-10-1939

[3] Ravishankar Shukla, Premier, Central Provinces, who welcomed the representatives

Ashadevi[1]. They have gone far beyond our expectations. That is what I mean by self-supporting education. When I used the word 'self-supporting' I did not mean that all the capital expenditure would be defrayed from it, but that at least the salary of the teacher would be found out of the proceeds of the articles made by the pupils. The economic aspect of the basic system of education is thus self-evident.

Then there is another aspect, viz., that of the national awakening. I wonder if you have read the Kumarappa Committee's report[2] on rural industries. The traditional figure of the average income *per capita* is Rs. 70, but he has proved that the *per capita* income in the C.P. villages does not exceed Rs. 12 to Rs. 14 per year. Spinning and other village industries for basic education have been so selected that they answer village wants. Therefore the boys who receive their education through village crafts must spread their knowledge in their homes. Now you will see that the average income of the villager can be easily doubled by the village crafts being revived. Most of the bickerings in the district boards will also cease if you will become servants of the people and interest yourselves actively in the new system. As I was coming to the meeting I had a letter from a school where the children had earned out of a four hours' spinning for 30 days Rs. 75 odd. If 30 children earned Rs. 75 in a month, you can easily work out how much would be the earning of crores of primary school children in India.

And imagine the result of the self-confidence and resourcefulness fostered among these children, as also of the consciousness that they are adding to the income of the land and solving the problem of unequal distribution. This would lead to an automatic political awakening. I would expect the children to know everything about the local affairs, about our corruption and how it can be ended. This kind of political education I would wish every one of our children to have. That would surely add a cubit to their stature.

I think I have more than proved that the system of basic education is sure to promote the economic and political advancement of the country.

Having said this I would make an appeal to you. Now that you have come here I would ask you to study this system of education and

[1] Ashadevi Aryanayakam, Editor, *Nayi Taleem*, the chief organ of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh. Her article "Conference of Basic Education" appeared in *Harijan*, 7-10-1939.

[2] For Gandhiji's summary of the report, *vide* "Summary of Industrial Survey Committee Report", 29-7-1939.

to tell Shuklaji and Aryanayakamji[1] whether you are going away with faith in it or not. I am sure that if you give it a fair trial, in three months' time you will be able to report that you have revivified the schools, and put new energy and new life into the children. A seed may take years before it grows into a tree, but the limited results of the educational seed you will sow will be seen in the course of a few months. I have placed the simplest things before the people of India, simplest things calculated to bring about revolutionary changes. e.g., khadi, prohibition, revival of handicrafts, education through crafts. But unless you can get over the intoxication of the existing regime you will not see the simple things.

Whatever you do, do not deceive yourselves and us. If you do not feel enthused over the system, you will please plainly say so.

A word about capital expenditure. The capital expenditure that you will incur will be no dead loss like the expenditure on buildings. You will have to expend on tools and stock which will be of productive use for years. The spinning-wheels and the looms and the carding-bows you will invest in should be useful to numerous batches of students. Industrialization involves heavy capital expenditure and plenty of wear and tear and depreciation. The present scheme involves nothing like it, as indeed nothing like it is required in a well-planned rural economy.

One last thing. I want you not to be disturbed by the impending changes in our political system. The Ministries may go as they came. They came on the understanding that they would have to go at the shortest possible notice. They knew that they would have to march from the secretariat to the prison if the occasion came, and they would do so with a smile on their lips. But your work and your programme need not depend on the Ministries. If the work that you have planned is based on solid foundations, it will endure, no matter how many Ministries come and go. But it depends on the faith you have in your work. The Congress and its work will endure so long as it remains true to its creed of truth and non-violence. I have criticized the Congress severely and mercilessly exposed its failings, but I also know that it has still got a fair credit balance.

Above all let me tell you that everything will depend on your faith and your determination. If you have the will, there is sure to be

[1] E. W. Aryanayakam, Secretary of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh

the way. Every difficulty will dissolve, if you make up your minds that this is a scheme that has to be put through. Only the faith has got to be a living faith. Thousands profess to have faith in God, but if they fly in terror at the slightest alarm, their faith is a dead faith, no living faith. A living faith endows one with the requisite knowledge and resources to put one's plan through. I am glad that every one of you claims to have that faith. If that is really so, your province will have set a noble example to other provinces.[1]

Harijan, 28-10-1939

27. LETTER TO RAVISHANKAR SHUKLA

[On or after *October 19*,][2] *1939*

BHAI SHUKLAJI,

The report you have sent me of our talks is not worth revising. You will realize it from the few lines that I have revised. There are very few short-hand writers in India who can accurately take down conversations. I have summarized below my thoughts on the subject, which may perhaps better clarify my attitude. You may publish it if you like. If you need an English rendering get it done there. If you want the same thing in English from me I shall send you one. In that case you will please return the Hindi.

Here is an abstract of the discussion with the Chief Minister regarding his scheme and mine:

There is no need to co-ordinate the President's scheme[3] with mine[4]. Both can run parallel but their aims are different. Under the President's scheme the burden of expenditure on primary education is to fall on the individual village. And this through the dedication of the land. This is certainly commendable if it can be done. People will develop an interest in the education of their children. But I doubt the possibility of earning Rs. 15 per month from a plot of land thus acquired. Nonetheless, there can be no harm in making an experi-

[1] Mahadev Desai adds that "the members had a discussion after this for several hours" and passed resolutions.

[2] From the reference to "talks" with the addressee, which, presumably, took place during the conference of local bodies; *vide* the preceding item.

[3] The Vidya Mandir Scheme sponsored by the addressee. A Bill on the scheme was passed by the Central Provinces Legislative Assembly on November 2, 1939.

[4] The Basic Education Scheme

ment if some zamindar gifts a large plot in the village. The experiment, if it succeeds, will certainly be beneficial. We shall not come across many people who will utilize the land profitably. Those who graduate from the agricultural colleges are not at all trained for work on the land. Hence the knowledge acquired in agricultural colleges proves generally sterile.

The aim of my scheme is to change the very system of education. The new system will fulfil the needs of the country as well as the individual and bring about self-reliance. Self-reliance is also a true test of the fulfilment of education. Hence it makes no difference to my scheme of education even if someone gives a donation for running a primary school. And here is the scheme in a nutshell:

Primary education shall be given only through some craft or the other. Real education and an all-round development of the child is not possible without it. And such education must be self-supporting. This does not mean that each class will be self-supporting. However, boys or girls who will go through the seven-year curriculum in a craft-based school will be able to pay all these years' expenses through their earnings from the crafts.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

28. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 20, 1939

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

The voice within told me 'not yet'. So the contemplated letter has not gone.

Love. BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3183

29. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEGAON,
October 20, 1939

CHI. PYARELAL,

What a letter from you! I have not understood it at all. It does not contain answers to my questions. If you believe that my decisions

are inspired by God, then I should not find it a strain to get work out of you. These are our decisions:

1. From Tuesday onward you will do the massage and bathe me. Sushila will do these on Sundays and Mondays.
2. You will take care of the mail, maybe with a sense of detachment but with the same interest.
3. You will write something for *Harijan*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum ant Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

30. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

October 20, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Go to Dr. A. Lakshmipati. Give him the service he needs. Let me know about his health.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4329

31. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 20, 1939

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I see no comparison between gambling and wine. I have taken donations from many wine merchants. Also from prostitutes. Whose money should I reject and whose should I accept? Yes, I had refused Rs. 12,000 from Gohar Jan because of the condition that I should go and listen to her music. But Alibhai went and collected the money. Tell me what we can do now. Strange are the ways of dharma.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

If Balvantsinha has arrived there[1], tell him that his other letters have been received. He must be visiting the dairy there. Mahadev had written to him.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2472

32. INTERVIEW TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"[2]

SEGAON,
[*October 20, 1939*][3]

Requested to give a reply to *The times of India's* editorial appeal addressed to him, Mr. Gandhi told me in a special interview that no amount of clarification or explanation of the Viceregal statement[4] would make it acceptable so long as the precise demand of the Congress was not met. There was no evidence of a desire or readiness on the part of Great Britain to transfer power to Indians.

The Times of India's appeal related to the scope, authority and function of the conference of India's representatives, proposed to be called at the end of the war.

The journal drew attention to the following words from the Viceroy's statement:

> His Majesty's Government recognize that when the time comes to resume consideration of the plan for the future Federal Government of India, and of the plan destined to give effect to the assurances given in Parliament by the late Secretary of State[5] to which I have just referred, it will be necessary to reconsider in the light of the then circumstances to what extent the details of the plan embodied in the Act of 1935 remained appropriate.

The Times of India interpreted these words to mean that it would be open to the projected conference at the end of the war to consider Dominion Status. It requested Mr. Gandhi and the Congress to appreciate the value of such a conference and, if they had any doubt, to ask for an authoritative clarification of the scope of that conference.

The words quoted by *The Times of India,* thought Mr. Gandhi, were "too vague to admit of clarification; they left everything beautifully indefinite." He added:

What the Congress wants is the clearest possible acceptance

[1] In Delhi

[2] This appeared under the title "An Important Interview" as reproduced from *The Times of India,* 21-10-1939.

[3] From *Gandhi—1915-1948: A Detailed Chronology*

[4] Of October 17; *vide* Appendix "Viceroy's Declaration", 17-10-1939.

[5] Sir Samuel Hoare

of the fact that India is to be treated as an independent nation. For India to become enthusiastic about participation in this war it is necessary to speak to her in the language of precision, admitting of no other meaning.

Surely what the Congress wants is easy enough to give, if the will is there. I miss the will in the Viceregal declaration.

And whom is the conference to consist of? Are they to be those to be invited by the Viceroy or the Secretary of State? How can they be called representative in the true sense of the term ?

In order to avoid any doubt, the Congress had suggested a representative assembly of men and women elected on the widest possible franchise. Such an assembly the Congress described by the accepted phraseology, namely, a constituent assembly. How can this be objected to by any party which desires freedom for India? Is it right to invite people to say whether they want freedom or not? Should a slave be consulted as to the desirability of his freedom? He might be asked as to the manner thereof. This the constituent assembly can do. It is for that assembly to decide whether it is to be Dominion Status or what. It may be more or less. The people's representatives should have the fullest freedom to decide upon the nature and content of the freedom.

It is surprising how the minorities are being played against the Congress. Surely the Congress has no quarrel with any of them. The Congress will safeguard the rights of every minority so long as they do not advance claims inconsistent with India's independence. The Muslims, the Scheduled Classes and every other class will be fully represented in the constituent assembly and they will have to decide their own special rights. Even the Princes and the zamindars have nothing to fear if they become, and appear, as representatives of the ryots. Independent India will not tolerate any interests in conflict with the true interests of the masses, whether the latter are known as Muslims, Scheduled Classes, Christians, Parsis, Jews, Sikhs, Brahmins and non-Brahmins, or any other.

But I blame neither the Viceroy not the British War Cabinet. Independence is not to depend upon the British or anyone else's mercy. It will come when the people are ready for it. Evidently British statesmen think that the people of India are not ready. The Congress or any other organization that seeks to represent the millions has to consolidate its strength and resources for the purpose.

Mr. Gandhi said he had hoped that British statesmen, from the bitter experience of European turmoil, had turned over a new leaf; that hope was for the time being dashed to pieces.

Mr. Gandhi, proceeding, remarked that *The Times of India* should direct its appeal to the Englishmen and ask them to do the right thing by India in keeping with the professed war aims of Britain. He said he was grieved to find that the paper which had till the other day been urging the authorities to make a generous gesture "had suddenly changed its front". Judged by the paper's own past demands, the Viceroy's statement was a poor response. Yet *The Times of India* praised it.

Mr. Gandhi concluded with the reply to the personal reference made to him in *The Times of India* editorial. He denied that he had been inconsistent or that he had deviated from his first statements[1] in which he had expressed his sympathy for England and France. He said he still held the view. But now that the issue has been raised, he expected England to face the issue and give a satisfactory answer.

His advice to the Congress did not mean that India's support to the Allied cause should be at the expense of her own freedom. He would not be a party to India being tied to the chariot wheel of Britain. His prayer still was not only that Britain and France should win, but also that Germany should not be ruined.

He had no desire to rear India's freedom on the ashes of any of the belligerent Powers, even as he did not want the freedom of the European Powers to be built upon the ruins of India's freedom.

Harijan, 28-10-1939

33. AM I A MESSENGER OF GOD?

A Muslim friend writes a long letter which pruned down reads as follows:

> The chief difficulty that stands in your way of right thinking is that your heart has so hardened by looking at and interpreting things in the light of your self-assumed principles, that you cannot bring to bear an open mind on anything howsoever valuable it may be.
>
> If God has not appointed you as his messenger, what you say or teach cannot be claimed to be a word of God. No one would contest the truthfulness of truth and non-violence as teachings of the prophets, and principles of very high spiritual value; but their true understanding and application require a soul that is in direct communion with God. Any person who has only polished his

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 5-9-1939 and "Source of my Sympathy", 11-9-1939.

soul by suppressing or acting against the desires and cravings of the flesh and the self is not a prophet.

The fact that you stand as a teacher of the world and claim to have diagnosed the disease from which the world is suffering, and proclaim that the truth of your choice and practice and the non-violence of your conviction and application are the only cures for the afflicted world, betrays your utter disregard and misconception of the truth. You admit you make mistakes. Your non-violence is actually a concealed violence as it is not based on actual spiritual life and is not the earnest of true inspiration from God.

As a true believer and in pursuance of that teaching of Islam which enjoins on every Muslim to convey the truth to every human being, I would request you to clear your mind of all complexes, to place yourself in the position of an ordinary human being who wants to learn and not to teach, and to become a real seeker after truth.

If you wish to find out the truth, I would request you to study the Koran and the life of the Prophet Mohammed (Peace of God be upon him) written by Shebli Nowani and M. Sulaiman Nadwi with an open mind.

As for unity among the different communities inhabiting India, it can never come in terms of a single nation. Broad-minded toleration of each other's religion and practices and an agreement based on the recognition of the Muslims as a nation with their own complete code of life and culture to guide them and an equality of status in political life, shall bring harmony and peace to India.

I have omitted no argument used by the writer.

I have not hardened my heart. I have never claimed to be a messenger of God except in the sense in which all human beings are. I am a mortal as liable to err as any other. Nor have I claimed to be a teacher. But I cannot prevent admirers from calling me a teacher or a mahatma, as I cannot prevent traducers from calling me all sorts of names and ascribing to me vices to which I am a stranger. I lay both praise and blame at the feet of the Almighty and go my way.

For the information of my correspondent, who is a schoolmaster in a high school, I may say that I have reverently studied the works he mentions and also many other works on Islam. I have more than once read the Koran. My religion enables me, obliges me, to imbibe all that is good in all the great religions of the earth. This does not mean that I must accept the interpretation that my correspondent may put upon the message of the Prophet of Islam or any other Prophet. I must use the limited intelligence that God has given me to interpret the

teachings bequeathed to mankind by the Prophets of the world. I am glad to find that my correspondent agrees that truth and non-violence are taught by the holy Koran. Surely it is for him, as for every one of us, to apply these principles to daily life according to the light given to us by God.

The last paragraph in the letter lays down a dangerous doctrine. Why is India not one nation? Was it not one during, say, the Moghul period? Is India composed of two nations? If it is, why only two? Are not Christians a third, Parsis a fourth, and so on? Are the Muslims of China a nation separate from the other Chinese? Are the Muslims of England a different nation from the other English? How are the Muslims of the Punjab different from the Hindus and the Sikhs? Are they not all Punjabis, drinking the same water, breathing the same air and deriving sustenance from the same soil? What is there to prevent them from following their respective religious practices? Are Muslims all the world over a separate nation? Or are the Muslims of India only to be a separate nation distinct from the others? Is India to be vivisected into two parts, one Muslim and the other non-Muslim? And what is to happen to the handful of Muslims living in the numerous villages where the population is predominantly Hindu, and conversely to the Hindus where, as in the Frontier Province or Sind, they are a handful? The way suggested by the correspondent is the way of strife. Live and let live or mutual forbearance and toleration is the law of life. That is the lesson I have learnt from the Koran, the Bible, the Zend-Avesta and the *Gita.*

SEGAON, October 21, 1939

Harijan, 28-10-1939

34. TELEGRAM TO PATTOM THANU PILLAI[1]

October 21, 1939

SHOULD NOT PUBLISH WITHOUT REFERENCE DEWAN. YOU ASK HIM OTHERWISE I CAN WRITE.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram dated October 21, in which he informed Gandhiji of the Working Committee's decision to publish the correspondence regarding Gandhiji's talks with the Dewan and sought permission for its publication.

35. LETTER TO N. S. HARDIKAR

SEGAON,

October 21, 1939

DEAR DR. HARDIKAR,

Several Mysore friends have been here. I have told them that I shall do nothing without the consent of those of you who have hitherto guided the Mysore workers.

Ramdurg is bad business, I can only advise mute suffering.[1] If there is no retaliation even by way of reply in the Press the fictitious agitation will die out. It follows that violence must always be from the traducers. You must train your followers in the art of non-violence. This presupposes a living faith on your part in the efficacy of non-violence under all conditions.[2]

Yours Sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: N. S. Hardikar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] In his letter dated October 18, the addressee had, *inter alia,* said: "The minds of the people are poisoned against those who gave evidence against Justice Davar. Shri Shankarrao Deo, Gangadharrao Deshpande, R. R. Diwakar, H. S. Kaujalgi and myself are the targets. . . . If this is left unchecked, I am afraid, it is bound to lead to violence."

[2] In his reply dated October 26, the addressee said: ". . . We will mutely suffer everything as advised by you. . . Now as regards the present movement, it was started by the Mysore workers on their own initiative. . . . We have, however, been giving some publicity to the actual happenings in the State and. . . necessary suggestions. . . Beyond that we have been doing nothing. . . We were glad to learn from Shri Bhimappa Naik that you were willing to intervene provided the State agreed to it. We feel sure that the Mysore State Working Committee or responsible Mysore workers will certainly jump at the idea of your intervention. . . ." *Vide* also "Letter to N. S. Hardikar", 14-10-1939 and "Fragment of Letter to People of Mysore", 24-11-1939.

36. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 21, 1939

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Do what you can about the Harijans after discussing the matter with Bapa, Hariji[1] and others.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2471

37. VIRTUES OF SILENCE

Thus writes Dr. Rajan[2] to Mahadev Desai:

The other day when I was at Segaon to see Mahatmaji, I found him observing silence. You know he wrote on a slip of paper to the following effect, referring to his silence: "This has become a health-necessity with me". These few words have made me ponder over the idea of silence in relation to physical health. As a piece of scientific information it will be good to have a record of his personal experience.

I should like to know as a result of his observing silence,

1. whether there is any visible drop in the blood-pressure variation;

2. whether after a period of silence he feels physically better and is able to put forth greater energy and application to his work; and

3. whether he feels mental recuperation also *pari passu* with that of his body while he is observing silence.

To observe silence is indeed a difficult self-imposed restriction. But it is worth while in the interests of physical and mental well-being to make this possible.[3] You know that I never write or indulge in such speculative writing to a busy person like Gandhiji. You will therefore appreciate as to why I am writing to you. If you think the information which I seek is worth while, I shall be glad if you can publish it in *Harijan.*

Before I answer the questions let me say that for me silence is

[1] Viyogi Hari of Harijan Nivas, New Delhi
[2] Dr. T. S. S. Rajan, Minister of Public Health, Madras
[3] As in the source

no strain and no effort. Indeed I am so tired of arguing and talking that I speak only when I feel I must. Generally, therefore, I am nowadays silent except to visitors who come by appointment and on some business connected with activities with which I am identified. In the Segaon Ashram I am silent to everybody except in cases of sickness and the like. I observe too that I get easily irritated if members of the Ashram act in a manner contrary to expectation. I find that silence avoids irritation.

Now for the questions.

1. There is a perceptible drop in blood-pressure when I observe silence. Medical friends have therefore advised me to take as much silence as I can.

2. There is no doubt whatsoever that after every silence I feel recuperated and have greater energy for work. The output of work during silence is much greater than when I am not silent.

3. The mind enjoys a peace during silence which it does not without it. That is to say, the decision to be silent itself produces a soothing effect on me. It lifts a burden off my mind. My experience tells me that silence soothes the nerves in a manner no drugs can. With me it also induces sleep.

Caution : I have noticed in the jails that prisoners get moody when, deprived of company, they have to observe enforced silence. To produce the effect I have described, silence has to be liked. No one, therefore, need be silent out of love of imitation or merely for the knowledge that it produces on me the effect described by me. The best thing would be to take silence on medical advice. Needless to say that here I do not refer to the spiritual need and effects of silence.

SEGAON, October 22, 1939

Harijan, 28-10-1939

38. ON BRAHMACHARYA

One may say I have long ago stopped writing for *Harijan-bandhu*. The will is not absent; but lack of time has stood in the way. I have been waiting for a long time to write on this subject. Today I shall dwell on it briefly.

A friend has pointed out to me that in an earlier article I had promised to state my views on *brahmacharya*. I do not recollect the exact words. But I had certainly said that I would try to write

something.

My definition of *brahmacharya* still stands. According to it, a man who is affected by passion even mentally has fallen from *brahmacharya*. One who is not free from passion [even] in thought can never be considered a perfect *brahmachari*. I do not consider myself an ideal *brahmachari* since I have not reached that ideal. Though I am far away from this ideal I think I have progressed from what I was when I started. Freedom from passion in thought cannot be achieved until one gets a vision of the Supreme.[1] When one achieves complete control over one's thoughts, 'man' and 'woman' include each other. I believe in the possibility of such a *brahmachari* athough I have not come across one. I still continue my strenuous efforts to become such a *brahmachari*. So long as such *brahmacharya* is not attained, man cannot realize the full potentialities of ahimsa.

I have not recognized the permanent need for the conventional restrictions on a *brahmachari*. One who needs outer restrictions is not a perfect *brahmachari*. On the contrary, one who is on the look-out for opportunities to waive the restrictions is not a *brahmachari* but a fraud.

How to achieve such fearless *brahmacharya*? I do not have the right key to it for I have not attained perfection in it. But I may state what I have found essential for myself.

One should keep the mind engaged in pure thoughts. Constant repetition of Ramanama should go on all the twenty-four hours as naturally as breathing, even during sleep. One should engage oneself in reading good books and thinking about one's own work, which again should be infused with public spirit. Those who are married should not seek privacy. They should not sleep in one room or in one bed. If their passion is aroused on seeing each other, they should live separately. If they experience passionate feelings while talking to each other, they should stop talking. One who is aroused at the sight of any woman should abandon the thought of *brahmacharya* and have restrained marital relations with his wife. If he is not married, he should think of marrying. None should insist on exceeding one's own capacity. I can think of many instances when men have fallen in attempting to exceed their capacity.

Anyone who gleefully listens to obscene talk, indulges in staring

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 59

at women, reads dirty books and gloats over filthy stories violates *brahmacharya.* Many students and teachers fail in practising *brahmacharya* because they are not aware of the discipline in hearing, seeing, reading, speaking and so on. And they ask me how they should practise *brahmacharya.* They do not even try to observe it. Let us bear in mind that a man who on any pretext touches a woman with passion violates *brahmacharya.* Those who strictly observe the above discipline can observe *brahmacharya* without difficulty.

An idle man can never practise *brahmacharya.* One who conserves his vital fluid acquires unfailing power. He must put his body and mind ceaselessly to work. Hence every seeker should select such service as would leave him no time for indulging the senses.

The seeker has to have complete control over his diet. Whatever he eats he should eat as medicine, for the preservation of the body, never to pamper the palate. He should, therefore, never take intoxicants, spices, etc. A person practising *brahmacharya* should be not merely temperate but abstemious in eating. Everyone should prescribe his own restrictions.

Fasting, etc., do have a place in the observance of *brahmacharya.* But those who attach undue importance to fasting, etc., and think that they have done their duty if they have fasted are gravely mistaken. When a man starves his senses, the objects of those senses disappear from him, but not the yearning for them.[1] Fasting is beneficial for physical health. An abstemious person may also make mistakes and hence occasional fasts will certainly benefit him.

Why should I lose my vitality for the sake of a momentary pleasure? Why should I deceive God by misusing His gift, i. e., by wasting my vitality which has the power of generating progeny? Since I can gain power by conserving my vitality, why should I lose that power by wasting it? If a seeker always meditates on these lines and prays for God's grace, it is possible for him to retain his vitality and be a *brahmachari* during this very life. I live in this hope.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 22-10-1939

[1] *Bhagavad Gita,* II. 59

39. NOTE TO POLICE SUPERINTENDENT AND DEPUTY COMMISSIONER[1]

October 22, 1939

I have been thinking hard over the proposal. I feel that it is wholly unnecessary to provide any protection so far as I am concerned. My co-operation in such protection will conflict with my own response to any attack on my own life. If therefore the authorities must take any precautions, they should be taken outside the Ashram limits. If the authorities will consult my wishes, they should drop all measures for protecting me. They can use this writing for absolving them from all responsibility about me.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

40. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEGAON,
October 22, 1939

CHI. MUNNALAL,

What a confusion reigns in your mind ! Read your note again. In one place you say that you would go to Ramana Maharshi since I advise you to do so but later on say that you do not know where to go. I suggest only one thing. You should go straight from here to Ramana Maharshi's Ashram, stay there for seven days and if you feel no benefit by the end of that period either go to Pondicherry or return here straight.

Did you understand what I told you yesterday about Shankaran? If you did not, reflect over it deeply till you understand it. It was no ordinary mistake.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8557. Also C. W. 7059. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] The addressees had met Gandhiji and proposed to arrange for his protection as they had received the news that some people were planning to assault him.

41. CABLE TO WORLD PRESS[1]

October 23, 1939

IN ANSWER TO (YOUR) INQUIRY (I MAY SAY) THE CONGRESS HAS DEMANDED NO CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE DURING WAR. ITS DEMAND IS FOR DECLARATION THAT BRITAIN'S WAR AIMS NECESSARILY INCLUDE INDIA'S INDEPENDENCE ACCORDING TO THE CHARTER FRAMED BY HER ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES AFTER WAR. THIS DECLARATION SHOULD BE ACTED UP TO DURING WAR TO THE UTMOST EXTENT POSSIBLE. THE MINORITIES QUESTION IS A BOGEY. NOT THAT IT DOES NOT EXIST BUT ITS PROPER SOLUTION CAN ONLY COME OUT OF THE PROPOSED CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY. THE BURDEN OF SOLVING THE TANGLE RESTS NOT ON BRITAIN BUT ON THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY. ACCORDING TO INDIAN OPINION HINDU-MUSLIM QUESTION IS THE DIRECT PRODUCT OF BRITISH RULE. THE LEAST THE CONGRESS COULD DO WAS TO WITHDRAW THE CONGRESS MINISTERS FROM PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATIONS. FURTHER ACTION WILL WHOLLY DEPEND UPON BRITAIN'S HANDLING OF THE CRISIS. THE CONGRESS HAS LEFT THE DOOR OPEN TO BRITAIN TO MEND THE MISTAKE.

Harijan, 28-10-1939

[1] This appeared under the title "Door Still Open" as Gandhiji's "reply to a Press correspondent representing various European papers". According to *The Hindu,* 26-10-1939, among the newspapers and agencies that made the request were *The New York Times; The Daily Herald; Paris Soir; Popolo D' Italia,* Rome; *National Tidende,* Copenhagen; *Aften Posten* and *Telegraff,* Amsterdam; the Tass News Agency, Moscow; *Arbizzi,* Madrid; the *Dagen Synther,* Stockholm; Swiss News Agency, Geneva; the *La Nacion,* Buenos Aires; *Yormiuri Shimbun,* Tokyo; *Unsi Suomi,* Helsingfors and *Nation Belge,* Antwerp.

42. CABLE TO Y. M. DADOO [1]

October 23, 1939

DADOO
47 ENDSTREET
JOHANNESBURG
ADVISE PATIENCE. SEND DETAILS WHAT GOES ON.

BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 11347. Courtesy: E. S. Reddy; also *South Africa's Freedom Struggle,* p. 310

43. CABLE TO J. C. SMUTS

October 23, 1939

GENERAL SMUTS
PRETORIA
DISTURBING NEWS FROM INDIAN FRIENDS JOHANNESBURG. TRUST YOU ARE NOT ENFORCING NEW LEGISLATION. SUGGEST YOUR INVITING DR. DADOO SEE YOU.

GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 11348. Courtesy: E. S. Reddy. Also *South Africa's Freedom Struggle,* p. 310

44. A LETTER[2]

SEGAON,
October 23, 1939

I am quite clear in my mind that what has happened[3] is the best for the cause. It is a bitter pill I know. But it was needed. It will drive

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's cable of October 21, 1939 which read: "Act of 1939 inflicting intolerable hardships on growing number of our people. Patience stretched to straining point. Pray cable definite advice".

[2] This was found among the letters to C. Rajagopalachari. The date-line has been written by Amrit Kaur.

[3] The reference is to the Congress Working Committee resolution of October 22; *vide* Appendix "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 22-10-1939.

away all the parasites from the body. We would have been obliged to do wrong things which we shall be able to avoid. We shall come to power with added strength. I shall still be trying for peace, if I keep my strength.

From a photostat: G. N. 2077

45. CAUSES

The best way of losing a cause is to abuse your opponent and to trade upon his weakness. Whatever may be true of other modes of warfare, in satyagraha it had been held that the causes for failure are to be sought within. The refusal by the British Government to fulfil the Congress hope, that they would make the expected declaration, is solely due to the weaknesses in the Congress organization and Congressmen.

The greatest weakness lies in our want of full appreciation of non-violence and its many implications. All our other weaknesses are to be derived from that one grave defect. Whilst we have fairly observed physical non-violence, our breasts have harboured violence. Hence our non-violence in respect of the Government is a result of our incapacity for effective violence. But therefore we have been betrayed into violence in our dealings with one another. We have quarrelled with one another in committees; sometimes we have even come to blows. We have refused to carry out instructions of the Working Committee. We have formed rival groups wanting to seize power. Hindus and Muslims have come to blows on the slightest pretext. Congressmen must be held partly responsible for the failure to compose communal differences. It is all very well to blame the British Government for our disunity. But that way we prolong the agony. We knew that the policy of divide and rule was there in 1920, and yet we made Hindu-Muslim unity part of our constructive programme. We did so because we had expected that, in spite of the Government being in our way, we would achieve unity. What is more we seemed for the time being to have attained it.

These examples of our weaknesses are terrible. They have prevented the Congress from rising to its full height, and reduced our professions of non-violence to a mockery. If my analysis of the causes of our failure is correct, there is the solid consolation that the remedy is dependent not upon any extraneous circumstance but upon

ourselves. We must put our own organization in order and make it pure enough and strong enough to command respect, not by inspiring fear among those who impede our march towards the goal but by the indubitable evidence of our non-violent speech and action.

The Working Committee's resolution, if it is evidence of Congress earnestness in vindicating India's freedom, is also a test of Congressmen's discipline and non-violence. Though nothing is said in the resolution, the control and management of civil disobedience has been left in my hands at the will of the Committee. Needless to say I have no sanction, never had any, save the willing and knowing obedience of the vast mass of Congressmen, registered and unregistered, to the instruction issued to them through the Committee, or through *Young India* and *Navajivan*, whilst they were published, and now through *Harijan*. When, therefore, I find that my instructions have no running power, Congressmen will find me retiring from the field without ado. But if I am to retain the general control of the struggle, I shall want the strictest adherence to discipline. So far as I can see there is no possibility of civil resistance on a large scale unless Congressmen show perfect discipline and greater appreciation than hitherto of non-violence and truth. There need be none unless we are goaded into it by the authorities.

We are engaged in a life and death struggle. Violence surrounds us. It is a time of great trial for the country. No camouflage will answer our purpose. If Congressmen find that they have no non-violence in them, if they cannot cast out bitterness against the English officials or the countrymen who may oppose the Congress, they must say so openly, discard non-violence and displace the present Working Committee. Such dismissal will be no calamity. But it will be a calamity of the first magnitude to keep the Committee without full faith in them and in their instructions. So far as I can see, there is no independence for India except through the strictest adherence to truth and non-violence. My generalship is of no use whatsoever if I have an army which doubts the efficacy of the weapons with which I arm them. I am as determined a foe of the exploitation of my country as anyone can be. I am as impatient as the hottest Congressman for the complete deliverance of the country from the foreign yoke. But I have no hate for a single Englishman and for that matter for anybody on earth. If I may not help the Allies, I do not wish disaster to them. Though the British Government have grievously disappointed the Congress hope, my hope, I do not seek any gain from their

embarrassment.

My attempt and my prayer are, and will be, for an honourable peace between the belligerent nations in the least possible time. I had nursed the hope that there would be an honourable peace and partnership between Britain and India, and that I might be able to play a humble part in finding a way out of the awful carnage that is disgracing humanity and making life itself a burden. But God had willed it otherwise.

SEGAON, October 24, 1939

Harijan, 28-10-1939

46. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 24, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

Mr. Thompson[1] has been here. He told me that you had thought I was guilty of discourtesy in making the statement[2] I did on your declaration[3]. I have not understood Mr. Thompson but I told him, I would write to you and make amends if I was guilty. Will you please enlighten me in the matter? I have no doubt that the friendship that has sprung between us will bear the strain of differences of opinion that may arise among us.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

47. LETTER TO PYARELAL

October 24, 1939

CHI. PYARELAL,

I agree that it would have been better for me to have you rather than Sushila to attend to my massage and bath. But since you

[1] Edward Thompson, British poet and writer; *vide* also "My Life".
[2] *Vide* "statement to the Press", 18-10-1939.
[3] *Vide* Appendix "Viceroy's Declaration", 17-10-1939.

will be busy with the *Harijan* work on Sundays and Mondays, Sushila can do these on those days. I must not waste time over this argument. I shall be happy if you can do this much cheerfully. I have discussed it with Sushila.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladwi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

48. LETTER TO PANNALAL JHAVERI

October 24, 1939

CHI. PANNALAL,

I am impatient for a talk with you. But I am saving my time and my wits. Before going, have a good look at the dairy, the fields and so on and let me know your conclusions about anything else you may have seen.

I forbade Nanibehn to massage my feet. That was for the sake of A. But my word had no effect. I am facing such tests here all around.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari—Pannalal Jhaveri, p. 38

49. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

October 24, 1939

DAUGHTER,

What am I to do? I did my best. Certainly Ba is extremely displeased with you. I don't know about others. Your duty is to leave this house. You may return when the cloud blows over. I had no inkling of Ba's displeasure. I was surprised when I noticed it today. How can I send for Hanif[1] here under these circumstances?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 432

[1] A khadi worker of Punjab

50. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 25, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have gone through the American thing. It is most expensive. In other respects, too, it does not attract me.

I hope you have good news about Indu.[1]

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

51. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 25, 1939

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

Yes, do go to Hardwar; also take a look at Dayal Bagh. We shall talk about your test when we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1926

52. DISCUSSION WITH EXECUTIVE MEMBERS OF GANDHI SEVA SANGH—I[2]

WARDHA,
October 25, 1939

The problem haunts me. It gives me no rest. I have described[3] in *Harijan* the position of the junior members of the Working

[1] *Vide* footnote of "Letter to Indira Nehru", after 15-10-1939.

[2] This is extracted from "The Hour of Trial" by Mahadev Desai, who explains: "On the 25th morning Gandhiji woke up at one o'clock and was thinking about what he should say to the Executive Members of Gandhi Seva Sangh, whom he was to meet in the afternoon."

[3] *Vide* "Notes", 17-10-1939.

Committee. Theirs was a difficult position. They were torn between loyalty to a principle and loyalty to their colleagues. But their eagerness to make their position clear to me was most welcome. It shows that we are all votaries of truth and even our mental struggles and conflicts arise out of our anxiety to be faithful to it. We had a very fine discussion in the Working Committee yesterday, and we discussed threadbare the position of the members as individuals and as representatives of the Congress and the people. The question with you is different. For you are here in your individual capacity and you have to decide your conduct no matter what Congress or Congressmen may think. The question is thus much simpler for you. Will you adopt an attitude of brotherliness to one who has done your dear ones a grievous injury? Supposing Rajendra Babu was attacked, would you retaliate or rather stand between Rajendra Babu and the assailant and bear cheerfully the blows meant for him? You will do the latter if you have shed all fear of death and injury to limbs, and all considerations for the domestic ties that bind you. But unless you have nothing but brotherliness for those that despitefully use you, your resolution that you would stand by the principle of non-violence through thick and thin will have no meaning. It would be far better to wind up the Sangh than to have an empty resolution.

Non-violence is not a cloistered virtue, confined only to the *rishi* and the cave-dweller. It is capable of being practised by the millions, not with full knowledge of its implications, but because it is the law of our species. It distinguishes man from the brute. But man has not shed the brute in him. He has to strive to do so. This striving applies to the practice of non-violence, not to the belief in it. I cannot strive to believe in a principle; I either believe in it or I do not. And if I believe in it, I must bravely strive to practise it. Ahimsa is an attribute of the brave. Cowardice and ahimsa do not go together any more than water and fire. It is that ahimsa that every member of the Gandhi Seva Sangh has to make a conscious effort to develop in himself.

We have often thought about this question but the hour of our trial has arrived today, as much with reference to war as with the struggle for swaraj and equally with reference to Hindu-Muslim unity. Remember also that your non-violence cannot operate effectively unless you have faith in the spinning-wheel. I would ask you to read *Hind Swaraj* [1] with my eyes and see therein the chapter on how to

[1] *Vide "Hind Swaraj"*, 22-11-1909.

make India non-violent. You cannot build non-violence on a factory civilization, but it can be built on self-contained villages. Even if Hitler was so minded, he could not devastate seven hundred thousand non-violent villages. He would himself become non-violent in the process. Rural economy as I have conceived it eschews exploitation altogether and exploitation is the essence of violence. You have therefore to be rural-minded before you can be non-violent, and to be rural-minded you have to have faith in the spinning-wheel.[1]

Harijan, 4-11-1939

53. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 26, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I could see that though your affection and regard for me remain undiminished, differences in outlook between us are becoming most marked. Perhaps this is the most critical period in our history. I hold very strong views on the most important questions which occupy our attention. I know you too hold strong views on them but different from mine. Your mode of expression is different from mine. I am not sure that I carry the other members with me in the views that I hold very strongly. I cannot move about. I cannot come in direct touch with the masses, not even with the Congress workers. I feel that I must not lead if I cannot carry you all with me. There should be no divided counsels among the members of the Working Committee. I feel that you should take full charge and lead the country, leaving me free to voice my opinion. But if you all thought that I should observe complete silence, I should, I hope, find no difficulty in complying. If you think it worth while, you should come and discuss the whole thing.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, p. 394

[1] According to Mahadev Desai, the members had a discussion with Gandhiji on the next day also; *vide* "Discussion with Executive Members of Gandhi Seva Sangh-II", 26-10-1939.

54. LETTER TO B. G. KHER

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 26, 1939

BHAI BALASAHEB,

As you are going to leave your post, take double interest in the work on hand and have such faith that whatever seeds you have sown will never be wasted. This great sacrifice will yield tenfold reward to the Congress.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 66

55. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 26, 1939

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I have your letter. You may come whenever you wish to. I shall fix up your stay either at Wardha or Segaon in the very same place where I had lodged Balkrishna. With me it is so crowded that you will feel suffocated. But we will decide all that when you come. We will have to send you to Nagpur to be examined by the expert there. Two[1] were cured in this manner. You will be the third. There is no need for Rami to come. But there will be no harm either if she does come. Do what you both consider best. If that place does not suit you, do not delay coming over here.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI KUNVARJI KHETSI PAREKH
HINDU DHARMASHALA, MIRAJ

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9731

[1] Balkoba and Mathew; *vide* "Letter to Kunvarji K. Parekh", 12-10-1939.

56. LETTER TO DIGVIJAYSINH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 26, 1939

MEHERBAN MAHARAJA[1],

I thank you for sending me a prompt reply. I understand what you write about water. Nevertheless I am requesting you to go deep into the matter and resolve to rid Kathiawar of this scarcity of water. It is my humble opinion that very little has been done to increase the number of trees.

When I get an opportunity to meet you, I shall certainly state my views about the doubt you have raised. It is my firm belief that the path you have adopted is not right. This much I have written as a friend.

Yours,

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

57. DISCUSSION WITH EXECUTIVE MEMBERS OF GANDHI SEVA SANGH—II

WARDHA,
October 26, 1939

QUESTION: How can a believer in the non-violence of your conception[2] be a Minister?

GANDHIJI : I fear he cannot in the present state of things. We have seen that our Ministers have had to resort to violence even as the British Government in the pre-autonomy days. It was inevitable perhaps. Had Congressmen been truly non-violent, there would have been no resort to force. But the Congress majorities were not based on unadulterated non-violence. A Minister said the other day that although he had not given up an iota of non-violence he could not do without resorting to the minimum of firing. He had resorted to it only to the extent that it was unavoidable. He may have said it then, he may not say it again if I can help it. For if he goes in again, he will have

[1] Of Nawanagar

[2] *Vide* "Discussion with Executive Members of Gandhi Seva Sangh-I", 25-10-1939.

made his position clear and he will represent a House that is predominantly non-violent. In other words, he will take office if he is sure that the people would let him carry on the Government on a non-violent basis.

But may it not be that whereas a non-violent Minister will confine violence to the lowest minimum, one who does not believe in non-violence would observe no such restraint?

That belief is a delusion. All those who are using violence today make the same claim. Hitler too would say the same thing. General Dyer was acclaimed as the hero of the hour by the House of Lords because his object was said to be to prevent the spread of mob violence. Soviet Russia believes its violence is a transitional stage to the establishment of an order without violence. In the present state of our belief and practice it may be better to wind up the Sangh leaving each one to grow unfettered.

KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA: But the suggestion is being made that we may confine the membership to those who are engaged in contructive work.

That suggestion is good, and we can conceivably convert the Sangh into such a body and then try each of us in our individual capacity to purify ourselves as much as we can. For non-violence is impossible without self-purification. Let us therefore be members of a self-purification association, but no association is necessary for that purpose. Therefore let us try each in our own way to face difficulties and problems as they come and see how far we can go. In Hudli, two years ago, I asked[1] you to help in the elections and in sending the best possible men to the legislatures. I gave advice in the atmosphere as it exised then. I cannot give you that advice today. In fact the time may have come when it becomes necessary for such of you as believe in the non-violence of the brave to retire from the Congress as I did in 1934[2].

How do you think that the masses can practise non-violence when we know that they are all prone to anger, hate, ill will? They are known to fight for the most trivial things.

They are, and yet, I think they can practise non-violence for the common good. Do you think the thousands of women that collected contraband salt had ill will against anyone? They knew that the

[1] In April 1937.

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 30-10-1939.

Congress or Gandhi had asked them to do certain things, and they did those things in faith and hope. To my mind the most perfect demonstration of non-violence was in Champaran. Did the thousands of ryots who rose up in revolt against the agrarian evils harbour the least ill will against the Government or the planters? Their belief in non-violence was unintelligent, even as the belief in the earth being round with many is unintelligent. But their belief in their leaders was genuine, and that was enough. With those who lead it is another matter. Their belief has got to be intelligent, and they have to live up to all the implications of the belief.

But then are not the masses the world over like that?

They are not, for others have not that background of non-violence.

But if there was non-violence ingrained in our masses, how should they have come to this state of slavery?

There indeed is what I flatter myself is going to be my contribution. I want that non-violence of the weak to become non-violence of the brave. It may be a dream, but I have to strive for its realization.

Harijan, 4 - 11-1939

58. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 27, 1939

CHI. VALJI,

It is very good indeed that you have decided to come here. We shall see what is to be done. You must have received Rs. 25 sent for Chitre. I have asked Kanu to send today another Rs. 30. I would like Chitre staying with you. I would then have to worry less about you. If he was needed there, why won't he be needed here? However, do whatever you and Chitre wish.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 7489. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

59. LETTER TO PYARELAL

October 27, 1939

CHI. PYARELAL,

I do not have the strength to command you. I do not wish to thrust on you a burden which you cannot carry. I wish to entrust to you only the work of your choice. When I ask you to do the massage and it hurts your feelings, it also hurts my feelings. I do not know what has caused your anguish. If it is only mental, the remedy for it is in God's hands or yours. If there is something which I can do let me know. I shall do it or at least try. If you find attending to the mail burdensome I shall take away that burden. I am being tested outside. I am being tested here and within my heart. That is why I am not able to find any way out. How can I guide you in your pitiable state? I am willing to break my silence if you wish to talk. Perhaps writing suits you better. May God be our guide.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati Original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

60 . LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

October 27, 1939

BHAI PRITHVI SINGH,

I got your letter. You may stay in Bombay as long as it is necessary. Get yourself medically examined.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR PRITHVI SINGH
C/O "JANMABHOOMI"
MEADOWS STREET
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 5636. Also C. W. 2947. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

61 . STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

SEGAON,
October 27, 1939

I have read Sir Samuel Hoare's speech[2] with the attention it deserves. I appreciate the conciliatory tone behind it. It makes it, therefore, embarrassing for me to produce what may appear to be a jarring note. But even as he speaks from a sense of duty I hope I shall receive the same credit. Has Dominion Status for India any meaning unless it is synonymous with independence? Has the India of his imagination the right to secede from the Commonwealth? I like the declaration that the British have shed imperialistic ambition. Will he allow the people of India to judge for themselves whether in reality that ambition has been shed? If it is, the proof of it should be forthcoming even before India is statutorily declared independent.

When the protection of minorities is pleaded against the declaration required by the Congress, the great pronouncement made

[1] This appeared under the title "Found Wanting". The statement was also published in *The Bombay Chronicle* and *The Hindu* on October 28.

[2] Replying to the debate on India, in the House of Commons, on October 26; *vide* Appendix "Sir Samuel Hoare's Speech", 26-10-1939.

by Sir Samuel Hoare sounds unreal. What the Congress has asked is not any sounding of Indian opinion but a declaration of Britain's intention. I have endeavoured[1] to show that there is no such thing as real minorities in India whose rights can be endangered by India becoming independent. With the exception of the Depressed Classes there is no minority which is not able to take care of itself. I observe that Sir Samuel Hoare has mentioned the Europeans also as a minority. The very mention of Europeans, in my opinion, condemns the cry of the interest of minorities. But the protection of minorities, whatever they are, is common cause between the British Government and the Congress. I would like the British Government to remember that there is every prospect of Congress India, to use Sir Samuel's phrase, being a hopeless minority. I like Sir Samuel's division of India into Congress and non-Congress. And if non-Congress India contains not merely the Princes but the people of Princes' India, all the Mussalmans, all those who might be represented by the Hindu Mahasabha and others who refuse to be classified as part of Congress India, it is Congress India which will be in danger of a non-Congress majority. And the Congress has got to make good its position even though it may represent a minority wholly unarmed, partly by outside force but largely by its own will.

I am glad that Sir Samuel Hoare has declared that the present British policy is to be judged in the moral scales suggested by me. I venture to suggest that if Sir Samuel's speech is the last word on behalf of the British Government, British political morality will be found wanting. Sir Samuel has laughed at non-co-operation as a barren doctrine. I am convinced that it is not as barren as he thinks. It has proved its worth in the eyes of millions of Indians and will do so again if the Congress remains truly non-violent, as I hope it will. The Congress decision[2] is an imperative call of duty. It puts both the Congress and the British Government on their trial. Nothing but good will come out of it if both will play the game.[3]

SEGAON, October 27, 1939

Harijan, 4 - 11-1939

[1] *Vide* "The Fiction of Majority", 16-10-1939.

[2] That the Ministries should resign; *vide* Appendix "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 22-10-1939.

[3] *Vide* also "Good and Bad", 30-10-1939

62. CABLE TO "THE NEWS CHRONICLE"[1]

[Before *October 28, 1939*]

I HAVE NO DOUBT WHATSOEVER THAT THE VICEREGAL STATEMENT[2] ON BEHALF OF BRITISH GOVERNMENT IN REPLY TO CONGRESS INVITATION COULD NOT HAVE BEEN MADE MORE IRRITATING THAN IT HAS PROVED TO BE. WHAT CONGRESS HAD ASKED WAS NOT AN ANSWER TO INDIA'S DEMAND FOR INDEPENDENCE BUT IT HAD REMINDED BRITAIN OF NEGLECT TO DECLARE WHETHER HER WAR AGAINST HERR HITLER TO PRESERVE DEMOCRACY INCLUDED INDIA THIS HAD NO CONNECTION WITH INDIA'S READINESS TO DIGEST INDEPENDENCE. BUT THE CONGRESS DEMAND WAS EVIDENTLY MISUNDERSTOOD AND THE VICEROY BEGAN A SORT OF ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE IN WHICH ONE MEMBER DID NOT KNOW WHAT THE OTHER SAID TO THE VICEROY AND AS A RESULT OF THESE TALKS HE WAS INSTRUCTED TO MAKE A STATEMENT WHOLLY UNRELATED TO THE UNPRECEDENTED UPHEAVAL GOING ON IN FRONT OF US. IF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WANTED TO MEASURE THE STRENGTH OF THE CONGRESS AND THAT OF OTHER POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN OBVIOUS THAT THE CONGRESS COULD NOT SATISFY THE GOVERNMENT STANDARD. BUT THE CONGRESS HAD SET BEFORE ITSELF A HIGHER MISSION. THE CONGRESS WANTED TO HELP BRITAIN BY GIVING HER THE MORAL SUPPORT WHICH WAS ITS SPECIALITY AND THE ONLY THING IT COULD GIVE. THE CONGRESS WOULD NOT GIVE THIS UNLESS IT WAS CLEAR THAT BRITAIN'S POLITICAL MORALITY WAS WHOLLY SOUND. I WISH BRITISH GOVERNMENT WOULD REALIZE THAT INDIA IS NOT BEGGING FOR INDEPENDENCE. THE CONGRESS ASKED BRITAIN TO SAY THAT BRITAIN WOULD NOT RESIST INDEPENDENCE. THE HINDU-MUSLIM AND OTHER DIFFICULTIES ARE THERE BEYOND DISPUTE. THE QUESTION IS WHETHER BRITAIN WILL STAND ASIDE AND LET INDIA SETTLE

[1] The cable appeared under the title "Congress Demand Misunderstood" with a note that it was "in response to a request from *The News Chronicle* (London)".

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Viceroy's Declaration", 17-10-1939.

HER OWN DIFFICULTIES IN HER OWN WAY WHEN THE WAR IS OVER. THAT IS WHY THE CONGRESS HAS SUGGESTED A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY WHERE EVERY COMMUNITY WILL BE FULLY REPR ESENTED TO FRAME INDIA'S CONSTITUTION. THE MISCHIEF DONE IS VERY REAL. THE WORKING COMMITTEE HAVE PASSED A MILD RESOLUTION[1]. IT STILL AFFORDS SCOPE FOR REPAIRING THE BLUNDER. WILL THE BRITISH PUBLIC REALIZE THAT IT IS A BLUNDER OR WILL THEY PERSIST IN THE HYPNOTIC BELIEF THAT THE INDIA OFFICE CAN NEVER ERR AND THAT INDIA MUST ALWAYS REMAIN THEIR MILCH COW? I CAN ONLY SAY THAT THE CONGRESS WILL NOT REST AND WILL GIVE NO REST TILL THE GOAL IS WON. ITS VERY EXISTENCE DEPENDS UPON ITS RELENTLESS PURSUIT OF THE GOAL WHICH IS NO LESS THAN COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE OF INDIA.

Harijan, 28-10-1939

63. NOTES

THAKKAR BAPA AND SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY

A friend who loves the Servants of India Society as himself, in sending his donation of Rs. 10 for the Thakkar Bapa Fund, writes:

> I endorse every word of your praise[2] of Thakkar Bapa. The only suggestion I would venture to make is that his membership of the Servants of India Society might have been mentioned. The Society may not take credit for his meritorious work; but it has kept him there without a demur and indeed taken pride in his great services to humanity.

The rebuke is well merited. To tell the truth, I did not even know that I had omitted to mention among Bapa's many merits that he had given up his office of Road Engineer for the Bombay Municipal Corporation to become a Servant of India. He is a loan to the Harijan Sevak Sangh by the Society. The Society needs no advertisement from me. And since I call myself an unofficial self-appointed member of the Society, to mention the latter is, in a way, advertising myself. But I am quite capable of performing that somewhat delicate task. The

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 22-10-1939.
[2] *Vide* "Bapa Jayanti", 16-10-1939.

reason for omitting the mention was, however, accidental. I work under tremendous pressure and though it was my intention to connect Bapa with the Society, I evidently failed to carry it out. I hope that this belated reference will bring more funds to the Bapa purse, which is Harijan purse. Let the Servants of India too, official and unofficial, set apart some time daily for the collection of the purse. I do not mind their collecting coppers. The real tribute to Bapa will consist in collecting coppers from Harijans and the numerous poor lovers of Harijans. Let no one plead shortness of notice. Let novices know from me, an experienced collector, that funds big or small do not need months to collect. They are collected in a few days if the collection is well organized and the cause worthy. Let them know that the crore for the Tilak Swaraj Fund[1] was collected in one month.

SEGAON, October 28, 1939

Harijan, 4 - 11-1939

64. MESSAGE TO POONA BASIC EDUCATION CONFERENCE[2]

SEGAON,
October 28, 1939

I hope that the Poona Educational Conference will, in all it does, keep steadily in view the newness of the *Nai Talim*, rendered in English as Basic Education. Just as we may neither reduce nor increase ingredients in a chemical experiment, so also we may not add to or discard anything from the essentials of the Wardha Scheme. The newness of this scheme is that education is to be given through a village craft. The end in view is not to be accomplished by merely adding a village craft to the current syllabus.

M. K. G

Harijan, 4 - 11-1939

[1] Bal Gangadhar Tilak died on July 31, 1920.

[2] This appeared under "Notes", sub-title "Basic Education" as a "translation of the message in Hindi".

65. LETTER TO PURATAN J. BUCH

SEGAON, WARDHA
October 28, 1939

CHI. PURATAN,

I have your letter. When you cannot restrain your wish to come here, do come. Room can always be found for a person like you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 9174

66. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEGAON,
October 28, 1939

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I was glad to have your letter. Return only after you have completely recovered your peace of mind. Do go to Pondicherry. I will certainly look forward to your return. I do miss you. But I felt that your good lay in sending you there. You have done well in asking Kanchan to join you there. It will be good if she comes, and no harm will be done if she doesn't.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MUNNALALJI OF SEGAON

RAMANA ASHRAM

TIRUVANNAMALAI

SOUTH INDIA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8556. Also C. W. 7062. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

67. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEGAON,
October 28, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

1. The idea is that a man,[1] by becoming passionless, transforms himself into a woman, that is, he includes the woman into himself. The same is true of a passionless woman. If you visualize the state of passionlessness in your mind, you will understand what I say. It is a different story that we do not come across such men and women.

2. *Ektara*[2] can blend with any music. No other instrument can take its place. Ramanama, like *ektara*, sustains the tune. If Ramanama fills our hearts it goes on sounding there like breathing during sleep.

3. We overeat in the name of balanced diet. That is why the *Gita* uses the word *laghwahar*[3]. Limited diet should not mean going hungry. Rarely does a man go really hungry. One should never feel weak. The quantity of food will differ with each individual. I shall remember about the letter to Panchgani.

You can give up anything else except teaching Hindi to the Japanese brother.[4]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4330

68. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

SEGAON, WARDHA
October 28, 1939

CHI. HARIBHAU,

I got your letter. I shall not judge in a hurry. I shall bother you no more. Your foremost duty is to recover your health by staying in a

[1] The rest of this sentence and the one that follows are in Gujarati.

[2] A musical instrument with only one string.

[3] *Bhagavad Gita*, XVIII. 52, however, has '*laghvashi*' which also means one on spare diet.

[4] In a note, at the bottom of the letter, the addressee had remarked that Gandhiji had misunderstood his point. He had himself given up learning Japanese but continued teaching Hindi to the Japanese friend.

quiet place. If the place you are staying in is not suitable, why not go to Delhi? The weather there is excellent these days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C. W. 6087. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

69. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

Unrevised

SEGAON,
October 29, 1939[1]

MY DEAR IDIOT,

It is never too late to learn. No one is too old to learn. It is your laziness which makes you say you may be too old to learn. And it is your pride which feels wounded to be corrected. No one will drive you out of Segaon. You alone can perform that trick, i e., of driving yourself out. And idiocy is no bar to people living in Segaon. I thought you had penetration enough to see that this was an asylum for the insane, the infirm, the abnormals and the like.

Do cheer up.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

One air-mail letter [was] redirected. If Mahadev [is] still there, tell him I had his letter.

From the original: C. W. 3661. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6470

70. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA
October 29, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I wrote to you yesterday. This is to send you a complaint from Meerut.[2] Please inquire and write directly to the correspondent. I have told him I have passed the letter on to you.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] This is in Devanagari.

[2] The reference is, presumably, to the communal riots which broke out in Meerut on October 4, when the army was called out and arrests were made.

71 . LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SEGAON, WARDHA
[Before *October 30, 1939*][1]

CHI. PREMA,

Why should you feel despondent?[2] How shallow is your faith? True faith is that which stands unshaken against the whole world, such faith alone counts. How can one's ahimsa endure without such faith? It would be a different matter if you were to say that you had no ahimsa in you. But if it were so what could you do about it? And in that case why feel despondent? You have then to watch and see what happens. If I have true ahimsa in me, it will shine out in any one of you at the right moment. But if I don't have it, how will it show itself in you all? It is, therefore, I who am being tested. That should make you dance with joy.

You have made a good beginning in Bihar. But what next? What has already been done will of course not be wasted. I take it that on your way back at any rate you will break journey here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10402. Also C. W. 6841. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

72. UNCONDITIONAL SUPPORT ?

Several British friends are puzzled and ask "Have you really said, you will give unconditional support to Great Britain as you are reported to have said?" The origin of this report lies in my very first statement[3] after my talk[4] with the Viceroy. The phrase 'unconditional

[1] According to the addressee, the letter was written some time in October 1939. The addressee, who had gone to Bihar to organize a women volunteer corps, came to Wardha on October 30, 1939; *vide* "Letter to Kanchanbehn M. Shah", and "Letter to Shardabehn G. Chokhawala", 30-10-1939.

[2] In *Bapuna patro-5: Premabehn Kantakne* p. 270, the addressee explains: "In view of the world war, the Congress Working Committee passed a resolution that ahimsa could not retain its primary place in the party's programme.'

[3] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 5-9-1939.

[4] On September 4 at Simla

support' does not occur in that statement. But had the Congress appreciated the position I took up, Congress support would have been unconditional in the sense that the Congress would not have asked for a clarification of Britain's war aims. But the Working Committee could not honestly take up that position. Therefore it passed as it had every right and justification for passing, the resolution[1] it did. Events have shown the prudence of the course adopted by the Working Committee. But had it waived the demand for the declaration of war aims, the support would have been unconditional. Remember, according to its constitution, the Congress is a non-violent body. Therefore its support would have been purely moral. It has no soldiers to supply, it has no money to give. But it has its good wishes. In my opinion those good wishes would have been more than many battalions. The Congress support would have put the British cause on an unassailable moral basis. It would have made the British case just, beyond measure. All the dependent races of the earth would have felt an indescribable glow of freedom. British moral stock would have shot up high at a bound. That is what the Congress unconditional support would have meant.

But God had willed otherwise. British statesmen had not faith enough in the Congress profession of non-violence. I must confess that the Congress could not pass the test to the satisfaction of a strict though just examiner. Anyway my British friends should have no difficulty in understanding my position. Of course it is open to them to argue that as a war resister I could not even give moral support. I have already said in these columns[2] that I do not hold such a view. It is open to a war resister to judge between two combatants and wish success to the one who has justice on his side. By so judging he is more likely to bring peace between the two than by remaining a mere spectator.

SEGAON, October 30, 1939

Harijan, 4 - 11-1939

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Congress Working Committee Resolution", after 18-7-1939.

[2] *Vide* "Notes", 16-10-1939.

73. MY LIFE

The following from its Allahabad correspondent appears in *The Bombay Chronicle*:

> Startling revelations have come to light regarding what has been going round the House of Commons about Gandhiji. It is reported that Mr. Edward Thompson, the British historian who visited Allahabad recently, threw some light on the curious mentality prevailing in England. Mr. Thompson, who met some political leaders here, is reported to have told them three things going round the House of Commons regarding Gandhiji:
>
> 1. Gandhiji was for unconditional co-operation with the British Government.
>
> 2. Gandhiji could still influence the Congress.
>
> 3. There were various stories about Gandhiji's sensual life, it being the impression that Gandhiji had ceased to be a saint.
>
> Impressions about Gandhiji's 'sensual life', it appeared to Mr. Thompson, were based on some Marathi papers. He spoke about them, I understand, to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, who repudiated them. He spoke about them to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Mr. P. N. Sapru also, who strongly repudiated them.
>
> It appears Mr. Thompson, before leaving England, had seen several members of the House of Commons. Mr. Thompson, before leaving Allahabad, sent a letter to Mr. Greenwood, M.P., on the suggestion of Pandit Nehru pointing out that the stories regarding Gandhiji were absolutely baseless.

Mr. Thompson was good enough to visit Segaon. He confirmed the report as substantially correct.

The 'unconditional co-operation' is dealt with in another note[1].

The country will presently know the influence I have over the Congress.

The third charge needs clearing. Two days ago I received a letter signed by four or five Gujaratis sending me a newspaper whose one mission seems to be to paint me as black as it is possible for any person to be painted. According to its headline it is a paper devoted to 'the organization of Hindus'. The charges against me are mostly

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

taken from my confessions and distorted from their setting. Among many other charges, the charge of sensuality is most marked. My *brahmacharya* is said to be a cloak to hide my sensuality. Poor Dr. Sushila Nayyar has been dragged before the public gaze for the crime of giving me massage and medicated baths, the two things for which she is the best qualified among those who surround me. The curious may be informed that there is no privacy about these operations which take over $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours and during which I often go off to sleep but during which I also transact business with Mahadev, Pyarelal or other co-workers.

The charges, to my knowledge, began with my active campaign against untouchability. This was when it was included in the Congress programme and I began to address crowds on the subject and insisted on having Harijans at meetings and in the Ashram. It was then that some sanatanists, who used to help me and befriend me, broke with me and began a campaign of vilification. Later, a very high-placed Englishman joined the chorus. He picked out my freedom with women and showed up my 'saintliness' as sinfulness. In this chorus there were also one or two well-known Indians. During the Round Table Conference, American Journals indulged in cruel caricatures of me. Mirabai who used to look after me was the target of their attack. As far as I could understand Mr. Thompson, who knows the gentlemen who have been behind these charges, my letters to Premabehn Kantak, who is a member of the Sabarmati Ashram, have also been used to prove my depravity. She is a graduate and worker of proved merit. She used to ask questions relating to *brahmacharya* and other topics. I sent her full replies[1]. She thought they might be of general use and she published them with my permission. I hold them to be absolutely innocent and pure.

Hitherto I have ignored these charges. But Mr. Thompson's talks about them and the importunity of the Gujarati correspondents, who say the indictment sent by them is but a sample of what is being said about me, impel me to repudiate them. I have no secrets of my own in this life. I have owned my weaknesses. If I were sensually inclined, I would have the courage to make the confession. It was when I developed detestation of sensual connection even with my own wife and had sufficiently tested myself that I took the vow of

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 6-5-1936 and 21-5-1936; also "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 5-2-1937 and 25-8-1937.

brahmacharya in 1906, and that for the sake of better dedication to the service of the country. From that day began my open life. I do not remember having ever slept or remained with my own wife or other women with closed doors except for the occasions referred to in my writings in *Young India* and *Navajivan.* Those were black nights with me. But as I have said repeatedly God has saved me in spite of myself. I claim no credit for any virtue that I may possess. He is for me the Giver of all good and has saved me for His service.

From that day when I began *brahmacharya*, our freedom began. My wife became a free woman, free from my authority as her lord and master, and I became free from my slavery to my own appetite which she had to satisfy. No other woman had any attraction for me in the same sense that my wife had. I was too loyal to her as husband and too loyal to the vow I had taken before my mother to be slave to any other woman. But the manner in which my *brahmacharya* came to me irresistibly drew me to woman as the mother of man. She became too sacred for sexual love. And so every woman at once became sister or daughter to me. I had enough women about me at Phoenix. Several of them were my own relations whom I had enticed to South Africa. Others were co-workers' wives or relatives. Among these were the Wests and other Englishmen. The Wests included West, his sister, his wife, and his mother-in-law who had become the Granny of the little settlement.

As has been my wont, I could not keep the new good thing to myself. So I presented *brahmacharya* for the acceptance of all the settlers. All approved of it. And some took it up and remained true to the ideal. My *brahmacharya* knew nothing of the orthodox laws governing its observance. I framed my own rules as occasion necessitated. But I have never believed that all contact with women was to be shunned for the due observance of *brahmacharya.* That restraint which demands abstention from all contact, no matter how innocent, with the opposite sex is a forced growth, having little or no vital value. Therefore natural contacts for service were never restrained. And I found myself enjoying the confidence of many sisters, European and Indian, in South Africa. And when I invited the Indian sisters in South Africa to join the civil resistance movement, I found myself one of them. I discovered that I was specially fitted to serve womankind. To cut the (for me enthralling) story short, my return to India found me in no time one with India's women. The easy access I had to their hearts was an agreeable revelation to me. Muslim sisters never kept

purdah before me here even as they did not in South Africa. I sleep in the Ashram surrounded by women for they feel safe with me in every respect. It should be remembered that there is no privacy in the Segaon Ashram.

If I were sexually attracted towards women, I have courage enough, even at this time of life, to become a polygamist. I do not believe in free love—secret or open. Free, open love I have looked upon as dog's love. Secret love is besides cowardly.

Sanatanist Hindus may abhor my non-viloence. I know many of them think that Hindus will become cowards if they remain under my influence. I know of no man having become a coward under my influence. They may decry my non-violence as much as they like. But they ill serve themselves or Hinduism by indulging in palpable lies.

SEGAON, October 30, 1939

Harijan, 4-11-1939

74. THE NEXT STEP

I have never felt the weight of responsibility as heavily as I do today in connection with the present impasse with the British Government. The resignation of Congress Ministries was a necessity. But the next step is by no means clear. Congressmen seem to be expecting a big move. Some correspondents tell me, if I only give the call, there will be an India-wide response such as has never been made before. And they assure me that the people will remain non-violent. Beyond their assurance I have no other proof in support of their statement. I have proof in my own possession to the contrary. These columns have contained some of that proof. I cannot identify myself with any civil disobedience unless I am convinced that Congressmen believe in non-violence with all its implications and will follow implicitly the instructions issued from time to time.

Apart from the uncertainty of the observance of non-violence in Congress ranks is the tremendous fact that the Muslim League look upon the Congress as the enemy of the Muslims. This makes it well-nigh impossible for the Congress to organize successful non-violent revolu-tion through civil disobedience. It will certainly mean Hindu-Muslim riots. Non-violent technique, therefore, demands the reduction of civil disobedience to the lowest term consistent with national self-respect. The offensive will have to be taken by the British

Government. In a situation so delicate and unexampled, no individual Congressman or even Congress Committee can be allowed to take law into their own hands. The Working Committee should alone have the right to declare and regulate civil disobedience.

I have undertaken to guide the Working Committee, but my limitations appal me. My physical condition makes it impossible for me to move about as I used to before. I am therefore cut off from all outward contact with the masses. Even the present Congress workers I do not know personally. I never meet them. My correspondence has to be restricted as much as possible. Therefore, unless Congressmen almost instinctively perceive the duty and the necessity of the preliminary inaction I am prescribing, my guidance will be not only useless but it will be harmful. It will create confusion.

I hold the opinion strongly that whilst by their own action the British Government have made it impossible for the Congress to co-operate with them in the prosecution of the war, the Congress must not embarrass them in its prosecution. I do not desire anarchy in the country. Independence will never come through it. I do not wish for the defeat of the British or, for that matter, of the Germans. The peoples of Europe have been helplessly drawn into the war. But they will soon be awakened from their torpor. This war will not be a war to the finish unless the whole of modern civilization is to perish. Be that as it may, holding the views I do, I am in no hurry to precipitate civil disobedience. My prescription to Congressmen, for the time being, is to consolidate the organization by purging it of all weaknesses. I swear by the old constructive programme of communal unity, removal of untouchability and the charkha. It is quite clear that non-violence is impossible without the first two. If India's villages are to live and prosper, the charkha must become universal. Rural civilization is impossible without the charkha and all it implies, i. e., revival of village crafts. Thus the charkha is the symbol *par excellence* of non-violence. And it can occupy the whole of the time of all Congressmen. If it makes no appeal to them, either they have no non-violence in them or I do not know the A. B. C. of non-violence. If my love of the charkha is a weakness in me, it is so radical as to make me unfit as a general. The wheel is bound up with my scheme of swaraj, indeed with life itself. All India should know my credentials on the eve of what can become the last and decisive battle for swaraj.

SEGAON, October 30, 1939

Harijan, 4 - 11-1939

75. GOOD AND BAD

The more I ponder over Sir Samuel Hoare's recent speech[1] in the House of Commons the more puzzled I become. It is both good and bad. But the bad part is so bad that it vitiates the good. His statement that the British Govenment have shed imperialism hardly squares with his defence of the promises made to the minorities. He gives up the whole of his case when he brackets the Europeans of India and the Princes with the other minorities. If Europeans who have made no home in India and whose roots are all in Europe are a minority requiring protection, the British soldiers and civilians too who are a hopeless minority require to be protected. In other words, rights acquired by conquest are to remain intact. European interests are an imposition protected by the British bayonet. A free India will claim to examine every European interest on its merit, and that which conflicts with the national interest will go by the board. I turn up *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* and I find the following definition of imperialism: "Extension of British Empire where trade required protection of the flag." If this is imperialism, does not Sir Samuel's speech fully protect it? India's ambition is to destroy that imperialism.

Do not Princes stand much on the same footing as the Europeans? Many, if not most, of them are an imperial creation and sustained for imperial interests. The Princes in no way represent their people. If I published the complaints I receive weekly from the people of the States, I should need to double the size of *Harijan.* They make a woeful tale neither creditable to the Princes nor to their protector, the British authority. Does not this British protectorate mean naked imperialism? The Congress is invited to regard the Princes as a minority. British power is the overlord without whom the Princes cannot breathe! They are not free even to see Congressmen, much less to enter into any settlement with them. I do not complain against the Princes for what they are doing in the crisis. They are powerless to do otherwise.

Sir Samuel talks of the Communal Award[2] as a meritorious act of the British Government. I am sorry he mentioned it. I have very bitter memories of the Award which was being hatched during the

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Sir Samuel Hoare's Speech", 26-10-1939.
[2] *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Letter to Ramsay Macdonald", 18-8-1932.

Round Table Conference time. I am unable to regard it as a proud British achievement. I know how miserably the parties themselves failed. I regard the Award as discreditable for all parties. I say this apart from its merits which do not bear close scrutiny. But the Congress has loyally accepted it because I was party to the request made to the late Mr. MacDonald to arbitrate. Then his division of India into Congress India and non-Congress India ! It would have been better if Sir Samuel had talked of armed India and unarmed India. The Congress represents the unarmed millions, no matter to what caste or creed they belong. Is it right to pit armed India against its unarmed part? It will be hard to find a parallel in history in which unarmed people have represented the urge for freedom, turning the very armlessness into the central means for deliverance. Sir Samuel has informed the world that India's battle for freedom cannot be won till unarmed India has come to terms with armed India including, of course, the British Government. Again, I do not complain. Sir Samuel could not, all of a sudden, alter British tradition and nature. Only it is my painful duty to show how an unbiased Indian has understood his speech. I have no doubt that Sir Samuel has meant what he has said. Only he has said nothing that can quench the parched throats of Congressmen who are thirsting for freedom. The Congress has to live up more closely than ever to its creed and develop the non-violent strength which will disarm armed India and with it armed Britain. If it can do so, it will be the greatest contribution to the peace of the world. For peace won't come out of a clash of arms but out of justice lived and done by unarmed nations in the face of odds.[1]

SEGAON, October 30, 1939

Harijan, 4 - 11-1939

76. NOTES

HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

Hindu-Muslim unity means communal unity. No pact seems to be in front of us. Janab Jinnah Saheb looks to the British power to safeguard the Muslim rights. Nothing that the Congress can do or concede will satisfy him. For he can always, and naturally, from his own standpoint, ask for more than the British can give or guarantee.

[1] *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 27-10-1939.

Therefore there can be no limit to the Muslim League demands. So far as the Congress is concerned, it does not represent all Hindus or all of any single community except in the sense that the Congress represents all because all are believed to desire independence for the country and the Congress is without a rival in fighting for that goal. In fact the Congress is the only national army the country posseses. It is not the less but all the more an army for its being non-violent. It has been the unbroken tradition of the Congress to refuse to represent any but the national interest. It has certainly never represented the Hindus as such. That function is claimed by the Hindu Mahasabha just as that of solely representing Muslim interests is claimed by the Muslim League.

The only course left open to the Congress, therefore, is to state its own communal policy for the guidance of Congressmen, no matter to which community they belong. The Congress should have no quarrel with the League for getting all it can through the British Power. An institution that is fighting that power will never put itself in the wrong by fighting the Muslims.

SEGAON, October 30, 1939

Harijan, 4 - 11-1939

77. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA

October 30, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Strange! No letter, no telegram! Rajen Babu and I are off to Delhi tomorrow to see the Viceroy. Hope to return on Thursday.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR

POONA HOTEL

POONA

From the original: C. W. 3662. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6471

78. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEGAON, WARDHA
October 30, 1939

MY DEAR C. R.,

Yours to Mahadev of 28th was duly read by me. I agree with every word of what you say. I had anticipated you as you will see from *Harijan*.[1] Keep well. We—Rajendra Prasad and I—are off to Delhi, I hope, only for a few hours.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
48 BAZULULLAH ROAD
THYAGARAYANAGAR
MADRAS

From a photostat: G. N. 2076

79. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

October 30, 1939

CHI. KANAIYO,

I do not have the courage to take you along. I am leaving behind Sushilabehn. Get well soon. Afterwards if you wish you may go to Rajkot to regain your strength. For getting the tonsils removed you will have to go to Bombay. I hope to return on Thursday. Is that all right?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U./II

[1] The reference is, presumably, to the "Statement to the Press"; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 27-10-1939.

80. LETTER TO KANCHANBEHN M. SHAH

SEGAON, WARDHA

October 30, 1939

CHI. KANCHAN,

I have your letter. You should write your address in every letter. Munnalal has gone to Ramana Ashram and I have received a nice letter from him from there. He says that he has sent for you there. Go if you feel like it. He will return in about a month's time. Sharda has left and Premabehn has arrived. Lilavati is here. Vasumati will be coming in a few days. Thus the house remains full. Take proper care and improve your health. I am leaving for Delhi tomorrow. I hope to return on Thursday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8289. Also C. W. 7063. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

81. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA

October 30, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. You must make it a point to go out for regular walks. Is it that you don't get any woman friend to accompany you? Here everything is all right. Premabehn arrived today. I shall have to leave for Delhi tomorrow. I hope to return on Thursday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10017. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

82. THE CONGRESSMAN

The Congressman seems to have become a distinct species. The various groups who make up the Congress organization have one thing in common. They are nationalists to the core. They will die for India's independence as they are living for it. They have made nationalism part of their religion, whether they are Hindus, Muslims, Christians or any other.

Now the Congress contains, besides those who need no other label but that of being Congressmen, socialists, communists, Kisan Sabhaites, trade unionists, Congress nationalists, Royists, ex-terrorists, the so-called Gandhi-ites, etc. I have not intentionally omitted any group. Some of these have sub-divisions. The Forward Bloc is an amalgam. Its other name is leftists. As the Congress movement spreads, it may throw up other groups. But all of them have one thing in common: a burning passion for freedom and readiness to die for it.

It is true that the vast majority of Congressmen are Hindus. But they stand apart from other Hindus as we have found in the South during the campaign for temple-entry. The sanatanists, who I think and hope are a handful have fought the reformers who are mostly Congressmen, and have denounced the latter as traitors to their religion. The Hindu Mahasabha is becoming a protest against the Congress. Some of its members use about the Congress language calculated to create contempt for it. They regard Hindus who belong to the Congress as enemies of Hinduism. The Muslims who belong to the Congress are almost outcastes.

That the Congressman stands for complete independence, for bold social reform, for broad tolerance, has a brilliant record for suffering and sacrifice, is a matter for legitimate satisfaction. The formation of different groups in a mass organization like the Congress is inevitable and may be a distinct sign of progress and life. But if it is so, why are there communal quarrels, why do the Mahasabhaites distrust Congress Hindus, why do not men and women belonging to all faiths flock to the Congress banner, and, last but not least, is it all well with the groups themselves which I have mentioned?

Let us examine their condition. Are they centripetal or centrifugal? Do they strengthen the organization or do they weaken it? Are they not bidding for power? Do they not distrust one another?

Do they submit to discipline?

I am not able to give a flattering answer to all these questions. I am afraid that these groups contain in themselves the seeds of the decay of the Congress. The cause that accounts for weakness within Congress ranks is also the cause that accounts for the Congress failure to draw all communities to its ranks.

That cause is absence of a living faith in non-violence in thought, word and deed.

Now, therefore, is the time for every one of us to test the efficacy or otherwise of non-violence. A false step by the Congress at this stage of its career is bound to retard the country's progress towards its goal. Strange as it may appear to Congressmen, I make bold to suggest that the one way to disarm communal suspicion is not to offer civil disobedience in terms of swaraj. The prospect that is about to face the country is that of the British Government in alliance with the so-called minorities arrayed against the Congress single-handed. Civil disobedience against this combination is a contradiction in terms. It would not even be civil war. It would be criminal war.

If Congressmen, whether labelled or unlabelled, do not subscribe to non-violence as I have been developing it in these columns, and do not appreciate the instructions issued by Rajendra Babu and the advice I have tendered[1] in *Harijan*, they should signify in writing their discontent to Rajendra Babu and tell him what they would like him to do and, if he cannot comply with their wishes, what they would themselves do. It must be clear to every Congressman that this is no time for divided counsels, indecision, or half-hearted obedience to instructions. For decisive action the whole Congress has to move forward in confidence and with one mind.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, October 31, 1939

Harijan, 11 - 11-1939

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 17-10-1939 and "The Next Step", 30-10-1939.

83. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 31, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This[1] has just come. You will do what is proper.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3938. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7274

84. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 31, 1939

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Why do you fall ill so often? You must take care of your health. Send me wire at Delhi.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
11 CHOWPATTY SEAFACE
BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 237

85. TELEGRAM TO SAMPURNANAND

[*October*][2] *1939*

MY SYMPATHY WITH YOU IN YOUR LOSS.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The reference is to a telegram to the addressee, at the back of which Gandhiji had written this letter. The telegram dated "Dehra Dun, October 30, 1939" from Ramdev, a leader of Arya Samaj, read: "If possible, arrive one day earlier."

[2] The source, however, has "September". In his *Memories and Reflections*, p. 104, the addressee says: "My youngest son died in October 1939 and his death was followed about a fortnight later by the death of my wife. In the course of the next twelve months or so, I lost another son and my elder daughter, Minakshi."

86. LETTER TO KUNDAR DIWAN

[*October 1939*][1]

BHAI KUNDAR,

Your letters arrive regularly. You have enclosed Vachchharajbhai's letter which, too, is good. Balkrishna should stay there for the present. The present is the best time to benefit from the weather there.

You mentioned your nature. In all these matters ahimsa or pure love is the only way. If we start with recognizing the temperament of our patient, or colleague or opponent, much friction can be avoided.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi G.N. 214

87. LETTER TO SIKANDAR HYAT KHAN

SEGAON, WARDHA[2],

ON THE MOVING TRAIN TO DELHI,

November 1, 1939

DEAR SIR SIKANDAR,

You will forgive me please for reverting to Sucha Singh's case. Here is a copy of his reply to my inquiry. There seems to be no reason to doubt his version. Whatever he may [have] said in his evidence, the Jail Superintendent's evidence should be conclusive. I suggest his indefinite release on parole. His record in the Hazaribagh Jail seems to be clean. His release is not likely to result in any mischief being done by him. I plead for mercy on grounds of humanity.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] From the reference to Balkrishna's illness; *vide* "Letter to Kundar Diwan", 6-10-1939

[2] Permanent address

88. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO KUNG[1]

[*November 1, 1939*][2]

What you say of the relations between our two countries finds a ready echo in my heart.

The Hindu, 13-11-1939

89. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO CHILDREN OF CHINA

[*November 1, 1939*]

How I wish I could meet you and see your beautiful country.

The Hindu, 13 -11-1939

90. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO YAN- YUN-SHAN

[*November 1, 1939*]

I know I occupy a corner in the Chinese heart.

The Hindu, 13-11-1939

91. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI
November 1, 1939

SHRI RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
POONA HOTEL
POONA

YOUR WIRE. HOPE YOU ARE BETTER. LEAVING TOMORROW. LOVE..

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3939. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7248

[1] The addressee was the Chinese Premier.

[2] Reporting this and the two following items as written by Gandhiji "during his train journey to Delhi", which was on November 1, the source explains: "These . . . have been sent to Prof. Yan Yun-Shan to be forwarded to their respective addresses. In one of his replies Mr. Gandhi humorously explains that writing was rendered difficult 'owing to jolting'."

92. SPEECH AT HARIJAN NIVAS, NEW DELHI

November 2, 1939

The hall built by the Chandiwala brothers in commemoration of Shrimati Janaki Devi[1] has in fact been already open for prayers for the last so many days. But this formal function has been organized with the pious feeling that it would be better if I threw open the temple. I do not know whether or no my hands would add to its religious merit. The importance of this shrine will increase if the hearts of the Harijan children present here are filled with true prayer. I would like to say a few words to the Harijan boys who come here for prayer and to their Superintendent Viyogi Hariji.

Deprivation of food does not do much harm to a man. On the other hand it may benefit him, because we often indulge in over-eating. But prayer is the food of the soul without which it is starved to death. The more you pray the better it is. In prayer there can be no excess. I have never come across a person harmed by excessive prayer. We should devote the maximum time to prayer so that ultimately our life becomes one continuous prayer. Therefore, if this hall increases such religious faith, the devotion of the brothers who have built it will have borne fruit and the spirit of Shrimati Janaki Devi will rest in peace.

There are a few Harijan ashrams in the country through which caste Hindus are atoning for their past sins. If untouchability is eradicated by such atonement, it will help the preservation of Hinduism.

Harijan children here are living without any discrimination. The superintendent also lives and mixes with them freely without any inhibition. It is certainly desirable of them if all pray together in harmony and rhythm. But the value of true prayer is never lost for want of any rhythm or harmony. Prayer should proceed from the depth of one's heart. If one perseveres, success is assured. The very purpose of opening a temple is to strengthen religious feeling. If this is fulfilled, the people who have built it will be content. May our goodwill bear fruit.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 4-11-1939

[1] Mother of the Chandiwala brothers

93. INTERVIEW TO "THE MANCHESTER GUARDIAN"

NEW DELHI,
November 4, 1939

Mahatma Gandhi, in an interview to the Indian correspondent of *The Manchester Guardian* on the Lords' debate[1] on India, said he was shocked at Lord Zetland's suggestion that the Congress is a Hindu organization; and was amazed that it could emanate from one in the responsible position of the Secretary of State.

Mahatma Gandhi observed that though the vast majority of Congressmen are Hindus, the Congress contained many Indians of all classes and creeds. What is more, from its very commencement the Congress has claimed to be and has been a wholly political organization and never communal. It has proved its claim repeatedly and on every relevant occasion. The Hindu Mahasabha is a communal organization and it came into being because even notable Hindus thought that the Congress did not and could not protect the special rights of Hindus. Lord Zetland as a former Governor and an author knows all these facts. His misdescription of the Congress is untimely, disturbing and calculated to increase irritation and bitterness. Mahatma Gandhi hopes that Lord Zetland will lose no time to correct what Gandhiji regards as a great blunder.

The Hindustan Times, 5-11-1939

94. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

RAILWAY STATION, DELHI,
November 4, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Just after you had gone, Kripalani told me that in United Provinces there was great ferment and preparation for civil disobedience. He told me, too, that anonymous placards had been circulated asking people to cut wires and tear up rails. My own opinion is that there is at present no atmosphere for civil disobedience. If people take the law into their own hands I must give up command of civil disobedience movement. I would like you to read this week's *Harijan.*[2] It deals with my position in this connection. It was this that I had intended to discuss with you. But it was not to be.

[1] On November 2; *vide* also "Statement to the Press", 6-11-1939, and "Is Congress a Hindu Organization ?", 13-11-1939.

[2] *Vide* "The Next Step", 30-10-1939.

At this critical time in our history there should be no misunderstanding between us and, if possible, there should be one mind.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, pp. 394-5

95. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[1]

NAGPUR,
November 5, 1939

I will resist civil disobedience unless I find the country prepared for that.

As for non-co-operation, he said, it had already begun with the resignation of the Congress Ministries.

The Hindu, 6-11-1939

96. TRAVANCORE AGAIN

There was a forced lull in Travancore after the acceptance by the State Congress of my advice to suspend civil disobedience. But things seem to have gone from bad to worse. The inactivity of the State Congress was perhaps mistaken for fatigue or worse. I knew that the State Congress leaders were being held down by me. Their loyalty was great. But when the other day a deputation came to me and asked me whether, in order to avoid civil disobedience, they were to stop even ordinary activity which one knows as political, I told them that even that severe restraint might be part of the people's training. But I also told them that I could not judge for them in such matters. I could not have the data they had. They could not help me in judging the atmosphere in Travancore. Physical presence there was necessary to enable me to judge. No second-hand evidence could be of much assistance, at least not to me. I told them, therefore, that they must judge for themselves, irrespective of my opinion. For I was not prepared to take the risk of curbing even harmless political activity for fear of imaginary consequences. The leaders should, therefore,

[1] Gandhiji passed through Nagpur *en route* to Wardha.

consider themselves free from any restraint from me.

After the greatest deliberation they took two steps embodied in restrained language. Their resolutions and the Press note in reply are printed below.[1]

In my opinion the State Congress had every right to dissociate themselves from the glorification of the Dewan's administration. Even an adversary is entitled to many happy returns of the day. But it is another matter when an attempt is made, as it is said to have been made in the present case, to make political capital out of an innocent event like a birthday. The first resolution is a protest against such political use of the Dewan's birthday.

The second resolution has nothing controversial about it. It is a mere assertion of the right to hold public meetings, etc.

News has now been received that Shri Thanu Pillai, Shri Philipose and three others were arrested on the 2nd instant and that the State Congress office was taken possession of by the Travancore Government. Furniture, it is said, was thrown out.

The policy of the Travancore Government is ununderstandable. The repression seems to me to be wholly unjustifiable. It is wrong to put the best and wisest citizens in jail. I know that those who have been arrested are sincere, devoted and able workers.

I can send no better consolation to the Travancore State Congress workers than that those who go to jail should do so joyously and with the determination to serve the whole period of imprisonment. I have no doubt that it is the surest way to swaraj if those who are imprisoned possess pure hearts.

SEGAON, November 6, 1939

Harijan, 11-11-1939

97. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

November 6, 1939

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I was delayed by three days and you have meanwhile gone in for fever. Today is my day for *Harijan*. I, therefore, will not go over

[1] The resolutions are not reproduced here; for the Press note, *vide* Appendix "Travancore Governmewnt Press Note", 30-10-1939.

there. Besides, it is Silence Day. There is one complaint against you, that you do not take complete rest. You must take complete rest. Strictly follow Sushilabehn's instructions. She told me everything last evening. If you take complete rest, your fever will certainly subside. Only then can you be taken to Nagpur. I hope there is no difficulty. If there is, tell Sushilabehn. Write to me. However, I shall certainly see you tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 9732

98. LETTER TO GHULAM RASUL QURESHI

November 6, 1939

CHI. QURESHI,

I feel that if you are able to engross yourself in khadi besides the work that is given to you, that is the only firm thing for Hindu-Muslim unity. Literature cannot do much. Knowledge of letters can be useful along with khadi. Do not think of the whole India for serving but only the sphere which you can easily handle yourself. If while doing so we have purity in us it is bound to have its impact.

I have Akbar's[1] letter. Blessings to him. He must be all right now. Is Amina[2] getting fever?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai. Also C. W. 10768. Courtesy: Ghulam Rasul Qureshi

[1] Addressee's son and wife

[2] *ibid*

99. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

SEGAON,
November 6, 1939

The London *Times* editorial seems to me to be unfair. The minorities question has invariably been brought up whenever the question of India's freedom has come to the fore. To represent the Congress and its demand as totalitarian is to misrepresent facts. This misrepresentation is not less serious because it is unconscious. The Congress has deliberately discarded the use of force. It has no military backing or tradition. It has from its inception believed in communal unity. It seeks to represent non-Hindus as well as Hindus. It has had Parsis, Muslims and Christians leading it. It has gone out of its way to placate all communities. It could not do otherwise as its only sanction was constitutional agitation till it forged non-co-operation and civil disobedience as an addition to constitutional agitation and as an effective substitute for violence. Communal differences have been used by the British Government to thwart India's aspiration. That the process is likely to have been unconscious does not make it less mischievous. That the Congress has no desire for loaves and fishes must be crystal clear from wholesale resignations of Congress Ministries. The Congress will never be party to communal quarrels. It will rather stand aside and wander in the wilderness and wait for a better day. Even now the ugly spectacle of playing off the league against the Congress seems to be going on. I had expected that the stupendous European crisis would bring better perception to British statesmen.

The mention of the Princes in this connection is particularly unfair. They owe their existence to the Paramount Power and have no status independent of it. Strange as the assertion may appear, they can do nothing good or big without the consent, tacit or implied, of the Paramount Power. They represent nobody but themselves. To invite the Congress to settle with the Princes is the same as inviting it to settle with the Paramount Power.

The Times wants the Congress record of dealings with Muslims

[1] This appeared under the title "Unfair". The statement was also published in *The Hindu,* 7-11-1939.

and Depressed Classes during the last two years. All that I can say is, 'Let Governors of Provinces speak.' That the Muslim League and some Depressed Class leaders complain is nothing strange. Some discontent is inevitable in democracy. The Congress has made a handsome and sporting offer. Let a Constituent Assembly of elected representatives frame a constitution for future Government of India subject to safe-guards for protection of rights of minorities to their satisfaction. Will British statesmen play the game?[1]

Harijan, 11-11-1939

100. OPINIONS DIFFER

An M. A. of Aligarh writes :

You have said on many occasions that your study of the holy Koran has revealed to you that Islam enjoins non-violence upon its followers. You again say that your study of the life of the holy prophet confirms you in this belief. Allow me to say that it must be only a sort of 'wishful' reading that you have done. The simple fact is that your philosophy of ahimsa eschews the use of force altogether. Islam, on the contrary, does allow the use of force on certain occasions. Did not the Prophet meet force with force at Badr? I dare not cite any authority because you have refused to accept any interpretation except your own. Yet I hope you will show some respect to what your own hypnotized Maulana Saheb said so long ago as during the first non-co-operation movement. He said in his statement to the court: "I do not agree with Mahatma Gandhi that the use of force should not be allowed in any case. Because I am a Muslim I believe that the use of force is allowed on the particular occasions specified by Islam." Again he said in the same statement to the court during his trial: "Against the non-Muslim Government, Islam prescribes only sword, protracted battle and the cutting of throats." I am sure Maulana Saheb cannot deny it even today.

So much for non-violence in Islam. As to the question whether the Muslims are a separate nation or not, I would say that the Muslims have been a separate nation ever since the beginning of Islam. They were so when Mohammed Bin Kasim first set foot on Indian soil, they were so during the days of the Moghul Empire, they are so even today, and they will remain the same for ever if they are true to their religion. Akbar attempted to evolve not only a common religion but also a common social system, but were not his

[1] *Vide* also "Interview to *The Manchester Guardian*", 4-11-1939.

attempts doomed to failure? The Muslims are a separate nation in the sense that they cannot merge their identity with any other community. But this need not frighten the champions of unity at all. Co-operation in some particular sphere for some particular goal is always possible. Breathing the same air and inhabiting the same land does not make a nation. It is the unity of thought that really matters. It is religion which moulds the mind. A Muslim may be the next-door neighbour of Sikh. But their viewpoints, their modes of thought and their modes of life will always differ from each other. The air is the same all round the globe. Is the air of England in any way different from that of India? Physical surroundings affect only the physical features. The mind is not affected by them. Of course, the Christians are also a separate nation, and so are the Parsis. India is a land of nationalities. It will be a red-letter day in the history of India when the Indian National Congress is transformed into a 'Federation of Indian Nations'.

Yes, the Muslims are a separate nation in China. If the insinuation is that they merged themselves with the other Chinese, then I can only say that they stand as an object-lesson before the whole Islamic world. Islamic brotherhood will be reduced to a mere farce if the same process continues. Islam has definitely laid down that the Muslims should have some distinction even in their dress. Does not Maulana Saheb stand prominent among the members of the Congress Working Committee ?

I have no doubt that this letter represents the present mood of many educated Muslims. I do not propose to enter into any long argument about the interpretation of the Koran. Being a non-Muslim I am at a disadvantage. If I began an argument, the natural retort would be: 'How can you, a non-Muslim, interpret Muslim scriptures ?' It would serve no purpose to answer back that I have the same reverence for Islam and the other faiths as I have for my own.

I may, however, inform my correspondent that I had before my mind the battle of Badr and similar incidents in the Prophet's life. I was aware of verses in the Koran itself contradicting my interpretation. I suggest, nevertheless, that it is possible that the teaching of a book or a man's life may be different from isolated texts in a book or incidents in a life, however many the latter may be. The *Mahabharata* is the story of a bloody war. But I have maintained in the teeth of orthodox Hindu opposition that it is a book written to establish the futility of war and violence.

I have no right to speak for the Maulana Saheb. He is well able to take care of himself. I must confess that I have no recollection of

the Maulana Saheb having given the evidence quoted. I do not question the veracity of my correspondent. Only that evidence does not affect the opinion I have held for many years about the central teaching of the holy Koran. Opinions will differ to the end of time. I plead for mutual forbearance.

The proposition laid down by my correspondent about nations is startling. There may be arguable grounds for maintaining that Muslims in India are a separate nation. But I have never heard it said that there are as many nations as there are religions on earth. If there are, it would follow that a man changes his nationality when he changes his faith. According to my correspondent, the English, Egyptians, Americans, Japanese, etc., are not nations, but Muslims, Parsis, Sikhs, Hindus, Christians, Jews, Buddhists are different nations no matter where born. I am afraid my correspondent occupies very weak ground in maintaining that nations are or should be divided according to their religions. In his zeal to maintain an untenable proposition he has overproved his case.

I must deny that the Muslim dynasties divided India into two nations. Akbar's example is irrelevant. He aimed at a fusion of religions. It was a dream not to be realized. But the other Muslim emperors and kings surely regarded India as one indivisible whole. That is how I learnt history as a boy.

If we Hindus, Muslims and others are to evolve democracy, we shall do so only by the whole nation speaking its mind through its representatives elected under the broadest franchise possible, and that either through British goodwill or in the teeth of its opposition. The pronouncements made on behalf of the British Government give no promise of British goodwill. British imperialism is still vigorous and, in spite of Sir Samuel Hoare's declaration[1] to the contrary, it will die hard. The proposal to vivisect India is a contribution to imperialistic growth. For vivisection can only be made by the aid of the British bayonet or through a deadly civil war. I hope the Congress will be party to neither game. British refusal to make the required declaration of Britain's war aims about India has perhaps come as blessing in disguise. It removes the Congress out of the way to enable the Muslim League to make its choice, unfettered by the Congress administration in eight Provinces[2], as to whether it will keep the British yoke by

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Sir Samuel Hoare's Speech", 26-10-1939.

[2] Assam, Bihar, Bombay, Central Provinces, Madras, Orissa, United Provinces and the North-West Frontier Province.

vivisecting India or whether it will fight for the independence of an undivided India. I hope that the League does not want to vivisect India. I hope that my correspondent does not represent a large body of Muslim opinion in India. Presently the talks[1] between Janab Jinnah Saheb and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru will be resumed. Let us hope that they will result in producing a basis for a lasting solution of the communal tangle.

SEGAON, November 7, 1939

Harijan, 11-11-1939

101. LETTER TO SHAMBHUSHANKAR TRIVEDI[2]

November 7, 1939

Your letter called for no reply. Keep your pledge. One must certainly put up hedges round oneself to be able to keep a pledge, but how long one should cling to them, even if one breaks down, should be decided by each one for himself. What one should do about others who fail to keep their pledges depends on each individual case. Is politics [at your place] improving?

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

102. TELEGRAM TO RULER OF PALITANA

[After *November 7, 1939*][3]

THAKORE SAHEB

PALITANA

UNDERSTAND SHAMBHUBHAI STARVING AS PROTEST AGAINST ALLEGED BREACH OF PROMISE BY YOU HOPE YOU WILL GIVE SATISFACTION AND SAVE PRECIOUS LIFE.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The first round of talks took place in Delhi on November 2.

[2] A constructive worker of Palitana (Saurashtra) known for his fasts

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

103. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

SEGAON,
November 8, 1939

I have read with respectful attention His Excellency the Viceroy's broadcast[2] and his introductory remarks[3] on the correspondence between himself and Shri Rajendra Prasad and Jinnah Saheb released by His Excellency. I welcome His Excellency's refusal to accept defeat and his determination to solve what seems to have become insoluble. I share to the fullest extent His Excellency's anxiety to reach a solution. Without, therefore, waiting for the Congress reaction to these two declarations and purely for the sake of assisting the common cause, I would like to suggest that no solution is possible unless an acceptable declaration of war aims about India is forthcoming. The pronouncements hitherto made, whether, here or in Great Britain, are after the old style, suspected and discredited by freedom-loving India. If imperialism is dead, there must be a clear break with the past. Language suited to the new era has to be used. If the time has not yet come for the acceptance of this fundamental truth, I would urge that further effort at reaching a solution should be suspended. In this connection I would remind British statesmen that what is wanted is a declaration of Britain's intention regarding her Indian policy irrespective of India's wishes. A slave-holder, who has decided to abolish slavery, does not consult his slaves whether they desire freedom or not.

Once a declaration to free India from bondage, not in stages but at once, is made, an interim solution will be found to be easy. Protection of rights of minorities will then become simple. The game of seesaw will cease. The minorities are entitled to protection, not in stages but to the fullest extent and in one single step. No charter of freedom will be worth looking at which does not ensure the same measure of freedom for the minorities as for the majority. The minorities will be full fledged partners in the framing of the

[1] This appeared under the title "End the Game of Seesaw". The Statement was also published in *The Hindu*, 9-11-1939.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Viceroy's Broadcast Declaration", 5-11-1939.

[3] *Vide* Appendix "Viceroy's Prefatory Remarks on Correspondence with Leaders", 5-11-1939.

constitution. How that can be attained will depend upon the wisdom of the representatives charged with the sacred duty of preparing the constitution. Britain has hitherto held power—this is inevitable in any system of imperialism—by playing the minorities against the so-called majority and has thus made an agreed solution among the component parts well-nigh impossible. The burden of finding a formula for the protection of minorities should be thrown on the parties themselves. So long as Britain considers it her mission to bear this burden, so long will she continue to feel the necessity of holding India as a dependency. And patriots impatient for deliverance will fight, non-violently if I can guide them and violently if I fail and perish in the attempt. God's curse of war, I had hoped and still hope, would be turned into a blessing by Britain realizing that the one thing needful for her to justify and hasten the end of this war was to free a great and ancient country like India from her yoke.

Believing as I do in the Viceroy's sincerity, I would urge fellow-workers not to lose patience. There can be no civil resistance so long as, first, the Viceroy is exploring the possibilities of a settlement, secondly, the Muslim League blocks the way, and thirdly, there is indiscipline and disunity in Congress ranks.

The second condition should not offend Muslim friends. So long as there is no workable arrangement with the Muslim League, civil resistance must involve resistance against the League. No Congressman can be party to it. I observe that my note[1] in *Harijan* has shocked Jinnah Saheb. I am sorry for it. But at this sgage I would not defend myself. I do not want to mar in any way the negotiations between him and Pandit Nehru which I hope will be resumed soon and pray will lead to communal peace.

Since making the above statement I have read the report of the further statement[2] of the Secretary of State in the House of Lords yesterday. It leaves the main position unchanged.

Harijain, 11-11-1939

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 30-10-1939.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Lord Zetland's Statement", 7-11-1939.

104. CABLE TO J. C. SMUTS [1]

November 8, 1939

PRIME MINISTER

PRETORIA

YOUR KIND CABLE. GREATLY RELIEVED.

GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. Courtesy: E. S. Reddy. Also *South Africa's Freedom Struggle*, p. 311

105. TELEGRAM TO S. SATYAMURTI

[On or before *November 9, 1939*][2]

MY BLESSINGS YOU HAVE ON YOUR ELECTION[3].

The Hindu, 9-11-1939

106. TELEGRAM TO PADMAJA NAIDU

WARDHAGANJ,
November 11, 1939

PADMAJA NAIDU

RED HILLS

HYDERABAD, DECCAN

LIVE LONG. LIVE TRUE. LOVE.

PLAYMATE

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Mussum and Library

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's wire which read: "No justification for alarm. Dr. Dadoo evidently misinformed and is being granted interview by Minister of Interior."

[2] The telegram was reported under the date-line "Madras, November 9".

[3] As Mayor of Madras

107. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your wire is disturbing. May God keep you. I hope you will not have to go through a strenuous programme. I shall expect a wire tomorrow though it is Sunday.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3940. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7249

108. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA
November 11, 1939

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. I have no intention of courting imprisonment. Nor have you. The future lies with God. Jayaprakash wishes that you should stay with me so that the household expenses may be saved and your studies may continue. This can be arranged in Segaon or Wardha. I would be generally staying in Segaon. Occasionally when I go out for three or four days, I will not take you with me. Your study must remain uninterrupted. I, therefore, feel that you are needlessly wasting your time there. Ba asks: "What! Prabha will not come to stay with me or will she never come for my sake? What difference would it make whether or not you are here? Write to her, 'Ba wants you here'." This is her message. She often inquires, "When is Prabha coming?" I have to reach Allahabad[1] on the 19th instant. Come there if you can, and accompany me from there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3536

[1] To attend the Congress Working Committee meeting

109. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

SEGAON,
November 11, 1939

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Let Natwarlal come.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Vijaya's letter is enclosed. Tear it up.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10797

110. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA
November 12, 1939

MY DEAR AMRIT,

You have been true to your word. Though your telegrams have made bad reading they have consoled me, being so full and accurate. I hope that in spite of all the trouble, you will come well out of your illness and reach Simla in a fairly fit condition. I must have wires while you are ailing.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3941. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7250

111. LETTER TO ISWAR SARAN

SEGAON, WARDHA
November 12, 1939

DEAR MUNSHIJI,

I should like to see your creation. But I fear there will be no time left. I should be reserved for such special work which my health still permits me to do.

Yours si ncerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MUNSHI ISWAR SARAN
6 EDMONSTON ROAD
ALLAHABAD

From the origininal: C. W. 10204. Courtesy: Municipal Museum, Allahabad

112. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 12, 1939

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Those who are on committees do not have to come out for the present. The addressee had asked whether in pursuance of the Congress resolution of October 22, 1939, Congressmen who were members of Municipalities ought to resign. I see no harm if Government officials are heading them. We shall have an opportunity of testing them. We can even quarrel with them if it becomes necessary. Maybe the committees will be superseded.

Let the Municipality maintain all connections. Non-co-operation this time is not like it was in 1920. These are my personal views. You can decide the matter in consultation with Sardar.

Harijans should certainly have a right to use the cremation ground which is under municipal control. The Municipality should requisition houses in some areas. These houses can be rented out to everyone, but Harijans should have the first preference.

Are you looking after your health?

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

113. IS CONGRESS A HINDU ORGANIZATION?[1]

Evidently we have not heard the last of Lord Zetland's charge that the National Congress is an organization representing Hindus and therefore national only in name but in reality communal. There cannot be a grosser libel on the Congress than this. From its inception it has been national. Its originator was an Englishman. The late A. O. Hume was long its Secretary. It has always had one or two Muslim Secretaries. It has had Muslim, English, Christian and Parsi Presidents. Dadabhai was, till he became invalid, the soul of the Congress. His was the guiding hand and the directing brain in everything. Sir Pherozeshah Mehta was the uncrowned king of the Bombay Presidency. He was the maker of Presidents both of the Congress and

[1] *Vide* also "Interview to *The Manchester Guardian'*, 4-11-1939.

of the Bombay Corporation. Badruddin Tyabji was for years a decisive factor in the deliberations of the Congress. Who does not know that whilst Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan was alive nothing could be done by the Congress if it had not his *imprimatur?* Dr. Ansari was for years Joint General Secretary. The readers know the influence that the Ali Brothers exercised over the Congress during the Khilafat days. Today the Working Committee does not move without Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's co-operation and wise guidance. His is the decisive voice on Hindu-Muslim questions. Through its whole history now running into the second half of a century the Congress has ever striven to represent the whole of India in a manner no other organization has done. Every victory scored by the Congress has benefited all communities.

"If such is really the case, why has the Congress usurped the function that belongs to the All-India Hindu Mahasabha?" ask some angry correspondents. *The Tribune* has also pointed out what has appeared to the Editor the illogicality of the Congress. The illogicality has to be admitted. But neither life nor institutions are governed by logic. Obviously, the Congress felt the necessity of a communal adjustment for the political advancement of the country, and the Congress-League Pact of 1916 was born. Ever since that time the Congress has made communal unity a plank in the Congress programme. Though the function should logically belong to communal organizations, a mass organization like the Congress cannot look on if communities quarrel and when in the national interest a solution becomes necessary. Thus the Congress could not shirk what came to it as a clear call to duty. The Congress is and should be the organization to take a purely nationalistic and impartial view on communal questions. Whatever may be said to the contrary, I maintain that the Congress embodies the hope and aspirations of India. It can conclude no pact with any person if it does not represent the whole of India in so far as her political aspirations are concerned. Its traditions unfit it to represent Hindus as against Muslims or *vice versa.* It is fit to represent the common interest of all sons of Hindustan. I can see nothing wrong in the Congress trying to arrange pacts with men or their organizations for the furtherance of common interest. Needless to say they must be all mutually helpful, never contradictory. It is a difficult task no doubt. But if people and organizations extend their goodwill to the Congress, the task is not beyond its scope or capacity. It does not inspire that all-round trust

today. It may therefore have to wait for that day. If some other organization does it, Congressmen will welcome it.

SEGAON, November 13, 1939

Harijan, 18-11-1939

114. UNNECESSARY ALARM

Writing on my statement[1] on the Viceregal preface[2] to the correspondence between the Viceroy and Shri Rajendra Prasad and Jinnah Saheb, an esteemed co-worker says :

> I have read with some surprise and distress your statement in today's papers which makes any further action by us dependent on a settlement with the Muslim league and on the Viceroy continuing his efforts at parleying. I should imagine that this attitude makes any settlement either with the British Government or the Muslim League most difficult.

This sentiment is probably shared by many Congressmen. I must therefore try to dispel the fear. In my opinion suspension of civil disobedience is inherent in both the cases. We may not precipitate civil disobedience whilst the Viceroy is making an effort to placate parties. The suspension cannot be indefinite or even prolonged. We may not put ourselves in the wrong. Suspension for the sake of the Viceroy is an aid to settlement.

As to the Muslim League, it seems to me to be self-evident that, whilst we are quarrelling among ourselves, we cannot resort to civil disobedience on any large scale. This is obvious. Moreover we cannot come to a true settlement by hiding the truth from ourselves or others. I refuse to believe that Muslims can possibly hold up for any length of time the progress of the country which is as much theirs as others'. I see no harm in making the admission that, if the crores of Muslims do not desire freedom, they can at least for a time prevent it for the others, unless the latter are prepared to fight the former. I have eliminated that possibility so far as the Congress is concerned. The admission of the obvious is a gesture of goodwill towards the Muslim League. It throws also the onus on the League of blocking the country's progress. The admission should improve the prospect of a

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 8-11-1939.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Viceroy's Prefatory Remarks on Correspondence with Leaders", 5-11-1939.

settlement.

It is worthwhile noticing the use of the word 'action' in the remarks quoted by me. What I have contemplated is merely suspension of civil disobedience in the event of the two contingencies mentioned by me, not of every variety of action. The Congress is not a static organization. It is ever moving. Whilst I cannot anticipate events, I have no doubt that the Congress will find means other than civil disobedience, within its self-imposed limits, of dealing with the crisis. I must repeat that we shall harm the cause by being impatient. I daily receive letters from men and women telling me that they are ready for the word and they will give a good account of themselves, and that I need have no fear of an outbreak of violence. To all these I would say that, if they are sincere in their professions, patient waiting will add to their strength and ensure success.

SEGAON, November 13, 1939

Harijan, 18-11-1939

115. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHAGANJ,
November 13, 1939

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
2 METCALFE HOUSE ROAD, DELHI

HOPE TROUBLE SUBSIDING. KEEP WELL. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3942. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7251

116. POLITICS v. *MORALS*

In response to my suggestion in my article[1] on the Congressman, Shri M. N. Roy has sent a long letter not to Dr. Rajendra Prasad but to me. He asks for a public discussion of the points raised by him. Omitting the prefatory paragraphs which have no interest for the reader, the letter is reproduced elsewhere.

To take the ministerial resignations[2] first, I feel sure that they

[1] *Vide* "The Congressman", 31-10-1939.

[2] In his letter, M. N. Roy said that "It was not necessary to have the Congress Ministers resign at this stage."

have added to the prestige of the Congress. The Working Committee would no doubt have done better to have accepted my proposal, only if it could have assimilated non-violence with all the implications suggested by me. But the members of the Working Committee were too conscious of their duty to accept my proposal mechanically and without heart belief. The Working Committee's resolution was, therefore, the only true course for the Working Committee to adopt. Having done so, resignations were the logical result.

It would have been unbecoming to have retained office for the doubtful advantage of guarding civil liberty. If they were ministers of autonomous States they could never have been ignored as they were about the war. Having been ignored, they would have been given satisfaction, when the attention of the British Government was drawn by the Working Committee to the grievous omission and when they were told how they could repair the mischief and retain India's co-operation in the prosecution of the war. The least that the Ministers could do, therefore, was to resign if only to show the hollowness of autonomy. To remain in office after the discovery of their impotence would have been to court ignominy. To retain office for the protection of civil liberty would have been to mistake the wood for the tree. And Shri Roy may feel quite sure that the weakened Ministers would have been poor guardians of civil liberty. The Governors would have set aside their decisions and caught hold of those whom they would have chosen to imprison. The Ministers had taken office principally to advance independence. When they failed, they were bound to forgo every other advantage however great in itself. And they can never go back to their offices so long as the demand of the Congress remains unsatisfied.

Civil disobedience is by no means the next inevitable forward step. It depends upon a variety of circumstances some of which I have already mentioned. Inaction is often the most effective action in the strategy of war—more so when the war is non-violent.

Now for the crucial point.[1] Non-violence is the central fact of the civil disobedience technique. It was in 1920 that the Congress hooked its politics deliberately to fundamental morals and vital social reform. It came to the conclusion that swaraj could not be won without non-violence and certain definite social reform, viz,.

[1] M. N. Roy criticized the doctrine of non-violence as "having no bearing upon the political programme of the Congress".

prohibition and removal of untouchability. It also put the charkha at the centre of its economic programme. Indeed it eschewed the then known political programme, i.e., the parliamentary. Hence the introduction of morals into Congress politics was not and is not irrelevent to the Congress fight for freedom. It is its core. There were a few grumblers then. But the vast majority welcomed the programme as the Congress had never done in the whole of its brilliant history. That programme justified itself by giving rise to a mass awakening on a phenomenal scale. By it the Congress gained an importance it had never before enjoyed. Shri Roy would not expect me at this stage to repeat here the argument that led to the enthusiastic acceptance of the programme. He should turn to the pages of *Young India* if he would know the pros and cons of the subject. The Congress became a mass democratic organization from the time of acceptance of the programme, and it framed a democratic Constitution[1] which stands to this day without much material and fundamental alteration.

The Congress has a double function. It is a democratic organization in peace time. It becomes a non-violent army in war time. In its second capacity it has no voting power. Its will is expressed by its general whoever he may be. Every unit has to tender him willing obedience in thought, word and deed. Yes, even in thought, since the fight is non-violent.

Shri Roy and other Congressmen do not need to be told that I am not in the habit of losing co-workers[2]. I go a long way with them in winning their affection and retaining it. But there does come a limit beyond which my compromise does not and cannot and should not go. No compromise is worth the name which endangers chances of success.

SEGAON, November 14, 1939

Harijan, 18-11-1939

[1] *Vide* "Congress Constitution Adopted at Nagpur Session", December 1920, and "Constitution of the Indian National Congress", 28-10-1934.

[2] M. N. Roy concluded his letter with a note that he and his group should not be "driven out of the Congress . . . for no other fault than the courage of our conviction and our devotion to the cause of Indian freedom"

117. NOTES

AWARD OR DECISION?

Protests against an innocent sentence in my article 'Good and Bad'[1] (*Harijan*, 4 -11-1939) are being showered upon me from all sides. The writers pay me unintended compliment for accuracy when they detect and severely criticize a hasty inaccuracy in my writings. I admit that what I have described as an award was after all not an award but a decision of the British Government. And if it was an award, there could be no question of my being party to it. But apart from that my "being party" requires an explanation. I was signatory to no application to the late Mr. Ramsay MacDonald. But having refused to sign the reference that was placed before me, I wrote[2] to the deceased Prime Minister to the effect that whatever all parties agreed to in the matter of communal adjustment would be accepted by the Congress. That project, however, fell through and there was no award but a decision given by the British Government in the absence of an agreed reference. A lapse of memory on my part cannot alter facts. But I am sorry for the trouble so many correspondents have been put to owing to my inaccuracy. Beyond however expressing my sorrow, I am afraid I shall not be able to mend my ways. Working under double pressure the slip like the one that has angered so many correspondents is likely to recur. But would-be correspondents will find me always ready to correct inaccuracies whenever they occur. And let my critics remember that of the neutral formula[3] of the Congress too, for which they have suddenly developed a liking, I was the author. They may also feel assured that if the time came during my lifetime for an agreed revision of the decision, which has many glaring defects, they will find me among the workers helping to evolve an equitable adjustment. What I will not do is to make an appeal to the British Government to revise it over the heads of the parties affected. It stands till the parties agree to purge it of its absurdities.

SEGAON, November 14, 1939

Harijan, 18-11-1939

[1] *Vide*"Good and Bad", 30-10-1939; also "Notes", 27-11-1939, sub-title, "Communal Decision Again".

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Prime Minister", 14-11-1931.

[3] *Vide* "Proposed Communal Solution", 16-7-1931.

118. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA

November 14, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Your letters have been coming in regularly. I have seen yours to Rajen Babu. Before I saw it I had written a note[1] on it for *Harijan*, I must try to send you an advance copy.

If you need me longer in Allahabad, you will keep me.[2]

The interested editings in London of our statements here do not worry me. If I find time I shall write out a brief message[3] for *The News Chronicle*. I have prepaid authority from that paper.

More when we meet.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev just reminds me that you complete half a century today. I hope you will complete the other half retaining the same vigour, frankness and robust honesty.

B.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, p. 396

119. CABLE TO "THE NEWS CHRONICLE"[4]

November 14, 1939

I OBSERVE THAT THE MAIN ISSUE BETWEEN BRITAIN ANDINDIA IS BEING CONFUSED IN THE BRITISH PRESS. DOES BRITAIN INTEND TO RECOGNIZE INDIA AS AN INDEPENDENT NATION OR MUST INDIA REMAIN BRITAIN'S DEPENDENCY?

[1] The reference is, presumably, to the preceding item.

[2] The addressee, in his letter dated November 8 to Gandhiji, said: "All the members of the U.P.P.C.C. were desirous of having an opportunity of meeting you, if this was possible during your stay in Allahabad. . . . The Working Committee is likely to last up to the 21st or possibly the 22nd. May I suggest the 23rd for an informal meeting between you and some of our prominent workers in the U.P., say, about 30 or so ?"

[3] *Vide* the following item.

[4] This appeared under the title "The Main Issue".

THIS QUESTION HAS NOT BEEN RAISED BY THE CONGRESS TO GAIN AN ADVANTAGE OVER BRITAIN, BUT TO ENABLE THE PEOPLE OF INDIA TO DECIDE HOW THEY SHOULD BEHAVE DURING THE WORLD CRISIS. THE ISSUE THUS BECOMES PURELY MORAL FOR, OWING TO HER MATERIAL AND MILITARY CONTROL OF INDIA, BRITAIN IS ABLE TO REGULATE THE INDIAN AND BRITISH GARRISON AND DRAIN INDIA'S WEALTH AT HER WILL. EIGHT PROVINCES OUT OF ELEVEN HAVE SAID IN EMPHATIC LANGUAGE THAT THEY CANNOT PARTICIPATE IN THE WAR, IF IT DOES NOT MEAN, AMONG OTHER THINGS, INDIA'S COMPLETE FREEDOM. ALL OTHER ISSUES ARE SUBORDINATE. THE QUESTION OF MINORITIES IS PURELY A DOMESTIC ONE FOR THE MAJORITY AND THE MINORITIES TO SETTLE THEMSELVES. THE PROPOSED CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY IS THE ONLY BODY THAT CAN EVOLVE A PROPER AND LASTING SOLUTION. ANY OTHER CAN ONLY BE A MAKE-SHIFTCARRYING NO POPULAR SANCTION. TO FLING THE MINORITIES QUESTION IN INDIA'S FACE IS TO CONFUSE ISSUES. TO RAISE THE QUESTION OF THE PRINCES IS STILL MORE UNTENABLE. THEY ARE PART OF THE PARAMOUNT POWER. IT IS PAINFUL TO THINK THAT BRITISH STATESMEN DO NOT SO MUCH AS MENTION THE MILLIONS OF PEOPLE OF THE STATES. HAVE THEY NO VOICE IN THEIR OWN GOVERNMENT? ARE THEY TO REMAIN SERFS, WHICH THEY ARE, THOUGH THEY ARE DRAGGED INTO THE WAR? NOWONDER HERR HITLER HAS CHALLENGED THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO PROVE HER SINCERITY BY RECOGNIZING INDIA AS A FREE NATION. WHATEVER MAY BE HIS INTENTION IN ISSUINGTHE CHALLENGE, IT CANNOT BE DENIED THAT IT IS PERTINENT. ANYWAY, LET THE BRITISH PUBLIC KNOW THAT THE CONGRESSDEMAND IS UNEQUIVOCAL AND CAPABLE OF BEING SATISFIED IF THERE IS THE WILL TO SHED IMPERIALISM. THE WORKING COMMITTEE MEETS ON THE 19TH INSTANT AT ALLAHABAD TO CONSIDER THE NEXT STEP. THERE SHOULD BE NO MISUNDER-STANDING, THEREFORE, ABOUT THE ISSUE. IF THERE IS TO BE A FIGHT BETWEEN BRITAIN AND THE CONGRESS THE WORLD SHOULD KNOW CLEARLY WHAT IT IS TO BE FOR.

Harijan 25-11-1939

120. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA
November 14, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

You have been very regular in sending me wires. Yesterday I sent mine[1] before yours came into my hands. Thank God for the

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Amrit Kaur", 13-11-1939.

ending of the Dehra Dun programme. You must now have complete rest. I hope you will have no worry in Simla. I am well. The strain of work is there. B. P. 180/106 and 160/100. Radha and Lilavati went today, so did Homi.

No more tonight.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3943. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7252

121. LETTER TO G. V. GURJALE

SEGAON, WARDHA
November 15, 1939

MY DEAR NIRMALANANDA,

You must not divert your attention from the service you are performing.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1389

122. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

SEGAON, WARDHA
November 15, 1939

CHI. JANAKIBEHN,

If Dinshaw so advises, have your teeth pulled out; you ought not to be afraid of it.

It is better to get the teeth removed, when there is discharge of pus; though, if the roots are too strong, one may have to consider. Let Dinshaw follow his judgment. Write to me in detail, How is Madalasa? I got Om's letter. Thanks.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 3005

123. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
November 16, 1939

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
SIMLA W[EST]

YOUR WIRE DISTURBING. MY PRAYERS WITH YOU. YOU MUST TAKE COMPLETE. REST. GET THOROUGHLY WELL. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3945. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7254

124. TELEGRAM TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

WARDHA,
November 16, 1939

DR. COPICHAND
LAJPATBHUVAN
LAHORE

NOT GOING DELHI.[1]

BAPU

From the original: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

125. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA
November 16, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your wire from Simla has disturbed me. I have a guilty conscience. Why did I promise to send you to Doon? But there am I. It is my nature to exploit co-workers to the fullest extent possible. But I should have known your weak body. Ten thousand apologies to

[1] The addressee in his letter of November 12 had expressed his wish to meet Gandhiji in Delhi if he was going there.

Shummy[1]. None to you. For you would resent even the thought of my sparing you. But I shall have to spare you for the sake of the cause. I am sending you a wire. You must now become strong. You can be, if only you will make up your mind to be strong. You have to get rid of your moods and sensitiveness. It is no use your saying you cannot change your nature. We are on this earth to bend our natures to the Higher Will.

I hope Shummy is well. Tofa[2] must have received you boisterously. The patients are doing well. Love to you all.

TYRANT

[PS.]

I understand I had given the letter to Ghanshyamdas to have it gummed and posted.

From the original: C. W. 3946 Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7255

126. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

SEGAON,
November 16, 1939

CHI. AMRITLAL,

You did well in remaining there for the sake of Kamath. I shall discuss with Sushila about the purgative. What you have written about Ashalatabehn is correct. Hers is a difficult problem. I shall see. If grown-up persons cannot look after themselves, what can we do?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10798

127. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 16, 1939

CHI. VIJAYA,

I have your letter. I, for my part, did write to you. How is Nanabhai's health? Is your health improving? As Kakasaheb is not

[1] Shumshere Singh, the addressee's brother, a retired surgeon
[2] The addressee's pet dog

here, Amritlal sleeps here for the present. He leads the prayers. Today he is not here because Kamath is ill and laid up at his place.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am going to Prayag for some three days.

SHRI VIJAYABEHN

C/O SHRI NANABHAI

AMBLA, *via* SONEGADH

KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 4612. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

128. LETTER TO DLKHUSH B. DIWANJI

SEGAON, WARDHA,

November 16, 1939

BHAI DILKHUSH,

I have your letter. Your work is no doubt always solid. Has your problem been solved? Your weaving is done there, isn't it? Can you weave fine yarn? Try to attain perfection.

Blessings from

BAPU

DILKHUSH DIWANJI

GANDHI KUTIR

KARADI, *via* NAVSARI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 2643

129. LETTER TO KANCHANBEHN M. SHAH

SEGAON, WARDHA,

November 16, 1939

CHI. KANCHAN,

I got your two letters. They did not call for any reply. Go to Ramana Ashram only if you feel like going. Recently there has been

no news from Munnalal. But there is nothing to worry. Improve your health. I am going to Allahabad for some three days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8288. Also C. W. 7064. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

130. LETTER TO NIRMALA, KANAM, SUMITRA AND USHA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 16, 1939

CHI. NIMU,

What an idler you are! Ba is pining for a letter from you: 'No letter from Nimu even on the occasion of Diwali?' I told her you are busy with your work. Is that right?

CHI. KANAM,

The camera you wanted is getting ready. But do you remember the condition on which it is to be given to you? If Nimu sends a certificate for you, take it that the camera is ready. You will come over here to take it, won't you?

CHI. SUMI,

You must have grown into a big girl now. Does Kanam harass you?

CHI. USHA,

You never came to play with me. Would you not come now ? Ramdas is here.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Kunvarji is all right.

SHRI NIRMALABEHN RAMDAS GANDHI
DAKSHINAMURTI STHAL
BHAVNAGAR, KATHIAWAD

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

131. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
Nearing 8 p.m., November 16, 1939

MY DEAR AMRIT,

This letter[1] should have gone to you early. But want of time is the excuse, or is it want of method, or both?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3944. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7253

132. INTERVIEW TO A CO-WORKER [2]

[On or before *November 17, 1939*]

CO-WORKER: I have come to listen to you, trusting as I do in your leadership.

GANDHIJI: Mine is an insipid leadership. I have nothing but this[3] to show.

Your statement[4] about civil disobedience is perplexing. It does not speak for itself. Thus when you say we should not start civil disobedience if the Muslim League blocks the way, I feel very much intrigued. Is there fear of communal rioting? Why should there be a riot?

Why was there one the other day in Nellore?

Oh, that was over some Diwali affair, nothing to do with politics.

Everything to do with want of communal unity.

You think they will obstruct us, lest we should secure our demands?

No, they will say in fighting Government we are fighting them and obstructing them in getting what they want by co-operation. Do you want to fight the Mussalmans?

[1] The reference is to a letter dated Bombay, November 10, 1939, from Shankerlal Banker to the addressee, at the back of which Gandhiji had written this letter.

[2] The interview is extracted from Mahadev Desai's article "Puzzled and Perplexed", dated "Segaon, November 17".

[3] Mahadev Desai explains: "Gandhiji was laughing and pointing to the spinning-wheel which he was trying to put right."

[4] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 8-11-1939 and "Unnecessary Alarm", 13-11-1939.

No. In your talks[1] with Jinnah Saheb did you get any such impression from him?

He gave me no such impression. But nothing more than ordinary common sense is required to see what I have said. In fact I am surprised that you do not see what is so obvious. Others of your party are clear that there would be trouble, but they say that we should not mind it, we should be able to deal with it. I say to them it is wrong to anticipate a riot in the hope that we can deal with it. If a big minority is opposed to the launching of civil disobedience, I should say let us wait.

But you have mentioned other obstacles.

That is the main obstacle. But should I not have said, there should be discipline among us?

But there is discipline. We do not start civil disobedience when you say we should not start it. I am surprised at the response given by our own leftists. Of course one or two of us have talked extreme language, but otherwise there is discipline.[2]

You, Mahatmaji, will go on waiting and want others also to wait?

Therefore I have said, don't have two masters. Either convert me or desert me.

So you have no objection to our starting civil disobedience if we do so after leaving the Congress?

My objection will have no effect on non-Congressmen.

But we will remain non-violent. The main obstacle you have mentioned, viz., communal disunity, should be removed. I accept it, but after it is removed you won't resist us.

On the contrary, if you remain non-violent in thought, word and deed, you will make me follow you. As I have been telling Prithvi Singh, when he is completely non-violent in thought, word and deed I should follow him as he would be very much superior to me. So when you are all non-violent I should dance with joy.

You have mentioned hostile acts by Government. What have you in mind?

For example, when they make civil liberty impossible.

But it is impossible. They arrest us even if we speak. Do you think it would be a breach of our self-imposed vow if we criticize the Government?

No, if you are not violent in your speech.

[1] In Delhi, on November 1 and 2

[2] Mahadev Desai adds: "Gandhiji gave the friend examples of indiscipline."

So we can attack Lord Zetland's speech. We can call them international robbers and say, there is nothing to choose between their imperialism and fascism.

Oh, yes.

That won't get us into trouble?

Not certainly with me.

Then I come to the next point. Now that there is an irresponsible executive why should we pay taxes? Some of our Kisan Sabha friends find the position anomalous. Can't we refuse to pay taxes?

That would be civil disobedience. How can you start non-payment of taxes on mass scale?

No, I do not mean on a mass scale.

Then it will not be non-payment of taxes. It has no meaning except on a mass scale.

Why not one or two men in a single village refuse to pay taxes as a kind of protest? It will be a test case.

You may try it, but it will be sheer madness, I tell you. And you may be sure no one will listen to you. No, you must not run away with your feelings. I assure you, I am capable of saying to the people: 'Those who are prepared to suffer to the uttermost may refuse to pay.' But that will not be today. The time may come some day—let us hope in my lifetime.

But is there any harm in doing what the Congress does not ban?

Everything is banned that the Congress does not advise to be done.

But if a man feels so strongly about it and wants an escape, how is he to find it?

By leaving the Congress—which is the only right thing.

You have asked us to rest content with the constructive programme. Now there are full-blooded people amongst us. They want to do something—something which may not be civil disobedience, but which may lead irresistibly towards it.

That surely is constructive programme. It is surely for the general to decide what that is to be. 'Every man shall walk five miles a day,' says he, or 'Everyone shall go and help in emptying a tank, and then march.' If you believe in observing discipline, don't you think everyone should do this?

But we do not know what exactly is to come ultimately.

You may therefore say that my language is not precise. You

would have me say, 'Ply the charkha for so many hours, and, if so many people do it for so many hours, we will have civil disobedience? I am quite prepared to say so.

We do not say that the negotiations should not continue and the peace efforts should be relaxed, but we should keep ourselves ready.

I am also ready to issue instructions to say that these are my minimum requirements, and that only those can join the non-violent army who satisfy them.

I am glad you will do it. When you declared that the Working Committee had left the whole thing in your hands, at any rate as regards civil disobedience, we were all very happy; you put heart into us, and we gained a feeling of self-confidence. If now you think there is no harm, why should not the Working Committee organize a sort of preparation committee or give all power to you to prepare for all eventualities?

I will see what happens in Allahabad.

Lastly, let me ask you one thing. If there is such need for unity, why should there be such persecution of the leftists?

Persecution is a wrong word. There is none, and the ban[1] can be removed provided there is the assurance of heart obedience being yielded.

Why don't you assume it?

We cannot, as there are apostates in the ranks. And the worst that can happen is that we go on expelling people until, say, I am left alone. Then I should resign and declare that I am defeated. But joking apart, don't you think whoever wants the ban to be removed should say, provided he means it, 'I must not keep away, I will tender my apology?' And he will be immediately taken.

It took their breath away when saw that you also approved of the action of the Working committee. They have a deep regard for you—not based on reason but personal affection. And for you they will do anything. If you can get the ban removed, they will be all very happy.

Then what I suggest is that you should write a letter to Rajendra Babu explaining everything and making the suggestion.

I will see what can be done. All I would appeal to you to realize is that there

[1] The reference is to the ban imposed on Subhas Chandra Bose by the Congress Working Committee; *vide* "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 11-8-1939.

should be no question of prestige with the Working Committee.

There is no question of prestige, it is a question of discipline.

The Congress, I think, has been given greater discipline than any army in the world. Against how few people have you had to take action ?

But, I wish I could take the same view as you. I have brought into being so many organizations here and in South Africa, and I am not able to say that the Congress compares favourably with them. Wherever the organizations have done well, it was because the members have yielded willing obedience. Whereas here we have had violent disobedience.[1]

Well, take away one thought with you and say how many Congressmen have carried out the khadi clause.[2]

The proof of the pudding is in the eating. There is a tremendous surplus of khadi everywhere. Why should your province not finish all the stocks lying unsold?

Harijan, 25-11-1939

133. A LETTER

November 17, 1939

"Be careful for nothing."[3] This is the same as *anasakti* of the *Gita.* The book has to be studied with this central theme in view.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

134. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 17, 1939

CHI. MANUDI,

I am not able to write to you as often as I wish to. Now your confinement should be very near. Hope you are keeping up your courage. Surendra should send a wire. One can say that you passed these last months without any trouble. Krishnadas is progressing and

[1] Here Mahadev Desai says: "The friend did not agree and was inclined for further argument. But the time was running against him."

[2] Mahadev Desai adds: "Nothing daunted, the friend tried to make out that in his province at any rate there were few culprits among Congressmen."

[3] *Philippians*, IV. 6

so is Kunvarji. They are improving faster than expected. Rami is fine. What a long name[1] you have given to her daughter? Who suggested that name to you? Or did you take revenge for your having been given a simple name?

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

SHRI MANUBEHN MASHRUWALA
BALKIRAN
SANTA CRUZ

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 2673. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

135. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 17, 1939

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I am leaving for Prayag tomorrow. Most probably I will return before the 25th. Find out from a newspaper before coming.

I am not writing separately to Maneklal[2] or the girls.

Blessings to all from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

136. LETTER TO MANEKLAL AND RADHA KOTHARI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 17, 1939

CHIL. MANEKLAL[3] AND CHI. RADHA[4],

I got the letters of you both. May you prosper during the New Year[5].

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIII

[1] Navamalika
[2] Addressee's brother
[3] Maneklal Kothari, son-in-law of Gandhiji's eldest brother, Lakshmidas Gandhi
[4] Wife of Maneklal Kothari
[5] According to the Vikram calendar the day following Diwali is observed as the new-year's day *(Kartik Sud* 1). In 1939, it was on November 12.

137. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 17, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

What a letter from you! Why do you seem to be getting away from me? Write to me in detail. You cause me worry. I have built high hopes on you. Do not disappoint me. We are going to Prayag tomorrow. I am keeping Pyarelal here. I have kept a leprosy patient, Parachure Shastri[1], in the Ashram. We hope to return on the 23rd. Hope you are getting on well. Reply to me immediately.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10018. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

138. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 17, 1939

CHI. SUMANGAL,

I have your letter. I am glad your marriage has been according to your wishes. May you both be happy and serve the country.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SUMANGAL PRAKASH
NAVASHAKTI KARYALAYA
PATNA

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] In his book, *Under the Shelter of Bapu* (pp. 110-1), Balvantsinha explains: "Parachure Shastri went to Bapuji and said that he would like to stay with him till he died. . . Bapuji looked thoughtful. . . ultimately decided to keep him. . . . When the disease took a serious turn, Bapuji began to massage him with his own hands." Parachure Shastri died on September 5, 1945.

139. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MAHOMED YUNUS

November 18, 1939

How can I convince you if you cannot accept my word that my attention is continually devoted to the question of questions? But man can only propose, God alone disposes. Whom He has joined none can keep permanently apart.[1]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

140. LETTER TO P. KODANDA RAO

ON THE TRAIN,
November [*18*][2]*, 1939*

MY DEAR KODANDA RAO,

Your argument is quite good. But tell me who is today the League of Nations[3]? The situation is baffling but deeply interesting. I am hoping that our country will play an important part in this moving drama.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 6283

141. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ITARSI,
November 18, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Here we are for five hours waiting for the train. Rajaji and Jairamdas are with us. I had your wire from Simla. You have been extraordinarily good. I hope the progress will be steady. You must not worry about anything and concentrate on getting quite well and

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Mahomed Yunus", 14-10-1939.
[2] The source, however, has "10". Gandhiji was going to Allahabad.
[3] With the outbreak of the war in September 1939, all activity of the League of Nations had ceased although it continued to exist till April 1946.

strong.

I expect to leave Allahabad for Segaon on Tuesday but it may not be possible to do so. In that case I leave on Wednesday. My mind is in Segaon especially since the coming of Parachure Shastri. He is God's gift. But it is also a medium of my examination.[1]

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3947. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7256

142. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

ITARSI,
November 18, 1939

CHI. BHANSALI,

Nayan is pining for a letter from you. It is your duty, since it is ahimsa, to satisfy her. We may not keep up personal relations with our relatives but we should not hurt them either. As the circle of our kith and kin widens, we must not get involved and maintain relations with them only for the sake of service. Take care of your health in your present exertions.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 433

143. LETTER TO PYARELAL

November 18, 1939

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have your chit. I have not understood it well. My demand is quite simple. If you can accept it, I may or may not get any work out of you. If you can act in good faith, nothing is spoilt. I have not received many letters of the type you imagine. But if somebody writes something, should I divulge it even if it is irrelevant? Is it possible? Explain it to me. But one thing I have already made clear: that is that when I cannot tell something to someone, no one should say anything about it to me.

[1] *Vide* 1st footnote of "Letter to Shardabehn G. Chokhawala", 17-11-1939

Meet Parachure Shastri and find out everything from him. He is constantly in my mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

144. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

ITARSI,
November 18, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I am pleased with your progress. Go ahead.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of Hindi: G. N. 4331

145. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

ON THE MOVING TRAIN,
November 18, 1939

BHAI DAHYABHAI,

I did get your letter. I hope you are getting along well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI DAHYABHAI MANORDAS PATEL
DHOLKA

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 2711. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

146. THE ONLY WAY

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has compelled me to study, among other things, the implications of a Constituent Assembly. When he first introduced it[1] in the Congress resolutions, I reconciled myself to it

[1] At the Congress Working Committee meeting on September 14, 1939; *vide* Appendix "Working Committee's Manifesto", 14-9-1939.

because of my belief in his superior knowledge of the technicalities of democracy. But I was not free from scepticism. Hard facts have, however, made me a convert and, for that reason perhaps, more enthusiastic than Jawaharlal himself. For I seem to see in it a remedy, which Jawaharlal may not, for our communal and other distempers, besides being a vehicle for mass political and other education.

The more criticism I see of the scheme, the more enamoured I become of it. It will be the surest index to the popular feeling. It will bring out the best and the worst in us. Illiteracy does not worry me. I would plump for unadulterated adult franchise for both men and women, i. e., I would put them all on the register of voters. It is open to them not to exercise it if they do not wish to. I would give separate vote to the Muslims; but, without giving separate vote, I would, though reluctantly, give reservation, if required, to every real minority according to its numerical strength.

Thus the Constituent Assembly provides the easiest method of arriving at a just solution of the communal problem. Today we are unable to say with mathematical precision who represents whom. Though the Congress is admittedly the oldest representative organization on the widest scale, it is open to political and semi-political organizations to question, as they do question, its overwhelmingly representative character. The Muslim League is undoubtedly the largest organization representing Muslims, but several Muslim bodies—by no means all insignificant—deny its claim to represent them. But the Constituent Assembly will represent all communities in their exact proportion. Except it there is no other way of doing full justice to rival claims. Without it there can be no finality to communal and other claims.

Again, the Constituent Assembly alone can produce a constitution indigenous to the country and truly and fully representing the will of the people. Undoubtedly such a constitution will not be ideal, but it will be real, however imperfect it may be in the estimation of the theorists or legal luminaries. Self-government to be self-government has merely to reflect the will of the people who are to govern themselves. If they are not prepared for it, they will make a hash of it. I can conceive the possibility of a people fitting themselves for right government through a series of wrong experiments, but I cannot conceive a people governing themselves rightly through a government imposed from without, even as the fabled jackdaw could

not walk like a peacock with feathers borrowed from his elegant companion. A diseased person has a prospect of getting well by personal effort. He cannot borrow health from others.

The risks of the experiment are admitted. There is likely to be impersonation. Unscrupulous persons will mislead the illiterate masses into voting for wrong men and women. These risks have to be run, if we are to evolve something true and big. The Constituent Assembly, if it comes into being—as I hope it will—as a result of an honourable settlement between us and the British people, the combined wit of the best men of the two nations will produce an Assembly that will reflect fairly truly the best mind of India. Therefore the success of the experiment at the present stage of India's history depends upon the intention of the British statesmen to part with power without engaging India in a deadly unorganized rebellion. For I know that India has become impatient. I am painfully conscious of the fact that India is not yet ready for non-violent civil disobedience on a mass scale. If, therefore, I cannot persuade the Congress to await the time when non-violent action is possible, I have no desire to live to see a dog-fight between the two communities. I know for certain that if I cannot discover a method of non-violent action or inaction to the satisfaction of the Congress and there is no communal adjustment, nothing on earth can prevent an outbreak of violence resulting for the time being in anarchy and red ruin. I hold that it is the duty of all communities and Englishmen to prevent such a catastrophe.

The only way out is a Constituent Assembly. I have given my own opinion on it, but I am not tied down to the details. When I was nearly through with this article, I got the following wire from Syed Abdulla Brelvi[1];

> Considerable misapprehensions among minorities (about) Constituent Assembly. Strongly urge clarification details, franchise, composition, methods arriving decision.

I think I have said sufficient in the foregoing to answer Syed Saheb's question. By minorities he has Muslims principally in mind as represented by the Muslim League. If once the proposition that all communities desire a charter of independence framed by a Constituent Assembly and that they will not be satisfied with anything else is accepted, the settling of details surely becomes easy. Any other

[1] Editor, *The Bombay Chronicle*

method must lead to an imposed constitution mostly undemocratic. It would mean an indefinite prolongation of imperialistic rule sustained by the help of those who will not accept the fully democratic method of a Constituent Assembly.

The principal hindrance is undoubtedly the British Government. If they can summon a Round Table Conference as they propose to do after the war, they can surely summon a Constituent Assembly subject to safeguards to the satisfaction of minorities. The expression 'satisfactionof minorities' may be regarded as vague. It can be defined beforehand by agreement. The question thus resolves itself into whether the British Government desire to part with power and open a new chapter in their own history. I have already shown[1] that the question of the Princes is a red herring across the path. European interests are absolutely safe so long as they are not in conflict with 'the interests of India'. I think this expression finds place in the Irwin-Gandhi Pact[2].

Look at the question from any standpoint you like, it will be found that the way to democratic swaraj lies only through a properly constituted Assembly, call it by whatever name you like. All resources must, therefore, be exhausted to reach the Constituent Assembly before direct action is thought of. A stage may be reached when direct action may become the necessary prelude to the Constituent Assembly. That stage is not yet.

ALLAHABAD, November 19, 1939

Harijan, 25-11-1939

147. SPEECH AT KAMALA NEHRU MEMORIAL HOSPITAL, ALLAHABAD[3]

November 19, 1939

After my coming from Africa, I came into contact with Kamala Nehru also. She was a remarkable person. Besides being devoted to her husband as most Indian women are, she loved her country much and this love was great. She was a high-principled lady and candid enough to express her opinion if she differed on principles. She had a

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 6-11-1939.

[2] Of March 5, 1931; *vide* Appendix "Provisional Settlement", 12-3-1931.

[3] After laying the corner-stone, Gandhiji spoke in Hindi. He read out a message from Madan Mohan Malaviya, one of the trustees of the hospital.

noble soul and whatever she did was not for show or gain or favour.

Congressmen have gained the reputation of being agitators only and not being capable of constructive work, but such critics are now inclined to change their opinion. During the Civil Disobedience movement Kamala's heart went out to the sufferers. It was then that she took active interest in the Congress Hospital which had then been started. During my last meeting[1] with Kamala in Bombay while she was leaving for Europe for treatment, she told me that she might not come back and that I should see that the work of the hospital went on. I gave her my word then. This work is my sacred duty and I come to Allahabad specially for it. I would have gone back tomorrow after this work here, but Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru insisted upon my staying here longer.

I gave my signature to the appeal for funds for this hospital, which is for five lakhs. Only half the amount has been collected. I hope you will all contribute to the fund. This hospital is not only for the United Provinces, but for all India. We should now think in terms of the whole of India. There are so many universities in the U. P., and so many students. I hope they will all help to collect funds. Then there are so many industrial magnates in Kanpur. It should not be difficult for you to raise the money. Finally, I wish God that He may give peace and rest to Kamala's soul.[2]

The Hindustan Times, 20-11-1939

148. RAJKOT REFORMS

Having once offended, however unwittingly, against the Thakore Saheb of Rajkot and Durbar Shri Virawala, I have restrained myself against saying anything by way of criticism of the Durbar's doings in that State.[3] But duty to the people of Rajkot who have shown exemplary discipline demands a word from me on the reforms just announced. They expect me to give my opinion on them. It pains me to have to say that they have undone what the late Thakore Saheb had done. The adult franchise which it was the late Thakore Saheb's boon lasting 15 years has been revoked, and it has been reduced to the

[1] On May 22, 1935. Kamala Nehru died in Geneva on February 28, 1936.

[2] *Vide* also "Notes", 20-11-1939.

[3] The reference is to Gandhiji's four days' fast from May 3, which was given up after the Viceroy's assurance.

possession of property qualifications and a stiff residential test. The elected President gives place to the Dewan as permanent President. The original Sabha which was wholly composed of elected representatives is to contain 40 elected members against 20 nominated. The elected members will be sub-divided into minorities. The so-called majority will thus become really a minority. The natural course of reforms is progressive increase of popular control. Here without the slightest justification popular control has been materially reduced. The original Sabha had wide powers of legislation. These have been curtailed.

There was a definite announcement that the privy purse was to be fixed. The reforms ignore the announcement. The Notification of December 26th last was to transfer to the people 'the widest powers possible'. My reading of them leads me to the conclusion that not only have the powers already possessed by the people been taken away but they have been limited as much as possible. In one word, the Thakore Saheb's, i. e., the Dewan's, will is to by the Supreme Law in Rajkot.

I am sorry to have to write these lines. I do not know whether these reforms are the last act of the tragedy for which my violence is responsible. A fast is a remedy to be applied only by an expert. It interrupts the even course of a movement for better. The slightest touch of violence damages it. I have admitted that my appeal to the Viceroy against the acts of the Thakore Saheb whilst the fast was pending was violence and vitiated the fast. I had thought that I had paid the penalty by repentance, and that the happy relations established between the Thakore Saheb and Durbar Shri Virawala and me would open a new and bright chapter for the people of Rajkot. The *durbar* held in my honour after my public repentance seemed to have set the seal on the good that the repentance had done. I see, I was mistaken. Men's natures are not changed in a moment. I apologize to the people of Rajkot.

But I do not repent of my repentance. I am quite sure that what was morally right was also politically right. My repentance saved the people of Rajkot from a worse fate. It averted a communal clash. I am quite sure that in the end the people of Rajkot will come to their own. Meanwhile the evil that the reforms in my opinion are, must be allowed to work itself out. Those citizens of Rajkot who have any sense of self-respect must abstain from co-operation in working them.

They will, if they take my advice, watch, wait, pray and literally spin. They will find that they will be also spinners of real liberty in Rajkot in the non-violent way which is the only true way.

ALLAHABAD, November 20, 1939

Harijan, 25-11-1939

149. NOTES

KAMALA NEHRU MEMORIAL

On the 19th instant I had the privilege of laying the foundation-stone of the Kamala Nehru Memorial Hospital in Allahabad before a large gathering.[1] This hospital will be not only a fitting remembrance of the memory of a true devotee of her country and a woman of great spiritual beauty, it will be a redemption of the promise made to her by me that I would do what lay in my power to see that the work for which she had made herself responsible was carried on even after her death. She was going to Europe in search of health. The visit proved to be a search of death. As she was going she had invited me, if I could, either to join her for a brief talk during part of her journey to Bombay or to see her in Bombay. I went to Bombay. During the time that I was able to give her she asked me, if she died in Europe, to try to see that the hospital which Jawaharlal had commenced in Swaraj Bhavan and which she had laboured to keep alive was put on a permanent footing. I told her I would do what I could. That promise was partly the foundation for the appeal, to which I had become party, for funds for the Memorial. Owing to circumstances beyond my control I was not able to take much active part in collecting the funds. The appeal was made for five lacs and only half the amount has come in. At the ceremony of foundation-laying, I made an appeal to the large audience composed of the wealthy as also the poor to share the burden of making up the deficit. By judicious organization it ought to be easy to make the collection for a cause so worthy and for a memory so sacred. Able doctors of all-India reputation like Jivraj Mehta and Bidhan Chandra Roy are among the trustees. They have made themselves responsible for the proper construction, organization and management of the hospital. I hope that not only will the deficit be soon made up but the doctors will have no difficulty in securing a

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Kamla Nehru Memorial Hospital, Allahabad", 19-11-1939.

suitable staff for the efficient management of the hospital.

A REMINDER

Narandas Gandhi tells me that I should remind the readers that all those who want to take part in the spinning *yajna* against the *rentia jayanti* should send in their names at once. The *yajna* took effect from the 11th October last. Those who have not yet sent in their names are already behindhand. But better late than never. Those who are behindhand can make up by spinning more than the stipulated quantity till they have made up for the past neglect. Narandas Gandhi has specialized in this class of khadi work. He loves figures at which he is quick. To keep an exact record of names and addresses of sacrificial spinners and register their output does not tire him. On the contrary he delights in this work. He believes in method. He thinks that the mere keeping of such registers systematizes the work of which a register is kept, and stimulates workers. If a fairly large number will spin for sacrifice, they can help in bringing about a material reduction in the price of khadi. The scheme is rich with possibilities. I hope, therefore, that it will meet with the response it deserves.

A GOOD SUGGESTION

A khadi-lover says:

> Now that the Ministers have resigned in what are called Congress provinces, will they not be most usefully employed if they will make it a point to sell khadi by hawking or otherwise? Khadi is in the centre of the Congress programme. Thousands of Congressmen can occupy themselves with it as with no other. Will you not put my humble suggestion before the ex-Ministers in particular and all Congressmen in general? In every province there is a surplus stock. Spinning is consequently being cut down. It should not be so.

I endorse every word of what the khadi-lover suggests. Congressmen should make it their duty to see that all surplus khadi is sold without delay.

ALLAHABAD, November 20, 1939

Harijan, 25-11-1939

150. LETTER TO SHUMSHERE SINGH

November 20, 1939

MY DEAR SHUMMY,

Have mercy on poor Amrit. She finds her soul with me. She has got what she has been yearning for years. With her it is not a question of what service I want from her, it is a question with her of how she can serve me, i. e., my cause. She wants to be near me. To be near me, to be of use to me is her joy and solace. It is cruel to resist her. You should notbe cross with her for wanting to be better, fitting herself for the service of humanity. You should encourage her, make her way smooth. She loves you with rare devotion. She freezes, if you are angry with her. She rejoices to see you in good humour. She has become inconsolable because you are cross with her. Do please assuage your wrath and let her come to Segaon with a willing heart. She really keeps well in Segaon. She eats with relish. Sometimes most healthy people will be unwell. She has worn herself out by overwork and anxiety. Any strain tells on her. She puts herself to inconvenience without cause. I shall take greater care of her health. After all the spirit is more than the flesh. Her spirit invariably prospers in Segaon. You should let her travel so long as your purse allows it. She gains experience. But she shall not travel if you do not want her to. Do wire to me that you have made up with her and that you are no longer angry with her. I am likely to be in Allahabad till Wednesday. I shall await your wire, if of course you can send it with the conviction that what I say is right and proper.

With love to you all,

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

151. CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION[1]

[*November 22, 1939*][2]

The Working Committee have noted with pleasure the response of the country to the policy enunciated[3] by them regarding the war in Europe and its repercussions in India. This policy, based on numerous declarations of the Congress, was laid down in a statement[4] issued by the Committee on September 14, and subequent events have amply justified its wisdom and expediency. The course of the war and the policy pur-sued by the British and French Governments, in particular the declara-tions made on behalf of the British Government regarding India, seem to demonstrate that the present war, like the World War of 1914-18,is being carried on for imperialist ends, and British imperialism is to remain entrenched in India. With such a war and with this policy the Congress cannot associate itself, and it cannot countenance the exploitation of India's resources to this end.

The Working Committee's unequivocal demand was for a declaration of war aims in regard to democracy and imperialism and, in particular, how these aims were going to be applied to India. These aims could only be considered worthy, if they included the elimination of imperialism and the treatment of India as an independent nation whose policy would be guided in accordance with the wishes of her people. The answer to this demand has been entirely unsatisfactory, and an attempt has been made on behalf of the British Government to create misunderstandings and to befog the main and moral issue. In justification of this refusal to make a declaration in terms of the Working Committee's resolution, communal pleas have been advanced and the rights of the minorities and of the Princes pleaded as barriers to India's freedom.

The Committee wish to declare with all emphasis that no communal considerations arise in meeting the demand of the

[1] A report dated "Allahabad, November 22" in *The Hindustan Times* read; "The Congress Working Committee considered for seven hours today the draft resolution prepared by Mahatma Gandhi on the present political crisis in India."

[2] *ibid*

[3] *Vide* Appendix "Congress Working Committee Resolution", after 18-7-1939.

[4] *Vide* Appendix "Working Committee's Manifesto", 14-9-1939.

Congress, and the minorities, whatever their other differences might be, do not oppose India's right to freedom and independence. The Princes are represented by, and are emblems of, the Paramount Power in India. In the end, it will be the people of the Indian States who will determine what part they will take in a free India, though the British Government have consistently ignored their wishes in the matter which vitally affects them. In any event, the wishes of those who may oppose India's independence are, and must be, irrelevant to the declaration of the British Government's intentions. The Committee can only interpret this attempt to avoid a statement of their war aims and Indian freedom by taking shelter under irrelevant issues, as a desire to maintain their imperialist domination in India in alliance with reactionary elements in the country.

The Congress has looked upon the war crisis and the problems it raises as essentially a moral issue, and has not sought to profit by it in any spirit of bargaining. The moral and dominant issue of war aims and India's freedom have to be settled satisfactorily before any other subsidiary question can be considered.

In no event can the Congress accept responsibility of the Government, even in the transitional period, without real power being given to popular representatives. The Working Committee, therefore, approve of and endorse the reply dated November 3[1] , 1939, sent by the Congress President to the Viceroy.

The Committee wish to declare again that recognition of India's independence and the right of her people to frame their constitution through a Constituent Assembly is essential in order to remove the taint of imperialism from Britain's policy and to enable the Congress to consider further co-operation. They hold that the Constituent Assembly is the only democratic method of determining the constitution of a free country, and no one who believes in democracy and freedom can possibly take exception to it. The Working Committee believe, too, that the Constituent Assembly alone is the adequate instrument for solving communal and other difficulties. This, however, does not mean that the Working Committee will relax their efforts for arriving at a solution of the communal problem. This Assembly can frame a constitution in which the rights of accepted minorities would be protected to their satisfaction and, in the event of

[1] The source, however, has "4"; *vide* Appendix "Letter from the Congress President to the Viceroy", 3-11-1939.

some matters relating to minority rights not being mutually agreed to, they can be referred to arbitration. The Constituent Assembly should be elected on the basis of adult suffrage, the existing separate electorates being retained for such minorities as desire them. The number of these members in the Assembly should reflect their numerical strength.

The declarations[1] made on behalf of the British Government, being inadequate, have compelled the Congress to dissociate itself from British policy and war efforts, and, as a first step in non-co-operation, to bring about the resignations of all the Congress Governments in the Provinces. That policy of non-co-operation continues and must continue unless the British Government revises its policy and accepts the Congress contention.

The Working Committee would remind Congressmen that it is inherent in every form of satyagraha that no effort is spared to achieve an honourable settlement with the oppponent. While a satyagrahi is ever ready for a non-violent fight, if it has to come, he never relaxes his efforts for peace and always works for its attainment. The Working Committee will, therefore, continue to explore the means of arriving at an honourable settlement, even though the British Government have banged the door in the face of the Congress. The Committee must, however, resist, by the non-violent methods of the Congress, all attempts to coerce the people of India along paths which are not of their choice and everything that is against the dignity and freedom of India.

The Working Committee appreciate and express their pleasure at the readiness exhibited by Congressmen for launching civil disobedience, should this become necessary. But civil disobedience requires the same strict discipline as an army organized for an armed conflict. The army is helpless unless it possesses its weapons of destruction and knows how to use them; so also an army of non-violent soldiers is ineffective unless it understands and possesses the essentials of non-violence.

The Working Committee desire to make it clear that the true test of preparedness for civil disobedience lies in Congressmen themselves

[1] *Vide* Appendices "Viceroy's Declaration", 17-10-1939, "Sir Samuel Hoare's Speech", 26-10-1939, "Viceroy's Broadcast Declaration", 5-11-1939, "Viceroy's Prefatory Remarks on Correspondence with Leaders", 5-11-1939 and "Lord Zetland's Statement", 7-11-1939.

spinning and promoting the cause of khadi to the exclusion of mill-cloth, and deeming it their duty to establish harmony between the communities by personal acts of service to those other than members of their own community, and individual Hindu Congressmen seeking an occasion for fraternizing with the Harijans as often as possible. The Congress organizations and Congressmen should, therefore, prepare for future action by promoting this programme. They should explain to the people the message and policy and implications of the Constituent Assembly which is the crux of the Congress programme for the future.

Harijan, 2-12-1939

152. TESTIMONIAL TO MUNNILAL

ANAND BHAVAN, ALLAHABAD,
[*November 23, 1939*][1]

Bhai Munnilal has given me a good shave today and done it with great affection. His razor is village-made and it needs no soap.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 7484

153. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

ANAND BHAVAN, ALLAHABAD,
November 23, 1939

MY DEAR SUBHAS,

It is only today that I find a moment to acknowledge your letter and wire. As you know, I attend the Working Committee only when required and deal with only those matters that are referred to me. But having received a letter, I read it to them and told them that if they had no confidence in the present Bengal Provincial Congress Committee and had sufficient reason for it, I agreed with you that they should dissolve it. Any piecemeal measure would fail and only cause irritation.

But I confess that your letter has appeared to me to be a challenge. You have evidently no confidence in the Working

[1] From *Gandhi—1915-1948: A Detailed Chronology*

Committee. You regard its ban on you as a vendetta. As you know, I am party to the ban which was voted unanimously. Who is to decide between you and the Working Committee? You have never submitted to the ban.

As to action by the Working Committee, I dissent from you. Your way is not mine. For the time being you are my lost sheep. Some day I shall find you returning to the fold, if I am right and my love is pure.

Ever yours,

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

154. DISCUSSION WITH U.P.P.C.C. EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS[1]

ALLAHABAD,

[*November 23, 1939*][2]

QUESTION: You seem to be placing an exaggerated emphasis on non-violence today. Surely you will not suggest that we were more ready or more non-violent in 1920-21 and in 1930? Or will you say that your standard has now gone up?

ANSWER: Both. There was not then so much violence as is to be seen on the surface today. And my standard too has gone up. I was not so rigid in my conditions then as I am now. If you accept my generalship, you have to accept not only my conditions but my judgment as to whether we are ready or not. It is quite likely that there is really no difference between the conditions of those days and of today; but it is equally true that I did not know then that I was walking on a mine, today I am haunted by that consciousness and I cannot help it.

Is there not a fear that, if we do not strike the nail while it is hot, we may never be able to do so at all? There is that psychology of readiness among the people. If we do notseize the opportunity, their enthusiasm may be damped and their readiness may vanish.The best thing, therefore, today is for you to suggest a programme whereby we may prepare the field and yet keep up the spirit of the people.

I have always been impatient of this kind of language. I cannot understand a readiness which would vanish if it was not availed of at once. That is no readiness at all. Ready is he who is ready at all times

[1] The discussion appeared under the title "The Task before Us", as summarized by Mahadev Desai.

[2] *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 14-11-1939.

and at all places—whenever and wherever he is called. The only meaning of readiness is readiness to carry out the command of the general. To use military language, we should be so prepared as to make war unnecessary. What is essential is the attainment of independence, not the time and the ways and means of civil disobedience. I expect from you enough faith and discipline to instinctively await and obey your general's word. Don't expect me to say anything more. Do not expect me to reveal *how,* if ever, I shall launch civil disobedience. I have nothing up my sleeve, and I will have no knowledge until the last moment. I am not made that way. I knew nothing of the Salt March[1] until practically the moment it was decided upon. This I know that God has rarely made me repeat history and he may not do so this time. There is one thing, however. I may, for reasons you may not reveal to me, be unfit as a general. In that case you must give me up, and I shall not in the least be sorry for it.

Now for the last point in your question. You want a programme which may be directly connected with civil disobedience. If you will not laugh at me, I will unhesitatingly say it is the programme of universal spinning. Listening to the alarms and advice of the doctors I had given it up for some time. I began it in response to Narandas Gandhi's call, and I do not think I shall ever give it up, until of course my hands are paralysed. So I would say that the more you spin the better soldiers you will be. If that is my conviction, why should I be ashamed of declaring it? There cannot be two parts in my advice, one of which you may accept and the other you may reject. My condition is a vital one. It is likely that there may not be the nccessary intellectual conviction, but it will follow faith as a necessary consequence. I say this because I have acted in that spirit. I have marched miles upon miles, through bush and briar and along unbeaten tracks, acting on the word of command, during the Zulu Rebellion[2]. But as I have said the whole thing may strike you as chimerical or quixotic. In that case you have but to give up my leadership. I have led for twenty years, and it may be well for me to rest on my oars. It is possible that you may be able to evolve some new technique of satyagraha. In that case the moment I am convinced I shall be ready to follow you. Whatever you do, do not accept my leadership with a mental reservation. You will by doing so betray both me and the country. If I get your co-operation, it must be full and hearty. I have argued the thing for twenty years; I can advance no fresh argument now.

[1] On March 12, 1930.

[2] In Natal; Gandhiji led an Indian Stretcher-bearer Corps.

We have proceeded on an altogether different ideology.

Well, there's the rub. That is why I am repeating again and again my suggestion of a change in the leadership.

But if the charkha is with some of us a symbol of your leadership and nothing more?

No, it must be a symbol of non-violence and a specific condition of preparation for a non-violent struggle. I would suggest even a better course—a course I suggested[1] in 1934. Banish spinning and khadi from the Congress programme, so that I automatically drop out. If you do so, the mistake will not be yours but mine. For it is my duty to convince you that there is a vital connection between the charkha and non-violence[2]

What was the duty of the Congressmen when there was a riot going on ?

To die in quelling it. We had one Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi[2] in 1931, and have had none to copy his example since. So many die during the riots, but they do not offer of themselves willing sacrifices. Those who do not accept this programme should leave me.

But must we allow them to hold up the movement assuming that there will be Hindu-Muslim riots?

They cannot indefinitely do so. I have enough faith in Mussalmans to hope that they would rebel against being an obstacle in the way of independence. There is enough love of freedom and democracy in them to make them ashamed of that state of things.

In view of the little time at our disposal, could you tell us what you would regard as the minimum preparation necessary from the point of view of spinning ?

Why little time? Is it essential that we should start the movement in three months or six months? Let it take six years. What is essential is the preparation, I would ask you to get rid of impatience. The test for me is not a formal spinning by you all for half an hour or even an hour a day in order to satisfy me or to secure my leadership, but the universalization of spinning so that there may be no mill-cloth—indigenous or foreign—in your province. If I feel that we have made rapid strides in that direction, I shall be satisfied. You boast of several hundred thousand Congress members. If all of these took up the programme and became voluntary workers on behalf of the A. I. S. A., there would be no mill-cloth in the province. It should be part of

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 17-9-1934.

[2] Who was killed in the Kanpur Hindu-Muslim riots in March 1931.

your daily life. Just as an Afridi cannot do without his rifle, even so every one of you non-violent soldiers should not be able to do without your spinning. And all this, not because this old man wants it, but because you want independence. When you realize this you will not come to me with questions like the one you have asked.[1]

Harijan, 2-12-1939

155. LETTER TO BARIN GHOSH

November 24, 1939

BARIN GHOSH,

The difference about the charkha is not immaterial. My whole life is wound up with it. If you cannot support it, you cannot wholeheartedly support non-violence. And of what use am I without non-violence?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

156. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO PEOPLE OF MYSORE

November 24, 1939

You should do what you think is proper under the circumstances. I should not advise without first-hand knowledge. Here I have no intuitive opinion. You have shown your mettle, you have suffered and [are] prepared to suffer. The people evidently are trained in the art of suffering, and so I should not interfere in Mysore affairs[2]. Forest Satyagraha[3] I certainly did disapprove for thereby we injure our own property. I led the campaign in cutting date-palm trees and took fiendish delight in cutting down thousands of trees. Fiendish because I see now that I acted hastily. I would not now cut down a single tree. *Gur-nira*—even the trunk is useful for hedges, leaves for mats, tree requires no nurture, it grows by itself. I therefore swear by the palm.

And even if this stopping of Forest Satyagraha affected

[1] *Vide* also "Baffling Situation", 28-11-1939.

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to N. S. Hardikar", 14-10-1939 and 21-10-1939.

[3] In the Central Provinces

adversely the number of jail-goers, you should not mind it [at] all.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

157. LETTER TO SARASWATI GANDHI

November 25, 1939

CHI. SARU,

I got your letter. I hope you are well. I am glad that Kanti has arrived. Keep writing to me. I am writing this on the train. We shall reach Wardha today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6176. Also C. W. 3450. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

158. LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

ON THE TRAIN,
November 25, 1939

BHAISAHEB,

Mahadev gave me your message overflowing with love. He also showed the *sloka*[1] in the eleventh canto of *Bhagavata*. I had come to know of this *sloka* in South Africa. I was much impressed by the eleventh canto. But I do not consider all the sayings in our Shastras as gospel truth. One who becomes lustful just by merely touching a woman is not a *brahmachari*. I believe that one who is not moved by passion even after intentionally touching a woman is the only *brahmachari*. And I have spent my *brahmachari* life like this. It is true that I am still not perfect. Kindly give your blessings that I become perfect in this life. My effort is going on every moment. Of course this experiment will be judged only after my death. I have understood the meaning behind your message. I am cautious and shall try to be more so.

[1] Presumably, 11, VIII. 13, which reads :
पदापि युवतीं भिक्षुर्न स्पृशेत् दारवीमपि
स्पृशन् करीव बध्येत करिण्या अङ्गसङ्गतः
A *bhikshu* may not touch even with his feet even a wooden figure of a woman. The elephant itself is caught through contact with an elephant cow.

What shall I say about the message you have conveyed about women in menses? I have never observed or made anyone adhere to such [restrictions]. I do not consider it a sin to touch woman during that period. My humble opinion is that there is room for change in our customs.

I am with you regarding observing silence. I shall go on increasing the duration.

Your indebted brother,
MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: Padmakant Malaviya Collection. Courtesy: National Archives of India

159. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 26, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your three letters. I gave all letters to Mahadev Desai. I can't account for the understamping and bad sticking. I am ashamed. Shall inquire. The rest of your letters I understand. We must leave some things in God's hands. I had no difficulty in Allahabad. Jawaharlal was quite nice. I had no particular talks. He was too busy for them.

There was a good reply from Shummy.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3948. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7257

160. LETTER TO TRIAMBAKLAL POPATLAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 26, 1939

BHAI TRIAMBAKLAL,

I had got the *hundi* for Rs. 4,401-6-9. And now I have received another for Rs. 13-6-0. You should get an official receipt from Delhi.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI TRIAMBAKLAL POPATLAL
121 MOGHAL STREET
RANGOON[2]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 9830. Courtesy: Triambaklal Popatlal

[1] For Gandhiji's letter, *vide* "Letter to Shumshere Singh", 20-11-1939.
[2] The address is in English.

161. SWARAJ THROUGH WOMEN

Now that the Working Committee has accepted[1] spinning as an indispensable condition of civil disobedience, the women of India have a rare opportunity of serving the country. The salt campaign brought out tens of thousands from their seclusion and showed that they could serve the country on equal terms with men. It gave the village woman a dignity which she had never enjoyed before. The restoration of spinning to its central place in India's peaceful campaign for deliverance from the imperial yoke gives her women a special status. In spinning they have a natural advantage over men.

Since the beginning of time there has been a division of labour between men and women. Adam wove and Eve span. The distinction persists to the present day. Men spinners are an exception. In the Punjab when during 1920-21 I asked men to spin, they used to tell me that men considered spinning to be beneath their dignity and that it was solely women's occupation. Men nowadays do not object on the ground of dignity. There are thousands who spin for sacrifice. It was when men took up spinning from a patriotic motive that spinning was reduced to a science and inventions as great as in any other field were made. Nevertheless experience shows that spinning will remain woman's speciality. I believe there is a good reason behind the experience. Spinning is essentially a slow and comparatively silent process. Woman is the embodiment of sacrifice and therefore non-violence. Her occupations must therefore be, as they are, more conducive to peace than war. That she is now being dragged down for purposes of violent war is no credit to modern civilization. I have no doubt that violence so ill becomes woman that presently she will rebel against the violation of her fundamental nature. I feel that man too will repent of his folly. Equality of the sexes does not mean equality of occupations. There may be no legal bar against a woman hunting or wielding a lance. But she instinctively recoils from a function that belongs to man. Nature has created sexes as complements of each other. Their functions are defined as are their forms.

But a proof of the different functions of the sexes is unnecessary for my purpose. The fact stands, at any rate in India, that millions of women regard spinning as their natural occupation. The Working Committee's resolution automatically shifts the burden from

[1] *Vide* "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 22-11-1939.

men to women and gives to them an opportunity of showing their mettle. I would love to find that my future army contained a vast preponderance of women over men. If the fight came, I should then approach it with much greater confidence than if men predominated. I would dread the latter's violence. Women would be my guarantee against such an outbreak.

SEGAON, November 27, 1939
Haijan, 2-12-1939

162. NOTES

WHY NOT HINDU MAHASABH?

A correspondent writes :

> I have read your comments[1] on the speech delivered by Lord Zetland in the Lords' debate on India in which he declared the Congress to be a Hindu organization. I cannot help saying that the attitude of the Congress itself is partly responsible for the mistake into which Lord Zetland has fallen. If the Congress is a national organization, as it undoubtedly is, with what propriety did it enter into a discussion with the Muslim League alone, which is a purely communal organization, for solving the communal question generally and the Hindu-Muslim question particularly? The Congress ought to have remained neutral and permitted Jinnah Saheb to negotiate with Shri Savarkar, the President of the Hindu Mahasabha, or, if it was not practicable, to convene a conference of the representatives of the several communal organizations in the country and to play the role of umpire at such a conference. Any attempt on the part of the Congress leaders to have direct and exclusive talks with the leaders of a single community with a view to the solution of Hindu-Muslim problem was bound to give a handle to the opponents of the Congress, of which they could not be expected to be slow to take full advantage. In my opinion this step on the part of the Congress has lowered the status of the Congress as a national organization.

I have already admitted the force of the correspondent's argument. I have also shown how the Congress could not shirk a duty devolving upon it. I must dissent from the view that the status of the Congress has been lowered by its attempt to solve a difficult national problem. I invite all well-wishers to refrain from doing anything to

[1] *Vide* "Interview to *The Manchester Guardian*", 4-11-1939 and "Is Congress a Hindu Organization", 13-11-1939 .

hinder the progress of the talks that are about to take place between Jinnah Saheb and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

COMMUNAL DECISION AGAIN

I gladly publish the following from Shri Radhakant Malaviya :

In your article "Good and Bad"[1] you have stated: ". . . I have very bitter memories of the Award which was being hatched during the Round Table Conference. . . . I regard the Award as discreditable for all parties. . . . But the Congress has loyally accepted it because I was party to the request made to the late Mr. MacDonald to arbitrate."

Is it that, as immediately after your return from the Round Table Conference you were imprisoned, you are not aware of the subsequent developments in connection with the negotiations for the settlement of the communal question? The Communal Decision by Mr. J. Ramsay MacDonald is dated 17th August, 1932. That there was not to be an award but a decision by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald was made clear by His Excellency the Viceroy on 24th Februray, 1932. The poceedings of the Consultative Committee of the Round Table Conference held at the Viceroy's House at Delhi on 22nd and 24th February, 1932, should be looked into.

There in the proceedings you will find that in the Committee meeting held on 22nd February, 1932, Mr. (now Sir) Zafarulla Khan stated ". . .that the difficulty could only be solved by a decision by the British Government itself. . . . Your Excellency might well press upon the British Government the necessity of pronouncing an immediate decision upon those questions. . . ." Dr. Shafat Ahmad Khan stated: ". . . I have urged your Excellency to ask the Prime Minister to give us a decision." Again, in the meeting held on 24th February, Dr. Shafat Ahmad Khan stated: "The Muslim delegation never mentioned the word 'arbitration'. We have said all along that it is for His Majesty's Government to give a decision. Of course we have never asked for arbitration." Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru [said]: "What was said was that the Prime Minister would give a decision." Dr. Shafat Ahmad Khan again stated, ". . . he (Prime Minister) will give a decision. . . . We are not asking for his arbitration; we request the decision of His Majesty's Government." Sardar Ujjal Singh stated: ". . . In the Minorities Sub-committee the Prime Minister undertook to decide that question if all the communities submitted it to him for arbitration. That was entirely a different thing. Some members did send him letters on behalf of their respective communities, but the offer was not

[1] *Vide* "Good and Bad", 30-10-1939. The source, however, has "Hindu-Muslim Unity".

accepted by all. . . . There is not question of arbitration now." At the end, His Excellency the Viceroy, as Chairman, stated: "I am advised that at that time the Prime Minister made an offer, as Chairman of the Committee, but that was not accepted."

If you think it proper, you may publish this in an early issue of *Harijan* so that the wrong impression which has been created by your above remarks may be removed.

I have admitted[1] my lapse of memory. It does one good to record the facts which Shri Radhakant has narrated. They cannot be altered by any error I may have committed. It is fortunate that my error does not in any way weaken the force of my complaint against Sir Samuel Hoare.

WHEN IS PICKETING PEACEFUL?

A correspondent writes :

I find that here in Bombay this weapon of 'peaceful picketing' is being misused on the ground that peaceful picketing, with whatsoever just or unjust object it may be resorted to, is no offence. The aggrieved party against whom such picketing is aimed at, fails to get any protection either from the police or law. For instance, A happens to be a shopkeeper. B, an employee of A, having no legal claim against A, threatens A with picketing his shop in case A does not accede to B's demands and actually, with the help of C and D posing as 'leaders', starts picketing A's shop, and misleads A's customers, with a view to dissuading them from patronising A's shop. Would such picketing, even though there be no actual physical force used, be termed 'peaceful'?

I cannot speak about the legality of such picketing, but I can say that such picketing cannot be called peaceful, i. e., non-violent. All picketing without indubitably just cause is violent even though no physical force is used. Picketing without such cause becomes a nuisance and interferes with the exercise of private right. Generally no picketing should be resorted to by individuals unless it is promoted by a responsible organization. Picketing like civil disobedience has its well-defined limits without a strict observance of which it becomes illegitimate and reprehensible.

SEGAON, November 27, 1939

Harijan, 2-12-1939

[1] *Vide* "Notes", sub-title, "Award or Decision", 14-11-1939.

163. MESSAGE FOR THAKKAR BAPA BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS[1]

[*November 27, 1939*][2]

I should have been present at the seventieth birthday celebration of Thakkar Bapa, but I am physically unfit for such functions. It is my heartfelt hope that he may live a hundred years. Bapa was born only to serve the downtrodden, whether they be untouchables or Bhils, Santhals or Khasis. Even the appreciation of his service means some little service of these downtrodden. His services have carried India considerably forward towards the goal.[3]

Harijan, 2-12-1939

164. THE PITY OF IT

The following is taken from a letter by a wise and learned Englishman to an English friend who has forwarded it to me :

> Gandhiji seems to me to have completely departed from his original position which was that he would not tolerate any bargaining with the British Government to which in this war he was prepared to give complete support. He seems to me now to have veered round completely to the Congress extreme position, namely, that unless complete and unconditional independence is promised to India now, they will not co-operate in any way with the Government, but where they are in power will resign thus to dissociate themselves completely from the Government which has declared that India is at war with Germany. This seems to me to be sheer bargaining, the exploiting of British need, to secure not only Dominion Status which has been promised in clear and unmistakable terms but absolute independence. Further, I find it hard to reconcile Congress assertion that it contemplates no constitution which does not carry with it the protection of real minorities to their satisfaction and the complete failure of the Congress to come to an understanding with the Muslim League. Surely this failure gives little encouragement to the Muslims to believe and trust the Congress with the supreme power that Indian independence would give them.

[1] The message is extracted from Mahadev Desai's article "Bapa Jayanti in Bombay."

[2] From *Bhil Seva Mandal Seva Smriti Granth, 1966*, p. 16

[3] *Vide* also "Bapa Jayanti", 16-10-1939.

As I have stated before[1] I have not departed a tittle from my original position which was taken, as I then said, because I was an out-and-out believer in non-violence. In offering my sympathy (I did not use the word 'support') I had the same end in view that the Congress has. I put my position before the Working Committee. It could not honestly adopt it. Desiring independence, it could not take up any other attitude. The Congress position was as good from its own, as mine from my premises. The Congress had a perfect right to know British intentions, if the British Government desired its help in the prosecution of the war. As a subject nation, India, if she was resolved upon securing her liberty, could not be expected willingly to help the dominant nation without knowing where she stood. If india was violently inclined and had the strength, she would be bound to take advantage of Britain's difficulty and declare her independence and defend it with arms if she was resisted. And she would have commanded the admiration of the world including Britain for seizing the opportunity. But the Congress has chosen the better way—the way of non-violence, however diluted it is. I own too that India is not ready for armed revolt. But this is no matter of credit either for Britain or for India. India is too weak for armed revolt. Britain's connection has made her weaker. Her disarmament is a black chapter in British history.

God has blessed me with the mission to place non-violence before the nation for adoption. For better or for worse the Congress has adopted it and, for the past nineteen years the Congress, admittedly the most popular and powerful organization, has consistently and to the best of its ability tried to act up to it. Hence the sting of forced disarmament has not been felt as it would have been otherwise. It is futile to guess what it would have done if it had not accepted non-violence as its chief means for the attainment of swaraj. The Congress has allowed itself to be judged from the non-violent standpoint. It is possible to question the propriety of the Congress attitude only from that standpoint. Judged according to the ordinary standard, the Congress stands fully justified in the attitude it has taken.

I hope the learned critic does not wish to suggest that as the Congress did not accept my position I should have dissociated myself entirely from the Congress and refused to guide it. My associationen ables the Congress to pursue the technique of corporate non-violent

[1] *Vide* "Source of my Sympathy", 11-9-1939.

action.

The writer seems to cavil at the demand for independence as distinguished from Dominion Status. Surely India cannot be satisfied with anything less if she is to rank as a free nation. I had thought that Dominion Status according to the Status of Westminster was equivalent to independence. The expression Dominion Status has a special connotation. It refers to a commonwealth of whites who are themselves pillars of imperialism engaged in exploiting the non-European races whom they regard as uncivilized. India free will be no party to such exploitation. But there is nothing to prevent free India from entering into an alliance with British for the protection of the freedom of all, whether black, brown or white. Therefore, if Dominion Status is less than independence, India cannot be satisfied with less. If it is synonymous with independence, then India has to choose how she would describe her status.

The critic then condemns the Congress for not coming to terms with the Muslim League. It is a pity that even responsible Englishmen will not take the trouble to study questions which they judge freely. The Congress has never given up the effort to solve the communal question. It is even now engaged in the difficult task. But it is wrong to use Congress inability to reach a solution for keeping India from her destined goal. British officials including Viceroys have admitted that they have ruled by following the policy of 'divide and rule'. The British established themselves by taking advantage of our internal quarrels and have remained by keeping them alive. It is unnecessary for my argument to prove that the policy is being followed deliberately.

The British have made themselves believe that they are ruling because of our quarrels, and that they will gladly retire when we have ceased to quarrel. Thus they are moving in a vicious circle. The British rule must be permanent if the adjustment of the communal quarrel is a condition precedent to India becoming independent. It is a purely domestic problem which we are bound to solve if we are to live at peace with one another. May I remind the critic and those who argue like him that only a short while ago it was said that if the British withdrew, Hindus would be left to the mercy of the virile races from the north, that not a virgin would be safe or a monied man retain his wealth? Now Princes and Muslims, who are able enough to protect themselves against the unarmed millions whom the Congress claims

specially to represent, are sought to be protected by the British bayonet against the latter! Be that as it may, the Congress must pursue its even course. It must work for communal unity in spite of odds against it. It is a plank in its programme. It is part of the non-violent technique.

Another English critic has put the problem in a truer way. He says among many other things: "British people feel that Great Britain needs to carry the Muslim world with her at this time of immense struggle." I have no difficulty in sympathizing with this position. Only let us clear the issues. Great Britain cannot afford to risk defeat for the sake of doing justice. This is just what an overwhelming number of Indians feel. The Congress, before it can offer ungrudging support to Britain, wants to feel sure that hers is an absolutely just cause. The recent events have created a grave doubt about it. Absolute protection of the rights of minorities is a greater concern of the Congress than it ever can be of Great Britain. The Congress dare not seek and cannot get justice, if it is not prepared to do it itself. To be above suspicion is the only way open to non-violent organizations. But British policy may make a just solution impossible at the present moment.

SEGAON, November 28, 1939
Harijan, 2-12-1939

165. BAFFLING SITUATION

Jawaharlal, born democrat as he is, had arranged for a free talk[1] between the Executive Council of the U. P. P. C. C. and me. We had three such talks. I had expected that the talks would result in a parting of the ways. Among the Congressmen whom I was facing there were some who had laughed at the charkha and non-violence. But to my utter astonishment I found them reconciled to both. It is a baffling situation both for Congressmen and me.

I do not know whether I am wise in bearing the heavy responsibility of leading Congressmen who only the other day had no faith in me. Are they not paying too great a price for my leadership in

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with U.P.P.C.C. Executive Council Members", 23-11-1939.

a battle? If they render obedience without faith, is it good for them or me? Can I lead them to success? If I was not good enough in peace, how can I be good in war? There was no peace. The Congress is at war with Great Britain till independence is won. War had never ceased; only civil disobedience had been suspended for better and greater preparation. Congressmen who did not obey instructions during the preparatoryperiod were surely not fit soldiers on active duty. And yet I could not distrust the responsible men who faced me in Allahabad. What is true of them is true of the other Congressmen in the other provinces. And so I am shouldering the burden.

Let me then think aloud. I hope that Congressmen will make it a point to read *Harijan* as if it was a weekly bulletin containing instructions for them.

To the impatient Congressmen I say: I see no immediate prospect of declaring civil disobedience. There can be no civil disobedience for the sake of embarrassing Great Britain. It will come when it becomes clearly inevitable. Probably it will come by the goading of the official world. I do not doubt the honesty of the Viceroy or that of the Secretary of State. At the same time I have no doubt whatsoever that they are in error because they cannot get out of the old rut to which they are used. We must give them time to collect themselves. We must do real propaganda by way of educating the public both here and abroad. We cannot all of a sudden dispel the surrounding misunderstandings, not merely on the part of the British people but of our own countrymen. There is no mistaking the fact that many non-Congress Muslims honestly think that the Congress Ministers did not pay enough heed to Muslim complaints. Congressmen wedded to non-violence have to give special heed to the complaints of non-Congress Muslims. It is no use saying that they are frivolous. I know myself that many complaints have been frivolous. But we have to be patient and courteous enough to take them seriously and endeavour to show clearly that they are frivolous. I do not wish to suggest that pains were not taken to deal with them. I am just now concerned with the phenomenon that the complaints persist. We must, therefore, give time to demonstrating that there never has been anything in the complaints. If in the course of further investigation we discover errors, we must make amends. We must prove to the Muslim countrymen and to the world that the Congress does not want independence at the sacrifice of a single legitimate interest, be it Muslim or other. We may leave no stone unturned to

carry the minorities with us. This meticulous care for the rights of the least among us is the *sine qua non* of non-violence.

If it is true, as it is, that for the British Government to plead want of communal unity as a bar to independence is wrong, it is equally true that this discord is, nevertheless, a serious handicap in our march towards swaraj. If we had the Muslim League and others with us, our demand would become irresistible.

So much for the external difficulties. Not till we have given sufficient time to their solution, can we possibly think of civil disobedience.

The internal weakness is no less great. I see a vital connection between the charkha and non-violence. Even as certain minimum qualifcations are indispensable in a soldier in arms, so are certain other and even opposite qualifications indispensable in a non-violent soldier, i. e., a satyagrahi. One of these latter is adequate skill in spinning and its anterior processes. A satyagrahi occupies himself in productive work. There is no easier and better productive work for millions than spinning. What is more, it has been an integral part of the non-violent programme since its commencement. Civilization based on non-violence must be different from that organized for violence. Let not Congressmen trifle with this fundamental fact. I repeat what I have said a thousand times that, if millions spun for swaraj and in the spirit of non-violence, there will probably be no necessity for civil disobedience. It will be a constructive effort such as the world has not witnessed before. It is the surest method of converting the 'enemy'.

The Working Committee desired to appoint me as its sole representative to carry on negotiations that may be necessary and to conduct the campaign of civil disobedience if they failed. It was a burden I could not carry. Being boxed up in Segaon, I have no direct touch with the people. I have no confidence, I should have none, in my unaided judgment requiring an accurate first-hand knowledge of many facts. I could only act with the constant guidance and direction of the Working Committee. I shall carry on no negotiations to finality. I should be pleased if I was relieved of the burden. But I shall not shrink from any responsibility, so long as I carry the confidence and affection of the Working Committee and Congressmen in general and so long as I feel that I have the requisite qualifications.

SEGAON, November 28, 1939

Harijan, 2-12-1939

166. SIND RIOTS

I have been following the riots[1] in Sind with painful interest. Many people delude themselves with the belief that I possess powers to remedy all wrongs. I wish I had them, though I am not sure that such possession will be an unmixed blessing. I should make people helpless if I made an indiscriminate use of such powers. And they would be of no use, if I might not use them freely. As it is, I use what powers I have to the fullest extent. Thank God, they are too limited to be harmful. My chief work, however, is to teach people to help themselves.

Here is a pathetic wire from Shikarpur :

> Riots, loot, incendiarism, Sukkur District villages Hindus mercilessly butchered, women and girls raped and kidnapped. Hindu life, property unsafe. Situation most critical. Government policy not firm. Pray send enquiry committee immediately to see situation personally.

It is the third of its kind from Sind. I took no notice of the first two mainly because I was preoccupied in Allahabad and I had no concrete consolation to offer. The Shikarpur Panchayat has come to the wrong person for help. For I am myself helpless. The Congress has not yet sufficiently advanced in non-violence to deal with riots and the like. It must develop it enough to deal with such situations if it is to retain its prestige. I suggested 'peace brigades', but the suggestion proved premature if not unworkable. No doubt the Sind Government should be able to protect life and property of the people within their jurisdiction. Evidently the matter has gone beyond their control. Sind is nominally autonomous and to that extent less able to protect life and property than the preceding Government. For it has never had previous training in the police or the military arts. I have shown in previous writings that the Central Government is impotent to prevent loss of life, property and worse during riots. It is able to check their spread and punish the wrongdoers when it wishes. It is organized solely for the protection of imperial trade and therefore for the maintenance of peace in so far as it is necessary for the safety of that

[1] The riots broke out on October 1, 1939, when Muslims at Sukkur launched a satyagraha with a view to securing possession of Manzalgah and, on November 20, the Sind Government had to meet the acts of violence by opening of fire.

trade. Hence it is ill-equipped for real protection of the people. Such protection involves the training of the people in the art of self-defence and securing their co-operation in quelling riots, etc. This would be putting imperial rule in jeopardy.

Now the only effective way in which I can help the Sindhis is to show them the way of non-violence. But that cannot be learnt in a day. The other way is the way the world has followed hitherto, i. e., armed defence of life and property. God helps only those who help themselves. The Sindhis are no exception. They must learn the art of defending themselves against robbers, raiders and the like. If they do not feel safe and are too weak to defend themselves, they should leave the place which has proved too inhospitable to live in.

SEGAON, November 28, 1939

Harijan, 2-12-1939

167. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 28, 1939

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I have only a moment to send you a line. Mahadev has gone to Bombay for Bapa[1]. I am over head and ears in work. Weather superb.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3949. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7258

[1] To participate in the seventieth birthday celebrations of Amritlal V. Thakkar

168. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA, C.P.,
November 29, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Strange, no letters from you for three days running! But I am putting the best construction possible, i. e., the post has been misdirected or sent too late and all is well. All's well here. The patients [are] keeping fairly well. I have some time today to overtake postal arrears.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Just received your two letters at the same time. Yours of 25th is in a sad mood—quite unnecessary. The cupboard you shall have but it will be made or bought after your arrival. There is no dictatorship. What is, is as serious. I can't say that J. L. has been a willing party. Time will tell its own tale. *Harijan* is a true reflex of things. You really therefore do not need anything more.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3950. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7259

169. LETTER TO BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

November 29, 1939

DEAR BHARATAN,

Herewith note for Kelappan if he is still there.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 3588

170. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 30, 1939

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Today again I have two letters from you. This letter[1] (at the back) with the appeal of which you have sent me copy from *Hindustan Times*, came to your address today by book post. Your note[2] I have kept. I shall see whether it should go in. I have kept your note[3] on education. I have not yet read it. If it is good enough it will go in some day. You have to be patient with me. As to Nayakam[4] and Ashawe have to bear with one another.

Mahadev has not yet returned. He should, tomorrow. He did extraordinarily well in Bombay—collected more than Rs. 15,000[5]. The purse amounted to one lac seventeen thousand.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope your boil has disappeared.

From the original: C. W. 3951. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7260

[1] It was an undated, printed circular signed by J. N. Wilson, Secretary, Kristagraha Committee, inviting Christians "to enlist in a crusade against the underlying causes of war" and urging them to "stand in this crisis against all oppression and exploitation". With it was also enclosed a manifesto to the Viceroy.

[2] This was published under the title "Christian Duty" in *Harijan*, 9-12-1939.

[3] This was published under the title "A Lay Woman's Impression", in *Harijan*, 30-12-1939.

[4] E. W. Aryanayakam and his wife

[5] For the Thakkar Bapa purse

171. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

SEGAON, WARDHA
December 14, 1939

CHI. KANCHAN,

I have your letter. What are you doing there? Return completely restored. Munnalal[1] has not yet returned. The kitchen is being looked after by A[mtul] S[alaam]. Zohra[2] helps her. Ba has gone to Delhi. Kanu has gone to Rajkot.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. KANCHANBEHN
C/O SUDHABAI
LADY BUTLER HOSPITAL, KHANDWA

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8287. Also C.W. 7065. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

172. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEGAON, WARDHA
December 14, 1939

CHI. LILA,

I have your letter. What shall I write? There isn't even a minute to spare. Mahadev was here to see me only recently. Now he is in Mysore. He left on Sunday. Probably he will return on Sunday. Bablo[3] has gone with him. Ba is still in Delhi. Lakshmi is better. All the patients are improving.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Study attentively during the holidays and pass your examination.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 9378

[1] Munnalal G. Shah, addressee's husband
[2] Dr. M. A. Ansari's daughter
[3] Mahadev Desai's son Narayan

173. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 14, 1939

CHI. RUKMINI[1]

I had your letter. Yesterday I got Radhika's[2]. I learnt more from it. May you have a safe delivery.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

SMT. RUKMINIBEHN
C/O SHRI BENARSI BAZAJ
THATHERI BAZAAR
BENARES CITY

From Gujarati: C.W. 2829. Courtesy : Benarsilal Bazaj

174. THE MORAL ISSUE

I release the following correspondence[3] between a Western friend and me as of general interest.

> . . . The Congress resolution[4] calling upon the British to define their objectives, especially as regards the subordinated peoples of the Empire, and India in particular, seemed to me very fine. It put the moral issues squarely up to the Imperial Government, and made India stand forth with a wonderful dignity in the midst of the evil atmosphere of selfish and unidealistic expendiency that seems at present to govern statesmen in their handling of world relations. . . .
>
> I find myself cent per cent at one with the attitude and action of the Congress. But there are certain other matters in which I am unable to see quite eye to eye. . . .
>
> To begin with it seems to me that there has been a certain tendency to treat the question as if it were merely one of "helping" the

[1] Maganlal Gandhi's daughter, married to Benarsilal Bazaj
[2] Addressee's younger sister
[3] Only extracts from the correspondent's letter are reproduced here.
[4] Dated September 14, 1939; *vide* Appendix "Working Committee's Manifesto", 14-9-1939.

British, and that, if the British wanted India to help them, it was up to them to give way to India's just demands. It has seemed implied that prevention of a victory by the Germans was a matter primarily of concern to the British, and that, if India gave her whole-hearted support, it would be a sort of "favour" that would only be given if she considered them worthy of it—a "worthiness" which they were to prove by demonstrating their *bona fides* in their relations with this country. . . .

. . . I hold it is not for their "deservingness" that we should look, or that their lack of it should in the slightest degree keep us from rendering all the help we can to the Western "democracies" at this juncture. . . .

. . . It is not a question of our doing a favour to the British by helping them to win a victory over Germany; rather it is one of joining others to insure that Nazi Germany does not win the world empire by the defeat of the only powers that, humanly speaking, can prevent her from taking it. *We,* at the present exploited and subordinated peoples of the world, cannot afford to have the Germans win, and I fear that, if she should, as a result of our refusing to do our share in obstructing her at this time, we could not escape our moral responsibility for the consequences to the world, and especially to the militarily weak non-European peoples of Asia and Africa, despite the fact that we are innocent of producing the situation which has brought about the war.

Today I saw your communicational[1] to *The News Chronicle*. How wonderfully you bring out the issues, and how very essential it is that these issues should be constantly confronting the West ! Yet I feel that at the same time the future demands of us that we do not remain inactive at this critical time, waiting for the British to give way to our just demands. The outcome of the war may depend upon the line this country takes *now*—not what line she may ultimately take.

I do not for a moment hate the Germans; on the contrary I have profound sympathy for them. . . . But I do hate and fear the present outlook on life of the Nazis, especially as it touches their relations with those which they look upon as "inferior races". . . . The German outlook has the most sinister implications for all of us, and I think it would be madness on our part to take any chances with it.

Meanwhile the precious days and hours are passing, and the sight of an India that has not definitely shown that she will not become a source of embarrassment to the British may encourage and strengthen the forces throughout the world that make for Nazism. This does not seem to me a

[1]*Vide* "Statement to *The News Chronicle*", 4-12-1939.

service to the non-European peoples or to the world.

To this I replied as follows :

I cling to an old superstition, if it may be so called. When in doubt on a matter involving no immorality either way, I toss and actually read in it divine guidance. I have no other scientific basis. To attribute residuary powers to God is scientific mode in my opinion. In this crisis, tool I have resorted to a kind of toss. If I had my way, you know what would have happened. That was not to be. The Congress way was not only not immoral, for it, it was the only moral way. Hence I kept myself with the Congress.[1] My object was and still is to push forth the non-violent way as it was in my own proposal. The Congress way made room for the interpretation you have put upon it. But I do not regard it as a condition. It is a toss. If the British intention is pure, says the Congress, we plunge. The way to test the intention is to know the British mind about India. If it is pure, then it is clear that God wants the Congress to throw its whole weight on the side of Britain, so that ultimately the victory may go not to the strongest arms but to the strongest cause. What you want is already at Britain's disposal. She draws men and money without let or hindrance. Unless violence breaks out, she will continue to get these. The Congress won't tolerate violence, let us assume. Then Britain has nothing to fear from the Congress in the violent way. And I hold that considered from the non-violent standpoint, which in my opinion is the only point worth considering, it would be immoral for the Congress to give her moral support to Britain unless the latter's moral position is made clear.

I do not lay down the law as you do about Nazism. Germans are as much human beings as you and I are. Nazism like other 'isms' is a toy of today. It will share the same fate as the other 'isms'.

I fancy I see the distinction between you and me. You, as a Westerner, cannot subordinate reason to faith. I, as an Indian, cannot subordinate faith to reason even if I will. You tempt the Lord God with your reason; I won't. As the *Gita* says, दैवं चैवात्र पंचमम्।[2] God is the fifth or the unknown, deciding factor.

In spite of our intellectual differences, our hearts have always been and shall be one.

SEGAON, December 15, 1939

Harijan, 23-12-1939

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 23-8-1939.

175. LETTER TO DILKHUSH DIWANJI

SEGAON, WARDHA
December 15, 1939

BHAI DILKHUSH,

Your work seems so good that I should very much like to relieve you of all worry with regard to finances. But I feel that perhaps it would be better that you progress under the strain of such worries. In any case Lakshmidas is there by your side.

I do not have the least doubt that your weaving should be done there only. Don't mind if it takes time to train the men. It is necessary for the final success of khadi that all the processes should be carried out in the same village.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI DILKHUSH DIWANJI
GANDHI KUTIR
KARADI *via* NAVASARI

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 2644

176. NOTE TO A. B.

December 15, 1939

It is broken and also it belongs to Ra. Ku[1] What right have you to use it?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 4332

177. MY HANDICAP[1]

I wonder if all journalists, having to write in English, feel the handicap which I do. The reflection arises from a stupid use I made of the verb 'cavil' in my note on a learned Englishman's letter partly reproduced in *Harijan* of 2nd December.[2] In my comment I said,

[1] This appeared under "Notes".
[2] *Vide* "The Pity of It", 28-11-1939.

"The writer seems to cavil at the demand for independence as distinguished from Dominion Status." The learned writer draws my attention to the meaning of the word 'cavil' as implying captious criticism of which, he says, he was wholly unconscious. I take great care in the use of English words. With all my care, however, I cannot make up for my imperfect knowledge of a foreign tongue. I had never known the dictionary meaning of the word. I must have picked up the word in the course of reading or hearing. I had hitherto given it an innocent meaning in the sense of strongly objecting. Knowing the writer as I do, I could never think of him as raising captious objection. I have apologized to him for the unconscious error.[3] It is good that he drew my attention to it. Heaven only knows how often, though wholly unconsciously, I must have offended persons simply because of my ignorance of the English language and its subtle idiom and usage. The language expands with the expansion of its people. I must struggle in the best manner I can and expect the indulgence of the English readers who, knowing my limitations, should believe that, where my language seems to offend, the offence is wholly unintended.

SEGAON, December 16, 1939

Harijan, 23-12-1939

178. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 16, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

What a shame ! Why did you let asthma attack you? And even if it did, why did you get frightened? Don't you see you upset Shakaribehn's[1] programme? You should keep in the house a kettle with a spout, and also secure a rubber tube of sufficient length. That will serve your purpose. Get a brass or copper kettle.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10019. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] Addressee's mother

179. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 16, 1939

CHI. KANCHAN,

I am replying to you by returns of post. You will be able to go wherever you want. But you can devote your time exclusively to study only in Vithal Kanya Vidyalaya. Stay there as long as it is necessary. Come over when you feel inclined. See that your health does not suffer. My visit to Bardoli seems to be off for the present.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8286. Also C.W. 7066. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah.

180. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 16, 1939

CHI. KANAIYO,

Radhabehn gave me the news about you. Wasn't it good that she was present? Did you suffer much? Do not be impatient. Till yesterday Ashadevi, with the *dilruba*[1], led the recitations from the *Ramayana* and the *bhajans*. She left today, for about ten days. We may, therefore, miss her in the evening. If Krishno holds the *tanpura*[2] we shall be able to carry on. Su. behn leads the morning recitations from the *Gita* and the *bhajans*.

Last time all *Harijan* work was finished on Tuesday. Pyarelal typed the articles. I suppose you know that. The typewriter was lying with Kakasaheb. So there was no difficulty. Rajkumaribehn is likely to take some time still. Mahadevbhai is expected to return on Sunday or Monday.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II

[1] A stringed musical instrument
[2] A stringed musical instrument used as a drone to accompany the musician

181. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 16, 1939

DAUGHTER RAIHANA[1],

You have sent very happy tidings. I got a shock when I heard of Mother's illness. God has been gracious. You too must be keeping fit. Tell Saroj[2] that it was a shame to have taken ill at Wardha.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : S.N. 9676

182. TO CORRESPONDENTS AND MESSAGE-SEEKERS[3]

I have often enough said in these columns that I am not in a position to read or acknowledge letters or send messages for numerous celebrations or functions. I have neither the time nor energy for the task. My helpers too cannot cope with the volume of correspondence that comes daily. Often there are pamphlets and reports accompanying the correspondence in the various languages of India besides English. The result is that only the correspondence that must be seen by me is placed before me. The balance is disposed of by Mahadev Desai, Pyarelal and Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, when she happens to be with me, or Dr. Sushila Nayyar when she has time from her medical work and when there is an overflow. In these circumstances I must ask my correspondence to spare me. Time was when I used to read every letter that was received and acknowledge most. That gave me an insight into the Indian mind that I would never have had otherwise. But I was then in possession of youth and health. Age has now overtaken me, and health requires a watchful care. Yet both the correspondence and the problems have increased. I would request correspondents to write only when there is something which, in their opinion, I alone can attend to. But what is more needed is forbearance on their part. If they do not receive answers or

[1] Daughter of Abbas Tyabji
[2] Sarojini Nanavati
[3] This appeared under "Notes".

acknowledge-ments, they should not take it amiss. I have an angry letter in my posse-ssion which has prompted this note. The writer had sent a pamphlet with his first letter. I was not able to cope with it. I had nothing new to say on it. I knew, moreover, that Pandit Nehru was dealing with the subject-matter; and so I spared myself by not dealing with the matter. Very often letters are sent to me which are meant for members of the Working Committee. The public know that I am not a member of the Working Committee. They should know too that I do not interest myself in its routine work. Only that part of its work comes to me in which it may need my advice. The best course, therefore, is not to write to me on any matter which the Working Committee can and does deal with. Corres-pondents should forgive me when they find that they receive no acknow-ledgement. It is sheer want of ability that prevents me from dealing with all the correspondence. As to messages, I should be regarded as unfit for sending them. My blessing must be assumed for all good work. Friends should help me to conserve what energy is left in me for the work God has called me to.

SEGAON, December 17, 1939

Harijan, 23-12-1939

183. INDEPENDENCE

From a correspondent's letter I take the following extract:

> While you ask for India's independence you promise nothing in return. Don't you think a promise of active partnership would show a spirit of reciprocity and may well be given? Co-operation and interdependence, is the law of life. India is in no position, even if it gets independence, to be able to retain it. In Anglo-Indian partnership is our best hope, and a 'Constituent Assembly' on a wide franchise will only make confusion worse confounded. This work can only be rightly done by a few wise men.

In the first place, the Congress has not asked for independence. It has asked for a declaration of Britain's war aims. Secondly, independence, when it comes, will come because India is ripe for it. Therefore there can be no consideration to be given for it. It is not a marketable thing. It is a status. This, however, does not mean a frog-in-the-well status. There may or may not be an alliance with Britain. My hope is that there will be. So long as I have a share in the attainment of independence, it will be through non-violent means and,

therefore, a result of an honourable treaty or settlement with Britain.

I must dissent from the correspondent's view that "India is in no position, even if it gets independence, to be able to retain it." This is surely a contradiction in terms. The correspondent has involved himself in it because he thinks that independence can be a gift from someone. India will never have it until it is able to keep it against the whole world. The alliance with Britain will be not for India's protection but for mutual benefit. So long as she needs Britain's protection for whatever cause, her status will be less than independence. We see the mockery of it going on in Europe today among the small nations. Their independence is on the sufferance of big nations. I attach little importance to such independence. So long as the basis of society is force, smaller nations must hold their status on sufferance. I should not be interested in India being in such a position. And India is not a small nation. I would far rather have India engaged indefinitely in a non-violent fight for gaining her indepen-dence than be satisfied with anything less as her goal. She can settle down to peace only when she has independence which she can hold against any combination. This is possible only on a non-violent basis. It may be far off. It may not be realized in my lifetime. It may even take generations. I have patience enough to wait. Joy lies in the fight, in the attempt, in the suffering involved, not in the victory itself. For, victory is implied in such an attempt.

I see no difficulty in a Constituent Assembly elected on a wide franchise. But I do in an Assembly of wise men. Where are they? Who will certify to their wisdom?

SEGAON, December 17, 1939

Harijan, 23-12-1939

184. FAITH v. *REASON*

Circumstances have placed me here in the midst of some 'ultramodern', 'rational-minded' young officers, who jeer at me, pooh-pooh me and consider me a brainless idiot for I cannot fall in with them and consider 'good' and 'bad', vice and virtue as mere matters of social expediency. Something in me tells me that they are wrong and I am right. I still believe that a moral code on the basis of something like 'absolute good' does exist. My friends argue with me to convince me that drinking of wine is as bad as drinking of tea or coffee. They insist that morality cannot depend on what a person eats or drinks.

Further,—and it is on this point chiefly that I would pray for your advice—they say that sex taboo was meant to keep the social structure safe. Their contention is that sex-enjoyment, which harms no person and leads to no trouble is perfectly natural and hence moral. Too much indulgence, they say, is as bad as overeating oneself and nothing more. A principle which is justifiable with one's wife cannot be inherently immoral with another person. Circumstances must decide, and it is always a question of more or less. There is nothing like an absolute code of morals.

Though my faith gets a shock and I sense some flaw in their argument, yet in actual combat they always corner me, and I have to take shelter under my sixth sense which they call blind prejudice.

In fact, they have smashed my intellectual comprehension of the matter, and I have begun to doubt the soundness of my position. Yet I told them I would prefer to be with men like you and go to hell rather than be with them and enjoy the Kingdom of Heaven.

So please, Mahatmaji, save me from this intellectual and spiritual torment with a bit of your mind. I do hope you would not fail me.

This is almost the whole of a young officer's letter. His case is typical of many. Those who have read my book of experiments[1] know how I had to pass through similar experiences. I would refer all who have difficulties like my correspondent's to read the relevant chapters in those 'experiments'. Reason is a poor thing in the midst of temptation. Faith alone can save us. Reason *appears* to be on the side of those who indulge in drink and free love. The fact is that reason is blurred on such occasions. It follows the instinct. Do not lawyers ranged on opposite sides make reason appear to be on their side? And yet one of them must be wrong, or it may be that both are. Hence faith in the rightness of one's moral position is the only bulwark against the attack of reason.

The arguments advanced by my correspondent's tempters are plausible. There is no such thing as absolute morality for all times. But there is a relative morality which is absolute enough for imperfect mortals that we are. Thus, it is absolutely immoral to drink spirituous liquors except as medicine, in medicinal doses and under medical advice. Similarly, it is absolutely wrong to see lustfully any woman other than one's wife. Both these positions have been proved by cold reason. Counter-arguments have always been advanced. They have

[1] *An Autobiography or The Story of My Experiments with Truth*.

been advanced against the very existence of God-the Sum of all that Is. Faith that transcends reason is our only Rock of Ages[1] . I present it to all those who are in the same difficulty as this young officer. My faith has saved me and is still saving me from pitfalls. It has never betrayed me. It has never been known to betray anyone.

SEGAON, December 18, 1939

Harijan, 23-12-1939

185. A USEFUL PUBLICATION[2]

Shri Aryanayakam has just handed me a *Teacher's Handbook of Basic Education through Cardboard Modelling* by Shri Lakshmiswar Sinha who had his experience in Europe. He was working in Santiniketan and had kindly come to Wardha to introduce cardboard modelling in the training school. The book, like Shri Vinoba's on spinning[3] is an original contribution. Shri Vinoba's original is in Marathi. It has been translated into Hindi too.[4] There is hardly a superfluous word in it. The volume before me is in a different style, but it is none the less attractive and instructive. It has five chapters and two appendices. The second appendix contains correlated lessons on preparatory models. As a specimen I give below the lesson entitled 'Cubic Box'

The chapters deal, among other things, with 'materials', 'class-room and equipment', 'fundamental techniques', 'a few suggestions about correlated teaching' and 'how to work with children'. The book is profusely illustrated. The price is As. 12 only. It should be in the hands not only of every teacher of 'Nayee Talim' but also of all teachers who would like their pupils to learn a simple craft. For every advanced student it provides a useful and instructive hobby which he can teach himself.

SEGAON, December 18, 1939

Harijan, 23-12-1939

[1] From a hymn by A. M. Toplady

[2] This appeared under "Notes".

[3] *Mool Udyog—Kantane*

[4] *Mool Udyog—Katna*

186. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

Monday, December 18, 1939

Valjibhai needs massage. He does not get it these days. Devote half an hour to this service.

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 4333

187. WHO IS A SANATANIST ?

,त्यं दमस्तपः शौचं संतोष हीः क्षमार्जवम्
ज्ञानं शमो दया ध्यानमेष धर्मः सनातनः ।
अद्रोहः सर्वभूतेषु कर्मणा मनसा गिरा
अनुग्रहश्च दानं च सतां धर्मः सनातनः ।[1]

—महाभारत, शांतिपव¸

A sanatanist is one who follows the sanatana dharma. According to *Mahabharata* it means observance of ahimsa, *satya*, non-stealing, cleanliness and self-restraint. As I have been endeavouring to follow these to the best of my ability, I have not hesitated to describe myself as a sanatanist. But during the anti-untouchability campaign my description of myself as a sanatanist was resented by those who opposed me. They styled themselves sanatanists. I did not engage in a quarrel over the name. And so I have described the opponents by the name they have chosen for themselves. Now a letter has been received by me from a correspondent writing on behalf of the Sanatana Dharma Pratinidhi Sabha, Punjab, protesting against my calling the opponents sanatanist which, they say, would imply that all sanatanists believe in untouchability and take delight in painting me in black colours. The letter proceeds :

> To tell the truth it has pained us very much, and we are afraid our religious and social work in the Punjab will suffer. Mahatmaji, you being nearer to Deccan know more of the sanatanists of the South than of us of the North. Here, in the Punjab, we have been advocating temple-entry and other facilities

[1] Truth, self-restraint, penance, purity, contentment, modesty, forbearance, uprightness, knowledge, serenity, compassion and meditation—this is the eternal (sanatana) dharma.

Freedom from malice towards all creatures, in thought, word and deed, kindness and charity— this is the eternal dharma of the good.

to the Harijans. We have obtained *vyavasthas*[1] to this effect from the All-India Sanatana Dharma Pratinidhi Sabha Parishad. Our organization, with its 600 branches and 300 Mahabir Dals, has itself worked for this cause. In this province there are very few temples whose *mahants*[2] and *pujaris*[3] refuse the rights of *devadarshan*[4] to Harijans. You can well imagine how your article[5] can affect our work. The ignorant masses, who cannot differentiate between one sanatanist and another have taken us to be your opponents. Our statements and contradictions are of no avail. Your word carries more weight than hundreds of our lectures. We are and have been working for the uplift of Harijans under the guidance of Pt. M. M. Malaviya and Goswami Ganesh Dattaji. I request you to find some other word for those who oppose the Harijan movement. The word 'sanatanist' does not fit in.

My correspondent is wrong in thinking that I do not know the sanatanists of the North. If Kashi may be considered to be in the North, Kashi has produced stubborn opponents of the reform. The correspondent would be on safe ground if he would confine his remarks to the sanatanists of the Punjab. But I should not have thought that anybody could fail to understand the limited sense in which I was using the term. I hope that he has exaggerated the mischief done by my reference to the anti-reformists as sanatanists. Surely, there should be no difficulty in the Punjab sanatanists making their own position clear. In any case, they may use this writing in their support. Indeed, not all the sanatanists in the South are opposed to the reform or to me. During the Harijan tour[6] I discovered that the opposition was confined to a microscopic minority, no matter where I went. Their number has been further reduced during the intervening years. Rajaji could not have carried his Temple-Entry Bill[7] if he was not supported by overwhelming Hindu opinion. Nor could the great temples of the South have been opened to Harijans if the sanatanist opposition had been at all extensive. When, therefore, I refer to sanatanist opposition it can only apply to the minority that delights to call itself sanatanist and whose occupation is to oppose anti-

[1] Injunctions

[2] Religious heads

[3] Priests

[4] Visit to a temple, literally, 'sight of deities'

[5] *Vide* "Temple Entry", 18-9-1939.

[6] Of 1933-34

[7] The Temple-Entry Authorization and Indemnity Bill was passed in the Madras Legislative Council on August 7, 1939.

untouchability reform and blacken my character. I can only pray that their eyes will some day be opened and they will range themselves on the side of reform, which is no less than purification of Hinduism of the taint of untouchability.

SEGAON, December 19, 1939

Harijan, 23-12-1939

188. LETTER TO NALINI RANJAN SARKAR

[After *December* 19, 1939][1]

Maulana Saheb told me that you had given up your portfolio in the Bengal Cabinet. I think you have done a patriotic thing.

The Hindu, 26-12-1939

189. TELEGRAM TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE[2]

December 22, 1939

YOUR WIRE WAS CONSIDERED BY WORKING COMMITTEE. WITH KNOWLEDGE THEY HAVE THEY ARE UNABLE TO LIFT BAN.[3] MY PERSONAL OPINION IS YOU SHOULD ADVISE SUBHAS BABU SUBMIT DISCIPLINE IF BAN IS TO BE REMOVED. HOPE YOU ARE WELL.[4]

Rabindranath O Subhas Chandra, p. 195

190. THE PLEDGE

It is to be hoped that Congressmen will learn by heart, not merely store up in their memory, the resolution[5] of the Working Committee containing the pledge for 26th January next. The pledge

[1] On December 19, 1939, the addressee had resigned as Finance Minister of Bengal.

[2] In reply to the addressee's telegram, dated December 20, 1939, which read : "Owing gravely critical situation all over India and specially in Bengal would urge Congress Working Committee immediately remove ban against Subhas and invite his cordial co-operation in supreme interest national unity."

[3] For the resolution declaring Subhas Chandra Bose ineligible for any elective post for three years, *vide* "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 11-8-1939.

[4] *vide* also "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 15-1-1940

[5] *Vide* Appendix "Resolution on Independence Day Pledge", 30-12-1939.

was first taken in 1930[1] Ten years is not a short time. If Congressmen had honestly lived up to the constructive pro-gramme of 1920, there would be *purna* swaraj today. There would be communal harmony, there would be purification of Hinduism and smiling faces in India's villages. These together would produce such a momentum that independence could not be resisted. But the painful fact must be admitted that Congressmen have not carried out the programme as they should have. They have not believed that the triple programme is non-violence in action. They have not believed that civil disobedience could not be successfully carried out without fulfilling it.

Therefore I have not hesitated to remark in these columns that our non-violence has been non-violent conduct born of impotence. Hence we witness the sorry spectacle of us confessing that, though this non-violence of the weak may bring us freedom from English rule, it cannot enable us to resist foreign invasion. This fact—and it is a fact—shows that, if the English yield to the non-violence, miscalled, of the weak, it would prove that they had almost made up their mind to surrender power and would not hold on to it at the cost of creating frightfulness. Congressmen should not be surprised, if I would not declare civil disobedience unless I was morally certain that they had understood the full significance of non-violence and that they were carrying out the triple programme with as much zest as they would offer civil disobedience, so called. They would perhaps now understand why I call the three items of the programme essentials of non-violence.

What do I mean by communal fellowship? How is it to be obtained when the Jinnah-Nehru talks have failed? They may or may not have failed. Pacts are meant for big people. They do not affect men in the street, the ground-down millions. In cultivating fellowship among these, written pacts are not needed. Do Congressmen cultivate goodwill towards all without political motive? This fellow-feeling should be natural, not born out of fear or expedience, even as fellowship between blood-brothers, not being born out of any ulterior motive, is natural and lasting. Nor is it to be applied only as between Hindus and Muslims. It has to be universal. It must be extended to the least among us. It is to be extended to Englishmen. It is to be extended to political opponents. Removal of untouchability again has deep significance. The very idea of high and low among Hindus should be rooted out. Caste solidarity should give place to national

solidarity. In Congress ranks these distinctions should be relics of the past.

Then the charkha. For nearly twenty years now it has adorned the National Flag which is made of khadi. And yet khadi has not become universal. Khadi having been adopted by the Congress, Congressmen may not rest till it has penetrated every home in the remotest part of India. Only then will it become a mighty symbol of voluntary co-operation and one purpose. It is a symbol of identification with the poorest in the land. Hitherto Congressmen have played with khadi. They have not believed in its message. They have used it often unwillingly, for mere show. It must become reality if true non-violence is to permeate us.

Let Congressmen note the preamble to the Working Committee's resolution on the pledge. Those who do not believe in it are not bound to take the pledge. Indeed, those who have not the belief are bound not to take it. For the pledge this time is to be taken for a definite purpose. A grave responsibility rests on my shoulders. A vast organization like the Congress will not move in the direction of civil resistance unless I give the word. It is no matter of pride or joy to me. I should break under the weight of that responsibility, if I were not conscious of the fact that I am nothing. Congressmen have trust in my judgement which is dictated by the living Law of Truth and Love which is God. God speaks through acts of men and women. In this case acts of Congressmen and Congress-women have to speak.

SEGAON, December 24, 1939

Harijan, 30-12-1939

191. WHAT IS NEUTRALITY ?

An American missionary writes :[1]

> . . . Are you and the Congress generally neutral in regard to which religion a person belongs to? I believe the congress claim to be neutral, but my contention is that they are not.

Your friend, the late Prime Minister of Madras, sent a wire of congratulation to Christians who became Hindus. Is that being neutral? And just the other day, here near Bombay in Thana District, when about fifty hill people returned to Hinduism, the leaders in making them Hindus were the Congress leaders of Than a

[1] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.

District. So this plainly shows that the Congress leaders favour Hinduism.Under such a Government what chance would the small minority of Christians stand when *purna* swaraj is given to be monopolized by the Hindu majority? . . . Are they to be placed at the mercy of anti-Christian leaders? Will it be possible for the Congress Government to be impartial and neutral in religious matters as the British Government has been? If not, we certainly would not hail it as a blessing.

I am not aware of what Shri Rajagopalachari said. He is well able to take care of himself. But I can give my idea of neutrality. In free India every religion should prosper on terms of equality, unlike what is happening today. Christianity being the nominal religion of the rulers, it receives favours which no other religion enjoys. A Government responsible to the people dare not favour one religion over another. But I should see nothing wrong in Hindus congratul-ating those who having left them may return to their fold. I think that the Christians of free America would rejoice at the return to their ancestral Christianity of Americans of the slums—if there are any in America—temporarily calling themselves Hindus under the influence of a plausible Hindu missionary. I have already complained of the methods adopted by some missionaries to wean ignorant people from the religion of their forefathers. It is one thing to preach one's religion to whomsoever may choose to adopt it, another to entice masses. And if those thus enticed, on being undeceived, go back to their old love, their return will give natural joy to those whom they had forsaken. The missionary friend errs in regarding the Congress as a Hindu organization. It has on its roll perhaps three million men and women. Its register is open to all. As a matter of fact it has on it men and women belonging to all religions. There is no reason why Christians or Muslims should not capture the Congress. It is true, however, that a national democratic Government will represent the majority of Hindu voters in the aggregate. But owing to unequal distribution of population in the various provinces, Bengal, Punjab, Frontier and Sind have a preponderance of Muslims, as the other provinces of Hindus.

I hold that it is wrong to look at the question from the narrow sectarian standpoint. The only true standpoint is national. Therefore the American missionary seems to me to labour under a threefold mistake when he mistakes a natural joy for want of neutrality, regards the Congress as a Hindu organization, and views India as divided religiously into parts hostile to and suspicious of one another. But economic and political aspirations of all the communities are surely the same except that the privileged ones will find their privileges melting in the sunshine of freedom. It seems to me to be wrong to

import religious differences into a political discussion. Common law should prevent any injustice.

SEGAON, December 24, 1939
Harijan, 30-12-1939

192. DRILLS IN INDIA

I know of no other person who has done as much as Prof. Manikrao[1], who is popularizing drills and exercise with single-minded devotion. He has always insisted upon uniform terms of command in drills all over India. We often see people using a hodge-podge of English terms. Prof. Manikrao has discontinued them and prepared a technical terminology [of his own]. He has now published them with their explanations in Gujarati. This compilation deserves to be read and studied by those interested in drills and exercise. It is priced twelve annas.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 24-12-1939

193. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 24, 1939

CHI. MANUDI,

I like the name Urmi. But choose a name approved by your mother's sisters. The final choice rests with you two, of course.

Ramibehn feels quite happy here for the present. Her little daughter also is becoming chubby. Rami says she can leave this place only after Kunvarji has completely recovered. It is all right if she stays on here. Why should you, too, go to a place where there is scarcity of water and thereby create more scarcity? But who can convince one's mother's sisters? Kindness demands that you should not go to Rajkot unless it is absolutely necessary.

Blessings to both from
BAPU

SMT. MANUBEHN MASHRUWALA
BALKIRAN, SOUTH AVENUE
SANTA CRUZ
B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 2676. Courtesy : Manubehn S. Mashruwala

[1] Rajaratna Gaianan Yashvant Tamhane of Baroda

194. SPINNING-WHEELS V. *MILLS*

Congressmen should not weary of my filling these columns with everything about the charkha and khadi. Heart peace among communities and reinstatement of the wheel in every home are my politics, for I expect to gain the freedom of the country from political and economic bondage through these means in the place of red rebellion.

The problem before every Congressman is how to displace mill-cloth, whether foreign or indigenous. It is often believed in Congress circles that indigenous mill-cloth is as good as khadi and superior because of its cheapness. The cheapness theory in terms of the crores of artisans has been exploded. Mill-spun for these millions is dearer than hand-spun. The former means deprivation of their wages. Imagine what would happen if, on the score of foreign wheat being cheaper, the wheat-grower was displaced !

If the village spinners and weavers are to come into their own, and that quickly, every Congressman has to become a master spinner and master weaver. He should be able to teach and guide the poor villagers. He has to be a khadi technician. He has to spin for the sake of the country. I have shown that khadi cannot be made cheap enough for the middle class unless there is enough sacrificial yarn or unless the spinner is put upon the old *begar*[1] wage of one pice to one anna for eight hours' strenuous spinning.

No congressman would put in the required labour and skill unless he believed that the indigenous factory, mills had to be and could be replaced by the charkha and the handloom.

If Congressmen have this faith, all congress organizations will become efficient spinning and weaving schools. I remember how in 1921 Congress offices used to collect indifferently spun yarn and expect it to be woven somehow. It was all a huge waste. Nobody knew how to deal with it nor what to do to ensure good spinning. Things are different now. Much knowledge and exper- ience have been gained by the A. I. S. A. Some literature has also been published. Every Congress office should become a model laboratory and spinning and weaving institute for the organization of villages. And, as I have suggested, khadi is the centre round which other village industries should revolve and be organized. Congressmen will discover the tremendous possibilities of this kind of service. It is chiefly mental

[1] Forced labour

lethargy that is in the way of quick and successful organization of villages. I suggest that, if India is to evolve along non-violent lines, it will have to decentralize many things. Centralization cannot be sustained and defended without adequate force. Simple homes from which there is nothing to take away require no policing; the palaces of the rich must have strong guards to protect them against dacoity. So must huge factories. Rurally organized India will run less risk of foreign invasion than urbanized India, well equipped with military, naval and air forces. Assuming then that Congressmen have understood the meaning and implications of the charkha, they would, without a moment's delay, set about qualifying themselves for the service. Assume further that they are novices. Then they will procure some cotton, preferably grown in their villages, taluks or districts. They should gin it with the hand or at the most on a board with the help of a rod. They will keep the seed and, when they have enough, either sell it or use it for their cattle if they have any. They will card the cotton with a hand-bow, costing next to nothing. They can improvise one themselves. This carded cotton should be turned into slivers. These will be spun on the *takli*. When they have fairly mastered these processess, they can proceed to speedier ones. They will also put themselves and the members of their families right regarding the use of khadi. They will keep an accurate record of their daily progress and will learn the arithmetic of yarn.

Congress committees will rearrange their offices with the help of the local A. I. S. A. branch and convert them into spinning and weaving depots. I must warn Congressmen against the fatal error of sending to distant depots their yarn for weaving. The economics of khadi require that from cultivation of cotton to the manufacture of khadi and its disposal all the processes should, as far as possible, be gone through in the same village or centre. Thus, it is wrong to spin yarn in the Punjab, weave it in Bombay, and sell in Malabar the khadi thus manufactured. If Congressmen and committees attend to this simple rule when beginning khadi work, they will not find themselves appalled by the difficulty of the task. If they succeed in their own district, there is no reason why the other 249 districts should not be successfully organized. The reasoning is valid even if villages were treated as units. It must be confessed that we have not as yet one single village organized in that fashion. Certainly Segaon is not, even though I am supposed to be living in it. My failure, however, need not dismay a worker who will make the organization of his own village his sole occupation.

SEGAON, December 25, 1939
Harijan, 30-12- 1939

195. NOTES

THE LATE ACHARYA RAMDEVJI

The death of Acharya Ramdev removes from our midst a notable Arya Samaj leader and worker. Next to Swami Shraddhanandji he was maker of Kangri Gurukul. So far as I know he was the Swamiji's right-hand man. As a teacher he was very popular. Latterly he had thrown himself with his characteristic energy in the running of the Kanya Gurukul in Dehradun and was the guide and supporter of Kumari Vidyavati. He was her only collector whilst he was alive. She did not have to worry over the financial side of the institution. I know what an irreparable deprivation his death is to her and her institution. The Gurukul should be put beyond financial stress by those who knew the late Acharya, who value female education, and who know the worth of Kumari Vidyavati and the institution. Such a collection would be a most suitable memorial to the departed Acharya.

SAD NEWS FROM BIHAR

I had a wire from Bihar complaining that Harijans, who have hitherto had no complaints against Congressmen, had not been put forward as they might have been as Congress nominees during the recent local board elections, and that those who had come forward had not received fair play. The wire further complained that Shri Rajendra Babu who was informed of the fact had interested himself but was not listened to. It seems that almost the same thing may be said about Muslims. There were honourable exceptions, no doubt. The complaint is that the congress has failed to fulfil the expectations raised by it. Congressmen have to go out of their way to justify their claim for being national-minded and impartial. In a matter so simple as this Rajendra Babu's energy should not be taxed at all. Self-seekers who want to serve their ends should have no place in the national organization. It is any day better for the Congress to do without their influence. I suggest that even at this juncture, if the complaint has foundation, the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee might redress the injustice by withdrawing some members to make room for deserving Muslims and Harijans. It is never too late to be just.

SEGAON, December 25, 1939

Harijan, 30-12-1939

196. A CASE FOR RELIEF[1]

In many parts of India the competition of imported iron has killed the old village industry of iron-smelting. All round the village of Thettupalli in Chittoor, for example, where fifty years ago the smiths were active, lie ruined iron kilns. Bazaar-iron has successfully competed with the village-iron of the Salahuva Vakkalu of Mysore, and has killed the smelting industry of the Telugu Kammaras. In the Central Provinces, the small tribe of Agaria Gonds are in danger of suffering the same fate.

The Agaria Gonds are an aboriginal tribe of charcoal-burners, iron-smelters and blacksmiths who live along the heights of the Maikal Hills mainly in the Mandla and Bilaspur Districts, where excellent surface ore may be obtained. In their case it is not the competition of foreign iron but an unimaginative and excessive tax that has almost ruined their once flourishing industry and brought its allied institutions to decay. In 1867 the Agarias paid a sort of levy of four annas a kiln; today they have to pay ten rupees, or forty times as much. . . .

Now these people are among the poorest in the world. Innocent of possessions, undernourished, malaria-ridden, they cannot afford such heavy taxes . . .

This is not only disastrous for the economic life of the tribe, but it has had serious repercussions on its religious and social institutions. For the iron kiln is the centre, the living focus of the religion and traditions of the Agarias. . . . The disappearance of the kilns has had a depressing and disintegrating effect; if the process continues, it will mean not only the loss of useful village industry, but the extinction of a tribe.

Government is spending vast sums of money on village uplift and on the reorganization of village industries. Here is an industry that can be revived immediately and at ridiculously small cost. . . . As there are only about one hundred kilns, this reduction of tax will mean a loss to Government of under five hundred rupees. Surely this is not an excessive price to pay for the revitalization of a whole tribe.

. . . At a time when the world is spending crores daily on iron that is destined to destroy mankind, let us be liberal and generous to these poor and simple iron-workers who no more than to be allowed to live in peace.

I hope the required relief will be quickly granted and the poor Agaria Gonds will be saved from the impending disaster.

SEGAON, December 25, 1939

Harijan, 20-1-1940

[1] Only extracts from Verrier Elwin's article are reproduced here.

197. LETTER TO NALINI RANJAN SARKAR

SEGAON,
December 25, 1939

DEAR NALINI BABU,

I like your speech.[1] You will come when you think it necessary.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

198. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 25, 1939

BHAI JETHALAL,

Only today I was able to read with care the article which you sent on October 3. The arguments are good but there is nothing in the article to make it worthy of inclusion in *Harijanbandhu*. The arguments can be answered. I didn't follow one argument. You say that if mill-cloth is not exported the people here cannot buy it. How are they to pay for it, [you ask]. How is this ? People can exchange surplus grain for cloth. I am returning the article. How are you getting on ? Do you make ghee ? How do you meet your expenses ?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 9868. Courtesy : Narayan J. Sampat

199. LETTER TO LAKSHMI GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 25, 1939

CHI. LAKSHMI,

What sort of a person you are ! You go on falling ill and making

[1] The addressee had enclosed a copy of his statement in the Legislature on his resignation; *vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Nalini Ranjan Sarkar", after 19-12-1939.

us all anxious. Now take plenty of rest and get well. The weather is very good here if you would come here now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 2135

200. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 25, 1939

DEAR SISTER,

I got your letter. I have read the Punjab resolutions and also the Planning Committee's. I was a little unhappy to read the Committee's. Everything will be all right if a wise lady is not carried away by this current. I understand the other things.

Keep writing to me. I hope you are well.

Mahadev has gone to Madras. He ought to be back by now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 7989

201. LETTER TO G. V. GURJALE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 26, 1939

MY DEAR BHIKSHU,

Mrs. Gurjale can come after the cold season if there is elbow room at the time. The place is crowded.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 1391

202. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 26, 1939

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. What is the point in my writing to you, since this is how you behave every time ? I even wired as desired by you.

Somebody will come to receive you at the station on the 2nd. Take care of your health. Ba is still in Delhi. Everything else is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3530

203. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 26, 1939

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

I got your letter too late, but that is only an excuse. There was time enough for my message to reach you, but you must have seen in *Harijan*, that I have reduced to the minimum writing letters and sending messages.[1] I do still send [messages] where I cannot escape having to do so. Won't that too stop one day ? The leprosy patient is doing well at present. See him when you happen to come here some time. I shall tell you about Lakshmipati too when you come.

SHRI VALLABHRAM VAIDYA
DHANVANTARI BHAVAN
AKASHETH KUVA'S POLE
AHMEDABAD

From Gujarati : C.W. 2908. Courtesy : Vallabhram Vaidya

204. DISCUSSION WITH NAGPUR CONGRESS WORKERS[2]

WARDHA,
December 27, 1939

One of the things that seemed to trouble [the Nagpur Congressmen] was how, if it was wrong to offer satyagraha to an opponent in difficulty, we could ever offer it against the British Government, for so long as the present war continued, they were bound to be in difficulty.

[1] *Vide* "To Correspondents and Message-Seekers", 17-12-1939.

[2] Mahadev Desai's summary, from which this and the following item are reproduced, appeared with the note : "Gandhiji's talks to the Congressmen who came to Wardha from surrounding places were not meant for publication. But as incomplete and inaccurate paragraphs have crept into the Press, it has been thought advisable to give the foregoing summary."

[GANDHIJI :] Satyagraha is a universal principle of which civil disobedience is one of the many applications. Satyagraha goes on no matter whether the opponent is in difficulty or not, for offered in the proper spirit it is service of the opponent. What is essential is that we should not embarrass an opponent who is in difficulty and make his difficulty our opportunity. That is why civil disobedience, which can be applied only under certain conditions and circumstances, may not be applied against an opponent in difficulty. Civil disobedience is not the law of life; satyagraha is. Satyagraha, therefore, never ceases; civil disobedience can cease and ought to when there is no occasion for it. Then there are two kinds of civil disobedience—aggressive and defensive. Defensive civil disobedience becomes a duty when insult or humiliation is imposed upon us by an opponent. That duty would have to be done whether the opponent is in difficulty or not. An opponent in difficulty may not expect people to obey unjust or humiliating laws or orders. Aggressive civil disobedience embarrasses the opponent, whether we mean to embarrass him or not. Travelling in a railway train without a ticket—assuming for a moment that it is civil disobedience, which it is not—would be taboo, for it would be merely to embarrass the opponent. In brief, there is nothing which being normally justifiable and conducive to swaraj would be taboo even if it seems to embarrass the opponent. To do what is morally necessary and beneficial is a duty and quite a different thing from that which may not be morally indefensible but calculated to vex and embarrass an opponent in difficulty. To make his difficulty one's opportunity is in no case justifiable.

What do you mean by saying that direct action will be a prelude to the Constituent Assembly ?

GANDHIJI : I do not remember having either said or written this. It is likely that you have torn something from its context. All that I have said is that we may have to go through the fire of civil resistance in order to win India's freedom, and even that I am straining every nerve to avoid. The Constituent Assembly is a prelude to independence and a natural prelude. It has been suggested as a means to obviate all clash of communal and class interest. Its main function is to draw up the charter of independence. Direct action would be necessary when all progress towards independence becomes impossible and all negotiations with the Government prove fruitless.

When the M.L.A.s are now unemployed, why should they accept their monthly

allowance ?

GANDHIJI : I have no doubt that they ought not to draw these allowances. It is no use our saying it is Government money. There is nothing that belongs to Government. There are people who when they go to jail make all kinds of demands and do not hesitate to misuse jail property. But they forget that the jails and everything there belongs to us, and that we have to make as sparing use of those things as we do of what we call ours. I have, therefore, no doubt that allowances should not be taken and, if they must be, they should be handed to the Congress office. It is an essentially moral question to be considered by every Congressman. We would enhance our prestige if we decide not to draw these allowances. I have hitherto refrained from expressing my opinion because I felt that it might be against the general trend of Congress opinion. But now that you have raised the question I would ask you to approach the Congress President and the Working Committee.

These questions answered, Gandhiji said :

I must now come to my favourite theme. To take the questions of communal unity first. The essence of it is to give to all communities what is their due without their asking or having to fight for it. Satyagraha, as I have said, is the law of life. It begins not by assertion of rights but by correct recognition of the rights of our neighbours. As regards the Harijans I would put up with their kicks and worse, if they should choose to resort to them. For it will take time for them to be convinced that, having used them ill for centuries, we shall now treat them as blood-brothers.

To come to the charkha, my pet obsession, I am not going to be content until you act truly. As I came in I heard you haggling about 640 yards or 640 rounds (i. e., 840 yards). This will not do. We have to set the charkha humming in every home and khadi must become universal. The sure proof that spinning has become universal will be afforded by the fact that khadi becomes current coin. I am thankful that the country will not think of launching civil disobedience until I as General give the signal for it. I shall not give the signal until my conditions are fulfilled. We need 200 crores of rupees worth of cloth. How much do we produce today on our wheels and looms ? Not more than a crore of rupees worth. How then can I be satisfied by your promise to spin 100 or even 200 yards a day ?

If people insist on wearing khadi exclusively, they will be

content with even a loin-cloth if no more khadi is available. I should be content even with that predicament if we cannot produce all the cloth we need. But I am sure that, if the demand is there, there will be an automatic supply. The universalization will come if we are all true. But the fact is that those who profess to believe in khadi will not work for it. Maulana Mahomed Ali, when he declared that our yarn cones were the bullets with which we would win swaraj, uttered a great truth and explained for all time the meaning of winning swaraj non-violently.[1] I will chant the khadi *mantra* as long as there is life in me, as I believe it will bring deliverance.

Settle your internal difference, organize yourselves and carry on the constructive programme of khadi, communal unity and Harijan *seva*[2].

Addressing the women present, Gandhiji said :

Khadi has a unifying influence. So, sisters, devote yourselves to it, as you hold the key to swaraj.

On the question of picketing of liquor shops, he said that there should be no violence. He asked them to keep a watch at liquor shops, approach addicts, study their surroundings, and persuade them to give up the evil.

I am a General, but a taskmaster as well. Hence, I appeal to you for complete devotion to the constructive programme before the signal for a fight is given.

Harijan, 6-1-1940, and *The Hindu*, 28-12-1939

205. TALK TO NAGPUR CONGRESS WORKERS

SEGAON,

[On or after *December 27, 1939*][3]

Gandhiji asked them individually how many knew how to spin, how many were regular spinners and so on, and said :

I am asking you all these questions because I want you all to be true. We have professed to believe in spinning all these years. We have the flag ceremony everywhere and on stated days. The flag is made of khadi and the wheel occupies the central place on it. We are disloyal

[1] What follows is from *The Hindu.*

[2] Service

[3] According to Mahadev Desai, the talk took place at Segaon after the discussion at Wardha; *vide* the preceding item.

to it so long as we do not strain every nerve to spread the message of the charkha. We have now to prove our loyalty by our concrete action. The General of a violent army insists on certain qualifications to be satisfied by his soldiers. May not I, the General of our non-violent army, insist on my soldiers being true to their creed ? I suggest to you that, if you will all be true to the creed, there will be no surplus khadi in the khadi shops, there will be no unemployment and there will be no mill-cloth, foreign or indigenous. You do not want me to say anything more, do you ?

Harijan, 6-1-1940

206. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 28, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter. I shall preserve the Chinese letter.[1]

The deliverance day[2] has received a full-page advertisement in *The T* [*imes*] *of I* [*ndia*]. But in truth, it seems to have fallen flat everywhere.

Have you read Fazlul Haq's indictment[3] ? Should nothing be said or done about it ?

You have not sent me Kumarappa's[4] letters to which you had raised strong objection. He is here. I asked him and he says he sent nothing recently. Do please send me what you may have.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The addressee, in his letter dated December 25, had suggested that the letter from Chiang Kai-Shek might be preserved at Maganwadi. *Vide* "Letter to Chiang Kai-Shek", 5-1-1940.

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 9-12-1939.

[3] Presumably this refers to the Bengal Premier's speech in the Assembly on December 18, alleging that it was the majority, the Indian National Congress, that had stood in the way of India's political progress. "They are a selfish lot. They are dishonest."

[4] J. C. Kumarappa, Secretary, A. I. V. I. A.

207. LETTER TO N. S. HARDIKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 28, 1939

DEAR DR. HARDIKAR[1],

I think you have taken the right step. But I do not like your language. Read the marked passages. They betray anger and ill will. Much of the grace has gone out of the resignation.

I hope the Mysore friends have been keeping you informed of the events there.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original : N. S. Hardikar Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

208. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 28, 1939

BHAI NANABHAI[2],

I am writing this under the pretext of acknowledging your letter, for though I do inquire and get news about you, I seldom write to you. Today, therefore, I have scribbled these few lines. How nice it would be if you got well completely !

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6692. Also C.W. 4337. Courtesy : Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

209. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 28, 1939

CHI. KANAIYO,

You are certainly lazy in the matter of writing letters. You know that at present I would expect letters from you. There has been

[1] Head of the Congress Seva Dal
[2] Manilal Gandhi's father-in-law

nothing from Radha, either, after two letters from her.

Don't you think you have been hasty in resuming the use of your throat ? If we consult a doctor and if his instructions are not contrary to dharma, we should follow them. Now write to me in detail. Can you use your throat for all purposes ? Do you find any difficulty in talking or singing ? Remember that if there is scarcity of water, etc., it is the duty of all those who are not needed there to leave the place. I did not remember this, otherwise perhaps I would have dissuaded you from going to Rajkot. Now keep this in mind while you are there.

Inquire about Manjula[1] and find out how she is.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II

210. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 28, 1939

CHI. LILA,

You should really not expect letters from me. There should be letters only when there is no other alternative. We should save even a minute if it can be saved. What does it matter if I do not write letters? And what is particularly significant if I write? What kind of love is it that needs the support of letters? You should think about nothing except your studies. Yes, you must also give thought to the question of money. Being away from me you should reflect more and should become serious. You have taken up studies. All this should be included in it. Your speech should be marked with seriousness, greater firmness and restraint. "Education without thought is false." You are not studying for the sake of the examination. Rather, you are using the examination as an inducement to study. The real purpose of education should be self-development. Therefore, concentrate well on your studies and come after passing your examination. Mahadev came the day before yesterday. Ba is still in Delhi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Vrajlal Gandhi's daughter who was unwell

211. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

[After *December 28, 1939*][1]

CHI. KANAIYO,

You don't write anything. That is not proper. How is Manjula ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II

212. MESSAGE TO ALL-INDIA URDU CONFERENCE[2]

[Before *December 29, 1939*][3]

Every Hindu well-wisher of the country should learn Urdu and every Muslim well-wisher Hindi.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-1-1940

213. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

December 29, 1939

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have had talks with Shastriji. A few revisions have been made.

I have telephoned about Madalasa[4]. God's will be done. . .[5]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3007

[1] This appears to have been written some time after the preceding item.
[2] The Urdu original is not available.
[3] The Conference began on December 29.
[4] Who was unwell and due for her first delivery
[5] Text of the letter after this is not available.

214. LETTER TO MADALASA

December 29, 1939

CHI. MADALASA,

What tricks are you up to ? Let what will be, be. Don't worry. Make proper use of all the *abhangas*[1] you have learnt and all the knowledge that you have imbibed from Vinoba. Follow the doctors' instructions.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 319

215. LETTER TO SAMPURNANAND

SEGAON, WARDHA,

December 29, 1939

BHAI SAMPURNANANDJI,

There has been no change in the pledge[2] of [19]30. All that has happened is an addition[3] to the original. And the addition is also relevant. It can also be amended, sometimes such amendment becomes imperative. The Committee[4] is not entitled to make changes in the original. Surely you will not say that suggestions may not be offered even in support of the original. There can be a difference of opinion regarding the usefulness of a suggestion. All I want to say is that it was necessary to offer the suggestion.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi original : Sampurnanand Collection. Courtesy : National Archives of India

[1] Marathi devotional poems

[2] The Independence Day Pledge; *vide* "Things to Remember for 26th", 23-1-1930; *vide* also "The Dissentients", 16-1-1940.

[3] *Vide* Appendix "Resolution of Independence Day Pledge", 30-12-1939.

[4] Congress Working Committee

216. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

December 29, 1939

To keep you purely for my own sake would be a crime in my view and a denial of my whole life. But I want your presence for a number of reasons. These include Pyarelal, you yourself, and looking after the sick. If along with these, you continue looking after my physical well-being, it will be acceptable to me. I cannot be concerned with your reason for staying. I can even understand that you can stay here only to serve me. For you it would even be creditable. In practice, it makes no difference so long as I am in Segaon. But when I go out and feel that your presence is necessary here and you feel the opposite you must give in to my view. This, as I see it, means that your duty lies in not leaving me. Since you consider serving me your primary duty, if there is any difference of opinion when I have to go out, you must bear with me. In that alone lie your good and my peace.

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

217. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

Friday [*1939*][1]

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have received all your letters. You are making a grave mistake! I suspect myself. There is no remedy for suspicion. Wisdom suggests that notwithstanding this suspicion you should give me all the services that I need. How can the suspicion go when you are staying so far away? I do not want to beat about the bush. This much I know, that no matter what happens, you should not leave me and should be with me even if on my conditions. Even Devdas's doubt or fear or whatever you call it would be dispelled if you stayed with me. So I say you should come over for my work. You will be rendering great help thereby and it is possible that if I have any illusion, it will be dispelled.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the contents the letter appears to have been written in 1939.

218. NOTE TO PYARELAL

[*1939*][1]

What have you written for *Harijan*? Does it have an article by you this time? And does that mean you need not write anything more?

Sushila told me last night while going to bed that you were preparing to give up everything within eight days. That is a different thing. But you are not going to run away leaving me in the lurch, are you? I did not give it any importance when she told me about it. But I woke up half an hour ago and felt uneasy. Hence I woke you up.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

219. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[*1939*]

CHI. SUSHILA,

I hope you got all my letters. Your letter of the 23rd causes some anxiety. As regards your mother, it is for you to consider what your duty and mine is because you alone know all the facts. On the other hand, I am counting the days for your arrival. Prakash is leaving tomorrow. She did a good job of checking the blood-pressure. She accompanies me on my constitutionals, both morning and evening. She has mixed well with everybody. Yesterday Krishnadas came to stay. Manojna is with him. Anand Gyolo arrived the day before yesterday. You have not acknowledged, nor even given me a hint of, the papers I sent you regarding Sankaran's case.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] This and the following two items have been placed in the source among letters of 1939.

220. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON WARDHA,
[*1939*]

CHI. SUSHILA,

What is this I hear? You have fallen ill because of carelessness about food and insufficient sleep. Why was this and how? We had agreed that you would return from there after putting on some weight and gaining some energy. Why should you succumb if people press you to eat this and that? Do you not have the strength to refuse?

Your article in *The Statesman* was good. Do you realize that you have tied yourself down in that article?

The dairy, the cows, etc., have to be taken nearer to the well. The dairy has a *pucca* building. There is a proposal to set up a hospital for you there. Enclosed is Mirabehn's plan. Have a look at it and give it thought. Whatever has to be done will be done only after you return.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

221. LETTER TO "KHADIR KATHA"

[*1939*][1]

Khadir Katha[2] must not be a mere magazine, an addition to the unwanted monthly publications. It should be a true record of khadi work from month to month. It should investigate causes of decline if there is any. And it should bring together all the khadi workers. If they cannot work as one mind, universal use of the charkha must remain an empty dream.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] The source has this placed in the 1939 file.
[2] The story of khadi

222. THE WHEEL ABIDES

A collegiate from Baroda tells me that the high school and college students in Baroda rarely use khadi. Hardly anyone spins. An earnest worker of Berar argues : "Do you not think that swaraj is an impossibility if your condition about khadi is seriously meant ? Your second condition about fellowship too seems to be equally incapable of fulfilment." This friend is himself a lover of khadi, spins regularly, and cultivates fellowship with everybody. But he has the honest doubt expressed above. The friend could have said with equal force the same thing about non-violence apart from the charkha. Perhaps he had no doubt about the charkha and goodwill being external and internal signs of non-violence. My answer to the collegiate and the Berar friend is the same. I am not blind to what they say. I know the difficulty of fulfilling the conditions within the implied time-limit. I am helpless. I am not obstinate. For my own reputation, if for nothing else, I should prescribe other and more feasible conditions, if it were at all possible. But even as the condition of producing water is the presence of H_2O, so are the charkha and goodwill conditions and signs of non-violence. Such being my fixed view, I have to insist upon the fulfilment of the two conditions before I can declare mass civil disobedience with any confidence.

My faith is in God and therefore in the people. If He wants me to put up another fight, He will change people's hearts. The conditions prescribed by me are not physically impossible. If the people will it, they can take to spinning and khadi today. If they will it, they can be good to the whole of mankind. The age of miracles is not past. But supposing that the conditions are not fulfilled, I shall cheerfully become the laughing-stock of India and the world and descend from the pedestal of Generalship. I shall have the supreme satisfaction of being true to myself. I shall read in the apparent failure a sign from God that the conditions were a hallucination produced by Him to save the nation from a disastrous career. Thinking from the purely practical stand- point and even apart from my conditions, the Congress organization shows signs of disintegration. The Bengal Committee is frankly defiant. Orissa is split up into two camps. Things are no better in Karnatak. A Kerala correspondent says that the Provincial Committee does not believe in the present policy and command and is trying by every means to undermine the influence of

the Working Committee by ridiculing its programme. Things are not rosy in the Punjab. I know things are, however, not beyond repair. I cherish the hope that they will right themselves. But if they do not, I cannot lead an indisciplined army to victory. I must refuse to subscribe to the easy doctrine that I have but to declare 'war' and everything and everybody will be found to be in order.

Another view has been suggested. If there is indiscipline in so many provinces, may it not be that the fault lies with the High Command rather than with the different committees ? I am not prepared to reject the hypothesis. But what is the High Command to do ? They do what they think is their best. They cannot abdicate so long as a large majority continues to put faith in them. When during the early days of non-co-operation I had suggested abdication, Maulana Mahomed Ali said, "How can we, if the people want us ? Abdication would be cowardly. It will be bravery to be kicked out." I did not go the whole length with him then as I do not now. But there is much force in that argument. The Congress command has to be held lightly. There should be no wire-pulling, no attempt made to hold on to office. There should be readiness to give up the command at a moment's notice. The Congress command is no command. It is an act of service. The President is the first servant. So far as I know the members of the Working Committee, I believe that they would be glad to be relieved of the responsibility. The fresh elections are on. The Congressmen's choice is unfettered. Let younger men come forward to take charge. But if they will not and will still retain the old team, they should give them implicit obedience. The critical situation in the country demands courageous and decisive handling.

SEGAON, January 1, 1940

Harijan, 6-1-1940

223. SINDH TRAGEDY

I have before me several letters from Sindh and a longish report from Dr. Choithram[1] over the recent riots[2] in Sukkur and Shikarpur. The Sindh Hindus should remember that Sindh has a National Government. Though for the sake of brevity I have often used the

[1] Dr. Choithram Gidwani, Vice-President of the Sind Provincial Congress Committee

[2] *Vide* "Sind Riots", 28-11-1939.

term Congress Government, the proper expression is National Democratic Government as distinguished from Foreign Bureaucratic Government, which it replaces. Whilst in discussing domestic differences and party politics we have to speak of Congress and Muslim League Governments, we must for all other purposes think and speak in terms of National Government. And so those who feel aggrieved must appeal to their Provincial National Governments and cultivate public opinion in favour of justice and public tranquillity. It would be wrong always to think in communal terms. I know that we may not shut our eyes to hard facts. But to attribute everything to the communal spirit is a sign of inferiority complex. It may well perpetuate what is yet a temporary distemper in the national life.

But as I have already suggested, contrasted with irresponsible bureaucracy, National Governments would be found to be weak in action because of their responsibility to the people in whose name and by whose goodwill alone they can rule. They can, therefore, deal with crimes with more or less success, but they will be found to be powerless to deal with popular upheavals which communal riots are. British military aid will not always be at their disposal. National Governments will cease to be national if they have to depend on British military aid. Moreover, if the Congress policy of non-violence becomes universal among all parties, military and even police aid must become taboo. Before the other parties can be expected to become non-violent, Congressmen have to express non-violence in ample measure in their daily conduct. Be that, however, as it may, I can only advise the afflicted people of Sindh in terms of non-violence.

The question in Sindh is not really one between Hindus and Muslims. It is essentially one between weak people and strong. Muslims fight among themselves as badly as with Hindus. Hindus have also been known to fight among themselves. It will be wrong to weigh ferocity in golden scales.

Hinduism has become a synonym for weakness and Islam for physical strength. Hindus, although they have been taught to believe in ahimsa, have not shown *en masse* the strength of ahimsa, have never shown its superiority, when matched against physical strength. I have maintained that superiority over physical strength, however overwhelming, is the core of ahimsa, and I have further maintained that this non-violence can be exercised as well by individuals as by groups of them, yea, even by millions together. The experiment is still

in the making. Sufficient evidence has accumulated during the past twenty years to show that the experiment is worth making. Nothing can possibly be lost by continuing it, provided of course that the non-violence is of the standard brand.

Nothing has come under my observation to show that there was in Sukkur or Shikarpur even one person who believed in and practised non-violence of the strong. Had there been one, we would surely have known of him as we know of Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi.[1] One such person can any day give a better account of himself than one armed to the teeth.

There are many Congressmen in Sukkur and Shikarpur, but they are not non-violently organized. It is not their fault. They know no better. As I have been repeatedly saying nowadays, our non-violence has not been of the strong. Weak people cannot develop it all of a sudden. But I have no other drug in my chest. I can only prescribe what I have and what has never failed. I can only, therefore, say : 'Try and try again until you succeed.' In the composition of the truly brave there should be no malice, no anger, no distrust, no fear of death or physical hurt. Non-violence is certainly not for those who lack these essential qualities. Wherever there are such persons they should be able to cover the weak ones, provided of course that they would listen to their helpers.

Let the weak ones never rely upon armed help. Such help will only make them weaker. If they have not the capacity for non-violent resistance, they should learn the art of defending themselves. It does not require a strong body; it requires a stout heart. The African Negroes have become, or were 25 years ago, so terror-stricken that they could not face a white lad—a pigmy compared to the giant-framed Negroes. White children were trained from their infancy not to fear the Negroes. The first lesson, therefore, for those who will learn how to defend themselves is to shed the fear of being hurt or being killed. I would like them to observe the laws of the game. Just as there is such a thing as honour among thieves, there should surely be honour between combatants. One hears so often of children and old men being butchered, women being outraged. If men must become beasts, there might even then be some decency observed. Religion is

[1] Who was killed during the Hindu-Muslim riots in Kanpur on March 26/27, 1931. *Vide* "Speech on Kanpur Riots, Subjects Committee Meeting, Karachi", 27-3-1931, "Telegram to Balkrishna Sharma", 1-4-1931 and "Notes", 9-4-1931.

outraged when an outrage is perpetrated in its name. Almost all the riots in this unhappy land take place in the name of religion, though they might have a political motive behind them. My chief point is that the existing situation is intolerable. Cowardice should have no place in the national dictionary.

I have suggested *hijrat*. I repeat the suggestion. It is not unpractical. People do not know its value. High and mighty have been known to have resorted to it before now. Planned *hijrat* requires courage and forethought. The second book of the Old Testament is known as *Exodus*. It is an account of the planned flight of the Israelites. In exile they prepared for a military career. In modern times we have the example of the flight of the Doukhobours from Russia owing to persecution. Theirs was no military career. On the contrary they were non-violent. There is, therefore, nothing wrong, dishonourable or cowardly in self-imposed exile. India is a vast country. Though poor, it is well able to admit of inter-migration especially of those who are capable, hard-working and honest. The people of Sukkur and Shikarpur have all the three qualities. They must appeal to the Government. Only they can give very little help. Apart from political pacts local heads among Hindus and Muslims may meet with mutual profit. It can do nobody or party any good to promote mutual slaughter and consequent increase in the existing ill will. But if no honourable local settlement is arrived at, and if the local residents do not feel able to defend themselves and their families and possessions non-violently or violently, I have no doubt that they should vacate the place in which they live in perpetual fear of their lives and the honour of their womenfolk.

SEGAON, January 1, 1940

Harijan, 6-1-1940

224. CABLE TO ISMET INONU[1]

[On or before *January 2, 1940*][2]

MY HEARTFELT SYMPATHY IN YOUR TERRIBLE CALAMITY.[3]

GANDHI

The Hindu, 3-1-1940

[1] President of Turkey, 1938-50

[2] The report is date-lined "Wardha, January 2, 1940".

[3] An earthquake had rocked Turkey on December 27, 1939, resulting in 30,000 deaths. Fifteen towns and ninety villages were reduced to ruins. *Vide* "Notes", sub-title "Afflicted Turkey", 8-1-1940.

225. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 3, 1940

CHI. LILA,

I had your letter. Do come after your work is over. One must finish what one has undertaken. Mahadev is at Baramati. He will return in about five days. Durga has gone to Surat. Sharda has given birth to a son. Kanchan, who had gone out, has returned. All the patients are improving.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. LILAVATIBEHN ASAR
NEW ERA SCHOOL
HUGHES ROAD, BOMBAY 7

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 9934. Courtesy : Lilavati Asar

226. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 3, 1940

CHI. BABUDI,

At last you have become a mother. I never saw Govardhandas's telegram. I learnt the news only when I got the letter today. The telegram was received, but Pyarelal did not give it to me thinking that I must have heard the news. The telegram was received as late as yesterday. By the time you get this letter, you will have even become strong enough to be able to write to me. Be careful about food and keep yourself and the baby in fine health. Durgabehn seems to have reached there quite in time. Here the place has almost been turned into a hospital.

Blessings to all three from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 10024. Courtesy : Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

227. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 3, 1940

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

You may build a house in the Harijan Colony if Bapa[1] and others approve. I have understood the other matters. Do whatever you think right. I understand what you say about spinning. Has the spinning programme undertaken by the Congress helped khadi work?

I am all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 2482

228. LETTER TO DR. BARETO

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 4, 1940

DEAR DR. BARETO[2],

I sent you the message that Asha Devi, being a member of my growing family of national beggars, was not to pay for your services. But I have discovered that not to pay would be an injustice to you. You will therefore please hold me responsible for your fees on the poor man's scale if you have two scales. Up to now I have carried the impression that you belong to that class of doctors who pay persons like me for sending them beggar patients.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 132

[1] Amritlal V. Thakkar, Secretary, Harijan Sevak Sangh
[2] A dentist

229. TELEGRAM TO PRIME MINISTER OF UDAIPUR

SEGAON,
January 5, 1940

PRIME MINISTER
UDAIPUR

WIFE[1] OF MANIKLAL VARMA SECRETARY MARWAR PRAJA MANDAL SAYS HEALTH OF HUSBAND WHO IS POLITICAL PRISONER SERIOUSLY DECLINING. WOULD URGE PRISONER'S RELEASE IF NO VITAL OBJECTION.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

230. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON,
January 5, 1940

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Your letter makes me sad.[2] You said in indignant tones that Ku [marappa] was a worthless man. And this you did on the flimsiest testimony. I asked you for the correspondence and you said you had not it with you but would send it to me. Now I see you accepted the interpretation of others. My point is not that the interpretation was incorrect but that it was wrong to judge a co-worker on such hearsay. I suggest your securing the correspondence and sending it to me.

Herewith my letter[3] to the Generalissimo. I have not released his to the Press. You will do so if you think it necessary.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Narayani Devi

[2] In his letter dated January 3, 1940, the addressee had written : "About Kumarappa's correspondence with the Planning Committee, I was told by Ambalal and Dr. Nazir Ahmad that they had approached him for certain information in regard to cottage industries and sought his co-operation on some other matters connected therewith. Both of them were very much hurt at the reply received from Kumarappa which seemed to them to refuse any kind of co-operation or help."

[3] *Vide* the following item.

231. LETTER TO CHIANG KAI-SHEK

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 5, 1940

DEAR GENERALISSIMO,

Many thanks for your very kind invitation. If I could accept it, I would be fulfilling a long-cherished wish. But my present mission forbids my responding to your invitation.

With renewed good wishes,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. CHIANG KAI-SHEK

From a copy : Jawaharlal Nehru Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

232. LETTER TO MADALASA

SEGAON,
January 5, 1940

CHI. MADALASA,

How silly you are ! Now that Shriman is coming, get well soon. Keep Ramanama engraved in your heart. He will see that everything ends well. Don't lose heart. You needn't reply. Shriman will do that.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 319

233. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

[After *January 5, 1940*][1]

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter. I know the possibility of misunderstandings. These and ignorant or interested criticism have never influenced me. I know that all would be well, if we are strong within. For the external affairs you are my guide. Your letter therefore helps me.

You have made more than ample amends about Kumarappa. You will like to see his letter. You may destroy it after perusal. Yes, we have very few workers like him.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : Jawaharlal Nehru Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

234. DISCUSSION WITH CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES[2]

[Before *January 6, 1940*][3]

[A PROFESSOR] . . . Will you under swaraj allow Christians to go on with their proselytizing activity without any hindrance ?

[GANDHIJI :] No legal hindrance can be put in the way of any Christian or of anybody preaching for the acceptance of his doctrine.

The visitor was anxious to know whether the freedom they were having under the British regime would be allowed to them under the national Government without any interference.

I can't answer that question categorically because I do not know what is exactly allowed and what is not allowed under the British regime today. That is a legal question. Besides, what is permitted may not necessarily be the same thing as what is *permissible* under the law. All, therefore, I can say is that you should enjoy all the freedom you are entitled to under the law today.

[1] From the reference to Kumarappa it is evident that this letter was written after the letter to the addressee dated January 5, 1940; *vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 5-1-1940.

[2] Reproduced from Pyarelal's article "A Talk with Christian Friends" dated January 6, 1940

[3] *ibid*

Some of us are under an apprehension that they may have hereafter to labour under. . . disabilities. Is there any guarantee that such a thing would not happen ?

As I wrote in *Harijan*[1], you do not seem to realize that Christians are today enjoying privileges because they are Christians. The moment a person here turns Christian, he becomes a *Sahib log*[2] .

He almost changes his nationality. He gets a job and position which he could not have otherwise got. He adopts foreign dress and ways of living. He cuts himself off from his own people and begins to fancy himself a limb of the ruling class. What the Christians are afraid of losing, therefore, is not their rights but anomalous privileges.

The visitor admitted the truth of Gandhiji's remarks, but assured him that whatever might have been the case in the past Christians as a class no longer wished to retain any exceptional privileges.

Another missionary friend recalling Gandhiji's well-known objection to the prevailing proselytizing practices chimed in : "Why may not I share with others my experience of Jesus Christ which has given me such an ineffable peace ?"

Because you cannot possibly say that what is best for you is best for all. Quinine may be the only means of saving life in your case, but a dangerous poison in the case of another. And again, is it not superarrogation to assume that you alone possess the key to spiritual joy and peace, and that an adherent of a different faith cannot get the same in equal measure from a study of his scriptures ?

I enjoy a peace and equanimity of spirit which has excited the envy of many Christian friends. I have got it principally through the *Gita*.

Your difficulty lies in your considering the other faiths as false or so adulterated as to amount to falsity. And you shut your eyes to the truth that shines in other faiths and which gives equal joy and peace to their votaries. I have not hesitated, therefore, to recommend to my Christian friends a prayerful and sympathetic study of the other scriptures of the world.

I can give my own humble testimony that, whilst such study has enabled me to give the same respect to them that I give to my own, it has enriched my own faith and broadened my vision.

Gandhiji's interlocutor was silent. "What would be your message to a

[1] *Vide* "What Is Neutrality ?", 24-12-1939.
[2] A Westernized person

Christian like me and my fellows ?" the professor finally asked.

Become worthy of the message that is imbedded in the Sermon on the Mount and join the spinning brigade.[1]

Harijan, 13-1-1940

235. ASHRAM NOTES[2]

January 6, 1940

Brahmadatta has gently brought it to my notice that some persons shirk work. Everyone should humbly examine his criticism. No one should feel bad about it. It is likely that not being well acquainted with all the activities of the Ashram, he has formed some wrong notions. If so, they should be removed.

2. I suggest that everyone should participate regularly in sacrificial spinning. We must be very particular in this respect.

BAPU

From Hindi : C.W. 4674

236. LETTER TO YAKUB HASAN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 6, 1940

DEAR YAKUB HASAN[3],

Your two letters show your deep anxiety for unity. I am working at it in my own way. The problem has become too complicated for an easy solution. Do, however, pass on suggestions whenever you have any.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

YAKUB HASAN
RUTLAND GATE, (CATHEDRAL P. O.)

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] The professor had brought for Gandhiji a khadi scarf made of yarn spun by his wife and his pupils—a gift which Gandhiji much appreciated.

[2] This and the following Ashram Notes are extracted from a note-book which Gandhiji maintained "for the workers of Segaon" and in which he put down instructions as they occurred to him.

[3] Ex-Minister, Public Works, Madras

237. LETTER TO H. V. KAMATH

SEGAON, *via* WARDHA (C. P.),
January 6, 1940

DEAR KAMATH,

You are in a hurry, you are hard. Hurry because you have not read the pledge[1] carefully. It is regular spinning that is wanted, not daily.[2] Hard because there is nothing wrong in others spinning. This time the real test is to be whether khadi has become current coin.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI H. V. KAMATH
MEHERABAD
ORGANIZING SECRETARY, FORWARD BLOC
WORLI, BOMBAY

From a facsimile in *Mahatma*, Vol. V (1962 ed.), between pp. 176 and 177

238. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

January 6, 1940

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. It is enough for me that you reached there safe. We shall meet again when God wills. Go on doing your work without worrying. How is Rajendra Babu's health ? Sushila has left. Rajkumari has arrived but will go to Madras on the 9th and return after the 15th. Ba is well enough. I am of course all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3540

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Resolution on Independence day Pledge", 30-12-1939.
[2] *Vide* letter to the addressee dated January 30, 1940.

239. INTERVIEW TO AN ENGLISH REPORTER[1]

SEGAON,
[Before *January 7, 1940*][2]

[REPORTER :] There seems to be a deadlock coming, indeed if one does not already exist. Cannot we take advantage of nominated group of a really representative character to come to some sort of an agreed solution ?

GANDHIJI : A nominated group of a really representative character is a contradiction in terms. Such a group can only represent the nominator. For the purpose of discussion the nominator would be finally the Viceroy. You will not call such a group one of a really representative character. If you have in mind a small number of representatives, I for one would accept only one representative, say Jinnah Saheb, provided he is elected by the free vote of the millions as, say, is the President of the U.S.A.

REPORTER : Would you really ?

GANDHIJI : Why not ? Is there any flaw in this statement ? I claim to be the greatest democrat of modern times. My faith is built on non-violence and therefore I have faith in human nature.

REPORTER : But while the minorities are deadly opposed to a Constituent Assembly, can you offer them this form of representation now with any hope of their accepting the position ?

GANDHIJI : Anyone who objects to the right thing, puts himself in the wrong. British statesmen have induced the belief that they want to end the imperialistic system and treat those under them as free. Having induced that belief the Congress naturally wanted to test its sincerity. The answer must, therefore, be irrespective of what India wants or does not want. Now the question arises to whom is the answer to be given. If there were a rebel power trying to seize the reins of government, it would be the rebel power. But here there is no rebellion. The Congress is the main organization. But I confess that in view of rival organizations, power cannot be transferred to it. If then Britain is to make good her declaration, she can easily do it by summoning a Constituent Assembly of elected representatives and enforce the constitution framed by it. Representatives of minorities

[1] The report by Amrit Kaur, date-lined "Segaon, January 7, 1940", appeared under the caption "World Conscience the Supreme Arbiter".

will frame safeguards for their protection. It is possible that even the representatives may fail to reach a constitution acceptable to an overwhelming majority, including safeguards for minorities. Even so, Britain will have proved her *bonafides*. I hold, however, that a properly elected assembly is bound to produce a workable constitution.

REPORTER : Supposing a referendum were taken and it was found that a Constituent Assembly was not wanted, would you accept the verdict ?

GANDHIJI : I must.

REPORTER : If a generally accepted scheme is prepared by nominated persons, would you accept it ? Or do you object to nomination as such ?

GANDHIJI : There is no meaning in my acceptance or rejection. Acceptance to be valid must be by a properly elected body. It takes the place of the existing Government or their nominee or nominees.

REPORTER : Supposing you could be sure of achieving democracy through a nominated assembly, would you reject it ? Why not wait and see what form of nomination could be offered ?

GANDHIJI : I would always suspect nomination, for it can never satisfy all. Election is the only satisfactory method. In spite of Congress claim and boast the Congress is an organization representing only 3 million voters out of a population of over 300 millions. Therefore the Secretary of State would be justified if he said that the Congress was not representative of the whole nation. And therefore the Congress challenges all to go to the people. Even the Princes can as individuals, and so can Europeans domiciled in India. That they will not is not our fault.

REPORTER : What place would you assign to the Princes in democratic India ?

GANDHIJI : I would give them a fat commission as trustees of their people. I would say to them, however, that they must work for this commission. They would have the same privileges as the British King enjoys. They are after all his vassals. They cannot be greater than he. The King of England cannot hang a man. He can only act through proper channels. He is a private citizen, though the first one. If I can like monarchy at all, I would like the limited monarchy of England. And why should not the people of the States determine what they want ? As far as justice for the people is concerned, I have already said[1] that their supreme courts must be subject to the High Court of India.

[1] *Vide* "To the Princes", 8-7-1939

REPORTER : Might it not be that the English form of democracy will be unsuited to India ?

GANDHIJI : That is for the Constituent Assembly to decide. The time when self-styled representatives or nominees could decide for India is gone for ever.

REPORTER : Do you think the Assembly would suggest an economic form of democracy ?

GANDHIJI : I give the Assembly credit for sanity. So far as I can see this is the best method. But if a better can be produced, I would accept it.

REPORTER : May it not be that, while Britain is sincere, the delay is due to the terrible situation of war in which she finds herself today ?

GANDHIJI : I have not lost faith in their sincerity and that is why I am still wooing them. I am wooing my own people to build up their power. I am preparing for a fight, if it must come, but I am doing my level best to stave it off. I believe that Britain's past is responsible for all the prevailing dissensions.

REPORTER : What if Britain lost the war ?

GANDHIJI : I would be sorry if Britain lost. But I would not feel helpless. Supposing Russia, Germany, Italy and Japan formed a combination to seize India, I should not feel perturbed if India, as a whole, had accepted non-violence as her fixed policy. Through non-co-operation India could defy any combination. So you see my sympathy for Britain is absolutely selfless. If Britain is really right, God will inspire her to make the declaration about India and put herself right with India. I do not wish Britain to win right or wrong. If India were wrong, India must perish. I have often said that Hinduism will perish if Hinduism allows the practice of untouchability to remain. I would go so far as to pray for India's destruction if she went wrong, even as Stead[1] prayed for England's defeat in the Boer War. In spite of all her great resources it is wrong on Britain's part to strain too much her faith in her strong arm. I rejoice that she still prays to the God of love and not to the God of gunpowder, and therefore I still hope that she will call to her aid the moral support of a free India. She gets today material support from

[1] A British journalist who publicly prayed and invited others to pray that God might decree the English a defeat in the Boer War. *Vide* "Satyagraha in South Africa-Chapter II".

India because she is a dependency. What I want Britain to do is to get the moral support of India and win. Would to God that the war ended on a moral issue and the conscience of the world became the final arbiter ! That can only happen if Britain had the moral support of a free India. Anyway, that is my view.

Harijan, 13-1-1940

240. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

January 7, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I am not dissatisfied with you. I would indeed miss you if you were to leave this place. I know your virtues, but have become impatient to see that you get rid of your shortcomings. Get rid of them. My criticism was made good-humouredly, for didn't I say nine hours ? The facts which you have stated are correct.

And now about the other letter. I will inquire about the damage to the books. That was a terrible thing. The money matter too was a terrible thing. I will inquire about that also. There is lack of order, no doubt. The blame for that is primarily mine. This is the simple truth. The disorder that you see is all due to me. I will see. If you recover your peace of mind, you can give me much help.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8555. Also C.W. 7070. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

241. LETTER TO JAMNA GANDHI

January 7, 1940

CHI. JAMNA[1],

If Kanaiyo stays there longer of his own free will, he has my permission to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II

[1] Wife of Narandas Gandhi

242. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

[*January 7, 1940*][1]

CHI. KANAIYO,

If the elders are likely to be pained by your coming away so soon and if you feel like it you may stay on for some time. But then what about the water scarcity ? Won't you have to stop both eating and drinking water ? Water is required even for cooking. If you don't eat at all, an additional advantage will be that Narandas will be able to contribute to famine relief !

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II

243. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 7, 1940

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Sonavate, a Harijan, is a clerk in your office on a salary of Rs. 79. He is a B. A., LL.B. Is it possible to give him a promotion there? What are the reports about his behaviour? As no Hindus are offering him any accommodation, he is staying with a Muslim family. Should not the Corporation reserve a *chawl* or a building for such people? Would there be any opposition to it?

It should not entail financial loss. But even if it does, I think we should bear it. Think about it from all points of view and write to me. I hope your mind is at rest and you are getting along well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] This and the preceding item are written on the same sheet.

244. A TELEGRAM

[On or before *January 8, 1940*][1]

DEEPLY GRIEVED. GIVE MY CONDOLENCE TO LALA SHAMLAL'S[2] FAMILY.

The Hindu, 9-1-1940

245. MESSAGE TO HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU[3]

[On or before *January 8, 1940*][4]

I loved Venkatasubbiah. His death is a great loss to the country. To meet him was to love him. I have not know a more unassuming man than him. Will you please convey my deep sympathy to his people ?

The Hindu, 15-1-1940

246. NOTES

ANOTHER HARIJAN SEVAK GONE

I regret to have to report the death of Shri Venkatasubbiah, an old member of the Servants of India Society. He was the Secretary of the Madras Harijan Sevak Sangh. He was a most unassuming and conscientious worker. He never spared himself in anything he took up. He was of a retiring nature. His opposition to untoucha- bility was uncompromising. His death is a distinct loss to the Harijan cause. I tender my condolences to the deceased reformer's family.

AFFLICTED TURKEY

The threefold calamity[5] that has descended upon Turkey has commanded universal sympathy. President Inonu has gracefully acknowledged numerous messages of sympathy sent to him from India.[6] Dr. Rajendra Prasad has issued an appeal for funds for the sufferers. It is to be hoped that the appeal will receive an enthusiastic

[1] The report is date-lined "Lahore, January 8, 1940".
[2] A Congress leader of the Punjab
[3] President of the Servants of India Society
[4] *Vide* the following item.
[5] Earthquake with rain and snow
[6] *Vide* "Cable to Ismet Inonu", on or before 2-1-1940.

response from the public. A correspondent has suggested the despatch of a medical mission to Turkey in order to relieve the sufferings of the distressed Turks. The Idea is worthy of consideration. If a mission is to be sent at all, it should be a national mission, not sectarian. In the face of the triple calamity all differences of religion must be sunk. Human distress knows no distinctions. Such unprecedented distress as Turkey has experienced makes one realize the oneness of the human family. This visitation should humble and chasten us. It should enable Hindus and Muslims to sink their differences and make them realize that though they profess different faiths they are all children of the same God, and as such it is theirs to live in perfect fellowships with one another.

A WISE STEP

The Hyderabad State Congress has had great difficulty in functioning. The State would not recognize it as a constitutional body so long as it continued to style itself Congress although it has no affiliation with the Indian National Congress. The world is nobody's monopoly. It is a common word used by many organizations in the world. But somehow or other the National Congress has become anathema in many States. Therefore the word itself has become suspect in Hyderabad. The matter was referred by the leaders to me, and I had no hesitation in advising them that there was no virtue in merely fighting for the name if their lawful activities were not otherwise interfered with. The leaders after correspondence with the authorities have acted according to my advice and adopted the name Hyderabad National Conference. Thus all's well that ends well. I hope that the Conference will concentrate on the many constructive activities that are healthful and necessary for mass uplift and consciousness. They should find the authorities co-operating whole-heartedly with them in such work. Their goal of responsible government under the aegis of H. E. H. the Nizam remains the same as before. I am sure every activity that promotes co-operation among the people, their education and their economic and social uplift brings them nearer their goal in a most solid manner one can think of.

THREE ITEMS

The Harijan Sevak Sangh has been for some time issuing a monthly circular letter containing a brief account of the Sangh's activities. Like Bapa, its Secretary, the letter is business-like. I take from the interesting letter for November and December the following

three most interesting items :

(1) History was made at Munyali, a Harijan village near Nand Prayag, when a Harijan bride was carried in a *dandi* (palanquin) for the first time in the locality with the consent of the caste Hindus.

(2) It is understood that the work of the Committee appointed by the last Congress Government for inquiry into the wages and living conditions of the sweepers has been suspended by the present Governor's Government.

(3) The Report of the Municipal Sweepers' Inquiry Committee, appointed by the C. P. Government in 1938 under the chairmanship of Shri A. V. Thakkar, has been published. Among the important recommendations are (1) a minimum wage of 4 as. per day, (2) an eight hours' working day, (3) employment of Welfare Officers for big municipalities, and (4) granting of privilege, casual and sick leave, and half holiday on week-ends. Regarding the housing of sweepers the Committee recommends as follows :

1. It should be obligatory on the Municipal Committee to provide houses to sweepers. 2. The Government should provide *nazul*[1] land for the purpose. The report costs Re. 1 and can be had from the Government Press, Nagpur.

When the taking of a Harijan bride in a *dandi* makes history we know how far we are from root-and-branch removal of untouchability. For the expiation of their sin against humanity the so-called caste Hindus should make it a point of themselves carrying in *dandis* Harijan brides in villages in all parts of India.

I hope the report in the item two is wrong, or that there is a sound reason for suspending the inquiry. One had hoped that no lawful activity inaugurated by the Congress Ministries would be stopped or suspended by the interim Governments.

The recommendations (item three) of the Municipal Sweepers' Committee (C.P.) are so sensible and moderate that there should be no delay in their being carried out in their entirety. The report should not share the fate that befalls many such reports, i. e., of being shelved. It should be remembered that Thakkar Bapa's was a labour of love. He does not put his hands to anything for praise or show.

SEGAON, January 8, 1940

Harijan, 13-1-1940

[1] Belonging to Government

247. CONGRESS M.L.A.S AND REMUNERATION

An M.L.A. from U. P. writes a letter which I abridge as follows :

In U. P. we are getting Rs. 75 a month. During the two and a half years in which the Congress was in power the Assem- bly sessions were sometimes concluded in six days, at others they lasted for some months. In addition, there were meetings of select, special and regular committees. Some of these are still working and constitute a heavy demand on our time. Moreover no one knows when the Assembly may be summoned again. Touring in our constituencies entails an expenditure of Rs. 200 a year. There are cases in which the constituencies are more than 200 miles away from Lucknow. Taking an average of three tours in a year, a member has to spend six weeks for this purpose. While at Lucknow, every member has to entertain people from his constituency. He also pays Rs. 4 per month to the Congress Legislature Party and the Provincial Congress Committee. In these circumstances business or professional life has to be sacrificed, and it is clear that unless a member has private means he is totally unable to give whole time work without some remuneration. This question has come up many times before the U.P. M.L.A.s. Many of us feel that either the allowance should be raised or the poor among us will have to go out, leaving the field to the rich. You were pained to know that some of the Assembly members were using the allowance for their own use;[1] but I have put before you another side of the picture so that you may guide us. It must also be remembered that many of us borrowed money to fight elections under order of the Congress.

The second point to which I wanted to draw your attention is the question of corruption in the Congress ranks. Along with other causes, the lure of M.L.A.-ship is a very strong one for the average Congress worker and often leads to underhand methods in the attempt to displace the sitting member. It would be a good thing if it were understood that members who have acquitted themselves well will be renominated. Such a policy would ensure a trained body of workers for legislative work. Members will further realize that constructive work outside the legislatures is also required of them.

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with Nagpur Congress Workers", 27-12-1939.

The third point on which I will humbly request you to enlighten us is the strong trend, even among important Congressmen, towards Western modes of living, thought and culture. In spite of putting on khadi many of them are absolutely strangers to their own culture, and to them all light comes from the West The letter leaves me unconvinced, so far as the remuneration is concerned. Of course there will be hard cases everywhere. But hard cases make bad law. It should be remembered that the Assem- blies are not Congress monopolies. Many parties are represented on them. The Congress convenience cannot be the sole consideration. My correspondent assumes that every member devotes his whole time to the national service with special regard to legislative activity. This means that the legislators become professional politicians and the legislatures become their special preserves. If I had my way, I would manage these things through the parties. I know that the question bristles with difficulties and requires a thorough and quiet discussion. But the point I have raised is quite small. Why should the members draw anything while the Assemblies are in virtual suspension ? If a census were taken, it would be found that many members were not earning before what they are earning as legislators. It is a dangerous thing to make legislatures a means of earning more than one's market price. Let the responsible men in the provinces put their heads together and come to a decision worthy of the Congress and the cause they represent.

The question raised by the correspondent as to making the present members permanent incumbents is beyond me. I have no experience in this matter. It is one for the Working Committee to probe. As to the habit of looking to the West for light, I can give little guidance if the whole of my life has not provided any. Light used to go out from the East. If the Eastern reservoir has become empty, naturally the East will have to borrow from the West. I wonder if light, if it is light and not a miasma can ever be exhausted. As a boy I learnt that it grew with the giving. Anyway I have acted in that belief and have, therefore, traded on the ancestral capital. It has never failed me. This, however, does not mean that I must act like a frog in the well. There is nothing to prevent me from profiting by the light that may come from the West. Only I must take care that I am not overpowered by the glamour of the West. I must not mistake the glamour for true light. The latter gives life, the former brings death.

SEGAON, January 8, 1940

Harijan, 13-1-1940

248. ADULTERATION OF GHEE [1]

Shri Pannalal[2], an old member of Sabarmati Ashram, is a lover of cattle. He has for years been a lay farmer and dairyman. He has tried to study the cattle question. Very few people realize that conservation of cattle wealth of India is a major economic problem beset with many complexities. Adulteration of ghee has always been one of them. During the last few years it has become a growing menace, owing to the import of cheap vegetable oil miscalled ghee because of its having been congealed and otherwise processed so as to look like ghee. Shri Pannalal says that middlemen and sellers of dairy products profusely adulterate real ghee and thus undersell the farmer or cattle-keeper. He says that it is impossible for farmers to hold out against this competition if the mischief continues for any length of time, especially as such vegetable 'ghee' is being manufactured in Bombay and elsewhere on a large scale. Shri Pannalal rightly adds that agriculture without dairying and cattle-breeding for draught purposes will be an impossibility if real ghee disappears from the market. Cattle-keeping will then become a luxury instead of a paying occupation. Shri Pannalal, therefore, suggests that drastic measures should be taken to prevent adulteration. I heartily endorse the suggestion. There should be a well-regulated public agitation against adulteration, and preventive legislation should be passed if necessary. In addition to the economic, this adulteration has a medical aspect which is no less important than the economic. It is well known that vegetable 'ghee' has a much lower protective value than ghee. From the health point of view, doctors say, vegetable ghee can never be a substitute for real ghee. This is, therefore, a question for corporations, medical men and humanitarian leagues to tackle without delay. If corporations have not adequate powers, they should have them. Shri Pannalal says :[3]

> It is quite feasible to make it compulsory by law to add some edible colour or flavour to each and every tin of vegetable ghee, whether imported or produced in India. This will readily distinguish the vegetable product from the genuine ghee and make detection easy.

SEGAON, January 8, 1940
Harijan, 20-1-1940

[1] This appeared under "Notes".
[2] Pannalal Jhaveri
[3] Only an extract is reproduced here.

249. LETTER TO NIRMALA AND RAMDAS GANDHI

January 8, 1940

CHI. NIMU,

What a girl you are ! Now that you have found a home you have completely forgotten Segaon, haven't you ? You want me to believe that you don't get a minute to spare in a week ! How is that ?

CHI. RAMA,

How hard-hearted you have grown ? Ba is in Delhi. Lakshmi is unwell. It is as if I have opened a hospital here. You know about Valjibhai, Kunvarji, Jairamdas, Kishorelalbhai and Krishnadas. I have also admitted a woman from a nearby village. And there is one more recommended by Parachure Shastri. All the persons are improving.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Nirmala Gandhi Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

250. THE CHARKHA

The east bowed low before the blast
In patient deep disdain,
She let the thundering legions past
And plunged in thought again.[1]

I congratulate the Socialists, the Royists[2] and others who have spoken out their minds on spinning. The situation that faces the country is most serious. If civil resistance is declared in right earnest, there should be no suspension unless there is a proper settlement. It therefore follows that, if the fight is to be non-violent, the non-violence must be unadulterated. I must not be weak in my statement of the requirements. If I hesitate, I would betray the national cause. I dare not lead an army that does not answer the qualifications which I regard as essential for success.

No half-hearted allegiance will do. Divided allegiance will lead

[1] Matthew Arnold
[2] Of the Radical Democratic Party of M. N. Roy

to disaster. The critics should realize that I have not imposed myself on the Congress. I am no dictator though I have been given that nickname by unkind friends. I have no sanction for imposing my will on any person. Therefore I call myself truly a servant of the people. The public should know that I have not even been formally appointed 'Generalissimo'. Not that the Working Committee would not give me the formal appointment. But I suggested and the members agreed that there was no necessity for it. Thus if ever there can be a bond of unmixed love and confidence between a General and his men, this is such a one. There is nothing to prevent the Congress from ignoring me and passing any resolution it likes. There is nothing so far as I am concerned to prevent any person or any province or district from declaring civil disobedience at his or its own risk. They will be guilty of indiscipline towards the Congress. But I can do nothing in regard to such insubordination.

Hence it should be unnecessary for me to argue out the case for spinning. It should be enough that it is the requirement that every satyagrahi has to fulfil.

But I must continue to argue till I convert opponents or I own defeat. For my mission is to convert every Indian whether he is a Hindu, Muslim or any other, even Englishman and finally the world, to non-violence for regulating mutual relations whether political, economic, social or religious. If I am accused of being too ambitious, I should plead guilty. If I am told that my dream can never materialize, I would answer 'that is possible', and go my way. I am a seasoned soldier of non-violence, and I have evidence enough to sustain my faith. Whether, therefore, I have one comrade or more or none, I must continue my experiment.

The first thing I would like co-workers to realize is that I have no hate in me for a single Englishman. I am not interested in driving him out of India. I am interested in converting him into a servant of India instead of his being and believing himself to be a ruler or a member of the ruling race. I feel towards him precisely as I feel towards an Indian, no matter what his faith may be. Therefore those who do not share this elementary quality with me, cannot become co-satyagrahis.

My love of Englishmen is not of the drawing-room type. No one has painted their imperialism in more lurid colours than perhaps I have. But then I have done likewise in my domestic as also political

circle. The love of my conception, if it is as soft as a rose petal, can also be harder than flint. My wife has had to experience the hard variety. My eldest son is experiencing it even now. I had thought I had gained Subhas Babu for all time as a son. I have fallen from grace. I had the pain of wholly associating myself with the ban pronounced on him.[1] Time was when Dr. Khare and Vir Nariman used to say that my word was law for them. Alas, I can no longer claim that authority. Anyway I was party to the disciplinary measures taken against them.[2] I maintain that I have acted towards them as I have acted towards those who are considered nearest and dearest to me. In all my dealings love has dictated my actions. Even so have I acted towards Englishmen. Of course they have called me all kinds of names when I have fought them. Their bitter criticism of me had as much effect on me as their praise. I say all this not to claim or expect any certificate of merit. I want to show that because I have said hard things about British rule and methods, ill will against Englishmen must not be imputed to me. Those, therefore, who are filled with ill will against them will find me a misfit in the end.

I am enunciating no new ideas here. They are to be found in *Indian Home Rule* (*Hind Swaraj*) which was written in 1908[3] when the technique of satyagraha was still in the process of formation. The charkha had become part of this programme of love. As I was picturing life based on non-violence, I saw that it must be reduced to the simplest terms consistent with high thinking. Food and raiment will always remain the prime necessities of life. Life itself becomes impossible if these two are not assured. For non-violent defence, therefore, society has to be so constructed that its members may be able as far as possible to look after themselves in the face of an invasion from without or disturbances within. Just as a domestic kitchen is the easiest thing in such circumstances, the *takli* or at most the spinning-wheel and the loom are the simplest possessions for the manufacture of cloth. Society based on non-violence can only consist of groups settled in villages in which voluntary co-operation is the condition of dignified and peaceful existence. A society which anticipates and provides for meeting violence with violence will either

[1] *Vide* "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 11-8-1939.

[2] They were debarred from holding any position of trust and responsibility in the Congress organization, K. F. Nariman in November 1937 and Dr. N. B. Khare in July 1938.

[3] A slip for '1909'; *vide* "Hind Swaraj", 22-11-1909.

lead a precarious life or create big cities and magazines for defence purposes. It is not unreasonable to presume from the state of Europe that its cities, its monster factories and huge armaments are so intimately interrelated that the one cannot exist without the other. The nearest approach to civilization based upon non-violence is the erstwhile village republic of India. I admit that it was very crude. I know that there was in it no non-violence of my definition and conception. But the germ was there. All I have said may be pure folly. It behoves me as a faithful servant of the nation not to hide my folly. There is no doubt that we are on the eve of a big change. I hope it will be for the better, but it may be also for the worse. I must have the courage to share with my co-workers my innermost thoughts even though I may risk the loss of their co-operation.

To resume the argument. It is from that germ that I have developed the technique of non-violence. If the charkha can bear the ample interpretation I have put upon it, it becomes the most effective weapon in the armoury of satyagraha. The weak thread from the wheel binds the millions in an unbreakable cord. One yard of the thread may be useless, but millions of unending threads spun by willing and knowing hands will make a cord strong enough to bear any strain that may be put upon it. But between 1908 and 1914 the idea remained dormant. The whole scheme was conceived for India. Nevertheless the spirit of it was worked out even in South Africa. The life of the satyagrahis there was reduced to simplest terms. Whether barristers or others, they learnt the dignity of labour. They accepted voluntary poverty as their lot in life and identified themselves with the poor. On my arrival in India I began single-handed to work for revival of the charkha. In 1921 khadi became one of the chief items of the constructive programme of the Congress. The charkha occupied the centre of the Congress flag with its vital connection with non-violence. I am, therefore, today saying nothing new. But as has often happened, people have passed by what I have said until they have been compelled to take action.

I have great regard for all the comrades who have been writing against the charkha and its implications. They are rendering a service by guiding the country according to their lights. I do not want their mechanical assent to my requirements. I should take it if it served the national purpose, but I know that it cannot.

I must here consider Sir Chimanlal Setalvad's letter[1] to *The Times of India*. I know we have had political differences practi- cally since my return to India in 1915. He is an eminent lawyer. But that no more entitles him to give an authoritative opinion on the economy of the charkha than on the use of infantry in modern warfare. I invite him to study the literature that has grown round it. I promise that he will revise his opinion on its potency. May I also remind him that I claim many mill-owners among my friends ? They know my views about mills. They know too that I have had a share in promoting the prosperity of our mills in relation to foreign mills. Sir Chimanlal should also know that I am guiding the policy of the largest and most powerful labour union[2] in all India. My opposition to the mills is unbending and uncompromising. But it is wholly non-violent, and I made bold to say that the mill-owners will be the first to give me that certificate. My connection with the mills is a happy and complete illustration of non-violent resistance. I need not be reminded that they pamper me because they know that my activity cannot touch them. I flatter myself with the belief that they know better. They know that, if with my fixed views about mills I had violent intentions about them, my activity could cause so much trouble that they would be obliged to treat me as an enemy and to summon the assistance of the law against me.

But I like Sir Chimanlal's challenge to the ex-Ministers. Let them speak.

SEGAON, January 9, 1940

Harijan, 13-1-1940

[1] Wherein referring to Gandhiji's article "Spinning-wheel *v*. Mills", he wrote : "One is amazed at this pronouncement, which implies that if Mr. Gandhi had his way, the mechanized textile industry of this country would be abolished in order that the village spinners and weavers might come into their own. Mr. Gandhi may as well advocate the abolition of railways, aeroplane services and motor-cars in order that the bullock-cart may come into its own. The Congress Ministries have again and again professed their concern for the development of large-scale industries so that India may become self-sufficient and a committee presided over by Jawaharlal Nehru is functioning to evolve a plan of industrial and economic development in the country. One would like to know what the Congress leaders think of this latest pronouncement of Mr. Gandhi. At any rate, those engaged in the mill industry, which is at present the outstanding industry of India and specially of this province, are entitled to know whether the Congress Ministry, if and when it comes back to power, would work to attain the goal laid down by Mr. Gandhi of suppressing the mill industry of this country. Will any of the ex-Ministers of Bombay answer ?"

[2] Majoor Mahajan, the textile labour union of Ahmedabad

251. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

January 9, 1940

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Just now you cannot give up the treatment and go to Jaipur. Write a letter to the Maharaja.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3008

252. TALK WITH BHAI PARAMANAND [1]

SEGAON,
[*January 9/10, 1940*][2]

[GANDHIJI :] I have come across plenty of revolutionaries during my lifetime. I have been arguing with them ever since I wrote *Indian Home Rule* and ever since the murder of Curzon Wylie[3] when I was in England. They come to me knowing that they would get a patient hearing from me, and that in confiding their secrets to me they have a friend whom they can trust. As a result, quite a good number of them are today to be found fully converted and among my co-workers. So Prithvi Singh's case[4] was not the first one of the conversion of a revolutionary to non-violence, and it is my hope that it is not going to be the last.

Assuming that Hinduism sanctions violence, one great contribution of Hinduism to the world is its varnashrama dharma (not the travesty we see today) which confines the use of arms to Kshatriyas only. Therefore, to teach 350 millions of people how to wield the sword is a stupendous, almost an impossible task apart from the wrong and the frightfulness of it. Universal violence as a means of getting independence is certainly not easier than my way, as you say,

[1] Reporting the talk under the title "Talk with a Revolutionary", Mahadev Desai writes : "One could see from the talk what a havoc long and solitary confinement in prison works on people, and how instead of breaking their spirit it makes many of them all the more bitter and irreconcilable."

[2] Date and identity of the interviewer are from the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary.

[3] On July 2, 1909; *vide* "London", after 17-7-1909.

[4] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 20-5-1938.

because mine is traditional and natural to India—apart again from the fact that mutual aid is the law of life and not mutual slaughter. If the latter had been the law, society would not have survived it.

[BHAI PARAMANAND :] But why not take in as many as possible in a fight which must be decisive ?

Oh yes. This must be my last fight, if we fight at all. It will be the last fight in any case. That makes it all the more necessary for me not to begin it unless I am sure that my army is fit to under- go the fiery ordeal in a completely non-violent manner. Think what would happen if all the 17 lakhs of the members in U.P. were to pass my test which after all is eminently simple—spinning and wearing khadi.

But why must they believe that khadi will bring swaraj ? They will spin because they want your Generalship and must yield obedience to you.

If they render implicit obedience to the General, they should believe with him that khadi will bring swaraj. Mere mechanical action will not bring the result by which I will have to judge their obedience—khadi bhandars to be emptied and unemployment to be liquidated. That cannot happen without the belief in the charkha. If there is no such belief, I will not call it real obedience. But I will not blame them, I will blame myself if I do not carry conviction to them. The fault will lie entirely with my defective ahimsa. As I have often said if there is *one* true satyagrahi it would be enough. I am trying to be that true satyagrahi. Not one of his thoughts would be in vain. I know that many of my thoughts do not go in vain, but I also know that what I have thought and said about khadi has not gone home. I know the cause. I am full of *himsa*. Though I can suppress my anger, the fact remains that I am liable to anger. I have been a conscious and persevering observer of the vow of *brahmacharya* since 1906, but I am not the perfect *brahmachari* I want to be. For with me perfect *brahmacharya* is the attainment of sexlessness—not impotence, but the state of *urdhwareta* in which the sexual energy is completely sublimated into spiritual energy. If I had attained that *nirvikara* (passionless) state, I should have but to think a thing and it would happen. I would not have to argue.

But God is *nirvikara*—free from all passions. Why does He not make us act as we ought to ? His influence must be all-powerful.

How do we know that He does not act ? But do not bring in God in this discussion. He has neither truth nor untruth, neither violence nor non-violence.

But it is due to Him that we have *vikaras*—passions. If it was wrong to have passions, He would not have filled us with them.

Oh yes, He had given us all that and yet endowed us with the sense of right and wrong and also given us a certain amount of choice—the choice between right and wrong, between good and evil.

But so far as we can judge, you are free from passions and comparatively perfect ?

No, I must be allowed to judge my limitations. If I was per- fect, as I told you, I would not have to argue with you. My thought would be enough. I have fought many a fight. If anything I was less perfect then than I am today. I had then to cover the length and breadth of India. I had to speak and argue day in and day out. Now if a fight has to come, you may be sure that I shall lead it from Segaon. I am speaking and arguing much less than I used to do. But the fact remains that I am far from my ideal yet.[1]

If there are so many volunteers ready, why should there have been so many riots ?

That is because they are provoked by the third party.

That is not the answer. Even if they were engineered, non-violent volunteers should be able to make them impossible. But what about you ? I have had accounts of you which are far from complimentary.

I have never in my life, even when I was an active revolutionary, countenanced violence. Let anybody prove that I advised anyone to strike police or Government officials down. In fact I used to denounce all such acts and attempts.

Did you ?

Yes.

Do you know Baba Ramachandra ?

Don't I know him ?

You do. Then do you know that Baba Ramachandra would not ask anyone to kill another ? But he believed that to pour boiling water down a man's throat was not violence. You may have preached non-violence of that kind.

No, but I have explained to the people the teaching of the *Bhagavad Gita*. I

[1] The following talk took place on the succeeding day. Mahadev Desai reports : ". . . Somehow the thought of thousands of satyagrahis in battle array obsessed [Bhai Paramanand]. Apart from the test of spinning, Gandhiji put another test before him."

have told them that Lord Krishna Himself has said that neither does the slayer slay nor is he whom he slays slain.[1]

Oh ! That's all you have said.

The friend laughed at the absurdity of his own claim of non-violence. "But," he persisted, "does not Lord Krishna say it ?"

That does not mean that you or I may say it. If I kill a man, I should have the gallows. My saying 'I have not killed' won't save me.

But if you want us to forget the teaching of the *Gita*, do tell us so. We will then not take the name of the *Gita* and [will] follow a different precept.

No, there is *no* different precept to follow. You have to re-learn your *Gita*. You have misread it all these years.

Harijan, 20-1-1940

253. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

January 10, 1940

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Return well and fully able to share burdens.[2]

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 3664. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6473

254. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

January 10, 1940

BA,

I have your letter. Prabha has given in her letter all the news. Tell Devdas that I don't at all like his falling ill. He doesn't take care to put in enough exercise. If he did that and kept regular hours for meals he would not fall ill. You may stay there as long as necessary.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./XXIV

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 19

[2] The addressee had gone to Indore.

255. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

January 12, 1940

CHI. MANILAL, SUSHILA,

I got your letters. I do make every possible effort to write, but there is so much work every day that something is always left over.

I have already written to you about your fighting there. I will write more when I get time. Medh's[1] letter is lying with me. I have nothing special to write. The final responsibility rests on you.

Kishorelalbhai is staying here at present. There are hopes of his improving. Jairamdas also is here. He is very much better. Kunvarji is gaining weight rapidly. Thus Segaon has turned into a hospital just now. I am not likely to start a struggle here immediately.

Ba is in Delhi. Lakshmi is very weak. She is improving.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4907

256. LETTER TO BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

January 14, 1940

MY DEAR BHARATAN,

Even though the medicine might have been or was given to me personally, I cannot trace it. Please procure another sample and literature.

I can't draft the resolution. I began it and saw that it was not for the A. I. V. I. A. to pass a resolution, it was for me to deal with it in *Harijan*. This I shall do.[2]

I have the money.

Love.

BAPU

From a Photostat : G.N. 3589

[1] Surendra Medh

[2] *Vide* the following item.

257. WHY ONLY KHADI ? [1]

Prof. Kumarappa has a grouse against me that although I am the author and guide of the A. I. V. I. A. I seem to treat it as a step- child. I have retorted that the grouse is due to superficial reasoning. He will not take a defeat lying down. He has returned to the charge again and again, and refuses to be satisfied till I proclaim to the world that the other village industries stand on the same footing with khadi. For me the proposition was so self-evident as not to need any enunciation. But Prof. Kumarappa is right so far as practical application is concerned. People are not governed by theory. Thus several people have recently complained to me that they know men who use khadi but use no other village articles. They suggest that many Congressmen wear khadi because it is required by the constitution. But having no belief in it they never think of anything but their convenience so far as other articles of use are concerned. This I call fulfilling the letter and killing the spirit. And where the spirit is killed the letter is of as much use as a body from which life has ebbed away. I have often said that khadi is the central sun round which the other village industries revolve like so many planets. They have no independent existence. Nor will khadi exist without the other industries. They are absolutely inter-dependent. The fact is that we have to make a choice between India of the villages that are as ancient as herself and India of the cities which are a creation of foreign domination. Today the cities dominate and drain the villages so that they are crumbling to ruin. My khadi mentality tells me that cities must subserve village when that domination goes. Exploiting of villages is itself organized violence. If we want swaraj to be built on non-violence, we will have to give the villages their proper place. This we will never do unless we revive village industries by using the products thereof in place of things produced in city factories, foreign or indigenous. Perhaps it is now clear why I identify khadi with non-violence. Khadi is the chief village handicraft. Kill khadi and you must kill the villages and with them non-violence. I cannot prove this by statistics. The proof is before our eyes.

SEGAON, January 14, 1940

Harijan, 20-1-1940

[1] This appeared under “Notes”.

258. NO SUPPRESSION

A Bengali friend came to me during the week and said that though Bengal was ready for battle the Working Committee and especially I were suppressing it and thus damaging the nation's cause. This is a serious charge. The Working Committee can take care of itself. So far as I know, it has suppressed no province and no person. But I can say as the sole authority on satyagraha that I have never suppressed any body or organization. Satyagraha does not admit of such suppression. Thus though I have been ignorantly accused of suppressing the people of Rajkot, I never suppressed them. They were at liberty, as they are now, to civilly resist authority. Even one person could do so if he had the conviction. If he is wrong, he can only harm himself, not his opponent. Hence it is that I have called satyagraha the most harmless, if also the most potent, remedy against wrongs.

What, however, I did in the case of Rajkot was to use the authority the satyagrahis of Rajkot had given me, to suspend civil resistance. It was open to them to reject my advice—it could hardly be dignified by the name of command. If they had, and if they had got responsible government, they would have received my congratulations.

Some readers may remember that the Working Committee had refused to sanction civil resistance in Chirala Perala[1] but had left the Chirala people to declare it at their own risk. Likewise it is open to Bengal, as also to any other province, on its own initiative and at its own risk, to offer civil resistance. What it cannot have is my approval or support. And if the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee wholly repudiates the authority of the Working Committee, it can, with all the greater force and propriety, do as it likes. If it succeeds, it will cover itself with glory, overthrow the present leadership, and rule the Congress organization as it will deserve to. I have prescribed the conditions of successful civil resistance. But if the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee thinks that the Muslim masses are with the Congress, if it thinks that both Hindus and Muslims are ready for the fight, if it thinks that neither non-violence nor the charkha is necessary or that non-violence has no connection with the charkha, and if it fails to declare war, it will then be untrue to itself and to the country. What I have said applies to every province and part of India. But as the most experienced satyagrahi I must be allowed to utter a note of warning to all concerned that whoever declares civil resistance

[1] *Vide* "Chirala-Perala", 25-8-1921.

without the proper training and a full appreciation of the conditions of satyagraha is likely to bring disaster to the cause he espouses.

SEGAON, January 14, 1940
Harijan, 20-1-1940

259. A VOLUNTARY LABOUR TAX

If all primary members of the Congress also become spinners for swaraj, how would it affect khadi ? I asked Shri Krishnadas Gandhi to answer the question for me, and he has produced the following figures :

1.	The number of primary members :	. . 40 lakhs
2.	The value of their annual donation, say, 12,000 yards per member, can be reckoned at Rs. 1-2-0 per head, but to be on the safe side is taken at Re. 1 per head	. . Rs. 40 lakhs
3.	The Value of khadi produced from the subscribed yarn	. . Rs. 48 lakhs
	The annual sale of khadi for 1939 is estimated at	. . Rs. 75 lakhs
	Therefore, the total value of the A.I.S.A. khadi is equal to (Rs. 75 lakhs + Rs. 48 lakhs)	. . Rs. 123 lakhs
	The cost to the A.I.S.A. (Rs. 123 lakhs – Rs. 40 lakhs)	. . Rs. 83 lakhs
	This would mean in the production of khadi an increase of	. . 84%
	Or, in the sale price of khadi, a possibility of reduction of	. . 32.5%
	Or, in the alternative, the possibility of increasing the wages of spinners by	. . 80 to 100%

2. There is a provision in the rules of the A.I.S.A. which allows subscribers to purchase back their subscribed yarn at its value (Re. 1) minus the value of the cotton Rs. 5 i.e., 11 Rs.

If all members exercise this privilege, the A.I.S.A. will realize in cash	. . Rs. 27.5 lakhs
Consequently,	
The cost price of the remaining stock of khadi with the A.I.S.A. will be (Rs. 75 lakhs — Rs. 27.5 lakhs)	. . Rs. 47.5 lakhs
This will enable the Association to reduce the sale price by about	. . 37%
instead of 32.5% mentioned in the first calculation.	

If the total amount of yarn contributed be worth Rs. 40 lakhs, each member will pay out of pocket not more than 8 annas per annum, it being the

price of cotton and the cost of carding, when the member is not a carder. If he self-cards his own cotton, as he is expected to, the out-of-pocket expenses will be still further reduced. It must be remembered that the higher the count of yarn the less is the price of cotton and the greater is the contribution in the form of labour.

Those who are not prejudiced against khadi will find ample food for thought in the foregoing. Let them work out what it would mean if all wore khadi, if all spun not the miserable 33 yards per day but at least 100 yards. The price of khadi can be lowered by donating this to the A. I. S. A. or, which is the same thing, the poor learning the art of spinning for their own needs. This donation will be a kind of a voluntary labour tax.

SEGAON, January 14, 1940
Harijan, 20-1-1940

260. ENGLISH OPINION ON INDIAN STRUGGLE

A friend forwards the following two cuttings from *The Cambridge Review*.[1] The signatories are distinguished men and women of letters. I publish them to show that thoughtful English men and women who used to be indifferent about India are now studying Indian affairs and are unreservedly supporting the struggle for Indian Independence.

SEGAON, January 14, 1940
Harijan, 20-1-1940

[1] Eileen Power, Susan Stebbing, M. H. Dobb, David Hardman, H. L. Elvin, Harold J. Laski, Joseph Needham and J. Robinson had in a letter expressed their keen sympathy with the Indians in their struggle "against indescribable poverty, the persistence of feudal anomalies" and their eagerness to extend their active co-operation to the Indian people. They had welcomed the setting up of an Indian Independence Committee in Cambridge to provide information about India and to explain and advocate the Congress policy.

In another letter R. R. Pittam and M. J. C. Hodgart had protested against the policy of the National Government towards India. "The Indian people," they wrote, "demand freedom and democracy in order to overcome the economic and political backwardness which 150 years of foreign rule has done little or nothing to alleviate. No formula which does not grant these things can be satisfactory, nor can it produce anything but conflict and disorder." The writers, advocating the proposal of the Indian National Congress to introduce universal adult franchise, had said, "No minority in India which genuinely believes in freedom objects to this, and it is a demand with which the British people are in full sympathy." Also, in their opinion, Dominion Status was meaningless, for "the Indian people have no cultural, religious or racial ties with Britain."

261. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 14, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I have read and re-read your Bombay speech.[1] I write this, however, to put before you my difficulties. Dominion Status in terms of the Statute of Westminster and independence are taken to be equivalent terms. If so, should you not use the term that fits India's case ?

I have no doubt you had very good reasons for the way you have dealt with the question of minorities. But I have serious doubts about the implications of your reference to that question. I do not at all understand the reference to the scheduled castes.

If you think that you would like to see me you have but to wire or write.[2] I shall be with the Working Committee till perhaps the 22nd inst.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : C. W. 7835. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

262. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

January 14, 1940

CHI. BABUDI,

Sushila wrote to me about your baby. I have dictated a letter to Gangabehn and she will now write to you direct. You also may write to her. The best thing is that you should eat enough fruit and greens and take enough milk. If you do that your milk will be nourishing and that will help the baby. Mix sago with milk.

[1] For the Viceroy's speech dated January 10, *vide* Appendix "Viceroy's Speech", 10-1-1940.

[2] In his reply dated January 17 the addressee invited Gandhiji for talks any day after January 29.

My yarn has still not been woven. If you want finer cloth still, I will send some from my dhotis. Both of you must be fine. Take complete rest.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 10025. Courtesy : Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

263. DISCUSSION WITH ENGLISH PACIFISTS[1]

SEGAON,
[Before *January 15, 1940*][2]

. . . Whilst the pacifists appreciated the position taken up by India, their difficulty was how, if Gandhiji accepted the Allied cause as just and said that he would pray for the victory of Britain, he had advised the Congress not to offer its co-operation to Britain.

. . . Gandhiji explained that any co-operation or non-co-operation that the Congress could offer would be moral and not material. Materially Britain's position would not be affected by either attitude, for the contribution in men and money that Britain exacted from India as a subject nation would continue. When a non-violent India wished Britain victory it was not victory for Britain, right or wrong, but victory for Britain which in going to war against Germany was less in the wrong and more in the right. But if there was no satisfactory declaration of the war aims regarding India, the moral support that Britain would gain would not be forthcoming. The result would be quite different if the Congress were indifferent as to means. She would in that case foment a rebellion and offer effective obstruction.

[Q.] Now it would be mental violence and not physical violence ?

[A.] Maybe. But the non-co-operation that may come would be non-violent. Mental violence has no potency and injures only the person whose thoughts are violent. It is otherwise with mental non-violence. It has potency which the world does not yet know. And what I want is non-violence of thought and need.

Such non-violent support can be available to Britain only if her cause is demonstrably just, even though from a pacifist standpoint her means are violent and therefore bad. Her cause will not be just if she is not just to India, i.e., if of her own accord and without reference to the

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's article "A Pacifist's Doubts" date January 15, 1940

[2] *ibid*.

parties in India she does not wash her hands clean of the imperialist exploitation of India. Therefore, non-violent India's prayer will be for Britain's victory when she declares in unequivocal terms that India is a free nation in action now, and in law as soon as possible, maybe even during the war. This she will do from the heart only when she begins to rely more on the efficacy of the moral support of non-violent India than on her own strong arm. If England can take this step, the war will end in peace through moral force, rather than through superiority of arms.

Harijan, 20-1-1940

264. A WELCOME MOVE

On the Deliverance Thanksgiving Day declared by Jinnah Saheb[1] I had the following wire from Gulbarga Muslims : "Deliverance Day greetings, Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah *Zindabad*". I took it as a message sent to ruffle my feelings. The senders little knew that the wire could not serve its purpose. When I received it, I silently joined the senders in the wish "Long Live Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah." The Quaid-e-Azam is an old comrade. What does it matter that today we do not see eye to eye in some matters ? That can make no difference in my goodwill towards him.

But the Quaid-e-Azam has given me special reason for congratulating him. I had the pleasure of wiring him congratulations on his excellent Id day broadcast. And now he commands further congratu-lations on forming pacts with parties who are opposed to the Congress policies and politics. He is thus lifting the Muslim League out of the communal rut and giving it a national character. I regard his step as perfectly legitimate. I observe that the Justice Party and Dr. Ambedkar's party have already joined Jinnah Saheb. The papers report too that Shri Savarkar, the President of the Hindu Mahasabha, is to see him presently. Jinnah Saheb himself has informed the public that many non-Congress Hindus have expressed their sympathy with him. I regard this develop-ment as thoroughly healthy. Nothing can be better than that we should have in the country mainly two parties—Congress and non-Congress or anti-Congress, if the latter expression is preferred. Jinnah Saheb is giving the word 'minority' a new and good content. The Congress majority is made up of a combination of

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 9-12-1939

caste Hindus, non-caste Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis and Jews. Therefore it is a majority drawn from all classes, representing a particular body of opinion; and the proposed combination becomes a minority representing another body of opinion. This may any day convert itself into a majority by commending itself to the electorate. Such an alignment of parties is a consummation devoutly to be wished. If the Quaid-e-Azam can bring about the combination, not only I but the whole of india will shout with one acclamation : 'Long Live Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah.' For he will have brought about permanent and living unity for which I am sure the whole nation is thirsting.

SEGAON, January 15, 1940

Harijan, 20-1-1940

265. MY SIN

The following is a summary of a long indictment from a Muslim official of a Punjab Congress Committee :

Your public statements show that you are deeply distressed over the differences among the major communities of India. Apart from the natural fear of the Mussalmans of a dominant majority at the Centre, it is chiefly your personality which is forcing the Mussalmans to ally themselves with the imperialist Government and thus array themselves against the Congress. The student of current events has to thank you for driving the brave and liberty-loving Mussalmans into the reactionary fold.

You claim that "from its very commencement the Congress has been a wholly political organization and never communal. It has proved its claim repeatedly and on every relevant occasion." You have written : "The Congress has refused to represent any but the national cause." Of course the Indian National Congress was organized as a non-communal body for the political emancipation of India. But when you say that "if untouchability exists Hinduism cannot survive", you admit that the uplift of the Harijans is a purely Hindu cause and is a question of the life and death of Hinduism. In spite of this for the twenty years of your life in India you have used the Congress platform for the removal of untouchability and have included it in the constructive programme of the Congress. The Mussalmans do not grudge you the right to work for the uplift of the

Harijans provided it is on a separate platform. But why should you include what you yourself admit to be a purely Hindu cause in the constructive programme of the Congress ? . . . You have thus made the background of the Congress so aggressively Hindu that it requires little effort to keep the Mussalmans away from the Congress. . . . The misfortune is that most of the Congressmen have been infused with the same narrow-mindedness and indiscretion as have characterized your leadership. To most of them freedom of India means going back to an age 2,500 years old and thrusting their religion and culture on eight crores of unwilling Mussalmans. . . .

But the communal question seen from the right perspective is not as insoluble as it appears to be. Even now prudence coupled with large-heartedness may undo the wrong done to the cause of national unity.

The Constituent Assembly is not only an expedient for the political problem facing India but is under the present circumstances the best and the only way out of the communal muddle. . . . But an article from your pen in *Harijan*[1] is not sufficient. It is necessary to incorporate in the resolution[2] on the Constituent Assembly a clear-worded clause assuring the Mussalmans that their representatives to the said Assembly would be elected on separate electorates, and that regarding matter relating to their religion and culture the decision of a two-third majority of their representatives would be accepted without hitch or hindrance.

Then again a mere resolution passed to the above effect would not suffice. It would be necessary to carry on continuous, systematic and intensive propaganda in order to bring home to every Mussalman the implication of the Constituent Assembly especially of the clause dealing with the election and powers of the representatives of the Mussalmans. Only in this way can the Congress gain the confidence of the Mussalman masses and cut the ground from under the feet of those who try to mislead them by creating the bogey of their religion and culture being in danger.

India can free itself the very day the Congress succeeds in winning the confidence of the Mussalmans. Britain dare not hold in bondage a united India. Therefore the fight for freedom should take the form of adopting measures for and putting into practice the ideal

[1] *Vide* "The Only Way", 19-11-1939.
[2] ibid.

of Hindu-Muslim unity.

Perhaps one thing has become clear to you now, namely, that Hindu-Muslim unity cannot come about by negotiating with the Muslim League or any other organization.

I have left out nothing relevant from the letter. The charge coming from a responsible Congressman is amazing. The programme of non-co-operation was passed[1] in consultation with the Ali Brothers[2] and at a time when the Congress had the full-hearted co-operation of the most influential Muslims. The programme contained removal of untouchability by Hindus. Should not non-Hindus rejoice in the purification of Hinduism ? Why may not the Congress allow and encourage social and religious reform from the Congress platform ? Non-violent politics cannot be divorced from moral uplift. And why does the correspondent forget that Khilafat itself was a purely religious cause ? There were non-Congress Hindus then as there are now who thought and think that it was a grave mistake made by the Congress in taking up the Khilafat wrong. I have no doubt whatsover as to the correctness of the Congress step. And if a similar thing occurred again, I should not hesitate to give my life in aiding my Muslim brethren. "A friend in need is a friend indeed." I hope, therefore, that my correspondent and those who think like him will correct their thought and believe with me that every act of purification in any sect or community promotes the well-being of the whole, of which they from a part, and therefore deserves encouragement from all platforms.

As to the Constituent Assembly everything the correspondent says has been conceded by the Congress. Propaganda is also going on. But Congressmen and especially Congress Muslims may not sit with folded hands and expect the Working Committee to carry on the work. The Working Committee's function is to supervise, guide and advise the organization and to administer its routine work. But propaganda can only be carried on if thousands of Congressmen interest themselves in it. If the programme mapped by the Congress is insipid, Congressmen can turn out the present guides in a moment. This is true especially because the Congress has accepted non-violence as its policy. Its success is dependent on the whole-hearted co-

[1] On December 30, 1920; *vide*, Appendix "Congress Resolution on Non-Co-Operation", December 1920.

[2] Mohamed Ali and Shaukat Ali

operation of every single Congressman. In that sense the Congress is the largest instrument of political education in the country. Everyone who comes on the Congress register becomes a candidate for political education. There should be a hand-book to impart such education. And since many Congressmen are illiterate it might be necessary to take up adult literacy and have a special department for carrying on the work. I commend this suggestion to my correspondent for adoption. He can commence with his own district in which he is Vice-president. Let him not distrust members of the Muslim League. They are both his countrymen and co-religionists. We need not be one another's enemies because we have different ideas or different policies.

SEGAON, January 15, 1940

Harijan, 20-1-1940

266. TO CORRESPONDENTS AND MESSAGE-SEEKERS[1]

In spite of my notice[2] in Harijan of December 23rd those who can spare me continue to write and ask for messages. I would refer them to the notice for further explanation. I know several intimate friends have not received acknowledgements or messages. They will forgive me. I have to harden my heart if I am to cope with the responsibility I am carrying. And what can be better than that I should commence with known friends ?

SEGAON, January 15, 1940

Harijan, 27-1-1940

267. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

WARDHA (C.P.),
January 15, 1940

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

If you think it proper tell Gurudev that I have never ceased to think of his wire[3] and anxiety about Bengal. I feel that Subhas is behaving like a spoilt child of the family. The only way to make up

[1] This appeal was repeated in Harijan, 3-2-1940. 10-2-1940 and 17-2-1940.

[2] *Vide* "To Correspondents and Message-seekers", 17-12-1939.

[3] Dated December 20, 1939; *vide* 1st footnote of "Telegram to Rabindranath Tagore", 22-12-1939.

with him is to open his eyes. And then his politics show sharp differences. They seem to be unbridgeable. I am quite clear the matter is too complicated for Gurudev to handle. Let him trust that no one in the Committee has anything personal against Subhas. For me, he is as my son. Hope you are well.

Love.

MOHAN

From a photostat : G.N. 8750

268. THE DISSENTIENTS

Shri Jayaprakash Narayan[1] and Shri Sampurnanand[2] have spoken in no uncertain terms against the addendum to the pledge[3] to be taken on the 26th inst. I have great regard for them. They are able and brave and have suffered for the country. I should count it a privilege to have them as companions in arms. I should love to win them over to my viewpoint. If the battle is to come and I am to lead it, I should not be able to do so with half-convinced or doubting lieutenants.

I am not spoiling for a fight. I am trying to avoid it. Whatever may be true of the members of the Working Committee, I wholly endorse Subhas Babu's charge that I am eager to have a compromise with Britain if it can be had with honour. Indeed satyagraha demands it. Therefore I am in no hurry. And yet if the time came and if I had no follower, I should be able to put up a single-handed fight. But I have not lost faith in Britain. I like the latest pronouncement of Lord Linlithgow.[4] I believe in his sincerity. There are undoubted snags in that speech. Many *i*s have to be dotted, many *t*s have to be crossed. But it seems to contain germs of a settlement honourable to both nations. Those, therefore, who work with me have to appreciate this side of me. Perhaps from the standpoint of the dissentients this compromising nature of mine is a disqualification. If it is, the country should know it.

Shri Jayaprakash Narayan has done well to clear his and the Socialist Party's position. He says of the constructive programme :

[1] General Secretary of the All-India Congress Socialist Party
[2] Ex-Minister, Education, U.P.
[3] *Vide* Appendix "Resolution on Independence Day Pledge", 30-12-1939.
[4] *Vide* Appendix "Viceroy's Speech", 10-1-1940.

> We have never accepted it as the only or even as an adequately effective weapon in our struggle. . . . Our views regarding these matters have remained unchanged. Rather they have been strengthened by the helplessness of the national leadership in the present crisis. . . . Let students come out of their schools and colleges on that day and let workers lay down their tools.

If the majority of Congressmen entertain the views that Shri Jayaprakash propounds on behalf of the Socialist Party, I can never hope to lead such an army to success. He has no faith either in the programme or in the present leadership. I suggest to him that he has quite unconsciously discredited the programme he would carry out merely "because the nation's High Command desire it". Imagine an army marching to battle without faith in the weapons to be used and in the leaders who have prescribed them. Such an army can only bring disaster to itself, its leaders and the cause. If I were in Shri Jayaprakash's place and if I felt able to tender discipline, I would advise my party to remain indoors and silent. If I could not, I would preach open revolt and frustrate the designs of an ineffective leadership. Again, he would have he students come out of their colleges and schools and workmen lay down their tools, Now this is a lesson in indiscipline. If I had my way, I would invite every student to remain in his school or college unless he got leave or the Principal decided to close the college or school in order to take part in the celebration. I should give similar advice to the workmen. Shri Jayaprakash complains that the Working Committee has given no details about the work to be done on the Independence Day. I thought that with the programme of fraternizing and khadi there was no need for detailed instructions. I should expect Congress committees everywhere to arrange spinning demonstrations, khadi-hawking, and the like. I observe that some committees are doing so. I had expected Congress committees to make preparations from the day the Working Committee resolution was published. I shall measure the strength of the nation's response not merely by the quantity of yarn spun but mainly by the khadi sales throughout the country.

Finally Shri Jayaprakash says : "We advanced for our part a new programme, that of labour and peasant organization, as the foundation of a revolutionary mass movement." I dread the language used. I have organized both but not perhaps in the way Shri Jayaprakash has in mind. The sentence demands further elucidation. If they are not organized on a strictly peaceful footing, they may damage non-violent action as they did during the Rowlatt Act

Satyagraha[1] and later during the hartal in Bombay over the Prince of Wales's visit[2].

Shri Sampurnanand has raised a spiritual issue.[3] He thinks that the original pledge should not have been tampered with though as he says, and rightly, it was discursive. I was its author. I wanted the people not merely to repeat the *mantra* of independence but to educate the people as to its why and wherefore. It was later amended when certain portions of the original had become meaningless. I admit the sacredness of the *mantra* of independence. That was given to us when the Lokamanya[4] first uttered: "Swaraj is my birthright." It was caught by thousands and is gaining strength from day to day. It is now enshrined in the hearts of millions. I hold that the addendum this year was necessary. It adds to the sacredness of the original and tells the people how everyone can contribute to the realization of national freedom.

I feel, therefore, that Shri Sampurnanand's objection really arises from his disbelief in the constructive programme. Thus he says :

> If making it an integral part of the pledge means that we are definitely committing ourselves to a policy of village industries as opposed to mass production, then I, as a socialist, cannot accept it.

Of course I cannot give the legal interpretation of the pledge. It can only be given by the Working Committee. But as the General responsible for declaring and conducting a non-violent war I am bound to say that this mentality must interfere with mass propaganda. A leader like Sampurnanandji can either throw himself whole-heartedly in the struggle or not at all. He will create confusion in the mass mind by being hafl-hearted in his exposition of the addendum. If khadi has not an abiding place in the national programme, it should have no place in the addendum. If there is anything more effective, it should be put before the nation. There need be no hush-hush policy because a big fight is said to be impending. It is not necessary for all to be of one mind. But it is absolutely necessary that those who have to be in charge, as he would have to be, have a living faith in the programme they have to work out. No make-believe will answer the present requirements.

[1] In 1919.
[2] On November 17, 1921.
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Sampurnanand," 29-12-1939.
[4] Bal Gangadhar Tilak

It has been suggested to me by a Congressman wielding great influence that as soon as I declare civil resistance I would find a staggering response this time. The whole labour world and the *kisans* in many parts of India will, he assures me, declare a simultaneous strike. I told him that, if that happened, I should be most embarrassed and all my plan would be upset. I must confess that I have no positive plan in front of me. Let me say that God will send me the plan when He gives the word as He has done before now. He has been my unfailing Guide and has sustained me throughout my stormy life. This, however, I know that no plan that I may put before the country will admit of unregulated and sporadic strikes, because that must lead to violence and therefore automatic suspension of the non-violent struggle. It would amount to my dismissal. I am sure that socialist leaders and other dissentients do not expect me to embark on a struggle which I know beforehand is likely to end in disaster. I ask for lieutenants and men who will act as one mind.

Even if somehow or other we achieve nominal independence, we cannot conduct national affairs with any degree of success unless we have won the struggle in the manner prescribed by me. Without real non-violence there would be perfect anarchy. I hope I am not expected knowingly to undertake a fight that must end in anarchy and red ruin.

SEGAON, January 16, 1940

Harijan, 20-1-1940

269. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

January 16, 1940

DEAR QUAID-E-AZAM,

I hate to write 'Mr.' before any Indian name. It is so unnatural. Hence I have been writing of you as 'Janab Jinnah Sahib', according to the usage taught to me by the late Hakim Sahib. But Amtul Salaam tells me that in the League circles you are always called "Quaid-e-Azam". And you will see from the enclosed how the finishing touch was given by a telegram I received from Gulburga. I hope you will accept my assurance that what I have done has been done in good faith and out of regard for you. If, however, you would have me address you otherwise, I shall respect your wishes.

The purpose of writing this letter is to send you the enclosed

advance copy of the article[1] I have sent to the *Harijan*. I have written it to further the end I have read in your recent messages and actions. I know you are quite capable of rising to the height required for the noble motive attributed to you. I do not mind your opposition to the Congress. But your plan to amalgamate all the parties opposed to the Congress at once gives your movement a national character. If you succeed you will free the country from communal incubus and, in my humble opinion, give a lead to the Muslims and others for which you will deserve the gratitude not only of the Muslims but of all the other communities. I hope that my interpretation is correct. If I am mistaken, you will please correct me.

It is a purely personal, private, friendly letter. But you are free to make public use of it if you think it necessary.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : C.W. 11340. Courtesy : Rizwan Ahmed

270. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

[*January 17, 1940*][2]

Since writing to you on the 14th instant I have had reports of the interviews you gave to Shris Bh. Desai[3], Munshi[4] and Kher[5]. These reports convey an impression different from the one made by a study of your speech[6]. If they are a correct reflection of your mind, a settlement may be more difficult than your speech has led me to believe and perhaps the time has not arrived for our meeting. But of this you shall be sole judge. I do not want to put you in a false position by your inviting me to meet you because of my letter of the 14th instant. Some-how or other I feel that when we meet we should do so to come to a final settlement. But I must not anticipate.[7]

From a copy : C.W. 7836. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

[1] *Vide* "A Welcome Move", 15-1-1940.

[2] From the addressee's letter dated January 21

[3] Bhulabhai Desai, leader of the Opposition Party in the Central Assembly, who was granted an interview on January 13

[4] For the text of the interview with K.M. Munshi on January 12, *vide* Appendix "K. M. Munshi's Interview with Lord Linlithgow", 12-1-1940.

[5] B. G. Kher, ex-Premier of Bombay

[6] *Vide* Appendix "Viceroy's Speech", 10-1-1940.

[7] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 23-1-1940.

271. LETTER TO DR. CHOITHRAM GIDWANI

[Before *January 18, 1940*][1]

Mahatma Gandhi in a communication to Dr. Choithram P. Gidwani has contradicted the statement of the Secretary of the Sind Hindu Mahasabha that he (Mahatmaji) had called Mr. Virumal Begraj and Mr. Bhojraj Ajwani, President and Secretary of the Hindu Mahasabha, Sukkur, respectively, to Wardha to hear from them the Hindu viewpoint on the Sukkur riots. Mahatma Gandhi states that he had invited nobody from Sind to meet him.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-1-1940

272. LETTER TO SARDUL SINGH CAVEESHAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 18, 1940

DEAR CAVEESHAR,

I am surprised at Gianiji so hopelessly misunderstanding me. What I said was that you never claimed to represent Sikhs in the sense that you were above sectarianism. What was said was said by way of a compliment to you. But you do not cease to be a Sikh even as I don't cease to be a Hindu because I refuse to represent those Hindus who believe untouchability to be part of Hinduism.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

273. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 18, 1940

CHI. VIJAYA,

I have your letter. You did well in paying a visit to Bapa. This place has become a hospital. Jairamdas, Kunvarji, Kishorelal and Valjibhai are ill. They seem to be improving. Ba has not yet returned. Lakshmi is weak. Devdas was ill. Kanu will return on the 22nd. Perhaps I may have to go to Santiniketan. Nothing has been

[1] The report is date-lined "Bombay, January 18, 1940",

fixed yet.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 7122. Also C.W. 4614. Courtesy : Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

274. LETTER TO ABDUL KHALIL

SEGAON, WARDHA,

January 18, 1940

BHAI ABDUL KHALIL,

I could read your letter only today. If what you write is true, it is regrettable. I shall make inquiries.

M. K. GANDHI

BHAI ABDUL KHALIL
C/O MUNSHI ABDUL WAHAB SAHEB
VAIJANATH PARA
RAIPUR (C. P.)

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 6861

275. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM,

January 19, 1940

CHI. LILA,

I received your letter. I have taken so much burden upon myself that it is difficult to cope with letters from persons like you. But sitting here I am doing whatever needs to be done. Do not lose heart. What appears difficult will become easy and interesting with effort. I have no desire at all to go to Poona. Come during the holidays. Give up any other craving. Your duty is to study. We shall see about nursing, etc. Right now, the issue is the intermediate examination. Learning never goes waste.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The rest from Mahadev's letter.

SHRI LILAVATIBEHN UDESHI

KANJI KHETSI CHHATRALAYA

65 MINT ROAD

BOMAY FORT

From the Gujara ti origin al: Pyarel al Papers . Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y. Courte sy: Belade vi Nayyar and Dr. Sushil a Nayyar

276. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

[Before *January 19, 1940*][2]

Your opposition[1] is proper and you have expressed it in a language of restraint. You could not have done anything else.

The Hindu, 19-1-1940

277. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

WARDHA,
January 19, 1940

VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

AKAS [H] ET [H] KUWANI POL [E]

AHMEDABAD

EXAMINE SHANKERLAL BANKER AILING DYSPEPSIA AND REPORT. WIRE IF NECESSARY.

GANDHI

From C.W. 2912. Courtesy : Vallabhram Vaidya

278. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI AND FAMILY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 19, 1940

CHI. RAMA,

I am satisfied to read your handwriting. Let us live as God wills.

CHI. NIMU,

After reading your letter I had only asked for a line from you on a postcard. You can certainly have the time every week.

CHI. SUMI,

I will say your letter is good. But you must use ink. And each letter should be like a pearl.

CHI. KANAM,

When you satisfy me with your studies as also with everything else you are sure to find sweets in your pockets.

CHI. USHA[1],

Improve your handwriting. There are quite a number of patients here. Tell whoever from Valjibhai's is there not to worry about him. He is being properly looked after. And he also is cheerful. Ba is still in Delhi and will remain there for some time.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI RAMDAS GANDHI
DAKSHINAMOORTI
BHAVNAGAR, KATHIAWAR

From the Gujarati original : Nirmala Gandhi Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

279. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
January 19, 1940

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. Vijaya's address is : Ambla *via* Songarh, Kathiawar.

[1] Daughter of Ramdas Gandhi

Your work will not suffer in the least if you stay here for a month. What would happen if you were bed-ridden, or if you had to go to help Father ? It will be better to come here now and improve your health than to be forced to come here after it has already broken down. If you ask Rajen Babu, he too will give you the same advice. As to your question how you should work there, the answer is simple enough. If you get even one or two women who will spin willingly and sincerely, you should labour for them as best as you can. You should also go from door to door selling as much khadi as possible. Get a few women together and form a *bhajan* party, and teach them how to read and write. Go among the poor women also and spread literacy among them. Go to the Harijan quarters and meet the women there. Thus you can widen the sphere of your work as much as you wish provided your health remains good enough. By and by other women also will join you. But the fact is that your health is not strong enough. Nor can you make adequate preparation. It appears to you that you have no work because you have not chalked out a programme.

We had a lot of rain here.

Sushila is in Delhi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3543

280. LETTER TO KESHAVRAM R. TRIVEDI

January 19, 1940

BHAI KESHAVRAM,

I am very late in replying to your letter. You should consult Lakshmidasbhai[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

KESHAVRAM RAMSHANKAR TRIVEDI SISODRAWALA
SHUDDHA KHADI BHANDAR
NAVASARI
B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./XXII

[1] Lakshmidas Purushottam Asar, an Ashram inmate and khadi expert

281. NOTES

IMPERIALISM DIES HARD

As I do not read newspapers but merely glance through the headings now and then, Pyarelal collects for me cuttings from various sources. These I read when I get odd moments. I chance upon one which contains the following instructions for bowing for those who were to receive decorations at the hands of H. E. the Governor of the United Provinces on the 16th instant :

> When your name is read out by the Secretary you will kindly move on to the edge of the carpet and you first bow to His Excellency.
>
> Then advance to the centre of the carpet and bow again.
>
> Then advance to the foot of the dais on which His Excellency will be standing and bow again.
>
> You will then be invested by His Excellency. His Excellency will then shake hands with you. Then you should bow.
>
> Then proceed four paces backwards and bow again.
>
> Then turn about and proceed to your seat.
>
> All officers, military or police. attending in head dress will salute and not bow.
>
> N.B.—The bow should be made by bending the head forward only and should not be made from the waist.

Sir Samuel Hoare says imperialism is dead. Every Congressman knows that it is dying. These instructions show that it will die hard. I never knew that this process of humiliation still continued. Decorations themselves are a symbol of imperialism. They are a means of overawing and bribing people, a reward for so-called loyal services and sometimes for gaining the applause or the silent approbation of distinguished men and women. When these decorations are accompanied by humiliating ceremonial, they excite angry feelings and mad passions of those who come to know about them. It is to be hoped that, while a move towards real democracy is being made, those who are in charge will make it a point of removing everything that savours of superiority and the humiliating spirit.

I have letters complaining that the khadi clause[1] of the Congress Constitution is honoured more in the breach than in the observance. The correspondents' chief complaint is that, in selecting Congress candidates for municipalities and local boards, the Congress officials do not enforce the khadi clause. One correspondent says that the obligation to wear khadi is waived because the Congress officials do not find competent enough candidates among khadi-wearers. This would be, if the dearth of proper men can be proved, a sound reason for altering the clause, surely not for committing a deliberate breach of the Congress Constitution. A writer justifies the waiver by arguing that there is no connection between swaraj and khadi. This again may be reason for a change in the Constitution but not for disregarding it. Every Congressman is a potential civil resister. The right to civil disobedience accrues only to those who perform the duty of voluntarily obeying the laws of the State, more so the laws of their own making. Therefore congressmen are taking grave risks when they commit wilful breaches of the Constitution.

And is there no connection between swaraj and khadi ? Were the Congressmen who made themselves responsible for the khadi clause in the Constitution so dense that they did not see the fallacy which is so obvious to some critics ? I have not hesitated to say, and I make bold to repeat, that there is no swaraj for the millions, for the hungry and the naked and for the millions of illiterate women without khadi. Habitual use of khadi is a sign that the wearer identifies himself with the poorest in the land, and has patriotism and self-sacrifice enough in him to wear khadi even though it may not be so soft or elegant in appearance as foreign fineries, nor so cheap.

SEGAON, January 22, 1940

Harijan, 27-1-1940

282. THE INDEPENDENCE DAY

Though questions regarding the forthcoming Independence Day Pledge should be properly addressed to the congress Secretary and though the President alone can give authoritative answers, they are continually being addressed to me; and as I have undertaken the duty of declaring civil resistance and leading the army, should a struggle

[1] *Vide* "Constitution of the Indian National Congress-Qualifications", 28-10-1934.

become necessary, it becomes incumbent on me to answer certain questions before 26th January.

1. Let it be remembered that, if civil resistance is to be declared, it will have to be more civil and more non-violent than ever before, if only to show the warring nations of the earth that a big people like that of India can fight non-violently for regaining their freedom. Therefore I shall resolutely refuse to fight unless I have sufficient confidence that Congressmen will render implicit obedience.

2. There is as much valour in self-denial as there is in rushing into the furnace, provided that the motive is the same in either case.

3. The Independence Day is an annual feature in the Congress programme and is unconnected with civil resistance. Hence the forthcoming celebration must not be mistaken for declaration of civil resistance. Nevertheless it would serve as an index of the discipline among Congressmen and those millions who have hitherto answered the Congress call. There should on the one hand be the largest demonstration of all the previous ones we have had, and on the other it should be of a character so peaceful as to disarm all criticism and induce and enable women with babes, little children and aged people to join the demonstration. Such was the demonstration on 6th April, 1919, in Bombay.[1]

4. Students have asked me what they should do. I would expect them individually to take the pledge, for it means their determination to win independence for India through truthful non-violent means symbolized in the constructive programme in which the charkha is the central activity. The other items are harmony among different communities and eradication of untouchability. These do not constitute the struggle but their fulfilment is indispensable for it. If the struggle comes, the students will not strike. They will leave their schools or colleges for good. But the students will not strike on the 26th. It will be good if the authorities themselves, as they well might, close their institutions and lead their staff and students in processions and other items of the programme. The same thing applies to labour. Those who without leave absent themselves from their work will in my opinion be guilty of indiscipline and render themselves unfit for enlisting as soldiers in the satyagraha army. Non-violence is all

[1] *Vide* "Speech on Hindu-Muslim Friendship, Bombay", 6-4-1919.

discipline, wholly voluntary. It is clear from the foregoing that those who do not believe in and use khadi cannot take the pledge.

5. The pledge is not designed, as some fear, to eliminate strikes and no-tax campaigns. But I must at once confess that I have in my mind neither strikes nor no-tax campaigns as part of the forthcoming struggle, if it comes at all. In my opinion the present atmosphere is not conducive to non-violent strikes and non-violent no-tax campaigns on an extensive scale.

6. I expect the whole weight of the Congress organization to be devoted to popularizing khadi and clearing the existing stocks.

7. For me satyagraha is a method of self-purification. The word was first used in the A.I.C.C. resolution of 1921. The constructive programme has been designed for that purpose. Though the word has fallen into disrepute, I as the author of the programme must have the courage to repeat it. We began satyagraha with a 24 hours' fast in 1919. I propose to observe one myself on the 26th beginning in the evening of the 25th. And those who believe in its efficacy will do likewise.

8. Though I am preparing myself in the best manner I know and inviting the country to join me for a struggle for the overthrow of the imperialistic spirit and all it means, I am making a despe- rate effort to avoid the struggle. I believe that the best mind of England, nay, of the world, is sick of the exploitation by the strong of the less strong. I believe in the sincerity of Lord Linlithgow. In the immediate carrying out of policies it is the individuals who count. I have worked with faith and hope. And I have not lost the hope that we shall have an honourable settlement without a struggle which, no matter how-violent, must involve considerable suffering. I therefore invite all communities, all parties, including Englishmen, to join the effort.

SEGAON, January 22, 1940
Harijan, 27-1-1940

283. ASHRAM NOTES

SEGAON,
January 22, 1940

I had two shameful dreams yesterday and the day before. In one, I saw robbers and screamed in fright. Screaming woke me up. Amtul Salaam was pacifying me. Yesterday, I saw a scorpion near my

hand. It was running away from my hand. I called for Munnalal and woke up with a scream. Both these dreams are a matter of shame for me. My ahimsa was disgraced. I have noted that I can hurt my colleagues with my words as I have hurt Mirabehn and others too. Thirdly, this morning I was not very careful and slipped into speech. This does happen, though it ought not to. All this reveals that my *sadhana* is quite imperfect. I have therefore decided to observe silence as far as possible. I need introspection. I shall of course talk when nursing the sick or meeting officials, etc., and in connection with public work.

Everyone must observe restraint in eating. There should be a limit to the quantities of wheat, ghee, milk and vegetables that one consumes. Eight ounces of greens at a time should be deemed sufficient. All should observe silence, as far as possible, while working. Silence is obligatory at meals. It is uncivil and a form of violence to criticize while eating any badly cooked item of the food. Such criticism should be conveyed to the manager in writing after the meal. If some item is half-cooked, it should be rejected. Eating a little less would do no harm, but in no case should one get angry.

All work should be done with the utmost care. It must be informed with a feeling that all of us form one family.

From Hindi : C.W. 4674

284. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 22, 1940

MY DEAR DESHABHAKTA,

I have your letter. Your decision is correct. I think you should withdraw from all organizations and devote yourself to such service as you can render from your seat. May God keep you for many years.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 3224

285. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

January 22, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

What shall I write to you ? Everybody complained that you talk too much. You should sit alone somewhere and spin. You may sit in that room only for doing library work. I have taken to prolonging my silence. It gives me joy and happiness. It is the only remedy for you. Wherever you go, you will find human nature the same. Whether we are happy or otherwise depends entirely on ourselves. Valjibhai is to be sent tomorrow to get his teeth extracted. Will you accompany him ? It may take about a week. Do see today's Ashram Note.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8554. Also C.W. 7071. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

286. NOTE TO PYARELAL

January 22, 1940

CHI. PYARELAL

Look into the mystery concerning the khadi article. How was it left out? And how did it appear on your cushion today? See my note in the Ashram note-book. Lately I have been mostly observing silence.

Did you send the letter to Gajanan?

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: Pyarel al Papers . Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y. Courte sy: Belade vi Nayyar and Dr. Sushil a Nayyar

287. AHIMSA IN PRACTICE

Thus writes Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia[1] :

Does the Independence Pledge necessitate belief in a social order for free India which will be based exclusively on the charkha and the present constructive programme ? I personally feel that it does not. The pledge is inclusive of the charkha and village crafts, but it is not exclusive of other industries and economic activities. Among these industries may be mentioned those of electricity, ship-building, machine-making and the like. The question of emphasis still remains. The pledge decides it only to the extent that belief in the charkha and village crafts as an integral part of the future social order is essential and cannot be superseded by other belief.

Does the pledge immediately necessitate abandonment of every other action except such as is based on the present constructive programme ? I personally feel that it does not. Agitation against land rents, taxes, interest and other economic obstructions to the advance of our people appears to be permissible. It is not, for instance, impossible that you should yourself decide upon a no-rent and no-tax campaign when you choose to start satyagraha. Whether you actually do so or not is not so important from the viewpoint of the pledge as the fact that you may do it. At any rate, agitation on economic lines is today permissible.

These two questions arise in so far as the negative aspect of the pledge is concerned. A third question arises in regard to its positive aspect. It is undoubtedly necessary that anyone who takes the pledge must be ready to express his positive faith in the principle of decentralized economy. The actual forms of this faith may, however, be decided by the march of history. Only in regard to the charkha it should be possible for anyone who takes the pledge to believe that the complete decentralization of the textile industry is possible and that it should be attempted.

I have not at all referred to irregularities of conduct due to indolence and similar causes; that happens in regard to all pledges and faiths. Only the wish must be there to remove these irregularities.

I do not know if this interpretation of the pledge is correct and can meet with your approval. I do not also know if my socialist comrades will approve

[1] (1910-1967); joined the Congress Socialist Party in 1934; Secretary, foreign department of the A.I.C.C., 1936-38; General Secretary, Praja Socialist Party, 1953-54; author of *Marx, Gandhi and Socialism* and other works

of it. It might perhaps be worth while for the country to know soon your opinion. Perhaps it is already too late for the Independence Day.

I need hardly repeat, what I have said often, that the legal and authoritative interpretation of the pledge can only come from the Working Committee. My interpretation has as much authority as my questioners choose to give it.

On the whole I can say that I have no difficulty in accepting Dr. Lohia's interpretation.

Whatever the ultimate outcome of the Congress effort, the discussion that is going on over the pledge provides healthy political education for the public and crystallizes the opinions that rule the various schools of thought in the country.

Though I am in general agreement with Dr. Lohia, it will be well for me to give the interpretation in my own language. The pledge is not exhaustive. It represents the limit to which I could carry the Working Committee with me. If I can convert the country to my point of view, the social order of the future will be based predominantly on the charkha and all it implies. It will include everything that promotes the well-being of the villagers. It will not exclude the industries mentioned by my correspondent so long as they do not smother the villages and village life. I do visualize electricity, ship-building, ironworks, machine-making and the like existing side by side with village handicrafts. But the order of dependence will be reversed. Hitherto the industrialization has been so planned as to destroy the villages and village crafts. In the State of the future it will subserve the villages and their crafts. I do not share the socialist belief that centralization of the necessaries of life will conduce to the common welfare when the centralized industries are planned and owned by the State. The socialistic conception of the West was born in an environment reeking with violence. The motive lying behind the Western type and the Eastern is the same—the greatest welfare of the whole society and the abolition of the hideous inequalities resulting in the existence of millions of have-nots and a handful of haves. I believe that this end can be achieved only when non-violence is accepted by the best mind of the world as the basis on which a just social order is to be constructed. I hold that the coming into power of the proletariat through violence is bound to fail in the end. What is gained by violence must be lost before superior violence. India is within an ace of achieving the end, if only Congressmen will be true to

their creed of non-violence and live up to it. The working of the constructive programme is the test. Those who play upon the passions of the masses injure them and the country's cause. That they have noble motives is irrelevant. Why will not Congressmen work out the programme fully and faithfully ? It will be time to consider other programmes when we have come into our own. But like the fabled men who quarrelled over the division of the buffalo before it was bought, we argue and quarrel over our different programmes before swaraj has come. Decency requires that when a programme is approved by the majority all should carry it out faithfully.

Most decidedly, the pledge does not necessitate the abandonment of the other items that have hitherto adorned the Congress programme and are adverted to by Dr. Lohia. Agitation against every form of injustice is the breath of political life. My contention is that, divorced from the constructive programme, it is bound to have the tinge of violence.

Let me illustrate my point. My experiments in ahimsa have taught me that non-violence in practice means common labour with the body. A Russian philosopher, Bondoref, has called it bread labour. It means closest co-operation. The first satyagrahis of South Africa laboured for the common good and the common purse and felt free like birds. They included Hindus, Muslims (Shias and Sunnis), Christians (Protestants and Roman Catholics), Parsis, and Jews. They included the English and the Germans. By profession they were lawyers and architects, engineers, electricians, printers and traders. Practice of truth and non-violence melted religious differences, and we learnt to see beauty in each religion. I do not remember a single religious quarrel in the two colonies[1] I founded in South Africa. The common labour consisted of printing, carpentry, shoe-making, gardening, house-building, and the like. Labour was no drudgery, it was a joy. The evenings were devoted to literary pursuits. These men, women and boys were the vanguard of the satyagraha army. I could not wish for braver or more loyal comrades. In India the South African experience was continued and, I trust, improved upon. Labour in Ahmedabad is by common consent the best organized in India. If it continues to work along the lines on which it began, it will ultimately own the mills in common with the present holders. If that is not the natural outcome, its non-violence will be found to contain flaws. The

[1] Phoenix Settlement and Tolstoy Farm

peasants of Bardoli who gave Vallabhbhai the title of 'Sardar' and won their battle[3] and of Borsad[1] and Kheda[2] who did likewise, have for years been working the constructive programme. They have not deteriorated as satyagrahis by working it. I am quite certain that Ahmedabad labour and the peasantry of Bardoli and Kheda will give as good an account of themselves as any other in India if there is civil resistance.

Thirty-four years of continuous experience and experimenting in truth and non-violence have convinced me that non-violence cannot be sustained unless it is linked to conscious body-labour and finds expression in our daily contact with our neighbours. This is the constructive programme. It is not an end, it is an indispensable means and therefore is almost convertible with the end. The power of non-violent resistance can only come from honest working of the constructive programme.

SEGAON, January 23, 1940

Harijan, 27-1-1940

288. UNITY V. *JUSTICE*

A visitor came the other day and said, "You have done an irreparable injury to India by saying that there is no swaraj without communal unity. You should say instead that there is no swaraj without justice between and to the different communities." I reasoned with my visitor but he would not be consoled. He said, "You have offered to sell your soul to win the favour of your Muslim friends." I protested and said, "Surely you know, the world knows, that I would not sell my soul to buy India's freedom. And if I want Muslim friendship, it is not for personal gratification but for India's sake. You are unjust to me." My visitor retorted with some passion, "I know your love for the country. If I had not known it, I would not have come to you specially. But your love has blinded you to the mistake you have made and are making. You do not know what Hindus say and do. For fear of offending Muslims, they suffer because they believe in you. I do beseech you to replace 'unity' with 'justice'." It was no use my arguing with my friend. And I had no time. I promised to deal with the question in these columns. The promise soothed him.

[1] In 1923; *vide* "Gujarat's Efforts", 6-4-1924.
[2] In 1918.

I do not know that my answer will.

My belief is unshaken that without communal unity swaraj cannot be attained through non-violence. But unity cannot be reached without justice between communities. Muslim or any other friendship cannot be bought with bribery. Bribery would itself mean cowardice and therefore violence. But if I give more than his due to my brother,

I do not bribe him nor do I do any injustice. I can disarm suspicion only by being generous.

Justice without generosity may easily become Shylock's justice.

I must, however, take care that the generosity is not done at the expense of the very cause for which it is sought to be done.

I cannot, therefore, drop the idea of unity or the effort for it. But what is wanted is not so much justice as right action. Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah's reply to me, as published in the Press, however, dashes to the ground all hope of unity if he represents the Muslim mind. His repudiation of the natural meaning I put upon his action in making common cause with the different political groups[1] has created a unique situation. His picture of India as a continent containing nations counted according to their religions, if it is realized, would undo the effort the Congress had been making for over half a century. But I hope that Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah's opinion is a temporary phase in the history of the Muslim League. Muslims of the different provinces can never cut themselves away from their Hindu or Christian brethren. Both Muslims and Christians are converts from Hinduism or are descendants of converts. They do not cease to belong to their provinces because of change of faith. Englishmen who become converts to Islam do not change their nationality. I hope Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah does not represent the considered opinion even of his colleagues.

SEGAON, January 23, 1940

Harijan, 27-1-1940

289. TO GUJARATIS

I do not forget even for a day that I should address at least something to you through *Harijanbandhu*. Although a lover of the language, I could never cultivate my love fully. I had entertained very

[1] *Vide* "A Welcome Move", 15-1-1940.

high hopes. Swami Anand would have had me express my views solely in my mother tongue if he could have his way. But neither he nor I could do anything. I had hoped to write equally for both the journals. But man proposes, God disposes. I will not admit that my love for my mother tongue was any the less. I have been silently thinking that the Lord wanted me to do something else. This is only a preface to what I have to say.

I had undertaken to stay at least for one month in Gujarat. I would love to fulfil Sardar's desire. But I wavered when the responsibility of planning for the struggle devolved on me. I wanted the solitude of Segaon. It is my experience that I get real inspi- ration at the place where I am permanently settled. Normally, however, wherever I stay I have formed a habit of making it my home. However, after the introduction or discovery of satyagraha, I have established ashrams at various places and I practise its disciplines there. I hesitate to call Segaon an ashram. I wanted to lead a solitary life at Segaon. But it has become an ashram without any rules and regulations. New buildings are springing up every day. I have made it into a hospital these days. I have humorously called Segaon a home for invalids. I am already an invalid in body and mind and I have collected quite a few invalids like myself. I have also compared Segaon to a mad-house. This too is an apt simile. The statement that swaraj can be achieved through the spinning-wheel can come only from the mouth of a madman ! But madmen are not aware of their madness and so I look upon myself as a wise man.

Had I gone there, you would have heard me talk only of the spinning-wheel and village industries. But do you still need to be told about all this ? And even if you do, Sardar is already there. Isn't he ? I would consider it his failing if you need my presence when he is among you. So had I come, I would have come for the pleasure of it. You know very well that I like to be with you. But this is the time neither for pleasure nor for doing what we like. It is the duty of all of us to do God's work by staying wherever He casts us. You should, therefore, rest assured that I have remained here solely as a matter of dharma and refrained from going there, again as a matter of dharma.

But remember that though I am away, I entertain very high hopes of you. Some of you might remember what I had said in 1916, namely, I would venture to launch satyagraha on the strength of Gujarat alone and win swaraj. Today I can repeat the statement with

greater force.

I am an optimist. I would build high hopes of a satisfactory settlement only when I am confident of our preparedness for the struggle. He whose base is not sound has nothing to stand on. What can such a person hope for except 'a flower in the sky' ?[1] I have built the castle of my hopes on the foundation of the dumb India, more particularly on Gujarat. But ultimately—?

Yours,

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

SEGAON, January 23, 1940
[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 28-1-1940

290. SARDAR PRITHVI SINGH[2]

Sardar Prithvi Singh has eschewed violence and taken to ahimsa; but he says it is a new experience for him. He is making efforts like Bhagirath[3] to pass the test. The future alone can reveal what the outcome will be. A field for his experiments had to be chosen. During his underground days he worked to spread physical culture activities. Exercise may be either for violence or for non-violence. Ahimsa cannot grow to its full stature in an emaciated body. A vigorous body is essential for the expression of pure ahimsa. Up to a point the same kind of exercise can be useful for both types of body but finally a distinction has to be made. It is Sardar Prithvi Singh's job to explain how to do it. He proposes to start with Gujarat. I wish him success in his efforts.

SEGAON, January 23, 1940
[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 28-1-1940

[1] A metaphor for 'an absolute impossibility'.
[2] This appeared under "My Notes".
[3] A mythological hero who succeeded in bringing the Ganga down to the earth.

291. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 23, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I thank you for your two cordial letters[4] the last having just come in. I heartily endorse the sentiment I read in your letter that even if we fail to reach an agreement during the forthcoming talks, we must try again.

I can reach Delhi any day after the 4th February. I must leave Delhi on 11th at the latest to attend a meeting of the Hari- jan Sevak Sangh in Segaon. I would appreciate a telegraphic reply, if you can conveniently send it.[1]

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : C.W. 7838. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

292. LETTER TO GLADYS OWEN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 23, 1940

MY DEAR GLADYS,

Your delightful letter. Your fault that you came only to hurry away. But I understand. You will keep me informed of your progress. Keep well and you will do well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 6196

[1] The addressee replied : "We meet at 11 a.m. on Monday 5th February, or Tuesday 6th February, as may be more convenient."

293. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRAN

SEVAGRAM,

January 23, 1940

DEAR RAMACHANDRAN,

Yours to hand. Don't think that I am neglecting Travancore. He[1] was due to come here today. Now he says he will come a little latter. I don't want to say anything in *Harijan* for the time being.[2]

As to funds, I must harden my heart. What shall I do ? You must lose in the end if you have to beg for funds. I can beg but I should be harming your cause if I did. Don't use me for raising funds for the struggle. There is something wrong somewhere if the struggle collapses for want of funds.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

294. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

January 23, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I was brief in order to save time. Try again. Don't lose heart. I know that there is a lot of [suppressed] anger in A.S. All of us are imperfect and should, therefore, bear with one another. My own smallness has been exposed by my dreams.[3] But just as all of you tolerate me as I am, so also should you tolerate one another. Otherwise all of us will be put to shame.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8553. Also C.W. 7073. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

[1] The reference is presumably to C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Dewan of Travancore State.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar", 28-3-1940.

[3] *Vide* "Ashram Notes", 22-1-1940.

295. ASHRAM NOTES

January 24, 1940

I shall undertake a 24 hour fast from tomorrow evening in honour of Independence Day. No one is bound to undertake it on this account. I am only passing on the information. Whoever wishes may undertake a fast. The sick must not.

I have talked to Sushilabehn about the quantities of milk. She will speak to those who do not need more than 1.5 1b of milk. The fact is, no one normally needs more than 1.5 1b. Since we are living on public funds and have taken a vow of austerity, we should take nothing more than we need.

Whatever I write these days may not be taken as orders. Only that should be considered right which one does in agreement with one's own reasoning. Independence Day can only be a day of self purification for us. Self-purification naturally includes discrimination, temperance, restraint, etc. A programme may be chalked out for the 26th. We should find out whether or no the villagers in Segaon intend doing something. Sukhabhau[1] may be consulted.

BAPU

From Hindi : C.W. 4674

296. LETTER TO DR. N. B. KHARE

January 24, 1940

DEAR DR. KHARE[2],

I was very glad to see your handwriting again. We may differ in our political opinions, but you are still the keeper of my body.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

My Political Memoirs or Autobiography, p. 256

[1] Sukhabhau Choudhary, a co-worker who lived in Segaon village.

[2] Ex-Premier of Central Provinces who was expelled from the Congress in 1938

297. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 24, 1940

CHI. AMRIT,

This morning's exhibition was unforgettable. But all's well that ends will. I can best describe myself as a parent who exacts complete obedience. I may distrust all or many of my children. I may give erroneous judgments. But they may not distrust me. They may not doubt the correctness of my judgments. They should be incapable of seeing my faults. That others see them is a matter of no moment. Such surrender is almost impossible. But it must be possible for those who adopt me as their parent, both mother and father, as you have done. I have been the recipient of such obedience and faith. You can't give it mechanically but I can do nothing of you or with you unless you have the required faith.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I am not exacting if naturally you have the faith. Such faith is a thing of beauty and a joy for ever.

From the original : C.W. 3665. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6474

298. NOTE TO KANU GANDHI

January 24, 1940

CHI. KANAIYO,

Start giving Valjibhai a massage from today at 9 or 9.30. The massage should be given gently to the whole body. As to the degree of force ask him. Pay more attention to the abdomen, apart from the chest and the back. Measure his chest. Teach him *pranayama* as also the practice of. . . .[1] His chest must expand.

BAPU

[PS.]

To be delivered now to Kanu . Gandhi.[2]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II

[1] Illegible
[2] This is evidently meant for the courier.

299. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

[On or after *January 24, 1940*][1]

You need not go on rubbing in ghee for hours. I don't need it. If you are acquiring *punya*[2] thereby, it is another matter.

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 4562

300. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[3]

SEGAON,
January 25, 1940

I have a telegram from Lahore saying that uncertified khadi and flags are selling briskly on the eve of the Independence Day. It is likely that such undesirable transactions may take place in other places also. I must warn Congressmen against buying or selling such khadi and flags. In my opinion it would be contrary to the pledge.

Uncertified khadi means deprivation of the spinner's rightful wage and general injury to khadi work. That khadi and [those] articles made of khadi are certified which are sold by dealers certified by the All-India Spinners' Association.

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-1-1940, and *Harijan*, 3-2-1940

301. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
January 25, 1940

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter was duly read and destroyed. I hope you got my letter of yesterday. I cannot accept your position. It is contradictory. Of course it is for you to surrender partly or wholly. It is not a mechanical act. So long as your mind does not endorse what I say or do, if only for the sake of honesty, you must at least warn me. My point is that full surrender excludes possibility of mind doubting the

[1] This was written on an envelope bearing a postmark of this date.
[2] Spiritual merit
[3] In *Harijan*, this appeared under the title "Uncertified Khadi".

correctness of the parent's judgment. But why argue about such things ? They are beyond argument.

I have your cheerful wire.

I have the appointment I reach Delhi on 5th February.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev looks after your post.

From the original : C.W. 3959. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7268

302. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 25, 1940

MY DEAR C.R.,

The above is a translation of the letter received from J[1]. Shanker-lal feels keenly in the matter. Nevertheless so far as I am concerned yours should be final word. The Viceroy has fix [ed] 5th, 10 a.m., for the meeting. There is talk of having the Sangh[2] meeting in Delhi earlier than 13th for the sake of . . .[3] elections. I shall wire from Delhi if I want you.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : C.W. 10885. Courtesy : C. R. Narasimhan

[1] Shrikrishnadas Jaju. Seeking Gandhiji's advice on behalf of Shankerlal Banker, he had written "against retention of Aiyamuthu's services in his present capacity" because he was "not fit to be entrusted with such a responsibility". He had added : "Rajaji's view, of course, ought to receive due weight. But in this case it does not appeal to me. Shri Banker also fears that khadi work in Tamil Nad will suffer by his removal. But I do not think that in a matter like this we can afford to be ruled by our timidity. We ought to face up to any difficulty that might arise. It is quite possible that there will be some difficulty in finding a suitable substitute. But it must be done."

[2] Harijan Sevak Sangh

[3] Illegible

303. LETTER TO MRS. K. L. RALLIA RAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 25, 1940

DEAR SISTER,

You have misread my note[4] I have not invited converts to return to the original fold. But I would not prevent them from doing so and would even rejoice, if they were not converted but coerced. Moreover, India of the future would be what you and I can make it. No single individual will alone count however great he may be.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRIMATI K. L. RALLIA RAM
6 GOULDING ROAD
LAHORE
PUNJAB

Gandhiji's papers received from outside Agencies, File No. 75. Courtesy : National Archives of India. Also G.N. 6834

304. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

January 25, 1940

It is not necessary to change the diet. No one can take more than 40 *tolas* of greens.

Don't devote more than 20 minutes to massage. You should rest, read or spin during the rest of the time. An hour-long inunction can only do harm and no good.

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 4334

305. LETTER TO ABDUL KHALIL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 25, 1940

BHAI ABDUL KHALIL,

I have your letter. It seems your complaint is justified. I am making inquiries. One wrong should not be answered with another.

Nothing will come in the way of the Friday *namaz*[1]. The rest of the matter pertains to a judicial decision; does it not ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 6862

306. LETTER TO BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

January 26, 1940

MY DEAR BHARATAN,

I have sent a note of acknowledgement to R. B. Jesudasan. You will be glad to know that the first parcel was found in the dispensary safely put away.[2] Sushila was not in Segaon when it was received and so I must have given it to the compounder. I could not have read the advertisement note, etc. However, all's well that ends well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 3587

307. NOTE TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[*January 26, 1940*][3]

I don't wish to write about Jaipur just now. According to me my coming visit to Delhi is a very important one. It is best, therefore, that I should say nothing just now. In Delhi, of course, I will discuss the matter. We are in no hurry. You should go only after completing your treatment.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3009

308. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
Independence Day, [*January 26, 1940*][4]

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

What makes you say that you cannot even talk with me ? The

[1] Muslim Prayer
[2] *Vide* letter to the addressee, 14-1-1940.
[3] From *Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad*, p. 226
[4] Year inferred from the subject-matter

fact is that you never feel the need for talking with me. That has been your habit from the beginning.

It is best that you should not come to Delhi at present. I reach there on the 5th. If there is anything worth while I will send you a wire and will also send for others. This is my view. But if you feel strongly that you should come, do certainly come. Even if you do not come [now] keep yourself ready to start.

I will write to Narandas (Gandhi) about Vajubhai[1]. I had written to Jamnadas (Gandhi) but there is no reply.

Virawala[2] has passed away. Let us see who succeeds him. Everything seems to be peculiar in Mysore.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

68 MARINE DRIVE, BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 237-8

309. MESSAGE TO ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE[3]

[Before *January 27, 1940*][4]

I have already pointed out the royal road to swaraj to my sisters where they can go ahead of their brothers. By traversing this road, they can achieve fulfilment.

The Hindu, 28-1-1940

310. NOTES

CURIOUS DISCIPLINE

The manifesto of the Kerala socialists, one of whom is the General Secretary of the Kerala Provincial Congress Committee, is a

[1] Vajubhai Shukla; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 27-1-1940.

[2] Dewan of Rajkot

[3] The Conference was held at Allahabad from January 27 to 31 under the presidentship of Begum Hamid Ali.

[4] The Conference was held at Allahabad from January 27 to 31 under the presidentship of Begum Hamid Ali.

curious specimen of 'discipline'. Here are the choicest sentences from it :

> The charkha cult is part of the policy of the Congress leadership, which consists in postponing the fight as long as possible, in keeping out all leftist forces when fight becomes inevitable, and in compromise.
>
> The signatories to the statement do not believe in the cult of the charkha. But still they appeal, in the name of discipline, to all people in Kerala to take the new pledge.

Soldiers who criticize their Generals as the Kerala patrons of the Congress have done would be considered guilty of treason, for they would, if they could, bring their Generals into contempt with the soldiery. It would be more dignified and certainly braver on the part of these gentlemen to secede from the Congress and convert the country to their method than to remain in it although they have no faith in its programme. They are postponing the day of deliverance who are undermining the influence of the only fighting organization in the country by belittling its programme and its leaders.

DISTURBING NEWS

The news from South Africa is disturbing. Dr. Malan[1] is on the war-path. He will enforce segregation by law. He will prohibit legal unions between the Whites and Asiatics. He will tolerate the Indians' presence only as hewers of wood and drawers of water, never as human beings, having equal opportunities and rights with the Whites. Here in India, which is daily growing in consciousness of her self-respect and her right to be regarded as a free nation, this racial bar is resented. India's independence is coming sooner than many people think. So far as I can see nothing can stop her march to her natural destiny. I myself envisage alliance with Great Britain and the Dominions, if the freedom is to come as a result of an honourable understanding between the two countries. But if the statesmen of South Africa continue the attitude of race superiority, alliance between unequals would become an impossibility. I look upon this war as a divine judgment. The whole world is directly or indirectly affected by it. Every nation subordinate or free has to make its choice. Personal wishes of the present actors are likely to be confounded. I would urge Dr. Malan and those South Africans who think with him to take a long view of things. He is of course on the right track if he thinks, as many

[1] Leader of the Nationalists in the South African Union Assembly

Africans do, that God has created the White man to be lord and master of the coloured man. I hope that Dr. Malan is not one of them. Anyway I hope general Smuts will resist the pressure that is being put upon him to adopt the reactionary legislation suggested by Dr. Malan.

SEGAON, January 27, 1940

Harijan, 3-2-1940

311. A TELEGRAM

WARDHAGANJ,
January 27, 1940

EITHER HARIJAN SEVAK MEETING HERE AS ANNOUNCED OR THERE FROM SIXTH. DON'T EXPECT ME THERE AFTER MY SPECIAL WORK FINISHED OR CHOOSE DATE AFTER MALIKANDA[1] AT WARDHA.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 7840. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

312. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 27, 1940

MY DEAR MALKANI,

Sindh tragedy has cut me to the quick. Write out something in the form of an appeal and I shall see what can be done. My remedy [2] is true.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 938

[1] Where the Gandhi Seva Sangh was to meet from February 20

[2] *Vide* "Sindh Tragedy", 1-1-1940.

313. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 27, 1940

CHI. NARANDAS,

Your work must be progressing well. Kanaiyo is engrossed in his work.

Herewith a letter from Chhaganlal. I should like you to get the matter clarified with him.

What is the difficulty about the account [1] ? Your accounts are always clear. Has not an abstract been published ? Give him the money received through him, as he writes; for instance the money received from Shantilal and others.

I see that the antipathy between you two persists. It may be better in such circumstances that you two should not work with each other.

Sardar thinks that your engaging Vajubhai in the work there shows that the latter's cleverness has succeeded. I too did not like it. He doesn't seem to me a clean man. Sardar believes that he wants to exploit your name for his gain.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8570. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

[1] Of Gandhiji's birthday fund; *vide* the following item.

314. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

SEGAON WARDHA,

January 27, 1940

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. Workers who are attached to institutions should take the pledge after obtaining the permission of the head of the respective institutions. According to me, there is no harm in taking the pledge.

About the fund in connection with my birthday celebrations, my view is that you should respect Narandas's decision. The contributions collected by you for special purposes should be returned to you—for instance, the money received from Shantilal. I have written to Narandas accordingly.

I have no doubt that the accounts of the birthday fund should be published. I have said that also in my letter to Narandas.

I see that there isn't complete accord between you two even now. Differences of opinion seem to persist. That being so, it seems best that you should not be associated with each other in the same work. Such things often happen. Wasn't this true of Kakasaheb and Maganlal[1] also ?

I took care not to let them come into conflict with each other, but whenever there was a conflict it always led to bitterness.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Anand wrote to me again. I have given him an appropriate reply.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5548

[1] Maganlal Gandhi

315. A NOTE

January 27, 1940

You may speak about the car in connection with Barot.

The simplest way seems to be to send for a car today for Rami. Balvantsinha or somebody else may accompany her to the station. I believe she will be going *via* Bombay.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4568

316. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA
January 27, 1940

BHAI PRABHAKAR,

Your questions are such as would take me long to answer. Some time when you come here you may raise them. Meanwhile keep reading *Harijan*. That may incidentally provide you all the answers.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original : C.W. 10250. Courtesy : Bharat Kala Bhavan

317. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

January 27, 1940

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I do not wish to take you to the Gandhi Seva Sangh Conference this time. Let us not worry over the cows in Bengal. I shall speak to Krishnachandra. But a seeker after knowledge may have to indulge in flattery [now and then]. When you become a mahatma like me, your teachers will try to flatter you. In the mean time remember these words of the *Gita* : "Learn it through humble homage and service and by repeated questioning."[1] Only mahatmas can perhaps be exceptions to the *Gita* rules. However, the amount of flattery that I have to practise, I alone can know.

Blessings from
BAPU

From photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 1945

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, IV. 34

318. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

January 27, 1940

Sushila says she said just the opposite. If a patient needs rubbing of his soles for inducing sleep it may be continued for hours; not so in other cases. You do not need it at all. To do something unnecessary is spiritually harmful. Twenty minutes is therefore enough.

Meals should not take more than two hours in all.

You should teach Keshu in a quiet place. Give up some work to be able to spare time for Balvantsinha if necessary. . . .'s[1] arrival should save some of your time.

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 4335

319. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

January 27, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Read the enclosed[2]. Can't you save some time for Balvantsinha ?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 4336

320. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

January 27, 1940

DEAR DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

I was very happy to get your postcard informing me that the worry which was consuming Mother is being removed. How shall I explain ? I was very unhappy that Mother was so much tormented. Her blood-pressure is still high. Yes, Jamnalalji recounted all the stories of your heroism. He was here for two days. Even otherwise he used to write from Poona how you had become a cuckoo[3] to him. I can hear your voice from here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : S.N. 9677

[1] Illegible

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] The addressee used to compose and sing *bhajans*.

321. FOURFOLD RUIN

Mr. F. E. James[1] is reported to have said as follows in a recent speech delivered by him at Madras :

> Mr. James then referred to the Independence Pledge prescribed by the Congress and said that he did not like the following sentence in the pledge :
>
> 'The British Government in India has not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom but has based itself upon the exploitation of the masses and has ruined India economically, politically, culturally and spiritually.'
>
> "Now I have got many friends in the Congress ranks, and I do feel that I have a right to protest against a statement which to my mind is not really necessary for the pledge itself. It is a provocative statement and I very much doubt whether it is true in any case. You can't prove it any more than I can disprove it." The speaker emphasized that it was not just to put all the debits on one side. He was sure that those of his Congress friends who were free from hatred and prejudice could not repeat it without some mental reservation. If they were asked to repeat that statement, it might lead to a great deal of bitterness, hatred and misunderstanding. "I do feel," he further pointed out, "that in this particular statement in the Independence Pledge there is to be found a contradiction between Gandhiji's doctrine of non-violence and the particular violence of the statement."

Mr. James is not alone in his condemnation of the part of the pledge quoted by him. *The Statesman* has called the paragraph "an abominable falsehood". It should be remembered that this part was in the original and has stood without challenge all these ten years. That of course is no reason for not criticizing it today if the criticism is well-informed and sound. Prof. V. G. Desai recently showed in these columns[2] how unsound the criticism was. I revert to the subject because Mr. James sees a contradiction between my "doctrine of non-violence and the particular violence of the statement". I presume that the statement will not be considered violent if it is believed by the maker. For non-violence does not consist in hiding the truth from oneself or the world; it consists in non-violent conduct towards the wrong-doer in spite of the most vivid knowledge of his misdeeds. My inculcation of non-violence has been effective because I have used

[1] Of the European group in the Central Legislative Assembly

[2] Under the title "A Tissue of 'Foul and Abominable Lies' ", in *Harijan*, 6-1-1940

almost the same adjectives as the school of violence has in describing the effects of British Rule, and showed the most effective remedy for undoing them. There is no merit in loving those who do you no ill, merit lies in being loving or being non-violent towards those who ill-use you. When I described modern civilization symbolized in imperialism as godless in *Hind Swaraj* I know that I had nothing but goodwill towards those who represented it.

And is it not a fact staring one in the face that "the British Government in India has not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom but has based itself upon the exploitation of the masses and has ruined India economically, politically, culturally and spiritually" ? A. O. Hume, Digby[1], Dadabhai[2], Wedderburn[3] and a host of other known and sober writers have taught the millions that the existing system of Government has drained the country of its wealth and reduced the peasantry to pauperism. Political subjection is patent. Cultural and spiritual conquest has at no time in India's history been so complete as during the British Rule. It is none the less galling or degrading because there has been a voluntary surrender. A victim's conquest is complete when he hugs the chains that bind him and begins to imitate the manners and customs of his captor. Our household was turned upside down when my father had to attend the Durbar during a Governor's visit. He never wore stockings or boots or what were then called "whole boots". His general foot-wear was soft leather slippers. If I was a painter, I could paint my father's disgust and torture on his face as he was putting his legs into his stocking and feet into ill-fitting and uncomfortable boots. He had to do this! I happened to be in Calcutta when Lord Curzon was holding his levee. I was staying in the India Club. The toilet of the Rajas and Maharajas who were staying there was a study. They looked like second editions of *khansamas*[4]. Their ordinary dress was simple dhoti with the inimitable Bengali folds which only the Bengali wearers can produce and spotlessly white kurta and a thin shawl carelessly but gracefully flung round the body. But this was considered indecent dress for the levee of the Crown Representative. The big zamindars and the Princes must appear properly bedecked and bejewelled. And what about the

[1] William Digby, Congress Agent in England
[2] Dadabhoy Naoroji
[3] Sir William Wedderburn, Congress President, 1889
[4] Chef-cum-waiter

latest circular reproduced in these columns[1] prescribing repeated bowings at an investiture ceremony in the U.P. ? Is not this cultural and spiritual degradation ? Mr. James says : "You cannot prove it any more than I can disprove it." The last half is as true as the first half of the sentence is untrue. I have given only casual illustrations of the cultural conquest. The tragedy is much deeper than I have depicted. Should Englishmen take pride in the fact that many educated Indians cannot express them- selves sufficiently in their own mother tongues, and that they have to transmit their inmost thoughts to their dear ones in the English langu- age? I ask them to realize with me the enormity of the ruination of cul-ture that this fact means. Many educated Indians have become *saheblogs* in their own land, and there is no living contact between them and the masses. Thanks to the Congress, things are better, but they are only just better. It is highly likely that the unnatural method of education has kept India from reaching her goal as nothing else has. Educated India has been disabled from reaching the masses. There are signs that Englishmen have begun to believe that India should come to her own. But their conversion will not be complete if they do not realize the truth of the fourfold ruination of India. If they are proud of the conquest of India and all it has meant, the gulf that divides them from us remains. Real understanding of the heart between them and us will not come by hiding facts. That understanding means a voluntary abdication by Britain of the fourfold conquest of India. Without that India cannot make to the world peace the special contribution for which she is specially fitted[2]

SEGAON, January 28, 1940

Harijan, 3-2-1940

322. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

January 28, 1940

CHI. KANAIYO,

The bicycle incident yesterday was not a happy one. A carpenter will always keep his tools ready for use. A typist will keep

[1] *Vide* "Notes" sub-title "Imperialism Dies Hard" , 22-1-1940.

[2] F. E. James's rejoinder to this appeared in *Harijan,* 9-3-1940, under the title "Unconvincing Apologia".

his typewriter in good repair and a rider will keep his horse in good stead. Similarly a bicycle should always be kept clean, oiled and ready for use. Otherwise don't have a bicycle at all. I cannot tolerate an accident caused by carelessness on your part. Such things are included in ahimsa.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II

323. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

[Before *January 29, 1940*][1]

CHI. PREMA,

Your letter was full of news. I gave it to the Congress Presi- dent[2] and Kishorelal to read. It has made both of them think seriously[3]. Prabha's health cannot be said to be good. She has come here. She does not have the same enthusiasm as before. She came only last night. I have had no talk with her yet. I can order her to go back today, but I am sure you would not want it.[4] Let her stay here for some time. I will think of the future after she has calmed down and her health has improved.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10403. Also C.W. 6842. Courtesy : Premabehn Kantak

324. QUESTION BOX

In spite of my weekly warning[5] , correspondence continues to be almost as heavy as before. I have no time to go through it all. Pyarelal

[1] From the addressee's introductory note to this letter in *Bapuna Patro -5 : Premabehn Kantakne,* . 271;*vide* also letter to the addressee "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 29-1-1940.

[2] Rajendra Prasad

[3] The addressee had written about the involvement of a number of Congress and Gandhi Seva workers in the Bihar Forward Bloc. Kishorelal Mashruwala was the President of the Sangh.

[4] The addressee wanted Prabhavati Devi to lead the proposed women volunteers' corps in Bihar.

[5] *Vide* "To Correspondents and Message-Seekers", 15-1-1940.

puts before me those letters which he thinks I must see. I have therefore suggested to him that he should prepare from the mass of correspondence questions which he may consider to be of general importance and I should deal with them from week to week. I hope that the correspondents and the readers will appreciate the effort.

CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

Q. Your Constituent Assembly will be elected by a vast majority of illiterate and ignorant voters who would vote for one side or another because that side is led by persons who cry slogans palatable to them. In such circumstances would not the decision of the Assembly be a farce, a tyranny of numbers ? Why cannot you settle by a discussion in the Press, or on the platform or in a private conference ?

A. There is risk always in every big experiment, but in my opinion it is the least in the proposed method. Underlying the proposal is the faith that the majority of candidates will be enlightened and selfless workers. In that case the elections will be concentrated political education on a stupendous scale. There is no ques- tion of tyranny of numbers. There is undoubtedly the risk of ignorant voters being betrayed into a wrong choice. Nevertheless the decision will be the verdict of the people. Discussion in the Press and on the platform cannot replace the elective method. The decision of a private conference will represent only those who compose it. What is wanted is not necessarily a wise but a representative decision. Today many societies claim to speak in the name of the masses. When the Constituent Assembly comes into being, it will silence all voices and be the sole instrument voicing the opinion of the nation.

AM I A REFORMIST ?

Q. Is not Subhas Babu right when he ascribes to the High Command, including of course you, the reformist and the liberal tendency ?

A. Of course he is right. Dadabhai was a great reformist. Gokhale was a great liberal; and so was Pherozeshah Metha, the uncrowned king of the Bombay Presidency. So too was Surendranath Banerjee. They were in their days the nation's tribunes. We are their heirs. We would not have been if they had not been. What Subhas Babu in his impatience to go forward forgets is that it is possible for men like me to compete with him in the love of the land in spite of our having reformist and liberal tendencies. But I have told him he has youth before him and he must have the dash of youth. He is not held down by me or anybody else. He is not the man to be so held. It is his own prudence that holds him. And in that way he is as much

reformist and liberal as I am. Only I with my age know it, and he in his youth is blind to the good that is in him. Let my correspondents rest assured that, in spite of our different outlooks and in spite of the Congress ban on him, when he leads in non-violent battle they will find me following him, as I shall find him following me, if I overtake him. But I must live in the hope that we shall gain our common end without another fight.

UNIVERSAL CONSCRIPTION

Q. You say millions are unarmed and unused to wielding arms. But what is the difficulty, when India is free, in training the whole nation in the use of arms by means of universal conscription ?

A. Of course in theory there is nothing to prevent the training by universal conscription. Only I think that the people of this land would not take to arms easily even though conscription may be resorted to. In any event arming of the millions, or even a few, is outside my province. It is repugnant to me. But what I would conscript is productive labour skilled and unskilled. This, I hold, would be the easiest and the most effective method of organizing society on a peaceful footing.

INDEPENDENCE PLEDGE

Q. The Independence pledge regarding khadi and village industries has been variously interpreted. What is one to do ? What is the meaning of 'regular spinning', 'habitual use of khadi' and of 'village products' ? Is it enough for me to fulfil the pledge, or does it apply to my family ? What am I to do if I cannot afford to buy khadi for the whole family ?

A. The Independence pledge has been made optional this time. The papers report that it has been taken by lakhs of men and women. I hope the reports are true. My own barometer is khadi sales. The pledge can be taken even now. I admit that it is capable of yielding various interpretations. But so are the Vedas. The authoritative interpretation can be given only by the Rashtrapati[1] , I do not propose to give you my own. You should be your own interpreter. Remember, where there's a will there's a way. Of course it is better if your whole family takes the pledge. But you are not your brother's keeper. So far as your purse is concerned, see if your wardrobe admits of reduced clothing whilst many millions go about in rags. I have a suspicion that many of my questioners have superfluous things which they consider

[1] Congress President

necessary for appearances. Appearances are not for those who want to sacri- fice themselves for their own and their country's freedom. I have also suggested that those who cannot pay the full price of khadi can get it almost at mill price if they will spin their own yarn. Lastly, you need not take the pledge now. You can take it when you have prepared yourself for it. What is most needed is uttermost sincerity. Letters like yours fill me with hope. I can raise an indomitable army out of sincere men and women who are willing to come under discipline.

SPINNING-WHEEL AND INDEPENDENCE

Q. How do you connect the wheel with swaraj ? We were producing our own khadi when we lost our freedom.

A. We did not then know the pricelessness of the charkha. Now that we know it, we must restore it to its honoured place in our homes. Supposing people who have their rifles with them lose both their freedom and their rifles, will it be proper for them to resist the counsel of a wise man who might rise in their midst and advise them to rearm themselves, with the knowledge added to the rearmament that they were foolish in easily surrendering their rifles ? I verily believe that we cannot gain or retain our freedom by non-violent means unless we realize the necessity and the dignity of reviving the charkha with all its implications.

LUSTING WITH THE EYE

Q. I am a poor man employed in a mill. I am in a great fix. Whenever I go out, the sight of a fair face overwhelms me. I lose all self-control. I sometimes fear that I might be betrayed into indecorous behaviour. I once thought of committing suicide. But my good wife saved me. She suggested that I should take her with me whenever I stirred out of the house. The plan has worked but it is not always practicable. In desperation I often think that I should pluck out my offending eyes. But the consideration for my wife has deterred me. You are a man of God. Can't you suggest a remedy ?

A. You are honest and frank. You should know that there are many people in the same plight as you are. This lusting with the eye is a common disease. It is on the increase. It has even attained a kind of respectability. This, however, should be no consolation to you. You have a brave wife. You dare not be unfaithful to her. And lusting after another woman is the height of unfaithfulness. It reduces marriage to a mockery. You should resolutely fight against the enemy. Treasure the thought that all other women are like blood-sisters to you. Give up

the lewd literature, cinemas and lewd pictures that disfigure the Press. Walk with your eyes fixed to the earth; and whilst you are doing so pray to the God within that He may cleanse. your heart, and believe that He will deliver you form the curse. If necessary, wear thickly smoked glasses. You will find in them a first-class external aid. There is really nothing to admire in the big cities with their oppressive hugeness and congestion and the same noises, and the same faces day in and day out. If we were not victims of the mighty force of inertia, our senses would sicken over the repetition of the same ugly phenomenon. In the daytime bury yourself in the duty before you, and at night do a little bit of star-gazing with the aid of a simple astronomical guide, and you have before your eyes a spectacle which no cinema in the world can provide; and, it may be, you will one day find God peeping through the myriads of stars, and if you attune yourself to the divine nightly manifestation, you will hear the soft and soothing music of the spheres. Try this every night and your eyes will act right and your heart will be sound. May God bless you.

UNCERTIFIED KHADI AND A. I. S. A

Q. I can quite understand your emphasis on the exclusive use of certified khadi. But certified khadi is dear. The result is that while on the one hand there are thousands of people who are too poor to purchase certified khadi, on the other there are thousands of spinners whom the A. I. S. A. cannot give employment on account of the standard wage. Would it not be advisable under the circumstances to employ the surplus spinners on a lower wage, pool the standard-wage and the non-standard-wage khadi, and thus at one stroke provide cheap khadi to the poor consumer and employment to the needy spinner ?

A. This is a good question. The executive of the A. I. S. A. is wide awake. Every effect of the arbitrary rise in the spinners' wages is being watched. The question of pooling has not escaped attention. Every effort is being made to keep prices within reach of the buyers. Selfish purveyors of uncertified khadi and the gullible or indifferent public are the greatest obstacle. The A. I. S. A. has to cut its difficult way through these obstacles.

DELEGATE'S FEE AND THE CONGRESS

Q. You have claimed the Congress members to be the spokesmen of the poor, toiling millions of India. How can you expect the representatives of the poorest, who must themselves be likewise poor, to pay the delegate's fee of Rs. 5 ? Does it then mean that the poor millions must choose their representatives from

among the monied class ? Is this your ideal of democracy ?

A. My ideal of democracy is quite sound. Without the delegate's fee the Congress cannot work. The fee also acts as some check on fraud. Every delegate has a large constituency. If the delegate is a *bona-fide* choice of the voters, they should find the delegate's fee and expenses. If the voters paid one pice per head for the expenses of their delegate, it would be possible for the poorest delegate to represent them. The fact is that the Congress is neither sufficiently democratic nor representative. There is too much wire-pulling and manoeuvring for seizing power rather than doing service. Congressmen have gone in for vastness at the expense of depth. The result is that we are skating on dangerously thin ice.

WHAT ABOUT YOUR SON ?

Q. I have a difficulty with you. You are out to conquer the whole world with love. How is it you could not conquer your own son ? You believe in the doctrine of beginning with yourself. Why not begin with your son ? There is no such thing as an irredeemably bad boy. I am sure you will succeed if you try.

A. You are right. But I have admitted my limitations. Complete non-violence, i.e., complete love, never fails. You may also know that I have not despaired of my son regaining his sanity. Superficially I seem to have hardened my heart. But my prayer for his reformation has never ceased. I believed in its efficacy and I have patience.

MALICIOUS FALSEHOOD

Q. In a book entitled 'खतरे का बिगुल' published by the Arya Sahitya Mandal Ltd., Ajmer, on page 30, I have come across the following statement which you are alleged to have made during your recent tour[1] of the Frontier Province : "The Pathan raiders have two kinds of needs, the physical, viz., those relating to food, clothing and shelter, and the sexual. The Hindus, therefore, ought to offer them all their property and womenfolk so that they might be satiated and give up their raiding habits." On page 31 of the same pamphlet it is stated that at the instance of Sir Akbar Hydari you wrote to the Vice-Chancellor of the Nagpur University not to admit to his University the students who had been rusticated from the Osmania University for singing *Vandemataram.* But the latter gave you a snub by retorting : "I am the Vice-Chancellor of the University, not you; I know my duty," and gave admission to the students in question. If these facts are true, they are a serious reflection on you. What have to say in reply ?

A. My answer is that every one of the statements is a malicious

[1] In July 1939

falsehood. I know that there is a campaign of lying propaganda going on against me. It grieves me, however, to find that an Arya Samaj publication should propagate such untruths. There is a *bhajan* in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* in which we pray for those that detract us Or I can say in the Biblical language : "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." The pity is that these friends of whom you write know what they are doing. My prayer goes out for them also. Lies have never hurt those against whom they are uttered. They do hurt those who utter them and they often confound society. The writer has libelled the Pathan and Sir Akbar. Badshah Khan, the servant of God, is a Pathan. Sir Akbar is not so simple as to expect me to do what is attributed to him.

THE SINDH TRAGEDY

Q. In your article "Sindh Tragedy"[1] you have advised the oppressed Hindus of Sindh to perform *hijrat* if they cannot protect their honour and self-respect by remaining in Sindh. Where do you expect them to go ? Who will provide them the wherewithal in their place of refuge ? May I further ask you if the remedy of *hijrat* is meant for the Hindus only ? Why do not you advise *hijrat* to the Mussalmans in the Congress provinces who complain so loudly of 'oppression' ? As it is you have given them weightage in provinces in which they are in a minority and a statutory majority in the Punjab where they are numerically superior.

A. My advice to migrate is for all who feel oppressed and cannot live without loss of self-respect in a particular place. If the Muslims where they are in a minority were really oppressed and they sought my advice, I should give them the same advice that I have given to the Sindh Hindus. But as a general rule they are capable of holding their own even when they are in a minority. I have already told the Sindhis that, if they have the bravery to defend themselves even though they are a handful, they should not leave the places where they are settled. My advice is meant for those who, though they are conscious of self-respect, lack the strength that comes from non-violence or the capacity to return blow for blow.

The question what the refugees should do after migration is surely secondary. A few thousand of them can be easily absorbed in a vast country like India. Sindhis are enterprising. They are scattered all over the world. I hardly think any public appeal will be necessary. Let

[1] *Vide* "Sindh Tragedy", 1-1-1940.

them know that there are refugees from Limbdi[1] who are bravely and silently bearing their exile. A keen sense of honour turns every privation into a joy. But perhaps migration will be unnecessary. I see signs of Muslim leaders realizing their responsibility and making arrangements to create among the Hindus concerned a sense of security[2]. If this happens, it would be as it should be.

The question of my befriending the Ali Brothers is surely irrelevant to the great issue I have raised. I am not sorry for anything I have done in connection with communal unity. I should repeat the same thing under similar circumstances. Neither community has lost by the unity of the Khilafat days, temporary though it unfortunately proved to be. You are wrong in holding me responsible for the communal decision[3]. It has nothing to commend itself to any community except the solid fact that we are living under it and that we have not yet found an agreed formula to replace it.

SEGAON, January 29, 1940

Harijan, 3-2-1940

325. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 29, 1940

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I hope you had my note[4] about Bengal.

So I am to be in Santiniketan about 15th or 16th[5] and pass there two days. I may have to come from Delhi. It depends upon happenings there. I shall have a large family with me. It will probably include Rajkumari. Ba will of course be with the party. Will the crowd matter ? If necessary you will wire. I leave for Delhi on 4th. You will of course pray.

Love.

MOHAN

From a photostat : G. N. 8751

[1] In Kathiawar

[2] The Sind Government had decided to set up a Court of Inquiry to investigate the causes of the riots and the measures taken by the authorities to preserve peace.

[3] The Communal Award of 1932

[4] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 15-1-1940.

[5] Gandhiji, however, reached Santiniketan on February 19.

326. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 29, 1940

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Nothing from you for the past two days. Here it is all well. Hope you are free from cough and cold.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

My love to Sarup[1] and Co.

SMT. RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
ANAND BHAVAN
ALLAHABAD, U.P.

From the original C.W. 3960. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7269

327. LETTER TO BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

SEGAON,
January 29, 1940

MY DEAR BHARATAN,

The facts are these. I was and am still willing to present myself at Ramgarh on 10th March[2] . The W.C.[3] thought that it would be no use sending me to R[amgarh] three days in advance. The crowds gathering will interfere with the arrangements. They will rob the show of its newness when the presidential procession, etc., takes place. There were other similar arguments advanced. You may send this to your correspondent. I am entirely in the Rashtrapati's hands. I have an open mind. Naturally I want to do all I can to further the common purpose. But I do not know what is the best thing to do. Rajen Babu should be the proper judge.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy : Dr. Rajendra Prasad Paper. File No. XI/40. Courtesy : National Archives of India

[1] Vijayalakshmi Pandit
[2] For the inauguration of the Khadi and Village Industries Exhibition
[3] Congress Working Committee

328. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

January 29, 1940

CHI. PREMA,

Prabha would have come there immediately if Ba had not specially wanted to see her. If you take care of her health, she will give you the work you want.[1] Not that you don't know this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10404. Also C.W. 6843. Courtesy : Premabehn Kantak

329. LETTER TO SAMPURNANAND

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 29, 1940

BHAI SAMPURNANANDJI,

Your letter. You have been very close to me for so long. I understand what you say. I write with an open heart as far as possible, yet the soldiers' burden must continue. What you write regarding the charkha is enough. The work of adult literacy has been well accomplished. I could not deal with an earlier letter for want of time.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SAMPURNANANDJI
JALIPADEVI
BANARAS

From the Hindi original : Sampurnanand Collection. Courtesy : National Archives of India

[1] The addressee had organized a camp to train women volunteers for the forthcoming Congress Session at Ramgarh. Considering Prabhavati to be the best person to head the women volunteers in Bihar, she prevailed upon the former, who was initially reluctant, to take up the responsibility.

330. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

January 29, 1940

CHI. SHARMA,

I shall order more when I get the list of books. Otherwise send the book received from Lahore. What is wrong with you ? If you yourself remain unwell,[1] how are you going to treat others ? I am reaching Delhi on the 5th.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. H. L. SHARMA
NAGLA NAWABAD
P. O. KHURJA U. P.

From a facsimile of the Hindi : *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh* between pp. 282 and 283

331. NOTE TO PYARELAL

January 29, 1940

CHI. PYARELAL,

Take this as my last note for now. Nothing should be left out. Show everything to me. I shall glance through it. Did you telephone Girdhari?

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

332. SIROHI[2]

From Sirohi comes the welcome news that the arrests made last year[3] of seven leaders did not break the spirit of the people. They have been observing the 22nd (the arrest day) of every month with due solemnity. They are having meetings, *Prabhat pheri*[6] spinning,

[1] The addressee's foot had been injured with a piece of glass.
[2] This appeared under "Notes".
[3] *Vide* "Notes", 18-9-1939.

selling khadi, etc. It is a good omen that workers in the States are, wherever possible, organizing themselves in a resolute and dignified manner. If on the one hand they learn the art of defying suffering however severe and on the other of remaining strictly within the limits prescribed in non-violent action, all would be well. All constructive effort means true education and organization of the people.

SEGAON, January 30, 1940

Harijan, 3-2-1940

333. ASHRAM NOTES

January 30, 1940

Balvantsinha's letter deserves to be read by all; everyone should read it. The remedy suggested therein may be ignored. Such remedies should be a matter of shame for us. Even in respect of salt, we should take only as much as we need. Even water should not be wasted. I hope everyone would look upon every article in the Ashram as his own or as belonging to the poor, and use it accordingly.

BAPU

From Hindi : C.W. 4674

334. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 30, 1940

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Padma Pant of Cawnpore has sent me copy of his letter to you. I hope you will probe the truth.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Have you seen the latest pamphlet of the Jamiat-Ulema-i-Hind ? They are dangerous friends. I wonder if the W[orking] C[ommittee] had a full talk with Moulvi Kifayatulla Saheb !

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1940. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

335. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 30, 1940

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have your two notes—one through M.[1] I am glad you have come so much nearer J.[2] than you have been. His buoyancy is infectious. But you have not caught the infection, nor has my talk gone home. If it had you won't be down in the dumps. However, may God do what man has failed to do. Of course they needed your presence. It is good you stayed at A.B.[3] I do not mind your defeat. Let them sell khadi.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original : C.W. 3961. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7270

336. LETTER TO H. V. KAMATH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 30, 1940

MY DEAR KAMATH,

Have just seen the printed correspondence. I see Rajkumari said "daily" instead of "regularly". It was purely a slip for which please accept my apology. R.K. is just now not here or she would have apologized.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile : *Mahatma*, Vol. V, between pp. 280 and 281

[1] Presumably Mahadev Desai
[2] Jawaharlal Nehru
[3] Anand Bhavan

337. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 30, 1040

CHI. VIJAYA,

Have you become thin ? I hope both of you are in good health. Does Manubhai take enough ghee and milk ? Ba is still in Delhi. I am going there on the 4th. We are still running a hospital here. Ashadevi had all her teeth extracted. Valjibhai has been sent to get his extracted. Durga[1] arrived today. She has brought a tiny girl with her. Prabha is here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 7123. Also C.W. 4615. Courtesy : Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

338. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

January 30, 1940

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

Your letter states the truth. All of you should put your heads together and find out a solution. The milk you are having you will continue to get. It was not intended to harm anyone's health by hasty reduction.

I notice no agitation in your letter, nor any exaggeration. I had already experienced what you describe.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 1928

339. TELEGRAM TO RAIHANA TYABJI

WARDHAGANJ,
January 31, 1940

RAIHANA TYABJI
CAMP BARODA
MAY GOD BE WITH YOU ALL DURING ORDEAL[2]. LOVE

BAPU

From a photostat : S.N. 9694

[1] Wife of Mahadev Desai
[2] Addressee's mother was critically ill.

340. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

WARDHAGANJ,
January 31, 1940

RASHTRAPATI RAJENDRA PRASAD
PATNA

ADVERTISEMENTS MAY BE TAKEN.

BAPU

From the original : Dr. Rajendra Prasad Papers. File No. XI/40. Courtesy : National Archives of India

341. INTERVIEW TO HOLMES SMITH[1]

[*January 31, 1940*][2]

[HOLMES SMITH :] I am now on my way to America where so far as it lies in our power we propose to start a twofold campaign by (1) opening the eyes of Missions against continuing an unholy alliance with imperialism (2) starting a movement to be organized by the friends of Indian freedom. I want your reaction to this programme and, if you approve of it, your blessings.

[GANDHIJI :] My strong advice to you would be not to have Indians in your society. You will seek information from them but not members. Their entry would make you suspects. I would like you to retain your spiritual and purely American character. You are interested in our movement, I understand, because it is claimed to be strictly non- violent. The hands of those who have fought for freedom all over the world are dyed red. But you, who claim to be Christians in a special sense because you insist on living according to the Sermon on the Mount, sympathize with us because of our unique claim.

And don't expect or accept a single pice from India, even if you may have to beg and are reduced to the level of the three tailors of

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's report "Rediscovering Religion". Holmes". Holmes Smith, the Acharya of the Lalbagh Ashram at Lucknow, and others had signed an open letter to the Viceroy challenging the missionary pledge of alliance with "the lawful authority of the country". In consequence Holmes Smith was asked by his Mission to resign.

[2] From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary.

Tooley Street[1].

And now I must share with you what I told Mr. Keithahn[2] . He, like you, has broken away from his Mission and chosen to work in the villages of India. I told him that I want every true Christian to make his contribution to the cause of non-violence. Our movement has been non-violent for 20 years or even 25, that is, ever since I returned to India and started work. Congress-minded India has been moving towards non-violence. And yet today I have to say that that non-violence has been non-violence not of the strong but of the weak. But you are attracted to it in the belief that our non-violence is of the strong. therefore, you should study the movement through and through, criticize it, find flaws in it. Thus I do not want you to spin unless you see an unbreakable connection between spinning or its equivalent and non-violence. It is likely that you will discover new methods of application or new argument, as Gregg[3] does, in support of mine.

Do you not mean economic non-violence by the charkha ?

Not economic non-violence, but I should say non-violent econo-mics. The charkha and handicrafts occupy a special place in a non-violent society, as centralized activities do in modern society constructed on militarism. My hands are feeble today, because I have not a full-hearted support for my conviction that India can retain her independence by non-violent means. So long as non-violence is a purely political battle-cry India cannot make a solid contribution to the peace of the world. Independence cannot be retained if it is a gift of the British. It can be retained when we have earned it and can retain it by our strength. We have not that non-violent strength, and we certainly have not the military strength. And so though I am going to Delhi I am going with my eyes open and in fear and trembling. But as I am practical I shall face the situation as it comes.

But you have to work non-violence out independently and not merely because I swear by it. I am but a sojourner on this earth for a few days—it may be for a few years, which does not really matter. I can only repeat what I have been saying all these years. And then I

[1] Who addressed a petition to the British Parliament describing themselves as "We, the people of England"

[2] Rev. R. R. Keithahn, an American missionary; *vide* "Discussion with R. R. Keithahn", 5-3-1937.

[3] Richard B. Gregg in his *Economics of Khaddar*.

realize my limitations which to me are amazing. And so I want the help of all who have faith enough to work for non-violence—especially of Christians, for thousands of them believe that the massage of Christ was that of peace on earth, goodwill to men. I mention Christians specially, because though there are individual Muslims who believe in non-violence, there are many who do not regard it as a special message of the Koran. And as you know there are Hindus who disown me because of my out-and-out belief in non-violence. Now the message of Jesus has been before the world for 1,900 years; but what are 1,900 years in the life of a religion or in the life of a message fraught with great consequence for mankind ? I therefore want you to be my fellow-workers testing everything I say on the anvil of cold reason. I want from you a spiritual effort.

In this matter we can only sit at your feet for years to come. I am getting in touch with fellow-seekers here, and I will seek out, on getting back home, men like Gregg. . . . We want to dig down through the accretions of centuries and rediscover Christianity. . . .

Harijan, 10-2-1940

342. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJA[1]

WARDHA,

February 1, 1940

JAMNALAL BAJAJ

NATURECURE CLINIC, POONA

DISINCLINED LET YOU GO. AWAIT DEVELOPMENTS. TAKE TREATMENT WITHOUT ANXIETY. WRITING.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 228

[1]This was in reply to the addressee's telegram dated January 31, 1940, which read : Fresh Jaipur news discouraging. State tactics terrorizing and unjust. Feel called uponto go Jaipur without delay. Wire permission. Shall take proper care of treatment."

343. LETTER TO SARLA DEVI[1]

February 1, 1940

MY DEAR SARLA,

Take a few minutes tonight after prayer.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 9085

344. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEGAON,
February 1, 1940

CHI. KAKA,

I have read Beli's article which I am enclosing. There is nothing new in it. You must have noticed that the Hindustani he has suggested is nothing but Urdu. It is not worth adopting.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6761

345. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 1, 1940

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter and wire.[2] I have had talks with Shastriji[3]. There is no need at all for you to cut short your stay there to go to Jaipur. There is no question, moreover, of your going till my Delhi visit is over. That will easily take us to the 15th. How many days remain then ? You should also realize that it is your duty to improve your health. The draft[4] prepared by you is not quite correct. Your complaint is against the Maharaja. I don't think it advisable to ask him to intervene. When you are all right you will be able to see him in person [if you wish]. After that, let events take their course.

[1] Of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Jamnalal Bajaj", 1-2-1940.
[3] Hiralal Shastri
[4] Of reply to the Home Minister of Jaipur

I won't be able to go as deep into the matter with the Viceroy as you wish me to do. I shall be able to go only as far as is consistent with the original issue. We will consider the question of your meeting him after my return from Delhi. I think I have now replied to all your questions. The rest you will know from Shastriji. I trust Janakidevi and Madalasa are doing fine.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N. 3010

346. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 1, 1940

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

Was there any remarkable sale of khadi on the 26th ? Have the sales improved lately ?[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 10843. Courtesy : Purushottam K. Jerajani

347. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

WARDHAGANJ,
February 2, 1940

RASHTRAPATI RAJENDRA PRASAD
PATNA

WHAT ABOUT ILLNESS. WIRE WHAT WAS DONE ON REPORT VIOLENCE ENQUIRY PUBLISHED PAPERS. LEAVING FOR DELHI TOMORROW.[2]

BAPU

From the original : Dr. Rajendra Prasad papers. File No. 2-1/40. Courtesy : National Archives of India

[1] In a postscript Mahadev Desai asked the addressee to send over the figures immediately so that he could make use of them for the statistics to be published in *Harijan.*

[2] In reply the addressee telegraphed : "Got influenza now gradually subsiding. ProvincialWorking Committee took precautions last year to prevent recurrence and was successful. No complaints received this year. Posting secretary's Press statement Delhi."

348. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS[1]

NAGPUR,
February 3, 1940

Gandhiji was informed by the Associated Press that Mr. Jinnah was meeting the Viceroy on February 6. Asked if he would be meeting Mr. Jinnah, Gandhiji curtly replied he had not any enmity with Mr. Jinnah. But when asked if he would meet Mr. Jinnah in connection with the discussion on the political situation, Gandhiji said that he did not know.

Replying to an inquiry if it was again going to be a farce of interviews, Gandhiji gravely remarked that he did not hope so but also could not say anything about whether there was going to be a settlement of the present impasse as a result of the Viceregal interview. He added :

Only God knows about that.

"Our hopes are centred in you," said the inquirer, whereto Gandhiji retorted :

Have hopes in God alone.

When told that on return from Delhi he should give them news of settlement or order for fight, he said they should be prepared for both. Gandhiji told the Associated Press that if the interviews were finished early he would not wait in Delhi for attending the meeting of the Harijan Sevak Sangh as he wanted to return to Segaon at the earliest possible moment whereafter he would leave for Santiniketan to meet Poet Tagore.

When the talk turned on the next President of the Congress, Gandhiji said that under the circumstances Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was the best and hoped that his election would be unanimous.

The Hitavada, 4-2-1940

349. TELEGRAM TO RAIHANA TYABJI

ITARSI,
February 3, 1940

RAIHANA TYABJI
CAMP BARODA
WIRE MOTHER'S CONDITION DELHI.

BAPU

From a photostat : S.N. 9695

[1] This was given in the morning when Gandhiji passed through Nagpur *en route* to Delhi.

350. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ON THE WAY TO DELHI,
February 3, 1940

MY DEAR J.L.,

Read the within letter.[1] You know best what to do. These things require attention.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1940. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

351. LETTER TO G. V. GURJALE[2]

ON THE TRAIN,
February 3, 1940

DEAR BHIKSHU,

I can do nothing in the matter.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 1392

352. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

ON THE WAY TO DELHI,
February 3, 1940

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have gone through the figures. As far as I can see there are two points. It is not Prithvi Singh who is to find the thirty candidates[5]They will have to be selected and sent by you all or by you alone. You have shown the expenditure to be [Rs.] twenty for each person, but will there be nothing to be deducted from that ? If that is the position, the

[1] Dr. Satyapal, in his letter to Rajendra Prasad dated January 24, described the communa l activities of the Akalis and stated that "unless the High Command includes these also in the list of communalists there is a grave danger of the Punjab Congress being entirely under the thumb of Akalis, and they will be a serious danger for this organization because of their being neither believers in truth, nor non-violence, nor nationalism . . . nor Purna Swarajya."

[2] Known also as Bhikshu Nirmalananda

expense will not be twenty for each but will come to 915/30 = $30^1/_2$. We must consider whether this is all right. What do you think must be the figure in self-run boarding-houses ? The chief thing, however, is not the expense, but the selection of the candidates. My asking you to make such arrangements as Prithvi Singh may desire should not be interpreted to mean that you need give him no guidance at all. You must give it wherever necessary. The supervision will have to be yours. Pray for the success of my Delhi visit.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
SWARAJ ASHRAM
BARDOLI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 238-9

353. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

ON THE TRAIN,
February 3, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

What pain you caused me! And while leaving you threw the barb: "What is the good of letters?" So much anger? Consider. If I let you abandon the patients and take you with me for the sake of my health, I would be demeaning myself and lose the dharma I have followed all my life. Why can you not understand that it would not be right for me to take you with me, leaving Kishorelalbhai behind? Here the question is not of medical knowledge. The question is of my sentiment. But right now, I have lost my place in your eyes. You seem to be under the impression that I am purposely hurting you. What kind of weakness was it that you did not even walk with me? But I know that at the root of your odd behaviour was your unhappiness. If you leave me, out of obstinacy, you may be sure that I shall not run the dispensary as it is being run now. The instruments will go with you. What good will they be to me? You are forgetting your duty.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Calm down. Think. Listen to me. Give up the idea of going away. Just because you would not be with me for a couple of months

in a year, will you give up serving me for the rest of the ten months? Give some thought to the matter. Have a little pity. What I have done is in your and my interest and in the interest of the Ashram. I shall be happy to receive a telegram that your mind is at peace.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

354. LETTER TO VIDYAVATI

ON THE WAY TO DELHI,
February 3, 1940

CHI. VIDYA[1],

I hope Chi. Virendra[2] is all right. Address your reply to Birla House, New Delhi.

Blessings from
BAPU

RANI VIDYAVATI
5 SUDIRAM BUILDINGS
GUNGE NAWABKA PARK
AMINABAD, LUCKNOW

From the Hindi original : Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy : Gandhi National Museum

355. GUJARATI SPELLING

The anarchy prevailing in Gujarati spelling is perhaps unparalleled in any other language. It is not found in Marathi, Bengali, Tamil or Urdu. I have not heard of it in any other Indian language. It is to be found in no European language. What epithet except barbarous can one apply to a people who speak a language with unorganized spelling ? Man's language develops as he progresses. A man can be judged in several matters by the language he speaks. It hardly takes any time to gauge the wisdom of a person writing such expressions as *hag*, *mar*, *tapar*.[3]

[1] Rani Vidyavati of Hardoi

[2] Addressee's son

[3] The first two expression, as they are, mean 'defecate' and 'die'; the third one is obscure.The correct spellings should be *heeng* (asafoetida), *mari* (pepper) and *toprun* (coconut kernel)

Such being my views on language, I was glad to get the following cutting[1] from Maganbhai.

The Government of Bombay took quite some time to come to a decision, but they deserve to be congratulated on having at last arrived at one. I hope all journalists and authors will be guided by the dictionary[2] prepared by the Vidyapith. The Vidyapith should provide the necessary means to facilitate this. Every lover of language must have in his pocket or on his desk a Gujarati dictionary as he would have an English dictionary if he were writing English. Gujarati writers must be as proud of the purity of their language as the English are of theirs. An Englishman who cannot spell correctly is considered uncivilized. But let us leave aside English. Why should we not devote as much attention to our mother tongue as the students studying in our English schools give or are required to give to English spelling ? The Vidyapith should immediately provide facilities for this purpose. The Vidyapith dictionary is of course there. But a simpler and cheaper pocket edition should be prepared. An attempt has been made in the said dictionary to include as many words as possible along with their meanings in brief. It is enough if the pocket edition gives only the spelling and not all words need be included. Only words whose spelling is doubtful should be included. The set of rules should be made available separately at a price of a paisa or two. But one should not expect that all will take the trouble to study the rules. People need ready-made material and that can be provided by a dictionary only.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 4-2-1940

[1] Not translated here. It contained a notification issues by the Government of Bombay approving the spellings standardized by the Gujarat Vidyapith and recommending their adoption by the State's educational and publishing institutions.

[2] Sartha Jodanikosha

356. QUESTION BOX

RELIGION AND POLITICS

Q. In your autobiography you have said that you cannot think of politics apart from religion. Do you still hold that view ? If so, how is it that in a country of many diverse religions like you expect a common political policy to be adopted ?

A. Yes, I still hold the view that I cannot conceive politics as divorced from religion. Indeed, religion should pervade every one of our actions. Here religion does not mean sectarianism. It means a belief in ordered moral government of the universe. It is out less real because it is unseen. This religion transcends Hinduism, Islam. Christianity, etc. It does not supersede them. It harmonizes them and gives them reality.

Q. Is it true that you advised some Sikhs, who came to seek your advice on certain matters, that Guru Govind Singh taught the use of the sword while you stood for non-violence, and therefore the Sikhs must be ready to choose the one or the other ?

A. The question is badly, if not mischievously, put. What I did say was that, if they thought the teaching of Guru Govind Singh excluded implicit belief in non-violence, they could not be consistent Congressmen so long as the Congress creed remained what it was. I added that they would be compromising themselves if they joined or remained in the Congress and might even damage their own cause.

NON-VIOLENCE, ISLAM AND SIKHISM

Q. By teaching respect for all religions you want to undermine the power of Islam. You want to emasculate the Pathans by taking away the rifle from them. There can be no meeting ground between us and you.

A. I do not know what you thought during the Khilafat days. Let me give you a bit of the history of our own times. The foundation of the Khilafat struggle was laid by me. I had a hand in the agitation for the release of the Ali Brothers. So when they came out, they, together with Khwaja Abdul Majid, Shuaib Qureshi and Moazam Ali, and I met together and devised the plan of action which the world knows. I discussed with them the implications of non-violence and told them that, if they could not accept non-violence as true Muslims,

I should be out of the picture. Their reason was satisfied, but they said they could not act without endorsement from Muslim divines, and so there was a conference of the *ulemas* at the late Principal Rudra's[1] house where I used to stay, when in Delhi, during his lifetime. This learned company included, among several others, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and the late Maulana Abdul Bari. Led by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad they held that belief in non-violence was not only not inconsistent with Islam, but it was obligatory in the sense that Islam had always preferred it to violence. It is noteworthy that this took place before the acceptance of non-violence by the Congress in 1920. Many were the discourses given by learned Muslims on non-violence before crowded Muslim meetings. The Sikhs too came in later without any scruples and they listened with rapt attention to my exposition of non-violence. Those were great and glorious days. Non-violence proved infectious. Under its spell there was a mass awakening such as had never been seen before in this land. All communities felt as one, and they thought that non-violence had clothed them with an irresistible power. Those halcyon days are gone and now I am obliged seriously to answer questions like the above. I cannot give you the faith in non-violence you do not possess. God alone can give it to you. Mine remains unshaken. I do maintain, in spite of you and others like you suspecting my motives, that mutual respect for one another's religions is inherent in a peaceful society. Free impact of ideas is impossible on any other condition. Religions are meant to tame our savage nature, not to let it loose. God is only one though He has countless names. Don't you expect me to respect your faith ? If you do, may I not expect the same respect from you for mine ? You say Muslims have nothing in common with Hindus. In spite of your separatism, the world is moving towards universal brotherhood when mankind will be one nation. Neither you nor I can stop the march towards our common destiny. As for the emasculation of Pathans, let Badshah Khan answer. He had accepted non-violence before we met. He believes that the Pathan has no future save through non-violence. Without it, if nothing else, his blood-feuds will keep him from going forward. And he thinks that the Pathan found his feet in the Frontier Province after he accepted non-violence and became servant of God—Khudai Khidmatgar.

[1] Sushil Kumar Rudra, Principal, St. Stephens College, Delhi

Q. You did not hesitate to join the Ali Brothers in their intrigue to invite Amanulla Khan to invade India and set up Muslim Raj. You drafted a wire for Maulana Mahomed Ali Advising the then Amir not to enter into a treaty with the British. The late Swami Shraddhanandji is reported to have seen the draft. And now you want the Hindus of Sindh to make a present of their hearths and homes to their Mussalman oppressors instead of demanding the re-amalgamation of Sindh with the Bombay Province, which alone can restore the reign of law to Sindh. Why won't you realize that in this age of enlightenment and progress what the minorities expect is effective protection of their due rights, not mere pious counsels of perfection ?

A. I have several such letters. Hitherto I have ignored them. But now I see that the news has gone through a revised and enlarged edition in the Hindu Mahasabha. An angry correspondent threatens that persons like him will begin to believe what has been stated so authoritatively. For the sake of my reputation, therefore, I must answer the question. But my correspondents should know that life for me would be a burden if I were to make it a point of controverting every report about me or distortion of my writing. A reputation that requires such a mud wall of protection is not worth keeping. So far as the charge of my intriguing with the Amir is concerned, I can say that there is no truth whatsoever in it. Further, I know that the Brothers stoutly denied the charge when it was brought to their notice. And I believed them implicitly. I do not remember having drafted any telegram on behalf of Maulana Mahomed Ali to the then Amir. The alleged telegram is harmless in itself and does not warrant the deduction drawn from it. The late Swamiji never referred the matter to me for confirmation. It is wrong to say anything against dead men unless one has positive proof and stating it is relevant. The romance has been woven round my writings in *Young India*. Deductions drawn from them are wholly unjustified. I would not be guilty of inviting any power to invade India for the purpose of expelling the English. For one thing, it would be contrary to my creed of non-violence. For another, I have too great a respect for English bravery and arms to think that an invasion of India can be successful without a strong combination of different powers. In any case, I have no desire to substitute British Rule with any other foreign rule. I want unadulterated Home Rule, however inferior in quality it may be. My position remains today what it was when I wrote the *Young India* paragraphs now sought to be used against me. Let me further remind

the readers that I do not believe in secret methods.

As for Sindh my advice stands. Reincorporation of Sindh in the Bombay Province may or may not be a good proposition on other grounds, but certainly it is not for the purpose of greater protection of life and property. Every Indian, be he Hindu or any other, must learn the art of protecting himself. It is the condition of real democracy. The State has a duty. But no State can protect those who will not share with it the duty of protecting themselves.

ON THE WAY TO DELHI, February 4, 1940
Harijan, 10-2-1940

357. ADULTERATION OF GHEE

Dr. Kailas Nath Katju[1] writes :[2]

> I have read with great interest in *Harijan* of 20th January your note[3] on adulteration of ghee. . . . The misfortune is that it is not only the ghee-dealer and the middleman who have taken to adulteration, but even the ghee producers in the villages are resorting to adulteration in their own homes before they bring ghee to the market. . . .
>
> We had drafted and introduced in the U.P. Legislature a comprehensive bill to stop this mischief. It was at the committee stage when we resigned. The bill confers power on the Provincial Government to prescribe colouring or flavouring of artificial ghee or vegetable oils. But I think the more useful and really important provision in the bill for the purpose in hand is that which arms the Provincial Government with the power to prohibit sale of artificial or vegetable ghee in ghee-producing areas. . . . We thought that in such areas where vegetable ghee is really sold for these universal purposes the only proper method is to prohibit its sale altogether, and thus protect and foster the genuine ghee industry. . . .

The suggestion made by Dr. Katju about specially dealing with ghee-producing areas is worthy of consideration. Indeed the question of adulteration of this important article of national diet is so important that it requires all-India treatment. It need not wait for disposal of the so-called higher politics.

ON THE WAY TO DELHI, February [4][4], 1940
Harijan, 17-2-1940

[1] Ex-Minister of Justice, Development, Agriculture and Veterinary in U.P.
[2] Only extracts are reproduced here.
[3] *Vide* "Adulteration of Ghee", 8-1-1940.
[4] The source has "February 5" evidently a slip. Gandhiji reached Delhi on February 4, 1940.

358. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

February 4, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

You will have received my letter of yesterday. I had been expecting your telegram today. It did not come. Well, I know this much that what I am saying is cent per cent true. What you are saying is cent per cent wrong. My only sorrow is that I am not able to convince you. I have talked with Pyarelal to my heart's content. Doing what you say will degrade me and cause you harm. You have to consider how far it is right for you to abandon me completely because I am not taking you with me on my tour.[1] It will be highly improper to run away on the 29th. Even if you have got to go, there should be some discretion and method about it. Abandon your stupidity and be alert. You should watch the diets of Valjibhai and Bharatanand. Kishorelalbhai should get well. I have attended to the Chhindwada affair. We shall have the information here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

359. A TESTIMONY

Here is an extract[2] from a letter from Shri Sarangdhar Das, Secretary of the Orissa States People's Conference :

I congratulate Sarangdhar Babu on his conversion. I suggest that his conversion will last and be infectious if he studies the implications of the wheel in all its aspects. He will then see that the stone-hub charkha, which I have seen and turned, is a very primitive contrivance for securing steady motion, but it is a great handicap on the speed. He will then apply himself to an improvement of the wheel so that the output of the spinners is doubled, if not trebled. This is only one of the many directions in which the charkha spirit can work.

[1] Gandhiji was to leave Wardha on February 15 on a tour of Bengal and Bihar.

[2] Not reproduced here. It stated how the correspondent, though a believer in machinery and mass production, had become a convert to the cult of the charkha after readingGandhiji's article on Moral Conscription.

The charkha has its economic, social, political and spiritual aspect. It is the last aspect which makes it a symbol of non-violence. Years ago I reproduced the observations of a Scotch psychologist showing how he used the spinning-wheel for curing bad-tempered boys. He observed that the gentle motion of the wheel produced a soothing and sobering effect on the minds of the subjects. I reproduced also the experience of the late Sir Prabhashankar Pattani[1], how he found the wheel a great solace to his jaded nerves when he span for half an hour before retiring. Compare Margarete's song in *Faust* as she sat at the wheel.[2]

NEW DELHI, February 5, 1940

Harijan, 10-2-1940

360. A GOOD SUGGESTION

Shrimati Kunverbai Vakil of the Pupils' Own School, Vile Parle, sends me a parcel of yarn spun by fifteen pupils of the middle class on the Independence Day. In a covering letter she says that the commencement in spinning was made by a Harijan pupil and his good example was copied by the others, though not all. But Shrimati Kunverbai's object in writing to me was to draw attention to the fact that for the last three years Principal Vakil and Shrimati Kunverbai Vakil with their pupils have been setting apart four hours for two days in the year to sell khadi. The result has been encouraging. They were able each time to sell khadi worth Rs. 500 per day. She is of opinion that, if all the educational institutions set apart certain days in the year for hawking khadi, there will be a great impetus given to khadi. She adds further that since the scholars began to spin and hawk khadi they have been able to introduce khadi in their homes most of which were untouched by it. There is no doubt that, if educational institutions take to khadi with the same sincerity and devotion that the Vakils have done, the whole atmosphere will change and khadi will come to its own. I have not hesitated to say, and I wish to repeat, that everyone who spins for swaraj brings nearer by so many yards. Think what it means if millions were to take part in this grand effort. Let no one seek for a parallel in history. History has no record of a non-violent effort made for a nation's freedom. *Bonafide* non-violent effort presupposes the adoption of unique weapons. It is the violence within

[1] *Vide* "My Notes", 9-8-1925; also "Spinning an Art", 27-5-1926.
[2] *Vide* "Notes", 4-9-1924.

the breast and the newness of the technique which stand in the way of an appreciation of the charkha. I have, therefore, the fear lurking in me that even those who have taken to spinning have done so mechanically and for the sake of discipline. If such is the case, it will not do. If it is taken up earnestly, the earnestness should be reflected in the sales of khadi. Correspondents have been telling me of their having taken up spinning, but no one has been telling me of sales of khadi. For me a marked increase is sales in the surest index to the manner in which the khadi clause in the Independence Pledge has been taken by Congressmen.

NEW DELHI, February 5, 1940

Harijan, 10-2-1940

361. CABLE TO CARL HEATH [1]

NEW DELHI,
February 5, 1940

CARL HEATH
FRIENDS HOUSE
EUSTON, LONDON

THANKS. NO SETTLEMENT POSSIBLE. DIVERGENCE TOO GREAT.[2]

GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 1033

362. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

NEW DELHI
February 5, 1940

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
MADRAS

NOTHING DOING. TAKING TOMORROW MORNING TRAIN.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 2078

[1] In reply to the addressee's cable dated February 2, 1940, which read : "Conciliation Group greatly hopes meeting fifth may find basis settlement. Sends you warm thoughts and prayers. Please keep us informed."

[2] For the communique issued after Gandhiji's meeting with the Viceroy on February 5, *vide* Appendix "Government Communique", 10-2-1940. *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 6-2-1940.

363. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

[*February 5, 1940*][1]

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I think the draft statement answers the purpose.

I take it you do not want me to return the draft.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

364. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRAN

February 5, 1940

We leave here tomorrow morning for Wardha. I have just got your letter. I am biding my time. But do not pin your faith on negotiations. If you are exhausted you should say so and suspend the struggle without any weakening or yielding but recuperate yourselves in the midst of stormy weather. This is a possible feat in satyagraha. If on the other hand you can go on endlessly without money from outside, you have nothing to fear. I am at your back always as a purely moral force.

Is this enough for the time being ?

Love.

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

365. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

[AS AT] SEGAON, WARDHA,

February 5, 1940

CHI. PREMA,

Here is Prabha. Now take charge of her. She will need milk, ghee and some fruit. She will not be able to keep up her health

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter dated February 5, 1940. The "draft statement" referred to is evidently the communique which was sent to Gandhiji before its release on February 5; *vide* Appendix "Government Communique", 10-2-1940.

without them. It would be very good indeed if she could do without them. But we may not undertake the experiment just now. Just now what is necessary is to take full work from her. Get from me whatever expense you incur on her food. The rest Prabha will tell you.

We are returning tomorrow morning. Ba is coming with us.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10405. Also C.W. 6844. Courtesy : Premabehn Kantak

366. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

February 5, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

I cannot forget you even at night. How stupid you are! What things you had to say about the patients ! I was not at all prepared for such callousness. The more I think over what you said that day, the more I am distressed. Has your being with me only brought you harm? Your studies were abandoned. You had a good job which you lost only because of me. Your life was disorganized. Why should I blame only your stupidity for all this? Why not my selfishness? Had I not been caught in my own selfishness, would you have stayed with me? When you leave here, how will you explain it? How will I explain it? Should I say that you abandoned me because I could not take you with me on my tour? What will the patients think? What will Shankaran think? Whatever you want to do, do it in a systematic way. Mira must have taken Kunverji to the hut.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

367. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

NEW DELHI,
February 6, 1940

The vital difference between the Congress demand and the Viceregal offer consists in the fact that the Viceroy's offer

contemplates the final determination of India's destiny by the British Government, whereas the Congress contemplates just the contrary. The Congress position is that the test of real freedom consists in the people of India determining their own destiny without any outside influence[1], and I see no prospect whatsoever of a peaceful and honourable settlement between England and India unless the vital difference is obliterated and England decides upon the right course, viz., accepts the position that the time has come when India must be allowed to determine her own constitution and her status. When that is done, the question of Defence, the question of minorities, the question of the Princes and the question of the European interest will automatically resolve itself.

Let me make this a little clearer. The provision of safeguards for the rights of minorities is not only common cause between the British Government and the Congress, but the Representative Assembly of Indians cannot evolve a stable Constitution without fullest satisfaction being given to the *legitimate* minorities. I use the word 'legitimate' advisedly because I see that minorities crop up like mushrooms, till there will be no majority left. By fullest satisfaction I mean satisfaction which will not militate against the progress of the nation as a whole. I will, therefore, in the event of differences, refer the question to the highest and most impartial tribunal that can be conceived by human ingenuity. Its voice shall be final as to what will amount to the fullest satisfaction of minority interests.

So far as Defence is concerned, surely it will be the primary concern of free India to make her own arrangements. It may well be that India would want elaborate preparation and would want Britain's help, if it is given, in enabling her to do so. Thanks to Imperial policy, unarmed India is left wholly unprotected except by the British bayonet and Indian soldiers whom British power has brought into being. It is a position humiliating alike for Britain and for India. I am personally unconcerned because, if I could carry India with me, I would want nothing beyond a police force for protection against dacoits and the like. But so far as Defence is concerned unarmed peaceful India would rely upon the goodwill of the whole world. But I know that that is only a dream at the present moment.

So far as European interests are concerned, emphasis on the word 'European' must be entirely removed. But that does not mean

[1] The *Congress Bulletin* here has "interference".

that a free India should be free to confiscate European interests or any other interests. There would, as there should, be provision for reasonable compensation for any existing interests which are legitimate and not harmful to the nation. It follows that there can be no question of favouritism which is being enjoyed today by European interests. I would, therefore, regard them as big zamindars or capitalists. They will be put on the same footing as these.

So far as the Princes are concerned, they are free to join the national assembly which will determine India's fate not as individuals but as duly elected representatives of their own people. The Princes being vassals of the Crown, I fancy they have no status apart from the Crown, and certainly not superior to the Crown itself. And if the Crown parts with the power it today enjoys over the whole of India, naturally the Princes have—and it should be their pride—to look up to the successor of the Crown, i.e., the people of India, for the preservation of their status.

I hope this will not be regarded as a tall claim, for it is made not on behalf of the Congress, nor of any single party, but on behalf of the unrepresented dumb millions of India. No claim made on their behalf can be considered too tall. I am myself an insignificant being, but I am supposed to have some hold over these dumb millions. I know that in every fibre of my being I am also one of them; and without them I am nothing and I do not even want to exist.

I want on their behalf an honourable settlement with Britain without *even* a non-violent fight. My dictionary has no such expression as a violent fight. Yesterday I put this view before His Excellency in as courteous and friendly a language as I was capable of using. We approached the discussion as personal friends, each believing in the other's sincerity. We understood each other, and both recognized that there still existed a wide gulf between the Government's position and the position taken by the Congress which I put, though not as an accredited representative of the Congress but certainly as the self-appointed representative of the dumb millions.

We parted as friends. I have no disappointment in me that the negotiations have failed. That failure I am going to use, as I am sure H. E. the Viceroy is going to use, as a stepping-stone to success. But if that success does not come in the near future, I can only say Heaven help India, Britain and the world. The present war must not be decided by a clash of arms, but it must be decided by the moral strength that

each party can show. If Britain cannot recognize India's legitimate claim, what will it mean but Britain's moral bankruptcy ?

Asked regarding the meaning of the words "at this stage" in the sentence "they did not, in his view, at this stage, meet the Congress demand,"[1] Gandhiji said :

The phrase in the Government communique "at this stage" is a superfluous phrase. If it is interpreted to mean that the Congress may in future modify its demand, it is absolutely unwarranted.

Asked if there was a chance of the Congress Ministries going back, Gandhiji said :

I hope and expect that Congress Ministries will remain out until the main question is settled.

I don't see any chance at present of approach between the Congress and the Muslim League. I do not see any; because the Muslim League represented by Jinnah Saheb's letter to me takes up a position which is wholly inimical to the national cause.[2] He contemplates several Indias. The Congress contemplates only one India.

When told about the B. B. C. broadcast that Gandhiji was meeting Jinnah Saheb on the evening of the 5th, Gandhiji said :

It is staggering how they manufacture news. The inventive faculty of man for destruction is showing marvellous resources.

Harijan, 10-2-1940, and *Congress Bulletin*, 24-2-1940

368. TASK BEFORE US

There need be no disappointment among Congressmen for failure of the negotiations between H. E. the Viceroy and me. We had met to explore the possibilities of a settlement. I had seen the germs of it in the Viceregal pronouncement[3] in Bombay. But I discovered that I was mistaken. The Viceroy's hands were tied down. He was not to go beyond the four corners of the offer now before the country. Perhaps

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Government Communique", 10-2-1940.

[2] Referring to his pact with other political parties M. A. Jinnah had written : "It was partly a case of 'adversity bringing strange bed-fellows together', and partly because common interest may lead Muslims and minorities to combine. I have no illusions in the matter, and let me say again that India is not a nation, nor a country. It is a sub-continent composed of nationalities, Hindus and Muslims being the two major nations."

[3] *Vide* Appendix ""Viceroy's Speech", 10-1-1940.

it represented too his own opinion.

But nothing has been lost by our meeting. In spite of the failure we have come nearer each other. There is a clarification of the situation. Non-violence requires great patience. The failure is only apparent. There can be no failure since both the cause and the means are just. This meeting has brought us nearer to our goal. If the Viceroy was clear in his enunciation of the British policy, I was not less clear in enunciating that of the Congress. The negotiations, so far as I know, have not been closed. Meanwhile we have to educate the world as to what we stand for. India cannot be one of the many Dominions, i.e., partner in the exploitation of the non-European races of the earth. If hers is a non-violent fight, she must keep her hands clean. If India is not to be co-sharer in the exploitation of the Africans and the degradation of our own countrymen in the Dominions, she must have her own independent status. Its content and nature must not be dictated or determined by Britain. They must be determined by ourselves, meaning the elected representatives of the nation, call such an assembly what you will. Unless British statesmen definitely concede this, they do not mean to part with power. Neither the question of Defence nor that of the minorities, nor of the Princes, nor of the European interests need come in the way of her making this clear declaration. Not that the important matters just mentioned do not require serious consideration and adjustment. But they will yield to just and proper treatment only when the required declaration is made and followed up immediately by corresponding action in so far as it is possible. Without it, Britain's war with Germany cannot be claimed to be just, certainly not unselfish.

What is to be done then ? Declaration of civil resistance ? Not yet. I mean what I say when I ascribe sincerity to Lord Linlithgow. He is doing his best to understand us, and his duty to his superiors and his nation. With all his traditions he cannot be made to jump to our position. He cannot be hustled into it. And we must not despise our opponent or belittle his strength. It would be wrong to assume weakness in him and seek to take advantage of it. His weakness will not make us strong or fit. And his strength need not baffle us if we are strong. Our duty is, therefore, to make him feel our strength. This we shall do not by civil resistance but by putting our own house in order. Whilst we may not allow the British Government to plead the minorities and the like as a bar to right action on their part, we may not blind ourselves to the fact that these questions exist and demand

solution at our hands. We may dismiss from our minds the impossible and utterly anti-national stand taken by Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah. We cannot dismiss the Muslims from our consideration. The same may be said about the other problems. We must educate public mind on these, clear our own minds and know where we stand in relation to them. Maulana Saheb tells me that Congressmen and Congress committees are not always considerate in regulating elections to popular bodies, and that local boards are not always dealing justly by all the communities. We have to be above suspicion. Congress committees have to take infinite pains to examine single complaint. None may be dismissed as too trivial for consideration. I have letters and telegrams bitterly complaining that at some elections for Congress committees, local boards and the like, Muslim, Harijan or Christian claims have been neglected. Wherever this happens a golden opportunity of doing justice is missed. We may not resort to civil resistance out of our impatience or to cover our shortcomings. It is not a panacea for all our ills, internal and external. It is a specific and sovereign remedy for extraordinary situations. But let us be ready for it. I say with a full sense of my responsibility that we are not ready. It is true that, even if we were ready, the time for it is not ripe. It may be any day. Let us not be found wanting when it comes.

ON THE WAY TO WARDHA, February 6, 1940

Harijan, 10-2-1940

369. INTERVIEW AT JHANSI

February 6, 1940

There was a large gathering . . . at the station.

Mahatma Gandhi addressed the people briefly thanking them for the reception and asking them to strengthen the Congress.

Replying to a question whether the Delhi talks were definitely broken or suspended, Mahatma Gandhi said :

Born optimist as I am, I can't regard them as broken. I think and hope they are only suspended. I believe the more so because I entertain the firm belief that we are reaching the goal soon. None can stop us attaining independence.

To another question if India would reach her goal without a struggle, Mahatma Gandhi said :

That is the thing which we should patiently wait and watch, but I

am sure if Congressmen solidly support me, we would not require another struggle. I do not want to fight for the sake of a fight. I am not spoiling for a fight, I will make endeavours to avoid it if we could free India without it.

Asked if he proposed visiting Delhi in the near future, Mahatma Gandhi replied :

It is for the Viceroy to invite me any time he thinks fit.

The Hindu, 7-2-1940

370. CABLE TO "THE NEWS CHRONICLE" [1]

[*February 7, 1940*][2]

SUPPOSING A MINORITY ADVANCES CLAIMS WHICH ARE REJECTED BY THE MAJORITY AS BEING HIGHLY INJURIOUS TO THE NATIONAL INTEREST, THEY SHOULD BE REFERRED FOR DECISION TO AN AGREED TRIBUNAL OF UNIMPEACHABLE IMPARTIALITY, SAY, THE FEDERAL. HIGH COURT.

Harijan, 10-2-1940

371. STATEMENT TO "THE DAILY HERALD"[3]

SEGAON
February 7, 1940

My interview with the Viceroy shows what wide gulf exists between British Government and nationalist India. What is offered is not real independence. Reality demands that India should deter- mine what she needs, not Britain. There could be no justice or virtue in Britain yielding to successful rebellion, violent or non-violent. Will present problems be then deemed to be dissolved? It is necessary for Britain to be just to declare her determination to recognize immediately the freedom of India in practice, and the constitution to

[1] This appeared under the title "An Elucidation" with the date-line Segaon, February 7, 1940". It was sent in reply to *The News Chronicle*'s cable seeking elucidation of Gandhiji's statement that the minority differences would be referred "to the highest and most impartial tribunal", *vide* "Statement to the Press", 6-2-1940.

[2] *ibid*

[3] It appeared in *Harijan* under the title "Let Britain Abandon Her Immoral Hold". This was cabled in response to a request "for a special message on the interview with the Viceroy".

be framed by the Constituent Assembly or an equivalent as soon as practicable. There is no analogy between the Dominions and India. Hers is a case by itself and has to be treated as such. It should be clearly understood that every problem is of Britain's own making. What has happened was no doubt a necessity of imperialism. But if imperialism dies, the problems of Britain's making will be automatically dissolved. Defence is the greatest of all. Why did Britain disarm India ? Why have even Indian soldiers become foreigners in their own land ? Why did Britain create Princes and arm them with unheard-of powers ? Surely for making her foot-hold secure. Who created the gigantic European interests, and why ? Who created minorities ? There is no majority save the political majority. But these four were and still are bulwarks of imperialism. No jugglery of words can hide this naked truth. Britain's moral victory will be assured when she decides by a mighty effort to abandon her immoral hold on India; and then her other victory will follow as day follows night. For then, the conscience of the whole world will be on her side. No makeshift such as is now offered can stir India's heart or world conscience.

Harijan, 10-2-1940

372. LETTER TO PREMI JAIRAMDAS

[*February 7, 1940*][1]

MY DEAR PREMI,

I saw the Swami today on the train. In fact he travelled with us for an hour. I told him everything about Baba and he is prepared to go to Segaon to examine and treat Baba, or to have him at Delhi for treatment. Bapu says we will do exactly as Baba wishes. So please discuss it with him and let me have a line in reply immediately so that I may inform the Swami. He is a busy man and I shall have to give him a few days' previous notice.

We had your telegram duly and we were all glad that Baba was feeling better there. I do hope the improvement is being maintained. Please let us have a wire again tomorrow. Bapu is always anxious about him, and a wire every alternate day may be just the thing to do.

Yours affectionately,
MAHADEV

From the original: C. W. 11047. Courtesy: Arjun Jairamdas

[1] There are two dates noted at the head of the letter, February 7, 1940 and February 8, 1940. Gandhiji was on the train on this date, having left Delhi for Wardha.

373. LETTER TO RAMIBEHN K. PAREKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 7, 1940

CHI. RAMI,

I have your letter. I had Balibehn's also. We arrived today, Ba too has come. Prabhavati had accompanied us to Delhi. From there she went to Patna. Jairamdas has gone to Khandwa. He is all right. Kunvarji is fine. He has been lodged in Mirabehn's hut. It used to be [very] hot under the shed where he was. Manu's daughter should be given castor-oil to relieve her. Manojna[1] has gone to her parents. It won't do for Kamu[2] to look like an old woman. Tell her that she must get strong. Ask your daughter whether she won't talk with me now.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI RAMIBEHN
VORA VAKHATCHAND HARIDAS BUNGALOW
BEHIND HIGH SCHOOL, RAJKOT C. S.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9733. Also C.W. 713. Courtesy : Navajivan Trust

374. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[*February*][3] *7, 1940*

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I am sending the accompanying letter[4] to you because you know more about the matter referred to by the correspondent. You know about my doings in Delhi. Now cables are being exchanged with London. I am leaving for Santiniketan on the night of the 15th. From there to Calcutta on the 19th.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 239

[1] Wife of Krishnadas Gandhi

[2] Kumi Adalja

[3] The source has May, which is evidently a slip since Gandhiji left for Santiniketan on February 15.

[4] From the Secretary, Tenants' Conference, which met in Ahmedabad

375. MESSAGE TO MILL-WORKERS

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 7, 1940

WORKER BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Bhai Gulzarilal[1] has explained the position to me. Your demand seems just to me. If you fail to get justice either through the arbitrator or in any other way, we have no choice but to resort to a strike. That weapon must be used only after careful thinking. If we don't have the strength, we need not be ashamed of putting up with the injustice. But if we once use this weapon we must not yield till we have secured justice. I have shown [the workers] long ago the best means of doing it.

Every one of you must learn some other occupation so that you can tide over the period of unemployment. I have put before you the work of spinning, weaving, etc., which everybody can take up. I have no objection if you find out some other occupation.

Moreover, those among you with better means should help the weaker ones. Only thus can you be fearless. Even if you escape the necessity of a strike this time, start acting upon my suggestion.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 5823. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

376. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[On or after *February 7, 1940*][2]

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I like your letter[3]. They give me information which I do not get otherwise. I knew nothing of the pan-Islamic movement.[4] It does not

[1] Gulzarilal Nanda, Secretary, Majoor Mahajan, Ahmedabad

[2] From the contents it is evident that this was written after Gandhiji's return to Segaon on February 7.

[3] Both were dated February 4; *vide* "The Old Game ?", 11-2-1940.

[4] Regarding this the addressee had written : "I wonder if your attention has been drawn to a recent social function in London, organized by the Royal Central Asian Society. Lord Zetland presided and a number of Cabinet Minister were present. The ostensible object was to establish a centre of Muslim culture and religion in London; the real object was to encourage pan-Islamism and to exploit this sentiment in India and in the Islamic countries to the advantage of the allies in the war."

surprise me. You will have seen my statement[1] on the interview. My method you know. I gain strength from these meetings. It is for you and other co-workers to see that the country gets the proper interpretation of what I do. I would like you not to worry about C. R.[2] He is absolutely sound. Nevertheless I would like you to share your doubts with him. I leave for Santiniketan on 15th evening and thence on 19th for Malikanda.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhiji-Nehru Papers (Undated). Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

377. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

February 8, 1940

Your wire so characteristic of you was redirected from Delhi today. You must have got mine sent yesterday. Yes, death is the end of pain. May you all keep up the noble traditions left for you by Father and Mother. I expect your graphic description of the passing away[3]. How I wish I was with you to listen to your soulful recitation of the Koran !

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : S. N. 9682

378. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,

February 8, 1940

CHI. BABUDI,

Why are you afraid ? Come over. Ba will be very happy indeed to see you. I have to leave on the 15th. I will return on the 28th at the

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 6-2-1940

[2] The addressee had expressed concern about some recent speeches of C. Rajagopalachari because "they talk so compromisingly of Dominion Status and the like".

[3] Of addressee's mother

latest. I may return even earlier. The children's pill need not be tried just now. If you take your baby in your arms and go out for a breath of fresh air and give it the morning sunlight, it will be all right. You can mix dill water in your own milk. This also may soothe the baby.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 10026. Courtesy : Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

379. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

February 8, 1940

CHI. BALVANTSINHA

If you are tired of this milk-drinking, it is another matter but I shall not be tired. Nor am I going to shift you from there. Stay here and do cheerfully whatever work I allot you. That is *sadhana* for you as well as service to the cow.

The lady's letter is good. You may read out to me whatever you want me to hear. I have written to Abhayadev[1].

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 1929

380. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 8, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your letter is good. Yes, body-labour constitutes one of our vows[2]. Its significance cannot be over-emphasized. Give to Chimanlal whatever time he needs. Hindi teaching should come only after that. Massage, etc., do constitute body-labour. It may be undertaken.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 4337

[1] A member of the Gandhi Seva Sangh

[2] Namely, non-violence, truth, non-stealing, *brahmacharya*, non-possession body-labour, control of the palate, fearlessness, equality of religion, swadeshi and 'touchability'

381. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON, WARDHA
[*February 9, 1940*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

I have been thinking of you all these days. I write this to tell you that you are not out of mind because you are out of sight.[2] I miss you. I hope time is doing its healing work. I wonder if the Pundit[3] came. You must write to me regularly.

We leave here on 15th by the cheaper train, reaching Calcutta 17th morning. We go to Santiniketan the same day and return on 19th to take the train for Malikanda.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 6449. Courtesy : Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10044 and *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, p. 318

382. LETTER TO PREMI JAIRAMDAS

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 9, 1940

CHI. PREMI,

I have your letter. I want a letter daily. There is no harm in staying on there as long as you like. We shall be leaving here for Calcutta on the 15th evening. We shall return on the 27th or the 28th.

Are you able to read my handwriting? If you cannot, I shall write in English.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI PREMIBEN
C/O DR. C. S. SAHNI
KHANDWA, C.P.

From the Hindi original: C. W. 11048. Courtesy: Arjun Jairamdas

[1] From *Bapu's Letter to Mira*

[2] The addressee had gone to the Punjab.

[3] Jagat Ram Bharadwaj of the Ghadar Party. *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur" 26-2-1940.

383. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

February 10, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have your letter. I have no objection to your coming over. If by spending Rs. 100 you can get peace of mind, the money will be well spent—whether it will be so is for you to consider.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8552. Also C.W. 7073. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

384. THE OLD GAME ?

After my return from Delhi I have had a letter redirected from New Delhi. It is from a valued co-worker[1]. I must share with all concerned the most important paragraphs in it :

> Everything that has happened during the last month or so confirms me in the belief that there is not the slightest ground for hope that the British Government will accept our position. In fact many things have happened which demonstrate that they are following a very definite imperialist policy. You must have seen that the British Parliament has just passed a Bill amending the Government of India Act which limits the powers of Provincial Governments in regard to taxation. This was specially in view of the Professional Tax[2] in the U.P. which is thus vetoed. Apart from the demerit of such a decision which reduces the powers of the Provincial Assembly, the time and the method chosen for it are eloquent of the imperialist outlook of the British Government and indicate that the outlook has in no way changed.
>
> It is not at all encouraging to find that you are going to New Delhi to interview the Viceroy. The same old game is played again, the background is the same, the various objectives are the same, the actors are the same, and the results must be the same.
>
> There are, however, some unfortunate indirect results also. An atmosphere of approaching compromise pervades the country when, in effect, there is no ground for it. It is enervating and depressing because it does not come out of strength but, in the case of many individuals, from the excessive desire to avoid conflict at all costs and to get back to the shreds of power

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru

[2] The original in Gandhi-Nehru Papers has “Property Tax”.

which we had previously. Conflict is undesirable, but obviously conflict cannot be avoided at all costs, for sometimes such avoidance itself is a more costly and harmful affair. For the moment, however, there is no immediate question of conflict. The question is of maintaining our position with dignity, and not weakening it in any way. I fear that the impression is widely prevalent in England as well as in India that we are going in no event to have any conflict and therefore we are going to accept such terms as we can get. This kind of impression is demoralizing. I have noticed during the last fortnight that even our Congress delegates' elections have been influenced by this. Many people who, for fear of possible conflict, were keeping in the background, have now pushed themselves in front again when the possibility of enjoying the plums of office and power seems to dangle again in front of them. The effort of several months to keep undesirables out of the Congress has partly failed because of this sudden change in the Indian atmosphere which led them to believe that the compromise was imminent.

The British Government is also reacting in a way unfavourable to us, though it may use soft language. Of course, it wants to come to terms with us because it wants our support in the war. But it is much more certain that it does not wish to give up any shred of real power or change its fundamental imperialist policy in order to come to terms with us. It is carrying on and will carry on its old intrigue on the communal issue, though occasionally it uses a few critical words against the Muslim League in order to soothe the Congress. So far as it is concerned, it will try to win us over, keeping its present position intact. If this is possible, well and good for it. If this does not take place, as seems likely even to it [*sic*], then to carry on from time to time conversations with Indian leaders, to prolong the issue, to make it appear that we are on the verge of a compromise, and thus to soothe both world opinion and Indian opinion. This second policy has the additional advantage, from their point of view, of exhausting our energy and toning us down, so that, if ultimately a conflict does come, the requisite atmosphere is lacking for it. It is the general belief among official circles in England that their policy of parleys and postponement has had this result and the situation in India, which was threatening when the Congress ministries resigned, is much easier now and no dangers are to be feared.

It seems to me that while we cannot and must not precipitate a conflict, and while we need not bang the door to a possible and honourable compromise, because your methods are never to bang the door, still we must make it crystal clear that there can be or will be no compromise except on the conditions stated by us previously. As a matter of fact, even these conditions have to be slightly reviewed from the point of view of developments in the war. We cannot now say, as we then said, that we want to know whether this war is imperialist or not. The British Government's answer to us as well as their consistent policy in the war and in foreign affairs has been one of full-

blooded imperialism. We must, therefore necessarily proceed on this admitted fact that it is an imperialist war, any profession to the contrary notwithstanding. The war and British policy grow more and more sinister every day, and I would hate to see India entangled in any way in this imperialist adventure from which India can only lose, not only materially but spiritually. This point seems to me of vital importance today.

Thus it seems to me that the most important thing for us to do is to make our position perfectly clear to the world, to the British Government and to the Indian people. There is too much misunderstanding on this issue of compromise, and this misunderstanding is entirely to our disadvantage and to the advantage of British imperialism which meanwhile is exploiting our resources for the war and even pretending to have a large amount of our goodwill. Approach by us to the British Government or to the Viceroy increases these misunderstandings and lead the British Government even further away from a right compromise.

The warning is sound. Perhaps I did not need it. But such warnings are never superfluous. It is unwise to be too sure of one's own wisdom. It is healthy to be reminded that the strongest might weaken and the wisest might err. And then, so far as I am concerned, I am so ignorant even of current events that I feel thankful when co-workers keep me posted with things I ought to know.

But whilst I value the warning given and admit the force of the argument advanced, I do not repent of my having visited H.E. the Viceroy and having had the prolonged talk. It has given me added strength. It is of great value to an army that its General gains added strength. I should therefore repeat the performance every time the Viceroy summons me, i.e., so long as I have faith in his sincerity. And every time I shall come out with greater strength than I go with. The method of satyagraha requires that the satyagrahi should never lose hope so long as there is the slightest ground left for it. For he never despairs of being able to evoke the best in his opponent, his mission being to convert the opponent, not humiliate or defeat him. He therefore even knocks at his opponent's door if it becomes necessary, as I did often with General Smuts. It so happened that the last opening, when even I had the least hope, proved the prelude to success.

There ought not to be demoralization among the ranks. It is up to the lieutenants to be in constant touch with them and explain to them the reason for, and the bearing on the struggle of, each step. For whether there is actual battle or merely preparation, the education of the masses continues without interruption. It is a great mistake to

suppose that the revolutionary instinct will die, if the garnered energies of the people have no outlet. This may be true of violent revolution but it is utterly wrong of non-violent revolution. I am quite convinced that we would put ourselves in the wrong if in our impatience we precipitate the battle or, which is the same thing, bang the door on negotiations. The battle will come at the right time when it is clear beyond doubt that there is no escape from it. Misunderstanding created in Britain or the world outside need not perturb us much for, being foundationless, it is sure to disappear in the face of our truth.

Nor need the prospect worry us, of the negotiations proving insincere in the sense of their being used as a screen to cover Britain's plans to consolidate her strength by misleading world opinion and creating and strengthening divisions among us. What does matter is our own weakness for which we alone should be to blame.

SEGAON, February 11, 1940

Harijan, 17-2-1940

385. NOTES

INDIA WITHOUT THE BRITISH

A retired English collector thus cables from England :

> Please consider that India without British troops and the sure shield of the British navy would be at the mercy of Pathans, Afghans and Japan. The Constituent Assembly would all be in a concentration camp very quickly or killed. Satyagraha only works with civilized people who are gentlemen.

These are honest fears of an honest Englishman. But the fears are only imaginary. The English friends gives little credit to Indian nationalists when he thinks that they contemplate a Constituent Assembly in a vacuum which can be blown to pieces by any power. If there is an honourable settlement, the Constituent Assembly will meet in the presence of the British but without any interference from them. If there is no settlement, it will meet after a successful rebellion, in which case India will have made herself ready to face any emergency. There is no other contingency possible in which a Constituent Assembly can meet. These fears reflect no credit on the British regime in India. Whose fault is it that India has no army and navy of her own? But the absence of army and navy will not deter an awakened people from throwing over domination, foreign or indigenous. My

friend's ignorance of the working of satyagraha is quite excusable. I have no finished example of a nation having modelled her life on the basis of satyagraha. I can only assure him that it is not the sob-stuff he believes it to be. It is of little use if it can work only among the so-called civilized people. The partition separating the civilized from the uncivilized is very thin. Both act almost alike when their passions roused.

SEGAON, February 12, 1940

A CURIOUS SITUATION

The Secretary of the Valmiki Mandal, Ludhiana, says in a letter :

> Under the Poona Pact[1], eight seats were allotted to the Punjab Hindu Depressed Classes in the Punjab Legislative Assembly. These seats were deducted from Hindu seats. Sikh and other Depressed Class people were counted amongst their own co-religionists. The Sikh Harijans are fighting with their own high caste Sikh brethren for separate seats and we wish them full success. But we also wish that they should not encroach upon what has been allotted to us.

Consequently the Mandal has sent a petition to the Punjab Government, from which I take the relevant extracts :[2]

> 1. That, according to the Poona Pact . . . eight seats were allotted in the Punjab Legislative Assembly to Hindu Depressed Classes. . . .
>
> 2. That these seats were deducted from the total number of Hindu seats.
>
> 3. That the Sikh and Muslim Depressed Classes . . . could not become voters or members in the above-named eight constituencies.
>
> 4. That great confusion is prevalent regarding the third point.
>
> 5. That to ensure the right interpretation, and to avoid objection-petitions on a large scale, instructions may very kindly be issued, not to enlist Sikhs as voters in the above-named constituencies, or a column of religion may also be added.

The petitioner's objection is quite sound. But why should there be Sikh, Muslim or Christian untouchables ? Has the bait of power made the converts repent of their conversion ? If the problem is not carefully and justly handled, with all-round growing consciousness it may give rise to embarrassing complications. There need be no surprise if to be classed among the chosen Scheduled Classes becomes a coveted privilege instead of being a sign of reproach. Time was when those who were regarded by the Government or society as untouchables resented the appellation and were trying to avoid it. Now

[1] Of 1932

[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

the emphasis is the other way. Let it be remembered in this connection that it is only Hinduism that has the dishonour of having untouchables legally known as Scheduled Classes.

SEGAON, February 12, 1940

Harijan, 17-2-1940

386. QUESTION BOX

UNTRUTH IN LAW COURTS

Q. I have followed with interest the controversy that has grown round your article in *Harijan* "The Fourfold Ruin"[1]. Whatever one may say about the arguments used on either side in this controversy, one thing I am in a position to assert without fear of contradiction, from my experience as a judicial officer of the present system of our law. Courts and the institution of lawyers are mainly responsible for the moral and spiritual degradation of our village peasantry in particular and the public in general. Even 'respectable' people, whom one has learnt to regard as the soul of honour in their ordinary everyday life, will tell barefaced lies for a trifle in a law court and think nothing of it. The canker is eating into the vitals of our village life. Would you suggest as to what a person in my position, (viz., a judge), who has to record evidence and give judicial decisions, can do to check this evil ?

A. What you say is too true. The atmosphere round law courts is debasing as any visitor passing through them can see. I hold radical views about the administration of justice. But mine, I know, is a voice in the wilderness. Vested interests will not allow radical reform unless India comes into her own through truthful and non-violent means. If that glorious event happens, the administration of law and medicine will be as cheap and healthy as it is today dear and unhealthy. The heroic advice will be for you to descend from the bench, embrace poverty and serve the poor. The prosaic will be for you to do the best you can in the very difficult circumstances in which you find yourself, reduce life to its simplest terms and devote your savings for the service of the poor.

AHIMSA *v.* SELF-RESPECT

Q. I am a university student. Yesterday evening some of us went to a cinema show. During the performance two of us went outside leaving our handkerchiefs behind on our seats. On our return we found that two British soldiers had taken possession of these seats unceremoniously in spite of the clearest warning and

[1] *Vide* "Fourfold Ruin", 28-1-1940.

entreaty by our friends. When requested to vacate the seats they not only refused but showed an inclination to fight. They browbeat the cinema manager who, being Indian, was easily cowed down. In the end the garrison officer was called and they vacated their seats. If he had not appeared, there would have been only two alternatives before us, either to resort to violence and maintain our self-respect, or to allow ourselves to be browbeaten and quietly occupy some other seats. The latter would have been too humiliating. How would you apply the principle of non-violence under such circumstances ?

A. I must admit the difficulty of solving the riddle. Two ways occur to me of dealing with the situation non-violently. First, firmly to stand the ground till the seats are vacated; secondly, deliberately so to stand as to obstruct the view of the usurpers. In each case you run the risk of being beaten by the usurpers. I am not satisfied with my answers. But they meet the special circumstances in which we are placed. The ideal answer no doubt is not to bother about the usurpation of the personal right but to reason with the usurpers and, if they do not listen, to report such cases to the authorities concerned and, in case of failure, take them to the highest tribunal. This is the constitutional method which is not taboo in a non-violent conception of society. Not to take the law into one's own hands is essentially a non-violent method. But the ideal has no relation to reality in this country because the index of expectation of justice for Indians in cases where white men and specially white soldiers are concerned is almost zero. Hence it is necessary to resort to something like what I have suggested. But I know that when we have real non-violence in us a non-violent way out is bound, without effort, to occur to us when we find ourselves in a difficult situation.

STUDENTS AND THE COMING FIGHT

Q. Although a college student I am a four-anna member of the Congress. You say I may not take any active part in the coming struggle whilst I am studying. What part do you expect the student world to take in the freedom movement ?

A. There is a confusion of thought in the question. The fight is going on now and it will continue till the nation has come to her birthright. Civil disobedience is one of the many methods of fighting. So far as I can judge today, I have no intention of calling out students. Millions will not take part in civil disobedience, but millions will help in a variety of ways.

1. Students can, by learning the art of voluntary discipline, fit themselves for leadership in the various branches of the nation's

work.

2. They can aim not at finding lucrative careers but at becoming national servants after completing their studies.

3. They can set apart for the national coffers a certain sum from their allowances.

4. They can promote inter-communal, inter-provincial and inter-caste harmony among themselves and fraternize with Harijans by abolishing the least trace of untouchability from their lives.

5. They can spin regularly and use certified khadi to the exclusion of all other cloth as well as hawk khadi.

6. They can set apart a certain time every week, if not every day, for service in a village or villages nearest to their institutions and, during the vacation, devote a certain time daily for national service.

The time may of course come when it may be necessary to call out the students as I did before. Though the contingency is remote, it will never come, if I have any say in the matter, unless the students have qualified themselves previously in the manner above described.

SEGAON, February 12, 1940

Harijan, 17-2-1940

387. WHAT IS WOMAN'S ROLE ?

With certain omissions I quote below the following[1] from a highly educated sister :

> You have shown the world, through ahimsa and satyagraha, the dignity of the soul. . . . But just as there is need for ahimsa and *brahmacharya* for a man to get rid of his aggressive spirit, lust . . ., etc., there is for woman need of certain principles that would enable her to get rid of her baser qualities, which are different from men's and commonly said to belong by nature to her. The natural qualities of her sex, the upbringing meted out to her because of her sex, and her environment which is created because of her sex, all are against her. And in her work these things, namely, her nature, upbringing and surroundings always get in the way and hinder her and give occasion for the hackneyed phrase, 'She is only a woman, after all' . . . I think that, if we only possess the correct solution, the correct method of improving ourselves, we could make our natural qualities, such as sympathy and tenderness, a help instead of a hindrance. The improvement just as your solution in the case of men and children, must come from within us. . . .

[1] Of which only excerpts are reproduced here

Your advice to me was to read *Harijan.* I do so eagerly. But so far I have not come across, well, the advice for the inner spirit. Spinning and fighting for the national freedom are only some aspects of the training. They do not seem to contain the whole solution. For I have seen women who do spin and do try to work out the Congress ideals and still commit blunders which are attributed to the fact of their being women.

. . . . Tell us, please, how to make the best use of our qualities, how to turn our disadvantages into advantages. . . .

I had flattered myself that my contribution to the woman's cause definitely began with the discovery of satyagraha. But the writer of the letter is of opinion that the fair sex requires treatment different from men. If it is so, I do not think any man will find the correct solution. No matter how much he tries, he must fail because nature has made him different from woman. Only the toad under the harrow knows where it pinches him. Therefore ultimately woman will have to determine with authority what she needs. My own opinion is that, just as fundamentally man and woman are one, their problem must be one in essence. The soul in both is the same. The two live the same life, have the same feelings. Each is a complement of the other. The one cannot live without the other's active help.

But somehow or other man has dominated woman from ages past, and so woman has developed an inferiority complex. She has believed in the truth of man's interested teaching that she is inferior to him. But the seers among men have recognized her equal status.

Nevertheless there is no doubt that at some point there is bifurcation. Whilst both are fundamentally one, it is also equally true that in the form there is a vital difference between the two. Hence the vocations of the two must also be different. The duty of motherhood, which the vast majority of women will always undertake, requires qualities which man need not possess. She is passive, he is active. She is essentially mistress of the house. He is the bread-winner, she is the keeper and distributor of the bread. She is the caretaker in every sense of the term. The art of bringing up the infants of the race is her special and sole prerogative. Without her care the race must become extinct.

In my opinion it is degrading both for man and woman that women should be called upon or induced to forsake the hearth and shoulder the rifle for the protection of that hearth. It is a reversion to barbarity and the beginning of the end. In trying to ride the horse that

man rides, she brings herself and him down. The sin will be on man's head for tempting or compelling his companion to desert her special calling. There is as much bravery in keeping one's home in good order and condition as there is in defending it against attack from without.

As I have watched millions of peasants in their natural surroundings and as I watch them daily in little Segaon, the natural division of spheres of work has forced itself on my attention. There are no women blacksmiths and carpenters. But men and women work on the fields, the heaviest work being done by the males. The women keep and manage the homes. They supplement the meagre resources of the family, but man remains the main bread-winner.

The division of the spheres of work being recognized, the general qualities and culture required are practically the same for both the sexes.

My contribution to the great problem lies in my presenting for acceptance truth and ahimsa in every walk of life, whether for individuals or nations. I have hugged the hope that in this woman will be the unquestioned leader and, having thus found her place in human evolution, will shed her inferiority complex. If she is able to do this successfully, she must resolutely refuse to believe in the modern teaching that everything is determined and regulated by the sex impulse. I fear I have put the proposition rather clumsily. But I hope my meaning is clear. I do not know that the millions of men who are taking an active part in the war are obsessed by the sex spectre. Nor are the peasants working together in their fields worried or dominated by it. This is not to say or suggest that they are free from the instinct implanted in man and woman. But it most certainly does not dominate their lives as it seems to dominate the lives of those who are saturated with the modern sex literature. Neither man nor woman has time for such things when he or she is faced with the hard fact of living life in its grim reality.

I have suggested in these columns that woman is the incarnation of ahimsa. Ahimsa means infinite love, which again means infinite capacity for suffering. Who but woman, the mother of man, shows this capacity in the largest measure ? She shows it as she carries the infant and feeds it during nine months and derives joy in the suffering involved. What can beat the suffering caused by the pangs of labour ? But she forgets them in the joy of creation. Who again suffers daily so

that her babe may wax from day to day ? Let her transfer that love to the whole of humanity, let her forget she ever was or can be the object of man's lust. And she will occupy her proud position by the side of man as his mother, maker and silent leader. It is given to her to teach the art of peace to the warring world thirsting for that nectar. She can become the leader in satyagraha which does not require the learning that books give but does require the stout heart that comes from suffering and faith.

My good nurse in the Sassoon Hospital, Poona, as I was lying on a sick bed years ago[1], told me the story of a woman who refused to take chloroform because she would not risk the life of the babe she was carrying. She had to undergo a painful operation. The only anaesthetic she had was her love for the babe, to save whom no suffering was too great. Let not women, who can count many such heroines among them, ever despise their sex or deplore that they were not born men. The contemplation of that heroine often makes me envy woman the status that is hers, if she only knew. There is as much reason for man to wish that he was born a woman as for woman to do otherwise. But the wish is fruitless. Let us be happy in the state to which we are born and do the duty for which nature has destined us.

SEGAON, February 12, 1940

Harijan, 24-2-1940

388. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 12, 1940

DEAR OLD SINGER,

If old women like you need blessings from young men like me, you have my blessings for one more year being written off the account against you. May your song never fade.

Love.

SPINNER

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

[1] In January 1924

389. LETTER TO PYARELAL

February 12, 1940

CHI. PYARELAL,

My advice is that Sushila should accompany me and you should stay here. This arrangement is only for this occasion. You should not think that Sushila's intention or decision has anything to do with. it. But if Sushila does not like it and you too do not like it and if Sushila has made up her mind immediately to leave Sevagram, you must go with her. If she can wait till I return from Ramgarh, then you should get ready to go with me.[1] It she is not willing to go with me to Ramgarh, then I insist that she should remain here till I get back. Let me know what you decide.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

390. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

February 12, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

What advice shall I give you ? Kanchan wants to come to malikanda. If she comes, you should not come. The reason—just decency. Nevertheless I shall let you do what you wish. I should also like you yourself to think about [attending] the Congress.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Consider what dharma requires. It enjoins control of desires.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8551. Also C.W. 7071. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Gandhiji had to be present at Ramgarh for the Congress Working Committee discussions from March 15 to 19.

391. IS IT WAR ?

The Builders of the British Indian Empire have patiently built its four pillars—the European interest, the Army, the Princes and the Communal Divisions. The last three were to subserve the first. It is clear to the realist the Builders have to remove the four pillars before they can claim to have given up the Empire or the Empire spirit. But they say to the nationalists or the destroyers of the Empire spirit, 'You have to deal with all the four pillars yourselves, before we can treat India as an independent nation instead of being our dependency.' They say in other words, "Guarantee the European interests, make your own army, treat with the Princes and with the communalists otherwise known as minorities.' The destroyers retort : 'You imposed the European interest on us, for their defence you built an army and kept it a close preserve, you saw that you could use the then existing Princes for your own purpose, you made them and unmade them, you created new ones, you armed them with powers they could not enjoy before with safety, in fact you partitioned India so that it could never rise against you in one mass. You saw again that we were cursed with the caste spirit, you took advantage of our weakness and refined it till at last claims are made which, if they were satisfied, there would be no single Indian nation and no independence. Add to all this the fact that by your policy of disarmament you have emasculated a whole nation. But we do not blame you for the past. On the contrary we admire your bravery, skill and spirit of adventure. You have copied other Empire Builders who preceded you. You have improved upon them in a variety of ways. But if you profess, as you have professed, that you have decided to give India her due, then you have to remove from our way the obstacles you have created. You are entitled to ask us to recognize the difficulties in the way of your making delivery and even to help you. If you are honest, you will leave us to do the best. You must trust our sense of justice, not your strong arm, to make us do what is right and proper. Hitherto you have determined our fate for us. Now if you are earnest, you will not only let us determine the method and manner of governing ourselves but even help us to do so, if we want your help.'

Lord Zetland has given the answer[1] to the destroyers which I paraphrase as follows :

We mean to hold on to what we have. Within that orbit, we will let you have such freedom as we think is good for you. This war that we are fighting is to prevent the disruption of our Empire. We want your help, if you will give it on these terms. It is good for you and us. But we will do without your help if you will not give it. You are not the only party we have to deal with. There are many in India who recognize the benefits of British Rule and *pax Britannica*. We propose to win the war with the help we can command from India through the loyal agencies. Their services we shall recognize by the grant of further reforms when the time comes. This is what we mean when we say we shall make the world safe for democracy. For we are the most democratic power in the world. Therefore, if we are safe, so are those who are with us. Those like India who are under our tutelage will be initiated into the art of democracy in gradual stages so that their progress may be uninterrupted and they might not have to go through the travail we had to go through.

I hope the paraphrase does no injustice to Lord Zetland. If it is fairly correct, the issues are quite clear. Between the two—the Nationalist and the Imperialist—there is no meeting ground. If, therefore, Lord Zetland represents the British Government's considered view, it is a declaration of war against nationalist India. For all the four pillars stand firm, rock-like. The more the nationalists try to deal with them as if they were problems for which they were responsible, the firmer they must become. I cannot conscientiously pray for the success of British arms if it means a further lease of life to India's subjection to foreign domination. I write this last sentence with a heavy heart.

SEGAON, February 13, 1940

Harijan, 17-2-1940

[1] The reference is to Lord Zetland's interview to the *Sunday Times* on February 11, 1940. *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 14-2-1940 and "Another Englishman's Letter", 16-3-1940.

392. ASHRAM NOTES

SEGAON,
February 13, 1940

1. Everyone should know that Segaon is infested by poisonous snakes. Thank God, no one has been bitten so far. It is, however, our duty to be cautious. God helps only the alert. That is why I would advise everyone to make the maximum use of lanterns and to wear shoes while walking in the dark.

2. As far as possible we should make no use of servants for personal work.

3. I have been upset from the day the trip to Santiniketan was planned. I have been agitated for more than two days and today I am extremely uneasy. I feel I am failing in my duty. I am digressing from Truth in an insidious way. I have a tendency to please everyone. Not that I always succeed in doing it. But if this is overdone, it ceases to be a virtue and becomes a vice. I know that it is my duty to take with me the smallest number of persons to Malikanda and Santiniketan. Although I have obtained permission from Santiniketan to take more people,[1] I felt today in a flash that it would be wrong of me to take anyone whose presence was unnecessary. I have, therefore, decided that no one except Ba, Mahadev, Pyarelal, Kanu and Narayan[2] will accompany me. I have not been able to express a fraction of what has been going on in my heart. This is a serious decision for me. But I could not regain my peace without it.

BAPU

From Hindi : C.W. 4674

393. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

February 13, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Never restrain [the prompting of] dharma. But always restrain desires. Bhagawan Patanjali has described yoga as control of

[1] *Vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 29-1-1940.
[2] Narayan Desai

movements of the mind.[1] This time you may practise self-control.[2] But that does not mean that if you get another occasion of going to Santiniketan for the benefit of dharma, you should not go. My own view, though, is that as long as you do not adjust yourself to Segaon you will continue to feel restless. It is here that you will get peace sooner or later. You will not find any place where everything will be to your liking. Let us, therefore, learn the art of liking everything.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8550. Also C.W. 7075. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

394. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 13, 1940

CHI. JETHALAL,

Your complaints regarding management, etc., are quite just. There is no limit to our lack of order. It is also true that I have visited only a few centres. They too do not have much of life in them. How to infuse it ? One effective way of doing it is to show some extraordinary result through silent work. Anantpur[3] will then easily become a centre of pilgrimage. You know that that has been my dream. Never mind if God has not gifted you with literary powers, you do have faith. Other things will follow.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

It is good news that Bachu has completely recovered.

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 9869. Courtesy : Narayan J. Sampat

[1] *Yogasutra*, 1
[2] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Munnalal G. Shah", 12-2-1940.
[3] Where the addressee had organized a khadi centre

395. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 13, 1940

CHI. LILA,

I very much want to write to you, but what can I do ? Please think that Mahadev writing to you is as good as my writing.

If you cannot restrain yourself, by all means do come. But I won't be here. We leave on the 15th night.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati : C.W. 9935. Courtesy : Lilavati Asar

396. LETTER TO MADALASA

SEGAON,
February 13, 1940

CHI. MADALASA,

So you are again down with fever, are you ? Do not feel dispirited. Get well soon. What we can gain from illness is to increase our faith in God and learn to control our nature. That also helps one to get well soon.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 320

397. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEGAON,
February 13, 1940

CHI. SHARMA,

Don't send the books[1] by post. Send them through some person. I have not followed the other hint in your letter. Why

[1] On nature cure, selected by Gandhiji

"merciless love" ?[1] I am leaving for Bengal on the 15th.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I expect to return by the 28th.

From a facsimile of the Hindi : *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 284 and 285

398. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[2]

SEGAON,
February 14, 1940

Lord Zetland's recent pronouncement,[3] if reported correctly, sets at rest all speculation regarding the Government's attitude towards the nationalist demand. I have been taught to believe that Dominion Status after the Statute of Westminster pattern is akin to independence and includes the right to secede. Therefore, I had thought there would be no difficulty about Britain allowing India to determine her own status. But Lord Zetland makes it clear that Britain, not India, has to determine it. In other words, the British hold on India must remain. He also puts the burden upon the nationalists of solving the minorities question and the like. I have shown[4] how impossible this is without previous recognition of India's independence, no doubt subject to safeguards. His Lordship thinks that, because some Indians have

[1] Referring to Gandhiji's article, *vide* "The Charkha", 9-1-1940, the addressee had pleaded with him not to be harsh with Subhas Chandra Bose who was then in indifferent health.

[2] This appeared in *Harijan* under the title "Banging the Door".

[3] The Secretary of State for India said that experience of the working of the constitution in the Act of 1935 had made it clear that the problem of the minorities must be taken in hand by Indians themselves. "Long-range bombardment by leading personalities from platform and Press is little likely to lead anywhere. What is wanted is escape from the tyranny of phrases and a descent from idealism, from the abstract to the concrete. . . . I believe that only by means of discussions among those who can speak with authority for their followers, informal and in confidence in the first instance, is helpful appreciation of their respective standpoints and difficulties inherent in them to be hoped for. If such a discussion is to be faithful, there must be on all sides a genuine will to succeed and a real spirit of compromise. The British Government cannot compel these things : they can only plead for them as I most earnestly do." *Vide* also "Another Englishman's Letter", 16-3-1940.

[4] *Vide* "Is It War ?", 13-2-1940.

received the boon of English education and have learnt ideas of freedom from British writers, they will want always to be under British tutelage euphemistically called partnership. This is what I call banging the door upon the nationalist position. Does it mean a pact deadlier than was announced at the last Round Table Conference[1] ? If it does, it is a declaration of war against nationalists who are out to destroy the empire spirit. I submit that it is wrong to dismiss the Indian claim by accusing the nationalists of losing realities in idealism. I suggest that it is he who refuses to face realities and is wandering in a forest of unrealities. I cannot accuse him of idealism. I assure him that Nationalist India is dreadfully in earnest.

Harijan, 17-2-1940

399. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEGAON,
February 14, 1940

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have picked up the pen but God alone knows if I shall be able to write what I have to write. My step is towards the quest of truth. It dawned on me that I was following the path of untruth. Yesterday the turmoil in my mind was beyond endurance. My decision has become a secondary atter. The great thing is the background of that decision. And what is the untruth? Well, there is Sushila. I take her as an example. It was an untruth to let her believe that I am keeping her as my physician. I wanted to draw her to me. The reasons are many. But all of them put together would not have attracted her. So I let her believe that she is with me as my physician. I would consider it sinful to have her principally as my physician. I would consider it the proper thing for her to give me medical care while doing my other work. This would not always include her travelling with me. Whatever work I entrusted to her would be service done to me. And while doing that work she could also look after my medical needs and be content. This attitude of 'all or nothing' is a great mistake. How long am I going to live? How can she have the heart to leave me? Why does she forget that she does so many other jobs for me? I consider it sheer obstinacy on her part even to overlook the fact that her presence will give you the satisfaction of being near her. You will please her. Now you guide

[1] In 1931

her in any way you think proper. I consider it your duty to accompany me. Now I come to the main point. If I have to lose Sushila it will be because of the untruth which I have mentioned. If I had not resorted to it, Sushila would not possibly have come. If that had happened, no harm would have come to her. Now if she leaves, there is danger of her being harmed. The blame then would be on me. There was untruth in saying 'yes' to Kanchan, etc. There was untruth in saying 'yes' to Rajkumari. It was softness on my part to give them the impression of being needed when I actually did not need them. There is no place for softness in truth, for otherwise there is no non-violence in it. If I did not see their good in their coming to Santiniketan and Malikanda it was my duty to firmly stop them. Yesterday God granted me the strength to follow that path of duty. I could not tell them so in the manner I wanted to. But take it as it is. My way will become easier if you follow this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

400. LETTER TO PYARELAL

After 1.00 a.m. [Before *February 15, 1940*][1]

CHI. PYARELAL,

I am truly tormented. So I am up and write this.

The more I think the more I can see it as clearly as daylight that what Sushila demands or desires is incompatible with dharma. This is how I understand her position. She will stay with me only if she can accompany me as my physician wherever I go; otherwise she will leave. I must not accept this demand. Of course there are occasions when she has to go around with me for one reason or another. At present even that is not the case. I would look upon it as plain *adharma* if Sushila should leave me now because I cannot accept her demand. In my heart I can find no justification for her going away. This is a critical period for me. I need her services for other things if not for my body. And I need you. If Sushila is around she will

[1]From the contents it appears that the letter was written before Gandhiii left Wardha on February 15, 1940 for Calcutta.

certainly look after my bodily comforts. If both of you look upon it as your dharma to quit all this, then by all means Sushila may go. And surely you will take her. If you regard this as your dharma, you have to fulfil it. I see in it nothing but *adharma*. And I cannot bless what I regard as *adharma*. I can only pray that God may make both of you follow dharma. There is no place for sentiment here. I have only considered what is dharma for all three of us.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

401. LETTER TO PYARELAL

February 15, 1940

CHI. PYARELAL,

I like your letter very much. I would like to make a few comments. But there is no time now. Your decision is not right. Sushila has got to be persuaded that she cannot accompany me on this tour. She is being unreasonably obstinate. She can be taken only at the cost of the truth I have discovered. I cannot explain this in a sentence or two. If she cannot be at peace and if you find it necessary for you to stay back you may do so. Of course, that would reveal Sushila's childishness. This thing is so clear that she must understand it. You should have the power to make her understand. Send a telegram to Prakash if you think it necessary. Maybe she will understand the point. All this hurts me a lot, but following the path of truth is more difficult than walking on the edge of a sword. May that truth be revealed to you. I am still hopeful that Sushila herself will realize this and give up the obstinacy.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Do Sushila Nayyar

402. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

February 15, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

What can I write to you ? Whatever I have done has been out of a sense of duty. You must calm down. Accept my advice. Forget about leaving. Have trust in God. Ba is unhappy about the talk of your going. The matter came up while we were in the car. It is not at all proper for you to be obstinate.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

403. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,
WARDHA,
[Before *February 15, 1940*][1]

CHI. SUSHILA,

Received your two letters. How should I reply to you? You see everything in me from the wrong end. I have never said that you cannot move with me at all. It is likely that you would go with me from time to time. But I do not agree to the distinctions you made. The belief that Kanu is in one compartment and A. S. in another is incorrect for all times. It is I who must decide from time to time who would go with me and at what time. But your letters suggest that we are looking at it from different vantage points. May it be so.

I am sending three articles this time.

I see no meaning in the Prabhudas affair. How does it matter to you if Devdas has taken a distorted view? That image of three monkeys should be with you, not with me. Do you want it?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the contents. In 1940, Gandhiji left Wardha for Calcutta on February 15 on a month-long tour and had been writing to the addressee, dissuading her from accompanying him on his tour; *vide* "Letter to Sushila Nayyar", 3-2-1940.

404. LETTER TO SHAMBHUSHANKAR TRIVEDI

SEGAON,
February 15, 1940

CHI. SHAMBHUSHANKAR,

I keep on getting news of you. Some friends write to me that I prompted you to undertake the fast. I hope you don't think so. Let me state my position. I have no right to recommend a fast to you or to anyone. A fast may be undertaken only when prompted from within. Hence this attitude on my part. You write that there was a clear breach of promise. You broke your fast after you had secured the promise. Then you asked me whether it was contrary to dharma to undertake it now that the promise was broken. And I replied that it was not so, in fact it could be your dharma. Hence if you have the slightest doubt please give up the fast. If you have no doubts, may God grant you the strength to hold fast to your resolve. I am happy to know that you are at peace. May your peace of mind last for ever.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

405. QUESTION BOX

UNITY *v.* JUSTICE

Q. In your article "Unity *v*. Justice"[1] you say that, if you give more than his due to your brother, you neither bribe him nor do you do an injustice. You say : "I can disarm suspicion only by being generous. Justice without generosity is done at the expense of the very cause for which it is sought to be done." I submit that justice and generosity cannot go hand in hand. As Dryden has rightly observed, "Justice is blind, it knows nobody." Besides, you can be generous to the weak, meek and the humble, not to one who in the arrogance of his strength seeks to coerce you into submission. To give more than his due to such a person is not generosity but cowardly surrender. Though Hindus are numerically stronger, their majority, as you yourself have pointed out, is only fictitious and actually they are the weaker party. Besides, if generosity is to be shown to the Muslims, the only organization that is competent to offer it is the Hindu Mahasabha. What right has a third party to be generous to one of the two

[1] *Vide* "Unity v. Justice", 23-1-1940.

parties to a dispute at the other party's expense ?

A. In my article referred to by you I have dealt with general principles, not with particular minorities. Even as justice to be justice has to be generous, generosity in order to justify itself has got to be strictly just. Therefore it should not be at the expense of any single interest. Hence there cannot be any question of sacrificing some minority or minorities, for the benefit of any minority. You are right again in con-tending that generosity has to be shown to the weak and the humble, and not to the bully. Nevertheless I would say, on behalf of the bully, that even he is entitled to justice, for immediately you brush aside the bully and be unjust to him you justify his bullying. Thus the only safe—not to put it higher—rule of conduct is to do generous justice, irrespective of the character of the minority. I am quite sure that where there is strictest justice the question of a majority and minority would not arise. The bully is a portent and is an answer to some existing circumstance, as, for instance, cowardice. It is often forgotten that cowardice can be unjust. The fact is that cowards have no sense of justice. They yield only to threat, or actual use of force. I do not know that there is any question of choice between a coward and a bully. The one is as bad as the other, with this difference that the bully always follows the coward in point of time.

In a previous issue I have admitted that the proper organization to enter into settlements is the Hindu Mahasabha, so far as Hindus are concerned, or any such organization.[1] The Congress endeavours to represent all communities. It is not by design, but by the accident of Hindus being politically more conscious than the others, that the Congress contains a majority of Hindus. As history proves the Congress is a joint creation of Muslims, Christians, Parsis, Hindus, led by Englishmen, be it said to the credit of the latter. And the Congress, in spite of all that may be said to the contrary, retains that character. At the present moment a Muslim divine is the unquestioned leader of the Congress and for the second time becomes its President.[2] The constant endeavour of Congressmen has been to have as many members as possible drawn from the various communities, and therefore the Congress has entered into pacts for the purpose of securing national solidarity. It cannot, therefore, divest itself of that

[1] *Vide* "Is Congress a Hindu Organisation?", 13-11-1939

[2] Abul Kalam Azad was President-elect of the forthcoming Congress session at Ramgarh.

function, and therefore, although I have made the admission that the Hindu Mahasabha or a similar Hindu organization can properly have communal settlements, the Congress cannot and must not plead incapacity for entering into political pacts so long as it commands general confidence.

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA, February 16, 1940

Harijan, 24-2-1940

406. NOTES

CLEAR INJUSTICE

The Secretary of the Seng Khasi Free Morning School, Mawkhar, Shillong, has sent a circular letter to those who are concerned in matters educational and has favoured me also with a copy. I extract the following from it :[1]

> The British Government gave education grants to the Christian missionaries for spreading education among the people of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills District. The missionaries printed the textbooks for schools according to their liking and choice. . . . They translated the Bible into Khasi language and made it a textbook for schools. . . . Some pure Khasi gentlemen . . . started the Seng Khasi Free Morning School as early as 1921, with a view to preserving Khasi national culture. . . . The Deputy Inspector of Schools, Khasi and Jaintia Hills, desired us to follow the curriculum prescribed by his department. I agreed to accept the curriculum provided that those books written or compiled by the missionaries are not included in the curriculum of the Seng Khasi School. The Deputy Inspector of Schools did not recommend this school for a grant from the Government on the plea that the curriculum was not followed in the school. . . . It is a matter of great regret that the Deputy Inspector of Schools compels this school to teach missionary books and frustrate the very object with which it was established.

If what is stated here is true, it enforces the argument often advanced by me that Christian missionary effort has been favoured by the ruling power. But I advertise the circular not for the sake of emphasizing my argument. I do so in order to ventilate the grievance of the Secretary of the school. Surely he has every right to object to teaching proselytizing literature prepared by the missionaries. It should be remem-bered that the school has been in receipt of a grant from Government. It is not clear why the question of the missionary books has now cropped up. It is to be hoped that the school will not

[1]Only excerpts are reproduced here,

be deprived of the grant because of the Secretary's very reasonable objection.

SKIMMED MILK

Prof. Warner of Allahabad Agricultural Institute sends me a copy of a note submitted by him to a Municipal Board in U. P. The Board has passed a bye-law requiring that "all skimmed milk sold in the city should be coloured in order that it may be easily identified as skimmed milk, thereby preventing its use in diluting or adulterating whole milk." Prof. Warner is of opinion that this is a dangerous bye-law whose effect would be total destruction of a valuable protective food. He has shown in the note, I think conclusively, that skimmed milk as an article of food is not to be despised, the only difference between whole milk and skimmed milk being that a large percentage of fat is removed from skimmed milk for preparing butter, but the milk retains all the salts and all the proteins. Adulteration, therefore, of whole milk with skimmed milk produces very little effect upon its nutritive value. Only the percentage of fat is reduced somewhat. He gives figures in support of his argument which I need not reproduce. He does not mind bye-laws preventing adulteration even with skimmed milk. But he strongly objects, and I think rightly, to destroying skimmed milk by colouring it, and he shows that not only is a valuable article of diet taken away from the mouths of poor people, but the danger of adulteration of milk with water increases. And this danger is very real, because the greater the percentage of water the lower is the nutritive value of milk. And add to this the fact that the water itself may be impure. Prof. Warner draws a distinction between requiring the colouring of vegetable ghee for preventing adulteration of real ghee, and the colouring of skimmed milk. It is wholly necessary that vegetable ghee should be coloured with some innocuous dye. Coloured vegetable ghee will be used by the people for its cheapness. But as there is already prejudice against skimmed milk people will refuse to take coloured skimmed milk, even though the colouring matter may be utterly innocuous. I would on my own behalf enforce Prof. Warner's argument by suggesting that municipalities will do well to popularize the use of skimmed milk. It can be sold very cheap and it is a perfectly wholesome thing both for the rich and the poor, and is a good sick man's diet, when whole milk is rejected by the digestive apparatus.

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA, February 16, 1940

Harijan, 9-3-1940

407. SPEECH AT SANTINIKETAN[1]

February 17, 1940

My uppermost feelings on arriving here are about Deenabandhu[2]. Perhaps you do not know that the first thing I did yesterday morning on alighting from the train at Calcutta was to pay him a visit in the hospital. Gurudev is a world poet, but Deenabandhu too has the spirit and temperament of a poet in him. He had long yearned to be present on the present occasion, to drink in and store up the memory of every word, movement and gesture relating to the meeting with Gurudev. But God had willed it otherwise and he now lies in Calcutta, stricken down and unable even to make full use of his speech. I would like you all to join me in the prayer that God may restore him to us soon, and, in any case, may grant his spirit peace.

I know what love Gurudev has for me.[3] I recollect the early days of the Ashram in 1915 when I had nowhere to lay my head. I have not come here as a stranger or a guest. Santiniketan has been more than a home to me. It was here that the members of my South African family found warm hospitality in 1914, pending my arrival from England, and I too found shelter here for nearly a month. The memories of those days crowd in upon me as I see you all here, assembled before me. It grieves me that I cannot prolong my stay here as I would have loved to. It is a question of duty. In a letter to a friend, the other day, I described my present trip to Santiniketan and Malikanda as a pilgrimage. Santiniketan has truly, this time, proved

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "The Santiniketan Pilgrimage". Welcoming Gandhiji, Rabindranath Tagore said : "I hope we shall be able to keep close to a reticent expression of love in welcoming you into our Ashram and never allow it to overflow into any extravagant display of phrases. Homage to the great naturally seeks its manifestation in the language of simplicity and we offer you these few words to let you know that we accept you as our own, as one belonging to all humanity.

"Just at this moment there are problems that darken our destiny. These we know are crowding your path and none of us is free from their attack. Let us for a while pass beyond the bounds of this turmoil and make our meeting today a simple meeting of hearts whose memory will remain when all the moral confusions of our distracted politics will be allayed and the eternal value of our endeavour will be revealed."

[2] C. F. Andrews

[3] This and the following sentence are from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*.

for me a *'niketan'* of *'shanti'*—an abode of peace.[1] I have come here leaving behind me all the cares and burdens of politics,[2] simply to have Gurudev's *darshan* and blessings. I have often claimed myself to be an accomplished beggar. But a more precious gift has never dropped into my beggar's bowl than Gurudev's blessings today. I know his blessings are with me always. But it has been my privilege today to receive the same from him in person, and that fills me with joy. Words are useless when the relation is one of love.[3]

Harijan, 9-3-1940, and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 18-2-1940

408. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SANTINIKETAN,
February 18, 1940

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have your wires. My hand was not badly hurt. The slightest hurt to a Mahatma must be duly magnified. Nor was there any hostility shown anywhere.

The embargo[4] that was prompted by the voice within has justified itself as I can see.

You took it extraordinarily well and it was a great relief to me. I hope you are keeping well and the whole family is acting like a family. I want you to interest yourself in every detail without obtrusion. The interest must be after the Sir Gibbie style. "Let not thy right hand know what the left doeth."[5] Or does it begin with the 'left' ?

Poor Bablo got ill just when he might have enjoyed himself. M[ahadev] had to take him today to Calcutta.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original : C.W. 3666. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6475

[1] According to *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, Gandhiji when confronted by Press correspondents earlier had remarked, "I have come in quest of peace and refuse to be disturbed."

[2] *Amrita Bazar Patrika* has : "In Santiniketan I have come without the burdens of politics I usually carry."

[3] This sentence is from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*.

[4] *Vide* "Ashram Notes", 13-2-1940.

[5] *St. Matthew*, VI, 3

409. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

SANTINIKETAN,
February 18, 1940

CHI. VALJI,

I trust you are doing well there. Do not leave Segaon until you are fully restored. Mix with everybody with an open heart. Go for walks in company and talk [with everybody]. You must be having a good massage every day.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W 7490. Courtesy : Valji G. Desai

410. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

SANTINIKETAN,
February 18, 1940

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I trust you are doing well. Since Sushilabehn is there, I do not worry about anything. I hope you are well looked after. A[mtul] S[alaam]behn was worrying about you.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9734. Also C.W. 714. Courtesy : Navajivan Trust

411. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SANTINIKETAN,
February 18, 1940

STUPID DAUGHTER SUSHILA,

I think of you wherever I am. At the same time I can see that what seemed as harshness on my part was really not harshness. It was right not to have brought you and others here. The reasons were several. It is unnecessary to dilate upon them, I hope you are in good health and fine spirit. I have sent Mahadev to Calcutta today as Bablo has been taken ill. Poor Bablo could see nothing [here]. I am doing well. I could not have the massage. Other things are going on as usual. I go to bed early at night. I had my hand caught in the window. Now

it is all right. The injury was slight.

I hope Valjibhai and Kunverji are well. Zohra and Shirin met me. Zohra must have sent my message.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

412. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SANTINIKETAN,

February 18, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your foot should improve. I hope Balkrishna is well. I am all right. The injury to my hand was not serious at all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 4338

413. MESSAGE TO SANTINIKETAN

SANTINIKETAN,

February 18, 1940

All Santiniketan knows or should know what relationship subsisted between Boro Dada[1] and me. It was a deeply spiritual bond. Death has not dissolved it. It should therefore be taken for granted that I shall be with you all in spirit at the forthcoming function.

M. K. GANDHI

From the original : C.W. 10209. Courtesy : Visvabharati, Santiniketan

[1] Dwijendranath, elder brother of Rabindranath Tagore

414. SPEECH AT SRINIKETAN[1]

February 18, 1940

Silence is good speech. There have been many developments here since my first visit.[2] I am glad to see the progress that has been made, both in Santiniketan and Sriniketan, and I pray that you may render service to the poor villagers and Santhals in the neighbouring areas.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 19-2-1940

415. DISCUSSION WITH PACIFISTS[3]

[On or before *February 19, 1940*][4]

[Q.] Supposing in the presence of superior brute force one feels helpless, would one be justified in using just enough force to prevent the perpetration of wrong ?

[A.] Yes, but there need not be that feeling of helplessness if there is real non-violence in you. To feel helpless in the presence of violence is not non-violence but cowardice. Non-violence should not be mixed up with cowardice.

Suppose someone came and hurled insult at you, should you allow yourself to be thus humiliated ?

If you feel humiliated, you will be justified in slapping the bully in the face or taking whatever action you might deem nece- ssary to vindicate your self-respect. The use of force, under the circumstances, would be the natural consequence if you are not a coward. But there should be no feeling of humiliation in you if you have assimilated the non-violence spirit. Your non-violent behaviour would then either make the bully feel ashamed of himself and prevent the insult, or

[1] As Gandhiji was about to leave after visiting the rural reconstruction centre of the Visvabharati he was asked to say a few words.

[2] Earlier, Gandhiji had remarked : "The place has grown beyond recognition."

[3] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "An Interlude at Santiniketan". A group of pacifists which included some Quaker friends, led by Dr. Amiya Chakravarty, met Gandhiji at Santiniketan.

[4] The report is date-lined "On Train, February 17, 1940". Obviously February 17 is a slip since the discussion took place "during Gandhiji's two days' stay at Santiniketan from February 17 to 19.

make you immune against it so that the insult would remain only in the bully's mouth and not touch you at all.

Supposing there is a person with a diseased mind—a lunatic run amuck, bent upon murder, or you arrive on the scene of trouble when the situation has already advanced too far. An infuriated mob has got out of hand, and you feel helpless, would you justify the use of physical force to restrain the lunatic in the first case, or allow the use, say, of tear-gas in the latter ?

I will excuse it for all time. But I would not say it is justified from the non-violent standpoint. I would say that there was not that degree of non-violence in you to give you confidence in purely non-violent treatment. If you had, your simple presence would be sufficient to pacify the lunatic. Non-violence carries within it its own sanction. It is not a mechanical thing. You do not become non-violent by merely saying, 'I shall not use force.' It must be felt in the heart. There must be within you an upwelling of love and pity towards the wrongdoer. When there is that feeling it will express itself through some action. It may be a sign, a glance, even silence. But such as it is it will melt the heart of the wrongdoer and check the wrong.

The use of tear-gas is not justified in terms of the non-violent ideal. But I would defend its use against the whole world if I found myself in a corner when I could not save a helpless girl from violation or prevent an infuriated crowd from indulging in madness, except by its use. God would not excuse me if, on the Judgment Day, I were to plead before Him that I could not prevent these things from happening because I was held back by my creed of non-violence. Non-violence is self-acting. A fully non-violent person is by nature incapable of using violence or rather has no use for it. His non-violence is all-sufficing under all circumstances.

Therefore, when I say that the use of force is wrong in whatever degree and under whatever circumstances, I mean it in a relative sense. It is much better for me to say I have not sufficient non-violence in me, than to admit exceptions to an eternal principle. Moreover my refusal to admit exceptions spurs me to perfect myself in the technique of non-violence. I literally believe in Patanjali's aphorism that violence ceases in the presence of non-violence.[1]

Can a State carry on strictly according to the principle of non-violence ?

A Government cannot succeed in becoming entirely non-

[1] *Yogasutra*

violent, because it represents all the people. I do not today conceive of such a golden age. But I do believe in the possibility of a predominantly non-violent society. And I am working for it. A Government representing such society will use the least amount of force. But no Government worth its name can suffer anarchy to prevail. Hence I have said that even under a Government based primarily on non-violence a small police force will be necessary.[1]

Harijan, 9-3-1940

416. COMMUNAL DECISION

During my brief stay in Bengal I have been overwhelmed with questions on the Communal Decision. I have been told that neither the Working Committee nor I have pronounced decisive opinion on it. The Working Committee's decision is written in its records and has been published.[2] It has neither accepted nor rejected the Decision. There can be neither acceptance nor rejection of an imposed thing. A prisoner is not required to accept the sentence pronounced against him. His rejection would be meaningless. For he would soon find himself undeceived. The Communal Decision has been imposed upon India not for her own good but for strengthening the British imperial hold on India. The Working Committee has, therefore, as much accepted and as much rejected the Decision as Bengal has. There is this difference, however, that the Working Committee has not agitated against it like Bengal.

For me, I detest the Decision. It has benefited no single party in India but the British. If the Muslims flatter themselves with the belief that they have profited by it, they will soon find that they were sadly mistaken. If I could alter the Decision and make it what it should be, I should do so this very moment. But I have no such power. The power can only come if there is unity. Bengal is the most glaring instance of injustice. I can conceive of no just reason for putting the wedge of the tremendous European vote between the two major communities. Their number is insignificant. Their interest is protected by the British bayonet. Why should that interest have added strength given to it by

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 6-2-1940.

[2] The Congress Working Committee passed the resolution at Bombay in June 1934. *Vide* Appendix "Resolution on White Paper and Communal Award", 18-6-1934.

its introduction in the legislature ? I can understand its representation without vote so as to enable it to put its case before the legislature. So long as it has the protection of the British bayonet, its over-representation on the legislature is a wholly unjust imposition. The whole face of the Bengal legislature would be changed if the European vote was withdrawn. Today that legislature is not wholly responsible to the people, the real voters. The European bloc gives peace neither to the Muslims nor the Hindus. Muslim ministers may flatter themselves with the belief that they are safe with the European vote. They may be safe as individuals, but the national interest cannot be safe if a body of persons who are numerically insignificant are given an artificially decisive voting strength in a democratic assembly. It deprives the latter of its democratic character.

Thus the evil contained in the Decision I know. But I do not know how to deal with it except by patient endeavour. This I do know that there can be no real swaraj so long as that Decision stands. Bengal is a glaring instance of the inequity. Assam is another. A critical examination of the Decision would show that it has very little to recommend itself from the national standpoint. It can be altered either by the British Government redressing the wrong or by successful rebellion. I was going to add by mutual agreement. But that seems an impossibility even if Hindus and Muslims agreed. Europeans have also to agree, and they have to agree to self-abnegation—an event unknown in politics. If there was self-abnegation, there would [be] no European interest in India which is hostile to the national interest. He will be a bold man who will assert and hope to prove that there was in India no European interest hostile to the nation.

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA, February 19, 1940
Harijan, 24-2-1940

417. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

February 19, 1940

A publication like this[1] should have an exhaustive index. Even the second edition [is] not having it. You should prepare one and sell it separately.

From a microfilm. Courtesy : National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] To *the Students*, a collection of Gandhiji's writings compiled by the addressee

418. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

ON THE WAY TO CALCUTTA,
February 19, 1940

DEAR GURUDEV,

The touching note[1] that you put into my hands as we parted has gone straight into my heart. Of course Visvabharati is a national institution. It is undoubtedly also international. You may depend upon my doing all I can in the common endeavour to assure its permanence.

I look to you to keep your promise to sleep religiously for about an hour daily during the day.

Though I have always regarded Santiniketan as my second home, this visit has brought me nearer to it than ever before.

With reverence and love,

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 1535

419. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

ON THE TRAIN,
February 19, 1940

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

Your wire was received too late to send you a wire in time. Therefore this carries my blessings for the humble wearer of *upanayan*[2].

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 3180

[1] *Vide* "What I Saw in Santiniketan", 26-2-1940.

[2] Obviously a slip for *Yajnopavita*, the sacred thread. *Upanayan* is the ceremony of investing one with the sacred thread.

420. CABLE TO AGATHA HARRISON

CALCUTTA,

[*February 19, 1940*][1]

AGATHA HARRISON

2 CRANBOURNE COURT

ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD

LONDON

ANDREWS SLOWLY IMPROVING. EVERY CARE BEING TAKEN. INFORM HIS SISTER.[2]

GANDHI

From the original : C.W. 10210. Courtesy : Visvabharati, Santiniketan

421. A TESTAMENT

All the wills made by me previously may be treated as cancelled and this may be considered as my final Will.

I do not regard anything as my personal property. Nevertheless, of whatever may be regarded in custom and in law as my property, movable or immovable, and of the copyrights of the books and articles, published or unpublished, written by me hithertofore or that may be written by me hereafter, I appoint "Navajivan", of which Shri Mohanlal Maganlal Bhatt and I made a Declaration of Trust, which was registered on 26-11-1929,[3] and of which Shri Vallabhbhai Jhaverbhai Patel, Shri Mahadev Haribhai Desai and Shri Narahari Dwarkadas Parikh are the present Trustees, as the sole heirs.

From the net profits accruing from the sale of the said books and from their copyrights "Navajivan" shall contribute twenty-five per cent every year to the Harijan Sevak Sangh for Harijan work.

I nominate Mahadev Haribhai Desai and Narahari Dwarkadas Parikh Executors for the purpose of this Will. In their absence,

[1] During his day's stay at Calcutta *en route* to Malikanda, Gandhiji visited C. F. Andrews on February 19.

[2] The cable has the following note by the addressee : "Sent to sister. Informed Press 20-2-40".

[3] *Vide* "Declaration of Trust", 26-11-1929.

through death or any other reason, others will have the right to administer the property.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

MALIKANDA, February 20, 1940

Witnesses :

PYARELAL NAYYAR, 20-2-40

KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA, 20-2-40

From Gujarati : C.W. 2686. Courtesy : Navajivan Trust

422. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

SEGAON,

February 20, 1940

CHI. DEVDAS,

I like your advocacy of the Viceroy's case. But you have been so carried away that you have lost sense. I would certainly not be discourteous, you may be sure of it. There is no need to elaborate on what he has said.[1] I had already said I was ready to stay on till the 14th if that was necessary. As such, I had nothing more to offer. It was futile to prolong my stay. My firmness was about the case. What can I do about it? If I give the reason suggested by you, it would mean giving a wrong explanation for postponing civil disobedience. He liked what I said. I said that we ourselves were not prepared. Moreover, where is the question of a conflict so long as there is hope? What we have to see is whether my belief that he is a clean man turns out to be true or he is playing a double game. The newspapers and letters I receive raise a doubt. In reply to the remark "Bapu ruined everything in a hurry" you say that it was the situation in Bengal that did it. That is far from the truth and is unfair to me. What kind of a general would I be if I were so weak? During our talk I had in mind neither the Bengal situation nor the Working Committee. It was only my own inclination. If I think of our own weakness, I should ask for

[1]Gandhiji had met the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow in Delhi on February 5 for his statement to the press emphasizing the vital differences between the Congress demand for freedom and the Viceroy's offer; *vide* "Interview to *Deshabhimani*", 23-9-1921.

less. But is not my case altogether different? Is Great Britain herself prepared to do justice?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

423. SPEECH AT KHADI AND VILLAGE INDUSTRIES EXHIBITION[1]

MALIKANDA,
February 20, 1940

If you remain quiet, my voice will reach you. I just now heard some people shouting "Down with Gandhism". Those who want to put down Gandhism have every right to say so. Those who have come to hear me will please keep quiet and not get excited by hostile slogans nor shout counter-slogans of "*Gandhijiki Jai*". If you are non-violent, you should calmly tolerate such slogans. If there is any trace of untruth in Gandhism, it must perish. If it contains truth, lakhs and crores of voices clamouring for its destruction will not destroy it. Allow freedom to those who want to say anything against Gandhism. That will cause no harm. Do not bear any grudge or malice against them. You cannot realize ahimsa unless you can calmly tolerate your opponents. In truth, I myself do not know what Gandhism means. I have not given anything new to the country. I have only given a new form to the traditional [wisdom] of India. It would therefore be wrong to call it Gandhism.

We have not assembled here for any political activity. We have come here to devise ways and means for fulfilling the principal objective of the Gandhi Seva Sangh. I cordially invite those who shouted hostile slogans to say whatever they like and give vent to their views. Why should we look upon each other as enemies ? What if our views differ ? We should remain friends because we all love India and want her to be free. One party follows one path and another party prefers a different path; but our goal remains the same. Why then should there be any enmity ?

[1] Gandhiji declared the Exhibition open soon after his arrival in Malikanda in the morning.

You have gathered here in such large numbers; but you remained orderly and disciplined to allow me to get here. I hope your discipline will set the model for others. If we do not cultivate discipline, we cannot attain swaraj for the millions.

Now I declare the Exhibition open. I have not yet seen it myself. It would have been right and proper for me to have seen it first.

The exhibits here have a special message. The Exhibition will remind you of industries the revival of which will enrich India. These days man takes pride in inert and lifeless machines. It is, however, my conviction that man is the most exquisite machine. Is there any machine in the world more miraculous and more minutely made than man ? God is its Maker. Manmade machines are lifeless. I do not understand why people should take pride in such machines. Man, the machine, is unique because it throbs with life. The ten fingers and two hands of man, with the brain he possesses, can work wonders beyond the ken of machines. I want every man and woman from every part of India to realize what art and skill are hidden in their heads and hands.

God has gifted us with hands not for fighting amongst ourselves. He has given them so that we may serve and help one another. He has given us brains so that we may use our hands to create things useful for each other. Those who use their hands and heads for this purpose can alone pursue peace. They can give a good account of their time to God.

With these words, I declare the Exhibition open. I hope thousands of you will visit the Exhibition and benefit from it.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Chhathe Adhiveshan (Malikanda-Bengal) ka Vivaran.

424. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING—I[1]

MALIKANDA,
February 21, 1940

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Bhai Jajuji has already told you that Kishorelal was determined to attend this session, but I prevented him. He was keen on listening to what I have to say to you. I told him that he need not hear it. But his

[1] The session started at 7.30 a.m. Shrikrishnadas Jaju took over as President in place of Kishorelal Mashruwala who was unwell.

heart does not consent. So he said he would lie in his room and listen to my speech through the loudspeaker. He could listen to his own speech when it was being read out yesterday. Today he will listen to my speech, too, in the same manner. I am in two minds today. This does not normally happen—whatever I want to say, the words come to me spontaneously. I do not know if that will happen today. Although I am still thinking what advice I should give you, yet even at this moment I do not have a clear idea of the advice I am going to offer you.

First, I wish to say a few things about Prafulla Babu's[1] remarks. If his words really reflect the feelings in his heart, I would say he has fully understood my view. I have deliberately employed the word 'if' by way of caution. How can I probe the heart of any man ? If he has uttered these words only in a fit of passion or being led away by his enthusiasm, if he has not weighed the meaning of every single word that he uttered, these words will benefit none. However, I hope and trust that his words are not empty utterances but reflect his [deep] faith. I too agree with him that if the Gandhi Seva Sangh were to confine itself exclusively to constructive activity, principally spinning, we can win swaraj. These are my views but I have not the courage to express them. Prafulla Babu dared to express them without hesitation.

He said that two or three hundred workers were not enough, we need at least a lakh of them. But we have a population of 30 crores. One lakh in thirty crores is like a drop in the ocean. However, if a lakh of workers act with faith, they can generate great power. This is a matter of faith, not of proof. It cannot be measured in figures. I am also keeping count of figures. It will have to be proved with figures how the charkha can clothe the country. I have asked Krishnadas Gandhi to work out these figures. I am myself working on them and have asked others to do likewise. I shall publish the results of these calculations when they are complete.

Prafulla Babu emphasized that every one of the workers should spin at least a hundred thousand yards [every year]. This is not a matter merely of figures. He went further and said he was convinced that the charkha was the symbol of non-violence. If a devoted man works with this faith, he will infect others. The infection of disease, too, spreads; but that is harmful. The infection of faith is fruitful. When a disease sets in, we get panicky because, as it spreads, it spells

[1] P. C. Ghosh

destruction. But there is no doubt that if everyone gets the infection of the charkha swaraj will be ours.

I however felt that the few of us who are sitting here hardly believe this. Perhaps my suspicion is well-founded. They doubt whether the charkha alone will win swaraj. But later this 'alone' ceases to be. The same charkha generates a great power. As I have said so often, the charkha is the sun round which all other planets revolve. The acorn is so tiny; but when it takes firm root and grows into an oak, it spreads and supports so much foliage. When the charkha mentality spreads, the charkha will not remain alone. It will accommodate so many other industries under its aegis. Its fragrance will pervade the whole world.

But above all the charkha is the symbol of non-violence and whoever takes it up must do so with faith in ahimsa. Sir Nil Ratan Sarkar said the same thing the other day. I had gone to see him. He is laid up with paralysis. He wept holding my hand. He talked about the charkha. He said : "If we develop faith in the charkha, our country will rise." I know invalid persons become sentimental, but there was truth in what Sir Nil Ratan said. All this means my non-violence is still imperfect. You are all participating in the attempt to perfect it. What Prafulla Babu said also means the same thing. If you accept the charkha with all this faith, the Sangh will have fulfilled its mission.[1]

Kishorelal has joined us, disobeying orders.[2]

Well, then, I shall turn to the main question, "What shall we do with the Sangh ?' I discussed this matter with Kishorelal. I cannot say that we arrived at a final conclusion. Nor do I propose to place any new argument before you. I am not clear in my mind what definite advice I should offer you. If things get clarified while exchanging ideas with you here, some definite advice may come from my lips. Otherwise the flow of my words will dry up. It is not like the flow of the Padma[3] which makes its way wherever it spreads.

The question is : 'Should we allow the Sangh to continue or not ?' And from this the second question arises : 'If yes, should we change its present form or maintain the *status quo* ?'

I can supply arguments in support of both the views. We are

[1] At this stage Kishorelal Mashruwala arrived at the meeting.

[2] Kishorelal Mashruwala replied that he had come with the doctor's permission, because he could not hear properly from his bed.

[3] The session was being held on the bank of the river Padma.

going to lose nothing if we wind it up, and if we change it, we have to do so radically. But I am not yet quite definite about the nature of the change. Hence I shall first explain how we lose nothing by winding up the Sangh. Maybe, my ideas spring from cowardice. But I do not think so. I shall now explain how.

The slogan "Down with Gandhism", which these people are shouting is not without meaning. For if Gandhism means simply a mechanical plying of the charkha, it deserves to be destroyed. When I explained the significance of Prafulla Babu's suggestion of spinning a hundred thousand yards of yarn, we must not take it in the literal sense. I know the other side [of the argument] also. Mere plying of the wheel will lead the country nowhere. Even in old days many invalids and women used to spin, but they were steeped in slavery. While Kautilya[1] mentions that the charkha was plied during those days, he has also said that the charkha was made to ply under penal action by the State. The spinning was not voluntary but forced labour of the helpless. The women used to sit in a row for spinning, but all that was forced on them. All these are recorded facts; I am not reporting hearsay accounts. If we seek to revive the charkha, as it used to be, then it must be destroyed and along with it should go Gandhism which pins its faith on the efficacy of such spinning.

If our ahimsa is not of the brave but of the weak, and if it will bend before violence or if it will be put to shame or prove ineffective in the presence of violence, then Gandhism deserves to be destroyed. It is bound to be destroyed. We fought the British, but there we used ahimsa as the weapon of the weak. Now we want to make it the weapon of the strong. Ahimsa can be used, within limits, as a weapon by the weak; but only within those limits. But it can never be a weapon of the coward, the timid. If a coward wields the weapon of ahimsa, it will recoil on him.

We have to find out whether the plying of charkha gives us the power of ahimsa. When you spin from two to four during the session, do you link your spinning with ahimsa ? Does it enhance your power of ahimsa every day ? Some may spin six hundred yards in two hours and some others may do so in one hour. This fact, too, has its own value. But the most important issue is whether the spinning has added to our power of ahimsa. Has it widened our vision of ahimsa ? If our charkha does not constantly add to our power of ahimsa, nor widen

[1] Author of *Arthashastra*, a treatise on political science

our vision of it, then I would say, 'Down with Gandhism'. Those who are shouting slogans for the destruction of Gandhism are doing so in anger, in a fit of madness. But I am saying this deliberately. This is being said by a man who can discriminate, whose intellect is not blurred and who has successfully practised law. I testify that if we do not concentrate on spinning while linking it with ahimsa then Gandhism most certainly deserves to be destroyed, because then it would have lost all its power.

I shall give an illustration. There is a man. He is turning the beads of the rosary all right, but his mind is wandering away from God in all directions. In that case, the rosary brings about his downfall. He falsely believes that he is telling the beads. He has not linked the rosary with God. Whatever the time he spends on turning the beads, he will make no progress. Only his fingers will start aching. Not only is this rosary useless but it is also harmful. It is filled with hypocrisy. From times immemorial, many religions have prescribed the rosary for remembering the name of God. But where there is neither meditation nor a search within, what remains is mere hypocrisy. A man who turns the beads in this manner deceives God and the world too.

The same argument applies to the charkha. If you do not derive from the charkha the same strength that I do, if you do not have the same faith in it that I have, then the charkha itself will be the cause of your ruin. You may spin a hundred thousand yards because you are a member of the Gandhi Seva Sangh. Dhotre[1] will state in his report that so much yarn was spun. You will think that the Sangh is progressing. I shall say 'No'. These figures only add to your pride. If a lifeless turning of the beads is hypocrisy, then a mechanical plying of the charkha is self-deception, and since it gives rise to pride it is also hypocrisy. If that were not so, we would enroll the hundreds of thousands of women spinners as members of the Sangh. But we have never thought of doing so.

If you spin with devotion and with a heart enlightened with a clear understanding of the whole philosophy behind the charkha, it will illumine your reason and strengthen your heart. The power of your reason as also of your heart will grow day after day. Your yarn will become finer and you will start thinking how the charkha will bring swaraj. You will begin seeing new vistas every day. Thus the

[1] R. S. Dhotre, Secretary and Trustee of the Gandhi Seva Sangh

charkha will take you ever nearer to your goal. I have dwelt briefly on how the charkha symbolizes ahimsa. I have also explained, in brief, the implications of Prafulla Babu's speech. I do not wish to expatiate on the subject. I am afraid those assembled here do not have this strength of ahimsa.

Let us therefore do some introspection. Are we non-violent as we should be ? Don't we become violent under stress of anger or hatred ? Do we really love the people with whom we sit and work ? I examine myself in this manner. I am convinced I am myself not non-violent in this sense. Recently, some four or five days ago, I have discovered that even untruth enters my conduct unawares. At Segaon, I usually observe silence. Silence gives me peace, like taking a burden off my chest. If I am asked to keep silent for ever, I shall dance for joy. In Segaon, often I write down whatever I have to say. But in spite of my long experience, I say that untruth has sometimes crept into my heart. Non-violence within a man urges him to please others. Even dharma prescribes that man must speak what is true and also what is pleasant. But this is a difficult task. The attempt to say what is pleasant leads to untruth. It is not one's duty to speak anything only because it would please others. I am not interpreting or elaborating what the seers have said. They have rightly said that we should speak what is true and also what is pleasant. But we do not understand its full import. We speak only pleasant things to please others. This is no dharma. Someone wants to come to Segaon. Suppose Premabehn wants to come. She asks me, 'Shall I come ?' I say 'yes' just to please her, without considering whether she has any work with me. You may look upon me as a doctor, a leader or a teacher, but in any case it is my duty not to practise untruth. When there is neither need nor desire to take personal service from others, I do so merely to please them. I had to go to Santiniketan the day before yesterday. Vasumati[1], Anasuya and others wanted to accompany me. I thought this was a pilgrimage for me; why should I take so many people with me ? I felt a little embarrassed. I said, in order to please them, that Santiniketan friends might be consulted. Mahadev sent them a telegram. Could they say 'no' ? They said that all who wanted to come were welcome. But I would have been a fool if I had taken all who wanted to go. That would have given *shanti*[2] neither to Santiniketan[3] nor to me. It could

[1] Vasumati Pandit
[2] Peace
[3] Literally, 'abode of peace'

never be my dharma to tax their hospitality in this manner. It was my duty to have said that I would take only those whom I needed for my work. But I did not have the courage. I failed in my truth as well as in my non-violence. But ultimately I mustered courage and wrote that I would cut down the party to the minimum.[1] I have the good fortune to have associates who put up with my vacillation in such matters.

If I have to retain this leadership, if I have to guide the millions, if I have to drag them into the ocean after me, I should not fight shy of practising truth. If I do, I shall be unfit to be a leader. This is an essen-tial aspect of non-violence. I have looked upon the charkha as an outward symbol of the principle of non-violence. You may ask me when and where I got all this. My reply is : from my experience of rendering service. This principle had taken hold of me as far back as 1908. I did not know then the difference even between a loom and a wheel. But the potentialities of the charkha took hold of me. You may not perhaps be knowing for whom I wrote *Hind Swaraj*. The person is no more and hence there is no harm in disclosing his name. I wrote the entire *Hind Swaraj* for my dear friend Dr. Pranjivan Mehta.[2] All the argument in the book is reproduced almost as it took place with him. I stayed with Dr. Mehta for a month. Although he loved me, he had no opinion of my intellect [then]. He thought I was foolish and sentimental. But experience had made me a little bold, and a little vocal also. Dr. Mehta was an intellectual giant. How could I pit my wits against his ? But I did place my point of view before him. It appealed to his heart. His attitude changed. So I said let me write down the argument. I wrote down the discussion as it took place. I had not even seen a charkha then. The activity of spinning entered our programme at a later stage; and yet I had concluded the argument with the statement that a non-violent civilization must be based on universal spinning. This means my mind had linked the charkha with

[1] *Vide* "Ashram Notes", 13-2-1940.

[2] A gold medallist of the Grant Medical College, Bombay, Bar-at-Law; was Gandhiji's "oldest friend". From the time he received Gandhiji in London in October 1888 he acted as his "guide and counsellor". A philanthropist, from whom "no deserving poor ever returned empty-handed", he rendered financial help to Gandhiji in his activities from the days of the Phoenix Settlement till his death in August, 1932. He was also author of *M. K. Gandhi and the South African Problem*. For Gandhiji's tribute to him, *vide* "Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta", 7-8-1932.

ahimsa even then. To the question 'whence did the idea of charkha descend ?' the only answer is : 'From God Almighty.' The charkha should give us the strength to act according to truth. When I ply the wheel, I become almost crazy about it. If God had not bestowed upon me other aptitudes for service, I would have been content to be glued to the charkha. Jethalal[1] once asked me why, if I really felt and did not merely profess such faith in the charkha, I was not devoting all my time to the charkha. I have already said God has endowed me with other aptitudes for serving mankind, and I utilize them too. Hence I do not devote all my time to the charkha. Jethalal may say that my devotion too is half-hearted. He will be justified in asking why I do not surrender all my other aptitudes to the cause of the charkha. It is true that all my other activities have arisen from the charkha. The All-India Village Industries Association is a bye-product of the charkha. Basic Education and eradication of untouchability are also fruits of the charkha. The charkha is the sun among the planets of my other activities. I utilize my other aptitudes for working out the potentialities of the charkha. I conduct full-scale experiments too.

I would therefore assert that you should throw the charkha into the Padma or burn it to ashes, if you turn it without realizing all its implications. Then only can real Gandhism rise. If Gandhism is restricted to mere plying of the charkha, I shall also shout, 'Down with Gandhism'.

Now a thought comes to me. Is it not better to wind up the Gandhi Seva Sangh at this session ? It should cause no regrets. True Gandhism may perhaps rise after the disappearance of its physical form. The story of Sita indicates the same thing. When the illusory deer appeared on the scene, Rama told Sita that the time had come for her to disappear.[2] The real Sita vanished. Only her shadow was left behind. Then followed all the adventures of Rama. Should we not disappear like Sita ? Those who wish to follow the path of truth and ahimsa will then persist in their efforts. Maybe this will give us real strength. Would it not therefore be better if we wind up the Sangh ? Otherwise, I am afraid, we may exploit the existence of the Sangh and ignore its main objective. That way we may deceive ourselves and the world. If the Sangh functions in this manner and all of you spend all

[1] Jethalal Govindji Sampat

[2] Tulsidas's *Ramacharitmanas*, 'Aranyakanda'. In Valmiki's *Ramayana* this disappearance of the real Sita and appearance of a Maya Sita find no place.

your lives in serving that Sangh, and if I alone survive while my associates die one by one in the service of the Sangh, I would not be in a position to say that they had fulfilled the mission of their lives. I would only say that my efforts were imperfect to the extent.

You will say : 'Maybe our efforts are not perfect, but the Sangh gives us strength and support in our efforts. If the Sangh is not there, who will give us strength and guidance ?' I am afraid this will make you weak and dependent. It will be a frightful result. I would therefore suggest that you let go this support. If we cannot do without the comfort and support from the Sangh, we needs must wind it up. Such a Sangh cannot add strength to your elbow. You have to follow the path of truth and ahimsa on your own strength.

Let us consider to what extent we act up to the ideals of the Sangh. Take, for instance, this Conference. How much do we spend on it ? I sent for Prafulla Babu and asked him, "How much do you spend on food ?" He says he will not spend more than five annas on food. But ghee flows like water. What I say may contain an element of humour or exaggeration. Very likely, I am not aware of the full facts. You should look only to the spirit behind my words.

I wish to suggest that we are a long way off from the ideal of poverty. Our living continues to be luxurious. We beguile our minds by pretending that all this milk and ghee is necessary for health, for preserving our strength to serve. I cheat my heart by suggesting that my energy will decline if I don't take goat's milk. Thus we deviate from the vow of *asvada*[1], we start seeking pleasures. Prafulla Babu invited us all here. He collected funds from people. The people are somewhat enamo-ured of my name. Once the funds were collected Prafulla Babu thought of feeding us well. That is how it goes on. We accept it too. This is not the correct way of using public funds. We should utilize the funds like a miser. There should be no wasteful expenditure. Money is not the only wealth for us. Every useful commodity is real wealth. We may not throw away even water. If one glass of water would do, why take two ? Thus in all respects we should have our own point of view. We may not overeat a delicious dish. If we do, we cannot practise truth and ahimsa.

Take another example. I refer to yesterday's incidents. Some people shouted "Down with Gandhism". There were cases of assault. A few persons were beaten up. I ask : What effect did these incidents

[1] Control of the palate

have on your mind? If the two hundred delegates here were beaten to death in this manner, will that rouse your anger or pity ? We pass the test merely by getting killed. We must feel compassion for our assailants. Love may not be right in this case. But we will not call down destruction on the assailants. It may be difficult to love them; but we can pity them—knowing that they are ignorant, we would pray to God to enlighten them. We would stand their blows. Words of pity would pour from hearts; not for making a show of it, but we will pity them in all sincerity. I shall claim to have acquired the non-violence of the brave when someone attacks me and I do not get angry; he delivers blows and I stand them; and there is no sign of pain but only a smile on my face even while dying; and my heart is filled with pity rather than anger. I pose this question to you. Do you feel pity for those who abuse you ? Do we feel pity for those who believe in socialism and in other 'isms', who oppose us ? Ahimsa has the strength to befriend the opponents and to win their affection. I am afraid, and for good reason, that we are not so non-violent. Those among us, who are not so, should honestly withdraw from the Sangh. If we are all equally at fault, we should all withdraw. Maybe, I might have to confess that I myself do not come up to the mark. It would then be appropriate to disperse from here after winding up the Sangh. Why burden Kishorelal with the management of the Sangh ? Do we want to bury him here ? Day and night, he worries over the Sangh. That impairs his health. Then there is Dhotre. He suffers under the weight of work. Why should we not release them from these burdens ?

I tell you no harm would come if we wound up the Sangh. If there is anything worth while in the Sangh, its three hundred members are as good as its three hundred branches. And if our members cannot give proof of such energy, we shall have to confess that the Sangh was worthless. What, then, would be the use of perpetuating it ? I am of the definite view that we should return from here after winding up the Sangh.

We do not propose to take this step out of any fear. We do so to mobilize our strength. If we take this step with pure motives, it will strengthen us and it will also remove the apprehension which is being generated by our very existence. If our strength causes fear in the hearts of people or provokes them to violence, then it is not based on non-violence. It would do us no good if, in these circumstances, we seek shelter in the Sangh. It cannot give us non-violent strength; nor can we add strength to it since we are ourselves seeking support. If we

seek such support for securing financial aid or collective strength, then we are unfit to practise truth and non-violence. If God is not succour enough for us then something is wrong somewhere.

When we end the present outer form of the organization, we will develop within us the strength of humility. There is a saying in English that he who knows that he knows nothing knows everything. The day we become so humble as to reduce ourselves to a cipher, we will start growing. Then the Gandhi Seva Sangh will become a wonderful invisible institution. The Sita who disappeared became immortal. To this day, we remember her name and purify ourselves. That Sita survives. The apparition of Sita has died. If indeed we want to become powerful, we should wind up the Sangh. This is a job for the strong. It also calls for courage and strength.

If you do not have the strength to do this, you should change the form of its organization. I am of the definite view that you should forget politics. I was the person who advised the Sangh in Hudli[1] to interest itself in parliamentary politics. I dragged you into politics; and I do not regret what I did. The advice was proper under the circumstances. We would not have otherwise gained the experience that we have today. Kishorelal has narrated to me many instances of how we fought for positions and power in this small Sangh. It only means we lack the strength of non-violence and fall very much short of truth too. If we had reflected truth and non-violence in our political behaviour, history would have taken a different turn.

We had in us the ambition to forge ahead and become leaders. But we did not grasp the essential meaning of leadership. 'I shall become the foremost leader' should really mean 'I shall become the foremost servant.' Service should be rendered to him who needs it. It is mere ostentation to serve someone who does not need any help. Indeed it is fraud.

I receive such unnecessary service. It is also an illustration of the untruth within me. How shall I enumerate my own untruths ? It will be a long list. I do not need massaging of my legs. But I allow this unnecessary service because it pleases others. It degrades me. The other person thinks that he is acquiring merit. That too is not true. He derives some satisfaction. This is not service.

In the same manner, we pretend to serve through position and

[1] In 1937; *vide* "Speech at Gandhi Seva Sangh Meeting", Hudli-II", 17-4-1937.

power. We only want to make a show of service. Therefore it is our duty to forget politics. We should ignore politics till the time when all the parties in the country approach us saying : 'Please come ! You are needed. We cannot do without your help.' Till then, we should only serve. Not that we should become idle and useless. After all, those who occupy various positions of power would not be more than a hundred thousand. Let us not aspire to be included in that number. We should be one among the thirty crores. Why should we aspire to rise from the thirty crores to the level of the one lakh ? Let us efface ourselves from the one lakh. It is no small achievement to merge oneself in the thirty crores.

Vallabhbhai thinks that a majority of the members of the Sangh are perhaps involved in politics. If they all withdraw from the Sangh, how many will be left behind ? Hardly half a dozen members will be left. I do not know how many are involved in politics. I have called for a list from Dhotre. But that will make no difference to my advice. I have not said that they should run way from politics. If they stay in politics for the sake of power, self or prestige, then they should quit politics. If they are there to serve, they may continue. But who will judge the motive ? Neither I nor Kishorelal can do it. Kishorelal is no God. He cannot fathom the depths of anyone's heart. I am not asking anyone to give up politics. I am asking those who are in politics to stay there on their own strength. They should not expect any support from the Sangh. Therefore those who are in or wish to enter politics should withdraw from the Sangh. If all members belong to this category the Sangh will automatically close. Even if a few are left behind, it will not be necessary to continue the Sangh.

Whatever any member does, he should do it on his own responsibility. I am convinced that you should wind up the Gandhi Seva Sangh. Its outer form should vanish. Whether we are in the Congress or in constructive work, we stay there on our own. Why needlessly bring into disrepute Gandhi or Gandhism, if there be any such thing ? The existence of the Sangh creates a false pride that we are superior to others. In fact, we are no better than others in any respect. We are like all others, more or less. It is a shame for us to indulge in such comparisons. We have to merge with others and serve them. We have to merge with them like sugar dissolving in milk. Whatever we are, we should keep it within our hearts and in all

humility remain steadfast in our principles and serve others, effacing our individuality.

If you have the courage, you should wind up the Gandhi Seva Sangh; if you don't have this courage, withdraw yourself from politics. Then no member of the Sangh shall remain in any Congress Committee. Even when we wind up the Sangh as it is, an inner bond will keep us together. If we are tied together by the bonds of ideals and affection, we will have an invisible organization. That alone will be true organization. It does not mean that we are going in for some underground organization. We do not need any formal organization. Who can take away from us what we have gained from the Gandhi Seva Sangh ? We stand in no danger of losing what we have gained. No one can snatch away what has become part and parcel of your heart. We will never give up the principles we have stood for; we cast off an intolerable burden of untruth. When there is so much bitterness, so much poison around, we have no alternative but to work away silently.

I am not suggesting that whatever we have done so far was all wrong. It was of course necessary. From that we have gained new experience and learnt new lessons. Now we are entering a new phase. Those who can adhere to truth and non-violence in politics may stay in politics; but they should withdraw from the Sangh. There shall be no politics in the Sangh. What is left after eschewing politics is constructive work. But what constructive work can there be besides the activities undertaken by the Charkha Sangh and other such institutions ? This is the other aspect. I shall touch upon it later. My mind has become clear while explaining the problem to you. So I have placed one definite suggestion before you, namely, you should wind up the Sangh. Or, at least, drop all political activities from its programme. In that case, we shall have to decide what new form the Sangh should assume.

Let them stay in politics[1]; but not as members of the Sangh. If they cannot stand there on their own strength, I shall say, they are good for nothing. If Sardar and Rajendra Babu were to leave politics, I would prevent them from doing so. But they should not retain their membership of the Sangh. I know they can stay in politics on their own and in a spirit of service. If, however, there is a class of persons

[1] Shrikrishnadas Jaju had asked whether those participating in politics in a spirit of service should also leave the Sangh even if they constituted the majority.

who need one another's support, it is a matter which they have to settle among themselves. The Sangh is not going to lend them support. Non-violence is a force which seeks support from no one except God. If they cannot depend on Him, they are crippled. Cripples should not enter politics; because non-violence is put to the severest test there. Not so in the Sangh. Those playing with politics should need no one's help. God alone is sufficient shelter.

And if the number of those participating in politics as a form of service on their own strength is more, why should it matter ? Even if only half a dozen members are left behind, I shall dance for joy. If they are sincere, the six will become six crores; they will have the power. All I want to say is that those who are in politics, in a spirit of service, may stay there, but they should withdraw from the Sangh.

I shall explain this again. I am not saying that those who are in politics should get out of it. I am only suggesting that they should leave the Sangh. Their withdrawal will not weaken the Sangh; it will strengthen it. If those who are left behind are good for nothing, the Sangh will vanish. We have nothing extraordinary; we possess no extraordinary qualities. The unique virtue, which could be ours, we have not acquired as yet. If we impose ourselves on others as a superior class, the Sangh is sure to die an infamous death. If we do not possess any independent strength of our own, the Sangh will become a laughing-stock. If we have within us the spontaneous power of non-violence, we can render service even without the Sangh. This power cannot be acquired by retiring to the solitude of a forest or a cremation ground. I may learn not to be afraid of ghosts there, but how will that help me in developing my ability to render service ? That can develop only through silent constructive work.

Those who are in the midst of politics must also possess the strength of truth and non-violence because that is their 'creed'. I can testify that the Congress is the greatest power in the country. Is not the Congress enough for handling politics ? Why should we then have another organization ? There is an impression going round that our organization does the same work as the Congress but wants to keep its separate identity. This means that it is trying to equate itself with the Congress. Hence the advice which I have given is proper in the prevailing atmosphere. My advice at Hudli was appropriate for the conditions then prevailing. I have this trait. I speak out what my heart feels at the moment. I am saying what my heart feels today. I do not

know what I shall say after a month. I am a person who gathers wholesome impressions from my surroundings and leaves out the evil ones. All my *sadhana* has helped me to acquire better strength and gain good results. I cannot remain untouched by them.

My heart and head have become clear while thinking aloud before you. I had not sorted out my thoughts; but I have given you unambiguous advice. If anyone has any doubts or if anyone wants to tell me : 'You were not aware of such and such an aspect and so you are giving this advice,' he can do so. If anyone has to put forward an independent opinion, he too can express his views.[1]

Yes, it will be the same.[2]

If we are really dynamic, our power cannot be reduced; that is my faith. We will have our impact on social life all right. We will not succeed in carrying on our experiment through the Sangh as we have been doing till now. We do not get through the Sangh a full view of the potentialities of non-violence. Non-violence is self-generating energy. If it is not hampered by the label of the Sangh, it can do greater work. I have written : "Our objective will be fulfilled if India could produce even one perfect exponent of non-violence"; and this is a comprehensive statement. I do not suggest that he will do everything single-handed. Even God cannot do everything all by Himself. He has to assume many forms. This one exponent, I submit, will draw everyone to him. The organizational strength of the Sangh will weaken you. It thwarts the expression of your individuality. You merely reflect the strength of the Sangh, not that of your own *atman*. The strength of the Sangh is only a sum of your individual strength. The growth of non-violence does not require an organization of such collective strength. I do not see the utility of external aids. If those who call themselves Gandhians carry hatred or cowardice in their hearts, they cannot add glory to any Sangh. Gandhism will not survive that way. I have made all India my field of activity, or, say, God has assigned to me this field. There is a sound reason behind this. I believe that non-violence dwells in every Indian home. In Europe, you

[1] Here Gandhiji was asked by Ram Ratan Sharma whether the attitude to politics would be the same in the princely States as in British India.

[2] Swami Satyanandji's question was : Since the spiritual bond between Gandhiji and the members would continue in spite of the winding up of the Sangh, hostile slogans would not be silenced. Besides, social life would be the poorer for want of the Sangh's influence.

cannot find a group of three hundred persons like you, before whom I can express the ideas I am putting before you. That is why God has given me this field for making my experiments. How can I choose my field ? My powers are very limited. He has given it to me. Hence my definite advice to you that everything except non-violence is only a snare. My only reply to your question is that our independent non-violent strength will continue to have an impact on social life even without the Sangh.[1]

One's own mind is the real touchstone. If our mind is clear, it is not necessary to ponder over other people's comments.[2]

If that is so, why did we at all create a separate organization ? Jamnalalji believed that those who looked upon truth and non-violence as mere policy had no place in the Sangh. But if the Congress 'creed' is religion also for us, the Congress should be a sufficient instrument for us. Where then is the need for the Sangh ?[3]

In the Congress itself. Spiritual strength is not a commodity which can be packed and sold at a grocer's shop. You look upon the Sangh as a spiritual congregation; but it does not remain so. It leads to sentimentalism and a feeling of self-righteousness creeps in. I beg to submit that the Sangh does not help in adding to our strength. Your strength grows by remaining in the Congress. I am quite sure that, comparing the Sangh and the Congress you will find that the Sangh can give you no strength, it will serve merely as a refuge. You can find warmth there; but it cannot be the field for testing your prowess. That field is the Congress. The Congress is a stormy ocean. If on that ocean, you can control your hatred and other passions, you may rest assured that your ship is sailing well. The Sangh is like a harbour. It provides no scope for testing one's strength. My own strength has grown in the Congress. I have gained no strength from the Sangh.[4]

If they cannot influence politics or if people do not approve of their presence, they should quit. The word 'Gandhism' itself is a product of politics. If we can brighten up its image, we may stay in

[1] Gopalrao Kale then asked how the spirit of service in politics could be tested. What if other people called it ambition ?

[2] Narahari Parikh asked why politicians should be asked to leave the Sangh when the Congress 'creed' also spoke of 'peaceful and legitimate' means.

[3] Pyarelalji (Hapur) asked where those who worked in the Congress in a spirit of service could get spiritual strength and *satsanga*.

[4] Next, Lala Jagannath asked whether those who accepted Gandhism but were not members of the Sangh should stay in politics.

politics or else quit it.[1]

A Gandhian is an individual; but the Sangh is a society. If persons participating in politics belong to an organization, it causes unnecessary bitterness. This Sangh was not created to influence politics. Those who participate in politics do not need any help from the Sangh nor do they derive any strength from it. If there is any other thing which you expect from the Sangh, you may mention it. If you say that the Sangh should continue because it provides you succour and support, I will insist that it must be wound up.[2]

It is true that I have spoken and written about Shanti Sena or Peace Brigade. Some persons have also striven in this direction. Hakim Alwai had organized one such Shanti Sena. I had congratulated him too. But now there is no trace of the organization. I see that such a thing too cannot work. You may form a Shanti Sena. Many will quietly sign your pledge and not act upon it. When the whole climate is so polluted, a clean move is also likely to go wrong. Hence we should move guardedly. If I have a jugful of Ganga water, I shall not commit the folly of believing that a tank of stinking water can be purified by pouring the Ganga water into it. Each one of you can form a peace corps of your own. But where do we find such people ? Were there no Congressmen in Shikarpur or Sukur ?[3] Why then was there not a single man who died, without hatred in his heart, in an attempt to pacify the rioting crowds ? In Kanpur, there is a host of admirers of Ganesh Shankar.[4] Why has his sect vanished ? I do not think, even then, that Ganesh Shankar's sacrifice was wasted. His spirit is working in my heart. When I remember him I envy him. This country has not produced another Ganesh Shankar. His tradition has stopped, but he has become immortal in history. His non-violence was tested and proved true. My non-violence will also be tested and

[1] Lala Jagannath then asked why members of the Sangh could not stay in politics on these terms.

[2] Referring to Gandhiji's Delang speeches of March 1938, Prabhudas Gandhi asked whether disbanding the Sangh would not be contrary to their avowed aim of fighting anti-social elements in an organized way.

[3] *Vide* "Sindh Tragedy", 1-1-1940.

[4] Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, founder-editor of the nationalist Hindi journal *Pratap*; met with a heroic death on March 26, 1931, while trying to restore peace during the communal riots in Kanpur. For Gandhiji's tribute to him, *vide* "Speech on Kanpur Riots, Subjects Committee Meeting, Karachi", 27-3-1931, "Telegram to BalKrishna Sharma", 1-4-1931 and "Notes", 9-4-1931.

proved when I die peacefully, like him, under an assassin's axe. I should die like him, that is my cherished dream—on one side an axe is raised to strike me down, on the other a dagger is pointed at me, a third person is wielding a club and a fourth is kicking and boxing me, I am standing peacefully in their midst, asking people to remain peaceful and I should die with a smile on my lips—I pray for such a good fortune. I wish I should get this opportunity and you, too.[1]

Did I ever say we should wind up because of public criticism ? I said that we might have perhaps deserved that criticism. I have many instances to prove it. If we really had the qualities of non- violent courage we would never have been or would never be in the plight in which we find ourselves today. A new energy would surge from within us. Then you would need neither my advice nor the Sangh's. They are not true Gandhians who suppress the promptings of their own heart and act on my advice or under my pressure. I did not expect this even from my own sons after they had attained the age of sixteen. I treated them as my friends as soon as they were sixteen years old. I asked them to follow what they considered to be their own duty—*swadharma*. 'Better is death in the discharge of one's duty.'[2] If they accept my ideals, they must make them their own; not because their father says so, but because they whole-heartedly subscribe to those very ideals. This cannot be said about the Gandhi Seva Sangh. You should think independently, each according to his lights. If your heart asserts that the Sangh should continue, it would mean that you are eager to face the severest of trials.[3]

I have already given the other alternative of eschewing all politics from the Sangh, if you do not wish to wind it up for these reasons. It was Jamnalalji's idea that the Sangh should be organized for the convenience and guidance of those who were not leaders, who did not adorn platforms and who did not wish to harangue. You may remain four-anna members of the Congress; but should accept no office in it. If you render honest service without occupying any position of authority, your ideals will produce their impact. I did not accept any position in the Congress; but still I have been saddled with

[1] Moolchand Agrawal argued that it was not ahimsa to wind up the Sangh in response to other people's criticism or hostility when the members' hearts were pure.

[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 35

[3] Ram Ratan Sharma explained the likely handicap of constructive workers who sought inspiration and guidance from the Sangh.

responsibility. All this means that constructive work should be the main mission of the Sangh. How this mission should be fulfilled, what should be the distinction between the Sangh's activities and those of other constructive organizations like the Charkha Sangh, etc., is the third question. It will have to be tackled by those few members of the Sangh who will be left behind after the politicians have withdrawn. I have already answered the arguments in favour of the continuance of the Gandhi Seva Sangh and it need not be repeated now.[1]

Our hatred and jealousies might not disappear; but at least an enormous fraud will disappear. Today the Sangh also is responsible for our hatred and jealousies. This imbroglio will at any rate disappear. This point has to be grasped. People believe that the Gandhi Seva Sangh seeks to organize truth and non-violence; that a man like Kishorelal is piloting that organization. If, however, we are not practising our principles, then the Sangh is instrumental in keeping up a fraud. If we have verily imbibed truth and non-violence, our behaviour within the family, with our neighbours or inside the Congress will evoke popular respect even in the absence of the Sangh. For this there is no need of the Sangh. It is true that none of us is born perfect. We need inspiration and guidance. But it is seriously doubted whether the Sangh provides such inspiration. I do not say this by way of criticism. When we see so much bitterness spreading, we should understand that something is wrong with us and we should do some introspection. This point deserves to be grasped. We must at least change the pattern of our work. I still think that winding up is the proper course.[2]

This is a question for Kishorelal to answer. I do not know all the facts, nor do I have his experience. I have come to believe that the Sangh's participation in politics has increased hatred and jealousy. How can I say whether or not corruption has crept in among the members ? I do not know anyone. Kishorelal knows everyone. You may direct your question to him. I am advising you to wind up the Sangh in view of the prevailing climate in the country. When so much bitterness is generated, we must be at fault. If Kishorelal holds a different view, let him continue with the Sangh. Who am I to obstruct

[1] Moolchand Agrawal asked whether the winding up of the Sangh would remove hatred and jealousy from the hearts of the members.

[2] Haribhau Upadhyaya asked whether the President had grounds to believe that politics had corrupted the members.

the way ? Don't you have to work under his guidance ? I have heard so many things which have led me to conclude that we are responsible in no small measure [for what has overtaken us].[1]

For that we have to ascertain how many members are left behind. Constructive work will be devoid of sting. The atmosphere today is charged with untruth and violence. We cannot therefore stay in politics. In what form the Sangh should function for constructive work, is a matter which will come up later.[2]

This question has already been answered. In the existing situation, the Sangh cannot give this consolation. This attitude only weakens us.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Chhathe Adhiveshan (Malikanda-Bengal) ka Vivaran, pp. 6-22

425. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING—II[3]

MALIKANDA,
February 21, 1940

Let me reply to what Gokulbhai has said. There is some misunderstanding about the two things he mentioned. Let me clear those misunderstandings so as to avoid needless discussion.

I did not say that members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh should withdraw from politics. What I said was that they should not be in politics in their capacity as members of the Sangh. I said in the morning that no member of the Sangh should give up politics. I cited the examples of Sardar and Rajendra Babu and said that I would not ask them to leave politics. But I said that they should keep out of the Sangh. I wish politics has no place in the Sangh.

Gokulbhai's second question is : When our whole life is one and indivisible, how can we specify whether a particular thing comes under the category of politics or not ? I did say that we should not compartmentalize our lives since things are interwoven. That is why life is one and indivisible. But there is also another point of view. Our

[1] Balubhai asked why the Sangh should not be retained for constructive work.

[2] Jyotiprakash asked why the Sangh could not continue as a forum for consultations.

[3] At the evening session which began at 7·30 p.m.

body is one whole, but it has several organs such as eyes, ears, nose, etc. When we consider the body as a whole, we do not think of the separate organs. But when we have particular organs examined we think of each of them separately. They are parts of one and the same body but, none the less, we do think of them separately and make distinctions such as organs of perception and organs of action. Today we are looking at this thing from such an analytical point of view. Politics pervades all our activities. But I am not talking of retirement from politics in this broad sense. I am referring to the politics of the Congress and elections and to groupism. I have explained why power politics should be kept out of the Sangh. We are taking that step not out of cowardice but for the sake of self-purification. That is the way of non-violence. I have not forbidden all political activity. I know that in this country all constructive activities are part of politics. In my view that is true politics. Non-violence can have nothing to do with the politics of power.

The existence of the Sangh is not indispensable for non-violence. This is not to say that there can be no Sangh at all for a non-violent purpose. But our Sangh today is not such a one. We formed a Sangh and tasted its benefit. I at any rate have done so. We have seen that a non-violent Sangh cannot and should not function like other organizations. A non-violent Sangh should have some special features. Hence, from the experience I have of the Sangh, I suggest that we keep away from politics. If we do not, Gandhism is sure to perish.

We have adopted a novel policy. We must adopt novel means to follow that policy. I have been trying to find out what these means could be. I am only experimenting. I have to change my methods as situations change. But I have no ready-made formula. Our experiment is absolutely new. The order in which the steps may be taken is not fixed. I am a person with an inquiring mind. With great patience I am discovering and developing the science of satyagraha. In the course of this search I am acquiring new knowldge and new light every day.

It was because I was keen on this experimenting that I suggested at Hudli that we should appear on the political stage and gain experience in that role too, and put to test the strength of our truth and non-violence. It is possible that I was mistaken in giving this advice; but I do not regret having done it. It was just as well that we entered politics. We have had a very valuable experience. Had we not

had this experience, I would have been in two minds. I would have been always conscious of the fact that we had no political experience. Now, after that experience, I can positively advise you as members of the Sangh to retire from politics.

One more thing you should not forget. The Sangh has never accepted politics as its field. Remember, have we ever discussed politics during the conventions of the Sangh ? You will find no trace of politics in its reports and resolutions. This is the subject that matters to those members of the Sangh who are interested in politics. This is not a matter of interest to the Sangh. It is meant for Sardar who is involved in politics. For other members of the Sangh too it is an activity outside the purview of the Sangh. When do you ever discuss politics here ? Do you ever trouble Sardar and insist that he should explain to you how he conducts the affairs of the Parliamentary Board ? Do you ever ask me what I convey to the Viceroy ? We are no doubt curious to know about these things; but it is not as members of the Sangh, but in some other capacity. At Hudli we passed a resolution to take part in politics. But even after that we did not discuss politics during our conventions. We come here with an altogether different mind. Ours is a group of seekers of knowledge. We come here with a view to doing some introspection and correcting our mistakes. Hence, our conventions have quite a different atmosphere. Politics is an outer activity. Hence, we do not discuss it here. That is not the sphere of the Sangh.

Even after Hudli the inner character of the Sangh did not change. It is clear from this that the misunderstanding on the part of people that we are forming a political group is totally unfounded. For no reason are we dragging ourselves down. That is why I suggest we wind up the Sangh. I am not winding up political activity. But I am putting a stop to it as far as the Sangh is concerned; because that is none of our business. Even at Hudli we did not change the original character of the Sangh. The only mistake we made was that we permitted members of the Sangh to take part in parliamentary activities. But even after this I took very little direct interest in parliamentary work. As far as I am concerned I devote little time even to reading newspapers. If you ask Kishorelalbhai he would say he knows nothing about it and that you had better ask Sardar. The obvious reason of this is that the Sangh never considered politics as its sphere. We did not form the Sangh for that purpose. Then, why should we needlessly jump into that fire ? Let us withdraw from it.

This distinction was not clear to Gokulbhai. He thought I was forbidding political activity. But that is not the case. What I say is that the Sangh should not get involved in this.

The question now remains why we may not try to introduce truth and non-violence into politics. Why should the Sangh leave this field untouched ? I have already answered this question. The method of non-violence implies that when we do not have the capacity to undo an evil, we should keep away from it. This is non-co-operation. I have placed before India the great principle of non-co-operation. I am applying that very principle here.

Let me give an illustration. There is a protest demonstration going on here. Should we force ourselves to stand before the demonstrators and say : 'Well, here we are ! Do with us what you will.' This would be sheer folly. That is why the Shastras say that we need not rush to hear abuse of ourselves.

I do not know if you have heard about the figure of the three monkeys. It is in Kobe, Japan. Somebody had sent me a small figure—a replica of the original. It consists of the statuettes of the three monkeys. One of them has its mouth closed, the second its eyes and the third its ears. These monkeys teach the world to speak no evil, to see no evil, to hear no evil. This is the secret of non-co-operation. There is a protest demonstration going on here. If the demonstrators enter this pandal and attack us, I would ask you to stick to your places and take their blows. But I would certainly not ask you to go to the place of demonstration and invite their blows. This would mean deliberately inciting them. This is not non-violence. It is self-assertion.

I propose to adopt here this pattern of non-co-operation. Our entering politics will provoke them. It will be like feeding their wrath. Therefore, non-violence tells me that we should withdraw ourselves from politics. If people criticize, oppose or attack us even after we quit politics, we should put up with all this. After we have quit politics if anyone wishes to destroy us, let him do so.

In spite of all this, those who do not need the protection of the Sangh for their political work may continue there. For instance Vallabhbhai. What does he need the Sangh for ? He does not enhance his prestige by remaining with the Sangh. He had established his political prestige even before the Sangh was born. Thus, it is the Sangh that acquires prestige by his being in it. Then he happens to be a born politician. Politics is in his blood. He is not born for the

constructive programme. In a way, he has accepted the constructive programme out of a sense of compulsion. It is not an inseparable part of his temperament as I claim it is in my case. Unlike me, he is not absorbed in the constructive programme. I was born for the constructive programme. It is part of my soul. Politics is a kind of botheration for me. I would dance for joy if I could shake it off. Sardar would hardly do any such thing. This is the main difference between us. He hears what I say and if I am making any mistake he can put me right.

But if there are many other members who derive prestige from their association with the Sangh and if this prestige proves helpful to them for political purposes, the only way out is that we should not let them have such prestige. They too ought to give up such borrowed prestige. If we lend them such prestige and they accept it, we deserve the charge that we are competing with the Congress socialists or the communists. When this is not actually the case, why should we lay ourselves open to such a charge ?

We do not wish to compete with anyone. We want to absorb even our opponents . If they are opposing us, it is because they do not understand us. But we know that we belong to them and they belong to us. Hence, let us take no active interest in politics so long as the people do not invite us. Let us carry on quietly our constructive programme. And let us, by withdrawing ourselves from politics, lend glory to non-violence. These are the words of an experienced person. You must understand and grasp its significance and pay attention to what it implies. Thus, your winding up the Sangh would be an object-lesson in non-violence. It is quite simple. There is no harm in it.

Now, why should he [Gokulbhai] feel hurt by my saying that I gained nothing from the Sangh ? Actually being in this place is like being in my home. You all love me. We form a family here. In a family, the children, wife, parents, brothers, sisters—all love one another. There is very little scope in a family to carry on an experiment in non-violence. Similarly, my non-violence cannot be tested in this Sangh. What can you teach me here ? My non-violence is tested in the Congress where I am opposed, censured and criticized. My proclivity to anger is nurtured and aroused. I put up with everything very respectfully. I have an opportunity to practise love and non-violence. There I grow. Hence I say that I had in the Congress opportunities to develop my abilities. I derived all my

[training] from the Congress. I learnt very little in the Sangh. I do not mean to suggest that the Sangh is something useless and hence deserves to be discarded. As a matter of fact I have only praised you. I have not criticized you. What can even Gokulbhai learn in a family where he finds only abundant love ? He can learn more outside. It is in the outside world that we are tested. We have to learn to keep smiling in the face of abuse. Whatever the provocation, there should be no anger in our hearts. The field for our test lies outside. All we have to do here is to charge our batteries. How we can charge our batteries is another question. For that purpose we shall have to change the character of the Sangh. You may, if you wish, express your view on this matter at a later stage. For the time being we are only considering the question of separating the Sangh from politics. I have cleared the misunderstanding in Gokulbhai's mind. I have clarified all the points. Now, if he wants, he may confess his fault or ask any other question if he so desires.[1]

I know Jajuji's temperament. He believes in doing everything methodically. He has said that it is easy to consider a matter when it is presented in definite terms. I too felt that it would be better if we could come to some decision. That is why a resolution has been drafted. Do wind up the Sangh if that is what you want. I still hold fast to my opinion in this regard and I have already offered my advice. If my suggestion is not acceptable to you, you can decide the manner in which the members of the Sangh may take part in politics. I have drafted this resolution[2] because I have a feeling that you would prefer such an arrangement. The draft will be presently read out to you. Think over it during the night. We must come to a final decision by tomorrow. Kishorelalbhai has drafted two resolutions twice over. I could not accept the points when he presented the resolutions for the first time. He has given fresh drafts today. I could not accept the points in these drafts either. But the spirit of the resolutions has been brought in.[3]

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Chhathe Adhiveshan (Malikanda—Bengal) ka Vivaran,

[1] Dandekar then invited Vallabhbhai to express his opinion. After the latter had spoken at length, Gandhiji concluded his speech.

[2] The draft resolution is not available. For the final resolution, *vide* Appendix "Resolution at Gandhi Seva Sangh", 12-2-1940.

[3] The Secretary read out the resolution drafted by Gandhiji. The session adjourned at 9 p.m.

426. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING—III[1]

MALIKANDA,
February 22, 1940

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Are those sitting at the far end able to hear me ? If not, please say so.

I was up by 3 o'clock this morning [and] started thinking about the Sangh. I am placing before you my conclusions. Later on you may express your views today itself if you so desire. Some sort of a tentative resolution was placed before you yesterday. I think I should say something about it and also something apart from it.

The views I had expressed on [taking part in] politics have been further confirmed. As I thought about it I felt that unwittingly we had acted wrongly. What I said last night was an indication of this. Hence it is that we have deliberately abjured power politics. If while remaining in the Sangh we wanted to enter into power politics we should have done so openly. For that matter we ought to have changed even the character of the Sangh. But we are not at all equipped for taking part in politics. In politics it is necessary to know what others also are doing and what they intend to do. It would also be necessary to be acquainted with the ideology and politics of the socialists. We do not have so much as a library of political literature.

I have not studied socialism. I have read no books on the subject; I have read one[2] by Jayaprakash. I have also read one book given by Masani[3]. Sampurnanandji has written a very good book[4]. He sent it to me very lovingly and I read that too. This is all my study of socialism. They say countless books have been written on socialism and communism. I have read nothing at all about communism. I do not know how many of you have read books about it.

This thing does not form part of my activity. My mental make up is quite different. They do not even accept my claim to intelligence. My intelligence is not recognized in the field of politics.

[1] The session began at 7.30 a.m. with Shrikrishnadas Jaju, the new President, in the chair.

[2] *Why Socialism ?* (1936)

[3] M. R. Masani

[4] *Samajvad* (1936)

Those who are deeply involved in politics laugh at me. They wonder if this is politics. I acquired some status in politics because I had been a fighter, not because of my intelligence. They don't credit me with intelligence capable of winning over others. I believe in socialism and also in communism. I believe in everything, but from my own point of view. I belong to everybody and I belong to none. A believer in non-violence cannot be anybody's opponent. He would wish to build up the science of non-violence with the help of everyone. His is not the politics of opposing or vanquishing anyone.

I do not wish to qualify myself or others for what goes by the name of politics. I had suggested at Hudli that we should enter politics. Unwittingly I made that mistake. You may as well say that unwittingly I followed untruth. Instead of doing well the task for which we were born, we took in hand something else. But whatever happened was for the good. We gained some experience. We discovered that we were not capable of engaging in politics. We have realized our incompetence. Now we are withdrawing our hands. We did commit a mistake, but now, the moment we have become conscious of our faults, we are being cautious. A mistake, when it is corrected, does not remain a mistake. Our strength grows if we acknowledge our mistakes. I am asking you to realize your limitations, and carry on thoroughly the work for which the Sangh was formed.

Some friends from Noakhali visited me today. They told me : "We accept everything you say. But we are unable to understand what your followers here say. We can agree to what you say. Call it Gandhism, spinning, village industries—we would accept any- thing. We are your followers. But we are not followers of your followers. Your followers have nothing [to offer]." Whatever these friends said sprang from sheer love. It is a matter over which we should ponder. We entered politics but we could do nothing in that field. Nor could we do our own work. We belonged neither here nor there. Now that we are aware of our folly let us try to remove it.

We used politics to put our principles into practice. Now after some experience we are renouncing politics. The politics which we are renouncing is the politics of acquiring positions of power within the Congress. We cannot take part in this politics. I am not talking about an individual; I am talking about the Sangh. Power politics has no place in the Sangh. An individual with a natural inclination and

qualification may remain in politics. But this power politics is such a dreadful snare that even individuals may have to quit it. Their non-violence would be put to the severest test there. They too will quit when they have some bitter experiences. But what I am saying today applies only to the Sangh. The Sangh must definitely renounce the Congress Committees, that is, elections and power politics. My opinion in this matter has hardened. This Sangh is not meant for this kind of politics. I am myself not qualified for it. Your Chairman is much less so. He is a philosopher, a moralist and a writer.

Let me mention the third point in just one sentence. As a matter of fact, you must give up the very name of Gandhism. If not, you will be falling into a blind well. Gandhism is sure to be wiped out. I love to hear the words : "Down with Gandhism." An 'ism' deserves to be destroyed. It is a useless thing. The real thing is non-violence. It is immortal. It is enough for me if it remains alive. I am eager to see Gandhism wiped out at an early date. You should not give yourselves over to sectarianism. I did not belong to any sect. I have never dreamt of establishing any sect. If any sect is established in my name after my death, my soul would cry out in anguish. What we have carried on for all these years is not a sect. We do not have to subject ourselves to any 'ism'. Rather, we have to serve in silence in keeping with our principles.

Whatever people might say, service can never be made into a sect. It is meant for everybody. We shall accept everyone. We shall try to fall in line with everyone. That is the way of non-violence. If we have any 'ism', it is just this. There is nothing like Gandhism. I have no follo-wers. I am my own follower. No, no, even I have not succeeded in being my true follower, have I? Do I put my own thoughts into practice? How then can others be my followers ? I would like others keeping me company and walking the same way. But how can I know who would walk ahead and who would fall behind ? You are all my fellow-students and co-workers, fellow-servants and fellow-researchers. Forget the idea of being followers. Nobody is leading and nobody is following. Nobody is a leader and nobody is a follower. We are all going together in one line. I have said this quite often but I am repeating it in order to remind you.

We have to give up offices in the Congress. Let this point be absolutely clear in your minds. Then you would grasp the significance of what I am going to say. I am asked : "Should we

withdraw ourselves even from municipal bodies and similar organizations ?" I would say that we should withdraw even from municipal bodies. I know what had happened in the case of the Nagpur Municipality. I was amazed to find how much bitterness and hatred had crept into the Congress Municipal Party. I have very little information about it. Gopalrao knows the inside story. There are three factions in the Congress Municipal Party of Nagpur. They are always at daggers drawn. People belonging to all the three factions came to me and narrated their own versions. I was very deeply pained. There is a lot of animosity prevailing in the Provincial Congress Committee also. I told them that the Provincial Congress Committee was under the control of the A. I. C. C. Hence they should approach either Sardar or Rajendra Babu. I would be infinitely pained if any member of the Sangh chose to go into any such organization. What can he attain by going there ? We wish to establish rapport with 300 million people. This would happen only when we reduce ourselves to a cipher. What have we to do with rights ? Politics of power is unreal. We must tell the people what is real politics. We shall concentrate only on the constructive programme which others not only shun but regard with contempt. The Gandhi Seva Sangh would justify its existence by persistently devoting itself to the constructive programme. There are eighty-four persons among the members of the Sangh taking active part in politics. They would of course leave the Sangh. But I shall presently explain to you what shape the Sangh would take after that.

The Gandhi Seva Sangh has come into existence for the purpose of carrying on the constructive programme. That alone is real politics. We have to lend glory to this real politics by renouncing our rights. What do we care if they do not call it politics ? We shall remain within the Congress fold, but keep ourselves away from power and elections.

There is no need to have the Gandhi Seva Sangh for the sake of keeping a register of the list of persons who believe as I do in truth and non-violence. I see no need for such a list. I was thinking yesterday about the future form and functions of the Sangh. I shall now place before you my conclusions. In my view, the Gandhi Seva Sangh has now to become something like an organization for post-graduate studies. All the organizations in the country which carry my name or are run under my supervision or guidance are meant only for the constructive programme. The Charkha Sangh, Gramodyog Sangh, Harijan Sevak Sangh, Talimi Sangh—I guide the functions of all these organizations. I was responsible for the propagation of Hindi

throughout the country. For me, these are inseparable aspects of real politics. I also control the labour union of Ahmedabad. The Gandhi Seva Sangh can undertake a great deal of post-graduate study and research for these organizations. All these organizations cannot take up such work to the required extent as their field of activity is limited. Take for instance the Charkha Sangh. I have laid down its policy which is aimed at giving the maximum wages to the hungry and poor who are idle for nearly six months in a year, and persuading others to buy the khadi produced by these poor people by appealing to their altruism. Self-sufficiency is also one of the functions of the Charkha Sangh, but as auxiliary to its primary objective. It does not include that aspect of self-sufficiency which Prafulla Babu had placed before you. Prafulla Babu had correlated it with non-violence and swaraj. Self-sufficiency in that sense of the term is not included among the functions of the Charkha Sangh. I cannot expect Shankerlal to go and explain to the poor women spinners all the things that the spinning-wheel implies.

All that is your work. Prafulla Babu had said the other day that you should spin at least 100,000 yards of yarn in a year. On calculation I realized that it would mean spinning nearly 300 yards every day to produce 100,000 yards in a year. It would take 45 minutes to spin 300 yards if the wheel and the slivers are good. There are people who do it even in half an hour. I would of course expect the maximum from you. For you the art of spinning should be child's play, for, after all, you are in the post-graduate stage. You would spin sincerely and with great concentration. There are experts who can produce 300 yards of yarn in half an hour. But you would not stop at being expert spinners. You would try, as I am doing, to realize God through the spinning-wheel. Then alone would you pass my test. This is my explanation of Prafulla Babu's scheme.

People from the Charkha Sangh and the Gramodyog Sangh come to you for acquiring the expertise in their respective fields. You would have to achieve perfection and specialize in such things. Everyone cannot become an expert in every field. But everybody can specialize in one thing. Among doctors too some are physicians and some are surgeons. Even in the field of surgery some specialize in the eye, some in the nose and throat. Similarly we should take up some field for specialization. This is not a matter of making money. Other specialists go in for invention and research for the purpose of earning money. We have to become specialists for the purpose of serving the

poor and bettering their lot. The Gandhi Seva Sangh would justify its existence in future only if it undertakes such work. If you must continue the Sangh you should continue it in this form or wind it up. If this is not done, the whole world will laugh at us and Gandhism will be killed by our own hands. Let us not deceive ourselves.

We shall follow yet another programme. I have told the labour union people that they would be doomed if they meddled in politics. I have told the Charkha Sangh people that they have nothing to do with politics. I told them that if they got involved in the politics of swaraj, they would be spinning weak yarn as their attention would be divided. They would not be able to do their work properly and they would prove worthless. I told the Harijan Sevak Sangh that it had nothing at all to do with swaraj. If they stuck to their work, swaraj would issue from it automatically.

But what about you ? You will have to understand what Gandhi means when he says he sees God in the spinning-wheel. Should we take it literally or grasp its significance ? Or should we accept both ? I would suggest that you accept both the meanings. It means that you should see God in every thread [you draw] from the spinning-wheel. Acts of service such as spinning take us nearer to God, and therein lies its significance. You will thus find that all our activities have a far-reaching meaning.

Even its literal meaning has a wider sense. You are all going to do research and make discoveries in this post-graduate laboratory. For that purpose you should have expert knowledge not only of the science of the spinning-wheel but also of the art of spinning. Knowledge and skill would be especially expected of the Gandhi Seva Sangh. Your spinning-wheel should work more efficiently than that of the Charkha Sangh. Your yarn should be fine, strong and may not snap. It would be a matter of shame if your thread snaps. For the expert, his tools should be of the highest quality. There should be something special about your slivers, your implements. I do not wish to make you just skilled labourers. I want to make you expert craftsmen and scientific researchers. I expect something unique from you. The difference between your spinning-wheel and that of the Charkha Sangh should be as much as that between my razor and a barber's. Your implements would be out of the ordinary.

Here you spin from the slivers made by others. But the slivers from which you would be spinning them would be no ordinary

slivers. You would improve the process of making slivers. You would make the best slivers yourself and make others improve theirs. Thus you would study the smallest detail just as Vinoba has done. After persistent experiments he has built up a science round everything. He has discovered a new method of making slivers. In Andhra fish-bones are used for this purpose. Vinoba's is a modification of the Andhra method, but the yarn spun from these slivers can well compete with the Andhra yarn. He has sent me cloth woven from the yarn of 40 counts spun from *verum*[1] cotton. It deserves to be displayed in the exhibition. It is made by a Muslim boy. Your carding process would also be such as to cause trouble to no one. Cotton fibres would not fly about from your carding-bow. Even one suffering from cough would be able to do the carding without a hitch. There would be something special even in your choice of cotton. How could you ever take cotton from the bales ? Your ginning process too would be special. For this one needs patience, talent for research and perseverance. If you have achieved all this, you would have followed my suggestion to the very letter.

After this you would have to see if the charkha increases your non-violent powers. Vinoba has composed a couplet comprising the eleven vows. You recite it every day. You would have to find out if the spinning-wheel in any way helps you in observing these vows. There may not be politics in the spinning-wheel of the Charkha Sangh; but you would have to see if it is there in your spinning-wheel. In other words you would have to see if it increases the strength of the people and whether, in free India, the economic provisions of swaraj could be based on the spinning-wheel. Would it turn people into mere automatons capable of physical labour or would it make them non-violent soldiers of swaraj ? You must think about all this. These things do not fall within the purview of the Charkha Sangh. The special task which lies beyond its scope would be your field.

You will have to consider if we can really win swaraj with the help of the spinning-wheel. Are you really convinced of it ? Or do you believe in it just because Gandhi says so ? Gandhi can see God through the spinning-wheel, or hope to find Him there. But it may as well be a personal matter with him. You will have to find out if this principle can be applied universally. Like Jagdish Chandra Bose you will have to become research scholars in your own field. He had even

[1] A variety of cotton largely grown in the former Berar State

devised a post-graduate course. I have seen how he remained deeply engrossed in it. This had become the main objective of his life. I used to be his close associate. I had stayed in his house for several days. He had a group of some twenty chosen men. But a few such men, if they are firm in their conviction, can work like millions. This is how experts work. The Charkha Sangh, Gramodyog Sangh, [etc.,] cannot do such work. There, too, there are experts and they also do research. But your field would be much wider and much more specialized. Through them I am trying to serve *Daridranarayana* in particular. Their development will be only along those lines. Your work however would be quite unusual. You would not merely improve the tools and implements, but also see their conformity with our principles. I shall exercise my mind to help you as your co-student; but I want to get the work mainly out of you.

In this way research and discoveries are undertaken everywhere. Look at Germany. How many specialists are there in that country ! There they are in need of specialists in the science of violence. We too could do research and make progress in the field of non-violence if we can have a small centre. We have to link the spinning-wheel and related activities with non-violence and ultimately with God.

You will have to consider if all these things are possible. You know that even a society based on violence functions only with the help of experts. We want to bring about a new social order based on truth and non-violence. We need experts to develop this into a science. The world as it functions today represents a mixture of violence and non-violence. The external surface of the world suggests its internal state. A country like Germany which regards violence as God is engaged only in developing violence and glorifying it. We are watching the efforts that the votaries of violence are making. We must also know that those given to violence are watching our activities. They are observing what we are doing for developing our science.

But the way of violence is old and established. It is not so difficult to do research in it. The way of non-violence is new. The science of non-violence is yet taking shape. We are still not conversant with all its aspects. There is a wide scope for research and experiment in this field. You can apply all your talents to it.

For me non-violence is something to be shunned if it is a private virtue. My concept of non-violence is universal. It belongs to the millions. I am here just to serve them. Anything that cannot reach the

millions is not for me. It should be so for my colleagues as well. We were born to prove that truth and non-violence are not just rules for personal conduct. They can become the policy of a group, a community, a nation. We have not yet proved this, but that alone can be the aim of our life. Those who do not have this faith or those who cannot acquire it should be good enough to remove themselves. But I have only this dream. I have regarded this alone as my duty. I shall not leave it even if the whole world abandons me. So profound is my faith. I would live only to attain this and die only in that endeavour. My faith gives me new visions every day. Now, in my old age, I am not likely to do anything else. It would be another thing if my mind is corrupted or I have a new vision. But today I am seeing ever new miracles of non-violence. Every day I have a new vision and I experience a new joy. I am certain that non-violence is meant for all time. It is an attribute of the *atman* and is, therefore, universal since the *atman* belongs to all. Non-violence is meant for everybody and for all time and at all places. If it is really an attribute of the *atman* it should be inherent in us. Nowadays it is said that truth cannot help in trade and politics. Then where can it be of help ? Truth is not worth a dime if it cannot be of help in all the fields of life, in all worldly dealings. Of what use would it be in life then ? I see every day that truth can be applied to life in all its practical aspects. I have been doing this *sadhana* for more than fifty years now. I have been conveying to you from time to time some of my experiences during this *sadhana*. You too can have glimpses of it.

If the Sangh has to continue it should be for this purpose. If you do not have this much inclination, earnestness or strength, disbanding the Sangh would itself be the pursuit of truth and non-violence. If we do not do so, we would prove guilty, we would be committing the sin of dishonesty. We would be committing yet another sin. We have in our midst a worker like Kishorelalbhai. He is a pure man given to uninter-rupted hard work. God has given him a keen intelligence. We would be misusing the services of such a man. Would we take his life even if he offered it himself ? But how can I press him ? What special work is now left for us ? We must relieve him of his responsibility right from today.

The other day I narrated to you the circumstances that should spell the doom of Gandhism. I repeat today that if Gandhism encourages any wrong thing it deserves to be doomed. Truth and non-violence are not just flowers in the sky. They should be manifest

in all our words, dealings and acts. Kishorelal does not wish to speak about all his bitter experiences in the Sangh. He is silent because he has forbearance. He conveys it to me just in passing when things go too far. This gives me some idea of the situation. Why is there such vicious estrangement amongst us ? We all form one family. We have adopted truth and non-violence. But we are given to strife and dogma and jealousy. Are not truth and non-violence things of this earth then ? Do they deserve only to be installed in the heavens ? We have learnt our lesson by entering politics. It created antagonism even among good people in the Sangh.[1] Oh, we are far away from Rama and Bharata. Kishorelalbhai is a poet too. He gave a poetic interpretation in terms of Rama and Bharata. But here no one is like Rama or Bharata. If we had Rama and Bharata amongst us would such things have happened ? What a world of difference between the love of Rama and Bharata and these feuds ! These people are miles away from Rama and Bharata.

Why should such differences arise among us when we all belong to the same Sangh and have come here with the sole idea of service ? There ought to be only love among us. Are all the people who have come here like this ? Do they have cordial relations with each other ? If your reply is in the affirmative, I shall have to put you to a very hard test. I am afraid we shall not pass that test. Ask the honest opinion of one another among yourselves. Ask yourselves, and you will realize that we are still far removed from non-violence. Why should we meddle with the Congress when we are so weak ? What service can we render there ? Why do we not withdraw when we are faced with a rival ? What have we to do with positions in the Congress ? Why should we think of defeating anyone in an election ?

If we are not possessed by the desire for power and a feeling of jealousy, why has so much bitterness spread round us ? Why do these people come to Malikanda and shout violent slogans ? Why is there so much bungling ? I would like to ask the Bengali workers present here: 'What gave rise to so much bitterness ? Why don't you try to win them over with love ? Why don't the leading workers among you go to them and talk to them lovingly ?' There are Prafulla Babu and Satis Babu. Let them go to the people who are raising the slogans, mix with

[1] Dhotre then pointed out that Kishorelal had discussed these feuds in an article "Rama aur Bharata" in *Sarvodaya*, a Hindi monthly edited by D. B. Kalelkar and Dada Dharmadhikari.

them and talk to them with love. I have tried this myself. It is nothing new for me. Surely I am not their rival. I do not want what they desire. They want power, and I have no desire for power at all. Rivalry is possible only when two persons want the same thing. We have to qualify ourselves for their love. That is why we must give up politics, and leave the field open for them. That is the way non-violence functions. For that very reason we must quit politics.

But are we going to remain idle, doing nothing ? We shall continue to spin and see if the spinning-wheel dulls our intelligence or sharpens it. We shall study the spinning-wheel. We shall find out what the spinning-wheel signifies, why and how it came into being and why it went out of use and in what way it can be useful to us. The Gandhi Seva Sangh should maintain a special library for this purpose. There will be no other library of its kind anywhere in the world. We shall be free from the bother of Gandhism only when we start working along these lines. Our present opponents will admire us for having such a programme and bless us, although today they are cursing us. Let me know if this thing is beyond your intelligence, strength or wishes. It would only prove that we are not yet qualified to form a new Sangh. But does this mean that what I have said is proved wrong thereby ?

I had not imagined this even when this Sangh was formed. Jamnalalji had set up the Sangh when I was in jail[1]. Jamnalalji is a worker with a pure heart. He opened his coffers when I started the non-co-operation movement. I had appealed to lawyers to give up their practice. Jamnalalji offered to support one hundred lawyers who would give up their practice and devote themselves to the service of the nation. This was not because he wanted to dominate the Congress but because he wanted to awaken the masses to the power of satyagraha. It was not his intention to send these gentlemen to the Congress. Every time he referred that matter to me he said that these people should be kept away from politics. Subsequently it was decided to use the money for the maintenace of constructive workers instead of the lawyers who had joined the non-co-operation movement. Out of this the Sangh was born. Jamnalalji had never intended to do political work through the Sangh. He was not agreeable again when I expanded the Sangh in 1934. Later on he also opposed my resolution at Hudli. If I am accused of dragging the Sangh into politics I would plead guilty. It would not be right to levy

[1] In 1922-23

such a charge against Jamnalalji.

Today I gave deep thought to the policy of the Sangh. I had not been able to do this with so much faith. Age has sapped my physical energy. I cannot observe things in all directions. I cannot be alert to all things and always. My body has become weak. I have somehow shouldered my responsibilities to this day. I even wanted to avoid coming to this convention; but I came because Prafulla Babu insisted. After coming here I concentrated my thoughts on the affairs of the Sangh. I placed the conclusions before you. Today my mind is saturated with these thoughts. Kishorelal carried this burden all these years. It was I who brought him into the Sangh. What is his condition today ? His body has become weak. I have read his speech. Now Kishorelal cannot work here. Hence I am placing this thing before you with so much concern.

In a way I am only casually mentioning this thing here. If you are not going to have in the Sangh any members who want to take part in politics independently, the Sangh would become quite small. But if it is genuine, it would grow into a huge tree, otherwise it would perish.

Because of politics, 84 out of 243 members go out of the Sangh. Not because they are worthless, but because they are useful in that field and are qualified for the task. How many from the remaining members can accomplish this ideal ? For this purpose you should form a committee with three or four members. This committee would prepare, with God as their witness, a list of persons who are qualified to carry on this work. This committee should also be empowered to decide on the future character of the Sangh. On this point you may also place your views before the committee in brief. But do not make speeches. In any case, the Sangh as it is functioning today has to be disbanded. It need not be considered whether or not it should function in future and if it should, in what shape. I have given you an outline of the shape it can take.

The question that now remains is : What would happen to the paid members who number nearly thirty ? It is a matter of settling accounts. But the Sangh does not exist for settling accounts, does it ? It is Jamnalalji's trust and this is a small matter. Dhotre and Jamnalalji can attend to it. It is not a matter for others to worry about. Let Jamnalalji and others concerned with him think about it. With this the matter comes to a close.

I am asking the rest of you if, in your view, the Gandhi Seva Sangh should continue to exist. If you want it to continue, it will have to be in the form I have indicated. You will have to study, do research and conduct experiments. And life will then be a grand thing. For that purpose all intellectual, physical and spiritual forces will have to be brought together. It will be a unique thing for the country, and for the world at large, which none may possibly envy. You will be placing before the country and the world the ideal of a new culture by this unity of body, mind and spirit. Can there be a goal loftier than this ?

I have placed this serious point before you. If this is beyond your capacity, it is only wise to wind up the Sangh. Only those who can pass the test of truth and non-violence and who are capable of working efficiently with a sense of complete dedication can manage the Sangh in its changed form.

I have explained my points at great length. Now you may express your views.

SWAMI ANAND : . . . Will communal unity also form part of the activities of the Sangh ? Or has it been kept out ?

GANDHIJI : It has not been kept out. It is there all right. Non-violence has no meaning without it. We have no programme for it right now, hence I deliberately omitted to mention it.

SWAMI : I am afraid if we get involved in the work of labour unions and communal unity it also may arouse jealousy and anger in other people. There too we shall come in conflict with them, and we shall have to withdraw from that field as well.

GANDHIJI : If feelings of jealousy and anger oblige us to withdraw it would be proved that we who are experimenting with non-violence are good for nothing. Some people may as well say that non-violence itself is meaningless. From their point of view non- violence would prove to be a great *adharma* instead of a great dharma, for they say that the world functions because of the mixture of violence and non-violence. In their view, it is necessary that these two go hand in hand, otherwise the world would come to a standstill. Labourers have become cowards [they say] and it is necessary to train them in violent protest to build up their self-confidence. The Hindus are also cowards and for them non-violence is not the supreme dharma. I am still receiving letters to this effect. But we have to prove that we can solve labour disputes and communal problems by adopting non-violent methods.

RAM RATAN SHARMA : I wish to place before you one of my difficulties. I requested Kishorelalbhai to arrange for sending me somewhere to be given some training. He said that he had no provision for such training for me. I had also wanted to shape the Sangh in the manner Bapu has suggested. For that purpose it is necessary that I get some expert training somewhere.

GANDHIJI : The Sangh about which I am thinking can come about after specialized training. It is a different question what we should do for training experts.[1]

SUDHAKAR : Are we giving up politics for good or for some time ?

GANDHIJI : Who can say it is for good ? We are not God, after all. We are talking only about the present.

KRISHNAN NAIR : People attached to the Charkha Sangh, the Gramodyog Sangh, etc., have their own organizations to lean on. But how should we organize those who do not belong to any of these five organizations ? Is it not necessary to have for them some kind of an old students' association ? Are all our members covered by these five organizations ?

GANDHIJI : If you have read the report carefully, you should know how many of our members are working in organizations devoted to constructive programme. This report is a thing which deserves to be studied. It is not an ordinary report. It indicates the number of the members in several ways. They are classified according to their Provinces, their activities and the organizations to which they belong. I was fascinated by the report. Look at the appendix. You find in the report an answer to every point. After reading the report you will realize that we are not going to achieve anything great by having an independent organization like the Gandhi Seva Sangh. Those who would work with complete dedication would not need frequent cosultation or guidance at every step. Attaining freedom is not an ordinary thing. For that purpose we would need workers who could carry on their tasks independently and with a sense of dedication. Those who require supervision would work under the aegis of some organization or other. The Sangh does not have to exist for that purpose. We have five organizations devoted to the constructive

[1] Narahari Parikh, Dada Dharmadhikari and Gopabandhu Chaudhari then expressed concurrence with Gandhiji's suggestion to disband the present Sangh and to set up a new one.

programme. Most of the members are covered by these organizations. What more can we offer them by having them to continue in the Sangh ? The Sangh remains like a sixth finger. And how can we carry on supervision or inspection ? We have no means to do it.

KRISHNAN NAIR : This means that the Sangh ceases to exist physically from today.

GANDHIJI : Yes, that is so. Today we are pushing Sita down into the nether world.

PREMABEHN : At the time of the Dandi March[1] also you said that we were all worthless and disbanded the Ashram. Has a similar situation arisen now ? Is this also a preparation for some struggle ? Or is it merely an attempt at purification ?

GANDHIJI : I did not say that anyone was worthless. And how could I say such a thing so long as people like you are around ? But this is only by way of a joke. The fact is that we want to become purer. I do not consider anyone worthless nor call him so. I did not describe anyone in the Sabarmati Ashram as worthless. You would be doing me an injustice by putting such an interpretation on my speeches. All I say is that applying the yardstick we have chosen we have not passed the test. And if we have really followed the principles of truth and non-violence why have these people come here to shout slogans like "Down with Gandhism" ? They teach us a lesson that we are yet impure. Otherwise why would they raise such slogans ?[2] Neither you nor I know if they are being paid. But even if it is true it is a matter for us to think over. Why do people pay them to shout these slogans ? Why are they so bitter ? We must learn something from this. As far as I am concerned, I have learnt from these demonstrations what I could not learn by seeing you. They have set me thinking. Very few among us would have practised non-violence. In this matter we can have no guidance even from history, for we do not find there instances of such experiments. But if you have a sharp mind like mine, you would find proof of non-violence everywhere in the universe. This world changes every moment. There are so many forces of destruction that nothing remains steady. But the human race

[1] In March 1930

[2] At this stage someone said some people believed that they were paid for this.

is not destroyed in spite of this. It only suggests that non-violence prevails everywhere. I have vision of it. Like the force of gravitation, non-violence is drawing everything in the universe towards itself. Love has this power. Do I no call myself a scientist of non-violence ? That is why I am aware of its laws and see them [in action]. We cannot be votaries of non-violence if we do not cherish a feeling of equality for all. If you have such a feeling of equality, you would not resort to protest or violence when anybody raises slogans invoking doom on you. Let us abjure any such practice which creates violent reactions in others. We are changing the character of the Sangh from this point of view. So many people come here to have a glimpse of me. They think I am an incarnation of God. But nobody is an incarnation of God. Or, if anybody is, everybody is. If I am such an incarnation, all of them are also such incarnations. Then why are they drawn towards me like this ? It is the law of non-violence at work. There is in me some non-attachment also. Hence I am able to take the detached view that it is not my own power but the power of non-violence. What am I ? I am but an embodiment of a thousand faults. When I search my heart I discover nothing but faults. If you take to such introspection you too would go crazy. We must try to control every thought of ours. I try it myself. I have a glimpse of God even in my opponents. You should also have that glimpse of God.

PRABHUDAS : Kishorelalbhai has said in *Sarvodaya* that there should be an organization even of imperfect followers of non-violence. They too must acquire the strength of organization. But from your speeches it seems that there can be no organization of those who practise non-violence imperfectly.

GANDHIJI : I shall not accept your point in your own words. An organization like the Gandhi Seva Sangh cannot be an organization merely of non-violent people. The Sangh was formed under specific circumstances. It was formed with the idea of supervising the work of some twenty or thirty people by giving them financial assistance. Then it expanded, and it was necessary to make improvements in it. But that special purpose is no more. There is no need to have such an organization for the progress of people who follow non- violence imperfectly. An institution is formed only with imperfect people. If men were perfect, no organization would be needed. Non-violence is imbibed even in the Charkha Sangh and the Harijan Sevak Sangh.

These also want to follow the path of peace. The Gandhi Seva Sangh can become an organization of non-violent people only if it has some special programme. But what is the meaning of a mere organization of non-violent people ? It is an implied dharma. When we wish to attain non-violence through certain means, an organization is formed. The Gandhi Seva Sangh has adopted no such specific means. We have our institutions for each particular department, which organize various constructive activities. But it is not the function of these institutions to examine how far their activities have helped develop non-violence. I would ask Shankerlal [1] how many persons were paid wages. I would not ask how much progress he made in the direction of non-violence. I would ask a labour union how far it had improved the lot of the workers through peaceful methods. I shall not ask how the labour movement was related to non-violence. The same is true of the Gramodyog Sangh. The same is true of Satis Babu. He does not have to take the test about the progress of non-violence in the Khadi Pratishthan. He can be asked only about how much of good quality oil, paper, khadi or leather he has produced. After all this the point remaining to be considered is to find out in what way we can evolve through them a non-violent culture. We can have an organization for that purpose. But where is the need for an organization merely for those who believe in non-violence ? Whatever strength or guidance they need would be available to them from my actions. God Himself would guide them. They would be organized even without an institution.

JAJU : It should be realized that those who are in politics will definitely cease to be members. Now we have to think about the future of the Sangh.

DADA DHARMADHIKARI : Let us wind up this Sangh. The new committee which is to be formed can form a new Sangh if it thinks it necessary.

SHANKARRAO DEO : I support Dada's suggestion. It is not proper to discriminate and say that those involved in politics cease to be members of the Sangh and the Sangh continues with the rest of the members.

GANDHIJI : Let it not be forgotten that we are not discri- minating when we keep the politically inclined people out of the Sangh. All that we want to do is to eschew politics in the name of the Sangh. Had we

[1] Shankerlal Banker, Secretary, Akhil Bharatiya Charkha Sangh

been regarding men who are active in politics as inferior persons, we would not allow those persons even to remain in politics. But we are not asking them to quit politics.

SHANKARRAO : We are confronted with this whole moral dilemma because we take part in politics even as we remain members of the Sangh. That is why Bapuji has suggested that we change the present character of the Sangh. The present form of the Sangh is not its original form. That is why I suggest we wind up the Sangh as it is functioning today, and restore it to its original form.

GANDHIJI : You may do that.

MAGANBHAI : Politics involves struggle for power which breeds jealousy. Hence the members of the Sangh are being asked to retire from politics or those in politics are being asked to leave the Sangh. But those who are inclined to pursue power will do the same in the field of the constructive programme. Even today it cannot be said that there is no power struggle or jealousy or bitterness in the field of constructive work. Nor do I see any need of even a research institute for those devoted solely to constructive work. People working in different fields would continue research in their respective fields while remaining with their own organizations. If they have any difficulty, they would consult their departmental head. Or, they would seek guidance from someone in whom they have a special faith. . . . For that no institution is needed. If you set up a research institute, it would undertake some stray research projects and exercise unnecessary control over other organizations. Apart from conducting research, its function would also be to correlate it with truth and non-violence. Hence it would become an organization exercising superior moral authority. I see no need for such a superior authority. In my view, you are discarding the shape you gave to the Sangh in 1934. And now when we clearly find that it can have no specific function under these conditions, why should we not disband it altogether ?

GANDHIJI : Maganbhai, I have understood your point. What you are saying is not quite relevant here. Krishnan Nair correctly observed the other day that this would be purely a research institute. It would place before the people the conclusions of its research. Anyone who is keen would be free to benefit from them. Those who do not find them useful can ignore them. Here the question of dominating others does not arise at all. There is nothing like ‘superior moral authority’ at the back of it. When there is no question of domination how can it give rise to quarrels ?

It is possible that organizations devoted to the constructive programme, such as the Charkha Sangh, etc., may to some extent suffer from bickerings, misuse of authority or arrogance resulting from power. But where do you find in it what we describe as power politics ? It is not a representative body formed after an election. It is an organization like a bank. How could power politics get into it ? The Congress is a vast organization. It be- longs to the millions. It is a representative organization. There is plenty of scope in it for the politics of power. Today the Gandhi Seva Sangh has neither the equipment nor the strength to enter power politics in its own capacity. That is why we are suggesting that those who are taking active part in politics should not remain in the Sangh. Did we ever say that they should give up politics ? If they find that by their remaining in politics they are not serving any useful purpose but are instrumental in spreading poison, they would have to get out of it. But today we only ask them that they should not enter politics as members of the Sangh. We must deny them this much.

The question now is : What form should the Sangh take ? I have given an outline. I cannot think of an alternative method. Those who want to engage in other activities like the study of politics can do it independently. This does not fall within my purview. For me, true politics consists in linking up the constructive programme with swaraj. I have never studied what people describe as politics. I carried on agitation even in South Africa; but I did not study politics. For me whatever I did was politics. I do not say that I have never taken part in politics. On my arrival in India, as chance would have it, the reins of the Congress fell into my hands. I remained with the Congress so long as I could be of service and then retired from it[1]. It seems to me that I have rendered a great service by going out of the Congress. It was my attitude of non-violence. My non-violent attitude served its purpose well. Non-violence had its place in the Congress even after I went out of it. Now I leave the politics of the Congress to Rajendra Babu and Vallabhbhai. If they find poison spreading by their remaining there, they too should quit. But it is not easy to quit. If the people insist on their remaining in politics and if the Congress and its President find it

[1] In 1934

necessary that they should be there, then it becomes difficult for them to go out. But in that case they should not remain with the Sangh.

We have to keep the Sangh untouched by the politics of power and groupism. We have to work in studied silence. That alone would be the beginning of real politics. The field of constructive work is very vast. Let us study it. Let us do research and make discoveries in that field. Shankerlal [alone] cannot shoulder this responsibility. This is the only programme I have for the Sangh. I can only give you what I have. A new vista is opening before you for an experiment in non-violence. You can expand it as much as you choose. Even if you cannot expand it, its present scope itself is sufficient. Your work will inspire others in their research. I am not talking of ordinary inventions. Am I going to be satisfied by haphazard discoveries ? Only when someone has something great should he place it before the world. That thing should be so extraordinary that the world should be wonderstruck by it. For having such a Sangh we should also have people who would be crazy about it.

I have put before you everything in simple and straightforward words. Whatever work we do, we have to keep away from power politics and groupism. The Congress is guiding the politics of the whole nation. Those among us who want to render service by being on Congress committees will not be with the Sangh from now. It is possible to prepare for civil disobedience even by remaining out of the Congress. The Congress represents the whole nation. Hence it has to reflect its views in its programmes and resolutions. But we have to do silent service in our independent field.

KRISHNAN NAIR : If the Sangh is continued, there is the danger of the emergence of a sect in your name. Just as we are scared of groupism in politics, we should also be scared of a sect emerging in your name in the form of the Sangh. This Sangh which has carried your name has done no extraordinary work in your own lifetime. Who knows what would happen after you are gone ? Hence it is just as well that the Sangh be disbanded.

GANDHIJI : There is, no doubt, the danger of forming a sect. In this matter I take as much precaution as possible.

MULCHAND AGRWAAL : In these two or three days Bapuji has said the same things that he has been saying for the last ten or fifteen years. He has said nothing

new. All this trouble has arisen because the members of the Sangh were permitted to take part in politics. Hence it would be enough to correct this. It seems impracticable to wind up this Sangh and form another. Let there be some improvements in the present set-up. We need not have a new set-up.

JAJU : It is not a question of breaking up. We are reorganizing it. Even those who are in favour of closing it down desire its reconstitution. We had reconstituted the Sangh in 1934. We are now doing it again in 1940.

BABALBHAI : Inventors would be produced by organizations like the Charkha Sangh, etc. They alone would be the experts in their respective fields. No special research institute is needed for them. They can correlate their work with truth and non-violence.

GANDHIJI : You do not expect me to answer this point, do you ? The answer is contained in whatever I have said.

PUNDALIK : Does withdrawal from politics as members of the Sangh indicate that politics of power is a bad thing ? Why should we not take part in politics of power after remaining out of the Sangh ? Why should we not prove for the world that the best possible means can be employed even in politics of power ?

GANDHIJI : Why should we meddle with politics of power while we remain in the Sangh ? I do not wish to give my view even about one individual doing it or not doing it. I do not have enough material about it. I do not know how far those who accept power observe non-violence and stand for truth. You would be put to test if you take part in politics of power. I cannot say to what extent you would pass that test. Vallabhbhai is conducting the experiment by remaining in politics. He would leave it when he finds that it is not proper for him to be there. The Sangh does not wish to take any responsibility in this matter. It is left to the conscience of each individual. Each should regard his own conscience as the authority. No outsider can take any decision in the matter. For instance, Vallabhbhai is engaged in [political] work. But I do not know his mind. I do not know Vallabhbhai's feelings, nor yours. After all, I am no God, am I ?

SWAMI ANAND : The Government has set up Rural Reconstruction Boards. Should we withdraw from these Boards as well ? After two years these Boards will be elected bodies. The Bombay Board will be elected after six months.

GANDHIJI : We may remain with the Boards so long as they are not infected by power politics. If the politics of power starts affecting

them, we should quit. This is a matter to be decided independently for one's own self.

It is quite likely that the committee which we are going to form may not be able to finish its work here in Malikanda. But it should nevertheless fix a time-limit for submitting its conclusions. If people are not offering their names, Kishorelal is of course there. I am there too.[1]

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Chhathe Adhiveshan (Malikanda—Bengal) ka Vivaran, pp. 34-52

427. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING-VI

MALIKANDA,
February 22, 1940

We can say 'barring the members mentioned below, others should withdraw'.[2]

This change we have introduced today is not ideal. We could not give the Sangh the new shape we wanted to. The Committee which you formed wanted to give an idea of the future shape of the Sangh. But we realized our shortcoming when we actually started our deliberations. Where are the men who would be useful to the new Sangh ? It was with great difficulty that we could decide upon the names for the new Executive Committee. At the same time we also wondered whether there was any certainty that the capable persons, even if we could find them, would work together in harmony. It is a matter of shame for us. Why should there be any suspicion or discord among the people who are wedded to non-violence ? If this is the case, there is no such thing as Gandhism of which we may be proud. This one reason alone is sufficient for winding up the Sangh. That is why we have passed a tentative resolution. After the experience of our bankruptcy we can no more say that Gandhism is a pleasant name to hear. It is not a word which can touch our hearts. This becomes a

[1] A sub-committee consisting of Gandhiji, Kishorelal Mashruwala, Vallabhbhai Patel, Shrikrishnadas Jaju, Gopabandhu Chowdhary, Gangadharrao Deshpande, V. V. Dastane and Prafulla Chandra Ghosh was formed.

[2] Before Gandhiji started his speech the resolution prepared by the sub-committee was being discussed. *Vide* Appendix "Resolution at Gandhi Seva Sangh", 12-2-1940.

strong reason for winding up the Sangh. If you wind up the Sangh because I insist on it, it would be a matter of shame for me as well as for you. We must shine forth after freeing ourselves of the encumbrance that is the Sangh; we must prove our worth by some action. We must give evidence of the supremacy of non-violence at least before India. If we cannot do it, why needlessly form a Sangh only to bring it into disrepute ? When I search my soul I realize that we have nothing worth offering to the people. The Sangh is then nothing but a burden. Its weight has crushed Kishorelal. Dhotre has gone to pieces working away at it. Non-violence should not have such a drawback. For the one who pursues non-violence, there should be enhanced joy. Let us examine ourselves and ask whether we pass the test. No. The discussions here have made no other impression on me. Whatever work we are doing do we do it with intellectual awareness and regarding it as our *swadharma*[1] ? No. We do so many things merely because Gandhi says so.

That is why I say that it is in the interest of all of you that the Sangh should close down. You were under the impression that the Sangh was protecting you and inspiring you. But that was not the case. It was only an illusion. Now you are coming out of that illusion and becoming self-reliant and independent. True Gandhi Seva Sangh will be born only when you pursue non-violence independently. After the Sangh has closed down it will be known to what extent you can follow the path of non-violence on your own strength. Hence, disbanding the Sangh is for the good of all of us.

I was facing a similar situation when I closed down the Satyagraha Ashram[2]. There were the same problems and the same arguments. At first some inmates of the ashram used to quarrel with one another over petty matters. This was a slur on the name of the Satyagraha Ashram. I felt that one should realize at least one's own weaknesses if one wanted to follow the path of true worship. Honesty is the first step. I found that we did not live like one family. We were lost in strifes and feuds. We should have lived in complete amity at the Satyagraha Ashram. But it should have happened spontaneously, not as a result of compulsion or coercion. When I saw that we have failed to conquer our nature, I replaced the name Ashram by Udyog Mandir and changed its character. But I was not satisfied even with that. I

[1] One's own duty
[2] In July 1933; *vide* "Interview to Associated Press of India", 25-7-1933.

needed a different type of qualification for the Udyog Mandir. The Udyog Mandir too could not work and so it was later changed into the Harijan Ashram. It became a sacred place for the service of those who are considered as the worst sinners.

But I was talking about the time when I disbanded the Satyagraha Ashram. I said at that time that the Ashram was being transformed into something grand. I said that each one of the inmates was carrying the Satyagraha Ashram with him, each one of them had become a mobile ashram. Can there be any transformation greater and more wonderful ? Not all the inmates of the Ashram passed the test I gave. But how does it affect me ? As a result, everyone could discover his own path. Those who had imbibed the spirit of the Ashram in their nature and their way of life, are like a mobile ashram to this day. And those who had a different temperament and inclination were like prisoners set free. It was for the good of both.

Just as these inmates of the ashram who had faith in satyagraha became each one a mobile ashram, you who are members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh have to be mobile sanghs. You are all going to take the Gandhi Seva Sangh with you. Your burden has become lighter as well as heavier. You will now be your guides. Just as I am my own follower, however incompetent and imperfect, you too should become your own followers. I am an imperfect man. I do not like to be anybody's captive. But I do not run away from hard work. I try to go ahead slowly, step by step. You too should do the same. You need no one's help in this regard. God's help is enough.

Let every member be ready to carry out the task he may have set for himself. Let him seek help from God. We should remain in the fore-front among the [freedom] fighters of India and proceed regarding life as a death-bed. We should not sleep all alone in that bed but have the messen-ger of Death as our bed-fellow. Let us say to Death : 'You may take me away if that be your wish. But I am dancing in your jaws. I shall dance as long as you let me and when you would not, I shall go to sleep in your own lap.' This sangh will become immortal when you thus conquer your fear of death. And if you are men of this kind, what need is there for any sangh ? You are, in that case, each one a sangh by yourself.

We add to our strength by freeing ourselves from an illusion. You acquire new strength if you take this step with full knowledge. I am pleased to know that you do not wish to remain in a state of suspended animation. I am also pleased to learn that you have

cancelled the membership of all the members. Today you have brought to a close the sangh in its present form. If you have done this on an impulse, it will bring you no good. For it would then not be an act in keeping with the principles of truth and non-violence. But if you have done it after calm consideration and weighing the pros and cons, we are, without doubt, going to progress in our search for truth.

You had given full authority to the committee, but we had no means to exercise that authority. With great difficulty we could find half a dozen men. The burden now will be on their shoulders. But you also cannot escape responsibility. You should take the responsibility of providing the means for the new sangh. You are leaving the Sangh with the knowledge that while you were in the Sangh you accomplished nothing. We could not even equip ourselves for a new sangh. What then did this sangh achieve ? This should be a matter of deep thought for us. Why should we continue to be associated with such a sangh ? Do we want to form a sangh of the weak ? Let us realize all our imperfections. If we become aware of our own weakness as well as that of the sangh, we shall start moving towards perfection. No one in the world is born perfect. We must see our failings ourselves. How can others point them out to us ? How can others know our shortcomings as well as we do ? That is why I am embarrassed when somebody starts praising me. The imperfection of the sangh is the sum total of our own imperfections. We must wonder at the fact that we have remained so wanting. We must acquire new strength. Being conscious of our imperfections is the first step of progress. He who does not realize this knows nothing. He is the greatest fool.

You must write to the new President of the sangh that he should consider you as experts. Tell him that you wish to do research. For a year you should carry on research by keeping in touch with Jajuji or by staying at Wardha. You may render silent service, incognito. We can then expect to acquire the power we wish to have. We can also hope to produce some research scholars who would dedicate their lives to ceaseless research. They would come to me with the results of their research. I would dance for joy if I find that they have found something which I wanted but was incapable of finding. Then the sangh would grow and non-violence take one step forward.

Why should we believe in Gandhism if our work does not progress in this manner? What is the test of your being Gandhities? You know only the science of spinning. But that is not enough. The

people who have come here for the exhibition can spin much better than you. But they are happy with their daily wages of eight annas. They know nothing about the science of spinning. It is not enough to spin well. It must be developed into a science. That is, it should be correlated with non-violence.

Thus, the sangh becomes a tiny little something today. You can derive immense strength from it. In order to generate that strength we are dispensing with its physical structure. We are driving the Sangh down into the nether world. We are wiping it out of existence. It is no more a burden either for Jajuji or for you. If the Sangh had any power, you are carrying it along with you. You will use it to counteract the poison spre-ading in the country, thereby increasing your own strength and also the Sangh's. If you have realized this point, then we have not been hasty in disbanding the Sangh nor have we done it just for the fun of it. Whatever we have done, we have done knowingly and after careful thought. I have had my hand in framing the constitution of the Sangh. And I have been responsible in prevailing upon the reluctant Kishorelal to accept the presidentship. I know what pains Kishorelal has taken in drafting the constitution. That constitution could be a model for other organizations, and now I am scrapping it with my own hands. This is not a light matter.

It is a different matter if you think that I have grown senile and hence I blurt out whatever comes to my mind. But if you think that I am still sound of mind and have learnt something from my experience, I say you will learn more about truth and non-violence from this. Since the Sangh has been disbanded at my instance, know that there is something in it. If you look inward and think about the matter, your mind would awaken to the realization that under the circumstances this is the greatest, the best and the most proper thing that we could do.

And now I would seek your permission to leave. Prafulla Babu says that I should stay here till Sunday. I have come to Bengal but have not done much work for the Bengalis. There is no hope of my coming to Malikanda again. That is why I wish to devote some time for Bengal. There are other things also waiting. I shall have to give some time for those things also. That is why I want you to let me leave. I shall be able to join you only for the sacrificial spinning.

[From Hindi]

Gandhiji Seva Sanghke Chhathe Adhiveshan (*Malikanda–Bengal*)*ka Vivaran*, pp. 54-8

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM H.S.L. POLAK [1]

November 23, 1939

MY DEAR BHAI,

Pyarelal has been good enough to send us news of you and your message of love and affection, for which we are grateful to you and to him. Of course, we understand how busy you must be and how necessary it is for you to deal with immediate matters and correspondence first. We know, too, from old experience, that "the nearest and the dearest" must be prepared to make the hardest sacrifice! It is good to feel that in spite of time and circumstances, we are still included in that category. Indeed, it must have been in our karma that this close link between us, which has remained unbroken for so long, should have been forged.

We are three families here (Shiplake, near Henley-on-Thames, Oxon.) in a small house by the river Millie, Celie and I; Leon's wife, Marie, and the two children (the elder, Rosemary, nearly five, a most energetic, exigent, and eager little girl, and the boy, Peter, aged 21 months, fat, fine, and full of good humour and intelligence); and Millie's other sister and her husband; not to speak of a maid and two dogs. So you can well imagine how full of domestic activity and responsibility Millie is. Indeed, she is giving all her time to these duties. Her health, despite the fact that she had no holiday this summer, owing to the outbreak of war just after everyone else had one, and that she had a shocking scalding accident when visiting Mater in June (the latter is over 80 and in fairly good health and spirit, at Bexhill), is on the whole pretty good, though, naturally, as the strain does not get less, she has spells of fatigue, which affect the nerves and the heart, from time to time. She shares with you, though in a much less degree, a tendency to blood-pressure.

The war is in background of all our lives. When the worst will be reached none can say. But the general determination of the country to try to end the constant pressure of threats, agression and violence is unmistakeable; and so, in spite of an undercurrent of anxiety and uncertainty, there is a deeply-ingrained satisfaction that a great effort is being made to establish once more the basis of something more than a nominal peace and a return to a more civilised handling of the problems of life, personal, rational, and international.

For ourselves, we are hoping to stay out at Shiplake till the end of the war. Leon is an Air Raid Protection Warden in charge of his area, near his house in Wimbledon, of some square miles. He comes down whenever possible at weekends, and sometimes instead, Marie goes up to him, to say that the house is still there and

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", August 30, 1941.

in order. Our London flat is closed, pending termination of the lease. For reasons of security, the firm has transferred most of the professional work and the records to new offices at Wimbledon, whilst retaining some of the old offices in the Strand, where we attend two days a week. But, in fact, work has largely dried up and is, at present, confined almost entirely to what was pending at the outbreak of war. How it will end is uncertain. I go to the office four days a week from Shiplake, and participate at the same time in my various public activities, including writing and lecturing. I am, among other things, the Treasurer of theosophical Society in England.

As you will no doubt have surmised, none of these jobs weighs more heavily upon me than our old problems of Indians overseas and, in particular, those of South Africa. So soon as General Hertzog resigned, I wrote to General Smuts and Dr.J.H. Hofmeyr, as you will see from the enclosed correspondence, and received from then the enclosed replies, which I have communicated to Lord Zetland, Mr.Anthony Eden at the Dominions Office (who have both warmly acknowledged them), the Government of India, and the Indian Agent General (Sir B.Rama Rau); and this week I have discussed the situation in an intimate and informal talk with Colonel Deneys Reitz, the Union Minister attending the war conferences here, who was most sympathetic but inclined to be somewhat pessimistic as to any real change of sentiment on race and colour questions in the Union for a long time. I may say too that I have had the most cordial help and appreciation of the importance of these matters from the Dominions Office, under Sir Thomas Inskip (now Lord Caldecote, the Lord Chancellor) and the Duke of Devoshire, and Mr.Eden. At the Colonial Office, too, where the reactions in Ken are being watched with anxiety, I have had a good deal of encouragement from Mr. Malcolm Macdonald, your old friend, Ramsay's son. All this, of course, is for your personal information and not for publication. In view of your great interest in the South African question, I thought you would wish to know how things were being dealt with at this end. I expect that in South Africa, for the time being, things anti-Indian will be at a standstill, especially as Stuttaford is no longer Minister for the Interior and Hofmeyr is again in the cabinet. If Reitz can help in this, I am sure that he will use his influence in the right direction.

Pyarelal writes that you are wondering if I get any worthwhile news of Indian developments. Yes, as a journalist, as an old colleague of many public men in India, and as a member of the India Conciliation Group, I get practically all that there is and am kept fully informed of what I may miss by Agatha, who has a watchful eye. Moreover, after over thirty years of experience of the inside of Indian affairs, fortified by the observations taken during many visits to India since the historic initial one of 1909, it is not difficult for me to set things in something like a reasonable responsible perspective; though I much doubt whether you will approve of or agree with my general conclusions.

I am going to be quite frank in telling you there I disagree with what has been happening in India and the background of belief in which it has happened. I know, from old times, how loyally you depend upon colleagues and how you have tended to accept from those whom you have regarded as specialists in their particular line their

views of a given situation and the advice thereon that they have offered you. I see this again in your backing of Jawaharlal's statement of principles against your own better judgement. However much you are prepared to stand alone in affirmation of what you hold to be true, your loyalty (it appears to me from what I have long observed) often betrays you into contrary and contradictory courses. You took ≈ as I hold rightly ≈ the view that, in this tragic crisis, India's help to the Allied cause in the war should be unconditional. But when Jawaharlal, misled as always, by his ineradicable passion for Leftist ideological phraseology and his blindness to facts that did not square with his intellectual preposessions (I don't in the least question his honesty, but only his judgement) carried the Working Committee with him in lying down conditions for collaboration with Britain, you could not or would not stand out in insistence upon India's taking what you regarded as the one right course. Jawaharlal could not get away from his mantram, "British imperialism" and I see that now you mutter it with equal fervour and iteration, as though it were both true and creative.

One reason why I was most anxious for you to come to the Round Table Conference (notwithstanding the conditions which you accepted upon which it was held) was that I wanted you to realise the intense and fundamental changes in public opinion here in the concept of Empire, even the most reactionary circles, which, however, did not and do not truly represent average sentiment in the country. I was deeply disappointed that you steadily averted your mind from any real contact with that sentiment. But the way in which you appeared before the Conference and the admissions of communal disunity that you were then compelled to confess did infinite harm to the cause of Indian constitutional progress. You knew before you came here ≈ or, if you did not, you must have been living in aworld of unreality ≈ that unless communal accord could be reached, the end must be disastrous. Yet, though you could have brought with you a galaxy of talent drawn from Congress-minded Muslims, you left the Mussalman cause to be represented solely by the Muslim communalists, and the Hindu reactionaries at the Conference defeated every reposed solution based upon national interests. You failed publicly to carry the minorities with you, and your stand did not even have the practical consequence of dividing them effectively on the national issue.

Later still, the Congress Party, both in and out of office, instead of seeking to draw over to country's cause the best and most national-minded of the Muslim Leaguers, by getting them to work inside the League and to transform it from within into becoming a sort of Muslim Nationalist wing of the Congress, set about deliberately seeking to undermine its influence in the country, attacking it openly and thus driving it to defend itself by extreme anti-Hindu propaganda, and thus giving to the Mahasabha the very material, without which it was impotent, to stir up communal prejudice and hatred, until communal stir has become more bitter and menacing than at any time in the history of the national movement. You have yourself only recently admitted the danger of the position, from the point of view of the preservation of non-violence and the possibilities of a resort to civil disobedience.

Yet, at the same time, in recent statements in India and the British press, you have supported the Congress denial that communal discord has any validity in the present constitutional situation, its assertion that civil disobedience to attain the Congress objectives is not a distant possibility in spite of the probability of its accentuating communal hatreds and its resulting in some parts of the country in civil war; and the assertion that it is only Jawaharlal's pet bogey, "British imperialism" that preveIndia's achievement of what you once called "the substance of independence", which you defined for me (and have reiterated and never repudiated) as Dominion Status, as interpreted in the Statute of Westminster. Both Mr. De Valera and General Hertzog have claimed that this involves the right to secede, and I have seen no authoriative denial of this claim of right. It is unlikely, for good reasons of a very practical character, to be exercised either by Eire or by South Africa. But if it were ever to be exercised, I am confident that no British Government would be found to constrain any Dominion by force to remain in the Empire. That is what "British imperialism" has now come to mean; and India could rid herself of her fears and suspicions, if she could bring herself to understand how a Dominion constitution is brought about and works in practice, if she could agree with reasonable unanimity upon any form of such a constitution, so British Government would be allowed by public opinion here to stand in the way. It would be had for the taking. The Jawaharlals and the others, who pretend to speak on these subjects, experts without any real experience and with hardly any theoretical knowledge even of constitution-working, are constantly talking of a Constituent Assembly, to which the British Government ought to agree in advance, for the purpose of threshing out a constitution for India. But you ought to know better than anyone else there that that was not how the South Africa Constitution was made. There was no formal or official constituent Assembly. The party leaders in the separate Colonies agreed to meet and discuss. They hammered out a constitution and then presented it to the British Parliament, which passed it substantially unaltered. Even then, in its working out, the South African constitution has since been structurally altered by the will of the South African people without interference from the British Parliament, and reservations made and accepted at the time in all sincerity have disappeared by acts of ill-faith, but without effective objection from here. Similarly with Eire.

The fact is that your colleagues do not live in a world of reality but in one of theory and you yourself are so indifferent to constitutional theory, usage, and practice that you accept their declarations though these were based upon anything but vagueness and ignorance of the true spirit of British constitutional history. The Congress party lives in the past, in a realm of suspicion and fear; not in the present, in one of courage and self-assurance. It cannot convince either of its sincerity or of its understanding of major problems affecting the welfare of the nation large sections of the public. It affects a lofty superiority, whereas, indeed, it manifests quite obviously an inferiority-complex, both at home and broad. It talks of democracy, but it practises the methods of totalitarianism, often unashamedly and ruthlessly overbearing all opposition because it fears for its prestige if it should modify its

policy to meet demand needs or because justice requires it.

I should have thought that, when the Allied countries are fighting a life-and-death struggle to destroy all that the Hitler regime stands for in brutality, aggression, lying, and violence, you, at least, would have understood that the greater naturally and inevitably includes the less, and that, with the ultimate resort once more to argument, reason, and conciliation in the solution of world problems, the problem of India's future, once her own leaders were in reasonable agreement as to principles and larger details, would be automatically solved.

I remember that old soldier Annie Besant, taking a very different line in 1911 on a subject very near to her heart. It was at the time of the Coronation of King George V, and the greatest women's suffrage demonstration ever held took place in London. Millie and I participated in it and marched with the Indian section, I carrying the symbolic elephant and some of the cane chairs! We wound up at the Albert Hall, where a great meeting was addressed by many of the most noteworthy of the feminist leaders. But the most striking speech was that of Annie Besant. She said, in brief (remember the date, 1911): "We have the franchise. That is not today the issue. The question is: How are we going to use it? If not better than the men, it is not worth having." It was not until years later, after the Great War in which the women contributed magnificently, that the women's Franchise Act was actually passes. But Annie Besant had vision and understanding. She knew that, in spirit, her cause had already triumphed, though form might yet be lacing for the spirit to inhabit. But the coming of the form was inevitable. And, before she died, she had the same certain vision regarding India's triumphant emergence to equality of status among the nations. She never doubted. But you and your colleagues, whilst profession, except in a purely academic sense, as when a good man may be said to represent all mankind ≈ have not this courage, this faith, this certainly. You doubt, you ask for assurances, you question whether there might not even be two kinds of Dominion Status, one white and one brown! ≈ which causes people here, who are instinctively aware of the true meaning of the things to smile, as at the pathetic innocence (or ignorance) of the young untutored mind! Where is the profound wisdom of India, for which the Rishis stood? And where is the true patience that has kept India alive and potent for such things through the centuries?

Two things have given me the most intense humiliation. The one is the gravity of the communal feud, inconceivable to me when I look back to conditions prevailing in India when I first went there thirty years ago. The second is the intrigue, the dishonesty the rancour and the dangerous authoritarianism in the Congress circles that has been condemned by none more vigorously than yourself. They display together not the spirit of unity which would, in itself, command successful realisation of the national aspiration, but one of tragic internal feud and discord, one of inferiority which, even in the absence (as I firmly believe) of external opposition would suffice to frustrate the fulfilment of India's hope.

And when I hear you echoing Jawaharlal's endless repetition of the mantram of "British imperialism", as though this had anything in common, either in theory or in

practice, with the calculated bestiality and horror of Nazi torture of the unoffending Jews, or persecution and terrorism of the Czechs and the Poles; when I see you hesitate even for a moment in throwing all the forces of India into the balance in order to destroy for ever a truly "Satanic Government" (to use an old and misapplied term of your own) I am amazed and shocked that either [of]1 you, trained in a knowledge of English and the use of language, should put your country to shame by confusing issues and misusing its trust in your guidance! If you had had a drop of Jewish blood in you, you could not have rested until, without hatred and without a desire for vengeance, but from the deepest and holiest sense of duty such as Sri Krishna spoke of to Arjuna, you had done your uttermost to destroy a locust regime that is seeking to devour every beautiful thing that mankind, intuitively realising its godly nature, has been developing during the ages of its development.

But as you are a Hindu by birth, an Indian by choice, and a citizen of the world by aspiration, I do adjure you to reflect once more upon the stupidity and the futility of abstention, even as Sri Krishna adjured Arjuna to remember that even if he were determined to renounce his duty, to resist evil and defend truth, yet his very nature would drive him irresistibly to the task.

I sometimes ask myself what changes in the. . .[1] each of us might have resulted had we remained together in common work.[2] I am sure that I should have been a better man. But, on my part, I would have told you faithfully what others have, in the main, concealed from you; I should have helped you to laugh things into their real proportions; I should have warned you loyally against misinterpreting the honest motives of others who did not agree with you, but whom your won "followers" have prevented from healthy contact with you. You have lately complained about many things that, though only now, apparently revealed to you, have long been known to and condemned by others who have been unscrupulously denounced as in British pay or under British influences, who have been virtually driven out of public life as traitors to the country's interest. You must accept your full share, it seems to me, of this lamentable state of affairs. And also for the weak and silly policy of withdrawal from the administration of affairs in the Congress Provinces. In India it seems so much easier to refrain, to stand aloof, to non-cooperate, than to join together to get things done, to gain experience, to create and construct and educate and provide opportunities for greater effort and the conquest of disease, poverty and ignorance. I know, of course, all the arguments for non-cooperation. I know, too, how they have been falsified in practice by your repeated admissions. I know all the arguments for positive non-violence. I know, too, how you yourself have been repeatedly deceived by those who have vowed themselves to it and betrayed both you and the ideal that they had sworn to defend. I know how hatred has spread throughout the country until its face has been unrecognisably distorted. Whose hatred was it that did this ≈ that of the British "Imperialists" or the Indian "nationalists"?

[1] Illegible in the source
[2] The sentence is as in the original.

Will you not reflect again that, in all this denunciation of British ['s] motives and actions, you might after all, under God, have been wrong, and that what has to be done now is to work together to face the Devil and subdue him?

I have tried to write honestly and with restraint, and I am sure you will understand the spirit of love for you and for India with which I have done so.

Please write soon and tell me so.

Yours affectionately,

[PS.]

Today's papers tell us of the Working Committee's resolution stating, *interalia*, that the British Government has slammed the door upon India! For sheer falseness and poverty of imagination it compared favourably even with Dr. Goebbels's propaganda bureau. I can tell you as a fact that this is all completely untrue and the exact opposite of the spirit in which the Indian situation is being faced in the most authoritative circles.

APPENDIX II

VICEROY'S DECLARATION[1]

October 17, 1939

Since the outbreak of war and more particularly during the last four weeks I have been in the closest touch with the leaders of political opinion in British India and with representatives of the Princely Order. . . .I have had the advantage of a full and frank discussion with no fewer then 52 people—with Mr. Gandhi, with the President and Members of the Congress Working Committee, with Mr. Jinnah and with representative members of the Muslim League Organization, with the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, and with a great variety of persons prominent in the political life of British India.

As was only to be expected, conversations with representatives of so many different points of view revealed marked differences of outlook, markedly different demands, and markedly different solutions for the problems that lie before us. . . .

The essential matters on which a clarification of the position is beyond any question desired are:

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 18-10-1939; "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 18-10-1939; "Letter to M. R. Masani", 18-10-1939; "Interview to *The Times of India*", 20-10-1939; "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 24-10-1939; "Cable to *The News Chronicle*", 28-10-1939 and "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 22-10-1939. Only extracts are reproduced here.

First, what are the objectives of His Majesty's Government in the war? To what extent are they of such a character that India with her long history and great traditions can, with a clear conscience, associate herself with them?

Second, what is the future that is contemplated in the constitutional sphere for the Indian Continent? What are the intentions of His Majesty's Government? Is it possible to define those intentions more precisely and in such a manner as to leave the world in no doubt as to the ultimate status envisaged for India as far as the British Commonwealth is concerned ?

Third, in what way can the desire of India and of Indian public opinion for a closer association, and an effective association, with the prosecution of the war best be satisfied ?. . . His Majesty's Government have not themselves yet defined with any ultimate precision their detailed objectives in the prosecution of the war. It is obvious that such a definition can come only at a later stage in the campaign, and that when it does come, it cannot be a statement of the aims of any single ally. There may be many changes in the world position and in the situation that confronts us before the war comes to an end, and much must depend on the cirucumstances in which it does come to an end, and on the intervening course of the campaign. . . .

We are fighting to resist aggression whether directed against ourselves or others. Our general aims have been stated by the Prime Minister within the last few days as follows:

> We are seeking no material advantage for ourselves. We are not aiming only at victory, but looking beyond it to laying a foundation of a better international system which will mean that war is not to be the inevitable lot of each succeeding generation. We, like all the peoples of Europe, long for peace; but it must be a real and settled peace, not an uneasy truce interrupted by constant alarms and threats.

This statement, I think, clearly establishes the nature of the cause for which we are fighting, and justifies, if justification is needed, the extension by India of her moral support and her good will to the prosecution of that cause.

Let me turn now to the second question which has been put to me—the question of India's future and of the lines of her constitutional development. . . today, the constitutional position of India and the policy of His Majesty's Government are governed by the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935. Part III of that Act, which provides for the conferment of Provincial Autonomy on the Provinces of British India, has been implementd. For nearly 2 $^{1}/_{2}$ years now the Provinces have been conducting their own affairs under the scheme of the Act. That they have done so, on the whole, with great success, even if now and then difficulties have arisen, no one can question. Whatever the political party in power in those Provinces, all can look with satisfaction on distinguished record of public achievement during the last 2

$\frac{1}{2}$ years. The experience that they have had, has shown beyond any question that, whatever minor problems, the application of the scheme of the Act may have presented, whatever difficulties may have confronted us in the operation of the Act from time to time in the provincial sphere, the scheme of the Act is essentially sound, and that it transfers great power and gives opportunities to popularly elected governments dependent on the support of a majority in their legislatures.

The second stage contemplated by the Act was the reconstitution of the Central Government on such a basis as to achieve the essential goal of Indian unity. The method contemplated for that purpose was the achievement of a Federation of all India in which the representatives of all political parties in British India would, together with the Rulers of the Indian States, form a unified Government of India as a whole. . . . I have throughout believed that the federal scheme in its operation would have turned out as satisfactorily as, broadly speaking, we can all of us regard the scheme of Provincial Autonomy as having turned out. I will not dilate on that subject today, for our work in connection with the federal scheme has been suspended. But in reaffirming as I do my belief in the essential soundness of the federal aspects of the Act of 1935, I do so with the greater emphasis because of the evidence which the federal provisions of the Act constitute, of the anxiety of His Majesty's Government to achieve, with the minimum of delay, and on the basis which appears to represent the greatest amount of agreement between the various parties and interests affected, the unity of India, and to advance beyond a further and a most important milestone on the road to India's goal.

Such being the background against which we are working, what are the intentions and aims of His Majesty's Government in relation to India? I cannot do better in reply to that question than to refer to the statement made on behalf of His Majesty's Government, and with their full authority, by the late Secretary of State for India in the House of Commons on the 6th February, 1935. That statement makes the position clear beyond a shadow of doubt. . . I need not dilate on the words of that statement. They are clear and positive. They are enshrined in the parliamentary record. They stand as a definite and categorical exposition of the policy of His Majesty's Government today, and of their intentions today in this end, the future constitutional development and position of India. I would add only that the Instrument of Instructions issued to me as Governor-General by His Majesty the King-Emperor in May 1937, lays upon me as Governor-General a direction so to exercise the trust which His Majesty has reposed in me "that the partnership between India and the United Kingdom with our Empire may be furthered to the end that India may attain its due place among our Dominions."

That is the policy and that is the position. Those are the intentions of His

Majes-ty's Government. Let me go on to say another word about the Act of 1935. That Act was based on the greatest measure of common agreement which it was possible to obtain at the time when it was framed. It was based, as is well known to all of us, on the common labours of British and Indian statesmen, and of representatives of British India as well as of the Indian States over a long period of years. All parties were at one stage or other closely asscoiated with those deliberations. . . .

Be that as it may, His Majesty's Government recognize that when the time comes to resume consideration of the plan for the future Federal Government of India, and of the plan destined to give effect to the assurances given in Parliament by the late Secretary of state, to which I have just referred, it will be necessary to reconsider in the light of the then circumstances to what extent the details of the plan embodied in the Act of 1935 remain appropriate.

And I am authorized now by His Majesty's Government to say that at the end of the war they will be very willing to enter into consultation with representatives of the several communities, parties and interests, in India, and with the Indian Princes, with a view to securing their aid and co-operation in the framing of such modification as may seem desirable. I have, I trust, in what I have just said, made clear that the intention and the anxiety of His Majesty's Government is, as stated in the Instrument of Instruction to the Governor-General, to further the partnership between India and the United Kingdom within the Empire to the end that India may attain her due place among the great Dominions. The scheme of Government embodied in the Act of 1935 was designed as an essential stage in that process.

But I have made clear in what I have just said that His Majesty's Government will, at the end of the war, be prepared to regard the scheme of the Act as open to modification in the light of Indian views.

And I would make it clear, too, that it will be their object, as at all times in the past it has been, to spare no pains to further agreement by any means in their power in the hope of contributing to the ordered and harmonious progress of India towards her goal.

Let me in that connection add that in the conversation I have had, representatives of the minorities have urged most strongly on me the necessity of a clear assurance that full weight would be given to their views and to their interests in any modifications that may be contemplated. On that I need say no more than that over more than a decade, at the three Round Table Conferences, and at the Joint Select Committee, His Majesty's Government consulted with and had the assistances of the advice of representatives of all parties, and all interests in this country. It is unthinkable that we should now proceed to plan afresh, or to modify in any respect, any important part of India's future Constitution without again taking counsel with

those who have in the recent past been so closely associated in a like task with His Majesty's Government and with Parliament.

That some even more extensive scheme than I have mentioned, some even more widely phrased indication of the intentions of His Majesty's Government, is desired in certain quarters in this country, I am fully aware from the conversations I have had during these last few weeks.

That is a desire held with sincerity, and that those who hold it are convinced that it is in the manner in question that the future progress and development of India and the expressed intentions of His Majesty's Government can best be fulfilled, I fully and readily accept. I would utter one word only of caution. . . it is essential in matters of this nature, affecting the future of tens of millions of people, affecting the relations of the great communities, affecting the Princes of India, affecting the immense commercial and industrial enterprises, whether Indian or European, in this country that the largest measure of agreement practicable should be achieved. With the best will in the world, progress must be conditioned by practical consideration. . .

I would ask that these words of caution be not taken as indicating any lack of sympathy on the part of His Majesty's Government for the aspirations of India, or any indifference to the pace of her advance; and I would repeat that His Majesty's Government are but concerned to use their best endeavours, now as in the past, to bring about that measure of agreement and understanding between all parties and all interests in this country which is so essential a condition of progress to India's goal.

I turn now to the arrangements to be made to secure the association of public opinion in India with the conduct of the war. India's contribution has already been great to a degree which has impressed the imagination of the world. At the head of the list I would put the contribution which India has made in spiritual, and not in material, terms—the support of her peoples for a cause which they can regard as a good and a righteous cause. In the material field equally her contribution is already most significant, and may be greater still. And in the circumstances the desire, the anxiety of public opinion in India to be associated with the conduct of the war is naturally one with which I personally have throughout felt the greatest sympathy. In the circumstances I have described, the desirability of steps to ensure that leaders of public opinion should be in the closest touch with developments is of the first importance.

I have discussed with the utmost frankness with the leaders of the various parties who have been good enough to come to see me in connection with constitutional position, by what machinery we could best give effect to this desire. . .

I will only say that in the light of my conversations and of the views (by no

means always in accord) of representatives of the great parties and of the Princes, I am of opinion that the right solution would be the establishment of a consultative group, representative of all major political parties in British India and of the Indian Princes, over which the Governor-General would himself preside, which would be summoned at his invitation, and which would have as its object the association of public opinion in India with the conduct of the war and with questions relating to war activities.

This group, for practical reasons, would inevitably be limited in size. But His Majesty's Government contemplate that it should be fully representative, and in particular that its personnel should be drawn by the Governor-General from panels prepared by the various major political parties, from which a selection of individuals to attend meetings of the group would be made by the Governor-General.

I hope in the very near future to enter into consultation with political leaders and with the Princes on this question. I have no doubt whatever, that an arrangement of this nature will most materially contribute to associating the Indian States and British India with the steps which are being taken for the prosecution of the war, and with the arrangements that are being made in that connection; and I am confident, too, that in an association of this nature of representatives of all parties and all interests, there lies the germ of that fuller and broader association of all points of view in this country which contains in it the seeds of such advantage for the future of India as a whole.

When I spoke to the Central Legislature a month ago, I made an appeal for unity. I would repeat that appeal today. . . . We live in difficult and anxious days. Great ideals are in issue. Dangers real and imminent face our civilization. Those dangers are as real and as imminent in the case of India as of any other member of the British Commonwealth of nations. Those ideals are as precious to India as to any country in the Empire or in the world. At this grave moment in the destinies of nations my prayer to all parties would be not to dissociate themselves from the common effort, but to lend their co-operation and their assistance in the prosecution of the war. There could be no decisive proof of India's fidelity to her best traditions than the full use of the opportunities afforded to her by the war for concerted endeavour. The ideals we have set before us, the objects to secure which we are engaged in the present struggle, are such as to command widespread sympathy and widespread support in India. They are in harmony with her past history and her highest traditions. It is my hope that in the grave juncture which we face, India will go forward as a united country in support of a common cause.

The Hindustan Times, 18-10-1939

APPENDIX III

CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION[1]

October 22, 1939

The Working Committee are of opinion that the Viceregal statement in answer to the Committee's invitation for a clear declaration of Britain's war aims, particularly in their application to India, is wholly unsatisfactory and calculated to rouse resentment among all those who are anxious to gain, and are intent upon gaining India's independence. This invitation was made not only on behalf of the people of India, but for millions of people all over the world, who were weary of war and violence, and Fascist and imperialist systems which exploited nations and peoples and were ultimately the causes of war, and who yearned for a new order of peace and freedom. The Viceregal statement is an unequivocal reiteration of the old imperialistic policy. The Committee regard the mention of the differences among several parties as a screen to hide the true intention of Great Britain. What the Committee had asked for was a declaration of war aims as a test of Britain's *bona fides* regarding India, irrespective of the attitude of opposing parties and groups. The Congress has always stood for the amplest guarantee of the rights of minorities. The freedom the Congress clained was not for the Congress or any particular group or community, but for the nation and for all communities in India that go to build that nation. The only way to establish this freedom and to ascertain the will of the nation as a whole is through a democratic process which gives full opportunity to all. The Committee must, therefore, regard the Viceroy's statement as in every way unfortunate. In the circumstances, the Committee cannot possibly give any support to Great Britain, for it would amount to an endorsement of the imperialist policy which the Congress has always sought to end. As a first step in this direction the Committee call upon the Congress Ministries to tender their resignations.

The Committee earnestly appeal to the nation to end all internal controversies in this hour of great crisis, and to act unitedly in the cause of India's freedom. The committee call upon all Congress Committees and Congressmen generally to be prepared for all developments and eventualities, and to show restraint of word and deed so that nothing may be said or done which is not in keeping with India's honour or the principles for which the Congress stands. The Committee warn Congressmen against any hasty action in the shape of civil disobedience, political strikes and the like. The Committee will watch the situation and the activities of the British Government in India, and will not hesitate to guide the country to take further steps whenever the necessity for this arises. The Committee desire to impress upon all

[1] *Vide* Statement to the Press", 18-10-1939; 27-10-1939; "A Letter", 23-10-1939; "Cable to *The News Chronicle*", 28-10-1939 and "Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", 12-11-1939.

Congressmen that a programme of resistance, commensurate with the magnitude of the issue before the country, requires perfect discipline within Congress ranks and the consolidation of the Congress organization.

The Working Committee realize that the non-violent resistance offered by the Congress in the past has sometimes been mixed with violence. The Committee desire to impress upon all Congressmen that any resistance that may have to be offered must be purged of all violence, and to remind them of the pledges taken to this effect as early as 1921, during the Congress Session at Ahmedabad, and repeated on many subsequent occasions.

Harijan, 28-10-1939

APPENDIX IV

SIR SAMUEL HOARE'S SPEECH[1]

October 26, 1939

Mr. Wedgwood Benn and I have very often confronted each other in the field of Indian debate. We have sometimes disagreed, and very strongly disagreed, but we have sometimes agreed. Tonight. . . . let us for a few moments look back upon the occasions on which we have agreed. I very well remember one of them when he and I, some eight or nine years ago in this House, were defending Lord Irwin from criticisms of those who said, he ought not to have had conversations with Mahatma Gandhi. . . . I am sure that he and I are agreed that today it is a matter of satisfaction that the Viceroy should see leaders of the principal parties concerned, even the most extreme leaders, even my old fellow-Harrovian, Pandit Nehru.

Since Mr. Wedgwood Benn and I last took part in these Indian debates, many events of staggering importance have taken place in the world. . . . At a time when democracies were being destroyed in Europe, we have seen eleven great democratic Governments come into being in India and join their forces with democratic peoples of the world. These ought surely to be grounds for great satistaction to every member of the House.

It was with this background on the Indian achievement that on September 3 of this year India and the British Commonwealth of Nations were faced with war. The crisis. . . found India united in its determination to resist brute force and in the realization that the danger was a common danger threatening every part of the British

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 27-10-1939; "Good and Bad", 30-10-1939; "Opinions Differ", 7-11-1939 and "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 22-10-1939. Only extracts are reproduced here.

Commonwealth of Nations. It was in the face of this unity that the Viceroy. . . showed his whole-hearted and sincere desire for Indian goodwill and co-operation. . . he. . . had a series of interviews with the leaders of Indian opinion and . . . he made two definite proposals. The first was rather in the nature of a pledge. It was a clear and definite statement that, at the end of the war, there would be a reconsideration of the constitutional problem in the light of the experience of recent years. Secondly, with a view to availing himself of Indian advice and with the intention of bringing Indian leaders within his confidence, he suggested that a Consultative Committee should be formed to discuss with him many problems arising out of the war, and to bring him into the closest and most constant contact with the trends of Indian opinion. . . .

The proposal regarding the Consultative Committee was made with the full desire to obtain the greatest possible co-operation with the principal bodies of Indian public opinion. The Congress, admittedly the greatest party in India, rejected it. Non-Congress India representing, it must be remembered, many millions of Indians, substantially accepted it. It may be asked, would it not have been possible for the Viceroy to have gone further and made some kind of proposal that would have avoided this division of opinion between Congress and non-Congress India? This is the first question, and it is a very important question, to which I would invite the attention of the House. If the members are to follow its implications, they must recall to their minds some of the most important discussions that took place over the Government of India Act. They centred round the pledge of Dominion Status and the aim of the India policy. These pledges, as Mr. Wedgwood Benn has said, were repeated time after time. They were reaffirmed in very precise terms in the speech with which I introduced the second reading of the Government of India Bill.

I made it clear, and I make it clear again today, that we stood by Lord Irwin's pledge and that when we spoke of Dominion Status we meant what we said, and did not mean some system of government that deprived India of the full status of equality with other members of the British Commonwealth.

There are no two kinds of Dominion Status as some people seem to think. The Dominion Status that we contemplated was the Dominion Status which has been described by Mr. Wedgwood Benn—the Dominion Status of 1926. I went on to state that Dominion Status is not a prize that is given to a deserving community, but is the recognition of the facts that actually exist. As soon as these facts exist in India, and in my view the sooner they exist the better, the aim of our policy will be achieved. If there are difficulties in the way, they are not of our making. They are inherent in the way they are between the classes and communities in the great sub-continent. It must be the aim of the Indians themselves to remove these divisions just as it should be our aim to help Indians in their task.

So far are we from wishing to divide and govern that we regard these divisions as a calamity and are ready to do our utmost to remove them. We have shown our good faith in the matter. We showed it when we made the Communal Award. At that time supposing we had wished to divide and conquer, we might very well have said: Settle your own communal differences first. Until you have settled them there can be no constitutional advance. We did not take that course, but at great risk to ourselves and in the face of much criticism, we made the Communal Award without which provinicial autonomy would have been impossible.

But in spite of our Award, these divisions still exist, and, until they are removed, we have responsibilities to the minorities that we cannot repudiate. That was our position in 1935, and it is our position today. We wish to see these divisions removed, but we shall never get them removed if we shut our eyes to their existence and refuse to admit that they are there. It is these divisions that have made so difficult the task of setting up responsible government at the Centre and of achieving the great ideal of an All-India Federation.

The Princes are afraid of domination by British India, the Muslims are firmly opposed to a Hindu majority at the Center. The Depressed Classes and other minorities genuinely believe that responsible government meaning a Government dependent on the Hindu majority, will sacrifice their interests. These anxieties will exist. I wish they did not.

But as long as they exist, it is impossible for the Government to accept the demand for immediate and full responsibility at the Centre on a particular date. If we did so we should be false to the pledges that time after time we have given in the most solemn words to the Muslims, other minorities and the European community.

It may be said, 'Supposing that full and immediate responsibility at the Centre is impossible, are there not other steps that could be taken to show our good faith and to make clear to India that the goal is just as much in our minds today as it was when we made those pledges four years ago?' Mr. Wedgwood Benn himself made a number of these suggestions this afternoon and I will try to deal with them. Firstly, let me disabuse him of the idea which I think he held that we are contemplating in the near future on Imperial War Cabinet in London and that in it India ought to be represented by more than a single representative. At present there is no intention to set up an Imperial War Cabinet of that kind. If and when the time comes, I will certainly remember the observations he has made on the subject, and I imagine they will be given extremely careful attention. Next he spoke on the project that has been discussed more than once before. He asked: "Would it not be possible to introduce into the Viceroy's Council political leaders who would hold portfolios in certain of the great departments?" I have said, this is not a new proposal, as I remember its

being made during the discussions of the Joint Select Committee.

I think the Leader of the Opposition himself made it at one time. We went fully into it then and at that time we found ourselves confronted by certain difficulties in the way of its adoption. I do not enumerate those difficulties tonight. I wish to close no door, I wish to explore every possibility within the ambit of the Government of India Act. . . .

Mr. Wedgwood Benn then spoke of the discussions that took place in the last War on the Subject of the constitution. He mentioned the Montagu-Chelmsford discussions and asked whether it would be possible for discussions of that kind to take place in the course of this war.

I do not wish to give a final answer but I would point out that in certain respects the situation today differs a good deal from the situation at the time of the Montagu-Chelmsford discussions. The issues had not then become so bitter as they have today. I am thinking more particularly of the communal issue. Further, at any rate at the beginning of a war, it seems to me impossible for discussions of that kind to take place. The Montagu-Chelmsford discussions only took place I think, three years after the beginning of the last War. As I have said, however, I would rather not give a final answer tonight on a point of that kind.

Nor indeed would I give a final answer on another point, Mr. Wedgwood Benn has raised, namely, that there should be a general election in India. At any rate, at the beginning of a war general election would seem to me to be almost impossible. In India, officials are working night and day on war work. Moreover, there would be the fact that the communal feelings would, I am sure, be very much aroused in an election and while again I do not want to dogmatize and use terms like 'never' and 'in no circumstances' I would say that as things are today, a general election to the Central Legislature would in my opinion be impossible.

To come back to the broad question of consultation, the Viceroy has not tied himself down to the exact methods of this consultation. It is essentially a question to be settled between him and the political leaders. I am able to state that he is ready to discuss the method and details with the leaders, and he proposes without delay to send an invitation to meet him for these discussions. Until these and other discussions take place, I claim that it would be a blunder of the first magnitude to take up an irrevocable position. Let the Indian leaders weigh these possibilities. Let them meet and discuss them once again with the Viceroy, and let them also ponder once again upon the alternatives.

As regards the alternative of direct and immediate responsibility at the Centre, I hope I have convinced the House that in the present circumstances it is impossible

to accept an alternative of that kind.

I come to another alternative, and I would ask the Indian leaders seriously once again to ponder upon it. I wish indeed that I had not to make any reference to it at all. It is the alternative under which are Indian Congress goes its own way, and the British Government and the minority communities in India go theirs. If it came to this issue, we should have no choice. The King Emperor's Government must be carried on, and it would be carried on with efficiency, with strength and with justice. We, like any other Government in similar circumstances, would give the Viceroy our full support. But let every man of goodwill in India and Great Britain contemplate the waste that such a chapter of non co-operation would mean. There would be a waste of all our constitutional efforts with these many years of Round Table Conferences, Joint Select Committees and debates in this House. . . .

I hoped that when the Act came into force, this chapter would be brought to an end. But it is there now in the face of the greatest crisis that has ever confronted the world, a crisis in which our danger is India's and India's danger ours, in which our determination to set up new and better order in the world is as great as India's and India's is as great as ours. There is grave risk of our drifting into a position in which we shall be wrangling with each other instead of fighting the enemy on the common front.

I am told, though I can scarcely believe it, that it being said in some quarters in India that the British Government is searching for a conflict. I repudiate that suggestion with all the power I have. The British Government want co-operation and not conflict. The British Government want to see the aim of its policy achieved and conditions realized in which India can take its true place in the British Commonwealth of free peoples. Non-co-operation may put the clock back for years. Whether its promoters desire it or not, non-co-operation leads to civil disobedience, to breaches of law and order and to a vicious circle of riot and repression from which we had hoped to have escaped for ever.

Until these things actually happen, I will not believe that they are going to happen. I shall continue to believe that when these great peoples of our own and the peoples of India are faced with a common danger and inspired with a common ideal, non-co-operation of any large section of a community would be a calamity and futility of the first magnitude. Millions of Indians in British India and in the States agree with this view. They wish to co-operate with us just as much as we wish to work with them. And the Congress party itself—I quote the words of Mr. Gandhi spoken three days ago— "wanted to help Britain by giving her moral support which was its speciality. The Congress would no give this unless it was clear that Britain's

morality was wholly sound."

I claim that our position is as sound as a bell. In good faith and perfect sincerity, we have started India on the greatest constitutional experiment that the world had ever seen. We have long ago set aside imperialistic ambitions. We believe that our mission in the world is not to govern other people but to help other people to govern themselves. It was in this spirit that Parliament passed a series of great Acts which gave the Dominions their free constitution. It was in this spirit that we passed the Government of India Act of 1935 and under which, of our own free will, we transferred wide authority to the Indian Government. It is in this spirit that we intend to administer the Act and during the war to do our utmost to remove the divisions that stand in the way of the full achievement. And when the war ends, and ends victoriously as a result of the Empire's united efforts, we mean to proceed at once to deal with the constitutional difficulties that have emerged in the experience of recent years. Non-co-operation, and non-co-operation alone, will stop this swift and steady progress. . . . Such a breach in the common front would be a repudiation at once of the gravest moments in the world's history of the call to both of us to resist the aggressor, to fight brute forces and to build by a new and better order in the world. . . .

"It was not"—I quote the Prime Minister's weighty words of October 12—"with any vindictive purpose that we embarked on the war but simply in defence of freedom." It is not alone freedom of small nations that is at stake. There is also in jeopardy the peaceful existence of Great Britain, the Dominions, India, the rest of the British Empire, France and indeed of all freedom-loving nations. Whatever may be the issue of the present struggle and in whatever way it may be brought to a conclusion, the world will not be the same world that we have known before. . . . In this new world India has a great part to play, perhaps in area the greatest of any Asiatic country, a great part also in the British Commonwealth of Nations, for it will be an outward and visible sign that with us there is no racial discrimination. It has a great part also to play in the world at large, for India should stand out as a model of a League of Nations from which war has for generations been banished and the rule of law and justice firmly set. With this great hope before us let us once and for all abandon the barren paths of non-co-operation and help each other to win the war and to win peace and in this double victory to take a great step towards the fruition of India's hopes.

The Hindustan Times, 27-10-1939: also *The Indian Annual Register, 1939,* Vol. II, pp. 398-403

APPENDIX V

TRAVANCORE GOVERNMENT PRESS NOTE[1]

In a communique issued on the 23rd September, 1939, the Travancore Government pointed out that they cannot permit an organized scheme of agitation at this juncture in view of the present situation and the industrial and economic position of the people who are affected by the adverse conditions produced by the war in a country so dependent on imports and exports as Travancore. They gave a warning that such a scheme of agitation is bound to give rise to serious repercussions, and the Government who have a duty to protect the law-abiding citizens of the State would be forced to take all necessary steps for maintaining normal conditions.

The Travancore State Congress have now arranged for the holding of public meetings on the 8th, 16th and 24th of every Malabar month, these days being styled as Civil Liberties Day, Responsible Government Day and Political Prisoners' Day respectively. Volunteer rallies, opening of training camps, and what is called organization work are also contemplated. It is noted that these demonstrations are timed to begin on the day preceding the commencement of the functions in celebration of the birthday of His Highness the Maharaja.

All persons are hereby warned not to take part in these demonstrations and rallies; and against attempts by means of pamphlets, leaflets, etc., to inflame public opinion and promote agitation and unrest. Persons organizing or taking part in such agitation and demonstrations are liable to be dealt with under the Defence of Travancore Proclamation and Rules without further notice.

CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT

HUZUR CUTCHERRY, TRIVANDRUM,

October 30, 1939

Harijan, 11-11-1939

APPENDIX VI

VICEROY'S BROADCAST DECLARATION[2]

November 5, 1939

It is with profound regret that I have to announce that the conversations which, at my instance, had been inaugurated between the representatives of the Congress and the Muslim League have so far not achieved what I had hoped. The country is entitled to know, in a matter of such moment and at a time of such gravity,

[1] *Vide* "Travancore Again", 6-11-1939.

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 8-11-1939 and "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 22-10-1939.

what was the nature of the proposition which I invited my friends in those two organizations to consider. I shall tomorrow publish correspondence which will make the position perfectly clear. Let me only say that my object has been, in these discussions, to bring together the leaders of the great parties and to endeavour to secure, as a result of personal contact between them, and with what personal assistance I could myself give, that measure of agreement in the Provinces which, in their view, would enable them to put forward proposals for a constructive advance at the Centre for the period of the war, such as would be represented by some expansion of the Governor-General's Executive Council and by the inclusion in it of political leaders.

My declaration of October 17[1] contemplated a consultative group. It offered an arrangement relatively so limited as that group only because of marked divergences of view between the great communities, divergences, the existence of which held out no hope of harmonious working at the Centre on the basis of joint membership of my Executive Council at a time when harmonious working was of first importance. Nevertheless, I am persuaded that that group holds out great possibilities for the future—possibilities, I feel sure, greater than are commonly realized.

I need not say that it is a profound disappointment to me, after so much endeavour on the part of His Majesty's Government, on the part of those leaders with whom I have conferred and of their friends, as well as on my own part, that we have no more to show and that in so many Provinces we should be left with no choice but to use the emergency provisions inserted for that purpose in the Government of India Act. As for those provisions, let me emphasize that they are an expedient and not a sanction. My own strong feeling in regard to their use I cannot better convey than by a paraphrase of the quotation that appears in Arabic characters upon the great gateway at Fatehpur Sikri. That quotation says: "Life is a bridge—a bridge that you shall pass over. You shall not build your house upon it."

Nor, in the wider field, do I propose to take this disappointment as final, or to abandon the efforts I am making to bring about a friendly adjustment of the differences in this country to the end that we can continue to co-operate over the achievement of our common objectives, differences and difficulties such as those which now threaten to retard—even reverse—the course of constitutional development in India and the earliest attainment of the common goal will not disappear spontaneously, nor will they be conjured away by any refusal to recognize their existence. They will be resolved only by negotiations, carried out in a spirit of mutual accommodation and trust and with a firm resolve to succeed.

I will say no more than that to-night. But I would ask for patience and for the

[1] The source, however, has "18"; *vide* Appendix "Viceroy's Declaration", 17-10-1939.

goodwill of the Indian people and of the great political organizations—their members and their leaders—in the efforts I propose to continue to make.

The difficulties are great. How great they are has been most clearly revealed by the events of the last six weeks. But the attempt to reconcile them is one which it is imperative to make and in which, whether I fail or I succeed, I shall spare no effort to bring about the result which is, I know, at the heart of all of those who care for India and for her future.

The Indian Annual Register, 1939, Vol. II, p. 245

APPENDIX VII

VICEROY'S PREFATORY REMARKS TO CORRESPONDENCE WITH LEADERS[1]

November 5, 1939

I next invited Mr. Gandhi, Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Mr. Jinnah to come to see me on November 1, and discussed the whole position with them frankly. I had already in my previous conversations discussed with them, as with almost all my visitors, from various aspects the possibility of an expansion of the Governor-General's Council. I now told them that if in regard to association at the Centre, we had been unable to go further than the Consultative Group, it was because of the lack of prior agreement between the major communities such as would contribute to harmonious working in the Centre. I added that the manifestos issued on 22nd October, by the Congress Working Committee and the Muslim League, had shown only too clearly the gulf that existed between the attitude of these two great parties.

I begged my visitors in these circumstances to meet and to have discussions among themselves on the Provincial position, with a view thereafter to putting forward in agreement proposals which could be considered for some expansion of the Governor-General's Council at the Centre. I told them that I saw no necessity for every detail of the differences between them in the Provinces to be resolved. What was needed was a sufficient resolution of those differences to make the devising of scheme for harmonious co-operation at the Centre practicable. I begged them in the most earnest manner to spare no endeavour to reach agreement; and I emphasized that this was essentially a question affecting Indians on which agreement between Indians themselves was what I was anxious to secure. I repeated the profound anxiety not only

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 8-11-1939; "Unnecessary Alarm", 13-11-1939 and "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 22-10-1939. Only extracts are reproduced here.

of myself but of His Majesty's Government to leave nothing undone which would contribute to achieve that agreement.

The discussions which I suggested have taken place. But the result to me has been a profound disappointment. There remains today entire disagreement between the representatives of the major parties on fundamental issues. All I will say now is that I am not prepared to accept this failure. I propose in due course to try again, in consultation with the leaders of these great parties and the Princes, to see if even now there may still be the possibility of securing unity. During all the time I have been in India, there is nothing I have been more anxious to secure than unity, and unity matters far more to India than is perhaps always realized. Unity, too, means that Indians, whatever their community or whatever their party allegiance, and whether they dwell in British India or in the Indian States, must work together in a common scheme. It is worth a great deal to try to bring that about. I may have been unsuccessful so far but I will try again. And when I try again I would ask India to remember my difficulties, and give me credit for an earnest goodwill and an earnest desire to assist. We are dealing with a problem that has defeated the united endeavours of the greatest organizations in this country. There are grave differences of view which have to be taken into account, which should be bridged. There are strong and deeply rooted interests which are entitled to the fullest consideration and whose attitude is not a thing lightly to be brushed aside. There are minorities which are great in numbers as well as great in historic importance, and in culture. Those are all factors to which full weight has to be given. But complex as the problems are, I refuse to regard them as insoluble, and I prefer to believe that, like other human problems, they will yield to patient discussion in a spirit of goodwill. In this belief I am encouraged by the friendly feeling which has pervaded my discussions with the leaders of parties I would ask the country, and I would ask the leaders of the great political parties and their constituents, who I know have faith in those leaders, and are ably led by them, to give me the help which I so much need if there is to be any hope of overcoming our difficulties and reaching the result which I am sure that we all of us desire.

The Indian Annual Register, 1939, Vol. II, p. 411

APPENDIX VIII

LORD ZETLAND'S STATEMENT[1]

November 7, 1939

I am grateful for this opportunity to make some observations on this matter and the House will, I hope, forgive me if my answer runs to some little length.

I need hardly say that His Majesty's Government share the profound regret of the Governor-General at the failure of the consulations which he had been holding during the last week to produce an agreement between representatives of the Congress on the one hand and the All-India Muslim League on the other. May I remind the House briefly that the previous discussions, which the Governor-General had been so patiently conducting for several weeks past, had convinced him that there was little, if any, prospect of securing an agreement on plans which he had been considering with the object of bringing Indians into association with the Central Government of India on the conduct of war, unless some accommodation could first be reached on the difficulties felt by the Moslems as to their position in the Provinces where the Congress Governments were in power?

As the House will have seen from the documents published yesterday, that the Congress has definitely refused to consider any concrete plans such as those outlined by the Governor-General, unless His Majesty's Government should be willing first to make a declaration to the effect that India is an independent nation and that His Majesty's Government will raise no opposition to her future form of Government being determined, without their intervention, by a Constituent Assembly called upon the widest possible basis of franchise and by agreement in regard to communal representation. The Congress have further consistently taken the line which they still maintain that the fact there are racial and religious minorities in India is of no relevance in that connection and that it has always been the intention of the Congress to secure through the constitution to be framed by Indians themselves such protection for their rights as may prove acceptable to the minorities.

His Majesty's Government find it impossible to accept this position. The long standing British connection with India has left His Majesty's Government with obligation towards her which it is impossible for them to shed by disinteresting themselves wholly in the shaping of her future form of Government. Moreover, one outstanding result of the recent discussions in which the Governor-General has been engaged with representatives of all parties and interests in India has been to establish beyond doubt the fact that a declaration in the sense proposed with the summary

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 8-11-1939 and "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 22-10-1939.

abandonment by His Majesty's Government of their position in India would be far from acceptable to large sections of Indian population.

But this does not mean that we had in any sense weakened in our determination to assist India by such means as are in our power to reach without avoidable delay the position to the British Commonwealth of Nations to which we are pledged. Let me take this opportunity for removing some doubts and suspicions which appear to have been felt in India about reference in the recent India about in the House of Commons by Lord Privy Seal to "Dominion Status of 1926" as being the status we contemplate for India. The suggestion, I understand, has been made that the passage of the Statute of Westminster in 1931 has produced for the Dominions to which the Statute applies a status which is somewhat different from and is superior to the relationship described in the Balfour Declaration contained in the report of Imperial Conference of 1926.

This House at all events will have no difficulty in believing me when I say that there is no foundation for any such suggestion. My Right Honourable friend (Sir Samuel Hoare) referred to Dominion Status of 1926 because it was in that year the Imperial Conference described the status of the Dominions and the status so described has not been altered by anything which has since occurred, the Statute of Westminister having merely given legal effect to certain consequences of the contitutional position as was then recognized.

It was our hope that the plans which the Governor-General has indicated, including as they did the incorporation of the leaders of the main political parties in India in the Central Government, if they could have been brought into play, would have done much towards facilitating the hoping for a reconsideration by the parties interested and His Majesty's Government warmly approve the readiness which he has expressed to be of such service as he can whenever an opportunity occurs.

Meanwhile the position at the moment is that in Bengal, the Punjab and Sind Ministries which in those Provinces do not owe allegiance to the Congress Party remain in office; in five of the remaining eight Provinces where the Congress Governments have been in power, those Governments have now resigned and in the other three Provinces the Governments are expected to resign in the very near future. There appears to be in one Province—Assam—the possibility of an alternative government, but with this one exception the Governors have found or will very shortly find themselves with no option, since alternative Ministries in a position to command the confidence of the legislature are not forthcoming, but to assume to themselves by proclamation powers which the provisions in the Act enable them to assume in such a situation.

Let me make it plain that Section 93 of the Act under which this action has been taken is in no sense a penal provision; it simply provides a machinery the possible necessity for which Parliament in its wisdom foresaw if, to quote the words

of the Act, "a situation has arisen in which the Government of Province cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of this Act for carrying on the King's Government."

It is our hope that in the absence of opposition from supporters of the Congress or from other quarters, the Governors with the aid of their official advisers and members of the public services will succeed in conducting smoothly and efficiently the administration of the Provinces, the diference being—obviously a fundamental difference—that their actions will be decided in responsibility to this House, to this Parliament; and not in pursuance of advice tendered to them by Ministers responsible to the Provincial legislature. We greatly regret that the Ministries which have with so much zeal been carrying on the Government of their great Provinces and tackling with energy and resource the many problems with which adminstration has naturally brought them into contact should have found it necessary to withhold their further services from their country, but we refuse to believe that this withdrawal will be for long and we shall continue to hope, so long as any grounds for such hope remain, that proclamations by the Governors need have only a temporary duration, for I can assure the House that the Governors will be only too ready to recall to their counsels responsible advisers as soon as they are available.

The Indian Annual Register, 1939, Vol. II, pp. 411-3

APPENDIX IX

LETTER FROM CONGRESS PRESIDENT TO THE VICEROY[1]

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
November 3, 1939

I thank you for your letter of November 2, embodying in concrete form the proposition which you had placed before us when we saw you on November 1. My colleagues and I have given our earnest consideration to it. We have had also the advantage of full talks with Mr. M. A. Jinnah. But we find ourselves unable to vary the answer we gave you during the interview.

At the outset I would like to say that both Gandhiji and I missed at the interview any reference to the main and moral issue raised by the Congress about clarification of war aims without which it was impossible for the Congress to consider any subsidiary proposal.

The present crisis has arisen owing to the outbreak of the war in Europe and the action of the British Government in declaring India a belligerent country without the consent of the Indian people. This crisis is entirely political and is not related to

[1] *Vide* "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 22-10-1939.

the communal issue in India. It raised vital questions in regard to the war aims of the British Government and the position of India in relation to them. The Congress Working Committee, as you are aware, issued a lengthy statement on September 14, 1939, in which they invited the British Government to declare their war aims, and in particular how these aims were going to apply to India and to be given effect to in the present. It was further stated that the Indian people must have the right of self-determination by framing their own constitution through a Constituent Assembly without external interference and should guide their own policy. On October 10, 1939, the All-India Congress Committee approved of and endorsed this statement, and stated that in the declaration to be made by the British Government, India must be declared an independent nation and present application should be given to this status to the largest possible extent. The Committee further added that Indian freedom must be based on democracy and unity and the full recognition and protection of the rights of all minorities.

Subsequent to this, the policy of the British Government was declared in the Viceregal statement, extracts from which you have been good enough to send me. This statement was considered by the Congress Working Committee soon after, and the Committee expressed their opinion that it was unfortunate and wholly unsatisfactory. As a consequence of this, they felt compelled to declare that they were unable to give any support to Great Britain and to call upon the Provinicial Governments, in Provinces where the Congress is in a majority, to tender their resignation.

It is worthy of note that the Viceregal declaration of British policy met with disapproval of the overwhelming body of opinion in India, even outside the Congress.

Subsequent statements made on behalf of the British Government in Parliament have not made any essential difference to the policy outlined in the Viceregal statement and, as you have rightly pointed out, that policy is still governed by the extracts from it that you have kindly sent us. I am afraid it is quite impossible for us to accept this policy or to consider any steps to further co-operation unless the policy of the British Government is made clear in a declaration on the lines suggested by the Congress.

It has pained us to find the Communal question being dragged in this connection. It has clouded the main issue. It has been repeatedly said on behalf of the Congress that it is our earnest desire to settle all points of communal controversy by agreement and we propose to continue our efforts to this end. But I would point out that this question does not in any respect come in the way of a declaration of Indian freedom as suggested above. Such a declaration applies to the whole of India and not to any particular community, and the Constituent Assembly which will frame India's constitution will be formed on the widest possible basis of franchise and by agreement in regard to communal representation, We are all agreed that there must be full protection of minority rights and interests and this protection should be by

agreement between the parties concerned. The British Government talking of sharing the burden has, in our poinion, made a settlement of the question much more difficult than it should have been. It should allay all real anxiety on the part of the British Government when the Congress declares that it contemplates no constitution which does not carry with it the protection of real minorities to their satisfaction.

It seems to us that a clear declaration of the kind suggested is an essential preliminary to any further consideration of the matter, I should like to add that recent developments in the European war have made it all the more necessary for a clear enunciation of war aims. If a satisfactory declaration is made, a discussion of the proposal made by your Excellency will be appropriate and useful and we shall gladly discuss it with you.

It is perhaps unnecessary to state that Gandhiji is in full agreement with this letter. We propose to leave tomorrow evening for Wardha unless your Excellency desires otherwise.

The Hindustan Times, 6-11-1939

APPENDIX X

RESOLUTION ON INDEPENDENCE DAY PLEDGE[1]

The Working Committee draw the attention of all Congress committees, Congressmen and the country to the necessity of observing properly and with due solemnity Independence Day on January 26, 1940. Ever since 1930 this day has been regularly observed all over the country, and it has become a landmark in our struggle for independence. Owing to the crisis through which India and the world are now passing and the possibility of our struggle for freedom being continued in an intenser form, the next celebration of this Day has a special significance attached to it. This celebration must, therefore, not only be the declaration of our national will for freedom, but a preparation for that struggle and a pledge to disciplined action.

The Working Committee, therefore, call upon all Congress committees and individual Congressmen to take the pledge prescribed below in public meetings called for the purpose. Where, owing to illness or other physical disability or to being in an out of way place, individual Congressmen are unable to attend a public meeting, they should take the pledge in their homes, individually or in groups. The Working Committee advise organizations and individuals to notify their Provincial Congress Committees of the meetings held as well as the individual or group pledges taken. The Committee hope that none who does not believe in the contents of the pledge will take it merely for the sake of form. Those Congressmen who do not believe in the prescribed pledge should notify their disapproval, stating reasons therefor, to the

[1] [1] *Vide* "The Pledge" 24-12-1939; "Letter to Sampurnanand", 29-12-1939; "Letter to H. V. Kamath", 6-1-1940; "The Dissentients", 16-1-1940.

Provincial Congress Committee, giving their names and addresses. This information is required not for the purpose of any disciplinary action but for the purpose of ascertaining the strength of disapproval of anything contained in the pledge. The Working Committee have no desire to impose the pledge on unwilling Congressmen. In a non-violent organization compulsion can have little place. The launching of civil disobedience requires the disciplined fulfilment of the essential conditions therefor.

PLEDGE

We believe that it is an inalienable right of the Indian people, as of any other people, to have freedom and enjoy the fruits of their toil and have the necessities of life, so that they may have full opportunities of growth. We believe also that if any Government deprives a people of these rights and oppresses them, the people have a further right to alter it or to abolish it. The British Government in India has not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom but has based itself on the exploitation of masses, and has ruined India economically, politically, culturally and spiritually. We believe, therefore, that India must sever the British connection and attain *purna* swaraj or COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE.

We recognize that the most effective way of gaining our freedom is not through violence. India has gained strength and self-reliance and marched a long way to swaraj following peaceful and legitimate methods, and it is by adhering to these methods that our country will attain independence.

We pledge ourselves anew to the independence of India, and solemnly resolve to carry out non-violently the struggle for freedom till *purna* swaraj is attained.

We believe that non-violent action in general, and preparation for non-violent direct action in particular, require successful working of the constructive programme of khadi, communal harmony and removal of untouchability. We shall seek every opportunity of spreading goodwill among fellowmen without distinction of caste or creed. We shall endeavour to raise from ignorance and poverty those who have been neglected and to advance in every way the interests of those who are considered to be backward and suppressed. We know that though we are out to destroy the imperialistic system we have no quarrel with Englishmen, whether officials or non-officials. We know that distinctions between the caste Hindus and Harijans must be abolished, and Hindus have to forget these distinctions in their daily conduct. Such distinctions are a bar to non-violent conduct. Though our religious faiths may be different, in our mutual relations we will act as children of Mother India, bound by common nationality and common political and economic interest.

Charkha and khadi are an integral part of our constructive programme for the resuscitation of the seven hundred thousand villages of India and for the removal of the grinding poverty of the masses. We shall, therefore, spin regularly, use for our

personal requirements nothing but khadi, and so far as possible products of village handicrafts only, endeavour to make others do likewise.

We pledge ourselves to a disciplined observance of Congress principles and policies and to keep in readiness to respond to the call of the Congress, whenever it may come, for carrying on the struggle for the independence of India.

Harijan, 30-12-1939

APPENDIX XI

VICEROY'S SPEECH [1]

BOMBAY

January 10, 1940

As you know, in response to requests for a clarification of the aims of His Majesty's Government and of their intentions towards India, His Majesty's Government have made it clear, both through statements issued by myself, and in Parliament, that their objective for India is full Dominion Status, Dominion Status, too, of the Statute of Westminster variety; that so far as the intermediate period is concerned (and it is their desire to make intermediate period the shortest practicable), they are ready to consider the reopening of the scheme of the Act of 1935, as soon as practicable, after the war with the aid of Indian opinion; that they are prepared in the mean time, subject to such local adjustments between the leaders of the great communities as may be necessary to ensure harmonious working, and as an immediate earnest of their intention, to expand the Executive Council of the Governor-General by the inclusion of a small number of political leaders; and that they are ready and anxious to give all the help they can to overcome the difficulties that confront us and that confront India today. But those assurances have not, to my profound regret, dissipated the doubts and the uncertainties which have led to the withdrawal from office of the Congress Ministries, and which have made it necessary in seven provinces to make use of the emergency provisions of the Act.

The pronouncements made on behalf of His Majesty's Government since the beginning of the war make clear, I think, beyond any question whatever, their intentions and their anxiety to help. The federal scheme of the Act was itself designed as a stage on the road to Dominion Status; and under that scheme, devised, I would remind you, long before there was any question of a war, very wide and extensive powers were to be placed in the hands of a Central Government representing the Indian States as well as British India, and constituted on a very broad basis indeed. There can be no question of the good faith and the sincerity of His Majesty's

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 14-1-1940, 17-1-1940; "The Dissentients", 16-1-1940 and "Task Before Us", 6-2-1940.

Government in the efforts they have made to deal with the consti- tutional future of India. I well know that there are many people who press for swifter and more radical solutions of the problems before us. I do not question the sincerity or the good intentions of those who feel that way. But all those of us who have to deal with problems of this magnitude know only too well how often we are attracted by apparently simple solutions; how often those apparently simple solutions, when more closely investigated, reveal unexpected difficulties, and difficulties, too, of unexpected importance, anxious as we may all be to take what seems to be the shortest course.

Short cuts, as many of us know to our cost, are too often prone in experience to lead to a considerable waste of time. Nowhere I fear is that truer than of the political problems of India, for there are difficulties, of which we are all aware, and which we all regret. But they will not be avoided or disposed of by ignoring their existence. The wise course is to face those difficulties and to try to find a solution of them that will result in the subsequent co-operation of all the parties and interests concerned. We are, after all, dealing not with one political party only, but with many, nor must we forget the essential necessity, in the interests of Indian unity, of the inclusion of the Indian States in any constitutional scheme.

There are the insistent claims of the minorities. I need refer only to two of them—the great Muslim minority and the Scheduled Castes—there are the guarantees that have been given to the minorities in the past; the fact that their position must be safeguarded and that those guarantees must be honoured.

I know, gentlemen, that you appreciate the difficulty of the position of the Viceroy and the difficulty of the position of His Majesty's Government, faced as they are with with strong and conflicting claims advanced by bodies and interests to whose views the utmost attention must be paid, and whose position must receive the fullest consideration. Justice must be done as between the various parties, and His Majesty's Government are determined to see justice done. But I would ask my friends in the various parties to consider whether they cannot get together and reach some agreement between themselves which would facilitate my task, and the task of His Majesty's Government, in dealing with this vital question of Indian constitutional progress : and I would venture again to emphasize the case for compromise, the case for avoiding too rigid an approach to problems such as those with which we are dealing today.

As to the objective there is no dispute. I am ready to consider any practical suggestion that has general support, and I am ready, when the time comes, to give every help that I personally can. His Majesty's Government are not blind—nor can we be blind here—to the practical difficulties involved in moving at one step from the existing constitutional position into that constitutional position which is

represented by Dominion Status. But here, again, I can assure you that their concern and mine is to spare no effort to reduce to the minimum the interval between the existing state of things and the achievement of Dominion Status.

The offer is there. The responsibility that falls on the great political parties and their leaders is a heavy one, and one of which they are, I know, fully conscious. They have helped me in the past. I ask today that they will help me again and help India, and I ask for their co-operation and their assistance in terminating at as early a date as possible a state of things which all who have faith in the virtue of constitutional progress must deplore; a state of things which every lover of India—everyone who is concerned to advance her interests—must feel today to be a bitter disappointment.

Indian Annual Register, 1940, Vol. I, pp. 374-5

APPENDIX XII

K. M. MUNSHI'S INTERVIEW WITH LORD LINLITHGOW [1]

January 12, 1940

LINLITHGOW : We have met under different circumstances. Let me talk to you about the general situation. I am not going to wait till the end of the war for settling the Indian problem. Possibly the war will not be over till June 1941, and we are so far away that our problem could be adjusted by us here without being concerned with a battle or two in France.

There is another fact in which you are as much interested as I am. England is making a colossal effort to win the war and at the end of the war, as on the last occasion, it will be exhausted. At the time there will be a tendency to liberalize the institutions of the Empire. India should not then be found unprepared and disunited.

You must have seen my recent statement. Between Dominion Status of the Westminster variety and Independence there is only a difference in name. It will take time to Develop India's capacity, even for the work which will be cut out for you.

Take the Act of 1935. The word 'Federation' has become like a dried fish which stinks in everybody's nose. But take the main objections to it.

First there is Defence. You will admit that the military machine is now no longer the concern of one country. Its training and organization as at present must be under common control, and India must be prepared to wait to be able to take over charge. Second, Foreign affairs. They are in the same position. Third, the commercial safeguards, which you call discrimination. They could be adjusted. But as the world goes today, India cannot afford to have free trade party (*sic*). But I would not despair

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 17-1-1940.

of coming to an agreed formula on the point. Fourth, there is the question of direct elections to the Assembly.

K. M. MUNSHI : I am not sure whether Gandhiji is very particular about direct elections to the Assembly.

LINLITHGOW : Then the next question is that of the States. You can't have Dominion Status unless the States are brought in in some manner. If a proper effort is made I would not despair of settling their questions in some way unless you pitch your claim very high.

The next question is that of the Central Assembly. I won't like to argue when people claim something as a moral right. But, given goodwill on both sides, ways and means could be found to have a body which would serve the purpose.

K. M. MUNSHI : Gandhiji has already stated that he would be satisfied with an agreed equivalent. Perhaps a convention of all the legislatures might be a good substitute.

LINLITHGOW : That leaves the question of minorities. I will concede that the minorities have no right to block the progress.

K. M. MUNSHI : But by speaking in the way you do, you give them an instrument to put forward the highest demand. That makes our task difficult. That has been our past experience of the British statesmen. They gave the minorities such an undue importance that they were led to make extravagant claims. In 1916 Congress agreed to Jinnah's demands thinking that they would have communal peace thereafter. The Lucknow Pact was ripped open. The MacDonald Award came. Against Hindu opinion, Gandhiji got the Congress not to reject the communal award but to work it. And still when you call Gandhiji you must needs call Jinnah and fifty other gentlemen as a counterweight. And now in your speeches you throw the burden of settling with him upon us. How are we expected to do that ?

LINLITHGOW : I have to do so. I have not merely to speak to a public in India, I have also a public in England. That public is an important factor both from your and my point of view. And it has a feeling that the Hindus as a community are against British interests.

K. M. MUNSHI : But you see the result. There was a cordial atmosphere in your dealings with Gandhiji about the time we left office. Now you make pronouncements which look like preparations for a case to impress the world that, when we broke from you, you were right. I see a reaction to this on our side. Gandhiji's recent statements show a tendency to occupy a politically unassailable position when mass action is started. Instead of both of you coming nearer, I feel that you are drifting apart, and no settlement is likely if both of you continue to drift away from one another.

LINLITHGOW : You mean we are creating fences round ourselves ?

K. M. MUNSHI : Certainly. You hold Gandhiji in great respect. You told me at Simla that you want an alliance with Right Wing Congress. If you are serious about it why don't you help in this settlement ?

LINLITHGOW : Am I not doing it every hour of my life ?

K. M. MUNSHI : Why do you then let Mr. Jinnah make things impossible ? You have got the Aga Khan, you have got your friend Sir Sikandar. It is your actions which send up Mr. Jinnah's rates. That leads him to make absurd charges against us. You do not even reply to them. And he is so difficult now that any friendly approach to him has become impossible.

LINLITHGOW : I know that he has become very difficult, but that is only from a short view of things. For the present he has made himself into a rallying centre of minorities. Time alone can remove him from that position. But from a long view of things Jinnah cannot succeed. He would soon be found out as a stumbling-block to progress.

K. M. MUNSHI : If that is your view, why don't you set about discussing matters with Gandhiji ? This 'range artillery', as Sir Maurice Gwyer puts it, is scarcely helpful.

LINLITHGOW : I am going to do it as soon as I am ready.

K. M. MUNSHI : But it may be too late. For instance, on the 26th of January, there is bound to be somewhat 'war mentality' amongst us.

LINLITHGOW : I don't think there will be any trouble, but there would be considerable enthusiasm.

K. M. MUNSHI : Yes, they will follow the Congress. I feel the undercurrents amongst our ordinary Congressmen, and I wonder how long Gandhiji will be able to keep them in leash. For the moment he is exercising a strong restraining hand.

LINLITHGOW : Yes, he has become powerful. But do you seriously think that he will be able to carry Jawaharlal ?

K. M. MUNSHI : Jawaharlal is a great idealist and is therefore an idol of the masses. But the inspiration, organization, and technique are all Gandhiji's and Jawaharlal will not part company with Gandhiji.

LINLITHGOW : I think it was a mistake to have left office. Perhaps there were reasons on your side which I cannot appreciate.

K. M. MUNSHI : Yes, we could not have continued long in office and helped you in the war unless we had obtained a share in the Centre which could justify our being there. Otherwise it would have been a thankless job. For instance, Subhas would have made our task very difficult.

LINLITHGOW : You think Subhas formidable. I do not think so.

K. M. MUNSHI : Not in that sense, but if we had been in power he would have

got himself arrested only in order to make our position difficult. Now things are better from every point of view and things should be done early.

LINLITHGOW : I hope to make a move soon.

K. M. MUNSHI : You hold Gandhiji in great respect and Gandhiji, I am sure, holds you equally in great respect and if you both cannot settle the matter, nationalism will naturally go into wilderness.

LINLITHGOW : Well, you are putting a great and flattering burden on me.

K. M. MUNSHI : If there is no alliance between nationalist India and Britain it may be that we may go, maybe for a long time, but then Savarkar and Jinnah will fight it out.

LINLITHGOW : It will be a disaster.

Pilgrimage to Freedom, pp. 390-3

APPENDIX XIII

GOVERNMENT COMMUNIQUE [1]

NEW DELHI,
February 5, 1940

In response to an invitation from His Excellency, Mr. Gandhi today came to see the Viceroy. A prolonged and very friendly discussion took place in which the whole position was exhaustively examined. Mr. Gandhi made it clear at the outset of the conversation that he had no mandate from the Congress Working Committee, that he was not empowered to commit it in any way, and that he could speak on behalf of himself only.

His Excellency set out in some detail the intentions and the proposal of His Majesty's Government. He emphasized in the first place their earnest desire that India should attain Dominion Status at the earliest possible moment, and to facilitate the achievement of that status by all means in their power. He drew attention to the complexity and difficulty of certain of the issues that called for disposal in that connection, in particular the issue of defence in a Dominion position. He made it clear that His Majesty's Government were only too ready to examine the whole of the field in consultation with representatives of all parties and interests in India when the time came. He made clear also the anxiety of His Majesty's Government to shorten the transitional period and to bridge it as effectively as possible. His Excellency drew attention to the fact that as he recently repeated at Baroda[2], the Federal Scheme of the

[1] *Vide* "Cable to Carl Heath", 5-2-1940; "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 5-2-1940 and "Statement to the Press", 6-2-1940.

[2] On January 17, 1940

Act, while at present in suspense, afforded the swiftest stepping-stone to Dominion Status, and that its adoption, with the consent of all concerned, would facilitate the solution of many of the problems that had to be faced in that connection. He added that the offer put forward by him in November last of an expansion of the Governor-General's Executive Council on the lines and on the basis then indicated remained open and that His Majesty's Government were prepared to give immediate effect to that offer, subject to the consent of the parties affected. His Majesty's Government would be prepared also to re-open the Federal Scheme, so as to expedite the achievement of Dominion Status and to facilitate the settlement after the war of the issues to which it gave rise.

Mr. Gandhi expressed appreciation of the spirit in which these proposals were put forward, but made it clear that they did not, in his view, at this stage meet the full demand of the Congress Party. He suggested, and the Viceroy agreed, that in the circumstances it would be preferable to defer for the present further discussions with the object of a solution of the difficulties which had arisen.

Harijan, 10-2-1940

APPENDIX XIV

RESOLUTION AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH [1]

February 12, 1940

Whereas past experience has shown that holding of responsible positions by members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh in political organizations is undesirable, this meeting of the Sangh resolves that such members of the Sangh as are on any elective bodies in such organizations and intend to serve on them should not continue as members of the Sangh. This does not by any means mean any reflection on such members or on political work. The resolution has to be taken because of the fact that the active participation of the members of the Sangh in politics has aroused bitterness which is proof of the fact that their practice of ahimsa has been inadequate. Pure ahimsa must by its very nature preclude a reaction in *himsa*.

It has always been the firm belief of the Sangh that the amelioration of the millions of India is impossible without constructive work in which alone the masses can directly participate. The Sangh's activity will, therefore, be confined in future to constructive work, and it will address itself to that part of the constructive programme which at present does not come within the province of the A.I.S.A., A.I.V.I.A., etc., e.g., the observation, study and research in the subject of the relation of constructive work to ahimsa and of the reaction of such work on individuals and society. And whereas there are not enough workers today capable of this special work, until men

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Gandhi Seva Sangh Meeting—II", 21-2-1940; "Speech at Gandhi Seva Sangh Meeting—IV", 22-2-1940 and "The Right Step", 26-2-1940.

are available for the purpose of the study and research aforesaid, the activities of the Sangh will be suspended save for the administration and disbursement of the Sangh's funds among paid workers and otherwise and the publication of the monthly *Sarvodaya*.

The membership of the Sangh will be henceforth confined to the following who will also constitute the Executive Committee of the Sangh :

Shri Shrikrishnadas Jaju—President and Trustee

,, R. S. Dhotre—Secretary and Trustee

Shri Kishorelal Mashruwala—Member and Trustee

,, Gopabandhu Chaudhri—Member

,, Abhaydevji—Member

,, Satis Chandra Das Gupta—Member

,, Dilkhush Diwanji—Member

,, Sitaram P. Patwardhan—Member

,, Krishnadas Gandhi—Member

And all the other members will be deemed to have resigned. It is also resolved that this Executive Committee will have all powers to amend or alter the constitution of the Sangh and will exercise all the other powers of the Sangh.

Harijan, 2-3-1940

1. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

LIKANDA
February 23, 1940

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Though we have hostile slogans[1], on the whole, things have gone smooth.One never knows when they may grow worse. The atmosphere is undoubtedly bad. The weather is superb. I am keeping excellent and have regular hours. The b.p. is under control.

Radical changeshave been made in the workingand composition of the Sangh.[2] This you will have already seen.

We are leaving here on Sunday and leaving Calcutta on Tuesday for Patna[3].

No more today. Mountain of work awaiting me.

Your reports about the family there are encouraging. Poonam Chand Ranka[4] told me he was going to correspond directly with Balkrishna about Chindwara. Evidently he has done nothing. This is unfortunate.

Love to all.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 3962. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7271

2. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

February 23, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is no news from you. How is Parachure Shastri? I have written to Biyaniji at Chhindwada. I hope Balkrishna and Kunverji are able to bear the heat.

I am keeping perfectly good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Khadi and Village Industries Exhibition", 20-2-1940
[2] *Vide* "Speech at Gandhi Seva Sangh Meeting—IV", pp. 22-2-1940
[3] For the Congress Working Committee meeting
[4] President, Provincial Congress Committee, Nagpur

3. TELEGRAM TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

GANDHI SEVA SANGH,

February 24, 1940

SUSHILA
SEGAON
WARDHA

TELL VALJIBHAI TAKE MILK TREATMENT WITH REST.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

4. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

MALIKANDA,

February 24, 1940

CHI. MIRA,

I have been too busy to write to anybody. I had two cheery letters from you after you reached Hariana. It is good you are at peace with yourself and you found in the Pandit a true friend in need. I am glad too that you are keeping well.

The company here too is well. I am asking P[yarelal] to send you cuttings which will give you some idea.

We leave here tomorrow, in Calcutta till 27, Patna 28 to 1st at the most. Then Wardha, leaving W. on 9th for Ramgarh[1].

Prithvi Singh is here. He is going to Ramgarh in advance. He is taking Anand, the Japanese monk, with him.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Love to Panditji.

From the original : C.W. 6450. Courtesy : Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10045

[1] For the Congress session

5. *TALK WITH WORKERS*[1]

MALIKANDA,
[February 24, 1940][2]

All incompatible mixtures are bound to explode.[3] You must resolve to act on the square, and whilst you should be prepared to compromise on non-essentials you should never be in the uncomfortable position of having to compromise truth. You should retire from all such positions. That is the essence of compromise. Let service without near or distant objective be your motto. You are surrounded by poverty on all sides. Serve those that are afflicted, whether they are Muslims, Namasudras[4] or others. Satyagraha transcends parties and divisions of class and creed. It should permeate the whole of our being and society. There is no question before you of enlisting members for the Congress. Give up all thought of gaining members for the sake of swelling your register. That is power politics. I would rather have no register than blacken it with bogus members. If you will thus become silent workers, even one of you will lead the Congress in the province without being in it.

I hope you will not now say, 'What will happen if the Congress is captured by the opponents ?' You know the Upanishad precept तेन त्यक्तेन भुंजीया:[5]. Enjoy by means of renunciation. Give up the Congress in order to 'enjoy' or have it. The moment I set my heart on some kind of capturing I am done for. No manoeuvring to keep your hold on the Congress, no descending from the right path, and you will disarm all opposition. A bogus Congress register can never lead you to swaraj any more than a paper boat can help you to sail across the Padma.

Harijan, 9-3-1940

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's article "Gandhi Seva Sangh—II". Gandhiji had this talk immediately before he addressed the Bengal Workers' Conference. Vide the following item.

[2] *ibid*

[3] According to Mahadev Desai Gandhiji was referring to the disruption in Bengal in spite of a long tradition of educated and self-sacrificing men and women.

[4] A Harijan caste from Bengal

[5] Ishopanishad, 1

6. ADDRESS AT BENGAL WORKERS' CONFERENCE[1]

MALIKANDA,

February 24, 1940

Gandhiji said that his time was limited and he wanted to say some things to them. The first question that struck him was : What was the meaning of the new manifestation which they were witnessing ? Why did some people cry "Down with Gandhism" ? (Gandhibad Dhansa Hauk).[2]

Let us understand that there is a kind of poison in the atmosphere. How are we to fight it ? Whether the number of those who shout these slogans is 50 to 500, we may not ignore them. We must try to discover their grievance.We may not treat them with contempt, if we are believers in ahimsa. No argumentum ad hominem will do. It is no answer to say that they are mercenaries, for you may be sure that not any and everyone who is offered a train fare and a wage would consent to come here. They must to an extent believe in their mission.[3]

They should remember that these people must bear some ill-feeling against certain things. That was why they came. One thing they could understand was that these people wanted to destroy something which they wanted to create.

And at the back of their mind is the feeling that 'Gandhism' is out to destroy what they hold dear. If that is the case, they may well desire the destruction of Gandhism. When we see the thing in this light we can afford to keep our temper. We will then try to meet and plead with them and assure them that we do notdesire to obstruct their work.[4] I do not say that you will immediately win them over, but you will certainly check the spread of the poison. Retaliation is counter poison, and poison breeds more poison. The nectar of love alone can destroy the poison of hate.[5]

These people were raising cries many times a day but afterwards they became silent of their own accord. It might be if they bore with it in silence their virulence might increase but they must be prepared for eventualities. They would bear in silence not on account of weakness but through patience out of which strength would grow.

[1] A conference of about 200 constructive workers of Bengal and volunteers of Malikanda was held in the morning.

[2] This paragraph is from Amrita Bazar Patrika.

[3] The following paragraph is from Amrita Bazar Patrika.

[4] Amrit Bazar Patrika here has : "If they did not offer resistance it might be that they would go away after shouting to their hearts' content and the poison would not spread."

[5] The following paragraph is from Amrita Bazar Patrika.

Therefore let not the cries anger you. Let none of you think of drowning those cries in the cry of "Mahatma Gandhiki Jai".You have done well in not shouting counte slogans. You have thereby sterilized theirs, and very little mischief has been done. If the forbearance is based on ahimsa, I am sure they will ultimately be still.[1]

Gandhiji advised workers to devote themselves to constructive work and not to try to keep the Congress organization under their control by any means. They must be prepared to leave the Congress if they were hampered in carrying out the constructive work. The service of the Congress did not lie in four-anna membership. There were crores of people who were outside the Congress but they loved and respected the Congress and they served the Congress better than those who were in control of the Congress to secure power and position. Gandhiji said he would say that those who had silently taken to the charkha were serving the country better than those who were inside the Congress but did not constructive work.

Therefore I have told you that he who takes up the charkha with a knowledge of its implications serves the Congress cause better than Congressmen.[2]

He was glad to know that the constructive workers of Bengal had resolved to spin no less than 60,000 yards annually. If they regularly spun for half an hour daily it would not be difficult to spin one lakh yards annually. It was no big thing but out of consideration of self-interest they should do it. The cost of weaving was not much. If they spun they would serve the country. It was better that they took a vow that would give them strength and determination to perform work regularly.

If, however, there is the slightest hesitance on your part, I would ask you not to take the pledge but try to do your quota without taking it.[3]

Though spinning might seem monotonous Gandhiji said that he called charkha "Daridranarayana Annapurna". If 500 or 1000 people took the vow of doing constructive work, that would provide money for poor weavers. That was why he called the charkha "Annapurna".

There is, however a flaw in self-spinning to which I should like to draw your attention. You will of course spin to make your own cloth, but you will to that extent deprive the poor spinners.[4] The wheel is meant for them. But though there is this flaw in it I am asking

[1] The following paragraph is from Amrita Bazar Patrika.

[2] *ibid*

[3] *ibid*

[4] Amrita Bazar Patrika here reports : "He conceded there was some truth the argument that to the extent they used khadi they deprived the mill workers of their bread."

you all to spin in order to universalize spinning.[1]

If they used khadi not only for wearing but also for other household purposes that would consume more khadi and give more bread to the poor people.

Those of you who are too poor to purchase khadi will of course card and spin for yourselves. But such of you as can afford to buy your khadi will send the 60,000 yards to the Spinners' Association, which will thus be able to reduce the price of khadi in its stock by adding to it the gift of your yarn[2]. That will enable poor people, who can neither spin for themselves nor purchase khadi today, to buy the khadi thus made cheaper for them.[3]

In other countries crores of people were conscripted for military service. One hour's spinning for service to the nation by all was conscription which he wanted his countrymen to impose on themselves.

This is what I call voluntary labour tax. In Europe there is compulsory military service. Let us have compulsory non-military service here.[4]

Their method was non-violence and they would not resort to violent methods but he merely asked everybody to give one hour's work for national service. This would provide bread for the poor and destitute.

All that you do, you will do intelligently, of your free will, and out of a spirit of service.[5]

Concluding, Gandhiji said the civil disobedience movement would not be possible unless they prepared themselves in this way. So far as he could see he would not be able to launch civil disobedience unless by constructive work they had succeeded in eschewing violence completely.

Along with khadi are the other cottage industries, Harijan service, and other items of constructive work, which, if solidly done will create the strength that political work, so called, cannot. That may preclude the necessity for civil disobedience and will automatically end the Hindu-Muslim tension, abolish untouch ability, abolish the squabbles between the 'leftists' and the 'rightists' and break the chains of slavery. This to my mind is rashtradharma[6] par excellence.

Harijan, 9-3-1940, and Amrita Bazar Patrika, 25-2-1940

[1] The following paragraph is from Amrita Bazar Patrika.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*
[4] *ibid*
[5] *ibid*
[6] Duty towards nation

7. ADDRESS TO BENGAL WOMEN WORKERS

MALIKANDA,

February 24, 1940

Politics means not merely to sit on the Congress Executive. Real politics is in spinning.[1]

He drew their attention to the vow taken by the male workers to spin 60,000 yards yarn a year and said that women should spin more than that.

Menfolk have taken to spinning, but let me confess that the art comes more naturally to you than to them. One of the reasons is that men have many other avenues of employment. And if swaraj has to come through the charkha, your share in the fight for freedom is going to be greater. Again if swaraj has to come through non-violence, then too your place in the fight will be in the forefront, for Nature has given you a greater capacity for suffering than she has to men. In order also to wipe out the reproach of inferiority and subjection that man has imposed on woman, you will take your privileged part in the fight and prove to the world that you are better fighters for freedom than men.[2]

Mahatma Gandhi congratulated them on the management of the kitchen during the Seva Sangh Conference and urged them to engage all their spare time in spinning which he said would bring swaraj to India.

Harijan, 9-3-1940, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 26-2-1940

8. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN CHAUDHARI

February 25, 1940

CHI. RAMNARAYAN,

Your time is fully occupied. Do not take up any more work. Your main job is to attain proficiency in khadi work. It is not at all difficult to do the carding according to the Andhra method. Consult Krishnadas.

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapu : Maine Kya Dekha, Kya Samjha, p. 133

[1] This and the following paragraph are from The Bombay Chronicle.
[2] What follows is from The Bombay Chronicle.

9. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING[1]

MALIKANDA,

February 25, 1940

Mahatma Gandhi at the outset expressed gratification that he was able, after many years, to meet so many people here. Gandhiji said :

I have been presented a purse of Rs. 18,000.[2] This money will be spent in Bengal for the service of the poor. I have nothing to tell you new. Four resolutions were passed at the Nagpur Congress[3]. I regard them as four pillars of the country's indepe-ndence.Those included Hindu-Muslim unity, untouchab-ility, prohibition and charkha. If we can give effect to those four resolutions, swaraj will be won automatically. I have the same if not more regard for those programmes today.[4] In that programme millions of the masses could take part. I hope the vast gathering here, which consists of Harijans and Muslims as well, will fulfil those programmes.

The programme of charkha can be taken up by everyone, including the old and the young. It is a matter of regret that the charkha has not yet been taken up by all. It pains me that most of you who have come here are not clad in khaddar. If you spin your yarn, you will not have to complain to me of the dearness of khadi. If you spin for half an hour daily you can meet your own requirements of cloth. If you are not prepared to devote one hour a day to spinning, how can we claim to attain swaraj ?

People of other countries make huge sacrifices in retaining their independence. If we pin our faith on ahimsa we will not have to spend croresof rupees nor sacrifice millions of people for our independence. Till my death,I will talk of no other means of achieving independence. I would repeat the programme that I have laid before the country. Women can take more effective part than men in achieving independence through ahimsa. Women as much as men must work side by side for the country's independence. Whether in charkha or removal of untouchability, they must not lag behind men. From times immemorial, in India it had been the duty of women to spin. Even today women spin more than men. If charkha be the sole weapon for winning swaraj then women can certainly contribute more than men

[1] Gandhiji addressed a gathering of 50,000 before his departure for Calcutta in the afternoon.

[2] This was the balance from the money collected for the session of Gandhi Seva Sangh

[3] In December, 1920

[4] The following sentence is from Amrita Bazar Patrika.

towards the country's independence[1].

My prayer to God is that women of India may be inspired with the ideal of the charkha and induce their relations to take to the charkha.

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-2-1940, and Amrita Bazar patrika, 26-2-1940

10. QUESTION BOX

CONSTRUCTIVE ORGANIZATIONS

Q. Since you have excluded politics from the Gandhi Seva Sangh,[2] what do you say of the Harijan Sevak Sangh ? Should they fly the national flag on their various institutions ?

A. I have no hesitation in sayin that all theconstructive organizations should eschew politics as we at present know it. It may sound strange but it is true that the more these organizations devote themselves exclusively to their own particular missions, the morethey will flourishandthe more they will serve the national cause.It should be enough that these organization are mostly manned by Congressmen or Congress-minded men. But they are and should be untouched by party politics. They would and ought to welcome the co-operation of all parties. They provide a non-political meeting ground for persons representing diverse schools of political opinion. When party politics separate us from one another even in non-controversial matters, it is a sure sign that something is wrong in the State of Denmark. It is a sure sign of intolerance. It follows from what I have said that these constructive institutions ought not to fly the national flag, especially so when it has become a cause of quarrel between Muslims and Hindus.

CALCUTTA, February 26, 1940

Harijan, 2-3-1940

11. WHAT I SAW IN SANTINIKETAN

The visit to Santiniketan was a pilgrimage for me. I had long intended to go there, but the opportunity offered itself only on my way to malikanda. Santiniketan is not new to me. I was first there in

[1] Amrita Bazar Patrika adds here : "and establish a precedent in world history".

[2] *V*ide "Speech at Gandhi Seva Sangh Meeting—III", 22-2-1940

1915 when it was yet taking shape, not that it is not doing so even now. Gurudev is himself growing. Old age has made no difference to the elasticity of his mind. Santiniketan will therefore never cease to grow so long as Gurudev's spirit broods over it. He is in everyone and everything in Santiniketan. The veneration in which he is held by everyone is uplifting because it is spontaneous. It certainly uplifted me. The title the grateful students and staff gave him accurately describes the position he commands in Santiniketan. He does so because he has lost himself to the place and the congregation. I saw that he was living for his dearest creation : Visvabharati. He wants it to prosper and to feel sure of its future. He had a long talk about it with me but that was not enough for him, and so as we parted he put into my hands the following precious letter :

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

You have just had a bird's-eye view this morning of our Visvabharati centre of activities. I do not know what estimate you have formed of its merit. You know that though this institution is national in its immediate aspect it is international in its spirit, offering according to the best of its means India's hospitality of culture to the rest of the world.

At one of its critical moments you have saved it from an utter breakdown and helped it to its legs.[1] We are ever thankful to you for this act of friendliness.

And, now, before you take your leave of Santiniketan I make my fervent appeal to you. Accept this institution under your protection, giving it an assurance of permanence if you consider it to be a national asset. Visvabharati is like a vessel which is carrying the cargo of my life's best treasure, and I hope it may claim special care from my countrymen for its preservation.

With Love,

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Who am I to take the institution under my protection ? It carries God's protection because it is the creation of an earnest soul. It is not a show thing. Gurudev himself is international because he is truly national. Therefore all his creation is international, and Visvabharati is the best of all. I have no doubt whatsoever that Gurudev deserves to be relieved of all anxiety about its future so far as the financial part is

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Rabindranath Tagore", 27-3-1936.

concerned. In my reply[1] to his touching appeal I have promised all the assistance I am capable of rendering. This note is the beginning of the effort.

CALCUTTA, February 26, 1940

Harijan, 2-3-1940

12. MY ADVICE TO NOAKHALI HINDUS

Manoranjan Babu and other friends from Noakhali came to see me during my stay in Malikanda about the difficulties of the Hindus in their locality. Manoranjan Babu has been in correspondence with me in the matter for some time. I have not examined the grievances. I had neither the time nor the wish to do so. That is the special province of the Provincial Congress Committee and finally the central body. But I had no difficulty in giving general advice. Their case is more or less like the Sukkur case.[2] There is a great difference in degree. But I feel sure that no popularly elected Government can successfully cope with widespread goondaism as it is alleged to be in Noakhali. It is essentially a case of self-defence. Self-respect and honour cannot be protected by others. They are for each individual himself or herself to guard. Governments can at best punish offenders after the offence has been committed. They cannot assure prevention except in so far as punishment acts as a deterrent. Self-defence can be violent or non-violent. I have always advised and insisted on non-violent defence. But I recognize that it has to be learnt like violent defence. It requires a different training from that which is required for violent defence. Therefore, if the capacity for non-violent self-defence is lacking, there need be no hesitation in using violent means.But Manoranjan Babu being an old Congressman said, "You say I cannot retaliate even in self-defence ?" "That is certainly my view,"I replied."There was, however, a resolution passed by the Gaya Congress[3] that the use of force in self-defence was permissible to Congressmen. I have never justified the resolution. Non-violence becomes meaningless if violence is permitted for self-defence. What is it but self-defence in national resistance against an aggressor nation? I would therefore advise secession from the Congress, if you contemplate the use of force in defending yourselves in the circumstances described by you."

"But," said Manoranjan Babu, "supposing I adopt the Gaya resolution, would I be accused of communalism if I defended the

[1] *Vide* "What I Saw In Santiniketan", 2-3-1940

[2] *Vide* "Sind Tragedy" 6-1-1940

[3] In 1922

aggrieved Hindu ?" "Certainly not," I replied. "In the first place, you do not cease to be Hindu because you are a Congressman. You will, however, be guilty of communalism, if you sided with Hindus right or wrong. In the case in point you will defend Hindus not because they are Hindus but because they are afflicted. I would expect you to defend Muslims if you found them molested by Hindus. A Congressman recognizes or should recognize [no] communal distinction."

The interviewers then discussed the Congress dissensions and told me that many Hindus despairing of Congress aid had joined the Hindu Mahasabha, and asked whether they could do likewise. I told them that in theory I could see no objection. Whether the local circumstances justified the step or not I could not judge. But if I was a Congressman and found that as such I could not act effectively, I should not hesitate to join an organization which could render effective assistance. I added,however, that no responsible Congressman could hold office in a Congress organization and yet be a member of the Hindu Mahasabha which is frankly a communal organization. The whole question bristles with difficulties. The occasion demands calmness, truthfulness and boldness. Communalism is bound to win, if the Congress cannot become effectively non-violent. It will itself become communal in action if it plays with non-violence. For the majority of Congressmen who are Hindus are bound to drift into violence, if they do not know the effective use of non-violence. I am quite clear in my mind that the Congress can remain non-communal only if it becomes truly non-violent in all matters. It cannot be non-violent only towards the rulers and violent towards others. That way lie disgrace and disaster.

CALCUTTA, February 26, 1940

Harijan, 2-3-1940

13. THE RIGHT STEP

It was not without a pang that I advised the important step taken by the Gandhi Seva Sangh[1].The harakiri was performed when the Sangh was in full bloom of life. Kishorelal Mashruwala is one of our rare workers. He is indefatigable. He is conscientious to a fault. No detail escapes his vigilant eye. He is a philosopher and popular writer in Gujarati. He is as good a Marathi scholar as he is a Gujarati scholar.

[1] At its meeting on February 22, 1940; vide "Resolution at Gandhi Seva Sangh", 12-2-1940

He is singularly free from race, caste or provincial pride or prejudice. He is an independent thinker. He is no politician. He is a born reformer. He is a student of all religions. There is no trace of bigotry in him. He avoids responsibility and publicity. And yet there is no man who having undertaken responsibility would discharge it with greater thoroughness than he. It was with great difficulty that I succeeded in persuading him to become President of the Gandhi Seva Sangh. His industry and single-minded devotion brought the Sangh the importance and usefulness it has shown. In utter disregard of his health (I count this no merit but a demerit in a public worker), he made himself available to all seekers at all times. No wonder he became indispensable to the Sangh. With infinite care he produced a constitution for the Sangh which can be used as a model by any such organization.

I mention these details not to glorify Kishorelal. He needs no glori- fying. I mention them for my own satisfaction and to show the reader and especially the retiring members and the numerous sympathizers of the Sangh that the step was not taken without the utmost deliberation. For the past two years we, its builders, have been groping. We have been fee--ling that it was not performing the function worthy of its ideals. It has ever remained untouched by party or power politics. It was born to supp-ort and popularize the constructive part of the Congress programme Kish-orelal was wearing himself out to make it effective. But we were not sati-sfied with the result. With our vaunted boast that as votaries of the Gita we were not concerned with results, there should have been no internal dissatisfaction. But it was there. The cause, as it has turned out, was not poverty of results but poverty of the mission. We were, at least I was, groping for the exact mission of the Sangh apart from its function of being a distributing agency for funds donated orcollected by Jamnalalji for the support of constructive Congress workers. It was in Malikanda that I discovered the central disease and the remedy. The Sangh was a superfluity so far as the mere carrying out of the constructive programme was concerned. For the necessity had brought into being the A. I. S. A., the Harijan Sevak Sangh, the A. I. V. I. A., and the Talimi Sangh. Was there nothing else for the Sangh to do which would be worthy of the ability and sacrifice of workers like Kishorelal ?

Painfully the answer came in Malikanda. The Sangh has to explore the possibilities of ahimsa in all walks of life. It has to find out whether in reality the activities known as constructive have vital connection with, or are inevitable consequences of, the application of

ahimsa to national life. Ahimsa in theory no one knows. It is as indefinable as God. But in its working we get glimpses of it as we have glimpses of the Almightly in His working amongst and through us. It is the function of the Sangh to apply their mind as scientists to this laborious task.The constructive activities of the different organizations furnish the Sangh with ample data for its investigations. When the mission was discovered we found that we were poor in missionaries for shouldering the tremendous responsibility. It is good that the discovery has been made.Without the past five years' incessant labour it might not have been made. The Sangh has been kept alive in the hope that the right men, maybe women, would be forthcoming to approach the mission than which no nobler is to be found. Let the retiring members know that for them, too, the work has only now begun. Let them become unseen and silent workers in the research laboratory and send their results to the Sangh. Their legal connection with Kishorelal is finished. The purer and unbreakable connection has only now begun. In the new president the Sangh has an equally well-tried and equally conscientious worker. Jajuji is no philosopher, he is no writer. But he is more practical. He has been in charge of the Maharashtra branch of the A. I. S. A. His labours have made of it the success it is.

The reconstruction is a right step. It must bear the right fruit.

CALCUTTA, February 26, 1940

Harijan, 2-3-1940

14. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,
February 26, 1940

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have not been quite as forgetful of you as you think. I wrote a letter at Santiniketan[1] which P[yarelal] forgot to post till we reached Malikanda ! I wrote another at M[alikanda].[2] But I have wanted to write every day. The thing has been impossible.Mira has been writing. She is better. P. is still on the brain. Her address is care Pandit Jagat Ram, Hariana. She has been moving about under his directions.

Charlie is better. I have not seen him yet. I shall tomorrow. Ba

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 18-2-1940
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 23-1940

is laid up. Fever and severe cough. I shall have to leave her here. You will tell Sushila.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 3963. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7272

15. MESSAGE TO PEOPLE OF MANIPUR[1]

[Before *February 27, 1940*][2]

Gandhiji sympathized with the plight of the people of Manipur, and expressed the opinion that they were justified in agitating for amelioration of their grievances.

Gandhiji, however, wanted them to realize his inability to render them any help except his moral support, and advised them to keep absolutely peaceful and non-violent in their agitation.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-2-1940

16. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

February 27, 1940

CHI. KANAIYO,

If you are insisting that you will eat bread in the morning only on condition that others also get it, you should give up such fussing. You need bread, others do not. Everyone may eat what he needs. If you have still any doubt, ask me.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II

17. FAREWELL MESSAGE TO BENGAL[3]

CALCUTTA,

February 27, 1940

I give brilliant good wishes to Bengal from the bottom of my heart, because I consider myself as good a Bengali as I am a Gujarati.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 28-2-1940

[1] This was sent through Lalit Madhab Sharma and another leader of Manipur.

[2] The report is date-lined "Gauhati, February 27, 1940".

[3] Gandhiji gave this to the Press reporters before his departure for Patna.

18. LETTER TO ABDUL MAJID KHAN

[*February 1940*][1]

Since you have the support of all the eminent Congressmen, if you are defeated it will be because the majority of graduate voters are not Congress-minded.[2] It will also show that in your province at least the Congress hold oh the educated men is not as great as it should be. I hope you will win.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

19. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[3]

CALCUTTA,
March 2, 1940

The question has come from London whether the Congress has closed the door to negotiation and compromise. My interpretation of the resolution[4] is that the Congress has not closed the door. It has been closed by Lord Zetland.[5] There can be no negotiation on his terms so far as the Congress is concerned. India will not be a helpless partner in her own exploitation and foreign domination.The Congress will not rest till India is a free country as Britain is. And if India accepts non-violence as her settled policy, she will be freer than Britain. Britain, which has ruled the waves, is in danger of losing her liberty. I have prescribed a remedy which is fool-proof. Whether the Congress will be instrumental in gaining India's freedom or not is a different question. The resolution states in unequivocal terms that the Congress will enter into no compromise that gives India less. The other thing that the Congress has made clear is that the British aim being known to be no other than the consolidation of the British Empire, the India that is influenced by the Congress can be no party to the war. In other words, the Congress cannot give Britain its moral support. The third thing the resolution makes clear is that the fight,

[1] As supplied in the source

[2] The addressee was a candidate for. the Punjab University fellowship elections.

[3] This appeared in Harijan under the title "What Resolution Means".

[4] *Vide* Appendix " Resolution at Gandhi Seva Sangh", 12-2-1940

[5] *Vide* "Is It War ?", 17-2-1940 "Statement to the Press", 14-2-1940 and "Another Englishman's Letter", 16-3-1940.

whenever it comes, will be strictly non-violent and, therefore, under severe discipline. The choice will be Britain's, not that of the Congress, whether India is once more to be a prison house for those who will rather be prisoners and even go through greater sufferings than be helpless witnesses of their country's continuous subordination to Great Britain or any other Power.

CALCUTTA, March 2, 1940

Harijan, 9-3-1940, and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 3-3-1940

20. WHEN THE BRITISH WITHDRAW[1]

> Unless you adopt an all-party form of government, you are paving the way towards sowing Hindu-Muslim conflict after the British protection is withdrawn. It was not non-violence but your tremendous magnetism plus the backing of British bayonet that kept the congress in power. Try non-violence without the latter for two or three months, and the truth of the above will be realized.

Thus writes an esteemed correspondent. I have no difficulty in endorsing the remark that it was the British bayonet that kept the Congress ministries inpower.My"magnetism"may have had something to do with the victory at the polls. But it proved utterly useless to keep the ministries in power. The sustaining force was the British bayonet. This only shows that the people at large have not yet imbibed the lesson of non-violence.

The remedy is not an all-party government.Such will be no government of the people, for the people.It will be the government of a caucus for its own ends. The caucus will have no smoother sailing than the Congress ministries had. It will also have to rely upon the British bayonet. There can be no manly peace in the land unless the British bayonet is withdrawn. The risk of riots has to be run. Non-violence will be born out of such risks, if at all it is to be part of national life. It is daily becoming crystal clear that real unity will not come so long as the British bayonet crushes the free spirit of the people. The peace it imposes is the peace of the grave. I feel that riots will be a welcome relief, if that is the price we have to pay for freedom. For out of them I can conceive the possibility of peace coming, not out of the present unreality. The way out of riots on the one hand and British bayonets on the other is frank acceptance of non-violence. To this my life is dedicated and my faith in its

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

possibility and efficacy will survive the dissolution of my body.

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA, March 3, 1940

Harijan, 9-3-1940

21. LETTER TO PREMI JAIRAMDAS

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA,
March 3, 1940

CHI. PREMI,[1]

You have given me news regularly. I wonder if you are still there. I hope the progress continues.

Love to you all.

BAPU

SHRI PREMIBEHN
C/O. DR. C. S. SAHANI
KHANDWA

From the original: C. W. 11049. Courtesy: Arjun Jairamdas

22. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN,
March 3, 1940

CHI. NIMU,

I have your letter. You will have the other news from the letter to Ra[mdas]. The train has stopped as if for you ! Kanam will not surrender to force. Let us be satisfied by getting him to do as much as is possible by love. He certainly will progress.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Nirmala Gandhi Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] This is in the Devanagari script.

23. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

[*March 3, 1940*][1]

CHI. PRABHA,

I had your letter. I am very happy to know that you are quite well. Ba is better now. She is with me. She will not accompany me to Ramgarh. We shall be there on the 10th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3537

24. A VERY USEFUL PUBLICATION

Shri Satis Chandra Das Gupta of Khadi Pratishthan has just published a volume called *Home and Village Doctor* (price Rs. 5 cloth-bound, Rs. 6 leather-bound). It contains 1,384 pages, has 18 chapters on the human body, care of systems, nutrition, hygiene and sanitation, nursing, accidents,home treatment, cheap remedies, diseases of the various organs, care of pregnant mother and child, infections and constitutional diseases as well as those relating specially to women. Particular contents are exhaustive, and it has a copious index at the end covering 32 pages. There are 219 instructive illustrations. It was during my second imprisonment here that I wrote and asked medical friends to give me a book after the style of the excellent publication *Moore's Family Medicine.* I wanted, however, something better and more indigenous in the sense that a layman serving in villages could handle with ease. A book was promised but the promise could not be fulfilled. Satis Babu came to the rescue and with his amazing industry has produced a book which should meet my requirements. As he says in his introduction he would not publish it till I had read it through and certified it as satisfactory. He supplied me with the chapters as they were getting ready; then when he had finished the whole volume he bound it and sent it to me. I carried it with me for one year or longer but could never get the time required. In despair I wrote to Satis Babu to publish the book as it was. He was quite content to leave the work unpublished, but I could not think of

[1] From the G.N. Register

allowing such labour of love given with infinite care to be lost. I confess that I do not quite like the bulk of the volume. If I could have revised it, probably it would have been curtailed. But Satis Babu has erred, if he has erred at all, on the safe side. I hope that every village worker knowing English will make it a point to possess a copy which can be had from the Khadi Pratishthan, 15 College Square, Calcutta.

SEVAGRAM, March 4, 1940

Harijan, 23-3-1940

25. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

After *12·30 a.m., March 5, 1940*

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

I have got up to write to Vinoba. I am, therefore, writing to you also. I have written to Vinoba about the Gandhi Seva Sangh. The answer to your question is as follows :

No general rule can be laid down regarding discharges. If the nerves have become weak, discharges would occur even when no desire was felt. This would be a condition of extreme weakness. If discharges are the result of physical urge, they must be conquered. In either case, however, we have no option but to endure them. It is but obvious that the fewer the discharges the better for the person. To the question how many may be considered safe, there can be no reply. Some may be debilitated even by one. Some feel no visible effect even if they get one every week. I would, therefore, advise you not to worry about their number but go on, patiently and with faith, taking measures to control them. "Action alone is thy province, never the fruits thereof"[1] applies completely in this case, too.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I cannot conceive of any circumstances in which you may be justified in retiring to the Himalayas.

For the present, at any rate, there is no question of your going to jail. I have not as yet thought over the subject from all points of view.

BAPU

From Gujarati : C.W. 805. Courtesy : Balkrishna Bhave

[1] Bhagavad Gita, II. 47

26. QUESTION BOX

IS IT VOLUNTARY ?

Q. The local officials have been collecting money from the people in aid of the war fund. But the way in which they have been raising money, though it is supposed to be voluntary giving, seems to be practical coercion. They arranged for a drama, but under instructions from the officials the village teachers (some of whom get about 12 or 15 rupees per month), the village munsif, bazaar-keepers, all had to buy tickets varying in price from one to fifteen rupees each. A petty shop-keeper whose income is only about Rs. 15 had to pay Rs. 5 for a ticket though the man never attended the drama. He told me he paid the money because the local Sub-collector, Tehsildar, Circle Inspector of Police were all there in person to collect the money. I am told Rs. 3,500 were raised in one night in my village. Will you advise what to do

A. If what you say is true, it is naked coercion. There is nothing voluntary in the people's action. I can only hope that the higher authorities do not know anything about such high-handed procedure. Your duty is clear. You must tell the people that they ought not to submit to coercion. They are as free to refuse to buy tickets as they are free to buy them. You and they should run the risk involved; you in instructing the people, and they in refusing to pay.

A YOUNG MAN'S DILEMMA

Q. I am a young man of 22 years. Is it legitimate for me to refuse to oblige my father in the matter of marriage if I do not wish to marry ?

A. According to the Shastras and also reason, children when they reach the age of discretion, which the former prescribe as 16, become their parents friends, i.e., are free from parental dictation. They are still bound to consult them and defer to their wishes wherever they can. You are full-grown, and in a matter so vital as marriage you should respectfully refuse to marry if the match is not to your liking or for any other valid reason.

A DOMESTIC DIFFICULTY

Q. I am a young man of 23 years. For the last two years, I have been using pure khadi only. Fro the last 28 days I have been spinning regularly in my leisure time. But my wife refuses to wear khadi. She says it is too coarse. Should I compel her to use khadi ? I may also mention that I find our temperaments are incompatible.

A. This is the common lot of life in India. I have often said that the husband, being the stronger and more educated party, has to act as tutor to his wife and put up with her defects, if any. In your case you have to bear the incompatibility and conquer your wife by

love, never by compulsion. It follows that you cannot compel your wife to use khadi. But you should trust your love and example to make her do the right thing. Remember your wife is not your property any more than you are hers. She is your better half. Treat her as such. You will not regret the experiment.

ANOTHER DOMESTIC DIFFICULTY

Q. I am married. My wife is a good woman. We have children. We have lived together in peace hitherto. Unfortunately she came across someone whom she has adopted as her guru. She has received gurumantra[1] from her and her life has become a closed book for me. This has given rise to coolness between us. I do not know what I should do. Rama, as portrayed by Tulsidas, is my ideal hero. Should I not do what Rama did, and cut off all connection with my wife ?

A. Tulsidas has taught us that we may not indiscriminately imitate the great. What they may do with impunity we may not. Think of Rama's love for Sita. Tulsidas tells us that before the appearance of the golden deer the real Sita at the behest of Rama disappeared in the clouds and the mere shadow remained. This fact was a close secret even from Lakshmana. The poet further tells us that Rama had a purpose which was divine. It was with this shadow of Sita that Rama dealt, after the appearance of the golden deer on the scene. Even so Sita never resented any single act of Rama. All such data would be lacking in any mundane case, as they are lacking in yours. Therefore my advice to you would be to bear with your wife and not interfere with her so long as you have no cause of complaint against her conduct.If you adopted someone as your guru and had your gurumantra and if you did not impart the secret to your wife, I am sure you would not relish her resenting your refusal to disclose the secret. I admit that between husband and wife there should be no secrets from one another. I have a very high opinion of the marriage tie. I hold that husband and wife merge in each other. They are one in two or two in one.But these thingscannot b regulated mechanically. All things considered, therefore, since you are a liberal-minded husband, you should have no difficulty in respecting your wife's reluctance to share the secret with you.

MUSLIM WEAVERS AND MILL YARN

Q. By insisting on the use of certified khadi only, you have delivered a very severe blow to the Muslim weavers on the one hand who are mostly using mill yarn, and on the other to the consumer who is thus induced to purchase certified khadi which is notoriously dear. I am a Muslim working for the uplift of the weaver class. I appeal to you to remove this double hardship by sanctioning the use of hand-woven

[1] A mystic formula prescribed by a guru

mill yarn khadi.

A. There is no communalism in khadi. The A.I.S.A. has thousands of Muslim spinners and hundreds of Muslim weavers on its books. Khadi has as yet made little impression upon mill yarn weavers. What it has done is to provide occupation to those Hindu and Muslim weavers who were thrown out of employment by mill competition. Those weavers who do not take to weaving hand-spun are cutting their own throats because the natural consequence of the spread of mills will be the destruction of weavers as it has been that of hand-spinners. The handloom weavers who have held their own are pattern weavers. If khadi became universal, Muslim and other weavers who are today weaving mill yarn would, as a matter of course, take to weaving hand-spun. Thus there is no case of khadi ever hitting a single weaver. In fact it is his sole protection.

A TICKLISH QUESTION

Q. I am a Hindu student. I have been great friends with a Muslim, but we have fallen out over the question of idol worship. I find solace in idol worship, but I cannot give an answer to my Muslim friend in terms of what may be called convincing. Will you say something on idol worship in Harijan ?

A. My sympathies are both with you and your Muslim friend. I suggest your reading my writings on the question in Young India and, if you feel at all satisfied, let your Muslim friend read them, too. If your friend has real love for you, he will conquer his prejudice against idol worship. A friendship which exacts oneness of opinion and conduct is not worth much. Friends have to tolerate one another's ways of life and thought even though they may be different, except where the difference is fundamental. Maybe your friend has come to think that it is sinful to associate with you as you are an idolater. Idolatry is bad, not so idol worship. An idolater makes a fetish of his idol. An idol worshipper sees God even in a stone and therefore takes the help of an idol to establish his union with God. Every Hindu child knows that the stone in the famous temple in Benares is not Kashi Vishwanath. But he believes that the Lord of the Universe does reside specially in that stone. This play of the imagination is permissible and healthy. Every edition of the Gita on a book-stall has not that sanctity which I ascribe to my own copy. Logic tells me there is no more sanctity in my copy than in any other. The sanctity is in my imagination. But that imagination brings about marvellous concrete results. It changes men's lives. I am of opinion that, whether we admit

it or not, we are all idol worshippers or idolaters, if the distinction I have drawn is not allowed. A book, a building, a picture, a carving are surely all images in which God does reside, but they are not God. He who says they are errs.

EDUCATED UNEMPLOYMENT

Q. The problem of unemployment among the educated is assuming alarming proportions. You of course condemn higher education, but those of us who have been to the University realize that we do develop mentally there. Why should you discourage anyone from learning ? Would not a better solution be for unemployed graduates to go in for mass education and let the villagers give them food in return ? And could not Provincial Governments come to their aid and help them with some money and clothing ?

A. I am not against higher education. But I am against only a few lakhs of boys and girls receiving it at the expense of the poor tax-payer. Moreover I am against the type of higher education that is given. It is much cry and little wool. The whole system of higher education and for that matter all education needs radical overhauling. But your difficulty is about unemployment. In this you have my sympathy and co-operation. On the principle that every labourer is worthy of his hire, every graduate who goes to a village to serve it is entitled to be housed, fed and clothed by the villagers. And they do it too. But they will not when the graduate lives like saheb log and costs them ten times as much as they can afford. His life must accord as nearly as possible with that of the villagers and his mission must find appreciation among them.

SEVAGRAM, March 5, 1940

Harijan, 9-3-1940

27. SEGAON BECOMES SEVAGRAM[1]

There is Segaon near Wardha where I am trying to be a villager. And there is Shegaon, a station on the main line about 132 miles west of Wardha. The result was that many letters and wires meant for Segaon, Wardha, went to the Shegaon station. In order to avoid this confusion an application was sent to the authorities on behalf of the villagers to change the name of Segaon to Sevagram. It is a name with a meaning. It means a village dedicated to service. The villagers who signed the application did so fully knowing what they were doing.

[1] This appeared under “Notes”.

Let us hope they will live up to the meaning of the name they have chosen to give to their village. Correspondents will please bear the change in mind.

SEVAGRAM, March 5, 1940

Harijan, 9-3-1940

28. WHEN ?

Everybody is asking me not whether but when I am to call the country to civil disobedience. Some of my questioners are the most sober among co-workers. To them the Patna resolution[1] has no other meaning than that the struggle's coming is a question of days. It is proof that the country, or that part of it that has hitherto taken part in the struggle for freedom, is tired of waiting and suspense. It is heartening to think that there are in the country so many persons who count no sacrifice too dear for gaining independence.

While, therefore, I admire the zeal of my questioners, I must warn them against being impatient. There is nothing in the resolution to warrant the belief that the atmosphere is suitable for declaring civil disobedience. It will be suicidal to declare it when there is so much indiscipline and violence within the Congress itself. Congress-men will make a serious mistake if they do not give full weight to my words. I cannot, will not, start mass civil disobedience so long as I am not convinced that there is enough discipline and enough non-violence inCongress ranks.The apathy about theconstructive programme, i.e., spinning and sales of khadi, I take to be positive signs of unbelief. Battle through such instruments is foredoomed to failure. Such persons should know that I am not their man. If there is no hope of attaining the necessary measure of discipline and non-violence, it would be better to let me retire from leadership.

Let it be clearly understood that I cannot be hustled into precipitating the struggle. They err grievously who think that I can ever declare civil disobedience, having been driven thereto by the so-called leftists. I make no such distinction between rightists and leftists. Both are my co-workers and friends. He will be a bold man who can with any measure of certainty draw the line of demarcation between leftists and rightists. Congressmen and non-Congressmen should also

[1] *Vide* Appendix VI.

know that, even if the whole country were to turn against me, I must, when the time comes, fight single-handed. The others have or may have weapons besides non-violence. I have no choice. Being the author of non-violent technique in the political field, I am bound to fight when I feel the urge from within.

It is inherent in the technique that I never know the time-table in advance. The call may come at any time. It need not be described as from God. The inner urge is a current phrase easily understood. Everybody sometimes acts upon the inner urge. Such action need not always be right. But there is no other explanation possible for certain actions.

The thought often comes to me that it would be a good thing if the Congress could forget me. I do sometimes feel that with my strange views of life I am a misfit in the Congress. Whatever special qualifications I may possess and for which the Congress and the country may have use, can perhaps be better utilized if I were wholly cut off from the Congress. But I know that this severance cannot be brought about mechanically or violently. It will come in its own time, if it has to come. Only Congressmen should know my limitations and should not be surprised or grieved if they find me stiff and unbending. I ask them to believe me when I say that I am incapable of acting without the fulfil-ment of the conditions laid down for declaring mass civil disobedience.

SEVAGRAM, March 5, 1940

Harijan, 9-3-1940

29. NOTE TO M. V. NAGALINGAM[1]

SEVAGRAM,

March 5, 1940[2]

The body is like a letter writ on water.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Tamil : G.N. 874

[1] The addressee was then rendering scavenging service at the Ashram.

[2] The date-line is in Devanagari.

30. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,

[On or after *March 5, 1940*][1]

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have Manilal's letter. Herewith a letter to Mrs. Fagson. I am glad I met her. She is a very good woman. How is West[2] doing ? How is Sorabji ? Give me all the news from there. Things are going on all right here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4873

31. TELEGRAM TO GUJARAT VIDYAPITH

[On or before *March 6, 1940*][3]

GLAD DR. MONTESSORI IS VISITING AHMEDABAD. HOPE THE VIDYAPITH WILL PROFIT BY THE DISTINGUISHED VISITOR'S PRESENCE.

BAPU

The Hindu, 7-3-1940

32. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

March 6, 1940

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. May God grant you enough strength to bear

[1] In the source the place name Segaon has been struck off and substituted by Sevagram. This change was notified on March 5, 1940; vide "Segaon Becomes Sevagram"

[2] A. H. West, printer of Indian Opinion and a close associate of Gandhiji in South Africa.

[3] The report is date-lined "Ahmedabad, 6-3-1940".

your new burden[1]. I have no doubt that you will acquit yourself well in the work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3538

33. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SEVAGRAM, WARDH
March 7, 1940

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

Here is a letter from Lilian[2]. I have sent her a consoling reply. I have your note. You need have no worry about the sisters. I have told you about Kallenbach's money. But you will not use it for any other purpose no matter what requests for aid you might have.

I hope you are making steady progress.

Love from us all.

MOHAN

From a photostat : G.N. 993

34. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 7, 1940

CHI. VIJAYA,

I have your letter. Did you climb Mount Abu all alone ? If you did not feel any after-effects, then your health must have greatly improved.

Has Nanabhai[3] recovered completely ?

Ba is fully restored. I will most probably leave here on the 13th for Ramgarh. Ba is not going with me. It is good news that both the

[1] In connection with women volunteers for the Congress session at Ramgarh. *Vide* footnote , 29-1-1940

[2] Addressee's sister

[3] Nrisimhaprasad Kalidas Bhatt

schools[1] are running well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 7124. Also C.W. 4616. Courtesy : Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

35. ASHRAM NOTES

SEVAGRAM,

March 7, 1940

I hear that many persons who forgo a meal do not inform the kitchen, with the result that food is wasted. It is therefore requested that whoever wants to forgo a particular meal should notify the kitchen in time.

This and such other notes issued from day to day should be displayed on the wall.

BAPU

From Hindi : C.W. 4674

36. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEVAGRAM,

March 7, 1940

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have read your previous letter. My impression was correct. There was nothing in it to which I could object. I do not consider your second letter proper. Sushila is convinced that she is here to provide me medical care. Hence she considers it her duty to be wherever I may be. She says that it is of no consequence to her whether I accept this position or not. She will be content if I always keep her with me. She will be ready to make exceptions in cases of emergency sickness. If I take her along with me with any other thought, it will be sheer self-deception. Hence, as I view the situation, it presents a dilemma. Then, Sushila also says that she does not mind being considered the sixth in the same place as the other five. I would not be inviting any blame if I take it that way, because Sushila is useful to me in many ways other than medical services. But I do not

[1] The Home School of Bhavnagar with which Nanabhai was connected and the school at Ambla where addressee's husband worked

consider any of the other five indispensable. I can let any of them go whenever I desire. Actually, five are not like that. Just as I can relieve any of the five any time I wish, I can also relieve Sushila. But when I say so, she refuses to believe me because she does not trust me. That is the crux of the matter. The fact remains, however, that one may try to gloss it over with sweet words. How can I overcome this distrust? It is a pitiable situation.

Now about you. If I considered you someone separate, I would consider doing something by way of repentance. But that thought is not in my mind any longer. Now you are what Mahadev is.

So you must now guide Sushila in a manner you think fit. I am absolutely clear in my mind. Her decision to leave is a great mistake. But what I think is of no consequence. Whatever you two consider as dharma will be dharma.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

37. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA
March 8, 1940

DEAR MARY,

. . . Bapu says you must give up spinning on the takli while reading. It is bad for your eyes. And you must concentrate on improving your speed which is very slow at the moment. . . .

Yours,

AMRIT

From a photostat : G.N. 6078. Also C.W. 3408. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur

38. LETTER TO VINAYAKPRASAD G. PANDYA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 8, 1940

BHAI VINAYAKPRASAD,

I could reach your letter only today. If you bear with the opposition and go on doing your work with single-minded devotion, a

day will come when the spinning-wheel will have become popular.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VINAYAKPRASAD G. PANDYA
BAJVADA, KHATRI POLE
BARODA

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 1368

39. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 8, 1940

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have your letters. Manilal's reproach is justified. I knew about the struggle there. But I did what I could. From here I could not give you any other advice. What could Jawahar have done ? I cannot put such a burden on him. I do not regret what I did or the advice I gave. Does not the final decision rest with you there ?

Medh writes and tells me that he wishes to come here and consult me. He is welcome to do so. I gather that in any case he has to come.

Ba is better. Whenever she makes the slightest mistake she falls ill. Kunvarji is well. Valjibhai is leaving today for Bombay and Ahmedabad.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4909

40. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

March 8, 1940

CHI. SITA[1],

I could reply to your letter, only today. You should write in ink. Your English handwriting is beautiful, but your spelling seem very poor.Not'copisition'but'composition',not'georaphy'but'geography

[1] Manilal Gandhi's daughter

’[1]. Your Gujarati handwriting is hardly legible. I shall wait and see what your reply is like.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4910

41. LETTER TO RASIKLAL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 8, 1940

BHAI RASIKLAL,

I am reaching your letter of February 7, 1940, only today. The celebration is over now; I am watching your work. I am firm in my opinion. Those who will remain steadfast will not only keep their own self-respect but will also uphold the prestige of the people of Limbdi.[2] If . . .[3] workers keep themselves out, the number of workers counted by you is good. But strength lies in quality, not in numbers.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

42. LETTER TO PYARELAL

March 8, 1940

CHI. PYARELAL,

Your letter is painful. It is strange. Maybe we are talking in different languages. No, your very first sentence is not correct.

I am totally against Sushila staying with me only as my physician and for my sake. I have never kept her with me on those terms and I am not keeping her like that today. I have kept her as my daughter and sister. I still wish to keep her. But I see that I have committed a grave fault. I followed the path of untruth. I let her believe that she is with me only as my physician. If she goes, it will be

[1] The source has these words in English
[2] *Vide* “ Limbdi”, 31-8-1939
[3] The word is unintelligible.

my expiation.

What else should I write? What can I do when language is ineffective? The circumstances have not changed. My untruth has come to light.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

43. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

March 10, 1940

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. May your faith bear fruit. Write to Sardar from time to time. I am sure you keep Nanalal informed, too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8571. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

44. LETTER TO PYARELAL

March 10, 1940

CHI. PYARELAL,

This letter is not a little painful. Though painful I shall bear it, as I am doing.

The words you put into my mouth express your belief not mine. Only the portion which seems superfluous is real. Neither S. nor anyone else is indispensable to me. Nor can anyone have a higher or a lower place. Such a fear can never be real. What I see is that I have lost the trust of both of you. Where is the question of argument where there is trust? If S. feels humiliated in staying here or if it will mean her undoing, I must put up with her departure. S. is not at all superfluous. She enjoys the same position which Mahadev and you enjoy. She is with me not as my physician, but as she happens to be with me, I avail myself of her medical skill.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

45. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 10, 1940

I can judge only when you tell me all that has been done. This much is of course true that our living here is getting quite luxurious. We should think how far it may be tolerated.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 4339

46. FOR ENGLISHMEN

Thus writes a very responsible Englishman to a common friend. The receiver sends it to me for answer :[1]

I have just been reading with very real concern the text of the resolution[2] which the Working Committee adopted yesterday. I am writing as a very ordinary Englishman who has been interested in India for a good many years. . . . I do not believe that my sympathy with or attitude towards Indian aspirations is in any way peculiar to myself; the views I hold . . . are pretty generally held by a large number of Englishmen. I can speak with some confidence on this point as I am in fairly close touch with several people who exercise some influence over English opinion and have been working with increasing success to create an atmosphere favourable to granting India's demand for full dominion status. What are we to make of the Committee's

latest move and of what appears to be the rather sudden and drastic change from a demand for dominion status to one for complete independence ? I have far too great a respect for Gandhiji and the other Congress leaders I have met to believe it is either bluff or arises from a hasty resentment at our regrettably unforthcoming attitude during the early negotiations. They ought to know us well enough by now to realize how difficult we find it to do the handsome thing in a handsome way; and yet on the whole I think it is our manners which are at fault more often than our intentions.

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.
[2] *V*ide A ppendix "A Resolution", 1-3-1940.

If, therefore, the resolution must be taken to mean what it says and we are invited to remove ourselves bag and baggage forthwith, I cannot help asking you very seriously whether you are really able to rule India without any help from us. When I was up on the Frontier last summer I met a number of large and fierce gentlemen who were literally gloating at the prospect of enjoying themselves at India's expense once the English were gone. There are also, I believe, other parties who would not hesitate to exploit the difficulties of the new Indian Republic. Non-violence is, I admit, a powerful weapon against people with some prejudices against the physical coercion of those who do not defend themselves, but I doubt its effectiveness against those who regard the whole idea with contempt. Can you keep these forces in order or are we to contemplate handing India over to administrative chaos and possible, even probable, civil war ? You may say that that is your affair and if such difficulties arise you will deal with them in your own way, but that does not ease my mind. I am not concerned to defend either the circumstances under which we got control over India—in view of her defenceless condition in the latter part of the 18th century some other power would no doubt have taken advantage of it, if we had not—nor the way we have treated her since, for the worse our record may be made to appear the more incumbent it is upon us, in my opinion, not to divest ourselves of our responsibilities of the penalties of our own misdeeds, if you like, until there is an equally stable as well as a more enlightened administration ready to take over from us. I know that if I heard six months after we left India that Hindus and Muslims were killing one another in the face of an impotent government, I should not feel without blame, and I am certain that many Indians and other people as well would point to it as the evil legacy of British domination. I cannot therefore persuade myself that we English can fairly leave India until we have put her in a position to stand firmly on her own feet. When that time comes I will go gladly. I believed it was coming soon but my experience does not suggest that it has arrived yet. As dominion status seems to me to be a long step towards it, why is it unacceptable ?

. . . I know the East End of London fairly well and I can assure you that it is the purest nonsense to say that the electors of Silver-town are fighting or voting to bolster up British imperialism. They realize that we are up against evil things and that life even under the conditions of dockland is a better thing than it would be under Nazism. They know too, or if they do not I am afraid they will know before they are much older, that this is going to be a desperate struggle and that victory, if and when it does come, will have been bought at a terribly high price. How are they going to feel towards those people in India who by trying to obstruct our war effort at this critical stage did their best to give that little push to the scales that might well have meant defeat ?

You may say, 'What do we owe to England and what do we care whether she is defeated or not ? This is the opportunity we have been waiting for and we mean to take it.' . . . Civil disobedience and the troubles to which it will certainly give rise will embarrass us seriously and cause exasperation, if not much worse, between people who ought to be friends, but I do not see how by itself it is going to get rid of us, particularly when we are mobilized. If it is unsuccessful and we win the war in spite of it, the very people who, I firmly believe, would have recognized India's forbearance to add to our difficulties in the most generous way will feel a resentment which it will take a generation to dissipate. If on the other hand you are able to make us lose the war, do you really believe that the Germans or Russians will either keep their hands off India or will be more active in giving her complete independence than we have been ? If your answer is 'no', then would you sooner be ruled by Nazis or Bolsheviks than by us ?

I do believe I have been honestly sympathetic towards Congress aspirations and so far as my limited experience goes have tried honestly to interpret them to friends in England. But this latest development I cannot understand or justify either on grounds of logic or even of expediency. Can you help me ? I know I shall be getting enquiries from home before long and should like to answer them fairly. At the same time while the generals are manoeuvring, is there any way in which a private soldier like myself could be of assistance ? There is so much goodwill in danger of being wasted.

The letter represents the thoughts of many Englishmen who are well disposed towards the Congress. And yet it betrays a tragic ignorance of Indian thought. Thus the writer says, "What are we to

make of the Committee's latest move and of what appears to be the rather sudden and drastic change from a demand for dominion status to one for complete independence ?" Now complete independence has been the definite goal of the Congress since 1929,[1] and has been repeated every year from thousands of platforms. From that year to this the Congress has never even so much as mentioned Dominion Status. There is, therefore, no change whatsoever in the Congress demand. The question of suddenness or drasticness simply does not arise. Confusion arises from my oft-quoted letter to Mr. H. S. L. Polak wherein I said in 1937, that if Dominion Status with the right to secede was offered, I for one would accept it.[2] I had no authority to bind anyone else to that statement. Needless to say the offer was never made. Whatever may be said of me, no charge of change of policy can be brought against the Congress. So far as I am concerned, I have changed. Experience since gained and maturer reflection have led me to think that Dominion Status even of the Statute of Westminster variety cannot suit India's case. I have only recently given[3] my reasons for the change of opinion which I need not repeat here.

When the writer thinks that India cannot yet stand on her own legs, he has not even Dominion Status in contemplation. For Dominion Status is nothing if it does not mean the ability of the Dominion in question to stand by itself.

What the Congress has definitely asked for is Britain's declaration that it will give effect to the decisions of a duly elected Constituent Assembly. In other words, Britain should recognize the right of India without any outside interference or influence to determine her own future. It may be even Dominion Status. It may be less than independence or a modified form of it. It may also be complete independence. The Congress will not lower its flag. But the Constituent Assembly is not synonymous with the Congress. This Assembly will include representatives of all parties who can secure sufficient votes. Therefore all minorities will be represented in their full strength.

It is a great pity that even the best of Englishmen are, as a rule,

[1] *Vide* "Draft Resolution for A.I.C.C., Lahore", 26-12-1929; "Speech at Congress Session, Lahore—II", 31-12-1929 *et seq.*

[2] *Vide* "Letter to H. S. L. Polak", 27-1-1937.

[3] *Vide* "Notes", 11-12-1939.

woefully ignorant of the Indian claim. They are too selfsatisfied to take the trouble of studying the Indian case. They will not read nationalist papers. They take their opinions from the Anglo-Indian papers which themselves generally betray amazing ignorance about the thoughts, aspirations and acts of nationalist India. It has been the lot of the Congress to be misrepresented from its inception. I suggest that responsible Englishmen should meet, say, the best-known Congressmen of the left and the right schools of thought, and I promise that much misunderstanding will be removed. It may be that even then there will be honest differences of opinion. These will always exist.

The writer dreads to think what will happen to India if Englishmen were to vacate the country bag and baggage. Such a contingency is inconceivable in a non-violent struggle. The end of non-violent action is a friendly settlement. If he means merely the English soldiers, they will certainly go if they will not serve independent India or if they are not wanted because they are too expensive or for any other cause. It must not be forgotten that the Indian struggle is not anti-British, it is anti-exploitation, anti-foreign-rule, not anti-foreigners. Underlying the writer's fear is the possibility of India deciding upon something beyond its capacity. This honest English belief in the incapacity of India to come to a sane judgment or to defend herself against civil war or foreign aggression is perhaps the greatest stumbling-block in the way of an honourable settlement. If the fear is justified, the only antidote is to run the risk and let India learn wisdom and the art of self-defence by becoming free. Any other course means almost perpetual helplessness and foreign domination. Surely it is better for India, England and the world that a helpless sub-continent runs the greatest risk for coming into its own than that in its sickness it becomes a dead weight to itself and the world. The distinguished writer seems to admit the wrong Britain has done. It will not be undone by Britain being the judge of India's destiny and cherishing the distant hope that one day India will be fit enough to shoulder full responsibility for internal and external defence. The very argument advanced by the writer against India determining her future seems to me to be conclusive for ending British rule at the earliest moment possible.

If the position taken up by me is the correct one, the Nazi or Bolshevik menace can have no meaning for nationalist India, especially as its defence is rooted in non-violence.

But the writer evidently has no faith in non-violence of the strong. I must wholly disagree with him when he says, "Non-violence, I admit, is a powerful weapon against people with some prejudices against the physical coercion of those who do not defend themselves, but I doubt its efficacy against those who regard the whole idea with contempt." The real test of non-violence lies in its being brought in contact with just those who have contempt for it. The writer would be right if he were to say that such unadulterated non-violence has not yet been used by the Congress. The answer would be that I am trying my utmost to present India and through it the world with a completed example of non-violence. I may fail. But I invite Englishmen to assist the experiment if they have even a faint belief in the possibility of the exercise of such non-violence.

With the poor opinion the writer has of the working of non-violence, it is no wonder that he trembles at the thought, when the British retire from India, "of a number of large and fierce gentlemen who were literally gloating at the prospect of enjoying themselves at India's expense once the English were gone". Is it likely that an assembly of elected men and women who had such a fear would sign their death warrant by asking the English to retire in order that they may be devoured by "large and fierce gentlemen" of the Frontier ? I suggest to the writer that, if and when the English retire, both the Muslims and the Hindus will find it profitable to live in peace as they used to do before the British advent. If there had been perpetual quarrels, one or the other would have been wiped out. When real independence comes to India, Congresses and Leagues will be nowhere unless they represent the real opinion of the country. The presence of the British bayonet has created an artificial condition which suppresses the natural play of human action and demoralizes both the suppressed and the suppressors. Let me also add that the presence of the British forces has not prevented riots such as were seen in Sukkur or kidnappings and raids on the Frontier. Whatever success the forces achieve is after the events have happened. The sufferers are no better off for the punitive measures, nor is it possible to say that at least in the majority of such cases full reparation is made.

That the Congress resistance at this stage will embitter the English mind and will be remembered against India, is a possibility.

But my own experience of human nature, not excluding the British, is that bitternesses are forgotten when parties wish to come together. The suggestion presupposes the crushing of civil disobedience. There is no such thing in the civil disobedience dictionary. If there is violence, it will certainly be crushed because violence can only end in a disgraceful rout. There never has been previous preparation; the people themselves will be bewildered. They would not know what to do. But if, in spite of all the precautions I may take for a non-violent struggle, bitterness is still to be the residue, even that risk has to be run. Before the throne of the Almighty man will be judged not by his acts but by his intentions. For God alone reads our hearts. Freedom's battles are not fought without paying heavy prices. Just as man would not cherish the thought of living in a body other than his own, so do nations not like to live under other nations however noble and great the latter may be. Englishmen who are undergoing tremendous sacrifices for preserving their freedom should not fail to appreciate India's travail. The Congress does not say: 'Give us Congressmen what we want.' Is says to the Rulers : 'Not you but the elected representative of the nation should decide its fate.' If such a reasonable proposition is circumvented, what should the Congress do ?

SEVAGRAM, March 11, 1940

Harijan, 16-3-1940

47. WOMEN AND VOLUNTARY ENDEAVOUR

Shrimati Rajkumari Amrit Kaur writes :[1]

> . . . I have recently addressed all our branches of the All-India Women's Conference[2] and asked them to take up what you have termed "sacrificial spinning" as a practical way of helping khadi. If women of the leisured classes would spin regularly and give their yarn to the A. I. S. A., it could be utilized for sustaining the recent increase in the wages of spinners which the Association has introduced. . . . Spinners are women; they live if khadi lives; if we can help to raise their earnings to a living wage, we are at once only giving them economic independence but we also raise the dignity of their labour.

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

[2] The annual session of which was held at Allahabad from January 27 to 31, 1940

. . . While it is open to those who will not spin to help by donations, the value of work which makes us one in spirit with the poor, which enhances the dignity of all labour, especially women's labour, and which develops within us a love of hand-woven and hand-spun cloth as nothing else can, is something which cannot be reckoned in terms of money.Girl students in colleges often ask me in what way they can serve the country. Each one of them could contribute her quota in this manner too.

I shall be very grateful if you will give your blessing and approval to this scheme and thereby strengthen my appeal. We ought of course to be able to raise many more than 3,000 volunteers to join hands in this endeavour. . . .

I heartily endorse this appeal. It will be a shame if even three thousand sisters cannot be found who would labour for the starving millions. It is well that the Rajkumari as laid stress on identification with the poor through labour willingly and cheerfully done.

SEVAGRAM, March 11, 1940

Harijan, 23-3-1940

48. KHADI BANKS[1]

A correspondent writes :[2]

I believe in khadi. . . . But my means are limited. So I made it a point to lay aside Re. 1 per month. Yet I am afraid the saving is within easy reach of pressing needs. So I conceive a scheme of 'Khadi Banks'. . . . An amount of money may be deposited at a time or at suitable intervals with a certified A.I.S.A. khadi bhandar. Such a bank would differ from a money bank in that the money once deposited cannot be withdrawn except through khadi purchase equivalent in value. The A.I.S.A. may issue *hundi*[3] books to such customers who may from time to time draw *hundis* of appropriate denominations on the bhandar and purchase khadi.

The advantages of having such banks are obvious. . . . the A.I.S.A. would be in a position to guarantee the wages of the wage-earners. . . . the interest earned by the A.I.S.A. would be capitalized and utilized towards reduction of the cost of khadi to purchasers without in any way injuring the wages of the wage-earners. . . .

[1] This appeared under "Notes".
[2] Only extracts are reproduced here.
[3] Promissory note

The suggestion reads attractive. Let the A.I.S.A. experts consider it. If the purchasers will forgo interest and a sufficient number subscribe, it should be possible to cheapen khadi.

SEVAGRAM, March 11, 1940

Harijan, 16-3-1940

49. DISCUSSION WITH A MISSIONARY [1]

SEVAGRAM,

[Before *March 12, 1940*][2]

[Q.] Could you tell me the things one should avoid in order to present the gospel of Christ ?

[A.] Cease to think that you want to convert the whole world to your interpretation of Christianity. At the end of reading the Bible, let me tell you, it did not leave on my mind the impression that Jesus ever meant Christians to do what the bulk of those who take his name do. The moment you adopt the attitude I suggest, the field of service becomes limitless. You limit your own capacity by thinking and saying that you must proselytize.

I see what you mean. We have been cumbered by creeds and man-made things. We feel that we sould be in a place where all barriers have broken down.

Gandhiji instanced a few Christians who, he said, saw the central fact that, if they wanted to live this Christian life, they should literally follow the words : "Not he that sayeth 'Lord, Lord', but he that doeth His will."[3]

You are living a guided life. Could you kindly tell me your experience or guidance ?

I do not regard God as a person. Truth for me is God, and God's Law and God are not different things or facts, in the sense that an earthly king and his law are different, because God is an Idea, Law Himself. Therefore it is impossible to conceive God as breaking the Law. He therefore does not rule our actions and withdraw Himself. When we say He rules our actions, we are simply using human language and we try to limit Him. Otherwise He and His Law abide everywhere and govern everything. Therefore I do not think that He

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Occasional Notes"

[2] The discussion took place before Gandhiji left for Ramgarh on March 12.

[3] *St. Matthew*, VII. 21

answers in every detail every request of ours, but there is no doubt that He rules our action, and I literally believe that not a blade of grass grows or moves without His will. The free will we enjoy is less than that of a passenger on a crowded deck.

Do you feel a sense of freedom in your communion with God ?

I do. I do not feel cramped as I would on a boat full of passengers. Although I know that my freedom is less than that of a passenger, I appreciate that freedom as I have imbibed through and through the central teaching of the *Gita* that man is the maker of his own destiny[1] in the sense that he has freedom of choice as to the manner in which he uses that freedom. But he is no controller of results. The moment he thinks he is, he comes to grief.

Harijan, 23-3-1940

50. JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN[2]

The arrest of Shri Jayaprakash Narayan is unfortunate. He is no ordinary worker. He is an authority on socialism. It may be said that what he does not know of Western socialism nobody else in India does. He is a fine fighter. He has forsaken all for the sake of the deliverance of his country. His industry is tireless. His capacity for suffering is not to be excelled. I do not know what speech has brought him within the law.[3] But if 124 A or the highly artificial Sections of the Defence of India Act are to be inspanned for catching inconvenient persons then any person whom the authorities want can be easily brought within the law. I have said before now that it is open to the Government to precipitate a crisis if they wish to. They have every right to do so. But I have hugged the hope that the fight will be allowed to develop along its natural course so long as it keeps strictly non-violent. Let there be no camouflage. If Shri Jayaprakash Narayan is guilty of violence, violence should be proved. What the arrest has done is to make the people believe that the British Government want to force the issue. History will then have repeated itself. During the first civil disobedience the Government had forced the issue by arresting the Ali Brothers[4]. Is this arrest a prearranged plan, or is it a

[1] *Bhagavad Gita,* VI. 5

[2] This appeared under "Notes".

[3] *Vide* "A Brave Statement", 26-3-1940.

[4] They were sentenced to two years' imprisonment on November 1, 1921.

blunder committed by an over-zealous officer ? If it is the latter, it should be set right.

SEVAGRAM, March 12, 1940

Harijan, 16-3-1940

51. QUESTION BOX

DO I DISTRUST THE VICEROY ?

Q. Does not your identifying yourself with the Patna resolution[1] of the Working Committee betray distrust in Lord Linlithgow, although you have professed to believe in his sincerity ?

A. You have read into the resolution what is wholly unwarranted by the text. I do not doubt the Viceroy's sincerity. I have not known a Viceroy who has weighed his word as Lord Linlithgow does. It is a pleasure to have a talk with him. For he speaks with the greatest deliberation. His speech is, therefore, always brief and to the point. I adhere to the remark I made about our last meeting that, although we could not agree, we had come nearer each other.[2] We might have gone on talking for a few days, but we would only have talked round the subject and repeatedly come to the same point of disagreement. I was under no handicap for I was speaking for myself. He was under a severe handicap. He was speaking under orders. He had no authority to go outside his instructions. And so we parted the best of friends. But so far as I am concerned, I expect many more meetings. The resolution makes the Congress position clear beyond doubt. It represents also my own position. If the British Government really mean full-hearted Dominion Status with the right to secede, then they can have no difficulty in accepting the Congress position. Unfortunately Lord Zetlands' interview[3] shows that it is not India which is to determine her future but Britain will do so for her. This is not even Dominion Status of any known variety. Once the British Government are sure that they can no longer hold India, all the difficulties that are now being put forth on their behalf will vanish like darkness before dawn. For they are all of their creation. They are

[1] *Vide* Appendix "A Resolution", 1-3-1940.

[2] *Vide* "Task Before Us", 6-2-1940

[3] *Vide* "Is It War ?", 13-2-1940, "Statement to the Press", 14-2-1940 and "Another Englishman's Letter", 16-3-1940.

inherent in exploitation. I hope you now see that there is no question of distrust of the Viceroy. Events had to move to where they are.

FEAR OF 'ISMS'

Q. You say that no such thing as Gandhism exist, and that what you stand for is nothing new. I am a Muslim. I see flashes of Islamic glory in Gandhism. As a student of theology I see the grandeur of Hinduism and the vigour of Christianity amply expounded in Gandhism. It includes also to a considerable extent the chaste philosophy of the entire East. I search the pages of India's past history, but your creed I do not find. Why, therefore, is it not new, and why may it not be termed Gandhism for those of us who believe in you and therefore it ?

A. I have a horror of 'isms', especially when they are attached to proper names. Even if all that you say of me is true, it does not make a new sect. My effort is to avoid not only new sects but even to do away with old and superfluous ones. Ahimsa abhors sects. Ahimsa is a unifying force. It discovers unity in diversity. All that you say is derivable from ahimsa. To bring into being a new cult is repugnant to ahimsa, to the very experiment I am making. Thus you will, I hope, see that there is no room for 'Gandhism'.

WOMEN AND THEIR WORK

Q. You say, "It is degrading both for man and woman that woman should be called upon or induced to forsake the hearth and shoulder the rifle for the protection of that hearth. It is a reversion to barbarity and the beginning of the end."[1] But what about the millions of female labourers in fields, factories, etc. ? They are forced to forsake the hearth and become "bread-winners". Would you abolish the industrial system and revert to the stone age ? Would that not be a reversion to barbarity and the beginning of the end ? What is the new order that you envisage where the sin of making women work will be absent ?

A. If millions of women are forced to forsake their hearth and become bread-winners, it is wrong, but not so wrong as shouldering the rifle. There is nothing inherently barbarous in labour. I see no barbarity in women voluntarily working on their fields whilst they are looking after their homes. In the new order of my imagination all will work according to their capacity for an adequate return for their labour. Women in the new order will be part-time workers, their primary function being to look after the home. Since I do not regard the rifle as a permanent feature in the new order, its use will be progressively restricted even so far as men are concerned. It will be

[1] *Vide* "What Is Woman's Role ?", 12-2-1940.

tolerated as a necessary evil while it lasts. But I would not deliberately contaminate women with the evil.

ROMAN SCRIPT

Q. Why may not the illiterate masses be taught the Roman script ? This would eliminate the existing controversy between Urdu and Hindi.

A. To teach the Roman script in the place of Hindi and Urdu would be like putting the cart before the horse. Our children have first to learn both Hindi and Urdu scripts. Difficult questions cannot be solved by ignoring them or suggesting apparently easy substitutes. So long as hearts are divided the Roman scripts will not cement them. It would be an additional burden.

The learning of the two scripts is the best and the easiest way of at least solving the national language riddle. It opens Hindi and Urdu thought to both Hindu and Muslim boys and girls who will be the men and women of the future generation. The Roman script will be learnt at its proper time, i.e., when our boys and girls are taught the English language, as some undoubtedly will be.

HOW TO BEGIN ?

Q. Congress clamours for unity, but the principles which must be followed to attain that unity, viz., Hindu-Muslim fellow-feeling, no caste distinctions, no hatred towards each other and towards foreigners, co-operative endeavour, all these are presented to audiences through the microphone but not acted upon. Tell me, what are the duties of a Congress member ? I would love to join and will put forth all my energy to do my bit for the country.

A. You need not mind what others do or ought to do. Charity begins at home. Let yours begin with yourself. Abolish all caste and religious or race distinctions from your heart. Be true to everyone—Hindu, Muslim Harijan, English, etc., as you are, I hope, to yourself, and you will find that so far as you are concerned your difficulty will be solved and your example will be copied by others. Be sure that you have banished all hate from your heart, and that you have no political or other objective in loving and serving your neighbour as if he was your own self.

SEVAGRAM, March 12, 1940

Harijan, 16-3-1940

52. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA
March 12, 1940

CHI. MIRA,

I have your second letter. I have given you all the details I knew of P[1]. You are not to defy any orders. There is no C.D. for anybody as yet. When it is declared those engaged in constructive activities will be unaffected. You are engaged in such. Why do you anticipate my orders ? Last time you were engaged in political activities. This time you are not. A satyagrahi is always prepared for, but does not anticipate, repression. He imputes no evil to his opponent. Here is an interruption.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 6451. Courtesy : Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10046

53. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 12, 1940

CHI. VIJAYA,

I had your letter from Ambla about Abu. I have already replied[2] to it. Yesterday I got your letter written from Varad. Father[3] is suffering very much. May God release him. I hope he remains perfectly calm. I am leaving for Ramgarh this evening. Ba will remain here. Amritlal has returned from his tour. He must be writing to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. VIJAYABEHN
[C/O] NARANBHAI PATEL
VARAD, *via* BARDOLI, T. V. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 7125. Also C.W. 4617. Courtesy : Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

[1] Presumbaly, Prithvi Singh
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Vijayabehn Pancholi", 7-3-1940.
[3] Naranbhai Vallabhbhai Patel

54. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

SEVAGRAM,
March 12, 1940

CHI. JAJUJI,

The khadi problem has always been before me right from the beginning. In the past I used to insist that those who do sacrificial spinning must spin a fine count. We had come up to 40 count. Later I stopped insisting on it. The first thing now is that we must revive the practice and, secondly, we must teach the women spinners and ourselves to spin fine-count yarn of good quality. We should also effect improvements in the means necessary for fine spinning.

Anannual conference would of course be a good thing. I see no objection to its being held under the auspices of the Gandhi Seva Sangh. Why and where should we search for another body for that purpose ? You are right in what you say about the expenses. The centre must not bear them. The province which wishes to do so may bear them. The delegates' expenses, if any, should be borne by the respective provinces. This will ensure greater selflessness. Communicate these fresh conditions and reply to all those who have asked for [the conference]. We will decide the venue after we hear from them. I will try to attend.

Replacing Kishorelal by Gopabandhu Babu[1] will be all right.

I should like to point out the following, if not more, for research.[2]

(1) The problem, of how to popularize khadi, etc., is there, no doubt.

(2) Is there any necessary connection between village crafts like spinning, etc., and ahimsa ? If there is, what is the nature of that connection.

(3) What are the crafts which cannot be carried on without ahimsa ? And what are the ones in which violence is unavoidable ? Or is there no such distinction ?

(4) Does India have any special gift in regard to ahimsa ?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

[1] Gopabandhu Chaudhri
[2] This sentence is in Hindi.

55. DISCUSSION WITH CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES[1]

SEVAGRAM,
[March *12, 1940*][2]

[Q.] What started you on your career of leadership ?

[A.] It came to me, unsought, unasked. I do not know, though, what sort of leader I am, and whether what I am doing is leadership or service. But whatever it is, it came to me unasked.

But the friends who came were sure that they were leaders, and they asked for guidance as leaders of Christian thought.

All I can say is that there should be less of theology and more of truth in all that you say and do.

Will you kindly explain it ?

How can I explain the obvious ? Amongst agents of the many untruths that are propounded in the world one of the foremost is theology. I do not say that there is no demand for it. There is a demand in the world for many a questionable thing. But even those who have to do with theology as part of their work have to survive their theology. I have two good Christian friends[3] who gave up theology and decided to live the gospel of Christ.

Are you sure that no great result has come through your own study of Jesus ?

Why ? There is no doubt that it has come, but not, let me tell you, through theology or through the ordinary interpretation of theologists. For many of them contend that the Sermon on the Mount does not apply to mundane things, and that it was only meant for the twelve disciples. Well, I do not believe this. I think the Sermon on the Mount has no meaning if it is not of vital use in everyday life to everyone.

Is there not to be found a solution to the present-day problems in the teaching of Jesus ?

Well, you are now dragging me in deeper waters, and you will drown me.

What is the present trend of the thought of young India ?

It would take a brave and knowing man to answer this question.

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Occasional Notes".
[2] The discussion took place on March 12, the day Gandhiji left for Ramgarh.
[3] Samuel E. Stokes and C. F. Andrews

But I must tell you that you have overstayed your time already.[1] And if you go on questioning and cross-questioning me, I dare say you will floor me without being any the wiser for having done so.

Harijan, 23-3-1940

56. CABLE TO CARL HEATH

March [*13*][2], *1940*

CARL HEATH

FRIENDS HOUSE, EUSTON, LONDON

YOUR LETTER[3]. CONGRESS DOES NOT DICTATE. CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY OR EQUIVALENT INCLUDES ALL MINDS CONGRESS MUSLIM LEAGUE AND PRINCES IF THEY WILL COME AS ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES. SUCH ASSEMBLY ITSELF INVOLVES AGREEMENT NOT IMPOSITION. SITUATION NOW BAFFLING WAS NOT SO MONTHS AGO. HOLD CONGRESS ATTITUDE HONEST REASONABLE ANSWERS PRESENT REQUIREMENTS. NO OBJECTION PRELIMINARY SMALL MEETING REPRESENTATIVES. DIFFICULTY WHO WILL CHOOSE THEM. WE ALL WANT SETTLEMENT BUT OMENS POINT CONTRARIWISE.

GANDHI

From a photostat : G. N. 1035

57. LETTER TO CARL HEATH

ON TRAIN TO RAMGARH,

March 13, 1940

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have read yours[4] of 23rd February many times.

There should never be any difference of opinion between us, for

[1] Gandhiji had promised the missionaries five minutes although he was busy preparing to leave for Ramgarh.

[2] The source has "March 14". However, from the reference to this cable in the letter to Agatha Harrison dated March 13 it is evident that this was drafted on March 13 and despatched on March 14 from Hazaribagh.

[3] *Vide* "Another Englishman's Letter", 16-3-1940.

[4] *ibid*

there is complete heart contact and agreement as to the end and the means. If therefore there is any difference left, it can be due only to an incomplete appreciation of facts.

The Congress does not dictate or claim to be infallible. It does, however, deny dictatorship to the Muslim League, for example, and even dares to deny it to the British Government though as a matter of fact the latter is the dictator. Hence if the British Government will not resign the dictatorship, the Congress has perforce to use its only non-violent sanction to dislodge it from the position it should never have occupied.

What does the Congress ask ? It asks that all the interested parties appoint a tribunal which cannot err as to what is right, viz., a constituent assembly of representatives elected on the basis of adult suffrage or an equivalent. Independence or even dominion status of the sincere type means nothing if it does not mean self-determination by the people of India. The minorities represented on the Assembly will practically dictate their own safe-guards. Neither the Congress nor the Muslim League can be allowed to obstruct the proceedings of such an elected Assembly. Whoever does, adopts the role of a dictator.

There remain the Princes. They are free to come if they are elected not by the common vote but by the vote of their [own][1] people on the basis of adult suffrage. Pray remember they are a creation of the British Government. The treaties that are adverse to the rights of the people have no value but the Congress has not suggested any breach of treaty obligations. The page of British History in India is soiled with narratives of broken treaties, pledges and promises. But I personally recognize the British Government's difficulty in the matter. They have raised a monster, they cannot all of a sudden abolish him. There[fore] I have said : 'Deal with British India only.' The British Government have without reference to the Princes given to Provinces, i.e., British India, not real autonomy but a kind of glorified municipal self-government as it has turned out to be in practice. Let them now allow the people of British India the right of determining their mode of government through representatives elected as suggested above.

You have said "a small private but very responsible conference

[1] Illegible in the source

of a dozen representative Indian men work out to agreement[1] the main points of the desired constitution". The suggestion was discussed by the Viceroy. The difficulty is who will select the men ? Anything short of elected men will lead to nothing new in the present artificial atmosphere. Such a committee will naturally be elected by the larger constituent assembly.

What I have said can only be done by agreement, never by dictation. The question shorn of all camouflage resolves itself into this. Are the British Government prepared to make a declaration to convene at the earliest opportunity, not latter than the termination of the war, a constituent assembly of representatives elected on the basis of adult suffrage or an equivalent for the purpose of determining the mode of the Government of India including Princes' India, if possible, and without if they won't agree ? Pending the convening of such an assembly the Government of India will be conducted, as far as possible, as if it was responsible to the Central Assembly without the official[2] bloc and the Viceroy's Council shall contain a majority of elected representatives from the Assembly.

If in all I have said above you see dictation or want of the spirit of accommodation or disinclination to recognize British difficulty, you will please say so and tell me in what way the test fails and I shall try to give you satisfaction. There is no desire on the part of responsible Congressmen to pick a quarrel with the British Government. On the contrary there is keen desire to explore every means of conciliation.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 1034

[1] This should perhaps read : "work out by agreement"; *vide* also "Another Englishman's Letter", 16-3-1940

[2] The source, however, has "non-official".

58. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

ON THE TRAIN

March 13, 1940

MY DEAR AGATHA,

A cable is going to friend Carl Heath in answer to his letter. I enclose copy of my letter[1] and cable.[2]

Things are sliding. I am trying hard but perhaps the slide is not preventible. They are afraid to part with power. I would however ask you not to worry. I am not. If we act rightly, we need not be anxious about results. After all we don't control them. So long as the Princes and the Muslim League are put forth as obstacles, there can be no meeting-ground. The Princes are a new creation. They were never before brought into the picture. The Muslim League with its impossible demands cannot be allowed to interfere with the progress of the country. There are many private organizations. But they do not count, for they, more or less, support the Congress. What more can be said or done to placate them than that their duly elected representatives should determine their safeguards ? The war preoccupation is there. But the Indian claim is part of the war cares.[3] You accuse the Congress of ungratefulness because it raises a legitimate issue; well, what can I say ? Am I to repent of my having taken up a high stand ? Can the Congress pretend to have the non-violence it has not ? But I must not bother you with the troubles here. You have enough there. I know you are doing all you can and I am happy over the thought. Charlie is doing well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 1516

[1] *Vide* the who preceding items.

[2] *ibid*

[3] The source has "care".

59. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN,
March 13, 1940

BA,

I did not at all like leaving you. Follow Sushila's instructions as regards your medicine and food. I slept a great deal on the way. There wasn't much disturbance at the stations. There are about twelve girls with me from the Mahila Ashram. Do not worry about me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./XXIV

60. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

March 13, 1940

CHI. BABUDI,

Anand[1] must be fine. You can safely carry him and go out. Sushila may help you to carry him. The child's feet and stomach should be properly covered. You should go out for walks twice a day. Shakaribehn also must go for walks. Give Ba as much of your company as possible, sing *bhajans* to her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 10027. Courtesy : Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

61. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

ON THE TRAIN,
March 13, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

I do hope that you would not be able to go in spite of your wanting. It would be a great mistake to go. I have not the slightest

[1] Addressee's son

doubt about it. Ba also thinks the same. May God grant you forbearance and a sense of discrimination.

Satisfy Balwantsinha. Kishorelalbhai will be well. Coax Amtussalaam to take something for her cough. Gaura I hope is doing well.

Zohra had been here. She had also brought food.

I slept thrice during the day. I was mentally quite fatigued.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

62. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

ON THE TRAIN,

March 13, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I am not often guilty of working beyond my strength. I mean ahimsa does not permit working beyond limits. One who knows no limits knows no ahimsa. I too have my shortcomings.

It is certainly one's duty to speak pleasant words; but this entails a risk of slipping into untruth. I have a habit of speaking pleasant truth, it is a good habit. That is why I wrote of the possibility of my overdoing it. Is this enough ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 4340

63. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

RAMGARH,

March 14, 1940

The news of the death of Sir Michael O'Dwyer[2] and of the injuries to Lord Zetland, Lord Lamington and Sir Louis Bane has

[1] This appeared in *Harijan* under the title "An Insane Act".

[2] Formerly Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab. He was shot dead by Udham Singh on March 13, 1940, at a meeting of the East India Association in Caxton Hall, London.

caused me deep pain. I offer my condolences to the deceased's family, and hope that the injured will soon recover. I regard this act as one of insanity. Such acts have been proved to be injurious to the causes for which they are committed. I hope this will not be allowed to affect political judgment.[1]

Harijan, 23-3-1940

64. SPEECH AT KHADI AND VILLAGE INDUSTRIES EXHIBITION

MAZHARPURI, RAMGARH,

March 14, 1940

Opening the Exhibition . . . Mahatma Gandhi said :

I believe through khadi we can make the villagers of India self-conscious and self-sufficient and give them such strength that they will be able to take steps for their uplift.[2]

You can show the villagers that they have in their possession crafts that can stand the invasion of bombs from aeroplanes. But they are ignorant of their treasures which have been mostly looted, and are on the brink of extinction. We have to awaken them to a sense of those treasures and dispel their ignorance and darkness. That is the function of these exhibitions.

Mahatma Gandhi . . . paid a tribute to Mr. Shankerlal Banker of A.I.S.A. who had worked with zeal for the improvement of khaddar and village industries. Expressing his appreciation of the numerous exhibits, he declared that India had made an onward march with regard to cottage industries. Despite the forces of obstruction good progress had been maintained. The economic potentialities of village industries were indeed very great.

He urged that villagers should be enlightened with regard to the position obtaining in the world at large and how they were being exploited. Rich people had a

[1] The Congress Working Committee, which met at Ramgarh from March 15 to 19, passed the following resolution.

"The Working Committee has learnt with deep regret of the assassination of Sir Michael O'Dwyer and the wounding of Marquess of Zetland and others by a person said to be an Indian. The Committee does not attach any political significance to this unfortunate act of violence. Nevertheless it wishes to reiterate its conviction that all such acts are injurious to the national cause."

[2] The following paragraph is from *Harijan*.

great responsibility in as much as they could uplift and enrich rural life by supporting village industries. The Congress, for fifty years now, had been actively engaged in rendering such assistance.

No struggle was needed for swaraj, it could be obtained very easily and peacefully as also communal unity, he added.

Mahatma Gandhi emphasized the need for educating the villagers in making them conscious of their own potentialities. If they had been rendered unemployed or been exploited, it was mostly due to ignorance, which must be removed and the people made to understand that they need not live always as they had been in the past and unable to get out of the Slough of Despond. They should be made to know something of the outside world and how their land was being exploited. The most effective way to prevent such exploitation lay in reviving the village industries, specially the charkha. The Congress, for the last fifty years, attempted to uplift the villages. These gave birth to the Khadi Sangh and the Talimi Sangh. The former propagated the cult of the charkha while the Talimi Sangh illustrated how communal unity could be achieved.[1]

The true Indian civilization is in the Indian villages. The modern city civilization you find in Europe and America, and in a handful of our cities which are copies of the Western cities and which were built for the foreigner, and by him. But they cannot last. It is only the handicraft civilization that will endure and stand the test of time. But it can do so only if we can correlate the intellect with the hand. The late Madhusudan Das used to say that our peasants and workers had, by reason of working with bullocks, become like bullocks; and he was right. We have to lift them from the estate of the brute to the estate of man, and that we can do only by correlating the intellect with the hand. Not until they learn to work intelligently and make something new every day, not until they are taught to know the joy of work, can we raise them from their low estate.

A Bombay or a Calcutta did not represent true India, but it was the seven lakhs of villages that were spread throughout the country which were real India. The villagers must be made to realize their own inherent strength and capacities and taught to depend on themselves for their vital needs. They should be made to produce their own food and clothing, which could be done by successfully working out the programmes of khadi and village industries.

Proceeding, Mahatma Gandhi laid particular emphasis on the Talimi Sangh (basic education), which he claimed could solve the communal problem. As a matter

[1] The following paragraph is from *Harijan*.

of fact the working of the scheme so far had clearly demonstrated that this end could be achieved. The scheme of basic education, he asserted, was not inspired by any partisan motive. It was absolutely non-communal. The scheme had been often criticized by various people from different points of view, but he was convinced that this scheme was capable of bringing about complete harmony between the Hindus and Muslims.

Continuing his speech, Gandhiji said, any reform in India must begin with the villages. . . .

Gandhiji conceded that village crafts could not be exported. He did not want it. He wanted to make the poor villagers get food and clothing. Since 1919, the message of khadi had been placed before the country. The Charkha Sangh, the village uplift scheme as also the new Talimi Sangh were the out come of the same. He hoped people would devote more time to the exhibition.

Reiterating the importance of village industries, Mahatma Gandhi earnestly pleaded that everyone in this country should take to them seriously for the emancipation of India.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 15-3-1940, and *Harijan*, 30-3-1940

65. DISCUSSION AT WORKING COMMITTEE[1]

RAMGARH,
March 15, 1940

GANDHIJI : If some such statement[2] is made on behalf of the Congress it will help to educate the masses. It will place before the country a picture of the kind of freedom we aim at. . . .[3]

Gandhiji dropped the proposal. He, however, still held that a declaration would not be amiss in the present situation. It may do us good to tell the people what the meaning and content of our freedom is.

Gandhiji asked the members of the Committee to enlighten him on three questions, viz., (1) what should the Congress stand be if they were confronted with the demand for a division of India into Hindu India and Muslim India, (2) was the

[1] The meeting was attended by Abul Kalam Azad, Sarojini Naidu, Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Jamnalal Bajaj, Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Bhulabhai Desai, Shankerrao Deo, Profulla Chandra Ghosh, Harekrushna mehtab and J. B. Kripalani. Rajendra Prasad presided. C. Rajagopalachari and Gandhiji were present by special invitation. The Working Committee met from March 15 to 19, 1940.

[2] Earlier, Gandhiji had read out a draft resolution sent by Jayaprakash Narayan, for the text of which, *vide* "Jayaprakash's Picture", 14-4-1940.

[3] The proposal was opposed by Abul Kalam Azad, Jawaharlal Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel.

country prepared for civil disobedience, (3) what was their precise conception of Constituent Assembly.[1]

GANDHIJI : I want to give you a picture of what I understand by Constituent Assembly. In the transition period we will lay down no conditions for the British Government. The army will remain and so will their administrative machinery. There will be an agreement with the British Government before and after the Constituent Assembly. If we are in a minority we will accept the decisions of the Constituent Assembly, whatever they be, for discipline's sake if for nothing else. If they want the army to remain, we shall not resist. I may not even press for the withdrawal of the army if a minority wants it. If impossible demands are put forward, we will have to submit to them. If corrupt men come and spoil the show we are helpless. The larger the scale of franchise for the Constituent Assembly the better. Mutual goodwill is necessary for the Constituent Assembly to come into being and function efficiently. Without this the British Government may very well use the Princes and the Muslims as counterweight against us.

All that I have heard from you has strengthened my belief that the country is not ready for civil disobedience. I do not see much chance of improving our preparations. Whatever has been done in U.P. is good but I cannot evolve non-violence from the awakening created there by Jawaharlalji. Khadi will create non-violent strength in the people. I have no doubt we can get complete independence through non-violence. I can fight a whole world with a small disciplined Congress, but the big Congress we have is unwieldy. If the C. D. is started, disobedience' will remain and 'civil' disappear. As things are, I dare not start C. D. I may find a way out if [my] present relation with the Congress is severed. I cannot leave my programme. I am not obstinate. I am given no alternative programme. I cannot produce a non-violent army from the agitation that is created by propaganda. The people have to be disciplined by work. Such an army will not go astray. Non-violence in the masses can be easily created.

Sir Maurice Gwyer said to Bhulabhai in an interview with him that Gandhiji has grown stiffer about the goal. It is true. I do not find any honest response from the other side.

Inside the country I have my difficulties. Ifind no suitable

[1] This was followed by speeches of Bhulabhai Desai, P. C. Ghosh, Pattabhi Sitaramayya and others including Rajendra Prasad.

material for fight. I shall not start a fight unless my conditions are fulfilled. I don't want people to be crushed. If a fight is launched without proper preparations, it is the poor who will suffer. I had to withdraw from Rajkot as there was no internal strength. Whatever strength there was, was theatrical in character. My withdrawal was a great service to the people of Rajkot; but for it there would have been reaction and suffering. I don't want to do anything which will bring about demoralization. If the struggle is started and discipline is slack, and every group does what it likes there will be disaster and the cause will suffer. Everybody admits that there is indiscipline in the Congress and yet everybody participates in it. I don't mind if people get demoralized on account of waiting. That will be a lesser evil.

An alternative occurs to me. I should be freed from the burden of my connection with you and you go ahead. I will keep myself in reserve. If necessary I may join later[1] . I may be a broken reed and may land you into unexpected troubles. I might not begin the movement for an indefinite length of time, and I might stop it abruptly. However much you may agree with me, your ahimsa does not go as far as mine. And if after twenty years of practice of it I have not been able to win the affection and trust of the Mussalmans, my ahimsa must be of a very poor quality indeed. Why not then let me further examine myself, and make further researches in non-violence

Turning to the Maulana he said:

I have not the slightest doubt that the Congress and the nation can have nothing to lose and everything to gain by the step. There is no question of my distrusting you or other members of the Working Committee or the nation. It is a question of my distrust in myself. I am sure that, if you release me, I may be able to give civil disobedience a purer and a nobler shape.

But the Maulana demurred. He somehow could not reconcile himself to the proposal. "You must not forget," he said, "that it was at your command that I accepted to serve this year, and you cannot now forsake me. One cannot think of civil disobedience without you."

RAJAJI : Is civil disobedience the only way ? Can we not try another method ? If we think our strength is small we must relate our demand to our strength.

[1] The report in *Harijan* here adds : "It would free them from what might be acting upon them as an incubus, and it would at the same time leave him free to pursue his experiment of ahimsa more intensively and without thought of the millions who looked to him for direction."

GANDHIJI : I have not given up the idea of resistance but I don't find any suitable atmosphere for it. The man who has tried the experiment throughout his whole life will certainly try it once again. But I have to carry on my shoulders the burden of the Congress organization. I will not think in terms of this organization if you release me. I can start struggle when I find my men ready. I may even do it alone at a pinch. This is what I did at Champaran[1]. I did not have behind me then the prestige and the influence of the Congress. I am giving you my mind as it is necessary that you should know my position. The resolution is not yet passed.

MAULANA SAHIB : Your always telling the people that they are not ready for a fight demoralizes them.

GANDHIJI : If it does I cannot help. I cannot lower the demand, from the people or the Government. We are asking for a Constituent Assembly today. I am no more talking in terms of dominion status. That has not been the Congress position. That was my position. The Britishers are unwilling to go even so far. I am however giving up that position now.[2]

Wardha Office Satyagraha File, 1940-41. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

66. ANOTHER ENGLISHMAN'S LETTER

Last week I dealt with a letter from a well-known Englishman who is in India[3] . Now I have a letter from a responsible English friend[4] in England, from which I give below all that the readers need to know:

> We are quite certain that no such thing as 'banging the door' has happened. The Government still anxiously desires a settlement to be reached. Even if normally it did not want this, it is bound to do so at the present time, in view of the terrific war in which this country is engaged. The feeling, however, is growing amongst Government people that the Congress is increasingly regarding 'settlement' as meaning what it alone considers right. Apart from the fact that that is not of the nature of a settlement, but rather of a one-sided dictation, I am bound to remind you that a war condition does not

[1] I n 1917

[2] The meeting was then addressed by Jawaharlal Nehru, Abul Kalam Azad and C. Rajagopalachari.

[3] *Vide* "For Englishmen", "For Englishmen", 11-3-1940.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Carl Heath", 13-3-1940.

increase the liberal-mindedness of men, but on the contrary tends to strengthen a certain fear and rigidity in politics, when men become of necessity concentrated on the terrible effort in hand, and more and more unable to allow for opposition.

Hence, if the Congress rejects conciliation and follows a line of immovable opposition, it is more than probable that the British War Cabinet will do the same. The time for peaceful settlement will pass—a disaster for both India and Great Britain. I need not labour this. Its consequences are obvious. But I may say that it is felt here, by many most sympathetic to the cause of freedom in India, that the Congress is not wise in taking so rigid a position and ignoring the grave and indeed enormous problems Great Britain is facing that make so difficult a satisfactory answer to the Congress claim.

India claims her freedom in the sense, first, of self-determination. Here the question is asked : What is this Government of India that *all* India wants—Congress Party, Muslims and other communities, and Princes included ? The Congress demands a Constituent Assembly to determine this. But it seems clear that before such an Assembly could usefully attempt to tackle this question, with any hope of reaching agreement, prior work has to be done. Should not, first, a small, private but very responsible conference of a dozen representative Indian men work out to agreement the main points of the desired constitution ?

Given that this small conference was representative, and was accepted by both India and Great Britain as a responsible body, and given the reaching of reasonable agreement, it is practically certain that the British Government would accept its decision. And it is to be supposed that a national assembly of all India, whatever the minor modifications it might desire, would substantially do so too.

This would not be all that the Congress High Command is envisaging. But unless the Congress is prepared for 'war' there must be some meeting of the views of other parties, and some willingness to meet the *de facto* Government on procedure.

There is a great desire and willingness here to reach a solution. Everything demands it, and there never was a greater amount of discussion over British-Indian relations than at the present time. On the other hand, there is developing a certain grim determination not to accept dictation from what, it is otherwise agreed of course, is the major political party in India,—but whose decision can neither oust Great Britain from participation in the solution, nor release her from treaties, undertakings and promises.

The gravity of the situation now is such that I most deeply pray you not to turn from the wonderful path of patient seeking of understanding that has

always been yours and return to a past situation of a kind we both equally hate.

May I add as a long friend of Indian freedom my deep conviction that this struggle must and can be ended in friendship and equality—accepting all the implications of both these words. For this, England has to return to India the domination and control she has exercised, not asking a price; and India has to claim England's *consent*, not demand her surrender. So only can a lasting peace be reached. But if this is so, the steps thereto must be *agreed* steps.

I can well believe that "the Government people" did not wish to bang the door, but Lord Zetland's interview left no room for doubt. These were his words:

Referring to Mr. Gandhi's statement that, if the British Government would leave the framing of the constitution to Indians themselves, the questions of defence, minorities, Princes and European interests would automatically be resolved, Lord Zetland said that, while he greatly admired Mr. Gandhi's optimism, he was unhappily quite unable to share it and felt that, as long as the leaders of the Congress maintained their present attitude, the obstacles in the way of an honourable understanding would be greatly increased.

Lord Zetland said that it was unfortunate that Congress spokesmen made a fetish of the word 'independence', since he was convinced that this had created a false impression in Great Britain of the aim which the vast majority of Indians had in view. "That they desire freedom to govern themselves I do not doubt; that they contemplate India swinging from the orbit of British Commonwealth, I do not for a moment believe. In a mad world, they are far too appreciative of the protection afforded to them by the armed strength of Great Britain on land and sea."

My correspondent is a careful student of contemporary events in India. He chooses his words before using them. Yet he has evidently felt unable to correct the impression in Government circles that the Congress "is increasingly regarding 'settlement' as meaning what it alone considers right". The Congress has never taken up an uncompromising attitude and within the four corners of its demand has always shown its readiness for a 'settlement'. Its demand is unequivocal. It says to the British Government : 'If you really mean to part with power and your war is not for consolidating your Empire but for democracy all round, then you will declare India a free country and let a Constituent Assembly elected on the basis of adult suffrage decide upon the form and content of her own Government. No doubt there are difficulties, e.g., about defence, about minorities, and the Princes. The burden of solving these difficulties will be shifted from you to the Constituent Assembly. If the Assembly cannot solve these satisfactorily, it will prove its insolvency. You will have done

your duty.' Surely in this there is no one-sided dictation.

The writer reminds me of the war condition and suggests in effect that it does not improve one's temper. I should say that a problem like India-is a direct issue in the war; perhaps the fortunes of war will turn upon the conduct of nationalist India. People engaged in a war do not lose temper over matters which affect the fortunes of war.

I have no difficulty in endorsing the suggestion that some work prior to the Constituent Assembly should be done. The writer suggests "a very responsible conference of a dozen representatives". The difficulty is of choosing the representatives. Who will choose them ? They cannot command confidence unless they are duly elected. Such a committee, so far as I can see, can only be appointed by the members of the Constituent Assembly. I think the day is gone when any party worth the name will accept as representatives Government nominees as was done at the Round Table Conference.

The Congress has to be and is prepared for 'war'. But it wants to avoid-'war'. It will not wantonly act so as to be the cause of endless suffering to the people. The Congress is ever ready to "meet the *de facto* Government on procedure". Is the latter willing and ready to recognize India as a free country ? The Congress history shows that it has always met and is today ready to meet the views of other parties on most matters. What it is not ready to do is to alter the goal. It must be content to be reduced to a hopeless minority for the sake of preserving its goal. It is a trust which it cannot abandon without being disloyal to its past. The end of non-violent 'war' is always an agreement, never dictation, much less humiliation of the opponent. There can be no question of the Congress asking or expecting Britain to dishonour just obligations or treaties.

What, however, I miss is a sincere desire on the part of Britain to do unto India what she would wish done to her if the position were reversed. The Congress is unreasonable, if it is wrong for it to refuse to abate the passion for freedom for which Dadabhai laboured, which Tilak taught India to regard as her birthright, and for which thousands of men and women have cheerfully suffered imprisonment and loss of their possessions. If it is allowed as a worthy passion, the Congress has no fear as to the verdict of being regarded as eminently reasonable in everything else.

RAMGARH, MARCH 16, 1940

Harijan, 23-3-1940

67. QUESTION BOX

PRINCES

Q. You have, I fear, evaded the question of the Princes. Generally you go straight to your subject, but somehow or other you seem to have walked round this subject.

A. Apparently, but not really, there is some truth in the taunt. The fact is that the Princes have never before now been presented as a difficulty. They are a new arrow from the British quiver. It is British India that is fighting for freedom. The States people are fighting their own battle in their own States against overwhelming odds. The people in the States and in British India are one. For them the artificial boundaries do not exist. But for the administrators the boundaries are very real. British law has allowed the Princes to regard as foreigners people from British India going to the States or people from one State to another. And yet the Princes exist only on British sufferance. They cannot move without British Permission. Their heirs have to be approved by the British Raj. Their tuition is also under the same supervision. They can be deposed at will. Thus so far as the British control is concerned, they are worse off than the ordinary British subject. But so far as their people are concerned, the Princes have unlimited control over them. They can imprison them at will and even put them to death. Theoretically British Raj has a duty by the people also. But it is rarely exercised. Therefore the people of the States labour under a double handicap. It must be clear to you from the foregoing narrative that the Congress cannot influence the Princes except through the British Government. Indeed, the latter will not permit any real approach to the Princes. I personally do not desire the extinction of the Princely order. But I do want the Princes to recognize the signs of the times and shed a large part of their autocracy. In spite of the powerful British bayonet, the march of the people of both the Indias cannot be stayed. I am hoping that the combined wisdom of all, including the Princes and the present rulers, will prevent the march from running mad, which it is bound to do unless a smooth passage is made for it. I am putting forth the best non-violent effort I can, but my non-violence, because of my imperfections, may fail. I ask for the helping hand of those who

would see India win her goal without a blood bath.

But if the Princes will not listen, I do not ask for their coercion. Let British India have her independence, and I know, the Princes know, that true freedom of British India means freedom of their people also. For as I have said the two are one. No power on earth can keep them in separation for all time.

USE OF FORCE AGAINST MUSLIMS

Q. You talk of complete independence from Britain and at the same time of settling the question of minorities through a Constituent Assembly. This means that, if Muslims do not listen to you, you would want to use British forces to compel them to submit to your will.

A. This question simply ignores my own position and, so far as I know, the Congress position. The Congress cannot want independence and the use of British forces at the same time. But that is not all. The Congress will not coerce Muslims or any minority. That would not be a non-violent approach. The greatest coercion is British coercion. And the Congress is impatient to get out of that coercion. My hope in desiring a Constituent Assembly is that whether the Muslims are represented by the Muslim League mentality or any other, the representatives when they are face to face with the reality will not think of cutting up India according to religions but will regard India as an indivisible whole and discover a national, i.e. Indian solution of even specially Muslim questions. But if the hope is frustrated, the Congress cannot forcibly resist the express will of the Muslims of India. Needless to say the Congress can never seek the assistance of British forces to resist the vivisection. It is the Muslims who will impose their will by force singly or with British assistance on an unresisting India. If I can carry the Congress with me, I would not put the Muslims to the trouble of using force. I would be ruled by them for it would still be Indian rule. In other words, the Congress will have only a non-violent approach to every question and difficulty arising. But just as it is possible that Muslim representatives to the Constituent Assembly may wear another hue than that of the Muslim League, it is also possible that the others may be non-Congressmen. In that event, the British will be where they are, only they will be wooed by both the parties alternately and will remain the architects of India's

destiny. For then, with the Congress swept away, non-violence will be blown to the winds and naturally the infinitely superior violence of the British aided by the willing co-operation of the wooing party will easily rule India. For the only force matched against British force is that of non-violence, incomplete though it is, of the Congress.

NEGLECT OF SANSKRIT

Q. Do you know that the Patna University has practically tabooed the study of Sanskrit ? Do you approve of the step ? If you do not, will you express your opinion in *Harijan* ?

A. I do not know what the Patna University has done. But I quite agree with you that the study of Sanskrit is being sadly neglected. I belong to a generation which believed in the study of the ancient languages. I do not believe that such a study is a waste of time and effort. I believe it is an aid to the sutdy of modern languages. This is truer of Sanskrit than of any other ancient language so far as India is concerned, and every nationalist should study it because it makes a study of the provincial languages easier than otherwise. It is the language in which our forefathers thought and wrote. No Hindu boy or girl should be without a knowledge of the rudiments of Sanskrit, if he will imbibe the spirit of his religion. Thus the *Gayatri*[1] is untranslatable. No translation can give the music of the original which I hold has a meaning all its own. The *Gayatri* is but one example of what I have said.

RAMGARH, MARCH 17, 1940

Harijan, 23-3-1940

68. NOTES

THE LONDON ASSASSINATION

Further details that have come through the press of the assassination of Sir Michael O'Dwyer[2] and the attempted assassination of Lord Zetland, Lord Lamington and Sir Louis Dane confirm my opinion that it was a work of insanity. It is none the less reprehensible on that account. We had our differences with Sir Michael O'Dwyer, but that should not prevent us from being grieved over his assassination or condoling with Lady O'Dwyer and her family. I would like every Indian patriot to share with me the shame of the act

[1] A Vedic *mantra* invoking the creative energy of the sun

[2] *Vide* also "Statement to the press", 14-3-1940.

and the joy that the lives of the three distinguished Englishmen were saved. We have our grievance against Lord Zetland. We must fight his reactionary policy. But there should be no malice or vindictiveness in our resistance. The papers tell us that the accused acted with amused n onchalance when he faced the court and the spectators.This does notcommand myadmiration. It is to me a sure sign of continuing insanity. The accused is intoxicated with the thought of his bravery. I have known drunken men act with a recklessness of which they would be incapable in a sober state. I understand that extra rum is issued to soldiers who are sent to specially hazardous tasks. What am I to praise, the rum or its after-effect ? The word assassin owes its origin to the hasheesh that was administered to the would-be assassins in order to deaden their conscience. This continuing insanity of the accused should fill us with pity and grief.

If we are to fight fairly and squarely, we must, as far as is humanly possible, make every Englishman feel that he is as safe in our midst as he is in his own home. It fills me with shame and sorrow that for some time at least every Indian face in London will be suspect. Is it not possible for us all to realize that the masses will never mount to freedom through murder ? I would like every reader of these lines to know that every such act harms our non-violent struggle and therefore to dissociate himself in the secret of his heart and openly from such acts of insanity.

THE NATIONAL WEEK

From 6th April to 13th April has been observed as the National Week from year to year. On the 6th April 1919 the masses of India found their feet[1] . It was the inauguration of Civil Disobedience. Its non-violent character was signalized by fasting and prayer. Hindus and Muslims fraternized as they had never done before. The vow of swadeshi was taken by tens of thousands. The 13th April 1919 saw the Jallianwala massacre in which Hindu, Muslim and Sikh blood flowed promiscuously. The National Week is observed as a week of self-purification, in which sales of khadi and other products of village industries are organized on a large scale. I have said and I repeat that there is no swaraj for the masses except through khadi and other village crafts. For there is no non-violent disobedience without sustained constructive effort. A living, continuous mass contact is impossible without some constructive programme requiring almost daily contact of the workers with the masses. I hope, therefore, that the forthcoming Week will be celebrated by all earnest workers with due

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Chowpatty, Bombay", 6-4-1919

solemnity and with intensive sales of khadi and other products of village handicrafts.

RAMGARH, March 17, 1940

Harijan, 23-3-1940

69. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

March 17, 1940

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I read your letter as well as your note.[1] I share your unhappiness. I am confident that nothing less can satisfy us on this occasion. I see no defect in my scheme. It is for their good also. Their unwillingness proves that they do not like independence for India. The report about the Princes is intolerable. Who told you that I do not wish to see them ? I shall meet them at the slightest hint. The fact is they do not want to see me.

Blessins from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am prepared to go to Calcutta for the Seva Sadan, if you so desire.

From the Hindi original : C. W. 8035. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

70. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE [2]

RAMGARH,

March 18, 1940

Since I went out of the Congress at Bombay[3], there has been an understanding between me and the Working Committee that I should not be asked to speak at the A. I. C. C. or the Subjects Committee or the open session and[4] should be allowed to conserve the l ittle strength that is left in me. I have usually been attending the meetings of the Working Committee. On this

[1] Both were addressed to Mahadev Desai, wherein among other things the addressee had said: "I had no other business except to press it again on Bapu that in my opinion we are going the wrong way and as the position is very critical, he should reconsider the position in the light of the views held by some of us."

[2] Gandhiji spoke in Hindi.

[3] In October 1934.

[4] *Congress Bulletin* here has : "I should be allowed to serve the country in my own way with whatever strength is left to me."

occasion, I myself suggested that I hould address the Subjects Committee and also the delegates. The Working Committee agreed to this and, although I wanted to address you before the resolution[1] was adopted, the Committee suggested that I do so after the resolution was disposed of.

It was my desire to see the faces of you all, and also to give you an opportunity of looking at me and finding out if there had been any change in me since my retirement in Bombay. Fifty years of public life have given me the capacity to read your faces. I have during these years created many institutions, met thousands and tens of thousands of people. Besides, I have been in contact with the Working Committee and many of you have been in correspondence with me.[2] And it should not therefore be difficult for me to get at the back of your minds.[3] But my desire to see you was in order to find out where I was.

You have, I see, made considerable progress in the art of debate and I congratulate you, for in a democratic organization powers of persuasion and a high level of debate are essential. I have also seen that the number of amendments you move has also increased, and it is well that you should all be anxious to press new points of view[4], though I cannot congratulate you on some of the amendments which were either frivolous or absurd.

You have adopted the resolution practically unanimously as there were only seven or eight dissentients.[5] That adds to my responsibility, for I have been witness to debate. If I had so desired, I should have warned you before voting, but I accepted the suggestion of the Working Committee that I should not address the house before the resolution was passed.

I do not want to reply to what has been said by some of you in the course of the debate. But I do want to say that, though there was a time in my life when I launched movements even if some of my conditions had not been fulfilled, I am now going to be hard, not for the sake of being hard, but because a General who has to lead the army must let the army know his conditions beforehand.

[1] *Vide* "A Resolution", 1-3-1940.

[2] This sentence is from *Congress Bulletin.*

[3] *Congress Bulletin* has : "It should, therefore, not be difficult for me to remember you."

[4] *Congress Bulletin* here adds: "So that any point that is not accepted today may be accepted tomorrow."

[5] *Congress Bulletin* here adds: "They had every right to do so."

Let me then tell you that I do not see at the present moment conditions propitious for an immediate launching of campaign. We are hemmed in withdifficulties greater than those we had to face in the past. They are external and internal. The external difficulties are due to the fact that we have declared unmistakably what we want and the Government have also declared their intentions as clearly as possible. Then there is the fact that the British. Government are engaged in a world war and naturally, if we engage them in a fight, we ask for enough trouble. This is the first difficulty.[1]

What, however appals me is our internal difficulties. I have often said that external difficulties need never frighten a satyagrahi. On the contrary, he flourishes on external difficulties and faces them with redoubled zeal and vigour. Today the situation is almost the reverse. Our external difficulties do not find us stronger and more united. Our internal difficulties are increasing. Our Congress registers are full of bogus members and members who have swelled them because they know that getting into the Congress means getting to power. Those who therefore never before thought of entering the Congress have come into it and corrupted it. And how can we prevent people from coming into a democratic organization because they come from selfish motives ? We have not that discipline, and not the strength and purity of public opinion which would compel such people to stay out.

And this strength and purity cannot come so long as we approach the primary members only once in a year for the vote. There is no discipline in our ranks, they have been divided up into groups which strive to gain more and more power. Non-violence as between ourselves does not seem to us to be necessary.[2] Wherever I go I hear the same complaint. My conception of democracy is not the formation of groups quarrelling with one another to such an extent as would destroy organization itself. There may be groups, but they should strengthen and not weaken and destroy the organization.

Ours has been both a democratic organization and a fighting one, ever since we reorganized it in 1920.[3] We have used even military language, though in a non-violent sense. Well then, I want to repeat what I have said times without number that, if you will be soldiers in my army understand that there is no room for democracy in that

[1] This sentence is from *Congress Bulletin*.

[2] The following two sentences are from *Congress Bulletin*.

[3] *Congress Bulletin* here adds: “Our fight is not yet over”.

organization. The army may be a part of a democratic organization, but there can be no democracy in it, as there can be none in its ranks, as there is none in our various organizations A. I. S. A., A.I.V.I.A. and so on. In an army the General's word is law, and his conditions cannot be relaxed.

I am supposed to be your General,[1] but I do not know a more feeble General in history. I have no sanctions.[2] My only sanction is the love and affection in which you hold me. But it has its weakness as it has its strength. I know that you love me. Does your love translate itself into action ?[3] If it does not, if it does not mean ever-increasing discipline and ever-increasing response to what I say, let me declare to you that I cannot launch civil disobedience, and you must select another General. You cannot make me your General on your terms.[4] You must fulfil the conditions set down in the Independence Pledge. You must allow me to tell you that if you do not fulfil those conditions it will not be possible for me to launch a struggle. . . . You cannot compel me to lead you against my will. When you appoint me as your General, you must obey my command. There can be no argument about it. Know, therefore, that I will insist on my conditions. They are inexorable, and if you do not observe them, I will automatically withdraw.

The General of a military army insists on strict discipline. I go on arguing with you, because my only sanction is love. I say to you, therefore, that unless you accept my condition, unless you have faith in them as you have in me, you should not think of going to jail. If you will go to jail, you have to pay the price.[5] Ours is a civil fight, and imprisonment as a civil prisoner has got to be earned by strict observance of the programme. For thieves and dacoits also fill the jails but they do not carry the country to freedom.

Well, then, I laid down the conditions in 1920 and have never ceased to repeat them. You may not believe in the programme, you

[1] *Congress Bulletin* here adds : "It should not mean that I should keep you in the dark regarding my feelings."

[2] This sentence is from *Congress Bulletin*.

[3] *Congress Bulletin* here has : "In one way it is a great thing but in another sense it can also be worthless, I can say I cherish love for all in my heart. Perhaps you also do so but your love must be active."

[4] The following five sentences are from *Congress Bulletin.*

[5] *Congress Bulletin* here has : "For love must be characterized by patience. I have heard friends criticising the charkha. I know you are all ready to go to jail but you must earn the right and pay the price for going to jail. You will not be going to jail as criminals."

may have grown wiser since then, but I have not. My faith in it has increased with the years. I see more virtues in it than I saw before.[1]

I turned a rebel against this Government in 1919, but before that I was as loyal to it as any Britisher.[2] It is that unique loyalty that gave me the unique power of civil disobedience, and the unquenchable spirit of search. I therefore go on making my experiments and also go on declaring my mistakes whenever I discover them. I am an erring mortal like you.[3] I have never even in my dream thought that I was a *maha-atma* (great soul) and that others were *alpa-atma* (little souls). We are all equal before our Maker—Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians, worshippers of one God. Why then do we fight among ourselves ?

We are all brothers—even the Quaid-e-Azam is my brother. I have meant all that I have said about him, never has a frivolous word escaped my lips, and I say that I want to win him over. A speaker said that I would not fight until I had won him over, and he was right.[4] There was a time when there was not a Muslim whose confidence I did not enjoy. Today I have forfeited that confidence and most of the Urdu Press pours abuse on me.[5] But I am not sorry for it. It only confirms me in my belief that there is no swaraj without a settlement with the Mussalmans.

You will perhaps ask, in that case, why I am talking of a fight. I do so in order to have a Constituent Assembly which means agreement and settlement. But if the Mussalmans will have nothing to do with it, I will understand that there is no settlement.[6] I am also a

[1] *Congress Bulletin* here has : "The more I think about non-violence, the greater the virtues I find in it."

[2] *Congress Bulletin* here reports : "I have been an outlaw since 1918. Before that I was so loyal to the Empire that I wrote to Lord Chelmsford that I longed to have the same loyalty towards the Empire as a Britisher has in his heart. I wrote those words because I am a believer in truth. Truth is my God and I could not have written anything else I wanted to be true to myself."

[3] *Congress Bulletin* here has : "You may have other ways than truth and non-violence but mine is the same old path and, being just a human being like you, I also commit mistakes."

[4] *Congress Bulletin* here adds : "I would be happy indeed if he could keep me in his pocket."

[5] *Congress Bulletin* here reports: "I do not read all that appears in the Urdu, Press ; but perhaps I get a lot of abuses there."

[6] *Congress Bulletin* here has : "If Muslims who came to the Constituent Assembly through Muslim votes declare that there is nothing common between Hindus and Muslims, then alone would I give up hope, but even then I would argue with them because they read the Koran and I have also studied something of that holy

reader of the Koran like them, and I will tell them that the Koran makes no distinction between the Hindus and the Mussalmans.[1] But if they feel that they should have the Heaven without the Hindus, I will not grudge it to them.

I have no ill will towards Englishmen. When I heard that Lord Zetland was wounded, my heart was wounded. That is my temperament.[2] I therefore always work with and for goodwill for them. That I want to destroy British imperialism in another matter, but I want to do so by converting those who are associated with it.[3] If non-violence has the power that I attribute to it, it is sure to react on the opponent. If it does not, the fault will be mine, not that of non-violence.

You must therefore understand that you have to deal with a dengerous man who will land you in unexpected situations. Compromise is part and parcel of my nature. I will go to the Viceroy fifty times, if I feel like it. I went to Lord Reading whilst non-co-operation was going on.[4] I would not only go to the Viceroy when invited, but I would seek opportunities to go to him, if necessary. You must know that, if I do so, I do it in order to strengthen our cause and not weaken it. It happened so with General Smuts. At the last moment I telephoned to him.[5] He put the receiver down in anger, but I thrust myself on him. As a result he relented and I was in stronger position. Today we are friends. The basis of my fight is love for the opponent.[6] I could not have fought the Dutch and the English[7] without love in my heart for them, and without a readiness for compromise. But my compromise will never be at the cost of the cause or of the country.

One of the amendments was to the effect that the word 'mass' be inserted before 'civil disobedience'. Well, if it is not mass civil disobedience is it to be the civil disobedience of a handful ? In that case I should not have come to you.[8] You might perhaps not be taking these things seriously, but in my mind there is no other thought. My

[1] *Congress Bulletin* here reports : "I will tell them that God makes no distinction between Hindus and Muslims.

[2] *Congress Bulletin* here adds : "These are my ways. You may call them weakness. If you want me you must understand this."

[3] *Congress Bulletin* here has : "I fight British imperialism but I have no quarrel with those who run the imperialist machine. I do not want to destroy them but I want to bring about a change in them."

[4] On May 13 and 14, 1921; *vide* "Notes", 4-8-1921.

[5] *Congress Bulletin* here adds : "to try and see if the fight could be abandoned."

[6] This sentence is from *Congress Bulletin.*

[7] *Congress Bulletin* here adds : "in South Africa".

[8] The following two sentences are from *Congress Bulletin.*

mind is wholly concentrated on trying this great experiment with your help and support, because it will not only benefit India but the whole world. It is the thought of mass civil disobedience that keeps my mind awake all the twenty-four hours. Why should a man of 70 trifle with a thing of this kind ?

Therefore let me tell you that there is no civil disobedience until I feel that you are ready. You have therefore to purify every Congress Committee and make it a satyagrahi unit. To that extent it will have to cease to be a democracy, because my word will be law. But if it does not become such a unit, millions of our dumb countrymen will be sacrificed. None of my campaigns has crushed or ruined the masses. They have increased their stature, and it is in order to take it still higher that I want to live. There was in the earlier campaigns enough of violence of thought and word, but there was non-violence in act, and therefore the masses were saved. I would not light-heartedly imperil those masses today, and that is why I insist on strictest non-violence and the fulfilment of my conditions. For that is the only link that binds them and me.[1] I may have to lay down my life for preserving the power that has accrued to India. You may not be able to analyse that power but it is there. It is the power of ahimsa.

If I am your General, your pulse should be in my hands. Otherwise I cannot fight through you. I can fight single-handed, but for that fight I need not come and argue with you.

One last word before I close. I do not want to stand in the way of those who want to fight at once. But if they have any sense of honour, I should advise them to do so after getting out of the Congress. Let me assure them that, if they put up a non-violent fight and carry it through, I shall follow their lead. Of course it is open to them to remain in the Congress and to defy it, but it will not be satyagraha[2]. Those who are impatient today do not know the power of satyagraha.

The resolution does not bind you. If you do not accept the conditions, you can still say you do not accept them, and you can have the resolution reversed. That will free you and me both. But if

[1] The rest of the paragraph is from *Congress Bulletin.*

[2] *Congress Bulletin* here adds : "which never harms the man who uses the weapon."

you accept the conditions and will all observe them, you may be sure that it need not take me a month to launch the struggle.[1]

Harijan, 30-3-1940, and *Congress Bulletin,* 12-4-1940, Vol. No. 1, pp 10-6

71. SPEECH AT EXHIBITION[2]

MAZHARPURI, RAMGARH,
March 18, 1940

Addressing the gathering after prayer, Mr. Gandhi stressed the importance of khadi and said for those who were not regular members of the Congress, an exhibition held on such occasions was a substitute for the Congress. Members of the Congress might attend the Congress Session out of a sense of duty but an exhibition provided at least an attraction for those who were not Congressmen. Such men could come and buy something for their use at the exhibition.[3]

This Exhibition is the real Congress for the masses. Our chosen delegates will attend the Congress, and pass resolutions there as to what we have to do during the year. But what are the masses to do ? The Exhibition serves to provide intellectual pabulum for the masses, and those who visit the Exhibition owe it to them to take to them what they learn here. There is no institution where 35 crores of our people can go. The Kumbh Mela[4] is attended by several lakhs of people, but what is that number in a population of 35 crores ? But if you who attend the Exhibition can take some of the crafts which are being demonstrated here to the villagers, you can reach the millions who inhabit the villages and revolutionize their lives. . . .

Urging his hearers to buy khadi he said that they would thus be carrying the message of khadi to the remotest corners of the land. He wanted khadi to be associated with everyone and unify the largest gathering in the country. Lakhs of people assembled at the Kumbh Mela or other functions, but khadi, when carried to every village home, would mean the largest congregation representing the urge for truth and

[1] *Congress Bulletin* here reports : "You may have other methods, but so far as I am concerned I have only the same old programme. I know that that method has never harmed anyone who has followed it and even now if I can get your whole-hearted support and co-operation, I can show you what can be achieved within even a month."

[2] Gandhiji addressed over ten thousand people who had attended the evening prayer held on the Exhibition grounds.

[3] The following paragraph is from *Harijan*.

[4] A religious fair held once in twelve years in Allahabad, Hardwar, Ujjain and Nasik

nationhood in the immediate present; they would be helping thousands of poor and widowed womanhood who depended for their livelihood on khadi. They would be doing something more. They would in reality be participating in the struggle for swaraj. Swaraj was not to be attained by violence. There was a talk of launching civil disobedience but who would launch civil disobedience and how ? When they spun, wore and bought khadi they would demonstrate their determination to stand by truth and peacefulness steadfastly, for khadi symbolized these. If they thought they had to achieve a goal and attain an objective, it was khadi that would show them the way to their goal and carry them through. By following other methods they would be deviating from the path they had set before themselves and not attain independence.[1]

There is the talk of civil disobedience in the air. But who is fit to practise civil disobedience ? Not those who will not spin, who will not wear khadi, who do not care for the handicrafts. They will do some other kind of disobedience, but it will be anything but civil. That is not the disobedience I would like to teach or would care to live for. I want to turn the quiet and living strength that spinning gives you into the channel of civil disobedience. If you will, therefore, see the exhibition with my eyes, you will carry the gospel of khadi and the spinning-wheel to the villages, and lay the foundation of a handicraft civilization and universalize khadi and handicrafts. If you do so, I assure you there will be no necessity for civil disobedience. If you will not do so, if you do not spin, do not universalize khadi, I may go to jail and be there for a number of years, but it will be all in vain. Without khadi and without handicrafts the Congress boat, far from carrying us to the port,will sink in midstream.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 20-3-1940, and *Harijan*, 30-3-1940

72. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS[2]

RAMGARH,

March 19, 1940[3]

It was a soul-stirring sight to see people standing knee-deep in water awaiting instructions to disperse. I feel God ranged Himself on the side of the people and gave them a foretaste of the suffering to be voluntarily undergone as the price of freedom.

[1] What follows is from *Harijan*.

[2] According to *The Hitavada*, 21-3-1940, Gandhiji was pacing up and down the verandah of his hut and listening to reports regarding the rain.

[3] The date-line is from *The Hitavada*, 21-3-1940.

Every session has its lesson. This has a lesson for workers to choose a site which will be proof against bad weather. Not that the slightest reflection can be cast on those who chose Ramgarh as their site. They have had no reason to fear rain at this time of the year. I feel for Rajen Babu, who, with his band of workers, slaved night and day to make the session a success so far as the arrangements are concerned.

The Hindu, 20-3-1940

73. SPEECH AT CONGRESS SESSION[1]

RAMGARH,

March 20, 1940

I am pleased to have been here to hear all these discussions today. When I see that all those who have spoken had the word 'civil disobedience' on their tongue, I am reminded of the Biblical saying : "Not everyone that sayeth to me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven : but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in Heaven, he shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven.[2]" (Cheers) I do not need your cheers, I want to win your hearts and your intellects, and cheers and acclamations stand in the way of winning them.[3] It is not those who shout the word civil disobedience that can launch civil disobedience. It is only those who work for civil disobedience that are capable of launching the movement. Real civil disobedience makes it binding on those who join it to do what they are enjoined to do and avoid what is prohibited. Civil disobedience properly launched and conducted is bound to lead to freedom.

I feel you are not prepared.[4] Therefore when I saw you acclaiming the speakers who said that we are ready I was shocked. For I know that we are not ready. It is true that we all know and realize that we are slaves in our own land. We also realize that freedom is essential for us. Further we all realize that we will have to fight for freedom. I may also join you in applauding the speakers who have demanded immediate launching of civil disobedience. A thief has

[1] Gandhiji spoke in Hindi.
[2] *St. Matthew*, VII. 21
[3] This sentence is from *Harijan*.
[4] The following two sentences are from *Harijan*.

come and turned me out of my house. I will have to fight him and get if back, but before I can do this, I must be prepared. (Applause) Your claps only demonstrate that you do not understand what this preparation means. Your General finds that you are not ready, that you are not real soldiers and that if we proceed on the lines suggested by you, we are bound to be defeated.[1] And knowing this, how can I ask you to fight ? I know that with such as you I can only have defeat.

I must make it clear that I am not prepared to do anything for which I will have to repent. I have never acknowledged defeat throughout all these years in any of my struggles. Though some people may point out to Rajkot, I maintain that it was not a defeat for me. Future history alone can make this clear.[2] The word 'defeat' is not to be found in my dictionary, and everyone who is selected as a recruit in my army may be sure that there is no defeat for a satyagrahi.

I can assure you and I promise you and publicly announce it, that when you are ready I shall march forth and then I [shall] have no doubt about victory. I said this before the Subjects Committee and I repeat it again here. Purify your mind and heart. Some people here have been asserting that it is not necessary for us to concentrate on the charkha before launching a fight. I do not doubt their sincerity and bravery, but, as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has told you, they betray certain weakness of mind.[3] Well, I tell you, as I have been telling you these 20 years, that there is a vital connection between satyagraha and the charkha, and the more I find that belief challenged the more I am confirmed in it. Otherwise I am no fool to persist in turning the charkha, day in and day out, at home and even on trains, in the teeth of medical advice. Doctors want me to leave the charkha. But I am devoting greater attention to it, because I have to prepare myself.[4] I want you too to be turning the charkha with the same faith. And unless you do it and unless you habitually use khadi you will deceive me and deceive the world. No one who does not believe in the charkha can be a soldier under me.

With me there is no other alternative than non-violence.[5] I shall of course die with non-violence on my lips, but you are not wedded to it in the sense I am, and so it is open to you to have another

[1] The following two sentences are from *Harijan.*
[2] This sentence is from *Harijan.*
[3] The following two sentences are from *Harijan.*
[4] *ibid*
[5] *ibid*

programme and to make our country free. But if you will not do this, nor turn the charkha, and want me to fight, it will be an impossible situation. If you feel that you are to fight, and you must fight now, and immediately, and feel convinced that there is some other method of winning the fight, I would ask you to go ahead and I shall be the first to applaud your victory. But if you do not want to leave me and yet are not prepared to follow my methods and instructions, then I would like to know what kind of generalship is this that you offer me.

Those whoclamourfor immediate launching of civildisobedience want to have me with them. Why ? Because they are conscious that the masses are with me. I unhesitatingly say that I am a people's man. Every moment of my life I feel for the starving millions. I live and am prepared to lay down my life to relieve their sufferings and mitigate their miseries. I claim to have some influence with the millions, because I have been a faithful servant of theirs.[1] My loyalty to them is greater than any other loyalty, and it is for them that I would not give up the charkha even if you were to forsake me or kill me. For I know that, if I were to relax the condition of the charkha, I should bring ruin upon those dumb millions for whom I have to answer before God. If, therefore, you do not believe in the charkha in the sense I believe in it, I implore you to leave me. Even if you stone me to death I will still work for the masses. This is my way. If you think there is any other way please leave me alone.

Without the charkha I cannot lead you to jail in the course of the fight for freedom. I will not have anyone under me who does not believe in the charkha. I shall go ahead only when I am satisfied that you have faith in the charkha. Remember if we, who are assembled here, blunder [we] shall cause untold suffering to the dumb millions by our mistake. The delegates to the Congress bear a heavy responsibility and as your General my responsibility is still greater. As a General I have to be a sort of beacon-light to you and warn you against possible disaster. Therefore, I have to proceed cautiously.

Many speakers dilated on the evils of British imperialism. I do not wish to elaborate that point except to state that we must get rid of it. I have told you the cue. Before I agree to launch satyagraha I must be convinced that you have understood my remedy.

It is no use going to a doctor and asking for a medicine if you do not propose to take it according to his instructions. I would much

[1] The following three sentences are form *Harijan*.

rather ask you to seek another doctor for your ailment. All the sermons you have heard today against British imperialism will not help you to remove it. They will only make you angry. This will not solve our problem. Anger is opposed to satyagraha. We have no quarrel with the British people. We want to be their friends and retain their goodwill, not on the basis of their domination, but on the basis of a free and equal India.

As a free country India will bear no malice to anyone, nor attempt to enslave any people. We shall march with the rest world, just as we shall desire the rest of the world to march with us.[1] Remember therefore, that you have to fulfil both the internal and external conditions. If you fulfil the internal condition, you will cease to hate your opponent, you will not seek or work for his destruction, but pray to God to have mercy on him. Do not, therefore, concentrate on showing the misdeed of the Government, for we have to convert and befriend those who run it. And after all no one is wicked by nature. And if others are wicked, are we the less so ? That attitude is inherent in satyagraha, and if you do not subscribe to it, even then I would ask you to leave me. For without a belief in my programme and without an acceptance of my condition you will ruin me, ruin yourselves and ruin the cause.

Satyagraha is the path of truth at all cost. If you are not prepared to follow this path please leave me alone. You can pronounce me worthless and I shall not resent it. If I do not make this clear here and now, I shall be ruined and along with me the country. Truth and ahimsa are the essence of satyagraha, and the charkha is their symbol. Just as the General of any army insists that his soldiers should wear a particular uniform, I as your General must insist on your taking to the charkha which will be your uniform. Without full faith in truth, non-violence and the charkha, you cannot be my soldiers. And I repeat again that if you do not believe in this, you must leave me alone and you can try your own methods.

The Indian Annual Register, 1940, Vol. I, pp. 230-1, and *Harijan,* 30-3-1940

[1] The rest of the paragraph is from *Harijan.*

74. INTERVIEW TO CEYLONESE DELEGATION[1]

RAMGARH,

March 20, 1940

Mahatmaji's first words were:

It is an unfortunate thing that is happening to Indians in Ceylon.

We explained to him that the problem was an economic one and that Indians in Ceylon, apart from labourers and a few others, were mainly exploiters.

Petty traders and Chettiars have captured the entire import and export trade and many estates from peasants in distress. The people of Lanka only see this side of India. Gandhiji replied:

Yes, that is too true. The fault is on both sides.

We told him that there was no racial animosity against Indians as was made clear by the receptions accorded to Pandit Nehru. Till Poet Tagore and Gandhiji and Mr. Nehru and a few other eminent Indians came to Lanka, our people met only exploiting Chettiars and immigrant Indian labourers. Gandhiji replied:

Unfortunately, we haven't many Nehru and many men of similar calibre. The wrong people, if sent, might spoil everything.

We asked him what Ceylon could expect from a free India. Many in Lanka prefer to remain as a Dominion in the British Empire than to be free and run the risk of being exploited by India which could easily swamp Lanka. Gandhiji laughed and said:

Ceylon has nothing to fear from a free India.[2]

The Hindu, 21-3-1940

75. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

March 21, 1940

DEAR SIR AKBAR[3],

I do not know if you are responsible for the orders against the

[1] This was reported to the United Press. The Ceylonese National Congress delegation consisting Jayawardhana, S. Jayasekara and Amaratunga met Gandhiji in the afternoon.

[2] The delegation presented Gandhiji a book entitled *The work of the Buddha* by a Buddhist Bhikku of Ceylon.

[3] President, Ministers' Committee, Hyderabad State

State Congress. They leave a bad taste in the mouth. But there was a technical flaw in the Congress action. And so I advised unqualified apology. How I wish justice could be done in this case![1]

Hope you are keeping well.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 8017

76. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

ON THE TRAIN,

March 21, 1940

MY DEAR C. R.,

I saw so little of you in Ramgarh. It is bad. Did not see Aiyamuthu[2]. I understand you have gone to Delhi. Therefore on your return you should break the journey and say a few days in Sevagram or Wardha whichever suits you better. There are things to discuss.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 2079

77. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

ON THE TRAIN,

March 21, 1940

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I got your letter just now. I am glad that you feel at home there. Write to me regularly. I wrote[3] to Rami. She has not answered.

Do you get any newspapers there ?

Teach Kanchan.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9740. Also C.W. 720. Courtesy : Navajivan Trust

[1] *Vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Akbar Hydari", 14-4-1940.

[2] C. A. Aiyamuthu, Secretary, Tamilnad branch of the A. I. S. A.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Ramibehn K. Parekh", 7-2-1940.

78. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

ON THE TRAIN,

March 21, 1940

CHI. KANCHAN,

I had asked Mahadev to reply to your letter. The service you are doing there is, according to me, no mean education. I look upon it as true education. Do continue your studies, however. Write to me regularly.

Won't you agree that you are gaining a hundred times more there than you would have by accompanying me to Ramgarh ? Besides, you escaped the drenching we got at Ramgarh. There are twelve girls from the Mahila Ashram in this carriage. Ashadevi and her Mithu also are in the party.

We shall reach tomorrow morning.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8285. Also C.W. 7077. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

79. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

ON THE TRAIN,

March 21, 1940

CHI. VALJI,

I had your postcard. In Bombay there are less chances of your constipation and fever disappearing. Still, if you are obliged to stay there I may send a note to a homoeopath who has been offering to help. Both the complaints must be cured.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VALJI DESAI
C/O SHRI B. J. REGE
GOVERNMENT PRESS
CHARNI ROAD, BOMBAY 4

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 7491. Courtesy : Valji G. Desai

80. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN,
March 22, 1940

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have gone through your long letter regarding the idea I put forward at Malikanda.[1] There seems to have been some misunderstanding. If possible, I wish to give a daily wage of eight annas right from today. However, what should we do if those who will wear the cloth cannot afford [the resulting price]? Crores of people will have to purchase the khadi which they wear. Only if khadi is thus purchased and worn by people, will the sisters who spin may earn a living. If everybody were to spin the yarn required for his clothes himself, spinning as a profession would cease. The spinner would be unable to make a living. That would be the situation. I am asking Krishnadas to think over all these problems. You need to go deeper into the matter. I will try to solve your difficulty through correspondence. If you wish,you may come over when you get the time to do so. You had placed on my table some figures related to spinning. I do not find them. Send me the figures again.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : . S. N. 33054

81. LETTER TO ABDUL MAJID CHAUDHRI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 23, 1940

DEAR CHAUDHRI SAHIB,

I have very carefully read your letter. In the Congress itself there is no Hindu raj. A Muslim divine[2] rules it. There is no hypocrisy about the Congress. Englishmen, Christians, Parsis and Muslims have dominated the Congress. In any case the Congress will never coerce any community to remain within its fold.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

CHAUDHRI SAHIB ABDUL MAJID, B.A., LL.B.
GUJRAT, PUNJAB

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] At the session of the Gandhi Seva Sangh held at Malikanda from February 20 to 25, 1940

[2] Abul Kalam Azad who was elected Congress President on February 16, 1940

82. LETTER TO REV. SATCHELL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

March 23, 1940

DEAR REV. SATCHELL,

I have kept your letter by me all these months. My experience tells me that no society can be held together unless it is ruled by truth and non-violence. To accept the rule of these two invisible forces is a difficult task. I hope therefore that in your society you will prefer quality to quantity.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 10958. Courtesy: Prime Minister's Office

83. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

March 23, 1940

CHI. MANILAL,

Read the accompanying letter. I have written to Haji Ismail Bhabha and asked him to see you and discuss the matter with you. You are brothers, not enemies. I have also informed him that I do not interfere with you in your policy. You yourself should try to meet him.

You know about things here through newspapers. I will ask Pyarelal to give you some news.

Ba is fine, and so am I

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4911

84. HOW TO EVOKE THE BEST ?

An Indian protagonist of Britain writes :[1]

> If our aim is to arouse the best in Englishmen through our non-violence and thus create mutual trust, we have signally failed. . . . Our best period of non-violence . . . was the period of Congress regime in provinces. . . . Now the whole atmosphere is again getting surcharged with nothing but hatred towards England. Cordiality is being replaced by

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

> bitterness and trust by distrust. . . . What visible demonstration have we given of our non-violence or of our desire to cultivate goodwill ? . . . Is not a compromise based on give-and-take a more appropriate machinery for (1) creating a non-violent atmosphere, (2) creating goodwill, (3) rousing the best in the Englishmen, and (4) creating a short cut to independence through mutual co-operation ?

The argument does credit to the heart of the writer, but he misses the method of non-violence. He has started with a half premise. Our aim is not merely to arouse the best in Englishmen but to do so whilst we are prosecuting our cause. If we cease to pursue our course, we do not evoke the best in him but we pander to the evil in him. The best must not be confounded with good temper. When we are dealing with any evil, we may have to ruffle the evil-doer. We have to run the risk, if we are to bring the best out of him. I have likened non-violence to aseptic and violence to antiseptic treatment. Both are intended to ward off the evil, and therefore cause a kind of disturbance which is often inevitable. The first never harms the evil-doer.

Whilst I agree with the critic that our non-violence has not been unadulterated, I must dissent from the view that we have signally failed. I am unable to agree that the best period of non-violence was the period of Congress regime. During that period non-violence was inactive. For each tried to please the other. Both were seemingly pursuing a common policy, though each had known reservations. The visible demonstration we have given of non-violence is that violent action has been successfully and entirely avoided through Congress influence. Being too near the event we are not able to have a true measure of the great restraint exercised by millions of men and women. I grant that we have not yet shed violence of the heart. But the amazing self-restraint exercised by the people fills me with the hope that violence of the heart will in due course give place to goodwill towards the opponent. It will never come if the critic's plan of the policy of timidity, as I should call it, is pursued. Hatred will melt when restraint has been exercised sufficiently long to starve it. The effect of it on the English mind will also be equally wholesome in the long run. Englishmen will perceive that non-violence was real in so far as it went, and that masses of people could act with great restraint in spite of their nursing a grievance against them.

All compromise is based on give and take, but there can be no give and take on fundamentals. Any compromise on fundamentals is a surrender. For it is all give and no take. The time for compromise can only come when both are of one mind

on fundamentals, i.e., when the British Government have made up their mind that not they but Indians will determine the constitution under which the latter will be governed. There is a dangerous snag in the reluctance to refer the question of constitution to an assembly of elected Indian representatives. Minorities need have no fear, for they will determine their own safeguards through their own representatives. The Princes need have none, for they need not come in, if they do not wish to. The only party that can effectively obstruct and does obstruct is the dominating i. e., the ruling party. There will be no compromise until that party has sincerely come to the conclusion that it cannot or does not want to rule.

SEVAGRAM, March 24, 1940

Harijan, 30-3-1940

85. A CHIEF JUDGE DESCENDS

A correspondent sends me a newspaper report of a speech delivered by the Chief Judge of Mysore at a meeting recently held in Bangalore to help the war. He is reported to have said :[1]

> The Allies were not fighting for democracy or any particular form of government. . . . They were fighting to put an end to all forms of aggression by one nation against others. . . . The leaders of a certain political party in this country had decided that this was the proper occasion for them to bargain for their political ends, had thereatened that, if what they asked for was not granted, they would create trouble in India and so help the enemy. . . . He was sure that when the history of India came to be written, Indian children of the future would skip over with shame that part relating to the tactics of such politicians as he had referred to. . . .

It is hardly likely that His Honour the Chief Judge knows of the secrets of the British Cabinet. In any event, if Britain is fighting against mere aggression, it can hardly be called a worthy aim. Having been the foremost aggressor in the world, Britain could not justify her fight against Germany on the pretext put forth by the learned Chief Judge.

My correspondent in sending the cutting says in his covering letter :

> 1. He ought not to have entered into matters of political controversy at a *non-party* meeting convened under *royal* auspices.
>
> 2. He, being the Chief Justice of a High Court, overstepped the bounds of propriety in publicly attacking the politics of a particular

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

party.

3. He, being a judicial officer of an Indian State, ought not to have gone out of the way and meddled with the party politics of British India.

I think the criticism is just. The Congress will survive the attack. But I do not know whether the Paramount Power should not take notice of the Chief Judge's extraordinary utterance. Surely he misuses the word bargain when he applies it to the Congress policy. What is there to be ashamed of in the Congress seeking the deliverance of the country from foreign rule even when the foreigner is in distress ? If the Congress was not committed to the method of peace, it would have been not only justified but would have deemed it its duty to take advantage of Britain's difficulty by creating a state of rebellion in the country by every means at its disposal. But the Congress has adopted the policy of peace. No doubt it would have done better if it could have honestly accepted my advice. The choice before the Congress was not between two evils but between good and better. The better was beyond its ability and would therefore have harmed and weakened it. Thus 'good' was the best for the Congress, and so I threw in my lot with it. I would have been a traitor if, having led the Congress to accept non-violence as its policy, I had remained on my pedestal and refused to guide the great organization. It ill becomes those who believe in war as an accepted institution to charge the Congress with the spirit of bargaining. The word is a misfit when it is applied to the life-and-death struggle of a nation bent upon vindicating its right to freedom.

SEVAGRAM, March 25, 1940

Harijan, 30-3-1940

86. EVERY CONGRESS COMMITTEE A SATYAGRAHA COMMITTEE

When I said at the Subjects Committee meeting[1] at Ramgarh that every Congress Committee should become a Satyagraha Committee, I meant every word of what I said, as I meant every word of everything else I said. I would like every Congressman who desires to serve in the Satyagraha *Sena*[2] to read my two

[1] On March 18

[2] Army

speeches[1] made at Ramgarh as well as whatever else I may write in *Harijan* on the struggle, and to carry out the instructions meant for him or her.

In the coming struggle, if it must come, no half-hearted loyalty will answer the purpose. Imagine a General marching to battle with doubting, ill-prepared soldiers. He will surely march to defeat. I will not consciously make any such fatal experiment. This is not meant to frighten Congressmen. If they have the will, they will not find my instructions difficult to follow. Correspondents tell me that, though they have no faith in me or the charkha, they ply the latter for the sake of discipline. I do not understand this language. Can a General fight on the strength of soldiers who, he knows, have no faith in him ? The plain meaning of this language is that the correspondents believe in mass action but do not believe in the connection I see between it and the charkha, etc., if the action is to be non-violent.

They believe in my hold on the masses, but they do not believe in the things which I believe have given me that hold. They merely want to exploit me and will grudgingly pay the price which my ignorance or obstinacy (according to them) demands. I do not call this discipline. True discipline gives enthusiastic obedience to instructions even though they do not satisfy reason. A volunteer exercises his reason when he chooses his General, but after having made the choice, he does not waste his time and energy in scanning every instruction and testing it on the anvil of his reason before following it. His is "not to reason why".

Now for my instructions.

Every Congress Committee should become a Satyagraha Committee and register such Congressmen who believe in the cultivation of the spirit of goodwill towards all, who have no untouchability in them in any shape or form, who would spin regularly, and who habitually use khadi to the exclusion of all other cloth. I would expect those who thus register their names with their Committees to devote the whole of their spare time to the constructive programme. If the response is sincere, these Satyagraha Committees would become busy spinning depots. They will work in conjunction with and under the guidance of A.I.S.A. branches in a businesslike manner so that there remain, in the jurisdiction of the Committees, no Congressmen who have not adopted khadi for exclusive use. I shall expect businesslike reports to be sent from provincial headquarters to the A.I.C.C. as to the progress of the work of the Satyagraha Committees. Seeing that

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Subjects Committee", "Speech at Subjects Committee", 18-3-1940, and "Speech at Congress Session", 20-3-1940.

this registration is to be purely voluntary, the reports would mention the numbers both of those who give their names for registration and those who do not.

The registered satyagrahis will keep a diary of the work that they do from day to day. Their work, besides their own spinning, will consist in visiting the primary members and inducing them to use khadi, spin and register themselves. Whether they do so or not, contact should be maintained with them.

There should be visits paid to Harijan homes and their difficulties removed so far as possible.

Needless to say that names should be registered only of those who are willing and able to suffer imprisonment.

No financial assistance is to be expected by satyagrahi prisoners whether for themselves or their dependents.

So much for the active satyagrahis. But there is a much larger class of men and women who, though they will not spin or court or suffer imprisonment, believe in the two cardinal principles of satyagraha and welcome and wish well to the struggle. These I will call passive satyagrahis. They will help equally with the active ones, if they will not interfere with the course of the struggle by themselves courting imprisonment or aiding or precipitating strikes of labourers or students. Those who out of overzeal or for any other cause will act contrary to these instructions will harm the struggle and may even compel me to suspend it. When the forces of violence are let loose all over the world and when nations reputed to be most civilized cannot think of any force other than that of arms for the settlement of their disputes, I hope that it will be possible to say of India that she fought and won the battle of freedom by purely peaceful means.

I am quite clear in my mind that, given the co-operation of politically-minded India, the attainment of India's freedom is perfectly possible through unmixed non-violence. The world does not believe our pretension of non-violence. Let alone the world, I, the self-styled General, have repeatedly admitted that we have violence in our hearts, that we are often violent to one another in our mutual dealings. I must confess that I will not be able to fight so long as we have violence in our midst. But I will fight if the proposed register is honest and if those who courageously keep out will not disturb the even course of the struggle.

Non-violent action means mobilization of world opinion in our favour. I know that a growing number of thinking men and women of the world are sick of the war spirit, they are longing for a way of peace, and they are looking to India to point that way.

We cannot have that opinion on our side if we are not honestly non-violent. Let me repeat what I have said in these columns, that I shall be able to fight with a very small army of honest satyagrahis and shall feel powerless and embarrassed if I have a huge army in which I can have no trust or as to whose behaviour I am not always sure.

I expect the A.I.C.C. to organize Satyagraha Committees and report to me from time to time of the progress made.

If there is an enthusiastic response, inside of one month it should be possible to forecast the exact period required to put the Satyagraha Committees in working order.

SEVAGRAM, March 25, 1940

Harijan, 30-3-1940

87. MY ANSWER TO QUAID-E-AZAM

Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah is reported to have said[1] :

> Mr. Gandhi has been saying for the last 20 years that there cannot be any swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity. Mr. Gandhi is fighting for a Constituent Assembly. May I point out to Mr. Gandhi and the Congress that they are fighting for a Constituent Assembly which we cannot accept ? Therefore, the idea of a Constituent Assembly is impracticable and unacceptable. Mr. Gandhi wants a Constituent Assembly for purposes of ascertaining the views of Muslims, and if they do not agree, he would then give up all hope and then would agree with us.[2] If there exists the will to come to a settlement with the Muslim League, then why does not Mr. Gandhi, as I have said more than once, honestly agree that the Congress is a Hindu organization and that it does not represent anything but the solid body of Hindus ? Why should Mr. Gandhi not be proud to say : 'I am a Hindu and the Congress is a Hindu body' ? I am not ashamed of saying that I am a Muslim and that the Muslim League is the representative of Muslims. Why all this camouflage, why this threat of civil disobedience, and why this fight for a Constituent Assembly ?
>
> Why should not Mr. Gandhi come as a Hindu leader and let me meet him proudly representing the Mussalmans ?

My position is and has been clear. I am proud of being a Hindu, but I have never gone to anybody as a Hindu to secure Hindu-Muslim unity. My Hinduism demands no pacts. My support of the Khilafat was unconditional. I am no politician in

[1] In his Presidential address at the Lahore session of the All-India Muslim League on March 22

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Subjects Committee", 18-3-1940.

the accepted sense. But whatever talks I had with Quaid-e-Azam or any other have been on behalf of the Congress which is not a Hindu organization. Can a Hindu organization have a Muslim divine as President, and can its Working Committee have four Muslim members out of 15 ? I still maintain that there is no swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity. I can never be party to the coercion of Muslims or any other minority. The Constituent Assembly as conceived by me is not intended to coerce anybody. Its sole sanction will be an agreed solution of communal questions. If there is no agreement, the Constituent Assembly will be automatically dissolved. The Constituent Assembly or any body of elected representatives can alone have a fully representative status. The Congress representative capacity has been and can be questioned. But who can question the sole representative capacity of the elected delegates to the Constituent Assembly ? I cannot understand the Muslim opposition to the proposed Constituent Assembly. Are the opponents afraid that the Muslim League will not be elected by Muslim voters ? Do they not realize that any Muslim demand made by the Muslim delegates will be irresistible ? If the vast majority of Indian Muslims feel that they are not one nation with their Hindu and other brethren, who will be able to resist them ? But surely it is permissible to dispute the authority of the 50,000 Muslims who listened to Quaid-e-Azam to represent the feeling of eight crores of Indian Muslims.

SEVAGRAM, March 26, 1940

Harijan, 30-3-1940

88. A BRAVE STATEMENT

Shri Jayaprakash Narayan sent me a copy of his statement[1] before the court which is printed below. It is worthy of him, brave, brief and to the point. It is an irony of fate, as he himself has said, that his patriotism should be penalized. What tens of thousands think and thousands say in their talks, Shri Jayaprakash has said in public and before the very men who are producing war material. It is true that, if his words take effect and they are repeated, the Government would be embarrassed. But such embarrassment should set them thinking about their treatment of India instead of punishing a patriot for his open thinking.

The concluding portion of the statement proves the author's intense humanitarianism. He has no malice in him. He wants to

[1] *Vide* A ppendix "Jayaprakash Narayan's Statement", 30-3-1940.

end Imperialism and Nazism. He has no quarrel with Englishmen or Germans and says truly that, if England were to shed imperialism, not only India but the freedom-loving people of the whole world would exert themselves to see the defeat of Nazism and the victory of freedom and democracy.

SEVAGRAM, March 26, 1940
Harijan, 30-3-1940

89. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

WARDHA,
March 26, 1940

MY DEAR CHILD,

It seems ages when I heard from you last. Therefore it gave me joy to see your letter to Charlie who has forwarded it to me for disposal. Why have you not been writing to me ? I know you are careful about my time. But I do want an occasional line from you.

The girls are the biggest problem for you. But there too you have to trust God to lead you. No use fretting about things we cannot mend.

How are you keeping yourself ?

Charlie had a narrow escape. He is still bed-ridden but out of danger. I saw him often enough when I was in Calcutta. Mahadev, who has just returned from Calcutta, brings news of slow but steady progress.

For the family here, I am keeping fit, Ba has a persistent cough and is weak, Mahadev is living here. The place is fairly crowded. Mary[1] is still in the village of her choice sticking to it in spite of difficulties.

M. writes to me now and then.

Love.

BAPU

My Dear Child, p. 115

90. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
March 26, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Su [shila] behn's remarks were relevant because she was explaining what I meant. I showed your letter to A.S. Sushila also

[1] F. Mary Barr

saw it. Both should have seen it. Why don't you see that your giving the details does not help matters. Whatever he has taken is not for his personal use. There is no friend in Chhindwara who would provide everything. That is why I sent Munnalal [once] in advance and [then] also accompanying him. There is no harm if he has taken with him more than he should have. If he had gone alone he would have taken neither grain nor utensils.

Your criticism of me is quite correct. My life-style has become grandiose. It is getting rather difficult to check it. The items for my use can only be carried from here. Only fruit may be available for me on the way. All the same there is too much fuss in preparing things for me. Doing so in the case of others would seem to be merely swimming with the current. In any case, neither thing has my approval.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 4341

91. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

WARDHA,

[After *March 26, 1940*][1]

MY DEAR CHILD,

You must trust God and be cheerful. Everything pales before the tragedy that is taking place in Europe. Can nothing be done for Tangai[2] ?

Love.

BAPU

My Dear Child, p. 116

92. TELEGRAM TO MRS. YAKUB HASAN

[On or before *March 27, 1940*][3]

MY SINCERE CONDOLENCES ON YOUR BEREAVEMENT.[4] MAY GOD GIVE YOU STRENGTH TO BEAR THE LOSS.

The Hindu, 27-3-1940

[1] In the source this letter is placed after the one dated March 26, 1940.

[2] Addressee's daughter

[3] The report is date-lined "Madras, March 27, 1940".

[4] The addressee's husband, former Minister of Public Works in Madras, had passed away.

93. LETTER TO PREMI JAIRAMDAS

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 27, 1940

CHI. PREMI,

I have your letter. Please give the enclosed to Father, if you think it should be given to him. Will it be safe to take him to Sindh in his present condition? Why not to Kashmir as he had originally planned? Somehow or other I dread the idea of going to Sindh especially at this time of year. You won't be remiss in writing to me. A postcard will do. I must have the latest condition.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 11050. Courtesy: Arjun Jairamdas

94. LETTER TO C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR

SEVAGRAM,
March 28, 1940

DEAR FRIEND,

You will have observed that I have written nothing in *Harijan* of late about Travancore. My silence has been due to the fact that Kurup and Rangaswamy wrote to me that you were coming to Sevagram to have a chat with me. I have been looking forward to the event. Much time has gone by after the last intimation received by me. I shall be obliged if you could drop me a line whether there is likely to be a meeting between us in the near future.

Meanwhile I send you the latest note I have received about Travancore.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

95. LETTER TO CHIMANDAS I. JAGTIANI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 28, 1940

DEAR CHIMANDAS,

Your quotation[1] is good. I hope your charkha work will flourish.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 5738

96. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

March 29, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Nothing has been decided about the hospital. Sushila says that the work continues up to 3 o'clock. So if you can work from 10 to 2 without break, you can take off some time for meals. If you need some rest, you can have that also during mealtime. That is, all you can get is three-fourths of an hour or an hour at the most. See if you find this worth considering.

I fully approve of what you write about the library. Discuss the suggestion with Chimanlal and implement it immediately if possible. If you need any help from me, ask for it. The library must be made a fine one.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8548. Also C.W. 7078. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

97. A MESSAGE

March 30, 1940

It should be a matter of shame for us as long as all men and women cannot read and write well.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 9561

[1] From Shet Letiff, a Sufi poet of Sind, which read : "Those who spin with the spirit of competition, their yarn is not accepted, while those who spin with love in their hearts, their yarn is accepted. . . ."

98. SPEECH AT KHADI YATRA[1]

SEVAGRAM,

March 30, 1940

Just now you recited the eleven vows as part of your prayers. It is our formula for gaining internal and external emancipation. Working within its orbit success may appear at times difficult, but there need be no despair, if we have faith. The greater the difficulties, the greater should be our faith. Even so, faith is needed for the prosecution of the khadi programme.

Although the people of Sevagram gave an invitation and I agreed to the holding of the *yatra* here, that does not mean that I consider this place to be fit for the holding of such *yatra*. My test would require a high percentage of adoption of khadi. As it is, perhaps, not more than 20 per cent of the Sevagram folk wear khadi. Those that do, have not adopted it fully and with an understanding of all its implications. The adoption of khadi with all its implications means revolution in one's life. It means purity in its wide sense and a readiness to lay down one's life for the sake of the country's freedom. Do the people of Sevagram come up to that test ? I am afraid, not. I confess the failure is partly mine. I have not put forth sufficient effort to give them the needed education. I would like you to hold the next *yatra* in a place which comes at least within a measurable distance of the ideal that I have laid down.

At Malikanda we reduced the size and scope of the Gandhi Seva Sangh and turned it into an institute for carrying out experimental research intothe principles for which the Sangh stands, as for instance, truth, ahimsa, khadi, and their interrelation ship. I have said that there is a vital connection between khadi and ahimsa. But I have not fully proved it. My reason follows my heart. Without the latter it would go astray. Faith is the function of the heart It mus be enforced by reason.The two are not antagonistic as some think. The more intense one's faith is, the more it whets one's reason. And so, although my faith in khadi is daily growing, I have not put my reason in cold storage. I listen carefully to all adverse criticism with an open and receptive mind, extract from it what is worth extracting and

[1] Reproduced from the article "Sevagram Khadi *Yatra*". Khadi *yatra* or pilgrimage was an annual conference of the khadi-lovers of Wardha district organized by Gram Seva Mandal under the inspiration and guidance of Vinoba Bhave.

reject the chaff. I am always ready to correct my mistakes. A full and candid admission of one's mistake should make one proof against its repetition. A full realization of one's mistake is also the highest form of expiation. I would like all co-workers to test with their reason all I say. When faith becomes blind it dies. It is a drawback in khadi work that many workers do not apply their reason to their work. We must find out why the progress in khadi is slow. It may be that we have erred in detail, we may find that we have hereafter to place more emphasis on self-spinning than on production for sale. At one time I myself had suggested the ideal of immediate introduction of a standard wage of eight annas a day for the spinners. But under the advice of experienced khadi workers, we satisfied ourselves with three annas standard wage for the time being, keeping the higher figure before us as our goal. Even this rise is phenomenal. Shall we be able to sustain this wage ?

Take now the political aspect. I have said that we can get swaraj through khadi. If you have real faith in it, you will not rest till you have proved it to the whole world by your reason. The link between khadi economics, politics and sociology cannot depend on unreasoned faith. The wheel is the one thing that can become universal and replace the use of arms. If the millions co-operate in plying the charkha for the sake of their economic liberation, the mere fact will give them an invincible power to achieve political independence. You must have noticed how insistent I have become about the fulfilment of the khadi programme as a condition precedent to the launching of civil disobedience. If our preparation is complete, the struggle may be rendered unnecessary. And if it does become necessary, it will be invincible and of a short duration. But if only a few take to the charkha, it becomes necessary for them to sacrifice their all in order to quicken the conscience of their compatriots and the English rulers. The efficacy of their sacrifice will depend upon the degree of their purity and innocence. Mere wearing of khadi without knowing its implications cannot help. For, when it becomes the vogue even evil-doers will wear it. Khadi like God's sunshine and air is for all alike, but all do not thereby become eligible for satyagraha. Khadi, purity and readiness to sacrifice oneself are the three essential conditions for a satyagrahi. The charkha is the external symbol. Without it your sacrifice will not be non-violent. I have no cut-and-dry plan of fight before me. I only know that I must be ready for it unless I am a hypocrite or a fool.

Lastly, since the *yatra* has taken place here, I suggest that you draw up a programme for making the whole of the village of Sevagram khadi-clad within a year. The experiment will exercise your faith and your reason and may give you the key for making khadi universal.

Harijan, 6-4-1940

99. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

SEVAGRAM,

March 31, 1940

MY DEAR KU [MARAPPA],

Gajanan[1] is an evergreen. He has sent me a long note and has seen me too. He says you do not approve of his turning palm *gur* to commercial uses and you want to control the method of expenditure already sanctioned. I have told him that you could not object to his turning *gur* to commercial uses so long as the process does not involve loss and you would not interfere with his expending moneys according to sanctioned budget. If I have interpreted you correctly, you have only to confirm this note. If I have misinterpreted you and if you have the time, come along on Thursday at 4.30 p.m. and we shall jointly waste 30 minutes between us.

I wonder if that returned bottle was re-returned with tomato delicacy put in.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 10150

100. LETTER TO PREMI JAIRAMDAS

SEVAGRAM,

March 31, 1940

CHI. PREMI[2],

Our letters crossed. I hope Father is none the worse for the journey nor the climate there. My letter contained the mala for you. I hope you got it safe. You will give me a detailed letter and guard Father against unwanted interviews.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 11052. Courtesy: Arjun Jairamdas

[1] Gajanan Naik, Supervisor, jaggery department of A.I.V.I.A.

[2] This is in the Devanagari script.

101. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEVAGRAM,

March 31, 1940

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your wire and letter, also the one from Jayaprakash. I had expected a longer sentence. In a way I welcome this imprisonment.[1] It will surely give him rest. See that he takes proper care about his food. As for you, you should engross yourself in the work there. Know the names and addresses of all your women friends and arrange for their spinning-wheels, etc. See that they get lessons in reading and writing in their homes. Send Harijan Sevak and other literature to those who can read. Train them in sanitation. Create in them a desire to discard the purdah. But don't be in a hurry about this.

I am all right.

Pass on the letter to Jayaprakash.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3544

102. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

SEVAGRAM,

March 31, 1940

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

I have your letter. I shall not ignore your view. I shall publish your resolution, and write about it.[2] I accept your view that I should not at any rate be caught napping.

They are all lax about District Boards, etc. They have not been able to decide anything. I am myself full of doubts after listening to their comments. I have no personal experience and therefore I cannot say things emphatically. I shall get more elucidation about this from Narendra Dev.[3]

I shall encourage Prabha to stick to the work she has

[1] *Vide* "A Brave Statement", 26-3-1940.

[2] *Vide* "Jayaprakash's Picture", 14-4-1940.

[3] Acharya Narendra Dev (1889-1956); President, All-India Kisan Sabha, 1939 and 1942; leading member of the Socialist Party of India and Praja Socialist Party; Vice-Chancellor, Lucknow University, and later, Banaras Hindu University

undertaken.

Preserve your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 2219

103. DISCUSSION AT KHADI YATRA[1]

SEVAGRAM,

March 31, 1940

Q. Has *takli* been introduced into the basic education scheme with the economic, i.e., self-support, or the educative end in view ?

A. Anything introduced in basic education can only have one end in view, i.e., the educative. The object of basic education is the physical, intellectual and moral development of the children through the medium of a handicraft. But I hold that any scheme, which is sound from the educative point of view and is efficiently managed, is bound to be sound economically. For instance, we can teach our children to make clay toys that are to be destroyed afterwards. That too will develop their intellect. But it will neglect a very important moral principle, viz., that human labour and material should never be used in a wasteful or unproductive way. The emphasis laid on the principle of spending every minute of one's life usefully is the best education for citizenship and incidentally makes basic education self-sufficient.

Q. How can khadi and spinning lead to swaraj ?

A. If millions co-operate, it cannot but generate tremendous strength which can be put to any use one likes. The charkha provides the best medium for such co-operation. It provides dignified employment and food and clothing for *Daridranarayana*. This cannot but produce mass consciousness and non-violent strength for gaining swaraj.

Q. Must one who takes to khadi take to spinning as well ?

A. From the economic point of view it is enough to take to khadi. But if khadi is to be our weapon for winning swaraj, spinning is of equal necessity. Khadi gives us economic self-sufficiency, whereas spinning links us with the lowest paid labour.

[1] Reproduced from the article "Sevagram Khadi *Yatra*". The report is prefaced as follows : "The khadi *yatra* was over at 5 p.m. on 31st March, but as Gandhiji had agreed to answer questions, if there were any, after the evening prayer, many people stayed on for the night."

In militarized countries everyone gives a certain time for military purposes. Ours being a non-violent basis, everyone should do sacrificial spinning for a minimum period from year to year. Maulana Mohamed Ali used to call the *takli* and the yarn our arms and ammunition for winning swaraj. The analogy is telling. Is it too much for us to give half an hour or one hour per day to spinning as a measure of voluntary conscription ? I remember, at the beginning of the last war when I was in England I was given pyjama suits to stitch for the soldiers. Many others from the most aristocratic families including some venerable old ladies and gentlemen were doing such work. We all finished our quota of work as we were required to. No one considered it beneath his or her dignity to do so. Towards the end of the war far more work was given by the whole nation. Yet no one complained. I warn you that, although today I am asking you only to give half an hour or one hour per day to spinning, I may have to be more exacting as the situation develops.

Q. Should civil resister prisoners offer satyagraha in order to get the permission to wear khadi and spin regularly in jail ?

A. A satyagrahi willingly submits to all jail discipline. He never wishes to embarrass the authorities. To insist on being allowed to spin in jail when you do not do so with religious regularity outside, would be a species of violence. I would not recommend that course to anybody although I can conceive of exceptional cases. Appa Patwardhan for instance—who might go to the extreme length in order to secure that permission.[1] We have not behaved as ideal prisoners in the past. There has been violence and untruth in our actions. I do not want that to be repeated. We may plead with the jail authorities. I would be faced with a dilemma if I were not allowed these facilities. What I have said of spinning applies equally to khadi.[2]

Replying to another question, Gandhiji said that workers should mix with villagers, identify with them, endear them and serve them. If we get a number of *sevaks* (workers) we can have swaraj early.

Q. Do you like cheering when you enter or speak and also shouts of *'Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai* ?

A. I have a small organization here. No cheering or *jai* takes place here in Sevagram. What you say does not sound nice. It is a rude thing and also avoidable. There is no need of praising in a family. I regard my country as a big family. I am not a

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. E. Doyle", 30-11-1932; "8-12-1932" and "Interview to Associated Press of India", 7-12-1932.

[2] What follows is from *The Hitavada*.

mahatma but try to be a true servant. God alone can testify to this.

Q. Should the truth of one man be considered as such by all ?

A. Truth is indefinable. Truth is another form of God. To serve God—Truth is satyagraha. Truth is a relative term. For worshipping liberty we require truth and non-violence as our means. We can reach or realize truth by non-violence.

Q. Will you insist on charkha even after swaraj ?

A. As soon as swaraj is won, I cease to be your General. You will then be called upon to elect your President. After that you may or may not decide to spin. But if I am alive then, I will insist on it. Because you know we cannot give up the means by which we achieve our independence. This is illustrated from the example of England, or Germany which never gave up arms (violent means) after she conquered her enemies. The charkha is our ammunition—guns and artillery—and so we cannot afford to forsake it. If you don't ply the charkha you cannot enlist in my army. There is no compulsion. But these are my conditions when you have selected me as your General.

Replying to a question whether several families devoting to spinning whole time could maintain themselves and educate their children, etc., Gandhiji said :

I never say this, nor is it possible. It is likely that we can maintain ourselves by khadi wages, but if all take to it, khaddar will be dearer. It is not possible to provide work for all. We should spin in spare time. Khadi is our *Annapurna*[1] (supplier of food), i.e., we can purchase some things out of its earning. If one crore people spin it will be great power and strength.

Answering a query whether he was opposed to machinery, Gandhiji said :

We should not use machinery for producing things which we can produce without its aid and have got the capacity to do so. As machinery makes you its slave, we want to be independent and self-supporting; so we should not take the help of machinery when we can do without it. We want to make our villages free and self-sufficient and through them achieve our goal—liberty—and also protect it. I have no interest in the machine nor [do] I oppose it. If I can produce my things myself, I become my master and so need no machinery.

Harijan, 6-4-1940, and *The Hitavada*, 5-4-1940

[1] One of the names of Siva's consert

104. QUESTION BOX

ARE YOU NOT MOVED ?

Q. You have written about Shri Jayaprakash Narayan.[1] But are you not moved by his sentence ? Is it not a call to arms ? Will you even now wait till your impossible conditions are fulfilled ?

A. I fear I must wait till my conditions are fulfilled. You should allow me to know more than you of the way in which satyagraha works. Of course I am moved by the sentence pronounced against that brave co-worker. I wish I could move you as I am moved. If you were, you would silently and more persistently spread the charkha cult by yourself spinning full-heartedly and by taking its message to your neighbours. Jayaprakash having gone to jail, has had his reward. He had the inner urge. He deserved the reward. Believe me, it will produce its own effect. If I become impatient and resort to precipitate action, the good done by Jayaprakash's imprisonment is likely to be undone partly or wholly. I will not be party to producing an anarchical condition in India, nor will any good purpose be served by my inviting individuals to follow Jayaprakash's example and court imprisonment. This jail-going in satyagraha does not admit of arithmetical application. Only one person's going may be most appropriate. Suffice it to say that Jayaprakash's imprisonment is engaging my serious attention. I wish all Congressmen would follow with redoubled zeal the task set before them.

CONSTRUCTIVE WORK AND C.D.

Q. You have tabooed power politics from Gandhi Seva Sangh and similar institutions for the sake of constructive work. Does this mean that no workers engaged in these institutions can take part in civil disobedience ? I am afraid this watertight division between civil resistance and constructive work will result in a crippling of the latter as no first-rate worker would take to it by renouncing civil resistance.

A. Those who argue like you do not know the value of constructive work. It is any day superior to civil disobedience. Civil disobedience without the backing of constructive effort is neither civil nor non-violent. Those who do constructive work merely for the sake of civil disobedience look at things topsy-turvy. At the present moment all satyagrahis have to hold themselves in readiness. But all may not be called. A soldier in reserve is as good as one on active duty. If the battle must come, I may say at once that my present plan is to disturb the constructive

[1] *Vide* "Jayaprakash Narayan", 12-3-1940, and "A Brave Statement", 26-3-1940.

work as little as possible. Your question, I take it, has reference to those only who are working in organizations such as the A. I. S. A., A. I. V. I. A., H. S. S.[1] and H. T. S.[2] These will be as little disturbed as possible. But all Congressmen without exception, if they want to help the struggle, must take up constructive work in their persons.

KHADI AND POLITICS

Q. Are you not endangering the khadi movement by identifying it with the political programme, especially the civil disobedience part of it ?

A. Most certainly not. I would be, if khadi was confined only to Congressmen or civil resisters. Khadi is prescribed as national wear for all, whether Congressmen or others. It is used even by some Englishmen, Americans and other Westerners. Your objection, if it was valid, would apply even to communal unity, removal of untouchability and temperance. These four have gained importance and momentum since they were incorporated in the Congress constructive programme. They can all become illegal if they become mixed up with violence. If they did become illegal, it would be found that the movements as such were not suppressed but the organizations masquerading under innocent labels were in reality covering violence.

CONFUSION OF THOUGHT

Q. You will be responsible for a gross injustice if you persist in giving to India a majority Government with only 'safeguards' for the minorities. The latter ought to have an effective part in the actual government of the country.

A. You have evidently confused majority rule with Hindu rule implying that the Hindu majority is irremovable. The fact is that the majority in all the provinces is a mixed majority. The parties are not Muslims and Hindus; they are Congressmen, independents, Muslim Leaguers, Muslim independents, labourites, etc. The Congress majority everywhere is a mixed majority and could be better balanced if there was no tension. The tension is a distemper. A distemper can never be a permanent feature of any growing society which India is. Whatever the outcome of the Muslim League demonstration and its claim, some day or other there will be a solution of the issues raised. The outcome will never be pure Muslim or Hindu majorities in any single province. The parties will be mixed and aligned according to different policies, unless democracy is crushed and autocracy reigns supreme in India as a whole or India is vivisected into two or more dead parts.

[1] Harijan Sevak Sangh
[2] Hindustani Talimi Sangh

If you have followed my argument, it must be clear to you that there will never be a denial of power to any party or group so far as the Congress is concerned. Minorities are entitled to full protection of their rights, for so long as they have to divide power with others, they run the risk of their special rights being adulterated.

A DILEMMA

Q. My father is an employee in the S.I. Railway. He has four children, all younger than I. He wants me to take an apprenticeship course. If I take part in the coming civil disobedience struggle, he may be dismissed and the family will starve. He says I can serve the nation by doing my share of constructive work. What is your advice ?

A. Your father is right. If you are the only bread-winner, you cannot leave the family to its fate for the sake of taking part in civil disobedience. You will certainly serve the nation quite as effectively as civil resisters if you zealously carry out the constructive programme.

VAIN REPETITIONS

Q. All agree that mechanical repetition of prayers is worse than useless. It acts as an opiate on the soul. I often wonder why you encourage repetition morning and evening of the eleven great vows as a matter of routine. May not this have a dulling effect on the moral consciousness of our boys ? Is there no better way of inculcating these vows ?

A. Repetitions when they are not mechanical produce marvellous results. Thus I do not regard the rosary as a superstition. It is an aid to the pacification of a wandering brain. Daily repetition of the vows falls under a different category. It is a daily reminder to the earnest seeker as he rises and retires that he is under the eleven vows which are to regulate his conduct. No doubt it will lose its effect if a person repeats the vows mechanically under the delusion that the mere repetition will bring him merit. You may ask : 'Why repeat the vows at all ?' You know that you have taken them and are expected to observe them. There is force in the argument. But experience has shown that a deliberate repetition gives stimulus to the resolution. Vows are to the weak mind and soul what tonics are to a weak body. Just as a healthy body needs no tonics, a strong mind may retain its health without the need of vows and the daily reminder thereof. An examination of the vows will, however, show that most of us are weak enough to need their assistance.

ON BEHALF OF DISABLED PEOPLE

Q. You stand for the poor and helpless. Would you not include the

providing of at least one daily meal to disabled beggars as an item of the daily routine of a 'constructive worker ' ? A large number of the former are lepers. There is not a city in India of any note without its quota of these hapless creatures. Their condition is deserving of your pity and consideration.

A. Valuable as this work undoubtedly is, it cannot become part of the constructive programme. It is not every form of social relief that can be made part of the Congress constructive programme. Such programme can only cover that part, the omission of which would make the attainment of swaraj through non-violence impossible. Who can deny that Hindu-Muslim unity, removal of untouchability, temperance and the charkha are essential for achieving our object ? My answer, however, does not mean that disabled humanity does not need any attention. No man or woman, whether of the Congress or not, can be worth much if he or she neglects to do his or her part of social service in the widest sense of the term.

SEVAGRAM, April 1, 1940

Harijan, 6-4-1940

105. A BAFFLING SITUATION

A question has been put to me :

> Do you intend to start general civil disobedience although Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah has declared war against Hindus and has got the Muslim League to pass a resolution[1] favouring vivisection of India into two ? If you do, what becomes of your formula that there is no swaraj without communal unity ?

I admit that the step taken by the Muslim League at Lahore creates a baffling situation. But I do not regard it so baffling as to make civil disobedience an impossibility. Supposing that the Congress is reduced to a hopeless minority, it will still be open to it, indeed it may be its duty, to resort to civil disobedience. The struggle will not be against the majority, it will be against the foreign ruler. If the struggle succeeds, the fruits thereof will be reaped as well by the Congress as by the opposing majority. Let me, however, say in parenthesis that, until the conditions I have mentioned for starting civil disobedience are fulfilled, civil disobedience cannot be started in any case. In the present instance there is nothing to prevent the imperial rulers from declaring their will in unequivocal terms that henceforth India will govern herself

[1] At its Lahore session in March; *vide* Appendix "Resolution Passed by All-India Muslim League", 23-3-1940.

according to her own will, not that of the rulers as has happened hitherto. Neither the Muslim League nor any other party can oppose such a declaration. For the Muslims will be entitled to dictate their own terms. Unless the rest of India wishes to engage in internal fratricide, the others will have to submit to Muslim dictation if the Muslims will resort to it. I know no non-violent method of compelling the obedience of eight crores of Muslims to the will of the rest of India, however powerful a majority the rest may represent. The Muslims must have the same right of self-determination that the rest of India has. We are at present a joint family. Any member may claim a division.

Thus, so far as I am concerned, my proposition that there is no swaraj without communal unity holds as good today as when I first enunciated it in 1919.

But civil disobedience stands on a different footing. It is open even to one single person to offer it, if he feels the call. It will not be offered for the Congress alone or for any particular group. Whatever benefit accrues from it will belong to the whole of India. The injury, if there is any, will belong only to the civil disobedience party.

But I do not believe that Muslims, when it comes to a matter of actual decision, will ever want vivisection. Their good sense will prevent them. Their self-interest will deter them. Their religion will forbid the obvious suicide which the partition would mean. The "two nations" theory is an untruth. The vast majority of Muslims of India are converts to Islam or are descendants of converts. They did not become a separate nation as soon as they became converts. A Bengali Muslim speaks the same tongue that a Bengali Hindu does, eats the same food, has the same amusements as his Hindu neighbour. They dress alike. I have often found it difficult to distinguish by outward sign between a Bengali Hindu and a Bengali Muslim. The same phenomenon is observable more or less in the South among the poor who constitute the masses of India. When I first met the late Sir Ali Imam I did not know that he was not a Hindu. His speech, his dress, his manners, his food were the same as of the majority of the Hindus in whose midst I found him. His name alone betrayed him. Not even that with Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah. For his name could be that of any Hindu. When I first met him, I did not know that he was a Muslim. I came to know his religion when I had his full name given to me. His nationality was written in his face and manner. The reader will be surprised to know that for days, if not months, I used to think of the late Vithalbhai Patel as a Muslim as he used to sport a beard and a Turkish cap. The Hindu law of inheritance governs many

Muslim groups. Sir Mohammed Iqbal used to speak with pride of his Brahmanical descent. Iqbal and Kitchlew are names common to Hindus and Muslims. Hindus and Muslims of India are not two nations. Those whom God has made one, man will never be able to divide.

And is Islam such an exclusive religion as Quaid-e-Azam would have it ? Is there nothing in common between Islam and Hinduism or any other religion ? Or is Islam merely an enemy of Hinduism ? Were the Ali Brothers and their associates wrong when they hugged Hindus as blood brothers and saw so much in common between the two ? I am not now thinking of individual Hindus who may have disillusioned the Muslim friends. Quaid-e-Azam has, however, raised a fundamental issue. This is his thesis[1] :

> It is extremely difficult to appreciate why our Hindu friends fail to understand the real nature of Islam and Hinduism. They are not religions in the strict sense of the word, but are, in fact, different and distinct social orders, and it is a dream that the Hindus and Muslims can ever evolve a common nationality. This misconception of one Indian nation has gone far beyond the limits and is the cause of most of our troubles and will lead India to destruction if we fail to revise our notions in time.
>
> The Hindus and Muslims have two different religious philosophies, social customs, literatures. They neither intermarry, nor dine together, and indeed, they belong to two different civilizations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions. Their aspects on life and of life are different. It is quite clear that Hindus and Mussalmans derive their inspiration from different sources of history. They have different epics, their heroes are different, and they have different episodes. Very often the hero of one is a foe of the other and, likewise, their victories and defeats overlap. To yoke together two such nations under a single State, one as a numerical minority and the other as majority, must lead to growing discontent and final destruction of any fabric that may be so built up for the government of such a State.

He does not say some Hindus are bad; he says Hindus as such have nothing in common with Muslims. I make bold to say that he and those who think like him are rendering no service to Islam; they are misinterpreting the message inherent in the very word Islam. I say this because I feel deeply hurt over what is now going on in the name of the Muslim League. I should be failing in my duty, if I did not warn the Muslims of India against the untruth that is being propagated amongst them. This warning is a duty because I have faithfully served them in their hour of need and because Hindu-Muslim unity has been and is my life's mission.

SEVAGRAM, April 1, 1940

Harijan, 6-4-1940

[1] As expounded in his Presidential address at Lahore

106. AN UNJUDICIAL DICTUM[1]

A correspondent sends me a Press cutting containing a report of an Allahabad judgement of two English judges sitting as appellate court. In delivering their judgment allowing the appeal their Lordships are reported to have said :

> The case is unsatisfactory because we have no less than five persons who were in effect, if their evidence can be relied upon, eye-witnesses, and yet, having regard to the slight value placed upon truth in this country, we have seriously to apply our minds as to whether they can be believed.

This is an extraordinary pronouncement from a bench of judges. What legal basis had these two judges for the sweeping statement made by them as to the character of a whole nation ? The inference is that in other countries a higher value is placed upon truth. Now if this was a universally accepted proposition, perhaps the judges would have been justified in taking legal notice of it. There is, however, not only no such acceptance but experienced observers have testified that, on the whole, greater value is put upon truth in India than elsewhere. But no judge should be influenced one way or the other by such observations as have no judicial value. I would go further and say that such observations ought not to be made by any responsible person, even on political platforms. They can never be proved. But when they are made by judges they vitiate their judgments and may lead to miscarriage of justice. Be it noted that the Allahabad judges have made use of their bias in coming to their decision and have thus proved their incapacity to hold responsible posts. The case in which the observation was made affected poor people. But the fact that only poor persons were involved makes it all the more necessary to take public notice of the judges' strictures. Who knows in how many cases this bias of theirs has resulted in defeating justice ?

SEVAGRAM, April 2, 1940

Harijan, 4-5-1940

[1] Though written on April 2, this was published only on May 4; *vide* "Letter to Sri Prakasa", 11-4-1940.

107. CABLE TO AGATHA HARRISON

WARDHAGANJ,
April 2, 1940

HARRISON
2 CRANBOURNE COURT
ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD
LONDON

OPERATION[1] SUNDAY SUCCESSFUL.

GANDHI

From the original : C.W. 10251. Courtesy : Visvabharati, Santiniketan

108. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 4, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad writes a long letter from which I enclose herewith the relevant portion.[2]

[1] C. F. Andrews was operated upon at Dr. Riordan's Nursing Home on Sunday, March 31.

[2] The letter dated March 30, 1940, *inter alia*, read : "A friend from Delhi, who very often meets the Viceroy, has sent a letter to me. He says that the impression left by your last interview on Linlithgow was that at first you wanted to lead him up to a certain point, and when he tried to reach it, then you left him altogether. He further writes that if you had cleared the position from the very beginning that the Dominion Status of the Westminster variety would not be acceptable to you, the Viceroy would have comprehended the situation. But it was not done. You insisted on the reply of the question whether the Status conferred on India would be of the Westminster variety or not. Linlithgow drew the conclusion that if he would get this point cleared, a way for further negotiation would be opened. He drew the attention of the Home Government to this fact with all emphasis, and assured her that his position would be strengthened if he gets a chance of making such a statement. He also insisted that so far as that declaration was concerned, it should not be mixed up with the communal problem. The League may be opposed to it to any extent, but the political destiny of India could not be now changed. But when the basis of negotiation was clarified, and he (the Viceroy) made an announcement with the surest hope of your approval, then all of a sudden you changed your attitude and declared quite unequivocally that India could not accept it. This weakened the position of Linlithgow, and the Home Government considered him to be incapable of understanding and dealing with Indian situation. In short, Linlithgow had a deep grievance against your attitude.

I shall be painfully surprised if you can confirm the report received by the Maulana Saheb. Mine was a simple inquiry. We had come so near each other that there was no mental reservation between us. And if anything was left obscure there was no difficulty about going straight to the point and clearing obscurities. That Dominion Status was not acceptable to the Congress had been cleared at the interview[1] which led to my inquiry. The object was to know where each party exactly stood. I should be very sorry indeed to discover that I left on your mind the impression that if Dominion Status of the Statute of Westminster variety was meant, the Congress would accept it.

I must refuse to give any credence to the suggestion that you had lost caste with the Cabinet because you had allowed yourself to be overreached by me as the report implies. I have not known British statecraft to be so easily moved from its dispositions as suggested by Maulana Saheb's correspondent. And I shall hope that you could never consider me guilty of wanting to overreach you.

Whilst I am writing to you, I want to have another thing also off my mind. I have already told you that in my son Devdas you have a warm-hearted champion. He has been writing long letters to me trying to convince me that I did you a gross injustice in abruptly terminating our last conversation. He discounts my assurance that the conversation ended because both you and I saw that the gulf between us was found to be too unbridgeable to be handled at that moment by prolonging conversations. Indeed it was your expression that it would be more manly for us to end the conversations the very day we began them and make the confession to the public. I at once accepted the accuracy of your characterization.

Devdas says, that was said out of courtesy if not British pride, and that you were eager to prolong the conversations. He is thus most disconsolate and thinks that my interpretation of your attitude is wrong. You alone can help me to settle this domestic dispute.[2]

M. K. G.

From a copy : C.W. 7843. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

"Here ends the letter. When I was in Delhi last time, I had come to know of similar things through other sources. . . ."

[1] Held on February 5, 1940

[2] For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 9-4-1940.

109. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 4, 1940

DEAR MAULANA SAHEB,

You shall address me as you like.[1] I do not know that you addressed me differently.

I have written[2] to Lord Linlithgow as suggested by you.

I quite agree with you about the Pattabhi episode.

I am inclined to think that there should be a considered reply from you to the Lahore resolution[3].

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : C.W. 7812 a. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

110. CABLE TO AGATHA HARRISON

WARDHAGANJ,
April 5, 1940

HARRISON
2 CRANBOURNE COURT
ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD
LONDON

ANDREWS DIED PEACEFULLY.[4] HOPE YOU LILIAN BE COURAGEOUS. MAHADEV IN CALCUTTA SINCE SUNDAY. LOVE.

GANDHI

From the original : C.W. 10252. Courtesy : Visvabharati, Santiniketan

111. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[5]

SEVAGRAM,
April 5, 1940

In the death of C. F. Andrews not only England, not only

[1] In his letter dated March 30, 1940, the addressee had addressed Gandhiji as "My Dear Mahatmaji".

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] Of the Muslim League; *vide* Appendix "Resolution Passed by All-India Muslim League", 23-3-1940.

[4] C. F. Andrews died at 1.40 a.m.

[5] This appeared in *Harijan* under "Notes", sub-title "A True Friend of the Poor".

India, but humanity has lost a true son and servant. And yet his death is a deliverance from pain and a fulfilment of his mission on this earth. He will live through those thousands who have enriched themselves by personal contact or contact with his writings. In my opinion Charlie Andrews was one of the greatest and best of Englishmen. And because he was a good son of England he became also son of India. And he did it all for the sake of humanity and for his Lord and Master Jesus Christ. I have not known a better man or a better Christian than C. F. Andrews. India bestowed on him the title of Deenabandhu. He deserved it because he was a true friend of the poor and downtrodden in all climes.

Harijan, 13-4-1940, and *The Hindu*, 5-4-1940

112. LETTER TO S. RADHAKRISHNAN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 5, 1940

DEAR SIR RADHAKRISHNAN,

I could not reply per return. Mass C. D. may or may not come. There is room for two or more opinions. I shall not be precipitate. But so far as the national claim is concerned, there can be no abatement. There is ample room for compromise after the mind becomes one. So long as the British Government think that they should have the decisive voice, the Congress should be the opposing body. I know the choice lies between two courses, opposition or acceptance of what can be had today. My whole life has been cast in the first mould, to yield nothing on the fundamentals, no matter how weak one may feel. Up to now I have had no cause for regret in having adopted that course. This unbending attitude of the British grieves me. I was going to use the word 'irritation'. But it is not to be found in the non-violence dictionary. Do you not see that Princes have no power to treat with us ? I ask you to be patient and firm.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : C.W. 7844. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

113. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SEVAGRAM,
April 5, 1940

MY DEAR MALKANI,

Wardha wants you badly for the new college[1]. If your feet are not firmly fixed there, I want you to help. If the call is

[1] Seksaria College of Commerce

definitely there, you must turn a deaf ear to the call from Wardha. In that case have you any good man in view ?

I have purposely not responded to your appeal. I am sad over the Sind affairs.[1] I thought therefore that I would observe silence and let you do the best you could alone.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G. N. 937

114. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

SEVAGRAM,

April 5, 1940

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I have your letter. The heat must not be unbearable. Sushilabehn tells me that you overexercise a little. You should feel no pain in any part of your body. In a disease like yours, one benefits by doing as little exercise as possible. You must not exceed the limit.

Rami writes to Ba. She must be writing to you, too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9735. Also C.W. 715. Courtesy : Navajivan Trust

115. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,

April 5, 1940

CHI. KANCHAN,

I have written more than one letter to you. You are doing well. You are getting trained to be a good public worker. Study carefully whatever you can. Here it is beginning to be very hot. Mahadev is still in Calcutta. Deenabandhu Andrews has passed away. The burial takes place today. [Mahadev] will return after that.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8284. Also C.W. 7079. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

[1] *Vide* "Sindh Tragedy", 1-1-1940.

116. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SEVAGRAM,

April 5, 1940

I am not congratulating you.[1] You have taken upon yourself a heavy responsibility. May God give you the strength to discharge it well. Till now you had been making Mayors. There was more fun in it and less responsibility. Now there will be no more fun but only responsibility. See that you do not get crushed under its weight. If you think that everything you do is dedicated to God, you will not feel the burden.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 175

117. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA

April 5, 1940

CHI. ANAND,

Why English ? I thought you wanted a few lines for some book. What can I say about the whole series ? Shall I praise a collection of my own writings ? My blessings are always with you. Why are you not satisfied with this ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy : National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

118. DISCUSSION WITH A CHINESE VISITOR

SEVAGRAM,

[Before *April 7, 1940*][2]

[Q.] Do you believe that the British, knowing them as you do, will give you independence without a fight ?

[A.] It all depends. I do not think they would want to have a fight if they were conscious of our strength. But today they do not feel our strength.

Have you any means other than civil disobedience to enforce your will ?

[1] The addressee had been elected Mayor of Bombay.

[2] The report of the discussion by Amrit Kaur is date-lined "Sevagram, April 7, 1940".

Yes. If we had no internecine quarrels, the British Government would not be able to resist us.

You are aware that in China we have paid heavily for unity. We have had to suffer 25 years of civil war. Might not India have to suffer the same horrors if the British withdrew ?

It is impossible to say definitely what will happen. It is, however, not necessary that there should be internal war. I imagine conditions in China were different. The whole populace there was fired with the spirit of revolt. Here we in our seven hundred thousand villages do not fly at each other's throats. There are no sharp divisions between us. But non-violence applied to large masses of mankind is a new experiment in the history of the world. I am buoyed up by my faith in its efficacy; the millions may not have caught that faith, and it may be that civil war will be the price we have to pay for our liberty. But if we win truly non-violently against the British, I am sure there will be no civil war.

After 25 years of civil war in China we have now found one person to represent us in our Generalissimo[1]. Is it not possible that the Indian people will need someone more martial than you with your spiritual leadership ?

If there is civil war, it will have proved my bankruptcy. A militarist will then be the need.

In the event of Indian independence would India develop along republican lines ? Is democracy suited to the character of the Indian people ?

These are problematical questions and it is difficult to say definitely one way or the other. If we evolve non-violently, democracy will not only suit us but we shall represent the truest democracy in the world.

If the British withdrew, could you protect yourselves ?

Yes, if both Hindus and Muslims evolve non-violently.

Is it true to say that the majority of Indians of the upper class do lip loyalty only to nationalism and in their heart of hearts want British rule ?

I am of opinion that the vast majority does not want British rule. They want freedom from foreign domination.

If the British withdrew, would you keep any Englishmen here ?

Yes, if they will transfer their allegiance to us and if they will serve India with their great ability, their techincal knowledge and powers of research.

Would you receive the help of a third party to free you from you yoke ?

Never. We have to find ourselves through our own inner strength, otherwise we must fall. Any structure built with outside help must of necessity be weak.

[1] Chiang Kai-Shek

The British are a bargaining nation, are they not ? Have you anything with which to bargain with them ?

Very little. And in any case I would not bargain for my liberty.

Do you believe conscience can make a man good ?

Yes, but it can make a coward of him too !

Can religion make a man moral ?

Yes, but it must be real religion, that which inspires one from within with a spirit of love and service.

In China we used to think that communism would never take any root, but it has now got a definite hold. Can the same be said of India ?

I may say that communists have not made much headway yet in India, and I somehow feel that the character of our people will not easily lend itself to communist methods.

Is it true that an Indian is a Hindu or a Muslim first and an Indian afterwards ?

It is not true, generally speaking, though neither will sell his religion for his country.

Religion plays no part in our political life, and this applies to Chinese Muslims too. Is India likely to develop more as an Eastern nation, or will the bond with the English be a difficult thing to get rid of ? It seems to me that English modes of life and thought have taken deep root here.

You are right where cities are concerned. But you will find, if you were to go there, that the villages, which are the real India, are wholly untouched. All the same, English ways and customs, their methods of administration, language and thought have had a devastating effect on so-called educated India. And this cultural conquest may perhaps never be wholly got rid of.

India is a nation of so many races. Do you think that should prove to be an obstacle to unity ?

None whatever.

It is strange how we and you have the same problems, social and otherwise.

Yes, and that is why we are really so close to each other—friends in distress.

And here Gandhiji related. . . how well he knew the Chinese colony in South Africa, how he was their lawyer, what close contact he had with them, how they became his comrades in the fight for vindication of the rights of Easterners there. He laughingly twitted the Chinese friend of the proverbial inscrutability of the Chinese as well as of the Japanese. He told him how Sevagram Ashram had

the good fortune to have a Japanese monk at the moment :

Quiet, disciplined, kind, but with a characteristic reserve which does not enable any of us to know his real mind. It may be a good thing, it adds to his dignity, it certainly adds to his peace of mind, and he is untouched, unruffled, by domestic difficulties and quarrels. I felt the same with the Chinese friends in South Africa. I addressed them hundreds of times. I made no distinction between them and Indians, but I always felt that your people had built a wall round themselves. You are so highly cultured and perhaps, therefore, artificial.

Gandhiji pointed to a lovely picture of hand-woven silk, framed and hanging on the wall, which the Chinese mission of goodwill had given him recently.

Take your art. It is a work of beauty and joy, but that art is inscrutable to me. But I do not mean this in a bad sense. I have trusted my Chinese co-workers and they were loyal and I am much drawn to China and the Chinese.

May I ask one or two more important questions before leaving ? Do you expect to see India independent ?

Yes, of course. I want to see India free in my lifetime. But God may not consider me fit enough to see the dream of life fulfilled. Then I shall quarrel, not with Him but with myself.

But without an army how can you ever succeed ?

Well, we have done so thus far. We are nearing our goal without having fired a single shot. It will be a miracle if we succeed. But there is nothing to make me doubt the efficacy of the weapon of non-violence. Whether, however, we have the requisite degree of it within us has yet to be proved.

Is there hatred against the British ?

Yes—alas—but if we remain non-violent, hatred will die as everything does from disuse.

It is very hard for us to get rid of hatred against Japan ?

Yes, it will take generations for you as you are using violence against them. I do not say that you should not have defended yourselves violently, but under those circumstances hatred cannot die.

Are the British easier to deal with than any other people ?

They are as easy, in terms of non-violence, to deal with as anyone else. But not having dealt with anyone else I cannot say from practical experience. All conquerors of India have reacted to what is noble in Indian culture and in Indian nature, the Muslims included. I believe the Germans would have done likewise. It may even be that the English reaction has been less than what others'

may have been because of their insularity and colour prejudice.

Before getting into the car the visitor said, "My half hour has been the fulfilment of a long-cherished dream. I shall never forget it."

Harijan, 13-4-1940

119. QUESTION BOX

A DOMESTIC DIFFICULTY

Q. You have rightly said that no one who has not renounced untouchability in every shape and form can take part in satyagraha. Supposing a Congressman's wife does not share his conviction in this regard and won't let him bring Harijans into his house, what should he do—coerce his wife into conformity with his views, renounce her, or renounce the satyagraha struggle ?

A. No occasion for coercing your wife. You should let her go her way and you should go yours. This would mean her having a separate kitchen for herself and, if she likes, also a separate room. Thus there is no question of renouncing the struggle.

TEACHERS AND SATYAGRAHA

Q. What part should a teacher who has faith in your constructive work play in the coming struggle, that of an active satyagrahi or a passive satyagrahi only ?

A. The data given by you are insufficient, but from what you have given I can say that you should play the passive part.

STATE PRAJA MANDALS

Q. What is the duty, in the event of civil disobedience, of members of Praja Mandals in the States and the rest of the people of the States ?

A. If civil disobedience is started by the Congress, it will be as against the British Government. The people of the States cannot and ought not to offer any civil disobedience in the States. Hence it follows that the Praja Mandals will remain unaffected by the Congress civil disobedience. But individuals of the States can, if they wish, join the civil disobedience campaign in British India. They can, therefore, send in their names to the nearest Congress Committee outside their State.

THE MORE ESSENTIAL

Q. Which is the more essential requirement in your mind for starting civil disobedience—your inner urge which may make you fight even single handed or the fulfilment of your conditions by Congressmen ? What will be the position if they are prepared and you have not felt the call ?

A. There can be no inner urge if my conditions are not fulfilled. It is possible that there may be apparent fulfilment of conditions but there may be no inner response in me. In such a case, I cannot declare civil disobedience; but it will be open to the Congress to repudiate me and declare civil disobedience independently of me.

NON-CONGRESSMEN

Q. Will those who are not now either Congress members or active satyagrahis be asked to join the movement ? If so, how ?

A. They should become Congress members and have their names registered as satyagrahis.

A.B.C. CLASSES

Q. Why should not all satyagrahis ask to be included in 'C' class only ?

A. There is a great deal to be said in favour of your suggestion.

SECRECY

Q. You should give your opinion clearly about secrecy. During the last struggle there was a great deal of secrecy to outwit the authorities.

A. I am quite clear that secrecy does no good to our cause. It certainly gave joy to those who were able successfully to outwit the police. Their cleverness was undoubted. But satyagraha is more than cleverness. Secrecy takes away from its dignity. Satyagrahis have no reason to have secret books or secret funds. I am aware that my opinion has not found favour among many co-workers. But I have seen no reason to change it. I admit I was lukewarm before. Experience has taught me that I should have been firm.

DAMAGE TO PROPERTY

Q. You know that many Congressmen openly preached that there was no violence in damaging property, i.e., destroying rails, burning *thanas*[1] when they are not ocupied, cutting telegraph poles, burning post-boxes, etc.

A. I have never been able to understand this reasoning. It is pure violence. Satyagraha is self-suffering and not inflicting suffering on others. There is surely often more violence in burning a man's property than doing him physical injury. Have not so-called satyagrahis preferred imprisonment to fines or confiscation of their property ? Well has one of my critics said that I have succeeded in teaching disruptive disobedience till at last it has come home to roost, but that I have signally failed in teaching people the very difficult art

[1] Police stations

of non-violence. He has also said that in my haste I have put the cart before the horse and therefore all my talk of civil disobedience is folly if not worse. I am not able to give a satisfactory reply to this criticism. I am but a poor mortal. I believe in my experiment and in my uttermost sincerity. But it may be that the only fitting epitaph after my death will be : 'He tried but signally failed.'

SEVAGRAM, April 7, 1940

Harijan, 13-4-1940

120. LETTER TO NARENDRA DEV

SEVAGRAM,
April 7, 1940

BHAI NARENDRA DEV,

I do not know whether you have been invited to attend the meeting of the Working Committee. If not, please solve a problem for me by writing a letter. You will recall that you, Jayaprakash and Lohia had proposed a resolution to the effect that Congressmen should withdraw from District Boards and similar other bodies. I had approved of the resolution, but in the Working Committee no one except Jawahar and the Maulana had any . . .[1] argument. As for me, I had no other material except my own personal view. I have no experience in such matters. Jayaprakash has some. I should not ignore this question. Will you help me in some way ? You can show this letter to Dr. Lohia and other friends.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

121. ALL ON TRIAL

. . . What has taken place in Lahore is well known to you.[2] The Khaksar movement has been declared to be an unlawful association. I enclose a synopsis of the writings and speeches of Allama Mashriqui[3]. . . . It is feared

[1] The word is unintelligible.

[2] On March 19 twenty-three Khaksars and two constables were killed in a clash. Later, four more Khaksars succumbed to their injuries.

[3] Inayatullah, founder of the Khaksar movement

> that the ban may be removed. If that happens, we will attribute it to what appears to us to be an impossible attitude adopted by the Congress—creating deadlock in seven provinces out of eleven. . . . The suppression of a violent movement like that of the Khaksars falls within the special responsibilities of the Governor under Section 52(1). . . . If the ban is removed, Hindu and Sikh organizations will be formed on the same lines as that of the Khaksars. The Akalis assembled at Attari the other day resolved to enlist a lakh of men to the ranks of their 'Dal'. If that plan materializes, there will be bloodshed in the land. . . . What do you propose to do to prevent such a catastrophe ?

This is an extract[1] from a letter from a well-known Punjabi. He is right in surmising that I must have received Khaksar literature. I am not publishing what my correspondent has sent.

I am studying the papers and hope to be able as soon as possible to give a *resume* of the literature in my possession. There is no doubt that it is a military and militant organization. No Government can allow private military organizations to function without endangering public peace. I am quite sure that the Punjab Government will not permit the Khaksar organization to be revived in its original form. I quite agree with my correspondent that, if the Khaksars are permitted to function as before, the Sikhs and others will have to be treated likewise. This cannot but lead to a clash.

My correspondent, however, suggests that, if the ban is removed, "we will attribute it to what appears to us to be an impossible attitude adopted by the Congress—creating a deadlock in seven provinces out of eleven." I am unable to subscribe to the view. The Congress resignations had nothing to do with the communal tension. They were an honourable protest against the British Government making India a belligerent country over the responsible heads of the eleven provinces which were supposed to be autonomous and resorting to other arbitrary acts in connection with the war. The resignations were the least and the mildest step the Congress could have taken. But events have justified the step on other grounds too. Communal bitterness would have increased if the Congress ministries had continued. So long as the Congress retains its non-violent policy, it cannot administer the affairs of the country except with the willing consent of the vast majority of the people. Mere majority through the ballot box does not count. If I have my way with the Congress, I would not allow it to hold power with the aid of the British bayonet. I did not hesitate

[1] Of which only excerpts are reproduced here

to express my dissent publicly[1] when the Congress ministers were obliged to make use of the police and even the military to suppress public violence. They were bound to use them if they were to remain in power. My point was that, having suppressed violence as they were bound to, the Congress might have made a public declaration that it had not attained non-violent control over the people and that, therefore, consistently with its policy, it should abdicate.

But I fear that in holding this view I am in a minority of one. My non-violence is not exhausted with the effort to displace the British Government. Such non-violence would be poor stuff, hardly deserving the name. Therefore, if I can help it, there will be no Congress ministry without a substantial communal settlement. I am quite clear that real independence is impossible without a consistent non-violent technique. I am equally clear that there is hope of India gaining real independence if the Congress will refuse to compromise on it and will adhere to the means and for so doing dare to wander in the wilderness.

The Khaksar menace is no menace in itself. As a symptom of a deeper disease it is a portent. To bring into being rival organizations is a simple thing, but it is no remedy. It merely multiplies the evil. If I had my way, I would ask the people to meet the Khaksar violence with non-violence. But from the papers and the correspondence before me, I observe that the people seek outside protection against the danger, real or imaginary. That means the consolidation of existing authority, supplemented perhaps by private defensive preparations. I am interested in neither.

I have not discussed the terrible toll of deaths the Khaksars had to pay. My sympathies are wholly with the bereaved families. I say nothing about the shooting. A special tribunal is inquiring into the whole affair. If the tragedy leads to a searching of hearts, whatever the finding of the Committee, it will not have been enacted in vain.

SEVAGRAM, April 8, 1940

Harijan, 13-4-1940

[1] *Vide* "Our Failure", before 22-3-1938, and "Speech at Kalukhan", 21-5-1938.

122. TWO QUESTIONS FROM AMERICA

A friend writing from America propounds the following two questions[1] :

> 1. Granted that satyagraha is capable of winning India's independence, what are the chances of its being accepted as a principle of State policy in a free India ? . . . . Is satyagraha likely to be accepted only in an up-hill battle, when the phenomenon of martyrdom is fully effective, or is it also to be the instrument of a sovereign authority which has neither the need nor the scope of behaving on the principle of martyrdom ?
>
> 2. Suppose a free India adopts satyagraha as an instrument of State policy, how would she defend herself against probable aggression by another sovereign State ? . . . What would be the satyagrahic action-patterns to meet the invading army at the frontier ? . . .

The questions are admittedly theoretical. They are also premature for the reason that I have not mastered the whole technique of non-violence. The experiment is still in the making. It is not even in its advanced stage. The nature of the experiment requires one to be satisfied with one step at a time. The distant scene is not for him to see. Therefore my answers can only be speculative.

In truth, as I have said before, now we are not having unadulterated non-violence even in our struggle to win independence.

As to the first question, I fear that the chances of non-violence being accepted as a principle of State policy are very slight, so far as I can see at present. If India does not accept non-violence as her policy after winning independence, the second question becomes superfluous.

But I may state my own individual view of the potency of non-violence. I believe that a State can be administered on a non-violent basis if the vast majority of the people are non-violent. So far as I know, India is the only country which has a possibility of being such a State. I am conducting my experiment in that faith. Supposing, therefore, that India attained independence through pure non-violence, India could retain it too by the same means. A non-violent man or society does not anticipate or provide for attacks from without. On the contrary such a person or society firmly believes that

[1] Of which only extracts are reproduced here

nobody is going to disturb them. If the worst happens, there are two ways open to non-violence. To yield possession but non-cooperate with the aggressor. Thus, supposing that a modern edition of Nero descended upon India, the representatives of the State will let him in but tell him that he will get no assistance from the people. They will prefer death to submission. The second way would be non-violent resistance by the people who have been trained in the non-violent way. They would offer themselves unarmed as fodder for the aggressor's cannons. The underlying belief in either case is that even a Nero is not devoid of a heart. The unexpected spectacle of endless rows upon rows of men and women simply dying rather than surrender to the will of an aggressor must ultimately melt him and his soldiery. Practically speaking, there will be probably no greater loss in men than if forcible resistance was offered; there will be no expenditure in armaments and fortifications. The non-violent training received by the people will add inconceivably to their moral height. Such men and women will have shown personal bravery of a type far superior to that shown in armed warfare. In each case the bravery consists in dying, not in killing. Lastly, there is no such thing as defeat in non-violent resistance. That such a thing has not happened before is no answer to my speculation. I have drawn no impossible picture. History is replete with instances of individual non-violence of the type I have mentioned. There is no warrant for saying or thinking that a group of men and women cannot by sufficient training act non-violently as a group or nation. Indeed, the sum total of the experience of mankind is that men somehow or other live on. From which fact I infer that it is the law of love that rules mankind. Had violence, i.e., hate, ruled us, we should have become extinct long ago. And yet the tragedy of it is that the so-called civilized men and nations conduct themselves as if the basis of society was violence. It gives me ineffable joy to make experiments proving that love is the supreme and only law of life. Much evidence to the contrary cannot shake my faith. Even the mixed non-violence of India has supported it. But if it is not enough to convince an unbeliever, it is enough to incline a friendly critic to view it with favour.

SEVAGRAM, April 8, 1940

Harijan, 13-4-1940

123. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

April 8, 1940

MY DEAR KU[MARAPPA],

Dr. Mehta gave a bad report of your gross misbehaviour. You must bring down your b.p. It is suggested that you should come and stay here for a few days and be under observation. Then during the hot season you should go up somewhere and rest. The brain requires more rest than the body. You can come today, if you will.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 10151

124. NOTES

ANDREWS' LEGACY

Nobody probably knew Charlie Andrews as well as I did. Gurudev was guru—master—to him. When we met in South Africa, we simply met as brothers and remained as such to the end. There was no distance between us. It was not a friendship between an Englishman and an Indian. It was an unbreakable bond between two seekers and servants. But I am not giving my reminiscences of Andrews, sacred as they are. I want Englishmen and Indians, whilst the memory of the death of this servant of England and India is still fresh, to give a thought to the legacy he has left for us both. There is no doubt about his love for England being equal to that of the tallest of Englishmen, nor can there be any doubt of his love for India being equal to that of the tallest of Indians. He said on his bed from which he was never to rise, "Mohan, swaraj is coming." Both Englishmen and Indians can make it come, if they will. Andrews was no stranger to the present rulers and most Englishmen whose opinion carries weight. He was known to every politically-minded Indian. At the present moment I do not wish to think of English misdeeds. They will be forgotten, but not one of the heroic deeds of Andrews will be forgotten so long as England and India live. If we really love Andrews' memory, we may not have hate in us for Englishmen, of whom Andrews was among the best and the noblest. It is possible, quite possible, for the best

Englishmen and the best Indians to meet together and never to separate till they have evolved a formula acceptable to both. The legacy left by Andrews is worth the effort. That is the thought that rules me whilst I contemplate the benign face of Andrews and what innumerable deeds of love he performed so that India may take her independent place among the nations of the earth.

HOW NOT TO DO IT

Prof. Ranga[1] is a co-worker whom I have had the pleasure of knowing for a long time. He is brave and good natured, but he has the knack of often saying things he ought not to and doing wrong things at the wrong time. He sent me a telegram when he had decided to break the order of internment served upon him. He knew that he was under discipline. If he had left me the time, I should have asked him to obey the order to confine himself to his place, Nidubrole. By compliance he would have shown a fine spirit of discipline and today he would be doing constructive work in his place and earning the privilege of joining the civil disobedience brigade. As it is, in my opinion, he has harmed the cause and done no good to himself or anybody. He has harmed the cause by setting a bad example to those who look up to him for guidance. If I could persuade him, I would certainly advise him to inform the authorities that he had committed a breach of internal discipline for which he was sorry and that, if he was discharged, he would gladly proceed to Nidubrole and remain there till the order of internment was withdrawn. I make bold to say that, if he followed my advice, he would help me and help the country's cause.

SEVAGRAM, April 9, 1940

Harijan, 13-4-1940

125. CHARKHA-SWARAJ-AHIMSA

A correspondent says now that civil disobedience is in the air, I must once more, even at the risk of repeating myself, summarize in a single article my argument showing that there is a vital connection between the charkha, swaraj and ahimsa. I gladly make the attempt.

The spinning-wheel represents to me the hope of the masses. The masses lost their freedom, such as it was, with the loss of the

[1] N. G. Ranga

charkha. The charkha supplemented the agriculture of the villagers and gave it dignity. It was the friend and solace of the widow. It kept the villagers from idleness. For the charkha included all the anterior and posterior industries—ginning, carding, warping, sizing, dyeing and weaving. These in their turn kept the village carpenter and the blacksmith busy. The charkha enabled the seven hundred thousand villages to become self-contained. With the exit of the charkha went the other village industries, such as the oil-press. Nothing took the place of these industries. Therefore the villages were drained of their varied occupations and their creative talent and what little wealth these brought them.

The analogy of the other countries in which too village handicrafts were destroyed will not serve us because, whereas the villagers there had some compensating advantages, India's villagers had practically none. The industrialized countries of the West were exploiting other nations. India is herself an exploited country. Hence, if the villagers are to come into their own, the most natural thing that suggests itself is the revival of the charkha and all it means.

This revival cannot take place without an army of selfless Indians of intelligence and patriotism working with a single mind in the villages to spread the message of the charkha and bring a ray of hope and light into their lustreless eyes. This is a mighty effort at co-operation and adult education of the correct type. It brings about a silent and sure revolution like the silent but sure and life-giving revolution of the charkha.

Twenty years' experience of charkha work has convinced me of the correctness of the argument here advanced by me. The charkha has served the poor Muslims and Hindus in almost an equal measure. Nearly five crores of rupees have been put into the pockets of these lakhs of village artisans without fuss and tomtomming.

Hence I say without hesitation that the charkha must lead us to swaraj in terms of the masses belonging to all faiths. The charkha restores the villages to their rightful place and abolishes distinctions between high and low.

But the charkha cannot bring swaraj, in fact it will not move, unless the nation has faith in non-violence. It is not exciting enough. Patriots yearning for freedom are apt to look down upon the charkha. They will look in vain to find it in history books. Lovers of liberty are

fired with the zeal to fight and banish the foreign ruler. They impute all the vices to him and see none in themselves. They cite instances of countries having gained their freedom through seas of blood. The charkha devoid of violence seems an utterly tame affair.

In 1919 the lovers of the liberty of India were introduced to non-violence as the only and sure means to swaraj and to the charkha as a symbol of non-violence. The charkha found its proud place on the national flag in 1921. But non-violence had not gone deep into the heart of India, and so the charkha never came into its own. It will never come into its own unless the vast body of Congressmen develop a living faith in non-violence. When they do so they will, without needing any argument, discover for themselves that there is no other symbol of non-violence than the charkha, and that without its universalization there will be no visible expression of non-violence. It is common ground that without non-violence there can be no non-violent disobedience. My argument may be false, my data may be faulty. But, holding the views I do, let me proclaim that without fulfilment of the conditions prescribed by me I simply cannot declare civil disobedience.

SEVAGRAM, April 9, 1940

Harijan, 13-4-1940

126. MY POSITION

Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan has, in his criticism[1] of my reply[2] to Quaid-e-Azam, put some questions which I gladly answer. I must adhere to my statement that I have never spoken to anybody on the communal questions as a Hindu. I have no authority. Whenever I have spoken to anybody I have spoken as a Congressman, but often only as an individual. No Congressman, not even the President, can always speak as a representative. Big things have always been transacted on this planet by persons belonging to different organizations coming together and talking informally in their non-representative capacity. I fear that even the answer I am about to give must be taken as representing nobody but myself. In the present instance I have reason to say that probably I do not represent any single member of the

[1] For extracts from Liaquat Ali Khan's statement, *vide* Appendix "Extracts from Liaquat Ali Khan's Statement", 4-4-1940.

[2] *Vide* "My Answer to Quaid-E-Azam", 30-3-1940.

Working Committee. I am answering as a peacemaker, as a friend (and may I say brother) of the Mussalmans.

As a man of non-violence I cannot forcibly resist the proposed partition if the Muslims of India really insist upon it. But I can never be a willing party to the vivisection. I would employ every non-violent means to prevent it. For it means the undoing of centuries of work done by numberless Hindus and Muslims to live together as one nation. Partition means a patent untruth. My whole soul rebels against the idea that Hinduism and Islam represent two antagonistic cultures and doctrines. To assent to such a doctrine is for me denial of God. For I believe with my whole soul that the God of the Koran is also the God of the *Gita*, and that we are all, no matter by what name designated, children of the same God. I must rebel against the idea that millions of Indians who were Hindus the other day changed their nationality on adopting Islam as their religion.

But that is my belief. I cannot thrust it down the throats of the Muslims who think that they are a different nation. I refuse, however, to believe that the eight crores of Muslims will say that they have nothing in common with their Hindu and other brethren. Their mind can only be known by a referendum duly made to them on that clear issue. The contemplated Constituent Assembly can easily decide the question. Naturally on an issue such as this there can be no arbitration. It is purely and simply a matter of self-determination. I know of no other conclusive method of ascertaining the mind of the eight crores of Muslims.

But the contemplated Constituent Assembly will have the framing of a constitution as its main function. It cannot do this until the communal question is settled.

I still believe that there can be no swaraj by non-violent means without communal unity. And eight crores of Muslims can certainly bar the way to peaceful freedom.

If then I still talk of civil disobedience, it is because I believe that the Muslim masses want freedom as much as the rest of the population of this country. And assuming that they do not, civil disobedience will be a powerful means of educating public opinion whether Muslim, Hindu or any other. It will also be an education of world opinion. But I will not embark upon it unless I am, as far as is humanly possible, sure that non-violence will be observed both in spirit and in the letter.

I hope the Nawabzada has no difficulty in believing that whatever is gained by civil disobedience will be gained for all. When India gets the power to frame her own constitution, the Muslims will surely have a decisive voice in shaping their own future. It will not be, cannot be, decided by the vote of the majority.

Lastly, I suggest to the Nawabzada that he wrote in haste the lines about the President of the Congress. For they are contrary to the history of our own times. And he was equally in haste in suggesting that "the sole objective of the Congress under Mr. Gandhi's fostering care has been the revival of Hinduism and the imposition of Hindu culture on all and sundry." My own objective is not the issue in the terrible indictment. The objective of the Congress is wholly political. Nothing is to be gained by making statements that are incapable of proof. So far as my own objective is concerned my life is an open book. I claim to represent all the cultures, for my religion, whatever it may be called, demands the fulfilment of all cultures. I am at home wherever I go, for I regard all religions with the same respect as my own.

SEVAGRAM, April 9, 1940

Harijan, 13-4-1940

127. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

April 10, 1940

MY DEAR MALKANI,

Our letters[1] crossed. In view of your ever-increasing liabilities there, you must be glued to Sind. Don't be in a hurry to join the Satyagraha Committee. You are of it without being a member. There is no struggle in sight yet. Silent work is what is needed to give me courage.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G. N. 936

[1] *Vide* "Letter to N. R. Malkani", 5-4-1940.

128. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

SEVAGRAM,
April 10, 1940

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I have your letter. If you go to Panchgani, I think it would be better for all of you to go. I will make inquiries at Panchgani. If proper arrangements cannot be made in Panchgani, then, I think, it would be better to pass the summer where you are. There will be no harm if the temperature does not go above 102°. But if your health deteriorates, we will have to find out some other way. I am not writing separately to Balkrishna and Kanchanbehn.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9736. Also C.W. 716. Courtesy : Navajivan Trust

129. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 10, 1940

CHI. PRITHVI SINGH,

I have your letter. Must you write in English ? I merely passed on the telegram I had received from Guntur. I did not suggest that you should go. But that is over now.

You need not feel concerned if anybody distorts what I write. What certificate need I give you ? Need I give one to Mahadev ? I do not intend to write anything. Get on with your job and everything will be all right. Do not move about much.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 5637. Also C.W. 2948. Courtesy : Prithvi Singh

130. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 11, 1940

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I do not know what to say or how to console you. Perhaps C.F.A.'s death has hit you the hardest. But you are a brave woman. Let us all forget his death and make him live by working in his spirit at the legacy he has left to us. Here is a copy of my note[1] about it. I can't realize that C.F.A. is gone. He was an institution. He was love incarnate.

You will guide me about his sister's wants and the like. I told him when I was last with him that he must not worry about this part of his obligation. What about his copyright ? You have to be my eyes in every business matter regarding C.F.A.

I want you not to worry about the Indian situation. Apparently it is as bad as it can be ! Nevertheless, I have no worry in me about it. My trust is wholly in God. He will give the right guidance if we will let Him. Fancy, He has left us the choice ! What a Democrat ? Let us do what may seem to us to be best and then rejoice in the thought that the disposition is with Him.

In the concrete I have nothing to impart just now. There is no C. D. just yet, so far as I can see.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G. N. 1515

131. LETTER TO N. S. HARDIKAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 11, 1940

DEAR DR. HARDIKAR,

I have your letter. The chord that is once broken is not easily joined. There was a time when I had thought our hearts had met. Neither the blend nor the breach is a mechanical act. My desire and effort must be to gain as many co-workers as I can get and by whom I

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 9-4-1940.

can swear. How that confidence can come I do not know. I hope you realize that the barrier does not make the slightest difference in my regarding you as an esteemed co-worker. The difficulty, if there is one, is more moral than practical.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original : N. S. Hardikar Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

132. LETTER TO GLADYS OWEN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 11, 1940

MY DEAR GLADYS,

Though your question was urgent, I could not overtake it before now. I think you should hold on to the Ashram and do what you can. It is clear that you are wanted there.

You must have read all about C. F. A.[1] He was a man of God.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 11281. Courtesy: Dr. Priyamvada Mathur

133. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 11, 1940

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. I am glad that you have come to like the place. Take care of your health. Rajendra Babu has recovered. I am quite well.

I am writing to Jayaprakash.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 3539

[1] C. F. Andrews had died in Calcutta on April 5; *vide* "Cable to Agatha Harrison", 5-4-1940.

134. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 11, 1940

CHI. VIJAYA,

I have your letter. I understand what you say about Father. Why did Manubhai undertake the fast ? Why are your letters incomplete ?

Amritlal is coming here for some work. I am sending him your letter. Everyone here is fine. We are having a stream of guests. It is quite hot here.

Blessings to both from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 7126. Also C.W. 4618. Courtesy : Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

135. LETTER TO DINESH SINGH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 11, 1940

CHI. DINESH,

I had your letter. Some days ago Dadu wrote to me that he wished to stay with Mother. I had also written to Mother accordingly. I do not know what happened afterwards. Normally, no one would shift Dadu in a hurry. Keep me informed of whatever happens. Does Dadu really wish to stay with Mother ?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI DINESH SINGH KALAKANKAR
THE DOON SCHOOL
DEHRA DOON, U.P.

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 8674

136. LETTER TO SRI PRAKASA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

April 11, 1940

BHAI SRI PRAKASA,

I had sent to *Harijan* my criticism[1] of the judgment on the basis of your report. Subsequently I learnt that the judges had not made those statements and that you had withdrawn your comments. Although I have not seen these reports, I have withheld my comments. Was it some mistake on the part of the *Leader* ?

Blessings from

BAPU

SRI PRAKASA
SEVASHRAM
BENARES

From the Hindi original : C.W. 9759. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

137. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

WARDHA,

April 12, 1940

JAMNALAL BAJAJ
JAIPUR

CONGRATULATIONS[2]. STAY AS LONG AS NECESSARY.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 233

[1] *Vide* "An Unjudicial Dictum", "An Unjudicial Dictum", 2-4-1940.

[2] On the settlement between the Jaipur State and the Jaipur Rajya Praja Mandal. *Vide* "Jaipur State and Praja Mandal", 14-4-1940.

138. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

WARDHA,

April 12, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I hasten to acknowledge with thanks your very prompt and clear reply[1] to my letter of 4th instant. It frees me from anxiety, and ought to set at rest the domestic difference.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm : No. 109 : Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy : National Archives of India

139. LETTER TO ATULANAND CHAKRABARTY

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

April 12, 1940

DEAR ATULANAND,

I have your second letter. I finished reading the book today. On the whole I like it. I have a lurking fear that you have not always adhered to truth. For any departure from it to prove one's thesis in the end damages it.

There are some howlers. Look at p. 135, 2nd para. "The instance of the Emperor Jehangir alone should eloquently prove the point." How can one instance prove a general point ?

At p. 151, you say India is "thousands of miles wide". Is it ? As a matter of fact not more than 1,500.

Then you have not given the dates to your quotations in the appendix except in one case.

For the student there are not the necessary verifying references. What you have given is not enough.

And think of the spelling mistakes! Unpardonable.

But the book should serve a useful purpose in spite of the

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 9-4-1940.

defects, if you have adhered to truth.

You should go on canvassing opinion as you are doing. I hope to refer to your book in *Harijan*.[1]

Don't be in a hurry. Why not approach even Q. A. Jinnah ?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : C. W. 1482. Courtesy : A. K. Sen

140. LETTER TO DEVCHAND U. PAREKH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

April 12, 1940

CHI. DEVCHANDBHAI,

Chandrabehn may come any time towards the end of the month. Tell her that it is quite hot here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5703

141. LETTER TO VITHTHALBHAI M. PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

April 12, 1940

CHI. VITHTHALBHAI,

I have your letter. I could read it only today. Pay no attention to others' criticism but go on doing whatever Harijan work you can.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 83

[1] *Vide* "Hindu-Muslim Tangle", 29-4-1940.

142. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 13, 1940

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND[1],

What do you say to this ?[2]

Yours,
BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

143. LETTER TO S. SATYAMURTI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 13, 1940

DEAR SATYAMURTI,

I have your letter. I think we both mean the same thing. I shall bear your letter in mind.

You must not be ill.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SRI SATYAMURTI, MAYOR
RIPON BLDGS.
MADRAS

From the original: S. Satyamurti Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Leader of the Opposition in the Punjab Assembly

[2] The reference is to a letter from Tarachand Jhingan taking exception to the addressee's support to Khaksars. The addressee had voted against the Government on the adjournment motion on the Khaksar police clash at Lahore on March 19, 1940.

144. LETTER TO JANG BAHADUR SINGH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 13, 1940

BHAI JANG BAHADUR SINGH,

Your letter. You are right; plying the charkha is not enough. It should go with all the things that it implies.

I hope Krishna is doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1337

145. JAYAPRAKASH'S PICTURE

The following draft resolution was sent to me by Shri Jayaprakash Narayan. He asked me, if I accepted his picture, to put it before the Working Committee at Ramgarh.

The Congress and the country are on the eve of a great national upheaval. The final battle for freedom is soon to be fought. This will happen when the whole world is being shaken by mighty forces of change. Out of the catastrophe of the European War, thoughtful minds everywhere are anxious to create a new world—a world based on the co-operative goodwill of nations and men. At such a time the Congress considers it necessary to state definitely the ideals of freedom for which it stands and for which it is soon to invite the Indian people to undergo the uttermost sufferings.

The free Indian nation shall work for peace between nations and total rejection of armaments and for the method of peaceful settlement of national disputes through some international authority freely established. It will endeavour particularly to live on the friendliest terms with its neighbours, whether they be great powers or small nations, and shall covet no foreign territory.

The law of the land will be based on the will of the people freely expressed by them. The ultimate basis of maintenance of order shall be the sanction and concurrence of the people.

The free Indian State shall guarantee full individual and civil liberty and cultural and religious freedom, provided that there shall be

no freedom to overthrow by violence the constitution framed by the Indian people through a Constituent Assembly.

The State shall not discriminate in any manner between citizens of the nation. Every citizen shall be guaranteed equal rights. All distinctions of birth and privilege shall be abolished. There shall be no titles emanating either from inherited social status or the State.

The political and economic organization of the State shall be based on principles of social justice and economic freedom. While this organization shall conduce to the satisfaction of the national requirements of every member of society, material satisfaction shall not be its sole objective. It shall aim at healthy living and the moral and intellectual development of the individual. To this end to secure social justice, the State shall endeavour to promote small-scale production carried on by individual or co-operative effort for the equal benefit of all concerned. All large-scale collective production shall be eventually brought under collective ownership and control, and in this behalf the State shall begin by nationalizing heavy transport, shipping, mining and the heavy industries. The textile industry shall be progressively decentralized.

The life of the villages shall be reorganized and the villages shall be made self-governing units, self-sufficient in as large a measure as possible. The land laws of the country shall be drastically reformed on the principle that land shall belong to the actual cultivator alone, and that no cultivator shall have more land than is necessary to support his family on a fair standard of living. This will end the various systems of landlordism on the one hand and farm bondage on the other.

The State shall protect the interests of the classes, but when these impinge upon the interests of those who have been poor and downtrodden, it shall defend the latter and thus restore the balance of social justice.

In all State-owned and State-managed enterprises, the workers shall be represented in the management through their elected representatives and shall have an equal share in it with the representatives of the Government.

In the Indian States, there shall be complete democratic government established, and in accordance with the principles of abolition of social distinction and equality between citizens, there shall not be any titular heads of the States in the persons of Rajas and Nawabs.

This is the order which the Congress envisages and which it shall work to establish. The Congress firmly believes that this order shall bring happiness, prosperity and freedom to the people of all races and religions in India who together shall build on these foundations a great and glorious nation.

I liked it and read his letter and the draft to the Working Committee[1]. The Committee, however, thought that the idea of having

[1] On March 15; *vide* "Discussion at Working Committee", 15-3-1940.

only one resolution for the Ramgarh Congress should be strictly adhered to, and that the original, as framed at Patna[1], should not be tampered with. The reasoning of the Committee was unexceptionable, and the draft resolution was dropped without any discussion on merits. I informed Shri Jayaprakash of the result of my effort. He wrote back suggesting that he would be satisfied if I could do the next best thing, namely, publish it with full concurrence or such as I could give it.[2]

I have no difficulty in complying with Shri Jayaprakash's wishes. As an ideal to be reduced to practice as soon as possible after India comes into her own, I endorse in general all except one of the propositions enunciated by Shri Jayaprakash.

I have claimed that I was a socialist long before those I know in India had avowed their creed. But my socialism was natural to me and not adopted from any books. It came out of my unshakable belief in non-violence. No man could be actively non-violent and not rise against social injustice no matter where it occurred. Unfortunately Western socialists have, so far as I know, believed in the necessity of violence for enforcing socialistic doctrines.

I have always held that social justice, even unto the least and the lowliest, is impossible of attainment by force. I have further believed that it is possible by proper training of the lowliest by non-violent means to secure redress of the wrongs suffered by them. That means is non-violent non-co-operation. At times non-co-operation becomes as much a duty as co-operation. No one is bound to co-operate in one's own undoing or slavery. Freedom received through the effort of others, however benevolent, cannot be retained when such effort is withdrawn. In other words, such freedom is not real freedom. But the lowliest can feel its glow as soon as they learn the art of attaining it through non-violent non-co-operation.

It therefore gladdens me to find Shri Jayaprakash accepting, as I read his draft, non-violence for the purpose of establishing the order envisaged by him. I am quite sure that non-violent non-co-operation can secure what violence never can, and this by ultimate conversion of the wrong-doers. We in India have never given non-violence the trial it has deserved. The marvel is that we have attained so much even with our mixed non-violence.

[1] On March 1; *vide* Appendix "A Resolution", 1-3-1940.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Jayaprakash Narayan", 31-3-1940.

Shri Jayaprakash's propositions about land may appear frightful. In reality they are not. No man should have more land than he needs for dignified sustenance. Who can dispute the fact that the grinding poverty of the masses is due to their having no land that they can call their own ?

But it must be realized that the reform cannot be rushed. If it is to be brought about by non-violent means, it can only be done by education both of the haves and the have-nots. The former should be assured that there never will be force used against them. The have-nots must be educated to know that no one can really compel them to do anything against their will, and that they can secure their freedom by learning the art of non-violence, i.e., self-suffering. If the end in view is to be achieved, the education I have adumbrated has to be commenced now. An atmosphere of mutual respect and trust has to be established as the preliminary step. There can then be no violent conflict between the classes and the masses.

Whilst, therefore, I have no difficulty in generally endorsing Shri Jayaprakash's proposition in terms of non-violence, I cannot endorse his proposition about the Princes. In law they are independent. It is true that their independence is not worth much, for it is guaranteed by a stronger party. But as against us they are able to assert their independence. If we come into our own through non-violent means, as is implied in Shri Jayaprakash's draft proposals, I do not imagine a settlement in which the Princes will have effaced themselves. Whatever settlement is arrived at the nation will have to carry out in full. I can therefore only conceive a settlement in which the big States will retain their status. In one way this will be far superior to what it is today; but in another it will be limited so as to give the people of the States the same right of self-government within their States as the people of the other parts of India will enjoy. They will have freedom of speech, a free Press and pure justice guaranteed to them. Perhaps Shri Jayaprakash has no faith in the Princes automatically surrendering their autocracy. I have. First because they are just as good human beings as we are, and secondly because of my belief in the potency of genuine non-violence. Let me conclude, therefore, by saying that the Princes and all others will be true and amenable when we have become true to ourselves, to our faith, if we have it, and to the nation. At present we are half-hearted. The way to freedom will never be found through half-heartedness. Non-violence begins and ends by turning the searchlight inward.

SEVAGRAM, April 14, 1940

Harijan, 20-4-1930

146. JAIPUR STATE AND PRAJA MANDAL

At last a settlement has been reached between the State and the Praja Mandal in Jaipur. The credit for this happy consummation belongs both to the authorities and Sheth Jamnalalji. Let us hope that the settlement will lead to cordial relations between the authorities and the Praja Mandal, and that the co-operation will result in progressive betterment of the people of the State in every respect. For this the State will have to show toleration and the Mandal restraint in all its doings and utterances.

SEVAGRAM, April 14, 1940

Harijan, 20-4-1940

147. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

April 14, 1940

DEAR SIR AKBAR,

You have given me stone when I had asked for bread.[1]

I fail to see the slightest connection between a simple performance of a promise and the big question of communal unity. And how can unity be brought about in the face of events like Bidar,[2] if the papers are to be believed ? As you know I have put a gag on myself regarding Hyderabad but I feel that I must not do so now, if I am to do my duty by the people of Hyderabad. This treatment of the State Congress and the reported happenings in Bidar have filled me with misgivings.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : C.W. 10253

[1] In reply to Gandhiji's letter dated March 21, the addressee wrote : "There is only one problem before us all and that is the removal of communal tension. Here in Hyderabad we are working in the face of great obstacles to bring contending parties together so that they move jointly in a truly national endeavour. Our attitude towards the National Conference has been determined by this more than by any other consideration."

[2] *Vide* "Wanton Destruction in Bidar", 30-4-1940.

148. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

April 14, 1940

CHI. NARANDAS,

What is the correct position regarding this[1] ? Behcharbhai was saying that Gokibehn used to get the amount regularly. If there has been any change please let me know. The amount should of course be sent to her. Show her this letter. Since when has the remittance been discontinued ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8572. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

149. QUESTION BOX

DANGER OF DELAY

Q. You say you will not launch civil disobedience till Congressmen are fully trained in non-violence and disciplined. That is right. But in the mean-time the country is being bled white. Increased railway fares, duty on sugar, the reduction of sugarcane prices are only a few instances in point. Is it right to delay the struggle till our best workers are picked off one by one, and thus lose the fight without 'striking a blow' ?

A. I can cite far more telling instances than you have given for justifying civil disobedience. But civil disobedience is not being delayed for want of justification. It is being delayed for want of preparation. I should be a stupid General if I began the fight in spite of my knowledge that my resources are poor. If the leaders are picked off by the Government without just cause, it would mean an invitation to the Congress to fight. I would not answer the invitation if I were not ready. The leaders being picked off can do the country no harm. For we know that disciplined jail-going is itself a part of the struggle. Moreover, the imprisonment of leaders will test our strength as an organization. A non-violent organization implies the equal education

[1] The reference is to a letter from Manubehn Mashruwala to Gandhiji written at the instance of Gandhiji's sister, Raliatbehn *alias* Gokibehn.

and therefore equal fitness of all units. That we have not arrived at that stage shows our ignorance of the working of non-violence.

AUTHORIZED AND UNAUTHORIZED STRIKES

Q. In your leading article[1] of March 30, you have hoped that passive satyagrahis will not interfere with the course of the struggle by "precipitating strikes of labourers". There is just this cryptic word "precipitating" and nothing more. When I read it first, I did not particularly notice it. But I had to do a lot of explaining later. Unless a very careful reader or trained to understand your way of thought and expression, one is likely to go astray. One may miss the force of the word "precipitating" and understand it as if you frowned upon all strikes of labourers.

With the recent Ahmedabad fight for a war bonus, no one would be entitled to regard you as an opponent of labourers' strikes as such. The strike in Ahmedabad was indeed averted, but you had approved of it and the workers realized their demands. The work in Ahmedabad was done methodically. There was proper presentation and working out of labourers' demands, completing of arbitration, full notice and balloting of the over hundred thousand votes on the question of the strike. I believe that, if after such methodical work a strike cannot be averted, you will approve of it and only assure yourself that there is no violence.

A. You are right. I consider myself to be an expert in organized strikes. My first successful attempt was made in South Africa under most adverse circumstances. I improved the technique in Ahmedabad. I do not claim to have reached perfection. I know that strikes can be made irresistible. I have discountenanced only unauthorized strikes. The Congress has not gained control over labour. Some Congressmen have. Almost all the strike leaders have their own methods. All of them are not non-violent. Some are ruled by selfish considerations. Some others are unscrupulous. What I, therefore, ask for is at least passive, if not active, co-operation. I shall not need strikes for the purpose of the struggle. What shape mass civil disobedience will take, if it ever comes, I cannot say. But I can say what it will never do if I have anything to do with it. I know that, if the Congress had non-violent control over all labour in India, the Congress could become far more powerful than it is today. That control will come when the congress has one policy about labour and has enough workers to give effect to it.

UNTOUCHABILITY AND CONVERSION

Q. If the object of the Congress in the liquidation of untouchability is to give Harijans a status of equality with the rest, is this not achieved by their

[1] *Vide* "Every Congress Committee a Satyagraha Committee", 25-3-1940.

conversion to Islam ? Why does the Independence Pledge allocate the programme of the removal of untouchability to the Hindus only ? Does this not show that Congress is anxious to maintain a Hindu majority and therefore denies to the Mussalmans their right of conversion ?

A. Liquidation of untouchability cannot be attained by the conversion of untouchables to Islam or any other religion. For it is the so-called caste Hindu who has to rid himself of the sin of untouchability. He can wash away the stain only by doing justice, however tardy, to the outcaste. You will thus see why Muslims are not invited by the Congress to share the burden with the Hindus. They have committed no sin against the untouchables. I cannot prevent you from looking at a simple but necessary social reform as a political dodge to maintain a majority. Tens of thousands of Hindus who are doing penance have no thought of majority. All they want is to do justice to those whom, under the guise of religion, caste Hindus have reduced to a state worse than slavery. Lastly, you are hopelessly wrong in suggesting that the Congress denies the right to Muslims to convert 'untouchables'. The Congress cannot prevent anybody from doing conversion work. Whether you will exercise the right in the right manner or wrong is for you to consider.

SEVAGRAM, April 15, 1940

Harijan, 20-4-1940

150. LETTER TO MARGARET FIERCH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 15, 1940

DEAR SISTER[1],

I thank you for your clear answer to my letter. I realize that you cannot act otherwise than you have done.[2] Of course my effort will continue.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 10940. Courtesy Marjorie Sykes

[1] A Quaker friend of Mary Barr who was at this time secretary of the Quaker group around Hoshangabad and Itarsi

[2] Gandhiji had been working to obtain the release of a young German who hat been interned by the Government of India as an "enemy alien" although he was firmly anti-Nazi. The Government was willing to grant the release of the internee provided the Quaker group with which he was connected would sponsor, employ and maintain him. The addressee had answered Gandhii's enquiry in this regard, explaining the group's inability to undertake such a responsibility.

151. CABLE TO H. G. WELLS[1]

[Before *April 16, 1940*]

RECEIVED YOUR CABLE[2]. HAVE CAREFULLY READ YOUR FIVE ARTICLES[3]. YOU WILL PERMIT ME TO SAY YOU ARE ON THE WRONG TRACK. I FEEL SURE THAT I CAN DRAW UP A BETTER CHARTER OF RIGHTS THAN YOU HAVE DRAWN UP. BUT OF WHAT GOOD WILL IT BE ? WHO WILL BECOME ITS GUARDIAN ? IF YOU MEAN PROPAGANDA OR POPULAR EDUCATION YOU HAVE BEGUN AT THE WRONG END. I SUGGEST THE RIGHT WAY. BEGIN WITH A CHARTER OF DUTIES OF MAN (BOTH D AND M CAPITALS) AND I PROMISE THE RIGHTS WILL FOLLOW AS SPRING FOLLOWS WINTER. I WRITE FROM EXPERIENCE. AS A YOUNG MAN I BEGAN LIFE BY SEEKING TO ASSERT MY RIGHTS AND I SOON DISCOVERED I HAD NONE NOT EVEN OVER MY WIFE. SO I BEGAN BY DISCOVERING AND PFRFORMING MY DUTY BY MY WIFE MY CHILDREN FRIENDS COMPANIONS AND SOCIETY AND I FIND TODAY THAT I HAVE GREATER RIGHTS, PERHAPS THAN ANY LIVING MAN I KNOW. IF THIS IS TOO TALL A CLAIM THEN I SAY I DO NOT KNOW ANYONE WHO POSSESSES GREATER RIGHTS THAN I.

The Hindustan Times, 16-4-1940

152. DANGER SIGNAL

The happenings in Ajmer are a danger signal if the facts received by me are correct. I have no reason to doubt their accuracy. The facts are these. There was a khadi exhibition held during the National Week by known workers. The promoters had arranged a series of lectures on the importance of khadi and other village

[1] Herbert George Wells (1866-1946); English novelist, sociological writer and historian; author of *The Time Machine, The War of the Worlds, The Shape of Things to Come, The Outline of History, The Invisible Man* and various other works

[2] The addressee had sought Gandhiji's opinion on the "Rights of Man" drawn up by him, a public discussion on which was going on in the British and Indian Press.

[3] Published in *The Hindustan Times*

industries. The national flag was hoisted as is usual at these functions. The authorities served a notice that a flag having been erected on the rampart of the fort had caused annoyance to some of His Majesty's subjects and should be hauled down within an hour. The promoters claimed that the ground was under municipal jurisdiction, and that they had authority from the Municipality to hold the exhibition. The protest was or no avail. The flag was unceremoniously hauled down by the police and addresses prohibited. If the exhibition was held under the permission of the Municipality, the interference with the flag was clearly illegal. But apart from the illegality the hauling down of the flag was a highly provocative act. An insult such as this can easily lead to unexpected results. I suggest that the matter is one for the Central authority to investigate. I hope that the Central authority does not want to provoke a clash which is highly likely if incidents like the Ajmer one are repeated. It would be deplorable if the non-intended happened.

The promoters telephoned to me for advice immediately the incident happened. Contrary to their expectations, I advised the workers to submit to the order. Ordinarily I would not have a moment's hesitation in advising disobedience of such an order. I am the author of the flag. It is dear to me as life. But I do not believe in flag-waving. This flag represents unity,non-violence and identification through the charkha of the highest with the lowliest in the land. Any insult to the flag must leave a deep scar on an Indian breast. But today unity is lacking; the Muslim League has declared its hostility to the flag; those who honour it do not accept the authoritative implications of the flag. And the nation is preparing for a vast struggle. In a situation such as this I felt that the best course was to suppress the impulse to answer the insult. I felt that the restraint would be a test of the discipline of the workers in Ajmer. It would be a lesson to all India in the non-violent technique, and an opportunity for the Central authority to undo what appears to have been a wanton interference with the ordinary peaceful non-political activity of the Congress. It should be remembered that the exhibition had nothing whatsoever to do with the impending struggle. I congratulate the workers on their prompt compliance with my instructions. They have strengthened the Congress by showing their capacity for observing discipline.

SEVAGRAM, April 16, 1940

Harijan, 20-4-1940

153. REPRESSION IN JODHPUR

News about repression in Jodhpur is disquieting. The Jodhpur Lok Parishad, which according to the information in my possession has been before now held in respect by the local authorities, has suddenly been declared illegal. Several prominent workers are under detention without trial. Speeches and processions are banned.

What is worse is the speech delivered by the Maharaja Bahadur justifying the order. It reads as if a mountain was in labour. The following are extracts[1] form the report of the speech:

> . . .Member of the Lok Parishad have recently become increasingly violent in their denunciations of all established order and traditions. The members of this party ask us to believe that the sole panacea for the many diverse affictions. . . is to vote for and place ourselves unreservedly in the hands of the Lok Parishad. We are asked t believe that with the advent to power of the Lok Parishad there will be created a new heaven and a new earth. And I, the Maharaja of Jodhpur, am desired to place the destinies of my house and my people in the hands of the Lok Parishad in order that peace may reign and 'freedom' be enjoyed by all.
>
> This is indeed a tall order and a bold demand. . . the Lok Parishad consists mainly of inexperienced young men, men who do not appear to have achieved much success in their various vocations. . .
>
> They show no sign whatever of any co-operative spirit. . .
>
> I do not consider it consistent with my duty, as a loyal ally of the British Government, to allow a groundless political agitation to grow and spread in my state in time of war; nor am I prepared any longer to allow an open campaign of subversive agitation manifestly designed to encourage our peasantry to revolt and to corrupt our youth.

It seems that the voice is the Maharaja's but the hand that has prepared it is not his. The speech consists of palpable exaggerations. The Parishad has more than 30 branches in the State and has many experienced men as mambers. I have seen correspondence in which their co-operation has been desired and sought for. The Lok Parishad has never put forth the claim attributed to it in the quotations. It has responsible government within the State as its goal. It has carried on agitation in the recognized manner. I suggest that it is highly undignified for the advisers of the Maharaja to put into his mouth

[1] Of which only excerpts are reproduced here.

words that have no correlation to facts. They have not hesitated even to drag the war and the 'alliance' with Britain to justify the high-handed action adopted towards the Parishad. The Parishad, I am sure, will come out unscathed, if the workers can stand the test of self-suffering. Those who are imprisoned will be the salt and saviours of Jodhpur, for they will be trusted by the people as their real servants. It is not right for the Princes and their advisers to ignore the time spirit and to resort to such statements and acts as cannot stand impartial scrutiny. I see from their leaflet that the parishad have asked for an open trial. They deny all the charges that are mentioned in the Maharaja's speech. The least that is owing to the public is proof of the indictment against the Parishad. Meanwhile, and whether the Parishad gets justice or not, I hope that its members will peaceful and bravely stand the sufferings that may be inflicted on them.

SEVAGRAM April 16, 1940

Harijan, 20-4-1940

154. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEVAGRAM

April 17, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL[1],

I will give you some time. Avail yourself of it when I am taking my walk. If Kanchan[2] also agrees, you may write to each other as much as you want, but through me. That will probably be much safer. I have even advised you that you would be committing no sin if you two lived together. Kanchan's zeal for service however is wonderful. I believe she will make progress. Stop getting up in the night. Everything will be all right if you keep yourself engrossed in work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8547. Also C. W. 7081. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] An inmate of the Sevagram Ashram

[2] Addressee's wife

155. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SEVAGRAM

April 18, 1940

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter, as also the pad[1] . It would have been better if you had written to me about the fast[2] before undertaking it. I might not then have tried to dissuade you, but would have, instead, shown you how to use it in a better way. I hope you are returning to normal food gradually. Your letter is incomplete. You have not said all that you should have said. That is not right. Write to me now if you can. If you want to come and talk things over personally, you may come.

Blessings from

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N.. 10406. Also C. W. 6845. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

156. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

April 18, 1940

CHI. MRIDULA,

I have your letter. What you have written is correct. We shall solve it on another occasion if that is necessary.

Mummy will be well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11211. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

[1] Of handmade paper

[2] The addressee had undertaken a seven days' fast to atone for some lapses in her conduct while she was in Bihar.

157. DISCUSSION AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

WARDHA

[*April 15/19, 1940*][1]

Discussing the present political situation Gandhiji said that the letters he was receiving from all over the country indicated that there was no atmosphere for the starting of the struggle. In Bengal and the Punjab, the struggle would not be against the British but against the respective ministries. People asked him what next. Some wanted to know if they were to leave their Government jobs and join in the preparation. He was telling everybody to keep ready. He was in no hurry. Some people asked if he would commence the struggle in spite of the attitude of the Muslim League and the Khaksars.

Congressmen, he continued, told him that there was neither honesty nor discipline in the Congress and there was no belief in the constructive programme. All this did not encourage him to issue the word of command for the struggle. Talking of the internationals situation, he said, that did not affect him. His gaze was centred on the internal situation and that was not hopeful. Some people asked if he would sit still and allow the present opportunity to pass by. His reply was that he was helpless unless conditions precedent were fulfilled.

Shri Jawaharlal said that all this was known at the time of the Ramgarh resolution. Nothing new had happened since. That resolution contemplated struggle if there was goading from the Government. He asked if Gandhiji was contemplating a non-mass struggle.

Gandhiji's reply was that he did not feel that Government was bent upon goading. If he felt that he would not wait for numbers he would begin with a few. Participation of even 50,000 satyagrahis would not make the action a mass struggle. Mass meant indefinite numbers. But if 50,000 satyagrahis offered themselves, it might mean that the door for mass civil disobedience had been opened.

Shri Jawaharlalji said that the goading at present might not be sufficient but it would go on increasing. Should the nation not prepare to resist it? He was not prepared to say that action might be immediately precipitated. But it was a fact that the country was being pushed back. . . He asked Gandhiji what the latter would do if he got 50,000 satyagrahis.

[1] It appeas from the contents that this was the meeting held at Wardha from April 15 to 19, 1940, after the Ramgarh session of the Congress (March 1940) and before the Working Committee meeting at Wardha from June 17 to 21, 1940.

Gandhiji reply was that even then communal and other difficulties might make action difficult. Gandhiji wanted the members to consider the question of the struggle in connection with the attitude of the Muslim league and the terrorist activities of the Khaksars.

Dr. Mehmood said there was need to analyse the Muslim opposition to the Congress. He had no doubt that the nationalist Muslims had not discharged their duties properly.

. . .Today there was nothing in India which was distinctly Muslim. Every reform movement in India brought about further assimilation. Even the theosophic movement had like results. Gandhiji's reforms also meant more Hindu revival than anything else. In his scheme of reforms there was no place for Muslims. The Congress was also guided by the spirit of Hindu revival. . . .

Gandhiji again asked the members to give him the benefit of their opinion about the starting of C.D., taking into consideration the opinions expressed by Dr. Mahmood and Mr. Asaf Ali in addition to the attitude of the Muslim League and the Khaksars. The Khaksars wanted to terrorize the Hindus. His advice to the Hindus would be to fight this menace non-violently. This he could not do under the present circumstances from the Congress platform.[1] . . . Maulana Saheb's view was that Gandhiji was exaggerating the importance and strength of the Khaksars. Their leader was an egoist who wanted to keep himself before the public eye anyhow. . . As for the movement, he said, the Congress was not writing on a clean slate. It would not changes its policies in mid-stream. . .

Gandhiji did not agree with Maulana Saheb in his analysis of the Khaksars. He said the Government this time would not be quick to repress us but would allow time to the opposition forces like the Legue and the Khaksars to complicate the situation. When that happened, his fear was that people would be cowed down. Even if they acted they would do so violently. He would also not like, if he could help it, to irritate the Muslims by starting the movement. He did not agree with Maulana Saheb and Jawaharlalji. He thought there could be no mass C.D.

It was not possible at present to have corporate non-Violence, which meant that all orders must be strictly obeyed and carried out. If these was disobedience and interference there could be no mass movement. The masses were connected with the movement but that connection was indirect. If there was proper discipline, he did not see any reason why individual C.D. should necessarily develop into mass C.D.It was

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru, Shankarrao Deo, Sardar Patel, Sarojini Naidu, Vijaya-lakshmi Pandit, Achyat Patwardhan, Bhulabhai Desai and J. B. Kripalani then spoke in favour of starting C. D., whereas Rajendra Prasad, P. C. Ghosh, Rajagopalachari and Pattabhi Sitaramayya expressed a contrary opinion

possible that Congress might succeed if it started the movement. The Government might accede to Congress demands. But that today would only mean that the Muslims were ignored. He did not want such a settlement or such a swaraj. He had respect for Islam. He was not prepared to say that the League did not represent the Muslim mind. If Muslims wanted separation, he would not oppose. When they had it, he would oppose them non-violently. He knew in this matter the nation would not accept his lead and there would be civil war. He was, however, hoping that at such a time the Congress at least would be with him and would declare that it would be no party to coercing Muslims or to seeking British protection.

During the course of discussion, Gandhiji stated his idea about the constituent Assembly. He said when the Congress asked for the Assembly, it was understood that the Assembly would be free to decide the question of independence or Dominion Status. Of course the Congress demand for Independence must stand. Jawaharlalji said that what was contemplated in the Congress resolution was that Government should first declare India independent and then call a Constituent Assembly. He said he would insist upon every Tommy to withdraw from India before a Constituent Assembly could be called. He did not mind the European officers working under Indian direction.

Gandhiji said that that was not his view of things. They both differed on this point but ultimately they seemed to understand each other and the matter was dropped.

Wardha Office, Satyagraha File, 1940-41. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

158. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

SEVAGRAM,
April 19, 1940

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

If you want to bind all letters into a book, use paper of uniform size. You did well in writing the letter. It was your duty. After writing it, your duty is over and mine begins. I have started investigating what you mention. There seems to be a difference between what is actually happening and your understanding of it, I put up with many things. Yes,it is true that I trust Parnerkar's scientific knowledge. I also trust your practical knowledge. You will gain more strength from what you are doing now.

I shall see about Krishnachandra.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N.. 1933

159. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

SEVAGRAM,

April 20, 1940

CHI. BALVANTSINHA

See the enclosed, Mother Gita says that we should prostrate ourselves before one from whom we seek knowledge, we should repeatedly question him and serve him.[1] See if Krishnachandra has the strength and seek instruction from him. You cannot have a better teacher.

I have spoken to Munnanlal. He will talk to you. His version is different. The arrangement that has been worked out should not be described as division of work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1930

160. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

SEVAGRAM

April 21, 1940

BHAI KAKUBAHI

What Vithaldas says is correct. Even so there is no harm in your having yourself registered as an "active" member, since only those whom I call will have to join the struggle. I do not want to bring out persons like you at the moment.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W.. 10844. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

[1] Bhagavad Gita, iv. 34

161. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEVAGRAM WARDHA,
April 21, 1940

CHI. VIJAYA,

I have your letter. I hope Father is calm. It is best that you stay there for the present. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7127. Also: C. W. 4619. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

162. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

SEVAGRAM
April 21, 1940

BHAI MUNISHI,

I will certainly read your book when I get the time.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KANAIYALAL MUNSHI
26, RIDGE ROAD
BOMBAY

From Gujarati: C. W. 7652. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

163. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

SEVAGRAM,
April 21, 1940

CHI. VALJI,

Is it not violence to make your handwriting so small or to write with a lead pencil or to write like I do? Because you have spent ten rupees, perhaps you won't even take treatment now!!! You may now

stay on in Bombay if it benefits you. I have your article also. I understand about Helen. What she requires seems a little excessive. And the English is none too good.

Blesssings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7493. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

164. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

SEGAON,

April 21, 1940

DEAR HARIBHAU,

I have your letter. You will have seen Bapu's article[1] about Ajmer. That should satisfy you.

This is what Bapu feels about Ramnarayan. Bapu is satisfied with him and feels that he has changed a lot. However, one cannot say with certainty that the change will endure. But it is our duty to put trust in him, and take work from him. Bapu would ask you to talk to him frankly and express your opinion firmly. But if you still have your doubts then tell him plainly, "Look, I still have my doubts. I hesitate to take work from you." If you feel shy and are hesitant in talking to him, you will not be doing him justice.

The Devas ruler is a very good man. A note on him will certainly appear in *Harijan*.

Yours,

MAHADEV

From the Hindi original: Haribabu Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

165. INTERVIEW TO "THE NEW YORK TIMES"

[Before *April 22, 1940*][2]

Q. I have heard it said on behalf of Britain, "We cannot say what the new world is going to be at the end of the war; the Indian problem cannot be isolated from world problems; . . . Dominion Status under existing circumstances is the highest we

[1] *Vide* "Danger Signal", 16-4-1940

[2] The report by Amrit Kaur is dated "Sevagram, April 22, 1940".

can offer India." You yourself have said, " Of what value is freedom to India if Britain and France fail?" Can you throw some light on these points?

A. The legal status of India, whether it is Dominion Status or something else, can only come after the war. It is not a question at present to decide whether India should be satisfied with Dominion Status for the time being. The only question is what is the British policy? Does Great Britain still hold the view that it is her sole right to determine the status of India or whether it is the sole right of India to make that determination? If that question had not been raised, there would have been no discussion such as we are facing today. The question having been raised-and it was India's right to raise it —I was bound to throw in my weight, such as it is, with the Congress. Nevertheless I can still repeat the question I put to myself immediately after the first interview with the Viceroy[1]: "Of what value is freedom to India if Britain and France fail?"[2] If these powers fail, the history of Europe and the history of the world will be written in a manner no one can foresee. Therefore my question has its own independent value. The relevant point, however, is that by doing justice to India Britain might ensure victory of the Allies because their cause will then be acclaimed as righteous by the enlightened opinion of the world.

Q. Have you any views about world federation (Streit's[3] scheme of 15 white democracies with India excluded at present) or about a federation of Europe with the British Commonwealth and again excluding India? Would you advise India to enter such a larger federation so as to prevent a domination of the coloured races by the white?

A. Of course I would welcome a world federation of all the nations of the world. A federation of the Western nations only will be an unholy combination and a menace to humanity. In my opinion a federation excluding India is now an impossibility. India has already passed the stage when she could be safely neglected.

Q. You have seen in your lifetime more devastation by war than there has been at any time in the world's history. And yet do you still believe in non-violence as the basis of new civilization? Are you satisfied that your own countrymen accept it

[1] This was on September 4, 1939.

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 5-9-1939. The text there reads; "but what will it [the freedom of India] be worth if England and France fall?"

[3] C. K. Streit, an American journalist. The reference is to a scheme he had propounded in *Union Now.*

without reservation? You continue to harp on your conditions being fulfilled before starting civil disobedience. Do you still hold to them?

A. You are right in pointing out that there is unheard-of devastation going on in the world. But that is the real moment for testing my faith in non-violence. Surprising as it may appear to my critics, my faith in non-violence remains absolutely undimmed. Of course non-violence may not come in my lifetime in the measure I would like to see it come, but that is different matter. It cannot shake my faith, and that is why I have become unbending so far as the fulfilment of my conditions prior to the starting of civil disobedience is concerned; because, at the risk of being the laughing-stock of the whole world, I adhere to my belief that there is an unbreakable connection between the spinning-wheel and non-violence so far as India is concerned. Just as there are signs by which you can recognize violence with the naked eye, so is the spinning-wheel to me a decisive sign of non-violence. But nothing can deter me from working away in hope. I have no other method for solving the many baffling problems that face India.

Q. You want a declaration that henceforth India shall govern herself according to her own will. You also say, " It is possible for the best Englishmen and the best Indians to meet together and never to separate till they have evolved a formula acceptable to both."[1] The British say, "We are vitally interested in defence, out commercial interests, and the Indian States." Are you willing to allow your best Englishmen and your best Indians to enter into a treaty in regard to these matters" in a spirit of friendly accommodation"?[2]

A. If the best Englishmen and the best Indians meet together with a fixed determination not to separate until they have reached an agreement, the way will have been opened for the summoning of the Constituent Assembly of my conception. Of course this composite board will have to be of one mind as to the goal. If that is put in the melting-pot, there will be nothing but interminable wrangling. Therefore self-determination must be the common cause with this composite board.

Q. Supposing India does become free in your lifetime, what will you devote the rest of your years to?

[1] *Vide* "notes", 9-4-1940

[2] The passages within quotes are form the Anglo- Egyptian Treaty of 1922.

A. If India becomes free in my lifetime and I have still energy left in me, of course I would take my due share, though outside the official world, in building up the nation on a strictly non-violent basis.

Harijan, 27-4-1940

166. QUESTION BOX

BEEF

Q. The Muslim public need to be satisfied on a very important question. Will the Muslims be allowed to eat their national food-beef-under a Hindu majority Government? If you can satisfy the Muslims on this all important question, a great deal of knots will be solved. You should give a straight answer to this question in your paper Harijain.

A. I do not know how this question arises. For whilst Congressmen were in office they are not known to have interfered with the practice of beef-eating by Muslims. The question is also badly conceived. There is no such thing as a Hindu majority Government. If a free India is to live at peace with herself, religious divisions must entirely give place to political divisions based on considerations other than religious. Even as it is, though unfortunately religious differences loom large, most parties contain members drawn from all sects. It is moreover not true to say that beef is the national food of Muslims. In the first place the Muslims of India are not as yet a separate nation. In the second, beef is not their ordinary good. Their ordinary food is the same as that of the millions. What is true is that there are very few Muslims who are vegetarians form a religious motive. Therefore they will take meat, including beef, when they can get it. But during the greater part of the year millions of Muslims, owing to poverty, go without meat of any kind. These are facts. But the theoretical question demands a clear answer. As a Hindu, a confirmed vegetarian, and a worshipper of the cow whom I regard with the same veneration as I regard my mother (alas, no more on this earth), I maintain that Muslims should have full freedom to slaughter cows, if they wish, subject of course to hygienic restrictions and in a manner not to wound the susceptibilities of their Hindu neighbours. Fullest recognition off freedom to the Muslims to slaughter cows is indispensable for communal harmony, and is the only way of saving the cow. In 1921 thousands of cows were saved by the sole and willing effort of Muslims themselves. In spite of the black clouds hanging over our heads. I refuse to give up the hope that they will disperse and that we shall have communal peace in this unhappy land. If I am

asked for proof, I must answer that my hope is based on faith and faith demands no proof.

DEATH SENTENCE

Q. Do you consider death sentence to be against your principle of ahimsa? If so, what form of punishment would you advocate as a substitute in a free India?

A. I do regard death sentence as contrary to ahimsa. Only he takes life who gives it. All punishment is repugnant to ahimsa. Under a State governed according to the principles of ahimsa, therefore, a murdered would be sent to a penitentiary and there given every chance of reforming himself. All crime is a kind of disease and should be treated as such.

GOD'S WILL

Q. How can an ordinary man distinguish between God's will and his own will?

A. By not regarding anything as God's will unless he has positive proof to the contrary. Not every person can know God's will. Proper training is necessary to attain the power to know God's will.

an offence against congress

Q. Some of the Congress committees here in Adampur Doaba during the last Independence Day celebrations got prepared national flags of uncertified khadi, and some of them got badge flags prepared from paper. They sold these to raise funds. When questioned they pleaded that they wanted funds for the Congress and could not afford to sell badge flags made out of khadi for one piece each and still retain something for themselves. At some places I even found national flags hoisted which were of mill-cloth and even without the spinning-wheel. I personally feel that the spinning-wheel and khadi are the very soul of our flag; and a national flag which is printed on uncertified khadi and without the spinning-wheel mark on it, or a paper flag cannot be called a national flag.

A. Your objection is sound. The Congress committees who used as national flags paper flags or those which were made of mill-cloth or uncertified khadi or without the charkha, committed an offence against the Congress. The betrayed little regard for the flag. Any rag cannot be used as flag. It has to conform to the prescribed pattern. If we do not respect our own flag, we have no right to expect others to do so. You have made out a case for the central office having a stock of flags of variety of sizes. Nobody should be permitted to use unauthorized flags as national flags.

SEVAGRAM, April 22, 1940

Harijan, 27-4-1940

167. WHAT BIG EMPLOYERS CAN DO

Shri Vthaldas Jerajani sends me the following[1] from Shri Shantikumar[2] of the Scindia House**:**

> During the National Week every effort will be made to sell khadi. . . . Then why not approach the big offices. . . . to buy khadi for peons' dresses? . . . . Last year the Scindia Company provided khadi uniforms for the peons, and this year also we are going to have the same. . . . I am trying to push khadi uniforms in other Associated Companies of the Scindia Company.
>
> I am also trying to push the use of handmade paper in the office of the Scindia Company. . . .

I have no hesitation in whole-heartedly endorsing the suggestion made by Shri Shantikumar. I would go a step further. In order that the peons who have willy-nilly to wear uniforms provided for them may not feel any inferiority, the big office staff should set the example by themselves voluntarily using khadi for their garments. Khadi is one of the greatest levellers. The peons should be able to take pride in their uniforms. This they will only do when they know that their employers use the same material as that of which their uniforms are made. The greater the approach on the part of employers to their employees, the greater the possibility of a peaceful solution of the difficult problem of class conflict.

I therefore hope that Shri Shantikumar's effort will be appreciated by the other employers. Indeed the idea should be taken up by all public institutions such as hospitals, students's hostels, etc.

The use of handmade paper is a less difficult problem. For good handmade paper is any day more artistic than and superior to the ordinary mill paper, and there is not the same difference in the prices of the two varieties as in the case of khadi and millmade cloth. The big houses owe it to the millions to use as many handmade articles as is possible for them to do.

SEVAGRAM, April 22, 1940

Harijan, 27-4-1940

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

[2] Shantikumar Morarjee

168. ABOUT ZAMINDARS

A first class Deccan Sardar propounds the following conundrums:[1]

You say, on page 442 lines 4-6 of Harijan of 10th February,[2] that you put Europeans on the same footings as big zamindars and capitalists. I presume that you include in the general word 'zamindars', inamdars[3] , talukdars and big landholders.

1. Will you be pleased to say whether you remember and realise the fact that Europeans are foreigners and their earnings and profits go out of the country to enrich other nations and make them more powerful instruments to exploit India; while zamindars and inamdars. . . are Indian. . . and all their earnings and savings and even their extravagance will remain in this country. . . Many of these people have national interest fully at heart. . .

2. What are the differences between a nationalist zamindar and a nationalist non-zamindar, in your opinion?

3. What exact position do you assign to zamindars and inamdars, and the capitalists in a free and independent India? . . .

4. Have the zamindars and inamdars and capitalists any place in the present Congress, consistent with their limitations and commitments?

Answers:

1. I make no difference between Europeans and Indians, if the former conform to the laws of free India. I cannot, consistently with my views on non-violence. Under my scheme European settlers will not be allowed to exploit the country as most of them are doing today. Patriots will have had their reward in the shape of freedom of their country. They are no patriots who are working with selfish personal ends in view. If we create a State based on pure justice, real equality and genuine brotherhood, Europeans will cease to be foreigners. They will take pride in pooling their talents for the sole good of the country of their adoption.

I gladly acknowledge the fact that there are many inamdars, zamindars and other capitalists who are as patriotic as any Congressmen.

2. A nationalist zamindar will try to live like a non-zamindar. He will regard his tenants as his co-proprietors; in other words, he will

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 6-2-1940.

[3] Holders of lease-free land

hold his zamindari in trust for his tenants taking a moderate commission for the use of his labours and capital. A nationalist non-zamindar will not regard the zamindaras his natural enemy but will seek redress of his wrongs by the process of conversion. I have shown before now that this is not a long-drawn-out agony.

3. This is answered in the foregoing. Antagonism between the classes will be removed. I do not envisage a dead and artificial level among the people. There will be a variety among them as there is among the leaves of a tree. There will certainly be no have-note, no unemployment, and no disparity between classes and masses such as we see today. I have no doubt whatsoever that if non-violence in its full measure becomes the policy of the State, we shall reach essential equality without strife.

4. All who subscribe to the simple creed of the Congress can join it. As a matter of fact there are many moneyed members of the Congress. To quote only one instance, Jamnalalji is a capitalist and he is a member of the Working Committee.

SEVAGRAM, April 22, 1940

Harijan, 27-4-1940

169. LETTER TO MRS. K. L. RALLIA RAM

SEVAGRAM,

April 22, 1940

DEAR SISTER,

I am dealing with your question in Harijan.

Your's sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: N. A. I. File No. 73. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also G.N. 6837

170. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON,

April 22, 1940

Three of your letters have remained unanswered. The reason is my helplessness.

I understand your arguments. But I stick to my position. In course of time either you will be persuaded or I shall be persuaded. I

cannot advance any new argument. You just watch which way I go. I myself do not know it. I have only one guiding principle. Comprehend it. There can be mistakes in its interpretation and practice. If that is proved, it should be taken as evidence of some shortcoming in my sadhana. With each passing day I see it more and more clearly that non-violence cannot be cultivated in any other way.

April 24, 1940

There was an interruption after I had written the above. You must continue to write whatever comes to your mind. Do not wait for my reply.

I read your letter to Pyarelal. I myself forbade him to reply. It would only lead to unnecessary bickering and achieve nothing. You have already said what you had to say. Now let the brother and sister go their ways. I too hardly discuss our relations with him.I go my way, the brother and sister follow their own ways. We are engaged in our own work. Where is the occasion to talk about anything except the work? I would advise you to stop worrying about them. Even as it is, are you not having enough work on your hands?

I have written a letter to the Viceroy today.[1] I do not intend to send copies of it to anyone. All I would say is that you would approve it. But I may be mistaken even in that.

Blessings form

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

171. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

April 22, 1940

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

We already had a discussion last night; hence I shall not repeat it here. What I said yesterday deserves serious consideration.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1931

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 24-4-1940.

172. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

SEVAGRAM,,

April 22, 1940

DEAR SISTER,

My article[1] does not mean what you interpret it to mean. Even if the telling of beads does not yield concrete results, continue it with faith. You will certainly witness concrete results one day. I have nothing more about the eleven vows[2]. Only this: if you believe in them, it is good to think of them. One day God will give you the strength to fulfill them.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. RAMESHWARI NEHRU

2 WARES ROAD

LAHORE

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7990

173. CABLE TO "THE NEWS CHRONICLE"[3]

[On or after *April 22,1940*][4]

PROPOSAL CONVENING COMMITTEE LEADERS REACH PRELIMINARY AGREEMENT ATTRACTIVE, PROVIDED LEADERS ELECTED, NOT NOMINATED, ACCORDING TO ACCEPTABLE PROCEDURE. THIS IS MY PERSONAL VIEW. UNCONSULTED COLLEAGUES.

GANDHI

Harijan, 27-4-1940

[1] *Vide* "Question Box", 1-4-1940.

[2] These were: Non-violence, truth, non-stealing, brahmacharya, nonpossession, body labour, control of the palate, fearlessness, equal respect for all religions, swadeshi and freedom from untouchability.

[3] This was sent in reply to a cable which read: "Grateful to receive an exposition of your attitude to proposal that committee of Indian leaders representing all interests should try to reach agreement on essential preliminary to final constitutional settlement,"

[4] The cable from *The News Chronicle* was received on April 22, 1940.

174. CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

The Working Committee[1] advisedly passed no startling or new resolution this time. For there was no programme before them. That of civil disobedience has to be evolved by me. But the Committee had useful discussions on many points arising out of the contemplated movement. I propose to give the readers the gist of what I told the members of the Committee, with the necessary amplification.

Civil disobedience in the face of the lawlessness that prevails in the country will easily pass for the same unless it is beyond doubt recognized as something different in kind from the prevailing brand. Thus the Khaksar defiance is admittedly and openly violent.[2] The kisans who held up the train between Gaya and Kiul were violent under cover of non-violence. They were doubt guilty according to the non-violent conception. For they are supposed to be Congressmen. To hold up a train is disobedience without doubt. And so far as the Congress is concerned, according to the Ramgarh resolution,[3] Congressmen may not resort to civil disobedience singly or in groups without my permission. I have already said that Prof. Ranga's disobedience was also not civil.[4] His friends have asked me to withdraw my criticism. I claim to be a special friend of his. We became friends probably before the protesters knew him. And it is because he is such a close friend that I condemned his action without mincing words.I am sure he will not misunderstand me. In any event when a man of his learning chooses deliberately to commit an act of indiscipline it must come to me as a warning against any hasty action.

Now civil disobedience, if it is really civil, must appear so even to the opponent. He must feel that the resistance is not intended to do him any harm. At the present moment the average Englishman thinks that non-violence is merely a cloak. The Muslim Leaguers think that civil disobedience is aimed at them more than at the British. I protest

[1] The Working Committee met at Wardha from April 15 to 19.

[2] Violent and widespread clashes, inspired by the Khaksars, had been taking place in the Punjab.For further comment by Gandhiji, *vide* "All on Trial", 8-4-1940.

[3] *ibid.*

[4] *Vide* "Notes", 9-4-1940

with all the strength at my command that, so far as I am concerned, I have no desire whatsoever to embarrass the British, especially at a time when it is a question of life and death with them. All I want the Congress to do through civil disobedience is to deny the British Government the moral influence which the Congress co-operation would give. The material resources of India and her man-power are already being exploited by the British Government by reason or their control of the whole of this subcontinent.

If by civil disobedience the Congress has no desire to embarrass the British people, it has still less to embarrass the Muslim League. And I can say this on behalf of the Congress with far greater assurance than I can with regard to the British. Working in the midst of suspicion and terrible misrepresentation. on the one hand and the prevailing lawlessness outside and inside the Congress on the other, I have to think a thousand times before embarking on civil disobedience.

So far as I can see at present mass civil disobedience is most unlikely. The choice lies between individual civil disobedience on a large scale, very restricted, or confined only to me. In every case there must be the backing of the whole of the official congress organization and the millions who, though not on the Congress register, have always supported the organization with their mute but most effective co-operation.

I have repeatedly shown in these columns that the most effective and visible co-operation which all Congressmen and the mute millions can show is by not interfering with the course civil disobedience may take and by themselves spinning and using khadi to the exclusion of all other cloth. If it is allowed that there is a meaning in people wearing primroses on Primrose Day, surely there is much more in people using a particular kind of cloth and giving a particular kind of labour to the cause they hold dear. From their compliance with the khadi test I shall infer that they have shed untouchability, and that they have nothing but brotherly feeling towards all without distinction of race, colour or creed. Those who will do this are as much satyagrahis as those who will be singled out for civil disobedience.

SEVAGRAM, April 23,1940

Harijan, 27-4-1940

175. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 24, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

This is going to be a complaining letter. I was tempted to write to the Press on Lord Zetland's speech[1] . But I restrained myself. What I wanted to say was too serious to be given to the public. Hence this letter. I am carrying on my head a tremendous responsibility. I want to avoid mistakes.

There is a ring of reluctance to [do] the right thing by India. He may say 'we don't want to do the things by way of settlement, you will have to fight for it or take what we offer. That would be a straight answer. Why does he bring up against the Congress things which are common ground? Hindu-Muslim question, minorities and the like are common ground. The Congress claims that they can be truly settled only by a constituent assembly or its equivalent. On British admissions, Princes are your creation. That they were there before you came is true. So were many other institutions. You kept what was necessary for your existence and destroyed what you thought were a hindrance.[2] It is a thankless task to prolong this tale. I can if you want me to. I feel sure this sample should enable you to infer the rest.

Will you please convey my complaints to Lord Zetland in any way you think best? If I have misinterpreted him, you will oblige me by correcting me.

[1] Speaking in the House of Lords on April 18, Lord Zetland, the Secretary of State for India (1935-40), had said: "A substantial measure of agreement among the communities of India is essential if the vision of united India is to become a reality . . . . But the fact of the matter is that the Congress Party has raised in the minds of many Muslims apprehensions which only they themselves can allay. Will the Congress refrain from closing the door upon unity in India? Upon their answer hangs the future fate of the country." *The Indian Annual Register*, January-June 1940,.

[2] In answer to this Lord Linlithgow, in his letter of April 29, said: "But it does seem to me, too, that we cannot refuse to face the historical facts of this matter or the historical setting in which the relationship of His Majesty's Government with the Princes arrose."

I know your and his preoccupations. But this Indian question is an integral part of the task in hand, is it not?

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a printed copy: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

176. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

April 24, 1940

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I knew one day you would see the truth. I wish to explain things at length, but I have no time. With patience, everything will become clear. I should be informed of whatever loss is observed. I have read the letter form B. A. Ascertain his needs before permitting him to come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1932

177. TELEGRAM TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

WARDHAGANJ,
April 26,1940

RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

DHULIA

YOU MUST NOT DISTURB BALKOBA'S[1] SLEEP. MEET HIM KALYAN IF NECESSARY.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 738

[1] Balkrishna Bhave

178. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

April 26, 1940

CHI, NARANDAS,

I have your letter. I hardly get time to read Harijanbandhu. Only today it chanced to fall into my hands and I read the very sentence you refer to. It irked me, too. This happened in the morning. In the afternoon I got your letter. How strange. Or rather what a coincidence!

I had a talk with Vallabhbhai about your work. He said he would send some help.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You yourself may write to Shamaldas and Kaku[1] and let me know the result. How much used to be given?

From a microfilm of the Gujarati:m.m.u./II. Also C. W. 8573. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

179. LETTER TO JAMNA GANDHI

[*April 26,1940*][2]

CHI. JAMNA,

I have your letter. We should use the strength God has given us and be content. Kanaiya's[3] work is progressing very well. Now he has decided to have a dark-room.

Blessing from,

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U./II. Also C. W. 8573. Courtesy:

[1] Purushottam K. Jerajani
[2] This and the preceding item are written on the same sheet.
[3] Addressee's son

180. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G.SHAH

April 26, 1940

CHI, MUNNALAL,

The remedy for you is simple. Resolve that you will get rid of your restlessness here and nowhere else, come what may. As you have understood the position about Pyarelal, there is no problem any more. You should not feel you are a slave.Man becomes a slave of his passions, not of his environment. Slavery thus is only a state of mind.

As for Kanchan, what has happened is good. Let her go to Panchgani for the present and serve till she is restored. Her regaining and keeping her health rests in her own hands. Like you, she too is free. if you wish to live with her, we shall think about it after it after she returns.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8546. Also C. W. 7082. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

181. LETTER TO RAMDAS AND SUMITRA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
April 26, 1940

CHI. RAMDAS,

I liked your having gone to Ahmedabad for you will have more experience there. You will get there the company of our own people and Nimu will have better facilities for her studies. But from the point of view of the children, I am not so happy at your having left Bhavnagar. They had got used to the place. But, then does it always happen as one wishes? Hence, one should believe that whatever happens is for the best and remain content.

I will certainly urge Ba to go to you but there is little likelihood of her going. If she finds the heat unbearable, she will prefer to go to Mithubehn at Maroli. I need not write separately to Nimu.

CHI. SUMI,

You have done very well indeed. Go on writing in this way.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

182. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

SEVAGRAM,
April 26,1940

CHI. HARIBHAU,

I have your letter. I am awaiting news from Ajmer. We should be in a position to give a full reply to the Government's note[1] . I hope you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: Gandhiji aur Rajasthan, p. 252. ALSO C. W. 6089. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

183. LETTER TO EARNEST A. BRANN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 27, 1940

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am myself groping in the dark and making an experiment in the direction mentioned by you. If it succeeds it will present the work an infallible peace plan.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

EARNEST A. BRANN, ESQ.
5532 KENWOOD AVENUE
CHICAGO

From a photostat: G. N. 10536

[1] *Vide* "Danger Signal", 16-4-1940, "The Ajmer Trouble", 30-4-1940 and "Ajmer", 6-5-1940.

184. AN ENGLISH SUGGESTION

An English friend writes thus:[1]

> It is still reasonable at present to proceed on the assumption that the Muslims would accept something a good deal less than 'Pakistan'. But the trouble is that the longer the time that elapses without any compromise solution being reached, the stronger and more insistent will be the cry for 'Pakistan', so that in the end civil war or partition will be the only alternatives. I think the view held by some that there is nothing to be done but to wait upon events is fatal. It is up to the British now to use all their powers of persuasion and statesmanship to compel the parties to settle.
>
> The crux of the matter is who is to control power at the Centre-Hindus or Muslims? Over this the Congress must be prepared to make great concessions. . . . If the Congress do not recognize the quickly, I am afraid that partition will become, If not the only alternative, the best one. . .

Of course the British Government can do much. They have done much by force. They can make the parties come to a solution by force. But they need not go so far. What they have done hitherto is to prevent a proper solution. In proof of my statement I commend the esteemed correspondent to the columns of Harijan. The only thing the British Government have to do is to change their attitude. Will they? They can retain their hold on India by a policy of divide and rule. A living unity between Muslims and Hindus is fraught with danger to their rule. It would mean an end of it. Therefore it seems to me that a true solution will come with the end of the rule, potentially if not in fact.

What can be done under the threat of Pakistan? If it is not a threat but a desirable goal, why should it be prevented? If it is undesirable and meant only for the Muslims to get more under its shadow, any solution would be an unjust solution. It would be worse than no solution. Therefore I am entirely for waiting till the menace it gone. India's independence is a living thing. No make-believe will suit. The whole world is in the throes of a new birth. Anything done for a temporary gain would be tantamount to an abortion.

I cannot think in terms of narrow Hinduism or narrow Islam. I am wholly uninterested in a patch-work solution. India is a big

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

country, a big nation composed of different cultures, which are tending to blend with one another, each complementing the rest. If I must wait for the completion of the process, I must wait. It may not be completed in my day. I shall love to die in the faith that it must come in the fullness of time. I should be happy to think that I had done nothing to hamper the process. Subject to this condition, I would do anything to bring about harmony. My life is made up of compromises, but they have been compromises that have brought me nearer the goal. Pakistan cannot be worse than foreign domination. I have lived under the latter though not willingly. If God so desires it, I may have to become a helpless witness to the undoing of my dream. But I do not believe that the Muslims really want to dismember India.

SEVAGRAM, April 29, 1940

Harijan, 4-5-1940

185. HINDU-MUSLIM TANGLE

The partition proposal[1] has altered the face of the Hindu-Muslim problem. I have called it an untruth. There can be no compromise with it. At the same time I have said that, If the eight crores of Muslims desire it no power on earth can prevent it, notwithstanding opposition, violent or non-violent It cannot come by honourable agreement.

That is the political aspect of it. But what about the religious and the moral which are greater than the political? For at the bottom of the cry for partition is the belief that Islam is an exclusive brotherhood, and anti-Hindu. Whether it is against other religions it is not stated. The newspaper cuttings in which partition is preached describe Hindus as practically untouchables. Nothing good can come out of Hindus or Hinduism. To live under Hindu rule is a Sin. Even joint Hindu-Muslim rule is not to be thought of. The cuttings show that Hindu and Muslims are already at war with one another and that they must prepare for the final tussle.

Time was when Hindus thought that Muslims were the natural enemies of Hindus. But as is the case with Hinduism, ultimately it

[1] The All-India Muslim League, meeting at Lahore, passed a resolution on March 23, recording the view that no constitutional plan would be workable unless it was based on territorial readjustment and the creation of independent Muslim States.

comes to terms with the enemy and makes friends with him. The process had not been completed. As if nemesis had overtaken Hinduism, the Muslim League started the same game and taught that there could be no blending of the two cultures. In this connection I have just read a booklet by Shri Atulanand Chakrabarti which shows that ever since the contact of Islam with Hinduism there has been an attempt on the part of the best minds of both to see the good points of each other, and to emphasize inherent similarities rather than seeming dissimilarities. The author has shown Islamic history in India in a favourable light. If he has stated the truth and nothing but the truth, it is a revealing booklet which all Hindus and Muslims may read with profits. He has secured a very favourable and reasoned preface from Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan and several other Muslim testimonials. If the evidence collected there reflects the true evolution of Islam in India, then the partition propaganda is anti-Islamic.

Religion binds man to God and man to man. Does Islam bind Muslim only to Muslim and antagonize the Hindu? Was the message of the Prophet peace only for and between Muslims and war against Hindus or non-Muslims? Are eight crores of Muslims to be fed with this which I can only describe as poison? Those who are instilling this poison into the Muslim mind are rendering the greatest disservice to Islam. I know that it is not Islam. I have lived with and among Muslims not for one day but closely and almost uninterruptedly for twenty years. Not one Muslim taught me that Islam was an anti-Hindu religion.

SEVAGRAM, APRIL 29, 1940

Harijan, 4-5-1940

186. OF WHAT AVAIL IS NON-VIOLENCE?

An Indian friend writes:[1]

> Yesterday Reuter in pathetic terms related how the population of Norway under the rain of bombs and machine-gun bullets was fleeing from towns completely demoralized and in panic. . . The futillity of violence, and also. . . its temporary efficacy, is being proved. . . Let us hope eventually everyone will see the futility of violence and a new era may dawn. But are we

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

> really making a non-violent contribution towards the world problem? Of what avail is our non-violence to Norway, Sweden and Denmark? Virtually are we not giving a handle to Germany? True, We are doing nothing beyond embarrassing Great Britain, and perhaps we may say that such an embarrassment is inevitable and is not caused deliberately. . . We are not likely, it seems, to succeed in changing England's heart. And victims like Norway, etc., can never appreciate our attitude. In the light of our present attitude, the internationals world can with justification misinterpret our past help to victims of aggression like China and Spain. Were they more deserving of our help than the present victims? And if not, then why this distinction? . . . You have never regretted your action during the last war when you vigorously recruited people for military purposes. This time your attitude appears to be in sharp contrast, although you say that both attitudes are right.

My correspondent is not alone in bemoaning the lot of the most cultured and inoffensive people like the Danes and the Norwegians. This war is showing the futility of violence. Supposing Hitler becomes victorious over the Allies, he will never subjugate England and France. It will mean another war. Supposing the Allies are victorious, The world will fare no better. They will be more polite but not less ruthless, unless they learn the lesson of non-violence during the war and unless they shed the gains they have made through violence. The first condition of non-violence is justice all round in every department of life. Perhaps it is too much to expect of human nature. I do not, however, think so. No one should dogmatize about the capacity of human nature for degradation or exaltation.

Indian non-violence has brought no relief to the cultured Western powers because it is still poor stuff. Why travel so far to see its inefficacy? We in India are torn asunder in spite of the Congress policy of non-violence. The Congress itself is distrusted. Not until the Congress or a similar group of people represents the non-violence of the strong. Will the world catch the infection.

India's aid to Spain and China was merely moral. The material aid was but an insignificant token of it. There is hardly an Indian who does not feel the same sympathy for Norway and Denmark who lost their freedom overnight. Though their case is different from that of Spain and China, their ruin is more complete perhaps than that of Spain and China. Indeed there is a material difference even between China and Spain. But there is no difference so far as sympathy is

concerned. Pauper India has nothing to send to these countries except her non-violence. But as I have said this is not yet a sendable commodity. It will be, when India has gained her freedom through non-violence.

There then remains Britain's case. The Congress has caused no embarrassment. I have declared already that I shall do nothing to embarrass Great Britain. She will be embarrassed if there is anarchy in India. That the Congress, so long as it is under my discipline, will not support.

What the Congress cannot do is to lend its moral influence to Britain. Moral influence is never mechanically given. It is for Britain to take it. Perhaps British statesmen do not think the Congress has any to lend. Perhaps they think that all they need is material aid in this warring world. If they do, they will not be far wrong. Morality is contraband in war. My correspondent has given up the whole of his case for Britain when he says, "We are not likely to succeed in changing Britain's heart." I do not wish ill to Britain. I shall grieve if Britain goes down. But the moral influence of the Congress cannot avail Britain unless she washes her hands clean of India. It works under its own unalterable condition.

My friend does not see the difference between my recruiting in Kheda and my attitude now. During the last war the moral issue had not been raised. The Congress was not pledged to non-violence. It had not the moral hold on the masses it now enjoys. I was acting on my own in all I did. I had even attended the War Conference. And to be true to my declaration I had been recruiting at the cost of my health. I told the people that, if they wanted arms. Military service was the surest way to get them. But if they were non-violent like me my appeal was not to them. There was no no-violent man among my audiences so far as I know. Their reluctance was based on ill-will towards Britain. This was gradually giving place to an enlightened determination to throw off the foreign yoke.

Things have changed since then. In spite of the unanimous support that Britain got during the last war from India, the British attitude was translated into the Rowlatt Act and the like. The Congress accepted non-violent non-co-operation to meet the British menace. There is the memory of the Jallianwala Bagh, the simon Commission, the Round Table Conference, the emasculation of Bengal for the sake

of the misdeeds of a few. The Congress having accepted non-violence, I do not need to go to the people to give recruits. Through the Congress I can give something infinitely better than a few such recruits. Of that evidently Britain has no need. I am willing but helpless.

SEVAGRAM, April 30, 1940

Harijan, 4-5-1940

187. WANTON DESTRUCTION IN BIDAR

A correspondent is grieved that I have been silent about the shocking tragedy in Bidar (Hyderabad State).[1] I have before now said in another connection that because I say nothing in public about certain wrongs it is not be thought that I am oblivious of them or that I am doing nothing. I must be allowed to judge what is best under given circumstances. If all I have heard about Bidar (not all has been published in the papers) is true, nothing quite like it has happened anywhere in all India. If Hyderabad State is not to give over to lawlessness and Hindu life and property not rendered valueless, there should be a thorough and impartial judicial inquiry commanding confidence, and full compensation should be given to those who are rendered suddenly homeless. It is to be hoped that Muslim opinion outside Hyderabad will ask for full investigation into the happenings.

SEVAGRAM, April 30, 1940

Harijan, 4-5-1940

188. QUESTION BOX

NO CONFUSION

Q. There is still a lot of confusion in the public mind about the Indian situation. How can one remove it?

A. Confusion should have been removed as soon as the popular ministers resigned. They were the chosen representatives of the people. They had applied themselves to their work with amazing industry and efficiency which won the unstinted praise of the Governors. They took no rest themselves and allowed none to their subordinates. They had set a definite programme before themselves which would

[1] The reference is to communal riots in Bidar. *Vide* also "Bidar", 28-5-1940.

have improved the condition of the masses. It must have cost them a lot to give up office. But they found to their amazement that Provincial Autonomy, Which sir Samuel Hoare had declared from the house-tops to be real and complete, was reduced to a farce in the twinkling of an eye. The popular ministers were to be mere registering officers to carry out the will of the central executive so far as war measures were concerned. In this most vital matter they were not consulted formally or informally. So the ministers had to resign. This one act of theirs was complete in itself. Its importance is not felt as it should be because the Congress is wedded to non-violence.

CONGRESS NOT RESPONSIBLE

Q. Many people believe that the attitude of the congress has precipitated the Muslim League resolution about partitioning India.[1]

A. I do not think so. But if it has, it is a distinct gain. It is good that what was in should come out. It is easier now to deal with the problem. It will solve itself. One distinct gain is that nationalist Muslims have become awakened to a sense of their duty.

MUSLIM RULE = INDIAN RULE

Q. Would you prefer Muslim rule to British rule?

A. The question is badly put. You, being British, cannot get out of the habit of thinking that India is fit only to be ruled by someone. Muslim rule is equivalent to Indian rule. You might as well ask me whether I would prefer Bengali or Maratha to British rule. Maratha, Bengali, Sikh, Dravidian, Parsi, Christian(Indian), Muslim-all will be Indian rule. It makes no difference to me that some Muslims regard themselves as a separate nation. It is enough for me that I do not consider them as such. They are sons of the soil. Muslims considered separately have eight crores of unarmed Muslims scattered over India to look to. But you have the whole British nation and your army of occupation to look to. You belong to the ruling race. You are less than one hundred thousand in the midst of 350 millions over whom you rule. It is a matter of shame both for you and us. I need not weigh whose is the greater shame. The sooner we get out of it the better for both of us.

You will now understand my answer when I say that I would any day prefer Muslim rule to British rule. I have no doubt that, if

[1] *Vide* footnote 1 of “Hindu-Muslim Tangle”, 29-4-1940.

British rule which divides us by favouring one or the other as it suits the Britishers were withdrawn today, Hindus and Muslims would forget their quarrels and live like brothers which they are. But supposing the worst happened and we had a civil war, it would last for a few days or months and we would settle down to business. In status we are equal. With you, it is different. You have disarmed us. Those of us who have been trained by you really belong to you rather than to us. We are no match for you in military power. You do not know how the rule has stunted the nation. Immediately British rule is really ended, we shall grow as never before, in spite of all foreboding.

WHY THIS PARTIALITY?

Q. Both Pro f. Rang and Shri Jayaprakash Narayan have been punished under the law. But while you were moved by the latter's sentence[1] you have denounced Prof. Ranga,[2] and this in spite of the fact that Prof. Ranga's offence was, if anything, a technical one, whereas Shri Jayaprakash by obstructing the war effort invited the penalty of the law upon himself. I agree that Prof. Ranga should not have broken the law. But then does not your attitude betray partiality on your part towards the one and antipathy towards the other?

A. You are hopelessly wrong. Your admission that Prof. Ranga was wrong in breaking the order shows that your cause is not just. Prof. Ranga is as good a friend to me as Shri Jayaprakash. I should have expressed the same opinion about the latter's action if he had done what Prof. Ranga did. There is no room in public life for partial friendships. Indeed real friendship is in no need of partiality. I have none for Shri Jayaprakash.. Nor have I any antipathy towards Prof. Ranga. I have perhaps less differences with Prof. Ranga than with Shri Jayaprakash, but that makes no difference to me. Shri Jayaprakash committed no breach of an order. He delivered a speech which was regarded as contrary to law. In Prof. Ranga's case there was a deliberate breach of an order served on him. The two things are different. I have answered your question because I attach importance to the breach. I also want to warn those who accept Congress discipline against such breaches.

A MUNICIPAL CHAIRMAN'S DUTY

Q. My father is the Congress Municipal Chairman of a certain place. In a recent by-election for a ward the official Congress candidate was defeated. A local

[1] *Vide* "Jayaprakash Narayan", 12-3-1940.

[2] *ibid.*

youth organization gave a tea party in honour of the successful non-Congress candidate. My father was invited and he attended.

His view was that once a candidate is elected, no matter to what party he belongs, as Chairman it was his duty to welcome him and get the best of co-operation from him in the interests of civic welfare. Some people feel that attending a function given in honour of an opponent is harmful to the party's cause.

A. Your father, I am sure, was quite right. He would have been wrong if he had not attended the function. An opponent is entitled to the same regard for his principles as we would expect others to have for ours. Non-violence demands that we should seek every opportunity to win over opponents. And what can be better than that we share their joys and sorrows? Moreover your father as Chairman was bound to be impartial. I was, therefore double his duty to attend the function.

SEVAGRAM, APRIL 30, 1940

Harijan, 4-5-1940

189. THE AJMER TROUBLE

Having published the gist[1] of the case of the Khadi exhibition organizers about the national flag incident, I am in duty bound to publish the following communiqué of the Commissioner of Ajmer Merwara on the incidents:

> A feature of the celebration by the Ajmer Congress of what is known as the"National Week'has been an exhibition organized by a com-mittee known as the 'Khadi Gram-Udyog Exhibition Committee'. For this a number of temporary structures have been erected adjoining the fort on a plot of nazul land, which is under the control of the municipal Committee. Advantage was taken of the fact that the exhibition attracted large crowds of people to hold political meetings on a vacant plot between the exhibition grounds and the entrance to the city kotwali. At two of these meetings speeches of an extremely objectionable character were delivered, and it was evident that the organisers of the meetings who are members of the local Congress were attempting under the pretext of promoting the use of khadi and village industries in general to bring the Government into hatred and contempt. The fact that these seditious utterances were made at a place adjoining a barrack

[1] *Vide* "Danger Signal", 16-4-1940

occupied by constables stationed at the kotwali was an additional provocation.

Further, the organizers of the exhibition set up a flag-staff on an outlying bastion of the fort from which the Congress flag was flown. This bastion is on Government land and is a part of the kotwali Police Station. Permission was neither sought for nor obtained for this act. Apart from the undesirability of a party emblem of this nature being displayed from a Government building, the flying of the congress flag from the ramparts of an ancient Moghul fort, which is a protected monument, caused grave offence to certain sections of the public.

After satisfying grave himself by personal inspection as to the facts, the Commissioner decided to issue two prohibitory order to prevent a breach of public tranquillity. The first order was addressed to the organizers of the exhibition by name, and it directed them to remove the flag and flag-staff within one hour and to refrain from reerecting it within 400 yards of the fort ramparts. The second order was a general one prohibiting political meetings under the Municipal limits for a period of ten days. The issue of this order was rendered necessary by the manner in which certain partisans of the Congress had abused the opportunity which the holding of the Khadi Exhibition presented.

As far as the first order is concerned, the individuals to whom it was addressed intimated in writing their refusal to comply, whereupon the police were directed to remove the flag and the flag-staff. Action is being taken separately regarding the refusal of the organizers of the exhibition to comply with the order.

If the above version is true, the case of the Exhibition Committee falls to the ground. I may state that a correspondent claiming to impartial sends a letter supporting the version of the Ajmer authorities. I refrain from expressing any opinion till my investigation is complete. One thing, however, is clear. The Commissioner has done everything he can to incite the Muslims against the Exhibition Committee. Prejudice against it peeps out through a portion of the communique. Even if the facts are as he has stated them, the Commissioner could have avoided the inflammatory reference to the ‘Moghul Fort’. He knew that the Exhibition Committee could have no intention of wounding Muslim susceptibilities.

I have further information that more trouble is brewing in Ajmer. But of this more when I have full facts.[1]

Meanwhile let me draw attention to the reported tactful act of a Commissioner in the Frontier Province who, when a Congressman went to his office to hoist the Congress flag, straight away hoisted it himself, and hoisted the Muslim League flag as well, taking care that the union Jack flew the highest of all. But for the sense of humour and tact of the Commissioner it is difficult to say what would have happened.

SEVAGRAM, April 30, 1940

Harijan, 4-5-1940

190. LETTER TO BIPIN BIHARI VERMA

May 1, 1940

BHAI, BIPIN,

Be as you are. That would be *sadhana* for you.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI BIPIN BABU
MANAPUR
BETTIAH, CHAMPARAN

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 10249

191. CABLE TO HUTCHINGS

May 2, 1940

MR. HUTCHINGS
26 PHAYRE STREET
RANGOON

GLAD HINDU MUSLIM REPRESSENTATIVES MEETING RESTORE HARMONY. HOPE MEETING WILL SUCCEED IN DEVISING WAYS AND MEANS TO ESTABLISH PERMANENT PEACE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Ajmer", 6-5-1940.

192. TELEGRAM TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

May 2, 1940

GURUDEO

SANTINIKETAN

OVERWHELMING WORK LEFT NO TIME. HOPE SEND YOU CONSIDERED OPINION[1] SOOON. PRAY FORGIVE UN-AVODABLE DELAY.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers;. Courtesy: Pyarelal

193. LETTER TO VITHAL L. PHADKE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

May 2, 1940

CHI. MAMA,

End your fast. I shall not judge you. May your fast bear fruit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3842

194. A STATEMENT

When Gandhiji was shown Reuter's cable of Sir Hugh O'Neill's[2] statement, he said his position was absolutely clear.

The only authority that can possibly convene a preliminary conference of elected leaders is the British Government, and they will do so and find out the ways and means when they have made up their mind to part with power and recognize the right of India to frame the charter of her own freedom[3]

SEVAGRAM, May 3, 1940

Harijan, 11-5-1940

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Rabindranath Tagore", 5-5-1940.

[2] A member of the House of Commons

[3] *Vide* also "Cable to The News Chronicle" ,on or after 22-4-1940.

195. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 4, 1940

CHI. MANI,

The figures you have sent are excellent. You had batter spend the time in spinning rather than in writing to me.

Ask Father whether I should send that amount to him or to Prithvi Singh direct. How is his health?

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. MANIBEHN
C/O SARDAR PATEL
68 MARINE DRIVE
BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 126

196. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

SEVAGRAM WARDHA,
[*May 4, 1940*][1]

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I see no flaw in it. I shall not enter into an argument. May your noble wish be fulfilled.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Rameshwari Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] From a copy of the letter available from the same source

197. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

SEVAGRAM WARDHA,

May 4/5, 1940

CHI. HAISUKHLAL,

You have at last settled down well. Everything depends on you now. IF Sanyukta[1] wishes to get married this year, let her do so in Porbandar in your absence. She can get married in Sevagram only next year. I do not think it at all proper for you to ask for leave just now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U:/XXIV

198. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

[*May 5,1940*][2]

CHI. AMRIT,

Your wire. Am well. No more today beyond sending love. I hope the pain of the sprain is entirely gone.

From the original: C. W. 3964. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7273

199. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

May 5, 1940

DEAR GURUDEV,

Ten thousand apologies for the delay in replying to Rathin's[3] letter. Pressure on my limited time is unbearable. The result is an accumulation of arrears. But I have not been idle about your proposal. I discussed it fully with Roger Hicks. I have been thinking over

[1] Addressee's daughter

[2] This is written at the top of an Urdu letter dated May 5 that someone had written to the addressee.

[3] Addressee's son, Rathindranath

the thing independently, The conclusion is set forth in the enclosed amended draft[1] . You will revise it as you like. You will give it the polish which you alone can give.

Somehow or other I could not reconcile myself to an appeal for the hall and the hospital. Santiniketan was his as much as it is yours. What can be better than that the thing to which he had given himself and from which he had derived inspiration would be put on a permanent basis? The sum asked may be too little. It should then be increased. I have stated that originally Santiniketan was founded by the Maharshi[2]. There is an apparent contradiction in the statement. You will please deal with it.

The idea that the appeal should be signed by us three[3] is, I think, quite good.

I have not sent a copy to the Bishop.

If you do not like my proposal and if you will retain the original, please do not hesitate to do so.

I hope you are keeping well.

With love,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2290

200. QUESTION BOX

HINDU - MUSLIM UNITY

Q. You can do Harijan work, you can organize khadi and village industries, but when it comes to Hindu-Muslim unity, You find many excuses for not organizing it.

A. This charge has been brought against me by several Muslim correspondents unknown to me. But latterly it has been repeated with considerable vehemence by one who knows me intimately. The com-

[1] This appeared in *Harijan*, 1-6-1940, under the title "deenabandhu Memorial".

[2] Addressee's father, Debendranath Tagore

[3] Finally, however, the appeal was signed by Gandhiji,Abul Kalam Azad, S. K. Datta, Madan Mohan Malaviya, Sarojini Naidu, Jawaharlal Nehru, V. S. Srinivasa Sastri and Bishop Foss Westcott.

plainant challenges me to deal with the charge in Harijan. There can be no comparison between Harijans and Muslims. I owe a debt to Harijans in need of any assistance that can be given to them. Harijan work is humanitarian work. Muslims stand in no need of my humanitarianism. They are a powerful community standing in no such need. Any work done for Muslims after the Harijan style will be resented. To cite khadi and village industries against me is thought-less. These can be organized and are organized for all who will care to profit by them. As a matter of fact both Hindus and Muslims, and indeed others too, profit by these activities. Hindu-Muslims unity stands on it own footing. I have tried and am still trying to do my share of the work. I may have achieved no visible success, but I have no doubt that the direction in which I am working is the right one and is bound to lead us to the goal.

BIDAR AND BIHAR

Q. You feel keenly about Bidar. You ask for justice about it and you want Muslims outside Hyderabad to see that justice is done.[1] Do you feel equally keenly if Muslims are ill-treated as they were in Bihar.?

A. I do not know what the exact reference to Bihar is. All I can say is that not one single case of maltreatment of Muslims by Hindus having been reported to me has remained without investigation by me. This has been my practice since the days of the Khilafat. I have not always succeeded in finding the truth or giving satisfaction to the aggrieved parties that I had done my best. The Bihar charge is too vague to be answered more fully. If a particular instance were mentioned, I should be able to say what I had done about it. But supposing that I had failed in my duty to do justice, supposing further that I did not "feel equally keenly about Hindu injustice to Muslims" would that justify indifference about Bidar? I have said that there is nothing like Bidar in all the previous cases of Hindu-Muslim clashes, assuming of course that the allegations we made were true. All I have asked is that full justice and reparation should be made through a tribunal admittedly impartial. My proposal in the case of Bidar should be applicable to all such cases.

SEVAGRAM, May 6, 1940

Harijan, 11-5-1940

[1] *Vide* , "Wanton Destruction in Bidar", 30-4-1940.

201. AJMER

As soon as I read the extraordinary communique[1] of the Commissioner of Ajmer, I asked for proof from the workers in Ajmer in support of their charges. It seems to me that in every single particular the charges are supported by documentary evidence. I have now in my possession copies of the relevant documents including a blue-print showing where the so-called Ajmer fort is, where the wall on whose bastion the Congress flag was flown is. The statement giving a categorical denial of all the allegations of the Ajmer Commissioner is published below.[2] From it, it would appear that the Commissioner is prejudiced against the Congress.

1. The ground including the wall and a portion behind it is in the possession of the Municipal Council as lessee.

2. Permission was duly received by the khadi workers for the use of the ground for the exibition.

3. No separate permission for flying the flag is or has ever been considered necessary.

4. The Municipal Council even voted Rs. 51 towards the expenses of the exhibition.

5. The Ajmer fort is a well-defined structure. It is at present used for the kotwali etc. It is undoubtedly a protected monument and in possession of the Government. The outer wall is dilapidated and is included in the ground leased to the Municipal Council and is going to be demolished by them.

6. There was no complaint brought before the workers against the hoisting of the flag on the wall. It could give no offence to anybody. The Ajmer Council contains Muslim members. The decision to give permission to hold the exhibition on the ground was unanimous. Muslims freely visited the exhibition. Well-known Muslim attended the party given to Seth Jamnalalji[3] although they knew that the flag was hoisted on the outer wall.

I have seen many denials by officials of uncomfortable popular charge-sheets. But it is hard to beat the unblushing distortions by the Commissioner of Ajmer. He has not added to British prestige. If ever

[1] *Vide* "The Ajmer Trouble", 30-4-1940.

[2] This is not reproduced here.

[3] Who inaugurated the exhibition

a case was clearly made out for civil disobedience, surly the Ajmer one is such a case. I refrain because of the turbid atmosphere and because I wish to take no action that will precipitate a crisis. The worker in Ajmer have done well to exercise self-restraint in the face of the gravest provocation. This case demands serious notice by the Central authority. In my opinion nothing short of the removal of the Commissioner from the high office he occupies will meet the requirements of justice.

It may be argued that the Commissioner of Ajmer is no worse than may such officials who do much worse things with impunity. The argument is sound. But many thieves escape with impunity because of want of conclusive evidence. When, however, one is caught red-handed, it is well to deal with him and give satisfaction to the injured public. Lord Curzon had his grave limitations. But he believed in justice being done and therefore had no hesitation in acting sternly and promptly when p proved case came under his observation. Prevention of civil disobedience, I believe is common cause between the Government and the Congress. The letter will resort to it when it is clearly inevitable, if, that is to say, the congress is ready, I am leaving no stone unturned to prevent it. But if the executive officials behave as the Ajmer Commissioner seems to have done, no effort on my part may prevent a conflagration.

On the 29th ultimo, being the last Sunday of the month, all over the country there was *jhandavandan*[1] . In Ajmer too the Congress had advertised the function to take place in the T own Hall com-pound. But this time the Commissioner, who is also the District Magistrate, prohibited the use of the Town Hall compound for the purpose. It is debatable whether he had any legal right to prohibit the use of the municipal ground in the manner he did. But for the moment it is not relevant. The fact of the issue of the order is relevant to show the bias the Commissioner has against the Congress. The matter was referred to me by telephone, and I advised the Congres-smen to obey the order and not attempt to hold the meeting even elsewhere. But if the Commissioner is intent upon provoking a quarrel, I suppose he will not be happy till he has succeeded.

SEVAGRAM, MAY 6,1940

Harijan, 11-5-1940

[1] Saluting the flag

202. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G.SHAH

SEVAGRAM,
May 6, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Since you don't mind a little delay, I took some time to reply to you. So much work has piled up. I think you find peace of mind only in restlessness, for if you can shake off your discontent there is no cause at all for restlessness. Here work has been piling up.

Either forget that Kanchan is your wife or start living with her. She has gone to Panchgani because of her own intense desire. Even as she should no feel suspicious when you go somewhere so also you should not when she does. If you wish, I may persuade her to change her mind, but that would upset those people's plans. It would not at all look nice if you stayed in Poona, nor would it benefit you. You may continue to write to her matter-of-fact letters.

Do what you wish about Burhanpur. I do not understand the matter very well.

Who do you think reads your letters? And even if anybody does what will he understand from them? Even so, if you do not want anybody to read mark them, "private" so that I can promptly return them or tear them up.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8545. Also C. W. 7084. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

203. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
[*May*][1] *6, 1940*

CHI. AMRIT,

I had your wife from Simla too. Herewith my two articles. You may translate at leisure. Sushila translated the questions well and

[1] The source has "6-6-40" which is evidently a slip, as the post-script is dated May 7 and the article on Ajmer (*vide* "Ajmer", 6-5-1940) referred to in the letter was written on May 6.

quickly. The Ajmer one was not ready. She will translate it tomorrow. But you should religiously translate them. If you two can get used to the work the whole of Harijan Sevak can be done here and I should be free from anxiety.

After all Anand[1] had no smallpox. It was rash after the vaccination. He has fever and cough. Majadev came in today.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

May 7, 1940

If the English articles don't accompany this, don't worry. The translation is not required. Practice may be delayed. Here with Gosibehn's letter. Your article about Kamalapuram[2] and your Hindi translation are going in. The translation is good.

From the original: C. W. 3965. Courtesy: Amrit kaur. Also G.N. 7224

204. A ONE-SIDED INQUIRY

I had hoped that I would not have to say anything on Justice Nagesvara Iyer's report into the allegations of ill-treatment of satyagrahi prisoners in Mysore. But the Press criticism of the action of the State Congress in abstaining fromparticipation in the inquiry demands an explanation from me. If it was wrong for the State Congress not to participate in the inquiry, the blame was mine. The inquiry was a result of Mahadev Desai's visit to Mysore at the instance of the Dewan[3] and the former's confidential report to me of which a copy was given to the Dewan. Mahadev Desai had recommended an open judicial inquiry presided over by a judge of known integrity brought from outside. Instead there was only a departmental inquiry by a Mysore judge. I have been for some time guiding the Mysore Congress, and the Congress acted upon my advice in not leading evidence before a Mysore judge who could not, I felt, be wholly impartial in judging the conduct of officials with whom he must have come in close official contact. It was too much to expect an impartial scrutiny

[1] Sharda G. Chokhawala's son

[2] *Vide* "A Hideous Evil", 18-5-1940.

[3] Sir Mirza Ismail

by one who had risen to the rank of a judge from being a Government official.

The allegations were of a most serious character, and they were repeated in the presence of Mahadev Desai and before officials occupying the positions of Deputy Commissioner, District Superintendent of Police, Superintendent of Jail and so on. Those who made the allegations were volunteers, not criminals, and a few of them held high social positions. It is impossible to treat them as liars, as the report seems to have done.

I am not yet in possession of the Judge's report. What I have before me is a highly tendentious summary of the report published by Government, interspersed by Government's own statements of certain happenings and Justice Nagesvara Iyer's comments on them in his report. It passes comprehension that the inquiry was continued when the complainants refused to appear before the officer. The judge should have dismissed the case for want to evidence. How he could have arrived at definite conclusions in the absence of material evidence, it is difficult to say. The judge admits that "most of the persons who made accusations of assault and torture did not attempt to establish those charges," but that he "had a large volume of oral and documentary evidence" adduced before him. What this "documentary" evidence was, we do no know. The oral evidence was of people who had nothing to do with the inquiry but were dragged by the police before the judge to prove the Government case. The judge says he has based his conclusions "on such materials and broad probabilities", This is hardly the language of a judge. No judge of integrity and impartiality would have cared to go into the extraneous evidence that Justice Nagesvara Iyer went into, and made uncalled for animadversions against satyagrahis for refusal to give evidence before him, when he knew that their reason in doing so was that they questioned the competence, independence and impartiality of the judge. The paragraphs in the communique are devoted to proving that the leaders of the movement adopted questionable methods of sending out surreptitious letters from jails. What this has to do with allegations of torture one is at a loss to know. It would thus appear that, far from the inquiry being into any allegations by Congressmen, it became an inquiry into allegations by Government official which the judge has supported without giving those against whom the allegations were made an opportunity to rebut them.

My point, however, in referring to the unfortunate inquiry is that the Mysore Congress acted under my advice. The judge's biassed finding confirms me in the soundness of the opinion I gave them. As satyagrahis, the members of the Mysore Congress were not interested in the guilty parties being condemned. They were interested in the truth being known. The golden lid of the one-sided inquiry covers the truth. But they should have the faith[1] that the lid will be lifted one day and the truth will be found. The exoneration of the officials may result in the hardening of their hearts and greater maltreatment of the prisoners than before. If such is the case, the prisoners should rejoice in their sufferings and know that, if they bear them without malice, they will being the local Congress nearer its goal.

SEVAGRAM, May 7, 1940

Harijan, 11-5-1940

205. ANDREWS'S INFLUENCE[2]

Mr. A. G. Fraser of Elgin, Scotland, sends me the following touching letter about Deenabandhu:

> I write to you because of the great joy and inspirations you were to him who has justleft us, Charlie Andrews, and because you, perhaps more than any other, will feel his loss. Hehas had a great and deeply joyful life, and amongst all the many things which made it rich,your friendship was one of the fore-most. For your pleasure in him I would like to tell you one story of him.
>
> The noblest of British Governors that I have known, Sir Gorden Gaggisberg, Who literally gave his life for Agricans, was anxious to know
>
> Charlie and he asked me to arrange a meeting, if possible for lunch in his club, the Army and Navy Club in Pall Mall. It is one of the most rigid clubs in London in its standard of dress, so I told Gaggisberg that Charlie would not be dressed for clubland, He did not care about that, so the lunch was arranged. On the day, I was seated with Sir Gorden when the porter came and said: 'Sir, there is a man at the door who says he has an appointment with you, but I did not like to let him in till you had seen him.' I said to Gaggisberg, 'That's Charlic.' and it was. He was worse dressed than I have ever known him to be in Europe. But Gaggisberg was too delighted to meet him to think of that. We had lunch at a small central table and admirals, generals, governors came up to

[1] The Source has "truth"

[2] This appeared under the title "Notes".

greet Gaggisberg who was newly back in England. He introduced them all to charlie. Then we retired to an alcove for a quiet talk, and Charlie's visit to British Guinana was fixed up. Thus charlie had to go and Gaggisberg saw him down to the street and finding a taxi himself for him put him into it. As the taxi left he followed it with his eyes, his head bent, It disappeared round a corner and he stood very still. Then he turned to me and said, 'I feel as though I had been honoured to give lunch to my Lord.' It was the meeting of two great men, and they met for the sake of Indian labourers in Guiana.

You will greatly feel his loss at this time, more than even we who loved him here can know. But we do pray that you and India through you may be blessed, and you will be blessed.

SEVAGRAM, May 7, 1940

Harijan, 25-5-1940

206. LETTER TO BAL KALELKAR

May 7, 1940

CHI. BAL,

I am sending you the revised version[1]. There has been some delay, but I couldn't help it. I had both your letters. Sign the letter and send it to me. I will despatch it myself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2641

207. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

May 7, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I think it is not desirable that you should go to Kanchan just now. I am afraid a quarrel will start there. I think it would be better, provided you wish it, that I myself should write to her and find out how she feels about it. Now that she has gone there it would not be

[1] Of the addressee's letter to G. D. Birla for a scholarship of Rs. 9000 to enable him to finance his studies in America for a D. Sc. in Engineering

right to upset her. You must observe a certain restraint even as her husband. You should respect her freedom; you may guide her, you cannot order her. Do nothing in haste. If you wish to go to Badrinarayan or Calcutta, why need you ask her? But do as you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8544. Also C. W. 7086. Courtesty: Munnalal G.Shah

208. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

[After *May 7*][1] *1940*

I have your letter. I had also seen your statement.[2] For us, it is a moral question. And when the Government obstinately refuses to do justice, how can we help? If slavery is bad, where is the question of choosing masters? This has been the Congress policy. We need not be uneasy. If all of us want freedom no one can deny it to us. If only a few of us want it, we will sacrifice our lives I it pursuit. What have we to offer except moral support? We can give it only when there is justice. They are getting money whether we like it or not. As long as they are the lords they will obtain the funds. Jawaharlal has shown me his reply. It is quite all right. It is no small thing that we are not resorting to civil disobedience. Take good rest.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] In the source this and the following letter are placed after the entries for May 7, 1940.

[2] According to the source the addressee had made a 'panicky statement' that the British rulers would be better than the others. In his autobiography the addressee writes; "when . . . the German army, in s weep, took Denmark, Norway Holland and Belgium, I was deeply distressed becase Hitler made it clear that he would not let any weaker nation survive. My feeling of anger against the British for denying India her rights was somewhat assuaged and I somehow felt that it was our duty to help the British in defeating Germany and help stop the rot.

"I was so much overpowered by these thoughts that I could not help issuing a statement to this effect."

209. LETTER TO K. N. KATJU[1]

[After *May 7, 1940*]

Of course my first position was true but it could not be taken up mechanically. The position Congress has taken is also true. Our problem is purely moral. The moral weight of the Congress is at the disposal of the British people, the moment they act morally. The Congress has nothing else to give. I do not think the position it altered because the war cloud has assumed a blacker shape. I may have sympathy for my erring son but moral help is of no avail to him till he persists in his error. The material help of Indian Britain gets whether we will of not. What however we can do is not to embarrass Britain by any precipitate action. I will not resort to c.d. unless the way is absolutely clear. If what I have said does not appeal to you I would ask you to discuss the thing with Jawaharlal and others.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

210. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
[*May 8, 1940*][2]

CHI. AMRIT,

I had your first letter today. I am glad you have a warm welcome. I had not a shadow of a doubt about it. You must now put on weight. The Times of India's thought for the day runs:"Your disappointment will be removed not by change of surroundings but by change of outlook—of heart."

I have been sending your post and writings. There are two letters [to] day.

Herewith the articles. I could have sent them yesterday but not without a strain. The translations have gone from here.

All well including Anand. Lalita Kumari is coming after all.

Love

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3966. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7275

[1] The addressee had written: "What you wrote about unconditional co-operation is right. There is now an international crisis. We may still reconsider our stand and offer our help. As it is all the smaller nations are faced with doom."

[2] From the reference to Gandhiji's inability to send the articles on the previous day. *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 6-5-1940.

211. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

May 8, 1940

CHI. PRABHA,

How perverse you are! I reply to all your letters, still you are not satisfied and keep complaining! Would it not be better, instead, to stay here permanently? Why should Jayaprakash not get a newspaper? I have had a letter sent to Poona. Inform me if he does not get it. There has been a letter from Rajendra Babu. I understand about Father, I hope he also is better now. Has your work been chalked out? Ba is well. Rajkumari has gone to Simla. Her address is: Manorville, Simla. It is very hot here. Sharda is still here, I am quite well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PRABHAVATI DEVI

C/O SHRI BRIJ BEHARI SAHAI

A/32 HIGH COURT QUARTERS, PATNA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3541

212. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,

May 8, 1940

CHI. KANCHAN,

I have your letter. Since Munnalal writes to you, I saved my time. I accept your notice. I have already told him that the two of you should set up house. Where and when is all that remains to be considered. We will think over it when you free yourself from there. Do you want Munnalal to go there? Can he be accommodated there? Write to me frankly.

Do you keep good health there? Do you get all your requirements? How do you pass your time? Here it is quite hot.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8282. Also C. W. 7083. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

213. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

May 8, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Send that accompanying letter[1] to Panchgani. I welcome the idea that you should set up house with her. We shall think over the matter when Kanchan returns. If on getting Kanchan's reply you think it necessary to go to Panchgani you may do so. I have no objection if you stay there and Kanchan comes here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8543. Also C.W. 7085. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

214. LETTER TO PRABHULAL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 8, 1940

BHAI PRABHULAL

I have the report of your work. It is quite satisfactory.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4135

215. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,,
May 9, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW

I must thank you for your prompt and frank reply of 29th ultimo.

I had the Hansard by me thoughtfully sent by Miss Harrison, so I read Lord Zetland's full speech.[2] I am sorry to say it read worse than cabled summary. But I will not weary you with argument on

[1] *Vide* the proceding item.

[2] *Vide* 1st footnote of "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 24-4-1940

points. My position is that Great Britain, to put herself right morally, should make requisite declaration unconditionally about India's right of self-determination. If you say that right will be recognized when she fulfils the conditions you lay down, self-determination may be indefinitely postponed, for the conditions may never be fulfilled.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 10257. Courtesy: India Office Library, London

216. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,,

May 9, 1940

DEAR SIR AKBAR,

Your letter makes strange reading.[1] Communal unity would never come by generalizations of glossing over serious disturbances. I do not know what Bihar incident you refer to. But if there was a denial of justice in Bihar, it is no precedent worthy to be copied.

And why should public criticism of a big disturbance prejudice judicial proceedings against individuals?

Your sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 8018

[1] The addressee's letter dated May 2, 1940, read: "My disappointment is no less than yours. The big question of communal unity governs all these minor proceedings, and, until progress is made with that problem, many other problems must be at a standstill, and communal manifestations will occur.

"As to the regrettable Bidar affair (which is reminiscent of incidents last year in Bihar) , cases are before the courts involving many accused. I can only express surprise that statements have [been] issued prejudicing some of the issues."

217. LETTER TO JAGANNATH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 9, 1940

MY DEAR JAGANNATH,

Surely Dr. Gopichand[1] needs no introduction or certificate from me. That he is the agent for everything I stand for is more than enough. Don't worry for him. In the Punjab, he is his own introduction and advertisement. I am glad he is free from the Parliamentary burden. I shall expect great things from him for constructive work.

Please hand the enclosed[2] to Shakuntala Devi.

Yours
BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 985. Courtesy: Lala Jagannath

218. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 9, 1940

CHI. MANUDI,

I got your letter. Why need you give your address, since the whole world knows you? If, therefore, I merely write Bombay, will not the letter reach you? Or do you perhaps think that I must have your address by heart? Ba is all right. Do you wish to come here in *Ashadh*? You know that you will be welcome whenever you wish to come. Kunvarji[3] is keeping good health. Sharda is still here. The boy is fine. His eczema persists but he is growing. It is very hot.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 2676. Courtesy: Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

[1] Gopichand Bhargava
[2] This is not traceable.
[3] Addressee's brother-in-law

219. LETTER TO SARASWATI GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,,
May 9, 1940

CHI. SARU,

I got your letter. It is not as if I abstained from writing to you because I did not want to bless you. Where can I go if I make you and Kanti angry? Ba and I can only wish you well. I am glad to know that Shanti[1] is well. I have also heard that Kanti has failed. He should not grieve over his failure. He gets another opportunity to study. If he studies steadily, he will become a good doctor. I hope you are keeping good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIMATI SARASWATI
MADHAVI MANDIRAM, EASWARAVATTOM
NEYYATHINKARAI, TRAVANCORE[2]

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6175. Also C. W. 3449. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

220. INTERVIEW TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"[3]

SEVAGRAM,
May 9, 1940

Seated on a mat in his small barely furnished room, with a wet cloth wrapped round his head, Mr. Gandhi carefully explained his viewpoint. He spoke with great earnestness.

I would welcome a settlement which ensures peace with honour. The Viceroy knows I am always ready.

I am not averse to coming to terms with Britain on matters like defence and commercial interests, and I am fully prepared that these adjustments should be referred to a Constituent Assembly as part of an agreed settlement.

Mr. Gandhi went on to explain his attitude to the Constituent Assembly.

[1] Addressee's son
[2] Address from the C. W. copy
[3] This appeared in Harijan under the title "An Important Interview".

I believe personally that it is the most satisfactory method of procedure; but don't forget that I preserve an open mind on the matter. If some people hold that there are other forms of procedure which are more representative, I am willing to be convinced. Today I say that the assembly should be elected on adult franchise, but here again my mind is open to alternative proposals provided these proposals have the backing of representative men.

"If the Viceroy," asked the correspondent, " declares that he will summon a conference of 'the best Englishmen and the best Indians', and if he further agrees that its terms of reference will be to arrange for the establishment of self-government within the shortest period practicable, would you accept that gesture?"

Certainly, it will be acceptable. In the preliminary conference it is necessary that the best Englishmen and the best Indians should meet to adjust their differences, but in the framing of the constitution only Indians must participate.

If the Viceroy is authorized to declare that His Majesty's Government have definitely come to the conclusion that it is the sole right of India to determine the form of government under which she would live, and if with that end he summons a conference of the best Englishmen and the best Indians—the latter elected according to an acceptable procedure—to devise a method whereby a Constituent Assembly can be summoned for the purpose of framing a constitution and for solving all problems that may arise, I would accept the proposal. But I don't sense the proper atmosphere today.

Asked whether, if His Majesty's Government summoned a conferences and acted in good faith, Mr. Gandhi would be prepared to use his personal influence to induce the Congress Ministers to return to office, the Mahatma quickly replied:

Not unless there is a Hindu-Muslim agreement. I should wait.

As I said good-bye, Mr. Gandhi chafed:

You did not deserve the interview. You brought a hot wind with you to Sevagram.

The temperature was 108. He laughed uproariously at my obvious retort: "It is an ill wind which brings no one any good."

The Times of India, 10-5-1940; also *Harijan*, 18-5-1940

221. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
May 11, 1940

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter.

Dr. Risti and her friend can easily stay in the Circuit House.

Ghanshyamdas and Jamnalalji here. Over head and ears in work.

Sharda's Anand was not smallpox. Many were willing to be vaccinated. Ba, Durga and other women said no. But the storm has blown over. In the village too, it has subsided.

Lilavati had a scorpion sting and so had Amtul Salaam. L. Suffered much.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3967. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7276

222. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA C. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 11, 1940

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

I have your letter. May you prosper. May your pious aspirations be fulfilled.

Come over whenever you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9426

223. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

May 11, 1940

Considering everything, it would be good if you visited Panchgani. There is a wire from Kanchan, too, asking me to send you.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8542. Also C. W. 7088. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

224. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 11, 1940

chi. amala,

I have your letter. I was very happy. It is good you are serving the blind dog. You are looking after Mother, too. Everybody is fine here.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. MARGARETE SPIEGEL
IVANHOE, OPP. BACKBAY BATHS
FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

225. QUESTION BOX

DEMOCRACY AND NON - VIOLENCE

Q. Why do you say,"Democracy can only be saved through non-violence"?[1]

A. Because democracy, so long as it is sustained by violence, cannot provide for or protect the weak. My notion of democracy is that under it the weakest should have the same opportunity as the strongest. That can never happen except through non-violence. No country in the world today shows any but patronizing regard for the weak. The weakest, you say, go to the wall. Take your own case. Your land is owned by a few capitalist owners. The same is true of South Africa. These large holdings cannot be sustained except by violence, veiled if not open. Western democracy, as it functions today, is diluted Nazism or Fascism. At best it is merely a cloak to hide the Nazi and the Fascist tendencies of imperialism, Why is there the war today, if it is not for the satisfaction of the desire to share the spoils? It was not through democratic methods that Britain bagged India. What is the meaning of South African democracy? Its very constitution has been drawn to protect the white man against the coloured man, the natural occupant. Your own history is perhaps blacker still, in spite of what

[1] The Questioner was an American.

the Northern States did for the abolition of slavery. The way you have treated the Negro presents a discreditable record. And it is to save such democracies that the war is being fought!. There is something very hypocritical about it. I am thinking just now in terms of non-violence and trying to expose violence in its nakedness.

India is trying to evolve true democracy, i.e., without violence. Our weapons are those of satyagraha expressed through the charkha, the village industries, primary education through handicrafts, removal of untouchability, communal harmony, prohibition, and non-violent organization of labour as in Ahmedabad. These mean mass effort and mass education. We have big agencies for conducting these activities. They are purely voluntary, and their only sanction is service of the lowliest.

This is the permanent part of the non-violent effort. From this effort is created the capacity to offer non-violent resistance called non-co-operation and civil disobedience which may culminate in mass refusal to pay rent and taxes. As you know, we have tried non-co-operation and civil disobedience on a fairly large scale and fairly successfully. The experiment has in it promise of a brilliant future. As yet our resistance has been that of the weak. The aim is to develop the resistance of the strong. Your wars will never ensure safety for democracy. India's experiment can and will, if the people come up to the mark or, to put it another way, if God gives me the necessary wisdom and strength to bring the experiment to fruition.

HYPOCRISY

Q. I agree with you that those who do not believe in the tests laid down by you for enrolment as satyagrahis should not hold office in the Congress organization. What is however, happening is that, while embargo upon disbelief has been effective, hypocrisy is enjoying a premium. People who have nothing in common with your programme are coming forward with the satyagraha pledge[1] in order to capture power, their only qualification being lack of scruples. Can you as general of the satyagraha army shut your eyes to this? If not, what remedy do you propose?

A. I suppose Cowper not knowing how to deal with the hypocrite paid him a compliment by saying that 'hypocrisy was an ode to virtue'[2] And so it is. But the gentlemen whom you refer to will soon discover their error either by my sensing the hypocrisy and not

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Satyagraha Pledge", before 1-6-1940.

[2] Rochefoucauld says: "Hypocrisy is the homage paid by vice to virtue."

starting the struggle, or by their being tired of a role which requires labour from them. Meanwhile I must take everyone at his or her word, and believe that those who have taken the pledge have done so in good faith. I have no right to question anybody's motive unless I have proof positive to the contrary.

DEFENCE OF INDIA ACT

Q. The resolution[1] passed at Ramgarh says that "Congressmen and those under the Congress influence cannot help in the prosecution of the War with men, money or material". Every resolution of the Congress has to be explained to the people by Congressmen and Congress committees. If we do that, we are sure to offend the provisions of the Defence of India Act, i.e., we will be committing an act of civil disobedience before you as general have given the word. What are we to do under the circumstances?

A. I am not quite sure that you will commit an offence against the Defence of India Act merely by explaining the resolution to the people. But you can easily put yourself under it by adding 'ginger' to your explanation and delivering a first-class harangue against British rule. In your place I would not do it. Sufficient education has been given to the people as to what British rule is. But you should lay stress on what the people have to do to get out of foreign rule. Therefore everything depends upon how you say it. You will offend against my instructions when you disobey explicit orders served upon you.

SELF - DETERMINATION

Q. Are you right in conceding the right of self-determination to Muslims in a matter so vitally affecting others also, viz., Hindus, Sikhs, etc.? Supposing the majority of the Muslims decide in favour of partition in terms of the Muslim League resolution, what happens to the self-determination of Hindus, Sikhs, etc., who will be minorities in the Muslim States? If you go on like this, where will be the end to it?

A. Of course Hindus and Sikhs will have the same right. I have simply said that there is no other no-violent method of dealing with the problem. If every component part of the nation claims the right of self-determination for itself, there is no one nation and there is no independence. I have already said that Pakistan is such an untruth that it cannot stand. As soon as the authors begin to work it out, they will find that it is not practicable. In any case mine is a personal opinion.

[1] *Vide* Appendix "A Resolution", 1-3-1940.

What the vast Hindu masses and the others will say or do I do not know. My mission is to work for the unity of all, for the sake of the equal good of all.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONES?

Q. In the last meeting[1] of the Working Committee the Committee have resolved that all Congress committees should either be transformed into satyagraha committees of the office-bearers, who for any reason cannot sign the pledge, should resign and make room for others who have signed the pledge. Now, if any Congressman has no faith in your technique but has accepted it only to carry out the Working Committee's resolution and is spinning only because he wants to remain in office, is he entitled to become a satyagrahi and remain in office?

A. Surely the office-bearers should resign. The pledge taken merely to remain in office is of no value. Such a person should not hold office.

FOR NON-PERPORMANCE

Q. If anyone signing the satyagraha pledge does not observe the rules laid down in it, what action will be taken against such a satyagrahi?

A. He is liable to be removed from the position he may hold.

IF A COMMITTEE REFUSES

Q. If a Congress committee refuses to transform itself into a satyagraha committee, what is the position of that committee?

A. That area will be unrepresented unless there are other Congressmen to take the place of the defunct committee?

CAN THEY TAKE THE PLEDGE?

Q. Can the following persons take the satyagraha pledge?

(a) A pleader who has given an undertaking to court that he will not join any civil disobedience movement.

(b) A person who though he wears khadi himself buys mill-cloth for others and uses mil-cloth for his bed-sheets, etc.

(C) A person who though a khadi-wearer himself trades in foreign cloth.

A. These persons cannot take the pledge.

SEVAGRAM, May 13, 1940

Harijan, 18-5-1940

[1] Held at Wardha from April 15 to April 19

226. FAVOURITISM

On reading my note[1] in Harijan of 9th March on the Seng Khasi School, a correspondent writes:[2]

> . . . It is all too true that the books on the prescribed list are nearly all mission books, and are unusable by any non-Christian school. . . All the people with influence in the Education Department, so far as Khasi education is concerned, are Christians, and the scales are weighted very heavily in favour of mission schools, and against such coura-geous efforts as the one referred to by your correspondent. . .

This is a matter for the Assam Government to attend to. Whatever may have happened before, the scandal such as the one referred to by my correspondent should cease under a Government which is responsible to the people.

SEVAGRAM, May 13, 1940

Harijan, 18-5-1940

227. NON-CO-OPERATION

The following is from a godfearing political friend whom everybody knows:[3]

> . . . I have been closely following your experiments in ahimsa and satyagraha . . . But I tell you these weapons of yours have been and are being abused in the world . . . Non-co-operation has become a curse in everyday life. Its ill effects are seen in family circles, in associations, in business, in factories and in Government offices.
>
> . . . Having learnt its use from you, selfish people use it in your name in order to gain their selfish ends, and bring misery upon thousand of people. Therefore I beg of you not to employ this weapon in politics . . .
>
> I request you not to embarrass the British in any way while they are engaged in this life-and-death struggle. But I know, by itself the Congress will not have the patience to do so, though it may under your advice. . .

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 16-2-1940.

[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

[3] *ibid*

> If the Congressmen must embarrass the British, I feel they should go back to offices in the Provinces and should face the British Government with a dilemma at every step in the Provincial and the Central Assemblies. . .
>
> Again we have to solve the Hindu-Muslim problem. For that we should call a conference of all the communal leaders and party leaders. If we make an effort before hand, we might become united by the time the Government is willing to call Constituent Assembly. No time should be lost. The demands of the Mussalmans will mount up as time goes on. I am certain God will help us to attain unity if we try for it is right earnest and without delay. . .

The writer is one of the most earnest among us. He has presented one side of the picture, but like all one-sided pictures this also is misleading.

Every powerful thing is liable to misuse. Opium and arsenic are most potent and useful drugs. And they lend themselves to great abuse. No one has for that reason suggested the stopping of their good use. If no-co-operation has lent itself to abuse in some cases, in many cases its wise use has proved absolutely efficacious. A thing has to be judged by its net effect. The net effect of no-violent no-co-operation has been of the greatest benefit to India. It has brought about an awakening among the masses which would probably have taken generations otherwise. It has prevented bloodshed and anarchy and on the whole improved the relations between the Britishers and ourselves. There is a better mutual understanding because there is better mutual respect than ever before. And yet our no-co-operation has been indifferently non-violent. I hold that no-co-operation is of universal use. Well applied, its use in politics can wholly displace the use of barbarous weapons of mutual destruction. The thing to do, therefore, is not to restrict its use but to extend it, care being taken that it is used in accordance with the known laws regulating its use. Risk of misuse has undoubtedly to be run. But with the increase in the knowledge of its right use, the risk can be minimized.

One safe thing about non-co-operation is that in the end its abuse recoils more upon the users than upon those against whom it is used. Its abuse is the greatest in domestic relations because those against whom it is used are not strong enough to resist the abuse. It becomes a case of misapplied affection. Doting parents or wives are the greatest victims. These will learn wisdom when they realize that

affection does not demand yielding to extortion in any form. On the contrary true affection will resist it.

The writer suggests that usual parliamentary programme with obstruction. It futility, when it is not backed by readiness for no-co-operation and civil disobedience, has been fully demonstrated.

So far as the British are concerned I have already said that I will do nothing to embarrass them. I straining every nerve to avoid a conflict. But they may make it inevitable. Even so, I am praying for a mode of application which will be effective and still not embarrassing in the sense of violent outbreaks throughout the country.

Here I must say that, whilst it is true that active co-operation on the part of Congressmen is not yet much in evidence, of passive co-operation on their part there is no lack. Violent, sporadic eruptions on the part of the people would have paralysed my effort to gather together forces of non-violence in an effective manner. As it is, the restraint which they have exercised fills me with hope for the future.

Hindu-Muslim unity is a morsel by itself. But my friend is on the wrong track when he suggests that unity should be hastened for fear of Muslims raising their demands. Demands against whom? India is as much theirs as anybody else's. The way to unity lies through just demands once for all, not through ever-increasing demands, whether just or unjust. The demand for partition puts an end to all effort for unity for the time being. I hold that communal understanding is not a pre- requisite to the British doing justice on their part. When they feel that they want to recognize India's right of self-determination, all the difficulties that they put forth as obstacles in their path will melt away like ice before the sun's rays. The right of self-determination means the right of determination by every group and ultimately every individual. The demand for a Constituent Assembly presumes that the determinations of the groups and individuals will coincide. Should it happen otherwise and partition become the fashion, either we shall have partition or partitions rather than foreign rule, or we shall continue to wrangle among ourselves and submit to foreign rule, or else have a proper civil war. Anyway the present suspense cannot continue. It has to end one way or the other. I am an optimist. I have every hope that when we come to grips Hindus, Muslims and all others will throw in favour of India which all will claim as their own.

SEVAGRAM, May 13, 1940

Harijan, 18-5-1940

228. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 13, 1940

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have already written to you about this matter. I have written to him[1] too. I suppose you know that Nanabhai is connected with this. Just now we shall have to hand him Rs.2,000. We shall manage it. I am writing to him in detail; you should too.

I have not yet read the note about Chandrashanker. I will do something if I can. What happened at Rajkot?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro -2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 240

229. LETTER TO DILKHUSH B.DIWANJI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 13, 1940

BHAI DILKHUSH,

Mahadev has given a pleasant description of your work. Do you label all your boxes? Have you bought cows? Do you have an oil-press? Have you introduced any other industries? You should take up only the work you can easily do. But as the men are obedient, you will perhaps be able to take new work from them easily; they too would fetch a little income.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRII DILKHUSH DIWANJI
KHADI ASHRAM
KARADI Via NAVSARI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2645

[1] Prithvi Singh; *Vide* "Letter to Prithvi Singh", 14-5-1940.

230. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,,

May 14, 1940

CHI. MANILAL,

Your attack on Jinnah Saheb in *I*[*ndian Opinion*] was not proper. You should never discuss our quarrels here. This is only the impression I have formed from this end. I do not know whether you have any special reason for such severe criticism.

Medh[1] has arrived. His daughter is getting married on the 21st. He has not yet visited me. I have written to him to come any time.

Ba is well. I am of course well. There is no indication that I shall be starting a struggle in the immediate future.

Radha has been here for the last two or three days. She has grown a little thin.

It is extremely hot.

Kishorelal is in Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4912

231. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

May 14, 1940

BHAI PRITHVI SINGH,

Sardar has sent me your letter to him. He will send you the money, but your estimates have not been carefully calculated. How can you afford to pay for water the price of milk and that too in such a poor country? How can you run a camp like this? You say that all the people there are happy. Why shouldn't they be? You have taken them out on a picnic or are giving them a change of air. Getting milk from a distance of fifteen miles is a luxury which only the rich can afford. You can get even six hundred men on your conditions. What

[1] Surendrarai Bapubhai Medh, an associate of Gandhiji and a leading satyagrahi during South Africa Struggle [1]

is heat and cold to a person who has come to learn to serve? I fear that your disciples, both men and women, are not likely to turn out very useful. You may, therefore, take Rs.2,000 but spend the money carefully. If you lose your reputation, I shall lose mine as well. After completing your work in Ghogha I think it will be safer to go back to the original idea. Borsad, Ahmedabad or Bardoli — whichever Sardar selects.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 2949. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

232. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

Unrevised SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

May 15, 1940

CHI. AMRIT,

Your two important letters were torn as soon [as] they were read. Therefore I have to trust my memory for what I am to write. But since you insist on all this, I have to submit.

The articles I could send earlier but I became indifferent as Sushila could effectively and quickly translate the articles. Yours[1] could never reach Delhi the same week. I have told you I might get the translation here. You are still to translate for practice, so that when you return, you will bring greater ability and dispatch for the translation work. You have therefore to translate the articles with the same care that you would give if they were to be sent to the press. You should then send them to me for examination. You should not read Sushila's translation till you have done yours.

Sir M.[2] disappoints me. His letter is curious. But you are right in saying that we have to cultivate even such people. We have to convert the die-hards.

I cannot say I miss you. I am daily getting more and more detached. I seem to miss nobody and nothing. I have no time to think

[1] The source has "you"

[2] Presumably Sir Mirza Ismail ; *Vide* "A One-sided Inquiry", 7-5-1940.

of these things. The burden I carry occupies the whole of my time. The is not to say that I would not like your return or that there is no work for you. There is work and there is no work. That has been life from the beginning. But it [is] much more so now than ever. There is an inner longing for loneliness. If Harijan was stopped today, I should not feel the deprivation. And yet the place is growing.

There is no smallpox now.

Lalita Kumari came in today. She has two servants. She is with me.

Ramnarayan's letter is disappointing. You need not write to him any more. I shall write when I can.

Your letter to Narsingarh is good. It is being sent.

The war is taking an ugly turn. Let us see what happens. Somehow or other I do not feel the same way as you do. I do not want to see the Allies defeated. But I do not consider Hitler to be as bad as he is depicted. He is showing an ability that is amazing and he seems to be gaining his victories without much bloodshed. Englishmen are showing the strength that Empire builders must have. I expect them to rise much higher than they seem to be doing. But I must stop now.

If I have omitted any of your questions you must remind me. Hot here. But I am keeping well.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

This was written 9.30 a.m. Your today's note just in 1.30 p.m. I sent you all my articles. I wrote very few. All but unimportant five lines going with this.

From the original: C. W. 3667. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6476

233. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

May 15, 1940

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your letter. What you write is correct. Our people are easily influenced. I got your telephone message. I do not intend to

write anything immediately. I will write when the time comes. We had heard the news about Ramu[1] . I did not feel unhappy but Ba did that you had not informed us. Ba still has such attachments though they have weakened considerably. Her forbearance, equimindedness, generosity, fortitude and firmness astonish me. Her health is good and she remains cheerful.

I see no need for anyone to go to America. Only what we can do here will have some effect. Nevertheless if an occasion arises, we shall see.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2123

234. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,

May 15, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have your letter. It is good that you have gone there. I think it is a great thing that you have found peace of mind. Stay there as long as duty demands. In any case you must do so as long as it may be necessary for your peace of mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MUNNALALJI

C/O SHRII BALKRISHNA

VADILAL SARABHAI AROGYA BHAVAN

PANCHGANI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8541. Also C. W. 7089. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Ramchandra, addressee's son

235. LETTER TO PURATAN J. BUCH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

May 15, 1940

CHI. PURATAN,

You are doing excellent work. But do you want me to notice all that work in Harijan? If it is likely to do any good, I will certainly write. Anand and you must be fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PURATAN BUCH

HARIJAN ASHRAM

SABARMATI

B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of Gujarati: G.N. 9175

236. MESSAGE TO N. W. F. P. DELEGATION[1]

WARDHA,

May 16, 1940[2]

My message has been already given, and I have none new to give you. All I will say is that now that you have actively taken up this great mission, you will not cease from your effort until Hindu-Muslim unity is achieved. I would ask you to forget that you have any quarrel with the Muslim League people. Your object differs from theirs, but they also are our brothers and you cannot convert them unless you treat them as such and refrain from all personal attacks. You have to carry conviction to them, for unless you or we can win them over there is no Hindu-Muslim unity. I wish you godspeed.

Harijan, 25-5-1940

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's article "God-speed". About twentyseven Red Shirts, accompanied by Ali Bahadur Khan, M. L. A. who had come to attend the Azad Muslim Conference in Delhi in April , called on Gandhii and asked him for a message.

[2] From The Hindu, 17- 5-1940

237. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
May 17, 1940

CHI. AMRIT,

Your corrections are quite good. They should have occurred to every one of us, but there you are.

Here are some letter for you.

I shall examine your translations and return to you. Have commenced t[he][1] [e][2] xam[i][3] nation already.

Lalita Kumari is down with headache. Nothing much. She has these attacks often.

Love.

[PS.]

J. L.[4] came in yesterday. He left this morning

From the original: C. W. 3968. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7277

238. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 17, 1940

DEAR MAHMUD

I have your letter. Before you can make anything of the Delhi Conference[5] much spade work has to be done.

Englishmen like me and dislike me by turns. I remain the same.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 5066

[1] The source is damaged here.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*
[4] Jawaharlal Nehru
[5] The All-India Azad Muslim Conference held at Delhi from April 27 to 30. One of the resolutions passed by the Conference condemned the Pakistan scheme as "impracticable and harmful to the country's interest generally and Muslims' in particular".

239. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA

May 17, 1940

CHI. AMALA,

I did not write '*sharam*'[1]. I wrote 'sarun'. It is good—sarun that you are serving the blind dog.[2] It is very happy thing that among all the teachers you are the only European. Mahadev is not keen on writing to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

240. A HIDEOUS EVIL[3]

A friend from Kamalapuram writes as follows:

I am quite sure that Congressmen must not tolerate this evil.

Harijan, 18-5-1940

241. FOREWORD TO "MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD"[4]

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

May 18, 1940

I have had the privilege of being associated with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in national work since 1920. In the knowledge of Islam he is surpasses by no one. He is a profound Arabic scholar. His nationalism is as robust as his faith in Islam. That he is today the

[1] Meaning 'Shame': *vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Margarete Spiegel", 11-5-1940.

[2] This sentence is in English.

[3] The article by Amrit Kaur, not reproduced here, dealt with the evil of brothels coming up at religious fairs and festivals and quoted a letter from Kama-lapuram complaining about the local Congressmen's apathy to it.

[4] A biographical memoir by Mahadev Desai.

supreme head of the Indian National Congress has deep meaning which should not be lost sight or by any[1] student of Indian politics.

M. K. GANDHI

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad

242. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

WARDHAGANJ,
May 18, 1940

JAMNALALJI
SHREE, BOMBAY

HAVE NOT COURAGE ASK SAROJINIDEVI THIS TIME.[2] SHE IS ILL.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 234

243. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 18, 1940

CHI. MIRA,

I was wondering why I had not heard from you so long. Anything beyond a week will be too long for me. Though your descriptive letters are welcome (they are your speciality) a p.c. when you have no time would be enough.

Do I take it that you have left Oel[3] for good? I don't mind if you have. I want you to feel free and make yourself happy.

Your description of your new place[4] is attractive, but I do not know that I shall ever reach there. There is no prospect of my going to simla. Though Sevagram is a furnace just now, I feel like not moving out at all. The work before me takes up all my time.

[1] The source has "every".
[2] The addressee had requested Gandhiji to send Sarojini Naidu to Jaipur.
[3] Oel Ashram where the addressee stayed for three months
[4] In Palampur, Kangra

R. K.[1] is in Simla. Maharani of Vizianagram is here just now. So also is Radha.

P.[2] is in Ghogha with his band of 340 boys and 40 girls. Water and milk and vegetables have to be brought daily from Bhavnagar.

Love.

BAPU

Form the original: C. W. 6452. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10047

244. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

Unrevised

SEVAGRAM,
May 18, 1940

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have your two letters, as also the cheque for Rs. 5,000 jointly from Grandmother and yourself for the equipment for the hospital here. I hope to utilize the amount.

Your second letter is very important. I very much appreciate your minute examination of the details regarding khadi. I am in agreement with you on many of the points raised by you and will now enter into correspondence with Kakubhai[3] on this subject.

The position regarding the exhibition is rather complicated. Not that shipping, steel manufacture, etc., are not beneficial to the country. They do not, however, stand in need of any help from the Congress; or if they do it is help of a different nature. The object in confining the exhibition to products of village industries is to raise the importance of these industries, to educate the people and to concentrate the country's attention on this activity. Anything other than village industries should, indeed, have no place either in the exhibition or outside it. Since, however, I have not been able to carry all co-workers with me on this point, some confusion does persist in this respect. I admit, however, that there can be other views also on this matter. Please come over here some time and discuss the thing with me. These days it is very hot. You may come in June when it will be cooler.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 4731. Courtesy: Shantikumar N. Morarjee

[1] Rajkumari Amrit Kaur
[2] Prithvi Singh
[3] Purushottam K. Jerajani

245. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,

May 18, 1940

CHI. NIMU

I got your letter. Ba will not go there. It is hot, no doubt, but she keeps quite well. It will be good if you do well there and suffer from no shortages. R[aj]kumari[1] has gone to Simla. Amtussalaam is here. There are a number of visitors coming and going. Sharda is still here. Her boy is growing fast. His eczema persists and that is rather vexing. Radha is here these days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

246. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

May 18, 1940

CHI. RAMDAS,

How are you keeping now? Has the load on your mind lightened? Are you able to absorb yourself in your work? I hope you are not short of money, are you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Rajkumari Amrit Kaur

247. QUESTION BOX

SPINNING REGULARLY

Q. What do you mean by 'spinning regularly'?[1] If one spins for a couple of hours during a month or for half an hour once or twice a week, would he be deemed to have satisfied the condition about spinning regularly?

A. 'Regularly' was put in the place of 'daily'. This was meant to provide for accidental or unavoidable omissions. Therefore spinning every week or at stated intervals will not meet the case. A satyagrahi will be expected to spin daily except for valid reasons such as sickness, travelling or the like.

SATYAGRAHA CAMPS AND UNTOUCHABILITY

Q. Satyagraha camps are being organized for the training of volunteers all over the country. But the principle with regard to the renunciation of untouchability in every shape and form is not being rigorously enforced. Don't you agree that it ought to be made an absolute rule in the camps that no one who regards the touch of Harijans as polluting and does not freely mix with them should be permitted to attend them?

A. I have no hesitation whatsoever in saying that he who has the slightest untouchability in him is wholly unfit for enrolment in the Satyagraha Sena. I regard untouchability as the root cause of our downfall and of Hindu-Muslim discord. Untouchability is the curse of Hinduism and therefore of India. The taint is so pervasive that it haunts a man even after he has changed over to another faith.

PARTITION AND NON-MUSLIMS

Q. You have said in Harijan that "If the eight crores of Muslims desire partition, no power on earth can prevent it."[2] Does it not strike you that 25 crores of non-Muslims too might have a say in the matter? Does not your statement imply that you put a premium on the opinion of the Muslims while underrating that of Hindus?

A. I have only given my opinion. If the majority of Hindus or Christians or Sikhs or even Parsis, small though their number is, stubbornly resist the express wish of the duly-elected representatives of eight crores of Muslims, they will do so at the peril of a civil war. This is not a question of majority of minority. If we are to solve our problems non-violently, there is no other way. I say this not because

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Satyagraha Pledge", before 1-6-1940.

[2] *Vide* "Hindu-Muslim Tangle" , 29-4-1940

the eight crores happen to be Muslims. I would say the same if the eight crores were any other community.

LEGAL PRACTICE AND SATYAGRAHA

Q. Knowing as you do how lying and deceit have become the stock-in-trade of the legal profession in this country, would you permit practising lawyers to enlist as active satyagrahis?

A. I am unable to subscribe to your sweeping proposition. The fact that a lawyer wants to become a satyagrahi presupposes on his part a certain standard of purification. No doubt there may be, to my knowledge there are, black sheep in the Congress. This is inevitable in any big organization. But it would be unbecoming of a satyagrahi to condemn a man because he belongs to a certain profession.

SATYAGRAHA AND OBSTRUCTIONISM

Q. Is the policy of obstructionism compatible with satyagraha? Can a satyagrahi, who is supposed to stand for principles rather than party, adopt one attitude with regard to a measure when it is sponsored by his party, and another when the same measure is sponsored by the opposite party? Would you approve of this policy in municipalities and district boards as is being done by some Congressmen at present?

A. I have always opposed obstruction as being anti-satyagraha. Congressmen, to be correct in their behaviour, should always give co-operation to their opponents when the latter are in a majority and adopt any wise measure. The object of Congressmen should never be attainment of power for power's sake. Indeed such discriminatory co-operation will enhance the prestige of the Congress and may even give it majority.

TRAINING HARIJANS AS COOKS

Q. Don't you think that, if the Congress started a plan for training Harijans as expert cooks for Hindu homes and made it a rule to man every ashram of a mess meant for Congress workers with Harijan cooks thus trained, it would prove a short cut to the removal of untouchability?

A. Our ambition should be to enable Harijan to rise to the highest rank. But while that must be the ideal, it will be a good thing to train some Harijan to become accomplished cooks. I have observed that the move we draw them into the domestic circle the quicker is the pace of the reform. Harijans who become absorbed in out homes lose all sense of inferiority and become a living link between other Harijans and savarna Hindus.

SEVAGRAM, May 19, 1940

Harijan, 25-5-1940

248. NOTES

NON-RESISTANCE

I read the following in the daily Press:

> A petition signed by a number of Muslims has been sent to the Corporation authorities that, if their previous representations for the removal of Gandhiji's portrait from all Corporation schools for Muslims boys and girls is not acceded to, the institutions will be boycotted. They contend that the display of the portrait is a form of hero worship, which is anti-Islamic.

Assuming the truth of the statement I would strongly advise compliance with the Muslim demand. Nothing is to be gained by the Congress party resisting the demand. At the same time I would suggest to the leaders of the agitation that it is supported by wrong argument. For they have surely their own heroes. The proper and conclusive argument is that I am no longer their hero. Heroes change with the times. It is well for public bodies to accommodate themselves to such changes.

FIVE QUESTIONS

1. Can satyagrahis (i.e., those who have signed the satyagraha pledge) offer defence when they are arrested?

2. May a satyagrahi make an effort to get better class treatment, i.e., 'A' or 'B'?

3. Ought a satyagrahi in jail to acquiesce in the conditions imposed upon him, or should be endeavour to secure that he regards more humane and satisfactory treatment?

4. What is the minimum time for which a satyagrahi ought to spin or what is the minimum quantity of yarn he should produce?

5. Can a man sign the satyagraha pledge immediately you declare civil disobedience and court arrest, or is there any definite period for which he should have remained a satyagrahi to be eligible to take part in the civil disobedience campaign?

Answers:

1. There is no objection to offering defence, and in certain cases it would be a duty to do so as, say, in the Ajmer case.

2. In my opinion he should not make any attempt to alter the class, Personally I am against an classification.

3. He is entitled to make every legitimate effort for change to humane conditions.

4. I think one hour per day should be the minimum and 300 rounds per hour is a reasonable speed. Men engaged in public work may spin less.

5. A man who intentionally refrains from signing a pledge in order to avoid fulfilment of conditions is a cheat and unworthy of being a satyagrahi. But I can conceive an honest man just signing the pledge and straightaway going to jail. Even at the risk of losing prospective pledge-takers and those who have taken the pledge. I would say that there is no immediate prospect of my giving the call.

SEVAGRAM, May 20, 1940

Harijan, 25-5-1940

249. OUR DUTY

In view of further ruthless aggression by Nazi Germany and the fact that Britain is hard pressed and going through deep waters today, does not non-violence demand that we should say to her that, while we do not resile in the very least from our position nor withdraw an iota of our demand so far as her relationship with us and our future are concerned, we do not desire to embarrass her in dire distress and will definitely, therefor, defer all thoughts and all talk of a civil disobedience movement for the time being? Do not our minds rebel against the very idea of a domination such as Nazidom is avowedly standing for today? Is not the whole future of a humane civilization at stake? It is true that our independence from an alien rule is also a matter of life and death to us. But when Britain is up against an aggressor who is definitely pursuing barbarous methods, should we not make a timely and humane gesture which should in the end win the heart of our opponent? Even if such a gesture makes no impression on her and an honourable settlement is impossible, will it still not be the higher and ennobling thing for us to offer non-violent battle when she is not beset on all sides? Will it not require greater strength in us and therefore mean greater and more lasting benefit, and will it not be a glorious example for a warring world? Will it not also be a proof that non-violence is pre-eminently a weapon of the strong?

Perhaps this correctly represents the sentiment of several correspondents who have written to me since the Norwegian setback.

It is evidence of the nobility of the hearts of these correspondents. But there is want of appreciation of the reality. These letters ignore British nature. British people stand in no need of sympathy from subject people. For they can command all they want from them. They are a brave and proud people. They are not going to be demoralized by even half a dozen such setbacks. They are well able to cope with any difficulty that may face them. India has no say whatsoever in the manner in which she is to take her part in the war. She was dragged into the war by the mere wish of the British Cabinet. Her resources are being utilized at the will of the British Cabinet. India is a dependency, and Britain will drain the dependency dry as she has done in the past. What gesture has the Congress to make in these circumstances? The greatest gesture in its power the Congress is already making. It creates no trouble in the country. It refrains in pursuance of its own policy. I have said and I repeat that I shall do nothing wilfully to embarrass Britain. It will be contrary to my conception of satyagraha. Beyond this it is not in the power of the Congress to go.

Indeed it is the duty of the Congress to prosecute its demand for independence and to continue the preparations for civil disobedience to the fullest extent it can. The nature of the preparations should be appreciated: to promote khadi and village industries, communal unity, removal of untouchability, prohibition, and to this end to enlist and train Congress members. Is this preparation to be suspended? I dare say that, if the Congress truly becomes non-violent and in pursuance of the policy of non-violence it successfully carries out the constructive work I have mentioned, it will be able to have independence without doubt. Then will be the time for India as an independent nation to decide what aid she should give to Britain and how.

The Congress contribution to the cause of the Allies in so far as it may be good, and to the world peace, is its active pursuance of non-violence and truth and the prosecution of its goal of complete independence without abatement and without delay.

Britain is really damaging her own cause by persistently refusing to examine the Congress position and recognize its justice and in raising false issues. The Constituent Assembly of the kind proposed by me provides for every difficulty except one, if it is a difficulty. It does not provide for British interference in the shaping of India's destiny. If that is put forth as a difficulty, the Congress

must wait till it is acknowledged that it is not only no difficulty but that self-determination is India's indisputable right.

In this connection let me refer to the letters I have received accusing me of unwillingness to declare civil disobedience under some pretext or other. These friends must know that I am more concerned than they in the successful demonstration of the weapon of non-violence. I am not giving myself a minute's rest from the pursuit of the search. I am ceaselessly praying for light. But I cannot precipitate civil disobedience because of outside pressure, even as I will not refrain because of such pressure. I know that this is the time of my greatest trial. I have overwhelming evidence to show that there is much violence in the hearts of many Congressmen and that there is much selfishness. If Congressmen were imbued with the true spirit of non-violence, we would have had independence in 1921 and our history would have been written differently. But I must not complain. I must work with the tools I have. Only let Congressmen know the cause of my seeming inaction.

SEVAGRAM, May 20, 1940
Harijan, 25-5-1940

250. LETTER TO RAMAKRISHNA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 20, 1940

DEAR RAMAKRISHNA [1],

Father tells me you are to have the *upanayana*[2] ceremony. It means a new birth - regeneration. It means a resolution to lead a life of purity and service.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 746. Also C. W. 2804. Courtesy: Ramakrishna

251. LETTER TO K. T. NARASIMHACHAR

[*May 20, 1940*][3]

MY DEAR K. CHAR,

There is not likely to be any call.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 746. Also C. W. 2804. Courtesy: Ramakrishan

[1] Brother of K. T. Narasimhachar
[2] Investiture with the sacred thread, a sacrament for caste Hindus
[3] This and the preceding letter are written on the same sheet.

252. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SEVAGRAM,

May 20, 1940

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I did not have the courage to write to Sarojinidevi[1] Shri Katju is no stranger.[2] He is an eminent lawyer and was a Minister in the Congress Ministry. He held a high post. People should give up such attachments also.

It appears Om[3] has failed. If so, she should not feel disappointed. She must study again and get through. One famous man who had failed 21 times kept on trying and got through at last.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3011

253. LETTER TO BHOLANATH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHAM

May 20, 1940

BHAI BHOLANATH,

I think I have replied to your letter of March 26, 1940. I came across it today when I was going over my correspondence. Tell me how you are now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1377

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Jamnalal Bajaj", 18-5-1940.

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to K. N. Katju", 29-5-1940.

[3] Addressee's younger daughter

254 LETTER TO TARA SINGH[1]

[Before *May 21, 1940*][2]

The Congress will stick to its resolution[3] passed at the Lahore session of the Congress regarding communal rights of the Sikhs, meaning thereby that no communal solution will be accepted by the Congress which will not be acceptable to the Sikhs.

The Hindustan Times, 23-5-1940

255. ASHRAM NOTE

SEVAGARAM,

May 21, 1940

The work of cutting vegetables is disorganized. Under the rules, no one should drop out of vegetable cutting. This applies to all community activities. Whenever someone is unable to participate in such work, the person in charge of that work should be informed. Those who cannot participate in such activities should declare their inability once and for all.

BAPU

From Hindi: C. W. 4674: also G.N. 6866

256. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,

May 21, 1940

CHI. AMRIT,

In spite of all effort I have failed to write before now. Reason: want of time.

You said there was a letter for Kanu. It never came. The account of yarn was received only yesterday.

[1] Leader of the Akali Party. He had pointed out to Gandhiji that Abul Kalam Azad's statement that the Congress would accept the Pakistan scheme of the Muslim League if the same got the approval of the Muslims had caused much anxiety amongst the congress-minded Sikhs, who did not like the idea of partition.

[2] The report carrying the item is dated May 21, 1940.

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Subjects Committee, A.I.C.C.—III", 30-12-1929.

I have made use of your question. I can't compliment you on it. There is no logic in it. I have let you down gently.

The weather has changed for the better since yesterday.

I sent you some letters

Lalita Kumari still here, She keeps none too well but gives no trouble. Her servants look after her. I had put her with me but she passes her time in Ba's room and is happy.

Love

BAPU

From the original: C. W.: 3969. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7278

257. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

SEVAGRAM,

May 21, 1940

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I have your letter. It is not yet time for you to go to Rajkot. If you build up your physical strength there, you will have taken one step forward.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9737. Also C. W. 717. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

258. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

SEVAGRAM,

May 21, 1940

BHAI PRITHVI SINGH,

I have your three letters. You are not at all to blame in regard to Prabhakumari's case. But the case proves that it is necessary to be alert in all matters. Ahimsa requires non-possession, both mental and physical, and truth requires silence, If this is accepted, it will become easy to distinguish between violent and non-violent actions in all important matters.

I find your case about going to Ghogha rather weak. All athletes would endure the hardships you mention. I do not believe, from what you describe, that any very great shock is being given to reason. But the truth will soon be known. We will know how much those who attended benefited. I have spent myself in training people in ahimsa but I have not wholly succeeded in cultivating it my self or in helping others to cultivate it. I am now looking to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 2950. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

259. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA

May 21, 1940

BHAI VITHALDAS,

I think we should not ask for contributions just yet. I have even written to Shankerlal [Banker] to this effect. We shall know in a month of so. Meanwhile we should think over the matter.

How to improve the internal state of affairs?

What should we do if we get no contributions?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9795

260. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,

May 21, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL

By all means stay on there. You are making yourself fully useful and are getting some peace of mind. Kanchan also gets it. Return only when you clearly feel that there is no further need for you to stray on. Ask Kanchan to write to me some time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a the photostat of Gujarati: G. N. 8540

261. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 21, 1940

STUPID GIRL,

What can I write to you? I know that it is very mean to go off leaving me in this condition. But if what I consider uncivilized attitude you consider duty, you must do your duty and in that case it becomes my duty to encourage you in that. If you would listen to me, I would say that (1) you should not talk of going till you have not convinced me of your position. In other words, you must not go. And if that is not possible (2) you should not utter a word about going till the mists have rolled away. Even Mother, if she understood this, would not keep you in Delhi for a moment.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

262. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,,

May 21, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I did not say anything because I thought the work of vegetable-cutting was proceeding smoothly. Now I have commented on it in my Ashram Note[1] .

Mahadev may not be looked upon as an inmate of the Ashram. He cannot be spared even for a minute for community work. Pyarelal's case is slightly different, but he too should not be pressed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4342

[1] *Vide* "Ashram Note", 21-5-1940.

263. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 21, 1940

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. I have also written to Madhav[1] . All of you must naturally be very sad at Sumitra's death. Still, do not such occasions serve to test our wisdom and faith? I trust you will all pass the test.

Europe is now an arena of bloody strife. Be that as it may. I have hardened my heart.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C. W. 8046. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

264. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 22, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have your letter. I could not reply by today's post. There is no need to send you a wire. Ask Kanchan to write to me about the matter and ask Balkrishna and Kunvarji also to write. I cannot also understand why Bhojubhau and Kanchan are not on speaking terms. Is Balkreishna's work suffering in any way because of this tiff? He had some such fear, and if it is so they should let him alone. I can give my decision about you only after taking into account all these factors.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8539. Also C. W. 7090. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Son of Rameshwardas Birla

265. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

May 22, 1940

CHI. MANILAL,

Why do you feel ashamed to mention that Sushila is in her seventh month of pregnancy? And why do you feel unhappy? All one must do is to observe that utmost self-control. What more can one do? This is how life will go on.

Yes, Sevagram is fast growing. Nobody can say how big it will grow.

Here there is no possibility of my starting a struggle immediately.

Bhabha and others may write what they please but propriety requires that you should write nothing about Jinnah Saheb. If you do write, you should use polite language. This is my view. Certainly I would not want you to write or refrain from writing anything out of fear.

I wrote what I thought best about the struggle there. But it was for you to decide whether or not to act upon it. Medh came and saw me. I had long talks with him. He will call again. His daughter is getting married and so he went back on the same day.

Ba's health is fine, considering her age. The rest are all right.

I am not nursing any hope of anyone of you coming here in the immediate future. Besides, it is a good thing that you are there and doing some service.

Ramdas is with the Tatas but he is very restless and has no peace of mind. His health also is not very good Nimu is with him of course.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4913

266. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

May 23, 1940

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Read the enclosed and guide me. I have told the writer that his suggestion[1] attracts me and if I see my way clear I shall act up to it in part or wholly.

Love.

Yours,

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1940. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

267. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,,

May 23, 1940

DEAR NATESAN,

You had a perfect right to send me your letter.

What more can India as a subject country do than it is made to do? You do not suppose for one moment that they hesitate to take all they want from this country. The Congress has nothing but moral help to give. They have disabled India from doing more. India as a subject country *cannot* save Britain. India as a free country may. There is no want of will on my part. It is sheer want of ability. Hope your wife is better.

Love

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 2238

[1] Abdul Hai Abbasi of Lucknow had suggested that since comunal troubles usually started in Northern Inda, Gandhiji should settle in a village in U. P. where Muslims were in a majority.

268. LETTER TO DILKHUSH B. DIWANJI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

May 23, 1940

BHAI DILKHUSH,

Your letter is not at all long. The single-minded devotion with which you are working leaves you no time for any other thoughts. I can of course remove your financial difficulty but I am of the view that it would be better if you fought your way through. I suppose you have trained weavers from among the local population. If not, please train more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 2646

269. ASHRAM NOTE

SEVAGRAM,,

May 24, 1940

Owing to certain irritations, big and small, I have entered on a period of silence today. The silence will continue indefinitely. It will have to be broken when the working Committee arrives. It will also be broken in other similar emergencies. At present there can be but one sadhana for me. For this silence is essential. Talking causes interruptions. I also find that silence saves my energy. I do not want to insist on anything any more and so beyond expressing my views on essential matters, I do not want to argue.

BAPU

From Hindi: C. W. 4674; also G.N. 6686

270. LETTER TO M. MUJEEB

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 24, 1940

MY DEAR MUJEEB,

Raju has been and gone to his place. He wants to work there if he can. I gave him all the time he wanted and put him in touch with Kaka's office. At his wish I have given him a note to Dr. Pattabhi.

I am sure you will strike the balance between the two seemingly conflicting duties. Please tell Dr. Zakir that the Urdu school thing is being fixed up satisfactorily

Love.

BAPU

PROF. MUJEEB
JAMIA MILLIA
NEW DELHI

From the original: C. W. 1466. Courtesy: M. Mujeeb

271. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 24, 1940

CHI. AMRIT

I have your translations. I must make time to read them. V. Hari[1] says he does not want any now. All the same you must practise them. One never knows when the need will arise.

Your corrections must be in ink for my eyes sake - not mine!

This week's articles will go in today I hope. I have not got them from Kanu yet.

No time for more just now. Nanahbai Bhatt has come in. I am silent indefinitely from 7.30 a.m. today.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3668. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6477

[1] Viyogi Hari, editor of *Harijan Sevak*

272. LETTER TO MRS. K. L. RALLIA RAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 24, 1940

DEAR SISTER,

What you say is true. I shall write - with what effect I do not know.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original: N. A. I. File No. 74. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also G. N. 6836

273. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 24, 1940

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your two letters. I have Dr. Bhaskar's detailed letter, too. It was good that you were sent there. Now you are bound to get well. Your mind is weak; make it strong. Here the weather has changed since the 20th. The heat has very much decreased. All the same it was good that you went. Shakaribehn must be having a little more peace of mind. Let her stay on as long as it may be necessary.

Blessings to all of you from
BAPU

SHARDABEHN CHOKHAWALA
PATIDAR ASHRAM
SURAT

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10028. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

274. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 24, 1940

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I wrote you a letter which you have not answered.

Read what is written overleaf. It is a job for the Corporation. It can be easily done. It means protecting the cows and the poor.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

275. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

SEVAGRAM,,

May 24, 1940

CHI. BALVANTSHINHA,

I have gone through your letter. The thing is that Parnerkar says he cannot all by himself look after the three jobs; the milkroom, the cattle and the farming. He is therefore agreeable to cattle and farming being transferred to you. I like this arrangement and then you have to help Parnerkar quite a lot in his work. Chimanlal and Munnalal, to the extent they understand the problem, also approve. Parnerkar also accepts if not wholly. The reason he advances is that he is short-handed. Under the circumstances, it becomes my duty to entrust cattle and farming to your care. I do not like the idea of forming a committee. You can take me to be the committee. If I need anyone's help I shall take it, otherwise I shall decide matters myself. In effect this will mean that many things will be left to you.

As far as possible let the *goshala* be as it is. If experience demands any change, it will be made.

As for servants only those will remain who are good.

We must grow our own vegetables. We are already using our own cotton. The fruit tree must be taken good care of.

This is my view. But if for any reason your heart is not in this work, I shall not insist. If you wish to go to Nathji[1] for some days, do go. And if you wish to do some work on a larger scale, you should certainly do so. If you take up this work you should do so with feeling of satisfaction and as a duty.

[1] Kedarnath Kulkarni

You should not take it up on my account; because I have no knowledge of these things. I want to entrust you with the work because you are here and I have confidence in you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1944

276. STATEMENT TO THE ASSOCIATED PRESS[1]

WARDHA,

May 24, 1940

While hourly butchery is going on in the West and peaceful homes are being destroyed, I have no heart to say anything publicly in regard to Mr. Amery's statement in answer to Mr. Wedgwood Benn in the House of Commons.[2]

Suffice it to say that I would leave no stone unturned to bring about a peaceful and honourable settlement of the present deadlock.

The Hitavada, 25-5-1940

[1] This was also published in Harijan, 1-6-1940, under the title "Will Leave No Stone Unturned". Gandhi was lying in his cottage with a wet piece of cloth over his head on account of the blazing heat when the Associated Press representative presented Amery's statement in the Commons to Gandhiji.

Gandhiji read the statement carefully and then appeared to think deeply for a few minutes. he then took paper and pencil and himself wrote out the statement.

[2] On May 23, L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, had said in the Commons: "The attainment by India of full and equal partnership in the British Common wealth is the goal of our policy. We recognize, as my predecessor made clear in his speech on April 18, that it is for Indians themselves to play a vital part in devishing a form of constitution best adapted to India's conditions and India's outlook. The promise already given that the present scheme of the Act of 1935 and the policy and plans on which it is based are to be open for re-examination at the end of the war necessarily implies discussion and negotiation, and not dictation. we have no desire to delay any of the steps that may pave the way towards an agreed settlement that will take account of the legitimate claims of all communities and interests. on the contrary, we have been, and are only too anxious to make our contribution towards such a settlement."

277. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

[Before *May 25, 1940*][1]

CHI. VIJI,

I have your letter as also the beautiful handkerchiefs. I have started using them. Do write to me about Father. I hope you are calm. You must have got my letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7106. Also C. W. 4598. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

278. TELEGRAM TO SIKANDAR HYAT KHAN[2]

WARDHA,,

[*May 25, 1940*][3]

SIR SIKANDAR HYATKHAN

CONFIDENTIAL. MUCH OBLIGED YOUR WIRE[4] SUFFICIENT DECLARATIONS OF SUPPORT HAVE BEEN MADE. IT SHOULD BE ENOUGH IF CONGRESS DOES NOT OBSTRUCT. OBVIOUSLY CONGRESS CANNOT GO BEYOND. WHAT BAFFLES ME IS BRITISH OBSTINCY MAKE UNEQUIVOCAL DECLARATION THAT INDIA IS FREE COUNTRY HAVING FULL RIGHT TO SHAPE HER DESTINY WITHOUT BRITISH INTERFERENCE. WITHOUT SUCH DECLARATION AND CONSEQUENT ACTION SO FAR AS POSSIBLE DURING WAR MORAL FORCES CANNOT WORK. THIS IS PERSONAL REACTION TO YOUR WIRE. AM CONFERRING WITH MAULANA AND JAWAHARLAL. HOPE YOU ARE QUITE WELL.

GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 10883. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan

[1] From the reference of "receipt of the handkerchiefs" in “Letter to Vijayabehn M. Pancholi”, 25-5-1940

[2] Punjab landowner, leader of the Unionist Party and Premier of the Punjab.

[3] The Source gives no date. However copies of this telegram and the one which it answered were forwarded by Mahadev Desai to Rajagopalachari on May 25.

[4] In this the addressee had appealed to Gandhiji and the Congress "for wholehearted support of prosecution of war in interests of civilization and of safety of India.

279. LETTER TO ABDUL DADAR BEG

May 25, 1940

DEAR MIRZA SAHEB

Herewith Shri Garg's reply to your indictment, I would like to have your reaction to it. Political differences there will be. But all bitterness between parties should be avoided.

Yours sincerely.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

280. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

May 25, 1940

CHI. AMRIT,

I told you Mira had gone to Bundla. I have an enthusiastic account from her.

Lalita Kimari is braving the heat quite cheerfully. She is quite happy being here.

Lilavati has no plans.

A[mtul] S[allam] does not want to be happy. She thinks everybody is at her.

Valjibhai's address is Harijan ashram, Sabarmati.

Surely I have been writing to you fairly regularly, Why should you feel depressed? The Allies seem to be losing ground everywhere. These are the fortunes of war. You must [not][1] grieve over these things. The slaughter is awful but it is part of the fame. All parties know what is what.

If it is the personal element that depresses you, it is worse than childishness. Let us forget ourselves in this dance of death. And then you have your day's work for you.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3669. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6478

[1] The source has this scribbled in pencil in somebody else's hand.

281. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 25, 1940

CHI. MIRA,

I have your chatty letter. I envy you your scenery. But I have to be in the midst of the storm. I have taken indefinite silence since yesterday for the sake of peace and work. It will break for the W[orking] C[ommittee] or accidents.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6453. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10048

282. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 25, 1940

CHI. VIJAYA,

I have already written to you. I have also acknowledged receipt of the handkerchiefs. I understand about the mangoes. I shall deal with them when they arrive. They will be finished in a day.

Pay a flying visit whenever you wish to.

Nanabhai had been here for a couple of days. He had come for some work concerning Bhavnagar. The rest are fine.

Blessings from

[PS.]

The mangoes have arrived.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7128. Also C. W. 4620. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

283. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,
May 25, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

Your last sentence was unbecoming of you. "I do not want a relevant truth, I do not want a half-truth, I want the whole truth''—think over its meaning.

So long as you are at Sevagram the question of what your duty and mine is does not arise at all. You may well believe that you are here on my account and I may think that because you are here I should take service from you. When there is an occasion to go out, I am faced with a dilemma, not you. If, thinking otherwise, I act differently, then it is self-deception. That cannot happen in Sevagram because I am already taking service from you. If this distinction is not clear to you, let both of us leave the matter to God. When God reveals to us your or my mistake, you or I shall correct it.

I have told you that so long as the mists have not rolled away, you must stay. If you do not feel certain about it, do as you like. Do nothing under any pressure. Do only what brings you self-satisfaction. Ultimately, only what you think to be your duty would be your duty.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

284. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,
May 25, 1940

STUPID GIRL,

You really are stupidity incarnate. I do not understand your letter at all. How have you become a sinner because I told you an untruth? I want to keep you with me, but not by making you believe an untruth. It was due to love that I resorted to the untruth. There was attachment in that love. How are you at fault in that? If at all, it is I who should undertake a fast. But I will not do so because my untruth was not so very sinful. If you undertake a fast, you will cause me pain and add to the wrong which you are doing. If you are keen to see your mistake, abide in peace. So long as I am here, you will continue to serve. Then you will see your mistake. But if you cannot endure it, do go. One day you will discover your mistake and laugh. You have your reason for staying whether I believe in it or not. You can stay out of the Ashram if I go out and do not take you along.

Why run away now? Why are you not ashamed of running away? What did I write to hurt you? What should I write? I am ashamed of your stupidity. I should certainly fast to cure you of your stupidity. This is not tragic. It is comic.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

285. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,
May, 25, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

It was not a question of my being insulted. You insulted yourself. But if you are not able to see it, there is nothing I can do. I have not taken it as an insult to me. Read my words again.

I see that there is a vast difference in our outlooks. What should I do to persuade you, how can I persuade you? I can say

nothing more. How is one to prove that red is red? For you it is sufficient to say that what I see as red appears yellow to you. I have expressed my feelings to you. If you cannot discover any meaning in what I say, how can I find another language to explain it ? Even when I took you along with me it was not the question. I have already explained that. The question was there even then. That is why I said that I resorted to untruth in order to keep you with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

286. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

SEAGRAM, WARDHA,

May 25, 1940

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

Your letter came into my hands only after 15th of May. You may come whenever you wish to. Accommodation will be found for you. A number of buildings have now been put up. The rest when we meet or, in case you do not come, when the question is decided. Krishna is still at Nasik.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PRABHUDAS GANDHI

ASAFPUR

DISTT. BADAUN

UP.

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 33050

287. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

SEVAGRAM,

May 25, 1940

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

Have a talk with Prahlad. The question of giving him the charge of he land does not arise now. About a house we shall see in November.

You havedone well in pointing out the mistake in ‘ *nanamota’*[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1935

288. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,

May 25, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

What you desire is of course good. It is, however, advisable to keep patience as long as my letters do not reach you in the natural course. I shall remember your wish. It will be fulfilled in its own good time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4343

289. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

May 25, 1940

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have read your letter to Rajku[mar]. None of you is to be selected.[2] Render such service as you can. If the battle is joined, truth

[1] *Vide* “Ashram Note”, 24-5-1940, and the reference to big and small irritations for which Gandhiji had used this Gujarati expression instead of its Hindi quivalent ‘chotemote’.

[2] Presumably for individual civil disobedience

and falsehood will stand revealed. You must do something in the villages if you can. I am keeping good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2481

290. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEGAON, WARDHA,
May 26, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

Many thanks for your letter of 19th instant, Enclosed herewith you will find copied of the wires that have passed between Sir Sikandar and myself.[1] My [wire] represents only my personal position. I feel that so long as Britain refuses to make an unquivocal declaration, her moral position must remain doubtful.

But my object in writing this letter is not to ventilate my grievances. It is to place before you my reaction to the war situation. The latest development seems to be most serious. Want of truthful news is tantalizing. I suppose it is inevitable. But assuming that things are as black as they appear to be for the Allied cause, is it not time to sue for peace for the sake of humanity? I do not believe Herr Hitler to be as bad as he is portrayed. He might even have been a friendly power as he may still be. It is due to suffering humanity that this mad slaughter should stop.

If there is anything in my proposition and if the British Cabinet desire it, I am prepared to go to Germany or anywhere required to plead for peace not for this interest or that but for the good of mankind.

This may be a visionary's idea. But as your friend I owe it to pass it to you. Perchance it may be wisdom more than a vision.[2]

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Sikandar Hyat Khan", 25-5-1940

[2] The Viceroy in his letter of June 3 replied: "His Majesty's Government have done their best in the past to avoid that struggle and to keep it to the extent that it proved inevitable within the narrowest limits practicable . . . But . . . they are clear in their own resolution that the war must be pursued until the objects for which they are fighting have been achieved. Nor can they place any objects for which they are fighting have been achieved. Nor can they place any reliance in the light of events on any undertaking or any promise that Herr Hitler might give to them. there is nothing for it . . . but to go on until victory is won."

You have two sons and son-in-law on active service. May it be well with them.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a printed copy: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

291. NOTE TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

May 26, 1940

I am sorry you discover nothing but violence, hy[po]crisy and untouchability here. There is nothing confidential in your letter. You shall talk to all the people here. As I am silent I shall not be able to do much. Even in supervision you can serve. But you are free to choose your work.[1] But how can you live in the midst of violence, hypocrisy, etc.? You must chalk out a programme for yourself. I am sorry but I am helpless.

BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 1499. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

292. LETTER TO CHANDAN KALELKAR

SEVAGARAM, WARDHA,
May 26, 1940

CHI. CHANDAN,

What a woman you are! I should not have allowed you to go away from sevagram. You ought to be where you belong. No matter whether you remain well or ill. Now observe the rules of food, etc., and get well soon. It will be nice if you can come and spend some time here. You seem to have completely given up writing to me!

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 954. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

[1] The addressee had sought Gandhiji permission to work amongst the Harijans of Sevagram instead of doing supervision work in the Ashram.

293. KERALA CONGRESS[1]

Mian iftikharuddin after his visit to Kerala reported to me that the differences between rival groups that were hampering real progress in Kerala had been settled. I was happy to have the report. But letters since received from Kerala go to show that the settlement was superficial. I have before me a long resolution passed by the Kerala Provincial Congress Committee which condemns almost all my acts and writings, ridicules the constructive programme, and yet to fulfil the letter of the Congress law half-heartedly endorses the congress resolution. I suggest to the Kerala Congressmen who are responsible for the resolution that this is neither good soldiership nor sportsmanship. The letter killeth, the spirit giveth life. Congressmen should understand the spirit of the resolution and carry it out. They will put life into me the themselves. If they cannot, it will be brave and honourable to resist in a dignified manner the present leadership and programme. The resolution before me merely confounds the people to whom it is addressed. I hope that the leaders of the majority group in Kerala will realize their mistake and retrace their steps. But whether they do so or not, the minority who have faith in the programme should quietly pursue it and by their solid work impress the people with their sincerity.

SEVAGRAM, May 27, 1940

Harijan, 1-6-1940

294. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,

May 27, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got both your letters only today. For the present please remain there. I understand about your fall. I see no need for you to broadcast it. When I permitted you to go there, I had expected this would happen. But I did not want to stop you forcibly. You were mentally meeting her every day. It was better that you should meet physically also, if it had to be so. Now it is best that you should resume living together. Surely living together does not necessarily

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

mean sharing the same bed. If, even while living together, you can both observe self-control, that will be a great thing. You should test each other while you are there. I think that would be the best thing.

Having written this much, I started feeling sleepy and so the mind got confused. Do not lose heart.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall not write to Kanchan or anyone else today; it is the day for Harijan.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8538. Also C. W. 7091. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

295. NOT YET

The reader will find in another column Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia's plea for immediate civil disobedience, I endorse his prescription for ensuring world peace. For enforcing the acceptance of his prescription he would have immediate civil disobedience. Here I must join issue. If Dr. Lohia subscribes to my conception of the working of non-violence, he will at once admit that the present is no atmosphere for influencing the Britisher in the right direction through civil disobedience. Dr. Lohia agrees that the British Government should not be embarrassed. I fear that any step towards direct action is bound to cause them embarrassment. If I start now, The whole purpose of civil disobedience will be defeated.

I would unhesitatingly declare civil disobedience if the country was demonstrably non-violent and disciplined. But unfortunately we have many groups outside the Congress who believe in neither non-violence nor civil disobedience. In the Congress itself there are all shades of opinion about the efficacy of non-violence. Congressmen who believe in the application of non-violence for the defence of India can be counted on the finger-tips. Though we have made great strides towards non-violence, we have not arrived at a stage when we can hope to be unconquerable. Any false step at the present time may end in the loss of the great moral prestige the Congress has gained. We have sufficiently demonstrated that the Congress has done with

imperialism, and that it will not be satisfied with anything less than the unfettered right of self-determination.

If the British Government will not suo motu declare India as a free country having the right to determine her own status and constitution, I am of opinion that we should wait till the heat of the battle in the heart of the Allied countries subsides and the future is clearer than it is. We do not seek our independence out of Britain's ruin. That is not the way of non-violence.

But we shall have many opportunities of demonstrating our power if we really have it. We can make it felt at the time of peace which must come whichever party wins.

Have we got the power? Is India at ease without having up-to-date arms? Does not India feel helpless without the ability to defend herself against aggression? Do even Congressmen feel secure? Or do they not feel that for some years to come at any rate India will have to be helped by Britain or some other Power? If such is our unfortunate plight, how can we hope to make an effective contribution towards an honourable peace after the war or universal disarmament? We must first demonstrate the efficacy of non-violence of the strong in our own country before we can expect to influence the tremendously armed Powers of the West.

But many Congressmen are playing at non-violence. They think in terms of civil disobedience anyhow meaning the filling of jails. This is a childish interpretation of the great force that civil disobedience is. I must continue to repeat, even though it may cause nausea, that prison-going without the backing of honest constructive effort and goodwill in the heart for the wrongdoer is violence and therefore forbidden in satyagraha. Force generated by non-violence is infinitely greater than the force of all the arms invented by man's ingenuity. Non-violence, therefore, is the decisive factor in civil disobedience. At this the most critical moment in India's history, I will not play with the force whose hidden possibilities I have been humbly trying to explore now for nearly half a century. Fortunately in the last resort I have myself to fall back upon. I have been told that people cannot be non-violence overnight. I have never contended they can. But I have held that by proper training they can be, if they have the will. Active non-violence is necessary for those who will offer civil disobedience, but the will and proper training are enough for the people to co-operate with those who are chosen for civil disobedience, The constructive work prescribed by the Congress is the proper

training. Given the preparation, the congress will make perhaps the most effective contribution towards ending the war in the right way. Disarmament of India though compulsory in origin, if it is voluntarily adopted by the nation as a virtue and if India makes a declaration that she will not defend herself with arms, can materially influence the European situation. Those therefore, who wish to see India realize her destiny through non-violence should devote every ounce of their energy towards the fulfilment of the constructive programme in right earnest without any thought of civil disobedience.

SEVAGRAM, May 28, 1940

Harijan, 1-6-1940

296. QUESTION BOX

WHOLE OF SPARE TIME

Q. You say an active satyagrahi should devote the whole of his spare time to constructive work. What is you conception of spare time?

A. Every minute that is not required for my necessary private work would be spare time. A merchant whose whole time is occupied in making money—nothing inherently wrong in it, if it is honestly made and equally honestly spent—naturally has no spare time. He cannot become an active satyagrahi. An active satyagrahi will give the least time to his private work. The balance is his spare time. For an active satyagrahi time is more than money. He should therefore be able to give a good account of every minute. In these matters the ultimate judge is oneself.

HOW TO USE VACATION

Q. What can students do during vacation? They do not want to study and would get tired of constant spinning.

A. If they get tired of spinning, It shows that they have not understood its life-giving property and its intrinsic fascination. What is the difficulty in understanding that every yard spun adds to the national wealth? A yard of yarn is not much, but as it is the easiest form of labour it can be easily multiplied. Thus the potential value of spinning is very great. Students are expected to understand the mechanism of the charkha and keep it in good order. Those who do so, will find a peculiar fascination in spinning. I refuse, therefore, to

suggest any other occupation. But of course spinning may give place to more pressing work - I mean more pressing in point of time. Their help may be required in putting the neighbouring villages in a good sanitary condition and in attending to the sick or in educating Harijan children, etc.

HONEST DOUBT

Q. Some of us belong to that section of Congress workers who are not firmly of the opinion that the charkha is no good and has to be discarded along with your leadership at the earliest possible date. Nor do we belong to that happy band of your followers who have an unshakable faith in the political, economical and spiritual mission of the charkha. We believe in khadi at any rate in the present circumstances of our country. But we cannot truthfully say that we understand the necessity of ourselves spinning. We are city people, and there is very little scope for the charkha here as a bread-giver. However, we are anxious to be enrolled as satyagrahis. We can promise that we shall conscientiously spin as required by you, but we are not in a position to promise that faith in it which you desire. It is possible that as we ply the charkha the faith may come. But, for the present, it is as we have stated. Can we honestly sign the satyagraha pledge?

A. Of course you can be enrolled. All those who spin do not do so because of the bread-giving property of the wheel. Many spin for sacrifice, to set a good example, and to create the spinning atmosphere.

TEST FOR ALL MEMBERS

Q. I am one of the secretaries of a Congress committee. I have a feeling that some of those who have signed the pledge are not carrying it out—particularly the clause about spinning. Can we put to them the question whether they spin or not? And, if we feel that their answers are evasive or untrue, is it part of our duty to hold an enquiry into the matter? Some of us feel that we must accept their word, and not be too searching.

A. As secretaries it is your duty to devise rules so that there would be an automatic test for all members, not merely for doubtful ones, spinning or not spinning. One test will be that the members deliver to a depot the yarn they spin. Every member is expected to keep a daily record of his output. But a nagging inquiry should undoubtedly be avoided.

RECRUITMENT v. CONSTRUCTIVE WORK

Q. Which would you prefer—whether we should devote all our time to recruiting satyagrahis or set about organizing constructive work with the satyagrahis that we already have on hand?

A. Of course you will organize constructive work with those you have. This will by itself attract recruits.

MEN AND WOMEN

Q. I should like to know whether you would approve of men and women satyagrahis mixing promiscuously and working together, or whether they should be organized into separate units with a clear delimitation of the field of each. My experience is that the former must lead, as it has led, to a lot indiscipline and corruption. If you agree with me, what rules would you suggest to combat the potential evil?

A. I should like to have separate units. Women have more than enough work amongst women. Our womenfolk are terribly neglected, and hundreds of intelligent women workers of sterling honesty are required to work among them. On principle too I believe I the two sexes functioning separately. But I would lay down no hard and fast rules. Good sense must govern the relations between the two. There should be no barrier erected between the two. Their mutual behaviour should be natural and spontaneous.

KHADI AND ADVERTISEMENT

Q. Do you approve of the policy that is being following by the Charkha Sangh in some places, of pushing the sale of khadi by the use, for instance, of loud-speakers, popular gramophone records and the like? Don't you think that advertising apart from supplying the necessary information about the marketing of khadi is undignified and incompatible with the khadi spirit?

A. I see nothing wrong or undignified in making use of loud-speakers, etc., to popularize khadi. Through these means too one does no more than give the prices and other information about khadi. It will be certainly undignified and worse if false information is given whether with or without the use of loud- speakers and the like.

WILL TO LIVE

Q. It has been said that the "will to live" is irrational, being born of a deluded attachment to life. Why is then suicide a sin?

A. The will to live is not irrational. It is also natural. Attachment to life is not a delusion, it is very real. Above all, life has a purpose. To seek to defeat that purpose is a sin. Therefore suicide is very rightly held to be a sin.

SEVAGRAM, May 28, 1940

Harijan, 1-6-1940

297. BIDAR

Five gentlemen from Hyderabad Deccan have sent me an offer to which there is a long preface containing all kinds of innuendoes against me. I need not burden these columns with their preface. If the adjectives used against me are deserved, they will stand whether I advertise them or not. If they are due to the ignorance of the authors, as I know they are, it is well for me not to notice them. Here is the offer:

Will Gandhiji agree that the whole Samajist movement which led to this and many other incidents should be thoroughly investigated by a Commission, whose head should be a Parsi or a Christian, with an equal number of Hindus and Muslim members? We are even prepared if Gandhiji agrees to arbitrate himself, as we are confident that the evidence with us will prove the case. As a preliminary, congenial atmosphere to conduct such an enquiry is all that is required. We, therefore, suggest that Gandhiji will not hesitate to demand that all the cases pending in court in connection with the Bidar conflagration should be withdrawn. We do not, of course, plead that cases of a serious nature, as that of murder or cases having no connection with the conflagration, should be included.

Gandhiji is also of opinion that compensation should be given to those who have suffered.[1] we fail to understand the logic behind it. If communal incidents are to be compensated, what would be the burden on the Exchequer? Would the riots not be employed as a weapon to bring financial failure upon the Government? Is it a remedy or an encouragement? It is a novel demand indeed. We hope Gandhiji will accept our offer.

I have no difficulty about accepting the offer unreservedly. If the writers succeed in persuading the Government of H. E. H. likewise to accept the offer, they will have established a precedent which may well be followed in all such cases. Needless to say, if the court suggested by my correspondents comes into being, the composition and terms of reference will have to be by agreement.

I am asked to demand the withdrawal of the cases instituted against persons suspected of complicity. They were not instituted at my instance, and I presume they will not be withdrawn on my demand. But I should have no hesitation in approving of all withdrawals if the court of inquiry is appointed. I assure my friends

[1] *Vide* : "Wanton Destruction in Bidar" 30-4-1940.

that I am interested in elucidation of truth, not in the punishment of the guilty.

But I am sorry I cannot forgo the suggestion for compensation. Compensation has been asked because it is alleged that the authorities failed to do their duty. The question of compensation has naturally to be referred to the proposed tribunal. My correspondents assure me of the sincerity of their proposal. I do not doubt it. I shall await the results of their efforts to have the offer accepted by the State. I wish them every success.

SEVAGRAM, May 28, 1940

Harijan, 1-6-1940

298. CURSE OF UNTOUCHABILITY

Several correspondents protest against my referring to the arguments advanced in favour of partition. They say that Islam is not exclusive, and that it teaches universal brotherhood and toleration. I have never denied this claim. It was because of my knowledge of Islam that I felt grieved over the arguments which go to prove the contrary. Almost every Muslim writing I take up nowadays contains disparagement of Hindus and Hinduism. It cannot be otherwise if the case for partition is to be proved. But my correspondents are angry when I point out the anomaly. They say I have hastily come to the conclusion from isolated writings of unimportant Muslims. Unfortunately, the arguments referred to by me have proceeded from important Muslims.

But where the writers score over me is in regard to Hindu untouchability. They say in effect:

> You should be ashamed of bringing the charge of untouchability against the Muslim League. First cast out the beam from the Hindu eye before you attempt to deal with the mote in the Muslim eye. Has not the Hindu maintained for a thousand years complete boycott of Muslims? He will not drink or eat with him. He will not intermarry. He will not even let his house to him. Can you conceive a more effective isolation of a whole community that the Hindu has carried out? Will it not be a just nemesis if the Muslim now turns round and pays you in your own coin?

I have admitted as much. Whatever the Muslims do by way of retaliation will be richly deserved by Hindus. My question was and is, should they do so? Does it behove a great political party to play upon religious prejudices?

Whatever the Muslim League does or does not do, it behoves thoughtful Hindus to take note of the deserved taunt and purge Hinduism of its exclusiveness. It will not be protected by artificial barriers which have no sanction in ancient Hinduism or reason. Well did Maulana Abul Kalam Azad say the other day how sick he was of hearing the cry at railway stations of Hindu and Muslim tea or water. I know this touch-me-notism is deeprooted in Hinduism as it is practised today. But there is no reason why it should be tolerated by Congressmen. If they will be correct in their behaviour, they will pave the way for a radical transformation of Hindu society. The message of anti-untouchability does not end in merely touching the so-called untouchables. It has a much deeper meaning.

SEVAGRAM, May 28, 1940

Harijan, 1-6-1940

299. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 28, 1940

CHI. AMRIT,

To my horror A[mtul] S[alaam] told me the enclosed was forgotten. So you will be without my letter again for four days. I am sorry. She is sick and a bundle of nerves. You have to suffer for your own obstinacy or stupidity or both.

I have your two letters—one almost all in Hindi. It is good. The copies of my articles now cannot he sent before Thursday. For that is the day on which the articles can be sent with safety. The office copy should be here till the others reach their destination. And it is the office copy that is being now sent to you.

Your letter of today brings me an Englishman's difficulty. I might deal with it next week. But the arrogance and ignorance of such men are marvellous. They don't want to do simple justice and yet expect sympathy. But our non-violence has full play only when the irritation is at its highest.

Love

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3970. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7279

300. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

May 28, 1940

CHI. MIRA,

I do not think the stay at Oel was a waste.[1] You are gaining valuable experience and keeping well in body and mind. I don't mind the expense. Do as the spirit moves you. It will be good if you can persuade Punditji to join you. Frightful things are happening in the West. God's will be done.

Love

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6454. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Alson G.N. 10049

301. NOTE TO MOHAN N. PARIKH

May 28, 1940

What will you gain by making me talk?[2] What I wanted to learn. I have learnt. You may ask me any question you wish. My silence gives me peace of mind. It helps my sadhana. If I broke my silence to please you, I would have to break it for others also. So please understand and stop urging me to speak.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9187

302. LETTER TO PURATAN J. BUCH

May 28, 1940

CHI. PURATAN,

This needs to be looked into. Investigate and write to me. Yes, send me a note about Bhangis.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9176

1 *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 18-5-1940.

2 The addressee wanted to hear Gandhiji's voice since he had come to see him after a long interval.

303. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

May 28, 1940

CHI. RAMDAS,

I wrote to you this morning and in the afternoon I received your letter. You have no cause to despair. Try for six months more and if you fail even after that, you may certainly come over to me. If your health itself suffers, you ought to give up the service. You alone can say what your health is like.

Go and consult Vallabhram Vaidya and improve your health.

Is the long letter Kanam has written the product of his own brain or has somebody dictated it to him?

Learn to be alert and do not lose self-confidence.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am returning Nalierwala's letter.

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

304. LETTER TO BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

May 29, 1940

MY DEAR BHARATAN,

Though I have scrapped the enclosed scheme[1] owing to the present turmoil, I should like to examine it. Can work be done in the manner suggested? Is it done anywhere like that?

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Regarding A. I. V. I. A. work in Orissa

305. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 29, 1940

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I had your letter enclosing Mr. Spalding's Thompson's was not in it. I am writing to S.[1] generally approving of your reply. That will save my time.

I have also yours enclosing reply to sir Sikandar and your letter [to] the Maulana. Your statements are good and full. I purposely refrain from making statements. But I will when I find it necessary.

I hope you are having a good time in Kashmir.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1940. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

306. LETTER TO K. N. KATJU[2]

May 29, 1940

I understand all you say. But panic must be avoided at all costs. You are quite right in saying that the country is not ready for non-violence. Therefore the thing to do is to throw individuals and groups on their own resources. The worst happening, there will be no central leadership, if the Congress disappears as it well may. It will be a testing time for the Congress. My own position is, I shall die in the attempt to preserve peace through non-violence. I may not be able to influence anybody but my immediate surroundings. I am not thinking of the future. I am trying to take care of the present. I should advise you also not to worry but prepare the people around you to do the best they can. We need not look to the existing Government to protect anybody if chaos overtakes us. Let us however have the confidence that if we have acted honestly all these years, our labours will not be in vain, and that God will see us through. I draw no black picture before me of India's future. I shall await your reflections on the States.

I am sure your presence in Jaipur must have given great relief to Jamnalalji and his band of workers.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] The letter to Spalding is not traceable.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 20-5-1940.

307. LETTER TO ARTHUR MOORE[1]

May 29, 1940

I know I have been disappointing you of late. This letter will add to the disappointment. For I cannot make the response you would like me to your suggestion to raise a crore of rupees for an air force. As you know I am wedded to non-violence through and through. There is no room for such a force in my plan of life. Perhaps in this I am in a minority of one in all India. But I must go my way. Only I shall say nothing about your plan. I am therefore not writing to Jawaharlal.

I know you will bear with me.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

308. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

May 9, 1940

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

You always have my blessings. God will always prosper you. You may come in June.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 4732. Courtesy: Shantikumar N. Morarjee

[1] The editor to *The Statesman*

309. LETTER TO MIR MUSHTAK AHMED

[After *May 29, 1940*][1]

BHAI MIR AHMED,

It is good that you have given up writing and speaking in English for as long as you can.

The answer to your question is covered in the opinion I have given. I feel that such a responsibility should not be undertaken as long as the Congress remains outlawed. Congress Assemblies are a different matter. In this each province is free to act in the manner it likes.

From Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

310. LETTER TO CARL HEATH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 30, 1940

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your kind letter. Since then events have happened which leave me dumb. May God help us all.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I have now your 2nd letter. But I am still the same.

M. K. G

From a photostat: G.N. 1038

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter dated May 29, 1940

311. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 30, 1940

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter.

Do you take enough milk? What work have you taken up? Just now this place is fairly crowded. Sarlaldevi Chowdhrani has come. Lalita Kumari is still here. You know she was in Ramgarh. There are others also. Krishnakumari has come here for a few days. Radha too is here. R[aj] K[umari] is still in Simla. It is a little cooler now. I am keeping excellent health. Ba's is fairly good. A[mtul] S[alaam] is rather unwell.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3542

312. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 30, 1940

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I do not know if Mahadev wrote to you about Suresh's[1] visit. He himself is now more inclined to our side. He wants to draw Subhas also but he is not likely to succeed. I have told him that he [Subhas] can come and see me whenever he wants. He knows my position. His publicly expressed views clearly indicate that he will not be able to come. He [suresh] believes that those views have now changed. It doesn't seem so to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 240

[1] Suresh Banerji

313. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 30, 1940

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I am enclosing Bal's letter.[1] He intended to send it direct. I said if he insisted on sending it I would rather sent it myself. But attach no special significance to my sending it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C. W. 8037. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

314. LETTER TO GOPAL NARAYAN SHIROMANY

SEVAGRAM, WARHDA,
May 30, 1940

DEAR SHIROMANY[2],

I am able to attend to your letter only today. I found nothing wrong in your letter. Let me know the judgment in the case[3].

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI G. N. SHIROMANY
SAINIK KARYALAYA
AGRA, U. P.

From the Hind; original: C. W. 10942. Courtesy: Gopal Narayan Shiromany

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Bal Kalelkar", 7-5-1940.

[2] Managing Editor of *Sainik*, Hindi daily, from 1932 to 1952

[3] Concerning the closure of Sainik Press under the Defence of India Act

315. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
[Before *May 31, 1940*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I am very happy that on the whole the burden of work on you is quite light.

I understand about ghee. You seem to be always having a tussle with Lilavati. She came here. She told me a lot of things. There is no point in narrating everything here. She said you had objected to the use of the word 'Chairman'. She also said that you lose your temper frequently. The thing about chairman has irked me.

The War is now hotting up. What no one else had everdone, Germany is doing. I am quiet. My faith in God has become stronger.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr, Sushila Nayyar

316. LETTER TO GORUR RAMASWAMI IYENGAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 31, 1940

DEAR FRIEND,

I see no objection to your acceptance.[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI GORUR RAMASWAMI IYENGAR

GORUR, HASSAN DISTT.

MYSORE

From a photostat: C. W. 10159. Courtesy: Gorur Ramaswami Iyengar

[1] Inferred from the date of receipt of this letter by the addressee, i. e., May 31, 1940

[2] The addressee was nominated a member of the District Board by the Government of Mysore.

317. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 31, 1940

CHI. BRAJKRISHNA,

Yes, do start a camp at Narela. It is not good to detain Nayar there under some pretext of the other. But you must do whatever you consider advisable. You have to do something about the widespread nervousness among the people.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2480

318. LETTER TO SHOBHALAL GUPTA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 31, 1940

BHAI SHOBHALAL[1],

I have a faint recollection that I had written to Durgaprasad about the poem[2]. It is provocative. But it is also true that such writings are common. Where an officer wants to resort to repression he does just this.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Gandhiji aur Rajasthan, p. 168

319. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
May 31, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You can certainly tell the guests that extra milk is not served except under doctor's advice.

[1] Editor of *Navajyoti*, a Hindi weekly

[2] By natvarlal Chaturvedi. Action was taken under the Defence of India Act against the publication of this poem.

Talk to Bharatananda[1] about Appu and about himself too. You may also talk about . . .[2] Consider first how it will affect Appu's heart. If Appu looks upon him as father and stays and works with him, we should have nothing to say.

Surendra's denial is partly true and partly untrue. Does not Sarladevi's man wash her clothes? Ask her. Leave out parner-karji now. The girls at any rate do their jobs, don't they?

Whatever we do should be inspired by ahimsa. Whomsoever you speak to, speak with affection. I shall tell you what your duty is. It is for you to act accordingly. Consult me about rules. Ask me to make new rules. But relieve me of the rest. My *sadhana* will be disturbed if I am saddled with day-do-day management.

Having said all this, I am still there if there is any difficulty in the management. I shall try to escape as much as I can. I suppose those who are getting extra milk get it only on doctor's advice.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4344

320. LETTER TO SAMPURNANAND

SEVAGRAM,
May 31, 1940

CHI. SAMPURNANANDJI,

I have your letter. I have a fear that if there is disorder I may prove ineffective. Because no one will listen to me. I tell those who ask me that everyone should be at his post-using the lathi if they must but with non-violence if they have the faith.

I do not worry, whatever may happen. We can but make the effort and say: "God's will be done."

You cannot take office like that. If there is disorder, of what good will the office be? Still, if I can find a way I shall.

There is no sign from Simla.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi original: Sampurnanand Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Maurice Frydman, a Polish Engineer who had become Gandhiji's follower.
[2] The name has been omitted in the source.

321. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[*May 1940*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I had got your letter. Why need you be unhappy that you lost five hundred rupees? There would have been cause for sorrow if the loss had been due to any mistake of ours. In the present case I see no mistake on your part. Your faith will bear fruit. You will get the help you need. It is better that whatever help you may get should be through Sardar.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 8574

322. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
June 1, 1940

CHI. AMRIT,

By book-post I send you this week's articles and three of your translations revised.

The articles are going late because of me. I was in no hurry.

In the revision you will see one or two howlers. You have made distinct progress.

You have not yet got control over the pen. You must religiously do the translation though they are not for the present wanted for publication.

You should also read the current translations in *Harijan Sevak* and make notes for my information.

Lalita Kumari went on 30th. She is an extraordinary woman. I liked her well. She bore the heat bravely.

She went and Sarla Devi Chowdharani came. I suppose she will be here for a day or two longer. I do not know her movements.

This war is going to alter things radically, at least I hope so. I simply refuse to think about it. It is a [war] of scientific abilities. German science is winning the day.

[1] As in the source

You asked Kanu to send you copy of R.'s letter. He never got the letter. But I do not want to send you copy. It must not leave the Ashram. It is well like this; of course there is nothing striking in the letter. You appreciate the reason, don't you? You will see all on your return.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C. W. 3971. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7280

323. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

June 1, 1940

CHI. JAMNALAL ,

I have your letter. Katjuji had written to me. We may look upon the Jaipur affair as having ended well. Our workers should not be impatient. If they have to make public speeches, they should talk about khadi. There is time enough for economic and social reforms.

Should I take it that your health is all right? How is Janakidevi? Is it true that Dr. Purshottam Patel has passed away? What is his wife's name? I heard of it recently.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

A letter to Dr. Patel's wife is enclosed.[1]

From a phoststat of the Hindi: G. N. 3012

324. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 1, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I shall write to Bharatananda. Let us see what happens. What he writes is silly. Yes, it is true that I have said that the eleven vows do not apply to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

We have to think about Appu.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4345

[1] This sentence is in Gujarati. The letter is not traceable.

325. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SEVAGRAM
June 2, 1940

DEAR MALKANI,

Tejuramji has been with us for some time. I have found him to be a very fine worker, simple and quiet. He dreamt of founding an ashram. I said he must not do that but attach himself to some institution and work under it. Hence this note to you. Take him if you have any use for him. He is honest and industrious.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

He has learnt fine carding.

From a photostat: G.N. 935

326. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SEVAGRAM,
June 2, 1940

MY DEAR MALKANI,

By mistake a note[1] I wrote for the bearer to take to you was posted. Hence this one is being given to Tejuramji. He is a good and industrious worker. He was dreaming of founding an ashram. I have advised him to join an institution. If you can make use of him, he will be a valuable worker.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 934

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

327. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 2, 1940

I had a talk with Bha[ratananda]. Let us engage Appu. Let him do all the work. Let him learn Hindi. If Bha[ratananda] needs any assistance in respect of his clothes, etc., give it to him.

The new friend[1] who has arrived today is very modest and hard-working. Find room for him. Make him your own. Explain to him the rules. Include him in all activities.

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 4346

328. NOTE TO AMTUSSALAAM

[*June 2, 1940*][2]

About today's theft you will have to speak to all the girls who go to Ba's room. Whoever has done it has done wrong. Hiding it will make it worse. If she does not confess the whole thing to me, I shall be compelled to fast. Convey this quietly to all the girls who go there.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 708

329. MISSIONARY EDUCATION IN ASSAM[3]

Shri Thakkar Bapa writes:[4]

> I have seen your notes in Harijan of 9th March and 18th May[5] regarding the grievance of the Secretary, Seng Khasi School, shillong. The Secretary has been running the school with great zeal and without any grant from the Government. That the Christian Missions have been working in Assam with the sole view to convert the Hill tribes to Christianity with the help of Government grants is very apparent from the *Quinquennial Education Report of the Assam Government for the Year 1932-37* as submitted

[1] Chandel, a co-worker of the addressee's sister

[2] From the reference to the theft which occurred on June 2; *vide* "To Segaon Workers", 3-6-1940

[3] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

[4] Only extracts are reproduced here.

[5] *Vide* "Favouritism", 12-5-1940; also "Notes", 16-2-1940

by Mr. G. A. Small, Director of Public Instruction. In his review of the report he wrote in April 1938, p. 63: "The general policy at present is for Government to take over the responsibility for education from the Missions as early as possible. While acknowledgement must be made of the debt owed to the Missions for their work as pioneers in the field of education, it must also be recognized that the Missions have interested themselves in education solely with the object of Christianizing the children. . . The Governments of the past have definitely neglected the Hill areas and it is only recently that they have recognized at all their responsibility in the matter. . . The question of the policy to be adopted in the Lushai Hills is still under consideration. In the Mikir Hills Government schools are being opened and arrangements are being made for the production of Mikir text-books in Assamese character."

This but confirms what I have already published in these columns. One only hopes that things will be better managed now.

SEVAGRAM, June 3, 1940

Harijan, 15-6-1940

330. TO SEGAON WORKERS

June 3, 1940

Today I wanted to send for everyone and talk to them: but the mind resisted. Perhaps I could do the same thing by writing. A letter and a pen belonging to Radhabehn[1] were stolen last night or this morning. I was shocked. Theft of a letter and a pen is an ordinary matter: but this theft has some peculiar aspects. However it be, this theft has brought me to the conclusion that I am a wholly incompetent person. That such a thing should happen in my very presence indicates that my penance is defective. A pure heart is the real foundation of any penance. It is said that violence is subdued in the presence of non-violence, untruth in the presence of truth and stealing in the presence of non-stealing. What is my worth if untruth, violence and stealing survive in my presence? How can I give any battle? All these questions do arise. But giving up will be cowardice. What, then, is one to do? The answer I get is that if the theft is not traced I should fast. The theft took place in Ba's room. The pen has been discovered. Budhu found it near the hospital gate at about 10 yesterday. Bits of

[1] Daughter of Maganlal Gandhi

paper were also found later. I feel that this is not the work of a servant. Someone who has access to Ba's room has done it. There are a few such persons. Why then do I address this to all ashram inmates? That is because you know one another well and may help in the enquiry. If I have to resort to a fast then, in any case, everyone will know. It is better that I do not have to say all this on that occasion. If a fast becomes necessary you will know the reason and remain calm. I am convinced that if the theft is not traced, I must fast. No one should join the fast or interfere with it. I must do whatever I consider my duty. I do not know how long I shall fast. If the theft is not traced by Friday, the fast will commence from Saturday. I hope the culprit will bring me peace by making a clean breast of it and save me from having to fast in these critical days. Everyone makes mistakes but the real cleansing comes by owning them. I myself stole once. I owned it up and freed myself of the taint for ever. Ba too resorted to thieving. What should I say about others? I do not know. But the instances of the two of us should help everyone in cleaning themselves.

BAPU

[PS.]

It would be kenough to read this out to the permanent inmates of the ashram. They should be summoned now or tomorrow to hear this. Those who cannot be present then may read this note.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6866. Also C.W. 4674

331. A NOTE

[After *June 3, 1940*][1]

You admit that it is only someone from amongst us who has done it. You should then try and find out. If I could do it, I would do so at once.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 632

[1] From the obvious reference to the theft; *vide* the preceding item. The following notes have been dated on the same basis.

332. A NOTE

[After *June 3, 1940*]

Can you tell something? Who could take the pen? There was a letter too.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 630

333. A NOTE

[After *June 3, 1940*]

Why waste my time like this? Why should you bother about what I do after you leave? If you are concerned with the matter, then don't go. I am unable to see at the moment. Do you or do you not agree that this is not the work of the servants? That you admitted it, is no crime, it is the truth. From you I merely understood that the servants had not done it. Besides, the matter ended then. I am convinced that the servants are not responsible. I am talking about you and me when I accept the innocence of the servants. Have you ever spoken or practised untruth in life? I have seen hundreds of Mussalmans swearing by the Koran and uttering falsehood. Some others swear by the Gita. If a Kazi says that you have committed a theft, will you admit the guilt? Then why do you unnecessarily raise the issue of a judge? I have heard your argument on the way. Do not hold your tongue. Say whatever you wish to say. I have said only this much. If the servants have not done it, there remain Ba, Johra, Abha, Lilavati and you. Your proof - my suspicion. This much. . . . [1]

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 706

334. A NOTE

[After *June 3, 1940*]

You took no notice of my words yesterday. I insist that you go to the root of the matter. I am convinced that the servants did not do it. It is so much on my mind that I have no peace. Unless things clear up in a day or two, I shall have no alternative but to fast if I am to have peace.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 707

[1] Incomplete in the source

335. A NOTE

[After *June 3, 1940*]

I am at my wit's end. I suspect everyone and no one. Supposing Ba herself has done it!

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 692

336. A NOTE

[After *June 3, 1940*]

It is not so. The fast will be avoided only when my suspicion is dispelled or confirmed. My quarrel with God is why He allows such things. Why does He permit suspicion to creep into my mind?

As for your not caring, well if you have not done it, why should you care what happens? Yes, you can help in tracing the theft. You yourself admitted that this was not the work of the servants.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 650

337. A NOTE

[After *June 3, 1940*]

What I wish is that you should do your work, eat well and be happy. You know what a terrific quarrel I had with Ba over my suspicion: she stayed away from me for a whole year. How shall I say what other things I did. But Ba showed courage. In the end, after four or more years, my suspicion was dispelled. It was not a matter of stealing. It was something worse. You do not know me ! How could I have told you all this? Sheikh Mehtab was behind this. He kept me under his thumb for more than ten years. On his suggestion, I came to doubt the character of. Ba. I broke her bangles, refused to have anything to do with her and sent her away to her parents. The hatchet was buried only after my return from England. It was then that I realized fully after many years how wicked Sheikh Mehtab was. He threatened me many times. But finally he relented. He continued to worship me from a distance. This is a long tale, pleasant as well as pathetic.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 641 a and 648

338. A NOTE

[After *June 3, 1940*]

Tell Chimanlalbhai to show your notes and mine to everyone. You want that , don't you? I on my part don't. Why should I? I am concerned only with you. What is the use of disclosing my suspicion? But I cannot stop you, nor do I want to. The argument about who said so is over. Then why do you ask who told him? That you showed the letter to Chimanlalbhai was the end of your duty. He is the manager.

I wrote because you asked me.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 721

339. A NOTE

[After *June 3, 1940*]

you have kept a copy. Now you should not take my time over this. Whatever you wish to make public, you may. Why should I withdraw anything? I for my part do not want any further discussion on the matter; but if you wish to tell everyone for your own satisfaction, you are free to do so.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 722

340. NOTES

PEACE IN SIROHI

Some time ago I had regretfully to comment on happenings in Sirohi.[1] I am therefore happy to be able to note that there is now peace between the State and the people. The credit may be equally divided between the State and the satyagrahis. The satyagrahis were ably led by Acharya Gokulnhai who is a firm believer in the principles of satyagraha. Let me hope that the relations between the two will daily become more and more cordial and that there never will be any cause for quarrel between the State and the people.

UNTOUCHABILITY

Shri T. S. Jadhav, President, District Local Board. Sholapur, writes:[2]

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 18-9-1939

[2] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.

I have been incessantly making efforts to five facilities to the Harijans especially with regard to their immediate needs in respect of water supply, education, etc. The Congress Board has opened a good number of wells to the Harijans, and has also arranged to put up notices to that effect at these wells. But it is a matter of regret that the Harijans are not inclined to take advantage of this facility for fear of being put to trouble by the 'touchables'. During my tours in the district, I have been requesting the latter to allow Harijans the exercise of this legitimate right. . . I go myself to a public well in a village after a public meeting with some Harijans, 'touchable' Congress workers, and

a few other prominent villagers, and all of us drink water from the well after it has been drawn by a Harijan. But it is found that the 'touchables' who take part in this function are often boycotted and the Harijans visited with various kinds of troubles by the 'touchables' who do not participate in the function . . . . Can you suggest anything more?

This certainly is good work. Removal of untouchability is a question of double education, that of 'touchables' as well as 'un-touchables'. 'Touchables' have to be taught patiently by precept and example that untouchability is a sin against God and humanity, and the 'untouchables' that they should cease to fear the 'touchables' and shed untouchability among themselves. I know that that is very easily said. But I have found nothing else. Living in the midst of both, I know how hard the work is among both. If Hinduism is to live, the work has to be done, however difficult and even hopeless it may appear to be.

HAND-MADE PAPER

Shri Jadhav further writes:

Secondly, I have been using hand-made paper for the use of the District Local Board office since the advent of the Congress Party in the Board. Use of mill paper or foreign paper is absolutely discontinued, and as far as my information goes, ours is the only Board in Maharashtra which has been using hand-made paper for its office use to the complete exclusion of other paper. I had sent a circular letter to the Presidents of the other Boards in Maharashtra, requesting them to follow this practice of our Board, and I am glad a few of them have agreed to do so. But I think it will be better if you yourself request the presidents of the Congress Boards in India to use hand-made paper for their office purposes. This can well be done through the columns of *Harijan*, and I am sure it will go a long way in bringing into reality your dream of revival of village industries as far as writing paper is concerned.

I gladly support this plea. Indeed I have often enough said the same thing in these columns. Shri Jadhav's example should be copied by all Local Boards not merely in the matter of hand-made paper but all village products. With a little care, the Boards should be able to manage these things within their budget. I should also suggest that the Boards have these things manufactured in the villages under their jurisdiction as far as possible. The purpose of the village movement will be defeated if this central fact is not borne in mind. Decentralization is the beauty of the movement as also the key to its success.

RED CROSS FUND

The same letter mentions the following:

> Then, with respect to the Real Cross Fund. Efforts are afoot in this district to collect money for this fund on a very large scale by means of sale of lottery tickers. These tickets are sold to the villagers against their wishes and in spite of their inability to do so. This is being done through undue influence without leaving any proof of the same behind. At some places the Patil-kulkarnis do not accept land revenue if the agriculturist does not buy these tickets. I have received a number of complaints in writing to this effect during my recent tour in the district. I am communicating these complaints to the proper Government authorities.

This subject too I have already dealt with. I have explained that in such matters there should be no compulsion. Over-zealous officials may resort to unfair means bordering on compulsion. There is no statutory obligation to subscribe to such funds. Those who do not wish to, well certainly not subscribe. These irregular collections are often vexing and should be stopped by the authorities wherever discovered.

COMILLA MUNICIPALITY AND HARIJANS

Shri Thakkar Bapa sends the following interesting account of what the Comilla Municipality has done and proposes doing for Harijans:

> 1. 15 days' leave with full pay in a year, and maternity leave to female sweepers.
>
> 2. A free primary school in their quarters.
>
> 3. Corrugated-iron-roof huts for (a) Naga sweepers at a cost of Rs. 1,500 and (b) for other sweepers at a cost of Rs. 3,000. Some Nagas in East Bengal and Surma valley have taken to scavenging work.

4. The sweepers have been relieved almost wholly from their indebtedness, which totalled about Rs. 3,000 and on which they were paying an interest of three annas per rupee per month or 225 per cent!

The Commissioners intend to adopt the following further measures for them:

1. To start a co-operative store, proposal for which has been sent to the Registrar of Co-operative Societies for registration.

2. Sweepers have to be weaned form their drinking habit, which it is known is a difficult task.

3. The insanitary drain behind the sweepers' quarters requires to be made into a pucca drain.

4. Providing kitchens for sweepers' quarters, as at present they have to cook and sleep in the same room.

This reminds one of what the Ahmedabad Municipality has done in the matter. The latter is possibly more thorough. But that does not in any way detract from the merit of what the Comilla Municipality has done. It deserves warm congratulation. Let us hope that the prospective reforms too will be carried out in good time.

SEVAGRAM, June 4, 1940

Harijan, 8-6-1940

341. HINDU-MUSLIM

Thus writes a Khan Bahadur from Delhi:

This is a letter for the Question Box in *Harijan*.

In your article in *Harijan* of April 6[1] , you observe as follows:

"I should be failing in my duty, if I did not warn the Mussalmans against the untruth that is being propagated amongst them. This warning is a duty because I have faithfully served them in their hour of need and because Hindu-Muslim unity has been and is my life's mission."

I will request you to consider the Hindu-Muslim problem from our point of view. The stumbling-block to any negotiations for a settlement of the communal question has been the refusal of the Congress to recognize the All-India Muslim League as the authoritative and sole representative body of the Indian Mussalmans. The Congress claims that it speaks for whole India and that it has on its rolls a considerable number of Mussalmans, the very fact that the Congress has made several attempts to come to terms with Mr. Jinnah

[1] *Vide* "Baffling Situation", 28-11-1939

shows that it is not fully confident of its representative character, as far as the Mussalmans are concerned. But do not honestly feel that the Congress Mussalmans are the real stumbling-block in the way of Hindu-Muslim unity, and that it is for their sake that the Congress is not making a serious effort to solve the problem? Believe me, they are a lazy lot who are enjoying their present position because they are in the Congress.

You know what the Muslim masses did to your President[1] in Calcutta where for years he had been leading Id prayer. You also know that they have no courage to address a Muslim meeting to convert the Mussalmans to their point of view. You blame the British for creating Princes, Moderates and Khan Bahadurs like me. You blame the British for trying to create another Ulster in India. Has not the Congress created equivalent Moderates and Khan Bahadurs in Azads, Asaf Alis and Kidwais? Is not the action of the Congress tantamount to creation of a Muslim Ulster?

You may cite the case of Mr. Asaf Ali succeeding in the municipal elections of Delhi. I may inform you that but for a division in the Provincial League and bad handling of the situation Mr. Asaf Ali would never have won the election. I may inform you that even as it is, when Delhi Congress wanted to contest the municipal elections as a party, Mr. Asaf Ali , who is now a member of the Congress Working Committee, had declined to take a Congress ticket. Therefore, Mr. Asaf Ali's election was not a test case; and if you pardon my saying so, even now let Mr. Asaf Ali reseek election on a Congress ticket, and I am confident that any League candidate would defeat him. You will thus realize that your being baffled by the Lahore resolution[2] of the League is not justified when Mussalmans have ceased to trust in your life's mission regarding Hindu-Muslim unity. On the other hand they are convinced that the sole aim of the Congress, for the last ten years at least, has been to divide and rule the Mussalmans. I will beg of you to reconsider your attitude towards the League. Please don't trust the Congressite Mussalmans, for they are not only the 'Mir Jafars' amongst us, but the enemies of Hindu-muslim accord and India's freedom.

Just now I am inundated with letters of protest from Muslim friends. Most writers do not argue. They five themselves satisfaction by abusing. Pyarelal, who opens and deals with the daily post, gives me only those letters which he thinks I should see. Of these I take notice of those I think I must. In some cases I answer them privately.

[1] Abul Kalam Azad
[2] Demanding a separate Muslim State

Therefore correspondents who never receive acknowledgement either through Harijan or the post should know the reason.

There are some Muslim letters of sympathy too. One of them says that in his house he has to listen to wildest criticism of me. No adjective is too bad to use. Much criticism he knows to be false. What is he to do, he asks. Is he to leave the house, or is he to engage in endless disputation and convert his house into a bear garden? I have advised my correspondent neither to leave the house nor to engage in a discussion. If he can, he may put in mild word when he knows that a manifest falsehood is being uttered and believed.

The correspondence in my possession and the Urdu press cuttings and even some English cuttings from journals owned by Muslims go to show that I am believed to be the arch enemy of Islam and Indian Muslims. If I was at one time acclaimed as their greatest friend and suffered the praise, I must suffer too to be described as an enemy. Truth is known only to God. I am confident that in nothing that I am doing, saying or thinking, I am their enemy. They are blood-brothers and will remain so, though they may disown me ever so much.

Now for the Khan Bahadur's letter.

I have never understood the reason behind the demand for the recognition by the Congress of the All-India Muslim League as the sole and authoritative Muslim body. Why should such an admission be demanded or expected? How is it compatible with a genuine desire for a settlement?

The Congress attempts to represent all. But it has never demanded recognition as such from anybody. The all-India status has to be deserved. But whether it be deserved or not, admission there of is a superfluity. The Congress has never claimed that it represents the whole of Indian Muslims. It has not claimed to represent any single community wholly. But it does claim to represent every single national interest irrespective of class, caste, colour or creed. Even that claim need not be admitted by those who deal with it. It should be sufficient consolation to each party that it is considered by the other important enough to seek friendship with.

The Congress has always frankly admitted that it has not on its register as many Muslims as it would like. But it has been proud to have had the support of many eminent Muslims. Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan was the tallest among them. Qaid-e-Azam himself was a great

Congressman. It was only after non-co-operation that he, like many other Congressmen belonging to several communities, left it. Their defection was purely political. They disliked direct action.

It is wrong to swear at the nationalist Muslims simply because they are attached to the Congress. If they become members of the League, they will become worthy Muslims!!! My correspondent simply does not know how much Congress Muslims are trying to bring about unity. When unity is re-established, as it must be, I have no doubt that nationalist Muslims will get their due both from Hindus and Muslims.

It is torture of truth to suggest that they are so many Mir Jafars. They are betraying neither Islam nor India. They are as true Muslims according to their lights as members of the League claim to be. It is equal torture of truth to suggest that the Congress is following the British method of divide and rule. The Congress is a political party with one single aim. It would be a bad day for India if the Congress could be proved to have mean motives. Is it mean to woo Muslim opinion by the fairest means imaginable? Rightly or wrongly the Congress does not believe in watertight compartments on a communal basis. If religion is allowed to be, as it is, a personal concern and a matter between God and man, there are many dominating common factors between the two which will compel common life and common action. Religions are not for separating men from one another, they are meant to bind them. It is a misfortune that today they are so distorted that they have become a potent cause of strife and mutual slaughter.

It will perhaps now be clear why I can have no concern with Asaf Ali Saheb's case. I would grant that he would be beaten in a contest between him and a Leaguer. Let it be further granted that such will be the case in the majority of such contests. It will in no way weaken my position. It will prove the superior organizing ability of the League and its popularity among the Muslims. I have not doubted either. My case is incredibly simple. I must not be called upon to make any admissions about the status of the League before thinking of unity through the League. I must not be disloyal to the Muslim nationalists however insignificant they may be considered to be. I ask the Khan Bahadur, the writer of the letter under discussion, to exert his influence to bring the two communities together.

SEVAGRAM, June 4, 1940

Harijan, 8-6-1940

342. PANIC

Nowadays one reads about panic in the Press and hears more than one reads. One friend writes:

> You sitting in lonely Sevagram can have no notion of the talks and whispers going on in the busy cities. Panic has seized them.

Panic is the most demoralizing state anyone can be in. There never is any cause for panic. One must keep heart whatever happens. War is an unmitigated evil. But it certainly does one good thing, it drives away fear and brings bravery to the surface. Several million lives must have been already lost between the Allies and the Germans. They have been wasting blood like water. Old men, women both old and young , and children in Britain and France are living in the midst of imminent death. But there is no panic there. If they were seized by it panic would be an enemy more dreadful than German bullets, bombs and poison gas. let us learn from these suffering nations of the West an banish panic from our midst. And in India there is no cause whatsoever for panic. Britain will die hard and heroically even if she has to. We may hear of reverses, but we will not hear of demoralization. Whatever happens will happen in an orderly manner.

Therefore I would say to those who lend a listening ear to me: Go on with your work or business in the usual way. Do not withdraw your deposits or make haste to turn your paper into cash. If you are cautious, you will run no new risks. Your metal buried underground of in your treasure chests need not be considered safer than in banks or in paper if anarchy overtakes us. There is risk just now in everything. It is best to be as you are in such a condition. Your steadiness, if it is multiplied, will steady the market. It will be the best preventive against anarchy. There is undoubtedly fear of goondaism in such times. You must be prepared to cope with it yourself. Goondas flourish only in the midst of timid people. They will have no quarter from people who can defend themselves violently or non-violently. Non-violent defence presupposes recklessness about one's life and property. If it is persisted in, it will in the end be a sure cure for goondaism. But non-violence cannot be learnt in a day. It requires practice. You can commence to learn it from now. You must be ready to lose your life or property or both. But that is implied in the art of non-violence. If you do not know how to defend yourself either way, the Government will not be able to save you in spite of its best effort. No Government, however powerful it may be, can without the active

co-operation of the people. If even God only helps those who will help themselves, how much more true it must be of perishable Governments! Do not lose nerve and think that tomorrow there will be no Government and it will be all anarchy. You can be the Government now, and you certainly will be in the contingency you contemplate or you will perish.

SEVAGRAM, June 4, 1940

Harijan, 8-6-1940

343. QUESTION BOX

IF YOU HAVE COURAGE

Q. My mother died last month. I have for a long time been following the practice of eating food cooked by Harijan. The orthodox did not like it, but they tolerated my practice. Three years ago I accepted an invitation for a funeral dinner given by a Muslim friend on the occasion of his mother's demise. Now my mother is dead. My community have now boycotted all functions in connection with my mother's demise. What am I to do?

A. If you have courage, you will let the castemen do their worst, but you will befriend your Muslim friend at all costs and dine with him as often as is necessary. Such boycotts should not be feared at all.

BENEVOLENT DICTATORSHIP

Q. When the rich become callous and selfish and the evil continues unchecked, a revolution of the masses with all the attendant horrors inevitably results. Since life, as you have put it, is often a choice between evils, won't you, in view of the lesson which the history of revolutions inculcates, welcome the rise of a benevolent dictatorship which would with the minimum use of force "soak the rich", give justice to the poor, and thereby serve both?

A. I cannot accept benevolent or any other dictatorship. Neither will the rich vanish nor will the poor be protected. Some rich men will certainly be killed out and some poor men will be spoon-fed. As a class the rich will remain, and the poor also, in spite of dictator-ship labelled benevolent. The real remedy is non-violent democracy, otherwise spelt true education of all. The rich should be taught the doctrine of stewardship and the poor that of self-help.

A SOCIAL NUISANCE

Q. The beggar problem has become a social nuisance everywhere, especially in the cities. India can ill bear the burden of this army of drones. They use self-torture,

sometimes even threats and menaces, to work upon the sympathy and fear of our simple folk and extract alms from them. Some of them have in this way accumulated a secret hoard and lead a life of vice and immorality. What solution would you suggest for this problem?

A. Begging is an age-old institution in India. It was not always a nuisance. It was not always a profession. Now it has become a profession to which cheats have taken. No person who is capable of working for his bread should be allowed to beg. The way to deal with the problem will be to penalize those who give alms to professional beggars. Of course begging itself by the able-bodied should be penalized. But this reform is possible only when municipalities conduct factories where they will feed people against work. The Salvation Army people are or were experts in this class of work. They had opened a match factory in London in which any person who came found work and food. What I have, however, suggused is an immediate palliative. The real remedy lies in discovering the root cause and dealing with it. This means equalizing the economic condition of the people. The present extremes have to be dealt with as a serious social disease. In a healthy society concentration of riches in a few people and unemployment among millions is a great social crime or disease which needs to be remedied.

ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE OF WOMEN

Q. Some people oppose a modification of laws relating to the right of a married woman to own property on the ground that economic independence of woman would lead to the spread of immorality among women and disruption of domestic life. What is your attitude on the question.

A. I would answer the question by a counter question: Has not independence of man and his holding property led to the spread of immorality among men? If you answer 'yes' then let it be so also with women. And when women have rights of ownership and the rest like men, it would be found that the enjoyment of such rights is not responsible for their vices or their virtues. Morality which depends upon the helplessness of a man or woman has not much to recommend it. Morality is rooted in the purity of our hearts.

A TEMPLE TRUSTEE'S POSER

Q. I am a member of the A. I. C. C. Personally I neither believe in nor observe taboos relating to untouchability. But I am trustee of a temple built by my ancestors who were thoroughly orthodox in their religious outlook. I feel that it

would be a breach of trust to throw it open to Harijans. Would that stand in the way of my signing the satyagraha pledge?

A. It would stand very much in the way of your signing the pledge. It would be no breach of trust if the law allows you to open the temple. The condition was immoral as we have now discovered and hence invalid.

UNCERTIFIELD KHADI

Q. You say that a person buying or using mill cloth cannot take the satyagraha pledge. Can a person using, buying or dealing in uncertified khadi take the pledge or hold offices in Congress committee? Is a person or an association other than the A. I. S. A. entitled to certify khadi dealers?

A. Certainly not, I repeatedly said that a person who uses or deals in uncertified khadi damages khadi and directly exploits the spinners and weavers whose lot the A. I. S. A. is striving to improve. Such persons can neither take the pledge nor hold any office in a Congress organization. No person or institution other than the A. I. S. A. can issue the required certificates.

STUDENTS' DIFFICULTY

Q. We are students in Poona. We are taking part in the drive against illiteracy. Now in the parts we are visiting there are drunkards who threaten us if we go to teach people. Those among whom we are working are Harijans. They get frightened. Some suggest that proceedings should be taken against these drunkards. Some suggest we should try your method of wooing them. Will you advise?

A. You are doing good work. Literacy drive and many such things are by-products of the big reform, perhaps the biggest of modern times. As to the drunkards they must be treated as diseased person entitled to our sympathy and service. You should, therefore, reason with them when they are sober, and take even the beating, if any, with good grace. I do not rule out court proceedings, but they will be evidence of want of enough ahimsa in you. But you cannot go against your nature. If you do not evoke response from them to your wooing, your work must not be held up because of the obstruction referred to by you. Recourse to legal proceedings is then indicated. But you must make all honest effort before you go to law.

SEVAGRAM, June 4, 1940

Harijan, 8-6-1940

344. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
June 4, 1940

CHI. AMRIT,

Shall I also write in Hindi? Put up with at least a little. I had intended, as I still do, to write a long letter, but it cannot be managed. One business after another keeps turning up and such letters have to remain unwritten.[1]

It is my intention to give you some satisfaction on the points raised by you but I could not do. I have just (4 p.m.) finished the last article for *Harijan* and I have taken up this to inform you of my helplessness.

Poor Lilavati. She had a scorpion sting last night and again this morning. Fortunately, the pain each time was quite bearable, she is up and doing. So the Sevagram charkha goes on.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Your donation to the treasurer, Santiniketen, earmarked Andrews Hall on Western Culture.

From the original: C. W. 4237. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur . also G.N. 7870

345. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,
June 4, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have your letter. I also am not happy that there are three of your there[2]. But you and Kanchan can be counted as one patient; hence you are three patients and three nurses to attend on them. That is how I console myself. I want that both of you should somehow have peace of mind.

[1] The foregoing is in Hindi. What follows is in English.
[2] At Panchagani where the addressee had gone for treatment

I have all along been of the opinion that Balkrishna and Kunvarji[1] should spend the monsoon months there. You may also decide whether both or one of you should stay there during the period. If Kunvarji's health is satisfactory he may be able to manage with a local servant, but think over the matter. My decision is that both of you should stay there.

Blessing from

BAPU

[PS.]

Today I am not writing separately to anybody else.

Form a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8536. Also C. W. 7093. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

346. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

June 4, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

What a girl you are! Everyone had been looking forward to welcoming you today and then came your telegram.

I passed by Ba's room after my bath. Ba asked what she should do about her cough. I said she need not worry since you would be coming today. She agreed. Then I went to my room and found your telegram.

Your arrival thus is being awaited. Yesterday your two letters came together. In one of them you have expressed some doubt as regards your examination result. May your doubt prove baseless. I am somewhat impatient to know the result.I shall be thankful if God takes the load off your mind. You will probably know the result while you are there. Send me a telegram if you do.

Ba's cough persists. It is mild of course. Jamnalalji has been put up here. His weight has gone down considerably. He has been put on a diet. How far he ultimately benefits remains to be seen.

I am keeping very good health. The weight has gone down. One cannot eat much in this heat.

Enclosed is a letter from Pyarelal. It, was received yesterday. It is about the things you have to bring from there. There are also letters to others. I am sending them along. You will explain the mistake about the watch.

[1] Kunvarji Parekh, husband of Rami, Harilal Gandhi's daughter

This letter will go from here on Thursday. You should get it on Friday, before you leave. Hence, I am not sending the telegram about the things Pyarelal wants.

Mahadev has not yet come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

347. NOTE TO AMTUSSALAAM

June 4, 1940

Then why don't you be quiet? What is the point in arguing over it?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.

Please excuse me . I am silent.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 662

348. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 4, 1940

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I understand about Bal.

You may bring the children whenever you like. The days are hot but the nights have become pleasant.

Blessing from

BAPU

SETH GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
BIRLA HOUSE
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD
BOMBAY

From Hindi: C. W. 8038. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

349. A NOTE

A SINCERE WORKER IS GONE

Bhai Fulchand writes from wadhwan as follows:[1]

This heart-rending picture needs no addition of colour. Vaishnav was a true *vaishnava*[2] . The best way to perpetuate his memory would be not to let a single activity of his suffer, go in vain and for everyone to strive to be like him.

SEVAGRAM, June 5, 1940

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 9-6-1940

350. LETTER TO PREMI JAIRAMDAS

SEVAGRAM,
June 5, 1940

DEAR PREMI,

What a bad girl you are? You have not written to me for ages. What was your promise? How is Father?

Love.

BAPU

SHRI PREMIBEHN
C/O SHRI JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
HYDERABAD, SIND

From the original: C. W. 11053. Courtesy: Arjun Jairamdas

[1] The letter is not translated here. it described the death from tuberculosis of Chamanbhai Vaishnav, who was in Yeravda Prison in 1932 with Gandhiji.

[2] Devotee of Vishnu

351. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

SEVAGRAM , WARDHA ,
June 5, 1940

BHAI PRITHVI SINGH

I get your letters regularly. If you come. we shall discuss the matter then and decide about the future. Just now you are gaining good experience from your tours.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SWAMI RAO VYAYAM MANDIR
BHAVNAGAR
KATHLAWAR

From Gujarati: C. W. 2951. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

352. TO SEGAON WORKERS

June 5, 1940

I hear that the servants are being questioned regarding the theft of the pen and letter. I have said that I do not suspect them at all and they should not be harassed in the least. I was pained and continue to be pained that someone from amongst us has committed the theft. I will change my mind when the person is identified. May God give the guilty person sense to confess the guilt.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6866; also C. W. 4674

353. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

[Before *June 6, 1940*][1]

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

It is easy to understand. When a father suspects one of his sons, but does not know who exactly it is, he seeks solace in a fast. If the

[1] This seems to have been written before the following item.

sons love him, they come out with a confession. True, I am only guessing but we men are not omniscient.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]
Bapuki Chhayamen, p. 275

354. A LETTER

[On or before *June 6, 1940*][1]

DAUGHTER,

My heart trembles at the thought of writing such a letter. But I must write it if my love for you is hones. I have thought over it a great deal and my suspicion turns on you. How far is it justified? Either you or Ba could have taken that letter. I am convinced that Ba has not taken it. It is not that Ba has never committed a theft. She has. I have announced it to the entire ashram. Why does my suspicion turn on you? It is no use going into that. If you have done it, you know it; if you have not done it, it will serve no purpose for you to know the ground of my suspicion.

You have one defect. You do not often see your faults and when you do you do not often confess them. If you have done it, that will not make you a different person. Others also have made mistakes. Munilal was guilty of a grave error, for which I fasted for seven days and missed a meal every day for a year. I fasted for 14 days on account of Jekibehn, it was not then a matter of letter having been stolen, but of lying. Chhaganlal was guilty of theft, too. I, of course, committed theft. Everyone errs. But everyone does not confess. If you have been guilty, you will tell me. If you have not done it, you should not care what I do. This is my injunction.

I am writing this with a heavy heart. Do not kick up a row. If you have sinned do not worry. If you have you not there is nothing to worry about.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 711

[1] *Vide* "Note to Mahadev Desai", 6-6-1940.

355. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
June 6, 1940

CHI. AMRIT,

I have your letter and the translation of "Not yet". "Not yet" should mean "It will still be some time" and not "Not just now ". I have made a beginning at revising it.[1]

I am sorry I was late sending you the articles last time. It was wholly my fault. Herewith this week's. I hope you got the book-post which contains the articles and my revision of some translation.[2]

There was an outpouring [sic] last night. The weather is decidedly much less hot than yesterday. You can descend after 15th so far as the heat is concerned.

Your corrections are good.

Love

BAPU

From the original : C. W. 4238. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7871

356. NOTE TO MAHADEV DESAI

June 6, 1940

I told A. S. about my suspicion. She has replied, too. Let us now see what she does. She keeps on telling me to publish that letter. I do now know whether to treat it as a threat or just an angry outburst. I am gaining good experience.,

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

357. NOTE TO MAHADEV DESAI

June 6, 1940

It seems you are absolutely wrong. As long as I had only a faint suspicion in my mind, how could I speak? When the suspicion persists

[1] The foregoing is in Hindi. What follows is in English.
[2] *Vide* "letter to Amrit Kaur", 1-6-1940.

and gets stronger, then it becomes my duty to put it before those whom I love. I have realized that even those who seemed above suspicion have turned out not to be so. Now I shall know the facts. If I have done any injustice, that also I will know now. It was my duty to tell her of my suspicion.[1]

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

358. LETTER TO SARASWATI GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 6, 1940

CHI. SARU,

I got your letter. Why these repeated apologies? Everyone makes mistakes. You two did so too. I have long forgotten about it. Do parents keep a record of the mistakes of their children? Some day you will certainly come here. We have not boycotted you and Kanti. Do not be unhappy. Ba had no grievance at all.

It will be good if the rains come soon. It rained here last night.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI. SARASWATI GANDHI
VORA HARIDAS WAKHATCHAD'S HOUSE
BEHIND HIGHT SCHOOL
RAJKOT (KATHIAWAR)

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6179. Also C. W. 3453. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi.

359. LETTER TO KANHAIYALAL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 6, 1940

BHAI KANHAIYALAL,

I got your *hundi*[2]. I am utilizing it for the Harijan Fund. Mirabehn has arrived safe.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 10050; also C. W. 6455

[1] This was in response to the adressee's reply to the preceding item.
[2] Bill of exchange

360. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM ,
June 6, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Why attach such importance to Ba's criticism? It was all right that Amtul Salaam was questioned. It would have been equally all right if she had not been questioned. It is either way a trivial matter. It is best not to brood over such things.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4348; also S. G. 82

361. LETTER TO GOPAL NARAYAN SHIROMANY

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 6, 1940

DEAR SHIROMANY,

I have read the Judgment. You may convey my opinion to anyone about what cannot come under the purview of Defence of India Rules. But what is the good of giving it to the Press? If there is any advantage in it, do explain it to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SHIROMANY
SAINIK OFFICE
AGRA, U. P.

From the Hindi original: C. W. 10943. Courtesy: Gopal Narayan Shiromany

362. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

[*June 6, 1940*][1]

Lilavatibehn told me that dates were being washed with tap water, that water pots lying on the ground were dipped into the jars, and so on. In all such matters we should observe norms of hygiene. We should make rules in this respect and display them on the notice

[1] The date is in a hand other than Gandhiji's.

board. They should be observed. Let them be framed in consultation with Sushilabehn[1].

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 4347

363. A NOTE

[*After June 6, 1940*][2]

I have paid no attention to it. I dismissed the matter when it was first reported. I do not know anything about it. It did not disturb me. Yes, if my suspicion is proved correct in this case, then the matter of Lilavati's letter may crop up. But I am striving for something else. What is the worth of Radha's pen or her letter? But after these four days of quarrelling the terrible thought has possessed me that you have done it. You annoy me What more shall I write? Leave me.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 705

364. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

Personal SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 7, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I have to thank you for your two letter of 3rd instant.

I think I understand your letter about the war situation.[3] My intense prayer to the Almighty is for a speedy end of this terrible suffering.

As to Miss Sheridan's bust I do not know that you have not brought a hornet's nest about your ears.[4] You are sure to have protests against the acceptance. And as it seems to me nothing is to be gained by the step you contemplate. As a mark of personal affection natu-

[1] Sushila Nayyar

[2] This seems to have been written after notes ot Mahadev Desai of 6-6-1940

[3] *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 26-5-1940.

[4] The Viceroy had informed Gandhiji that he had been given by the Maharja of Darbhanga a bust of Gandhiji done by Clare Sheridan and thathe proposed in the first instance to have it exhibited in Bombay and thereafter "to make it over to the Goverment of India with the suggestion that it should ultimately find a permanent home in the national capital".

rally I esteem your action. I am merely presenting an impersonal view for you consideration.

I shall not expect any reply to this letter.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a printed copy. Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

365. LETTER TO BHASHYAM[1]

June 7, 1940

I am quite clear that you should obey every order even to the non-holding of meetings. Such voluntary obedience of orders, even unreasonable, produces a capacity for non-violent resistance which becomes invincible. It disarms suspicion. If you knowingly do these and the people too follow you knowingly you will feel a new strength to which you were stranger before. Obstacles there will be. They have to be conquered intelligently.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

366. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, ,

June 7, 1940

DEAR SIR AKBAR,

I have slept all these nights over your unkind letter of 28th ultimo.[2] I see I have lost caste with you. I thought you would take my word for it that I knew nothing of the Muzaffarpur violence by

[1] Presumably K. T. Bhashyam of Banglore

[2] In this the addressee had referred to the concern Gandhiji had shown at the communal riot at Bidar in Hyderabad and asked how it was that a similar riot in Muzaffarpur, Bihar, where Muslims had suffered, had escaped Gandhiji's notice. *Vide* also "Question Box", 6-5-1940.

Hindus.[1] I am now trying to find out what it was. For that matter, I knew nothing of Bidar till parties wrote to me and sent papers.

I had hoped that you knew me sufficiently to know that whenever occasion had arisen I had not spared Hindus. So far as Hyderabad is concerned, I have been particularly careful and avoided public reference to Hyderabad when I might have. I thought you had given me credit too for my reticence. Even as it is I am guiding the Hyderabad State Congress (now defunct) and restraining them. But I must not plead for myself. Only I feel sorry that you can think so unkindly as to write that last sentence in your letter.

I hope Lady Hydari's improvement has continued

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G. N. 6845. Also from the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

367. LETTER TO HRIDAYA NATH KUNZRU

June 7, 1940

I am glad I got the statement. In a way the statement raises p. In my estimation. He has expanded his philosophy. But the cleavage is definite. He has taken the Society;s[2] name in vain. I hope you will have smooth sailing. But smooth or rough, your way is clear. There is no room for compromise. Even if you are in a hopeless minority you will take the satyagraha [*sic*] with you for God's spirit will be with you. Hope you are keeping well in this turmoil.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

368. LETTER TO SHIVA RAO

June 7, 1940

You are wonderful. I have read your letter to Mahadev. The draft[3] requires drastic amendments. In any case I won't make them. I

[1] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Akbar Hydari", 9-5-1940.

[2] Servants of India Society

[3] Of a formula for Congress-League rapprochement forwarded to Gandhiji by the addressee

would advise you to send it to Maulana Saheb and to Jawaharlal. My own opinion is that the time for a settlement has not arrived. It will come but not without agony. I have not lost hope but am prepared for the worst.

But you persevere along your own line.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

369. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

SEGAON, WARHDA,
June 7, 1940

DEAR FRIEND,

I was glad to have your letter. Who says you are old.? And of course I am young enough to be your son. I am sorry I cannot move out. What is poor B. P. . . .[1] doing now? C. D. is suspended.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR
THE ARAM
SALEM

From a photostat: C. Vijayaraghavachariar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

370. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 7, 1940

CHI. NARANDAS,

May God give you adequate strength in you famine relief work.

You have written to Nanalal—it is all right. What can I say about Shamaldas[2] ? He does not even answer my letters. But go on trying.[3] Did you write to Kaku?

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] Illegible in the source

[2] Shamaldas Gandhiji, Lakshmidas Gandhiji's son

[3] The reference is to the complaint by Gokibehn, Gandhiji's sister, that she was not receiving money regularly from Shamaldas.

SHRI NARANDAS GANDHI
RASHTRIYASHALA
NAVU PAPU
RAJKOT, KATHIAWAR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U./II. Also C. W. 8575. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

371. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 7, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Yes, when you suspect a dear one, it is your duty to speak out. Suspicion is imaginary. It indicates the evil in you. It is one's duty to suppress it. But when it grows too strong and looks as if it might have consequences, it is necessary to give expression to it. My pain arises out oft he fact that a suspicion should arise in my heart. There have been such occasions earlier and my suspicions proved right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4349; Also S. G. 84

372. TO SEVAGRAM WORKERS

SEVAGRAM,
June 7, 1940

I have to state with regret that my suspicion falls upon A. I am convinced that no servant has done this. So we are left with our own people. When I inquire further, only A. remains to be cleared. She has been closer to me than a daughter, her service has been immense, it is no small matter to suspect her. But I can see no other way. She is equally sure that she has not done it. Under these circumstances, a fast is the only easy way left to me. My fast may be considered as a measure of self-purification. Why should this suspicion arise in me? If she is innocent, then the suspicion indicates impurity in my love. Love never suspects. Faults cannot remain hidden to love. The loved ones feel secure. Ahimsa ordains that no one should look at A. with hatred. Everyone should continue to love her. Let no one presume

that she is a liar and that my suspicion is well founded. I shall not be unhappy if she is found innocent. I shall dance with joy.

My fast commences from tomorrow. I have no idea how long it will last. I shall be guided by the intelligence and strength that God may grant me. No one need worry

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6866; also C. W. 4674

373. NOTE TO PYARELAL AND MAHADEV DESAI

June 7, 1940

You should bear with me. The whole thing reminds me of S. M. Incident[1]. My talk with her makes me tremble. I will not tell you about that today. I will tell you some other time. This will bring to light a good many things. This fast seems to have come as a godsend.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

374. NOTE TO MAHADEV DESAI

June 7, 1940

Ghanshyamdas or anybody else who may be thinking of coming here today should give up the idea. I shall know today what the inner voice says. I have no intention at all this time of carrying the fast to the point of physical suffering. I want to be ready for the 17th[2] and for other work. I wish to fast only as long as I can bear.

As I was preparing to send this note, I got yours. This answers part of it. Rest later. Today I want complete peace. Continue to send your suggestions. I will not reply today.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Sheikh Mehtab incident; *vide* "A Note", 3-6-1940.

[2] On which date the Congress Working Committee was meeting at Wardha

375. A NOTE

[Before *June 8, 1940*][1]

Now all this is unnecessary discussion. Can't you see that I am not in a position to engage you in any work. Why this suspicion against one whom I have loved more than a daughter? I cannot force the suspicion out. Do please leave me alone for the present. You may follow the way God shows you. Leave me in peace. I shall see my way clear when my suspicion is either proved or dispelled. At present, everything is dark. I have not understood why you should want to fast with me. If you do so, you will be coercing me. I thought it was to be a sympathetic fast for a day today. That, too, I would not permit.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 682

376. NON-VIOLENCE AND KHADI

Mr. Richard Gregg, one of whose letters I reproduced some time ago, has sent another which I share with the reader:[2]

> All these months since I wrote you last I have been wrestling intellectually with the problem of discipline for non-violence and of non-violent persuasion and conversion, and how to state them and their solution in Western terminology. As I think I wrote you, I am working on a book about those two aspects of satyagraha, to supplement my *Power of non-violence* . . . My effort is to try to get the Western world to realize the validity and practicalness of your entire programme.
>
> I have been so glad that during these last few months you have insisted so strongly that the Congress must earnestly and loyally take up the khadi programme before you will lead them in any open struggle of satyagraha against the Government. I see clear as crystal the necessity for that. You are absolutely right. . . .
>
> Despite the war and all its horrors, I am optimistic as to the future of non-violence. Never before in all the history of the world have there been so many believers in non-violence , both in absolute number and also relatively to the rest of the population. Never before has that belief been found in all groups, classes, religions and occupations. Never before have so many

[1] From the reference to the fast which Gandhiji was to undertake from the 8th

[2] Only extracts of the letter are reproduced here

prominent statesmen stated earnestly, clearly and publicly the folly, futility and appalling results of war and violence. Never have so many military men been so unsure of the validity and ultimate effectiveness of their method.

All during the past two years and rapidly since the war began, the organized peace movements of Britain and America have grown. . . .

Up to March 9th 26,681 men among the military conscripts of Great Britain had been officially registered as conscientious objectors to war, as compared with about 16,000 for the entire four years of the war of 1914-18. . . In the five or six calls of conscripts in Great Britain between last June and March of this year the percentage of C. O.'s ranged from 1.6 to 2.2%. This may be interestingly compared with the estimate that in all countries the really effective or decisive work of government is done by not over 2% of the population. . . .

If it be true that man's desire for order and significance in his life are stronger than fear and hate, the only programme which can produce order and significance to life will have non-violence as its back-bone . This places a great responsibility upon the believers in non-violence . It will require of them great thought, discipline and social invention. I consider your khadi programme one of those great social inventions. The Wardha education scheme is another.

I am writing a letter to J. C. Kumarappa about some items that that I have long wanted to discuss with him, a set of suggestions for possible experiment by the A. I. V. I. A. One is to try hanging small mosquito-net bags containing napthaline moth balls in village wells a yard or more above the level of the water. The odour of the moth ball is much disliked by mosquitoes, and as it is slightly heavier than unscented air it would lie like a blanket over the surface of the water the keep the mosquitoes from laying their eggs in the water, without harming the water or killing the mosquitoes. Another application of the same idea would be planting certain water-living aromatic herbs along the banks of village tanks and rivers, close to the water's edge. Mosquitoes lay their eggs preferably in shallow water so that the larvae can escape being eaten by small fishes. If the right herbs, of a kind whose odour is repellent to mosquitoes, were thus planted and kept growing, it would seem likely to cut down the malaria in this way. Anyhow I think these two experiments worth trying. The mint family of herbs are known to be repellent to mosquitoes.

Mr. Gregg is a careful thinker. He takes nothing for granted. The last paragraph of his letter shows his practical nature. But I know that no amount of logical thinking is going to establish the supremacy of non-violence on earth. The only thing that can do it is India's

ability to demonstrate beyond doubt its efficacy in gaining and defending national freedom.

SEVAGARAM, June 8, 1940

Harijan, 22-6-1940

377. LETTER TO RICHARD B. GREGG

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 8, 1940

MY DEAR GOVIND,

Yours of 16th April. It is also going into *Harijan* with the paragraph cut out as you wanted[1] .

The letter is good. But all depends upon what we can do here.

Though you are doing good work where you are, I expect you and Radha[2] to turn up here one of these days.

Meanwhile my love to you and Radha.

BAPU

RICHARD B. GREGG, ESQ.
ELIAT SAINT
SOUTH NATICK MASS., U. S. A

From a photostat : C. W. 4521. Courtesy: Richard B. Gregg

378. TO SEVAGRAM WORKERS

June 8, 1940

I notice that no one is with me over my fast; on the contrary everyone opposes it. In this situation I cannot preserve my peace of mind. I have therefore decided to give up the idea of fasting. I shall eat when it is time to eat. This does not mean that my suspicion has been dispelled. Only God can dispel it. Nor do I feel that the intended fast was mistaken. But there are occasions when a man has to give up something for the sake of his colleagues. This is one such occasion. Krishnachandra may copy this in the note-book.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6866; Also C. W. 4674

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The addressee's wife

379. NOTE TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*June 8, 1940*][1]

I did not ask about it.[2] The reason is that I had no proof at all, and still have none. Of circumstantial evidence I have plenty. I see her as another Sheikh Mehtab. You can put an end to everything. I ended the fast for the reason I have explained,[3] but the chapter is not closed for me.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

380. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

June 8, 1940

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have been forgetting to write about Abha. You should write to Mahila Ashram and inform them that her expense will not be borne from here. She is to be admitted as a freeship holder. If the practice of exempting students from fees has been discontinued, then it is a different matter. With whom does the decision rest at present?

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope she will be allowed to wear the same clothes that she does here.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10602

381. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,
June 8, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have your letter. My advice is that at present you should stay there. Let your health also improve. When you yourself feel bored.

[1] This appears to have been written on the day Gandhiji decided against a fast.

[2] The addressee had written to Gandhiji that he would like to find out about the letter which Lilavati had lost

[3] *Vide* the preceding item

You will of course run away from there. Both of you are ill, i.e., in mind. Mental illness should not be neglected.

Blessings from

BAPU

MUNNALAL SHAH

VADILAL AROGYA BHAVAN

PANCHGANI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8535. Also C. W. 7094. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

382. A NOTE

June 8, 1940

I shall take only service from you. When you are sick, go to the kitchen as little as possible; you have to eat and drink merrily. If you cannot do this, then all service will be suspended.

The best thing would be for you to go to Zohra. Set her on the track and also do some spinning, etc. You should return when you are absolutely calm. But this is left entirely to your discretion. In my view Zohra's going will benefit neither Akbar nor Zohra. In this, I may be wrong.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 717

383. A NOTE

[After *June 8, 1940*][1]

'Shall I or shall I not continue doing these two jobs which I used to perform before the theft incident?'—these words of yours in the morning had in them the sting of a scorpion. You say things to me which I do not dream of. Now my verdict is that you have to give up these two things also—shoes and latrine. You are not attached, so you need not be pained. And we shall be quits.

[1] From reference to the theft incident

What shall I write about the other thing? Time alone will show. It is my past experience.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 638

384. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 9, 1940

CHI. AMRIT,

Your two letters came in together. Although the address was correctly written, the first letter went to Shegaon. Ramarkable how the mistake continues. I suppose we must put up with it. I am sending the envelope for complaint.

Your Gujarati is flawless. It shows how you have picked up from the air. It is easy of course for those who know the Punjabi.

Yes, I have commenced you translation of "Our Duty"[1] and some other too. I shall insist on finishing all.

You must not damage your hand or arm. You should learn to draw the thread with the right hand like me.

By the by your watch does not work in my hands. After two days I gave up winding it.

I am glad you have patched up the internal quarrel. But how long will[2] patches last?

You ask me why silence. It is to avoid irritation and save my energy. The output of my work has certainly doubled. Irritation is almost nil. It would be a strain now to speak. I love my silence. I expect M.[3] is giving you all such titbits and A. S.[4]

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C. W. 3972. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7281

[1] *Vide* "Our Duty", 20-5-1940
[2] The source has "with".
[3] Mahadev Desai
[4] Amtussalaam

385. LETTER TO BHOLANATH

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
June 9, 1940

BHAI BHOLANATH,

I have received your letter. I see that the Dewan wants to evade the demands of the Praja Mandal. We have to make a stand somewhere. If you want to give up the insistence on the flag you may. Responsible government should be accepted as the goal. As for affiliation with the All-India Conference, seek a decision from Jawaharlal. I am in two minds.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1378

386. QUESTION BOX

ARRESTS

Q. You must know that arrests after arrests are being made under the defence of India Act. Now your favourite Dr. Lohia is taken up. I suppose you still see no reason for civil disobedience even as a protest against these arrests. Or maybe you think that these arrests are legitimate.

A. The question is apposite. Dr. Lohia is no more my favourite than any other Congressman. True he has come nearer to me than he was. Every arrest evokes my mental protest. But I am not in the habit of reducing all my thoughts to writing. I believe that our thoughts too produce effects, though not known to us or to the world. I felt that any public protest by me would be ineffective. All things are legitimate and illegitimate in war time. I regard war itself as illegitimate. Therefore all repression is bad from my standpoint. But I have as yet no effective remedy against war. Even, therefore, as I suffer war, I suffer these repressive acts of warmakers. One strange thing about India is that, so far as I know, it is not the people who are likely to help the Nazis that are being put under restraint, but those who are patriots hungering for the freedom of the country. In a free country they will be fighting against designs upon their country. Here their chief fault is that they are lovers of their country and its freedom. If the authorities have anything else against them, they should publish it. Repression is on the increase. They know that the Congress is the

most powerful instrument for preventing violence. The Congress has taken no step which might, in spite of its efforts to the contrary, result in violence. It is therefore difficult to understand these acts of repression. They seem to be part of a concerted plan, for they are prevalent in almost all provinces. One reflection I put before Congressmen for what it is worth. Imprisonment has no terror for them. Civil disobedience means certain imprisonment. The difference is that in the one case it is courted, in the other it comes uninvited. Therefore any step the Congress can take will be not to secure the discharge of the persons arrested but to take wind out of the Government sails by offering more victims than they can take. Therefore the question is whether the Congress should take that step or not.

INCONSISTENCY

Q. Recently you wrote: "The present is no atmosphere for influencing the Britisher in the right direction through civil disobedience." And in the same article[1] you said: "I would unhesitatingly declare civil disobedience if he country was demonstrably non-violent and disciplined." Now the question is, if the country is demonstrably non-violent after some time, and the war continues for a long time, will you start civil disobedience? And if you start it, will it not embarrass the Britisher? Will you hesitate to start civil disobedience if the group outside the congress are not non-violent?

A. If you will fill in the sentences left to be understood in my article, you will not find any inconsistency. The present atmosphere means English unreadiness to put up with anything when the safety of English homes is at stake. It also means our very incomplete non-violence. If we were completely and therefore demonstrably non-violent, it would mean that the British themselves would recognize our non-violence . Any purely non-violent step cannot embarrass them. As a matter of fact, if our non-violence was complete, we would have no internal differences, no friction in the Congress ranks, no friction with non-Congressmen. In that case there would be no occasion for civil disobedience at all. I have said as much only recently in these columns. I have put the same thing in another manner in the sentence quoted by you. For a non-violent step taken by a united nation will carry its own fruition without any bitterness. Therefore I should be ready for action the moment the non-violence of my dream is establish, no matter in what peril the British may find themselves.

[1] *Vide* "Not Yet", 28-5-1940.

Indeed, if that non-violence comes, it will not only save India but also save Britain and France. But you will be on safe ground in saying that I wrote nonsense because I knew that the degree of non-violence required by me was not forthcoming in my time. I am an irrepressible optimist. No scientist starts his experiments with a faint heart. I belong to the tribe of Columbus and Stevenson who hoped against hope in the face of heaviest odds. The days of miracles are not gone. They will abide so long as God abides. Your second question is answered in the foregoing. Of course in the picture here presented non-Congress groups will also have accepted non-violence . But first things first. Let the congress put its own house in order.

A WIDOW'S DIFFICULTY

Q. I am a Bengali Brahmin widow. Since my widowhood - these 24 years - I have observed strict rules about my food. I have my separate widow's kitchen and utensils even in my own family. I believe in your ideal of truth and non-violence , I am a habitual wearer of Khadi since 1930 and a regular spinner. Our Mahila Samaj has established a Harijan school in a Harijan village in Dacca. I go there and mix with the Harijans. I mix freely with my Muslim sisters towards whom I have nothing but goodwill. But I cannot interdine with Harijans or any other non-Brahmin caste. Now can't orthodox widows like me enlist as satyagrahis, passive and active?

A. According to the congress constitution you have a perfect right to be enlisted. You can even enforce your right. But since you ask me, I would dissuade you from being enlisted. I know the punctilious way in which Bengali widows observe the rules custom has prescribed for them. But widows who dedicate themselves to the country's cause, and that in a non-violent way, should have no scruples in dining with anybody. I do not believe that dining with people, no matter who they are, hinders spiritual progress. It is the motive which is the deciding factor. If a widow approaches every task in a spirit of service, it is well with her. A widow may observe all the dining and other rules with meticulous care and yet not be a true widow if she is not of a pure heart. You know as well as I do that outward observance of rules governing a society often covers hypocrites. I would, therefore, advise you to disregard the restriction on inter-dining and the like as a hindrance to spiritual and national progress and concentrate on cultivation of the heart. In the satyagraha dal I should like to have not self-satisfied persons but those who have used their reason and chosen a way of life that has commended itself to both head and heart.

SEVAGRAM, June 10, 1940

Harijan, 15-6-1940

387. NOTES

COPYRIGHT

Shri Satish Kalelkar writes:

Being modern in my views and rather materialistic in temperament, I have always been sceptical about your views on the question of copyright. If I remember rightly, you needed some persuasion from friends before you consented to hold the copyright and save the profits on your *Autobiography* for the sake of the A. I. S. A. I agree that a seeker of truth should welcome its spread, and not put obstacles by insisting on the copyright. But surely there is a limit to this liberality, and an unscrupulous exploitation of it ought to be prevented.

Perhaps you are aware that *Harijan* comes in very handy to the evening papers on Saturday and morning papers on Sunday. Some editors, not content with the "whole week-end off", draw liberally on Harijan even on Monday morning.

I am not discussing here the possibility of raising the already excellent sales of *Harijan* by stopping the reproduction of articles in other papers, nor am I opposed to your view that truth should be spread widely. There are other results, however, which must not be ignored. Some Anglo-Indian papers, which are not exactly in love with the nationalist movement, sometimes reproduce convenient excerpts, and sometimes one side only, of issues discussed in a series of articles in *Harijan*. Takes for example the Ajmer case. The Anglo-Indian papers, that published an account of the incident and your cautious advice to the Ajmer workers to restrain themselves, took care to publish the Commissioner's 'explanation'[1] in that connection; but they did not consider it a part of the 'gentleman's agreement' with regard to the free reproduction of articles from Harijan, to publish the final and irrefutable reply from your pen. Your unwillingness in accusing before all facts are known, and your deliberate moderation and openness are interpreted as 'Gandhi's admis-sion'. The 'awkward' articles that appear in Harijan are safely ignored!

Perhaps you would argue that truth needs no tomtomming, and that it can never be suppressed in spite of a conspiracy of silence in papers. But surely one may not be a party to the spread of untruth by indirectly consenting to the publication of half-truths. Don't you agree that you should

[1] *Vide* "The Ajmer Trouble" , 30-4-1940.

qualify your free permission so as to stop misleading excerpts and only a few of a series of articles being reproduced in other papers?

There is much force in what young Kalelkar says. I own that often my articles suffer from condensation. They are made to yield a meaning I had never intended. The Ajmer illustration quoted by my correspondent is clinching. This matter of copy-right has been often brought before me. But I have not the heart to copyright my articles. I know that there is a financial loss. But as *Harijan* is not published for profit I am content so long as there is no deficit. I must believe that in the end my self-denial must serve the cause of truth.

PLEASE SPARE ME

In spite of repeated entreaties friends continue to ask me for messages. I have stated before and repeat here that I am of no use for such services. Ido send messages where I must, for instance to meeting which I promoted or which demand attention for delicate reasons. Apart from such occasions I must resolutely deny myself the pleasure of sending messages or replying to letters. Though I have imposed on myself- indefinite silence for, among other things, coping with the very heavy work which I must go through, I am daily in arrears. In these circumstances enthusiasts will please forgive me if I sent them neither messages nor even acknowledgments.

ANDREWS MEMORIAL

As usual, collections for this memorial will not come spontaneously. They will have to be organized. It is much to be wished that the numerous devotees of Deenabandhu will take up the work themselves. I am happy, therefore, to be able to announce that in Agra it is going to be done by the students. Nothing can be more fittings than that all over they should organize what after all is a paltry collection. Charlie Andrews was above all an educationist of a very high order. He came out as an educationist to help his friend and chief Principal Rudra. He picked up an educational institution of international reputation as his final home. To the making of it he dedicated his life. Even without Andrews's closest association with it, Santiniketan by itself is worthy of the devotion of the student world. I hope, therefore, that the students of India will take a leading part in the work of collections. Then come the poor people who have specially benefited by his labours. It would be a great thing, a proper thing, if the five lacs were made up of offerings of thousands of students and poor people rather

than from the donations of the few special rich friends of Deenabandhu with whom they had come in close touch and of whose worth they had intimate knowledge.[1]

TRIBUTE FROM SOUTH AFRICA

The joint Hon. Secretaries of the Natal Indian Association send me the following:

> At a meeting of the Indian community held under the auspices of the Association, on the death of the Rev. C. F. Andrews, the followings resolution was passed unanimously:
>
> 'This meeting of the Indian community held under the auspices of the Natal Indian Association (with which are amalgamated the Natal Indian Congress and the colonial Born and Settler Indian Association) deeply mourns the death of the Rev. C. F. Andrews, whose services in the cause of the South African Indians were outstanding and whose humanitarian appeals for the better treatment of Indians overseas have always received the ear of the Government and the attention of responsible European opinion. This meeting records its deepest sympathy and conveys its condolence to his family, Mahatma Gandhi, Poet Tagore and to the Indian nation.'
>
> The meeting was attended by not only the members of the Indian community but also by leading Europeans including the Rt. Rev. Archdeacon Harris, who, after offering prayers, spoke of the sterling qualities and the humanitarian spirit of Mr. C. F. Andrews. The Indian community of South Africa have lost a friend and guide. His services in the cause of our community in South Africa, his simplicity, his constant endeavours to bring about a better understanding between the European and Indian communities, his constant thought for the poor, will always remain fresh in the minds of those of us who have had the pleasure of working with him.
>
> We respectfully tender to you our condolences, for we know that in Mr. Andrews you have lost a trusted friend.

GWALIOR AND KHADI

The A. I. S. A. has the information that the Gwalior State has issued the following departmental order in connection with khadi. The original is in Hindustani:

> In the Tariff of Revenue it has been laid down that no import duty should be charged on any kind of hand-spun and hand-woven cloth whether

[1] For an appeal for funds for the Deenabandhu Memorial signed by Gandhiji and some others, *vide* Appendix "Deenabandhu Memorial", 1-6-1940.

cotton, woollen or silk. It has come to our notice that with the increasing popularity of khadi, very often khadi made out of mill-yarn is passed for genuine hand-spun and hand-woven khadi, free of customs duty. This causes loss of revenue and nullifies the object of exempting the industry of hand-spinning and hand-weaving from duty. It should be realized that hand- spun and hand- woven khadi only is to be exempted from customs duty. To secure this end it is notified that khadi bearing an A. I. S. A. certificate only should get the benefit of the exemption.

The Gwalior authorities deserve commendation for their alertness. The next step should be a grant to local khadi and its use by elite of Gwalior.

HARIJANS OF GARHWAL

Only the other day I had the good fortune to report a case of Harijan bride being carried in *palki* or *dandi* in Garhwal without let or hindrance. But Shri Shyamlal of the Harijan Sevak Sangh informs me that the case has proved to be an exception, and that prevention of the use of a *dandi* by Harijans flourishes almost as before. Two such cases have come under his observation only recently. Harijans who had dared to make use of *dandis* were "mercilessly beaten". There is an awakening among Harijans. They have approached the Commissioner for protection which he had promised if a fortnight's previous notice is given to him. But that means more bad blood. The real thing required is conversion of the caste Hindus. I understand that Pandit Jawaharlal is specially interesting himself in the matter. The U. P. C. C. is moving. All these are steps in the right direction. Let us hope that the labours of the reformers will bear fruit and Harijans. Will no longer need police protection. But they need not wait for the success of the reformers' labours. They must assert their right even if it be by seeking police protection. It should be remembered that Garhwal produces fine soldiers. It is a part of India which is noted for its beauty. Shall caste Hindus alone be vile?

A WALKING TOUR

Shrimati G. Vishalakshi of Gokulam Harijan Colony of Madras writes:

Nine Harijan students of the Gokulam Harijan Colony taking their training in village welfare work propose to tour the villages on foot in the neighbouring district of Chinglepet. In the course of their training in the Ashram they learn the cause of their backwardness and how to cure it by being self-reliant. They will study first-hand the economic condition of the vil-

lagers and what types of cottage industries could be taken up in a particular village. They will teach habits of thrift, how savings could be pooled and how they can derive benefit by organizing themselves into co-operative societies for such purposes as better living, agriculture, credit, and industries as mat-making, hand-loom weaving, etc. The students who are trained for welfare work in the villages are expected to settle in villages and do welfare work without expecting any subsidy from Government or public bodies. They will earn a living by the industries they have learnt like spinning, weaving, mat-making, paper-making and bee-keeping. As they tour in the villages they will also speak to the villagers about these cottage industries which they can take up as spare-time work. The party start from Madras on 1st June and will complete their tour on 30th June. As all of them are Harijan they will visit *cheries* only unless invited to go the caste-Hindu villages also. They will depend for the daily food during their tour on the hospitality of the *cheries* they visit.

I hope the tourists started on their tour on the 1st. It is a good plan. If the tour succeeds, it will be an example to copy. If the tourists are of the right type, they will succeed. They won't be a burden on the villagers, for they will make ample return for the hospitality they will receive from them.

SEVAGRAM, June 10, 1940

Harijan, 15-6-1940

388. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

SEVAGRAM,
June 10, 1940

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

I am sending you herewith the resolution of the All-India Spinners' Association duly signed by me. It has to be delivered to the bank.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10845. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

389. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEVAGRAM,
June 10, 1940

CHI. KAKA,

It seems there has been some confusion about sending a wire to Tandonji.[1] I had drafted it all right. Amritlal thought that it was to be sent to you. The problem now is what should be done. You alone can decide the date. The meeting is fixed for the 19th now instead of the 14th. But I cannot decide whether to call him on the 14th or the 18th. You will get this letter tomorrow, so send a wire as you think fit. I will of course accept whatever you decide.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10924

390. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 10, 1940

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. Everything is in mess. We have to find our way through it. We are in God's hands. He will do as he wills.

As regards the organization[2] do as your heart bids you. I have no objection but I shall not encourage you either.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10407. Also c. W. 6846. Courtesy: Premabehn kantak

[1] Purushottamdas Tandon

[2] The addressee had been asked to organize the women's wing of the Congress and had sought Gandhiji's guidance.

391. TWO PARTIES

Private and public appeals are being made to me to call all parties together and arrive at a common agreement, and then, they say, we shall get what we want from Great Britain. These good friends forget one central fact. The Congress, which professes to speak for India and wants unadulterated independence, cannot strike a common measure of agreement with those who do not. To act otherwise would be to betray its trust. In the nature of things, therefore, there can be no 'all parties conference' unless all have a common purpose.

The British Government would not ask for a common agreement if they recognized any one party to be strong enough to take delivery. The Congress, it must be admitted, has not that strength today. It has come to its present position in the face of opposition. If it does not weaken and has enough patience, it will develop sufficient strength to take delivery. It is an illusion created by ourselves that we must come to an agreement with all parties before we can make any progress.

There is only one democratic, elected political organization, i.e. the Congress. All the others are self-appointed, or elected on a sectional basis. The Muslim League is an organization which, like the congress, is popularly elected. But it is frankly communal and wants to divide India into two parts, one Hindu and the other Muslim. I read an appeal by a Muslim Leaguer suggesting that the British Government should come to terms with the Muslims and depend upon Muslim aid. That would be one way of settling the question, but also of perpetuating British rule. The Hindu Mahasabha will no doubt want favoured treatment for Hindus including Hindu States.

Thus for the present purpose there are only two parties - the Congress and those who side with the Congress, and the parties who do not. Between the two there is no meeting ground without the one or the other surrendering its purpose. The other parties must be presumed to be as constant in their purpose as the Congress claims to be in its. Therefore there is a stalemate. But the stalemate is only apparent. An agreement independently of evolving a common demand the Congress must seek and has always sought. It is the process of conversion. Its non-violence forbids the Congress from standing aloof and riding the high horse as the opponents say. On the contrary, it has to woo all parties, disarm suspicion and create trust in its bona fides. This it can only do when it has cleaned its own stables. The process

may take time. That time must be given. It will be no waste. But if the Congress loses hope and faith and comes to the conclusion that it must surrender its original position for the purpose of getting a common measure of agreement. It will cease to be the power it is. Today it is the sheet-anchor of India's hope and faith. It will be well with it if it refuses to move away from its moorings, whether it is in a minority or a majority.

SEVAGRAM, June 11, 1940

Harijan, 15-6-1940

392. LETTER TO RAMIBEHN K. PAREKH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

June 11, 1940

CHI. RAMI[1] ,

I have your letter. I got it today and I am replying to it immediately. It came into my hands after the post had been despatched. You are suffering a good deal. Do get the tonsils removed. One should be very careful about children's diet. I hear from Kunvarhi every week at least. He is keeping good health. There is no need at all to worry about him. It is enough if you do not cause him worry.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9739. Also C. W. 719. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

393. LETTER TO BALIBEHN M. ADALJA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

June 11, 1940

CHI. BALI[2],

I got your letter. You have been born to wear yourself out in the service of the family. And so you take upon yourself even unnecessary burdens, but God fulfils everybody's aspirations. I do not, therefore, pity you. I shower praises on you from here.

[1] Harilal Gandhi's daughter

[2] Harilal Gandhi's sister-in-law

I know that you will train Saraswati[1] perfectly well. You must have got her tonsils removed. It will be better if it rains there now. You have taken a great risk by collecting such a large crowd there at such a time. Kunvarji will most certainly spend the monsoon months in Panchgani. He is doing very well. Kumil[2] must be well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9738. Also C. W. 718. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

394. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

[*June 11, 1940*][3]

I am convinced that your good lies in your joining college. God will provide the funds for completing the medical course. Otherwise neither you nor I shall find any peace of mind. You do have that capability and you have the will. There is certainly nothing wrong about it. Hence, you should start tomorrow. Ba's trouble is only temporary.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 11285

395. LETTER TO K. F. NARIMAN

[Before *June 12, 1940*][4]

Do come.[5] Events[6] have made no difference in my regard for you and you will find me the same you used to admire.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Wife of Kantilal, Harilal Gandhi's son

[2] Addressee's sister

[3] From the reference to the addressee leaving for Bombay "tomorrow" namely, on June 12 1940, *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 12-6-1940 and "Letter to Vijayabehn M. Pancholi", 12-6-1940

[4] In the source this precedes the letters of June 12.

[5] These words are in Gujarati in the source. The addressee had written: "I want to go to you to understand Gandhism, there was a time when I used to revere you."

[6] Presumably a reference to the episode relating to the addressee's charges against Vallabhbhai Patel that the latter used his influnce to defeat him in the Bombay Legislature leadership election in 1937. Gandhiji, who found Vallabhbhai Patel irreproachable, persuaded the addressee to withdraw his allegations which were ultimately proved baseless by arbitrators.

396. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 12, 1940

CHI. AMRIT,

After many days there is a post for you. Here it is.[1] Lilavati[2] has passed her examination. She is delirious with joy. Probably she goes to Bombay today to arrange for her college course. Valjibhai's son Manu[3] comes first and has gained prizes. He is a wonderful boy. The heat is melting.

Love

BAPU

From the original: C. W . 3973. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7282

397. LETTER TO SIR SAMUEL HOARE[4]

June 12, 1940

I was delighted to have your unexpected letter[5] . I thank you for it. It revived the memories of the frank and cordial talks we used to have. You are passing through trying times. My incessant prayer is that peace may take The place of strife.

SIR SAMUEL HOARE
2 CHESTER PLACE
REGENTS' PARK
N. W. I. LONDON

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] This was a letter from the Editorial Committee of the Social Service Quarterly requesting her to contribute an article.

[2] Lilavati Asar

[3] Mahendra V. Desai

[4] Then Lord Privy Seal

[5] Which read: "Our religion, our culture, our very life is in jeopardy —I look to the time when I worked at your constitution as very usefully spent. you did not like it, but you did not doubt my sincerity nor did I yours."

398. LETTER TO K. F. NARIMAN

June 12, 1940

I am serving the Congress because it is not inconsistent with the service of God. I assure you I am trying to do the best I can.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

399. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

WARDHA,
June 12, 1940

CHI. KAKA,

What you have sent about Hindustani is controversial. I feel that nothing would be published just now. Go on doing quietly whatever you wish to do. Have a brief discussion with me on this matter when you come here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10988

400. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 12, 1940

CHI. VIJAYA,

At last you have gone back to Ambala. You could not peep in here! I did acknowledge the handkerchiefs. Only those are used these days. What news may I give of Ba ? I can write about her if she is not well. When I give no news, you should understand that all are well. Lilavati has passed and is mad with joy. She will now go to Bombay for further study.

Blessings to both of you from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7129. Also C. W. 4621. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

401. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 12, 1940

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

You do not seem to have received the letter I wrote to you in reply to yours. Hence I repeat here what I said in that letter. Come over here for some days. You have even expressed your desire that Vinoba should explain your idea to me in detail. Krishnadas will be arriving here before the 15th. It is not right that you should fall ill so often. It is not necessary to eat like a labourer in order to live as he does. If the body consents, one must eat. I will see about . . .[1] I will have to find . . .[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PRABHUDAS GANDHI
P.O. ASAFPUR
DISTT. BADAUN

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33048

402. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 13, 1940

CHI. MANI,

When you come , please bring an alarm-clock for Balvantsinha.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MANIBEHN PATEL
C/O SARDAR PATEL
68 MARINE DRIVE

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro- 4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 126

[1] A word at each of these places is illegible in the source.
[2] *ibid*

403. LETTER TO VIDYAVATI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 13, 1940

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. It is God's grace that Chi. Virendra has recovered.

You have shown much patience.

Blessings from

BAPU

RANI VIDYAVATIJI
KOROKALA
BENIGUNJ
HARDOI, U. P.

From the Hindi original : Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

404. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
June 14, 1940

CHI. AMRIT,

The weather has taken a sudden turn for the better.

Quite stupidly I forgot to send you the articles yesterday. I don't send them today. They will be useless. You will have your Harijan.

Herewith letter from Bapa[1] . Of course you will accept his proposal.

Some corrected translations are going by book post. You will be interested to know that they took me 1˚ hours. There is as much work left to clear the balance.

I finished the arrears of correspondence yesterday. Silence has done the trick. I don't feel like speaking at all. I had to last night for Tandonji. As soon as he went, I lapsed into silence again.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3974. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. W. 7283

[1] Amritlal V. Thakkar

405. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 14, 1940

CHI. KANCHAN,

I had given instructions about Pratap and Lokvani. But what am I to do if you do not receive them? I am sending you some old issues that I could find. It seems the current issues have stopped coming. Don't you get anything else to read besides these? There was a letter from Valod to say that neither Munnalal nor you have been writing to them. What laziness and what a shame!

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KANCHANBEHN SHAH
VADILAL AROGYA BHAVAN
PANCHGANI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8281. Also C. W. 7095. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

406. LETTER TO PYARELAL

June 14, 1940

CHI. PYARELAL,

A. S. has written me a number of letters about the talks she had with you. She has also given me the gist of a letter you wrote to her in Urdu. I have not understood much of it. I have written to her to that effect and stopped further discussion. But it would be nice if you could write about it. What happened? In any case you were to write about A. S.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

407. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 14, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHADRA,

Brahmacharya and ahimsa have reference to the body, hence they are included in physical disciplines. I also did not like the word

‘physical’. It does not bother me now. This does not, however, mean that mental lechery is excusable or less reprehensible.

Namasmaran[1] can be looked upon as the king of *yajnas* only in one sense. It needs practically no physical effort and yields the maximum fruit.

I am not satisfied about the pen and letter. But it does not seem proper to investigate further. Hence I have left it to God.

I had not fixed any duration while taking up the fast; so there was no difficulty in abandoning it. Naturally, there was no moral blemish. It often becomes a duty to respect the views of one’s colleagues. The fast was intended for my satisfaction and my purification. But the opposition of colleagues pained me. So I abandoned it. The fast was necessary. But I had to choose between two duties.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4351

408. TELEGRAM TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

[Before *June 15, 1940*][2]

MAULANA ABULKALAM AZAD
MAHAL NAINITAL

YOUR WIRE AND LETTER IN VIEW YOUR HEALTH DATE CAN STAND. AFTER MIDDLE JUNE WEATHER HERE QUITE COOL. DIFFICULT FOR ME STAY OUT INDEFINITELY.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] Remembering the name of God
[2] From the reference to improvement of weather after middle June

409. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
June 15, 1940

CHI. AMRIT,

The letter at the back of whose cover you forgot to give your name, etc., was censored and received a day late.

C. P.[1] never came, never wrote.[2] At last Ramachandran went yesterday.

Harijan Sevak translations are bad. I am writing to Viyogi Hari.

Your Gujarati is better.

You are not doing the right thing in not giving yourself rest during the day.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3975. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7284

410. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEVAGRAM,
June 15, 1940

CHI. KAKA,

Tandonji loves you. He likes your company. He might feel lonely in Poona and therefore he wishes to take you along. It is your duty to go. Make the necessary arrangements for his lodging and boarding. Be with him in his work. Give him whatever help he asks for. Since you have withdrawn the invitation, no responsibility rests on your shoulders now. Do whatever you can as a silent member and worker. Your going to Poona will not be fruitless.

The business of the Prachar Samiti cannot be settled in a hurry. We shall think over it when you return. I shall have to go a little deeper into it. There is of course no need to worry about it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer
[2] *Vide* "Travancore" , 17-7-1940.

[PS.]

To be free from all activity is liberation from the physical self. How can I, having a body, teach you that?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10931

411. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,
June 15, 1940

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Balvantsinha has asked for Apu's help in farm work. I feel that is reasonable. Apu is strong and it is not right to use him in the kitchen, though of course I do believe that the kitchen should be entrusted to a man. He feels that if you are agreeable Apu should be transferred to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10603

412. LETTER TO PYARELAL

June 15, 1940

CHI. PYARELAL,

What you have written is certainly useful. That means that the blame I put on A. S. was not justified.

Then she said that the papers fell out from her Koran. They were saved from falling into somebody's hands. What did those papers contain? Into whose hands could they have fallen? Or have I understood it all wrong?

On the whole in your opinion she is a saintly woman and I am being unfair to her.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

413 DUTY OF INDIANS OVERSEAS

Last week I referred to the duty of the students to make collections for the Deenabandhu memorial.[1] Dr. Brookes's letter,[2] reproduced elsewhere in this issue, should remind Indians overseas of their special duty. No man laboured so hard, so sincerely or so effect-ively as C. F. Andrews in their behalf . he travelled to distant lands to study personally the condition of the Indian settlers in those lands. I hope that these settlers will make collections and send their quota to the Memorial Fund.

SEVAGRAM, June 16, 1940
Harijan, 22-6-1940

414. NOTES

CASTE HINDU MARRIES HARIJAN GIRL

Shri Harekrushna Mahtab writes a letter about a marriage between a caste Hindu and a Harijan girl in Orissa. From it I take the following:[3]

I congratulate Shri Radhamadhab on his courage in breaking through the rock of caste superstition. I hope his example will be copied by other young men. May the union prove happy. I would advise Shri Radhamadhab to arrange for the proper education of his wife who, I understand, has not received any scholastic training.

ANOTHER TRIBUTE

Dr. Edgar Brookers has sent me through my son a letter about his contacts with Deenabandhu. Dr. Brookes, my son tells me, is a very learned man and deeply religious. He is a well-known figure in South Africa apart from his being a senator. Here is Dr. Brookes's letter to me:

> You will pardon me, a complete stranger, for thus writing to you. I am elected senator representing the Bantu 'Natives' of Natal and Zululand in the Union Parliament. As such I have had the privilege of speaking more than once on behalf of groups of Indians suffering from disabilities in South Africa. The urge to write to you has come to me as during these last weeks I

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 10-6-1940

[2] *Vide* the following item.

[3] Not reproduced here. The letter described how a caste-Hindu youth had married a Harijan girl in the face of oposition from his as well as her relations.

> have been reading C. F. Andrews's *Christ in the Silence,* and thinking very much of my dear friend who has entered into fuller life - I dare not say 'died', for I have never felt him more living. Knowing something of what your friendship meant to him and his (I imagine) to you, I felt that I should like to tell you a little of our contact. I met him not only here in south Africa but also in England and France, where we both spoke in connection with the Oxford Group movement. He is godfather to my youngest son. Mr. Andrews had the greatest of gifts - love. In its weakness, it is yet the strongest thing on earth - 'terrible as an army with banners'. You have taught us that lesson. I would rather be like Mr. Andrews than the Prime Minister of a great country. He was the closest among all the people that I have ever met to what I imagine Jesus to have been. He brought something to India. He learned much from India, and much from yourself. Those who were made humbler and better by knowing him will, like myself, want to thank you for helping to make him what he was.

The letter shows how great was the influence that Deenabandhu produced on those with whom he came in contact.

ADULT LITERACY

The Gandhi Mission Society, Tiruvennainallur, send me their half-yearly report of adult literacy work. The total number of adults educated was 197. But the problem that really faces them is ' how to enable the adults to retain the knowledge thus gained'.

> Nearly half the members who attended the class during the first session have approached the workers in charge to repeat the lessons. In fact they had lapsed into illiteracy. The workers are racking their brains to devise means to prevent this lapse.

The workers need not rack their brains at all. The lapse is bound to occur after the short courses that are given. The lapse can only be prevented by correlating the teaching to the villagers' daily wants. The dry knowledge of the three R's is not even now, it can never be, a permanent part of the villagers' life. They must have knowledge given to them which they must use daily. It must not be thrust upon them. They should have the appetite for it. What they have today is something they neither want nor appreciate. Give the villagers village arithmetic, village geography, village history and the literary knowledge that they must have use daily, i.e., reading and writing letters, etc. They will treasure such knowledge and pass on to the other stages. They have no use for books which give them nothing of daily use.

SEVAGRAM, June 16, 1940

Harijan, 22-6-1940

415. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
June 16, 1940

CHI. MANILAL,

This time it can be said that you wrote a very long letter. Do not feel apprehensive that it will bore me. That cannot be.

What you say about Sorabji[1] is painful. It is surprising that even Christopher[2] did not remain with you. But I do not worry in the least that you are left alone. Never mind if you find yourself alone for the sake of what you regard as truth.

I have already written to you about Medh. He will come back. No one is going to arrest me in a hurry. I am myself in no hurry to start a fight. It is enough that I am prepared. This is the position today. Tomorrow rests with God.

Ba is fairly well. Krishnadas[3] and Manojna[4] have returned from Nasik. Ramdas is touring and selling soap. He is in the good books of his boss and is, therefore, getting along quite well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4914

416. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 16, 1940

CHI. VALLABHRAM,

Your settling down in Bombay means that you cannot pay your way in Ahmedabad. If it is so what a sad state of affairs!

You must have gone to Poona and examined Valjibhai. I have advised him that when you are ready to call him to Bombay he should go.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] Sorabji Rustomji
[2] An inmate of Phoenix Ashram
[3] Son of Chhaganlal Gandhi
[4] Wife of Krishnadas

SHRI VALLABHRAM VAID
1756 JUGAL BHUVAN
GANDHI ROAD
AHMEDABAD

From Gujarati: C. W. 2910. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya

417. LETTER TO PYARELAL

June 16, 1940

CHI. PYARELAL,

A. S. says that you are still not careful about your food. This is not good. Relieve me of this anxiety. It will end the trouble if you eat whatever A. S. cooks and as often as she cooks.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original; Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

418. LETTER TO PYARELAL

June 16, 1940

CHI. PYARELAL,

A. S. categorically says that she never told you that she did not tell me. Anyway, she told me and I wrote to you only after she had told me. She said it with such pain that I asked her why she herself did not feed you. I did not want to force her. I would never do it. I would only wish that you eat your food regularly and regain your failing health.

As for my words, no doubt should have arisen in your mind at all. Sushila had already told me. But since I know that you do not approve of Sushila telling me anything about you, I usually do not act on what she says. If A. S. had not told me, I would not have told you anything even though I would have felt upset.

There was no need for me to comment on that letter of yours. I was not surprised by what you wrote. Where is the need for me to show 'delicacy'[1] in my dealings with you? If I come to know

[1] The English word has been used in the source.

something, I would give my reactions. What was your last sentence? 'Is it about her whom you consider a saintly woman?. That is my question. Even though I am aware of her many qualities, I have my doubts about her being a saintly woman. She eats herself away. I have already told her that. I would feel happy if you see her as a saintly woman. In that case I will try to see her as such. I think now all the questions have been dealt with.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

419. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

June 16, 1940

It is strange. How sensitive and suspicious you are! On such occasions silence irks. But for my silence there would have been no misunderstanding. Still I cherish it. Gradually, as we become more generous towards one another this sort of misunderstanding will cease. Silence has many other advantages that are unique.

I told you not to touch the file because I had arranged the papers in my own way. 1 did not want anyone to disturb them. I cannot stand any interference on Sundays and other such days. I do the same with everyone.

I wrote out the addresses myself because I could do that quicker. I had to send the letter to Valjibhai in any case. And before I could enclose with it one to Vaidya I had to write it and take out Vaidya's address. Rather than explain all this to you, it was better that I wrote everything myself. Yes, you did offer to write. I did not respond because I did not want to waste time writing down my response or making signs.

As for Rajkumari's article I did not want to take it out because she desires to send it elsewhere. Until I examine it from this angle I do not want to remove it from my file. There was no consideration of whether you saw the article or not. There was no question of stopping you from seeing Rajkumari's article. It was you who raised such a question. Is everything clear now?

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

420. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM ,
June 16, 1940

CHI. NIMU,

I got your letter. It is good that Sarita has arrived. You will now have some spare time. Manojna and Krishnadas have arrived. Bachu has grown into a big boy.

How do you keep? Do you read anything? Does Ramdas keep fit in all this travelling about?

Things are going on well here. Meetings will start from the 17th.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

421. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

[After *June 16, 1940*][2]

I am determined to find a way out of the impasse.

I have just got yours of the 28th May. Pretty quick work. Mr. Amery's message is good. I shall live in hope and not make haste. But I know that the Working Committee will not accept anything weak. If they on your side wait till all parties including the Princes have come to a common agreement they will have to wait and so shall we. This should be recognized that the Congress is one party and others anti-Congress in the sense that they will close on a lesser note. The Congress can afford to wait but cannot afford to take less in the sense of bartering away the liberty of the country. The situation there is terrible. You are living in a blood-bath. For those of us who know, in a way it is worse than a blood-bath here. All my energy is devoted to

[1] Of the Congress Working Committee, at Wardha

[2] L. S. Amery's message referred to in the text was broadcast on June 16, the anniversary of the signing of the Magna Carta. Amery traced the development and spread of British democratic ideals and said, "In the case of India, we have made manifest our sincere desire, that she should, as a willing partner, attain the same status in the British Commonwealth as is enoyed by the Dominions, or for that matter by ourselves." *Indian Annual Register, 1940*, Vol. I, p. 79

preventing a blood-bath here. How long I shall control the situation I do not know. I shall not bend but break in the attempt.

Love

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

422. SPINNING COMPETITION IN RAMGARH

During the Congress Week there was the usual spinning competition at the exhibition. There were six tests-coarse counts up to 10, medium up to 18, fine up to 30, very fine ranging from 44 to 158, spinning on the Magan Charkha, and last on the *takli*. The examiners were Ramdev Babu of Bihar, Shri Nandlal Patel of the Khadi Karyalaya, Ahmedabad, and Prabhudas Gandhi who was also the organizer. From the table before me I see that the examination was as strict and thorough as it should have been. In my opinion the competitors were neither as many as should have been nor from many provinces. They were principally from Bihar and Gujarat, some from Maharashtra and U. P. There were cash prizes, the highest being Rs.15, and trophies for the winning institutions. It is worthy of note that in the very fine yarn competition there were many women. The finest spinner was Devsundari Devi of Madhubani. Her count was 158. The highest speed on the wheel was 618 yards per hour of 10 counts. The highest on the Magan charkha was 925 yards of 15 counts. The highest on the *takli* was 303 of 12 counts. This is all satisfactory. There is not much scope for increased speed with the present improvements except on the Magan Charkha. Enough experiment has not yet been made on that wheel. But all accounts go to show that is has further possibilities. The *takli* is any day the queen for easy carriage, simplicity and cost. On the whole it may prove to be the quickest. Whereas the wheels many go out of order, the *takli* need never. Experiments are being made in plying the takli after the style of the charkha.

I congratulate the winners. I only hope that more interest will be taken than hitherto in such competitions. Spinning competitions have a great national value. I may note that the Maulana Saheb was to have given the prizes. But the wholly unexpected downpour made it utterly impossible to do so.

SEVAGRAM, June 17, 1940

Harijan, 22-6-1940

423. QUESTION BOX

MEANING OF SPINNING ACTIVITIES

Q. It is an admitted fact that constructive activity keeps the political atmosphere pure and non-violent. You have recommended it for active satyagrahis. This activity can be carried on in a centre amongst Congressmen as also the villagers generally, which may include such people as old women, etc., who take to spinning as unemployment insurance, as is done in A. I. S. A. production centres. Your writings make one infer that you want active satyagrahis to confine constructive activity to Congressmen and particularly in the direction of making them self-spinners and make them were khadi of their own yarn; the khadi in the first instance to be bought from A. I. S. A. stores, until the Congressmen produce their own yarn. Confining attention to Congressmen or political Congressmen seems to be more practicable than starting a general khadi centre of spinning for wages. Is this a correct interpretation of your writing?

A. Your interpretation is correct so far as it goes. I do not want the Congress organization to be an indifferent of glorified copy of the A. I. S. A. It has to do the work that the A. I. S. A. does not do. Its motive will be predominantly political,, whereas that of the A. I. S. A., although it is a creation of the Congress, is purely philanthropic and economic. The Congress organization aims at creating an army of non-violent soldiers or, to drop the military terminology, a band of non-violent workers for the freedom of the country. The spinning work and all the allied processes keep Congressmen busy and away from mischief. It will knit them together in a brotherhood, it will give them an insight into village life, it will bring them in direct touch with the villagers, it will give them a hold on the economic condition of the masses as nothing else will do, it will lead them on to a study of the whole of the vast village problem, it will make them sink their petty or big differences and forget class, racial or religious distinctions. The charkha may or may not have all this potency inherent in it. I want Congressmen to impute all these implications to it.

TEST-TUBE BABIES

Q. You say that motherhood is sublime but sex is bad. From the spiritual and eugenic point of view don't you agree that the test-tube technique of begetting babies is ideal since it altogether eliminates lust and carnality from procreation?

A. I would reconcile myself to your method, if carnality itself can be eradicated thereby. So long as I hold to the view that carnality prevents man or woman from rising to the fullest height possible, so

long must I rebel against these artificial methods of procreation. Your method, as far as I can see, can only result in multiplying idiots or monsters, not human beings, thrown into the sea of passions which it should be their pride to subjugate. But I own I belong to an age that is perhaps dying. The new age to come, when men and women will walk, if they at all do , only for pleasure but go to their work on wheels or fly to it, and when the institution of marriage and all it implies will be abolished, does not enthuse me.

HOW TO FACE A LIE

Q. People believe in your sincerity when you sympathize with Britain and France in their struggle for existence, but some of us have scented a danger that the Indian capitalists may continue to employ you as a tool for keeping India calm when these capitalists are reaping rich profit as a result of this war. What steps are you taking to remove this suspicion?

A. I propose to take no steps, even as I took none when I was accused of having one crore of rupees in the Bank of England. Lies are best left unanswered. They die of inanition. They have no vitality of their own. They flourish on opposition. If my whole life is not sufficient answer to the lie referred to by you, no steps I can take will remove the impression created by the lie. Mind you, I do not dispute the fact that the peaceful atmosphere created by my inaction benefits the capitalists, but it benefits the masses more than the capitalists, for the inaction enables the masses to garner their non-violent strength which will enable them to deal effectively with capitalists and imperialism which covers them.

SEVAGRAM, June 17, 1940

Harijan, 22-6-1940

424. A NOTES

[*June 17, 1940*][1]

There is no need at all to do anything just now. Never mind if you have been given the charge. Advise everyone in the Ashram not to hurt her. There is no need to broadcast the thing. I will write something tomorrow in the Notes.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 647

[1] The last sentence "I will write something tomorrow inthe Notes" is presumably a reference to "Note to Ashram Inmates", 18-6-40.

425. NOTE TO AMTUSSALAAM

[Before *June 18, 1940*][1]

I have made no mistake . think that what you have done is the best thing. There is no question of my being angry. I am only doing my dharma. You should do yours. Seeking my advice is not going to help you in any way.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 655

426. NOTE TO AMTUSSALAAM

[Before *June 18, 1940*][2]

I cannot judge. Guide Zohra as you wish. If you have no influence with her, then entrust her to me. Let her talk the thing over with me. For the rest you may decide. Do what Puri tells you. Listen to what Khan Saheb says. I cannot guide you.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 723

427. HOW TO COMBAT HITLERISM

Whatever Hitler may ultimately prove to be, we know what Hitlerism has come to mean. It means naked, ruthless force reduced to an exact science and worked with scientific precision. In its effect it becomes almost irresistible.

In the early days of satyagraha when it was still known as passive resistance, *The Star* of Johannesburg, stirred by the sight of a handful of Indians, wholly unarmed and incapable of organized violence even if they wished it, pitting themselves against an overwhelmingly armed Government, had a cartoon in which the latter was depicted as a stream-roller representing irresistible force, and passive resistance was depicted as an elephant unmoved and comfortably planting himself in his seat. This was marked immovable force. The cartoonist had a true insight into the duel between the irresistible and the immovable forces. It was then a stalemate. The sequel we know. What was depicted and appeared to be irresistible was successfully

[1] These notes were obviously written before "Note to Ashram Inmates", 18-6-1940

[2] *ibid.*

resisted by the immovable force of satyagraha-call it suffering without retaliation.

What became true then can be equally true now. Hitlerism will never be defeated by counter-Hitlerism. It can only breed superior Hitlerism raised to nth degree. What is going before our eyes is a demonstration of the futility of violence as also of Hitlerism.

Let me explain what I mean by failure of Hitlerism. It has robbed the small nations of their liberty. It has compelled France to sue for peace.[1] Probably by the time this is in print Britain will have decided upon her course. The fall of France is enough for my argument. I think French statesmen have shown rare courage in bowing to the inevitable and refusing to be party to senseless mutual slaughter. There can be no sense in France coming out victorious if the stake is in truth lost. The cause of liberty becomes a mockery if the price to be paid is wholesale destruction of those who are to enjoy liberty. It then becomes an inglorious satiation of ambition. The bravery of the French soldier is world-known. But let the world know also the greater bravery of the French statesmen in suing for peace. I have assumed that the French statesmen have taken the step in a perfectly honourable manner as behoves true soldiers. Let me hope that Herr Hitler will impose no humiliating terms but show that, though he can fight without mercy, he can at least conclude peace not without mercy.

But to resume the thread of the argument. What will Hitler do with his victory? Can he digest so much power? Personally he will go as empty-handed as his not very remote predecessor Alexander. For the Germans he will have left not the pleasure of owning a mighty empire but the burden of sustaining its crushing weight. For they will not be able to hold all the conquered nations in perpetual subjection. And I doubt if the Germans of future generations will entertain unadulterated pride in the deeds for which Hitlerism will be deemed responsible. They will honour Herr Hitler as a genius, as a brave man, a matchless organizer and much more. But I should hope that the Germans of the future will have learnt the art of discrimination even about their heroes. Anyway I think it will be allowed that all the

[1] The French request for armistice was sent to Hitler on June 16. Hitler's terms were deliverd to the French on June 20. On June 22 the German terms were accepted and three days later on June 25 the armistice became effective.

blood that has been spilled by Hitler had added not a millionth part of an inch to the world's moral stature.

As against this imagine the state of Europe today if the Czechs, the Poles, the Norwegians, the French and the English has all said to Hitler:'You need not make your scientific preparation for destruction. We will meet your violence with non-violence . You will therefore be able to destroy our non-violent army without tanks, bat-tleships and airships. It may be retorted that the only difference would be that Hitler would have got without fighting what he has gained after a bloody fight. Exactly. The history of Europe would then have been written differently. Possession might (but only might) have been then taken under non-violent resistance, as it has been taken now after perpetration of untold barbarities. Under non-violence only those would have been killed who had trained themselves to be killed, if need be, but without killing anyone and without bearing malice towards anybody. I dare say that in that case Europe would have added several inches to its moral stature. And in the end I expect it is the moral worth that will count. All else is dross.

I have written these lines for the European Powers. But they are meant for ourselves. If my argument has gone home, is it not time for us to declare our changeless faith in non-violence of the strong and say we do not seek to defend our liberty with the force of arms but we will defend it with the force of non-violence ?

SEVAGRAM, June 18, 1940

Harijan, 22-6-1940

428. NOTE TO ASHRAM INMATES

[*June 18, 1940*][1]

Now you know from experience that A. S. is not in such a state of mind that we can rely on any word of hers. This condition is also a part of her illness. So there is no question of ascertaining her wish. I made it plan last evening that the kitchen is completely out of bounds for her. She may go there today if she has any instructions to give. But she shall do no work at all. We have, therefore, to make arrangements ourselves independently of her. Do not send Apu to work on

[1] This was found among the papers of Krishnachandra and presumably the date is given by him.

the farm against his will. In that case let him take charge of the kitchen. If he requires any guidance, he can ask Krishnachandra. If Krishnachandra cannot judge, he can ask me, but not A. S. I do not at all want to tax either her body or her mind. She is working out of stubbornness. I have tolerated her stubbornness till now. But I see that I would be committing a sin if I went on doing so any longer. I would be doing her harm and doing the same to myself too. The best service to her is that however difficult she may be I must stop her from working in the kitchen, and compel her to give up doing everything she did for me. When she recovers health of body and mind, we will let her work in the kitchen and for me and also do whatever other work she can do.

If Krishnachandra has Brahmadutt's clothes, please ask him to send them with these men, or he may give them to me. I will send them.

Let everyone read this letter and then return it to me.

Chimanlalbhai himself had said that A. S. Behn had agreed to give up the kitchen work. Now they say she is not willing to give it up.[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4563

429. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,,
June 20, 1940

CHI. SHARMA,

I got your letter; also the book. I had asked Su[shila] behn to send an acknowledgment. The book was needed for Shankaran who is working in the dispensary. I shall expect one letter from you every month.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 286

[1] This paragraph is in Hindi and written in the margin.

430. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
June 21, 1940

CHI. AMRIT,

Just one line of love in the midst of distraction. I suppose you have abstained knowing that I would hardly have time to see the post. If so, you were right.

Well, you have seen what has happened. I am both unhappy and happy.[1]

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3976. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7285

431. LETTER TO BHAGWAN DIN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 22, 1940

BHAI BHAGWAN DIN,

What I have been asked is about staying in some Muslim home, in some Muslim village. Nothing has been decided.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 737

432. SPEECH AT MEETING OF GANDHI SEVA SANGH AND CHARKHA SANGH

WARDHA,
[*June 22, 1940*][2]

Now is the testing time for you. The Working Committee, let us say, were weighed and found wanting. Can the Gandhiji Seva Sangh do anything to repair their failure? The Working Committee's resolution does not mean that you cannot appeal to people to declare their faith in non-violence. You can do so, and then tell the members of the Working Committee, 'You undervalued our faith. We are going to

[1] *Vide* "Both Happy an Unhappy", 29-6-1940

[2] From *Hitavada*, 26-6-1940

hold by the creed.' I tell you the Working Committee members well not only not resent this, but will simply dance with joy. Some of you are members of the Congress. It is the duty of those who are members and who believe in non-violence to reassure the members of the Working Committee, to declare their faith before the meeting of the A. I. C. C. and even before the open Congress if the time comes. But you may not separate your creed as Congressmen and creed as ordinary human beings, your behaviour in Congress affairs and in non-Congress affairs. Your non-violence , if it is true, must be part of your normal life, must be in your thought, word and deed, and deed, and must colour all your behaviour. Then and then only can you give the Working Committee the assurance I have referred to, and compel them to alter their resolution. . . .

But, let me explain this further. You will examine every action of yours in the light of the creed. That does not mean that you will be morbid of pernickety. Your conduct will have to be natural. When I began observing silence it meant an effort on my part. Now it has become part of my nature, and to break my silence means an effort. In the same way acting non-violently must be part of your nature. It is likely that your relating everything to non-violence may be logically wrong, but it is not wrong for you. I may be wrong, in the eyes of others, in my belief that with every thread that I draw I am bringing swaraj nearer, but for me the belief is as true as the fact that I exist. That saves me from losing my sanity. This spinning-wheel is a symbol of non-violence for me. The wheel as such is lifeless, but when I invest it with symbolism it becomes a living thing for me. Its sound, if it is musical, is in tune with non-violence . If is unmusical, it is not in tune with it, for it indicates carelessness on my part. The steel spindle one can use as a deadly weapon, but we have put it there for the best possible use. So we have to be meticulously careful about every part of the wheel. Then and then only will it produce fine music and spinning will be a true sacrificial act.

But this kind of sadhana, you will say, may take thousands of years. It may take some a thousand years, and it may take some others only one year. Don't think that, if in spite of my 50 years' practice of it I am still imperfect, it must take you many more years. No, there is no rule of three here. You may succeed quicker than I. I meant what I said to Prithvi Singh: 'You had at any rate the violence of the brave. I had nothing of it. Now if you believe in cultivating

non-violence of the brave, you will do so much more quickly than I, and you will leave me behind.' This applies to every one of you. In South Africa I was the first to learn shoe-making and so I taught it to others. But those others soon left me behind. It was because I was a true teacher. Now if I am a true teacher of ahimsa, I am sure you will soon leave behind your teacher. If that does not happen, it will only mean that I was an unfit teacher. But if my teaching fructifies, there will be teachers of ahimsa in every home.

I want to know how many of you are with me. If none goes with me, I am ready to tread my path alone. For I know that I can never be alone as God is there with me. You are all companion *sadhaks* (seekers) with me. I am old but you have many years before you. And yet me tell you that I do not feel the weight of my years. I do not think my power of growth or capacity for research has come to an end.

So you have to go forth and find out how many actual believers in ahimsa there are among Congressmen. The Working Committee members are you representatives. If they were mistaken in assessing the faith of their electors, you have to correct their judgement. My position was different from theirs. I consider myself a confirmed representative of ahimsa, and so I severed my connection with the Congress in 1934. I could not help doing it. If I had not done so, I should have been untrue to my creed.

No one knows my imperfections better than I, but what little power I possess is derived from my ahimsa. What is it but my ahimsa that draws thousands of women to me in fearless confidence? But neither you nor I can trade on our capital. We have to be up and doing every moment of our lives and go forward in our sadhana. We have to live and move and have our being in ahimsa, even as Hitler does in himsa. It is the faith and perseverance and single-mindedness with which he has perfected his weapons of destruction that commands my admiration. That he uses them as a monster is immaterial for our purpose. We have to bring to bear the same single-mindedness and perseverance in evolving our ahimsa. Hitler is awake all the 24 hours of the day in perfecting his sadhana. He wins because he pays the price. His inventions surprise his enemies. But it is his single-minded devotion to his purpose that should be the object of our admiration and emulation. Although he works all his waking hours, his intellect is unclouded and unerring. Are our intellects unclouded and unerring? A mere belief in ahimsa or the charkha will not do. It should be

intelligent and creative. If intellect plays a large part in the field of violence, I hold that it plays a larger part in the field of non-violence.

With this he referred to the work of Richard Gregg in this direction, and described how the latter had come to the conclusion that spinning as a symbol of non-violence is good enough not only for India but for the world. Continuing he said:

The Working Committee's decision was simply an echo of the atmosphere around them. My decision could not be its echo. For ahimsa is my special sadhana, not that of the Congress. I congratulate the members on their honesty and their courage, though I am sorry for myself that I could not inspire them with confidence in our creed and in my leadership. We have now to show that we have faith in the non-violence of the brave. It does not mean the development of the capacity to go to jail. It means increasing faith in the potency of constructive work to bring about swaraj, and in constructive work being a vital part of the programme of ahimsa.

Harijan, 21-7-1940

433. BOTH HAPPY AND UNHAPPY

It was on the 18th instant that I expressed the following hope Harijan:[1]

> If my argument has gone home, is it not time for us to declare our changeless faith in non-violence of the strong and say we do not seek to defend our liberty with the force of arms but we will defend it with the force of non-violence ?

On the 21st the Working Committee felt unable to enforce such faith in action when the time for it came.[2] For the Committee never

[1] *Vide* "How to Combat Hitlerism", 18-6-1940.

[2] The resolution of the Working committee, passed after five days of deliberations, inter alia said: "While the Working committee hold that the Congress must continue to adhere strictly to the principle of non-violence in their struggle for independence, the Committee cannot ignore the present imperfections and failings in this respect of the human elements they have to deal with . . . The Committee have deliberated over the problem that has thus arisen and have come to the conclusion that they are unable to go the full length with Gandhiji. But they recognize that he should be free to pursue his great ideal in his own way, and therefore absolve him from responsibility for the programme and activity which the Congress has to pursue under the conditions at present prevailing in India and the world in regard to external aggression and internal disorder."

before had an occasion to test their faith. At the last meeting they had to lay down a course of action for meeting impending anarchy within and danger of aggression from without.

I pleaded hard with the Committee: "If you have faith in non-violence of the strong, now is the time to act up to it. It does not matter that many parties do not believe in non-violence whether of the strong or of the weak. Probably that is all the greater reason for Congressmen to meet the emergency by non-violent action. For if all were non-violent, there could be no anarchy and there would be no question of anybody arming for meeting aggression from without. It is because Congressmen represent a party of non-violence, in the midst of parties who do not believe in it, that it becomes imperative for Congressmen to show that they are well able to act up to their faith."

But the members of the Working Committee felt that Congressmen would not be able to act up to it. It would be a new experience for them. They were never before called upon to deal with such a crisis. The attempt made by me to form peace brigades to deal with communal riots and the like had wholly failed. Therefore they could not hope for the action contemplated.

My position was different. With the Congress non-violence was always a policy. It was open to it to reject it if it failed. If it could not bring political and economic independence, it was of no use. For me non-violence is a creed. I must act up to it whether I am alone or have companions. Since propagation of non-violence is the mission of my life, I must pursue it in all weathers. I felt that now was the time for me to prove my faith before God and man. And so I asked for absolution from the Committee. Hitherto I have been responsible for funding the general policy of the Congress. I could no longer do so when fundamental differences were discovered between them and me. They readily recognized the correctness of my attitude. And they gave me the absolution. One more they have justified the trust imposed in them. They have been true to themselves. They had not the confi-dence, in themselves of those whom they represented, that they could express in their actions the required measure of non-violence . And so they made the only choice they could honestly make. It was a tremendous sacrifice they made-the sacrifice of the prestige that the Congress had gained in the world for unadulterated non-violence, and the dissolution of the unwritten and unspoken bond between them and me. But though it is a break in the common practice of a common ideal or

policy, there is no break in the riendship of over twenty years' standing.

I am both happy and unhappy over the result. Happy because I have been able to bear the strain of the break and have been given the strength to stand alone. Unhappy because my word seemed to lose the power to carry with me those whom it was my proud privilege to carry all these many years which seem like yesterday. But I know that, if God shows me the way to demonstrate the efficacy of non-violence of the strong, the break will prove to have been temporary. If there is no way, they will have justified their wisdom in bearing the wrench of letting me go my way alone. If that tragic discovery of my impotence is in store for me, I hope still to retain the faith that has sustained me all these years and to have humility enough to realize that I was no a fit enough instrument to carry the torch of non-violence any further.

But this argument and doubt are based upon the assumption that the members of the Working Committee represent the feeling of the vast majority of Congressmen. They would wish and hope that the vast majority of Congressmen had in them the non-violence of the strong. No one would be more glad than they to discover that they had underrated Congressmen's strength. The probability, however, is that there is no majority but only a good minority which represents the non-violence of the strong. It should be remembered that the matter does not lend itself to argument. The members of the Working Committee had all the argument before them. But non-violence, which is a quality of the heart, cannot quiet but resolute demonstration on non-violent strength. The opportunity comes to everyone almost daily. There are communal clashes, there are dacoities, there are wordy duels. In all these things those who are truly non-violent can and will demonstrate it. If it is shown in an adequate measure, it will not fail to infect their surroundings. I am quite clear that there is not a single Congressman who disbelieves in the efficacy of non-violence out of sheer cussedness. Let the Congressmen who believe that the Congress should adhere to non-violence in dealing with internal disorders or external aggression, express it in their daily conduct. Non-violence of the strong cannot be a mere policy. It must be a creed, or a passion, if 'creed' is objected to. A man with a passion expresses it in every little act of his. Therefore he who is possessed by non-violence will express it in the family circle, in his dealings with neigh-

bours, in his dealings with opponents. It is because it has not expressed itself in this way amount Congressmen that the members of the Working Committee rightly concluded that Congressmen were not ready for non-violent treatment of internal disorders or external aggression. Embarrassment caused by non-violent action would move established authority to yield to popular will. But such action has obviously no play in the face of disorders. We have to court death without retaliation and with no malice or anger towards those who bring about disorder. It is easy enough to see that non-violence required here is of a wholly different type from what the Congress has known hitherto. But it is the only non-violence that is true and that can save the world from self-destruction. This is a certainty sooner or later, sooner rather than later, if India cannot deliver that message of true non-violence to a world which wants to be saved from the curse of wars and does not know how to find the deliverance.

SEVAGRAM, June 24, 1940

PS.

After the foregoing was written and typed, I saw Jawaharlal's statement.[1] His love for and confidence in me peep out of every sentence referring to me. The foregoing does not need any amendment. It is better for the reader to have both the independent reaction. Good must come out of this separation.

Harijan, 29-6-1940

434. WHAT THE "MASNAVI " [2] *SAYS*

I gladly publish the following sent to me by Advocate Rustomji Andhyarujina of Bombay:

> In the latest issue of *Harijan* while dealing with the letter of a Khan Bahadur from Delhi you write the following lines[1] of eternal truth:

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru in his statement issued from Bombay on June 23 had said: " . . . The difference between Gandhiji's approach and that of the Working Committee must be understood and must not lead people to think that there is a break between him and the congress. the Congess of the past twenty years is his creation and child and nothing can break this bond. I am sure his guidance and wise counsel will always be available to the Congress.

[2] Poem composed by the Persian mystic poet Jalaluddin Rumi (1207-73)

[1] *Vide* "Hindu-Muslim", 4-6-1940.

"Religions are not for separating men from one another, they are meant to bind them." (Page 157, 2nd column.)

These lines remind me of the immortal words of a famous Persian poet put into the mouth of God who addresses Moses in verse 14 of the poem, viz.,

"Thou hast come to this earth to unite; thou hast not come to this earth to separate."

Original:

To barae Vasl kardan amadi

Na barae Fasl kardan amadi.

I give below a faithful translation of the whole poem in order to show the beauty and the grandeur of the truth contained in the above verse:

"Moses once saw on the road a shepherd who was exclaiming thus: 'Oh God Almighty!

Tell me where Thou art, so that I may become Thy servant, stitch Thy heavy shoes, comb Thy hair,

Kiss Thy hand, rub Thy feet, and sweep the floor for Thee to sleep.

If Thou wouldst fall ill in future, like Thy kith and kin I would grieve for Thee.

Oh my Lord, my life is sacrificed to Thee: together with my children and all the property that I own.

Aye, all my sheep are sacrificed to thee: every call of 'hae-ha' of mine addressed to my wayward sheep is for Thy remembrance!"

In this strain that shepherd was speaking when Moses spoke to him thus: "Whom art thou addressing?"

He replied: "I am addressing Him who created us, the One from whom became manifest this earth and this revolving celestial globe (Charkh)."

Moses exclaimed: " Alas, thy head has become arrogant and discourteous: thou hast ceased to be a Mussalman; thou has turned an infidel.

If thou dost not tie up (stop) these words in thy palate, the fire (of Hell) will spread out and consume the whole world."

The poor shephered cried in agony: "oh Moses, thou hast stitched my mouth; the repentance that thou hast caused in me has consumed my soul."

He tore his robe into tatters, heaved a burning sigh, set his face towards the forest and disappeared in its midst.

A voice reached Moses from God saying: " Why didst thou separate my slave from me ?

Thou hast come to this earth to unite; thou hast not come to this earth to separate.

Knowest thou that We do not see the exterior nor the words; We see only the interior and the real thing."

No sooner did Moses hear these words of censure from the almighty God than he ran a after the shepherd in the thickness of the wood.

At last Moses was able to find him out in the wilderness. The Prophet told him: "Good news for thee! For, Good has given me permission to tell thee, do not worry about the conventional modes and forms whilst addressing Me, but instead speak out whatever thy narrow heart prompts thee to speak."

(From *Masnavi-e-Molavi)*

How I wish the beautiful truth embedded in these verses will be taken to heart by every one of us. Is not the Pakistan movement a denial of the obvious truth?

SEVAGRAM, June 24, 1940

Harijan, 29-6-1940

435. QUESTION BOX

VOWS AND WILL POWER

Q. I am a genuine seeker after *brahmacharya*. But in spite of all my prayerful effort I am sinking deeper and deeper into self-indulgence. I cannot blame my partner for it. My circumstances do not permit me to enforce the rule about segregation.

You advocate and believe in the efficacy of vows. You have said in *Harijan* that "for the weak in mind and soul vows are like tonics". But how will you administer this tonic to a case like mine who has not the strength of will to carry out the vow he has taken? Had I such a strong will, the necessity for taking vows would not have arisen.

A. Let me bluntly tell you that I do not believe in your genuineness, not that you are wilfully lying. You are unconsciously un-genuine. If you are genuine, you will at least observe the rules of the game. You give up you case when you say you cannot segregate yourself from your wife for want of room. I have never heard such an excuse. If you take the vow, you must at least produce the necessary atmosphere around you for its observance. Everyone who has successfully carried out the vow has invariably observed this first condition.

If you are living in only one room, you should go elsewhere or send away your wife or have a relative to sleep in the same room. The question is how far you are determined. It may be that you want to observe *brahmacharya* because you have read much about it and would like to be classed among *brahmacharis.* I know many such young men. If that is your case, you should not make the attempt. One must have a burning desire to live that life. If you have it, you will adopt the measures that all aspirants have invariably adopted. You are then bound to succeed. If you have not read *Self-restraint* v. *Self-indulgence,* you should read it.

WHAT TO DO?

Q. The situation in the country is becoming graver daily. Everywhere panic is growing. In certain parts armed gangs are already organizing themselves to take advantage of the ensuing anarchy in case the central power should disintegrate or weaken. The danger may not be imminent, but it would be folly to ignore its possibility. With all the education in non-violence which the country has received during the last twenty years, you will agree that it has not developed the sort of non-violence that can be effective in the face of anarchy and gangsterism. The Government is taking steps to organize the citizens for self-defence. What is the duty of those who look up to you for lead and guidance? Should they take part in these Government activities? If they should not, what else are they to do? Surely they cannot sit with folded hands doing nothing.

A. I am unable to say what the Congress will exactly do, in view of the recent statement of the Working Committee. If you believe in non-violent treatment of anarchy and the like, naturally you will prepare yourself and your neighbours and those whom you can influence for non-violent defence. I quite agree with you that no responsible person can sit idly by in these times. Violent preparation would need long previous training. Non-violent preparation means mental adjustment. Possibility of anarchy there undoubtedly is. But if you are non-violent, you will not give way to fear. Do not anticipate anarchy, just as you do not anticipate death though you know that it is a certainty. If you are non-violent, you will believe that there will be no anarchy. But if unfortunately it comes, you and your companions of followers will give your lives to prevent it. Those who five their lives, in trying to kill those whim they regard as robbers or mischief-makers, do no better, possibly they do worse. They risk their lives and there is darkness after they are gone. What is more, they may leave

things worse by feeding the fire of violence by counter-violence. Those who die unresistingly are likely to still the fury of violence by their wholly innocent sacrifice. But this truly non-violent action is not possible unless it springs from a heart belief that he whom you fear and regard as a robber, dacoit, or worse and you are one, and that therefore it is better that you die at his hands than that he, your ignorant brother, should die at yours.

PAKISTAN AND CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

Q. The two nations theory is by way of a counterblast to the demand for a Constituent Assembly which is about as absurd as the other thing. To me the idea of a Constituent Assembly ignores the existing conditions. 95 per cent of our people are illiterate, and nearly cent per cent are swayed by religious prejudices; and then there is the additional factor of corruption. And the fatal objection to a constituent Assembly is that without a genuine desire on the part of the majority to give effect to safeguards the best of these are bound to prove unreal.

A. Surely you cannot speak of the Constituent Assembly side by side with Pakistan. The latter is wrong, as I conceive it, in every way. There is nothing wrong in the idea of a Constituent Assembly. At its worst, dangers surround its formation. Every big experiment is beset with dangers. These risks must be taken. Every effort should be made to minimize them. But there seems to me to be nothing like a Constituent Assembly for achieving the common purpose. I admit the difficulty of illiteracy. Indeed adult suffrage was introduced at the instance of Muslim nationalists including the late Ali Brothers. The danger of corruption is also there. The greater the origination the less felt is the effect of corruption because it is so widely distributed. Thus in the Congress there are much corruption and jealousy, but they are confined to those few who run the machinery. But the vast body of Congressmen are untouched by these defects, though they profit by the good the Congress does. The danger you mention about safe--guards will be reduced to the vanishing point if they come through a Constituent Assembly. For safeguards laid down by the representatives elected by the adult Muslim population will depend for their safety not on the goodwill or honesty of the majority but on the strength of the awakened Muslim masses. Fatality really attaches to your wrong conception of the majority, not to a Constituent Assembly. There is a

majority of Hindus undoubtedly, but we observe that in popular political assemblies parties are not rigidly divided according to religious opinions, but they are according to political and other opinions. The curse of communalism became intensified by the introduction of separate electorates. The cry for partition is the logical outcome, but it is also the strongest condemnation, of separate electorates. When we have learnt wisdom we shall cease to think in terms of separate electorates and two nations. I believe in the innate goodness of human nature. I therefore swear by the Constituent Assembly. The Muslim vote will surely decide the issue so far as their special interest is concerned. Arguing communally, therefore, the fear, if there is any, about a Constituent Assembly should surely be on the part of the Hindus. For if the Muslim vote goes in favour of partition, they have either to submit not to one but many partitions or to a civil war. As things are, all satisfy themselves by passing resolutions and seeing their names in print. In practice all of us remain where we are in a state of subjection. A Constituent Assembly is a reality. It will not be a debating or legislative irresponsible body. By registering its final decision it will decide the fate of millions of human beings. You may oppose it. If you are successful in your opposition, there is the dread prospect of anarchy, not an orderly civil war. There seems to me to be no solution of the painful deadlock except through a Constituent Assembly.

SEVAGRAM, June 24, 1940

Harijan, 29-6-1940

436. TELEGRAM TO LORD LINLITHGOW

[*June 24, 1940*][1]

H. E. VICEROY

SIMLA

THANKS WIRE. HAVE APPOINTMENTS TILL WEDENESDAY. CAN LEAVE THURSDAY. REACHING SATURDAY. BUT CAN LEAVE TOMORROW IF YOUR WISH.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] From the postmark

437. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

June 24, 1940

CHI. KAKA,

Your letter will not do. The cutting does not support your case. Just now I am busy with Harijan work. It was with some reluctance that I spared time even to read what you have sent. I will draft a letter and send it after I am free from Harijan work. You will of course see my letter. Let Anna go. Release him completely. You will not be able to shoulder the responsibility for his nephew. It will be better if you frankly tell him so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10932

438. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM,
June 24, 1940

CHI. LILA,

I have received your letters. You have settled well. Have you met Shankar? He will be of maximum help in the matter of books. Such books are available even second-hand. We shall try from here of course. Sushila does not have any. Continue to study patiently. Meet Radha. She must be having some books. Do not hesitate to go to her. Today Sushi's tonsils were removed. Mahadev, etc., are at the hospital.

Blessings from,

BAPU

SHRI LILAVATIBEHN ASAR
KANJIKHETSI KANYA CHHATRALAYA
65 MINT ROAD
BOMBAY FORT

From the Gujarati original: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

439. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHAGNJ,
June 25, 1940

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA W

REACHING THERE SATURDAY LEAVING HERE THURSDAY. IF INCONVENIENCE AT MANORVILLE YOU MAY PUT ME ELSEWHERE. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3977. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7286

440. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SEVAGRAM,
June 25, 1940

CHI. PREMA,

Why are you afraid? Such things do happen. They are a test for me.[1] Do you remember the bhajan beginning: "When will the matchless time. . . ."? Think over the lines "Wandering alone on the cremation ground". The Committee could not have adopted any other course. Everyone has to face this problem. What will all of you also do, if I turn out to be a bad coin? We have never tried the non-violence of the brave. Now the time has come for that. My Memon clients used to quote the saying/" He is a man who remains steadfast at a critical hour". Cheer up.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10408. Also C. W. 6847. Courtesy: premabehn Kantak

[1] The reference is to the Congress Working Committee's resolution; *vide* 2nd footnote of "Both Happy and Unhappy", 29-6-1940.

441. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 25, 1940

CHI. JETHALAL,

I have already talked the matter over with Jajuji, for the arrival of your postcard coincided with his coming. I will go through Sarvadaya.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 9870. Courtesy: Narayan J. Sampat

442. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 25, 1940

KRISHNACHANDRA,

If no one has notified Shankaranji, inform the kitchen that four new guests will dine there today.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4353

443. TELEGRAM TO AMIT KAUR

WARDHAGANJ,
June 26, 1940

RAJMUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA W

WE SHALL BE FOUR. ONE CAR WILL DO. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3978. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7287

444. INTERVIEW TO VISITORS FROM PRINCELY STATES[1]

[Before *June 27, 1940*]

They should cease to be Princes and become servants of the people.

They will have to descend from their pedestal and seek the co-operation of their people. If they do so, they need not use force at all to put down the forces of disorder. The Congress does not want to do away with the Princes, and they can seek its co-operation in bringing about peace and contentment in their States.

They will have to be genuine servants of the people. When they do so, no one will think of eliminating them. If they are the servants and the people are the masters, why should the masters do away with the servants? You say there are a number of smaller Princes today who are anxious to make up with the Congress. If they are, what prevents them from doing the most elementary things.?

INTERVIEWERS: They want to do certain things, but they are on the one hand afraid of the Paramount Power and on the other afraid of the people. Some kind of fear seems to have seized them that the people will want to pay off old scores.

GANDHIJI: Both their fears are groundless. If they will do justice, I can scarcely think of the people wanting to pay off old scores. Our people are not of a revengeful nature. Is the Ruler of Aundh afraid of any rebellion in his State? He is not, for whom will they rebel against when they know that he has divested himself of practically all power? If they want to rebel, I think he is capable of saying to them, 'Come and take charge of my palace, I shall be content to go and stay among the poorest of you! Appasaheb, the son of the Chief of Aundh, is slaving away for the people as no servant of the State does.

But the fact is that the people have to be convinced of their *bona fides*. Let them do two things. One is that they have to purify their lives and reduce themselves to utter simplicity. The fabulous amounts they spend on themselves are unconscionable. I cannot understand how they can have the heart to squander the people's money in riotous living, when thousands of their people cannot get a square meal a day. Why should they not be content with two or three hun-

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "occasional Notes", 27-6-1940. The interviewers had asked Gandhiji what the Princes were to do in the face of the panic, insecurity and impending anarchy in the States.

dred rupees a month? But my point is this . let them take what the people will give them. Their privy purse must be votable. No reforms and no budget can have any value unless the people have the fullest right to say how much their ruler take for himself. An new age has already begun, and no ruler can conceivably be tolerated whose life does not correspond largely with the life of his people and who does not identify himself with them.

That is one thing. The other thing is that their judiciary will have to be above board and therefore independent of them. I cannot say today with confidence that in any State the judiciary is really independent. And there must be complete civil liberty.

These, then, are the first steps in the way of reform. Their fear of the Paramount Power is groundless. That Power dare not openly say or do anything to interfere with *bona-fide* reforms. Wherever they have interfered they have made some flaw in the particular Prince's character an excuse. The deduction is that Princes should be, like Caesar's wife, above suspicion. As for the Congress, let them know that it is ever ready to come to an understanding with them. The Congress is essentially a non-violent organization. Let the Princes voluntarily go under the authority of their people and the Congress will befriend them. If they do not do so, there are breakers ahead. The Congress, let me repeat, is not out to destroy the Princes, unless it be that they do not mend their ways and destroy themselves. Even if there is *one* Prince who will be content to be the servant of the people, the Congress will stand by him.

Harijan, 13-7-1940

445. INTERVIEW TO AMERICAN VISITORS[1]

SEVAGRAM,
[Before *June 27, 1940*]

QUESTION: How can I best prepare in India to help in America towards a better understanding between Indians and Americans? . . . How could I contribute towards this end in America?

ANSWER: One has to show in one's life one's country's best traits, and that is how one can bring another country to a better

[1] EXtracted from Mahadev Desai's "Occasional Notes", 27-6-1940. The visitor was a pacifist and represented various women's associations.

understanding of one's own. If you do not show the best in you whilst you are here, you make America liable to be misunderstood; and the same thing I would say about Indians in America. If one wants to interpret one country to another, he or she has to discover the best in that country and place it before the other country. If you, for instance, see nothing good in the life here, then you certainly are not the best person to interpret India to America. In America you find a Miss Mayo bringing out all the filth from the Indian gutters. You will contradict her, and as against one calumny uttered by a hasty or a paid or an interested observer you will adduce many testimonies gathered out of a sympathetic understanding and knock the bottom out of that calumny.

Q. What can pacifist Americans do to help the world situation?

A. It is a difficult question. If you mean pacifist Americans in India, they can do precious little. But in America they should, I suppose, be able to do a great deal. But it is a question really outside my depth, and I must not say anything more about it.

Q. I do a lot of writing and speaking especially among women. Have you any message to give to American women?

A. Not as a message. I can throw out a suggestion and, if it appeals to you, you can develop it. Woman can play a most important part in the work of pacifism. She should refuse to be swept off her feet and to imitate man's language and refuse to allow herself and hers to be identified with anything connected with war. For she must know that she can represent peace more than war. She is made for the demonstration and exhibition of that silent force which is not less effective because it is silent, but the more effective because it is silent.

Harijan, 13-7-1940

446. LETTER TO BISHAN NATH

DELHI
June 28, 1940

DEAR LALA BISHAN NATH,

I had yours of 11th inst. I shall do what I can.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

LALA BISHAN NATH
ADVOCATE
ANARKALI
LAHORE

From a photostat : G. N. 7943

447. TELEGRAM TO LORD LINLITHGOW

[Before *June 29, 1940*][1]

H. E. VICEROY
SIMLA

MANY THANKS WIRE. HOPE REACH FRIDAY.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Gandhiji had reached simla on June 29, 1940.

448. DISCUSSION WITH PYARELAL AND MAHADEV DESAI[1]

[*June 29, 1940*][2]

PYARELAL: This puzzles one.[3] What is so personal about that letter? That man has a curtness which one does not like.

GANDHIJI: It is improper of you to judge a co-worker from one single instance. It is improper from the point of view of logic and more so from the point of view of ahimsa. Darwin, in his book *The Descent of Man*, has not based his conclusions on any one fact. He never tired of adducing heaps and heaps of evidence. He has crammed the whole book with facts to prove his thesis and in the end he has formulated that thesis in the fewest words. Imagine how much he valued truth! Even so I find a flaw in his thesis because *Syadvad* of Jain philosophy teaches me that notwithstanding all this testimony we may come across some other facts which may refute Darwin's thesis. Because the writer of the letter has written "personal" on the top of the letter, you came to the conclusion that he is curt. Now let me give an instance. Many people eat out of each other's plates and they believe that that promotes friendship. Hindu wives believe that they earn merit by eating the orts from their husbands' plates. Maybe Ba also believes that and she would not shrink from eating from the plate used by me. But as for me, leaving others aside, I would not be able to eat even from Ba's plate. If someone was to see me refusing food from Ba's plate and drew the conclusion that I was curt and fussy - what an injustice he would be doing me! Even though I may feel repelled by this one thing, I have no doubt that by temperament I am neither curt not fussy, and I can cite hundreds of instances to prove that. Similarly numerous instances can be cited to prove that your friend about whom you have complained is not what you have described him to be. No proposition can be called universal unless it is proved so by analysis and synthesis. We know that water consists of two parts of hydrogen and one part of oxygen. But we must prove that by synthesis and analysis. If we analyse water we get two parts of

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's " A Revealing Dialogue". A brief report by Pyarelal also appeared in Harijan, 6-06-1940, under the title "On the Road to Simla".

[2] *ibid.*

[3] Pyarelal was commenting on a co - worker's marking "Personal" a letter he had written to Gandhiji.

hydrogen and one part of oxygen. However we should synthesize two parts of hydrogen and one part of oxygen and if that produces water, our proposition about its composition is proved. The same applies to our day-to-day behaviour. We cannot jump to the conclusion about a certain thing, even though it be as clear as daylight, without examining hundreds of facts which may prove it wrong. It certainly violates truth and in being uncharitable towards others we violate ahimsa too. We who tread the path of ahimsa should take each step with great care.

It is not that I am unaware of his faults. Maybe you are justified in finding him curt in this particular instance but to believe that he is always so betrays lack of charity on your part. Shall we not take into account the circumstances under which this co-worker has been brought up and educated, the difficulties he has had to face and the efforts he had to make to reach the present position? Shall we judge him by this one manifest shortcoming of his? What a beautiful word the English language has for love -'charity'. It connotes compassion too. And compassion should be an integral part of our ahimsa.

M. D. The meaning of the roots of 'charity' and '*daya*' is the same.

G. I did not know that the roots of both the words meant the same. But one thing is certain: that even if we see shortcomings in others, we should overlook them and take into account their good points alone. The beauty of love and compassion lies in magnifying the virtues of others. Moreover there is always another way to win over others-i.e., by rendering silent service.

P. I agree. But there should be an opportunity for that. I have many times endeavoured to befriend him and make myself agreeable to him. But I have failed. You do not know the utter contempt in which he holds me.

G. You do not see the point. I tell you there is subtle pride in those words of yours. It is your pride that prompts you to say that you have tried to befriend him ignoring his contempt for you. All the time you were conscious of the injustice done to you. But you have never thought of analysing why he was unjust to you either consciously or unconsciously. Don't I know his faults and shortcomings? You do not know how many times I have made him shed tears by reminding him of all his faults. I have not even restrained myself in exposing him in the presence of all co-workers. But look at his behaviour. He is fighting against all his faults and shortcomings. All the twenty-four hours he is making incessant efforts to subjugate them and he has achieved considerable success. But how much can a man rise beyond

his inborn nature and upbringing? If we are perpetually aware of these things, we shall never have the courage to do injustice to others. Who knows better then I the faults of the Rajas and Maharajas? But why do I have sympathy for them? Because I know that their nature, their temper is conditioned by their circumstances. I understand them and they also know that in me they have a friend.

While talking about contempt, we must think about Andrews. Numerous Government officials had nothing but contempt for him. It is not that he did not know about it but he never hesitated in going to their houses. He tried to find out why they showed contempt for him and endeavoured to remove the cause. As a result many of those who had hated him repented of their attitude and confessed that they had been unjust to him. Such contempt creates opportunities for love to come into play. What is so remarkable about loving those who love us? The beauty lies in melting those who hate us with our love and kindness.

P. I understand. I understand all. There were occasions when I sensed the dreariness of his condition. Many times on such occasions I felt like befriending him, but always feared that he might misinterpret the gesture.

G. Even that fear had *himsa*. Love and fear cannot co-exist. There was pride even in your fear. But for all this I am to blame. My ahimsa is imperfect and that is why my surroundings are not saturated with ahimsa. Sevagram is to me a laboratory for ahimsa[1] . If my experiment here were successful and I could find a solution for the little problems that confront me here, I am sure the same formula would provide me a solution for the bigger issues that today face us in the country. That is why I am so reluctant to leave Sevagram. It is my laboratory for satyagraha. It is there that I expect to discover the key to India's independence, not in Simla or New Delhi. I sometimes feel like taking shelter in flight, not to seek cloistered peace, but in the stillness of utter isolation to know myself, to see where I stand, to catch more effectively the faint whispering of the 'still small voice within'. Then alone would my experiment in ahimsa be complete.

M. D. we who are near to you are utterly devoid of ahimsa, so I feel that in order to lighten your burden we should leave you.

[1] The rest of the paragraph is from Pyarelal's "On the Road to Simla", published in *Harijan*, 6-7-1940.

G. But there may be some whose mere thoughts would influence the world. Hence in returning to a cave the motive should not be just to achieve solitude so as to seek individual salvation but to cultivate a natural bent of mind which will always inspire thoughts of-universal welfare, nothing less.

M. D. But Buddha achieved salvation and returned to the world, preached to lacs of people and made them his disciples.

G. That is true. But I am never attracted by the idea of complete renunciation.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 20-7-1940

449. INTERVIEW TO " THE HINDU "

SIMLA
June 29, 1940

I have come because I have been invited, and I shall return to Wardha this evening unless there is need for me to stay on.

The barometer within me is rising, even though the sky looks back.[1]

The Hindu, 29-6-1940

450. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

BIRLA HOUSE, ALBUQUERQUE ROAD
NEW DELHI,
June 30, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I think it will be mutually helpful if I reduce to writing the substance of the advice I tendered you yesterday as a personal friend and friend of the British.[2]

I had made it clear at the outset that I had no representative capacity and that, after the last resolution of the Working Committee, I

[1] Later in the afternoon Gandhiji left to see the Viceroy.
[2] Gandhiji had met the Viceroy on June 29 at Simla at the latter's invitation.

could only speak as an individual in any case.[1]

Your first proposal was to advise His Majesty's Government to let you announce that a status similar to that of the self-governing dominions would be granted to India within one year of the termination of the war, subject to an agreed understanding about British commercial interests, defence, external relations, rights of minorities and the position of Princes-regard being had to treaty obligations with them.[2] Granted these reservations, a Constituent Assembly[3] may draw up the Constitution which, unless there were unacceptable provisions, will be adopted by His Majesty's Government and placed by them before the Parliament for acceptance.

I said as to this that I personally could never accept it and that so far as I knew, the Congress also would never approve of it. My strong advice was that it should not be put before the Secretary of State of before India. Any such announcement would further embitter the relations between His Majesty's Government and India. I stressed the point that nothing short of immediate unequivocal declarations of independence,, free of all control by the British Government, would be accepted by the Congress. (India free will no doubt have to negotiate a treaty, I hope, of partnership, with Great Britain; will have to make provision for protection of legitimate foreign interests, guarantee to the full the rights of the minorities and make adequate arrangements with the Princes consistently with due protection of the people living within their jurisdiction. All this is inherent in the non-violent policy of the Congress. For its predominant sanction will be, not the force of arms behind it, but its sense of fairness and absolute justice. In the absence of these two, independence will go as soon as obtained. The thought thus expressed parenthetically was not put before you as part of my advice. I see as I am writing this letter that it was incomplete

[1] The Congress Working Committee which met at Wardha on June 21 resolved that they were unable to extend to the region of national defence, Mahatma Gandhi's creed of non-violence; *vide* "Both Happy and Unhappy", 29-6-1940

[2] The Viceroy, writing on July 1, gave his own version of the talk. According to him what he had said here was that His Majesty's Government "would spare no effort to bring about Dominion Status within a year after the conclusion of the war, and to set up whatever machinery those concerned agreed as appropriate to work out the new constitution".

[3] The Viceroy's version was ". . . you had thought of a constituent assembly . . . , while some of us were thinking of a smaller and rather different body. That body . . . would however have to be one on which the various political parties were agreed."

without it) The question of drawing up of the Constitution by a Constituent Assembly might be postponed to a future suitable date. I suggested too, that it would be a catastrophe not to make the aforesaid unequivocal declaration of independence, for whilst the Congress was openly pledged to it and had been fighting for it persistently and consistently for a long time, all parties whether it be the Muslim League or the Hindu Mahasabha, or even the Princes, could not but prize independence if it could be had. Therefore it passed comprehension why there should be so much ado about making the overdue declaration that India was free of all external control.

Your second proposal was that subject to the acceptance of the proposed declaration, and pending the war, you would increase the number of the Executive Council[lors] so as to include representatives of various parties. As to this, I advised that without the vital declaration of independence the Congress was not likely to serve on the Council. I added that I adhered to the view expressed in a recent *Harijan* article of mine, entitled "Two Parties". Unless the parties had one mind on the question of fighting or immediate independence and the method thereof no joint effort was possible.

You had also in mind a proposal to convene a miniature Round Table Conference composed of representatives of various parties, groups and interests.[1] I strongly dissuaded you from entertaining any such proposal as being doomed to failure.

I then enlarged upon my confirmed opinion that time had arrived for a revision of Britain's war policy. Frank recognition of German superiority in organization and technique would be no derogation from British valour and would add to it because of confor-mity to truth. Even if it were otherwise, and Britain could show her superiority to Germans in every department and defeat them, given sufficient time, my proposition would still hold. In order to prove its validity, admission of German superiority was unnecessary. As you know, I had made this suggestion before the fall of France. My proposition was based on purely humanitarian grounds. I had chosen the present time as being opportune for pressing it. Assuming that Nazis were as bad as they were said to be, victory must be unattainable without cop-

[1] The Viceroy said: "I do not think that I spoke of a miniature Round Table Conference . . . I had rather in view a preliminary enquiry group of persons competent . . . to ttender advice and guidance to their principals . . . without the parties being in any way committed to their conclusion."

ying the Nazi methods. That would mean no deliverance from Nazism. Sufficient had happened to prove the utter futility of arma-ments for the protection of small nations no matter how brave they were. Britain's victory after the slaughter and ruthlessness which it must involve could never make the world safe for democracy, nor bring it peace. Such a victory must mean another preparation for a war more inhuman than the present, as this one had proved more inhuman than the last. For this and similar reasons I urged with all the earnestness and force at my command that if Britain could accept the non-violent method. It would redound to her eternal glory and would count for much greater bravery than her proverbial bravery in war.

I hoped too that it would not be retorted that I had no warrant for appealing to Britain suddenly to accept the non-violent method when I had failed in persuading my colleagues and co-workers to accept it when the time had come for its enforcement in its fullness. I said in anticipation of the possibility of such a retort that my colleagues and I represented a weak and subject people wholly unarmed and untrained in the use of arms. The non-violence of my conception was essentially for those who were conscious of their ability to wield them with effect. Therefore I suggested that if Britain could be convinced of the superiority of non-violence over violence, now was the psychological moment for the full adoption of the non-violent method. Britain with all her intentions could not protect Abyssinia, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Finland, Norway, Denmark, Holland, Bellgium and France. If Britain could accept the method presented by me, it would point to all these countries the way of deliverance and ensure the peace of the world as no other method ever would or could. It would confound Nazi wisdom and put all the Nazi armaments out of use.

Lastly, I said Thai my proposal was based on a practical experience of non-violence extending over half a century of ceaseless striving, experiment, research and prayer. I therefore requested you to present my proposal to His Majesty's Government for acceptance as coming from a life-long friend and well-wisher of the British people.

You were good enough to tell me that I could give the purport of our conversation to the members of the Working Committee. This I propose to do by showing a copy of this letter to them. Unless you have any objection I would like also to make a public appeal to the

British people to accept the non-violent method at this supreme juncture in their life as also the life of mankind.[1]

I am
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a printed copy: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

451. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDUSTAN TIMES"[2]

DELHI,
June 30, 1940

The situation today is the same as it was yesterday.

Questioned whether his abrupt departure from Simla after his interview with the Viceroy meant that his talks with the Viceroy would not be pursued further, Mahatmaji said that it was evident that if there had been anything more to discuss he would have stayed in Simla.

GANDHIJI. . . . motored from the station to the Mall Road, from where he, along with the party, walked up to the Harijan Colony. The students of the Harijan Industrial Home extended a warm welcome to mahatmaji on his reaching the colony. Gandhiji remarked:

The credit for my coming here goes to Zohra (Begum Zohra Ansari). If she had not invited me to stay with her, probably I would not have been able to visit the Harijan Colony.

The Hindustan Times, 1-7-1940

452. TALK TO MEMBERS OF SPINNIG CLUB[3]

DELHI
[*June 30, 1940*][4]

QUESTION: Why should we spin now that there is no definite civil disobedience in the offing? Some satyagrahis have actually given up spinning since civil disobedience has receded into the background.

[1] *Vide* "To Every Briton", 2-7-1940.

[2] The *Hindustan Times* correspondent saw Gandhiji at railway station on the latter's arrival from Simla.

[3] Extract from Pyarelal 's "The Journey Back". The club was organized by Brij-krishna Chandiwala.

[4] The date is from a report in *The Hindustan Times,* 1-7-1940.

GANDHIJI: That to me shows that they would have made but poor satyagrahis and it is for the best that they have dropped out. I doubt if these fair-weather customers could be good for anything. For good or for ill, we have adopted the spinning-wheel as the weapon for our non-violent struggle. A soldier who will practise his weapons only when action is in sight will surely come a cropper at the time of the test. A satyagrahi soldier always looks and plans far ahead of him. If we have faith in the efficacy of the weapon we have chosen, we shall never give it up or lay it down but keep it always refurbished and ready.Today our non-violence is on its trial. The Working Committee's resolution is based on the as sumption that the country is today not ready for the practice of pure ahimsa. They would be but too glad to discover that their assumption was wrong and revise their decision accordingly. It is for those who have a living faith in non-violence to prove the same and convert the Working Committee to their view instead of catching at the first excuse to resile from their faith. If the fifty-two members who are on the register of your club have the right faith in them, they will soon multiply into fifty-two hundred. But mere shilly-shallying won't do. 'If the salt loseth its savour, where-with shall it be salted?'

I have not a shadow of doubt that though the spinning-wheel we can develop the non-violence of the strong which recks no odds, however overwhelming, and knows no defeat. Weapons forged out of iron and steel do not interest me. They might enable you to scatter death over the enemy and to capture a measure of the power he today wields over you. But that will not leave the masses any the better. They will continue to groan under the yoke of the powerful and the mighty. I am not interested in an order which leaves out the weakest- the blind, the halt and the maimed. My swaraj is even for the least in the land. This can come only through non-violence

Non-violence of the weak is bad. But violence of the impotent - impotent violence-is worse. That is what is today vitiating the atmosphere. Mere spinning a *la mode* will not purge the atmosphere of this poison.

Another member of the club remarked that they could not pretend to have a faith in the spinning-wheel which Gandhiji had, put they were prepared to spin for discipline, which was quite honest a stand to take up.

Gandhiji, while admitting that spinning for discipline had value at one time, contended that it was altogether inadequate to the need of the hour today. To create a

truly non-violent atmosphere in the country, spinning with faith was necessary. Supposing there were riots imperilling the lives of thousands of innocent women and children and the conflagration threatened to spread over the whole country, it would be up to those who had true faith in non-violence to interpose themselves between the lust-maddened rioters and quell their fury by their self-immolation. Spinning for discipline will not five them that faith. He continued:

discipline has a place in non-violent strategy, but much more is required. In a satyagraha army everybody is a soldier and a servant. But at a pinch every satyagrahi soldier has also to be his own general and leader. Mere discipline cannot make for leadership. The latter calls for faith and vision. That is why I have said that spinning for discipline, whatever else it might be capable of achieving. Cannot help us to win the satyagraha fight which requires the non-violence of the strong.

Harijan, 28-7-1940

453. ANSWER TO QUESTION[1]

[Before *July 1, 1940*][2]

QUESTION: You think we have not the non-violence of the brave. Well, then, I ask you what would you do if independence were to be offered to you today? Would you say no?

ANSWER: I would say no. I am giving an absurd answer to an absurd question. The question is absurd, for independence is not going to be offered, because we are not ready. If we were ready, it would be there without our asking for it.

Harijan, 13-7-1940

454. ABOUT THE WORKING COMMITTEE'S DECISION

I have been receiving several letters both from Congressmen and non-Congressmen including friends from the West Deploring the

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "What Led to the Decision", 1-7-1940.

[2] *ibid.*

[3] Namely that congress could not go all the way with Gandhiji in the matter of non-violence; *vide* also "Both Happy and Unhappy", 29-6-1940

recent decision[3] of the Working Committee. These correspondents have nothing but admiration for the courage the members have shown in doing what they felt was a duty though very unpleasant, but all of them deplore the decision and would have the Working committee to reconsider it. Of all these letters there is one which is a reasoned plea for not abandoning non-violence for internal disorders or external attacks. The correspondent encloses also an extract from a letter he wrote to a friend of his who ridiculed the method of satyagraha. Both the letter to me and the extract referred to have intrinsic merit and are opportune at this juncture. I have omitted from the letter the part that disputes the correctness of my tribute to the French statesmen for suing for peace. French capitulation, he considers, was unjustified. It has given him a great shock.

"But,"says the writer, "the decision of the Working Committee has come as a greater shock."From the extract too I have omitted, for the sake of brevity, a paragraph which though very interesting was not strictly necessary for his argument.[1]

NEW DELHI, July 1, 1940

Harijan, 6-7-1940

455. SOME VITAL QUESTIONS

H. E. the Viceroy is again conferring with leaders of parties. I was invited, but not as a party leader or a leader at all. I was invited as a friend to help him, if I could, to come to a definite conclusion, especially to interpret the Congress mind to him. It is better, in the

[1] The texts of the correspondent's letter to Gandhiji and one written to a friend, are not reproduced here. In his letter to Gandhiji the correspondent, having affirmed his "absolute faith in satyagraha, not only as a convienient insturment ofr regaining independence for our country, but as the only law for hunanity to follow", had gone on to say that the decision of the Working committee to adopt measures for national defence, in spite of Gandhiji, had come as a huge disappointment to him.

In the letter to his friend he had said, "To declare that preparations should be made for national defence, while retaining non-violence as a method for national liberation is, to my mind, to make a stravesty of non-violence in the sense in which every true satyagrahi understands it . . . It is non-violence that should be the end . . . , and self - determination the means. . . .

"The desire for moral effort . . . is there in everyone. But that does not mean that moral effort is easy, or that everyone will willingly take to it . . . the majority of us live by our passions . . . Patriotism is the worst kind of emotional orgy. . . ."

light of what is happening (and things will presently move with lightning velocity) to consider some of the question that will demand quick decision, if they will not have been decided before these lines are in print.

The first thing that everyone has to consider for himself is whether Dominion Status of the Westminster variety can be acceptable to India. If it has not become a myth already, it will be at the end of the war. Britain herself, victorious or defeated, will never be the same as she has been for these few hundred years. But this much is certain that her defeat, if it must come, will certainly be glorious. If she is defeated, she will be because no other Power similarly situated could have avoided defeat. I cannot say the same of her victory. It will be bought by a progressive adoption of the same means as the totalitarian States have adopted. I must say with the deepest pain that British statesmen have rejected the only moral influence they could easily have got from the Congress to turn the scales in Britain's favour. It is no blame to her statesmen that they have not availed themselves of that influence. They did not see the need of it. It may well be that they did not perceive the moral influence itself which I have claimed for the Congress. Whatever may be the case, it is clear to me that India's immediate objective must be unadulterated independence. This is no time for mincing words or hiding our thoughts. I cannot think of anyone wanting less than independence for his country, if he can get it. No country has ever got it without its people having fought for it. Anyway, the Congress made up its mind long ago. Even if India is to render effective help to Britain, it can come from a free India. Crores may be drained from India as of yore; thousands of men may be hired as soldiers or camp-followers out of her teeming millions. All such contributions will be from a helpless India. They cannot raise the moral status of Britain.

The next question for consideration is that of providing for internal disorder and external invasion. The raising of private armies will be worse than useless. It will never be allowed. No Power, whether foreign or swadeshi, can tolerate private armies. Those, therefore, who believe in the necessity of India having armed forces will be driven sooner or later to enlist themselves under the British banner. It is the logical outcome of the belief. The Working committee have taken the decision on the point. If it is to abide, I have little doubt that they will presently have to advise Congressmen to enlist in the usual way. That

would mean an end to the slogan of immediate independence and an end also to non-violence of the true brand. I shall hope to the last that, for the sake of themselves, India, aye Britain herself, and humanity, Congressmen will resolutely decline to have anything to do with the use of arms for any of the two purposes. I feel strongly that the future of humanity lies in the hands of the Congress. May God give wisdom and courage to Congressmen to take the right step.

The officer of enlarging the Viceroy's Council is on the tapis. The Congress cannot countenance it, so long as it swears by independence and non-violence. But if it sidetracks them , it will be logically driven to reconstructing Congress ministries in the Provinces. This means the congress becoming a vital part of the war machine. The Government of India has no other occupation but that or preparing India for defending Britain. It is an illusion to talk or preparing India for self-defence. No power has eyes on India except as British possession. As such she is a rich prize. Is not India the brightest jewel in the British Crown? But I own that, if India is to learn the trade of war, she can now have her apprenticeship to the extent that the British masters will allow.

The Congress has to make its choice. The temptation is irresistible. Congressmen can again become Cabinet Ministers. They may also be Ministers or Members at the Centre. They will have an insight into the war machine. They will watch from inside (again to the extent allowed) the Englishman at work when engaged in a life-and-death struggle. They will have to raise crores of rupees and dispose of them in the war effort. If I have my way, I would have the Congress to resist the irresistible temptation and not grudge those who believe in the accepted method filling all these posts. There will be Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis and others taking up these posts as they have done before now. They too are our countrymen. We must give them credit for good faith. Let us who believe in independence and the only way to attain it, hold fast to the objective and the means. I can see much good coming out of this division of functions. For the Congress to merge itself into the stereotyped method would be a disaster of the first magnitude. If, on the other hand. The Congress sticks to its colours, it is sure to fight it way to its goal even before the war is over, provided that the fight is purely, truly and demonstrably non-violent.

NEW DELHI, July 1, 1940

Harijan, 6-7-1940

456. A VALID COMPLAINT

A correspondent sends me a forcible letter in which he argues that, though I expect great things from my countrymen, I write only for *Harijan* which is edited in English, and utterly neglect its Hindustani and Gujarati editions. Both *Harijanbandhu* (Gujarati) and *Harijan Sevak* (Hindustani) have only translations of the writings in *Harijan.* I must plead guilty to the charge. My excuse for writing in English has been that I had to address English-educated India who could understand neither Gujarati nor my faulty Hindustani, and also the ever-growing number of Western readers. I hope that the excuse will be deemed valid. But it seems to me that the time has come for me to confine my writings, as far as possible, exclusively to Gujarati and occasionally to Hindustani. The reason is simple and, I hope, convincing. I have before me that most difficult task of reaching the message of the non-violence of the strong to the masses. They will not understand the fineness of the Working Committee's decision. Already I have warnings that they will be confused. They will believe that the Congress has given up non-violence and wants them also to do likewise. Then they would say, "But the Mahatma still believes in it. In the midst of these differences whose word are we to follow?" If I lose the masses, the mass experiment in no must be voted down as failure. My faith would be still as strong as ever. But my failure will be equally clear. In such trying circumstances I must not rely upon the translations of my writings to carry my message to the masses. I must use the most effective means available. Naturally, therefore, I must speak at least to the Gujaratis in their own language which is also mine. Moreover Gujarati lends itself to correct translation in any northern language much more easily that English.

But the decisive reason for the proposed change is that when I write in English the English-speaking public is in view. I would not have exactly the same message of them as I would have for the masses. Past experience, too, points in favour of the change. When I began to edit *Indian Opinion* in south Africa, most of the Indians there were almost illiterate. I wrote the language they could understand. When the weekly *Indian opinion* reached them, for every twenty Indians they had one reader who was of course a volunteer. They listened to and devoured every word of what appeared in *Indian Opinion*. In it there was no padding , no essays given to the readers. I used to reason out for them their difficulties. I had no time to discuss theories. They

they had one reader who was of course a volunteer. They listened to and devoured every word of what appeared in *Indian Opinion*. In it there was no padding , no essays given to the readers. I used to reason out for them their difficulties. I had no time to discuss theories. They had weekly instructions as to what they were to do. I have no doubt that *Indian Opinion* had a vital part to play in moulding and guiding the satyagrahis. Had I spoken to them through the English medium, I should have failed. I should never have been able to feel one with them, if I had spoken to them in English when I knew that I could speak to a large section of them through their own tongue. If, therefore, I hope as I do, to carry even a section of the masses with me, I must at least speak to them through the tongue they and I understand.

So the English-knowing readers should not be surprised if one fine day they get my writings in *Harijan* in translated from. Happily I have very able assistance in this direction. Mahadev Desai and Pyarelal have often translated my Gujarati or Hindustani writings. English-knowing readers should know that they have my *Experiments with Truth* and *History of Satyagraha in South Africa* in translation. So in *Hind Swaraj*, and several other writings of mine. After all, however, in the matter of non-violence I must rely most upon my thought to carry my message to the farthest limits of the universe. All thought does not possess the same potency. Only thought crystallized by a pure life and charged with prayerful concentration has potency. The purer the life, the greater the concentration, the brighter the faith in that Unseen Power from whom all things are, the greater the potency of thought. If I had the purity, the concentration and the faith I want, I know that I would do all my work without speech or writing, or with the least use of either, and the power the thought would then carry would be irresistible. That is the power which every human being has to aspire to and with due effort can attain. The voice of silence has never been denied.

NEW DELHI, July 1, 1940

Harijan, 6-7-1940

457. NON-VIOLENCE AND PANIC

The following[1] from a correspondent's letter will be read with interest and perhaps profit:

> Since the Allies have begun to suffer reverses there is a panic in the country. The people have become afraid of the consequences of the failure of the British. They apprehend civil war, communal riots, looting, arson, plunder and goondaism. You are the apostle of non-violence and have been preaching it for the last twenty years, if not more. . .
>
> But . . . I find that in the majority of your followers this conception on non-violence is wanting. They are non-violent because they believe that, if they will use violence to fight a wrongdoer, they will provoke him with the result that he will use greater violence which they may be unable to stand. This seems to be the background of their non-violence which is clearly an outcome of fear and cowardice, and not of love. For , the idea behind is to save one's life and not to risk it for a higher cause. . . .
>
> In these days of panic and general nervousness I strongly believe that a few articles from your pen will dispel all fears from our young men and infuse a spirit in them which will enable them to resist the goonda element in the society. One article[1] of this nature has already appeared in the last issue of *Harijan*. But I suggest that a series is necessary to bring courage and bravery to those who are physically quite fit but are panic-stricken. In my opinion, all fear, all nervousness and panic will disappear in case you are kind enough to spare a few lines in Harijan on this subject every week. Our nervousness is encouraging the goondas amongst us. The moment it disappears, the goondas and bullies of our society will also disappear.

The letter gives a correct picture of the mentality of the average Congressman. The non-violence which it describes can never take us to our goal. It will have served us well, if we use it as a stepping-stone to true the non-violence of the strong-non-violence which will stand alone defying the combined might of the mightiest powers of the earth. Let all Congressmen ask themselves whether they have the courage to take up non-violence of the strong. Nothing is needed to reach that much-to-be-desired state beyond the will to risk all for the sake of one's cause. The non-violence of the person who went to jail to avoid a worse fate harmed him and disgraced the cause which he used as a shelter to escape death. Swaraj-makers are made of sterner

[1] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.
[1] *Vide* "How to Combat Hitlerism", 18-6-1940.

stuff. And, surely, it is simple enough to see that, if we can bravely face death without killing or even wishing to kill, we have achieved the ability to win and keep swaraj.

My correspondent asks me to write a series of articles in condemnation of panic. Nothing that I can write will alone prevent panic. What is required is example more than precept. I have pointed out that the city-dwellers who are reported to have given way to panic were never non-violent even when they went to jail. Our city-dwellers made a handsome contribution as jail-goers during the civil-resistance campaigns launched by the Congress. They should now, by resolutely sticking to their posts, steel the hearts of the timid against the temptation to flee from fancied or real danger. It is foolish to think that by fleeing one can trick the dread god of death. Let us treat him as a beneficent angel rather then as a dread god. We must face and welcome him whenever he comes. My host, Sheth Ghanshyamdas Birla, tells me that not many months ago a whole mercantile family which had converted paper into gold met death in a railway accident which overtook the train that was carrying the family and its precious gold. Verily that gold was a death trap. Let us not die before the inevitable hour comes as it must come to every one of us, war or no war

NEW DELHI, July 1, 1940

Harijan, 6-7-1940

458. QUESTION BOX

A MUSLIM'S DELEMMA

Q. We Muslims believe that the Prophet's life was wholly directed by God and truly non-violent, though not in your sense of the term. He never waged an offensive war, and he had the tenderest regard for the feelings of others, but when he was driven to a defensive war he drew his sword for a holy war, and he permits the use of the sword under conditions he has laid down. But your non-violence is different. You prescribe it under all conditions and circumstances. I do not think the Prophet would permit this. Whom are we to follow- you or the Prophet? If we follow you, we cease to be Muslims. If we follow the Prophet, we cannot join the Congress with its creed of extreme non-violence. Will you solve this dilemma?

A. I can only answer that, since you notice the difference, you should unhesitatingly follow the Prophet, not me. Only I would like to say that I claim to have studied the life of the Prophet and the Koran

as a detached student of religions. And I have come to the conclusion that the teaching of the Karon is essentially in favour of non-violence. Non-violence is better than violence, it is said in the Koran. Non-violence is enjoined as a duty; violence is permitted as a necessity. I must refuse to sit in judgement on what the Prophet did. I must base my conduct on what the great teachers of the earth said, not on what they did. Prophethood came not from the wielding of the sword, it came from years of wrestling with God to know that truth. Erase these precious years of the great life, and you will have robbed the Prophet of his prophethood. It is these years of his life which made Mohammed a prophet. A prophet's life, after he is acknowledged as one, cannot be our guide. Only prophets can weigh the works of prophets. If a civilian can judge the merits of a soldier, a layman of a scientist, an ordinary man may judge a prophet, must less imitate him. If I handled a motor-car, I should surely run it and me into the danger zone and probably into the jaws of death. How much more dangerous would it be then for me to imitate a prophet! When the Prophet was asked why, if he could fast more than the prescribed times, the companions also could not, he promptly replied: "God gives me spiritual food which satisfies even the bodily wants: for you He has ordained the Ramadan. You may not copy me. "quote from memory.

SPARE THE ROD

Q. I am a teacher. I try to follow the principle of non-violence in dealing with my schoolboys and my own children. I am successful to a great extent in case of the school children, excepting a bully whom I would send to the Head Master. But in case of my own children I often feel like beating , though I successfully restrain myself. I find that these are readily obedient to my uncle who, unlike me, believes in the old saying: 'Spare the rod, spoil the child., what should I do with my own children? How should a non-violent Head Master deal with a bully?

A. I am quite clear that you must not inflict corporal or other punishment on your children or pupils. You can punish yourself, if you like and are qualified, in order to melt your children's or pupils' hearts. Many mothers are known to have corrected their children in this manner. I have on many occasions. I had to deal with wild boys in South Africa, Muslims, Christians, Hindus and Parsis. With one exception, I do not remember ever having punished a single boy. The non-violent method invariably succeeded. When a bond is established between a teacher and his pupils, the latter will generally yield before

their teacher's suffering for their sake. In the case of your 'bully', if he has no respect for you, you can non-co-operate with him by sending him away from your school. Non-violence does not compel you to keep in your school a student who does not carry our disciplinary rules.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Q. You often refer to the Sermon on the Mount. Do you believe in the verse, 'if any man will take away the coat, let him have thy cloak also"? Does it not follow from the principle of non-violence? If so, then do you advise the weak and poor tenant of a village to submit gladly to the violent encroachment of the zamindar on his '*abadi* land' or tenancy rights, which so often occurs in a village these days?

A. Yes, I would unhesitatingly advise tenants to evacuate the land belonging to a tyrant. That would be like giving your cloak also when only the coat is demanded. To take what is required may be profitable; to have more given to you is highly likely to a burden. To overload a stomach is to court slow death. A zamindar wants his rent, he does not want his land. It would be a burden on him when he does not want it. When you give more to a robber than he needs, you spring a surprise on him, you give him a shock although agreeable, he has not been used to it. Historical instances are on record to show that such non-violent conduct has produced a wholesome effect upon evil-doers. These acts cannot be done mechanically; they must come out of conviction and love or pity for the other man. Nor need you work all the apparent implications of my answer. If you do , you will come across blind alleys. Suffice it to say that in the verse quoted by you Jesus put in a picturesque and telling manner the great doctrine of non-violent non-co-operation. Your non-co-operation with your opponent is violent when you give a blow for a blow, and is ineffective in the long run. Your non-co-operation is non-violent when you give your opponent all in the place of just what he needs. You have disarmed him once for all by your apparent co-operation, which in effect is complete non-co-operation. A girl, who rather than give her living body to a would-be ravisher presents him with her corpse, confounds him and dies a heroine's death. Here is a stout heart in a frail body.

COMPULSORY PRAYER

Q. I am a worker in the Rajasthan branch of the A. I. S. A. I believe in prayer but some of my colleagues do not. Still they have got to join in prayer under the rules

of the *Sanstha*.[1] They are afraid that, if they refuse, they would lose their job. My view is that the *Sanstha* pays wages to its workers for their eight hours' work. What right has it to insist upon including compulsory participation in prayer by their workers into the bargain?

A. There can be no such thing as compulsory prayer. A prayer to be prayer must be voluntary. But nowadays people entertain curious ideas about compulsion. Thus, if the rules of your institution require every inmate-paid or unpaid-to attend common prayer, in my opinion you are bound to attend it as you are to attend to your other duties. Your joining the institution was a voluntary act. You knew or ought to have known its rules. Therefore your attendance at prayer I would regard as a voluntary act, even as I would treat your other work under the contract. If you joined the institution merely because of the wages it offered, you should have made it clear to the manager that you could not attend prayer. If in spite of your objection you entered the institution without stating your objection, you did a wrong thing for which you should make expiation. This can be done in two ways - by joining the prayer with your heart in it, or by resigning and paying such compensation as may be necessary for the loss caused by your sudden resignation. Everyone joining an institution owes it to obey the rules framed by the management from time to time. When any new rule is found irksome, it is open to the objector to leave the institution in accordance with the provisions made for resignation. But he may not disobey them whilst he is in it.

NEW DELHI, JULY 1, 1940

Harijan, 13-7-1940

459. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

BIRLA HOUSE, ALBURQUE ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
July 2, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I have to thank you for your very prompt reply to my letter of 20th ultimo. I thank you too for sending me the full meaning of what

[1] Institution

you had actually said. In trying to interpret you, my object was to put your proposals in as favourable a light as I could. I am thankful for the corrections. I would read your letter to the Working Committee.

I am glad also that you have no objection to my making a public,appeal to the British people on behalf of non-violence.[1] Needless to say that I can in no way associate your name with my appeal.

Our talks and correspondence shall remain confidential as desired by you.

I am

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a printed copy: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archieves of India

460. TO EVERY BRITON

In 1896 I addressed an appeal[1] to every Briton in South Africa on behalf of my countrymen who had gone there as labourers or traders and their assistants. It had its effect. However important it was from my viewpoint, the cause which I pleaded then was insignificant compared with the cause which prompts this appeal. I appeal to every Briton, wherever he may be now, to accept the method of non-violence instead of that of war for the adjustment of relations between nations and other matters. Your statesmen have declared that this a war on behalf of democracy. There are many other reason given in justification. You know them all by heart. I suggest that at the end of the war, whichever way it ends, there will be no democracy left to represent democracy. This war has descended upon mankind as a curse and a warning. It is a curse inasmuch as it is brutalizing man on a scale hitherto unknown. All distinctions between combatants and non-combatants have been abolished. No one and nothing is to be spared. Lying has been reduced to an art. Britain was to defend small nationalities. One by one they have vanished, at least for the time being. It is also a warning. It is a warning that, if nobody reads the writing on the wall, man will be reduced to the state of the beast, whom he is shaming

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[1] Presumably "Open Letter" and "Letter to Europeans"; *Vide* "Open Letter", before 19-12-1894.

by his manners. I read the writing when the hostilities broke out. But I had not the courage to say the word. God has given me the courage to say it before it is too late.

I appeal for cessation of hostilities, not because you are too exhausted to fight, but because war is bad in essence. You want to kill Nazim. You will never kill it by its indifferent adoption. Your soldiers are doing the same work of destruction as the Germans. The only difference is that perhaps yours are not as thorough as the Germans. If that be so, yours will soon acquire the same thoroughness as theirs, if not much greater. On no other condition can you win the war. In other words, you will have to be more ruthless than the Nazis. No cause, however just, can warrant the indiscriminate slaughter that is going on minute by minute. I suggest that a cause that demands the inhumanities that are being perpetrated today cannot be called just.

I do not want Britain to be defeated, nor do I want her to be victorious in a trial of brute strength, whether expressed through the muscle or the brain. Your muscular bravery is an established fact. Need you demonstrate that your brain is also as unrivalled in destructive power as your muscle? I hope you do not wish to enter into such an undignified competition with the Nazis. I venture to present you with a nobler and a braver way, worthy of the bravest soldier. I want you to fight Nazism without arms, or, if I am to retain the military terminology, with non-violent arms. I would like you to lay down the arms you have as being useless for saving you or humanity. You will invite Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini to take what they want of the countries you call your possessions. Let them take possession of your beautiful island, with your many beautiful buildings. You will give all these, but neither your souls, nor your minds. If these gentlemen choose to occupy your homes, you will vacate them. If they do not give you free passage out, you will allow yourself, man, woman and child, to be slaughtered, but you will refuse to owe allegiance to them.

This process or method, which I have called non-violent non-co-operation, is not without considerable success in its use in India. Your representatives in India may deny my claim. If they do, I shall feel sorry for them. They may tell you that our non-co-operation was not wholly non-violent, that it was born of hatred. If they give that testimony, I won't deny it. Had it been wholly non-violent, if all the non-co-operators had been filled with goodwill towards you, I make bold to say that you who are India's masters would have become her

pupils and, with much greater skill than we have, perfected this matchless weapon and met the German and Italian friends' menace with it. Indeed the history of Europe during the past few months would then have been written differently. Europe would have been spared seas of innocent blood, the rape of so many small nations, and the orgy of hatred.

This is no appeal made by a man who does not know his business. I have been practising with scientific precision non-violence and its possibilities for an unbroken period of over fifty years. I have applied it in every walk of life, domestic, institutional, economic and political. I know of no single case in which it has failed. Where it has seemed sometimes to have failed, I have ascribed it to my imperfections. I claim no perfection for my self. But I do claim to be a passionate seeker after Truth, which is but another name for God. In the course of the search the discovery of non-violence came to me. Its spread is my life-mission. I have no interest in living except for the prosecution of that mission.

I claim to have been a lifelong and wholly disinterested friend of the British people. At one time I used to be also a lover of your empire. I thought that it was doing good to India. When I saw that in the nature of things it could do no good. I used, and am still using, the non-violent method to fight imperialism. Whatever the ultimate fate of my country, my love for you remains, and will remain, undiminished. My non-violence demands universal love, and you are not a small part of it. It is that love which has prompted my appeal to you.

May God give power to every word of mine. His name I began to write this, and in His name I close it. May your statesman have the wisdom and courage to respond to my appeal. I am telling His Excellency the Vicero[1] that my services are at the disposal of His Majesty's Government, should they consider them of any practical use in advancing the object of my appeal.

NEW DELHI, JULY 2, 1940

Harijan, 6-7-1940

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 3-7-1940.

461. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
July 3, 1940

CHI. AMRIT,

You may not cable Amery[2] . Let things shape themselves. Shivaroa[3] need not worry. Read my "Appeal[4] to Every Briton" and do lobbying among the Britons. Don't expect letters from me now. You should write. I shall see that someone writes to you. I must reserve writing for papers.

LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3979. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7288

462. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

DELHI,
July 3, 1940

You must have seen in the Press my public appeal to every Briton. Nevertheless, for the sake of courtesy, I enclose herewith a copy. You will note the last sentence of my appeal. Will you please convey the contents it to the proper quarters? The appeal and the offer at the end represent my personal and humble contribution to Britain's cause. It is the best I could give.[1]

Harijan 21-7-1940

[2] The Secretary of State of India

[3] B. Shiva Rao

[4] *Vide* the preceding item.

[1] Replying on July 10, the Viceroy said, "I duly conveyed your letter of July 3 and your appeal to His Majesty's Government. I have now heard from them that with every appreciation of your motives they do not feel that the policy which you advocate is one which it is possible for them to consider, since in common with the whole Empire they ae firmly resolved to prosecute the war to a victorious conclusion.

463. CABLE TO AGATHA HARRISON

NEW DELHI
July 5, 1940

AGATHA HARRISON
CRANBOURNE COURT
ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD
LONDON

NO HOPE SETTLEMENT, WIRE EXTENT PUBLICITY GIVEN THERE MY APPEAL EVERY BRITON.

GANDHI

From the original: Gandhi Nidhi File (August 1796). Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

464. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
July 5, 1940

CHI. AMRIT,

I have your two packets. You will not worry if I can't send you many letters.

I appreciate the love behind the wish that your translation should be revised by me. I have promised that I shall do so. I shall try. If I can train you and S. to do that work I should be at ease about *Harijan Sevak*. In the altered circumstances created by me I must write for Harijan also. I refer to my "Appeal to Every Briton".

Khurshed is here. She is quite well and quite cheerful. She is going for a few days to Bombay and will return to the Frontier on 15th.

Rogers is still here meditating on what he can do about the Appeal. You should do the lobbying among your English friends.

LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3980. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7289

465. TESTIMONIAL TO BAL. D. KALELKAR

NEW DELHI,
July 5, 1940

This is to introduce young Kalelkar to all my friends in America. He was brought up under my hands. He is one of the most promising among the boys brought up in Satyagraha Ashram. Any help rendered to him will be appreciated.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 2176

466. TO SEVAGRAM WORKERS

July 6, 1940

I hope everyone drinks only boiled water. During the rainy season, our wells contain many impurities. As a protection against malaria everyone should apply kerosene oil to hands and feet before retiring to bed at night. It should be applied even to the face. Food should be masticated well. Bowels should be cleared every day. If there is constipation castor oil may be taken as a purgative. We should protect ourselves against the sun; a cap or a piece of cloth may be used to cover the head

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bopuki Chhayamen, P. 383

467. SPEECH AT THE HARIJAN INDUSTRIAL HOME, DELHI[1]

[Before *July 7, 1940*][2]

There can be no better cement to weld scattered and isolated units into a homogeneous society than heart-union through prayer. It purifies us and gives us true strength-the strength that come from purity and high resolve. May God bless you with both in an ample measure.

A litter girl asked Gandhiji how satyagraha could avail against raiders from the sky who would deal death from above and with whom the satyagrahis would not be able even to make contact.

By dying non-violently rather than submitting.

Q. But who will then live to enjoy freedom?

A. The survivors if there are any. But may I put you a counter-question? Who enjoys the freedom when whole divisions of armed soldiers rush into a hailstorm of bullets to be mown down? Why, those who might succeed in capturing the citadel by passing over their dead bodies. The soldier who fights never expects to enjoy the fruits of victory. But in the case of non-violence everybody seems to start with the assumption that the non-violent method must be set down as a failure unless he himself at least lives to enjoy the success thereof. This is both illogical and invidious. In satyagraha more than in armed warfare, it may be said that we find life by losing it.

Harijan, 28-7-1940

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's “The Journey Back”. The Home was being run under Thakkar Bapa's care and Gandhiji visited it twice during his stay in Delhi.

[2] Gandhiji left Delhi on the evening of July 7.

468. DISCUSSION AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

[*July , 3/7, 1940*][1]

GANDHIJI: I have been oppressed all the time by the fact that I now represent a totally different mentality from that of the Working Committee. When I asked for absolution it was not a formal thing. My article in the *Harijan*[2] is a true picture of my mind. I put the same thing to the Viceroy. I told him that this was the last interview. He should send for the President of the Congress if he must have an offer on behalf of the Congress. I think in the course of days he will invite the President. It is the most difficult job for me to give a decisive opinion on these matters. I would much rather that you left me alone.

Granting the implications that I have drawn from the last resolution you cannot possibly escapes its logical conclusion. You will want to seize power. You will have to surrender certain things in order to get it. You will have to be like other parties. You will be driven into their ways. Maybe you will be an advanced party. This picture repels me. I don't believe in the expression ' seizure of power'. There is no such thing as 'seizure of power'. I have no power save what resides in the people. I am a mere representative of the power in the people. While Rajaji was developing his theme I felt that a wide gulf separated me from him. He thinks he will be best able to serve his country by taking advantage of every opportunity be serve the country. He takes office in that light. I differ fundamentally from him. He may satisfy himself with the illusion that he is serving non-violence. I am not afraid of power. Some day or the other we will have to take it. The Viceroy is here to serve his country, its interests and therefore he must use all resources that India has mercilessly. If we participate in war effort, we shall have learnt some lesson in the art of violence, even if the Britishers are defeated. This will gives us some experience, some power such as a soldier has but all this at cost of independence, this seems to me the logical consequence of your resolution. This does not

[1] From the contents it is obvious that this was the meeting following the one held at Wardha from June 17 to 21 at which Gandhiji had expressed a desire to be absolved from the activities of the Congress

[2] *Vide* "Both Happy and Unhappy" , 29-6-1940.

appeal to me. If we are non-violent I know how to deal with the situation. The vast majority of our people had violence in them, but they were taught the power of non-violence. Now you must teach them the power of violence. There is confusion in the people now. It is not my interpretation which has caused it but the resolution itself. I cannot guide you in this atmosphere. Whatever I say will embarrass you.

I told the Viceroy that the British, if they succeed, will not be better than Mussolini or Hitler. If there is peace with Hitler India will be exploited by all powers. But if we are non-violent and Japan comes we will see that they do not get anything without our consent. Non-violence has worked wonders in 20 years. We cannot do any such thing with violence. . . [1]

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: The question was brought forward by Gandhiji in the world context. He wanted to place the message of non-violence before the world.

GANDHIJI: Not exactly world context. I thought of the immediate problem. I did not have the world picture before me but India, and India alone. In the position they have taken the Working Committee is free to render help and to prepare an army. It is free to take office. The Viceroy thought the resolution favoured him. He said: "You want to defend India, you want aeroplanes, battle-ships, tanks, etc. We will give you all these. This will serve our purpose and also yours. This is the golden opportunity. You should come and get equipped. Under pressure we will go forward double speed.'

I regret the Congress took what I considered as a backward step, but it is a perfectly honourable step. It has taken the only step that it could. I will still try to wean it and the rank and file from this mistake. If the rank and file feel with me the Working Committee will retract the step. A larger issue of internal anarchy was before us. What contribution shall we make if anarchy overtakes us? Will the masses co-operate in the non-violent effort? I will test the masses and if I find that they will desert me I will shape my policy accordingly, but I won't collapse before they collapse. The terrible things that are going on in Europe fill me with anguish. I do not know where I could come in there. I feel I can do something and hence the statement.

[1] The meeting then discussed the question of non-violence and internal disorder.

Private armies never appeal to me. The masses will be exploited by us. We will go and tell them you must give us your last penny to defend your hearths and homes. I cannot do this. This is not for me. I want to proclaim to the country that India will defend itself non-violently so far as the Congress is concerned.

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI: I cannot go with Gandhiji in his conception of the State. Ours is a political organization not working for non-violence but for the political ideal. We are working in competition with other political parties.

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: I agree with Rajaji in his understanding of violence and non-violence ; else we cannot function on the political plane.

GANDHIJI : Very difficult questions have arisen in the course of the discussion. Rajaji has summarily rejected the idea that we can retain power by non-violent means. This was illustrated even when we attained it by non-violent means while the Congress was in office. To the extent they used violence the ministries failed. Their action showed bankruptcy of our non-violence. Perhaps we could not have done otherwise. I advised giving up of office. Rajaji however does not accept what I have said, that it is possible to hold office without the use of more than police violence.

I again want to emphasize two things. I do not [*sic*] believe that declaration of independence is necessary. The legal declaration may come afterwards. If the government expect any help from us our help will be moral. It will be infinitely superior to what they can get by manipulation, coaxing or coercion. I do feel if they have courage to do the right thing, the scales will be turned in their favour. Independence inaction must be declared. Very lightly it was said by some mem-bers that we must dismiss from our minds civil resistance. I have never dismissed it. A time may come when we shall resort to civil disobedience. I cannot conceive the idea of our sitting, silently when people are made to co-operate under compulsion. This process is going on now. The process was gentle and not much felt till the French capitulation. I cannot conceive my remaining silent or sitting at ease with this coercion going on unhampered. But can our people show non-violence through and through? The non-violence of the weak will bring us some relief but not real joy and power-it will end in our being exhausted. If we begin with non-violence of the weak and end also with that we are finished. Therefore now, when the testing

time has come, you say it is not possible. All honour to your integrity and courage of conviction. But I cannot help feeling that our non-violence has ended in disaster, I say again with experience and conviction that it is possible to touch power through non-violence , but we may not take it. A non-violent organization may not accept office but it can get things done its way. Thus alone can we have power if we have not non-violent control over people. Jawaharlal has done less than justice to those who believe in non-violence. He means that they want to be superior men leaving the dirty work of violence to be done by others. I hold, on the other hand, that we don't take power at all. It involves emoluments, glory and things which people prize. Those in power consider that they are superior and others subordinate. When a non-violent man refuses to take over power he says, 'I decline because if I accept I shall make a mess of it. I am not built that way. Let credit go to others.' I never felt that I was superior to those who took power nor did they feel that they were inferior or called upon to do a dirty job. Now suppose you at this critical moment hold fast to non-violence in the midst of other parties who swear by violence, you will be in a minority. Why should a small non-violent group immediately expect to win power before they convert others. Let others hold power. A group of non-violent men wishing to convert the country to non-violence will not bother about power. In holding fast to the creed you will have converted a majority of the people. A man who has self-confidence will convert the county. But you say millions will never arrive at that stage. I feel practically certain they can. Do not lay down this proposition. I became non-violent after laborious processes. It is the essence of non-violence that we give the same credit to the whole of mankind that we claim for ourselves. I have never felt that I alone can practise non-violence . Quite the contrary, I consider myself mediocre. I belong purely to the rank and file and yet I can lead the masses. I can produce heroes from the illiterates of Gujarat. Time was when these illiterates said, 'what can we do?' Today these very people are wielding power. If we can convert a few thousands we can convert millions. Both masses of Hindus and Muslims acted non-violently in 1920. Could it not be a great thing for us to have acquired such an influence upon public opinion and upon those who wield power that we do not have to compel obedience. Non-violence cannot suddenly mount to power. I am not satisfied with swaraj for the few. It is for millions. They must feel it. By violent means they cannot feel it. This opportunity has

come into our hands. We have got to decide. I do not leave out even lepers from my non-violent calculation. I am not talking through my hat. I have a leper[1] in my Ashram. He feels now that he can play his part though he cannot wield arms. Logically I have endeavoured to show that there is nothing to prevent you from taking power if certain conditions are fulfilled.

Many Indian villages and institutions are behaving non-violently. We are trying to produce a homogeneous nation. We must allow time for it. What has violence accomplished in the world? I think impatience has seized us. If we do not take office others will take office. If you think that you can serve the people by entering into competition with others you are mistaken. We are democrats. We would be presumed to be ruling by the will of the people. We must dismount if people rebel. We have not given that trial to non-violence which we might have. All of us did our best. Let us do better. If we do better, if we have got the proper courage we shall have left something for India to be proud of. I would like you to feel with me that it is perfectly possible to hold the State without an army. If anybody comes I will square accounts with him along non-violent lines. Why should we fear that they will swallow us? Violent people fight violent people. They do not touch non-violent people. We build up huge armaments in order to ward off an attack in some distant future. The divisions in the country also provide us with reason for our keeping to non-violence. We can hold our people peacefully against the whole world.

Our non-violence is of the weak. It is not non-violence of the brave. If we have affection for our neighbours there will be no Hindu-Muslim riots. These riots can be prevented, if they can be prevented, other anarchy can also be prevented.

Wardha Office Satyagraha File, 1940-41. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Parchure Shastri

469. DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR THE WORKING COMMITTEE

[*July 3/7, 1940*]

The Working committee have noted that confusion prevails amongst Congressmen as to the interpretation of their last statement made in Wardha on 21 June. They observe that several newspapers and others in common with many Congressmen have believed that the committee had given up non-violence as an integral part of the Congress policy. Certain paragraphs of the statement do lend themselves to such interpretation in spite of the following emphatic and unequivocal declaration therein of the Congress policy:

> The war in Europe, resulting from a desire for imperialist domination over other peoples and countries, and a suicidal race in armaments, has led to human sorrow and misery on a scale hitherto unknown. It has demonstrated the inefficacy of organized violence, on however vast a scale, for the defence of national freedom and the liberties of peoples. It has shown beyond a doubt that warfare cannot lead to peace and freedom and the choice before the world is uttermost degradation and destruction through warfare or the way of peace and non-violence on a basis of freedom for all people. . . The Committee wish to make it clear that the methods and basic policy of non-violence in the national struggle for freedom continue with full force and are not affected in the least by the inability to extend it to the region of national defence.

The Working Committee have come to the conclusion that they should exclusively rely upon Congress volunteers pledged to non-violence and the Congress discipline to deal with internal disorders to the extent it is possible. The volunteers will co-operate in a non-violent way with other similar organizations in their non-violent activities. The Working Committee advise all Congress Committees to form volunteer corps provided that they are sure that the candidates know the implications of non-violence and the value of strict discipline.

The Congress non-violence has been hitherto confined to the fight with the British government. If success achieved so far has made non-violence, to the extent mentioned, the settled policy of the Congress beyond assail, it must be admitted that success cannot be claimed for non-violent effort in the case of communal riots. The Working Committee are of opinion that the fault must be laid at the door of volunteer organizations. The Working Committee hope that at

this the critical hour in the history of India volunteer organizations would be able effectively to deal with riots and the like in a non-violent manner.

The Working Committee never had occasion to determine whether India can be defended non-violently, nor is it even now called upon to do so, though the proved futility of violence to defend the nations of Europe is sufficient indication for the Working Committee for coming to a decision. But till the hour for taking a final decision arrived, the Working Committee must keep an open mind. But so far as the present is concerned, the Working Committee are firmly of opinion that in pursuance of their non-violent policy Congressmen must not have anything to do with military training or activities calculated to made India military-minded. Therefore the Working Committee cannot but view with grave alarm the attempt made in an organized manner to prepare India for military defence. In the opinion of the Working committee if India were free and independent without an army she would have no fear of external aggression. The best defence that free India can put up if the people accepted the Congress policy would be to cultivate friendliness with the whole world. To invest crores of rupees in armaments, fortresses and the like would be to invite foreign attack. The Working committee believe that India is too poor to invest money in costly defence forces and modern equipment. The Working Committee therefore warn the British Government against the feverish preparations that they are making for the professed defence of India. They are of opinion that they are intended merely to help Britain. These preparations cannot help India in any real sense. The Working Committee draw the attention of the British Government and people that although India is claimed by them to have provincial autonomy and every province has elected assemblies, and there is also a partially popularly elected Central Legislative Assembly, the huge expense is being incurred without any reference to these legislatures. The Working committee believe that it is wrong and immoral to arm one man, however honest and distinguished, with unlimited powers to utilize the resources of a great country like India and to impress her people in any manner he chooses without any control or check on the part of her people. It is a procedure in no way

in keeping with the British Government's declarations, however unsatisfactory from the congress standpoint, about the freedom of India.

The Working Committee wish to declare that the Congress claims to be wholly friendly to the British people. Its non-violent policy demands nothing but goodwill towards them. But the friendliness and goodwill can have no play and no meaning, so long as India remains in helpless bondage and her resources in men and money are utilized without ascertaining the wishes of the representatives of the people elected under a system established by Great Britain. The Working Committee ask the British Government to revise their suicidal policy and take the popular assemblies into their confidence. The Working Committee associate themselves with the appeal recently made by Gandhiji to every Briton[1] and hope that Great Britain will accept the policy of non-violence whose potency has been proved beyond doubt even though its application was admittedly imperfect. British Government may rely upon the fullest and friendliest co-operation of the Congress in the direction of peace effort in the non-violent way commended by Gandhiji.

In spite of the repeated and firm declaration of the Congress to the contrary, there seems to be a belief among the public, including even some Congressmen, that the Congress will be satisfied with Dominion Status. The Working Committee warn all concerned that they will accept no status lower than complete independence and that declaration should be made now and given effect to, immediately so far as may be. The legal formality may await a suitable future period. Only India free and independent in action can decide upon the part she should play in the present war.

There is talk among some Congressmen that the Congress may countenance resumption of Ministerial offices. The Working Committee wish to make it clear that there is no prospect of the Congress countenancing such a step without a satisfactory settlement with the Government and in no case of promoting a war effort in which they have no faith. In view of the foregoing it is superfluous to say that the Working Committee cannot associate themselves with any Government proposals to expand the Central executive.

[1] *Vide* "To Every Briton", 2-7-1940.

In view of the recent developments the Working Committee decide to remove the ban upon Congress members of the Central Legislative Assembly attending its sessions.

In as much as it is necessary still further to enforce strict discipline, the Working Committee ask all those who do not strictly believe in non-violence to resign from the Congress. It is against the Congress Constitution for anyone to become a four-anna member unless he believing in it, signs the Congress pledge.[1]

GANDHIJI: I have placed this draft before you only to know your reactions. I have no doubt that you took in Wardha the wisest decision that you could take. The discussions today have more than confirmed my opinion. I am more than fully repaid for the labour I spend on the draft. I reduced my idea to writing only to find your reactions. I have listened to every word of the discussion. I see that there is a definite, wide gulf between us, such that it cannot be bridged. To attempt to do so would be doing a disservice to the country. I have no impatience, no irritation in me. If I find that my hold has weakened I must withdraw in the interest of the Congress itself.

I have always derived my politics from ethics or religion and my strength is also derived by my deriving my politics from ethics. It is because I swear by ethics and religion that I find myself in politics. A person who is a lover of his country is bound to take lively interest in politics otherwise he will not be able to carry on his avocation with peace. I came into the Congress with my religion.

The time has arrived when I should watch you and see whether I can take you as far as necessary.

I had not in the past the slightest difficulty in carrying Rajaji with me, his intelligence as well as his heart, but since this office question cropped up, I saw that our thoughts were running in different directions. I see that I cannot carry him now along with me. It is vital for me therefore to ask for absolution. Internal dissensions are a small thing. We have now concentrated sufficiently on them. If you cannot come to a decision about external aggression, you cannot come to a decision about internal dissensions. My mind does not make a vital distinction between the two. I have deliberately put in the resolution the expression ‘open mind’. You have said that we can mount to power by non-violent means but you doubt the ability to retain and

[1] The meeting then discussed Gandhiji's draft.

consolidate it except through an army. The little police force that I have in mind will not be sufficient to cope with big disorders unless we have, as a nation, sufficient non-violence in us, or in other words we apply non-violence to politics. The technique of non-violence is different from that of violence. We shut our eyes to the fact that our control on the masses, over even our registered Congressmen is ineffective. The negative response is there. In positive response both fail. It is not our fault exactly. Millions are concerned. Even a military programme could not have been complete in 20 years. We must therefore be patient. If the masses have won independence by non-violence , they can also retain it by non-violence.

Twenty years is nothing for the country. Our non-violence was restricted to capturing power. We are successful as against the British, but we failed against our own people. At several places we have had violent demonstrations by Congressmen and Congress Committee. Hence our difficulties and my insistence that we must develop non-violence. This is the time; otherwise we will cut a sorry figure. Rajaji is right that if I believe that the Congress is with me I am living in a fool's paradise. I have plunged with my eyes open. I played with fire when I entered into partnership with Muslims. Hindus said the Muslims would organize themselves. They did. I have one measure for the whole of mankind.

I have been thinking seriously about the weaknesses that have crept into the Congress, but always in the hope that I will carry you further when the time comes. When Bhulabhai said we are committing ourselves he is right and not right. A document is to be read together with commas and semi-colons. Today we have the choice between weapons of destruction and non-violence for internal and external purposes. We have got to make the choice. Let us say good-bye to non-violence if we must. Today non-violence , tomorrow violence - this is our attitude. We don't know what we shall do in future. Let alone tomorrow, let us ask ourselves: shall we shoulder the rifle now? Bhulabhai spoke of 1100 officers. This does not move a single muscle of mine. My horizon extends to the submerged millions. The 1100 are lost in that ocean. I will never be able to forgive myself if I take a false step. If you don't come to Rajaji position today you will come to it tomorrow. If you have imbibed non-violence in practice well and good; for myself I go on with it in my pocket, in my heart and mind. I shall try to convert my people and see what is in store for me; in the

alternative we must give our people military training but that for ourselves and not for the empire. The empire is tottering. The sun on it is fast setting. If we lack faith in non-violence let us organize for violence. I hold we will fail. I agree with Maulana Saheb that those who start with violence for self-defence end with aggression. He has quoted his own coreligionist. I have got this precious thing for which I want to live. I don't want to be instrumental in militarizing the masses. A non-violent soldier will not be despised. He may be a consumptive, but he will give a better account of himself than the tallest Pathan. I want you to seriously examine Rajaji's position and see if you can adopt it; otherwise he should be allowed to go away. Our readings on non-violence differ at this moment. Let him carve out a position for himself. He must agitate even if he is in a hopeless minority. I started alone, but soon I enjoyed a vast majority. He should strain every nerve to persuade the Working Committee or reconstitute the Committee of those who are no saturated with non-violence up to the point I have stated.

You should allow me to carry the message as I know it. The country will not lose by this twofold division if we are honest. We must all act according to our views. It fills me with intense pleasure that everyone has spoken frankly. Visualizing the position as it changes from moment to moment we have to find out what part we can each of us play in the drama. Let Jawaharlal take the lead. He will express himself forcible. I shall be in his pocket.[1]

Wardha Office Satyagraha File, 1940-41. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

470. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

[*July 3/7, 1940*]

GANDHIJI: If Rajaji's draft reflects the Congress mind it must be accepted. If it does not and if it is the personal opinion of some members it is necessary to know where the Congress mind lies. In

[1] After this discussion Gandhiji withdrew his draft and C. Rajagopalachari placed his draft before the Working committee for its consideration. For the draft, *vide* Appendix "Rajagopalachari's Resolution for Working Committee Meeting, Delhi", 3-7-1940.

order to know this at the present moment no resolution be passed. You must boldly face the situation. You must recognize that the non-violence that we have hitherto offered is different from true non-violence. The non-violence of the Congress represent only the resistance of the weak. It is passive resistance, the expression which was flung in my face in Africa and which I resisted. It does not satisfy me; but the country will be free from the incubus of doubt. Whenever we have tried non-violence of the strong we have miserably failed.

The business of the members of the Working Committee should be to ascertain where the Congress mind lies. They should go to the provinces and quietly ascertain the opinion there. This will give us the opinion of the general run of Congressmen. We will then come with better and more accurate information. Each one may try to influence the members in his favour up to a point. If we find that Rajaji's proposition reflects the popular will we should allow it to be worked. I am not satisfied with it. But then I pledge everything from the standpoint of non-violence.

I feel that the draft will be accepted by the Government. If it can be then I hold independence too would be swallowed. The question of independence should not be taken in a lukewarm manner. This will be tactically wrong. If we really mean what we say in the draft we should be prepared to put forth the best war effort of which we are capable. I feel we can get both our independence and national government, not one in which all the parties will be represented, but it will be a transference of power to the Congress, if the Government are assured that the Congress will participate fully in the war effort. But this will mean we have said goodbye to non-violence. The Government is anxious to get the Congress. They are resourceful to get other tools if they cannot get the Congress. At present they are doubtful if they can get full assistance from the Congress even if they transfer power to the Congress. I have never allowed them to think that they will get even one soldier from the Congress. All they can get from it is moral support. They realize it. They weigh the two things; (1) what they get in a voluntary manner from other parties and (2) the moral support of the Congress. But if we go and say that the resources of India are at the disposal of the British I have no doubt they will accept the Congress demand. The question is whether it is an outlook which you can countenance. I have a thousand objections but they are based on non-violence.

QUESTION: How does the moral support of the Congress help them?

GANDHIJI: Britain rises in the estimation of the whole world. It means it seeks eagerly the support of an organisation which has functioned non-violently for 20 years. They will say: 'We will rather have your support than the support of other parties.' They will make an appeal to non-violent India. I am taking a lofty view of the moral support. They have to make their choice between India which represents force and this incalculable force of non-violence. These are two dissimilar forces. If they say they will rather have this moral support, it will be a tremendous thing. It is not a mechanical process at all. It is a vital process.

If you want to do justice to the Congressmen, you must quietly go and ascertain their opinion. If we find that they have no true non-violence we must make an honest declaration. We will have done our duty. Then we must arm ourselves. If we do so in an open and sincere manner, we will overcome other organizations. I know the workings of violence. I always put it side by side with non-violence. I do not feel for one moment that I represent only myself in holding the extreme view that I do. I feel, I represent the dumb mind of India. If I had physical strength and went to the people I am sure they would say yes to my proposition. I know how to put it to the masses in their language. . . .

such help rendered will go in favour of India. It will mean that we tried our best to save the sinking ship. They say:'Give us a helping hand when we are drowning.' We can reply: 'We are trained in the school of adversity. We fought nobly and non-violently. We give you this help now that you are sinking.' There is nothing wrong in such an attitude.[1]

Wardha Office Satyagraha File, 1940-41. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

471. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
July [*7*][2] *, 1940*

CHI. AMRIT,

I got your letter. Your article will be published. It is good. I shall read the translation. I am reading the translations of other

[1] In the light of the discussions C. Rajagopalachari recast his draft. For the draft as it emerged finally from the discussions, *Vide* Appendix " Resolution assed at Congress Working Committee Meeting at Delhi", 7-7-1940

[2] The original has "8", but the postmark bears the date "July 7".

articles. The work here will probably be completed today. It is very hot here. I am keeping good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RAJMUMARI AMRIT KAUR

MANORVILLE

SIMLA W

From the Hindi original: C. W. 4239. Courtesy: Amrit kaur. Also G. N. 7872

472. ' A CRY IN THE WILDERNESS '?[1]

ऊर्ध्वबाहु विरौम्येष न च कश्चिच्छृणोति मे

धर्मादर्थश्च कामश्च स धर्मः किं न सेव्यते॥[2]

Bapuji Aney [on his way back from simla][3] paid a flying visit to me at Delhi on Saturday. Whether we work together or seem to be working in opposite directions, his love for me endures, and so he never misses an opportunity to look in wherever I may be. He express himself freely before me, and often shares with me a verse or two from his inexhaustible store. During his Delhi visit he sympathized with me for my having had to sever my connection with the Congress, but he really congratulated me.

They should, I think, leave you in peace, and let you go your way. I read your appeal to every Briton [4]. It will fall on deaf ears. But that does not matter to you. You cannot help telling them what you feel to be their *dharma* (duty). But it is not strange that they will not listen to you- seeing that the Congress itself did not listen to you at the critical moment. When even sage Vyasa failed to make himself heard, how should others fare better? He had to conclude his great epic - *Mahabharata* - with a verse which reveals the cry of his soul.

[1] The Gujarati original of this was published in Harijanbandhu, 14-7-1940. This translation is taken from Harijan.

[2] "With hands upraised I cry:
(But none listens to me)
Dharma yields both artha and kama
Why is that dharma not observed?"

[3] The Gujarati version does not have this.

[4] *Vide* " To Every Briton", 2-7-1940

With this he cited the verse I have quoted at the head of this article. He thereby strengthened my faith, and also showed how difficult was the way I had chosen.

And yet it has never seemed to me so difficult as it is imagined to be. Though the Sardar's way and mine seem to diverge today, it does not mean that our hearts also diverge. It was in my power to stop him from seceding from me. But it did not seem to be proper to do so. And it would have been morally wrong to strive with Rajaji in what he firmly regarded as his clear duty. Instead, therefore, of dissuading Rajaji I encouraged him to follow his course. It was my clear duty to do so. If I have the power to carry my experiment of ahimsa to success in an apparently new field, if my faith endures, and if I am right in thinking that the masses are fundamentally non-violent, Rajaji and the Sardar will again be with me as before.

What are these apparently new fields for the operation of non-violence? Those who have followed the Working Committee's resolutions and writings in Harijan are now familiar with these. Non-violence in its operation against constituted authority is one field. We have exercise this up to now with a fair amount of success, and I have always described it as the non-violence of the weak. This non-violence may be said to have come to stay with Congressmen.

The other field is the exercise of ahimsa in internal disturbances -Hindus-Muslim riots and the like. We have not been able to show visible success in the exercise of ahimsa in this field. What then should the Congressmen do when internal chaos is so imminent? Will they return blow for blow, or will they cheerfully bend their heads to receive violent blows? The answer to this is not so easy as we might think. Instead of going into the intricacies, I should say that Congressmen should try to save the situation by laying down their lives, not by taking any. He who meets death without striking a blow fulfils his duty cent per cent. The result is in God's hands.

But it is clear that this non-violence is not the non-violence of the weak. It does not give one the joy of jail-going. One can have that joy and also cover thereby the ill-will one harbours in his breast against the Government. One can also non-co-operate with the Government. But where swords, knives, lathis and stones are freely used, what is a man to do single-handed? Is it possible for one to receive these deadly blows with ill-will in one's heart? It is clear that it is impossible to do so, unless one is saturated with charity. It is only he who feels one with his opponent that can receive his blows as though they were

so many flowers. Even one such man, if God favours him, can do the work of a thousand, it requires soul force - moral courage of the highest type.

The man or woman who can display this non-violence of the brave can easily stand against external invasion. This is the third field for the exercise of non-violence. The Congress Working Committee were of opinion that, while it might be possible for us to exercise ahimsa in internal disturbances, India has not the strength to exercise ahimsa against the invasion of a foreign foe. This their want of faith has distressed me. I do not believe that the unarmed millions of India cannot exercise ahimsa with success in his wide field. It is for Congressmen to reassure the Sardar, whose faith in ahimsa of the strong has for the moment been shaken, that ahimsa is the only weapon that can suit India in the fields mentioned. Let no one ask, ' But what about the martial races in India ?" For me that is all the more reason why Congressmen should train themselves to defend their country with a non-violent army. This is an entirely new experiment. But who, save the Congress, is to try it - the Congress which has tried it successfully in one field? It is my unshakable faith that, if we have a sufficient number of non-violent soldiers, we are sure to succeed even in this new field, apart from the saving of the needless waste of crores of rupees.

I am therefore hoping that every Gujarati Congressite - man and woman-will declare their adherence to ahimsa and reasure the Sardar that they will never resort to violence. Even if there is sure hope of success in the exercise of violence, they will not prefer it to the exercise of non-violence. We are sure to learn by our mistakes. " We fall to rise, are baffled to fight better, sleep to wake."

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA, July 7, 1940

Harijan, 13-7-1940

473. ' COPYRIGHT'

It is strange that what I would not do in response to the advice of a correspondent[1] I have to do almost immediately after the refusal though, I feel, for a very cogent reason. Since my main articles will henceforth be written in Gujarati, I would not like their unauthorized

[1] Satish Kalelkar; *vide* "Notes", 10-6-1940.

translations appearing in the Press. I have suffered much from mistranslations when I used to write profusely in Gujarati and had no time myself to produce simultaneous English translation. I have arranged this time for such translation in English and Hindustani. I would therefore ask editors and publishers kindly to regard English and Hindustani translation rights as reserved. I have no doubt that my request will be respected.

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA, July 8, 1940

Harijan, 13-7-1940

474. CONGRESS MEMBERSHIP AND NON-VIOLENCE [1]

A Punjabi Congressman writes:

> Can those who openly declare that they do not believe in non-violence be Congress members, can they take part in Gulughara[2] celebrations, and what should one do if such men be in a majority in a Congress committee?

Now that I am out of the Congress guidance,[3] my opinion has little weight. I cannot say what decision the Congress will give on your question.[4] But I am quite clear that those who do not believe in non-violence cannot belong to the Congress. I am also clear that no Congressman can take part in celebrations such as Gulughara. If you find your self in a minority, the non-violent way for you is to withdraw from the Committee.

ON DELHI-WARDHA TRAIN, July 8, 1940

Harijan, 13-7-1940

[1] The Gujarati orginal of this was published in Harijanbandhu, 20-7-1940. This translation is taken from Harijan.

[2] Ahmed Shah Abdali Day

[3] The Gujarati original has: "when the Congress is undergoing so many changes".

[4] The Gujarati here adds: "I also feel that Congressmen should not ask me such questions and also that I ought not to answer them. I shall however answer this question since I must."

475. ABOUT THE WAZIRIS[1]

Waziristan is one of the regions on the border of the Frontier Province. Everybody knows that there are a number of tribes living on the north-western frontier of India. The popular notion about them is that they are born only to rob and plunder and harass the British Government. Both these notions are far removed from reality. These trans-border[2] tribes are born and bred in extreme poverty. Life among their native hills is a tale of chronic hardship and internecine strife. India comes handy to them for satisfying their pecuniary need by raiding. Besides, there are not lacking people who in order to serve their own political ends are ready to misguide them and set them on the wrong path. Our knowledge about these tribes, therefore, is almost confined to their raiding activities. Khan Saheb has told me that these tribesmen are very simple and innocent by nature.

Whenever I have visited the Frontier Province I have tried to go across and make acquaintance with these tribes. My first effort in this direction was made at the time of the Irwin-Gandhi Pact. I had to give it up as Lord Irwin said his Government would feel embarrassed. I next sought permission through correspondence but was equally unsuccessful. I renewed the attempt at the time of my first Frontier tour and interviewed H. E. the Governor in that behalf, but he could not give or rather could not obtain for me the necessary permission. Recently the Frontier Provincial Congress Committee tried to send a deputation among the Waziris not with any political motive but simply to do welfare work. But the permission could not be obtained. The Working Committee has now decided to send a deputation consisting of Shri Bhulabhai Desai the Janab Asaf Ali. Let us hope the deputation will be given the necessary permission.

The object of the Working Committee's resolution is not political. Its purpose simply is to find out how help can be rendered to the border tribes and friendly relations cultivated with them. It ill comports with our dignity to be in constant dread of them. Ignorance is at the root of most of our fears. If I suspected my neighbour, naturally I would be afraid of him. But if I cast out my suspicion, the

[1] Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandu*, 14-7-1940. This translation is taken from *Harijan*.

[2] The Gujarati version has "the Waziris and other tribes".

fear would automatically go. For years we have proceeded on the assumption that the authorities would under no circumstances allow us to cultivate friendly relations with the border tribes. The Government, on their side, have, under the spell of their pet bogey[1] , spent crores of rupees on building forts and block houses and on sending out military expeditions into the tribal territory. It should be a duty of the Congress to try to cultivate sincere and friendly relations with these folk. The proposed step of the Working Committee is, therefore, to be welcomed. Let us hope that the Congress, having begun the effort, will pursue it to the end.

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA, July 8, 1940

Harijan, 13-7-1940

476. IS ISLAM INSPIRED?[2]

A writer in a Muslim paper has suggested that, if I regard Islam as an inspired religion and Muhammad as the Prophet of God, I should declare my belief, so that Mussalmans doubts may be dispelled and Hindu-Muslim unity may possibly be more easily achieved. I read the suggestion about a month ago, but Idid not think it necessary to respond to it. But as nowadays I read as many Muslim papers as I can, in order to acquaint myself with the Muslim mind, and as I find them so full of poison and conscious or unconscious untruths, I feel it necessary to redeclare my opinion about Islam, though I think it is well known.

I certainly regard Islam as one of the inspired religions, and therefore the Holy Koran as an inspired book and Muhammad as one of the Prophets. But even so I regard Hinduism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism as inspired religions. The names of many of them have been already forgotten, for the simple reason that those religions and those prophets related to the particular ages for which and peoples for whom they flourished. Some principal religions are still extant, after a study of those religions to the extent it was possible for me, I have come to the conclusion that, if it is proper and necessary to discover an underlying unity among all religions, a master-key is needed. That master-key is that of truth and non-violence. When I unlock the chest

[1] The Gujarati has "Out of fear".

[2] The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 14-7-1940. This translation is taken from *Harijan*.

of a religion with this master-key, I do not find it difficult to discover its likeness with other religions. When you look at these religions as so many leaves of a tree they seem so different, but at the trunk they are one. Unless and until we realize this fundamental unity, wars in the name of religion will not cease. These are not confined to Hindus and Mussalmans alone. The Pages of world history are soiled with the bloody accounts of these religious wars. Religion can be defended only by the purity of its adherents and their good deeds, never by their quarrels with those of other faiths.

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA, July 8, 1940

Harijan, 13-7-1940

477. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ON THE TRAIN,
July 8, 1940

CHI. AMRIT,

Here are two more translations corrected. Both are good. The Masnavi[1] captivated me. It had the force of the original. Of course it was easy. You have seen what happened at the W. C.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3981. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7290

478. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

ON THE WAY,
July 8, 1940

STUPID GIRL,

I cannot put you out of my mind. I shall certainly hope that you will arrive on the 24th or the 25th. Did you read what Bharatanand wrote at the end of his letter? He was right. I wish you to come out only if you can do so with your mind at peace. That is your duty. Come only if you can come as Mahadev, Kanu and Pyarelal came. My last sentence should be carefully considered. Devdas and Ramdas are my sons. But they are quite apart. You are a daughter.You will always be to me as they are. Though remaining staying away you will have with me same sweet relationship that Devdas and Ramdas have. But if you stay with me, you have to stay on my terms. Forget

[1] *Vide* "What the Masnavi Says", 24-7-1940

the past. Think afresh, think with a calm mind. It does not behove you to lay down conditions. I cannot afford to keep you on conditions. The question is not whether you are deserving or undeserving. Surely Devdas and Ramdas are not undeserving? It is a matter of temperament. If you cannot come as Mahadev and others came, does it mean that you cannot come when you wish? Do not feel upset in any way.

If you are definitely not coming, I do not intend keeping the dispensary in its present form. I have set it up for you. Unless I get another doctor to settle here the dispensary will be of no use. I cannot afford to have another doctor here.

I shall enclose with this the Gujarati matter that is ready. Other matter is being got ready.

I have myself made the thumb worse. It is now throbbing. I hope it does not become septic. I shall bandage it. You will keep writing to me. Make the *Harijan Sevak* beautiful. Do not feel unhappy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

479. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

July 8, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

One Gujarati article at least is going with this. I hope to send the rest from Wardha. The thumb-nail keeps reminding me of my foolishness. It troubles me occasionally.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

480. THE DELHI RESOLUTION

I have just seen the news that the Working Committee's fateful resolution[1] has been released to the Press. It was passed in my pre-

[1] The resolution, passed on July 7, called for "acknowledgment by Great Britain of the complete independence of India" and as an immediate step in giving

sence, but I wanted to say nothing before it was actually released for publication. It will be a profound mistake to suppose that the members passed the five solid days in wrangling. They had to discharge a heavy responsibility. Though logically the resolution is no departure from the Ramgarh resolution[2], it is an undoubted departure from its spirit. The letter often remains constant, the spirit changes. Up to now for one reason or another the Congress policy was: No participation in the war except for the moral influence that the Congress can exercise if the vital demand was satisfied of Britain's own free will. Such was not the position of all the members of the Working Committee. Hence at the critical moment every member had to make up his or her mind independently of the rest. The five days were days of tremendous heart-searching. I had produced a draft resolution[3] which almost all thought was the best, if they could bring to bear a living belief in non-violence through and through, or if they could truthfully say that such was the belief of their constituencies. Some had neither and some had individually the required faith. Only Khan Saheb was clear so far as his own faith and that of his beloved Khudai Khidmatgars were concerned. So he had decided even after the last Wardha resolution that he had no place in the Congress. He had a special mission and a special duty to his followers. So the working Committee gladly permitted him to retire from the Congress. By retiring he serves the Congress all the more even as I hope to do. Who knows that those of us who retire may not be able to five our comrades the faith they seem, for the moment, to have lost?

Rajaji was the Framer of the Resolution. He was as certain of his position as I was of mine. His persistency, courage and utter humility brought him converts. Sardar Patel was his greatest prize. He would not have even thought of bringing up his resolution if I had chosen to prevent him. But I give my comrades the same credit for earnestness and self-confidence that I claim for myself. I had long known that we

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effect to it, the constitution at the centre of a provisional National Government. it declared that "if these measures are adopted, it will enable the Congress to throw in its full weight in the efforts for the effective organization of the Defence of the country." *Vide* Appendix " Resolution Passed at Congress Working Committee Meeting at Delhi", 7-7-190

[2] This, while reiterating complete independence as the only thing acceptable to the people of India, denounced the declaration, by the British Government, of India as a belligerent country and said, "Congressmen, and those under the Congress influence, cannot help in the prosecution of the War with men, money or material."

[3] *Vide* " Draft Resolution For the Working Commttee", 7-7-1940

were drifting away from each other in our outlook upon the political problems that face us. He will not allow me to say that his is a departure from ahimsa. He claims that his very ahimsa has led him to the point which culminated in his resolution. He thinks that I suffer from obsession owing to too much brooding on ahimsa. He almost thinks that my vision is blurred. It was no use my returning the compliment though half joking I did. I have no proof, save my faith, to question his counter faith. That is evidently absurd. I could not carry the Committee with me at Wardha and so I got my absolution. I at once saw as clear as daylight that, if my position was not acceptable, Rajaji 's was the only real alternative,. I therefore encouraged him to persist in his effort, though all the while I held him to be hopelessly in the wrong. And by exemplary patience, skill and considerateness towards his opponents he got a good majority, five remaining neutral. I had a fearful moment. Generally such resolutions are not carried by the majority vote. But at his juncture unanimity was not to be expected. I advised that Rajaji's resolution should be enforced. And so at the last moment the committee decided that the resolution should go forth to the world.

It was necessary for the public to have this background to the tremendous step the Committee have taken for good or ill. Those Congressmen who have a living faith in the non-violence of the strong will naturally abstain. For the moment, however, what they can do is wholly irrelevant, Rajaji's resolution represents the considered policy of the Congress. Non-Congressmen, who were eager for the Congress to be free of my religious bias to adopt a purely political attitude, should welcome the resolution and support it wholeheartedly. So should the Muslim League, and even the Princes who think of India more than their principalities.

The British Government have to make their choice. Independence they cannot withhold unless their wisdom is as much blurred as Rajaji claims that mine is. If independence is recognized, the acceptance of the other part of the resolution follows as a matter of course. The question is: Do they want to impress help from India by virtue of their rulership over India , or will they have the help that a free and independent India can give? My individual advice has already gone. My help always has been promised. Acceptance of that advice can but enhance their heroism. But if they cannot accept it, I advise, as a

disinterested but staunch friend, that the British Government should not reject the hand of friendship offered by the Congress.

SEVAGRAM, July 8, 1940

Harijan, 13-7-1940

481. MYSORE LAWYERS

Several Mysore lawyers who had taken part in the Mysore satyagraha struggle have been disbarred by the Mysore Chief Court. The last victim is Shri H. C. Dasappa, a most respected Mysorean and a practitioner of twenty years, standing. Serious as the disbarring of a member belonging to a liberal profession must be, such cases have happened before now on insufficient or purely political grounds. Such injustices have to be borne with resignation and fortitude. But the order of the Chief Judge in Shri Dasappa's case as reported in *The Hindu* has made for me most painful reading. Shri Dasappa had the hardihood to defy a magistrate's order not to address meetings in a part to Mysore, and had the equal hardihood under my instructions to advise satyagrahi prisoners to boycott the departmental inquiry by Justice Nagesvar Iyer. For these grave offences Shri Dasappa has been disbarred for ever. He well be reduced to penury, if the Judges could help it and, if their verdict has any potency beyond the paper on which it is written, Shri Dasappa becomes a man without a character, to be despised and shunned by society. I happen to know Shri Dasappa personally. I hold him to be a man of spotless character and unimpeachable honesty. He has been manfully striving to practise non-violence to the best of his ability. He has done what many patriots, lawyers or no lawyers, have done in British India. And nowadays the Judges take no notice of their conduct, and the public have made of them heroes. Advocate Bhulabhai has been Advocate-General of the Bombay High Court. He has defied laws. So has Advocate Munshi and so has Chakravarti Rajagopalachari. They have not been disbarred. Two of them have been Ministers in their Provinces. Public inquiries have been boycotted before now with impunity. Neither the honour nor the character of those who have brought about such boycotts have been impugned. In my opinion the Judges of the Mysore Court have forgotten themselves in delivering their-

judgement. Shri Dasappa has not suffered. He will rise in the estimation of the people of mysore. But I make bold to say the Mysore Judges have suffered by allowing themselves to be carried away by prejudice.

Such travesty of justice has happened before now. A Durban Magistrate who was carried away by some stupid prejudice had condemned an innocent man. His judgement was reversed and the Supreme Court condemned it in such scathing terms that the Magistrate had to be removed. The Judges of the martial law days in the Punjab were not removed, but many were thoroughly disgraced because they had pronounced judgements which could not be supported by evidence before them. This Mysore judgement is worse than the Punjab judgements. Then there was panic. Murders had been com-mitted by the mob, and eminent men were tried not by ordinary courts but by martial law tribunals. In Mysore nothing of the kind has happened. The Chief Judge's order is a cool and calculated attack on the honour of a man who could not defend himself against reckless statements from the Bench. Judges sometimes forget, as these Mysor gentlemen have done, that there is the bar of public opinion which is no respecter of persons.

My condolence and pity go out to the Judges who have delivered a judgement which, let me hope, in their cooler moments they will regret. For Shri Dasappa and his colleagues who have been disbarred I have nothing but congratulations. I would ask them to turn the punishment into a blessing. It is well that they cannot appear before Judges who can be so grossly prejudiced as the Mysore Judges have proved themselves to be. Let these lawyers be proud of their poverty which will be probably their lot now. Let them remember Thoreau's saying that possession of riches is a crime and poverty a virtue under an unjust administration. This is an eternal maxim for satyagrahis. The disbarred lawyers have a rare opportunity of so remodelling their lives that they can always be above want. Let them remember that practice of law ought not to mean more taking daily than, say, a village carpenter's wage. Let them make redoubled efforts to produce such a state of affairs in Mysore that the travesty of the nature I have described may become impossible. It is no pleasure to me to have to write as strongly as I have done. But I could do no less if I was to serve Truth.

SEVAGRAM, July 9, 1940

Harijan, 13-7-1940

482. THE LATE CHANGANACHERRY PILLAI[1]

The readers must have learnt about the death of Shri Changanacherry K. Parameswaran Pillai of Travancore. He was one of the true and consistent Harijan sevaks. He was a retired Judge of the Travancore High Court. He was a member of the Executive Council of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. As a man he was most unassuming and lovable. His secretary sends me the following pathetic account of his death.[2]

Death prompted the feast.[3] As the secretary truly says he ate to live. But God confounds our wisdom when He wants to take us unwary. None of us can boast that we would do better than the late sevak. It will be creditable if we can close our lives as did this great Harijan sevak. May God bless his spirit and give courage to his widow and family to bear their loss, and let me hope that they will follow in his footsteps.

SEVAGRAM, July 9, 1940

Harijan, 13-7-1940

483. SUBHAS BABU

On the return journey to Wardha a young man at Nagpur station asked why the Working Committee had not taken any notice of Subhas Babu's arrest[4] . I was in silence and so gave no reply but took note of the reasonable question. I have no doubt that hundreds if not thousands must have asked themselves the question the young man put at Nagpur. It is true that Subhas Babu is an ex-Rashtrapati of the Congress twice elected in succession. He has a record of great sacrifice to his credit. He is a leader born. All these qualities alone will not warrant a protest against the arrest. The Working Committee would be bound to take notice of it if it could be condemned on merit. Suhbas Babu did no defy the law with the permission of the Congress. He has frankly and courageously defied even the Working Committee. If he had asked for permission to raise any side issue for battle at the

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

[2] This is not reproduced here.

[3] According to the secretary's account the deceased had eaten a sumptuous feast a few hours before death.

[4] Subhas Chandra Bose was arrested on July 2, 1940, in connection with his campaign for the removal of the Hollwell monument in Calcutta.

present juncture, the Committee would, I think, have refused it. Hundreds of issues of greater importance can be discovered. But the country's attention is for the moment riveted upon one single issue. Preparations are being made to take up direct action at the proper time on that issue. Therefore, if the Working Committee had taken any action, it would have been one of disapprobation. That the Committee would not do. I might also have ignored the youth's remark. But I felt that no harm cold occur by my putting this arrest in its proper setting. The arrest of a big man like Subhas is no small matter. But Subhas Babu has laid out his plan of battle with deliberateness and boldness. He thinks that his way is the best. He honestly thinks that the Working Committee's way is wrong, and that nothing good will come out of its "Procrastination". He told me in the friendliest manner that he would do what the Working Committee had failed to do. He was impatient of delay. I told him that, if at the end of his plan there was swaraj during my lifetime, mine would be that first telegram of congratulation he would receive, if while he was conducting his campaign I became a convert, I should whole- heartedly acclaim him as my leader and enlist under his banner. But I warned him that his way was wrong.

My opinion, however, matters little. Os long as Subhas Babu considers a particular course of action to be correct, he has the right, and it is his duty, to pursue it whether the Congress likes it or not. I told him be would be more in the right if he resigned from the Congress altogether. My advice did not commend itself to him. Even so , if success attends his effort and India gains her freedom, it will justify his rebellion, and the Congress will not only not condemn his rebellion but welcome him as a saviour.

In satyagraha a courted imprisonment carries its won praise. There can be no protest against an imprisonment for a breach of the current law of the land. On the contrary, the practice has been to congratulate arrested civil resisters and invite Congressmen to imitate them. It is obvious that the Committee could not do so in Subhas Babu's case. Let me remark in passing that the Committee has taken no notice of the numerous arrests and imprisonments that have taken place even of prominent Congressmen. It does not mean that the Committee does not feel anything about them. But in life's battle there is such a thing as mute submission to many a wrong. If it is

deliberate, it generates strength which, if the submission is well conceived, may well become irresistible.

SEVAGRAM, July 9, 1940

Harijan, 13-7-1940

484. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

SEVAGRAM,
July 9, 1940

DEAR BROTHER,

Have just read your letter. Your detachment[1] is simply wonderful. Bapu[2] is an authority on many things-road-making, Harijans, Bhils, Society's[3] affairs, forlorn causes, etc. But I never knew that he was an authority on interpreting Tulsidas. I should still cite Sita's example for our women. My incitement has never gone beyond. But I must not weary you. Keep me always on the straight and narrow path.

love

M. K. G.

From a facsimile: Mahatma: Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Vol. V, between pp. 352 and 353; also Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, p. 320

[1] T. N. Jagadisan explains "Sastriat's letter, which is not available now, was written from Poona in the midst of an anxious crisis inthe society. This fact explains Gandhijis reference to Sastiar's detachment."

[2] A. V. Thakkar

[3] Servants of India Society

485. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEVAGRAM,
July 9, 1940

CHI. VIJAYA,

We arrived yesterday evening and Ba gave me the news that you had bidden farewell to Naranbhai[1] . I was very happy to hear that. He was released from pain and you all are released from worry. You are keeping up courage, but I can read your grief in your letter. But do not grieve. Run down here as soon as possible. Amritlal is not here. I will send your letters to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7130. Also C. W. 4622. Courtesy: Vijayabhn M. Pancholi

486. NOTE TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

[*July 9, 1940*][2]

It will not make much difference whether you wire or write. The proper thing would be to write a letter. It will certainly reach tomorrow. You may write and I also will write. Come and take away my letter.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8534. Also C. W. 7096. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Addressee's father

[2] In a note, date 9-7-1940, the addresee had sought Gandhiji's permission to send a telegram to his wife Kanchan on that very day. The above is a reply to that.

487. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 9, 1940

CHI. AMALA,

I will keep in mind what you say and do the needful.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. MARGARETE SPIEGEL

IVANHOE

OPP. BACK BAY BATHS

BOMBAY, FORT

From the Gujarati original: Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

488. LETTER TO PADMAVATI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 9, 1940

CHI. PADMAVATI,

God has at last blessed you with a son. May he have a long life and may he bring credit to the family. I hope you are keeping good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. N. 11399

489. LETTER TO VASANT LAL.

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 9, 1940

BHAI VASANT LAL,

My blessings to Chi. Bhagirathi and her husband. Let us hope that the couple will be happy and will serve the country to the best of their ability.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindu: C. W. 10256

490. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHAGANJ,
July 10, 1940

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA

JOIN STATES CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3983. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7292

491. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

July 10, 1940

CHI. AMRIT,

Your 2 letters. I won't keep you quite letterless. Wired today to say you can join the States C[onference] Executive. In fact I had a hand in your nomination. The matter was referred to me. And I approved. I forgot to tell you about it.

Even when I write in Gujarati, its Hindi has to go. And now that

I wrote that Appeal[1] something will appear in English. Too from my pen[2] .

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3982. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7291

492. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON,
Via WARDHA,
July 10, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

You will have duly received all the articles. In case you are pressed for time, I have sent Pyarelal's translation to help you. Had it

[1] *Vide* " Letter to Amrit Kaur " , 3-7-1940
[2] *Vide* also "Unrepentant", 17-7-1940.

been your translation, I would have corrected it more carefully because I want to teach you how to translate well. I went through Pyarelal's translation to see if the meaning had been properly conveyed. I might have made the language simpler or better at places but you can attend to that there.

You are free to write to me anything you choose. That is also my demand. You were forbidden only for that particular day. What dreams ? I shall not worry about you if you become hale and hearty. I shall take all possible care of myself. The weight today was $111\frac{1}{2}$ lb.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

493. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 11, 1940

DEAR MALKANI,

Nothing can be spared just now from A. I. S. A. I am trying to get some funds. You must do what you can there. Your, I know is a difficult task. If the Hindi Prachar work is too much for you, you should reject it.

Love.

BAPU

PROF. N. MALKANI
TILAK CONGRESS BHAVAN
HYDERABAD, SIND

From a photostat: G. N. 939

494. LETTER TO MARGARET JONES[1]

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 11, 1940

MY DEAR KAMALA,

I was delighted to have your letter. . . .[2] Herewith one for Chandel.[3] I am glad you liked your stay here. You will come again when you wish.

Love.

Blessings from
BAPU

Bapu-Conversations and Correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi

495. LETTER TO CHANDEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 11, 1940

BHAI CHANDEL,

I was glad to have your very clear letter. If you can get away from khedi it would be better for you to work in your own village. But if you go there you should go for good. However, the first thing to consider is whether you can leave the Khedi Work in a healthy condition; it should not be ruined by your departure. You had better come and stay with me for some days to talk it all over.

Blessings from
BAPU

Bapu-Conversations and Correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi

[1] An Englishwoman who was doing village uplift work in Khedi after F. Mary Barr Left for South Africa; she adopted the Indian Name Kamala.

[2] Omission in the source

[3] *Vide* the following item.

496. LETTER TO S. R. VENKATRAMAN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 11, 1940

DEAR VENKATRAMAN,

you should see Rajaji about the Tamil edition of *Harijan.*

Your sincerly,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI. S. R. VENDATRAMAN
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
ROYAPETTAH
MADRAS

From a photostat: G. N. 10504

497. LETTER TO PURATAN J. BUCH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 11. 1940

CHI. PURATAN,

You have given me terrible news. I did have some suspicion.

What should be done about liquor? We must not give up.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PURATAN BUCH
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI
B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9177

498. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 11, 1940

CHI. PRABHA,

How lazy you are! And you want an immediate reply from me! If you have no work in Patna for the time being and if Jayaprakash also wishes it, then take Rajen Babu's permission and come here and improve your health. What prevents you from coming? If you are not going to Hazaribagh either, we shall plan about the future if you come.

Sushila is working in her own college Hospital in Delhi at present.

Vijaya's father has passed away. She will perhaps come here for a few days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3545

499. LETTER TO CHAKRAIYYA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 11, 1940

CHI. CHAKRAIYYA,

I got your letter. What you write about money is not correct. Money is no everything in the world. What can money do in a waterless desert? I refused you money out of a sense of duty. When you go home, it is your duty to eat at home. Why should you spend public money there? Whatever service is being rendered to you is not for money but for love. Am I paying any money to Sharmaji for his service to you? If we are healthy, we need less money. God has protected you till now and He will care for you in the future, too. Never lose courage and faith. I had gone to Delhi and there too I talked to people about you. It will be very good if homoeopathy cures you. I hope will recover completely.

Hand over to Sharmaji the letter meant for him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9111. Also C. W. 9181

500. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
[After *July 11, 1940*][1]

CHI. MANILAL,

Mary Barr is an excellent co-worker. Take her home. Give her help if she needs any.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4916

501. LETTER TO RADHA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 12, 1940

CHI. RADHA,

I hope Mother's passing away has not filled you with despair. She lived quite long, and God fulfilled many aspirations of her. She has left you all in a happy state. Of course however long a mother lives the children are bound to miss her when she dies. One must bear the loss patiently.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U./XXIII

502. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, ,
July 12, 1940

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter surrendering all. Nothing less could be expected of you. Do not worry about me. I know no such thing as despair. The Working Committee's resolution did not particularly shock me. Go on reading Harijan and Harijanbandhu. I will of course have to start afresh. But I do not think myself too old for that.

[1] *Vide* "First Foot Note, Lettet to Margaret Jones" , 11-7-1940

Accept a cartload of blessings for your birthday. A birthday means a year less, doesn't it?

My going there is not at all certain.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a Photostat of Gujarati: G. N. 10409. Also C. W. 6848. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

503. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 12. 1940

CHI. NARAHARI,

Bhai Maganlal, Dr. Mahta's son, is there. I am sending a letter[1] for him at the Ashram address. Send it to him wherever he is staying. Give him whatever help he asks for. Introduce him to the leading citizens.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9118

504. LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 12, 1940

CHI. MAGAN,

I had got your letter. I could not reply at once as I was visiting Delhi and other place. How is Ratilal[2] ? How is his mind? Champa[3] has come here today. She is unhappy. What should we do about her?

You should get acquainted with the men there. I am writing to Naraharibhai.[4] He will introduce you. See Ambalal and others and meet the Congress leaders. Champa told me that you had left the Lal

[1] *Vide* the following item.
[2] Addressee's brother
[3] Ratilal Mehta's wife
[4] *Vide* the preceding item.

Bungalow[1] and were staying elsewhere. I am sending this letter at the Ashram address.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 1017. Courtesy: Manjula Mehta

505. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PARIKH

SEVAGRAM,
July 12, 1940

CHI. KUNVARJI,

Kanchan has come here and I hope that has not caused you any inconvenience, if Bhojakbhai's cooking for you both is unsatisfactory in any way you can cook your own food. Consult Vachharajbhai and make suitable arrangements.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a Photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9741. Also C. W. 721. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

506. LETTER TO BHOLANATH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 12, 1940

BHAI BHOLANATH,

I could reach your letter only yesterday. I had made up my mind to write. How it got left I do not know, but it was all to the good. It should be enough if your work is no interfered with.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1379

[1] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's house near the Ashram premises

507. THE BEST FIELD FOR AHIMSA[1]

Last week I wrote about three fields for the operation of ahimsa.[2] I propose to invite attention today to the fourth and the best field for the operation of non-violence. This is the family field, in a wider sense than the ordinary. Thus members of an institution should be regarded as a family. Non-violence as between the members of such families should be easy to practise. If that fails, it means that we have not developed the capacity for pure non-violence. For the love we have to practise towards our relatives or colleagues in our family or institution, we have to practise towards our foes, dacoits, etc. If we fail in one case, success in the other is a chimera.

We have generally assumed that, though it may not be possible to exercise non-violence in the domestic field, it is possible to do so in the political field. This has proved a pure delusion. We have chosen to describe our methods adopted so far as non-violence, and thus caricatured non-violence itself. If non-violence it was, it was such poor stuff that it proved useless at the critical moment. The alphabet of ahimsa is best learnt in the domestic school, and I can say from experience that, if we secure success there, we are sure to do so everywhere else. For a non-violent person the whole world is one family. He will thus fear none, nor will others fear him.

It will be retorted that those who satisfy such a test of non-violence will be few and far between. It is quite likely, but that is no reply to my proposition. Those who profess to believe in non-violence should know the implications of that belief. And if these scare them away, they are welcome to give up the belief. Now that the Congress Working Committee has made the position clear, it is necessary that those who claim to believe in non-violence should know what is expected to them. If, as a result, the ranks of the non-violent army thin down, it should not matter. An army, however small, of truly non-violent soldiers is likely some day to multiply itself. An army of those who are not truly non-violent is never likely to yield any use whether it increases or decreases.

Let no one understand from the foregoing that a non-violent army is open only to those who strictly enforce in their lives all the

[1] The Gujarati original of this was published in Harijan bandhu, 20-7-1940. This translation is taken from Harijan.

[2] *Vide* " 'A Cry in the Wilderness'?", 8-7-1940

implications of non-violence. It is open to all those who accept the implications and make an ever-increasing endeavour to observe them. There never will be an army of perfectly non-violent people. It will be formed of those who will honestly endeavour to observe non-violence. For the last fifty years I have striven to make my life increasingly non-violent and to inspire my co-workers in the same direction, and I think I have had a fair amount of success. The growing darkness around, far from damping my zeal and dimming my faith, brightens them, and makes the implications of non-violence more clearly visible to me.

SEVAGARAM, July 15, 1940

Harijan, 21-7-1940

508. A WORTHY EDUCATIONAL EFFORT[1]

The Birla family have been running an institution called the Birla College at Pilani in Jaipur State. I have been often asked to visit it, but in spite of my keen desire to do so I have never been able to find time for it. Thakkar Bapa visited the institution and gave me a glowing account and pressed me to visit it. Seth Ghanshyamdas Birla has now issued a booklet to acquaint the public about the origin and growth of the institution. The object is to invite criticism and to present the public with its novel features, may be for adoption. The writer has lavished on the booklet all his art of writing, aided by fine printing, beautiful illustrations alluringly arranged, making the whole thing very attractive. For two months Mahadev waited for a suitable opportunity to place it before me, and imagining that I should have some spare time on our journey to Simla he ventured to give it to me on the train. The moment I took it up to read, it gripped me. It is a quarto size booklet of 47 pages, and I could not give it up until I had read it from cover to cove. I would ask all interested in education to write for it to the Secretary of the Birla College, Pilani.

A brief history of the enterprise may be given here. The institution has grown out of a small school called Birlas Pathshala opened 40 years ago in an insignificant little building. Now it is an institution with an intermediate College, splendid buildings for school,

[1] The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 20-7-1940. This translation is taken from *Harijan*.

college and hostels, and vast playgrounds. It has 33 staff quarters, and 5 hostels accommodating 295 students (including 27 Harijan). There are 18 playgrounds, a library with 3,608 Hindi and 6,772 English books. There is high school with 791 boys, a college with 165 boys, and a girls school with 157 girls. The Birla Educational Trust runs besides 128 village schools with 4,636 boys and 200 girls. Physical instruction and games are compulsory, and so is music. There is an agricultural farm with a dairy on modern lines. Among the crafts and vocations taught are spinning and weaving, carpentry, tailoring, dyeing, printing, book-binding, weaving, carpet-making, shoe-making and leather-work. The agricultural farm and dairy have numerous cows, sheep and goats. The basic education scheme is also being given a trial. Hardly anything has escaped the attention of those in charge - prayer, intellectual and industrial training, balanced diet, health examination and health preservation. An endeavour is made to develop individual contact between the students and teachers on a family basis.

The whole institution has grown out of Seth Shivnarayanji Birla's desire to provide for the education of his two grandsons Rameshwardas and Ghanshyamdas. He did not like the provision to be confined to the needs of his grandsons, and so he established a school in 1900 with a village teacher on Rs. 5 a month for all the children of the village. This was called the Birla Pathshala - the seed out of which has grown the vast tree that the institution now has become. It combines family interests with philanthropy which has now become a distinctive trait of the Birla brothers. But Ghanshyamdas, of all the brothers, made a special interest of education, health and kindred topics, and the growth of the institution at Pilani is mainly due to his perseverance, resourcefulness and interest in education. Sir Maurice Gwyer and other distinguished people have visited the institution and spoken in high terms about it. Ghanshyamdasji's ambition is to make a Degree College of the Intermediate College, and he has been trying to do so for some years. But things move slowly in Princes' India, and so his ambition still remains unfulfilled, it is hoped that the Jaipur State will lose no time in encouraging this worthy enterprise and accord permission to turn it into a full-fledged college. In my opinion there are few institutions in India run with such care and attention.

If we assume the necessity for modern colleges, the Birla college has succeeded in combining several features which are scarcely to be seen elsewhere in India.

SEVAGRAM, July 15, 1940

Harijan, 28-7-1940

509. ONE MORE FACTION?[1]

Q. Does not the resolution of the Working Committee mean that it adds one more to the existing factions?

A. I do not think there is room for such a fear or doubt. Let us see what happens in the A. I. C. C. If it is found that a large majority of the members are believers in strict non-violence I have no doubt that Sardar Vallabhbhai and other will be extremely delighted. It was no pleasure to them to arrive at the decision they did, and they acted in their representative capacity. They acted in the belief that there were very few Congressmen with a genuine faith in non-violence, and they had sufficient reasons for their belief. Had it been a question of their individual belief, I am sure they would have unhesitatingly voted for non-violence. Assuming, therefore, that the truly non-violent are in a minority, it will be their duty to leave the Congress and thus serve the Congress all the better. Their continuance in the Congress would lead to friction, for the majority would, in carrying out their policy, have to adopt many resolutions which the followers of out-and-out non-violence could not accept. That would lead to clashes which should be anything but non-violence.The out-and-out non-violent, therefore, will gladly retire and devote themselves exclusively to constructive work. They will also co-operate with the Congress wherever they can do so without a clash, and yet they will not think of being in any committee. I am firmly of opinion that, if we can bring into being an army of truly non-violent persons, the Working Committee's decision will be found to be a blessing in disguise. If every province has its band of truly non-violent soldiers, they will not only add to the glory of the Congress but contribute effectively to bringing the Congress nearer to non-violence than ever before.

SEVAGRAM, JULY 15, 1940

Harijan, 28-7-1940

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 20-7-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan* where it was published under the heading "Question Box".

510. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDA,
July 15, 1940

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

The idea about Urdu is good. You shall have a review of the Urdu writings by Hindus and of Urdu periodicals and books. There should be an Urdu weekly giving a dispassionate reply to the lies. It is uphill work to overtake deliberate lies but it is worth trying.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
LUCKNOW, U. P.

Gandji-Nehru Papers, 1940. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

511. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

July 15, 1940

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

I understand. If your needs were within my means to meet, I would give you a place at Sevagram. I should like you to settle in a village and teach Ayuveda. But I know it will be difficult. It will be easy in Bombay. If you feel that my plan is worth considering, come over. You can come any day except Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. I understand about Shankerlal. Also about Valjibhai.

Blessings from
BAPU

VAIDYARAJ VALLABHRAM
DHANVANTARI AYURVEDA HOSPITAL
151 PRINCESS STREET, BOMBAY 2

From Gujarati: C. W. 2911. Courtesy: Vallabhram vaidya

512. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

July 15, 1940

BHAI PRITHVI SINGH,

I won't interfere with your programme, but I must remind you that you have altered the schedule you had planned. Your decision was that after finishing your book in about eight days in Bombay, you would come here, begin the work and impart your knowledge to the people here. You will keep to the dates you have sent if you must. If it is not necessary then give them up and come soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR PRITHVI SINGH

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. N. 5641. Also C. W. 2952. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

513. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

July 15, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have received your letter of complaint. You had a right to hope. In fact I wrote you a letter before I reached Mathura. But Pyarelal did not like it. His argument convinced me, so I cancelled the letter and asked him to tear it up. That is why Mathura was missed. After that I wrote three letters between Itarsi and Wardha. So you did not hope in vain, did you ? Admit it. I would forget writing to you only if I forgot you. You are always before my eyes. Pyarelal does try to make up for your absence, but how can he do it ? Where would he find a hand like yours ? He sleeps even closer to me than you did. But who would be jealous of him ? However, I have not regained that

fearlessness I had with you. Pyarelal does almost everything you did. I am looking after my health. Ba is well.

You are free to write to me anything you want. I shall wait for you on the 24th. My order stands. But my order is meaningless. Follow the guidance of God. I can wish for nothing except your well-being.

Take care of yourself, will you? It will be good both for you and for Mother if you return the food she may bring. Sensible children never succumb to the blind love of their parents. If you return it once, she will not express her love in this undesirable way again.

I am personally seeing to it that the articles are sent to you on time. Three are being sent today. Mahadev sent you his Gujarati article yesterday. I shall go through what has come from you today. As you might have guessed, I have written a lot today.

Blessings form

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

A RESOLUTION [1]

PATNA,
March 1, 1940

This Congress, having considered the grave and critical situation resulting from the War in Europe and British policy in regard to it, approves of and endorses the resolutions passed and the action taken on the War situation by the A.I.C.C. and the Working Committee. The Congress considers the declaration by the British Government of India as a belligerent country, without any reference to the people of India, and the exploitation of India's resources in this war, as an affront to them which no self-respecting and freedom-loving people can accept or tolerate. The recent pronouncements made on behalf of the British Government in regard to India demonstrate that Great Britain is carrying on the war fundamentally for imperialist ends and for the preservation and strengthening of her Empire, which is based on the exploitation of the people of India, as well as of other Asiatic and African countries. Under these circumstances, it is clear that the Congress cannot in any way, directly or indirectly, be party to the war, which means continuance and perpetuation of this exploitation. The Congress, therefore, strongly disapproves of Indian troops being made to fight for Great Britain and of the drain from India of men and material for the purpose of the war. Neither the recruiting nor the money raised in India can be considered to be voluntary contributions from India. Congressmen, and those under the Congress influence, cannot help in the prosecution of the war with men, money or material.

The Congress hereby declares again that nothing short of complete independence can be accepted by the people of India. Indian freedom cannot exist within the orbit of imperialism and Dominion Status or any other status within the imperial structure is wholly inapplicable to India, is not in keeping with the dignity of a great nation, and would bind India in many ways to British policies and economic structure. The people of India alone can properly shape their own constitution and determine their relations to the other countries of the world, through a Constituent

[1] Gandhiji's draft was approved by the Working Committee and recommended for adoption at the Congress Session at Ramgarh. It appeared in *Harijan* under the title "India and the War". *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 2-3-1940; "When?", 5-3-1940"For Englishmen", 11-3-1940; "Question Box", 12-3-1940; "Speech at Subjects Committee", 18-3-1940 and "Jayaprakash's Picture", 14-4-1940.

Assembly elected on the basis of adult suffrage.

The Congress is further of opinion that while it will always be ready, as it ever has been, to make every effort to secure communal harmony, no permanent solution is possible except through a Constituent Assembly, where the rights of all recognized minorities will be fully protected by agreement, as far as possible, between the elected representatives of various majority and minority groups, or by arbitration if agreement is not reached on any point. Any alternative will lack finality. India's constitution must be based on independence, democracy and national unity, and the Congress repudiates attempts to divide India or to split up her nationhood. The Congress has always aimed at a constitution where the fullest freedom and opportunities of development are guaranteed to the group and the individual, and social injustice yields place to a juster social order.

The Congress cannot admit the right of the Rulers of Indian States, or of foreign vested interests, to come in the way of Indian freedom. Sovereignty in India must rest with the people, whether in the States or the Provinces, and all other interests must be subordinated to their vital interests. The Congress holds that the difficulty raised in regard to the States is of British creation, and it will not be satisfactorily solved unless the declaration of the freedom of India from foreign rule is unequivocally made. Foreign interests, if they are not in conflict with the interests of the Indian people, will be protected.

The Congress withdrew the Ministries from the Provinces where the Congress had a majority in order to dissociate India from the war and to enforce the Congress determination to free India from foreign domination. This preliminary step must naturally be followed by civil disobedience, to which the Congress will unhesitatingly resort as soon as the Congress organization is considered fit enough for the purpose, or in case circumstances so shape themselves as to precipitate a crisis. The Congress desires to draw the attention of Congressmen to Gandhiji's declaration that he can only undertake the responsibility of declaring civil disobedience when he is satisfied that they are strictly observing discipline and are carrying out the constructive programme prescribed in the Independence Pledge.

The Congress seeks to represent and serve all classes and communities without distinction of race or religion, and the struggle for Indian independence is for the freedom of the whole nation. Hence the Congress cherishes the hope that all classes and communities will take part in it. The purpose of civil disobedience is to evoke the spirit of sacrifice in the whole nation.

The Congress hereby authorizes the All-India Congress Committee, and in the event of this being necessary, the Working Committee, to take all steps to implement the foregoing resolution as the Committee concerned may deem necessary.

Harijan, 9-3-1940

APPENDIX II

JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN'S STATEMENT[1]

I have been charged with trying to impede the production of munitions and other supplies essential to the efficient prosecution of the war, and with trying to influence the conduct and attitude of the public in a manner prejudicial to the defence of British India and the efficient prosecution of the war. I plead guilty to these charges.

These charges, however, do not constitute a guilt for me but a duty which I discharge regardless of the consequence. That they also constitute an offence under certain laws of the foreign Government, established by force in this country, does not concern me. The object of these laws is diametrically opposed to the object of nationalist India of which I am but an humble representative. That we should come in conflict is only natural.

My country is not a party to this war in any manner, for it regards both German Nazism and British Imperialism as evils and enemies. It finds that both the sides in this war are driven by selfish ends of conquest and domination, exploitation and oppression. Great Britain is fighting not to destroy Nazism, which it has nurtured, but to curb a rival whose might can no longer be allowed to grow unchallenged. It is fighting to maintain its dominant place in the world and to preserve its imperial power and glory. As far as India is concerned, Great Britain is fighting to perpetuate the Indian Empire.

Plainly, India can have no truck with such a war. No Indian can permit the resources of his country to be utilized to buttress up imperialism, and to be converted through the processes of the war into the chains of his country's slavery. The Congress, the only representative voice of nationalist India, has already pointed out this sacred duty to the people of this country. I, as an humble servant of the Congress, have only tried to fulfil this duty.

The British Government on the other hand, in utter disregard for Indian opinion, has declared India a belligerent power and is utilizing Indian men, money and materials for a war to which we have pledged our uncompromising opposition. This is in the nature of an aggression against India, no less serious in the circumstances than German aggression against Poland. India cannot but resist this aggression. It therefore becomes the patriotic duty of every Indian to oppose the attempt of the British Government to use the country's resources for its imperialist ends. Thus the charge framed against me of trying to impede the efficient prosecution of the war is only the fulfilment of a patriotic duty. That the British Government should consider what is a duty for patriotic India to be an offence, only proves further

[1] *Vide* "A Brave Statement", 26-3-1940.

its imperialist character.

Regarding the speech for which I am being prosecuted, I cannot say how far it succeeded in achieving its ends. But nothing would please me more than to learn that it did have some success in impeding the effective prosecution of the war. I shall deem the heaviest punishment well earned if I am found to have succeeded in this.

As for the charge of endangering the defence of British India, I think the irony of it cannot be lost upon us. A slave has no obligation to defend his slavery. His only obligation is to destroy his bondage. I hope we shall know how to defend ourselves when we have achieved our freedom.

I consider it fortunate that I have been prosecuted for a Jamshedpur speech. This important industrial centre, which I consider the most important in the country, is peculiarly backward politically and from the point of view of the labour movement. I shall derive some satisfaction in prison, where I expect inevitably to find myself, from the thought that my arrest and incarceration for a speech delivered there has attracted to that city the notice of the political and labour leaders of my country. It seems scandalous to me that the country's most vital resources should be so wasted in a war to which we are so firmly opposed. And it seems no less scandalous to me that while labour throughout the country should be reacting vigorously to the conditions created by the war, Jamshedpur labour should carry on as if nothing extraordinary has happened. May, at least, the demand for a war bonus gain some momentum from this prosecution.

Before concluding I should like to add that, lest as an Englishman you should misunderstand me, I should make it clear that in impeding the prosecution of the war I have no desire to help Germany or to see Germany victorious. I desire the victory neither of Imperialism nor of Nazism. Yet, as a Congressman and a socialist I have nothing but goodwill for the British and German people. If India's opposition to Britain's imperialist war ensures a Nazi victory, it is for the British people to decide whether they would have Nazi hegemony or victory with real democracy at home and in India. If the people of Great Britain remove their present rule and renounce imperialism with its capitalist rulers, not only India but the freedom-loving people of the whole world exert themselves to see the defeat of Nazism and the victory of freedom and democracy. In the present circumstances, however, India has no alternative but to fight and end British imperialism. Only in that manner can it contribute to the peace and progress of the world.

I am conscious, Sir, that I have made your task easier by this statement. I do not regret it.

In the end I thank you for your courtesy and consideration during the trial.

Harijan, 30-3-1940

APPENDIX III

RESOLUTION PASSED BY ALL-INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE [1]

March 23, 1940

1. While approving and endorsing the action taken by the Council and the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League, as indicated in their resolutions dated the 27th of August, 17th and 18th of September and 22nd of October 1939 and 3rd of February 1940 on the constitutional issue, this session of the All-India Muslim League emphatically reiterates that the scheme of Federation embodied in the Government of India Act, 1935, is totally unsuited to and unworkable in the peculiar conditions of this country and is altogether unacceptable to Muslim India.

2. It further records its emphatic view that while the declaration dated the 18th of October 1939, made by the Viceroy on behalf of His Majesty's Government, is reassuring in so far as it declares that the policy and plan on which the Government of India Act, 1935, is based will be reconsidered in consultation with the various parties, interests and communities in India, Muslim India will not be satisfied unless the whole constitutional plan is reconsidered *de novo* and that no revised plan would be acceptable to the Muslims unless it is framed with their approval and consent.

3. Resolved that it is the considered view of this session of the All-India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to the Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principle, viz., that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority, as in the north-western and eastern zones of India, should be grouped to constitute "independent states" in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign.

That adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards should be specifically provided in the constitution for minorities in the units and in the regions for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them and in other parts of India where the Mussalmans are in a minority, adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards shall be specifically provided in the constitution for them and other minorities for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them.

This session further authorizes the Working Committee to frame a scheme of

[1] *Vide* "A Baffling Situation", 1-4-1940 and "Letter to Abdul Kalam Azad", 4-4-1940.

constitution in accordance with these basic principles providing for the assumption finally by the respective regions of all powers such as defence, external affairs, communications, customs and such other matters as may be necessary.

The Indian Annual Register, January-June 1940, Vol. I, pp. 311-2

APPENDIX IV

LETTER FROM LORD LINLITHGOW [1]

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE,
NEW DELHI,
April 9, 1940

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Many thanks for your letter of 4th April and for your kindness in sending me the extract enclosed in it from a letter from Maulana A. K. Azad.

2. It is obvious that the extract in question reveals some misunderstanding. When we met on 4th November you asked me specifically, as you have indicated in your letter, whether the Dominion Status which His Majesty's Government had in view for India was the Dominion Status of the Statute of Westminster variety. I explained the position, and I took the steps at once to ask the Secretary of State to arrange in the House of Lords (as he did on 7th November 1939) to place the position beyond any question. When we met on 5th February I again made the offer of His Majesty's Government clear and stated the limits within which I could conduct negotiation. You equally made your position clear, and I have no complaint whatever that you failed to do so. That, in the light of my speech at Orient Club and of your first reaction to it, I was disappointed that the gulf between us should at our meeting on 5th February have proved to be so wide, you know as well as I do. But there is no question of misunderstanding.

3. As for His Majesty's Government, I have never failed to keep them fully informed of what had passed between us, and I am sure there is no misapprehension in their minds. I only wish that as the result of our various conversations I had found myself in a position to report that the hopes, indeed the confident hopes, I had at various times entertained and which, in accordance with my duty, I had not concealed from them, of a friendly settlement had been realized.

4. I am sorry too that I should all unwittingly have involved you in, in your own words, this domestic dispute with your son. For his friendly interest in the promotion of a settlement I am indeed grateful. But you put the matter correctly when you say, as you say in your letter, that the gap revealed between the offer I was

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 4-4-1940 and 12-4-1940.

empowered to make on behalf of His Majesty's Government and the full demand which you put forward to me was clearly shown, as we both recognized, to be too great to be handled at that moment by prolonging conversations; and disappointed as I frankly was myself that that should have been the case, I think we were both right in feeling that the straightforward and courageous course in the circumstances that had disclosed themselves was to conclude those conversations as we did rather than to protract them.

Yours sincerely,

LINLITHGOW

From a microfilm : No. 109 : Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy : National Archives of India

APPENDIX V

EXTRACTS FROM LIAQUAT ALI KHAN'S STATEMENT [1]

NEW DELHI,
April 4, 1940

. . . Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, Hon. Secretary, All-India Muslim League, in a statement to the Press . . . refers to the article by Gandhiji in the *Harijan* under the caption, "My Reply to Quaid-e-Azam" and says :

Of course a politician who has a dual role, like Mr. Gandhi who is not even a four-anna member of the Congress and yet its virtual dictator, has always a greater advantage over ordinary mortals. He tells us for the first time that "Whatever talks I had with Quaid-e-Azam or any other have been on behalf of the Congress. . . ."

Yet in his letter dated the 8th March 1938 addressed to Mr. Jinnah, Mr. Gandhi stated as follows :

"You expect me to be able to speak on behalf of the Congress and other Hindus throughout the country. I am afraid I cannot fulfil the test. I cannot represent either the Congress or the Hindus in the sense you mean; but I would exert to the utmost all the moral influence I could have with them in order to secure an honourable settlement."

It is indeed very difficult to know exactly when Mr. Gandhi speaks for himself and when he speaks for the Congress. . . .

Mr. Gandhi goes on to say in his article that the Congress is not a Hindu organization and in support of this he puts forward the following argument. "Can a Hindu organization have a Muslim divine as President. . . ?"

He would have the world believe that because Maulana Abul Kalam Azad has been elected President of the Congress therefore the true Hindu character of that body

[1] *Vide* "My Position", 9-4-1940.

has changed. May I point out to Mr. Gandhi that one swallow does not make a summer and the world cannot be so easily fooled.

Maulana Azad's election as President of the Congress at this time is a tactical device to mislead the ignorant and the credulous. And what does the "Muslim divine" himself think about his election ? At the time of Maulana Azad's election to the Presidentship of the Congress he is reported to have said that "he regarded his election as a vote of confidence in the leadership of Mr. Gandhi and the country's approval of his programme."

Mr. Gandhi goes on to say that "I still maintain that there is no swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity. I can never be a party to the coercion of Muslims or any other minority. The Constituent Assembly as conceived by me is not intended to coerce anybody. Its sole sanction will be an agreed solution of communal question. If there is no agreement the Constituent Assembly will be automatically dissolved."

Further he goes on to say that "If the vast majority of Indian Muslims feel that they are not one nation with their Hindu and other brethren who will be able to resist them ?"

There are a few pertinent questions which arise out of the above statement of Mr. Gandhi. Mr. Gandhi has been saying for the last 20 years that there is no swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity and yet the Hindus and Muslims have never been so far apart from each other as they are today owing to the policy that has been followed by the Congress under the fostering care of Mr. Gandhi having for its sole objective the revival of Hinduism and the imposition of Hindu culture on all and sundry.

Mr. Gandhi's description of the Constituent Assembly as conceived by him needs a great deal of clarification and explanation. One would like to know if the Congress conception of the Constituent Assembly is the same as his own, as the resolution of the Congress is couched in different language to what Mr. Gandhi states in his article.

Mr. Gandhi now says "that if there is no agreement the Constituent Assembly will be automatically dissolved"; but not very long ago he had laid down that in the event of disagreement the matter will be referred to the highest and most impartial tribunal that the world can conceive of. Mr. Gandhi's statement that "if the vast majority of Indian Muslims feel that they are not one nation with their Hindu and other brethren who will be able to resist them ?" is rather interesting.

Is he prepared, that if the majority of Mussalmans declare in favour of the proposals of the Muslim League as laid down in the resolution passed at the Lahore session he and the Congress will give their whole-hearted support to them ?

If so, let him and the Congress declare it unequivocally and in the plainest language to that effect. If the object of the Constituent Assembly is only to ascertain whether the Mussalmans are in favour of the resolution of the Muslim League or not then why go to all the trouble of dragging the whole country into a turmoil, as Mr. Gandhi threatens to do by resorting to civil disobedience, to secure a Constituent Assembly from the British Government ?

We have no doubt in our mind. . . that the resolution passed at the Lahore session has the solid support of an overwhelming majority of Mussalmans. Nevertheless let Mr. Gandhi and the Congress and the British Government declare unequivocally that if the majority of the Mussalmans express themselves in favour of the Lahore resolution they would agree to the demand contained in it and give effect to it, and the Muslim League, I have no doubt about it, will be prepared to satisfy any reasonable test; and in order to do that a Constituent Assembly is not necessary.

May I now most earnestly request Mr. Gandhi to lay down the test which would satisfy him in the first instance and describe the procedure categorically by means of which the Mussalmans could prove to the hilt that the Lahore resolution is the voice of Muslim India from one end of the country to the other ?

But if Mr. Gandhi wants that we should pull the chestnuts out of the fire for him and the Congress and save their faces by setting up some sort of Constituent Assembly then he is greatly mistaken.

THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE, *5-4-1940*

APPENDIX VI

SATYAGRAHA PLEDGE[1]

TO THE SATYAGRAHA/CONGRESS COMMITTEE

. . . . . .

I desire to enroll myself as an active satyagrahi.

I solemnly declare that,

(I) So long as I remain an active satyagrahi I shall remain non-violent in word and deed and shall earnestly endeavour to be non-violent in intent, since I believe that as India is circumstanced today, non-violence alone can help and result in the attainment of *purna* swaraj and consolidation of unity among all the races and communities of India whether Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Parsi, Christian or Jew.

(2) I believe and shall endeavour always to promote such unity.

(3) I believe in the justice and necessity of removing the evil of untouchability and shall on all possible occasions seek personal contact with, and endeavour to render service to the submerged classes.

(4) I believe in swadeshi as essential for India's economic, political and moral salvation and shall use hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar to the exclusion of every other cloth. I shall so far as possible use the produce of hand and village industries.

(5) I shall spin regularly.

(6) I shall carry out the instructions of my superior officers and all rules and regulations not inconsistent with the spirit of this pledge prescribed by any superior

[1] *Vide* "Question Box", 19-5-1940.

Congress organization or the Working Committee or any other agency established by the Congress.

(7) I am prepared to suffer imprisonment or even death for the sake of the cause and my country without resentment.

(8) In the event of my imprisonment I shall not claim from the Congress any support for myself, my family and dependants.

Signed

Full name . . . . . .

Address. . . . . .

Date. . . . . .

Note. Nobody who is not above the age of 18 may take this pledge.

The Indian Annual Register, 1940, Vol. I, p. 240

APPENDIX VII

DEENABANDHU MEMORIAL[1]

Innumerable people all over the world, who have been plunged into sorrow by the recent death of Charles Freer Andrews, must have been feeling, in their grief, that it behoves his friends to carry on the work of service and reconciliation in which he laboured so greatly. We would not willingly let die the memory of his life; we seek a way to perpetuate, in permanent and visible from, the spirit of that life. Andrews's permanent Indian home, the place with which for over a quarter of a century he affectionately identified himself, was Santiniketan in the Birbhum District of Bengal. This Ashram was originally founded by the late Maharshi Debendranath Tagore and supported by the ancestral funds. Under the leadership of his son, the Poet Rabindranath Tagore, the educational institutions at Santiniketan, with the centre of rural reconstruction close by at Sriniketan, have far outgrown the first conception, and become a world-famous centre of international culture. To the welfare of these institutions, with their vision of universal brotherhood and their service of international understanding and peace, Andrews, the Poet's closest friend, gave his whole-hearted devotion. No private resources could be adequate for the support of such a centre of study and research, and many of the financial and other contributions which have been made to it from East and West alike have been owed to Andrews's perseverance, hard work, and faith in its future. No more fitting place can be conceived for a memorial to him, nor one which he himself would have loved better, as we who came into the closest contact with him know.

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 10-6-1940. and "Andrews Memorial", 27-8-1940.

It is true that no memorial in stone and mortar can fully perpetuate Andrews's memory. That can best be done by promoting true and lasting peace between India and Great Britian as independent nations and, through their joint effort, universal peace. But this work of reconciliation must find concrete form in some centre from which his influence can radiate. There could be no better memorial to him than the place where he found his spiritual home and greatest human inspiration should be so endowed as to enable it to fulfil his high hopes for it unhampered by the constant financial anxiety with which it is now burdened. In his name and that of the Poet whose vision he so entirely shared, we appeal for this endowment to be generously given.

There are two projected developments of the work of Santiniketan and Sriniketan which Charles Andrews himself specially longed to see. The generous response of the public to our appeal for a memorial fund will enable them both to be carried out in addition to ensuring the permanence of the present established work. They are as follows:

Andrews was most appropriately called 'Deenabandhu', the friend of the poor, and the poor of the Birbhum district knew his friendship. The rural centre at Sriniketan has a good doctor and dispensary but no hospital or operating theatre. We propose to build a small but properly equipped hospital to serve the villages round us, and to dig each year 'Deenabandhu wells' in the neediest areas. The Birbhum district is not served by the large rivers of Bengal, and lack of adequate water supply is the main cause of its grinding poverty.

It was true insight which caused an Indian friend to interpret the initials C. F. A. as meaning "Christ's Faithful Apostle". Christ was the centre of his life. Devotion to Him was his outstanding characteristic and the source of his inspiration and strength. During the last months at Santiniketan he often expressed the hope that in this place, where the civilizations of the world can share with each other the bases of their strength, there might be established a Hall of Christian culture which could do for India's thought through contact with the Western world, what the 'Cheena Bhawan' is expected to do for our relationship with China. The central purpose of the Hall would be the study of the teaching and character of Christ and its application to the solution of international problems. It would seek to attract scholars and students, especially of the East, to the task of interpreting in their own modes of thought the spirit and mind of Christ. We envisage a modest building, sufficiently endowed to enable us to offer such scholars and students a home at a minimum cost, with simple living accommodation, meeting hall, and the library whose nucleus Charles Andrews had already begun to assemble. He himself made Santiniketan his headquarters during a life of practical Christian service which, reached our from here to the ends of the

earth. We hope that such a Hall would enable others consecrated to the same kind of service to enjoy the same kind of home.

The full carrying out of this programme will require a fund of at least Rs. 5,00,000 (£40,000). We ask Andrews's friends and admirers all over the world to give liberal support to a scheme which will make possible, in his name, the preservation and enrichment of this work nearest to his own heart.

Santiniketan and Sriniketan are in the charge of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, Founder-President, Sir Nilratan Sarkar, Shri Hirendranath Datta, Shri L. K elehirst, Dr. D. M. Bose, Treasurer, and Shri Rathindranath Tagore, General Secretary, as trustees. The trust deed is registered. Its corpus today is valued at Rs. 1,700,000. Its annual expenditure is about Rs. 330,000.

ABUT KALAM AZAD
S. K. DATTA
M. K. GANDHI
M. M. MALAVIYA
SAROJINI NAIDU
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI
FOSS WESTOOTT (BISHOP)

Harijan, 1-6-1940

APPENDIX VIII

RESOLUTION PASSED AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING AT DELHI[1]

POLITICAL SITUATION

July 7, 1940

The Working Committee have noted the serious happenings which have called forth fresh appeals to bring about a solution of the deadlock in the Indian political situation; and in view of the desirability of clarifying the Congress position they have earnestly examined the whole situation once again in the light of the latest development in world affairs.

[1] *Vide*. "The Delhi Resolution", 8-7-1940 and "Letter to Abdul Kalam Azad", 19-8-1940.

The Working Committee are more than ever convinced that the acknowledgment by Great Britain of the complete independence of India, is the only solution of the problems facing both India and Britain and are, therefore, of opinion that such an unequivocal declaration should be immediately made and that as an immediate step in giving effect to it, a provisional National Government should be constituted at the Centre, which, though formed as a transitory measure, should be such as to command the confidence of all the elected elements in the Central Legislature and secure the closest co-operation of the Responsible Government in the provinces.

The Working Committee are of opinion that unless the aforesaid declaration is made, and a National Government accordingly formed at the Centre without delay, all efforts at organizing the material and moral resources of the country for Defence cannot in any sense be voluntary or as from a free country, and will therefore be ineffective. The Working Committee declare that if these measures are adopted, it will enable the Congress to throw in its full weight in the efforts for the effective organization of the Defence of the Country.

The Indian Annual Register, 1940, Vol. II, pp. 176-7

1. MYSORE JUSTICE

After I had sent my note[1] on Shri H. C. Dassappa's Case, I received the following from a Bangalore advocate:

> You have now material which is sufficient to give an indication of the independence of the Mysore Judiciary. It is undoubtedly under the control and lead of Sir D'Arcy Reilly. The other Judges in the High Court follow in his footsteps, and no single instance can be recalled when any Puisne Judge of the High Court of Mysore has had the strength to demur to even the excesses committed by the chief Justice in the language, form and tone of his judgements, the Government, which professes not to interfere with either the High Court or the Judiciary is evidently well satisfied about the Judges of the High Court of Mysore. For a dozen years important judgements have come from the Judges of the High Court which have clearly shown that they have yielded to the pressure of the bureaucracy while professing fear of God and of no man. Probably it is this practical docility that has made the Government
>
> Order on Political Reforms in the State silent to the point of being sinister as regards recommendations for the reform of the Judiciary in the State. To cap it all comes the pronouncement in Shri H. C. Dasappa's case that in this country truth is so often degraded into a political catch-word.' The reference to the country is wide enough in its mischief and implications so as to embrace all people whether Congressmen or others and whether they reside in the States or in British India. What basis had Sir D'Arcy Reilly for such an assumption? And what evidence had he for such a general charge against a whole country? Is it moral on the part of Sir D'Arcy Reilly to condemn Sri H. C. Dasappa and debar him on the ground that he preferred a charge that he could not prove, and do the same thing under a different guise in a judgment?

My correspondent's complaint is right. But Judges are above all law, at least in Mysore. Like kings they can do no wrong.

SEVAGRAM, *July 16, 1940*

Harijan, 21-7-1940

[1] *Vide* "Mysore Lawyers"

2. *KHAN SAHEB'S AHIMSA*[1]

In the storm that shook most of the members of the Working Committee Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan stood firm as a rock. He had never any doubt about his position, and his statement which I reproduce below should serve as a beacon light to all of us:

> Some recent resolutions of the Congress Working Committee indicate that they are restricting the use of non-violence to the fight for India's freedom against constituted authority. How far and in what manner this will have to be applied in the future I cannot say. The near future will perhaps throw light on this. Meanwhile it is difficult for me to continue in the Congress Working Committee, and I am resigning from it. I should like to make it clear that the non-violence I have believed in and preached to my brethren of the Khudai Khidmatgars is much wider. It affects all our life, and only this has permanent value. Unless we learn this lesson of non-violence fully we shall never do away with the deadly feuds which have been the curse of the people of the Frontier. Since we took to non- violence and the Khudai Khidmatgars pledged themselves to it, we have largely succeeded in ending these feuds. Non-violence has added greatly to the courage of the Pathans. Because they were previously addicted to violence far more than others, they have profited by non-violence much more. We shall never really and effectively defend ourselves except through non-violence. Khudai Khidmatgars must, therefore, be what our name implies - pure servants of God and humanity - by laying down our own lives and never taking any life.

It is worthy of the Khan Saheb [and all that he has stood for during the past twenty years][2] . He is a Pathan, and a Pathan may be said to be born with rifle or sword in his hand. But the Khan Saheb deliberately asked his Khudai Khidmatgars to shed all weapons when he asked them to join the satyagraha against the Rowlatt Act. He saw that this deliberate giving up of the weapons of violence had a magical effect. It was the only remedy for the blood feuds which were handed down from sire to son and which had become part of the normal life of a Pathan.[3] They had decimated numerous families, and non-

[1] The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu,* 20-7-1940. This translation is reproduced from *Harijan.*

[2] This is not to be found in the Gujarati.

[3] The Gujarati here has: "This marked the limit of violence and showed its bankruptcy."

violence seemed to the Khan Saheb to have come as a longed-for salvation. The violent blood feuds would otherwise have no end and would spell the end of the Pathans. He saw as clear as daylight that, if he could persuade his people not to retaliate, the suicidal feuds would cease and the Pathans would be able to give a better account of their bravery. They took up his message and put into practice what with them became non-violence of the brave.

Being so clear about his own faith and that of the Khudai Khidmatgars, there was for him no escape from resignation of him membership of the Congress Working Committee. His continuing on it would have been anomalous and might have meant an end of his life's work. He could not ask his people to join as recruits in the army and at the same time forget the law of tribal retaliation. The simple Pathan would have argued with him-and the argument would have been irresistible-that the present war was a war of retaliation and revenge, and that there was no difference between it and their blood feuds.

I do not know how far the Khan Saheb has succeeded in carrying his message to his people. This I know that with him non-violence is a matter not of intellectual conviction but of intuitive faith. Nothing can therefore shake it. About his followers he cannot say how far they will adhere to it. But that does not worry him. He has to do his duty which he owes to them. The result he leaves to God. He derives his ahimsa from the Holy Koran. He is a devout Mussalman. During his stay with me for over a year I never saw him miss him *namaz* (prayers) or his Ramzan fast (except when he was ill). But his devotion to Islam does not mean disrespect for other faiths. He has read the *Gita*. His reading is slight but selective, and he immediately assimilates what appeals to him. He loathes long argument and does not take long to make up his mind. If he succeeds in his mission, it would mean the solution of many another problem. But the result no one can predict. 'The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.'

SEVAGRAM, July 16, 1940
Harijan, 21-7-1940

3. *THE ANNUAL SPINNING SACRIFICE*[1]

Shri Narandas Gandhi has issued his usual appeal for intensive spinning during the 71 days before my seventy-first birthday. He began this way of celebrating it six years ago with an appeal for 66 thousand yards. Last year he made an appeal for 70 lakhs of yards, and the response was beyond his expectation-over 4 crores of yards of yarn were spun.

I commend his appeal to all. The response to his appeal should increase with my increasing years. If the annual quota of the National School in Rajkot is any index, the response would seem to be on the increase. But the appetite of Daridranarayana is insatiable, and it demands still greater response. It is a Herculean task to liquidate the unemployment and starvation of crores of people. Let me hope that every lover of the wheel will contribute his or her quota to this task and make the sacrifice a worthy one. Let them approach the task intelligently and with a proper regard for its sacredness. Let them, therefore, devote not only more time to spinning, but also endeavour to do it better by keeping all their spinning tackle in proper trim and thus increasing their speed. If they will watch the revolutions of the spindle and find out the secret of putting up the speed, I am sure that at the end of the sacrifice they will have nearly doubled the speed.

SEVAGRAM, July 16, 1940

Harijan, 21-7-1940

4. *HOW TO CULTIVATE AHIMSA?*[2]

Q. What is the good of your crying 'ahimsa, ahimsa' in season and out of season? Will it by itself teach people to be non-violent? Would it not be better, instead, to tell people how pure ahimsa or the ahimsa of the strong can be cultivated?

A. Your is a very timely and opportune question. I have attempted before this on more occasions than one to answer it. But my effort has, I confess, been rather desultory. I have not concentrated upon it, or given it the weight I might have. This was all right while I was devoting all my energy to forging means to give battle to Govern-

[1] The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 20-7-1940. This abridged English version is reproduced from *Harijan*.

[2] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 20-7-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan* where it was published under the heading "Question Box".

ment. But it had the result of retarding the growth of pure ahimsa, so that today we are not even within ken of the ahimsa of the strong. If we now want to advance further, we ought, at least for some time, to completely forget the idea of offering non-violent resistance to constituted authority. If non-violence in the domestic field is successfully achieved, we shall surely see the non-violence against constituted authority revived in its purified form, and it will be irresistible.

Now that I am no longer in the Congress, I may not offer civil disobedience even in my own person in its name. But I am certainly free to offer civil disobedience in my individual capacity whenever it may be necessary. No one need suppose that all civil disobedience will necessarily be taboo while the country is still being educated in the ahimsa of the strong. But those who may want to join the non-violent force of my conception would not entertain any immediate prospect of civil disobedience. They should understand that, so long as they have not realized ahimsa in their own person in its pure form, there can be no civil disobedience for them.

Let not the mention of pure ahimsa frighten anybody. If we have a clear conception of it and have a living faith in its matchless efficacy, it will not be found to be so hard to practise as it is sometimes supposed to be, it will be well to remember the immortal *Mahabharata* verse[1] in this connection. The Seer Poet therein loudly proclaims to the whole that dharma includes within itself both legitimate *artha* and *kama*, and asks why men do not follow the royal road of dharma that leads to both earthly and spiritual bliss. Dharma here does not signify mere observance of externals. It signifies the way of truth and non-violence. The scriptures have given us two immortal maxims. One of these is: "Ahimsa is the supreme Law of dharma." The other is:"There is no other Law or dharma than truth." These two maxims provide us the key to all lawful *artha* and *kama*. Why should we then hesitate to act up to them? Strange as it may appear, the fact remains that people find the easiest of things oftentimes to be the most difficult to follow. The reason, to borrow a term from the science of physics, lies in our inertia. Physicists tell us that inertia is an essential and, in its own place a most useful, quality of matter, it is that alone which steadies the universe and prevents if from flying off at a tangent. But for it the latter would be a chaos of

[1] The Gujarati has "Bharat Savitri verse". For the text of the verse, *vide* " A Cry in the Wilderness"?

motion. But inertia becomes an incubus and a vice when it ties the mind down to old ruts. It is this kind of inertia which is responsible for our rooted prejudice that to practise pure ahimsa is difficult. It is up to us to get rid of this incubus. The first step in this direction is firmly to resolve that all untruth and *himsa* shall hereafter be taboo to us, whatever sacrifice it might seem to involve. For, the good these may seem to achieve is in appearance only, but in reality it is deadly poison. If our resolve is firm and our conviction clear, it would mean half the battle won, and the practice of these two qualities would come comparatively easy to us.

Let us confine ourselves to ahimsa. We have all along regarded the spinning-wheel, village crafts, etc., as the pillars of ahimsa, and so indeed they are. They must stand. But we have now to go a step further. A votary of ahimsa will or course base upon non-violence, if he has not already done so, all his relations with his parents, his children, his wife, his servants, his dependants, etc. But the real test will come at the time of political or communal disturbances or under the menace of thieves and dacoits. Mere resolve to lay down one's life under the circumstances is not enough. There must be the necessary qualification fro making the sacrifice. If I am a Hindu, I must fraternize with the Mussalmans and the rest. In my dealings with them I may not make any distinction between my co-religionists and those who might belong to a different faith. I would seek opportunities to serve them without any feeling of fear or unnaturalness. The word 'fear' can have no place in the dictionary of ahimsa. Having thus qualified himself by his selfless service, a votary of pure ahimsa will be in a position to make a fit offering of himself in a communal conflagration. Similarly, to meet the menace of thieves and dacoits, he will need to go among, and cultivate friendly relations, with, the communities from which thieves and dacoits generally come.

A brilliant example of this kind of work is provided by Ravishanker Maharaj. His work among the criminal tribes in Gujarat has evoked praise even of the Baroda State authorities. There is an almost unlimited field for this kind of work and it does not call for any other talent in one besides pure love. Ravi shanker Maharaj is an utter stranger to English. Even his knowledge of Gujarati is barely sufficient for everyday use. But God has blessed him with unlimited neighbourly love. His simplicity easily wins all hearts and is the envy

of everybody. Let his example provide a cue and inspiration to all those who may be similarly engaged in other field of satyagraha.[1]

SEVAGRAM, July 16, 1940

Harijan, 21-7-1940

5. *IMPOSSIBLE*[2]

Miss Muriel Lester writes:

> See how you are misquoted by Sherwood Eddy[3] in his latest book *I Saw God Do it.* I have been asked to send you this cutting from it so that you may reply to it if you want to. Here is the extract.
>
> "We have maintained throughout this chapter that some are called to be conscientious objectors as absolute pacifists to challenge the whole war system, but that the majority will feel it to be their duty forcibly to defend their country when it is attacked or its vital interests are threatened. Gandhi himself, the most effective and the greatest living pacifist, is not an absolutist but a relativist, a realist and, to a large degree, a practical states-man. He is effectively using non-violent resistance to achieve the indepen-dence of India, but he recognizes that a modern State cannot be maintained without both a police force and an army. When the writer asked him personally how a divided Indian army could be commanded by a Moslem, a Hindu or a Sikh, he told me they could first ask an American or some foreign neutral to lead their army. But Gandhi pacifists and Indian nationalists would defend their country if attacked by Japan or Soviet Russia or any other foreign power by the full force of their army. So, I believe, should our own country."

I can only say that I have no recollection of my having ever made such a statement. I know Dr. Sherwood Eddy well. I remember too his visit. The astounding statement put into my mouth belies all I have ever written or said about the defence of India. Even if I believed in armed defence, I should never want a foreign general to lead my army. I may have foreign instructors but not officers. If, therefore, Dr. Eddy sees these lines, and instead of correcting himself persists in his statement, I can only say I must have been absent-

[1] The Gujarati here adds: "He should have such awareness that he could give account of every moment."

[2] This appeared under "Notes".

[3] American Y. M. C. A. official and writer, author of *India Awakening*, *The New Era in Asia* and other books.

minded when I made the statement imputed to me. I cannot say I must have been drunk, because I do not drink.

SEVAGRAM, July 16, 1940

Harijan, 28-7-1940

6. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 16, 1940

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. It is no game of marbles being a wife and mother. If we look upon it as a dharma, we can shape ourselves through it. If we realize that *grihasthashrama*[1] is not for pleasure but is a test for us, it becomes the biggest school for us. I should like both of you to shape your life on this pattern. It is good that Shakaribehn[2] has come. When you come here again, let her also accompany you. Let Shakaribehn stay there till this illness is over.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 10029. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

7. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

SEVAGRAM,
July 16, 1940

BHAI MUNSHI,

I had your letter. I solved your problem yesterday itself. I have nothing to say now. Two courses are open, and either will be right if it is within your strength."One's own dharma though devoid of merit is better."[3]

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 7654. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

[1] Householder's estate
[2] Addressee's Mother
[3] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 35

8. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

For Surendra *July 16, 1940*

You may say this: Ephidrine is a useless thing. The homoeopathic treatment has to be continued. I am looking for other remedies. Be patient.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4354

9. UNREPENTANT

By writing that "Appeal to Every Briton"[1] I have invited upon my head an extra load of work which without God's help I would be ill able to bear. If it is His will that I should shoulder it, He will give me the strength to carry on.

When I decided to confine myself mostly to writing in Gujarati or Hindustani, I had no notion that I would have to write the appeal. It came to me like a flash, and the courage to write it came with it. I had resisted till then all pressure from English and American friends to give guidance. But I could not see my way. Now having addressed that appeal, I must follow up the reactions to it. A large amount of correspondence is pouring in upon me. Save for one angry telegram, I had nothing but friendly criticism from Englishmen and even appreciation from some.

I was grateful to H. E. the Viceroy for forwarding my offer to His Majesty's Government. The correspondence with regard to it the readers have already seen or will see in this issue. Though no better response to the appeal was to be expected, I cannot help saying that is was the knowledge of the determination to carry the war to a victorious end that had prompted my appeal. No doubt the determi-nation is natural and worthy of the best British tradition. Nevertheless the awful slaughter that the determination involves should induce a search for a better and braver way to achieve the end. For peace has its victories more glorious than those of war. The non-violent method would have meant no abject surrender. It would have confounded all modern tactics of war, indeed rendered them of no use. The new world order which all dream of would surely have been found. I hold a new order to be impossible if the war is fought to a finish or mutual exhaustion leads to a patched-up peace.

[1] *Vide* "To Every Briton"

Let me, therefore examine the argument advanced in a letter received from a friend[1] . Here it is:

> Two English friends who admire you, say your appeal to every Briton cannot have any effect *just now*. It is impossible to expect the man in the street to do a complete *volte face* with any degree of understanding - indeed it is impossible for the understanding [*sic*] to do, as you say, without a *heart*-belief in non-violence. The time to mould a new world on your lines will be after the war. They realize your way is the right one, but they say it needs endless preparation and instruction and *big* leadership - none of which they possess. Regarding India they say the attitude of the present authority is deplorable. Long ago India should have been declared as independent as Canada, and her people should be allowed to work out their own constitution. But what they are extremely perplexed about now is that you want absolute independence straightaway, and the next step you will take is 'no further help to Britain in the prosecution of war, surrender to Germany, and opposition to her by non-violent means'. You must explain what you mean in more detail so as to remove this misunderstanding. This is an honest reaction.

The appeal was intended to produce the effect now. It could not come out of a mathematical calculation. If the conviction could have come, action was an easy matter. The mass mind responds under pressure. That the appeal has not produced the intended result shows that either my word has no power or that God has a purpose of which we have no knowledge. The appeal has come from an anguished heart. I could not suppress it. It was not written for the moment. I am quite sure that it enunciates a truth of eternal value.

If the ground is not prepared from now, there may be no time left after a dismal termination of the war for evolving a new order. Whatever the order, it will be in response to a conscious or unconscious effort from now. Indeed the effort began before my appeal. I hope that it has stimulated it. Perhaps given it a definite direction. I suggest to the non-official leaders and moulders of British opinion, if they are convinced of the truth of my position, to work for its adoption. Compared to the big issue raised in my appeal, the question of Indian independence pales into insignificance. But I hold with the two Englishmen that the British Government's attitude is deplorable. The two friends are wholly wrong in the deduction they have drawn from

[1] Amrit Kaur; *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 19-7-1940.

the assumed recognition of India ‘s independence. They forget that I am out of the picture. Those who are responsible for the Working Committee’s last resolution have meant free India’s co-operation with Britain. With them, there is no question of surrender to Germany or non-violent opposition.

But I must not here tarry on Indian independence and its implications, tempting though the subject is.

The cuttings and correspondence before me say that the Congress rejection of my advice to abstain from preparation for military defence of India precludes me from making the appeal to Britain or from expecting a favourable response. The argument is plausible, but only plausible. The critics say that , if I have failed with my people, I have no right to expect Britain whilst she is in the midst of a life-and-death struggle to listen to me. I am a man with a mission. India ‘s millions have never tasted the bitters of war as the British have. Britain, if she is to fulfil her declared purpose, needs a radical change in her policy. I feel that I know the change that is needed. My inability to persuade the Working Committee is irrelevant to the theme under discussion. There is no analogy between India’s case and Britain’s. I am, therefore, wholly unrepentant. I maintain that in issuing my appeal I have acted wholly as a lifelong friend of Britain.

A writer, however, retorts: “Address your appeal to Hitler.” In the first place, I did write to Herr Hitler.[1] My letter was publish din the Press some time after I addressed it. In the second place, there can be no meaning in my appeal to Herr Hitler to adopt non-violence. He is marching from victory to victory. I can only appeal to him to desist. That I have done. But to Britain, which is just now on the defensive, I can present the really effective weapon of non-violent non-co-operation. Let my method be rejected on merits, not by bringing inapt analogies or untenable argument. The issue raised by me, I venture to think, is of universal importance, the usefulness of the non-violent method seems to be granted by all the critics. They gratuitously assume the impossibility of human nature, as it is constituted, responding to the strain involved in non-violent preparation. But that is begging the question. I say, ‘You have never tried the method on any scale. In so far as it has been tried, it has shown promising results.’

SEVAGRAM, JULY 17, 1940

Harijan, 21-7-1940

[1] *Vide* “Letter to Adolf Hitler”, 23-7-1939

10. TRAVANCORE

Some Travancoreans have thought I had neglected them. But I had not. It is no pleasure to me to criticize any State. Much of my work is done by negotiation. I criticise when I must. So when I was told by common friends that Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar would like to meet me if an opportunity occurred, I stopped all reference to Travancore affairs. But the meeting was not to be. In reply to my inquiry I have the following extraordinary wire from him:

> Have just received your telegram.[1] In view developments in India including your recent statement and resolution of Working Committee with similar aims though different programmes, and also having regard to the close though unacknowledged connection existing between many of the leaders of Travancore State Congress and communist activities which have come to light after arrest of K. C. George, and in view of the openly hostile activities of Mr. T. M. Verghese and of Mr. G. Ramachandran who has been chosen by you to give advice as to Tranvancore, no useful purpose is likely to be served by any meeting. In these circumstances you are of course free to comment on Travancore affairs, but it is hoped that you will not accept versions furnished by persons who are discredited here and who depend for their influence, collection of funds, and their political existence, on possibility of getting periodical statement from you on one-sided data furnished by them. Most of the leading members of State Congress including Messrs V. K. elayudhan, M. N. Parameswaran Pillai and others have openly dissociated themselves from State Congress activities. They number over 60.

I fail to see the connection between the Working Committee's resolution and my recent statement on the one hand and Travancore affairs on the other. The Working Committee have not even interested themselves in Travaneore affairs. The idea of our meeting did not originate with me. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar thought of it months ago. Even a date was fixed. But owing to a pressing engagement he had to keep, our meeting was postponed. As late as the 3rd of April he had wired saying he was writing to me about the interview. Have the Working Committee's resolution and my statement so altered the situation that our meeting has become undesirable? The other things the worthy Dewan refers to are the very things which would have made our meeting fruitful. He had but to convince me that the State Congress was involved in communist activities of a dangerous nature,

[1] This is not traceable.

and I would have washed my hands clean of the local Congress and its doings. All communism is not dangerous. I do not know that Shri K. C. George is a communist. I warn the Dewan against being prejudiced by the mere name. I know many friends who delight in calling themselves communists. They are as harmless as a dove. I call myself a communist in their company. The underlying belief of communism is good and as old as the hills. But I have strayed.

If Shri T. M. Verghese and Shri G. Ramachandran are untrustworthy, again our meeting is necessary to convince me of their untrustworthiness. I must confess I have profound admiration for their courage, self-sacrifice ability and integrity. Shri Ramachandran is an old member of Sabarmati who has never given me cause for distrusting him. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar knows me enough to feel sure that I would not hesitate to own my mistake if I discovered it. It was his duty, as it still is, to make an effort to convince me that the sources of my information are tainted. The extraordinary telegram has made me conclude that Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar has nothing against the Congress or its members except that they are patriots without reproach and without fear. He hates their philosophy and seeks to crush them. All the evidence in my possession points that way, and the telegram confirms my impression.

I have made an offer which I repeat. Let there be an impartial open inquiry into the whole conduct of the State Congress and its treatment by the State. Let the judge or judges be outsiders of known integrity. I shall advise the State Congress to accept the findings of such a court.

If this simple offer is not accepted, I must be pardoned for rejecting the interesting denials by officials of the State Congress allegations and believing them and asking the public to do likewise.

SEVAGARAM, July 17, 1940

Harijan, 21-7-1940

11. TELEGRAM TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

WARDHAGANJ,
July 17, 1940

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
LADY HARDINGE COLLEGE
NEW DELHI

PATIENTS WELL. TAKING REGULAR INJECTIONS.[1] LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

12. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
July 17, 1940

CHI. AMRIT,

Harijan work stops everything else. I see you had a good time in A. You must take rest.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA W

From the original: C. W. 3984. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7293

13. LETTER TO PUSHPA[2]

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 17, 1940

Bravo! May God bless you in your University career. Don't damage your eyes or other parts or your body in the mere pursuit of studies.

[1]A rabid jackal had bitten five persons at the Ashram in their sleep — J. P. Bhansali, Munnalal Shah, Narayan Desai and two policemen.

[2] Daughter of V. A. Sundaram

Do collect for the Andrews Memorial and use this as your authority. And congratulate the two brothers on their having finished 12 chapters of the Gita.

Love.

BAPU

KUMARI PUSHPA
C/O SHRI V. A. SUNDARAM
KRISHNAKUTIR
BENARES HINDU UNIVERSITY

From a photostat: G. N. 3193

14. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 17, 1940

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

I know Dr. Vaidya very well. If he wants to see me he can certainly come or you may bring him along with you. It is difficult to comfort him but your love can have some effect. It will be good if he occupies himself with some work. Can he not work in the Bhandar under your supervision?[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI KAKUBHAI
ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' S ASSOCIATION
KHADI BHANDAR
396 KALBADVI ROAD
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10846: Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

[1] A line is illegible here.

15. LETTER TO HARSHADABEHN DIWANJI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 17, 1940

DEAR SISTER,

I received the yarn sent by you.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI HARSHADABEHN DIWANJI
15TH STREET, KHAR
BOMBAY

From Gujarati: C. W. 9936

16. LETTER TO MANJULA M. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 17, 1940

CHI. MANJULA[1],

It is only now that I got your letters written from Rangoon. The second one I got today. I was extremely pleased to read these letters. I cannot contain my joy at your straightforwardness and purity. Your suffering appears insignificant beside them. You have grown up in suffering. I want both of you to come here; I feel you should. I will reason with Magan. Probably he will listen to me. In any case I will try. Whatever happens, your well-being is assured. Write to me frankly from time to time. Do not worry about the money.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 1018. Courtesy: Manjula M. Mehta

17. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 17, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

How is it that you do not receive my letters? I take great care in

[1] Wife of Maganlal Mehta, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's son

writing to you. I have sent a telegram today regarding the patients. They go for their vaccinations. When I heard about a jackal having bitten them I turned to look for you and realized that you were in Delhi ! Following your advice I have sent one translated article direct to V[iyogi] H[ari]. I have received the second part of your translation today. I can see that you will have to spend considerable time in this work. So I will send it next week. Take suitable matter for the next week from the English articles. It is impossible to take everything in the same week when the writing is repeated.

I do not like your having dreams at night. They should become less frequent and disappear.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum ant Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

18. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 17, 1940

BHAI BENARSIDAS,

The message is at the back. Don't ask for anything in English. You may select from whatever I have written.

Why then have you joined the *Vishal Bharat*[1] ?

You may come whenever you like. I shall spare the time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2573

19. LETTER TO PYARELAL

July 18, 1940

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have understood your experience of that night. It pained me. I do not like dreams at all. But when some action takes place in a dream it is worse. For instance, it is one thing to dream of eating. But quite another when somebody really eats in a dream; it is definitely a bad

[1] A Hindi monthly

thing. It would be the end result of a particular habit. Such a thing happened in my case. That is why I asked you if you had seen any gesture on my part. How would it have any adverse effect on you? You must really feel pity for me. If you did not see anything wrong in it, it is because of your softness for me. But I must beware of myself. However close you may sleep by my side why should it harm me? I would expect you to see if there was any defect in me. I would be committing a crime if I hide even a single defect of mine from all of you who are living close to me. Hence, you do not have to change anything.

You feel my love only now. But I am not doing any thing new. When Sushila was here I used to get her to do any work I wanted. I used to get details about your diet, etc. I used to see about your bed, etc. Occasionally I used to direct her where and how your bed should be made. When Sushila left, I had already decided to entrust her chores to you. Hence I am not doing anything extra or anything new. You of course see it as something different. Let the feeling persist. If and when Sushila comes she will take charge of them. Is it going to diminish my love for you in any way?

I do not want to force you. I am glad that you have given up fasting on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays Since you have done it for my sake, you are getting the merit of fasting and in addition you are giving satisfaction to me. Had you been fasting, I would not have been able to take from you as much work as I wish. Whatever you may think you would not be able to accomplish as much work as I may desire. Hence I would insist that since you have given up observing fasts, you should leave it at that. Now that I have saidthis much, you may do whatever brings peace to your mind. Actually, you should find peace in satisfying me. That will cure your blankness of mind and also enable you to avoid the mistakes that tend to get repeated.

You will now have understood my not being afraid of Sushila and being afraid of you. She has experienced everything I have in me. Even though Sushila has entered late in my life, she is more absorbed in me. Hence I would even make her sleep by my side without fear. I believe that she can forestall any mistake I may make. In my view, contact with her has brought greater purity to me. However much I may try, I cannot take with you the same liberty as I may take with Sushila. This has been in my nature right from childhood. Usually, a man can take greater liberty with another man.

The opposite is true in my case. I have felt it is only correct. Whether or not it is really correct can perhaps be known only after my death. I am saying 'perhaps', because who can know It? If I can become pure in this life morning, noon and evening then I can say it for certain. Right now, I can only surmise. In spite of my very intimate contacts with women no woman can say that she has been harmed by contact with me or been prey to lustful thoughts. This has been a matter of great consolation to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

20. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,

July 18, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. You must have got my letter of yesterday, The jackal bite patients are well. There were seven vaccinations today. Kumarappa[1] has had a little relapse. His vision was blurred and then lost altogether. This lasted for about an hour. He remembers you.He will write to you. You should treat the talk about my going that side as mere gossip.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR

LADY HARDINGE MEDICLAL COLLEGE FOR WOMEN

NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] J. C. Kumarappa

21. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
July 19, 1940

CHI. AMRIT,

Your two letters today. Your resolution will go in. You will see I have dealt with your report of two Englishmen's complaint.[1] I suppose someone has reported to you about Babla, Mun[n]alal, Bhansali and two policemen having been bitten by a rabid fox. They are all having the serum treatment. The course is 14 days. B. has fever today, not due to the serum, they say.

Maulana Saheb presses me to go to Poona.[2] I have resisted the pressure. He is coming here on 21st. Let us see what happens. Since taking [to] Gujarati writing I have become indifferent about sending you copies.

The weather is quite cool. But when it is dry, it will be hot of course.

We are fairly full and yet not too full. There is no sickness worth speaking of.

Om[3] was married last Saturday. It was raining heavily at the time.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3985. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7294

22. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
[*July*][4] *19, 1940*

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letter. Nanabhai had telegraphed to me at Delhi the news of Sushila's delivery. It is good that everything was over without much suffering. You have found a nice name. Did you find a good

[1] *Vide* "Unrepentant".
[2] For the A. I. C. C. meeting to be held there on July 27 and 28
[3] Uma Agarwal, Jamnalal Bajaj's youngest daughter
[4] The source has January, obviously a slip.

astrologer or did you consult an almanac for the sign of the Zodiac? Whisper my blessings in Ila's ear and say:"Be a credit to the family."

Your politics there is in a muddle. You seem to be virtually isolated. He had requested a wire from me. I did not send the reply he wanted. God knows what will happen this time. Keep in touch with Marybehn. She is a fine woman. She has done excellent work here.

Do you get the mail regularly there? Here I can't judge I got your letter of the 8th July today, which means it took eleven days. And it came via Akola, so I suppose it must have come by air-mail. We cannot judge all this here.

Here one night a rabid fox bit five persons who were sleeping - Bhansalibhai, Munnalal, Bablo and two policemen. All are being given injections. It is expected that they will get well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4908

23. LETTER TO NANALAL I. MASHRUWALA

SEVAGRAM,
July 19, 1940

BHAI NANALAL,

I have your letter. I had got your wire also. I have written to Phoenix.[1] About violence and non-violence I will write in *Harijan-bandhu*. Hope you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 6693. Also C. W. 4338. Courtesy: Kanubhai Mashruwala

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

24. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

SEVAGARAM, WARDHA,
July 20, 1940

CHI. MARY,

I have your two letters. I am glad you are having this new experience, kamala[1] and Chandel were with me for a few days.

Yes, I got your note from Bombay.

I was pained to learn that there was no khadi available in Durban. You should induce people to store some.

Strange you should find scope there for Telugu work.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G. N. 6079

25. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

SEVAGRAM,
July 20, 1940

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I have your long letter[2]-but not long enough for me. You do me less than justice when you say neither R.[3] nor I are too ready to defer to others' judgment. This can never be true of you. But there are some differences between us which our mutual love and regard cannot get love. I have much to say about the letter, but I know you don't want me to argue. Please believe me; no word of yours to me is without its effect. I fancy I am in God's good hands. Mahadev Desai will write.

Love.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, p. 326

[1] Margaret Jones

[2] Of July 16. In this the addressee had criticized the Working committee's resolution of July 7 and questioned the wisdom of Gandhiji commending it to the public: *Vide* Extracts from Srinivasa Sastri's Letter", 16-7-1940

[3] C. Rajagopalachari

26. LETTER TO CHARU PROBHA SENGUPTA

July 20, 1940

DEAR CHARU PROBHA,

I have an idea that I wrote to you in reply to your indictment of man. If not, this is to say you have to be patient.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI CHARU PROBHA SENGUPTA

123/1/1 UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD

CALCUTTA

From a photostat : G. N. 8708

27. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 20, 1940

CHI. MANILAL,

I wrote to you only yesterday. And today I got another letter, enclosing letters from Mr. Vogle and Mrs. Paul. The replies to their letters are enclosed. You must have got my letter of yesterday. Maybe you will get both together.

Marybehn writes to say that one cannot get even an inch of khadi in Durban.[1] It seems a little strange. What a state of affairs it is if a person wishes to buy some khadi and can't Keep a little stock of it if no one else will. Can't you persuade somebody to do so?

Sushila and Ila will be well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4915

28. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 20, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your two letters. I of course try to send you the matter as early as possible. Satya must have completely recovered. Kuma-

[1] *Vide* "Letter to F. Mary Barr", 20-7-1940.

rappa's blood-pressure has become stable now. It had gone up to 170/120. I am considering what I should do. Write to me if you have any suggestion to make. Bablo is down with a 104° fever. It is the second day today. The fever has not come down. That is why the vaccination was not given yesterday.

I have freed you from bondage. The rest of it is true. What is the point of arguing? You must follow God's guidance. I see from what you write that unless you change your mind you will not come on the 24th or till I change my mind. I mention this because I have to consider the situation here.

If Punjab is given ten rupees, the other three should also be given the same. That is why I have not been insisting. I am considering how the additional two rupees can be given.

You will remember the knife I had. I do not find it in the wooden box. Did you take it out in Delhi ? Is it likely that it was left behind in Delhi ? How to find it out ?

Pyarelal, I would say, is eating quite well. Let us see what God wills. According to my last article, I must pass the test here, is that not so?

Blessings form
BAPU

From the Hindi original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

29. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,
July 20, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

How careless you are! Three mistakes in your letter to Kumarappa? How many times have I corrected "answer"? There should be no 'e' at the end. 'Alltogether" is "altogether'. There has to be only one 'l'. One 'c' in "record". You must make full use of the dictionary. I cannot tolerate wrong English spelling and bad handwriting. You can write correct spelling if you are careful. You can improve your handwriting if you are careful.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

30. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 20, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

Your long-translation is going with this. It has taken me more than two hours to correct it. I had to do it with great care and attention. You must have followed my corrections. Your scrawl shows haste, so it was difficult reading it through. You will realize that in many places you could have written more clearly. It was a difficult translation to do, and the English was so involved that it was not easy to grasp the ideas. Considering this, I think your translation was good. Had you been more careful, you could have made a still better job of it. I have written you two letters today.

Bablo is not having any fever today. Two others, Keshuand Appu, are also down. They themselves are: responsible for it. It is malaria only.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

31. DISCUSSION WITH EMILY KINNAIRD[1]

[*July 20, 1940*][2]

She seemed to doubt the utility of Gandhiji's "Appeal to Every Briton', but she said: "Don't you think Denmark has carried out your ideal of non-violence ?"

GANDHIJI: Not a bit. It was surrender, and what I have asked for is not surrender but non-violent resistance.

EMILY KINNAIRD: But Denmark did not resist and did exactly as you have advised Britons today!

G. But I have not asked for unresisting surrender or capitulation. I have appealed to Briton and everyone in their plight to display the highest courage that man is capable of, viz., to refuse to use arms

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "A Hot Gospeller"

[2] *Vide* the following item where Gandhiji says, "Miss Kinnaired . . . was here for an hour yesterday".

and to defy the enemy to walk over their dead bodies. Denmark did nothing of the kind.

E.K. But Denmark had no time. It was all so sudden, and there was nothing for it but for her to offer no resistance.

G. I know, I know. But it is such suddenness that puts non-violence to the test. It was no doubt prudent on her part to offer no resistance. But prudence is not the same thing as non-violence. Non-violent resistance is far more effective than violent resistance, and that is what I have asked for from these nations which are so accustomed to violent resistance.

E.K. Well, well, what's the good of it?

G. What was the good of Jesus Christ laying down His life?

E.K. Oh, that was a different matter. He was the son of God.

G. And so are we !

E.K. No. He was the *only* son of God.

G. It is there, that the mother and son[1] must differ. With you Jesus was the only begotten son of God. With me He was a son of God, no matter how much purer than us all, but every one of us is a son of God and capable of doing what Jesus did, if we but endeavour to express the Divine in us.

E.K. Yes, that is where I think you are wrong. If you accepted Christ in your heart and appealed to your people to do likewise, you could deliver your message with greater ease and far better effect.[2] He is our salvation, and without receiving Him in our hearts we cannot be saved.

G. So those who accept the Christ are all saved. They need do nothing more?

E.K. We are sinners all, and we have but to accept Him to be saved.

G. And then we may continue to be sinners? Is that what you mean? You do not, I hope, belong to the Plymouth Brothers[3], do you?

E.K. No, I am a Presbyterian.

G. But you talk like some of the Plymouth Brothers I met long ago in South Africa.

[1] Emily Kinnaird and Gandhiji. She was 86 and Gandhiji addressed her as mother.

[2] Mahadev Desai says he is here quoting from memory.

[3] Non-conformist sect founded by J. N. Darby. They recognize no orders of ministers and receive into communion all who acknowledge Christ.

E.K. Yes, I am afraid you were so unfortunate in the Christian contacts you formed in South Africa. You did not meet the right kind of people.

G. Surely you will not say that. I met a number of estimable people. They were all honest and sincere.

E.K. But they were not *true* Christians.

Gandhiji then gave a graphic account of his contact with a number of Christians in those early days, ending up with the intimate contact with F. W. Meyer.[1] He asked Lady Emily:

Do you know F. W. Meyer

E.K. Oh yes.

G. Well, then, let me tell you that it was F. W. Meyer who after a long talk with me asked the other Christian friends to let me alone. He said to them that I was as good as converted, and that I did not need any formal process of conversion. But of course that did not satisfy them. And old A. W. Baker, who must be much over eighty now, is still at me. He writes to remind me time and again that unless I accept Christ in his way I cannot be saved.

E.K. But you *do* think of those Christians, Mr. Gandhi, even at this distance of time!

And she wondered why we were so obtuse as not to see what was so obvious to her-the outstanding superiority of the message of Christianity to any other message. The Bible had been translated into several hundred languages, and the heathen in the remotest parts of the world, who knows not a syllable of English, was agreeably surprised to find God's message delivered to him in his own dialect.

G. That proves nothing.

E.K. And then, whereas fifty years ago there were so many hundred thousand Christians in India, there are today ten times as many.

G. Again that proves nothing. But why all this quarrel about labels? Cannot a few hundred thousand Indians or Africans live the message of Christ without being called Christians?

Harijan, 4-8-1940

[1] For a fuller account of this *vide* "An Autobiography", sub-title "Christian Contacts" and "An Autobiography", sub-title " Religious Ferment"

32. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

Unrevised SEVAGRAM,
July 21, 1940

MY DEAR IDOT,

How funny! Some people are never pleased! Why not Chi. Amrit? I give satisfaction."But I must have 'Idiot' occasionally." What is the poor 'pleaser' to do? Therefore the safest way is to please oneself and let the others do likewise. But I have not followed the safe way. Heaven help me! And then to please idiots! Hard job.

Miss Kinnaird ¾ is that the spelling? ¾ was here for an hour yesterday.[1] Kept her in roars of laughter and she went away well pleased though without converting me to her Christianity. You must ask me to describe the visit when you find me idle. If you don't, ask P. He was present and so was Nayakam.

Your first article I have accepted. The account of the meeting is unnecessary for *Harijan*. It is well written. Send it to H. *Times*, etc. I return it and three old articles revised. All the translations were good, some portions quite idiomatic. The writing is much improved and firm.

Babla had fever. He is better though has still some.

Pandit Kunzru is here today and Kodand Rao is coming. Maulana is coming on Tuesday. I do not want to go to Poona. But I won't refuse if he insists.[2] as you see I have to write for *Harijan* also. Therefore you will hardly notice any gap. Do give yourself rest.

About khadi you should write to the different Bhandars and correct them Publication will serve no useful purpose. If you do not get satisfaction I am at your back. There can be no relaxation about cash down. We have suffered a lot by giving credit to notabilities. It was therefore right for the erring sales man to suffer. Hard cases make bad law.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3986. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7295

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Gandhiji in the end, did not go for the A. I. C. C. session.

33. FOREWORD[1]

There are two reasons for printing this edition in the Devanagari script. The main reason is that I want to see how far the Gujarati readers can welcome the Devanagari script. My dream that there should be one script for all the languages derived from Sanskrit and that should be Devanagari goes back to my South African days. However it still remains a dream. There is a good deal of talk going on for one script but, as the saying goes, who will bell the cat, who will take the initiative? The Gujaratis say,'Our script is beautiful and easy. Why should we give it up?' And then there is another party that has emerged. I myself belong to it. According to it Devanagari it itself a difficult and imperfect script, it should be reformed and perfected. But our purpose will be defeated if we do nothing till the script is perfected. This should not be. This edition, therefore, is being brought out on an experimental basis. If it is welcomed by people we shall try to bring out other Navajivan Trust books in the Devanagari script.

The other motive behind this enterprise was to give to the Hindi-speaking people a Gujarati book in the Devanagari script. I am of the opinion that learning Gujarati will become less difficult if Gujarati books are published in the Devanagari script.

In order to make this edition popular we have kept the price low. I hope that the Gujarati and Hindi-speaking people will make this venture a success.

SEVAGRAM, JULY 21, 1940
[From Gujarati]
Sarvadaya, October 1940

34. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

July 21, 1940

CHI. KAKA,

Here is the foreword[2]. I have not revised it. If there are no errors, send it as it is. If you want to make any changes, you may do

[1] To *Atmakatha*, Gujarati version in Devanagari script of *An Autobiography*
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

so and return it to me. I shall revise it and send it back. I wrote it out. . . .

The rest we shall see.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10936

35. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEGAON,
July 21, 1940

CHI. SHARMA,

Why did you neglect the thing till it had developed into a sinus? What has happened to your medical training? Why are you retaining Draupadi and the children there? I do not understand your ways. As for police harassment, I shall do whatever I can.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 287

36. SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY

I have avoided mention of the tragedy that has overtaken Gokhale's greatest creation. Through the kindness of Pandit Kunzru I was kept informed of every happening while the Society was going through the agony. It was no small matter for the Society to have to expel members or to lose one of its oldest members by resignation. The trouble had been brewing for many months. But the chief members were putting off what to them was the evil day. They tried to bridge differences. They failed. They tried to evolve discipline out of what had almost become a state of anarchy.

The Society has a high ideal. To serve India so as to purify politics and without a selfish motive or the desire to attain power for the sake of it, is itself a noble ideal. Gokhale created a certain standard of conduct and tradition for the Society. Those who could not carry it out obviously should not seek to enter the Society, or on having changed their viewpoint after entering is, should not remain in

it. Such was the case with Shri Parulekar and Miss Gokhale. They subscribe to a philosophy which includes advocacy of violence for the redress of wrongs economic, political and other. There was no questioning their ability or their sacrifice. Both are inestimable qualities no doubt. But they were irrelevant to a consideration of conformity to certain tradition or discipline the quality of the tradition too would be irrelevant to such consideration. So when the Society could not induce these members to resign, it had to perform the very painful duty of expelling them, if the Society was to function as a properly organized body with one purpose and one policy. I know that the President and the other members left no stone unturned to avoid the crisis. They invited the associates to examine the whole situation. The President put himself at their disposal. And it was on their unanimous recommendation that the Society took the final step.

So far as Shri Joshi[1] is concerned it is wrong to say, as has been said, that he was compelled to resign. For valid reasons the President and the Council thought that he should be transferred from Bombay. Shri Joshi, however, would not move from Bombay. And resigned. And the Society voted a pension and regretfully accepted the resignation. Such is the unvarnished version of the crisis through which the Society has passed. I have felt it a duty to take notice of the incident because there has been unkind criticism and because I consider myself an unofficial and sleeping member of the Society. The reader may not know that immediately after the Chief's death I might have myself become a cause of a grave crisis. My name was suggested for membership. Some members were afraid of my entry as for them, and truly, I was an unknown quantity. As soon as I came to know of differences, I withdrew my name, and everything went off happily. We came closer to one another by this natural restraint. How nice it would have been if Shri Parulekar and Miss Gokhale had followed the example set before them in 1915! If they have the welfare of the Society at heart, they could serve it in a variety of ways in matters in which they have no differences of opinion.

SEVAGRAM, July 22, 1940

Harijan, 28-7-1940

[1] N. M. Joshi

37. QUESTION BOX[1]

Q. What work besides spinning can an active satyagrahi do in cities, especially in Bombay?

A. I shall reply to your question by a cross-question. Why do you want anything else besides spinning? If you have no interest in spinning, you can be no satyagrahi, active of passive. For all satyagraha presupposes the qualification of spinning, and this has been before the country for twenty years. You can, therefore, do no better than give all your spare time to spinning. Do it in a scientific way. If there is no room for a spinning-wheel, you can ply the *takli.* A way has now been devised for easily increasing the speed on the *takli.* It costs a trifle, and it can be plied in any little corner of the house. If you are not doing your own carding , you must do so now. You may have no space for a carding-bow in your room. You should in that case card according to the Andhra method adapted by Vinoba. If you can interest yourself in this, it will add considerably to your useful knowledge. When you come to think of the romance of cotton, you will get out of it an interest the best novel cannot give you, and you will probably discover the solution of the problem of Indian poverty. Therefore, if you want to be a true satyagrahi, if you want to cultivate true ahimsa, I would suggest to you spinning and nothing but spinning, no matter where you may be. Take it from me that without sacrificial spinning non-violent swaraj is impossible.

But if you have enough time on your hands and you are already doing all the spinning that would satisfy me, and if you are longing to do some additional act of service, I can suggest quite a number of things. For instance, there is Harijan service. Try to enter Harijan's life, go and stay in Harijan quarters, teach them, nurse those who are ill, show them the ways and means of improving their economic condition. All this offers a wide field of work. Thakkar Bapa is now going to spend a lot of time in Bombay. Go and seek his guidance.

Then I would ask you to cultivate disinterested friendship of the Mussalmans, it is likely that you do not even know your next-door neighbours. Make their acquaintance and try to render what service

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandu*, 20-7-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan.*

you can to them. If you do not know those of other faiths, try to cultivate acquaintance with them. Your contacts will be the test of your broad-mindedness.

Then you can help in the khadi propaganda. Go to Kakubhai of the main Khadi Bhandar in Bombay and ask him if he can utilize your services for khadi-hawking and similar work.

These are but a few samples. The field of service is limitless. In a city like Bombay, especially, the mountain of services is so immense that you can never compass it.

DO NOT JUDGE

Q. Many Congressmen in Bombay have joined the Congress for the sake of offices. They never spin. Some have spinning-wheels in their homes just for show. What about this?

A. Do not judge others. Be your own judge and you will be truly happy. If you will try to judge others, you are likely to burn your fingers. If I were secretary of a Congress committee, I should see that those who do not observe discipline are struck off the Congress register.

MAY HARIJANS ENLIST AS RECRUITS?

Q. I Am a Harijan sevak. I believe in military training. May I encourage Harijans to enlist as recruits? Those who join the army are rid of fear and untouchability and learn self-respect. What is your advice?

A. You have gone to the wrong man with this question. You know that I do not believe in military training. Nor do I believe with you that Harijans who join the army are so suddenly transformed. But I should not make an attempt to dissuade those Harijans who voluntarily want to enlist as recruits. If sons of the well-to-do go in for military training and if Harijans would like to follow their example, how can I prevent them? It is a difficult thing any day to teach the lesson of ahimsa. How can one inculcate ahimsa in those who are doubly suppressed? The wonder to me is that even among the suppressed there are some Harijans who have truly learnt the lesson to ahimsa.

CHIVALRY *v.* DUTY

Q. You have decided not to launch civil disobedience in order that you may not embarrass the British when they are engaged in a life-and-death struggle. Don't you think this chivalry is misplace, and that you are failing in your duty to carry on the fight for swaraj?

A. I do not think so. If I were to launch civil disobedience, my ahimsa would be at fault, and the disobedience would cease to be civil. I should never think of reaping swaraj out of British defeat. It

would be anything but chivalry. Mine is, therefore, not misplaced, chivalry is a vital part of ahimsa. Ahimsa without it is lame, it cannot work.

IMPLICATIONS OF UNTOUCHABILITY

Q. In satyagraha camps there often crops up the question of the implications of untouchability. In Bihar this certainly is the case. If abolition of untouchability consists simply in touching the Harijans, untouchability does not exist in Bihar. But if it includes letting the Harijans use your water-pot and exchange water with non-Harijans, if it includes inter-dining and allowing them to enter your dining-room and kitchen, even Congressmen are not free from this untouchability. What do you say to this?

A. Abolition of untouchability in me will be really achieved only when I behave towards Harijans as I should towards my own kith and kin. There is no untouchability today in Congress kitchens. And so if Congressmen in Bihar observe untouchability as regards eating, I should be disagreeably surprised. Believe me that swaraj will be delayed in proportion to our failure and half-heartedness in carrying out the different items of the constructive programme. It is impossible to attain swaraj non-violently unless there is self-purification. I do not often use this word nowadays, but it is there in an important Congress resolution. It has been a vital part of Congress politics since 1920. Letters of the late Pandit Motilalji and other leaders, written during that period, are worth perusal. Their lives had undergone a conversion. Have we descended from that high pedestal?

DONATION OF TAINTED MONEY

Q. Supposing a man has earned million by exploiting millions of his poor brethren and made a gift of them to a Mahatma like you, and supposing you use that money for the benefit of humanity, is the exploiter absolved from sin? Does not some blame attach to you too for having accepted this ill-gotten wealth? How can one remain blameless in this unending vicious circle? How is ahimsa to cope with this immoral exploitation?

A. Let us assume for the purpose of this riddle that I am really a Mahatma, and then try to solve it. The gift of what you assume to be ill-gotten gains cannot lessen the guilt of the exploiter. If he had kept the money for himself, that would have been an additional count against him. If instead he makes a gift of it to me from pure motives, he escapes the additional sin. It is also likely that a good use of his gift may wean the exploiter from immoral means of making money. But no blame attaches to me for having accepted the gift. As the foul waters from drains flowing into the sea partake of its purity, even so does tainted wealth become pure when put to the purest use. There is

one condition, however, that we have assumed, viz., that the gift is made and accepted out of pure motives.

Exploitation of the poor can be extinguished not by effecting the destruction of a few millionaires, but by removing the ignorance of the poor and teaching them to non-co-operate with their exploiters. That will convert the exploiters also. I have even suggested that ultimately it will lead to both being equal partners. Capital as such is not evil; it is its wrong use that is evil. Capital in some from or other will always be needed.

A FLAW IN AHIMSA

Q. You have appealed to Briton to lay down arms and to adopt non-violence. But that raises a moral difficulty. A's ahimsa provokes B to *himsa* and makes him impervious to appeal to his heart. If a non-violent man comes up against an inanimate thing his non-violence will have no effect on it. There is, therefore, some flaw somewhere in your belief. It is likely that ahimsa may have success in a a restricted field. If so, what use is it for universal purposes? Your claim, therefore, of its universal use falls to the ground.

A. Ahimsa cannot be dismissed so lightly as you think. Ahimsa is the strongest force known. But if all can use the strongest force with equal ease, it would lose its importance. We have not been able yet to discover the true measure of the innumerable properties of an article of daily use like water. Some of its properties fill us with wonder. Let us not, therefore, make light of a force of the subtlest kind like ahimsa, and let us try to discover its hidden power with patience and faith. Within a brief space of time we have carried to a fairly successful conclusion a great experiment in the use of this force. As you know I have not set much store by it. Indeed I have hesitated even to call it an experiment in ahimsa. But according to the legend, as Rama's name was enough to float stones, even so the movement carried on in the name of ahimsa brought about a great awakening in the country and carried us ahead. It is difficult to forecast the possibilities when men with unflinching faith carry this experiment further forward. To say that those who use violence are all insensible is an exaggeration. Some do seem to lose their senses, but we are bound to be mistaken if we try to base a moral law on those exceptions. The safest course is to lay down laws on the strength of our usual experience, and our usual experience is that in most cases non-violence is the real antidote to violence, and it is safe to infer from it that the highest violence can be met by the highest non-violence.

But let us consider for a moment inanimate objects. He will surely break his head who strikes it against a stone. But supposing a stone comes against us through space, we can escape it by stepping

aside, or if there is nowhere to step aside, we can bravely stay where we are and receive the stone. That will mean minimum injury and, in case it proves fatal, the death will not be as painful as it would be if we made an effort to ward it off.

Extend the thought a little further, and it is easy to see that, if a senseless man is left alone and no one tries to resist him, he is sure to exhaust himself. Indeed it is not quite inconceivable that the loving sacrifice of many may bring an insane man to his senses. Instances are not wanting of absolutely insane people having come back to their senses.

SEVAGRAM, July 22, 1940

Harijan, 28-7-1940

38. TWO JUST COMPLAINTS[1]

I RIGHT OF TRANSLATION

A Calcutta telegram protests against the reservation of copyright in translations of my Gujarati articles, saying that my articles are the property of the nation and therefore there could be no copyright in them, and that I myself had taught that Hindustani was the lingua franca of India, and that I should therefore reconsider my decision. This grievance appears on the face of it to be just. But it is forgotten that I have prohibited translation from Gujarati into all other languages. Experience had taught me that English translations of my articles written in any Indian languages were faulty, but it would not have been proper to confine the copyright to translations into English. All important Gujarati articles would be translated simultaneously into English and Hindustani and published almost at the same time. There is, therefore, no hardship involved, for there is no copyright in the translated articles which can be and are being reproduced.[2]

My object was clear and unexceptionable. if I wanted to enter the hearts of the Indian masses, I should write in an Indian language, and that language could be no other than that in which I could write with the greatest ease. If I had the same command over Hindustani as over Gujarati, I should have written only in Hindustani.

II ARE GUJARATIS MORE NON-VIOLENT?

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 27-7-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

[2] The Gujarati adds: "So I hope the first complaint is satisfacrorily redressed. The grievance would have been just if I had not arranged for the simultaneous publication of translations."

The other complaint is this:

> You could not have begun to write in Gujarati out of your partiality for Gujarat, but it would seem as though you believed that you would be able to influence the Gujaratis more quickly than others. That is to say, you have assumed that they are more non-violent than others. I doubt that they are. You may have more workers in Gujarat, but you do not seem to have a greater hold on the Gujarati than on other masses. Belief in non-violence, you have always emphasized, presupposes removal of untouchability and universalization of khadi. Now I suggest that no other province in India has the curse of untouchability to the extent that one finds in your Gujarat, especially your beloved Kathiawar. Indeed we have heard you have expressed this opinion. Again according to you khadi fares no better there. Gujarat is the seat of the textile industry. I admit that the large number of workers in Gujarat are all khadi-lovers and they have all personally shed untouchability. But my complaint is against the masses in Gujarat. Where the masses are not ready, what hope is there of your influencing them more than others? Why not, therefore, address the Indian masses in your imperfect Hindustani than, in your more perfect Gujarati? For the number of Hindustani-knowing masses is much larger than the Gujaratis, and I make bold to say that your influence on them is certainly the same as on the Gujaratis, if not even greater.

This complaint is couched in sweet Hindustani and made in all sincerity. I have summarized it in my own words. The correspondent will, I hope, admit that in doing so I have not only not been unfair to him, but have even put his argument more forcefully. This I have done with a purpose as my reply to him will reveal.

I claim that consciousness on my part of my belonging to Gujarat has never meant any exclusiveness. I have always believed and described myself as in Indian. When I went to South Africa I found that there were divisions among our countrymen into Tamils, Telugus and Gujaratis. Immediately on my landing I abolished the divisions. For myself I knew that all the immigrants from India were Indians , and that provincial or religious divisions between them were improper. It was true that they belonged to different provinces and to different faiths and that they spoke different languages, but all belonged to the same country, all had the same joys and sorrows, and all were under the same alien rule. Besides even the people of the country where they had gone did not know and did not know and did not recognize the distinctions of caste, religion, language or province. To them we were all Indians, all coolies, all *samis*, and all to be governed by the same

law. We have ceased to be called coolies and *samis*, but we have not ceased to be Indians. Thus alike by temperament and from experience I have been against these divisions, as I think everyone should be.

Nevertheless when I begin to think in terms of the talents God has given me and of the use I should make of them for the service of the motherland, I cannot afford to ignore the province of my birth. As Gujarati is my mother tongue and as I know the Gujaratis more intimately, I could serve India best through Gujarat and the Gujarati language. It was this consideration that was at the back of the choice of Gujarat as my place of abode on my return from South Africa. But I deliberately did not choose Porbandar or Rajkot, though I had invitations from and facilities in both the places. For I had ceased to belong to Porbandar and Rajkot, ceased to belong to my caste. My choice has been proved to be cent per cent right. It could not be otherwise, as I believe that my footsteps are guided by God, and all my life is based on this belief.

If the argument presented above appeals to the reader and to the co-worker who has made the complaint in question, I need not labour it any more. But something more I must say for the sake of the work I want from Gujarat and from the other provinces of India.

I do not enjoy elsewhere the same intimacy and extent of contact as I do with the Gujarati worker. And so if I succeed with them, I should have confidence regarding the rest of India. Some of them believe that I should again fix up my abode in Gujarat, but I do not think so. If I stayed in their midst, they would lose initiative, and cease to work independently, they have a tried leader like the Sardar to guide them at every step, and I feel that if I stayed in Gujarat my talents would not be put to the fullest possible use. It is God who has guided my steps to Sevagram. It may be a difficult field or work. If it is, surely I may not shirk it. Stay in Sevagram has taught me, is teaching me, a lot that is new. If I can be one with its six hundred souls, if I can engage them in constructive work and in the necessary work of reform, and if I can easily make a satyagrahi army of them, I should discover the key to do the same work in the whole of India. If I chose a big city, I should get lost, puzzled and perplexed. Much of what has been done and planned in Sevagram has been done from the point of view of India. It is, therefore, but meet that I must deliver my message through Sevagram and in Gujarati.

There is one fact which can upset the plan of burying myself in Sevagram. The khan Shaheb can summon me to his province whenever he likes for his work, which indeed is also my work. If he succeeds in expressing real ahimsa, I firmly believe that the whole country

can succeed. For the experiment there is out and out that of non-violence of the brave. God alone knows whether it will or will not succeed. This I know that wherever I go I will do His work. I regard the winning of Indian independence by non-violent means as God's own work, and if that is achieved, the whole world would be saved from being drowned in a sea of bloodshed.

The reader will now see that I am prompted by partiality for neither Gujarat nor anything else. If there is any partiality, it is for truth and non-violence. It is through these that I can have some glimpse of God. Truth and non-violence are my God. They are the obverse and reverse of the same coin.

My co-worker's complaint is true that in the abolition of untouchability and in love of khadi Gujarat lags behind other provinces. But that does not mean that I should leave Gujarat alone. If these who items cannot be accomplished in Gujarat, Gujarat will be an obstacle to the independence of India. If I can inspire the Gujaratis to lay down their lives for the abolition of the curses of untouchability and unemployment, what a glorious thing it would be! It would be a sight for all India to see and copy. Hindu-Muslim troubles would automatically come to an end, for the moment we cast out untouchability from our hearts Hindu-Muslims unity will be an accomplished fact and many another good thing would follow as a matter of course.

All this is only a dream today. But it is in order to realize that dream that I have undertaken in my old age this Gujarati enterprise. If it is God's will thus to take work from me, age will be no bar.

SEVAGRAM, July 22, 1940

Harijan, 28-7-1940

39. OPEN LETTER

MY DEAR GANDHIJI,

> . . . I am still hoping and praying daily that Congress may see that its supreme opportunity is not to win a doubtful political victory over a foe but . . . to win the lasting friendship of all who love liberty, in England and in all the world, by revealing the only adequate zeal for India's defence or defence of democracy in the world - *the non-violent war to the finish against the whole structure of man's inhumanity to man.* The combined might of India, building a third- rate military force, can at best but become the support of force. . . But defence committees and those who know no better way should not be discouraged. What I do mean is that, at the same time, those who understand and love peace should build up a non-violent defence force for the precise purpose for which military force is being established. Like the military

forces, these should also be non-political and voluntary. Besides being negatively harmless to the interests of the defence of India, such a force should at the very outset place itself at the disposal of the Government for the purpose either of defence or offence against all the foes of liberty in India or elsewhere, as the non-violent army of India.

. . . I think that this war has already revealed that armed force cannot defend even the institutions of democracy without first nullifying them and second destroying them. Further, the very strongest military defence force in the world has not been able to make its nation secure in this war-mad world. I am convinced that a non-violent war against all aggression, the economic as well as the poitical, not only will prove more effective than all the armies but can very rapidly be made available, if the non-violent of the world will but put their minds and hearts to the matter. . . .

Traditional democracy theoretically reserved the right of violent rebellion to aggrieved people whose will was no longer represented in their government. But pure democracy must repudiate the violence, while reserving the right of rebellion. This is because violence, however employed, is the antithesis of democracy, . . . I do not think there is a single instance in history where defensive war has ever settled the problems for which the defenders have supposed they fought. But Denmark, on the other hand, is the supreme illustration of a nation setting itself on the road to liberty by the deliberate repudiation of the "glory" of imperial conquest or defence of integrity.

Kristagraha has already taken its unequivocal stand for the non-violence of Christ its Master, in it two manifestos. It will perhaps be reviewing its stand shortly in order to make its present position fully clear in the face of the new turn of events, though that may seem unnecessary. Many missionaries have recently received copies of Memorandum A, under which all non-British missionaries serve in India. It was surprise to most of them to note that the Government had provided for them to "influence" politics in the interest of assisting in the preservation of the nation's security and well-being. Here then, I believe, is the supreme opportunity for Christian lovers of freedom, missionary and non-missionary, to serve their nation and the world while adhering to their Master's injunction not to take up the sword. I can only say for myself that I am prepared to surrender fully to this great cause, and do hereby pledge to follow your leadership if you decide to launch the Satyagraha Army of the World. I do this because I believe it is the only way that the real aggression can ever be uprooted from its soil in mankind's unbrotherliness and the world established on a basis of justice, quality and peace . . . I can see no hope whatever in the way the United States and England have so far taken. The war of 1940 will never be won. Chaos can win over order, barbarity over civilization, autocracy over democracy,

darkness over light, and violence over goodwill. That has already transpired over a large part of the world and is fast coming in the rest. But generous application of goodwill can still arrest this in every part, especially when men in large numbers are ready to lay down their lives for the Truth that is in them. . .

I pray that God may lead you in His own way. You have countless friends encircling our earth. Through the instrumentality of non-violent resistance to the mountainous lovelessness and stupidity or our ago, the way may yet open into the new day and a peace of full justice prevail among the nations.

With the deepest appreciation of your single-minded devotion to Truth, and with the sincerest affection.

I am,

Yours for the World Satyagraha Army,

Ralph T. Templin

I gladly publish this letter.[1] Mr. Templin represents a growing number of Western satyagrahis. There are just two reflections arising out of this letter. I wish to say that denmark's is not an illustration of non-violent action.[2] It was most probably the most prudent course to adopt. When armed resista n ce is vain, it is folly to spill blood. The second is that I do not expect to lead any satyagraha army of the world. So far as I can see at present, every country will have to work out its own programme. Simultaneous action is possible.

SEVAGRAM, July 23, 1940

Harijan, 28-7-1940

40. TRAVANCORE

In the hope of having a talk with Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar and possibly arriving at some way out of the impasse, I was suppressing the manifestos sent to me by succeeding acting Presidents. The last received was from Shri Achuthan, a Harijan advocate, about the last week of June. From the manifesto I extract only statements of facts, omitting as far as possible all argument and inferences:

Processions and meeting have been violently broken up by the special police and the ordinary police without even the semblance of prohibitory orders. To quote from the speech of Shri. K. Santhanam, M. L. A. (Central) which he delivered at Madras after a brief visit to Travancrore, he said: "My impression is there is police raj in Travancore. No one could speak with any

[1] Only extracts have been reproduced here.

[2] *Vide* "Discussion with Emily Kinnaird", 20-7-1940

sense of security or discuss matters even with friends. The Government appear determined not to allow any discussion on responsible government, and are willing to resort to any methods to prevent it. All normal channels of public expression have been stopped."

Repression has worked ruthlessly along three main lines: 1. Legal terrorism, 2. Police terrorism, 3. Complete muzzling of the Press.

1. Legal terrorism has taken the shape of 'the Defence of Travancore Proclamation'. It is not the actual number of those arrested and detained for indefinite periods under this Act, but the threat of it against every man and woman with any active sympathy towards the State Congress that has created a grave situation. Several people have been arrested under this Act and then let off, just to show that the authorities can do anything with anybody. Many important leaders have been imprisoned under this Act without trial and for indefinite periods.

2. Police terrorism has meant more than what will be ordinarily understood by that term. In Travancore it has meant more than the forcible dispersal of processions and meetings. It has meant secret as well as open goondaism by what are called the special police who wear no uniforms and who get only Rs. 5 a month. This body of special police contains in many cases the worst rowdies and drunkards in various localities. Their special business is to quietly mix with the crowds and start sudden goondaism. It has become physically impossible to hold any decent meeting or procession or demonstration n the face of such goondaism. In Neyyattinkara, Alleppey, Palai, Karunagapilly and many other place such goondaism has appeared openly.

3. Muzzling of the Press. No doubt there are several papers in Travancore which appear regularly. Not one of them would publish reports or news of State Congress meetings and demonstrations. Statements issued by Acting Presidents of the State Congress or by State Congress leaders never appear in them. In many cases people in one part of the State never knew anything of what happened in another part except from news appearing in the English papers at Madras. This was proved when police frightfulness occurred in Neyyattinkara and Palai.

But the Travancore Government did not rest content with the above items of repression. Every officer from the highest to the lowest went about the country treating every State Congressman or sympathizer not merely as one belonging to a disturbing political party but as an enemy to be hunted down by every means in their power. Another severe trial for those engaged in the struggle has been police violence in lock-up. Volunteers who are under arrest and awaiting trial are mercilessly beaten and very often discharged after several weeks of detention without trial.

Every time State Congress leaders published allegations against the Travancore police, the Government as often came out with categorical and wholesale denials. But Shri G. Ramachandran's specific allegations regarding police terrorism at Neyyattinkara and Palai published in *The Hindu* of Madras supported by unimpeachable data have at last compelled the Government to order an official enquiry. It is significant that the enquiry has been ordered long after the Government had published categorical and wholesale denials of the allegation! The public are still awaiting the findings of the enquiry.

The most disquieting development in the present situation has yet to be related. This is the direct and open encouragement given to the various communal organizations in Travancore by the authorities including the Dewan, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar himself. At one time Sir. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar used to say that it was the presence of various communal organizations in Travancore which prevented him from inaugurating any scheme of responsible government in Travancore. But today his policy clearly appears to be to encourage each and every communal organization to develop along separate lines and thus make political unity impossible. Officers of Government including the Dewan take part in meetings of the various communal organizations. Lovers of Travancore know that, if this process is allowed to continue, Travancore will soon become a battleground for the various communal organizations.

I know that there will be an official contradiction. I have already suggested that such contradictions can have no value unless they are backed by a definite promise of an impartial enquiry. Officials stake nothing when they issue unprovable contradictions, whereas State Congress Presidents stake their liberty and the prestige of their institution when they make rash statements.

The balance of probability therefore, must be in their favour. The quotation given by Shri Achuthan from Shri Santhanam's speech in his support is not to be lightly brushed aside.

I sent a copy of Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar's wire to Shri Ramachandran. He sends a comment from which I take the following:

I can show that our Working Committee kept 'communist tendencies' clearly and absolutely out of the struggle. Mr. K. C. George who is referred to was one of the severest critics of our Working Committee, and considered our work and programme as thoroughly useless. . . . It is absolutely false to say that we depend on Bapu's periodical statements for collecting our funds and for our existence. If this were so, there should be today no State Congress. During the last eight or nine months Bapu has not said a word about Travancore. Our cause is so patently just that it does not depend even on Bapu. It depends on its own inherent justice. Bapu can of course help our cause. But that is different from saying that our movement depends on Bapu. . . .

Most of the leading members of the Travancore State Congress including Shri V. K. Velayudhan and M. N. Parameswaran Pillai and others have openly dissociated themselves, says Sir C. P. Yes, these two gentlemen have done so. But neither of them has said that the State Congress is in the wrong. Shri Velayudhan stated that he withdrew in obedience to the Mandali of the Ezahava communal organisation which has now been captured by the friends of Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar. Sir M. N. Prarameswaran Pillai has nearly apologized and recovered his *sannad* to practise law. How do these actions touch the demand and the programme and the stand of the State Congress? But besides these two gentlemen no prominent leader of the State Congress has gone back in any sense. The number 60 requires close analysis. . . .[1] Then there is my second statement on the Palai atrocities which *The Hindu* published and a copy of which I am enclosing. It was then stated on behalf of the Travancore Government that there would be an official

enquiry and a press communique. It is weeks now since this appeared, and no enquiry or communique has been heard of. It was tight corner into which the Travancore Government was pushed by specific and unchallengeable allega-tions. They had denied everything in their first communique. Then when I replied, they said there would be an enquiry and a communique. But nothing has happened yet.

I believe every word of what Shri Ramachandran says. The terrible repression may thin the ranks of the State Congress. But even if there is one true representative left to hold aloft the torch of non-violent liberty, he will be quite enough to multiply himself till every Travancorean becomes an apostle of life-giving freedom. A friend sent me the other day a bon mot of an American President: 'One true man of courage represents a majority.' I have quoted from memory. But there is no mistake about the meaning. Let every member of the State Congress take it to heart, and believe that nothing is lost if one true man survives the repression. As it is I know that there are numerous men and women of the State Congress who are seasoned enough to stand the most rigorous repression that the wit of the resourceful Dewan of Tranvancore and his advisers can devise.

SEVAGRAM, July 23, 1940

Harijan, 28-7-1940

[1] Omission as in the source

41. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHAM,
July 23, 1940

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your two letters. Hope you have my long letter[1] and corrected translations, etc.

I never said to K. That M.[2] must or even should become a doctor. I understood that it was her wish. If that was so I had approved of it. But my strong recommendation was for your institution.I thought there she would really grow and enjoy freedom. I had also asked M. To see the institution and then arrange for K. to go. But it did not happen. Therefore you should pursue your project to have her in your college. I shall write to K. S. about this. You have assumed my advice as suggested by K. Never repeat the mistake. Always have confirmation from me of whatever is reported about me, before even accepting it subject to correction. Always reserve judgment. This should apply to all. But for me, it is a peremptory command.

Mira is in New Delhi. Khurshed was good this time. I have heard again from her.

I am not moving from Sevagram. Hope to be here to receive you on 3rd August, unless you alter the date.

It will be said if G.'s eyes are damaged. I do not know whether Mira[3] is here. In any case you shall have a girl of your choice. But meanwhile bring anyone you like for a few days. No question of settling in Gujarat. I am sending you an advance copy of article from which you will know how my mind is working.

I hope not to go to poona. The fate will be decided tonight. The Maulana is coming. Hope you are all right.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3987. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7296

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", pp. 299-300.
[2] Mehrtaj, daughter of Abdul Ghaffar Khan
[3] Not Mirabehn

42. NOT QUITE SO BAD

A friend quotes from a letter received from an English friend.:

> Do you think that Mahatma's appeal[1] to every Briton is going to produce right reactions in the mind or heart of a single Briton? That appeal has probably created more ill-will than anything else recently. We live in astonishing and critical times, and it is frightfully difficult to decide what should be done. At any rate we should try to avoid obvious dangers. So far as I can see, Mahatma's unadulterated policy must inevitably lead to disaster for India. How far he himself intends following it I do not know, for he has a wonderful way of adapting himself to his material.

Well I happen to know that many more than one single heart have been touched by my 'Appeal to Every Briton'. I know that many English friends were anxious for me to take some such step. But I do not want to take comfort from the approbation, however pleasing in it self, of English friends. What is of value for me is to know that at least one Englishman thinks as stated in the extract. Such knowledge should put me on my guard. It should make me more careful, if possible, in the selection of the words I use to express my thought. But no displeasure even of the dearest friends can put me off the duty I see clearly in front of me. And this duty of making the appeal was so peremptory that it was impossible for me to put it off. As certain as I am writing this, the world has to come to the state to which I have invited Britan. Those who will be witnesses of that happy and not-far-off event will recall my Appeal with gladness. I know that the Appeal has hastened its advent.

Why should a single Briton resent an appeal to him to be braver than he is, to be better than is in every respect? He may plead inability, but he cannot be displeased by an appeal to his nobler nature.

Why should the Appeal breed any ill-will at all? There is no cause given for it by the manner or the matter of the Appeal. I have not advised cessation of fight. I have advised lifting it to a plane worthy of human nature, of the divinity man shares with God Himself. If the hidden meaning of the remark is that by making the Appeal I have strengthened Nazi hands, the suggestion does not bear scrutiny. Herr Hitler can only be confounded by the adoption by Britain of the novel method of fighting. At one single stroke he will find that all his tremendous armament has been put out of action. A warrior lives on

[1] *Vide* "To Every Briton"

his wars whether offensive or defensive. He suffers a collapse if he finds that his warring capacity is unwanted.

My Appeal is not from a coward to brave people to shed their bravery, not is it a mockery from a fair-weather friend to one in distress. I suggest to the writer to re-read my Appeal in the light of my explanation.

One thing Herr Hitler, as every critic, may say: I am a fool without any knowledge of the world or human nature. That would be a harmless certificate which need excite neither ill-will nor anger. It would be harmless because I have earned such certificates before now. This one would be the latest of the many editions, and I hope not the last, for my foolish experiments have not yet ended.

So far as India is concerned, my unadulterated policy can never harm her, if she adopts it. If India as a whole rejects it. There can be no harm accruing except to those who may foolishly pursue it. The correspondent has lighted upon my strong point when he says: "Mahatma has a wonderful way of adapting himself to his material." My instinctive knowledge of my material has given me a faith which cannot be moved. I feel within me that the material is ready. My instinct has not betrayed me once. But I must not build much upon past experience. "One step enough for me."

SEVAGRAM, July 24, 1940

Harijan, 28-7-1940

43. LETTER TO PREMI JAIRAMDAS

SEVAGRAM,
Via WARDHA (C. P.),
July 24, 1940

What are you doing in Hyderabad? . . .[1] that Father is quite restored now. He is not working, is he? Do write to me something about the situation. Love to you all.

BAPU

SHRI PREMIBEHN JAIRAMDAS
BHAI MULCHAND LANE
HYDERABAD, SIND

From a photostat: C. W. 10160. Courtesy: Arjun Jairamdas

[1] Indistinct in the source

44. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

SEVAGRAM,
July 24, 1940

CHI. NARAHARI, ,

I got your letter only today. I very much like what is happening. Please treat *Harijanbandhu* as my weekly letter. See the corrections I have made in your draft. I have no comments to make about the pledge. If I had time, I might have shortened it. But there is nothing wrong in the present form. If the Sangh is formed and changes become necessary later on we will make them. There is a difference between Shanti Sangh and the Sangh that you have in mind. In any case the Satyagraha Sangh will be open to all. You will have to come here for the final decision.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9119

45. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

July 24, 1940

CHI. JETHALAL,

Am I not doing exactly what you have suggested? I am pouring into this work all the strength and energy I and my co-workers have. I have based all my plans on the success of this. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 9871. Courtesy: Narayan J. Sampat

46. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 25, 1940

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your resolution did not go in this week. Do send Spear's book or bring it with you. Why waste stamps?

I have dealt with the English complaint.[1] My "Appeal to Every Briton" is being translated. It will go to you with the next collection and it will be the last. No use sending you only one.

I see jackal and fox are used interchangeably. All the patients are doing well.

I have inquired and have been told that Mira is available but going through her sixth or seventh month.[2] Not much good for you?

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3988. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7297

47. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEVAGRAM,
July 25, 1940

CHI. KAKA.,

Please write to Bhai Saxena and tell him that I have carefully gone through his articles from beginning to end. I did not find in them a clear answer to the question what the mind can do or cannot do. He has not correctly understood my ideas on Hindi and Urdu.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10933

48. LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

July 25, 1940

CHI. MAGAN,

Where will you study there? What knowledge will you gain? So many years have passed now. Manjula's letter is worth thinking over. We shall discuss it when you come here.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MAGANLAL PRANJIVAN MEHTA
C/O "HINDUSTAN TIMES"
NEW DELHI

From Gujarati: C. W. 1603. Courtesy: Manjula M. Mehta

[1] *Vide* "Not Quite So Bad", 28-7-1940
[2] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 23-7-1940

49. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 25, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. 1 understand about the patients. I see your point about the dispensary too. Even as your view becomes stronger, mine does too. My mind will never accept that I have let you down. I claim to have actually saved you when you felt you were being let down. I have saved you like a mother saves her child. The child would think with irritation that the mother was stopping its progress. But you are and are not a child. Hence, we shall call it a differenceof opinion and pull the curtain down over the affair. Moreover, in spite of my explaining it you refuse to be convinced that none of those staying with me have any certainty of tenure. I can let any of them go whenever I like. If any of them assume any such right, it is a mistake on their part. Even though some of them may have been with me from the beginning, it is not by virtue of any such right. I may have acted as though they had this right, but there has been a reason for it. But why go into that discussion now? I am accepting your decision. Come here when you cannot help it. You do have a place here. I shall welcome you. I do not wish to make you unhappy by dragging you here against your will.

I am not able to send you the English matter early because I have not been able to get it ready. I see from Pyarelal's letter that you wish to have the Tata scholarship (or something) if you can get it. It would be nice if Mahadev could do something. Then why do you not let Mahadev talk straight to you? You take from me whatever money you need. Or I shall arrange to raise the amount. This should be the easiest way for you.

Your health has deteriorated. It is my wish and demand that you should improve it. It can be easily done.

Blessings form
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

50. SPINNING AND CHARACTER

The Secretary of the A. I. S. A., Karnatak Branch, sends me the following report[1] of the spinning work done on the settlement schools.

There is ample evidence to corroborate the foregoing testimony as to the steadying influence of spinning. I hope Miss Briscoe[2] will continue to send me periodical reports on the progress of her experiment.

SEVAGRAM, July 26, 1940

Harijan, 4-8-1940

51. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

July 26, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

This is a purely personal letter. No one shall see it except those in charge of the office.

It is reported to me by persons of status that money is being spent like water in the name of the war. Men who have enjoyed fat salaries in their respective jobs are being taken up for the war at much higher salaries and given ranks to which they have never been used before. The largest number of these are said to be Europeans or Anglo-Indians. If patriotism is the deciding factor, these gentlemen should take, and be given, no more than just enough to keep them and their dependants.

On the one hand money is said to be spent on a most extravagant scale; on the other it is collected in a manner bordering on force. It is being squeezed from rich and poor. I have letters from all parts of India complaining of these exactions giving graphic details which it is difficult to believe.[3] If you would care to have details I could furnish them.

The result of these measures but more especially of the collections is much silent discontent and ill will. I have been advising correspondent that they are in no way obliged to yield to pressure unless they are willing. I very much fear that a fair part of these collections never reaches the treasury. In my opinion they ought to be stopped

[1] Not reproduced here. The report spoke of the work done to teach carding spining to the inmates of the Remand Home for boys at Hubli and mentioned the improvement that had resulted in the conduct of the boys.

[2] E. W. Briscoe, Lady Superintendent of the certified school of Hubli Settlement.

[3] *Vide* also letter to the addresee, 11-8-1940.

altogether; leaving it to those who wish to send donations of their own accord to do so at stated Banks or Post Offices against proper receipts.

I want to avoid as far as possible publication of such information. But Ifelt that you would not mind my bringing these complaints to your notice.

I hope you have reassuring news about Lord Hopetoun.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a printed copy: Lord Linlithgow papers. Courtesy: national Archives of India

52. TELEGRAM TO CHOITHRAM P. GIDWANI

[On or before *July 27, 1940*][1]

CONVEY CONDOLENCES TO MR. PAMNANI'S[2] FAMILY. THE MURDER IS MOST DISCONCERTING. YOU SHOULD ADVISE WISE MEASURES MAKING PEACEFUL LIFE POSSIBLE.

The Hindu, 28-7-1940

53. IS IT PROPER?

Shri Gopinath Bardoloi, ex-Premier of Assam, sends me a newspaper cutting which contains the full text of the speech of H. E. The Governor of Assam at the inaugural meeting of the Assam War Committee. From it I take the following extract:

> Let me say how fortunate we are in Assam to have a Ministry which is not only prepared to work the Constitution, but also in pledged to do its best to further the ends of this righteous war, an attitude indeed which reflects clearly the general attitude which prevails throughout this Province. One of the finest gestures which the Ministry has made was that which was published recently, but I consider did not get half the publicity it deserved, the gift out of public funds of Rs. 100,000 for war purposes, a gesture of which Assam may well be proud, for so far it is unique in India. It symbolizes in a concrete and in a valuable form the sentiments which the Ministry feel as members of the British Commonwealth, a proof of their belief in the righteousness of our cause, of their conviction that the outcome of this war is vital to India, and of their determination to do all in their power to achieve victory. And anyone

[1] The news item carrying the report is dated July 27.

[2] H. S. Pamnani, a Congress M. L. A.

who has the temerity to criticize this gift must inevitably stamp himself as an enemy of India and a friend of Hitler.

In reply to this Shri Gopinath Bardoloi has issued the following statement:

> The speech delivered by His Excellency Sir Robert Reid, Governor of Assam, at the inaugural meeting of the Assam War Committee, will have aroused mixed feelings of surprise and regret amongst all those who hold the democratic rights of fair criticism and free speech dear. It is indeed unfortunate that the speech should lend itself to the interpretation that criticism of the Ministry's gift of a lakh of rupees to the War Fund would be an act of temerity and prove the critic to be an enemy of India and a friend of Hitler.
>
> I do not indeed understand by virtue of what power the Ministry can make such a gift. To me it seems clear that no rules of budgetary and accounts procedure can sanction it. The only authority to do so might probably have been the Assembly, and as it gave no such sanction the gift must be unconstitutional. That is probably the only reason why other provinces have not done anything of the kind.
>
> That we are no friends of Hitler need not, I think, be proclaimed; but when the gift is a ministerial act, I do not see why as Opposition we should not criticize it. The Congress resolution on India's co-operation in general and of Congressmen in particular is before the country, and His Excellency might well know that a fair proportion of the House and the major section of the people in the country are in full agreement with it. In view of this he should not have identified himself with the gift as he has chosen to do.

Shri Gopinath Bardoloi deserves congratulation on his dignified protest. It was certainly unbecoming of a constitutional Governor to Identify himself with the act of his Ministers irrespective of the propriety or legality of their act and of the wishes of the Opposition in such a matter as a public gift. Apart from the legality of the transaction it is a serious thing for a Ministry to pay out of public funds any sum without previous provision and without the sanction of the House in whose name they have to act and from whom they derive their authority. I think Shri Bardoloi was quite right in raising the question. And I hope the money will not be paid without a thorough examination of the legality of the transaction. I myself so further and suggest that, even if the gift is held to be within the rights of the Ministry, His Excellency would put himself right if he has the gift sanctioned by the Assam Assembly. One lakh of rupees is insignificant compared to the daily expense of nine million sterling incurred by the

British Treasury. It is, in my opinion, all the more necessary why extra care should be taken to ensure constitutional propriety.

SEVAGRAM, July 27, 1940

Harijan, 4-8-1940

54. WOMAN'S ROLE[1]

The Standing Committee of the All-India Women's Conference met recently at Abbottabad. This was their first venture in the Frontier Province. The members, I understand, had a very happy experience. There were no caste distinctions, no religious differences. Muslim, Sikh and Hindu women freely mixed together. The Standing Committee passed the following three resolutions:

> 1. The members of the Standing Committee of the All-India Women's Conference assembled at Abbottabad desire to place on record their immense grief and despair at the continuance of war in Europe and the Far East. They are in deep sympathy with all those countries which have lost their independence and are under the iron heel of Nazi and Fascist domination against which all sections of India have expressed their opinion in no uncertain terms. They appeal again to the women of the world to realize the utter futility of trying to settle disputes and grievances by means of war and to throw their whole weight into the cause of peace.
>
> 2. The Standing Committee reaffirm their belief in non-violence as the only effective means of ensuring a lasting peace in the world by the formation of abrotherhood of nations. They realize how difficult of attainment this ideal is, and therefore they appeal to Indians women to try to develop the practice of non-violence in their individual and collective live, for they feel that with their traditional inheritance of service and sacrifice they could give a lead to the women of the world in this respect.
>
> 3. The members reiterate the opinion of the A. I. W. C. that the recognition of India's free status would be a first and logical step towards the attainment of the goal for which Britain is at War - namely, the freedom of all nations, and a world democracy.

Evidently the sisters who met at Abbottabad believe like me that in the war against war women of the world will and should lead. It is

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 3-8-1940. The English translation has been reproduced from *Harijan*, where it was published under "Notes".

their special vocation and privilege. Therefore the Committee have reaffirmed their belief in non-violence. Let me hope that the women who are under the influence of the Conference share the Committee's belief, and that they will work to that end.

SEVAGRAM, July 27, 1940

Harijan, 4-8-1940

55. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 27, 1940

DEAR IDIOT,

I sent you a full batch of corrected translations. Two more and last were ready but overlooked. They go today. Together with them go leaflets from Atulanand. His letter herewith. He must get ill every three months. Remarkable that in spite of such advertisement his books have no sale. It shows the reading public has no use for such literature. Cultural unity can't be brought about by books.

Some of your translations are good; all are not uniformly so. The language is not yet settled. The choice of words is laboured. No wonder. The wonder is that you have made so much progress. You need more practice and fair reading of current Hindi. I have suggested *Pratp*[1] . There are other good papers, too, which may be read with profit and a good grammar.

Babla still has fever though there is nothing to cause anxiety. Ku.[2] comes here. He needs rest from routine work.

A. S. is weak. She is attending to correspondence under P. and doing Urdu translations.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

This will be in your hands on 30th. I suppose there need be no more letters from me.

From the original: C. W. 3989. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7298

[1] A Hindi daily of Kanpur

[2] J. C. Kumarappa.

56. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,
July 27, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

You write that you neither have altercations with anyone there nor have any cause to feel unhappy. I think the reason for this is that while here you were not in your own milieu, there you are. You are in a place which you desired and which you have found with your own enterprise. Here you were brought only by circumstances.Therefore, you are in your natural situation there. The situation being unnatural for you here, there was constant friction, or so you thought. This is true not of you alone but of everyone. As I think on it, I see that those who have not absorbed the atmosphere here are constantly in conflict. The atmosphere here cannot be said to be natural for anyone. It is what it is. Hence, only he who has learnt to master the atmosphere or wants to do so can live here comfortably and grow. There is no particular purpose in my writing this. As a doctor, you must be concerned with such matters and so I have placed before you my view for your consideration.

Kumarappa is coming today to stay here. This change has been made following your letter. It is intended to provide him rest. He could go to Coimbatore, but I felt that if he stayed here, I could see to things myself and when necessary consult you. If he does not maintain good health here, we shall have to think of an alternative. He does miss you. He asked about your coming again yesterday. I informed him that you were tied up there till the middle of September, and the next programme was not definite. He just listened. Others are also asking.

Bablo's fever is still persisting He is being treated only for malaria. He took 15 grains of quinine yesterday. Kesho and Appu had a severe attack of malaria. Now they are better. They have not resumed work yet. Abha is down.

Three English articles will be sent to you today. I took up *Harijan* work since I have been able to avoid writing letters.

Blessings form

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum ant Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

57. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,
July 27, 1940

I have seen the Associated Press message in the Press to the effect that I intend to open a class in Bardoli under the guidance of Sardar Prithvi Singh for training a non-violent army and that all preliminary arrangements have been made. There is no foundation whatever for this report. Sardar Prithvi Singh had intended, under Sardar Patel's guidance, to open a vyayam class in Bardoli. As the final decision was to rest with me, with the concurrence of Sardar Prithvi singh even that has been stopped. I can but repeat my request to the Press not to publish news about persons without reference to them, especially when reference is easy and the public is not likely to suffer any harm by a little delay.

The Hindu, 28-7-1940

58. THERE IS VIOLENCE IN IT[1]

Shri Surendra, a co-worker from Boriavi, who reads my articles usually in *Harijanbandhu*, the Gujarati edition of Harijan, has expressed his painful surprise that in my article on the Working Committee's statement issued from Wardha, I had written to the effect that ' I was unhappy that the privilege of a friendship of many years had now become a thing of yesterday.' 'Is there not violence in these words?' he asks. I was startled to see these words put into my mouth, and wrote to him at once that I could not have said them. For I had no doubt that there was violence in the very thought that a friendship of twenty years had become a thing of yesterday. I could say this of no friendship I have formed, much less of my friendship with the Sardar. Having repeated all these year the precept of loving even one's enemies, how could I break my friendship with a colleague like the Sardar? My differences with Malaviyaji and Sahstriar have not affected in the least my friendship with them. That a friendship should not bear the strain of difference in views is a sure sign of intolerance.

So I turned to *Harijanbandhu* and found that what Surendraji was referring to was translation of the following words: "Unhappy because my word seemed to lose the power to carry with me those whom it was my proud privilege to carry all these many years which seem like yesterday." These words could not possibly bear the

[1] The Gujrati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 3-8-1940. The English translation is reproduced from *Harijan.*

meaning that was attributed to me in the translation. Besides it was plainly inconsistent with the words I had written only a few sentences before: "Though it is a break in the common practice of a common ideal or policy, there is no break in the friendship of twenty years' standing." My unhappiness was not over any break of friendship—there was no such break—but over the fact that my word seemed suddenly to have lost the power that it had until yesterday. The friendship endured, but I had to do more self-purification to regain the co-operation that I had lost. That was the burden of the article.

But this accidently erroneous translation shows that my decision to write in Gujarati was right in more ways than one. Translations made by translators, howsoever competent, are likely sometimes to be faulty. The Bible was translated by some forty able scholars, but it has been found to contain errors, be they ever so few.

The friendship, then, will endure. Time will even make it stronger if possible. But that does not effect the fact that in spite of my best effort I have not been able to prevent differences on a fundamental issue. Yet the more I think about it, the more I feel that in adopting the attitude it has done the Congress has gone off the rails. It has lost the capital built with patient labour.

Perhaps it may be said that the Congress had really no such capital to lose. For the non-violence of the Congress was confined to its struggle against constituted authority. That remains intact. It had not defined its attitude—there was no occasion for it—with regard to other fields. The permission to use force in individual self-defence had been given as early as the Gaya Congress. There is force in these arguments. But I know that a fair number of Congressmen believe that the Congress non-violence applied to all the fields, including internal disorder and external aggression. Non-violence restricted to a struggle against constituted authority is like a corpse lifeless. But no amount of argument for or against can shake convictions that come from the heart.

All honour to the Sardar and others for holding fast by their conviction. The Sardar is no man of words, he is a man of action. He does not look around or about himself, when he has decided upon a course of action. He simply goes ahead. May he always be thus.

My way is clear before me. But what of those who have followed the Sardar and me in the belief that we are always of one mind? They are in a difficult situation. If their ahimsa is not part of their being but only a reflection of mine, it is their duty to follow the Sardar. I have no doubt that the Sardar has gone off the track, or rather that it is beyond his capacity to go my way. He has chosen a

different path with my consent, nay, encouragement. Therefore those who are in doubt should follow the Sardar. I believe the Sardar will see his error and come back to the way he has abandoned, when he discovers in himself the capacity that he feels he has not. When that happy moment arrives, if it does, the rest will also come back to me with the Sardar. That is the safest way for them.

But those who have no doubt about their course, those who have assimilated ahimsa, those for whom ahimsa is the only way out of all difficulties, should quietly retire from the Congress and bury themselves in various non-violent activities. If they are truly non-violent, they will prevent a split in the Congress. Their retirement makes any split out of the question. But even after retiring they will not come in conflict with the Congress. They will give the Sardar any help that he summons for non-violent activities, and they will try to lay down their lives wherever there is an occasion to do so in the event of internal disturbances.

If it is possible to from small bands of satyagrahis afters my pattern, it is of course desirable. They should be able not only to keep the flag of ahimsa flying, but should also be able to convert Congressmen by their steadfastness and success. For there are many Congressmen who desire that ahimsa should be the rule of life in all fields, only they doubt its practicability. It is my duty, and that of those who think with me, to dispel this doubt by successful application of ahimsa in the new field.

SEVAGRAM, July 29, 1940

Harijan, 4-8-1940

59. FOR KHADI WORKERS[1]

A sister has sent the following complaint:

> The A. I. S. A. khadi bhandars not only render no help to, but even slight, the women who desire to spin in the name of Daridranarayana. Some bhandars refuse to give them slivers. Now those who are beginners need to be induced with slivers. Every bhandar should stock slivers. At certain bhandars some sisters purchased khadi hundis but were given no receipts for them, for they had run out of stock. We pay money in advance for fine saris, but there is vexing delay in getting them.

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 3-7-1940. The English translation has been reproduced from *Harijan*, where it was published under "Notes".

The sister who has written this is known for her care and for the pains she takes over selling khadi. She has mentioned in her letter the names of the bhandars, but I have deliberately deleted them. For if I gave their names, I should not do so without giving them a chance of explanation, and I have no time for writing to them. I therefore simply mention the complaints in the hope that the bhandars concerned will benefit by them and mend their ways if they are in error. I hold strong views regarding slivers. We cannot supply slivers. If we undertook the work, I am afraid khadi work might in the long run come to and end. It is uneconomic. We should never be able to cope with the demand. This much, however, may be done. In the villages where spinning is organized, some may do the carding while the rest do spinning. Even this requires careful handling. Similarly some of the sisters whom the correspondent has in mind should learn carding and then teach it to the others, or one of them may card for her group or club. In no case should slivers be sent by post, or from one centre to another. I know this golden rule is honoured more in the breach than in the observance. I fancy the A. I. S. A. has not laid down a fixed policy in this behalf. I do not, therefore, insist on my opinion being followed for the moment. But as the question has arisen I shall have it considered by the A. I. S. A. and, if possible, have some policy laid down in the matter.

SEVAGRAM, July 29, 1940

Harijan, 4-8-1940

60. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
July 29, 1940

MY DEAR IDIOT,

From the above[1] you see I am advising Mira to go to Adampur instead of coming here. I see you will come on the 6th. Do not strain yourself. Finish your work well and without hurry. Your work here awaits you but does not suffer. You are not tied down to dates even as you would not be in going to your home. This is your second home if not the only home. Whilst therefore you will long to return

[1] At the top of the sheet Gandhiji had written and then scratched out: "Chi. Mira, on the whole I vote for Adampur."

but [sic] will not endanger your health or work to return here. I may write one more letter. I hope nothing radically wrong with your teeth.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3990. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7299

61. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

July 29. 1940

CHI. KAKA,

Here is Brelvi's letter.[2] The rest tomorrow at 4 o' clock. Never mind if what you have written is too long. How can we help if luck is against us? Tomorrow Rajaji and party are coming, but I shall give you whatever little time I can spare. We will finish the work bit by bit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10934

62. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,
July 29, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

It is my feeling that if Mahadev comes to know about it, he will certainly want to try and get you the scholarship. But I shall not go into that. In writing to you about it had never been my intention to hurt you. The same was the case about your staying here. I have understood your point. I admit my mistake. The best thing is for you to forget Sevagram and concentrate on your studies. Your peace and your good lie in staying on there and pursuing your studies. Things which you have missed you have missed. It is futile to weep over them. In their place the experience that you have acquired in life I am sure will not go waste. If I had not interfered when you were getting that post, you would have enjoyed financial ease. How can we know what God ordains through your present hardship ?

I am taking the maximum care of Pyarelal. What you are saying is correct. God will protect him. What can I do?

I cannot understand how you received the articles late last week. They were posted from here in time. But in all our calculations we have to remember that this is Sevagram.

I do wish to distribute the translation work for the *Harijan Sevak* when Rajkumari comes. That will solely depend on your convenience and willingness. I will endeavour to send you selected articles. Would you like that? English or Gujarati? I gather from Pyarelal's letter that you have a lot of your own reading to do. Will not the translation work be a hindrance? If it adds to your joy and does not become a burden on your mind, I should like you to continue the work.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall do something about Punjab. What my position is you will see from my articles. I do not harbour anything in my mind.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

63. SIR C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYARS EXTRAVAGANCES

I have seen Dr. Katju's spirited reply to Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar's recent statement on the position of Indian States.

In my opinion the latter's thesis is self-condemned. His extravagant claims will make not the slightest difference when the British are ready, or compelled by events, to recognize India's in dependence. Pyarelal has shown from authentic documents the flimsy nature of the status enjoyed by the States. The guarantee is a convenient excuse for denying India 's claim. But it will have no validity when the claim becomes irresistible. Surely Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, as a constitutional lawyer and student of British history, knows all this. I wholly agree with Dr. Katju when he says that the Dewan of Travancore is ill serving his own and the other Princes by inducing in them the belief that the British guarantees will perpetuate their and their successor's' autocracy against the just claims of the States' people and the people of India as a whole. I venture to suggest that the best guarantee of their status consists not in the treaties with the British but in the goodwill, contentment and co-operation of their own people and the friendship of the people of non-State India. Time a running in favour of Indian independence and against all interests adverse to the people and their natural aspiration. I was, therefore, pained and surprised to find the Rana Sahab of Dholpur hastily echoing the phrases of Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar.

SEVAGRAM, July 30, 1940

Harijan, 4-8-1940

64. *QUESTION BOX*[1]

PAKISTAN AND AHIMSA

A Gujarati Mussalman correspondent writes:

> I am believer in ahimsa as well as Pakistan. How can I use the ahimsa principle for the realization of my ideal?

A. It is not possible to attain an iniquitous end by non-violent means. For instance, you cannot commit theft non-violently. As I understand Pakistan I do not regard it as a worthy ideal. But since you consider it to be worthy end, you can certainly carry on a non-violent movement on its behalf. This means that you will always strive to convert your opponents by patient reasoning. You will impress everybody by your selfless devotion to your ideal. You will give a respectful hearing to what your opponents might have to say, and respectfully point out to them their mistake if they are in the wrong. Finally, if you feel that the people do not listen to you out of sheer bigotry and prejudice although your cause is absolutely just, you can non-violently non-co-operate with the obstructionists. But you may not injure or seek to injure anybody and must, on your part, patiently endure any injury that might be done to you. All this you will be able to do if impartial persons endorse the justice of your cause.[2]

PUNJAB SATYAGRAHA CAMP

Q. (From a letter from the Punjab) Preparations for satyagraha are afoot in the Punjab. There is a lot of untruth going on, and it is best to make this known as early as possible. Some plied the charkha in name. Some signed the satyagraha pledge, but did not so much as touch the charkha. The same is the case with khadi. In our satyagraha camp our satyagrahis were making fun of you and the Congress policy. I am therefore glad that the Congress has absolved you. It would be still better if the Congress were to delete the conditions about non-violence, truth, spinning , etc. All the same I have no doubt that the Working Committee's resolution has done untold harm to the country. What should one like me do in a situation like this?

A. I have had other letters from the Punjab making similar complaints, and the condition of things in many other provinces is very much, if not quite, the same as in the Punjab. It is a tragedy and spells ruin for the Congress if things do not mend. If the Congress loses its influence, it will be due to internal disease, never to external attacks.

[1] The Gujrati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 3-8-1940. The English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

[2] The Gujarati has: "If objectively your cause can be considered a just one."

I would give people like you the same advice as I have given to the Gujaratis believing in out-and-out non-violence. The articles in Gujarati, though written with reference to the condition of things in Gujarat, are of general applicability, for a more or less similar condition obtains in the other provinces.

WHAT CAN A SOLITARY SATYAGRAHI DO?

Q. (From a letter from Orissa) There is one solitary satyagrahi in one of our villages. The rest do not worry about violence or non-violence. What discipline is that single satyagrahi to undergo?

A. Yours is good question. The solitary satyagrahi has to examine himself. If he has universal love and if he fulfils the conditions implied in such a state, it must find its expression in his daily conduct. He would be bound with the poorest in the village by ties of services. He would constitute himself the scavenger, the nurse, the arbitrator of disputes, and the teacher of the childrenof the village. Everyone, young and old, would know him; though a householder he would be leading a life of restrain the would make no distinction between his and his neighbour's children; he would own nothing but would hold what wealth he has in trust for others, and would therefore spend out of it just sufficient of this barest needs. His needs would, as far as possible, approximate to those of the poor, he would harbour no untouchability, and would therefore inspire people of all castes and creeds to approach him with confidence.

Such is the ideal satyagrahi. Our friend will always endeavour to come up to, wherever he falls short of, the ideal, fill in the gaps in his education; he will not waste a single moment. His house will be a busy hive of useful activities centring round spinning. His will be a well-ordered household.

Such a satyagrahi will not find himself single-handed for long. The village will unconsciously follow him. But whether they do or not, at a time of emergency he will, single-handed, effectively deal with it or die in the attempt. But I firmly hold that he will have converted a number of others. I may add in this connection that I had come to Sevagram as a solitary satyagrahi. Luckily or unluckily, I could not remain alone, several from outside came and settled with me. I do not know whether any inhabitant of the village proper can be counted as a satyagrahi, but I do hope that some of them are unconsciously shaping themselves as such. Let me say that I do not fulfil all the tests I have laid down. But I should not have mentioned them, had I not been striving to put into practice all of them. My present ambition is certainly to make of Sevagram an ideal village. I know that the work is as difficult as to make of India an ideal country. But

while it is possible for one man to fulfil his ambition with respect to a single village some day, one man's lifetime is too short to overtake the whole of India. But if one man can produce one ideal village, he will have provided a pattern not only for the whole country, but perhaps for the whole world. More than this a seeker may not aspire after.

NO DEATH FOR YOU

A friend from Agra writes:

> According to you a satyagrahi may no longer remain in the Congress. I too think the same. I believe in the Vedas. The Vedic text is quite clear on this point: "O thou, himsa-free man, there is no death for you, there is no death for you. Be not afraid." Why should we not implicitly believe in this hoary saying? My faith in himsa is daily growing. I am a Congressman. What should I do now?

A. If you really have that faith in you, you will unhesitatingly leave the Congress organization and render it greater and truer service by remaining outside. If you have love, patience and bravery, you will convert Congressmen around you to your view.

SEVAGRAM, July 30, 1940

Harijan, 4-8-1940

65. INDORE STATE AND HARIJANS[1]

I have before me an Indore State bulletin stating that out of the one lakh of rupees which the Maharaha Saheb had set aside from his privy purse for poor relief, Rs. 79, 445 have been earmarked for building ninety-one tenements for Harijans. The Maharaja Saheb deserves to be congratulated on his action. I do hope that the munificence of the Maharaja will grown till there is not a single unemployed person in the State, nor a single person without milk and ghee in his diet, nor a Harijan without a well-lighted and well-ventilated house. The crushing contrast that one notices between the royal palace and the Harijan hovels must go.

SEVAGRAM, July 30, 1940

Harijan, 4-8-1940

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 3-7-1940. The English translation has been reproduced from *Harijan*, where it was published under "Notes".

66. A TESTIMONY FROM ENGLAND

I publish the following[1] received by Mahadev as a sample of how some English minds are reacting to the non-violent movement in India.

> . . . Again and again I turn to *Harijan* and feed upon the courage and love of truth I find in its pages. I feel comforted when I mourn the devastation of Europe of reflect that the ancient village life of India will survive this storm, and beauty will not have entirely vanished from the earth. . . . The spectacle of naked force is horrible, obscene, but it exists. Continue to oppose all such force with all the spiritual forces of a great nation. This is the greatest service you may do for your own race and for humanity. . . . I am sending you a translation I have attempted of the work of an Indian village poet. It is on Indian handmade paper and bound in khadi. . . .

SEVAGRAM, July 31, 1940

Harijan, 4-8-1940

67. 'WHAT ELSE BESIDES SPINNING?'[2]

With reference to my note under the above caption in *Harijan-bandhu* of 27-7-1940, a friend from Bombay writes:[3]

I published the foregoing letter not because of any originality but because of his suggestions springing from practical experience, no case arises for persuasion when a person commits deliberate breaches of rules. His name simply ought to be struck off the register and restored to it only if he comes after full expiation. Indiscipline in a soldier is as dangerous a thing as the breakdown of a vital part in high power machine. To drive in a car which a vital part has given way would simply be to court disaster and even death, unless of course the car mercifully strikes work and refuses to move altogether. What applies in the case of machinery or an ordinary army applies with still greater force to a satyagrahi group. The mode of applying discipline will differ. The penalty for ,breach of discipline in an army would be jail of flogging or even shooting. In the case of a satyagrahi there is

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

[2] The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 3-8-1940. This English adaptation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

[3] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had suggested certain organizational rules to be followed by satyagrahis and activities to be taken up by them in addition to spinning. He had also suggested disciplinary action against offenders.

no penalty save that or removing him from the register. His repentance, if he has conviction of guilt, is the only punishment.

The recommendations made by the writer about work over and above spinning are quite sound and deserve to be carefully considered. But before actual work of organization can be taken up, one must watch the developments resulting from the new orientation of the Congress policy, I must also know as to how many people are actually ready to follow out-and-out non-violence. One thing, however, ought to be clear to everybody.[1] There will be no central organization. There will be one law under which innumerable autonomous, self-sustained, non-violent groups will be functioning. [This can only be possible where real non-violence rules men. India has had experience of such village republics as they were called by Mayne. I fancy that they were unconsciously governed by non-violence. These have suffered a rude check at the hands of the present rules. An effort has now to be made to revive them under a deliberate non-violent plan.][2] My correspondent will, therefore, do well to organize a group from among those living within walking distance. Every city may have such autonomous groups, if there are sufficient workers.

SEVAGRAM, July 31, 1940

Harijan, 4-8-1940

[1] The Gujarati here adds: "There should be numerous groups of satyagrahis. I have already written on the subject. Accordingly the correspondent should organize all the satyagrahis of the area he can cover on foot. This group would be completely independent of the other groups.

[2] The Gujarati here has: "But each group will be independent of the others. In this way if one groupbreaks down it will not have an adverse effect on the rest. In ancient India villages were based on this system. There were as many separate administrations as there were villages. The villages used to elect the administrators; that was their Panchayat. The Panchayats framed and administered the laws. The people gladly obeyed them. That was a non-violent organization that lasted till the present day. The British government has shaken it though they have not destroyed it completely. Though I would not call it a perfectly non-violent organization, it nevertheless had seeds of non-violence. Whether that was so or not I have described above my idea of satyagraha groups. Such groups in spite of being independent of each other should work together when time comes because the common bond between all of them will be ahimsa and nothing else. Just as we can build a most beautiful building by arranging similar bricks together we can also produce a mighty satyagrahi army from several similar satyagrahi group."

68. OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

It is unfortunate that in answer to Mr. Sorensen's very relevant question the Secretary of State for India was betrayed into giving a reply which shows want of appreciation of the gravity of the situation in India. Who could have known the gravity of the European situation before the declaration of war by the British Government? But the British ministers knew how very grave the situation had become since Munich. They were so appalled by the gravity that they put off the declaration as long as they could. Similarly the layman does not know anything of the gravity of the situation in India. But the Secretary of State is not a layman. What he does not know, nobody else should know. And yet I venture to suggest to him that his questioner gauged the situation more accurately than he himself did, taking his answer at its face value.

In ordinary times such ignorance as Col. Amery's answer shows may be excusable. At this moment it is unpardonable. I do not propose to enlighten him on all I know. I dare not publicly exhibit all the danger signals. It would be an unfriendly act on my part to do so. Even the warning I am giving here might have been privately given. I have slept several nights over the answer. I came to the conclusion that to suppress altogether from the public what I know would also be an unfriendly act. In spite of my isolation from the Congress, I flatter myself with the belief that a large part of the public still seek my guidance and will continue to do so, as long as I am believed to represent the spirit of satyagraha more fully than any other person in India.

Col. Amery has grievously erred in underrating the restraint that the Congress has exercised in postponing civil disobedience in order not to embarrass the British Government at a most critical period in the history of the British. The restraint expects no appreciation. It is inherent n satyagraha. Therefore it is a duty. And the discharge of a duty carries no merit, even as payment of a debt does not. Nevertheless mention of the restraint becomes relevant in order to show that but for that restraint a conflagration may burst forth whose effect no one can foresee.

It is true that civil disobedience remains in suspension also because of the internal defects in the Congress organization. But I have said repeatedly that, if the Congress is goaded to it, the science of satyagraha is not without a mode of application in spite of the internal weaknesses. Therefore the final and deciding motive for suspension is undoubtedly the desire not to embarrass the British Government at the present moment.

But his restraint has its limits. Just a suspicion is growing among Congressmen that the British authority is taking advantage of the restraint to crush the Congress. They point for example to the numerous arrests of Congressmen. The opposition on the part of so many members of the A. I. C. C. to the ratification of the Delhi resolution is, as the Maulana Saheb has said, a sign of their resentment at the feeling that the High Command was letting the British Government to get the better of the Congress. If that suspicion is proved to be well-grounded, nothing on earth can possibly deter me from adopting some from of effective satyagraha. But it is my prayer and corresponding effort to prevent it until the clouds lift from Great Britain. I do not want her humiliation in order to gain India's freedom. Such freedom, if it were attainable, cannot be manfully retained.

I have dealt with the one danger signal on which I can write with special knowledge. There are several others which I can easily mention and which are no less grave. But these I must not mention.

If I have publicly discussed one danger, I have done so because the Congress is connected with it and I have to say what is expected of Congressmen. If I retired from the congress at Bombay in 1934, I did so to render greater service. Events have justified the retirement. The present isolation too has the same motive behind it. So far as I can judge the immediate future, satyagraha, if it comes, will be confined only to those whom I may select. The rest will be expected not to interfere with the course I may adopt. All will render very substantial help, if they will carry out the instructions that may be issued for them. One permanent instruction is: leave the Congress if you do not believe in the constructive programme, especially spinning and khadi which are visible symbols of adherence to the Congress, and if you do not believe in truth and non-violence—the latter in the restricted sense now given to it by the recent resolution. If this elementary requirement is not fulfilled, any satyagraha that I may lead will be of no avail to the Congress. It will merely satisfy my satyagrahi soul.

SEVAGRAM, July 31, 1940

Harijan, 4-8-1940

69. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

July 31, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have been meaning to write to you for these three days, but, being unable to spare any time from Harijan work, couldn't. I had long and frank talks with Kanchan. Now that you do not wish me to talk to her I have stopped it. Kanchan and I are of one opinion. You should set up house with her in Sevagram or in Balkrishna's cottage or wherever you like and as long as you like. This will please Kanchan best. If you are not prepared for this step and wish to be alone for the present, you may certainly do that. Kanchan will then stay here or wherever else you want her to. She will do what you desire. My independent opinion is that you will not be happy anywhere without her. You will not be able to overcome your love, or attachment, or whatever you call it, for Kanchan. You crave pleasures of the flesh. So does she if she can have them. But she is not pining for them as you are. There is nothing morally reprehensible in your love for Kanchan or your desire for sexual pleasure. You wish to soar high but that is beyond your capacity. Maybe your craving will be satisfied in a year or two and you will then be able to take to the path of renunciation as you wish to do. If you go, your present place will be reserved for you whenever you wish to return. If you get. . . .[1] from the spinning that you do at present and can. . . .[2] the science of khadi I will be . . . .[3] satisfied. Only, you should decide about Kanchan.

I do not think anything is left out now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8531. Also C. W. 7098. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

70. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 31, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

Your three letters have come together. I accept your advice that I should not go into what has happened and whether you should come here.

[1], [2] & [3] Illegible in the source

You have analysed what I wrote to you and asked my opinion about it. What opinion can I give? I see difference of opinion in every sentence. There is no basis for your conclusions because what you only suppose I know and the knowledge is in contradiction to your conclusion. What is the solution when you cannot see at all what is clear to me as daylight? In fact it amounts to this, that your mind does not trust my evidence. Pyarelal's diagnosis I consider wholly wrong. I can hurt colleagues and the entire world for the sake of truth. You yourself say that I changed course when your defences were beginning to weaken. That shows that there were no external causes for that change. I have surely given no importance to what Devdas has said. That is his charge against me. Thus, in everything I see that you and I hold different views. What can be done under the situation ? Hence I advise you to calm down. Forget that letter I wrote you. Forget also this letter. Let us leave the whole episode to God.

I understand about the articles. You should get the changes made in the articles corrected there. Consider yourself how it is to be done. We shall not publish the matter relating to the society. It is not necessary. I have sent the next article after correcting it. I had to hurry a little.

Have you written to Ludhiana? If you have not written, there is no need.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

71. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

August 1, 1940

CHI. VIJAYA,

You are crazy. They have triumphed that are dead. Why then grieve over death[1]? Those who do their duty have nothing to grieve over. I understand why you did not come. Your place is their. Come here for a rest when you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7131. Also C. W. 4623. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

[1] Of the addressee's father Naranbhai Patel; *vide* "Letter to Vijayabehn M. Pancholi", 9-7-1940

72. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 1, 1940

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

The accompanying letter is from Nadiad. Please see if anything needs to be done about it.

Your falling ill so often is not good. You should take some rest.

Why do you feel uneasy? I would always regard as correct whatever you do, because ultimately a man functions according to his inspiration or ability. Even if he makes a mistake, he can rectify it only after it is made. I am having talks with Rajaji, not so as to make him change his stand but about what should be done next. At the moment I do not want to try and change his views. Experience will do that. I have no doubt in the least about it. Political wisdom also lies in following my way. But I will not dwell on that at present. Do come here whenever you wish.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
68 MARINE DRIVE, BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro - 2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 241

73. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA ,
August 1, 1940

CHI. PRABHA,

It is very difficult to suggest anything about Father. My advice is that he should give up medical treatment. Let him go on repeating Ramanama. He should live on milk and fruit only. He may give up even milk, and take only fruit juice. He may take milk of course if he can digest it. Let him rest peacefully and wait for the end. You may show him this letter. Do what you think best. Come when you can. Take care of your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3546

74. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 1, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

It would be better if instead of conveying to me your thoughts after amending them, you expressed them as they are. That way I would be able to understand you better. It is only right that you should come only when all your three conditions can be met. But why should you worry about conditions? You will come only when you cannot help coming. Then there will be no room left for any conditions. At the moment we seem to be going in different directions. So there is no question of your coming. You are required there every moment.

You can live in peace and happiness only where you believe that you are required. You like my company. That is something to be cherished. It cannot be acquired. If we have it, we take it as God's grace. If not, we shall be content with merely desiring it. I always wish to have Manilal's company. But if I call him here, it will be only at the cost of his duty, won't it?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

75. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
August 2, 1940

MY DEAR IDIOT,

So you will be delayed again. I have said don't hurry.[1] I shall postpone remaking your mattress till after your return.

The mistakes you point out are there. When you come they will be avoided. I do revise the English translations, can't revise the Hindustani.

Khanderia's letter I shall see. Maulana is just coming.

Ku. is here under my direct treatment and so is A. S. She is on her back. I have put her on a few ounces of milk.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3991. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7300

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur",29-7-1940

76. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 2, 1940

DEAR SATIS BABU,

The village meeting I see is to be on 13th here. Therefore for the Pratishthan [and] A. I. S. A. there I fix 14 to 18th. During those days I ought to know the truth. Hemprabha I expect will come with you. When you come please bring 3 copies of your book on Home medicine.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1637

77. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

August 3, 1940

CHI. NARAHARI,

Draw the amount sanctioned by Thakkar Bapa from the money earmarked for me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3991

78. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

[After *August* 3, 1940][1]

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

Please have this immediately investigated and justice done to the poor Chamars, if the facts are true.[2]

You will write to the correspondent. I have not.

Yours,
BAPU

From the original: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The letter has been written on the reverse of another dated August 3, 1940 from one Satyanarayan Saraf.

[2] Satyanarayan Saraf had written to Gandhiji that the Chamars of the village Moth in Hissar had sunk a well for their use which they intended to make *pucca,* but that the caste men of the village had taken sway the bricks and the cement and filled up the well. He had sought Gandhiji's help in the matter.

79. A CONVINCING ARGUMENT[1]

This is what an Englishwoman who knows what war means says about the Working Committee's decision to insist on non-violence for dealing with internal disturbances while fearing to trust non-violence to defend India:[2]

> . . . .To throw non-violence overboard when it comes to facing external aggression seems to me to be throwing it away at the very moment when its efficacy is the most sure and its benefit to mankind the greatest. . . . In internal disorder. . . . it is more often than not a case of dealing with unintellectual and lower types of humanity. . . But in the case of external aggression, the two elements you are dealing with are intellectually developed leaders of nations and masses of innocent soldiers. On both of these non-violence is bound to have its reactions. . . especially men of such intelligence as Hitler would be deeply moved by its grandeur. . .
>
> If the working Committee members ever thought non-violence should be and could be the ideal for internal affairs, then how much more it should be and could be the ideal for external affairs!

SEVAGRAM, August 4, 1940

Harijan, 18-8-1940

80. TRAVANCORE

Shri P. J. Sebastian sends me the followings true copy of the Press note of the Travancore Government:[3]

> The Government of Travancore have observed with regret that, in the columns of his newspaper Harijan, Mr. Gandhi has afforded hospitality to statements emanating from Messrs Achutahn and G. Ramachandran, the former being the latest President and latter the propagandist of the moribund Travancore State Congress. Evidently it is hoped by these statement and the comments of Mr. Gandhi to force an outside enquiry and outside mediation upon the State. . . In view. . . of the publicity which accompanies state-ments associated with Mr. Gandhi. . . the Travancore Government propose to take appropriate legal proceedings against Messrs Achutahn and G. Ramachandran. . . .

I have published the text without interfering with the spelling or the grammar. In sending the copy Shri Sebastian says:

> It has not up to now appeared in any of the Madras papers. The object of the Press note seems to be to warn the Travancore papers not to copy the

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

[2] Only extracts are reproduced here.

[3] Only extracts are reproduced here.

article on 'Travancore' in the *Harijan* of the 28th July. It is worthy of note that none of the Travancore papers has published the *Harijan* article of the 28th, though the article of the 21st together with the reply of the Dewan had been published.

I am publishing everything important coming to me about Travancore because I believe it to be true. The threatened proceedings against Shri Ramachandran and Achuthan will not disprove the statements published. They will confirm the impression that the Travancore State authorities are determined by all means at their disposal to crush the movement for liberty. If past experience is any guide, this Travancore repression will fail to crush the movement. Note how the issues are evaded in the Press note. There is no demand for an 'outside enquiry' or 'outside mediation', nor is there any question of force. The Dewan himself and many others in Travancore are outsiders. But they are not forced upon the State when the Maharaja engages them, and the use of the word 'outsider' ceases to have any meaning for the appointer. It is preposterous to use the word 'force' for friendly suggestions by the Press or appeals by State subjects, or to use words 'outsiders' and 'outside mediation' for suggestions to the State to bring impartial judges from outside. Were Justice Hunter, himself a non-Punjabi, and his non-Punjabi colleagues forced upon the Punjab Government when in response to public agitation Government appointed the Hunter Committee ? OR was Justice Ramesam forced upon Sir Mirza Ismail when he appointed that learned outsider to conduct an inquiry into the Viduraswatham shooting? The public is bound to give sinister meaning to this gross misuse of the language by the Travancore authorities. Again, if the Travancore people are hostile to or apathetic to the doings of the State Congress, where is the occasion for the suppression of the State Congress bulletins and newspaper comments? Just causes truthfully and non-violently conducted have always survived repression and drawn sympathy from unexpected quarters. I call such sympathy divine help. God works in mysterious ways. Lets the persecuted State Congress people have faith that God is with them.

SEVAGRAM, , August 4, 1940

Harijan, 18-8-1940

81. DEBT BONDAGE OF A HILL TRIBE[1]

Shri Mandeswar Sarma, who is working among the hillmen of Madugole Agency area in the Vizagapatam District, writes:

> I am glad to inform you that the debt bondage system prevailing from ages in these areas has been abolished very recently by the Government of Madras as the result of the efforts of the Hill Tribes' Association and the Provincial Zaim Ryots' Association. Debt bondage means that the hill muttahdars and employers advance some money, say Rs. 50 or 60, to tripesmen and exact whole-time services of the meek hillmen for 5, 10 and even 20 years, and at times for generations together. By this new regulation thousands of hillmen have been set free. We are leading the hillmen in all these matters in a non-violent groove. I am helping them to realize non-violent values by themselves. It is our ambition to take you to this area after three thousand persons actively take to the spinning- wheel and the takli. For this we need your blessing. They are about twenty thousand. At present twelve hundred hillmen are spinning. We are also trying to wean them from drink.

Though the Madras Government have taken long to redress the glaring wrong referred to here, they deserve to be thanked on principle that it is better to be late than never. It should now be easier for the workers like Shri Sarma to carry out ameliorative measures among the hillmen. My blessing he has. I do not know that I can hold out any hope of visiting his area even if he succeeds in getting three thousand charkhas going among the hillmen. He should have no difficulty in realizing his modest ambition.

SEVAGRAM, August 4, 1940
Harijan, 25-8-1940

82. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
August 4, 1940

CHI. AMRIT,

Although you say I may post your article to you I think you are in error if you leave on 6th. Hence it is being sent to Lucknow. No corrections. Don't much appreciate this article. The thing requires a lot of work behind it. Discuss it with me when you come.

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

I am handing your note to Babla.
Rajen Babu is ill. Not very.
Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3992. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7301

83. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,
August 4, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

What a long letter and what a test! Had you been here, I would have caught you by the ears and even given you a couple of slaps. But you being far away, I shall only reply to you at leisure. I have already replied to your letter. If I had my way, I would drag you here by the ears. But because I had wanted you to come only when you wished to come and when I accepted your conditions, I wrote that you should forget Sevagram. On my conditions you can come even today. But you will not follow my conditions and I do not understand your conditions sufficiently to accept them. That is why I say that you should forget Sevagram. There at least you have your work. I have got my work here which you never made your own. That is why I wrote what I did. And when you will not come because of your lack of understanding or imperfect understanding, where is the question of your being separated from me ? Why should you give up the translation work for that reason? "How stupid the mind! It discards the divine stream of devotion to Rama and founds its hopes on dew drops."

You have got to do the translation. Do you not know that I have taken away that work from others because I depended on you? Even if I send the translations from here, the responsibility remains yours. I keep asking people here how your translations read. Balwantsinha says they are crude. Mahadev and Bablo say there are quite a few mistakes. Both father and son are studying Hindi quite well. Hence, you have got to take a lot of trouble. I do not know if you can spare that much time. You must think it over. I have a feeling that Viyogiji[1] is not taking interest in the *Harijan Sevak* now. If that be the case, even you will be in trouble. You should meet him from time to time. You should find out who carries on the work in his absence. I have

[1] Viyogi Hari, editor of *Harijan Sevak*

thus no intention at all of taking away the responsibility of the *Harijan Sevak* from you. Yes, I am certainly thinking about shifting the *Harijan Sevak*.[1] It may be brought here or printed at Poona. If that comes about and if you are determined not to come here, the beautiful relationship we have will certainly come to an end. It is beautiful because there is no opportunity for any friction and you are not too closely connected with my ideas. But if all this comes to an end I shall put the entire blame on you. That is the sum and substance of all my letters. I am trying to absorb you in me but what can I do if you keep running away from me and put the blame on me?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

84. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

August 4, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

The reply is good. You may add: 'Instead of inviting me, it would be better if Mother comes here and sees for herself how happily I live. It will give her the satisfaction of meeting her son and I shall get the pleasure of seeing her.'

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4355

85. HOPEFUL

One reads the following in the daily Press:

> A call for passive resistance by Frenchmen and women was made by General de Gaulle in a broadcast last night. He urged all free Frenchmen in France not to help in the war against Britain.

I know that this is not a case of conversion. The gallant general will deal destruction to the 'enemy' to the best of his ability whenever he is able to. Nor can this passive resistance be called non-violent

[1] *Vide* "To the Readers"

by any stretch of meaning . I simply cite General de Gaulle's advice to his countrymen to show that the world is irresistibly and unconsciously being drawn towards non-violent action.

SEVAGRAM, August 5, 1940

Harijan, 19-8-1940

86. IS NON-VIOLENCE IMPOSSIBLE?[1]

The doubt and difficulties raised by this correspondent[2] occur to others also, and I have on various occasions tried to solve them too. But when the W o rk ing Committee of the Congress has been instrumental in making of ahimsa a live issue, it seems necessary to deal with these doubts and difficulties at some length.

The correspondent doubts in substance the universal application of ahimsa, and asserts that society has made little progress towards it. Teachers like Buddha arose and made some effort with some little success perhaps in their lifetime, but society is just where it was in spite of them. Ahimsa may be good enough to be the duty of an individual; for society it is good for nothing, and India too will have to take to violence for her freedom.

The argument is, I think, fundamentally wrong. The last statement is incorrect inasmuch as the Congress has adhered to non-violence as the means for the attainment of swaraj. It has indeed gone a step further. The question having been raised as to whether non-violence continues to be the weapon against all internal disturbances, the A. I. C. C. clearly gave the answer in the affirmative. It is only for protection against outside aggression that the Congress has maintained that it would be necessary to have an army. And then even on this matter there was a considerable body of the members of the A. I. C. C. who voted against the resolution. This dissent has got to be reckoned with when the question voted upon is one of principle. The Congress policy must always be decided by a majority vote, but it does not cancel the minority vote, it stands. Where there is no principle involved and there is a programme to be carried out, the minority has got to follow the majority. But where there is a principle involved, the dissent stands, and it is bound to express itself in practice when the

[1] The Gurajati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandu*, 10-8-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

[2] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent, while admitting the power of non-violence, had argued that it was not possible for common people to attain to it.

occasion arises. That means the ahimsa for all occasions and all purposes has been recognized by a society, however small it may be, and that ahimsa as a remedy to be used by society has made fair strides. Whether it will make further strides or no is a different matter. The Working Committee's resolution, therefore, fails to lend any support to the correspondent's doubts. On the contrary it should in a certain degree dispel them.

Now for the argument that I am but a rare individual, and that what little society has done in the matter of ahimsa is due to my influence, and that it is sure to disappear with me. This is not right. The Congress has a number of leaders who can think for themselves. The Maulana is a great thinker of keen intellect and vast reading. Few can equal him in his Arabic and Persian scholarship. Experience has taught him that ahimsa alone can make India free. It was he who insisted on the resolution accepting ahimsa as a weapon against internal disturbances. Pandit Jawaharlal is not a man to stand in awe of anyone. His study of history and contemporary events is second to none. It is after mature thought that he has accepted ahimsa as a means for the attainment of swaraj. It is true that he has said that he would not hesitate to accept swaraj if non-violence failed and it could be won by means of violence. But that is not relevant to the present issue. There are not a few other big names in the Congress who believe in ahimsa as the only weapon at least for the attainment of swaraj. To think that all of them will give up the way of ahimsa as soon as I am gone, is to insult them and to insult human nature. We must believe that everyone can think for himself. Mutual respect to that extent is essential for progress. By crediting our companions with independent judgment we strengthen them and make it easy for them to be independent-minded even if they are proved to be weak.

I hope neither the correspondent nor anyone else believes that the Congress or many Congress leaders have bidden good-bye to ahimsa. To the limited extent that I have pointed out faith in ahimsa has been reiterated and made clear beyond any doubt by the Congress. I agree that the limit laid down by the Congress considerably narrows down the sphere of ahimsa and a dims its splendour. But the limited ahimsa of the Congress is good enough for the purpose or our present argument. For I am trying to make out that the field of ahimsa is widening, and the limited acceptance of ahimsa by the Congress sufficiently supports my position.

If we turn our eyes to the time of which history any record down to our own time, we shall find that man has been steadily progressing towards ahimsa. Out remote ancestors were cannibals. Then came a time when they were fed up with cannibalism and they began

to live on chase. Next came a stage when man was ashamed of leading the life of a wandering hunter. He therefore took to agriculture and depended principally on mother earth for his food. Thus from being a nomad he settled down to civilized stable life, founded villages and towns, and from member of a family he became member of a community and a nation. All these are signs of progressive ahimsa and diminishing himsa. Had it been otherwise, the human species should have been extinct by now, even as many of the lower species have disappeared.

Prophets and avatars have also taught the lesson of ahimsa more or less. Not one of them has professed to teach *himsa.* And how should it be otherwise? *Himsa* does not need to be taught. Man as animal is violent, but as spirit is non-violent. The moment he awakes to the spirit within he cannot remain violent. Either he progresses towards ahimsa or rushes to his doom. That is why the prophets and avatars have taught the lessons of truth, harmony, brotherhood, justice, etc. —all attributes of ahimsa.

And yet violence seems to persist, even to the extent of thinking people like the correspondent regarding it as the final weapon. But as I have shown history and experience are against him.

If we believe that mankind has steadily progressed towards ahimsa, it follows that it has to progress towards it still further. Nothing in this world is static, everything is kinetic. If there is no progression, then there is inevitable retrogression. No one can remain without the eternal cycle, unless it be God Himself.

The present war is the saturation point in violence. It spells to my mind also its doom. Daily I have testimony of the fact that ahimsa was never before appreciated by mankind as it is today. All the testimony from the West that I continue to receive points in the same direction. The Congress has pledged itself to ahimsa however limited. I invite the correspondent and doubters like him to shed their doubts and plunge confidently into the sacred sacrificial fire of ahimsa. Then I have little doubt that the Congress will retrace its step. "It is always willing." Well has Pritam, our poet, sung:

Happiest are those that plunge in the fire.

The lookers-on are all but scorched by flames.

SEVAGRAM, August 5, 1940

Harijan, 11-8-1940

87. THE TEST OF NON-VIOLENCE[1]

Those who regard themselves as out-and-out votaries of non-violence and believe the step taken by Rajaji and others to be wrong,[2] have to pass through a severe test. I have expressed my opinion in the clearest possible language. I believe that Rajaji has gone off the track. He believes that I have. The future alone will decide who is right.

But as I have not the slightest doubt the correctness of my position., I have not hesitated to advise those who think with me to leave the Congress. But this does not mean that they have to do so forthwith. It is enough if they are ready to retire when I decide upon the date. Before the actual step is taken, we shall have to make sure of certain things. Their retirement must be such as to cause no shock to fellow Congressmen. If these do not appreciate the step, I have to explain it to them patiently, and to convince them that it is in the interest of the Congress that it should be taken. It is common cause between them and us that it would be an ideal thing if we could protect the country against foreign aggression by non-violence. It is therefore desirable that there should be a group of people pledged to devote their lives to proving the efficacy of non-violence. If the existence of such a group is good for the country, it is apparent that they should remain outside the Congress, and that the Congress should not only tolerate them but welcome them, render them as much help as possible, and regard them as their own. That means that far from there being any estrangement or misunderstanding between the Congress and this group, their relations should, if possible, be sweeter than before.

To bring about this happy consummation, the out-and-out votaries of non-violence should not even mentally find fault with their erstwhile comrades. They may not remind them of their previous statements. It is their duty to revise their statements if they feel that they were erroneous, and it is possible that they may not read in them the same implications as others discover in them. The best thing, therefore, is to bear joyously with one another. This mutual tolerance presupposes their choosing different spheres of action and Working in co-operation wherever possible.

It will be some time before we can create such an atmosphere, but we are sure to succeed if we make a serious endeavour in this direction. In the meanwhile let everyone occupy himself with the

[1] The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu,* 10-8-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan.*

[2] *Vide* "The Delhi Resolution"

constructive activities I have suggested and make steady progress therein. One or more leaders in each province should prepare a list of the seceders at the proper time. But I will not take a single step without mature deliberation.

SEVAGRAM, August 5, 1940

Harijan, 11-8-1940

88. SPINNING ANNIVERSARY[1]

Shri Narandas Gandhi writes from Rajkot as follows about the Spinning Anniversary:

> The 71 days' Programme for the forthcoming anniversary was commenced on the morning of 20th July with prayers and the song of the 'True Vaishnava'. Spinning is in full swing. Some begin from 4 a.m. Amritlal gets up at 3.30 a.m. and begins spinning from 4 a.m., and by 3.30 p.m. with a break for breakfast and lunch spins nearly 6,000 yards in 11 hours. After this he learns music, has his walk and rest. He has resolved to spin 400,000 yards in 71 days. We have the evening prayer at 6.30. About 75 people attend. The following figures of collections for *Daridranarayan* made on the last five birthdays may be of interest:[2]

Figures are usually uninteresting and I rarely give details of these collections. But I have given these in detail as they are of striking interest. They are an eloquent testimony to the work that can be done by the single-minded devotion and efficiency of a single man. This annual spinning sacrifice goes on without fuss and advertisement. It is worthy of emulation everywhere for it means automatic propagation of khadi.

SEVAGRAM, August 5, 1940

Harijan, 11-8-1940

89. ONE STEP FORWARD[3]

I have before me two neatly bound volumes in English and Hindustani, being a report of the first conference of Basic National Education held at Poona in October 1939. The English volume is

[1] The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 10-8-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

[2] The figures are not reproduced here. They showed the amounts collected in the years from 1935 to 1939 and their disbursement for Harijan work, khadi work, education and famine-relief.

[3] This appeared under "Notes".

entitled *One Step Forward*. It covers 292 pages in English and 290 in Hindustani. The price is Rs. $\frac{1}{4}$ per volume. Besides instructive introductory pages the report is divided into three parts. The first contains general speeches and discussions. The second is devoted to various interpretations of basic education, and the third part is devoted to a description of the exhibition of basic education for which Shri-mati Ashadevi[1] made herself mainly responsible. There is an appendix which contains the names and addresses of delegates and invited guests. In the concluding part of his brief introduction Shri Aryanayakam says:

> The conference and the exhibition have finally lifted the scheme of basic national education above the realm of controversy and proved to educational world that as regards the fundamental principles, contents and method, the claims of this new education are justified by a year's experience of work with the teachers and children.

The proceedings of the conference are proof of that claim. I must resist the temptation to quote from the body of the report. Those who are interested in education should not be without a copy. For me it is a matter of comfort that this the latest, though perhaps not the last, effort of mine has met with almost universal approbation. The year's record promises a bright future for the experiment. I must review the annual report in another issue.

SEVAGRAM, August 5, 1940

Harijan, 18-8-1940

90. THE CASE OF MY FIRST SON[2]

Q. You have failed to take even your own son with you, and he has gone astray. May it not, therefore, be well for you to rest content with putting your own house in order?

A. This may be taken to be a taunt, but I do not take it so. For the question had occurred to me before it did to anyone else. I am a believer in previous births and rebirths. All our relationships are the result of the samskars we carry from our previous births. God's laws are inscrutable and are the subject of endless search. No one will fathom them.

[1] Ashadevi Aryanayakum

[2] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 10-8-1940. The English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*, where it appears under the heading "Question Box".

This is how I regard the case of my son. I regard the birth of a bad son to me as the result of my evil past whether of this life or previous. My first son was born when I was in a state of infatuation. Besides, he grew up whilst I was myself growing and whilst I knew myself very little. I do not claim to know myself fully even today, but I certainly know myself better than I did then. For years he remained away from me, and his upbringing was not entirely in my hands. That is why he has always been at a loose end. His grievance against me has always been that I sacrificed him and his brothers at the altar of what I wrongly believed to be public good. My other sons have laid more or less the same blame at my door, but with a good deal of hesitation, and they have generously forgiven me. My eldest son was the direct victim of my experiments—radical changes in my life—and so he cannot forget what he regards as my blunders. Under the circumstances I believe I am myself the cause of the loss of my son, and have therefore learnt patiently to bear it. And yet it is not quite correct to say that I have lost him. For it is my constant prayer that God may make him see the error of his ways and forgive me my shortcomings, if any, in serving him. It is my firm faith that man is by nature going higher, and so I have not at all lost hope that some day he will wake up from his slumber of ignorance. Thus he is part of my field of experiments in ahimsa. When or whether I shall succeed I have never bothered to know. It is enough for my own satisfaction that I do not slacken my efforts in doing, what I know to be my duty. 'To work thou hast the right, never to the fruit thereof' is one of the golden precepts of the *Gita.*

SEVAGRAM, August 5, 1940

Harijan, 18-8-1940

91. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

August 5, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I agree with you. Would you consider Kanchan touching me undesirable? Should she avoid touching a man even for the sake of serving him? Tell me unhesitatingly what you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8530. Also C. W. 7099. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

92. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,
August 5, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

I shall reply to your long letter when I have some free time. This is merely to tell you that in my opinion you should accept a job if one comes your way. I want you here for the sake of my work. This may include your taking care of my body too. I can see that that is not acceptable to you. I see that you will come only to serve me as a doctor and if I accept you in that capacity and others stop their opposition to this. This is asking for the impossible. According to my condition, you can come whenever you can make it. The cards are in your hands, not mine.

Bablo has corrected one of your translations. I have found the changes he has made very good. There were some outright mistakes. The other translation is better. But it has things one can do without. I have got it corrected with a view to helping you. I am sending whatever is ready today.

Mirabehn said you were looking disturbed. Absent-minded was the word she had used. You are still lean and weak. This fault should be remedied.

Blessing from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

93. WHAT OF THE 'WEAK MAJORITY'?

Prof. Timur of Islamia College, Peshawar, writes:[1]

> . . . The experiment which you want to make of defending India against foreign aggression without the use of arms would be the boldest moral experiment of all times. There are two possible results of such a course. Either the conscience of the invaders may be awakened by the love of the invaded and they may repent of their sin. Or the proud invaders may take non-violence as a sign of physical weakness and degeneration and may think it right to subjugate, rule over, and exploit, a weak people. This is the doctrine of Nietzsche which is followed in practice by Hitler. A great loss is involved in such conquest of the physically weak by the physically strong. A few strong-

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

willed members of the conquered nation may refuse to owe allegiance to the conquerors, but the large majority always submits. . . It is the weak majority which needs protection. The question is how to protect it by non-violent methods. . .

The weak majority no doubt needs protection. If all were soldiers either of ahimsa or *himsa*, no such questions as call for discussion in these columns would arise. There is always a weak majority that would want protection against man's mischief. The orthodox method we know. Nazism is its logical outcome. It is an answer to a definite want. A terrible wrong wantonly perpetrated against a whole nation cried out for redress. And Hitler arose to avenge it. Whatever the ultimate fortune of the war, Germany will not be humiliated again. Humanity will not stand a second outrage. But in seeking to avenge the wrong by the wrong method of violence brought to very near perfection, Hitler has brutalized not only Germans but a large part of humanity. The end of it we have not yet reached. For Britain, so long as she holds to the orthodox method, has to copy the Nazi methods if she is to put up a successful defence. Thus the logical outcome of the violent method seems to be increasingly to brutalize man including "the weak majority". For it has to give its defenders the required measure of co-operation.

Now imagine the same majority defended after the method of non-violence. As it admits of no grossness, no fraud, no malice, it must raise the moral tone of the defenders. Hence there will be a corresponding rise in the moral tone of the "weak majority" to be defended. No doubt there will be difference in degree, but not in kind.

But the snag comes in when we consider the ways and means of working the non-violent method. In working the other, there is no difficulty in getting the human material. Therefore that way seems easy. In getting non-violent defenders, we have to pick and choose. Money cannot buy them. The non-violent process is wholly different from the one commonly known. I can only say that my own experience in organizing non-violent action for half a century fills me with hope for the future. It has succeeded in a marked measure in protecting the 'weak majority". But half a century is nothing in discovering the hidden possibilities of this force and working them out. Those, therefore like the correspondent who are attracted to non-violence, should, according to their ability and opportunity, join the experiment, it has entered upon a most interesting, though at the same time a most difficult, stage. I am myself sailing on uncharted waters. I

have to take soundings every half hour. The difficulty only braces me for the struggle.

SEVAGRAM, August 6, 1940
Harijan, 11-8-1940

94. THE BISWA AFFAIR

Though late in the day I must redeem my promise to give my opinion on this unfortunate case. I have letters containing angry protests against the five Congress Ministers in C. P., chiefly the Prime Minister. I have carefully read both the judgments, that of the learned Chief Justice and of the concurring Judge. There is no doubt whatsoever that there has been a gross miscarriage of justice due to the police bungling. I hold pandit Shukla and his fellow-ministers to be wholly free from blame. These are the remarks of the Chief Justice about Pandit Shukla:

> In the course of the debate the then Prime Minister himself did not hesitate to use the word 'murder' and to indicate that this was not a case of riot but a carefully planned murder ruthlessly carried out.

I can find nothing objectionable in this statement. He made use of the information then in his possession. He might have used the orthodox prefix 'alleged' in connection with 'murder' and used guarded language. But there is nothing in his statement to justify the wrath poured upon his head. The judges' finding , however, is that there was a murder and that it was worthy of condemnation. Their natural regret was that because of want of reliable evidence the crime had to go unpunished. I have not, therefore, been able to understand, much less to appreciate the rejoicing over what is a manifest failure of justice. So far as the discharge of the prisoners was concerned, it was a matter for common, not communal, rejoicing that no man suffered unless there was conclusive evidence. All must accept the unequivocal judgement of the final court of appeal. But there should have been common regret too that there was failure of justice. It cannot be to the advantage of any community that a murderer should be screened. Panditji has written a long letter to the Maulana Saheb about the affair . I have seen the letter. I do not know what the Maulana Saheb has said on the letter. I hold it to be quite convincing. I take from the letter the following Muslim testimony quoted by him:[1]

[1] Not reproduced here. Shukla in his letter had described how he had visited the place accompanied by Hindu and Muslim M. L. A. s, taken tea at the Muslim High school at Khamgaon and when this was objected to by some, had appealed to both the communities for harmoney and goodwill and how Khan saheb Abdul Rahman was pleased by this.

I hope that my opinion will not revive the dying members of an unfortunate controversy which should never have arisen. If the two communities must quarrel, is it not possible to fight fair? Charges without foundation can but add to the existing bitterness.

SEVAGRAM, August 6, 1940

Harijan, 11-8-1940

95. AUNDH

Who does not know little Aundh? Little it is in size and income, but it has made itself great and famous by its Chief having bestowed, unasked, the boon of full self-government on his people. Its chief minister Appasaheb Pant has brought out an attractive pamphlet of nine pages describing the experiment, from which I reproduce the following:

> Village democracy is the basis of the new Constitution. Every village elects by the vote of all of its adults a panchayat of five persons. One of these five is elected by the panchayat unanimously as their president. If this unanimity is not possible, then all the adults of the village elect the president out of the panchayat.
>
> Duty elected presidents of a group of villages constitute the taluka panchayat. The taluka panchayat decides in its meetings the way in which it would spend the money that it receives. It receives as near as possible half the revenue that is collected in the taluka. It receives as near as possible half the revenue that is collected in the taluka. The villages prepare their budgets and present them through their presidents to the taluka panchayat. These are discussed and a budget for the whole taluka is prepared. The villages can spend the money they get as they think fit. As yet education and public works constitute the chief items of expenditure.
>
> The members of the Assembly know not only about the affairs of the Central Government, but they are intimately connected with the everyday work in the villages, and they get acquainted with the work of other villages in their taluka at the meetings of the taluka panchayat. The member of the Legislative Assembly, in the way, is an active worker almost 12 hours of the day. It is not that he stands for election, gets elected on certain issues, and does not worry about these till the next election. He has to face the villagers every day. The Constitution gives the power of recall to the villages. 4/5ths of the voters can ask for a re- election of the panchayat.
>
> The panchayats dispense justice. The villager need not spend money, go out of his village, and spend days at the taluka town to get a hearing. The panchayat decides his case on the spot. The peasant can get witnesses in the village. And in the cases that are difficult and involve intricate points of law,

a sub-judge comes to the village and assists the panchayat with the dispensation of justice. The sub-judge not only gives expert advice to the panchayat, but also acts as a guide to the peasant who many a time is completely ignorant of his legal rights and is therefore liable to be misguided by the vested interests—the *goondas.*

Justice in Aundh is therefore cheap, swift and effective. In the panchayats of two talukas alone 197 criminal and civil suits have been disposed of. In 75 per cent of civil suits and 50 per cent of criminal cases no pleaders were engaged. The witnesses had to be paid nothing, being themselves on the spot. There was thus great saving of time and money. Most cases were decided at a single sitting. The whole village turns out at the hearing of cases. Hence lying is rare, because it can be easily detected. Therefore many cases are compromised out of court. This method of dealing out justice is itself great adult education.

There are 88 village schools for 72 villages. After the introduction of adult franchise, 35 per cent of the adult population received education. Basic education is not neglected, nor is physical. The Rajasaheb himself takes a keen interest in the physical development of his people. It is done through *suryanamaskar.* It is a special style.

If Appasaheb has shown the bright side of the experiment, he has not lost sight of the difficulties and troubles. I omit notice of these. For they are the usual difficulties that attend all such experiments. The leader of the people, if they retain their faith, will surely surmount them. This is how the pamphlet closes:

> Little has been done. Much remains to be done. It's an important work we are doing. We want sympathy and advice.

I am sure everybody sympathizes with the Aundh people. Let those who have any to give send Appasaheb their thoughts. Let them be sure that they are sound and relevant.

SEVAGRAM, August 6, 1940
Harijan, 11-8-1940

96. *NAZISM IN ITS NAKEDNESS*

A Dutch friend writes:[1]

You will perhaps be able to remember me having made a drawing of you at Romain Rolland's in 1931. . . I am a Dutchman and lived for many years in Germany, where I had build up a living as an artist. Nazim, which gained hold in Germany seven years ago, caused me many conscientious doubts. . .

It is just one year ago since I left my house in Munich to spend some time in Holland. . . On 10th May, by the use of every possible subtle trick. Holland was overpowered. After four days of the most ruthless bombing we fled to England and are now on our way to Java, the country of my birth, where I hope to find work. . .

Hitler aims at nothing less than the destruction of all moral values, and in the bulk of German youth he has already attained that end.

Your article in *Harijan* about the Jewish problem in Germany particularly interested me since I had many Jewish friends there. You say in it that, if ever a war were justified, it is this one against Germany. In the same article, however, you write that, if you were a Jew, you would attempt to soften the hearts of the Nazis by non-violence.[2] Recently you also advised Britain and the British people to surrender their beautiful island to the German invader, without resistance by force, and to conquer him afterwards by non-violence.[3] There is probably no man in the whole history who has a better knowledge of the practice of non-violence than yourself. Your views have awakened veneration and love for you in millions of hearts not only in India but in the outside world as well. . .

Through Nazism, the German youth has lost all individuality of thought and feeling. The great mass of young people has lost its heart and it degraded to the level of a machine. The German conduct of the war is absolutely mechanical; machines are driven by robot men who have no qualms of consci-ence about crushing under their tanks the bodies of women and children, bombing open towns, killing hundreds of thousands of women and children, and on occasion using them as a screen for their advance, or distributing poisoned food. These are all facts, the truth of which I can vouch for. I have spoken with many of your followers about the possibility of applying non-violence against Germany. A friend of mine, whose work it is to cross-examine German prisoners of war in England, was deeply shocked by

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.
[2] *Vide*, "The Jews"
[3] *Vide* "To Every Briton"

the spiritual narrowness and heartlessness of these young men, and agreed with me that non-violence could not be applied with any success against such robots. . .

The friend has sent his name and address. But I withhold both for fear of harm coming to him through unnecessary publicity. The letter must be valued on its own intrinsic merits.

What, however, concerns me is not so much his characterization of Nazism as his belief that non-violent action may have no effect on Hitler or the Germans whom he has turned into so many robots. Non-violent action, if it is adequate, must influence Hitler and easily the duped Germans. No man can be turned into a permanent machine. Immediately the dead weight of authority is lifted from his head, he begins to function normally. To lay down any such general proposition as my friend has, betrays ignorance of the working of non-violence. The British Government can take no risks, can make no experiments in which they have not even a workable faith. But if ever an opportunity could be given to me, in spite of my physical limitations, I should not hesitate to try what would appear to be impossible. For in ahimsa it is not the votary who acts in his own strength. Strength comes from God. If, therefore, the way is opened for me to go, he will give me the physical endurance and clothe my word with the needed power. Anyway all through my life I have acted in that faith. Never have I attributed any independent strength to myself. This may be considered by men who do not believe in a higher Power than themselves as a drawback and a helpless state. I must admit that limitation of ahimsa, if it be accounted as such.

SEVAGRAM, August 6, 1940

Harijan, 18-8-1940

97. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

August 6, 1940

CHI. MANUDI[1],

It is but natural that you should expect my letters. But where is the time? Yes, I do assume that even if I don't write to you, you will not chide me in your heart. I do get news of you from time to time. Are you not coming here some time? Do not wait for my invitation.

[1] Gandhiji's grand-daughter, Harilal Gandhi's daughter

Ba's should be sufficient. Do not come now even if Ba calls you. Wait till the weather improves.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MANUBEHN MASHRUWALA,
"BALKIRAN"
SANTA CRUZ, B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 2677. Courtesy: Kanubhai Mashruwala

98. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

August 6, 1940

Q. You say that God has a hand in the creation of the world. Why is then there this frightful war? Why aren't they inspired by God? Millions of men, women and children are being killed. It seems that God loves it. What are the things inspired by God? Can't He prevent bad deeds?

A. If we knew this should we not become God? It is all [beyond] reason.

Q. 'Rama cares only for love." Will you explain what is meant by love here?

A. Those who love Rama's creation, love Rama.

August 6, 1940

CHI. PRABHU DAYAL,

The replies are given above.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

99. DISCUSSION WITH MEMBERS OF THE A. I. C. C.[2]

[Before *August 7, 1940*][3]

A few members of the A. I. C. C. who are out-and-out believers in non-violence visited Sevagram the other day. Some of them had remained neutral on the Delhi resolution, some had opposed it. What was the right attitude? What were they to do

[1] Questions were asked by Prabhu Dayal Vidyarthi
[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "The Live Issue", 7-8-1940
[3] *ibid*

next? What was the programme before them? Should they not retire forthwith? These and other questions were troubling them, and they did not know what to do. In response Gandhiji began to do some loud thinking. Gandhiji said:

Wait, watch, and pray. You must carefully follow what I am writing from week to week. You must be absolutely sure that you are out-and-out believers in non-violence. Can your ahimsa stand the test? Rehearse to yourselves what you would do in case of riot. Those who have differed from us are no cowards. If they say that they cannot do without an army and police, they deserve a respectful hearing. I myself do not know what I should do in a difficult situation. You know I have capitulated on the question of the desirability of maintaining a police force. But what I can say is that I shall hope to behave non-violently, should the occasion arise. I should not like to die before my death. I do not want to prepare India for military defence from today. We should never forget that we are not the whole of India. The Congress is without doubt a powerful organization, but the Congress is not the whole of India. The Congress may not have an army, but those who do not believe in non-violence will. And if the Congress too surrenders, there is no one to represent the no-army mentality. This was my argument in a nutshell. But I failed to carry conviction. Therefore I must find fault not with my comrades but with myself. There must be some weakness in my argument, and so I must prepare myself to carry conviction to those who differ from me.

But, I have digressed. What you and I have to do is to show our ahimsa when there is rioting or similar disturbance. If every one of us, wherever he is, begins doing so there will come into being a non-violent army. Even the limited non-violence that all are subscribing to would not have come into being if we had seen no successful demonstrations of it. So we have to hold on to our faith, even if when the time comes we may fail. There is no use arguing with the comrades who have differed from us, I hope only temporarily. The question is one of demonstrating the truth in us, and we won't do it, unless we show that we have no malice, no bitterness, no inclination to find faults. We have to prepare ourselves for the terrible ordeal. The testing time may come sooner than we imagine. I am sailing on an uncharted sea. I have no cut and dried programme, and I am brooding from moment to moment. In the meanwhile follow my weekly writings and carry out the constructive programme. The time for resignation is not yet. We must not be misunderstood.

A WORKER: But, you have asked us to retire immediately, and all of us are ready.

GANDHIJI: Your readiness is good, and it is enough for me for the time being. If you conscientiously voted against the Delhi resolution, you did nothing wrong; if you remained neutral, you did nothing wrong. You would have been wrong if you had joined hands with those who sought to defeat the resolution on any but the ground of non-violence. For having given your vote on the Wardha resolution, and having lost, you could not vote against the Delhi resolution which was the natural corollary of the Wardha resolution.

A WORKER: But it was by accident that those who voted against the Delhi resolution, did so.

G. No, it was by design. They are no believers in non-violence to the extent you are, but they wanted to defeat the resolution for the sake of their policy.

Q. But then how long are we to remain in the Congress?

G. I cannot give a definite answer. I shall have a talk with the Maulana. We must not rush the Maulana and the Working Committee. If they find that the out-and-out non-violence people were the sustaining part of the Congress organization, they will retrace their step.

Q. Then how long shall we wait?

G. Until I give you the word.

A WORKER: But, I disliked the Wardha resolution and wanted to resign at once.

G. You might have done so. Then you would have been within your rights. But to do so now might savour of violence and self-righteousness. You must remember that I waited for more than a year before taking the final step and then too I took it with the full approval of the friends of the Working Committee.

Harijan, 11-8-1940

100. NOT A HARIJAN

Shri Ramchandran draws my attention to the fact that Shri Achuthan should not have been described as a Harijan. Whilst he is too big to resent the description, his fellow Ezhawas are likely to take offence. I ought to have known this. For when I was touring in Travancore I had this delicate matter brought to my notice. All those whose feeling has been hurt by my use of the word will please believe

me when I say that no offence was intended by me. I have never regarded the word as a term of reproach. But I am aware that there are many who do not look at things with my eyes.

SEVAGRAM, August 7, 1940

Harijan, 11-8-1940

101. FOREWORD TO TAMIL TRANSLATION OF TULSIDAS'S "RAMACHARITAMANAS"

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 7, 1940

Everyone knows of my close association with Shrimati Ambujammal. She has studied Hindi with great devotion. She has shown the same devotion in the study of the *Ramayana*. Now she has rendered that peerless epic into Tamil. I hope Tamilians will read it with joy. I congratulate Ambujammal.

M. K. GANDHI

From Hindi: C. W. 9613. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal

102. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

SEVAGARAM, WARDHA,
August 7, 1940

MY DEAR AMBUJAM[1],

I was glad to hear from you after a long silence, if only to remind me that I had not sent you the promised foreword[2]. My memory does betray me nowadays. What I intend to do I often take for granted I have done. Since you have not received the previous letter I am inclined to regard it as another betrayal of memory. I shall not be happy till I receive your letter that you have the foreword. I am sorry for the delay wholly unintended.

It is a good thing you are attending to the parents. I hope both are well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : C. W. 9614. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal

[1] Daughter of S. Srinivasa Iyengar

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

103. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
August 7, 1940

CHI. NARANDAS,

Your figures, etc., have been despatched. They will appear in all the three journals.[1] Why did you not send them earlier?

Enclosed is a letter from Prema as usual.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U. / II. Also C. W. 8577. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

104. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SEVAGRAM,
August 7, 1940

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. If true ahimsa is to be manifested, it will be manifested now. But we must put our own house in order. Our first duty is to show generosity towards those who part company with us. If we succeed in doing that, the next step will be easy. If we fail, we shall not be able to take the next step at all. Is this clear? Read Harijan and Harijanbandhu very carefully.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10410. Also C. W. 6849. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

105. LETTER TO MANJULABEHN M. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 7, 1940

CHI. MANJULA,

I have your letter. Here you will not get a Gujarati teacher. You should bring one from there. My advice to you is that you should

[1] *Vide* "Spinning Anniversary"

come here once, stay for a month or so and then decide which place will suit you. If you come I will of course like it. If you come, perhaps Magan also may come. I do not think that letters will have much influence on him. I did expect that he would turn out as you have described him to be. But you are brave and sensible and so I keep patience.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 1604. Courtesy: Manjulabehn M. Mehta

106. LETTER TO URMILA M. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA ,
August 7, 1940

CHI. URMI[1] ,

I was extremely pleased to read your letter. How big have you grown now? I may not even be able to recognize you. I hope that we shall meet soon. Keep on writing to me. You have given a fine description of the monuments in Ahmedabad. Did you see the windows of Bhadra?[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 1605. Courtesy: Manjulabehn M. Mehta

107. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
August 7, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

There should be no eating in the kitchen. I shall advise the women.

Clothes must be washed, slivers made. Grinding, sweeping and dish- washing should be compulsory. If there is any confusion, I shall see about it.

[1] Daughter of Maganlal Mehta

[2] The Bhadra mosque famed for its grillwork windows

Bharatanandji's dog should be sent away. Dhiren's has been. I shall see.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4350

108. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHAGANJ,
August 8, 1940

RAJKUMARI
MANORVILLE
SUMMER HILL
SIMLA

KHANSAHEB WANTS MEHRTAJ IRWIN COLLEGE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3993. Courtesy: Amrit kaur. Also G. N. 7302

109. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 8, 1940

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL, ,

Maulana Saheb gave me the Hyderabad preliminary report. It makes fearful reading. There is nothing new in it for me. But one does not want confirmation of worst fears. I have been taxing myself about the remedy. I meet the workers tomorrow. If you have any thoughts pass them on to me.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Will you send me any authentic evidence you may have of the war exactions?[1]

Gandhi–Nehru Papers, 1940. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] For Jawaharlal Nehru's reply, *vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 10-8-1940

110. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,
August 8, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I will see about Kanchan. I will do something about those among them who have real enthusiasm. I will get for you whatever journal you want. If you are ready, I even want your services in that field. I would also like your comments on the language.

I will have a talk with Bharatanandji.

Pyarelal writes his names on whatever is addressed to him. I will manage to get that booklet.

My explanation about what a single village-worker can do was intended for all villages and that included Sevagram too. But not the Ashram. Shouldn't my remarks be applied to me also? Hence I pointed out my shortcomings in that article. If I had only the Sevagram work with me and if I were the only worker, my article would have literally applied to me, too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8529

111. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 8, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

I am enclosing two more articles with this. Two have been posted at Nagpur. Thus, you will be receiving four articles together.

You must be at ease. It is not raining here right now. Every- one is in good health. Shakaribehn[1] did come but is going back today. Anand has again fallen ill. Sharada cannot look after her children alone.

Blessings from

BAPU

From by Gujara ti origin al: Pyarel al Papers . Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y. Courte sy: Dr. Sushil a Nayyar

[1] Shakaribehn C. Shah

112. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM WARDHA,
August 8, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

1. You did take interest in Sevagram, but you did not consider it your duty like your work there. Your heart was not in Sevagram. It was wherever I was.

2. Conflicts do not arise overnight. Nothing would have happened if you had not regarded it as conflict. You made a mountain out of a molehill without seeing or listening and without paying attention to my letters.

3. What I have said is a cruel, stark truth. Your statement that the old do not let the young have their way is far from true. Had your observation been correct, the Ashram would not have continued to grow at such a pace as it is doing.

4. I have not raised you high. Nor have I pulled you down. But you are so touchy that you did not hesitate even being unfair to me. Bapu has not changed but you saw him changed. It is another matter that you forgave him out of generosity.

5. There was jealousy indeed, but it was not of you. Had you understood this much, there would have been no need for you to suffer as you did.

6. Pyarelal says that you have understood it all wrong. But if Pyarelal really believes what you have told him, then he does not know me at all. Bapu's entire life has been spent in coping with opposition—internal and external, never in submitting to it. I have always preferred losing colleagues rather than wrongly submitting.

7. I changed my attitude, when protests were ceasing. Does it not show that it had not been in any way related to the protests ?

8. But 1 do not agree that I changed my attitude. I have proved to you that I explained the truth. I claim that my attitude has remained unchanged.

9. This is true.

10. But he who regards me as the centre, must consider himself safe. Instead of taking that view, you followed your own mind and then felt puzzled. This much in reply to your letter of 29-7-1940.

Now for the letter of 2-8-1940.

1. 2. 3. If your experience till the time of my going to Calcutta was sweet, you must accept that if it turned bitter later you

should have put up with it. You could not do so because you never considered Sevagram your field of action and field of duty. Your field of action was only I, which was wrong in itself. I must never become the field of activity for anyone. The cause of envy lay in this fact, not outside it.

4. It is not true that I had raised you high.

5. The reply has been given above.

The rest is nothing new.

I hope you will be able to read this.

How can I expect that my reply will satisfy you? I shall be content if you can only accept that we are considering the same thing from different points of view. But forget all this; start afresh. Not for my sake but for the sake of my work. Come whenever you can decide to come. Right now you are in your field of duty. You are well trained for it. Go on with it. Later on you can come if you think it proper to come. So long as our view-points are different, you will not find peace even if you come. Pyarelal will explain this better.

In your absence I cannot keep the dispensary in its present shape. It is your thing. Now that you have gone, I cannot bear the sight of it. But I cannot bear it either that you should return merely for the sake of the dispensary. I had and have altogether another use for you. It may include the dispensary. But that is a different matter. You need not feel miserable that we had a dispensary and now it may be closed down. I would not hesitate to set up and let go such things for your sake. That is how I am made. I have always incurred such expenses for those I like. All I want is your good, be it anywhere.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: Pyarel al Papers . Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y. Courte sy: Dr. Sushil a Nayyar

113. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
August 9, 1940

DEAR LORD LINITHGOW,

I received your kind wire on Wednesday and yesterday your letter referred to in the wire. I thank you for both of them.

I have very carefully read your pronouncement[1] and slept over it. It has made me sad. Its implications frighten me. I cannot help feeling that a profound mistake has been made. I recognize that yours is a tremendous responsibility and that you can only do what you think is best. But since you have given me the privilege of sharing my thoughts with you and since I fancy I know more of a vital part of India than you can, I have thought it my duty to let you have my reaction to your pronouncement. I am filled with the greatest misgivings. I hope, however, that events will prove that there was no warrant for them.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a printed copy: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

114. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

SEVAGARAM, WARDHA,
August 9, 1940

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

Please thank Dr. Vaidya on my behalf for his joining you. You will certainly have warmth from him. You have done well in taking over the responsibility of the exhibition.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10847. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

115. LETTER TO NRISINHPRASAD K. BHATT[2]

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 9, 1940

BAHI NANABHAI,

I do not know where Prithvi Singh is these days. If he is somewhere there and if you feel disposed please to this. Mirabehn looks upon him as her husband. She believes that her love for him is

[1] *Vide* "Statement made by the Viceroy on August 8, 1940"

[2] Nrisinhprasad Kalidas Bhatt, founder of Dakshinamurti, an educational institution in Bhavnagar

the result of her previous life. She has pledged her all to him. Prithvi Singh regards her as a sister. For this I am responsible. The moment he came here I told him that he should regard all the women here as his sisters. As a result he does not look upon her in any other way. Mirabehn is pining for him here. It is not that Prithvi Singh is not going to marry. I feel that if a woman whom one regards as a sister is really not one's sister and if there is no violation of morality, the brotherly sentiment is not binding. It is question of life and death for Mirabehn. Mirabehn is worthy in every way. She can be a great help to Prithvi Singh. Mirabehn does want a child and that too by Prithvi Singh. Under such circumstances it becomes my duty to persuade Prithvi Singh and if he has no religious objection it is his duty to marry her. If Prithvi Singh is likely to come this way or if you have any hesitation about talking to him, you need not involve yourself in this. If his coming is likely to be delayed and you hesitate to speak to him, let me know when he will be coming.[1]

I trust your work is going on well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 10861. Courtesy : Prithvi Singh

116. LETTER TO PURATAN J. BUCH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 10, 1940

CHI. PURATAN,

The advice you have given to the Bhangi friends is perfectly sound.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PURATAN BUCH
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI
B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9178

[1] Mirabehn's version of this episode is to be found in *The Spirit's Pilgrimage*, Ch. LI.

117. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA ,
August 10, 1940

BHAI PRITHVI SINGH,

I have your letter. I see there is a divergence between your views and mine. There is no harm in this. Every individual should have freedom of thought. I perceive flaws in your views. You do in mine. It is possible that I may be mistaken in my views. I have confessed that I have no first-hand knowledge of himsa. Therefore if you have really accepted ahimsa, I shall not be surprised if yours is purer than mine. On the contrary I shall only be pleased. I therefore thank you for so frankly placing your views before me.

What you think about Guru ka Bagh[1] is not correct because those people came to me and I told them that what they had done was wrong. They agreed with me. Your assumption about Khudai Khidmatgars is also wrong. Neither Khan Saheb nor I can say that they have really become non-violent. I do not feel Nathji would agree with your assessment. I shall look into it. But even if it should be so my views remain unaltered. The idea which have gripped me for now fifty years cannot be given up suddenly.

Your saying that I had asked you to run classes in Wardha shows a slip of memory. I had said that you should start your experi-ment initially in the Ashram and that if I was convinced, you certainly had boys from Wardha to instruct.

Your last statements is significant, you say that the Government notice has left you without an ideal. That falsifies your ideal because no one can stop the preparation for satyagraha. Even though I do not have the time I have written such a long letter just to let you know some of the flaws in your views. Let the three brothers getting training in Baroda, continue to do so. As I have understood it is a three months' course. However if our field of activity is going to be different, I am not responsible for them. All the same I will pay for their 3 months' expenses up to Rs. 180.

We shall further discuss things when you come.

[1] A place near Amritsar from where Akail Sikhs launched satyagraha to take possession of the Gurudwara.

It is good that you stayed on to nurse Nalini[1] and that she has recovered.

I have sent an important letter to Nanabhai.[2] You will perhaps get it when you go there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 5642. C. W. 2953. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

118. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 11, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

With reference to your kind letter of 31st July, I am now able to send you some papers. I have picked up a letter from one whom I know well and who has never deceived me. That is marked (A)[3]. Another is from Hinganghat (Dist. Wardha, C. P.). I do not know the writer. But the information he gives can be easily checked. It is marked (B)[4]. (C)[5] is copy of a minatory notice. These are but samples. The complaints are universal.

About the increase in the salaries given to persons appointed to the new posts created I send you a sample list herewith. I cannot have free access to this kind of information. The figures I am sending you are supplied by those who claim to know.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[1] Wife of Gopalrao Kulkarni, a worker for Nayee Taleem

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Nrisinhprasad K. Bhatt",9-8-1940

[3] This was a translation of H. L. Sharma's letter of July 15, addressed to Gandhiji wherein he had described the high-handedness resorted to by officials in extorting contributions for the war fund.

[4] This pertained to dedction of war fund contribution from the millhands' salary itself as the millowner was expected to pay a huge amount towards the war fund.

[5] This was a copy of a Tehsildar's letter to an honorary Magistrate who had failed to attend a war fund meeting. The Tehsildar had threatened to bring his ' indisciplinary attitude' to the notice of the Government.

[PS.]

I was glad to have the good news about Lord Hopetoun.

M. K. G.

From a printed copy: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

119. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 11, 1940

MY DEAR MAHMUD,

Your two letters. I am reading your booklet. Do come whenever you like. Hope you are well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 5086

120. MORAL SUPPORT[1]

A friend writes as follows:

> On the declaration of war you had advised giving moral support to Britain. Many persons never understood the implications of such support. You have never explained them either so far as I know. I am a regular reader of *Harijanbandhu*, but I have not seen a clear explanation there. Everyone puts his own interpretation on the words. At the last sitting of the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee the leaders said: 'Bapu was ready to give moral support to Britain. What else has the Congress done in its latest resolution? As a matter of fact the Congress asks for more than it promises to give. Bapu was willing to give all for nothing.' If war is itself a wrong act, how can it deserve moral support or blessings? In the Mahabharata, was the help that Lord Krishna gave to Arjuna moral, or was it more destructive than the deadliest weapons of war?

I did explain in Harijan what I meant by moral support. It is possible that the explanation did not appear in *Harijanbandhu*. In my English writings things are often to be understood. The ellipses need, however, to be brought out in translations.

[1] The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 17-8-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

Broadly speaking, Britain could have had moral support from the Congress, if only she had acted justly towards India. There was no spirit of bargaining in my proposal because the help was not offered in exchange for anything.

Suppose my friend possesses moral strength which he has acquired through *tapasya*. And suppose I am in need of this strength. I shall not get it from him for the asking. He may always be ready to give it to me, but if I have not the capacity within me to take it from him, how shall I ever obtain it? Moral support cannot really be given in the sense of giving. It automatically comes to him who is qualified to take it. And such a one can take it in abundance.

The Congress has this moral reservoir. The acceptance of the creed of truth and non-violence has been its *tapasya*. It has acquired world prestige through the acceptance of truth and non-violence for the attainment of its goal. If the Congress could have given its blessings to Britain, the world would have adjudged Britain's cause to be just. The masses over whom the Congress holds sway would also have acknowledged justice to be on Britain's side. But in all this the Congress would have had nothing materiel to give. The British Government would, by its own action, have acquired moral prestige or strength. Though the Congress would not give one man or one piece as material aid, its moral support and blessings would definitely have turned the scales in favour of Britain. This is my belief. That my belief may be groundless and that the Congress never had any moral prestige is quite possible. The determination of this question is unnecessary for my argument.

But the opportunity for rendering moral support now seems almost to have gone. The Congress felt itself unable to adopt my course. It cannot be taken mechanically. It presupposes a living faith in truth and non-violence. The greatest quality in the Congress is this that it has never claimed to have what it really does not possess. And therefore its resolutions are dignified and carry force with them.

The help that the Congress in its latest resolution promises to give is material and for a consideration, eminently just, no doubt, but it is not and cannot be unconditional. I do not suggest that this position is either untenable or morally wrong. The resolution has dignity because it is the considered opinion of the majority. But by passing it the Congress has, in my opinion, surrendered the prestige it had or was supposed to have. Many Congressmen say that while they firmly

believed that they could attain swaraj through non-violence, they had never meant it to be understood that they could retain it also through non-violence. The entire outside world, however, believed that the Congress was showing the golden way to the abolition of war. No one outside India ever dreamed that, if the Congress could wrest independence from a mighty power like Britain purely through non-violence, it would not be able to defend it also by the same means.

In my opinion Lord Krishna's help to Arjuna cannot be said to be moral, because he himself had an army and was an expert in the art of war. Duryodhana acted foolishly in that he asked for krishna's army, while Arjuna got what he wanted in the person of the expert in the science of war. Therefore, if we interpret the *Mahabharata* literally, Lord Krishna's strength was certainly more destructive than that of his army. Because of his scientific skill Krishna was able with an army of seven divisions to destroy Duryodhana's army of eleven. But it is well known that I have never looked upon the *Mahabharata* as a mere record of earthly warfare. In the garb of an epic the poet has described the eternal warfare within the individual as well as in society, between truth and Untruth, Violence and Non-violence, Right and Wrong. Looking at the epic even superficially one can understand how the great Vyasa has demonstrated that in this war the victor was no better off than the vanquished. Out of that vast concourse of warriors only seven remained to tell the tale. And the poet gives a true picture of the woeful state of mind also of these seven. The author has shown clearly too that in armed warfare the contending parties are certain to stoop to meanness and trickery. When occasion arose even the great Yadhishthira had to report to untruth to save the battle.

One more question of the writer remains to be answered. If war is itself a wrong act, how can it be worthy or moral support or blessings? I believe all war to be wholly wrong. But if we scrutinize the motives of two warring parties, we may find one to be in the right and the other in the wrong. For instance, if A wishes to seize B's country, B is obviously the wronged one. Both fight with arms. I do not believe in violent warfare, but all the same B, whose cause is just, deserves my moral help and blessings.

SEVAGRAM, August 12, 1940

Harijan, 18-8-1940

121. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

August 12, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

A mistake has been made; but do not grieve over it. I shall be present if Su[shila] permits.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a Photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4356

122. IMPLICATIONS OF CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME[1]

A correspondent writes:

> What are the qualities that you intend to inculcate in people by laying stress on the constructive programme? What are the qualifications necessary for a constructive worker in order to make his work effective?

The constructive programme is a big undertaking including a number of items: (1) Hindu-Muslim or communal unity; (2) Removal of untouchability; (3) Prohibition; (4) Khadi; (5) Other village industries; (6) Village sanitation; (7) New or basic education; (8) Adult education; (9) Uplift of women; (10) Education in hygiene and health; (11) Propagation of Rashtrabhasha; (12) Cultivating love of one's own language; (13) Working for economic equality. This list can be supplemented if necessary, but it is so comprehensive that I think it can be proved to include items appearing to have been omitted.

The reader will see that it is the want of all these things that is responsible for our bondage. He will also see that the constructive programme of the Congress is not supposed to include all the items. That is understood to include only four items, or rather six, now that the Congress has created the All-India Village Industries Association and the Basic Education Board. But we have to go further forward, we have to stabilize and perfect ahimsa, and so we have to make the constructive programme as comprehensive as possible. There should be no room for doubt that, if we can win swaraj purely through non-viole-

[1] The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 17-8-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

nce, we can also retain it through the same means. In the fulfilment of the constructive programme lies the non-violent attainment of swaraj.

The items I have mentioned are not in order of importance. I have put them down just as they came to my pen. Generally I talk of khadi only nowadays, because millions of people can take their share in this work, and progress can be arithmetically measured. Communal unity and the removal of untouchability cannot be thus assessed. Once they become part of our daily life, nothing need be done by us as individuals.

Let us now glance at the various items. Without Hindu-Muslim, i.e., communal unity, we shall always remain crippled. And how can a crippled India win swaraj? Communal unity means unity between Hindus, Sikhs, Mussalmans, Christians, parsis, Jews. All these go to make Hindustan. He who neglects any of these communities does not know constructive work.

As long as the curse of untouchability pollutes the mind of the Hindu, so long is he himself an untouchable in the eyes of the world, and an untouchable cannot win non-violent swaraj. The removal of untouchability means treating the so-called untouchables as one's own kith and kin. He who does treat them so must be free from the sense of high and low, in fact free from all wrong class-sense. He will regard the whole world as one family. Under non-violent swaraj it will be impossible to conceive of any country as an enemy country.

Pure swaraj is impossible of attainment by people who have been or who are slaves of intoxicating drinks and drugs. It must never be forgotten that a man in the grip of intoxicants is generally bereft of the moral sense.

Everyone now may be said to believe that without khadi there is no just and immediate solution of the problem of the starvation of our millions. I need not therefore dilate upon it. I would only add that in the resuscitation of khadi lies the resuscitation of the ruined village artisans. Khadi requisites (wheels, looms, etc.,) have to be made by the village carpenter and blacksmith. For unless these requisites are made in the village it cannot be self-contained and prosperous.

The revival of khadi presupposes the revival of all other village industries. Because we have not laid proper stress on this, khadiwearers see nothing wrong in using other articles which are foreign or mill-made. Such people may be said to have failed to grasp the inner meaning of khadi. They forget that by establishing the Village Industries

Association the Congress has placed all other village industries on the same level as khadi. As the solar system will be dark without the sun, even so will the sun be lustreless without the planets. All things in the universe are interdependent. The salvation of India is impossible without the salvation of village.

If rural reconstruction were not to include rural sanitation, our village would remain the muck-heaps that they are today. Village sanitation is a vital part of village life and is as difficult as it is important. It needs a heroic effort to eradicate age-long insanitation. The village worker who is ignorant of the science of village sanitation, who is not a successful scavenger, cannot fit himself for village service.

It seem to be generally admitted that without the new or basic education the education of millions of children in India is well-nigh impossible. The village worker has, therefore, to master it, and become a basic education teacher himself.

Adult education will follow in the wake of basic education as a matter of course. Where this new education has taken root, the children themselves become their parents' teachers. Be that as it may, the village worker has to undertake adult education also.

Woman is described as man's better half. As long as she has not the same rights in law as man, as long as the birth of a girl does not receive the same welcome as that of a boy, so long we should know that India is suffering from partial paralysis. Suppression of woman is a denial of ahimsa. Every village worker will, therefore, regard every woman as his mother, sister or daughter as the case may be, and look upon her with respect. Only such a worker will command the confidence of the village people.

It is impossible for an unhealthy people to win swaraj. Therefore we should no longer be guilty of the neglect of the health of our people. Every village worker must have a knowledge of the general principles of health.

Without a common language no nation can come into being. Instead of worrying himself with the controversy about the Hindi-Hindustani and Urdu, the village worker will acquire a knowledge of the *Rashtrabhasha,* which should be such as can be understood by both Hindus and Muslims.

Our infatuation about English has made us unfaithful to provincial languages. If only as penance for this unfaithfulness the village worker should cultivate in the villagers a love of their own speech. He

will have equal regard for all the other languages of India, and will learn the language of the part where he may be working, and thus be able to inspire the villagers there with a regard for their speech.

The whole of this programme will, however, be a structure on sand if it is not built on the solid foundation of economic equality. Economic equality must never be supposed to mean possession of an equal amount of worldly goods by everyone. It does mean, however, that everyone will have a proper house to live in, sufficient and balanced food to eat, and sufficient khadi with which to cover himself. It also means that the cruel inequality that obtains today will be removed by purely non-violent means. This question, however, requires to be seperately dealt with.

SEVAGRAM, August 13, 1940
Harijan, 18-8-1940

123. QUESTION BOX[1]

CAN HE STAND ALONE ?

Q. You are anxious that there should be believers in complete non-violence in every province. Is there not need then to organize a Sangh of such person? Or are you of opinion that ahimsa is a force that enables individuals to stand alone?

A. Complete non-violence needs neither the aid of speech nor of the pen. And if it does not require the help of these two means, it certainly does not stand in need of organized strength. A man or woman who is saturated with ahimsa has only to will a thing and it happens. I can picture this truth in my imagination. It is stated in the scriptures, too. But my experience can only be reckoned as meagre; so meagre that I cannot ask anyone to build on it. Hence my desire to build an organization pledged to unadulterated non-violence. At the same time I believe that true believers in out-and-out non-violence should have the strength to stand alone. They will thus be soldiers and their own generals at the same time. If the non-violent army of my dreams can be set up, it will put an end to the existing disbelief in the power of non-violence. Indeed the Congress will itself be converted to complete non-violence.

[1] The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 17-8-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

WHAT SHOULD HE DO?

Q. I am a Congressman and I believe in out-and-out non-violence. I am also a member of Congress Committees. You have advised people like me to leave the Congress. I am in touch with the villagers in my area. Should I continue to bring these into the Congress fold or allow them to remain outside?

A. This is not a good question. So long as you are in the Congress, it is your duty [to persuade others to join its ranks].[1] You should explain the Congress policy to them. Those who join the Congress with an understanding of the real difference between *himsa* and ahimsa will do so knowingly. They will join the Congress either with the desire to try to bring the Congress on to the path of complete non-violence or to support it in its present policy. Your duty is to explain the position fully to them and freely admit as many as wish to join. You may resign from the Congress only when the date of leaving it is fixed. Until then you are to carry on as you have been doing heretofore.

WHAT SHOULD A BRITON DO AND NOT DO?

Q. In your appeal to 'Every Briton' you say: "You will invite Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini to take what they want. . . You will give all your 'earthly possessions' but never your souls or your minds. . . . You will refuse to owe allegiance to them." Please explain clearly what a Briton should or should not do. I ask the question because your answer will have a bearing on the duty of every satyagrahi.

A. Not to yield your soul to the conqueror means that you will refuse to do that which your conscience forbids you to do. Suppose the 'enemy' were to ask you to rub your nose on the ground or to pull your ears or to go through such humiliating performances, you would not submit to any of these humiliations. But if he robs you of your possessions, you will yield them because as a votary of ahimsa you have from the beginning decided that earthly possessions have nothing to do with your soul. That which you look upon as your own you may keep only so long as the world allows you to own it.

Not to yield your mind means that you will not give way to any temptation. Man is often-times weak-minded enough to be caught in the snare of greed and honeyed words. We see this happening daily in our social life. A weak-minded man can never be a satyagrahi. The latter's 'no' is invariably a 'no' and his 'yes' an eternal 'yes'. Such

[1] The Gujarati has "to admit as many as are willing to join it".

a man alone has the strength to be a devotee of truth and ahimsa. But there one must know that difference between steadfastness and obstinacy. If after having said 'yes' or 'no' one finds out that the decision was wrong and in spite of that knowledge clings to it, that is obstinacy and folly. It is necessary to think things out carefully and thorughly and before coming to any decision.

The meaning of refusal to owe allegiance is clear. You will not bow to the supermacy of the victor, you will not help him to attain his object. Herr Hitler has never dreamt of possessing Britain. He wants the British to admit defeat. The victor can then demand anything he likes from the vanquished, and the latter has perforce to yield. But if defeat is not admitted, the enemy will fight until he has killed his opponent. A satyagrahi, however, is dead to his body even before the enemy attempts to kill him, i.e., he is free from attachment to his body and only lives in the victory of the soul. Therefore, when he is already thus dead why should he yearn to kill anyone? To die in the act of killing is in essence to die defeated. Because, if the enemy is unable to get what he wants from you alive, he will decide to get it after killing you. if, on the other hand, he realises that you have not the remotest thought in your mind of raising your hand against him even for the sake of your life, he will lack the zest to kill you. Every hunter has had this experience. No one has ever heard of anyone hunting cows.

You may find that I have not answered the question that you had in your mind[1]. I have made humble effort and dealt with your general question by giving you a few homely examples. I hope that from them you will be able to deduce answers to the question left unanswered.

Dignity of the soul and self-respect are interpreted differently by different persons. I am aware that self-respect is often misinterpreted. The over-sensitive man may see disrespect or hurt in almost everything. Such a man does not really understand what self-respect is. That has been my experience in many cases. But no harm accrues even if a non-violent man holds mistaken notions of self-respect. He

[1] The Gujarati here adds: "I did not intend to deal with all the questions that might come up."

can die cheerfully for the sake of what he believes to be his dignity and self-respect. Only he has no right to injure or kill the supposed wrongdoer.

SEVAGRAM, August 13, 1940

Harijan, 18-8-1940

124. CABLE TO "THE NEWS CHRONICLE"[1]

SEVAGRAM,
August 13, 1940

HAVING RETIRED FROM PARTICIPATION IN CONGRESS POLITICS, I HAVE REFRAINED FROM EXPRESSING OPINION ON THE RECENT VICEREGAL PRONOUNCEMENT[2]. BUT PRESSURE FROM FRIENDS IN ENGLAND AND FELLOW WORKERS HERE DEMANDS RESPONSE FORM ME. THE VICEREGAL PRONOUNCEMENT IS DEEPLY DISTRESSING . IT WIDENS THE GULF BETWEEN INDIA, AS REPRESENTED BY THE CONGRESS, AND ENGLAND. THINKING INDIA OUTSIDE THE CONGRESS, TOO HAS NOT WELCOMED THE PRONOUNCEMENT, THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S GLOSS SOOTHES THE EAR, BUT DOES NOT DISPEL SUSPICION. NEITHER DOES THE PRONOUNCEMENT TAKE NOTE OF THE SMOULDERING DISCONTENT. MY OWN FEAR IS THAT DEMOCRACY IS BEING WRECKED. BRITAIN CONNOT CLAIM TO STAND FOR JUSTICE, IF SHE FAILS TO. BE JUST TO INDIA. INDIA'S DISEASE TOO DEEP TO YIELD TO ANY MAKE-BELIEVE OF HALF-HEARTED MEASURES.

Harijan,18-8-1940

125. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKWASA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August, 14, 1940

BHAI MANGALDAS[3],

The letter is merely by way of an apology. I inquired again about your letter today and Pyarelal found it. The letter must have arrived here on the 31st July. It was rather shameful that though the

[1] This was also reproduced in *The Hindustan Times*, 14-8-1940.

[2] *Vide* "Statement made by the Viceroy on August 8, 1940"

[3] President of the Bombay Legislative Council.

letter was an important one it remained unattended to. Lapses like this occur more than once. At that time I do feel pained, but there can be no assurance that such a thing will never happen again. I am returning that telegraph form.

Jayantibhai may come whenever he wishes. You also may come if you wish.

The first step about the income-tax matter was good. I hope the second will be equally good. I know you will do your best.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 4685. Courtesy: Mangaldas Pakwasa

126. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,
August 14, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. What should I write to you? You have ready answers to all questions. If we see the same thing from the same point of view, our perceptions will be similar. But if we see from opposite points of view, our perceptions would never be the same, and each would firmly stand by his own perception. That is the case with us. God is between us. Let us be guided by Him. The wonderful thing is that while I admit only one sentence, you demand the same sentence. You say that I am putting you in the same category as Mahadev, etc. I say that I have not thought about you in any other way. But that is not sufficient for you. You yourself would test me whether I treated you as I would Mahadev, and if I failed in the test you would desert me. It is surprising that you do not laugh at such a demand on your part. But your mind does not let you understand or perceive anything straight. Under such circumstances I would only say that I have no doubt given you what you asked. Come when you realize this. Why should you be concerned whether the dispensary exists or not? If it is not there, it will be set up if you desire it when you come. Surely you would not be coming because of the dispensary or on the condition that it should be in existence? I see that my mind rebels against it. The dispensary without you, the very sight of it pains me. The dispensary was set up for your sake. I believed that you would get some

satisfaction out of it. What could be more tragic than that that very dispensary became the provocation to make you run away from here? And now you tell me that if I close down the dispensary, you hope to pay for the expenses incurred. Patience! May you have a lot of money. I shall not hesitate to accept whatever you send me out of it. I have not written all this to obtain any reply from you. Nothing would be achieved by indulging in arguments. I think it would be appropriate to close this chapter. Time will do its work.

The arrangement about the *Harijan Sevak* is the Pyarelal will send the Hindustani translations of English matter and you will be translating the Gujarati into Hindi. Rajkumari and Mahadev will translate the Gujarati matter into English. This is the present arrange-`` ment.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: Pyarel al Papers . Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y. Courte sy: Dr. Sushil a Nayyar

127. LETTER TO EDMOND AND YVONNE PRIVAT

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 15, 1940

MY DEAR ANAND AND BHAKTI,

It was delight to hear from you after such a long lapse of time. Yes, you are passing through most anxious times. There must come light out of this darkness.

Love.

BAPU

MONS. EDMOND PRIVAT
SAN BLAGIO
LACARNO (TESSIN)
SWITZERLAND

From a photostat: G. N. 8801

128. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 15, 1940

Yes, your appointment stands.[1]

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

It is good you are bringing Taralika along. Charu should be sent somewhere early. If you wish to bring him here, do so. You may bring five copies of Satis Babu's book[2] with you.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI HEMPRABHA DEVI
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
15 COLLEGE SQUARE
CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1638

129. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 15, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have framed the rule. Now it is up to you to implement it to the extent possible. Take from me whatever help you need in doing so.

What you say about servants is true. We shall not be able to do anything in the matter. Our progress will depend on our internal purity.

That is why this institution was never a burden. You do not realize this, at least not fully. But as you proceed with faith, others will automatically support you and you will feel no burden. You have to be content with yourself. Everything will then become easy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4357

[1] This sentence is written at the top of the letter.

[2] On home medicine; *vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 2-8-1940

130. DISCUSSION WITH B. G. KHER AND OTHERS[1]

[*August 15, 1940*][2]

You see that I am answering every one of your questions straightway without the slightest hesitation. That is because the great question underlying your questions possesses me and I have rehearsed to myself every one of the situations arising out of the various implications of ahimsa.

Q. Should one stop with the human species or extend ahimsa to all creation?

GANDHI: I was not prepared for this question. For the Congress ahimsa is naturally confined to the political field and therefore only to the human species. Hence out-and-out non-violence means for our purpose every variety of non-violence in the political field. In concrete terms it covers family relations, relations with constituted authority, internal disorders and external aggression. Put in another way it covers all human relations.

Q. Then what about meat-eating and egg-eating? Are they consistent with non-violence?

G. They are. Otherwise we should have to exclude Mussalmans and Christians and a vast number of Hindus as possible co-workers in ahimsa. I have known many meat-eaters to be far more non-violent than vegetarians.

Q. But what if we had to give them up for the sake of a principle?

G. Oh yes, we would, if we had to compromise our principle. Our principle is defined as I have shown already.

Q. If, as you have said, Polish resistance to the German invasion was almost non-violent, and you would thus seem to reconcile yourself with it, why do you object to the wardha resolution of the Working Committee?

G. Surely, there is no analogy between the two cases. If a man fights with his sword single-handed against a horde of dacoits armed to the teeth, I should say he is fighting almost non-violently. Haven't I said to our women that, if in defence of their honour they used their nails and teeth and even a dagger, I should regard their conduct non-violent? She does know the distinction between himsa and ahimsa. She acts spontaneously. Supposing a mouse in fighting a cat tried to

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "An Interesting Discourse". B. G. Kher, a former Prime Minister of Bombay had come with a party from Poona "for the sole purpose of clearing their doubts on ahimsa".

[2] The Date is from *Bapu Smaran*, "What the "Masnavi" Says

resist the cat with his sharp teeth, would you call that mouse violent? In the same way, for the Poles to stand valiantly against the German hordes vastly superior in numbers, military equipment and strength, was almost non-violence. I should not mind repeating that statement over and over again. You must give its full value to the word 'almost'. But we are 400 millions here. If we were to organize a big army and prepare ourselves to fight foreign aggression, how could we by any stretch of imagination call ourselves almost non-violent, let alone non-violent? The Poles were unprepared for the way in which the enemy swooped down upon them. When we talk of armed preparation, we contemplate preparation to meet any violent combination with our superior violence. If India ever prepared herself that way, she would constitute the greatest menace to world peace. For if we take that path, we will also have to choose the path of exploitation like the European nations. That is why I still regret the moment when my words lacked the power of convincing the Sardar and Rajaji. By having passed that resolution we proclaimed to the world that the ahimsa we had subscribed to all these years was not really ahimsa but a from of himsa.

Q. How will you run your administration non-violently?

G. If you assume that we would have won independence by non-violent means, it means that the bulk of the country had been organized non-violently. Without the vast majority of people having become non-violent, we could not attain non-violent swaraj. If, therefore, we attain swaraj by purely non-violent means, it should not be difficult for us to carry on the administration without the military. The goondas too will then have come under our control. If, for instance in Sevagram we have five or seven *goondas* in a population of seven hundred who are non-violently organized, the five or seven well wither live under the discipline of the rest or leave the village.

But you will see that I am answering the question with the utmost caution, and my truth makes me admit that we might have to maintain a police force. But the police will be after our pattern, and not the British pattern. As we shall have adult suffrage, the voice of even the youngest of us will count. That is why I have said that the ideally non-violent State will be an ordered anarchy. That State will be the best governed which is governed the least. The pity is that no one trusts me with the reins of government! Otherwise I would show how to govern non-violently. If I maintain a police force, it will be a body of reformers.

Q. But you had the power in the Congress?

G. That was a paper-boat. And then you must not forget that I never spared the Congress ministries. Munshi and Pantji came in for a lot of strictures from me. As I have said in another connection even the dirty water from the gutter. When it mixes with the water of the Ganges, becomes as pure as the Ganges water; even so I had expected even the *goondas* would work under Congress discipline. But evidently our ministers had not attained the purifying potency of the fabled Ganges.

B. G. KHER: But the Congress ministers had no non-violent power with them. Even if 500 *goondas* had run amuck and had been allowed to go unchecked, they would have dealt untold havoc. I do not know how even you would have dealt with them.

G. Surely, surely, I had rehearsed such situations. The ministers could on such occasions have gone out and allowed themselves to be done to death by the goondas. But let us face the fact that we had not the requisite ahimsa. We went in with our half-baked ahimsa. I do not mind it, inasmuch as we gave up power the moment we felt we should give it up. I am sure that, if we had adhered to strictest non-violence during these two or three years, the Congress would have made a tremendous advance in the direction of ahimsa and also independence.

B. G. K. But four or five years ago when there was a riot, and I appealed to the leaders to go and throw themselves into the conflagration, no one was ready.

G. So you are supporting my argument. You agree that our loyalty to ahimsa was lip-loyalty and not heart-loyalty. And if even the half-baked ahimsa carried us a long way, does it not follow that ahimsa would have carried us very far indeed, even if it had not already brought us to the goal?

Q. But we cannot visualize how you will stand non-violently against a foreign invasion.

G. I cannot draw the whole picture to you because we have no past experience to fall back upon and there is no reality facing us today. We have got the Government army manned by the Sikhs, Pathans and Gurkhas. What I can conceive is this that with my non-violent army of, say, two thousand people I should put myself between the two contending armies. But this, I know, is no answer. I can only say that we shall be able to reduce the invaders' violence to a minimum. The general of a non-violent army has got to have greater

presence of mind than that of a violent army, and God would bless him with the necessary resourcefulness to meet situations as they arise.

B. G. K. The world is made up of pairs of opposites. Where there is fear, there is courage too. When we walk on the edge of a precipice we walk warily, for we have fear. Fear is not a thing to despise. Will your non-violent army be above these pairs of opposites?

G. No. No, for the simple reason that my army will represent one of the pair—ahimsa—out of the pair of *himsa* and ahimsa. Neither I nor my army is above the pair of opposites. The state of gunatita[1] , in the language of the *Gita*, rises above *himsa* and ahimsa both. Fear has its use, but cowardice has none. I may not put my finger into the jaws of a snake, but the very sight of the snake need not strike terror into me. The trouble is that we often die many times before death overtakes us.

But let me explain what my army will be like. They need not and will not have the resourcefulness or understanding of the general, but they will have a perfect sense of discipline to carry out faithfully his order. The general should have the quality which commands the unquestioning obedience of his army, and he will expect of them nothing more than this obedience. The Dandi March was entirely my conception. Pandit Motilalji first laughed at it, he thought it to be a quixotic adventure, and Jamnalalji suggested instead a march on the Viceroy's House! But I could not think of anything but the salt march as I had to think in terms of millions of our countrymen. It was a conception that God gave me. Pandit Motilalji argued for some time, and then he said he must not argue as after all I was the general, and he must have faith in me. Later when he saw me in Jambusar, he was completely converted for he saw with his own eyes the awakening that had come over the masses. And it was an almost magical awakening. Where in history shall we find parallels of the cool courage that our women displayed in such large numbers?

And yet none of the thousands who took part in the movement were above the average. They were erring, sinning mortals. God has a way of making use of the most fragile instruments and remaining Himself untouched by everything. Only He is *gunatita*.

[1] One who has transcended the three constituents of nature—*Bhagavad Gita*, xiv. 25.

And then what after all is the army that wins? You know Rama's reply to Vibhishana when the latter wondered how Rama would be able to conquer a foe like Ravana, when he had no chariot, no amour, nor any shoes to his feet? Rama says:[1]

> The chariot, my dear Vibhishana, that wins the victory for Rama is of a different sort from the usual one. Manliness and courage are its wheels unflinching truth and character its banners and standards; strength, discrimination, self-restraint and benevolence its horses, with forgiveness, mercy, equanimity their reins; prayer to God is that conqueror's unerring charioteer, dispassion his shield, contentment his sword, charity his axe, intellect his spear, and perfect science his stout bow. His pure and unwavering mind stands for a quiver, his mental quietude and his practice of *yama* and *niyama* stand for the sheaf of arrows, and the homage he pays to Brahmins and his guru is his impenetrable armour. There is no other equipment for victory comparable to this; and, my dear friend, there is no enemy who can conquer the man who takes his stand on the chariot of dharma. He who has a powerful chariot like this is a warrior who can conquer even that great and invincible enemy - the world. Hearken unto me and fear not.

That is the equipment that can lead us to victory. I have not retired from the world, nor do I mean to. I am no recluse. I am content to do what little work I can in Sevagram and give what guidance I can do those that come to me. What we need is faith. And what is there to be lost in following the right path? The worst that can happen to us is that we shall be crushed. Better to be crushed than to be vanquished.

But if we had to equip ourselves violently, I should be at my wit's end. I cannot even think out an armament plan, much less work it. On the other hand my non-violent plan is incredibly simpler and easier, and with God as our Commander and Infallible Guide where is there cause for any fear?

Q. May a non-violent man possess wealth, and if he may, how can he keep it non-violently?

G. He may not own any wealth, thought he may possess millions. Let him hold it in trust. If he lives among dacoits and thieves, he may possess very little, indeed little beyond a loin-cloth. And if he does this, he will convert them.

[1] Mahadev Desai says: "Gandhiji only made a reference to these verses from Tulsidas's *Ramayana*. I translate them here fully for the benefit of the reader."

But you must not generalize. In a non-violent State there will be very few dacoits. For the individual the golden rule is that he will own nothing. If I decided to settle and work among the so-called criminal tribes, I should go to them without any belongings and depend on them for my food and shelter. The moment they feel that I am in their midst in order to serve them, they will be my friends. In that attitude is true ahimsa. But I have discussed this question at length in a recent article in *Harijan.*

Q. How is one to protect the honour of women?

G. I am afraid you do not read *Harijan* regularly. I discussed this question years ago, and have discussed it often since. The question may be discussed under two heads: (1) how is a woman to protect her own honour? And (2) how are her male relatives to protect it?

As regards the first question, where there is a non-violent atmosphere, where there is the constant teaching of ahimsa, woman will not regard herself as dependent, weak or helpless. She is no really helpless when she is really pure. Her purity makes her conscious of her strength. I have always held that it is physically impossible to violate a woman against her will. The outrage takes place only when she gives way to fear or does not realize her moral strength. If she cannot meet the assailant's physical might, her purity will give her the strength to die before he succeeds in violating her. Take the case of Sita. Physically she was a weakling before Ravana, but her purity was more than a match even for his giant might. He tried to win her with all kinds of allurements but could not carnally touch her without her consent. On the other hand, if a woman depends on her own physical strength or upon a weapon she possesses, she is sure to be discomfited whenever her strength is exhausted.

The second question is easily answered. The brother or father or friend will stand between his protege and her assailant. He will then either dissuade the assailant from his wicked purpose of allow himself to be killed by him in preventing him. In so laying down his life he will not only have done his duty, but given a new accession of strength to his protege who will now know how to protect her honour.

"But," said one of the sisters from Poona, "there lies the rub. How is a woman to lay down her life? Is it possible for her to do so?"

G. Oh! Any day more possible for her than for man. I know that women are capable of throwing away their lives for a much lesser purpose. Only a few days ago a young girl of twenty burnt herself to

death as she felt she was being persecuted for refusing to go in for ordinary studies. And she perished with such cool courage and determination. She ignited her sari with an ordinary oil-light and did not so much as raise a cry, so that the people in the neighbouring room were unaware of the happening until all was over. I do not give these details to commend her example, but to show how easily a woman can throw away her life. I at any rate am incapable of this courage. But I agree that it is not the external light but the inner light that is needed.

The same sister wondered how one was to avoid anger and violence altogether in dealing with children.

G. You play with him till he is five, hammer him for ten years, treat him as your friend when he is sixteen.[1] But don't you worry. If you have to be angry with your child on occasion, I shall call that anger non-violent anger. I am speaking of wise mothers, not the ignorant ones who do not deserve to be mothers.

Q. Is the central teaching of the *Gita* selfless action or non-violence?

G. I have no doubt that it is *anasakti* - selfless action. Indeed I have called my little translation of the *Gita* "*Anasaktiyoga*". And *anasakti* transcends ahimsa. He who would be *anasakta* (selfless) has necessarily to practise non-violence in order to attain the state of selflessness. Ahimsa is, therefore, a necessary preliminary: it is included in *anasakti*, it does not go beyond it.

Then does the *Gita* teach *himsa* and ahimsa both?

I do not read that meaning in the *Gita*. It is quite likely that the author did not write it to inculcate ahimsa, but as a commentator draws innumerable interpretations from a poetic text, even so I interpret the *Gita* to mean that, if its central theme is *anasakti*, it also teaches ahimsa. Whilst we are in the flesh and tread the solid earth, we have to practise ahimsa. In the life beyond there is no *himsa* or ahimsa.

B. G. K. But Lord Krishna actually counters the doctrine of ahimsa. For Arjuna utters this pacifist resolve:

Better I deem it, if my kinsmen strike,
To face them weaponless, and bare my breast
to shaft and spear, than answer blow with blow.
And Lord Krishna teaches him to answer blow with blow.[2]

[1] लालयेत पन्चवर्षाणि दश वर्षाणि ताडयेत् ।
प्राप्तेतु षोडशेवर्षे पुत्रं मित्रवदाचरेत् ॥

[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, I. 46

G. There I join issue with you. Those words of Arjuna were words of pretentious wisdom.'Until yesterday,' says Krishna to him, 'You fought your kinsmen with deadly weapons without the slightest compunction. Even today you would strike if the enemy was a stranger and not your own kith and kin!' The question before him was not of non-violence, but whether he should slay his nearest and dearest.

Again the questioners came down to solid earth, and began to put questions about the Congress and the attitude of those who believed in complete non-violence

Gandhiji explained that they should refrain till he gave the word. He wanted still to plead with the leaders who had passed the Poona resolution. He expected to show them that the Congress would lose all its prestige if they adhered to the new policy. But the question had to be dealt with patiently. On the other hand, it did not matter even if the Congress resolution received no response. The resolution was as good as enforced, when it was deliberately passed, and their duty did not alter with the refusal of the Government to respond.

Besides there is an inherent flaw in the Poona resolution. It should be obvious to the meanest understanding that, if you think that you cannot do without arms in meeting foreign aggression, they would a *fortiori* be needed in dealing with daily disturbances internecine feuds, dacoities and riots. For organized unarmed resistance against an organized invasion is any day easier than deliberate ahimsa in face of a dacoit who breaks into your house at night. That calls for ahimsa of the highest type.

Q. Can one work in two capacities—one's own individual capacity and one's representative capacity?

G. Yes, but they should not be in conflict with each other. And how can a leader follow the people? He has to lead them and they have to follow him. A newspaper may both lead and follow the public, but not a leader of the people.

Q. Then, how is it that the Sardar is reported to have said in Ahmedabad that individually he would follow Mahatmaji but otherwise he would act as a representative of his province?

G. I do not believe that he said this. Can one think of the Sardar taking up the sword as a representative of Gujarat, and abandoning it in his individual capacity?

Q. You have told us how to behave in case of riots. May we know how you acted in 1921 when there was rioting on the day the Prince of Wales arrived in Bombay?

G. There were two occasions. The first was the Rowlatt Act Satyagraha. Then as I was discharged near Marine Lines I heard that rioting was going on near Pydhunie. I got into a car, drove straight to the scene, and was able to restrain the crowd. The second was at the time of the Prince of Wales's visit when the people were burning motors, tram-cars, etc. I went to the scene and pacified them. But riots broke out at Byculla and spread in other parts. The anger was against Congressmen. I did not go myself, but I sent Congressmen to face the angry crowds and pacify them. That was a most delicate situation. I purposely did not go myself, because I thought an injury to me by the angered crowd would be attended with much bloodshed instead of resulting in pacification.

That, however, is not to say that I am a brave man. I am by nature timid, but God has always come to my rescue and blessed me with the courage needed for the occasion. The one occasion on which my courage was put to the severest test was on 13th January, 1897 when, acting against Mr. Escombe's advice not to disembark until dusk, I went ashore and faced the howling crowd determined on lynching me. I was surrounded by thousands of them, I was pelted with stones and kicked, but my courage did not fail me. I really cannot say how the courage came to me. But it did. God is great.

Harijan, 25-8-1940 and 1-9-1940

131. LETTER TO TARA SINGH

SEVAGRAM,
August 16, 1940

DEAR SARDARJI,

I am glad you have sent me a copy of your letter[1] to Maulana Saheb. As I have told you, in my opinion, you have nothing in common with the Congress nor the Congress with you. You believe in the rule of the sword; the Congress does not. You have all the time 'my community' in mind. The Congress has no community but the whole nation. Your civil disobedience is purely a branch of violence. I

[1] In his letter the addressee had argued that the Congress should not prevent recruitment to the army.

am quite clear in my mind that being in the Congress you weaken 'your community' and weaken the Congress. With your mentality, you have to offer your services to the British Government unconditionally and look to it for the protection of the rights of 'your community'. You do not suppose for one moment that the British will take your recruits on your conditions. They would commit suicide if they did. You have to be either fully nationalist or frankly communal and therefore dependent upon the British or other foreign power.

This is the considered opinion of one who loves you and the Sikhs as he loves himself an din reality more. For I have ceased to love myself.

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

Harijan, 29-9-1940

132. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 17, 1940

CHI. LILA,

I do write to you regularly. I got the *raksha*. It is not at all good that you do not go for walks. You will regret it. Be regular about going for walks every morning and evening as you are about other things. Your mind will remain fresh and your reading will be more fruitful. There is no book on zoology here. Which do you want? You will get help in science when you come here. Shakribehn has not come. She is not coming in the immediate future. Sushila will not come before September at any rate. Damayanti's son will get well. To bring up children is no easy job. Rajkumari has come. Mirabehn is here at present.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI LILAVATIBEHN UDESI
KANJI KHETSI CHHATRALAYA
65 MINT ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 9937. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

133. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

August 17, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You are right. You should yourself do whatever you can. But if some difficulty crops up that must be got over, do consult me.

Ba's problem is perennial. It has got to be put up with. Keep on reporting to me. I shall do whatever I can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4358

134. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
August 17, 1940

CHI. SHARMA,

I have made full use of your letter.[1] Now I have been asked to supply the names and addresses of persons you have mentioned. I think this is a just demand. You say that those who want to inquire into your complaint may approach you. Now you may send all details to me urgently.

How is your leg? You have been very careless.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

What about your own case[2]? Write to me in detail. Did you meet the collector?

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 288

[1] The addressee had complained of coercion being used by officials in collecting money for the war fund, furnishing instances. *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 11-8-1940

[2] Alleged harassment at the hands fo the police

135. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
August 18, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I thank you for your letter of the 15th instant.

I gave all the particulars I had from Nagla Nawabad. But I admit that enquiry into the particular cases will be difficult without the details you ask for. I am at once writing to my correspondent.[1] It may be difficult for him to produce the required details. Direct proof of these cases may be impossible save in a case like Hinganghat. But I shall try to get what details I can. You may expect a further letter from me containing information about other cases.

I am,

Your sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a printed copy: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

136. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA[2]

August 18, 1940

I am glad you wrote. I was wondering why there was no letter from you. Endure the ulcer cheerfully as gift from God.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7561. Also C. W. 5036. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

137. EQUAL DISTRIBUTION[3]

In last week's article on the Constructive Programme[4] I mentioned equal distribution of wealth as one of the 13 items.[5]

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] This was a postscript Gandhiji added to a letter Mahadev Desai wrote to the addresee.

[3] The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 24-8-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

[4] *Vide* "Implications of Constructive Programme"

[5] The Gujarati adds: "Let us consider it here."

The real implication of equal distribution is that each man shall have the wherewithal to supply all his natural needs and no more. For example, if one man has a weak digestion and requires only a quarter of a pound of flour for his bread and another needs a pound, both should be in a position to satisfy their wants. To bring this ideal into being the entire social order has got to be reconstructed. A society based on non-violence cannot nurture any other ideal. We may not perhaps be able to realize the goal, but we must bear it in mind and work unceasingly to near it. To the same extent as we progress towards our goal we shall find contentment and happiness, and to that extent too shall we have contributed towards the bringing into being of a non-violent society.

It is perfectly possible for an individual to adopt this way of life without having to wait for others to do so. And if an individual can observe a certain rule of conduct, it follows that a group of individuals can do likewise. It is necessary for me to emphasize the fact that no one need wait for anyone else in order to adopt a right course. Men generally hesitate to make a beginning if they feel that the objective cannot be had in its entirely. Such an attitude of mind is in reality a bar to progress.

Not let us consider how equal distribution can be brought about through non-violence. The first step towards it is for him who has made this ideal part of his being to bring about the necessary changes in his personal life. He would reduce his wants to a minimum, bearing in mind the poverty of India. His earnings would be free of dishonesty. The desire for speculation would be renounced. His habitation would be in keeping with the new mode of life. There would be self-restraint exercised in every sphere of life. When he has done all that is possible in his own life, then only will he be in a position to preach this ideal among his associates and neighbours.

Indeed at the root of this doctrine of equal distribution must lie that of the trusteeship of the wealthy for the superfluous wealth possessed by them. For according to the doctrine they may not possess a rupee more than their neighbours. How is this to be brought about? Non-violently? Or should the wealthy be dispossessed of their possessions? To do this we would naturally have to resort to violence. This violent action cannot benefit society. Society will be the poorer, for it will lose the gifts of a man who knows how to accumulate wealth. Therefore the non-violent way is evidently superior. The rich man will

be left in possession of his wealth, of which he will use what he reasonably requires for his personal needs and will act as a trustee for the remainder to be used for the society. In this argument honesty on the part of the trustee is assumed.

As soon as man looks upon himself as a servant of society, earns for its sake, spends for its benefit, then purity enters into his earnings and there is ahimsa in his venture. Moreover, if men's minds turn towards this way of life, there will come about a peaceful revolution in society, and that without any bitterness.

It may be asked whether history at any time records such a change in human nature. Such changes have certainly taken place in individuals. One may not perhaps be able to point to them in a whole society. But this only means that up till now there has never been an experiment on a large scale in non-violence. Somehow or other the wrong belief has taken possession of us that ahimsa is pre-eminently a weapon for individuals and its use should therefore be limited to that sphere. In fact this is not the case. Ahimsa is definitely an attribute of society. To convince people of this truth is at once my effort and my experiment. In this age of wonders no one will say that a thing or idea is worthless because it is new. To say it is impossible because it is difficult is again not in consonance with the spirit of the age. Things undreamt of are daily being seen, the impossible is ever becoming possible. We are constantly being astonished these days at the amazing discoveries in the field of violence. But I maintain that far more undreamt of and seemingly impossible discoveries will be made in the field on non-violence. The history of religion is full of such examples. To try to root out religion itself from society is a wild goose chase. And were such an attempt to succeed, it would mean the destruction of society. Superstition, evil customs and other imperfections creep in from age to age and mar religion for the time being. They come and go.[1] But religion itself remains. Because the existence of the world in a broad sense depends on religion. The ultimate definition of religion may be said to be obedience to the law of God. God and His law are synonymous terms. Therefore God signifies an unchanging and living law. No one has ever really found Him. But

[1] The Gujarati version has: "Religion undergoes transformation. The apparent superstitions, evil customs and imperfections can be removed—in fact they are and will be removed."

avatars and prophets have, by means of their tapasya, given to mankind a faint glimpse of the eternal Law.

If, however, in spite of the utmost effort, the rich do not become guardians of the poor in the true sense of the term and the latter are more and more crushed and die of hunger, what is to be done? In trying to find the solution to this riddle I have lighted on non-violent non-co-operation and civil disobedience as the right and infallible means. The rich cannot accumulate wealth without the co-operation of the poor in society. Man has been conversant with violence from the beginning, for he has inherited this strength from the animal in his nature. It was only when he rose from the state of a quadruped (animal) to that of a biped (man) that the knowledge of the strength of ahimsa entered into his soul. This knowledge has grown within him slowly but surely. If this knowledge were to penetrate to and spread amongst the poor, they would become strong and would learn how to freethemselves by means of non-violence from the crushing inequalities [which have brought them to the verge of starvation][1] .

I scarcely need to write anything about non-co-operation and civil disobedience, for the readers of *Harijanbandhu* are familiar with these and their working.

SEVAGRAM, August 19, 1940

Harijan, 25-8-1940

138. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

August 19, 1940

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I am returning the letter[2] duly revised.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3013

[1] This portion is not to be found in the Gujarati.

[2] The letter, addressed to the Viceroy, is not traceable.

139. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

August 19, 1940

There is no need for you to feel unhappy because [I have said that] I am your faithful dog. That quadruped brother of ours possesses great nobility. . .[1]

According to the commentators the dog was Dharma personified[2] . But if the Dog has become rabid, you can and should remove him. My advice to you now is that you should set right this mistake made by me. I have exceeded my authority as a general. Either rectify the mistake I made in allowing Raja to have his resolution[3] twisting the meaning of ahimsa or remove me. If you rectify the mistake I have a plan for future action.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

140. LETTER TO SUSHLLA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 19, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

What a girl you are! You are taking the whole blame on yourself. Would I be taking such pains over you if I was dissatisfied with your translations? Would the *Harijan Sevak* be shifted from there because of such dissatisfaction? It would be like killing a buffalo to make a leather thong. If I am dissatisfied, why should I not withdraw the translation work from you and give it to someone else? There are more facilities for printing in Poona and there is the temptation to make *Harijan Sevak* more attractive. Its circulation is only nominal. Hariji himself writes that it can flourish only if it is shifted to Poona. We have none to take charge there. Ultimately if it has to be shifted, on your account I shall really be sad to shift it. But if it becomes a

[1] Omission as in the source.

[2] In the *Mahabharata* Dharma appearing as a dog is said to have accompanied Yudhishthira on his last journey.

[3] The Delhi resolution of July; *vide* "Rajagopalachari's Resolution For Working Committee Meeting, Delhi", 3-7-1940 and "Resolution Passed at Congress Working Committee Meeting At Delhi", 7-7-1940 *Vide* also "The Delhi Resolution"

duty to shift it, I will do it notwithstanding the distress doing so will cause me. We can hope that by the time *Harijan Sevak* is shifted to Poona, you will have arrived here. The people connected with [*Harijan*] *Sevak* came here. I told them that the idea for improvement was yours. There is a letter from Soli saying that he is willing to pay half the expense. I have written to say that you. are not here and the improvements will be carried out if you come back.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: Pyarel al Papers . Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y. Courte sy: Dr. Sushil a Nayyar

141. MY IDEA OF A POLICE FORCE[1]

A friend writes as follows:[2]

The questions asked in this letter are of the utmost importance and deserve notice.[3] If true ahimsa had come into being within us, and if our so-called satyagraha movements had been truly non-violent, these questions would not have arisen because they would have been solved.

For one who has never seen the arctic regions an imaginary description of them, however elaborate, can convey but an inadequate idea of the reality. Even so is it with ahimsa. If all Congressmen had been true to their creed, we would not be vacillating between violence and non-violence as we are today. The fruits of ahimsa would be in evidence everywhere. There would be communal harmony, the demon of untouchability would have been cast out, and, generally speaking, we should have evolved an ordered society. But the reverse is the case just now. There is even definite hostility to the Congress in certain quarters. The word of Congressmen is not always relied on. The

[1] The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu,* 31-8-1940. This translation is reproduced from *Harijan.*

[2] Not reproduced here. The correspondent, while conceding the effectiveness of non-violence to meet external affression, had argued that so long as social injustice and poverty existed internal disturbances were bound to continue and hence also the need for a police force. he had asked Gandhiji whether he envisaged such a police force to be maintained for all time.

[3] The Gujarati version has: “deserve consideration by all the responsible satya grahis.”

Muslim League and most of the Princes have no faith in the Congress and are in fact inimical to it. If Congressmen had true ahimsa in them, there would be none of this distrust. In fact the Congress would be the beloved of all.

Therefore I can only place an imaginary picture before the votaries of ahimsa.

So long as we are not saturated with pure ahimsa we cannot possibly win swaraj through non-violence. We can come into power only when we are in a majority or, in other words, when the large majority of people are willing to abide by the law of ahimsa. When this happy state prevails, the spirit of violence will have all but vanished and internal disorder will have come under control.

Nevertheless I have conceded that even in a non-violent State a police force may be necessary. This, I admit, is a sign of my imperfect ahimsa. I have not the courage to declare that we can carry on without a police force as I have in respect of an army. Or course I can and do envisage a state where the police will not be necessary; but whether we shall succeed in realizing it, the future alone will show.

The police of my conception will, however, be of a wholly different pattern from the present-day force. Its ranks will be composed of believers in non-violence. They will be servants, not masters, of the people. The people will instinctively render them every help, and through mutual co-operation they will easily deal with the everdecreasing disturbances. The police force will have some kind of arms, but they will be rarely used, if at all. In fact the policemen will be reformers. Their police work will be confined primarily to robbers and dacoits. Quarrels between labour and capital and strikes will be few and far between in a non-violent state, because the influence of the non-violent majority will be so great as to command the respect of the principal elements in society. Similarly there will be no room for communal disturbances. Then we must remember that when such a Congress Government comes into power the large majority of men and women of 21 years and over will have been enfranchised. The rigid and cramped Constitution of today has of course no place in this picture.

SEVAGRAM, August 20, 1940

Harijan, 1-9-1940

142. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 20, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

As I have not had any acknowledgment—a most unusual thing for you—of my letter of the 9th instant, lest it might have miscarried I send herewith a copy of it in order to make assurance double sure.[1]

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a printed copy: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

143. LETTER TO BHOLANATH

SEVAGRAM,
August 20, 1940

BHAI BHOLANATH,

I think I have given you my blessings. But your letter is before me and hence I write again. May you succeed in your endeavours.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]
Gandhiji aur Rajasthan, p. 275

144. DR. LOHIA AGAIN

By courtesy of Shri Achyut Patwardhan I have a copy of Dr. Lohia's statement before the court and the judgment of the presiding magistrate. The whole of Dr. Lohia's statement is sound, but I resist the temptation to give it in full. Here, however, is its pertinent part:

[1] The Viceroy's note on this letter was: "P. S. V. Perhaps an acknowledgment to an acknowledgment might be held to be superfluous! But we can afford to be magnanimous and to say that I received his letter and was greateful for it. This letter is clearly an invitation to expand and perhaps a sign of distress. But there is nothing doing."

In all our activities we have to be non-violent. Non-violence is dictated not only by the circumstances in our country but by considerations that operate throughout the world. It is not only a practical necessity, it is an ethical desirability. Whatever little confusion there might be on this point due to faulty reporting is set aside by the reporter himself. I am reported to have said: 'When we have recourse to weapons we become weak of hearts. Those who rely on weapons do not rely on their hearts. They turn into slaves of their own weapons. They have no strength left in themselves.

I am an opponent of the old cult of the lathi, and its modern equivalent the cult of the aeroplane. There is an inner contradiction between these cults and the enduring of human life, a contradiction which is daily becoming more fierce. The next twenty years will show which wins, and the dualism cannot last longer.Should human life endure, there can be only one from of organization. Adult democracy must obtain throughout the world, and there will be no place in it for imperialism, nor for capitalism. I have given an indication in my speech of this form of government as it will affect the Indian people. It was with a view to bring into the foreground this principle of adult democracy that I suggested an immediate peace plan to Mahatma Gandhi. I claim no origina-lity for this plan whose items are:

1. All peoples will be free. Those newly acquiring freedom will determine their constitution through a constituent assembly.

2. All races are equal, and there will be no racial privileges in any part of the world. There will be no political bar to anyone settling wherever he likes.

3. All credits and investments owned by the Government and nationals of one country in another will be scrapped or submitted for impartial review to international tribunals. They will then be owned not by individuals but by the state.

When these three principles will have been accepted by the people of the world, a fourth will automatically come into operation.

4. There will be total disarmament.

I am happy in the knowledge that Mahatma Gandhji has endorsed this peace plan.

Let me in conclusion state that I have no ill will towards any people. I have lived among the German people and liked their thoroughness of enquiry, the scientific bent of their mind and their efficiency in action. I am unhappy that they have today to carry on their shoulders a system which

results in war and conquest. I have no intimate knowledge of the British people. I dare say that they have their virtues. I may be permitted to quote from my speech: 'I do not want the destruction of Britain. The British have done evil to us, but I do not want to do evil to them.' Again, I am unhappy that the British people have to carry on their shoulders today a system which has enslaved the people of the world.

Of Dr. Lohia this is what the court has to say:

The accused is a highly intellectual and cultured gentlemen, perhaps with a doctorate degree of some European University, a man of high principles and morals whose honesty of purpose nobody can doubt. He does not mind suffering for his convictions and does not care much for his sentence or its duration. We certainly do not punish him for holding certain political views about the present Government, for the very claim of the Government that it is democratic and run on public opinion entitles the public to criticize it according to his [sic] light by constitutional means, but we must protect such Government from embarrassment in her relations with the masses who are bound to be disaffected by a speech like the one the accused has delivered in Dostpur, and particularly when the British nation and Empire is in grip with the most unscrupulous enemy. I, therefore, consider that his detention in jail for a long duration or until the present cloud is drifted away is very desirable and to that end in view I sentence him to two years R. I. He is recommended for B Class.

Then why has he been rewarded with rigorous imprisonment? The duration of the term I understand. He must be kept from the supposed mischief. I wonder whether the fact of the imprisonment will not aggravate the mischief. Of this, the Government must be the judge. But the people will remember that love of one's country and outspokenness are a crime in a country where the state is irresponsible to the people. Dr. Lohia and other Congressmen's imprisonments are so many hammer-strokes that must weaken the chain that binds India. The Government is inviting the Congress to start civil disobedience and deliver the last blow it would fain have reserved for a better day - better for the British. It is a pity.

SEVAGRAM, August 21, 1940

Harijan, 25-8-1940

145. IMPROPER USE[1]

There is in Kashmir a firm called Ganju House. I do not know any of its partners or the nature of the business done by the Company. Shri H. Kotak who was for some time in the Ashram at Sabarmati and later in the A. I. S. A., having ceased connection with the latter, joined the Ganju House and advertised it and his connection with it by using without my permission a private and personal letter written to him by me. My attention was drawn to the improper use. I rebuked Shri Kotak for such use of my letter. He has realized his mistake and sent the following notice to the Lahore *Tribune* for publication:[2]

I am glad that Shri Kotak has repaired the blunder.

SEVAGRAM, August 21, 1940

Harijan, 25-8-1940

146. DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE[3]

WARDHA,
August 21, 1940

The Working Committee have considered the Viceregal pronouncement dated 8th inst.,[4] on the Indian situation and the statement made by the Secretary of State in the House of Commons. The W. C. are of opinion that both are highly unsatisfactory and provocative because they ignore patent facts. They constitute one more among the many impositions on an unwilling India. In spite of all repudiations the indisputable fact stands out that the Congress is the only national organization in the country that is non-communal, non-sectional and wholly democratic. It is the one organization that has for fifty-five years growingly represented the dumb millions of India, as has been repeatedly proved during its career. The most convincing proof that can be understood by the world consists in the fact that barring four

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

[2] Not reproduced here. Kotak admitted in the notice that his action was hightly improper and wholly unauthorized.

[3] The Congress Working Committee met at Wardha from 18th to 22nd August. The resolution was not accepted *in toto*. For the resolution as passed, *vide* "Resolution Passed at Congress Working Committee Meeting at Wardha", 21-8-1940

[4] *Vide* "Statement made by the viceroy on August 8, 1940"

out of the eleven provinces the Congress has a decisive majority given even by the limited electorate provided by the British Government in their Act imposed upon India. If the electorate was not manipulated, as it has been under the said Act, and if representatives were elected under adult suffrage, it is admitted that the Congress would sweep the polls throughout India not excluding State India. This claim has not been put forth by any other organization in India. In the face of this the Secretary of State has misled the British public and world opinion by mentioning as 'separate constituent factors the Muslim League, the Depressed Classes and the Princes. The Muslim League is undoubtedly a powerful organization demanding the greatest consideration. It is the primary concern of the Congress to placate the Muslims of India. What the British Government have done is to play the Muslims against the Hindus and vice versa in order to consolidate their power and to exploit the vast resources of India in their own interest. It is they who finally cut the nation in twain by introducing the virus of separate electorates. The Congress therefore repudiates the British claim specially to represent Muslim interests in so far as they may be in danger from the Hindu majority. The Congress has claimed that the political and economic state of both is identical. The Congress has undertaken to guarantee to the full the protection of the religious and the cultural rights of Muslims. So far as the depressed classes are concerned the indisputable fact is that the British Government is incapable of protecting them. It is admitted that they have suffered and are suffering from wrongs which no other part of the nation has suffered. But their disabilities are social and religious. They are beyond the power of any foreign Government to redress. All that the British Government have done is to sow seeds of dissension among the Hindus themselves of whom the depressed classes are an inseparable part. There is no such thing as a class known as depressed. No single organization specially devoted to their interest can represent the whole of them. They have no class consciousness. If the British Government could have helped it, they would have vivisected the Hindus by creating separate electorates for them as they have for Muslims and destroyed both the caste Hindus and the non-caste Hindus which the depressed classes are. The British Government know very well that the legal status of these classes was improved under Congress ministries as never before. They know that removal of untouchability is a plank in the Congress programme. They know that the Congress has worked ceaselessly for the social amelioration of their lot. It is therefore false

and hypocritical for the British Government to pose as their protectors as against the Congress. Equally false is their claim to protect the Princes against the Congress. The British Government know that the Princes are their creation sustained to secure the British hold on the whole of India. They cannot be played against the Indian claim for independence.

Rejection by the British Government of the Congress resolution[1] is proof of their determination to hold India by the sword against her will. In order to compass this they have been gradually undermining the power of the Congress by picking out some of the best workers of the Congress under and Defence of India Act which has no popular sanction whatsoever.

It was to this Government that the Congress resolution was addressed in the hope that the congress goodwill and the hand of friendship will be recognized, appreciated and reciprocated. Instead it has been rejected on grounds which have been shown to be false and hypocritical.

It is well known that the offer was made against Gandhji's advice. He had warned the members of the W. C. that the Congress was abdicating its moral position by promising to associate itself actively with the War as against declaration of independence and immediate composition of a national executive responsible to the elected legislature. It would be no answer to this proposition that under the existing Act this could not be done. The desired change could have been made in one hour as a peremptory war measure. But the British Government did not and do not wish to part with their possession of India. Events that have happened compel the W. C. To recognize the soundness of Gandhiji's advice from the purely political platform if not from his ethical standpoint. The Congress which has inculcated non-violence for the past 20 years for ousting the British Power could not be turned into a war machine without losing its fibre and without doing violence to the dumb masses which have hitherto responded to the Congress call. The W. C. therefore consider the British Government's rejection of the Congress resolution as a God-sent escape from a false and untenable position. The W. C. therefore wish it to be known that the effect of the resolution must be regarded as exhausted.

[1] Promising co-operation in the war effort if Britain acknowledged the independence of India and formed a national government at the Center. The resolution was passed at the A. I. C. C. session held at aPoona on 27th and 28th July.

It has not further currency. The W. C. must revert to Gandhiji's position and so far as the congress is concerned it must strive to build up a non-violent society and believe with Gandhiji in the possibility of building up a State able to defend its liberty against the whole world by its own sheer goodwill towards the whole of mankind working under a democratic system which will eschew all violence and which by its simple code will afford no temptation to an invader.

It follows from this that the Congress must now vindicate its position and seek to protect itself against a slow death by the means that the British Government have chosen to adopt for the purpose.

The W. C. cannot but put on record its deep sorrow that the desire of the Congress not to embarrass the British Government has been despised by them and they have thus driven the Congress to defend itself against political extinction. It therefore invites and appoints Gandhiji to devise such measures as he may think necessary for the protection of the congress and national honour and calls upon all Congress organizations and Congressmen to carry out such instructions as he may issue himself and through the W. C. or otherwise.

The W. C. wish it to be known that they have no quarrel with the Muslim League or the Muslims or any other organization or persons. Nor have they anything but goodwill towards the Princes. Their non-violence, if it is worth the name, precludes any ill will towards any part of the nation of which the Congress is proud to be known as servant. Nor has the Congress anything but goodwill towards the British people. In entering upon a life and death struggle, as the Congress must, Congressmen can have no thought but that of the supreme good of the dumb and toiling millions of India and through them of the whole of submerged humanity. In seeking that good, Congress has chosen the most harmless and the most powerful method of unadulterated non-violence.

The W. C. seek the co-operation in their task of all the forces of good throughout the world.

A. I. C. C. File No. 1251, 1940. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

147. TO THE HINDI READERS

Ever since I started writing for *Harijanbandhu* in Gujarati, readers have been complaining—though in sweet words—that I have

been partial to Gujarati. I have already answered this complaint, but the readers are not satisfied. Viyogiji[1] , therefore, says that I must write something exclusively for *Harijan Sevak*. There is no need to persu-ade me in this connection because I love to write in the national lang-uage. I would, therefore, only say that I will try. The Congress has recognized Hindustani as the national language. Hindustani is that language which is spoken in North India by both Hindus and Muslims and is written either in Devanagari or Urdu script. My endeavour will be to write in such Hindustani.

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, August 21, 1940

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1063

148. LETTER TO KANHAIYALAL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C.P.,
August 21, 1940

BHAI KANHAIYALAL,

Mirabai is going there with a different intention. A special reason which is blameless. She wants to do penance. She does not want to participate in any activity. She would devote her time only to spinning and singing the praise of God for a while. I know you have helped Mirabai a lot. Being aware that you like her pious company, I am sending her there. If this inconveniences you in any manner, let me know.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 10051. Also C. W. 6456

149. ADVICE TO MYSORE CONGRESSMEN[2]

[Before *August 22, 1940*]

Gandhiji is reported to have emphasized that no out-and-out non-violent Congressman, whether belonging to the State Congress or British Indian Province,

[1] Viyogi Hari, editor of *Harijan Sevak*

[2] In view of the different opinions prevailing among Mysore Congressment K. T. Bhashyam and K. C. Reddi asked Gandhiji whether the Mysore Congress could co-operate in the war efforts if the State promised responsible Government to the subjects.

could extend his material co-operation with his own money to a cause which demands perpetration of inhumanity. Gandhiji is also stated to have added:

It is entirely a matter for the Mysore Congress to decide whether they have the courage of their conviction to go with me. No useful purpose can be served by quoting the 1917 incident. I had no message to deliver then. I now have the courage of conviction that a believer in non-violence could not co-operate in war efforts. It was purely a matter of personal al belief then. Recent experiments have given me the courage to extend it further, including Defence.

The Hindu, 22-8-1940

150. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

August 24, 1940

BHAI MAVALANKAR[1],

Bhai Prabhashankar[2] has come here. He told me his tale of woe. I was glad to hear that this work had been entrusted to you. I know that you will do whatever you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 1248

151. OUTLINE RESOLUTION FOR A. I. C. C.

August 25, 1940

The Working Committee and the A. I. C. C. should pass a resolution in the following terms:

1. In view of the British Govt.'s statements and decision the offer made by the A. I. C. C. in the Poona resolutions[3] is exhausted

[1] A Congress leader, Speaker fo the Bombay Legislative Assembly, later Speaker of the Lok Sabha

[2] Prabhashankar D. Pattani, Dewan of Bhavnagar

[3] At its meeting at Poona on July 27 and 28, the A. I. C. C. had endorsed the Delhi resolution of the Working Committee offering co - operation in the war effort subject to the British Government making "an unequivocal declaration according complete independence to India" an unequivocal declaration according complete independence to India" and constituting a "National Government" at the centre. In another resolution it had said that "while the Congress must continue to adhere strictly to the principle of non-violence in the struggle for independence it is unable, in the present circumstances, to declare that the principle should be extended to free India's national defence".

and has no further currency. The British Govt.'s proposals are rejected and the Congress, which took a step in non-co-operation with the British Govt. In November last, must now, in order to defend the honour and liberties of the Indian people, take further steps in this direction and resist the activities of the British Govt. which are injurious to the nation. The A. I. C. C. call upon that people to refuse every kind of participation in the war and in men and money.

2. A reference to the British Govt.'s repressive measures, arrests of Congressmen, etc., functioning of the Defence of India Act and their attempt to suppress the Indian people, rule them by the sword and impose their will upon them promoting divisions.

3. The position thus created is intolerable and if submitted to would mean degradation of the people and their continued enslavement.

4. The Congress, therefore, must now function in terms of the Ramgarh resolution and undertake satyagraha for this purpose. It requests and authorizes Mahatma Gandhi to guide the nation and calls upon the people to follow his directions with a view to making this satyagraha effective and in conformity with the principles of the Congress.

5. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the previous resolutions the A. I. C. C. affirms afresh its firm faith in the policy and practice of non-violence. It believes in the principle not only in the struggle for swaraj but also, in so far as this may be possible of application, in free India. The A. I. C. C. is convinced that world events demonstrate that complete world disarmament is necessary, and the establishment of a new political and economic order, wherein free nations co-operate with each other; if the world is not to revert to barbarism. A free India will therefore throw all its weight in favour of world disarmament and should herself be prepared to give a lead in this to the world. Such lead will inevitably depend on external factors and internal conditions. But the State must do its utmost to give effect to this policy of disarmament.[1]

From a photostat : C. W. 10880. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan

[1] For the resolution passed by the A. I. C. C. at its sitting in Bombay on September 15/16, 1940; vide "All-India Congress Committee Resolution"

152. CABLE TO CARL HEATH[1]

WARDHAGANJ,
August 26, 1940

CARL HEATH
FRIENDS HOUSE
EUSTON ROAD
LONDON

SITUATION SERIOUS CONGRESSMEN FEEL GOVERNMENT REPRESSION AIMED AT CONGRESS. THIS WILL MAKE CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE INEVITABLE THOUGH TRYING AVERT CRISIS MYSELF MAY BE INVOLVED. POLICY NON-EMBARRASSMENT ADOPTED MY INITIATIVE. IT MAY NOT BE ALLOWED TO BE USED TO CRUSH CONGRESS. WILL DO NOTHING WITHOUT TRYING SEE VICEROY. FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CONGRESS AND ME BEING ELIMINATED.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 1040

[1] On August 13, he and Agatha Harrison had c abled to Gandhiji: "Realize difference between government proposals and Congress demand. But feel much depends on specific intrepretations face to face. We recal your words when Andrews died. Would venture to suggest to you and Congress that this is moment to implement Andrews's legacy."

153. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

August 26, 1920

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have received no letter from you for a week. Pyarelal says that he has not shown me some of your letters. I did not have the time and since there was no letter from you, I did not write. Today I saw your letter to Pyarelal. There is no limit to your foolishness. I shall not press you to come. If you do come in your present state, you will not feel happy here. What you ask is a thing you should not ask and even if it were possible for me to give it I should not give it. So you may take the chapter as closed. When you find that you cannot help coming to me without laying down preconditions, rush to me and become one with me.

You must live there in total detachment. Then only will you be happy. When you go home you should go as an outsider or as a doctor. Do not involve yourself in the cares of the household. It would be best if you could start earning. You can then satisfy Mother's hunger. You have no special needs. Give up the temptation of sending your savings to me. You can be absorbed in many places if you take up a job. By refusing to accept my help, you are not earning merit but incurring sin. Are you ashamed to be known as my daughter? Lilavati introduces herself as my daughter. Your false pride is eating me.

Mohanlal and Shakuntala should live away from Mother. Mother's place is here. Parnerkar's mother had been staying here. She will be coming again. Mahadev's mother comes and goes. She is his step-mother. Why should not Pyarelal's mother live with Pyarelal? I am prepared to provide a separate kitchen for her. Thereby, the question of expenses will be solved. Arguments will come to an end. And the meanness resulting from lack of money will disappear. This is a natural arrangement. Mother will be able to pay occasional visits to Mohanlal as a guest. You will be relieved of a heavy burden. If you become calm, everything will be well soon. If I remain alive, in course of time you are bound to become one with me. I am in no hurry about it. You should not be in a hurry either.

Enclosed is a list of mistakes in *Harijan Sevak* prepared by Munnalal. The first mistake is obvious and it is bad. I have hurriedly

glanced through other errors. Some of them may not be errors. The rest are insignificant.

Harijan Sevak will probably be shifted to Poona next week. Chandrashankar[1] will arrive there on Saturday to make arrangements. Rest assured that my decisions are likely to have more knowledge behind them than yours. You will feel calm if you have such confidence. This does not mean that you should rush here. But it means that you should become humble. If you have humility in you, you should never have any doubts concerning my decisions. You are free to ask questions. But you must have trust in my answers. Think over this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: Pyarel al Papers . Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y. Courte sy: Dr. Sushil a Nayyar

154. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 26, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. You have really lost your senses in this matter. You ought to trust to my wisdom. You are unnecessarily torturing yourself by imagining things. Who says that you are disqualified? If you were disqualified, how would I say from here that you were qualified? Why does this not satisfy you? You would be living here on the same conditions as Mahadev, Chimanlal, Krishnachandra, etc. It is the height of your stupidity that you are making a distinction between Mahadev and Chimanlal. You should come out of that pit of folly. I would have liked, when I go to Simla, to take with me Rajkumari's black clock which used to be kept on the wall. I had given it either to you or to Pyarelal for safe-keeping. Do you remember anything about it?

I have already written about *Harijan Sevak.*

Blessings form

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: Pyarel al papers . Nehru memori al Museum and Librar y. Courte sy: Dr. Sushil a Nayyar

[1] Chandrashankar Shukla

155. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 26, 1940

CHI. PYARELAL,

With regard to Sushila, I know you and I hold different views. I consider the letter I am writing today as brimming with love. Very often love appears harsher than even a thunderbolt. It is not less love for that. For in reality it is as soft as a flower. In my view, Sushila is going completely astray and making herself unnecessarily miserable. But I am willing to abide by your wish. Should I stop writing to her? One thing is certain: that either you should guide her or I should do so. Between the two of us, she will be crushed. It may be as well if you go to Delhi for a couple of days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: Pyarel al Papers . Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y. Courte sy: Belade vi Nayyar and Dr. Sushil a Nayyar

156. NON-VIOLENCE OF THE BRAVE[1]

A correspondent writes:

> You say non-violence is for the brave, not for cowards. But, in my opinion, in India the brave are conspicuous by their absence. Even if we claim to be brave, how is the world to believe us when it knows that India has no arms and is therefore incapable of defending herself? What then should we do to cultivate non-violence of the brave?

The correspondent is wrong in thinking that in India the brave are conspicuous by their absence. It is a matter for shame that because foreigners once labelled us as cowards we should accept the label. Man often becomes what he believes himself to be. If I keep on saying to myself that I cannot do a certain thing, it is possible that I may end by really becoming incapable of doing it. On the contrary, if I have the belief that I can do it, I shall surely acquire the capacity to do it even if I may not have it at the beginning. Again it is wrong to say that the world today believes us to be cowards. It has ceased to

[1] The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 31-8-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

think so since the satyagraha campaign. The Congress prestige has risen very high in the West during the past twenty years. The world is watching with astonished interest the fact that although we have no arms we are hoping to win swaraj, and have indeed come very near it. Moreover, it sees in our non-violent movement rays of hope for peace in the world and its salvation from the hell of carnage. The bulk of mankind has come to believe that, if ever the spirit of revenge is to vanish and bloody wars are to cease, the happy event can happen only through the policy of non-violence adopted by the Congress. The correspondent's fear and suspicion are, therefore, unfounded.

It will now be seen that the fact that India is unarmed is no obstacle in the path of ahimsa. The forcible disarmament of India by the British Government was indeed a grave wrong and a cruel injustice. But we can turn even injustice to our advantage if God be with us, or if you prefer, we have the skill to do so. And such a thing has happened in India.

Arms are surely unnecessary for a training in ahimsa. In fact the arms, if any, have to be thrown away, as the Khan Saheb did in the Frontier Province. Those who hold that it is essential to learn violence before we can learn non-violence, would hold that only sinners can be saints.

Just as one must learn the art to killing in the training for violence, so one must learn the art of dying in the training for non-violence. Violence does not mean emancipation from fear, but discovering the means of combating the cause of fear. Non-violence, on the other hand, has no cause for fear. The votary of non-violence has to cultivate the capacity for sacrifice of the highest type in order to be free from fear. He recks not if he should lose his land, his wealth, his life. He who has not overcome all fear cannot practise ahimsa to perfection. The votary of ahimsa has only one fear, that is of God. He who seeks refuse in God ought to have a glimpse of the atman that transcends the body; and the moment one has a glimpse of the imperishable atman one sheds the love of the perishable body. Training in non-violence is thus diametrically opposed to training in violence. Violence is needed for the protection of things external, non-violence is needed for the protection of the atman, for the protection of one's honour.

The non-violence cannot be learnt by staying at home. It needs enterprise. In order to test ourselves we should learn to dare danger

and death, mortify the flesh and acquire the capacity to endure all manner of hardships. He who trembles or takes to his heels the moment he sees two people fighting is not non-violent, but a coward. A non-violent person will lay down his life in preventing such quarrels. The bravery of the non-violent is vastly superior to that of the violent. The badge of the violent is his weapon - spear, or sword, or rifle. God is the shield of the non-violent.

This is not a course of training for one intending to learn non-violence. But it is easy to evolve one from the principles I have laid down.

It will be evident from the foregoing that there is no comparison between the two types of bravery. The one is limited, the other is limitless. There is no such thing as out-daring or out-fighting non-violence. Non-violence is invincible. There need be no doubt that this non-violence can be achieved. The history of the past twenty years should be enough to reassure us.

SEVAGRAM, August 27, 1940

Harijan, 1-9-1940

157. QUESTION BOX[1]

A. I. S. A. EMPLOYEES

Q. Is there a ban on A. I. S. A. employees as far as signing the satyagraha pledge is concerned? They fulfil all the conditions of the pledge, but they may not offer themselves for jail without the permission of the A. I. S. A., and therefore they cannot sign the form. Is it then permissible for them to retain membership of Congress executive committees, or should they resign from them?

A. Your interpretation of the rule of the A. I. S. A. is correct. No one can work in two spheres at the same time. The work of the A. I. S. A. too is Congress work. None of its employees can be allowed to court imprisonment. His absence must harm khadi. Therefore, granted that the rule is necessary, it is plain that no A. I. S. A. employee may remain a member of a Congress committee. The entire committee may be arrested, or if the Committee so desires, it can order any of its members to court imprisonment.

[1] Gandhiji wrote this in Hindi except for the last question. The Hindi was published in *Harijan Sevak*. 31-8-1940 and the Gujarati in *Harijanbandhu*, 31-8-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

UNCERTIFIED KHADI

Q. Members of Congress local executive committees sometimes sell uncertified khadi. They give the same wages to spinners and weavers as the A. I. S. A. Only their khadi is not certified. According to Congress rules are they entitled to remain on Congress Committees or should they resign from them?

A. In my opinion they are not entitled to membership of Congress Committee. The official answer must be officially secured. If it is correct that they give the same wages to spinners and weavers, why do they not get the necessary certificate from the A. I. S. A.?

HOW TO CONVERT ATHEISTS

Q. How can one convert atheists to belief in God and religion?

A. There is only one way. The true servant of God can convert the atheist by means of his own purity and good conduct. It can never be done by argument. Innumerable books have been written to prove the existence of God, and if argument could have prevailed, there would not be a single atheist in the world today. But the opposite is the case. In spite of all the literature on the subject, atheism is on the increase. Often, however, the man who calls himself an atheist is not one in reality; and the converse also is equally true. Atheists sometimes say, " If you are believers, then we are unbelievers." And they have a right to say so, far self-styled believers are often not so in reality. Many worship God because it is the fashion to do so or in order to deceive the world. How can such persons have any influence on atheists? Therefore let the believer realize and have the faith that, if he is true to God, his neighbours will instinctively not be atheists. Do not let him be troubled about the whole world. Let us remember that atheists exist by the sufferance of God. How truly has it been said that those who worship God in name only are not believers but those who do His will!

LIVING WAGE

Q. You once wrote in Harijan to the effect that villagers are at liberty to buy yarn spun in their own villages without reference to the living wage, and that the A. I. S. A. should let them go their way in this matter. Are those who wear khadi woven from such yarn eligible as Congress delegates? And what is the village worker to do in this regard? He naturally does propaganda in favour of a living wage. There are always a certain number of villagers who buy A. I. S. A. khadi, but at the same time there are many who cannot afford to do so. And even if they pay less than the living

wage, there is no doubt that the spinners get some relief and khadi finds a certain place in village life too. Is the village worker there to encourage such khadi.?

A. If we were always careful enough not to read into a writer's sentences a meaning which defeats his very purpose, such questions would rarely arise. Where no wages are paid and the yarn is self-spun, no ban of any kind can be applied. It is of course assumed that the A. I. S. A. rule is not broken on a false plea of self-sufficiency. The same applies to the village worker.

But there is one important issue raised in your question. The A. I. S. A. worker in a particular village cannot pay a living wage if he is to use the village khadi. Therefore he will buy yarn at a lesser rate and give some work to the spinners who would otherwise get nothing. But he may not become a member of the Congress. He will serve the Congress from without. Sometimes such persons serve the Congress far better, and they are moreover saved from the ambitions that membership often carries with it. It is clear that such khadi cannot be sold outside the village. It should all be absorbed locally. The moment uncertified khadi is put into the market the A. I. S. A. law is broken and real khadi receives a setback. The A. I. S. A. is labouring under great stress in trying to raise the spinners' wages. Never in the world have I heard of wages being increased from one or two pice to 8 or 12 pice per day without the wage-earners having asked for a rise in pay. The A. I. S. A. has done monumental work in this matter.

WILL IT FAIL ?

Q. You say that the Congress is not cent per cent non-violent today. If that is so, will not a satyagraha movement launched by it be unsuccessful?

A. It is not possible for a large popular organization like the Congress to be wholly non-violent, for the simple reason that all its members cannot have attained a standard level of non-violence. But it is perfectly possible for some of its members, who truly understand the implications of pure ahimsa and observe its law in their lives, to lead a successful satyagraha movement. This truth has even been demonstrated so far by the Congress.

SEVAGRAM, August 27, 1940

Harijan, 1-9-1940

158. ANDREWS MEMORIAL

A friend, who is himself trying to collect for the Andrews Memorial, has written a letter from which I take the following relevant paragraphs:

> As I read it there are four objects of the appeal[1] (you will kindly correct me, if I am wrong):
>
> (i) Ensuring the permanence of the present established work by an endowment to enable Santiniketan to fulfil Andrew's high hopes for it, unhampered by the constant financial anxiety with which it is now burdened.
>
> This is obviously the first need, for it would be doubtful wisdom to add new developments to an institution which itself is insecure. At the same time the amount required for this purpose is nowhere specified.
>
> If there is a sufficiently generous response to the appeal, providing more than is required for this first need, then it will be possible to go on to the other three parts of the scheme, viz.,
>
> (ii) a small but properly equipped hospital;
>
> (iii) the provision of 'Deenabandhu wells' in the district;
>
> (iv) the provision of the Hall of Christian culture.
>
> Now, if I am right in this, it must surely occur to the reader of the appeal that, if, as seems likely, the institution requires a considerable sum for its endowment fund, the chances that any contributions made now will actually be available for either of the second, third or fourth part of the scheme are somewhat remote. It is not stated whether contributors are allowed to earmark their gifts for any of the special objects in the scheme; and obviously, if a large proportion of contributors did so, the primary object of the appeal— the placing of Santiniketan on a sound basis financially—may be defeated.
>
> My second difficulty was about the statement of the aims, and I had in view particularly those of the proposed hall of Christian culture, in which I am naturally interested.
>
> That is first described as providing for India's thought contact with the Western world, on the analogy of the 'Cheena Bhavan' and China. This suggests a doubtful identification of 'Christian culture' and 'Western culture'.
>
> That statement then goes on to speak of (a) the application of the teaching and character of Christ to international problems, and (b) the task of interpreting in Eastern modes of thought the spirit and mind of Christ.

[1] For the text of the appeal, *vide* "Deenabandhu Memorial"

What we have, therefore, seem to be three rather different aims, all very important and relevant. Perhaps it may be necessary to leave it in this rather wide from; and yet I cannot help thinking that a more careful wording might make clear the relation of the other two aspects of the aim to that which is described as the 'central purpose'.

Thirdly, I raised the question of trustees and a sound basis for confidence in the future running of the scheme. If I understand your letter rightly, the trustees of this special fund are to be the trustees of Santiniketan and Sriniketan, mentioned at the end of the appeal. The appeal itself does not seem to make this clear.

Does this imply that the disposal and allocation of the special fund raised is directly in the hands of these trustees of Santiniketan, so that, in effect, the fund becomes an additional part of the corpus of the 'Trust?

It seemed to me that for a scheme of the importance and magnitude of that contemplated in the appeal there would be a place for some special committee or body of trustees related a little more definitely both to the special objects and to the wider interests to which the appeal will extend.

The enquiry is pertinent and deserves a proper answer. As I happen to be one of the signatories to the appeal for funds, what I write may be taken as authoritative. The present trustees have made a rough calculation of the expenses in connection with the three definite additions to Santiniketan. After providing for them, a surplus is expected to be available which will go into the general funds. But naturally these three items will have precedence. Nevertheless it is open to donors to earmark their funds for any of the three additions, and the money will be so used. Therefore there need be no apprehension about the additions, whether donations are earmarked or not. If I may let out a secret, I may say that the general appeal was my idea. Gurudev, who first thought of the memorial being identified with Santiniketan, has in mind only two things¾the hospital and the hall, the latter being the suggestion of a Christian friends. Deenabandhu wells were to be built out of Santiniketan funds. Taking the cue from Gurudev, I felt there should be no hesitation whatsoever in identifying the whole of Santiniketan with Andrews's memory. The Poet is a host in himself. He has an established international fame which will grow with time. Nevertheless Andrews was its best advertiser. Gurudev has no advertising ability. He simply works, wishes, and then leaves his wishes to fate. Not so the practical Englishman. He felt attracted to the Poet and found his peace and permanent abode in

Santiniketan. England was his birth-place; he never tore himself away from her. But his soul found its full expression and home in Santiniketan, and I know, because I was his co-worker, that he went literally from door to door in order to get funds for Santiniketan. And he would often say to me: ‘ Never mind Santiniketan, but you must get so much money for me. You know what Santiniketan means to me and what the Poet means to the world.’ And I succumbed to his advance whenever he made it, even though I could ill afford the time. His love for Santiniketan was greater¾I say this without any offence to anyone living in Santiniketan ¾than theirs. It was certainly as great as the Poet’s, and Santiniketan, as it is at present, is due as much to Andrews as to the Poet. Probably Andrews was the more persistent of the two.

With this knowledge at the back of my mind I had no hesitation in suggesting that the appeal should be general. Hence I would say to would-be donors that they would miss the central fact of the memorial if they detached the three additions from Santiniketan. For the three together would be a poor memorial to Deenabandhu if Santiniketan were no more. And let me say at once that Santiniketan will never owe its permanence to the five lakhs that may be collected. It will be permanent because the Poet has breathed life into it and the spirit of Andrews hovers over it. If it keeps up the character imparted to it by its founders, including Andrews, it will never die.

The second difficulty is easily answered. The interpretation of Christ in the Hall of Christian Culture will bear the imprint of the Poet’s all-embracing soul, and therefore Christian culture, as it will flourish in Santiniketan, will never be exclusive. Much will depend upon the Christians who might be attracted to Santiniketan. A more careful wording in defining the scope of the Hall of Christian Culture was not possible, was not intended. I suggest to my correspondent that such matters are better left in a liquid state. Who shall say what the future has in store for any of the big things of the world?

The third difficulty is also easily disposed of. It had occurred even to me, but I felt that it would not be right to create a new trust for the memorial funds. The names of the present trustees are given in the appeal. If they are good enough to be made responsible for the management of the vast international estate, called Santiniketan and Sriniketan, they might well be entrusted with the additional responsibility of dealing with the funds that may be collected for the memorial.

Finally I may mention that the response hitherto made through the memorial appeal has been very poor. I know that the organization of the fund rests principally upon my shoulders. I have done nothing in the hope that Deenabandhu's solid work for submerged humanity would need no organized effort, and that it would evoke spontaneous response. I have not yet lost that hope. I publish the meagre list of donations hitherto received. The reader will notice, as I have noticed, that as yet there is no collection from the student world nor any coppers from the labour world.

SEVAGRAM, August 27, 1940

Harijan, 1-9-1940

159. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA ,
August 27, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

In continuation of my letter of the 11th instant, I send here with a second batch of complaints about the alleged exactions and high salaries. In the latter you will find in places the same names repeated. The reason is that against the names you will notice additional information about them. The note[1] about alleged exactions is supplied by Pandit Nehru. The list about salaries has been supplied principally by the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta.

I am,
Your sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a printed copy: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* "Letter From Jawaharlal Nehru", 10-8-1940

160. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 27, 1940

MY DEAR C. R,

Here is the draft[1] prepared by the jury. The addition in my hand in the last paragraph was suggested by me and verbally accepted. I have no time to describe to you the background but you will have no difficulty in filling it in. Mahmud, R. Babu, Jamnalal and the night[2] ingale[3] were also present. What will happen on 13th[3], I do not know. If all goes well I may have to go to Bombay also. I am not too happy over what is happening but I rejoice in my faith in God.

Love

BAPU

[PS.]

Can you bring Papa[4] this time?

From a photostat: G. N. 2080

161. NOTES

SIND

The position of Congressmen in Sind is by no means enviable. They have a most difficult time before them. Their non-violence, if they have it in them, has not benefited those who live in fear of their lives. It is true that no one else has helped them. I warned them at the very outset that they must learn the art of helping themselves as others do, or by non-violence as Congressmen are supposed or expected to do. In some places they are organizing national guards. Those who do, look up to Congressmen for help and guidance. For the latter have been their helpers and guides hitherto. Some Congressmen feel that without any intention themselves of taking up arms they can put courage into the people, if they train them in the art of self-defence

[1] Not traceable

[2] Sarojini Naidu

[3] On September 13, the Congress Working Committee was to meet at Bombay.

[4] Eldest daughter fo the addressee

whether with or without arms. The question has attained importance and demands immediate answer in view of the unequivocal resolution of the A. I. C. C. recently held at Poona. I am quite clear that no Congressman, so long as he is even a four-anna member of the Congress, can take part in organizing or aiding self-defence groups without committing a breach of the Poona resolution. But I am equally clear that it is the duty of those Congressmen who feel the need for helping self-defence groups and have the capacity for doing so, to go to the rescue of the terror-stricken men. This they can do by resigning their membership of the Congress. By doing so they will enhance the prestige of the Congress and their own usefulness. The fact that they feel the call to help is the decisive factor in determining their course of action.

PEACEFUL METHODS ?

A correspondent sends a leaflet published by the Madras Provincial War Committee and printed at the Government Press, which enume-rates the seven "great ideals" for which "War is being waged" today by England. The second of the ideals runs thus:

> The ideals for which England is fighting are the ideals of India. Our philosophy of life, our traditions of domestic and international policy have had:
>
> Peace for its ideal—as exemplified in the teaching of the Lord Buddha and Mahatma Gandhi.
>
> Peaceful methods and tolerance—as the means of political progress and international relations, as symbolized by the policy of India's ideal king Asoka.
>
> In fighting with England we shall be fighting for what we hold most precious in our own national heritage.

My correspondent says these leaflets are issued in the provincial languages and are widely distributed among the villagers. I suggest to the Madras War Committee that they remove Clause 2 altogether as being untrue. For my ideal as put before the British people is well known. If Lord Buddha was on earth in the body at this moment, such a war would be impossible. It is a travesty of truth to call English methods of peace. Asoka's is perhaps the only instance of a great king having voluntarily abandoned war and adopted peaceful methods.

It is no reflection on the British people that they do not accept my advice or follow Asoka's way. These things cannot be done mechanically. But it is not right to give them the credit they do not deserve or want. Well may the British people who read the leaflet say: 'Save us from our friends.'

SEVAGRAM, August 28, 1940

Harijan, 1-9-1940

162. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 28, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have been awake today since 1.00 a.m. I woke up Pyarelal at 3 o'clock and asked him to get me some paper. This is the first letter. You are not the only cause for this sleep-lessness. My other jobs are also the reason. You being the chief reason, I am taking up your letter first.

Pyarelal gave me your letters yesterday. This is in reply to those letters. My programme of action is uncertain. I do not know whether I shall fight or resort to a fast. One of the two courses appears certain. You must be aware of this. You should not make any changes in your programme on that account.

The fact that the dispensary drove you from Sevagram means that had there been no dispensary and had you not been the resident doctor, the question of your walking or not walking with me would not have arisen.

It is not right that you should compare me with Mahadev and Devdas. In the first place, you are doing gross injustice to Mahadev. He has no hatred towards you. Only he is not any more under your spell. For this I hold myself responsible. It has been to the good of you both. I am firmly convinced that Mahadev still wishes you well. If possible, he would serve you and do it whole-heartedly. You do not know him. Your impression about Devdas is correct. But if he has contempt it is not for you but for me. Behind it is his deep knowledge. But my position is not to be equated with that of either. For the change you find in my behaviour is solely for your good, for truth. How stupid and unthinking of you that you should see displeasure in my well-meant behaviour. Get rid of such a thought. It

does not behove you. It is wrong. There is no displeasure at all in the step I have taken. It is possible that I may have been unfair knowingly or unknowingly. I see in it only the purest justice and purest love. I would cease to be a satyagrahi if it were otherwise. I would be disqualified for conducting the struggle.

I shall not force you to come to Sevagram. Your good lies in being away. Your being a doctor is a restraining factor. I often feel it is your duty as a doctor to be at Sevagram. So long as I do not cease to see your usefulness as a doctor for Sevagram, I cannot take you around with me as I do Mahadev. If I do that, it would appear to me against my duty. You hold the contrary view. Hence, so long as we hold opposite views about duty, how can your talents be put to use? How can I allow it that your medical services should not at all be made available to others? I feel your need every moment. Ba yearns for you. She thinks of you when someone falls ill. Hence, whatever I may have said earlier, I clearly see your place is essentially in the Ashram. Unless you see it as clearly as the reflection in a mirror, your coming here will be meaningless. Once this point is clearly understood, it would be another matter if I take you out for my sake or even your sake.

I do hope that you will get a job. Concentrate on your studies. What would be the value of a degree obtained wihout hard work. You ask me what you should do. This is my reply. You will have peace only when you become a full-fledged doctor. That will be your happiness.

I abide by what I said about Mother. You should forget everything else.

Pyarelal and I have come to an agreement that only I should guide you, not he. He would not give you any independent guidance. He is incapable of doing that. How can he guide you when he himself is in need of guidance? Then, why do you always expect letters from him? What can he write? At least he can write nothing concerning you. Should he always give you the news about the Ashram? I can send that even through somebody else. I advise you to stop altogether writing him confidential letters. Write to me when it is necessary. I consider it your great fault that you preserve the letters. Whatever the nature of letters that might have been written, why should they be preserved? Even Pyarelal has that bad habit. I shall make him give it up. Whatever letters you write to me, I will read and destroy. I will not give them back to Pyarelal. I will not send them back to you. I would

advise you to destroy my letters too. You may preserve the letters in which I may have written something important or valuable. But it would be wrong to preserve the letters which you have not liked or in which you have seen only my faults. We should not be obsessed with the faults of our elders or dear ones. Nor should we preserve their references. Now the prayer bell has gone. May God always protect you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: Pyarel al Papers . Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y. Courte sy: Dr. Sushil a Nayyar

163. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
August 29, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I thank you for your letter of the 23rd instant; my reminder was proof of my anxiety that the letter should not miscarry.

My distress is going deeper. Recent events disconcert me. My complaint about 'exactions' and inflated salaries is already before you. I fear that free expression of public opinion will presently be suppressed with a heavy hand.[1] no discordant note will be allowed. Perhaps wars cannot be carried on otherwise. That is one of the many reasons for making them hateful.

If things go on as they are and if the Congress remains supine, the Congress will die a slow death.[2]

In the domain of politics your words alarm me. I must confess I do not understand some of them.

The profound differences between Congressmen and me are practically bridged.[3] They nearly feel that it was wrong to have decided in advance that a State could not be run without an army. All hope for the world seemed to have been lost so far as the Congress

[1] Here the Viceroy has noted in the margin: "False associatin. This has no place in its context."

[2] Viceroy's note in the margin: "there is the rub"

[3] Viceroy's note in the margin: "Am I to understand this to mean that he comes as the Congress leader?".

was concerned. If you are interested in this part of the inner history of the Congress you shall have it.

If I cannot help the British Government, I do not wish to embarrass them. But this desire must not be carried to the extent of Committee hara-kiriA[1].

Before I take any step, I would like to bare my heart and mind to you and seek light if it is darkness that envelops me. If, therefore, you think that it is worth while our meeting, you will please wire appointment.[2] I am seeking the interview in anticipation of the 13th which is the date of the meeting of the Working Committee.

If our meeting comes off before the 13th so as to enable me to return to Wardha before that date, it will be helpful. If you will feel embarrassed to meet me or would otherwise not meet me, there need be no telegram sent me. I shall take you silence to mean that you cannot see me on the issue raised by me. If you cannot, I shall not misunderstand you. I hope you will find it possible to pardon me for causing you trouble when your attention should not be diverted from the task before you. My object in seeking an appointment is to leave no stone unturned, first to avoid all possibility of an error of judgment and, secondly, to put before you my case before taking any irretrievable step.[3]

I am now able to send you a translation of the reply I had asked from my Khurja correspondent.[4]

I am,

Your sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a printed copy: Lord Linlithgow Paper. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Viceroy's note in the margin: "I did not know that the company of the saints were accustomed to limit their liability! !"

[2] Viceroy's note in the margin: "This is for Mr. G. to judge. I can only discuss matters within the four corners of the Statement. Upon that understanding I shall be flad to grant his request for an interview, and to do my best to help him."

[3] Viceroy's note: "P. S. V. He must of course come. My reply should contain an expression of regret that the Maulana declined my invitation and the publice must know that Mr. G. has asked for an invitation."

[4] The reference is to a letter from H. L. Sharma containing allegations of intimidation of the people for exaction of war loans and contributions to the War Fund.

164. A NOTE

August 29, 1940

The above does not satisfy me, nor do I like that you should be satisfied with it. We shouldn't be satisfied too easily.

BAPU

About Munnalal's objection, it should be decided where meetings of permanent inmates of the Ashram should be held from time to time, and their recommendations and decisions should be recorded. Do you find anything impracticable in this?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N 10604

165. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

August 30, 1940

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. Come whenever you like. Do not wait till you are so week that you have to take to your bed.

Give Bhagawati his letter and explain the matter to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Rajendra Babu has gone to Sikar. He will stay there for a month. Jamnalalji is with him.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3547

166. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

[*August 30, 1940*][1]

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

Your letter. Your pain is apparent in spite of your very delicate words. But your duty consists in parting with it is in its own interest although it is your own handiwork. Ultimately we must abandon the

[1] From the post- mark

desire for captainship or success. You still have it. Let us see how I can manage now. Henceforth you have a greater opportunity to concentrate on service to Harijans. I shall seek one thing from you. Please send me some articles for *Harijan Sevak* every week. Also send your criticism about the language, etc., of the *Harijan Sevak.*

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VIYOGI HARI

HARIJAN NIWAS

KING'S WAY, DELHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1090

167. LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

SEVAGARAM, WARDHA,

August 31, 1940

CHI. MAGAN,

See that you pass. Keep your pledge of fulfilling Manjula's wish. She is as gentle as a cow.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

C/O Y. M. C. A.

NEW DELHI

From Gujarati: C. W. 1607. Courtesy: Manjulabehn M. Mehta

168. LETTER TO MANJULABEHN M. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,

August 31, 1940

CHI. MANJULA,

I have your letter. I understand. Come when you can. I had a letter from Magan. He is repenting. He is sure to improve, thanks to

your merit.

Keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MENJULA MEHTA

BRAJ BHUVAN

ELLIS BRIDGE

AHMEDABAD, B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From Gujarati: C. W. 1606. Courtesy: Manjulabehn M. Mehta

169. LETTERE TO DR. VARIAVA

August 31, 1940

BHAI VARIAYA,

Chi. Kunvarji is the husband of my grand-daughter, Ramibehn. He was suffering from tuberculosis. Now the T. B. specialist Dr. David says the he is all right. I shall be grateful if you will examine him after a fortnight or so and send me your report.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 221

170. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

August 31, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

Pyarelal gave me a letter from you the day before yesterday. What a letter! Why such doubt about me? There was no condemnation in what I said about you. There was only love in it. I have not shown your letters to anyone. No one can read my letters because from my hands they go straight to Pyarelal. In my whole life I do not remember to have taken as much care about anyone's letters as I do about yours and my replies to them. I am not even conscious of having mentioned any conditions. I have not even given you a categorical reply about your coming. The clearest reply I gave to Lilavati Munshi's question yesterday: "She had not come to settle here permanently. The dispensary was only a plaything for her. She is

expecting to get a job. If she gets it, she will not be coming at least for the present. If I know that she is not coming at all then I shall have to consider what to do about the dispensary." I cannot undertake that Pyarelal will write to you. In my view, he should not write to you at all. You must be content with what I write.

The *Harijan Sevak* will be shifted to Poona. I shall be happy if you can write something original from there for the edition from Poona. There are ample subjects. If you wrote a series of articles on sanitation, etc., in beautiful Hindi you would refresh your knowledge and improve your skill as a writer.

I did not like the doctor's letter to you. Had there been enough time for consultation, I would have drafted a stern reply and made you withdraw your application. I cannot bear to see that you have become helpless. Where is any prestige in a job obtained in such a manner? But what is done is done.

I may have to go to Simla.

I am sending Lilavati's letter for you to read.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

171. LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

SEVAGRAM,
August 31, 1940

BHAI SAHEB,

I was happy to see your handwriting. The very word convocation scares me.[1] where do I have knowledge worthy of a scholar? How can I face the boys? And certainly the lack of time is an important consideration. Therefore please excuse me. I know it is your love and Radhakrishnan's that call me, but I am helpless.

Hope you are well.

Your younger brother.

From Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee in his letter of August 28, had invited Gandhiji to deliver the convocation address at the Banaras Hindu University on Novermber 30 or any other day convenient to him.

172. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
August 31, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

All the questions that you have raised are important.

Keshav will never steal eatables. It is mere suspicion on the part of you people. It has to be put up with. I do not see anything wrong in using a lock and key. The custody of fruit should be with you only.

Make it clearly known cots are meant only for the sick and for those who sleep in risky corners. I shall write this in the Notebook if you want me to.

Ramanarayanji has come for *sadhana*. It is our duty to look after his health. The problem of servants is knotty. We shall not improve merely by removing servants. It will be enough if we limit the jobs to be entrusted to servants.

If flour is not available we should certainly have porridge.

Things like. . . [1] soap should be eschewed.

A copy to the *Ramayana* has been ordered. Hindi *Bhajanavali* is under print. You should get all the three newspapers. Make the necessary arrangements.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4359

173. TALK TO VILLAGERS[2]

[*September 1, 1940*][3]

In ancient India a man's wealth was reckoned according to the number of cows he possessed, not according to the gold and silver he owned. The Cow was worshipped as mother, for she sustained us with milk and her male progeny helped us to carry on agriculture which kept us alive. Cows are there in the West also, and they are kept very

[1] The brand name has been omitted.

[2] & [3] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Sevagram Notes", 9-9-1940. The villagers had invited Gandhiji to go and see their cattle parade on the 1st September which day was observed as their day of annual rest when the bullocks were decorated adn garlanded.

well indeed. But their male progeny is not used for agricultural purposes, it is turned into beef. From time immemorial this idea has been repugnant to us, and we have worshipped the cow and her progeny. The bullocks are the means of transport everywhere in our villages and have not ceased to be such even in a place like Simla. The railway train and the motor-car go there, but all along the mountain road I found bullocks trudging up and down dragging heavily-laden carts. It seems as if the means of transport is part of our lives and our civilizations. And the bullock has to endure if our handicraft civilization is to endure.

But we have fallen on evil days. Our idea of wealth has changed, we reckon it in terms of hard cash, and have come to neglect our cattle which have been progressively deteriorating. I am glad that you are celebrating this day, but you must know its implications. A day's celebration would have no meaning if you neglected them the rest of the year. You have to find out whose animals are the best and to discover how he manages to keep them so well. You will find out whose cow gives the largest amount of milk and discover how he keeps her and feeds her. You may fix some prize for the best bullock and the best cow in the village. We are here for your service. Parnerkarji, who is a qualified dairyman, and Balvantsinha, known for his love and care of the animals, are at your disposal. The stud bull is being maintained for the benefit of the village. You must make use of all the facilities we have provided. But you can do so only when you have a genuine love for your animals. Here is a thing of which you and I should be ashamed.[1] Supposing I were to prod one of your children with this stick, would you let me do it? And if you will not, how dare you treat these useful animals so? Nowhere else in the world, to my knowledge, is such an instrument of torture used. You should either give this up or not invite me to these shows. You should treat them so kindly and handle them so gently that they will understand a word or a gesture from you without the use of any stick at all. Address yourselves to the task from today, and see what progress you can make by the time we have the next festival. Our aim is to make of Sevagram a model village. I have on another occasion told you what to do in other matters. Today I am telling you that without model cattle we cannot have a model village. Our service is at your disposal, but our service too cannot be of much use without your co-operation. I hope you will,

[1] Here Gandhiji showed them a goad.

therefore, meet together at once and frame a programme of immediate action.

Harijan, 15-9-1940

174. DISCUSSION WITH BHARATANAND[1]

[Before *September 2, 1940*][2]

BHARATANAND: You say that the Poles were 'almost non-violent'. I do not think so. There was black hatred in the breast of Poland and I do not think the compliment is deserved.

GANDHIJI: You must not take what I say so terribly literally. If ten soldiers resist a force of a thousand soldiers armed cap-a-pie, the former are almost non-violent, because there is no capacity for anything like proportionate violence in them. But the instance I have taken of the girl is more appropriate. A girl who attacks her assailant with her nails, if she has grown them, or with her teeth, if she has them, is almost non-violent, because there is no premeditated violence in her. Her violence is the violence of the mouse against the cat.

B. Well, then, Bapuji, I will give you an instance. A young Russian girl was attacked by a soldier. She used her nails and teeth and tore him, so to say, to pieces. Was she almost non-violent?

MAHADEV DESAI: How can it cease to be non-violence, if offered on the spur of the moment simply because it was successful?

G. No.

B. Then I am really puzzled. You say there should be no premeditated violence and no capacity to offer proportionate violence. Here in this case she by her success proved that she had the capacity.

G. I am sorry that I inadvertently said 'no' to Mahadev. There was violence there. It was equally matched.

B. But, then, is not intention ultimately the test? A surgeon uses his knife non-violently. Or a keeper of the peace uses force against miscreants in order to protect society. That too he does non-violently.

G. Who is to judge the intention? No we. And for us the deed in most cases is the test. We normally look at the action and not at the intention. God alone knows the intention.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Ahimsa in Daily Life", 2-9-1940.

[2] *ibid*

B. Then God alone knows what is himsa and what is ahimsa.

G. Yes, God alone is the final judge. It is likely that what we believe to be an act of ahimsa is an act of *himsa* in the eyes of God. But for us the path is chalked out. And then you must know that a true practice of ahimsa means also in one who practises it the keenest intelligence and wide-awake conscience. It is difficult for him to err. When I used those words for Poland, and when I suggested to a girl believing herself to be helpless that she might use her nails and teeth without being guilty of violence, you must understand the meaning at the back of my mind. There is the refusal to bend before overwhelming might in the full knowledge that it means certain death. The Poles knew that they would be crushed to atoms, and yet they resisted the German hordes. That was why I called it almost non-violence.

B. But, Bapuji, I cannot somehow forget that it is God who is the Judge, and God permits violence. There is a *puranic* story I should like to tell you. God Shiva once suddenly disappeared as he and Parvati were in the midst of a conversation. But soon he appeared again. On being asked where he had been, he said he had gone to the rescue of a bhakta who had been attacked, but he had come back on finding that the *bhakta* had helped himself by striking his assailant with a stone.

G. Well, well, no amount of argument can teach us ahimsa. And you must not forget that one cannot be sure of the purity of one's intention until one has gone through the whole course of spiritual training laid down by masters of yoga like Patanjali. Perfect *chitta-shuddhi*[1] cannot be achieved in any other way.

B. Ahimsa, brahmacharya, spinning are all sadhanas, and whereas one may suit one, it may not suit another. Why have you made of ahimsa a universal precept?

G. When a means has been tried by a scientist and he has found it of infallible effect he puts it before all. You know the maxim what is true of the individual is true of the universe.

B. But you lay down the same law for a saint and a robber!

G. The law is the same; the way may be more difficult for the robber than for the saint. The law is the ideal, no matter how much individuals may fall short of the ideal.

B. But you forget the reality before the ideal.

G. No. The really is always present before me, but my striving is always to reach the ideal. Euclid's straight line exists only in our con-

[1] Purification of mind.

ception, but we have always to postulate it. We have always to strive to draw a true line corresponding to Euclid's imaginary line.

Harijan, 8-9-1940

175. QUESTION BOX[1]

A RIDDLE

Q. You have said that a non-violent person should at all times be ready to renounce everything, for the things of this world pertain to the body and not to the spirit. If we were all thus prepared, the question of violent or non-violent warfare would not arise. Wars are fought in order to protect life and property, should these be endangered. You also say that, so long so the desire to protect life and property remains within us, out ahimsa cannot be said to be pure. How can we reconcile the two?

A. Yours is a good question. I wrote with reference to the satyagraha army. Take our own country for instance. Its entire population will not enlist in the army. But those who are willing to protect the millions by means of non-violence will have to renounce all worldly attachment.

KHADI AND PURITY

Q. Can one whose heart is not pure wear khadi?

A. It appears you do not read the papers. I have said and written times without number that khadi, as cloth, is there for everyone to use, the drunkard, the immoral, the thief and the dacoit included. But inasmuch as khadi has been accepted as the symbol of our freedom, it is obligatory for all those who wish to gain and protect that freedom to wear it. And what you say is, therefore, applicable to such persons. Because a satyagrahi must be pure in heart, he must shun drink and immorality, and for him the wearing of khadi is a duty.

A QUANDARY

Q. I was walking along the railway line some distance from the station when I saw a young man standing on the line with the obvious intent of committing suicide. I tried to dissuade him from carrying out his intention, but he was adamant. Thereupon I dragged him away and held him until the train had passed, but inflicted some bodily injury on him by so doing. I acted spontaneously. Was my action violent or non-violent? I cannot decide for myself.

[1] The Hindi original of this was published in *Harijan sevak*, 7-9-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

A. It is good that you acted spontaneously. [We act truly only when we act spontaneously.][1] I have no doubt that your action was non-violent and brave. You are to be congratulated on saving the young man's life. You acted as a true friend, just as a surgeon does when for the sake of the good of the patient he does not hesitate to operate even though the operation inflicts temporary pain. [Congratulations.][2]

SEVAGRAM, September 2, 1940

Harijan, 8-9-1940

176. HOW TO QUENCH IT?[3]

Elsewhere in these columns the reader will see "A Seeker's" letter in which he has asked a question which must have occurred to everyone. The beauty lies in the way in which he has introduced the question. He has depicted the present conflagration in such lurid colours that violence cannot but stink in our nostrils. The reader is sure instinctively to exclaim: "Even if it were possible to win the kingdom of the world by means of such violence, I would not have it."

But this exclamation will be of no avail to quench the conflagration. No doubt it will some day quench itself, but it means mutual fratricidal slaughter like that of the Yadavas of old who destroyed themselves and relieved the earth of so much burden. And such a consummation would any day be preferable to a perpetual conflagration. But no one would wish for this. What one would devoutly wish for is some brave step to stop the conflagration before there is total destruction. This can only be a non-violent step. How and when it can be taken has to be discovered. The "Seeker" will be satisfied when the discovery is made. In my opinion the discovery has already been made. If India can win swaraj non-violently even while this conflagration is going on, the latter is bound to be extinguished by that one event. That being my firm faith I fought the Wardha resolution tooth the nail, and secured my freedom¾not indeed to tickle

[1] The Hindi version has: "The world does not act in that manner. We form a habit by constant practice and we act from that habit when the time comes. You have done the same."

[2] From the Hindi version

[3] The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 7-9-1940. The English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

my vanity but for the success of the experiment. And if I have to forgo this freedom¾as is quite likely¾it will be for the same purpose.

We read in our religious books that whenever, in the days of old, all ordinary means failed to secure release from an ordeal or a calamity, people resorted to *tapasya* (penance), i.e., actually burnt themselves. I do not regard these stories as legendary. *Tapasya* is of various kinds. Misguided men can resort to it, as we find them doing today. The wise also can do it. It is worth while understanding the implications of *tapasya*. It was by dint of *tapasya* that Western scientists made their discoveries. *Tapasya* does not simply consist in betaking oneself to the forest and sitting down there surrounded by blazing fires. That *tapasya* may even be the height of folly. We have therefore to discriminate.

The question asked by "A Seeker" does not arise out of despair. It is intended to quicken the conscience of those who believe in ahimsa. I have already shown the way. It is the fulfilment of the thirteenfold constructive programme described in a recent article. Those who will carry it out in faith, in full knowledge, and without the slightest fuss will have done their share in the *tapasya* to quench the conflagration. They will achieve two ends at the same time. They will make India free and will also quench the conflagration. It is likely that the number of such people is limited, so limited that it can have no effect. I have maintained that, even if there is one individual who is almost completely non-violent, he can put out the conflagration. But I have suggested a *tapasya* which can easily be performed by the average individual. In the age of democracy it is essential that desired results are achieved by the collective effort of the people. It will no doubt be good to achieve an objective through the effort of a supremely powerful individual, but it can never make the community conscious of its corporate strength. An individual's success will be like a millionaire doling free food to millions of starving people. We should, therefore, bend our energies to a fulfilment of the thirteenfold constructive programme. It may or may not bring swaraj, but we shall surely have the satisfaction of having done our best.

There is a warning in the "Seeker's" letter to which I should like to draw the reader's attention. He says papers and broadcasts describe with devilish pleasure the amount of injury each is able to inflict upon the other, and suggests that such news should sicken people instead of providing pleasure, if they are to take part in the

propagation of peace. I agree. Such people will not be able to carry out even the constructive programme, for they will have no faith in it.

However that may be, it is as clear as daylight that, if this conflagration is to be put out through non-violent effort, it will be done only by India.

SEVAGRAM, September 2, 1940

Harijan, 8-9-1940

177. TO THE READERS

When it was decided that I should also write for *Harijan Sevak*, I thought it would be convenient for me if all the three, i.e., *Harijan*, *Harijanbandhu* and *Harijan Sevak* were published from the same place. Shri Viyogi Hari also liked the suggestion. There had been talk over the past many months of lightening his burden of *Harijan Sevak* work. His chief task, in fact only task, is to make the Harijan Nivas an ideal school for Harijans. In this he has also met with a degree of success. *Harijan Sevak* was pretty heavy burden for him. Efforts were being made to lighten that burden and we had succeeded to some extent. Now shifting the publication of *Harijan Sevak* will reduce the burden even further. He cannot of course be wholly relieved of *Harijan Sevak* work. Though staying away he will still be the editor. I tried to relieve him even of this, but it is good that I did not succeed. *Harijan Sevak* is Viyogiji's creation. It was kept going because of his enthusiasm. He also enrolled the subscribers. Therefore it is proper that his link with *Harijan Sevak* is maintained in some way or other. His articles of course will continue to appear in *Harijan Sevak*.

The language of *Harijan Sevak* will certainly change. My knowledge of Hindustani is very imperfect. I have not studied it. I picked it up while talking and listening to people. So my language will have grammatical and other mistakes. Other coworkers who make similar mistakes will also write. I hope the readers will be generous enough to tolerate such mistakes. This means that no one should buy *Harijan Sevak* for its language. Those who buy and read it, will do so to know the views it contains. Yielding to the persistent requests from the readers I have decided to write for *Harijan Sevak* also. I had assumed that Hindi-Hindustani speaking readers will be satisfied with the translations of my articles from Gujarati. But this did not satisfy them. There is of course this. I had no control over the translation

when it was done in Delhi. But now it has been decided that the translation also will be done under my supervision. Therefore there will be no misinterpretations, or very few, such as one saw often in *Harijan Sevak*.

SEVAGRAM, September 2, 1940

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 7-9-1940

178. LETTER TO PYARELAL

September 2, 1940

CHI. PYARELAL,

You are caught up in your own verbiage. This is no time to bathe me in your tears. And what do your tears avail, save that at the time of my need you will be of no use to me. Is that a sign of your desire to be moulded by me? All your ideas are true, but where is your acuity? Why could you not understand that if I entrusted the matter to A. S. and to Munnalal there must have been some purpose behind it? If you wanted to make a copy you should at least have told me. The copy that you made was useless. You made a better one only when you took it up as a challenge. What you could do as a challenge, you were not prepared to do for my sake. You refused point blank. I thought you would act as I directed. You first agreed and then wriggled out of it. Is that what you call faith? You have read that faith gains in strength. But you did not let your faith advance even one step. And now I have absolutely no idea what you intend to do.

Now I come to what you write about Sushila. Your defence has no basis. Why do you not understand that the reason that Sushila has for staying with me is that she is a doctor. But her medical knowledge could be my undoing, because, if I acknowledged it I would pass from God's hands into Sushila's. As for her affection, what shall I say? She would probably work on my conditions for 359 days, but if on one day her own conditions are not met, she would not serve me, she would not work for me. What does she care how much I have to involve myself with the patients while she is away? But what is the use of bemoaning my lot before my own sons and daughters? I shall endure what comes. I see that she even resents my guiding her. I wish you would yourself guide her. She has infinite faith m you. Her good

lies in being guided by you because, should you stray in guiding her, her faith will correct you. My guidance, even if it is a hundred per cent sound, will not benefit her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: Pyarel al Papers . Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y. Courte sy: Belade vi Nayyar and Dr. Sushil a Nayyar

179. BISWA MISCARRIAGE AGAIN

Moulvi Saheb Fazlul Haq, the Premier of the largest Province in all India has done me the honour of addressing an open letter holding the National Congress, of which he was at one time an ardent followers and admirer, to public ridicule. In his opinion the Congress has done everything to wound Muslim feeling. Says the Moulvi Saheb:

> On several occasions I have published instances of the manner in which the Congress chariot wheels of democracy have ridden roughshod over the feelings and sentiments of countless Muslims and other minorities, and in many cases with our connivance, approbation and consent.

I must plead not guilty so far as the indictment concerns me. I have claimed to have inquired into every case of alleged injustice brought to my notice. I have never hesitated to condemn Congress acts when facts have demanded condemnation.

Let us, however, examine the latest illustration quoted by the Bengal Premier in support of his charge. He deals at length with the notorious Biswa miscarriage of justice. I am invited to give my opinion on it. The Moulvi Saheb evidently had not my opinion before him when he penned the open letter. I refer him to Harijan dated 11th ultimo (p. 244) wherein he will find my opinion. I adhere to every word of that opinion.

If the cases of injustice quoted by him are on a par with the Biswa case, his indictment singularly fails. The Congress Ministry had as much to do with the miscarriage of justice as the Moulvi Saheb. No judge has suggested that the police were under the influence of the Congress Ministry and that the latter used it to procure the miscarriage. The fact is that the ministers were in no way responsible for the conduct of the police or the prosecution. Miscarriages, like the one under examinations, have occurred before now in India. But in every

case the police were held blameworthy, not the Government, except when a clear case of Government complicity was made out. The Moulvi Saheb has produced no evidence whatsoever in support of his statement that the ministers had in any way interfered with the conduct of the prosecution.

He has produced certain remarks of the court on Pandit Shukla's speech in the C. P. Assembly. It amounts to no more than a reflection on the political unwisdom of making a speech which would seem to prejudge the case. The court's stricture in no way connects Pandit Shukla with the police or the prosecution. Moreover it is an *obiter dictum* which has no judicial value. I doubt if the court was wise in making the stricture without having called upon Pandit Shukla to explain his speech. This explanation, however, Pandit Shukla has given in his letter to the President of the Congress.

The Moulvi Saheb has omitted to notice the outstanding fact that the appellate court has found as a matter of fact that Jagdervao was killed and that many person were seriously injured. Their regret is that the guilty ones got off scot-free. Surely the ministers cannot be blamed for this untoward result by the Muslims. If a complaint can be legitimately made by anybody, it is the Hindus who can make it. So far as I am aware there were no Hindus tried, and there were no serious injuries sustained by the Muslims. The Sessions Judge may have erred in weighing evidence. But the fact that he condemned six Muslims to the gallows is a matter that demands serious thinking by all right-minded men. For if the ones condemned were not guilty, some other Muslims were.

I miss in the Moulvi Saheb's open letter any regret for the murder of a Hindu leader and for serious injury to other Hindus, and the fact that the culprits who were responsible for the murder and injuries had gone unpunished. Pandit Shukla was a fellow Premier in a neighbouring Province. I suggest to the Bengal Premier that courtesy required him to ask for Pandit Shukla's explanation before condemning him.

SEVAGRAM, September 3, 1940

Harijan, 8-9-1940

180. LETTTER OT KULSUM SAYANI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
September 4, 1940

MY DEAR KULSUM,

I was delighted to hear from you. I shall see what I can do with your report.[1] but you have my blessings in your work and also for your dear ones, here and in England.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: K. Sayani Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

181. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

September 4, 1940

CHI. AMRITLAL,

When Kakasaheb comes, put this letter[2] before him. Ask him to discuss the last paragraph, too, with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10800

182. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

September 4, 1940

CHI. VIJAYA,

You seem to have become very busy. There is no letter at all from you. Spend three pice every week. Haven't you fully recovered yet? How is anabhai? Does Manubhai take enough ghee? Here things are fairly well. Sushila is still in Delhi. There is some new company. I

[1] The addressee was conducting classes in Bombay for spreading Literacy among women.

[2] This was Sunderlal's letter to Gandhiji which is not traceable.

will expect you at Diwali time. But I do not wish that you should neglect your work there and come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7132. Also C. W. 4624. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

183. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,
September 4, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Your letter becomes your ahimsa. I did not wish to examine the entire case but only wanted to reply to the grave allegations of the Bangal Premier[1]. It is one thing for the C. P. representative to take interest and another altogether that he should bring forward false witness. The fact that the Hindus in Biswa had suffered greatly was relevant, and the ill-treatment of the prisoners subsequently, though a fact, was irrelevant.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8528. Also C. W. 7101. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

184. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,
September 4, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

These corrections are for your amusement. And another thing for your amusement: nobody saw the translations of what Mahadevbhai wrote about Poona published in *Harijan Sevak*. Rajkumari and Bablo laboriously completed it and despatched it yesterday. Now it is seen that the translation had already been printed.

[1] *Vide* "Biswa Miscarriage Again"

Surely it is your translation. It does not mention Gujarati as the source.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: Pyarel al Papers . Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y. Courte sy: Dr. Sushil a Nayyar

185. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
September 4, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

All of them do not take the same interest in collecting my articles as you do. Therefore I do not find anything wrong in your taking *Harijan Sevak.*

I understand the rest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4360

186. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

September 4, 1940

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. You should get well quick. There have been heavy rains this side and some damage. There has been no development of note here.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 289

187. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
September 4, 1940

BHAI. HARIBHAU,

I shall write about the members of the Prajamandal, etc., in the next issue of *Harijan Sevak*.[1]

We have to see how the language of *Harijan Sevak* shapes up now. Pyarelal has been charged with the responsibility. All the articles will pass through him. Pyarelal will write to you. If you can send some factual articles, not just essays, do so. And of course your comment on the language.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

188. CABLE TO CARL HEATH

WARDHAGANJ ,
September 6, 1940

CARL HEATH
FRIENDS HOUSE
EUSTON ROAD
LONDON

YOUR WIRE.[2] TRYING BEST AVOID CLASH WHICH SEEMS INEVITABLE. AM IN COMMUNICATION WITH VICEROY. CORRESPONDENCE SHOWS POLICY ENUNCIATED BY AMERY UNCHANGEABLE. ARRESTS PROMINENT CONGRESSMEN CONTINUE. AMERY'S ASSURANCE GIVEN YOU

[1] *Vide* "Question Box"

[2] In his cable of August 30, the addressee had said that he had been assured by Amery that no advantage was being taken of the non- embarrassment policy of the Congress and that orders were not specially directed against the Congress but were of a general nature. He had urged that Gandhiji seek an interview with the Viceroy.

UNSUPPORTED BY PATENT FACTS. CONGRESS RESTRAINT CANNOT BE USED FOR SELF-DESTRUCTION.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 1042

189. LETTER TO SAILENDRANATH CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
September 6, 1940

DEAR SAILENDRA[1],

I have your letter. I have had a chat with Father. For a man with Father's ideals it would be wrong to tempt you. God must be trusted to look after everyone. Father may talk of death. You should not. For you, he lives for ever. My advice to you is to hold on to what you have.[2] By sheer merit, you should be able to earn more in the Sangh. You should know that there are men who earn more than Rs. 20 in the Sangh. You need not worry about the sisters. For when they marry there will be no expense. Dhiren[3] is qualifying himself for earning a fair wage. Mother is being provided for by Father. Hence you need worry for nobody at least for the time being.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 10161. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

190. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
September 6, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I thank you for your prompt reply to my letter of the 29th ultimo. I had your wire too. I appreciate your hesitation to send me an appointment straight away.[4]

[1] Son of Amrita Lal Chatterjee, an inmate of the Ashram

[2] He was working in the A. I. S. A., Calcutta.

[3] The addressee's younger brother, who was being trained for work at the Ashram.

[4] The viceroy in his letter of September 2 had said: "I shall of course be happy to see you . . . though I must in fairness to you make it clear that my statement . . . represents the decided policy of H. M. G. Nor, I am sure, will you misunderstand if I

whenever I come, if I do, as a result of this correspondence, of course the announcement will be that I had sought an appointment. As I can see things now, it is likely that after the forthcoming meeting of the All-India Congress Committee I shall renew my request for an appointment. For I wish to take no step without first discussing things with you and making myself sure that there is no room left for any misunderstanding.

I was well aware that your statement and the Secretary of State's speech represented the decided policy of H. M. G. Had we met, I would have sought a clearance of my doubts about the manner in which the policy is being enforced and put before you more fully my grounds for dissatisfaction which, I must say, daily events are deepening. I do not at all mind the Congress wandering in the wilderness. Nor should I at present engage in a fight with the Government over their policy if it were based on grounds which could be understood by the plain man. But I must not be a helpless witness to the extinction of a great organization which I have held under curb on the ground of refusal to embarrass H. M. G. at the present critical juncture. I must not have it said of me that for a false morality I allowed the Congress to be crushed without a struggle. It is this thought that is gnawing at me.

As to the Maulana Saheb's disinclination to see you I had clearly understood that you would give him the option either to see you, if he felt like it, or to send you a written reply. You did, as a matter of fact, give him the option. But instead of sending a written reply he first wanted to ascertain whether he was free to discuss the announcement itself, and when he was told that he was not, naturally he chose not to take up your time over discussing details of enforcing a plan of which he thoroughly disapproved.[1] Don't you think, taking

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say that . . . I should have to make it clear . . . that . . . the initiative did not come from me."

[1] The Viceroy in his letter of August 4 to Abul Kalam Azad had said: " . . . I have been authorized to invite a number of representative Indians to join my Ececutive Council . . . I trust sincerely that the indian National Congress will feel able to join with me in the Central Government and in the War Advisory Council . . . I readily conceive that it might be convenient for you to discuss this matter further with me before you send me a formal reply . . . I shall be very gald to see you . . . at any time convenient to you . . ." Azad declined the invitation since in the terms of the Viceregal declaration he found no meeting ground.

the position in the light I have understood it, that he was quite correct in not visiting you?

I must deal with my complaints about the allegations as to pressed contributions and higher salaries in another letter if it becomes necessary to do so. Meanwhile I thank you for the pains you are taking over my complaints.

I am,

Yours sincerely

From a copy: C. W. 7848. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

191. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

September 6, 1940

CHI. VITHALDAS,

I have your letter. Bhai Lakshmidas's[1] plan is good but it cannot be implemented just now. We shall never make enough profit from khadi to repay the money borrowed or increase the capital. For khadi still subsists purely on faith, and cannot therefore be considered as a commercial proposition. As long as power has not come into the hands of the people or as long as the State has not adopted it, khadi will have to depend on voluntary contributions. Khadi cannot be propagated in any other way. I understand that even in Bhai Lakshmidas's plan, there is no intention of returning the capital, only a little interest on the investment will be paid. No trader would invest his money on that rate of interest. We can give no guarantee that they can sell khadi stocks in the share market. So even if we get loans, it will be only from philanthropically inclined khadi-lovers. I am, therefore, trying at present to get voluntary contributions. The statement sent to Bhai Shantikumar[2] contains some signatures also. Let us see now what happens. If we get our present requirements, we can make much greater progress.

If you have any further suggestions to make, please do so.

I hope Vaidya is getting along with his work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9796

[1] Lakshmidas Asar

[2] Shantikumar N. Morarjee

192. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
September 7, 1940

CHI. MIRA,

I have your long letter. It enables me to follow the struggle that is going on within you. You have not yet acquired the art of looking within for everything. Carding should soothe just as much as spinning once you connect the process with God. Farhad saw his God through breaking a mountain. He is represented as one incessantly delivering heavy blows with God-given strength. He broke the mountain and found his God who is represented as a fair bride. It will be an indulgence if you spin with slivers supplied from Sabarmati or elsewhere. But your arms may be too weak to card heavily. The body may be too weak to respond to the routine involved in all the processes involved in attaining speed and quantity. But, for you neither of these two things is essential. What is essential is the spirit of dedications to God. Whatever your outward activity it must be all for God. In order to avoid self-deception we have devised spinning including all the anterior processes. If this much is clear to you, you should have a small quantity of unginned cotton. This you will gin with the hand - roller. You know the process. You can devise these there. Instead of an iron rod you can have a wooden roller. You will gin enough for your purpose. To card this cotton would be child's play. You will employ the Andhra method. The slivers thus made will be flawless - no sound, no exertion, no untidiness, no dust. You will draw the finest thread and every draw will bring you nearer to God. It may be difficult for me to find unginned cotton at this time of the year. But as soon as I know your mind I shall find out what can be done. Till I hear from you I shall be doing nothing.

I shall have to go to Bombay for the Congress meeting for a few days from 12th.

The weather here is dry. Presently we shall want some showers, if the crops are to be saved.

God be with you.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6458. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 10053

193. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

SEVAGRAM,
September 7, 1940

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

Your submitting the resignation is perfectly all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10848. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

194. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
September 7, 1940

CHI. NARANDAS,

You are also growing in years as the days go by and will soon be counted among the old. I wish you to complete a century and to remain ever young.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI NARANDAS GANDHI

RASHTRIYA SHALA

NAVU PARU

RAJKOT (KATHIAWAR)

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U. / II. Also C. W. 8578. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

195. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SEVAGRAM. WARDHAM, C. P.,
September 7, 1940

CHI. JAMNALAL,

What does the enclosed letter say? You may do whatever you consider proper.

I hope Rajendra Babu is well. How is your health? Haribhau has written to me. I shall write about it in Harijan Sevak.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 3014

196. TO THE READERS

The first issue of *Harijan Sevak* published from Poona has many printer's errors. Readers will excuse me for that. There are very few people knowing Hindustani in Poona. For that matter, those knowing Gujarati are also few in number. Readers know under what conditions *Harijan* was started. It did not prove so difficult to bring out *Harijanbandhu* from Poona because I had with me workers who knew Gujarati while those who know Hindustani are scattered everywhere. I hope the printing of *Harijan Sevak* will improve soon and the mistakes will gradually become fewer. If those who take interest in the language of *Harijan Sevak* send me their criticism I shall be grateful.

Although Viyogiji had wired his willingness to continue as editor he writes to say that he would be happy if he was relieved. He believes that it is morally wrong to continue as editor without any responsibility. He also says that he will hardly get any time to write. I understand his viewpoint and I appreciate it. I have therefore relieved him. Pyarelal consented to my proposal and has agreed to become the editor. Knowing his temperament, I wanted to keep him free. But he is the only person among my associates who is fit to be editor. He is well versed in Urdu and he has also a knowledge of Hindi. He can therefore carry the responsibility of editing a Hindustani paper. He was at once time editor of *young India*. Notwithstanding all this I would need the generosity of the readers and their help by way of comment and criticism.

The main thing is the realization of the purpose. The purpose of publishing *Harijan Sevak* is to lay before the Hindustani knowing people all aspects of satyagraha. Satyagraha does not mean only civil disobedience. Of much greater importance are the various constructive activities. Without these civil disobedience is nothing. *Harijan Sevak* will strive to explain to the people what this thirteen-point programme is, how it can be conducted and what progress is has made. The work was the same even before, but it was not done under my direct supervision. Now I will look after it to the extent I can. We shall never forget the aim of *Harijan Sevak,* which is the service of the Harijan. For so long as the incubus of untouchability remains our efforts to win swaraj will be like looking for flowers in the sky.

Now the readers will understand why I have given a secondary place to the language. The language is not an end in itself. It is neither jugglery of words nor bombast. It is certainly an important means of

expressing thought. However poor the language of the writer may be, if his ideas have any force, if he has something worth saying or some information useful to the reader, it is sure to find its way to his heart.

THE THIRTEEN-POINT PROGRAMME

The above programme is as follows:

1. Hindi-Muslim or communal unity
2. Removal of untouchability
3. Prohibition
4. Charkha and khadi
5. Other village industries
6. Village sanitation
7. Nayee Taleem or Basic Education
8. Adult education
9. Uplift of women
10. Education in health and hygiene
11. Propagation of the national language (Hindustani)
12. Cultivating love for mother tongue
13. Working for economic equality.

SEVAGRAM, September 8, 1940

Harijan Sevak, 14-9-1940

197. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 8, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. Yesterday Pyarelal showed me your letter to him.

What a conclusion you draw from my innocent remark! That I show your letters to others and have my letters to you read by them: is this what you think of your godfather? In that case you should abandon him altogether. Why even write to him? How can you trust him? So, that is that.

The people from Sevagram came and said they wanted Dr. Sushilabehn. I said I too needed you, but that it was not in my hands, I would write to you. What reply could I give them? I have the reply but

how can I tell them that? Write to me so that I can let these people and others know.

Now for the reply to your question. You want me to take you round with me my physician, even as I take Mahadev. That occasionally, when you are so inclined, you may stay in the Ashram for the sake of the patients is another matter. I have told you that I cannot do as you say every time. Doing so would be my downfall, because I do not wish to be dependent on a doctor to that extent. That knowing this about me you still ask such a thing of me does you no credit. It is not a thing you should ask. But if I feel that I have made a mistake in not conceding your demand, I will ask your forgiveness and correct the mistake. If I have said anything contrary to this, you must take it as a mistake on my part. It amazes me that you are not able to understand such a simple thing. That is way I have entrusted everything to God. He will do what He wishes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

198. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 8, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

Pyarelal gave me your letter only yesterday. You did we to write it. What you say is all in your hands today. Only one thing which is behind it all is absolutely wrong. Even though unconsciously, you believe that strength is your right. Doing one's duty is not a right, it is an obligation. You must be content to do whatever it is given to you to do. If I were on my death-bed, would you say that you would take up my case only if I accepted your conditions and not otherwise? If that be not so and if, as you have said, I should not be without a doctor even for a moment, because one can never say what may happen to me at what time, however much I may refuse you should never leave my side. But this is only an argument. I put forward this argument because you have advanced an argument. But what really counts is God. We must let ourselves be guided by Him. In my eyes, you are always with me. I never left you and I do not want to leave you. Your absense irks me, but I would not bargain even for your presence at the cost of duty.

You have committed a grave blunder by writing about the fast to your superior. Such naivete in you is a new thing for me. I informed you about it to convince you that I have concealed nothing from you. But you should not have mentioned it even to Mother or Mohan. It should have remained buried in your heart. I have not written about it even to Devdas. I hope this does not lead to any trouble. You do not have to do anything. You do not even have to feel sorry. There is no doubt that it has been a grave mistake. But now there is nothing to be done about it. You must face the consequences. This is no rebuke, only a warning to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujara ti origin al: Pyarel al Papers . Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y. Courte sy: Dr. Sushil a Nayyar

199. ADVICE TO PRABHAKAR[1]

[Before *September 9, 1940*][2]

I am prepared to go one better than you. Mother cow is in many ways better than the mother who gave us birth. Our mother gives us milk for a couple of years and then expects us to serve for when we grow up. Mother cow expects from us nothing but grass and grain. Our mother often falls ill and expects service from us. Mother cow rarely falls ill. Hers is an unbroken record of service which does not end with her death. Our mother when she dies means expenses of burial or cremation. Mother cow is as useful dead as when she is alive. We can make use of every part of her body¾her flesh, her bones, her intestines, her horns and her skin. Well, I say this not to disparage the mother who gives us birth but in order to show you the substantial reasons for my worshipping the cow. Although I am such a cow-worshipper, I ask you to take milk. I don't take cow's milk as I took a vow about it. But yours is not a vow. You see what I am doing to expand the dairy here. If you feel so much for the cow, you can dedicate yourself to her service.

Harijan, 15-9-1940

200. QUESTION BOX[3]

INDIANS STATES AND CONGRESS ACTIVITY

Q. Should Congress members be enrolled in Indian States?

A. This question has been frequently put and answered by me. I have always held that it would be inadvisable to enrol Congress members in the States. There is danger fo friction and clash with authority, and the latter interfering with this work of organization. Indian States subjects who may be anxious to become Congress members can enrol themselves on the register of the nearest Congress office of their Province in British India. But it would be better for them not to bother about membership and to confine themselves to such activity

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Sevagram Notes", 9-9-1940. Prabha-kar, a Harijan worker from Andhra, had given up cow's milk in expiation for the sin he had committed against here in eating carrion.

[2] *ibid*

[3] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 14-9-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan.*

as is possible within their own States. This can be largely only constructive work. It will arouse self-consciousness and solidarity among the masses. In fact it may on the whole be better to make people Congress-minded in the true sense of the term than to enrol them as Congress members.

A. I. S. A. WORKERS

Q. Supposing members are enrolled in the State for the Congress, should not workers of the Charkha Sangh or the Praja Mandals participate or co-operate in Congress political work?

A. Neither of these organizations may go outside its allotted field. The Charkha Sangh workers are already precluded from doing so by the existing rules. Although it is a creation of the Congress, it has no connection with Congress politics. It is purely an economic and philanthropic organization and cannot be made to subserve a dual purpose. The Praja Mandals should be ruled by their peculiar position. They are functioning under heavy odds. [It would not be fair or proper][1] to burden them with Congress work. It follows from this they cannot be asked to lend co-operation to the Congress organization, unless it be in the sense of [silent homage expressed in the constructive work.][2] All these organizations can help one another by each rendering true service within its well-defined ambit. Thus if the Congress is successful in the political field, the Charkha Sangh and the Praja Mandals would profit thereby. Similarly the success of the Charkha Sangh equally serves the Congress. Any single Praja Mandal that achieves success in its mission strengthens the Congress to that extent. By straying from our allotted fields we are likely to do more harm than good.

SEVAGRAM, September 9, 1940

Harijan, 15-9-1940

201. KHADI PATRIKAS[3]

Several Khadi Patrikas are being published these day by the various branches of the All-India Spinners' Association. I have not seen all of them. But of those that I have seen the Maharashtra Khadi

[1] The Hindi version has: "It would be dangerous."

[2] The Hindi version has "moral support".

[3] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 14-9-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

Patrika alone has captured my attention. The rest, so far as I have seen them, are not up to much. If all the provinces will send me their respective khadi patrikas, I will gladly have them examined and send them the result. Besides these there is too the *Gram Seva Patrika* published on behalf of the Nalwadi (Wardha) Karyalaya which is always well worth reading. It is published in Marathi. Shri Vinoba is the inspiration behind it. As a rule, it contains at least one article by him. In my opinion no *patrika* should be brought out for its own sake. They should be self-supporting, notwithstanding the fact that their readers are likely to be mostly workers of the publishing organization. The latter will and must pay for the publications if they are really needed, since they will be getting back many times the worth of money spent on them in the form of useful knowledge.

The August issue of the *Maharashtra Khadi Patrika* is lying before me. One item out of it, viz.,"One Aspect of Khadi", has already been reproduced in these columns. The *patrika* is mostly in Hindi, partly in Marathi. Each issue is priced as. 2; the subscription for the year being Rs.1/4/-. it is printed on handmade paper. It is published from *chanda* and can be had from the Khadi Karyalaya, Wardha.

The *patrika* is filled with useful knowledge about khadi. The issue under review contains the following articles:"The thickness of yarn and width of cloth","The Care of Slivers","Some Experiments of Gandhi Ashram, Raniwa","The Curriculum of the Vastra Vidyalaya, Mool","The Village Service Scheme of the Gandhi Seva Sanga","For Spinners on the Yeravda and the Kisan Charkhas", "Dhanush Takli","The Arithmetic of Spinning","Organizational Notes". No student of khadi can afford to go without this patrika.

SEVAGRAM, September 9, 1940

Harijan, 22-9-1940

202. NOTES[1]

CONGRESS AHIMSA

I am being inundated with letters[2] complaining that by giving my definition of ahimsa before the Poona Congressmen, who saw me

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 14-9-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

[2] The Gujarati adds: "Some sent by registered post".

recently at Wardha,[1] I have seriously circumscribed the scope of ahimsa. These friends forget that my remarks were confined to Congress ahimsa only. Personally I would not kill insects, scorpions or even snakes. Nor would I under any circumstance take meat. But I may not impose the creed of such ahimsa on the Congress. The Congress is not a religious institution, it is a political organization. Its non-violence is limited to human beings. If it were to be further extended, only Hindus, and among even them only Vaishnavas and Jains, would be left to participate in it. Millions of Hindus who eat fish and meat would be excluded. My proposition, to my mind, is so simple and straight that I never thought that anybody could object to it.

My critics should further understand that many Mussalmans have not accepted even the limited ahimsa of the Congress as their creed, and that the Congress, itself has by its Wardha and Poona resolutions, so cramped its scope as to render it almost meaningless. It follows, therefore, that any attempt to widen its scope to include the sub-human species will defeat its purpose. Unlimited ahimsa will take time to be universalized.[2] we will have ample cause to congratulate ourselves if we learn to substitute the law of love in society for that of the jungle, and if instead of harbouring ill will and enmity in our bosoms against those whom we regard as our enemies we learn to love them as actual and potential friends. It should be remembered too that mere *jivadaya* (kindness to animals) does not enable us to overcome the'six deadly enemies' within us, namely, lust, anger, greed, infatuation, pride and falsehood.[3] Give me the man who has completely conquered self and is full of goodwill and love towards all, and is ruled by the law of love in all his actions, and I for one will offer him my respectful homage even though he be a meat-eater. On the other hand the *jivadaya* of a person who is steeped in anger and lust but daily feeds the ants and insects and refrains from killing has hardly anything in it to recommend itself. It is a mechanical performance without any spiritual value. It may even be worse—a hypocritical screen for hiding the corruption within.

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with B. G. Kher and Others", 15-8-1940

[2] The Gujarati adds here: "It certainly has its uses for the devotees."

[3] The Gujarati has here: "Only non-violent behaviour towards other human beings will help us to overcome these six enemies."

NON-VIOLENCE DURING RIOTS

A friends writes:

> How can non-violence be efficacious during riots? By self-immolation we can influence only those with whom we have already established living contacts. But the hooligans who perpetrate violence during riots are, as a rule, hirelings imported from outside. How can they have any scruples about hurting those whom they have never known before and for whom they can have no regard or consideration?

The question deserves careful consideration. The friend who has put it is a valiant worker who nearly lost his life in trying to do his duty during a riot.

I have often written on this question before. The pity of it is that Congressmen have never seriously thought over the question of finding a non-violent way of quelling riots. Their non-violence was restricted to the sole purpose of offering civil resistance to the authorities. In my opinion the non-violence that goes so far and no further scarcely deserves the name 'ahimsa'. You may, if you like, call it unarmed resistance. So far as it is a device for embarrassing the Government it is a species of himsa. To quell riots non-violently, there must be true ahimsa in one's heart, an ahimsa that takes even the erring hooligan in its warm embrace. Such an attitude has to be cultivated. It can only come as a prolonged and patient effort which must be made during peaceful times. The would be members of a peace brigade should come into close touch and cultivate acquaintance with the so-called goonda element in his vicinity. He should know all and be known to all and win the hearts of all by his living and selfless service. No section should be regarded as too contemptible or mean to mix with. Goondas do not drop from the sky, nor do they spring from the earth like evil spirits. They are the product of social disorganization, and society is therefore responsible for their existence. In other words, they should be looked upon as a symptom of corruption in our body politic. To remove the disease we must first discover the underlying cause. To find the remedy will then be a comparatively easy task. So far we have not even attempted a proper beginning. But it is never too late to mend. It is enough that we are at last alive to the necessity of it. We have now to follow it up with prompt action. Let everyone who is interested make a prompt beginning in his own neighbourhood. The difficulty mentioned by my correspondent will automatically resolve itself if we proceed with our effort in the right spirit.

A correspondent[1] writes:

1. The spinning propaganda is going on in every part of India; but I wish the A. I. S. A. would simultaneously open khadi production centres where people could send or take their yarn, without much expense, for weaying, and where they could sell their yarn if they wished.

2. The A. I. S. A. should allow every spinner to have his or her yarn woven locally and also to sell it locally.

3. Khadi bhandars in big towns and cities mean heavy overhead charges due to house-rent, electric lighting , management, and other office expenses, and that makes khadi too dear. It ought to be possible for people to purchase cheap khadi in villages or taluka centres.

All the three suggestions are good. But the great difficulty in carrying them out is that we have not enough workers. There is no doubt that all the yarn should be woven where it is spun, and that the khadi should be disposed of there and then. Therein lies the beauty of khadi. The economics of khadi are to a great extent contrary to those of mill cloth. Cloth manufactured in Manchester is meant for use not in Manchester or England or Europe, but to be exported to Asia or Africa for the use of the people there. On the contrary khadi is meant to be made for the millions by the millions living in villages. Mills use cotton imported from all parts of the world. Cotton for khadi should be produced where it is turned into khadi. We have not yet attained the ideal of the science of khadi, and to that extent the foundation of khadi must be regarded as weak. There was no science of khadi when we began to use khadi. It has evolved with the progress of khadi, and even now it is far from being perfect. But ever-watchful khadi servants are constantly thinking about it and going on perfecting it in the light of experience. I am afraid it will be some time before we can reach the ideal pictured by the correspondent. The A. I. S. A. is not slack in its effort, but it is faced with difficulties at every step. The main thing needed for the universalization of khadi is the co-operation of the people. Machine manufacture can be planned in an office and can be carried out according to plan. Where people have to be converted to an idea it does take time. We have therefore, for the time being, to put with khadi bhandars in towns and cities. Most of these are self-supporting. But for them there would not be the demand for khadi

[1] The Gujarati version has “from Dabhoi”.

that there is today. While, therefore, we should make every attempt to teach the ideal, we cannot jump to it at one bound.[1]

SEVAGRAM, September 9, 1940

Harijan, 15-9-1940

203. QUESTION BOX[2]

STUDENT AND SATYAGRAHA

Q. Why do you object to students participating in the satyagraha campaign, if it is launched? And why must they leave school or college for good, in case they are permitted? Surely students in England are not silently looking on when their country is engaged in a war.

A. To withdraw students from schools and colleges is to encourage them in a programme of non-co-operation.

It is not on our programme today. If I were in charge of the satyagraha campaign, I should neither invite nor encourage the students to leave their schools and colleges. We have seen by experience that the students have not yet got over their passion for Government schools and colleges. That these institutions have lost their glamour is a gain, but I do not set much store by it. And if the institutions are to continue, withdrawal of students for satyagraha will do them no good and will be of little help to the cause. Such withdrawal will not be non-violent. I have said that those who intend to join the campaign should leave their schools or colleges for good and resolve to devote themselves to the nation's service even after the struggle is over. There is no comparison between the students here and those in England. There the whole nation is involved in the war. The institutions have been closed down by the managers. Here, on the contrary, students leaving their schools and colleges would do so in spite of the heads of those institutions.

ARE NOT ALL FASTS VIOLENT?

Q. Are not all fasts violent? Do I not coerce a friend when I try to prevent him, by means of my fast, from doing a wrong act?

[1] The Gujarati version has: "and as long as we do not reach the ideal we should not underestimate the existing arrangement."

[2] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 14-9-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

A. Fasts undertaken according to the rules governing them are truly non-violent. There is no room there for coercion. If a friend of mine is going astray, and if I impose suffering on myself by fasting in order to awaken his better instincts, it can be only out of love. If the friend for whom I fast has no love in him, he will not respond. If he has it and responds, it is all to the good. This is how I would analyse his act: He valued his love for me more than his bad ways. There is a possible risk, I admit, namely that as soon as the effect of the fast is over he would be tempted to go back to his old ways. But then I can fast again. Ultimately the increasing influence of my love will either convert the friend to the extent of weaning him completely from his evil ways, or repeated fasts may lose their novelty, blunt his mind, and make it impervious to my fasting. It is my conviction that a fast undertaken out of genuine love cannot have such an untoward result. But because such a result is not impossible we cannot afford to disregard this pure instrument of moral reform. The risk, however, makes it clear that he who fasts should to properly qualified, and that it should not be lightly undertaken.

PENANCE

Q. Is not the realization of one error and the resolve never to repeat it a penance in itself? Is any further penance necessary?

A. Realization of an error, which amounts to a fixed resolve never to repeat it, is enough penance. One casts away one's evil habits as a snake casts off its skin, and thus purifies oneself. Such self-purification is itself complete penance. But he who gets into the habit of committing errors cannot easily shed it. For all such penance in its accepted sense, if undertaken with discrimination, is likely to be a great help.

SEVAGRAM, September 10, 1940
Harijan, 15-9-1940

204. LETTER TO SHAKRIBEHN C. SHAH

September 10, 1940

CHI. SHAKRIBEHN,

Why do you feel worried? Happiness and misery, health and disease, youth and old age are always with the body. Who knows which is the fruit of sin and which of good deeds? There is nothing wrong in your staying on there. Come here whenever you wish. You may start as soon as you get this letter so that you may be free from worry. You have to bring Sharda with you. Everything will be all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. G. 31

205. NOT QUITE NEW[1]

Apropos of my suggestion that a successful non-violent defence against aggression from without is not so fantastic as is supposed, a correspondent sends me the following extract from a writing in Visvabharati of 1927:

> Of course, we must not think that killing one another is the only form of war. Man is pre-eminently a moral being. His war instinct should be shifted to the moral plane and his weapons should be moral weapons. The Hindu inbabitants of Baili, while giving up their lives before the invaders, fought with their moral weapons against physical power. A day will come when men's history will admit their victory. It was a war. Nevertheless it was in harmony with peace, and therefore glorious.

SEVAGRAM, September 11, 1940

Harijan, 15-9-1940

206. ECONOMIC RUIN IN SINDH

The following printed letter has been circulated by Shri Tarachand D. Gajra and Shri C. T. Valecha:

> We trust you received our previous communication, 'A note on the present state of lawlessness in Sindh'. Herewith follows another one, 'Eco-

[1] This was published under "Notes".

nomic ruin due to the lawlessness in Sindh'. It is a sad story of silent misery that has befallen those who are migrating without any financial aid from the public or the authorities. Elsewhere such a thing would evoke wide international public support and sympathy. We hope your interest in our province will grow.

I take the following from the statement referred to in the letter:

Great havoc has been wrought in the economic life of the province by the present lawlessness in Sindh. The village life is almost at the brink of total ruin. The peasantry, whose only property and means of sustenance are the bulls and the milch cattle, find themselves without both on account of depredations by thieves, as thefts of cattle have risen to abnormal proportions. The lot of the cultivators has come to this that he passes the day of toil followed by a night of vigil.

The Hindus in the villages do not feel themselves strong enough to face thieves and dacoits. Hence they have taken to migrating from smaller villages to bigger villages, and those who are in bigger villages are leaving for urban areas.

With a view to having some idea of this migratory movement, herein below are given figures about one of the sixty-one tahsils in Sindh, namely, Hyderabad taluka. These have been collected by Prof. Ghanshyam, M. L. A. (Congress- Hyderabad Rural Constituency). From several villages almost all Hindu families have left, and from most of the remaining ones nearly fifty per cent of the Hindus have migrated.

Then follow the figures about the migration from 42 villages in the single tahsil of Hyderabad. Of these all the Hindu families in 17 villages have migrated. Of the rest some villages had only one family left. More than 50 per cent of the families had left all the other villages.

The framers of the statement thus comment on the figures:

To fully grasp the significance of the above figures it should be borne in mind that Hyderabad tahsil is in one of the best situated parts of the province. It is immediately round the district headquarters, while the Hyderabad district itself is the entral district of the province - both the eastern desert boundary and the hilly western border of the province lying far away. Even the Sukkur district, which witnessed the recent abominable atrocities, is far distant from Hyderabad. If that is the state of affairs in the safest part of the province, the extent of migration from villages in the tahsils in other districts such as Dadu, Jacobabad, Larkana and Sukkur can easily be imagined.

I need not reproduce the other paragraphs of the statements. The whole of it is a dignified and dispassionate narrative of the calamity that has overtaken the Hindus. The narrative shows that it has begun to affect the Muslims also. The Hindus of Sindh are enterprising. They supply the felt wants of the Muslim agriculturists. The two are closely interwined. Communalism of the virulent type is a recent growth. The lawlessness is a monster with many faces. It hurts all in the end including those who are primarily responsible for it.

The writers of the covering letter are right in saying that the Sindh calamity is an all-India concern. It is as much the duty of the Congress as of the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha to deal with the situation in the right spirit. The Government of Sindh will be judged by the manner in which they handle the situation. Nor can the Central Government look on indifferently while a province of India, which is watered by the mighty Indus and which contains the remains of our proud and ancient past, is being devastated by lawlessness which, if not checked in time, may travel beyond the imaginary boundary of Sindh. For what happens in India, whether good or bad, in one part, must ultimately affect the whole of India.

ON THE TRAIN TO BOMBAY, September 11, 1940

Harijan, 15-9-1940

207. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

[Before *September 12, 1940*][1]

In the course of a letter written to Sir Akbar Hydari, Gandhiji says that satyagraha has been suspended by the State Congress under his advice. However, he thinks that the time is come for some action to be taken and he has picked up only four satyagrahis[2] out of a long list to offer satyagraha at Aurangabad tomorrow. After they are arrested, none else will offer satyagraha, but if they are released, they will again offer satyagraha.

Those four satyagrahis left Wardha last night for Aurangabad.

The Hindu, 12-9-1940

[1] The news item in the source is dated September 12.

[2] These were Achyuthrao Deshpande, Motilal Manthiri, Devram Nanji Chohan and Hiralal Kotecha.

208. ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

[*September 15, 1940*][1]

The All-India Congress Committee has given its careful attention to the events that have taken place since its last meeting held in Poona on July 27, 1940, and to the resolutions passed by the Working Committee at Wardha in August last.[2] The Committee approves of and endorses these resolutions.

In order to end the deadlock in India and to promote the national cause, in co-operation with the British people, the Working Committee, even at the sacrifice of Mahatma Gandhi's co-operation, made a proposal to the British Government in their Delhi resolution of July 7, which was subsequently approved by the A. I. C. C.[3] at Poona. This proposal was rejected by the British Government in a manner which left no doubt that they had no intention to recognize India's independence, and would, if they could, continue to hold this country indefinitely in bondage for British exploitation. This decision of the British Government shows that they will impose their will upon India, and their recent policy has further shown that they will not even tolerate free expression of public opinion in condemnation of their

[1] The resolution, drafted by Gandhiji (*vide*"Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting, Bombay) and moved by Jawaharlal Nehru on this date, was passed on September 16.

[2] On August 21, the Congress Working Committee passed a resolution (*vide* "Resolution Passed at Congress Working Committee Meeting at Wardha", 21-8-1940) on the Viceroy's declaration (*vide* "Statement made by the Viceroy on August 8, 1940") of August 8, suggesting expansion of Governor's Executive Council and establishment of a War Advisory Council. The Viceroy also stated that soon after the war they would set up "a body of representatives of principal elements in India's national life" to frame the new Constitution. He added that "they could not contemplate the transfer of their present responsibilities for the peace and welfare of India to any system of government whose authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life." The Working Committee resolved that the Viceroy's offer not only did not fulfil the Congress demand but also blocked the way of achieving freedom.

[3] The A.I.C.C., which met at Poona from July 25 to 28, ratified the Working Committee resolution demanding independence and a national ministry at the Centre and explained, "how, while the Congress must continue to adhere strictly to the principle of non-violence in the struggle for independence, it was unable, in the present circumstances, to declare that the principle should be extended to India's national defence". For the text of the Delhi resolution and Gandhiji's comments on it, *vide* "The Delhi Resolution"

associating India in the war against Germany, against the will of a vast body of the people of India, and of exploiting her national resources and manpower for this purpose.

The All-India Congress Committee cannot submit to a policy which is a denial of India's natural right to freedom, which suppresses the free expression of public opinion and which could lead to the degradation of her people and their continued enslavement. By following this policy the British Government have created an intolerable situation, and are imposing upon the Congress a struggle for the preservation of the honour and the elementary rights of the people. The Congress is pledged under Gandhiji's leadership to non-violence for the vindication of India's freedom. At this grave crisis in the movement for national freedom, the All-India Congress Committee, therefore, requests him to guide the Congress in the action that should be taken. The Delhi resolution, confirmed by the A.I.C.C. at Poona, which prevented him from so doing, no longer applies. It has lapsed.

The A.I.C.C. sympathizes with the British people as well as the peoples of all other countries involved in the war. Congressmen cannot withhold their admiration for the bravery and endurance shown by the British nation in the face of danger and peril. They can have no ill will against them, and the spirit of satyagraha forbids the Congress from doing anything with a view to embarrass them. But this self-imposed restraint cannot be taken to the extent of self-extinction. The Congress must insist on the fullest freedom to pursue its policy based on non-violence. The Congress has, however, no desire at the present moment to extend non-violent resistance, should this become necessary, beyond what is required for the preservation of the liberties of the people.

In view of certain misapprehensions that have arisen in regard to the Congress policy of non-violence, the A.I.C.C. desires to state this afresh and to make it clear that this policy continues, notwithstanding anything contained in previous resolutions which may have led to these misapprehensions. This Committee firmly believes in the policy and practice of non-violence not only in the struggle for swaraj but also in so far as this may be possible of application in free India. The Committee is convinced, and recent world events have demonstrated, that complete world disarmament is necessary, and the establishment

of a new and juster political and economic order, if the world is not to destroy itself and revert to barbarism. A free India will, therefore, throw all her weight in favour of world disarmament and should herself be prepared to give a lead in this to the world. Such lead will inevitably depend on external factors and internal conditions, but the State would do its utmost to give effect to this policy of disarmament. Effective disarmament and the establishment of world peace by the ending of national wars, depend ultimately on the removal of the causes of wars and national conflicts. These causes must be rooted out by the ending of the domination of one country over another and the exploitation of one people or group by another. To that end India will peacefully labour, and it is with this objective in view that the people of India desire to attain the status of a free and independent nation. Such freedom will be the prelude to the close association with other countries within a comity of free nations for the peace and progress of the world.

Harijan, 22-9-1940

209. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY,
September 15, 1940

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I am writing this in the A.I.C.C. meeting. My heart is there, though the body is here. Your being there eases my mind. Your reports are good and business-like. I hope the typhoid case is progressing as it should. I have talked exhaustively to Dinshaw[1] about Sarala Devi[2]. He is firmly of opinion that, if she is to be cured by nature treatment, she should put herself under his care. He is ready to take charge of her whenever she can go to Poona. If she will not go, he is of opinion that she will not be cured except by quinine taken under observation. The spleen must be reduced. She ought not to trifle with her body. Please read this to her. If she decides to go to Dinshaw she should do so at once. Let her not think of his bill. If she will not, she should go to the Civil Hospital and get definitely cured. No false modesty should deter her from taking the course which

[1] Dr. Dinshaw K. Mehta of Nature-cure Clinic, Poona
[2] Sarala Devi Chowdhurani

commends itself to her.

I am afraid I cannot leave before Tuesday. You may expect us therefore on Wednesday.

Of the political situation, you will learn from Mahadev and the papers.

Though the work is heavy, I am bearing the strain well. God be thanked. I am glad Shummy's[1] condition has not meant your going to Simla.

I hope you are not feeling the want of a Simla servant's presence for your minimum comfort.

I take it Sharda[2] and her mother[3] have arrived there and that she and the baby[4] are well.

I am glad Parachure Shastri[5] is doing well and so is Akbar[6].

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3994. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7303

210. MESSAGE TO MILL-HANDS

September 15, 1940

What need I tell the workers by way of recommending khadi to them? If they have still not understood that for them khadi is the strength of the weak, a source of sustenance during strikes and the best means of preserving their self-respect, what more is there for me to say? Then it is a sad thing.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan M. Desai

[1] Lt. Col. Shumshere Singh, the addressee's brother, a retired surgeon

[2] Sharda G. Chokhawala

[3] Shakaribehn C. Shah

[4] Anand G. Chokhawala

[5] A leprosy patient who came to Sevagram in November 1939 and stayed there till his death on September 5, 1945

[6] Akbarbhai Chawda

211. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING, BOMBAY-1

September 15, 1940

I told Maulana Saheb[1] that the resolution[2] before you was of such a nature that he would have to let me speak on it right away, so that before anyone else spoke on it I could explain in my own words how I interpreted it, why at death's door as I was I had taken upon myself this responsibility and what I expected of you. A general discussion could come afterwards. Maulana Saheb and the other members of the Working Committee acceded to my request. I have had to bear many heavy responsibilities in my life but I feel that the responsibility I am today called upon to bear is the heaviest. I have assumed this responsibility with due deliberation. But I must confess that I am besieged by a doubt, I cannot say why, as to how far I shall be able to carry you with me. As to what the upshot will be is quite beyond my telling. Still it is good. It is a lesson I have learnt during fifty years and more that a man should not worry about the end but should address himself only to the means. Herein lies the key to success. Truly we can think only of the means, which is the only thing in our hands. Nothing can interpose itself between us and our means. But who knows about the result? Who can tell whether I shall be able to go where I intend to go. So many obstructions in the way can frustrate me. There are hidden enemies inside myself, too. I shudder even when I think of all this. But it is enough for me that I know where I want to go and by which way. So I set out in the faith that if the path I have chosen is right, straight and true, my quest will lead me to the end I desire and no other. Behind this belief of mine is not only faith but also the accumulated experience of fifty years. Therefore, in assuming this responsibility, I am neither hampered by my hesitation nor subdued by my fear. Before getting into a boat there is scope for a thousand hesitations, fears and reflection. There is none after one is in the boat and the boat is in the stream.

Why then this fear in me ? Why this hesitation ? I have not the least bit of doubt as to the rightness of the way. What I am not so sure about is whether I shall be able to carry you with me, heart and soul. In the past I used to tour all over the country. Today I am no longer able to do that. Even if I wanted I would not be able to get around the

[1] Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President

[2] *Vide* "All-India Congress Committee Resolution", 15-9-1940

way I used to. I must accept my limitations. I am not so much out of my mind as to forget that I am past seventy and go about thinking that I am fifty. So I confine myself to Sevagram and try to do what service I can from there. Even coming here to Bombay was a strain. But since there was this responsibility to shoulder there was no alternative. What I fear is that the relations that bound me to you at one time no longer obtain. Things change, they are changing today. The people that were in the Congress twenty years ago are not there today. Those who were old then are gone. Those who were young are no longer young.

As you know at Wardha, at my request, the Working Committee had exempted me. I had said that since I was no longer able to keep your hearts and minds with me it was better for me to keep away from you for even after that I would be serving the Congress. They also felt that if I wanted to create something new I would not be able to do so by keeping them with me. We parted. But since then neither they have known any peace nor I. As to who was at fault no one quite seemed to know. Of course, as I have been saying again and again, man is an erring creature. We went on arguing. In the meanwhile came the Delhi resolution. The Congress made a simple and straightforward proposal to the Government. The Government refused to countenance it. I must confess that this rather pleased me. For I trembled at the very thought that the Congress which had been swearing by ahimsa for the last twenty years, the Congress which had given the call of ahimsa from thousands of platforms to the millions in the country, could take it upon itself to make the people give up ahimsa and cultivate war-mindedness. Has not the Congress, ever since the days of Khilafat and the Ali Brothers, repeated in season and out of season, with the beat of drums, that we seek to solve all questions—whether of the Khilafat or swaraj, whether national or international—only through non-violence and that if we have to resort to civil disobedience it will be purely non-violent? And notwithstanding the fact that our opponent is a Government that spends ten crores of rupees a-day on arms and ammunition, we chose the path of peace and Muslims as well as Hindus all resorted only to non-violent action. You must remember that in the special session of the Congress at Calcutta the main resolution[1] was moved by me and it mentioned only the Khilafat and the Punjab murders and brutalities. "Where is swaraj in this?" asked

[1] *Vide* "The Non-Co-Operation Resolution", 5-9-1920

Pandit Motilalji. In my view, swaraj was inherent in the two demands. If we had been successful in having them accepted, we would have automatically secured swaraj. Even so I accepted his suggestion. Ever since we have been saying that we shall destroy the empire through non-violence, free ourselves from its evils through non-violence. How could we, I thought, ask the Congress now to become war-minded? In Delhi we had declared that if the freedom of India was acknowledged, we would co-operate fully in the war effort. This meant that to secure freedom we were prepared to sacrifice non-violence. How terrible it is that we should be ready to go before the millions, in whose name we speak and to whom we have been preaching non-violence all these years, and tell them something quite opposite!

The strength of the Congress does not reside in the members enrolled in its register. The strength of the Congress is derived from the millions that stand by these members. The Congress does not belong to the Hindus alone. It belongs to all—Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and Christians. It may well have a majority of Hindus but belongs as much to Muslims, Parsis and Christians as it does to Hindus. No one is precluded from joining the Congress because he is a Muslim. An example is there before us. Maulana Saheb has not become our President because he represents a large group of Muslims. And yet he makes you and me and the Congress and its Working Committee dance to his tune. He did not have to become a Hindu for that. Where will you find a Muslim academic as great as he? Then there are the Khan Brothers sitting amongst us. They wield so much influence over me that they can make me do what no one else can. Dr. Khan Saheb told me that plying the charkha was beyond him. I told him that if he found the charkha difficult he could take up the pickaxe. Similarly, is not the Congress of the Parsis? They are numerically a much smaller community than Muslims. But Dadabhai Naoroji became our first President. Then Pherozeshah Mehta, the uncrowned king of Bombay, was our President, who in fact made the Congress. He knew no distinctions. It was all the same to him whether one was a Parsi, a Muslim or a Christian. Since childhood the lesson I have learnt from their example is that anyone who seeks the freedom of the country and serves it can acquire control of the Congress. Who can stop Muslims from acquiring control of the Congress? Who can prevent them from dominating the Congress in the Punjab, in Bengal, in Sind and even in Bombay where they are in a minority? If there are any Hindus who in their pride think that since they are in a majority the

Congress is their monopoly, I should ask them to leave the Congress. It is true that the Congress guides itself by majority opinion. But that is because, and only to the extent that, right is on the side of the majority. Many people accuse the Congress of wanting to bring about Fascism. But even such people will concede that the Congress has no weapon except that of non-violence. All its work is conducted wholly through peaceful means. Such being the case the charge of Fascism becomes meaningless. For Fascism cannot carry on without the cudgel and the sword, nor can imperialism, nor can Nazism. But since we want to do everything peacefully we have to carry with us even a minority of a handful of people. If we do not do that, they can obstruct our functioning. The magic of satyagraha, which I have explained to the country, is for all. With its help even eighty thousand people can block the way of eighty million. And, to say nothing of eighty million, we can stop even 210 million from riding on the backs of the whole population. There is a section in the Congress that says that Gandhi's way is not the right way. They want a campaign of widespread labour strikes, mass defiance of laws and such other things. They do not accept the policy of non-violence. It certainly is one way. But it is not the Congress way. Those who accept the policy of non-violence will have to accept that the Congress does not belong to any one community. And if it goes by the principle of majority it is not so as to rule over the minority or brow-beat it but to serve. If the majority remembers this and acts accordingly it will easily be able to win the minority over to its side. The history of the Congress shows this. Records in the Congress office will show that its membership has been steadily increasing. It has also been steadily gaining in prestige. The reason for this is that the strength that the majority represents is moral strength and not the strength of the brute. This is the strength of its right and truth. If in addition it gains also the strength of non-violence, nothing can be more desirable.

It is possible that this will be my last opportunity to speak to you. And I have to take work from you. So I wish to talk to you to my heart's content. I have explained to you what sort of thing the Congress is. If you cannot swallow what I have said, you may throw out the resolution. If your hearts and minds do not accept it, you and I shall be deceiving one another and the purpose we seek to attain will not be attained. If the captain of a ship does not have the co-operation of the crew heart and soul, the ship must sink. You have accepted me as your captain—and I am your captain. So you must—all of you,

from the first officer down to the lowest hand—give me your co-operation with one heart and one mind. If not, not only will you be shipwrecked yourself but history will record that we betrayed the millions in whose name we claimed to speak, that we consigned ourselves to the sea and ruined the country.

Therefore the first important thing is that with full deliberation you should follow me heart and mind. Of course, I shall be keeping you informed every week. I do not wish to go to jail. The Government may no doubt put me in jail but I will not deliberately court imprisonment. I will not myself offer civil disobedience. If they seek to gag me I will not keep quiet. But the Government knows me to some extent. If I do not wish to go to jail it will not put me in jail. I shall be keeping those of you who are outside posted with instructions from time to time and expect you to act accordingly. If you do not do so and then say, 'How is it you could not see that we would be of no use to you as instruments in your hands?', you will be betraying me. Rather than that you should bid me good-bye now and throw out this resolution. If you do this the Working Committee and I will not be hurt. After all the resolution has been put up to you for your approval. If you do not like it you have every right to reject it.

Now I come to the resolution. It is a short one. One part of it says what we believe in. We believe in peace. We want to take peace as far as it can go. Not only do we want to secure swaraj through non-violence, but we also want to run our affairs after swaraj is secured in a non-violent way. But the government under swaraj will not be wholly in the hands of Congressmen. Other parties—including those opposed to the Congress—will be represented. There will be adult franchise. That is to say, adult Hindus, Muslims and those whom we today consider untouchables will elect their representatives for the parliament. Who knows what this mixed parliament will do? But I hope that those representing the Congress will vote for non-violence and if they are in a majority they will conduct the affairs of State through non-violence. The Congress, as Congress, has no other way. We have been saying all along that we shall secure swaraj through non-violence, through peace. How then can we, in order to secure swaraj, assist the empire in its war today? There are other reasons besides for not giving such assistance. Supposing the Government accepted all our demands and said, 'You may do what you like later, but you must mobilize an army today.' Even then in the present

circumstances I feel we have to tell them, 'No, we cannot go along with you. We do not wish you to lose the war. It is in the hands of God whether you win or lose. But we can under no condition help you with money or men. No matter what rewards you promise, the Congress will never agree to the step.'

There is another thing in this resolution. At a time when the British people are fighting for their very existence and are risking their lives and their all, no satyagrahi will ask, 'Are you going to give us swaraj now or not?' He will remain quiet. He will say, 'Why fight against an opponent in trouble?' We cannot start the battle of swaraj now on the assumption that they will give us nothing after they have won the war. It is not the way of satyagrahis to take advantage of the opponent's weak position to wrest political power from him. We have to wrest power with our own strength. We, therefore, tell them: 'At this hour of your trial we do not wish to harass you.'

The question then may be asked: Why bring the resolution at all? For, whatever we may do in pursuance of the resolution is bound to create difficulties for them. The answer is that the position today is such that if we do nothing, our very existence will be imperilled. Even if they do not seek to destroy us the result will be the same. The answer of those who are opposed to the war is that ever since Ramgarh[1] we have been shouting from the house-tops that it is our right to persuade others not to assist in the war. We shall tell them that India cannot be forced into supporting them, that we do not wish to gain even our independence by supporting them in the war. We must have the freedom to say this. Right of free speech is included among civic rights and so far as it has not been gained, swaraj cannot become a reality. So long as we adhere to non-violence and can do what we like, we can have no quarrel with the Government. And if vast masses of our people give expression to this feeling how can the Government claim that India is with it in the war? We have a right to tell them without mincing words that they made a serious mistake in declaring India at war. They themselves enacted legislation and gave us provincial autonomy. It used to be believed that the provinces enjoyed the status of virtual 'Dominion Status'[2]. 'Safeguards' [3] were certainly there. But that was merely to provide against the possibility that owing

[1] In Bihar, where the Congress met in March 1940

[2] Gandhiji has used the English expression.

[3] Lord Linlithgow.

to inexperience we might not know how to manage Governmental affairs. These safeguards never had to be invoked in practice. Notwithstanding all this the central authority abused its powers and proclaimed that India was at war. The Government may very well count the Princes on their side but who can claim that the people of the princely States are also with the Government in the war? Was it not necessary even to consult the provinces which were supposed to be autonomous? Leaving aside other provinces did they consult even Bengal or the Punjab? Did they ask N.W.F.P., where ninety per cent of the population is Muslim? All this has showed that what is called provincial autonomy is a farce, a mere toy. So we cast it away. Even after casting it away we patiently waited for a year. I do not regret it. We gained in strength thereby—at least I did. For without it we could not have spoken up as we are speaking up today.

After this we made a proposal which was hurtful to us but that too was not accepted by the British Government. Nor did they care. They have made the Viceroy the supreme ruler over 300 million people. The Viceroy[4] is my friend and I hope he will continue to be my friend. But what is the meaning in entrusting one individual with so much power ? This is what pinches me. With whose consent does he declare today that India is with Britain in the war? If nothing else, he could have at least kept the Congress out of it when he made the declaration. But nothing of the sort happened. Under the circumstances if we do not make our opposition known we shall cease to exist. At a time when our very existence hangs in the balance what can we say or do? We can at least say this: 'Send us to jail if you want, but we will make our feelings known. We will not let ourselves go out of existence.'

Still we are observing this restraint: the fight will not be on a mass scale. As I have said, this is not going to be a fight for swaraj. Today they tell us: 'Come aboard our ship. Save yourselves and save us too.' We say: 'No.' For we do not depend on them for our existence. We do not depend on anyone for our existence. I fear neither Japan nor Germany nor anyone else. I do not seek the defeat of the British. I want them to win. They are a brave nation. But I cannot bear that their rule over my country should be perpetuated and we for ever remain under their protection. So I shall not board their ship. If I do, we shall be faced with what Germany and Britain are faced with today. I shall not be party to the barbarous business they

are engaged in today. I shall keep on addressing them from a distance: 'Why are you cutting each other's throats? Throw away your weapons. Become brothers. You belong to the same Europe and are therefore brothers. Are you fighting for the possession of India? Then you should understand that India will not be possessed either by Germany or Japan. It belongs and will continue to belong to the Indians.' So long as there is a single Congressman alive no foreigner shall occupy it. What may happen after he falls is another matter. A satyagrahi has faith that whatever God does, He does for good, so he will die smiling. And even while dying he will bear no enmity towards his assailant. He will say that the assailant is steeped in ignorance and has lost his senses.

Let me now say something about how the resolution was drafted. Up to now I have been drafting Congress resolutions. However we now have a very able man to do the drafting. So the wording of the resolution is mine but it has been touched up by Jawaharlal. I am not such a master of English as Jawaharlal is. So I asked him to improve my draft. I must say that the exposition of non-violence in the resolution is Jawaharlal's. I had wanted to omit it. Jawaharlal had also agreed. But Maulana Saheb did not permit it. In saying all this I wish to emphasize that the resolution is wholly mine. The resolution says: 'We have no ill will against the British. We want friendship of all.' I am profoundly hurt even if a single English child dies. The thought of St. Paul's Cathedral being damaged hurts me as much as it would hurt me to see the temple of Kashi Vishwanath or the Jama Masjid damaged.

I was therefore shocked to hear that bombs had fallen on St. Paul's. What harm had this Cathedral caused to anyone? But what is the use of merely expressing sorrow? I am a disciple of the British in this regard. Today when bombs are raining over London, the Londoners are going on with their everyday business without showing any panic. They dance, they make merry, they jest. An eleven-year-old boy writes to his father from school that he will not leave England and go to Canada. In this kind of bravery the British people deserve to be our gurus. How then can I forget this thing that I have learnt from them? While I sympathize with them, how can I forget my dharma? They are today in a very delicate plight. But even if they should lose London, even if they should lose England they will not accept defeat. They will go to Canada, they will go to New Zealand,

they will go to Australia and continue the war from there. While sympathizing with them we cannot forget our duty. That is why I have said that though our fight this time will not be for swaraj how can we forget the foundation of swaraj which is in danger? We have to resort to satyagraha to defend it.

But even here we have accepted restraints. The Working Committee says: 'We have placed everything in Gandhi's hands. We have learnt the art of civil disobedience from him. We shall let him make one more throw. So long as he is alive let him do the fighting.' So they have made me the sole leader. That includes civil disobedience, non-violence, non-co-operation and everything. I do not know what step I shall ask you to take today. Right now there is darkness in front of me. You must understand that in passing this resolution you are appointing a man who finds himself in the dark as arbiter of your destiny.

Those who do not want compromises and negotiations should know that this resolution gives scope for both. I have always believed in *via media*. I shall go to the Viceroy with the resolution and ask him why he has taken away our liberty. If he says, 'No, that is not so; keeping within the bounds of non-violence you may say what you like', then I shall not fight. Nor shall I advise you to fight. Thus the resolution spells out the limitation of the objective of the fight. We cannot save one who chooses the path of violence. We do not wish to embarrass the Government. At the same time we do not wish to carry the policy of non-embarrassment to the point of suicide.

In the end the resolution expresses the conviction that if we accept non-violence within our hearts and minds and act according to it, a day will come when the world will come to us and ask us how it can extricate itself from the war. Today England is spending anything from ten to twelve crores of rupees every day on the war. Why can't 300 million of India's people tell them not to indulge in this senseless expenditure? With that amount millions here can be saved from starvation. I commend the bravery of the British but I cannot compliment them for good sense. What they are doing today is foolish in the extreme. If we can tell them plainly what we feel and peacefully secure our independence we can show to the world how a peaceful social order can be established. Today it is merely a dream, tall talk of small men.

But if we can do this, freedom is in our pocket. And not only

this. We can also set a magnificent example to the world. Hitler's astuteness baffles me. But this astuteness is of no worth to me. The thing I have placed before India today is such that even if Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin and Churchill all put together oppose it they cannot defeat it.

Just one word more in the end. I do not know what I shall ask you to do. But I know what is not on the cards. Even if we have to resort to civil disobedience it will not be mass civil disobedience. What I have in mind is individual civil disobedience and also some other things. I hope to give you a full account of the responsibility I have today assumed. But should a time come when I find myself bankrupt and cannot do anything, I shall ask Maulana Saheb or whoever else from amongst you is outside jail to try your resources. I pray to God to give you and me the sense and courage and ability to keep on the right path.

If you do not care for the things I have said, I must ask you to throw out this resolution. If you approve of what I have said, I shall hope that you will become the bearers of my message. To those who have violence at heart, those who believe in cutting wires, derailing trains and creating disorder, my request is: There is a great experiment going on; please do not put obstacles in the way, otherwise the lead I can give will become ineffective. If I give up the leadership or the Congress gives up non-violence they may do as they like.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 21-9-1940

212. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETTING, BOMBAY—II[1]

September 15, 1940

I know that you have listened to me with the greatest patience.[2] I am specially grateful to you today for the simple reason that I have said many things which may have displeased you. But it was never my intention to displease those whom I want to harness for the great work that lies before you and before me. I have to speak to you at length because I have to shoulder this burden. I have not come with a

[1] In the source, Mahadev Desai explains that this is an "authorized version" of the English speech as "revised by Gandhiji".

[2] Gandhiji first spoke in Hindi; *vide* the preceding item.

prepared speech at all. The thoughts will come as I proceed.

Let me begin with a thought which has been weighing with me for a considerable time. When the war broke out and I went to Simla to see the Viceroy I issued a statement[1] the next day, not in a representative but in my individual capacity. A friend[2] has now reminded me how good it would have been if I had simply hung on to that statement although I could not take the Congress with me; and on the eve of my shouldering this responsibility, he prayed that I should be guided by God to take up that original position and retire. I have very great regard for him. I have not forgotten that statement, nor have I any regret or apology to offer. If such a thing occurs—and history often repeats itself—and I happen to go to another Viceroy, I should make the same statement.

Although I spoke only for myself, deep down in me there was the Congressman speaking. The Viceroy also did not send for me because I was M. K. Gandhi. M. K. Gandhi has absolutely no place in his books. The man who wields the sceptre can have no room for individuals. He sent for me because he thought I would represent the Congress view and I would be able to carry conviction to Congressmen.

I withdrew from that position, not as an individual but as a Congressman, and because I failed to carry conviction even to a single Congressman. Happily you have got on the Working Committee men with sterling honesty who had the courage to tell me that, although it was my statement, they did not feel like accepting it. They added that they had had bitter experience behind them, and that therefore they would not be able to take that position. Thus you had the resolution[3] that was passed by the Congress immediately after the war. And I agreed with the resolution as a representative, although I said to them that if I could carry conviction, my original position was the best possible one to take up. If I had pressed the members of the Working Committee to accept my position, they would have done so, but it would have been only mechanical. The statement was not made to deceive the Viceroy or, for the matter of that, a single soul. It came straight from the heart. It was not a theatrical display. It was the

[1] On September 5, 1939; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 5-9-1939

[2] The reference is to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri; *vide* "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 20-7-1940

[3] Of October 10, 1939; *vide* "A. I. C. C. Resolution"

opening up of the secret recesses of the heart before the world, the Viceroy and the Congress. If these words of mine could not find an echo in their hearts, they would have been of no use whatsoever to the Viceroy, to the great English nation or to India. That still remains my sentiment. If I could not convince the Congress of my attitude, it would not carry us further. It would have been a wrong step to take, and hence it was not taken. With that background I approach this resolution.

I have made repeated statements that I would not be guilty of embarrassing the British people or the British Government when their very existence hung in the balance, that I would not be true to my satyagraha, would not be true to non-violence, would not be true to the truth which I hold dear if I did so, and therefore could not do so. That very man now stands before you to shoulder the burden of satyagraha. Why? There comes a time when a man in his weakness mistakes vice for virtue; and virtue itself, when taken away from its context and from the purpose for which it was dedicated, becomes vice. I felt that, if I did not go to the assistance of the Congress and take the helm even if it be in fear and trembling, I would be untrue to myself.

I feel that in taking the step that we are doing we are rendering a great service not only to the Congress but to the whole of India. And we are rendering a service not only to the whole of India. History will record—and Englishmen will be able to grasp this statement some day—that we rendered help to the English nation, and they will find that we were true to our salt and had the same bravery and fearlessness of which the Englishman is proud and for which he is renowned. I, who claim to be fast friend of the British people, will be guilty of unfriendly conduct if, under a false sense of modesty, or because people may think otherwise about me, or because Englishmen themselves will be angry with me, I do not issue a warning that the virtue of self restraint now becomes vice, because it will kill the Congress organization, and it will kill the very spirit which is exercising this restraint.

When I say this, I am speaking not only for the Congress, but for all who stand for national freedom—Muslims, Parsis, Christians and even those who are against the Congress, so long as they represent the aspiration of India, namely, unadulterated independence. I should be untrue to all of them if, at this time, I said, ‘No embarrassment to

the British.' I must not repeat parrot-like 'no embarrassment'. Then that repetition would be just as useful for my salvation or for the guarding of my virtue as the repetition by a parrot of God's name which cannot bring him salvation, because it is only a mechanical and vocal effort without any intelligence behind it. Therefore, if I exercise that suppression at this critical moment in the history of the nation it would be useless. I should be perfectly untrue to myself if I hid myself in Sevagram and said, 'No, I have told you, no embarrassment.'

The language of this resolution is in the main mine. It appealed to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. I used to be the Congress draftsman. Now he has taken my place. He saw it was inevitable, if we were to be true to non-violent resistance to the extent to which we wanted to go. The Working Committee has accepted this phraseology deliberately, well knowing its implications The result is this: If we can get the declaration from the British Government that the Congress can carry on anti-war propaganda, and preach non-co-operation with the Government in their war effort, we will not have civil disobedience.

I do not want England to be defeated or humiliated. It hurts me to find St. Paul's Cathedral damaged. It hurts me as much as I would be hurt if I heard that the Kashi Vishvanath Temple or the Jama Masjid was damaged. I would like to defend both the Kashi Vishvanath Temple and the Jama Masjid and even St. Paul's with my life, but would not take a single life for their defence. That is my fundamental difference with the British people. My sympathy is there with them nevertheless. Let there be no mistake on the part of Englishmen, Congressmen, or others whom my voice reaches, as to where my sympathy lies. It is not because I love the British nation and hate the German. I do not think that the Germans as a nation are any worse than the English or the Italians are any worse. We are all tarred with the same brush; we are all members of the vast human family. I decline to draw any distinctions. I cannot claim any superiority for Indians. We have the same virtues and the same vices. Humanity is not divided into watertight compartments so that we cannot go from one to another. They may occupy one thousand rooms, but they are all related to one another. I would not say, 'India should be all in all, let the whole world perish.' That is not my message. India should be all in all, consistently with the well-being of other nations of the world. I can keep India intact and its freedom also intact only if I have goodwill towards the whole of the human family and not merely for

the human family which inhabits this little spot of the earth called India. It is big enough compared to other smaller nations, but what is India in the wide world or in the universe?

Let there be no mistake as to what I am about. I want my individuality to remain unimpaired. If I lose it, I would be of no service to India, much less to the British people, still less to humanity. My individual liberty is the same as the nation's, convertible with national liberty. I do not claim any greater liberty for myself. Hence my liberty is equal to the liberty of all of you and no greater. I feel that, if my liberty is at stake, yours is also at stake. I claim the liberty of going through the streets of Bombay and say that I shall have nothing to do with this war, because I do not believe in this war, and in this fratricide that is going on in Europe. I admire the bravery. But what is the use of this bravery? I deplore the foolishness and the crass ignorance. These people do not know what they are fighting for. That is how I look at this war that is going on across the seas. I cannot possibly take part in it. Nor do I want the Congress to do so.

The part that I would like to take is the part of a peacemaker. If the British people in their wisdom had recognized the independence not of the Congress but of all India, and if other parties in India had also co-operated with us, we would have taken the honourable place of peacemakers between these nations. Such is my ambition. But today I know that it is a day-dream. But sometimes a man lives in his day-dreams. I live in mine, and picture the world as full of good human beings—not goody-goody human beings. In the Socialist's language, there will be a new structure of society, a new order of things. I am also aspiring after a new order of things that will astonish the world. If you try to dream these day-dreams, you will also feel exalted as I do.

And now I come to our 'tin-pot' Congress—tin-pot in the estimation of others, not my own. If we do not take care, the Congress will disappear, and if the Congress disappears, the national spirit disappears. One after another Congressmen are being selected and jailed. It is not satyagraha to watch people being taken away. It is much better for all of us to rush into the jaws of the opponent. After all, as the Maulana Saheb once said, India is a vast prison. Let us get out of this slave-prison by breaking the prison bars. He said to the

Sikhs at the time of the Nankana Saheb tragedy[1]: 'You may protect one gurdwara; but what about the vast gurdwara that is India? We have to deliver it from bondage.' Those words ring true even today in my ears. If this liberty of the nation or the movement for freedom is likely to be choked, then I say that the virtue of self-restraint is going to become a vice. That virtue of restraint cannot be carried to the extent of the extinction of the national spirit wherever it may reside, whether among Congressmen or non-Congressmen.

I do not want to hurl civil disobedience or anything in the face of the Government without making my meaning clear, the meaning I attach to the sum total of Government actions— actions beginning with the declaration of the Viceroy, the statement[2] of the Secretary of State for India, and the series of actions and the policy that the Government have pursued since. The sum total of all these has left an indelible impression on my mind that there is something wrong, some injustice being perpetrated against the whole nation, and that the voice of freedom is about to be stifled. This is implied in the resolution, not in the exact language which I am using now, but you will see the meaning clear as daylight.

In order completely to clarify our position, I propose to approach the Viceroy with a request that he will be good enough to see me, and I have no doubt that he will. I will place my difficulties before him; I will place the Congress difficulties before him. I will approach him in your name, I will tell him that this is the position to which we have been reduced: 'We do not want to embarrass you and deflect you from your purpose in regard to war effort. We go our way, and you go yours, undeterred, the common ground being non-violence. If we carry the people with us, there will be no war effort on the part of our people. If, on the other hand, without your using any but moral pressure, you find that the people help the war effort, we can have no cause for grumbling. If you get assistance from the Princes, from the zamindars, from anybody high or low, you can have it; but let our voice also be heard. If you accept my proposal, it will be eminently honourable, it will certainly be a feather in your cap. It will be honourable of you, although you are engaged in a

[1] In the Punjab, where on February 20, 1921, many Sikhs were killed on entering the gurdwara;

[2] Of L. S. Amery, who opened on August 14, a debate on India in the House of Commons

life-and-death struggle, that you have given us this liberty. It will be honourable of you that you take this great step, although you have limitless powers to choke our voice, and that you give us the fullest possible freedom, consistently with the observance of non-violence, to tell the people of India not to join the war effort.'

Let the people use any reasoning they like for refusal to help the war effort. My reasoning is the only one which will sit well on Congressmen's lips. But I do not expect all to restrict themselves to that reasoning. Those who have conscientious objection, as I have, will adopt my reasoning. Those who are tired of British imperialism will use that argument. There may be others who will have other arguments. All these should be covered under this freedom of speech, provided, however, that they all accept non-violence, provided also that what they say is said openly and not secretly. These are the implications of my generalship. If these do not satisfy you, you must reject this resolution summarily. So long as you can preach non-co-operation with war effort in men and money; there should be no civil disobedience. But if you have not that liberty, there is no swaraj but perpetual bondage. I would like the British people and the Viceroy to be able to tell the world that they have given the leaders of the Indian people liberty to preach to their people what they like. The British can then say to the world: 'Judge us by our conduct. Here in India we are playing the game.'

I do not mind the British not responding to the Delhi resolution. They may say, 'At the present moment you cannot interfere with the management of affairs as they stand. Deliverance will come to you in its own time. At this critical juncture do not worry us.' I will understand that argument. I will sympathize with it. I will hold my hand so long as there is no fraud or falsity in what they say. It is impossible for them to give us freedom. If freedom has got to come, it must be obtained by our own internal strength, by our closing our ranks, by unity between all sections of the community. It cannot descend from heaven, nor can it be given as a gift from one nation to another. I do not know whether I am representing the feelings of the members of the Working Committee, because I have not discussed these things with them. But you have to take me with all my limitations, with the workings of my mind.

The Viceroy may say, 'You are a visionary.' I may fail in my mission, but we will not quarrel. If he says he is helpless, I will not feel

helpless. I will make good my position. I cannot sit still when I see Ram Manohar Lohia and Jayaprakash Narayan in jail, than whom I do not know braver or straighter men. They have not preached violence, but simply carried out the behests of the Ramgarh resolution[1]. It was a point of honour with them.

I have restrained myself, and will restrain myself. I will not seek imprisonment. I do not want to offer civil disobedience. I will not place myself in peril. In this battle I will not expose myself to imprisonment. But if the Government chooses, it will not be difficult to take me away. I will not be able to seal my lips or restrain my pen. It will be difficult for them to keep me in prison, not because India will rise in rebellion. India will be wrong if it does so. My own instinct is that they will not be able to keep me in jail.

I will place my argument before the Viceroy. I may fail in my mission. But I have never approached a mission in despair. I may have approached it with the consciousness that I may be faced with a blind wall. But I have often penetrated blind walls. I shall approach the Viceroy in the confidence and hope that he will understand the great reasonableness of the request of the Congress for full liberty to preach 'no war' in India. Everyone should have perfect liberty to preach by pen and tongue: 'We cannot aid imperialism, we cannot help spoliation.'

I shall strain every nerve to avoid satyagraha in your name. What shape it will take, when it comes, I do not know. But I know that there will be no mass civil disobedience, because mass civil disobedience is not required for this occasion. I have impenetrable darkness before me regarding the future course of action. I have no mysteries. I do not know how I shall lead you, what action I shall put before you. I hope that any action that we may take will be worthy of the Congress traditions and of the occasion.

I have often said that I do not know the Congress mind as I have buried myself in Sevagram. It is because of the Congress difficulty that I have dragged myself to Bombay, and immediately I am released from this duty you will find me in Sevagram. But I have got strength and resourcefulness enough to lead this battle although I am buried in Sevagram. I shall do better and clearer thinking in Sevagram than anywhere else, simply because I have built up there an atmosphere for

[1] *Vide* "A Resolution"

my growth. With the march of time my body must decay but, 1 hope, not my wisdom. I seem to see things more clearly with the advance of age. It may be self-deception, but there is no hypocrisy. Self-deception is good sometimes in that it helps one to remain cheerful and not to give way to despair. It will be, therefore, wrong of you to drag me from Sevagram; and I promise that I shall give a good account of my stewardship.

There are many parties in the Congress. We are not all of the same opinion. There is indiscipline in the Congress. I know it is inevitable in a mass organization which is growing from day to day. If it is all indiscipline and no discipline, the organization is on the downward path. Let it not be said of you that you come to the Congress although you do not believe in non-violence. How can you possibly sign the Congress pledge with violence in your breasts? I want complete obedience to the policy of non-violence. While the policy lasts, it is the same as though it was a creed, for so long as it holds good it is as good as a creed. My creed holds me for life; yours so long as you hold it. Resign from the Congress, and you are free from it. Let us be clear regarding the language we use and the thoughts we nurture. For, what is language but the expression of thought? Let your thought be accurate and truthful, and you will hasten the advent of swaraj even if the whole world is against you. You will have won swaraj without having to spend nine million pounds a day or without burning a single home. If you are true to your policy, I am sure that without doing any of these things you will build up the majestic edifice of freedom.

Now for the violence party. Do not mix up the methods if you can help it. You have restrained yourselves for some years. Restrain yourselves for some more years. Ours is not a small battle. If you restrain yourselves, you will lose nothing.

Freedom of speech and pen is the foundation of swaraj. If the foundation-stone is in danger, you have to exert the whole of your might in order to defend that single stone. May God help you.

Harijan, 29-9-1940

213. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING, BOMBAY-III

September 16, 1940

I am not yet your captain. I shall be, when you have passed this resolution[1]. Today I am not even a four-anna member of the Congress. I am here only on your sufferance and that of the Working Committee. I wish to speak to you today on a couple of important matters.

Maulana Saheb had exempted me from attending today's session. It was I who insisted that before the Committee adopted the resolution I should know how they thought and spoke. In that way I might get some inspiration. And indeed I have learnt a lot here. One thing I learnt is that, notwithstanding so many years of training in ahimsa, many members used intemperate language. I was surprised to find that you did not even realize that everything you wanted was included in the resolution. I observe that an important matter which I explained to you yesterday has not been accurately reported in the newspapers. I wish to clarify it today. The Working Committee have laid the foundation of swaraj in framing this resolution.

If you ask for a definition of 'swaraj' I cannot give it; nor can Jawaharlalji. It is possible that someone else can fully define the swaraj of my conception. I am prepared to become a pupil of anyone of you who can send me a comprehensive definition of swaraj. The truth is that swaraj is something undefinable. I shall be able to include in my definition only a fraction of all that fills me. But the beauty of this resolution is that if you fully abide by it all your aspirations can be realized. Freedom of speech and civil liberty are the very roots of swaraj. Without these the foundations of swaraj will remain weak.

If you can understand this simple fact, you will realize all your arguments are meaningless. If we are able to secure the right of free speech, whether through persuasion or force, everyone including Sardar Sardul Singh of the Forward Bloc and Dr. Ashraf of the Communist Party will be able to do their work. If I look upon war-resistance as a religious matter, then freedom of conscience can also be said to be the objective of this resolution. You want complete independence. It is beyond its power to confer it. And we cannot

[1] *Vide* "All-India Congress Committee Resolution", 15-9-1940

become really free by merely declaring our freedom. We can be free only when the British go out bag and baggage and we can hold our own in the face of aggression by Japan, Germany, Russia or Afghanistan. It is useless today even to talk of civil disobedience for securing complete independence. What use is fighting for freedom against a country whose own independence is in danger? Even if one people could give independence to another people, the British people are not in a position today to do so. They are themselves in the midst of war. They have therefore gagged us all. They think we are their vassals. I am not. I can say what I like and also do what I like. This resolution authorizes you even to embark on a struggle to secure this right. They have the power to grant us this right. If even then they do not grant it, and if in consequence they are placed in a sorry plight we shall not be to blame.

I have placed before you a clear objective for the struggle. It is the basis of independence. If we do not hold fast to it, we shall be deprived of our principal weapon in the struggle for independence. I, therefore, want you to obtain this precious jewel and guard it. It is not a paltry matter. It has a vital importance. It is not a brain-wave of mine. When I was in great distress and prayed to God to show me the way, He inspired me with this thought.

Rajaji said to me that my demand was greater than his. It is partly true. They can make an announcement regarding independence even during the war. But they will not give us control over the Central Government. The reason is obvious, for then the war will have to be conducted through us. Rajaji may be the Prime Minister one day, Jawaharlal the next day and someone else the day after. Knowing the history and psychology of the Congress, how can they take the risk of relying on such an uncertain thing as our co-operation? If I were the Viceroy, I too would be afraid to do that. But there is no risk in giving what I ask. Where is the harm even if India as a whole does not volunteer to help the war effort with men and money?

If you have understood all this you should withdraw all the amendments you have given notices of. But not as a favour to me. I want you to make me your captain not as a favour to me but only if you feel l deserve it. Otherwise you should go your ways and allow me to retire to Sevagram and do my own work. I have neither a chart nor a compass to guide the ship which I have to captain today. My plight is like that of Columbus, or even worse. He knew his

destination. He had wanted to sail to India but he discovered a land much bigger than India. I am in a much worse plight. In spite of this you are appointing me your captain. You will have therefore to fill all posts from a rating to an officer. I do not seek any favour from you nor am I conferring any favour on you. If you accept this condition, you will have to obey every order from the captain. The captain of a ship has the authority to lighten the load of the ship by throwing overboard a disobedient rating or officer.

The swaraj that we demand has only one limitation. We cannot preach violence. This limitation has been imposed because the Government that is based on violence will not be able to tolerate violence by others. If even those who believe in violence lend me their ear, they too will ultimately find that they have no ground for disappointment. Because they will have the right to preach and even practise violence after we secure swaraj through non-violence. We are not going to have an army. But if a Sikh or a Khaksar wants to carry one or more swords, he will certainly be able to do so. When all others believe in non-violence, what can the violent do? If a majority of citizens are restrained in their speech and actions, they cannot but influence the others. If I become the head of the state in swaraj, I shall give such permission to anyone who seeks it. On the other hand, you must know that you will not have this freedom if you secure swaraj through violence.

Those who wish to resort to mass civil disobedience, general strike, etc., forget that the 1920 resolution contains all these methods. I have been endeavouring to prepare the country for these things for the last twenty years. If you had been prepared, we could have undertaken many of these things and created a new structure of society. Whose fault was it that you were not prepared ?

Even so those who wish to resort to mass civil disobedience may do so. But it will be considered a breach of discipline. Of course, as I said to Subhas Babu, I shall congratulate them if they succeed. But those who rebel will not have my blessings. The right course would be for you to leave the Congress and then do what you like.

But the truth is we cannot resort to civil disobedience today within the limits of non-violence and it is for this reason that I do not today permit students to leave their schools and colleges. If they want to leave them for good they well may. As for strikes, it will be enough to tell you that Shri Suresh Banerji, a labour leader who had once

been my friend, then chose a different way, and who is again coming closer to me, told me that I alone possessed the key to a successful strike. It is true. But I am not inclined to use it for any of the activities today. Even if I wished to do so, would I have your help? If I order all of you to ply the charkha faithfully, will you do it? If I ask you to wield a pickaxe, will you do so without argument? I have my doubts.

If today you do what I ask you to do, I shall succeed with the Viceroy. I am not going to be silenced by his saying, 'No'. You are free to say whatever you like even today. It is not as if you will be able to open your mouth only after my visit to the Viceroy. But the proper thing would be for you to exercise restraint till I have been to see the Viceroy and reported the results. I can promise you this: I shall not come back with a compromise which will gag our mouths.

Pandit Jawaharlal and Dr. Ashrof have referred to the Hindu Muslim problem. If strife is destined to be our lot who can avoid it? We should also be prepared to risk anarchy and disorder. We should have the faith that non-violence will not lead to violence and even if this happens, we shall have the strength to control it. And that will be our real test. It is in the nature of ahimsa that it grows in strength as violence increases. I hope you will acquire such strength before my death. We can establish non-violent swaraj only when we acquire non-violent strength and through such strength we can spread peace and goodwill throughout the world.

I wish to give a message to the Muslim brethren. If eight crore Muslims oppose India's independence, India will never win independence. But I shall admit such opposition only when all adult voters from among the eight crore declare their opposition to independence. But I consider this almost impossible. They may, of course, declare that they want independence without Hindu domination. It is worse than anarchy to partition a poor country like India whose every corner is populated by Hindus and Muslims living side by side. It is like cutting up a living body into pieces. No one will be able to tolerate this plain murder. I do not say this as a Hindu. I say this as a representative of Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and all. I would say to Muslim brethren, 'Cut me to pieces first and then divide India. You are trying to do something which was not attempted even during the Muslim rule of two hundred years. We shall not allow you to do it.' Whatever I have said about the Muslims also applies to the Sikhs. If the 30 lakh Sikhs wish to obstruct India's independence, they are in a

position to do so. We shall deal with them also in the non-violent way. Non-violent swaraj cannot be secured without non-violence. I shall work for communal unity. Islam means peace. It does not mean peace to the Muslims only; it means peace to all communities and to the entire world.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 12-10-1940

214. INTERVIEW TO STIMSON[1]

[*September 17, 1940*][2]

STIMSON: How do you desire not to embarrass Britain with your demand to preach anti-war propaganda in a non-violent way?

GANDHIJI: Because non-violence is the Congress creed which involved Congress hostility to all war. Hence it is a vital necessity for the Congress to dissociate itself from identifying itself with any war. Hence my desire not to embarrass Britain was necessarily limited and conditioned by the counter-necessity of preserving the Congress existence, and therefore civil disobedience is definitely restricted to freedom of speech and action, provided they are absolutely non-violent. Therefore I have claimed in my speech that, if the full import of Congress action is understood, it must in the end help Britain and the world.

Why?

Because in the midst of the conflagration all round there is one powerful body pinning its faith to uttermost non-violence. If it succeeds, then the groaning world can heave a sigh of relief and find a way out of these monstrous armaments.

How do you visualize the future of India in the event of a Nazi victory?

All I can say is I am not dismayed by the prospect, if my country remains true to the cult of non-violence. But that does not mean that I should be in any way pleased with the prospect of a Nazi victory. What terrifies me is that as things are going on at defeat of

[1] The interview is extracted from "Seven Days in Bombay" by Mahadev Desai, who explains that "the representative of the Associated Press of America saw Gandhiji within twenty-four hours of the termination of the A.I.C.C." The A.l.C.C. session came to a close on September 16.

[2] *ibid*

Nazism will be bought at a terrific price, viz., superior Nazism, call it by any name you like.

In view of what has happened in Malabar,[1] is there any hope of mass civil disobedience being carried on non-violently?

Not at present, and therefore, as you must have noticed, in my speech[2] I made an emphatic declaration that so far as I was concerned there was no prospect of my embarking on mass civil disobedience. But if you ask me whether it is possible to conduct mass civil disobedience without its resulting in violence, I would emphatically say 'Yes'. But my country is not at present ready for mass action, and in a way I am thankful that the unfortunate events in Malabar have come as a warning to the country and a pointer for me also.

Does your policy mean disapproval of America's help to Britain in the shape of planes and munitions?

Not in the slightest. For the simple reason that America does not believe with the Indian National Congress in non-violent action. I wish it did. Then America's contribution to peace and help to Britain would be infinitely more substantial than any number of planes and any amount of material that America can supply to Britain. And if the weekly correspondence I receive from America and visits from Americans who come to see me is any index to American opinion, I expect America to take a leaf out of the Congress book and outrun the Congress in the race for the establishment of peace on earth through universal disarmament.

Harijan, 22-9-1940

215. INTERVIEW TO FRANCIS G. HICKMAN[3]

BOMBAY,
[*September 17, 1940*][4]

HICKMAN: What is India's contribution towards making the world safe from Hitlerism?

GANDHIJI: If the Congress succeeds in its non-violent effort,

[1] At various places people held, 'protest day' meetings against magesterial orders, when several policemen and demonstrators were wounded or killed.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting, Bombay" 15-9-1940and "Speech At A.I.C.C. Meeting, Bombay", 16-9-1940

[3] This is extracted from "An American's Questions" by Mahadev Desai. According to a report in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 5-1-1941, the interview "took place in Bombay at the time of the session of the A.I.C.C. which Hickman attended".

[4] From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's diary

Hitlerism and all such ‘isms’ will go as a matter of course.

Don’t you think India should do something to make facts better known in America and thus promote the interchange of goods and ideas? What do you think should be done in this connection?

First let us take up goods. America has had her bit, irrespective of Indian conditions and India’s wishes. So far as ideas are concerned, my unhappy experience is that anti-Indian propaganda carried on in America has held undisputed sway, so much so that even the visit of an outstanding personality like Tagore produced little impression on the American mind.

But why does not India endeavour to make herself better known in America ?

If America really wanted to know what Indian opinion is at a given time, there is ample literature which is growing from day to day to which they have access. If you have in mind an Indian agency which should do propagandist work on behalf of India, again our bitter experience has been that imperialist propaganda that is carried on with much ability and perseverance and at a lavish expenditure is such that we can never overtake it, and the work of any such agency has up to now proved fruitless.

Why not have Indian people use Indian hand-spun cloth and keep her mills busy for the export of manufactured cloth and yarn? Don’t you think that this would help the cotton-grower?

I would not mind such a thing but it must be in order to supply the felt needs of the country which received our cloth. I have no idea of exploiting other countries for the benefit of India. We are suffering from the poisonous disease of exploitation ourselves, and I would not like my country to be guilty of any such thing. If Japan, say, as a free country wanted India’s help, and said we could produce certain goods cheaper, and we might export them to Japan, we would gladly do so. But under my scheme of things all dumping of goods by one country on another, supported by her army and her navy, has to cease.

Apart from export of merchandise what has India to give America, and turn what does India expect from America?

I must correct your question for you. India sends no merchandise to America; she sends only raw material, and that is a matter or serious consideration for every nationalist. For we cannot suffer our country remaining an exporter of raw produce, for it means (as it has meant) extinction of handicrafts and art itself. I would expect America to treat India not as though India was a country for American exploitation but as if India was a free country, although unarmed, and deserving, therefore, the same treatment that America

would wish at the hands of India.

You are repeating, Sir, the message of Jesus.

I agree. We are poor in technical skill, but as soon as you accept and consent to follow Jesus's teaching, I would not have to complain of all the skill being monopolized by America. You will then say, 'Here is a sister country poor in technical skill, let us offer our skilled assistance not for exploitation, not for a terrific price, but for its benefit, and so for nothing.' And here let me say a word about your missionaries. You send them here for nothing, but that also is part of imperialist exploitation. For they would like to make us like you, better buyers of your goods, and unable to do without your cars and luxuries. So the Christianity that you send us is adulterated. If you established your schools, colleges and hospitals without the object of adding to the number of the so-called Christian population, your philanthropy would be untainted.

As regards technical skill, I cannot afford to do what the Tatas are doing. They can afford to bring an American expert manager at Rs. 20,000 a month. But whilst they represent the spirit of adventure, they do not represent poor India. India has seven lakhs of villages which take in 90 per cent of her population. America has to think of these. America ought, if she will be of real help, to exercise her resourcefulness in this direction. And for that purpose America will have to cease to be the premier exporting country that she is. My views on national planning differ from the prevailing ones. I do not want it along industrial lines. I want to prevent our villages from catching the infection of industrialization. American exploitation has added neither to the moral height of the exploited countries nor of the exploiting country. On the contrary it has impeded their march towards spiritual progress, and deadened America's real spirit of philanthropy. A phenomenon like the one that America witnessed cannot happen in India. I mean the destruction of tons of sugar and other agricultural products. You might have supplied other countries the sugar and the wheat or fed America's own unemployed.

But you could not have taken our pigs!

I know. But all do not think like me. Pandit Nehru wants industrialization because he thinks that, if it is socialized, it would be free from the evils of capitalism. My own view is that evils are inherent in industrialism, and no amount of socialization can eradicate them.

We have seen what Germany has done to Belgium and to the other countries. You would still say 'non-violence'? And yet you ask the Congress to fight because it is in danger of extinction. England also is in such danger and therefore fights.

Don't you see the obvious difference? England would have to out-Hitler Hitler in defeating him. We do not want to use any of the weapons used by those who would crush us. I would say to an

aggressor: 'You may destroy my churches, my hearths and my homes, everything but my soul. I won't come to your country to destroy your churches, hearths and homes. I will not defend my country with your weapons. I will simply refuse to co-operate with you, refuse to owe any allegiance to you, in a word I will say "No" to you.' He may take possession of India, but if I have my way, he will not impress a single Indian in his service.

Then you must see another distinction. If we were fighting Government with Government's weapons, it would be the best chance for us to surprise the enemy and make their difficulty our opportunity. But we have been for over a year laying the utmost stress on non-embarrassment. It ought not to be turned against us. But we shall not use Britain's weapons, and that is how we shall help Britain against her will. I can understand the Viceroy's reluctance to surrender the reins of Government to us while he has to fight Germany; but I cannot understand the Government's desire to suppress the non-violent spirit of the nation.

But you again speak like Christ on earth, and they cannot understand that language.

I must persist at the peril of my life. In my opinion non-violence is not an individual virtue, but a course of spiritual and political conduct both for the individual and the community.

Harijan, 29-9-1940

216. I WAS UNJUST BECAUSE WEAK

I know Rajaji enough to understand that he is too brave to need any support from anybody, he is too philosophic to harbour an injury for many hours, if not minutes. I know also that his fine sense of humour enables him to enjoy a joke at his expense. Therefore this confession must be taken as one for my own satisfaction only.

I have told[1] the public that, had, I not egged him on, Rajaji would never have brought forward his resolution at New Delhi. Having great regard for his judgment and his honesty, when he asserted with amazing assurance that I was wrong and he was right in the implications and application of non-violence, I allowed myself to doubt the correctness of my interpretation to the point of allowing and encouraging him to act on his. I showed weakness and became unjust to him. A weak man is just by accident. A strong but non-violent man is unjust by accident. I was unjust to Rajaji because I exposed him to ridicule and unkind attacks. Though no ultimate harm has come to the Congress because what I still consider was an error has been rectified, it is not a good thing for a great leader to have his work undone all of a sudden, for I know that Rajaji still feels that he was right. If his view had prevailed, the resolution that now holds sway would not have taken the shape it has. I would still have been out of the Congress. For I was out of it at Wardha before the Delhi resolution was taken as the natural outcome of Wardha.

If I was unjust to Rajaji, I was also unjust to the Working Committee. For, had I remained firm, the Wardha resolution too would not have been passed. I hold that, so long as I am accepted as the sole authority on satyagraha and its implications, they must not be a matter of vote. My colleagues may debate the pros and cons with me and try to convince me that their interpretation is right. If I cannot accept it, my judgment should prevail because I am both the author of satyagraha and general in satyagraha action. The only way the colleagues can avoid my judgment is by absolving me from guidance. They did in so many words at Wardha. But it is plain that the absolution was not what the word means. They were most unwilling to give me absolution. It was given because I wrung it from them. My

[1] Presumably, the reference is to the article, "The Delhi Resolution"; *vide* "The Delhi Resolution"

weakness began at Wardha. When a serious crisis arose, I should have raised the issue of jurisdiction. It was outside the Working Committee's jurisdiction to decide upon the meaning and application of a matter which belonged to their expert who was their interpreter and executive officer.

I am aware that all the members of the Working Committee do not accept my opinion as to jurisdiction. The matter has not come up for decision. But before the Committee and I came to the resolution now before the country I had made the confession I have now published for the sake of an esteemed co-worker.

It is my conviction that, owing to a series of fortunate combination of acts of the members at the last Wardha meeting, the present resolution was conceived and we have been saved from a national disaster. We have come to a decision which, if Congressmen react to it as they should, must raise India to a position which it has never yet occupied, and brings it nearer to her goal as nothing else could have done.

Whether my estimate is right or wrong time alone can show. But this is merely by the way. Nor is the purpose of this confession to invite the reader to accept my judgment as to the jurisdiction of the Working Committee. The mention of it was relevant to show the nature of my error. It is unpardonable for a general to surrender his judgment to a fellow officer unless the conviction goes home to him that the latter *is* right—not *may be* right.

I hope I have given the public enough material to show that in all that Rajaji did he was throughout brave and correct. The incorrectness was due to me.

And I wish to say the same thing about his 'sporting offer'. It is no part of this confession to defend it. But so far as I can see, the offer was truly sporting, if the correctness of the Poona resolution be accepted. It should be remembered that the Muslim League is a great organization wielding influence upon the Muslims of India. The Congress has dealt with it before, and I have no doubt it will deal with it in future. However mistaken Qaid-e-Azam[1] may be in our estimation, let us give him the same credit for honesty of purpose as we claim for ourselves. When the war cloud is lifted and when India

[1] Literally, 'great leader'; honorific title given to the Muslim League leader, Mahomed Ali Jinnah

comes to her own, surely Congressmen would just as much welcome a Muslim, a Sikh, a Christian, or a Parsi as Premier, as they would a Hindu, and even a non-Congressman, no matter of what faith he may be. I am sure that Rajaji's 'sporting offer' meant no more and no less than this. When passions have died, critics will read his offer in its proper light. It is wrong to misjudge a public worker, and doubly so, when he happens to be of Rajaji's calibre. He has lost nothing by the misjudgment. But a nation may easily harm itself by misjudging its true servants and denying itself their services. Above all, when the Congress may have to embark upon a great non-violent struggle for fundamental liberty, it behoves Congressmen to guard against harsh, hasty and uncharitable judgments.[1]

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA, September 18, 1940

Harijan, 22-9-1940

217. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

September 18, 1940

You must have seen the resolution passed by the All-India Congress Committee at its session on 16th instant. But, for ready reference, I send a copy of it, as also a newspaper cutting containing a fairly accurate summary of my speech in Hindustani and English.

I now request an interview at your early convenience. I seek it both as guide of the Congress and your friend which you have allowed me to call myself.[2]

From a photostat: C.W. 10163. Courtesy: India Office

[1] For C. Rajagopalachari's rejoinder, *vide* "Rajaji's Postscript", 25-9-1940.

[2] The Viceroy, who cabled this letter on September 22 to the Secretary of State for India, *inter alia*, said: "I have replied that I shall be glad to see him on Friday, September 27."

218. INTERVIEW TO "THE NEWS CHRONICLE"[1]

BOMBAY,
September 18, 1940

CORRESPONDENT: While expressing your sympathy with the British people in their plight, don't you think there is an inconsistency between your earlier decisions and your latest decision?

GANDHIJI: I thought that I had clearly and sufficiently explained my position in my speech[2], in anticipation of the charge of inconsistency. If there is any inconsistency, it is due in this particular instance to changed circumstances. My sympathy is not only the same as it had been expressed[3] in Simla on the declaration of war; it has become deeper because what was imaginary has become vividly real. In Simla almost a year ago I had expressed my grief over what might befall Britain. Today the dreaded thing has happened and is still going on. By nature I am so framed that every calamity moves me irrespective of the people whom it may overtake. But my sympathy, even though it is deeper today than a year ago, has undoubtedly changed in form. I was unprepared for the recent Government declarations, and I claim that it is the genuineness of my sympathy which has made me single out the one fact which Britain can easily recognize and yield without any hitch in her prosecution of war. I readily grant that there might be some reason for not dividing the responsibility for the conduct of the war with those who are the determined opponents of British imperialism and all it implies, and therefore I felt that, if the Congress continued to abide by its policy of non-embarrassment which is inherent in its non-violence, the Congress should for the moment abate agitation by way of direct action for independence. But freedom of speech and corresponding action is the breath of democratic life. Freedom of propagating non-violence as substitute for war is the most relevant when indecent savagery is being perpetrated by the warring nations of Europe. The Congress will forfeit all its right to be considered a non-violent organization if out of false sympathy or—what would be worse—fear of consequences, it

[1]Extracted from "Seven Days in Bombay". Mahadev Desai explains: "The correspondent . . . saw Gandhiji when he had already had a heavy day on top of a night of insufficient sleep, and when he had heavy engagements yet to fulfil."

[2] *Vide* "Speech At A.I.C.C. Meeting, Bombay", 15-9-1940

[3] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 5-9-1939.

ceased to agitate against the inhumanity that is being perpetrated in Europe and which, if not checked by somebody or some organization, may overtake the whole world. I hope this statement of Congress policy as I interpret it, as its sole guide, will not only satisfy the British public opinion, but will make it range itself on the side of the Congress, so as to enable the Viceroy to recognize the justice of the Congress claim which is a claim not for itself but which is a claim for freedom of speech no matter by whom exercised so long as it does not promote violence in any shape or form.

Harijan, 22-9-1940

219. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN[1]

[After *September 18, 1940*][2]

I hope that all the conversation we had in Bombay has soaked into you. If it has, every problem could be solved by reference to those fundamentals which I tried to put before you. Our non-violence has to begin at home with our children, elders, neighbours and friends. We have to overlook the so-called blemishes of our friends and neighbours and never forgive our own. Then only shall we be able to right ourselves, and as we ascend higher, our non-violence has to be practised among our political associates. We have to see and approach the viewpoints of those who differ from us. We have to be patient with them and convince them of their errors and be convinced of our own. Then proceeding further we have to deal patiently and gently with political parties that have different policies and different principles. We have to look at their criticism from their own standpoint, always remembering that the greater the distance between ourselves and others, the greater the scope for the play of our non-violence; and it is only when we have passed our examination or test in these fields that we can deal with those against whom we are fighting and who have grievously wronged us.

This was one thing we talked about. The other thing I said was that a non-violent man has to keep himself engaged usefully during all waking hours and, therefore, *constructive work is for him what arms are for the violent men*.

Harijan, 18-1-1942

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "On the Path of Ahimsa"

[2] From the reference to the conversation between Gandhiji and the addressee in Bombay, where Abdul Ghaffar Khan was invited to the Congress Working Committee meeting from September 13 to 18, 1940.

220. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 20, 1940

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter, as also the wire. You did well in writing to Sardar[1]. You should never get upset by such criticism. You should realize that your method of work is quite different from everybody else's; such persons are always targets of criticism. You have created your own environment. Go on doing whatever you can within it. I will give whatever help I can. I have realized that your path is difficult. I will send Ba to you. I have already written that Mavalankar[2] or someone like him should come if possible. Ba will stay in Ahmedabad for a month.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8579. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

221. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

September 20, 1940

CHI. KAKA,

You may certainly publish the matter about the Kanpur-report.

I have read the portion relating to Dr. Mahmud[3]. There is nothing in it worth including. I am returning it. I will send Bal's[4] letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] Vallabhbhai Patel

[2] G. V. Mavalankar; also called Dada; Speaker Bombay Legislative Assembly

[3] Syed Mahmud, ex-Minister of Education, Development and Employment in Bihar

[4] Addressee's son

[PS.]

I am going through the thing about Begum Sita.

Many live in (अनन्तकी इमारत) why does not the word इमारत (see verse 34) fit here? [*sic*]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10937

222. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,
September 20, 1940

I see from Press comments that the main purpose of my contemplated visit to H.E. the Viceroy is being missed. It is well that I should not be misunderstood as to the purpose of my visit.

Assuming that the interview is granted, I do not go to hold a pistol at the Viceroy's head if the contemplated civil disobedience is to be taken as such. But I go, as I explained[1] in my speech before the All-India Congress Committee, in order to make sure I am right in the inferences I have drawn from the acts of the Government, commencing from the declaration of His Excellency the Viceroy. If the premises on which the Congress case is built are wrong, there is no case for civil disobedience. I would not be able to approach my task with confidence and firmness unless I made myself sure of my facts and the conclusions to be deduced therefrom.

The Hindu, 20-9-1940

223. LETTER TO A SIND WORKER

[Before *September 21, 1940*][2]

Do not think I am unconcerned about Sind. But I feel helpless. The people have not the capacity to adopt my remedy, and I have no other. They must, therefore, go to another physician.[3]

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-9-1940

[1] *Vide* "Speech At A.I.C.C. Meeting, Bombay", 15-9-1940.
[2] The letter was reported under the date-line "Sukkur, September 21".
[3] *Vide* also "Sind Hindus"

224. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

WARDHAGANJ,
September 21, 1940

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
CARE LUCKY
CALCUTTA

FULSINGHJI[1] FASTING REGARDING WELL FOR HARIJANS IN VILLAGE MOTH YOUR ESTATE HISSAR. AM TOLD YOUR INTERFERENCE ALONE CAN SAVE LIFE PRECIOUS WORKER. MUSLIM AND HINDU JATS OPPOSING ANY WELL FOR HARIJANS. THIS WELL ALMOST BUILT FROM PUBLIC DONATIONS AND WOULD HAVE BEEN FINISHED BUT FOR SAID OPPOSITION.

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7849. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

225. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

WARDHAGANJ,
September 21, 1940

NARANDAS GANDHI
RAJKOT

BA AHMEDABAD. ADVISING ACCORDING YOUR SUGGESTION.

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./II

226. LETTER TO S. K. RAY CHAUDHURY

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
September 21, 1940

DEAR SARAT KUMAR BABU,

I have yours of the 17th instant. The cases you quote are certainly bad but without knowing full facts I cannot deal with them in *Harijan*. This is the special function of the Hindu Mahasabha. You

[1] Bhagat Fulsingh, a Patwari of Rohtak District, came under the influence of Swami Shraddhanand, took a vow of refraining from bribes, and subsequently resigned his post. He was on fast for over a fortnight from September 2, 1940, and gave it up only after the obstructionists had agreed to the completion of the well.

have many able lawyers in your organization. I would suggest your collecting unimpeachable cases, bringing them to the notice of the Government and, failing relief, circulating such cases for formulating public opinion on them. For I notice much irresponsible and heated discussion in the papers on the sins of the Muslim majority Governments and the Congress Governments. The result is increasing bitterness without truth appearing before the public. You can do much to set the right tone. This letter must not be taken to mean any reflection upon your organization. I must confess that I have not followed its career. Probably you are doing exactly what I have suggested. If you have been, you may pass on the literature to me. I do not promise to work upon it. I may not get the time. But I should like to be kept informed of the happenings in your province which demand public attention. As I do not wish to enter into a public discussion with the Sabha, I would like you not to send this letter to the Press. Mine is a purely friendly approach in the interest of peace between the two communities.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

227. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 21, 1940

CHI. MIRA,[1]

I have kept you without a letter now for some days. But Bombay gave me neither time nor peace. I returned on Thursday but am able to write to you only today (Saturday).

Kanaiyalal[2] has sent a sweet reply. He understands and appreciates the position. You will, therefore, have no difficulty.

I see your point[3] about slivers. I have now asked Laxmidas[4] to send you best slivers so as to enable you to spin fine counts. You will

[1] The superscription in this and other letters to the addressee is in Devanagari.

[2] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, Mirabehn explains: "Lala Kanaiyalal Butail, my host, who had the hut prepared for me in his pine forest." For Gandhiji's letter to Kanaiyalal, *vide* "Letter to Kanhaiyalal", 21-8-1940

[3] Mirabehn says: "I had explained to Bapu that as I was combining *japa* with spinning, the turn of the wheel taking the place of the bead, I was most anxious not to have to interrupt spinning for carding and sliver-making in which no *japa* could be easily combined."

[4] Lakshmidas Asar

tell me when you receive them and warn me in good time when you are likely to run out of stock.

The descriptive parts of your letter are just as fresh and delightful as ever. From that I infer that you are enjoying inner peace. Your *sadhana* there will be vain if it does not give you ever-growing peace. Your affinity for bird, beast, tree and stone is your greatest support. They are never-failing friends and companions.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I expect, you do not want me to give you political news or even Ashram news[1].

From the original: C.W. 6459. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10054

228. TELEGRAM TO LORD LINLITHGOW

[*September 22, 1940*][2]

HIS EXCELLENCY VICEROY

SIMLA

MANY THANKS WIRE. HOPE REACH FRIDAY.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

229. MESSAGE TO COW-PROTECTION MEETING

[September, *22, 1940*][3]

What message need I send to a meeting which will be presided over by Sardar ? However, since I have been asked, I am sending one. I look upon myself as a good servant of the cow. So their donation will be put to good use. But they should ask themselves whom the 71 cows received in donation will feed if they themselves do not drink

[1] Mirabehn explains: " I had stopped seeing all newspapers including *Harijan* and all letters except Bapu's."

[2] *Vide* footnote 2, "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 18-9-1940

[3] *Vide* the following item.

cow's milk and eat cow's ghee.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar, Vallabhbhaine, p. 242

230. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
September 22, 1940

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I suppose you would hardly be coming here now. I did expect you yesterday. I shall now be leaving this place on Wednesday.

The grocers will be donating 71 cows.[1] I have sent a message[2] since Shamaldas[3] asked for one. Explain to the donors what I have said in it. If they make the donation conditional, do not accept it. I will utilize the amount for cow-protection work wherever I like. Of course the condition that we must purchase cows is acceptable. But I must be free to decide to whom the cows should be given.

You will have entirely got rid of the fever by now. The others also will have recovered. I know that you will look after Radha[4] well and do what is necessary. When I heard of her illness, Maganlal's[5] image came vividly before my eyes.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
68 MARINE DRIVE
BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 242-3

[1] On Gandhiji's 71st birthday
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] Shamaldas Gandhi, Gandhiji's nephew
[4] Radha Gandhi and her father, Maganlal Gandhi
[5] *ibid*

231. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
September 22, 1940

CHI. BABUDI,

So you did not come. I wanted to talk to you in person. Why do you lose heart ? I will resolve your doubts when you come. Come soon. I am going to Simla. I will return in October.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10030. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

232. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 22, 1940

BHAI TANDONJI,

I have received your letter just now. I can never agree to a meeting of the Standing Committee being called. The better thing would be for those who wish to withdraw from the Prachar Samiti to do so. But I am agreeable to a meeting of the Rashtrabhasha Prachar Samiti being called, and I shall work in that direction.

I am entirely with you when you say that the Sammelan cannot swallow the pill of Hindi or Hindustani. It will be a bitter pill In any case, the controversy should not be carrried on in newspapers.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10996

233. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[After *September 22, 1940*][1]

What is the sense in my sending messages every now and then? Even if I enumerate nine hundred ninety-nine virtues of khadi, those

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's of September 22, requesting Gandhiji for a message on *Rentia Baras*, the non-stop sacrificial spinning initiated by the addressee, from *Bhadarva Vad* 12 (Gandhiji's date' of birth according to Vikram Calendar, usually falling in the second half of September) to October 2; *vide* also "Notes", sub-title", A Repudiation"

who lack faith in it will not acquire any. It can come only through effort and God's grace.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8681. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

234. ANSWER TO A QUESTION[1]

[Before *September 23, 1940*][2]

I agree. The resolution is the result of several days' full fledged debate among the members of the Working Committee. I may confess that many of the members have no independent faith in non-violence but they are trying to imbibe it. But you must know that the Congress is not merely the Working Committee, nor the A.I.C.C., nor the members on the Congress registers, but the dumb millions. They are all peace-loving, and we have to represent them truly. These millions, before the Congress identified itself with them in 1919, had taken no part in any violent or non-violent or even a so-called constitutional fight. But they rose like one man on the 6th of April 1919[3]. They took up peaceful rebellion as their *mantra*, and without any organization, without any country-wide tour—for I had not then toured in the interior—they instinctively took up the call, and the Congress organization became a peaceful rebel organization. The Bombay resolution had these masses in mind.

Harijan, 29-9-1940

235. TALK WITH AN ASHRAM YOUNGSTER.

[Before *September 23, 1940*]

ASHRAM YOUNGSTER: If the Congress demand is complete, it means that we do not need swaraj, and that we shall be content with the liberty of speech and the Press.

[1] This and the following item are extracted from Mahadev Desai's "More about the Resolution", published under the date-line "Sevagram, September 23, 1940". Mahadev Desai explains: "A visitor recently asked Gandhiji if his re-entry meant that the Congress had become again non-violent at heart. 'So far as I can say from things in the Punjab,' said the visitor, 'I think that, though there is a good deal of self-restraint, there is little non-violence.'

[2] *Vide* the preceding item. Mahadev Desai explains: "While some have regarded the Congress demand as too difficult to be accepted, some have regarded it as too trifling. A talk that Gandhiji had with an Ashram youngster may be summarized for the benefit of both."

[3] Total hartal in protest against Rowlatt Act (Bill No. 29, 1919)

GANDHIJI: Our objective is complete independence, as you know. But do you know the means to attain it?

Carrying out the constructive programme.

That is one of the principal branches of the tree. But what is the root?

Truth and non-violence.

Well, then, we want the right to preach truth and non-violence.

But will newspaper articles and speeches be enough for the propagation of truth and non-violence?

No, we have to do much more. But the right to preach truth and non-violence is threatened. The law seems to say that we may not tell people that they have every right not to co-operate in the war effort and that it is their duty as a non-violent people not to co-operate thus.

But you have yourself said that we can get swaraj if we fulfil the constructive programme. Why then this trivial issue?

It is not a trivial issue; it is a concrete and all-important issue. If we surrender it, a time will come when we may have to surrender all, when we may have to forget even the name of truth and non-violence. To preach these is our birthright, and to forfeit it is to forfeit our existence.

But what I am troubled about is the emphasis on mere speech and writing.

It is the liberty we claim. How and when to use it and whether to use it or no is our concern. If we cannot stand a strong breeze, we shut the windows and even the doors. But how should we feel if someone were to shut us up?

I see. But may it not be imaginary? If you ask a little child not to eat earth, it will eat it. It is the inhibition that is galling. Do you want to remove the inhibitions?

The analogy is wrong, for the little child has no right to eat earth, whereas no one has a right to prevent us from enjoying free air. But let me take another example for you as you are a child. Prahlad was ordered by his father not to take the name of Rama. He might have argued with himself, 'I lose nothing by not repeating the name of Rama, for Rama is in my heart.' But if he had resorted to this argument, he would have deceived himself. He did not do so, and he defied his father to do his worst; he was not going to give up repeating Ramanama. And because he braved the most fearful hardships and dared even death for that sacred right, we have today a living faith in Ramanama. If he had yielded, that faith would have vanished from the earth. Even so, if we give up our right to preach truth and

non-violence, we give it up for ever.

But abstract truth and non-violence no one prevents us from preaching.

No principle exists in the abstract. Without its concrete application it has no meaning. And when I want to preach non-violence I want to preach it as an effective substitute for war, and thereby to be able to wean Britain and other warring countries from violence and barbarism.

But why do you claim that right for all? In your speech[1] you said that you would speak as a conscientious objector, but that others might use any reasoning they liked, e.g., the financial or the imperialistic argument.[2]

I have no business to claim the right only for myself and for those who are conscientious objectors. For, some other grounds may be as important as, if not more than, conscientious grounds; and if I may not be smothered, how can I suffer those others to be smothered? If, moreover, the freedom was restricted to conscientious objectors, we should compel a number of our people to be hypocrites, for they would take shelter under the conscientious argument. All that is necessary is the acceptance by all of the condition of non-violence. That cannot be relaxed.

Harijan, 29-9-1940

236. KHADI WEEK

It is a happy thing that the khadi week coincides with my pending visit to H. E. the Viceroy. I want the prayers of all who believe in the efficacy of prayer that the result of my visit may prove fruitful to India, the British people, and ultimately conduce to peace between the warring nations. I feel that though the issue raised by the A.I.C.C. resolution seems small, it has in it great potency for the good of mankind.

'Khadi Week' is the name given by me to my birthday celebration. Birth and death are twins. I should be sorry if the annual celebration was forgotten with my death. Therefore, I have popularized the birthday celebration as Khadi Week. It enables me to deal with the event impersonally.

I shall strain every nerve to avoid a civil disobedience struggle. But it would be wrong for Congressmen to go to sleep while an effort for peace is being made. I hope no Congressman thinks that because I have undertaken command of the struggle, if it comes, the spinning

[1] *Vide* "Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting, Bombay", 15-9-1940

[2] According to Mahadev Desai "someone" asked this question.

and khadi conditions are waived. Those who do not strictly confirm to these and other conditions will find themselves left out if civil disobedience faces us. Moreover what will the millions do who will never have to court any kind of suffering ? The constructive programme is as much for them as for the civil resisters. Indeed if it was confined to the latter only, the imprisonment of a few could never deserve to be called a national struggle. But voluntary suffering of even one person in the name of an organization or the nation, if backed by their unreserved co-operation in all manner prescribed by the commander, must ensure success. Khadi and spinning are the visible symbols that all can show. I would, therefore, expect a phenomenal rise in khadi sales, spinning and village handicrafts during the celebration week. I may also mention that the A.I.S.A.[1] having given up the policy of taking loans, it has become necessary to receive donations, if the work is not to be curtailed. The unexampled and unexpected rise in the wages of spinners has meant an increase of spinners. These cannot be provided for without more capital. Fortunately workers have come forward to collect funds for the A.I.S.A. I hope that there will be an automatic response to the appeal. All, whether Congressmen or others, should liberally support the appeal. The A.I.S.A. is a purely humanitarian economic institution. As such it has no politics, even though it has received its charter from the Congress. It is a purely autonomous body. All can, therefore, help it without any scruples. Khadi has no doubt a political, as it has an economic and humanitarian, significance. And viewed as a symbol of non-violence, even its political significance in no way detracts from its moral appeal. For genuine and unadulterated non-violence can have no colour of party politics. And the Congress will cease to be a party label but will be universally acknowledged as national institution having no quarrel with any party or nation.

SEVAGRAM, September 23, 1940

Harijan, 29-9-1940

237. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

September 23, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Balvantsinha is unhappy. I did not send your letter. It has hurt him very much. It was bound to do so. To say about a co-worker that he would never listen to anyone is rather strong language. It cannot be

[1] All-India Spinners' Association

proved either. He has always accepted the *Panch's*[1] decision. Do not have any fear on his account. Give your decision. How is he to blame? If, therefore, you agree with me, withdraw your unnecessary remarks about Balvantsinha.[2]

Kanchan[3] is progressing. She will get well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8485. Also C.W. 7102. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

238. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

September 23, 1940

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

It was good that Munnalal Shah's letter came to me. Its language is no doubt harsh but why feel hurt by it? A votary of ahimsa should feel hurt when he himself is guilty of violence. Why should I be hurt merely because someone abuses me? I have explained to Munnalal his error. I hope he will improve. That is his duty; but it is not your duty to improve him. What would happen if he does not improve? Can we compel anyone to observe his dharma?

The message which I had sent to you was like this: Chimanlal[4] and Munnalal say that they gave the verdict in your favour because they were afraid of you. So I told them to rectify their error and give the correct verdict. How could you know how they had given the verdict? You were not guilty for you had accepted the verdict. If anyone had to atone, the judges should have done it for their own weakness.

Now about the five rupees. In my view, we are the trustees and so we have no right to bid. We do not get donations for this purpose. You have no money, that is, you should have no money. Thus your bidding had both these blemishes. You had no right to bid with the Ashram money and bidding itself is an evil, indicating pride. What value can be attached to the labourers saying that they will give the five rupees? You did not bid with their consent. And such consultation

[1] A mediator

[2] *Vide* also the following item.

[3] Addressee's wife

[4] Chimanlal N. Shah

and consent would also be improper.

All these things should teach us not to lament over anything.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1936

239. TELEGRAM TO ORISSA PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE[1]

[On or before *September 25, 1940*][2]

AWAIT MY RETURN FROM SIMLA.

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-9-1940

240. I WONDER

> For some time you seem to have made it a point to strengthen your arguments in favour of non-violence by frequent but invariably vague references to the Holy Koran and the teachings of Islam. It is quite obvious that you only seek to impress the Muslims thereby. . . . Similarly, it is quite understandable that you should pat the fifth columnist Mussalmans like Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Abul Kalam Azad on the back. But can't you realize that nothing can offend the religious susceptibilities of a Mussalman more than to see a non-Muslim citing the scripture for his own purpose? . . . The fact stands out that you are a non-Muslim. Hence the Koran cannot be the source of your ideas or ideals. . . . It is my friendly advice to you to stop forthwith all reference to the Koran. . . .

This letter[3] is from an M.A. (Aligarh). He is a research scholar in the Muslim University. The letter was received some time ago. I kept it in my file so long, for I was debating whether it would serve the cause of unity to publish it. But having received another from the same friend more unbalanced than this one, I decided to publish the

[1] This was in reply to a telegram from the addressee, alleging "seizure of pamphlets by the police from Congress offices in Koraput District". The report also said that "pamphlets in Oriya which were issued by the Provincial Congress Committee related to the Congress Working Committee's resolution regarding 'compulsory subscription to the war fund'."

[2] The telegram was reported under the date-line "Cuttack, September 25".

[3] Only extracts are reproduced here.

foregoing in order to enable me to expostulate with those who in Aligarh or outside hold views similar to the writer's.

I have sweet memories of Aligarh. I have more than once visited the great university. I have still associations with it. I think I am an honorary member of their club. I received[1] the honour at the hands of the late Dr. Sir Ross Masood when he was Vice-Chancellor of the university. As for the Holy Koran, it was my Muslim clients and friends in South Africa who invited me to read it. They furnished me with Islamic literature. On my return to India, Muslim friends sent me copies of translations of the holy book. Among the senders was Dr. Mahomed Ali, himself a translator, and the late Mr. Pickthall, also a translator of the book. I was presented by the late Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan with Maulana Shibli's translation. Have I changed or have the times so changed that it has become a crime for a non-Muslim like me to read and even dare to put his own interpretation upon the Koran? Many pious Muslims have remarked that I am a better Muslim than most Muslims in that I act in the spirit of the Koran and know more of the life of the Prophet than most Muslims. Whose testimony am I to accept—these Muslim friends' or the research scholar's and of those who think like him—I wonder.

The research scholar is right in imputing to me the desire to read my meaning into the Koran. Surely there is no harm in it so long as I remain absolutely faithful to the text and approach my task with a prayerful and open mind. My correspondent should know as a scholar that an interpretation of a life or a book is not necessarily correct because it has been handed down for generations. An error does not cease to be one after a given number of repetitions by a given number of men for a given number of years. The Biblical texts are still being corrected. And many good Christians believe that the Christianity of the West is a negation of Christ's central teaching. It is just possible that the research scholar's views about the qualifications required for reading and interpreting the Koran and his own interpretation are wrong, and that my being a non-Muslim is no bar to my reading the Koran or interpreting it. And it is not at all impossible that my interpretation may be found to be right. It will be an evil day if the reading and interpreting of religious books are to be confined only to those who wear particular religious labels. I ask my correspondent and his companions, as their friend, to shed what in my opinion is their gross intolerance and give the same credit to others

[1] On November 3, 1929; *vide* "Statement on Untouchability"

for seeing truth as they claim for themselves. No one has a monopoly of truth. All truth represented by imperfect humans that we are is relative. We can each act according to our lights. God alone knows the reality. That being so, it behoves research scholars at least to be humble and tolerant. Fanaticism and intolerance can neither conduce to research work nor advance the cause they represent.

SEVAGRAM, September 25, 1940

Harijan, 29-9-1940

241. SOME CRITICISM ANSWERED

The recent resolution of the A.I.C.C. and my speeches before the meeting have come in for much criticism, if they have earned some praise. Of the criticism there are two items which I must attempt to answer. For they are of permanent interest. *The Times of India* of the 17th instant in its temperate criticism[1] takes me to task for my statement[2] that 'the peoples of Europe do not know what they are fighting for'. It was bound to be resented. But truth, though seemingly harsh, has to be uttered when utterance becomes relevant, indeed imperative. I believe that the utterance had become overdue. I must say why I think that the warring nations do not know what they are fighting for. I had used the expression 'warring nations', not 'peoples of Europe'. This is not a distinction without a difference. I have distinguished between the nations and their leaders. The leaders of course know what they are fighting for. I make no admission that they are right. But neither the English nor the Germans nor the Italians know what they are fighting for except that they trust their leaders and therefore follow them. I submit that this is not enough when the stake is so bloody and staggering as during the present war. It is perhaps common cause that Germans and Italians do not know why English children should be slaughtered in cold blood and beautiful English homes should be destroyed. But *The Time's* claim probably is that the British people know what they are fighting for. When I asked the British soldiers in South Africa during the Boer War they could not tell me what they were fighting for. 'Theirs was' surely 'not to reason why'. They did not even know where they were being marched to. The British people would not be able to give me a more

[1] *Vide* "A Strange Plan"

[2] *Vide* "Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting, Bombay-II", 15-9-1940

satisfying answer, if I happened to be in London and asked them why their soldiers were working havoc in Berlin. If the Press accounts are to be relied upon, British skill and valour have wrought more havoc in Berlin than have the Germans in London. What wrong have the German people done to the British people? Their leaders have. Hang them by all means, but why destroy German homes and German civilian life? What difference does it make to the dead, the orphans and the homeless whether the mad destruction is wrought under the name of totalitarianism or the holy name of liberty or democracy? I assert in all humility, but with all the strength at my command, that liberty and democracy become unholy when their hands are dyed red with innocent blood. I hear the living Christ saying: 'These so-called children of mine know not what they are doing. They take my Father's name in vain, for they disobey the central command of my Father!'[1] If my ears do not deceive, I have erred in good company, if I have erred at all.

And why have I uttered the truth? Because I am confident that God has made me the instrument of showing the better way. If Britain seeks justice, she must appear before the imperial court of God with clean hands She will not defend liberty and democracy by following totalitarian methods so far as war is concerned. She will not be able to retrace her steps after out Hitlering Hitler in war. The last war is a resounding lesson. Her victory, if attained, will be a snare and a delusion. I know mine is a voice in the wilderness. But it will some day ring true. If liberty and democracy are to be truly saved, they will only be by non-violent resistance no less brave, no less glorious, than violent resistance. And it will be infinitely braver, and more glorious because it will give life without taking any.

Now I come to *The Statesman's* article[2] of 17th[3] September. I am sorry to say, it is intemperate and written in anger. It is full of palpable mistakes (to use a mild word), no doubt unconscious. But I am not concerned with the intemperance of language. In the fierce heat of battle unknown before, the wonder is that the intemperance one sees sometimes is not much greater than it is.

[1] *St. Luke*,"Notes", sub-title "Inciting To Assault", and *St. Matthew*, VII.21, 22

[2] *Vide* "Danger of Extinction"

[3] The source, however, has "18".

Here is the cream of the heavy indictment:

> We have often expressed our view about the fundamental immorality and contradictory character of the doctrine. Non-co-operation is a method of war and not of peace. . . . It carries with it a pretentious claim to spiritual value which involved sanctimonious insincerities and mass hypocrisy masking intensified hatreds . . . A nation which accepted this doctrine would doom itself to slavery.

This is all contrary to the history of our own times in India. I claim that there is nothing immoral in non-violent non-co-operation. Violent resistance is itself non-co-operation, and it is immoral because of its violence. It becomes moral when it is non-violent. Non-co-operation with evil is a sacred duty. It is essentially spiritual because of its non-violent character. The adjectives used by the writer would be deserved if it was non-violent in name only. For the present argument I must take the genuine article. Now for the facts. Non-violent non-co-operation, however imperfect it was, has redeemed India at least somewhat from the slavery under which she was groaning. It has raised India from the slough of despond, and has brought her prestige which nothing else could have. I make bold to say that, if the non-violence offered had been not adulterated, its effect would have been still more visible. My greatest claim, however, is that it is this despised non-violent resistance which hitherto saved India from anarchy and red ruin. It is not yet entirely saved. If it is to be saved, it will only be by the non-violent method. I invite the *Statesman* writer to test the truth of my statement. He will have many infallible proofs in its support. A dispassionate study will enable him to serve both Britain and India.

ON THE WAY TO SIMLA, September 25, 1940

Harijan, 29-9-1940

242. SIKHS AND THE SWORD

The reader will find in another column copies of correspondence between Master Tara Singh and myself. My letter[1] was addressed to him as a friend. I had no wish to see it published as it certainly compromised him, as did also his letter to the Maulana Saheb. Master Tara Singh has turned to me for advice on several occasions, my relations with the Sikhs being of the friendliest nature. I flatter myself with the belief that on occasions I have saved the community against itself.

But Master Tara Singh asked me for permission to publish the correspondence which I readily gave. I would still have refrained from entering into a public discussion of it but for the fact that my advice is being grossly distorted, and that I have received a pressing letter from nationalist Sikhs who do not share Master Tara Singh's views and who accept the Congress non-violence and its discipline. In their letter they say:

> Your letter to Master Tara Singh is grossly misinterpreted in the Punjab Press and especially in the Akali circles. They say that you wrote to Master Tara Singh that the whole Sikh *panth* is a believer in violence, hence useless and unsuitable to remain in the Congress. We think that your letter was a personal one and referred to Master Tara Singh or his party only. But the Akali party has raised a storm of agitation on this account.

My letter is absolutely clear. It applies only to Master Tara Singh and those whom he represents. It can apply to the whole of the Sikh community only if they accept Master Tara Singh as their undisputed leader. I knew when I answered the letter that at best he represented only a portion of the great community. I knew then that there were many nationalist Sikhs who are as much nationalist as I. My letter to Master Tara Singh lays down general propositions of universal application, though stated in connection with a concrete case which was put before me for advice. Shorn of its concreteness it simply means that (1) the Congress is pledged to a non-violent policy; (2) therefore no one who does not believe in that policy can belong to the Congress; (3) the Congress is a purely nationalist, non-communal organization; (4) therefore no one with a communal bias should belong to it; (5) the Congress being a non-violent organization and being a determined opponent of imperialism, anyone belonging to it

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Tara Singh", 16-8-1940

will have little hearing from imperialist Britain so long as the Congress retains its policy and is 'at war with' imperialism.

Those, therefore, who misrepresent my letter in the way they are reported to have done, cannot harm me, but deprive themselves of the services and advice of one who has been their faithful servant for practically twenty years.

Master Tara Singh has sent me an angry letter in reply to mine. As it contains no new argument, I refrain from publishing it in these columns. But it is necessary to correct one error. In my attempt to solve the Hindu-Muslim tangle I have been represented as having abandoned the Congress position as stated in its famous Lahore resolution[1] on the communal question. That resolution is a sacred trust, and so far as I am concerned, when and if the time arrives for a solution of the communal problems, full effect will be given to the Lahore resolution. No non-violent solution is possible without the association of all parties concerned. I, therefore, urge Sikh friends not to come to hasty conclusions but to judge everything dispassionately. Anger is short madness, and it hurts those that are consciously or unconsciously betrayed into it.

ON THE WAY TO SIMLA, September 25, 1940

Harijan, 29-9-1940

243. RAJAJI'S POSTSCRIPT

MY DEAR GANDHIJI,

I had the advantage of reading the leading article[2] of September 22 in manuscript at Poona through the courtesy of Shri Chandrashanker[3]. I quite understand why you wrote the article, but I wished I could stop its publication or add my remarks to it. Reading the article in print now I think I had better explain my position.

I do not feel that you exposed me to any ridicule. I was not worried over the attacks made at Bombay on the Poona resolution. I am not the least bit sorry for the Poona resolution. It expressed what we felt was the right thing to do under the circumstances. The British Government did not agree, and in consequence the proposal has failed. That, however, does not make any difference as to the validity of the reasons that led to it. Almost the entire body of intelligent public opinion in India welcomed the Poona resolution. You, of course, considered it wrong because it involved participation in war,

[1] *Vide* "Diary, 1932" and "Appeal to Santanists", 4-1-1933

[2] *Vide* "I Was Unjust Because Weak"

[3] Chandrashanker Shukla

be it even for the defence of India. There were some who feared that the resolution might be accepted by the British Government and involve us in co-operation with Britain which was distasteful to them. There are some people for whom the deciding consideration is success. They feel it a disgrace to make a proposal which is turned down. There are again some who desire the maturing of chaos in which alone they see hope for the future of our country, and they would oppose anything that would retard the progress of this fermentation of chaos. Barring these groups the vast body of enlightened opinion in the country enthusiastically approved of the proposal made at Poona, namely, that if Britain acknowledged the right of India to the status of an independent nation and set up a truly national government composed of leaders of the various groups among the present elected legislators in the Central Assembly, the deadlock should stand resolved. You hold the view that the Congress should as from now work for the abolition of war. The fulfilment of our national goal is inextricably connected, according to you, with that mission. You are, therefore, of opinion that it is a grievous error to participate in the present war effort under any conditions. I believe also that the world should reach peace and abolish wars as soon as possible. But the pathway to it lies, in my opinion, in education in the highest sense in international co-operation and not in finding alternative weapons to defeat one another's ambitions and aims. Unlike you, I do not feel glad that the British rejected our offer on the ground that it has saved us our pacifism.

I do not support the Bombay resolution[1] because the Poona resolution was wrong. My support is based on the following grounds.

It is wrong for the British to declare that the Indian people were in a state of war against any other nation without asking them about it. War does not mean only payment of some money and manufacturing munitions. It can easily lead up to all that is happening in London, and should be dealt with on that footing. Four hundred millions of human beings cannot be thrown into such a condition against their own will or without asking them. It is possible for us to recognize the justice of Britain's case against Germany without having to join in it and extend the tragedy beyond the necessary limits. America refuses to enter the war though it may give judgment in favour of Britain. We have not entered the Sino-Japanese war in spite of the justice of China's cause.

The Poona proposal sought to make participation consistent with self-respect and fruitful. But the proposal was rejected by the British Government. India is, therefore, entitled to refuse to participate in the war. But she is forced to contribute and participate on the basis that India is an imperial possession without any independent status or the right to choose between war and neutrality. The case for Britain is that the help taken from India is

[1] *Vide* "All-India Congress Committee Resolution", 15-9-1940

voluntary. This claim can be justified, or at least the objection can be reduced to the minimum, if those who preach non-participation are not suppressed by imprisonment. It could then be claimed that such Indian co-operation that comes in spite of such appeals against participation is truly voluntary. This much should be conceded to mitigate the offence of dragging the Indian people into the horrors of modern war without their consent.

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

MADRAS, September 23, 1940

Rajaji would not be Rajaji, if he took notice of ridicule. From his own standpoint his position is unassailable. But it therefore does not cease to be a denial of the last twenty years' past of the Congress. If the Poona gesture had received the response it deserved, from being peace-minded the Congress would suddenly have become war-minded—a feat which even Rajaji would have failed to perform. But all this is past. Nor is it relevant to my confession and Rajaji's postscript.

ON THE TRAIN TO SIMLA, September 25, 1940

Harijan, 29-9-1940

244. LETTER TO G. N. KANITKAR

ON THE TRAIN,
September 25, 1940

DEAR BALU KAKA,

I had your *Gita* for which many thanks. I don't write because there is nothing to write about.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 969. Courtesy: Gajanan N. Kanitkar

245. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

ON THE TRAIN,
September 25, 1940

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I read your account of the Jaipur incident only today. I sat down to write about the matter in *Harijan*, but then decided not to write just now. I felt that if I wrote, you would attract all the more attention, and so gave up the idea. But if you think that my writing

will do any good, I am prepared to write. How is your health and that of Rajendra Babu? I am going to Simla. I will return to Sevagram on Sunday or Monday.

I hope the work there is progressing to your satisfaction.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3015

246. LETTER TO M. M. MALAVIYA

ON THE TRAIN,
September 25, 1940

REVERED BHAI SAHEB,

I received your letter. I shall certainly strive to prevent a clash and if a clash does occur, it will be in spite of. myself. What should I write about fasting?[1] The matter is not really in my hands. I hope you are well.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi original: Padmakant Malaviya Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] The addressee had appealed to Gandhiji to avoid at all cost the reported fast; *Vide* also "Fasting in satyagraha", 8-10-1940.

247. MESSAGE TO MIRAJ KHADI EXHIBITION

[On or before *September 28, 1940*][1]

There are many aspects of khadi; amongst them the spiritual one I hold uppermost and the economic one next. For their fulfilment, all can extend their help; nay, they ought to. In fact, it is the Princes who ought to come forward first of all. It is to their good that Princes are also partaking in the Miraj Exhibition.[2] I hope the exhibition will be a success.

The Hindu, 29-9-1940

248. SIND HINDUS

Shri Shamlal Gidwani writes a letter on the situation in Sind from which I quote the following:[3]

At the same time that I received this letter, I saw in the papers that five Hindus were shot dead openly while they were pursuing their normal business. As usual the murderers have not been traced. Is this a plan of terrorism to drive the Hindus out of Sind, or is it something else? Someone in Sind ought to be able to answer the question.

Shri Gidwani does not subscribe to non-violence. He thinks that my advice is contrary to the teachings of Lord Krishna. He thinks, for (to himself) very good reasons, that the Hindus cannot act non-violently. For equally good reasons he thinks they cannot migrate. But he would like me to advise them to defend themselves by arms. This is like asking a nature-cure physician to prescribe allopathic drugs. Can he be trusted to prescribe the right drugs? And what will my advice be worth when my own hands are incapable of wielding arms ? Shri Gidwani should go to a physician who knows the business and will, on due occasion, run to the rescue and always be ready to give the necessary training. I have said that for those who do not believe in non-violence armed defence is the only remedy. But if I am asked to advise how it can be done, I can only say, 'I do not know.'

But Shri Gidwani is trifling with the crisis when he lazily looks

[1] The message was reported under the date-line "Miraj, September 28".

[2] According to the source, the exhibition was to be opened on September 29 by the Raja Saheb of Aundh.

[3] The letter is not reproduced here.

up to me to guide Sind Hindus on impossible terms. If he sincerely believes in the solution he has proposed, he must himself take the training at once and lead the terrified Hindus of Sind along the path of armed defence. It is wrong for the leaders of Sind to look for outside help. They should cease to write. They should seriously think out a plan of action, violent or non-violent, and follow it up firmly and bravely.

I venture also to suggest to the responsible Muslims of Sind that their reputation is at stake. If they cannot stop those senseless murders of innocent people, history will find them guilty. They will never persuade anybody that they are helpless to deal with the mischief. Such acts are impossible without the silent sympathy of the society to which the perpetrators of murders belong.

SIMLA, September 28, 1940

Harijan, 6-10-1940

249. INTERESTING PARALLEL

Shri A. Choudhary, who has come to non-violence after much travail, sends the following interesting letter:

> Looking through some Press articles about Trotsky[1] after his recent murder, I came across the following remarkable fact: When the Bolsheviks captured power after the October revolution in 1917, the Soviet Government negotiated for peace with Germany. The German Government offered very severe terms. Trotsky thought that the moral effect of the revolution was so great that the German Government would find it impossible to move their armies against Russia. So, rather than submit to those terms, he declared that the Soviet Government considered war to be at an end and so would demobilize their armies, and actually proceeded to do so. The Germans continued to advance and later on they concluded a severer treaty.
>
> Do you not think this to be an unconscious and partial realization by the revolutionary leader of the possibility of resisting foreign aggression without an army? The cause of the failure is obvious. They had never

[1] Lev Davidovich Trotsky (1879-1940), Russian politician, whose real name was Bronstein, escaped to England in 1902 under the name Trotsky. Opposed to war, he played important part in organizing the 1917 Bolshevik revolution. In 1936, he was accused of joining a plot to murder Stalin but repudiated the charge. On August 20, 1940, Trotsky was attacked by a 'friend', described as a Stalinist agent. He died the next day.

consciously accepted non-violence or prepared for it. Trotsky's action amounted to non-resistance, not active non-violent appeal.

There are instances in the history of the Russian Revolution of unarmed masses or workers facing the military forces in face of rifle fire in the hope of winning them over and actually doing so. These I hold to be an unorganized and unconscious adoption of the non-violent technique, by the masses in the streets. But Trotsky's instance shows that a responsible revolutionary statesman, having nothing to do with non-violence, could, in the light of revolutionary experience, think the 'silly' course now advocated by you to be a possible one, and actually experiment with it.

Why should not we, with twenty years' tradition of non-violent action, not only experiment with it, but hope for certain success? I for myself have begun to believe that of all forms of non-violent action, resistance to foreign aggression is the easiest one, and the first one likely to be completely successful.

SIMLA, September 28, 1940

Harijan, 6-10-1940

250. TELEGRAM TO A.K. CHANDA[1]

[*September 28, 1940*][2]

YOUR TELEGRAM.[3] MAY GOD PULL GURUDEV THROUGH ANDKEEP HIM A WHILE FOR HUMANITY AS HE HAS DONE BEFORE.

GANDHI

Harijan, 6-10-1940. Also from a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Which read: "I am grateful to you for giving me so much of your time this afternoon. I suggest that we should resume our conversation on Tuesday at 2.45 p.m., if that would be convenient for you. I had already planned to be away from Simla tomorrow and on Sunday and, as I know that Monday is your Day of Silence, I do not wish to suggest anything to you on that day.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Pyarelal Papers, however, has: "Yours received." The addressee's telegram read: "Gurudev dangerously ill. Being removed Calcutta tonight accompanied by Calcutta doctors."

251. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

MANORVILLE, SIMLA W.,
September 28, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I have just received your letter[1] of yesterday's date.

According to your wont you thank *me* for taking up so much of your time yesterday. I fear I must not accept the thanks. For they are all due to you for allowing me to make my long statement without showing impatience or irritation. Please accept them.

I thank you for so promptly sending me an appointment for Tuesday. If it is the same thing to you, I would like the appointment for Monday at 2.45 p.m. I can take my silence early tomorrow so as to finish in time for the appointment on Monday.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

252. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 28,1940

CHI. A. SALAAM,

You also should learn to read Gujarati. I hope everything is going on well, and you are happy. I will have to be in Simla a little longer. Work should be over by Monday at the latest. Recover your health fully. Remember what I have told you. Master Hindi spelling.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 434

[1] Secretary to Rabindranath Tagore. The telegram is quoted by Mahadev Desai in a postscript to his article "Come Thou in a Shower of Compassion", bearing the date-line "Simla, September 28, 1940". Mahadev Desai says that the telegram was sent "immediately" on receipt of the addresee's, which arrived after the article was "sent to the post".

253. DISGRACEFUL IF TRUE

A correspondent sends me a bitter letter which I reproduce after removing some choice adjectives which he has used:[1]

I have several letters in confirmation of the general charge of indecent behaviour of these 'soldiers'. One letter says that a philanthropic lady had invited these and Indian soldiers to tea. The Indians responded. Of over 250 Australians invited about eight responded. The poor lady, it is said, was frantic with grief, and phoned to know why her Australian guests had not turned up. 'They have gone out, they are not ready,' was the answer.

When I was in Bombay I had heard of this wild behaviour. I was inclined to discount the stories that came to me of their alleged misbehaviour. Some of them were at the station when I took the train for Wardha. I mentioned to them the complaints that were brought to my notice. They promised to set things right. Evidently they had no influence over their companions. They did say to me, they had not been in touch with one another before their enlistment.

Be that as it may, the menace should be sternly dealt with. I did mention the matter to H.E. the Viceroy. He promised to investigate. He admitted that the thing was serious if it was true. I suppose colour prejudice is as strong in Australia as in South Africa. The coloured man is dirt. There shall be no equality between the whites and the coloured races. Thus runs the South African constitution. The white man thinks that a nation containing forty crores of people and ruled by one hundred thousand white men can only be treated as the Australian soldiers are reported to have regarded our girls, the victoriawallas and even the Indian police. The war has made no difference in the behaviour of the white man.

Two questions emerge from the incidents, assuming them to have happened as reported. All the letters received by me cannot be inventions of fertile brains. What notice have the immediate authorities taken of the allegations? The Viceroy is but one man. If every ugly incident has to go up to him for redress, the system under which this has to happen is bad. There is gross indiscipline among the subordinates in so far as justice to the people is concerned. It is plain sailing when the power of the bayonet is to be exhibited. Then the Viceroy and the subordinate service can act as one man. The sinister

[1] The letter, not reproduced here, gave an account of the rowdy and indecent behaviour of Australian soldiers in Bombay.

inference from this phenomenon is that the subordinate service is the supreme authority and the Viceroy a mere figure-head. The most striking though painful illustration of the truth was furnished by the subordinate authority combining to break to pieces the Gandhi-Irwin pact[1]. Had it not been wantonly disregarded by the subordinate service, history would certainly have been written differently. But there was no Irwin spirit behind the service. The question, therefore, is, in the present instance, what has the G.O.C. Of the Australian contingent done with his men? Had he issued instructions to them as to their behaviour in the midst of a mild population? What did the Commissioner of Police do? What did the Collector do? And what did H.E. the Governor do?

The second question is equally important—what have the people done to protect girls from the barbarity to which they were exposed ? What has the Mayor[2] done to vindicate the honour of the women living within his jurisdiction? True, he has no executive authority. But he is not the mere chairman of the Corporation. His status carries with it a dignity and prestige which should enable him to move the authorities concerned in the right direction. What has the Bombay Congress Committee done? What has the man in the street done? If the facts are correctly represented, they constitute a serious blot on everyone concerned. If there was public spirit, violent or non-violent, no one, white or brown, would dare to touch a girl against her will.

The matter demands thorough investigation.

SIMLA, September 29, 1940

Harijan, 6-10-1940

254. NOTES

ILLEGAL LEVY?

This is a typical letter[3]. In some shape or other things go on like this. I call it an illegal levy. Any passenger who will take the trouble can decline to pay the levy and tender the scheduled fare and demand a seat in the bus. If he is rejected, he has a cause of action. So far as I know, it is not the Government policy to compel people to give

[1] Of March 5, 1931; *vide* "Provisional Settlement"

[2] Mathuradas Trikumji; *vide* also "Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", 7-10-1940.

[3] The letter, not reproduced here, described how the police forced bus owners at Alibag, Kolaba, to contribute half anna on every ticket sold as war gift and how they were charging it to the passengers.

donations. There is legal compulsion enough for the purposes of the war. Even that is being carried too far and is causing resentment. But it becomes intense when to this legal levy is added the illegal one miscalled donations. It is indecent to legalize arbitrary exactions. It is doubly indecent to connive at illegalities. I can only hope that these will be stopped altogether. There should be no engineering of war contributions. If they are to be spontaneous, let the people send what they like to the appointed depots. This will be a true test of the strength of voluntary effort.

A CHRISTIAN STUDENT'S COMPLAINT

An Indian Christian student from a missionary college in Bengal writes:[1]

Of late I have written a great deal against strikes by students. I do not know the name of the college. Had I known it, I would have sought verification from the authorities. Therefore I base my opinion on the assumption that the facts are correctly stated by my correspondent. If they are, I am happy to be able to say that this strike was thoroughly justified. And I hope that it was wholly spontaneous and successful. Whether the song is in fact national or not is not for the missionaries concerned to determine. For them it is surely enough to know that their students recognize the song as national. Professors and teachers, if they are to be popular with their pupils, have to identify themselves with their activities and aspirations so long as they are not unhealthy or immoral.

SIMLA, September 29, 1940

Harijan, 6-10-1940

255. PHYSICAL TRAINING AND AHIMSA[2]

Part of the course in physical training schools and gymnasia is a training in the use of the sword, the spear and similar weapons. The Congress volunteers are taught various kinds of drill, and in many places are given also the training I have mentioned. I have received a

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent said that the students of the college had called a strike in protest against the Principal objecting to the singing of *Vandemataram* in a programme.

[2] This appeared as "translated from Gujarati"' originally published in *Harijanbandhu*, 5-10-1940.

number of letters asking for my views on the subject from the point of view of ahimsa.

Before I proceed to state my views, it is necessary to mention an important fact, viz., that physical fitness is the only thing examined in case of candidates intending to be recruited for a violent army. Old men, women, and raw youth are not regarded as eligible. Nor are those suffering from disease fit to be chosen. And it is necessary to insist on this rule in selecting these recruits.

But the standard is quite the contrary for selecting recruits for a non-violent body. The chief thing to test is the candidate's mental fitness. And so such a body may have old men, women, raw youth, the blind and the lame, and even lepers, and it would bid fare to win. The ability to kill requires training. The ability to die is there in him who has the will for it. One can conceive of a child of ten or twelve being a perfect satyagrahi; indeed we come across such in daily life. But for such a child to be recruited for a violent army is out of the question. In spite of the best will in the world he cannot have the physical fitness.

But to say that lepers and children are eligible for a non-violent army is not to say that a non-violent person need have no regard for physical fitness. Ahimsa requires certain duties which can be done only by those with a trained physique. It is therefore most necessary to consider what kind of physical training a non-violent person should receive.

Very few of the rules applying to a violent army will apply to a non-violent body. A violent army will not have its arms for show but definitely for destructive purposes. A non-violent body will have no use for such weapons and will therefore beat its swords into plough-shares and spears into pruning hooks, and will shrink from the thought of using them as lethal weapons. The violent soldier will be trained in the use of violence by being taught to shoot. The non-violent soldier will have no time for this pastime. He will get all his training through nursing the sick, saving those in danger at the risk of his own life, patrolling places which may be in fear of thieves and dacoits, and in laying down his life, if necessary, in dissuading them from their purpose. Even the uniforms of the two will differ. The violent man will wear a coat of mail for his protection, and his uniform will be such as can dazzle people. The uniform of the non-violent man will be simple, in conformity with the dress of the poor, and betokening humility. Its purpose will be just to keep him

from heat and cold and rain. A violent soldier's protection will be his arms, no matter how much he takes God's name. He will not shrink from spending millions on armaments. The first and last shield and buckler of the non-violent person will be his unwavering faith in God. And the minds of the two will be as poles asunder. The violent man will always be casting about for plans to work the destruction of his enemy and will pray to God to fulfil his purpose. The national anthem of the British people is worth considering in this connection. It prays to God to save the King, to frustrate the enemy's knavish tricks, and to destroy him. Millions of Englishmen sing this anthem aloud with one voice standing respectfully. If God is the Incarnation of Mercy, He is not likely to listen to such prayer, but it cannot but affect the minds of those who sing it, and in times of war it simply kindles their hatred and anger to white heat. The one condition of winning a violent war is to keep the indignation against the enemy burning fiercely. In the dictionary of the non-violent there is no such word as an external enemy. But even for the supposed enemy he will have nothing but compassion in his heart. He will believe that no man is intentionally wicked, that there is no man but is gifted with the faculty to discriminate between right and wrong, and that if that faculty were to be fully developed, it would surely mature into non-violence. He will therefore pray to God that He may give the supposed enemy a sense of right and bless him. His prayer for himself will always be that the spring of compassion in him may ever be flowing and that he may ever grow in moral strength so that he may face death fearlessly.

Thus since the minds of both will differ as the poles, their physical training will also differ in the same degree.

We all know more or less what military training is like. But we have hardly ever thought that non-violent training must be of a different kind. Nor have we ever cared to discover whether in the past such training was given anywhere in the world. I am of opinion that it used to be given in the past and is even now being given in a haphazard way. The various exercises of Hatha Yoga are in this direction. The physical training given by means of these imparts among other things physical health, strength, agility, and the capacity to bear heat and cold. Shri Kuvalayanandji is making scientific researches in the technique and benefits of these exercises. I have no knowledge of the progress he has made, nor do I know whether he is making his experiments with ahimsa as his goal. My reference to Hatha Yoga is meant only with a view to showing that this ancient type of non-violent training still exists, though I know that there is room in it for improvement. I do not know either that the author of this science had any idea of mass non-violence. The exercises had at their

back the desire for individual salvation. The object of the various exercises was to strengthen and purify the body in order to secure control of the mind. The mass non-violence we are now thinking of applies to people of all religions, and therefore the rules that may be framed must be such as can be accepted by all believers in ahimsa. And then as we are thinking of a non-violent army, that is to say of bringing into being a Satyagraha Sangh, we can but build anew accepting the old as our foundation. Let us then think of the physical training required by a satyagrahi. If the satyagrahi is not healthy in mind and body, he may perhaps fail in mustering complete fearlessness. He should have the capacity to stand guard at a single spot day and night; he must not fall ill even if he has to bear cold and heat and rain; he must have the strength to go to places of peril, to rush to scenes of fire, and the courage to wander about alone in desolate jungles and haunts of death; he will bear, without a grumble, severe beatings, starvation and worse, and will keep to his post of duty without flinching; he will have the resourcefulness and capacity to plunge into a seemingly impenetrable scene of rioting; he will have the longing and capacity to run with the name of God on his lips to the rescue of men living on the top storeys of buildings enveloped in flames; he will have the fearlessness to plunge into a flood in order to rescue people being carried off by it or to jump down a well to save a drowning person.

This list can be extended *ad libitum*. The substance of it all is that we should cultivate the capacity to run to the rescue of people in danger and distress, and to suffer cheerfully any amount of hardship that may be inflicted upon us. He who accepts this fundamental principle will easily be able to frame rules of physical training for satyagrahis. I have a firm conviction that the very foundation of this training is faith in God. If that is absent, all the training one may have received is likely to fail at the critical moment.

Let no one pooh-pooh my statement by saying that the Congress has many people who are ashamed to take the name of God. I am simply trying to state the view in terms of the science of satyagraha as I have known and developed it. The only weapon of the satyagrahi is God, by whatsoever name one knows Him. Without Him the satyagrahi is devoid of strength before an opponent armed with monstrous weapons. Most people lie prostrate before physical might. But he who accepts God as his only Protector will remain unbent before the mightiest earthly power. As faith in God is essential in a satyagrahi, even so is *brahmacharya*. Without *brahmacharya* the

satyagrahi will have no lustre, no inner strength to stand unarmed against the whole world. *Brahmacharya* may have here the restricted meaning of conservation of the vital energy brought about by sexual restraint, and not the comprehensive definition I have given of it. He who intends to live on spare diet, and without any external remedies, and still wants to have physical strength, has need to conserve his vital energy. It is the richest capital man can ever possess. He who can preserve it ever gains renewed strength out of it. He who uses it up, consciously or unconsciously, will ultimately be impotent. His strength will fail him at the right moment. I have often written about the ways and means of conserving this energy. Let the reader turn to my writings and carry out the instructions. He who lusts with the eye or the touch can never conserve his vital energy, nor the man who lusts after flesh-pots. Those who hope to conserve this energy without strict observance of the rules will no more succeed than those who hope to swim against the current without being exhausted. He who restrains himself physically and sins with his thoughts will fare worse than he who, without professing to observe *brahmacharya*, lives the life of a restrained householder. For he who lusts with the thought will ever remain unsated and will end his life a moral wreck and burden on the earth. Such a one can never be a full satyagrahi. Nor can one who hankers after wealth and fame.

This is the foundation of the physical training for a satyagrahi. The detailed structure of the course can easily be built in consonance with this foundation.

It should now be clear that in the physical training of a satyagrahi there is no room for lethal weapons like the sword or the spear. For far more terrible weapons than we have seen are in existence today, and newer ones are being invented every day. Of what fear will a sword rid him who has to cultivate the capacity to overcome all fear—real or imaginary? I have not yet heard of a man having shed all fear by learning sword-play. Mahavir and others who imbibed ahimsa did not do so because they knew the use of weapons, but because in spite of the knowledge of their use they shed all fear.

A slight introspection will show that he who has always depended on the sword will find it difficult to throw it away. But having deliberately discarded it he is likely to find his ahimsa more lasting than that of him who, not knowing its use, fancies he will not fear it. But that does not mean that in order to be truly non-violent

one must beforehand possess and know the use of arms. By parity of reasoning, one might say that only a thief can be honest, only a diseased person can be healthy, and only a dissolute person can be a *brahmachari*. The fact is that we have formed the habit of thinking along traditional grooves and will not get out of them. And as we cannot take a detached view, we cannot draw the right conclusions, and get caught in delusive snares.

If I have the time, I hope to present the reader with a model course of training.

SIMLA, September 29, 1940

Harijan, 13-10-1940

256. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

[On or before *September 30, 1940*][2]

I know that khaddar is not very much in vogue in Simla. I hope that people will realize their duty towards the poor and will consequently take to khadi. It has pained me to learn that in Simla there is going on the sale and purchase of such khadi as is not duly certified by the All-India Spinners' Association. My pain is the greater because this is being done even by office-bearers of the Congress. I hope that anyone who is anywhere dealing in or purchasing uncertified khadi will stop doing so.

The Hindu, 18-10-1940

257. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

September 30, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I have your letter[3] of even date. It fairly sets forth the Congress position as I placed it before you. It is a matter of deep regret to me that the Government have not been able to appreciate the Congress position, meant just to satisfy the bare requirements of the people,

[1] For the text of the Viceroy's letter, *vide* "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 30-9-1940

[2] *ibid*

[3] The statement was reported as issued by Gandhiji "during his recent visit to Simla". Gandhiji left Simla on September 30, 1940.

whether Congressmen or others, who felt a conscientious objection to helping a war to which they were never invited and which they regard, so far as they are concerned, as one for saving imperialism, of which India is the greatest victim. Their objection is just as conscientious as mine as a war resister. I cannot claim greater freedom for my conscience than for that of those I have named.

As I made it plain in the course of our talks, the Congress is as much opposed to victory for Nazism as any Britisher can be. But their objection cannot be carried to the extent of their participation in the war. And since you and the Secretary of State for India have declared that the whole of India is voluntarily helping the war effort, it becomes necessary to make clear that the vast majority of the people of India are not interested in it. They make no distinction between Nazism and the double autocracy that rules India. Had His Majesty's Government recognized the freedom required in the special condition of India, they would have justified the claim that they were receiving from India only such effort as they could voluntarily. The war party and the no-war party would have been placed on an equal footing so far as each worked fully non-violently.

As to the last paragraph of your letter, I wish to remind you that it was never contemplated to carry non-embarrassment to the point of self-extinction or, in other words, stopping all national activities which were designed to make India peace-minded and show that India's participation could not benefit anyone, not excluding Great Britain. Indeed I hold that, if India were left free to make her choice which freedom of speech implied, India would probably have turned the scales in favour of Britain and true liberty by the moral prestige which Britain would have then gained.

I must, therefore, repeat that the Congress does still want to refrain from embarrassing the British Government in their war effort. But it is impossible for the Congress to make of the policy a fetish by denying its creed at this critical period in the history of mankind. If the Congress has to die, it should do so in the act of proclaiming its faith. It is unfortunate that we have not been able to arrive at an agreement on the single issue of freedom of speech. But I shall hug the hope that it will be possible for the Government to work out their policy in the spirit of the Congress position.

I should like to touch upon the other points I raised in our talks. But for fear of burdening this reply, I refrain. I shall hope to make a

public statement[1] on them as early as I can.

In conclusion, let me thank you publicly for the great courtesy and patience with which you listened to my very long statement and argument. And though our ways seem to diverge for the moment, our personal friendship will, as you have kindly said at the time of saying farewell, bear the strain of divergence.

As arranged I am handing our correspondence to the Press for publication.

Harijan, 6-10-1940

258. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE[2]

DELHI,
October 1, 1940

DEAR GURUDEV,

You *must* stay yet awhile. Humanity needs you. I was pleased beyond measure to find that you were better.

With love.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4653

[1] *Vide*"Statement to the Press", 5-10-1940

[2] The letter was carried by Mahadev Desai to the addressee in Calcutta. *Vide* also "Telegram to A. K. Chanda",28-9-1940

259. TO SATYAGRAHIS[1]

Satyagrahis will not be impatient with me and argue with me or with themselves and say, 'When will you give the word? You have had your interview with the Viceroy. You have got what many of us had told you would get'. Your telling me this or that mattered little. The attempt was worth making. I had told you that even if I did not get what I wanted from the Viceroy, I would bring from Simla added strength for myself. Who knows that to have added strength is not better than weak success. But my wisdom will be tested by the manner in which I use the strength. Maulana Saheb has called the Working Committee for the 11th instant. I hope, I shall be ready then with my plan of action. But whatever it is, it will be good only if it carries with it the united will of all Congressmen, if not the whole nation. Then the visible action even of one man will be enough for the purpose intended. Meanwhile please remember there is to be no civil disobedience, direct or indirect. Any breach of this will weaken the cause because it will unnerve your general who is susceptible to the slightest indiscipline. A general in action has no strength but what is given to him by his people.

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA, October 2, 1940

Harijan, 6-10-1940

260. SPEECH AT WARDHA[2]

October 2, 1940

In this Kali Yuga, you get more fruit for less work. It is an easy dharma to spin and weave, whereby you can achieve your objective and reach the goal. You are celebrating my birthday not because of my satyagraha but because of my inseparable connection with khadi. I desire that all villagers whether young or old should produce it and wear it

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

[2] The report said: "Gandhiji was speaking at a meeting organized to celebrate his 72nd birthday. He distributed prizes to winners in spinning, carding and weaving competitions."

Asked about his recent interview with the Viceroy, Mahatma Gandhi said:

As the Viceroy refused my demand for liberty of speech, there is no way out now.

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-10-1940

261. THE BREACH[1]

It is my firm conviction that British statesmen have failed to do the right thing when it was easy to do it. If India is wholly in favour of participation in the war, they could have easily disregarded any hostile propaganda. But the determination to gag free expression of opinion, provided it was not in the least tainted with violence, shatters Britain's claim that India's participation is voluntary. Had the Congress proposal been accepted, such aid as Britain would have got from India would have been an asset of inestimable value. The non-violent party would have played an effective part for honourable peace when the proper time for it was in sight, as it must be some day. I have been shown *The Times* comment on the breach. I accept the compliment about my resourcefulness. But great as I believe it to be, I own that it has its limitations. There must be willingness on the other side. I regret to have to say, I wholly missed it at the interview. The Viceroy was all courtesy, but he was unbending, and believed in the correctness of his judgment, and as usual had no faith in that of nationalist India. The Britisher is showing extraordinary bravery on the battle-field in a marvellous manner. But he lacks bravery to take risks in the moral domain. I often wonder whether the latter has any place in British politics.

SEVAGRAM, October 3, 1940

Harijan, 6-10-1940

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

262. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

October 3, 1940

CHI. KUNVARJI[1],

I do not recollect getting Variava's[2] report. It is surprising that you cannot keep up your weight there. Do go to Mysore [for treatment]. I see nothing wrong in that. I have received Rs. 300 from Bombay. Will any more be coming?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9742. Also C.W. 722. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

263. CABLE TO CARL HEATH[3]

WARDHAGANJ,
October 4, 1940

CARL HEATH
FRIENDS HOUSE
EUSTON ROAD
LONDON

MOST EARNEST PLEADING FAILED. EVIDENTLY SUCH WAS GOD'S WILL. ACTING WITH GREATEST CARE. SOME FORM OF CIVIL RESISTANCE INEVITABLE FOR MERE EXISTENCE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1044. Also Home, Political, File No. 3/33/40-Poll. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Husband of Gandhiji's grand-daughter, Rami

[2] A Parsi doctor who attended on Gandhiji in 1939, during the Rajkot fast. He was asked to send a report on the addressee who was suffering from tuberculosis; *vide* "Letter to Dr. Variava", 31-8-1940.

[3] This was in reply to a cable dated September 11, 1940, from the addressees, a Quaker. Chairman of the India Conciliation Group, he had said: "Your cable [*vide* "Cable to Carl Health", 26-8-1940] received. Hold belief clash can be averted by persistent human contact till acceptable formula found".

264. CABLE TO JAMES MAXTON[1]

October 4, 1940

I SEE NO CHANCE OF PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT. BRITISH MATCHLESS ON BATTLE-FIELD BUT BRITISH STATESMEN NOT BRAVE ENOUGH TO TAKE RISKS IN DOING THE RIGHT THING AT THE RIGHT MOMENT AND IN ORDER TO COVER THEIR WEAKNESS RESORT TO FALSE ARGUMENT UNSUPPORTED BY FACTS.

From a photostat: C.W. 10165 a. Also Home, Political, File No. 3/33/40 Poll. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India

265. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 4, 1940

CHI. ANAND,

Got Vidya's[2] letter only yesterday. Therefore neither the telegram nor the letter was of any use. You have always my blessings in whatever you do. Pyarelal wrote to you a few lines, so why do you feel hurt? I am busy over so many activities that I am unable to cope with them. So even if you get a few lines you should be glad. I am sorry to learn about your ears. Accept God's will. As for the book[3], do as you think proper. It is good that you have good relations with Father. Come whenever you want. Be happy. Serve according to [your] capacity.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] The addressee was a British Labour leader and Member of Parliament.
[2] Addressee's wife
[3] The reference is to "Gandhi Series", edited and published by the addressee; *vide* "Letter to Anand T. Hingorani", 14-2-1941.

266. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

SEVAGRAM,
October 5, 1940

In the correspondence between H.E. the Viceroy and myself announcing the breakdown in the talks, I have said in my letter[2] that I would make a public statement covering matters not referred to in my letter.

Before I do so, I think it is necessary for my purpose to say a few words regarding Lord Linlithgow. He is straight in his talk, always deliberate, and economical in his language. He is never equivocal, never leaves you in doubt as to his meaning. He conveys the most unpalatable decisions with a calmness and courtesy which, for the moment, make you think that you have heard no harsh or hard decision. He listens to your argument with a patience and attention I have never known any other Viceroy or high functionary to show in an equal measure. He is never ruffled and never discourteous. With all this, however, he is not to be easily moved from his position. He meets you with his decision on the matter under discussion already made. He takes care not to let you think that it is so, but there is no doubt about it that his decision is unchangeable. He is not receptive. He has amazing confidence in the correctness of his judgment. He does not believe in a gentleman's or any other agreement. I have always felt that after the Gandhi-Irwin pact, British satraps decided that there should be no more such pacts. Whatever they wanted to do, they should do independently. It shows either a high sense of justice or boundless self-assurance. I think it is the latter. He and I have become friends never to be parted, be the differences between us as great as they can be.

Holding such an opinion about the Viceroy, it pains me to have to relate what I must of my impression of the talks which have ended in a divergence which, in my opinion, was wholly avoidable. Acceptance of my proposal would have been no less beneficial to England than to India.

[1] This appeared under the title "More about Simla Visit".
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linthgow", 30-9-1940

I went to Simla in the capacity of a representative and as a friend. As a friend I presented him with my doubts as to certain acts of the British Government. To have them dissolved was necessary to enable me to determine my mental attitude which to me is more than any visible act. I felt that the putting up by the Viceroy, and then the Secretary of State, of want of agreement by the Congress with the Princes, the Muslim League and even the Scheduled Classes as a barrier to the British recognition of India's right to freedom was more than unjust to the Congress and the Indian people. I told the Viceroy that these three represented class or communal interests, whereas the Congress represented no particular class. It was a purely national organization striving to represent India as a whole; and therefore the Congress had always maintained that it would abide by the verdict of a national assembly elected on the basis of the broadest franchise. It had further declared its intention to abide by the vote of the separate Muslim electorate, so far as special Muslim rights were concerned. Therefore it was wrong to speak as if Muslim rights needed special safeguards as against the Congress. The same thing applied to the Sikhs.

The Princes of the present day were a creation of the British Government to subserve British interest. As against the plea that the British were bound by special treaty obligations, I contended that the Congress did not ask the British Government to disregard them. Only they could not be used to bar Indian progress, and it was wholly wrong to expect the Congress to produce an agreement with them. The Princes were not like other parties free to conclude any agreement with the Congress even if they wished. Moreover, the treaties, if they oblige the British Government to protect the Princes, equally compel them to protect the rights of the people. But it has been abundantly proved that the British had rarely interfered with the Princes purely on behalf of the people. If they had been as careful of the people's right as they were bound by the treaties to be, the people's condition would not have been as miserable as it is today. Had they been true to the treaties of their own making, the people of States India should be more advanced than those of British India. I cited some telling illustrations of this neglect of duty.

The introduction of the Scheduled Classes in the controversy has made the unreality of the case of the British Government doubly unreal. They know that these are the special care of the Congress, and

that the Congress is infinitely more capable of guarding their interests than the British Government. Moreover, the Scheduled Classes are divided into as many castes as the caste Hindu society. No single Scheduled Class member could possibly and truthfully represent the innumerable castes.

I had sought the interview with the Viceroy to see if my interpretation of the British argument had any flaw. I failed to get any satisfaction on the points raised. The Viceroy would not be drawn into a discussion. I can have no grievance about his disinclination to enter into any argument. He had every right to rely upon the fact that that was a matter of high policy not admitting of argument. There is a certain cold reserve about the British official world which gives them their strength and isolation from surroundings and facts. They do not want to be too frank. They politely refuse to enter into embarrassing argument. They leave you to draw what inferences you like while they continue to maintain their inflexible attitude. I suppose that is what is meant by the steel frame. For me, this side of British policy has been the least attractive. I had hoped, against the warning of friends, that I might be able to break through this steel wall of reserve and get at the naked truth. But the imperialist Britisher is firmly fixed in his saddle.

Nevertheless, I will not accept defeat. I must strive to have the truth admitted by the British people that the bar to India's freedom lies not in the Congress or any other party's inability to produce an agreement which is in its nature impossible, but that it undoubtedly lies in the British disinclination to do the obviously right thing.

The unreality of the British reasons for refusal to treat India as a free country was not my only grouse. I drew the Viceroy's attention to certain irregularities in the prosecution of the war policy. There was agreement between us that there should be no compulsion as to war contributions. He has promised to examine all cases of hardship and all other difficulties. My purpose was to leave no ground for misunderstanding and to fight, if there was to be a fight, only on well-defined issues and without bitterness. I want to enter upon the fight with the hope that its very fairness will compel the recognition that India deserves better treatment, not merely from the British but from all the nations of the earth.

Lest it might be said that the Congress fights because it has failed to get power, I told His Excellency in the plainest words possible that the Congress had no desire to mount to power at the

expense of a single national interest. It seeks no power save for the whole nation. Therefore he will have no opposition from the Congress if he forms a Cabinet composed of representatives of different parties. The Congress would be content to be in opposition so far as the war effort is concerned and so long as the machinery of Government has to subserve imperialist ends. The immediate issue is not independence. The immediate issue is the right of existence, i.e., the right of self-expression which, broadly put, means free speech. This the Congress wants not merely for itself, but for all, the only restraint being complete observance of non-violence. I hold that that condition answers all the difficulties by whomsoever raised.

Harijan, 13-10-1940

267. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 6, 1940

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I had your two letters[1]. You will tell me more about Rajni Patel when we meet. Your letter[2] about Napier[3], with enclosure, I am sending to the Viceroy. It is a pathetic case.

I am over head and ears in work. Hence no more.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1940. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

268. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 6, 1940

CHI. MIRA,

I have your two letters. I have made arrangements with the Harijan Colony. They will send you slivers when you need them. If you will give notice in time I shall see to their being sent. I hope what

[1] One of these, dated September 21, was concerning the case of Rajni Patel, a barrister in Bombay, who had been arrested on his return after years of sojourn abroad.

[2] Dated October 2, 1940; *vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 2-10-1940

[3] Great grandson of Sir Charles Napier

you have are quite good. Yes, I have been to Simla. It has been a good experience. I hope you will get the solitude you want.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABAI
PALAMPUR
KANGRA DISTRICT
PUNJAB

From the original: C.W. 6460. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10055

269. LETTER TO SAILENDRA NATH CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 6, 1940

DEAR SAILENDRA,

Your letter. You should certainly earn more. Are you worth more? Can you leave Calcutta? I quite see that you must all have proper food. I shall discuss with Father[1] what can be done.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10164. courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

270. LETTER TO G. N. KANITKAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 6, 1940

DEAR BALUKAKA,

I thank you for your good wishes. I have read the portions marked by you. It is difficult to speculate today what will happen if this country of ours was left undefended. I can only say that satyagrahis will have no fear. If they are worth their salt they will not be found bending the knee to any conqueror. But on this as on many matters we must agree to differ.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI BALUKAKA KANITKAR
HINDMATA SEVA MANDIR
POONA

From a photostat: C.W. 970. Courtesy: Gajanan N. Kanitkar

[1] Amrita Lal Chatterjee

271. LETTER TO DILKHUSH B. DIWANJI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 6, 1940

BHAI DILKHUSH,

I duly got your loving gift. You are progressing day by day. You have to progress a great deal more still. I got Harshadabehn's gift too. She has given an incomplete address. Please thank her yourself on my behalf.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI DILKHUSH DIWANJI
GANDHI KUTIR
KARADI, *via* NAVSARI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2647

272. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

October 6, 1940

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter and your book[1]. I read the dedication. I wore the dhoti[2] and I still wear it along with the others. I have kept the book with me. I do wish to go through it.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI PREMABEHN KANTAK
ASHRAM, SASWAD
POONA DISTRICT

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10411. Also C.W. 6850. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] *Satyagrahi Maharashtra*, which the addressee had dedicated to Gandhiji
[2] Which the addressee had got made from yarn spun by her and sent to Gandhiji as a birthday present

273. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 6, 1940

CHI. SHARMA,

I got your letter. I want to call you to the battle. At least now improve your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 290

274. TWO THOUGHT-PROVOKING LETTERS[1]

A friend writes thus:

> When you asked for the names of out-and-out believers in non-violence I wanted very much to send in mine, but something within compelled me to refrain. First because I felt there was lack of ahimsa in my personal conduct, and secondly because there was the opposite of love for the English in my heart. I rejoice when I read in the papers of the destruction wrought on London and Britain, and I inwardly want the British to be defeated in the war. I am impelled to confess this, for I could not deceive you.

The second letter is from South Africa. I take a few sentences from it:

> I am puzzled as to what should be the attitude of Indians at the present juncture. The 'White' races are so utterly callous in regard to 'Coloured' people, and in spite of the war colour prejudice continues unabated. Why then should we give our lives for them ? Quite recently an Indian student who returned here from Europe was telling us that in spite of the fact that the steamer was not crowded the British company hesitated to give accommodation to Indians. Such treatment leads us and also the African people to believe that there is no difference between the Nazis, the Boers and the British, so far as we are concerned. If there were Nazi rule in South Africa, we could not be treated worse than we are today. Many of us think that the British

[1] This appeared as "translated from Gujarati", originally published in *Harijanbandhu*, 12-10-1940.

are sweet-tongued but they pursue their own ruthless policy in spite of honeyed words, whereas Hitler would be more frank. He at any rate says exactly what he feels. Is there not truth in this? Anyhow we ought to know where we stand. Please tell us.

Though differently worded the two letters betray the same thought. It is difficult for those who suffer at British hands to shed either their dislike of or a disinclination to help them. But the present is a real testing time for ahimsa which alone can throw light on our path.

First of all we must distinguish between the British people and their policy. We must have full liberty thoughtfully and with reason to criticize the latter, but we may not dislike them. To err is human. All have their good as well as bad points. It is in human nature, even if we are in the wrong, to resent bitter, often unjust, criticism. But if we were lovingly shown our faults, we would perhaps be willing to listen. We must behave thus towards the British. Let us tell them where they are in the wrong, but let us not wish them any harm. We may demand a mental and heart change in their outlook, but we may not pray for their downfall.

Such an attitude is indispensable in satyagraha which demands that, while we may neither speak evil of wrongdoers nor wish them ill, we must at the same time show them the error of their ways and non-co-operate with them in their wrongdoing. The Congress has been trying to follow this great principle for the last twenty years. I believe that we have benefited greatly therefrom. Moreover there is no reason why we should wish the British to be defeated in this war. The writer from South Africa rightly says that there is not much to choose between the British and the Nazis. This is as clear as daylight in South Africa, in particular, where Coloured races are treated as definitely inferior in every way. What more than this could the Nazis say or do? The defeat of the British would connote the victory of the Nazis, which, again, we do not and must not desire. Therefore, we should be impartial. We are desirous of our own independence. For that there is no reason why we should want the destruction of Germany. We have to achieve as well as maintain our freedom through our own strength. We do not need British or any outside help for it. Those of us who have full faith in ahimsa believe that we can win it through non-violence and keep it thereby also.

There is, however, a section amongst us who believe in winning and maintaining our independence through force of arms. Their position is a difficult one. As a matter of fact we have still to gain our freedom. If we win it through violence, we will not do so by helping Britain in the war. For if we help the war effort, we really come more under their sway than we are today. And if in spite of our help they lose, we would then come under the rule of another foreign power. So that, if Britain and India were jointly defeated, we would, so to speak, be jumping from the frying pan into the fire. Moreover India has no enmity towards any nation. Hitler and others have no illusions. They know full well that India is not a willing partner in the war, that we are a slave country and that our wishes do not count. It was really the Congress who raised this question because the Congress has adopted non-violence as its weapon. At the same time we have no quarrel with those who do not believe in non-violence. Each of us must go his own way. By doing so we shall know where India stands. If the Congress had not spoken out its mind, it would have committed suicide, that is to say, it would have given up its right to follow out its policy of non-violence. It is its duty to keep itself alive. Therefore the Congress has to take some action. What that action will be will shortly become known. I suggest to the two writers that they should try to rid their hearts of all anger and hatred. These are in reality signs of weakness. Non-violence is an active force. If they were to follow it, they would be active and they would be spreading the leaven of ahimsa. The Congress demand is not for itself only. It extends far beyond even India and embraces the world. Let us therefore wish well from the bottom of our hearts to all the warring nations.

SEVAGRAM, October 7, 1940

Harijan, 13-10-1940

275. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 7, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I enclose herewith Pandit Nehru's letter[1] and its enclosure. Though it relates to an individual British officer who has risen against

[1] *Vide* "Letter From Jawaharlal Nehru", 2-10-1940

the tradition, I think the case merits sympathetic treatment. The Pandit's letter I send in order that you may know the inner working of the mind of one who will be the future leader of all India. You will please tell me if I have overstepped the limit in sending you these papers.[1]

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. courtesy: National Archives of India

276. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SEVAGRAM,

October 7, 1940

My criticism[2] was intended to support you and the Congress. I of course knew that you were doing something. I wrote to help you and strengthen your hands. It will also not have escaped your attention that such criticism can be made. The correspondent who wrote to me meant well. I felt that if I wrote openly, all of you would understand and take further steps accordingly. Do you see now? May I publish the correspondence with you?[3]

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 176

277. HYDERABAD

What do you say to the right of Hyderabad to the territories that have been taken away by the English under some pretext or other, e.g., Berar, Ceded Districts, Karnataka, etc.?

This question demands an answer. So far as they have been taken away by the English the right accrues against the English. If I

[1] In his reply dated October 11, the Viceroy, *inter alia*, remarked: "These are difficult cases, as the Pandit dearly recognized and I think, if I may say so, that the advice which he gave was eminently sensible and in the best interests of the officer concerned. I fully appreciate your own feelings."

[2] *Vide* pp. 63-5.

[3] *Vide* also "Notes," sub-title "Australian Soldiers"

am asked as a matter of equity, I can only say that the people of the respective parts should be asked to make their choice. That is the only equity I know.

But I suggest that all such discussion is academic. If India, the geographical unit, gets independence, as it must some day, it means that every component part has its independence. If independence is won non-violently, all the component parts will be voluntarily interdependent, working in perfect harmony under a representative central authority which will derive its sanction from the confidence reposed in it by the component parts. If independence is taken by force of arms, then the strongest power will hold sway over all India. And this may be Hyderabad for ought I know. All the big and the petty States will be free willy-nilly from the British yoke. They will each fight for their existence and succumb to the strongest who will be the emperor of India. This presupposes unarmed millions lying prostrate at the feet of the combination of armed States. Many other things are, however, conceivable. The Indian part of the British army will probably have consciousness of strength and an independent existence. There may be Muslim arms, Sikh arms, Gurkha arms, Rajput arms and what not. They may fight among themselves or, having allied themselves to some nationalist party, may present a united front to the Princes. There may also be the descent upon India of the warring tribes from the Frontier to share the spoils or the sovereignty itself.

The Congress, if it still has anything of its non-violence left in it, will die in the attempt to establish universal peace in India. It is not impossible that all the warring elements will find it profitable in more ways than one voluntarily to surrender themselves to the moral authority of a central power. This means universal suffrage exercised by a disciplined and politically intelligent electorate. It also means a decent and permanent burial to communal and other discord.

But this may not happen. The existing state of things does not warrant an optimistic outlook. But I am a man of faith. And to faith all things are possible. But supposing the worst happens and there is anarchy in the land, if there is God upon earth as He is in heaven, then you may depend upon it that, I shall not live to make any choice. I shall die in the anarchic flame whilst I am vainly attempting to still it with my tiny, shaky hands. But if you ask me in advance whether I would face anarchy in preference to foreign orderly rule, either

British or any other, I would unhesitatingly plump for anarchy, say, the rule of the Nizam supported by Chiefs become feudatory to him or supported by the border Muslim tribes. In my estimation it will be cent per cent domestic. It will be home rule though far, far from self-rule or *swa*-raj (स्व-राज). But you must let me repeat that, while I can write thus academically, if the reality faces me, my choice will be death or the rule of the people by the people for the people. This means the rule of unadulterated non-violence. So you see my non-violence is made not of cotton wool but of a metal much harder than steel and yet softer than cotton wool. You can compare it only with itself.

You will naturally then ask what place have the Princes in my scheme of things. Such a question should not arise if you had fully realized the implications of non-violence. For the Princes obeying the moral authority of a central body not sustained by arms will find an honourable place as servants of the people. No one will have any rights but what are inherent in a willing performance of one's duties. Thus H. E. H. the Nizam will then be the chosen servant of people. Only then his people will not be merely those confined willy-nilly within his present borders but may be all India. You must not dismiss this as a utopian scheme. I claim to be a practical man. If the Congress proves true to its policy, what may seem today to be an airy nothing may tomorrow become an agreeable reality. In my scheme there is no waste of either human talent or creative effort. Let me quote here my cable to H. G. Wells in reply to his on the rights of man:

> Received your cable. Have carefully read your five articles. You will permit me to say, you are on the wrong track. I feel sure that I can draw up a better charter of rights than you have drawn up. But what good will it be? Who will become its guardian? If you mean propaganda or populareducation, you have begun at the wrong end. I suggest the right way. Begin with a charter of duties of man, and I promise the rights will follow as spring follows winter. I write from experience. As a young man I began life by seeking to assert my rights, and I soon discovered I had none—not even over my wife. So I began by discovering and performing my duty by my wife, my children, friends, companions and society, and I find today that I have greater rights, perhaps, than any living man I know. If this is too tall a claim, then I say I do not know anyone who possesses greater rights than I.

SEVAGRAM, October 8, 1940

Harijan, 13-10-1940

278. THANKS[1]

I am grateful to the numerous senders of birthday greetings from India as well as remote parts of the earth. Many have this time also sent me strands of yarn some of which is of great fineness, strength and evenness. Needless to say I shall make the wisest use of all these (to me) precious gifts for they betoken a labour of love for *Daridranarayana*. Some have sent monetary gifts either for Harijans or for the A.I.S.A. All these have been sent to the proper quarters.

SEVAGRAM, October 8, 1940

Harijan, 13-10-1940

279. FASTING IN SATYAGRAHA[2]

I note that in connection with the imminent satyagraha the possibility of my fasting has been hinted at in the papers. Pandit Malaviyaji has a soft corner for me. He is always deeply concerned about my health, my politics, and my morals. We have differences of opinion, but our love cheerfully stands the strain. The day before I left Sevagram for Simla I received a letter from him, urging me to avoid at all cost the reported fast.[3]

I have to admit that there is a certain measure of truth in the report. I have told my friends of the Working Committee of my premonition that I may have to undertake one more fast during my life, and that this may even take place sooner than I had thought. But the fact is that so far as I can remember I have never undertaken a single one of my public fasts with any premeditation on my part. All my fasts have come to me on the spur of the moment, gifts from God as I have called them. Their results have been invariably good. And in any event I have no regrets regarding them. I hope, therefore, that readers will entertain no anxiety on reading these lines. If God has a fast in store for me, it will surely come and it will bring good in its wake. In all things His will be done.

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

[2] This appeared as "translated from Hindustani", originally published in Harijan Sevak, 12-10-1940.

[3] For Gandhiji's reply to M. M. Malaviya, *vide* "Letter to M. M. Malaviya", 25-9-1940

Now what is the place of fasting in satyagraha ? Nowadays quite a number of fasts are undertaken in the name of satyagraha. Many of the known fasts have been meaningless, many may be said to have been impure. Fasting is a fiery weapon. It has its own science. No one, as far as I am aware, has a perfect knowledge of it. Unscientific experimentation with it is bound to be harmful to the one who fasts, and it may even harm the cause espoused.[1] No one who has not earned the right to do so should, therefore, use this weapon. A fast may only be undertaken by him who is associated with the person against whom he fasts. The latter must be directly connected with the purpose for which the fast is being undertaken. Bhagat Fulsinghji's recent fast was such a one. He was closely connected with the people of Moth village; he had served the Harijans of the place, too. The wrong that was being enacted was done by the villagers to the Harijans. When every means of obtaining justice had failed, there was no option left for a man like Fulsinghji except to resort to fasting. He did and succeeded.[2] Success or failure depends entirely on the will of God and is not relevant to the issue under discussion.

All my public fasts have been of this category. Out of all of them perhaps there is most to be learnt from the Rajkot one. It has been roundly condemned by many people. Originally it was pure and necessary. The blemish crept in when I asked the Viceroy to intervene. Had I not done so, I am convinced that its result would have been brilliant. Even as it was, the result was a victory for the cause. Because God wanted to open my eyes, he took the bread out of my mouth, so to speak. The Rajkot fast is thus a useful study for the satyagrahi. In regard to its necessity there is no doubt, assuming that the principles for fasting which I have laid down are accepted. The important thing to note about it is how a pure undertaking can become tainted owing to lack of watchfulness on the part of the doer. There can be no room for selfishness, anger, lack of faith, or impatience in a pure fast. It is no exaggeration to admit that all these defects crept into my Rajkot fast. My selfishness lay in the fact that, inasmuch as its being given up depended on certain conditions being fulfilled by the late Thakore Saheb, I had in me the selfish desire for the realization of the fruits of my labour. If there had been no anger in me, I would not have looked to the Viceroy for assistance. My love should have deterred me from

[1] The Hindi version has: " . . . and it may harm even other people."

[2] *Vide* also "Telegram to G. D. Birla", 21-9-1940

doing so. For if he was really as a son to me, why should I have complained about him to his overlord? I betrayed want of faith in that I thought the Thakore Saheb would not be melted by my love and I was impatient to break the fast. All these shortcomings were bound to make my fast impure. It would be irrelevant here to ponder over the many results of the Rajkot fast, and I therefore refrain from doing so. But we have learnt how infinietly watchful and prayerful he who fasts has to be and how even a little carelessness can damage a good cause. It is now apparent that in addition to truth and non-violence a satyagrahi should have the confidence that, God will grant him the necessary strength and that, if there is the slightest impurity in the fast, he will not hesitate to renounce it at once. Infinite patience, firm resolve, single-mindedness of purpose, perfect calm, and no anger must of necessity be there. But since it is impossible for a person to develop all these qualities all at once, no one who has not devoted himself to following the laws of ahimsa[1] should undertake a satyagrahi fast.

I should like readers to note that I have not here dealt with fasts undertaken for bodily or spiritual purification. Nature-cure doctors should be consulted for the former. The greatest of sinners can undertake the latter. And for this type of fast we possess a veritable mine of literature. Fasts for spiritual purification have really been forgotten in our day. If they are ever undertaken, they are either purely imitative or merely for the sake of tradition, and we cannot, therefore, derive the benefit from them that we should. Those who want to go in for a satyagrahi fast should certainly possess some personal experience of fasts for spiritual purification. Fasts for ridding the body of impurities are also beneficial. In the end, of course, there is only one basis of the whole ideal of fasting, and that is purification.

SEVAGRAM, October 8, 1940

Harijan, 13-10-1940

[1] The Hindi version has: " . . . no one who has not purified himself by observing *yama-niyamas* . . . ."

280. PLAIN LIVING AND HIGH THINKING[1]

> An ideal society is that in which every individual will be able to live a life of progressively inereasing wants with a minimum output of labour.

Thus writes a friend from Ahmedabad. The proposition is pleasing and is backed by plausible argument which many may accept. The writer forecast that the Viceroy was bound to refuse the Congress proposal.[2] He does not believe in the freedom of the individual, and is therefore of opinion that it was only meet that the Viceroy should turn down the proposal. Because his forecast turned out correct he may even hold his argument to be sound and say, "I told you so." It is therefore necessary for me to take note of the letter.

The writer may not derive any satisfaction from the Viceroy's refusal.[3] All my colleagues had foretold the result. But I wanted to go not so much in the expectation of getting acceptance as, in the event of failure, to return with added strength. Nor does the rejection of the proposal mean in any sense that the Viceroy does not believe in individual freedom. Britain has not gone that length. Europe has no doubt entered upon a new phase in denying individual liberty. If this goes, then surely all is lost, for, if the individual ceases to count, what is left of society? Individual freedom alone can make a man voluntarily surrender himself completely to the service of society. If it is wrested from him, he becomes an automaton and society is ruined. No society can possibly be built on a denial of individual freedom. It is contrary to the very nature of man. Just as a man will not grow horns or a tail, so he will not become an animal with no mind of his own. In reality even those who do not believe in the liberty of the individual believe in their own. Modern editions of Chenghiz Khan retain their own.

Just as the writer's ideas on individual liberty are impossible, so also is his other theory. That everyone in this world should be able to maintain as high a standard of life as possible with the least possible

[1]This appeared as "translated from Gujarati", originally published in *Harijanbandhu,* 12-10-1940.

[2] The Gujarati version has: ". . . my proposal."

[3] The Gujarati version adds: "It is never assumed that such demands will be acceded to."

output of labour is just as fantastic as to expect a camel to pass through the eye of a needle. The writer's high living would appear to mean luxurious living which is an impossible proposition for any society as a whole. And when there is no limit to luxury where shall we stop ? All the scriptures of the world have taught the exact opposite. Plain living and high thinking is the ideal that has been placed before us. The vast majority recognize its truth but are unable to get there because of human frailty. It is, however, perfectly possible to envisage such an existence. That the crores in India should be guaranteed a certain income is only right, and to achieve this ideal large-scale machinery is not only not necessary but wholly destructive.[1]

Man falls from the pursuit of the ideal of plain living and high thinking the moment he wants to multiply his daily wants. History gives ample proof of this. Man's happiness really lies in contentment. He who is discontented, however much he possesses, becomes a slave to his desires. And there is really no slavery equal to that of his desires. All the sages have declared from the house-tops that man can be his own worst enemy as well as his best friend. To be free or to be a slave lies in his own hands. And what is true for the individual is true for society.[2]

SEVAGRAM, October 9[3], 1940

Harijan, 1-2-1942

[1] The Gujarati version does not have the last three words.

[2] The Gujarati version adds: "And that emancipation can be achieved only by living a pure and simple life."

[3] From *Harijanbandhu.* The source, however, has "7".

281. NOTES

'A STAB IN THE BACK'?

I have read Sir Sikandar Hyat's reported speech[1] on the correspondence between H.E. the Viceroy and myself. I was sorry for it. Where is the stab in the back when everything is done openly after full discussion and with the utmost consideration for the party affected? He is a bad advocate who overproves his case, and I promise that Sir Sikandar will be proved as such. Sir Sikandar says that ninety-nine per cent of the Punjab is for participation in the war. No doubt he is a popularly elected member of the Punjab Assembly, and he is the undisputed Premier of the Punjab. Nevertheless it is a big claim that he puts forth for the Punjab. Sir Sikandar's cause will lose nothing by being true to facts. And the facts are that the Punjab has been one of the best recruiting grounds for the British rulers. This does not necessarily prove that the Punjab is the most patriotic of the provinces. In this vast country of ours there are many professions. Soldiering is one of them. These professionals will lend their services to whomsoever will pay them good wages and enough practice for their profession. Therefore, in my opinion, Sir Sikandar can prove no more than that the Punjab has the pride of place so far as the recruiting ground for the British is concerned. But the Punjabi soldier is as much interested in the issue as the black soldiers trained by General Franco were interested in his politics or in his ambition. They served him because of the pay and the practice in the use of arms which he offered them. But politically speaking, if Sir Sikandar can claim that ninety-nine per cent of the Punjab is for participation in the war, it can be claimed with much greater force perhaps that ninety-

[1] According to *The Indian Annual Register*, 1940, Vol. II, pp. 31-2 and 40, Sikandar Hyat Khan, "addressing a gathering of ryots at Nuh (Gurgaon District) on October 1, said that Mahatma Gandhi was among the first Indians to denounce Hitler's acts of aggression and to declare that his sympathy lay entirely on the side of Britain in this war. Since that declaration was made the Congress had been changing its position from time to time until at last Mahatma had formulated his demand for freedom to carry on propaganda against participation in the war." Addressing another meeting at Lahore on November 1, in connection with the "Muslim Countries Day", Sikandar, "took the opportunity to elaborate his charges against Mahatma Gandhi". He said: "Mahatma's campaign amounted not only to stabbing Britain in the back but also a betrayal of the best interests of India and the Islamic world."

nine per cent of the seven provinces where the Congress has an over whelming majority are against such participation. Only I do not want to advance any such argument. I suggest that those who want and those who do not want to participate in the war may follow their respective courses without being acclaimed as patriots. It may well be left to the historian of the future to pronounce judgment.

AUSTRALIAN SOLDIERS

The Mayor of Bombay has sent me a letter complaining of my reference[1] to him as if he had neglected his duty as the first citizen of Bombay. He tells me too that he acted in the promptest manner possible and entered into correspondence with the Government. As a responsible citizen he could not rush to the Press or inform the public what he was doing. All this is creditable to the Mayor. I know him to be business-like and anxious to render service without fuss. But it is strange that he has read a meaning into my writing which the context shows I could not have meant. I have put to him the same question that I have put to all the other parties concerned. Surely I must not be taken to have cast any reflection on any single one of them. For aught I know they might have taken effective steps without my warning. When a series of complaints came to me from various sources, I was found to draw attention to them and show how, from a private citizen to the Governor, the various units in a society would be expected to act in emergencies of the character described by me. The latter might, if not handled effectively and in time, give rise to a first-class crisis ending in an exhibition of racial passions of a most undesirable type.

I am happy, therefore, to note that almost all parties seem to have acted as they should have. A college girl, who was among the first to complain to me, tells me that, whilst there is no doubt about the general truth of the complaints, the improper behaviour stopped after a few days. She tells me that it had stopped altogether before my writing appeared in the Press. Whilst, therefore, I am not sorry for what I wrote, as I should have in the public interest, it gives me as much pleasure to note that the mischief was nipped in the bud, as it had caused me pain to give publicity to it. I am no believer in a hush-hush policy. Such incidents, if they are not to be repeated, demand publicity and an effective and immediate remedy.[2]

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", 7-10-1940

[2] *Vide* also "Two Points of View"

Seth Jamnalalji is trying to cut his way through a thick forest of difficulties in Jaipur. He had thought that after a settlement, to which he had contributed not a little and which had brought much credit to the State and freedom from embarrassment, he would have fair weather and smooth sailing. But such was not to be the case. In Raja Gyan Nath he has to face a Prime Minister who, according to Sethji, is thoroughly unreliable and reactionary. He has failed to give any satisfaction to the long-suffering ryots of Jaipur. He has put back the hands of the clock of progress, and there is an agitation for his removal and the appointment of a Minister who would be responsive to public opinion. It is the duty of the Paramount Power to see to it that when it imposes a Minister on a Prince, it gives one who would be sympathetic to public demands. It is time to remove him when he is more autocratic than the Prince in whose name he is supposed to administer the State.

SEVAGRAM, October 9, 1940

Harijan, 13-10-1940

282. LETTER TO ABDULLA HAROON RASHEED

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 12, 1940

DEAR HAJI SAHEB,

Though it is only an official letter[1], your signature revives memories of the old happy days when I used to enjoy your confidence in full measure. But as the saying goes all days are never the same. I must be content with what God gives me from time to time.

You will not expect me to enter into a discussion with you on your resolution. I did not write the note[2] in *Harijan* to provoke

[1]*The Hitavada*, 23-10-1940, reported that the addressee, President of Sind Muslim League, had forwarded to Gandhiji "the Sind Provincial Muslim League resolution on lawlessness in the province". According to *The Indian Annual Register*, 1940, Vol. II, p. 34, the resolution "expressed the hope that the Hindu organizations in Sind would co-operate with the President of the Sind Provincial Muslim League in easing the communal situation".

[2]*Vide* "Sind Hinds"

controversy. If you are satisfied that so far as the Muslims are concerned they have nothing to answer for, I have nothing to say. I wrote as a friend, not as an opponent. Hence you will excuse me for not printing the resolution. If I do, I must answer it. This I want to avoid. But you can expect me to help in the production of a friendly atmosphere in Sind through personal correspondence. I, therefore, like the last paragraph of your first resolution—that inviting the co-operation of Hindus.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

283. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 12, 1940

BHAI SATIS BABU[1],

Annada's[2] letter is enclosed. When he writes that whatever happened that day was due to panic, we should reopen the case so far as necessary. What shall I do about the auditors? First send reply to all the issues raised by Annada. How are the prices of khadi brought down? How and how much capital is invested in khadi work?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2732

284. LETTER TO SAMPURNANAND

SEVAGRAM,
October 12, 1940

BHAI SAMPURNANANDJI,

I have in view only Hindi or Hindustani. But that does not imply boycott of Urdu. The root of all the three languages is the same and when we establish unity among us we would laugh at our own stupidity, and wonder why we ever quarrelled over the language

[1] Founder-President of Bengal Khadi Pratishthan
[2] Annada Chowdhury, a constructive worker from Bengal

problem. You should read the article[1] in the *Harijan Sevak* from this point of view.

I praised Pyarelal's Urdu for the simple reason that I have no other person who knows Urdu, and a knowledge of Urdu is essential for evolving the Hindustani language. I have made a distinction between Pyarelal's Urdu and Hindi merely in order to explain the situation. I never thought of the interpretation you have given to it. We who belong to the Congress can use no other name but Hindustani. For the Congress Hindustani is the national language. In fact there is no language called Hindustani which is different from Hindi and Urdu. That language has still to evolve itself. People will understand the meaning when we use Urdu words as well as Hindi words. But which language is to be known as Hindustani? Has it not to be a fusion of Hindi and Urdu? My endeavour is to create such a fusion. Let it be your endeavour too.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

285. TESTIMONIAL TO UMA DEVI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 13, 1940

I have known Shri Uma Devi (Wanda Dynowska) of Poland for over four years. She has adopted India as her second home. She is simple in habits, extremely self-sacrificing and brave. I believe her also to be thoroughly honest.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1203 and 8057. Also C.W. 5098. Courtesy: Wanda Dynowska

[1] *Vide* "To the Reader"

286. LETTER TO CHANDEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 13, 1940

CHI. CHANDEL,

I have your beautiful letter. You are doing good work there.[1] I am looking forward to seeing you both[2] if you will come here after Dewali.

Blessings from
BAPU

Bapu—Conversations and Correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 189

287. LETTER TO V. N. BARWE[3]

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 13, 1940

DEAR BARWE,

I do not want to deal publicly with you question. As a matter of ethics, however, I do maintain that to do Red Cross work is an indirect encouragement to war effort. But I know that is a very delicate question and admits of two conflicting opinions.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee was in charge of the spinning centre in Khedi.

[2] The addressee and Kamala (Margaret Jones), who were doing village uplift work in Khedi.

[3] This was in reply to a letter dated October 11 form the addressee, who wanted to know if Congressmen could contribute to Red Cross funds, and whether such contribution could be said to be an indirect help to the war.

288. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 14, 1940

CHI. MIRA,

I am glad you are in you new abode[1]. There is a ring of sadness about the few lines you have sent me. I want you to feel inner joy and strength. God be with you.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Your khadi has now come. If you gave me instructions about it, I have forgotten. Shall I keep it for you?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6461. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10056

289. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 14, 1940

CHI. SHARMA,

Retain them[2] as long as they allow you. It is not necessary to return them immediately.

It will be good to send Devi Prasad[3]. But ask the school first.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 290 and 291

[1] Mirabehn explains: "A solitary little hut in a pinewood on the mountain side"; *vide* also "Letter to Miraben", 21-9-1940

[2] Tents borrowed for the addressee's camp hospital

[3] Addressee's son; the question had been raised whether he should be sent to school.

290. CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

I have had three days' discussion[1] with the Working Committee. During it I unfolded my plan of civil disobedience in so far as I was able to envisage it. Although I have sole charge of the campaign, I could not think of taking the first step without consulta-tion with the members of the Working Committee. In non-violent action one has to carry the co-workers with one through the mind and the heart. There is no other way to enforce discipline or obedience to instructions. I must admit that it was not plain sailing for me. There was stubborn dissent from two members. I tried hard to carry conviction to them but I fear I failed. They will, however, yield obedience so far as it is possible for them for the sake of discipline. The difference of opinion solely centred round the quantity of civil disobedience and the restrictions with which it was hedged.

I disclose this part of the discussion to show that my plan will fall short of the expectations of those whom the dissenters represent. I would simply say to them, 'Wait patiently and see what happens. Carry out instructions to the best of your ability. Do nothing to thwart the plan. If your reason rebels against it, you will serve the cause by seceding and educating the people along your own lines. That would be straight, brave and stimulating, in that the people will learn to appraise the value of different methods. You will cause confusion by preaching from the Congress platform anything contrary to the official programme, especially when the whole organization becomes like an army. It matters little whether one person offers civil disobedi-ence or many. The rest have to render such support as they may be called upon to do.'

The plan is simply this. Direct action will be commenced by Shri Vinoba Bhave and for the time being confined to him only. And since it is to be confined to individual civil disobedience and that too of him only, it will be so conducted by him as to exclude others directly or indirectly. But since it is concerned with freedom of speech, the public will be involved to an extent. It is open to them either to listen to him or not.

But much will depend upon what the Government wish to do. In spite of all attempt to confine civil disobedience to individuals and for the moment to one only, they can precipitate a crisis by making it a

[1] From October 11 to 13

crime to listen to him or read anything written by him. But I think and believe that they do not want to invite any trouble, though they hold themselves in readiness to cope with every trouble that may face them.

I have discussed with Shri Vinoba various plans so as to avoid all unnecessary friction or risks. The idea is to make all action as strictly non-violent as is humanly possible. One man's violence, veiled or open, cannot go beyond a certain limit, but within that limit it would be effective. One man's non-violent action would be despised and ridiculed by the non-believer in it. In truth, while the effect of a given violent action can be reduced to mathematical terms, that of non-violent action defies all calculation and has been known to falsify many that have been hazarded. How far I shall be able to present an example of unadulterated non-violence remains to be seen.

Who is Vinoba Bhave and why has he been selected? He is an undergraduate having left college after my return to India in 1915[1]. He is a Sanskrit scholar. He joined the Ashram[2] almost at its inception. He was among the first members. In order to better qualify himself he took one year's leave to prosecute further studies in Sanskrit. And, practically at the same hour at which he had left the Ashram a year before, he walked into it without notice. I had forgotten that he was due to arrive that day. He has taken part in every menial activity of the Ashram from scavenging to cooking. Though he has a marvellous memory and is a student by nature, he has devoted the largest part of his time to spinning in which he has specialized as very few have. He believes in universal spinning being the central activity which will remove the poverty in the villages and put life into their deadness. Being a born teacher he has been of the utmost assistance to Ashadevi[3] in her development of the scheme of education through handicrafts. Shri Vinoba has produced a text-book taking spinning as the handicraft. It is original in conception. He has made scoffers realize that spinning is the handicraft *par excellence* which lends itself to being effectively used for basic education. He has revolutionized *takli*-spinning and drawn out its hitherto unknown possibilities. For perfect spinning probably he has no rival in all India.

He has abolished every trace of untouchability from his heart. He believes in communal unity with the same passion that I have. In

[1] The source, however, has "1916".
[2] On June 7, 1916
[3] Ashadevi Aryanayakam

order to know the best mind of Islam he gave one year to the study of the Koran in the original. He therefore learnt Arabic. He found this study necessary for cultivating a living contact with the Muslims living in his neighbourhood.

He has an army of disciples and workers who would rise to any sacrifice at his bidding. He is responsible for producing a young man[1] who has dedicated himself to the service of lepers. Though an utter stranger to medicine this worker has by singular devotion mastered the method of treatment of lepers and is now running several clinics for their care. Hundreds owe their cure to his labours. He has now published a handbook in Marathi for the treatment of lepers. Vinoba was for years Director of the Mahila Ashram in Wardha. His devotion to the cause of *Daridranarayana* took him first to a village near Wardha, and now he has gone still further and lives in Paunar, five miles from Wardha, from where he has established contact with villages through the disciples he has trained.

He believes in the necessity of the political independence of India. He is an accurate student of history. But he believes that real independence of the villagers is impossible without the constructive programme of which khadi is the centre. He believes that the charkha is the most suitable outward symbol of non-violence which has become an integral part of his life. He has taken an active part in the previous satyagraha campaigns. He has never been in the limelight on the political platform. With many co-workers he believes that silent constructive work with civil disobedience in the background is far more effective than the already heavily crowded political platform. And he thoroughly believes that non-violent resistance is impossible without a heart-belief in and practice of constructive work.

Vinoba is an out-and-out war resister. But he respects equally with his own the conscience of those who, whilst not being out and-out war resisters, have yet strong conscientious objection to participation in the present war. Though Vinoba represents both the types, I may want to select another who will represent only one type, namely, conscientious objection to participation in the present war.

It was necessary to introduce Vinoba at length to the public in order to justify my choice. This will perhaps be the last civil disobedience struggle which I shall have conducted. Naturally I would

[1] Manohar Divan

want it to be as flawless as it can be. Moreover the Congress has declared that it will avoid all avoidable embarrassment to the Government consistently with its own existence. For that reason too I had to strive to produce the highest quality irrespective of quantity.

But Vinoba must fail, as I must, if we do not represent the Congress, let alone the whole nation. And we shall certainly not represent either if they do not give us full-hearted co-operation which is ceaseless prosecution of the constructive programme. It is not vocal co-operation that is required. It is co-operation in work that is needed. The signs of such co-operation will be phenomenal progress in spinning, complete disappearance of untouchability, an increasing friendliness between communities, and an increasing sense of justice in every walk of life. Unless rock-bottom justice and equality pervade society, surely there is no non-violent atmosphere. Above all there should be no civil disobedience but what is sanctioned by me. This is peremptory obligation binding on every Congressman. If it is disregarded, there is no co-operation. The representative character belonging to Vinoba and me is then challenged. And I can say with confidence that, if the full-hearted co-operation I want is forthcoming, not only will the issue of freedom of speech be decided in our favour but we shall have gone very near independence. Let those who will, take me at my word. They will have lost nothing and will find that they had contributed greatly to the movement of freedom through truthful and non-violent means.

Let me repeat the issue. On the surface it is incredibly narrow—the right to preach against war as war or participation in the present war. Both are matters of conscience for those who hold either view. Both are substantial rights. Their exercise can do no harm to the British if their pretension that to all intents and purposes India is an independent country is at all true. If India is very much a dependency in fact as it is in law, whatever the British get from India can never be regarded as voluntary, it must be regarded as impressed. This battle of life and death cannot be won by impressed levies, however large. They may win if they have the moral backing of an India truly regarded as free. Non-violent Congress cannot wish ill to Britain. Nor can it help her through arms since it seeks to gain her own freedom not through arms but through unadulterated non-violence. And the Congress vanishes if, at the crucial moment, it suppresses itself for fear of consequences or otherwise by ceasing to preach non-violence through

non-violent means. So when we probe the issue deep enough we discover that it is a matter of life and death for us. If we vindicate that right, all is well with us. If we do not, all is lost. We cannot then win swaraj through non-violent means.

I know that India has not one mind. There is a part of India that is war-minded and will learn the art of war through helping the British. The Congress has no desire, therefore, to surround ammunition factories or barracks and prevent people from doing what they like. We want to tell the people of India that, if they will win swaraj through non-violent means, they may not co-operate militarily with Britain in the prosecution of the war.

This right of preaching against participation in the war is being denied to us, and we have to fight against the denial. Therefore, while that right will be exercised only by those whom I may select for the purpose, all the other activities of the Congress will continue as before unless the Government interfere with them.

A question has been asked why, if I attach so much importance to quality, I do not offer civil resistance myself. I have already said that unlike as on previous occasions I do not wish to do so for the very good reason that my imprisonment is likely to cause greater embarrassment to the authorities than anything else the Congress can do. I want also to remain outside to cope with any contingency that may arise. My going to jail may be interpreted as a general invitation to all Congressmen to follow suit. They will not easily distinguish between my act and speech. Lastly, I do not know how things will shape. I myself do not know the next step. I do not know the Government plan. I am a man of faith. My reliance is solely on God. One step is enough for me. The next He will make clear to me when the time for it comes. And who knows that I shall not be an instrument for bringing about peace not only between Britain and India but also between the warring nations of the earth. This last wish will not be taken for vanity by those who believe that my faith is not a sham but a reality greater than the fact that I am penning these lines.

SEVAGRAM, October 15, 1940

Harijan, 20-10-1940

291. A BRITISH ENDORSEMENT

Mr. Stephen J. Thorne, Secretary to the Society of Friends, sends me the following letter:

> We, a group of friends, want to send you our deep gratitude for your impressive appeal[1] to every Briton to adopt the way of non-violence and bring about a cessation of hostilities. We drew together immediately on receiving the short version of your statement, and were later able to obtain a fuller text.
>
> You have received through the Viceroy the response of the British Government to your proffer of help, a response that from your knowledge of the situation you will easily understand. To most Britons the call to throw down their arms in a moment of supreme national peril and in face of imminent aggression is indistinguishable from cowardice and treason[2]; it is an invitation to save their lives by the surrender of principles of liberty and justice that are dearer than life itself. But to those of us who in the peace movement share your faith in non-violence, you present a tremendous challenge. Few of us are fully prepared to stand up to it; and we are conscious of our own failure to convince our fellow countrymen of the value and practicability of this "more excellent way". The technique of non-violent resistance as you have practised it is little understood in the West, especially in its positive and reconciling sense; and for that reason apart from any other, your appeal has not yet met with any wide response.
>
> Though the British Government's reply must have been disappointing, we are anxious to make full use of your offered help. Your appeal gave expression to a spirit that is moving, we are certain, in the hearts of men all over the world. We believe that it would be a step forward if you were willing to address a further message to certain of the spiritual leaders of the world, urging them to act together in taking hold of the situation before the winter brings fresh disaster.
>
> We hope you will maintain the closest contact with us, sending direct the full text of anything you may say in the days ahead.
>
> *Your friends sincerely,*

HORACE G. ALEXANDER	PERCY W. BARTLETT
ANNA BIDDER	W. MAUDE BRAYSHAW
ROBERT DAVIS	A. RUTH FRY
CARL HEATH	ELIZABETH FOX HOWARD
JAMES H. HUDSON	FRANCIS E. POLLARD
J. CUTHBERT WIGHAM	ALEXANDER C. WILSON

[1] *Vide* "To Every Briton"

[2] The source has "reason", evidently a misprint.

PS.

The Council of Christian Pacifist Groups associates itself with this letter, and looks forward to all early opportunity of discussing the deep issues involved.

I am thankful to the signatories for their support of my appeal. I can assure them that immediately I see the psychological moment, I shall act up to the signatories' expectation that I should address the spiritual leaders of the world. It is quite evident that the very thoroughness of the Nazi method makes them think that nothing but counter-violence can check the terror. I have suggested that counter-violence can only result in further brutalization of human nature. Drastic diseases require drastic remedies. In this instance nothing but non-violence can cure Nazi violence.

SEVAGRAM, October 16, 1940

Harijan, 20-10-1940

292. TWO POINTS OF VIEW

The publication of the correspondence between the Mayor of Bombay and H. E. the Governor, on the behaviour of the troops from Australia and New Zealand is proof of the fact that the Mayor lost no time in writing to H. E. the Governor, nor did the latter in responding to the Mayor's warning.[1] It is also a striking illustration of the same thing appearing contrariwise when looked at from different angles of vision. The English mind excuses in soldiers many things which would be inexcusable in an ordinary citizen. In India the soldier is regarded as a nuisance to be tolerated. His pranks are hardly appreciated. It is, therefore, a matter of pity that the paragraph defending the behaviour complained of should have found place in a letter which is otherwise admirable as showing prompt attention to the Mayor's studiously courteous and temperate letter. The sheaf of correspondence received by me does not show that my correspondents took the behaviour lightly. The girls who came in for the attention of the troops were too pure not to resent the molestation which fell to their lot. I have never been able to understand why the

[1] *Vide* also "Disgraceful if True", 87 and 96-7.

art of killing should receive indulgence which men going through harder trails than soldiers never claim nor receive.

SEVAGRAM, October 16, 1940

Harijan, 20-10-1940

293. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

October 16, 1940

In answer to the question, how the present movement would differ from the Salt Satyagraha[1] and, particularly, whether his anxiety not to embarrass the British Government would be the major or even the governing factor in his calculations, Gandhiji replied:

It will be the prime factor in every one of my calculations.

Gandhiji was next asked if he had at he back of his mind the sense of contrast between India and the Dominions, where General Hertzog[2] and Mr. De Valera[3] could preach neutrality or opposition to participation in war but were still free, Gandhiji said:

Of course the contrast is painful, so much so that every time British declarations are tested, they prove valueless.

In reply to a question whether there was any significance in the fact that he had waited until after the Viceroy had rejected the Poona offer and whether he was leading both types of Congressmen, those who agreed with Gandhiji that all wars were violations of the principle of non-violence, and those who thought that the rejection of the idea of a National Government compelled them to oppose participation in this war, Gandhiji observed:

There is no significance in it so far as I am concerned, but I am representing both types.

While civil disobedience will proceed on the lines laid down by him, Gandhiji said that the rank and file of Congressmen would concentrate on the constructive programme and absolutely no relaxation in this work was contemplated by him. Referring to his premonition about another fast, Gandhiji said:

Under what circumstances and on what occasion I shall resort to it I do not know. In saying this, I have no mental reservations. I want

[1] Of March 12, 1930

[2] James B. M. Hertzog, Prime Minister of South Africa, 1924-1939

[3] Eamon De Valera, Prime Minister of Ireland, who later became the President

to avoid fast.[1]

Regarding the charge of inconsistency between his attitude at the commencement of the war and now, he stated that he had already made[2] this point clear. He said:

It is a different position which faces me now and it would be illogical to ask that the Congress must perform *hara-kiri*.

Freedom would be used to give moral support to Britain, India would want Britain to succeed—a Britain which has played the game by India.

Never, he emphasized, would there be the slightest interference with those who want to give Britain active support.

The Hindu, 17-10-1940

294. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

October 17, 1940

PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY
VICEROY'S CAMP

I OBSERVE THAT CENSORS HAVE BEGUN TO REMOVE FROM MY PRESS STATEMENTS SENTENCES WHICH THEY CONSIDER OBJECTIONABLE. I DO NOT KNOW WHETHER THIS IS PART OF POLICY LAID DOWN FROM CENTRE OR MERE LOCAL ACTION. I CANNOT ISSUE ANYTHING WHICH MIGHT BE MUTILATED WITHOUT MY CONSENT. DANGER IS OBVIOUS. REMOVAL OF KEY WORDS OR SENTENCES MAY ALTER WHOLE MEANING. IF MUTILATION OF STATEMENTS IS CONSIDERED NECESSARY IN DUE COURSE PERHAPS IT WILL BE EXTENDED TO "HARIJAN" WRITINGS. IF IT IS POSSIBLE TO KNOW GOVERNMENT POLICY DEFINITELY I CAN SHAPE MY COURSE ACCORDINGLY. I CAN CONTINUE MY WRITINGS ONLY IF I AM UNHAMPERRED.

[1] The report said that Gandhiji added this sentence "after a moment's reflection".

[2] *Vide* "Interview to "The News Chronicle", 18-9-1940

SHALL ESTEEM EARLY REPLY.[1]

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7851. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

295. TELEGRAM TO RUIKER AND OTHERS[2]

October 17, 1940

ARE YOU QUALIFIED? DO YOU BELIEVE IN CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMMES ?

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan M. Desai

296. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

October 17, 1940

CHI. AMALA,

I got a letter from you after a long time. Why do you keep indifferent health? The asthma must be cured. Do you take any treatment?

Blessings from

BAPU

MARGARETE SPIEGEL

COLABA

BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] In his reply dated October 19, the addressee said: "Thank you for your telegram of October 17. I postponed reply until reaching Delhi today. I have confirmed from departments here that no orders have been issued regarding censorship of your Press statements."

[2] According to Mahadev Desai, this was sent in reply to telegram from R. S. Ruiker, President, All-India Forward Bloc, Patwardhan and Khandekar, who had sought Gandhiji's permission to launch individual satyagraha.

297. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

October 17, 1940

CHI. KANCHAN,

I have your letter. You will be fully restored to health in a few days. Write to me regularly. Tell Sushilabehn[1] everything about yourself. Tell her also about all your worries.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8280. Also C.W. 7104. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

298. LETTER TO SAILENDRA NATH CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 18, 1940

DEAR SAILENDRA,

If you can without any harm to the A.I.S.A. be relieved, you should come here and I shall see what can be done for you. There is a commercial college, too, in Wardha where you can qualify if necessary. You should be in a position to earn decently. But you should rise on the strength of your own merits.

Yours,

BAPU

SHRI SAILENDRA CHATTERJEE
E 76 COLLEGE STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: C.W. 10166. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[1] Dr. Sushila Nayyar

299. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SEVAGRAM,
October 18, 1940

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. Women certainly do have a place.[1] But I do not know where this struggle will take me and the country. Everything is in God's hands.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10412. Also C.W. 6851. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

300. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

October 18, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I am glad you wrote. I continue to get news about Kanchan. She is being looked after well. Half of her food is sent by Sushila from home and half she gets from the hospital. There is no cause at all for worry. If you want to write to her brother, you may. He will stay somewhere and visit her whenever he wishes. I personally do not think that anyone need go. But if you wish, you may go. Sushilabehn is a member of the family and a responsible person. About the Punjab there is nothing to worry about. I forgot completely about Kunvarji. I had said that on the basis of what you yourself had told me. You had a suspicion at one time that his company might do harm.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8527. Also C.W. 7103. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] The addressee had asked whether women had a place in the individual satyagraha.

301. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 19, 1940

CHI. SHARMA,

There is a vast difference between the present civil disobedience and the earlier ones. It may hardly be necessary to call any other volunteer[1]. Your name is already with me. But you need not make any special preparation. You may carry on as if no one was to be called. Everyone should engage himself in constructive work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 290 and 291

302. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 20, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I am exceedingly obliged to you for your telegram[2].

I had hoped that the instructions issued were merely local. Since sending you my telegram I have had further news that News Agencies had been informed that they were not to distribute my messages directly as they have done hitherto, but that all such messages were to be sent to headquarters at Delhi for censorship before they were distributed.

I also send you herewith a copy of notices received by registered publications. I should like to keep the public informed of the development of individual civil disobedience which is being carried on under my strict supervision. In view of the notice, I dread to send anything for printing to the local printing Press, for if I did

[1] After Vinoba Bhave, who began the individual civil disobedience on October 17, 1940

[2] This was from the Private Secretary to the Viceroy; *vide* footnote 1, "Telegram to Ruiker and Others", 17-10-1940

send anything and the order were accepted, the local printing Press, which is purely a commercial concern, may come in for penalty. For the same reason I have hesitated to send any public statement. My chief motive in sending such statements would be to regularize the movement so as to ensure unadulterated non-violence. Up to now the response has been fully up to expectation. I was not certain about the Trade Union Congress. But its President who came to see me has assured me that no strike of a political nature will be resorted to without my consent.

Shri Vinoba Bhave's addresses are from the highest plane.[1] I have been sending Mahadev Desai to follow him and give me a full report of what he says. He is a strict disciplinarian and therefore will carry out most difficult instructions. His first extempore speech was not as I would have delivered it. Living in seclusion he had not followed closely the correspondence between us. He had, therefore, put the worst construction on it. I immediately sent him instructions that our code was to put the most favourable construction on the opponent's language. He accepted the correction and made the earliest amends by making a public admission. And his address of yesterday was unexceptionable. His main work, whilst he is free, will be to emphasize the necessity of the constructive programme and not to bother about civil disobedience (which will, for the moment, be confined to himself) being offered by others. All this development I would like Congressmen and the public at large to know. It is an education in courteous and non-violent conduct. And although we are 'at war' with each other we might observe the law which I claim specially belongs to the human species. But I know that the decision rests with you. I can only plead.[2]

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7582. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] According to *The Indian Annual Register, 1940,* "Note on the grivances of the British Indians in South Africa", 22-9-1896 , on October 17, 1740, Vinoba Bhave, in his address to about 300 persons in Panam, said: "The Congress would not on ethical grounds help Great Britain in her war effort. He wondered why Great Britain claimed to fight democracy, which she denied to India."

[2] For the Viceroy's reply, *vide* "Letter from Lord Linlithhgow", 24-10-1940

303. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 20, 1940

CHI. MIRA,

I have your big and good letter. Yes, I have started civil disobedience. It is confined only to Vinoba at present I do not court imprisonment. Vinoba still remains free. If you will like me to give you news, I will. I won't tempt you nor disturb you. It is all well with you.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABEHN
PALAMPUR
KANGRA DISTRICT
PUNJAB

From the original: C.W. 6462. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10057

304. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 20, 1940

BHAI AMRITLAL,

Why need I ask Soni Ramji now? You yourself may discuss the matter with him and do what you can.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6317

305. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

October 19/21, 1940

CHI. KANCHAN,

Do you worry there, too? You are in your home there. You must return from there only after you are cured. Write to me, not to Munnalal, about whatever is weighing on your mind. Ultimately Munnalal has to get everything done through me. I am sending you

Munnalal's letter as it is. About Jagadishlal it is as I told you. You must shed all suspicion and fear. Keep cheerful. Stop worrying. Do not think about the future. Have faith that everything will be all right. Write to me regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

October 21, 1940

I got your letter today. You are bound to get well. Even if you have to stay there a little longer, isn't it your home? Vinoba has been sentenced to three months imprisonment.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8279. Also C.W. 7105. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

306. TELEGRAM TO LORD LINLITHGOW

WARDHA,

Express *October 21, 1940*

"HARIJAN" HAS RECEIVED NOTICE[1] DATED 18TH THAT NOTHING CONNECTED WITH VINOBA'S SATYAGRAHA MAY BE PUBLISHED WITHOUT PREVIOUS REFERENCE CHIEF PRESS ADVISER DELHI. THIS I VENTURE SAY IS SERIOUS INTERFERENCE WITH LIBERTY OF PRESS. I HOPE THIS DOES NOT REPRESENT CONSIDERED POLICY GOVERNMENT OF INDIA. I BASE MY HOPE ON YOUR KIND WIRE OF 19TH TO WHICH I HAVE REPLIED BY LETTER[2].

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7853. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] For the text, *vide* "Statement to the Press",24-10-1940

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 20-10-1940. The Viceroy's reply to the telegram read: "Your telegram of 21st. I have ascertained from Home Department that instructions issued to *Harijan* and to all other papers were not mandatory but advisory as indicated in a letter received with your letter of 20th October to which I am replying separately, object in view being interest of editors as publication of prejudicial reports will render them liable to prosecution under Defence Rule 38."

307. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHAGANJ,
October 21, 1940

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
FYZABAD

VINOBA ARRESTED EARLY MORNING. TRIAL TODAY. THINKING NEXT STEP.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1940. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

308. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

October 21, 1940

Mr. Vinoba Bhave was arrested after three this morning. This was to be expected. I have not advised hartal but have not discouraged spontaneous closing of shops. I could not for instance disregard the wishes of managers of the numerous institutions of Wardha which bear Mr. Vinoba's indelible impress. No suspension of work would take place without the willing consent of employers. Congressmen should not be impatient about the next step. Every imprisonment in individual civil disobedience is a complete step in itself. The plan this time is not to have a continuous stream of resisters. I am making note of names that are sent to me. But senders should not suspend their normal activities. There is little chance of my calling them. I am not going to invite anyone who does not believe in spinning and khaddar as visible emblems of non-violence and removal of the last trace of untouchability and establishment of communal unity as obvious symbols of non-violence. Nor will all such who are so equipped be necessarily invited. The question before me is not whom to send next but to know how the millions react to his imprisonment. How many does he represent? Those who hug untouchability and regard communal unity as impossible or who believe neither in the charkha nor in the other village industries and, therefore, in the regeneration of the six hundred thousand villages—for such Mr. Vinoba is of no use. In their estimation he must be a hindrance to the political, economic and social advance of India. And yet without the Congress vindicating its elementary right of preaching non-violence at this crucial hour there will be no independence for India. Britain's claim to fight for

democracy is being shattered at every step. There is no democracy in India. Indians remain, in the words of an Englishman, what they have always been—helots of empire. But success in the non-violent Congress fight for freedom must mean success for real democracy throughout the world. It must mean freedom for the Europeans in Europe and for all the non-white races of the earth. Such success must not be a camouflage. It must be the clearest possible demonstration of non-violence. The result aimed at is extraordinary. The remedy, too, must, therefore, be equally extraordinary. It is for Congressmen to show now by their action whether they believe in the non-violent method as I have placed it before them and whether they will act up to their belief.

The Hitavada, 23-10-1940

309. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
October 21, 1940

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

So Vinoba has been fixed up. His four days' ministry has been quite successful from my point of view.

I am issuing a note[1] which you will see. Professor[2] telephoned saying you were ready. I have seen your statement too. I would still like to ask you whether you can see anything to commend itself to you in all I am writing and doing. I would not like you to go in merely as a disciplinarian. My present conception requires those who believe in the plan—not in every detail but in the main. *Verb. sap.*

Drop me a wire[3] if you can.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1940. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, p. 443

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] J. B. Kripalani, General Secretary of the Congress

[3] In his telegram dated October 24, Jawaharlal Nehru said: "Your letter. Agree generally."

310. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM,
October 21, 1940

This is why I have written[1] to Sailen. If he comes here I can do something for him, and the family in Calcutta may be well provided for. You may send Rs. 20 now. But the rest will depend upon Sailen's decision.

From a photostat: C.W. 1451. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

311. LETTER SO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 21, 1940

CHI. BRIJKISAN,

I got your letter. I am not planning the sort of satyagraha that you imagine. If I undertake a fast, then you can come although your duty will be to remain engrossed in constructive work. When, if at all, there will be a fast, I have not the least idea.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2479

312. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 22, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

Herewith I send you a copy of a wire received from Alwar.

> Najim Thanedar publicly injured me seriously forcibly realizing war funds. Paid 251 mortgaging grand-daughter's ornaments. Population terrorized. Pray intervene. Jaharia Mahajan Padmara, Mundawar, Alwar State.

I take it that it makes no difference in the charge of 'under

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sailendra Nath Chatterjee", 18-10-1940

pressure' whether it is exercised in the British part of India or the States part.[1]

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

313. LETTER TO CHARU CHANDRA BHANDARI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 22, 1940

DEAR CHARU BABU,

I have read your scheme. You should confine yourself to Dhanush *takli*. The money you should raise locally. This you will get as your work advances. If I began to find funds for all enterprises —very worthy—I should be overwhelmed. And it would be a mushroom growth. Never mind if you have to wait a bit but rely upon your own ability to command credit or come directly under the Charkha Sangh.

Yours,

BAPU

SHRI CHARU CHANDRA BHANDARI
DIRECTOR, KHADI MANDIR
DIAMOND HARBOUR
24 PARGANAS, BENGAL

From a photostat: G.N. 8697. Also C.W . 1467

314. NOTE TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM,
October 22, 1940

Let him have it all if he wants it. Ask him how he felt after the large quantity he had in the morning.

[1] The Private Secretary to the Viceroy replied on receipt of another letter of the kind from Gandhiji; *vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow" 4-11-1940.

Let him write under this or better still take someone who can hear S[ailendra] and t[ake] down what he says.

From a photostat: C.W. 1452. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

315. LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 22, 1940

CHI. MAGAN,

I have your letter. If you fail now, resign yourself to your fate giving up your craze for examination; get absorbed in work. The knowledge you have gained will not go waste.

It is not good that Manjula[1] should repeatedly get fever. Come after she is well. After the 15th November, it will be quite cool here. Tell Urmila[2] to write to me. She must be fine. How is Ratilal[3]? Do something for him. There was a letter from him saying that he wanted to come here and clear up the matter with Prabhashankar[4]. I have written to him advising him to have patience. On the other hand Champa[5] writes to say that he borrows money on interest from the Pathans.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MAGANLAL PRANJIVANDAS MEHTA
BRAJ BHAVAN, BRIDGE ELLIS
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 1608. Courtesy: Manjulabehn M. Mehta

316. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

October 22, 1940

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I got your letter and the roll of cloth. I have gone through the

[1] Ratilal's wife
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*
[4] Addressee's wife, daughter and brother
[5] *ibid*

figures. They are promising. Hard work always pays. Give my congratulations to all those who have contributed to the work. Gangabehn[1] has explained everything to me in detail. Use whatever yarn and money you have collected for me for the khadi work there. Suryachandra[2] found everything strange here for a day or two. Now he is happy.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

VALLABH VIDYALAYA

BOCHASAN

BORSAD TALUKA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9519. Also C.W. 436. Courtesy: Shivabhai G. Patel

317. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

October 22, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Once the money that you have is spent, both of you will be free from worries. At present consciously or unconsciously you depend on it. The contentment and happiness you can enjoy when you have no money, you will know only from experience. Then also Kanchan will get the same treatment she is getting today. Need I say anything about you? Have no worry, therefore.

The *Harijan* file is of course round my neck. But you are not in a hurry. Whatever is received has to be read.

You yourself have to find your work here. Pyarelal certainly needs you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8526. Also C.W. 7106. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Gangabehn Vaidya

[2] Addressee's son

318. TELEGRAM TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

WARDHA,
October 23, 1940

GURUDEV
DWARKANATH TAGORE LANE
CALCUTTA

THANK GOD YOU ARE OUT OF DANGER.[1] IF IT WOULD ADD TO YOUR RAPID CONVALESCENCE I GIVE YOU NEWS THAT NEVER A DAY HAS PASSED BUT I HAVE THOUGHT OF ANDREWS MEMORIAL. I WON'T REST TILL COLLECTIONS COME IN AS THEY OUGHT. AM BIDING MY TIME. LOVE.

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10288

319. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[2]

WARDHA,
October 24, 1940

On the 18th instant the Editor of *Harijan* received the following notice from the District Magistrate's Office, Poona:

> I am directed by Government to advise you that no account of incidents leading up to satyagraha by Vinoba Bhave and no report of his speeches or any subsequent developments should be published without previous reference to the Chief Press Adviser, Delhi.
>
> I would like to bring to your notice that this is in your own interest to avoid prosecution under Rule 38 of the Defence of India Rules.

Thereupon I entered into correspondence[3] with H. E. the Viceroy. Correspondence is still going on. But it is necessary for me to take a decision today for, if I did not, there my be waste of public money. In view of the reply hitherto received, I have no course left

[1] *Vide* also "To Satyagrahis"
[2] This appeared under the title "Why Suspension."
[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to Viceroy", 17-10-1940 and "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 20-10-1940

open but to suspend publication of *Harijan, Harijanbandhu* and *Harijan Sevak*. I cannot function freely if I have to send to the Press Adviser at New Delhi every line I write about satyagraha. It is true that the notice is only advisory, and that therefore I am not bound to act up to it. But the consequence of disregard of advice is also stated in the notice. I have no desire to risk a prosecution against the Editors. The three weeklies have been conducted in the interest of truth and therefore of all parties concerned. But I cannot serve that interest if the editing has to be done under threat of prosecution. Liberty of the Press is a dear privilege, apart from the advisability or otherwise of civil disobedience. The Government have shown their intention clearly by the prosecution of Shri Vinoba Bhave. I have no complaint to make against the prosecution. It was an inevitable result of the Defence of India Rules. But the liberty of the Press stands on a different footing. I am unable to reconcile myself to the notice which although in the nature of advice, is in reality an order whose infringement will carry its own consequence.

I am sorry to have to disappoint the numerous readers of the three weeklies. Next week I shall be able to let the public know whether it is to be merely a suspension or an indefinite stopping of the three weeklies. I shall still hope that it will be merely a suspension and that my fear will prove to be groundless. But should it prove otherwise, I may inform the public that satyagraha is independent of Press advertisement. If it is real, it carries with it its own momentum; and I believe the present satyagraha to be very real. It will go on. I will not be provoked into any hasty action. I am still not ready with the next move. But as I have said in my previous statement[1], every act of civil disobedience is complete in itself. This Press notice shows how effective it has been. Every act of repression adds strength to the reality. Satyagraha thrives on repression till at last the repressor is tired of it and the object of satyagraha is gained. Whether, therefore, I take the next step or not and when I take it, is a matter of no consequence to the public. Let those who sympathize with it follow implicitly the instructions I have issued. I believe, and my belief has been tested repeatedly, that thought deliberately thought and controlled is a power greater than speech or writing and any day greater than steam which is husbanded and controlled. We see the latter every day carrying incredible weights even across steep precipices. Thought-power

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 21-10-1940

overcomes much greater obstacles and easily carries greater weights. But let me give a practical hint to the non-believer in the power of thought husbanded and controlled. Let everyone become his own walking newspaper and carry the good news from mouth to mouth. This does not mean what boys used to do in the past, viz., trumpeting about of bits of news. The idea here is of my telling my neighbour what I have authentically heard. This no Government can overtake or suppress. It is the cheapest newspaper yet devised and it defies the wit of Government, however clever it may be. Let these walking newspapers be sure of the news they give. They should not indulge in any idle gossip. They should make sure of the source of information, and they will find that the public gets all the information that they need without opening their morning newspaper which, they should know, will contain garbled, one-sided information and therefore not worth the trouble of reading. For it may be that even the public statements such as I am now issuing may also be stopped. It is the condition of life under an autocratic Government, whether foreign or indigenous.

Harijan, 10-11-1940

320. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
October 24, 1940

DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I was glad to have your wire[1]. If my statement[2] has been allowed, you will have seen it before this.

If you are ready, you may now ceremonially declare your civil disobedience. I would suggest your choosing a village for your audience. I do not suppose they will allow you to repeat your speech. They were not ready with their plans so far as Vinoba was concerned. But should they let you free I suggest your following the plan[3] laid down for Vinoba. But if you feel otherwise, you will follow your own course. Only I would like you to give me your programme. You will fix your own date so as to leave me time for announcing the date and

[1] *Vide* footnote 3, "Leter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 21-10-1940
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] *Vide* "Civil Disobedience"

place. It may be that they won't let you even fulfil your very first programme. I am prepared for every such step on the part of the Government. Whilst I would make use of every legitimate method seeking publicity for our programme, my reliance is on regulated thought producing its own effect. If this is hard for you to believe, I would ask you to suspend judgment and watch results. I know you will yourself be patient and ask our people on your side to do likewise. I know what strain you are bearing in giving me your loyalty. I prize it beyond measure. I hope it will be found to have been well-placed, for it is 'do or die'. There is no turning back. Our case is invulnerable. There is no giving in. Only I must be allowed to go my way in demonstrating the power of non-violence when it is unadulterated.

Maulana Saheb telephoned saying I should choose another man for the second satyagraha. I told him I could not do so if you consented to come in.

I would like your reaction to the step I have taken regarding *Harijan*.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1940. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, pp. 443-4

321. LETTER TO KISANSINH CHAVDA

October 24, 1940

BHAI KISANSINH,

I have your letter. When did you become free? Please write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KISANSINH CHAVDA

PARDESI MOHOLLO

MADAN JHANPA ROAD

BARODA

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9939. Courtesy: Kisansinh Chavda

322. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

October 24, 1940

BAPA,

Your hastily written and unrevised letter is nonetheless perfect. Your handwriting, even when you write in haste, is as clear as Mahadev's. Your descriptions also are pleasing.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1185

323. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

[After *October 24, 1940*][2]

Q. Will Government's ban on reports of anti-war meeting lead to any revision in the plan of individual civil disobedience?

A. There is likely to be some revision but it will be all in the direction of stiffening non-violence.

You have said[3] that each Indian should be "his own walking paper". Don't you feel that the ban may only give currency to exaggerated rumours ? How do you propose obviating this ?

If the people do not catch the spirit of my advice, there will undoubtedly be exaggerated rumours and I confess that I have no control over all without exception, and exceptions, however few they may be, can easily upset the apple-cart. I have no method for obviating the exaggeration. The Government should be held solely responsible for mishaps that may arise out of their complete black-out by their Press-gagging ordinance. It seems to me they are outdoing Nazism.

Do you propose obeying the ban?

I have no intention of defying the ban. Have I not, anticipated it by suspending the publication of the three weeklies controlled by me? Civil disobedience as conceived this time is of an extraordinary nature designed to meet an extraordinary situation.

[1] D. G. Tendulkar explains that the questions were received from "Frank Moraes on behalf of *The News Chronicle*, London".

[2] From the reference to the suspension of "the three weeklies" by Gandhiji; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 24-10-1940

[3] *Vide*"Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 24-10-1940

What is your reaction to this ban? It is said, the language of the ban is taken from similar restrictive orders in Great Britain. Is that any justification ?

My reaction to the ban is that the Government have over-reached themselves. Language of the ban may be borrowed from Great Britain but how can they borrow the conditions operating in Great Britain? In Great Britain it is people's rule, the Constitution is in full working order. In India it is one man's rule who is responsible to nobody in India. The contrast between the two is staggering. It is defiance of all propriety to copy the language which may be quite proper for Britain but which is quite improper for India. It is like imposing on India in mid-summer the British fur-coat of mid-winter.

From a facsimile: *Mahatma, Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi,* Vol. 6, between pp. 8 and 9

324. TELEGRAM TO LORD LINLITHGOW

WARDHA,
October 25, 1940

H. E. VICEROY
NEW DELHI

THANKS FOR WIRE[1] OF 24TH. IT HAS COME AS PAINFUL SURPRISE. ADVICE WHOSE REJECTION MAY INVOLVE PENALTY IS VERY LIKE MANDATE. AS MERE ADVICE NOTICE WAS SUPERFLUOUS. EVERY EDITOR IS PRESUMED TO KNOW LAW UNDER WHICH HE EDITS HIS PAPER. IN CIRCUMSTANCES I HAVE BEEN RELUCTANTLY OBLIGED TO SUSPEND PUBLICATION OF THREE PAPERS FOR WHICH I AM RESPONSIBLE. I HAVE ISSUED PRESS STATEMENT[2] WHICH IF NOT CENSORED YOU WILL HAVE SEEN. SUSPENSION WILL BE WITHDRAWN IF I AM LEFT SCOPE FOR RESUMING PUBLICATION. HAVE NO DESIRE PUBLISH WEEKLIES UNLESS YOUR GOVERNMENT APPRECIATE THAT

[1] *Vide* footnote 2, "Telegram to Lord Linlithgow", 21-10-1940
[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 24-10-1940

THEY ARE FRIENDLY NOTWITHSTANDING THEIR FEARLESS CRITICISM AND EVEN ADVOCACY CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE.

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7854 a. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

325. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
October 25, 1940

J. NEHRU
ANAND BHAWAN
ALLAHABAD

LETTER[1] POSTED TODAY.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1940. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

326. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

October 25, 1940

BHAI VITHALDAS,

I have your letter about the Meerut Ashram. I am trying to stabilize the Ashram. I hope I shall succeed. Tell Vaid not to give up his trade entirely. Let him master the science of spinning and desist from unnecessary suppression of the body. His body should be vigorous.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VITALDAS JERAJANI
A.I.S.A. KHADI BHANDAR
396 KALBADEVI
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9797

[1] Dated October 24; *vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 24-10-1940

327. LETTER TO SYED ABDUL LATIF

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 26, 1940

DEAR DR. LATIF,

I have read with attention your outline[1] which you kindly sent me. I can offer no useful criticism as my objection holds good the same way as when I raised it to your first scheme. The underlying idea is repugnant to me. For me India is one indivisible. I believe in a blending of cultures, not in their being kept in water-tight compartments. It should be enough for you to know that I am open to conviction and that you are free to convert me to your view.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

328. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

October 26, 1940

CHI. KANCHAN,

I have your letter. I am glad that you are on the rails again. I am quite certain that you will get well soon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8278. Also C.W. 7107. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

329. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 26, 1940

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I liked your article very much. I gave it to Krishnadas. His reply is not as good. You may, however, read it and reply to it when you

[1] According to *The Indian Annual Register*, 1940, Vol. I, p. 117, the addressee, ex-professor of English in the Osmania University, had in his pamphlet "The Cultural Future of India" elaborated the theme that "Islam and Hinduism stand asunder", and on this finding built up his scheme of "Hindu Zones" and "Muslim Zones" in India. His draft scheme was placed before the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League on March 25, 1939.

have the time. *Harijan Sevak* is now closed. But what do I care? I am seeking truth. I had not imagined that *Harijan Sevak* and other journals would have to be closed down so soon. But are not the ways of governments also inscrutable?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am also enclosing your article by separate book-post. Please return it.

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8039. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

330. NOTE TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

[*October 26, 1940*][1]

Some of it seems to be true, but the suggested cure seems to be wrong. Some of it is purely imaginary. The only remedy for you is not to let your mind dwell on these thoughts. Keep your mind occupied with thoughts about work.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8335

331. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

October 27, 1940

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

You are strong and a lion[2], hence now and again the fangs show.

I read the letter sent through Rajkumari. I liked it and I had started to act according to it. Today's letter shows the fangs as well as two sharp claws. It is good that I keep getting glimpses of that side of you. I shall be cautious.

I don't know this Sambhaji. Whoever he is, what does he know of my affairs? I shall take what land I want. There is no fear that I may not be able to get it. I have not the least doubt about Jamnalalji. He is one of those who stand firm on their pledged word. The Trust will remain just as it is. I have complete faith in Rajkumari also. The land which belongs to the Trust cannot be misappropriated by a trustee.

[1] The note is written on the page of a diary covering October 24 to 26.

[2] The addressee's name, literally, means 'strong lion'.

I agree with your contention that you cannot become a member of any committee. Do whatever you can by remaining out of it. I shall be content with it.

I shall call both when the occasion arises. You forgot the torch; why should I remember it? Now I shall send it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1937

332. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 27, 1940

CHI. SHARMA,

I got your beautiful letter. Since I wish to demonstrate on this occasion total ahimsa as I have visualized it, I do not intend to send more than two or three persons. It is likely that I may not send any.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 292 and 293

333. CABLE TO CARL HEATH[1]

WARDHAGANJ,
October 28, 1940

CARL HEATH
FRIENDS HOUSE
EUSTON ROAD
LONDON

ALL EFFORT FAILED. INDIAN CONDITION WHOLLY DIFFERENT AND UNIQUE. PRESS[2] GAGGED[3]. HAVE STOPPED

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's cable (G.N. 1045) dated October 17, which read: "Deeply regretted issue conversations. Agree personally your peace principle yet feel no *de facto* government in present fierce struggle can admit organized opposition. Recognizing new formula essential. Group renewing effort here for solution of fundamental constitutional problem. Urge you Congress co-operate in this and suspend irrevocable action." *Vide* also "Cable to Carl Heath", 4-10-1940 and "A British Endorsemet"

[2] These two words were scored out by the Censor.

[3] *ibid*

"HARIJAN" WEEKLIES. RESTRICTING CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS OF NON-VIOLENCE,

GANDHI

Home, Political, File No. 3/33/40-Poll.(I). Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also G.N. 1046

334. LETTER TO ABDULLA HAROON RASHEED

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA
October 28, 1940

DEAR HAJEE SAHEB,

I see you have published only an extract from my letter[1]. It gives rise to a misunderstanding. Will it not be better for you to publish the full text of my letter?

HAJI ABDULLA HAROON

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

335. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SEVAGRAM,
October 28, 1940

CHI. PREMA,

What a woman you are! You seem to be fated to fast. Of course, for a satyagrahi occasion must come some day or other when he has to resort to fasting. But if you cannot live without me, you can gladly accompany me. But not by starving yourself. Light the fire of yoga and consume yourself in it. Your fasting would certainly mean your starving yourself. One must acquire the right to fast. One who understands this will dance when someone like me undertakes a fast. He will consider it an occasion for rejoicing. He would go on doing the work for which the fast was undertaken. Fasting, after all, has

[1] Of this, only the last two sentences were reported in *The Hitavada,* 23-10-1940. For the full text, *vide* "Letter to Abdulla Haroon Rasheed", 12-10-1940

certain conditions attached to it and when these conditions are fulfilled, the fast ends. Do not lose your reason.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10413. Also C.W. 6852. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

336. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

October 29, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Both the things can be done. Learn what you can in three months at Maganwadi and make use of that knowledge here. Do this after a month. Here our ultimate aim in everything is to realize God. There will be no harm, therefore, if you join us here. And if the villagers want you and if you are sure that you can control your temper, you may join in that work too. If your mind is calm, you will be able to do a lot. Just now the circumstances are such that the best work can be done only here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8525. Also C.W. 7108. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

337. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 30, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I have to thank you about your letter[1] of the 24th instant.

As to the first paragraph of your letter, I have already given[2] you my reaction to the notices referred to by you.

The second paragraph is astounding. Reducing your language to simple terms you tell me that I must be punished if I do not behave myself. I hardly needed to be given the warning. But I do not mind it.

[1] *Vide* "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 24-10-1940
[2] *Vide*"Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 25-10-1940

The language used by you shows the pains you have taken to conceal your meaning in as gentle words as the English language and your exalted office will let you.

But I was wholly unprepared for your assumptions. I have nowhere said that I desire freedom to conduct a civil disobedience movement in a way that commends itself to me and that for that purpose I wish to-enjoy unrestricted access to the public through the ordinary channels of publicity. You will see from my statement[1] —copy of which is hereto attached—that I have claimed that civil disobedience can be conducted without publicity through newspapers. This statement was published before your letter reached me. Indeed, if civil disobedience depended for its conduct upon the mercy of the Government against which it was directed, it must be poor stuff, utterly worthless for the purpose intended. It seeks through self-suffering to convert the opponent.

You then say:

> Although, however, you evidently wish me to believe that this movement which you have initiated will be more dangerous if you do not enjoy these facilities, I must credit you personally with the desire that it should succeed in its avowed object, that of persuading the public to withhold all support from India's war effort.

There is no warrant in my letter for the belief entertained by you. The whole purpose of my letter[2] has been missed. It was to commend to your sympathetic attention the fact that I was taking extraordinary precautions to ensure non-violence, and the further fact that to that end I was restricting the movement to the fewest possible typical individuals. I had hugged the belief that you would, as a friend, be pleased with the information and, recognizing the fact, you would not put yourself in the wrong by passing the wholly unnecessary drastic gagging ordinance you have passed. You have by that ordinance demonstrated to the world that you could not conduct the war through India except by stifling public opinion. I had hoped that you would be satisfied with such aid as the Princes, moneyed men and professional warlike classes could give you. They could not come under my or the Congress influence.

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 24-10-1940
[2] *Vide*"Statement to the Press"

I am sure you will not compare India with Britain. In Britain you have the Houses of Parliament through which the nation acts. Here you have powers derived not from India but from Great Britain that no single individual in the wide world enjoys over so many people. I had hoped that you would use them with restraint. It was for that purpose that I had sought the last interview and stayed beyond my time so that I might not be said to have rushed you. For the moment the hope has been dashed to pieces. I ask you to believe me when I tell you that, in every single step I have taken, I have thought of you and your people as your and their true friend. One day you will feel the truth of this remark if you do not today.

But I accept your verdict for the moment. I do not want to conduct the movement secretly. Nor can I allow non-violence to perish by default. I might, therefore, give the only thing I have in me to give—my life. I told you about the possibility of a fast, prolonged or unto death. I was waiting on God to find what is to be the case. I am trying hard to avoid it but I may not be able to do so. You will have another letter from me when I have come to the final conclusion.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has been with me. I had invited him to be the next resister. He had consented. Your ordinance came after. And the fast idea possessed me. He has an open mind on the fast. But he thinks, and I have agreed with him, that the contemplated resistance by him should be completed before entertaining the idea of the fast. Therefore the very next step is to be his civil resistance. As soon as the date and place are finally decided, I shall let you have them for your information.

I hope you will not resent this letter. I have written as a friend to a friend and not as a member of the public to you as the Viceroy. I have not written to seek publicity or to make a point against you. I will not publish this letter or any part of the recent correspondence between us without your consent.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7855. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

338. TO THE READER

You must have seen through my Press notice[1] that the publication of *Harijan* and the other two weeklies had been suspended. In it I had expressed the hope that the suspension might be only for a week. But I see that the hope had no real foundation. I shall miss my weekly talks with you, as I expect you too will miss them. The value of those talks consisted in their being a faithful record of my deepest thoughts. Such expression is impossible in a cramped atmosphere. As I have no desire to offer civil disobedience, I cannot write freely. As the author of satyagraha I cannot, consistently with my professions, suppress the vital part of myself for the sake of being able to write on permissible subjects such as the constructive programme. It would be like dealing with the trunk without the head. The whole of the constructive programme is to me an expression of non-violence. I would be denying myself if I could not preach non-violence. For that would be the meaning of submission to the latest ordinance. The suspension must, therefore, continue while the gagging lasts. It constitutes a satyagrahi's respectful protest against the gag. Is not satyagraha giving an ell when an inch is asked for by the wrongdoer? Is it not giving the cloak also when only the coat is demanded? It may be asked why this reversal of the ordinary process? The ordinary process is based on violence. If my life were regulated by violence, in the last resort I would refuse to give an inch lest an ell might be asked for. I would be a fool if I did otherwise. But if my life is regulated by non-violence, I should be prepared to and actually give an ell when an inch is asked for. By so doing I produce on the usurper a strange and even pleasurable sensation. He would also be confounded and would not know what to do with me. So much for the 'enemy'. I, having made up my mind to surrender every non-essential, gain greater strength than ever before to die for the defence and preservation of what I hold to be essential. I was, therefore, wrongly accused by my critics of having advised[2] cowardly surrender to Nazism by Englishmen when I suggested that they should lay down external arms, let the Nazis overrun Britain if they dare, but develop internal strength to refuse to sell themselves to the Nazis. Full surrender of non-essentials is a condition precedent to accession of internal strength to defend the essential by dying.

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 24-10-1940
[2] *Vide* "To Every Briton"

But I am not writing this to convert the English to my view. I am writing this to suggest to you that my surrender to the framers of the gagging ordinance is an object-lesson to you, the reader, in satyagraha. If you will quietly work out in your own life the implications of the lesson, you will then not need the weekly aid from the written word in *Harijan*. Even without your weekly *Harijan* you will know how I shall myself work out the full implications of giving an ell when an inch is wanted. A correspondent pleads with me that on no account should I suspend *Harijan*, for, he says, his non-violence is sustained by the weekly food he gets therefrom. If he has really done so, then this self-imposed restraint should teach him more than a vapid continuation of weekly *Harijan*.

One word as to the practical question. You are a subscriber to one of the weeklies. I do not know, when, if ever, they will be resumed. You are entitled to the return of the unused balance of your subscription. On receipt a postcard from you to the Manager, *Harijan*, Poona, for a refund, a money order for it will be sent to you. Those who do not ask for a refund will have their paper sent to them if it is resumed. If it is not, the unused balance will be spent in covering any loss that may be caused in winding up. And then the balance, if any, will be sent to the Harijan Sevak Sangh for use in the service of Harijans. If *Harijan* is not resumed within six months, it will be deemed to have been finally wound up. Meanwhile goodbye.

SEVAGRAM, October 31, 1940

Harijan, 10-11-1940

339. LETTER TO PRABHAVAT1

October 31, 1940

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. It is not good your being ill. What work can you do there if you are ill? Get well soon and go away.

Jawaharlal left yesterday. He will now court imprisonment.

There was nothing special in Jayaprakash's letter. I have replied to him.

Here someone or the other is always ill. There is always one

sick-bed. At the moment it is Lilavati's brother, Lakshmidas. It seems he has typhoid. He will get well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3549

340. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

October 31, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

It is good that you wrote. I don't give a long reply.

My experiment is certainly new. If I undertake the fast, it will certainly be tainted with attachment for the fruit. But all beginnings are tainted. We have to balance the pros and cons. If the pros exceed, we may embark on the attempt. This seems to be such a case.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8523. Also C.W. 7109. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

341. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

November 1, 1940

CHI. MANUDI,

I have your postcard. May you all be happy in this New Year[1]. When are you coming? I am not very eager to call you. There is illness here at present—it is typhoid. There are a lot of people also. But if you wish to come, you may. "I will certainly like it. Ba of course wishes it. Illness will come and go, but that does not mean that a person may not go home. But do as the two[2] of you wish.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. MANUBEHN
BALKIRAN
SOUTH AVENUE
SANTA CRUZ
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2678. Courtesy: Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

[1] According to Vikram calendar, New Year begins on the day following Dewali. In 1940, it was on November 1.

[2] The addressee and her husband, Surendra B. Mashruwala

342. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

November 1, 1940

CHI. NARAHARI,

Vasumatibehn[1] says that as I am contemplating a fast, she is not inclined to go there. I tell her that she ought not to neglect her duty and stay on here, to which she replies that she does not have there any such responsible work to attend to. I told her that you would decide about that. She has agreed to that. You have to decide only from the point of view of dharma. If she stays here, it won't be to serve me. There are many others who will do that.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI NARAHARI PARIKH/VASUMATIBEHN

HARIJAN ASHRAM, SABARMATI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9120

343. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

November 1, 1940

CHI. MITHUBEHN,

Chi. Vijaya[2] is leaving today with Manubhai[3]. She is very weak. She does not put on weight though she is not suffering from any disease. Previously she was suffering from dysentery, but now there is no symptom of it. I have asked her to go there. If she comes, please see if something can be done. I heard about everything from Ba. It is not good that you are not taking proper care of your health. You have a lot of work yet to do.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MITHUBEHN PETIT

KHADI KARYALAYA

MAROLI, *via* NAVSARI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2719

[1] Vasumati Pandit
[2] Vijayabehn and Manubhai Pancholi
[3] *ibid*

344. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM
November 1, 1940

CHI. SUMI,

Your letters are fine. You have made good progress. When shall I be able to see you all? When will you let me hear your music? Motiba[1] told me about the thing. You may go in for an operation if the doctor advises. But you should do so only if the doctor assures you of its success.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

345. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 1, 1940

CHI. NIMU,

I have your long letter. Understand well what you write. For years, there has been no such thing as Diwali for me. You will of course read the letter to Ramdas. What should I arrange for you? How much time can you spare? I would advise you to see either Maganbhai or Mridula. One of them will fix you up. Have you made any progress in music? Have you kept up study of Hindi? We do not wish to ask for more than what we are worthy of. No matter if we get a rupee less. We cannot accept more than our worth.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original . Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Literally, the elder Ba, that is, grandmother Kasturba

346. LETTER TO UMA AGRAWAL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 1, 1940

CHI. OM[1] ALIAS SLEEPING BEAUTY,

Did you do me a great favour by writing? You should bow to Nanda Devi, etc., on my behalf also. Now at last you are a resident of the mountains. It is no small thing that you remember us. Be happy, all of you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad,* p. 344

347. TO THE READERS

I had hoped, when I made public my intention[2] of suspending *Harijanbandhu*, that the suspension might be only for a week and as a result of my correspondence with H.E. the Viceroy it might be possible to publish it again soon. But the outcome was just the opposite. My hope was without any basis. There is no reason to regard this as a bad omen. Satyagraha tests the satyagrahi as also the opponent. There is certainly a difference between the two tests. A satyagrahi's shortcomings are eliminated as satyagraha progresses, while those of the opponent's come to light, as a result of which he is transformed.

But at the moment I do not wish to focus attention on the faults of my opponents. I wish to explain briefly to the readers why *Harijanbandhu* is to be suspended for an indefinite period. I had two alternatives before me. Either to accept the restrictions imposed by the Government and continue publishing *Harijanbandhu* under limitations or to reject the restrictions and suspend its publication. The second alternative alone would bring credit to a satyagrahi. A satyagrahi should offer a hand where a finger is demanded, while practical wisdom would be to drive him away, so that he will never have the courage to ask for the hand. However this policy is for those

[1] Daughter of Jamnalal Bajaj
[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 24-10-1940

who rely on *himsa*. A non-violent person depends on the opposite policy. A violent person engages himself in safeguarding material and mortal things and either forgets or undermines the inner and the immortal self. A non-violent person is ever ready to forsake the material things and serves and protects the inner self. So it becomes his dharma to offer a hand to one who asks for a finger. This dharma ultimately leads to all-round happiness.

Let us examine its result. An opponent who gets a hand on asking for a finger is surprised and thereby will possibly be confounded. When he has such surprising experiences from time to time, he is likely to give up opposition of the non-violent. A non-violent person, while adhering to his dharma, adds to his strength, his capacity to sacrifice grows, he understands better the value of inner strength, and his strength to face the calamity of any kind increases.

As a votary of non-violence, that is, a satyagrahi, I am left with only the second alternative. I experienced a sense of relief when I chose to suspend publication of *Harijanbandhu* and I repeat the immortal lines of Narsinh Mehta:

> Better it is that the worldly bonds are broken,
> Easier it will be to attain the Lord.

Mahadev says that the correct version is: "I shall worship the Lord in peace." I don't know how, but I have always remembered the wrong version and have derived solace from it. I, therefore, retain that. My faith is daily growing that I will attain God only through such sacrifices, not otherwise. Here God means the freedom of India.

But, Readers, what about you? I loved my weekly talks with you as I expect you, too, loved them. I tried to explain to you the meaning of satyagraha in various ways. But now? If you have followed properly my writings in *Harijanbandhu*, then I am sure you will follow satyagraha better by my sacrifice and my conduct hereafter. How long shall I explain it to you by writing and talking to you? What you do not get from my conduct, you will never get from my words. An ounce of my conduct, that is, what I am doing, is several times more valuable than a ton of philosophizing.

I have to tell you only this much: wear khadi, spin with perseverence every day, make Harijans your own, treat the followers of other religions with equality and achieve unity. Your body may fall, your house and belongings may go, but do not do anything which

your conscience does not allow. Examine the thirteen-point programme and what I have not mentioned above, you may add to it. If you act accordingly, you will not feel the need of a newspaper and be sure that the Ganga in the form of swaraj will come to your doorsteps without any effort.

Now one thing very practical. Your yearly subscription is not over yet. You will have some balance due to you in the books of *Harijanbandhu*. You are entitled to ask for the refund of the balance. I hope *Harijanbandhu* will come out again some day. If it does, you will get the journal as long as your balance lasts. But if you do not want to wait, write a postcard to the Manager, *Harijanbandhu*, Poona-4. He will send you the balance. If the restriction on *Harijanbandhu* is not lifted within six months, it will be deemed to have been finally wound up, and the balance will be spent in covering any loss that may be caused in winding up. The balances of subscriptions will be sent to those subscribers who ask for it and the share of those who do not ask for it will be sent to the Harijan Sevak Sangh for the welfare of Harijans.

For the present *Vandemataram*.[1]

SEVAGRAM, November 2, 1940

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 9-11-1940

348. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 2, 1940

CHI. MIRA,

I have your good letter. I am preserving it, for some time at any rate. You must keep your body in good order. The things you want are being got ready and will be sent soon, including your khadi.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABEHN
PALAMPUR
KANGRA DISTRICT, PUNJAB

From the original: C.W. 6463. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10058

[1] A similar article in Hindi appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 9-11-1940. *Vide* also "To the Reader"

349. LETTER TO AMINA G. QURESHI[1]

November 2, 1940

DAUGHTER AMINA,

Is what Sultana[2] says about you true? Why do you suffer from piles? They should be removed. There is no after-effect if they are removed. Removal may not be necessary. You must consult a doctor. Why should you be so obstinate? Write to me immediately that you will take medical treatment.

Id *mubarak*[3] to all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10777. Courtesy: Ghulam Rasul Qureshi

350. LETTER TO SULTANA QURESHI

November 2, 1940

DAUGHTER SULTANA,

I have your letter. I am glad you wrote to me. Keep writing. You must have grown quite big now. What are you studying these days? What are the others doing? I am also writing to Amina. Pass the letter on to her.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Today is Id-ul-Fitr. Id *mubarak* to all of you.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10761. Courtesy: Ghulam Rasul Qureshi

[1] Also spelt 'Koreishi'
[2] Addressee's daughter
[3] Greetings

351. LETTER TO SAHASRABUDDHE

November 2, 1940

BHAI SAHASRABUDDHE,

I have your letter. I have sent a copy to Bhai Patwardhan. I don't understand why the resolutions passed have not been implemented.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

352. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
November 3, 1940

CHI. KANTI[1],

I thought you did not write to me out of shyness. Now I see that you do not write out of anger. If that is true, it does not befit you. Have you forgotten what nice letters you used to write? Harilal's letter is enclosed. Write to him. He had a fall but now he is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gajarati: C.W. 7361. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

353. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 3, 1940

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I got your letter. My relations with Mysore are strained and, therefore, I do not wish to write to the doctor there. We can get someone not connected with the court, but I do not know any of them at all. Why do you need a doctor, however? Your body itself will tell you. It will be enough if you observe the rules.

[1] Son of Harilal Gandhi

Kanti himself will know some doctor there. You can go to him if necessary. There are bound to be facilities there for taking weight, etc.

Blessings to both of you from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9743. Also C.W. 723. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

354. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 3, 1940

BHAI DAHYABHAI,

I got your letter. May you have a prosperous New Year. Do as much service as you can. It is not worthwhile coming here. There is nothing new. Moreover the Ashram is completely full.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI DAHYABHAI MANORDAS PATEL
CONGRESS OFFICE
DHOLKA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2712. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

355. LETTER TO BHOLANATH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 3, 1940

BHAI BHOLANATH,

I got your letter. I am aware of the difficulties[1] there. I don't know what may happen. Although I am making some arrangements, the results may be meagre. If the people have the strength to resist, they must do so. No one should think that I can counsel compromise

[1] The reference is to the forcible extortions for the war funds; *vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 22-10-1940 and "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 4-11-1940

with such injustice. Men may break, but they should not bend before brute force.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1311. Also *Gandhi Shatabdi Smarak Granth-Yug Purush*, p. 184

356. LETTER TO SARASVATI GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
November 3, 1940

CHI. SURU[1],

What a girl you are! Having joined Kanti you write neither to me nor to Ba. This is not proper. I hope all of you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6180. Also C.W. 3454. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

357. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 3, 1940

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter after many days. Thakkar Bapa had given me a description of your Sind tour. He has already arrived at Sevagram.

The problems of Sind are difficult. Maulana will go there. I am not very hopeful of his being able to do much. Muslims of Sind are in the hands of *pirs*[2]. Many of them are fanatics; even some zamindars are marauders. In such circumstances, nationalist Muslims will not be able to do anything. The fact is, Hindus are rank cowards. They also lack the spirit of sacrifice. Let us see how things can be shaped.

I am contemplating a fast. I cannot say whether I shall undertake it or not. Everything is left to God. But the idea has gripped me. You do not have to worry. It can start only if God wills it. If it does commence, you should consider it a matter for rejoicing. Fasting is the final penance prescribed by our dharma. It has

[1] Kantilal Gandhi's wife
[2] Leaders of religious factions

been considered to be an ultimate weapon in a difficult situation.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7991. Also C.W. 3088. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

358. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

November 4, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I do not know whether I am now in order in still carrying my complaints to you. But until you tell me to stop, I propose to send them as before.

This is in continuation of my letter[1] of 22nd October, 1940, regarding the alleged war extortions in Alwar. Here is another wire, dated 28th October, 1940:

> Sepoys beat me unconsciousness. Kept in sun realize war fund Rs. 22 forcibly under Najim order. Pray intervene. Chhajjuram, Baldeogarh, Nizamat Thanaghazi, Alwar State.

I understand that there the Minister and his Secretary are British, lent by the Political Department. The whole administration is said to be under the Political Department. If so, the argument I have advanced in my said letter of 22nd October, 1940, applies with double force. I have a letter telling me that force has been used in several cases for exacting contributions.[2]

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 22-10-1940

[2] Replying to this on November 8, J. G. Laithwaite, Private Secretary to the Viceroy said: "His Excellency . . . on receiving your letter of 22nd October . . . at once caused enquiries to be made but be has not yet had the result. He is also sending a copy of your present letter to the Political authorities."

359. LETTER TO CHARU CHANDRA BHANDARI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 4, 1940

DEAR CHARU BABU,

Your faith will be rewarded. Never falter.[1]

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 8698. Also C.W. 1468. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

360. LETTER TO C. A. AIYAMUTHU

SEVAGRAM,
November 4, 1940

DEAR AIYAMUTHU,

I have your letter[2]. It is enigmatic. Open out the enigma and I shall understand better. In any case I expect you to prove true and all will be well.

Yours,
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

361. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

November 4, 1940

The paper quilt may be tried. It fully serves the purpose. But a blanket may be taken if necessary. In no case should time be wasted. He should take it when it becomes available. Why is he going, if it can easily be had from Barabadi[3]?

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4361

[1] *Vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Charu Chandra Bhandri", 22-10-1940

[2] Dated October 29, in which the addressee, Secretary of the Tamil Nadu branch of the All-India Spinners' Association, had complained about lack of faith in khadi among the khadi workers

[3] A village near Sevagram

362. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 4, 1940

CHI. SHARMA,

I understand you. Everything is in the hands of God. We, too, are all in His hands. He will make me do what He likes. You have to concentrate on your work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh,* between pp. 290 and 291

363. LETTER TO PRABHU DAYAL VIDYARTHI

November 4, 1940

CHI. PRABHU DAYAL,

I have your beautiful letter. Of course your name is included in the list [for individual satyagraha]. But at present the situation is quite different. Remain engrossed in your duty.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 11691

364. LETTER TO CHOITHRAM GIDWANI[1]

[Before *November 6, 1940*][2]

The sole concern of Congressmen in Sind should be to rid the province of the terror that is raging there. If the Congressmen of Sind cannot do that, they had better retire from public life.

The Hindu, 9-11-1940

[1] The addressee was President, Sind Provincial Congress Committee. The letter was reported under the date-line "Sukkur, November 6".

[2] *ibid*

365. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

November 6, 1940

MY DEAR ANAND,

Amtul Salaambehn is proceeding to Sind to give her life in preventing the murders that are taking place in Sind. She is to go to some Muslim friend and will appeal to Haji Sir Abdulla Haroon to help her in the attempt.[1] You will help her in every way. Take her to Kikibehn[2] also and do everything you can for her.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 681

366. LETTER TO ABDULLA HAROON RASHEED

SEVAGRAM,

November 6, 1940

SETH SHRI HAJI ABDULLA HAROON,

Behn Amtul Salaam has been with me for the last ten days. She came to me of her own free will. She is thirty-six. She is the daughter of the late Col. Abdul Majid Khan Saheb, Mir Munshi of Patiala. From her childhood she has been devoted to the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity. The murders that are taking place in Sind are worrying me no doubt, but Amtul Salaam also is worried. I am, therefore, sending her to you on the strength of our relations during the Khilafat movement. I think you can play a big role in stopping these murders. I am not thinking at the moment of the political aspect. It is a question of humanity. Behn Amtul Salaam does not know anything of politics and is not interested in it. She is a staunch Muslim. She is never irregular in reading the Koran. When she is not ill she observes the Ramadan strictly. She has been silently serving a good many Muslims. She is brave. She intends to lay down her life if these murders are not stopped, and I have fully encouraged her to do so. I hope that you will not misunderstand her or me in this

[1] *Vide* the following item; also "Letter to Abdulla Haroon Rasheed", 12-10-1940

[2] Kikibehn Lalwani, J. B. Kripalani's sister

connection. I do not have with me a stauncher or nobler man or woman than she. And when she wishes to sacrifice her life to save the honour of Islam and serve the Hindus, I consider it my duty to give her my blessings.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1219. Also from the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

367. TELEGRAM TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

WARDHA,

November 7, 1940

ANAND HINGORANI

UPPER SIND COLONY

KARACHI SADAR

AMTUSSALAAM ARRIVING THERE NINTH AFTERNOON. RECEIVE.[1]

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India, and Anand T. Hingorani

368. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,

November 7, 1940

I have been receiving numerous telegrams asking me not to undertake the contemplated fast. Almost all of the telegrams are from friends who are concerned about my health and who think that if I am alive I can still render useful service to the country. There are one or two bitterly criticizing me and telling me that fasting has no place in the politics of the country and that it disturbs the political atmosphere and impairs the efficiency of opposition to the Government in the fight for freedom. I wish to thank both the friends and the critics. The members of the Working Committee and I also had a long discussion

[1] *Vide* also letter to the addressee "Letter to Avdulla Haroon Rasheed", 6-11-1940, and the preceding item.

over the contemplated fast.

In view of the extension of individual civil disobedience, the idea of the fast naturally remains in abeyance. But I must say nothing that I have heard has dislodged me from the position I have consistently held about the relevancy and propriety of fast in all walks of life including the political. I admit that it is a new weapon. I admit also that the use of that weapon is not open to any but specialists, even as the use of the weapon of civil disobedience is not open to everybody. But if the use of civil disobedience is open only to those who are qualified for it, the use of fasting requires infinitely larger qualifications. I hold that I possess these qualifications. I have had God-given opportunities of training myself in this direction consciously since 1906[1], that means 34 years. But it cannot be taken mechanically. It can only be taken in obedience to the promptings of an unseen power, call it the inner voice, God or whatever other name you like to give to that power. I have mentioned the possibility of fasting because something within me is prompting me to it. I am myself fighting against it. I know that however willing the spirit may be, the flesh is weak. I know that being unable to drink an adequate quantity of water during a fast, it becomes almost unbearable, specially in the initial stages. But however weak the flesh may be, I know that the weakness can be conquered when that unseen power dominates me to the exclusion of every other force. That feeling has not yet come to me and until it does naturally there will be no fast. If it does come, I shall myself feel powerless to listen to the kindly intervention of friends or the anger of fierce critics. Therefore I will beseech all to hold themselves in patience and watch the developments. Of course, it is open to everybody to help me in the crisis through which the country is passing. I have shown the numerous ways in which everybody, friend and critic, can help. I have no desire to make any elaborate statement indicating the ways in which people can help. Having stopped the publication of *Harijan* weeklies I have lost all desire for making public statements. This I am compelled to make in order to thank numerous inquirers, and to allay public anxiety.[2]

[1] Here the newspaper source has "1906 or 1907"; *vide* "An Autobiography", sub-title "Brahmacharya"

[2] What follows is reproduced from *The Hitavada*, according to Gandhiji was interviewed by the Associated Press of India.

Asked about the future of the *Harijan* weeklies, Gandhiji said:

You will presently see the valedictory issue[1] of *Harijan* announcing their stoppage altogether.

Congress Bulletin, No. 6, 1942, File No. 3/42/41-Poll. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *The Hitavada*, 10-11-1940

369. INSTRUCTIONS TO SATYAGRAHIS

1. Under the extraordinary situation created by the Government, I have, after consultation with the Working Committee, extended the scope of civil disobedience and I propose to select, for the time being, resisters from among the members of the Working Committee, the Congress members in the Central and Provincial Legislatures and the members of the A.I.C.C.

2. Those only will be selected who conform to the conditions I have laid down, who are themselves willing to offer resistance and who are otherwise free to do so.

3. The method of selection is as follows. The members of the Working Committee will send me lists of such members in the first instance and no one will offer civil disobedience whose name I have not passsed. No list should contain names of those who are physically unfit to undergo prison life. I may supplement the lists by making selection out of the names I have already received or may receive hereafter.

4. The names should be sent through messenger to ensure delivery.

5. No one will offer civil disobedience without first informing the District Magistrate of his district, of the time when and the place where and the manner in which it is to be offered.

6. It is advisable not to hold public meetings for the purpose in cities. Meetings may be held in villages. The best and the easiest way is to repeat the following slogan to passers-by as the resister walks on in a particular direction until he is arrested. My preference is for this last method. It is harmless, economical and effective. No argument is necessary. It rivets attention on the single issue of war. The idea is to prevent the movement from lapsing into mass civil disobedience. This

[1] Dated November 10, two articles; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 24-10-1940 and "To the Reader"

is the slogan: “It is wrong to help the British war effort with men or money. The only worthy effort is to resist all war with non-violent resistance.” The slogan should be translated into the language of the province in which civil disobedience is to be offered.

7. Civil disobedience is to be offered singly. It need not be simultaneous. The whole of this programme should, if possible, be finished in one month.

8. All demonstrations should be avoided when civil disobedience is offered.

9. The ordinary channels of publicity being closed, we must rely upon everybody becoming his own newspaper. Satyagraha is and must be independent of the ordinary channels. We must not feel helpless when these are closed, and they are for the most part even now closed against us. It should be realized too that the repetition of the slogan while walking in one direction reduces the movement to its simplest terms.

10. Secrecy should be avoided. Therefore cyclostyles and the like should be used only when the owners are prepared to lose them. The cheapest multiplying method is to use composition trays. The formula for making them may be got locally. (The A.I.C.C. Office shall try to send it later.) But the infalliable way is to multiply the manuscript by many hands copying. This method was extensively used during the last satyagraha.

11. Congress funds need not be kept secretly. If the Government choose to confiscate them, they may do so. In this life-and-death struggle, we must be prepared to lose all funds and other property. We must learn to depend upon the nation financing the movement from day to day. Our wants must, therefore, be reduced to the minimum. No one need expect monetary assistance from the Congress.

12. Our policy should be to avoid classification of prisoners. In no case should any attempt be made to ask either for a higher or a lower class. An A-class prisoner is not bound to take advantage of the special facilities offered to him. Nor need he be ashamed of availing himself of them if thereby he retains his health.

13. Jail rules and discipline should be strictly observed so long as they are not inconsistent with human dignity. No labour should be avoided because it is labour. We should know its dignity.

14. Hartals should be rare. They lose their force if resorted to too often. They are likely to be prohibited. It is better to anticipate the prohibition. Our civil resistance is strictly limited. It is not general.

15. Should the Congress be declared an illegal organization, it should make no difference. I shall conduct the movement so long as I am left free. In the event of my being arrested, it will become self-acting if the people have imbibed non-violence. Congressmen should remain calm and unperturbed. Each one will act on his or her own initiative. If he or she feels like offering civil disobedience, the way is clear. If he or she is unable, they will devote themselves wholly to one or more items of the thirteenfold constructive programme. I do not propose to appoint a successor whether I am in or out. Those who belong to the Congress constructive organizations may not offer civil disobedience.

16. While the Congress functions as a legal organization, the Provincial Committees, will elect their President if the present one is arrested. The person elected should seek confirmation from me. I shall be unable to work through him if he does not fulfil my conditions.

17. In the provinces where there is no Working Committee Member, the provincial president will put himself in touch with me and send me his recommendations.

18. If I am impelled to fast, I expect Congressmen not to feel paralysed but to be stimulated to more intensive effort in the direction of constructive work. The fast, if it comes, must result in khadi and village manufactures generally becoming universal, untouchability being a thing of the past, and communal unity a settled fact.

19. Congressmen should make it clear in their speech and their action that they are neither pro-Fascists nor pro-Nazis, but that they are opposed either to all war or at least to the war conducted on behalf of British imperialism. They sympathize with the British in their effort to live, but they want also to live themselves as members of a fully free nation. They must not, therefore, be expected to help Britain at the cost of their own liberty. They bear ill will to no nation. They want to play their part in establishing lasting peace in the world.

M. K. GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, November 8, 1940

Congress Bulletin, No. 6, 1942, File No. 3/42/41-Poll. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India

370. TELEGRAM TO M. M. MALAVIYA[1]

SEVAGRAM,
[On or before *November 9, 1940*][2]

PANDIT MALAVIYAJI
HINDU UNIVERSITY
BENARES

KNOW YOUR LOVE. UNDERSTAND YOUR ANXIETY. AM IN GOD'S HANDS. WILL AVOID IF POSSIBLE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also The *Hindu*, 10-11-1940

371. TELEGRAM TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

WARDHAGANJ,
November 9, 1940

ANAND HINGORANI
UPPER SIND COLONY
KARACHI SADAR

AMTUSSALAAM REACHING SATURDAY BY AHMEDABAD MAIL. MEET STATION. ACCOMMODATE.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India, and Anand T. Hingorani

372. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 9, 1940

CHI. MAHADEV,

I got your letter. I have sent copies of the correspondence. You

[1] The telegram, reported under the date-line "Benares, November 9", was in reply to the addressee's which according to *The Hindu.* 8-11-1940, read: "The policy pursued by the Government is lamentable. The provocation is great. The country is in a sad plight and the worst time is ahead. Your presence is needed among the people for service which you alone can render. A fast at your age in this crisis will be running away from duty. Please avoid it."

[2] *ibid*

carried my blessings, when you left. Devdas had asked for a message for the meeting, but I could not send it. These days I do not like to send any messages and so in this case also I did not send any.

I believe I will be arrested and that too soon. I am ready of course.

I understand about Brahmadutt[1]. He is at the right place. I see, however, that the experiment cannot be repeated.

I finished Charkha Sangh work today.

Brijkrishna will show you the instructions[2]. Go through them. If you wish to suggest any changes, let me know. I could not write the letter to the Viceroy. Now I will write it[3] tomorrow. I do not wish to keep awake all night.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

373. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 9, 1940

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I got your letter. Maulana Saheb has been consulted. The fact is, you don't have to carry my letter. And you have gone there[4] in my name, for my work and in the capacity of my daughter; what more do you want? You must stay with them if you can. I am happy. The rest from Pyarelal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 435

[1] He was the third individual satyagrahi who was arrested on November 7 at Delhi.

[2] *Vide* "Instructions to Satyagrahis"

[3] This was addressed to the Private Secretary to Viceroy; *vide* "Letter to Sir J. G. Laithwaite", 11-11-1940

[4] To Karachi; *vide* "Telegram to Anand T. Hingorani", 7-11-1940

374. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 10, 1940

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I am holding a meeting. You were informed on the telephone. I hope things are proceeding smoothly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 436

375. LETTER TO SIR J. G. LAITHWAITE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 11, 1940

DEAR MR. LAITHWAITE,

I have to thank you for your letter of the 2nd instant.

I must not offer any apology for this letter. For, in answer to the Government measures regarding the Press, I have given up making public statements on the struggle between the Government and the Congress, and I want to avoid secrecy regarding my plans. I shall, therefore, continue to send you periodical letters unless His Excellency desires otherwise.

I had hoped to be able to confine civil disobedience to two or three typical cases and supplement them, if necessary and if the call came, with a fast, limited or unlimited. But the members of the Working Committee were very much perturbed over the contemplated fast. Wires also pressed in upon me from all sorts of men and associations prevailing upon me not to fast. I felt that if I was not to fast, I must in some way answer the action of the Government in regard to Pandit Jawaharlal[1]. My restraint depended upon a measure of reciprocity from the Government as I had hoped in my letter[2] of the 30th September in the following words:

> I shall hug the hope that it will be possible for the Government to work

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru was arrested on October 31, under the Defence of India Rules, and was sentenced on November 5 to an aggregate term of four years' rigorous imprisonment.

[2] To Lord Linlithgow, *vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 30-9-1940

out their policy in the spirit of the Congress position.

But I do not complain. I must not. Only I feel I should explain my change of plan. The changed plan consists in extending civil disobedience to qualified persons selected from particular groups. The groups touched at present are the members of the Working Committee, the Legislators, the members of the A.I.C.C. and a few others. I felt that with the Pandit dealt with in the manner he was, and the almost simultaneous arrest of Shri Achyut Patwardhan, who has proclaimed his faith in non-violence, I should not restrain members of these groups and the like if they satisfied my test as to non-violence and the constructive programme.

I send you herewith a copy also of the instructions[1] I have issued to Congressmen which you will please show to H.E.

There is one other matter to which I wish to draw his attention. My son, Devdas, has sent me notes of the recent interview with certain editors by the Hon. the Home Member. In it the Hon. the Home Member is represented as having said: "Mr. Gandhi's object is to paralyse India's war effort and thus to help Hitler." If Sir Reginald[2] said these words, I can only say that he is wholly wrong. I claim that nothing that I have said can warrant Sir Reginald's extraordinary statement. Indeed I have said repeatedly and so have Pandit Jawaharlal and almost all the numerous Congressmen who have been jailed, that we do not want to help Hitler. I have never said, I wished to paralyse Government's war efforts. But I have said that those of us who do not believe in war as war or in the war on behalf of British imperialism, which they hold the present British effort to be, should be free to propagate their views in a non-violent manner. What will, however, help Hitler and the enemies of Britain is the present utterly irresponsible and repressive policy of the Government including the wholly unwarranted arrests and imprisonments. I had expected that those in high places would observe fairness and not go to the extent of putting into the mouths of humble workers like me words which they have never uttered.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7856. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] *Vide* "Instructions to Satyagrahis"

[2] Sir Reginald Maxwell

376. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 11, 1940

CHI. MIRA,

Your good letter has just come in. Your *tapasya* is real and, therefore, the zest must come.[1] And with the zest must come bodily strength. The slivers will be sent when you ask for them. You are right. I may be taken any moment. What does it matter? The Ashram is full to overflowing.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABEHN
PALAMPUR
KANGRA DISTRICT
PUNJAB

From the original: C.W. 6464. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10059

377. LETTER TO BARI KHAN

November 11, 1940

MY DEAR BARI[2],

There are times when the last step becomes obligatory. Amtul Salaam is in God's hands.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 639

378. LETTER TO VASUKAKA JOSHI

November 11, 1940

DEAR VASUKAKA,

Of course, I feel honoured to have your name on my list. I know your energy is superior to mine and your love of the country

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Mirabehn", 21-9-1940
[2] Brother of Amtussalaam

as great. Will you give me the exact details of your diet? How do you take the lemon juice—not undiluted?[1]

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 7915

379. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

November 11, 1940

CHI. LILA,

I got your two notes. Today Lakshmidas's temperature is 97°. I see him more often. He was taken to the Civil Surgeon, who says, he is progressing saitsfactorily. There is intermittent fever but that need not worry us. His teeth are bad, so the improvement is slow. I will get them extracted as soon as he regains strength. Do not worry in the least.

Please go on studying patiently. Whatever knowledge you acquire will be useful. If I die in the meanwhile, do as your conscience tells you. Since you are getting trained for the Ashram, you should feel fully satisfied.

Mahadev will not come before the day after tomorrow. I am writing this with your pen-holder. If you practise complete self-control and propagate khadi amongst the girls, you may rest assured it will be no mean service.

I will continue to write to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9594. Also C.W. 6566. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Vasukaka Joshi", 18-11-1940.

380. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

November 11, 1940

CHI. PREMA,

Do as Shankarrao advises you.[1] But he will do nothing without consulting me.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PREMABEHN KANTAK

ASHRAM

SASVAD

POONA DISTRICT

From a photostat of the Gujarati. G.N. 10414. Also C.W. 6853. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

381. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

November 11, 1940

BHAI MUNSHI,

I am aware of the love you both[2] have for me. If there is a fast, it will only be at the prompting of the inner voice. If you believe this, you will rejoice instead of being pained.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 7655. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

382. LETTER TO MANUBHAI PANCHOLI

SEVAGRAM,

November 11, 1940

CHI. MANUBHAI,

I got your beautiful letter. I had got Vijaya's letter also. I can understand your pain. This should be sufficient to calm both of you:

[1] Shankarrao Deo had asked the addressee to be prepared for courting imprisonment as an individual satyagrahi.

[2] The addressee and his wife, Lilavati Munshi

if I go on a fast, it won't be on my own but as prompted by the inner voice. Like Mirabai, I too, am pierced with the dagger of love.

Show this to Nanabhai[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7133. Also C.W. 4625. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

383. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

November 11, 1940

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I have your letter. May every New Year, as it comes round, increase your spirit of service. Shankerlal[2] should recover completely. I am getting ready for a severe test. God knows what will be the outcome.

Sarladevi[3] must be getting better day by day.

Blessings to all from

BAPU

SHRI ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

C/O VEDANT COLLEGE

XI MAIN ROAD

MALLESWARAM, BANGALORE

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 11563

384. LETTER TO PYARELAL

Diwali, 8.30 p. m. [*November 11, 1940*][4]

CHI. PYARELAL,

I am able to reply to your letter only now. About the man-woman question I shall only say this. I had talked of the ideal I had indicated that I would prefer. But any decision can be given only after

[1] Nrisinhprasad Kalidas Bhatt

[2] Shankerlal Banker

[3] Sarladevi Sarabhai

[4] From the contents, it appears that this letter belongs to 1940, in which year Diwali fell on this date.

considering all the attendant circumstances. Risk is no doubt involved in a man taking service from a woman. Hence the principle I mentioned can be followed in practice only to a very limited extent. Applying it in my own case, I certainly cannot take service from just anyone. I too have to be on my guard. Considering all this, I have come to the conclusion that if I must take service from a woman, it should only be from Sushila. Till such time as she is not here, I should take whatever serivce I can have from you. It is altogether another matter what should be done if Sushila finally does not come.

Under no circumstances can I have A. S. do the massage, etc. For it would not do any good neither to her or to me. I cannot bear the thought that I am like God to her. I do not possess those attributes. You should take it that I merely suffer her. So you must dissuade her. I certainly can dissuade her myself but I should not like to shoulder the responsibility.

It is true that I rarely sleep facing you. The reason is this; I have let her get into a certain habit. I cannot suddenly break away. Here it is not a question of a person being of the same sex or the opposite sex but of a person as person. It would have been the same if I had allowed a man to get into the habit. There is one thing about her though. She is not able to cling to me. I had the desire but with some difficulty I have freed myself from it.

As for you, I could sleep with you all the time and still it would not be enough for you. To satisfy that desire of yours I would have to give up sleeping. I could do even that. But I have not found it necessary. That is why I have been putting up with it as far as possible. I have told you that I find it difficult to sleep with somebody in bodily contact with me. I would put up with that only if you came to sleep early and left after a little physical contact. But I would not be very eager for it because when I am really asleep, I cannot do even that. I would like you to be satisfied with whatever physical contact you have while serving me. To give you that satisfaction I would be willing not to take service from any other person and have yours. I would not test you. I would regard it sinful to do so. For testing you I would not sleep with you even for a moment. My faith is backed by knowledge. I had to ask you about the Koran, and theknowledge that I gained thereby was sufficient for me. I have no doubt about it at all.

Now I think I have replied to most of the points. In short

(1) I only want to take from you whatever service you can give.

(2) When Sushila comes, you may discontinue your services for her sake, but I would have no objection if you continued. I would like it as much as I do service from Sushila. A. S. means a lot to me. But because of her mistaken belief, I only put up with such service as she gives. I would be happy if she left me today. I would be happy if she gave up serving me today. That is my sincere attempt. It is the opposite in your case. I would like to accept as much service from you as you would give. I have taken that service. I have known its worth.

(3) Hence, you have got to free me soon from massage by A. S.

I forgot to mention one thing. I do not like it the least bit that you lie on a mat all through the night. I know I could have pampered you. I purposely hardened my heart. It is your duty to sleep on a proper bed covering yourself. It is wrong and sinful not to do so. It is certainly upsetting for me. So, it is not right that, even if unwittingly, you are testing me by sleeping on a mat.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

385. LETTER TO SEVAGRAM WORKERS

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

Monday, November 11, 1940

I had suspected Amtul Salaambehn's hand in the disappearance of Radhabehn's letter. Hence it is necessary to say that I would not have chosen her for a very sacred mission like fasting, if the suspicion had been substantiated. The suspicion was not very well-founded. But why should I hide my slightest suspicion from one whom I look upon as my own child? My suspicion had no meaning but this. That too is no more. It will always remain a mystery as to who took that letter. I still do not know about it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 639 and 6366

386. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 11, 1940

DAUGHTER,

I hope you are getting letters every day. Your news has appeared in the Press. Akbar is well. I have not been able to do anything about Niyamat's daughter. I shall do something. The rest from Pyarelal. I think of you very often. Bari's letter has been received.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 437

387. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

SEVAGRAM,
November 11, 1940

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

Your letter is good. I have made proper arrangements about land, etc. I shall do more if I remain free. Yourself, Parnerkar[2], Chimanlal, Sukhabhai[3], etc., are, of course, remaining out.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1938

388. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

Silence Day, November 11, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Settle the account of Pratapchandraji at the rate of forty. He is leaving today.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4362

[1] For Gandhiji's letter to Bari Khan, *vide* "Letter to Bari Khan", 11-11-1940
[2] Jashwant Mahadev Parnerkar
[3] Sukhabhau Chowdhary

389. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[Before *November 12, 1940*][1]

DAUGHTER,

I am waiting for your long letter. Jamshedji[2] has written that he is anxious. Pyarelal keeps on writing. Everything is going on well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 440

390. LETTER TO NIRMALANANDA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 12, 1940

DEAR NIRMALANANDA[3],

There is no fasting just now. If it comes, no one will be allowed to join me. But what you suggest may be adopted after I am gone. If I survive, I shall issue instructions about the future. You should, therefore, qualify yourself by further discipline and hold yourself in patience.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1393

391. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 12, 1940

DAUGHTER,

Now I get your news from newspapers. May God be your friend.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 438

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's "waiting for" news from Amtussalaam; *vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Amtussalaam", 12-11-1940

[2] Mayor, Karachi Corporation

[3] Earlier known as G. V. Gurjale

392. LETTER TO MADALASA AGRAWAL

November 13, 1940

CHI. MADALASA[1],

I have your letter.

I shall reply to Sardar.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 320

393. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

November 13, 1940

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. Your letter to Mahadev too has been received. You must have got the news from Mahadev. It does not seem proper that all of you should start courting imprisonment just when he is going round meeting everybody. You may go after Mahadev has visited you. If you think it necessary to consult me too, come over here. Otherwise I will definitely send Mahadev. If he goes there directly[2], he will not be able to carry my final decision. Please, therefore, change the dates a little if necessary. Excellent preparations are being made in Berar too. There is a letter from Patil[3] of Bombay and I am replying to him. I take it that you will read it.

Mahadev will arrive on Friday night. It seems best that Mangaldas[4] and Dada should write[5] to the Governor. That is the proper course. There is no question of their resigning, but courtesy demands that they should explain their reasons in the letters. I see that you expect me to send a draft. I cannot send it today, as I have other

[1] Second daughter of Jamnalal Bajaj and wife of Shriman Narayan

[2] From Delhi

[3] S. K. Patil, General Secretary of Bombay Provincial Congress Committee for 17 years; became its President in 1946; Central Minister, 1957-63 and 1964-67

[4] Mangaldas Pakvasa, President, Bombay Legislative Council, 1937-47; Solicitor for 30 years

[5] About their intention of participating in individual civil disobedience

work to attend to. Will it be all right if I send it with Mahadev? I will send it today if possible. Those who are not in the priority list can also go to prison, but I am inclined to send them in after you all have gone. If, however, after studying the local situation you think it necessary that they should go, you may ask them to do so. I insist that Narahari should not be dragged just now. If anyone is upset by his not joining, it would be a matter of pain for me.

Rafi[1] was with me only for half an hour. He only wanted to know the trend of my thinking. Jawaharlal had told all of them that they should quietly carry out my instructions.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

DR. KANUGA'S BUNGALOW

ELLIS BRIDGE

AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 244-6

394. ADVICE TO URMILA MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,

November 13, 1940

Be a good girl. You are good, but be better still and grow bigger everyday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 1609. Courtesy: Manjulabehn M. Mehta

[1] Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, Minister in U. P., 1936-39; later Central Minister for Communication and Food

395. LETTER TO MANJULABEHN M. MEHTA

[*November 13, 1940*][1]

Urmila is enjoying herself. Today she brought her autograph book and got everyone to write something in it. I asked her if she was getting everyone to write in it, to which she replied that she approached only those whom she thought to be good people.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 1612. Courtesy: Manjulabehn M. Mehta

396. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 13, 1940

DAUGHTER,

Received your telegram. Also the letter. Yes, your brothers are certainly good. I hope you are keeping good health. You have asked for a telegram. It is not quite necessary now. I had written to Kafi[2] and also to Bari. You will, of course, do good work there. Listen to everyone and talk little. I am well. Lakshmidas is also doing well. Everything about Islam Bi has been done. Lakshmidas has no fever. I do feel your absence.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 439

397. DISCUSSION WITH KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA[3]

[*November 13, 1940*][4]

As I have mentioned in my writings, I have been feeling for a long time that a prolonged fast is yet to be my lot. The war that is raging, the country's slavery and the importance for the whole world

[1] From the reference to Urmila; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] Addressee's brother

[3] Reporting a summary of the discussion in his circular letter dated November 14, 1940, to Provincial Committees of Gandhi Seva Sangh, Kishorelal Mashruwala said that it took place on the "previous day"

[4] *ibid*

of India attaining its independence through non-violence are the considerations that make this supreme sacrifice on my part inevitable. At the same time I am a little nervous at the prospect. I wish I could see my way. I am not trying to move towards the fast. I am being drawn towards it.

In a way it is good. For, the time I am taking to prepare myself inwardly for the step is also preparing the masses and all of you for it. Maybe people will after a time so much come to expect it that they may begin to ask why I do not start the fast.

I cannot yet tell under what conditions the fast will come. If it comes while I am still out of jail, I shall tell you what you ought to do and, so long as I keep the strength, I shall continue to give you instructions. It may be that before starting the fast I shall issue a statement. But it is also possible that the Government may arrest me and the fast may come while I am in jail. In that eventuality I shall neither be able to issue a statement nor give you instructions. And I have already said that I am not going to appoint a successor. So you will all have to act as you think best. And, if someone then emerges as a guide, he will do so on his own merits.

I may have to fast in jail. But from this you should not conclude that I have already decided on it. Even if I should be in jail, I would gladly serve my term if the situation outside should be promising of a solution.

So far as I can see, the contemplated fast can only be conditional. It will not be a fast unto death. It will be for the accomplishment of a purpose. Spiritually it cannot be considered of the highest order. Still the purpose sought to be accomplished is sufficiently pure to deserve sacrifice of life. If the purpose is accomplished, the fast can be terminated. So this will be striving—a sort of *tapasya*—in the form of a fast, to attain a specific goal.

But although the fast will be a conditional one, seeing the present situation and the present attitude of the British, it is not likely that the Government will change their policy to save my life. Saving their own lives has become so important to them that they will not hesitate to sacrifice fifty Gandhis for it. At the same time they will also not have the wisdom to take to non-violence and self-purification for the solution of the problem. So they will let me make the sacrifice, not from anger but because they will be helpless.

I have also received a suggestion that before I undertake the fast

or while I am on fast, I should let a few other co-workers share in the sacrifice. So long as I am alive it will not be a wise proceeding. The purpose of this fast is not of merely local importance. It has significance not only for the whole of India, but for the whole world. The sacrifice here of fifty humble persons cannot carry as much weight as the sacrifice of one world-famous figure. And if the problem gets solved through such a sacrifice, the sole sacrifice, namely, of myself will be enough. What you should do during my fast or after it, if it should end in my death, is a matter to be considered.

The constructive programme to be sure comprises thirteen different activities. It can be further enlarged. But there are three items in it that are the most important. They are pregnant with revolutionary possibilities. They are: khadi, eradication of untouchability and Hindu-Muslim unity. The MacDonald Award and 'Pakistan' are nothing but projections of our mental attitude of treating the Harijans and Muslims as separate from us. Remember that the separation is not of their asking. It is what we have chosen to give them, what we forced them to ask for. Thus the unity between the caste Hindus and outcaste Hindus, and that between Hindus and Muslims and khadi represent a revolution in our own lives. And in order to bring about this revolution you should devote all your energies and if necessary you should be prepared to lay down your lives in the manner of Fulsingh Bhagat and Amtul Salaam.

At the time when civil disobedience is going on, those who are engaged in constructive work, and do not, therefore, want to go to jail, will continue with the work in hand. But, when other workers are insisting on a programme of jail-going, it will not be right for you to initiate a vigorous programme of constructive work. The mood among the people today is for jail-going. We should, therefore, concentrate on this.

If nevertheless a situation arises when all the people who want to go to jail have been arrested or I happen to be fasting or some local issue comes up, such as the one that has come up in Sind, then you will have to look after your work and your place. Then you should launch an agitation and die if need be and do as your inner voice prompts you. If after I am no more, your inner voice prompts you to initiate the tradition of fasting, you may do so. But I do not say that it will be necessary.

You may be called upon to lay down your lives in yet another

set of conditions. It is possible that the British or if they are defeated the occupation forces, may resort to repression to cow down people. Even State machinery can be destroyed. Such destruction to some extent may make things easier for them. But the masses by and large will not be so treated. They will be subjected to repression. For example, if the countryside does not capitulate to the occupation forces on their terms, villages may be surrounded, armed guards could be placed at public wells to keep the public away from them, crops may be destroyed and people may thus be exposed to hunger and thirst. The people must not submit. We shall have to give them courage; we shall have to undergo hunger and thirst to generate in the people the strength to bear these hardships and die rather than to collaborate with the occupation forces.

If occasion can be found for me to confer with the co-workers who have the same mission, I shall be happy. But today I do not wish to plan for any such contingency.[1]

From Hindi: C.W. 10745. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

398. MESSAGE TO STUDENTS

WARDHA,
November 14, 1940

I have received several letters from students in Madras and the United Provinces regarding their demonstration over Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's arrest and imprisonment, and the threatened reprisals by the Governments concerned. The students now desire to have a strike of protest and ask for my advice. When the whole world hangs its head in shame over the imprisonment of one of India's noblest and bravest sons, it is no wonder that the student world in India is shaken to its roots. Whilst, therefore, my sympathy is wholly with them, I must adhere to the view that the students were wrong in their walk-out as a mark of their resentment over Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's imprisonment. The Governments of the provinces are more than wrong in their threats of reprisals. The students will, however, do well not to resort to the contemplated strike of protest. If they desire my advice, they

[1] At the end of the circular Mashruwala suggested that a list of all the workers who held similar views should be made and sent to the Provincial Committees of the Gandhi Seva Sangh.

should send an authorized representative who is in full possession of the facts, of which I have but a very superficial knowledge. I shall gladly give my guidance for what it may be worth. They know how much I would value their whole- hearted co-operation in the struggle I am endeavouring to lead. In any case they will spoil their own and damage the national cause by ill-conceived and hasty action.[1]

The Hindustan Times, 15-11-1940

399. TELEGRAM TO BALRAM SINGH SRIVASTAVA[2]

SEVAGRAM
November 14, 1940

BALRAM SINGH SRIVASTAVA
STUDENTS' FEDERATION
LUCKNOW

JUST READ LETTER. HAD ADVISED[3] AGAINST STUDENTS' STRIKES. MATTER DELICATE. NO HASTY STRIKE FOR EVEN DEMONSTRATION. IF YOU HAVE STUDENTS' SPECIFIC AUTHORITY YOU SHOULD COME. AM PREPARED ADVISE AND GUIDE.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

400. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

SEVAGRAM
November 14, 1940

CHI. KANCHAN,

I had your letter. I hope you are making progress as expected. Has the itching stopped? Write to me in detail.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8277. Also C.W. 7110. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] *Vide* also the following item.

[2] In reply to the addressee's letter which sought Gandhiji's advice on the U.P. Governor's threat to rusticate the students who had associated themselves with the U.P. Provincial Students' Association, which staged a strike in protest against Jawaharlal Nehru's arrest.

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

401. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 14, 1940

DAUGHTER,

I now get reports about you from newspapers. Your letters reach me afterwards. You have gone there at the right hour.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 441

402. LETTER TO PATWARDHAN

November 14, 1940

BHAI PATWARDHAN,

I couldn't reply earlier. At present I cannot positively say that the money belongs to the school. More clarification is required before giving an opinion. That is why I am constantly keeping in touch through letters. My main worry is that the money should be safe and used only for a good purpose. My other worry is that all of you should be what you were before. Both these things need help from all of you.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

403. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 15, 1940

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

I had a chat with Sailendra. He says, it is no use bringing Vinapani[1] here. A suitable match is easily available there. It may be well to consider the question. What does she say herself? Don't you think that I have anyone ready? I hope your wife is doing well. If you

[1] Addressee's daughter, now Vinabehn K. Patel.

decide on bringing Vina, you should borrow Rs. 15 from Satis Babu. I shall repay it.

BAPU

AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE
17 JHAMA POOKER LANE
CALCUTTA
(BENGAL)

From a photostat: C.W. 1453. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

404. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

November 15, 1940

DAUGHTER,

Your article in the *Sind Observer* is beside me. I will read it when I have time. God is with you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 442

405. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

November 15, 1940

CHI. AMALA,

I got your letter. I can understand your anger. You can call yourself my enemy, but you cannot be one. If Hitlerism is to be destroyed, it will be destroyed only through non-violence, and in no other way. Yes, one of the letters addressed to you came back because of a mistake.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. MARGARETE SPIEGEL
3 WODEHOUSE ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Spiegel Papers. Courtesy:. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Presumably, the reference is to the letter dated October 17; *vide* "Letter to Margarete Spiegel", 17-10-1940

406. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHAGANJ,
November 16, 1940

AMTUSSALAAM
C/O ANAND HINGORANI
UPPER SIND COLONY
KARACHI SADAR

AM STOPPING CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE SIND. YOUR LETTER QUITE GOOD. WRITING REPLY. LOVE.

BAPU

From a Photostat: G.N. 443

407. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 16, 1940

DAUGHTER,

I got your letter. Also the telegram. I have replied to the telegram. I read every word of all your letters. Is not the situation different now? Your letter is beautiful. Your appeal, too, is very good. You are handling the situation well. We shall think later about the timing and length of the fast. There is no hurry. Persist with your mission as long as that is possible. When nothing else can be done, you will certainly undertake a fast. What you say about the Hindus is correct. Let us see. You have grasped the problem aright and are acting courageously.

You alone will write to Pir Saheb[1]. If a rejoinder has to be issued subsequently, I shall do it. You can send for Gulzar Khan[2] or Qureshi[3], if you need any help.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 444

[1] Pir of Bharchundi
[2] A Congress worker of Ahmedabad
[3] Ghulam Rasul Qureshi

408. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 16, 1940

CHI. ANAND,

Do work, taking care of your health. Amtussalaam gets full help from both of you. Really, God is the sole protector for her and all of us.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India, and Anand T. Hingorani

409. NOTE TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
[Before *November 17, 1940*][1]

The purpose of keeping Rajkumari here is that when all, including myself, have gone to jail, she will remain outside and look after routine matters. She has the capacity for it. She will remain here. If the Government starts shooting, she should face it and be prepared to die. I believe that she has the courage. Even if she does not, there is nothing to lose.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 243

410. NOTE FOR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

[After *November 17, 1940*][2]

Please tell Vallabhbhai that I am becoming more and more firm in my opposition to the Government. For the present only those whom I have chosen may go to jail. If they do not arrest me, I will send all the rest, as many of them as the Government wants. If they arrest me, the whole thing will be in God's hands.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 243

[1] The addressee was arrested on November 17, 1940.
[2] *ibid*

411. LETTER TO VASUKAKA JOSHI

November 18, 1940

DEAR VASUKAKA,

Your letter is interesting. How long have you been on this diet? What is the quantity of lemon-juice, the variety of vegetables and their weight and the weight of baked sweet potato? Sweet potatoes vary in size.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 7916

412. LETTER TO DR. S. K. VAIDYA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA ,
November 18, 1940

BHAI VAIDYA,

Though I wanted to write to you, I could not manage it. Kakubhai[2] has written a long letter about you. If you can devote yourself to khadi work and get absorbed in it, I would not ask you to join the civil disobedience just now. If you wish to come over and stay here for some time, you may do so. Whether the food, climate, etc., will suit you remains to be seen. Do as you wish.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5741

413. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

SEVAGRAM,
November 18, 1940

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

I have your letter. Accordingly I have written to Bhai Vaidya. Pass it on to him if you think fit.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10849. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Vasukaka Joshi", 11-11-1940
[2] Purushottam K. Jerajani

414. LETTER TO GHULAM RASUL QURESHI

November 18, 1940

CHI. QURESHI,

I have your beautiful letter. Who knows what Islam says? It has nowhere advocated suicide. Amtul Salaam will do as God ordains. I understand about the Muslim League. It is our job to win them over also. Many may have to die before we achieve our non-violent victory. If you cultivate sincere love, there will be work here itself [without going to jail]. Get Amina operated upon. You or Gulzar Khan may have to help Amtul Salaam, if she needs help. Of course I have written[1] [to her] to get help from Karachi.

BHAI GHULAM RASUL QURESHI
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10766. Courtesy: Ghulam Rasul Qureshi

415. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,
November 18, 1940

CHI. KANCHAN,

I got your letter after a long time. You write nothing about your health. How are you? We can think of satyagraha only after you are fully restored. There is no hurry. The struggle is a long one. Keep writing to me. The place remains as crowded as before. I think it will be less after three days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8276. Also C.W. 7111. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Anand T. Hingorani", 16-11-1940

416. LETTER TO MANEKLAL GANDHI

November 18, 1940

CHI. MANEKLAL,

I got your letter. I had got the telegram, too. I was glad. Kalabhai has been released from suffering.

Blessings from
BAPU

MANEKLAL AMRITLAL GANDHI
PORBANDAR
KATHIAWAD

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33135

417. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 18, 1940

DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. Everything will be sent afterwards to Anand. I have heard some fulminations from the Press. Whatever we do, will be done in the name of God alone. We are not doing anything to please anyone else. If the Hindus go berserk, we shall think again. Whatever you do, you should do only after consulting Maulana Saheb. When he leaves the place, then it will be a different thing. It was good that you went to Hatim's[1] place. You shall, of course, keep silent. You should not be afraid of abuses. I shall certainly go to the telephone, but I do not know whether I shall be able to hear. Qureshi's letter is enclosed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 447

418. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 18, 1940

DEAR SISTER,

I got your letter. The fast should cause no anxiety. If I undertake it, God alone will make me do so. Hence the fruit is bound to be wholesome. At present the question does not arise.

[1] Hatim Alvi, a nationalist Muslim

We shall think about your courting imprisonment. The conference[1] work has got to be done. The struggle is likely to be a long one. Hence it would be better if you join late.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7992. Also C.W. 3089. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

419. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 20, 1940

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. Yes, all the Puranas are worth reading. They are real history of all time. I am glad you are having more and more peace.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABEHN
PALAMPUR
KANGRA DISTRICT
PUNJAB

From the original: C.W. 6465. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10060

420. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 20, 1940

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter. There is certainly anger in your letter. There is pain in it, too. You go from one extreme to another. There was a time when I was your all-in-all. How is it possible that I have changed so much, as you think I have? When you were angry with Devdas and did not write to him, I used to plead with you against such anger. Once

[1] Presumably, the reference is to the All-India Women's Conference which was to be held at Bangalore from December 27 under the presidency of the addressee.

you have formed an opinion, you altogether lose the power to see the other side. But what is the use of arguing with you about such matters? Suffice it to say that I am the same as I have ever been to you. You yourself will grant it one day.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7362. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

421. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

November 21, 1940

CHI. BAPA,

I have your two letters.

Write to Dr. Subbarayan's wife[1]. She will join [individual civil disobedience]. Consider the changes suggested by me in the rules, and incorporate such of them as you think proper. There is no need to specify Hindu Harijans. Harijans are Hindus. We need an institution for the backward classes. Our purpose will be served if the manager of the institution is an efficient man. It does not seem possible to resume *Harijan* in the near future.

Vinoba has trained a man for leprosy work. He is like a *rishi.* We had Rajabali's money. Out of it we have kept aside Rs. 25,000. This is the first project of this kind undertaken by Indians. Phooke[n] had started one, but it was meant for show. This one is filled with great *tapascharya.*

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1186

422. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[Before *November 21, 1940*][2]

DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. I do not approve of your *roza*[3]. But I shall not interfere from this distance. You will not undertake a fast without my permission. You must be guided by Maulana Saheb as long as he is

[1] Radha Subbarayan
[2] *Vide* the following item.
[3] Dawn-to-dusk fast during Ramzan month observed by devout Muslims

there. While you are still busy meeting people, there is no occasion for undertaking a fast. The fact that you suffer from asthma indicates that God does not approve of your *rozas.*

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 445

423. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 21, 1940

DAUGHTER,

I got your letter. Also the telegram. I am still considering the matter of *rozas.* As long as there is work to do, one should preserve one's health. But I shall not instruct you from here. Now you are able to speak something and the Muslims listen to you. Hindus will, of course, listen. Hence devote yourself to propaganda work for the present. When all the work is over, we shall think what should be done next. Do not let your health get worse.

Baqui[1] has written that there was some important news about you in the papers. He may have sent the cutting to you also. I sent him a long reply.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 450

424. LETTER TO SYED MAHMUD

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 22, 1940

MY DEAR MAHMUD,

Your letter. Don't think of civil disobedience. The first thing is to get well. You must have a radical cure. Shaukat showed me a scheme which bore your name. But your denial is quite enough for me. He showed me also copy of the draft I gave you. Brelvi[2]

[1] Addressee's brother
[2] S. A. Brelvi, Editor, *The Bombay Chronicle*

mentioned the fast and so your name was connected with it as you were with him. But why worry about these things?

Love.

BAPU

DR. SYED MAHMUD, M.L.A.
CHHAPRA
BIHAR

From a photostat: G.N. 5081

425. DISCUSSION WITH TAI CHI-TAO[1]

[*November 22/23, 1940*][2]

TAI CHI-TAO: We are passing through difficult times. I want to know how we can get through our difficulty successfully. Victory is not enough; future peaceful relations between nations must also be established.

The President, who is of a deeply religious temperament and had evinced a great interest in the constructive activities here and in Sethji's temple at Wardha, had a rosary of beads in his hand.

Gandhiji, after making inquiries about his health begged to introduce him to the spinning-wheel which, he said, was among the latest inventions, and plied the wheel as he answered the President's question.

GANDHIJI: Just as you are engaged in a terrific life-and-death struggle, so are we. Yours is an ancient country and so is ours and although yours is a much bigger country than ours, ours is not by any means a small country and there is much in common between you and us. Speaking personally, I may inform you that I was in touch with the Chinese colony in Johannesburg and gave them legal advice. They were a colony of 1,200 and I came in closest I touch with everyone of them and so the Chinese are not strangers to me by any means. Although you are engaged in a life-and-death struggle and so

[1] The discussion is extracted from a statement by Mahadev Desai who explained that the goodwill mission of Tai Chi-Tao, President of Examination of Yuan of Chinese Government, was in return for Jawaharlal Nehru's visit to China in 1939. The statement said that the visiting President had brought special message for Gandhiji from Chiang Kai-Shek and the Kuomintang. *Vide* also "Letter to Chiang Kai-Shek", 26-11-1940.

[2] Mahadev Desai says that Tai Chi-Tao, his Secretary and others were in Wardha on November 22 and 23 as guests of Jamnalal Bajaj, who had come from Bombay specially for the occasion.

are we, the means we employ for regaining our freedom are different from the means you employ for retaining your freedom. This does not mean that I want to criticize the means you have adopted. The remedy you employ in self-defence is an age-old one. I am employing a remedy which is unknown to the world on the political field. But since you have come all the way from China merely to reciprocate the good wishes that Pandit Jawaharlal carried there, the only service I can render in my humble way is to put forward before you and, through you, the Generalissimo, the new remedy I am applying. I found it in South Africa in 1906, when all my resources were exhausted, in order to combat difficulties which might have meant the death of the Indian community in the Transvaal if we had not found this remedy. And since 1920, we have applied this remedy more or less successfully, perhaps with more success than otherwise, till at last the Congress has become a powerful body, and in a nutshell, it is this, viz., to be prepared to die as bravely as the bravest Chinese soldier, but without trying to kill your opponent or do the slightest harm to him, whether in offence or self-defence. If we succeed here in instilling into the mass mind bravery to die without killing, I think that not only shall we have regained our liberty without violence but we shall have presented to the world a remedy to do away with all wars. If I have succeeded in giving you the kernel of the movement, I would ask you to watch this movement with interest and bless it on behalf of China. More I cannot say until we have regained our liberty with these absolutely peaceful means.

You will see that it is not without a purpose that I have taken up the wheel at the present moment when, ordinarily speaking, it would be discourtesy to a guest to keep spinning when he comes. But I have taken it up both to demonstrate the process and to show you how, externally speaking, I derive all the power of peace from the spinning-wheel. You will have noticed that the spinning-wheel finds a central place in our national flag, and it is the one thing which establishes a living relation and identification with the masses of India.

President Tai Chi-Tao said that he was greatly inspired by the message. He had heard a great deal from newspapers about Gandhiji's peaceful method and all it had accomplished, but he was grateful to hear it from his lips....

TAI CHI-TAO: We had no alternative. We had to resist violent aggression after a long waiting. But now we have a movement to make our country self-sufficient; in our villages, the spinning-wheel has returned. Nearly ninety per cent of our houses have their wheels, not so modern as yours, but old-fashioned. We have been thus

compelled by necessity to revive our national village industry. All the big factories have been destroyed and bombed and some have moved to the interior and so we have to depend more or less on the spinning-wheel which cannot be bombed. Your spinning-wheel gives me new inspiration.

Gandhiji now gave a demonstration on the latest model, the Dhanush *Takli*, and offered both the wheels as presents to President Tai Chi-Tao. But he had already purchased the wheels in the morning. As he rose to take leave, His Excellency said:

I pray that, for the welfare of India and China and for the whole of humanity, you may have a long life, and I pray, on behalf of all members of the Kuomintang Party, for your welfare and for the welfare of your family.

G(Laughing). My family is a family of 350 millions.

T. All mankind.

G. Yes, if I can make good my claim for 350 millions I will advance the other claim. Please carry my good wishes to the Generalissimo, to the Madame, his staff and all who are putting up a brave fight in self-defence and I wish you early peace.

As Gandhiji went out of the hut to bid the President farewell, the latter, having a full view of him standing in broad daylight remarked:

T. Your health is extraordinarily good.

G(Smiling) . Yes, the charkha keeps me healthy and then I do not carry any cares on my head. I have cast them on the broad shoulders of God.

The Hindu, 26-11-1940

426. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

[Before *November 23, 1940*][1]

Those who are sickly and those who cherish the hope of a speedy compromise should not go to jail.

The Hindustan Times, 24-11-1940

[1] The letter was reported under the date-line "Ahmedabad, November 23".

427. LETTER TO TARABEHN N. MASHRUWALA

SEVAGRAM,
[Before *November 23, 1940*][1]

CHI. TARA,

I got your letter. You are ruining your health. You will not do justice to Prithvi Singh either, if you do not make the needed changes in your diet. Stay here under Dr. Das's supervision or under that of the doctor at Poona. Do anything you like, but resolve to get well. It will do you no good to try anything after your health has completely broken down.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7531. Also C.W. 5007. Courtesy: Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

428. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHAGANJ,
November 23, 1940

BIBI AMTUSSALAAM
CARE HATIM ALVI SAHEB
GARDEN ROAD
KARACHI

RECEIVED TWO LETTERS TELEGRAM. MOVE CAUTIOUSLY. NO HURRY ABOUT FASTING.[2] YOUR PRESENCE IS HAVING EFFECT. WHILE MAULANA THERE BE GUIDED BY HIM. WHY WANT QURESHI AND ZOHRA? HOPE KEEPING WELL. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 451

[1] From the reference to the addressee's health in this and the letter dated November 23, *vide* "Letter to Tarabehn N. Mashruwala", 23-11-1940

[2] *Vide* also letters to the addressee, "Letter to Amtussalaam", 16-11-1940, "Letter to Antussalaam", 21-11-1940 and "Letter to Amtussalaam", 24-11-1940

429. LETTER TO TARABEHN N. MASHRUWALA

SEVAGRAM,
November 23, 1940

CHI. TARA[1],

I vote for Sevagram. I have not accepted defeat. You know my attachment. I have good facilities here to cure you. I will send for you when you are ready. I am ready and all the arrangements made.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7530. Also C.W. 5006. Courtesy: Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

430. INTERVIEW TO M. L. SHAH[2]

[Before *November 24, 1940*][3]

Gandhiji agreed with me that students should have freedom to arrange meetings and take out processions in a peaceful and orderly manner to express their resentment against repressive measures.

Regarding political strikes, such as those on the arrest of national leaders, Gandhiji advised that students should create an atmosphere which may win the sympathies of the educational authorities, who might themselves close the institutions.

Gandhiji felt sorry when he heard about forced war contributions from students, and advised the students to resist all such actions. He appreciated the potentialities of the students, and if he succeeded in getting their support to his constructive programme, he was confident that the students would form the vanguard of the struggle.[4]

The Hindustan Times, 25-11-1940

[1] Also called Tari, sister of Sushila Gandhi

[2] The interview appeared as "stated by Mr. M. L. Shah, General Secretary of the All-India Students' Federation, who recently met Mahatma Gandhi at Wardha and explained to him the attitude of the authorities towards the student movements'.

[3] Reported under the date-line "Lucknow, November 24"

[4] The report concluded with M. L. Shah's appeal to the students "to co-operate with him to fulfil the assurance which he has given 'to the noblest and greatest friend of the student community' by being peaceful in all that they did and said".

431. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 24, 1940

DAUGHTER,

I was busy with so many things yesterday that I could not write to you.

I have read your thirty-page letter from beginning to end. All letters are preserved. During the telephone talk today I gave answers according to my lights. I said that Qureshi and Zohra might not be sent now. The fast should not be undertaken in a hurry. Everything has to be done in consultation with the Maulana. I shall send Qureshi and Zohra when the need arises. Have you done anything about funds? I shall send money when needed. Write to me how much you want and what for. You have not to interfere in other matters. Your job is to clear the atmosphere and, if bloodshed cannot be stopped, to undertake a fast. Whether the prisoners are released or not is a separate issue. But your plain duty is to observe everything and do my bidding. Your mission is to bring peace to all people there. Close your ears to all political talk.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 452

432. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
November 25, 1940

DEAR ANAND,

Your letters are helpful. Continue. How is Jairamdas? How about your ears? How about Vidya?

BAPU

SHRI ANAND T. HINGORANI
UPPER SIND COLONY
KARACHI SADAR

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India, and Anand T. Hingorani

433. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SEVAGRAM,
November 25, 1940

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter and also saw your name in the list[1]. God will protect you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10415. Also C.W. 6854. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

434. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

November 25, 1940

CHI. VIJAYA,

You kept me waiting for a long time. Only today I got your letter. All that I want is that you should take care of your health. Then you may stay anywhere you like. Flood and ebb alternate here. Amtul Salaam is in Sind. She is doing good work there. Pyarelal has gone to Delhi to see his mother. Then he will go on a tour. Annapurna is here. As Bachu[2] is to be operated upon for tonsils in Delhi, Manojna[3] has gone there today.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VIJAYABEHN
DAKSHINAMURTI GRAMSHALA
AMBLA, *via* SONAGADH
KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7134. Also C.W. 4626. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

[1] Of persons for offering individual civil disobedience
[2] Nirmala Desai, step-sister of Mahadev Desai
[3] Wife of Krishnadas Gandhi, Chhaganlal Gandhi's son

435. LETTER TO GHULAM RASUL QURESHI

November 25, 1940

CHI. QURESHI,

I am glad your letter is quite frank. I will not send either you or Gulzar Khan. You cannot go leaving the work there unfinished. I shall explain things to Amtul Salaam.

Blessings form

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10767. Courtesy: Ghulam Rasul Qureshi

436. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

November 25, 1940

DAUGHTER,

I got your letter. You are in too great a hurry. I shall send both Akbar and Hanif[1], if they are of any use to you. You have not gone there for doing khadi work. It is good if it appeals to the poor Muslims. But first you should look with your eyes open and find out who the poor are and how they live. You have only one mission: to stop the bloodshed. If you get involved in the political controversies between Hindus and Muslims, rest assured that your mission will fail. You have seen Anand's letters, also those of Jamshedji. Have differences cropped up between you and these people? I shall get nervous if you develop disagreements with such people. What does Hatim say? In any case, try and understand Maulana Saheb's view. He will come here. We are not going to do anything against his wishes.

Pyarelal will now come on Thursday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 453

[1] A khadi worker of Punjab

437. MESSAGE TO BENGAL CONGRESSMEN[1]

[Before *November 26, 1940*][2]

I expect great things from Bengal.[3] My expectations can only be realized if all parties sink their differences and work for the common cause.

The Hitavada, 29-11-1940

438. LETTER TO CHIANG KAI-SHEK

November 26, 1940

DEAR GENERALISSIMO,

I am deeply grateful to you for your affectionate letter received through the goodwill mission[4] you have so thoughtfully sent. Shri Tai Chi-Tao has given me, too, your verbal message. My only regret is that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru will not be able to receive the members of the mission when they reach Allahabad.

I have no doubt that the mission has drawn our countries close together.

May your deliverance take place sooner than expected.

With revered good wishes for you, your good wife and your nation.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10410. Courtesy: Pyarelal

439. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHAGANJ,
November 27, 1940

AMTUSSALAAM
CARE JAI RAMDAS DOULATRAM
HYDERABAD (SIND)

TELEGRAM NOT YET RECEIVED. YOU MUST NOT DO THINGS PROHIBITED BY MAULANA. AM CONFERRING

[1] &[2] The message, "brought by Surendra Mohan Ghosh, President, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, who lately went to Wardha to see Mahatma Gandhi", was reported under the date-line "Calcutta, November 26".

[3] *Vide* footnote 2, "Discussion with Tai Chi-Tao", 22/23-11-1940

[4] The reference is to the launching of satyagraha in Bengal.

WITH HIM. AWAIT INSTRUCTIONS. REMAIN SILENT QUIET WITHOUT WORRY.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 454

440. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHAGANJ,
November 27, 1940

AMTUSSALAAM
CARE JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
HYDERABAD (SIND)

RECEIVED MAULANA'S MESSAGE PEREMPTORILY ADVISING ME RECALL YOU. UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES COME IMMEDIATELY. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 455

441. LETTER TO SIR J. G. LAITHWAITE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 27, 1940

DEAR MR. LAITHWAITE,

I would like you to place this before His Excellency and the contents to be telegraphed, if possible, to the Secretary of State for India or to be brought to his notice in such manner as His Excellency may wish.

The Secretary of State is reported by the Press as follows:[1]

> The Congress under Mr. Gandhi's leadership has decided to express its dissatisfaction by a campaign of defiance of law by instalments. What they (my colleagues) have demanded is the right to urge Indians not to recruit, not to work in munition factories or to contribute voluntary contributions to the War Committee.

While it is not possible in theory to deny the truth of the statement, Mr. Amery should have known that he was giving his

[1] He was speaking in the House of Commons on November 20.

uninformed audience a view which was not warranted by the following from my Press statement of October 15[1], 1940:

> I know that India has not one mind. There is a part of India that is war-minded and will learn the art of war through helping the British. The Congress has no desire, therefore, to surround ammunition factories or barracks and prevent people from doing what they like.

And add to the above the following slogan which I have standardized, and on the strength of which civil resisters are being imprisoned: "It is wrong to help the British war effort with either men or money. The only worthy effort is to resist all war by non-violent resistance."

It is wholly wrong to say that we have demanded the right to urge voluntary contributors not to pay voluntary contributions. The truth is that undue pressure and even force is being used on behalf of the British Government to extract money from unwilling parties who in several cases are even too poor to pay.

Then I take the following from the Secretary of State's speech about Pandit Nehru:

> Vinoba Bhave was to have been followed by Pandit Nehru who, however, outstripped Mr. Gandhi both in time and I believe in the character of the speeches he made. The speeches were violent and deliberately provocative and were deliberately aimed at hampering the war effort and did so in effect as well as in intention. In any case Pandit Nehru's sentence was a matter not for the executive but for the law. If the sentence is judged by him to be excessive, he has the right to appeal.

I regard this as a cruel libel uttered against a man who has been put behind prison bars. There is nothing in his speeches having the slightest odour of violence. I must deny that Pandit Nehru outstripped me. Indeed the Provincial Government outstripped me. They knew that he had come to me to fix up when, where and how he was to offer civil disobedience. In my letter[2] of October 30, 1940, I had informed His Excellency that the Pandit was the next to offer civil disobedience and that, as soon as the date and place were finally fixed, I would inform him. And yet before he could arrange affairs, his journey was interrupted and he was taken to Gorakhpur for trial. It is worse than a cruel mockery to suggest against the charge of a vindictive sentence that Pandit Nehru could have appealed against the sentence, if he had so chosen. The Rt. Hon. the Secretary of State surely knew that Pandit Nehru would not appeal against the sentence.

[1] The source, however, has "14"; *Vide* "Civil Disobedience"

[2] *Vide* "To the Reader"

I write this because I feel grieved that one who has the charge of the affairs of a sub-continent should have dealt with friendly opponents in a manner ill befitting his charge. British statesmen seem to go out of their way to court the doubtful friendship of powers who have no friendly feeling for Britian and to lose no opportunity of estranging those who would gladly befriend them.

I have written all this in sorrow, not in anger, certainly not for publication.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7857. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

442. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM,
November 27, 1940

CHI. LILI,

There is no need to go right up to the Dean for permission to have a mosquito-net. You should quietly submit to the rules unless violation of a moral principle is involved.

You did well in reporting the conversation with the Dean. This shows that it is your duty to pass all your examinations diligently.

Forget Sevagram and get engrossed in your studies. Think about the fast only when it starts. Now your path is straight and that itself is your guideline. You must not look this way or that.

You sign your letters as 'obediently'. You have already got my orders.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9598. Also C.W. 6570. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] The addressee's reply dated November 30, read: "His excellency asks me to acknowledge with many thanks your letter of 27th November, and to say that he is at once communicating it to the Secretary of State."

443. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD[1]

[After *November 27, 1940*][2]

BIHAR ACCOUNTS ARE DISTURBING. WHY DOES A PROVINCE THAT WAS THE BEST CAUSE ANXIETY? THERE SHOULD BE NO DEMONSTRATION. AUTHORITIES SHOULD BE INFORMED AND NOT THE PUBLIC OF IMPENDING RESISTANCE.

The Hindu, 4-12-1940

444. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHAGANJ,
November 28, 1940

AMTUSSALAAM
CARE JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
HYDERABAD (SIND)

RECEIVED NOW LONG TELEGRAM. IMPOSSIBLE MY GOING. RETURN IMMEDIATELY SO AS BE HERE WHEN MAULANA COMES. AM WELL NOW.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 456

[1] The telegram was quoted by the addressee, in the course of a statement, along with his reply which read: "Babu Sri Krishna Sinha's resistance was marred by an accident on the 27th." In his *Autobiography*, , the addressee recalls: "In Bihar, as I had been advised against joining the movement because of my ill-health, the onus of inaugurating the satyagraha fell on Dr. Sri Krishna Sinha. It was decided that, on the first day, Dr. Sinha would offer satyagraha at the Bankipore maidan. . . when Dr. Sinha came to the maidan . . . there . . . was a noisy demonstration which did not cease till he had been arrested and taken to jail."

[2] *ibid*

445. LETTER TO ABDUL WADUD SARHADI[1]

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 28, 1940

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Opinions differ in your province itself. Everyone is left to his own free choice whether to offer civil disobedience or not. But if he does, he has to conform to conditions laid down, one of which is belief in Hindu-Muslim unity. In the circumstances no one should have anything to say against civil disobedience.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

446. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,
November 29, 1940

My attention has been drawn to some paragraphs appearing in the Press, purporting to give my opinion about the questions agitating the students. I have not read all that has appeared in the Press, if only because I want to conserve my energy, on which of late I have been obliged to put an unduly heavy strain.

My opinion is firm.[2] No provocation should be allowed to justify political strikes by students unless they have made up their mind once for all to abandon their college or school studies. Unlike as in free countries, our educational institutions are controlled by the rulers from whom the nation is struggling to free itself. Self-suppression is, therefore, the price the students must pay for receiving the education evolved and controlled by the rulers. They cannot have the cake and eat it, too. If they want the education which the schools and colleges impart, and evidently they do, they have to conform to

[1] The addressee, President, Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Sarhad, in his letter dated November 23 to Gandhiji, had disapproved of the Civil Disobedience Movement and suggested unity between Congress and Muslim League as a worthy effort.

[2] *Vide* also "Message to Students", 14-11-1940

the rules and regulations laid down for these institutions. Therefore, unless the heads of the institutions consent, there should be no political strikes.

But I have suggested a way out. Students have ample time, after school and college hours, of which they are their own masters. They can hold meetings, express their sympathy with the national cause in an orderly manner and they can have processions, too, if they like. Those who wish to take part in civil disobedience and accept my leadership can do so after suspending their studies for the time being, by conforming to the conditions laid down for offering individual civil disobedience and after receiving my permission.

Letters being received by me from individual students show that they have little faith in my leadership, for they have no faith in the constructive programme, of which the centre and the most visible part is khadi. They do not believe in spinning and if my correspondents are to be accepted as reliable witnesses, their belief in non-violence is also a doubtful quantity. Students can play an effective part in the national struggle, if they will whole-heartedly come under the discipline. But if they will act on their own and fritter away their energy in making ineffective demonstrations, they will hinder the national cause.

I am glad to be able to testify that Congressmen are showing a measure of discipline, which is an agreeable surprise to me for I was unprepared for it. Let it not be said of the student world that, at the eleventh hour, they were found wanting. Let them remember that I am asking for greater steadfastness, greater courage and greater self-sacrifice than can be denoted by undisciplined and thoughtless demonstrations.

The students should also realize that the number of civil resisters will always be confined to a few, compared with the 350 million forming the nation. There is no limit to the number who should take part in working the constructive programme. I regard this as the most useful and effective part of the movement for independence, without which civil resistance will cease to be civil and, therefore, be utterly valueless.

The Hindu, 30-11-1940

447. LETTER TO VISHVAMBHAR NATH BHARGAVA

SEVAGRAM,
November 29, 1940

BHAI VISHVAMBHAR NATHJI[1],

I have your letter[2]. Individual advice can be only subject to the Congress Committee's. If I unknowingly give an opposite advice it should not be followed.

Ramnarayan had asked me about Durgaprasad. I had told him that he could prefer an appeal. And if the lawyers also approve, an appeal should be preferred. Durgaprasad's case dates from before the war. But even if it arose after the war but was not concerned with the war, an appeal would lie. And on occasion it may be one's duty to file such an appeal.

I found nothing improper in what Ramnarayan told me about khadi, etc. He is very reserved with me. Except that he asked my opinion about Durgaprasad, he said nothing about Ajmer. Moreover I get very little time for talking.

But you have done well to convey your reactions to me.

The date indicated to me is all right. I think none of your questions remains unanswered now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

448. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 30, 1940

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I got your letter. If the persons whose names have been

[1] Secretary, Ajmer Provincial Congress Committee

[2] In which the addressee said that there was a talk in Ajmer that Gandhiji had permitted Durgaprasad to file an appeal which was contrary to what Gandhiji had told him. He also expressed a doubt whether, for those connected directly or indirectly with Gandhiji, Congress opinion carried more weight while they were in Congress or was it necessary to take orders from Gandhiji for matters other than satyagraha.

submitted are willing to fulfil the conditions, they may offer civil disobedience.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Raghunandanji[1] that he may well stay out for a few days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2477

449. LETTER TO SATYAVATI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 30, 1940

CHI. SATYAVATI,

You can go whenever you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2478

450. LETTER TO PATWARDHAN

November 30, 1940

BHAI PATWARDHAN,

I have your letter. I got the earlier one also. I could not reply promptly as I was busy with other things. I am still very weak. I have not been able to ask Dada Dharmadhikari. I shall do so now. Clarification is necessary because Sahasrabuddhe's doubts should be cleared. The money will be put to good use only when the school runs smoothly and the money is easily available. I will not be useful as a *Panch* but if I can convince you and Sahasrabuddhe, let me know the correct position on 1st December. When I can deal with the whole thing and if I feel the need of sending for all of you, I shall do so.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Raghunandan Saran, President, Delhi Provincial Satyagraha Committee

451. ABSTRACT OF LETTER TO MUKUNDLAL SIRCAR[1]

[Before *December 2, 1940*][2]

The issue on which individual civil disobedience has been started is undoubtedly that of free speech and free pen. But at the end of every issue is independent India. The movement was limited, in its original conception, to two or three persons, and then extended to members selected by me belonging to the Working Committee, the A.I.C.C. and the Central and Provincial Legislatures. And, according to the occasion and the reaction on me after each move, it is capable of infinite expansion. I have called for classified lists of members of Provincial Congress Committee Executives and similarly of District Congress Committees, Firka or Taluk Congress Committees, and lastly of village Congress Committees. But whatever the expansion may be, it will never be a mass movement. It will always remain, so far as I can see, individual disobedience and will be confined to those who believe in and fulfil my conditions.

The Hindu, 5-12-1940

452. LETTER TO SIR REGINALD MAXWELL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 2, 1940

DEAR SIR REGINALD,

Mahadev Desai gave me your kind message which he has embodied in the full notes he prepared for me of his doings in Delhi. The portion of the notes containing the message reads as follows:

> Well, well, I should have thought that the correct position for a man like Mr. Gandhi to take would have been to address a manifesto to the people of India stating his own position as he did in his appeal[3] to every Briton and then be quiet. Give this message from me to Mr. Gandhi.

I have been fagged out and for some days cutting down the daily work to the minimum. Hence the delay in reply. Even so, I enter

[1] The addressee, Acting General Secretary of All-India Forward Bloc, had, in a letter, asked Gandhiji about "Individual Satyagraha Movement and whether it would lead to mass civil disobedience". The letter was reported under the date-line "Calcutta, December 2".

[2] *ibid*

[3] *Vide* "To Every Briton"

into a discussion of your message for the sake of elucidating truth. I know how busy you are and care-worn. But the only way satyagraha works is by a continuous discovery of truth and action based on it. In the progress towards full discovery the satyagrahi has to show that he is ever ready and even eager to learn and appreciate the opponent's side. It is in that spirit that I approach your message.

You would be wholly right in the advice you have sent me if I was a preacher. But I have never adopted that role. I am essentially a man of action and a reformer carrying on an experiment never before tried in the political field. Hence at the risk of making mistakes even big I must continue to tread the chosen path so long as I have no sense of mistake or distrust of my action. My desire is to cause the least embarrassment to the Government consistently with the prosecution of my mission. If it is successful, it cannot fail to benefit the British side by side with India and ultimately the world. If it fails, the Government cannot be hurt. I cannot carry the argument any further. Perhaps what I have said is no argument but a bare recital of the motive behind my action and its interpretation in the light of the motive. The rest must be left to time.

Mahadev Desai told me about your dear ones being in the thick of the fight. I am conscious of the fact that what applies to you applies to almost all the known British families. How I wish I could have stood side by side with them. But duty has enjoined upon me a seemingly opposite course. I take comfort in the fact that though seeming to be in the opposite camp, I work for the same end as is declared by the British Government, only with the certain conviction that their method can never defeat Hitlerism and mine alone can, if any at all.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7858. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Acknowledging this letter on December 7, the addressee said: "I am glad to know that you are only seemingly in the opposite camp and that your end is the same as ours. Although I regret that there should be differences about the method of attaining it, I see that I must leave you to work things out in your own way."

453. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 2, 1940

CHI. MIRA,

Your nice, long letter[1] has just arrived. I understand all you write. May He be your sole guide. I am not unwell. I need rest which I am taking. Yes, I have been pestered with mice. I can't sleep if they disturb me. Their nibbling may be even poisonous. Have you a bedstead? Your net should have a strong flat roof. You must have undisturbed nights. I purposely refrain from giving you any other news or messages. I want to leave your meditation undisturbed. If you speak to Lalji[2], tell him I have him in mind.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6466. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10061

454. MESSAGE TO AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS[3]

[Before *December 4, 1940*][4]

Ever since I came in contact with you, I have tried to impress upon you that your liberation lies in your own hands. The value of labour is far greater than its price in money. You can enhance or reduce your price as you desire. But if you are satisfied with its cash value, you put your own limitation upon your worth.

The Hindu, 5-12-1940

[1] Mirabehn explains: "I had explained to Bapu how several little mice had started coming into the hut from the forest, specially at night. They found their way into my bed, sometimes nibbling my feet, sometimes running up and down my side and sometimes getting mixed up in my hair. My chief anxiety was not to squash them. And what with this anxiety and the fidgeting of the mice, sleep became a difficult problem, until I hit on the device of using a mosquito net. This proved wholly successful."

[2] Kanaiyalal Butail

[3] According to the source, the message was sent for "the Ahmedabad Labour Day celebrations held on December 4, in connection with the founding of the Textile Labour Association in 1917". All local mills remained closed and meetings were held in labour areas to explain the significance of the Day.

[4] *ibid*

455. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 4, 1940

CHI. MIRA,

This is being written immediately after reading your letter. I am referring the water difficulty to three doctors who happen to be here. One of them is Sushila. Our contract is that you will stay in the mountains provided you keep your health. Sound body is a condition of every effort material, moral or spiritual. It is good you have left off bread. The slivers went with the parcel. You should inquire about it. I hope you have not sent back the cover containing parcel receipt.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Put alum six gr. to a gallon of water. Let the water stand overnight. In the morning take out the water. Add half a teaspoonful of lime to a gallon of this water and boil and use. But you should get distilled water in Palampur. If you can, use that only.

From the original: C.W. 6467. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10062

456. LETTER TO GHULAM RASUL QURESHI

December 4, 1940

CHI. QURESHI,

I have your letter. You should not be upset or unhappy over Amtul Salaam's anger, nor be happy about her happiness. She will be here tomorrow afternoon. What about Amina's piles?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10768. Courtesy: Ghulam Rasul Qureshi

457. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 4, 1940

CHI. PRABHUDAS

I received your letter. You are unnecessarily crying your heart out. The success or otherwise of one's life is measured not by the result but by the motive. The world will always see the result. To God, result is nothing because He himself is its master. It is sufficient that you have tried and are still trying. I am not writing separately to Kashi. That Amba had a safe delivery is a welcome news. Indira's progress appears to be good. I will not write separately to them either. Manojna's Bachu also was operated upon at the same time. The operation was wholly successful. I had a letter saying that he keeps quite cheerful. Take care of your health. You need not be in a hurry to court imprisonment.[1] There is no special merit in it, though I do not rule out the idea altogether. Explain to me further why you wish to court imprisonment. If Kashi keeps good health, she may certainly go. If you wish that she does so from there, let it be so.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI PRABHUDAS GANDHI
GANDHI SEVA SADAN
ASAFPUR
DISTT. BADAUN
U.P.

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 33017

458. LETTER TO S. C. CHATTERJEE[2]

SEVAGRAM,
December 5, 1940

DEAR SIR,

The contents of the enclosed speak for themselves. I send you a copy in order that you might correct the bare statement of facts

[1] The reference is to the Individual Civil Disobedience Movement which Gandhiji had launched in October 1940.

[2] The addressee was the Principal, Christ Church College, Kanpur.

regarding your circular referred to in the letter. You will now understand why I have prevented publication of my letter until I have heard from you. I am anxious not to be instrumental in doing an unconscious injustice to you.[1]

From a photostat: C.W. 10504. Courtesy: India Office Library

459. TELEGRAM TO BARADA PRASANNA PAIN[2]

[On or before *December 6, 1940*][3]

REGRET INABILITY EVEN UNWILLINGNESS TO INTERFERE. NOTWITHSTANDING MY REGARD AND FRIENDSHIP FOR THE BROTHERS FEEL BAN CANNOT BE LIFTED WITHOUT THEIR APOLOGIZING FOR INDISCIPLINE.

The Hindu, 7-12-1940

460. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHAGANJ,
December 6, 1940

I have just read Sardar Sampuran Singh's astounding statement before the Court.[3] I do not know who passed his name. In my instructions, I had explicitly prohibited the inclusion of names such as his. But I compliment Sardar Sampuran Singh on his courage in telling the truth at the cost of his political reputation. Let his example be a warning to others that I attach no value to empty and meaningless discipline in whose name Sardar Sampuran Singh offered civil disobedience.

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to S. C. Chatterjee", 9-12-1940

[2] The addressee, "a prominent member of the Bengal Congress Parliamentary Party", had, in a telegram, requested Gandhiji "to direct the immediate withdrawal of the Congress High Command's ban on Sarat Chandra Bose and Subhas Chandra Bose in order to put an end to the wrangle in Bengal Congress politics". The telegram was reported under the date-line "Calcutta, December 6".

[3] Sampuran Singh, Leader of the Congress Party in the Punjab Legislative Assembly, was expelled from the Party for his conduct in the court. According to *The Indian Annual Register, 1940,* "Speech at Public Meeting", Bombay", 26-9-1896, Abul Kalam Azad in his letter to Sampuran Singh said: "There is nothing in the explanation you have sent me. Your replies in the court clearly demonstrate that you do not agree with the decision of the Congress about war. In spite of this you offered yourself as a satyagrahi and made both yourself and the Party of which you had the honour of being a leader, ludicrous." *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 20-12-1940.

I have also read a report of the boisterous demonstration students are alleged to have made over the arrest of Sardar Sampuran Singh in whom they saw a hero. The students should know that they have done a great disservice to the national cause. Let this unruly demonstration, assuming the correctness of the report, be a warning to Congressmen that they are not to court demonstrations.

There has been about this unfortunate case of Sardar Sampuran Singh some bungling on the part of those who were in charge of the Congress organizations. They have departed from the strict instruction that civil disobedience should be offered from villages. This is no movement to overawe or to deliberately embarrass the Government, whatever may be said to the contrary. It is a movement to express the stern determination of the Congress to pay the highest price required in the shape of self-sacrifice and suffering for vindicating national honour.

The Hindu, 7-12-1940

461. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHAGANJ,
December 7, 1940

I have just been made aware of the movement to withdraw from the match[1], I understand, as a mark of grief over the arrests and imprisonment of satyagrahis, more especially recent arrests of leaders. I must confess ignorance of these matches and the etiquette governing them. My opinion must, therefore, be taken as of a layman knowing nothing of such sports and special rules governing them. But I must confess my sympathies wholly with those who would like to see these matches stopped. I express this opinion not merely as a satyagrahi desirous of getting public support in some way or other for the movement. I must say at once that the present movement is wholly independent of such demonstrations or adventitious support. But I would discountenance such amusements at a time when the thinking world should be mourning over the war that is threatening the stable life of Europe and its civilization and which bids fare to overwhelm Asia.

[1] The reference is to the pentangular cricket match to be played in Bombay on December 12; *vide* also "Telegram to Bhalerao", 12-10-1940

I would like the public of Bombay to revise their sporting code and erase from it communal matches. I can understand matches between colleges and institutions but I never understood reasons for having Hindu, Parsi, Muslim and other communal elevens. Can you not have some field of life which cannot be touched by the communal spirit? I should like, therefore, those who have anything to do with this movement to stop the match, broaden the issue and take the opportunity of considering it from the highest standpoint and decide once for all upon banishing communal taints from sporting world and also deciding upon banishing these sports from our life whilst blood-bath is going on.

The Hitavada, 8-12-1940

462. LETTER TO S. RADHAKRISHNAN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 8, 1940

DEAR SIR RADHAKRISHNAN[1],

Certainly those who are engaged in public work are free. They need not give their names, and having given them can withdraw them without any slur being cast upon them. Therefore Ramakant can be absolved for the asking.

Many thanks for the convocation address[2]. I shall make it a point of going through it at the earliest opportunity.[3]

I think Mr. Jinnah will accept nothing unless Pakistan is granted. He has said this in clear terms.

Why do you 'hate the whole idea of satyagraha by the representatives of the people'?

Yours *sincerely*,
M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile: *Mahatma, Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi,* Vol. 6, between pages 8 and 9

[1] Vice-Chancellor, Banaras Hindu University
[2] Delivered at the University of Patna on November 29
[3] Gandhiji gave his view in letter dated December 28, to the addressee.

463. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 8, 1940

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

I had your long letter. You will not overstrain yourself. Do conserve your energy.

Amtul Salaam[1] has told me your love towards her and how you all rained torrents on her.

Your letter on the situation I understand. She is now under treatment. I won't send her back till she is quite fit. But neither she nor I will be happy till Sind is free from senseless murders. Her heart is in Sind.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 9266. Courtesy: Jairamdas Doulatram

464. LETTER TO S. C. MUKHERJEE

December 8, 1940

With regard to the renewal of the deposit in the Bank of Nagpur Ltd. on behalf of the Jallianwala Bagh Trust Fund[2], I am of opinion that the deposit should be renewed for a period of three years from the date of renewal, bearing interest at the rate of 4 per cent per annum provided that in the event of the Trust requiring the funds or part thereof at an earlier period, the withdrawal should be subject to reduction of interest at the rate for the shorter period and provided further that in the event of the Bank rate suffering increase the Trust should have the benefit of such increase.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

M. K. GANDHI

[1] She was called back from Sind; *vide* "Telegram to Amtussalaam", 27-11-1940 and "Telegram to Amtussalaam", 28-11-1940

[2] Of which Gandhiji was President, and the addressee Secretary

465. LETTER TO DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, WARDHA[1]

[*December 9, 1940*][2]

DEAR SIR,

Shri Pyarelal Nayyar, my co-worker for past twenty-five years and co-secretary with Shri Mahadev Desai, will offer civil disobedience tomorrow at 9 a.m. from the railway gate leading to Wardha from Sevagram. He will walk on in the direction of Ahjee and continue until arrested or except for rest and food. On the way he will recite the following slogan[3] in Hindustani or Marathi as occasion demands.

In order to show that this movement is wholly non-violent and independent of boisterous demonstrations and in order to warn the public against a repetition of the recent unfortunate exhibition of indiscipline in Patna and Lahore, I am avoiding the usual notice to the public of the proposed civil disobedience tomorrow. I have only informed Sheth Jamnalal and Shri Gopalrao, the President of the Provincial Congress Committee, with strict instructions not to advertise the function in any way.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

466. LETTER TO S. A. BRELVI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 9, 1940

MY DEAR BRELVI,

Your fairly full letter is very helpful to me in understanding the

[1]*The Hindu*, 14-12-1940, published the letter as given in Mahadev Desai's statement to the Press, which began as follows: "Considerable interest attaches to Mr. Pyarelal's satyagraha in the villages of Wardha District. Mahatma Gandhi had taken extra precautions to preserve non-violence of the movement in letter and spirit, as would appear from his letter to the Deputy Commissioner" .

[2] From the reference to Pyarelal's satyagraha which was on December 10; *vide* "Letter to Vijayabehn M. Pancholi", 9-12-1940, also "Letter to Sir J. G. Laithwaite", 10-12-1940

[3] Standardized by Gandhiji (*vide* "Letter to Lilavati Asar", 27-11-1940) for the civil resisters, it read: "It is wrong to help the British war effort with either men or money. The only worthy effort is to resist all war by non-violent resistance".

situation.

Yours,

BAPU

SYED ABDULLAH BRELVI SAHEB

ZAMIAH MANZIL

CHURCHGATE RECLAMATION

BOMBAY

From the original: S. A. Brelvi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

467. LETTER TO UMA DEVI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

December 9, 1940

MY DEAR UMA,

I like your letter. Believe me you are wholly wrong. Can evil be repelled by greater evil? When you have cooled down, you will own that you were carried away by your excess of passion which had blurred your vision. But go on. You are too good not to see the grave error into which you have been betrayed.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 8058 and 1204. Also C.W. 5099. Courtesy: Wanda Dynowska

468. LETTER TO S. C. CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

December 9, 1940

DEAR PRINCIPAL CHATTERJEE,

I thank you for your prompt reply. I congratulate you on your securing the undertaking from 243 out of 246 students.[1] For me it is a

[1] In his letter dated December 7 to Gandhiji, the addressee had explained that in August he had warned all students of his college that if they organized any strike by coercive measures, "they would be required to leave the college or promise never to join such a strike".

painful proof of the unworthiness of the students to understand the value either of self-restraint or contents of self-respect.

No amount of violence on the part of students can justify the narrow communalism you have been betrayed into showing.[1] I am sorry you think you belong to a minority community. Will you believe me that if Rudra and Andrews were alive they would utterly repudiate your narrow outlook?[2] I wish you could realize the gravity of the injury you have done to the nation of which you are a member, and to the profession in which you have mounted to a high rank, even to the religion which bears the sacred name of the Christ anointed and crucified. I wish you could see that by your action you have crucified Him afresh.

This letter is too sacred for publication. It is for you alone and in the name of the two sons of mankind whom you have mentioned.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Home, Political, File No. 3/33/40-Poll. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India

469. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 9, 1940

DEAR MAULANA SAHEB,

Yes, Dharam Yash Dev[3] was with me for three days. He went this morning to see his wife. He has promised to return. I hope to fix him

[1] The addressee had written: "As regards my letter to the Muslim Students' Federation, I would beg of you to bear in mind that it was written in reply to a letter I had received from them. . . . I would be guilty of irreverence, if I tried to enter into an argument with you. I shall only say that, unless I have failed to understand and appreciate your ideals, character and outlook, I am sure that if you had been Principal of this college, you would lot have acted otherwise than I have." *Vide* also "Letter to S. C. Chatterjee", "Letter to S. C. Chatterjee", 11-12-1940

[2] In his letter, the addressee had introduced himself as "an old pupil of Principal S. K. Rudra and C. F. Andrews". Sushil Kumar Rudra of St. Stephen's College, Delhi, died in Delhi on June 29, 1925. C. F. Andrews died in Calcutta on April 4, 1940.

[3] Secretary in charge of overseas Indian branch in the A.I.C.C. office. The addressee, in his letter dated December 6, had strongly recommended him for offering individual civil disobedience.

up in due course.

Hope you are keeping well.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

470. LETTER TO SYED MAHMUD

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 9, 1940

DEAR DR. MAHMUD,

Thank you for your long letter which I shared with Bapu. We both had a few minutes' relaxation because of it. Such relaxation is a welcome thing when one is hard pressed for time as one is these days.

Bapu said, he was glad to know that you had been able to write such a long letter in your own hand; it shows your health must be better. I said, the handwriting was not yours and the letter was dictated. We had a dispute! You may enlighten me as to which is right!

Kindest regards and hoping your health will gradually improve,

Yours sincerely,

AMRIT KAUR

From the original: Dr. Syed Mahmud Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also G.N. 5113

471. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

December 9, 1940

CHI. VIJAYA,

I got your letter. When I don't write anything, you may take it that my health is all right. Do not believe newspaper reports. Yes, I do feel exhausted and so I am taking a little rest. Amtul Salaam is here. She will go to Sind again. Manu[1] has arrived. There are many others. The Ashram is full. Pyarelal will court imprisonment tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7135. Also C.W. 4627. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

472. LETTER SULTANA QURESHI

December 9, 1940

CHI. SULTANA,

Improve your handwriting. What is wrong with your health? Get well soon. When it is your turn to go to the jail, do so. At present card, spin and learn all the processes of cotton. Serve the poor and be more simple. Do you recite the Koran? Do you write in Urdu?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Amtul Salaambehn is here.

DAUGHTER SULTANA QURESHI

SHRI VITTHAL KANYA VIDYALAYA

NADIAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10762. Courtesy: Ghulam Rasul Qureshi

[1] Manubehn S. Mashruwala; also called Manudi

473. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

December 9, 1940

DAUGHTER,

The more I think of your letter the more highly I think of you. And I feel happy. You should do your work on your own responsibility. It is true that you came over here on your mission; you went to Sind and will go there again in pursuit of your own mission. You will certainly get my counsel; but whatever you do should be your own responsibility. You will, of course, consult Jairamdas and others whom you wish to. You can go whenever you like. It was good that I sent for you here. For the present be guided by Dr. Das. Do not call on anyone here. Give up the temptation of rendering even the least little service to me. If you cannot desist, you may well do it. But the less you serve me, the less friction there will be. You will be with Madam Wadia[1] as long as she is here. Seek her advice. That will keep you busy for quite some time.

Now about your work in Sind. You have to give up all interest in the [problems of] prisoners and [dispute about] Manzilgah.[2] You may listen to everyone; but this is a matter for the courts to decide. You have to explain to the Muslims of Sind that in political matters and the like, justice cannot be secured through murder, force or untruth. Your going to Sind and even sacrificing your life should be for stopping the bloodshed, whether or no the Muslims get justice or injustice. That was my object in sending you, and remains so even now.

Despite these views of mine, I do not wish to explain things to you or advise you elaborately. I shall not be in a position to advise you in political matters since I shall have to listen to and abide by the words of Maulana. In respect of bloodshed, it is not necessary to consult him. I do think that you should not do anything against the wishes of Maulana. It is your duty to meet Muslim Leaguers, to listen to them and to love them. I believe that there can be no Hindu-Muslim unity without them.

May God clear the path for you. He alone is the Compassionate

[1] Sophia Wadia

[2] On October 1, 1939, Muslims at Sukkur launched satyagraha with a view to securing possession of Manzilgah. To arrest the communal riots which had broken out, Sind Government had to open fire on November 20; *vide* "Sind Riots" Also footnote to "Letter to Abdul Qaiyum", 3-3-1941.

One and you and I are all His slaves; everything else is unreal.

Millions of blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 459

474. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

December 9, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your letter is clean. Yoga consists in doing your work skilfully. But skill must include *bhakti*. The devotee chants the name of Rama while eating and while sleeping. You should daily come and see the figures of the three monkeys, which I keep by my side. Where have you the time to see other things? Forget whatever you have seen [before].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4364

475. DISCUSSION WITH T. R. DEOGIRIKAR[1]

[Before *December 10, 1940*][2]

Mahatmaji was asked whether after the commencement of his fast the satyagraha would stop. He became at once serious and said, why should satyagraha stop if he started his fast; there was no connection between the two. Satyagraha would and must go on in spite of the fast. I showed him the list. He asked me whether I have got full information of those whose names I had suggested. I said, "Yes, I have brought that."

GANDHIJI: Do you know the ages of those satyagrahis?

DEOGIRIKAR: Sorry, I have not [noted] that; but all of them are above eighteen.

G. That is not sufficient. Do you know how many persons are dependent on each of the satyagrahis? Take for instance Mr. Mahajan.

[1] President, Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee

[2] The discussion appears to have taken place after the commencement of the satyagraha on October 17, 1940. However, the date-line is inferred from the reference to "sending Pyarelal to Jail", which happened on December 10; *vide* "Letter to Syed Mahmud",9-12-1940 and "Letter to Sir J. G. Laithwaite"

How many persons are dependent on him?

I could not reply. He said:

Some persons come to me and say that they have thirteen persons to support. Wherefrom can I or the Congress Committee give them money? They must not depend on the Congress Committees for the support of their families.

D. In the pledges they have agreed that they would not ask for help. Is it not sufficient?

G. Yes, I want to know under what pressing conditions they are offering satyagraha. Do you know in the military for instance John's details are given in full. The commander must know every detail about the persons whom he asks to fight. When I went to Round Table Conference, the Government had full information about us. I want to prepare a Who's who. I want to publish a book giving details about the satyagrahis. I want to show to the Britishers, nay, to the whole world, what the calibre of our satyagrahis is. Do you know Mr. Young of *The Pioneer*? When he came here, he was a pauper, a beggar. He got a job in *The Pioneer*. He became Editor of the paper, but as soon as war commenced, he was taken on Rs. 5,000 by the Government. He took all the Englishmen working in that paper with him, and gave them high posts, and high salaries. They are exploiting India as much as them can even now. This is the sacrifice of the English people at the time of the war. I want to show by contrast that whereas the Englishmen are fattening themselves on India's money, the sons of India having big families to support are courting jail for their country. I am going to lay before the world that the satyagrahis who had thirteen men to support made supreme sacrifices for the country. Would it not be glorious?

"Yes", I said. I told him I would supply him all the details as soon as I go to Poona.

G. Yes, do that. The Andhra people have given me full details. You must give me details about your province. You know this is not a mass satyagraha. I do not want a large number of people going to jail. I want the choicest and the best men to offer satyagraha, they must not only be the representatives but must be men of high standard. I want to have such men. They may be few, but must be the best. I am sending Pyarelal to jail. Do you know what hardships I would be put to? He is my hand, my foot, nay, my brain. Without him I cannot work. But I am sending him on the 15th. I want to send Mahadev also,

but I would be crippled if I send him now. But his turn is to come soon. In making selection keep this point in view.

D. Mahatmaji, what should be the form of the notice to be given to the Magistrates?

G. Why, don't you know it?

D. Yes, I know, we were saying that we were selected by Mahatmaji.

G. Yes, that should be the form. You must write in the notice that you are selected by me for offering satyagraha; there should be one form in the whole country. We must have a uniform notice. In the Civil Procedure Code, the Government has one settled form of summons. Go to any distant part of the country and you will have the same language of the summons. We must have one uniform language in satyagraha, be particular about it.

D. Some persons whom we don't select will also be giving notices to the District Magistrate and will be going to jail. How can we prevent it?

G. That will be a calamity. They should not do that. They should not embarrass us.

D. Mahatmaji, may I suggest one way to distinguish between the genuine satyagrahis and non-genuine satyagrahis?

G. Yes, yes.

D. How do you like the idea of submitting the whole list approved by you to the District Magistrate of the Government?

G. That is splendid, you do it. The Government must know who are our men and who are coming in our way to foil our attempt.

D. What about the Provincial and District Congress Committees? What work should they do and where are the men to do that?

G. What normal activities can you do? You won't get good men to carry on the work. Let the whole Constitution be suspended. Only one man should be at the head of the organization.

D. You have given, I am told, option to the Provinces to determine their policy with regard to the Local Bodies. We have asked the Local Body members to resign.

G. No, no, you must not ask them to resign. Why should they resign? You did not take them on the Congress ticket on the condition that they should either go to jail or should resign, if the political situation develops in the way in which it has done now. Manu Subhedar has resigned. He wrote to me today that he was not taken on Congress ticket on the condition of his going to jail. He says that he is

not afraid of going to jail. He is right. I have just written to him not to resign. Let the seats remain vacant if the members go to jail, the Local Bodies' work must go on. Undesirable persons would capture the seats if you resign.

D. Should the communists be included in the list?

G. No.

D. Should we open volunteer camps?

G. No.

D. What about meetings?

G. No meetings should be held for satyagraha, that is creating violent atmosphere. Look at the Ghatkopar incident. I don't want to give the slightest opportunity for violence. Only slogans should be prononunced. Notice to the District Magistrate is sufficient. People should not be informed of your satyagraha. Maybe the three slogans, viz., (i) not to give money (ii) not to give men for army (iii) to oppose war measures by non-violent means—this should be on everybody's mouth just as Ramanama has become universal. Does it require notification to the people?

Every man, child and woman should repeat that. Let the whole atmosphere be surcharged with this *mantra*. You can have meetings no doubt but they should not be for the purpose of satyagraha.

I told him that persons arrested under Section 129 would be served with restraint orders after they are kept in jail for two months. "Should they break the orders immediately?"

G. Yes, if their names are approved by me, they must disobey the orders.

D. What about those who come out after their term of sentence is over?

I have selected them and I want them to go to jail again and again. They require no further permission from me to offer satyagraha. This is the last fight, we must sacrifice all for it. You don't offer satyagraha soon.

D. How will it be possible? I am doing this work and any day I am likely to be arrested.

G. Yes, yes, I am sitting on the mouth of death, anything may happen to you and to me. But instruct your successor to mind my order. The second list must not begin before January.

Gandhiji appeared full of hopes and sure of success. I took his leave and departed.

Home, Political, File No. 3/33/40.-Poll. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India

476. TELEGRAM TO MYSORE CONGRESSMEN[1]

[On or before *December 10, 1940*]

DELIGHTED OVER THE SIGNAL SUCCESS. YOU MUST NOW BUILD UP CONSTRUCTIVELY.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-12-1940

477. TELEGRAM TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON

WARDHAGANJ,
December 10, 1940

PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON
SAMMELAN
ALLAHABAD

HEAR YOU CONSIDER THAT DISCIPLINE DEMANDS YOUR ABANDONING PRESENT DUTY AND GOING. BUT DISCIPLINE DEMANDS FULFILMENT OF DUTY UNDERTAKEN AND THEN GOING. THEREFORE UNLESS YOUR OWN CONSCIENCE DEMANDS OTHERWISE MY FIRM OPINION IS YOU SHOULD ATTEND POONA SAMMELAN[2] AND THEN GO.

GANDHI

From the original: Gandhi-Tandon Correspondence No. XIV/51. Courtesy: National Archives of India

478. TELEGRAM TO CHAMANLAL[3]

SEVAGRAM,
December 10, 1940

DEWAN CHAMANLAL
LAHORE

HAVE NEVER KNOWN YOU BELIEVE IN KHADI OR

[1] The telegram was sent by Mahadev Desai on the success of Mysore Congressmen in securing all the seats in Mysore Municipal elections. The message was reported under the date-line "Bombay, December 10".

[2] Annual session of Hindi Sahitya Sammelan

[3] Member, Punjab Legislative Assembly

NON-VIOLENT TECHNIQUE. DO YOU SPIN AND WEAR KHADI HABITUALLY? PLEASE ENLIGHTEN ME BEFORE I CAN SEND YOU PERMISSION AND BLESSINGS.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

479. LETTER TO SIR J. G. LAITHWAITE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 10, 1940

DEAR MR. LAITHWAITE,

The time has arrived for informing His Excellency of the development that is going on within and the outward expression it is to find.

In every step I am taking I bear in mind the difficulties through which the brave people of the British Isles are passing. Hence I am moving slowly and with the greatest deliberation. It is my deep conviction that in all I am doing I am serving the British, in spite of themselves, equally, with my own people. This I can do only if I keep the movement completely non-violent or as much as is possible for a popular movement to be. I know that notwithstanding great care, I am sometimes deceived. But I know too that in the aggregate the balance is in favour of honesty. To ensure this and to set the tone, I began with my best representative who cannot be called a politician in the accepted sense. I refer to Shri Vinoba Bhave. Then I took up politicians, pure and simple. But I cannot be sure of the probity of large numbers of people with whom I have no personal contact. I have perforce to rely upon certificates of political associates. I believe that in the majority of cases the selections have been well made. But since I am myself not offering civil disobedience, I feel that I must send more men like Shri Vinoba Bhave for I am anxious to show that the movement is not purely political. It is much more. And so Pyarelal Nayyar has gone today. He and Mahadev have been my constant companions all these many years. Satyagraha is a movement of self-purification and self-sacrifice. I must continue to part with the best I have. And so Mahadev will follow Pyarelal in due course. There are many who have no political ambition and yet who have a passionate love for freedom and still greater for the famishing millions. Many of these have still to be sent. They and the elected

members in the Congress organization who fulfil my conditions as to the charkha, untouchability and communal harmony will be offered. I propose to offer them from the beginning of the New Year.

I must continue to offer such sacrifice until I carry conviction to the ruling power that the satyagrahis represent a definite opinion in the country and that they represent millions. Theirs is a mission of peace to vindicate which they are prepared to sacrifice their all. It is no less to them a matter of principle of the life and death than to the British power against whom they are seemingly at war. They are as much opposed to Hitlerism and Fascism as the latter. Only they fight with the weapons of non-violence whereas the latter vainly expect to kill Hitlerism by excelling Hitler and Mussolini in the manufacture and use of weapons that these two dictators use. I hope this argument will not jar on His Excellency. I bring it forward to claim for our movement the same reality and strength that are claimed on behalf of the British. They are none the less because they do not apply to the whole of India. It was therefore wrong for Mr. Amery to characterize the movement as artificial. Do the hundreds who have gone to jail love prison life? Oh, for an ounce of imagination to realize that a human being wearing a brown or black skin can have equal susceptibility with the wearers of the white skin!

The notes that Mahadev prepared for me put these words in your mouth:

> I have to reply to your question about *Harijan.* Well, Mr. Gandhi has to make up his own mind. Only let him or you not preach any breach of the law.

If Mahadev has correctly reported you, may I say that the warning was unnecessary. How can an unlawful movement be conducted lawfully by a newspaper guided by the author of the movement? But many things remain lawful so long as the Government wish them to remain so. I am quite sure that you can prosecute me or Mahadev for many things we have written. *Harijan*, therefore, can be restarted during the pendency of the movement, only if the Government desire it and believe that it was an organ which was serving both the nations, indeed the whole of humanity.[1]

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 7859. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Acknowledging this letter on December 14, Laithwaite informed Gandhiji: "It has been laid before His Excellency who has asked me to thank you for putting him in possession of your mind and intentions."

480. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 10, 1940

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

You are greedy. You were not satisfied with the elegant message that I sent with Bhai Vaidya. Here is my signature. I like the issue of your *Khadi Patrika* very much. If the three things that are mentioned there are carried on well, the Bombay [bhandar] will not remain a mere khadi bhandar but will become a beautiful production centre also.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10850. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

481. LETTER TO S. C. CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 11, 1940

DEAR PRINCIPAL CHATTERJEE,

I have gone through your long letter[1]. It leaves me wholly unconvinced. I have based my opinion on your letter to the Muslim Students' Federation. This you have not denied.[2] I wrote to you for the simple reason that if there was anything that you could say in justification of that letter or if the letter was a fabrication, you should have the opportunity of saying so to me. Unfortunately there is no extenuating circumstance to justify your letter. Your intellectual gifts, your impartial philanthropy and many other virtues that you may

[1] Dated December 8, it was in continuation of what he wrote on December 7; *vide* footnotes 1 and 2, "Letter to S. C. Chatterjee", 9-12-1940, and footnote 1, "Letter to Abul Kalam Azad", 9-12-1940

[2] The addressee had said: "You have condemned me as a rank communalist, merely because I encouraged Muslim students through their Federation not to be cowards and allow themselves to be treated as slaves in the matter of the exercise of their elementary rights of attending college. I understand, you are opposed to Mr. Jinnah's scheme for the partition of India; so am I. But, may I ask you if your conception of India is really different to the one that I have suggested to the Muslim Students' Federation?"

summon to your assistance are wholly irrelevant as is also my conduct[1] in connection with the British Government. Of course you are free to publish the correspondence between you and me.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Home, Political, File No. 3/33/40-Poll. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India

482. LETTER TO N. S. HARDIKAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 11, 1940

DEAR HARDIKAR,

I have your touching letter. You shall go after 5th January. Meanwhile do take care of your health and wind up your paper.

I would like to have you treated here for your cough. I have just now a qualified doctor[2] who for the last ten years has been curing patients by dietetic changes. Come, if you can.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original: N. S. Hardikar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

483. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM[3]

[Before *December 12, 1940*][4]

DAUGHTER,

Your letter is very bad. I have never entertained any suspicion. If that is your sin, call it a sin. You do not understand your guilt. I tell

[1] Towards the end of his letter, the addressee had remarked: "I have long lost faith in your political wisdom. More recently I have found your attitude to India's participation in the war to be altogether incomprehensible."

[2] Presumably, the reference is to Dr. Das; *vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam'' 9-12-1940; also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 11-1-1941.

[3] Gandhiji did not allow the addressee to go to Sind; thereupon she asked him what suspicions he had and what sins she had committed.

[4] From the reference to the letter to Jairamdas Doulatram; *vide* "Letter to Jairamdas Doulatram", 12-12-1940

you, you will not succeed so long as you are not cleansed. This is bare truth. It is futile to go to Maulana. Whether you approve or not, I shall write to Jairamdas. If you permit, I am prepared to talk to Sophia and Kafi. If you want to fast, you cannot do it here. Fasting is not the remedy for cleansing yourself.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 712

484. TELEGRAM TO SHRIRAM[1]

[On or before *December 12, 1940*][2]

IF YOUR STANDARD IS THAT OF SARDAR SAMPURAN SINGH[3] YOU MAY NOT GO. IF YOUR STANDARD IS THAT OF PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU YOU MAY GO. PLEASE CIRCULATE THIS AMONG YOUR CO-LEGISLATORS.

The Bombay Chronicle, 13-12-1940

485. TELEGRAM TO BHALERAO[4]

December 12, 1940

ALL WHO HOLD MY OPINION MUST REFRAIN WHETHER FEW OR MANY.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee, a Congress M.L.A. from the Punjab, had asked Gandhiji "for instructions relating to satyagraha in the Punjab". The telegram was reported under the date-line "Rohtak, December 12".

[2] *ibid*.

[3] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 6-12-1940

[4] The addressee, Secretary, Bombay Hindu Cricket Club, in his telegram dated December 11, had asked Gandhiji whether he wanted only Hindus to boycott the pentangular cricket matches; *vide* "Statement to the Press". 7-12-1940

486. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 12, 1940

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

I had sent a minor[1] to Sind and I thought she had returned a major. That was the impression created on my mind by a letter she wrote and to which I had replied. She has sent you a copy of my reply. But her action belied my interpretation as she herself perceived. She saw that mine was an over-liberal interpretation to which she could in [no] way live up. Hence she remains what she went as—a minor requiring delicate care and attention. She will be sent back when her health is fully restored and when you and Maulana Saheb think she can come. Her life is dedicated to the cause of peace in Sind to the extent of stopping terrorism of which wanton murders are but a symptom.

You will not endanger your health in thinking of Amtul Salaam. She is in God's hands.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 9256. Courtesy: Jairamdas Doulatram

487. LETTER TO BHANUSHANKER PANDYA

SEVAGRAM,
WARDHA, C.P.,
December 12, 1940

BHAI BHANUSHANKER,

Herewith the letter for you friend.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI BHANUSHANKER PANDYA
ANJANIA WADI
GHATKOPAR
BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33154

[1] Amtussalaam, *vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Jairamdas Doulatram", 8-12-1940

488. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[After *December 12, 1940*][1]

I am not able to make out anything from what was narrated to me. As for money, I had already issued an appeal. Let us be content with whatever we have received. Now you have to deal directly with Maulana and Jairamdas. You should write to them everything. I have put in my letter to him everything that I could. The Sindis received it direct from here.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 688

489. LETTER TO ACHREKAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 13, 1940

DEAR ACHREKAR,

I am sorry for your troubles[2]. You may certainly postpone offering civil disobedience till you are out of the wood. I hope, however, that you are doing regular spinning and taking in constructive work. I hope you know also that spinning includes carding.

Yours sincerely,
M K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

490. LETTER TO J. M. DATTA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 13, 1940

DEAR FRIEND,

Nothing that I can do will alter the situation[3] but I think there

[1] From the reference to letter to Jairamdas Doulatram; *vide* the preceding item.
[2] Financial
[3] The addressee had requested Gandhiji to give his blessings to the Bengal Census Board and to ask the Hindus to get themselves enumerated.

will be no difficulty as there is no boycott declared on behalf of the Congress.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

JATINDRA MOHAN DATTA
45 BARRACKPORE TRUNK ROAD
COSSIPORE P. O.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

491. LETTER TO PREMNATH BAJAJ

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 13, 1940

DEAR PREMNATH,

I have your letter. On the face of it the order[1] about Hindi and Urdu seems quite harmless. But I can give no final opinion without knowing all sides of the question. And if at all possible you will spare me the trouble of studying it.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

492. TESTIMONIAL TO PRITHVI SINGH

SEVAGRAM,
December 14, 1940

I have gone through "The Scheme of Physical Training" which Sardar Prithvi Singh has given me. It was placed before the public many years ago but it does not seem to have been implemented anywhere. I liked the Scheme. It takes into account the condition of the country, is simple and inexpensive and can be readily implemented. I have always been of the opinion that for true education, strength of the body, mind and heart should be equally and simultaneously developed. But in practice attention is paid to one aspect only and that too without any reference to the condition of the

[1] Issued by the Kashmir Government, allowing the use of both Devanagari and Persian scripts in Government schools

country. Sardar Prithvi Singh's suggestion regarding development of physique is worth pondering over. I hope that the experts in that field will study the Scheme and, if they approve of it, implement it.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5643. Also C.W. 2954. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

493. LETTER TO GURUMUKH SINGH MUSAFIR

December 15, 1940

DEAR GIANIJI[1],

You have asked me for my interpretation of the teachings of the Ten Gurus[2]. Here it is:

I regard Guru Granth Saheb as one of the scriptures of the world. I consider myself an humble follower of their teachings as of the teachings of Islam, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Hinduism. The essence of the teachings (so far as non-violence is concerned and that is what you want to know from me) is, that they all enjoin non-violence as a duty, but they tolerate violence when the choice before the votary is between cowardly surrender and the use of the sword.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

494. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

December 15, 1940

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have heard the roar of the lion and the wail of the cow.[3] The cow will remain where she is. I have talked to Aryanayakamji[4] and Ashadevi.

Is that all right?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1939

[1] Member, Working Committee of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee

[2] Of the Sikhs

[3] The addressee had written a harsh letter to Gandhiji when he came to know that the plot used as *goshala* was to be given to the Talimi Sangh. He wrote on behalf of the dumb cow.

[4] E. W. Aryanayakam

495. LETTER TO PATWARDHAN

SEVAGRAM,
December 15, 1940

BHAI PATWARDHAN,

I laughed heartily after reading your letter. It is only when I can satisfy you that you will have faith in my judgment. It is good that I have never had the desire to give the verdict. I do what I can as a friend. I have sent a copy of Dada's[1] letter to Sahasrabuddhe. There has been no reply from him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

496. LETTER TO HANSRAJ RADHAR[2]

[Before *December 16, 1940*][3]

There is to be no civil disobedience, individual or mass in the States.

The Hitavada, 18-12-1940

497. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

Early Morning, December 16, 1940

I was in the midst of mad . . .[3] They had besieged me. With difficulty they had carried me to the door of my abode. But one admirer had possession of me and won't leave me. So I howled for help.

From the original: C.W. 4220. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7856

[1] Dharmadhikari

[2] According to the source, the addressee, a political worker in Jind, had requested Gandhiji "to permit the State Congress to launch satyagraha in the State". The letter was reported under the date-line "Lahore, December 16".

[3] One word is illegible in the source. Gandhiji was describing a dream.

[3] *ibid*

498. LETTER TO MOHAMMAD HAMIDULLAH KHAN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 16, 1940

DEAR NAWAB SAHEB,

Here is a pathetic letter from Zakir[4]. You will not mind my approaching you for the assistance. From a tiny thing Jamia[5] has become a big institution. You know that it was the joint creation of the Ali Brothers, Hakim Saheb and Dr. Ansari. Dr. Zakir was Mahomed Ali's choice. And he has, so far as I know, come up to the highest expectation. He has able and self-sacrificing assistants. I know you have heavy calls on your purse. But this should not be a strain on your purse. I leave the case in your hands.

I hope you are doing well.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. H. OF BHOPAL

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

499. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL MAJMUDAR

December 16, 1940

CHI. PARIKSHITLAL,

I have read your report. What is the cause of the failure in Kheda and Ahmedabad? Are you making an all-out effort to win over the opponents? Why not start a model school in such places and induce other pupils to join it? Of course, that would involve expenditure. Perhaps Ambalalbhai[1] may agree to meet it. Is it the Patidars who oppose or some other communities or all the communities? If the Government grant has been delayed, why doesn't Gulzarilal[2] meet the officer concerned?

Blessings from
BAPU

PARIKSHITLAL MAJMUDAR
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3992. Also C.W. 150. Courtesy: Parikshitlal Majmudar

[1] Ambalal Sarabhai
[2] Gulzarilal Nanda, Secretary, Ahmedabad Textile Workers' Union

500. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 16, 1940

CHI. PRABHA,

There has been no letter from you recently. I hope your health is all right.

My purpose in writing this is to tell you that I am eagerly hoping that Jayaprakash will come and see me. I wonder why there is no letter from him and why he has not met me till now. I will know from you.

Sushila will come here about the 22nd or the 23rd. Manu is here. There are others, too. The Ashram is full.

I am keeping well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3549

501. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON

December 16, 1940

BHAI TANDONJI,

I have your letter. At the instance of Sardar Prithvi Singh I had requested Vaishampayanji to come to Sevagram. He had come here. He mentioned the matter of money to me also. I do not know what Shri Deo may have thought about it, but I personally do not like the idea of the Samiti having to bear the expense of the Reception [Committee]. There is a difference of opinion between Vaishampayanji and Deo. In such a situation it is difficult to get money for them from the Samiti. I think the expense of the reception should be borne by the Reception Committees. I told the same thing to Vaishampayanji. We talked about other things too. I hope everything will work out well.

Rajendra Babu, being ill, will not be able to attend. Jamnalalji's date has been fixed. It should not be changed. What applies to you cannot be applied to others. You are the founder and the life of the Sammelan, and I have full faith that it will be sufficient if you are

present there. Kakaji[1] and Shriman[2] will be going, of course. Rajendra Babu should also go if his health permits. I shall write [to him].

I hope you are well.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

502. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

Silence Day, December 16, 1940

DAUGHTER,

If you wish to act on principles, where is the room for service to me? In that case, all your time should be devoted to the service of Shastriji. I do everything in the capacity of a father, not of a mother, although I aspire to be a mother. The status of a father sets its own restrictions on a man.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 462

503. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

December 16, 1940

DAUGHTER,

Your behaviour upsets me. You are full of anger and also pride. You think you know a lot, but in fact you are a fool. You talk of principles, but understand nothing about them. You do not act on principles or, maybe, you have only one principle, viz., to stay near me and to serve me. This is no principle. It is a matter of affection. If I allow you to do some service out of love, you start flinging principles at my face. When will you understand this simple thing? Your going to Sind would be futile till you do not understand this.

Think over this letter. Cast away anger and pride and learn humility.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 463

[1] D. B. Kalelkar

[2] Shriman Narayan

504. INSTRUCTIONS TO SATYAGRAHIS[1]

WARDHAGANJ,
December 17, 1940

Under Gandhiji's instructions I have to make the following announcement: All Provincial Congress Committees and other Committees will please note that there is to be no satyagraha during Christmas, that is to say, between December 24 and January 4, both days inclusive. Satyagrahis outside the three permitted classes may start satyagraha on and after January 5 and all lists approved by Gandhiji may be finished by April 5.

A number of applications are being received here direct from various parts of the country. In many cases we have referred them to the Pradesh Congress Committees concerned. But we have not been able to reach all applications. All intending satyagrahis will please note that they have to apply to the P.C.Cs of their respective provinces clearly stating their names and addresses, age, occupation, their freedom from commitments and illness and declaring faith in Truth and non-violence and in the constructive programme. Concretely stated, they should express their belief in non-violence as the only means of attaining swaraj and the only worthy way of ending all wars within the terms of the Bombay resolution[2] of the A.I.C.C.; that they believe in the vital connection between non-violence and constructive programme, and that their faith in the constructive programme is evidenced in regular spinning and habitual wearing of khadi, and insistence on the use of handmade articles and promotion of village industries and crafts, in the total abolition of untouchability, and in the insistence on communal unity.

The best thing perhaps would be for all provinces to have forms stating all these details which should be filled in by those intending to offer satyagraha in the presence of responsible Congress workers. Some provinces have already started this procedure. This will prevent a good deal of waste of time and money involved in postage.

Over and above the fulfilment of the aforesaid conditions, those who have not decided to give up their studies and who have not secured permission of their parents or guardians should not apply.

I would request the Press not to make unauthorized statements about satyagraha. Thus for instance the report that instructions have been sent to Delhi to suspend satyagraha is without foundation.

The Hitavada, 18-12-1940

[1] Issued by Mahadev Desai
[2] *Vide* "All-India Congress Committee Resolution", 15-9-1940

505. LETTER TO SYED MAHMUD

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 17, 1940

MY DEAR DR. MAHMUD,

Your kind letter and enclosure, both of which I read out to Bapu. He is delighted to hear you are better. But in return for having given your verdict against him[1] regarding the dispute over the handwriting between him and me he orders one year's restraint orders on you! I entirely share his view. You must not *dream* of courting arrest. Surely there is plenty of work to be done outside. And responsible guides outside are really essential when most people capable of giving the right lead and advice have gone to prison.

Of course the 'rumour'[2] was a fabrication. Bapu says, you should ask Dr. Shaukat as to who was really responsible for the muddle. He will be able to enlighten you.

Kindest regards and hoping you will soon be better,

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

[PS.]

Bapu's pressure remains within control so long as he does not overwork. But it is hard to control him nowadays. There is so much to be done!

From the original: Dr. Syed Mahmud Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also G.N. 5112

506. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SEVAGRAM,
December 17, 1940

This reply is just for your entertainment and mine. You have set down certain maxims without proving their truth. Why do you think sacrifice will harm or weaken the cause? I on the contrary believe that it will bring credit to the cause and lighten the effort. I can offer proof in support of this statement. What you say is mere inference and is incorrect. Will you now dare to say that Mahadev's going was objectionable? The Mayor's authority extends only to the Municipal limits of Bombay. Outside you have to win over people through arguments.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 179

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Syed Mahmud", 9-12-1940.

[2] About Gandhiji's fast; *vide* also "Letter to "Syed Mahmud", 22-11-1940

507. LETTER TO P. B. GOLE

[Before *December 18, 1940*][1]

I have been told that you observe untouchability, practically according to the original formula which I had used for all caste Hindus. Obviously that is insufficient for Congressmen and specially Congress leaders. I had, therefore, said that if what was reported to me about your belief and practice was true, you should not offer civil disobedience.

When, however, Kishorelalbhai Mashruwala sent me a note that you had felt grieved, I at once invited you to come and see me and you were good enough to respond quickly. In the course of our talk I understood that your belief in the necessity of purging Hinduism of the canker of untouchability and the consequent belief in high caste and low caste and outcaste was as pure and as high as that of the tallest Congressman, but in your home you observe strict rules of purity, so that you exclude, irrespective of caste, from the domestic dining *chowka*, those who do not observe the same stiff rules that the members of your family do. This practice has nothing to do with untouchability and had no application to Harijans as such, and stood on its own footing. I also understood that outside the domestic circle, you acted precisely as any Congressman would act towards Harijans.[2]

I am sorry that in my ignorance I attributed to you and Dr. Parasnis a belief which neither of you entertains. I was delighted to find I had erred, and that I could claim you as members of the satyagraha band.

The Hindustan Times, 24-12-1940

[1] The letter was reported under the date-line "Nagpur, December 18".

[2] The source reported that it was with these words that Gandhiji "allowed P. B. Gole, ex-Congress Minister, C.P. and Berar, to offer satyagraha".

508. LETTER TO SURESH CHANDRA BANERJEE[1]

[Before December *19, 1940*][2]

You may continue what you are doing so long as you preserve peace. The whole question requires patient consideration.

The Bombay Chronicle, 20-12-1940

509. DISCUSSION WITH G. D. BIRLA AND DEVDAS GANDHI

December 18/19, 1940

I was with Gandhiji at Wardha for two days, that is, on the 18th and the 19th December. . . .

I asked him what was his next plan. He has already informed the Viceroy of it. The next stage will continue for another three months. During that period nearly 10,000 persons will be in. All names will be properly scrutinized. "What after that?", I asked.

[GANDHIJI:] There is to be no stage after that. It will continue indefinitely and I will send in as many as I can. Sometimes I get a little worried about the mentality of our young men. I know they are impatient. They might do something stupid. Communism appeals to youth, unfortunately.

I replied that in the past whenever satyagraha was in the field, communism disappeared for the time being only to reappear after its suppression. He agreed. . . .

He is anxious to send Mahadev in. I tried to persuade him not to send Mahadev. Gandhiji will be virtually a cripple without him. Mahadev very strongly feels that his absence may be harmful for Gandhiji's health. Pyarelal is already in. Therefore Mahadev thinks he must be kept out. But Gandhiji disagrees:

It is a movement of self-purification, not for embarrassing anyone. As such, I must sacrifice my best. I needed Mahadev out for various other noble missions. This has enhanced his value further. But all the more reason, therefore, for sending him in since the sacrifice will be still greater.

[1] The addresse, ex-President, All-India Trade Union Congress, had sought Gandhiji's advice as he had not been arrested "in spite of offering satyagraha repeatedly". The letter was reported under the date-line "Calcutta, December 19".

[2] *ibid*

I then related to him how I was told in Bombay that Sardar Patel and others in Yeravda were quite cheerful and comfortable. I told him that there was too much restriction about interviews about which I had spoken to the Governor of Bombay. He was glad to hear that they were all comfortable.

Devdas at this stage pointed out that things in Madras were different. Rajaji was locked up at night. Interviews were not allowed to last more than 20 minutes. And the C.I.D. remained present at the time of interviews. I said, I would bring this matter to the notice of H.E. But Gandhiji said, there was not much to complain against. After all, jail was jail and one could not expect much while in. If all kinds of freedom was allowed, then there would be no imprisonment in a sense. All said, he thought, Government was fighting in a gentlemanly way. I was glad to hear this tribute to the Government. Good relation is a great thing and its value can never be over-estimated.

I gave my impression of the Viceroy's speech[1]. Devdas at this stage read H.E.'s Calcutta speech to Gandhiji who had not yet read it fully. He listened to it very carefully. After Devdas finished the reading, I asked Gandhiji what his reaction to it was. Gandhiji said, it was very cordial, but no advance. He related some of his old talks with the Viceroy and then remarked:

But the Viceroy believes very strongly in his own views. I could never dislodge him from his own position.

I then told him what I had suggested to Sir Roger Lumley. Here is the gist:[2]

> Referring to the failure of an agreement, I said, I felt that to a great extent the failure might be attributed to mutual misunderstanding. Perhaps it was due to this reason that Gandhiji had to write to Lord Irwin when he went to negotiate a pact with him: "I want to see Irwin the man." . . . With reference to the offer of Dominion Status . . . Mr. Amery's speech[3] on the Viceroy's statement has created an impression that since so many conditions were attached to the offer, it was impossible of achievement. One could even

[1] The reference is to the Viceroy's speech at Associated Chambers of Commerce in Calcutta on December 16. According to *The Indian Annual Register, 1940*, Vol. II, p. 364, both this and the speech by L. S. Amery, the Secretary of State for India, at a luncheon in London on December 12, reiterated the proposals outlined in the Viceroy's statement of August 8 (*vide* "Letter from Jawaharlal Nehru", 10-8-1940), which "devised a national government for India—a government associated through the War Advisory Council with the Indian States—that will contain itself the representatives of those great parties and communities that will exercise full and real influence on the conduct of the war, leading to the post-war discussions . . . the final settlement of those intricate questions, whether between the communities here or between British Indian States, or between India and His Majesty's Government. . . ."

[2] Only an extract is reproduced here.

[3] *Vide* footnote 1 on "Letter to Krishnachandra", 20-12-1940

reconcile to separation, but it was difficult to reconcile to a position which implies no advance until Muslims gave their consent. . . . Discussing the solution for ending the present impasse, I suggested immediate expansion of the Viceroy's Council by taking in men who were neither Congressmen nor Leaguemen but who would command respect. . . . I gave a few names and said could give more.

I told Gandhiji that in my opinion such an expansion would be useful in more than one way. It should definitely end the deadlock. I argued that even if we got national government, Congress would not associate itself with war efforts unless it was prepared again to give up Gandhiji's leadership. But giving up Gandhiji's leadership once more may not now be possible for the Congress. Therefore, for all practical purposes, Congress may be ruled out even for a national government. On different grounds, perhaps the League also could be ruled out. But why wait only for these two parties? If Government, as is suggested, were really anxious about their efforts to lead India towards her goal, then why not begin? I admitted that the success of this scheme depended on the selection of really good men, who though might not command the confidence of the Congress or the League but who at least command respect not only of these two political parties but of the country at large. In the second place all the important portfolios like Law and Order, Commerce, Finance, War Supplies, Defence, Railways, etc., were transferred to these men.

Gandhiji's reaction was not unsatisfactory. He said, he would appreciate this provided Government at the Centre was made virtually a representative government. It may not be responsible but the men so chosen should at least be of a representative character. He realized the difficulty of getting independent men from outside the two parties, but I gave him a few names and he thought they may not be a bad selection.

He agreed that in view of the war exigencies His Majesty's Government would not be able at this stage to go beyond this and he would not quarrel if they did not go beyond this. I, of course, was assuming that no Executive Council composed of such men could afford to keep political leaders in jail, nor could they afford to shut their mouth. Smuts could not shut the mouth of Hertzog and yet war effort of South Africa continued. Similarly, war efforts in India could continue with greater forceunder my plan. They would definitely be accelerated. Freedom of speech will be there, but once the freedom is given I am sure it will not be abused.

Devdas was not prepared for Gandhiji's good reaction. For clarification, he intervened: "What of the war effort? Will it continue? And will the Congress tolerate it?" Gandhiji said:

Yes, they will. Even today they do. It will all be voluntary. There will be no coercion. And freedom of speech will have been allowed. After all, the main idea of the Congress is not to allow the civil

population to become war-minded. It is not desired that Government should be embarrassed. Besides, even today the whole country is not anti-war-minded. There are people who sincerely believe in waging war. The mission of the Congress is only to educate people. If the Congress could at any time make the whole nation unwar-minded, who could force them to fight? But today it is not so. Therefore why should we grudge war-minded people associating with war?

I pointed out that such a Cabinet may also be able to build a bridge between Hindus and Muslims and also could do the spade work for setting the stage for Constitution-making after the war. He said:

Yes, perhaps.

I asked him if there was no danger that the freedom of speech granted by a representative government may be abused. He did not think so. But at the same time he said that the law was there to punish any such violation. Congress would not tolerate any abuse on the part of its people.

The question of provinces would still remain unsettled but perhaps the lull would give us a breathing ground for the next step,

I suggested why not cry a halt for six weeks before taking the next step?

But the next step is already taken. It could, of course, be stopped, if so desired by the Government.

From a copy: C.W. 7860. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

510. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,
December 20, 1940

Sardar Sampuran Singh has seen me with reference to the statement[1] I published on his conduct at his recent trial. Though what I said about my not passing men like him is true, I recognize that he was permitted by the Provincial Congress Committee to offer civil disobedience and from that he had taken it for granted that permission must have been given under my instance. I recognize, therefore, that he was fully justified in offering satyagraha in so far as permission was concerned.

Nevertheless his conduct at the trial was wholly unjustified and I believe that Sardarji now understands and appreciates the meaning of my criticism. He understands, too, that no one can legitimately say

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 6-12-1940

that he believes in non-violence by way of discipline. Whatever the contents of one's non-violence, either one believes or one does not. Sardarji now realizes this simple truth. I have shown him now that the obvious blunder into which he was betrayed could be repaired. He is considering my suggestion. I would, therefore, ask the public to suspend final judgment about Sardar Sampuran Singh's conduct.

Sardarji tells me that in the Punjab, so far as he knows, no one believes in non-violence except as a matter of discipline. If this is true it is a most serious matter and I would advise every such person to withdraw from the field. I could not possibly lead Congress to success if they do not believe even in Congress fundamental policy or creed except by way of discipline. He enlists because he knows the art of soldiering and believes in it. But after having enlisted he comes under iron discipline that is justly exacted from every soldier if the battle in which he is engaged is to be won. That our fight is non-violent makes no difference or rather the difference is all in favour of stricter discipline and willing obedience to it.

The Hitavada, 22-12-1940

511. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
December 20, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have spoken to Vaidyaji about water. I am trying to set up a cistern. Till then, boiled water should be given for gargling. Vessels should be finally washed in boiled water. This won't need much water. Sushilabehn is coming day after tomorrow; consult her also.

We cannot serve food to visitors and others. We have to plead helplessness if they ask for food. It would be a duty to give it to an ignorant and hungry traveller from afar. Milk and ghee should be given to none. Roti, oil, raw vegetable, etc., may be given.

We can order one book from the Sasta [Sahitya] Mandal.

We have one copy of *Ramayana* in bold letters, it may be given to Ramnarayan[1]. We can get books worth a couple of annas for the children.

[1] Ramnarayan Chowdhary of Rajasthan

Your question regarding Ramanama has not been answered. When I say I remember the name all the twenty-four hours, it does not mean I am explicitly aware of the same. But it is my resolve that it should continue throughout the twenty-four hours like the act of breathing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4365

512. MESSAGE TO KHADI EXHIBITION

[Before *December 21, 1940*][1]

I earnestly hope that the Khadi Exhibition will prove a great success and that the citizens of Bombay will give a befitting response to it. For the success of the present satyagraha movement, it is essential for the general public to patronize khadi.

The Hindu, 23-12-1940

513. LETTER TO C. A. TULPULE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 21, 1940

DEAR SHRI TULPULE,

Your note to Gandhiji has come. He says that unless you have anything of urgent importance to say to him, he will be grateful if you will spare him. He is far from well—has to conserve his energy to the utmost and is advised by doctors to talk as little as possible. Of course, you may see Maganwadi at any time. Do make an appointment with Shri J. C. Kumarappa for this.

Yours sincerely,

AMRIT KAUR

SHRI C. A. TULPULE
TILAK ROAD
POONA CITY

From the original: C.W. 2903. Courtesy: C. A. Tulpule

[1] The exhibition was opened on December 21 by Mathuradas Trikumji, Mayor of Bombay.

514. LETTER FO CHRISTOPHER ACKROYD[1]

WARDHA,
December 21, 1940

I am sorry I have not been able to acknowledge your letter earlier. But I hope that Chaturvedi[2] showed you my letter to him which contains my view on what should be done. I sent you copies of correspondence[3] with the principal which speaks for itself. I have no manner of doubt that unless he withdraws the offending circular and revises his view of communalism, he is unfit to be a teacher. No apology, unless it shows signs of a definite change of heart, can possibly be accepted. In my opinion you owe it to yourselves, you owe it to India that you do not directly or indirectly support an institution which has a principal holding the views that Chatterjee does.

Please share this with Mr. Schiff.

Home, Political, File No. 3/33/40-Poll. (1). Courtesy: National Archives of India

515. INTERVIEW TO ALL-INDIA STUDENTS' CONFERENCE DELEGATION FROM MADRAS[4]

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 21, 1940

The students discussed with Gandhiji many problems regarding strikes. Gandhiji advised the students to find a better alternative of expressing their protest, such as demonstrations and meetings outside college hours. If they resolved to strike, they must be prepared for all consequences including giving up of their studies. Gandhiji was afraid that the present-day strikes had no determined will behind them and, therefore, did not carry the students very far in the struggle against imperialism. In his opinion, the most effective form of protest was to leave the colleges instead of

[1] The letter is given under a note: "Secret. Copy of an intercepted letter dated December 21, 1940, from M. K. Gandhi, Sevagram, Wardha, C.P., to Professor Christopher Ackroyd, Secretary, S.P.G. Mission, Head of the Brotherhood, Kanpur."

[2] President, Kanpur Students' Union

[3] *Vide*"Letter to S. C. Chatterjee", 9-12-1940 and "Letter to S. C. Chatterjee", 11-12-1940

[4] This was communicated by R. Achuthan, General Secretary, Madras Students' Organization, Madras.

resorting to half-way methods.

Regarding the Annamalainagar incidents (relating to the arrest of students) Gandhiji was definitely of opinion that in case the Government did not hold an impartial enquiry, the students concerned should completely boycott the University because of the gross violation of the elementary rights of students. Gandhiji hoped that the Government would revise its attitude and bold an impartial enquiry fully realizing the gravity of the situation.

The Hindu, 4-1-1941

516. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

December 21, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

When Ramanama becomes as natural as breathing, it does not obstruct but helps other work, just as the tune of the *tembura* sustains other tunes. Ramanama does not amount to doing two jobs at a time. The eye does its work and the ear its own. All these organs work in harmony.

Now you will realize how Ramanama makes my work easy and brings it to fruition. Its effect cannot be described; it can only be experienced.

Brahmacharya and ahimsa constitute physical penance. I too had doubts on this score, but now there is none. Both the disciplines pertain to the body. Mental passion leads to physical desire. Similarly, anger and other violent feelings affect the body. *Brahmacharya* and ahimsa would have no meaning in the absence of the body. Thus both are qualities dependent on the body and are related to other bodies.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4365

517. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

December 23, 1940

CHI. SHARMA,

Your name is already with me. But why should I send you [to jail] as long as I wish to take constructive work from you? And how can I send you unless you become a social animal? Tell me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, p. 294

518. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 23, 1940

BHAI SATIS BABU,

Why did you give money to Harilal and how much did you give? It has done him no good. It was all spent on drinks.

What you write about Annada is right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2733

519. CABLE TO AGATHA HARIRISON[1]

[On or before *December 24, 1940*][2]

MY HEALTH PASSABLE. SITUATION DEMANDS TIME. MOVING WITH GREATEST CAUTION. WHITEHALL, CALCUTTA DECLARATIONS[3] IGNORE SOLID FACTS. LOVE.

Home, Political, File No. 3/33/40-Poll. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India

520. LETTER TO ADOLF HITLER[4]

WARDHA,
December 24, 1940

DEAR FRIEND,

That I address you as a friend is no formality. I own no foes. My business in life has been for the past 33 years to enlist the friendship of the whole of humanity by befriending mankind,

[1] Secretary of a small group of Quakers known as India Conciliation Group

[2] From the reference to this cable in an unofficial note No. 8/P. F. (D)/ 40-II, dated December 28, by the Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, which referred to its earlier unofficial note No. 8/P. F. (D)/40-III, D. Birla and Devdas Gandhi", 18/19-12-1940dated December 24, on the telegram

[3] *Vide* footnote 1 on "Discussion with G.

[4] This letter was suppressed by the Government of India; *vide* "Letter to Agatha Harrison", 17-1-1941, and also the following item. Earlier Ghandhiji had written to Adolf Hitler on July 23, 1939; *vide* "Letter to Adolf Hitler", 23-7-1939

irrespective of race, colour or creed.

I hope you will have the time and desire to know how a good portion of humanity who have view living under the influence of that doctrine of universal friendship view your action. We have no doubt about your bravery or devotion to your fatherland, nor do we believe that you are the monster described by your opponents. But your own writings and pronouncements and those of your friends and admirers leave no room for doubt that many of your acts are monstrous and unbecoming of human dignity, especially in the estimation of men like me who believe in universal friendliness. Such are your humiliation of Czechoslovakia, the rape of Poland and the swallowing of Denmark. I am aware that your view of life regards such spoliations as virtuous acts. But we have been taught from childhood to regard them as acts degrading humanity. Hence we cannot possibly wish success to your arms.

But ours is a unique position. We resist British Imperialism no less than Nazism. If there is a difference, it is in degree. One-fifth of the human race has been brought under the British heel by means that will not bear scrutiny. Our resistance to it does not mean harm to the British people. We seek to convert them, not to defeat them on the battle-field. Ours is an unarmed revolt against the British rule. But whether we convert them or not, we are determined to make their rule impossible by non-violent non-co-operation. It is a method in its nature indefensible. It is based on the knowledge that no spoliator can compass his end without a certain degree of co-operation, willing or compulsory, of the victim. Our rulers may have our land and bodies but not our souls. They can have the former only by complete destruction of every Indian—man, woman and child. That all may not rise to that degree of heroism and that a fair amount of frightfulness can bend the back of revolt is true but the argument would be beside the point. For, if a fair number of men and women be found in India who would be prepared without any ill will against the spoliators to lay down their lives rather than bend the knee to them, they would have shown the way to freedom from the tyranny of violence. I ask you to believe me when I say that you will find an unexpected number of such men and women in India. They have been having that training for the past 20 years.

We have been trying for the past half a century to throw off the British rule. The movement of independence has been never so strong

as now. The most powerful political organization, I mean the Indian National Congress, is trying to achieve this end. We have attained a very fair measure of success through non-violent effort. We were groping for the right means to combat the most organized violence in the world which the British power represents. You have challenged it. It remains to be seen which is the better organized, the German or the British. We know what the British heel means for us and the non-European races of the world. But we would never wish to end the British rule with German aid. We have found in non-violence a force which, if organized, can without doubt match itself against a combination of all the most violent forces in the world. In non-violent technique, as I have said, there is no such thing as defeat. It is all 'do or die' without killing or hurting. It can be used practically without money and obviously without the aid of science of destruction which you have brought to such perfection. It is a marvel to me that you do not see that it is nobody's monopoly. If not the British, some other power will certainly improve upon your method and beat you with your own weapon. You are leaving no legacy to your people of which they would feel proud. They cannot take pride in a recital of cruel deed, however skilfully planned. I, therefore, appeal to you in the name of humanity to stop the war. You will lose nothing by referring all the matters of dispute between you and Great Britain to an international tribunal of your joint choice. If you attain success in the war, it will not prove that you were in the right. It will only prove that your power of destruction was greater. Whereas an award by an impartial tribunal will show as far as it is humanly possible which party was in the right.

You know that not long ago I made an appeal[1] to every Briton to accept my method of non-violent resistance. I did it because the British know me as a friend though a rebel. I am a stranger to you and your people. I have not the courage to make you the appeal I made to every Briton. Not that it would not apply to you with the same force as to the British. But my present proposal is much simple because much more practical and familiar.

During this season when the hearts of the peoples of Europe yearn for peace, we have suspended even our own peaceful struggle.[2] Is it too much to ask you to make an effort for peace during a time

[1] *Vide* "To Every Briton"

[2] Gandhiji ordered suspension of the satyagraha movement during Christmas; *vide* "Letter to Syed Mahmud", 17-12-1940

which may mean nothing to you personally but which must mean much to the millions of Europeans whose dumb cry for peace I hear, for my ears are attended to hearing the dumb millions? I had intended to address a joint appeal to you and Signor Mussolini, whom I had the privilege of meeting[1] when I was in Rome during my visit to England as a delegate to the Round Table Conference. I hope that he will take this as addressed to him also with the necessary changes.

I am,
Your sincere friend,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7861. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

521. TELEGRAM TO SIR J. G. LAITHWAITE

December 24, 1940

OPEN LETTER[2] TO HERR HITLER BEING SENT TO PRESS. HOPE HIS EXCELLENCY COULD ALLOW IT QUICK PASSAGE TO THE WEST.[3]

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

522. LETTER TO NRIPENDRA NATH SIRCAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 24, 1940

DEAR SIR NRIPEN,

I have your letter. I would gladly sign for it. I allow my name to be exploited for raising money. Sir P. C. Ray's I hold to be much fitter than mine for such exploitation. I know that when I was in my teens he was already spending himself whether it was for poor students or anybody else. Yet I must resolutely refuse to lend by name to the

[1] On December 12, 1931; *vide* "Letter to Romain Rolland", 20-12-1931, "A REtrospect"and "Diary, 1031"

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] The addressee, in his reply dated December 27, *inter alia,* said: "He has only just seen your open letter but with great regret finds himself quite unable to accept the statements contained in it as in any way a fair representation of the relations of great Britain with India, which has so greatly benefited over so long a period of years from association with the empire, and between which and the forces of aggression outside there stands today only the empire's strength. It is not possible for him, in these circumstances, to give you the assistance for which you ask in connection with it." *Vide* also "Letter to Sir J. G. Laithwaite", 30-12-1940

appeal unless you have a private meeting of would-be subscribers and get the minimum in cash. I have a tragic experience of such appeals being made, widely signed and yet falling flat. I would far rather that no appeal for funds was made in the proud name of India's great scientist-philanthropist than that the appeal having been made, should fall flat. Therefore canvass amongst those who will sign the appeal. Bag the money from them. Wire how much you have bagged and if it is a worthy sum you shall have my signature. Otherwise not.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

523. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
December 24, 1940

BHAI PRITHVI SINGH,

Do go to Bhavnagar. Everything will be all right at Poona. I am writing to Nalini.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR PRITHVI SINGH
C/O SHRI VAISHAMPAYANJI
"VANDEMATARAM"
787 SADASHIV PETH
POONA CITY

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5644. Also C.W. 2955. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

524. LETTER TO DUNICHAND[1]

[Before *December 25, 1940*][2]

Mahatma Gandhi in a letter to me has conveyed that only those persons are eligible to offer satyagraha who strictly conform to the following conditions:

[1] The addressee, a Member of the Legislative Assembly, and President, Punjab Provincial Congress Committee, had quoted the letter in a statement to the Press in which he had appealed "to all concerned to make a careful note of the wishes of Mahatma Gandhi and save the good name of the Punjab". The statement was reported under the date line "Lahore, December 25".

[2] *ibid*

1. They are habitual and regular spinners.

2. They are habitual khadi-wearers.

3. They believe in the necessity of communal unity and removal of untouchability in every shape and form.

4. They believe in the necessity of supporting village handicrafts and swadeshi in everything.

5. They believe that swaraj for the millions is unattainable without non-violence.

6. They believe in the Bombay resolution of the All-India Congress Committee.

7. They believe in an inevitable connection between the above mentioned points and non-violence.

Mahatma Gandhi stresses that nobody is obliged to court imprisonment merely as a matter of discipline. Civil disobedience thus becomes a matter of inviolable faith and not discipline. Congress does not—at least Mahatma Gandhi does not—expect anybody to offer civil disobedience who does not believe in the urgency of it. Mahatma Gandhi considers it disgraceful for any Congressman to say that he offers civil resistance for the sake of mere discipline. He has further stressed that lukewarm adherence to the Congress brings us no nearer to our goal; nor can half-hearted political belief in the Congress programme, he says, answer the purpose.

Those who do constructive work are just as good as civil resisters and by their faith and devotion to service, he says, they are rendering greater service to the cause of civil resistance than civil resisters of doubtful complexion.

Mahatma Gandhi has stressed that we shall reach our goal if civil resistance has the backing of the nation in the shape of conformity to the constructive programme. Quality is the thing which is required in the fight and not quantity; of course, both combined would be welcomed.

The Hindu, 26-12-1940

525. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
December 25, 1940

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

I got your letter. You may come over whenever you wish. I do not like the idea about Nasik. You will not get the real thing there. Nevertheless, Jivanlalbhai[1] is a gentleman. Nasik is a good place. Of

[1] Jivanlal Motichand Shah

course, there are hardships here, but you will get nowhere else the experience you will get here. To live among persons of different temperaments and to devote yourself to the study of herbs are both difficult tasks. If you are weak, how can you be called a vaid? Perhaps your health too may improve only here.

Blessings from
BAPU

VAIDRAJ SHRI VALLABHRAM
DHANVANTARI AYURVED HOSPITAL
159 PRINCESS STREET, BOMBAY-2

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2909. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya

526. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
December 26, 1940

CHI, AMRIT,

I have your promised wire. I was glad. Everything going well.

You will know the contents of your parcel. Evidently it was a conspiracy. Why should there be prunes? Do you know that the bottles cost a lot in transit? But you will retort, 'Love counts not the cost'.

Hitler letter[1] not yet published.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3955. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7304

527. LETTER TO MAGAN AND MANJULA MEHTA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
[Before December 27, 1940][2]

CHI. MAGAN AND MANJULA,

I was very pleased that you two came and stayed. Appa's name is Indrajit[3] and Munna's Dharmapal[4]. They may be called Indra and Dharma in short.

I have not been able to prepare a plan of the house, but all told,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Adolf Hitler",24-12-1940

[2] From the contents, it appears that this letter was written before the one to the addressees dated December 27, 1940; *vide* "God of Love, Not War"

[3] Addressees' sons

[5] *ibid*

it will probably cost Rs. 5,000/-. The house itself will take up 4,900 sq. ft. Then there will have to be a fence. The lavatory, etc. will be separate. Counting all this, the expense is estimated to be Rs. 5,000/-

Urmila is well. Do not worry in the least. She slept with Ba.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 1038. Courtesy: Manjula Mehta

528. MESSAGE TO ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE[1]

[On or before *December 27, 1940*][2]

I have already pointed out the royal road to swaraj to my sisters where they can go ahead of their brothers. By traversing this road they can achieve fulfilment.

From a copy: C.W. 10363. Courtesy: All-India Women's Conference

529. LETTER TO U. A. ASRANI AND B. L. TRIPATHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

December 27, 1940

DEAR FRIENDS,

I like your letter and offer.[3] I shall treasure your names and will send you in when I find it necessary. Meanwhile go on with the constructive work.

I hope you are yourselves spinning with faith and organizing it among the students.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The message was sent for the annual session which was held at Bangalore from December 27 to 30, 1940.

[2] *ibid*

[3] The addressees, members of Banaras Hindu University staff, in their letter dated December 24, had sought Gandhiji's permission to take part in the satyagraha movement.

530. LETTER TO MRS. RALLIA RAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 27, 1940

DEAR SISTER,

Gandhiji is thankful to you for your letter of the 24th. He reciprocates the season's greetings and hopes you will have a successful session.

Re. the cutting you have sent, this is the first time he has heard the allegation that he is conniving at the doings (or resolutions) of the Hindu Mahasabha. The columns of *Harijan* give the lie to it. Unfortunately *Harijan* is extinct at the present moment, and Gandhiji has no time to overtake everything that appears in the Press.

Yours sincerely,
MAHADEV DESAI

From the original: File No. 83. Courtesy: National Archives of India

531. LETTER TO MAGANLAL AND MANJULA MEHTA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 27, 1940

CHI. MAGAN AND MANJULA,

Everyday I mean to write to you but cannot do so. Urmila is happy.

You should not mourn over Mother's death. Instead, you should be grateful to God that she has found peace at last.

I myself cut Urmila's hair today. She looks much better now. Her hair used to fall off a good deal.

It will take some time to get your house ready. But whenever you decide to come, I will arrange for a separate kitchen for you. Let me know in advance.

May your vow bear fruit.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 1611. Courtesy: Manjulabehn M. Mehta

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

RAJAGOPALACHARI'S RESOLUTION FOR WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING, DELHI[1]

July 3, 1940

The Working Committee is of opinion that the proposals communicated by His Excellency the Viceroy in his conversation with Mahatma Gandhi do not meet the requirements of the present situation in any satisfactory manner.

According to these proposals the claim of the Congress that the status of India should be declared by Britain to be one of complete independence remains unsatisfied. Any declaration that India shall be in the same position as the self-governing countries in the British Commonwealth does not meet the case of India. Nor has it any real meaning in the present state of world affairs.

Apart from this and what is even more important in relation to the immediate activities in regard to Defence efforts, - the Working Committee is emphatically of the opinion that the Congress cannot withdraw its non-co-operation unless the entire field of central government including defence is immediately placed in charge of a national government, which, though formed *ad hoc* and as a transitory measure, should be so constituted as to command the confidence of all the elected elements of the Central Legislature and of the Responsible Governments in the provinces. Unless such a central national government is immediately formed, any efforts in the direction of the defence of India will not only be contrary to the fundamental principles of justice and democratic government, but will also prove utterly futile.

Wardha office, Satyagraha file, 1940-41. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX II

EXTRACTS FROM SRINIVASA SASTRI'S LETTER[1]

July 16, 1940

. . . When you ask Britain to admit that India is free or declare that India shall be free from a certain date, you ask for the impossible. South Africa and Eire have not asked for it. The right to secede at will is equivalent to independence. This right has been openly claimed by both Dominions and no one in authority has raised a voice of protest from the British side. No one will venture to do so. It is a very different

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Abul Kalam Azad", 19-8-1940

[1] *Vide* "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 20-7-1940

thing to demand a resolution or Act of Parliament declaring or granting in express terms the right of secession. Why shall we not be realists for once and rest content with Dominion Status, of which we now know the implicit as well as the explicit significance? You recently said that Dominion Status will go after the war or change beyond recognition. Let it. We shall be no worse than the other Dominions. . . The Congress and you believed, or allowed yourselves to be persuaded, when the war began in earnest, that your demand of independence would be complied with. As the war grows more grim, you are confirmed in that belief. True, Britain could be squeezed today if things were normal in India. I mean you would obtain your desire if Britain could be sure that she would gain more that she would lose by compliance. She calculates that she would be worse off worse off in the result. Who can gainsay it with confidence? My own opinion —I am so ignorant it isn't worth much— is that Muslim displeasure is a greater minus than Congress adhesion is a plus. Nobody can gauge the precise extent of Jinnah's influence. As a man and as a politician he has developed unexpectedly. . . . Nevertheless, Congress is unable to ignore or neglect him; how can the British Government do so? The risk is great. . . .

To sum up: Independence at Britain's hands is out of the question. Independence of Britain the fortune of war may thrust upon us (God forbid it). But independence we shall neither get not keep. . . .

Rajaji's resolution in my judgment is foredoomed by being coupled with the independence demand. Consistency and prestige perhaps require it, but neither of these is an all important consideration.

Let me paraphrase the W. C. C. 's offer to Britain. Grant our independence and in earnest thereof nationalize the Central Government. We shall abandon non-violence and harness all India's resources in your aid. It is the clear duty now of the strongest and the most patriotic party to grasp at every opportunity of acquiring power and using it for the protection of the people, subordinating and postponing for the moment all other considerations, including independence. Instead, Rajaji's position, stated briefly, is : "Congress can't do its best till India is independent or declared so. Because you don't enable us to do our best, we won't do even what we can, though for our own people's primary needs."

Suppose, now, on the contrary, the W. C. C. directed the men who were Ministers in the Provinces to resume office and other measures necessary for the protection of the people. Will it not immediately restore the confidence of the public and dispel the fear of anarchy which is now widespread and may soon demoralize the inhabitants of the villages? Power carries a responsibility; Congressmen may not say now to the harassed citizens: "You must suffer till the Britisher yields." Will you not shake off your prepossessions and obsessions and order the provincial

parliamentarians back to their posts of duty? Tell them that peaceful existence is prior to independence, and that Britishers and Muslims may be disposed of later. . . .

Srinivasa Sastri Papers. File No G-1. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX III

LETTER FROM JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

August 10, 1940

MY DEAR BAPU,

I have just received your letter of the 8th. About Hyderabad, I can make no suggestion. So much depends on the strength of the people and their organization. I think, however, that it is far better for them to concentrate on the rural areas where the chances of communal clashes are probably less. I do not see how they can remain passive under the circumstances. Yet it may be perhaps better not to precipitate a big crisis immediately in view of the rapid developments of the political situation in India as a whole. When this all-India situation advances further, Hyderabad people might be in a better position to assert their right.

In a sense I am not sorry at the development in Hyderabad. The impossible attitude that Bahadur Yar Khan and others have taken up will react on them. It may of course lead to a great deal of trouble and bloodshed. In any event the State Congress people should make it perfectly clear that they cannot reduce by an iota their demand for responsible government.

I understand the Working Committee is likely to meet in Wardha in eight or nine days' time. I hope to meet you then.

About the exactions for war funds. I have written to the secretary of the U. P. P. C. C. to send you some particulars. Some have been published in the Press and are clear enough. Some others, though equally clear, might be explained differently. For instance an usual case is for a person to be approached for a donation. He refuses or offers a smaller sum than what is demanded. Immediately or a day or two after, he is arrested on the charge of preventing others from subscribing to the war funds, and thereby charge of preventing others from subscribing to the war funds, and thereby coming in the way of war efforts.

I have just had a case like this from Allahabad district. A poor village shopkeeper was asked to give Rs. 15 or Rs. 20. He said the most he could possibly give was Rs. 15. He was cursed and sworn at and immediately a notice was given to him to appear to show cause why he should not be proceeded against under the Defence of India rules. His case is up today in a court here. Usually this kind of thing

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 27-8-1940

is not done with full-fledged Congressmen who are expected to refuse anyhow. Another case which has come to me today is from Kasganj in Etah district. A Naib Tahsildar went to the shop of a Congressman on 2nd of August and demanded money for the war funds. This was refused and the man stated that as a Congressman he could not do so. Thereupon the Naib Tahsildar threatened to take action and had the name of the person noted down. On the next day this man, who is the nephew of a well-known Congressman in the district, was suddenly arrested for non-payment of a punitive police tax. He was put in the lock-up and for 30 hours he was not given any food or facilities for bathing. Etc. This arrest was completely illegal as punitive tax can only be recovered by attachment of property and the person concerned, whose name is Omprakash, has considerable movable and immovable property. The amount of Punitive Tax concerned was only Rs. 6 which could easily have been realized by attachment. Omprakash's uncle, Manpal Gupta, thereupon created a lot of fuss and ultimately Omprakash was discharged. That is how the matter stands now.

Another interesting case is that of Thakur Surendra Bhadur Singh, Taluqadar of Simri in Rae Bareli district. He is a Congress M. L. A. His father, the Taluqadar, recently died and thereupon, at his own request, his taluqa was taken under the Court or Wards. The Deputy Commissioner informed him that he should contribute Rs. 1,500 to the War Fund. He refused to do so as a Congressman. He was then told that he held his taluqa on conditions of loyalty and good service and the Court of Wards had a perfect right to give the donation out of the revenues of the taluqa. Thereupon he sent a registered notice to the Deputy Commissioner protesting against this imposition and saying that it was wholly illegal. His case was that it might or might not be open to the Government to confiscate his taluqa for want of loyalty to them. But it was certainly not open to them to give a donation on his behalf and against his will. In spite of this the Deputy Commissioner has already or is going to pay this sum to the war fund and Surendra Bahadur singh is thinking of bringing a declaratory suit in a court of law.

I am getting complaints from various districts of pressure being brought on kisans to pay eight annas or a rupee or more per plough. It is obvious that they do not want to pay but are compelled to do so.

Petty Government servants and minor officials dare not say no when they are asked to contribute. A recent case which came to my notice informally but nevertheless correctly was that of stenotypist of a District Magistrate. He was asked to give Rs. 200. His salary was Rs. 125 a month. He pointed out hesitatingly that he had a large family and it was entirely beyond his capacity to pay that sum. He was then told that in any event he and his family would have to starve if the British lost the war. So this was a kind of insurance that he had to pay. Ultimately it was settled that he should pay Rs. 150 to the war fund. A curious thing is that one does not hear

very much about donations from higher officials. They think it is enough for them to serve the cause by giving their very efficient service at a high rate of payment.

That number of new appointments at high salaries grows from day to day. Probably a very large proportion of the funds that are being collected goes towards the payment of these high salaries. Simla, I understand, is crowded with this type of officials serving the great cause by drawing a fancy salary for little or no work. There was a recent case of an English official who was till recently drawing Rs. 750 a month suddenly being pushed into some war work and is being given Rs. 2,500 a month. It was stated that he had accepted this new job at considerable sacrifice to himself.

Yours affectionately,

MAHATMA GANDHI

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1940. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX IV

STATEMENT MADE BY THE VICEROY ON AUGUST 8, 1940 [1]

India's anxiety at this moment of critical importance in the world struggle against tyranny and agression to contribute to the full to the common cause and to the triumph of our common ideals is manifest. She has already made a mighty contribution. She is anxious to make a greater contribution still. His Majesty's Government are deeply concerned that that unity of national purpose in India which would enable her to do so should be achieved at as early a moment as possible. They feel that some further statement of their intentions may help to promote that unity. In the hope they have authorized me to make the present statement.

Last October His Majesty's Government again made it clear that Dominion Status was their objective for India. They added that they were ready to authorize the expansion of the Governor-General's Council to include a certain number of representatives of political parties, and they proposed the establishment of a Consultative Committee. In order to facilitate harmonious co-operation it was obvious that some measure of agreement in the provinces between the major parties was a desirable prerequisite to their joint collaboration at the Centre. Such agreement was unfortunately not reached, and in the circumstances no progress was then possible.

During the earlier part of this year, I continued my efforts to bring political parties together. In these last few weeks I again entered into conversations with

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow",9-8-1940 and "Draft Resolution for Congress Working Committee", 21-8-1940

prominent political personages in British India and the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, the results of which have been reported to His Majesty's Government. His Majesty's Government have seen also the resolutions passed by the Congress Working Committee, the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha.

It is clear that the earlier differences which had prevented the achievement of national unity remain unbridged. Deeply as His Majesty's Government regret this, they do not feel that they should any longer, because of these differences, postpone the expansion of the Governor-General's Council, and the establishment of a body which will more closely associate Indian public opinion with the conduct of the war by the Central Government. They have authorized me accordingly to invite a certain number or representative Indians to join my Executive council. They have authorized me further to establish a War Advisory Council, which would meet at regular intervals, and which would contain representatives of the Indians States, and of other interests in the national life of India as a whole.

The conversations which have taken place, and the resolutions of the bodies which I have just mentioned, make it clear however that there is still in certain quarters doubt as to the intentions of His Majesty's Government for the constitutional future of India, and that there is doubt, too as to whether the position of minorities whether political or religious, is sufficiently safeguarded in relation to any constitutional change by the assurance already given. There are two main points that have emerged. On those two points His Majesty's Government now desire me to make their position clear.

The first is as to the position of minorities in relation to any future constitutional scheme. It has already been made clear my that declaration of last October does not exclude examination of any part either of the Act of 1935 or of the policy and plans on which it is based. His Majesty's Government's concern that full weight should be given to the views of the minorities in any revision has also been brought out. That remains the position of His Majesty's Government. It goes without saying that they could not contemplate the transfer of their present responsibilities for the peace and welfare of India to any system of Government whose authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life. Nor could they be parties to the coercion of such elements into submission to such a government.

The second point of general interest is the machinery for building within the British Commonwealth of Nations a new constitutional scheme when the time comes. There has been very strong insistence that the framing of that scheme should be primarily the responsibility of Indians themselves, and should originate from Indian conceptions of the social, economic and political structure of Indian life. His Majesty's Government are in sympathy with that desire, and wish to see it given the fullest practical expression subject to the due fulfilment of the obligations which

Great Britain's long connection with India has imposed upon her and for which His Majesty's Government cannot divest themselves of responsibility. It is clear that a moment when the Commonwealth is engaged in a struggle for existence is not one in which fundamental constitutional issues can be decisively resolved. But His Majesty's Government authorize me to declare that they will most readily assent to the setting up after the conclusion of the war with the least possible delay of a body representative of the principal elements in India's national life in order to devise the framework of the new constitution and they will lend every aid in their power to hasten decisions on all relevant matter to the utmost degree. Meanwhile they will welcome and promote in any way possible every sincere and practical step that may be taken by representative Indians themselves to reach a basis of friendly agreement, firstly, on the form which the post-war representative body should take, and the methods by which it should arrive at its conclusions and secondly, upon the principles and outlines of the constitution itself. They trust however that for the period of the war (with the Central Government reconstituted and strengthened in the manner I have described and with the help of the War Advisory Council) all parties, communities and interests will combine and co-operate in making a notable Indian contribution to the victory of the world cause which is at stake. Moreover they hope that in this process new bonds of union and understanding will emerge and thus pave the way towards the attainment by India of that free and equal partnership in the British Commonwealth which remains the proclaimed and accepted goal of the Imperial Crown and of the British Parliament.

From a printed copy: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Microfilm No. 109, Part II, item No. 137. Courtesy: National Archives of India

APPENDIX V

RESOLUTION PASSED AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING AT WARDHA[1]

August 21, 1940

The Working Committee have read that statement issued by the viceroy on the authority of the British Government on the 8th of August and the report of the speech of the Secretary of State for India in the House of Commons explaining the Viceroy's statement. They note with deep regret that the British Government have rejected the friendly offer and practical suggestion contained in the Poona resolution of the A. I. C. C. on 28th July framed for a solution of the deadlock and to enable the Indian National Congress to withdraw its non-co-operation and to secure in the present

[1]*Vide* "Draft Resolution for Congress Working Committee", 21-8-1940

crisis the patriotic co-operation of all the people of India in the governance of India and organization of national defence.

The Working Committee have read with deep pain and indignation the declaration and assumptions contained in the statements and speeches made on behalf of the British Government which seek to deny India her natural right of complete national freedom and reiterate the untenable claim that Britain should maintain herself in a dominant position in India in the discharge of the higher functions of the State. These claims render false and empty even their own promise to recognize India at an early date, as a free and equal unit in the British commonwealth. Such claims and recent events and developments in the world have confirmed the Committee's conviction that India cannot function within the orbit of an imperial power and must attain the status of a free and independent nation. This does not prevent close association with other countries within a comity of free nations for the peace of the world.

The Working Committee are of opinion that the assertion contained in the statement made on behalf of the British Government that they will not part with power and responsibility in favour of the elected representatives of the people of India, and that therefore the present autocratic and irresponsible system of government must continue so long as any group of people or the Princes, as distinguished from the people of the States or perhaps even foreign vested interests raise objections to any constitutions framed by the elected representatives of the people of India, is a direct encouragement and incitement to civil discord and strife, and amounts to a fatal blow to all willingness to compromise and adjustment of claims.

The Committee regret that although the Congress has never thought in terms of coercing any minority, much less of asking the British Government to do so, the demand for a settlement of the constitution through a Constitutent Assembly of duly elected representatives has been misrepresented as coercion and the issue of minorities has been made into an insuperable barrier to India's progress. The Congress had proposed that minority rights should be amply protected by agreement with elected representatives of the minorities concerned. The Working Committee therefore cannot but conclude that the attitude and assertions contained in these statements made on behalf of the British Government confirm the prevailing feeling that the British authority has been continually operating so as to create, maintain and aggravate differences in India's national life.

The Working Committee note with astonishment that the demand for the constitution of a Provisional National Government composed of persons commanding the confidence of the various elected groups in the present Central Legislature, formed under the 1919 Constitution of India, has been described by the Secretary of State for India as one that would raise the unsolved constitutional issue and prejudge it in favour of the majority and against the minorities. The Working Committee are of

opinion that the rejection of this proposal unmistakable indicates that there is no willingness on the part of the British Government to part with any power and authority even for the immediate purpose of securing co-operation in war efforts. The British Government would gather together and carry on with such dissentient groups and individuals as oppose the wishes of the majority of the people of India and without any co-ordination with elected legislatures at the Centre or in the Provinces, rather than concede anything that would work towards the recognition of the rights of the people of India to rule themselves democratically.

For these reason the Working Committee have come to the conclusion that the statement referred to are wholly opposed not only to the principle of democracy as acclaimed by the British Government in the war, but also to the best interests of India, and they cannot be a party to accepting the proposals contained in the statements, or advising the country to accept them. The Working Committee consider that these declarations and offers not only fall far short of the Congress demand, but would be impediments to the evolution of a free and united India.

The Working Committee call upon the people to condemn the attitude adopted by the British Government by means of public meetings and otherwise, as also through their elected representatives in the provincial legislatures.

The Indian Annual Regist er, 1940, Vol. II, pp. 196-7.

APPENDIX VI

A STRANGE PLAN[1]

As expected, the Congress Working Committee agreed at its meeting in Bombay to hand over the direction of Congress policy to Mr. Gandhi. The three cardinal points emerging from the Working Committee's resolution are that the Congress has no desire to embarrass the British Government in the conduct of the war, that there is to be no mass civil disobedience, but that the Congress must insist "on the fullest freedom to pursue its policy on the basis of non-violence". On the first two points there will be widespread agreement. "Congressmen", so runs the resolution, "cannot withhold their admiration for the bravery and endurance shown by the British nation in the face of danger and peril. They can have no ill will against them, and the spirit of satyagraha forbids the Congress from doing anything with a view to embarrass them." This tribute and assurance are opportune, and will be widely welcomed. There will also be relief among all classes of the people that whatever action Mr. Gandhi, as dictator of Congress policy, may take, it will not involve mass lawlessness.

[1] *Vide* "Some Criticism Answered"

But there are other features of the resolution and of Mr. Gandhi's exposition of it on Sunday which will arouse misgivings. In the first place the resolution makes it clear that the offer of conditional Congress co-operation with the British Government in the war has lapsed. Moreover, Mr. Gandhi explained very fully what Congress insistence "on the fullest freedom to pursue its policy based on non-violence" really means. He announced his intention of again seeing His Excellency the Viceroy and seeking from him a declaration that the Congress "can go on preaching anti-war propaganda and non-co-operation with Government in their war effort". If this declaration is given, there will be no civil disobedience; if it is not given, Mr. Gandhi will have to consider what action he should take, but he will do his best to avoid satyagraha. This amazing proposal is both impracticable and completely illogical. Mr. Gandhi professes his desire not to embarrass the British Government in any way, yet in the same breath he suggests that he should be allowed to do something which will hamper India's war effort and thus aid the enemy. Even Congress papers have already pointed out the impossibility of reconciling the two ideas. Anything which hinders India's war effort must be an embarrassment to the British Government; it cannot be anything else.

This attitude clearly arises from a grievous misunderstanding of the European struggle. In his speech, Mr. Gandhi made two extraordinary statements. The first was that the peoples of Europe do not know what they are fighting for; the second that the Government of India should give expression to India's freedom by permitting the Congress to conduct an anti-war campaign in the name of liberty. We can assure Mr. Gandhi that the British people know full well what they are fighting for. It is far too late in the day for anyone who does not deliberately shut his eyes to hard facts to pretend that the war is merely a struggle between rival systems of so-called "imperialism". Mr. Gandhi should read *Main Kampf*; he should also study the speeches of those who expound Nazi aims, and he should note what Hitler had done to neutral countries in Europe. He should also pursue the report of Mr. Patel, the former Indian Trade Commissioner in Hamburg, who throws a flood of light on Nazi methods inside Germany in peace time. These things reveal with remarkable clarity the menace which Britain and her Allies are fighting—a menace realized no more keenly than in the United States of America. If Mr. Gandhi is right, the British people are wrong; so are the vast majority of Americans and all free Frenchmen, Dutchmen, Belgians, Norwegians, Poles and Danes who are struggling to rescue their country from Hitler's tyranny.

The fundamental difference between democracy and totalitarianism is evident to the merest child. The one system constitutes the greatest amount of individual freedom consistent with good government; the other regards humanity as a mob of automatons to be directed by the chosen few. There is not a single Congressman from

Mr. Gandhi downwards who does not profess himself to be revolted by the totalitarian system and the mass slavery which it connotes; it is, therefore, almost incredible to find Mr. Gandhi calmly announcing that the British people, among others, have no idea what they are fighting for. Mr. Gandhi must also know that to preach anti-war propaganda and non-co-operation with the war effort in India is to advocate support for the enemy. His plan would create in this country an army of fifth columnists, which is exactly what Hitler desires. Surely Mr. Gandhi knows that Hitler has achieved his success hitherto in destroying democracy by the simple expedient of using the freedom which democracy bestows to encompass its downfall. If Mr. Gandhi seriously believes in democracy, he cannot pretend that this war is of no consequence to India, or that the people of India should be allowed to take no part in it. We sincerely trust that he will reconsider his position before approaching the Viceroy.

The Times of India, 17-9-1940

APPENDIX VII

DANGER OF EXTINCTION[1]

It is very difficult to understand the reported proceedings of the Congress at Bombay. Wading through the sea of words, contradiction after contradiction serves to make the darkness more and more visible. One tangible point seems to be Mr. Gandhi's statement that, if the Viceroy will assure him that the Congressmen will be allowed publicly to advocate non-co-operation in the war-effort—stressing the fact that such non-co-operation must be non-violent —there will be no satyagraha of any kind on his part and that, in any case, there will be no mass civil disobedience. Our first reaction to this was to wonder why the Congress must always be asking for difficult statements and cannot leave well alone. The Government has never prohibited the conscientious teaching of pacifism in India any more than the British Government has interfered with it in Britain. The Quaker and the conscientious objector are not penalized in war unless they take action obviously calculated to help the enemy. Those who attempt to convert soldiers, sailors and airmen, and suborn these or others engaged in direct war work, are clearly helping the enemy. When a whole people is legally conscripted, as is the case in Britain now, the line is still more difficult to draw. Every worker is, in a sense, a war worker. Nevertheless, conversion to the view that it is wrong to be a combatant even in the most righteous cause is not likely to interfere with the output of the ordinary man who is doing civilian work. This is the point of view which is tolerated in Britain and has hitherto been tolerated in India. Mr. Gandhi's own astounding proposal that Britain should

[1] *Vide* "Some Criticism Answered"

abjectly surrender to Hitler was even, at his own request, put before the War Cabinet which treated it with respect as a sincere opinion and sent a polite reply.

Why then, if you have got what you want, ask the Viceroy for a difficult statement which many will seek to twist and turn into a cloak for their efforts to help the enemy to conquer India? Other passages in Mr. Gandhi's speech throw light on this. What is in his mind is the wholesale arrests of Congress officials and workers which are now continually recorded in the Press, especially in the United Provinces. Details are not given, but the arrests are generally made under the Defence Regulations and appear to be because of speeches in connexion with the war. Mr. Gandhi says he wishes to point out to the Viceroy that the Congress is in danger of "extinction" during the war because of its creed of non-violent non-co-operation, and he wants liberty for Congressmen to preach their doctrine.

We have often expressed our view about the fundamental immorality and contradictory character of the doctrine. Non-co-operation is a method of war and not of peace. For otherwise unarmed or defenceless people it is quite a reasonable method of making war or defending themselves, but it has no more spiritual value than war and probably much less; for it carries with it a pretentious claim to spiritual value which involves sanctimonious insincerities and mass hypocrisy, making intensified hatreds and accompanied by an extraordinary development of violence of language to compensate for the absence of real manliness in defending what must be defended if life is to be worth living. A nation which accepted this doctrine would doom itself to slavery and would breed generations of sycophantic hypocrites crawling before masters who despised them. It is no doctrine for India and, if the Congress persists in it, the Congress will certainly be "extinguished", either because India will have none of it, or because the Congress will so poison the country that Britain cannot save it from three or four totalitarian Powers determined to carve it up, in which case the Congress as an organization will never be heard of again.

Lust of conquest in one country and pacifism in an unaggressive country are twin poisons working together to produce war. The English pacifists have much to answer for. They preached the doctrine of surrender to a country innocent of any desire for war and had not the courage to stand on street corners in Berlin and Rome and go to prison. The non-co-operator has a better case. He was at war against the Government of India and he did go to prison, but he spoilt his case by pretending to be a pacifist. We have no quarrel with the Quaker or with any other quietist. He acts according to his conscience, but he seeks no converts, interferes with no one, and does positive good work in war time refusing true help and sympathy to no man whatever his nationality. But the man who preaches non-resistance and surrender in war time, whatever his motives, is weakening a nation's will to survive and is

helping to destroy it and to deliver it to the enemy. Under this leadership, the Congress has nothing to offer India. At the same time, there is not sufficient assurance that the authorities everywhere—and the doubt is perhaps strongest in regard to the United Provinces—are acting intelligently in regard to the arrests of the Congressmen. It is not yet the accepted practice either in Britain or in India to arrest a man merely expressing pacifist views, though we do not ourselves see how in a war for survival a nation can tolerate aggressive pacifism, which must plainly be one of the enemy's assets. Having, however, recently seen people who were trying to help the war effort, arrested when they tried to organize an Anti-Fascists Day, we cannot help having some doubts whether sufficient care is always taken to prevent injustice. It is necessary to arrest men who preach revolution or violence or any form of action to impede war effort. But it is not yet the business of the authorities to prevent sincere expression of personal conviction of a non-violent character, still less to attempt the extinction of Congress in the name of the war. The Congress is in danger of extinguishing itself and needs no interference. So are the Pakistanists and the vested interests, some of them British, in the services or in business which stand in the way of the war effort. To survive, we have all to shed many prejudices yet and develop new attitudes and new leadership.

The Statesman, 17-9-1940

APPENDIX VIII

LETTER FROM LORD LINLITHGOW[1]

SIMLA,

September 30, 1940

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I think it will be convenient if I record very briefly in writing the origin of the talks that we have had on the 27th and 30th September and their outcome.

As you will remember, you wrote to me on the 18th September to ask that I should grant you an interview, and you explained in your letter that you were anxious to discuss the situation covered by the recent resolution of the All-India Congress Committee, not only in your capacity as guide of the Congress but as a personal friend. I was, I need not say, most ready to talk things over with you, and we have now had the advantage of two conversations.

[1] *vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 30-9-1940

In the course of these conversations the situation has been exhaustively discussed, with particular reference to the question of free speech in time of war. On that matter, while professing yourself most anxious to avoid in any way embarrassing His Majesty's Government in the prosecution of the war, you made it clear to me that you regarded it as essential that the Indian National Congress and other members of the public should be in a position to give full expression to their views in relation to the war effort, provided only that such expression was fully non-violent.

I indicated to you the nature of the special treatment laid down by law in the United Kingdom for dealing with conscientious objectors—which I may broadly describe as an arrangement under which, while the conscientious objector is absolved from the duty of fighting and is allowed even to profess his faith in public, he is not permitted to carry his opposition to the length of endeavouring to persuade others, whether soldiers or munition workers, to abandon their allegiance or to discontinue their effort.

You made it clear to me that you would not regard treatment of that nature as adequate in the conditions of India, and that you regarded it as essential that in India, where in your judgment conditions were wholly different from those existing in Great Britain, the Indian objector, either to all war as such, or to the participation of India in the present war, should be untramelled in the expression of his views.

It emerged further from our conversation that, while you would not yourself preach to workers engaged on war work at the actual works, in an endeavour there to dissuade them from working on war equipment, you could regard it as essential that it should be open to Congressmen and non-Congressmen alike to deliver addresses and otherwise to call upon people throughout the country to refrain from assisting India's war effort in any way which would involve India's participation in bloodshed.

I listened with the utmost care and attention to your argument, and our examination of the situation has been full and close. I felt bound, however, in the outcome, to make it clear to you that action such as you suggest would certainly amount not only to the inhibition of India's war effort, but to that embarrassment of Great Britain in the prosecution of the war which the Congress state that they are anxious to avoid; and that it would clearly not be possible in the interests of India herself, more particularly at this most critical juncture in the war, to acquiesce in the interference with the war effort which would be involved in freedom of speech so wide as that for which you had asked.

Harijan, 6-10-1940

APPENDIX IX

LETTER FROM JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

ANAND BHAVAN, ALLAHABAD,

October 2, 1940

MY DEAR BAPU,

About six weeks ago, when I was in Bombay for the Planning Committee, I had a remarkable experience, which has oppressed me often since then. I should have told you about it when you were in Bombay last but the Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. filled my mind and I forgot. I did not want to write about it through the post.

I came back from the Planning Committee during the midday interval for food. I had to go back soon after and was pressed for time. Just then a young English boy turned up at my sister's flat. He was dressed in khadi—a shirt and loose pyjamas and [a] cap. He told me that he was an officer in the army—a Second Lieutenant—and had decided to leave the army and face the consequences. He produced a copy of a document which he said he had given to his Commanding Officer and which had been forwarded to Army Headquarters at Simla. I read this and was amazed. It was a very fine statement. I enclose a copy of it and you can read it for yourself.

His name was Napier. He was the great grandson of the Napier who is said to have conquered Sind. The family since then had been intimately connected with the army. Apparently it came down in the world. Young Napier joined as a private a few years before the war began. But because he was a bright lad, and possibly also because of his family, he got a scholarship for Sandhurst and later became a commissioned officer. He was sent with his regiment to India a month or two after the war began. He was stationed at Mhow in Central India. Evidently he did not fit in with his brother officers. He was more serious and intellectual and he felt drawn towards India, especially to the poorer classes. He avoided officers' messes and spent his time in the bazaar or elsewhere talking to paltry shopkeepers, labourers, etc. He tried to pick up Hindustani. I think he gave a good part of his salary to the poor.

This was not liked by his brother officers. The Commanding Officer spoke to him about it and they had many arguments. He began to dislike his profession, and especially service in India, more and more. He wanted to leave it but this was not possible in war time. Ultimately he gave the enclosed note to his C.O.

His regiment was transferred from Mhow to Jhansi. This gave him a day and a half or two to join up at Jhansi. He decided to burn his boats whatever the consequences and went and sold his uniform. This was done chiefly to put a definite

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 6-10-1940

end to his military career—also to raise some money. He did not, particularly, want to be sent back from India to England.

He then telephoned to Allahabad to get into touch with me and learnt—found—I was in Bombay and got my address; went straight to Bombay and to my sister's house from the station.

This was a novel situation for me and I was completely taken aback. My heart went out to this young and terribly sincere boy of 25 but I did not know what to do. By coming to Bombay he had deserted—and that too in war time. This is the gravest offence in military law and there was no doubt that he would be arrested in a day or two and court-martialled. I found from him that he was due to report at Jhansi the next morning. There was just a chance of his getting back to Jhansi in time if he took the next train which left soon after.

I wanted to have a much longer talk with Napier but already I had kept the Planning Committee waiting. If he had to go back to Jhansi by the next train then there was going to be no other chance. I felt he must go back. To be charged with desertion was to confuse the issue apart from other consequences. He had already made his position perfectly clear to the army authorities and he could face them and fight them on that issue. I could hardly conceive of his remaining in the British Army after his declaration of faith. Nor could I see how he was to get out of it. Army authorities do not permit this kind of thing. What was going to happen to him I could not guess, but it seemed to be clear that he would have a very hard time. Anyway I felt that this question must not be mixed up with desertion. I advised him, therefore, to go back by the next train to Jhansi and to report himself to the C.O. there. I further suggested to him not to do so in khadi *kurta* and pyjamas. He said he had shorts, etc., and he would wear them. I asked him if he had enough money. He said he had quite enough for his purpose.

He accepted my advice and said he would go back. I asked him to communicate with me, if possible, or with my sister, and to let me know what happened. We have had no news of him since. I am told now that every regiment that is sent to Jhansi, goes off soon after to Egypt. I am trying to find out now what had happened to Napier's regiment. It is quite likely that because of his views and his escapade he was kept under arrest and prevented from communicating, and later sent out of India.

His face haunts me and I often wonder if I advised him rightly.

Yours affectionately,

[ENCLOSURE—NAPIER'S NOTE]

August 1940

Having regard to the fact that the country is at war and it is not possible for an officer to resign his commission in the normal manner I here under at the request of my Commanding Officer set down my considered opinions, in the belief that these are incompatible with the retention of my commission. I am infinitely more proud of these opinions than of the fact that my family has an unbroken tradition of service in the British Army for the past 150 years, and that one of my forbears played no small part in conquering India.

I am opposed to British Rule in India. I consider that a country should be ruled by its inhabitants, because freedom is the most important thing of all. It is even more important than food, but food is also important. In India no one has freedom, and a large proportion of the population have insufficient food, a fact plainly evident to any Englishman who took the trouble to miss his drinks at the club for one evening and go into the country to look.

I am opposed to the British Empire. I consider it to be an association for the making of money, propagated by merchants in England under a hypothetical screen of "Empire glory and the betterment of the native races". I consider this bad for the majority of people in England, bad for India, and bad for the world. There is this much difference between Hitlerism and Bolshevism on the one hand and British Imperialism on the other. The latter gives liberty and food to some and neither to others. The former gives food to all and liberty to none. I am opposed to modern European civilization, which is the grandiose name under which the present mess in the vicinity of the North Sea is known. I find it difficult to believe that the peoples at present engaged in a mad struggle generated by greed and fear are a force for good in the world. European civilization has produced the means for making things, and rather more efficiently the means for destroying what it has made. Its most important effect on the mind of the ordinary man is that it has produced an inability to think, and a distrust of those who can. It is seen at its best in war time, when everyone has work and money, and is reasonably happy in the pursuit of killing his fellow men. In peace time, there is unemployment, starvation and misery. Surely even an Englishman can see something wrong there.

I am opposed to the Englishman as a means of spreading culture and civilization. The average Englishman values his body to such an extent that he neglects his mind. Certainly the body should be fit, and be exercised to be fit, but why do people assume that the mind needs no exercise. An effete mind in a healthy body is a matter for satisfaction to an Englishman, whereas an active mind in a feeble body is a thing of contempt to him. English ideas of life are with few exceptions

based on this principle, which is in direct opposition to the Oriental view of life. I cannot willingly help the English to propagate suet-headed mentality. And for the third part of man, that elusive thing called soul! The average Englishman neglects this completely. The English are an irreligious people. The lower classes make no bones about this; on the other hand the higher classes treat religion as a social function. By a mixture of hypocrisy and sheer stupidity they manage to convince themselves they are Christians, though in practice they utterly disregard the magnificent precepts of their religion, and if Christ were to appear today in England, they would regard him as a most undesirable fellow. One point of the Christian religion is to pray daily. *You* who read this, do you pray daily? Would you kneel down in a public place and pray to your God? Yet Indians do this every day. I am not religious myself, a fact which I consider a cause for regret. I am not a Christian, but neither do I pretend to be one. Despite this I deplore my unacceptability in the eyes of my Commanding Officer, a thing which no decent Englishman would do, be he Christian or no. Nor do I in spite of my irreligion scoff at the beliefs of others, whose ignorance and superstition at the present time is due to a Government which so far from teaching them anything, has in a hundred and fifty years made no attempt to see that they have sufficient to eat. I have as much sympathy with the Hindu religion as with the Christian, and infinitely more with the Indian people than with the British.

Few Europeans object to the British themselves, but most of them object to their hypocrisy, which allows them to feather their nests at the expense of all and sundry while believing themselves in a muddled sort of way to be the saviours of mankind.

Few Indians like the British or their rule. This applies equally inside the Cantonments as outside them. The people whose work depends on the British keep their opinions to themselves, but outside the Cantonments any man who is not in receipt of a Government pension will very gladly say what his opinions are. As to the opinion of Indians in the Army, particularly those commissioned, I leave it for someone sufficiently painstaking to find out. Considering that the state of the average Englishman in such matters is such that after thirty years in the country he can with difficulty speak the language, there seems little chance of this happening. But it is quite an important question; and the answer is not merely 'Yes' or 'No'. In India all questions have several answers.

Finally I must assert that I am not taking this course without due consideration, nor was it on the spur of the moment that I suggested to my Commanding Officer that it might be better if I left the Army. I have a good position; pay that is roughly twice my requirements (thanks to the munificence of the Government at the cost of a population who need it far more than myself), in addition to a scholarship obtained with some labour at the Royal Military College. I am now prepared to leave that, to

leave a profession in which I have always been keen, and to cut myself off from such friends and relations as I have in England. 'Prepared' is not the right word. 'Hoping' would be more appropriate. I do this against the advice of every Indian in the *bazar*, who assures me that though he would certainly prefer an *Indian* Government to a British one, he has no intention of doing anything about it, since his livelihood depends on the British. I am well aware that anything I may do will make scarcely a ripple in an ocean which at the present time is as near to being churned with blood as ever before. But if one must join in the general fight in this mad world, it is surely a feeble creature who would not fight for what he believes to be right, even if he must do it without a bank balance. Freedom is more important than food.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1940. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX X

LETTER FROM LORD LINLITHGOW[1]

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI,

October 24, 1940

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I have given all possible consideration to your letter of the 20th October and have seen your telegram of the 21st. My further enquiries and the papers which you have sent confirm me in what I told you in my telegram of the 19th October, viz., that no censorship orders were issued by the Central Government. What was done was to advise local editors in their own interests to refer for scrutiny any matter which might be a prejudicial report and the publication of which might, therefore, expose them to penalties under the Defence of India Rules. This, I am informed, is the usual procedure by which the Press are able to obtain advice in doubtful cases.

2. I can, of course, appreciate your desire for freedom to conduct a civil disobedience movement in the way that commends itself to you and I can understand that for that purpose you wish to enjoy unrestricted access to the public through the ordinary channels of publicity. Although, however, you evidently wish me to believe that this movement which you have initiated will be more dangerous if you do not enjoy these facilities, I must credit you personally with the desire that it should succeed in its avowed object, that of persuading the public to withhold all support from India's war effort. I must, therefore, assume that any opportunities afforded to you would be used solely for that purpose. In so far as you ask for my co-operation in such a plan, I must once more make it plain to you as I did in our conversation at the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 20-10-1940 and "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 30-10-1940

end of September that both I myself as the representative of His Majesty's Government in this country and the Government of India as responsible for its security have a very definite obligation to perform, and it would be disingenuous of me were I to leave any doubt that activities, the effect of which may be prejudicial in terms of the prosecution of the war and which infringe the law, cannot but attract the provisions of the law; and that it would not be possible for me or for the Government of India, consistently with the formal obligations falling upon us, to acquiesce in them. You know how greatly I regret that there should be this conflict of views between yourself and Government as regards the limits within which speeches of a certain character or activities of a certain character affecting the prosecution of the war may be allowed to pass unnoticed, but a point must inevitably be reached at which here as at home and elsewhere in the Empire they cannot but attract, as I have said above, the sanctions which the law provides.

Yours sincerely,

LINLITHGOW

From a copy: C.W. 7853a. Courte sy: G. D. Birla

1. LETTER TO ARTHUR MOORE

December 28, 1940

DEAR MR. MOORE[1],

Many thanks for your reasoned letter. I see that we cannot agree as to facts and, where we agree, we view them from different angles of vision. Therefore we must for the time being agree to differ. 'We shall know each other better when the mists have rolled away.' I know that our friendship can easily bear the strain of our differences.

With compliments of the season.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

2. LETTER TO K. SURYAPRAKASA RAO

SEVAGRAM,

December 28, 1940

DEAR SHRI SURYAPRAKASA RAO,

Your postcard dated 24th instant. You must spin, wear khadi, learn Hindi and do some constructive work while retaining your present job.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10275. Courtesy: K. Suryaprakasa Rao

3. LETTER TO S. RADHAKRISHNAN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

December 28, 1940

DEAR SIR RADHAKRISHNAN,

I have just finished your convocation address which you so kindly sent me. I liked it very much. Your language is all your own.

[1] Editor, *The Statesman*

You will, however, let me say that I miss the strength which I would expect from your pen or speech. The message of non-violence demands the utmost strength without sting behind it.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile: *Mahatma, Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi,* Vol. 6, between pp. 8 and 9

4. LETTER TO J. B. KRIPALANI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 28, 1940

MY DEAR PROFESSOR,

Why do you complain about my dealing directly with the Presidents and issuing Press notes? There is nothing irregular in this. And how cumbersome to do all these things through you? Mahadev might have sent you copies. But you will pity him if you saw him at work. And if and when he too goes!

You are overdue. I sent you a wire in reply to your letter. No reply and no Kripalani!

I hope you found Sucheta[1] in g[ood] he[alth].

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 10877. Courtesy: Girdhari Kripalani

5. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 28, 1940

CHI. PREMA,

I got your fine letter. I will forward it to Dhotre[2] and others and then to Narandas.

[1] Addressee's wife
[2] Raghunath Shridhar Dhotre, Secretary, Gandhi Seva Sangh

I have heard that Sushila[1] visited you. You must, therefore, have come to know everything. Bhagavat[2] also had written to me.

Sarojinidevi[3] also had told me that spinning, prayers and so on were going on regularly. I hope that all the women will come out [of jail] with good health after having acquired great skill in constructive work.

Prabhavati is here. She travelled a lot with Jayaprakash. She has been here for three days. Jayaprakash will come either today or tomorrow and take her away. She has benefited by your teaching and your guidance. She will start her work from January 1. She had gone out taking one month's leave.

Don't be guided by newspaper reports about my health. I am quite all right. I am taking care of my health. So long as God wishes to take work from me, He will keep me in health.

Ba is with me. She is calm. Lilavati is restraining her desire to come here.

Mahadev and others are fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10416. Also C.W. 6855. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

6. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE[4]

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 29, 1940

MY DEAR SUBHAS,

You are irrepressible whether ill or well. Do get well before going in for fireworks.

I have not been in consultation with Maulana Saheb. But, when I read in the papers about the decision, I could not help approving of it. I am surprised that you won't distinguish between discipline and indiscipline.

[1] Sushila Pai
[2] Manager, Saswad Ashram
[3] Sarojini Naidu
[4] This was in reply to the addressee's letter dated December 23; *vide* "Letter From Subhas Chandra Bose", 23-12-1940 Mukundlal Sircar, with Gandhiji's approval, released the correspondence to the Press.

But I quite agree with you that either of you is more than a match for the Maulana Saheb as far as popularity is concerned. But a man has to put conscience before popularity. I know that in Bengal it is difficult to function effectively without you two. I know, too, that you can carry on even without the Congress. But the Congress has to manage somehow under the severe handicap.

Suresh[1] wrote to me that Sarat was coming. I have been waiting. He can come any time he chooses, and so can you too. You know, you will be well looked after here.

As for your Bloc[2] joining civil disobedience, I think, with the fundamental differences between you and me, it is not possible. Till one of us is converted to the other's view, we must sail in different boats, though their destination may appear, only appear, to be the same.

Meanwhile let us love one another, remaining members of the same family that we are.[3]

Yours,

BAPU

The Hindu, 24-2-1941

7. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
December 29, 1940

CHI. DEVDAS,

I got your letters. It is enough for me that you understand my love. If you are ignorant, you alone are not to blame. I am equally to blame, am I not? Has not the education of all you brothers remained incomplete? I do not regret that. I am aware of it. You too have been

[1] Suresh Chandra Banerjee

[2] All-India Forward Bloc

[3] In his reply dated January 10, 1941, Subhas Chandra Bose said: "I am glad to receive your letter . . . not so much for the contents, as for the clarification of your views. . . . It is not merely my personal desire to offer hearty and sincere co-operation, but it is the desire of many who stand with me. For doing this, it is neither necessary nor desirable to surrender or abandon our political principles and connections. . . . In the previous struggle, many worked shoulder to shoulder with ardent Gandhi ites while differing from them on several important questions. Why should not this happen again? I beg of you to reconsider your decision. . . ." *Vide* also "Letter to Mukundalal Sircar", 16-2-1941.

the victims of my experiments. But is not that true of the whole of India? Critics say that I am destroying the country.

Pyarelal's statement contains pure truth. It was not drafted to prove anything.

The letter[1] to Hitler also was prompted from within. There is no bitterness in it at all. But it certainly states what I believe to be truth. Your scepticism in this regard does not pain me. It is a virtue to see only the good in others. But if we see the bad and still cover it up, isn't that a vice? Was it not I who used to sing 'God Save the King'? After much experience, I have come to see the darker side.

I have received the Government's reply[2]. I am sending you a copy of it. It is poisonous. I am in no hurry to see the letter to Hitler published. It is enough for me that you are ready. I will write to you when the time for you comes.

What you have said in the letter to Mahadev about your policy is correct. There is no need for you to stand alone. It is better to take a stand which others can share. I cannot send Mahadev to take your place. My suggestion was quite different. But that also cannot be done now. You may play whatever part you can. This is but the beginning of the country's fight. The worst is yet to come. Let us see how long God keeps me. God knows what work He wants from me. I merely dance to His tune.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2023

8. LETTER TO SIR J. G. LAITHWAITE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 30, 1940

DEAR MR. LAITHWAITE,

I thank you for your letter[3] of 27th instant, received yesterday.

Your letter raises a fundamental question. I can fully appreciate the fact that His Excellency could only hold the view he does. The

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Adolf Hitler", 24-10-1940
[2] *Vide* footnote 2, "Telegram to Sir J. G. Laithwaite; also the following item.
[3] *Vide* footnote 2, "Telegram to Sir J. G. Laithwaite", 24-10-1940

despair of Indian nationalists like me has been that British functionaries could not be persuaded to see the other side of the shield. And so the distance between them and nationalists is growing in spite of all efforts to the contrary. The present struggle is the latest attempt among many to induce the makers of the British Empire to see things through nationalist eyes. Such attempt must be continued till the truth is brought home to them. Why should they constitute themselves the judges of their work among and on us? The ordinary rule is that those should be the final judges who are the beneficiaries and not the self-styled benefactors.But I must not enter into the interminable discussion of a question on which the British rulers and we must for the present differ.

But that difference can be no reason for gagging me. I sought for the assistance because all the means of communication are under the Government control. I was unprepared for the prohibition against the Indian Press. I was prepared for the gag outside. His Excellency must be the sole judge of the effect on the *bona-fide* war effort of my letter to Herr Hitler being published in the world in the manner I had intended. But I observe from your letter that the gag has been placed not for reasons of high policy but because, in His Excellency's opinion, my characterization of British rule is not true to facts. This is a dangerous doctrine of which the logical result would be suppression of all honest opinion except at the will of the executive head of the State or his deputy or deputies. This has evidently no bearing on the war issue. I may draw His Excellency's attention to the fact that the sentiments expressed by me in the open letter to Herr Hitler are those I have expressed often enough in the columns of *Harijan* and elsewhere. My booklet called *Hind Swaraj*[1] or *Indian Home Rule* contains similar sentiments.

I should like to know, if I may, whether my interpretation of your letter is correct.

I may mention that I had copies of the letter prepared for distribution to the Press. But owing to the Press Adviser's note I refrained from distributing the copies. I have sent a copy only to my son forbidding its publication for the time being. I do not want surreptitious publication, nor do I want to resort to open defiance, so

[1]*Vide* "Hind Swaraj", 22-11-1909

long as it is at all possible consistently with the interests of the national cause as I conceive it. I shall, therefore, anxiously await a line from you.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

9. LETTER TO GLADYS OWEN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 30, 1940

MY DEAR GLADYS,

Your letter. Though we are crowded, I shall squeeze you in. Do come on the 5th whenever you like.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 6197

10. LETTER TO LAKSHMI SATYAMURTI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
December 30, 1940

MY DEAR LAXMI,

I must forgive you for writing in English. But you must hurry up with your Hindi. Tell Father[2], it will be a shame if he does not fully recover during the rest he has imposed on himself.

Love.

BAPU

KUMARI LAKSHMI
C/O SHRI S. SATYAMURTI
TYAGARAYANAGAR
MADRAS

From the original: S. Satyamurti Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also C.W. 10276. Courtesy: Government of Tamil Nadu

[1] For the addressee's reply; *vide* "Letter From Sir J. G. Laithwaite", 4-1-1941

[2] S. Satyamurti, a political prisoner, undergoing treatment in General Hospital, Madras

11. LETTER TO MOHAMMAD DILAWAR KHAN[1]

December 30, 1940

DEAR FRIEND,

Yes, Shri Khurshedbehn[2] talked a great deal about you and your kindness. May I send a Copy of your letter[3] to your friends?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

12. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
1940[4]

CHI. MANILAL,

Sister Mary Barr is one of our hard working co-workers. Take her home. Give her whatever help she needs.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4916

13. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

Silence Day [*1940*][5]

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Did you send for Mathuradas[6] to explain to him his work? If not, when do you intend to send for him?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10662

[1] Deputy Commissioner of Bannu, North-West Frontier Province

[2] Khurshed Naoroji, grand-daughter of Dadabhai Naoroji

[3] In this, dated December 24, the addressee had complained about the unhelpful attitude of the local Congress Committee members in restoring law and order in the area.

[4] As in the source

[5] In the G. N. series, the letter has been placed last among those of 1940.

[6] Mathuradas Purushottam

14. LETTER TO KRISHNA CHANDRA

[*1940*][1]

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

A measuring-tape is a good thing. We do not want to give up everything modern. The tape needs some improvement. Assign the work to Bharatanandji[2] [for making] improvements in order to facilitate its use by the rural folk. The rest will be done by Sushilabehn. If it is possible it might perhaps be better to have all water boiled. It is good to follow the rule to the extent possible. According to the analysis of the experts the wells here remain polluted throughout the year. That is another reason why there has been no case of typhoid ever since boiled water began to be used.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 4409

15. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

Tuesday, [*1940*][3]

BHAI KASHINATH,

Received your letter. I am sending this much today. The booklet is all right but the absence of the table of contents is a great fault. Let Ramnarayan look after the *Hindi Navajivan* and you join the Ajmer struggle. I would like that arrangement. You should not go till it becomes absolutely necessary. At present, men are required there also. Mahadev has gone.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : G.N. 5287

[1] From the contents; *vide* letters to the addressee in "Letter to Krishnachandra", 1-6-1940 and "Letter to Krishnachandra", 1-6-1940

[2] Maurice Frydman, a Polish engineer who became a follower of Gandhiji

[3] From the reference to the Ajmer struggle; *vide* "Danger Signal", "Letter to Haribhau Upadhyaya", 21-4-1940, "The Ajmer Trouble" and "Ajmer"

16. LETTER TO ARUN CHANDRA GUHA[1]

[On or before *January 2, 1941*][2]

No quantity please. I can assure victory, if the quality is assured.

The battle has just begun, and it will be a long and arduous affair.

The Hindu, 4-1-1941

17. LETTER TO K. SURYAPRAKASA RAO

January 2, 1941

You need not join the Society referred to in your letter. You can remain independent and do some constructive work without joining any society.[3]

With blessings.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10384. Courtesy: K. Suryaprakasa Rao

18. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
January 2, 1941

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I was very happy to read your letter. Be careful about your diet and safeguard your health. I am certain you will pay the money.[4] How is Kanti?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9744. Also C. W. 724. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

[1] The letter was in reply to the one from the addressee, Secretary, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, in connection with the preparation of a list of satyagrahis in the province. The letter was reported under the date-line "Calcutta, January 2".

[2] *ibid*

[3] *Vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Margarete Spiegel", 9-7-1940

[4] The addressee had contracted tuberculosis and was sent to Mysore Sanatorium for treatment.

19. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

January 2, 1941

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your two quite lengthy letters together. It is of course commendable that you two are holding out by yourselves. He who is on the side of truth, though alone, is in company, and those who oppose truth, though millions in number, count for little.

Tari is with me for the last three days. She is pretty ill. She will leave for Delhi on the 5th, the fourth day from now. She will go with Dr. Sushila, who is here. Most probably Tara's friend will also go with her. Manudi is still here. Her daughter[1] is a very active and playful child. With Sharda's son and Nirmala's daughter, thus there are three children.

Ba is fairly well. She keeps on working.

There is hardly standing room in the Ashram, so to say. It remains overcrowded.

Yesterday I called over Janakidevi here. She has got piles. She has started fasting from today.

Kishorelal is all right at present.

What need I say about myself?

There was a letter from Schlesin[2]. There has been none from Kallenbach[3] for some time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4919

20. LETTER TO SATHYE

January 4, 1941

DEAR DR. SATHYE,

Your yarn [is] excellent. I hope you will keep good health in the Liberty Hall.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 7919

[1] Urmila Mashruwala

[2] Sonja Schlesin, who was Gandhiji's secretary; *vide* "Satyagraha in South Africa", 22-11-1925

[3] Hermann Kallenbach, German architect, who was an associate of Gandhiji in South Africa

21. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
January 4, 1941

CHI. AMBUJAM[1],

I got your letter and the book. The book is fine. It is good you are continuing Hindi and spinning. You have to give up grief. Leave all joys and sorrows to God. Ranganayaki is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also C.W. 9616. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal

22. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

WARDHA,
[*January 5, 1941*][2]

CHI. AMBUJAM,

Your letter. I am getting a regular supply of fruit from you. You must let me know the price. If the fruit is dear, must get it from where it is cheap even when it is a gift. I have three sick beds just now.

Your argument is both sound and unsound. I would have the hospital in preference to superstition. But there is a middle way—to have intelligent home treatment and then await the result with confidence. Even kings have to die. Thousands die in hospitals. It is all a toss. The key to life is in God's hands. We can but explore His laws and obey them. And I do not expect a time when every villager who wishes can have good hospital treatment. But I do expect a time when he can have at his door competent advice. But even that time is far off.

I hope you are all well.

Love.

BAPU

SRI AMBUJAM AMMAL
AMJADBAG
LUZ, MYLAPORE
MADRAS

From a photostat: C.W. 9615. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal

[1] Daughter of S. Srinivasa Iyengar. The source has this in Devanagari.
[2] From the postmark

23. INSTRUCTIONS TO SATYAGRAHIS[1]

[On or after *January 5, 1941*][2]

A satyagrahi, man or woman, once started on satyagraha, if unarrested, shall not return home but shall go from village to village reciting anti-war slogans and addressing anti-war meetings where necessary and doing constructive propaganda.

If, on any account, he feels obliged to return home, he must seek special permission for offering satyagraha again.

Satyagrahi once unarrested need not issue a fresh notice to the District Magistrate.

Satyagrahi shall not use any conveyance on his campaign. He need not be in a hurry. He may proceed slowly and travel a short distance. He may, if necessary, stay more than one day at one place.

Satyagrahi must not stop any person or conveyance against their wishes nor must he enter anyone's compound to recite slogans unless invited to do so.

A satyagrahi shall not recite slogans in an authoritative tone but in a persuasive way.

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-1-1941

24. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTMDAS TANDON

SEVAGRAM,
January 6, 1941

BHAI TANDONJI,

I am writing this letter early in the morning before four o'clock prayer. Yesterday I had a talk with Shriman, Nanavati[3], Perinbehn[4], Dikshit[5] and Kakasaheb. Now Maulana is not coming. I feel that now I should get out of the Sammelan. A policy which I got accepted has been practically destroyed in Poona. The Sammelan had full powers to change it. The only question that remains is that of my duty. I am

[1] According to the source this was "issued to satyagrahis in Nagpur District by the President of the Nagpur District Congress Committee, under instructions from Gandhiji".

[2] Satyagraha was resumed on January 5, 1941, after its suspension during Christmas; *vide* "Draft Resolution for the Working Committee", 3/7-7-1940

[3] Amritlal Nanavati

[4] Perinbehn Captain

[5] Sitacharan Dikshit

in a dilemma. Please come and help me in arriving at a decision. I do not want to run away from the Sammelan. But how do I stay in? I am for a composite language. The name does not matter. To me work is everything. If I stay in the Sammelan, I become a partner in retrogression. If I leave I may probably become the root cause of dissension. Come over soon, if you can.

Come, but take care of your health.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10997

25. LETTER TO DR. S. K. VAIDYA

January 6, 1941

BHAI VAIDYA[1],

Why do you worry? Rajkumari had a talk with me. You need feel no shame in returning, nor will that do you any harm. It is folly to cling to a mistake after realizing it. Wisdom lies in rectifying it as soon as it is discovered. To one who loves a quiet life, the type of motley crowd we have here can be unbearable. You may prepare yourself better in Bombay and then come over. If, having realized your mistake you immediately go back to Bombay, you may be able to come back after some months or after a year. In the mean time, whenever you wish to come for a few days, you will always be welcome. After hearing everything, I feel that you should leave right now and not let your health suffer. I want you to attain complete peace of mind so that you can serve to the best of your ability. You will be doing my work even in Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5742

[1] An eminent pathologist

26. LETTER TO DR. S. K. VAIDYA[1]

[After *January 6, 1941*][2]

I am in no hurry at all. If and get well and come back after some time with the whole family. But this is only by way of suggestion. Your wish will be my wish.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5743

27. LETTER TO SIR ROBERT E. HOLLAND

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
January 7, 1941

DEAR MR. HOLLAND,

I thank you for your letter and the important information contained therein. You may depend upon my taking the necessary steps.

I shall be very happy to meet you, should you find it convenient to alight at Wardha on your way northward.

You will be sorry to learn that Manilal Kothari[3] is no more.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5666

28. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SEVAGRAM,
January 8, 1941

BHAI SATIS BABU,

I have your letter Jajuji[4] has written something. I have not read it. Whenever Annadaji wants to see it, show it to him without

[1] He died in Ahmedabad on October 11, 1937.
[2] *ibid*
[3] To Bombay; *vide* the preceding item.
[4] Shrikrishnadas Jaju, Secretary, All-India Spinners' Association

hesitation. I am sending these two slips of paper for perusal. They are not to be returned.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2738

29. INSTRUCTIONS TO SATYAGRAHIS

SEVAGRAM,

January 10, 1941

A very serious question confronts me in connection with the struggle. In many places magistrates; have been imposing heavy fines on civil resisters, in some cases without option of imprisonment. Civil resisters must not and cannot complain of whatever penalty is imposed on them, and Government will always take advantage of weaknesses of human nature. Hitherto I have advised that fines should not be voluntarily paid but that authorities must be left to collect fines by distraint. The result during the last struggle was a great deal of heart-burning and bitterness. Those who bought movables or immovables for a song incurred popular ill will. I hope that if Government wish to touch immovable property, they will not sell but confiscate it. For, whenever the struggle ends, immovable property is bound to be restored to the original owners—the resisters. The late Bombay Government knew how difficult it was for them to restore to the resisters the immovable properties that had changed hands. I have, however, discovered what may be termed a flaw in the reasoning that I had applied to the infliction of fines. I now feel that even as a resister courts imprisonment, he is expected to court any other form of punishment, i.e., fines. Punishment courted has to be joyfully suffered. Therefore when fines are imposed and the person fined is able to pay he must do so willingly. The result may naturally be that such a person will be fined again and again. If he persists in his resistance, he may have no property left. This is nothing to be wondered at. As a matter of fact it is the essence of civil disobedience that the resister becomes indifferent whether the authorities take away all his property or not. Therefore all propertied persons who wish to join the struggle should do so well knowing that the whole of their property may be taken up by the Government. This is a struggle which has no ending except in success. Therefore those who may be

fined should pay cash if they have it. If they have no cash and the Government attach their property, it should be open to their friends to buy the same. This will be an effective check on the cupidity of those who would profit by exploiting others' loss and there will be no bad blood. One corrollary to this reasoning is that even as I had declared that every inch of immovable property sold or confiscated by the Government would have to be returned to the resisters, so will every rupee taken in fines have to be returned to them on the struggle ending. It follows of course that those who pay the fines will have to offer civil disobedience till they are safely lodged in jail. It follows also that those propertied persons who do not wish to run the risk of losing their property must not join this struggle. I hope however that patriotic people who believe in the efficacy of civil resistance will not fight shy of losing all their possessions. Let them remember the words of Sheth Jamnalal:

> I have long since come to realize that much too heavy a price has been and is being paid by the few for the enjoyment of wealth and for the apparent safety of life. The price paid is the blood of the famishing millions and the manliness of those who should be ready to shed their blood for the defence of themselves, their families and their country.

Congress Bulletin, No. 6, 1942. Pile No. 3/42/41-Poll. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India

30. LETTER TO JAGANNATH[1]

January 10, 1941

I note your name. When your time comes I shall certainly send you. For the time being I want you to do constructive work.

BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 986. Courtesy: Jagannath

[1] The addressee, a member of the Servants of the People Society, Lahore, in a letter dated "Sevagram, January 10, 1941" had requested Gandhi to include him "in the list of satyagrahis from the Punjab".

31. MESSAGE TO THE PUNJAB CONGRESSMEN[1]

[On or after *January 10, 1941*][2]

Surely there is no cause for depression. I have never condemned Punjab Congressmen. I have faith that the average Congressman in the Punjab is as good as the average in the other provinces. Let the Punjab Congressmen take heart and qualify themselves by spinning, and regarding Harijans and other Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, etc., as blood-brothers. Let them have a living faith in the virtue of non-violence, and they will all be chosen for civil disobedience.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 988. Courtesy: Jagannath

32. INSTRUCTIONS FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY[3]

January 11, 1941

I hope that every man and woman in India, whether Congressman or other, will realize the gravity of the struggle and will resolve on the forthcoming Independence Day upon dedicating himself or herself to the service of the country in terms of the millions. Swaraj based on non-violence does not mean mere transfer of power. It should mean complete deliverance of the toiling yet starving millions from the dreadful evil of economic serfdom. This can only be attained by the propertied few identifying themselves with the millions and by their readiness to sacrifice their all for the latter's sake. It must be a day of fraternization, abolition of untouchability from our hearts, giving up spirituous liquors, self-spinning, and sale and spread of khadi and village industries. There is to be no civil disobedience that day. For, we must not invite disturbance of our

[1] The message was sent through Jagannath who, in his letter dated January 10, requested: "A friend from Lahore who is a responsible and well informed Congress worker and who is in constant touch with Congressmen all over the Punjab writes to me that the recent occurrences in the Punjab have depressed the hearts of Congressmen there and have created confusion in their minds and they are feeling that they may have fallen in your estimation and you may have despaired of them. A word from you will cheer them up. . . ."

[2] *ibid*

[3] Celebrated on January 26

meetings, processions and *prabhat pheries*[1] on that day. The day may begin with *prabhat pheries*, followed by flag-hoisting and flag-salutation. In the evening there may be processions terminating in public meetings where the pledge[2] may be explained clause by clause and administered by the Chairman and solemnly accepted by the audience. Where there are already restrictions they must be obeyed. From such voluntary obedience comes the strength for the right of civil resistance.

PLEDGE[3]

In view of the fact that individual civil disobedience has already commenced and that a large number of Congressmen have already been imprisoned all over India, it becomes the special duty of every Indian to concentrate with redoubled zeal on the constructive programme, without the fulfilment of which no civil disobedience, mass or individual, can help us to win and retain swaraj. Concretely expressed, constructive programme means the universalization of hand-spinning and khadi and popularization of village industries and village products. We recognize that effective spread of non-violence must bring communal harmony and complete eradication of untouchability in every shape and form.

Congress Bulletin, No. 6, 1942. File No. 3/42/41-Poll. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India

33. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
January 11, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your wire has come in. I had fully intended to write yesterday. But it was no use. The interviews which began at 3 p.m. ended after the second dinner bell. So you were crowded out. But you had some

[1] Literally, 'morning round'; parties going round early in the morning singing patriotic songs

[2] Of which only the last paragraph is reproduced here. The pledge was originally drafted by Gandhiji in January 1930; *vide* "Hindi or Hindustani", 9-5-1936. It was amended in December 1939, by the Congress Working Committee to which this paragraph was added.

[3] *ibid*

letters redirected to you. That must have been some consolation.

I hope you are having a profitable time there[1]. You will insist on seeing Ambujam and on going to the Hindi Prachar Office.

Ascertain the prices of the fruit you bring. You will bring coconut of course. But bring lemons (sour) too. They are scarce in the Wardha market. Das's experiment is spreading. I have joined it with greater zeal than when you were here. I have given up cooked vegetables and the blood-pressure has dropped in a phenomenal manner. All the three times near or under 150 systolic and 100 diastolic. The reason is absence of gases.

The note[2] I was drafting was finished today. You may see it there or on your return journey.

Shastriji is better. Remember me to your hostess.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3996. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7305

34. INSTRUCTIONS TO SATYAGRAHIS

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
January 12, 1941

Long before his unexpected arrest[3] Maulana Saheb had announced that before offering civil disobedience he would visit Sevagram and discuss with me important matters affecting the communal questions as also such other matters. But it was not to be. Non-popular rulers do not disclose their intentions to the people. They allow them to be inferred from their acts. Perhaps it is a legitimate inference to draw from Maulana Saheb's premature (from the Congress standpoint) arrest that they did not want him to meet me. There can be no cause for complaint in this. They may not be expected to consult Congress convenience. But it is proper for Congressmen to realize that the rulers have no faith in Congress non-violence. Probably they do not consider me to be a knave, but they do consider me to be a fool. In so doing they only follow many others who think that Congressmen fool me and that the latter's

[1] In Madras
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] On January 3

non-violence is but a cloak for hiding their violence, if it is not a preparation for it. Our struggle, therefore, consists in showing that our non-violence is neither a cloak to hide our violence or hatred, nor a preparation for violence in the near or distant future. Therefore our success depends not upon numbers going to jail but on the sum total of the purity and non-violence we are able to show in all our activities. Numbers can count only when they are of the right type. They will positively harm the movement, if they are of the wrong type.

For me there is no turning back, whether I have many or very few satyagrahis. I would far rather be regarded as a fool but strong, than as a knave and a coward. Though the whole world may repudiate my claim, I must repeat that the struggle is God-guided. I am but a humble instrument in His hand. Without His guidance, real or imaginary, I should feel utterly impotent to shoulder the burden I am supposed to be carrying.

Let me now say how I visualize the struggle. Maulana Saheb having gone, there is to be no successor appointed. Every acting President in a province must be approved by me. It is not necessary that there should be one. All representative Congressmen from members of village to provincial Committees are expected to be in jail if they are fit and approved by me. If they are not, by reason of health or otherwise, they cannot be expected to function except in rare cases and that too under my approval. No fresh elections are to take place to replace those who will have gone. The idea is ultimately for every Congressman to act on his own and be his own president but nobody else's. That is the conception of a completely non-violent institution or society. Not much direction is required by those who have learnt the art of suffering. Everybody knows the conditions he has to fulfil for acquiring fitness for offering civil disobedience. They can be easily complied with by any adult who is sound in body and mind. No difficulty as to action arises so long as I am left free. For nobody can resort to direct action without my consent. My intention not to court arrest abides, but the rulers may have a different plan. If it comes, it will be the real time of freedom from external control be it ever so non-violent as also of true test for everyone. I am not to appoint a successor. Thus if I am arrested, everyone will be under the discipline of his or her own conscience. In theory, therefore, a time may come when millions will be judges of their own fitness to offer civil disobedience.

This is not a struggle which can be ended quickly. We are resisting an authority that is in itself struggling to fight for life against a stubborn foe. The authority is related to a nation which knows no defeat. Those whose life is in danger either readily yield on what they regard as non-essential, or fight to the end on what they regard as essential. Its refusal to concede our demand shows that they think that our struggle comes under the latter category. Therefore our struggle must be coterminous at least with the European. Hence everyone who offers civil disobedience and gets a short term should know that on every release he has to repeat civil disobedience till the end of the struggle.

There are two tactics demanding attention. I have already issued a note[1] about fines without the option of imprisonment.

The other is that of not arresting civil resisters at all. In each case the resisters should march on foot in easy stages in the direction of Delhi. It may be even two or three miles per day. The resister will march taking such food as the villagers may provide.

Congress Bulletin, No. 6, 1942. File No. 3/42/41-Poll. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India

35. LETTER TO KRISHNANATH SARMA

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
January 12, 1941

MY DEAR SARMA,

Please give my blessings to your bereaved daughter and tell her not to grieve over the inevitable. I am glad you are bearing the loss bravely. You should delay offering civil disobedience till your daughter has cal[med] down.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI K. N. SARMA, M.L.A.
BAR ASSOCIATION
JORHAT, ASSAM

From a photostat: G.N. 8233

[1] *Vide* "Mysore Justice"

36. LETTER TO KRISNACHANDRA

January 13, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA.

As I sat down to reply to your letter of the 9th, I saw your letter of today. You have replied in this to your own previous letter. Ahimsa does not work in any other way. The defects that you have pointed out are there, but our Sangh is a mixed crowd. All sorts of people are there. If we can put up with them, we can bear with the world. If by keeping them with us we live happily, we can then some day hope for a complete non-violent order.

But there are certain rules we have to observe. The question is how to put these rules into practice. As long as I live, the way I put them into practice becomes our rule. Look, patience will solve all problems. Don't take to heart our shortcomings. It is enough if you know that they exist. You are trying to remove them. You are bound to succeed.

Even then speak out your mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4368

37. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM[1]

[Before *January 14, 1941*][2]

DAUGHTER,

Why should you write a letter to me? If you keep well I shall value it more than a letter from you. I received Wahid's angry letter. If you saw it you would be able to judge his pain. I have not felt hurt on account of his anger. He has a right to be angry. I would now advise you to make all arrangements for Mother and return only after getting well yourself.

I am all right. Kanchan sleeps on one side and Abha on the other. Khan Saheb has written about you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 598

[1] This was in reply to a letter from the addressee's brother, Abdul Wahid Khan, asking Gandhiji to send the addressee to look after her ailing mother.

[2] Inferred from the reference to ailing mother in this and the following item

38. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 14, 1941

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

Of course I did hurt you, but I think what I did was right. There are letters to you from Rameshwar[1], Deva[2] and Anand[3]. I hope Mother is all right and that you had a comfortable journey. You must have met Sushila. I had sent a wire.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 465

39. CABLE TO CARL HEATH[4]

WARDHAGANJ,
[*January 15, 1941*][5]

HEATH
FRIENDS HOUSE
LONDON

M.P.S' LETTER[6] IGNORES FACTS. FRANK OPEN COMMUNICATION MADE IMPOSSIBLE. GOD BETWEEN US ALL.[7]

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1048

[1] Rameshwardas Poddar

[2] Devdas Gandhi

[3] Anand T. Hingorani

[4] This was in reply to the addressee's cable (G.N. 1047), received on December 22, 1940, which read: "Profoundly glad your truce. Think spontaneous unofficial document Members Parliament despite inadequacies deserves careful consideration and response as indicating deep desire break constitutional deadlock."

[5] From the postmark

[6] According to *Gandhi—1915-1948: A Detailed Chronology,* the letter dated December 23, 1940, from members of the British Parliament to the people of India said: "We are determined to give you full independence preceded by Dominion Status and in the mean time we shall have to make some temporary arrangements." *The Indian Annual Register, 1941,* Vol. I, p. 30, explains that a statement, signed by prominent Indian Liberals, the signatories to which included V. N. Chandavarkar, P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyar and V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, was sent in reply to the letter on January 17, 1941. They held that "the British Government had so far failed to unify British and Indian interests and to inspire zeal for the British cause among the people of India." The signatories, however, hoped that the situation "could be improved beyond recognition if the British acted with vision and courage."

[7] *Vide* also "Letter to Carl Heath", 25-1-1941.

40. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
January 15, 1941

CHI. MIRA,

Your two letters to hand. You should take as much distilled water as you need. You should also take fruit liberally including prunes. The box-charkha was in your list. But you may let Kanaiyalal take it. Your letters give rise to many reflections. Mountains are not for us to live in. We can live on the plains by the riverside or the seaside. The hills are for the wealthy. You can surely find an abode (secluded) on the seaside or riverside.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6468. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9863

41. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

January 15, 1941

I agree with you in all the propositions you have laid down—neither[1] wants to be married just now. I have discovered the mutual attraction. The question is whether it may go on or whether the two should be separated. My opinion is there is no harm. If they remain unmarried, that is ideal. But if they cannot restrain themselves they should think of no one else. Your conditions are solid.

As to your son's books, I do not want to shoulder an indefinite responsibility.[2] You and I will be misusing public funds if we go beyond lawful bounds. The two households are a burden. You may discuss the whole thing with me.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 1454. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[1] The reference is to Abha, the addressee's daughter, and Kanu Gandhi, son of Narandas Gandhi. They were married on November 7, 1944; *vide* also "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 5-3-1941.

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 22-1-1941.

42. LETTER TO SIR J. G. LAITHWAITE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
January 16, 1941

DEAR SIR GILBERT,

Many thanks for your letter[1] of the 4th instant.

I am not going to write a serious reply to your extra serious letter. My letters are not written either for publication or for propaganda, They are written in pursuance of the effort to act non-violently. Nor are they written to a stranger. So much by way of preface.

The language of officialdom is evidently a thing to be learnt specially. Your letter is an instance in point. In my own plain English I resolve your language thus:

> I forgot to tell you that His Excellency's disagreement with you as to the estimate of the British connection was not the only reason for not complying with your request. It is inconvenient to give you the real or the whole reason. So please regard this correspondence as closed.

Putting this interpretation upon your letter and reading it together with the last paragraph in it, I have finally decided not to contrive to secure publicity of the open letter[2] to Herr Hitler. I have accordingly asked my son not to make any use of the letter but to destroy it.

I had told[3] you that I had not shown the letter to anyone else except my son. I have since shown it to an English friend[4] who believes in my method. She is not to make use of her knowledge except among friends such as the Bishop of Calcutta. My hearty co-operation with His Excellency in preventing publication does not mean admission of the validity of the prohibition It is an earnest of my desire not to embarrass authority wherever it is possible for me to avoid embarrassment.

[1] *Vide* "Statement made by the Viceroy on August 8, 1940
[2] *Vide* "Is Islam Inspired"
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Manilal Gandhi", 11-7-1940
[4] Agatha Harrison; *vide* the following item

But the action of the Censor in prohibiting the enclosed[1] passes comprehension. I entertain the fond hope that His Excellency knows nothing of the Censor's action. I would like you very kindly to let me know whether it commands His Excellency's approval. If it does and if I am to fall in with it, it will stop all open communication with the public. That would constitute an undue interference with the liberty of the Press, and would raise a grave issue. I shall hope that if it is at all possible, this will be avoided.

As the matter is very urgent may I expect an early reply?[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

43. LETTER TO DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, WARDHA

January 16, 1941

Shri Vinoba Bhave, who was discharged yesterday from the Central Jail, Nagpur will offer Civil Disobedience again from Sevagram Chowk at 9 A.M.[3] tomorrow by addressing a meeting on the duty of carrying on anti-war propaganda within the limits prescribed by the law of non-violence as I understand it.

From the India Office Library and Records : IOR R/3/1/341, p. 12

44. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
January 17, 1941

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I have before me your letter of 30th October received yesterday. I do not write because I know not whether my letters will reach you at

[1] *Vide* Instructions to Satyagrahis", 10-1-1941 and "Instructions to Satyagrahis",12-1-1941

[2] For the addressee's reply, *vide* "Letter from Sir J. G. Laithwaite", 28-1-1941

[3] Civil Disobedience which had been suspended from December 24,1940 to January 4, 1941 was resumed on January 5, 1941. Individual satyagraha had been begun by Vinoba Bhave on January 17; *vide* also "Instructions to Satyagrahis", 5-1-1941

all. When they do they may be even out of date. And now one never knows what one may write. I do not mind the Censor reading what I write but I do mind his suppressing what one writes. And yet war is war. One must not grumble. Warriors want to win and they will not tolerate what in their opinion hinders their efforts. Knowing this, I am patient. I do not know what you can do. Here I am hampered at every step. I wrote what I thought was a good letter[1] to Herr Hitler. It has been suppressed. Of course I could secure publication at once. But I do not want to do so. I must bow to the Viceregal judgment. Evidently, he thinks it will interfere with their war-effort. Since open publication is possible only by their permission, I have deemed it proper not to seek publicity through defiance which must be initiated surreptitiously.

But they have gone a step further. They are interfering with local publication of my statements which are necessary. I am, therefore, devising a method of securing publication. But no matter what hindrances are put, the struggle will continue. I can give you this assurance, if you need it, that nothing unworthy, nothing that may be even remotely called violent will be knowingly done. I have absolute faith that this non-violence will finally triumph. It must not be allowed to be suppressed. The M.P.s' appeal has fallen flat.[2] It takes no note of the truth. Hindu-Muslim differences do not stand in the way of an honourable agreement. The will is not there. The old custom will not give way. They need not be blamed. They go on and, if they can, they do not stop to consider whether it is right or wrong. That is not rulers' way. Theirs is but to rule.

Love

BAPU

[PS.]

I am attending to your advice about Andrews's sisters.

From a photostat: G.N. 1517

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Adolf Hitler", 24-12-1940

[2] *Vide* also "Cable to Carl Health", 15-1-1941 and "Letter to Carl Health", 25-1-1941

45. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
January 17, 1941

CHI. SHARMA,

I got both your letters. You are invariably forgiven. If you insist I will allow you to go. You had better be patient since you are already engaged in work there. But still if you are restless, I am prepared to send you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, p. 295

46. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
January 18, 1941

BHAI PRITHVI SINGH,

I have read your letter very carefully[1]. Why are you afraid of talking to me?

I do not want to keep you here perforce. I can only be happy if you can live here willingly and in perfect peace. But I feel so long as you do not become one with Ashram life, your living here is useless. I also realize that he who has given up all fear has nothing to gain from the Ashram. So you have a full right to go where you wish to and do whatever you want to do. You always have my blessings. I know for certain that wherever you go and whatever you do ahimsa and truth will always be there. Keep writing to me, and give your address. And, if possible, keep me informed of your activities. Whenever you want to come back, do come. If you want to talk to me about this, do so. Why grieve, when we part with goodwill? Joy consists in performing one's duty.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2645. Also C.W. 2956. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

[1] The addressee had written that he wanted to leave the Ashram on account of differences of approach between him and other inmates.

47. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON

January 20, 1941

BHAI TANDONJI,

Please read the accompanying wire from Malaviyaji Maharaj and do what you think right. There was a wire from Prayag saying that they wish to oppose Radhakant[1]. I have already given my opinion, but all of you there should decide among yourselves. I am totally ignorant of the situation there.

Yours,

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

48. LETTER TO NILA NAGINI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,

CHI. NILA[2],

I do hope you received my letter in reply to yours some days ago. Now I have another from you through Mr. Whittamore. He is a most lovable man. We all had a very profitable time with him.

You are doing good work there. Do ask Sirius[3] to write to me. Where do you propose to put him?

You will be welcome whenever you can come.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1218

49. LETTER TO DR. S. K. VAIDYA

January 21, 1941

BHAI VAIDYA,

How is it that there is no letter from you? Is it a case of 'out of sight, out of mind'? I will not, of course, take it in that light. I know that you are not writing because you do not want to waste even a

[1] Radhakant Malaviya, son of M. M. Malaviya

[2] Nila Cram Cook, an American, who after her divorce came to India, adopted Hinduism and was doing Harijan work. The superscription is in Devanagari.

[3] Addressee's son

single minute of my time. But I cannot forget you. How are you? Please write and tell me what you are doing. What about the laboratory[1]? How is Ambu[2]?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5744

50. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
January 22, 1941

MY DEAR C. R.,

This is not to please you but Narasimhan[3]. I know you do not need a formal or other letter from me. Letters are meaningless when hearts can speak to each other. I know you are doing your duty there[4] as we are trying to do ours outside. Do keep yourself well and complete your Hindi learning.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10879. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan

51. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
January 22, 1941

BHAI SATIS BABU,

The son of Amrita Babu, Ramendra Nath, is studying there. He has joined the ninth class and needs some books. Please send for him and ask what books he wants and what they would cost. He is a 'free' student. His address is: 4/1 Sham Charande Street. They say it is a

[1] At Pant Bhavan, Sandhurst Road, Bombay
[2] Addressee's daughter, Amba Jugatram Vaidya
[3] Addressee's son
[4] In jail; the addressee was arrested on December 3 and sentenced to a year's simple imprisonment.

minute's walk from Pratishthan office. Every week I read *Rashtravani* attentively.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SATIS BABU
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
15 COLLEGE SQUARE
CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2734

52. LETTER TO A JOURNALIST[1]

[Before *January 23, 1941*][2]

Non-violence is an active force. Do you not realize that when non-violence reigns, materialism takes the back seat, avenues are changed; and in a non-violent war there is no waste of efforts, property or the moral fibre?

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-1-1941

53. MESSAGE TO GUJARAT COLLEGE STUDENTS

[Before *January 23, 1941*][3]

The action of the Principal, if it is such as you describe, calls certainly for a protest. You should negotiate with him respectfully; you should seek the assistance of leading citizens and you should cultivate public opinion. Still if you do not obtain justice you have the right to strike. To exercise that right or not is dependent upon the strength of the students.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-1-1941

[1] The addressee had written to Gandhiji "questioning the efficacy of non-violence in the establishment of peace in materialistic world". The letter was reported under the date-line "New Delhi, January 23".

[2] *ibid*

[3] The message was reported under the date-line "Ahmedabad, January 23".

54. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
January 23, 1941

CHI. VIJAYA,

I got your letter. My reason does not tell me that the gifts we make in the name of the dead benefit the dead. But thereby we show our loyalty towards them. I hold the same view about prayer. But in such matters it is better to rely on faith rather than on reason. At least there is no harm in doing so. Charity must be prompted by knowledge. I do not feel particularly tired. Whatever fatigue I feel should now be accepted as inevitable in old age. There is a good deal of illness here. Manu is having fever.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VIJAYABEHN
GRAM DAKSHINNAMURTI
AMBLA, *via* SONGADH
KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N 7136. Also C.W. 4628. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

55. ADVICE TO CONGRESSMEN

SEVAGRAM,
January 24, 1941

I observe that in the Punjab people pay for and wear paper [or] metallic tricolour badges. Now the tricolour has merit because of the material, that is, khadi, of which it is made and is a symbol of identification with the masses and of non-violence. Therefore badges must be made of khadi. Metal and paper badges have no value for Congressmen save as superfluous decorations. At this time of trial for us all I would expect Congressmen and those who are in sympathy

with it to observe the necessary rules of conduct. No detail can be regarded as too trifling for attention. For, an aggregate of details makes a principle.

M. K. GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 1362,1941. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

56. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
January 24, 1941

CHI. MIRA,

Your second letter just to hand. If finally it is decided that you should come to Varoda, I shall bear your wish in mind. But my presentiment is that you won't be happy there for any length of time. If you keep your health, you need not disturb yourself until you are quite clear in your mind that you can have your peace in the haunts of mankind.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6869. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9864

57. LETTER TO CARL HEATH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
January 25, 1941

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your very kind letter. In it there is no acknowledgement of my cable reply[1] to your cable referred to in your letter. My reply cabled 28th[2] October, 1940, was as follows:

> All effort failed. Indian condition wholly different and unique. Press gagged. Have stopped *Harijan* weeklies. Restricting civil disobedience minimum requirements of non-violence.

Since then I have sent you the following cable[3] in reply to yours of the last week of December:

[1] *Vide* "Cable to Carl Health", 28-10-1940 and 15-1-1941.
[2] The source, however, has "27".
[3] *ibid*

M.P.'s letter ignores facts. Frank open communication made impossible. God between us all.

I understand your argument. The Quaker attitude is individual. The Congress attitude has reference to a big organization. The Congress, as an institution based on non-violence, cannot distinguish between one species of violence and another. I do not think that the world will be any better if British arms are victorious over the German through the means employed by the latter. In the ultimate, the question before the Congress is how to do away with the use of arms as between man and man or nation and nation for the vindication of justice. The universal proposition is implicit in India's fight for freedom through non-violence.

You have rightly detected the flaw in the Congress attitude as reflected in the Poona resolution. That was when and why I had ceased to guide the Congress or take part in its deliberations. I withdrew my opposition when the Congress retraced its steps through the later resolution at Bombay. In my opinion it reflects no discredit on the Congress that it could not abide by non-violence in all circumstances. Its policy is truth and non-violence. Above all else, therefore, it must be honest. When, therefore, it found the Poona demand flouted, it came round to its original position and invited me to lead the battle of civil disobedience. I had no hesitation in responding as I knew that the mass mind in India was by instinct non-violent. You seem also to have missed the fact that the Poona resolution would not have been passed at all but for my weakness of which I made ample confession[1] in the pages of *Harijan.*

My experience is that the Congress has grown progressively, though slowly, in non-violence. And I would have proved an unworthy exponent of non-violence if I had failed at the right moment to express it through the Congress.

The Congress is as much anti-Nazism as anti-imperialism. If the Government had not thoughtlessly forbidden the anti-war activity of the Congress and had not proclaimed it as pro-Nazi, they could easily have claimed the whole of India as anti-Nazi—both that part which followed the Congress non-violence and the other which believed in the use of violence. Had it not done so, much bitterness would have

[1] *Vide* "I was Unjust Because Weak"; also "Is Non-Violence Impossible" and "Moral to Sir. Syed Mahumud", 11-8-1940

been avoided and the world would have profited by the lesson of tolerance and its moral opinion would have been on the side of Britain. It is never too late to mend one's error.

Whether, however, the error is admitted and mended or not the course of the Congress is clear. The conviction being purely moral it should be pursued irrespective of the immediate result. A moral means is almost an end in itself. Is not virtue its own reward?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

FRIEND CARL HEATH
WHITE WINGS MANOR WAY
GUILDFORD, SURREY

From a photostat: G.N. 1049

58. LETTER TO T. B. SAPRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
January 25, 1941

DEAR SIR TEJ BAHADUR,

I have just finished reading your article[1] in the *Twentiet Century.*

I quite agree with you that we have to settle our domestic troubles ourselves and without thinking whether the rulers will accept our joint demands or not. Having that belief you should know that I specially went[2] to Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah in Bombay and had several talks, and then Subhas Babu went but we could make no headway. You perhaps know why. Then again, determined not to go to the Viceroy as strangers, I invited myself to his house in Delhi[3] and from there we went together in his car but only to show our differences to the Viceroy. I would go again and again if I had not the knowledge that my going would cause irritation to him. I cannot crack a joke without exposing myself to being misunderstood. My impression is that he does not want a settlement till he has so consolidated the League position that he can dictate his terms to all the parties concerned including the rulers. I do not blame him for having taken

[1] Under the title "The Need of the Hour"
[2] "In April 1938"
[3] "In November 1939"

up that position, if he has. But with this impression it is useless for me to approach him. I often feel like writing to him but lose courage when it comes to the point of taking up my pen. But if you have faith why don't you see him without being asked by anybody?

I hope you are keeping very good health.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 7584. Also C.W. 10339. Courtesy: National Library

59. LETTER TO VEERBAL H. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

January 25, 1941

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your kind letter[2]. I have followed the memorial movement with interest. But I could not enthuse over it. Shri Natarajan I have known for years before he knew me. I am a hero worshipper, and he was one of my heroes as a social reformer. Then we began to know each other and became friends that we are today. But I have never known him as a journalist. He became an Editor because he was a reformer. I do not believe in scholarship in journalism. I would like Shri Natarajan's name to be associated with a rise in the status of women or Harijan uplift or some such social reform dear to his heart. But I have no desire to affect the course the Committee has adopted especially if it has met with Shri Natarajan's approval. Only you should quietly forget me.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] For the addressee's reply, *vide* "Letter from T. B. Sapru", 28-1-1941

[2] In this, dated January 23, the addressee, who was honorary Secretary of the Natarajan Committee, had sought Gandhiji's blessings to an appeal for funds to raise a suitable memorial to K. Natarajan, who was the Editor, *Indian Social Reformer.*

60. A LETTER

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
January 25, 1941

BHAI,

If it had been possible, I would have found some solution long ago. I smell some sort of a threat in your letter. If you wish to recover it through a court, why do you need my help? I have already written and told you that I have done all I could. I am helpless. You may do what you think best.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Bhavnagar Samachar, 17-12-1955

61. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO M. L. SHAH[1]

[Before *January 26, 1941*][2]

I am fighting the country's struggle. The country includes students as much as other parts of the body politic. I have, however, a special claim upon the students and they upon me, for I regard myself still a student and also because, from the very commencement of my return to India, I have been in close touch with them and many of them have served the cause of satyagraha. Therefore, even if the whole of the student world were to repudiate me for causes which in their very nature must be temporary, I am not going to be deterred from tendering my advice for fear of rejection. Students cannot afford to have party politics. They may hear all parties, as they read all sorts of books, but their business is to assimilate the truth of all and reject the

[1] The addressee, in a letter to Gandhiji, said that "he would still maintain that the policy of the Students' Federation was that all their actions for the achievement of the rights and redress of their grievances should be peaceful. If the communists can prove otherwise, I am amenable to any disciplinary action. We Congressmen, Socialists, Forward Bloc and others, except the communists, believe that the students' platform should not be turned into a tail of any political party. It must be kept aloof from party politics."

[2] From *The Hindu*, 27-1-1941, in which the letter was reported under the date-line "Bombay, January 26"

balance. This is the only worthy attitude that they can take. Power politics should be unknown to the student world. Immediately they dabble in that class of work they cease to be students and will, therefore, fail to serve the country in its crisis. And you as General Secretary would be ill serving the cause of the students if you take part in power politics.

All communists are not bad as all Congressmen are not angels. I have therefore no prejudice against communists as such. Their philosophy, as they have declared it to me, I cannot subscribe to. I have great regard for Dr. Ashraf's abilities. I have never questioned his love of his country but I am positive, he will one day be sorry for the wrong guidance he is giving to student world. But, inasmuch as he is enamoured of his views, as I am of mine, and we are equally obstinate, I despair of convincing him of his error and, therefore, never enter into argument with him. And he returns the compliment by avoiding me. But let the students remember that at the present moment I am fighting the country's cause. I am not an inexperienced general, but a seasoned soldier of 50 years' standing. Let them, therefore, think 50 times before rejecting my advice which is that they must not dabble in strikes without reference to me. I have never said or suggested that they may never resort to strikes. They should not forget my recent advice[1] to the Christ Church College students. I do not repent of that advice. Let them take full benefit of it.

In the first place you gave me none[2] on behalf of the Federation. In the second place, even if you had given any, I would not have taken it from you because you had no authority to give me assurance in advance.

The Hitavada, 29-1-1941

62. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
January 26, 1941

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I had your messages about the hospital[3]. Dr. Mehta[4] has been to Allahabad and he is of opinion that it should be opened by me on

[1] *Vide* "Message to Students", 14-11-1940, "Interview to M. L. Shah", 24-11-1940 and "Statement to the Press", 29-11-1940

[2] The report said that Gandhiji was "referring to the assurance alleged to have been given by Mr. Shah". *Vide* also "Interview to M. L. Shah", 24-11-1940

[3] Kamala Nehru Memorial Hospital

[4] Dr. Jivraj N. Mehta

28th February. All things considered, I agree with him that I should open it and that too on 28th February at the earliest. If I go, the balance of the contemplated sum is likely to be collected and the hospital inaugurated without much anxiety as to the future. I know you will all be with us in spirit. I think we need not wait for Sarup[1] and Indu[2].

If you are permitted to wire your opinion, please do. I shall then go to Allahabad with a lighter heart.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1951. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

63. LETTER TO RAMBHAU B. TILAK

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
January 26,1941

DEAR RAMBHAU,

I did send you a message asking you to give up the fast. I have read your papers and I am of opinion that you should not resist the trustees. And in any case there is no case for a fast.

I hope you will break the fast.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI RAMBHAU B. TILAK

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

64. LETTER TO GOPALRAO[3]

[Before *January 27, 1941*][4]

Do not be in a hurry to conduct the campaign; have as many stoppages as are needed for efficient working.

The Hindu, 29-1-1941

[1] Vijayalakshmi, addressee's sister

[2] Indira, addressee's daughter

[3] According to the source, the addressee, President, Nagpur District Congress Committee, had "requested Gandhiji to allow him to suspend satyagraha in the Nagpur District from February 1 to February 4". The report also said that according to the Secretary, Nagpur District Congress Committee, "the decision was taken for the purpose of scrutinizing satyagraha forms, already approved by Mahatma Gandhi, in view of the fresh instructions issued by him"; *vide* "Instructions to Satyagrahis", 5-1-1941, "Instructions to Satyagrahis", 10-1-1941, and "Instruction to Satysgrahis", 12-1-1941

[4] The letter was reported under the date-line "Nagpur, January 27".

65. LETTER TO SYED MAHMUD

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
January 27, 1941

DEAR MAHMUD,

I am delighted that you are out of bed. Do please give your-self complete rest before moving about. I am likely to be in Allahabad about 28th February.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5087

66. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

January 27, 1941

CHI. KAKA,

I got the draft ready for you. Then at night I started thinking. First of all I did not like the name. Find some other name. Then consider whether such a Sangh is very necessary just now. Come tomorrow at four. Today the Ashram is full. Enclosed are Bal's letters. They are very fine indeed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10939

67. A LETTER

January 27, 1941

BROTHERS,

I have not seen the circular. But I have no objection to what you say. The Congress has given the name Hindustani to the *rashtra-bhasha*. A mere change of name will not destroy our language. But it will certainly perish if we prove ourselves unworthy. I advise you not to get involved in argument over the name. Let us carefully consider what our task is.

Yours,

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

68. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
January 27, 1941

DAUGHTER,

I did not get your letter this time. I do not know whether or no you got my letters. But it is good that you went and brought Mother to Bombay, and that you too are keeping all right. This is what Kanu told me regarding your telephone call. I would advise you to improve your health still further. Serve Mother and come over afterwards. Whenever you come you will of course do all sorts of Ashram work but not any special service to me. You would do what others do. I would be glad if you come after careful thought. I am quite all right. Manubehn's and Ramnarayan's fever has come down a bit, but it still persists.

Blessings from
BAPU

BIBI AMTUSSALAAM
C/O MAULVI BAGI KHAN SAHEB
EASTER VILLA, 7TH ROAD
SANTACRUZ, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 466

69. TELEGRAM TO SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
January 28, 1941

SHRI SARAT BOSE
WOODBURN PARK
CALCUTTA

STARTLING NEWS ABOUT SUBHAS.[1] PLEASE WIRE TRUTH. ANXIOUS. HOPE ALL WELL.[2]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *The Hindu*, 30-1-1941

[1] Subhas Chandra Bose disappeared from his house in Elgin Road, Calcutta, on January 17, 1941.

[2] According to the report in *The Hindu*, the addressee's telegram in reply to this read: "We are as much in the dark as the public about Subhas. No whereabouts and intentions and even the exact time of his leaving. No news in spite of the best efforts for the last three days. Circumstances indicate renunciation."

70. LETTER TO NEWSPAPER EDITORS

SEVAGRAM,
January 28, 1941

DEAR EDITOR,

We have become so used to the Press gag that we hardly know that there is a partial paralysis of the Press. In the name of "war effort" all honest expression of opinion, if it is opposed to war effort as conceived by the official world, is effectively suppressed, unless an enterprising editor or publisher risks the loss of his Press. Thus my own effort, if my honesty be not questioned, is the true effort to end all war and therefore in no way anti-British or pro-German. If public opinion desired suppression, the Press would on its own initiative exclude news and opinions disliked by the public. But in India the majority of Indian Editors would gladly publish all the news about satyagraha if there was no gag.

I wish to use my case by way of illustration. For the conduct of the campaign and for the sake even of keeping it within restraint, I have to issue statements from time to time. During four days two out of three such statements were suppressed. The reason assigned was as follows:

> 1. January 16, 1941. I am writing this to inform you that Mahatma Gandhi's statement of January 12[1] regarding continuance of the Civil Disobedience Movement was submitted for Press advice by two of the Press agencies but was not passed for publication. I am accordingly bringing the above fact to your notice.
>
> 2. January 28, 1941. I am writing this to inform you that Mahatma Gandhi's statement of January 10[2] regarding payment of fines by satyagrahis, which was submitted for Press advice by two of the Press agencies, was not passed for publication, as being a prejudicial report containing incitement to carry on anti-war civil disobedience. I am accordingly bringing the above fact to your notice.

[1] *Vide* "Instructions to Satyagrahis", 12-1-1941; the source, however, has "January 13".

[2] *Vide* "Instructions to Satyagrahis", 10-1-1941; the source, however, has "January 9".

I used to send my statements through the usual news agencies. But when I found that they were censored, I had to send my statements to selected newspapers and so they found place in some of them. You can judge for yourself whether they were objectionable news. This method of sending statements on chance publication is precarious. As I had no intention of extending civil disobedience to the special Press laws and ordinances, I stopped[1] the three *Harijan* weeklies whose chief aim was to propagate non-violence and what is known as the constructive programme. I do not want so far as possible to extend the scope of civil disobedience beyond the present limit. But I do not know that I can exercise that restraint if the Press abdicates its function of publishing relevant news. I therefore appeal to the Press not to succumb to the gag but to assert its independence by publishing all the satyagraha news in its fullness. Of course it is open to the Editors to criticize and condemn the movement or the statements that may be issued. Editors can signify their disapproval of the gag by either publishing the offending statements and risking prose-cution or even confiscation of the Press or by stopping publication of their papers altogether by way of protest. These are only two out of many ways for signifying your disapproval.

I observe that the Standing Committee of Editors is meeting on the 1st proximo[2]. The Committee is expected fearlessly to vindicate the liberty of the Press. It must cease to be the power it should be, if it submits to suppression of free public opinion.

I need hardly draw attention to the fact that in a subject country like India, the liberty of the Press is doubly precious. And your responsibility, if you represent British-owned Press, is very great at the present critical moment in the history of this country.

I need hardly also draw attention to the fact that I represent unadulterated non-violence whose spread can do nobody any harm. It is false and cruel to suggest that I could have anything in common with Nazism or Fascism because I happen to oppose imperialism.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 1362, 1941. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 24-10-1940, "To the Reader", 31-10-1940 and ; 2-11-1940

[2] The Standing Committee of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference met on February 1, 1941, in the premises of "The Hindustan Times". K. Srinivasan, Editor, *The Hindu*, presided.

71. LETTER TO DR. S. K. VAIDYA

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
January 28, 1941

BHAI VAIDYA,

I got your detailed letter. I do want you to give the people the full benefit of the knowledge you have acquired and, while doing so, to devote yourself to khadi. You will always find a home here. Come whenever you wish to. If you have any suggestion to make about anything here, please do so. Cannot Ambu's health be improved? I refuse to believe it. The miracle about Shastri is still continuing.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5745

72. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
January 28, 1941

DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. I wrote three letters to you. You might have got my letter of yesterday. What will you do by coming here when you are ill? And now you are meeting Qaid-e-Azam and others. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 467

73. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

WARDHA,
January 30, 1941

MIRABAI
PALAMPUR
KANGRA DISTRICT

COME AT ONCE VARODA.[1] LOVE. WELL.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6470. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9865

[1] *Vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Mirabehn", 24-1-1941

74. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
January 30, 1941

DAUGHTER,

You have sent for Zohra to Bombay. This I consider a great mistake. Akbar showed me your letter. If Zohra does not go to Aligarh, she may come here. If she wants to stay in Indore, she may. She is sure to lose in Bombay. I am all right. Rajkumari is going to Benares today for Vidyarthi Sammelan. Manu is still having fever.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 468

75. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
January 31, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

Mahadev has left.

I am reminded of you today because you are going[1] on a difficult task. Of course God is with you. Will remember the second. Ultimately Subhas Babu could not be arrested. Manu has fever today also. I am quite all right. It is pretty cold, so I slept under the roof. Kishorelal has come. Blessings to Maharani[2] and Maharaj Kumar[3].

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7873. Also C.W. 4240. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur

[1] To attend the Vidyarthi Sammelan; v*ide* also the preceding item.
[2] Addressee's wife.
[3] Rajmata and Prince of Vizianagaram

76. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
January 31, 1941

BHAI SATIS BABU,

Get from here the money for your expenses. Or, shall I send you Rs. 15? It is suggested that Khadi Pratishthan should get certification. It is good for us to have it. I believe there would be no difficulty in getting it. Jajuji has sent me Hem Prabha's letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2735

77. NOTE TO K. T. BHASHYAM[1]

[On or before *February 1, 1941*][2]

Rejection of so many nominations, on apparently the flimsiest grounds, is a serious matter. It has filled me with deep regret that this injustice should have been perpetrated in Mysore. You have done well to send a memorial to His Highness. I hope it will remedy what appears to me a manifest wrong.

The Hindu, 3-2-1941

78. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHAGANJ,
February 1, 1941

AMTUL SALAAM
CARE MADAM WADIA
ARYA SANGH, MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

I HAVE NOT ASKED YOU SEE ANYBODY. AM NO

[1] President of the Mysore Congress. The note was sent after Gandhiji heard from Dasappa, Chairman of the Parliamentary Sub-committee, and ex-President of the Mysore Congress, "on the situation created by the rejection in several cases of nomination papers of Congressmen to the Mysore Legislature".

[2] The report was dated "Wardha, February 1".

REPRESENTATIVE HINDU NOR CAN SPEAK FOR HINDUS. YOUR FIRST BUSINESS IS TO BE WELL. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 469

79. LETTER TO T. B. SAPRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
February 1, 1941

DEAR SIR TEJ BAHADUR,

I thank you for your kind letter.[1] Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah says, I can only talk to him as a Hindu for Hindus. I cannot do it. If I write to him that I want to meet him, he won't decline to meet me. But I know the result. He will immediately distort our meeting. He thinks that I am the greatest stumbling block. I am, therefore, biding my time. As soon as I see my way, I would certainly seek an interview with him and everybody else. You may have seen how he has distorted the present civil disobedience as anti-Muslim[2]? But of course you should pursue the subject after your own style with whomsoever you may think fit.[3]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 7583. Also C.W. 10277. Courtesy: National Library

[1] Dated January 28; *vide* "Letter From T. B. Sapru", 28-1-1941

[2] Answering Lucknow University students on January 27, Jinnah said: "I hope that the Muslim students will not participate in any strikes, protest meetings or any other activities directly or indirectly to support the Congress, as the latter's objective is to force the British Government to surrender to their demands which are highly detrimental to the vital interests of the Muslims in the country."

[3] The addressee, in his reply (C.W. 10380) dated February 6, said, "After careful consideration, I have decided to write a letter to Mr. Jinnah and I am sending it today. . . . I have simply suggested to him that he should be prepared to meet you and to have a talk with you, if you should write to him to see him in Bombay or elsewhere.. .."

80. LETTER TO MANORANJAN CHAUDHURI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
February 1, 1941

DEAR MANORANJANBABU[1],

I have your long letter. I am afraid I won't be able to help you. I cannot lead a movement of satyagraha as you suggest.[2] It has its limitations. And then very few, if any, members of the Hindu Mahasabha are believers in non-violence. Neither Shri Savarkar[3] nor Dr. Moonje[4] nor Bhai Parmanand are. No fault of theirs. They are entitled to hold the views they do. But they cannot lead a satyagraha movement. I think they will admit as much.

You draw too much upon our talks when you say that you would not have joined the Sabha without my blessings. All I said was that you had every right to join it, if you thought the Congress was impotent and the Sabha could secure relief.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

SHRI MANORANJAN CHAUDHURI
211 BOWBAZAR STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: C.W. 10438. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

81. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
February 1, 1941

DAUGHTER,

A telegram[5] has been sent to you. What do you expect from me? You may not make use of my name for anything. You have not

[1] Secretary, Bengal Provincial Hindu Mahasabha

[2] The donor of this letter, Amrita Lal Chatterjee who was an inmate of Sevagram Ashram, explains that the Bengal Hindu Mahasabha leaders had suggested a satyagraha movement against the Secondary Education Bill and Calcutta Municipal Amendment Act introduced by the Muslim League Ministry of Bengal.

[3] V. D. Savarkar and Dr. B. S. Moonje, President and Vice-President of Hindu Mahasabha

[4] *ibid*

[5] *Vide* "Telegram to Amtussalaam", 1-2-1941

understood at all. So long as you are not quite healthy, you will not be able to do anything thoroughly. Just leave everything for the present. Get well first. Attend to other things later.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 470

82. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
February 2, 1941

BHAI DAHYABHAI,

Ramjibhai is full of praises of you. I am giving this letter for his satisfaction. What need I say to you on behalf of the Harijans? No service we render them can be enough.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2713. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

83. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
February 2, 1941

DAUGHTER,

I got your letter. I sent you a telegram yesterday and also wrote a postcard. I find I understand nothing.[1] I have faith in prayer. Get all right first.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 471. Also *Bapuke Patra-8: Bibi Amtussalaamke Nam*, p. 209

[1] According to the printed source, the reference is to the Lahore Resolution of the Muslim League which demanded partition of India.

84. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
February 3, 1941

RAJKUMARI
CARE SIR MAHARAJ SINGH
MALL AVENUE
LUCKNOW

DELIGHTED SIGNED PHOTO. HOPE WELL. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3997. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7306

85. LETTER TO MOHAMMED NOMAN[1]

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
February 3, 1941

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry for your illness. Hope you will soon recover. I shall be glad to give you another appointment, when you are restored to health.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4091

86. NOTE TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH[2]

[*February 3, 1941*][3]

This must not be used.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7115. Also C.W. 8514. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] The addressee's name has been supplied from the G.N. register.

[2] The note is written on the one of even date from the addressee who wanted to know whether they could utilize the weevil-infected wheat grown on the Ashram farm or should buy a better variety from the market.

[3] *ibid*

87. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 3, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Ramji Gope will arrive today. He will stay somewhere. For the last five days he has been living here and there. He appears to be a gentleman. With him is his son.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4369

88. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEVAGRAM, via WARDHA,
February 4, 1941

CHI. PRABHA,

You are the limit! I cannot believe that you get no time to write even a postcard. I did not at all like the statement Jayaprakash has issued to the newspapers. I wish he had not issued it. Tell him this when you meet him. Nothing can be done now, of course. Take care of your health. Manu is all right. Amtul Salaam arrived today from Bombay. Rajkumari is in Lucknow, Mahadev in Delhi. Mirabehn is arriving on the 7th. By that time everybody else will be here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3551

89. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO E E. MACK[1]

[On or before *February 5, 1941*][2]

I would not regard it as a breach of discipline for a Congressman to subscribe to the Red Cross or take the necessary

[1] The addressee, District Judge of Nellore, was in correspondence with Gandhiji on "the aims and objects of the Red Cross organization". The letter was reported under the date-line "Wardhaganj, February 5".

[2] *ibid*

training. But it would be a different thing if a Congressman yielded to outside pressure and in order to avoid the displeasure of an authority and to gain a selfish end, subscribed to it.

The Hindu, 7-2-1941

90. LETTER TO SULTANA QURESHI AND KUSUM GANDHI

[On or before *February 5, 1941*][1]

CHI. SULTANA AND KUSUM,

I have the letter from both of you. There should be no friction between you two nor between others. It is all right if at present Sultana's Urdu is not up to the mark. How long will you be there? What do they give you for food?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10763. Courtesy: Ghulam Rasul Qureshi

91. LETTER TO MANJULABEHN M. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
February 6, 1941

CHI. MANJULA,

I got your letter. You did well in writing about Prabhashankar. I shall write to him.

You say that all of you will come over in May. Why so late? It is very hot in May. If you are not afraid of the heat, it is all right. It will take time for your quarters to get ready. But I shall be able to accommodate you in the quarters that are getting ready and make arrangements for a separate kitchen for you. A suitable building for that will be ready soon. I will let you know as soon as it is ready. Anyway you can come whenever you wish to. As you can put up with inconveniences, I do not worry about you.

Do observe the vow of *brahmacharya* which you have taken. I would be happy if you could observe it. After the birth of a certain number of children, everyone should observe *brahmacharya.* As this

[1] From the postmark

is not done, people resort to artificial means of birth-control. But the practice cannot but do harm in the end. It destroys morality. According to me life without self-control has no meaning. Without self-control no real service is possible. Those who wish to observe *brahmacharya* should lead a simple and disciplined life. They should keep themselves physically and mentally well occupied all the time. One's reading, too, should be such as will fill one's mind with good thoughts. Both husband and wife should devote themselves to public service, so that they might not even feel the desire for pleasure. If you want to ask me anything more, do so. You should, of course, do nothing beyond your capacity. Only rare persons succeed in observing self-control., If, therefore, you two cannot observe it for a long time, what need I say? Hence both of you should think over the matter yourselves and do what you think best.

Devdas told me that Magan was thinking of going to Poona. If you decide not to stay here, Poona would of course be better than Delhi.

Urmila is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 1613. Courtesy: Manjulabehn M. Mehta

92. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

February 6, 1941

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

What you say[1] is correct. I am working cautiously. If I die leaving the work half done, then my whole work will be criticized but if I die after completing it then all would appreciate it. I can say this much that I will not allow the manure to be wasted. Whatever I do is for the poor. But today I am unable to prove it in Sevagram. If you have faith and if you make your personal life simple and pure, you will then see that everything has been done for the best.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] The addressee said that Gandhiji had permitted the construction of a septic tank.

[PS.]

You did well in writing to me. It has neither tooth nor claw.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1940

93. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

February 6, 1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Never mind having written a long letter. My blood-pressure is not likely to shoot up because of it. Read the letter[1] to Balvantsinha. What you write is absolutely correct. Watch the result now. The seemingly royal life is in fact a very simple one. All this cannot be proved while the thing is still in an experimental stage. But try to find out, if everybody eats all things raw with the exception of *rotli*, how much will the expenditure come to? The quantity of milk would be reduced, less fuel would be consumed and, as for fruits, the fruits and vegetables grown in our gardens would be enough to meet our needs. This is my reason for plunging into this experiment with the enthusiasm of a young man. That we in the ashram are a motley crowd is of course a big handicap.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8513. Also C.W. 7119. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

94. LETTER TO PATWARDHAN

February 6, 1941

BHAI PATWARDHAN,

I have your letter. What connection can there be between Dr. Khare's episode and this? I still claim that no one has involved me in this nor do I want to shoulder the responsibility. From the very beginning I have been saying this. Didn't I have a share in building up the school? That is why I listened to you and Sahasrabuddhe as a friend. I can do something only if you two are with me. I will not act as a tribunal.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

95. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM,
February 7, 1941

DEAR AMRITLAL,

You have done well in writing as you have. The ferment will do good. You must wait and watch and you will say that no step will be taken that can possibly harm the village life conception.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 1455. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

96. LETTER TO KAMESHWARAMMA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
February 7, 1941

DEAR SISTER,

I have your pathetic letter. For your husband's[1] sake you should refrain from offering satyagraha or doing any active political work. The constructive field is open for you. It is wide enough. If in spite of this forbearance anything happens, you should both be prepared for it and suffer joyfully.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10279

97. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO A CONGRESSMAN OF DELHI

[Before *February 9, 1941*]

Every satyagrahi will be his own leader and should shoulder the full responsibility of the national struggle in the event of my arrest. It is wrong to presume that only those serve the cause of the country who offer satyagraha and court imprisonment. In my opinion, people

[1] Prof. Karpurswami of Mysore University

devote every available minute of their time in spinning and other constructive programme of the Congress subscribe a lot towards the national movement.

He adds that no Indian should dream of this movement developing into a mass movement so long as the leadership is in his (Gandhiji's) hand. He calls upon every Indian to fulfil the conditions which are laid down for a satyagrahi.

The Hindustan Times, 9-2-1941

98. LETTER TO NIRMALANANDA

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
February 9, 1941

DEAR NIRMALANANDA,

I hope all will be well during your absence. You have given me a good report.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1394

99. LETTER TO T. B. SAPRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
February 9, 1941

DEAR SIR TEJ BAHADUR,

Your letter[1] has just reached me. It disconcerts me somewhat. I think I have told you that I am not going to write to him unless I know that he wants to come to some settlement. What I do know is all to the contrary. I wish I had a copy of your letter[2] to Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah. Of course I do not want you to do anything further so as to remove misunderstanding, if there is any.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 7582. Also C.W. 10281. Courtesy: National Library

[1] Dated February 6; *vide* footnote 3, "Letter to T. B. Sapru", 1-2-1941

[2] For excerpts from this, as recorded by the addressee in his letter dated February 12 to Gandhiji, *vide*"Letter from T. B. Sapru", 12-2-1941. The addressee forwarded to Gandhiji on February 14 the reply received from Jinnah. *Vide* also "Letter to T. B. Sapru", 16-2-1941

100. TELEGRAM TO R. K. SIDHWA[1]

SEVAGRAM,
February 10, 1941

ABOUT ELECTION[2] FOLLOW MAULANA'S DIRECTION. LOCAL MEN MUST BE BEST JUDGES.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

GANDHI

101. LETTER TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
February 10, 1941

SIR,

Your word to me written so earnestly in your issue of February 7, demands a reply.

In spite of your disbelief, I must adhere to my faith in the possibility of the most debased human nature to respond to non-violence. It is the essence of non-violence that it conquers all opposition. That I may not express myself that measure of non-violence, and the rest may express less is highly probable. But I will not belittle the power of non-violence or distrust the Fuhrer's capacity to respond to true non-violence.

The illustrations you have cited in support of your disbelief are all unhappy because wholly inapplicable. A man is not necessarily non-violent because he lays down his arms. The Czechs, the Danes, the Austrians, and the Poles may have all acted most wisely, but certainly not non-violently. If they could have put up successful armed resistance, they would have done so and would have deserved well of their countrymen. Nor is it for me to blame them for submission when resistance became vain. It was, however, order to meet such contingencies and in order to enable even the physically weakest persons not to feel powerless against physically strong persons fully armed with

[1] Rustomji Khurshedji Sidhwa; leader of the Congress party in the Sind Legislative Assembly

[2] The reference is to by-election in the Rohri Division of Sukkur District in Sind.

modern weapons of destruction that satyagraha was discovered and applied in South Africa in 1907[1]. And it has since been successfully applied under varying and even baffling circumstances. You will please excuse me for refusing to draw a distinction in kind between the forces I have had to cope with hitherto and what I may have to cope with if the Fuhrer attacked India. The prospect of his killing every satyagrahi causes neither terror nor despair. If India has to go through such a purgatory and if a fair number of satyagrahis face the Fuhrer's army and die without malice in their breasts, it would be a new experience for him. Whether he responds or not, I am quite clear that these satyagrahis facing the army will go down in history as heroes and heroines at least equal to those of whom we learn in fables or cold history.

You are, however, on less weak ground when you doubt the honesty or non-violence of my companions. You are entitled to throw the Poona resolution in my face. I have already confessed[2] that the Poona resolution would not have been passed but for my momentary weakness. As to the want of honesty or defective non-violence, I can only say that the future alone will show whether satyagrahis were only so-called or as honest and true as human beings can be. I can only assert that every care has been taken in making the selection to ensure a fair standard of non-violence. I admit, however, that hypocrites have undoubtedly crept in. But I entertain the belief that the vast majority will be found to be true. The Congress President has been frank enough to define the limitations of his non-violence.[3] But so far as I know his mind—and nobody does if I do not—his non-violence will be proof against any temptation within the limits defined by him. I should undertake to engage in non-violent resistance to the Fuhrer if I had companions with the Maulana Saheb's circumscribed belief. Whether such non-violence can stand the test or not, is a moot question. I have achieved success till now with such material.

You are incorrect in attributing to me a demand for unfettered

[1] In protest against the Transvaal Asiatic Registration Act passed on March 22, 1907

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Carl Heath", 25-1-1941

[3] According to *The Indian Annual Register, 1940,* Vol. II, p. 56, Abul Kalam Azad, in the course of an interview at Lahore on December 30, 1940, said: "If India is invaded tomorrow and there is no other alternative to defend my country, I will not hesitate to take up arms and fight."

liberty of the Press or speech.[1] What I have said[2] is that there should be unfettered liberty provided that it is not inconsistent with non-violence. I am not aware that Congress Ministers' restrictive action went beyond the proviso. If it did, it was certainly against the declared Congress policy and can be no guide or criterion for me.

The unkindest cut is contained in the insinuation that my demand for free speech, subject to the proviso mentioned, was "a device for squeezing political concessions from the British". There would be nothing politically wrong if political concessions were demanded even at the point of civil disobedience. But it is a matter of public knowledge that the Poona resolution has lapsed. And in so far as I am concerned, it remains lapsed so long as the war lasts. Civil disobedience would certainly be withdrawn if free speech is genuinely recognized and the *status quo* restored. I have never stated during previous movements that they were likely to be long drawn out. But I have done so this time because I believe that there can be no settlement with the Congress, short of complete independence during the pendency of the war, for the simple reason that the Congress cannot commit itself to active help in war with men and money. That would mean a reversal of the policy of non-violence which the Congress has pursued for the last 20 years. And independence cannot come through any settlement while the war lasts. Therefore so far as I know, the Congress will be satisfied with the fullest freedom to grow in non-violence. The Congress demand concerns all persons and parties.

You ask me in the face of all these facts whether it is "fair or morally right to pursue his (my) present campaign". You have answered the question yourself in the negative. But I may not accept your answer. In the first place, as shown above, I do not subscribe to your facts. Secondly, to accept your answer will be to declare my utter insolvency. I would be untrue to the faith I have unwaveringly held now for nearly half a century in the efficacy of non-violence. I may seemingly fail, but even at the risk of being completely misunderstood I must live and act according to my faith and belief that I am serving

[1] *The Times of India* had argued: "He demands the unfettered liberty of the Press and the right of the individual to say what he likes. These so-called rights do not exist anywhere in the world; they did not prevail when Mr. Gandhi's Congress Governments were in office in the Indian provinces. Bombay and Madras bear witness to that fact. Is Mr. Gandhi justified in demanding for himself and others a privilege which even Congress Ministers denied to the public?"

[2] *Vide* "letter to Newspaper Editors", 28-1-1941

India, Britain and humanity. I do not wish well to India at the expense of Britain as I do not wish well to Britain at the expense of Germany. Hitlers will come and go. Those who believe that when the Fuhrer dies or is defeated his spirit will die, err grievously. What matters is how we react to such a spirit, violently or non-violently. If we react violently, we feed that evil spirit. If we act non-violently, we sterilize it.

You ask me to devote myself to internal unity. Well, my passion for it is as old as that for non-violence. Indeed, my first non-violent experiment outside the domestic circle was to promote that unity. And I had considerable success. I ask you, therefore, to believe me that my effort for unity is not suspended but intensified by the present movement. The great beauty of non-violent effort lies in the fact that its failure can only harm those who are in it, while its success is sure to promote all-round good.

M. K. GANDHI

The Times of India, 15-2-1941

102. LETTER TO EDITOR, "THE TIMES OF INDIA"

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
February 10, 1941

DEAR EDITOR,

You will please publish this[1] without alteration or reject it altogether.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile: *Mahatma, Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, Vol. 6, between pp. 16 and 17

103. LETTER TO P. C. GHOSH

SEVAGRAM,
February 10, 1941

MY DEAR PRAFULLA,

I was delighted to hear from you. I wonder if your companion recited the *Gita* correctly. You have attained very good speed. I hope your yarn is even and strong.

The Sardar is keeping very well and devoting practically the

[1] *Vide* the preceding item

whole of his time to spinning. He has induced his companions also to do likewise though not so long. They offer prayers together and are occupying their time quite usefully.

Do not believe the reports about my health. I am keeping very well and the blood-pressure remains under control if I do not work at night.

Jamnalalji is in the Nagpur jail with Vinoba and Pyarelal. They are a big company and all spinning regularly.

I have to go to Allahabad to open Kamala [Nehru] Hospital on 28th.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3780

104. LETTER TO ISWAR SARAN

February 10, 1941

DEAR MUNSHIJI,

If I come there, I must try to visit the Ashram. Please make no announcement or fuss.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI MUNSHI ISWAR SARAN

HARIJAN ASHRAM

ALLAHABAD

From the original: C.W. 10282. Courtesy: Allahabad Municipal Museum

105. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

February 10, 1941

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I was glad to have your letter. Manu has left this place cured of her fever. If, therefore, she gets it again there, I will put the blame on

you all. Let me have the report after doctors have examined her. I am very glad to learn that now you are well. Do not let your health deteriorate.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9745. Also C.W. 725. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

106. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

February 10, 1941

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Though Kanti's letter is simple, it is against our policy. So I did not like it. But how am I to check him? Your sending [money] is all right.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8041. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

107. LETTER TO P. KODANDA RAO

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
February 11, 1941

MY DEAR KODANDA RAO[2],

You have no business to be ill.

When people are in need of blessings, they do not seek them by post. So Mary will have to come here and ask them with due supplication.

As for your suit, it has failed in spite of my pleading. My whole soul rebels against any speechifying. And about Gokhale[3] I simply cannot do it. You will, therefore, have to do without me.

[1] The addressee, in his letter to Gandhiji, had written: "I am enclosing a copy of a letter received from Kanti. I have promised to send him Rs. 50 a month and I have already sent him Rs. 150 for the first three months."

[2] Of the Servants of India Society

[3] Whose 26th death anniversary fell on February 19

Lastly it is cruelty to animals to drag me from Sevagram except when duty makes a peremptory call.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6282

108. LETTER TO CHARUPRABHA SENGUPTA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
February 11, 1941

DEAR SISTER,

Gandhiji has your letter. You must not offer satyagraha, and put in your resignation also—unless the Provincial Committee people insist on your remaining in office. If people are arrested for prosecuting the constructive programme, they may defend themselves.

Yours sincerely,

MAHADEV DESAI

SHRIMATI CHARUPRABHA SENGUPTA
32/5 BEADON STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 8712

109. LETTER TO SURENDRA B. MASHRUWALA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
February 11, 1941

CHI. SURENDRA,

I got the letter from you two[1]. Yesterday I replied[2] to Kunvariji's letter. Do not make Manu a slave of drugs. I think her stay here did her a lot of good. The improvement should be kept up. Let me know the doctor's diagnosis.

I think it is my duty to recover from you the expense incurred on Manu. I have of course not kept a separate account. In such cases I leave the matter to the persons concerned. I can get an estimate of the

[1] The addressee and his wife
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Kunvarji K. Parekh", 10-2-1941

expense worked out. If you agree with me, you may send me whatever amount you can afford. You will have fulfilled your dharma then. It is but proper, isn't it, that children who are earning should not depend on public funds? Your own health cannot be said to be too good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1576. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

110. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
February 11, 1941

CHI. MANUDI,

Is what I have written[1] above all right? So long as you were unmarried, it did not matter if expenditure on your account was met from public funds. But don't you think it should no longer be so? If this hurts you, I do not want the money.

Get well soon.

Vinabehn[2] has arrived safely.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1577. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

111. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 11, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

The example you cite is not good. Can it come under the rule? If so, the rule would be that you simply point out [the shortcomings of others]. We cannot talk of fine or rough [cloth] nor of [having] a collar. All this is to be said with love. Anyway he can always come to me, and then your responsibility ends. There is no room here for disappointment. Firmness is needed. To walk on the edge of a sword

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] A German

is now the highest duty for you. Give your *kurtas* to Sailen. If he still has some complaint, he may come to me. In future if anyone wants something, you can ask him for a note from me. Do what is convenient. If you frame the rules, I shall go through them and make the necessary changes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4370

112. LETTER TO E. E. MACK

WARDHA,
February 12, 1941

DEAR MR. MACK,

I thank you for your letter[1]. Of course I accept your word I never published anything. I must not be held responsible for things said to be [mine].

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

113. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

February 12, 1941

CHI. MIRA,

I had fully expected to see you yesterday and today.[2] I would then have fixed up the day with you. You can have Wednesdays and Saturdays at 8.15 p.m., if that would suit you.[3] You can start from tonight.

Love.

BAPU[4]

From the original: C.W. 6471. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9866

[1] Dated February 10, regarding the publication of his correspondence with Gandhiji about the Red Cross organization; *vide* also "Fragment of Letter to E. E. Mack", 5-2-1941

[2] Mirabehn explains: "I had returned from the mountains and was staying in my hut on the hill."

[3] Mirabehn says: "For going to see Bapu, at which time I used to break my silence."

[4] At the back of the letter Mirabehn had noted: "I am so sorry. If I had realized, I would have come for the answer."

114. LETTER TO GANDHI ANNAMALAI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
February 12, 1941

DEAR FRIEND,

Gandhiji has your letter of the 7th. He would ask you not to leave your job just now. The fight here will be a long-drawn-out affair, and you need not take the plunge just yet.

Yours sincerely,
MAHADEV DESAI

From a photostat: C.W. 10346. Courtesy: Jairamdas Doulatram

115. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA
February 12, 1941

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. Yes, Rajkumari has arrived. The Ashram is full. New rooms are coming up. As soon as they are ready, they will be full. The fact that you are keeping good health now, shows that you lacked occupation. You will have no difficulty at all in meeting Jayaprakash. I will have to go to Allahabad on the the 28th and I will know more then. If you want to come over and see me, do so. I am going to open the Kamala [Nehru] Hospital. I am fine.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3552

116. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
February 12, 1941

BHAJ MALKANI,

When Kaka Saheb is coming there, why do you need my

message? Is he not himself my message? Hope the whole tour will be successful.

Blessings from
BAPU

Prom a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 941

117. LETTER TO PATWARDHAN

February 12, 1941

BHAI PATWARDHAN,

I had already advised you to put the money in the name of a *panch* even though Sahasrabuddhe may not approve of it. I had understood that Sahasrabuddhe was prepared for this much. Now I don't know what can be done. I don't even know in whose name the money has been kept. I shall tell you if I can see more clearly.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

118. INTERVIEW TO VAMANRAO JOSHI

[Before *February 13, 1941*][1]

I want quality and not number. I may get a few satyagrahis today but their number is bound to increase. I prefer five satyagrahis of quality to hundreds because these five will fight till the last. There should be no competition between provinces for number.[2]

It is understood that Mahatma Gandhi has disapproved of the proposal of the Berar Provincial Congress Committee to start training camps for satyagrahis.

Mahatma Gandhi is reported to have told Mr. Vamanrao Joshi, President of the Berar Provincial Gongress Committee, when he interviewed him recently, not to start such training camps as it might be banned by the Government and that he did not want to embarrass the Government.

Mahatma Gandhi had no objection for starting centres for training purely constructive workers.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-2-1941 and 15-2-1941

[1] The first report of the interview had appeared under the date-line "Nagpur, February 13".

[2] This paragraph appeared in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 14-2-1941; which reported that Gandhiji gave this answer in reply to "a question whether the province should give the best possible satyagrahis or should go without any if none came up to the prescribed standard".

119. MESSAGE TO PUNJAB CONGRESSMEN[1]

WARDHAGANJ,
February 13, 1941

Have belief in service and work. This is a greater duty.

Mahatma Gandhi, it is learnt, has insisted on the necessity for intensifying constructive work which is as equally important as satyagraha.

Do not flatter your opponents but try to win them over by work and love and convert them to your view or bring them into the Congress fold as true believers in the Congress programme.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-2-1941

120. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 13, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your duty is to behave affectionately with all, and also not to allow breaches of the rule. It means that you are not to be a party, but should let me know when the rule is broken.[2] But what is the rule? *Ekadash Vrat*[3] is of course there. From this subrules should follow. If I had time, I would frame them; but since I haven't I am passing the burden on to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4371

[1] This was sent through Ramnath Agarwal, Secretary of Moga (Punjab) City Congress Committee, who left Sevagram on February 13 after a fortnight's stay. The *Hitavada*, 14-2-1941, reported that satyagraha was being started in Moga on February 13, and that a centre for constructive work was to be opened there.

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Krishnachandra", 11-2-1941

[3] The eleven vows of non-violence, truth, etc., taken by the inmates of the Ashram; *vide* "Letter to Krishmachandra", 14-5-1935.

121. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
February 14, 1941

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter, and note what you have written about the students. Keep as much contact with them as possible, and influence them if you can.

Regarding your offering civil disobedience, I feel that you should stay out and do service. There is enough work outside. You should give up the desire of going to jail. No one is going to arrest me. But even if I am arrested, persons like you, if outside, would go on working with God's grace.

Yes, Rajkumari has done a great thing indeed. Everyone says that.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7993. Also C.W. 3090. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

122. LETTER TO ADVAITA KUMAR GOSWAMI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
February 14, 1941

BHAI ADVAITA KUMAR,

Received your letter just now. My opinion is that you should not pick a quarrel over congregational prayer. It is a different thing if obstruction is put on individual prayer. Prayer should not be said loudly even in one's own room.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 150

123. LETTER TO RAMADEVI CHOWDHARY

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
February 14, 1941

CHI. RAMA[1],

I was very happy to read your letter. Congratulations to the teachers who have made up their mind. I hope that other teachers too will make a similar sacrifice and will not leave their schools. Congratulations to the villagers also. If this work succeeds, it will be a great service.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI RAMADEVI
ASHRAM
BARICUT P.O.
ORISSA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9298

124. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
February 14, 1941

CHI. ANAND,

I have your letter. Your ears are getting worse and worse; it is not good. There is a place in Bombay where I want to send you for treatment. If you can come soon, write to me. Here are a few words:

I like the idea of collecting my writings under suitable heads as has been done by Anand Hingorani. The reader cannot but appreciate the labour he has given to securing attractive printing and binding.

M. K. GANDHI[2]

[1] Wife of Gopabandhu Chowdhary; the couple was running an Ashram in Baricut.

[2] According to the addressee, this "Foreword" originally written in English, was "intended for all the titles in the 'Gandhi Series' " edited and published by him. It was "modified by Gandhiji at Allahabad on March 1, 1941".

Have this set up in print; don't make a block.[1] I hope Vidya and the child are well.

How is Jairamdas? What does Premi do? Are you getting on well with Father?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India, and Anand T. Hingorani

125. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 15,1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have nothing to say about the rubbish. Such mistakes would go on. As long as we are alert it is all right. Munnalal's suggestion seems to me to be worth trying. It is to put the urine bucket elsewhere. Tell me the difficulty you have on account of Anjanadevi. I will try to remove it. Her sons are good, specially Pratap. I feel that even for his sake we should put up with their family.

The rules are lying with me. Whatever you wish to write, do write and do come over.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4372

126. LETTER TO MUKUNDALAL SIRCAR

SEVAGRAM,
February 16, 1941

DEAR MUKUNDALAL,

I have your letter[2]. I had to delay replying to you because I got your copy of Subhas Babu's letter first and then his own letter.

[1] The Foreword did appear as facsimile block on all cover-jackets of the titles under "Gandhi Series". *To the Students* and *To the Women* were the first two books published under the series on October 2, 1941.

[2] According to the source, "the letter of Mr. Bose dated January 10 [*vide* footnote 4, "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj"] having remained unanswered, Mr. Mukundalal Sircar sent a telegram to Mahatma Gandhi on January 28, asking for a reply. When he learnt from Sevagram that Mahatma Gandhi did not receive the letter in question, Mr. Sircar sent a copy of the same on February 8 for ready reference."

The differences in our case are vital and fundamental. Subhas Babu knows them, and I expect you too know them. Independence secured through violence would have contents different from that secured through non-violent means. My notion of independence is independence of the poorest and the lowliest in the land. But in political language, all of us—Communists, Socialists, Kisan- Sabhaites, Labourites and others must think of independence though all will have different meanings for the same word.

So far as I am concerned, I have no objection to the whole of the correspondence being published.

You will please let me know as soon as news about Subhas Babu's whereabouts is known.[1]

The Hindu, 24-2-1941

127. LETTER TO T. B. SAPRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
February 16, 1941

DEAR SIR TEJ BAHADUR,

I thank you for two letters[2]. I need not now discuss the points raised by you. Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah's letter confirms my fear. He would see me if I go "on behalf of the Hindu community". This I cannot do. I do not represent the Hindu community. I am not even a member of the Hindu Mahasabha. But you may not now get out of the situation. You must not mind my warning[3]. I suggest your writing to Qaid-e-Azam that his position is unsound, if you agree with me. If

[1] The addressee's reply dated February 21, *inter alia*, read: "Though I consider the correspondence on this subject as closed, I feel constrained to say that the sentence in your letter with particular reference to violent and non-violent means, in my opinion, does not arise and is not relevant to the point of clarification sought for by Subhas Babu, because he is a Congressman and the Forward Blocists are Congressmen as well. As such Subhas Babu and his associates in the Forward Bloc had all along advocated the means of "non-violent" mass struggle as the only potential force to secure independence and, therefore, the independence thus secured is surely the independence through non-violent means."

[2] Dated February 12 and 14. For the letter dated February 12, *vide* "Letter from T. B. Sapru", 12-2-1941

[3] In letter dated February 9, *vide* "Letter to T. B. Sapru", 9-2-1941

you do not, you should strive with me and persuade me that I should go on behalf of the Hindu community.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 7581. Also C.W. 10285. Courtesy: National Library

128. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

SEVAGRAM,
February 16, 1941

CHI. MANUDI,

Let Ba get angry.[2] But we must do our duty. So ultimately you lost the purse containing eight rupees? Or did you find it afterwards? There was absolutely no need to give the pen to Vina. She handed it over to me. I have told her to keep it. Recover fully.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1578. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

129. LETTER TO SURENDRA B. MASHRUWALA

SEVAGRM,
February 16, 1941

CHI. SURENDRA,

What about the expenditure on medicine that was saved? If you take into account the money saved, your burden will increase. But I intend to waive all that. Ba was really very angry and said, "Why did

[1] In his letter (C.W. 10286) dated February 19, the addressee said: " . . . from the 15th of February, I have been down with high fever . . . I am not attending to any work at present. . . I have just written a letter to Mr. Jinnah, simply acknowledging his letter . . . Personally, I am not hopeful of success. I do not think I can persuade you to see him on behalf of the Hindu community, nor do I think I can persuade him to give up his point of view. Still I shall think over the matter and, if anything occurs to me which may be of any use, I shall act accordingly. Meanwhile, I am taking no action."

[2] *Vide* the following item; also"Letter to Manubehn S. Mashruwala", 11-2-1941

you send for the girl here if you were going to charge her?" Henceforth I will not send for her at all. Such is my life. But be that as it may, I must do my duty.

I hope there is no danger to the baby Manu is carrying.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1579. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

130. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

February 16, 1941

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

A little irregularity regarding the vegetables is worth putting up with.[1] Whatever we do not need in the Ashram, we should be able to sell. You should consult the doctor about the future crop. We should be able to produce fresh and good vegetables.

If wheat goes bad, it has to be thrown away. Even the poor should do the same. How did our wheat go bad?

This Ashram shows no signs of closing down. It may have to change. Whatever happens would be the result of our, or say, my actions. Have patience.

Blessings from

BAPU

Prom a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1941

[1] The addressee had complained that he was not able to assess the quantity of vegetables that was required at the Ashram and feared that the Ashram might close down owing to mismanagement.

131. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO P. NARAYANA[1]

[Before *February 17, 1941*][2]

In my opinion the Magistrate's remarks[3]are libellous. There should be no appeal. I propose to take no notice of his remarks. He cannot harm the movement. He has harmed the Service he has disgraced.

The Hindu, 21-2-1941

[1] The addressee, a Congressman of Gudur, had drawn Gandhiji's "attention to the remarks made by the local Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Mr. R. Galletti, in his judgment in the cases against satyagrahis, and in his speech at the public meeting held in connection with the satyagraha offered by Enuga Narasa Reddi in Gudur, on February 1." The report appeared under the date-line "Gudur, February 17".

[2] *ibid*

[3] According to *The History of the Indian National Congress*, Vol. II, p. 265, "Galletti was not merely stating from the bench that it was wrong on the part of the police to prosecute the smaller fry, leaving alone the prime movers who were the arch conspirators . . . but by joining public meetings and arguing out with the people the pros and cons of the movement." The book explains that in one of his speeches, referring to Narasa Reddi's trial before him and Gandhiji's instruction to him to spin for fifteen days, subsequent to discharge order and to offer satyagraha again, Mr. Galletti "disputed the assertion of Mr. Reddi about spinning, and added that he would honour men of character though they were misguided, and expose those to ridicule who lacked it. Speaking on the war effort in his division, Mr. Galletti assured himself that the satyagrahis could not do anything 'prejudicial', even if Mr. Gandhi came and had his say." Referring to the correspondence between Gandhiji and E. E. Mack *(vide* pp. 315 and 329), Galletti is stated to have said that " 'Gandhiji, as everyone knew, would not go out of his spiritual determination.' He quoted the analogy of Quakers who had conscientious objection to war but at the same time came forward to the relief of the victims in war. The same was the view of Gandhiji. But what was the Provincial Congress Committee doing? There were a number of Congressmen who were angry with Gandhiji for his opinion on Congressmen's participation in Red Cross work. There were a few sincere Congressmen but most lacked honesty. Many of them . . . were inconsistent."

132. LETTER TO S. MALKINSON

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
INDIA,
February 17, 1941

DEAR FRIEND,

I have carefully read your letter. There is confusion of thought in it. My pacifism cannot aid the Nazis. India has two sections. One section Britain is exploiting to the full. I represent the dumb millions who have ever been peaceful. The Nazi spirit is not new, only the name is new. If it dies it will die only by my method and no other.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

S. MALKINSON, ESQ.

133 PRINCESS STREET

PORT ELIZABETH

SOUTH AFRICA

From a photostat: G.N. 2168

133. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
February 17, 1941

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. I had replied to your previous letter. Now there is nothing for me but to wait. Rajendra Babu will go on like this. They will certainly send you the *Ashram Samachar* when it is published. But it is not published regularly. By 'Suraj Bhavan', I suppose you mean 'Swaraj Bhavan'[1] ? Don't you stay now with Jayaprakash's brother-in-law[2]?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3553

[1] Motilal Nehru's bungalow at Allahabad
[2] Brijbihari Sahai

134. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON[1]

SEVAGRAM,
February 17, 1941

BHAI TANDONJI,

Make an inquiry into the matter and write to Abdus Samad Saheb also.[2]

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi original: Purushottamdas Tandon Collection. Courtesy: National Archives of India

135. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

February 18, 1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

You did well in writing to me. It is your duty to draw my attention whenever my interference hurts you. There is no question at all of my feeling offended. If I myself break rules, who will observe them? Hence behind my seeming breach of a rule you will discover that I really observe it. If I had known about Kripalani, I would have stopped him. Nevertheless it is our duty when a guest turns up unexpectedly that we should spare for him some food even from the measured quantity that has been cooked. One should exercise one's discretion. The sparing of such food would be dharma only if it is willingly done by the person concerned. Ba's interference is of course to be regretted. But that is part of her nature. We have, therefore, no option but to put up with it. Ba has changed herself a great deal with patience. If I made more effort, she would improve still further. But I save my time. Yet I will see.

You must take charge of *datan*[3]. Anybody who uses one must pick it with his eyes shut. Nobody should select and choose. Those

[1] Gandhiji had written this on the margin of Abdus Samad Ansari's letter to him complaining of corruption and anti-Muslim prejudice on the part of Congress members in electing chairman to Sultanpur District Board.

[2] In his reply dated March 4, the addressee said that A.S. Ansari's report was true; but he could not find any proof for the charges of corruption and the anti-Muslim prejudice.

[3] Babul stick for brushing teeth

that are altogether bad should be thrown away.

Personally I would certainly like your making a liquid solution of soap. I think we are using too much soap. I do not know how to prevent this. See if you can think of some way. The matter should be discussed with all. The use of 501 soap must be stopped. Why shouldn't we ourselves make soft soap? See if you can do something about it.

I approve of the other changes you have suggested.

I am not surprised to learn that the kitchen is working all the time. There should be some arrangement for looking after it. The persons in charge must be *sthitaprajnas*[1]. If we have such persons, the whole set-up would function smoothly. If you need my help, ask for it. Do and persuade others to do everything with good humour. And be patient about what cannot be done.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8512. Also C.W. 7120. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

136. ABSTRACT OF LETTER TO ALI GUL KHAN

[Before *February 19, 1941*][2]

It is understood that Mahatma Gandhi has sent a letter to Ali Gul Khan, President of the Frontier Congress Committee, expressing his agreement with Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's suggestion that satyagrahis should remain in the Frontier Province to finish constructive work and thus there need be no march towards Delhi for the present.

Referring to those satyagrahis who want to postpone satyagraha on some pretext or another, Mahatma Gandhi is understood to have advised that their names should be struck off the list unless their case is undeniable.

Ali Gul Khan is forwarding the letter to Abdul Ghaffar Khan who is at Utmanzai.

The Hindu, 21-2-1941

[1] Those of steadfast intellect

[2] The report appeared under the date-line "Peshawar, February 19".

137. LETTER TO GENERAL SECRETARY, ASSAM PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE[1]

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

February 19, 1941

THE GENERAL SECRETARY
ASSAM PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE
CONGRESS HOUSE
GAUHATI

DEAR FRIEND,

I showed your letter to the General Secretary dated the 16th February, 1941, to Gandhiji who has asked me to reply to you as follows:

He sees no objection whatsoever to Congressmen helping in the prohibition campaign started by the present Government, provided it does not affect the satyagraha campaign. That is to say, those who have signed the satyagraha pledge and are due to offer satyagraha on the dates given to them may not allow their decision to be affected by the campaign. You say: "Some Congressmen, mostly active satyagrahis, have been enrolled as members of prohibition committees and, in some cases, they have assumed responsible roles." But Shri Chaliha in his letter to Gandhiji dated 15th February, 1941, writes: "Congressmen who are offering services for this work are almost (all?) non-satyagrahis, and out of 150 members there are only a few satyagrahis." What is the truth? However, our duty is clear. Those who have not signed the satyagraha pledge may offer full co-operation to Government, and those who have, may do so until the date on which they are offering satyagraha.

Yours sincerely,

MAHADEV DESAI

A.I.C.C. File No. 1294 a, 1941. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

138. LETTER TO PRABHU DAYAL VIDYARTHI

February 19, 1941

CHI. PRABHUDAYAL,

Whatever you do you must do it with Kakasaheb's consent and

[1] A copy of this was forwarded to K. Chaliha, M. L.A., President, Jorhat District Congress Committee, and Krishnanath Sarma, Jorhat.

blessings. You may live anywhere you like but so long as you do not earn your bread through work, I shall not be satisfied.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 11702

139. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO P. V. NAIDU[1]

[Before *February 20, 1941*][2]

If the Hindu Sabha was so inclined, it could partake in the reorganization of the Central Government, but the question of the Congress doing so would not arise so long as the Congress demand[3] remained unconceded.

Mahatma Gandhi is said to have told Dr. Naidu that the reply[4] given by him recently to an editorial in *The Times of India,* Bombay, fully represented the Congress position.

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-2-1941

140. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
February 21, 1941

CHI. PRABHA,

I understand about Jayaprakash. What I meant[5] was that as long as you did not get work of your own choice there, you used to remain

[1] According to the source, this was "stated to be the reply given by Mahatma Gandhi to the suggestions put forward by Dr. P. Varadarajulu Naidu, General Secretary, All-India Hindu Mahasabha, with a view to bring about a settlement of the political deadlock". According to *The Indian Annual Register, 1941,* Vol. I, p. 40, the addressee "had suggested from Madras that the Viceroy should invite a conference of the Premiers of the provinces and the Congress ex-Premiers, along with a certain number of leaders, nominated by the Hindu Mahasabha, the Muslim League, Sikhs, Christians and the Depressed Classes".

[2] The report appeared under the date-line "Nagpur, February 20".

[3] The reference is to the Working Committee resolution passed in Delhi on July 7, 1940; *vide* "Resolution Passed at Congress Working Committee Meeting At Delhi", 7-7-1940

[4] *Vide* "Letter to "The Times of India", 10-2-1941

[5] *Vide*, "Letter to Prabhavati", 12-2-1941

ill. Now your work has become your medicine. And that is how it should be. Our party will include Mahadev, Kanaiyo[1] and myself. We will reach [Allahabad] on the 27th evening. We may have to stay for a couple of days. I see that you also will reach the same evening.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3554

141. LETTER TO T. B. SAPRU

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
February 22, 1941

DEAR SIR TEJ BAHADUR,

I was sorry to learn about your illness.[2] Do please write only when you are quite well and strong.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU
19 ALBERT ROAD
ALLAHABAD, U.P.

From a photostat: G.N. 7580. Also C.W. 10287. Courtesy: National Library

142. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND

February 22, 1941

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

At last God gave you the strength to fulfil the vow. Congratulations. May the bride and the bridegroom be happy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 841

[1] Kanu Gandhi, son of Narandas Gandhi
[2] *Vide* footnote 4, "Letter to T. B. Sapru", 16-2-1941

143. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
February 22, 1941

CHI. ANAND,

I have your letter. Meet me at Allahabad itself. I was sorry to note the contents of the letter. We should accept the will of God.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India, and Anand T. Hingorani

144. FOREWORD TO "STATUS OF INDIAN PRINCES"

The following seven chapters are a result of Pyarelal's deep study of the status of the Princes of India. They should have been published in pamphlet form long ago, and would have been, but for my pre-occupation. The writer is himself behind jail walls. Therefore they are being published as they were written. They are an evergreen. They give to the busy public worker or student, in a compact form, an idea of the status of the Princes of whom there are nearly six hundred. The chief merit of the pamphlet is that it contains nothing but what is taken from authentic records. The existence of this gigantic autocracy is the greatest dis-proof of British democracy and is a credit neither to the Princes nor to the unhappy people who have to live under this undiluted autocracy. It is no credit to the Princes that they allow themselves powers which no human being, conscious of his dignity, should possess. It is no credit to the people who have mutely suffered the loss of elementary human freedom. And it is perhaps the greatest blot on British rule in India. But we are too near the event to realize the falsity called "Princes' India" or "Indian India". The system will break under its own intolerable weight. My humble non-violent effort is to induce all the three parties to wash the triple sin. Even one of them can take the decisive step and it will affect all. But it will be glorious if the three together realize the enormity of the sin and by a combined effort wash it.

M. K. GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, February 23, 1941

Status of Indian Princes

145. ADVICE TO CALCUTTA SATYAGRAHIS[1]

[On or before *February 24, 1941*][2]

It would not be wrong if non-arrested satyagrahis tour the whole district for a month or two and then proceed to Delhi. Some may tour in the district and some may go to Delhi.

Referring to illiterate Harijan satyagrahis, Mahatma Gandhi says that if they do not march to Delhi or return after going half-way, they should do constructive work and may also learn reading and writing.

Mahatma Gandhi does not approve of the idea of batches of two, three or four satyagrahis proceeding to Delhi but wants everyone to go singly.

Answering another question, Mahatma Gandhi says that those not proceeding to Delhi should offer satyagraha in their provinces.

To another query, "When people are told not to give food to satyagrahis, what should they do?", Mahatma Gandhi replied that they should buy food if they have money or starve or proceed further; no hard and fast rule can be laid down.

The Hindu, 26-2-1941

146. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

February 24, 1941

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Those who have observed fast on *Shivaratri*[3] night, should remember Siva and decide to become more pure and restrained.

Make this clear to all the children.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1456. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

[1] Gandhiji was "replying to satyagrahis from Calcutta, who sought his advice regarding their marching to Delhi". The report appeared under the date-line "Wardhaganj, February 24".

[2] *ibid*

[3] The fourteenth night of the dark fortnight in *Magha* (January-February). In 1941, it was on February 24.

147. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
February 25, 1941

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got Sushila's beautiful letter. The description of the tour was good. I hope the collection also was good.

Here, at present, I am busy with the affairs of the struggle. By God's grace, I keep good health.

CHI. SITA[1],

I got your letter. Your English is still weak. But it will improve gradually. The handwriting is not bad. Do no forget Gujarati.

Taribehn's health has improved. She is in Delhi and will stay there for the present. I have forwarded your letters to her.

Manu is all right. Nanabhai[2] is thinking of settling down somewhere in Surat.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4920

148. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

February 25, 1941

CHI. VIJAYA,

You do not write. How then do you expect me to write? Mahadevbhai will write to you about Manubhai. I am very glad that Nanabhai reads the *Bhagavata* regularly. I will procure the book about the marriage ceremony and send it to you. Shastriji had a copy of the very same book published by Kaka. Annapoorna has not yet come here. Shastriji is again suffering these days. I am going to

[1] Daughter of Manilal Gandhi
[2] Nanabhai Ichchharam Mashruwala, Sushila Gandhi's father

Allahabad tomorrow to open the Kamala [Nehru] Hospital. We shall return on Sunday.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. VIJAYABEHN

DAKSHINAMURTI GRAMBHAVAN

AMBLA, *via* SONGARH, KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7137. Also C.W. 4629. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

149. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM,
February 26, 1941

CHI. MIRA,

I was more than pleased with what I saw yesterday. You may take the silence. I understand its value.[1] I shall inform Ashadevi.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6472. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9867

150. NOTE TO PREMABEHN KANTAK[2]

[Before *February 26, 1941*][3]

Tell Lilavatibehn[4] that she has to think of women as a class and not of herself. The rule should not be broken for the sake of a Congressman; nor should a woman be made a party to such breach. It is harmful for the woman too. But when it is the turn of a Christian,

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Mirabehn", 12-2-1941

[2] Lilavati Munshi who wanted to contest for the Mayorship of Bombay to put an end to the convention of elections by communal rotation.

[3] *ibid*

[4] The addressee was sentenced in the last week of November 1940 for three months' imprisonment. On her release, she went to Sevagram and asked Gandhiji several questions regarding women prisoners. Gandhiji wrote down the reply so that she could carry it with her during her second term of imprisonment, and in order that the women prisoners would not doubt its authenticity. Gandhiji left Sevagram on February 26.

a woman from that community should be given the chance, just as a Hindu woman or a Muslim woman should be chosen when it is the turn of that community.

Women satyagrahis who are weak and diseased should not go to jail again. Moreover no woman can go to jail with her child.

It is better if 'A' and 'B' class prisoners avail less and less of their special privileges. In fact our ideal is not to enjoy any additional facilities other than those enjoyed by 'C' class prisoners.

The purpose behind payment of fine is only to remove the fear of fine as we have already overcome the fear of jail. It does not mean that fine should be paid by borrowing money. But we should not lose valuable things for a negligible price.

We have to presume that the struggle will be a prolonged one. Talks of compromise only betray our weakness. Rest assured, ultimate victory is ours.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10417. Also C.W. 6856. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

151. ADVICE TO SIND ASSEMBLY CONGRESS PARTY

[Before *February 27, 1941*][1]

The Azad Arrangement[2] should be adhered to, failing which the Congress members of the Assembly should help in dethroning the present Ministry[3] and support Khan Bahadur Allah Baksh, in forming a new Ministry.[4]

It is understood that Mahatma Gandhi had earlier expressed the opinion that in case the Azad Pact was broken, the Congress members should resign and come out of the Assembly, but on a reference being made to him whether he was still of the same opinion, Mahatma Gandhi expressed the above view, having learned in the meanwhile Maulana Azad's mind in the matter.

The Hindu, 1-3-1941

[1] The advice was reported under the date-line "Karachi, February 27"

[2] According *to The Indian Annual Register*, 1941, Vol. I, p. 255, the "Arrangement" was that "Khan Bahadur Allah Baksh and Sir Ghulam Hussain should be brought in . . . and an all-Party Government should be formed".

[3] With Bunde Ali Khan as Premier

[4] Allah Baksh formed the new Ministry on March 7.

152. SPEECH AT OPENING OF KAMALA NEHRU HOSPITAL, ALLAHABAD

February 28, 1941

Mahatma Gandhi, while expressing his delight at the completion of a great project[1] which was the fulfilment of the last wish of the late Mrs. Kamala Nehru, pointed out that the Kamala Nehru Hospital was one of the first of its kind from the point of view of architectural beauty, and the comforts provided for the patients might attract even maharanis. He, however, hoped that those responsible for running the day-to-day administration of the institution would not forget that the hospital was primarily intended for the poor whose interests should not be neglected, and service to the poor patients should be the motto of those in charge of the administration.

The Leader, 1-3-1941

153. A FOREWORD

[ALLAHABAD,
March 1, 1941][2]

I like Anand Hingorani's idea of collecting my writings under suitable heads. The reader will not fail to appreciate the labour he has given to securing attractive printing and binding.

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India, and Anand T. Hingorani

154. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

March 1, 1941

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. My going there will serve no purpose and may even be harmful. Harmful because, if my visit results in failure, it may add to our disappointment. As it is, my meeting with Qaid-e-Azam appears to be an impossibility. But I have encouraged Rajaji to

[1] Its foundation-stone was laid by Gandhiji on November 19, 1939; *vide* "Speech at Kamala Nehru Memorial Hospital Allahabad", 19-11-1939

[2] *Vide* footnote 1, "Letter to Aand T. Hingorani", 14-2-1941

a great extent. He will of course try. We shall see what the result is. I think an agreement is not likely. We should do what we can without it. Inaction on our part in the hope of an agreement may result in serious harm. I am of the opinion that fruitful efforts can be made outside an agreement.

I hear your experiment is progressing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8052. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

155. SPEECH TO UNITED PROVINCES STUDENTS' FEDERATION[1] ALLAHABAD

March 1, 1941

The students cannot offer satyagraha unless they are ready to suspend their studies during the period of the Movement.

Mahatma Gandhi added that those who could not go to that length might do constructive work, specially the promotion of khadi and communal unity. It was undesirable that communal virus should infect the brains of the students.

Gandhiji also emphasised the need for discipline, which was necessary in any organization. Even violence, he remarked, needed discipline as was obvious from the example of Hitler.

Regarding the strikes, Gandhiji reiterated his previous statements[2] and warned the students against entering into party politics prematurely. He urged that the students should keep an open mind and study ideologies. He stressed that the students could play an important part in bringing about communal unity.

The Leader, 2-3-1941

[1] About 19 members of the Working Committee of the Federation met Gandhiji at Anand Bhavan in the morning; Ram Naresh Shukla, Balram Srivastava, Siddiq Ahmad, Hit Narain Singh and Madan Mohan Prasad were among them. The report said: "Mr. T. K. Chaturvedi, Convenor of the U.P. Students' Federation of the rival group, submitted today to Mr. Mahadev Desai for Mahatma Gandhi a memorandum deploring the present 'unfortunate split' in the Students' Federation, and repudiating the allegation that his group was opposed to the present national struggle and requesting Mahatma Gandhi to help them in bringing about unity amongst the students by blessing the plan of 'democratic elections' suggested in the memorandum."

[2] *Vide* "Message to Students", 14-11-1940, "Satement to the Press", 29-11-1940 and "Fragment of Letter to M. L. Shah", 26-1-1941

156. LETTER TO SHANTI SWARUP

ON THE TRAIN,
March 2, 1941

BHAI SHANTI SWARUP,

I have your letter. Your argument is absolutely correct, and it should be acceptable to your relatives.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 567

157. LETTER TO ABDUL QAIYUM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 3, 1941

DEAR ABDUL QAIYUM,

It is good you have written to me. I was firmly of opinion that the report[1] should be published. But somehow or other it was not. I do not know that it will be wise now to publish it. But I shall consult Rajen Babu and Prof. Kripalani as also Sarojini Devi and see what should be done.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 1010. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The addressee, Member, Indian Legislative Assembly, from North-West Frontier Province, in his letter dated February 26, had said: "In December 1939, I was ordered by Babu Rajendra Prasad, the then Congress President, and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to proceed to Sind to hold an enquiry into the Sukkur communal riots and the Manzilgah dispute.... I gave my finding about the causes of the riot, and suggested the means of restoring communal harmony in that unfortunate province. As regards the Manzilgah, my finding was that it was a mosque, that it was undesirable to have a tribunal, that it should be restored to the Muslims who on their part should take their Hindu brethren back to the villages and should inspire confidence in them.... No doubt, in my report I have criticized our own organization in Sind with a view to reform it and make it more acceptable to the people.... Now that the judicial enquiry is also over and the Manzilgah has been restored by the Government to the Muslims, there is absolutely no justification for not publishing my report any longer. Let the people know what the findings of the Congress report are."

158. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

March 3, 1941

CHI. KUSUM,

How foolish you are! You are seriously ill and have not even informed me. You are still not well. Send your name[1] only when you are able to walk five miles daily without getting tired. Meanwhile do whatever service you can and get well. It will be better if you come over here and get yourself examined. Of course Mahadevbhai is always there. He has gone to Delhi today. Pyarelal will be released on the 6th.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KUSUMBEHN DESAI

MEHTA POLE, BARODA

From the Gujarati original: Kusumbehn Desai Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya

159. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 3, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I want Manubehn's account.[2] Expenses [incurred during her illness] have to be taken from her.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

What have you done about the rules[3]?

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4374

[1] For offering satyagraha.

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Manubehn S. Mashruwala", 11-2-1941

[3] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Krishnachandra", 13-2-1941

160. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO KRISHNABAI PANAJIKAR[1]

[Before *March 4, 1941*][2]

I can assure you that if you will give all your time to touring and to seeing that the best quality of people are coming in as satyagrahis, you will have done more work for the movement than you would do by going to jail. I would, therefore, ask you to be patient.

The Hindu, 6-3-1941

161. LETTER TO FAREED ANSARI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 4, 1941

MY DEAR FAREED[3],

I was very glad to hear from you. I was unable to overtake your letter earlier. It was received when Kamala Memorial absorbed me exclusively.

Your speed is not bad. You must have gone up to 300 rounds per hour. Please congratulate Asaf Ali and Deshbandhu on their spinning.

I can well understand Brijkrishna taking the *Gita* class. I wish all of you will learn the two scripts—Urdu and Devanagari. It is a sad thing that Hindi and Urdu are going away from each other. It was not thus always. I wish you will all take common action in the direction.

I have not heard from Zohra[4] for a long time now.

I had a letter from Satyavati sometime ago. She threatens to come here but never succeeds.

In spite of the heat I seem to be keeping well.

Love to you all.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10372

[1] The Addressee, Acting President of the Karnataka Provincial Congress Committee, had sought Gandhiji's permission for offering satyagraha. The report appeared under the date-line "Hospet, March 4."

[2] *ibid*

[3] Dr. M. A. Ansari's nephew

[4] Daughter of Dr. M.A. Ansari.

162. INTERVIEW TO SANKARAN[1]

WARDHAGANJ,
March 4, 1941

Door-to-door anti-war propaganda by Congress satyagrahis has been permitted by Mahatma Gandhi, provided the residents do not object. He added that this form of satyagraha would be resorted to from next week.

Mr. Sankaran said that Mahatma Gandhi approved another list of 1,607 Congressmen for offering satyagraha. He said that 140 satyagrahis from the South including five ladies, are now marching towards Delhi. Mahatma Gandhi has insisted that satyagrahis from the South should learn Hindi if they are to march towards Delhi.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-3-1941

163. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
March 5, 1941

CHI. NARANDAS,

I liked your letter very much. Your ideal is fine indeed; but Kanaiyo will not be able to reach it. His mind was firm before Abha came into the picture. People have noticed that since then he has been unconsciously letting himself be drawn towards her. When I asked him, he felt that it was true. We can put off the engagement for the present, but that would only be like deceiving the people. The condition of Kanaiyo's mind, so far as I can see, is as follows: 'If I marry, it will be Abha, and if I cannot get Abha, I would prefer to remain unmarried.' My view is that Abha should wait for three or four years. Abha is of course growing fast. Even after my death, he will marry nobody but Abha. He is not of such an unsteady mind that he may change it any time. Besides, Abha seems to me to be a noble type of girl. Though she is not highly educated, she is lively. She understands Gujarati even today. She always talks with Ba in that language. If both of them stay there, she will not spare herself in service. She would willingly serve anybody she is asked to serve. I shared your keen desire, but Kanaiyo does not have the strength to

[1] The interviewer was the Secretary of Tamil Nadu Provincial Congress Committee.

fulfil it. I now wish that both of you or Jamna[1] alone may come here and see Abha and meet her father. If Kanaiyo must marry, then from our point of view Abha is the chosen one. She possesses the ideals we look for.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

164. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

SEVAGRAM,
March 6, 1941

I must warn the public against journalistic flights of imagination. No importance need be attached to my visits to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and there meeting quite accidentally Kunver Sir Jagdishprasad, then Pandit Malaviyaji and the morning following Shri Vijayalakshmi Pandit and finally Maulana Saheb Abul Kalam Azad. They were all of them friendly visits wholly unarranged when I left Sevagram for Allahabad. I had gone for one mission and that alone. What little other work I did was purely accidental. I refer to my meeting some students and Garhwali workers. Sir Tej Bahadur I went to see because he was ailing. We are old friends. He was to have come to see me but when I heard that he was ill I insisted on going to him. No doubt, we talked about the political situation and even more about the Hindu-Muslim problem. Sir Jagdish who dropped in and who was to dine at Sir Tej Bahadur's joined the conversation. But not the slightest political importance attaches to these conversations. We talked as individuals and not with regard to any mission. Sir Tej Bahadur is anxious (who is not?) to end the present deadlock. He would give anything to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity. He ascribes to me overmuch capacity for bringing about unity. Sir Jagdish is no less anxious. But the talks were no more than a friendly interchange of views. As to the visits to Malaviyaji Maharaj, the same thing happened. He has aged. He ought not to talk about current events. He is too weak. But the country's affairs are his daily food. He will cease to think about them when he ceases to read and think of the *Bhagvata*

[1] Addressee's wife
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Amrita Lal Chatterjee", 15-1-1941

and the *Gita.* These things are the breath of his life and they will stop with the stoppage of his last breath. Who knows but that he will take them where the disembodied spirit goes. It was a privilege to meet these friends but our talks have no bearing on the political situation in the country. And there could be none in the purely prison visits to the Maulana and Shri Vijayalakshmi Pandit.

I know that the imaginary descriptions of such visits and the eagerness with which the public devour them show their desire for communal unity and a solution of the political deadlock. But mere desire will take us no nearer its fulfilment. For fulfilment can only come through common action on the part of those who share the desire. All are searching for common action. Speculation interferes with the search. So far as the Congress is concerned, its policy and action based thereon are well known. It is gross misrepresentation to suggest that the Congress is out for securing terms for itself. Freedom of speech is for all even as independence will be for all. The contents of the latter will be decided not by the Congress but by the vote of all. And if it is to be achieved non-violently it follows that the mere vote of the majority will have little play. The charter of independence must be the product of the willing consent of the minorities and other relevant interests which are not in conflict with the interests of the vast mass of Indian humanity.

Be this as it may, in order that all the units may have full freedom of expression even against the war itself, the Congress has embarked upon civil disobedience. That is the contribution of the Congress to the fulfilment of the common desire. As an effort in direct action it must hold the field till a better is found.

Strong objection has been raised against my interpretation of the Bombay resolution. I regard it as a true interpretation. But it is that of an individual. I have no authority from the Congress to interpret or vary the Congress resolutions. That is essentially the function of the President, the Working Committee and finally the A.I.C.C. The. only authority I have is to conduct the campaign of civil disobedience. But when the time for settlement comes it will be for the Working Committee to decide what the terms shall be. My contribution will be confined to advising the Committee. The Working Committee may reject the interpretation I have given. It or the A.I.C.C, may even alter the resolutions they have passed. Meanwhile let everyone whether Congressmen or others be guided by the Bombay resolution and not

by my interpretation. I have, therefore, failed to understand the consternation created by my statement[1] that there can be no settlement short of independence during the pendency of the war.

Congress Bulletin, No. 6,1942. File No. 3/42/41-Poll. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India.

165. LETTER TO SHERWOOD EDDY

SEVAGRAM,
March 6, 1941

DEAR DR. EDDY,

1 thank you for your kind letter. It would be well if you make a general statement[2].

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHERWOOD EDDY
52 VANDER BILL AVENUE
N. Y. CITY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

166. LETTER TO SUSAI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 6, 1941

DEAR DR. SUSAI,

Your case is hard. But the remedy is in your hands. If the Church is as bad as Hinduism, and if you have no conscientious scruples, you should revert to your original faith. If you do not, surely you should suffer the fate of reformers and purge the Catholic Church of the blot.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5739

[1] *Vide* "Letter to *The Times of India",* 10-2-1941

[2] The addressee misquoted Gandhiji in his book *I Saw God Do It,* saying that in answer to one of his questions Gandhiji expressed belief in favour of armed defence and that too with the help of America or some neutral army. Gandhiji expressed denial of the answer in *Harijan,* 28-7-1940 *(vide* "Impossible"), and suggested to the addressee to have the mistake rectified.

167. LETTER TO ISWAR SARAN

March 6,1941

DEAR MUNSHIJI,

Your letter. It was not trouble but joy to visit the Ashram which you have built up with patient effort. I should repeat the visit whenever possible. Your institution is worthy of full public support. May you live long to serve this essential cause of humanity.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI MUNSHI ISWAR SARAN

HARIJAN ASHRAM

ALLAHABAD

From a copy: C.W. 10289. Courtesy: Allahabad Municipal Museum

168. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL MAJMUDAR

March 6, 1941

BHAI PRAIKSHITILAL,

You have done nothing wrong in issuing the statement. Ambalalbhai has told me, though, that as long as Sardar is in jail, he will shoulder the responsibility. Please do not make public use of this fact. And let not his [willingness to do so] slacken our effort. On the contrary, we should intensify it. Collecting a pice each from the common people would be more befitting and yield fine results.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3967. Also C.W. 151. Courtesy: Parikshitlal Majmudar

169. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,

March 6, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I consider this a serious mistake. Regarding your honesty, have no doubt; but carelessness is a great defect. In accounts there should

not be a mistake even of a pie. A pie entered more or less in accounts can result in a mistake of a thousand, and it has happened before. Accounts should be written daily. Not only this, every item should be entered then and there, as is done in banks.

It is not good that you have given up [writing the accounts] What Chimanlal said was correct, but by asking his pardon you should have kept the work to yourself. This can be done even now if you wish. The atonement for this is that whatever the deficit make it up by getting the money from home. Clearly specify the reason for doing so.

There is no cause for shame. By accepting the fault publicly, your burden will be lightened, and others too will learn a lesson.

Ask anything more if you wish to.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4375

170. LETTER TO T. B. SAPRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 7, 1941

DEAR SIR TEJ BAHADUR,

I hope you have kept free of fever. If you propose to invite Qaid-e-Azam and me, I shall of course present myself.[1] But I would urge you to think fifty times before issuing these invitations. Failure would be bad. And what I fear is that the time for communal settlement has not come. But you need not mind my caution, if you feel otherwise.[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 7579. Also C.W. 10291. Courtesy: National Library

[1] In his letter (C.W. 10290) dated March 2, the addressee had asked Gandhiji: "Supposing some of us, who are meeting in Bombay on March 13, decide to invite you and Mr. Jinnah and just a few other leaders at a conference to be held later on some suitable date and at a convenient place to talk over matters of difference, how will you view it?"

[2] In his reply (C.W. 10292) dated March 10, the addressee said: "You may be sure that I am in no hurry to invite you and Mr. Jinnah to a conference and shall never do so without first consulting you."

171. LETTER TO CHAMANLAL

SEVAGRAM,
March 7, 1941

DEAR CHAMANLAL,

I must look at your book[1] and send you something.

Yes, I would like you for the present to concentrate on Harijan work. Offer your services to Mohanlal of Lalaji's Society. He is in charge of that work on behalf of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. No one works separately in my name. Put yourself also in touch with Shri Rameshwari Nehru whom you must know. Later on, if all is well you will offer civil disobedience, if required. You should spin regularly, make your own slivers and learn the science of the charkha.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

172. LETTER TO LAKSHMI SATYAMURTI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 7, 1941

DEAR LAKSHMI,

Tell father he had no business to fall ill as he has done. He must learn to avoid anxiety and he will sleep well[2].

Love.

BAPU

From the original: S. Satyamurti Papers. Courtesy: Neheru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Hindu America?* The addressee had requested Gandhiji for a short message for its new edition. *Vide* also "Letter to Chamanlal", 22-3-1941.

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Prembehn Kantak", 12-7-1940

173. ADVICE TO SYED MAHMUD[1]

[Before *March 8, 1941*][2]

An ailing satyagrahi is a liability for the Government. In jail, he indirectly embarrasses the authorities and as such it is against the spirit of the present satyagraha movement.

While not permitting him to offer satyagraha, Mahatma Gandhi is understood to have asked Dr. Mahmud to come to Wardha for recouping his health.

The Hindu, 10-3-1941

174. CABLE TO AGATHA HARRISON[3]

WARDHAGANJ,
March 8, 1941

AGATHA HARRISON
2 CRANBOURNE COURT
ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD, LONDON

STRUGGLE PROCEEDING STEADILY BUT VERY GENTLY. GOVERNMENT STATEMENT PALPABLY MISLEADING INDEED FALSE.[4] BUT HAVE NOT LOST HOPE OF NON-VIOLENCE BEING EFFECTIVE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1518. Also File No. 3/33/40-Poll. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] The addressee, who had been ailing for some time, had sought Gandhiji's permission to court arrest in the second week of March . The report appeared under the date-line "Patna, March 8".

[2] *ibid*

[3] This was in reply to the addressee's cable dated March 6, which read: "Your words in 'Andrews Legacy' are ever before me as I know they are before you. Would welcome informative cable." For the note referred to, *vide* "Notes", sub-title "Andrews' Legacy"

[4] This sentence was scored out by the censor.

175. LETTER TO GURBAX SINGH SANT[1]

SEVAGRAM,
March 8, 1941

DEAR DR. SANT,

All things considered you should adhere to the decision to offer civil disobedience.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

176. NOTE TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH[2]

March 8, 1941

Yes, do put Keshav on his own job, but give him whatever help he may need.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8511. Also C.W. 7126. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

177. LETTER TO KOTWAL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 8, 1941

BHAI KOTWAL,

1. The better course would be for you to offer satyagraha in your district.

2. On the way to Delhi, in the territories of Indian States, you should not shout any slogans about the war but should do propaganda for constructive activities as you go along. You cannot travel by train.

3. There is no need to send any statement to the authorities It is

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter dated March 5, in which he had asked Gandhiji's opinion as to whether he should offer civil disobedience or do constructive work.

[2] This was in reply to the addressee's letter which sought Gandhiji's advice on giving the management of the Ashram kitchen to Keshav.

enough that you have sent it once.

4. If the residents of Indian States are brought back to their own States, they may start the march again. After reaching Delhi on foot, you may ask me [what to do next]. It will be a long time before you do that, and I cannot, therefore, say anything today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3603

178. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

March 8, 1941

BHAI PRITHVI SINGH,

I have your letter. We were all waiting for it. It is good that you have peace of mind. It is true that I no longer have faith in Amrita Lal. But how can I tell you to sever relations with him because of it? Yes, if you also feel that he is not trustworthy, it is your duty to break off with him.

Yes, Mirabehn has come. She remains cheerful. She is all right but she keeps harping on the same thing.[1] She is hopeful and does not worry. She passes her time in taking the name of God and spinning. She stays alone in Balkrishna's[2] hut. She comes to see me on Wednesdays and Saturdays in the evening.[3] Rest of the time she observes silence.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR PRITHVI SINGH

P.O. BOX 360

BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10862. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

[1] She wanted to marry the addressee whereas the latter looked upon her as his sister; *vide* also "Letter to Nrisinhprasad K. Bhatt", 9-8-1940

[2] Balkrishna Bhave

[3] *Vide* " Letter to Gandhi Annamalai", 12-2-1941

179. LETTER TO NIRMALANANDA

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
March 9, 1941

DEAR BHIKSHU,

I have your letter. You should go on as you are doing. Why should anybody go to an ashram with a gold watch? However it would be good if your appeal bears fruit.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1395

180. LETTER TO ABRAHIM RAHIMTOOLA

March 9, 1941

DEAR SIR,

I was delighted to see your firm signature. I am running a close race with you but you can't be reached, I see. I shall make time to glance through your pamphlets. I hope you are keeping as fresh as your signature.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

181. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

March 9, 1941

CHI. DAHYABHAI,

If the accompanying can be sent to Sardar, send it or hand it over unsealed.

I trust your family life is all right and Babu[1] is cheerful.

[1] Bipin Dahyabhai Patel, addressee's elder son

Remember that Shantikumar and you have to collect twenty lakhs.[1] I hope for the best.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI DAHYABHAI PATEL
68 MARINE DRIVE
BOMBAY

[PS.]

If you see Manibehn, tell her that she must improve her health a lot.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 160-1

182. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

March 9, 1941

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I deliberately refrain from writing to you. Mahadev is in Delhi and I was, therefore, tempted by the sight of Dahyabhai's handwriting. Things are going well. There are bound to be a few black sheep among the good ones[2]. But they are the fewest this time. The thing is bound to be protracted, but that is in our interest. There is no room for defeat. I hope everybody there spins with a living faith. My own faith in spinning, my nature being what it is, is becoming stronger. Bharatananda's[3] little inventions make everything quite inexpensive. I keep excellent health.

Blessings to you all from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON
POONA

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 246

[1] Shantikumar Morarjee and the addressee had agreed to collect the sum for khadi production.

[2] Taking part in Individual Civil Disobedience movement.

[3] Maurice Frydman, a Polish engineer in Mysore State, who gave up his job and went to Sevagram; he was the inventor of the spinning-wheel known as *Dhanush Takli*.

183. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 9, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Amrita Lalji says whoever wants fruits and vegetables takes them away. The key is not in the custody of one particular person. How is this? Satisfy Amrita Lalji and hand over the key to him.

Give this to Chhajuramji. Arrange his bed outside the verandah in the open.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4376

184. LETTER TO RAGHUVANSH GAUR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
March 9, 1941

BHAI RAGHUVANSH[1],

Rajkumaribehn went over to you on my instructions, and conveyed only my views. The letter written to. . .[2] behn is all right. Now you should go home. Whatever can be done from here will be done. Railway fare will be given to you, which you will send back on reaching Kanpur.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 139

185. INSTRUCTIONS TO CONGRESS COMMITTEES

[Before *March 10, 1941*][3]

Mahatma Gandhi has issued instructions to the Andhra and the Tamil Nadu Provincial Congress Committees not to bring persons from districts for the purpose of offering satyagraha in the city of Madras. He has also instructed that the

[1] Of Old Instructional Farm, Nawalganj, Kanpur
[2] Two words are mutilated in the source.
[3] The report appeared under the date-line "Madras, March 10".

house-to-house satyagraha should in no way take the form of picketing and that satyagrahis should not enter houses where they would be unwelcome.[1]

The Hindustan Times, 11-3-1941

186. LETTER TO SACHINDRA NATH MITRA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 10, 1941

DEAR SHRI S. N. MITRA

Your letter to Gandhiji has come. He is unable to attend to much correspondence these days. If you have read *Harijan* carefully, you would have known his views on the militarization of India or indeed any country. A satyagrahi who believes in out-and-out non-violence can never stand for militarization of India under any circumstances. But such are few and far between. The majority believe in non-violence for achieving our independence but cannot get as far as condemning war weapons and machinery for defence from external aggression. This, as you rightly say, requires boundless faith in non-violence as a living creed and the only way to save the world from destruction.

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

SHRI SACHINDRA NATH MITRA
5/2 KANTAPUKUR LANE
BAGHABAZAR
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 7184

187. INTERVIEW T0 KANNAMWAR[2]

WARDHA,
[Before *March 11, 1941*][3]

If any employee of a local body desires to offer satyagraha, he must resign his post first.

Mahatma Gandhi appears to have argued that an employee of a local body, who

[1] *Vide* also "Interview to Sankaran", 4-3-1941
[2] Secretary, Provincial Congress Committee; the interview was reported under the date-line "Nagpur, March 11".
[3] *ibid*

wishes to offer satyagraha, could not look for support to the employing local body.

He should come in the field with clean hands, keeping full confidence in God.

Mahatma Gandhi added that a local body with a Congress majority should not resist the policy of the Government of withholding grant to that body if its employees were participating in the satyagraha movement.

The Hindu, 13-3-1941

188. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 12, 1941

BHAI PRITHVI SINGH,

I have your letter. You need not feel sorry for Mirabehn. She believes that she had the same relationship with you in a previous birth and it will be the same in future also. That you have forgotten it in this birth is a matter both for sorrow and joy for her. Mirabehn has made this a spiritual thing and is doing *tapasya*. She reads Puranas and such other books and spins for hours daily. She spins at least 1,800 rounds and remains cheerful.[1]

I have had a very bitter experience of Bhai Amrita Lal. But since your experience is contrary to mine, I do not wish to say anything. Follow the dictates of your heart.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10863. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

189. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 14, 1941

MY DEAR AMRIT,

These partings must come.[2] They must be cheerfully borne.

Your *gadi* is occupied by K[3]. Don't worry. Keep your times

[1] *Vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Prithvi Singh", 8-3-1941
[2] The addressee had left for Delhi.
[3] Bharatan Kumarappa.

there as far as possible.

The library room is undergoing innovation.

Amtul Salaam is the same as when you left her. Sita[1] has fever.

My [blood-pressure] reading was 156/98. Heat has commenced today. I have a wet wrapper on the head.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3998. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7307

190. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 14, 1941

Leaving aside what I have deleted, the rest is worth taking. For the permanent residents of the Ashram the vow which I have drafted is essential, otherwise the Ashram cannot become stable.

For setting up the committee suggested in it, send immediately the list of rules after making the necessary changes.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4377

191. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 15, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

I wrote yesterday. Herewith Bh[aratan Kumarappa]'s letter.

Padmaja[2] has arrived. Have not met her yet. Gosibehn[3] goes today. Pyarelal came in last night. He has gone to Nagpur for his teeth. Mahadev Desai is still between Bombay and Poona. My blood-pressure: 156/90. All well otherwise. Sita out of fever today. Sharma leaves tomorrow. Amtul Salaam still on fast-diet. Shastri shows distinct progress.

I hope you are having good time. You were to have wired but there is none yet. *Ashirvad*[4] to Nandan[5] and Raksha[6].

BAPU

[1] Wife of Bharatan Kumarappa
[2] Padmaja Naidu, daughter of Sarojini Naidu
[3] Gosibehn Captain, grand-daughter of Dadabhai Naoroji
[4] Blessings
[5] Raghunandan Saran and his wife
[6] *ibid*

[PS.]

Your wire has come. Thank God.

From the original: C.W. 3999. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7308

192. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 15, 1941

CHI. KANCHAN,

Tari is of course lazy, but aren't you also like her? Why is there no letter of acknowledgement from you? How is Tari? What about your diet? How are you? Do you cook everything yourself? Help as much as you can in the Ashram. You can even take your meals in the Ashram kitchen. Take part in the prayers, etc. Teach them to make bread. How are you keeping there? Ask Tari to write to me, I am all right. It seems Shastriji's wounds are healing up. Mahadev has gone to Bombay. I still give Amtul Salaam only *bhaji* soup. She does take honey, of course. Munnalal is fine.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8275. Also C.W. 7127. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

193. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
March 15, 1941

CHI. PRABHA,

I was waiting for your letter. You have become lazy and then you ask for pardon. You should have immediately dropped a postcard. Jayaprakash is right in saying that just now you will be able to come only for a few days. You cannot of course cure his illness. Can you see him every day? When do they bring him to the hospital? How are the conditions in jail? Rajkumari has gone to Delhi. Mahadev is either in Bombay or in Poona. Gosibehn is here. Padmaja arrived today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati; G.N. 3555

194. LETTER TO VITHALDAS V. JERAJANI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 15, 1941

BHAI VITHALDAS,

Since the Gandhi Seva Sena is certified by the A.I.S.A., shouldn't the latter have a place in the *Khadi Patrika?*

Shri Gosibehn desires to work among Muslim women. She will work chiefly through khadi. Please, therefore, guide and help her.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9798

195. FOREWORD TO "THE PARTING OF THE WAYS"[1]

The Parting of the Ways should have appeared when it was finished, i.e., immediately after August 10. By some mischance it has escaped publication till now. It has just come into my possession. I understand that some portions of the article have already appeared in *Asia.* I think it is too precious a document to be withheld from the public. I have shown it to Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Acharya Kripalani who are in Wardha. They agree with me that it should be published on behalf of the A.I.C.C. I know that Sarojini Devi, if she was here, would also agree.

I believe that it correctly represents in moderate, though forcible language, the Congress position.

The passages quoted above[2] are key paragraphs. The first extract shows what might have been. The second declares the author's love for the British people. The third shows in the fewest possible words how the British Government in India is sustained by coercion pure and simple. The fourth paragraph shows that the independence India wants is neither exclusive nor antagonistic to any nation.

[1] Written by Jawaharlal Nehru, this article dated August 10, 1940, was published by the A.I.C.C. on March 18, 1941.

[2] *Vide* "Extracts from "Parting of the ways".

Though the author has said not one word about non-violence, he has led the reader to the inevitable conclusion that the independence of Jawaharlal's conception, nay, Congress conception cannot be won except through unadulterated non-violence, and the present struggle is an attempt to keep the spirit of non-violence alive in the midst of the fratricidal inhuman carnage. If it is a contribution to India's freedom it is no less contribution to world peace.

M. K. GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, March 16, 1941

The Parting of the Ways

196. LETTER TO SACHINDRA NATH MITRA

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
March 16, 1941

DEAR FRIEND,

Rajkumari is away. Digest my writings still further and if doubt still haunts you, write to me after two months.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 7185

197. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 16, 1941

CHI. MRIDULA,

I have read your statement about Vikasgriha[2]. Pushpabehn[3] and you seem to be working hard and devoting yourselves to public service. You, therefore, desire to serve both men and women. Your institution is a valuable shelter for poor girls. You have the strength for such a tough job. May God increase it. The obstacles created by elders are a painful thing. But it is good that all are not of that type. If some of them obstruct your work, there are others who help you. You

[1] *Vide* also letter to the addressee, "Interview to Kannamwar:, 11-3-1941
[2] Founded in 1937 at Ahmedabad
[3] Pushpabehn Mehta, a social worker

must, of course, take the necessary legal steps. But the best remedy for the goondaism that you see is a vigilant public opinion. In order to cultivate it you should give publicity to incidents of that type.

Your scheme for a building for the Vikasgriha is a good one. Of course, the utmost simplicity will have to be observed. The building and style of living [of the inmates] should be such as will befit a poor country like India. You certainly deserve financial help for this building project. I hope you will get it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Gujarati: Report of Vikasgriha

198. INSTRUCTIONS TO SATYAGRAHIS[1]

[Before *March 17, 1941*]

Don't bring persons from villages into towns for offering satyagraha.

Satyagrahis, if not arrested, may do house-to-house propaganda but it should not take the form of picketing. Satyagrahis should not enter the houses where they are not welcome.

Persons serving in local bodies should resign from the services before offering satyagraha.

When a Congress Committee is suspended, its work should be entrusted to an approved satyagrahi.

Lady satyagrahis, if unable to march to Delhi, may tour in their own districts and province.

Satyagrahis marching to Delhi should obtain a working knowledge of Hindustani.

Satyagrahis charged under the Nuisance Act may not offer any defence. They may make it clear that their sole intention was to carry on anti-war propaganda, and plead not guilty to the nuisance charge.

Harijan Congress workers should devote themselves to constructive work.

Satyagrahi prisoners may refuse food only if it is unwholesome and uneatable.

Satyagrahis who are let off with fines should continue the satyagraha without giving a fresh notice.

Satyagrahis able to pay the fine may not evade payment, but are not bound to

[1] Issued by A.I.C.C. as "instructions given by Mahatma Gandhi for the guidance of satyagrahis"

sell their property to pay it.

For the facility and convenience of village folk, non-arrested satyagrahis should be provided with a certificate or a badge on the authority of the Provincial Congress Committee, testifying to his being an approved satyagrahi. The badge may differ from province to province.

Satyagraha may not be offered in a place where Section 144 is in force.

Fetters and handcuffs, etc., should be borne cheerfully when being transferred from one jail to another.

Non-arrested satyagrahis marching to Delhi should, besides raising anti-war slogans and otherwise carrying on anti-war propaganda, propagate the constructive programme of the Congress. It must be explained to the masses that the best and most effective as also the easiest way in which they can help forward the struggle is by carrying out the constructive programme laid before the country by our leader.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-3-1941

199. ABSTRACT OF LETTER TO M. FAROOQUI[1]

[Before *March 17, 1941*][2]

The view that there should be no dissensions among students is expressed by Mahatma Gandhi. . . .

Mahatma Gandhi, in reply, has now suggested the acceptance of the proposal[33] that all disputes be referred to an impartial tribunal acceptable to both parties on whom its findings should be binding.

The Hindu, 19-3-1941

200. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 17, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

Here are some enclosures. Do send your voting paper before the

[1]The report said: "This proposal for a tribunal was first put forward by Prof. Kalelkar, who was of the view that it should examine all matters under dispute including primary membership of both bodies and then order fresh elections in provinces where such a course was deemed necessary."

[2] *ibid*

[3] The addressee, General Secretary, All-India Students' Federation, "had informed Gandhiji of the developments in the controversy that followed among students, organizations after the recent conference at Nagpur when a split occurred". The letter was reported under the date-line "New Delhi, March 17".

due date. I won't guide you in your selection. Vote as you like.

I sent nothing yesterday.

Pyarelal offers civil disobedience tomorrow.

Mahadev returns not before Thursday. Probably *Harijan* will be out on 29th.[1] Shastri is getting on. Heat continues.

Blood-pressure is under control; not taken at the time of writing.

Your umbrella is being used.

Prabhavati came in yesterday. She goes back to Jayaprakash tomorrow, if I am ready for her.[2]

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Later your two letters have come in. I am writing[3] to Mridula. Can't tell off-hand what to do. B. P. 138/90.

From the original: C.W. 3670. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6479

201. APPEAL FOR C. F. ANDREWS MEMORIAL FUNDS

WARDHAGANJ,
March 18, 1941

The handsome public response to the Kamala Nehru Memorial Hospital[4], though late, yet not too late, prompts this appeal. Even as I had made that collection my special duty because of the promise made by me to Kamala when she went to Europe, as it turned out, to meet death, so is incumbent on me the duty of collection for the Andrews Memorial. I might have failed in collecting for the Kamala Memorial but for the tireless labours of Dr. Jivraj Mehta. I have no counterpart to Dr. Jivraj Mehta for the Andrews Memorial collection.

The first anniversary of Deenabandhu's death will be soon upon us. I am too weak and too occupied to travel about for collections. What is, however, tantalizing is the fact that the collections have not been coming promptly and spontaneously. Charlie Andrews was

[1] *Vide* "Mahadev Desai's Letter to Desmond Young", 22-3-1941

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Prabhavati", 15-3-1941

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Mridula Sarabhai", 16-3-1941

[4] Opened by Gandhiji at Allahabad on February 28; *vide* "Speech at Opening of Kamala Nehru Hospital, Allahabad", 28-2-1941

everybody's friend in need. He made no distinction between the high and the poor or Christians and non-Christians or Englishmen and others. He ungrudgingly assisted all who were in need of his help. He slaved night and day for humanity. He found his home and self-expression in Santiniketan. Dr. Rabindranath Tagore was his guru and friend. He was the chief collector of funds for Santiniketan. No more fitting memorial could, therefore, be conceived than that his home should never be in want and that it should have additional funds for expansion. Indeed the Gurudev himself should command all the monetary help he needs. He has brought lustre to India. Many men have derived signal assistance from him and his institution. Their children are receiving instruction in Santiniketan. His art decorates many an Indian home. His poetry, his novels, plays and his art enrich the minds of thousands of boys and girls, men and women.

It is a problem why these two precious names have not brought forth spontaneous response. Why should there be special appeals made on behalf of a memorial which is its own compelling recommendation? A spontaneous response will delight Deenabandhu's spirit and put new life into Rabindranath Tagore. What answer have students and teachers, friends of labour and lovers of art to make? Among them they can produce the paltry Rs. 5,00,000 in a day. Will they produce the amount before the 5th April, the day on which Deenabandhu, that true friend of the poor, took sleep from which he never awoke?

The Hindu, 20-3-1941

202. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 18, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

Your two letters. Herewith copy [of] letter[1] to friend Farooqui.

Pyarelal was arrested today, judgment tomorrow.

In haste.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4000. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7309

[1] For an abstract, *vide* "Abstract of Letter t M. Farooqui", 17-3-1941

203. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

March 18, 1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I approve of your resolution. See that your health does not suffer. Make a trial. If you are not ready this time, then try again the next time. In this matter, of course, whatever you have learnt will prove useful. That you will have to strive so hard shows how weak we are.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8522. Also C.W. 7122. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

204. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO TILAK BAL MANDAL[1]

[Before *March 19, 1941*][2]

There are no personal disputes between me and Bose brothers. There is a difference of ideology and that cannot be helped.

I am as unaware of Subhas Babu's whereabouts as any man in the street.

The Bombay Chronicle, 20-3-1941

205. LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 19, 1941

DEAR SIR MIRZA[3],

I must thank you for your most affectionate letter. I have never doubted your personal affection for me, I was going to say even partiality. These are things I treasure. They please me but what I want is true co-operation, if my mission of peace and goodwill is to succeed.

[1] Dewan of Mysore

[2] *ibid*

[3] This was in reply to an appeal by the Mandal in Karachi requesting Gandhiji "to sink the differences and unite for the attainment of India's political freedom". The report appeared under the date-line "Karachi, March 19".

Since you would know what I would like, I reduce to writing my thoughts as they come to me.

I am quite clear in my mind that there is little real freedom of speech in British India, there is still less in 'Indian India' and there is no independent judiciary. Unfortunately you hold a different view. Hence there is not much prospect of co-operation. I am sure you will one day be convinced of this fundamental truth. Till then we must agree to differ. Your Chief Justice is wholly unfit for the post he holds. How can there be real justice ! I know that in British India too there have been unfit Chief and other Justices. My point is that they become worse on going to the States. I feel these things keenly because I am the only true friend among public men of the Princes. This is a high but true claim. You are about to leave. How I wish you can see truth as I feel it!

By way of palliative you can restore the *sanads* and redress the wrong done to those candidates who were rejected.[1] Such a step will be appreciated. It won't be of much use because the lawyers have turned the punishment to good account and they have become workers. The rejected candidates have reconciled themselves to the rejection. But as a gesture, if you can take the step, it will have a value.

Don't please expect Bhashyam or others to seek an interview with you but send for them as friends. Trust will beget trust. Surely the first step should be yours.

I am asking Pattabhi[2] to see you as early as he can.

I know that even in your retirement, you will be doing useful service. May you have many years before you and may you be an instrument for doing some truly big work.

Your sandal-wood box is always by my side and holds my odds and ends.

This is a personal letter. I am not copying it. I have not written it for any public use, nor do I expect a reply unless you feel like sending one. My love to all members of the family.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[1] *Vide* also "Note to K. T. Bhashyam", 1-2-1941

[2] Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya; he was member of the Standing Committee of the All-India States Peoples' Conference. He was authorized, along with Jawaharlal Nehru, to represent it before the Working Committee of the Congress.

[PS.]

Since writing this I have your letter regarding garlic for which many thanks.

From a photostat: G.N. 2182

206. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 19, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

Here is letter about Gaur. What can be done?[1]

Do you remember that little ointment-box that Radhakishen[2] brought for Janakibehn[2]? Where could it be? I think I gave it to you to put away in a place of safety. If you remember it, you may even wire or write just as you like.

Pyarelal has got six months.

Mahadev comes tomorrow.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3671. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6480

207. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 19, 1941

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I got your letter addressed to Ba. Manu's examination has lasted a long time, but it is better that she stays in the hospital till some definite treatment is decided upon. Tell Manu that she must not get

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Raghuvansh Gaur", 9-3-1941, and "Letter to Amrit Kaur".
[2] Nephew and wife of Jamnalal Bajaj
[3] Nilkanth Mashruwala
[4] Spent on Manubehn Mashruwala's treatment; *vide* "Letter to Surendra B. Mashruwala", 11-2-1941

tired of the hospital. Ba goes on worrying. I don't. I know that only in a hospital can all the facilities be available. I am happy that you are keeping well.

Here it has started getting quite hot.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Today I got Nilubhai's[3] letter. I will write to Brahmananda later. It is still not clear to me whether or no Chi. Surendra has paid the money[4] to the Ashram here.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9746. Also C.W. 726. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

208. LETTER TO GHULAM RASUL QURESHI

March 19, 1941

CHI. QURESHI,

I got your letter three days ago but failed to reply by oversight. I had taken the letter to Allahabad. I could not get a minute there. Then it was buried beneath other letters. Today on Amtul Salaam reminding me, I got it out immediately.

Compliments to you all for making good use of the time you have on hand. It should be so. Congratulations to all.

You yourself have got this valuable opportunity for clarifying your thoughts. It is but natural that people expect a lot from you.

Maulana has somehow not been able to go beyond two parts.

I am making Kishorelal responsible for the literature. He will send it.

Superficial non-violence is when a man is not killed or even attacked physically. The subtle kind is when no one is hurt in thought, word or deed and when the welfare of all mankind is at heart. In normal circumstances the idea of non-violence is limited to man only. But truly speaking there is no limit at all. It can be extended to animals and even germs. But one does not go that far nor can one do so. But non-violence is normally extended to animals. I do not talk of such non-violence in respect of the Congress. Nor can one do so. It

would not suit the Muslims. Nor would it suit Christians and countless Hindus. So the observance of subtle non-violence about which I talk is limited to man. I think it is enough if we reach that stage. Something is bound to come out of it in due time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10770. Courtesy: Ghulam Rasul Qureshi

209. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 20, 1941

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

By all means tour the Himalayas and collect medicinal herbs. Come over whenever you wish to.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy the Gujarati: C.W. 2913. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya

210. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 20, 1941

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. It is good indeed that you went. Remember, you have to come here when your work there is over. The packet to Jawaharlal is being sent by book-post. Things are all right here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3556

211. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

March 20, 1941

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I have heard from you after a long time. Aren't you with the Scindias? If not, what are you doing? Tell Harjivan[1] to take cod-liver

[1] Harjivan Kotak

oil. Let him not think it is objectionable. Let Mridula[1] cook and also study at the same time. Her education will shine all the better. Give up hopes of getting a good maid-servant. I understand about Abhechand.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

212. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
March 20, 1941

CHI. KUSUM,

I have your letter. You have walked much more with me than what you say. There is a gentleman here who is of the same age as you. He could not walk even a furlong. Now he is able to walk miles. What can I do if you are lazy? You will be allowed [to join] only after you get over your lethargy and shine in constructive work. For you that is the only rule. I saw your letter to Ba. Since I have written to you, Ba must have given up the idea of writing to you. She keeps well. I will make you all right, if you come here and get yourself treated.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Kusumbehn Desai Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya

213. APPEAL TO CONGRESS WORKERS

March 21, 1941

The National Week[2] will be soon upon us. Its observance has a double purpose: (1) to achieve self-purification through fasting on the 6th and 13th April, and (2) to increase mass consciousness by greater concentration on constructive work. The 6th of April 1919 saw exhibition of a sudden and unexpectedly high spirit of swadeshi and mass manifestation of communal unity and a determination on the

[1] Manu J. Gandhi, addressee's daughter

[2] Observed in commemoration of the total *hartal* on April 6, 1919, in protest against the Rowlatt Act (Bill No. 29, 1919) and the Jallianwala Bagh massacre on April 13 of the same year

part of Congress Hindus to get rid of the canker of untouchability from Hinduism. The spirit of swadeshi centred itself on khadi as it was the central village industry of a universal character. During the twenty years since 1919 the constructive programme has widened. The other village industries have found expression through the A.I.V.I.A.[1]. Education has been linked with the villagers through Hindustani Talimi Sangh. There has been greater concentration on impressing women in the national service and, therefore, regarding them as valued co-workers on a par with men. The widening and working of the constructive programme is the only way in which active non-violence can express itself. Civil disobedience comes, if it must, at the end of the constructive programme, never in the beginning. We saw through experience that we had to retrace our steps in 1919 as civil resistance had been resorted to without preparation through constructive service. Disobedience of laws can never be civil unless the resisters have learnt the art of voluntary obedience. This is impossible without tangible co-operative work requiring exact discipline and voluntary and whole-hearted obedience to rules and regulations.

Civil resistance is merely lawful and obligatory only in some cases, whereas constructive work is obligatory on all who belong to a non-violent organization. And civil resistance can be effective only when it is backed by constructive effort on a mass scale. Success of civil resistance can be measured by the success of constructive effort. Therefore, I hope that all Congress workers will, during the National Week from 6th to 13th April, devote their time to the constructive programme. Khadi and other village industries have always played a prominent part in the programme. For, all young and old, men and women can take part in it and the work can be measured in arithmetical terms. It is to be hoped that the response will be much greater than ever before.

Congress Bulletin, No. 6, 1942. File No. 3/42/41-Poll. (I). National Archives of India. Also *The Bombay Chronicle,* 22-3-1941

[1] All-India Village Industries Association

214. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 21, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

I missed yesterday. Your Hindi writing is perfect and composition very good. If you have as much practice there as possible, you will do well for Hindi. *Harijan* publication may be resumed on 29th.

Ramnarayan's letters I did not like. There is a desire to hide truth. I have written to him and asked him to send you my letter. I have not kept any copy.

About the Law Committee[1], I have already written to you. I am expecting a letter from Mridula.

Ba has gone to Delhi to have Sushila's treatment. Sushila wired that she would be able to give her better treatment in Delhi. Ba is very brave. She got ready in no time and she went without an escort.

I am glad you stick to the Indian style of living for the college. All unreasoning opposition will melt before your firmness.

I have got your textbook. I propose to read it. Send a copy to Sushila,

You will have seen my appeal[2] about Andrews Memorial.

I want you to collect as much as you can from all and sundry.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4001. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7310

[1] Of Lahore who took up the role of the *amicus curiae* and decided to bring before the High Court for revision, the cases of satyagrahis in which, in their opinion, obvious injustice was done. In her letter dated April 19, 1941, to Dunichand, Amrit Kaur said: "There have been some complaints regarding revisions undertaken by the *amicus curiae* Bar Association Committee in Lahore. Gandhiji's opinion is that the idea of such a Committee in itself is all right. But it should be allowed to function on its own, without any interest, instigation or interference in its work on the part of the satyagrahis. You should issue strict injunctions to the latter in this regard."

[2] *Vide* "Appeal for C. F. Andrews Memorial Funds", 18-3-1941

215. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 21, 1941

CHI. RUKMINI,

Your letter of February 24, 1941, is before me. Only today I could get time to write a couple of lines. I hope you have regained plenty of strength. The marriage must have passed off without any hitch. Today Ba has gone all by herself [to Delhi] to be treated by Dr. Sushila. She has piles.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI RUKMINI DEVI
C/O SHRI BENARSIDAS BAZAJ
THATHERI BAZAAR, BENARES CITY

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 10128. Courtesy: Benarsilal Bazaj

216. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 21, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

It was not proper to burden Mahadevbhai. What is to be done now? I will see to that. To burden Kishorelalbhai for such matters should be considered a sin. I understand about Akbar. Let me see what can be done.

If I am told what Chimanlal said, I shall be able to say something.

Blessings from
BAPU

From photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4378

217. LETTER TO CHAMANLAL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 22, 1941

DEAR CHAMANLAL,

In spite of my best effort, I have not been able to read your book. But a cursory glance shows that some of your statements are

too startling to be true. If they are true, you have made no mean contribution to research work. If your thesis is accepted by Americans, there must be established a cultural bond between America and India.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile: *Hindu America?,* facing p. xviii

218. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,

[*March 22, 1941*][1]

CHI. AMRIT,

You will know this letter[2]. I forget all about it.

Herewith Kamala's[3] very interesting letter. Ten rupees are being sent to Chandel.

I understand what you say about the Law Committee[4]. Don't worry. You will go to Simla if you are at all pressed. Even a week there would do you good.

I have your wire.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4002. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7311

[1] From the postmark

[2] The reference is to a Hindi letter dated March 20 from Raghuvansh Gaur at the back of which Gandhiji had written to Amrit Kaur. Raghuvansh Gaur had written: "The file of the U.P. Agriculture Department which I had given to Rajkumari has been sent back to me without any intimation. I request you to let me know what is being done about it. . . ." *Vide* also letter to the addressee, p. 383, and "Letter to Raghuvansh Gaur", 9-3-1941

[3] She had gone to Bombay for training in midwifery; *vide* also "Letter to Mary Barr", 31-3-1941

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Rukmini Bazaj", 21-3-1941

219. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
March 22, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

What you said yesterday was correct, and was timely. If you are still not satisfied, ask again and again. The matter is important. Therein lies the test of ahimsa. Both were attracted towards each other. If this is considered a defect and they are turned out, their lives can be embittered. If we tolerate them, their self-control can increase, and they can progress step by step. Their progress depends on us. This line of thought is in favour of their staying [in the Ashram], and this should be sufficient.

We should put up with the temper of others to the extent that we ourselves are not weighed down by it. A proof of this is that others are influenced by us. This is an outward proof. Inner proof is the testimony of the soul. If our fearlessness goes on increasing, it is ahimsa, otherwise it is cowardice.

It may be said that in Kocharab [Ashram][1] the whole work was in order. The other things were subject to it. In outward work there was there the same discipline that I had in South Africa. I used to engage the visitors in the Ashram work or they left soon after they came. My physique could bear the strain of laborious work, so I could take part in every activity; and it may be said that I was in constant touch with all. There was one big living room. So it was easy to come in touch with others. This is about the early stage. Whole work means to fill water early in the morning, to wash clothes, to cook food, to clean grains and vegetables, to serve food, to teach, and so on. These things being one after the other were not troublesome.

The rest of the questions were answered yesterday.

Your letter is enclosed. Ask, if anything still remains.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4379

[1] Started by Gandhiji on May 25, 1915, it was housed in Jeevanlal Vrajrai Desai's bungalow in Ahmedabad, where it continued till Sabarmati Ashram was founded in 1917.

220. LETTER TO SHRIRAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 22, 1941

BHAI LALA SHRIRAM,

I hope to have the utmost help from you for the Andrews Memorial.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 947

221. MESSAGE TO M. R. JAYAKAR[1]

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
[Before *March 23, 1941*][2]

Tell Mr. Jayakar that I should always be delighted to meet old friends. But while I may personally discuss every aspect with them, I could not, without consultation with the members of the Working Committee, give them any assurance, armed with which they might go to the Viceroy. For they would need the assurance on behalf of the Congress Working Committee and I have no authority to give it. There will be this obvious handicap, but otherwise I should be only too glad to meet them. They may come with great expectations and I may fail to satisfy them. Otherwise of course I could not have the slightest objection to meeting them.

From the original: C.W. 10387. Courtesy: National Library

[1] The message is extracted from Mahadev Desai's letter dated March 23 to Tej Bahadur Sapru, which read: "I dare say Mr. Jayakar has acquainted you with our talks in Bombay. He had asked me to get in touch with Gandhiji and get his reaction. This was the message [from Gandhiji] that I gave Mr. Jayakar.... Now I have a letter from Mr. Jayakar asking me to convey this message also to you, so that you may do what may be needful...."

[2] *ibid*

222. CABLE TO AGATHA HARRISON

WARDHAGANJ,
[On or before *March 23, 1941*][1]

AGATHA HARRISON
BRANBOURNE COURT
ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD, LONDON

BOMBAY SUGGESTIONS[2] NOT LIKELY RECEIVE CONGRESS COUNTENANCE. AM REMAINING SILENT.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1519. Also C.W. 7862. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

223. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 23, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

Your wire was prompt and-useful. I know that you would remember the place where it[3] was put. Amtul Salaam had suggested, and so also Lilavati, that I should look into the box. I pooh-poohed the idea. But they were right.

I thought my letter[4] to Farooqui was just the thing. I have not answered all the impertinent questions. I am quite sure my answer cannot be exploited with any success.

I am glad you had a good report about your college.

Boiling here. You must take rest.

Love.

BAPU

[1] The cable is extracted from Mahadev Desai's letter (C.W. 7862) dated March 23 to G. D. Birla, in which it was quoted as Gandhiji's "reply" to the addressee who wanted to know "Bapu's reaction to the Bombay resolution". In the G.N. source, the postmark of the original cable bears the date "March 24".

[2] The reference is to the resolution passed by the Non-party Leaders' Conference held under the presidentship of Tej Bahadur Sapru in Bombay from March 13 to 16; *vide* "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 30-9-1940

[3] The reference is to the ointment-box; *vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Kunvarji K. Parekh", 19-3-1941

[4] *Vide* "Absreact of Letter to M. Farooqui", 17-3-1941

[PS.]

Sorry for New Delhi address.

Herewith letter from Pyarelal. I asked him to write to you.

From the original: C.W. 4003. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7312

224. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM,
March 23, 1941

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

You are needlessly worried. Married people can live in the Ashram, if they lead the life of a *brahmachari*. If Kanu and Abha marry, they will not marry to lead the life of *brahmacharya*. Is this not clear?[1]

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 1457. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

225. LETTER TO VITHALDAS V. JERAJANI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 23,1941

BHAI VITHALDAS,

I hope your exhibition, etc., will be completely successful. The success of our struggle depends on the spread and success of such constructive activities.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9799

226. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

SEVAGRAM, *WARDHA*,
March 23, 1941

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I gave my opinion[2] to Kishorelalbhai yesterday. I don't think

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 5-3-1941, and letter to the addressee, "Letter to Samrita Lal Chatterjeee, 15-1-1941

[2] Regarding Manubehn Mashruwala's illness; *vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Kunvarji K. Parekh", 19-3-1941, and "Letter to Kantilal Gandhi", 24-3-1941

there is any need to send for all family members. If the lady doctor also is of the same opinion, get the operation done at once. There is no danger at all in opening the abdomen. I think it absolutely necessary to find out about the tumour. Even if all of them come over, they will not be of much help. Why, then, incur expenses on travelling and so on? It is necessary to observe certain limits in every matter. Show this letter to everybody.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9747. Also C.W. 727. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

227. LETTER TO MAGANLAL AND MANJULA MEHTA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 23, 1941

CHI. MAGANLAL AND MANJULA,

The portion in pencil in the accompanying letter was returned because Urmi had written the wrong address. I did not like the pencil handwriting and so she re-wrote the portion in ink. Urmi is keeping fine and is becoming mature.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 1614. Courtesy: Manjulabehn M. Mehta

228. LETTER TO PRABHU DAYAL VIDYARTHI

March 23, 1941

CHI. PRABHUDAYAL,

Write to Shri Ramji Sharma that Mahadevbhai has already sent his opinion about *Sainik*. We are fighting on behalf of *Sainik* and do not want to publish it under any other name. The greatest need is for dharma and determination. Your article is worthless. It is grossly exaggerated. A considerable part of Shastriji's body is still very clear. There is not much of a stink. I do not spend hours on him. These days I don't even give him massage. I have already told you that your language is superficial because your thoughts are such. You do not honour truth as much as you should. If at all you wish to write

something, first ascertain the whole thing from Shastriji. There should not be a single sentence for which you have not made sure of the facts.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Returning the article and Ramji Sharma's letter.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 11692

229. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 24, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

Your little note.

You never doubted the welcome you were to receive there. I did not. I hope Tofa[1] remembers us all. I know your love of flowers. But I cannot give you satisfaction here. The place is much too disorganized for sporting flower-beds.

Harijan will be out on 5th April unless some mishap prevents it.[2] Probably it will be Ahmedabad. Chandrashanker seems to have neglected his duty to an unforgivable extent.

I am hoping that he has not been wilfully dishonest. But neglect such as he seems to have shown produces almost the same result.

I am keeping well in spite of the heat.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Amtul Salaam is doing well. No asthma.

From the original: C.W. 4004. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7313

[1] Addressee's pet dog

[2] It could not, however, be resumed, and had to be again suspended; v*ide* "Note on *Harijan*", On or before 28-3-1941, and "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 29-3-1941; also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 21-3-1941

230. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

March 24, 1941

CHI. MIRA,

Is it not best that I send you Undhru back? He can be on guard between 12 and 4, and do all your work. The woman may be disposed of otherwise. Here is. .....[1]

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6473. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9868

231. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

March 24, 1941

CHI, MIRA,

Your note. I did not even notice anything. It is enough that you are incapable of disrespect. If you take Undhru, all difficulty vanishes.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6474. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9869

232. LETTER TO RAGHUVANSH GAUR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
March 24, 1941

DEAR RAGHUVANSH,

Rajkumaribehn tried and failed. In the circumstances you should for the time being employ yourself in some paying work whereby your knowledge may not be lost, and cultivate non-violence.[2]

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 140

[1] One word is illegible in the source.

[2] *Vide* also letter to the addressee, p."Letter to "Raghuvash Gaur:,9-3-1941 and "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 22-3-1984

233. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 24, 1941

CHI. VIJAYA,

You are demanding too much. You write after a long time and then want an immediate reply. I will use the dhotis when I get them. Ba has gone to Delhi to take treatment from Sushila. There is nothing in particular. She is suffering from the same old complaint. But she wanted to be under Sushila's treatment. It was not possible for Sushila to come and stay here for a long time. I, therefore, sent Ba. Manubhai must have had some good experience. Does he take enough ghee? I hope Nanabhai is keeping well. Sharda is still here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7139. Also C.W. 4631. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

234. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 24, 1941

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter. May Shanti[1] and you live long. May you bring credit to the family and society and be true servants.

Ba has gone to Delhi to have treatment from Sushila. She will stay there for a month or so. The piles had become painful. Manu has a tumour and she may have to be operated upon. Saraswati must be fine.

Blessings to you all from
BAPU

From the photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7363. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] Addressee's son

235. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

March 24, 1941

BA,

Either write or dictate a letter to me. A letter from Kanti is enclosed. On one side he has written to you and on the other to me. I get regular news about Manu. It looks as if she will have to be operated upon. I have written and suggested[1] that another doctor should be consulted and, if he also is of the same opinion, she should be operated upon. There is no risk at all in the operation. Do not worry. Now that you are there, go through the full treatment and get well.

Here it is quite hot. Do not worry about me. Things are all right. Lilavati[2] looks after my food, etc.

Blessings to Lakshmi[3] and the children.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

A letter from Mani[4] is enclosed. Reply to her at length. Lakshmi or Sushila will write it for you.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

236. LETTER TO ADVAITA KUMAR GOSWAMI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
March 24, 1941

BHAI ADVAITA KUMAR,

I am replying to your letter belatedly as I could get no time. What can I write about the condition there? I cannot write to Baba Raghavdas, Mohanlalji and others. So try to do your best.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 151

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Kunvarji K. Parekh", 23-3-1941
[2] Lilavati Asar
[3] Lakshmi Devdas Gandhi
[4] Manibehn Patel

237. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
March 24, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have read the set of rules and regulations prepared by Bhai Kundar[1]. It is good. If there is any need for making certain changes, please make them. otherwise get copies made on the office cyclostyle. We can always make some changes later.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4380

238. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 24, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You have not understood at all. If personally I had some inkling of it, I would have told you. As I was in a hurry I did not write. The underlying problem is that man is not so simple. If anyone tells as soon as passion arises in him, then this Ashram would become heaven. Afterwards it may or may not result in marriage. . . .[2] was able to hide his passion. When I asked him he admitted it. If their behaviour was not disapproved by others, who knows how far the two would have gone. So the correct rule would be that as soon as passion arises, one should let it be known. But who will do this? So I stick to the old saying that as we are and as we shall be so would others be.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4381

239. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 24, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Grinding, latrine-cleaning and so on were all there in Kocharab, and I used to do all these things.

[1] Kundar Divan, a khadi worker, brother of Manohar Divan
[2] The name is scored out in the source.

You have asked a proper question. This was only an example. To expel . . .[1] would be equally unjust. For disobeying the rules everyone should be dismissed. To expel a person who sincerely admits his mental attitude would be intolerance. Out of intolerance springs hypocrisy. The problem is complicated. If you think coolly over the matter, you would be convinced. Behind your question there seems to be some other question. I am thinking about it, you may also think over it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4382

240. LETTER TO SECRETARY, BENGAL PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE, CALCUTTA

[Before *March 25, 1941*][2]

There is no absolute merit in jail-going. It is only a means. If you attain the end without it, we should welcome the opportunity.

Your difficulties I can well imagine, but the road to success is overlain with them. They need not baffle us. If our steps are firm and true, success is assured. I do not worry about their not arresting satyagrahis. You must turn this move of the Government to good account. Let the satyagrahis work in their districts and organize them, if they will not march towards Delhi.

In any event a vast majority will always be outside. If they are organized fully, none need court imprisonment.

The Maulana's arrest is of course unfortunate, but it had to come. Every one of the difficult tasks should put the, workers on their mettle.

The Hindu, 27-3-1941

[1] The name is scored out in the source.

[2] The letter was reported under the date-line "Calcutta, March 25".

241. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
March 25, 1941

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
JULLUNDUR CITY

ADDRESS ONLY WOMEN STUDENTS. VISIT GUJARAT UNNECESSARY.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4005. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7314

242. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 25, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter. I have sent you the wire you asked for. I do not want you to be involved in men's meetings, etc. You must not be made cheap. Students, yes, if they behave and really want you. Women always. You may not go to Gujarat.

The ointment was in its place. It is for Janakibehn.

I am keeping quite well. 142/90[1] in the afternoon.

About women I have given no final opinion. You are not in a hurry ?

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Harijan on 5th April—Ahmedabad.[2]

From the original: C.W. 4006. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7315

[1] Blood-pressure

[2] *Harijan*, however, could not be resumed; *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 27-3-1941

243. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 26, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

You will care to read the enclosed. You may destroy it.

The weather is getting warmer though I remain unaffected by it.

Manu Trivedi's father[1] has come. He is one of the rare men I have met. He is a good man. He is suffering from blood-pressure and is under my treatment though living in Wardha.

Janakibehn is getting on. Madalasa is still causing worry. Amtul Salaam is keeping fairly well. All else is as when you were here. Do drop a postcard to Ba. She is to have an injection today. This is being written before 4 a.m.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4007. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7316

244. LETTER TO PATWARDHAN

March 26, 1941

BHAI PATWARDHAN,

How can I say whether going to the court is right or not ? This much I can plainly say that you have a full right to go to the court and it may be a duty to do so. But I am in no position to decide whether it is or is not a duty. You yourself should think over this. I tried to bring everyone together, but failed. Still if all of you come over, I will certainly give some time to you. But I have no courage to send for all of them.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Jaishanker Trivedi

245. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHAGANJ,
March 27, 1941

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
JULLUNDUR CITY

ENOUGH IF YOU REACH DELHI FOURTEENTH MORNING.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4008. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7317

246. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
March 27, 1941

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. I was pained to read about Jayaprakash. Let him have a cold water bath after the massage. The body should be massaged thoroughly. Uncooked tomatoes are all right. Remember you have to come here on your way back.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3557

247. LETTER TO RAMDAS AND NIRMALA GANDHI

[SEVAGRAM, "VIA" WARDHA, (C.P.)][1]
March 27, 1941

CHI. RAMDAS AND NIMU,

I received the letters from you both. I will not tempt you to come here in May. The best thing will be for you to go to a cool place and take rest. You may go to Maroli. Perhaps Chorwad. Next in the

[1] As on the letter-head

list is Ghogha. It will suffice if the place is on a sea-coast. If, however, you wish to have a taste of the hot air here, by all means come over.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RAMDAS GANDHI

SHANTINAGAR SOCIETY

SABARMATI

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

248. NOTE ON "HARIJAN"[1]

[On or before *March 28, 1941*][2]

Under the circumstances we cannot restart. And even if we did so, I am sure we should come to grief in a month or so.

From a copy: C.W. 7863. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

249. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

March 28, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

I could not write yesterday. I have your letters. I sent you a wire[3] about not going to Delhi before 14th. I told A[mrita Lal Chatterjee] about Good Friday. He says he is himself a Christian and was even crucified because he was married on Good Friday.

You will find herewith my final opinion on the women's part in the Law Committee. Mridula has made ample reparation to

[1] The note is extracted from Mahadev Desai's letter dated March 28 to G. D. Birla, which read: "Man proposes, God disposes. I made the announcement yesterday that *Harijan* would be restarted on 5th April, but like a bolt from the blue came a letter from Tottenham today which decided Bapu against re-publication. . . . Perhaps *Harijan* cannot now be restarted until after the war or after a settlement, of which I see no hope whatsoever." For the letter addressed to Mahadev Desai from Sir Richard Tottenham, Additional Secretary, Home Department, *vide* "Sir Richrd Tottenham's Letter to Mahadev Desai", 27-3-1941

[2] *ibid*

[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Amrit Kaur", 27-3-1941

Joshi.

Here is a letter from Zuberi. I think you have corresponded with him. Kripalani has said that the letter has been forwarded to you for disposal.

Your Hindi writing is daily improving.

Hope Shummy is better.

Ba had an injection, Bharatanand had the operation yesterday. Sailen is all right. Shastri's greed is on the increase, but he is well.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4009. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7318

250. LETTER TO PRABHU DAYAL VIDYARTHI

March 28, 1941

CHI. PRABHUDAYAL,

I have your letter. Give up all needless talk and do only what Kakasaheb says. Consider it your dharma to do whatever work he gives and be fully engrossed in it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 11693

251. THE ONLY WAY TOWARDS WORLD PEACE

Deep inside me I have an ever growing faith that in the midst of this universal destruction due to bloodshed, I am carrying on an absolutely innocuous struggle which, however, is pregnant with great potentialities.[1]

The movement, for the conduct of which I am responsible, may prove a vain effort, if I represent no one but myself; and if I remain true to my faith, I may be satisfied, but so far as world peace is concerned, the effort will prove inadequate in terms of the present. For producing the desired result during the lifetime of the present generation, it will be necessary to give an unmistakable demonstration that a substantial part of the nation is behind the effort. Much more

[1] The following two paragraphs are reproduced from *The Hindu*, 6-5-1941.

has to hope before such a demonstration becomes possible. The present movement is a humble attempt in that direction.

Man can only make an honest attempt. In a satyagraha movement, the saying that God is the giver of the result is literally true. Therefore, it is faith that sustains me and it is faith that must sustain the other satyagrahis. We have only begun the battle. The real test, the real suffering, has yet to come. Let me repeat for the thousandth time that, in this long and arduous struggle, quality alone will count, never quantity. In this there is no room for hatred, certainly not for camouflage.

Despite my being the originator of this struggle, I venture to say that only through it can we hope for permanent world peace. Peace can never come through war.

SEVAGRAM, March 29, 1941

[From Hindi]

Sarvodaya, May 1941

252. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 29, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

Man proposes, God disposes. Yesterday the announcement went that *Harijan* will be resumed on 5th April. Now a letter[1] from the Government has been received which practically amounts to prohibition from my point of view! I have, therefore, now announced[2] that *Harijan* will not be resumed on 5th April.

There is no post from you today. Of course I do not expect you to write every day.

I am keeping fit. In a way the re-suspension removes a burden from my mind.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3672. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6481

[1] *Vide* "Sir Richard Tottenham's Letter to Mahadev Desai", 27-3-1941
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Amrit Kaur", 27-3-1941

253. LETTER TO CHANDRAGUPTA VARSHNEYA

SEVAGRAM,
March 29, 1941

BHAI CHANDRAGUPTA,

I got your postcard. owing to your brother's death, I can understand your difficulty in returning to Sevagram. Ashadevi will feel your absence. She got much help from your work.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Gandhiji aur Rajasthan, p. 261

254. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 30, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter today. Your suggestions are sound. I want to take no hasty step. I am not perturbed by the discoveries. But if what you have heard about Iftikhar[1] is true, it will be a grievous shock. I still feel that there is some serious misunderstanding. But you will make what quiet inquiry you can make and let me know.

Yes, Rs. 100 have been received from your college. I have sent a postcard. I have readdressed three or four letters including a *Patrika* to you.

You won't grieve over the suspension of *Harijan*. Good is bound to come out of this.

I am sorry about Shummy. I hope he will soon recover. I am A-1.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4010. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7319

[1] Mian Iftikhar-ud-din, President, Punjab Provincial Congress Committee; also "Statement to the Press", 6-7-1941.

255. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 30, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

It is difficult to answer your question regarding the diary. Do as you think proper. Experience alone shows what is best. You had better write on a separate sheet anything which specially needs to be told to me. You should not have the burden of reading the diary.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4383

256. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 31, 1941

I have just read yours of 18th February. Heaven knows when this will reach you. I see you are having varied experiences. I hope you are keeping excellent health and so is Father.

Yes, you may write your book[1]. It will remove some cobwebs.

It is very hot here. But there is no sickness just now.

Things are difficult here. I had announced resumption of *Harijan* but a letter[2] from the Government compelled me to countermand the announcement.

Kamala has got a good training-ground in a big hospital in Bombay and thanks to Dr. Jivraj Mehta. She is perfectly happy. Chandel is carrying on in Khedi. of course we all expect you to return some day.

The rest from Mahadev.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6081. Also C.W. 3411. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] *Bapu-Conversations and Correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi*, International Book House Ltd., Bombay, 1949

[2] *Vide* " Sir Richard Tottenham's Letter to Mahadev Desai", 27-3-1941

257. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 31, 1941

DEAR IDIOT,

I have your two letters today. That accounts for the absence of yesterday's.

I have given you a definite opinion about women.

Shah has not come near me yet. Farooqui won't be able to exploit my letter[1] much or for any length of time. The position I have taken up is sound almost in all such cases. There need never be any fear of going to arbitration. The choice of a judge or judges is always under one's control. I agree with you that the Congress should not seek to organize students as a party. But who can prevent individual Congressmen ? You must not take such things to heart. After one has done one's best, it is always wise to let events take their course.

About the Punjab Congress affairs, I am not so agitated as you are. In a big democratic organization, action cannot be taken all of a sudden. It must represent good men as well as bad men. If the sum total is bad, it will be utterly discredited. Therefore without in any way worrying yourself, you bring me all the facts you can and I will see what action is possible.

Not much money has come in, in reply to my appeal.[2] Malkani has gone to Ahmedabad and Delhi for the purpose. He will get some, I am sure. If nothing comes in, I shall have to go to some places myself. Let us see.

I am still fit. Amtul Salaam is decidedly better. So is Bhagawati. Janakibehn occupies Ba's seat and Madalasa yours. The former is taking normal food. The latter still requires care. There is no sickness worth the name.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3673. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6482

[1] *Vide* "Abstract of Letter to M. Farooqui", 17-3-19-41

[2] For the Andrews Memorial Fund; *vide* "Appeal for C. F. Andrews Memorial Funds", 18-3-1941

258. LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
March 31, 1941

CHI. MAGAN,

If you think the accompanying letter[1] is worth replying to, send the reply to me. In any case please return the letter.

Since you both are so keen, I will send Urmi back. I do not feel like doing so as she is progressing satisfactorily. I will be on the lookout for someone to send her with.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 1616. Courtesy: Manjulabehn M. Mehta

259. LETTER TO DINESH SINGH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 31, 1941

CHI. DINESH,

I was glad to have your letter. If possible, collect donations from students for the Deenabandhu Andrews Memorial [Fund] and send the amount.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8675

260. CABLE TO AGATHA HARRISON

WARDHAGANJ,
April 1, 1941

AGATHA HARRISON
CRANBOURNE COURT
ALBERT BRIDGE
LONDON

ALWAYS READY COSULTATION.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1520

[1] Written by Prabhashankar H. Parekh, father-in-law of the addressee's elder brother, Ratilal, complaining that the addressee did not fulfil the moral obligations to his family.

261. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 1, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

You must not upset your system. The contract is not to eat rather than eat hastily. You know, too, that you can live on fruit juices. Take a little longer rather than endanger your health.

No sign of Shah.

Don't worry if you can't collect for Andrews Memorial.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4011. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7320

262. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

April 1, 1941

DEAR AMRITLAL,

You have to evolve order out of disorder. The list seems all right. It is always subject to change.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 1458. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

263. LETTER TO MAGANLAL AND MANJULA MEHTA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 1, 1941

CHI. MAGAN AND MANJULA,

I talked to Urmi today. She would do whatever I ask her. She does not like giving up the programme here nor does she wish to disregard the wishes of you both. I suggest that you should come over here in May and let Urmi stay on. But if that is too much for you, send me a wire. I will do as you wish.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 1617. Courtesy: Manjula M. Mehta

264. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,
April 1, 1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have your letter. I have no objection if Bablo[1] and you go. I have my doubts, though, whether you will be able to preserve your health there. I am not prepared to send anyone else, for my idea is that the people here should prepare themselves [for the struggle] here. If that takes a little more time, it doesn't matter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8521. Also C.W. 7123. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

265. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

April 1, 1941

BA,

I got your letter. It seems you will take some time to get well. Never mind the delay if in the end you are fully restored. I do not worry since you are under good care. Here everything is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

266. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 1, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

There are faults in your letter. It is good that you discovered some of them. As long as the devil possessed your mind, it was good that you wrote to me. That this happened was itself a fault. Someone

[1] Narayan Desai, son of Mahadev Desai.

has to be a manager, and he is entitled to decide things. The powers belong to the office and not to the man holding it. So nobody need worry what sort of a man the manager is. This means "No blame attaches to the strong, my Lord," says Tulsidas. In English it is: "The King can do no wrong." Among us Indians this fault-finding is almost universal. From where can we find a perfect manager ? It is needless to ask how Chimanlal is. His analysis of merits and defects was correct. If I can find time to go to that kitchen, I will certainly do so, and carry my milk with me, because I do not consider it second rate. That one is inexpensive and this one is costly. Perhaps there condiments are allowed and here they are not. In case no inconvenience is felt there, it would no doubt be good if anyone of us some time go there.

In view of his temperament what Chimanlal said to Sushila was proper. Now it is time to stop.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4384

267. REMARKS IN AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE'S DIARY[1]

SEVAGRAM,

[*April 1, 1941*][2]

Yes, it will be better if both Abha and Vina could be sent somewhere—perhaps both to Bari[3]. Suspicion is inevitable. To be exposed to the public gaze is part of the open life we live here.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10347. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[1]According to Amrita Lal Chatterjee, who was an inmate of Sevagram Ashram, in a letter dated January 8, 1941, he had "suggested to Gandhiji that the Ashramites should keep a personal diary of their work, thoughts and ideas that come in their way, and place them before Gandhiji for his perusal so that he could know the mind and work of each and every Ashramite, and make necessary suggestions. Gandhiji accepted the idea, and the system of keeping a personal diary was introduced from April 1." In his diary dated April 1, Amrita Lal Chatterjee had recorded a talk between him and Kanu Gandhi, Gandhiji's personal attendant, regarding "a subdued suspicion and whisperings of two particular sisters in the Ashram about the friendly relation that was developing between Kanu Gandhi and Abha (now Abha Gandhi) daughter of Amrita Lal Chatterjee", and had sought Gandhiji's advice.

[2] Supplied by Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[3] Baricutt Ashram in Orissa

268. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

April 2, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You have not understood my letter. There should be a manager. Whoever he may be, respect is due to the post. Victoria became queen at the age of seventeen. Old Palmerston[1] knelt before her. This is British etiquette. Victoria was immature. Still Palmerston did not hesitate. What have you to do with Chimanlal? I am in a delicate position. If in my presence only the will of the manager prevails, the order is maintained; if it does not prevail then there could be no order. If there were no order here then it would be nowhere, and then satyagraha would disappear.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4385

269. REMARKS IN AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE'S DIARY[3]

April 2, 1941

This is not right; contemplate:

जड़ चेतन गुण दोष मथ विश्व कीन्ह करतार |
संत हंस गुण गहहिपथ परिहरि वारि विकार ||[4]

[1] Henry John Temple Palmerston, third Viscount (1784-1865); Prime Minister during Victoria's reign in the year 1855, and from 1859 until his death

[2] *Vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Krishnachandra", 1-4-1941

[3] According to Amrita Lal Chatterjee, the remarks were made with reference to his diary, dated April 2, in which he had "candidly criticized the then prevailing system of management of the Ashram by a chosen Manager instead of a Committee of Ashramites, and also the then Manager with particular reference to a certain incident in which the said Manager gave quite a wrong decision against a fellow-Ashramite and induced another to support it."

[4] Balkand *Ramacharitmanasa*: Everything in the world, animate and inanimate, has virtues and defects; the saints who are like the swan, accept the good that is milk and ignore the evil that is water.

If you do not know the meaning, ask Ramdasji[1].

BAPU[2]

From a photostat: C.W. 10347. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

270. REMARKS IN SAILENDRA NATH CHATTERJEE'S DIARY

SEVAGRAM,
April 2, 1941

I can send you to Calcutta[3] if you give up the idea of examination. You will get a fair post and rise according to your merit.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10295. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

271. REMARKS IN SAILENDRA NATH CHATTERJEE'S DIARY

SEVAGRAM,
April 2, 1941

Not bad. You can give the same information in two pages.

Try and you will succeed. Do you run to your work ? If you do, it is a good habit. I wonder if in your present state of health you can take exercise unless it is quite gentle.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10296. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

272. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 3, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your two letters came in today. How is this? This is the third time it has so happened.

[1] Ramdas Gulati, a retired Engineer, an old inmate of Sevagram Ashram

[2] The subscription in this and the following item is in Devanagari.

[3] To work with Satis Chandra Das Gupta, *vide* "Note to Amrita Lal Chatterjee", 5-4-1941

I could not write yesterday.

Your letter to Zuberi is all right and so are your suggestions and replies to Lala Dunichand. Let us see what happens.

If Mridula has her limitations, she has very great qualities. Her gate-keeper in her Ashram[1] was murdered. She has taken no fright. She is handling the situation in a cool and brave manner. You have to nurse such girls. She is a rare woman.

Mahadev has written to you fully about *Harijan*.

I hope Shummy is better, if not fully restored.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4012. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7321

273. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

April 3, 1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Your writing to me was all right. Time will solve many of the problems. It is for you to find out a way of living that will satisfy you, for who else can understand what will satisfy you? There is always scope for independent work. And as for being released from me, that will be possible only when you ask for it. The game, therefore, is entirely in your hands. If you still feel troubled, what is to be done? But God is always there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8508. Also C.W. 7128. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

274. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

April 3, 1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I heard about the meeting held in Sevagram. My criticism is well-founded. We cannot ignore anything.

[1] Vikasgriha; *vide* also "Letter to Mridula Sarabhai", 16-3-1941

Yes, if you find any suitable village, you may stay there. But just now you should fulfil at least one resolution. You will then have taken one step. Your latest resolution was good. Take all the khadi examinations.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8510. Also C.W. 7124. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

275. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

April 4, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter.

I have not intentionally avoided answer to any of your questions. If I have, you will repeat the question or questions. The fact is I never have your letters before me at the time of replying. I have to rely upon memory.

I was afraid the letter was overweight. You have done well in telling me of the neglect.

Yes, the library has undergone the necessary change. I think you will like it. It has now become a proper room, the coolest in the Ashram. Madalasa rests there.

Mira can't bear the heat. She is off to Nasik[1] today. Sending you a copy of Pyarelal's pamphlet[2].

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4013. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7322

[1] On her way to Chorwad; *vide* also "Letter to Mirabehn",6-4-1941

[2] *Status of Indian Princes*

276. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,
April 4, 1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Better is death in the discharge of one's duty; another's duty is frought with danger.[1]

You must, therefore, concentrate at present on your examinations. They will prove to be *kamadhenu*[2] for you. There are bound to be some defects in the examinations. Even to have these reformed, you have to appear for them. I see much good in your doing so.

That village may be regarded as reformed, where everybody wears khadi, which produces all the khadi it needs, in which every inhabitant spends some of his time in one or more processes relating to cotton, which uses only oil produced in indigenous oil-presses, which consumes only jaggery manufactured in the village itself or in its neighbourhood and only hand-milled flour and hand-pounded rice; the village, in other words, where the largest possible number of village industries are flourishing, in which nobody is illiterate, where the roads are clean, there is a fixed place for evacuation, the wells are clean, there is harmony among the different communities, and untouchability is completely absent, in which everybody gets cow's milk, ghee, etc., in moderate quantities, in which nobody is without work, and which is free from quarrels and thefts, and in which the people abide by the *sevak's* advice in all matters. This is possible in the existing conditions. I cannot of course say about the time required.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8507. Also C.W. 7130. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 35
[2] A mythical cow that was supposed to give whatever was asked of her

277. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
April 4, 1941

CHI. PRBHA,

I got your letter. I do not want to send for you specially nor have I anything important to tell you. But my condition is like that of a father who wants his daughter, without any reason, to be near him. But your first duty is to serve Jayaprakash. If, therefore, you cannot come over here, I will not mind. Keep on writing to me. Ba has gone to Delhi for treatment. She has piles. It will be some time before she returns.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3558

278. DRAFT CABLE TO LADY HARTOG[1]

[Before *April 5, 1941*][2]

NO END DEADLOCK POSSIBLE WITHOUT BRITAIN FREEING INDIA FROM YOKE. THERE IS UNDILUTED AUTOCRACY REIGNING HERE. OUR STATE CANNOT BE WORSE IN FUTURE HOWEVER BLACK. WE SEE NO WAY OUT EXCEPT THROUGH COMPLETE TRUTH AND NON-VIOLENCE. EARLY JOINT EFFORT FRUITFUL THROUGH THIS METHOD.

Home, Political, File No. 3/33/40-Poll. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] This was drafted by Gandhiji for Rameshwari Nehru; *vide* postscript, According to an unofficial note dated May 3, 1941, by the Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, "it appears that the cable was . . . abbreviated by the sender before transmission." It read: "Thanks message. Conference discussing next month will communicate result. Personally feel end deadlock impossible without Britain freeing India. (Undiluted autocracy reigns here.) Joint effort possible only through complete non-violent methods."

[2] *ibid*

279. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 5, 1941

DEAR IDIOT,

Mahadev in Bombay, Mira in Nasik and Anand Hingorani in front of me pulling the punka. He will be here a few days. It is now 10.35 a.m.

Here are three letters. Haskell's I have read carefully. It is a good letter and requires a reasoned reply. Discuss the letter or the argument with Datta or any other learned Christian and send your answer. Even if you do not feel like sending it without discussing it with me, do have the discussion. See if you find a supporter for our position.

I hope you got Pyarelal's pamphlet.

The weather has become less unbearable. The nights are cool.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Your letter. We shall discuss what should be done about the Punjab when you return. Did not Mahadev tell you that I had sent to Rameshwari my draft reply[1] to Lady Hartog's wire? You must have seen it. Your draft too is good but mine is probably better.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4014. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7323

280. NOTE TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM,
April 5, 1941

1. Democracy based on non-violence cannot come out of your suggestion. It is too mechanical.

2. Your suggestion about my taking a personal interest in everyone and everything is sound but since the Ashram exists for the

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

development of national satyagraha, I have to fit in everything with the main idea. Remember that after all it is God who is guiding this as everything else.

3. I forgot to say that Mahila Ashram does not open before July, therefore, the girls cannot be sent there till then. What is wanted is their immediate withdrawal from the Ashram for their own good.

4. I have already told[1] Sailen, I would send him to Satis Babu if he throws in his lot with him.

5. All things considered, I think that for your own growth and that of the family it is worth considering whether you should not return to Bengal and reconstruct your life there. It is your natural place. With your temperament suffering jars in the Ashram at every step, my proposal is worth considering. Of course, in Bengal, too, I shall always be interested in your welfare. My sole concern is your all-round good.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 1459. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

281. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

April 5, 1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

What you say is correct. By all means go to Mool[2]. There is only one condition: if you get ill, you must return immediately. Do not be eager to call Kanchan there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8505. Also C.W. 7132. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] *Vide* "Remarks in Sailendra Nath Charrwejees Diary", 2-4-1941

[2] A town in Chanda District

282. MESSAGE TO BASIC EDUCATION CONFERENCE[1]

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 6, 1941

I hope that the Conference will realize that success of the effort is dependent more upon self-help than upon Government, which must necessarily be cautious even when it is well-disposed. Our experiment to be thorough has to be at least somewhere made without alloy and without outside interference.

M. K. GANDHI

Two years of Work

283. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 6, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

We are all fasting today[2]. Continuous spinning is going on. Hot wind is blowing.

All the news you give makes sad reading. But your account of the poor women is cheering.

Here is a letter from Cochin. I keep the original and send you a copy.

You asked me about extending the verandah and making another on the other side. It shall be done after your return.

I have let Mira take one of your Gujarati grammars. She will be careful about its use.

No more today!

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4015. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7324

[1] This was sent for the Second Basic Education Conference held in Jamia Nagar, Delhi.

[2] For the National Week; *vide* "Appeal to Congress Workers", 21-3-1941

284. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
April 6, 1941

CHI. MIRA,

I was afraid you will suffer in the train. Yes, you can go to Chorwad.[1] Harakhchandbhai's[2] letter has been received. He is quite glad, you could go. I am not wiring because it is Sunday and a wire would reach you no earlier than this.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABAI
C/O SHETH JIVANLAL MOTICHAND, NASIK

From the original: C.W. 6475. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9870

285. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 6, 1941

Non-violent conduct requires toleration of and even generosity towards the opponent whether he is father or any other. Contrary conduct is a species of violence.

Most of our difficulties arise from our ignorance. Unregulated sentiment is waste like unharnessed steam.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India, and Anand T. Hingorani. Also G.N. 472

[1] Mirabehn explains: "owing to the extreme heat in the hut on the hill, Bapu was sending me to Chorwad by the seaside in Junagadh State. I had halted at Nasik on the way." *Vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 4-4-1941

[2] Harakhchand Motichand Shah of Chorwad

286. REMARKS IN SAILENDRA NATH CHATTERJEE'S DIARY[1]

SEVAGRAM,
April 6, 1941

I have never undertaken to read diaries word for word. I gave most attention to yours. To be read, you must be brief. You are prolix. You have written almost an essay. I have read all the marked parts. I can give no guarantee as to the pay. You will get what you are worth. Anything more will be charity. Today you are a burden and you will be still greater when you are studying. But if you begin to earn, you reduce the burden and will presently save. This means hard and honest labour. I hope you will do this.

You are not attending to your diet. You must control it or let Dr. Das control it. I am quite sure, I was right in stopping massage. You are becoming too soft.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10297. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

287. MESSAGE TO MYSORE PROVINCIAL CONGRESS MEETING[2]

[Before *April 7, 1941*]

I am firmly of the opinion that, if the constructive programme is assiduously and successfully worked out to its end, the helpless will find themselves possessing power they never had before, and that is the truest foundation for the swaraj of millions based on non-violence.

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-4-1941

[1] According to Amrita Lal Chatterjee, Sailendra Nath Chatterjee had noted in his diary, dated April 6, "that he was sorry that Gandhiji did not read his diary fully . . . that he was prepared to give up further studies and join service, if his father and Gandhiji desired so, and if it offered a decent pay and future prospects. Sailendra Nath had also mentioned about the trouble he had, because of his taking rather too much food after a long fast."

[2] The message was for its fourth session, held on April 7.

[3] The reference is to the non-stop spinning performed in connection with the National Week observed from the 6th to the 13th April.

[4] Hank

288. ASHRAM NOTE

April 7, 1941

In the *sutra-yajna*[3] care should be taken to note the following:

1. Weight of the slivers of each of the spinners;
2. amount of yarn produced thereby;
3. amount of refuse; waste yarn to be collected; it has its own use;
4. count of the yarn produced, its tensile-strength and evenness;
5. every *gundi*[4] should be accompanied by the spinner's name.

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, p. 383

289. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 7, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter I shall keep the recipe for *missi* chapati. There is not much in it. Ba often makes it. And it will be often made if I would allow it. Gram flour makes it too nutritious for all but the heavy-work labourers. The proportion of *bhaji* is not enough. Our bread is far superior and any day lighter.

I am glad you have been able to finish your Jullundur work.

Ba might have to give a month to Delhi. Sushila expects to cure her completely. She may drop in for two days.

I do not think I ever met Sardar Sunder Singh. I am, therefore, not writing.

I hope you are taking care of yourself according to our new discovery.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4016. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7325

290. NOTE TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM,
April 7, 1941

1. I have said my say. You will grow only if you find that the plus side is greater than the minus side. It is strange but true that a person is affected by a thing as he imagines it to be not as it really is. Thus the two Sikh brothers who lived here told me that the shortcomings they saw they were prepared for, but the new and good things they saw in the Ashram filled them with admiration. The Bengali detenu who was here (I forget his name) saw nothing or little that was good. The truth no one knows, not even I the author. God only knows what this place is.

2. Of course Vina and Abha can stay here, if they know the art of living in the midst of suspicion.

3. Sailen is a tough problem. I fear he will be a burden to himself and to you and society.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 1460. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

291. REMARKS IN SAILENDRA NATH CHATTERJEE'S DIARY[1]

SEVAGRAM,
April 7, 1941

This is good.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10298. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[1] According to Amrita Lal Chatterjee, Sailendra Nath had noted in his diary, dated April 7, "that in obedience to the advice of Gandhiji he was prepared to leave his studies and join any service on whatever pay it might offer provided it promised future prospects, so that Gandhiji could be relieved of the burden and responsibility of helping Sailen's mother and younger brothers and sisters." *Vide* also the preceding item, and "Remarks in Sailendra Nath Chatterjee's Diary", 6-4-1941

292. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 7, 1941

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

It is good that you went there.[1] You will gain good experience. After the tour is over, if necessary, we will think again about your problem. Jivanlalbhai has not yet asked me anything.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2916. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya

293. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 7, 1941

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. You are worrying needlessly. In fact, you are a fortunate woman. You are doing as much as you can. It is in God's hand to grant success. What is the harm if you get fewer opportunities of staying with me? It is but natural that you wish to come over. But are all our wishes always fulfilled? Your place is with Jayaprakash or wherever your duty calls you.

Therefore stop worrying and be engrossed in your duty. Ba is still in Delhi. It will take time for her wound to heal. There is no cause at all for worry. She is quite happy in Delhi.

Rajkumari is arriving on the 16th. Sushila is coming over here for a few days.

It is of course very hot.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3564

[1] The Himalayas; *vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Vallabhram Vaidya", 20-3-1941

294. SATATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHAGANJ,
April 8, 1941

I have seen what purports to be a report[1] by some 'special correspondent' of an interview by Shri Mukundlal Sircar and Shri R. S. Ruikar with me. I have no hesitation in saying that it is a mischievous distortion of a friendly conversation.

I rarely give interviews. When I do, I insist on seeing the draft before publication. So far as I know, there was no one in my cottage who could send any reports. I should hope that none of the two friends has become a 'special correspondent'.

I repeat my request that Editors will confer a favour on me if, before publishing interviews with me, they will make sure that I have authorized them. I would not mind any amount of misrepresentation, if it did not injure a public cause.

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-4-1941

295. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 8, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Here are two letters. Dharam Yash Dev's is a strange letter. You will write to him plainly and strongly. He has been condemned by his own action.

Your Lahore programme is strenuous. I shall heave a sigh of relief when you are back in your corner. How nice not to have a room but a corner or even a part of a wall. Nevertheless when the hot wind blows as it is, while I am writing this, I feel tempted to say, pass a month or so at Simla. But I know you won't be happy anywhere else.

Ba is not likely to come back for a month though she is decidedly better. Sushila may come during Easter. Kanchan is back from Delhi.

Love

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4017. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7326

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with R. S. Ruikar", 30-3-1941

296. LETTER TO JAGANNATH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 8, 1941

MY DEAR JAGANNATH,

You have told me a sorry tale. Why don't you see the Editor?

I cannot issue any statement. Of course, if *Harijan* was published, I could deal with all such things.

Yes, Mahadev told me everything. When Rajkumari returns, I shall see what can be done.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10349. Courtesy: Jagannath

297. REMARKS IN AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE'S DIARY[1]

April 8, 1941

1. I shall do what I can for Sailen.

2. The remedy is shut your eyes like the wise monkey towards the faults of others. They cannot hurt you. Why don't you try to write in Hindi and be brief?

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10348. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

298. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 8, 1941

BHAI PRITHVI SINGH,

I am happy that you write to me regularly. You are working so

[1] According to Amrita Lal Chatterjee, in his diary, dated April 8, he "expressed his concern for his son, Sailendra Nath, who was then living in the Ashram with him, and also mentioned his own difficulty in living in the prevailing atmosphere of the Ashram, which was not congenial and helpful to social, moral and spiritual growth of a person."

hard that I am sure your efforts will bear fruit.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5646. Also C.W. 2957. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

299. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

April 8, 1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Kanchan arrived this morning. She is quite happy. There is no cause at all for worry.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MUNNALAL SHAH
KHADI KARYALAYA
MOOL P.O.
CHANDA DISTRICT

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8501. Also C.W. 7133. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

300. LETTER TO DR. RAGHUVIR SINGH AGRAWAL

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
April 8, 1941

BHAI AGRAWAL,

Valjibhai[1] is an impecunious social worker. For years he has been working with me. How can his son be charged Rs. 3 daily? Can you give the assurance that his eyes will be all right? Perhaps you do not know Valjibhai. The boy's name is Mahendra. He keeps on asking me whether or no to go.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

DR. AGRAWAL
15 DARYA GANJ
DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 9665 a. Courtesy: Dr. M. S. Agrawal

[1] Valji G. Desai

301. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 9, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your regular letter has come.

Here are three letters. Two I have read.

Ba is not likely to come for a month, nor is Sushila coming. She is wanted by Ba.

Mahadev will come probably on 11th.

Bhagawati has gone to Raipur for a change.

Shastriji is eating more and more daily and is yet improving.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4018. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7327

302. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 10, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Mahadev has come. He had an arduous programme.

How I have anticipated you! I suddenly remembered that you had written to me about the porch. The idea is sound. But the addition will be made after your return. In my case the workmen are few and the work much. Therefore nothing can be rushed. Nor is there any hurry. I am simply delighted with the change I have made in the library. It has proved a positive blessing to Madalasa. She rests there from 10 to 2.30 p.m. Amtul Salaam also often rests there and has her hip-baths. The door too opens.

Mira has gone to Chorwad, a seaside place in Kathiawar.

What an escape you had! But life is made of a series of escapes, living as we are in the midst of death.

Do avoid overwork.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4019. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7328

303. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
April 10, 1941

CHI. MIRA,

Your postcard. Here we are boiling but I hope you have an ideal weather in Chorwad and that everything else is well.

Mahadev has returned.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABEHN
SHRI HARAKHCHAND MOTICHANDNI VADI
CHORWAD, *via* JUNAGADH, KATHIAWAR

From the original: C.W. 6476. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9871

304. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

April 10, 1941

I heard from Mahadev that you were quite seriously ill. Now take complete rest. I had warned you. One should never work beyond one's strength. But that is a thing of the past. If you take care of the present, everything will be all right. Mahadev says that your party has broken up and you are depressed about that; but that is unnecessary. You have done your best; why need you worry then ? Many other factors and circumstances contribute to the outcome, and surely you cannot be the master of all of them? What you have done is enough. If you get well completely, you will again be able to influence the Corporation irrespective of whether you have a party behind you.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 180-1

305. LETTER TO MAURICE FRYDMAN

[After *April 10, 1941*][1]

DEAR MAURICE,

I have your letter. I never thought of your fast. I was under the impression that you were fed here. I hope you were none the worse for it. I was painfully conscious that I could not give you any satisfaction for your theory. The worst of it is that those who seek support for their theories cannot be easily satisfied, if at all, except when you agree with them. This is no drawback. It often means strength. Where would all the discoverers and inventors have been, if they had given in at the first sign of opposition. Therefore you need not be disappointed if you have a living faith in your theory.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

306. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR[2]

[After *April 10, 1941*][3]

CHI. KAKA,

Follow Koyaji's[4] advice in regard to diet. Otherwise you will not be fair to him. If you get a secretary, you may go out slowly. It is good that Raihana is there now.

I understand about *Sarvodaya*.

Get well soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10948

[1] The letter was in reply to the one dated April 10 from the addressee.

[2] The letter is written on the one dated April 10 from the addressee.

[3] *ibid*

[4] Dr. Koyaji, a physician of Bombay

307. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 11, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Madalasa has torn a[1] bit from this. She holds her impromptu poem on seeing my trinity.[2] Here is the bit too.

Three letters accompany this. It is better to let you have such correspondence than to keep it awaiting you.

There is one defect in the otherwise beautiful blue paper. In this darkened room, it is difficult to read the writing. You will check this yourself.

I do hope you will not allow yourself to be overworked.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4021. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7330

308. LETTER TO R. K. NANDKAOLYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 11, 1941

DEAR NANDKAOLYAR[3],

Please convey to Shri R. Viswanatha Mudaliar and Shri Pachi Ammal my condolence on the death of the late Shri Ramalinga Mudaliar.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 1298, 1940-41. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] First Gandhiji had written 'the', and then as an alternative, 'a'.
[2] The reference seems to be to the statuettes of three monkeys.
[3] R. K. L. Nandkaolyar, Inspector, A.I.C.C. Office

309. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
April 12, 1941

RAJRUMARI
50 EMPRESS ROAD
LAHORE
OMIT DELHI. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4020. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7329

310. TELEGRAM TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE[1]

WARDHA,
April 12, 1941

GURUDEV
SANTINIKETAN
FOUR SCORE NOT ENOUGH. MAY YOU FINISH FIVE. LOVE.[2]

GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10299. Courtesy: Visvabharati

311. LETTER TO DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, WARDHA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 12, 1941

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER
WARDHA
DEAR SIR,

Shri Ramakrishna Bajaj, ex-student, Son of Seth Jamnalal Bajaj, will offer civil disobedience on Tuesday, 15th instant, at 8 a.m. from Gandhi Chowk, Wardha, by reciting the usual anti-war slogans.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 347. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] For his eightieth birthday which was on April 14

[2] According to *The Hindu*, 15-4-1941, the addressee, in his reply, said: "Thanks for your message. But, if four score is impertinence, five score will be intolerable."

312. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 12, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

Your unfailing post. After all said and done, nothing like white or cream coloured paper.[1]

I am glad you are meeting the people you ought to have. (I went so far and felt so sleepy that I dropped the pen and slept.)

I have your wire. Of course you will drop Delhi.[2] I trust you have informed Aryanayakam of your inability. Two additional days will give you more scope for work there.

Durga[3] is a little better. Mahadev has gone to Bombay. He returns on Monday or Tuesday. You come back on Wednesday. This, therefore, is my last letter to you.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3674. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6483

313. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
April 12, 1941

CHI. MIRA,

I have your postcard. I am glad you like the place. I am sure you will have the solitude you desire. Harakhchandbhai is a pearl. His left hand knoweth not what his right gives. Give him my love.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6477. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9872

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 11-4-1941
[2] *Vide* also "Telegram to Amrit Kaur". 12-4-1941
[3] Mahadev Desai's wife

314. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SEVAGRAM,
April 12, 1941

CHI. PREMA,

I had your letter written from Saswad. Yesterday I got the one written from jail. I was delighted to read the account of conditions there. I am sure that, if all the women live in harmony and do constructive work with faith, they will bring swaraj nearer.

On the 6th everybody here, excepting the children and the sick, fasted for twenty-four hours. Today also we intend to do the same. Non-stop working of some charkhas, one carding-bow and several *taklis* is in progress. Babla and Kanu had a big hand in arranging this. All are working with zeal.

And now for your questions:

1. All that I can say about fasting is that it is part of my life. A fast may come any time. At the moment, however, I am not thinking of any. But my strength comes from the possibility of my undertaking one and from my faith in the method. In the last resort a satyagrahi vindicates his honour by laying down his life, as one who believes in violence does by killing. What a big difference! Let nobody, therefore, look upon the possibility of a fast by me as the sword of Damocles. If the fast does come, welcome it and pray that God may grant me the strength to go through it.

2. *Harijan* was stopped because of an unexpected letter[1] from Delhi. I could see from it that they were not well-disposed towards the paper, and I do not want it to be made an issue in this struggle.

3. The current political developments have had no effect on me, for I have realized that nothing is possible just now. That is why I have said that this is going to be a long struggle. On the whole our good lies in that.

Mahadev has again gone today to Bombay for a day. He has gone leaving Durga ill here. Both are courageous. They have willingly sacrificed themselves.

My blessings to all the women.

[1] *Vide* "Sir Richard Tottenham's Letter to Mahadev Desai", 27-3-1941

Ba is still in Delhi. She is improving, but will take time to get well completely.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10418. Also C.W. 6857. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

315. LETTER TO LAKSHMISWAR SINHA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 13, 1941

DEAR LAKSHMISWAR,

I have read your letter very carefully.[1] It is difficult to give you an independent organization. You should be able to work in the existing organization and hope to carry your point with your colleagues. I would like you also to tell me what your requirements are.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

SHRI LAKSHMISWAR SINHA
13 LANSDOWNE TERRACE
KALIGHAT P. O .
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: C.W. 1474. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

316. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
April 13, 1941

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I got your letter. Somehow obtain the certificate. Jajuji is not here. I will ask him when he comes.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI HEMPRABHADEVI
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
SODEPUR, *via* CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2736

[1] The addressee had given his own plan for implementing the scheme of basic education.

317. STATEMENT FOR RAMAKRISHNA BAJAJ[1]

[On or before *April 14, 1941*][2]

SIR,

Mine is a case somewhat out of the ordinary. I am an ex-student. It is necessary to mention this fact in these days of anarchy that prevails in the student-world. Though I am under eighteen, I have known enough of the student-world and the world outside to realize the necessity of discipline in everything. In the step I have taken I have, therefore, obtained the blessings of my parents and other elders. Under my parents I have had practical training in non-violence in every detail of life. I have just finished my matriculation examination. I began school work rather late in life. My parents had stopped our regular school work during the non-co-operation days of 1920 when I was not even born. My parents have brought us all up in a free atmosphere. And so when I was minded to go to school and go through the ordinary training, I was permitted to do so. When, however, the present struggle was started, my mind began to waver and I felt that the practical experience I should gain in the pursuit of freedom would be of far greater value than the ordinary schooling which every schoolboy knows is conceived not so much in the interest of the masses as that of the rulers. If in spite of that knowledge we go through that course, it is because it is the only one that has been in vogue for so many years and which serves the purpose of providing a status in life. Such is the fate to which we have been reduced through foreign domination. I have been attracted to the present struggle more for its moral worth than the political. I know that if India can present a completed example of non-violence, India will have made a unique contribution to human progress. It is a vision that holds my youthful mind and I would count no suffering too great to achieve an end so noble and glorious.

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 347-8

[1] In the source, D. B. Kalelkar explains that this was drafted by Gandhiji for being read out by Ramakrishna Bajaj in the court. Gandhiji had explained the statement to Ramakrishna Bajaj at Sevagram on April 14, a day before he offered civil disobedience; *vide* "Letter to Deputy Commissioner, Wardha", 12-4-1941

[2] *ibid*

318. LETTER TO P. C. GHOSH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 14, 1941

MY DEAR PRAFULLA,

I duly received your letter of 28th March last. I am somewhat late answering.

Yes, uneven and weak yarn is, like a counterfeit coin, useless. I have received some very fine specimens from the jails.

My health is quite good and so is Kumarappa's. Yes, I saw Maulana Saheb in Naini Jail. He was quite well, and so was Vijaylakshmi who has now been discharged. Sardar is keeping well and spinning during all his spare hours.

Kumarappa too is in good order and condition. He will leave today for Coonoor for a change. Rajen Babu is keeping well. He should be here in four or five days.

My regards to all there.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3781

319. ASHRAM NOTE

April 15, 1941

Neither boys nor elders should indulge in idle jokes either between themselves or with girls. While discussing work there is a place for innocent pleasantries. That is an art. But unless there is adequate reason for talking, observing silence is best.

This is the root of purity in speech.

There is much filth and refuse lying around the Ashram. Someone from amongst us should assume responsibility for keeping the surroundings clean. . . .[1] It need hardly be emphasized that cleanliness is an essential part of non-violence.

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, p. 383

[1] Omission as in the source

320. LETTER TO PREMNATH BAJAJ

April 15, 1941

DEAR PREMNATH,

Your complaint is just. I have not replied because I could not apply my mind to the question and so I shirked a reply as I must do even now. I would not like to let my perfunctory note to go forth as my opinion. I fear you should do without it.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

321. NOTE TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

[*April 15, 1941*][2]

Perfectly desirable except what was kept for me. The mangoes were specially sent for as medicine for both Chimanlal and Munnalal. I come in by the side door. If I refuse, there will be terrible argument. The children here get much more than elsewhere. But you are right. Mango is a cursed fruit. It attracts attention as no other fruit does. We must get used to not treating it with so much affection. But they will all get some as we have three boxes.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 1461. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

322. LETTER TO RAGHUVANSH GAUR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
April 15, 1941

CHI. RAGHUVANSH,

I got your letter. I have no doubt your writing to the magistrate was a mistake. Surely it is not a case for fasting. How can we force any college? Make use of the knowledge that you have acquired and earn your livelihood. If you will give up your insistence, I would be pleased. Rajkumaribehn has taken great pains for you.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI RAGHUVANSH GAUR
C/O KHAIR ASHRAM
ALIGARH

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 141

[1] *Vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Premnath Bajaj", 13-12-1940
[2] Supplied by the addressee

323. NOTE TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM,
April 16, 1941

You need not write in Hindi. You misunderstand me.[1] I cannot be blind to your faults but they cannot affect my regard for you.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10350. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

324. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

Personal *April 16, 1941*

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. How can writing to you be a trouble to me? I manage to write in the midst of work. If on occasion I cannot do so, I do not make any special effort to write. This happened yesterday. I apply mud-packs to the stomach. Then I feel sleepy. If the mail goes in the meantime the letter to you remains unwritten.

I would like it if Ba could stay with you, whether in your hospital room or at your house. The only thing is that she should not be a burden on Mother. Make that change if Ba is willing. Her staying with you is certainly a different thing from your occasionally visiting her.

Letters to Pyarelal have been received. I shall have them sent on to him if that can be done. He is not able to get over his touchiness. His touchiness has its reasons, if we look for them. But my teaching is that we must not be touchy even if there are reasons for it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[1] *Vide* "Remarks in Amrita Lal Chatterjees Diary", 8-4-1941

[PS.]

Durgabehn had pain again yesterday. But she is feeling better right now.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

325. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

April 17, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Rajkumari gave me your letter. I have not yet received the things you sent for Devdas. Would it not have been better if those too had come with Rajkumari? But there is no hurry about it.

Ba will have arrived.

Days are pretty hot here. It is nice and cool later in the night. How shocking that your examination goes on being postponed! You have to get your degree in such chaotic conditions! But what can be done? Being in that set-up, you have got to face those troubles.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Your reply about doctors joining military service is correct.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

326.LETTER TO INDUMATI N. GUNAJI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 17, 1941

CHI. INDU,

I have your letter. Restraint, to be natural, must have the co-operation of the mind, which again cannot be had without knowledge. If I have the clear knowledge that consumption of alcoholic drinks will harm me I will never touch alcohol, whatever its attraction. In your case the fact is that you do not accept abstinence a

hundred per cent. You think you have two different duties, in fact you have only one. But that is what I think. God alone can guide you in your dilemma. Make an effort. It will certainly do you good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10944. Courtesy: Indumati Tendulkar

327. TELEGRAM TO NIZAM OF HYDERABAD[1]

[On or before *April 18, 1941*]

H. E. H. NIZAM
HYDERABAD

MY RESPECTFUL CONDOLENCES YOUR BEREAVEMENT.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 21-4-1941

328. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA (C. P.),
April 18, 1941

MY DEAR SINGER,

You are a finished diplomat. I am sending a wire of condolences. Herewith love letter for Lilamani.Sarup coming here on Sunday.

Hot winds blowing here all day. Hope you are better off.

Love to you all.

SPINNER

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The addressee, who had lost his mother, received the telegram on April 18, 1941

329. LETTER TO MANUBEHN AND SURENDRA MASHRUWALA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA
April 18, 1941

CHI. MANUDI[1],

You are suffering very much indeed.[2] That is always So. Even if an operation becomes I necessary, there is no need to getfrightened. There is no risk at all in it. Keep Ba informed. I must have letters from you during your illness.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. SURENDRA,

If Manudi is too lazy to write, you should write. I was awaiting a letter, when I got the postcard today.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MANUBEHN MASHRUWALA
"BAL KIRAN"
SOUTH AVENUE
SANTACRUZ, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2679. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

330. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

Personal *April 18, 1941*

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. Do I not know your condition? But why should I raise that issue now? You finish whatever work you have to do there. In a way of course no work can ever be finished. But what can be easily completed should be completed. Then the way will automatically be opened.

Have you given the papers to Devdas? Pyarelal's articles are among them. I shall have a look and decide whether they can be immediately used.

[1] Harilal Gandhi's daughter
[2] The addressee had a tumour in her stomach.

Brahm Dutt came yesterday after his release. He gave good news about Pyarelal. There will be more to know when Mahadev goes to meet Pyarelal tomorrow.

Durgabehn is doing quite well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

331. STATEMENT TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"[1]

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 19, 1941

I have very carefully listened to the advance Press notes of *The Times of India's* leading article which must have appeared this morning in Bombay. I acknowledge the friendly tone of the article, and I wish I could have given an encouraging reply; but I cannot.

I adhere to all that I said at the initiation of the struggle[2]. When I launched out, I had no foolish illusion about a sudden miracle happening. It was conceived to be, and it remains, a silent declaration of unquenchable faith in the power of non-violence even in the midst of circumstances so terrible and so baffling as face the world today.

I believe more in the efficacy of the incalculable force of inscrutable divinity than in the efficacy of the calculated and calculable forces that the combined powers of destruction can bring into play on this little planet. That incalculable force has somehow or the other to act through human agency. How and when I cannot say. Whether that agency is the Congress or not, I cannot say. I proceed upon the faith that today the Congress is the only organization, however imperfect, however wanting in faith as an organization, still the only organization that stands definitely for peaceful measures.

That being my position, so far as I am concerned, there is no drawing back. Whether civil disobedience is offered by one or many is of no moment. It must continue against all odds. Congressmen can

[1] This was given to the special correspondent, who met Gandhiji for an answer to the appeal by *The Times of India* for the withdrawal of the Civil Disobedience Movement.

[2] In October 1940

certainly repudiate it in more ways than one. It will then cease to be an organizational movement, and therefore I will admit it will cease to be effective in any shape or form. But I would be content if I still retain the faith to be the solitary witness of the power of non-violence.

I must resolutely deny that this movement, whether in conception or in execution, is communal or anti-Muslim or anti-English. There is sufficient evidence for those who want to notice it to show that extraordinary precaution is being taken to keep the movement within limits and absolutely innocuous.

Many Government people have admitted that it is wholly ineffective according to their conception. The writer of the article has said as much from his standpoint. And both are right. It was never intended that it would create an appreciable impression upon the war effort, but it is a moral, and from that standpoint a grand protest against the conduct of the war in the name of a free people. It is a token of the yearning of a political organization to achieve the freedom of 350,000,000 people through purely non-violent effort and therefore to affect the future destiny of the world. Again an ambitious claim, but it is there.

If I can help it, the Congress will disdain freedom at the sacrifice of a single legitimate interest that is consistent with the interests of the dumb millions, whether they are Hindus, Muslims or others. I must deny that if the Congress had held on to office in the seven provinces the Pakistan cry would have been less loud than it is today; but the giving up of office had an infinitely more moral basis than the avoidance of a tussle with Muslim interests or any other interests. The fundamental basis was India's dissociation from the war effort to which it was never invited to be party. This is putting it in its lowest term and in bald political language. As you snow, my own basis is still more abstract, still more moral and still more universal, but on that account none the less real or less practical.

I make bold to say that when the clash of arms has ceased and we have settled down to peace, permanent or impermanent, history will record that the Congress fight in its totality was a supremely moral fight and free from any injury to man's dignity.

To conclude this very unsatisfactory reply, as it would appear, to a friendly gesture, I want to plead one thing. Would friends ask me at this supreme moment in the life of the world and my own life, to deny a faith that has sustained me for nearly half a century? And let me

interpolate one thought, however unwelcome it may be: I am convinced that if Britain will only be true to India, then, whether the Congress withdraws the struggle or not, everything can be settled satisfactorily. But unfortunately British statesmen have chosen the wrong path and have put imaginary obstacles in the way of India's freedom. But that is a chapter on which I have no desire to dilate.

The Times of India, 20-4-1941

332. LETTER TO DUNICHAND

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 19, 1941

DEAR LALA DUNICHANDJI,

I arrived here on the 16th evening but was only able to put your questions before Gandhiji yesterday.

1. In regard to M.L.A.s who in spite of reminders do not court imprisonment the question had better wait for an answer in view of Mian Iftikhar-ud-din's[1] pending early release.

2. The same applies to A.I.C.C. members whose date has already been extended to the 30th instant.

3. Gandhiji is agreeable to having the spinning and weaving of certified khadi test done by the A.I.S.A. appointees. He is, however, in agreement with you that those who cannot afford to or for some equally legitimate reason are unable to present themselves before the appointed examiners and who can get the necessary certificate of *bona fides* from the President or Secretary of District Congress Committees may be exempted from the A.I.S.A. test.

4. In regard to members of local bodies resigning, the matter had better wait till Mian Iftikhar-ud-din's release.

5. The same as regards Congressmen of all grades who refuse to offer civil disobedience.

6. Members of the Provincial Congress Committees are included among the number that is to offer civil disobedience.

7. Members of Working Committees of all grades are to offer civil disobedience.

8. Gandhiji fears that no undertaking of loyalty to the movement will be worth anything with those who are determined to deceive.

[1] President, Punjab Provincial Congress Committee

Your list of 212 satyagrahis has come. I note that the names have been accepted by the local President or Secretary and you told me that you had seen to it that these officers are reliable persons. In any event we would like to have the answers to the questionnaire from each person from the local officers. And what about a test for them? How soon can the A.I.S.A. arrange for the latter?

There have been some complaints regarding the revisions undertaken by the *Amicus curiae* Bar Association Committee in Lahore. Gandhiji's opinion is that the idea of such a committee in itself is all right. But it should be allowed to function on its own without any interest, instigation or interference in its work on the part of the satyagrahis. You should issue strict injunctions to the latter in this regard.

I am afraid my programme must have tired you as it did me. I trust you are rested by now and well.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

[PS.]

Since writing the above your covering letter of the 15th instant has come in.

LALA DUNICHANDJI OF LAHORE, BAR-AT-LAW
C/O PRESIDENT, PUNJAB CONGRESS COMMITTEE
MOZANG ROAD
LAHORE

From a copy: C.W. 997. Courtesy: Jagannath

333. LETTER TO SAMBHAJI

BHAI SAMBHAJI,

I have gone through the terms of the agreement. They are certainly harsh. I am considering the matter. What I would suggest is that an impartial arbitrator should be appointed and only such terms should be laid down as he accepts. Strictly speaking, of course, every employer has a right to fix his own terms for recruitment and everyworker has a right to reject them. It is up to one's liking. But since I know the press authorities I have suggested the appointment of an arbitrator.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

334. LETTER TO KHWAJA

SEVAGRAM,
April 20, 1941

MY DEAR KHWAJA,

I was much touched by your long letter. I had your note too from Delhi. I am glad you met Ba.

You will have no difficulty in believing me that I am the same confirmed believer in unity that you saw in 1919. Let me correct you about dates and facts. I presided at the Hindi Sammelan in 1918[1] and that with the deliberate intention of making Hindi inclusive, not exclusive. There was no criticism then of my presiding. Muslim friends were enthusiastic about my definition of Hindi. At that time it was only my definition when I presided. Again my definition was accepted by the Sammelan. How could there be criticism when I broadened the basis so as to give recognition to Urdu script on a Hindi platform? The first note of opposition was sounded when I attempted to use Hindi as a term synonymous with Hindustani. Again it was an attempt in the right direction. But I had lost caste by then and every act of mine had begun to be suspect. Into the causes for this phenomenon I need not go. But from the above narrative it is clear that nothing that I have done could possibly be a cause for the Hindi-Urdu controversy. But the controversy having arisen, I could not escape unscathed. I would not call the Sammelan[2] a communal organization any more than I would so call t he Urdu Anjuman[3]. Both forms exist and votaries of both also exist. There need be no rivalry between the two but the wretched spirit which has nothing to do with the languages pervadesevery department of life. When it goes, as it will and must some day, the languages will remain what they are but they will provide us no food for quarrel. Meanwhile both are subserving the common cause. In the end the extreme forms which have no living reality behind them will disappear or will exist as corruptions of a past age. Be that as it may, let us few keep our heads cool and do the right, cost what it may.

[1] The source has "1917" *Vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1941

[2] Akhil Bharatiya Hindi Sahitya Sammelan

[3] Anjuman-e-Taraqqi-e-Urdu

Your plan about the dictionary is good. I am discussing that and other points with Dr. Tarachand[1] and Pt. Sunderlalji.

My love to you and the whole family.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

335. LETTER TO PURATAN. J. BUCH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 20, 1941

CHI. PURATAN,

I got your letter. The news that you give does not seem correct; but even if it is true, we must keep ourselves ready. I hope both of you[2] are quite prepared. You may write whatever you wish.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9179

336. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

April 20, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I just could not write to you yesterday. I had sent Mahadev to Nagpur. He had a very satisfactory meeting with Pyarelal. He will give you a full account of the meeting. Of course, today he has gone to Wardha to receive Sarupbehn. He may be quite late in returning, because Prof. Trivedi[3] is very ill. He will have to tarry for his sake. I am writing to you only about one thing. Pyarelal says that you should definitely not appear for the examination without full preparation. Hence, he would rather that you did it either in October or April next. I feel that if you are confident, you should certainly appear for the examination in May. I for one believe firmly that medical service is a God-given gift in your case and hence you will easily pass whenever you sit for the examination. So far as knowledge is concerned you will go on adding to it all the time. You do not need anybody's

[1] Of Allahabad University
[2] The addressee and his wife Anandi
[3] J. P Trivedi, father of Manshanker J. Trivedi

certificate for that.

Ba seems to have arrived there. You will of course inform me about her condition. We have started giving mango and milk to Sharda's son. Because of that his bowels are moving. Now Madalasa remains to be treated. I am giving the same things to her also. She does keep well because of it.

Durgabehn can be considered to be quite well. Today she is not having any fever either.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

337. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 21, 1941

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter full of beautiful description.[1] I am glad you are in such peace and you have the benevolent Company of Harakh-chandbhai. Durgabehn[2] is well now.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6478. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9873

338. LETTER TO SACHINDRA NATH MITRA

April 21, 1941

DEAR SACHINDRA BABU,

Your letter. I gave you the minimum.[3] But a satyagrahi who has the call may go from one end of the earth to the other. So far as your forming a sevadal[4] is concerned please see the Bengal Provincial

[1] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira* the addressee explains: "I was staying in a mud cottage in the midst of a magnificent fruit garden, twenty acres in extent. It was full of gorgeous peacocks some of whom would now and then come and dance in front of me while I was spinning."

[2] Wife of Mahadev Desai

[3] The reference, presumably, is to the instructions given by Gandhiji for the guidance of satyagrahis. *Vide* "Instruction to Satyagrahis", 17-3-1941

[4] A voluntary service corps

Congress Committee people.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SACHINDRA NATH MITRA
5/2 KANTAPUKUR LANE
BAGHABAZAR, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 7186

339. LETTER TO DR. AMUTHU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 21, 1941

DEAR DR. AMUTHU,

I am surprised. Why did you take the train? How can you say you walked to Delhi? You must not write to the Viceroy. You should return to Tamilnad and do constructive work silently and by way of penance. You have proved an unworthy satyagrahi.

Yours,

BAPU

From a copy: A.l.C.C. File, 1940-41. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

340. LETTER TO PURATAN J. BUCH

April 21, 1941

CHI. PURATAN,

Vasumatibehn[1] has given me your message. How can I forget Anandi or you? But Anandi seems to have completely forgotten me.

What is this that has happened in Ahmedabad?[2] Have the Pathans ruined your work?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9180

[1] Vasumati Pandit
[2] The reference is to the communal riot that had broken out on April 18.

341. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

April 21, 1941

CHI. NARAHARI,

See that the accompanying letters reach their destination. I hope to hear something from you about the Ahmedabad riot.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9121

342. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

April 21, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your postcard. A letter to Ba is enclosed. Give it to her. Durgabehn is doing very well. I hope when you come here you will find much improvement in her health.

I do not like your being burdened in any way at the time of your examination. But how can you consider Ba a burden? God alone is your saviour. You did well to deposit the fee.

I am well. Shastri is also keeping well. A specialist has come for Trivediji. He has introduced some important changes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

343. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAJAJ

SEVAGRAM,
April 21, 1941

CHI. RUKMINI[1],

I got your letter just now. Indubehn is sitting beside me. She knew him[2]. His ship had sunk, but he was in a small boat for a few

[1] Maganlal Gandhi's daughter
[2] Rameshwarlal Bajaj, addressee's father-in-law

days and finally reached Scotland. From there he took another ship and Miss Harrison[1] had heard that he had reached South Africa. After that Indubehn does not know anything. Let us hope he will arrive safely. Remain calm, all of you.

Ba is still in Delhi.

Blessings to both[2] *from*

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10129. Courtesy: Benarsilal Bajaj

344. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

April 22, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. I have made it a rule to have someone visit Pyarelal. Send me the address of P. Gupta. I shall give him notice when the next visit falls due.

I have understood about your examination. I do not worry at all. It may be held any time. If it is held in May, you will be able to give me time without any worry. From that point of view, I would rather that it was over in May.

Ba is keeping well and so I shall not be anxious about her at all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

345. LETTER TO ARUN CHANDRA GUHA

SEVAGRAM,
April 23, 1941

DEAR GUHA[3],

Your letter dated 18th instant. I shall do what I can. But relief by way of clothing or food has not much attraction for me.

[1] Agatha Harrison
[2] The addressee and her husband Benarsilal Bajaj
[3] Secretary, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee

The problem is why do riots take place in spite of Congressmen functioning in all the three places—Dacca,[1] Ahmedabad and Bombay? Congress influence is strongest in Ahmedabad, then in Bombay. You are under a handicap. Why were so many thousand people so helpless as to fail to defend their homes? They could have done it either violently or non-violently. Congressmen must not be satisfied with mere relief work. That is for social workers who have specialized in the field, such as the Marwari Relief Society. Congressmen have to find out the why and the way to combat the evil. You are a seasoned worker, no arm-chair man. I would like you to apply your mind to the task. We may not expect governments to help in such things. If there are people who can be easily frightened, there must be those who will put them in fright.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI A. GUHA
BENGAL PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE
32 UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also File No. 3001/H, Police Commissioner's Office, Bombay

346. NOTE TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE [2]

SEVAGRAM,
April 23, 1941

It is not merely audit that is going on. It is also going to be a proper system of account-keeping.

Nothing has to be procured at any cost. Oranges may be stopped altogether except for the properly sick. We will use lemons liberally instead of the *papita*[3]. We shall issue mangoes almost daily like today. When mangoes are issued other fruit like bananas may be stopped.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 1462. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[1] Communal riots had broken out in Dacca on March 18.
[2] The addressee was in charge of distribution of food in Sevagram Ashram.
[3] Papaya or papaw

347. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

April 23, 1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

If one thinks deeply over it, the examination point of view, the knowledge point of view and the proficiency point of view, all are one and the same. A person takes an examination in order to become an expert, i.e., to acquire perfect knowledge. Kanchan[1] does become restless at times, but there is no cause for worry. She is under my constant observation. Do you write harsh letters to her? Ask her to show me all your letters, so that you may keep your pen under restraint and it will be easy for me to guide you.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MUNNALALJI
CHARKHA SANGH, KHADI VASTRALAYA
MOOL, DISTT. CHANDA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8503. Also C.W. 7135. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

348. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

April 23, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is no letter from you today. You will have received mine of yesterday.

Durgabehn is much better today.

I have two suggestions about Ba. She should have hip-baths and apply mud-packs to the lower abdomen at night. Both these things should have an effect on the rectum.

Today almost everyone is on fast.

How is Satya's life going on? How is Mother's health? Write a letter to Pyarelal and send it here. I shall try to have it delivered to him.

Urmila has gone there. I have told her that she should meet you.

[1] Addressee's wife

My health is fine. What would you say if Anand were unable to pass stool without enema?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

349. ADVICE TO SIND CONGRESS DEPUTATION

WARDHAGANJ,
April 24, 1941

Apart from the decisive fact that Maulana Saheb does not want civil disobedience in Sind, I am clearly of opinion that on merits, too, there should be none. Every Congressman in Sind should bury himself in the villages and devote himself to constructive work.

The Hindu, 26-4-1941

350. NOTE TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM,
April 24, 1941

With the exception of those crossed, they should do with lemons.[1]

From a photostat: C.W. 10386. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

351. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

April 24, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I could not write to you yesterday.[2] And today I am writing this at bed-time, The whole day was spent in meeting people.

[1] The addressee had submitted a list of persons requiring fruit. Gandhiji wrote this on the addressee's letter and marked a cross against the following names' Chimanlal, Ramdas, Dr. Das and Amrit Kaur.

[2] This appears to be a slip; *vide* the preceding item.

Durgabehn is well. I am of course fine. Pyarelal is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

352. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

April 24, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. I have received all your letters concerning Ba and I have replied to all of them. Since you had forbidden it, I have not written to Ba anything about her fever. I know that you would not regard Ba as a burden. Still, Ba does make demands on your time, does she not? It irks me that you have to visit her twice every day. Ba is only in your hands and so of course you will shower on her all you have. But what would be my own duty in the matter? And yet since Ba is there with you what more can I wish? Hence, what you write is absolutely correct.

I am observing fast today.[1] By the time this letter is in your hand, there will be hardly four or five hours left to end the fast. I am not feeling anything today. I am taking a lot of water. If tomorrow passes the same way, there will be no cause for worry. Even if not, no harm can come in just twenty-four hours. The fast is undertaken on moral grounds. I have been greatly perturbed that Sharad and Abha resorted to lying. My conditions are such that they are bound to be broken, and when they are broken, one cannot help telling lies. Therefore, I had no recourse except to observe a fast for my mental peace.

Give this information to Ba also. I have not let this get around. You too should tell no one except Ba. Do not mention this to Lakshmi [or] Devdas. I shall not be sending any telegram when the fast is broken. There is no cause at all for worry.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The fast was broken on April 27; *vide* "Non- Party Leaders' Conference Resolution", 14-3-1941

353. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

April 24, 1941

BHAI AMRITLAL,

Give to Vasumatibehn papaya or whatever fruit she wants.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 1463. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

354. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,
April 25, 1941

I have read painfully the long report of the debate in the House of Commons on India. Distress has been known to have softened people's hearts and made them mindful of facts. But Britain's distress has evidently left Mr. Amery absolutely cold and untouched.[1] This callousness makes me more than ever confirmed in my opinion that the Congress must abide by its policy of non-violence in spite of the heavy odds facing it.

Mr. Amery has rendered no service to Great Britain by his contemptuous disregard of the situation as it exists in India and thefacts that stare one in the face. He talks glibly of British rule having given peace to India. Did he not know what was happening in Dacca and Ahmedabad? Who was responsible for keeping the peace in these two places? I hope he will not throw in my face the fact that Bengal, at any rate, has self-government. He knows what a mockery that self-government is. He knows what little power for such emergencies toy Ministers have, whether they wear the Congress label, the League label or any other.

I ask the very pertinent question: Why has this long spell of British rule left the people so emasculated as to disable them from standing up against a few hundred goondas? It is a humiliating spectacle, more for the British than for us, to see thousands of people

[1] L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, moved a resolution in the House of Commons on April 22, 1941, to extend for another year the proclamation under which the Governors of Indian Provinces had assumed the powers of the Provincial Legislators.

running away from their homes through sheer fright, because a few hundred goondas have found a favourable atmosphere for resorting to arson, murder and loot The first act of any government worth the name would be to teach its people the art of self-defence, but the foreign British Government had no concern about this fundamental welfare of India's citizens and so it deprived the people of the use of arms.

All the handsome tribute that Mr. Amery pays to Indian troops falls flat on Indian soil, because, leaving aside Congress non-violence for the time being, if India had been equipped and trained for self-defence and if India had become a voluntary ally of Great Britain, I hold that all European Powers combined for destruction would not have touched Great Britain.

Mr. Amery has insulted Indian intelligence by reiterating *ad nauseam* that Indian political parties have but to agree among themselves and Great Britain will register the will of a united India. I have repeatedly shown that it has been the traditional policy of Great Britain to prevent parties from uniting. 'Divide and rule' has been Great Britain's proud and ill-conceived motto. It is the British statesmen who are responsible for the divisions in India's ranks, and the divisions will continue so long as the British sword holds India under bondage.

I admit that there is unfortunately an unbridgeable gulf between the Congress and the Muslim League. Why do not British statesmen admit that it is after all a domestic quarrel? Let them withdraw from India and I promise that the Gongress and the League and all other parties will find it to their interest to come together and devise a home-made solution for the Government of India. It may not be scientific; it may not be after any Western pattern; but it will be durable. It may be that before we come to that happy state of affairs, we may have to fight amongst ourselves. But if we agree not to invite the assistance of any outside power, the trouble will last perhaps a fortnight and it will not mean even one day's destruction of human heads such as goes on in Europe today, for the simple reason that thanks to the British rule we are wholly unarmed.

Mr. Amery, in utter disregard of truth, misleads his ignorant audience that the Congress wants "all or nothing". Let me remind him that in order to placate British sentiment, the Congress descended

to the Poona Resolution[1] and when at Bombay it undid the Poona Resolution,[2] I authoritatively stated that the British Government could not at the present moment grant or declare India's independence and that, therefore, for the time being, we should be satisfied with the complete freedom of speech and pen. Was that "all or nothing"? With Mr. Amery's state of mind, I suppose it is too much to expect him to have the elementary grace to acknowledge the studied moderation of the Congress in its desire not to embarrass the British Government whilst it is fighting for its very existence. Not having that grace, he turns the Congress moderation against it and claims that the Congress civil disobedience has fallen flat.

It took my breath away when I read his statement about India's prosperity. I say from experience that it is a legendary thing. India's millions are becoming progressively pauperized. They are miserably clothed and underfed. Because there is one man's rule, he is able to produce a budget of millions. But I make bold to say that it is not only no proof of the prosperity of the famishing millions, but it is proof positive that India is being ground down under the British heel.[3] It is the duty of every Indian who knows anything about the distress of the peasantry, to rise in rebellion against this autocratic rule. Fortunately for humanity, India's rebellion is a peaceful revolt and I hope it will be through exclusively peaceful effort that India will realize her natural destiny.

But I must not carry any further the painful dissection of Mr. Amery's performance. It hurts me to have to undertake even this very brief analysis of his speech. But it is so amazingly misleading that I felt I would be failing in my duty if I did not point out at least some of the most glaring discrepancies in that unfortunate utterance. Surely he could have rested content with the undisputed sway that he exercises over the destinies of over four hundred million people.

The Hindu, 27-4-1941

[1]The resolution, recommended by the Congress Working Committee at Wardha on June 21, 1940, was passed by the A.I.C.C. at Poona on July 28, 1940. For the text of the resolution, *vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 18-10-1940.

[2]*Vide* "All-India Congress Committee Resolution", 15-9-1940 and "Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting, Bombay", 15-9-1940

[3] The following two sentences were struck out by the censor.

355. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

[*April 25, 1941*][2]

1. In answer I must repeat my former statement that British statesmen and publicists have covered the whole Indian question with unreality. The reality about the *Times* [*of India*] criticism is that nationalist India, for some reason or other, is against co-operating in the war effort.[3] But when one understands that the whole of India is a prison and that the jailers are able to make the prisoners do what they Iike, it is small wonder that the British Government is able to impress what money and recruits they like. I have shown before now that the modern titled classes, including the ruling princes; are essentially a British creation.

2. If the proposals[4] of the Bombay Conference are accepted *in toto* I shall admit that though the proposals are likely to be unacceptable by the Congress, their acceptance will be some evidence of a desire to part with power.

3. To describe me as a dictator is laughable, if only because I have no sanction behind my instructions save the willing and affectionate endorsement thereof by Congressmen. I have imposed no views on anybody. Imposition of non-violent views is a contradiction in terms. It is true that I cannot change what is described as my policy because my policy is my creed.[5]

I am amazed at Mr. Amery's effrontery in saying that the Congress wants "all or nothing" and "refused even to discuss the matter". He knows that the Congress descended so far as to make the Poona offer and he should know that at Bombay when the Poona offer was withdrawn the Congress realized that the Government could not be expected at the present moment to grant the Congress demand, and therefore the resolution asked for freedom of speech which has been categorically refused.

[1] Enclosing this in his letter dated April 25, 1941, to Frank Moraes who had raised these questions on behalf of *The News Chronicle*, London, Mahadev Desai wrote: "Here is what G. has given in reply to questions 1, 2, 3 and 5. He wants to say nothing in reply to question 4."

[2] *ibid*

[3] *Vide* "Statement to "The Times of India", 19-4-1941

[4] *Vide* "Non-Party Leaders' Conference Resolution", 14-3-1941

[5] What follows is presumably the answer to question 5.

Equally false is the description of the Congress as a totalitarian body with totalitarian ambitions. The essence of totalitarianism is that it should have violent sanction behind it. Mr. Amery knows that the Congress is pledged to non-violence and I challenge him to produce a single instance of an authoritative resort to violence by the Congress to impose its will upon its opponents.

On a par with the foregoing two statements is Mr. Amery's assertion that "the main constitutional task is inevitably for the moment far more in the hands of Indians themselves than in ours" when he knows that there is nothing in the hands of the Indians themselves, except to perform the almost impossible task of undoing the traditional policy of 'divide and rule'. Imagine a Hitler in occupation of England and successfully dividing Englishmen as Indians are divided in India and then mocking at them by saying, 'I will ratify an agreement among you.' I assert that in India we have Hitlerian rule however disguised it may be in softer terms. And since he has chosen to disregard truth, I must not wonder at his deliberately misleading an ignorant audience by saying that individual civil disobedience has created a situation naturally embarrassing as it was meant to be. The written letter stands, and it is that the Congress by its civil disobedience did not mean to embarrass. That it has not proved embarrassing is acknowledged by Mr. Amery himself in his speech when he declared with great gusto that the Congress action has not affected the war effort in any part of India, "generous funds having flowed in from every class for every purpose of war or for mitigation of suffering". Instead of paying a tribute to the exemplary moderation of the Congress, he has gracelessly accused a half-century old organization of doing what it has never intended and what, in fact, it has never done. It makes me sad to think that the distress through which Great Britain is passing today has not sobered Mr. Amery even to the extent of respecting cold fact.

From a facsimile: *Mahatma*, Vol. VI, between pp. 48 and 49

356. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 25, 1941

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I purposely write to you in English. Under my advice[1] Amrita Babu returns to Bengal. He ought not to coerce his family. He istherefore likely to take mental sannyasa and sever his connection with the family. His two boys[2] remain here for the time being. The two girls[3] he takes with him. I think their place is with their mother with whom they have more in common than with Amrita Babu. I would like you to advise and guide the family. So long as they accept your guidance I shall continue to send the money I am sending. I would like both the sisters to do some national service and earn their living. But you will know better. Amrita Babu has high ambition in the shape of service. He would rather die in the attempt to still the rioters[4] than anything else. You will guide.

Abha has no sari. You will please equip her simply and send me your bill.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10300. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

357. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

April 25, 1941

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

What is this? Why should exertion lay you low? You know the trick. When there is undue exertion fast partially or wholly. Partial fast means living on juicy fruit only. When there is fever fast is obligatory. I wish you would be soon in Coonoor.[5]

[1] *Vide* "Note to Amrita Lal Chatterjee", 5-4-1941
[2] Sailen and Dhiren
[3] Vina and Abha
[4] At Dacca
[5] The addressee was to go to Coonoor for a change.

I am glad you were able to go to Kodambakkam.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10152

358. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,
April 26, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

My faith is well founded. It rests on direct experience. All learning is limitless. Fortunately, even the examiners cannot go beyond the limitlessness of learning. So, why should we be scared by it? You are of course not the type to be scared. So far, the fast has gone on all right. I have been able to carry on the daily routine. I am writing this to you at 6 a. m. I have been taking plenty of water.

It would be very nice if you could come here in June. Durga is well. Prof. Trivedi had blood-pressure. Now he is having difficulty in urination. He has diabetes. But his condition is fairly good. Durga is being given rest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

359. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

April 27, 1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your very long letters. They were welcome. But you should get rid of the letter-writing mania. I do not believe that you have overcome your attachment to Sevagram. In this matter I am only giving you my own views. You must keep Kanchan with you wherever you stay. You may separate afterwards. It was a condition that if you got fever you would leave Mool. Please, therefore, come back.

[PS.]

Wrote this much despite the weakness. Today is the third day of fasting.[1] I will break the fast in the evening.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8502. Also C.W. 7134. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

360. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

April 27, 1941

BA,

Sushila will tell you everything about my ending the fast. Now there is no reason at all to worry. Durga's condition may be considered satisfactory. Trivediji is in midstream. I am not writing separately to Devdas and Lakshmi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

361. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

April 27, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I just finished taking lime and water at 5.20 p. m. In the meantime the grapes have arrived, and I am writing this while eating them. My health is very good. I remained in bed the whole day today. They took me to the bathroom for the massage in an arm-chair. I am going to be on grapes and lime-juice for the day. There should be no cause at all for worry now.

I shall not write more today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] It is likely Gandhiji undertook the fast in connection with the riots.

362. TELEGRAM TO MULKRAJ [1]

April 28, 1941

LALA MULKRAJ
SECRETARY, JALLIANWALA BAGH MEMORIAL FUND
AMRITSAR

YOUR ACTION APPROVED. YOU MUST NOT GIVE PERMIT UNLESS ALL PARTIES MEET AND PRESENT YOU WITH A PLAN CLEARLY SHOWING PARTS OF BAGH THEY WILL OCCUPY AND SATISFY YOU THAT THEY WILL ABIDE BY THEIR PROMISE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

363. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

April 28, 1941

BHAI NANABHAI[2],

You have completed three score. I do hope that you will regain your health and will complete two score more in order that you may go on serving.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6694. Also C.W. 4339. Courtesy: Nanabhai I. Mashruwala

364. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

April 28, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. I understand about Ba. You will know about me from my letter to Ba. I have not mentioned the blood-pressure in it. It was 132/86 in the afternoon. The fast will definitely do some

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter dated April 22, 1941, regarding reservation of Jallianwala Bagh for the different unions of Amritsar for observing May Day.

[2] Brother of Kishorelal Mashruwala and father of Sushila Gandhi

good. The weight has gone down from 105 lb. to 101 lb.

Madalasa can be said to have completely recovered. She walks for an hour morning and evening. There is a glow on her face. She is taking milk, fruit and vegetables properly. She is able to pass stool without enema or purgatives.

Janakibehn's wound looks tender. You will tell me after examining it whether or not it has healed. Otherwise, she eats and drinks well and moves about a good bit. She sits without a cushion.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

365. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

SEVAGRAM,
April 28, 1941

BHAI SHRIMAN,

Your suggestion is good. Today Rajendra Babu is coming. I shall see what can be done. You know perhaps that Madalasa[1] is making good progress. She walks a lot. I do hope she will be fully restored.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]
Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 300

366. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

April 29, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Your letter is full of love. I know that any time I happen to go on a fast, you will come flying if you can do that. I am sure that you will try your utmost to restore Ba to health and your joy at doing that will be a thousand times more than at passing your M. D. Today's letter from Ba is no doubt good. I am not worrying at all. Come when you can.

[1] Addressee's wife

Anand has now put on some weight. It is 19_ lb. He is keeping well. He has become very naughty.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I did not have here the pain from which I suffered at Rajkot. And I am well. I have taken 1 lb. of milk today.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

367. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

[*April 30, 1941*][1]

CHI. KAKA, REBEL,

Why don't you see that, though you are a rebel, to work on the [opponent's] committee and follow his style in correspondence is a sign of your being a non-violent rebel?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KAKASAHEB
40—A RIDGE ROAD
MALABAR HILL, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10940

368. LETTER TO URMILA M. MEHTA

[*April 30, 1941*][2]

CHI. URMI[3],

I got your slips. I kept silent because there was no need for a reply. What are you reading at present? I miss you very much. All of you should come at the earliest in May. What do you read and what is your diet? Let me know your weight. Do you go out for walks?

Use ink for writing. In what form are you studying? It is quite hot here.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI URMILABEHN
C/O SHRI M. P. MEHTA
TOP FLOOR, 71 DARYAGANJ
DELHI

From Gujarati: C.W. 10116. Courtesy: Manjula M. Mehta

[1] From the postmark.
[2] *ibid*
[3] Daughter of Maganlal P. Mehta and Manjula M. Mehta

369. LETTER TO EDITOR, "THE TIMES OF INDIA"

May 1, 1941

DEAR SIR,

You write[1]:

> Mr. Amery may well retort that the "discrepancies" with which Mr. Gandhi charges him are also evident in the Congress leader's statement[2]. Certainly the accusation that India has been "emasculated" because of the alleged British policy of keeping her ''wholly unarmed" comes strangely from the arch-protagonist of non-violence.

In 1908[3] when I first expounded the life-saving and the life-giving truth of ahimsa I wrote that disarmament was the blackest page in British history in India. I repeated the same thing in 1918[4] when I was collecting recruits for the British army with a zeal that brought me serious illness and a fair measure of unpopularity. My statement passed muster then. But times have changed and I have become inconsistent for stating an unchallengeable fact. I suggest that non-violence cannot be imposed upon anyone. It has to come from within. The British measure was undertaken to make British rule safe, not to make the people non-violent. It has made them impotent even for mischief. Good, impotent persons[5] can never do. It is no matter for pride or credit that one representative of the British power can hold in abject subjection, say, a village of 1,000 souls. My non-violence does admit of people, who cannot or will not be non-violent, holding and making effective use of arms. Let me repeat for the thousandth time that non-violence is of the strongest, not of the weak. It is a force mightier than violence, though radically different from it in quality and effect.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile: *Mahatma"* Vol. VI" between pp. 48 and 49

[1] Under the column "Current Topics" in *The Times of India"* 28-4-1941

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 25-4-1941

[3] A slip for "1909". The reference is to *Hind Swaraj;*

[4] *Vide* "Appeal for Enlistment", 22-6-1918

[5] The source has "Good and impotent persons".

370. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

May 1, 1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your letter. You must appear for the examination. You must become proficient in khadi science, in respect of both production and sale. After you have done that you are sure to settle down somewhere.

You must take all necessary measures for preserving your health. But asking for everything to be sent from here will not help. You will yourself feel embarrassed. I had assumed that as per our agreement you would immediately return. I still suggest that you do. None the less, if you wish to stay on, you may, and see that you make good progress.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8500. Also C.W. 7136. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

371. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 1, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

You have done well to detain Ba. Her fever went down immediately, did it not? But you are right to say that Ba should not go anywhere at all.

I understand that you are definitely appearing for the examination. I have taken it for granted that you will pass the examination.

What you write about that girl is correct. You would have felt more satisfied if you had examined her yourself. But it is not always possible to keep that balance.

I am well. Durgabehn is well too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

372. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

May 2, 1941

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. I don't know what can be done about Jayaprakash[1]. We have got to endure it. Continue to make inquiries from time to time. If I think of anything I will write. In any case go on doing your work. Do not worry about other things. Rajendra Babu had a talk with me. He will write about it himself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3565

373. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 2, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is no letter from you today. There is one from Lakshmi. Ba must have completely recovered by now. I am gaining more and more energy every day. The mind is greatly disturbed after the passing away of Prof. Trivedi. He had been helpful to thousands of people. I was instrumental in bringing him to Wardha. Manu and other doctors made all possible efforts; but what could be done when the string had snapped?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

374. FOREWORD

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 3, 1941

I have not read this collection. But it is enough for me that it

[1]Jayaprakash Narayan, addressee's husband, was interned in the Deoli Detention Camp.

recounts the noble qualities of Deenabandhu and that the money it brings in will all go to the Deenabandhu Memorial [Fund].

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Deenabandhu ko Shraddhanjaliyan; also G.N. 11694

375. TELEGRAM TO TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU[1]

[*May 3, 1941*][2]

AGREEABLE .

GANDHI

The Hindu, 5-5-1941

376. LETTER TO MARGARET JONES

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 3, 1941

DEAR KAMALA,

Yes, I had all your letters.[3] I should have written earlier, but I

[1] This was sent in reply to the addressee's telegram dated May 2, which read: "Mr. Jinnah, without reference to me, has released for publication my letter to him dated 6th February and his reply to me dated 10th February, 1941. I ask your permission to publish our correspondence beginning with 25th January and ending with 10th March, 1941. Please wire." In his statement dated May 4, the addressee explained: "After reading day before yesterday the statement of Mr. Jinnah in the newspapers, issued from Mysore, and the correspondence between him and me, which he has released to the Press, I sent day before yesterday evening a telegram to Mahatma Gandhi. . . . Last evening, I received the . . . reply from the Mahatma. . . . As Mr. Gandhi is agreeable to my releasing the correspondence which has taken place between him and me, I am issuing it to the Press. In his statement, Mr. Jinnah says that he showed his willingness 'to meet Mr. Gandhi or any other Hindu leader to have a heart-to-heart conversation'. He would have been more accurate if he had drawn attention to the following sentence in his own letter to me: 'I have always been ready and willing to see Mr. Gandhi or any other Hindu leader on behalf of the Hindu community and do all I can to help in the solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem." The words 'on behalf of the Hindu community', which he has omitted in his statement, but which are found in his letter, would go to show that he wanted Mr. Gandhi to see him in that professed capacity. Mr. Gandhi, as will appear from his letter, was not in a position to agree to this condition. There the matter ended, and it was no use my carrying the matter further with Mr. Jinnah. . . ." For Gandhiji's letters to the addressee

[2] *ibid*

[3] Gandhiji had asked the addressee to send him a fortnightly diary while she was under training in midwifery. *Vide* also, ''Letter to F. Mary Barr", 31-3-1941

could-not do so. I was glad you were doing so well, and were keeping to the simple life. Do continue to write.

Love.

BAPU

Bapu—Conversations and Correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 191

377. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 3, 1941

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

I was distressed to see your pompous statement[1] to the Associated Press. I told you to work silently and under Satis Babu's guidance. You have taken no mission or authority from me. You know that you have been sent for a domestic reason.[2] You have therefore told a deliberate lie. Unless you somehow correct yourself, I shall have to repudiate you entirely. I am sorry. I had expected better things from you.

Here is a letter from Sailen.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10301. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

378. COMMUNAL RIOTS

SEVAGRAM,
May 4, 1941

Hindu-Muslim riots that have broken out in many important places in the country must have saddened all sane people. My grief however is special. The Congress influence seems to have been practically unfelt during the dark days.

We have proved ourselves barbarians and cowards in these places. Arson, loot and killing of innocent people including children, have been common in almost all the places. Thousands have run away

[1] According to the addressee this statement, dated May 1, was on "his mission to Dacca where a Hindu-Muslim riot had broken out".

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 25-4-1941

from their homes for fear of their lives.

Congress influence was not to be measured by the number of members on the Congress register but by its leavening quality. It has been shown clearly that the influence is negligible in riots and the like. Individual cases apart, the Congress produced little or no influence over either the Muslims or the Hindus in the affected areas. From the accounts received it seems that Muslim fanatics in Dacca and Ahmedabad did their worst in inflicting damage on Hindu property by looting and burning with a deliberation that showed premeditation. Hindus, instead of boldly standing up and facing the mischief-makers, fled in their thousands from the danger zone. And where they did not, they were as barbarous as the assailants. These were all untouched by the Congress non-violence. And yet these are the men who form the bulk of the Congress meetings.

If the Congress has no control over the masses on such occasions, there is not much value in Congress non-violence as a positive force. The Congress cannot take charge of the Government if the British suddenly withdraw. They are not likely to do so without a desperate effort. But British valour cannot make Congressmen brave or fit for shouldering the responsibility of Government.

At the present moment the British Government is preoccupied. It is a marvel how they hold sway over four hundred million people. Their amazing self-confidence and their skill in the use of destructive weapons enable them to hold India in bondage. But they may not be expected to keep the peace even to the extent they do in normal times. They will ensure their control anyhow but they willallow us to kill one another and come in only when that control is in danger.

Congressmen's course is clear. They must examine the contents of their non-violence. If it does not go as far as the regulation of inter-communal and such other relations, it is of no use for the acquisition of independence. I prophesy that without pervasive non-violence of the brave, when the question of real transfer of power comes, it won't be the Congress who will have the privilege and the responsibility of delivering the goods. The power will descend to those who are able to make effective use of violence.

In Europe two forces, equally matched in destructive skill and bravery, are ranged against one another. The goal before both is domination. In spite of all the will in the world, I have found no difference in kind between the two. The difference in degree does not

interest me. The British heel is bad enough for me. As a man wedded to independence and non-violence, I must fight Nazism and Fascism equally with the enslaving British Imperialism. But has the Congress really the non-violent strength even to fight this imperialism which we know through and through? Hitherto it was a case of seizing power bit by bit. But every Indian politician knows that there never was the slightest move on the part of the British to part with real power. And now we have it in its nakedness from Mr. Amery that we may expect no such thing peacefully from British authority. We have to fight for it either violently or non-violently, whether it is the Congress or the League or the Hindu Mahasabha that fights for it. I am satisfied that the two sectional organizations will never win independence for the masses, Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Parsi, Jew. The Congress is the only organization that has laboured for national solidarity from the beginning. But that labour will be vain if the Congress does not prove true to its trust. I do not mind Congressmen changing their creed in spite of many leaders being in jail or openly leaving the Congress. I can see my way to rebuilding the Congress with five true men with whom there is neither Hindu nor Muslim nor any other. Religion is a personal matter. It ought not to affect the political field.

Then what should a Congressman do? He must resolutely refuse to take sides and defend with his life and without the use of violence the person who is in distress as did for instance three women in Ahmedabad. I have no doubt there are many such individual instances unknown to me. Cowards will never bring peace or independence. He must therefore tell the masses never to fly from danger and that if they cannot follow his way they must defend themselves in the best way they can. What is required is a brave heart—a possession which is in nobody's giving and which therefore can never be taken away. He must instil into his neighbours the lesson that even violence can be both decent and indecent. It is no bravery to kill unawares an innocent person because he does not belong to one's religion or to burn his property. Those who do so disgrace their religion and themselves and positively mar the effort for independence.

Let me give some further illustrations of what a Congressman should do in given circumstances.

A Congressman has no enemy. While he will not seek the protection of the police or the military, he will not interfere with them in the performance of their duty but he will not hesitate to lose his life

if need be in checking them when they are partial or exceeding their authority. This will appear a dangerous doctrine. But it is not if it is enforced fully. For if the Congressman concerned has erred, he will be the sufferer and not the police or the military. I know that a young man, because he was brave, by timely interference saved perhaps a hundred lives by simply holding the bridle of an officer's horse and telling him in firm accents, that he may not give the order to fire and that he—the young man—would reason with the crowd and disperse them.

Supposing there is a Hindu procession which has a right to pass through a Muslim locality and a Congressman has no influence over either, he will still give his life in begging a passage from the opposing Muslims. The immediate result may be zero. But the Congressman will have left a legacy of non-violent bravery. It will be good practice in non-violence. Let us learn from the British people the art of recklessly losing life and property. The same rule applies to a Muslim procession passing through a Hindu locality. We shall never learn the art of mutual forbearance and toleration till some of us, though perfectly innocent, have staggered Indian humanity by losing our lives.

A crowd is bent upon setting on fire the property of one community or another or desecrating a mosque or a temple. Congressmen whether one or many will give their lives to prevent mob fury.

A stray man attempts to stab a passer-by. At the risk of his life, a Congressman will pluck the knife out of the hands of the would-be miscreant.

Congressmen may gasp on reading this note and particularly the illustrations and say 'impossible'. Well, attainment of independence is still more impossible whether by violent or non-violentmeans. But what seems impossible to one lacking faith will become possible to those who have faith. And it is said that faith can move mountains. I know this, that neither independence nor communal unity is possible without ample sacrifice, bravery and self-confidence which is but another name for faith.

Congress Bulletin, No. 6, 1942, File No. 3/42/41—Home Department, Pol. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also A.I.C.C. File, 1941. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

379. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 4, 1941

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

Your letter distresses me.[1] You seek notoriety and not service. You had no business to give the interview. Do please retrace your steps. If you go to Dacca, you will go on your sole responsibility. As to the girls, if they cannot be under Satis Babu's guidance, I must disown all responsibility. They should be in some institution there. But that is your concern. I shall not be responsible for financial support, if you cannot put yourself under Satis Babu's guidance.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10302. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

380. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 4, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. When will be your examination? How long will it go on? When will the result be known? I have taken it for granted that you are going to pass. Do not burden your mind with any worry at all.

My blood-pressure is behaving ideally for the present. I go to bed at about 9 p. m. The nights here are pleasantly cool. I think Durgabehn is improving day by day. It can be said that she is not having any illness at the moment.

Mahadevbhai will have to go to Bombay tomorrow in connection with the riots there.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The addressee wanted to go to riot-affected Dacca. *Vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Amrita Lal Chatterjee", 3-5-1941

[2] For Gandhiji's article on the communal riots that had broken out at the time, *vide* "Communal Riots", 4-5-1941

381. LETTER TO PURSHOTTAM TRIKAMDAS

May 5, 1941

Don't know what I can do.[1] You should seek out ways and means. You can have a Deoli Day. Perhaps . . .[2] might be helpful.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

382. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 5, 1941

CHI. MANUDI,

I had your letter. Now that Kishorelalbhai and Gomati are going over there it will cheer you up. Do not needlessly make yourself unhappy. Harilal went and stayed with Ba at Delhi for some days and then ran away. Ba will return in June.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1580. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

383. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

May 5, 1941

BHAI MUNSHI,

Follow the example of Asquith[3]. When he fell ill he went on a cruise in the Mediterranean even while the War was going on. Why worry about Ahmedabad? Your job is to return completely restored. You may worry about all other things after that.

Blessings to both of you or all from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7659. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

[1] The addressee, General Secretary, Congress Socialist Party, had informed Gandhiji of the impending strike on May 4 by the Deoli Camp jail detenus if their demands remained unfulfilled.

[2] Illegible

[3] Herbert Henry Asquith, Prime Minister of Great Britain from 1908 to 1916 and leader of the Liberal party

384. LETTER TO URMILA M. MEHTA

May 5, 1941

CHI. URMI,

I got your letter. Your description is good. You must leave a margin when you write a letter. Write a clean hand. Munno[1] should be made to sit in cold water. The prickly heat will subside. During the day I wrap a wet sheet even round my body, so that I do not feel the heat. In this weather one should give up pulses, and oil, too. You may add a little ghee to the vegetables, though there is no need even for that. Tell Manjula she may if she wishes eat these things in winter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 1618. Courtesy: Manjula M. Mehta

385. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 5, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. Lately I have not missed a single day. Never two days at a stretch. The case of Ba is delicate. You are doing your level best. You have even succeeded considerably. What else? Both of you will be coming here when this month is over. I do not have any doubt about your examination. You are of course gaining experience every day. Is it not increase in knowledge for you? And you have not completely stopped reading. Who will look after Ba in your absence?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal, Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

386. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

May 5, 1941

CHI. HEMPRABHA[2],

I got your letters. Before me is your letter from a village which is 22 miles away [from Sodepur]. Yes, you get satisfaction in such

[1] Dharmapal, addressee's younger brother

[2] Wife of Satis Chandra Das Gupta

activities. I pray to God that He may give you health so that your strength to serve may grow.

How is Arun[1]?

Did Amritlal Chatterjee go there? Whatever he has written in the newspapers is all wrong. I have not made him my representative. Let him go to Dacca and immolate himself. He has been told to do as Satis Babu directs him. I have said the same thing regarding his daughters. If he comes, guide him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2737

387. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

May 5, 1941

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Today I finished reading your article on the economic condition of India. I liked it very much. To do justice to it, a gist should be given in the beginning. There should be more of such articles, and they should be printed in pamphlet form and translated.

If it is necessary to go to Bihar, I am fully prepared. I read again about Schuster, etc. I do not feel there is any need for suggestions from here. We should put our own house in order and clean it. Time is on our side. They have to move forward. We must secure control over things. At least freedom of speech and the Press should be allowed and the detenus should be released. Even communists should not be detained without trial.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8042. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Addressee's son

388. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May 5, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

What does Lilavatibehn say? Tell me about the stove, etc. Who does all the shopping?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4386

389. LETTER TO GOPINATH BARDOLOI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 6, 1941

DEAR BARDOLOI,

I was delighted to have your letter. You are certainly making the best use of your time. I am glad too that you are all spinning.

I do not mind your writing about me.[1] But you will offend all orthodoxy by bracketing me with the avatars or prophets and I think rightly. You cannot write of a living man in the same way as of the dead who, by common consent, have been acclaimed as great teachers.

Your second question is difficult.[2] I believe with those Muslims who think that the Prophet's years in Mecca were the years in which he taught and lived pure non-violence. He became an administrator in Madina and thus ceased to be a pure teacher. In any case the net effect of the Koran is that non-violence is an obligation but violence is permissible. We are bound to accept as authoritative the interpretation generally given by the Muslim world and not the one I have preferred.

As to Krishna's advice to Arjuna you should read my

[1] The addressee who was in Jorhat Jail had sought Gandhiji's permission to include a life-sketch of Gandhiji in his Assamese book on religious teachers, meant for children.

[2] The addressee had wondered how to reconcile the ahimsa doctrine with the action of prophet Mahomed in Madina, where he took up arms, and Shri Krishna's advice to Arjuna in the *Bhagavad Gita* to fight.

introduction to *Anasaktiyoga*[1]. If you have not read it, you will tell me and I shall send you a copy.

I would advise you all[2] to learn well both Urdu and Hindi. Then only shall we evolve an all-India speech.

Yours,

BAPU

(M. K. GANDHI)

From a photostat: G.N. 2

390. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

May 6, 1941

CHI. NARAHARI,

Now that Mahadev is there with you, this is not of much use. But I read your letter only last evening. As the matter is very important, I am giving a brief reply. Mridula[3] is of course made of steel. God will protect her.

I will not be satisfied with watchmen. I am assuming that the truly non-violent can be counted on one's fingers. The others should defend themselves. If this is not done, the same story will repeat itself. Keep this in mind in whatever you plan. Those who employ watchmen will not be able to rule. The few who can be counted on one's fingers must of course meet the Mussalmans. They should try to win over as many of them as they can.

If the Muslim community is bent on fighting, I would not reject the idea of boycott. I would consider boycott more decent than stabbing with daggers, burning houses, etc.

The conclusion to be drawn from this is that we should guide even those who resort to violence as much as we can. As I am writing this with my left hand I have been brief.

Add this to what Mahadev tells you or keep this in mind in whatever you do. Mahadev himself will fit it into what he advises.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] *Vide* "Anasaktiyoga"

[2] Some Congress M.L.A.s had also been imprisoned along with the addressee.

[3] Mridula Sarabhai" daughter of Ambalal Sarabhai, who moved about fearlessly in the riot-affected areas in Ahmedabad

[PS.]

The enclosed letters are for Kaka and Babu.[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9122

391. LETTER TO SURAJRAM PUROHIT

SEVAGRAM,
May 6, 1941

BHAI,

I have read your letter. I could not decipher your signature and Mahadevbhai is not here.

You will be stronger if you leave your native place. Whatever the amount you may earn outside, you can give a good fight from there whether you are one or five. The vital thing is that you should go out and earn in a spirit of *yajna*. Then you will spend your wealth for the welfare of the people. have suggested. If you land in jail there, then that is indeed welcome. If you are guided by the considerations of safeguarding your body or wealth, it is a vain endeavour.

This covers replies to all your questions.

Blessings from
BAPU

SURAJRAM PUROHIT
THE OTHER WAY IS WHAT YOU
SANSTHAN RAJPIPLA LOKSABHA
136-140 MEADOWS STREET, 2ND FLOOR
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

392. TELEGRAM TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

WARDHAGANJ,
May 6, 1941

DR. SUSHILA
LADY HARDINGE MEDICAL COLLEGE
NEW DELHI

DEVDAS SAYS DESPITE YOUR EXTRAORDINARY DEVOTION BA GETTING WEAKER AND RESTLESS. IF SO BETTER

[1] The letters are not available.

SEND HER BEFORE GOING LAHORE BUT YOU SHALL BE FINAL JUDGE.

BAPU

From a photostat: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

393. LETTER TO VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA

SEVAGRAM,
May 6, 1941

BHAI VICHITRA,

I have your letters. I do not fully understand the situation, but I have faith in your capacity and your devotion to duty. So all will be well. Our work goes on, doesn't it?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

394. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

SEVAGRAM,
May 7, 1941

I have just read an account of the unfortunate riots in Bihar. As soon as a wire was received on the 3rd instant by Rajendra Babu from Shri Sachidanand Sinha that a dangerous situation was developing in Bihar, he responded by hastening to Bihar.

The account of the riots makes painful reading. I have studied the various statements regarding them also. Rajendra Babu has gone to Bihar to put in the whole of his weight in favour of sanity and peace. This is his first wire to me after reaching there:

> Situation improving but still panicky uncertain. Mathura Babu[1], Shah Sahib[2] touring. Myself proceeding with volunteers.[3]

[1] Rajendra Prasad's Secretary

[2] Shah Mohammed Uzair Munimji

[3] In his *Autobiography* Rajendra Prasad writes: " . . . I decided to go at once to Bihar Sharif. Fortunately Abdul Bari arrived in Patna the same day and he consented to accompany me. We engaged a couple of motor-lorries and with a batch of teachers and students of Bihar Vidyapith and some other workers left for the place. . . ."

I know that he will give a good account of himself. Peace will somehow be restored if it has not been already by the police and the military. But this can only be a superimposed peace. Rajendra Babu's as every Congressman's and for that matter every sane citizen's business is to find out the cause of the riots. Unless this is done, there is no likelihood of permanent peace. I observe that the riots started with the resentment over the observance of Anti-Pakistan Day[1]. Pakistan and anti-Pakistan observances and the like have come to stay. As national consciousness grows and ambitions rise high, such observances will multiply. But why can we not conduct ourselves decently in spite of these? Why should we be so utterly intolerant as not to suffer one another's views? And then why should we show our intolerance as if we were savages?

I am quite convinced that the chief burden for the voluntary preservation of peace lies on the shoulders of the Congress, the oldest, the best organized and the most popular organization in India. It must be admitted that the vast majority of Congress members are Hindus and Bihar is a predominantly Hindu province. Therefore it should be comparatively easier for the Congress to ensure peace there without the aid of the police and the military. It should be a point of honour for the stronger party to protect the weak against harm to life or property. It is a difficult task but it has got to be tackled. When I lay this burden on the Congress, I do not mean to suggest that the Congress alone should or can do it. The Congress has to invoke the assistance of all parties, the Muslim League, the Hindu Mahasabha and others. Each may have its political programme. But if we are not intent upon imposing our respective programme on the opponents by force of arms, expressed today through goondaism, surely we may all agree that we shall settle all our differences through negotiation and peaceful effort including arbitration. The Congress may fail to produce joint action. If so, it will be a noble failure. It must, however, continue to work even single-handed, if its non-violence has any meaning in it.

At present Bihar is the province that can lead the way and set the example. Rajendra Babu has a gentle and unique hold in his province such as no other leader has. He is the hero of the earthquake[2] days when the whole of India put its trust in him. May he have too the privilege of being the messenger of peace in Bihar and through Bihar

[1] In protest against Pakistan Day which was observed on March 23" at the instance of M. A. Jinnah

[2] Of January 15, 1934; *vide* "Speech at Om Prakash Mutt, Ootacamund", 4-2-1934

maybe throughout India.

Congress Bulletin, No. 6, 1942, File No. 3/42/41-Home Department, Pol. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India

395. LETTER TO K. B. MENON

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 7, 1941

MY DEAR MENON,

I had both your letters. The first did not call for a reply.

I note what you say about the meeting.

As Seth Jamnalalji had a talk with Shri Vaze[1] and as the latter is understood to have undertaken even the editing of the paper[2] I have written to him and am awaiting his reply. I would therefore suggest your holding the meeting after I have had the reply.

I think your reply to Shri Jainarainji[3] was correct.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

PS.

I have your further letter today. If the Standing Committee ceases to function, J.N. also does likewise. But hand the enclosed[4] to J.N. and show this letter too to him. I shall give you further instructions after I hear from J.N.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

396. LETTER TO JAINARAYAN VYAS

May 7, 1941

BHAI JAINARAYAN,

Menon saw me. Now I have three letters from him. Is there some

[1] S. G. Vaze

[2] *States' People,* an organ of the All-India States' People's Conference

[3] Jainarayan Vyas, one of the three Secretaries of the All-India States' People's Conference. The addressee had written to J. N. Vyas that along with those of other members of the Standing Committee his powers also were suspended.

[4] *Vide* the following item.

bad blood between you? I have expressed my view. You will have known about it. But now I feel that I ought to hear what you have to say and then make up my mind. Of course strictly speaking I have no right to interfere in the matter. But since Panditji[1] wants it I am giving my opinion to Menon. But if there is friction between you my position will become untenable.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

397. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 7, 1941

CHI. MANI,

Nandubehn [Kanuga] was complaining against you very much, saying that you were obstinate and ruining your health. You are not eating properly, she said. I regard this as a sign of despair. A satyagrahi will always keep his health in the best of conditions. I, therefore, strongly advise you to improve your health.

My blessings to all the women. I do get reports about the work there.

I keep excellent health. Ba is in Delhi. She has become very weak.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. MANIBEHN PATEL
PRISONER
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON
YERAVDA

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—*4: Manibehn Patelne,* p. 127

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru

398. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 7, 1941

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I had your reply. As I am writing to Manibehn, I am writing to you also. My work is going on as usual. Health is excellent. The heat does not seem to affect me. A wet piece of cloth protects the head.

I now feel like going on a tour somewhere. I will go where God leads me. I have in mind Ahmedabad, Bombay and Bihar I will see. We must find some way of reconciliation. Or the Congress mustsacrifice itself in the attempt to find one. I cannot think of any other way. Can I? But such a way can be found only when God reveals it. I am thus neither panicky nor worried. I observe things and try to remain engrossed in my duty.

Do not draw any inferences from what I have said. I have written down everything that came to my mind.

Blessings to all from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON
POONA

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 247

399. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C.P.
May 7, 1941

CHI. DAHYABHAI[1],

If the accompanying letters can be delivered to the persons concerned, please pass them on. Send the letter for Mahadev as it is or take out a copy and send it.

[1] Son of Vallabhbhai Patel

I trust everything is all right at home. Ask Baba[1] to drop me a few lines.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI DAHYABHAI PATEL
68 MARINE DRIVE
BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4 :Manibehn Patelne, p. 161

400. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 8, 1941

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

I got your astounding wire[2] from Narayangunj to which I sent you a reply[3]. I hope you had my letters[4]. In them I have made it clear that you went with no authority from me. I merely gave you advice which you were free to follow or reject. Now my firm opinion is that you are wholly unfit for responsible work on your own. You have long neglected your domestic duty. You will serve the nation by bearing the family burden. If you can restrain your sexual appetite, you will create no progeny but do your duty by those for whose creation you are responsible. Your worth will be judged by what you are able to do in this direction. I shall continue to send money till the end of this month. Thence you will bear your own burden. Please remember that I was in no way obliged to spend any money on you. But thinking that you were a deserving national servant, I spent money on you.

I shall still try to train Sailen and Dhiren. I shall go on for a little time. If they prove worthy I shall continue, or else I shall send them on to you. I am intensely sorry for what has proved a disastrous

[1] Vipin, addressee's son

[2] According to the addressee, this was "regarding the riot situation and soliciting Gandhiji's instructions".

[3] This is not available. *Vide* however letter to the addressee, 10-5-1941

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Amrita Lal Chatterjee", 3-5-1941 and "Letter to Amrita Lal Chatterjee", 4-5-1941

experiment. But my sorrow will be turned to joy, if perchance you wake up, become humble and rebuild your ruined home.

You will see my letter to Vina.[1]

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10303. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

401. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA
May 8, 1941

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

I forgot to send you blessings for your birthday, didn't I? What can I do? But you know that you have them. All the same have them in writing too. Since you are getting them late, have them with interest. Anyway you know how thing are. I have Narandas's[2] letter. If it needs a reply, I will send it by and by.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

402. LETTER TO BHUJANGILAL K. CHHAYA

May 8, 1941

CHI. BHUJANGILAL,

What will you do here with me? I am always engrossed in my work and do not get even a minute to look at anyone. You should, therefore, stay there and, availing yourself of the company of Narandas and others, shape the course of your life as you wish. How much longer will my presence be available? What trust can one put in it?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2594

[1] The letter is not available.
[2] Addressee's father

403. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 8, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have sent you a telegram.[1] I had been waiting for your reply and so did not write to you yesterday. I do hope that Ba is really all right. So that is not the reason why I have sent the telegram. I feel perturbed that just when you are having your examination you have to be worrying about Ba. But I know God will save you.

I am doing very well. Doctor and Sankaran together had removed Lilavati, Rajkumari and Amtul Salaam from the proximity of my bed. Das slept on one side and Sankaran on the other. This went on for five or six days. Lilavati created a row and so she came back last night. Rajkumari and Amtul Salaam were in agreement with the plan. Lilavati was not aware of it. Even so she slept at some distance. She did not even protest when Dr. Das made other suggestions. The whole change was with a view to giving me rest.

I forgot to write to you that I had read your article in *Hardonian*[2]. I thought it was good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

404. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

May 8, 1941

BHAI PRITHVI SINGH,

I got your letter. I also read Gopal Rao's statement; everything seems to be going on well.

I got no acknowledgement for my letter. I gave the post box address.

All that you told Seth Rameshwardas was correct. I shall not be able to guide you much, because in a gymnasium you have to teach the use of weapons for self-defence and defending others. So act according to your own lights. Rameshwardasji cannot at all mean that

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Presumably the Lady Hardinge Medical College journal

non-violent exercises should be taught. Now it is to be seen how far you can take up responsibility for training in violence. In this everything depends upon your attitude. Consult Nathji[1]; nowadays Kishorelalbhai is also in Bombay.This is a complicated question. What your conscience prompts you to do should be considered proper.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5647. Also C.W. 2958. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

405. LETTER TO S. G. VAZE

SEVAGRAM,
May 9, 1941

MY DEAR VAZE,

Many thanks for your prompt reply. I have told Menon to continue the paper. The financial part will demand consideration. I am glad you are out of the wood.

Love.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

406. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

May 9, 1941

CHI. LILA,

I hope you reached there safe. From today's letter I can see that it was a good thing that I sent you there. Now, while you are there, let not your health suffer and try to overcome whatever shortcomings you have. Speak little and that too after due thought. Here everything is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9595. Also C.W. 6567. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] Kedarnath Kulkarni

407. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 9, 1941

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. We have a number of different methods. One is yours, the second Lakshmidas's[1], the third Vinoba's, the fourth (perhaps) Jajuji's[2], the fifth that of the Meerut Ashram (that is, Kripalaniji's), the sixth Mathuradas's[3], the seventh Diwanji's[4]. Still more names can be added. None of these methods is perfect. If any of them was, it would have been universally adopted. But only a creation of God can be perfect. Since I have faith in you, I did not permit the formation of the committee which you could not join. Now that you are ready, you may certainly form one along the lines you have suggested and intensify your work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8582. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

408. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

May 9, 1941

BA,

I got your letter. The fast was for 72 hours.[5] I didn't feel it at all. I am regaining strength. Whenever you are ill I get worried. Get well soon. I am having my normal food now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2140

[1] Lakshmidas Asar
[2] Shrikrishnadas Jaju
[3] Mathuradas P. Gandhi
[4] Dilkhush Diwanji
[5] *Vide* "Letter to Munnalal G. Shah", 27-4-1941

409. LETTER TO LAKSHMI GANDHI

May 9, 1941[1]

CHI. LAKSHMI[2],

Because you need help or Ba needs a companion I am sending Lilavatibehn. Even earlier I had thought of Lilavatibehn, thinking that Ba would need an escort if she were required to come before Sushila does.

I hope the children are all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2137

410. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 9, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I had been expecting your wire. It has not come. If Ba has to come before you do, she must have an escort. That is why I am sending Lilavati. There is also the wish that while Ba is bed-ridden, this will mean less burden for Lakshmi. Now Lilavati is going there. If she has to stay on there, you will of course be showing her around the college, etc. Entrust that job to someone else. I do not wish to take your time.

I am returning the papers you had sent for Pyarelal. He does not want them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The source has these in Gujarati.

[2] *ibid*

411. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 9, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I received both your postcard and letter together.

I understand about Ba. I feel relieved after sending Lilavati. The burden on Lakshmi was hurting me. Lilavati will give you all the news from here. It is really strange about your examination. What kind of a university is it that cannot fix even the dates till the very last moment? What can you gain out of it? Be that as it may, you have to go through the ordeal.

I shall await your arrival on the 2nd or 3rd of June.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

412. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 10, 1941

DEAR AMRITLAL,

I have your letter.[1] Evidently you did not attend to what I said. I told you, you were not to use my name about anything you did. You were sent because Vina and Abha had to go and for that matter even Sailen and Dhiren had to go. I did advise you to go toDacca but not as my agent or messenger, You needed no introduction. You know that I have no confidence in your judgment. I merely suggested what you might do, if you cut yourself from your family. But I must not labour the point. If you will let friends know that you were acting under an obvious misunderstanding and that you were in no way my representative it would be enough. My Dacca wire stands. If you work in the limelight you will fail. If after telling Annada or whoever is in

[1] According to the addressee" this was written on May 7, from Dacca, in order "to dispel misunderstanding'", and to seek "Gandhiji"s permission to carry on the peace effort".

charge that you are acting on your own, they keep you for Dacca work, you may stay provided they pay your full expenses. If they do not you must go to the family and attend to that primary duty. I shall not be responsible for your expenses after May for which month I now understand you have already taken the money in advance. I was sorry to hear that you had taken away the things you had got from others as for instance the blanket from Chimanlal.

Surendra[1] has left the Ashram without telling anybody.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10304. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

413. LETTER TO DR. NATHUBHAI D. PATEL

May 10, 1941

BHAI NATHUBHAI,

Mahadev is in Ahmedabad. You are worrying too much about Durgabehn. She sleeps more than enough. The pain in the thigh is gradually subsiding. She is taking salicylate and occasionally Epsom salts too. Urine, etc., are normal. She can sit up by herself. She comes down at will from the raised platform in the open with somebody's help. In spite of this evident daily improvement, do you still want her to be admitted to the hospital? What do you suspect? She eats thin *khakharis, bhaji*, fruit, etc.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. N. D. PATEL, M.D.

BACKBAY VIEW, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2721. Courtesy: Dr. Nathubhai D. Patel

[1] Surendranath Sarkel, a political sufferer from Bengal to whom Gandhiji had given asylum

414. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 10, 1941

CHI. DEVDAS,

I got your letter today at 11.40 along with the other letters.

You have written Friday in your letter. Today is Saturday. A letter written on Friday cannot reach here on Saturday at 11 o'clock. The date on the envelope is also that of Thursday.

It seems I must now stop issuing statements to the Associated Press. The U[nited] P[ress of India] has stopped on its own. Several papers have published my statement[1] in full. You fought quite well. But I think by and by even that will not be possible. Or you people will have to. . .[2] I see that you have published my statement minus the portions censored.[3] This was not right. It would have been much better if you had not published the statement at all. In any case you should have said "censored" at places where some portions are omitted. *The Hindustan Times* will come out poor in comparison with other papers. It wouldn't have mattered if such an impression had no foundation in fact. But here it will be well-founded. But what is done is done. Henceforth I should like my statements to be published in full, if they are to be published at all.

I was glad to learn that you found Ba in good health. I had no doubt at all about Lakshmi's capacity for service. All the same, I have sent Lilavati to lighten her burden. It seems now that Ba will not return before June.

Mahadev will be here on the 13th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2146

415. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

May [*10*][4]*, 1941*

CHI. MANI,

I have written one letter[5] to you. You will get it in the jail. This is

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 25-4-1941

[2] The source is illegible here.

[3] The addressee was Editor of *The Hindustan Times.*

[4] The source has "20", evidently a slip, since Gandhiji mentions Lilavati being sent to Delhi the previous day. Lilavati left for Delhi on May 9. *Vide* "Letter to Lakshmi Gandhi", 9-5-1941

[5] *Vide* "Letter to Manibehn Patel", 7-5-1941

in reply to your letter. I got it yesterday and could read it only late at night.

How can I share your belief that, had I been in Ahmedabad, the riots would not have taken place? It is difficult to make such a statement about anybody today. I follow where God leads me. He has brought me and kept me here. I know there are many villages like this one in Gujarat and I could have settled in one of them.

Manubhai[1] is showing great courage. The whole family was present at the prayers yesterday.

Ba is in New Delhi just now. She is laid up. She is having fever. She writes and says there is no cause for worry. Yesterday I sent Lilavati to Delhi. Janakibehn's[2] health is very good indeed. Why did Nandubehn say it was bad? These days she is taking long walks as she never used to do before. And she eats well.

Kanu's betrothal has been put off for the present. It may be assumed that it is not coming off in the immediate future. The girl[3] also has gone home to her parents.

Mirabehn is spending the summer in Chorwad. Durgabehn's health is improving rapidly.

I do wish that you should spend two or three days with me after you have put things in order there.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. DAHYABHAI,

To be handed over to Manibehn when she comes.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI DAHYABHAI PATEL
68 MARINE DRIVE
BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro— 4: Manibehn - Patelne, pp. 128-9

[1] Manshankar Jaishankar Trivedi, whose father J. P. Trivedi had passed away
[2] Wife of Jamnalal Bajaj
[3] Abha Chatterjee

416. LETTER TO DR. S. K. VAIDYA

May 10, 1941

BHAI VAIDYA,

I got your carbine. I am simply captivated by your purity of heart. But why blame khadi and the spinning-wheel? Of course, I didn't mind your having acted as you thought proper. If you continue thus you will discover the truth by and by. If on further reflection you think you can stick to khadi and the spinning-wheel, please do so. Do however what your conscience tells you.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VAIDYAJI
A.I.S.A. KHADI BHANDAR
396 KALBADEVI ROAD
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5746

417. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 10,1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is no letter from you today. But there is one from Devdas. I understand from it that Ba's health is improving. I hope that improvement will continue and as you expect, she will return here in better health than when she left.

You will receive this on the 12th. Your examination also will commence on the 12th. Which of these statements is going to be true? Durgabehn is fine. So am I.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

418. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 11, 1941

CHI. PREMA,

This time I have delayed in replying to you. There is heavy pressure of work, and, moreover, your letter lay buried in a heap of other letters.

I do get reports about that place.

I keep excellent health.

Everybody is being severely tested.

Amtul Salaam is always in poor health. Ba is in Delhi and has become rather weak just now. Sushila is looking after her with the utmost care. She is hopeful that Ba will get well. I have sent Lilavati to help in looking after her.

Mahadev, who has gone to Ahmedabad, is now expected back on the 13th.

I am sure all the women there spin as much as possible. I hope the prayers are going on well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10419. Also C.W. 6858. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

419. LETTER TO RANCHHODLAL

May 11, 1941

BHAI RANCHHODLAL,

I got your letter. I am doing the best I can.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 742

420. LETTER TO DR. S. K. VAIDYA

May 11, 1941

BHAI VAIDYA,

I don't think any purpose will be served by sending the papers to the magistrate and to the Secretary to the Governor. You are angry at the moment. Please calm down a little. Stop writing and speaking and look deeper into yourself. You may, if you wish, come here for a day or two and recover your peace of mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5747

421. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 11, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is no letter from anybody today. You may have gone to Lahore. Still I am sending this letter. The enclosed cutting may be useful to you. It had been crossed, but when I noticed it, I cut it out for you. Ba must be well.

Things are going on well here.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope you are regularly guiding Tari. She has chronic indigestion. She says she keeps writing to you.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

422. LETTER TO RAMMANOHAR LOHIA[1]

May 11, 1941

BHAL RAMMANOHAR,

I was very glad to have your letter. I have written to Haridattaji. It is good that almost everyone spins. Your father's journeys continue. He keeps sending me his diary. My blessings to everyone.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

423. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

May 11, l941

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have all your letters. Mahadevbhai has been regularly answering them. It is strange that you have not received his letters.

I have understood all your problems. We should work according to our lights. The result is in the hands of God.

It is good that your *Gita* class is going on. I wish that in the same way Koran classes were also held, and we respect each other's religion.

I got Bhai Farid's[2] letter. I am not replying separately. His speed has improved. It is good that all of them are learning both the scripts—Devanagari and Urdu—and also Hindi and Urdu styles. I find its result very heartening. We should be so equipped as to read and write with ease both Hindi and Urdu. Congressmen in particular ought to do this much.

As for Behn Satyawatiji[3] it is as usual. She wrote that she would come to Sevagram some time. I hope she will do so after summer.

I am quite all right.

Vandemataram or blessings to all.

[1] The addressee was in Bareilly Central Jail.
[2] Farid Ansari
[3] Grand-daughter of Swami Shraddhanand

I hope you are keeping good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2485

424. LETTER TO S. N. CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 12, 1941

DEAR SAILEN,

Your letter[1]. You write very carelessly. You make avoidable mistakes. You even omit your pronouns. If you are as slovenly in your work as you are in writing to me, you will fail. Janaki Devi is in Nagpur at Shri Mehta's. You may give the book to her to be sent to me. I shall then see what other book to send you.[2]

Father does write to me. I am dissatisfied. But you need not bother about it. He is otherwise well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10305. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

425. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

May 12, 1941

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. I have not yet received Jayaprakash's. Have you seen the resolution passed by the Socialists? Who were they? Why do you worry? Whatever is to happen will happen. We can only do our best. I am all right. The fast has no after-effect. Ba is better. She is still in Delhi. I have sent Lilavati there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3559

[1] From Nagpur where he had been sent for training

[2] According to Amrita Lal Chatterjee, Gandhiji used to send books, newspapers, etc., to the addressee in order to improve his knowledge. The addressee then submitted a synopsis of his study to be corrected by Gandhiji. Sometimes Gandhiji got them corrected by Amrit Kaur.

426. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 12, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your perfect letter. The letter from Devdas scared me so much that I sent a telegram leaving it all to you. Even though I had not asked for a telegraphic reply, I did expect one. But now it is an old story.

Now you alone will bring Ba.

But what about your examination? What utter chaos! I have not seen such a thing anywhere. On what basis did Lazarus say that the examination would be held on the 12th? Even if the examination is not held this month, will you be able to ask for long leave in June?

Tell Lilavati that I have received her letter. Coax her to study. I do not like that she should lose three months without study.

Jamnalalji has fallen ill. I have sent Das. He was under Das's treatment. He has difficulty in passing urine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

427. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May 12, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Yes, it is your job to get things for the kitchen, and decide what to get.

About the guests, what you say is correct.

You are also correct regarding kitchen cleanliness, etc. If you have to incur some out-of-the-way expense the Committee should be consulted. The expenses will be debited to the accounts falling within your sphere. These will be endorsed by you. But the manager can endorse them only in your absence.

It is your duty to distribute to various people the work in your charge. The same people can work in other departments also. You should arrange for this with the head of the other department.

Remember that our duty is to discharge the responsibility. Whatever authority we need to discharge it will come by itself. This has been my experience throughout the last fifty years.

You will have to arrange your work in such a way that a definite time is kept for supervising cleanliness. At that time you should have a small bucket, a shovel and a broomstick. The regular work would be done by others. But whatever faults you come across at the time of inspection you will yourself do as best as you can and draw the attention of the persons concerned. You will not try to do the bulk of the work yourself, and whatever you can conveniently do, you will not allot to others.

Show this to Chimanlal[1] and also your letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4387

428. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

May 13, 1941

CHI. MIRA,

Your plan of disbandment reads well but means little. The cowshed is separate but Balvantsinha is not. The dairy is separate but Parnerkar[2] is not. The thing is that the world is inseparable from me. There are more Bhansalis than one. They all do not behave so handsomely as he[3] does. But there they are. You have not gone deeper into the thing. It is not the kitchen that is worrying me. The growth has been spontaneous and the destruction or the reshaping will have to be likewise. I can only help the process. Everywhere I have been overwhelmed. The Rajkot home gave place to the Bombay home. That to the Natal Home, the latter again to Bombay, then two in Johannesburg, then Phoenix, Tolstoy Farm, back to Phoenix, then Kochrab, Sabarmati, Maganwadi and Sevagram. I have omitted the intermediate shifts. All came in their due course. Heaven only knows

[1] Chimanlal Shah, Manager, Sevagram Ashram
[2] Y. M. Parnerkar, a dairy expert at Sevagram Ashram
[3] J. P. Bhansali

where I am to be flung again. No, my safety lies in praying and waiting. "Lead Thou me on."

I have not seen the paragraph about you, you cannot be in hiding, unless you do as the anchorites do, which is absurd and unthinkable.

Mahadev returns tomorrow.

P's class is for the vacation. It will close about 10th June, I expect.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6479. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9874

429. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
May 13, 1941

MY DEAR 'SLAVE',

'Handsome is that handsome does'. J. H. has gone by the appearance of the exterior. The imposing case was nonsense. Remove the nonsense and the bare *dhanush takli* is the cheapest and the most efficient thing going. It is cheaper than the original *takli*. It cannot easily go out of order and is so incredibly simple that the spinner can adjust it, not so the vertical wheel or the horizontal. I touch no other. After having said this, let me admitthat the solid charkha has its special merits. But putting all things together, the *dhanush takli* I consider the best.[1] You will pass on this to J.H.

These riots are a wicked thing.[2] Evidently we have to go through the purgatory.

How is the old dame? And how are you?

Love.

SLAVE-DRIVER

SHRI PADMAJA NAIDU
ZAHEER MANZIL
RED HILLS
HYDERABAD, DECCAN

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* also "Instructions to Satyagrahis", 17-6-1941

[2] There had been communal riots in Dacca, Ahmedabad, Bombay and Bihar.

430. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
May 13, 1941

CHI. LILA,

You were supposed to write to me daily. Would it be futile to hope for this from you?

Among the fruit you have sent, the apples are no good. Half of them are rotten. Who bought them? Surely Janakibehn would not have had them sent if they were not good?

Termites had invaded your clock. A. S. has removed the termites and put the clock in your suitcase after cleaning. Did you leave your suitcase open?

What about tea?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

431. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 13, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Enclosed is a letter from Balkrishna. It deserves to be given thought. If you have something to suggest, do so.

It seems Tari's affair is not fully settled.

Everything is all right here.

There is no news from you today. I do not remember to have received your letters on two consecutive days. It is futile to ask you about your examination. Let us see when it is held.

Mahadev will come tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

432. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

May 13, 1941

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I had carefully preserved the draft of *Satyagraha Sathi*[1] which you had prepared on August 9, 1940. I had resolved to find time to go through it. I fulfilled my resolve today, if only to respect your enthusiasm and selfless labour.

I have experienced such disappointments regarding the Ashram that I have lost all interest in embarking on new ventures. I do wish that some of you should set up a brotherhood during, or even after, my lifetime. Let it be just a few in the beginning.

The supplement is useful. It gives good guidance. It can be touched up and published even now. I have deleted two clauses on page 6. I did not think it necessary to list the different types of violence as they are countless. Moreover, the ones you have cited are superficial examples. Violence lies latent in our hearts. If in my curs cursory revision I have spoiled the draft, please make necessary corrections.

You will understand what I mean by the cross on page 10. Appendix C becomes superfluous for the present.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10724. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

433. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

May 13, 1941

DEAR SISTER,

Why do you fall ill again and again? Those who want to serve should learn the art of keeping healthy. I hope with the grace of God the tour would be completed without any hitch.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7995. Also C.W. 3092. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

[1] Satyagraha Brotherhood

434. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May 13, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Amtul Salaam wants to do some community work. Give her some if you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4388

435. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

May 14, 1941

CHI. LILA,

I got your letter. Don't worry about your weight and eat according to natural appetite at regular intervals. You must have started your study.

Tell Lakshmi that I got her letter.

Ask Tara what kind of a friend one is who does not write to her friend at all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9379. Also C.W. 6654. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

436. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 14, 1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Your letter makes strange reading. It shows the limit of mental confusion. You asked for one hundred rupees, and the sum was immediately sent. You now return it and say that if, after considering all the factors, Kanchan and I feel convinced and are fully satisfied, the money may be sent back to you ! What is all this? You could have asked us whether or not we were satisfied.

After reading it, I am sending your terrible letter to Kanchan. You are not coming. If now I send her, you are prepared to have her. What is this? You have no consideration for her feelings nor for mine. If you were not to come or could not come, it was understood that Kanchan would stay there. She could have stayed. You sent her back as soon as she arrived. What is this? Your heart is not there, and still you are staying on. You have not got adjusted to everything there and are still obstinately clinging on. This is not right.

I have not told anyone that you are hiding any fact or thought from me.

That you do not want to come to Sevagram, I learnt only from your letter.

My advice is this: Ask for the hundred rupees whenever you need it. If you are not interested in appearing for the examination or if your health is not good, come over here and then go to some cool place. If you wish, you can go to Bordi. If you come here, we can have a quiet talk and decide what you should do. I do not agree with you that I have paid no attention to your problems.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8498. Also C.W. 7138. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

437. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 14, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. It is all right. Let Devdas bring Ba when he comes. About the same time you will be having your examination. You will come as soon as the examination is over.

Durgabehn is fine. What should I say about myself?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

438. LETTER TO PRESIDENT, BENGAL PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE

[Before *May 15, 1941*][1]

The only advice I can give you at present is, that those who are allowed to be outside should devote themselves to constructive work, specially communal.

Really speaking, it is not unfortunate; for, we expected such arrests[2]. They test our strength and solidarity.

The Hindu, 16-5-1941

439. LETTER TO SARANGADHAR DAS

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
[Before *May 15, 1941*][3]

DEAR SARANGADHAR DAS ,

I was delighted to read your very interesting letter to Rajkumari.

Yes, I remember having received your statement. I can remember nothing that jarred on my ears. Rajkumari was then in the Punjab.

I am glad you came in such close contact with Harijans. 'C' class is undoubtedly best. ''A" and "B" are [an] eternal sore. It is of our making. I hope you are none the worse for your experience.

I know there is trouble outside. Rajen Babu cannot leave Bihar for the present. As I have already told Padhiary[4] we have all to learn the art of solving our own difficulties. . . .[5]

BAPU[6]

From a copy: C.W. 10516. Courtesy: Government of Orissa

[1] The letter was reported under the date-line "Calcutta, May 15".

[2] Arun Chandra Guha" Secretary of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, and other Congress office-bearers and workers in different parts of the Province had been arrested.

[3] The letter was reproduced by J. N. Ghosh, S.I.S., Cuttack, in his report dated May 15, 1941.

[4] Pran Krishna Padhiary, President, Orissa Provincial Congress Committee

[5] Omission as in the source

[6] The source has "Bapuji".

440. "KHADI JAGAT"[1]

The sphere of *Khadi Jagat* is co-extensive with that of the activities of the All-India Spinners' Association. Theoretically speaking, the activities of the A. I. S. A. are unlimited. At present it provides employment to 2,24,421 spinners, of whom 1,67,996 are Hindus and 56,425 are Muslims, along with 20,643 other artisans, such as ginners, carders, dyers, weavers and washermen. The A. I. S. A. represents all those Hindus, Mussalmans, and others who are engaged in the various processes involved in the production of khadi, as also those who use khadi. Although these people are at present a mere drop in the ocean of Indian humanity, they are numerous enough to be scattered throughout the length and breadth of the country. The A. I S. A. is entirely a philanthropic institution. It is the largest institution of its kind in India and perhaps in the world. If the expectations formed about this institution materialize, the A. I. S. A. should represent the whole of the dumb and semi-starved millions of India. And if that event comes about, it would represent the aspirations of the whole of the submerged world. The bloody massacre going on in the present war is probably a demonstration of the fact that industrialism will lead the world to destruction in the end. Enlightened revival of handicrafts alone can save it. But here I am talking of the future and God alone knows what the future has in store for us. All the same there is such a thing in the world as human endeavour, and the endeavour of the A. I. S. A. is to propagate the spirit of khadi throughout India. Then alone can we get rid of the grinding pauperism of India's masses. The word 'khadi' must be taken in its wider sense here. For such extensive work, we require a much greater number of workers than have been hitherto available. Those who are already engaged in this work have to cultivate greater capacity for sacrifice. They must cultivate the habit of studying in a scientific spirit. Their knowledge must be steadily progressive.

The wheel is the centre of this activity because it alone can give employment and living to the millions of women. The wheel includes the *takli*. It is not to be taken merely as the widow'smainstay. It has been conceived as a symbol of India's economic uplift,

[1] This appeared in the inaugural issue of *Khadi Jagat,* a Hindi monthly published by the A.I.S.A. from Wardha.

Hindu-Muslim unity and therefore even of her independence in terms of her millions. Thus the science of khadi is a lofty study. Many experts are required to dedicate their energies in an organized manner for the furtherance of the cause. These include economists as well as highly skilled mechanics. A mason can build a village house, but it requires an engineer to plan and build a big building or a big dam. Much more talent, knowledge, application and research are required to improve the village implements than to build a bridge on the Ganga. When we are able to attract people of this type by our renunciation and methodical research, we will be able to make rapid far-reaching progress, not till then.

Looking at it from this point of view, *Khadi Jagat is* not an insignificant venture. It was because I regarded it as an ambitious venture that I supported the proposition of undertaking it. I hope, therefore, that all the articles published in this magazine will be of the required standard and be earnestly studied by the A. I. S. A. workers and those interested in the uplift of the villages.

To carry on the activities of the A. I. S. A. we require workers as well as money. The responsibility of getting both rests upon the Present khadi workers. I think it will be well for me as the President of the A. I. S. A. at this stage to make a confession. The Association has suffered a loss of over two lacs because of my and a co-worker's, call it carelessness, or overtrustfulness. Thinking him to be a good man, Shankerlal Banker took a certain person on the A. I. S. A. staff. He overtrusted this man and did not supervise his work as he ought to have. His failing health was partly responsible for this. Though the auditing of accounts was done regularly, this man very cunningly succeeded in outwitting everybody and misappropriating over two lacs of rupees. This was detected when Shri Jajuji took charge of A. I. S. A. offlce. The delinquent has confessed his guilt, though we have not succeeded in getting back the money as yet. We are still trying for it. The Sangh is following its traditional policy of avoiding the law courts as far as possible, but if it becomes necessary, there will be no hesitation in going to the courts. The object of mentioning this incident here is to let the helpers of the A. I. S. A. learn of our carelessness and forgive us if possible. I make the confession also in order that we may become more vigilant. It is also hoped that as a result of this confession, workers of the A. I. S. A. all over the country will realize their responsibility and know that every pice mis-

appropriated is so much taken out of the mouths of the poor. It will be well if it can also awaken the guilty person to a sense of his duty. It will comfort Shri Shankerlal Banker who in his simplicity had put too much trust in this man.

One thing I must not omit. The Association has increased the wages of the spinners without any demand from the spinners themselves and completely ignoring the market wages. This will be always looked upon as a creditable adventure for the A. I. S. A. The khadi-lovers have helped the Association in this philanthropic move. The price of khadi was bound to go up, but these friends willingly paid the extra price. Consequently, khadi-workers have a double duty to discharge. They must see that in the first place the spinners get the full wages according to the standard laid down by the A. I. S. A. Secondly the customer buying khadi should be charged the minimum price compatible with the rise in the wages. There should be no attempt at making profit. If at some place profits have accrued they should be spent with the permission of the A. I. S. A. in lowering the price of khadi or otherwise in the interest of the poor. The progress of khadi does not depend upon the ups and downs of the market. It depends upon the purity of our transactions. If our transactions are pure they must result in at least three things.

1. We will attract spinners and artisans.

2. The number of khadi-wearers will increase and the necessary money will flow in, and

3. Greater number of workers will be attracted.

I say this on the strength of 55 years of public service. It will be the endeavour of the *Khadi Jagat* to achieve the three ends or in other words *Khadi Jagat* will strive to induce in the workers an ambition for greater purity, greater dedication and greater knowledge.

M. K. GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, May 15, 1941

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, 25-7-1941

441. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 15, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. You have given very good news. Here also everything is fine. But Balkrishna's health is not good.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

442. DISCUSSION WITH D. K. GOSAVI[1]

May 15, 1941

Q. Very few names from the third list of satyagrahis from Maharashtra (193 out of 1,072) are approved and permitted to offer satyagraha. This permissionbusiness seems to be unduly delayed, and the satyagrahis are thus put to much inconvenience.

A. I propose to introduce a change in the technique about the passing of these lists of satyagrahis.[2] From the date on which the name of a prospective satyagrahi is forwarded to me for sanction by the Provincial Congress Committee the satyagrahi concerned has to stop his private activities and has to devote himself wholly to the working out of one or more of the items of the thirteenfold constructive programme, which expression is to be understood in the widest sense as explained in my article[3] headed ''Implications of Constructive

[1] President, Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee, who was accompanied by Dr. Lagu of Poona. According to the source, this was ''revised and corrected by Gandhiji" and was released to the Press with his permission. *Vide* also ''Letter to D. K. Gosavi", 1-6-1941 and 8-6-1941.

[2] For instructions issued by J. B. Kripalani ''for the guidance of satyagrahis and Congress Committees in consultation with Gandhiji", *vide* "Instruction to Satyagrahis", 17-6-1941

[3] *Vide* "Inplications of Constructive Programme"

Programme" in the issue of *Harijan* dated 18th of August 1940.

Every prospective satyagrahi is expected to keep a log-book (or diary) in which he will daily enter the work done during the course of the day and the log-book shall be submitted to me through the P.C.C. concerned at stated intervals, say, fortnightly or monthly. After going through the diaries I shall grant permission for satyagraha to deserving persons. Others will have to follow the said course till they get permission.

The satyagrahi may not expect any financial help from the Congress.

I know that on this very strict basis the number of satyagrahis will be reduced to a very large extent but what I am keen on is quality and not quantity. I shall not feel sorry if the number is reduced to any extent. Moreover, whilst so many satyagrahis are wandering about, I am anxious not to add to the list of wanderers.

Don"t you feel that you are unfair to the prospective satyagrahis in prescribing such a severe preliminary test to them only, while you allowed their predecessors in on a comparatively simpler test?[1]

I don't think I am unfair. One thing that you must remember is that the above movement is evolving. Exigencies of the situation may demand varying conditions.

Has the President of the P.C.C. any duty towards the satyagrahis when they come out of jail?

Yes, he certainly has. He has to ask them to repeat satyagraha and find themselves again in jail, say, within about a week from the date of their release. The P.C.C.s. need only report to me cases demanding special treatment and the instructions that will be issued by me in these cases should be followed and executed by the P.C.C.s.

How long will this process go on?

Indefinitely; that is to say, till we achieve our goal. Deep down in me there is a feeling that the struggle will become progressively fiercer, and we must pass through all such trials.

In this respect we must take lesson from the British who, in spite of all the severe losses and heavy odds against them, have maintained fine morale and are determined to carry on. We may not do less.

[1] This and the following three paragraphs are reproduced from *Congress Bulletin*.

If any satyagrahi who has enrolled himself on the original basis feels unable to accept the new basis, which will be the honourable way out for him ?[1]

He is free to withdraw his name and there is no disgrace attaching to any such honest withdrawal. I must not be deceived. To deceive me is to deceive oneself and the nation. Every honest person can and should withdraw his name. He may continue to render whatever services he can to the country. He does remain and does continue a Congressman as before. Congress does require and does appreciate his services also. But he cannot remain on the satyagrahi list as it is now envisaged.

Can we start and develop a volunteer organization under the present circumstances ?

By all means; the only condition is that it shall be organized only on the basis of non-violence—unadulterated non-violence.

No trifling with non-violence will do and therefore no laxity in that respect can be tolerated. One more point. The said organization should be pro-Congress and yet independent of the Congress. It can be an allied institution like A.I.S.A., etc.

Can decent violence in self-defence under emergencies by any member of such volunteer organization be tolerated as an exception?

No, it cannot be. No such exception can be contemplated or provided against in advance, in an organization which is started specifically on the sole basis of non-violence. Such a person will have to leave the organization.

Non-violent resistance is the best method; failing that, even violent decent resistance is tolerable but cowardice is unthinkable and condemnable". That is what you have been preaching in this respect. But what you now say does not square with your above dictum.

That dictum is meant for those millions that have not yet accepted the creed of the Congress. It cannot apply to those organizations that are founded on the basic creed of non-violence. Those who desire to effect a change in the basic creed of non-violence must either change their General or go out of the organization.

The Congress being largely suspended as an organization, what should be our policy this year as regards the annual enrolment of membership?[2]

[1] This and the following paragraph are reproduced from *Congress Bulletin*.

[2] This and the following three paragraphs are reproduced from *Congress Bulletin*.

Under the circumstances there can be no obligation to enrol membership in the usual manner. New applicants, if they so desire, must however be enrolled as members and there should be no objection to realizing annual subscriptions from old members wherever practicable.

Do you desire the starting of peace-brigades?

Certainly I do. Some time ago *(vide Harijan* 18th June, 1938) I made certain concrete suggestions[1] in that respect. I know very few will be found, at least in the beginning, to enlist in such an organization. A beginning may however be made by any small number or even singly. Such an organization cannot be conducted on the lines of democracy. It can only be a body of persons with a definite purpose. If the pioneers are the right sort of people they may gather followers in due course.

What should be our attitude towards elections to local bodies?

As a rule, elections to such bodies should not be run in the name of the Congress. There may be no objection to Congressmen fighting the same on their individual responsibility. But this is a question which can be authoritatively decided only by Rajendra Babu and Acharya Kripalani[2].

Can enrolled satyagrahis fight such elections individually?

No. I am quite clear on this point.

What should be done in the case of those satyagrahis who have already put in their candidature for such elections?

They have either to withdraw from the election or from the satyagraha pledge[3]; they cannot retain both.

What should be the Congress attitude towards the registration of voters to the Legislatures—both central and provincial?

The Congress must pay full attention to this work. Congress may not ignore it.

Congress Bnlletin No. 6, 1942, File No. 3/42/41-Home Department, Pol. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *The Bombay Chronicle,* 17-6-1941

[1] *Vide* "Qualifications of a peace Brigade". 18-6-1938

[2] General Secretary, AlI-India Congress Committee

[3] *Vide* "Satyagraha Pledge"

443. LETTER TO CHARU PROBHA SENGUPTA

May 16, 1941

DEAR CHARU PROBHA,

I have your letter. I have not received the books you mention. In any case I am off writing prefaces. Please therefore procure release for me.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 8709. Also C.W. 1494. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

444. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

May 16, 1941

DEAR AMRITLAL,

I have your letter[1]. You do not even read my letters fully. I have told[2] you that you are free to do what you like so long as you do not act as my agent or in my name or under my instructions. I have no confidence in your judgment. But if you have and if people want you, you would be wrong not to go.[3] I have also told you that I shall be no longer responsible for your expenses. It is no use your returning to Sevagram. If no public body will have you or pay for your keep, you should quietly settle down and earn your livelihood and reconstruct your broken home. Please read this carefully and act according to your own judgment.

Sailen and Dhiren I am trying to mould. It is a difficult task. Please tell Vina and Abha I have their letters. They should employ their time usefully. Why did Vina give two bangles to Kanchan?

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10306. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[1] Dated May 13

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amrita Lal Chatterjee", 3-5-1941, "Letter to Amrita Lal Chatterjee", 4-5-1941, "Letter to Amritalal Chatterjee", 8-5-1941 and "Letter to Amritalal Chatterjee", 10-5-1941

[3] According to the addressee, he had returned to Calcutta from Dacca "under protest, in obedience to Gandhiji's direction".

445. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

May 16, 1941

CHI. LILA,

You never write after careful thinking. I have taken care to write to you nearly every day, and still you ask how you can hope for letters from me! And what a funny spelling you have adopted for your name? Are you Leila[1]? The word is pronounced 'Laila'. Do you know who Laila[2] was? But you are 'Lila'[3]. What a difference between the two. In writing and in speaking, in general bearing and in thinking, in every detail of one's behaviour some propriety must be observed. I have told you to write or speak every sentence after due thought. But to whom may I complain about all this? You are deliberately blotting out your virtues. Be warned. Mahadevbhai has forwarded your application.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9380. Also C.W. 6655. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

446. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 16, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

The examination has come at last. You are sure to pass. I expect you to arrive on the 3rd.

Yes, it is true. Ba will certainly be uneasy in your absence. You should therefore send her early if you can. You may do what you want.

Balkrishna is running temperature. Tari is worried. You have rightly written that Tari will have to decide her own diet. But it is difficult. If it could be done what would be the need for persons like you? It is quite possible that you may have to go to Panchgani for a

[1] The name is in English.
[2] Heroine of a Persian romance
[3] The name is in English.

day or two. I do wish that both of them would recover by that time, because till June the weather is cold.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

447. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 17, 1941

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

I see you have been again speaking to the papers.[1] What you are reported to have said is wholly false. If you do not come out with a correct statement, I must repudiate you publicly. You seem to have taken things through Surendraji, e.g., tooth-paste, soap, etc., for there is a bill from the merchants here of purchases made the same day that you went. I would like you to tell me what you took.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10307. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

448. LETTER TO ANNADA SHANKAR CHOWDHARY

SEVAGRAM,
May 17, 1941

MY DEAR ANNADA,

I have not written to you as I promised. As a matter of fact I discovered that I did not want to say anything beyond what I said in my letter to Guha[2] and what he has published. It is not enough that we give relief. That work many can do and are doing, But who can give courage to those who are frightened and who can avoid hatred in spite of things happening which must generate hatred? Surely that is

[1]According to the addressee, he had made a statement on May 13 "to a representative of the United Press regarding the riot situation in Dacca".

[2] Arun Chandra Guha; *vide* "Letter to Arun Chandra Guha", 23-4-1941

primarily Congressmen's work. I hope you are applying your mind to that problem.

Now about Amrit Babu[1]. He has been riding the high horse. I never asked him to act as my agent or in any way to represent me.[2] Since his daughters had to be sent away to Bengal and since I had no particular use for him I asked him to return to Bengal and advised him if he wished to go to Dacca and immolate himself as a silent worker without fuss and without in any way using my name. Instead he has appeared in the limelight as a star of the first magnitude. It has pained me much. If I can, I want to avoid having to repudiate him publicly. Please talk to him if you think it worth while and wean him from his vanity and falsity. In any case warn those who should be warned. Do you know anything of his work in Dacca?

Yours,

BAPU

From a copy: A. I. C. C. File. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

449. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 17, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Your letter of the 11th arrived today. How is that? Mahadevbhai went and met Pyarelal today. He is all right, but he is almost observing silence. The gland in the neck is of course visible. He does not write any letters at all. I shall send your letters today. You must now be preparing for your Lahore visit. Everything is fine here. I shall wait for you on the 3rd.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum ant Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Lal Chatterjee", 4-5-1941 and "Letter to Amrit Lal Chatterjee ", 10-5-1941

450. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May 17, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Who reprimanded you? I do not even remember if anybody told me anything against you. If it had been so I would have at least told you about it. Remember the three monkeys. Do not lend your ears to such idle talk. Tell yourself 'If there is any complaint Bapu would tell me' and ignore the complainants. Why do you feel hurt?

If you have work with me come any number of times, otherwise don't come at all.

Is it all right now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4389

451. LETTER TO SHUAIB QURESHI

SEVAGRAM,
May 18, 1941

MY DEAR SHUAIB,

Better late than never.

I understand Bazmi's case. What have you done to your thumb? We are boiling here. Wardha heat can vie with Jacobabad's.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

452. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

May 18, 1941

CHI. VALJI,

I got your letter.

Durgabehn's health is improving.

When you come here I shall be prepared to hear whatever you have to say about Gopalan. By patience I did not mean waiting for

years and months. I only meant that after you had all the facts of the case and were ready, you might come, accompanied by the witnesses. Asking me questions, piecemeal, will not help. For my part I will not delay. I will be ready to give two hours daily to the matter till it is finished.

Blessings from

BAPU

PS.

I had Mahendra's[1] letter.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7494. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

453. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

May 18, 1941

BAPA,

You did very well in going to Garhwal. It will do you good. I think the climate and water of that place are good.

Jainarayan came and saw me. I accepted Vaze's suggestion and so I told him to go to you and do nothing else. I have already communicated my view to you, namely, that the Standing Committee stands suspended and during the struggle the Emergency Committee should function. I certainly should not like the whole organization to remain under Amritlal Sheth's[2] control. I do not even like that the paper should run with his money. Jainarayan thinks that the Emergency Committee was a private body. There was no report about it in the papers nor is it likely to do any work. It is the Standing Committee which must have the sole authority. I had asked Jamnalalji. He says that the Emergency Committee was formed with the consent of Jainarayanji and others, and, therefore, the Standing Committee remains suspended at present. It was Balwantrai, and not J., who was keen on the States' People's [Conference]. Jawaharlal has conveyed to Menon that he should abide by my advice. That is why I have taken interest in the matter. My opinion is as above. If you also agree with it there will be no need for you to come. If you differ, however, then it is desirable that you should come here. I think there will be no difficulty if the States' People's [Conference] is run independently. I

[1] Addressee's eldest son

[2] Owner of the *Janmabhoomi* group of papers

think we should meet and decide about that. I leave everything to you. I would certainly like your coming here. If you feel that anybody else should be present, you may arrange accordingly. Do you find it difficult to decipher my handwriting? I ask the question this time because I have had to write a rather long letter.

BAPU

[PS.]

After writing the above I got your letter full of joy. I had foretold your victory. Still you want a reward?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1187

454. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

May 18, 1941

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. I have written to Jayaprakash. You can certainly write to Jamnalalji He does get letters. He is better now. Durgabehn is all right. So also is Ba. Perhaps she will return on the 25th. Sushila is going to Lahore on the 20th. Her examination commences on the 26th and will go on for six days. I take it that she will pass. Mridula and Gulzarilal[1] are here just now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3566

455. LETTER TO GULAB CHAND JAIN

May 18, 1941

BHAI GULAB CHAND,

I got your letter. Even if a telegram had come regarding your father, I would not have understood it. It is but natural that a son feels the sorrow of separation

How is injustice done to Mukundlalji? Injustice arises only when one is deprived of a right. To go to jail can only be a duty, but never a right.

[1] Gulzarilal Nanda

If unworthy people from Delhi have been selected, you should tell Raghunandanji about it. I can act only on trust. If the reporter of *The Hindustan Times* accepts bribes, it is your duty to inform Devdas. So also about the policy of *The Hindustan Times.* I do not read newspapers at all. If what you say is correct, why hide the name? I will not write indirectly to Devdas. I can write to him if you allow me to mention your name.

I cannot give a definite opinion in your case. Do as your conscience bids you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7744

456. LETTER TO DR. S. K. VAIDYA

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
May 19, 1941

BHAI VAIDYA,

How can you catch my joke? Accept all the meanings of *swachchhata*[1] and the last one of *mugdha*[2]. If you stick to khadi and the spinning-wheel, they will ultimately give you peace of mind. Just as one who does not tire of Ramanama finally sees Rama, so is the case with the spinning-wheel. Surely all Muslims do not carry daggers. But your pure heart will finally see purity. When you feel like having a hearty laugh, come to Sevagram. I hope Ambu is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. VAIDYA
SHRIPAT BHUVAN
SANTACRUZ
BOMBAY 7

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5748

[1] Cleanliness
[2] "Full of admiration", literally, "infatuated", also "naive"

457. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

May 19, 1941

CHI. MANI,

I got your letter today. I hope you will get this in the jail itself. I sent one letter[1] to Dahyabhai to be passed on to you. I was happy to learn that you had been taking care of your health.

If, after your release, you wish to spend a few days in Bombay you may do so, but do come and see me later. Mridula and Gulzarilal have come here to discuss the situation in Ahmedabad. They are with me just now and are discussing the problem. Father or you must not worry about these things from there. I need not write more. There is not the slightest cause for worry about Jamnalalji. Everything is going on well. Manu Trivedi is fine. Ba will return from Delhi in a few days. Lilavati is with hers.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 127-8

458. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

May 19, 1941

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

Munnalal says that things are no better even after you have asked for pardon. You reprimanded Vithoba[2] by saying that even though he had betrayed a trust, you were asking for pardon. If this is correct, the plea for pardon is meaningless. The complaintof betraying a trust is very serious. I do not see betrayal of trust. You may call it lack of courage. This should be set right.

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, pp. 286-7

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Manibehn Patel", 10-5-1941

[2] The mediator who had requested the addressee to buy a piece of land from a farmer who was in trouble. After the deal had been finalized, the farmer's son wanted the land back and this led to a dispute.

459. LETTER TO SHAKUNTALA

May 19, 1941

CHI. SHAKUNTALA,

It is good that you will offer civil disobedience again in June.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1396

460. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 20, 1941

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

It is sad you won't understand the simple thing I have driven home. For your own sake, I must not pay you anything. I have harmed you by pampering you. You are able-bodied. You should do such work as you can find.

You need not return anything you have taken away.[1]

Surendraji has cheated right and left. His is a sad story.

Please understand you have now to look after yourself. You cannot come back. I shall be more than satisfied if I can make something of Sailen and Dhiren.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10308. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

461. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 20, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. You are right. I really do not get any time at all these days. Mridulabehn and have Gulzarilal come, and so I have to devote most of my time to them.

[1]*Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Amrit Lal Chatterjee", 17-5-1941

I go on thinking about your examination. When will you know the result?

I shall send the letter to Pyarelal.

I am fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

462. LETTER TO BHOGILAL LALA[1]

[On or before *May 21, 1941*][2]

For four days, Mridulabehn, Gulzarilal and I have had talks to our hearts' content. If you and Sjt. Jivanlal Divan could have been also present, it would have been very helpful to me in arriving at a decision.

I gather that there are two opinions regarding what the Congress did, failed to do, and should do in future in case of communal disturbances. However that may be, everything considered, I am of opinion that, in a crisis like the present, an Advisory Committee (of which the personnel is given below) should be appointed, and everything should be done according to their advice. You will see that I have included Shri Mahadev Desai's name on the Committee. He will not be able to be there on all occasions, but he will try to be there whenever you all feel that his presence is essential.

Your first duty is to find out how many among our Congressmen firmly hold that violent resistance against an opponent in defence of oneself or others is out of the question. Those who favour violent resistance must get out of the Congress and shape their conduct just as they think fit and guide others accordingly. I am firmly of opinion that, if the Congress does not clearly define its policy in this matter, it will end in proving itself to be a useless organization.

[1] Secretary, Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee. According to the source, this letter was brought to Ahmedabad by Mahadev Desai for the guidance of Congressmen. Mahadev Desai left for Ahmedabad on May 21; *vide* the following item.

[2] *ibid*

If a majority of Congressmen hold that violent resistance against an assailant is a duty, and if they do not regard it ,as inconsistent with the creed of the Congress, they should openly declare their opinion and guide people accordingly. The absence of our leaders in jail should not deter anyone from declaring his opinion in this crisis. It can be revised in case it is found later to be wrong. The point is that no one should be in a state of indecisiveness.

I am sure that, if all Congressmen had done their duty, we should not have had the *goondashahi*—the reign of the goonda—that we had recently.

That people should flee for their lives for fear of the goonda should be intolerable. They ought to possess the capacity of resisting *goondashahi* violently or non-violently. If my interpretation of the Congress creed is correct, the Congress and Congressmen may offer non-violent resistance only, and they are sure to succeed. But we should tell the people, in the clearest possible terms, that running away in fear is cowardice. It is their duty to offer resistance—even violent, if they are incapable of non-violent resistance, which is a worthy way.

Congressmen will not ask for the help of the Government, the police or the military. Those who believe in violent resistance will indeed ask for Government's help.

A Congressman may not directly or indirectly associate himself with gymnasia where training in violent resistance is given. But he will appeal even to the believer in violent resistance to observe certain rules of restraint. Even violent resistance admits of a certain amount of decency. Thus, for instance, murdering an innocent man in cold blood should be taboo. The fundamental thing to be borne in mind is that people should, under no circumstances, be cowardly or impotent. One need never be a goonda to fight a goonda. One who stabs another in the back and takes to his heels will never be counted as brave.

A Congressman can have no prejudices, and so he would go out of his way to meet members of the Muslim League, the Hindu Mahasabha and other bodies in the interest of peace, and persuade them to combine in ruling out the law of the jungle, no matter how great their political differences. That these endeavours may fail should not matter in the least. It is their duty to appeal to everyone, and to flatter none.

The Congress will not claim compensation for losses sustained during the riots. That is not its concern. The people had to sustain losses as they lacked the capacity to defend themselves; and so they

must bear them. I go so far as to believe that Government could not, even if they would, secure adequate compensation to those who have sustained losses.

I think it is terrible to think of protecting ourselves with the help of the Bhaiyya, the Sikh or the Thakurda. To engage an ordinary *durwan* or gate-keeper is a different proposition. There should be no young man among the mercantile middle-class community who hasnot gone through training for self-defence, violent or non-violent. Engaging these foreign elements for defence, far from putting an end to *goondashahi* will put a premium on it.

Hindus staying in Muslim localities must not leave them, but stay on there even at the risk of their lives. Muslims living in Hindu localities should be ensured the fullest protection by the Hindus.

The practice of closing down shops at the slightest rumour of disturbance should be stopped and every shopkeeper should be ready for violent or non-violent self-defence. If they will cultivate this courage, the loss will be reduced to a minimum, and the riots would become a thing of the past. Riots such as we have in our country are unknown in the West, though there may be civil wars there. The reason is that the contending parties there are equally matched, and do not take to their heels at the sight of one another, nor do they ask for and accept police help. The use of the police is entirely for protection against thieves and robbers. In this respect we are absolutely barbarous and even impotent.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE: Mr. Mahadev Desai—President; Mr. Narahari Parikh—Vice-President; Mr. Bhogilal and Mr. Gulzarilal Nanda—Secretaries; Mr. Jivanlal Divan, Mridula Sarabhai, Indumati Chimanlal, Mr. Khandubhai Desai and Raojibhai Patel.

The Hindu, 25-5-1941

463. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

May 21, 1941

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have sent Mahadev today to Ahmedabad. There is much fear there. Most probably Mahadev will reach Simla. If you can stay here till the 27th, he will meet you here itself. Otherwise you will meet direct in Simla. Most probably I will have all of you here in Sevagram

on the 24th. But I shall see. Ba must be fine. Tell Lilavatibehn that I have her postcard. I got Ramdas's letter also. All will meet here on the 24th. Durgabehn has gone to Bombay to undergo clinical examination.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2138

464. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

May 21,1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

You may stay on there. You are giving most useful services there, and you are getting some peace of mind. Kanchan at any rate is getting it. Come only when you are quite convinced that there is no need for you to stay there.

Ask Kanchan to write to me sometimes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7139. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

465. LETTER TO PURATAN J. BUCH

May 21,1941

CHI. PURATAN,

I got your letter. I quite agree. May God protect you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9181

466. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 21, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. You will certainly pass. And if there is only one candidate who passes, you will be the first as well as the last.

I do not recollect that I wrote in Hindi nor why. It is the speed at

which I have to dispose of the work these days.

Mahadevbhai, Mridulabehn and Gulzarilal have gone to Ahmedabad today. There is still the danger of riots in Ahmedabad. Durgabehn has gone to Bombay for medical observation. Nathubhai[1] insisted. Hence the house is quite empty.

Devdas and his big crowd will be arriving on the 24th night.

I shall of course await your arrival on the 3rd, but if you have to go out to help, do go. Let us see what happens. Inform me if there is to be any delay. You will of course go to Bombay for the sake of Prakash if it is necessary. We shall think about it when you come here. We shall see about Panchgani also then.

You must write to me regularly. I shall be worrying about your examination.

Otherwise everything is fine here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

467. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

[On or before *May 22, 1941*][2]

Replying to a question put by me, in the course of a special interview, whether he felt that the British Government would not come to any understanding with India, that they would prefer to continue the policy of drift, Mahatma Gandhi said:

I am afraid, I have to say, 'Yes'. Quite; that has been their traditional policy and it seems that, even whilst they are fighting for their very existence, they do not or they will not revise their traditional policy.

Asked whether in the present circumstances the Congress should be content with merely recording its moral protest when moral values seemed to be the first victim in the war, Gandhiji replied:

The Congress has no other value and no other influence. Whilst it is true that moral values are the first victims in war, in the end they will emerge triumphant if there is any body of people ready to represent them. And I have every hope that the Congress is at least

[1] Dr. Nathubhai D. Patel

[2] The interview was reported under the date-line: "Nagpur, May 22".

one such body to represent moral values. If I am asked for proof, I can't give it. Time alone will show.

When I drew Gandhiji's attention to the remark[1] he made in the course of his statement on communal riots that mischief-makers and their victims who failed to stand up to them were all untouched by Congress and yet these are the men who form the bulk of Congress meetings, Gandhiji replied:

Yes, I have been obliged to say that because Congress has not been able to gain control over rowdy elements. It does not matter to me whether these elements are supported by powerful organizations or, as some hint, encouraged by the British authorities. I have no manner of doubt that the mass mind has to shed all fear of goondaism. Whether that fear is shed violently or non-violently, it has to be shed before we can defend ourselves not only against British might but the world. The first condition of civilized life is that people are able to deal with goondaism, no matter how fomented.

Asked whether the report that no further list of satyagrahis is likely to be approved by him is correct, Gandhiji said that satyagraha is temporarily suspended in places where there is tension due to communal riots and where there are a large number of satyagrahis who have not yet been arrested.

To a question whether satyagrahis returning from jail will be required to offer satyagraha again, Gandhiji replied:

Every one of them, I suppose, will go to jail from time to time until the whole question is settled for which civil disobedience is being offered, that is, until the object of civil disobedience is fulfilled.

The Hindu, 23-5-1941

468. LETTER TO BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

SEVAGRAM,
May 22, 1941

DEAR BHARATAN[2],

Yes, Kumarappa may take the salts—mild doses. He must not leave Coonoor till the yellowness is entirely gone. If necessary you will wire.

[1] *Vide* "Communal Riots"
[2] Brother of J. C. Kumarappa

As to the Bombay report, I agree with your suggestion.

Love

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10154

469. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 22, 1941

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter.

An inquiry has come from London whether the report is true that you have severed all connection with me and are living away from me! How wish is father to thought!

As you say if something drastic has to happen, it will do so even on some pretext appearing altogether flimsy.[1]

You should pick up good *bhajans* from Purushottam[2]. You know that he is almost as good as the late Panditji[3]. It would be good if Narandas goes to meet you.

Most of the reports you read in the papers are patent lies manufactured for pushing up sales. I am not going to Ahmedabad nor touring nor going to Simla. And yet any of these things may come to pass though at present unexpected. But these newspapermen will be able to say 'You see we were right'.

Ba returns on 24th. Devdas is also coming and Ramdas too.

Mahadev has gone to Ahmedabad to see whether he can help to promote harmony. Durga has gone to Bombay to undergo clinical examination.

War news continues to be sensational. The news about the destruction in England is heart-rending.

The Houses of Parliament, the Abbey, the Cathedral seemed to be immortal. And yet there is no end. Nevertheless pride rules the English will. Is it still bravery?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6480. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9875

[1] The addressee explains: "We were still corresponding on the subject of the Sevagram Ashram and what could be done about it."

[2] Purushottamdas Gandhi

[3] Narayan Moreshwar Khare

470. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

May 22, 1941

CHI. MITHUBEHN,

I got your letter. Ba is in Delhi. She has gone there for treatment by Dr. Sushila. She will return on the 24th. She has improved in health, though she is still weak. I shall preserve your letter for her.

Your health department seems to be doing excellent work. Many find it a great help.

You have given no news about your health. May I, therefore, take it that it is fine?

You did very well in sending an extract from Jaiji's letter. It is excellent. Tell her when you write that I remember her quite often. What she says about the virtues of the British is correct, but the description is incomplete. It is necessary for us to realize that their intoxication of power, highhandedness and blatant lies, seen here in India, show that their civilization is rooted in selfishness and love of pleasure. If we do not get angry with them despite this knowledge and cultivate friendship, then alone will our ahimsa be worth the name. We have not yet developed such ahimsa.

I hope everything is going on well there. My blessings to all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2718

471. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 22, 1941

CHI. PYARELAL,

How is it there is no letter from you at all? I am enclosing letters from home. You must write to them. You must also write to me. Without that how would your going to jail do you credit? Should you not maintain all proprieties of conduct, all courtesies?

I keep getting news about your health. But it is one thing your giving the news yourself and quite another thing my getting it. Now write to me in detail.

Sushila is having her examination from the 26th. It will conclude on the 31st. I have given her full encouragement to appear for the examination. There are strong reasons for it. By the grace of God she will pass.

Ba, Devdas, Lakshmi, etc., will be arriving on the 24th. Lakshmi will be going to Madras. Ramdas will also be coming. Mahadev has gone to Ahmedabad today with Mridula and Gulzarilal. Durgabelon and Sushi have gone to Bombay for Durgabehn's medical check up. They will be returning in about a week's time.

Amritlal, Veena and Abha have gone to Calcutta. They turned out to be worthless. Surendra has run away. It is not known where he is. He has misappropriated quite a sum. My health is very good. A. S. is the way she always has been. That is how things are. Munnalal had gone to learn the work of the Charkha Sangh. He fell ill and came back.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

This letter could not be sent on the 21st as nobody left that day. You must write to your people and to me. No service is to be had from Jamnalalji.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

472. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 22, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter.

You do not have to worry about the opposition from your brother. He did not have the background to form an opinion. And then does he also not think that my decision should be taken as final? He told even Mahadev:"What have I got to say when Bapu has made the choice?" Moreover, at the root of his opposition is his love or attachment. He wishes to see you at the top in everything. He would certainly not tolerate that you should fail. I would give no importance to your failing at all. The value of examination lies in giving prestige to a person. But those who fail do not lose their prestige, do they?

There are many reasons for one's failing. Many clever persons are also known to have failed. But I for one cannot believe that you can fail.

Both Durgabehn and Mahadevbhai will have arrived here by the time you come. Munnalal has already come in a sick condition. It is only malaria and he has been given cinchona and quinine. He is better today.

I expect that Ba will be arriving the day after tomorrow. Lilavati writes that she may delay her coming by a couple of days because Ramdas has arrived there.

Do not worry about Ba. I shall continue your treatment here.

I shall be in trouble if Tari and Balkrishna fall sick again. I hope they will be out of danger by the time you come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy Dr. Sushila Nayyar

473. LETTER TO DHIRENDRA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 22, 1941

BHAI DHIRENDRA,

I have your letter. I have not been able to understand your imprisonment. Let us see what further developments take place.

Saksena of course did right in refusing to be set free by giving an undertaking. But even if one cannot resist the pressure of family feelings and gives an undertaking for one's release, I shall put up with it. The best thing of course is not to seek release.

I shall certainly try to push the good work of village industries that you had been doing. But who can replace you? Everything is in the hands of God. Blessings to all.

Blessings from

BAPU

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

474. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE[1]

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
May 23, 1941

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

I see that you took nothing from Surendraji. Did the girls take anything? If you would now take to private life, you need not makeany public statement. I have sent you Copy of my letter to Annada Babu.[2]

Love.

BAPU

SHRI AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE
4/1 SHYAMA CHARAN DE STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: C.W. 10309. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

475. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 23, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. I am sending the letter to Tari. It could have gone today. But I just could not attend to it. That shows how overworked I am! For this reason I am late by a day.

The riots in Bombay and Ahmedabad are causing anxiety. Let us see what God wills. I am keen at the moment that you should finish your examination soon.

There is no time to write more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1]According to the addressee, this was in reply to his letter dated May 20, in which he had ''repudiated the allegation of having taken anything through Surendraji as stated by Gandhiji"; *Vide* letters to the addressee, "Letter to Amrita Lal Chatterjee", 17-5-1941 and "Letter to Amrita Lal Chatterjee", 20-5-1941

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Amrita Lal Chatterjee", 30-5-1941

476. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

May 23, 1941

BHAI PRITHVI SINGH,

I got your letter. Our training should only be on non-violent lines. So we cannot teach the use of the sword and other such violent weapons. But we should certainly teach non-violent defence even through them. To use the sword against the sword is a violent defence. To snatch the sword from the murderer would he non-violent defence. The best defence would be to surrender before the murderer and die. For such defence we should have unlimited capacity for forgiveness. For such people there will be no need of exercise or any other kind of training. The training in exercise is for those who have not freed themselves from fear. I am writing this with the intention of training those who do not know the difference between violence and non-violence, and whom we want to train in non-violent exercises. I feel I have in brief covered everything.

Nathji and Kishorelalji may also see this and ask any other questions, if necessary.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5648. Also C.W. 2959. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

477. SPEECH AT NATIONAL YOUTHS' TRAINING CAMP[1]

WARDHA,

May 23, 1941

It is but natural that nowadays I don't feel like leaving Sevagram at all. If I express a desire to do so I get invitations to various places. But I am unable to complete the different jobs I have on hand at Sevagram. That is why it is not possible for me to take interest in other things.

But then I thought to myself that so many boys are coming to

[1]This appeared along with a note, which read: "This has been reported by newspapers also, but this is the authentic report of the speech which was delivered by Gandhiji at 8.20 p.m. on May 23, 1941, at Wardha."

Wardha and I wouldn't like it if I am not able to mix freely with them or crack jokes with them. So I myself agreed to come and attend the Camp.

Today my mind is full of only one thing. I cannot think of anything except what has happened at Ahmedabad, Dacca, Bombay and in Bihar. Riots have again started in Ahmedabad. There are disturbances in Bombay, too.

I ask you, ''What part are the youths supposed to play in these circumstances?" Every Indian should ask himself this question.

There are but two ways of facing this situation. One is the age-old way of the world—meeting violence with violence. There is yet another way of defending oneself—that is, to peacefully endure the suffering and not to take revenge. The first way is considered universal. It is unmanly to run away from danger. Dumb animals run away when beaten. We should not be like them. It only befits us to face the danger like men and sacrifice our lives while doing so if the occasion demands. The Congress has shown the path of facing violence through non-violence. This is the only right way. If you are not able to accept this, then it is your duty to fight the enemy as much as you like. But do remember this—you have to fight only the assailant; to take revenge on innocent people is a sign of inhumanity and cowardice.

I wish you to make yourselves worthy of accepting the new and better way—the non-violent way—of bravely dying for the cause. You should neither give blow for blow nor run away for your life. For the last twenty years we have been learning to put this supreme art into practice. Today the situation is such that it is a challenge to our faith in the new way of self-defence, i.e., non-violence. I hope you have been taught the art of facing such difficult situations.

At the moment every Congressman is put to a severe test. If the Congress does not stand this test it will not have a right to exist as a national institution. What counts most is that we should be true to ourselves.

[From Hindi]

Sarvodaya, June 1941

478. LETTER TO ANNADA BABU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 24, 1941

DEAR ANNADA,

I have your letter. My sending Mahadev there[1] would-be of no use. He can do no effective work there. He cannot secure the co-operation of all Congressmen. So far as the reports are concerned I have ample material to judge for myself the extent of the damage done. How to combat the disease is for Congressmen to find. If you can tackle that proposition it will be worth while.

Yours,
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

479. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 24, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Ba has now arrived. She is fine. Devdas, Lakshmi and Ramdas have come too. Today only this much. You will have got over your first day of the examination by the time you receive this.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
SOHANLAL COLLEGE
16 LAKE ROAD
LAHORE (PUNJAB)

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] To Dacca and other riot-affected parts of Bengal

480. LETTER TO C. A. TULPULE

May 25, 1941

DEAR TULPULE,

So far as I know the Poona resolution[1] is dead for ever.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 7920

481. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA C. MEHTA

[*May 25, 1941*][2]

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

I got your letter, as also Dhiren's. All of you take care of your health and acquire sound knowledge and get through the examination. Munnalal's fever has come down. Ba, Lakshmibehn, Devdas, Ramdas and the children arrived here yesterday. Lilavati is of course here. Akbarbhai left for Ahmedabad yesterday to be of some help following the riots. Tari's[3] and Umia's[4] keys have been found.

Blessings from

BAPU

ANNAPURNABEHN
KHADI KARYALAYA
MOOL

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9407

482. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 25, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have received your postcard from Lahore. Can they not prepare for you vegetables without chillies? If that is not possible, you should be satisfied with salad.

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 25-4-1941
[2] From the postmark
[3] Tara Mashruwala
[4] Urmila, wife of Shankerlal Agrawal

You will have received the postcard I wrote last night saying that Ba had reached here. Ba is still very weak. But there should be no trouble if she is careful. Now that she has come here, she will not keep herself away from work. I shall see that she takes as much care as possible.

When your examination ends, you will have conquered the world. It is extremely hot here. But I have been able to maintain good health. I am also working quite hard.

Devdas will leave the day after tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

483. LETTER TO AGNIHOTRI

SEVAGRAM,
May 25, 1941

BHAI AGNIHOTRI,

I have gone through your letter to Kishorelal. Mahadev is not here. Your letter itself shows that I was right in laying down the condition I did. If the people are new they are not yet fit to be satyagrahis. If they have no interest in the constructive programme then again they are useless. We are going to derive no benefit by sending such people. I shall issue a statement concerning the matter. Please go through it and then put to me any questions you may wantto. We must not worry about people becoming despondent.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

484. LETTER TO ATTA MOHAMMED

SEVAGRAM,
May 26, 1941

DEAR ATTA MOHAMMED,

You should write to me in full before I can send for you.[1] But the best thing is for you to go to Ahmedabad and see Shri Gulzarilal Nanda.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

485. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

May 26, 1941

DEAR AMRITLAL,

Your letter. Your holding every worker cheap and refusing to work with him is your curse.[2] It is a disease with you. Here too nobody seemed to you to be good. I want you to humble yourself. There is ample work for you in a national organization. You must live simply and humbly like others. The bangles have become a mystery.[3] I must explore it.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10310. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[1] The addressee had sought an interview with Gandhiji in order to explain to him his "sound and perfect remedy for eradication of the root cause of communal riots."

[2] According to the addressee, in his letter dated May 23 he had stated his "difficulty and reluctance to work in any public body in Bengal where party friction and tussle for power were so rampant".

[3] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Amrita Lal Chatterjee", 16-5-1941

486. LETTER TO URMILA M. MEHTA

May 26, 1941

CHI. URMI,

I got your postcard. All of us were hoping that you would all arrive here on the 28th. But of course Kashmir is better than this place. Here it is still very hot this year. Now the nights also are hot. Enjoy the cool air of Kashmir, therefore. Whenever you come, you will find the house ready. I will not put up other people in it. Magan[1] is determined to pass the examination. That is good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1615. Courtesy: Manjula M. Mehta

487. LETTER TO DR. S. K. VAIDYA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 26, 1941

BHAI VAIDYA,

I can't express myself in English. The reply is contained in your description ltself. If a man is passing through a forest alone, and someone stabs him in the back, he cannot do anything. But according to your description, men were stabbed in many residential areas; in such places the assailant could easily be caught, or would be killed, provided the people are not cowardly. The murder of one innocent person cannot be avenged by killing another innocent person. If ignorance is added to ignorance, the sum can be only ignorance. Think over this calmly and, if I have misunderstood the facts, let me know. You may write in English.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5749

[1] Maganlal P. Mehta, addressee's father

488. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

[*May 26, 1941*][1]

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I got your postcard after a long time. Do not worry about the loss of a few pounds if otherwise you keep good health. I received money sent by Jugatrambhai. I expect Rami[2] is with you. The children must be fine. Ba arrived the day before yesterday. She is all right. Devdas, Ramdas and Lakshmi also have come. Lakshmi and the children are going to Madras. Devdas will leave for Simla tomorrow. Ramdas will go to Ahmedabad.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KUNVARJI KHETSI PAREKH
ZANDU PHARMACY
DADAR, BOMBAY 14

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9748. Also C.W. 728. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

489. LETTER TO RISHABHDAS RANKA

SEVAGRAM,
May 26, 1941

BHAI RISHABHDAS,

I have your letter. I am pained. I had just finished your letter when Girishwar came in. He came to give me some information on behalf of the Nagpur Bank. From what he had to say and from the auditor's report it seems you have made some mistakes. If that is so you must humbly admit it. In the circumstances I shall not send Kanubhai just now. When things have cleared up there, you can come and complete the accounts.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] From the postmark
[2] Addressee's wife, Harilal Gandhi's daughter

490. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May 26, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I did not like your letter. Anyway it is good that you have communicated to me the thoughts that arose in your mind. But why did such thoughts arise? Whatever you have written could have been decided with patience by you and Chimanlal. Once you have realized your position you should have the art to retain it with dignity. I can set right everything, but you will not gain thereby. Chimanlal says that he will be glad even if he is removed from the post of manager. If there is no manager and each department is responsible for its own work, and no one is responsible for all the departments; this too is not proper. What have you to say now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4390

491. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 26, 1941

DEAR SISTER,

I have your nice letter. Thakkar Bapa had written everything. Let us hope what has been done would become permanent. See that your health does not suffer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7996. Also C.W. 3093. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

492. LETTER TO SAVITRI BAJAJ

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 26, 1941

CHI. SAVITRI[1],

Since you have passed in the first division, many must have congratulated you. If you want my congratulations you can have them. I am not at all surprised that you obtained the first division, because the subjects that you had to study were not difficult for you. The difficult and useful examination for our country is that of the Charkha Sangh. There all-round development is needed, and the examination to which I am referring is the *Prathama.* It is no doubt interesting. I hope you are keeping your word.

Here it is terribly hot.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3060

493. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 27, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is no news from you today. Ba is also counting days for the end of your examination. Today is the second day.

There is a letter from Balkrishna today. Read it and give your comments if you have any.

Devdas and Mahadev have gone to Simla. Lakshmi has gone to Madras. Ramdas has gone to Ahmedabad.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Wife of Kamalnayan Bajaj

494. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
[*May 28, 1941*][1]

MY DEAR IDIOT,

You are well out of this sweltering heat.

I was afraid of a bad journey[2] for you and so it has proved to be. Never, so far as I remember, have you had to send such a wire as today's. Hope you were quite well after settling down in Bombay.

Here are four letters. I am writing to Shivaji[3]. Metcalfe's[4] letter is quite good. You may write to Cunningham[5], if you know him.

My blood-pressure is quite steady-154/92, about the same in the morning.

Madalasa occupied your place. The night was a trifle better.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4022. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7331

495. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 28, 1941

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter written from Champaran. You seem to have stuck to the place. Ba has returned. She is better. Lakshmibehn has left for Madras, and Mahadev and Devdas for Simla. Rajkumari has gone to Bombay for four days to attend a women's meeting there. It must be as hot there as it is here. How can it possibly be hotter than this?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3560

[1] From the postmark
[2] The addressee had gone to Bombay to attend a women's meeting.
[3] Brother of Vinoba Bhave
[4] Herbert Aubrey Francis Metcalfe
[5] George Cunningham, Governor of North-West Frontier Province

496. LETTER TO PRABHULAL

May 28, 1941

BHAI PRABHULAL,

Of course you have my blessings. If you think they can be a source of inspiration for you, use them for the purpose. If you publish them in papers, you may take it that they will lose the power, if any, of inspiring you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4136

497. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 28, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is no letter from you today. You will have received the one I sent yesterday. It is your third day today. You will receive this letter on the 31st morning. That will be your last day. Send a telegram when the examination is over. When will the results be known?

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
SOHANLAL COLLEGE
16 LAKE ROAD
LAHORE (PUNJAB)

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

498. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 29, 1941

DEAR IDIOT,

Yours. Strange no letter from you today. I do hope you have no more bad jaw. If it is not good, you must consult Jivraj[1].

[1] Dr. Jivraj Mehta

Mani[1] coming here tomorrow.

Ba is keeping well.

I [am] first class.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Can you remember where Pakistan literature could be? Kanu searched and found nothing. If you have any notion, wire and tell me also how your jaw is behaving.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4023. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7332

499. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

May 29, 1941

MY DEAR MUNSHI,

I have your transparent letter[2]. I don't mind your having written it in English. I would not for a moment tolerate your suppressing your thoughts or simply parroting my views. It would not become either of us.

You have the fullest liberty of thought and expression. If there is an error, there is nothing to prevent us from correcting it. But do remember that non-violent resistance is far superior to violent resistance. And if that is so, how can a votary of non-violence resort to violence? I have already made it absolutely clear that violentresistance becomes the duty of those who have no faith in non- violence.[3]

But I would ask you not to worry about these things while you are there. Go to Kausani and soothe your eyes with the sight of the Dhavalgiri snows. Do stay there longer, if you must, for the sake of your eyes. There is no hurry at all. This work will be there awaiting you, no matter when you return after full recovery. Do come, on your return to Bombay.[4]

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7661. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

[1] Manibehn Patel

[2] *Vide* "Instructions to Satyagrahis", 17-6-1941

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Bhogilal Lala", "Letter to Bhogilal Lala", 21-5-1941

[4] The addressee met Gandhiji on June 12/13; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 15-6-1941.

500.. LETTER TO DR. S. K. VAIDYA

May 29, 1941

BHAI VAIDYA,

You give me useful information regularly. Whether one adopts the method of non-violence or of violence, one can succeed only if one has patience. Can we ever imagine what patience and self-control Hitler and others must be obliged to exercise? Stabbing cannot be stopped by stabbing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5750

501. LETTER TO PURATAN J. BUCH

May 29, 1941

CHI. PURATAN,

I got your letter. You are doing good work. What work have you given to Akbar?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9182

502. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 29, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your two postcards today. I have written to you daily. I shall wait for your letter every day. Ba is well. I am also well.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
LADY HARDINGE MEDICAL COLLEGE
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

503. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May 29, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

If you have understood my letter[1], then the other two [questions] need no reply. The pity is that both [you and Chimanlal] are ready to give up work. What would you give up? Duty or right? Duty cannot be given up and there is no right. You cannot give up what forms a part of duty, what is left is only a burden. This applies to both you and Chimanlal. If Chimanlal does not enjoy the privilege of a manager, then he is free, but what remains as part of duty has got to be done. For example, if Surendra steals, then power has to be exercised to stop him from doing so. But if he insults anyone, the use of power should be shunned. Both of you should read this. Perhaps many things will then get solved by themselves.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4391

504. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
[*May 30, 1941*][2]

CHI. AMRIT,

Your note.

I am sorry the jaw is still giving you pain. You will carry out instructions.

I hope you got my letter of yesterday.

Your resolution is not up to the mark. We will discuss it when we meet.

Here everything goes well.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4024. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7333

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Krisnachandra", 26-5-1941

[2] From the postmark

505. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 30, 1941

DEAR AMRITLAL,

I am not satisfied with your letter. You are too-simple to do any responsible work. The girls are deceiving you. You were near them. How could Surendra thrust those things on them without your knowledge? How could they accept S's word? You are spoiling your children. It seems strange that you should offer to send those things back or to sell them. I do not believe for one moment that the girls did not want to use those things. At any rate I do not want the price which you cannot get nor do I want the articles.[1]

As to Annada Babu, he must take you at his risk. I must say I have no confidence in your doing anything well.

You may send your draft[2] of what you will say and I shall see if I can correct it.

Why do you say I have prohibited you from saying anything about the Ashram or your connection with it? You are surely at liberty to say anything you like so long as you are truthful.

By private life, I meant taking any service on your merits. I would not call it private life if you take up-khadi work as a patriot. It would be private if you take it up for the sake of a living.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10311. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[1] *Vide* also letters to the addressee, "Letter to Amrita Lal Chatterjee", 20-5-1941 and "Letter to Amritalal Chatterjee", 23-5-1941

[2] The addressee had proposed to make a public statement on the Dacca riot; *vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Amrita Lal Chatterjee", 23-5-1941

506. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 30, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Just a postcard will have to do for now. I have nothing to say except that you should pass. There is no letter from you today.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR

L. H. M. COLLEGE

NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

507. LETTER TO VINA CHATTERJEE AND ABHA CHATTERJEE

May 30, 1941

CHI. VINA AND ABHA,

Your letter is full of lies. Father was with you and you did not at all ask him. Can't you be truthful enough to say that you liked the thing, so you took it?[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10312. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

508. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May 30, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have read your letter. The difficulty is there. The test of your intelligence would be in getting things done with whatever means you have. The work should be so divided that it can be taken from casual

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

workers not recruited for it. In wars this is done. Everyone gets such training that he can do any work with ease. I do not find anything wrong in it. If necessary, talk it over with me.

Balvantsinha was telling me about the leafy vegetable. If you can satisfy him, do so; otherwise let me know what it is.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4392

509. LETTER TO LAKSHMI SATYAMURTI

May 31, 1941

MY DEAR LAKSHMI[1],

Yes, I had your two letters. How I wish your next letter will tell me that Father had good sleep without drugs. I hope both you and Mother are quite well.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: S. Satyamurti Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Also C.W. 10313. Courtesy: Government of Tamil Nadu

510. LETTER TO MARGARET JONES[2]

May 31, 1941

DEAR KAMALA,

Your letter to Gandhiji has come. He wants you to let him know what exactly the skin trouble is. Also he says: Why cannot you buy your own flour and make your own bread or chapati? You should be able to do this.

In regard to your other question, you should go out of your way neither to cultivate nor to drop acquaintances. Take what comes your way, and you have not to *seek* or *wait for* opportunities to tell people anything. Your life should be your sole spokesman. . . .[3]

Bapu—Conversations and Correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 192

[1] Daughter of S. Satyamurti

[2] F. Mary Barr explains: "In May, Kamala wrote to say that she was having some skin trouble, and also to ask Gandhi's advice as to whether she should visit people whose addresses had been given to her by friends, but with whom she had had no previous contact. After one such visit she had doubted its value. Gandhi replied through one of his secretaries." *Vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter tpo Margaret Jones", 3-5-1941

[3] Omission as in the source

511. LETTER TO MARGARET JONES

May 31, 1941

DEAR KAMALA,

It was naughty of you to have slipped. I hope you will soon be restored. Rajkumari is in Bombay. I wish she should have gone to see you.

Love.

BAPU

Bapu—Conversations and Correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 193

512. LETTER TO CHANDEL

May 31, 1941

BHAI CHANDEL,

You have done well to tell me the news of Kamala's accident[1]. I am glad to know that your work is progressing. . . .[2]

Bapu Conversations and Correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 195

513. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
May 31, 1941

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Manibehn arrived yesterday. She has grown very weak indeed. Even so, I would have asked her to return to jail, but I think she can do very useful work in Ahmedabad. I have, therefore, asked her to proceed there. She will spend two or three days in Bombay.

She tells me that the condition of lavatories in the women's ward is intolerable. You should fight about this matter there. It seems to be less a matter of expenditure than of indifference or lethargy. I think

[1] *Vide* also the preceding item.
[2] Omission as in the source.

you can, through judicious intervention, get things improved. Mani says what Hansabehn[1] has written is not enough.

Let not the riots worry you at all. What is destined to happen will happen. Personally I believe it is a civil war that has started. It remains to be seen how far it takes us. Nobody can influence the events now. I am not worrying at all. I am guiding people according to my lights. If necessary, I will go to Ahmedabad or Bombay or anywhere else.

It is truth and non-violence which will triumph ultimately. Whether or no we have these in us, we shall know now.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 248

514. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

May 31, 1941

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have read your letter and also the enclosed. We should not even think of such things. I would do nothing here. Yes, in the end everything will be as God ordains. Then why should we worry? We should take necessary precaution and give up fear. I do not feel satisfied by keeping Gorkha watchmen and so on. We may keep them but at the same time give up all fear, and learn to defend ourselves through violence or non-violence. We would perish if we depended on others. People are cowardly, and that is why they are scared by such things; and there are lots of people in the world to scare them. On this occasion my advice to you is to give up all fear, and tell others also to do so. Such disturbances will go on and will increase. They can die out if Hindus become brave in the true sense. Such bravery cannot be gained in a day or two. We can be secure if we understand the situation and face it. It hurts me that our people even give up their moral stand. How can the weak maintain their moral position?

Mahadev will be reaching Delhi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8043. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Hansa J. Mehta

515. LETTER TO ABRAHAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
[*May/June 1941*][1]

DEAR DR. ABRAHAM,

Here is a copy of the report on your letter. It will be a pity if there is difference of opinion on facts. It is likely that the riots had economic causes rather than religious. But you will give me your considered opinion.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

516. LETTER TO D. K. GOSAVI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
June 1, 1941

DEAR GOSAVI,

Our talk[2] was not for publication. Something has already appeared. It should not have. I do not understand Marathi well. But as far as I understand your notes, they faithfully interpret my answers. It would be however better for me to put forth the whole thing in a form fit for publication.

If the socialist friends or any others resent my restrictions, of course it is open to them to take independent action. This they can do by resigning from the Congress. It would be rebellion, if they act independently while they remain in the Congress. Their rebellion will be justified, if they carry the bulk of Congressmen with them in their revolt. So you will see that my instructions in no way interfere with the independence of any single person.

[1] The source places this among the papers of 1941. Riots had broken out in Dacca, Ahmedabad and Bombay in March and April. From the contents the letter appears to have been written in May or June.

[2] *Vide* "Discussion with D. K. Gosavi", 15-5-1941

One word for yourself. Where are you? I have a feeling that you yourself do not like the restrictions I have suggested. If so, you will fail in Maharashtra. You won't be able to carry on the struggle mechanically. You have to carry out the programme in faith and with resoluteness which comes from faith.

If I have misunderstood you, the part of the letter which refers to you must be regarded as not written at all.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

If you think it necessary to come again and discuss things, you can do so.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: G.N. 9232

517. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

June 1, 1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

If you wish to have a talk with me, you can do so tomorrow. I am observing silence today. But I can explain without speaking. Make a *dhanush takli* with a bamboo stick, and make the spindle from an umbrella spoke which I will send for. Make as many such *taklis* as you can. It is an easy job. You will also learn something as you do it. You seem just now to have forgotten altogether about the examination. Remember that you have to appear at both simultaneously.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8499. Also C.W. 7140. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

518. LETTER TO NATVARLAL J. VEPARI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 1, 1941

BHAI VEPARI,

When is the inspection of *Harijan* accounts likely to be

finished? If your health permits, I should like you to finish it as soon as possible.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

June 2, 1941

The above was written yesterday, after the time for sending the post. I got your letter today. I certainly feel that, if you sent an abstract of the [account] books, I would attend to the rest, for in any case I will have finally to go through the accounts myself.

BAPU

NATVARLAL J. VEPARI
361 HORNBY ROAD
BOMBAY 1

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10119

519. LETTER TO MARGARET JONES

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 2, 1941

MY DEAR KAMALA,

Having heard about your accident I wrote to you[1] at your hospital, but I see you are at your old place. Yes, come when you like and you will stay as long as you can. You will have all the help you may need.

Love.

BAPU

Bapu—Conversations and Correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 194

520. LETTER TO MAHENDRA PATEL

June 2, 1941

BHAI,

I have your letter. I hope the 4th will pass off peacefully. The duty on your part and on the part of persons like you is clear. You

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Margaret Jones", 31-5-1941

have to persuade both sides to restrain themselves even at the risk to your life. Then alone shall we be on the right lines. One thing is clear. No one must be a coward.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Keep me fully informed.

From the Gujarati original. Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

521. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 3, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

These days the well-water remains almost clean, so there is no problem. When the rains begin you will have to be careful.

Keep an account as far as you can of the fruit sent by Janaki-behn.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4393

522. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

June 4, 1941

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

The letter has had no effect on me because I did not find anything new in it. If I had written anything about that, I would have given them another chance to tell lies, and it would have been of no use. The principle is that except for doing our own duty we should notbother about anything else. But my unwillingness had nothing to do with the principle.

I am glad to know that there is no atmosphere of fear in Calcutta. It would be very satisfying if at the back of this fearlessness is a restraint in taking revenge. Perhaps the riots, etc., will increase but it will be good if neither party goes beyond limits; any other course

would do no good to the country. From today there is a change in the weather. A cool breeze has started.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8044. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

523. LETTER TO FAREED ANSARI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C.P.,
June 4, 1941

MY DEAR FAREED,

I had your letter. The affliction that has befallen you must be regarded as our common lot. I hope however that your mother has survived the illness. Of course no son wants to be away from mother's bedside.[1]

The fact is he[2] was a selfless friend and guide to so many. Such was his goodness. May his spirit sustain us and enable us to so conduct ourselves as to prove worthy of him.

You vainly approach me for relief and strength. I have none of his great medical skill nor do I possess the knowledge of you all that he had. But I know God has given you strength and courage enough to bear the separation.

The heat here too has been very great, hot winds blowing day and night. It seems to have cooled down a bit today.

You know that Jamnalalji has been discharged on medical grounds. He is much reduced but purposely. The question is whether he will be able to get rid of his arthritis. He is in Sevagram undergoing the same dietetic course he was having in the jail. Of course there is no cause for anxiety.

Is Shaukat[3] still in the same place? Please send me his address when you next write to me. Both he and Zohra have beennaughty. For they have never written to me. I hope S. has been doing well.

[1] Apparently some portion is missing here.
[2] M. A. Ansari
[3] Shaukat Ansari, Zohra's husband

Dr. Gopichand[1] is likely to come here soon.

I am glad to have the few lines from Brijkishen. He should get rid of his constipation. Satyavati wrote to me some time ago but she has been silent for a long time.

My love to you all.

BAPU
(M. K. GANDHI)

[PS.]

June 5, 1941

This letter was written last night, and Brijkishen's sorrowful message came in this morning. I have sent you a wire[2] which I hope you have received. Such is life. No life without death. We have to obey the law that admits of no exception. May God give you complete peace and strength.[3]

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 10373

524. LETTER TO SHUAIB QURESHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 5, 1941

MY DEAR SHUAIB,

I assume that you have seen my statements on the riots.[4] They have come in for much hostile criticism on the part of Muslim correspondents. I would like your reaction to my statements. If you have not read them, I would get the cuttings and send them. My remark that in Dacca and Ahmedabad the start was made by Muslim goondas has been specially resented. I wonder what you have to say to that remark. What disturbs me most are the indecent stabbings and the like. Whatever the political differences between parties or communities, a resolute attempt should be made to avoid the use of the law of the jungle.

[1] Gopichand Bhargava
[2] The wire is not available.
[3] The postscript is from a photostat of the original in Brijkrishna Chandiwala Papers.
[4] *Vide* "Communal Riots", 4-5-1941 and "Statement to the Press", 7-5-1941

At first I had thought of writing simultaneously to Zakir[1] and Khwaja. But as I began to write, I thought to myself I would first confine myself to you.

I know you will give me the whole of your thought.

Love.

BAPU

From a facsimile: *Madhya Pradesh aur Gandhiji,* between pp. 128 and 129

525. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 5, 1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Somehow all these days I could not reply to your note. I had nothing special to say. It would be a very good thing if you just now devote yourself to the *dhanush takli* and learn to make it. That will give you both peace of mind and knowledge, besides enabling you to serve *Daridranarayana.* Afterwards you will of course appear for both the examinations simultaneously. We will send Kanchan to Valod or Bangalore when Sushilabehn returns. Her own wish is to stay here till you have fully regained strength. Don't hurt her in any way. She is a child, and you are mature and have seen life.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8497. Also C.W. 7141. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Zakir Husain

526. ANSWER TO "THE HINDU" CORRESPONDENT[1]

June 7, 1941

After Tagore's reply[2], should I say anything? Nothing.

The Hindu, 9-6-1941

527. LETTER TO D. K. GOSAVI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
June 8, 1941

DEAR GOSAVI,

I have your clear and unequivocal letter. It was not a question of suspicion. But as you had not made your position clear in your letter or during our talks[3], I was bound to find out where you yourself stood. I well remember your being with Prof. Limaye and others. I do not need to refer to the friends you mention for confirmation of your assurance which I accept at its face value.

I return the questions and answers duly corrected. You are free to publish them.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 9233

[1] Miss Eleanor Rathbone, M. P., in an open letter addressed to Indian friends, had said that she saw a risk that the attitude of most of her British friends who were concentrating on the question of how far the British Government might be blamed for Indian deadlock and what they could possibly do to end it might mislead non-co-operating Indians into thinking that all progressive-minded British people were with them in throwing the whole blame on the British authorities. Hence, she said, she was moved to take the opposite course by trying to set down the opposite side as she saw it—the case against non-co-operators. The correspondent had asked Gandhiji whether he wished to say anything in reply to Miss Rathbone's letter.

[2] Dated June 4, 1941; *vide* "Rabindranath Tagore's Reply to Eleanor Rathbone", 4-6-1941

[3] On May 15; *vide* "Discussion with D. K. Gosavi", 15-5-1941

528. LETTER TO KANWARLAL SHARMA

SEVAGRAM,
June 8, 1941

DEAR KANWARLAL,

You may fight if you like but my advice is not to.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

529. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

SEVAGRAM,
June 9, 1941

I have read and re-read with shame and sorrow an official account of the cool, calculated and unprovoked murder of a Muslim family including an infant girl, three years old. Though Rajendra Babu is doing glorious work on behalf of communal peace in Bihar, it is impossible for me to suppress my own opinion on this cruel crime. The perpetrators, whoever they may be, have done no good either to themselves or their religion, if they have any, or to this country. This I say apart from my views on ahimsa. I suggest that on no ground, even of violence, can such murders be defended. Repeated on a wide scale they must reduce our fair land to savagery and make the country's freedom an impossibility. No government can cope with such crimes. They can only punish the miscreants after the event and that only if they are found. In the latter case, the punishment is likely to be as indiscriminate and savage as the crime itself. I, therefore, advise the perpetrators with all the force my words may possess to deliver themselves up unconditionally to the authorities for such punishment as the latter may think fit to award. This act of repentance, tardy though it will be, will somewhat recompense for the grievous crime committed. They will thereby purge themselves, their religion andtheir country to some extent of the disgrace that attaches to the crime. Such

[1] The addressee, who was sentenced to one-and-a-half years' imprisonment for offering satyagraha, had sought Gandhiji's advice regarding the suspension of his licence of Pleadership under the Defence of India Rules.

a confession, if it is frank and wholehearted, may also serve as an example and possibly prevent a recurrence of such savagery.

From a copy: A.I.C.C. File, 1941. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

530. LETTER TO NATVARLAL J. VEPARI

June 9, 1941

BHAI NATVARLAL,

I got your letter. I am sending to Chandrashankar the papers sent by you, and asking him to send his reply immediately.

I see that Chandrashankar has no more trust in your impartiality. He often writes to Mahadev, and sometimes to me also, complaining against you, but I didn't think it necessary to take up your time by sending his letters to you. I have written to him that the final decision will be mine and that your report will cover only the figures.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10120

531. LETTER TO YUDHVIR S1NGH

June 9, 1941

BHAI YUDHVIR,

I have your letter. I have been watching the conflict among the students with pain and detachment. I can thus neither send a message nor depute a leader. And it is in this that the good of the student community lies. You must resolve the quarrel amongst yourselves. How this is to be done I have explained in my exposition of satyagraha. Nothing should be done out of cowardice, nothing at all from malice and nothing to gain power. You should also keep away from active politics. If even a handful of students remember this and work accordingly, others will in time begin to follow them.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

532. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 9, 1941

All must have missed me as I did not turn up at meal time. In fact there is no cause for disappointment. Because of my foolishness or ignorance I have mild dysentery and slight fever. If Sushilabehn had not forbidden me, I could have easily come to the dining-room. But I follow the instructions of the doctors as far as possible. No one should worry.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4394

533. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

June 10, 1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have read your letter carefully. It will be enough if you do not make up your mind that you cannot live with Kanchan. She will go to Valod when she is relieved by Sushila. It is but natural for a girl to wish to stay with her parents. It is not quite necessary that she should stay with you. You should remain here and do what you can. Let your thoughts mature, and preserve your peace of mind. Observe self-control and build up good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8496. Also C.W. 7142. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

534. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 12, 1941

MY DEAR AMALA,

Your letter. Mahadev is in Ahmedabad. He has not been ill. Durga is, and is in the Bhatia Hospital. I am glad you are to have anew

companion in Sati. What is this about the college? You will let me know more about it.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

535. LETTER TO DR. ABRAHAM PAUL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, (C. P.),
June 13, 1941

DEAR DR. PAUL,

Your letter to Gandhiji has come today. He desires me to write and ask you what in your own mind you regard as a 'modest' salary.

Yours sincerely,

AMRIT KAUR

From a photostat. C. W. 10979. Courtesy: Dr. Abraham Paul

536. LETTER TO WALCHAND HIRACHAND

June 13, 1941

BHAI WALCHAND[1],

I am in receipt of your letter. As Rajendra Babu[2] is going [to Vishakhapatnam] there should be no necessity of a message from me. In view, however, of my old association with the late Sheth Narottam[3], I can quite understand that you would expect my blessings on this occasion. May your enterprise succeed and may it benefit the whole country.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 120

[1] Chairman, Board of Directors, Scindia Steam Navigation Company

[2] Who was to lay the foundation-stone for the first India-owned shipbuilding yard on June 21, 1941

[3] Narottam Morarjee, father of Shantikumar Morarjee

537. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

June 14, 1941

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I have your descriptive letter. I can well understand your and Mother's grief.[1] Have I not personally known what a domestic man Father was? His love for you all was boundless. His love of the country was a later growth. But it never diminished the family affection. Do I not remember how for your sake he came to Wardha[2]? It showed to me too that although our politics differed, the personal bond between us never snapped.

You must be a tower of strength to Mother. Tell her I expect her to follow in the footsteps of Ramabai Ranade and bravely do such service [as] she can. She must not give way to grief.

Do come when you can.

Love.

BAPU

From a facsimile: *Builders of Modern India: S. Srinivasa Iyengar*, between pp. 95 and 97

538. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL V. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,
June 14, 1941

BHAI CHIMANLAL,

Received your letter. Do defend yourself by all legal means.[3] Don't submit. Let them fine you if they choose. Undergo imprisonment if they offer it. Let the press be closed down if there is no one to run it after you go. Or let the magazine[4] run only as a newspaper. If that too is not possible, then let things take their own

[1] The addressee's father, S. Srinivasa Iyengar, had passed away on May 19.

[2] In 1934

[3] The addressee was sentenced to six months' imprisonment or to pay a fine of Rs. 2000.

[4] *Bharat Samachar* which was asked to stop publication

course. I will only insist that you should not do anything under pressure. But since Munshiji is there, there is no need to consult me. Be guided by his advice.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

539. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

SEVAGRAM,
June 15, 1941

Shri K. M. Munshi wrote to me the enclosed[1] from Nainital to which I sent a reply[2] in Gujarati of which the original and translation are herewith enclosed. In pursuance of the correspondence, Shri K. M. Munshi came to me[3] as soon as it was possible after his return to Bombay. In the course of the discussion, I discovered that whilst he accepted in the abstract the principle of ahimsa with all its implications, he felt the greatest difficulty in acting upon it, the more so as with his intimate knowledge of Bombay he was sure that he could not carry the Hindus with him, much less the Muslims. He knew that the numerous Hindus who were under his influence would look to him for guidance and would seek his advice. He saw no way of convincing them that they could defend themselves through ahimsa. As a political weapon and therefore of immediate use in the midst of the riots which looked more like a miniature civil war, he could not make any effective use of ahimsa. With him the question was not one of interpretation of Congress resolutions but of being truthful to himself and to the country. In view, therefore, of the following resolution[4] by the A.I.C.C. explaining the Wardha statement, I advised that the only dignified and brave course for him was to resign from the Congress and attain freedom of action unhampered by restrictions entailed by the Congress non-violence.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to K. M. Munshi", 26-5-1941

[2] *Vide*"Letter to K. M. Munshi", 29-5-1941

[3] On June 12, 1941; *vide* "Discussion with K. M. Munshiu and Others", 12-6-1941

[4] Passed at Poona on July 28, 1940.

> The A.I.C.C. has considered the statement issued by the Working Committee from Wardha on June 21, 1940, and confirmed it. The A.I.C.C. is of opinion that as explained therein, while the Congress must continue to adhere strictly to the principle of non-violence in the struggle for independence, it is unable, in the present circumstances, to declare that the principle should be extended to free India's national defence. The A.I.C.C. desires to affirm that the Congress organization should continue to be conducted on the principle of non-violence and all Congress volunteers are bound by their pledge to remain non-violent in the discharge of their duty and no Congress volunteers' organization can be formed or maintained except on that basis. Any other volunteers' organization for the purpose of self-defence with which Congressmen are associated must likewise adhere to non-violence.

I told him that there came a time in every Congressman's life when being a Congressman dragged him down; that was when there was conflict between thought and action. For the spring of non-violent action was non-violent thought. If the latter was absent, the former had subjectively little or no value. Therefore it was good for him, the Congress and the country that he should resign and mould hisaction from moment to moment as he thought proper. And by his action he would open the door for those Congressmen to resign whose practice could not accord with their thought. The Congress was conceived to be a non-violent and truthful organization in which there should be no place for those who could not honestly conform to these two conditions. Strange as it might appear, the practice of non-violence seemed more difficult than of truth. For the fruits of untruth were more indetectable than those of violence.

My advice appealed to Shri Munshi. And he has decided to accept it.[1] He will go because he could not be disloyal to the Congress he has so long served. And it does not at all follow that his resignation means that from being a meek and mild man he suddenly becomes a fierce man, vowing vengeance on those whom he may consider to be opponents, or that he becomes a communal anti-nationalist. I have no doubt that for him every non-Hindu whose only home is India is as much Indian as a Hindu, born and bred in India. I congratulate him upon taking the step he will and I have every hope that his resignation from the Congress will enable him to utilize his faculties so as to make a decisive contribution towards the establishment of lasting peace in Bombay.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-6-1941; also *Pilgrimage to Freedom*, pp. 415-6

[1] For K. M. Munshi's statement, *vide* "K. M. Munshi's Statement"

540. REPLY TO BRITISH WOMEN'S APPEAL[1]

SEVAGRAM,
June 15, 1941

DEAR SISTERS,

We have very carefully studied your message addressed to India's women. We write this in our individual capacity, as also that of representative members of the A.I.W.C. which, as you know, is an organization of fifteen years' standing. We mention this to show that what we state here is not only our deep personal conviction, but also, as far as we can judge, the conviction of a large body of India's women.

It is scarcely necessary to tell you that we appreciate the sincerity of your appeal. But we are amazed at the ignorance betrayed in it of the realities. Indeed your Prime Minister[2] by contrast shows a grasp of realities which is refreshing, however painful it may be. He has no misgivings about the status that India occupies in the British mind. It is a dependency which can and is being utilized at the British will. He knows that he does not need the consent or co-operation of India's thinking sons and daughters in anything that Britain wants for fighting her war. He takes care to pay tribute to the valour of the Indian soldiers who are part of the army of occupation in India. These soldiers you should know are wholly unconnected with the national life and activities. They may not freely see any nationalist without incurring heavy penalties, nor has your Prime Minister any difficulty in raising either by taxation or so-called voluntary contributions the money he wants. We cannot complain of this helplessness but we must not be blind to the facts. How can there be the association, in such a situation, of the India that is impatient of the foreign yoke with the forcible aid we have adverted to?

The fact is that you are wholly wrong in your estimate of things. We are surprised at your quoting the untruth contained in President Roosevelt's pronouncement. You quote: "Today the whole world is

[1] Drafted by Gandhiji, this was signed by Sarojini Naidu, Rameshwari Nehru, Vijayalakshmi Pandit, Amrit Kaur, Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade, Ammu Swaminathan and Radha Subbaroyan on behalf of the All-India Women's Conference and sent on June 21, 1941.

[2] Winston Churchill

divided between human slavery and human freedom."[1] The fact is that there is no such thing as human freedom for Asiatic races, certainly not for India, nor is there for the virile Africans. The result, whatever it may be, of the war will not alter their condition for the better, save through their own efforts. As we see the reality, it is this. It is a war between the British Empire and Nazis and Fascists for world domination, meaning in effect exploitation of the non-European races.

We cannot be in love with Nazism and Fascism. But we may not be expected to be in love with British Imperialism.

Now perhaps you will understand why we as women are against all war. Women's part is just now to stand up for truth and non-violence as against the untruth and violence which surround us. We admire the self-sacrifice of the British women of which you write with just pride. Here we wish you could have taken a braver andprouder part by telling your men to wash their hands clean of human blood. You might not have succeeded all at once. But you would have led the way to the establishment of permanent peace. We take leave to doubt the wisdom of women aping men in the black art of human slaughter on a scale hitherto unknown.

Lastly, let us point out the anomaly of British women asking India, though a slave nation, to help the slave-owner in distress instead of asking the slave-owner to undo the wrong and cure himself of the initial sin and thus ensure the moral justness of his position.

This presentation of the picture may appear unpleasant to you but it is none the less sincere. And we could not answer your sincerity except by being equally sincere.

From a photostat: C.W. 10360

541. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 16, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

The way to hand over the kitchen to Harijans is to train those men and women who work steadily and to leave the others out. In the beginning one of us should supervise their work. This sort of arrangement prevails in all institutions.

[1] The quotation is from *The Bombay Chronicle*, 23-6-1941.

The rules of the kitchen continue to be the same. The change is only in the case of fruit. It should be served to those who must have it and to others when available. Mangoes will go out in a few days now. Serve papayas when they become available. If you can give fruit to everyone by all means do so.

Nothing is to be given to anyone because he likes it but Ba is exempted from this rule. Shakaribehn can prepare something for herself, if she desires. In the ease of others anything outside the menu may be prepared only if specially instructed by me. Of course you know about Shastriji.

This covers everything.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4395

542. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 16, 1941

DEAR SISTER,

I got your letter today. I received the dhoti. I wore it the next day and will use it more. I understand the affection it symbolizes.

Only our actions will lead to the spread of ahimsa. *Harijan* cannot be published right now. Publishing it will itself harm the truth. But we should have faith that thought is more effective than speech and writing. If I hold pure thoughts, it is my firm belief, they must be having their effect, and this will spread.

What happened in Garhwal is rather sad. I feel that you or Bapa should go there. And if possible both of you should go. If the settlement is broken, you must go there and restore it. It is essential that at least one of you should visit the place at once. The path of service is hard indeed.

I hope you were not worried on hearing of my illness. Now I am quite all right. Whatever happened was due to my foolishness or ignorance.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7997. Also C.W. 3094. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

543. LETTER TO GANESHDUTT SINGH

June 16, 1941

BHAI GANESHDUTT SINGHJI,

I was very glad to have your letter. Rajendra Babu tells me that despite your age you are taking considerable interest in public activities.

Even if all satyagrahis are released I cannot say that I will not send anyone to jail again. I am having consultations with Rajendra Babu.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8738

544. LETTER TO VIDYAVATI

June 16, 1941

CHI. VIDYA,

A great calamity has indeed befallen you. These are your moments of trial. You have to bear it with fortitude. There is a tuberculosis hospital in Delhi but it is for the benefit of Delhi people only and is always full. But the one at Bhowali is the best, where people belonging to the U.P. are given priority, and there is another at Dharampur. There is no cause for worry. If Rajendra observes restraint in diet he will recover. If the tuberculosis is in its early stages it is not incurable.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

545. LETTER TO JIVKRISHNA SHARMA

June 18, 1941

BHAI JIVKRISHNA SHARMA,

Your intention to hold an exhibition of the products of khadi and village industries and to give away the total profit to the Kamala

Nehru Hospital[1] is indeed praiseworthy. I wish you success in the effort.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 89

546. LETTER TO S. SATYAMURTI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 19, 1941

MY DEAR SATYAMURTI,

I was delighted to see your signature after a prolonged silence. I do hope you will be fully restored to health under the kindly attention you are having.

Though there is no connection between what I did during the last war and what we are doing now, I quite agree with you that those who offer their services now need have no fear of any vindictive action by any Congress government.[2]

Please tell Lakshmi that I am quite well.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 10202

547. LETTER TO S. RANGANAYAKI [3]

June 19, 1941

DEAR SISTER,

I was delighted to have your note through Ambujam. She translated that letter for me. Of course, I consider myself a member of the family and shall follow its fortunes with personal interest.

Ambujam has given me her costly jewels which you have permitted her to donate in the sacred memory of the deceased patriot.

[1] At Allahabad

[2] The addressee had asked Gandhiji to encourage medical recruitment on humanitarian grounds.

[3] S. Srinivasa Iyengar's widow

I have decided to devote the proceeds to founding Harijan scholarships.

Love.

BAPU

Builders of Modern India: S. Srinivasa Iyengar, p. 67

548. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

June 19, 1941

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

I got your letter. You are doing great *tapashcharya*[1] indeed. May you succeed. Come whenever you wish to. I am all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VALLABHRAM VAIDYA
SHANTISADAN
MOUNT ABU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2914. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya

549. TELEGRAM TO OBEIDULLAH

WARDHA,
June 21, 1941

OBEIDULLAH[2]
CONGRESS OFFICE
TRICHI

EXEMPTION VENKATACHALAM[3] GRANTED.

GANDHI

From a copy: A.I.C.C. File, 1941. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Penance
[2] President, Tamil Nadu Provincial Congress Committee
[3] A released satyagrahi who was seeking election to Presidentship of the Trichinopoly District Board

550. DRAFT LETTER TO DISTRICT MAGISTRATE, WARDHA[1]

June 21, 1941

DEAR SIR,

With reference to your letter of 16th instant, I have to state that my sons are no longer members of a joint family. Each has his own means. But since there are funds with me belonging to my son Ramakrishna[2], I send you herewith notes for Rs. 300 being the total fine inflicted on him.

From a photostat: G.N. 3064

551. NOTE TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ[3]

[*June 21, 1941*][4]

Will not the remitting of this amount result in Ramakrishna's release?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3064

552. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL V. SHAH

June 21, 1941

BHAI CHIMANLAL,

Received your letter. I find your article entirely innocent. I do not like that again and again you have to submit to the censors. But the newspapers have learnt the art of survival, of which I am completely ignorant. Therefore I cannot be of much help. Munshiji is there. Therefore I would ask you to act only according to his advice. If he has to ask anything about you he will ask me. I do not want to give my independent view when he is there. Show him this letter too and be guided by his advice.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] On behalf of Jamnalal Bajaj; *vide* also the following item.

[2] Who had offered satyagraha on April 15, 1941, at Wardha

[3] Gandhiji wrote this on the margin of the English letter drafted for Jamnalal Bajaj; *vide* the preceding item.

[4] *ibid*

553. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

SEVAGRAM,
June 21, 1941

BHAI HARIBHAU,

Rukmini's letter is enclosed.[1] I hope you are keeping good health. Ramnarayan says that the misunderstandings prevailing about municipal affairs at Ajmer can be removed if you devote some time to the matter. If there is some truth in this please spare the time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6090. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

554. LETTER TO BALIBEHN M. ADALAJA

[On or after *June 21, 1941*][2]

CHI. BALI[3],

You seem to have been born for the service of Harilal's children. So what advice can I give you?

It would be surprising indeed if you weren't ill. What else can you expect but to fall ill?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1582. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

555. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Monday, June 23, 1941

CHI. MIRA,

I have read the enclosed. It is a good collection[4]. All these verses

[1] The letter is not available.

[2] This letter is written on the back of a letter of this date, written to the addressee by someone.

[3] Sister of Harilal Gandhi's wife

[4] Of hymns from the Rigveda

have more meanings assigned to them than what you have found. But for us the literal meaning is enough.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6481. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9876

556. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

SEVAGRAM,
June 23, 1941

DEAR LOTUS-BORN,

Here is work for you and for which you ate eminently fitted.

It is reported in the Press that in Tandur 30 miles from Wadi, 3,000 pilgrims suddenly took ill after drinking water from a certain well about the beginning of the month. They had drunk from this well before with impunity. It is suggested that the well was deliberately poisoned by somebody. Whatever the cause, have the authorities remained indifferent over the tragedy? Or is it all a hoax?

Hope you and the whole family are well.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI PADMAJA NAIDU
RED HILLS
HYDERABAD
DECCAN

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

557. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

June 23, 1941

DEAR SISTER,

I got your letter. I don't think Ba is likely to go there at present. She is all right. We will manage to get mangoes from somewhere. I was glad to learn that Ranjit had recovered. Would it not have been a discredit to you if he hadn't? So in the end you also had to seek mother goat's help. But Kalyanji is a farmer, and he must drown

himself for being unable to keep a fine cow and to have her breed calves even if he has to undergo some hardships. Pragji should share the same fate.

Blessings from

BAPU

MITHUBEHN PETIT
MAROLI, *via* NAVASARI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2717

558. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

June 23, 1941

CHI. MAHAVIR,

How is it your fever still does not leave you? Are you sufficiently careful about your diet? Such fever cannot be the result of simple fatigue. Whatever the cause, get rid of it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6243

559. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM,
June 23, 1941

CHI. LILI,

You will have reached safely. Concentrate fully on your studies. I do miss you. Had I permitted M., he would have come at 8.15 and wasted valuable time.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI LILAVATI UDESHI
KANJI KHETSI CHHATRALAYA
65 MINT ROAD, BOMBAY FORT

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

560. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[After *June 23, 1941*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

Your troubles are many. You have chosen the path.[2] I am trying to send Munnalal and possibly Ozaji with him. The use of the well is the most serious matter. Let us see what happens. Yes, Asha[3] is a good friend.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Here is what [I] have finished of the selections.

From the original: C.W. 6482. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9877

561. TELEGRAM TO ISHWARLAL G. VYAS

WARDHAGANJ,
June 25, 1941

ISHWARLAL
ASHRAM
BHADRAK

CONSIDER JIVRAMBHAI'S[4] DEATH BLESSING. NATHIBEHN[5] SHOULD REJOICE HIS FREEDOM FROM PAIN. REPORT FULLY.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5060

[1] The addressee places the letter between those dated June 23 and July 1.

[2] Mirabehn explains: "I had returned from Chorwad and was living in a cottage by a well in a newly-planted *bagicha* about half a mile from Sevagram."

[3] Ashadevi Aryanayakum. The addressee had gone to stay with her in order to revise with her assistance the English rendering of her selections from Vedic hymns.

[4] Jivram Kothari; *vide* also "Bhakta Jivram"

[5] Wife of Jivram Kothari

562. LETTER TO D. P. KARMARKAR

June 25, 1941

DEAR KARMARKAR[1],

As I know so little of municipal affairs they are all referred to Rajendra Babu and Acharya Kripalani. Both are just now away. Either follow the existing rule or write to Rajendra Babu at Patna.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: A.I.C.C. File No. 1293-A, 1940-41. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

563. TELEGRAM TO GOPINATH BARDOLOI

SEVAGRAM,
June 26, 1941

I AGREE.[2] HOPE HEALTH IMPROVING.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

564. LETTER TO KANHAIYALAL

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
June 26, 1941

BHAI KANHAIYALAL,

I hope Chi. Kumari Vidyavati's wedding will pass off without any hitch. May both of them have a long life and serve the country. Mirabai has returned from Chorwad. She is happy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10052. Also C.W. 6457

[1] President, Karnataka Provincial Congress Committee

[2] The addressee had sought Gandhiji's advice on offering satyagraha immediately after his release.

565. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

June 26, 1941

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I hope your health is improving there. Chi. Radha and Bindu are here at present. Bindu has been mixing with everybody here and has become adjusted to the food and other things here.

Of course the purpose of writing this letter is altogether different. You had suggested to Radha to come there. She did not realize that you desired her presence for your sake. I told her that whether you wanted is or not, her duty at the moment was to be with you. Radha is willing to do that. As soon as you get this letter, send me a telegram indicating whether Radha should come or not. If her services are useful even in the slightest degree, send a telegram without hesitation asking her to come.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Radha is going to Bombay. So send a telegram to Bombay too.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

566. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

June 27, 1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Your letter was a painful one. But perhaps your good lies in your leaving. I fear you will return after a bitter experience. I will be only too glad if the fear is proved false and if, like Janaki Prasad, you are able to settle down somewhere. I have suggested Pondicherry or Ramana Ashram. But if you cannot settle in peace anywhere you have of course a place here.

Jawaharmulji's advice regarding Hiramani is the best. Let her get trained slowly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8493. Also C.W. 7143. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

567. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
June 28, 1941

DEAR AMRITLAL,

It is clear to me that I can do nothing for you. You must now come down to mother earth and do as other men do—labour to earn an honest cowrie and subsist on it. You will then be able to learn what self-respect is.[1]

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10314. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

568. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

June 28, 1941

CHI. MANUDI,

There have been no letters from you recently. But I learn that you keep good health. Write to me. Grandmother is all right. I am also quite well. Manojna and Krishnadas[2] have arrived. Prabhudas[3] also is here at present. He will soon be leaving.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1581. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

569. BHAKTA JIVRAM

Jivrambhai is no more. In my view he was a true *bhakta* and a *bhakta* lives all the more after death. I refuse to believe that he is dead. Of course his ailing body has perished, it has turned into ashes. His radiant soul is immortal and pervades every particle of the

[1] The addressee had expressed his reluctance "to take a merely mercenary work to the exclusion of social service".

[2] Sons of Chhaganlal Gandhi

[3] *ibid*

province of Orissa.

Jivrambhai was rich. According to me he was an ideal trustee. He gave his money for the spread of the charkha among the poor of Orissa. He himself lived like the poor of Orissa and all the twenty-four hours his thoughts were full of the welfare of the people of Orissa. Shri Ishwarlal describes his last days thus:

> He suffered from diarrhoea for nearly three months. He stopped taking medicines from the 18th June, 1941. He said: "I have been taking medicines for the last three months and there is no improvement. So now let it be as God wills." He was using mud-packs. He had completely given up food. He took *mosambi* juice which also he gave up later. Since the morning of the 23rd he did not take even water. He used to rinse his mouth when his throat went dry. I told him: "Please take some water". He replied: "Don't you see I am losing my breath?" This he said in the morning and till ten minutes to three he was fully conscious. Within ten minutes all of a sudden he was unconscious and lay stiff. Without any movement, slowly the breathing stopped.

Let us all become like him. May God grant us such a noble death.

SEVAGRAM, June 29, 1941

[From Hindi]

Sarvodaya, July 1941

570. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
June 29, 1941

DEAR MOTI BABU,

Shri Jajuji has sent me the file regarding Prabartak Sangha. I was distressed on reading it. The A.I.S.A. is a huge concern which has the poorest of the land as its only concern. It must put all its transactions on a sound legal footing. Then only can it be morally sound. I therefore do not understand the hesitation to give the required promissory note. Indeed, the debt should have been paid off long ago. And why this hesitation to get the certificate? If you cannot accept the requirements, surely the least you should do is to stop khadi work altogether.[1]

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Motilal Roy", 18-7-1941.

I am sure I have but to draw your attention to things to set them right.

I hope your eyes no longer trouble you and that otherwise too you are well.

Love.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 11054

571. LETTER TO DR. ABRAHAM PAUL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, (C. P.),
June 29, 1941

DEAR ABRAHAM,

Rajkumariji has gone to Simla. I have seen your letter to her. I would like you personally to visit Sevagram and pass about a week and see things. I could then decide if I can make use of your services. And you would also be better able to judge whether you would like the work here.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. ABRAHAM PAUL
THOPPAL HOUSE
P. O. PARUR
TRAVANCORE

From a photostat: C. W. 10980. Courtesy: Dr. Abraham Paul

572. LETTER TO DHIRUBHAI B. DESAI

June 29, 1941

CHI. DHIRUBHAI[1],

I had replied promptly to Bhai Motichand Kapadia's letter. I have mentioned it in my note, too. Unfortunately I didn't keep a copy. But I remember the reply, which I enclose with this.[2] Read it and

[1] Son of Bhulabhai Desai

[2] Kanu Gandhi has added the following note to the letter: "A copy of the earlier letter to Motichandbhai has since been traced but since it is the same as the enclosed one I am not sending it."

give it to Bhai Motichand.

Your previous letter did not call for a reply. For after that Bhai Munshi resigned[1] and Mahadev also met him.

I hope you and Madhuri are keeping fine.

How is the atmosphere there?

Give the accompanying[2] to Bhulabhai if you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Bhulabhai Desai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

573. LETTER TO NATVARLAL J. VEPARI

June 29, 1941

BHAI NATVARLAL,

I learn from the office that this is the third or fourth letter from you [though] containing fewer criticisms. Please warn your men.

I am sending your letters to Mahadevbhai. Since he has had a talk with you, you should write direct to him at Harijan Ashram, Sabarmati. He will reply to you. The point is that it will be enough if you give a report on the basis of the material you have received. For finally I myself will have to look into everything. I will, therefore, take your [help][3] if I particularly need it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10121

574. LETTER TO ZOHRA ANSARI

June 29, 1941

DAUGHTER ZOHRA,

I was delighted to have your letter. Faridbhai writes and says that you looked after his mother very well. God will look after your

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", "Statement to the Press", 15-6-1941

[2] In another note Kanu Gandhi here says: "He will write this letter later, so I cannot enclose it with this."

[3] One word here is illegible.

well-being. Have some patience. One day I shall certainly let you go to jail. I hope Shaukat is all right. Love to the children.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Urdu: *Mahatma*, Vol. VI, between pp. 48 and 49

575. LETTER TO GOPINATH BARDOLOI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 30, 1941

MY DEAR BARDOLOI,

I replied to your wire there and then.[1] I had a note from the Telegraph Office that you had left and that the wire was posted to you. You must have got it. In view of the notice given by you, I suppose you must court imprisonment, but if the Government had good grounds for releasing you, it would be violence to court imprisonment. But you are the best judge. Please keep me informed of your movements and doings. This is a long-drawn-out struggle in which there would be no haste. Everyone will have all the opportunity he needs to show his mettle.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3

576. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

June 30, 1941

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I have your letter introducing Mr. M. Lancaster. I have already given him an appointment. I do not know that I shall be of any help to him.

Yes, I did receive your letter about Andrews' sisters. Amrit it was who sent an acknowledgement. But who knows what letters reach addressees. The wonder is that in the midst of the terrible slaughter there is still so much order.

I have not yet been able to do anything about the sisters. Even

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Gopinath Bardoloi", 26-6-1941

the memorial is hanging fire. If I live long enough I shall collect the money.

The riots, floods and the struggle have upset all my plans. The riots this time have no resemblance to the former ones. This time it is a rehearsal for a civil war. My faith in the authorities is daily receiving rude shocks. It seems they will never learn, never forget.

The Secretary of State never speaks but to irritate almost everybody. The breach is widening. There is much make-believe. In spite of all this, I do not despair of my ahimsa working. Its effect is silent, torturingly slow, but sure. You may therefore be sure that no stone will be left unturned on this side to promote understanding and friendliness.

You must have seen India's women's answer[1] to the British women's appeal. I wonder if Ch. keeps up sending you cuttings.

Mahadev is in Ahmedabad and Amrit in Simla.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1521

577. LETTER TO FARID ANSARI

June 30, 1941

MY DEAR FARID,

Whatever I do is spontaneous and natural to me. A votary of truth cannot do otherwise. No appreciation is therefore needed for doing what is natural, even as there need be none for a man being what he is.

Yes, Zohra has written. She asks for permission, but I have asked her to wait.[2] I do not wonder at Zohra having served mother well. She would have belied Dr. Ansari's teaching if she had done otherwise.

I am quite well. There was nothing but a passing distemper. I admit even that should not have been. I regard every distemper as a breach of nature's laws. That we are often unconscious is no excuse.

What is Satyawati's address?

[1] *Vide* "Reply to British Women's Appeal", 15-6-1941
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Zohra Ansari", 29-6-1941

I hope things are going well with you all.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

578. LETTER TO BHULABHAI J. DESAI

June 30, 1941

BHAI BHULABHAI,

Bhai Munshi had given me the substance of your talk with him. You must have seen from my statement[1] that the Congress policy is quite clear. The clarity was achieved after a long discussion. Hence those who do not accept that particular portion of the Poona resolution have no option but to leave the Congress, and that is why I persuaded Bhai Munshi to take the step he has taken. Now if what I understand about your views is correct, your path is clear. You should come out openly with your view and try to cultivate public opinion inaccordance with it. This is an age of action. All of us will be judged by our actions. A heavy responsibility rests on the Congress. It can be discharged only if there is perfect correspondence between our views and our actions. We claim to represent the 35 crores. I am addressing this to you personally, but I should like all of you to think over it. It is going to be a long and a hard struggle. What is going on at present is but a preparation.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Bhulabhai Desai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

579. LETTER TO DHIRUBHAI B. DESAI

June 30, 1941

CHI. DHIRUBHAI,

I got your letter. You must have received my letter[2] of yesterday. Send me other cuttings from time to time like the one you

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 15-6-1941

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dhirubhai B. Desai", 29-6-1941

sent regarding Bhai Munshi. I expect nothing but good from Bhai Munshi's step. Much will depend on his future course of action. Encourage others also who think like him to leave. Now it is going to be a time for real action, when half-hearted people will prove a burden. The path of ahimsa can lead to success only if all those who adopt it believe in it whole-heartedly. Nobody can be non-violent merely by professing non-violence.

I will send Chi. Kanu after his account work is finished.

Yesterday I could not write to your father. Please find the letter[1] enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original:, Bhulabhai Desai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

580. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

June 30, 1941

BHAI SATIS BABU,

Please answer this[2]. I hope you arrived safely.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

581. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

June 30, 1941

DEAR IDIOT,

I had your cheering wire from Delhi. There should be one from Simla. Not yet received at 3.30 p.m.

Do you know anything about a cheque for Rs. 251 from Khambhatta?

Here is a letter from Rameshwari. I am fasting for 24 hours in compliance with the wish expressed by Osman Sobani for the sake of Hindu-Muslim unity. The fast finishes at 5.20. Seven have joined me

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The reference is to a letter from Annada Babu about working in Kalimpong.

of their own accord. The rains have set in properly. It has been raining the whole night. It has stopped just now.

I have been working .full speed, none the worse for the fast. Sushila has gone to Nagpur to accompany Usha for medical examination of her womb by Dr. Martin. She will see Pyarelal too.

Mahadev will be leaving Ahmedabad tomorrow for Dehra [Dun] to see Jawaharlal[1]. He returns here 9th. From Dehra [Dun], he will go to Bombay, thence to Panchgani to see Mathuradas[2].

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4025. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7334

582. RENTIA BARAS[3]

Along with his success, Shri Narandas's ambition and enthusiasm go on increasing from year to year. So should it be with all those who have faith. The scope for khadi is as wide, at least, as the boundaries of India. This terrible; suicidal war may perhaps show that khadi, i.e., the principle of self-reliance for meeting one's needs, is of universal application. Be that as it may, for India, at any rate, the spinning-wheel is the sole means of ending simultaneously both poverty and unemployment. I, therefore, hope that Kathiawar will completely fulfil Narandas's ambition.

It should be remembered that the use of khadi is spreading in Kathiawar. It should, therefore, produce locally all the khadi it needs. This will necessarily require more money. In view of this, all the money received this time will be used for production of khadi.

Narandas hopes to collect at least one lakh rupees in the coming 72 days. May this hope be fulfilled!

M. K. GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, July 1, 1941

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8583. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] He was in Dehra Dun jail,

[2] Mathuradas Trikumji

[3] This note was appended to an appeal issued by Narandas Gandhi in connection with the celebration of Gandhiji's 72nd birthday according to the Gujarati calendar.

583. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM,
July 1,1941

CHI. MIRA,

Ramdas says at present he has not a man to spare. Can Undhru do the job under your directions? Can you procure labour from Varoda? Your difficulty is real. But I am helpless. Experiences like this show that labour is more than money. Many moral problemsarise from your letter but these I must not discuss here. You will tell me what you will have me do. Will you like me to procure labour from Wardha?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6483. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9878

584. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

July 1, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

I had your wire from Simla and now I have your letter from Delhi.

Here is Balkoba's letter to you.

It is still raining. Your Hindi writing is almost perfect.

I have a batch of cuttings about Munshi. They make interesting reading. I may issue a statement.

I have advised Nandan[1] to accept Prof. Indra's[2] resignation. The more the merrier. The atmosphere will be cleared.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4026. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7335

[1] Raghunandan Saran, President, Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee; *vide* also "Letter to Raghunandan Saran", before 16-7-1941, and "Statement to the Press", 5-8-1941.

[2] Indra Vidyalankar

585. DRAFT STATEMENT FOR AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

[*July 2, 1941*][1]

For domestic reasons in which the public is not interested I had to come back to Bengal leaving my two elder sons under Gandhiji's care. On arrival in Bengal I proceeded at once to Dacca as I had thought under Gandhiji's instructions. And I made a long statement about my going to Dacca. On seeing the statementGandhiji in a telegram[2] repudiated it and said that he had never given me any instructions but that he had said that if I felt like it I could go to Dacca on my own responsibility and without fuss immolate myself there whilst trying to serve both the communities. I am sorry I misunderstood his instructions. I well recall his repeatedly saying to me as to all workers that we had to work silently and selflessly. But in the impulse of the moment I forgot myself and was betrayed into making a long statement up to which I could not live. In Dacca I was in need of directions without which I could not do work. I wired to Gandhiji for them and he wired [3]saying he could issue none and that I should come away and work for my living which I am trying to do.[4]

From a photostat: C.W. 10361. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

586. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 2, 1941

MY DEAR AMRITLAL

I am sorry I was unable to send you my draft. I now send you one[5] in the place of yours. If you do not like my draft, you need not publish anything. The matter has become stale.

I hope Abha has become strong now.

[1] The draft statement was sent along with a letter of this date; *vide* the following item.

[2] The telegrams are not traceable.

[3] *ibid*

[4] Amrita Lal Chatterjee disapproved of this Statement and it was not published.

[5] *Vide* the preceding item.

You should find some work in a private firm and gradually earn your living. I regard your life as wasted in the manner you have lived. And you should make both Vina and Abha too earn whatever they can. You must not be ashamed of labour.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10315. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

587. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

July 2, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Here are two letters. I hope this will reach you safely.

Not a day has yet passed but I have written to you.

It is blowing cold. For the moment it is like Simla. It should delight S's[1] heart. I hope he was not shocked by your appearance.

All well here

Sikandar is coming here today. I shall be at sea without you. But Damodar has made friends with him. He has promised to look after him.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Written amidst interruptions.

From the original: C.W. 4027. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7336

588. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

July 2, 1941

CHI. LILY,

I got your letter. It will never do to lose heart so soon. You should try to read with concentration and understand what you read. Take somebody's help if necessary. Never mind if your weight increases, but do include enough ghee and milk in your diet. It will do you no harm if your weight remains at 105 or even 110. If you do

[1] Kunwar Shamshere Singh, addressee's brother

not eat nourishing food, your health will suffer and your mind will not keep fresh. It has been raining hard here for the last four days. It is very cold, too. I hope you make the tea light, as you told me you would.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Rajkumari has gone to Simla. Sushila is all right. Your expenses have been guaranteed by Shantikumar.

SMT. LILAVATIBEHN UDESHI

KANJI KHETSEY KANYA CHHATRALAYA

65 MINT ROAD

FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10109. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

589. LETTER TO SATIN SEN

SEVAGRAM,

July 3, 1941

DEAR SATIN,

Your letter just to hand. Though local factors ultimately determine the situation, I think if the division of opinion among you is not on communal lines you should accept earmarked donations, if you receive from both communities. If the Muslims are over-whelmingly opposed, you should not undertake communal distribution.

I do not wonder at the Marwadi Society's answer. You should do what you locally can.

Yours,

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

590. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

July 3, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Here is Jhind's reply. It is bad, it is evasive. But what can you do? I am glad they were all agreeably surprised to see you looking so

well. I am glad, however, I got nervous and packed you off. It was necessary for you to go to Simla, well or ill.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4028. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7337

591. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 3, 1941

CHI. MIRA,

Your note. I missed you last night and yet was I wishing that you would not come. When I learnt that Undhru was sent to you, I thought you were being attended [to]. On inquiry just now, I find that only Undhru was sent. I hear just now that Undhru was sent with full instructions. Nevertheless I am sending Puri to see how you are faring, You will break your silence to speak to him.[1]

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6484. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9879

592. LETTER TO GOPINATH BARDOLOI

July 3, 1941

DEAR BARDOLOI,

Your letter. I am quite clear that you must not court imprisonment till you are cured of all your illnesses. Please show this to the President.[2]

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 4

[1] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira,* in a note placed before a letter of September 7, 1940, the addressee explains: "The inner struggle had come to a crisis and such bewildering and delusive mists and fogs had enveloped my path that, in my anguish, I went into silence and seclusion that I might the better pray to God for help. The silence, with a few days' breaks for travelling, lasted 15 months. For part of the time my rule was to speak once a day for half an hour, if necessary, and for the rest of the time when I was in a cottage in the Sevagram fields, I spoke twice a week in the evening when I went to see Bapu."

[2] *Vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Gopinath Bardoloi", 30-6-1941

593. LETTER TO DILKHUSH B. DIWANJI

July 3, 1941

BHAI DILKHUSH,

I got your booklet. I will try to read it, and if I feel that I should write something, I will do so.[1] Since you are all coming, I would naturally like to have a special word with some of you but I have to restrain myself.

Blessings from

BAPU

DILKHUSH DIWANJI
"GANDHI KUTIR"
KARADI, *via* NAVASARI
B.B.&C.I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2648

594. LETTER TO ARUN CHANDRA GUHA[2]

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
July 4, 1941

DEAR ARUN BABU,

It was delightful to hear from you from the old haunt. The wonder is that you were not taken there earlier. You serve whether in or out. Yes, I had all your letters and dealt with them. Our work is undoubtedly hard but simple. We know what we have to do at a given moment. We are in no hurry for we are sure of success.

Perhaps no one will need to come to me from Bengal because Rajen Babu and the Professor were there and had a heart-to-heart chat with the workers.[3]

We shall some day play a decisive part in the solution of the communal question, if we remain strictly non-communal and

[1] *Vide* letter to the addressee dated 21-7-1941.

[2] This was withheld by the censor and later allowed to go on July 22.

[3] On June 23, Rajendra Prasad and J. B. .Kripalani discussed the communal problem with Bengal Congress workers in the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee office in Calcutta.

non-violent. Do you not agree that without non-violence we cannot be wholly non-communal?

I hope all of you are keeping well.

With kind regards to all of you,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI ARUN CHANDRA GUHA
SECURITY PRISONER
C/O ADDITIONAL SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE
MIDNAPUR
HIJLI CAMP

From a photostat: G.N. 8668

595. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

July 4, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Here are your letters. Yours has duly come. I am in no hurry about Jamnalal Bajaj.[1] And if you experience the slightest difficulty you will tell me without the slightest hesitation.

It is a grand thing to feel that your movements are fixed for you without taxing you. If servants do so they are faithful, if friends do so they may at least get that much credit. And imagine what opportunity you get for doing your work! But we are living in an ungracious world. What is to be done? Sikander is here feeling lonely without you. He goes to Hyderabad and will come later.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4029. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7338

[1] The addressee had sent a telegram to Gandhiji requesting him to send Jamnalal Bajaj to Simla to regain his health.

596. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[After *July 3, 1941*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Puri cannot continue with Mirabehn. She is now coming there.

She will go to Nalwadi tomorrow. She has taken Vinoba's permission.

Isudas had got the permission to go to Nalwadi. If he has not gone there, let him go tomorrow. Let him abide by the rules there. Let him learn all the processes of cotton. I have talked to Krishnadas.

Amtulsalaam says she will spend the night today with Kaka. Kaneba has been informed.

Lilavati should not take more than two cups of tea. If she cannot at all manage with *gur*, she may take only the absolutely necessary quantity of sugar.

She should not engage you or anyone else in talk. She should quietly carry on with her work.

Let her write to me daily in ink and in beautiful handwriting. She must give me full details.

She must go to bed and get up punctually. She must write and send to me daily two stanzas from the *Gita* with their meanings. . .[2]

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

597. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 4, 1941

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

I am quite clear that an individual Congressman cannot offer violent resistance in a public brawl. I say public because Congress cannot govern private conduct.

[1] From the contents; *vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 2-7-1941 and "Letter to Gopinath Bardoloi", 3-7-1941

[2] The letter is incomplete.

It is astonishing K. B. Allahbux can accept any invitation without reference to Mian Saheb[1].

I have the Punjab statement in mind.[2] I sent Mian Saheb a letter I had promised.

Yours,

BAPU

From the original: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

598. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

July 4, 1941

CHI. PREMA,

The letter which I said I had not received, I got later.

What you say is true. Sometimes, while trying to rush through work, I do forget to reply to some letters and I reply to some twice over, as it happened in your case. Is it not better to reply twice rather than not reply at all? Even as I was writing to you I felt that I had replied to that letter earlier. As a rule, I reply to your letters by return of post. But in this case I did not note on the letter the date of my reply and hence the mistake. But all this is idle talk.

Sushila's[3] typhoid seems to have been quite serious. Radhabehn[4] gave me some more details about it. I am writing to Sushila today. Jamnadas[5] looked after her with great care indeed.

Appa[6] has certainly been doing very fine work. This time I do hope you will come here direct [from jail].[7]

You must have received the *dhanush takli*. If it is well made, it gives excellent speed.

Improve your Urdu to a good enough level. You must know both to read and to write.

Increase your weight.

[1]Mian Iftikhar-ud-din, President, Punjab Provincial Congress Committee
[2]*Vide* "Statement to the Press", 6-7-1941
[3]Sushila Pai
[4]Daughter of Maganlal Gandhi
[5]Jamnadas Gandhi
[6]Appasaheb Patwardhan, popularly known as the Gandhi of Maharashtra
[7]One sentence following this was scored out by the prison authorities.

I thought Kanu's betrothal was about to take place, but it is no longer so. The future is in God's hands.

Rajkumari has gone to Simla for a change of air.

Ba's health is fine, and so is mine. Mahadev has gone to Dehra Dun. He will return after meeting the people there today. He did excellent work in Ahmedabad.

Blessings to all sisters from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10420. Also C.W. 6859. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

599. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 4, 1941

CHI. NARANDAS,

As usual, I am sending you Premabehn's letter. You must have duly received my note[1] on your statement. I had a note from Jamna. There was nothing in it which called for a reply.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8584. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

600. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

July 4, 1941

BHAI MUNSHI,

I had written to the Rao Bahadur even before he got your letter.

I felt your reply to Dr. Khare was lacking in spirit. How dare he compare himself with you? There is a lot of difference between you

[1] On *Rentia Baras; vide* "Rentia Baras"

two. He violated all the principles of the Congress,[1] whereas you observed them in an ideal way and left the Congress in obedience to them. Nothing that anybody says or wishes can create a rift between us two.

I hope you are all fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7664. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

601. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS G. KAPADIA[2]

[*July 4, 1941*][2]

Are you doing something or are you still without an occupation?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MADHAVDAS GOKULDAS KAPADIA
1ST FLOOR, SHYAMJI SHIVJI BUILDING
MANOHARDAS STREET, MODIKHANA
FORT, BOMBAY

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII

602. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

July 4, 1941

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your postcard. You must now be getting ready to go to Deoli. I am sure you will come here on your way back. I had a letter from Jayaprakash. He seems to be somewhat dissatisfied with what I am doing. But then was he ever satisfied? I am going to reply to him. Tell him that, though he remains dissatisfied [with me], I will be fully satisfied [with him] if he improves his health. Rajkumari has gone to

[1] In July 1938 the Congress Working Committee had found Dr. N. B. Khare, ex-Premier of the Central Provinces; "guilty of gross indiscipline" and held him "unworthy of holding positions of responsibility in the Congress organization."

[2] This is a postscript to a letter of this date by Kasturba Gandhi to the addressee, her brother.

Simla for a change of air. Rajen Babu must needs fall ill the moment he arrives there. Ba is fine. I am quite well. Sushila is still here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3561

603. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

WARDHA,
July 5, 1941

SETH JAMNALALJI
BIRLA AROGYA MANDIR
NASIK ROAD

SIMLA WIRE RECEIVED WELCOMING YOU.[1] COME.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 236

604. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

Personal

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 5, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter and wire reached me today. According to your letter your wire should have reached me at the latest on 3rd. You will inquire how this discrepancy arose.

I have now wired[2] Jamnalal at Nasik. You may expect him there next week. I have kept your letter for showing it to him. All other letters are destroyed as soon as I have read them.

Your letters show at what tremendous sacrifice you live in Sevagram. It is clear to me that you have to pass all the hot months in the hills. You must not do violence to yourself. I quite believe with Shummy that violence will result in a sudden breakdown. Self-suppression ceases to be good when the saturation point is reached. I would like you to take your bearings in Simla this time.

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 4-7-1941
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

Deprivation to be healthy must bring joy within. It is good you will have Jamnalal with you.

Here is Shummy's letter. Let us see how fat you become by the stay in Simla.[1] When you return, you must not lose what you bring.

Amtul Salaam continues to be a difficult problem. She is uncanny. Her asthma is not gone altogether. She is very weak. Her temper is just the same as it was..

Mahadev returns on 9th.

Of course the weather is quite cool. It is still raining though not incessantly. I sleep in our room instead of verandah. It is required for the inmates. Last night I slept between the two doorways. That produced a fresh breeze. Of course my companions were with me including Sankaran who slept on the *pat*[2] behind the wall on Pyarelal's side.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3675. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6484

605. LETTER TO MARGARET JONES

July 5, 1941

DEAR KAMALABEHN,

Your note to Bapu. He is well now and attending his work and moving about as usual. Bapu says that you are there to train yourself and you should persevere with it, unmindful and undistracted by what may be going on around.[3] Yes, events in Europe are moving faster and faster day by day, and one does not know where we will be in the world events. But God knows it. Let us have faith that He will put us where we ought to be, whether that place brings us for the time being pain or pleasure. . . .[4]

With Bapu's love, . . .[5]

Bapu Conversations and Correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 195

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 17-7-1941.

[2] Wooden cot

[3] The addressee had written about "the general unsatisfactoriness of the atmosphere" in Bombay, where she was undergoing training in midwifery.

[4] Omissions as in the source

[5] *ibid*

606. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

SEVAGRAM,
July 6, 1941

When Mian Saheb Iftikhar-ud-Din, President of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee, and Dr. Gopichand were with me the other day, Mian Saheb told me that there was some misunderstanding among some Congressmen about certain things which required clearing. I should have dealt with them earlier. But pressure of work and my limited capacity for disposal are responsible for the delay. I take them up now.

When the Punjab Bar patriotically took up the honourable role of *amicus curiae* and decided to bring before their High Court for revision the cases of satyagrahis in which, in their opinion, obvious injustice was done, I was delighted, not for the sake of the relief such revision might bring, but for the sake of the Punjab Bar and of purity of justice. Whilst satyagrahis must be indifferent to the sentences pronounced against them, they must welcome exposure of injustice especially when it is brought about at the instance of disinterested parties. When, therefore, Ismet Begum wired and wrote to me that her husband was much displeased and disturbed over the prospect of revision, I urged her not to interfere and asked her to tell her husband that there was nothing wrong about the revision and that if he was discharged it would be open to him to offer civil disobedience again. Of course the matter wears a different and ugly aspect when satyagrahi prisoners request the *amicus curiae* that they should take up their (prisoners') cases. Such conduct would be quite contrary to the satyagraha code.

Complaints are being made in several parts as in the Punjab that the new lists of satyagrahis are not being passed as fast as they are sent. There is no lack of despatch in the Punjab or any other province as to the lists. But I am in no hurry to pass them. I repeat for the thousandth time that the present civil disobedience is not only not designed to embarrass authority but care is being taken as far as possible to avoid all embarrassment. The merit as also the strength of the struggle consists in reducing embarrassment to the minimum whilst the British are engaged in a deadly life-and-death war. Moreover, since our struggle is going to be indefinitely prolonged —I

give no less than five years—there need be no hurry to fill the jails. Mere filling of jails can bring us no nearer our freedom than we are now. The virtue lies in the people learning through the restricted civil disobedience the necessity of discipline, suffering and self-sacrifice. Every true example of satyagraha acts as a leaven working itself in the mass mind. During the initial stages I was purposely lax in scanning the lists. The result was that many crept in who had done no constructive work. Some had even no faith in it. These are a burden on the organization and positively hinder the march to freedom. I have said repeatedly that constructive work is the foundation for civil disobedience. It promotes discipline and conduces to the growth of non-violence in the worker. As time advances Congressmen must therefore expect increasing stiffness on my part. The conditions will be the same. Strictness will be confined to the enforcement. This is but natural if we are to grow from strength to strength and if we are to make the struggle increasingly purer. I can conduct it on no other terms.

Then Mian Saheb mentioned to me that some Congressmen had adversely criticized his move for achieving among all parties in the Punjab agreement about eschewing goondaism in the pursuit of their respective programmes. When the Mian Saheb told me that there was just a possibility of such an effort succeeding, I at once told him to make it and suspend for the time being his own civil disobedience and of those whose assistance he might consider necessary for the arduous task. Some Congressmen seem to have taken exception that Mian Saheb had invited to his meeting non-Congressmen and even communal leaders. The objectors forget that it is the essence of Mian Saheb's move to bring together all the opposite elements and see whether they could agree to eschew goondaism for the achievement of their respective purposes. Nor could there be in such a meeting decisions by counting heads. The end contemplated could only be achieved by the willing consent of the parties. In any event Congressmen should know that Mian Saheb has undertaken this difficult mission in consultation with me and with my whole-hearted consent. I hope that he will receive the closest co-operation of all Congressmen.

He is impatient to offer civil disobedience. As the head of the Congress in the Punjab, he thinks that his primary duty is to offer civil disobedience. I have told him that there is no such universal

rule. On the contrary it is his clear duty, and of those whom he mayselect, to refrain so long as he and they feel that they can contribute their mite to the attempt to eradicate goondaism.

There remains the question of those who were prematurely released owing to the Punjab High Court decision about the insufficiency for the purpose of conviction of mere notices to offer civil disobedience. When I learnt about the decision, I had informed Mian Saheb that he should not be in a hurry to send them to jail and that when he paid his contemplated visit to Sevagram I should discuss the question with him and decide. He came and I advised that those who were not wanted for the peace move should re-offer civil disobedience.

Congress Bulletin, No. 6, 1942, File No. 3/42/41-Home Department, Pol. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India

607. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

Personal SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 6, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter.

I have never missed a day. So you must get the missing letter.

I forgot to tell you about Farooqi's visit. We passed an hour in exchanging views. But it was only a preliminary talk. He said he would come again. I do not think anything is lost by having met him. Nandan ought to give me his opinion about Farooqi especially as he is a Delhi man.

Yesterday we had Purshottam Trikamdas here. Khan Saheb is arriving on the 9th. Jamnalal may be coming tomorrow or Wednesday for certain.

What business have you to develop headache?

Raja[1] has been released for the sake of the child. I had a note from him. Dhiru had asked the Police Commissioner for Raja's discharge.

Since when have you learnt the science of reading your past? How do you know that in your millions of previous births you were

[1] Gunottam Hutheesing

not worse than a Bania? In any case did I not suggest that if youwould ask the paperman not to render any bill at all, he would accept your request? And I had told you that I would not feel at ease using that paper. His bill, as it was, was a true bill. He would exact that price from any other customer. But there is no hurry about a final decision. You will appeal to my reason and if you satisfy it, I would gladly use the pads.

The rains have been violent everywhere. Let us hope that it does not mean dry season hereafter.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4030. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7339

608. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

July 6, 1941

CHI. LILY,

I got your letter. I did not like it. Your hardships are nothing to speak of. Many other women study under still greater hardships. Does it befit you to remain restless and to be unable to concentrate on your studies? Play well the part which you have accepted. Forget Sevagram for the present. I like your firm determination not to trouble Shantikumar. But your studies ought not to suffer for want of money. You must resolve to work hard and pass the examination. If you cannot do that, I will think that the three months you spent here were wasted and will feel sorry for having let you come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9381. Also C.W. 6656. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

609. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

July 6, 1941

CHI. BABUDI,

I got your letter today, and the telegram also I got only yesterday. So, though it was nobody's fault, Shakaribehn here felt very much worried. I did not worry at all. It was a fine test for you. Here

the sky is clear today. Take care of your health. Khan Saheb is arriving on the 9th. Cart-load of good wishes to Anandaghan[1]! I have arranged about your book. I trust Chokhawala is keeping good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10032. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

610. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
July 7, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letters have come unfailingly except once. But mine don't reach you, strange.

Here are three letters and your wire which I forgot to send you yesterday.

I shall send you intimation about Jamnalal's food when he is here. But nothing special. You have everything he can need. Fresh vegetables, fruit and milk.

Mahadev says he reaches on 10th. With the breaches on the railway lines, nothing is certain.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4031. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7340

611. LETTER TO LAKSHMI BHARATI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
July 7, 1941

DEAR SISTER,

Regard being had to your poor health and other circumstances,

[1] Addressee's son

you should not re-offer civil disobedience.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI BHARATI, M.L.A.
C/O SHRI L. K. BHARATI
PASUMALAI
MADURA (S. INDIA)

From the original: C.W. 9269. Courtesy: L. Krishnaswami Bharati

612. LETTER TO D. K. GOSAVI

July 7, 1941

MY DEAR GOSAVI,

Rajen Babu's return date is uncertain. He won't come before the middle of July. Deokinandan's argument is plausible but not convincing. You may anticipate Rajen Babu's return and come and bring D. with you.

Yours,
BAPU

SHRI D. K. GOSAVI
CONGRESS HOUSE
POONA 5

From a photostat: G.N. 9235

613. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

July 7, 1941

CHI. KANCHAN,

I had your postcard, and today there is a letter. It cannot be said that you have been lazy. You may come whenever you wish to, but without displeasing anybody there. And, moreover, it is your duty, when you come here, to resolve not to go on crying but to live cheerfully all the time. Yes, there has been heavy rain everywhere. Let us hope there will be no unduly long break later. Munnalal keeps fine.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. KANCHANBEHN
C/O SHAH MAGANLAL KALIDAS
VALOD, STATION MADHI
(SURAT), T. V. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8274. Also C.W. 7145. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

614. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 8, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter. Both the language and the writing are good. And if you write your Hindi as quickly as English, the progress is marvellous.

Jamnalal came in today. He looks very healthy. He wants to stay till 15th at the latest. He wants to finish certain things. I do not want to rush him.

You must not become cheap. I do not like the officers always sending you a polite 'No'. It is a hint that you must not expect anything now that you have openly come over to me. From their standpoint I would justify their conduct. You cannot blow hot and cold. All this would be sound argument from their standpoint. They can have no other. But if you think otherwise, you should act accordingly. For there would be nothing inherently wrong in your writing to officials, The same argument applies in Bul's[1] case. After her notice they have asked her to await instructions from them. She has consented to wait till 10th. There too you should use your independent judgment.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4032. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7341

615. A NOTE

July 9, 1941

I have read both the letters. Cariappa's fault is clear. It is also proper that Munnalal has begged for pardon. But Munnalal's views are wrong on many things. No one can be unworthy of living in an institution. The world itself is an institution. Can anybody stay outside it? The family is also an institution. It is a sub-institution; and in between the world and the family are institutions like ours. All are imperfect. The world is also imperfect. There is no such thing as a perfect institution because every institution is made up of imperfect

[1] Khurshedbehn Naoroji. *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 4-8-1941

human beings. Only God is perfect. Hence Munnalal cannot run away from an institution; he has to live in one or another.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8492. Also C.W. 7144. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

616. LETTER TO ISHWARLAL G. VYAS

July 10, 1941

BHAI ISHWARLAL,

I have read your very vivid letter. Let me know what arrangement has been made there now. Jivrambhai's money has been lying in different places. What do they propose to do about it? Who will manage the Ashram? I should like it if Nathibai came here. Give her the letter meant for her. Some memorial ought to be erected at the spot where Jivrambhai was cremated. Let me know if you have thought about anything. Where was he cremated? Have you preserved any portion of the ashes, or did you immerse the whole of them into the sea? We whom Jivrambhai has left behind will have been worthy of him when the seeds which he sowed grow into big trees.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5059

617. LETTER TO C. A. TULPULE

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
July 11, 1941

DEAR FRIEND,

Gandhiji has your letter of the 9th. You ought not to think of going to jail until you are completely free from the complaint.[2] In the mean while, you will do what constructive work comes your way.

Yours sincerely,
MAHADEV DESAI

SJT. C. A. TULPULE, ADVOCATE
TILAK ROAD
POONA

From the original: C.W. 2902. Courtesy: C. A. Tulpule

[1] *Vide* also "Bhakta Jivram"
[2] The addressee was a heart patient.

618. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

July 11, 1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Even a person who becomes perfect as a man does not become God. Even Krishna the man died a miserable death.[1] He may have been the best among men but was not God. Just as a frog may become the highest among frogs, so a man may be the highest among men. Any institution, therefore, created by man is bound to be imperfect.

If, however, you feel unhappy in this institution, you must leave it. I merely wanted to say that what you had stated about all institutions was based on ignorance.[2]

I would certainly welcome your staying in another institution, namely, the family. That is what poor Kanchan wants. She has not known the joys of family life. Make her happy and let her feel satisfied.

Here we do have freedom. I am certain that you will enjoy nowhere else the freedom that you do here. If you reflect over the matter, you will see that you cannot tolerate in others the freedom that you want for yourself. Cariappa was certainly at fault in refusing to do anything, but you should have respected his freedom to do that. Likewise, you should respect Chimanlal's freedom not to keep Nimbarkar, just as he should respect your freedom to express your opinion. Whether justice or injustice is being done to Nimbarkar is for me to see. I shall look into the matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8518. Also C.W. 7147. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

619. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

July 11, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

I could not write anything yesterday. I did get your letter. What reply can there be? What is there to forget? In my view summer lasts

[1] Lord Krishna was accidentally killed by a hunter's arrow while resting under a tree.

[2] *Vide* "A Note"

for two or three months only. Yes, I do believe that we should not worry about the body. For individuals it is quite all right, but at times people staying in the neighbourhood are forced to worry.

This [letter] is from Sailen. Do write to him from there. Sushila has left for two weeks to gain some medical experience. Dr. Jivraj stayed back yesterday. Today he left for Calcutta. Khan Saheb has arrived. The rains have again started today. Nature is behaving in a strange way this season.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7874. Also C.W. 4241. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur

620. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM,
July 11, 1941

CHI. MRIDU,

How can you have any cowardice in you? Prison is not for you. You are doing so much work outside that you should not even think of going to prison abandoning that work. Moreover, all those who have to go to jail will have their chance. This will be a prolonged struggle. Hence, patience.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11214. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

621. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

July 11. 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I hope you have reached there safely. Also that you have gone to Sushi's place if you did not feel comfortable at Prahlad's house. All those places are like your own home. But you know Sushi very well and so staying with her may suit you better. You are completely free to do anything you think right. I have found your pen-knife. It is not worth while sending it there. It seems you forgot your umbrella with Ba. How will you manage without the umbrella? Do buy a

raincoat. Here it has been raining with strong winds since 3 o' clock in the morning. It is still continuing. Khan Saheb has not been able to come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original. Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

622. LETTER TO DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, WARDHA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 12, 1941

THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER
WARDHA

DEAR FRIEND,

This is to confirm the phone message of Sjt. Jamnalalji to you that Sjt. Vinoba Bhave who was released today is to re-offer civil disobedience at Nalwadi on Monday the 14th instant at 6 p.m.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

623. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 12, 1941

CHI. MIRA,

The enclosed[1] is the last. It is very interesting. The gods and men share the same virtues and vices and are familiar friends who often quarrel among themselves. The one invisible Power stands supreme and unbound.

You are cutting your way through difficulties. You can easily make chapatis of *juari* flour. Try and you will succeed.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6485. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9880

[1] Selections from Vedic hymns which the addressee had been sending to Gandhiji. *Vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Mirabehn", 23-6-1941

624. LETTER TO DHIRUBHAI B. DESAI

July 12, 1941

CHI. DHIRUBHAI,

Appasaheb writes and tells me that he is restraining himself because you do not let him move out in Bombay. I feel, however, that you should let him move freely. There are very few persons like him and it is not proper that we should hold him back. Never mind if he is killed. He is gaining invaluable experience, which he will not get in any other way. If this reasoning appeals to you, permit him. You must have received my letter[1] of yesterday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Bhulabhai Desai Papers. Courtesy. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

625. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

[After *July 12, 1941*][2]

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letters after a long time. If you are happy I do not have to worry at all. Let me see when Sita comes. She should study there and grow as well. Let her stay with you. She can be of some help to you, too.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.][3]

Here also the leaders are rotting in jails. Vinoba was released and arrested again.

Where is Medh[4]? Instead of you and Medh both staying together in Johannesburg, shouldn't one of you go and stay in

[1] This is not available.

[2] From the reference to Vinoba Bhave's release and re-arrest. Vinoba Bhave was released on July 11, 1941, and re-arrested the next day. Also, Mahadev Desai was continually on tour from May to August, 1941.

[3] The postscript is from the C.W. copy.

[4] Surendra Medh

Phoenix? Sushila writes and tells me that you send the material for the paper[1] to her, or rather pass it on to her through somebody. She also says that there might be a revolt. I personally advise you to stay with Sushila.

Mahadevbhai is touring all over. The sporadic outbreak of riots in Bombay and Ahmedabad continues. Moreover. . . [2]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4917. Also C.W. 1330. Courtesy: Sushila Gandhi

626. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

July 12, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I had been expecting your letter. Prabhavati has come today. Both your rosaries are with me. I hope you have settled down properly.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
C/O ASSTT. DOCTOR
K. E. M. HOSPITAL
BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

627. LETTER TO DR. ABRAHAM PAUL

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA, C. P.,
July 13, 1941

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter to Gandhiji. You need not be worried for having troubled him. It has helped clarification of the situation. He regrets it is not possible for him to find a

[1] *Indian Opinion*
[2] The letter is incomplete.

place for you, which will meet your requirements. He does not interfere in the internal administration of any hospital of the kind mentioned by you.

Yours sincerely,

K. G. MASHRUWALA

FOR GANDHIJI

DR. ABRAHAM PAUL
THOPPAL HOUSE
P. O. PARUR
TRAVANCORE

From a photostat: C. W. 10981. Courtesy: Dr. Abraham Paul

628. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
[*July 13, 1941*][1]

CHI. AMALA,

Mahadev is quite well. He has gone to Gwalior. Today he is in Delhi. He may be back tomorrow. The day after for certain.

You must get rid of your illness. Of course, you will drop in here when you can and wish.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

629. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

July 13, 1941

CHI. NARAHARI,

Mahadev is in Delhi. I read your letter. It is the deluge. There can be no question whatever that all the resources of the Congress should be used to help the people. We will of course have to consider what help to give and where it should be given. We should decide that with reference to the circumstances of each place and bearing in mind our limitations. You can certainly utilize the permanent [relief] fund there.

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Margarete Spiegel", 14-7-1941

I hope the people have forgotten about the riots just now. Mahadev will come here on the 17th. Only then can we think and decide whether or no he should go there. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9123

630. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 14, 1941

MY DEAR AMALA,

You are foolish. Mahadev is in Delhi. He has to wander about just now. Why this hankering? True friendship does not require meeting or even letter-writing. Why not just treasure silent love? Or must you for ever remain mad?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

631. LETTER TO DR. S. K. VAIDYA

July 14, 1941

BHAI VAIDYA,

Your certificate is fine indeed. Did it have any effect on your mind? Did the charkha give you any peace of mind in the midst of the prevailing atmosphere of violence? I suppose you have kept up your practice.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5751

632. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

July 14, 1941

BHAI BAPA,

Your ambition is boundless. By all means satisfy it. Your being the Secretary[1] will not come in your way. Ghanshyamdas and you have come together as co-workers and this union cannot be dissolved except by death. He needs—and so do I—your moral strength and your dedication. Your Secretaryship is but an indication of that. I don't think you will want to give up the Secretaryship even when you are free to give to the *Adivasis* as much time as you wish despite your being the Secretary. For your sake we held back Vaidyanatha Iyer with just a line. Surely it was not as if the others would not have worked. But we want the moral strength of saintly men for washing off this sin. Please do not forget that the evil of untouchability is being practised in the name of religion. The *Adivasis*, however, suffer from no such bar. I have no objection, of course, to your dedicating your life to the cause of *Adivasis*, too, but not at the cost of your connection with the other cause.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1188

633. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

July 14, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

The weather has cleared today. There is no letter from you. My two (or is it three) letters sent to the hospital address must have reached you. Do take the things for the hospital. Ultimately it is all meant for you. I have taken it for granted that you will pass well and will come here the very next day. I do need you. I shall not collect the things that will be put to use only after you arrive here. Who knows what will happen in one year and how much they will cost then?

Right now I wish that you should be able to study well without any obstruction. I do hope the responsibility of Tarabehn will not be an obstruction in this. She will never respond to anybody's treatment

[1] Of the Harijan Sevak Sangh

except yours. The climate there after August-September will be very good. Kishorelalbhai has written to you in detail yesterday. Hence I am not elaborating here.

You did well to stay on at Prahlad's place. He is a fine young man. We should become like family members wherever we stay. Radha is quite close by. If possible, go and meet her on your return. But I do not wish to burden you even with the suggestion to meet anyone.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am well. Ba also is well. Manojna did not have fever again. Jamnalalji will leave for Simla tomorrow.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

634. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
July 15, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

I got your letter. Today I have no time at all. Jamnalalji must have reached safely. I hope he is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7875. Also C.W. 4243. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur

635. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

July 15, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Your two letters came together. Today also I am so busy that I cannot write to you. I do not think I am going anywhere from here. You do come here after completing your two weeks. You will

certainly learn a lot there. I for one wish that you should gain experience in different hospitals.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
490 MULJI MANSION
EDENWALA ROAD
MATUNGA (G. I. P.)

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

636. LETTER TO RAGHUNANDAN SARAN

[Before *July 16*, 1941][1]

You should invite primary members such as you have mentioned to withdraw. If they do not listen, you can take action; but you need not, for the simple reason that the organization is not functioning fully. But you should take public notice of their indiscipline.

The Hindu, 18-7-1941

637. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[Before *July 16, 1941*][2]

You cannot return the (present) like this. It is gift of love. It will always be so. You can pass it on to others.

What is all this you have written? You are stupid and will remain so.

Why harbour such thoughts in your mind? What does it matter even if I get annoyed? But since I know you, you may take it that my anger is already gone. You may not reform yourself, old as you have grown !!! But I am reforming myself and shall keep on reforming till I

[1] This was reported under the date-line "New Delhi, July 16"

[2] Presumably written before the addressee appeared first for her M.D. examination in 1941; *vide*, "Letter to Prabhavati", "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 16-7-1941 and "Letter to H. L. Sharma", 25-8-1941. The date has been inferred from "Letter to Amrit Kaur" (ibid,)which has reference to the addressee having failed in this examination.

die. Why have any doubt at all? Why do you not listen? There is no question at all of your moving from here. How can you leave what you have built yourself? You are not going to stay anywhere else at all. I am beginning to believe that whatever is to be done by you will be done only from here. After me some at least will carry on my work. One of them would be of course you. Now drive away all doubt. Pass your examination soon and come and sit in my lap.

BAPU

From the Hindi original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Sushila Nayyar

638. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
July 14/16, 1941

DEAR SISTER,

Your questions are good. In non-violent war, to mix poison in water or to burn grains, oil, etc., are forbidden, and should be so. It is one thing to non-co-operate with the enemy and quite another to stop water, etc., to harm him. The non-co-operator accepts suffering for himself. For example, a lawyer will starve because ofnon-co-operation. Motilalji[1] sacrificed lakhs of rupees. Students gave up their studies. Men working in offices gave up their jobs. We are not going to run away from the invaders and if we do so, unable to bear the sufferings, we would leave our property as the Dukhobors[2] had done in Russia. In following ahimsa there is no question of ever doing what Stalin was obliged to do.

A satyagrahi is not to protect his property, instead he may give up his life. A satyagrahi should be a non-possessor and he can defend others by being so. That is why I said that Englishmen may lose England but not their self-respect. To save his self-respect while doing no harm to his enemy, a satyagrahi has, for the time being, to allow his property to be looted. Anyway in a violent war too he would, on being defeated, lose his property.

The habit of getting help from the police has got to be tolerated

[1] Motilal Nehru

[2] A religious sect of Russia, first known in the 18th century, now settled in Canada

even though it is against ahimsa. To control a madman by force would not be wrong if the man who holds him down has no self-interest in it. All such cases should be examined independently.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7998. Also C.W. 3095. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

639. TELEGRAM TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

WARDHA,
July 16, 1941

GURUDEV
SANTINIKETAN

PRESS REPORTS DISTURBING. WIRE EXACT CONDITION.

GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 10317. Courtesy: Visvabharati, Santiniketan

640. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

July 16, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Yesterday I was able to give you only a postcard. Here are two letters from your pupils. They would have been written earlier, if I had remembered your message. But your instructions to destroy your letters make it difficult for me to carry things in my head and reproduce them at the exact moment.

Khan Saheb has returned from Nagpur less all his teeth. Some were too strong for removal but Bareto was determined to remove all. He suffered much pain. He is better today. He will go to Bul as soon as he is better.

Mahadev returned with Ghanshyamdas yesterday. Ghanshyamdas goes to Nasik on Saturday for a change. He is not overwell.

White ants have invaded our hut and so Ramdas is digging up everything for tracing the mother. It means rebuilding walls, etc. More money. Terrible to contemplate!

Prabha is here and will be for a few days. She has to go to Jayaprakash again.

You need not bother about Sushila's exam. Col. A. has written to her how she failed, why and what she should do to ensure success. Her clinical experience is not up to the mark. And so she has gone to Bombay for a fortnight. That is the beginning. It is a difficult job to earn and study. She has got to do the trick. For she will take no scholarship. She is very wonderful in this as in other directions. And she is growing. Amtul Salaam is better.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4033, Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N, 7342

641. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

July 16, 1941

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I will keep worrying about you. If you get the expected benefit there, I will feel greatly relieved. Much will depend on Rajkumari's selfless love. But your firmness of mind also will have a share. If you wish to make any change in diet or anything else, please write or send a wire to me.

Madalasa has stayed on with Mirabehn today. Her aspirations are very high. If her health improves and if she delivers without any complication, I think she will make good. Vinoba's training is bound to bear fruit.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Khan Saheb's teeth have been removed.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3016

642. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
July 17, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

Yes, you should go to see Jawaharlal on 24th. Mahadev says Nandan is not going on 29th.

I hope Jamnalal reached there safely. Though I asked for no

wire, I do expect.

The summer months you now understand. I have anxiety about you which I have not about others because I have a responsibility about you towards Shummy who does not fully approve of your staying with me. My anxiety arises from the fact that I am not always clear about my duty regarding you at a given moment. But that is nothing.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4244. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7876

643. LETTER TO DUNICHAND

July 17, 1941

DEAR LALA DUNICHAND,

In the circumstances you mention, I agree you have no option but to give up all the responsible positions in the Congress. You deserve rest after 40 years' unbroken service.

As to your views on non-violence, satyagraha, etc., we have to tolerate one another's differences of opinion.

As to the incident referred to by you, there is no question of untruthfulness. It is at bottom a question of interpretation of your own actions. I had forgotten it all. Of course, your wife must remain by your side.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5593

644. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 17, 1941

CHI. NARANDAS,

I could reach your letter only today. I did not like your draft. I have, therefore, written to Jivanji in the way I thought fit. A copy of the letter[1] is enclosed. If it has any effect, it will serve the whole purpose.

My spinning is going on ceaselessly. I try to spin a minimum of

[1] This is not available.

75 rounds. I will keep up the effort for these 72 days. I do not have the courage to go beyond that.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Your statement will certainly be published in the *Khadi Patrika.* My note[1] also.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8585. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

645. LETTER TO SURESH SINGH

July 17, 1941

BHAI SURESH[2],

You have asked a proper question. I do not feel like saying anything. In such matters I have always given the first place to Jawaharlal's views and he is not here. His policy has been the policy of the Congress. Since he is in prison my mind does not work at all. Russia is not a country like Spain or China. The English are even now giving [them] help. I find a great difference between Lenin and Stalin. Lenin's Russia is no more. But this is going into the merits and shortcomings. I may be wrong in my observation. As long as I am not able to do something with all my heart, it is my nature to keep silent. I hope your ulcer is cured by now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8692

646. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 18, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

As far as possible I want to send you a daily line. But at times it becomes physically impossible.

I have your wire about Jamnalal's safe arrival. I do hope it will

[1] *Vide* "Rentia Baras"

[2] Uncle of the Raja of Kalakankar

be all well.

I am 99_, blood-pressure 160-94. It has a tendency to rise at night. But I am quite well.

The rest from Mahadev.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4245. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7877

647. LETTER TO VIJAYARAGHAVACHARI

July 18, 1941

DEAR FRIEND,

Of course, I want to know all about your health. For I want you to live the full century in good order and condition. But please don't expect my co-operation in anything to perpetuate the memory of anything done by me. If the things I do have no vitality in them, let them perish. If they have any, then what need of any prop?

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

648. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
July 18, 1941

DEAR MOTI BABU,

I was delighted to have your prompt reply. The legal advisers of the Sangha insist that a promissory note is necessary. You will therefore please send the promissory note.

I am telling Shri Jajuji that you are and have been willing to be certified by the A.I.S.A. and to that end to conform to the usual conditions.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Motilal Roy", 29-6-1941

[PS.]

I hope your eyes may be restored. You are so identified with the Sangha that your nominal withdrawal will mean no change.

From a photostat: G.N. 11055

649. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA (C.P.),
July 18, 1941

MY DEAR SINGER,

I have been too busy seeing people to overtake even important letters like yours.

As to Mr. Munshi[1], my position is clear. When he could not conform to the explicit resolution[2] of the Congress on internal disorders, I had no option but to advise him to leave.[3] I cannot be held responsible for what he does after severing his connection with the Congress. Those who know me understand that such influence as I can exert on Shri Munshi must still be on the side of non-violence. Those who do not trust me impute motives to me which I can only disprove by my conduct.

As to the workers, they are bound by the Congress resolution I have quoted in my letter to Shri Munshi. The Congress policy binds them to non-violence in the struggle with the Government as also in dealing with communal riots and the like. Is not this crystal clear?

Love.

Yours,
SPINNER

From the original : Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] K. M. Munshi
[2] Passed at Poona on July 28, 1940
[3] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 15-6-1941

650. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA (C.P.),
July 18, 1941

DEAR SINGER,

I agree that I should move about if I can. But I must repudiate the charge that my judgement goes astray by my being cut off from outside contact. I have breathed not a word about the undue deaths. And in my letter to Padmaja, I simply told her what the papers had suggested. Mark my extraordinary care in avoiding all public reference without testing the truth of the allegations through no less an authority than sober Padmaja. I therefore accept your apology in anticipation.

Love.

SPINNER

From the original : Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

651. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

July 18, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have told Prabha to write you a long letter today and it will be going with this. Now you have to spend only six days there. Yes, if you have a chance of gaining experience in different hospitals during this year I should like it, that is, if you are able to get away from Delhi for a few months. If you can have a month in Bombay, a month in Calcutta and a month in Madras, your experience would be enriched. The necessary arrangement can be easily made. I expect you to be so well prepared this time that there will be no doubt at all about your passing, and you will have also gained a lot of experience. Kishorelal has already written to you about Tari[1] yesterday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Tara, daughter of Kishorelal Mashruwala

652. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
July 19, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

Your brief note.

You have your mouthful. May you have full success. I hope your tooth trouble will be completely dealt with. Mahadev is preparing to go to Bombay. No more possible today.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4246. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7878

653. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

July 19, 1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

You must put your health before everything else. The programme for training in village service is all right. But you must make a beginning with the resolve to be methodical and firm.

By all means study the Vedas, etc. Real study, however, consists in knowing and practising the mission of service.

As regards the question where you should stay, I have told you that I will arrange wherever you wish. Are you worried about the expenses?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8520. Also C.W. 7116. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

654. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

July 19, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. You will not be required to go to Panchgani. Taribehn is welcome. But I think she may as well go

to Delhi. Just across there is a hospital with air-conditioning facilities. Ghanshyamdas[1] has drawn my attention to it.

Das's patient is doing quite well. He is taking 2 lb.of milk. Khan Saheb is still running a slight temperature. He is taking milk and Ovaltine. Today he was also given some soup.

Mahadevbhai is going to Bombay today. He will no doubt meet you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

655. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TRIKAMDAS

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA (C.P.),
July 19, 1941

BHAI PURUSHOTTAM,

These days all my time is taken up with meeting people. As a result I am only today in a position to deal with five or six days' accumulated post. Your letter forms part of it.

The question of the Soviet Union is too deep for you to understand. In this matter I have appointed Jawaharlal my captain. What you say is perfectly true. Had he been a free man he would certainly have taken some steps. Today's Russia is not the Russia of Lenin. And Russia is not a small country. Vanquishing Russia will be an arduous task. Russia has no use for mere lip sympathy. Moreover England is already assisting her and when England is there, India which is England's slave is also there. How can those who stand for a free India speak in the matter? Such are my difficulties. Therefore in this regard you may as well forget me.

Now about Salivati. It is good you had her message conveyed to Jawaharlal. The Poona resolution is as good as dead. But I am not going to answer any questions from reporters.My silence is dear to me.

Blessings from

M. K.GANDHI

From the Gujarati original : Purushottamdas Trikamdas Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Ghanshyamdas Birla

656. *LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR*

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA (C.P.),
July 19, 1941

CHI. LILI,

Your complaint is justified. I was caught in a very heavy schedule of work. Now there is hope of a little respite. You have deliberately spoilt your health. You used to have a sense of balance. Now eat well and improve your health. Keep me fully posted. Mahadev will have given you the razor. Clean it by applying oil on it. Now you may have to give up tea. I shall not be able to tolerate even slow or any other type of fever or ailment. Your good health should never be spoilt. If necessary, take some leave and come here.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI LILAVATIBEHN UDESHI
KANJI KHETSI CHHATRALAYA
MINT ROAD
BOMBAY FORT

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

657. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
July 20, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your first letter after Jamnalal's arrival there. Let us hope the climate of Simla won't worry him.

All well here. Kanchan and Kusum arrived here today. More from Prabha.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4247. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7879

658. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

July 20, 1941

What you say in your letter[1] is true. Don't be eager to go to Wardha for marketing. You may do that when you are all right, for you have a special aptitude for it. For the present, follow my advice and confine yourself to work in the farm— within the limits of your strength. That will restore your health. Give up all worries. Live chiefly on milk and curds. Eat whatever fruit you can get. Eat very little of bread, but eat greens in plenty.

Your second letter is fine. The best way of winning people's trust is through selfless work and service. The secret of this lies in "seeing oneself in all creatures". If this truth abides in your heart, nothing will make you unhappy. My plan regarding your expenses is this. I wish to draw from the money Iying in your name for all extraordinary expenses till the amount is exhausted. You two will begin to progress rapidly only when it is fully exhausted. As long as the money is there, interest in possession will remain and you will continue to harbour the sense of proprietorship. Though it is true that both of you have practically gifted away the money, the knowledge that you own it does you harm. If you do not understand this distinction, ask me.

Let not the arrival of Kanchan disturb your peace of mind in the least. It is indeed a good thing that she has come. Stop regarding her as your property. You may start living as husband and wife after some time, but if you accept her right to enjoy the same freedom that you do, you will not get angry with her for anything she does. You may let her serve you, but you must not feel in the least offended if she does not do that to the extent you would like her to do. You wish to win her trust, too, don't you? Please remember that unbroken cheerfulness is the most important condition for your keeping good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8519. Also C.W. 7117. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Of July 19, below which this letter appears

659. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

July 20, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is no post from you today. Taribehn must have arrived there. Examine her and let me know.

You had mentioned something about breaking a glass. How crazy you are! If you go on paying every time something breaks, all your funds will be exhausted. Hence, give up that idea Kanchan and Kusum Desai have come today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

660. LETTER TO S. RADHAKRISHNAN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 21, 1941

DEAR SIR RADHAKRISHNAN[1],

I see that in your deep and extensive studies the art of begging formed no part. Malaviyaji is unequalled in that art. You will be begging in his name. Do you suppose that my recommendation can carry greater weight? Your innate modesty disables you from seeing that you cannot need any introduction from me. Some of the friends you mention I have probably not even met. Anyway, if my recommendation is of the slightest use, please use this letter and tell the friends whom you meet that I regard it as the duty of monied men to free Malaviyaji Maharaj from the anxiety about the B.H.U. by subscribing liberally towards the payment of the debt referred to by you. I do hope that your mission will be wholly successful.

You know that you will be welcome whenever you can come.

Sundaram has been the University Collector. Why not make use of him?

[1] Vice-Chancellor of the Banaras Hindu University

Many thanks for your inquiry about my health. I am well.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

661. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

July 21, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

Tu[1], *tum*[2] and *aap*[3] are one and the same if they convey the same feeling. If the attitude is otherwise, the particular form of address has no meaning. Am I not barred from speaking and writing in Hindi? If the correspondence is allowed freely in Hindi *tu* would become natural. Wouldn't it?[4]

I have wired you today to wire U.P. Government, i.e., Mudie[5], about Agra prisoners.[6] They ought not to be unreasonable or stingy.

Here Bhansali[7] is down with gout. He is fasting, and so better today. Veeramma was cross with her would-be husband and drank permanganate. It was known in time and she was saved.

J. should have the simplest vegetables, no starchy things, no fried things.

I had given you one month. You thought two were the least. So you may stay there till end [of] August. But if Jamnalal makes good progress and it becomes necessary for his sake to stay longer, of course you will stay. If he becomes strong physically, mentally and spiritually, it will be worth while prolonging the stay.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4248. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7880

[1] "Thou", generally used to convey extreme intimacy or contempt

[2] "You", used in addressing equals or juniors

[3] A third person plural pronoun used in second person also for expressing respect

[4] This paragraph is in Hindi.

[5] Sir Francis Mudie, Chief Secretary (officiating), United Provinces

[6] Who were on a hunger-strike which was called off on July 23

[7] Jayakrishna Prabhudas Bhansali

662. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

July 21, 1941

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letter. My prayers are continuing, and I have faith that you will do your best. You have the benefit of Rajkumari's company and in other ways, too, the atmosphere there is clear. I am, therefore, expecting much from your stay there. Madalasa is in very fine spirits and eats well. She likes the sweet made from *kunvar*[1] and I have permitted her to have as much as she wants. She relishes whatever she eats. Janakidevi also keeps cheerful. So everything is all right here.

Ghanshyamdas left the day before yesterday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3018

663. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

July 21, 1941

Regarding the village people, the last course is the best. If we take interest in their local affairs, we shall not be able to serve them. You should, therefore, render to the poorest among them whatever silent service is possible. Such service is bound to bear fruit. It was with this idea that I made the suggestion about one or two boys. While training them, you also will get trained and will learn the art of serving people.

Let our way of living produce whatever effect it can on the *panchayat*. I shall certainly talk to Krishnadas and Chimanlal, but everything will depend on your being frank and gentle. If you mix with the people here as sugar dissolves in milk, your work will progress very fast.

What you say regarding possessions is correct. Land and other things also are included. If you can skilfully free yourself from

[1] Aloe Plant

the possession and the whole business, you will feel as light as a feather.

I think I have answered all your questions.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8516. Also C.W. 7148. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

664. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 21, 1941

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have already replied to your letter. The work is going on beautifully. It is bound to bear fruit.

Regarding Chi. Chhaganlal[1] we all feel that his staying on in Vijapur will do nothing but harm. Now he need not do any fixed work. He may, therefore, stay either with Krishna[das][2] here or with Prabhudas[3] or with you at Rajkot. Kashi[4], too, will be able to live independently. And Chhaganlal himself will not feel lonely. Prabhudas, Krishnadas, probably Kashi also, and I, have all independently felt that Vijapur is not the right place for him now. If, however, Chhaganlal does not like the plan, I certainly would not force him to go elsewhere.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8586. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

665. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
July 21, 1941

BAPA,

We may receive help from or give help to the Mysore Congress as much as we like. Its policy will still remain what it is. Here also we

[1] Chhaganlal Gandhi, addressee's elder brother
[2] Chhaganlal Gandhi's sons
[3] *ibid*
[4] Wife of Chhaganlal Gandhi

help the Congress or receive help from it whenever necessary. I am thus happy that it is Congressmen who have been helping us most. It should be enough if we do not get involved in their other activities. Do you feel otherwise?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1189

666. LETTER TO DILKHUSH B. DIWANJI

July 21, 1941

BHAI DILKHUSH,

I have carefully gone through *Kantan Praveshika*[1]. The title is not appropriate. The book is not a *praveshika*. It offers useful suggestions to those who have become acquainted with the subject. I would, therefore, call it *Kantanarne Upayogi Soochano*[2] or simply *Kantanarne*.

Your instructions are incomplete in some ways. You have assumed that the spinner can tell when a spindle is bent or can judge about the point. My experience is that 95 spinners out of a hundred cannot do that. You should, therefore, explain what a bent spindle and a good point are. You should similarly explain about slivers, etc.

The third and easiest method of determining the count of yarn is not what you have suggested. The count is equal to the number of rounds in one-anna weight of yarn. The method you have explained does of course include this, but a beginner will not be able to see this. I found from experience that the method suggested by me was the best. I hit upon it while trying, day after day, to determine the count of my yarn in Yeravda.

You have suggested the use of cocoanut oil. My experience is that it smells and also attracts ants. I used to mix with cocoanut oil one-fourth or a little more of kerosene. This keeps away ants and less of dirt gets mixed with the oil.

From the above you will be able to think for yourself about other revisions. I had noted other points in my mind, but I don't

[1] Introduction to Spinning
[2] Useful Suggestions for Spinners

remember them now. After saying all this, I do hold the booklet to be a fine one. I have made the above suggestions because I wish to see it perfect.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2649

667. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

July 21, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have of course been writing to you at the hospital address as you desired. It is surprising that you have not received the letters. This letter is also being sent at the same address. I hope your going to another hospital will not make any difference.

Enclosed is a letter from Dr. Gopichand addressed to you. Here too the rains have stopped, and hence the days are hot. The nights are lovely.

Khan Saheb runs temperature between 99∞ and 89·4∞. The temperature is normal in the morning. Bhansali has fallen ill. He has gout in the legs. He has been fasting since yesterday and has taken saline.

Veeramma drank potassium permanganate in a fit of anger.[1] It was immediately discovered. She was given lime to drink and made to vomit. She became all right.

Soon it will be the 25th !

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Musuem and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", July 21, 1941

668. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
July 22, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have another full letter from you. I have faith in your wisdom and discretion. In spite of Shummy's laugh, I persist in my advice about tennis. He won't have the professional touch but he can hit the ball to the amusement of all of you. It is a question of his passing 30 minutes in idle amusement in the open air.

Don't bring him many visitors on business.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4034. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7343

669. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA (C.P.),
[*July 22, 1941*][1]

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

If the measure is compulsory, your school has to submit. If it is optional, you may ignore it.

Yours,
BAPU

DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA
LAJPATRAI BHAVAN
LAHORE, PUNJAB

From the original : Dr. Gopichand Bharagava Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

670. LETTER TO ANANTRAI THAKKAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 22, 1941

BHAI ANANTRAI[2],

I am certainly against your writing in English, just as I would dislike an English youth writing in Gujarati. Both of them can be said to have forgotten their duty. Anyway all this is over now. But

[1] From the postmark
[2] A theosophist

onreading your letter, I almost felt like weeping. You started writing by dipping your pen into a cup of venom and poured out the whole of it in the end. Why all this? I was sure that Dr. Arundale would come over. Had he come, he would have certainly spoken in English. It was with hesitation that I permitted Vishwanathdas to speak in English but I would have gladly permitted Dr. Arundale. You just cannot have any concrete reason to doubt this. I have no hostility towards Dr. Arundale nor towards any Englishman. I had none against General Dyer and I was a worshipper of Mrs. Annie Besant. Perhaps you might not have been born when I began to idolize her. This was in 1889-90. I beg your pardon if you were born about this time. I do not remember at all about the meeting where Shri Iyengar was present. Why should I oppose putting up a statue of Mrs. Annie Besant? I do not remember anything at all. I shall be obliged if you will give me the evidence you have.

In the end you have exceeded the limits. You have insulted the English language the way you have abused your own people. Perhaps you could not have poured out so much venom in Gujarati. As I have good relations with your family, your letter has shocked me. Your letter is full of rudeness and ignorance. Go through my letter carefully and pray to God that He may remove your ignorance.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile of the Gujarati: *Mahatma*, Vol. VI, between pp. 48 and 49

671. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

July 22, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. Whatever the cost of the glass, you have to bear it. But you must definitely have stamps in your pocket. You could have taken them from Dr. Gilder. Right now you are excused even for that.

I think whatever may have been decided about Pyarelal's stay there, etc., is appropriate.

Now I shall be writing you only one letter.

You have quite a few patients to handle. Kunvarji[1] is causing some anxiety. You did well in going to Jugatram[2].

Now there is not much time. You should receive all my letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

672. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA[3]

SEVAGRAM,
July 22, 1941

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I finished reading *Bapu* Just now. At two or three places the facts are wrong though they do not detract from the views expressed. I have marked the passages. Of course you can always put forward your own arguments about the calf incident[4]. But I findsome fundamental defect in it. The killing of the calf has no similarity with the killing of Ravana and so on. I had no self-interest in killing the calf, the only motive was to free it from pain. Primarily there was self-interest in the killing of Ravana and so on. There was burden on the earth and it had to be lightened. His destroyer was God in the form of Rama. Here the destroyer was no supposed incarnation. I hold that everyone in my situation can do what I did. Inspired and encouraged by me, Ambalal killed forty dogs. There was however some material advantage. But there is a lot of difference between the killing of Ravana and so on and this. And I have given a special meaning to these things. A discussion of it was necessary there. More about it on another occasion if considered necessary. The language is sweet. At some places the argument is repeated. This could have been

[1] Kunvarji K. Parekh

[2] Jugatram Dave

[3] This letter is included in the revised edition of *Bapu* with a note from the publisher.

[4] *Vide* "The Fiery Ordeal", 4-10-1928

corrected in proof-reading, and the flow of the language would not have suffered. Perhaps others may not have even noticed this repetition.

I hope you are well now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8046. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

673. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

July 22, 1941

When I asked Gandhiji, who was at work on his charkha when I called on him, whether he had read the communique[1], he said he had not and asked me to read it. With his hands busy operating his charkha, stopping only now and then to wind the thread, Gandhiji listened as I read the communique including the personnel of the National Defence Council. When I concluded reading, Gandhiji looked up and, laughing loudly, asked whether I had finished. I said I had, and asked him whether he wished to say anything. Gandhiji said that he had no statement to make and added:

I would rather observe silence, Monday silence, whatever it may mean and you can say so in the papers.

When I asked him whether it could be taken that he was not interested in the announcement, he said:

I can't say so. That will be pedantic.

Then I handed him a sheet of paper containing a few questions drafted by me earlier. Gandhiji read the questions and remarked:

I can answer some of these questions. But I don't know what purpose it will serve.

Pressed further to say whatever he wished, Gandhiji replied to my first question, whether the Government of India's announcement affected the stand taken by the Congress and whether it met the Congress demand to any extent.

The announcement does not affect the stand taken by the Congress; nor does it meet the Congress demand to any extent.

To my next question whether the members of the A.I.C.C., if released from jail, will be permitted to consider the present situation in the light of recent

[1] Issued by the Government of India on July 21 from Simla announcing the expansion of the Viceroy's Executive Council and the formation of a National Defence Council.

developments in the country, Gandhiji replied:

I understand you to mean whether I shall permit A.I.C.C. members, if they are released, to consider the present situation. If that is the meaning of your question, I can at once say that I have no authority to prevent members of the A.I.C.C. from doing anything they wish. The authority given to me by the A.I.C.C. does not permit my interference with the fullest freedom of its members. And in any case the body that gave me the authority can at any time refuse it or withdraw it.

I certainly consider the demand made by the Mysore Legislative Council[1] as not only modest but any day opportune.

When I asked him whether the present situation in the country was an opportune one for embarking on the programme, Gandhiji added:

As a matter of fact it should have been made long ago. The present situation in the country cannot be allowed to interfere with elementary justice being done to Harijans.

When I asked him whether non-arrest of satyagrahis shouting anti-war slogans can be construed, as some people seemed to, as amounting to grant of liberty to preach against war, Gandhiji said:

There is no warrant for the belief implied in the opinion. Some Provincial Governments have clearly stated that they do not want to arrest unimportant members. But they are arresting those whom they consider important enough if they recite anti-war slogans.

The Hindu, 24-7-1941

674. LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
July 23, 1941

DEAR SIR MIRZA[2],

Mahadev is in Bombay. I have read yours to him. Why "Mr. Mahadev"?

I have no faith in conferences at the present moment. We can do nothing when people come with mental reservations. Nevertheless I do

[1] For the appointment of a committee to ascertain public opinion on the question of allowing Harijans to enter temples and other religious institutions in the charge of the Government.

[2] Ex-Dewan of Mysore

not dissuade those who believe in them. Therefore, if you or Sir Tej convened one[1] and wanted me to come, I should gladly come in my individual capacity. But I am more likely to become a cause of discord than otherwise.

More love to the whole family.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a. photostat: G.N. 2183

675. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 23, 1941

CHI. AMRITLAL,

You are fast leaving the years behind you and I still believe that you are the same today that you were when I knew you first. How can I shed this illusion? Remain the same that you were and put time to shame.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10801

676. INTERVIEW TO A. S. N. MURTI[2]

SEVAGRAM,
4 p.m. to 4.20 p.m., July 23, 1941

After the usual salutation, I waited just a minute when Mahatma said that he was [all] attention to me. And I began referring to the Poona resolution of the Congress, and invited his opinion to the possibility of arriving at an understanding on the basis of that resolution, if a way could be found for reconciliation. To this, Mahatmaji replied that the Poona resolution would not be revived. The psychological

[1] The Non-Party Political Leaders' Conference met at Poona on July 26 and 27 under the presidentship of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru.

[2] Enclosing this with his letter dated July 27 to A. S. N. Murti of Sarvodaya Bhavan, Chatrapur, Kishorelal Mashruwala wrote: "Thank you for your letter dated 24th instant. Please find herewith your memo of the interview with Gandhiji as corrected by him. It is common ground that it is for personal record." Kishorelal Mashruwala was present during the interview.

time is gone. I mention to him the restlessness that is becoming evident in the country, and if the Congress were not to revise its stand, it may lose ground. To this he said that even if the Congress were to find itself in the desert, it would prefer to be there, to sacrificing the country's interest and humorously said that sometimes the desert air did good. I mentioned to him that by the withdrawal of the Congress ministry, the little good that was attempted to be done had to be given up. He replied that weighing matters in the proper way, it was not worth while to put much emphasis on the attempted progress, when considerations far weightier were at stake. When Congress was out to put down imperialism, all these things were insignificant. Even if the Congress gave up non-violence, it had been found that as a purely political measure, the Poona resolution could not be revived.

From a photostat: G.N. 154

677. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
July 24, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

This is just for the sake of writing. I hope Jamnalal has recovered all the lost ground. I know that he will have all theloving care bestowed on him. He says the attention he is receiving is embarrassing.

Give a cart-load of love to Jawaharlal. You should try to see Anandmayi Devi who is somewhere near Dehra Dun. She was Kamala's[1] guru.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4035. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7344

678. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

SEVAGRAM,
July 24, 1941

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

This is about your letter of 14th. I have found you to be weak in action and that out of your overgoodness. Overgoodness leads to

[1] Kamala Nehru

weakness. It means a disposition not to offend people even at the cost of suppression of truth. My firm advice to you is that you should talk to Mian Saheb[1] with the utmost candour and he will respond. If he has suspicion he will tell you so. He is young and in experienced but straight and brave. This is my analysis of him. You should have gone to Solan and Simla. When he definitely asked you not to go to Manorlal, it was well to respect his wishes. But you were not bound always to carry out his wishes except in strict Congress matters. Youmust build up your opinions and enforce them when enforcement becomes a duty. It is wrong to seek imprisonment in order to gain relief from squabbles or suspicion fancied or real of one's chief. Such imprisonment is harmful.[2]

I refrain from guiding you in the matters referred to by you, till you have become even with Mian Saheb. If you have really forfeited his confidence, my advice would be for you to retire from the Congress activities without any fuss. You have ample other useful work. Men like you cannot work half-heartedly or under shadow of mistrust or suspicion.

I have not heard from Mian Saheb at all for weeks now. I do not think I had anything from him save one letter to Rajkumari after the last visit.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat : Jayaprakash Narayan Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Mian Iftikhar-ud-din

[2] *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 6-7-1941

679. LETTER TO H. R. STIMSON[1]

SEVAGRAM,
July 24, 1941

DEAR MR. STIMSON,

Here are my answers :

1. No modification necessary. My advice to the Russians would be precisely the same as to the British. It is a cruel misrepresentation of my advice to the British to say that it was one of non-resistance. I suggested non-violent resistance which is any day superior to violent, blood-thirsty resistance.
2. I am entirely satisfied with the progress and achievements of my limited non-cooperation campaign as you call it and which I describe as civil disobedience.
3. It is a difficult question to answer definitely. But I do not mind it being said that the majority are non-violent only out of policy. That is the weakest part of my campaign but it is inevitable. In spite of the appearances to the contrary it is my belief that true non-violence is growing among the people.
4. I have no doubt whatsoever that in spite of the riots, etc. India will have the moral strength and unity to forge her own destiny in her own way. Twenty years of solid work cannot be a waste. I hope you can decipher my writing and that if you publish my reply, it will be published as it is, in toto.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : Jayaprakash Narayan Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

[1] An Associated Press correspondent had sought Gandhiji's views on the following points :

(i) whether Gandhiji's policy of non-violence advocated to the British would apply to Russians also, or would it need any modification; (ii) whether Gandhiji was satisfied with the progress of non-cooperation; (iii) how many of his followers really believed in non-violence; (iv) whether in view of the widespread rioting in the country, India could still have the unity and strength to forge her own destiny.

680. LETTER TO SHEIKH MOHAMMED ABDULLAH

SEVAGRAM,
July 24, 1941

DEAR SHEIKH SAHEB,

You have my apology. You had, I thought, always told me that you were a soldier and I was your general. I see I misunderstood you. I now understand your complaint about Kashmir. I asked Badshah Khan who is with me and he supports me. He vividly recollects the grief he in common with me felt over your obstinacy in opposing my wish to be the state guest not for my pleasure but for the sake of the people of Kashmir.[1] You should know that I cancelled the visit to Kashmir simply to please you. I changed overnight for I learnt that if I came as the people's guest the Durbar would take it amiss. I thought that I could take the liberty I took with my followers as I deemed you to be in altering my plans. But now I see that you were only trying me before becoming my follower. I am sorry I failed in your test.

Now about the Kashmir position. I had no difficulty in giving my provisional opinion about the script. You have put before me an intricate problem on which I dare not give even a provisional opinion.

I appreciate your frankness. I hope you will find no want of it in my reply.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : Jayaprakash Naryan Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

681. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

July 24, 1941

CHI. BABUDI,

I got your letter. It throws much light on the atmosphere there. Let all those who wish to leave, do so. I would welcome that. They have not understood the meaning of the struggle. Chokhawala will regain his weight quickly. The *muni's* book is not available in the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 29-7-1939

market. I will try to get a copy from Delhi. The cause of Anand's diarrhoea is clear, and there is, therefore, no cause for alarm. The food you are giving him is all right. Will you all still be staying there? Sushilabehn is coming tomorrow. She will leave for Delhi on the 28th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10033. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

682. LETTER TO DR. S. K. VAIDYA

[*July 24, 1941*][1]

BHAI VAIDYA,

Your spinning is bound to bear fruit. We are upset when we see people stabbed in front of us. But what about the millions of innocent people being killed far away from us, and homes and other buildings, the fruit of great labour, being destroyed in a moment? We cannot stop it by becoming violent, but it is our duty to remain calm and acquire the strength to check it. I believe that the spinning- wheel, if adopted with this aim, will serve the purpose.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5752

683. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SEVAGRAM,
[About *July 24, 1941*][2]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I did get a little frightened on reading about your fever, but was reassured by the wire. You must get completely restored there. You should not mind having to accept service. You should accept it in the name of God and hope that He will enable you to return a hundredfold all the service you receive. The whole family is filled

[1] From the postmark

[2] From the reference to the addressee's illness, the letter appears to have been written about the same time as the letter to Amrit Kaur, 24-7-1941. The addressee replied to this on July 27. *Vide*. also the following item.

with the spirit of service. Her[1] father also was as simple as she is. In fact, he should have succeeded as the Ruler of Kapurthala, but being a Christian the succession went to another person.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3017

684. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
[*July 25, 1941*][2]

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your usual letter.

I thought I had told you I had added 1_ lb. to my weight.

Neither you nor Shummy need give anything to Gujarat[3]. Noakhali[4] and Malabar[5] have better claims. The damage in both is infinitely greater.

Mira knows all about what has been done about Prithvi Singh.

Sushila has come back from Bombay. She has certainly benefited by the experience, short though it was. And she was able to see many patients of ours.

Mahadev is having some difficulty in making collections but he will get his sum.

Khan Saheb is off to Bombay today to see Khurshed.

I hope Jamnalal's progress is steady.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4036. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7345

[1] Amrit Kaur's
[2] From the postmark
[3] The reference is to the relief work in connection with riots in Ahmedabad.
[4] The reference is to the cyclone havoc in these places.
[5] *ibid*

685. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
July 25, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

This is entirely my fault. Haven't I told you that you will have to put up with it? I heard on that day that there was no mustard oil. So in order to give some to the doctor and to save your time, when Jhaverbhai came I asked him to send some if he could. This is what happened. It is true that I ought to have informed you. I should havetold you even if I asked for it. This time it has happened. In future I will try to be careful, but this habit of mine is an old one.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4396

686. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
July 26, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Yours.

You must have heard that the Agra strike is off. So you have become Jamnalal's outfitter!

As Tara was due here today I vacated this house for her and transferred myself to the dispensary. Dr. Das has gone to Janakibehn with his patients. So I am literally *aniketa*[1], houseless. I do not mind.

Sushila has gone to see Pyarelal with Prabhavati and Kusum.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4249. Courtesy Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7881

[1] This is in the Devanagari script.

687. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

July 26, 1941

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

I am sorry your son[1] is ailing. I hope he is better. You know the treatment for typhoid. You hardly need a doctor. Strict nursing and practical fasting is all that is needed.

Jamnalalji was saying that Vina could not be admitted to the Mahilashram. Her place is with you or with Ramabai in Bari. She must become an earning member. Perhaps it would be best forher to marry. If Abha alone wishes to come to the Ashram I shall take her on trial. Ba is anxious about Abha. She dotes on her and often talks about her to me. But if she comes she must come a changed girl.

Sailen and Dhiren I am watching.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10318. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

688. LETTER TO ABHA CHATTERJEE

[*July 26, 1941*][2]

CHI. ABHA,

I have your letter. I have written everything in the letter to your father. He will explain everything to you. Only if you can come alone and live according to the rules will I keep you here but not in the Mahilashram. Shethji[3] will not keep Vina there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10354. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[1] The addressee's youngest son, Ranendranath

[2] This letter was written on the back of the preceding item.

[3] Jamnalal Bajaj

689. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

July 26, 1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have given you full freedom. Only thus will you become steady one day. The notion that there is no freedom here is but a product of your own imagination. The mind is the sole cause both of our bondage and our freedom. You will be calm only when you stop thinking altogether and devote yourself exclusively and ceaselessly to work, be it in Sevagram or on the top of the Himalayas—only, he who climbs the top of a mountain is in danger of falling. There is no such danger in a place on the plains, like Sevagram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8495. Also C.W. 7150. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

690. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

July 26, 1941

CHI. VALJI,

I got your wire. I have already written and suggested that a report of the investigation as far as it has proceeded will suffice. I shall let you know as soon as I receive the report and will also fix the date.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7495. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

691. LETTER TO PYARELAL

July 26, 1941

CHI. PYARELAL,

This time I have specially chosen the persons who should come. You will approve the choice. I did not press anyone.They will make no demand without my telling them. Prabhavati is already here, and

Kusum has just arrived. Hence I thought of sending both of them. A.S.[1] wishes to come later on if you wish.

Sushila is bringing two *dhoties* which Ba eagerly got woven for you with the yarn she herself spun.

You must have seen from the press reports that Mahadev is busy at the moment collecting money for the flood relief fund. I am planning to detain Prabhavati here for about three months because Kanaiyo will be going to Bombay to complete the massage treatment. Right now he is engaged in clearing the accounts.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

692. LETTER TO NATVARLAL J. VEPARI

[*July 26, 1941*][2]

BHAI NATVARLAL,

I got your letter. I am writing to Bhai Mahadev. My own view is that you should draw up the report on the basis of the material in your possession. But Mahadev has studied this problem and if he holds a different view I might think again.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10131

693. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
July 27, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

Your Hindi is getting better and better.

I have no anxiety about Jamnalal. When this reaches Simla you will be in Dehra Dun. I expect from you a full account of your visit. I am not surprised at your not being with the Rani.

[1] Amtussalaam
[2] From the postmark

What a wretched agreement has Bajpai[1] concluded with Burma.
No more just now.
Sushila is going tomorrow to Delhi.
Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4037. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7346

694. TELEGRAM TO IFTIKHAR-UD-DIN

[On or before *July 28, 1941*][2]

ASK POLITICAL PRISONERS IN LYALLPUR JAIL TO STOP HUNGER-STRIKE.[3]

The Hindu, 30-7-1941

695. LETTER TO UMESH RAU M. VAKIL[4]

July 28, 1941

Send dates and can you vouch for the truth?

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

696. LETTER TO IFTIKHAR-UD-DIN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 28, 1941

MY DEAR IFTIKHAR,

I have your letter of the 25th instant You are doing good work. I hope the District Committees will work so that Punjab may become

[1] Girija Shankar Bajpai, Member, Viceroy's Executive Council, had led a delegation to Burma on behalf of the Government of India and signed on June 28 in Rangoon the Indo-Burmese Agreement to regulate and restrict Indian immigration into Burma. The Agreement was published on July 21 from Simla as a joint statement by the two Governments. For Gandhiji's statement, *vide* "Statement to the Press", 24-8-1941.

[2] The report of the telegram appeared under the date-line "Lahore, July 28".

[3] The report adds that the addressee communicated this to the prisoners through the Superintendent of the jail and also informed the Lyallpur District Congress Committee accordingly.

[4] The addressee, in his letter dated July 18, had reported the bad condition of the agriculturists in the southern portion of Kasargod Taluk of South Canara District as also some instances of police excesses.

proof against goondaism. If the effort succeeds, it will produce a tremendous impression on the whole of India. I regard this work of yours as most important—much more than jail-going.

If those who have been discharged as a result of appeals do not go again you need not worry. Their names should be removed from the lists.

No member has asked me for permission to remain on. I should not think of giving such permission. Every case of this type or any other I have invariably referred to you.

I have read all about Dr. Satyapal[1]. You should accept his resignation and of others who have copied his example. You have done well to refer to Rajendra Babu about the Parliamentary resignation. But it follows that if [he] gives up the four-anna membership, he should resign all other offices.

I personally think that you should ignore his Press statements.

You are quite right in doing what you have about Brahma Datta. He has written to me saying that he has apologized for his conduct. He is very impulsive.

If I have kept a copy of my letter[2] to Lala Dunichand, I shall send it to you.

I share your grief about Lala Shamlal. I shall not accept any resignation directly. I enclose a letter of a Bhiwani correspondent. He complains that you gave too short a time to Bhiwani when you went there during your tour. He is afraid that the atmosphere is tense there. You will see.

Farooqi is angry with me because I did not approve of his statement of his visit to me. I told him that his statement was in the nature of an advertisement and sent him a brief one. He retorts that mine is an advertisement (I suppose for myself!)

My love to you and Ismat.

Yours,

BAPU

[1] Former President of the Punjab Congress Committee, who had, in a statement at Lahore on July 21, suggested to Gandhiji to reconsider the situation and to devise a really useful course instead of the satyagraha movement which he said was doing good to no one

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dunichand", 17-7-1941

Encls.

1. Letter of Rajendra Prasad Jain—Bhiwani, 26-7-41
2. Letter of Shri Rama Sharma—Phatak, 27-6-41

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal .

697. LETTER TO RATHINDRANATH TAGORE

July 28, 1941

MY DEAR RATHIN[1],

Your letter of 24th instant. I have not the appeal by me just now. I think the proposed project is included in the objects. If it is, I have no objection. But please ask the others and secure their consent.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI RATHINDRANATH TAGORE
"UTTARAYAN"
SANTINIKETAN, BENGAL

C.W. 10319. Courtesy: Visvabharati, Santiniketan

698. LETTER TO SIR ROBERT E. HOLLAND

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
July 28, 1941

DEAR FRIEND,

Apologies for the delayed reply.

I have not asked for suspension of respective activities. I have only asked for eschewing goondaism for enforcing claims. Thus the Muslim League may pursue their claim to Pakistan and the antis their objection so long as each party does so non-violently. For the time being I have not aimed at agreement on issues. I have aimed at agreement on non-violence, i.e., calm discussion.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10452. Courtesy: Sir Robert E. Holland

[1] Rabindranath Tagore's son

699. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA (C.P.),
July 28, 1941

DEAR PLAYMATE,

You have no business to fall ill as often as you do. I expect your further letter and a cheery report about your health. Of course I knew that you would throw yourself into the work entrusted to you.

Love

BAPU

SHRI PADMAJABEHN NAIDU
ZAHEER MANZIL
RED HILLS
HYDERABAD, DECCAN

From the original : Padmaja Naidu Papers.Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

700. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
July 28, 1941

CHI. NARANDAS,

Herewith a postcard from Jethalalbhai. I have not replied. If you wish to give any, please do so directly. If you think I should write, let me know.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

If you have any suggestions to make about *Khadi Jagat,* do send them.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8587. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

701. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

July 28, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

You were right. Khan Saheb did not come after all. Now he will be coming on Thursday. Even so it was my duty to observe silence earlier.

I trust you found a seat in the train and have reached home without any trouble. You were actually having a slight temperature. You must completely cure Anasuya.

You must now concentrate on studies. But do not spoil your health in doing so. You have to take full advantage of having failed once. You must study well and gain good experience. I shall send you the *Khadi Jagat*[1].

The lost letter and the charkha are constantly troubling me. The search is on.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Mother will be well

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

702. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

July 28, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

It has been settled now that you have to look after the guests. If someone turns up all of a sudden, then Chimanlal will have to decide immediately. I do not know what precisely is your problem. If you make it clear, I will be able to help you more.

You will have to look after the guests for whom I do not make

[1] A Hindi monthly pubished by the A.I.S.A. fromWardha, the inaugural issue of which appeared on July 27, 1941.

arrangements about their stay and so on. You will be informed as soon as the guests arrive.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4398

703. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

July 28, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

The tone of Balvantsinha's letter did not suggest [that the refuse] was burnt out of enmity. His letter expresses nothing but grief. Almost all the refuse is manure except broken glass. I feel that what Balvantsinha says is correct; it would have been better to have asked him before getting the refuse burnt. When he had asked for help, it should have been given. It is true that a farmer would be deeply hurt if his manure is burnt. Try to pacify Balvantsinha.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4397

704. LETTER TO LAKSHMI GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
July 28, 1941

CHI. LAKSHMI,

Ba sent you a letter yesterday. She wanted me to add something. But the letter was posted by mistake. What she meant was that I also should give you comfort regarding the illness of the children. But now the children are all right. And even if they are not, what comfort do you need? We are all in the hands of God. Yes, it is our duty to try our best, and that you are already doing. My blessings to brothers and Papa[1]. Sushila left for Delhi today. Any number of houses constructed

[1] Addressee's elder sister

in the Ashram get filled up very soon. Perhaps Devdas will stop over here on his way to Delhi.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

SHRI LAKSHMIBEHN GANDHI
C/O SHRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
BAZULULLAH ROAD
THYAGARAJA NAGAR
MADRAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2001

705. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

July 29, 1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I was very clear in my reply.[1] But being confused in mind you find it vague. My advice is that you should firmly decide to stay here and be content with doing whatever work is given you. This is the royal road and the royal yoga. If you cannot do that, you may go on a tour and return if and when you feel tired. Don't carry any worry with you. Let Kanchan stay here. There is no third alternative.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8488. Also C.W. 7151. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

706. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
July 29, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

I know you have told me not to write a postcard, but what am I to do? There is no letter from you today, and so many letters are lying

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Munnalal G. Shah", 26-7-1941

before me. Today at this time you are in Dehra Dun. All is well here. Miss Moore will leave on Sunday. Since there has been no rain, I am worried.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7882. Also C.W. 4250. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur

707. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
July 30, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your two letters came in together.

So you see it works the same way at both ends. We must suffer these little pricks of life.

If Jamnalal must leave earlier, he must not be prevented.

I am glad you are pursuing the Agra case.[1]

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4038. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7347

708. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SEVAGRAM,
July 30, 1941

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letter. You need stay there only as long as you wish to. Far from envying you, I would welcome your cultivating a closer relationship with that family than I enjoy. But how do you hope to cultivate a relationship like mine when from the very beginning you feel afraid even to stay there? You should have no objection to staying there as long as Rajkumari is there. But do as you like. It would be certainly good if you meet Jawaharlal. But do not let your visit get

[1] *Vide* also letter to Amrit Kaur", 21-7-1941

into the papers. There is a lady named Anandamayi Devi near Dehra Dun. She was Kamala's guru. She is said to be a good woman. Try and see her if you can but do not rush about it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3019

709. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
July 30, 1941

CHI. BABUDI,

I got your letter. By all means stay there as long as you like. Come here when you wish to.

Both of you please read the accompanying letter. I have asked Bhai Ahmed Qureshi to meet you. I have also told him that Ashram life is a hard one. There is no privacy at all. You two should now guide the couple. Let me know what impression you form.

I hope Anand is happy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10034. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

710. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

July 30, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I find no moral or any other lapse in what you write about Chi[manlal]. It is a different thing that we should put up with it if we fail to obtain what we call justice or if it is delayed. It is a unique heritage.

I am having talks with Ramji.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4399

711. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

SEVAGRAM,
July 30, 1941

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I had no talk with Balkrishnaji apart from polite enquiries after his health and so on. Where was the time? I did tell him to see me at four but he did not want to say anything.

I think I had replied to Bhai Kotwal. I do not in the least relish the idea of his going to jail[1]. And there is absolutely no need to come here. Why should he at all go to jail? Let him do whatever constructive work he can in Indore. If he does not get my letter, he should consider this my reply to him.

Mishrilal has lost much weight. Now he should take it easy. The same is the case with Kanhaiyalal Khadiwala. Many useless persons have gone to [jails] in the U.P. I know it.

It is good that you gave news about Harilal. I am keeping fairly fit these days.

You should give yourself rest—considering it a duty.

We are waiting for the rains. If it does not rain, people will suffer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

712. LETTER TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 31, 1941

DEAR SIR,

This is the concluding portion of your leaderette[2] in *The Times of India*, [of the] 29th instant:

> Either he has been lax in interpreting his own rules of satyagraha or he has been deceived by the majority of those whose names were submitted. Mr. Gandhi can best say which of these alternatives is the right one.

[1] The source here adds "in Ajmer"; *vide* "Letter to Kotwal", 7-8-1941

[2] *Vide* "Letter from Subhas Chandra Bose", 23-12-1940.

I suggest a third alternative. I have neither been lax in the interpretation of my rules of satyagraha nor have I been deceived by anybody. You have omitted to read one sentence in my admissions: "It is inevitable." From the very inception of the movement in 1920 non-violence has been a policy and not a creed. I said[1] in Bombay speaking at the A.I.C.C. meeting on the reversal of the Poona resolution that with the majority non-violence was a policy. The weakness was therefore inherent in the movement. It should not be forgotten that I am trying the great experiment of using non-violence for the political freedom of the country. With me no doubt non-violence is an end in itself, though it is also a means for the attainment of the freedom of the country. With the vast majority of Congressmen it is and must remain a means. The weakness is thus inherent though none the less regrettable. The marvel is that in spite of the weakness, twenty years' experience has not weaned Congressmen from the non-violent policy, though it is open to it to change it any time.

In the light of the information I have provided, you will perhaps admit that the case you have made up against the Congress and me falls to the ground.

I am,
Yours sincerely,

Congress Bulletin, No. 6, 1942, File No. 3/42/41-Home Department, Pol. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India

713. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
July 31, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter.

Yes, I had sent the message privately that the hunger-strike should be given up.[2] How the news went abroad I do not know.

Farooqi was angry with me for prohibiting him from publishing his report of the interview. Instead I sent him a few sentences. He returned that. Mine looked like advertisement and he did not see any use in seeing me again. But he has sent a courteous letter today and

[1] *Vide* "Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting, Bombay —1", 15-9-1940
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Iftikhar-ud-Din", On or before 28-7-1941

says he will see me when it becomes necessary.

Iftikhar has sent me a long and interesting letter about his tours.

The news about yourself is disturbing. You must get rid of your weakness or return.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I am extra-well, if such a thing can be said of a 72-year-old man.

From the original: C.W. 4039. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7348

714. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 31, 1941

CHI. MIRA,

I finished these last night in the "library". It will be a good selection in the end.[1]

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6486. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9887

715. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

July 31, 1941

CHI. LILY,

I got your letter. Sushila felt no apprehension regarding you. She believes that if you eat properly and take the prescribed medicines, you will certainly get well. Do not take strong tea. Take enough milk, or curds. Keep me regularly informed. If you do not regain strength, do come away. We will give up one year [of study] if it becomes necessary to do so. You must, of course, complete your study. The subjects which you regard as dull are certain to become interesting after you have mastered them. Ba frequently thinks of you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] *Vide* also letters to the addressee, 23-6-1941

[PS.]

I am fine.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10110. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

716. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

July 31,1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. I was pleased that Anasuya accompanied you. I shall be very happy if she come fully recovered. And if she can be accommodated with you, good work can be done.

Enclosed is Kaka Saheb's report. Dr. Manu has stopped the injections after checking the sugar level, and has also stopped sweet fruit, etc. Is this right? Now the diet will consist of curds, milk, leafy vegetables, sour lime, etc.

I am of course well.

Khan Saheb has arrived. He is all right. Most probably he will leave on Sunday. He is likely to reach there on Monday. Ask Devdas to take the car to fetch him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

717. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[*July 31, 1941*][1]

CHI. SUSHILA,

After you went, you must have received one letter followed by a postcard. Enclosed is the strange letter from Sankaran which you must read and preserve. Annapurna's fear proved right. Sankaran has worked very hard. He is well educated. But women remain his obsession. I cannot decide what can be done about it. I do not want to

[1] From the reference to Tarabehn Mashruwala's departure for Bal Kutir; *vide* "Letter to Sushila Nayyar", 1-8-1941

worry you about it. I shall see about it. But it is necessary that you should be kept informed.

My blood-pressure continues to be satisfactory at the previous level. It seems it was unnecessary for me to take the salted limes that I had been taking. Within four day, after I gave up taking the limes, the blood-pressure started coming down. At all the three readings yesterday it was between 150/90. It had considerably gone down the day before yesterday also. Of course, I had been working very hard.

Tari is still here. She will most probably go to the Bal Kutir tomorrow. It will be some time before it gets vacated.

Madalasa is doing fine. Mahesh's[1] pain seems to have gone now. Miss Moore is also feeling better.

For the present at least, Ba is able to have good walks. She is feeling quite energetic.

Your letter was received today. Kaka's urine was found to contain sugar and acetone. I would be happy to send him there. Mahmud is very benevolent.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

718. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

July 31, 1941

BHAI PRITHVI SINGH,

I saw your letter to Kishorelalbhai. I had received your letter and was very glad to read it. But as there was nothing to write, I did not even acknowledge it. It is good that your work is going on well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] Prof. Maheshdutta Mishra, ex-M.P. and freedom fighter

[PS.]

I hope Gopalrao is all right. Was the examination held?

SARDAR PRITHVI SINGH
AHIMSAK VYAYAM SANGH
RAMBAUG, MALAD, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5649. Also C.W. 2960. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

719. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
August 1, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

No time. No letter from you today. Kanu[1] is going to Rajkot. His mother has lost one eye through glaucoma and is in danger of losing the other[2]. Poor boy!

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Prabha has returned.

SHRI RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA

From the original: C.W. 4040. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7349

720. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

August 1, 1941

CHI. NARANDAS,

Do you feel stunned?[3] Even if you do, for a person like you it can be only for a while. You are unattached, a lover of God and a man

[1] Son of Narandas Gandhi
[2] The source has "another".
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

of faith, and so you bear cheerfully whatever befalls you.

Bhai Nanalal will send the Rs. 11,000 that he has received. I will include the amount in your purse. I remember to have quoted the figure of one lakh[1] from your letter, not from your statement. But be that as it may. God will protect our honour.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8588. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

721. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

August 1, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. I know Khan Saheb's nature. He would surely expect that I should talk when he comes. There certainly had been a mistake, it occurs to me as I write this. He was to arrive in themorning, and so it would have been all right if I had started talking later. As it happened, I was having my massage when he arrived. He could not wait the while and barged in while the massage was going on and engaged me in talk. Love is a remarkable bond. But that is all right.

Kanu is going to Rajkot today. His mother lost one of her eyes through glaucoma and there is danger of her losing the other eye too. She is to be operated on. She is refusing to have the operation without seeing Kanu. Hence his abrupt visit.

Tari will be going to Bal Kutir today.

God will look after me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* "Rentia Baras", 1-7-1941

722. SPEECH AT INAUGURATION OF KHADI VIDYALAYA

WARDHA,
August 1, 1941

We want to achieve the welfare of the world by truth and non-violence.

I want you, students of this Vidyalaya, to devote yourselves to a scientific study of the charkha and khadi and make improvements by new inventions and serve the villagers.

Just as the sun is the centre of the planetary system, so is the charkha of our economic or village structure. Without the sun, the world will perish; so without the charkha, which is our saviour and bread-giver, we shall lose.

If khadi comes to stay, everything will be all right; for the progress and improvement of khadi utilize both your intellect and hand-power. This khadi *mantra* manifested itself in 1908 when I was in South Africa along with the late Maganlal Gandhi who had made experiments for improving its technique. We are not opposed to machinery, but we must meet it by new inventions in our khadi science and by providing work and food for the villagers. Make your mind and intellect scientific, so that you students will always search for new things for the betterment of your country. Our prayer should be for serving all, Hindus, Muslims and other communities. By serving India, we can serve the world, as our object is non- exploitation, non-suppression and non-hatred. This requires penance which will add to our knowledge.

We have to exert ourselves more for passing the test of service to Indians and later to humanity. The Charkha Sangh is the central force or the centre of the All-India Village Industries' Association and the Talimi Sangh just as the sun is the guiding force on the solar system (*suryamandal*). Our small beginning with this Vidyalaya may attain or produce better results and our dreams will be realized if you systematically and scientifically study *khadishastra* (science) for serving the poor villagers, for giving them food and clothing by your sacrifice, suffering, penance and purity of character; by this we shall not only serve India, but also the world.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-8-1941

723. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
August 2, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter is bad! What is the use of your suppressing your illness or weakness? It leads to greater anxiety. I shall learn to shed anxiety not by companions suppressing truth but by experience which *faithful* companions should not deny me. Do be well and strong.

I understand your instructions about not writing on other people's letters. In the case referred to, I was careful to write on that part which you would have easily cut out.

Let Jamnalal have the pleasure of beating you each time.

Your report about Dehra Dun is exhilarating. You will never succeed in telling me when you come what you cannot tell me through letters. You know you did not succeed last time. I do not mind. You will be right in retorting that I never give you time. Such is life. What is really worth telling I know you will never omit. But what is of that nature as a rule admits of writing and cannot await long delay.

Here is Sailen's diary[1] and whatever it may be called. K. S.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4041. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7350

724. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

August 2, 1941

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have written to Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas. I can think of many ways. I believe the matter[2] can be set right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4734. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarjee

[1] *Vide* "Letter to S.n. Chatterjee", 12-5-1941
[2] The Indo-Burma Immigration Agreement

725. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
August 2, 1941

CHI. NARANDAS,

Kanaiyo is terribly upset. Do console him, please. I need him badly here but if he wishes to stay on there or if you feel the need to keep him there, you need not worry about me. I have always regarded it as my dharma to take whatever work I can from those persons who feel the need to be near me. Any other course would not be compatible with scrupulous adherence to truth. Realization of God also is impossible in any other way. The renunciation of *grihasthashrama* is inspired by the same ideal. It follows, therefore, that it is my duty to think of Kanaiyo's welfare and take into consideration what will suit you. The rest Kanaiyo will tell you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M.U./II. Also C.W. 8589. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

726. LETTER TO INDRAVADAN N. DIVYENDRA

August 2, 1941

BHAI INDRAVADAN,

I got your letter. My opinion about milk has not changed. But what is the value of opinions which I myself have not been able to act upon? Please, therefore, forget my opinion for the present and do take as much cow's milk and ghee as you can digest.

Blessings from
M. K.GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 146

727. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

August 2, 1941

CHI. KUNVARJI,

Carry out the accompanying suggestions fully. He has written to Dr. Jivraj also about you. I am sure you will see him, won't you? But write to him first and see what he says.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9751

728. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

August 2, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

What shall I do? I am so busy that I am unable to write letters and I am not happy not writing. It never happens that I do not think of you when I have the massage while bathing. Hence, I cannot say when it was that I particularly remembered you.

Instead of going tomorrow Khan Saheb left today. I have sent a telegram to Devdas. Puri has also gone with him. Prabha has also left. She has gone to Patna. She will be returing on the 15th.

In spite of all indications, it is not raining here.

Tari gets fever between 99°-102°. And she cannot pass stool without enema.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

729. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
August 3, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

I have your letter. I cannot understand this irregular delivery. Something wrong at your end. What can't be cured must be endured.

This public kidnapping of Khurshed[1] is an atrocious thing! I do not know that your organization[2] should not take up the case from women's standpoint. You should carefully consider the thing. This too under the Defence of India Ordinance. What an untruth!

Your being ill is not a comforting thought. You have not fared so badly before in Simla?

You must bestir yourself and get thoroughly well. Or is old age creeping over you?

Who is Prof [3]? I can't make out the name. Of course Saran must not be in a hurry to go.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4042. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7351

730. LETTER TO RATANMONI CHATTERJI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
August 3, 1941

DEAR RATANMONI,

You have done well in giving me details about Dr. Das[4]. His

[1] *Vide* ''Statement to the Press", "Statement to the Press", 4-8-1941

[2] The All-India Women's Conference

[3] This abbreviation is in the Devanagari script.

[4] Dr. Ashutosh Das, I.M.S., had given up his permanent commission during the Non-co-operation Movement and worked for the eradication of Kalaazar in Haripal, a village in Hooghly District. He was imprisoned for offering individual civil disobe-dience and died following an attack of malaria shortly after his release.

death is a distinct loss. We can but intensify our devotion to the country's cause. Please convey my condolences to his aged mother.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

SHRI RATANMONI CHATTERJI
DISTRICT CONGRESS COMMITTEE
G. T. ROAD
P.O. SERAMPORE, DIST. HOOGHLY
BENGAL

From a photostat: G.N. 8026. Also C.W. 10342. Courtesy: Ratanmoni Chatterji

731. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

August 3, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is no letter from you today. I do go to see Tari every morning. I felt it could not be avoided. I do not feel tired. Since I take a shortcut, there is only a slight increase in blood-pressure.Once she is on the way to recovery, I may not go.

Enclosed is Kaka's letter. Koyaji is a renowned and elderly doctor and is conversant with everything that is new. I have written to Kaka that he should go to Poona and spend some days there. Give your suggestion if you have any.

Kanchan's health cannot be called good. She frequently falls ill. I should like to keep her with you for a long while if she agrees. Would you wish that? Would she not be a burden to you? Can she be kept in the hospital as a voluntary nurse? Or, can she be kept at your house? Would it be a burden to Mother if she were to stay at your place? Write to me after thinking everything over. There is certainly no hurry.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

732. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

SEVAGRAM,
August 4, 1941[1]

Khurshedbehn Naoroji is the youngest grand-daughter of the late G.O.M.[2] of India. In common with her other sisters, she has dedicated herself to the service of India, in truth, of humanity. She felt the call some years ago to go to the Frontier Province. and workamong the Pathans there and spread the gospel of non-violence. She took part also in the last civil disobedience campaign. The last time she was in the Frontier was in connection with dacoities and kidnappings. She is a brave and fearless woman, and so she had planned to work, if she could, even in the tribal area, and come in contact with the dacoits, and wean them from their error. For months she worked within the Province and was trying to cross the border with the permission of the Government. But she did not get the permission, though the authorities with whom she came into contact recognized her worth, transparent honesty, and utter absence of secrecy about her movements in the Frontier Province. This is clear from the letters she holds from the officials. Being tired of waiting she notified the Frontier Government of her intention to cross the border. But she was arrested, tried and sentenced to a fine of Rs. 100 or imprisonment for three months in default thereof. She preferred the latter and on her finishing the term of imprisonment she was externed from the Frontier Province, and interned in the Island of Bombay. She protested against the order and corresponded with the authorities. I give below her letters:

78 NAPEAN SEA ROAD, BOMBAY,
March 31, 1941

SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM,

ADDITIONAL SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

HOME DEPARTMENT, POLITICAL (I)

NEW DELHI

[1] The draft version available in the A.I.C. C. File No. 1363, 1941, is dated August 3, 1941, and *The Bombay Chronicle* reports the statement under "Wardha, August 5".

[2] Dadabhai Naoroji, who was known as the "Grand Old Man of India".

dated 18th February, 1941, which was served on me just before my release from the Peshawar Central Prison on 4th March 1941, I have to state as follows:

I consider the language of the order vague and the restrictions unjustifiable, in view of the activities in which I was engaged. I place these few facts before you.

For nine months prior to my arrest on 4th December, 1940, I had been working in the Bannu District of the North-West Frontier Province, trying to instil into the minds of the people the ideal of non-violence. I went about from village to village meeting Pirs, Maliks, Khans, as well as dacoits—all honour to many of them—who gave a patient hearing to my talks. I spoke to them on the cowardice and cruelty of carrying away or killing defenceless men, women and children. I argued with dacoits and tribesmen on the inhumanity of killing one's fellow-beings. I strove to make villagers responsible for the collective security of the villages. I asked the Hindus to show more courage, and try and create a living bond of sympathy between themselves and their Pathan neighbours. I begged of the Pathans to live up to their traditions of protecting the weak and opposing brute force even from their own kinsmen. The above-mentioned facts may be verified through Government officials in the district concerned, in the North-West Frontier Province.

After due intimation to the authorities, I was proceeding to Walo Tangi in Tribal Territory on 4th Dec. 1940, to try and obtain the release of some Hindu kidnappees, among whom was a woman, when I was arrested. I had intended to spend some time there, if necessary, until I had accomplished my object.

During all my talks, private or public, to the Frontier villagers as stated above, at least one C.I.D. officer was always present and heard what I said, and which in all probability was reported to the Government department concerned.

I, therefore, take the liberty to ask if my conduct or speech in the N.W.F. Province, such as I have described, could by any stretch of imagination be considered to be prejudicial to the efficient prosecution of the war, to the defence of British India, or to the public order.

I regard my work in the Frontier Province to have been essentially humanitarian. I feel sure that I could not have been banished from the N.W.F.P. for the activities described by me. If the Government have information to the contrary, they have been entirely misled. I should be given

an opportunity of rebutting evidence which has led to the passing of the order against me.

May I expect an early reply?

Yours truly,

Sd/- K. A. D. NAOROJI

The authorities turned a deaf ear to her protest. So she decided to break the order of internment if she could not get relief and consequently gave the following notice to the authorities:

DEAR SIR,

With reference to your last letter after careful consideration I have failed to find the slightest justification for restricting me to the Island of Bombay.

I am prepared to understand in these times of stress for the British Government the prevention of my entry, for the time being, into the Frontier Province. But I find it hard to reconcile myself to being cooped up in the Island of Bombay. My whole soul rebels against what I hold to bemanifestly unjust and wholly unnecessary. It insults my intelligence. Unless, therefore, the restriction order is confined only to the Frontier Province and my freedom of movement is left otherwise undisturbed and unless I receive an answer amending the order as requested by June 30, I propose to disobey it.

Yours truly,

Sd/- K. A. D. NAOROJI

For very shame,[1] I suppose, and probably also because they felt that they could not justify their high-handed action in confining the internment to Bombay they relaxed the order so as to cover the whole of the Bombay Presidency.

That brought her no relief. She resented the underlying distrust. As will be seen from the correspondence I have reproduced, she was quite willing to accommodate the authorities by not going to the Frontier Province. But she could not possibly tolerate the idea of being confined to the Bombay Presidency. There was no reason whatsoever why she should not be allowed to go to Wardha to confer with me, or to go to Allahabad to see the Kamala Nehru Hospital of which she was till the other day one of the active trustees and

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Devdas Gandhi", 13-8-1941.

secretaries, or to travel to any other part of India, where she has many friends, and where she could be of great service in many of the constructive activities going on in the country. At last being utterly dissatisfied with the inexplicable treatment meted out to her she gave notice to the Commissioner of Police, Bombay, on 31st July, 1941, of her intention to proceed to Wardha on the 1st of August if she was left free. So on the morning of the 1st she was without trial, shall I say, kidnapped, to the Yeravda Central Jail.

This action of the Government baffles me, and is a significant and searching commentary on the so-called expansion of the Viceregal Council and what not. The public should understand that Khurshedbehn's action is no part of the war resistance. But the public is hardly aware of the fact that many persons have been arrested and detained without trial although so far as I am aware there is no charge against them of having offered war resistance either as part of the Congress campaign or outside it. They are being detained for reasons of which neither they nor the public have any knowledge. Is Khurshedbehn's case an index of what has been done in these other cases?

Congress Bulletin, No. 6, 1941, File No. 3/42/41-Home Department, Pol. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 6-8-1941

733. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHAGANJ,
August 4, 1941

I have seen a Press report of an interview said to have been given by me to an American magazine called *Look*. It is a pure fabrication. I never knew before now of even the name of the magazine. My attitude remains what I have repeatedly stated. The Congress will not be satisfied with anything less than complete independence.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-8-1941

734. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

[*August 4, 194l*][1]

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter. Here is a letter for you. You will remember the girl.

Nothing need be done by you for the time being.

If Jamnalal leaves in the middle of the month you will be without work! !

Yes, you can get a 1st class certificate for packing and general neatness. You will have to get [one][2] for general fitness of body. Just now the family regard [you] as too delicate to be handled anyhow.

Ask Shummy how to deal with flies. They are a pest at the present moment. If the rains keep out long, they will devour us. I would not like you to take part in the battle unless you come with some special remedy which admits of no failure.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Veeramma[3] and Cariappa gone to Karnataka.

From the original: C.W. 4043. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7352

735. LETTER TO N. R. MALKAN1

August 4, 1941

MY DEAR MALKANI,

You have sent me a letter after long waiting. But I understand the delay.

I see you are having the greatest difficulty in establishing contact with the villagers. You are bound to succeed, if you have the right type of workers with the proper spirit of perseverance.

Do you manufacture your own tools? You ought not to depend upon Sabarmati or Nalwadi. We must fail, if we depend on distant depots. Decentralization to the nth degree is necessary for success. For

[1] From the postmark

[2] The source has "for".

[3] *Vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 21-7-1941

similar reasons I would like you to depend more and more on local production of khaddar.

Did I ever ask you to go to Quetta and advise the Baluchistan Congress about constructive work? Maulvi Abdus Samad is the President or Secretary. I promised that I would ask you to proceed there and give a few days. I have the notion that I sent you a hurried line about this. But as you make no reference to the matter, I wonder what happened.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 940

736. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA (C.P.),
August 4, 1941

MY DEAR BULBUL,

Your love letter which is also business letter. Of course you are working there and wearing yourself out. Take care that you don't disappear before me. So you go to Hyderabad, and do the diplomatic work.

As usual you have come out with your wise suggestion. I am writing to Chhatari[1].

I know you will come to my view that it is not time yet for me to move out. I am doing better work remaining in Sevagram.

Love.

SPINNER

From the original : Padmaja Naidu Paper. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Muhammad Ahmad Said Khan, Nawab of Chhatari, Member of the National Defence Council

737. NOTE TO MIRABEHN

August 4, 1941

Reminds one of "confound her enemies, frustrate their knavish tricks".

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6487. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9882

738. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,
August 4, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Your two letters arrived together. I understand about Kaka. I have sent the report of Koyaji's examination yesterday. He will be careful.

It will be good if Anasuya's health improves.

I am sending the letters concerning Kunvarji, as also the letter from Mathuradas. In your letter to the doctor you have not thanked him for his help in Bombay. Or, have you already written him a letter of thanks?

I shall see about Sankaran. Annapurna will not be coming there. She wants to go to Gujarat after the *rentia baras*. She wishes to have training in khadi work. Ba will carry on as before. I have not put on any weight. It was 99 1/2 1b. yesterday. I am considering taking garlic. I am not able to decide. Its odour is offensive. I dare not increase the quantity of food. The blood-pressure is well under control. I shall warn Ba about moving about. But when she has energy, nobody can control her. You write to her.

Blessings from

BAPU

[P.S.]

Miss Moore left on Saturday. So, I have sent Pyarelal's watch through her.

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

739. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHAGANJ,
August 5, 1941

I have read a Press summary of a letter said to have been written to me by 48 persons from the Gujrat Jail (Punjab). The question asked in the message is: "Would it be possible for any member of the Congress to use violent means against a violent dacoit under grave and provocative conditions, and yet remain in the Congress fold?"

Of course it is possible, it is even possible for people to remain in the Congress although they deliberately break every Congress rule. But if I am asked whether such persons should remain in the Congress, my answer would be an emphatic 'No'. That is for public conduct. No law has been laid down by the Congress as to private conduct. The Congress will refuse, as it should, to judge the conduct of a person who resists by force a robber robbing his property, or an assailant molesting his daughter.

However, the Congress Resolution passed at Poona clearly lays down that volunteer organizations for the purpose of self-defence organized by the Congress or with which Congressmen are associated, must adhere to non-violence. Whether persons who break the rule or even preach the use of violence by Congressmen in such cases should be turned out of the Congress is a different question.

My personal attitude is clear. I would not necessarily turn out such persons from the Congress. My letter to the Delhi President of the Congress Committee has been misquoted or misunderstood.[1] I deliberately advised against expulsion from the Congress. I have always held that it is an action to be adopted in rare case.

I know some persons have interpreted my advice[2] to Shri Munshi as expulsion. I regard the step taken by him as that of a high-souled man. He had taken no overt action. He had conscientious scruples. He referred to me for advice and, in his own interest and that of the Congress, I advised him to go out of the Congress. There was no coercion, even remote or indirect. His retirement was wholly

[1] *The Hindu*, 4-7-1941, had quoted the letter as follows: "If any four-anna Congress member, directly or indirectly, participates in the war effort, he should be expelled from the Congress membership." *Vide* also "Letter to Raghunandan Saran", Before 16-7-1941.

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 15-6-1941

voluntary and dictated by purely moral scruples. I have no reason whatsoever for repenting of my advice, which I should unhesitatingly repeat in every such case.

The rest of the message does not call for any notice.

The Bombay Chronicle, 6-8-1941. Also A.I.C.C. File No. 1363, 1941. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

740. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 5, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your note. I sent you the wire at once. I am quite sure he[1] must not speak for some time. His speech will be all the better for the restraint. You will make out all the reasons.

You were right also in vetoing his going to Hardwar. He must have uninterrupted stay there whatever it is to be. And you can truthfully say that he can't have equal quiet, equal facility and equally good and clean arrangement for food. May all these conveniences result in permanent benefit to his body and mind.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

What you say about Sailen is correct.[2]

From the original: C.W. 4044. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7353

741. LETTER TO S. N. CHATTERJEE

August 5, 1941

DEAR SAILEN,

I have read the enclosed. Rajkumari's criticism is quite correct. The mistakes she has collected are unpardonable. If you do not make

[1] Jamnalal Bajaj
[2] *Vide* the following item.

a serious endeavour to improve, you will never make any progress. Your mistakes are purely due to carelessness.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10343, Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

742. LETTER TO SARDUL SINGH CAVEESHAR

August 5, 1941

DEAR CAVEESHAR,

I have your letter.[1] My doubts are there. But I am always ready and willing, provided there is some common ground.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

743. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
August 5, 1941

CHI. VALJI,

Once I have agreed, where is the need for you to decide anything?[2] But it would be extremely painful for me to give the decision you want. I wish to settle everything at the same time. Durga is in Bulsar with her sister's husband at present for a change of air.

Blessings from

BAPU

PROF. V. G. DESAI
DEVAGIRI
POONA 4

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7496. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1] The addressee had sent to Gandhiji a copy of his letter to M. A. Jinnah, in which he had suggested some formula for Congress-League talks.

[2] *Vide* letters to the addressee, "Letter to Valji G. Desai", 18-5-1941 and "Letter to Valji G. Desai", 26-7-1941

744. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

August 5, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is no letter from you today. I have increased my quota of food from today. I have also started taking garlic from today.The sin of the foul odour is on your head and also the sin of any harm that may come from its use.

I tried to persuade Ba but so long as she has the energy, she will exert herself. Of course, she is eating well.

Mahadev has not yet returned. And he is so deep in fund collection that there are no letters from him.

Some eight persons at Nalwadi have got diarrhoea at the same time. I have sent Dr. Das. Manu has already reached there. Now there will be some news.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

745. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA

August 6, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

You have done what you have condemned in me—written on the blank part of correspondence. Tulsidas was right when he wrote:

समरथ को नाहिं दोस गुसाईं[1]

[The] king can do no wrong.

You may do that, pleased with the progress made in the Harijan welfare work.

Your *raksha*[2] has been received and will be duly used tomorrow. Madalasa is making grand preparations for distribution on a large scale. She is preparing special thread and making centre pieces. Ramakrishna comes out on 9th to go back as soon as he is ready.

[1] *Ramcharitmanas*, Balkanda

[2] This word is in the Devanagari script.

Kanu writes saying his mother had a successful operation.[1]

No rain yet. It is exasperating. The farmers are having an anxious time. Yes, what you say about Amery is too true. Can a leopard change his spots!

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4045. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7354

746. LETTER TO VIJAYA M. PANCHOLI

August 6, 1941

CHI. VIJAYA,

You seem to be very busy. Your letters are insipid and arrive after long intervals. Why is this so? I will tie the *rakhdi* tomorrow. I hope both of you keep good health. How is Nanabhai? How is the school going on? Ba is fine. My health is all right. Kusum is here at present. Prabhavati is arriving on the 15th. Amtul Salaam has got allher teeth extracted. After that her asthma has disappeared. The Ashram is full, even though a good many new buildings have come up.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7138. Also C.W.. 4630. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

747. LETTER TO VITHTHALDAS V. JERAJANI

August 6, 1941

BHAI VITHTHALDAS,

Bhai Jajuji[2] had sent me your budget for my information. I made the suggestions without much thinking. You have identified yourself with the work of the Spinners' Association as much as Jajuji and I. We may, therefore, put our points of view before you and then agree with what you say. Is it not true, as a rule, that as sales increase the cost diminishes? That is, either the cost price decreases or profits

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 1-8-1941

[2] Shrikrishnadas Jaju

increase. Since we do not want to make profit we should reduce the prices. But I thought that, since you are increasing the number of shops, in the beginning the expenses might go up, but in the end they are bound to come down. If this reasoning is correct, you should tell me when the cost is likely to begin decreasing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9800

748. LETTER TO NATVARLAL J. VEPARI

August 6, 1941

BHAI NATVARLAL,

I have your letter and the accompanying literature. If, after studying it, I have any questions to ask you I will write and do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10122

749. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM,
August 6, 1941

CHI. MRIDU,

I have your letter. What you say is not correct. It seems you have not understood at all the nature of the struggle this time. It is no good people going to jail simply because others have done so. If there are poor people who want to do constructive work but cannot you will be needed to organize them. You will be needed even if there is a riot again. It will do even if no one from Gujarat goes to jail for the present. If you and others do not handle the crisis of floods, who else will? Why can't you see that? Your letter bespeaks cowardice and impatience. It does not behove you. I shall explain further if you come here.

Blessings from

BAPU

[P.S.]

If you did not leave Gujarat now to go anywhere, I would be happy.

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 11218. Courtesy : Sarabhai Foundation

750. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

August 6, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have received your two letters together today. You are unnecessarily worrying about me. I am well enough to be able to say that God will look after me. I have no fear. I have already written that I have increased the milk quota and started taking onions and garlic. Do not worry. Concentrate on your studies and see that you not only pass but there is nothing in the field worth knowing that you do not know. I want you to have the ability to formulate a plan for a small or big hospital and to say what it should be like, and to map out a plan for rural health. All this is possible only if you become a *sanyasini* for one year.

Sharma's case is as you describe. But I have the impression that he is honest. There is no need to ask Mahadev because I know his opinion. You can be of great use if you can control yourself. But if your joining this interferes with your studies, I do not wish to involve you. Hence, instead of leaving it to me, give your independent view.

Let Tari be here for the present. If her health deteriorates I shall send her there. She seems to be happy that she is able to live independently. I meet her every morning.

On second thoughts, I feel that I should not involve you in the Sharma affair. Forget it. You should not be saddled with that responsibility.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

751. CONDOLENCE TO RATHINDRANATH TAGORE

WARDHA,
August 7, 1941

Your loss is also mine, nay, it is the nation's or rather the world's. Let us by our acts prove worthy of Gurudev who had become an institution. My condolences to you all.

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-8-1941

752. TRIBUTE TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

August 7, 1941

In the death of Rabindranath Tagore, we have not only lost the greatest poet of the age, but an ardent nationalist who was also a humanitarian. There was hardly any public activity on which he has not left the impress of his powerful personality. In Santiniketan and Sriniketan, he has left a legacy to the whole nation, indeed, to the world. May the noble soul rest in peace and may those in charge at Santiniketan prove worthy of the responsibility resting on their shoulders.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 8-8-1941

753. LETTER TO K. A. CHIDAMBARAM[1]

SEVAGRAM,
August 7, 1941

The portion underlined[2] by you is wholly false. So is the

[1] This appeared in facsimile in the centre of the page which contained the addressee's article, "Always Front Page News! Today, As Before, the. Mahatma Provides Material for Scoops—And Hoaxes!".

[2] In his article, the addressee had referred to "certain alleged Gandhi-Irwin anecdotes" published in *Picture Post* and had quoted one of them, which read: "He (Lord Irwin) went to India and remained five years. He met Mohandas K. Gandhi and prevailed upon him through greater religious fervour than even India's scrawny little saint could muster. 'You can't argue with Jesus Christ', commented Mahatma once, following a long conference from which he had emerged second best."

statement[1] about Lord Irwin as he then was. Ours was a purely political meeting.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile: *The Bombay Chronicle*, 28-9-1941

754. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

August 7, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Here is a letter from Lucknow.

Sailen's you need not correct if you have not done already. I wrote[2] to him strongly about his great carelessness.

I have not the Hindu Law Committee's[3] report by me. But I have read the two articles in *Indian Social Reformer* on it and some other reviews. It appeared to me to be a good report. I do not know that anything is coming out of all this effort. (I am writing this in the midst of interruptions.)

Your letter is disquieting. You don't seem to have profited by the change as much as I had expected. So you are obliged to doubt your ability to return even at the end of the month. I hope your

[1] Which, as quoted from the same source by the addressee, read: "During one of Gandhi's periodic hunger-strikes, Lord Halifax shrewdly remarked, 'Gandhi is now speaking in a language the Indian people understand. If I were to get in the hallway of the Government buildings at New Delhi, squat on the floor and refuse to eat a bit until the Indian Civil Disobedience Movement came to terms, the trouble would be over in a few days. Of course, before those few days could elapse, my Liberal, Conservative and Labour colleagues in London would send for me to come home and would have a padded cell waiting for me on my arrival.' "

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 5-8-1941

[3] This was appointed under the Chairmanship of B. N. Rau in January 1941, "to examine the Hindu Women's Rights to Property Act of 1937 (as amended by Act XI of 1938) with particular reference to five private Bills." The report, which was published from New Delhi on July 26, advocated "immediate admission of the daughter to an equal share with the daughter-in-law". It suggested "legislation for agricultural land, with retrospective effect, in order to give widows the full measure of multiplicity of rules of succession". The Committee had recommended "preparation" in gradual stages, of a complete code of Hindu Law" beginning with the law of succession, instead of piecemeal legislation. The task of codification of Hindu Law was completed by the Committee on August 4, 1941.

doubts have no foundation.

Kanu's place is filled by Laxmidas so far as office work is concerned and by Dhiren so far as *malish*[1] is concerned.

Amtul Salaam is keeping well and eating well. Our outbursts continue but that is the normal state.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4046. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7355

755. LETTER TO KOTWAL

August 7, 1941

BHAI KOTWAL,

I got your letter. If you have become impatient, you may certainly go [to jail]. I certainly feel at present that those who understand the secret of ahimsa should remain engrossed in constructive work. Ultimately everybody will get an opportunity of going. Not "Ajmer"; it is certainly a slip.[2] If you must go, go to Ajmer and obtain the permission of the local committee.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3601

756. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
August 7, 1941

CHI. LILI,

Received your *rakhi*. Do not give up the injections for fear of expense. If the injections have helped you, continue to take them and

[1] Massage
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Haribhau Upadhyaya", 30-7-1941

recover completely. Who is the doctor? What are the injections? Lakshmidas has taken Kanu's place in the office. Dhiren does the massage.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI LILAVATIBEHN UDESHI

KANJI KHETSI CHHATRALAYA

65 MINT ROAD

BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

757. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

August 7, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. What a letter! Why this despondency? You have not failed and left me. Why do you allow yourself to be affected by what other people may say? That is not scientific thinking. A good doctor should be of steadfast intellect. Hence, you will truly be an M.D. when you develop a sense of detachment and do not let yourself be affected by anything whatever. This is also something that medical science has to deal with. You will not find any cure for if in the *Materia Medica*. You have to discover it yourself. You are now making up for your previous inadequate study for the examination. You are surely going to study well this time. If you remain disturbed and do not concentrate on your studies like a true seeker, not only you but I too will have to lose face. Hence, prepare yourself. Get rid of the despondency and concentrate on your studies.

As for a medical job, I certainly advise you to take permission to spend three months at Lahore. I am not in the least troubled that you will give up your job to gain experience in different hospitals. Let me bear the expenses whatever they may be. It will be no burden to me. After all in the end you have to work for me.

I shall think about Tari. Ultimately I may have to send her to you. Kanchan is bed-ridden. She is running temperature. I have not given her quinine yet. I am giving her milk and *mosambi* juice.

I shall see about Kaka. The *rakhi* duly arrived. A.S has taken it and gone to meet him. She will give it to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

758. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

August 7/8, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I am writing this after A.S.'s arrival. She tied the *rakhi* on Pyarelal. Right from the morning Pyarelal had a feeling that someone would visit him. So he was very happy to see A.S. They talked of this and that. He was in a happy mood. His health also was better than last time. He feels better because he has now been getting green vegetables.

On the back of this is Kunvarji's letter. Read it.

I shall write more tomorrow if there is anything worth writing. You must have received the letter posted today.

Blessings from

BAPU

[P.S.]

There is no letter from you today. Kanchan is feeling well today. Tari likes being here but she is suffering from constipation.

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

759. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
August 8, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your Hindi letter. I hope Shummy's prescription will set you up. Glad Jamnalal is making steady progress all round.

There is no knowing when Mahadev will return. He has to go to Ahmedabad after finishing Bombay.

Sardar is not keeping well in Yeravda. It is a sad thing we can't keep good health in imprisonment.

Kanu is due in Bombay today. His mother had a successful operation.

Here are visitors coming.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4047. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7356

760. LETTER TO NATVARLAL J. VEPARI

August 8, 1941

BHAI NATVARLAL,

I have read your report. I can see that you have had to take a lot of trouble. It seems you have also spent a considerable sum out of your own pocket. The quantity of paper and the amount of typing were not negligible. Do claim the expense on account of both and if you think you should be paid a fee, ask for it, too.

If you have taken out a sufficient number of copies of the report, please send one to Gopalan and one to Chandrashanker. If you have no spare copy, I will get copies made here. I have enough facilities for the purpose.

I thank you for the trouble you have taken.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10123

761. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

August 8, 1941

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. The news about Rajendra Babu was painful. Come over only after completing your work. If you think it necessary to stay on for the sake of Rajendra Babu, you may do so. Here it

rained today and everybody felt relieved. Kanchanbehn has fallen ill. The rest are all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3562

762. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

August 8, 1941

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letters. It is good that you have decided once and for all. Nanabhai is a kind and large-hearted soul. I understand about Kanaiyo. I hope Jamna is all right and her eye is quite unscathed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8590. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

763. LETTER TO VIDYABEHN

August 8, 1941

CHI. VIDYA,

I got your *rakhi* and duly tied it. Spin more yarn, even, strong and fine. Use the carding-bow regularly. Study the science of spinning.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VIDYABEHN
SHANTI NIVAS
SIALKOT CITY, PUNJAB

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8945

764. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
[*August 9, 1941*][1]

CHI. AMRIT,

Your note. Yes, you would not allow flies to enter the cottage. Thanks to Shummy for his hints.[2]

I see you have sent me a parcel.

Jajuji has just come in.

Here are two letters.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4048. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7357

765. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

August 9, 1941

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

I am sorry for your troubles. I hope your daughter is out of the wood.[3]

As for Abha she should be with you as long as you need her. As soon as you are ready to send her you may ask Satis Babu or Annada to find out a companion who would escort her. Of course, I would pay her fare.

Vina is a difficult proposition. Why not Chittaranjan Seva Sadan[4]?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10320. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[1] From the postmark
[2] *Vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 4-8-1941
[3] The addressee's third daughter Anima was suffering from typhoid.
[4] Of Calcutta

766. LETTER TO ABDUL RAHMAN

August 9, 1941

DEAR A.R.,

Many thanks. You have certainly clarified S's "Will You?" Now tell me whether the time has arrived for such a declaration, who should make it and what should be its contents.[1] My question has been put in order to seek help for I am not clear as to any of the questions.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

767. LETTER TO ANNADA BABU

SEVAGRAM,
August 9, 1941

MY DEAR ANNADA,

Your letter. The reason why the alteration was made is that there were charges against the Bengal Branch which need elucidation. The Khadi Pratishthan case is wholly of a different type. The question then was whether they sold cheaper. If they have, it does not much matter. The charge against the Bengal Branch is that it sold khadi dearer, unduly loaded the khadi prices. It is [a] matter of much moment. I would myself like to be satisfied as to what has happened. Do you see the distinction? The reference should therefore be as follows:

'Whether during the years 1937 to 1939 the Bengal Branch unduly loaded the khadi prices and sold khadi much dearer than what they should have. What should have been and what has been the gross margin during the said years and to report on the reasons for the high prices, if any, and on the use made of the margin, if any.'

Yours,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee in his letter dated August 6 had suggested the "adoption of a 'unilateral statement' for the consideration of all men of good intentions."

768. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

August 9, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Because you do not mark your letter 'Personal', they are opened, but nobody reads them.

You worry unnecessarily. What makes you think that I shall not do as you say? I have already written to you that I have increased my milk quota by 50 per cent. I am also trying to take more *rotis.* I have of course started taking garlic and onions. Now let me see what happens. Since I take a shorter route, there is no appreciable increase in walking. I am taking great care. Do not worry.

Now I shall close as Jajuji has come.

Kanchan is having fever today too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

769. INTERVIEW TO " THE HINDU"

[On or before *August 10, 1941*][1]

I am surprised that such things appear in the papers[2] when there is no foundation whatever. I have not received any communication either from the Maulana Sahib or any other prisoner; nor has any messenger come to me with such representations.

Asked what the position was of Congressmen in jail, who felt that the policy of the Congress should be revised in view of the altered situation at home and abroad, Gandhiji said:

If they have changed their views and want a change of colour, of course, they can do so at any time. They have only to declare this and the Government will be glad to oblige them.

[1] Reported under the date-line "Nagpur, August 10"

[2] The correspondent had drawn Gandhiji's attention to the report that "forty prisoners in the Naini Jail, including the Congress President, made representations to him urging a change in Congress policy in view of the changed international situation".

When I asked him whether nothing that had happened in the country or outside recently warranted the calling off of satyagraha, Gandhiji said:

So far as I am concerned nothing has happened.

The Hindu, 12-8-1941

770. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, *VIA* WARDHA,
August 10, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter is disturbing. Why should you have such bad headache? What had you done? You *must* be well and strong.

The apples have arrived.

It is still raining.

The Poet's death has left a void that cannot be filled. He was a rare combination of goodness and genius.

I am glad Jamnalal is keeping up steady improvement.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3637. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6485

771. LETTER TO SIKANDAR

August 10, 1941

MY DEAR S.,

Your impatient letter to hand. No hurried action need be taken. Haste is waste. Time is always in favour of Right. I see no harm in your practising. But your practice should also be calm, not tempestuous.

Rajkumari does not return before the end of the month, if then. It will depend upon her health. Her address is . . . .[1]

Yours,
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Omission as in the source

772. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 10, 1941

DEAR LOTUS-BORN,

I learn on good authority that you are not behaving properly and are wearing yourself out with work. You are hereby required not to be so stupid and make yourself ill.

Love.

PLAYMATE

SHRI PADMAJA NAIDU
RED HILLS
HYDERABAD DECCAN

From the original : Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

773. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

August 10, 1941

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

You have been sending me useful material. The friends from Burma are also coming. I feel the proper course for me would be to issue a statement only after I have had talks with them all. I need a copy of the Burma Pact.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4735. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarjee

774. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

August 10, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I got your letter. Marybehn[1] has not yet come and seen me. This time I have been regular in writing to you. But how can we help the negligence of the Postal Department? I have no doubt that Manilal is

[1] F. Mary Barr who had gone to South Africa

lethargic. If even association with you has not succeeded in overcoming his laziness, what is its worth? Or is it that lethargy is so ingrained in Manilal's nature that even good company cannot cure him of it?

Kishorelalbhai and Gomati are staying here for the present. Since Mahadevbhai is on tour, he is helping me.

There was a prolonged dry spell, but we are having rain now and perhaps the year's [harvest] will be good.

I am glad to learn that Sita[1] helps you. Arun[2] also will come round.

Forward the accompanying to E. M. Parekh. I don't have his address.

The rest of the news will be given by Kishorelalbhai.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4921

775. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

August 10, 1941

CHI. BABUDI,

Tell Chokhawala that he has expressed his opinion without careful thinking. You have been weak in body from your very birth. If you had been eating everything, you would not have lived long enough to marry Chokhawala. Anybody who can have milk, ghee and greens will never be delicate in health. If he but looks around, he will see that the innumerable people who fall ill eat chillies and fried stuff. If he visits a hospital, he will find it full of such people. Let Anand, therefore, grow up, while he is a child, on milk, curds, fruits, greens and bread. When he grows up he will choose for himself. I am trying to buy a copy of Kuhne's book. If that friend does not arrive you need do nothing.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10035. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] Addressee's daughter and son

[2] *ibid*

776. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

August 10, 1941

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Your letter has just arrived. Radha's letter too arrived at the same time. I am sending it to you. I think it would not be good to make her give up the job she has got. You may disregard the money. You may disregard experience. But you may not disregard the loss of reputation. Is it Radha's medical knowledge you need or just her company? If you want only the company, why not have Bindu? Or should I find somebody else? It is embarrassing that just when you expressed a desire to call her, Radha finds herself in an awkward situation.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

777. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

Personal

August 10, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is no letter from you today. Sankaran's letter is enclosed. My weight has increased by 1 1b. Do not worry about me and concentrate on your work. I do not at all like that you should remain unhappy. There is absolutely no reason for it. You must understand that if you become dispirited and disheartened or if you fail, I will be held responsible for it, and justifiably, because when you were not in very close touch with me, you succeeded in everything you did. There was nothing like disappointment. From your association with me would your qualities be further enriched or would they be diminished? I know that nothing is going to be achieved by argument. Association with people has a subtle influence. We cannot free ourselves from it. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from

BAPU

[P.S.]

There is no need to thank Dr. Jivraj again. A letter had already been sent to him. The reply has also been received.

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

778. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
August 11, 1941

DEAR IDIOT,

Your note. You do not say whether you lost your headache and why you had it. I do not mind your imprisoning Jamnalal for a year, so long as you do not have to be with him all that time. I have heard that Simla is at its very best in winter and it is the cheapest—rent is nothing and vegetables and fruit you get for a song. Valji was there during a winter and profited by his stay.

I have another commission for [you]. Find out from somebody what to do to get rid of white ants. We have a positive infliction. They have now attacked my bathroom and may spread throughout the place if their mischief is not stopped in [time].

The agricultural department must know the remedy.

Have I not told you that *malish* is done by Dhiren and office work by Lakshmidas?

Amtul Salaam is quite well. She has added seven pounds to her weight and is active the whole day long.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Are the apples from your garden?

From the original: C.W. 4049. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7358

779. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

August 11, 1941

BHAI MUNSHI,

I got your letter. It is quite clear. It will now be easy to write to

Chandravadan. I didn't know anything before I got his letter. I read your speech in *Social Welfare* after I had his letter.

Come whenever you wish to.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7665. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

780. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

August 11, 1941

CHI. MANI,

I had your letter. Kishorelalbhai has already replied to it. How did that happen to Bhanumati? Aren't the doctors able to say anything? The baby is not likely to survive. Even if she lives, she will perhaps remain weak all her life.

Did my letters reach Father? I took double precaution in order that he might get them without delay.

You have no cause at all to worry. It is certainly not one's duty to go to jail irrespective of one's circumstances. Outside you are doing Father's work. By going to jail just now you would only feel self-satisfied. When the time comes, I will not hold you back even for a moment. Just now all Gujaratis who are ready to work should go on doing their work.

Send me five pounds of dry figs of good quality.

I got that grammar book.

Mahadev must have arrived there. What is the collection now? Things are going on all right here.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 130

781. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

August 11, 1941

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

I have your reply regarding the expenditure. I quite understand.

I make no distinction between you and Viththaldas My letter to you includes him just as one to him includes you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10851. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

782. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

Personal

August 11, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Your letter has arrived only today. You will have fully recovered by now.

I did not have any particular hospital in mind. Let us first see someone making a donation of Rs. 30 lakhs. Only then will you be in a position to say what kind of a hospital could be run with that amount, and what kind with a hundred rupees. I know this is very difficult. But does not the M.D. degree mean the capacity to know the most difficult things? Only you can say whether all this is possible through a study course of one year. Perhaps an M.D. is not required to have knowledge of this kind. But even if that be so, I would expect you to have that knowledge, because I have observed that medical skill is a god-given gift to you, so that you are able to turn your reading and observation into something good.

Had I known that you would be so upset by your failure I would not have allowed you to appear for the examination at all. I should have respected Pyarelal's knowledge of you and gone with his advice. But I thought in my pride that I too knew you well. I also assumed in my pride that you had developed detachment to a certain extent after being in contact with me. But it is no use crying over spilt milk. Now as far as possible try to forget your failure at the last examination and work hard to pass the next examination. There should be no obstacle to it.

I commend your resolve not to seek any financial help. But even there, stubbornness would not be proper. If you need to have more free time for the sake of your examination, then you must accept such help.

I am treating Kanchan myself. Her fever is decreasing but not completely gone. Even water tastes bitter to her. That is why I am not giving her food. I shall give her everything when she recovers. I shall not keep her just on milk and fruit.

I have understood about Anasuya. Increase in weight by 3 1b. is quite good. It will be nice if the progress can be maintained. Do not think it is your duty in any way to call Kanchan there. Call her only if you can do so without trouble. I am of course taking good care of myself. I do not tire myself by walking.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

783. LETTER TO BRAHMANAND

August 11, 1941

BHAI BRAHMANANDJI,

What you take to be hostility is not hostility. Everybody has to endure disease. One should serve despite being a patient. Milton in his blindness served with the pen, and so did Surdas[1]. Those who are healthy should serve with body, mind, and soul.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI BRAHMANAND 'BANDHU'

C/O B. DAYARAM

BOHRA-MANDIR

MUZAFFARNAGAR, U.P.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2776

784. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

August 11/12, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Enclosed is an extract from Dr. J.'s letter concerning Balkoba

[1] A Hindi saint-poet

and Mathuradas for your perusal. Let me have your comments if there are any.

Blessings from

BAPU

August 12, 1941

I have your letter. Why are you falling ill? You will find here the details about my diet. I find that I cannot increase the milk quota. I had to reduce it today. But the decrease will not make much difference in the calories. Is Sankaran's calculation correct? What changes would you suggest in it? The blood-pressure is all right. I shall get a weekly report prepared and send it to you. Tari is fine.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

785. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,

August 12, 1941

The seventeenth instant is the *shraddha* day of Gurudev. Those who attach religious significance to the *shraddha* ceremony will no doubt fast for the day by abstaining from food altogether or confining themselves only to fruits, and devote themselves to prayer. The prayer may be individual or congregational. Every city and every village which has partaken of Gurudev's uplifting message delivered through his writings and lived in his life will meet at an hour best suited to them and contemplate the noble life and dedicate themselves for the country's service.

Gurudev stood for peace and goodwill. He knew no communal barriers. I, therefore, hope that all sections will join together in observing the solemn day and promote communal harmony.

I would like all further to remember that the bulk of the Deenabandhu Memorial still remains to be collected. Sad to say, it has also become Gurudev's Memorial, for the simple reason that collections of the Memorial are to be solely devoted to the upkeep and expansion of Santiniketan, which includes the Visvabharati and

Sriniketan. This does not exclude a separate and special memorial for Gurudev, but it would be a mockery even to think of one before the memorial conceived by Gurudev himself has been fulfilled. It would be a fitting finish to the solemn day if the workers and organizers make it a point to collect for the memorial and send them to Messrs Bachraj and Company, 51 Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bombay.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-8-1941

786. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
August 12, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

You have given me good news. I hope the improvement will be steady.

You will see the message[1] I have issued regarding Gurudev.

Appa[2] of Aundh is coming here for a week. The Burma deputation on 15th. And so the day fills in. Dr. Shyama Prasad[3] wants me to preside at a Gurudev meeting in Calcutta. I have wired 'No' for the simple reason that I must finish Andrews Memorial first.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4050. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7359

787. LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL

August 12, 1941

DEAR SIR MIRZA,

I have your very interesting proposal for which many thanks. It does not attract me for the simple reason that I do not trust the British Government to do the right thing. Moreover any participation in

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Appasaheb Pant
[3] Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, President, All-India Hindu Mahasabha

conferences invited by the Government presupposes aid in the war effort by the participants. I cannot, I must not.

My love to the whole family.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2184

788. LETTER TO ARUN CHANDRA GUHA

August 12, 1941

DEAR ARUN BABU,

I have your interesting letter. I have no difficulty in accepting your limitation of non-violence. When it is honestly worked it automatically expands. But your acceptance of non-violence in communal conflicts and the like is enough for my purpose.

Your interpretation of the present struggle is accurate.

With regards to all the friends,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 8669

789. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

August 12, 1941

MY DEAR KU[MARAPPA],

Your article[1] on industrialization I consider weak. You have flogged a dead horse. What we have to combat is socialization of industrialism. They instance the Soviet exploits in proof of their proposition. You have to show, if you can, by working out figures that handicrafts are better than power-driven machinery products. You have almost allowed in the concluding paragraphs the validity of that claim.

[1] "Public Costs of Centralized Production", published in the August issue of *Gram Udyog Patrika*

Do not trouble to answer this but you may deal with it in the next issue.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10155

790. LETTER TO BHAGWAN DAS

August 12, 1941

DEAR BABUJI,

It is extraordinary how you have been saved. God's grace. I do hope you will give yourself ample rest.

Your suggestion is not new to me. But who is to frame the future social order? The Congress cannot in advance for it is a body whose opinion must change from time to time. If you say I should, I have adumbrated it through the A.I.S.A., A.I.V.I.A. and the Talimi Sangh. But I would like you not to tax yourself for the time being.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

791. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

August 12, 1941

DEAR SISTER,

Mahadev is collecting funds for relief. I have not seen Ramachandran's letter of July 18. Send it to me and I shall reply.

I hope you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7999. Also C.W. 3090. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

792. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

August 12, 1941

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. I am not under a misapprehension. You have yourself said that what I decide[1] will be the right thing. This is not enough. If you are not clear in your intention my decision should be regarded as invalid. If Draupadi[2] also does not fully agree, this gift should be considered tainted. No sacrifice can endure unless backed by renunciation. I have only raised a moral issue.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 302 and 303

793. LETTER TO MANAGER, BANK OF NAGPUR, LTD.

SEVAGRAM,
August 13, 1941

THE MANAGER
BANK OF NAGPUR LTD.,
WARDHA

DEAR SIR,

Re: Jallianwala Bagh Memorial Fund

Please renew the fixed deposit of this fund with you for a period of three years from the date of the expiry of the period of deposit. As per talk on the phone with you it will bear interest at 4% per annum, unless withdrawn before its due date. If it is withdrawn after one year, the rate will be 3½% and if after two years 3½%.In case

[1] About the use of the money obtained from the sale of the nature-cure clinic after the addressee's death

[2] Addressee's wife

it has to be withdrawn prematurely, you have asked for a notice of at least 10 days. This will be done.

Please confirm and send your receipt.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

PRESIDENT,

JALLIANWALA BAGH MEMORIAL FUND

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

794. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

August 13, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I can easily plead guilty. Had I been always right in everything I said and did with Amtul Salaam, she would not have developed as she has. But as I told you in another connection, I am not past redemption. I can improve, am improving.

I now understand about you. I agree with you that you should not return till you have regained your strength and weight. But it may also be that you will do so ultimately only here. For the winter months are always good here. But I don't worry about the future.

Kanchan who was ill is now out of the wood.

I have just received a wire from Bul that she has been released but says she cannot come here. I shall know more fully tomorrow.

Here is a letter for you. You will tell him I had as yet no time.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4051. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7360

795. LETTER TO C. MADHAVAN PILLAY

August 13, 1941

DEAR FRIEND,

I cannot say that I am free from sexual emotions. But I can say that I have control over them and hope to be free by striving. Perfect

brahmacharya is a goal to be attained by perhaps one in amillion. Success lies in the effort honestly and persistently made.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI AYIROOR C. MADHAVAN PILLAY
PERUR, MANGADI
QUILON (TRAVANCORE)

From a photostat: G.N. 230

796. LETTER TO T. PALANIVELU

August 13, 1941

DEAR PALANIVELU,

Truth can only be reached through purity of life and a reverent study of the scriptures of the world.

No need to come to me.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI T. PALANIVELU
SECRETARY, ARYA SAMAJ
46 PANDI ROAD
VILLUPURAM

From a photostat: G.N. 6091

797. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

August 13, 1941

CHI. DEVDAS,

You should have been able to read "shame". I had dictated "for very shame"[1].

Just now I have a wire saying that Khurshedbehn has been released. What happened we will know by and by. There were two errors in that article. She had not crossed the Frontier. The original order was revised not when she protested against it but when she gave notice that she would disregard it. Such errors are nothing unusual. When we read a thing in haste we can write only on the basis of our general impression.

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 4-8-1941

The article about Jayakar was all right. The one about the *New Statesman* was good.

I will be happy if Lakshmi comes over and stays even for one day. The weather is quite cool these days. The recent showers were a great relief.

The [Indo-]Burma Pact is a great betrayal. You must study it and get an expert to write on it in great detail. Mahadev is still abegging[1] in Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2148

798. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

August 13, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. Your cold has persisted too long. Here I would not have allowed it to continue so long.

How can I remove your anxiety about me? I am sending herewith the blood-pressure figures. Wherever you find them higher, it was because of extreme cold or food or some similar cause. On one occasion I went to bed late. There is nothing to complain of about my health. I do not visit Tari daily.

Kanchan is well. Her fever can be considered to have gone. I understand about you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Collecting relief fund

799. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
August 14, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

Your note.

The thing is this. There is only one clearance from Sevagram and that is at 4.30 p.m. The post for the North and the East leaves Wardha the morning following. But sometimes I write after 4.30 and send through some reliable person. Though reliable, he may forget to post the same evening. Then the letter will be delayed by a day. At this end there is no other possibility of a mishap that I can think of. Remember also that at times your post is also delivered the same way, two letters coming together. Let us bear without grinning.

No news about yourself in the present letter. Is it a sign of good news?

Bul's letter has come in. She seems to be no better off. The order remains what it is. It seems that the game now is to try and convict her. She has been told to apply for permission to go to Wardha. She has applied by wire. Let us see.

Here is a letter from Sarangadhar Das. I have sent a copy to Mahadev to make use without using names. You will write to Sarangdhardas. I may send him a few lines.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4052. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7361

800. LETTER TO MADALASA

August 14, 1941

You are both[1] poets. There is this difference, however, that though he is a poet he clings to the earth and takes pleasure in his work. You soar in the sky and so you remain absorbed in your thoughts. That is why you are always dissatisfied with your servants.

[1] The addressee and her husband, Shriman Narayan

As long as you remain so, how can you bring credit to your house as a housewife? Here are heaps of blessings from me![1]

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 320

801. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

August 14, 1941

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Your health seems to be improving there. It seems from Dr. Menkel's report that the knee-trouble will remain for ever. If there is no other complication, I see no harm. Do not leave that place, as long as you get peace of mind there.

Do not be very keen on seeing [Sir Francis] Wylie. There will be no harm if you can see him without any effort. It would not be good if you have to make an effort to see him.

I was very pleased to see Ramakrishna. He is taking full advantage of his stay in prison.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3020

802. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

August 14, 1941

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter yesterday. I was glad to receive it, but was pained on reading it. Mahadev did write to me about your health having suffered. But your letter suggests that it has got much worse. If that is so, what is the use of having Dr. Gilder there? If he cannot improve your health, you will be dismissed.

Personally I would prefer your living for some time on fruit juices. It would clear the obstruction, if any, in the bowels. If you take

[1] The addressee had composed a poem asking for Gandhiji's blessings.

as much juice as you can of grapes, *mosambis*, pomegranates and pineapples, you are bound to benefit. If you can take the juice in sufficient quantity—say, 60 ounces—there is no reason why you should grow weak. And along with it if you apply mud-packs on the abdomen at night, I am sure it will do you good. It must not become necessary to release you because of illness. Keep me regularly informed. Drop a postcard if nothing more.

The workers in Gujarat are being tested well. They seem to be working all right. Mahadev also is gaining fairly good experience. I don't experience any difficulty, since Kishorelal is staying here. He is indeed a great help to me. My health may be said to be generally good.

Ba has regained good strength. She walks about three quarters of a mile every evening, besides working the whole day. She is able to eat well. There is no cause at all for worry.

Jamnalal also is better. He is having change of air in Simla. He is regaining strength. He is Rajkumari's prisoner there, eating the food she permits, walking eight miles a day, playing chess and enjoying himself. He has the atmosphere he wanted.

Janakibehn and Madalasa are with me and they have their meals with me. Both are well. Janakibehn can run fast for four or five miles. Madalasa is in the family way. It is the seventh month. She had ulcers in the mouth, but they have disappeared now. This time the delivery is likely to be normal.

Gurudev having passed away, I have had to take up the responsibility of collecting the Deenabandhu Fund as quickly as possible. God's will be done.

Kusum [Desai] is here at present. She helps me a little. She will stay for about a month or may be more. I have left it to her.

Blessings to you and to all your companions from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 249-50

803. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

August 14, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. A.S. has gone today to get her dentures. She will try to meet Pyarelal.

The enclosed letter is addrressed to you. I have held back Mahadev's letter. Copy out the portion pertaining to Kripalani and send it to him. He is not here at present.

I have almost given up going to Tari.

Be firm and complete your programme. It seems best to take leave without pay. It is due to obstinacy that you are refusing to take money. Give up all worry and complete your study and gain full experience. That is most important.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

804. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
August 15, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your note. I ought to have sent you a copy of my letter to Sarangadhar Das. But there it is. I never succeed in doing such things as they should be done.

Your apples are extra fine. Ba likes them very much. That I do likewise goes without saying. This is not to be taken as an invitation to send more. What about the price of fruit in winter in Simla?

A crowd is coming in. Do make small collections in Simla. I see this will be in your hands after the event.[1] So it is withdrawn.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4053. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7362

[1] The reference is to the observance of Rabindranath Tagore's *shraddhs* on August 17; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 12-8-1941

805. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

August 15, 1941

DAUGHTER,

Today I will not write in Urdu. Your being with Kakasaheb is by itself half the medicine. If he gets congenial company and the kind of music he likes, what else can he want? You two sisters should now leave only after fully restoring Kakasaheb to health. After that, I will give Saroj[1] her fill of *khakharas* and you a slap.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9683.

806. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

August 15, 1941

CHI. KAKA,

Half your medicine will be Raihana's music, and rest. Please do not be in the least impatient. Follow the doctor's advice. You have only one concern at present—to improve your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Enclosed for Raihana.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10949

807. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
August 16, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter.

So far as your own apples are concerned you may send as often

[1] Saroj Nanavati

as you like. I take them practically every day and so does Ba. For the bazaar ones you must let me know the price.

I am glad Jamnalal was able to have his wish fulfilled. The solid gain he had made can never be lost.

You will be sad to know that Vallabhbhai has a polypus[1] in the rectum and a suspicion of cancer. He is much pulled down.

What is the cause of your rheumatism? Is it an extension of what was here or is it a new thing?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4054. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7363

808. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, VIA WARDHA,
August 17, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

Your note. Today is *shraddha* day. We are all busy. You must be soon restored.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4055. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7364

809. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SEVAGRAM,
August 17, 1941

CHI. JAMNALAL .

I got your letter. First come here. We shall think about Sikar, etc., afterwards. Today I am busy with the *shraddha*. Mridu[2] has

[1] Gandhiji had, by "mistake", spelt this word with double 'l'; *vide* postscript to "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 23-8-1941

[2] Mridula Sarabhai

come. I will not, therefore, write more. My blessings to Om[1] and her husband.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3021

810. INTERVIEW TO UNITED PRESS OF INDIA[3]

WARDHAGANJ,
August 17, 1941

I shall be more than pleased to send my heartiest congratulations immediately the United States and Great Britain resort to disarmament, and call it the triumph of non-violence.

The Hindu, 19-8-1941

[1] Addressee's daughter Uma and Rajnarain Agrawal

[2] *ibid*

[3] The correspondent had sought Gandhiji's advice on the clause regarding "abandonment of force by nations and the adoption of disarmament" in the Churchill-Roosevelt Declaration, known as the Atlantic Charter, officially issued on August 14.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE[1]

CALCUTTA,

December 23, 1940

When Mahadevbhai saw me in the Presidency Jail, I took the opportunity of conveying a message to you. I requested him to tell you that, if you launched a movement, then our services would be entirely at your disposal, for what they were worth. I also waned him to request you to take the initiative in settling the dispute in Bengal, so that the Province could throw its whole weight into the movement. Since you have been appointed Dictator, you could easily take up this matter on behalf of the Congress. So, I thought.

At the time, my fond expectation was that you would launch a mass movement, as you had done in 1921, 1930 and 1932, though Mahadevbhai told me that you had been thinking of individual civil disobedience. Today it is clear that the movement launched by you is not on the issue of our national demand for independence. Nor is this movement a mass struggle. If the Government were to permit anti-war speeches, it appears to me, the movement would come to an end. Nevertheless we would like to co-operate with such a movement, despite its restricted scope and form, so far as it lies in our power consistently with our political stand. We would like to know if you would accept our co-operation for what it is worth—and if so, what you would like us to do in pursuance of this offer of co-operation. This proffered co-operation is unconditional in the sense that whatever grievances we may have against the Congress High Command will not stand in our way. If and when the High Command deal with us unfairly and unjustly, we shall have to react accordingly. We may have to fight the arbitrary and high-handed action of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad at the present time. But this can never blind us to the larger issues before the country, and there you can have our fullest co-operation, consistently with our political stand. I beg you to accept our offer of co-operation.

Regarding the Bengal situation, I had told Mahadevbhai that if you desired unity, you could have it for the mere asking, and all that was necessary was a talk between you and my brother, Sarat Babu. Since then the situation has deteriorated. You have chosen to remain silent and indifferent. The Maulana has been rushing

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose", 29-12-1940

headlong along the mad path of what he calls disciplinary action. I am not bothered about it, because if he wills it and seeks it, we are ready to meet him on his own ground. He cannot affect our public position in the least, and he has only been making himself ridiculous before the public of this province and thereby dragging the name of the Congress to the dust. Since the Maulana's action seems to have your tacit approval, I am not seeking your intervention in this matter. All that I desire is that, despite this unfortunate side-show which has been forced on us, we should co-operate where larger issues are concerned. and so far as we are concerned, we are anxious to co-operate. In all sincerity, I am offering you our co-operation.

I am sending this letter through a relative who is going to Nagpur. I am asking him to wait for a reply.

How is your health? The papers again give disquieting news. I am progressing, but slowly.

The Hindu, 24-2-1941

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM SIR J. G. LAITHWAITE[1]

VICEROY'S CAMP, SUNDERBANS,

January 4, 1941

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Thank you for your letter of the 30th December, which I have laid before His Excellency. You must not regard my letter of the 27th December, which dealt solely with your request for the Viceroy's personal assistance for intervention and action in the transmission of your message, as in any way an exhaustive exposition of the reasons which have necessitated the decision of which you complain, and the observations contained in it as to His Excellency's personal feelings could quite clearly have no relations whatever to the matter of publicity in India. It will, however, be obvious to you that so far as a personal request such as you made is concerned, it would be out of the question for the head of the Executive Government, merely on personal grounds, to take special steps to facilitate the transmission of a document which, in the respects alluded to in my letter, any other relevant considerations apart, he cannot but regard as containing an unfair presentation of very important facts to its addressee.

His Excellency asks me to add that as this correspondence which started on an

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Gladys Owen", 30-12-1940 and "Letter to Sir J. G. Laithwaite", 16-1-1941

entirely personal basis is clearly taken by your letter of the 30th December into the official field, and as he thinks it important that the official and personal fields should not overlap, he feels that he has no option, in the interests of avoiding misunderstanding, but with great reluctance, to conclude that the present channel of communication had better not be further pursued in regard to the present matter.

But he asks me to take the opportunity to add an expression of his appreciation of the attitude displayed in the concluding paragraph of your letter under reply.

Yours sincerely,

J. G. LAITHWAITE

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

APPENDIX III

LETTER FROM SIR J. C. LAITHWAITE[1]

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI,

January 28, 1941

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Thank you very much for your letter of the 16th January which I have laid before His Excellency. He is very glad to note your decision, and he asks me to say that he much appreciates the emphasis you have laid in your letter on your attitude towards the embarrassing of authority.

I see that you are under some misapprehension as to the manner in which the statements enclosed with your letter failed to appear in the Press. There is no such thing as the censorship of matter intended for publication in the Indian Press nor has any prohibition been issued in respect of your two statements. In view, however, of the provisions of the Defence of India Rules regarding the publication of prejudicial reports, Press agencies and editors have the option of voluntarily submitting for advice messages in regard to which they feel any doubt. In giving advice on such references the Press Advisers have regard only to the question whether the matter submitted contains any prejudicial report, the publication of which would render the person concerned liable to prosecution under the Defence of India Rules. You will see, for instance, that both the Congress Pledge and your own statement[2] about Independence Day, although similarly referred for Press advice, were passed for publication, because they had no direct connection with movement intended to

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Agatha Harrison", 17-1-1941

[2] *Vide* "Instructions For Independence Day", 11-1-1941

interfere with the prosecution of the war. On the other hand, both the statements[1] enclosed with your letter were, I regret to say, of this nature. Although considerable portions of them could have been published without objection, at least from the point of view of the war, each of them contained numerous passages which were clearly intended or likely to encourage and instruct persons engaged in your civil disobedience movement. This movement in its present form consists of the uttering in public of slogans purporting to dissuade the public from participation in the war effort and thus in the words of the Defence of India Rules "to influence the conduct or attitude of the public or any section of the public in a manner likely to be prejudicial to the defence of British India or to the efficient prosecution of the war". In so far as they contained such passages, the statements in question could not have been published without exposing the editor or Press agency concerned to the risk of prosecution and the Press Advisers were only performing their clear duty in advising the Press against their publication. The Press were of course not obliged to take this advice, but you would not expect them, I think, to take a risk of which they were warned and you will see the dilemma in which they are placed when they receive such statements from you for publication. His Excellency feels sure that you will appreciate that the liberty of the Press does not and cannot in any country mean the right to publish anything without prosecution, more especially at a time of grave emergency such as this, and that without any interference with such liberty the Press Advisers were fully justified in giving the advice they did and the Press in accepting it.

Yours sincerely,

J. G. LAITHWAITE

From a microf ilm: Lord Linlit hgow Papers . Courtesy: Nation al Archiv es of India

APPENDIX IV

LETTER FROM T. B. SAPRU[2]

January 28, 1941

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I thank you for your letter of the 25th of January, which I received yesterday. I am glad to know that my article in the *Twentieth Century* had attracted your notice.

[1] *Vide* "Instructions to Satyagrahis", 10-1-1941 and "Instruction to Satyagrahis", 12-1-1941

[2] *Vide* "Letter to T. B. Sapru", 25-1-1941 and "Letter to T. B. Sapru", 1-2-1941

I read in the papers that you had gone to Bombay to see Mr. Jinnah but I do not know what exactly passed between you and him there. I met Mr. Jinnah by the merest accident at Dr. Berger's Clinic in Bombay on the 6th or the 7th of August last. He came up to me and asked me to have tea with him. Accordingly I went to him the next day and I had a conversation with him lasting for about one hour and a half. He told me what had transpired between you and him at Delhi and of the differences which arose between you and him in the presence of the Viceroy. My impression was that though there was a general conversation between you and him on some of the political demands of the Congress, the communal question did not specifically form the subject of discussion.

You are, if I may say so, quite right in saying that we have to settle our domestic troubles ourselves and that without thinking whether the British will accept our joint demands or not. That has always been my view. I am afraid, the communal situation has been allowed too long to deteriorate from bad to worse and I very strongly feel that that is *the one question* to which every one of us (and particularly you with your influence) have to address ourselves. For so long as these differences last among ourselves, I am afraid, real self-government is difficult to achieve and still more difficult to maintain.

During the Christmas Week Nawab Mohammad Ismail and Nawab Liaquat Ali Khan were here in connection with the session of the Provincial Muslim league. The former, who is an old friend of mine, came to see me and I met the latter at the house of a common friend. We talked freely and pleasantly and the impression left on my mind was that though the task of settlement would present great difficulties, it was by no means hopeless. I had no talk with Mr. Jinnah on the question of Pakistan. I believe the word 'Pakistan' is a convenient phrase which has been adopted by the Muslim League to cover a multitude of political and constitutional ideas. If it means a partition of India then I do not mind saying that I am very strongly opposed to it. If it means a reconsideration of certain political ideas and readjustment of some constitutional provisions then I should not rule out their discussion. In any case, however, for the purpose of conversations intended to achieve a communal settlement, it would not be right for any party to impose on the other any kind of conditions precedent. I can see no reason why Mr. Jinnah should decline to meet you. Not only would it be rude on his part to decline to meet you but it would also put him positively in the wrong, if he were to adopt that sort of attitude.

You say in your letter that "he does not want a settlement till he has so consolidated the League position that he can dictate his terms to all the parties concerned including the rulers" and that you "often feel like writing to him but lose courage when it comes to the point of taking up my pen". You are, however, a man of infinite courage and you are big enough to rise superior to petty considerations of a

conventional character. I see no reason why you should not write to him a perfectly courteous letter—as you always do—telling him that in the interest of the country you should like to have an opportunity of meeting him and discussing the whole situation so as to see whether an honourable settlement, which will be satisfactory to all the parties concerned, is possible. If he makes a satisfactory response, I think, you should take the step forward. That will heighten and strengthen your position and the position of the Congress and of the Hindus at large. If he makes no response to your request or adopts a truculent attitude that is bound to recoil on his head and on the party which he represents. My own belief is that the farther away the parties can be from each other, the greater is the misunderstanding and the more difficult the task of reconciliation.

You then say in your letter: "But if you have faith why don't you see him without being asked by anybody?" As a private individual I should have no objection at all to meeting him or anybody else but the real difficulty that I feel about my position is that I cannot pretend to represent the Congress or the Hindus. I can write to him (and am quite willing to do so) suggesting that he should meet you or that if you write to him saying that you want to meet him, he should receive you and talk to you. I should not, however, write to him without your permission. If you will permit me, I can also write to Nawab Mohammad Ismail, who, I know, is a very good man and who, I feel, will sincerely welcome peace and harmony. You may be sure that whether I write to Mr. Jinnah or to Nawab Ismail or to anyone, I am not going to commit you or anyone to any position. I can only throw out a suggestion for the initiation of conversations. Hitherto I have written no kind of letter on the subject to Mr. Jinnah or any other Muslim friend and I have scrupulously avoided during the last one year and a half writing to the Viceroy or any British official at Delhi or Simla. Last time that I saw the Viceroy was in September 1939. Holding the views that I do, I feel verystrongly that it is no use my seeing him or writing to him in the midst of these differences, which divide one party from another and one set of politicians from another. It is because of this feeling that both in the statement that I issued last month to the Press and in my article in the *Twentieth Century* I have laid emphasis on the desirability of a communal settlement and of your meeting Mr. Jinnah. Speaking for myself I do not attach much importance to the general criticism of British policy that the Secretary of State and the Viceroy have given a veto to the minorities. Whether they have done so or not, it is up to us to set our house in order and once we have done that, I think, we shall have gained the strength which it will be impossible on political grounds for anyone at Delhi, Simla or Whitehall to resist.

It is my misfortune that on some political questions I differ from many of my countrymen and have very strong convictions but I should do everything that lay in my power to pave the way for the communal settlement to which I attach far greater

importance than I do to mere academic discussions of this political theory or that. In short, if you permit me, I am quite willing to write to Mr. Jinnah and some other Muslim friends. I would much rather that you took the lead at a suitable opportunity of calling a conference than that any outsider or common friends howsoever well-intentioned assumed responsibility for such a conference. Some friends have written to me about it but I am not yet convinced that it would do any good for any private individuals to call such a conference or to wait on the Viceroy. This must be left to you and Mr. Jinnah and I feel very strongly that if you take the lead in this matter, good may result.

With my best regards,

Yours sincerely,

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHI

SEVAGRAM

WARDHA

From a copy: C.W. 10278. Courtesy: National Library

APPENDIX V

LETTER FROM T. B. SAPRU[1]

February 12, 1941

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I received your letter of the 9th of February yesterday. I was, however, surprised to know from you that my last letter of the 6th of February had somewhat disconcerted you. I see no reason why it should have. . . .

In your letter of the 1st of February you say: "Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah says, I can only talk to him as a Hindu for Hindus. I cannot do it. If I write to him that I want to meet him, he won't decline to meet me. But I know the result." In the present state of feeling I admit that it is quite understandable that he should think that you are the greatest stumbling block. Towards the end of that letter you wrote to me: "But of course you should pursue the subject after your own style with whomsoever you may think fit." This sentence led me to believe that I was at liberty to write to Jinnah in my own style and to suggest to him that he should meet you.

I am herewith enclosing a copy of my letter to Jinnah. You will find from it that among other things I have written to him as follows: (a) "I represent neither the one party nor the other. I can neither offer nor accept terms. I can only appeal to you

[1] *Vide* "Letter to T. B. Sapru", 9-2-1941 and "Letter to T. B. Sapru", 16-2-1941. Only excerpts are reproduced here.

in my individual capacity—in the capacity of one who strongly and genuinely holds that the Muslims are an integral part of India and that their willing co-operation with other communities must necessarily condition the nature, extent and speed of the progress of the country." Then I wrote to him: (b) "I think conversations, or if I may use a hackneyed phrase, heart-to-heart conversations, may possibly lead to some satisfactory results."

My suggestions to him are contained in the following sentences: "I am, therefore, venturing to suggest on my own account, without committing any other person, or any other party, to my views or suggestions that (1) you should agree first to meet Mr. Gandhi, and then the process of private talks could be extended to others. (2) If you and other leaders then think that it would serve the best interests of the country to invite a joint conference, then you all could take the necessary step. If your reply to my suggestion is that you will be prepared to see Mr. Gandhi and talk over matters with him, I shall write to him and press it on him that he must see you at Bombay or any other place that may suit your convenience. I hope very strongly that he will be quite willing to see you in Bombay or any other convenient place and discuss things with you."

After careful consideration of the whole position I do not see any reason to regret the letter that I have written to Mr. Jinnah. I could not reasonably ask him to give me the undertaking that he would certainly come to a settlement with you when you met. The basis of a settlement is for you and him and others to decide; but in my opinion it would not be right for any party to impose any kind of conditions precedent on the other or to have any such assurances.

I do not wish my letter to him at all to interfere with any other line of action that may possibly be under contemplation or in progress; and I have, therefore, decided to drop the matter altogether. If Mr. Jinnah writes to me any letter and if it is of a satisfactory character, I shall communicate the same to you and leave it to you to come to your own decision. But in view of your last letter to me, I shall not, as I have said above, pursue the matter any further.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHI

SEVAGRAM

WARDHA

ENCLOSURE

From a copy: C.W. 10283. Courte sy: Nation al Librar y

APPENDIX VI

EXTRACTS FROM "PARTING OF THE WAYS"[1]

In the mind and heart of India there was a conflict. There was an intense dislike of Fascism and Nazism and no desire to see them win. If India could but be convinced that this war was being fought for a new world order, for real freedom, then indeed India would throw all her weight and strength into it. But imperialism and we were old acquaintances, very old, with many generations of contact. We knew each other, suspected each other, and disliked each other thoroughly. There was this background of one hundred and eighty years of hostility, of exploitation, of bitterness, of promises unfulfilled, of disruptive and reactionary movements encouraged, and attempts to break up the national unity of India. It was no easy matter for us to get over these tremendous hurdles, or remove the complexes that had grown up. Yet we said we would do it, but we could not even attempt it unless a great psychological shock was given to the people, a pleasant shock, which would suddenly change the air of India and get rid of fears and complexes. That pleasant shock could only come by an unequivocal declaration of independence and immediate steps to give effect to the popular will in the carrying on of the administration. Unless this was done, no man in India, nor group, could make the people move in the direction of willing association with the war. Wars today required mass support and even authoritarian countries have to whip up their people by ceaseless propaganda. No war can be fought effectively by a professional army in an atmosphere of public ill will or indifference. So even from the narrower point of view of organizing India's defence or India's participation in the war effort, a popular representative government was essential. Imperialism can coerce; it cannot win public approval and goodwill.

I repeat that it is incorrect to say that there is any new parting of the ways, for our ways never lay together. But this declaration of the British Government means the final breaking of such slender bonds as held our minds together, it means the ending of all hope that we shall ever march together. I am sorry, for in spite of my hostility to British imperialism and all imperialisms, I have loved much that was England, and I should have liked to keep the silken bonds of the spirit between India and England. Those bonds can only exist in freedom. I wanted India's freedom for India's sake of course; but I also wanted it for England's sake. That hope is shattered and fate seems to have fashioned a different future for us. The way of co-operation is not for us; the hundred-year-old hostility will remain and grow in future conflicts, and the breach when it comes, as come it must, will also not be in friendship but in hostility.

The British Government says, it will not coerce an important group to impose

[1] *Vide*"Foreword to "The Parting of the Ways"

a system of government which this does not like. The alternative surely is that it will coerce other groups who want that particular system of government. What exactly has the function of the British Government been, and what is it today, in India? It is to coerce the Indian people as a whole, every group, in order to maintain its own hold and special position. It is to suppress Indian industry in favour of British industry in India. It is to maintain an army of occupation whose chief function is to coerce the Indian people. It is to uphold Indian princes by coercing their subjects into submission. It is strange to be told that the British Government does not want to we coercion. What else does it do in India?

That is the goal of India—a united, free, democratic country, closely associated in a world federation with other free nations. We want independence, but not the old type of narrow, exclusive independence. We believe that the day of separate warring national State is over.

The Parting of the Ways

APPENDIX VII

MAHADEV DESAI'S LETTER TO DESMOND YOUNG[1]

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 22, 1941

DEAR MR. YOUNGS

On return to Warda I have had some talk with Gandhiji over our correspondence about the restarting of the *Harijan*. Shri Srinivasan was also here, especially to urge Gandhi to restart it. And it is after some deliberation that I am writing this.

While there is in the correspondence little to encourage us to revive the *Harijan*, there is no doubt that there was enough in our informal talks—both between you and me, and between Sir Richard Tottenham and Shri Srinivasan —which could help a favourable decision. Above all there is the urgent desire of Shri Srinivasan and many of the members of the Standing Committee, as also of the general reading public, which Gandhiji cannot possibly ignore. He has, therefore, come to the conclusion that it would now be discourteous, if not improper, not to comply with the wish so generally expressed. We propose to bring out the first issue on the 29th March.

But before we do so, I owe it to you to tell you again that both Gandhiji and I are completely identified with the satyagraha movement, and our editing of the *Harijan* cannot but bear the colour and impress of that identification, though it will be solely with a view to keeping the spirit of non-violence alive in a world of strife and

[1] *Vide* "Appeal for C. F. Andrews Memorial Funds", 18-3-1941

bloodshed. If you feel therefore that we had better not to restart the paper, you have but to send me a wire. I will not misunderstand it, and say nothing in public about it, for the simple reason that I have not yet announced the decision to restart the paper.

Yours sincerely,

MAHADEV DESAI

From a copy: C.W. 10293

APPENDIX VIII

NON-PARTY LEADERS' CONFERENCE RESOLUTION[1]

March 14, 1941

While India should not take advantage of Britain's difficulties in her heroic struggle, the Conference is equally desirous that India's domestic problems should not be pressed to her disadvantage. As a first step towards the removal of the present deadlock and until a permanent constitution is brought into force, the Conference desires to emphasize the immediate need for the reconstruction of the Governor-General's Executive Council.

The Conference considers that the present Council, which consists of three European members of the Indian Civil Service, and three Indians of whom two are non-officials and one is a member of the Indian Civil Service, in addition to His Excellency the Viceroy and His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, is neither adequate nor sufficiently representative to organize and direct India's war efforts at this moment of grave period. This Conference is anxious that India's defences should be put on a firm basis and that resources of this great country in men and material should be used to the fullest advantage not only for defending her own frontiers but for helping the British people to the fullest extent possible consistently with the best interests of India.

For the reasons mentioned above, this Conference is of the opinion that the whole Executive Council should consist of non-official Indians drawn from important elements in the public life of the country. This would naturally involve the transfer of all portfolios, including the vital ones of finance and defence, to Indians.

The Conference would be content during the period of the war that the reconstructed centre remains responsible to the Crown, and so far as defence is concerned, the position of the Commander-in-Chief as the Executive head of the defence forces of the country should not be in any way prejudiced. At the same time

[1] *Vide* "Cable to Agatha Harrison"

the Conference is strongly of the view that the reconstructed Government should not merely be a collection of departmental heads, but should deal with all important matters of policy on a basis of joint and collective responsibility. In regard to all interimperial and international matters, the reconstructed Government should be treated on the same footing as the Dominion Governments.

The Conference is further of the opinion that with a view to create a favourable atmosphere for the working of the reconstructed Central Government, it is necessary to remove the doubts and misgivings of the people of this country as regards the genuineness of the intentions of His Majesty's Government by making a declaration simultaneously with the reconstruction of the Government that within a specified time limit after the conclusion of the war, India will enjoy the same measure of freedom as will be enjoyed by Britain and the Dominions.

The Conference authorizes its President, the Rt. Hon. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru to communicate the terms of the resolution to His Excellency the Viceroy and the Secretary of State for India and to take such other steps as may be necessary to achieve its objects.

The Indian Annual Register, Vol. I, pp. 307-8

APPENDIX IX

SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM'S LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI[1]

Confidential HOME DEPARTMENT, NEW DELHI,
March 27, 1941

DEAR MR. MAHADEV DESAI,

Mr. Desmond Young has shown me the correspondence[2] which he has had with you about the publication of the *Harijan* and it will, I think, be convenient if I make the position of the Government of India clear. In the first place, there is no question of Government advising against publication. The decision whether or not to resume publication of the *Harijan*, must of course be entirely a matter for Mr. Gandhi himself, and is one which the Government are not concerned to influence in any way. In the second place, you are of course aware of the limits imposed by the Defence of India Rules on the publication of news or comment which may fall within their mischief; and you will not, I am certain, misunderstand me if I add, in the most friendly way, that these Rules must necessarily be of general application. I am, however, glad to

[1] *Vide* "Note on "Harijan" ", 28-3-1941, "Letter to Chandragupta Varshenya", 29-3-1941 and "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 12-4-1941

[2] *Vide* "Non-Party Leaders Conference Resolution", 14-3-1941

infer from your correspondence that should Mr. Gandhi in fact decide to resume publication, it will be in the hope of assisting rather than of causing embarrassment to Government.

Yours sincerely,

R. TOTTENHAM

From a copy: C.W. 10294

APPENDIX X

DISCUSSION WITH R. S. RUIKAR[1]

[On or before *March 30 1941*][2]

GANDHIJI: Shall I congratulate you upon your defence and acquittal in appeal ?

RUIKAR: I have not been able to understand the fundamental difference between you and Sjt. Subhas Bose.

G. Is it not clear in the first letter of Mr. Bose which he wrote to me ?

R. No, it is not clear to me.

G. The fundamental difference is about non-violence.

R. So far as the present struggle is concerned, Sjt. Bose and the Forward Bloc agree that it has to be carried on non-violently.

G. No. Non-violence means that you must believe in the emblem of non-violence—which is charkha, Hindu-Muslim unity and removal of untouchability.

R. So far as the last two items are concerned, we believe in them.

G. No. The real emblem of non-violence is the charkha which Sjt. Bose ridicules.

R. What about Pandit Jawaharlal and Maulana Azad?

G. But Pandit Jawaharlal has agreed to abide by all the conditions imposed by me. It was only when he agreed and conveyed his acceptance that I allowed him to be the second satyagrahi. Even now he sends reports from jail that he is regularly spinning and has therefore faith in the charkha, so far at least as the present struggle is concerned.

R. Suppose a man has faith in non-violence and is prepared to work for Hindu-Muslim unity and removal of untouchability but does not believe in charkha would you say that this is a fundamental difference between him and you ?

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 8-4-1941

[2] The source had reported this from a "despatch dated March 30, 1941, to *The Hindustan Standard*, Calcutta, from its special correspondent at Sevagram".

G. No. If I am the General of the Army, I choose my own emblem, and, so far as I am concerned, charkha is the emblem of non-violence.

R. Gandhiji, your philosophy of non-violence is a world philosophy and world policy, would you put Hindu-Muslim unity as one of the emblems in America or England?

G. No; obviously it could not be. So far as India is concerned, the emblem of non-violence is charkha and one who wants to join the army must accept the condition of the General.

R. Mahatmaji, do you not contemplate some compromise with the Muslim League at some stage or other?

G. Yes.

R. Do you expect the Muslim League to accept charkha as the emblem of non-violence and to co-operate with them?

G. No.

R. On what condition will you have compromise with the League?

G. On common grounds on which we can work together.

R. Don't you agree with me that there are more common grounds of agreement with Sjt. Subhas Bose and the Forward Bloc than with the Muslim League ?

G. Yes; I agree that there are more common grounds of agreement between Sjt. Bose and me than between the League and me; but because Sjt. Bose insists on working inside the Congress, I cannot work with him. If he goes out of the Congress, then there will be more common grounds of agreement between us.

R. Are we to understand that the only hope of co-operation with Sjt. Subhas Bose is that he should go out of the Congress?

G. Yes; I admire him as a great man and if he is out of the Congress, there will be more chances of co-operation with him than if he is inside the Congress.[1]

The Free Press Journal, 4-4-1941

[1] Gandhiji later stated that this report was a "mischievous distortion of a friendly conversation"; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 8-4-1941

APPENDIX XI

INSTRUCTIONS TO SATYAGRAHIS[1]

June 17, 1941

1. A released satyagrahi must seek to offer satyagraha as soon as possible. If for any reason he is unable to do so he must apply through the President or officer-in-charge of the Provincial Congress Committee for exemption from Mahatma Gandhi and he should state the reasons for such exemption being granted.

2. From the date on which the name of a prospective satyagrahi is forwarded to Mahatma Gandhi for sanction, he is to suspend his private activities and devote himself wholly to working out one or more items of the following thirteenfold items of the constructive programme:

(a) Hindu-Muslim or communal unity.

(b) Removal of untouchability.

(c) Prohibition.

(d) Khadi.

(e) Other village industries.

(f) Village sanitation.

(g) New or Basic Education.

(h) Adult education.

(i) Uplift of women.

(j) Education in hygiene and health.

(k) The propagation of *Rashtrabhasha*.

(I) Cultivating love of one's own language.

(m) Working for economic equality.

3. Every prospective satyagrahi is expected to keep a diary in which he will enter the work done by him during the day and this diary will be submitted to the Provincial Congress Committee concerned at fortnightly intervals. Permission to offer satyagraha shall be granted only to such workers who have proved their worth by their everyday work.

4. The new restrictions in passing lists of satyagrahis are considered necessary in the interest of the struggle as it is likely to develop in future and will become progressively more arduous. New satyagrahis that come in should, therefore, be such as can stand the new test. Complaints have been received in the office of undue delay in passing names. Those who have given their names need not, however, feel impatient at the delay. They should devote the interval to carrying out the

[1] *Vide* "Discussion With D. K. Gosavi", 15-5-1941

If any satyagrahi who has enrolled himself on the original basis feels unable to accept the new terms, he is free to withdraw his name and there will be no disgrace attached to any such withdrawal. He may continue to render whatever other service he can to the country. He remains a Congressman as before.

5. Enrolled satyagrahis cannot contest elections to the local bodies. Those who have put in their candidature for such elections, before being enlisted as satyagrahis, have either to withdraw from election or from offering satyagraha. As satyagrahis they cannot be in both places.

6. No released satyagrahi who is a member of a local board, unless specially exempted by Mahatma Gandhi, can attend its meeting. If he does, his name will be expunged from the list of satyagrahis.

7. Unarrested satyagrahis who are touring in their districts and those whose names have been approved are not to attend meetings of local bodies.

8. During the monsoons a satyagrahi may, if necessary, establish himself in a village, not his own, or a group of villages and carry on satyagraha and constructive activities.

9. Unarrested satyagrahis, either touring in their districts or marching in the direction of Delhi, should send fortnightly reports of their work to the provincial office. The Provincial Congress Committees in turn will send a consolidated report of their work to the All-India Congress Committee office at stated intervals, fortnightly or monthly.

10. Complaints have been received about the intemperance of language of certain satyagrahis. Satyagrahis should know that vituperation and abuse are against both the spirit and letter of satyagraha and must, therefore, be invariably avoided.

The Histor y of the Indian Nation al Congre ss, Vol. II, pp. 271-2

APPENDIX XII

LETTER FROM K. M. MUNSHI[1]

NAINITAL,
May 26, 1941

MY DEAR BAPU,

Please excuse the language, but as my thoughts have, in this instance, taken shape in English they had best be expressed through that medium. I am seriously perturbed since yesterday morning when I read your letter to Shri Bhogilal Lala in the morning papers. I will quote two marginal paras:

Those (Congressmen) who favour violent resistance (by way of self-defence)

[1] *Vide* "Letter to K. M. Munshi", 29-5-1941 and "Statement to the Press", 15-6-1941

Those (Congressmen) who favour violent resistance (by way of self-defence) must get out of the Congress and shape their conduct just as they think fit and guide others accordingly.

A Congressman may not directly or indirectly associate himself with gymnasia where training in violent resistance is given.

Forgive me if I cannot reconcile myself to these injunctions. Since Pakistan has been in action at Dacca, Ahmedabad, Bombay and other places, it is clear that such riots are going to be the normal feature of our life for some years. If war comes to India's frontiers or the British machinery of maintaining order weakens, they will perhaps grow more frequent and intense if a division of India is sought to be enforced by internal or external agencies through organized violence. If life, home and shrine and honour of women is threatened by goondaism, organized resistance in self-defence appears to me to be a paramount and inalienable duty, whatever form such resistance may take. Do you include *akhadas* in the gymnasia where training in violent resistance is given? I may inform you that for the last fifteen years and more I have been associated with the *akhada* movement in the presidency, both directly and indirectly. I presided over two conferences, one at Bombay and the other at Poona to organize it on systematic lines. I have still unofficial connections with several *akhadas*. I deem them an essential machinery for training our race in the art of self-defence. During the last many years they have played a great part in giving us some self-confidence to resist goondaism. In spite of the great efforts which I have made since yesterday, I have failed to convince myself that my views as expressed in an article I wrote a fortnight ago and published in the *Social Welfare* of the 22nd May, 1941, require a revision. I am sending you a copy of the article for ready reference.

Since I came to you in 1930, you have been more to me than a political leader. You have been to the whole of our family a father. You have been a beacon for the last ten years lighting me on the path of the little spirituality that I can lay claim to. Hence the pain I feel in confessing that I have searched in vain for a way out of this conflict. I can, of course, keep quiet or can acquiesce in what you say or can, for fear of losing my Congress association and your confidence—both precious possessions of my life— voice your sentiments and go my way or do nothing. But something in me rebels against such a course. You have been to me the embodiment of truth and I would lose my self-respect, my right to pray to God, if I pretend to follow you with such mental reservations. I cannot pledge myself not to preach, hold, organize or sympathize with organized resistance to violence in self-defence by all possible means. I do not want to be dishonest to myself nor to the country whose integrity is now threatened, nor do I desire to deny myself your inspiration and guidance in this dilemma. Please let me know what I should do.

My wife is leaving Naini Tal on the 28th and has already written to you. I am leaving again for Kausani. I will start from here on June 9 and will be in Bombay on the 11th. Will the 12th or the 13th suit you to see me at Sevagram? My eyes are still

profound respect.

Yours,

K. M. MUNSHI

Pilgri mage to Freedo m, pp. 409-10; also The Bombay Chroni cle, 27-6-1941

APPENDIX XIII

RABINDRANATH TAGORE'S REPLY TO ELEANOR RATHBONE[1]

SANTINIKETAN,
June 4, 1941

I have been deeply pained at Miss Rathbone's open letter to Indians. I do not know who Miss Rathbone is, but I take it that she represents the mentality of the average 'well-intentioned' Britisher. Her letter is mainly addressed to Jawaharlal and I have no doubt that if that noble fighter of freedom's battle had not been gagged behind prison bars by Miss Rathbone's countrymen, he would have made a fitting and spirited reply to her gratuitous sermon. His enforced silence makes it necessary for me to voice my protest even from my sick-bed.

The lady has ill served the cause of her people by addressing so indiscreet, indeed impertinent, a challenge to our conscience. She is scandalized at our ingratitude,—that having "drunk deeply at the wells of English thought" we should still have some thought left for our poor country's interests. English thought, in so far as it is representative of the best traditions of Western enlightenment, has Indeed taught us much, but let me add, those of our countrymen who have profited by it have done so despite the official British attempts to ill-educate us. We might have achieved introduction to Western learning through any other European language. Have all the other peoples in the world waited for the British to bring them enlightenment?

It is sheer insolent self-complacence on the part of our so-called English friends to assume that had they not 'taught' us we would still have remained in the dark ages. Through the official British channels of education in India have flowed to our children in schools not the best of English thought but its refuse, which has only deprived them of wholesome repast at the table of their own culture.

Assuming, however, that the English language is the only channel left to us for "enlightenment", all that "drinking deeply at its wells" has come to is that in 1931, even after a couple of centuries of British administration, only about one per cent of the population was found to be literate in English,—while in the U.S.S.R. in 1932, after only fifteen years of Soviet administration, 98 per cent of the children were educated. (These figures are taken from *The Statesman's Year-Book*, an English

[1] *Vide* "Letter to D. K. Gosavi", 8-6-1941

publication, not likely to err on the Russian side.)

But even more necessary than the so-called culture are the bare elementary needs of existence, on which alone can any super-structure of enlightenment rest. And what have the British who have held tight the purse-strings of our nation for more than two centuries and exploited its resources done for our poor people?

I look around and see famished bodies crying for bread. I have seen women in villages dig up mud for a few drops of drinking water; for wells are even more scarce in Indian villages than schools. I know that the population of England itself is today in danger of starvation and I sympathize with them, but when I see how the whole might of the British navy is engaged in convoying food vessels to the English shores and when I recollect that I have seen our people perish of hunger and not even a cart-load of rice brought to their door from the neighbouring district, I cannot help contrasting the British at home with the British in India. Shall we then be grateful to the British, if not for keeping us fed, at least for preserving law and order? I look around and see riots raging all over the country. When scores of Indian lives are lost, our property looted, our women dishonoured, the mighty British arms stir in no action, only the British voice is raised from overseas to chide us for our unfitness to put our house in order.

Examples are not wanting in history when even fully armed warriors have shrunk before superior might and contingencies have arisen in the present war when the bravest among the British, French and Greek soldiers have had to evacuate the battle-field in Europe because they were overwhelmed by superior armaments—but when our poor, unarmed and helpless peasants, encumbered with crying babes, flee from homes unable to protect them from armed goondas, the British officials perhaps smile in contempt at our cowardice.

Every British civilian in England is armed today for protecting his hearth and home against the enemy, but in India even lathi-training was forbidden by decree. Our people have been deliberately disarmed and emasculated in order to keep them perpetually cowed and at the mercy of their armed masters. The British hate the Nazis for merely challenging their world mastery and Miss Rathbone expects us to kiss the hand of her people in servility for having riveted chains on ours. A government mustbe judged not by the pretensions of its spokesmen but by its actual and effective contribution to the well-being of the people.

It is not so much because the British are foreigners that they are unwelcome to us and have found no place in our hearts as because while pretending to be trustees of our welfare they have betrayed the great trust and have sacrificed the happiness of millions of India to bloat the pockets of a few capitalists at home. I should have thought that the decent Britisher would at least keep silent at these wrongs and be grateful to us for our inaction, but that he should add insult to injury and pour salt over our wounds passes all bounds of decency.

The Indian Annual Regist er, Vol. II, pp. 202-3

APPENDIX XIV

DISCUSSION WITH K. M. MUNSHI AND OTHERS[1]

(*9 to 11 a.m.*) *June 12, 1941*

MUNSHI: (a) War is coming on India's frontiers, when the internal machinery of order will be weakened.

(b) Pakistan is in action and will be so for some time in the shape of premeditated riots.

(c) Pakistan can only be conceded on our dead bodies.

(d) The question of freedom and of the territorial integrity of India are academic. The real question is whether in the coming years of trouble we will have strength enough to protect our homes, lives, etc., from internal disturbances.

(e) Few Congressmen can follow the programme of self-immolation. I will only lead to hypocrisy in the Congress or make other elements more powerful.

(f) If Congressmen can't take any part in this way, then what are they to do? They must cease to play any effective part in the most acute problem of the day.

Gandhiji discussed the general situation.

(*12 Noon*)

GANDHIJI: (a) I do not expect any settlement with Government.

(b) Jinnah is not likely to settle; and the riots will grow.

(c) Congress as constituted at present can have no place in riots. At the same time it will be extinct if it does not tackle the riot situation.

(d) If I continue, with even some men, it may enable the masses, in a conceivable event when they are tired of the present methods, to seek me outfor a solution. Anyway, we may leave behind us a tradition which will help the country in future.

(e) Any attempt to organize violent self-defense will attract an attack on the Congress by Government. The problem is an all-India one and cannot be ignored.

MUNSHI: I do not want to part from you. But you should tell me what I should do in view of my limitations and the situation.

GANDHIJI: As for the Congress some people must get out to have a free hand. It will be dangerous for the organization to do anything in the riots, for it will give Government an opportunity to destroy it.

(*3.00 to 5.00 p.m.*)

Rajendra Babu and Mathura Babu described the conditions in Bihar.

RAJENDRA BABU: (a) I am losing my hold over Bihar.

(b) The Muslims are frankly aggressive.

[1] *Vide*"Statement to the Press", 15-6-1941

(c) The Hindus are equally aggressive, and are organizing themselves.

(d) The Hindu Mahasabha is gaining ground.

(e) The Peace Brigade does not appeal to Congressmen and few will be found to follow it.

GANDHIJI: I admit that the Peace Brigade idea is not likely to attract Congressmen. Even Mahadev has got no response in Ahmedabad so far.

Shri Gopichand Bhargava described the position in Punjab.

RAJENDRA BABU: These are preliminary skirmishes, in my opinion, to see how the Muslim community is affected. Very soon, the full force of the campaign will perhaps begin.

MUNSHI: It's a civil war. An effective part must be played by the Congress.

RAJENDRA BABU: Not a single Mussalman leader is coming forward to condemn the Muslim atrocities, nor will he join in saying that we should immolate ourselves.

(*9.30 to 11.00 a.m., June 13, 1941*)

GANDHIJI: (a) Congress as an institution cannot organize violent self-defence.

(b) At the same time it may become necessary for the Congress to encourage the efforts of those who conscientiously believe that this 'war' should be stopped in some other way.

(c) He can always insist on force being used in self-defence or in a decent manner. For instance, shrines, women and children may not be touched in any case.

Dr. Gopichand then stated the Punjab situation.

In the Punjab, the northern part is predominantly Muslim, central Sikh, eastern Hindu. So there is scarcely any equality. But the real quarrel is between agriculturists and non-agriculturists. Muslim attitude discussed.

(*2.30 p.m.*)

Discussed the reaction of leading Muslim Congressmen to the modification of the principle of non-violent defence in (a) international matters and (b) in domestic disputes.

GANDHIJI: Maulana accepted that violent defence is necessary in (a) but would not accept it for (b).

DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA: Asaf Ali had said that Gandhiji's letter[1] regarding non-violent self-defence to Bhogilal was not a correct interpretation of the Congress creed, which only dealt with the movement for swaraj, not with internal affairs.

GANDHIJI: But he sided with Maulana in opposing the use of violent defence in internal matters.

MUNSHI: They don't want the Congress Hindus to defend violently; they can't stop the Muslims from violent aggression. The result is that the Hindus will be

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Bhogilal Lala", 21-5-1941

divided and unable to oppose the Muslims in a civil war.

RAJENDRA BABU: The Muslim Congressmen now outside may be consulted.

GANDHIJI: It is not necessary. Khan Saheb is for pure non-violence; Maulana also is.

Bombay position discussed.

GANDHIJI: I have thought over the whole question. For Munshi the path is this:

(a) If he can throw himself heart and soul in the Peace Brigade, he would be able to work it up very well.

(b) If he can't he may retire into the Himalayas or somewhere for a few months and watch the situation and find out what way his mind works and whether he could adopt the first course.

(c) If he comes to the conclusion that the first course is not possible, he should leave the Congress and organize the Hindus for violent self-defence. Whatever course you may take, our personal relations will remain the same and I will take the same interest in you as now.

MUNSHI: As you know my attachment for you, I do not want to part from you. I will think over the alternatives with my wife and let you know. But of one thing I am positive; I cannot retire in the way you mention. I am in public life for years. When God willed that I should be out of jail at this time when I feel my country, community and culture are in danger, I cannot forgive myself if I shrink back. (I broke down here.)

That is out of question. If, however, you think that the interest of the Congress or the country requires my abstention from public life I am willing

(a) to go back to jail; or

(b) retire into exclusive professional activities.

GANDHIJI: I do not want you to go to jail nor to retire into practice,

MUNSHI: Then as regards the first course, my whole being protests against the idea. If I undertake it, I must take it up thoroughly and offer myself at the first instance. I feel that I can't do it: (a) I haven't that spiritual strength; (b) I know it's useless and I won't take it up hypocritically. My inner urge is my country and culture are in danger. I want to fight for them, so far as I can, though I know it won't be much, as I have neither the health nor the ability to do anything effective. But I will struggle to acquire the necessary spirituality for the first course.

(c) Bombay Congressmen still believe that Gandhiji will work a miracle; Congress will get into power; so they must retain their vested interest.

(d) Scarcely anyone will be found to immolate himself.

(e) Several Congressmen helped and do help new organizations which defend their localities violently.

(f) The Muslims have their mosques and their organization. In riots, for the first few days, the Hindus are at a disadvantage.

(g) Peace Brigades in Bombay will not succeed, as it is an industrial town with an underworld which would not mind killing anybody.

GANDHIJI: Your freedom may by itself be effective

KRIPALANI: It is necessary at this stage that some Congressmen should go out and do the work which the institution cannot do.

GANDHIJI: If Munshi can't take to the first course, it is in the interests of the Congress that he should go out and do as he is prompted to do. I will issue a statement[1] to clear his position. He should also discuss the matters with his Congress friends and see whether they would join him in going out and organizing defence.

Dr. Gopichand Bhargava read out the passage in Bhogilal Lala's letter giving local option.

Gandhiji was inclined to the view that the Congress workers in Bombay should consider whether they want the right of violent self-defence. Rajendra Babu pointed out that that would destroy the integrity of the Congress.

Munshi concurred. The idea was given up.

GANDHIJI (to Munshi): You go to Bombay and come back after seeing your friends, etc. Then we shall finally decide.

MUNSHI: This is a new idea. Going out is not so easy and I shall have to discuss the matter with my wife.

GANDHIJI: I have told her to help you in your work, whatever it is.

MUNSHI: But she may prefer to be with you than with me.

GANDHIJI: I know she will be with you.

Pilgri mage to Freedo m, pp. 411-5

APPENDIX XV

K. M. MUNSHI'S STATEMENT[1]

I had the benefit of detailed discussion with Gandhiji and many friends on the present situation in the country. After mature deliberation, I feel that the interests of the country demand that, with my views on the question of self-defence, I should not continue any longer to be a member of the Congress. Any other course would neither be honourable for me nor fair to the country or the Congress.

Gandhiji would not think of my offering satyagraha in the present uncertain and enfeebled condition of my health. I could not think of working a Peace Brigade in Bombay, not having the requisite spiritual strength. At the same time to pursue any work other than that of helping to arrest the progress of the blood feud that is going on before one's eyes is flying away from duty. I feel that in the dark days which lie ahead of India I would be of no use to the country unless I pursued the path of duty in

[1] *Vide* "Reply to British Women's Appeal", 15-6-1941

the light which God has been pleased to vouchsafe to me.

This decision has been rendered rather difficult by the personal bond which subsists between Gandhiji and several leading Congressmen on the one hand and myself [on the other], but I would not be worthy of their confidence if I remained in the Congress with a mental reservation on the cardinal point of Congress faith as Gandhiji understands it. My only satisfaction has been that Gandhiji, with his usual generosity, has helped me to reach a decision which is consistent with my own view as to the direction in which immediate duty lies.

Pilgri mage to Freedo m, pp. 416-7

APPENDIX XVI

"MR. GANDHI'S ADMISSION"[1]

Mr. Gandhi, in an interview with an American news agency, makes a candid and significant admission. When asked how many of his followers who are now in jail sincerely subscribe to his own belief that violence can never be right, he replies: "I do not mind it being said that the majority are non-violent only out of policy. That is the weakest part of my campaign. . . ." Impartial observers of Mr. Gandhi's civil disobedience campaign have suspected as much from the beginning, and their suspicion has been confirmed of late by the departure from Mr. Gandhi's ranks of men like Mr. Munshi and Dr. Satyapal[2]. Mr. Gandhi himself has now publicly recognized, and for the first time, that the non-violent slogan is being exploited politically. He also admits by implication that such exploitation is distasteful to him, and, indeed, weakens his campaign.

When the campaign was first launched, it was widely believed that only those who were in full agreement with Mr. Gandhi's interpretation of non-violence should offer themselves for jail. And yet, as we now know, a majority submitted their names, not out of conviction, but "only out of policy"—some of them through a sense of loyalty to the party organization, others from more questionable motives. Nor can Mr. Gandhi escape the largest share of the blame for allowing this inconsistency to develop. He is personally responsible for sanctioning the names of satyagrahis, and it is reasonable to suppose that in some instances at least he accepted nominees who he knew did not fulfil the conditions which he himself had laid down. If the presence in jail of those who went "only out of policy" has weakened Mr. Gandhi's campaign, then Mr. Gandhi has proved that he is among his own worst enemies. Either he has been lax in interpreting his own rules of satyagraha or he has been deceived by the majority of those whose names were submitted. Mr. Gandhi can best say which of these alternatives is the right one.

The Times of India, 29-7-1941

[1] *Vide* "Letter to "The Times of India", 31-7-1941

[2] Who had resigned from the Congress party on July 14, 1941

1. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 18, 1941

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

I have hurriedly gone through your draft. It reads all right. You may circulate it. But I shall study it carefully before you meet.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10157

2. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

August 18, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This thing about the post is vexing. But what is one to do with a village P[ost] O[ffice]?

The second vexing thing is your indifferent condition. Why should you not feel first class? Could it have anything to do with your having taxed yourself too much over Jamnalal? He is in rapturesover the kindness shown to him by you all— meaning you and your. . .[1] The thought has just occurred to me and I have passed it on to you. Anyway it is time you got well.

We had a glorious day here. We had prayers at which Gurudev's songs were sung, the morning "*Jivana jakhan*[2]" by Sushila and the "*Anand lok*[*e*][3]" in the evening by Prabhakar who is proving a fine singer. We had a pice collection from every adult and more from those who could pay more. The Ashramites not having any money of their own spun for one hour and got one pice for their labour at market price. Maganlal gave Rs. 2,500, Janakibehn Rs. 110, Sushila Rs. 500 in 10 instalments, i.e., Rs. 50 out of her salary. Therefore, we have a goodly sum in Sevagram. Ashadevi went out for collection and prayer in Wardha. I have not yet had the report. But it was good there too.

Vallabhbhai's condition is bad. You must have seen the report. Let us see what happens. It is a big load on the mind.

Mridula leaves today for Bombay. She has come to solve her little difficulties.

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] These words are in the Devanagari script.
[3] *ibid*

I must not give you more time today. What about khadi sales there this time?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4056. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7365

3. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

August 18, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

You were to leave one of your pens here. I do not find it here. If it is with you, it is all right. I do not want a new pen.

There is a postcard from Nagpur today addressed to you. It is a reply to your letter : ''The prisoner is not legally allowed to meet anyone. And he does not wish to meet anyone in particular.'' So even if the telephone had been answered, you would have got the same reply.

I hope you did not have much trouble and could catch the train easily. If you remember, write to me how many minutes before time you reached.

Do not fix appointments anywhere. I do not wish to place any burden on you. It would hurt me taking even a moment from your studies.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

4. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

August 18, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Consider that we are all sailing in the same boat as you. The difference is only one of degree. You should fix your mealtime and also the quantity of food. If this is done for a period, everything will be all right. Do not worry about the result, once you have made the efforts.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4400

5. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
August 19, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

Your note.

How strange my letter crossed yours. You have used the same or a synonymous term. You must get rid of your illnesses now. If Shummy and others relieve you and think that you might flourish under humble surroundings I shall gladly nurse you to health. If I am solely responsible, I shall not be nervous.

No more today.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W 4057. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7366

6. LETTER TO TARACHAND

August 19, 1941

DEAR DR. TARACHAND,

Many thanks for your cheque which I am passing to the Deenabandhu Memorial Fund. If you do not like the disposal I can easily alter it.

I have purposely not moved in the Hindi matter because of the extraordinary riots in Dacca and elsewhere. The matter has to be settled but the values have changed. As I read the signs of the times the matter does not admit of piecemeal treatment. I drafted my statement. Sunderlalji did not like it much. Meanwhile the disturbances affected me deeply and I stayed immediate action, my views remaining the same.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers, Courtesy; Pyarelal

7. LETTER TO INDRAVADAN N. DIVYENDRA

August 19, 1941

BHAI INDRAVADAN,

Searching for the envelope sent by you would take some time, and, moreover, you have no reason to complain since you are getting one pice worth more than what you spent. If we exclusively look after the cow, the buffalo will not perish, but if we exclusively look after the latter both the cow and the buffalo will perish. If we try to look after both, then also both would perish. All the world over people use mostly cow's milk. From the medical point of view, too, cow's milk is more beneficial.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

BHAI INDRAVADAN N. DIVYENDRA
GOODS OFFICE
SABARMATI, B.B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 121

8. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

August 19, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. You will have received mine. You reached well in time. Kunvarji is fine.

The conversation with Natwar is enlightening.

I understand about the house. I shall of course make the arrangements. It is good you wrote.

Enclosed is Balkrishna's letter. Write to him if you wish.

Today Khurshedbehn and Shankerlal are here; also Gulzarilal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

9. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

August 20, 1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

What you say in your letter is perfectly correct. When I get up at the sound of the bell, I look at the watch and when twenty minutes pass I start the prayers.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8486. Also C.W. 7152. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

10. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
August 20, 1941

CHI. DEVDAS,

I read your letter addressed to Mahadev. He has been held up in Bombay.

I think you should not have published a report like that without verifying it. And even if you published it, to have made unfounded comments on it was certainly wrong. [I][1] cannot save you. And, moreover, you have given the name of the Chief Justice. I am afraid you will be found guilty. You had better consult a lawyer and publish, before attending the court, an apology saying that your correspondent was unable to prove the truth of his report. I think this would be a graceful step. Or you may apologize in the court without defending yourself. I am suggesting this from the moral and legal point of view. But ultimately do as Sir Tej Bahadur and Munshi advise. I am sending a copy of this letter, together with your letter, to Mahadev. You have signed in full, but I can decipher neither "Devdas" nor "Gandhi". The civilized rule is that the letters even in a signature should be as neat as pearls.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2142

[1] One word is illegible in the source.

11. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 20, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is no letter from you today. Sankaran says that one more stethoscope is required because the doctor has to use one. If you also feel that one more stethoscope is needed, you may purchase one and send it here. Kanu is coming tomorrow. But he may come any time. I am not worried. There are many people coming here.

I can see that I shall not be able to eat more. I feel somewhat heavy in the stomach. I am trying hard to follow your instructions, but I realize that that is possible only when you are present here.

Maganlal and Kanchan are free from fever. So also is Appa Saheb.

You will be getting along well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

12. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[On or before *August 21, 1941*][1]

JAMNALALJI
SIVALAYA, DEHRA DUN

GLAD. STAY AT WILL.[2]

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 242

[1] According to the source the telegram was received by the addressee on August

[2] The addressee had sought permission to prolong his stay at Anandmayi Devi's Ashram; *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 21-8-1941

13. LETTER TO UTIMCHAND GANGARAM

SEVAGRAM,
August 21, 1941

DEAR UTIMCHAND,

I have Government papers containing Rs. 500. I am handing the 3_ p.c. ones (Rs. 200) to Harijan Sevak Sangh and the other Rs. 300 to the Deenabandhu Memorial, since Gurudev would have donated the amount to the Memorial which, as you know, is to be wholly used for Santiniketan.

My interest in Geometry never gets stale and I shall be your first 'school-boy'. Whether I shall succeed in cutting off the two triangles or not I do not know.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

14. LETTER TO JAKATDAR

August 21, 1941

DEAR JAKATDAR,

You have done so well at your time of life that you need not re-offer C.D. If the Government choose to take you off for any of your activities, it is a different matter.

I would like you to spread the gospel of non-violence by doing the constructive work of the Congress in your district.

I hope you are keeping well.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

15. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

August 21, 1941

CHI. KANCHAN,

You should feel satisfied with this letter. I hope you reached there safely. Take care about your food and get well. Arrange about your studies. Write to me regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have written regarding the *Autobiography*.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8273. Also C.W. 7154. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

16. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

August 21, 1941

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I was indeed afraid that you would be released. What else could they do? Now you must get completely well before resuming work. There is, of course, a lot to be done, I will not be easy in my mind till the operation is over. Keep me regularly informed. Did they give you my letters?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 250

17. LETTER TO NATVARLAL J. VEPARI

August 21, 1941

BHAI NATVARLAL,

I got your letter. For the present I will not trouble you. You have given me enough details in your report. If there is anything morestill, write to me. I take it that you will stamp every page in the account books. It will be enough if you merely initial the corrections.

I suppose all the vouchers are duly numbered. Please return the account books, etc., to the Navajivan office now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10124

18. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

August 21, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your postcard. Kanchan went to Valod yesterday. I have of course given her all the intructions. You may write to her if you wish. Her address is : C/o Maganlal Kalidas, Valod, *via* Madhi, Tapti V. Rly.

It is your duty to go when people are sick and want you. It is your trade; how can you get out of it ? I consulted Dr. Das about Madalasa. He said : ''I get the point. I have respect for Dr. Sushila's treatment. But I would not like to give her any medicine.'' Since she is doing very well, I am not insisting. Mahadev's case is completely in the hands of Dr. Das. I would not dare do anything else in your absence. In other cases, I am of course doing what I can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

19. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

August 21, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have received your three letters together.

Sardar has been released. I learn from Mahadev's telephonic talk that you are going there today to examine his polypus. You may go and visit him if he so desires. Kanchan and Maganbhai are free from fever. Neither of them had to be given quinine. Just for trial I had given to Maganlal betel and calotropis leaf. I cannot say whether these helped or the fever went down on its own. Appa is doing well. He had been put on vegetable soup and fruit juice. He was also given a little butter. From today he is being given *roti*. He is feeling better. He does not seem to have any complaint about his throat either. Annapurna gets temperature up to 99°. Sankaran says that he has swelling of the throat. He will apply

something. I am feeling much improved after reducing the food quota yesterday. I had good motion. Eating more may result in a relapse after initial improvement. This is my third attempt after your insistence on my increasing the intake of milk, etc. I have also reduced walking. The work is stopped by 8.30 p.m. It is possible to stop talking altogether about important matters while walking. In the evening I keep my eyes closed both when going out and returning. That does not interfere with the night's sleep.

You must have got over the anaesthesia trouble. Is not Jivraj Mehta in any way concerned with it ?

Are you taking proper food ? I have written this with your pen.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

20. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

August 21, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

There is no letter from you today. I hope this is not due to illness.

Jamnalalji liked Anandamayi Devi's Ashram. He could get peace there. He sent me a telegram to permit him to stay there for some more time. I have said yes.[1] He had a long talk with Jawaharlal and had fruit with him. He also met Indu.

Here everything is all right. Sardar was released, and I had a talk with him on the phone. I hope you did not find it difficult to decipher this letter. Do you mind its being in Hindi?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7883. Also C.W. 4251. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur

[1] *Vide* "Letter to amrit Kaur", 17-8-1941

21. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN CHAUDHARY

August 21, 1941

CHI. RAMNARAYAN,

Your letter is of course good; but do not overstep the limit. If a passing impulse is not the reason behind it, your sacrifice will endure.[1] Otherwise it would only cause more pain. A habit oflong standing is not broken without firm determination. May God give you strength!

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapu: Maine Kya Dekha, Kya Samjha?, p. 144

22. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

WARDHAGANJ,
August 22, 1941

JAMNALALJI
SIVALAYA
RAIPUR, DEHRA DUN

MAHESH[2] WELL BUT REQUIRES OBSERVATION. GIVES MADALASA GOOD COMPANY. ALLOW STAY UNLESS YOU NEED BADLY.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 242

23. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
August 23, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Here are two letters for you.

I see how you are struggling against your fever and cough.

[1] The addressee had decided to curtail the expenses of his family as regards food, clothing, etc. He felt that they were a burden on the Ashram.

[2] Maheshdutta Mishra

Victory to you.

You will write to Dharm Yash Dev that he has first to purge himself to be true to himself.

Sushila stopped for two days on her way to Bombay. She is on duty leave. She has been sent to Bombay to gain more experience in anaesthesia. Her last experience enabled them to work an expensive instrument that was lying unused.

Kanchan has gone to her mother for a few months.

I am first finishing the Deenabandhu Memorial which becomes also partly Tagore Memorial too. I shall take from you the highest amount possible in its time. You see I have taken Rs. 500 from Sushila. Of course in instalments.[1]

Yes, you may send the spray. I now see it is expensive but not very if it is effective against these fellow-creatures of ours. I have also told you, you could send apples twice a month.

Now I must stop. Oh, I forget. Sardar's has proved a hoax.[2] Seven doctors miss the polypus. So there is no anxiety.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Polypus is one '1'. The mistake was mine.[3]

From the original: C.W. 4058. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7367

24. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRAN

August 23, 1941

MY DEAR R[AMACHANDRAN],

I have just read your letter [to] Rameshwari Nehru. She wants to know what to say in reply. The need of the Sangh[4] at Delhi is indeed very great. But the need for you and Sundaram to busy yourselves in Travancore is greater. I have no doubt whatsoever that you will serve the Harijan cause better by serving it in Travancore. Therefore I need not discuss the other questions arising from your letter.

Love to you both.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 8000. Also C.W. 3098. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

[1] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Krishnachandra", 18-8-1941

[2] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 16-8-1941

[3] *ibid*

[4] Harijan Sevak Sangh

25. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

August 23, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is no letter from you today, Taribehn's temperature has again started rising above 99°. Her case is beyond my capacity. But what can I do ? Besides, she is far away.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
C/O ASSTT. DEAN
K.E.M.H.
PAREL, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

26. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

August 23, 1941

DEAR SISTER,

I got your letter today. Enclosed is a copy of the reply I sent to Ramachandran. I am glad you are all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8000. Also C.W. 3097. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

27. FOREWORD TO " A DISCIPLINE FOR NON-VIOLENCE" [1]

SEVAGRAM,
August 24, 1941

A Discipline for Non-violence is a pamphlet written by Mr. Richard B. Gregg for the guidance of those Westerners who endeavour to follow the law of satyagraha. I use the word advisedly instead of 'pacifism'. For what passes under the name of pacifism is not the same as satyagraha. Mr. Gregg is a most diligent and methodical worker. He [has] had first-hand knowledge of satyagraha, having lived in India and that too for nearly a year in the Sabarmati Ashram. His pamphlet is

[1] To its first Indian edition published by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad

seasonable and cannot fail to help the satyagrahis of India. For though the pamphlet is written in a manner attractive for the West, the substance is the same for both the Western and the Eastern satyagrahi. A cheap edition of the pamphlet is therefore being printed locally for the benefit of Indian readers in the hope that many will make use of it and profit by it. A special responsibility rests upon the shoulders of Indian satyagrahis, for Mr. Gregg has based the pamphlet on his observation of the working of satyagraha in India. However admirable this guide of Mr. Gregg'smay appear as a well-arranged code, it must fail in its purpose if the Indian experiment fails.

M. K. GANDHI

A Discipline for Non-violence

28. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDRA,
August 24, 1941

Being vitally connected with immigration problems and having been in South Africa for twenty years, I am naturally interested in the Indo-Burma Immigration Agreement. It has caused me deep pain. I have collected as much literature as I could on the subject. I have studied as much of it as was necessary to enable me to form anopinion and as was possible during the very limited time at my disposal.

My study has led me to the conclusion that it is an unhappy agreement.

It is panicky and penal. In the papers I find no reason to warrant any panic nor do I find any warrant for the severe punishment meted out to the Indians resident in Burma.

The burden of proving the right to remain in Burma has in every case been thrown on the Indian resident. One would have thought that the least that should have been done was to have automatically recognized as fully domiciled every Indian found in Burma on the date of promulgation of the Agreement.

I am acquainted with the immigration laws of South Africa and other countries. In every case the restrictions have been imposed by legislation and, after fairly full opportunity being given for the expression of public opinion, legislation has been preceded by considerable lapse of time for the ventilation of views on the mere proposal for legislation.

In this case secrecy and mystery have surrounded the Agreement which has been sprung upon an unsuspecting public.

The whole thing appears still more hideous when we recall the fact that only a few years ago Burma was an integral part of India.

Does the partition make India a leper country the presence of whose inhabitants must carry heavy penalties including the tickets of leave such as criminals carry? They do not cease to be less offensive because they bear the inoffensive name of passports andpermits. I should be prepared to understand the validity of the permit and passport system when the necessity is clearly established. I must refuse to believe that this Agreement is in response to a vital cry from the great Burmese nation with which the people of India never had any quarrel and with which India had enjoyed cultural contact long before the advent of the foreigner from the West.

We can never be in Burma or the Burmans in India foreigners in the same sense as people from the West. There has been free commerce and emigration to Burma for hundreds of years.

This drastic Agreement is an undeserved slur both on India and Burma.

This Agreement is a brutal reminder that both India and Burma are under the British heel and that the Government of India Act and the Government of Burma Act gave no real freedom to the respective peoples. They give no scope for full growth to us. I fear that this statement of mine will not please the Premier of Burma who may think that the Agreement is a popular Act. He will soon discover the error, if he has not already, that he has not served his people but that he has played himself into the hands of those who would want to exploit Burma to the exclusion of any rivals. I must admit that Indians have been partners with the Westerners in the exploitation of Burma, but with this fundamental difference, that the Westerner went to Burma with his gun, while the Indian went on sufferance as he has always done in every part of the world.

We cannot exist in Burma for one single day without Burmese goodwill.

I would plead with the Burmese Ministers and the Burmese people that they should wait for the regulation of immigration till both of us are free and independent for such regulation. I flatter myself with the belief that when that happy day arrives, as it must, such matters will regulate themselves, for we shall never want to impose our nationals on one another.

But I have strayed. My purpose just now is to show that this Agreement must be undone inasmuch as it breaks every canon of

international propriety. It becomes less defensible in that an Indian[1] instead of an Englishman was sent to negotiate the Agreement. It is an old and familiar trick, that of putting up an Indian to perform a disagreeable task. Nor is it relevant that the Agreement had the approvalof local Indian opinion. For the Agreement is an insult to the whole nation, not merely to the particular individuals whose material interests lie in Burma. But even if it was relevant, there should be evidence to show the volume and character of that opinion.

When I come to examine the Baxter Report[2], which became the prelude to the Agreement, it contains nothing to justify the Agreement. This was the reference made to Mr. Baxter:

> The enquiry will be directed to ascertaining:
>
> 1. the volume of Indian immigration;
> 2. to what extent it is seasonal and temporary and to what extent permanent;
> 3. in what occupations Indians are mainly employed and the extent to which they are unemployed or underemployed;
> 4. whether in such employment Indians either have displaced Burmans or could be replaced by Burmans, due regard being paid to both the previous history of such occupations and their economic requirements; and
> 5. whether in the light of the statistics obtained and other relevant factors any system of equating the supply of Indian unskilled labour to Burmans' requirements is needed.

Thus it was purely a fact-finding commission. Here is the fact found by the Commission:

> There is no evidence of any kind to suggest that Indians have displaced Burmans from employment which they had previously obtained. . . . Indian labour in the past has been supplementary rather than alternative to Burmese labour.

That surely does not justify the restrictions imposed by the Agreement on the movement of Indians in Burma. The recommendations made in the Report appear to me to be in excess of the reference and therefore of no effect. Add to this the fact that the opinion of the assessors finds no mention in the Report. It may not have weighed with the Commissioner but surely it should have found mention in the Report.

[1] Girija Shankar Bajpai; *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 27-7-1941

[2] James Baxter, Financial Adviser, with two assessors, U Tin-Tut and Ratilal Desai, was appointed by the Government of Burma to examine the question of Indian immigration into Burma. The report was submitted to the Government of Burma in October 1940.

Now let me for a moment examine the pertinent sections of the Act. Here they are:

Section 44(3) of the Government of Burma Act, 1935, says:

> The provisions of Sub-section (2) of this Section shall apply in relation to British subjects domiciled in India and subjects of any Indian State as they apply in relation to British subjects domiciled in the United Kingdom, but with the substitution in the provision to the said Sub-section for references to the United Kingdom or references to British India, or as the case may be, that Indian State:
>
> Provided that nothing in this Sub-section shall affect any restriction lawfully imposed on the right of entry into Burma of persons who are British subjects domiciled in India or subjects of any Indian State, or any restriction lawfully imposed as a condition of allowing any such persons to enter Burma.

Section 138 of the same Act:

> His Majesty may by Order-in-Council direct that, during such period as may be specified in the Order, immigration into Burma from India shall be subject to such restrictions as may be specified in the Order (being such restrictions as may have been mutually agreed before the commencement of this Act between the Governor of Burma-in-Council and the Governor-General of India-in-Council and approved by the Secretary of State, or in default of agreement as may have been prescribed by the Secretary of State), and no other restrictions:
>
> Provided that any such Order may be varied by a subsequent Order-in-Council in such manner as appears to His Majesty necessary to give effect to any agreement in that behalf made after the commencement of this Act by the Governor with the Governor-General of India or the Governor-General of India-in-Council.

The first read as a whole does not appear to contemplate any interference with the present Indian population. The second is decisive.

According to this Section restriction by agreement cannot be imposed on the present Indian settlers.

I have no doubt whatsoever that the Secretary of State for India should not pass the Order-in-Council and should withhold his assent to the Agreement. Any restriction should be a matter for legislation by the Burmese Assembly in consultation with and with the co-operation of the Government of India.

It is pertinent to the examination of the Agreement to know what declarations were made by His Majesty's Ministers when the Act was passed. Here is the assurance of Sir Thomas Inskip, the then Minister for Co-ordination and Defence, on the subject:

> Nobody wants to discriminate between British subjects domiciled in India

or Indian States' subjects when they go to Burma, any more than one wants to discriminate between the British when they go to British India.

Mr. Butler (then Under-Secretary of State for India) also stated in the House of Commons:

> In connection with unskilled Indian labour, the Governor of Burma is asked to confer with the Governor-General with a view to ,regulating the immigration of unskilled labour into Burma. The reason we cannot make a simple rule is that we have to make this differentiation in regard to unskilled labour, while at the same time we do not want to stop the free entry of Indians in general.

Such declarations may have no validity in the interpretation of the Act in a court of law. But politically considered they have or should have the effect of promissory notes.

The Agreement is a clear breach of the declarations quoted by me. I am glad that responsible Indian public opinion is being expressed in unmistakable terms in condemnation of the Agreement.

The Bombay Chronicle, 25-8-1941

29. LETTER TO VIJAYA M. PANCHOLI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
August 24, 1941

CHI. VIJAYA,

I got your letter written from Junagadh. If you had any imagination you would have given a description of the town, what you saw there, what you learnt, and so on. Does not Nanabhai ask you whether you lost in Sevagram all the intelligence you had cultivated? My health is fine, as also Ba's. Did I write to you that Prabhavati and Kusum are here at present? Rajkumari is still in Simla and as she is having fever and cough she is not coming here in the immediate future.

Blessings to both or to three of you(?) from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7140. Also C.W. 4632. Courtesy: Vijaya M. Pancholi

30. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

August 24, 1941

CHI. DEVDAS,

I got your letter. You have argued well. Yes, one must take risks. But the point is that even in doing so one must exercise discretion and restraint. Even the additional information you have given does not justify your involving the Chief Justice. You were free to agitate the matter strongly without doing that. You could have taken that magistrate to task for describing it as "voluntary". And you could have written at length about what the man from the Punjab did. I would endorse your going to the utmost length in taking risks. But here I find your case weak. However, if the lawyers permit you, you may follow their advice. I certainly do not wish to dampen your enthusiasm.

Mahadev also will write to you from Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2143

31. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

August 24, 1941

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have replied to your wire, and have now received a reply to that, too. The worry about Mahesh is not over. The disease which goes back to many years is not active, but it cannot be said to have been completely cured. He is on a special diet, etc. Perhaps he will feel tired soon. In this condition he should not be asked to go out unless there is urgent work. Do you need any help? If so, of what sort?

I see no point in sending Shanta[1] there. If it is for her good, she can be sent independently after you have had sufficient experience there. If you want her services, I think you will derive the full benefit from your stay there only if you check your desire. This is mypersonal view. But I will carry out your wishes. I have still not asked Shanta.

Vallabhbhai has been released. He is not suffering from polypus, and, therefore, there is no cause for anxiety.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3022

[1] Shanta Ruia

32. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

August 24, 1941

CHI. BABUDI,

I do know, of course, that the happiness and security to be found in living together are not to be found in staying alone. That is why it is said that even the overcrowding of the dear ones is to be welcomed. For Anand's diarrhoea, add one teaspoonful of lime-water or dill-water or the two together to the milk. You can make lime-water even at home. If you add water to pieces of limestone, there will be effervescence and you will get clean, sky-blue water at the top. Decant and store it in a bottle. Add a teaspoonful from this to the milk. Boil one teaspoonful of dill seeds in eight ounces of water, strain the water and add one teaspoonful from this to the milk. Thus mix lime water and dill-water with the milk by turns. He is bound to benefit. Do not give him any *rotli* for a day or two.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10036. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

33. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM,

August 24, 1941

CHI. MRIDU,

I had your letter. The figs arrived today. They seem to be good. I shall give you the corrected draft when you come. It is a matter of saving time. Mummy I hope is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 11215. Courtesy : Sarabhai Foundation

34. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

August 24, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have received your two letters today. It would be honourable and proper for you to be present wherever you are needed.

The cancer patient will have been attended to.

You have not given me Pyarelal's address. Annapurna is being given rest. But she continues to have fever.

I have benefited from the change I have made in my diet. My weight has gone up by 1/2 1b. today. I am taking 5 *tolas* of butter and 4 oz. of *roti*. I take 8 oz. of milk only once in the morning. I shall gradually make the change you have suggested. I shall try to take more fruit. There are new faces around. Ram Saran Das and his daughter-in-law are here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

35. LETTER TO ADVAITAKUMAR GOSWAMI

August 24, 1941

BHAI ADVAITAKUMAR,

I have your letter. It is difficult to advise you. Not being acquainted with you, what can I say? Still this much is clear, that if you are to gain self-confidence you must leave everything for a time and find some occupation which will enable you to meet all yourexpenses. Even the man who shoulders his own burden and does not worry others does in a way serve the country.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 149. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

36. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

WARDHA,
August 25, 1941

SETH JAMNALALJI
SIVALAYA
RAIPUR, DEHRA DUN

SHANTA HAS NO DESIRE. WILLING DO AS YOU DESIRE. MY OPINION SHE HAD BETTER BE SENT THERE LATER.

DO YOU NEED ANY SERVICE. WROTE[1] FULLY YESTERDAY.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 243

37. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

August 25, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Nothing from you today. So you see the irregularity is not one-sided. And it is a regular irregularity! But we must be thankful that there is not greater irregularity or that there is postal service at all. Fifty years ago, the postal system was not what it is today. Between Rajkot and Porbunder we had to send special messengers. So I am satisfied when I get a letter at all. Renunciation of rights brings special happiness.

Annapurna is lying in bed with slow fever unaccountable. I hope she will be free in a few days.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4059. Courtesy Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7368

38. LETTER TO CHANDEL

August 25, 1941

BHAI CHANDEL,

The description of your work is very attractive. The results of work which has no selfishness are always good. Do not take any notice of those who are opposing it, but feel pity for them and whenever you get a chance to serve, do whatever you can to help them, e.g., if they are sick, try to make them well. This is the one way to conquer hatred by love and anger by patience. We should always reply to unkind words by keeping silent.

Blessings from

BAPU

Bapu—Conversations and Correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi, pp. 195-6

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 24-8-1941

39. LETTER TO V. RAGHAVIAH

August 25, 1941

DEAR RAGHAVIAH[1],

You are right. Your preoccupation need not be any reason for exemption, you having once taken the plunge. I could still give you the exemption, if you insisted. But for one like you, it is better to withdraw from the satyagraha list at least for the time being. There would be no slur on you. But I would leave the choice to you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SRI V. RAGHAVIAH, B.A., B.L.
NELLORE

From a copy: C.W. 10447. Courtesy: K. Linga Raju

40. LETTER TO S. RADHAKRISHNAN

August 25, 1941

DEAR SIR R[ADHAKRISHNAN],

You do make yourself irresistible. You may book me provisionally for 21st January next[2]. I am not certain myself as to what will happen between now and 21st January. Please defer advertisement as long as you can.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

41. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

August 25, 1941

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Herewith a note from Shanta. The writing is likely to get faint by the time you get the note. Please do not trouble yourself if you cannot read it. I have given its substance in today's wire. She is neither willing

[1]A Congressman and tribal welfare worker, popularly known as Yenadi Raghaviah

[2] For the silver jubilee of the Benares Hindu University

nor unwilling. She feels one with you. Your wish, therefore will be her wish, and that is as it should be. The question, therefore, is what is for her good. If you are going to stay there for a sufficiently long time, she may perhaps benefit a little by going there. I think she should stay there when you are not there. It may not even be necessary for her to stay there. She does have the spirit of devotion in her. What we have to consider is whether or no the atmosphere there will make her work. In this life she will not look upon anybody else as her guru. You are her guru and, therefore, you have but to command her. Your stay there will be over by the time this correspondence comes to an end. If you are getting complete peace of mind there and also getting all other facilities which you need, do not leave the place. If you decide to stay on, or even if you don't, send a wire if you want Shanta there. I will send her immediately. I have exchanged wires with you merely because your wire left scope for further thinking. It was necessary to think about both Mahesh and Shanta. I have understood that you are sending for both for their own sakes and not because you want their services. If your motive is to get their services, we will have to think in a different way.

There is no special news regarding Sardar today. You must have got my letter of yesterday. Madalasa is fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3023

42. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

August 25, 1941

CHI. KAKA,

I have your letter. It will be very good indeed if you recover by the end of August. Do not be in the least impatient. You will be able to work in peace if you recover completely.

Do go to Allahabad, but before doing so have a discussion with me.

Amritlal has told me nothing. Is there any man who never 'bungles'? What else is Churchill doing? And what am I doing? I still remember that Deshbandhu Das had flung at me this very word. We should rectify our mistake as soon as we discover it, and go ahead. If we again commit a mistake we should set it right again. And, moreover, Raihana is with you now and she will cheer you up. Yes, one thing is certain. I will not burden you with any fresh responsibility.

We cannot by an unnatural effort break off the connection with

the Sammelan[1]. It will break on its own when the time comes. Our effort should be to see that it does not break. I think Shriman will have to go to Allahabad.

Do go to Prayag. You will be able to attend to several things there without much trouble. But go only after you have fully recovered.

Tell Raihana that I got both her letters. Both call for a reply, but I am going to keep quiet. Instead of giving her a slap througha letter, I will do so personally when she comes here. And I will give one to Saroj, too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10950

43. LETTER TO NATVARLAL J. VEPARI

August 25, 1941

BHAI NATVARLAL,

Now you should not send me any further material. The report you send should be the final one. If either party desire to tell me more, they may do so in writing and send it to me. After I receive your report, I shall consider you free from responsibility.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10125

44. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

Personal *August 25, 1941*

CHI. SUSHILA,

Tari was agitated today. Her temperature rose and Dr. Das was called. I had been to see her yesterday. She was very upset. She was fed up with Varoda. I had always had t he fear that she would not be able to stay in Varoda. She needs company. She is scared at night. She asked for a male companion. I sent somebody to sleep there. Her fever shot up at night and she was scared. If her fever continues to rise

[1] Akhil Bharatiya Hindi Sahitya Sammelan

like this, I cannot look after her unless I bring her here. She too cannot stay there.

Now Dr. Das is asking for her case history. Hence, you should put down in English whatever you know of it and send it to me. She is my responsibility till you can take charge of her. I shall get Dr. Das to help, but finally what I wish will be done. Tari is a difficult patient. I cannot say if she will allow my decision to be carried out. This matter is strangely complicated. You should not be burdened with it for the present. I shall try to lighten it as much as I can. Right now send me only her case history. I myself do not have a very clear idea of her trouble. You mentioned some gland. But where is the gland ? Today she told the doctor that she felt pain in the lower abdomen when it was pressed.

This was written before 11 o'clock. I may write more after your letter arrives. Now the bell too has gone.

There is nothing from you today. I am increasing my food intake. I prefer to have more butter than milk.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

45. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

August 25, 1941

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter of the 16th. Today your wire has come. Why a wire? How can I reply by wire? My meaning was clear. We and ours cannot hope to derive anything out of what we have gifted away. Draupadi's argument has no place here. You are right when you say that the result of your hard work should not be such as to prevent its fruit being used except in one particular way. Why such fear? Why such lack of trust? Remain absorbed in your work and all will be well. We shall certainly have Dr. Sushila's assistance. This is a difficult year for her. She is preparing for her M.D.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 303. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

46. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

August 26, 1941

CHI. MIRA,

The Rigveda should be here tomorrow.

You don't say anything about your illness. How did the medicine act? Here is *isabgol*[1]. If you have not taken the cascara take half a spoonful of the seed as it is. Drink water after to swallow it.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6488. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9883

47. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

August 26, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have received your letter today. Dr. Das was not hurt at all. He only replied to what I had asked him.

Tari is contemplating going to the Mahilashram. She does not want to come here. She has no faith in my treatment. She is willing to be with you. She would not like to be at Sevagram. If she goes to the Mahilashram, Kaka Saheb's permission will have to be obtained for a room.

What happened in the case of Sardar was all right.

The anaesthesia problem was bound to be overcome. I shall stop now as Gosibehn is sitting here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] A Unani medicine

48. TELEGRAM TO SHRINARAYAN JAINARAYAN[1]

August 27, 1941

NO OBJECTION IF PROVINCIAL PRESIDENT AGREEABLE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

49. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA (C.P.),
August 27, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your note.

Of course I have not lost hope of seeing swaraj in my life-time. When you return I shall see to your chest being kept out of harm's way.

I am glad you met Prakash and invited her. She is not married. The one who was married is Satya. Prakash is in Bettiah.

Kusum is leaving today.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Gosibehn is here for A.I.V.I.A. Herewith Keskar's[2] letter. You know Narendra Dev[3]. Write to M. or anyone you like and see what can be done.

From the original: C.W. 4060. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7369

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram dated August 25, requesting Gandhiji to allow the Chairman of the Chikhli Municipality to withdraw his resignation temporarily as there was work pending.

[2] B. V. Keskar

[3] A leader of the Congress Socialist Party. He was then seriously ill in the prison.

50. LETTER TO S. N. CHATTERJEE

August 27, 1941

MY DEAR SAILEN,

You are beyond improvement. "Encloser" is wrong; it should be enclosures. Newspaper is one word, not "news paper". Not "Hope you must have decided", but 'Hope you have decided'. Nothing has been decided. Am trying. You should stop the diary. It is a waste of time. Send me a paraphrase of the book you are reading. Keep the dictionary by you.

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

Dhiren has done well in his Parichay examination[1]. You too should make up your Hindi.

SHRI SAILENDRANATH CHATTERJI
PREMIER STORES SUPPLY CO.
SITABULDI
NAGPUR

From a photostat: C.W. 10321. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

51. LETTER TO MARGARET JONES

August 27, 1941

DEAR KAMALA,

I had your note. You are right. City people will not take interest in things of permanent value. It is vexing this delay in Mary's coming.

Love

BAPU

Bapu—Conversations and Correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 196

[1] Conducted by the Rashtrabhasha Prachar Samiti, Wardha

52. LETTER TO DHIRUBHAI B. DESAI

August 27, 1941

CHI. DHIRUBHAI,

I have received a serious complaint against you. I am told that you have been saying everywhere that this fight must stop now and that we should take back the reins of administration in our hands, etc. If this is true, should I not be told? If you do hold such views there is no harm at all in declaring them. And if you hold them, how can you continue as President of the B. P. C. C.[1] unless, of course, the majority of the B. P. C. C. also hold similar views? But in that case I should be informed. Write to me frankly whatever the truth is. If we honestly hold a view, there is no need at all to keep it back.

From the Gujarati original: Bhulabhai Desai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

53. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

Personal *August 27, 1941*

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. You have not made a mistake at all. I suggested to you the general rule. It was only proper that you went. I only replied to the question you asked me. You must also go and see the girl. You must go wherever Mahadev desires.

I see from your letter to Sankaran that you are absolutely against my stopping milk. I have kept Annapurna completely on fruit juice and soup of leafy vegetables. That also seems to have done her some good. Explain this to me.

I follow your point about butter. You know I do not like it. I shall gradually increase the milk quota. Butter seems to have had some good effect on the bowel movement. The weight is increasing. I shall of course maintain good health till you come.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Prakash is at Simla. She has met Rajkumari. She was invited for lunch.

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Bombay Provincial Congress Committee

54. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

August 27, 1941

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

Remember that if your penance is pure, you will return here.[1] Wherever you may be study of Urdu must not be given up, and you should improve your Hindi letters. Learn more and more of the science of farming and cow-breeding.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, p. 289

55. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

August 28, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I see that I can keep you going even there. I passed on to you yesterday N[arendra] Dev's case. Read the enclosed cutting[2]. See if you can do anything about it. Perhaps you are the best medium. Sarup[3] is doing something. The Press reports are so hopelessly one-sided that it becomes difficult to know the truth.

I wonder if my statement on the wretched Indo-Burman Agreement[4] is published in the papers you get. If you see Bajpai tell him I was deeply grieved to see him involved in the national dishonour. I would like to know his defence if he has any. I have said the least about his part in the affair.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

This was before the arrival of the post. There is no hurry about the apples. I have given the permission, acquired no right.
Here is Shah's letter.

[1] At Gandhiji's instance the addressee had decided to leave Sevagram Ashram as he couldn't control his temper. Finally, however, he did not leave the Ashram.

[2] This is not available.

[3] Vijayalakshmi Pandit

[4] *Vide*"Statement to the Press", 24-8-1941

You will do what you like. Perhaps it is better to let them fight out their own battle.

Prabhakar had fever yesterday. Annapurna has been having slow fever.

Of course you are better in spelling as in many other things. You must be better in health, too.

Love.

BAPU

[PPS.]

I just discovered that Ramdas had already ordered the virus and the exterminator. So if you have not ordered, stop.

From the original: C.W. 4061. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7370

56. LETTER TO S.N. CHATTERJEE

August 28, 1941

DEAR SAILEN,

You have to come away.[1] You should therefore return as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10322. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

57. LETTER TO G. L. KHANOLKAR

SEVAGRAM,
August 28, 1941

DEAR KHANOLKAR,

I had your wire as also your letter. I am in correspondence with Vijayalakshmibehn as also others and am doing all that is possible for me. How did you come to know of the treatment? Or are you relying upon the newspaper reports? Keep me posted with all the information you can get. What are you doing in Cawnpore?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] At Gandhiji's instance the addressee had gone to Nagpur for training in accountancy.

58. LETTER TO NATVARLAL J. VEPARI

August 28, 1941

BHAI NATVARLAL,

I was surprised by your letter of the 25th. From an auditor you have become a plaintiff. Even if I have received complaints against you, surely I am not going to entertain them. So far as I am concerned, you are free, having submitted your report. Actually you have done us a favour by auditing the accounts. Why should you feel unhappy? You can make any marks you like on the papers with you. If you think fit you may hand them over to Bachhraj Co. Or if you wish they will deposit them with some lawyer. The Navajivan office will need the account books every now and then. I will certainly inquire into the charge you have levelled against them, but I must say that I have not agreed to inquire into their affairs, nor do I entertain any suspicion against them. I cannot readily believe that they have all conspired with Chandrashankar. Some of your remarks have appeared strange to me. But I do not blame you for them. You have stated what you honestly felt. I have now to sift the truth.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10126

59. LETTER TO HARSHADA D. DIWANJI

August 28, 1941

CHI. HARSHADA,

I have your letter and the ten-rupee note. The manner in which you are observing the rules is excellent. There is not only no need to send the yarn to me, but you need not send it to Kakubhai either. You can certainly buy it. It will, therefore, suffice if you send the amount which you think the yarn is worth.

Chi. Abhimanyu's skein is excellent. The yarn seems to be fine and even.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9955

60. LETTER TO SHIVANAND

August 28, 1941

CHI. SHIVANAND,

You have written in good detail. Tell Fulchand[1] not to lose heart. Those on the death-bed have risen whereas others, [full of life] like a juicy berry, have passed away in the space of a yawn. We dance as the Master makes us dance and so, if in spite of our reasonable precautions we have to depart, we should do so with a smile on our face.

Fulchand has great work to his credit. As I was writing this sentence, some visitors arrived.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2872. Courtesy: Sharda F. Shah

61. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

August 28, 1941

CHI. LILI,

I have your letter. I think the letter you wrote was not proper. And, moreover, where was the need to send it to the Trustees? You also were certainly at fault. Students should have nothing to do with the servants. What does it matter if they do not supply aniseed? And if you do, not get tea you should put up with that. Is this [habit of] quarrelling over trifles also what you learnt here? Anyway Mahadev has had to apologize on your behalf.

And it is not proper, either, that you should lose heart about your studies. There is no slavery there. You are a slave only of your habit and your anger. You should get over these shortcomings. If you cannot do that, I can see that it will be difficult for you tocontinue there. You should regard yourself forbidden to have tea in Irani restaurants, for is it not the rule that you will get tea only once a day? Go to Mahadevbhai himself, understand from him what your dharma is and follow it.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9382. Also C.W. 6657. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1]Fulchand Kasturchand Shah

62. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

August 28, 1941

CHI. KANCHAN,

Does your postcard mean that your going there has meant too much expense and that you need not have gone? If so, you need not at all assume that you must stay there. You can even return or go to Sabarmati or somewhere else. Write to me in detail. Eat some leafy vegetable like amaranth. And I hope you take fruit. You must get clear stools. Have you had good rains?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8272. Also C.W. 7155. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

63. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

August 28, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Taribehn would not listen to anyone. She would listen to you or your namesake Sushila. And Sushila also listens to you. Hence, ultimately Tari will be cured only by you. She will not go to Bombay. She will remain here somehow. You alone should give her the injections. If you insist, I shall arrange that she takes them now. You are coming here on the 13th, are you not ? There is information that Pyarelal will be released on Saturday. Kanu will be going to receive him. A. S. went for the second time because she had to go to Nagpur. Otherwise, what you say is correct.

You will be getting along very well.

I have sent Anasuya's letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

64. LETTER TO P. C. GHOSH

August 29, 1941

DEAR PROFULLA,

I am late replying to your letter.

Sardar is free from the danger that was suspected. Of course he is

considerably reduced and has to be under observation.

Kishorelal is living at the Ashram. He is as well as can be expected.

Khan Saheb had all his teeth extracted. He was better for the extraction.

Rajen Babu is still far from well. He is expected here in September.

Yes, I did hear of the death of Dr. A. Das. I sent a note of condolence[1]. He was truly a great and good national servant. Such tragedies will occur, we have to bear them. There is little malariain the Ashram. But an indefinite and unclassified fever attacks the inmates now and then. Careful nursing brings it down.

I hope all of you are keeping well.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3782

65. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
August 29, 1941

CHI. NARANDAS,

May you live long and render much service. I shall send Jajuji there. As you know, he is a holy man. He is the soul of the Spinners' Association. He was a great lawyer, but today he lives like a fakir.

He will let you have one week. See if you can manage with less. Write to me and let me know the date and other details.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8591. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

66. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 29, 1941

CHI. PYARELAL

Kanaiyo is coming to take you. He will tell you everything. I have also written to Mohammed. Sushila has gone to Bombay to acquire

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Ratanmoni Chatterji", 3-8-1941

more knowledge. The rest when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

67. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

August 29, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is no letter from you today. Kanaiyo is going to receive Pyarelal. Prabhakar is having high fever today. He has been given quinine injections. I am fine. Do not worry.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
C/O ASSTT. DEAN
K. E. M. HOSPITAL
PAREL, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

68. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

August 29, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

I had a meeting of the A.I.V.I.A. just finished, almost 4.30 p.m. Hope you are much better.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMILA

From the original: C.W. 4062. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7371

69. GURUDEV

Sarvodaya is for the *udaya*—rise—of *sarva*—all. Gurudev also longed to serve the world through India and breathed his last while

doing so. He is gone but his experiment is unfinished. His mortal remains are no more but his soul is immortal like ours. Taken in this sense none perishes or dies; none is born. But Gurudev lives on in a special sense. His activities were universal, mostly altruistic and through these he will be immortal. Santiniketan, Sriniketan and Visvabharati—all these are manifestations of one movement. They were his soul and for them Deenabandhu left this world followed by Gurudev. Our true homage should be to maintain these institutions which he is watching wherever he may be.

SEVAGRAM, August 30, 1941

[From Hindi]

Sarvodaya, September 1941

70. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

WARDHAGANJ,
August 30, 1941

SETH JAMNALALJI
CARE HARNANDRAY SURAJMAL
KANKHAL

ALL WELCOME MATAJI.[1]

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 247

71. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

August 30, 1941

MY DEAR KU[MARAPPA],

You are in a hurry. You will earn the prize when you have finished your century without the b.p. rising beyond its limit corresponding to the then age.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10158

[1] The source has: "All well. Come Mataji." In his letter dated August 26, 1941, the addressee had suggested that Anandamayi Devi be invited to Wardha to meet Gandhiji.

72. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

August 30, 1941

CHI. LILI,

I have your letter. Your letter to Tilottama is good. I hope everything is all right now. See that you do not make such a mistake again. You must always remember that you are staying there as a free boarder. When you feel your self-respect hurt, your reaction should be not to insult the other in return but to leave the institution. But that does not happen there. It cannot happen in a philanthropic institution. It is we indeed who humiliate ourselves.

If you have calmed down, do not be in a hurry to come here. Take what help you need, master your subjects and acquire proficiency in them.

Pyarelal has been released and is here now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9383. Also C.W. 6658. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

73. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

August 30, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. Pyarelal has arrived. I gave him your letter to read. He seems to be in a cheerful mood. We have not talked. Most probably he will come there and also go to Delhi.

Annapurna's fever is not going. Manu is giving her the medicine that was given to Rajkumari. Prabhakar is well. I had thought your suggestion about the diet was to be continued only up to the 13th, when you would be arriving. I shall carry on with what I am taking now and after your arrival on the 13th, shall make whatever changes you suggest. So far, 2 oz. of butter is having good effect. I am gradually increasing the milk quota. The bowel movement has considerably improved. The enclosed cartoons have been brought by Pyarelal. You will like them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

74. FOREWORD TO "PRACTICAL NON-VIOLENCE"

It is simply a coincidence that these essays on "Practical Non-violence" are being published in pamphlet form almost simultaneously with Richard Gregg's *A Discipline for Non-violence*[1]. The votary of non-violence should read the two together. Kishorelal Mashruwala is like R. Gregg a deep student of non-violence. Though he has been brought up in that faith, he never takes anything for granted. He believes only what he has tested. Thus he has come to accept non-violence by hard thinking. He has in his own life and practice proved its efficacy in a variety of conditions—political, economic, social and domestic. His essays have, therefore, a value all their own. They should help the believer in non-violence in sustaining his faith and the honest unbeliever in resolving his doubts.

M. K. GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, August 31, 1941

Practical Non-violence

75. A DIFFICULT PROBLEM

A person who is scientifically inclined does not take the truth of anything for granted; he tries to prove it himself. In this way he develops his own intellect and also obtains knowledge of the potentialities of things. Why does an apple fall off the tree, why does it not fly up? It is said that this question arose in Newton's mind and he discovered the law of gravitation. Is the earth flat like a plate? Is it stationary? Such questions arose in Galileo's mind and he discovered that the earth is spherical like an orange and revolves on its axis. Such discoveries have produced great results.

A khadi worker should adopt a similar scientific attitude. Newton or Galileo did not ponder over the problem of *Daridran-arayana* and of serving *Daridranarayana*. They followed an intellectual quest. The khadi worker has however to find a solutionto the problem of feeding the hungry masses. That is why their attitude should be all the more scientific.

Why khadi? Why not mill cloth? Also, why not foreign cloth? Why cotton cloth? Why not silk? Why not jute or woollen textiles? Why the charkha? Why not the *takli*? I can go on filling pages with questions

[1] For Gandhiji's foreword to this pamphlet, *vide* "Forward to "A Discipline For Non-Violence", 24-8-1941

like these but I do not propose to exhaust all the possible questions.

I want to touch upon only one question here. Suppose for a moment that for one reason or the other India does not have or cannot run textile mills, also suppose that no cloth can be imported from abroad, can we then provide sufficient khadi to all the Indians? We should not be satisfied with meeting the demand somehow. The East India Company did this and to some extent this was done even earlier. In those days people were forced to spin and to weave on minimum wages. This custom was called *begar*. We have to confess with regret that *begar* is an ancient custom. It was not introduced by the British. We may perhaps be able to produce enough khadi through *begar*. But khadi workers cannot be trained to undertake such inhuman work. Our intention is to help the spinners earn such wages as would ensure, after eight hours' hard labour, wholesome and nutritious food, necessary clothing, comfortable houses and other amenities necessary for a happy home. If it is proved that khadi cannot succeed under these terms and conditions, we should modestly accept the limitations of khadi and also restrict our activity.

Let me state my view here. I have adopted khadi in the belief that khadi has all the above-mentioned capacity. I cannot adduce irrefutable evidence in support of my view. Many of my activities are undertaken in good faith or intuitively. But they are not conducted on the basis of inspiration alone; I have tried to place my convictions on a sound scientific foundation while propagating them. I have made and am still making all possible experiments based on reason and I encourage my co-workers to do so. We have not found a solution to the problem posed above; we may perhaps never get it and I know it is a difficult problem, a complex problem. It does involve a lot of statistics as also knowledge of economics, psychology, particularly of the Indian mind, and also of ethics. A mere statistical solution will not do, nor will a mere economic solution, because we cannot ignore our most fundamental and vital principles. We do not want to spread khadi through coercion. We want to do our work by changing people's sense of values and habits. Hence our researches should proceed from all angles.

Khadi workers should intensify their efforts to solve this difficult problem.

This is enough for the day.

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, August 1941

76. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

August 31, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter.

I think I have told you that I do not worry about your health. I know you are getting on. I have resigned myself to your return being indefinitely delayed. And just now I am glad you are not here. The heat is severe and damp. You know what it is after the rains. This heat is needed by the crops but not by you at any rate.

I had your apple today. It was very good.

P. will be going to Bombay and thence to Delhi. He would return here to offer C[ivil] D[isobedience].He has visibly increased his knowledge of the Koran. Are you keeping up your practice of Urdu writing? You should, if you are not.

A[mtul] S[alaam] is keeping quite well and working in the kitchen, etc., etc. Annapurna has not yet got rid of her slow fever.

I have not thought over the League resolutions.[1]

But I agree with your criticism. Yes, Satyamurti had acted most unwisely.[2]

Love.

BAPU

From the original C.W. 4063. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7372

[1] The Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League, which concluded its session on August 26, 1941, passed resolutions on the question of inclusion of Muslims in the expanded Viceroy's Executive Council and the National Defence Council, the political and communal situation in the country, the Indo-Burma Agreement and the Bihar-Sharif riots. The Committee called upon Sir Sultan Ahmed, member-designate of the Viceroy's Executive Council, the Nawab of Chhatari and Begum Shah Nawaz, members of the National Defence Council, to resign from their respective bodies within ten days.

[2] At a public meeting in Madras on August 27, S. Satyamurti, Deputy Leader of the Congress Party in the Central Assembly, had expressed the opinion that the Congress should resume office in the provinces.

77. LETTER TO FARID ANSARI

SEVAGRAM,
August 31, 1941

DEAR FARID,

I have your letter with Brijkrishna's footnote.

I have written to Satyawati inviting her to come to Sevagram. No reply.

Jamnalalji went to Rajkumari's home for health. He is now in Anandamayi Devi's Ashram near Dehra [Dun]. He will be returning about 21st September. He is well.

Radhabehn has passed, is well and gaining experience as a pathologist.

Sardar is out of immediate danger but not out of the wood. No cause for anxiety.

The rest you know.

My regards to all.

Love.

BAPU
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

78. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

August 31, 1941

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. I do not expect any letter from you at present. If you can politely get yourself released from the doctors and come here, I should like it. I believe that your intestines can be soothed by remedies like mud-packs and changes in diet. I have not much faith in ayurveda. The vaids do not master their subject. Some of the remedies are effective, but I have not observed what the vaids know, how they work and so on. This is only my guess-work. Do what satisfies you. I have only expressed my personal view. Anyhow you must get well. I would not let you spend a whole hour in the lavatory.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallahbbhaine, p. 251

79. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

August 31, 1941

CHI. MANI,

I deliberately refrained from writing to you. I do not wish to send you to jail just now. I will certainly send you when the time arrives. Even being outside you are doing useful work. The time to send you will certainly come. For the present go on doing service without any other thoughts and improve your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. MANIBEHN PATEL
68 MARINE DRIVE
BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 131

80. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

August 31, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. It was just as well that you did not come. I had in any case planned to send Pyarelal. Your studies are of the utmost importance to me. It is also good that Satya is there.

Tari has gone to stay near the Mahilashram. She can never be comfortable without her friend. She may accompany you to Delhi. She wants to live only in the Harijan Ashram. That will be too far for you. Now it will be difficult to get the car. We shall see about it when you come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

81. LETTER TO INDIRA NEHRU

August 31, 1941

CHI. INDU,

I am very glad to have your letter. I have been getting news of your health. It is good that you have not suffered on account of this climate. On the contrary it did some good, didn't it?

I am also trying for Lucknow Jail. Let us wait for the result. Tell me what is done about Papu[1]. How many times do you meet?
My blessings to Raja[2] and Krishna[3]. I hope their children are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9803. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

82. TELEGRAM TO SHIVANAND

September 1, 1941

SHIVANAND
WADHWAN

MY CONDOLENCES. IN FULCHAND'S DEATH WE LOSE ONE OF OUR BRAVEST AND BEST WORKERS. THOUGH SO YOUNG HE HAS DIED WELL. SHARDA[4] AND YOU WHO WERE NEAR HAVE TO CARRY ON FUL-CHAND'S WORK.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10344. Courtesy: Shivanand

83. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 1, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your well-written Hindi letter to hand.

Why not have your women's meeting in Simla? Those who will

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru
[2] Gunottam Hutheesing and his wife, sister of Jawaharlal Nehru
[3] *ibid*
[4] Fulchand Kasturchand Shah's widow

attend are most of them well-to-do, are they not? But if it is not important it is better that it takes place in your absence. It will be a tax on your energy, if it is in your presence.

Here is a copy of my letter to Satyamurti. Please destroy after perusal.

I do not want you to write to Mudie. It is enough what you have done. Sarup and Kripalani have seen Sloan[1]. They have got some satisfaction.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Rathi's[2] letter is good. 1 did right in not taking you. You should seek an opportunity of going there now to help. But of that later.

From the original: C.W. 4064. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N 7373

84. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

September 1, 1941

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I have gone through your letter from the beginning to the end. It has produced no effect on me. You have seen nothing with your own eyes. It is all hearsay. One should not suspect a co-worker on the basis of such stories. If L. bhai had been devoid of character, the fact would have become known long ago. He would not have been able to retain [the goodwill] of so many people. Such a man cannot go on working ceaselessly. I have of course talked to L. bhai. He denies everything. I would advise you to have trust till you get first-hand evidence. One can write to me whatever one wishes. You are certainly of a suspicious nature. You are not able to weigh evidence. All the same I am sending your letter to Narahari, who will do what is necessary.[3] And finally the path of ahimsa requires that we should trust to the last, and have faith that sin cannot be hidden for ever.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 394. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

[1] Tennant Sloan, Adviser to the Governor, U.P.
[2] Rathindranath Tagore son of Rabindranath Tagore
[3] *Vide* the following item.

85. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

September 1, 1941

CHI. NARAHARI,

Read the accompanying papers when you are free and see if it is necessary to do anything. Return Bhagwanji's letter to him after reading it. If you think it necessary, meet any of the people whose names he has mentioned.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9124

86. LETTER TO DR. NATHUBHAI PATEL

September 1, 1941

BHAI NATHUBHAI,

Why do you feel ashamed about your Gujarati? We are all sailing in the same boat. However badly we write it, our mother tongue must be dear to us.

You have given me good information and also explained the matter well. I am hopeful that I shall be able to convince Sardar on your behalf. Bring him out of bed first. With so many of you doctors there, why should he have to spend one hour in the lavatory? That is as good as inviting death.

I suppose you know that Durga has not fully recovered. She gets belching and has pain in her leg. She is still in Ahmedabad. This is for your information if you do not know it.

Mahadev will of course get well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1057. Courtesy: Dr. Nathubhai Patel

87. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM,
September 1, 1941

CHI. MRIDU,

I have your postcard and letter. Is it Mahadev who is blessed in having you as secretary or is it you who are blessed in being Mahadev's

secretary ? Who can answer ? Since you have not come I keep postponing revising your writing and attend to other things. You should not fall ill now. Why should I worry about Mahadevbhai ? Good doctors and you, too, are there. Now do not let him work so much.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 11216. Courtesy : Sarabhai Foundation

88. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 1, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is no letter from you today. Pyarelal is not going today. Some work remains to be done. And he has promised to be present when Kolaya comes to consult Dr. Das. He is his jail companion. He will definitely start tomorrow (Tuesday). The telegram has been sent today.

You must be knowing about Mahadev's illness. If you do not you would do well to pay a visit there. Mary Barr[1] has arrived. She is also there.

My weight was up by two lb. yesterday. It is now $102\frac{1}{2}$ 1bs. This is mainly the result of taking more butter. I am eating two oz. [of it]. The cream formed when milk is boiled is also butter, is it not ? Does it contain anything else? It is difficult to remove butter after churning buttermilk. There is no difficulty in taking out cream by boiling milk on slow fire.

Prabhakar is free from fever. Akbar is fine. Annapurna's ailment is not yet under control. I have given her very mild doses of megasulpha and sodasulpha. Her tongue is bad; she has no appeme. Her face does not look right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] F. Mary Barr, who had gone to South Africa

89. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

September 2, 1941

CHI. MARY, [1]

At last you have come. And now that you have arrived it seems you had never left India. I shall patiently await your arrival at Sevagram. I hope you have derived much physical benefit from your visit to S[outh] A[frica].

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Please tell Kamala that I forgot to tell her that her standpoint about Red Cross, etc., was correct. You are right about her health. Fault is wholly hers. She can easily procure the food she needs.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6082. Also C.W. 3412. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

90. LETTER TO K. B. MENON

SEVAGRAM,
September 2, 1941

DEAR MENON,

I have your two letters. I shall try to send you something. Seeing that Thakkar Bapa is there to guide you, I am not taxing myself about Jainarayanji.[2]

Yours,

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The superscription is in the Devanagari script.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to K. B. Menon", 7-5-1941

91. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

September 2, 1941

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

You are having good experience. Let it result in your rendering truly great service of the people.

SHRI VALLABHRAM VAIDYA
BIRLA HOUSE
P.O. UTTARKASHI
DISTT. TEHRI GARHWAL

From Gujarati: C.W. 2915. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya

92. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

September 2, 1941

BHAI MUNSHI,

I got your letter. Let Chi. Sarala[1] come over.

You have made a good tour. I have not read everything, but have formed some impression. For years conditions in Bengal have been what you describe them to be.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7666. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

93. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 2, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have not received your letters for two days. Hence, what can I write? Besides, I am sending Pyarelal. What more ? Kaka Saheb is sitting before me talking. And so, this much is enough for today. I am counting the days for your arrival. Annapurna is causing anxiety. The rest is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The addressee's eldest daughter Sarala Sheth who was a solicitor of the High Court of Bombay

94. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 2, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

The earliest I can hear from you will be the day after tomorrow. It is another matter if you have written on the way. Taribehn is still running a slight temperature. She is still at Sevagram. She may go to Varoda in a couple of days. I have left it entirely to her. You must have resumed your work properly.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

95. LETTER TO UMADEVI AGRAWAL

September 2, 1941

CHI. OM,

At last you have taken the trouble of writing a letter. Kakaji[1] would soon return now. And with what great and vivid experience! The description of your place is such that I wish I could send all my patients to you, not only Janakidevi and Madalasa. What do you say?

Blessings to both from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 344 5

96. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

September 2, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You can imagine my condition twenty-five years ago. Now I stay in bed and accept service. At that time mostly I used to do physical work and took part in all activities. There was this difference,

[1] Jamnalal Bajaj, addressee's father

that when I worked almost everyone used to come and join me.[1]

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4401

97. LETTER TO POKHRAJ

September 2, 1941

BHAI POKHRAJJI,

I have read the letter Dr. Hasan sent you. In my view there is now no reason why the document should not be got from theCommissioner. If the Council's permission is considered necessary it should be obtained.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

98. LETTER TO JUGALKISHORE BIRLA

SEVAGRAM,
September 2, 1941

BHAI JUGALKISHOREJI,

I have your sweet letter, although I think something still remains to be done. There is no particular need for you to come. Come when you have the leisure. My blessings are to be taken for granted for all noble work.

Blessings from

BAPU

SETH JUGALKISHORE BIRLA
8 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLACE
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

99. LETTER TO JAINARAYAN VYAS

September 2, 1941

BHAI JAINARAYAN,

I have your letter. We should not make it a rule that a policy adopted in respect of British India should be [applied][2] also in the

[1] The rest of the letter is not available.
[2] Blank space in the source

States. My personal opinion remains that those who wish to follow the policy of non-violence should keep clear of the various current entanglements.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

JAINARAYAN VYAS
BRAHMAPURI
JODHPUR, MEWAR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

100. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 2/3, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have now begun to send you business. You know that Ratlam has passed unconscionable sentences on certain members of the Praja Parishad. The men are important people. Do you know anybody there? If you want any literature, it can be supplied. If you do not know, you need not worry.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Your note in Hindi. The apples received from [you] were not each wrapped in paper. Should they not have been?

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4065. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7374

101. LETTER TO SHARDA F. SHAH

September 3, 1941

CHI. SHARDA,

I have sent a wire[2]. I cannot forget Fulchand. I feel that his soul is present by my side. What are your plans now? You must not waste even one minute in mourning. Your only thought should be how to carry on the work Fulchand has left behind. And please remember that you can come here without any hesitation whenever you wish to

[1] The addressee had asked whether he could join the Air-Raid Precaution Consultative Committee appointed by the Government of Jodhpur.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Shivanand", 1-9-1941

and always keep me fully informed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2873. Courtesy: Sharda F. Shah

102. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
September 3, 1941

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. You have done well in giving me all the details. I sent yesterday Jassawala's[1] letter. I strongly urge your starting treatment as advised by him. Once the health badly deteriorates, all remedies are likely to fail. I do think you must have a discussion with Dr. Nathubhai.

Keep me fully informed.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 131

103. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 3, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

It is surprising that there is no letter from you for three days.

Pyarelal will have arrived. He does not eat well. See to it there. There is a book called *Princes and Chiefs and Notable Persons in Kathiawad*. Barrister Chudgar writes that he had sent the book. If Pyarelal remembers, let him write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
C/O ASSTT. DEAN
K. E. M. H.
PAREL, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1]A naturopath of Bombay

104. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 4, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

Mian If[tikhar-ud-din] is here, so is Sarala, Munshiji's daughter, and others. I send you this merely to acknowledge yours and say all is well. More tomorrow.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4066. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7375

105. LETTER TO SACHIDANAND KARKAL

September 4, 1941

DEAR SACHIDANAND,

Surely you and the other students . . .[1] guidance from me. You can flatly refuse to submit to coercion and take the consequence whatever it may be. You ought to resent insult to the Congress by asking for an apology . . .[2] enter the teacher's class till heoffers an apology. But remember every criticism is not an insult. A loyalist can legitimately say that though the Congress resists the Br[itish] caravan moves on.

Yours sincerely,

M. K GANDHI

SHRI SACHIDANAND KARKAL

HOUSE NO. 5020, CHRISTIAN COLONY

SETTLEMENT

HUBLI

From a photostat: G.N. 8807

106. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

September 4, 1941

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I got your second letter. I do not wish to hush up the matter. Don't you know that I have not hushed up the misdeeds of my own

[1] One line is illegible here.

[2] *ibid*

son? Why, then, should I do L.'s? But just as I disbelieved the evidence against Manilal produced by Devdas, so also I will not readily believe the evidence against L. Devdas had not seen anything with his own eyes, nor did you. It was, ultimately, my unbounded trust which melted Manilal and he confessed everything. Why may not the same thing happen in L's case? L. has not concealed the facts about his past life, why then should he conceal anything about his present life, and what would he gain by doing so? Still I believe nothing is impossible and, therefore, am ready to hear you. But you will have to learn to weigh evidence.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 395. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

107. LETTER TO PURATAN J. BUCH

September 4, 1941

CHI. PURATAN,

Bhagwanji has sent extracts from your diary casting aspersions on Dada. He has made very serious allegations, or has allowed himself to be used as a tool in making them. Let me know what you knowand believe concerning this. You can show this letter to Bhai Bhagwanji.

Both of you must be keeping well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9183

108. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

September 4, 1941

CHI. AMRITLAL,

You are a fortunate man. Father's falling into sleep eternal without having to be nursed by anybody is no occasion for mourning. I vividly see his face before me. He was a very holy man. Console Mother and return soon after finishing your work there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10802

109. LETTER TO PYARELAL AND SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 4, 1941

CHI. PYARELAL AND SUSHILA,

I have your two separate letters today. I sent Annapurna to the hospital for a check-up today. The report has not yet been received.

There are a lot of people here today. Mian Iftikhar-ud-din, Manu Subedar, Amala, Munshi and Dadachanaji. Hence, I can write this only with great difficulty.

The Kutchi Meman affair is interesting.

Let Pyarelal start only after settling everything properly.

Sushila does not have to go to Panchgani or anywhere else. She cannot afford to spare even a single day in Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

110. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

September 5, 1941

BHAI MUNSHI,

Chi. Sarala arrived safe yesterday. I intended to write to you yesterday, but so many visitors arrived all at once that I had no time. Sarala possesses the virtues which her name connotes. She has become friendly with all. I hope she will stay up to Wednesday at any rate. None of you should worry about her in any way.

A letter from Satish Kalelkar is enclosed.[1] I have taken out extracts concerning you from his previous letter. The original has been sent to Mahadev and others according to the normal routine. Thinking that you should see his letter, I asked for his permission and the accompanying letter is in reply to that. Since the whole of it concerns you, I am sending the letter itself. If you wish to write tome anything after reading it, please do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] Satish Kalelkar had complained about the addressee's speech at Banaras. *Vide* letter to the addressee dated September 11, 1941.

[PS.]

I will send the extract from Satish's letter tomorrow, as Kanaiyo, in whose keeping it is, has gone to Wardha and I do not wish to hold back this letter.

From Gujarati: C.W. 7667. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

111. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September5, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Your letters have been very irregular of late. Mahadev was down with pneumonia after all. Pyarelal must be having his treatment. Everything should be all right.

Blessings to both of you from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
C/O ASSTT. DEAN
K. E. M. H.
PAREL, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

112. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

September 5, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

It was no doubt a mistake to have allowed Nirmal Singh to go. But such mistakes will happen. It is enough that you are anxious to correct them.

Parnerkar can have Sailen. He has to be fully trained.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4402

113. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

Unrevised *September 5, 1941*

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I write this during the silent hour, i.e., before dinner and before the post.

I have not heard from Agatha nor from Henry[1]. But I saw H.'s article in a magazine which contained the attack. I thought I should correct him. If you want to see the article I can send it to you. And as I did not know H.'s address I wrote to Agatha.

Of course you were right in refusing the Hyd. invitation as you would be in refusing every other. I sent it to you so that you may know it and send a reply. You were bound to refuse. Before you take up anything you must be thoroughly restored. Even as it is, you are giving a good account of yourself.

You remember the pamphlet containing the Lahore resolution[2] on Pakistan! Two copies have been traced in the library.

I never anticipate evil. So the answer to your question stands deferred till the .evil overtakes us but which shall not. Is that satisfactory answer, if it is any? Do you remember your question?

For the time being you need do nothing about Narendra Dev. I shall inquire. I do not know anything about the Dehra Dun offer.

Prabhavati wrote for the transfer of Jayaprakash on the ground of ill health, which is patent. Her application is summarily rejected. They can't do anything because it is right. They yield only to pressure bordering on violence. We are on that portion of *Ramayana* which relates Narad's confusion because he had to be corrected. Truly does God confound the wisdom of those whom He seeks to destroy. Here is a telegram about Ratlam. I have already written to you about the case.[3]

Love.

BAPU

[1] Henry Solomon Leon Polak; assistant editor of *The Transvaal Critic*, joined *Indian Opinion* staff, became its editor in 1906 during Gandhiji's absence in England. He lived with Gandhiji at Phoenix, and was an ardent supporter of the Indian cause in South Africa. *Vide* also "Letter to Mirza Ismail", 5-10-1941.

[2] Passed by the All-India Muslim League on March 23, 1940; *vide* "Resolution Passed by All-India Muslim League", 23-3-1940

[3] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 2/3-9-1941

[PS.]

I send you too a copy of a letter from Andhra, not necessarily for action but for information to be used on due occasion.

From the original; C.W. 3677. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6486

114. INTERVIEW TO H. V. KAMATH[1]

SEVAGRAM,
September 5, 1941

Q. Has the entry of Russia into the war altered its complexion and India's attitude thereto?

A. The entry of Russia into the war has not materially altered the complexion of the war. Expression of oral sympathy with Russia as a victim of aggression is not wrong but no purpose will be served by so doing so long as we cannot translate it into action. Russia is not wholly free from blame inasmuch as she has allied herself with imperialist power though it may be for the purpose of self-existence only. Had Jawaharlalji, who is a close student of international politics, not been behind the bars and thus free to express his views, his opinion in the matter would have weighed with me.

Q. Can you, Mahatmaji, envisage the emergence of a non-violent new world order in the Atlantic Charter?

A. No. I am not able to envisage in the Atlantic Charter the emergence of a non-violent new world order of my conception.

Q. What is your attitude towards the acceptance of office in the Viceroy's Executive Council by Congressmen such as Sjt. Aney[2] and Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sircar[3]?

A. I do not approve of the acceptance of office by Congressmen such as Sri Aney and Nalini Babu. Such action on their part has undoubtedly given a handle to the British Government for carrying on propaganda in America to the effect that India should now be satisfied in that even well-known ex-Congressmen have joined the Viceroy's Council.

Q. Is the satyagraha movement proceeding to your satisfaction? In what way is it

[1] H. V. Kamath, Organizing Secretary of the All-India Forward Bloc, submitted this report for Gandhiji's approval who revised it in places, though not very materially.

[2] Madhav Srihari Aney who joined as member-in-charge, Overseas Indians

[3] Who joined as member-in-charge, Education, Health and Lands

different from the 1930 movement[1]? Has the policy of non-embarrassment any political value or significance? What will be your attitude in case the Government conceded the right of freedom of speech? Is there any likelihood of intensification of the struggle in the near future?

A. The satyagraha movement is proceeding to my entire satisfaction. Pressure on a scale comparable to that of the 1930 movement is not being put on the Government, it is true, but that movement was different in character from the present one. But the main fact that the struggle is going on constitutes sufficient moral pressure, so much so that the British Government's position in America does not appear to be quite comfortable. The policy of non-embarrassment is a logical consequence of non-violence and in that way a political necessity, but I do not expect the British Government to reciprocate my chivalrous stand. There is no possibility of the Government conceding the right of freedom of speech, but if they did so honestly, I am bound to call off the movement. *Bona-fide* recognition of free non-violent speech would mean a large step towards independence. Intensification of the struggle is not likely during the pendency of the war. Intensification will come at the close of the war if it became necessary.

Q What is your attitude to the local *kisan* and *mazdoor* struggles?

A. I extend my sympathy to all local *kisan* and *mazdoor* struggles for their legitimate demands and such struggles cannot amount to embarrassment of the Government. My attitude cannot be otherwise, considering that I myself have been the author of such struggles in the past.

Q. In view of the fact that the word 'non-violence' does not appear in the Congress Constitution, what is the duty of Congressmen as regards non-violent conduct?

A. Though the word 'non-violence' does not appear in the Congress Constitution, it does in resolutions. Though there be no resolution of a plenary session of the Congress on the subject of non-violence, I expect Congressmen to abide by the A.I.C.C. resolution so long as it is not modified or altered by a plenary session.

Q. Acharya Kripalani recently, in reply to Sardar Sardul Singh Caveeshar, said that the Forward Bloc is not a part of the Congress organization. The statementon Kripalaniji's part has created not a little confusion and misunderstanding among several Congressmen. I personally hold that the position of the Forward Bloc in the Congress is quite similar to that of the Congress Socialist Party. Could you kindly

[1] Dandi March and Salt Satyagraha

enlighten me with your opinion on the subject?

A. Though the Congress Constitution does not recognize separate groups within the Congress organization, Congressmen who owe allegiance to such groups have every right to remain in the Congress in their individual capacity if the groups are not inconsistent with the Congress resolution and policy. I never insisted that Congressmen who do not subscribe to my interpretation of non-violence should leave the Congress. The Congress Socialist Party is just as much not a part of the Congress organization as the Forward Bloc. The Congress Constitution makes no mention of either as being component parts of the Congress organization. The Forward Bloc and the Congress Socialist Party are on a par with each other so far as their being part of the Congress organization is concerned.

Q. Have you, Mahatmaji, full faith in a Divine Power moulding our destiny?

A. Yes, I have full faith in a Divine Power guiding the destinies of India and of the world. It is this living faith that sustains me in the present crisis.

The Hindu, 5-11-1941

115. LETTER TO SARANGADHAR DAS

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
September 6, 1941

DEAR SARANGADHAR DAS,

Rajkumari is resting in Simla. She won't be back before October. Your letter to her gives a piteous tale.

This is my advice. The men whose statements you have translated had no notion of the working of ahimsa. If they had the courage of non-violence they could not have come away alive except by converting their assailants miscalled Police without retaliation. That would mean ahimsa of the highest order. This does not come except by long previous training. It is rarely seen. But if one cannot exhibit such courage, one must not be a coward. One has not only the right but it is a duty to retaliate in a vigorous manner. This again requires great courage. I have, seen it exhibited successfully. It should not matter how heavy the odds are. Resistance may mean death. It must be faced in preference to a cowardly resignatio to brutal and indecent treatment.Iti this self-defence which is not taboo to a Congressman. It is the inherent right and the bounden duty of a man to defend honour non-violently if he knows how, otherwise violently. There is no other way. Such a man will soon

be able to learn the virtue of non-violence. But that is only by the way. My advice is clear and emphatic. There is too much of this assaulting in Orissa, assuming the truth of statements that have been sent to me from time to time. If you have assimilated my advice you will act in a methodical and deliberate manner. You will be at liberty to publish this letter with a carefully thought out programme as to how to go about it. You may send me the draft manifesto for approval or you may come when you like for a discussion before acting. The matter is too important to be ignored.

From a copy: C.W. 10443. Courtesy: Government of Orissa

116. LETTER TO S. M. MASURKAR

September 6, 1941

DEAR MASURKAR,

If I get the papers referred to by you in your letter of 26th ultimo I shall try to study them.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

117. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 7, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

You had to be satisfied yesterday with Prabha's letter. But she more than compensates for the absence of my very brief letters. And she writes well.

Here is Bablo's[1] letter.

No more heat again here. It has been raining off and on. The sky remains overcast.

Mira is happy in her new cottage. She is putting in artistic decorations on the wall—all sacred things.

Mahadev is restored but weak. He has to be in Ahmedabad.

Jajuji is to go to Narandas. Bul is not so easily led as you. I would have loved to send her. But her heart is in the Frontier work. If she gets the freedom she has asked for, she might be induced to take up work like what you suggest.

[1] Narayan, son of Mahadev Desai

I must send you *Sarvodaya*[1].

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Here is the bell going for 11.

After receipt of post:

Your letter. This week I have lost one lb. You will have done well if you overtake me—hard task?

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4067. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7376

118. LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL

September 7, 1941

DEAR SIR MIRZA,

This[2] for your amusement if nobody else has already passed it on to you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2185

119. LETTER TO PURATAN J. BUCH

September 7, 1941

CHI. PURATAN,

You may come over whenever you wish. Tell Vasumatibehn that I got her letter. Let her by all means complete her programme.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I got your letter. I am glad.

PURATAN BUCH
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9184

[1] A Hindi monthly, published under the auspices of the Gandhi Seva Sangh, edited by Kaka Kalelkar and Dada Darmadhikari

[2] The enclosure is not available.

120. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

September 7, 1941

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I have written to Sushilabehn. Dr. Mehta had sent me a message and now I have your letter. Yes, we have to be careful and if we are, nothing will happen. Dinner parties and banquets on festival days should be avoided. Live in the open air and avoid over-exertion, and eat enough of fruit and greens.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KUNVARJI KHETSI

ZANDU PHARMACY

DADAR

BOMBAY 14

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9750. Also C.W. 729. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

121. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

[*September 7, 1941*][1]

CHI. KANCHAN,

I do not know what truth there is in the accompanying. Mu[nnalal] claims that it is the plain unvarnished truth. Even if it is not so, there is an agreement between us that you should take no offence.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Will you let yourself be medically examined by Manjulabehn?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8271. Also C.W. 7156. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] From the postmark

122. LETTER TO DHIRUBHAI B. DESAI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
September 7, 1941

CHI. DHIRUBHAI,

Received your letter. It is frank. I am satisfied. I don't attach importance to the other things I have heard. More about that when I have time.

You have not written about Bhulabhai's health. I hope he is in good spirits.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

123. LETTER TO PYARELAL

September 7, 1941

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have both your letters. I do hope to be able to meet you in Bombay. If Mathuradas wishes, you must give him a night. The same goes for Mother. Now that so many days have already gone by, a day or two more may as well be spent. Is it not also your duty to satisfy your mother to some extent ? Also, try to find out whether she wants to come here.

See about your spectacles, etc. You need not go leaving things half way.

Enclosed is a letter from Rajkumari.

I shall find out about Chudgar's book. I do not remember to have seen it among the books you had left outside.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

124. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 7, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Would it not be right to say that I have your letter after many days ? I have had two letters from Pyarelal.

You wrote *amrita*[1] in the letter to K.C. In Urdu guava is called *amrud*. There were other mistakes, too, but I do not remember them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9432

317. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 7, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter and the cheque through Prithvi Singh. Why is the cheque of the Travancore bank ? Does it give [a higher] interest or provide more facilities ? Where can that cheque be encashed ? It must be charging a handsome commission. I shall of course make inquiries.

Can you accommodate both the sisters ? How is it your studies get constantly interrupted ? I shall not let you sit for the examination if you are not fully prepared. There should be no question which you cannot answer. If you cannot be so well prepared by April, then you may sit for the examination later. I am not in a hurry. The knowledge you have gained is not going to be wasted, and so, if it takes some more time, so be it. Because, I also do not wish that you should spoil your eyes and health by continuously reading night and day in order to pass. Passing in this way is no better than failing. You have to appear for the examination not for name but for service.

How much khadi did you sell and where did you sell it ?

The Ashram is now becoming very crowded. Vijaya and Vasumati have come. Pannalal has come. Some others will be arriving. More people are eager to come. How can I accommodate them ? Just think of the size of the kitchen and of the verandah, which is the dining place. Construction work is of course going on. There is nosaying when it will end. Nor can I fix a time for it. Let God do as He wills.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Literally, ‘nectar’

received.

Your cough is taking a long time going. Are you talking too much? Can you take a few days' complete silence? It will work a miracle. The Ratlam papers make heavy reading. I won't inflict them on you unless I find it absolutely necessary.

The apples were not damaged. They might have kept fresher if they had been wrapped in paper. Don't you worry about them.

The rest from Prabha. I occupy the Hospital room.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4068. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7377

127. LETTER TO DR. B. C. LAGU

September 8, 1941

DEAR LAGU,

Thanks for your letter. Lakshmibai will be welcome with Premabai. She won't mind being crowded. I am trying the scorpion-sting medicine. It seems to have answered in the one case tried.

Yours,

BAPU

DR. B. C. LAGU
RAMA NIVAS
LAKSHMI RD., NARAYAN PETH
POONA 2

From a photostat: G.N. 1375

128. LETTER TO RATHINDRANATH TAGORE

September 8, 1941

MY DEAR RATHI,

As I sent you wire[1] in reply to yours, I have taken my time to acknowledge yours of 1st instant. If you and the others want me to be President of Visvabharati, I must discuss the project with you. My whole soul is with you all in wishing to keep the triple institution[2] fully

[1] This is not available.
[2] Visvabharati, Santiniketan and Sriniketan.

worthy of Gurudev. Just now I am seriously thinking of touring the country to make up the five lacs if my appeal[1] fails to bring the sum. Please send me a list of what has been sent directly to Santiniketan.
Love.

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI RATHINDRANATH TAGORE
SANTINIKETAN
BENGAL

From a photostat: G.N. 8752

129. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

September 8, 1941

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. I got Puratan's also. He is displeased that you sent his five-year-old note without his consent. It is his opinion now, i.e., after five years' experience, that Dada is a spotless and simple-hearted man. Bhai Puratan believes that the allegation against Dada is the result of a conspiracy by some Harijans. I share his belief. These people have suffered so much that they have lost their humanity. This is of course not true of all of them. We must bear with all this. But while doing so we should not be misled into entertaining suspicions against anybody.

I understand Narahari's criticism. It is a fact that you are collecting evidence. In doing so you cannot but start whisperings among the people. This would foul the atmosphere. And, moreover, you are forgetting your sphere of work. This is bound to interfere with your work. Why do you make yourself a watchman of anyone in the Ashram? It will be enough if others, you and I, all become our own watchmen. Supervision is Narahari's job. If anybody wants to complain let him do so to him. You should plug your ears. I have a beautiful figure of three monkeys, which I always keep in front of me. They are three representations of the same monkey. His ears, mouth and eyes are closed. The lesson the figure teaches is that one should not listen to criticism of or see or speak of anybody's defects. The original of this figure is found on a tall pillar in Japan, and was carved thousands of years ago. We should engrave this lesson in our hearts.

I will hear what you have to say when you come here. I am not inclined at present to send for anybody else. I would send for others

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 12-5-1941

only if I myself am shaken even a little in my mind. But if Narahari is positive in his view, I would not disregard him and make any inquiry. You may, with Narahari's consent, stay for 15 days or more. But you need not come or stay specially for the sake of Nimu. She will get somebody to accompany her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 396. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

130. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
September 8, 1941

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter of the 1st. I have already suggested Jajuji's name for *Rentia Baras* programme. You must have received that letter long ago.[1] Jajuji's other programmes have been suspended in view of that visit. He will be ready to give you eight to ten days. I should now get from you the programme drawn up for him.

Chhaganlal[2] was here for a day. He has assured me that he will complete [the figure]. If necessary he will go as far as Rangoon. The papers report that you have had some rain there. Did you have enough?

It is Prabhashankar[3] about whom I am not sure, but would not Champa[4] also be included? Poor thing, she would do what he asks her to do. And that is natural. I had even gone to the extent of arranging that he should come here while Maganbhai[5] was here. M. is in Delhi now, and will come again in October. After spending a few days here, he intends to go to Rangoon around the 20th. I got your letter afterwards. Information about Jajuji is enclosed. It is better that my message should be conveyed by Jajuji himself. It is too early just yet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8543. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 29-8-1941
[2] Son of Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta
[3] Champa's father
[4] Wife of Ratilal Mehta, Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta's son
[5] Maganlal, youngest son of Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta

131. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 8, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Again there is no letter from you today. But, considering your circumstances, I should not expect a letter from you daily.

I have left it entirely to you to decide where Pyarelal has to be operated upon for his gland. You alone can say where it would be best to have it. Your convenience will no doubt be a factor to consider. You will get this on Tuesday. You must free yourself from there on Friday. I should not worry if you are required there for two or three days. But it is possible that the operation may not be over by that time and you may not be able to free yourself from there in time. The earliest it can be done in Delhi would be on the 16th. Pyarelal can reach there on the 11th at the earliest. He will have to spend five days there. If it is necessary, he may as well spend those days with Mother. Now think about it yourself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

132. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEVAGRAM,
September 8, 1941

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have received your letter. I do not think it advisable for you to have the operation in Wardha. If facilities are easily available in Bombay or Delhi, I see no need to have it done in Wardha. I would go by Sushila's decision in this matter. If she decides in favour of Bombay, it does not matter if she has to waste two or three days. But she would probably prefer Delhi. She can give more personal attention there. In my opinion Sushila should reach Delhi by the 15th. I would consider unavoidable the time spent in undergoing the operation. One may take into consideration the effect it may have on others. But I would treat it as of very little importance. The main thing is the effect it may have on me and on you. I do not think it will make any difference in this regard. I would not like to detain you with me. I would also not like it if you stayed on there or in Delhi without any

valid reason. But so far, not a single day has passed like that. Hence, I am not anxious.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

133. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

September 8, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

If evil thoughts come to mind it means that the mind is empty and Nature abhors a vacuum. So when the mind is not reciting Ramanama or doing His work, then the Devil takes possession of it. So when evil thoughts invade the mind, the only way to check their attack is to recite Ramanama and to do Rama's work. It can never fail. Go on increasing the recitation of Ramanama till you succeed. There is no other remedy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4403

134. NOTE TO RAMNARAYAN CHAUDHARY

September 8, 1941

CHI. RAMNARAYAN,

I have listened to Anjana[1]. I am pained,[2] but there is nothing to worry about. I shall break my silence soon after the prayer meeting today. We three can then sit together and discuss the matter. It will not be proper to talk while out walking.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapu: Maine Kya Dekha, Kya Samjha?, p. 167

[1] Addressee's wife.

[2] The addressee's health had suddenly deteriorated.

135. NOTE TO RAMNARAYAN CHAUDHARY[1]

[*September 8, I941*]

Morning:
Milk 12 ounces
Mosambi 1
11 a.m.
Banana 1
Ghee _ ounce

Vegetables as much as can be contained in an 8-ounce bowl. They could be seasoned with lemon juice, and not more than 10 grains of salt.

2 p.m.

Twelve ounces of butter-milk, 20 grains of soda bicarb and one *mosambi* if you feel hungry.

5.20 p.m.
Milk 12 ounces

Vegetables as much as can be contained in an 8-ounce bowl.

Cucumber raw 2 ounces, whenever available.
Mosambi 1

At night if you feel very hungry then take one banana. Mash it and chew it properly. This is the maximum quantity. If your bowels do not move for three days, take an enema. Give me details every day so that, if I have to make a change, I may do so. Send them in writing.

[From Hindi]

Bapu: Maine Kya Dekha, Kya Samjha?, pp. 167-8

136. LETTER TO M. G. BHAVE

SEVAGRAM,
September 9, 1941

DEAR BHAVEJI[2],

Your letter[3]. I retain the same opinion[4] as before. I am utterly opposed to communalism in everything but much more so in sport.

[1] It was decided that before shifting to Nalwadi the addressee should try, at Sevagram, Gandhiji's prescription received along with the note of this date; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] Secretary, Maharashtra Cricket Association

[3] Dated August 26, 1941, seeking Gandhiji's opinion regarding communal cricket and participation of Hindus therein

[4] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 7-12-1940

You may make what use you like of this opinion. Please do not ask me to do anything more. I have no time.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

137. LETTER TO R. KRISHNAMURTHY

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA (C.P.),
September 10, 1941

DEAR KRISHNAMURTHY[1],

I like your suggestion that leaders should meet and deliver their considered judgement.[2] You put words into the mouths of the masses. Are they not dumb? As to your suggestion, I can do nothing mechanically. God's will be done.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile: *Kalki*, 26-10-1975

138. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 10, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter in perfect Hindi.

Sarojini[3] went yesterday—as chirpy as ever. She was interesting without being instructive. What new things could she tell?

Sarup is still here. She leaves tomorrow for Allahabad. She tells me J[4] & R[5] are both keeping well. She herself is pulled down but is otherwise fit.

Annapurna is better. Rajen Babu came in today with his wife. I have not met him yet. He is resting in Wardha. He is well though weak.

[1] Founder-Editor of *Kalki*, a Tamil weekly of Madras

[2] The addressee had sent Gandhiji an English translation of an editorial voicing public disappointment at Gandhiji's decision to keep aloof from the freedom movement till the War was over. It exhorted national leaders to request Gandhiji to revive the struggle.

[3] Sarojini Naidu

[4] Jawaharlal Nehru

[5] Ranjit Pandit

Mahadev won't be here till he has finished Ahmedabad.

They want me to send you to Alwar on 1st October. I have sent a flat refusal. If you were well I would certainly have sent you, but there is no knowing when you will be quite fit. When you return it might be well to bring someone with you.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4069. C:ourtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7378

139. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

September 10, 1941

DEAR KU[MARAPPA],

This is Jhaverbhai's suggestion. Do you think it is feasible and necessary? Confer with Jh.

The analysis of मलाई[1] sent by you seems to be faulty. I am inquiring.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10159

140. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
September 10, 1941

CHI. LILI,

Man can shape himself only by making his way through the difficulties you have mentioned. Supposing you had all the facilities –a special teacher for each subject coming to the house to teach, a motor-car to take you to college and such royal privileges as no one could ensure you–what would be the worth of your passing the examination ? I had never thought you would become a coward. The help you have been having so far should not go waste. Difficulties vanish when we suffer them. If you have patience, you can reform your superintendent and make your path smooth. Consult Mahadev.

[1] Cream

In spite of all this, if you cannot carry on, I am helpless. Discontinue the studies. But remember that your discontent will only increase.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

141. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 10, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

This is my last letter at the Bombay address. I have not let a single day pass without writing to you. No, I forget. One day did go without it. I just could not write.

Annapurna is doing very well. She is taking rest. She is eating and drinking. I am sending her to David tomorrow.

Rajendra Babu has arrived today. I have not been able to meet him. He is at the bungalow. Sarup is here. She will be leaving tomorrow.

There can be no answer to the reproach you have to face. But you can correct the misconception without getting angry. The misconception will be strengthened if you get angry. But it can be corrected if you do it good-humouredly. In case you do not know, let me tell you that lately I had a letter from Nilla[1] in which she has expressed her longing to come back to me. Because, she says, she found truth only with me. Of course for the one who deliberately makes a mistake, there is no question of correcting the mistake. My loss of one 1b. in weight should be treated as only as accidental. My health is good.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am sure Pyarelal will have reached there and you will have come to a decision about the operation.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Nilla Cramcook

142. LETTER TO KANHAIYALAL VAIDYA[1]

September 10, 1941

I am doing whatever I can and whatever is possible while remaining in the background.

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

143. LETTER TO T. S. CHOCKALINGAM

September 11, 1941

DEAR CHOCKALIGAM[2],

I would not trouble you to come here as Dr. Subbaroyan will be coming himself.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI T. S. CHOCKALINGAM
"DINAMANI"
100 MOUNT ROAD
MADRAS .

From the original; C.W. 2976. Courtesy: T. S. Chockalingam

144. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 11, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

So you are not yet out of the wood. What is this rheumatism of the mouth? Why should you have it at all? There must be deeper cause. How I wish you allowed yourself to be overhauled in Delhi in Hardinge College Hospital. But I suppose Shummy won't listen to it. I would suggest Bombay as an alternative. Sardar is now under a homoeopath and is better. The chief thing is to get well.

Here are two letters from your pupils.

[1] This is written on the addressee's letter dated September 7 in which he had reported the hardships in prison.

[2] Editor of *Dinamani*, a Tamil daily of Madras

Did I tell you Sailen had returned? I have put him on Hindi and charkha. He has not wasted his time in Nagpur. He has become more amenable to discipline.

I must inquire about the apples.

Annapurna has gone to Nagpur to be examined by Dr. David.

Rajendra Babu has not yet come to Sevagram.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4070. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7379

145. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRA RAO

September 11, 1941

DEAR FRIEND,

Atheism is a denial of self. No one has succeeded in its propagation. Such success as you have attained is due to your sincere work among the people round you.[1] I am sorry I cannot invite you to come here. I have no time to spare for talks.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

An Atheist with Gandhi, p. 26

146. LETTER TO ATULANANDA CHAKRABARTI

September 11, 1941

DEAR ATULANANDA,

I fear you are ploughing a lonely furrow. You may be sure that I would have formed an organization if that had served the purpose. An attempt was made but it had to be given up. However let me not

[1] The addressee had written: "For one year I have tackled the problem of untouchability with the atheistic outlook. . . . The atheistic approach mainly consists in the non-recognition of sectarian labels like Hindus, Muslims and Christians. . . . Our programme of work so far has been confined to systematic and periodical cosmopolitan dinners. . . . In the village atmosphere where caste restrictions continue to be rigid, open cosmopolitan dinners are not easy to accomplish. Yet we succeed, because we find that the atheistic attitude brings definite cosmopolitan outlook in its wake. . . ."

shake your faith. You must persevere.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI ATULANANDA CHAKRABARTI
P. 148 JANAK ROAD
P. 6 RASHBEHARI AVENUE
CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the original: C.W. 1483. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

147. LETTER TO NALINI RANJAN SIRCAR

September 11, 1941

DEAR NALINI BABU,

I must confess that I was taken aback when I heard of your acceptance of office. I can only hope that your expectations will be realized. MY advice whenever you want it will always be at your disposal. I understand from your letter that though the ban is lifted you have not rejoined the Congress.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

148. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

September 11, 1941

BHAI MUNSHI,

I have read your long letter. I can understand your agony. But it will take you forward. If at first you had my support, you are not without it now. Is this not what many people believe?

I want to drive out from your mind the idea that we absolutely cannot do without foreign help.[1] The examples of China, Russia and England cannot apply to us. China, after attaining freedom, seeks outside help in order to fight Japan. Russia and England are already free. We may also seek help from a thousand quarters after we have become free, but only if we have gained our freedom with force of

[1] The addressee had written: "And I see no disgrace in accepting help from a foreign power in order to protect India's nationalism and unity— that power may be Britain today, and who knows which other power after the War! What is China doing? Is not Russia taking foreign help? Is not England doing it?"

arms. Freedom won through non-violent means will need no help, or it will need the entire world's. All this is so clear that you should have no difficulty in understanding it. But if you do have any, please find some time to come over here at least to get your doubt resolved. This is a very important issue. In the context in which you made your statement[1], it does not at all seem proper. The fight about Pakistan is a fight between two brothers. One can get reconciled to one brother being- defeated at the hands of the other; but the one who wins with the help of a third party will himself become a slave and also make the other a slave. Whom are the British helping today? Where does Pakistan exist in the present situation? Akhanda Hindustan[2], on the other hand, does exist as a dream at any rate. He who seeks to realize that dream may be no more than a dust particle floating in the sky but after all it is floating. Its dream lifts it above; it does not cast it down. Its exercise of individual freedom makes it shine brightly in the sky. Whose help can it require? And if all the particles get together, that is, recognize their individuality, then they themselves will be the sky. Can you conceive a sky without particles? You, therefore, who are out to fight for an Akhanda Hindustan can never entertain the idea of seeking external help. It does you no credit. It ill becomes the maturity of your thinking. If I go on further I would be only wasting time. But what need to argue at length with the wise?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Chi. Sarala is upset because she has not received any reply from her partners. Are you speaking on their behalf or on behalf of you two? If you were not speaking on behalf of the partners, please consult them if possible and convey their consent. If they are hard-pressed and cannot give it, Sarala will immediately return.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7668. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

[1] The reference is to the addressee's speech at Benares, wherein he said: "Men will come from all parts of the country to resist the vivisection of the country. If need be, we shall seek the help of a friendly power. If necessary we shall stand at the bar of the world and ask it to help us to avoid a catastrophe which would destroy the life of the 400 millions of men."

[2] Undivided India. The addressee had initiated a movement known as "Akhanda Hindustan Front". He had written: "I am a mere particle floating in the sky, while you are the sun of the solar system."

149. LETTER TO SARASWATI GANDHI

September 11, 1941

CHI. SURU[1],

I have your letter. May you live long, and be a pure worker. These are Ba's blessings and mine to you. There is always some trouble with the body, that has to be borne. We shall meet some time.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. SURU
[C/O] SHRI KANTI GANDHI
DEVRAJ MOHALLA
MYSORE[2]

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6181. Also C.W. 3455. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

150. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

WARDHAGANJ,
September 11, 1941

I interviewed Gandhiji today and asked him a few questions on Mr. Churchill's reference to India in his latest speech[3] in the Commons. Gandhiji declined to answer any question. Then I asked him; "I see you are disinclined to answer the most important and relevant questions that I put to you. Do you think that this silence of yours is helpful for the cause of Indian independence for which the Congress is fighting?" Gandhiji replied:

If I did not believe so I would have come out with a statement without any prompting from you. But I sincerely believe that my silence is much more eloquent than any words that I may utter. After

[1] Wife of Kantilal Gandhi, Harilal Gandhi's son.

[2] The address is from the C.W. copy.

[3] On September 9, 1941, wherein he declared: "The Joint Declaration does not qualify in any way the various statements of policy which have been made from time to time about development of constitutional government in India, Burma or other parts of British Empire. We have pledged by the declaration of August 1940 to help India to obtain free and equal partnership in the British Commonwealth of Races subject, of course, to the fulfilment of the obligations arising from our long connection with India and our responsibilities to its many creeds, races and interests."

all it is not words that matter. Action is all in all. My action is before all India and, if you like, the whole world.

The Hindu, 12-9-1941. Also C.W. 4075. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur

151. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 12, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your left-handed letter! What a tragedy that you cannot use your right hand! I repeat my suggestion of yesterday. Go to Delhi or even come here for the cure. If you are not cured here you can be sent to Bombay. I am quite clear that Simla is not the place for you just now.

In whatever you do, Shummy's willing co-operation must be there. The cottage has become usable. The walls are being filled in. But it is quite habitable.

M[ahadev] will be still away for some time.

You will wire what you are doing.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4071. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7380

152. NOTE TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

September 12, 1941

I suppose you don't need A written reply now, do you? If you want, I am ready to give one.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8643

153. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
September 12, 1941

CHI. MRIDU,

I had omitted to reply to one of your questions. Suddenly this morning I remembered it.

The movement[1] started on 18th October. Jawaharlal was arrested on 31st October. I have no interest in celebrating days. Only a very significant day should be celebrated, so that it will have its impact. It has become cheap nowadays to celebrate various days. People's response is also lukewarm. In this condition I don't venture to call for celebrations. If you suggest a programme which may touch the hearts of crores of people, I will surely consent to it. Satyagraha day is different from the day of Jawaharlal's arrest. Think for yourself and guide me. Discuss it with Mahadev and, if possible, with Sardar.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

154. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

September 12, 1941

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I got Hanumanprasadji's letter through 'M' day before yesterday.

The incident is sad. I am clear in my mind that Raghavadas could be free of his weakness only by admitting fully the mistakes committed. Without such purification he is likely to do only harm. He is a good man; so without such admission the harm would be greater. One sign of goodness is owning a mistake openly. For a satyagrahi there is no other course. So the first thing to do is to find out some nice reliable person who would talk to him. I got the cutting you sent.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8047. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

155. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

September 12,1941

CHI. RRISHNACHANDRA,

We should tolerate other people's shortcomings, just as they do ours. This should not be interpreted to mean that we may let anyone intentionally break the rules. Mark the difference between the two!

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4404

[1] Individual civil disobedience movement

156. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 13,1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your note of good news to hand. Nevertheless you should move out of Simla. That is my feeling. Sushila agrees that for rheumatics Simla and the like are bad places. She does not think much of Bombay either.

You were right as usual. The previous apples were wrapped in paper. Prabha had seen them well-packed. Some busybody removed the wrappers. Next time you should send me the number of apples sent.

Bul has received a reply saying the Government would leave her free, if she gives an undertaking not to enter F[rontier] P[rovince] and tribal territory. She is giving notice that she will not give any undertaking.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4072. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7381

157. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
September 13, 1941

CHI. PYARELAL,

It is good you have gone to Delhi. I would leave the matter of the operation to Dr. Joshi. If he says that considering everything it is advisable to perform the operation, get it done. I would not insist if he does not think it necessary. Get your teeth thoroughly examined. If you do not wish to have it done there, have it done by Bareto. On your return you can stay at Nagpur for a day and have your teeth checked.

As for the books, etc., you may do whatever you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

158. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 14, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Sushila came yesterday and gone today. Prabha has [been] to her mother for two or three days just to feed her superstition. Her brother had a child born and she has to attend some ceremony. She returns on 23rd. Annapurna has gone with Sushila for treatment. There was suspicion of tuberculosis. Dr. David however says there is no trace. But she had slow fever and has grown weak.

I have two deputations—Alla Bux[1] and Sidhwa[2] and the other from Burma.

Munshi's daughter Sarala who is here for a few days has taken Prabha's place. She is a very fine girl. She is one of the three Indian women solicitors in all India. But she is exceedingly simple in her tastes and has made friends with everybody. She has come to pass a few days with me.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Your letter. Mr. Hancock, 27th September, 4 p.m.[3] Glad you are better.

From the original: C.W. 4073. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7382

159. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

September 14, 1941

CHI. KAKA,

I got your note after Raihana had left. I see no harm in publishing Kannada *Navanit* on behalf of the Bharatiya Bhasha Sangh. Get the consent of the other members. Wouldn't you like to give Hindi versions of Kannada articles in *Navanit*?

Draft the resolution which you think should be placed before

[1] Premier of Sind

[2] R. K. Sidhwa, leader of the Sind Congress Assembly Party

[3] *Vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur," 25-9-1941.

the Sammelan. Meet Rajen Babu. Ask whatever help you require from me. I am returning the book.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10951

160. LETTER TO MANU SUBEDAR

SEVAGRAM,
September 14, 1941

BHAI SUBEDAR[1],

I have your letter. I think you have again fallen into a trap. The Quaid-e-Azam has made no definite proposal. He only wants to prove the two-nation theory and partition the country. We need not pay attention to him, as we would not to anybody who wanted to separate two brothers.

The charges against the Congress have been disproved, but if they have not they can be referred to an impartial tribunal.

As long as the policy of keeping at a distance from both the Government and the Congress and using concessions by either side for extracting more from the other remains, no understanding seems possible. A party following such a policy will never be satisfied with what it gets.

I am convinced that the riots in Sind, Dacca and Ahmedabad were intended to intimidate the Congress. But I am ready to ignore this. That is, all the points may be referred to an impartial tribunal. I don't think anything else is possible.

And please also remember that ultimately the people themselves will decide these questions and bypass us all. I would, therefore, advise you to extricate yourself from this business, or to proceed on the basis of certain fundamental principles. It will be enough if you cling to even one. As long as he does not decide about coming to an agreement among ourselves, no discussion is possible.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 252-3

[1] An economist from Bombay

161. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

September 14, 1941

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. I am sending you a copy of my reply to Subedar.[1] I think he will come round. Is it not our policy to secure the utmost possible co-operation from men of all temperaments and abilities?

Do not worry about anything just now. Your health must mend completely. If homoeopathy helps you, I will begin to have some faith in it. I have never been able to put any faith in it. I entrusted a case to a homoeopath but there was no result. It was Tari's[2]. But this is only by the way. I do wish homeopathy benefits you. I have heard much about it. Das[3] believed in it, and so did Motilalji and Gurudev. Does not our Lakshmidas also believe in it? But finally everybody takes refuge in allopathy. All this is beside the point, but let it be. We are concerned only with the result.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

68 MARINE DRIVE

BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 251-2

162. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 14, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I hope you found a comfortable seat and reached there without trouble. Remain engrossed in your studies. Annapurna should not be a burden on you.

I was happy that you came at least for a day.

Pyarelal's letter must have been found. He must have contacted the doctor. The glasses and the teeth must be attended to.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Tara Mashruwala

[3] C. R. Das

The proposal about Mother coming here must not be dismissed. If she is here when you come, you will be free from worry and so will be Mataji. Are children, once they are married, ever of any use to parents ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

163. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

[SEVAGRAM, "VIA" WARDHA,(C.P.)][1]
September 14, 1941[2]

CHI. RAMDAS,

I got your postcard. I understand what you say. I hope you will get this. You have not given your address. What you have written to Nimu is right. I hope your food arrangement is satisfactory.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

164. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 15, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have yours. I am more and more confirmed in my opinion that you should leave Simla and if you have confidence and if Shummy agrees whole-heartedly, you should come here before being sent elsewhere. I flatter myself with the belief that probably my company itself will put you right. Just think this over and if your mind agrees, discuss the proposal dispassionately with S. and decide. If you decide, do so quickly. If you come, you will bring someone with you. Wire your health and your decision.

Let not K's book sit on you like a load. Never mind if it takes a little time.

I have Munshi's daughter still here. She is a very good girl, a

[1] As on the letterhead

[2] Addressee's daughter, Sumitra, had undergone an eye operation

lover of children and hard work.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4074. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7383

165. LETTER TO P. C. GHOSH

September 15, 1941

DEAR PRAFULLA,

Sardar is now under homoeopathic treatment. He feels better. But he has to take care of himself. He has intestinal spasms. Rajen Babu is here. He is better though still weak. He is free from fever.

I am sorry about Suresh. I do hope he will get quite well. He must take care of himself.

Give my love to all.

Love.

BAPU

(M. K. GANDHI)

From a photostat: G.N. 3783

166. LETTER TO IQBAL KRISHAN KAPOOR

SEVAGRAM,
September 15, 1941

DEAR KAPOOR,

I think your case is clear. The order is humiliating.[1] You will disregard it not as a satyagrahi under the struggle but as an individual who values his self-respect above so-called freedom. Therefore, no general instruction is necessary.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The History of the Indian National Congress, Vol. II, p. 275

[1] On his release after two months' detention, the addressee was served with a notice "restricting his movements within the limits of the Kotwali police station, requiring him to attend in person the Kotwali police station once a week to report his presence and requiring him to refrain from the Congress activities in connection with the satyagraha movement".

167. LETTER TO SHAUKAT USMANI

September 15, 1941

DEAR SHAUKAT USMANI[1],

I am glad you are being drawn to non-violence. Non-violence precludes us from hating anyone however bad he is.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

168. LETTER TO HARILAL M. RANGOONWALA

September 15, 1941

BHAI HARILAL,

I had your letter written from jail. I have already replied to it. I have now the letter written after your release. I am glad that you are not worrying about the boycott in Rangoon. Let it go on for the present. You may go to jail again when the Bombay office invites you to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 143

169. LETTER TO VISHNU NARAYAN

September 15, 1941

BHAI VISHNU NARAYAN,

I got your letter. You have not been forbidden [to use] khadi. They have only expressed their opinion. You have not been ordered to use drill cloth, but are given freedom to use it. I would, therefore, advise you to buy khadi costing the same as drill cloth and get uniforms made out of it. See that you get strong khadi. If you can win over the peons, there will be no difficulty. Do not force them. Do not inflict khadi on them as a compulsory duty, but create love of khadi in them. If they spin, khadi may even be cheaper. Even if you are put to some expense, bear it and induce the peons to wear khadi uniforms

[1] Secretary, Prisoners' Camp, Baroda

willingly.

As long as the Bank values your service, you are likely to come to no harm.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

We are trying to get paper for *Sarvodaya*.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 19327

170. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 15, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Right now at 3.30 p.m. you must be busy at your hospital.

Yesterday Ram Saran Das had all of his teeth extracted and today he has no fever at all. Yesterday Bareto took out his teeth in spite of his fever. He was of the opinion that infection of the gums alone was the cause of his fever and his teeth had to be extracted to cure his fever. Nirmal Singh is quite well. His fever is not wholly gone. He has been kept in a separate room. Otherwise he is all right. Ram Narayan has to go to Nagpur tomorrow to have one tooth extracted and the rest of the teeth cleaned. He has put on weight. My weight was $101^{1}/_{2}$ 1b. yesterday. Do not worry about me.

I am not writing a separate letter to Pyarelal. In case the operation has not taken place, he may have even gone away from there. If he is there let him come after he has had his teeth attended to. It is another thing if he wants this done at Nagpur.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Annapurna must be fine; also Anasuya?

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

171. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

September 15, 1941

BHAI PRITHVI SINGH,

Read your letter and the account of your tour. You gained good experience. I know our faith in ahimsa is rather slender. Had it been

strong today we would have risen fairly high. I do not believe that much work can be done by speeches. You will not know the power of nectar by a description of its qualities. You can know it only by drinking it yourself or by observing its effect on someone drinking it. This does not mean that there should be no speeches.

I like your decision to enroll only the best students.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5650. Also C.W. 2961. Courtesy Prithvi Singh

172. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
September 16, 1941

I expect a wire on Thursday to my letter of yesterday.

This is being written before the incoming post.

Can you throw any light on the enclosed[1]? Jajuji has gone to Rajkot for the Charkha Week.

An ex-jail-bird (satyagrahi) from U.P. came last night suffering from tuberculosis to see me! Poor Chimanlal could not turn him out, so gave him a bed in his verandah. His is a pathetic case. It is difficult to treat him. These unexpected visitors make the running of the Institution most difficult. Fortunately the workers rise to the occasion at such critical times and make it possible for me to face difficulties of this nature.

I have to see Alla Bux and Sidhwa today.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Devdas is fighting *his* case manfully.[2] Your letter has arrived. Of course what S. says must be followed.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4076. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7357

[1] This is not available.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dedas Gandhi", 20-8-1941 and "Letter to Devdas Gandhi", 24-8-1941

173. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

September 16, 1941

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I am positive that the Indians living in Burma should protest strongly against the Agreement signed by the two Governments. They should have no fear in this matter. We can have no quarrel with the people of Burma. We may live among them only with their goodwill. But who is to ascertain their view? And also who is to decide how it should be ascertained?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4736. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarjee

174. LETTER TO KANHAIYALAL VAIDYA

September 16, 1941

BHAI KANHAIYALAL,

I have your letter. It is a regrettable thing. Please do not expect any money from me.[1] I do what I can within my limits and in my own way. At present I do whatever I can while remaining in the background. Those who pursue satyagraha must put up with suffering. Therein too lies the way to alleviate suffering.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

175. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 17, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is very bad paper. You can't use both the sides.

Your letter. Your submission to the simple drugs is worthy of your submissive nature! Do refuse all appointments there too.

I had your apple today. This variety is not so good as the previous

[1] The addressee wanted money to engage lawyers to defend the satyagrahis in custody.

one. Ba told me that one had gone bad and very soft. This is no criticism of the buyer. I simply pass on the information.

Our room is being rebuilt. The verandah porch is being transferred to the gate through which the monsoon rains pour in. And there will be an extended verandah where we used to sleep. It seems building operations will never cease. And yet the crowding grows. How to limit the crowd is a serious question.

There is going to be much charkha work done in the village.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4077. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7386

176. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

September 17, 1941

CHI. BABUDI,

I got your letter. Lotus seed and cardamom are well-known tonics. If they solve your problem, so much the better. The chief thing is attention to diet. There is no illness here worth mentioning. Everything is all right. There is considerable crowding. Nobody here is now afraid of typhoid, since good nursing has saved all cases. You are having good experience there. Mix with all as sugar mixes in milk. Prabhavati has left. She will return on the 23rd.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10037. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

177. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

September 17, 1941

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your wire. Your case is going well. I have been following the proceedings. Shivji also keeps me informed. The judges also are behaving strangely. But if you can produce the evidence which you have, everything will be well. Only our people are so weak that you never know when they will let you down. However, since your case is perfectly just I am sure that God will protect you. Ba is worrying. I have explained to her that going to jail is nothing unusual for us. Jail, therefore, should hold no terrors for us. Looking at the matter from

another point of view, I believe you will get some rest in jail. But now there seems to be no possibility of your getting imprisonment. Yes, it might be a different matter if your witnesses turn out to be men of straw.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I got your letter just after this was completed. You should struggle hard.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2139

178. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 17, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I just could not write yesterday. It was a full court to the very end. There should have been a letter from you today but it has not come. There is no letter from your brother either ! I am getting on well. Ram Saran Das is in good shape. Nirmal Singh continues to have fever. His swelling has subsided.

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

179. LETTER TO LAKSHMI GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
September 17, 1941

CHI. LAKSHMI,

Hope you at any rate are not afraid. What is going to happen will of course happen. You married a tempestuous man, so how can you escape storm?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2139

180. LETTER TO SURENDRANATH SARKEL

[After *September 17, 1941*][1]

BHAI SURENDRA,

I have your letter. This is my only advice: tell the court nothing but the truth

Blessings from

BAPU

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

181. WORK FOR EVERYONE

I have sent a message for women and children to this effect:[2] Enough khadi can be produced if children up to the age of twelve and women gave a few hours of their spare time to spinning and other processes of khadi production. I had asked Krishnadas Gandhi to work out some figures to prove the above contention. I give below an abstract of the findings.

> India's population was estimated at about 35 crores in the 1931 census. Children in the age-group of eight to twelve numbered about 4_ crores and women and girls above the age of 12 numbered about 11 crores. If the children devoted four hours to cleaning, carding and spinning and if the women devoted four hours to cleaning, carding, spinning and weaving daily, enough khadi can be produced. It can be shown by calculation that the children can produce every day yarn of ten to twelve counts that can be woven into 90 lac square yards of khadi, whereas the women can produce every day two crore square yards of twenty counts in addition to weaving the ninety lac square yards of khadi out of the yarn spun by the children. It has been calculated that the entire process from the cleaning of cotton to weaving a 20 counts square yard of cloth involves 18 hours of labour on the part of one person. Out of this half an hour will go to the cleaning of cotton, two hours for carding, 12 hours for spinning, one hour for

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter forwarded by the jail authorities on September 17, 1941.

[2] *Vide*"Message to People of Ahmedabad", 8-9-1941

unwinding the yarn, one hour for making and fixing the warp and sizing and one and a half hours for actual weaving. This is the breakdown of the total of 18 hours. It is based on the average skill of an average person. An efficient worker may complete this process in just 15 hours. On a rough estimate the women and children can, with such skill as they have, produce about 30 square yards of khadi for every person in this country by working four hours a day for 300 days in a year.

My object in publishing this abstract is to encourage an institution to undertake an experiment to corroborate it. Any family can easily produce all the cloth that it requires by introducing a charkha and a loom in their home. Suppose there are 35 individuals in an institution including four children in the age-group of 8 to 12 and 11 women above the age of 13. All men, of course, will be busy with other activities. Ten out of the eleven women and all the four children can devote three to four hours every day to cleaning, carding, spinning and weaving according to their convenience. One of the ten women will help the four children and will also weave the yarn produced by the children. The remaining nine women will undertake all the work from cleaning to weaving. According to the calculations given above, the four children together with one woman will produce at least three fourths of a square yard of 10 to 12 counts khadi every day and the 9 women will easily produce two square yards of 20 counts khadi every day. If we calculate for 300 days in a year, all of them will together produce 225 square yards of coarse khadi and 600 square yards of fine khadi. Thus a total of 825 square yards of cloth will be available for the 35 persons or, in other words, everyone will get 23_ square yards of cloth. As the efficiency grows every individual will be able to get 27_ square yards of cloth.

It should be remembered that so much cloth can be produced even in less time by using the now improved charkhas and carding-bows. If every home has a charkha and a loom we can produce the cloth we need with very little effort. It will create a great contentment in the home. We can only imagine what an impact this can have on our lives and how it can inspire all the people. But for oneself one can instantly discover this bliss.

Sevagram, *Charkha Dwadashi*, September 18, 1941

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, September 1941

182. BLANKETS FOR SOLDIERS

It is a good augury that votaries of non-violence often raise fine questions of principle. Man advances through such spirit of inquiry, but there is a prerequisite condition to it. The inquiry should not be like that of a person who strains at a gnat and swallows a camel. Raising such questions profit only him who is ever vigilant in major matters and whose practice keeps pace with the progress of the principle.

Let me illustrate what I mean. A certain khadi bhandar received an order for woollen blankets from the military. The bhandar authorities asked me whether they could accept it replied that they could. The question of principle raised was whether it did not amount to helping the war.

As a matter of abstract principle, it will have to be conceded that the acceptance was a breach. But in that case, we must leave India and every country engaged in the war. Because we help war in purchasing the very food we eat. We do the same when we travel by train or buy postage stamps. Our use of the currency itself is an aid to war. In fact we are hardly able to do any act which is free from the taint.

The truth is that no one is able to act upon a great principle, like that of non-violence, in its entirety. Like the geometrical line, it can only be imagined, but never drawn. In practice, we have to be content with drawing only such fine lines as we can with our instruments. There is no wall which can be called 'straight' according to Euclid. And yet, walls have stood the test of time for thousands of years. It is the same with ahimsa. We must put it into practice as best as we can.

It would have been easy for me to forbid the sale of the blankets. It was a question of only a few thousand rupees, a small amount for an establishment whose turnover is in lakhs. But the prohibition would have been a matter of shame for me. I could have done so only by concealing my real view of the matter. Where should I draw the line from which such prohibition should commence? If I were a grain merchant, should I decline to sell it to soldiers? Or, if I were a chemist, should I refuse to sell quinine and other drugs to them? If I should, what c ould be the reason for my doing so? Does my ahimsa prevent me from entertaining such customers? In other words, does it require of me to look into the occupations of my customers? The

clear reply is that provided I deal in goods which conduce to the welfare of society, I may not look into the occupations of my customers. This means that I may sell my innocuous articles even to soldiers.

SEVAGRAM, September 18, 1941

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, September 1941

183. UNCERTIFIED KHADI

One who purchases uncertified khadi is ignorant of the purpose of khadi, which was conceived as a simple means to remove the poverty of *Daridranarayana*, which alone can improve India's economic condition and ultimately win freedom. Therein lies the importance of khadi and if khadi has to play its role in removing the poverty of the millions it must be under the control of some organization or State authority. Crores of spinners would be willing to spin for eight hours for a paltry pice for they must fill their bellies. Khadi made from yarn spun by them may be called hand-spun but by its use we certainly will not be serving *Daridranarayana*. The Charkha Sangh has therefore at once increased the spinners' wages and attempts are being made to improve the economic condition of other artisans.

Those who sell uncertified khadi are guilty of theft from khadi-artisans. To purchase such khadi is to acquire stolen property. This is atrocious. The Charkha Sangh therefore appeals to business people to take up some other trade instead of selling [uncertified] khadi. The public should purchase khadi from khadi bhandars of the Charkha Sangh or its certified depots only.

I hope all khadi-lovers will agree that khadi, be it dear or cheap, should be purchased only through the Charkha Sangh and such khadi alone should be recognized as khadi.

Sevagram, September 18, 1941

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, September 1941

184. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 18, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

This only to say how you are in my mind. I have said my say, you know best how to get well. I am sending the book to Mahmud Khan.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4078. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7387

185. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

September 18, 1941

BHAI MUNSHI,

I had Lilavati's letter and yours. Today I have the wire. Chi. Sarala wrote to you the day before yesterday. You must have received the letter now.

There is no need for you just now to resign. I had a discussion with both Rajendra Babu and Kripalani. Both are of the view that there is no need at all just now. I will leave no room for the slightest criticism. The idea had not crossed my mind at all. All the same, you did well in writing to me.

I have been having short talks with Sarala. I cannot spare any time specially for her, but generally during morning walks we go a little ahead of others and talk. She has become very friendly with all. She takes interest in the prayers, too. She also helps me. She will tell you all this when she meets you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7669. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

186. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
September 18, 1941

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. It seems best now to go through the homoeopathic treatment. Don't mind if that means some loss of time.

You must keep patient till you are sure whether or no it is benefiting you.

I am glad you met. . .[1] He does not at all seem clear in his mind. About Valji also it is difficult to judge. He has got very much prejudiced. I think he also will come round.

I understand about Lilavati. When you have taken her case in hand, why need I worry about her? I did not wish to worry you with her problem, though. She is hard working and smart. I hope she will pass. But she has got a little tired. I hope Bhanumati[2] is all right. So it now seems certain that the girl[3] will not survive.

Has Bhulabhai been released? He seems to be quite ill.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 253-4

187. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA C. MEHTA

September 18, 1941

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

I have your letter. Grow strong and healthy there. I knew you would get friendly with all. You are of course not likely to allow yourself to become a burden on anybody. I know you would do nothing but serve others there. I am sure the climate there will suit you. Write to Vedchhi from time to time. In any case you will write to me regularly. Read something. Learn Hindi. Learn Urdu also.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9428

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

[2] Dahyabhai Patel's second wife and daughter

[3] *ibid.*

188. LETTER TO PYARELAL

September 18, 1941

CHI. PYARELAL,

What a letter from you ! A *tonga* will be arranged if you let me know when you are coming.

You are right about the teeth. Only Bareto should do it.

How will it be a burden to me if Mother comes here ? Ba gets along well with her. She cannot be a burden to anyone here. She can stay on freely if her health remains satisfactory. If she suffers in health, we shall see. It would be a matter of satisfaction to her that if she was here she could see you oftener.

Your dejection must go. It should be remembered that there is no reason for it at all.

Blessings from

BAPU

[P.S.]

Mira could have gone with Devdas for a day.

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

189. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 18, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. I had to keep you without a letter for one day. Pyarelal may or may not be there, and so I am writing to you.

Just as you have been giving good news about the patients there, I can do the same about the patients here. Both are well. Nirmal Singh's ganglion has all but subsided. His fever has come down today. He has not been given anything except lime and soda and since yesterday glucose. He asked for tamarind water which I gave.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

190. ADDRESS AT GANDHI JAYANTI MEETING

SEVAGRAM,
September [*18*][3], *1941*

I want Sevagram to be self-sufficient in its clothing by producing khadi and the villagers to produce their necessaries of life.

Learning and service should go hand in hand and I am glad that here in the Khadi Vidyalaya you are having both, which is different from university training.

He exhorted the villagers to devote themselves more and more to bring about full cleanliness and sanitation. He also appealed for more constructive work specially in regard to khadi which, he reminded them, was the saviour of the poor.[1]

The Hindu, 22-9-1941

191. LETTER TO PRAN KRISHNA PADHIARY

[Before *September 19, 1941*][2]

You have not given me discouraging information.[3] All do not live who are born. I rejoice that some at least will remain true. That is enough encouragement to me. If the sea-deserters form a Ministry, we need not worry. We shall be stronger for the weak ones falling away.

Dube[4] need not resign[5] for he has given valid reasons for not offering civil disobedience.

The Bombay Chronicle, 20-9-1941

192. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 19, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Yours. You are having regular ups and downs. We may not always have an even surface to walk on. Some day you will be entirely

[1] Gandhiji participated in the sacrificial congregational spinning held on the occasion.

[2] The report appeared under the date-line "Cuttack, September 19, 1941".

[3] The addressee, President, Utkal Provincial Congress Committee, had informed Gandhiji about the move for the formation of a coalition Ministry in the province.

[4] Bodhram Dube, ex-Minister

[5] From the Provincial Congress Committee and the A.I.C.C.

free.

Apples this time are an inferior type. To look at they are extraordinarily good. But some parts are bad. Do not take anybody to task. Next time the variety should be changed. And send them only once a month. Presently there will be *santras*[1] when apples will no longer be required.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

The Sind Premier is still here. Prema goes to jail again in three days' time.

From the original: C.W. 3678. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6487

193. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

September 19, 1941

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have your letter. It seems perfectly all right to me. Tell Bhai Bhagwanji that I got his letter too. He should get relieved from there and come here. I will see how to fix him up. He will certainly be of use, if he stays here. Show this to Bhai Bhagwanji and send him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9125

194. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
September 19, 1941

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I had long and frank talks with Khan Bahadur (Alla Bux). He is now going to Karachi. From there he will go to see Maulana. I am firmly of the view that the Congress should leave the Assembly. Khan Bahadur also, if he is on the Congress side, should do the same. The Congress in Sind helping the war effort while not doing so elsewhere would produce—is producing—a bad impression. Keeping up this arrangement will not benefit the country in any way, neither Sind nor

[1] Oranges

the Hindus nor the Muslims. Can a wrong step benefit anybody? Even if there were no war, I would be in favour of the Congress leaving the Assembly in Sind. But that is a side issue just now. I will discuss it with you if you wish. Here, I have explained how my mind is working, so that you may be able to understand Khan Bahadur correctly. He says he is convinced by my reasoning.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 254

195. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 19, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. It is very good that Annapurna has made herself at home there. She is the type who will adjust anywhere she goes.

I am trying to keep myself in good health even for your sake. Free yourself from worry and go on increasing your knowledge. Everything will be all right.

I have brought Ram Saran Das in Annapurna's place. He is wholly free from fever. He is being given sufficient milk. Following the extraction of his teeth, his face has changed. The bad breath too has largely gone. He himself feels as though he had got a new life. The moment the teeth were taken out, his temperature started going down.

Nirmal Singh too has been improving since yesterday. The ganglion is dissolved. He has not been given milk as yet. He was given barely water today. He himself asked for it. So, there is no patient here. As for Chakrayya, I myself give him food in measured quantities. He is keeping well. I shall not write to Annapurna today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

196. LETTER TO PYARELAL

September 19, 1941

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have your letter. I had my doubts about Dr. Joshi. But even such experiences are useful to us. Your reply was of course proper.

Why did the car have to go to Lucknow ? Whatever happens, do not leave anything unfinished there. It does not matter if a couple of days more have to be spent.

Think over what I wrote about Mother yesterday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

197. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 20, 1941

CHL. AMRIT,

I dare not give you more than this today. For the first time after his arrival I was able to give some time to [Rajendra] Babu. The patients here are getting on. The Ashram is still filling.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4079. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7388

198. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 20, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I cannot write at length today. There is a pile of letters. The visitors are of course there. The widow of our late colleague Fulchandbhai has come. There are others too. Rajen Babu has also come. The patients are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

199. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

September 20, 1941

BHAI PRITHVI SINGH,

Your letter is good and so is your question. For the dearth of khadi I do not blame anyone. Everyone works according to his capacity. The problem of khadi is difficult. Even those who were not habitual khadi-wearers buy some. The highest consumption of khadi is in Bombay. Is not khadi our dharma? Dharma as such is difficult to follow. Having said so much, I who am its pioneer cannot be credited with perfect *tapascharya*. I am not sorry for it. I have done my best. But the non-stop plying of the wheel that you suggest is no small matter. There are such devotees, aren't there? Some day khadi is bound to become universal.

Now about Russia. We can do nothing. I do not find much difference between the three. It is true that much has been done in Russia for the people. The slaughter that is going on does not raise my hair. The civil war mentioned in the *Bhagawata* may be imaginary, but in real life it is true. When violence increases in the world internecine wars are bound to take place. Out of this will non-violence be born if there are some truly non-violent people. I believe we are such people. I cannot say how ahimsa will be born. This power is beyond description. It can be seen only in its impact. God alone regulates it. My peace and my firmness are based on this faith: See what Russia has done. Once it took help from Germany and now from England. Who can say what Russia will do if she loses? From the point of view of ahimsa today we can be no more but [mute] witnesses of this slaughter. Yes, but when an occasion arises we should be ready for sacrifice.

Kishorelalbhai will write something on non-violent exercise.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5651. Also C.W. 2962. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

200. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 21, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your glorious letter in Hindi—glorious because of your sustained Hindi.

Here are two letters.

J[amnalal] came in yesterday much reduced. He had fever when he descended from Nainital.

Yes, your report is not bad. But I am not going to be satisfied till you are fit enough to come down. Everybody is asking when you are returning and what is the matter with you. You are right in continuing the treatment which is doing so much good.

Of course you are not to go anywhere else.

I forget to tell you that I have given your pen to Mira. She was in need of a pen that would never fail. Her work is all delicate. Her room has become a temple of God. All the four Vedas decorate her table which is set against a wall on which is painted *Om* over two "∑§◊ ‹"s[1] also painted by her. To Allah Bux I said he should give up the Ministry if he had to live on Congress support. But that he should do if he could convince Maulana of the truth of the position. He said he had seen my viewpoint. Let us see.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4080. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7389

201. LETTER TO VIJAYA M. PANCHOLI

September 21, 1941

CHI. VIJAYA,

You are very greedy. You yourself write only a couple of lines and ask for an "immediate" reply. Is not this one immediate enough? I got your postcard only just now. I had your reply in which you had given a full description. I remember to have replied to it also. I hope you will come over soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7141. Also C.W. 4633. Courtesy: Vijaya M. Pancholi

[1] Lotuses

202. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA C. MEHTA

September 21, 1941

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

I have your chits. Do drop at least a postcard to Vedchhi from time to time. You must come back fully restored. Since you have normal appetite, you will be all right soon. We are plying here a spinning-wheel round the clock which will continue till October 2. Jamnalalji has arrived today. He seems to have gone a little thinner. Fulchandbhai's widow, Shardabehn, and Shivanand have arrived.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 4929

203. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

September 21, 1941

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

Miss Moore will deliver this letter to you. She had once stayed in the Ashram. She had so adjusted herself that she had become a member of the family. She wants to meet as many persons as possible in her quest for truth. Put her up and let her see all the activities.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI
SEVASHRAM
MIRZAPUR
AHMEDABAD

From the Gujarati original : S. N. 32780

204. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA, (C.P.)
[On or about *September 21, 1941*][1]

CHI. KANTI,

This lady Miss Moore was in the Ashram for a considerable time. She had become friendly with everyone. She travels everywhere. She has particularly asked me to give a letter for you. Hence this one.

[1] From the contents; *vide* the preceding item.

Meet her with affection and show her whatever she wishes to see.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 11661. Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy : Sabarmati Sangrahalaya, Ahmedabad

205. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,
September 21, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Pyarelal writes that you have a slight temperature because of a throat infection. How can you have a bad throat ? Surely you remember the English saying : Physician, heal thyself ! So, both you and Annapurna should get well quick.

Is there any doubt you will be with me for the coming [*rentia*] *baras ?*

Your letter of the 15th was received after a delay of two days. It must have just remained in the letter-box of the post office.

I am getting on quite well. Today my weight was a little over 103 1bs. It means as increase of at least 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ 1bs. In other ways too, I am quite well. I am more or less sticking to the time of going to bed. I am not able wholly to avoid talking while walking.

All patients are well. Prabhakar is having something like eczema on his hands and legs. Hence, I have kept him on leafy vegetables and fruit. That has done him a lot of good.

What has been decided about Mother ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

206. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

September 21, 1941

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. Do not leave the place till you are completely restored.

It is perfectly all right that you interpreted my letter as referring to you. I however know from my own experience as well as from

others' that one stands to gain a lot by accepting one's mistakes. This is pure practical wisdom. In account books we proceed after correcting a mistake, if any; the same applies to our moral accounts.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8048. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

207. LETTER TO SATYAWATI

SEVAGRAM,
September 21, 1941

CHI. SATYAWATI,

You say you want to come but the fact is you do not. What a difference there is between Russia and Poland. And under what circumstances should one write about Russia? Russia is not a small power. Not that I do not recognize the worth of what Russia has done. But I do not understand what is now going on. And how can I speak about what I do not understand? If we are successful in achieving our object we shall be able to help Russia and all others. Let us all work to see such a time.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

208. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 22, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter. I have not missed a day so far as I know. Why the delivery is irregular is more than I can say. You should simply believe that I have written. Then when you get two letters the same day, your belief is confirmed.

J[amnalalji] is full of the tales of your hospitality and kindness. He delights in describing your 30 servants to five or six inmates, Tofa[1] counting as one.

M[ahadev] is due here on 27th with Durga and Bablo.

He has to be in Alwar on 1st October.

Love.

BAPU

[1] Addressee's dog

[PS.]

I have neither seen Ajanta nor Ellora. Tell Sir Akbar[1] he never invited me. And what is the use my going now?

From the original: C.W. 4081. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7390

209. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

September 22, 1941

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

I am glad you are free from fever. I hope you will remain so. I hope too that your wife and son will also be entirely free.

So far as Vidyashram is concerned, I am in correspondence with Annada. I know Dhirendra's worth. He won't do anything in opposition to the A.I.S.A. Of course he is free to come whenever he wishes.

As to Abha I am prepared to have her whenever she comes. If she comes, I shall prepare her for her marriage if she proves her worthiness. I won't draw a line between her and Kanu. If she comes, I can find an escort for her.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10323. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

210. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA (C.P.),
September 22, 1941

DEAR SWEET SINGER,

May God be with you in your travail w[hich] is but your anvil to test the gold that is you.

Yours,

SPINNER

From the original : Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Sir Akbar Hydari, President, Executive Council, Hyderabad (Deccan), 1937-41; later Member, Information and Broadcasting, Viceroy's Executive Council

211. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

September 22, 1941

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You are still not on the rails again. If you cannot judge definitely in fifteen days, I should like you to come here. If you are well enough to travel, I think it might even be desirable that you should come and spend a few days here. Do what suits you. Rajendra Babu is daily improving. He comes every day now.

Mahadev's letter is enclosed. From there you may send [it] whenever you like.

Prema Kantak must have seen you. Her work is going on well.

what is the position about Allah Bux? I am convinced that the Congress must withdraw. Rajendra Babu suspects something.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 255

212. LETTER TO MOOLSHANKAR

September 22, 1941

BHAI MOOLSHANKAR,

I have very hurriedly gone through your English summary. It is good. It could have been shorter. I would not speak as in para 31. I may say that 'Hundreds and thousands of Gandhis will emerge'; but I should [not] be made to say 'I will create'.

Principles can have no exception. Two plus two can only be four. If I have made a mistake, it must be called a mistake. Can there be a different duty under stress? A mistake committed under stress may be pardonable. The moment Yudhishthira uttered a small falsehood, his chariot-wheel came down to earth.[1] When I say that those who are not able to practise ahimsa should prefer violence to cowardice, I am not providing any exception to the principle.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy Pyarelal

[1] Because Yudhishthira was a perfectly righteous person, his chariot was believed to move just above the ground

213. LETTER TO KANHAIYALAL VAIDYA

September 22, 1941

BHAI KANHAIYALAL,

I go through all your letters carefully. Who is your lawyer? Isn't there any lawyer who is prepared to work in a spirit of service? The appeal I suppose will be filed in Ratlam? In which court will it lie? Do you hope you will get justice? We should have a key with which to overcome all this injustice.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

214. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 23, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter. You may give your name. No more today.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4083. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7392

215. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

September 23, 1941

CHI. KAKA,

What you write is certainly worth thinking over. I thought over it but finally came to the conclusion that Jamnalalji's ability could fully develop only in *goseva*[1] work. Though we have a Goseva Sangh, the work remains neglected. We have been able to get neither experts nor money. We have only been able to prepare the ground. The work can be done, however, only if an experienced man dedicates himself to it.

Harijan work has got going and is getting on the rails. What is being done is necessary. Ultimately it is the awakening among Harijans themselves that will solve the problem.

Work is being done among sanatanists also, though it is true that no publicity is being given to it. Being a dedicated Harijan worker,

[1] Service of the cow

J[amnalalji] will be able to win over many sanatanists while engaged in *goseva*. Finally, when you read the accompanying letter[1], the position will be clearer to you. Return the letter. There is one special reason also. J[amnalalji] wants to cultivate greater purity. He craves for purity of mind. Service of the cow might satisfy his craving, for the cow is more mute than even the Harijans. If we do not look after her, she will not rebel, but die. Harijans, on the other hand, are being taught by us to rebel. If we don't teach them, others are eager to do so. In the Bharatiya Parishad[2], I think Abdul Haq Saheb had proposed a resolution to the effect that Hindi-Urdu should be adopted in place of Hindi-Hindustani. What was the resolution, if not this?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10952

216. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

September 23, 1941

BHAI VITHALDAS,

I had meant to write to you when I saw your English letter to Jajuji, but I could not manage it. I have now your Gujarati letter.

Why did you write in English? We can never pour out our hearts in English. A man like Jawaharlal may be able to do that for he has studied English since his childhood, and he learnt it in England. But let that be.

There is some error in your reasoning. If we wish to open small stores everywhere, we shall necessarily have to entrust each store to one man only. We cannot employ another man to help him. You do not seem to have any experience of village stores. Poor village store-keepers, how can they afford assistants? If the man leaves his store, he will shut the door and lock it up, and then go out. If he has a son, he might perhaps leave it in his charge. In South Africa thousands of stores are run by our people and by Jews, and they are, each of them, in charge of one person only. It would not be paying to have more than one person. And in most cases the person lives just behind the store itself. If he has to leave the store for any reason, he will shut the door and go out. The store has stocks hardly worth Rs. 500. How can the man, then, afford an assistant? *Moreover, we are*

[1] This is not available.

[2] Akhil Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad

dreaming of ushering in a new age, the age of ahimsa. We should keep our stores open only for reasonable periods, not from six in the morning till twelve at night. In England the stores are closed at fixed hours by law. We should follow that practice voluntarily. The English in India do so. But irrespective of their practice, we should arrange our affairs on the basis of the law of ahimsa. We should, therefore, plan the whole thing from that point of view.

I believe that we should give thought to the question of location, too.

I agree with your view that the science of sales is different from that of production. And as the science of khadi production is different from the science of production of other goods, so also is the science of khadi sales different from the science of selling of other goods. We have always postponed thinking about this matter. The little thought we have occasionally given to the matter is not enough. Morning is when we wake up. I have now been making the khadi world think about this matter.

Our work is not being controlled by one man, but we have still not been fully organized as an institution either. The reason is that we have not trained the requisite number of workers. We started no school for them. Now we have started one[1]. Let us see how it fares.

The implication of your English letter was that the question should be considered by the Council. I think that the time for that has not yet come. First, Jajuji, you and I should think about it. Finally, of course, the Council will have to consider the matter. The objection you took in your English letter to Jajuji expressing his views seemed altogether improper to me. If a secretary does his duty conscientiously, he must guide the others. That you did not approve of his suggestions was a different matter. But so long as we accept a man as secretary, he is bound to guide us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9801

[1] Khadi Vidyalaya at Sevagram

217. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 23, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is no letter from you today. Pyarelal did not come.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

218. LETTER TO PANNALAL JHAVERI

[After *September 23, 1941*][1]

CHI. PANNALAL,

How could anyone have imagined that Nanibehn would leave us so suddenly ? I cannot forget her ever-smiling face, yet I must. The soul that dwelt in her body is of course immortal. Our concern was with that soul. That remains. Let us emulate her good qualities and character.

There is no need to preach anything to you. Gangabehn too is competent.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari – Pannalal Jhaveri, p. 33

219. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 24, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I sent you a hurried note yesterday. I am giving myself time before the arrival of the post.

There is a complaint again that Narendra Dev is steadily going down. If you think it worth while, you may write again. I am writing to

[1] The period is inferred from the contents. Nanibehn, the addressee's wife, passed away on September 23, 1941.

Sarup too to do what she can.

Since writing this news of his release was received.[1]

Herewith receipt for Rs. 100 which will go to the A[ndrews] Memorial.

It will be good if you are declared entirely free.

Submissiveness is both a virtue and a vice. Circumstances determine the quality each time. Are you satisfied?

I told J[amnalal he] was not looking well. He does not feel it either. The Nainital visit took it out of him.

You did write to me about your Conference taking a village. It might be possible to find someone. We shall discuss when you return.

The cottage is undergoing extensions.

Khadi Jagat is in the press. The Maharajah's order can be reported only next month which will be done.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Pyarelal is returning today or the day after. Prabha has returned. Vijaya will be coming in for a few days, so will Vasumati. Ramdas has been transferred to Nagpur. So Nimu and children will also come for a few days. And so the Ashram remains full. There are one or two new arrivals.

There is a clean bill of health.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4082. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7391

220. LETTER TO SARANGADHAR DAS

WARDHA, SEVAGRAM,
September 24, 1941

DEAR SARANGADHAR DAS,

Take your time before publishing my letter[2]. It is he who is to be backed by considered plan.

Yours,

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 10444. Courtesy: Government of Orissa

[1] Narendra Dev was released unconditionally on September 23.

[2] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Sarangadhar Das", 6-9-1941

221. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA C. MEHTA

September 24, 1941

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

Do not lose heart. What does it matter if the fever has not left you completely? It is bound to leave you some day. The real cause has not been diagnosed, and hence this delay. You will certainly improve in the climate there. And also resolve in your mind that you will not allow yourself to become a burden on others.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9430

222. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

September 24, 1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

What you write is worth thinking over. Put up the suggestion to me.

Lakshmibai has given me a description of Surgaon. Whatever we do, we shall do after careful thinking.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8484. Also C.W. 7157. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

223. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

September 24, 1941

BHAI MUNSHI,

Chi. Sarala is leaving today. I feel sad sending her back and she also does not feel happy to leave. she has become deeply attached to all—including the children. Sarala will sever her relationship with Chandravadan. She will do that only to please you and me, though she will do it honestly. She has not been convinced—is not likely to be easily convinced—that it is her moral duty to sever that relationship independently of other considerations. I wish to call Chandravadan, but only if you two are agreeable. Sarala and I t alked about many

other things, too. She has permitted me to report to you everything. I will do that when either or both of you come here. Encourage her to come here whenever she feels inclined to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7670. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

224. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

September 21, 1941

CHI. NARAHARI

Chimanlal told me about your blood-pressure. It is a warning to you. You need rest. If you go and hide yourself somewhere, you will be on your feet once again. Don't ignore the warning.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am not writing anything for Mahadev, for he will have left the place.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9126

225. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

September 24, 1941

CHI. KAKA,

Personally I feel the same way as you do, but I cannot be positive. I may have to change my mind after hearing the other party. You also should keep an open mind. We will do what we think necessary at that time. You should not be scared of what Saksena writes. By all means press everybody to come on the 4th. But it will be better if you consult in advance all those whose presence you consider necessary. It suppose Jamnalalji and Rajendra Babu will be the two such persons. I see no need to invite Satyanarayana[1] specially to attend.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10953

[1] M. Satyanarayana

226. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 24, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is a letter from you today. I am not happy about your studies getting interrupted for one reason or another. But neither you nor anyone else can do anything about it. It must be as God wills.

Annapurna has also been a burden to some extent. I had thought that she would not get any fever there. She will no doubt recover with your treatment. But I shall be anxious until that happens.

I shall discuss Mother with Pyarelal. Difficulties will certainly arise if things do not turn out the way you write. Mother herself is so considerate that she will not be a burden to me. However, we shall do as you wish. I shall not insist in any way. I shall be fully prepared. I am absolutely fine. All the patients are well. Chakrayya had a fit of epilepsy again.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

227. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

September 24, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Bananas have to be brought for Doctor and the others. It would not be right to discontinue lemons. You will have to give rice or *khichri*[1]. The amount of milk may be reduced. Jaggery only in porridge. Doctor and the others will have to be given this. The rest should be clearly thought out before acting. Some bananas have to be procured.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Ask Gajanan about the palm gur.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4405

[1] Rice and dal cooked together

228. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHAGANJ,
September 24, 1941

I understand that uncertified dealers are issuing *hundies* for the Charkha Week. This is wholly unauthorized and harmful to khadi. I request the public to beware of unauthorized dealers in khadi.

The Hindu, 25-9-1941

229. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

September 25, 1941

BIRLA
AMRITNIWAS
MUSSOORIE

FEEL INADVISABLE INVITE SIRCAR.[1]

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 7864. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

230. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 25, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I wonder if I wrote to you about Mr. Hancock.[2] He may come in October as written by you. I hope he won't run up on 27th. I have cancelled that appointment and filled the day with others.

I am sorry to hear about Raja Saheb. You will be quite right in putting a check upon the loot. I know how difficult it all is. His death would certainly be a deliverance for him and to you all who are helpless witnesses to the tortures he is suffering.

Though the post leaves here daily at the appointed time evidently you receive two at a time.

I am keeping extraordinarily well.

I am thinking of going out for the Andrews Memorial about the

[1] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to G. D. Birla", 25-9-1941
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 14-9-1941

middle of October. Nothing is fixed yet. But the idea is taking shape.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4084. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7393

231. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
September 25, 1941

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Nanibehn Jhaveri has passed away. This seems incredible, but it is one of those acts of God which nobody can comprehend.

I understand about Allah Bux. I have of course told him that we will accept Maulana's decision. But I have also told him at the same time that, if he is convinced of the necessity of leaving, he should convince Maulana also and, resigning his office, go into the wilderness with the Congress. There is no breach of promise or anything like that in this. But let us leave it alone. When you come, we shall have a brief discussion about the pros and cons of the suggestion. My view regarding Sind is not new. But the old view has grown stronger and I hold it to be applicable to all provinces. I am in no hurry. The suggestion can be acted upon only if most of us accept it. "Most" includes Maulana also.

Do give, within reasonable limits, the time required by homoeopathy to cure you. I have heard much about the water at Hajira, but do not know about Deolali. Hajira may possibly agree with you. Everything else failing, you can try nature cure. But we should first meet and have a brief discussion.

The little girl's illness is getting prolonged. It seems from Manibehn's letter that she may even survive.

Rajendra Babu is all right. Jamnalalji's problem cannot still be said to have been solved.

I hope Bhulabhai will get well.

I am not writing separately to Mani.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I see that I will have to undertake a tour to collect contributions

for the Deenabandhu Memorial Fund. I intend to start it in the middle of October.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2. Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 255-6

232. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 25, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is no letter from you today. Pyarelal did not come yesterday. I presume he will be coming today.

I might say I am doing very well. The patients are all fine. The right treatment for Chakrayya still eludes us. Prabhakar's case is peculiar. He is not having fever. He does not suffer from itch because he is not being given food. However, he continues to be troubled by sexual craving, and has discharges frequently. If you can think of a cause for this, let me know.

You must have adjusted your routine for studying.

After visiting Bombay it somehow seems that this time I met no-one of importance there.

How is the climate there ?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I may tour in connection with Deenabandhu Memorial Fund in October.

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

233. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

September 25, 1941

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I clean forgot the matter concerning Sircar. Today I have sent a telegram[1]; it would have reached in time. I believe he as well as we shall stand to lose if we invite him. If his love is true it would endure. The public will not be able to understand his acceptance of office in Government. Therefore from every point of view it would be better if he

[1] *Vide*"Telegram to G. D. Birla", 25-9-1941

did not receive public acclamation, but continued to lend prestige to their administration in the eyes of the public. It is true that we accept help from everyone but there is always a limit.

I hope your health is improving.``

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I will have to tour for the Deenabandhu Memorial [Fund] I intend to set out in the middle of October, Should I start from Delhi—Pilani?

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8049. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

234. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI JAKATDAR

September 25, 1941

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

To Jakatdarji I write in English but to you I shall write in Hindi. I was pained to hear of Father's condition. I congratulate you on your bravery.

You may make what use you think proper of the money you have collected. Whether any money can be spared from here we shall discuss when you come. I hope your work will prosper and you will be able to bring order to the work in the office.

Blessings from

BAPU

SAU. PRABHAVATIBAI JAKATDAR
CHAIRMAN, LOCAL BOARD
BHANDARA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

235. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

[*September 26, 1941*][1]

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Here are two letters. You should accept the proffered nomination on the Education Board.

I hope the Raja affair is being smoothed.

M[ahadev] is definitely coming tomorrow only to leave for Alwar on 29th. There is a rush to the Ashram. I simply can not stop it.

I never told you that Surendra was arrested and being tried in Wardha.

All well.

Hope you will be able to report yourself here by 15th October. Like you to be here in my absence.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

P[yarelal] came in yesterday.

From the original: C.W. 4085. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur

236. LETTER TO GHULAM RASOOL QURESHI

September 26, 1941

CHI. QURESHI,

I have your letter. I am much delighted to know that spinning at your end is being conducted vigorously How is Kanjibhai[2] getting on with his betel-leaf-chewing?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10771. Courtesy: Ghulam Rasool Qureshi

[1] The source has "24-9-41" written in someone else's hand which is evidently a slip since the postmark carries the date "26-9-41" and this is substantiated by the reference to Mahadev Desai's expected arrival the next day; *vide* "Letter to Amrita Lal Chatterjee", 22-9-1941

[2] Kanaiyalal Desai

237. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
September 26, 1941

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. You already know my mind from what I wrote to you yesterday. It is not so hot here as you think. The nights are indeed pleasant. Of course, there are mosquitoes at the Bungalow[1]. There will be no mosquitoes if you stay at Sevagram and sleep under the sky. And all other facilities are also available. It will be better, therefore, if you spend two or three days here. The idea about Deolali does not appeal to me. Hajira, of course, is well known.

Satyamurti writes and suggests that they should be permitted to attend the Assembly. I don't like the idea at all. Let me have your opinion.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 257

238. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

September 26, 1941

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I had sent a copy of my statement[2] to the Chief Minister of Burma and conveyed my views to him. He has sent me a cordial reply, accompanied by copies of his two statements before the Indian Delegation. You have presumably seen these letters. I think we can get something done if we have people working there too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4737. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarjee

[1] Jamnalal Bajaj's residence at Wardha
[2] On the Indo-Burman Agreement; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 24-8-1941

239. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 26, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I received your letter sent through Pyarelal.

Only when your routine of study is settled shall I feel sure that you are studying well.

I am discussing Mother. How can she be a burden to me ?

As for Annapurna, I suggest that you should keep her on a light diet. If T.B. is not suspected then her fever may come down by a diet of milk, fruit and leafy vegetables. But this is the suggestion of a quack. Do whatever you feel is right. I do not worry in the least about the patient who is left in your charge.

The enclosed letter is about Punjab.

Mahadev is coming tomorrow. He will leave here on the 29th and reach there on his way to Alwar.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

240. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

September 26, 1941

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. I am in agreement with your scheme. If there are six such organizations, they are bound to do some good. I also feel that for the present we cannot dispense with the matriculation examination. At the same time my opinion is that our curriculum should be such that the boys who reach the high school stage should have gained adequate knowledge which would enable them to find occupations or jobs when they leave school. The main point is that I like the thing and it can be given practical shape.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

About your health. Take as much exercise as your body can stand without discomfort.

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8050. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

241. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[*September 27, 1941*][1]

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. How can you get into panic like that ? Annapurna's parents scared her. In this way, if they just arrive there, they will be sorry. When you spare no effort from your side, what more can one expect ? You should write to her father. He is a very good man.

Keep Anasuya with you only if you can bear the burden.

Durgabehn and Bablo have arrived. Durgabehn's pain in the thigh has become chronic.

Blessings from

BAPU

[P.S.]

My weight went down by 1 1b. this time. Less intake of butter may be the reason. I am taking butter with some hesitation. Pressure of work could also be a reason.

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

242. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[2]

SEVAGRAM,
September 27, 1941

Today I have no time. I am sending you one letter. I am returning Mrs. Cousins's[3] letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4252. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7884

[1] From the reference to the arrival of Mahadev Desai in the preceding item and of Durga Desai and Bablo in this; *vide* also "Letter to Amrit Lal Chatterjee", 22-9-1941

[2] This is in the form of a postscript to Prabhavati's letter to the addressee dated September 27, 1941.

[3] Margaret Cousins

243. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 28, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your little note. I have answered all your three questions. You should join the Women's Tagore Memorial Committee and Education Board. For Hancock let it be 4 p.m. on 11th October. I did not give the exact date. I am glad you are definitely on the mend.

The apples have come. Have not tasted them. Let it be once a month.

You will be pleased with this performance.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4086. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7395

244. LETTER TO SIR ROBERT E. HOLLAND

September 28, 1941

DEAR ROBERT,

Many thanks for your departing note. Of course I shall look forward to your note and your letters from time to time.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR R. E. HOLLAND
1180 DRUMMOND
CANADA

From a photostat: G.N. 5667

245. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

September 28, 1941

DEAR KU[MARAPPA],

You seem to have written something to Shankerlal. Whatever the cause his health has taken a sudden turn for the worse. Therefore please cease all correspondence with him.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10156

246. LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

September 28, 1941

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I learnt, by chance, only the day before yesterday about your having failed. You have not failed only in one subject. This indicates that you lack aptitude for law. This is true of many people. There have been great men who were deficient in certain capacities. Everybody cannot be a mathematician. One should follow the path indicated by one's gifts. I would, therefore, urge you to give up your ambition of passing the examination and to devote yourself exclusively to your business. Whatever little knowledge of law you have acquired will remain with you. I do wish, of course, that you should improve your English. But if you are disinclined to that labour, I will not insist on that either. I should also like you to be tested thoroughly by an able professor and you should then agree to learn whatever subject he finds you have an aptitude for. I wish, too, that you should come here as early as possible and take the children to Rangoon. Urmi is pining for Rangoon all the time. She has now got tired of Sevagram. Appa has not been happy here from the very beginning. In these circumstances, the children will not progress. From every point of view, therefore, I suggest that you come over here, have a discussion and then go to Rangoon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1019. Courtesy: Manjula M. Mehta

247. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 28, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. I am not going to worry at all about Annapurna.

Ultimately, it is I who will have to think about Mother. Pyarelal is vacillating. If there is a difference of view, he is more in favour of having her here.

If Mother does come, I would like to shift to the old hut and the portion of the hospital which I am using. I would return to the hospital where Mother can stay. Sankaran will no doubt serve her well. Mother can separately cook for herself whatever she wants. Pyarelal

thinks that Mother can help in the hospital. What do you think about all this ? Consult Mother also.

The *ghee* turned out to be expensive. How can I bear the thought that it was made at home from 64 1bs. of milk ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

248. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
September 28, 1941

CHI. LILI,

I have your postcard. I have more information from M. Now you must concentrate on your studies. I do not forbid you to come here. But you are not going to study while here. And it is necessary to study. I would prefer that you made up your mind to come only after passing your examination. I can arrange for your independent stay during the holidays. Prabhavati has arrived. Rajkumari has not come yet. We are all well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI LILAVATI UDESHI
KANJI KHETSI CHHATRALAYA
65 MINT ROAD
BOMBAY FORT

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

249. LETTER TO PANNALAL JHAVERI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
September 28, 1941

CHI. PANNALAL,

You will have received my letter. If you are not already on your way here, both you and Gangabehn should be right away. You must lighten your heart.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari – Pannalal Jhaveri, p. 33

250. LETTER TO RATHINDRANATH TAGORE

September 29,1941

MY DEAR RATHI,

I had your letter of 14th instant.

I am glad Dr. Abanindra Babu has been elected[1]. Please give him my congratulations. I would only have accepted the responsibility if I could not have escaped it. At my time of life the natural desire is to lessen the burdens, not to add to them.

I can give myself no rest till the five lacs are collected. I shall avoid travelling so far as I can but I dare not, if the full amount is not forthcoming. It is a debt I owe both to Gurudev's and Deenabandhu's memory.

I shall be glad when you are free to come here.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2292

251. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 29, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter. We can easily accept the Kapurthala terms. If a good local man can be obtained you can open a bhandar there. Why should [not][2] the State produce its own khadi? I suppose there is not enough atmosphere for it.

J[amnalalji] is getting on. His mind is still weak. He has shouldered a big burden in the shape of a Cow Service Sangh. A preliminary meeting is going on today. I have to attend tomorrow. Will you care to join? It is again specially woman's work. She spins, she milks, she bears, she keeps the house. Daughter दुहिता—milk-maid.

I have redirected two packets. Bul's letter I have destroyed. She has written another letter. I think the thing will end favourably.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3679. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6488

[1] President of the Visvabharati

[2] From *Letters to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur*

252. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HINDU MAHASABHA, SHIMOGA

September 29, 1941

THE SECRETARY
HINDU MAHASABHA
SHIMOGA, MYSORE STATE

DEAR SECRETARY,

Your signature is indecipherable.

I have known In the national flag used in Ganapati processions. It is wrong to use the national flag on temples.

The Congress is a national organization in that it is open to all without distinction of race or creed. The Congress has as much or as little to do with Hindu festivals as with any other.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6839

253. LETTER TO JIVARAJ

September 29, 1941

So far as I am personally concerned, the feeling grows upon me that the possession of land and property is a nuisance and a burden. Those who wish to travel should have as little luggage as possible and I want to get rid of my superfluous baggage.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

254. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
September 29, 1941

CHI. DEVDAS,

I daily read about you. The Chief Justice has given you good publicity. Sir Tej has deservedly praised you. Some of your replies are wonderfully effective. Shivnathbhai keeps me informed about you. You have cast a spell on him. Ba hears everything about you. Munnalal reads the reports to her with great interest. She is no more afraid of [your] imprisonment.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI DEVDAS GANDHI
HINDUSTAN TIMES BUILDING
NEW DELHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2141

255. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA C. MEHTA

September 29, 1941

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

It is very good indeed that you are regaining confidence. I want you to be fully restored. Go on learning new things while there. I am sure you are lightening Grandmother's burden. Do not be in a hurry to resume work. Everything is going on quite well here. We remember you all the time.

Nanibehn Jhaveri died all of a sudden of heart failure. She was a dedicated worker.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9431

256. LETTER TO DHIRUBHAI B. DESAI

September 29, 1941

CHI. DHIRUBHAI,

I have received your letter. Ask Father not even to think of writing to me. Whenhis health is restored, he may come here instead

of writing to me. Meanwhile it is enough that I go on writing to him.

You had mentioned about your resignation from the presidentship. I had omitted to reply. I too consider your resignation proper. Consult Father, and also Sardar, about your successor. Send me the name suggested by the two of them.

Have you received a complaint against one Sharma? I too have received its copy. Let me know all about it and do the needful.

Blessings from

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

257. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 29, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. If I have to tour, I would prefer to have you with me. In all likelihood the touring will be put off. Let us see what happens. Even if I have to go, I shall of course be careful.

Annapurna appears to have turned the corner. A great hurdle will have been overcome if her fever goes. Chakrayya has been invited by Lakshmipati. He will keep him at his own mansion. I am sending him there tomorrow.

I understand about Prabhakar. I am myself looking after him. Your advice will help.

Enclosed is a cutting for Annapurna.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

258. GUARD AGAINST CREDIT

In this business of khadi, as in any other, I know that we sell on credit to increase the sales but ultimately suffer losses. While I was practising law in South Africa I used to examine the accounts of hundreds of businessmen who were my clients. They used to provide 25 per cent for bad debts. As a result they would charge a very high rate of profit. Some of them would go bankrupt. My experience of conducting *Indian Opinion, Navajivan, Young India* and *Harijan* has shown me that we escaped losses because we never sold on credit. Nor

did this policy adversely affect the number of our subscribers. One direct benefit of this policy was that only those subscribed to these periodicals who cared for them. There can however be no comparison between khadi and other kinds of business. Khadi is an altruistic affair. It is conceived as service to the starving millions. Then why should we sell khadi on credit?

My personal conviction therefore is that under no circumstances and to no person should we sell khadi on credit. If we firmly followed this policy we shall spare ourselves much unnecessary expenditure and can even bring down the price of khadi. And simultaneously we shall be able to give our customers satisfaction.

It is a general rule of the Charkha Sangh that no bhandar under its jurisdiction shall release goods on credit. I am afraid everyone has not been able to observe this rule hundred per cent. I submit that mere enunciation of a rule whose importance we cannot appreciate is not much good. I hope, therefore, that all khadi workers will clearly understand the policy of not giving credit and then follow it unfailingly.

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, September 1941

259. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 30, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. I have also read the letter to Pyarelal. This letter will be going with the late fee. Today there was a Goseva meeting in Nalwadi which took three hours. I returned from there at 5.30 p.m. After that I had my meal. I am writing this after prayer.

Pyarelal will be offering satyagraha tomorrow. Today he has worked like mad. I did not think it was proper to postpone it after his arrival here. His work will always be there. So, I decided on tomorrow. Now I shall prepare the statement[1] for him.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Krishnachandra", 12-5-1941

260. LETTER TO VIJAYALAKSHMI PANDIT

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
September 30, 1941

CHI. SARUP,

I have your letter. I understand about the Vice- Chancellorship. Whatever people may say about the Lucknow Jail, what happened was for the best. People will always complain. We must put up with it.

I haven't seen the papers concerning the Chunar Jail. Perhaps you forgot to send them. Be that as it may, my opinion about that Jail is the same as about other jails. Hunger-strikes are permissible only when self-respect is at stake. This can be minimized by keeping the movement pure. We must understand the limitations of hunger-strike. After a few other prisoners are released I shall certainly send for them.

Mahadev may go to Dehra Dun on the 5th.

Now I have answered all your questions.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

261. A NOTE

September 30, 1941

I have given my yarn to Bibi Sultana. She will sell it and the money it fetches will go to the Deenabandhu Memorial.

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile of the Urdu: *Mahatma*, Vol. VI, between pp. 48 and 49

262. SPEECH AT GOSEVA SANGH MEETING

NALWADI,
September 30, 1941

You should adopt a simple and brief constitution without provision for so many categories of members. All the members should be of one category and there should be no patrons at all. Those who contribute will do so not for the sake of name. Some of them may contribute anonymously and may not even like to disclose their names.

You don't stand to gain by having various categories of membership. The members are not going to have any privileges. Our purpose is to render service, not to enjoy privileges. Even ten or twenty members capable of rendering concrete service would suffice. Every member must be bound by the condition to use only cow's milk, ghee, etc., and leather made from dead cattle. In this no laxity should be permitted. A small committee to carry on the work of the society may be formed.

I formed the opinion, even while in South Africa, that we would have to give up the lure of buffalo's milk and ghee. Cow-protection helps protection of the buffalo also. It cannot be that everybody would give up buffalo's milk but there is real danger of people giving up cow's milk. If, therefore, we do not protect the cow, both the buffalo and the cow are sure to be doomed.

Our fault is—this is a fault found in all men, but more particularly among Indians—that we grab what is easily available and we let go what is difficult to obtain. People find khadi, village industries organization and the like inexpensive and convenient. They prefer buffalo milk because it is sweet and cheap.

Since the times of the Vedas we have been glorifying the cow—not the buffalo. Had the cow not been so glorified, it would have perished and along with it the buffalo. I have studied the comparative figures of the cows and buffaloes in India. Both are in plenty but neither of them is making any progress. So long as it pays him, the milkman keeps the cow or the buffalo after which he sells them to the butcher. The butcher utilizes the proceeds for purchasing more cattle. The cow-protectionwallahs purchase these cows or buffaloes in order to save them from the butcher's knife. A couple of cows are saved in this manner but it spells disaster for the cow in general. The correct remedy, therefore, lies in forgetting the cow already sold and in investing funds for improving the breed, raising its value and in teaching cattle-keepers their dharma.

Let no one fear that the buffalo will become extinct if all give up its milk and ghee. As I have already told you this will hardly happen and even if it did there would be no harm. The buffalo will return to the jungle. What we must protect is the cow and, because the milk of both is useful, the buffalo will also be saved along with the cow. But if instead of following the scientific method everybody, in the name of cow-protection, sets about acting according to his own fancy, both the cow and the buffalo are sure to he doomed. It was mainly owing to our ignorance that so many other things in our country similarly met their doom. We can realize our duty towards the

animal world and discharge it by wisely pursuing our dharma of service to the cow. At the root of cow-protection is the realization of our dharma towards the sub-human species. But our service to the cow is service only in name and all of us are therefore tending to forget our dharma.

Statistically speaking, India has one-fourth of the world's cattle population. But the plight of our cattle is worse than that of the human population, bad as it is.

One who serves the cow must take cow's milk only and not goat's milk. I take goat's milk out of my helplessness. But the members of the Cow-protection Society must take only cow's milk and ghee and use only leather made from dead cows and buffaloes. Where even cows and buffaloes are being slaughtered, how can one get leather made from dead goats? Mankind has till this day taken it for granted that the goat is born only to be butchered. Today being Dussehra, in Calcutta thousands of goats must have been sacrificed to Goddess Kali.

Ghee should not present any problem for the rich. Just as they carry with them some lavender, Eau de Cologne and a toothbrush, similarly they should also have cow's ghee or else they should not think of cow-protection. The problem of milk is not as simple as that of ghee. In Almora cow's milk is not available at any cost. The same condition prevails in Orissa. We can make milk by dissolving *mava*[1] in water. We use Horlicks powder because it is a good thing and easily digestible. But why should we not make a similar powder here? We should acquire the scientific knowledge and make it locally so that powder milk could be available even at the top of the Himalayas.

Jamnalal's health is not so good that he can be allowed to go to jail again. If he falls ill after going there I shall not be able to bear it. This struggle is going to be a prolonged one. When the time comes I shall myself ask him to leave everything and go to jail. But today it is my duty not to send him to jail. What should be his field of activity then? He placed before me a few suggestions such as Harijan [work], khadi, cow-protection, etc. Of them I liked cow-protection. He was associated with this work from its inception and whatever work has so far been done has not been wasted. It was by and large being conducted according to my own understanding and advice. Now it will be run under Jamnalalji's guidance.

Cow-protection is service to the dumb creation. Today Harijans are weak but tomorrow they can become strong and make progress on

[1] Milk boiled to solid form

their own, for they possess all the human faculties. If tomorrow Harijans rise and take possession of temples, I shall dance [for joy]. But the cow has no such strength. She can be strong and healthy only if we feed her. She will always be a docile animal. You may hit or even kill her, but she cannot revolt against you. Who is then going to protect her? Jamnalal's spiritual craving will be satisfied by serving the cow. I have, therefore, entrusted this work entirely to him and he will run it with his business instinct as well as his altruistic disposition.

Cow-protection is a stupendous task. We will have to study this science in a dispassionate manner. We must bring together all those who have studied this subject from the modern scientific angle. We should have a band of efficient *gosevaks* who can go where demanded. If Swami Ananda wishes to come he may, though he can carry on the work in Thana itself. He should decide about the area of his activity and concentrate his energy there. In this way, let us take the map of India and divide it into ten or hundred divisions. The person in charge of each division will send in his report. There are a number of goshalas in India which should be inspected and run on proper lines. If an expert is required anywhere we should be in a position to send one.

It requires a man of purity to become a servant of the cow. A person of ability alone will not do. I see no need of touring at present for this work. It should be possible to do a lot of work while stationed at one place. To begin with, from now on we can supply cow's milk in Wardha itself to those who are prepared to use it.

[From Hindi]

Sarvodaya, December 1941

263. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 30, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This will go with late fee. Your long letter. I have not missed the two days you mention. But the post here is a curious thing. These are the drawbacks of village life. I revel in them.

You are quite right in not paying anything to the Sammelan as you have never appreciated their activity. My No has been sent already for reasons of my own.

I shall [see][1] what can be done about Suman[2]. Let him write to

[1] From *Letters to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur*

[2] Ramnath 'Suman', a Hindi poet

Jajuji.

If I go out I would like you to look after Sevagram. But that can be only if you are quite fit. But if you are not, you can certainly stay on there till after my return. I would [leave][1] it entirely to you. If I go, I hardly think I can finish the tour under twenty days or even a month. Much will depend upon my health and invitations.

I have not given away your pen for good.[2] I told Mira that it was yours and that you had specially put it in my rack for use by me only. But for the moment I had no other. So on your return we shall fix up something for her and get back what I have given her. Just now I am using Lilavati's and the one Mira has returned.

I had a meeting of new Goseva Sangh at Nalwadi.[3] It was good and business-like because of Jamnalalji. It was begun punctually and finished in time.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4087. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7357

264. CABLE TO HAJEE E. M. PARUK, NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS [4]

September 1941

E. M. PARUK
NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS
37 ALBERT STREET
DURBAN

WISH SUCCESS. HOPE INTERNAL DISSENSIONS COMPOSED.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] From *Letters to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur*

[2] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 21-9-1941

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

[4] The addressee, a sugar-mill owner, became President of the Natal Indian Congress in 1940 when a group led by A. I. Kajee revived the NIC, refusing to recognize the amalgamation of the NIC and the Colonial-born and Indian Settlers Association in 1939 to form the Natal Indian Association.

265. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 1, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I sent you a long letter posted this morning with late fee. It was written last night.

Your brief note today. So you got three letters at a time. They answer all your questions, I have sent an appointment for 11th for Hancock. He has now sent a long wire for a wire to be sent to his paper. How can I cope with such work? I am trying.

Herewith a letter.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4088. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7397

266. A LETTER[1]

[*October 1, 1941*][2]

DEAR SISTER,

Your son telegraphs to me about your illness. I am glad you are not insisting on his release. May God give you peace and restore you. His will be done, not ours.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10332. Courtesy: Government of Mysore

267. LETTER TO DODDAMATHI

October 1, 1941

DEAR DODDAMATHI,

I had your wire. I am glad about your decision. I have written to your mother. May God bless her.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10331. Courtesy: Government of Mysore

[1] This and the following item were displayed at the Mysore Pavilion, Gandhi Darshan, New Delhi, 1969-70.

[2] *Vide* the following item.

268. LETTER TO TAYYEBULLA

October 1, 1941

DEAR TAYYEBULLA,

I was glad to have your and Sarma's letters. Someone will be going [to] Assam. My regards to you both and the others who may be with you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 62

269. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 1, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Pyarelal courted arrest today. It was a beautiful sight. All of us went up to the outskirts of Sevagram. Even after that we continued to walk in procession. The village people washed his feet at every step, did *arati* and thus the procession went on to Barbadi.

Most probably an account of the proceedings will go along with this.

He worked the whole night. Then he slept by my side for a little while and then went with a smiling face.

I am sending herewith his letter and other enclosures.

BAPU

[P.S.]

You must have received my letter of yesterday sent with late fee.

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

270. MESSAGE TO STATES' PEOPLE

October 1, 1941

I hold strong and decided views on the relationship between the Princes and the people. I am convinced that, in the new world order, which is bound to follow the insensate butchery, dignified by the name of war, the Princes will have place only if they become true servants of

the people, deriving their power not from the sword but from the love and consent of the people.

Such being my fixed view, I advise the people of the States to cultivate patience and prepare themselves for the responsibilities that will devolve on them, willy-nilly, by assiduously doing mute constructive work.

This does not mean submission to active and acute tyranny, of which I have so many accounts coming to me. This the victims must resist in the best manner they can. The only best manner I know is the way of non-violence, otherwise called conscious and deliberate self-suffering. But cases of individual torture and degradation have come under my notice. If they are true and if the tortured persons do not know the way of non-violence, they will resist the tortures with all the violence they can summon from within and die in the attempt to resist the torture and the degradation. That violent resistance will almost count as non-violence, even as the resistance of a mouse to a ferocious cat will count. I have in mind an unarmed man under torture by an armed company of torturers. No man, however weak in body, if he has the will to resist and the capacity to die bravely, need feel helpless against odds, however heavy.

I would like the Princes to accept my claims to be their true friend. As such, I would like to tell them that the way to read the signs of the times is to realize the utter helplessness of the sword. The Biblical saying is going to prove true sooner than we had expected: "For all they that take the sword shall perish by the sword."

The Hindu, 3-10-1941

271. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[1]

October 2, 1941[2]

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

HOMI VILLA

PANCHGANI

JAMNALALJI LEAVING TOMORROW. SEE YOU SUNDAY. GOD'S WILL OUR LAW. WIRE CONDITION.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 248

[1] The addressee was critically ill; *vide* the following item.

[2] From *Bapuni Prasadi*

272. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

October 2, 1941

According to me you have escaped death. I was afraid that you might not survive. Don't you think, therefore, that you have really escaped. Don't worry about anything. Let Bombay sink into the Back Bay if it will.[1] If Janaka[2] did not feel the least concerned while Janakapuri was burning, why should we prove ourselves weaker than Janaka? Shouldn't we do better than he? How we can do that, only God knows. But Janaka himself has shown us how we can be like him.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 181

273. LETTER TO TARAMATI M. TRIKUMJI[3]

SEVAGRAM,
October 2, 1941

Great is your burden. Jamnalalji is going there. He will stay there for one or two days. Tell Mathuradas that I think of him the whole day. Ask him to have patience and mediate on God. He should not lose courage. And you, especially, should not at all get frightened. Life and death are in God's hands But as long as one is alive one must serve and should repeat God's name.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 181

274. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

October 2, 1941

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You must now be preparing to come here. Mathuradas is seriously ill. You had better send someone to him. I have already written to Radha. I am thinking of sending Jamnalalji. I hope you are getting along all right.

[1] The addressee was Mayor of Bombay.
[2] Sita's father, a king known for his perfect non-attachment
[3] Wife of Mathuradas Trikumji

A *goseva* sangh has been recently formed. It is a new field of service for Jamnalalji.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Jamnalal will start tomorrow. From there he will go to Mathuradas.

I have your letter. Mahadev will have to be forced to travel second class. What is the progress concerning Andrews [Memorial Fund]?

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 257

275. LETTER TO MADALASA

October 2, 1941

CHI. MADALASA,

I trust you are in good health. If you have any problem, let me know. It has now become impossible for Dr. Das to go there and be of service. I hope, however, that nothing much remains to be done. Take proper care of your diet. Do not eat dal, spices and things cooked in ghee. You may satisfy your palate later. Just now observe self-control for the sake of the baby.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 321

276. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

October 2, 1941

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I am afraid you will not get the letter sent with Marybehn. It is with the censor. Perhaps you may get it belatedly.

At present everything has become irregular. Things will be more irregular still. The surprising thing is that even this much order has been kept. Our little troubles don't count at all when thousands are being massacred every day.

Both of us keep good health.

Ramdas has become our neighbour now. At present he appears to be calm. His health also has improved a little.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4922

277. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 2, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. Today the Ashram is teeming with people. They just keep coming. The spinning-wheels are plying. I too gave an hour to it.

I have understood about Mother. Now it is for you and me to decide. Even if this building is handed over for the hospital, Mother can still stay in your room. What does she herself desire ? Is she willing to come ? Is she enthusiastic ? Discuss it with her and write to me. In whatever is done, we have to think of what will be convenient to you and Mother. What inconvenience can it cause me ? If I think of all these people at the Ashram as an inconvenience, then Mother too would be an inconvenience. Ultimately, she has to come here. Hence, while taking a decision do not assume that she may be a burden to me.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

278. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

October 2, 1941

BHAI PRITHVI SINGH,

Your letter. Ahimsa was born along with man. Hitler too does not kill his own people. This is ahimsa though in a very limited measure. As ahimsa is the very nature of the *atman*, either man comes to it out of weariness or accepts it willingly, as we are trying to do. Know that our endeavour in comparison with the achievement of a

siddha[1] is like a drop in the ocean. But the drop also has the essence of the ocean, so it is no small thing. The rest when you come here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5652. Also C.W. 2963. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

279. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA[2]

October 2, 1941

CHI. BRIJKRISHNAJI,

I am wearing the dhoti sent by you. Remain cheerful.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2484

280. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

October 2, 1941

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Your letter. I think it would be good if Feroze[3] went along with you. If he himself wants to stay on I have no objection. We shall be able to talk more when you come over tomorrow.

I hope Madalasa is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3024

281. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

October 2, 1941

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. Jamnalal leaves everything to you. He thinks that I should be taken to other places too. I do not want to go to

[1] One who has attained perfection

[2] This is a postscript to Prabhavati's letter to the addressee.

[3] Feroze Gandhi who was expected to come the next day

Ahmedabad. I may go if I am invited. I should be taken only to places from where we hope to collect funds. Jamnalal thinks that this is the season when rich people stay in their homes. I do not insist that I should begin [my tour] in the middle of this month either from Delhi or Pilani. Do what is right. You will meet Mahadev and decide in consultation with him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8051. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

282. SPEECH AT GANDHI JAYANTI MEETING

October 2, 1941

However mean or insignificant the work may be, God values it more, provided it is done for service and without any hope of return. Thus sweepers' work is more valuable if it is done selflessly and with the motive of serving.

Gandhiji appealed to the audience to help in cow-protection work, in preserving the cow which was now perishing due to neglect. The evil, if not checked, would, he said, result in serious deterioration of the agricultural wealth of the country.

In conclusion, he appealed to them to develop charkha and spinning.

I do not value my Jayanti Day, but I call it 'Charkha Jayanti'.

Gandhiji told the villagers that he would come every night amongst them for prayer, provided they liked it, as this would establish increased contact with them, but they must be punctual and regular.[1]

The Hindu, 3-10-1941

283. TELEGRAM TO RAGHUNANDAN SARAN[2]

[On or after *October 2, 1941*][3]

MAY HOSPITAL SERVE POOR.

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Gandhiji distributed prizes for the best cows exhibited by the villagers.

[2] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram dated October 2, 1941, seeking Gandhiji's blessings on the occasion of the opening of a charitable Ayurvedic hospital by the Lok Sevak Sangh.

[3] To the Education Board; *vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 26-9-1941

284. STATEMENT IN COURT [1]

SEVAGRAM,
October 3, 1941

It is no pleasure for me to appear before this court for the third time except the natural pleasure one derives from the performance of one's duty. But for the peremptory call of duty I should not have reappeared before this court.

Deep meditation for which jail life provides an ample opportunity has convinced me more than ever of the correctness of the Congress resolution to offer civil disobedience in vindication of the right of free speech to the extent of inviting those who listen to oppose the war in every shape or form.

The rivers of blood that are daily flowing in this war which is without parallel in barbarity and ferocity should convince even the confirmed sceptic of the utter immorality of the war. Except for hypnotism which hardens even the sense of perception, there should not be any difficulty in preceiving the crime against humanity which the present war means.

It is difficult to strike the balance between the right and the wrong. The right can only belong to the party that washes its hands clean of blood-guiltiness and dares the aggressor by accepting the law of self–suffering through non-violent action to do his worst.

Though seemingly the Congress fight is in defence of the right to preach against association with all wars or at least this war, it is none the less an effort to convince the world of the immeasurable superiority of non-violent action over the violent resistance even in a cause considered just.

Let no one attribute ineffectiveness to the studied mildness of the Congress action. Actions appearing insignificant have led before now to astounding results. Those of us who are privileged to take part in the struggle have a living faith that our civil disobedience will lead to a result fraught with the greatest benefit to mankind.

The Hindustan Times, 4-10-1941

[1] Drafted by Gandhiji for Pyarelal who filed this after the charge was framed against him for offering individual satyagraha. He was awarded 12 months' simple imprisonment; *vide* also "Letter to Rammanohar Lohia", 11-5-1941

285. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 3, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Yours. I repeat that you should accept the nomination.

I have already told you, my touring is uncertain. I agree that if you are not completely restored or otherwise, too, if you feel the benefits of Simla climate, you should stay away during my absence. Indeed if you feel the benefit, you should prolong your stay till you are completely restored.

P.'s trial was finished this morning. Judgment will be pronounced this afternoon. Madalasa gave birth to a son. All are happy.

Love.

BAPU

Frorn the original: C.W. 4089. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7398

286. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

October 3, 1941[1]

CHI. AMBUJAM,[2]

I am using your cheque for Deenabandhu Memorial. I am glad to have good news about Kichi and his wife. I never expected anything but great courage from Mother. The weather in Sevagram has been good. I am inquiring about the box you left with me. I sent it to Bombay there and then, and forgot all about it. I am glad you reminded me.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI AMBUJAM AMMAL
96 MOWBRAY'S ROAD
ALWARPET[3]
MADRAS

From a photostat: C.W. 9617. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal

[1] These are in Devanagari script.
[2] ibid
[3] In Tamil script

287. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

October 3, 1941

CHI. MIRA,

You will be at the bend tomorrow Saturday at 5 p.m. when a tonga will be waiting for you to take you to Madalasa.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Better come here at 5 p.m. and you will go with Rajen Babu.

From the original: C.W. 6489. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9884

288. LETTER TO KAMALADEVI CHATTOPADHYAYA

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA, C.P.,
October 3, 1941

DEAR KAMALADEVI,

I got your letter only yesterday. It was received earlier but I don't succeed in reaching the post the day it is received. I am glad you have returned home after a long absence. You can come on Sunday or Tuesday next. You will be more comfortable at the Bungalow but you could come directly to the Ashram if you will prefer. We shall talk at 4.00 p.m. on either date.

I hope you are quite well.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

289. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

[*October 3, 1941*][1]

You have to learn the art of not feeling pained at anything. That means absence of feeling of pleasure. The more you cultivate that equimindedness, the better instrument you will be of service.

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] As noted by the addressee

290. LETTER TO MADALASA

October 3, 1941

CHI. MADALASA,

I received your letter after I had written to you yesterday. Now there is no need to reply to your letter. You have gone through a great ordeal.[1] The doctor is going to visit you. Won't you forgive me? You have to come over here to let me have your *darshan.* Be cheerful. Take great care of your diet. The doctor who goes there will tell me everything.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 321

291. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM,
October 3, 1941

CHI. MRIDU,

I have your letter. You have written in a very small hand. Did you have to send it by air mail ?

Sardar is definitely coming. Then I shall discuss your questions. There is no reason to be scared. You and I want to do away with bitterness through sweetness. We want to combat ill-will with love, anger with poise.

The Shanti Sangh affair should be organized. I shall think about it. Come whenever you wish.

Mahadev will not be reaching here before the 7th. He may be delayed further.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 11219. Courtesy : Sarabhai Foundation

[1] The addressee had a safe first delivery after some initial fears.

292. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 3, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. Pyarelal has written from prison. I am sending you the letter.

I understand about Annapurna. There is no need now to write to Rajkumari because she has now almost recovered. And she has written that her brother would not let her go anywhere. He insists that she should regain her health only at Simla.

I am enclosing a copy of Pyarelal's statement. The rest later. The trial was in the morning. The judgement will be given at 3 o'clock. If I have any news, I shall include it in this letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

[P.S.]

There is nothing certain about Lakshmipati. Let us see when he builds the house. If he does build one he plans to do it near the hill.

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

293. TELEGRAM TO PROPRIETOR, HITIASHI AUSHADHALAYA

[On or after *October 3, 1941*][1]

THANKS. BLESSINGS.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

294. LETTER TO D. D. SATHYE

October 4, 1941

DEAR DR. SATHYE,

Many thanks for your letter.

I have in mind your suggestions. I am considering what is possible. I can only take what people give.

Chhotubhai's suggestion cannot be worked. We need no groups as suggested. Everyone has to satisfy the lowest test. Nor is Diwakar's practicable. Some districts will give more some less. This is a voluntary

[1] The addressee's telegram under reply was dated October 3, 1941.

effort. I should be wholly satisfied, if only true men and women went, no matter how few they are.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: D. D. Sathye Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

295. LETTER TO R. ACHYUTHAN

October 4, 1941

DEAR ACHYUTHAN,

I was glad to receive your frank letter. Much misunderstanding arises from ignorance pure and simple. Give my regard to all.

Yours,

BAPU

(M. K. GANDHI)

SHRI R. ACHYUTHAN
STUDENT DETENU, CENTRAL JAIL
RAJAHMUNDRY
ANDHRA

From a photostat: G.N. 10851

296. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
October 4, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Yours.

Again the pain. I suppose it will come and go till at last it is itself exhausted in the effort, if we do not feed it. That is nature's way. And you are following it, I am sure. No fried chips or anything of the sort.

You did not tell me about this exposition of the Bible. But having met ma[n]y Seventh-day Adventists, I can understand his zeal.

We shall discuss the propriety of your joining the Goseva Sangh.

Of course you can resign from the Ed[ucation] Board if it became necessary.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4090. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7399

297. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

October 4, 1941

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

We shall meet soon now. However, I wish to write about one thing. Manibehn writes and tells me that . . .[1] will appear for mill-owners in a case against workers. I cannot believe this. But how can Mani make such a mistake? At first, therefore, I thought of writing to. . . .[2] On second thoughts, however, I feel that there was no need for me to write while you were there. You yourself can solve the problem. If Mani is right, send for . . .[3] and tell him that, if at all, he should appear on behalf of the workers. He cannot appear on behalf of the mill-owners under any circumstances. The other point is that, so far as I understand, ...[4] was not to resume practice. He has dedicated himself to national service. He may accept a brief in special circumstances. But if he starts practice like any other lawyer, his conduct would deserve the severest condemnation. I am quite clear in my mind that he was not to resume practice. He has left the Congress in order to clarify his position from a moral point of view. But in all other respects he is a Congressman. I had thought that by leaving the Congress he had, like me, become more of a Congressman. He seemed frank and straightforward to me, is capable of responding to an appeal to the heart and of self-sacrifice, and is a man ready to correct his error. If you share this impression, send for him and explain this to him. We should treat him as a Congressman for all practical purposes.

I suppose you know that Maulana wants . . . to leave the Assembly. I see no such need. Rajendra Babu does not see any, nor does the Professor. I think you also do not see any. Am I right? Or do I stand corrected?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Do you know Madalasa has given birth to a son? She is fine.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 258-9

[1] The names are omitted in the source.

[2] *ibid*

[3] J. B. Kripalani

[4] The names are omitted in the source.

298. NOTE TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 4, 1941

I like this short and succinet draft[1]. But secure the approval of all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

299. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 4, 1941

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. I had the previous one, too. The constitution drafted by you seems all tight. It is enclosed. I have signed my approval on the draft itself.[2]

The programme there succeeded very well indeed. Dhiru proved to be of great help. By the 2nd, you will perhaps have reached the figure of one lakh. The Iord's will prevails. Kanaiyo left yesterday for Calcutta to complete his training in photography. Abha might come with him. Everything is left to her father.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8593. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

300. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 4, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Herewith another letter from Pyarelal. Send back the letter I forwarded to you yesterday, or a copy of it or the portion with which I have to deal. I thought I would remember everything. But now I see that I have forgotten something.

Everything went off well this time. Jamnalalji also sat with him for an hour in the court and talked. Ba also sat there and talked. He

[1] Of the constitution of the Kathiawar Khadi Board

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

will most probably be taken to Nagpur today. The patients Nirmal Singh and Ram Saran Das have recovered and left for Punjab yesterday.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

301. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 5, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Yours. Whatever happens, you belong to Sevagram. And you will serve whether you are bodily in Sevagram or elsewhere. Therefore no worry please. You must shed the nervousness too about being ill in Sevagram. I have decided not to worry or to worry as little as I do, say, about Ba or, say, Ramsarandas.

All well here.

The weather began to be chilly from yesterday.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4091. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7400

302. LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL

October 5, 1941

DEAR SIR MIRZA,

I have your letter of 28th ultimo. I had your previous letter too. I thank you for both.

The copy of Polak's letter is important. He has developed of late a strange attitude on Indian affairs. It is not less unfortunate because it is sincerely held. What he considers unreal is altogether real for us. Pakistan may be unreal. I hold it to be dangerous. But it is too real to be dismissed with contempt. C[ivil] D[isobedience] may be unreal. But I should resent anybody calling it unreal. Sir Tej Bahadur's wrath is not unreal. It is symptomatic of the Indian temper. I know nobody who considers this war to be India's war. The utter disregard of the sentiment of politically-minded India is a dangerous reality.

I can heartily share Polak's hope that you may be used by God

for bringing peace between the two communities. Polak has forgotten what he knew before as well as I do, that the Princes are not free agents. They have no will but the British will, they have no status but what the British may give them from moment to moment. To say that we must produce an agreement to which the Princes are party is as much as to say that the British should be party.

You may send this to Polak, if you think it will serve any useful purpose. I have simply given you my reaction to Polak's, if only in appreciation of your considerateness in sending me the copy.

I hope you have no difficulty in deciphering my writing.

With regards to you and the family.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2186

303. LETTER TO L. KRISHNASWAMI BHARATI

October 5, 1941

DEAR KRISHNASWAMI,

I was glad to have your full letter.[1]

In the circumstances mentioned by you, the wisest course is to withdraw your name from the list of satyagrahis. It would mean not the slightest reflection on you. In this long struggle every true man or woman will have an ample chance. And I shall be more than satisfied if you work the constructive programme with a scientist's zeal. Without the backing of that programme, C.D. means nothing in terms of the nation.

Yours,

BAPU

SHRI L. KRISHNASWAMI BHARATI, M.L.A.
ADVOCATE
MADURA, SOUTH INDIA

From the original: C.W. 9268. Courtesy: L. Krishnaswami Bharati

[1] In his letter dated September 27, 1941, the addressee who had been just released had expressed inability to reoffer himself for arrest in the near future in view of his family circumstances.

304. LETTER TO ANNADA BABU

SEVAGRAM,
October 5, 1941

MY DEAR ANNADA,

There is no point in your seeking satisfaction, for he has covered the loan.[1] My satisfaction was relevant because if he had been wrong, he would have been guilty of prevarication and I could not be quite the same to him as before. If you do not see this point, pursue it further. I do not want to shut you off without giving you satisfaction.

Yours,
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

305. LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

October 5, 1941

CHI. MAGAN,

I have your clean letter. May your self-confidence bear fruit and may you pass the examination.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1020. Courtesy: Manjula M. Mehta

306. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
October 5, 1941

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have both your letters. All right, go to Nasik for a while and then come over here. All I want is that you should get well. Fortune may smile on a man any time if he but remains alive. It will be a great thing if Mathuradas survives. Madalasa and her baby are fine. I have

[1] The addressee, in his letter dated September 28, had requested Gandhiji to go into the accounts of Khadi Pratishthan with particular reference to the use of A.I.S.A. money by Satis Chandra Das Gupta.

not gone to inquire after them. You must have received my letter of yesterday.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 259

307. LETTER TO POPATLAL CHUDGAR

October 5, 1941

BHAI POPATLAL,

I chanced upon your letter as I was going through all the files. There is no sign on it indicating my having acknowledged it. I have a faint impression that I had asked Bhai Kishorelal to send you an acknowledgement. If he has not done so, please do not think, therefore, that your letter was ignored. I have read it. The suggestions made in it do not seem to me practical at present.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI POPATLAL CHUDGAR

BARRISTER

RAJKOT, KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10118

308. LETTER TO KHWAJA KHURSHED ALAM

October 5, 1941

BHAI KHWAJA SAHEB,

I have your letter. Salesmen in khadi stores work on very meagre wages. There are very few Muslims of this class willing to work for so little. It is something that cannot be helped. Muslims are also there where they are available. I do not like your threat. You could have asked this question through the Press. The question is pertinent. The answer is clear.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

309. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 6, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your note has reached me in time. Why you should get three letters at a time I do not understand. But let us not forget that this is but a small village.

You have to work out your karma and that cheerfully. It is likely that winter will set in early this year. So many additions are being made to the cottage that you will hardly recognize it when you return.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

M[ahadev] does not reach here before 19th. He is at present in Mussoorie.

[PPS.]

I am glad Raja Saheb is better.

B.

From the original: C.W. 4092. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7401

310. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

October 6, 1941

DEAR AMRITLAL,

Kanubhai is in Calcutta. You can send Abha with him if you like and if she likes. I have already written to you about the matter.[1] Hope you are all well.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10324. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[1] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Amrita Lal Chatterjee", 22-9-1941

311. LETTER TO MARGARET JONES

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

October 6, 1941

CHI. KAMALA,

You have done well in giving me your long letter which I am sending to Mary. I had no doubt about your passing with distinction.[1] May you finish your course equally well. Of course you will write when you like.[2]

BAPU

Bapu— Conversations and Correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi, p.197

312. LETTER TO CHANDAN S. KALELKAR

October 6, 1941

CHI. CHANDAN,

I have your letter. May your union bring good to the country as well as to you both.[3]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6266

[1] The addressee had topped the list of successful candidates for the first examination in midwifery.

[2] According to F. Mary Barr the addressee had asked if it would not be better if she wrote her diary only when there was something worth while to write about.

[3] The addressee was married to Satish *alias* Shanker Kalelkar.

313. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 6, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is nothing from you today. There is nothing in particular to write from here. I am doing very well.

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

314. LETTER TO CHAKRAYYA

October 6, 1941

CHI. CHAKRAYYA,

It is sad that you had an attack of giddiness. I think it was due to the weight on your mind. So it is good that you wrote everything. But there is no reason to be sorry about it.

The complaint about partiality is correct. None else is at fault except Ba and myself. Ba has not been able to give up [the feeling of] 'mine' and 'thine', and I cannot leave Ba. Hence the progress of the Ashram has stopped. But there are many good qualities in Ba, which I cannot forget. It is difficult to free oneself from 'mine' and 'thine'. But the change that has taken place in Ba's life is no small thing. From where did Ba attain such purity? Her simplicity, patience, etc., are qualities of a high order. Hencc Ba's partiality deserves to be tolerated. There is no venom in her partiality.

You have been unfair to Krishnachandra and Shakaribehn. Krishnachandra does nothing for his own sake. He gave up his home, his studies, and he labours in the Ashram. If he tried to save five annas, it was not for himself. He will not be partial to anyone. lt is a different matter if he is frightened and is exploited by someone. So it is with Shakaribehn. If I relieve her from work, she would stay away, and also like it. She is like that. You should understand that all of us in the Ashram are imperfect; even then we try to be good. Your duty is to look at your own faults and be tolerant of others'. This rule is for us all. You

have seen the figure of three monkeys on my desk, haven't you? One monkey has closed his ears, another his eyes and the third one his mouth. The suggestion is, hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil. I hope you would be satisfied with this. Read this letter again and again. Get well soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9112. Also C.W. 9180. Courtesy: Chakrayya

315. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

October 7, 1941

MY DEAR C.R.,

Prakasam's wire tells me you, he and Gopal Reddy are freed.[1] I wrote to your brother[2] only yesterday. Before this reaches you, you will have gone to him. For him it can truly be said misfortunes have [not] come single. I hope he has your philosophy to say that fortune and misfortune are one and the same thing.

BAPU

SHRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

BAZULULLAH RD.

THYAGARAJANAGAR, MADRAS

From a photostat: C.W. 10900. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan. AIso G.N. 2081

316. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA C. MEHTA

October 7, 1941

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

I have your letter. Do not get impatient. Even from your sick-bed you can do plenty of service, in fact you are doing some.

Now you have a friend like Anasuya with you. Write to Vedchhi and other places only cheering letters. Be resolved that you will leave the place fully restored.

Vijayabehn, Vasumatibehn, Pannalalbhai, have all arrived today. More are expected. This is how things are going on here.

[1] The addressee was released on October 6, 1941.

[2] Whose two sons had just then died

You wrote *amrita*[1] in the letter to K.C. In Urdu guava is called *amrud*. There were other mistakes, too, but I do not remember them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9432

317. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 7, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter and the cheque through Prithvi Singh. Why is the cheque of the Travancore bank ? Does it give [a higher] interest or provide more facilities ? Where can that cheque be encashed ? It must be charging a handsome commission. I shall of course make inquiries.

Can you accommodate both the sisters ? How is it your studies get constantly interrupted ? I shall not let you sit for the examination if you are not fully prepared. There should be no question which you cannot answer. If you cannot be so well prepared by April, then you may sit for the examination later. I am not in a hurry. The knowledge you have gained is not going to be wasted, and so, if it takes some more time, so be it. Because, I also do not wish that you should spoil your eyes and health by continuously reading night and day in order to pass. Passing in this way is no better than failing. You have to appear for the examination not for name but for service.

How much khadi did you sell and where did you sell it ?

The Ashram is now becoming very crowded. Vijaya and Vasumati have come. Pannalal has come. Some others will be arriving. More people are eager to come. How can I accommodate them ? Just think of the size of the kitchen and of the verandah, which is the dining place. Construction work is of course going on. There is nosaying when it will end. Nor can I fix a time for it. Let God do as He wills.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Literally, ‘nectar’

318. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI [1]

October 7, 1941

CHI. MATHURADAS,

In my opinion you have been saved from the jaws of death. I had been haunted by the fear. So now you have definitely been saved, have you not ? Do not worry at all. Let Bombay be sunk in the back bay. When Mithila was burning, King Janaka was not perturbed in the least. Why should we lag behind Janaka ? Why should we not outdo him ? How that can be done, God alone knows. But he has shown us that we should be like him.

Taramati must be happy. There is a telegram from Harkisan. But I am not writing to him separately. He has done creditable work as your nephew. Because you gave me detailed information at once, I also caused a stir.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

319. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 7, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Today I have to attend A.I.S.A. meeting[2] and therefore this is before the post.

I do hope you are better. Stokes[3] has sent a boxful of good apples. They are quite good, though some were damaged in transit. Vijaya, Vasumati and Pannalal came in today. others coming and many are applying. The Ashram is growing smaller and smaller. Can you grow smaller? Anyway the Ashram is.

Sardar does not come before 19th.

Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya coming on Thursday.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4093. C:ourtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7402

[1] An extract from the letter appears in "Letter to Mathurdas Trikumji", 2-10-1941

[2] *Vide* the following item.

[3] Samuel Stokes

320. SPEECH AT A. I. S. A. MEETING

WARDHA,
October 7, 1941

Today I must speak on one or two fundamental questions. You must all have read Pandit Jawaharlal's letter in *Khadi Jagat.* Jawaharlal's language generally tends to be strong. But I feel that this is a good letter. We must pay attention to its purport. He is discontented. He asks why we have not been able to do more work. He feels we have not given enough consideration to the matter. I would not entirely agree. We have been giving consideration to the matter from time to time and even today we are seized of it. But I must admit our *sadhana,* our *tapasya,* has not been adequate. This is the point made by Jawaharlal. His very name evokes thoughts of awakening and inspiration. Jawaharlal has always recognized the importance of khadi but after he went to jail he has come to feel more acutely on the subject. We must give due thought to his letter.

The news coming in from all sides shows that the demand for khadi has sharply increased. It has risen so much that we are not in a position to meet it. The demand for charkhas too is so great that we can never cope with it! What can we do? In many places, the money value of the work, which was a few hundred rupees, is now a few thousand rupees. You may have heard that in Ranchi, Bihar, while the sale of khadi at the last Jayanti was of the order of Rs. 600, it has now risen to Rs. 10,000. What I say is that we must go on producing as much khadi as we can. We should not let ourselves be deterred by the fear that it might not be sold. We must never allow ourselves to think for a moment that khadi cannot be sold. Yes, we may not have enough capital to substantially increase the production of khadi. In that case we should try to find the capital.

We must carefully consider what should be our technique of work. Someone has written saying that a lot of yarn has piled up with him and asked how he is to get it woven. We must have the resources to have such yarn woven or exchanged for khadi. We must be able to accept all the yarn that comes and supply in exchange such khadi in such quantities as we can.

We must also so improve the quality of our yarn that even the least efficient weavers may be able to weave it. It is said that we cannot spin any yarn of the strength of mill yarn. This is to some extent true. But this does not satisfy me. May be we cannot compete with mills in the quality of the yarn. Even so the difference should not be too great

and it should gradually diminish. Today our yarn leaves much room for improvement. We have not made the progress that is desired in this field. There is much work that we have to do. We must discover and show to the people ways of producing good and strong yarn. A lot of research into the subject is needed. We have not paid sufficient attention to the matter. We have been slack.

We must decentralize our work. *Yarn should be woven where it is spun.* We have been able to do so much since middle-class people took to spinning Now if they will also take up weaving we can rally the weavers round us and take them forward. We should make efforts in this direction also.

The demand for charkhas is on the increase everywhere. This too shows that more and more people are taking to spinning. For myself I have decided that we cannot send charkhas to every place from outside. They should be manufactured locally. I am beginning to think that *dhanush takli* alone can solve the problem. It can be made everywhere. The Yeravda charkha has its place and it will remain. But it cannot be made everywhere. It would be well if we could provide *taklis* to the millions. But the plying of the *takli* calls for devoting special time, labour and attention. It is also possible we may not be able to produce yarn in sufficient quantities on the *takli.* It is not that with the *dhanush takli* as much yarn can be produced as with any other charkha. It is easy to ply and easy to make. It can be made even without the aid of a carpenter. The making of the spindle for it may present some difficulty but not much. For even if a spindle is a little crooked, it can serve in a *dhanush takli.* We can make millions of *dhanush taklis* in a day. I admit I will have a little difficulty in the beginning in making people interested in it even as I had in making them interested in khadi but it will soon be overcome. We have to put a spur to the work of attaining self-reliance in khadi. This can be done only through the *dhanush takli.*

I cannot agree with the suggestion that charkhas should be manufactured in a few factories and then sent out to every place from there. If we thus centralize the charkha it will be finished. Everything connected with the charkha should be made where the spinning is done. That is why I have suggested that every home should have a *dhanush takli* in it. Till we have fully gone into the thing we should not indulge in a mere intellectual discussion of the problem. Only he has a right to participate in any discussion on the matter who has plied a *dhanush takli* for nine hours every day for a month. He will have a right to express a view. I therefore suggest that you should give thought to the *dhanush takli.* But not merely because I am advocating it. If your experience refutes my point you should not go merely by

what I say. I had spoken of giving spinners a daily wage of eight annas but so far we have not been able to go beyond three annas. Supposing we were to have the same experience here? This is a matter for research and experiment.

In the same way we have to think about the yarn. We should think of developing the capacity to weave whatever yarn may come to us. We must in any case accept the self-sufficient yarn. The people who bring the yarn should accept the price we can give for it. Whether it is in the form of money or khadi we must not refuse to pay. If we cannot arrange for yarn thus received to be woven, then we may say in Jawaharlal's words that our creative faculties have become atrophied—we have lost our ability to think. This would be a defeatist attitude. We do not want to accept defeat.

If we cannot take the weavers in our fold nothing will get done. But we cannot go by mere faith. Today they are using mill yarn. We have to change this situation. We have to give them handspun yarn. My feeling is that the War is not going to end soon. No import of cloth will he possible. Prices of textiles will also rise. Only Indian mills will be manufacturing cloth for use in India. A time may come when they will not be able to supply all our requirement. Cloth in India will then become scarce. In China too such a situation had arisen. But the Chinese are a hard-working people. They started the charkha in every home and in their own way quickly solved the problem. Our method will be a little different but the effort required will be as much or more. A day may come when people will ask us for cloth. It would be a disgrace to tell them that we could not supply it.

We shall also have to think about cotton. It is my firm conviction that if we produce cotton in the manner it should be from the point of view of khadi we shall soon be free of the need for imports. If we produce cotton to feed the mills this will not be possible. I feel that the principle of producing cotton for mills is opposed to the principle of producing it for khadi. The convenience of the mills requires that cotton should be intensively grown in a few areas. Their aim will be to see that if cotton-growing is too scattered it should be brought together and concentrated in one place. But khadi requires that cotton should be grown in every village. No village should have to depend on another village for its cotton requirement. Khadi cannot afford transport of cotton from one village to another. We must immediately pay attention to the question how we can make cotton row in every village.

Another matter has been placed before me for my consideration. Many of our khadi bhandars are very small. The question is

whether in the interest of economy it will not be better that each such bhandar should be looked after by no more than one person. What we will have to consider in this connection is whether these bhandars are to remain open for a fixed time or as long as possible.

If we want to make our lives khadi-based we shall have to devise certain rules as regards khadi bhandars. The rules will be different for towns and villages. For the towns I think we should follow the practice of English shopkeepers. They open shops according to their convenience. They keep them closed on Sundays. They don't care about the customers. Gradually the customers become used to it. We also want to establish new habits. We should also make certain rules and fix a time for the opening of shops. The same consideration should apply to shops in rural areas. In South Africa there is one shop for an area of thousands of *bighas.* People come in mule-carts to make their purchases. Sometimes the shopkeeper is not there, since there only one person to look after the shop. But people are used to it. Similarly, it is not necessary for us to keep our bhandars open all the time. But the matter needs to be considered.

Thus we shall have to give systematic thought to all these matters. We want to make of khadi an integrated way of life. We have to deal with artisans, spinners and weavers. In the sphere of production our aim is to pay equal wages to all. So far we have extorted forced labour from the spinners. This doctrine of paying the lowest wage and taking maximum work for it has been taken from the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya. We must change this doctrine for a new one. We shall give the same wage to spinners as we give to weavers. Those who produce cotton should also prosper. And yet we want that the burden on the buyer should be light. Thus we wish to create a socialist society. The socialism that India can digest will be of this kind. It will be the socialism of the poor, but of the well-to-do poor. The ideal of khadi is thus the promotion of a wholly socialistic way of life.

In brief, we have to give thought to all the processes of khadi—from the growing of cotton to the selling of cloth. When we have thus succeeded in bringing about a self-sufficient socialist polity we shall no more be at the mercy of foreign markets. Our society will be like a self-sufficient agriculturist. To an agriculturist his land is his capital. He eats what the land yields. If some year there is a failure of crops he starves. He does not beg and he does not plunder.

That is all I had to say. We must pay special attention to

weaving. I have always said that just as we insisted that we should be good carders we should also insist that we should become good weavers.

[From Hind]

Khadi Jagat, October 1941

321. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
October 8, 1941

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I understand your letter. It is very necessary to see . . .[1]. I am certainly going to pursue the matter. I do not wish to involve you in the problem of Bhulabhai. I will do what I can about him.

Raja is not in a position to come at present. Two well educated sons of his brother died only recently. There are two or three sick-beds in his own family. He will, therefore, go first to Bangalore. He will spend a few days there. He must have informed you, too. I also do not wish that you should have to come here twice. You may, therefore, come over when Raja and others are coming. Satyamurti of course is coming on the l0th. Kamaladevi is arriving tomorrow. Prakasam[2] is certain to come. Asaf Ali is coming after meeting Jawaharlal and Maulana, and so we shall be having a good crowd. I shall be able to manage.

Your duty is to get well.

The Ashram is being practically raided these days. We continue to receive pressing requests from people. I refuse most of them. Where is the space? New buildings are continually coming up, but even then the Ashram is always crowded.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 260

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

[2] T. Prakasam

322. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 8, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is no letter from you today. Pyarelal's statement has appeared in the newspapers in these parts. What about there ? Right now the meeting of the Charkha Sangh is in progress.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

323. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
October 9, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Again I follow the new rule of writing during the silence hour.

So your cough is persistent. Poor Shummy. I am almost sure that the cough is due to some error in diet. Some grease, more starch, sour fruit, sloppy food, too much protein, both animal and vegetable, dal, spices ever so little, general indigestion. These are the causes according to my belief. Menkel's manipulations are local. They can never bring permanent cure unless your digestive apparatus is in order.

There is no moving out for me during this month. Almost all dates are booked. If Rajaji comes about 20th, it means four or five days' conversations.

Additions to the cottage are substantial and expensive.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Kamaladevi has arrived. Satyamurti comes tomorrow. Amraoti riot was disgraceful. Biyaniji[1] who is discharged comes to see me

[1] Brijlal Biyani, President of the Vidarbha Provincial Congress Committee

tomorrow.

Mira wants as much of your worn-out clothing as you can spare. You know what for. I have been forgetting all these days. If your coming is indefinitely prolonged, you can send it through somebody coming.

From the original: C.W. 4094. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7403

324. LETTER TO P.P.M.T. PONNUSAMY NADAR

October 9, 1941

DEAR PONNUSAMY,

I was delighted to hear from you. Chakrayya wrote to me all about your great care of him.[1] May God bless you. It was His grace that you and your companion happened to be his escort.

Yours,

BAPU

P.P.M.T. PONNUSAMY

C/O SHRI P.P.M. THANGAIAH NADAR, MERCHANTS

TUTICORIN, S. INDIA

From a photostat: C.W. 10961. Courtesy: T.P. Sivanandam

325. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 9, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. You are filled with anxiety about your studies. Content yourself with as much as you can do. Your aim is not to pass an examination but to enhance your knowledge. Of course you have to appear for the examination but that should be when you feel fully confident. Do not worry about the delay. Let it take as long as it may.

Pyarelal had spoken to me about the idea of your staying in Lahore. I had told him that I would keep myself ready to make the arrangements later. I forgot to write to you about the matter. I can make arrangements quickly if you will allow me to do so.

Kanu having left, A.S. is doing the massage. Dhiren has his class at 8, so A. S. has to do it. You should take it that all talk about my taking service from you has now ceased. Of course, I want you to

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chakrayya", 6-10-1941

rise above all such talk. Why should it affect us whether somebody praises us or blames us ?

My teaching was only with regard to the duty of a satyagrahi. A satyagrahi will not court imprisonment to forget his pain or to escape from it. He will do so in the faith that to offer satyagraha is his duty.

As for A. S., I would only say that one should forget about her. One should accept whatever services she offers, but not expect anything from her.

It seems Pyarelal's statement has been well received. It is brief but to the point.

Do not worry about my weight. Increasing it only gradually may be the best thing. I have again increased the quota of butter.

Blessings from

BAPU

[P.S.]

Rajkumari has again fallen ill. She is coughing more. She writes in her letter today that it is reduced. Thus, it is sometimes better, at other times, worse.

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

326. LETTER TO SIR SHAFA AT AHMED KHAN [1]

SEVAGRAM,
October 9, 1941

DEAR SIR SHAFAAT,

I am delighted to have your letter just received. I was glad to learn of your appointment as High Commissioner. Nothing less than what you have so nobly said in your letter could be expected of you. I know that you have before you a most difficult task. May God be your help. I appreciate your desire to see me before you sail. I shall be delighted to meet you and place at your disposal all I know about the problem and our people in the Union.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] This was in reply to a letter from the addressee dated October 7, 1941, informing Gandhiji that he had been appointed High Commissioner of India in the Union of South Africa. He wished to pay his respects to Gandhiji before his departure form India, and discuss the problem of Indians in South Africa.

327. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 10, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is according to the new rule. Your note is cheery. May the improvement be steady and continuous. Everybody is wondering whether you are at all coming. I continue to say you are though an uncertainty has crept into my heart.[1]

Kamaladevi is leaving just today. She will meet her mother and come over for a few days' stay. Dr. Das will leave for Calcutta in two or three days; he is going for a few days only. Satyamurti has come today and is putting up at the Bungalow.

The weather here is generally good, though it warms up a little in the afternoon. The rest is O.K.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4253. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7885

328. LETTER TO SYED MAHMUD

Unrevised *October 10, 1941*

DEAR MAHMUD,

I have read your letter to Rajendra Babu.

What you say about unity I can heartily endorse. But fancy misunderstanding the blankets. Did you read my note[2]? If I was a grain merchant, should 1 refuse Government order for wheat for the army, or quinine, if I was a chemist? Supposing I refused and somebody else bought from me and sold it to the Government, how do I get out of the responsibility? War effort is made of sterner stuff. If you do not understand this elementary proposition, you will when an attempt is made to impress my personal service or to impress my labour to manufacture ammunition. You will then realize the fundamental distinction, if I have the courage to refuse obedience. You must think hard and try to understand or not rest till I convert you or you, me. About Sind, you must see the Maulana and reason with him. I am wholly with you there. Are you well?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5075

[1] The rest of the letter is in Hindi.

[2] *Vide* "Blankets for Soldiers"

329. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

October 10, 1941

CHI. ANAND,[1]

Your imagination is your enemy. You gave me no cause for displeasure. Then what right had you to think that I was displeased? At least refrain from taking things for granted. I was on the spot to be asked and I would have made you laugh. Now "don't do it again".

Giving the portrait of your sister would look vulgar. But if it would please Father then you may even be vulgar.

You send him my opinion.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI ANAND HINGORANI
C/O THE POST MASTER
ALLAHABAD, U.P.

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

330. LETTER TO RAGHUBIR SAHAI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA (C.P.),
October 10, 1941

DEAR RAGHUBIR SAHAI,

I thank [you for] your very full and instructive letter. What I knew from various correspondents, you confirm in your full letter. I am watching. Hope you are well.

Yours,

BAPU

MR. RAGHUBIR SAHAI
BADAUN, U.P.

From a photostat: G.N. 10206

[1] This is in the Devanagari script.

331. LETTER TO HARIKRISHNA BHANJI

October 10, 1941

BHAI H.B.,

Received your letter. Do come and meet me in December. Meanwhile you should start taking interest in constructive work. You should acquire skill in spinning and weaving and other processes of the yarn. You should serve the Harijans. You should serve the Muslims, Christians, Parsis. If you do all these things, then only will you become a true worker and then only will you become fit for civil disobedience. In fact you need not come to me to learn all this.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

332. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
October 10, 1941

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Read the enclosed letter and let me have your guidance.

Satyamurti has come today. He will state his case tomorrow.

I hope you are doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Biyani was here. There had been a reign of terror in Amraoti.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 261

333. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 10, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. Congratulations about Annapurna. There is a letter from Sankaran. He continues to take enema. He will therefore send everything except the syringe. Shall I send another syringe ?

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

334. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

October 10, 1941

CHI. TARAMATI,

I have received your letter. Mathuradas is a pious man. God will do good in every way. Patients with much worse sickness have recovered. Mathuradas has taken a lot of physical strain. Hence, he may take longer to recover. But there will be nothing to worry about once his health takes a turn for the better. I shall be happy even if he has to spend the winter at Wardha. But all that depends on the will of God. Let us be content to live in God's keeping.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

335. LETTER TO DILIP MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

October 10, 1941

CHI. DILIP,

I like what you have written. I also like your handwriting. It can be further improved. It is good that you are keeping up courage. Yes, I keep getting Hakubhai's letters. They are very helpful.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

336. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

Unrevised *October 11, 1941*

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Ramsarandas is an old devotee of Ludhiana. He has been regularly sending money and khadi. He has a doctor son in England, another in India but married to [a] Scotch girl. She wrote asking for permission for herself and Father-in-law to come and pass a few days at Sevagram. He became ill and was nursed back to health. His teeth were all extracted. They were the seat of disease. Bessie is a fine steady girl, extremely devoted to her father-in-law, nearly as old as I am. He insisted on doing C[ivil] D[isobedience]. He proposes to go again. He says he does not mind dying there.

My tour[1] is off for the time being. For G.[2] says he must try. If he fails, I might be allowed. Of course he won't fail. I have told you about my anxiety.[3] It won't be any more for you than for any other patient. But the point is not your anxiety or mine. It is that you should not become ill. You should find out the art of keeping well. You live on the border line. That is bad.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Lilavati came in today. She has a month's leave.

From the original: C.W. 4095. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7404

[1] To raise funds for the Deenabandhu Memorial; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 12-8-1941 and "Letter to Rabindranath Tagore", 8-9-1941.

[2] Presumably G. D. Birla; *vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 2-10-1941.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 5-10-1941.

337. LETTER TO JAMNADAS

SEVAGRAM,
October 11, 1941

BHAI JAMNADAS,

Who can approach a person dwelling in a dreamland? I do not remember the circumstances you have mentioned in your letter. Possibly I was engrossed in work and I was unable to talk to you at length. The fact is I try to be true to myself and give equal respect to all. But when misunderstandings crop up in a person's mind, he imagines that I have changed.

Received your poem. I have glanced through it. You know I have no knowledge of poetry or of prosody. I am returning it to you. Show it to some well-known poet. Publish it only if he passes it.

Blessings to both of you from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

338. LETTER TO KANHAIYALAL VAIDYA

October 11, 1941

BHAI KANHAIYALAL,

Your letter. Are lawyers from outside given permission to appear in Ratlam without let or hindrance? When will the appeal be heard? How many days is it likely to last? If the High Court exists only in name, what can we hope for by an appeal?

The matter about Gwalior is regrettable.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

339. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 12, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

I can ill afford even to send a postcard. The apples have come. Hancock came yesterday. Can't say whether there was any change in K. The heat for the last two days has been scorching and I felt glad that you were not here to go through the experience.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C. W. 4096. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7405

340. LETTER TO S. RADHAKRISHNAN

October 12, 1941

DEAR SIR RADHAKRISHNAN[1],

I have your two letters for which many thanks.

Having yielded to you I cannot interfere with your announcement[2]. Please do what you think best. Do however spare me the degree. These honours must be reserved for those who really deserve them. How can a law-breaker be a doctor of laws? But you may treat the occasion for donations either to the University or Harijan Sevak Sangh or A.I.S.A.

I am glad I wrote to you about young Jasani's conversation. I could not believe it. He is a good man but the foreign medium as often resulted in ludicrous misunderstandings.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SRI. S. RADHAKRISHNAN

30 EDWARD ELLIOTS' ROAD

MYLAPORE, MADRAS

From a facsimile: *Mahatma*, Vol. VI, between pp. 48 and 49. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Vice-Chancellor, Benares Hindu University

[2] Gandhiji had agreed to attend the Silver Jubilee celebrations of the University; *vide* "Letter to S. Radhakrishnan", 25-8-1941.

341. LETTER TO A. AZIZ

SEVAGRAM,
October 12, 1941

DEAR FRIEND,

There is nothing offensive in your letter. It is well argued. But you seem to me to have missed my point. I would ask you to reread my argument if you have got it in full.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SH. A. AZIZ

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

342. LETTER TO SHAVAKSHA

October 12, 1941

BHAI SHAVAKSHA,

I envy you. Where is 84 years and where 72? And you run the mill in full steam and a young man like me remains idle ! Let God's will be done and let us be thankful to Him. Received both your books. The beautifully printed one must indeed be costly. I will make full use of it. Because while you may run one or two mills I ply thousands of mills and plan to ply millions.

If a junior may bless a senior here are

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

343. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 12, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Yesterday I could not write at all. Today only this much. I am doing well. Kanu has gone to do photography. He will take two weeks. Dr. Das is leaving tomorrow-for a month at the most. Lilavati

came yesterday. She brought fever along. She is better today. Mirabehn has a drumming sound in her ears. What could that be?

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

344. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
October 12, 1941

CHI. NIMU,

Why has Usha fallen ill? If you avoid giving milk or soup while the fever is rising, it comes down quicker. Here, this is how the treatment of all fever starts. It applies to everybody, young and old. Fever causes no fear. Giving enema does become necessary. The patient must be given as much water as possible. Hot water would be better. Salt and soda can be added to it. Lime juice can also be added. If Kanu really wants to come, send him. Or, bring him at Diwali time if he can make it. I think Ramdas too will be having holidays !

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Sansmarano, PP. 202–3

345. LETTER TO CHANDRAGUPTA VARSHNEYA

October 12, 1941

BHAI CHANDRAGUPTA,

It would do to say that there is no truth in the statement made by the person who has not given his address and whom you do not know. Why inquire into it? I sent the letter because I thought he was one of your acquaintances.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI CHANDRAGUPTA VARSHNEYS, B.SC.
AJMER

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

346. LETTER TO PRABHU DAYAL VIDYARTHI

October 12, 1941

CHI. PRABHU DAYAL,

I have gone through the articles about which you have written. Lately I have not written on this subject for any newspaper nor are these my writings. And there is nothing to indicate the source from which they have been reproduced.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 11695

347. LETTER TO MAITHILISHARAN GUPTA

October 12, 1941

BHAI MAITHILISHARAN,

Your letter. You have done quite well. I have written to Dhirendra[1] . You must not incur expenditure in sending the yarn to me. It may as well be kept there. It will certainly be woven if it comes. I will of course use the khadi made out of the yarn sent by you. A shawl is being made out of it. After using it for a while I shall give it to Kakasaheb[2] for sending it to Kashi. I have gone through your poem. Please convey my blessings to all and say that the more heart they put into spinning the nearer swaraj is bound to be. Never without it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

348. SPEECH AT SEVAGRAM

October 12, 1941

I did not know that such a big crowd would collect here. It is good that it has. It is an auspicious augury that two crore eighty thousand yards of yarn and Rs. 12,000 have been collected from the

[1] Dhirendra Majumdar, who was the addressee's fellow-prisoner in Agra Jail

[2] D. B. Kalelkar

three divisions[1] of Central Provinces.

I have received two letters from Agra Jail also. The prisoners there have spun a good deal of yarn. They did not have all the facilities for spinning. But after Dhirendra Majumdar had reached the Jail, how could he rest content without making everyone spin? He is one of the pillars of the Charkha Sangh. He was not expected to go to jail. But the Government sometimes becomes over-generous. It picks up some people without any ostensible reason.

Shri Maithilisharanji is also there. He too was arrested without any good reason. He is a famous poet and he has sent me a poem also. But today poetry does not flow from his pen; it flows from the yarn that he spins. I have sent him today a short reply[2]. In that letter, too, I have said that with every round of yarn he and his co-prisoners have spun, they have brought swaraj so much the nearer.

What I wrote to the poet is not mere rhetoric. I mean what I say. According to my definition, there cannot be true swaraj as long as there is exploitation. Mere change from British to Indian rule does not mean swaraj. As long as one class dominates over another, as long as the poor remain poor or become poorer, there will be no swaraj. In my swaraj the millions will live happily. They will get good food, decent house and enough clothing. By good food I do not mean that they will eat sweets. But everyone must get pure milk, pure ghee and sufficient fruit and vegetables. I know I am talking tall because the poor today do not even know what fruit is. During the mango season, they get a few mangoes and during the guava season they have a few guavas. They do not get any other fruit except these and a few other. They do not get even clean and nutritious foodgrain. They have to live on rotten rice, coarse grain and dirty salt. I wish everyone gets what they call a balanced diet as also a clean and comfortable house. This according to me is real freedom. I have written those words to Maithilisharanji with this kind of freedom in view.

We have never produced as much yarn as we have produced this year. The reports that I get from the prisons make me dance for joy. Maithilisharanji writes to me that in the Agra Jail his Communist companions also join in spinning although they have no respect for my views. No one compelled them. They started spinning on their own. This is the way of ahimsa.

[1] Nagpur, Berar and Mahakoshal
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

I have also received reports from the Gujrat (Punjab) jail. I am not suggesting that everyone spins. I have the names of those too who are not spinning. But those who spin are in a majority. I become more hopeful when I see these facts. I am an irrepressible optimist. But even I did not entertain such high hopes. The Congress Constitution does include the rule about khadi but till now the Congress Committee insisted on khadi only to conform to the rule. On this occasion, I believe, the work has been done with an element of faith.

While I say all this, I am not so foolish as to believe that khadi is now on its feet. Whatever has been achieved is sufficient to strengthen my hope and my faith. But that is not enough for the growth of khadi. These are good omens. But they are not sufficient for the removal of poverty and unemployment. These problems cannot be solved as long as crores of people do not wear khadi. I have a dream that people will wear home-spun khadi just as they eat home-made food.

I am talking of these things because people continue to ask me one question. Even today I have received a letter. They all ask, 'What will be the outcome of this struggle? It is very slow and has no effect on the Government. The Government does not seem to care. A large number of satyagrahis are wandering in the streets. They are not even arrested. How can such a struggle be effective?'

They may say what they like, but my feeling is that my fight is going on according to my plan. I am satisfied with its momentum. At present I do not want to increase it further. This does not mean that it will never gain momentum. When the occasion demands it will be accelerated. But this is not the occasion for it. Everything is good or bad in a particular context. There are occasions when mere bread is very useful. But when it is inopportune even *jalebi*[1] is harmful. So when an opportune time comes, our fight will be intensified.

Some people expect a miracle this very day. In ahimsa there is no scope for such sudden miracles. Ahimsa does not admit of sudden spurts. But those who will can always see the miracles of ahimsa. We watch the sky every day but we see no miracles there. But those who have an eye for it are spellbound by the spectacle. They see new miracles every moment. And the sky is only a small fragment of Divine Power. That Divine Power is also the source of ahimsa which

[1] A sweetmeat

works according to the Divine Law. That Law is so mysterious that even its miraculous effects do not appear to be such. They look like a natural course of events. Our non-violent struggle will also evolve according to the same Law. When independence comes through non-violence it will blossom forth so naturally that we may never notice the miracle having taken place.

Some people say that this is the opportunity to pressurize the Government. From this point of view, they say, my present struggle of ahimsa is entirely lifeless. I want to point out to them that the contents of the Bombay Resolution[1] are not mere prattle nor were they intended to bluff the world. The Congress is a responsible trustworthy organization. Its resolutions are serious, sincere and without exaggeration. The Bombay Resolution pins its faith on the policy of non-violence. It has a passage[2] which should keep Congressmen always alert and watchful.

When the policy of non-violence has been so clearly stated in the Bombay Resolution, how can we say that England's difficulty is our greatest opportunity? How can the Congress say that we should give her one more blow when England is herself collapsing? And who knows whether England is actually collapsing? Outwardly of course it looks like that. But I do not believe it. Appearances are not always real. During the Boer War also there was an occasion when it appeared that England was almost defeated but the situation took a sudden turn and she came out victorious.

Today also we do not know who is going to win. We do not want any one party to be defeated. We wish that all the warring parties should come to terms and live like brothers. How can you expect me to say that either Germany or Russia or Britain and America should be defeated? I would pray that no one is defeated and they all live like brothers.

Ahimsa dictates : 'Consider no one your enemy. Love even him who considers you his enemy.' How can we then think of taking advantage of England's predicament?

You may say, 'Then we are sure to be destroyed. We will suffer defeat at the hands of the British.' This betrays lack of faith. A

[1] *Vide* "To Satyagrahis", 2-10-1940.

[2] Which reads : "They can have no ill will against them (the Britishers), and the spirit of satyagraha forbids the Congress from doing anything with a view to embarass them."

follower of non-violence suffers defeat at no one's hands. I may repeat once again that 'defeat' has no place in the dictionary of ahimsa. Victory and defeat are the results of violent war. In ahimsa there is only victory and nothing else. At the moment I cannot tell you how our ahimsa is ultimately going to succeed.

Not to embarrass Britain does not mean that we should help them. They are resorting to violent methods. We have to stand firm on our principle of ahimsa. This will no doubt create some difficulty for them. But we cannot help it. How can we give up a principle which is bound to lead to the welfare of the world including that of Britain? But if we violate our principle, we shall be guilty of violence. I wish you to keep this in mind.

People ask me, 'What will be the outcome of this satyagraha? All types of people, good, bad and indifferent, have joined it. Even cheats and rogues are courting arrest in the name of satyagraha.' I know there is not a single province where undesirable men have not courted arrest. But I also know that there is not a single province where people who measure up to my standards have not gone to jail. That is why I have not launched a mass movement. If I launch a mass movement, people may perhaps jump into it. What will the British do in that case? They will enact another Jallianwala Bagh. I am not afraid of it, but I do not want to give them an opportunity to do so. If we remain strictly non-violent and then they force a Jallianwala upon us, I could not care less.

But I say once again that it will be a good omen for India if even a handful of men whom we know to be true remain steadfast to their pledge. That will pave the way for an all-out non-violent struggle.

All this needs an element of honesty. It is a primary condition. Those Congressmen who have to faith in khadi, who decry untouchability in public but observe it in their homes, who, being Hindus, hate the Muslims, or who, being Muslims, hate the non-Muslims, do not deserve to be satyagrahis. Such persons cannot help our cause even by going to jail. They are like thieves and dacoits who also go to jail. They are not satyagrahis but only law-breakers. They cannot produce any wholesome results. Why should they go to jail disrupting their homes and forgoing their income? We wish that only a handful of satyagrahis should go to jail; but their conduct should be such as to produce a moral effect.

Civil disobedience is a powerful weapon. But for employing it, we must fulfil the thirteen-point constructive programme[1] which I have outlined. Till then this weapon cannot be effective. I know that the crores of people in India cannot court arrest. Nor is that necessary. But it is essential that crores of people should have faith in the constructive programme. Khadi is the pivot of the constructive programme. It is essential that crores of people should wear khadi; they should not wear foreign or mill-made cloth and they should not observe any untouchability. If they are not prepared to do even this, how can freedom be won through ahimsa? What right do they have to desire freedom, who are not prepared to take even a little trouble?

If we wish to win swaraj through ahimsa, this is the only way. If, however, we wish to use force, then Hitler would point the way. There are only two courses open—either Hitler's, that is, the way of violence, or mine, that is, the way of non-violence. Hitlerism and Churchillism are in fact the same thing. The difference of only one of degree.

By presenting this yarn and this money to me, you are telling me that you do not want to tread the path of violence. It is my belief that a time will come when everyone in India will realize that the only correct course is to follow ahimsa. The day is soon arriving for khadi when the entire country will be convinced that any cloth other than khadi must be discarded. I shall utilize all the money I have received on the occasion of Khadi Jayanti for encouraging khadi. People ask me, 'Why do you not ulitize this money for Congress work?' In a way khadi work is also Congress work. But it is only the parliamentary programme or the movement against the Government that people regard as Congress work. This is a wrong notion. This amount will be utilized only for khadi work.

It is to be considered how this money received from the three divisions of the Central Provinces is to be utilized for the purposes of khadi. These three divisions may jointly or separately send schemes for their areas. Jajuji[2] will welcome and give them due consideration. If we do not accept these schemes, we shall give reasons for rejecting them.

Many people send yarn to me by post. I do not understand why they do so. The amount spent on postage is more than the value of the

[1] *Vide* "Implications of Constructive Program", 13-8-1940

[2] Shrikrishnadas Jaju

yarn. I wish people would send me ready-made khadi. Even from the jail they should send khadi woven out of yarn spun by them. Today people ply the charkha. But I wish that they learn operating the handloom. They should send me woven khadi. I do not need khadi for myself. I have enough khadi for my personl use. Hence it would be all right if people weave khadi and send it to the Charkha Sangh of their own Province, though, from one point of view, it is better to sent it to me so that I may know how the work is progressing from year to year both in quantity as well as in quality. As years pass the quality of our yarn should improve. But they should not pay railway freight in sending the yarn to me. Only khadi should reach me. It would be enough if just a specimen is sent to me.

All of us should devote greater energy and talent to khadi work. This can be done even in jail.

Those who have been to prison once have to go there again and again. There is no question of going back. It does not mean that we shall do so indiscriminately. We shall have to use our discretion. How can we send to prison again a person whose health has been shattered during imprisonment in spite of the best efforts? It will be a kind of violence.

Some people ask me : 'Why should the same persons go to jail again and again? Why not select new men so that the satyagraha continues without causing much strain?' I have already said that a non-violent war has its own strategy. We cannot follow Hitlerian tactics. A barbaric war is being fought in Europe with large-scale massacres. Young, old, even invalids, are being annihilated. Even barbaric war demands sacrifices. In a non-violent war there is no scope for sacrifices on such a gigantic scale. Here we seek to employ moral pressure. This will entail sacrifices on the part of a select few. We have not been called upon to make any great sacrifices till now. What are our sacrifices worth if we are not prepared to face even the hardship of prison life time and again?

There is one other question. Should we carry on the struggle within the four walls of the prison? Many problems arise there also. The matter of A, B and C classes creates much bitterness. What should we do there? These classes are a creation of Congressmen themselves. I am convinced that these classes will ultimately be abolished. In the mean time, there is much scope for improvement in the diet of C class prisoners. I have already said that doctors can bring about the much-

needed improvement in this matter if they so desire. But granting that the doctors cannot do anything, even then this struggle will have to continue. The satyagrahis will repeatedly go to prison. Prison life will be full of hardships. It will mean starvation and even if it causes death in some cases I shall be prepared to face that eventuality. We should all be ready for it.

We have simply on other course open to us. Our war demands sacrifices, hardships and suffering. That is how the war of ahimsa is waged.

[From Hindi]

Sarvodaya, November 1941

349. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 13, [1941][1]

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Yesterday was another hectic day. So I had to satisfy myself by sending you a card only.

I think I told you I had your amendments of the Constitution which was placed before the meeting. A small committee was appointed to go into all the suggestions. Rajen Babu is its head.

The heat wave seems to have passed.

Lilavati is free from her fever. Maganlal[2] has returned from Delhi after having sat for his examination. He is plucky. This was his third failure. And he is not sure that it will be a walk-over this time.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 4097. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7406

[1] The source has "1934", which appears to be a slip, since the contents of the letter indicate that it was written in 1941. The addressee has also placed it among the letters of 1941.

[2] Son of Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta

350. LETTER TO CHOITHRAM GIDWANI

October 13, 1941

MY DEAR CHOITHRAM,

Though I have said, if my analysis is accepted by you do as Jairamdas[1] says, I gladly withdraw my condition. Do as Jairamdas advises, even to the extent of resigning. My faith in his wisdom is a constant factor.

Yours,

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 9259. Courtesy : Jairamdas Doulatram

351. LETTER TO DR. MOOKERJI

SEVAGRAM,
October 13, 1941

DEAR DR. MOOKERJI,

I thank you for your letter.

Supposing Christians as such wanted to get rid of some social abuse and established an association for dealing with it, I should think they would restrict admission to fellow-Christians only. If you admit this, you will appreciate the restriction in Harijan Sevak Sangh. Hindus have sinned and they must purge themselves. The others can extend their sympathy but cannot do repentance. Of course, there is untouchability among Christians and Muslims, thanks to the highly infectious disease in the Hindu body. Hindus can only help the latter by completely curing themselves of the disease, but the rest has to be dealt with by the respective communities.

The obvious is being missed because of the political results. But the root of the evil is in the corruption of religion. If this is not clear, you should pursue the subject, till at least we agree as to the results.

I hope your wife is well. Of course, you will come when you can.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : C.W. 7865. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

[1] Jairamdas Doulatram

352. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

October 13, 1941

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I understand about Dhirubhai[1]. Keep yourself completely aloof in this matter. Nothing is going to happen. What can we do when the source of whatever power I have is of a different character altogether?

Did Satyamurti meet you? He told me he would. He is quite clear in his mind. If he can have it, he will accept office today. But he will do nothing against the Congress. His loyalty is exclusively to the Congress.

Farid Ansari[2] arrived yesterday. He is going to Hyderabad today to see his sister there, and will return here afterwards. Is it not Monday today?

How is your health?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 261

353. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

October 13, 1941

CHI. BABUDI,

However careful you may have been, the cause of your asthma seems to be some error on your part. Find out what it was. There has been some error in your diet, in your living habits or in your manner of bathing. The error cannot be undone now, but if it is discovered its recurrence can be prevented. It is great news indeed that Anand[3] is showing signs of life again. Take proper care of him, too. This is the time when a baby's future is made or marred.

The rest you will hear from Prabhavatibehn[4] .

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W.10038.Courtesy : Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] Son of Bhulabhai Desai
[2] A socialist leader of Delhi
[3] Addressee's son
[4] Wife of Jayaprakash Narayan

354. LETTER TO VAIKUNTHLAL L. MEHTA

October 13, 1941

BHAI VAIKUNTH,

Write a letter on the lines of the draft below and accept the appointment if they accept the proviso.

'With reference to your letter extending my appointment for a further period of three years, I have pleasure in accepting it, it being understood that I work as an agent of the A. I.V.I. A. and in accordance with its programmes.'[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am sending a copy of this letter to Sardar so that he can advise us if there is any political sang in your acceptance. I would suggest your writing direct, so that no time is wasted.

From the Gujarati original : V. L. Mehta Papers. Courtesy. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

355. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA, C.P.,

October 13, 1941

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

I have your letter. You must recover soon. I shall meet Bhai Rangaswami if he comes.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SHANKERLAL BANKER
19TH CROSS ROAD
MALLESWARAM
BANGALORE

From the Gujarati original : S. N. 32742

[1] This paragraph is in English.

356. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 13, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I am taking this opportunity as otherwise I may not be able to write this letter. What I wrote implied only one meaning. I have not implied what I have not said. And what does it matter if any such thing is talked about? The second sentence is by way of an expression of good wishes. We can assign to it what value we want. Is it not like quoting a *sloka* from the *Gita?*

Today I have sent Prithvi Chand and Puri to meet Pyarelal. Dr. Das and Nimai have left for Calcutta today. They will break their journey to see Bareto at Nagpur. They will return after a month.

I had not thought about having any changes with regard to massage.

The weather has again become very hot here. The nights are cool. I have put on some weight again. The increase is $2^1/_2$ to 3 1bs. Everything depends on the use of butter and *ghee.*

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

357. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

October 13, 1941

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I was very glad to read your letter. You all have done a lot of spinning. So is the case almost everywhere. It will be a very good thing if everybody's faith in khadi and other constructive activites increases in this way. Congratulations to all. Whoever wants to keep his yarn may do so. I would like it if all get khadi made out of their own yarn. Like spinning-wheels, looms too should be introduced in jails on which to weave the hand-spun yarn. This can be done easily.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

All should learn Urdu and Hindi scripts and also learn to employ both these forms in their speech.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2483

358. LETTER TO S. SATYAMURTI

[*October 14, 1941*][1]

In view of your very delicate condition and the uncertainty of the period of treatment, I am quite clear that your re-offering civil disobedience should be indefinitely postponed and that you should give yourself complete rest and follow your medical adviser's instructions.

The Hindu, 16-10-1941

359. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
October 14, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter. Of course you should not worry Shummy[2] until you are uniformly well for at least a fortnight. There need be no hurry to leave the place so long as the weather there agrees with you.

We have here a homoeopath. He is a crank like me. I have entrusted Prabhakar to his care. He took charge yesterday and P. is distinctly better today. As you know I have little faith in h'pathy, though I would like to for its comparative simplicity.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 4098. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7407

360. LETTER TO C. K. NARAYANASWAMY

SEVAGRAM,
October 14, 1941

DEAR NARAYANASWAMY,

I was glad to have your letter and to note that in the end you began to like the Ashram and its people.

You will come with your wife whenever you like.

[1] The report is date-lined "Wardha, October 14"
[2] Kunwar Shumshere Singh, addressee's brother

There is very little difference between your socialism and mine as you subscribe so whole-heartedly to non-violence and the constructive programme.

I am organizing village along the constructive line but I don't mix with it the political programme so called. The two will not blend, though those working both are Congressmen. The constructive progrmme is complete in itself.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

SHRI C. K. NARAYANASWAMY
C/O " BOMBAY CHRONICLE"
BOMBAY

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

361. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

October 14, 1941

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

Enclosed is a letter from Chimanlal. I have treated it as a pretext for writing this letter. You must have received my previous letter.

I did not get Manilal's letter after all. I have now given up hope of receiving it.

Nilkanth[1] and Surendra[2] were here for a few days. Everybody whom you know here is well.

Diwali is nearing, but there is no Diwali in my heart. I wonder if you, too, have the right atmosphere for a Diwali there.

Your new High Commissioner is going to call on me. He writes and tells me that he will remain completely neutral. I will write to you after we have met. You will of course meet him at any rate as a matter of courtesy. Invite him to Phoenix.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4923

[1] Nilkanth Mashruwala
[2] Surendra Mashruwala

362. LETTER TO MAGANLAL K. NAYAK

October 14, 1941

BHAI MAGANLAL,

Only now I could get time to read your letter of the 20th. I cannot reach and deal with all letters in time. What can be the value of my opinion now? I will state it, however. Let the friends take the pledge if they wish. I have discovered from bitter experience that they do not know the meaning of a pledge. Perhaps the best course would be to remain in contact with them and be content with whatever they do.

Regards from

M. K. GANDHI

MAGANLAL KAHANJIBHAI NAYAK

KURLA

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 10115

363. LETTER TO PANNALAL JHAVERI

October 14, 1941

CHI. PANNALAL,

I hope you are allowing time to take its course.

Come quickly with Gangabehn and any of the children you wish to bring.

Letters for the children are enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari – Pannalal Jhaveri, p. 34

364. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 14, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Yesterday I wrote the letter to you in the midst of a big crowd. Today I am observing silence for an hour before mailing time and taking the opportunity to write this letter.

Yesterday with great difficulty Prithvi Chand, Girdhari and

Mahmud met Pyarelal. They had given no intimation beforehand. Pyarelal was very happy. Prithvi Chand will give you a full account when he comes. He has said that Sushila must not come to Sevagram before her examination. Mother should not come to visit him if she is not going to stay at Sevagram. He wants to meet Mahadev. The rest through Prithvi Chand. I have come to the conclusion that Pyarelal wishes that Mother should come here to stay. I have not yet met Prithvi Chand. Girdhari mentioned the matter to me. Prithvi Chand has gone to Wardha.

Prabhakar is very seriously ill. He is coughing very much. His morning temperature is 99° and it goes up to 103° every day. Today a homoeopath has come here and I have allowed him to take his medicine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

365. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
October 15, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

You are right. The extensions to the cottage are so elaborate that there is every danger of our being crowded. The cosiness will be gone. Let us see.

I have suggested full fortnight to test yourself. And otherwise too this is no time for you to come. Nights are good but the days are oppressive. So every way it is good you are not here.

Asaf Ali is in Wardha. He will be coming presently. So good-bye.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4099. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7408

366. LETTER TO DUNICHAND

October 15, 1941

DEAR LALA DUNICHAND,

Many thanks for your letter. I am considering all that is being written of said to me.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 5586

367. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

October 15, 1941

DEAR AMBUJAM[1],

I have just heard from Jamnalalji that he has been able to sell the jewellery at over Rs. 9,000.[2] He considers this a good price. The letter is misplaced. If I can trace it, I shall let you know the exact amount. You have said something in your letter. Please let me have your concrete suggestion, if you have any.[3]

Love.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

368. LETTER TO MADALASA

October 15, 1941

CHI. MADALASA[4],

As you are constantly in my thoughts, I dreamt about you though I rarely dream. This letter is prompted by that dream. It occurred three days ago, but it is only today that I got the time to write.

Rearing a baby requires as much care as carrying it. The quality of your milk will depend on your diet and your way of living. As the food you eat will affect the quality of your milk, so also will your

[1] Daughter of S. Srinivasa Iyengar
[2] *Vide* "Letter to S. Ranganayaki", 19-6-1941
[3] *Vide* also "Letter to S. Ambujammal", 20-10-1941.
[4] Daughter of Jamnalal Bajaj, married to Shriman Narayan

temper and your thoughts. Please take my word for this, for I am writing it from personal observation. You should, therefore, make it a point to eat food only as medicine, and not to please your palate. The relish which one gets from this 'medicine' is true relish and is nourishing. Do not understand the word 'medicine' in its strict dictionary sense and be repelled by it. Milk can be taken both as medicine and for the pleasure of the palate. The first way of taking it will nourish the body and the second will harm it. The baby should get proper exercise, fresh air, massage, etc. Do not listen to anybody else in this matter. Many people will want to pamper the baby. But whatever they might say, remain firm in your resolution.

This was the idea behind my dream. I hope you are in good health and that the baby is growing well. I hope Mother and you do not quarrel and that you do not cry. After you have left childbed you should, I think, stay here for a month of so.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvd, p. 322

369. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 15, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Today nothing more than a postcard. There is no letter from you. Asaf Ali will now be coming. Prabhakar is all right. The homeopath can do massage also. I have been having my stomach and back massaged by him for the last two days. There has been a definite improvement. More about it later.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

370. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

October 1, 1941

CHI. SHRIMAN,

I have made corrections in your statement. Accept them, if you like, otherwise let the statement go as it is.

Blessings, from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 300

371. LETTER TO VIDYAVATI

October 15, 1941

CHI. VIDYA,

There is no end to your misery.[1] But what is it to you? Some may die today, some tomorrow, all are destined to die. Why grieve over it? Moreover, you have dedicated yourself to the country, then why be perturbed? Be alert, give courage to everyone as before and become even more absorbed in service. May God grant you peace.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original : Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy : Gandhi National Museum and Library

372. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

October 16, 1941

MY DEAR C. R.,

Your brother is on his trial.[2] May God give him peace. I had sweet little note from him.

I shall expect you on 21st. V[allabhbhai] will be here by then.

I fear I cannot accept the compliment for knowing slang better than you. I did not even know that 'O. K.' and 'A 1' were slang. So you see the poverty of my language. Anyway it won't do for you to be worse than you were in jail. And you know the consequence!!

Asaf Ali leaves for Calcutta tomorrow. All eyes are on you,

[1] The addressee had lost her husband.

[2] Two sons of the addressee's brother had died just then.

including mine!

Your son-in-law[1] has now become a distinguished journalist. What about Papa[2]?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : C.W. 10901. Courtesy : C.R. Narasimhan. Also G.N. 2082

373. LETTER TO P. C. GHOSH

October 16, 1941

MY DEAR PRAFULLA,

You had no business to lose weight and develop fever. Anyway I hope you are out of the wood now. I had a letter from Suresh and I replied. Sardar and others are due about 20th. All well.

Love.

BAPU

(M. K. GANDHI)

[PS.]

Your record in fine spinning is splendid.

From a photostat : G.N. 3784

374. LETTER TO B. L. RALLIA RAM

October 16, 1941

DEAR R.,

Many thanks for your letter.[3] You and your friends will be welcome on 8th November at 4 p.m.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

B. L. RALLIA RAM

GENERAL SECY.

A. I. COUNCIL OF INDIAN CHRISTIANS

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] Devdas Gandhi

[2] Addressee's elder daughter

[3] The addressee had wished to meet Gandhiji and acquaint him with the result of a meeting he along with others had had with M. A. Jinnah.

375. LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

October 16, 1941

CHI. CHAMPA,

I have your letter. Leave the three elder children there and come here. Do not bring any jewellery with you. There is no place here where they can be safely kept. I will look after you here. Maganbhai left for Mahabaleshwar today. I had shown him your letter. He is willing. I will put you up in the room I have assigned to him. I cannot ensure your safety in Wardha. I cannot protect you there if Ratilal[1] comes.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Show this to Narandasbhai.

CHAMPABEHN MEHTA

C/O SHRI NARANDAS GANDHI

RASHTRIYA SHALA

RAJKOT (KATHIAWAR)

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 1050. Courtesy : Champabehn R. Mehta

376. LETTER TO ABHYANKAR

October 16, 1941

BHAI ABHYANKAR,

You will be welcome. But the Ashram is crowded. How can I refuse you, though? Moreover, there will be a large crowd in the first half of November. If you can put up with inconveniences you may come after the 15th. Please let me know the date of your coming.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 19328

[1] Son of Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta and addressee's husband who was mentally deranged

377. LETTER TO RATILAL DESAI

October 16, 1941

BHAI RATILAL,

It seems I have not replied to your long letter. If so, I write now. Your letter has helped me a lot in understanding the problems. I am getting on with the work. Let us see what happens. Can we not cultivate or humour the Burmese?

I believe that a person like you can do a great deal of work in this direction. I wish you do your best. I hope all are well.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

RATILAL DESAI
94 MOGHUL STREET
RANGOON

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

378. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

[*October 16, 1941*][1]

BHAI TULSI,

I got the cloth-piece woven by you from self-spun yarn. I was very much pleased. I will preserve it. I should like others also to copy your example.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4207

[1] From the G.N. Register

379. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

[*October 16, 1941*][1]

CHI. RUKHI[2] ,

I have your *hundi*[3]. The money will be spent as you say. I hope you are keeping perfect health. Who gets the letter-papers for you printed in English? How many letters do you have occasion to write in English?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9162. Also C.W. 10130. Courtesy : Benarsilal Bazaj

380. LETTER TO CHAKRAYYA

October 16, 1941

CHI. CHAKRAYYA,

I have your letter. What you write is clear. It is good. Convey promptly to me whatever comes to your mind. I do not like your persistent fever. Let us see what the doctor does and says. Will it not be good to buy a case for the watch? I shall arrange to get one for you from there.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI CHAKRAYYA
" AROGYA BHAVAN"
AVADI, MADRAS

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 9113

[1] From the postmark
[2] Maganlal Gandhi's daughter, married to Benarsilal Bazaj
[3] Bill of exchange

381. LETTER TO KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI

[*After October 16, 1941*][1]

DEAR SISTER,[2]

You are bound to wait for a reply. If it does not come during the next few days, You will write a brief note saying that you will regard the silence as consent and move out as stated in your letter.[3] Wait for a while before writing to Iftikhar.[4]

Farid[5] says he may bring Satyawati[6] here.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

382. LETTER TO AMRIT LAL CHATTERJEE

October 17, 1941[7]

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

I have your letter. From your previous letter I read a different meaning from what I read in your letter. I have now asked Kanu[8] to go to you. His love for Abha[9] is still there. But he realizes that he erred and has therefore resigned himself to forfeiture of Abha's hand. If you and your wife wish and Abha is eager to marry Kanu, then and then only should she come to me. If she comes you have to forget her for the time being as you have Sailen[10] and Dhiren[11] till they have finished their course and are on their way to earning their bread. Abha will be trained here and will be sent to Rajkot too, if I pass her. If both restrain themselves and Abha still likes Kanu and likes his parents and surroundings and keeps her health, she will be married to Kanu. So far as I can see both will have to wait for two years before

[1] The addressee's letter to which this is a reply is dated October 16, 1941.

[2] The superscription is in Gujarati.

[3] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 4-8-1941 and "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 13-9-1941.

[4] Iftikhar-ud-Din, President, Punjab Provincial Congress Committee

[5] Farid Ansari

[6] Grand-daughter of Swami Shraddhanand

[7] The date is in the Devanagari script.

[8] Son of Narandas Gandhi

[9] Addressee's daughter

[10] Addressee's sons

[11] *ibid*

marriage. If all this does not commend itself to you, your wife or Abha, she should not come and you should train her there and do what you think best. I would not take it ill, if she does not come. All I want is her welfare and [to] fit her for marriage. [If] you all and she are desirous that she should marry Kanu, you should talk frankly to Kanu. If she decides to come and if you are agreeable, you may send her with Kanu.

I am glad you are all well now.

Don't expect anything from Sailen now. I hope to prepare them both as early as possible and so I have disengaged them from Ashram work.

Please show this to Kanu, if Abha is to come. The enclosed for him.[1]

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat : C.W. 10325. Courtesy : Amrita Lal Chatterjee

383. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 17, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This I am writing after curfew. It will be posted by Prithvichand who is leaving tomorrow.

I am glad you report marked improvement. May it continue.

I have told Satyamurti plainly that so far as I am concerned no change can be made.[2] If he thinks otherwise he is free to cultivate public opinion in his favour.

You are right about Harijans.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 4100. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7409

[1] The letter is not available.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to S. Satyamurti", October 30, 1941.

384. LETTER TO NANDAN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 17, 1941

MY DEAR NANDAN,

Sarup[1] tells me that I should not on any account let you go. You are the only person to manage the *Herald.* I had taken it for granted when I was prepared to yield that you had weighed all the facts before feeling free to go. You will therefore not think of going till the *Herald* matter is cleared, although Asaf Ali is out.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

385. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 17, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. Anasuya has become a problem for you. Gomatibehn has of course written to her. Let her go if she wishes. You have done your duty. What more could you have done?

Swami Vakil's is a remarkable case. Now let us see what happens. This case illustrates how even a slight insistence on truth can be rewarding. Prithvi Chand will tell you the rest. Prabhakar may be said to have recovered. I have understood about Mirabehn.

Blessings from

BAPU

[P.S.]

Today Prakasam and four other men came. People will continue to come like that.

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Vijyalakshmi Pandit

386. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

[*October 18, 1941*][1]

MY DEAR IDIOT,

One letter was entrusted to P[rithvi]chand for posting. Your note to hand. You should pass a day in Jullundur when you descend and do what you can. The nights are getting colder night after night, not so the days. The cottage is nearing completion. No more now. Munshi[2] and others have come.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 4101. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7510

387. LETTER TO KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI

SEVAGRAM,
October 18, 1941

DEAR SISTER,[3]

Your letter full of information. Khan Saheb will be all right in time. Your love will conquer.

Surely I never said I did not like your warnings. I remarked about your hasty conclusion, etc. But that had nothing to do with your duty to warn where in your opinion a warning was needed. So let me have a boxful.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI
FREDRICH HOTEL
MAHABALESHWAR

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] The date is in the addressee's hand. *Vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 17-10-1941.

[2] K. M. Munshi

[3] The superscription is in Gujarati.

388. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 18, 1941

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. I am returning J's[1]. What was the discrepancy in the receipt given to you? If you have a copy, please send it.

I see no harm in their selecting Nanabhai[2] as President instead of you. Accept whatever office they give and acquit yourself well. You should learn the art of working in an organization. When you feel that the work itself is suffering and conflicts are increasing, you may resign in a spirit of humility. But you should not assume from the beginning that the work is bound to suffer. It they give you the financial functions or control, accept it. However, after duly thinking over all this, do only what you think proper. I have faith in your judgment.

I get letters from Kanaiyo. He is fine. He is coming not tomorrow but next Sunday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8594. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

389. LETTER TO INDU PAREKH

[*October 18, 1941*][3]

CHI. INDU,

New year blessings to you all.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI INDU PAREKH

"SANZGIRI SADAN"

171 GIRGAUM, BOMBAY 2

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6260. Also C.W. 10450

[1] Jivanlal Shah

[2] Nrisimhaprasad Kalidas Bhatt

[3] From the postmark. The source, however, has "*Padavo*", that is, *Kartak sud* 1 which corresponded to October 21, 1941.

390. LETTER TO LALJI M. GOHIL

October 18, 1941

BHAI GOHIL,

Received the letter signed by you and the other teachers. The restrictions are imposed on teachers of Government schools mainly with the object of preserving the authority of the Government. This I think is sufficient reason for quitting Government service. But if you want to continue in it, truthfulness lies in following Government rules as long as the fetters are not removed as a result of the freedom movement.

There must be regulations in non-governmental national institutions also. Teachers should have a say in formulating them. It is up to the teachers to continue or not to continue in the service of such institutions. The propriety or impropriety of their regulations can be judged only after scrutinizing them.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

L. M. GOHIL
PRABHAT STORES
346 BUDHVAR, POONA 2

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

391. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 19, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter. Aruna's[1] letter is not so sad as you have felt it to be. I have a sadder one from her but that is on account of Asaf Ali. He passed two days with me. He wants a change. I held out no hope. He will come again. Rajaji comes Tuesday, Sardar and M. tomorrow.

J[amnalal] came in yesterday. Madalasa and baby doing well.

On your return journey it might be well to pass a day in Lahore and go and see Aruna and others. But you know better. I would not like to delay unnecessarily.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 4102. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7417

[1] Wife of Asaf Ali

392. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 19, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There have been no letters from you for two days. Today I am saving time. Yesterday I just could not write. We really miss you when there is some illness here. Two persons are ill. The homeopath could not cope with them. Both are running high fever. It is of course malaria. Ramdas, Nimu and the children are coming today.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

393. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

October 19, 1941

BHAI SATIS BABU,

Will you answer the enclosed?[1] I had forgotten all about it. I had been content with your statement that you had spent not a penny of the Association's[2] money except on khadi work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

394. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 20, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

You do forget things nowadays. You wrote only the other day that the Simla weather just now was superb and suited you well. You dreaded the heat below. In today's note you say the heat will suit you !!! I had suggested the very thing and [you] had opined otherwise. Anyway the way is becoming clearer daily because the temperature is steaily going down.

[1] Presumably the letter from Annada Babu. *Vide* "Letter to Annada Babu", 5-10-1941.

[2] All-India Spinners' Association

How I wish your effort for the porters will succeed. What you say is terrible.

At long last J.'s letter was delivered by M. today. He does not give me gloomy account of J. Devdas has also come in and so Ramdas, his wife and children less Sumitra who is detained in Bombay for her eyes. Of course Sardar has come. Raihana[1] is still with me, quite merry.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 4108. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7412

395. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

SEVAGRAM
October 20, 1941

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I have your letter. I have now got the exact figure. The amount realized is 16,048-15-9. I shall now see what can be done with it. You need not now send Rs. 1,000 unless you want to increase the donation. I would advise you not to at the cost of your other work. I do hope your body will be quite well. You must not worry. We have to resign ourselves to God's will.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI AMBUJAMMAL
96 MOWBRAY'S ROAD
ALWARPET, FORT
MADRAS

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] Abbas Tyabji's daughter

396. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA C. MEHTA

Diwali [*October 20, 1941*][1]

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

You are improving fast now. What good news ! I hope you write regularly to people at home. You must keep perfect health during the coming year[2] and render service.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9433

397. LETTER TO JUGATRAM DAVE

SEVAGRAM,

October 20, 1941

BHAI JUGATRAM,

I have read both the books carefully. I think they would rank high among the existing text-books. But I have not been able to convince others of my view. You may remember the preface to my efforts in this field. I had said that my attempt was not to add one more book to the number of many good books. I wanted one book to replace all the others for that standard. I stick to my view even now. But I see that it will not hold at the moment. If anyone from among our teachers succeeds in such an enterprise, he may lead the way. I want to prize open the minds of millions. I do believe they must open up. Knowledge of the alphabet develops the intelligence but little. Rather, it thwarts the development. And it costs a great deal, as I do. From that angle these two books do not make the grade. The illustrations are comparatively good but need much improvement.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] The source has this among the letters of 1941. The year is also corroborated by the reference to the addressee's health. In 1941 Diwali fell on October 20.

[2] The Gujarati New Year

398. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 20, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Your cover was so heavy that it got torn and was sent in a Government cover.

I have broken your rule quite a bit. Hence, I also observe silence in the evening while keeping the eyes closed. I stop at exactly 8.30 at night. My health is of course good. If I do more work, the blood-pressure rises. My weight went down by one 1b. yesterday. I think it was due to the rush of work. I have been taking proper diet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

399. LETTER TO KANHAIYALAL VAIDYA

October 20, 1941

BHAI KANHAIYALAL,

I have your letter. When you have received everyone's approval about Ratlam you may write to me. I have spoken to Munshiji. When all the material is ready please let me know. The other cases are worth considering. I wish to be able to do something. I have lost the capacity to go to battle over such matters. Still I am trying to figure out what I can do.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

400. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHAGANJ,
October 21, 1941

The publication of the statement attributed to Shri Jayaprakash Narayan, which he is stated to have attempted to smuggle from his place of detention, does not, so far as I can see, lead us anywhere.[1] If the motive was to discredit the organization of which Jayaprakash Narayan is a distinguished member, it must fail.

Assuming the correctness of the charge against Jayaprakash Narayan, the method advocated by him is against the policy of truth and non-violence adopted by the Congress, and he deserves the severest condemnation. But it ill becomes the Government to condemn or discredit it. Frankly, all nationalist forces, no matter by what name they are described, are at war with the Government. And, according to the accepted canons of war, the method adopted by Jayaprakash Narayan is perfectly legitimate. He has had his training in America for seven long years and is a student of the methods adopted by Western nations in their fight for freedom. To practise deception, to resort to secret methods and even to plot murder, are all honourable and turn the perpetrators into national heroes. Are not Clive and Warren Hastings British heroes? If Jayaprakash Narayan was in the British Diplomatic Service and by secret diplomacy achieved something of importance, he would be covered with distinction.

The sensation with which the event has been disclosed to the Indian world is ill-conceived. The annotations in the communique are probably wholly unwarranted. When it is borne in mind that Jayaprakash Narayan is an untried detenu, the annotations look very like hitting below the belt. The Government should have shown Jayaprakash the document or documents seized, and published his answer if he had any to give.

The way in which his poor wife has been dragged in is unfortunate. She knew nothing of the attempt, for it was frustrated

[1] A communique issued by the Government on October 16 said : "Plans to consolidate the position of the Congress Socialist Party by winning over important members of the terrorist organizations, known as the Revolutionary Socialist Party and the Hindustan Republican Socialist Association and by isolating the Communist Party, were seized from Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan, security prisoner, Deoli Camp, when he attempted to pass them to his wife, Prabhavati Devi, at an interview."

before anything could reach her. I may inform the public that Prabhavati does not share Jayaprakash Narayan's views. She was put under my charge by her parents when she was not yet fifteen and while her husband Jayaprakash was still in America. She has wholly accepted my view of Indian politics and is one of my most faithful co-workers. As husband and wife, Jayaprakash Narayan and Prabhavati Devi are an ideal couple. Jayaprakash has never sought to impose his views on Prabhavati. He has never prevented her from freely coming to me. Indeed, he has encouraged her to come to me whenever she has been ill. She has never been taken into the secrets of the Socialist Party. The alleged communication has completely upset her, for she never thought that her husband would advocate the method attributed to him.

The suggestion made in some newspapers that the restrictions on prisoners should be tightened is wholly irrelevant to Jayaprakash Narayan's attempt. That it was frustrated is enough proof of the efficiency of the C. I. D. Even if there is laxity, it can be no warrant for giving them bad or insufficient food, or keeping them in places far away from their homes, making it difficult or expensive for relatives to visit detenus. I have read Shri N. M. Joshi's very careful and over-moderate recommendations[1] about the Deoli Camp. I have learnt enough about it to enable me to say, in the name of humanity, that the Camp should be disbanded and the prisoners should be sent nearer their homes. It is wrong, from every point of view, to bring prisoners from their provinces and concentrate them in a place where there is no facility either of provisions or medical assistance or other amenities of life. Prisoners of war are treated like princes compared to political prisoners, whose status would be any day superior to that of prisoners of war.

One word to Congressmen. While Jayaprakash Narayan remains the patriot we have known him, they must realize that his method is harmful in the extreme while a non-violent struggle is going on. I have said, repeatedly, that secrecy has no place in a non-violent organization. No underhand or underground movement can ever become a mass movement or stir millions to mass action. I am glad, therefore, that Shri Purshottam Tricumdas, Secretary of the Socialist

[1] N. M. Joshi had, with the Government's permission, visited Deoli in July and published his impressions and suggestions.

Party, has repudiated the method said to be advocated by Jayaprakash Narayan. Indeed, I would appeal to Jayaprakash Narayan to reconsider his philosophy and, if his reason can approve, to repudiate the method as a lapse from sound reason and the loyalty he owes to the Congress. What he has stigmatized as a farce of satyagraha is not a farce. It is the fine fruit of mature experience of thirty-three years' experimenting in truth and non-violence; and, if God wills it, I hope to demonstrate that from this farce will rise a reality which will compel admission even by Jayaprakash Narayan and those who think with him. Jayaprakash did not indeed go to prison as a satyagrahi,[1] but he has not ceased to be a member of the Congress, and so it is not proper for him and others who think with him to retard the movement by their action, which is admittedly disloyal to the Congress.

The Hindu, 23-10-1941

401. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 21, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter. You can't undermine your body because someone else's is much worse than yours. You can try to bring your weak-bodied neighbour to your strength. The same thing applies to one's house. No doubt you have to give up superfluities as you would superfluous fat or even muscle.

The day is full.

Love.

Yours,

BAPU

From the original : C. W. 4104. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7413

[1] Jayaprakash Narayan was imprisoned in March, 1940; *vide* "Jayaprkash Narayan", 12-3-1940. He was released in December 1940 and rearrested soon after under the Defence of India Rules and sent to Deoli Camp.

402. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 21, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Today it is partly Diwali and partly the New Year. Tomorrow it will fully be the New Year day. Right now there are too many people. Sardar is here from today. I want to treat him myself with earth and water. The place is very crowded.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

403. LETTER TO R. K. SIDHWA[1]

[Before *October 22, 1941*][2]

The responsibility for the stoppage of satyagraha in Sind is Maulana Azad's and ultimately mine. I shall not grant permission to any Sindhi friend to offer satyagraha without the permission of the Maulana.

I can safely state that neither you nor any other Congressman from Sind has any hand in the stoppage of satyagraha in Sind.

The Hindu, 23-10-1941

[1] The addressee had drawn Gandhiji's attention to the allegations made by certain Congressmen in Sind that Sind's case had not been properly placed before the Congress High Command. For Gandhiji's earlier advice, *vide* "Advice to Sind Congress Deputation", 24-4-1941.

[2] The report is date-lined "Karachi, October 22".

404. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

October 22, 1941

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I have kept by me your letter of 15th July. I did not know what to say nor do I know now. I understand your earnestness and grief. But I do not know how to console you. However detached you may try to be, you cannot but be influenced by your surroundings. It is equally true of me, not to talk of others. Add to this the difficulty of answering in the middle of October a letter written in the middle of July. And this when every day means new history. I have therefore the greatest reluctance even to write to you in spite of the pleasure it gives me to write to you. But I must try.

Distrust of the Rulers is growing and spreading. The distance is increasing. We here perceive no difference between Hitlerism and British Imperialism. Hitlerism is a superfine copy of Imperialism and Imperialism is trying to overtake Hitlerism as fast as it can. Democracy is nowhere. In this unholy duel, so far as I can see, non-violence is working its way in a silent but sure manner. My fatih in it is daily growing stronger. Whether as Polak says, and as you almost hint,[1] I think, in your most gentle manner, it can stand the strain if bombs were dropping near my feet and I was witnessing dear ones being crushed to death, I cannot say. I rehearse such situations, I pray that the faith might not break under such strain. I flatter myself with the belief that I can feel these things from afar. I did shed a silent tear when I read about the damage done to the Houses of Parliament, the Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's. Nevertheless this is all speculation. If I fail in the examination, if it ever came to me, I shall have the courage to admit my weakness but I will not deny my faith in non-violence.

Of communal unity there is no immediate hope, though I believe that it will come sooner than we expect. But that will bring no settlement with the British Government. In their declarations there are many impossible conditions. One is that we must get the Princes also to agree. Now the Princes mean the British Government, for the former are the latter's creation and they cannot even talk openly with

[1] The addressee explains : "I did not 'hint' that his non-violence could not stand the strain of bombing, but asked him if sometimes 'compromise of method—not of aim' could be considered."

anybody but by the latter's consent.

The Rulers feel a sense of security in the existing situation. The Princes obedient, the Muslim League showing its harmless teeth, and the Congress led by me following its equally harmless Civil Disobedience. They find no difficulty in squeezing the last pice and getting as many recruits as they want.

Can you now have a glimpse of why you find endless difficulties in the pursuit of your thankless task? But you must . . .[1] It is never wasted if it is sown in cultivable soil.

My own and hence the Congress method is incredibly simple. Its token Civil Disobedience must continue. It will blaze forth when the question of embarrassment disappears. The Congress is ready for any honourable compromise with any party including the Rulers, consistently with its fundamentals. Nothing short of Complete Independence can be acceptable to the Congress. The Congress cannot be party to the war efforts and therefore cannot take office. But Civil Disobedience can be stopped if free speech consistently with non-violence is recognized and all political prisoners are unconditionally discharged. This excludes those who have been tried and found guilty of actual violence unless they repent. It includes all untried men. So far as I can see, the Congress will not change its policy so long as I am alive and well enough to think clearly and advise. There is no one who has any sympathy with Nazism or Fascism but there is no one who has any sympathy for Imperialism [either], not even the recruits who hire themselves out for the sake of bread. Some join because they want military training at any cost.

Now you have a picture as true as I can draw of India to date.

My advice is don't worry, don't fret. You need not write, need not speak, unless you feel an irresistible impulse. Let prayer of the heart be our sole and sure refuge. It is enough to realize that not a blade moves but by His will. He allows this slaughter. We do not know why. But if we keep our hands, head and heart stainless let us believe that in His own good time, He will use us to stop this apparently senseless mutual slaughter.

Amrit is not with me for the moment. She is in Simla resting. Indira is resting in Mussoorie and keeping fairly well. Padmaja[2] is in

[1] A few words are faded out here.

[2] Daughter of Sarojini Naidu

Hyderabad. She is chronically ill.

I have in mind Andrews constantly. I will not rest till I have finished the Memorial work. Please send my love to his sisters.

I had the joint cable of good wishes from you three.

Thank you.

Love.

BAPU

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G. N. 1522

405. LETTER TO GANDHI ANNAMALAI

October 22, 1941

DEAR FRIEND,

Gandhiji has your letter of the 14th and the M. O. for Rs. 11. He wishes you a happy and pure married life of service.

Yours sincerely,

MAHADEV DESAI

From a photostat : C. W. 10374. Courtesy : Gandhi Annamalai

406. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

October 22, 1941

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

How did Babudi[1] fall ill again there? Does she take hip-baths? Does she over-exert herself? What is her diet? Does she use a mosquito-net? The money was to be paid as usual. I was under the impression that it was being paid to Jajuji.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. G. 128

[1] Sharda, addressee's daughter, married to Gordhandas Chokhawala

407. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 22, 1941

Today I am sending you only blessings. There is no time at all.

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

408. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

[*October 22, 1941*][1]

CHI. BABUDI,

Why do you fall ill? If your diet is correct and you have enough fresh air nothing should happen. Do you drink water after boiling it? Do you know how to recite Ramanama?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. G. 128

409. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

SEVAGRAM,
October 22, 1941

As regards diet, I am quite convinced that the food cooked in the Ashram kitchen would, with slight adjustments, be suitable for the people in Sevagram also. The food served at the Khadi Vidyalaya or to C class prisoners would not do. The standard of food prepared in our kitchen here would be found suitable. In this regard we have taken into consideration the opinions of doctors all over India and we consult them even now. At the Ashram we can protect ourselves from a number of diseases. Whatever illness persists is due to the fact that all of us are not frugal eaters.

[1] This is written on the same sheet as the preceding item.

[2] Sevagram workers had sought from Gandhiji an appointment specially to hear his views on an ideal village community.

Everyone must get two 1b. of milk, two *tolas* of ghee and two-and-a-half *tolas* of butter daily. Vegetables such as we have here are also essential for everybody. Perhaps in the case of those who do physical labour it may be necessary to increase the quantity of grain; they may need dal too, though we do not use it in our kitchen. But the quantity of milk and butter we take can be reduced to some extent. Skimmed milk can and ought to be used in our kitchen. It is wrong in a way not to use it. It has everything except ghee and it is cheaper too. We certainly want to reduce the cost of our diet. Skimmed milk should suffice for our villagers. They must have some fruit too. At present they get no fruit at all, though they may have some sort of mangoes during the season. They should have fruit in the same proportion as we have for the Ashram inmates. Tamarind, lemons and tomatoes are essential for them. They can manage with them. They may also require some spices, though we do not have them in the Ashram and according to me they are not at all necessary. But I do not believe that spices have no place in our villagers' diet. They can have some vitamins from the spices also. But spices cannot take the place of milk as some people mistakenly believe. I have found that the body grows weak and health deteriorates by the excessive use of spices. This will provide you some basis for calculating the expenditure on food.

The second necessity is clothing. The loin-cloth such as I wear is not meant for everybody and it is not necessary for all to adopt it. *Kurta,* short dhoti and cap should suffice for men.

The women's dress in the Ashram has been rather strange. I am of the opinion, however, that the dress of the women of the Punjab is the most suitable. What Amtul Salaam sometimes wears would be, with some modifications, very good. There is art in the *kurta, dupatta* and *shalwar* of the Punjab and in these every part of a woman's body can be properly covered. Mirabehn has nicely adapted it for herself. The *dupatta* is artistic and at the same time very useful and comfortable during winter. The *kurta* covers the woman's body fully, the *shalwar* also is a complete dress in itself and lends the wearer grace. The *ghaghra* is an absolutely inadequate dress and should never be worn without an under-wear. If we could not adopt a uniform dress even for the women in the Ashram, it is a very difficult proposition to do so for the whole of India. There is great scope for improvement in the present dress of [our] women. But I am not particularly bothered

about this. For the present it would suffice if we made our dresses entirely out of khadi.

These days people huddle together and sleep in the same room which is sometimes also shared by their cattle. It keeps them warm but it is bad for their health, with the result that the mortality rate in India is the highest. People will enjoy better health if they sleep in the open. This will be possible only when they have sufficient clothing to cover themselves as we have in the Ashram. Everyone must have at least a blanket and a heavy sheet of khadi. People in the Ashram try to use quilt-covers by stuffing them with paper but they become useless during the rains. One does not, however, have to spend a lot on it. Greater expenditure is needed on diet.

Thirdly, we have the housing problem. Here we must first decide how much shelter is required per head. Houses can be built with grass, mud and stalks. At present it is not so in the Ashram. I have allowed houses to be built with bricks but pucca houses are not essential in the villages. They are costly. Thatched mud houses would do in the villages. Even as it is, rain water floods even our houses and we are faced with the problem of saving people from it. Everybody should protect his own house. I see no difficulty in it. Perhaps for years to come the country cannot reach my ideal of housing. I agree that houses in the Ashram are ideal houses. In order to determine the ideal we will have to decide upon the covered area required per head. It is however essential to provide separate shelter for the cattle. At present people in Sevagram keep their cattle also in the house itself. Their houses have poor sanitation. They don't have enough room for the children. Their houses should be so constructed as to admit plenty of fresh air and light. Though the houses in the Ashram are poor dwellings even the rich can live comfortably in them. The villages also should have such houses. Today this is not the case but if the villagers co-operate with us the situation can be improved to a great extent.

What I have said to you today is a matter of great importance. I agree we cannot achieve complete success in the countryside unless we have the reins of government in our hands. But if our dedication and service attain a high degree of perfection we shall not have to depend on the Government and a great many things can be done even without it.

The villagers should co-operate with one another in regard to their cattle. We should first find out the number of cattle in the village,

and decide whether all of them are needed or we can do with less by managing them on a co-operative basis. For instance, I do not consider it proper for every villager to own a bullock-cart. Can't we manage with much fewer bullock-carts if we follow the co-operative method? The same thing applies to oxen and a number of other things. The villagers can make much more profit if they have a co-operative society for selling their grain. The cattle of the entire village can likewise be accommodated on a contributory basis. The villagers can make great progress if they work like this in co-operation with one another. Ours is a small village. We should inquire and find out in which spheres of activity and to what extent we can work on a co-operative basis. Even if all villagers are not inclined to follow the co-operative method we must find out those who are prepared to give it a trial.

Similarly, we should adopt the co-operative method in farming too. The entire produce of the village should be distributed only among those who have laboured for it. This does not mean that the labour put in will not be taken into account. A proper account of the labour put in by each individual will have to be maintained.

We should also decide about the crops we want to raise. Those things which are essential for Sevagram should be given priority. Cultivation for purposes of sale should be kept to the minimum. We have been carrying on trade to some extent since the olden times and shall continue to do so within India as well as with foreign countries. I shall not speak about other countries. Let us consider what we can do here.

We should produce all the other necessities in the village itself. Then we should also find out what other industries we can set up here. We ought to press oil and make shoes locally. Similarly we can think of other industries also.

You should decide what it is that you want to give priority to. It is for you to examine all the aspects of farming. I myself have not gone deep into this aspect and therefore am not at present in a position to guide you in this regard.

We have to think about education in Sevagram. Though you have not asked me any question on this, I may at least tell you that in my opinion there should not be a single illiterate person in Sevagram. I put forward the concept of basic education very late in my life but all the same I attach great importance to it. I had put the following

question before the Gujarati Sahitya Parishad[1] : What kind of literature are the writers bringing out for the crores of illiterate villagers? This task is as huge as it is difficult.

Let me also tell you that our own life, if it is simple and pure, is bound to have its impact on the villagers without our having to tell them in so many words. It is not our way to argue. All our personal conduct should be well regulated and must conform to our ideal. We have enough land in the Ashram and we can cultivate it as a model farm. If I want, I can have the entire land in the village bought up but I have forbidden further purchase of land for the time being and, until I am able to distribute the entire proceeds among the tillers of the soil, I do not want to purchase more land. I must ask you for the present to set through the Ashram an example of ideal farming. They will then try to follow it of their own accord. At present farming in the Ashram is not as it should be and we are far behind the ideal. Our expenditure too is excessive and we must remedy this situation. We shall make steady progress only when we persistently direct all our experiments towards our ideal. I want you to associate the Ashram women also with your experiments. They will be of great help to you. You won't be able to do without them; besides, they have to be trained for this work.

Thus Sevagram will become a sort of republic. You may appoint some person as your leader for a few years but later you will be able to do without him, for a republic has no place for a leader. People know one another closely, unlike what we find in the elections where millions of voters don't even know who the candidate is. A popular leader cannot suppress the people. We had some such institution in the olden days. But the British destroyed everything. They are trying to suppress the villagers through their military strength. Once this force loses its grip, there will be no place for the police, the village headman, the patwari and the like. Only the toughs will remain. But the people can take care of them.

Unless we do this we shall not attain the ideal social order based on truth and ahimsa. I am convinced that a non-violent society can be built only on the foundation of harmony and co-operation, without which society is bound to remain violent. If we argue that this cannot be done it will mean that a non-violent society can never come into being. In that case our entire culture would be meaningless. How can

[1] On October 31, 1936; *vide* "Speech at Gujarati Sahitya Parishad", 31-10-1936.

we call this ideal an impossibility while professing faith in human nature? Of course it presupposes ahimsa of a high order.

The ahmisa required for driving the British out of India need not be of so high a quality; but the steps we shall have to take to cleanse our own hearts cannot be taken without ahimsa of a very high order. For instance, the Hindu-Muslim tension cannot be removed without true ahimsa. We followed the path of ahimsa to face the British because we had no violent force. This was not true ahimsa. Ahimsa dwells not in the hearts of the cowards but in the hearts of the brave. The Negroes are physically robust, their chests are worth admiration but the British have filled them with fear, so much so that a sturdy Negro trembles at the sight of a white child. The same is the plight of the Indians. Although in physical strength, we are nothing compared to the Negroes, our experiments, imperfect as they are, in ahimsa have had a profound impact.

My faith in human nature is progressively growing. I have concluded, on the basis of my experiments, that human nature can be easily moulded. We have come to assume, because of our inertia, that human nature is always the same and seldom amenable to progress. Churchill and Hitler are striving to change the nature of their respective countrymen by forcing and hammering violent methods on them. Man may be suppressed in this manner but he cannot be changed. Ahimsa, on the other hand, can change human nature and sooner than men like Churchill and Hitler can.

If you can digest what I have said to you today and if you acquire the strength to act accordingly, I shall be saying many more things. Discuss fully all this amongst yourselves and put up before me a definite scheme of what you can do. I shall answer all your doubts from time to time. Today I have talked to you at great length and some of the things I have said to you are not only new but also very vital. You should try to digest them before asking me any questions, for otherwise your questions will lack the force of careful thinking.

[From Hindi]

Sarvodaya, November 1941

410. AN ERROR

The khadi movement, I find, has gone on for more than 21 years. But while on the one hand we do not have a sufficient number of weavers, on the other the millions of idle weavers in India do not use our yarn for weaving. Is it any error on our part which leads to this double failure? I shall try to answer this question today.

I am of the opinion that this is but the result of our own folly. If I were to find fault with anyone in this effort it could be only myself. When I placed khadi on such a high pedestal I should have considered all aspects of the problem. However, many vital things were first revealed to me in their generality and the finer details were only gradually worked out. The fact that spinning involves carding was discovered only through experience. The process of ginning cotton came to light only later. I knew that the yarn would have to be woven but I had not imagined then that it would be a difficult process. Even when I knew it I did not clearly see the solution as I see it now. The solution is that khadi workers must learn the process of weaving even as a matter of atonement. The best of our spinners have come from the same class. That is how we could make good progress in spinning. In the same manner we should have made weaving compulsory for the khadi workers. When we learn this art we shall fully understand the weavers' difficulties in using hand-spun yarn. Only then can we find a remedy for the difficulties and the professional weavers will follow us in using hand-spun yarn. Not that I had never thought of this. The work of weaving hand-spun yarn was first started long ago by the late Maganlal Gandhi and by Manilal Gandhi. But I did not insist that everyone or certain people must weave, as I used to insist that they must spin. As a result of this error the process of weaving has not been as widely taken up by khadi workers as it should have been. I am of the opinion that one among every five, seven or ten spinners must become a good weaver. Weaving cannot be done by one man. One needs a companion for fixing the warp and for sizing. One also needs the help of a boy or a girl to load the shuttle. Any-one can handle these processes as also the actual weaving on the loom. But what I propose is that a certain proportion should become experts. This will lead to great progress. It is not necessary to tell me that this is already the practice at some centres. My complaint is that I have not systematically insisted that one loom must operate where there are, say, five, seven or ten spinners. Had I so insisted I would have got

today not yarn but woven goods. The large number of satyagrahis in the prisons would not have been content with merely plying the charkha but would have had a loom and woven their yarn.

Weaving includes tapes, webbing, towels and coarse khadi as well as the fine dhotis or saris from Andhra with elaborately woven patterns. When the processes of weaving all these items are present in our minds we shall not waste a single stretch of yarn. We shall classify the different varieties of yarn, and weave them into appropriate cloth. This error has also led to a lot of waste. We used to throw away broken yarn as so much waste. I know that many of the basic schools have begun taking care to avoid such waste. We have to spread this knowledge. This is just the beginning of basic education. In fact it is the primary function of basic education to give thought to these problems, to investigate them scientifically and to suggest reform accordingly.

The most unfortunate result of this error has been our failure to enlist every weaver for our movement. Why can we not approach the weaver with hand-spun yarn instead of mill-made yarn? If we acknowledge our error and atone for it, there would be such a great improvement in hand-spun yarn that it could compete with mill-made yarn. Perhaps it may not be possible to spin by hand as fine yarn as the mills can produce. However, there need not be this vast difference between the two and the weaver need not have scorn on his face, as he now has, at the sight of hand-spun yarn.

SEVAGRAM, October 23, 1941
[From Hindi]
Khadi Jagat, October 1941

411. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 23, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

I can give you no more than a postcard reporting ‘all well’.

Too much occupied in talks.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 4105. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7414

412. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 23, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Right now you should be thankful that I am writing even this much. The whole time is taken up in talks. It is a very good idea that you have decided to go to Puri's place. I have acquainted myself with everything. The idea about December is also good. I am feeling better.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

413. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

[Before *October 24, 1941*][1]

Hindi is absolutely good, language perfect and lettering quite nice.

Of course you have access to all my letters and answers. I expect to be able to train you to do the whole of the editing in time. You have a wonderful comand over your pen, only the thought formation has to come. To produce the exact thought means exact understanding. It is difficult when one has to interpret another. But it is not beyond you I know. You should begin to throw notes at me. I may reject them all as you see I do Mahadev's.

I want to build a cottage for my convenience rather than yours. You will still sit by me but if there is a room which can be called yours it may yield many uses. You wanted to build me a little hospital. Let this be something like it. About buying when I get the time.

From the original : C.W. 4223. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7859

[1] From the reference to the construction of a cottage; in his letter to the addressee dated October 24, 1941, Gandhiji writes that the cottage is "nearing completion" *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 24-10-1941

414. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 24, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter. I have a heavy day before me today too. But I must give you a decent letter.

Your apples have come in time, but the basket was found to contain only 22. I am inquiring. But nothing will come out of it. Sometimes such thefts do take place. The apples are very good.

You need not go to Lahore. Better to give a day to Jullundur.

What you say about the ruling class is but too true.

You held up J.L.'s letter too long. You must have seen my note on J[aya]P[rakash] N[arayan].[1] Prabha is somewhat better now.

The nights are properly cold now. I had all the blankets I wear during winter.

The cottage is nearing completion.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 4106. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7415

415. LETTER TO M. R. MASANI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA (C.P.)

October 24, 1941

DEAR MASANI[2],

I was glad to have your letter and to find that it had pleased you.[3]

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 21-10-1941.

[2] (b. 1905); Joint Secretary, All-India Congress Socialist Party (1934-39); Member, Central Legislative Assembly, 1945-47; Constituent Assembly, 1947-48; Ambassador of India in Brazil, 1948-49; Member, Lok Sabha, 1949-52, 1957-62 and 1963-70; Chairman, U.N. Sub-Commission on Discrimination and Minorities, 1950-52; President, Swatantra Party, 1970-71

[3] Referring to Gandhiji's statement to the Press dated October 21, the addressee, in his letter dated October 22, had written : "As one who was once a colleague and is still a friend of Jayaprakash, may I say how much I appreciate what you have said as reported in the morning papers? If the proverbial 'cat may look at a queen', I hope someone who has fallen out of the active ranks may still be permitted to pay homage to the General !!"

I hope you are doing well.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : C.W. 10983. Courtesy : M. R. Masani. Also *Bliss Was It in That Dawn*, p. 174

416. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

October 24, 1941

CHI. BALKRISHNA[1],

I have your letter. Your present visit cannot be said to be successful. But who knows what would have happened if you had remained here? Never think about the future. When I see that your life is a burden [on others] I will not have the slightest hesitation in saying so, but as long as your intellect is clear I will not say that. For a person whose intellect is clear and whose aspirations are pure can never be a burden. The thoughts of such a man have a power not to be found in his actions. Just as speech limits thought, so also action limits aspirations. But now we shall meet soon. Let me know the exact date.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI BALKRISHNA

VADILAL SARABHAI AROGYA BHAVAN

PANCHGANI, DISTRICT SATARA

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 806. Courtesy : Balkrishna Bhave

[1] Brother of Vinoba Bhave

417. LETTER TO ORGANIZER, DELHI SATYAGRAHA COMMITTEE[1]

[Before *October 25, 1941*][2]

Briefly put, your question is this : Is an applicant for admission to the Congress on his signing the prescribed form for admission entitled to it or is he not? My answer is : He is entitled.

The Hindu, 26-10-1941

418. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

October 25, 1941

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

I have your letter. You must not be timid. A reform[er] has to brave starvation. It is wrong on your part to live on charity even if it is from your wife's brother. Surely I am aiding you when I am supporting Sailen, Dhiren and Abha, if she comes. That should mean at least Rs. 45 per month. Should you belittle it? But you should act as you think best. You should not expect any more financial aid from me.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : C.W. 10326. Courtesy : Amrita Lal Chatterjee

419. LETTER TO MADALASA

October 25, 1941

CHI. MADALASA,

Having conveyed my message through Radhakrishna[3], this is not necessary. I am writing this merely for your entertainment. Shall I send some more *papad*[4]?

[1] This was in connection with Prof. Indra who having earlier resigned from the Congress had again signed the membership form with a note that in his opinion "the present Congress Constitution does not make it obligatory for every primary member to forgo his right to use violence in self-defence".

[2] The report appeared under the date-line "New Delhi, October 25".

[3] Son of Jamnalal Bajaj's brother

[4] Thin, crisp, spicy, waferlike preparation

Why do you cry? Do you know that even your crying has an effect on the baby?

When are you coming over here?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 322

420. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

October 25, 1941

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

Send me Mohansingh's statement. I have read your letter. According to my practice I shall inquire into the matter at my convenience.

You must have fixed up with Chimanlal about yourself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 397. Courtesy : Bhagwanji P. Pandya

421. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

October 25, 1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have preserved the accompanying letter, though it is rather old now. Having some free time today, I read it and am replying to it.

Nothing remains now to be considered about Kanchan.

If the problem about the field and Balvantsinha has not been solved, put it up to me. I will deal with it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8483. Also C.W. 7158. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

422. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

October 25, 1941

CHI. BABUDI,

Heaps of blessings to you both—be happy, live long and render as much service as possible. We should not make comparisons with other people who, though they do not take care of their health, seem normal. No comparison is possible. You know from experience that you would fall ill if you did not take care of your health as you do. You at any rate should know the laws of health and observe them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 10039. Courtesy : Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

423. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 25, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

How can I write a letter to you today? The day passes only in talking. Today Govind Ballabh Pantji has come.

Has the weather turned cold there?

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

424. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 25, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

Today I have no time to write. This is only to remember you. Everything is all right. You might have seen what I have written about Jayaprakash.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original : C.W. 4254. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7886

425. LETTER TO JAYANTIPRASAD

SEVAGRAM,

October 25, 1941

BHAI JAYANTIPRASAD,

I have your letter. I can certainly say that 'the Ashram is full of unclean things and that Pratibha may continue her study where she is'. My statement would suggest that you had written to me about Pratibha. Still, if you can find the letter, I should like to see it. I cannot keep Pratibha in the Ashram. I also do not approve of the craze for passing examinations at such great inconvenience. I have no right to give money for such a purpose.

I have received the yarn.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 21-10-1941.

426. LETTER TO MANEKLAL A. GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
October 26, 1941

CHI. MANEKLAL,

If you did not give me such detailed information about the family, who else would? I was very glad. I showed the letter to Ba, too.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MANEKLAL AMRITLAL GANDHI
PORBANDAR
KATHIAWAR

From Gujarati : C.W. 893. Courtesy : Maneklal A. Gandhi

427. LETTER TO MANEKLAL

October 26, 1941

CHI. MANEKLAL,

It was from your letter that I first learnt about Chi. Mridu's engagement. Afterwards I got Maneklal Gandhi's letter. May you all prosper during the new year and may you always be the instrument of some service.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./XXIII

428. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 26, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is no letter from you even today. Do not be so irregular. If you cannot write every day, tell me on which days you will write. The whole world is governed by rules. My blood–pressure remains a little high these days.

Blessings from

BAPU

[P.S.]

Today the weight was 102 1bs. That means it has gone up by 1 lb.

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

429. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 26, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

I have your letter. Today also there is a great crowd. Bul[1] got a disappointing reply[2]. Everybody is fine. Discussions are going on.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original : C.W. 4255. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7887

430. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

October 26, 1941

BHAI PRITHVI SINGH,

Prof. Kripalani will reach Bombay on November 1 and perform the opening ceremony[3]. It does not seem proper to send for Khan Saheb from the Frontier Province. Perhaps he may not like it. It is good that 42 students have been enrolled. It does not matter if the number is small, but we should be perfectly satisfied if they turn out to be first class.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 5653. Also C.W. 2964. Courtesy : Prithvi Singh

[1] Khurshed Naoroji
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Khurshedbehn Naoroji", 27-10-1941.
[3] Of the Ahimsak Vyayam Sangh

431. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 27, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I must hurry again. I began a serious study of your rendering of K's writing. It has begun ill. English is fairly good but the thought does not run smooth. The whole must read logical. You will see on your return what I mean. It is a most difficult task and if you are found to have failed it won't be accounted as your fault.

Of course I shall deal with your chest. You will stay in Jullunder as long as necessary.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 4107. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7416

432. LETTER TO KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
October 27, 1941

DEAR SISTER,[1]

I have your two letters, received simultaneously.

Here is a draft[2] for your reply. It gives you my reaction to the Government letter. Of course you will reject it, if it does not correctly represent your view.

I understand and appreciate all you say in your second letter. My advice is that you should come here first and stay a few days so that we may have a leisurely chat. Probably Satyawati will come. You will then see her too. I would advise you to see Sarup and the Hospital[3] and then see J.[4] and Indu[5]. When you have finished this programme, you may break the order[6]. The rest when we meet.

Love.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] The superscription is in Gujarati
[2] This is not available
[3] The Kamala Nehru Memorial Hospital at Allahabad
[4] Jawaharlal Nehru
[5] Indira, daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru
[6] Prohibiting entry in the North-West Frontier Province and the tribal territory

433. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 27, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is no letter from you even today. I think the hospital and your studies do not leave you with any time to spare. I want to draft my statement[1] today.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

434. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

SEVAGRAM,
October 28, 1941

I have been chary of issuing statements for the guidance of satyagrahis. The deciding reason has been to have them to be self-guided where they are not guided by local leaders. But this chariness can easily be overdone. Time seems to have arrived for a brief review especially as several leaders who have been discharged have met me and there has been much speculation about the trend or the result of these talks. The public should know that those who were not whole-heartedly with the Bombay Resolution[2] have come out with their doubts confirmed. Similarly those who never had any doubts have become firmer than ever before in their opinion. As for me I never had any doubt as to the correctness of the Bombay Resolution and have none about the correctness of the steps hitherto taken in pursuance thereof. If I had, I could not, would not, have led a fight involving not only the fate of the Congress but even of the nation as a whole. There is one saving grace in non-violent action. Unlike violent action, it being good in itself can never do real harm.

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 28-10-1941.
[2] *Vide* "All-India Congress Committee Resolution", 22-9-1940.

Complaints reach me (1) that there is marked deterioration in enthusiasm; (2) that fewer people are coming forward now than before; (3) that those who are discharged are not seeking imprisonment again; (4) that there is no discipline among many satyagrahi prisoners some of whom have no notion of non-violence or truth; (5) that the treatment of C class prisoners is inhuman in that the food given is bad in quality and deficient in balance. The result is that the majority of prisoners have suffered in health, making it impossible for many on discharge to seek imprisonment again without adequate rest and repair. There are too complaints about want of newspapers, books and proper sanitation; (6) that the policy of non-embarrassment is unintelligible, as the Rulers themselves do not appreciate it, and the fight therefore should be intensified without regard to embarrassment; (7) that there is no life left in the Congress—there are no meetings, there are no demonstrations, no other activity, and that there should be a change of policy and programme even resulting in the resumption of full parliamentary programme, including ministries, i.e., reversion to the Poona offer[1] with suitable modification.

(1 & 2) I shall consider the first two together. Enthusiasm that is froth is of no use in non-violent action. Showy demonstrations and the like have a value in the initial stages. Continuous feverish activity can only promote violence and therefore retard the steady march of non-violent action, call it battle, if that word is preferred. That fewer are coming forward is but natural. For it must be recalled that civil disobedience is individual and restricted to representatives, be they even elected members of village or *firka*[2] committee. The list of representatives being limited it must one day be exhausted. I have no doubt that if I made a general call and relaxed the conditions of enrollment I should be overwhelmed by applications. I have no machinery to examine such applications. In reality it will be mass action which does not admit of individual examination and choice. That call will not come before the close of the war. There is neither warrant nor atmosphere for mass action. That would be naked embarrassment and a betrayal of non-violence. What is more it can

[1] The reference is to the A.I.C.C. resolution passed at Poona on July 28, 1940; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 15-6-1941.

[2] Group

never lead to independence. Mass action at this stage without communal unity is an invitation to civil war. If civil war is to be our lot, it will come, but if I know the Congress mind, it will never come at the wish or invitation of the Congress.

(3) This complaint is partially valid. It is true that some of those who have been discharged are reluctant to go back. This is a novel experience for India. I had to do it in South Africa. The struggle demanded it there as it now does here. Self-suffering has no limit. In the former civil disobedience the occasion had not come to send the same resisters to jail again and again. In the present one it is inevitable. Any other course would reduce the struggle to a farce. The alternative suggested is that substitutes should be found for those who would not go in again. Surely that is not the way of suffering. And how can we think of gaining independence without a full measure of suffering? The greater the cause the richer the suffering. Therefore in this struggle they only will count who will seek imprisonment again and again, come what will. They may be very few. That will not matter. Of course those who are ill will naturally not be required to go till they are restored. Some have interpreted literally my statement[1] that the discharged satyagrahis may take about a week before they go. Each case has to be judged on merits. Shri Vinoba went in twice within 72 hours of his discharge. He had to come to me before reoffering civil disobedience. Hence even that little delay. Shri Pyarelal took nearly a month before going in for the third time. There were unavoidable causes which need not occupy the reader's time and attention. I have mentioned two cases which I was personally regulating. They exemplify the elasticity I refer to. There is no shame or harm in unavoidable delay. Hypocrisy and camouflage must be avoided at all cost. In satyagraha there is no waste of men or time or labour, provided that *Satya* is adhered to in its entirety. I can otherwise utilize the services, as true soldiers of truth, of men and women who will whole-heartedly carry out instructions. Thus those who cannot for some just reason court imprisonment should engage themselves in corporate constructive activity. Difficulty arises because many Congressmen, though they profess or believe in C. D., have no

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with D. K. Gosavi", 15-5-1941.

faith in the constructive programme. I must proclaim from the housetop for the thousandth time that constructive programme is an integral part of the national movement and therefore also of C. D. C. D. without the backing of the constructive programme is criminal and a waste of effort. All cannot go to jail. But all must work the constructive programme. Even in armed conflict armies are powerfully helped by the civil population. Imagine the fate of the British forces, if their effort was not co-ordinated with that of the civilians. I was therefore delighted that there was a wide response from the prisoners and the other Congressmen this time in the matter of spinning during the spinning carnival[1]. I dare to believe that if Congressmen were enthusiastic believers in communal unity and removal of untouchability and the like, there would be no communal discord and there would be no antagonism such as it is from Harijans. We are the makers of our own destiny. It has been somewhat justly said that if I am a good General, I must not grumble about my men. For I must choose them from the material at my disposal. I plead guilty. But I have qualified my admission by the adverb 'somewhat', for I laid down the conditions from the very inception of the programme of non-violence. My terms were accepted. If from experience it is found that the terms cannot be worked, I must either be dismissed or I must retire. I retired[2] but to no purpose. The bond between Congressmen and me seems to be unbreakable. They may quarrel with my conditions but they will not leave me or let me go. They know that however unskilled a servant I may be, I will neither desert them nor fail them in the hour of need. And so they try, though often grumblingly, to fulfil my conditions. I must then on the one hand adhere to my conditions so long as I have a living faith in them and, on the other, take what I can get from Congressmen, expecting that if I am true, they will some day fulfil all my conditions and find themselves in the enjoyment of full independence such as has never before been seen on earth.

(4) There are two sides to the complaint about indiscipline. I must here confine myself to satyagrahi prisoners only. I would naturally like the other political prisoners to attend to what I say. It is

[1] Ceremonial spinning during Gandhi Jayanti week
[2] In October 1934

wrong to say that there is universal indiscipline among Congressmen or that all are unfit to be called satyagrahis. Cases of grave indiscipline have been brought to my notice. I know that violent men have crept into the organization under the guise of non-violence. But I know also cases of exemplary discipline. Everybody knows that there are in the movement and among the prisoners faithful Congressmen. I am conducting the struggle in their name and for their sake. It is through them that we may expect to win. This should mean no reflection on those who are weak but true. Even a child of seven who performs its allotted task faithfully will be entitled to the same credit as those who may cheerfully mount the gallows, if thereto called.

What is happening now is a process of automatic selection. Those who cannot stand the test will stay out without dishonour. Hypocrites and smugglers will be cast out because they will not stand the real heat or they will be rejected when found out.

(5) C class prisoners' is almost a baffling question. I have said more than once that classification is bad in itself. But the Congress has come to no decision on the question. Meanwhile we must do the best we can. There is no manner of doubt in my mind that the treatment of C class prisoners is unhuman. I do not wish to blame either the Government or the prison officials. I admit that theirs is a thankless task. For ages almost they have been used to only one tradition. Their mind refuses to grasp the distinction between criminals and political prisoners. They would make no distinction between prisoners guilty of crimes and those who rebel against constituted authority. For them the political are worse than the others. But pressure of public opinion has compelled distinction. The result is highly unsatisfactory. The will on the part of the officials is lacking. Satyagrahis who seek imprisonment cannot with any dignity quarrel with the treatment they get, except when their honour is attacked. An irresponsible government, which the British Government in India is may, as it often does, defy public opinion. Satyagrahis have still to court imprisonment. It is one of the gateways to liberty. They cannot stipulate as to the conditions of jail life.

But weak as public opinion is, it can express itself with effect on a matter of pure humanity. I have suggested that medical men should

give the lead in this matter. I understand that a movement on their part is quite likely. It is cruel to distinguish between the food of the different classes. The needs in the majority of cases of the political prisoners are identical. I suggest that the rations of all political prisoners should approach what is known as balanced diet with the permission to replenish it at the prisoner's expense. As to sanitation and other matters, a non-official medical committee should make recommendations which should be given effect to at once. There should be identity of treatment in all the provinces.

Having said this, I must warn satyagrahis against hunger-strikes or the like. It is their duty to conform to the jail regulations in so far as they do not come in conflict with known rules of honour, not self-made ones by hyper-sensitive temperaments. These ought not to court imprisonment. I suggest that it is a satyagrahi's first code of honour that he will conscientiously carry out jail discipline with the reservation just mentioned. Satyagraha is a process of silent conversion. Indiscipline and nagging are wholly inconsistent with the ambition of conversion. I am repeating these views of mine not without fear and trembling. For I know that jail officials have often quoted them on wrong occasions against satyagrahi prisoners. Of course in all I have said there is nothing against carrying out constitutional agitation for jail reforms even as to the so-called criminals. A satyagrahi is a universal reformer. For him there is no distinction between criminals and non-criminals. He is out to render service to the whole of humanity to the extent of his ability and opportunity.

There is the question of newspapers and books. These are as important as food. Some would do without food but not without newspapers and literature. I hold that deprivation of this amenity is additional punishment for a political prisoner.

(6) Although I have dealt with the question of non-embarrassment in my previous statements, I see that it still continues to agitate many Congressmen. For one thing, it is part of the Bombay Resolution and effect should be given to it. It is inherent in non-violence. But it is also expedient. By causing embarrassment at this stage, the authorities must resent it bitterly and are likely to act madly. Of course it would be different if we had resorted to armed rebellion.

Then the saying 'their difficulty becomes our opportunity' would apply. It is obvious that exactly the opposite rule should apply when an opposite method is adopted. It is worse than suicide to resort to violence, i.e., embarrassment under cover of non-violence. We may not be "temperate and furious" at the same time.

'But then to be logical you must give up C. D. altogether', says the critic. To give up C. D. would be folly. C. D. is itself completely non-violent action. It is a duty in the face of violence without parallel. C. D. in the present case means assertion of the right to speak against participation in this war or all war. If we cannot do even this much when the occasion demands it, we might as well give up non-violence. C. D. is the assertion of a right which law should give but it denies. If performance of a duty causes embarrassment, it cannot be helped. It is my duty to give up drink. It would cause some loss to the tavern-keeper. I am helpless. The authority can easily avoid embarrassment by recognizing the elementary right of non-violent free speech. Consideration whether the policy of self-imposed restraint creates an immediate impression on the authority is irrelevant. Belief that it must ultimately is inherent in belief is non-violence itself. We may not bear ill will against the bitterest opponent.

(7) I do not share the belief that there is no life left in the Congress. "Still waters run deep." Congressmen are too much attached to the Congress to let the institution die of inanity. There seems to be no life because we have no spectacular show in the shape of parliamentary programme or mass C. D. Things are going according to plan. C. D. is restricted to select individuals. It will be further restricted to those who reoffer C.D. as often as necessary. It does not matter if the number is reduced to ten or two. The two will represent the whole Congress. Does not one ambassador represent his people? One can be multiplied infinitely. Parliamentary activity has been almost stopped also according to plan. It may be, in my opinion should be, stopped completely. But I do not wish to rush things. Members of local boards have in many cases been withdrawn according to plan.

Then what are the Congressmen to do if they cannot or will not be allowed to offer C. D. and there is no parliamentary programme? The answer is simple. There are only two things for Congressmen to

do. All to carry on the thirteenfold constructive programme and some select few to offer C.D. in addition. C.D. is a mighty weapon to be wielded effectively by only a few in the first instance. Constructive programme is to be worked by all Congressmen and even non-Congressmen if they will. How can people shut their eyes to its paramount importance? Even parliamentary programme without it is a mere farce. We have had it till 1920. I do not deny its usefulness even as a farce is useful. But there is no such thing as a farce without the backing of a play. In 1920 the nation came into its own. Constructive programme was described in so many words to be a preparation for C. D. Parliamentary programme was given up *in toto*. The nation lost nothing by it. Parliamentary programme will have its definite place when we have a parliament of our own. Let it not be forgotten that this is expected to be a fight to the finish. It is true that C. D. will be suspended if genuine free speech is granted. If we do not find ourselves free at the end of the war, resumption will be a certainty. But that is idle speculation. If we do our present duty, whatever the circumstances that face us at the end of the war we shall be found ready.

Let me glance at the constructive programme. There is communal unity. It is worth much more than the whole parliamentary programme. Without it, the latter is useless. It becomes a field for interminable wrangling. Complete heart-unity takes us almost straightway to independence. Let me not be told that there will be no unity at all or not in our lifetime. I must refuse to believe the negation so long as there are some Congressmen working for unity. If the Congress cannot, I know that no other institution can. For every Congressman whatever his faith must equally represent in his own person every Indian, no matter what his faith is. In that sense he belongs to all religions.

Then take untouchability. I repeat that if untouchability lives, Hinduism and with it India dies. Is that not a programme worth living for, dying for? And the spinning-wheel whose every turn brings India nearer her destiny? Surely it can fully occupy every day of every Congressman. And the wheel being the centre of our solar system it includes all the planets in the shape of village industries.

The wheel brings us at once to the emancipation of India's

manhood, *kisans*, labourers and all those who are weary and heavy-laden. If this all-inclusive and mighty programme is not understood and appreciated by Congressmen they do not know the A B C of non-violence nor do they know the elements of C.D.

This programme gives ample scope for public meetings, demonstrations, exhibitions and the like. No official Congress Committees need function for co-ordinating these activities. Wherever five earnest Congressmen are found, they can group together and organize them.

Congress will now see why I contemplate no change in the programme as it is going and why I am full of hope for the future of the country.

Congress Bulletin, No. 6, 1942, File No. 3/42/41-Pol. (I). Courtesy : National Archives of India

435. ASHRAM NOTE

October 28, 1941

The blood-pressure will remain normal only when people here do their work well and do not indulge in quarrels. Let them do all things according to my wishes and ideals.

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, p. 384

436. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 28, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have your letter. I have gone through some more sheets of your rendering[1]. It is likely that as I proceed it will run smooth. I have the earth bandage on and am lying on my back as I write this. I do so in the midst of the visitors. Therefore no more.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 3680. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6489

[1] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Mirabehn", 13-5-1941.

437. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

SEVAGRAM,
October 28, 1941

CHI. AMBUJAM,

Your letter has "award". What is it?

Of course you can pray for definite objects so long as they are worthy. The fact is that God is within every one of us. Intense prayer is intense concentration of the right type.

I hope things will go well with you.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

438. LETTER TO AMINA QURESHI

October 28, 1941

DAUGHTER AMINA[1],

I was very pleased to read your letter. When are you and Sultana[2] coming over here?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6669. Also C.W. 4314. Courtesy : Hamid Qureshi

439. LETTER TO SULTANA QURESHI

[*October 28, 1941*][3]

DAUGHTER SULTANA,

I should like you to come and stay with me for a few days. Just now Sardar also is here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6669. Also C.W. 4314. Courtesy : Hamid Qureshi

[1] Daughter of Abdul Kadir Bawazeer, popularly known as Imam Sahib. She was married to Ghulam Rasul Qureshi.

[2] Addressee's daughter

[3] This is written on the same sheet as the preceding item.

440. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 28, 1941

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. I have suggested that you should be appointed Vice-President. I think you should let the Committee be formed. There have to be such bodies. Only thus can we progress.

What is approximately the total figure now?

Kanaiyo is expected on Saturday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8595. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

441. LETTER TO VIJAYA M. PANCHOLI

October 28, 1941

CHI. VIJAYA,

You are being unreasonable. You do not write but expect me to write. But let that pass. As long as you all are happy, I am satisfied.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II

442. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 28, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

My blood-pressure continues to remain high. Hence, I took three drops of *sarpagandha* yesterday both in the morning and evening. This morning it came down to 166/98. There is no cause for worry. In the morning I talked while walking and when I measured the blood-pressure it was 196/112. When it was taken in the afternoon, it was 150/90. My food intake is good.

Sardar is quite well. Vasumati's breasts are very tender. The slightest pressure causes her pain. Let me know if you understand why

this is so.

There is no letter from you even today. I take it that this is because you are very busy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

443. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,
October 29, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter after many days. How can you afford being continuously ill? Surely you remember the saying : "Physician heal thyself"?

Anasuya can be said to have greatly improved.

You have not suggested anything about Sardar. You seem to have forgotten. It seems he is improving just by himself. I have been giving him soup of leafy vegetables for the last two days.

Ba has again started coughing. She suffers much at night. I am thinking of stopping *rotis* for her.

I have understood about Balkrishna. You must have your meals at the hospital as a rule.

Blessings from

BAPU

[P.S.]

Either Prithvi Chand or you will have delivered Pyarelal's letter to Dr. Zakir.

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

444. LETTER TO RAGHUVANSH GAUR

October 29, 1941

BHAI RAGHUVANSH,

What Prabhavatibehn wrote to you was not correct. I never got your letter. I had asked Prabhavati to reply on behalf of Rajkumari that she herself would not be able to offer help. And you should not go abegging like this. If you do not get money from friends, then leave Patna and do some work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 142

445. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
October 29, 1941

CHI. DEAR IDIOT,

It was a tragedy about Raghuvansh. I had asked P[rabhavati] to write for you. She thought it was for me. Hence the serious mistake. Now I have written to him myself.[1] Copy herewith. It is your duty to say 'no' emphatically. You may write accordingly.

For the Harijans you may look to me for Rs. 1,500. I shall manage on your return. Will it be enough?

If necessary you should placate S[hummy] by staying till 15th. But you know best what to do.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 4108. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7417

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

446. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 30, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter.

Williams is here. He is looking after the cottage.

If you are here before 7th you will see him and his wife.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 4109. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7418

447. LETTER TO S. SATYAMURTI

SEVAGRAM,
October 30, 1941

MY DEAR SATYAMURTI,

I have your letter. You would have got my letter earlier but for the message which Sardar received. You are said to have sent him the message that at least for three months you did not wish to speak.

You are free to speak and convert the people to your views[1]. There never was any idea of suppressing you, but when you ask me as a co-worker to guide you, the question of propriety of speech arises.

In a non-violent society and therefore in true democracy a person has many rights but duty automatically restrains him from using most of them.

I expect you to carry out your promise to look after yourself.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-11-1941

[1] On the question of a change in the Congress programme and the resumption of parliamentary activities including office-acceptance in the provinces

448. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 30, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is nothing from you today. Vasumatibehn is having a little fever today. Chakrayya is down with fever at Madras. Lakshmipati's letter is odd. He says that he is improving.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

449. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

WARDHAGANJ,
October 30, 1941

Asked for his reaction to the hunger-strike by detenus[1] in Deoli Camp Jail and the Government communique thereon, Mahatma Gandhi said :

The communique was unfortunate. I am generally averse to hunger-strikes by prisoners but I cannot help recognizing that at times they have no other honourable recourse for the redress of grievances. It is cruel for the Government to say that they will not consider grievances unless the strike is given up. It is tantamount to saying that the sufferers should not suffer for the redress of wrongs done to them.

I should have thought a responsive Government would all the more readily listen to appeals of the wronged when they are accompanied by self-inflicted suffering. If the demands are just, and they seem to be just according to Sri N. M. Joshi's report, justice should be expedited in order to alleviate avoidable suffering

The Hindu, 1-11-1941

[1] Two hundred and four detenus were on hunger-strike.

450. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

ASHRAM,
Saturday, [*October 31, 1941*][1]

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I am told that today is your birthday. That means one year less from the number you can devote to service. To say that you may have many more years of service is to wish you a long life. Remember, we wish to depart only after winning swaraj.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 262

451. LETTER TO BHOGILAL LALA

October 31, 1941

BHAI BHOGILAL,

Sardar spoke to me about your meeting with an accident.[2] It seems you have escaped a grave danger. Let us hope you will get well in a few days.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. BHOGILAL LALA
"CONGRESS HOUSE"
AHMEDABAD, B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 10860. Courtesy : Shashibehn Desai

[1] The source places this among the letters for the year 1941. October 31 was the addressee's birthday which, however, fell on a Friday in 1941.

[2] The addressee had met with a motor accident while travelling in the countryside for famine relief work.

452. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,
October 31, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have received your letter. It really makes me sad and it will continue to do so if for whatever reason, you are not able to study well.

I do not also understand about anaesthesia. One gains experience from whatever work one may be assigned.

Mahadevbhai did not get the permission to see Pyarelal because nobody in jail has been allowed to have visitors. Now there will be a struggle on the issue.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

453. LETTER TO R. K. L. NAND KEOLYAR

October 31, 1941

BHAI NAND KEOLYAR,

The account of the yarn spun by the Kerala spinners during the Khadi Jayanti made me very happy. I have also received the draft for Rs. 236 sent by you for that yarn. Please convey my congratulations to all the spinners. I hope this enthusiasm will endure and the khadi atmosphere will spread.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

454. WHAT JESUS MEANS TO ME[1]

Although I have devoted a large part of my life to the study of religion and to discussion with religious leaders of all faiths, I know very well that I cannot but seem presumptuous in writing about Jesus Christ and trying to explain what He means to me. I do so only because my Christian friends have told me on more than a few occasions that for the very reason that I am not a Christian and that (I

[1] The source reproduced this from *Inner Culture*. The date of the writing, however, is not available.

shall quote their words exactly) "I do not accept Christ in the bottom of my heart as the only Son of God", it is impossible for me to understand the profound significance of His teachings, or to know and interpret the greatest source of spiritual strength that man has ever known.

Although this may or may not be true in my case, I have reasons to believe that it is an erroneous point of view. I believe that such an estimate is incompatible with the message that Jesus Christ gave to the world. For he was, certainly, the highest example of one who wished to give everything asking nothing in return, and not caring what creed might happen to be professed by the recipient. I am sure that if He were living here now among men, He would bless the lives of many who perhaps have never even heard His name, if only their lives embodied the virtues of which He was a living example on earth; the virtues of loving one's neighbour as oneself and of doing good and charitable works among one's fellow-men.

What, then, does Jesus mean to me? To me He was one of the greatest teachers humanity has ever had. To His believers He was God's only begotten Son. Could the fact that I do or do not accept this belief make Jesus have any more or less influence in my life? Is all the grandeur of His teaching and of His doctrine to be forbidden to me? I cannot believe so.

To me it implies a spiritual birth. My interpretation, in other words, is that in Jesus' own life is the key of His nearness to God; that He expressed, as no other could, the spirit and will of God. It is in this sense that I see Him and recognize Him as the Son of God.

But I do believe that something of this spirit, that Jesus exemplified in the highest measure in its most profound human sense, does exist. I must believe this; if I do not believe it I should be a sceptic; and to be a sceptic is to live a life that is empty and lacks moral content. Or, what is the same thing, to condemn the entire human race to a negative end.

It is true that there certainly is reason for scepticism when one observes the bloody butchery that European aggressors have unloosed, and when one thinks about the misery and suffering prevalent in every corner of the world, as well as the pestilence and famine that always follow, terribly and inevitably, upon war.

In the face of this, how can one speak seriously of the divine spirit incarnate in man? Because these acts of terror and murder offend the conscience of man; because man knows that they represent evil; because in the inner depths of his heart and of his mind, he deplores them. And because, moreover, when he does not go astray,

misled by false teachings or corrupted by false leaders, man has within his breast an impulse for good and a compassion that is the spark of divinity, and which some day, I believe, will burst forth into the full flower that is the hope of all mankind.

An example of this flowering may be found in the figure and in the life of Jesus. I refuse to believe that there now exists or has ever existed a person that has not made use of His example to lessen his sins, even though he may have done so without realizing it. The lives of all have, in some greater or lesser degree, been changed by His presence, His actions, and the words spoken by His divine voice.

I believe that it is impossible to estimate the merits of the various religions of the world, and moreover I believe that it is unnecessary and harmful even to attempt it. But each one of them, in my judgment, embodies a common motivating force : the desire to uplift man's life and give it purpose.

And because the life of Jesus has the significance and the transcendency to which I have alluded, I believe that He belongs not solely to Christianity, but to the entire world; to all races and people, it matters little under what flag, name or doctrine they may work, profess a faith, or worship a god inherited from their ancestors.

Modern Review, October 1941

455. TELEGRAM TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

WARDHA,
November 1, 1941

PARIKSHITLAL
SABARMATI ASHRAM
AHMEDABAD

ARJUN[1] WIRE[S] RAMJIBHAI SERIOUSLY ASSAULTED BY PAJPUTS SIMEJ. ADMITTED HOSPITAL. TAKE NECESSARY PROCEEDINGS. IF NECESSARY SHOW ARJUN.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 4045. Also C.W. 154. Courtesy : Parikshitlal L. Majmudar

[1] Son of Ramjibhai, a Harijan

456. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 1, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I hope this will be my last letter to you for the season.

I do not want you to rush. You may give whatever time may be necessary.

All well.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 4110. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7419

457. LETTER TO DUNCAN GREENLEES

November 1, 1941

I have your letter. It makes strange reading. I have no narrow patriotism about me. I would do anything to promote goodwill among men. Nothing can be done without men of the same opinion joining and co-operating. You may call them a party and condemn them. But they are not a party if they are against no one. Did Jesus and his twelve chosen disciples form a party or not?

And is there any difference between Imperialism and Nazism? I see none. The latter is the logical outcome of the first. I cannot take up arms for Imperialism in the vain hope of destroying Nazism. I would rather be ground down between the two in resisting them unavoidably. Surely your logical brain should see this.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

458. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

November 1, 1941

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I have sent you a wire today. You must have received it and taken all possible steps. You may get arrested those who in your opinion deserve to be arrested. If you can get hold of those people, and if they appologize and pay compensation to Ramjibhai, we may certainly let them go. But in that case they should promise that they will never again harass Harijans in that manner. If the Harijans have been intimidated, you should pacify them and give them courage.

You can explain to them that if they do not understand non-violence they may defend themselves with violence.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4033

459. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[*November 1, 1941*][1]

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is no letter from you even today. Sardar seems to be improving. Yesterday the Civil Surgeon and Dr. Manu examined him. They too felt his health had improved. They found nothing wrong about the treatment. Vasumatibehn is still running temperature. Ba has been feeling a little better after she was given your medicine. She continues having chest pain.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR

L. H. M. C.

NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

460. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,

November 2, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Yes, woman also like man can only propose and God reserves sole right to dispose. So when you come, I shall believe that you have. I am glad you will be leaving with S. It is well he will have his full measure of pleasure. The weather also will be cooler still by the time you return. Poor Prabha !!

You are over-sensitive. Your translation is good so far as style goes. I have simply remarked upon the looseness of thought.[2] Even if it is loose in the original, the translator has to make it definite. It is a difficult thing but it has to be done. But it cannot be done if you

[1] The postmark bears this date.

[2] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Marit Kaur", 27-10-1941.

cannot take corrections in perfect good humour. I have only begun. It may run quite smooth as I proceed.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 4111. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7420

461. LETTER TO SATIN SEN

November 2, 1941

MY DEAR SATIN[1],

I have your letter. We have to do the best we can with the help we can get by dint of Service. The Society was right. I can only distribute relief in accordance with the wishes of the donors. Of course it could reject those donations. But that would be foolish. We can try and get donations for the needy Mussalmans. It may be difficult at the present time. Then we must be content with what personal help we can render.

It would be wrong for me to send money from here even if I can collect some. What you can command locally and by local effort would be solid service. We must learn the secret of rendering service without money and without fuss. Money is often a hindrance.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

462. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

November 2, 1941

CHI. KANTI[2],

I was surprised to read your letter to the grandmother. How small-minded you are ! Not a trace of generosity. And no limit to suspiciousness? Who writes to Saraswati[3]? I inquire and learn whatever I can regarding you. Nor is it that I do not reply to your letters. And, apart from pointing out your errors to you, what else need I do? What Ba wrote was based on experience. But let it be. I have written even this merely to explain your error to you. Kishorelalbhai also wrote his letter at my instance. I myself wished to write, but afterwards, to save my time, I asked him to do so. Even behind my not writing to you

[1] Secretary, Baquerganj District Storm and Flood Relief Committee

[2] Son of Harilal Gandhi

[3] Addressee's wife

there is no other motive but to save my time, though I do not remember any occasion when I did not reply to a letter from you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 7364. Courtesy : Kantilal Gandhi

463. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

November 2, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. I understand about Ba. Ba's case is difficult.

What you write about me is unnecessary. I am trying my very best to abide by everything you say. I am not allowing my sleep to be disturbed. I am also talking very little [during my walks]. I keep my eyes closed and observe silence in the evening as far as possible. With just three drops of *sarpagandha* the blood–pressure too has come down. I continue the efforts to further control it. I am sure if you were present here, you would have brought it under control more effectively. So, pass your examination and come down. I like your self-confidence. But it must be backed by an equal measure of reading.

Suggest something for Sardar if you think it necessary. I give him a diet of soup of leafy vegetables and honey. He feels full of spirit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

464. LETTER TO DHARMAPRAKASH

November 2, 1941

BHAI DHARMAPRAKASH,

I have your letter. The depressed classes question is very complicated. It transcends politics. If enough money cannot be raised for our conference it should be postponed. How much can you get with my help? It will be more befitting if you make do with whatever you can collect on your own. You must also have a clear aim in view.

Remember that Dr. Ambedkar has placed a definite aim before himself. Study it. Digest it. And also understand fully what your own is.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

465. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 3, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

It will be nice to make the help to Harijans dependent upon their conforming to your conditions. You should raise a whole-time worker there.

Your dream was strange. Sometimes these do come. I attach no importance to them.

When you come you will miss Raihana. She has become a member of the family and sings every evening. She has taught some a few verses from the Koran. She sings the *shlokas*[1] correctly.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 4112. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7421

466. LETTER TO SANT SINGH

November 3, 1941

DEAR SANT SINGH,

There is no analogy between my selling blankets to a murderer and your *offering* services on the field.[2] Selling blankets is my calling and I may sell to whomsoever requires them. To offer your services on the field is no part of your duty. My answer therefore is 'no'.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 861

[1] Verses

[2] *Vide* "Blankets for Soldiers", 18-9-1941.

467. LETTER TO S. RADHAKRISHNAN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 3, 1941

DEAR SIR RADHAKRISHNAN,

Of course you have to make the official announcement. How I wish I could send you something written.[1] But I must not even make the attempt. By then surroundings will give me the word. But whatever it is, it must be disappointing. You do not know what nervousness creeps over me speaking in front of learned men! It is my deep love of Malaviyaji[2] as elder brother and great regard for you that have compelled me to respond to your invitation.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

468. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

November 3, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is nothing from you today. I forgot to write yesterday that my weight had increased by 1 1b. It was 103 1bs. The blood-pressure is fully under control. Ba does not heed the adivce that she should take rest. She is a difficult person. Balkrishna arrived yesterday. His room looks quite good with the extension of the verandah. Travelling has not harmed him in any way.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The addressee had requested Gandhiji to send him an advance copy of his address for the silver jubilee of the Banaras Hindu University for circulation.

[2] Madan Mohan Malaviya, one of the founder-members of the Banaras Hindu University

469. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
November 4, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

You must not get ill again but move on from strength to strength.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 4113. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7422

470. LETTER TO ANNADA BABU

November 4, 1941

MY DEAR ANNADA,

This[1] has remained with me so long without attention. You will see and return it with such remarks as you may wish to make.

Yours,

BAPU

From the original : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

471. LETTER TO ANNADA BABU

November 4, 1941

MY DEAR ANNADA,

This[2] was received after writing to you. What do you say? Please return [it].

Yours,

BAPU

From the original : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

472. LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

November 4, 1941

CHI. MAGAN,

I got your letter only today. I had written to you at the Mani Bhuvan address. I wrote to Urmi[3], too. You never got that letter. Being unable to get your address I wrote to Manibhai.

[1] Satis Chandra Das Gupta's letter, dated October 10, replying to the addressee's allegations; *vide* "Letter to Annada Bapu", 5-10-1941.

[2] A letter dated November 1 from Satis Chandra Das Gupta

[3] Addressee's daughter

I think it necessary that you should go and see Ratilal. Naraharibhai, of course, is doing everything possible.

I like your idea of settling in Bombay. I suppose you can join the Chamber only after passing the examination. When will the result be out? More when we meet.

I am not writing separately to Urmi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 1021. Courtesy : Manjulabehn M. Mehta

473. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

November 4, 1941

CHI. JAMNALAL,

You alone can guide me in this matter[1]. You may write frankly. I have sent a wire[2] saying that I am consulting you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3025

474. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

November 4, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. There is no reason to worry about me. At the moment the blood-pressure is ideal. Last night it was 136/88 and today it is 146/96. In the morning it was 172/98. I am also able to eat well. Ba is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Rishabhdas Ranka's future course of action, about which he had asked for Gandhiji's guidance

[2] Not available

475. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA C. MEHTA

[*November 4, 1941*][1]

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

You have made great progress, mentally and physically.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

476. LETTER TO SIDDHARAMAPPA G. HARKUNI

November 4, 1941

BHAI SIDDHARAMAPPA,

I have your letter. Work as much as you conveniently can. Keep up your reading and study. Keep yourself fit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

477. LETTER TO PURSHOTTAM TRICUMDAS[2]

November 5, 1941

BROTHER PURSHOTTAM,

I was dissatisfied with your speech in Bihar[3] to the same extent as I was satisfied with your comments on the statement regarding Jayaprakash. It amounts to this that the teeth for show and for chewing are different. And what a poisonous criticism of the Congress of which you are a member? If the Congress is as you believe it to be, what is the good of your continuing to be a member of the same? Your justification of the Congress policy at present appears to be a favour on it from a high position. I am writing this much as a friend of yours. This is not for discussion in the Press. No institution can

[1] The letter is written at the back of a postcard dated November 4, 1941, addressed to Sushila Nayyar.

[2] The Gujarati original is not available. The addressee was General Secretary, All-India Socialist Party.

[3] At the Provincial Socialist Conference

advance by adverse criticism of any other institution. It progresses by its own strength.

Blessings from

BAPU

File No. 3301/4, Police Commissioner's Office, Bombay

478. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

November 5, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

Today only

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original : C.W. 4256. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7888

479. LETTER TO PRAN KRISHNA PADHIARY

[Before *November 6, 1941*][2]

Your letter makes sad reading. I can only say even if the Congress contains only a few men who are true to it, it will be well. Those who secede will do so, but if there are a few true and brave Congressmen, people will follow them and not the seceders, no matter whether they are ministers or not.

The Hindu, 8-11-1941

480. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 6, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Has there not been idiocy somewhere about your collapse? Why did you take that pill? But there you are. "There's many a slip between the cup and the lip." So we shall both believe when you are actually installed here.

Take care of yourself. You should not be anxious about your health whilst you may not be indifferent about it.

Talimi Sangh meetings going on. About sixteen of them dined at the Ashram kitchen.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 4114. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7423

[1] This is written at the end of Prabhavati's letter to the addressee.

[2] The report appeared under the date-line "Cuttack, November 6".

481. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

SEVAGRAM,
November 6, 1941

DEAR DR. JAYAKAR,

I was glad to hear from you. As you know I never told our friends that I would try to raise funds on any account. They never raised enough money themselves to enable me to make an appeal for funds. Now of course it is too late for me to do anything. But you are there to guide them.

Now that I am writing to you, I feel tempted to tell you that I have read the appeals you have made to me from time to time with respectful attention. But I felt sorry that I could not make the response you expected, without denying the faith of a lifetime.

I hope you are keeping fit.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Enclosure returned.

DR. M. R. JAYAKAR
WINTER ROAD
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY 6

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

482. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

November 6, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Vasumatibehn's fever persists, but is on the decline. She is cheerful. I am doing very well. I am very busy.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

483. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

November 6, 1941

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I will talk to Khurshedbehn. The letter to Kotiji goes with this. Silence is bound to benefit you. Do you weigh yourself?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 3026

484. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 7, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter makes one sad. But you must not be nervous. Take things as they come. Mathuri[1] and Lakshmibehn came here yesterday. Lakshmibehn is Panditji's[2] widow. Mathuri sang a *bhajan* last evening in her magnificent voice. The substance is, man is after pleasure or happiness but it ever flies from him. Why will he not appreciate the fact that substantial pleasure or happiness comes through grief or unhappiness? Cheer up and pass on all your troubles to Him—the Rock of Ages.

I shall see to the apples being inspected at the station.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 3684. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6490

485. LETTER TO M. TAYEBULLA

November 7, 1941

DEAR T.,

I was glad to have your letter. Rajendra Babu has invited principal workers to come to Wardha. I have no doubt you will be among them. I need not say anything now. I am glad you are fit and well.

Yours,

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] Daughter of Narayan Moreshwar Khare

[2] Narayan Moreshwar Khare

486. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

November 7, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. In my estimate Sardar's health is on the mend. You may ask Kishorelal why he thinks it is causing anxiety. I cannot ask him now as we are in the middle of a meeting.

Ba, one may say, has recovered. That is why I have not written to you. She has been taking only medicines prescribed by you. She does not listen at all about taking rest. Once she got angry with me and said she was determined to keep on working. I laughed it away.

Mahadev has received a communication from the Government about Bhai. It says that no permission can be given except on very special grounds. Only relatives can get such permission. I am afraid Pyarelal is going to refuse to meet anyone at all. Vinoba has stopped receiving visitors. Now the correspondence will be prolonged.

For now it will be better for you to stay only at Puri's. If you see any particular advantage in staying at the doctor's, you may certainly go and stay there and say no to Puri. Think about it and write to me.

I feel quite fit. I get a backache from fatigue. It is in the region of the shoulders. Prabhavati suggests it might be something else. That is why I am writing to you. Can there be any other reason for it except fatigue?

About Chakrayya, Lakshmipati writes that he has quite recovered. He has no fever. He walks two miles.

Annapurna's weight can be said to be very good.Mahadev has gone to Gwalior. He will return on the 11th or earlier. He may visit you there for a day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

487. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 8, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have your letter. I can't give you up, even if you can. It is a case not even of "till death do us part". For I do not believe in the capacity of death to part soul from soul. Blood relationship is in its very nature a physical connection, not so genuine friendship. But this

discussion will take us into deeper waters. No time for it.

I hope you are daily regaining lost ground. If the cold is so severe, can you not get down a few days earlier and await S. in Jullundur?

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

The bathrooms are becoming sumptuous.

From the original : C.W. 3682. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6491

488. LETTER TO T. KANNAN

November 8, 1941

I had your interesting letter. My blessings on your forthcoming birthday.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SH. T. KANNAN

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

489. LETTER TO KAMALADEVI CHATTOPADHYAYA

SEVAGRAM,
Via WARDHA, (C.P.),
November 8, 1941

DEAR KAMALADEVI,

I have your letter. You will come when you wish[1] . . . . The visit to J. L. can be fixed up after your arrival.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

490. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

November 8, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

The pain in the shoulder does not seem to be wholly due to fatigue. Massage does give some relief. But it may well be rheuma-

[1] Mutilated in the source

tism. I am observing.

The blood-pressure is quite satisfactory. It is 150/88. I am able to eat a lot. Still, it may be necessary to remain on a diet of fruit for a couple of days.

Sometimes I do feel it would be good if you were by my side. But I quicky drive the thought from my mind. I consider it is a thought best avoided till after your examination.

Navin came for two days. Lakshmibehn[1] and Madhuri[2] have come. Madhuri sang us a *bhajan*. I have instructed Prabha to write it down and send it to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

491. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

SEVAGRAM,
November 8, 1941

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. Mahadev told me about your being ill. I didn't take much notice of it thinking it would only be something temporary.

I did get telephone calls about the Assembly. I said I didn't like the idea but that I would consider if you wrote to me. The 82 matter had ended there. It was good in a way. Sending you to the Assembly means sending you to jail, and right now I do not wish to send you to jail. The work you are doing is of great importance. There will be a time for going to jail.

Blessings from

BAPU

RAMESHWARI DEVI NEHRU
2 WARRIS ROAD, LAHORE[3]

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 8001. Also C.W. 3099. Courtesy : Rameshwari Nehru

[1] Wife of Narayan Moreshwar Khare
[2] Daughter of Lakshmibehn Khare
[3] The address is from Pyarelal Papers.

492. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

November 8, 1941

BHAI PRITHVI SINGH,

I have read the account that you sent me about the opening ceremony. It was very good. I understand you would not be able to come before the 20th. When Bhai Devraj arrives I shall explain a few things.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 5654. Also C.W. 2965. Courtesy : Prithvi Singh

493. LETTER TO SHRINATH SINGH

SEVAGRAM,
November 8, 1941

BHAI SHRINATH SINGH,

I have your letter. There is no reason to be sorry that Rajendra Babu was not elected[1]. But we must try to remedy the situation of which this is a symptom. Do what you can about the attack on a worker like Kakasaheb.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SHRINATH SINGH
"DIDI" KARYALAYA
730 KATRA, ALLAHABAD

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 5663. Also C.W. 2975. Courtesy : Shrinath Singh

494. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 9, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter.

I am sorry to have to report to you that the apples were 19 short. They were weighed at the station. The weight showed $2\frac{1}{2}$ seers less. The Station Master won't issue the certificate; though the weighing

[1] President, Akhil Bharatiya Hindi Sahitya Sammelan

was in his presence he refused to give the certificate. You should lodge a complaint on your side. I am doing likewise here.

I am well. I wish you could say the same of yourself.

No more possible today.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 4115. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7424

495. LETTER TO S. SATYAMURTI

SEVAGRAM,
November 9, 1941

MY DEAR SATYAMURTI,

Your letter. You are off the track. You need no permission even as those you mention did not.[1] The Congress Constitution recognized the right of free speech by Congressmen.

I have given you my personal view of the working of non-violence.[2] You are in no way bound to accept it.

No one wants you or expects you to gag yourself even for one day. You are free save for the restraint you put upon yourself by reason of ill health or otherwise.

My statement[3] demands the freest expression of their views by Congressmen. Therefore please feel free to express yourself in any manner you like and whenever you like.

Your difficulty has evidently arisen from the mistaken notion that you were labouring under a legal gag which needed lifting.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-11-1941

[1] The addressee's letter, dated November 6, 1941, *inter alia*, read : "The Congress Socialist Party, in spite of my earnest pleading with you, are allowed to carry on a countrywide propaganda against the resolutions of the Congress and there has not been a single session of the Congress or of the All-India Congress Committee in recent years. to my knowledge, where they have not put forward amendments to almost every important proposition of the Working Committee."

[2] *Vide* letter to the addressee, 30-10-1941.

[3] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 28-10-1941.

496. LETTER TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

November 9, 1941

MY DEAR KHAN SAHEB,

Your letter has come in.

I am trying to send someone for your camp.

The name of the Ashram should be 'Khidmat Gah'[1] or 'Khudai Khidmat Gah'.[2] 'Mazlumabad'[3] offends.

Girdhari Puri is preparing himself as fast as he can. I do not want to send him before he is fully equipped.

Akbar is also being trained for the same purpose.

For your teeth you should come here as early as you can but later than December.

I may not be able to catch the train if I get this typed. I hope you will have no difficulty in deciphering it.

Sardar and Rajendra Babu are here.

Love from all of us.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

497. LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

November 9, 1941

CHI. MAGAN,

I got your letter. Champa now writes and says that now she will come only after Nirmala's wedding. I advise you to go to Ahmedabad and fetch him[4]. If you wish, all of you may go and live in the Red Bungalow[5] or bring him here. I see no other way.

You must have got my letter addressed to you at Mahabaleshvar. In it I have replied to your question regarding yourself.[6]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 1022. Courtesy : Manjulabehn M. Mehta

[1] House of service
[2] House of service to God
[3] Refuge of the oppressed
[4] Ratilal P. Mehta, addressee's brother
[5] Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta's house near Sabarmati Ashram
[6] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Maganlal P. Mehta", 4-11-1941.

498. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

November 9, 1941

CHI. KANCHAN,

I have your letter. How did you fall ill? I want you to return completely restored. Here the weather just now is beautiful. The cold has begun. Ki[shorelal]bhai is as he has been. Rajkumari is arriving on the 21st. Amtul Salaam is fine. Vasumati and Lilavati left for Bombay today.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. KANCHANBEHN SHAH
C/O SHRI MAGANLAL KALIDAS
VALOD, DIST. SURAT
T. V. RAILWAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8270. Also C.W. 7160. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

499. LETTER TO VIJAYA M. PANCHOLI

November 9, 1941

CHI. VIJAYA,

I have your letter. You are greedy. But I will see what I can send you. Take care of your health. Today I have sent Vasumatibehn to Bombay for treatment. We have a large number of guests just now—Khurshedbehn, Sultana[1], Gosibehn[2] and so on. They will leave after two or three days.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. VIJAYABEHN
GRAM DAKSHINAMURTI
AMBLA, *via* SONGARH
KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 7142. Also C.W. 4634. Courtesy : Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

[1] Sultana Razia
[2] Gosibehn Captain, grand-daughter of Dadabhoy Naoroji

500. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM,
November 9, 1941

CHI. MRIDU,

I have your letter. I had of course been getting news of you. You have been repeatedly saying that you were coming. Now come whenever it is convenient. No harm has been done by keeping you away. I will not keep you away even a minute longer than is necessary. You are one of those who will fight against all obstacles.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 11220. Courtesy : Sarabhai Foundation

501. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

November 9, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. I only wish that your studies should proceed well.

The Civil Surgeon and Dr. Manubhai examined Sardar today. Both of them were satisfied after examining him. They are of the view that the same regimen should be continued. They would be happy if his food intake could be increased as also his weight. Of course the items of food will be the same.

Ba is well.

My weight is constant at $103^{1}/_{2}$ 1bs. I feel an improvement in the shoulder.

Pyarelal has sent for a large number of books.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

502. TELEGRAM TO NALINI RANJAN SIRCAR

SEVAGRAM,
November 10, 1941

NALINIRANJAN SIRCAR[1]
EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR
NEW DELHI

HOPE NOTHING SERIOUS. WIRE CONDITION.

BAPU

From a photostat : C.W. 10351

503. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHAGANJ,
November 10, 1941

RAJKUMARIJI
MANORVILLE
SUMMERHILL
SIMLA

MY CONDOLENCES[2] AND CONGRATULATIONS. GOD MERCY. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 3684. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6493

504. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 10, 1941

MY DEAR A.,

Your letter. It is well Rajasaheb[3] is gone. He was a living death. I felt I should send your a wire. And so one is going.

Bul has been here for a few days. Gosibehn came in last night from Mussorie having seen Indu and J[awahar] L[al].

I reported to you about the apples.

This record from Vaidya[4] is very good. You should write to him.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 3683. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6492

[1] The addressee had suffered a mild stroke of paralysis. 7
[2] *Vide* the following item.
[3] Of Kapurthala
[4] Shankerlal Kunvarji Vaidya; *vide* the following item.

505. LETTER TO DR. S. K. VAIDYA

November 10, 1941

BHAI VAIDYA,

Your yarn is very fine indeed. There is room for improvement in the strength. I suppose you will get a piece woven specially from this yarn? Why do you not yourself get a loom installed? I certainly believe that for you your own method is the best one.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5753

506. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

November 10, 1941

CHI. LILI,

You must have reached there safe. Ba misses you very much. Who in your absence will go on talking silly things? Get engrossed in your study. Make up your mind to pass. I shall be satisfied if you drop me a postcard every week.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. LILAVATIBEHN UDESHI
KANJI KHETSI CHHATRALAYA
MINT ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 10112. Courtesy : Lilavati Asar

507. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

November 10, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

You must be receiving my letters regularly. Sardar is well. The shoulder pain has not completely gone. Have you met Rajaji? Or is it that you are not going anywhere these days? If you are not, I do not wish that you should. For the present, solitude is best for you.

The expense on the *tanpura* was necessary. Change of activity is rest, is it not? Besides, It is your favourite instrument. Who is your teacher?

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

508. STATEMENT ON INDO-CEYLONESE PACT

WARDHA,
November 11, 1941

The proposed Indo-Ceylonese Pact[1] is not open to the fatal objections that have been universally raised against the Indo-Burman thing,[2] which was sprung upon an unsuspecting public as an almost settled fact. What has come from Ceylon is a proposal for examination by the Government and the public. I have studied the relevant papers as much as possible.

On merits, the Ceylon proposal is open to objection in the same manner as the Burman. I suggest to Ceylon Ministers that there is no reason whatsoever for hurry. Adjustment can easily be made about the supply of labour, but wholesale legislation may be left over till after the war. The war is a terrible tragedy, the like of which is unknown to history. But the tragedy will be deeper still, if at the end we find

[1] The status and rights of Indians in Geylon, which were threatened by the proposed Immigration Ordinance of Ceylon Government, were sought to be safe-guarded and in some respects improved in the joint report, published in New Delhi on October 16, by the Indian and Ceylonese delegations to the exploratory conference held in September in Ceylon.

[2] For Gandhiji's statement on Indo-Burman Agreement, *vide* "Statement to the Press", 24-8-1941.

ourselves living the old way without radical changes in every walk of life.

Let me recall here the goodwill mission that was sent by the Congress in July 1939 in the person of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. It had created a deep impression upon the Singhalese and their Ministers. It was hoped that the good seed sown by our ambassador would fructify. When the Ceylon deputation came to India in November last, it was arranged that they would meet him in Allahabad. But he was arrested before they could meet. Jawaharlal had prepared a note for them. It will be published, if I find it necessary to do so.

My object in recalling the mission and the attempt made thereafter is to point out the way to lasting peace and brotherliness between Ceylon and India. It is unthinkable that Burma, Ceylon and India should distrust one another or regard the presence of their nationals among their neighbours as antagonistic to one another.

Any harmful migration from one country to the other may surely be regulated by voluntary adjustment without much legal interference. I feel somehow that no harm has accrued to Ceylon by the settlement of Indians there. As elsewhere, Indian merchants and professionals had followed in the wake of labour imported wholly for the benefit of Ceylon.

Sir Edward Jackson's report, I understand, clearly shows that Indian emigration to Ceylon has done no harm to the indigenous population.

But, if my plea for patient waiting falls on deaf ears, I suggest much the same thing that I have suggested for Burma. I should have no difficulty in persuading experienced legislators that in legislation affecting men in the street and addressed to the masses the simplest and shortest method is best. I, therefore, suggest that the whole of the Indian population found in Ceylon on a given date (kept secret) should be registered and clothed with full rights of citizenship. Those who may be outside Ceylon but who can unquestionably be proved to be *bona fide* residents of Ceylon should also be registered on application. This procedure obviates the intricacies which permeate the proposal under examination.

The term 'domicile' should find no place in such legislation. The English law of domicile is the worst possible. Judges have been known to have been confused over the interpretation of the term. Human liberty is a precious thing, which must not be trifled with by legal subtleties and interminable wranglings in courts of law. The wrangling attains no dignity, because it takes place in a law-court. Men should know definitely where they stand in given circumstances.

So far as labour is concerned, I have no doubt that Ceylon should have the sole right to import as much as it likes under contracts easily to be understood and mutually agreed to between the two Governments.

The suggested quota system should have no place in an honourable understanding.

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-11-1941

509. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
November 11, 1941

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I hope you received my letter.

Yes, *undhi* [*y*]*u*[1] will be available. I have been forgetting to write to you about it.

Radhabai Subbaroyan is here. She will leave for Madras tomorrow.

Here is a letter for you. I think it is from Mridula[2]. She has forgotten to sign the letter.

I am glad you will be bringing someone. Don't make up your mind to send him away at once. But you shall decide.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 4116. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7425

[1] Baked vegetables
[2] Daughter of Ambalal Sarabhai

510. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

November 11, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Dr. Subbarayan's wife, Radhabai, has arrived today. Gosibehn[1] and Khurshedbehn are of course here. Sultana is here. The group from Gujarat is also here. That is the situation. You must be doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

511. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHAGANJ,
November 12, 1941

I observe that there is a move to press the Government to release satyagrahi prisoners.

It is, perhaps, appropriate to mention that so far as I know there will be on the part of the Congress neither appreciation of nor response to any such gesture by the Government.

Those who may be discharged will have to be invited to re-offer civil disobedience if they are physically fit. Moreover, there will be great resentment if distinction is made between satyagrahis and those who are detained without trial. The Government should not be judges of what is reasonable.

What the public demand is this :

Let the Government keep the prisoners, but give decent treatment to the prisoners whether they hunger-strike or not. They need not take notice of such strikes when there is no reasonable cause for that.

The Deoli prisoners' demands as far as they are known are just. Let them end the terrible suspense by granting the demands and ending the hunger-strike.

Let them also examine the recently published weighty manifesto by representative and prominent medical men from all India on the

[1] Gosibehn Captain, grand-daughter of Dadabhai Naoroji

dietary of C class prisoners and make the necessary changes and redress such other disabilities which have no just basis.

I, therefore, suggest to those who are urging the Government to discharge satyagrahi prisoners that they will do well if they will concentrate on the relief herein suggested.[1] It can be granted quickly without any political or other embarrassment.

The Bombay Chronicle, 13-11-1941

512. TELEGRAM TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

November 12, 1941

STRONGLY ADVISE DISCONTINUANCE OF THE HUNGER-STRIKE BY YOU AND OTHERS. PUBLIC OPINION BEING CREATED FOR SECURING RELIEF. DR. RAJENDRA PRASAD AND MIAN IFTIKHARUDDIN JOIN ME IN THE APPEAL. PRABHAVATI ANXIOUS TO MEET YOU. RESTRAINING HER PENDING DEVELOPMENTS.

The Hindu, 16-11-1941

513. LETTER TO MADALASA

November 12, 1941

CHI. MADALASA,

This is just to cheer you up. I do get news about you. You must be getting my messages. Do you move about a little now? You must go out for walks, provided the doctor agrees.

The fewer the tonic foods you eat the better.

Is the baby[2] growing well? Dr. Das was to come today.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 323

[1] N. M. Joshi, however, moved in the Central Assembly on November 18, 1941, his resolution recommending the immediate and unconditional release of political prisoners.

[2] Bharat

514. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

November 12, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. There is no need at all to send Annapurna right now. Ba is getting sufficient help. She does not even need much help. Let her derive full benefit from that place.

My pain is much reduced. But if it does not subside, I shall take a purgative. I shall not summon you for the present.

The way you answered Mother was correct, yet it would have been better not to answer her. Mother will not take it amiss. But it was uncalled for. You should maintain silence in the face of the wrath of the elders.

I have been sleeping in the verandah since yesterday. Do not worry about me.

You must realize that people here too are a family. Everybody is longing for you. You have written the right thing to Shankar.

Mother should definitely come in December. Mahadev cannot get permission, but Mother certainly can. It is another matter if Pyarelal declines to meet her. The *bhajan* is being sent today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

515. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 12, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter. You will get this on the 15th. From tomorrow I shall write to your Jullundur address. Today there are Kher[1] Miyan, Ismet, Radhabai, Sultana, etc. All are accommodated in the new hut. Dr. Das and Nimai have come today, and Kanaiyo also.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original : C.W. 4257. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7889

[1] B. G. Kher

516. LETTER TO HAZARIPRASAD DWIVEDI

November 12, 1941

BHAI HAZARIPRASADJI,

I very much like the idea of publishing a quarterly from Visva-bharati. This venture has my full approval.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI HAZARIPRASAD DWIVEDI
VISVABHARATI, SANTINIKETAN
BENGAL

From a copy of the Hindi C.W. 10260. Courtesy : Ravindra Sadan Visvabharati

517. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 13, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

Today also I shall make do with a postcard. I am all right, and so you are, I hope. I understand what you say in your letter. I have to go to Wardha in connection with the States' People's [Conference]. Hence this much should be enough. Beryl has sent a shawl. Tell her it is good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original : C.W. 4258. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7890

518. LETTER TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 13, 1941

DEAR KHAN SAHEB,

In accordance with your letter I am sending you Girdharilal Puri and Krishnadas Gandhi.[1] They will be able to help in organizing spinning, etc., and discussing plans for the Ashram. I do not anticipate their stay there beyond seven days. But if you want them longer Puri can give more time. Krishnadas has very great responsibility here.

[1] Son of Chhaganlal Gandhi

As to Alighul Khan I am quite clear that he should resign. He cannot help the war effort.

Love to all.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

519. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

November 13, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is no letter from you today. I am all right. But again I took three drops of *sarpagandha* last night. The backache has subsided. I am having to do a lot of work. Prabha will lodge the complaint.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

520. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHAGANJ,
November 14, 1941

I sent the following telegram[1] to Shri Jayaprakash Narayan on the 12th instant.

To this, I have just received the following reply :

> Thanks for the telegram. Have explained the whole position to Sardar Mangal Singh. Our demands are reasonable. Please excuse inability to discontinue the hunger-strike. May do what you can outside. Do not send Prabhavati.

I have heard nothing as yet from Sardar Mangal Singh. shall, no doubt, do so in due course. But the matter is too urgent to brook delay. I have heard that Shri Jayaprakash has lost heavily in weight. Forcible feeding can only be a temporary makeshift. Shri Jayaprakash is one of the most determined of workers. I flatter myself with the belief that if anything could have melted him our joint telegram should have. His preventing his wife from going to him is ominous. He wants no interference, emotional or other, with his decision.

[1] Not reproduced here; *vide* "Telegram to Jayaprakash Narayan", 12-11-1941

So far as I can see, there is no political motive behind this hunger-strike. The refusal to consider the case until the hunger-strike is given up is a cruel joke. It would be an act of inhumanity if Shri Jayaprakash and his fellow-detenus are detained till their lives are in danger. I appeal to the Government, in the name or humanity, forthwith to grant the request of the detenus. The plea of ascertaining and carrying out the wishes of the Provincial Governments is irrelevant and untenable. The Central Government is in no way bound to oblige the Provincial Governments in matters where the life and liberty of the citizen is involved. There must be something radically wrong if the Provincial Governments are afraid to keep their own detenus within their borders.

This continuing hunger-strike shows the futility of discharging civil resistance prisoners who have themselves sought imprisonment. With what face can they come out when those who have not sought imprisonment are detained without trial and are hunger-striking for the minimum of conveniences to which every human being is entitled?

The Hindu, 16-11-1941

521. LETTER TO MAGANLAL AND MANJULA MEHTA

November 14, 1941

CHI. MAGAN AND MANJULA,

I have letters of you both.

I understand about you. Khersaheb and I were so busy, each with his own affairs, that we could meet only for a few minutes. I therefore forgot to talk to him about you. I will now write to him and inquire.

The plan for the building was sent by Chimanlalbhai at the Mani Bhuvan address. If you have received it, let him know your decision about it.

About Ratubhai I believe that you should go and fetch him and keep him with you. Let him have the taste of brotherly love. When you come here, you will of course bring him along with you. If Champa arrives in December we shall see what can be done. I agree with Manju's analysis.

I am glad that Munno often mentions Sevagram. Only if the other children too feel the same way, will they enjoy staying here. If

they cannot forget their attachment to city life, they will never be happy in Sevagram.

Blessings from

BAPU[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 1023. Courtesy : Manjulabehn M. Mehta

522. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
November 14, 1941

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. I accept your suggestion. What about Jamna[2]? Kanaiyo will write to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8596. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

523. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

November 14, 1941

CHI. JAMNA,

I have your letter. I had from the very beginning told you to go to Bombay. But what is done is done. The necessary arrangements will be made whenever you go. If you feel that you must go, I think the earlier you go the better.

Kanaiyo returned the day before yesterday after finishing his job. I am asking him to write to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8596. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

[1] At the end of the letter Kishorelal Mashruwala writes : "Your second letter. I will have a talk with Balasaheb on the telephone, since he has not left. Ring him up on the 16th and see him. He lives in Khar."

[2] Addressee's wife

524. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

November 14, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. I am thinking about Sardar. Nothing more today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

525. LETTER TO SAM HIGGINBOTTOM

November 15, 1941

DEAR PROFESSOR,

I am in need. I want a good, sound man who can guide Seth Jamnalal[1] in the matter of cows and dairying. He must be an expert. Sethji has taken up cow-protection as his life's mission. He has need of an adviser to guide him. I have advised him to correspond with you in such matters and assured him that you will give him guidance.

I need, too, one who can be director of an agricultural and dairying institute. He can get a good salary. If you have one in view, will you please put me in touch with him?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

PROF. SAM HIGGINBOTTOM
AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTE
NAINI, ALLAHABAD

From a photostat : G.N. 8938

526. LETTER TO S. SATYAMURTI

SEVAGRAM,
November 15, 1941

MY DEAR SATYAMURTI,

I have your letter. You should have published the whole of my letter.[2] It did not admit of abbreviation. It has given rise to consider-

[1] The source has "Jamnadasji".

[2] The addressee had, on November 12, 1941, released to the Press extracts from Gandhiji's letter dated November 9, 1941; *vide* "Letter to S. Satyamurti", 9-11-1941.

able misunderstanding. I would ask you please to send the whole for publication.

I have no objection to the whole correspondence being published.[1] But it may take time. Hence the necessity for publishing the particular letter separately.

I am glad you propose earnestly to rebuild your broken body. . . .

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-11-1941

527. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE

November 15, 1941

CHI. MAMA,

I had your postcard. It is well that they have taken away Mother. You must have bid her farewell for ever, for you will not now be able to go to Ratnagiri off and on.

Sardar is here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3844

528. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

November 15, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is no letter from you even today. Since Mahadevbhai has obtained permission to see Pyarelal, Mother can gladly meet Pyarelal. Since I have vacated the hospital room, Mother's accommodation will be no problem at all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The full correspondence was released to the Press on November 18, 1941.

529. LETTER TO CHANDAN S. KALELKAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 16, 1941

CHI. CHANDAN[1],

I have your letter. All of us liked it. May you both be happy and do as much service as you can. I am not writing separately to [Satish][2]. Take this as addressed to both of you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6267

530. LETTER TO MOHANBHAI

November 16, 1941

BHAI MOHANBHAI,

You must not accept nomination to the Legislative Council in December, whatever your personal relations. Bhai Balwantrai will show you the statement. Don't sign it if you would not; but it would be graceful to keep out of the Legislative Council. Advise the Dewan to withdraw the announcement and postpone everything for the present or to take some befitting step.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

531. LETTER TO NRISINHAPRASAD K. BHATT

November 16, 1941

BHAI NANABHAI,

You may catch my meaning from the statement I have drafted and do whatever you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] Wife of Satish Kalelkar alias Shankar
[2] The source has "Kanti", obviously a slip.

532. LETTER TO PURSHOTTAM TRICUMDAS

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 16, 1941

BHAI PURSHOTTAM,

I have your letter. I read the speech again. It has pained me very much. I stick to the opinion expressed by me.[1] All the comments about the Congress are in bad taste. At present I am preoccupied with the Deoli affair. You may come when that is over, to understand my point of view.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

533. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 16, 1941

CHI. AMRIT,

This is my last letter. We will see about the man. I have read your suggestions. I was present at the time of constitution [-making] and both your suggestions were accepted at my instance. Perhaps they would have been accepted even otherwise.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original : C.W. 4259. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7891

534. TELEGRAM TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

November 17, 1941

KAMLADEVI[2] HERE. SHE AND I CONSIDER YOUR DEMAND FOR SAME TREATMENT AS DEOLI INCAPABLE LITERAL EXECUTION. PUTS YOU WRONG BOX. YOU SHOULD BE SATISFIED WITH REPATRIATION AND END STRIKE AND AGAIN YOU WILL ESTRANGE

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Purshottam Tricumdas", 5-11-1941.
[2] Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya

PUBLIC FEELINGS BY PERSISTING IF REPATRIATION ASSURED. SARDAR RAJENBABU KRIPALANI JOIN.[1]

GANDHI

File No. 43/65/41-Pol. (I). Courtesy : National Archives of India

535. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

November 17, 1941

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

I have your two letters. Dr. Das too had a talk with me and so Kanu.

Abha should not come here without the blessings from her mother too. She will give them if she feels that Abha will have no one but Kanu. Kanu can wait indefinitely.

It is good that Vina[2] is to take [up] work. The post offered is good. It should be accepted. Every one of you should be earning something if not disabled and there would be nor penury. It comes when there is insistence on costly education which only a few can have at the expense of the hungry millions.

I understand what you say about debts.

Dr. Das told me that your wife felt most hurt that I stopped sending what I did when you were here. I hope you realized that I would have done you moral harm, if I had continued the payment. I am quite clear that you are better as you are and, if you can remain firm in your resolve, you will set a worthy example to all.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : C.W. 10327. Courtesy : Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[1] In reply the addressee on November 18 telegraphed as follows : "Much pained at telegram. Afraid you have not understood situation correctly. Repatriation not our only demand. Cannot fight afresh for remaining after repatriation. Therefore asking for two small assurances. First provincial Governments shall consider sympathetically demands already before India Government. Second pending decision at least Deoli standard shall be applied. Never insisted on literal application Deoli standard. In Punjab detenus are given C class treatment. Fail to understand how our position unreasonable. Both Joshi Mangalsingh considered it reasonable. If you send someone shall convince him completely."

[2] Addressee's daughter

536. LETTER TO MANINDRA NATH DAS GUPTA

SEVAGRAM,
November 17, 1941

DEAR MANINDRA,

I have your letter.[1] If you are brave and have no fear of death, you should fearlessly move among Muslims and show them affection and wish them well. You should never feel cowed down. I know this is difficult but not impossible.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. MANINDRA NATH DAS GUPTA
HINDU HOSTEL
MANIPUR AGRICULTURAL SCHOOL
DACCA (BENGAL)

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

537. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

November 17, 1941

CHI. LILI,

I have your letter. I like my own marks. But if you study regularly you are sure to pass. Do not worry, but go on studying regularly and with confidence. The result is in God's hands.

Take care of your health. Everything is all right here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9596. Also C.W. 6568. Courtesy : Lilavati Asar

538. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

November 17, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I just could not write to you yesterday. Sardar is all right. His food intake is about 1,200 calories. Sankaran has taken a blood-count,

[1] The addressee had sought Gandhiji's advice for restoring goodwill between Hindus and Muslims.

but he is not convinced. He spent three hours here yesterday. I am well. The backache is not yet completely gone.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

539. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

[SEVAGRAM, "VIA" WARDHA,(C.P.)][2]
November 17, 1941

CHI. NIMU,

I have gone through your letter. I hope the operation[3] went through all right. Usha is always with me and is overflowing with joy. She was very pleased to read her name in your postcard. Kanam is fine. He forgot about the money. He has handed it over to Ba. He wants a camera. I was a little surprised that you permitted him to take ten rupees. That is the way of the rich. The children must know and learn that we are poor. Both of them sit with me at the meals. The Sardar and Kanam have warmly taken to each other. Do not worry in the least.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI NIRMALABEHN GANDHI
BHIMJIWALA BUILDING, THIRD FLOOR, ROOM 39
WORLI
BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original : Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

540. HOW TO PAY THE EIGHT-ANNA WAGE?

The satyagrahis as well as the others who have courted arrest are spinning a lot during the present movement. I am receiving news from all the prisons that spinning is going on with great enthusiasm and interest. For me this is heartening news. It may be said that Shri Dhirendra Majumdar is a paragon among the prisoners. He spins himself, makes others spin and has been deeply pondering over the methods of improving the charkha. I have received a letter from him

which deserves serious consideration. I am, therefore, reproducing it below for the benefit of khadi-lovers.[1]

This scheme seeks to realine the dream of paying the spinners and ultimately all labourers, i.e., craftsmen, eight annas for an eight-hour day. It does not attempt to give everyone everything here and now. But the attempt is to show that all this can be achieved within ten years.

Bhai Dhirendra does not express a definite opinion on the scheme but seeks the opinion and comments of other experts. Maybe he does not have in the prison all the necessary literature on the subject. About the scheme at the moment I can only say that all khadi workers should examine it and experiment in this direction. Small experiments need almost no capital. For exapmle, training ten or twenty spinners and a few teachers and keeping a record of the results should not involve much expenditure.

The chief merit of the scheme lies in its being almost self-supporting. It consists of two parts. It does lay a little burden on the institution in the form of enhanced wages. But the other half deals with payment to the spinners after training them for higher production. Another merit of the scheme is the attempt at all-round reform in the spinners' lives. I attach importance to the scheme from this point of view. This scheme is not the handiwork of an ignorant khadi-lover but has been thought out by a responsible and practical worker. Dhirendra Babu is not merely the author of this scheme. He is himself going to implement it.

Every experimenter in the field should remember that the scheme takes into consideration all the processes from cotton growing to weaving.

SEVAGRAM, November 18, 1941

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, November 1941

[1] The letter is not translated here. Dhirendra Majumdar had outlined a scheme to implement Gandhiji's suggestion, made four years earlier, that every village craftsman should get one anna for an hour's honest labour. The scheme which involved social as well as economic reform visualized an immediate beginning in a small area and its gradual extension in ten years.

541. TELEGRAM TO BHURALAL BAYA[1]

November 18, 1941

BHURALAL BAYA
UDAIPUR
ICONSENT.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

542. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 18, 1941

BHAI MUNSHI,

This is about Paranjape. Now write about newspapers. Newspapers are supplied to C class prisoners in other States. I don't know about all. But they are supplied in Bihar and the U.P.

Sarala[2] had been here for two days.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Deshpande's letter and a copy of the reply are enclosed.

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

543. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

November 18, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is a letter from you today. I shall abide by your wish with regard to that girl. I am not in a position to know better. I cannot write more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram which read : "State desire Kripalaniji Vijayalakshmi its guests. Your consent essential."

[2] Addressee's daughter

544. TELEGRAM TO HOME MEMBER, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

WARDHA,
November 19, 1941

HOME MEMBER[1]
NEW DELHI

AM COMMUNICATION WITH JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN VIEW ENDING HUNGER-STRIKE.[2] HE AND HIS COMPANIONS REFUSE ABANDON STRIKE WITHOUT KNOWING NATURE FUTURE CONDITION ASSUMING REPATRIATION WILL BE GRANTED. HE WANTS ME SEND REPRESENTATIVE REMOVE POSSIBLE MISUNDERSTANDING. COULD YOU PLEASE WIRE AUTHORITY MAHADEV DESAI PROCEED DEOLI?[3]

GANDHI

File No. 43/65/41-Pol. (I). Courtesy : National Archives of India

545. TELEGRAM TO JOG[4]

November 19, 1941

JOG
CARE STOCK
CAWNPORE
YOU CAN.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

546. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

November 19, 1941

CHI. KAKA,

Herewith the draft. Show it to Rajendra Babu and Jamnalalji also. If absolutely necessary, you may come over here, but it will be better if you revise the draft and send me the final version so that I

[1] Sir Reginald Maxwell
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Jayaprakash Narayan", 17-11-1941.
[3] The Government on November 20, 1941, authorized Mahadev Desai to visit Deoli.
[4] This was in reply to the addressee's informing Gandhiji of his arrest and asking him if he should seek bail and defend his case.

need do nothing more than sign it. I suppose you know that this afternoon I have no time at all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10954

547. MESSAGE TO FRONTIER PEOPLE [1]

[Before *November 20, 1941*][2]

Mahatma Gandhi wants every person in the Frontier Province and tribal areas to devote some portion of his daily time to spinning on the *dhanush takli* [3].

The Hindu, 23-11-1941

548. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

November 20, 1941

CHI. MIRA,

In the midst of work, I won't say anything beyond saying may God the Truth, not untruth, guide you. For God is both Truth and untruth. If you do not understand this language you should ask me to give you its meaning.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 6490. Courtesy : Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9885

549. LETTER TO DR. D. D. SATHAYE

November 20, 1941

DEAR DR. SATHAYE,

I have your letter. You will excuse the delay in writing to you. Of what use can my ignorant word be for a highly technical treatise?[4] From your index I see it is not going to be a popular book telling the

[1] This was delivered to Abdul Ghaffar Khan by representatives from Wardha who attended the Red Shirt Camp at Utmanzai. *Vide* "Letter to Abdul Ghaffar Khan", 13-11-1941.

[2] The report appeared under the date-line "Peshawar, November 20".

[3] An invention of Maurice Frydman, a Pole, also known as Bharatananda

[4] The addressee had requested Gandhiji to write a foreword to the Hindi portion of his book on ophthalmology.

man in the street what he should do to keep his 'eyes straight' with all the implications of the last phrase.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original : D. D. Sathaye Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

550. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

November 20, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is so much pressure of work at present that I find writing to you a severe test. Sardar can be said to be quite well. He still does not accept this. I felt relief in my constipation because I gave up milk and butter for two days. I felt good and the blood-pressure came down to 136/88 in the afternoon. I have taken milk today. I have also taken butter. I am all right. The blood-pressure is 156/96.

Ba is coughing a little at night. She is eating well. She is straining herself a lot.

The crowd here defies description.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

551. LETTER TO AMARNATH JHA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 20, 1941

BHAI AMARNATHJI,

I venture to write to you without earlier acquaintance.

Your election as President of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan made me glad as well as sad. Who would not be glad at the election of a scholar like you? But I must confess that I was sad, too; because I had, in the interest of work, wanted Rajendra Babu to be the President this year. That is why Seth Jamnalal Bajaj proposed the name of Rajendra Babu.

You are of course aware that I have been closely associated with the Sammelan for many years. I had a hand in framing the policy of the Sammelan towards propagation of Hindi. It has developed some

political overones too. I shall not be able to attend the Sammelan. Hence myself and a few friends thought that the election of Rajendra Babu would safeguard the interests of the Sammelan.

But this did not happen. Now all my hopes rest on you. I hope to secure your help in what I had expected from Rajendra Babu.

It will be common ground between you and me that all of us should endeavour to do our best, keeping in view the accommodating attitude of Tandonji[1] who is the soul of the Sammelan, and all the other things we know he stands for.

I do not know whether or no you approve of the policy adopted at Indore[2] and Nagpur[3]. Some attempts were made at Poona to change that policy. The attempts did succeed to some extent. I do not however regard these changes as intolerable. But further steps in that direction will become unbearable for persons like me. My efforts would be to move a step further than at Nagpur. I am convinced this would secure the progress of Hindi and the welfare of the nation. Hindi-Urdu controversy should not have been started nor should it be continued.

There have been sharp differences about the Wardha office. That office must be subordinate to the Sammelan but I think it should have as much autonomy as the Madras office. If it is agreed that the Wardha office has well served the cause of Hindi, it should, I think, enjoy greater autonomy than it has today.

Rajendra Babu's presence at the Sammelan is uncertain. He cannot stand the December weather of the Punjab. Nor can Seth Jamnalalji go. Kakasaheb Kalelkar and Acharya Shriman Narayan may go. Please lend your ear to them. I wish there should be no conflicts at the Sammelan nor any meaningless controversy. If there are differences on principles, let them be expressed in a friendly spirit. Therefore I would request you, if you can spare the time, to come here for a day so that all of us can meet and talk things over. Rajendra Babu and Jamnalalji are here for the time being. If you cannot come for want of time or for other reasons, I can send Kakasaheb and

[1] Purushottamdas Tandon
[2] In 1935 and 1936, respectively
[3] *ibid*

Shrimanji to you. Please let me know your convenience.

Kindly excuse me for the trouble.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI AMARNATH JHA
GEORGE TOWN
PRAYAG, U.P.

From the photostat of the Hindi : C.W. 10262. Also G.N. 65

552. LETTER TO MADALASA

November 21, 1941

CHI. MADU,

Will you always remain as crazy as you are? Come here at the earliest opportunity, if not to stay here, at least to meet me. And then you may pour out all that is stored up in your heart and cry yourself out to your heart's content. Since I am giving you such a fine opportunity of crying here, stop crying there. For the rest, if you follow the rules I have suggested you will forever be happy.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 323

553. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[*November 21, 1941*][1]

CHI. SUSHILA,

Today only this much. I wrote to you only yesterday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The letter is written at the back of Kasturba Gandhi's letter of 21-11-1941

554. LETTER TO DR. S. MEHDI HASSAN

SEVAGRAM,
November 22, 1941

DEAR MEHDI,

In your words, I cannot give twice, for I have nothing to give quickly or otherwise, but I get the credit of giving half because I refuse at once, i.e., by return post.

You know my limitations.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. S. MEHDI HASSAN
GONANIA MEDICAL COLLEGE
HYDERABAD DN.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

555. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA, (C.P.)
November 22, 1941

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

With reference to the Sales Act, please do as Shri Jajuji[1] may advise. I have not applied my mind to it in all its bearings.

Yours,
BAPU

DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA
LAJPATRAI BHAVAN
LAHORE

From the original: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

556. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

November 22, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I could write yesterday with great difficulty. Today that is not exactly so. There are still five minutes for the prayer bell to go. Sardar

[1] Shrikrishnadas Jaju, Secretary, All-India Spinners' Association

has been started on 2oz. of *separata* today. Rajkumari has arrived today. Rajaji and Bhulabhai have gone.

Ranganayaki[1] has come for a few days. I am all right. I can say that the backache has gone. I cannot say whether there is still a trace left. It has started getting quite cold.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

557. LETTER TO NIRMALA AND SUMITRA GANDHI

[SEAGRAM, "VIA" WARDHA, (C.P)][2]
November 22, 1941

CHI. NIMU,

As Ba has replied to your letter I saved my time. You must have got at least one of my letters. You have not acknowledged it. As it seems to me, Kanam and Usha are getting along very well. They are overflowing with joy. They come out for walks both times. They run about like mad, eat quite well. Both eat greens, too, in sufficient quantity. Perhaps they eat jaggory more than is good for them, but I let them have as much as they ask for. Bhansalibhai of course teaches them but the Sardar also is taking great interest in them.

I am very glad that you are getting along quite well there.

As usual, people are crowding here.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. SUMI,

You are not Dhritarashtra, for he was blind from birth. You are Gandhari, for, she deliberately bandaged her eyes. Ask Ba who Gandhari was and she will tell you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Widow of S. Srinivasa Iyengar
[2] As on the letter-head

558. LETTER TO SUNDERLAL

[*November 22, 1941*][1]

BHAI SUNDERLAL,

Only today could I reach your telegram of the 18th. So I am not replying by wire. May what you have begun meet with brilliant success.

Blessings from

BAPU

PANDIT SUNDERLALJI
C/O DR. DAVAR
NEW DELHI

From the Hindi original : C.W. 10263. Courtesy : Purushottam Prasad

559. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

November 23, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is no letter from you even today. Mahadevbhai is there today. He might have met you. Everything is going on nicely. Only I am under great pressure of work.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the postmark

560. LETTER TO NIRMALANANDA

November 24, 1941

MY DEAR NIRMALANANDA[1],

Come if you must.

Yours,

BAPU

BHIKSHU NIRMALANANDA
KRIPA ASHRAM
TIRUVENNAMALIUR
S. INDIA

From a photostat : G.N. 1397

561. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

November 24, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

The prayer bell has just gone. Sardar is fine. But Ba continues to have the cough. What can one do?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

562. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

November 24, 1941

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

Blessings to Chi. Savitri and her husband. It is good that both are khadi-wearers, and that there will be no purdah during the wedding. I hope both of them will continue to render service and live happily.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 842

[1] Formerly G. V. Gurjale

563. LETTER TO AMARNATH JHA

SEVAGRAM
November 24, 1941

BHAI AMARNATHJI,

I have your letter and wire. Thanks. Kakasaheb and Shrimanji will of course be visiting you now, so there is nothing I need say. It is enough that I assure you that nothing will be done at this end that might create ill will and nothing will be done to change Tandonji's policy in his absence.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

564. LETTER TO TEGH RAM

November 24, 1941

BHAI TEGH RAMJI,

I have your letter. I am in correspondence with Shri Amarnathji. It will be enough to tell you that in Tandonji's absence nothing will be done that might affect his policy.

Yours
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

565. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

November 25, 1941

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

I have your letter. So long as you feel grieved by my conduct, how can you forgive me? I have no conviction of wrongdoing. Just think clearly a bit. Was I in any way bound to pay you a single pice? You pleaded inability to get on with the Bengal workers. You wanted to come to Sevagram. I took pity and let you come. Inch by inch I came to know of your difficulties and I began to accommodate you. When I thought you to be unworthy of support, I declined to continue, after notice. Was that a wrong done to you? You yourself admit that you acted hastily and thoughtlessly. I acted in the only honourable way I could. I was disbursing public funds. You should know

that I brought you here almost against the wish of trusted co-workers. Your wants were and are beyond your market value. I doubt whether I should have given you the support I did. I still continue to do what I can for you because I believe you to be a person willing to serve but with reasoning faculty gone astray. Your present letter is proof of what I say.

I suggest your showing all the correspondence between us to your friends or rather the other workers. Let Dhirenda say what he thinks of it. It is a serious thing for you to harbour the wrong against me and be satisfied that all is well.

Of course if you harbour any wrong against me, your wife cannot help it. And it is but natural that she cannot send Abha to such a man as me. I hope this letter will clear all your doubts. If it does not, you should pursue the inquiry till you convince me of my error or are yourself convinced of doing wrong to me in thinking as you do.

You are wrong about Sailen. He is not going to help Rishabhdas but the latter is willing for my sake to take him up. Had you not been in need of money, I might not have sent Sailen. S[ailen] too likes the job.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10328. Courtesy : Amrita Lal Chatterjee

566. LETTER TO SULTANA RAZIA

SEVAGRAM
November 25, 1941

MY DEAR SULTANA,

I was delighted to have your letter. The four propositions you have laid down with the approval of the Maulvi Sahib are sound. But how to secure universal acceptance for them is the question. They form a basis for join action. If you have been able to assure Maulvi Sahib of my *bona fides* the next step for us is to meet and discuss the ways and means. If he can take the trouble to come here, this is a good time. Dr. Rajendra Prasad too is here.[1] You will ascertain his wish and let me know.

As to the fifth proposition I have doubts. It demands clarification and mutual discussions.

[1] The rest of the letter is from Pyarelal Papers.

I hope you are keeping well. When are you returning? We all miss you.

Did you not take with you that book on women? I miss it on the shelf. I have an idea that you borrowed it.

Love.

BAPU

BIBI SULTANA RAZIA
AUNDER KOT
MEERUT

From a photostat : G.N. 10859. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

567. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

November 25, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

You have got to be satisfied with a postcard for now. I cannot have even the slightest respite from work. I think I am very well. My weight remains constant at $103^{1}/_{2}$ 1bs. although I have stopped taking milk for two days. Sardar is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

568. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA C. MEHTA

November 26, 1941

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

Your work has increased. I am glad. There is no harm at all in going to Mathura, etc. Bow in front of the temples from outside. I have not visited any of those temples. How can we, through mere curiosity, visit a place which is not open to Harijans? You should not, therefore, enter the temples. Father has raised a fine question. It shows that you are the daughter of a vigilant father. With good wishes for your welfare,

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9434

569. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

November 26, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter after many days. It will hurt me if you do not write from sheer lethargy. The thought that your studies are getting disturbed is unbearable. You may well pass in the examination, but your studies being disturbed without cause can only result in harm. Whether it is Satya or any other friend who comes, your studies must not be interrupted.

I wish you would abandon the idea of living elsewhere and stick to Puri's. I would change my view if you found a more comfortable place than Puri's. But I prefer Puri's house. Once we take a decision we should not change it all of a sudden.

You cannot also change the decision to get away for three months. It does have its advantages. Why worry about the loss of pay? Surely you are not going to stick to the salary. No, you must not change the three-month decision.

I had a dream only yesterday that you are sure to get your M. D.; that you are extremely talented and have been offered a salary of three or four hundred rupees for a couple of years merely to enable you to enhance your knowledge; I had to take a decision and I could not arrive at any and then I woke up to find that there was neither any offer nor did I have to take any decision.

Everyone is well here.

Blessings from

BAPU

[P.S.]

Mahadev has not been given any date for meeting.

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

570. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHAGANJ,

November 27, 1941

The discontinuance of the hunger-strike by the Deoli detenus relieves the terrible tension under which the public was labouring. It was not possible to contemplate with unconcern the starvation, even self-inflicted, of patriots, whether one agreed with their method or not.

Let us hope that repatriation will be hastened and their treatment will not be worsened for their removal to their respective provinces.

I have read the Government communique describing the bewitching life in Deoli. I recall a similar description of life in the Andamans. It read like a fairy tale and yet most of the inmates preferred to return home. These descriptions, however truthful they may be in the estimation of the writers not themsleves detenus, do not answer the reality as the detenus see it. The object of the communique, on the face of it, is to show that the condition in Deoli was superior to what it was in the respective provinces. If such was the case, it shows how correct and proper was the demand of the hunger-strikers that their condition on repatriation should be no worse than in Deoli. I should translate the demand thus :

(1) Repatriation should not be to a remote godforsaken place in the detenu's province. The object of repatriation would be wholly frustrated if the detenus are transferred to a place far away from their homes.

(2) The conveniences and food should be as near to Deoli's latest standard as possible.

That is so far as the prisoners' demands are concerned. But something more is needed. Seeing that the detenus have not been tried, the burden is on the Government to give them as decent a treatment as possible. War economy has no place in this connection, for detention is itself a war measure and could not be justified on any other ground. Therefore, they are entitled to family allowance and travelling expenses for their families when necessary. It should be remembered that most of the detenus are poor people. So much as to Deoli.

But I feel that the question of food, sanitation and classification is and should be treated as an all-India question. I confine myself just now only to political prisoners, whether detenus detained on suspicion or satyagrahis who have courted imprisonment. If I had the authority, I would treat all prisoners alike, making a distinction only on the ground of health and habit. But I must not complicate the main issue by raising others [that] do not demand immediate solution. I think that classifications should be scrapped. At best they are arbitrary.

The scale prescribed in the very weighty and reasoned manifesto recently issued by eminent medical men representing the whole of India should be accepted forthwith as the minimum scale for all India, with such variations as staples grown in various provinces may demand. All political prisoners should have the right to supplement their food and other requirements from their own pockets.

All should be supplied with a selection of newspapers and magazines of known standing without any censoring. There should be no restrictions as to choice of books. What is not generally prohibited in India should be allowed to prisoners. They should be allowed to write letters and receive visitors on the same scale as in B class.

It should be common cause that no recognition should be given to hunger-strikes for wringing illegitimate concessions nor need they be penalized by refusal to consider legitimate demands on merits. For a prisoner under stress, hunger-strike is the last non-violent remedy. He seeks to end imposed suffering by self-imposed suffering. He thereby hopes to melt the heart of authority or at least enlist the sympathy of the public. Experience shows that the method is not to be despised. It has succeeded in several cases. But it is not easy to know always whether the cause for which a strike is undertaken is valid. We know, too, that Governments do not always come to a right decision in such cases. I have before me the case of a prisoner, who has given up his strike at my instance. The cause, as transpires in the record of the case before me, seems to have been more than valid. The vegetables served contained a dead scorpion. The men who had resorted to hunger-strike are now being tried for breach of jail regulations in that they refused the food served. There is the Chunar hunger-strike now going on for a fortnight. It is in respect of the treatment of C class prisoners. I have wired pleading for its suspension.[1]

I think that hunger-strikes should not be regarded as a crime, but whenever such a strike takes place it should be referred to a judicial tribunal with the right to the prisoner to be represented by a lawyer of his choice. If the cause is found to be valid, the grievance should be removed. If the hunger-strike is persisted in, although the finding is against the prisoner, the fast should be ignored. If the procedure recommended by me is adopted the probability is that strikes will automatically decrease. Where the cause is valid, the authorities will grant redress on a mere notice of hunger-strike and where the strike is found to be unjustified there will be no public sympathy. It follows that there would be no forcible feeding if the procedure I am recommending is adopted. In rare and obstinate cases a life may have to be lost. It is impossible always to prevent suicide, even by fasting.

Fasting has come to stay as a remedy for redress of grievances. It has its uses. An honest fast draws attention to a felt grievance and

[1] The telegram is not available.

compels redress. What I have suggested is regularization of the humanitarian instinct and the rescuing of a useful institution from ridicule or contempt.

The Hindu, 29-11-1941

571. LETTER TO M. S. ANEY

SEVAGRAM,
November 27, 1941

DEAR BAPUJEE,

I have your letter. Three names come to my mind.[1] H. N. Kunzru, Hamid Ali, ex-Collector, Satara, K.A.D. Naoroji (Lieut.) of the Tatas. I have given you enough to choose from.

I have your other letter just now which I have not yet read. Of course all your letters are treated as confidential.

Hope you are not freezing there.

Yours,
BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

572. LETTER TO GULZARILAL NANDA[2]

November 27, 1941

BHAI GULZARILAL,

As I have said before, if the Majoor Mahajan realize that the value of their labour is always greater than that of capital and if they all combine, they can come into their own without hurting a single individual.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Gujarati : *Gujarat Samachar*, 3-12-1941

573. LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

November 27, 1941

CHI. MAGAN,

It is good that Urmi has started going to school. Since you will be spending most of your time in Bombay, why should you construct

[1] For appointment as Agent in Malaya

[2] This was sent on the 25th anniversary of Majoor Mahajan, Ahmedabad, of which the addressee was the Secretary.

a big house here? For brief visits you may come whenever you wish and you will be accommodated with the others. You have as yet spent on nothing else besides timber. The timber can be used for other purposes.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MAGANBHAI MEHTA
4 B TEJPAL ROAD, TOP FLOOR
GAMDEVI
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 10117. Courtesy : Maganlal P. Mehta

574. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

November 27, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

You will have received the letter I wrote you yesterday. Today the blood-pressure was 142/86. In the morning it was 152/96. It is not always as good as this. But you will see that it is all right. Sardar's quota of food has been increased. He takes 4 oz. of *separata.*

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

575. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

November 27, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

It is not necessary to give jaggery to everyone. Some of the guests sitting by my side sometimes take jaggery and sometimes do not. Two children invariably take it. It could be offered to other children also. It is not common practice to offer jaggery. Outsiders have complained that a lot of sweets are served here and the criticism is correct. This may lead to some dissatisfaction; but you should face it and give your explanation. Starch and jaggery have the same food value; but the processes of their digestion are different. Starch has yet to be converted into jaggery.

Twig brushes can be cut only from babul or *neem* trees. It is undoubtedly theft to cut them from trees not belonging to us. We must get them from trees earmarked for us. Tell this to B[alvantsinha] and select a tree or two. Thorns may be used as fuel or put to some [other] use.

Govindrao does not have the strength. He is not idle, he is weak. If a man dare not touch a scorpion, even though each of us can lift it with our hands, how can he be compelled to do so? Govindrao is afraid of contracting leprosy. This fear is not peculiar to him; many people have it. This work, it is quite obvious, can be allotted only to a willing worker.

Cleaning of latrines should be completed before meals. If that is not possible, let it be done at 2 in the afternoon. This should be decided by common consent and from the point of view of hygiene.

Efforts are made to give advance intimation about guests. Lanterns may be bought if necessary. I do try to reduce to the minimum the number of people staying here.

The contact with cities is inevitable. We have to watch whether we earn in the cities or merely help in enabling the cities to exploit the villages. Yes, we should try to reduce to the minimum contact with cities.

We have to create love for physical labour. The difficulty is that guests outnumber regular inmates in the Ashram. How can the guests be expected to labour? Make a list of the regular inmates and you will be surprised to see how few we are.

I understand the reason for your not coming to me.

Do whatever is proper in respect of *jawar*. I do not like that question.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 4406

576. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

[*November 28, 1941*][1]

MY DEAR KU[MARAPPA],

Misbehaviour. Punishment was swift and sure. Not the b.p. That was the result but the punishment consisted in the cancellation of the tour. You cannot afford to play ducks and drakes with your body.

[1] From the G.N. Register

The nature of the work you have to do demands rigid restraint. It is necessary precaution to cancel the tour. Moral : Don't do it again.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 10160

577. LETTER TO DADACHANJI

SEVAGRAM,
November 28, 1941

DEAR DADACHANJI,

I have your letter. I am glad you have written so frankly as you have done. I am entirely at one with you that our relations with the Burmans ought to be of the most cordial character. The correspondence between the Prime Minister and me was naturally perfectly friendly on either side. I myself love the Burmese people and as you know I had come in every close touch with the Phoongis. What concrete steps can be taken at present I do not know. I think the defects that I have pointed out in the Agreement[1] are real and they should be remedied. You should, therefore, not give in on those points but try to remove those defects by friendly negotiation. You ought not to take an attitude of opposition to your colleagues. There is no occasion for it.

I am glad you have not expected me to go through your very long letter to Shri Satyamurti. I tried to read it nevertheless but had to leave it for want of time.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

578. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

November 28, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Today also only a postcard. The blood-pressure was 134/84 this afternoon, and 158/96 in the morning. Ba, Mahadev and Ramdas are

[1] The Indo-Burma Immigration Agreement; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 14-8-1941.

going to visit Pyarelal tomorrow. The premission was received only today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

579. INTERVIEW TO "THE DAILY HERALD"

WARDHAGANJ,
November 28, 1941

Mr. Amery's Manchester performance[1] does not excite any new reaction in me. Mr. Amery has said nothing new. It is difficult for me to say anything more. Mr. Amery holds certain views which he is entitled to hold. But he does not know India as well as I do. Therefore, I see that by repeating his statement, he is doing no good either to his own country or to India. His repeating the same untruths would not convert untruth into truth.

The Hindu, 30-11-1941

580. LETTER TO M. S. ANEY

SEVAGRAM,
November 29, 1941

DEAR BAPUJEE,

Why did you give so much time to explain the wretched unfortunate incident? If you had given me a line I should have been satisfied. I sent you the papers because I did not want to have anything about you on my mind without your knowing it. We may travel along different roads but my regard for you shall never suffer diminution.

[1] In a speech at Manchester on November 19, L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, said : "We can be proud of Britain's contribution to India. What the Magna Carta won for us in the rights of the individual under the law, that we have given to India. We have now set ourselves to achieve in co-operation with Indian statesmanship the far greater miracle of building up within the space of a few years that superstructure of responsible freedom which we took centuries to complete. In spite of suspicion we still retain the underlying goodwill and confidence in India. But above all there is need of goodwill between Indians themselves."

I got the benefit of Malaviyaji's *kaya kalpa*[1] by resisting it. It was all so unnatural.

Yours

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

581. LETTER TO SIR GEORGE

November 29, 1941

DEAR SIR GEORGE,

It was an unexpected pleasure to hear from you after such a long time.

I was sorry to learn of your son's death. But I suppose there is hardly an English family that has not to its credit such heavy sacrifice. This mention brings to the mind a rush of thoughts which you can imagine.

When I get your book I shall read it and write to you if there is anything to tell you. Meanwhile let me tell you that I remain the same true friend of the British that I always have been, whether fighting or co-operating.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

582. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

November 29, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

Ba and Mahadev have gone to Nagpur. Mahadev may write to you from Nagpur. The blood-pressure had gone up last night. It came down to 154/96 in the morning. In the afternoon also it was 154/92. The climate is good. Sardar is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
L. H. M. C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Rejuvenation of the body

583. LETTER TO SAMPURNANAND

November 29, 1941

BHAI SAMPURNANAND,

I got your letter and the book. I like your line of thinking, so I shall certainly try and read the book. Prabhavati will read it first. She asked for the books as soon as she saw it. At the moment she is on her way to Jayaprakash from where she will proceed to Bihar. I shall get the book only at Benares.

I hope you were all right in the jail.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SAMPURNANANDJI
JALIPADEVI
BENARES

From the Hindi original : Sampurnanand Collection. Courtesy : National Archives of India

584. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

November 30, 1941

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

You should go to the Harijan Sevak Sangh and present the case[1]. Don't rush to the Press.

As to my retiring from politics,[2] I might as well wind up non-violence as retire from politics. It would be like denying myself.

I hope you had my previous letter.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat : C.W. 10329. Courtesy : Amrita Lal Chatterjee

585. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

November 30, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

There is no question of writing today. Ba has written. Mahadevbhai has also written. You will know everything from that.

[1] Of the Harijan employees of Nabadwip Municipality whose condition was pitiable

[2] The addressee had suggested Gandhiji's retirement from politics.

My blood-pressure was 202/110 last night. This morning it was 152/92. This only means that I should stop working after the prayers. I am thinking along those lines. Prabhavati is leaving tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

586. LETTER TO LAKSHMI GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 30, 1941

CHI. LAKSHMI,

I have your letter. I learnt more from the newspapers. We should send an address to our Chief Justice for having raised Devdas's status so high. He saved him Rs. 1,000 and gave him complete rest for one month. Let Ramu[1] also go to jail and enjoy himself.

Anna[2] had fallen ill. Ramachandran Brahmachari says he is now better.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 2144

587. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[*November 1941*][3]

CHI. SUSHILA,

In the matter of Dev, you should try to convince him. What is this obsession about examination? Why such a craving for a job? Are all those who earn highly educated? What about millions who are unable to have education? Even then, he may study if he wishes; but why this craze for it? Can you not tell him all that? You may use this letter if you think it necessary.

[1] Ramchandra, addressee's son

[2] C. Rajagopalachari

[3] From the reference to Sardar Patel's treatment and improvement in his condition it appears that the letter was written in November 1941. Sardar Patel was under Gandhiji's treatment between October 20 and November 30, 1941; *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 20-10-1941 *et seq.*

Mahadev will go to meet Pyarelal after the pressure of visitors here is reduced. His presence is necessary during the current discussions.

When will you be able to attend to your studies properly? Right now, Raihana is here. I think of you. She can teach music very well. She can teach other things also. But all such things only after your examination is over. When will you be going to Lahore? Sardar, who was having a harrowing time with six or seven doctors, is now almost free from trouble since he came. The spasms have not ceased completely, but he is not suffering in any way. He used to pass five motions a day; now it is only once, and that too, with the help of enema. He used to sepnd an hour on the toilet seat, but now he spends fifteen minutes at the most. Only my treatment is being given—mud-packs, hip-bath and lying in warm water. He is allowed to take as much honey and lime as he can. He is feeling quite energetic.

Read Balkrishna's letter. What is the purpose behind your sending me saffron?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

588. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

December 1, 1941

CHI. LILI,

I have your letter. Never mind the loss of the scholarship. But you should not have taken a vow not to pass. Try your best. Let God, then, do as He wills. You ought to like your solitary life. That is a sign of a studious nature. When one is going along the straight path there is no need to keep count of the days, for there is no other path to follow. Prabhavati is leaving today. She is going in order to meet Jayaprakash. From there she will most probably go to Bihar. Lakshmibai[1] arrived today. Khurshedbehn and Kamala Devi are still here. Sardar is going to Bombay today. From there he will go to Bardoli. I am also going to Bardoli on the 9th. I will stay there for a month. We are all well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 10113. Courtesy : Lilavati Asar

[1] Lakshmibai Vaidya, a khadi worker and educationist of Poona

589. LETTER TO MADALASA

SEVAGRAM,
December 1, 1941

CHI. MADALASA,

The doctor says now you are quite free. So you can come when you wish. I have to go to Bardoli on the 9th for one month. So I would like you to come before the 9th. I hope you are happy. I learn from the doctor that the baby is also making progress.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Please hand over the enclosed receipt in the office.

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 323

590. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

December 1, 1941

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. It is certainly sad about Sita[1], but you need not get frightened. Such a thing could have happened here, too, though of course there would be less danger here.

It is clear that you cannot leave. I think it is the duty of you both to spend your lives there. You may bring up Sita there as best as you can. If I brought her up, I would do so under my close personal supervision, as I did the four [brothers] and other [children]. I do not repent having done that. According to me, they have lost nothing. If Harilal went to school, etc., you see the result. We cannot see the weaknesses of barristers and degree-holders, for we are overawed by them. In fact, there are many even among barristers and doctors who, like Harilal, lead immoral lives and are given to drinking. But they are big men, holding degrees, and so their weaknesses are not noticed. And, moreover, I myself condemned Harilal, and that also is one reason why he is on the streets. It was my duty to denounce him, though I think "denounce" is not the right word in this context. If, however, you are not convinced of the correctness of my advice, and if you can overcome your desire to keep Sita with you and she herself is willing, you may send her over and she will be educated in the

[1] Addressee's daughter

manner you desire. Devdas and Ramdas bring up their children as they think best. You both have the same right. I can only advise you as a friend. The right belongs to the parents alone, and it is their moral duty, too, to bring up their children in the way they think best.

Do ask Virji's son, too. You need not feel awkward about it. You did well, of course, to explain to Sita a woman's function. Instruction in regard to sex organs will do her nothing but good. If the instruction is pure, the children will understand the right function of the organs and will learn self-control. Everything will depend on how the instruction is imparted. You yourself should think over this matter. Naraharibhai has written something Kishorelalbhai also will write to you and send you some useful literature. Please do not get frightened.

I had Manilal's letter also. I have sent him a reply, too.[1]

I am pained to read about Sorabji and Jalbhai. But that is how the world goes on.

Everybody is well here. Ramdas's children are here for the present. Nimu[2] is arriving tomorrow with Sumi[3]. She had to undergo an eye operation.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4925

591. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

December 1, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Yes, there has been some misunderstanding. I had told Aryanayakum[4] clearly; some books are to be kept and for them a couple of almirahs, too. I have . . .[5] to Aryanayakum. His language is such; pay no heed to it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 4407

[1] Gandhiji, however, had not; *vide* "Letter to Manilal Gandhi", 2-12-1941.
[2] Ramdas Gandhi's wife Nirmala, and Sumitra, her daughter
[3] *ibid*
[4] E. W. Aryanayakum, Secretary of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh
[5] One word is illegible.

592. NOTE TO BALVANTSINHA[1]

December 1, 1941

What is all this? Why all this unhappiness at the insult from a member of the weaker sex? I do not know at all what names . . .behn[2] called. Even the abuses from our sister should be looked upon as praises. I shall of course investigate but I do not like your writing to me, for whatever reason. Insult is to be put up with. You ought to have laughed it away. And where is the question of sending you away? One can drive away only oneself. The Ashram belongs to you and also to . . .behn[3]. If you both quarrel, who can ask whom to go away? The *Gita* truly says : Wrath breeds stupefaction, stupefaction leads to loss of memory, loss of memory ruins reason and so on.[4] I find you in such a situation. Wake up and laugh at your own folly.

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, p. 291

593. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

December 2, 1941

MY DEAR KU[MARAPPA],

Unless you are sure of getting on well and if you are permitted to travel come here. I have to leave here for Bardoli on 9th. If you leave tomorrow 3rd you are here on 4th. That gives me clear five days. You must be the judge.

Love.

BAPU

PROF. KUMARAPPA
C/O SHETH SHOORJIBHAI
CUTCH CASTLE
GIRGAUM. BOMBAY

From a photostat : G.N. 10161

[1] The addressee, who was then observing silence, was pulled up by a woman member of the Ashram for his failure to supply rice to the kitchen. Exasperated, he complained to Gandhiji, asking to be sent away.

[2] The names are omitted in the source.

[3] *ibid*

[4] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 63-4

594. LETTER TO S. RADHAKRISHNAN

SEVAGRAM,
December 2, 1941

DEAR SIR RADHAKRISHNAN,

I have not given you the number of my party because I am myself uncertain. But provisionally you may count on three—Mahadev Desai, Kanu Gandhi and myself. I do not want to bring my wife with me.

As to Swami Bhawani Dayal, I am taking no notice of the matter. Our people in S.A. or elsewhere must show the weaknesses to which they are heir[1].

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

595. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

December 2, 1941

CHI. MANILAL,

I was under the impression that I had replied to your letter. But Kishorelal tells me that I have not done so. If you cannot be happy there, you may come over, but it will not look proper. It will not be proper to desert your co-workers. All the same, I do not wish to force you to stay on. You two, therefore, may do what you consider is your dharma. What further guidance can I give you than this?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4926

596. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

December 2, 1941

CHI. BABUDI,

I hope you have not been frightened. It is not an easy thing to be a mother. Children are bound to get one illness or another. Manjulabehn will come and see you. I am reaching Bardoli on the 10th. You may come over to me then. By that time Anand will be full of *ananda*[2] . Fix your thoughts on God and do what you can. If you

[1] The source has "of which they are heirs".
[2] Joy

want Shakaribehn[1] to go there, send a wire. She is ready. Since you are staying with your family, I have been wondering whether I should send her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10040. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

597. LETTER TO MADALASA

December 4, 1941

CHI. MADALASA

At half past ten this morning I received your letter of yesterday. You had asked for permission to come. Now that permission is useless. You can now come over any time you wish.

There is no need to drag yourself here if you are happy there. I will peep in there on the 9th. But if you can relax better by coming here, then you should certainly come.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 324

598. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

December 4, 1941

CHI. MAHAVIR,

I have your letter. Munshiji says you should send your application in March. I learn that there will be no point in sending it before that. You should, therefore, wait till March. Write to me in March. There is no need at all to send Satyadevi[2] just now. I am likely to leave this place for Bardoli on the 9th.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MAHAVIR
C/O SHETH BHIMJI KARA
CHANDAVARKAR ROAD
BORIVLI

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6244

[1] Addressee's mother
[2] Addressee's sister

599. LETTER TO SAMPURANANAND

December 4, 1941

BHAI SAMPURNANAND,

I just got your letter. Even before your letter arrived I had, in the course of a letter to a friend, stated that you were fully entitled to offer criticism. It has had no adverse effect on me, although I maintain that there is absolutely no ground whatsoever for your criticism. At the back of [the struggle for] freedom of speech there is [the claim for] independence as it was at the back of the Salt [Satyagraha]. But then this is a controversial subject. Time will reveal everything.

That leaves the question of Hindi. This controversy is meaningless and stems from ignorance. No one in the Congress is antagonistic towards Hindi. And no one will suspect me of such antagonism. But I may differ in my policy [regarding Hindi]. And if this happens to be the case, what would be my position in the Sammelan[1]? I have been dragged into the Sammelan and I can quit this moment. I regard Urdu and the Persian script as included in Hindi. I have been maintaining this view since the Indore [session]. The man responsible for giving to the national language the name Hindustani [and getting it] accepted by the Congress is Tandonji. Now what can be done? I think the resolution was all right. And if it was so we should regard Hindustani as a synonym for Hindi. Now tell me if there is anything wrong in it. Rajendra Babu is not in a condition to go to Kashi. And he is certainly not going to Abohar. Kakasaheb and Shrimanji are on their way to meet Dr. Amarnathji.[2] Maybe, now Tandonji himself will come out. Whatever he says will be done.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi original : Sampurnanand Collection. Courtesy : National Archives of India

[1] Akhil Bharatiya Hindi Sahitya Sammelan

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amarnath Jha", 24-11-1941.

600. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

WARDHAGANJ,
December 4, 1941

In the course of an interview, this afternoon, on the Government of India's communique[1] regarding the release of political prisoners, Mahatma Gandhi said :

As I have said before the event,[2] I must repeat after the event, that, so far as I am concerned, it cannot evoke a single responsive or appreciative chord in me.

From my student days onward, I have been, and still claim to be, a friend of the British people. But my friendship cannot blind me to the fact that British representatives hold India as a bondslave. All the freedom that India enjoys is the freedom of a slave and not the freedom of an equal, which is otherwise known as Complete Independence. Mr. Amery's pronouncements do not soothe the festering sore, but are like sprinkling chillies on it. It is in that setting that I am called upon to examine this release.

If the Government of India are confident of the determination of all responsible opinion in India to support the war effort, the logical conclusion would be to keep the civil disobedience prisoners in their custody, because they produce a jarring note. The only meaning I can attach to the release, therefore, is that they expect that the prisoners will have changed their opinions in their self-invited solitude. I am hoping that the Government will be soon disillusioned.

Civil disobedience was not taken up without the most careful consideration. It was certainly not taken up out of any vindictiveness. It was taken up, and I hope will be continued, in order to make good the claim of the Congress to let the British people and the world know that there is, at the very least, a large body of public opinion represented by the Congress which is utterly opposed to participation in the war, not because it wishes any disaster to the British arms or

[1] Issued on December 3, 1941, which stated : "The Government of India, confident in the determination of all responsible opinion in India to support the war effort until victory is secured, have reached the conclusion that those civil disobedience prisoners whose offences have been formal or symbolic in character, can be set free. Effect will be given to this course as soon as possible. There are provinces in which local conditions may mean delay; but before the end of the year the Government of India hope that throughout India practically all such persons will have been set free. With them there will be released also Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru."

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 12-11-1941.

victory to the Nazi or Fascist arms, but because it sees no deliverance from blood-guiltiness either for the victor or for the vanquished, and certainly no deliverance for India out of this war.

The Congress, which seeks and claims to represent the dumb millions, has, for the past twenty years, accepted non-violence as its unbroken policy to achieve India's independence. To stop civil disobedience, symbolic though it may be for the time being, will be to deny its policy at a crucial moment. The Government claim that, in spite of the Congress efforts, they are able to get all the men and money from India. Therefore the Congress opposition, in their estimate, can only be a moral effort and a moral demonstration. I, for one, am entirely satisfied with it, because I am convinced that from that moral demonstration will arise, when the moment comes, a demonstration which will result in the attainment of India's independence, not the ascendance of this party or that. The Congress struggle covers every single unit in India.

Now that the Congress President[1] is expected to be out, it will be for him to consider whether and when to call the Congress Working Committee or the A. I. C. C. These two bodies will determine the future policy of the Congress. I am but a humble instrument of service in conducting the civil disobedience.

I would, however, say one word about the detenus and other prisoners. It sounds strange that those who have sought imprisonment are to be discharged and not those who are either detained without trial or imprisoned because they hold the freedom of their country dearer than their personal liberty. There is surely something utterly wrong somewhere. Therefore I cannot rejoice over the Government of India's decision.

The Hindu, 6-12-1941

601. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

December 5, 1941

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

It is nice to be able to write to you outside the jail. But the pleasure is only momentary for I cannot reconcile myself to these discharges. However, we meet this new menace.

This is merely to tell you that I delayed answering your question as the rumour about your discharge was in the air.

[1] Abul Kalam Azad

I have read your letters most carefully. I agree with your conclusions and I like the very generous manner in which you have treated the whole thing. I had one and only one chat with F[1]. and he accepted my proposition that he would not think of marrying Indu without your consent and blessing. Indu wrote to J. that she was coming and seeing me too. Now that you are out and probably will be for a few days if not longer, you will shape this thing as you wish.

I hope you have liked the recent statements issued by me. You will tell me when you are coming. Maulana[2] telephoned today saying he proposed to come after two or three days. I propose to leave here on 9th for Bardoli for one month. Sardar wants me to give one month to Gujarat. He is under treatment, mostly dietetic. I have prescribed the diet. I think his pain is most bearable under that regime. So far as it is possible our talks and meetings should take place in Bardoli. The discharges are a challenge. I feel that we should hold the W[orking] C[ommittee], A. I. C. C. meetings as early as we can. But of this you and Maulana are the best judges.

I am writing this against time.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1941. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

602. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

SEVAGRAM,
December 5, 1941

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter.

Now that you have been released, your responsibility and mine have increased. There is no question of your returning [to jail] immediately. I am thinking [about it].

I am leaving for Bardoli on the 9th. Go to Rajkot meanwhile and come to Bardoli after finishing your work there. I will not be in a hurry to send you away from there.

I am fully satisfied with Lakshmibai. She is a very good and thoughtful lady.

[1] Feroze Gandhi
[2] Abul Kalam Azad

I hope you keep fine health. I have no time to write more. All those released from Nagpur have come to see me. I am writing this surrounded by a large crowd.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10421. Also C.W. 6860. Courtesy : Prema Kantak

603. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

December 5, 1941

BHAI MUNSHI,

Kanhaiyalal Vaidya will be seeing you. He will tell you about Ratlam. Go there. Do what you can. Whether your efforts as a lawyer succeed or not, the poor prisoners will feel comforted by your going. Meet the officials there and see that, outside your sphere of duty too, compassion prevails.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati : C.W. 7671. Courtesy : K. M. Munshi.

604. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

December 5, 1941

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter and the doctor's report. Before that I had two letters from Mahadev. Please make no changes before I arrive there. We shall have a talk with Dr. Gilder. I am unshaken in my faith that your present diet is sufficient and that you must improve with it. Nevertheless, we must respect the doctor's findings. Do not be negligent about taking rest. You must take walks both morning and evening. Listen to the doctor's advice and walk as much as possible or lie down but do not sit for too long. We had already decided about a belt when you were here. But if there is any speciality in the Powell belts, let one be procured there.

I am busy with the problem of the prisoners. You must have seen my statement[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SWARAJYA ASHRAM

BARDOLI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2 : Sardar Vallabhbhai, p. 263

605. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NERHU

WARDHA,

December 6, 1941

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

LUCKNOW

WROTE YESTERDAY. YOUR WIRE. COME WHEN YOU CAN. SARDAR HAD LONG SETTLED BARDOLI PROGRAMME.[2] HIS BODY SHATTERED. I AM SOLE GUIDE ON

[1] *Vide* "Interview to the Press", 4-12-1941.

[2] The addressee's telegram dated December 4, 1941, *inter alia*, read : "Would not Bardoli involve longer journey for Maulana others ?"

CARE HIS BODY. WOULD AVOID DISTURBING HIM BUT YOUR AND MAULANA'S OPINION SHALL PREVAIL. LOVE.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1941. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

606. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

December 6, 1941

CHI. TARAMATI,

I have your letter as also Harkishan's. You must send me news every day. Bhaskar Patel has a sanatorium there, hasn't he? Has he examined him (Mathuradas)? You should give up all worry and nurse him cheerfully.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. TARAMATI MATHURADAS
WINDI HALL
DEOLALI
G. I. P. RAILWAY

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

607. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHAGANJ,
December 7, 1941

The jail delivery that is going on apace of satyagrahis must be taken as a challenge to convene a meeting of the A. I. C. C. which, the Government of India have been evidently induced to expect, will reverse the Bombay decision, whose working is reflected in my conduct of the satyagraha campaign. I have, therefore, advised the Maulana Saheb to convene a meeting of the Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. at an early date, but until that decision is reversed civil disobedience has to go on.

I must admit, however, that the conduct of the campaign has been rendered difficult by the Government action in discharging civil disobedience prisoners, but if we are to reach our goal, we have to cut our way through every difficulty. This one is nothing compared to what we are likely to have to face before we come into our own.

If the A. I. C. C. meeting is to come, as it must, pending the meeting members of the Working Committee and the A. I. C. C. must

not offer civil disobedience, nor should those who are interested in reversing the Bombay decision.

Apart from these, civil disobedience should continue without interruption. Of course it will stand suspended on Xmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

The question naturally arises whether civil disobedience is to be offered in the usual manner by reciting the prescribed formula[1] or in some other manner.

I like the formula method. It gives directness and symmetry to the movement. There is great power in the reciting of the same formula in the same manner. It rivets the attention of the masses and men on identical theme. The formula is not a mean thing. It is a protest of the nation against war as an arbitrator. It is a message of peace on earth and goodwill towards mankind. What is individual formula today will become, in due time, that of the masses, but the authorities having discharged symbolical satyagrahis may refuse to rearrest them for reciting slogans.

There are then two ways open to us: If they do not rearrest, there need be no dismay and demoralization, the jail is not our objective. Freedom of speech is the immediate objective. If recitation is not objected to, we have advanced somewhat towards our objective and it will be foolish to court imprisonment for the sake of it.

Dismay and demoralization arise because Congressmen in general have not realized the inevitable connection between constructive programme and civil disobedience. Civil disobedience without the backing of constructive programme can never lead us to independence. Shorn of it, civil disobedience becomes method of violence bound to prove ineffective in the end.

Moreover, civil disobedience, even when it is mass, will only be offered by those who are bodily fit, whereas constructive programme is for all and will never be suspended. If the whole nation took it up in earnest it is enough to give us complete independence. The prosecution of the constructive programme means constructing the structure of swaraj.

The whole theme of corporate non-violence, as I have conceived it, falls to pieces if there is no living faith in the constructive programme.

To my mind, swaraj based on non-violence is a fulfilment of the

[1] Namely, "It is wrong to help the British war effort with men or money. The only worthy effort is to resist all war with non-violent resistance", *Vide* "Instructions to Satyagrahis", 8-11-1940.

constructive programme; hence, whether the authorities jail us or not, we must pursue the constructive programme.

I have been asked whether discharged satyagrahis should hold or attend meetings and deliver speeches. They should do so. I do not want or expect them to re-offer civil disobedience immediately. That would be indecent haste, but ordinary civil disobedience may go on. For the discharged ones let there be breathing time. Let them address meetings in their constituencies and study things. At the meetings they will expound their views on the general situation and not hesitate to interpret anti-war Congress policy.

Symbolic satyagraha has a definite meaning but it is open to the authorities to arrest Congressmen for their speeches even if they do not intend thereby to offer C. D. That was how they had arrested the Maulana Sahib and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, not to mention lesser lights.

Let it be known that I have no authority to suspend C. D. on extraneous grounds. That is for the Congress to do. For me personally there is no choice.

As a man sworn to peace, at this critical moment to suspend my anti-war activity would be to deny myself.

Therefore, for those who think like me, whether we are misunderstood or worse befalls, we must express our faith through our action hoping thereby that ultimately our way will be accepted by all warring powers as the only escape from a blood-bath which is reducing man to his lowest depth.

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-12-1941

608. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

December 7, 1941

MY DEAR C. R.,

I have your heart-rending letter. I can quite imagine your brother's condition.

I have written to Prakasam without mentioning the correspondence. Of course you will come in the afternoon and have as much time as you need. This is just to let you know how you occupy my thoughts.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

So you could not come. I have wired. I must go to Bardoli. Vallabhbhai has made elaborate preparations. And he is so weak. I hope you have cancelled the Lucknow address. It is a big risk. Do come to Bardoli as soon as you can.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : C.W. 10902. Courtesy : C. R. Narasimhan. Also G.N. 2083

609. LETTER TO KANHAIYALAL VAIDYA

SEVAGRAM,
December 7, 1941

BHAI KANHAIYALAL,

I have sent a telegram. You will have seen Munshiji[1]. Being too busy I could not answer your letter [earlier]. Also, there was nothing to say.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

610. ASHRAM NOTE

December 8, 1941

The rules deducible from the eleven observances[2] and essential for a well-regulated Ashram life are as follows :

All members—whether permanent or otherwise—will turn every minute of their time to good account. They will take part in every corporate activity of the Ashram. When free from Ashram work they will spin or carry out some other process connected with cotton. They will prosecute their private studies from 8 to 9 p.m. or during daytime, when they have no Ashram work to do and have done at least one hour's spinning.

They may not spin when they are ill or otherwise unable to spin owing to circumstances beyond their control.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to K. M. Munshi", 5-12-1941.

[2] Ahimsa, truth, non-stealing, *brahmacharya*, non-possession, body-labour, control of the palate, freedom from fear, equal regard for all religions, swadeshi and looking upon all human beings as touchables

No one should talk idly or in a loud voice. The Ashram must bear the impress of perfect peace as well as of truth. Our relations with one another must be marked by affection and restraint, and with guests and visitors by courtesy. Whether a visitor is dressed in rags or in gorgeous robes, we should treat him with the same respect. We must not make any distinction between the rich and the poor, the high and the lowly. This does not mean that we may expect a delicately nurtured guest to live as simply as ourselves. That is to say, in waiting upon guests, we must always take into consideration their habitual mode of life. This is true courtesy. If an unknown visitor arrives at the Ashram, we must ask him the purpose of his visit, and if necessary take him to the manager. This is the duty of every inmate of the Ashram, because we cannot know whom such a visitor is likely to meet first.

Our every word and every act should be well considered. Whatever we do we should do with a will and in complete identification with the work of the moment.

Food must be taken like medicine, under proper restraint, only for sustaining the body and keeping it a fit instrument for service. We must therefore take food in moderation or even abstemiously. We must be content with what food we get. If the food is insufficiently or badly cooked, we must not talk about it at meals, but courteously speak about it later to the manager of the kitchen. Bad or imperfectly cooked food should not be eaten. We must not champ while eating. We must eat our food slowly, decorously and tidily in a spirit of thankfulness to God.

Everyone must wash his own dish thoroughly and keep it in its place.

Guests and visitors are requested to bring their own plate, drinking pot, bowls and spoon, as well as lantern, bedding and mos-quito-net. They must not have more clothes than necessary. Their clothes should be made of khadi. Other things must be as far as possible village-made or at least swadeshi.

Everything must be kept in its proper place. All refuse must be put into the dust-bin.

Water must not be wasted. Boiled water is used for drinking purposes. Pots and pans are finally washed with boiled water. Unboiled water of the Ashram wells is not safe to drink. It is necessary to learn the distinction between boiling water and hot water. Boiling water is that in which pulses are cooked; and which gives out lots of steam. No one can drink boiling water.

We should not spit or clean the nose on the road, but only in an out-of-the-way place where no one is likely to walk.

The call of nature must be attended to only at the appointed place. It is necessary to clean oneself after answering either call of nature. The water-jug used in the toilet is, as it should always be, set apart. After a visit to the latrine, we must wash our hands with pure earth and pure water, and wipe them with a clean napkin. The night-soil must be fully covered with dry earth so as not to attract flies and in such a way that nothing but dry earth is visible.

One must sit carefully on the latrine seat, so that the seat does not get dirty and the stool drops into the receptacle. A lantern must be carried if it is dark.

Everything which can attract flies should be properly covered.

Teeth must be cleaned with care at the proper place. The end of the twig must be well chewed into a soft brush, and the teeth and the gums must be brushed with it inside and out. The saliva discharged during brushing must be spat out. It must not be swallowed. After the teeth are well brushed the twig must be split into two to clean the tongue with. Then the mouth should be carefully washed. The nose also should be cleaned by drawing in water. The split twigs should be washed well, and collected in a pot. When they dry up they should be used for starting a fire, the idea being that nothing which can be used should be thrown away.

Waste paper, which cannot be used for writing on the other side, should be burned. Nothing else should be mixed with it.

The refuse from leafy vegetables must be kept separate and converted into manure.

Broken glass should be thrown into a pit at a safe distance from houses.

If anyone visits the Ashram or comes as a guest he should be received with love. He should not feel an outsider.

In the Ashram everything should be in its proper place and every nook and corner should be clean. No dust should be allowed to collect on the doors, nor should they be sticky.

Everyone should do with great care the work allotted to him.

No one should absent himself from a collective task. There should be the most scrupulous care in cleaning the utensils.

The latrines should always be kept dry. The night-soil must always be covered with dry earth.

Much water stagnates near the water-room; this is not good. Food should always be kept covered, so that it does not attract flies.

In the matter of food everyone should remember our vow about control of the palate, and eat all the things as medicine. We should not be perturbed if occasionally we miss an item. Whatever we get should be accepted as God's grace.

We should learn to understand correctly the meaning of our prayer. Take care of the Ashram property while you are using it, as if it were your own.

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, pp. 384-7

611. LETTER TO R. M. SANYAL

SEVAGRAM,
December 8, 1941

DEAR PROFESSOR,

As you know I am doing all I can. I suppose your brother will be transferred in due course to U. P. The release is a different and difficult matter. You will have seen my statement[1] on it.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

612. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

December 8, 1941

DEAR SATIS BABU,

Please read and return the file[2] with your reply.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

613. LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

December 8, 1941

CHI. MAGAN,

I have your letter. If one's brother is mad and by his behaviour frightens one, can one cast him out on the streets? Suppose it is one's

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 7-12-1941.

[2] Containing five documents of the All-India Spinners' Association, sent by Annada Babu

own son, what would one do? When Ratu[1] had run away, the Doctor[2] had lost all peace of mind and recovered it only when he had found him. I do not suggest that Prabhashankar[3] is right. If Ratu is not as mad as we think, it is certainly a good thing. If he is worse, it would do nothing but good for you to go. Maybe, your very presence will calm him. The children may be kept away for their own safety. They may stay with Manjula and you may live somewhere with Ratilal. Here, of course, you are always welcome.

I have the following gentleman in view. He knows about you. I had written to him :

Dolatram Sundarji Dave, 2nd Floor, 355 Vithalbhai Patel Road.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 1024. Courtesy : Manjulabehn M. Mehta

614. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

December 8, 1941

BHAI KAKUBAI,

I for one like your recommendation regarding the women. I have not spoken to Jajuji, I have not been able to see him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 10852. Courtesy : Purushottam K. Jerajani

615. INTERVIEW TO EVELYN WRENCH[4]

[Before *December 9, 1941*]

Sir E. I recently had an hour-and-a-half talk with Mr. Jinnah and heard his point of view. I do not know what following he has, but he reiterated again and again : "Never will Muslims be subservient to Hindu authority. You English and Germans are much closer to each other than Hindus and Muslims." I would like to know what you have to say in regard to this.

[1] Ratilal, addressee's brother, and Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta, addressee's father

[2] *ibid*

[3] Prabhashankar Parekh, Ratilal's father-in-law

[4] According to Evelyn Wrench, Editor of *The Spectator*, the interview took place just before Christmas, 1941, in Gandhiji's Ashram, Sevagram, Wardha. The period, however, has been inferred from the fact that Gandhiji was at Wardha in December 1941 up to the 9th, when he left for Bardoli.

GANDHIJI. I deny absolutely what Jinnah sahib says. The Muslim is as much an Indian as I am and of the same blood. There is no fundamental cleavage between Hindus and Musalmans. We have lived in the same land as brothers for generations and what has been possible all these years will certainly be possible in the future. With due respect to Jinnasahib, he resorts unconsciously to an untruth when he says what you have just quoted, and speaks as a disappointed man does in order to maintain his view at any cost. In any case, the fear of subservience is quite imaginary. No one can dominate a population of 80,000,000. Can such a number be termed a minority? I personally would resist the subservience even of the Parsis, who are a mere handful, i.e., 1,00,000 , because I believe in equality for all and has throughout been the Congress creed. But I admit that Jinnah sahib's fear though in fact imaginary is a real thing in his estimation, and therefore he has my sympathy.

Sir E. What about the possibility of a free and equal India becoming a partner in the British Commonwealth in the sense that Canada and Australia are partners?

G. Bitter experience has shown that India cannot be that in the sense that Canada and Australia are. At the moment the British Common-wealth is a Commonwealth of *White* nations. But I go a step further than you. Why only a *British* Commonwealth? Whoever is victor, there should be, after the war, a commonwealth of all nations. The British Commonwealth must give a place to this and no one must be excluded. Germany, Italy, Russia, all must come in, not only those who are today Allies of Britain. India will gladly be a member of such a common-wealth.

Sir E. You are indulging in undue optimism. I worked seven years for the All Peoples Association in Europe and my experiences there during the last two decades do not lead to hope that the real internationalism is round the corner. Anyhow, your and my goal of universal brotherhood is common. Is it thus wise to destroy or abolish what has stood for a Commonwealth of at least some nations when the world is not ready for the ultimate ideal?

G. It is not a question of abolition. It is a question of extending the scope of the British Commonwealth. If Britain wins wholly, Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and perhaps even Bolshevik Russia will dis-appear. If Britain were honest, which I dispute, she would then embrace all nations on terms of equality.

Sir E. According to the sentiments expressed in the Atlantic Charter?[1]

[1] A joint declaration was drawn up at a series of meetings on board warships in the North Atlantic in August, 1941 by Franklin D. Roosevelt, the then President of the United States and Winston Churchill the then Prime Minister of the United

G. What is the Atlantic Charter? It went down the ocean as soon as it was born ! I do not understand it. And Mr. Amery denies that India is fit for democracy, while Mr. Churchill says the Charter could not apply to India. Force of circumstances will falsify their declarations. Personally I like to believe that all become honest, the millennium is round the corner!

Sir E. I know your views on pacifism. But all the same you won't impede the British war effort?

G. I said I would not embarrass Britain. And so far as civil disobedience is concerned, I have demonstrated that this is so. A non-violent man cannot desire embarrassment. And Government, in using the term "symbolic"[1] in their recent release of satyagrahis unsought by the satyagrahis have tacitly admitted non-embarrassment. Had Congress wished, it would have been possible to ignite a spark that would have swept right over India and which would certainly have deflected British energy from the war.

Sir E. You want Britain to win, don't you? Cannot you under any circumstances give active support to our war effort?

G. I do not wish disaster to British arms. In saying this I may be said to have modified my original words. But I cannot give active support in the war effort without denying a life-time of practice.

Sir E. Compared with fifteen years ago, has not British opinion moved favourably towards India? There are two powerful sections of public opinion in Great Britain today-one which holds that she should move closer to the U.S.A. and the Dominion with a view to forming a federation between these English-speaking democracies and definitely cut loose from India, which with its alien civilization they say has little in common with the Anglo-Saxons; the other consists of those who believe that the chief glory of the British Commonwealth is that it can admit nations of any race, creed or colour to become partners within its orbit. Do you not trust us? Do you not think that we are genuine when we see the difficulties inherent in the diffferent viewpoints of yourself and Mr. Jinnah? Would there not be civil war if we were to withdraw?

Kingdom, stating certain common principles and policies on which the two leaders based their hopes for a better future for humankind after World War II. It condemned the use of force and territorial aggrandizement and defined the right of all peoples to self-determination and self-government. Though it was incorporated by reference in the declaration by the United Nations of January 1, 1942, the Atlantic Charter, like many war-time declarations, it was characterized more by vague generosity that by any precise commitment. Also *vide* footnot of "Interview to United Press of India", 17-8-1941 and "Interview to H. V. Kamath", 5-9-1941.

[1] *Vide* footnote of "Interview to the Press", 4-12-1941.

G. I believe that a party wishing equality for India does exist in Britain. But it is an insignificant minority, and while I honour and like their opinion I cannot be enthused over it, for I know that those who shape policy and dominate are otherwise inclined. For me, therefore, it is only the Secretary of State who counts. I see no genuine ring in his statement. If he were honest he would not ask for an agreed solution among us as the first step. It is obvious that if Jinnasaheb asks me for things which I cannot give him, he will naturally go to the third party where he can get what he wants, as he did in London during the Round Table Conference[1]. The minority pact was there flung on us one fine morning unknown to any one of us. It is one of the most disgraceful chapters in British history. The Secretary of State should realize that the last word is in his hands. Hence it is that I have said you should retire and we shall have a pact in fifteen days. There may be civil war, it is highly probable there will be, but at the end of it there will be peace.

Sir. E. At the end of all wars there is peace.

G. You proposition was wrong. You can only have lasting peace based on justice. We are an unarmed people. Your armies are meant to suppress an armed rebellion and are not for use by us. The Indian troops are mercenaries and would be of no use in the civil war. It is the politically conscious Muslims and Hindus who will fight. They will fight with sticks, staves and soda-water bottles, but they will soon tire, and there will be wise men enough among us to bring about an honourable peace.

Sir E. Are you not assuming too much?

G. I assume nothing. These are daily happenings. There is breaking of each other's heads for a couple of days and then there is peace.

Sir E. But a Hindu cannot dine with a Muslim. Mr. Jinnah says these social barriers matter a good deal.

G. They do not. You inter-dine and inter-marry with Germans and yet are both saturated with hate for each other.

Sir E. May I take it that you would oppose Pakistan even if it were agreed upon by the Muslims and Britain?

G. No agreement between the British and Muslims can affect me. An agreement between Hindus and Muslims alone will affect me.

Sir E. Do you not think that Britain has stood for freedom and democracy–take Canada, Australia, South Africa?

[1] Of 1931

G. You have stood for these things simply for the spoilation of the weakers races. I have lived for twenty years in South Africa and I know the quarrel between you and the Dutch was over the sharing of the spoils and the same is happening elsewhere in Africa, too.

Sir E. But very few are ready for a world Commonwealth. At what moment would you be willing to join a Commonwealth?

G. When Africa, China, Japan are all included. I cannot be subservient anywhere.

Sir E. Are you opposed to defence behind an international group?

G. I would agree to a minimum international police force.

Sir E. What about an air-force?

G. On no account. I look upon air-power for destruction as a terrible crime against humanity.

Sir E. But if you do not agree to an armed force to stop aggression other Hitlers may arise.

G. They will not arise if justice prevails. Hitler is a scourge sent by God to punish men for their iniquities.

Sir E. Take the case of Abyssinia. If there had been an armed international force we could have stopped Mussolini from that conquest.

G. You cannot cure a lesser evil by a greater evil. You might have succeeded in wiping out Italy, but how would that have helped? Britain's success in the exploitaion of non-European races raised the ambition of Bismarck and later Mussolini and others.

Sir E. But is not the mentality now passing? I assure you it is in England. Take the case of Iraq, to whom we have given independence.

G. I wish I could think that. I do not agree that there is freedom in Iraq today. I do not read current history as you do. Nothing is of a permanent nature. One can only talk of good intentions when the war is over. I would love to see that Iraq at least had real complete independence after the war.

Sir E. You may call me prejudiced, but Churchill has definitely announced that there will be no a acquisition of territory, etc.

G. You are not prejudiced. You have perforce to believe what is told you. I have grave doubts. I mean no ill. Having given up arms, I can mean none. I never think of imaginary evils, however. There is no distrust of men and mankind in me. They will answer before God, so why should I worry? But where my own mission is concerned, my thought is active, and I try to wish everyone well in spite of doubts and mistrust. I will suffer the agony if that is to be my lot. But I may not

unnerve myself while I can struggle against evil.

Sir E. Try to believe there are more people in great Britain than you imagine in favour of India's inclusion as a free partner in the British Commonwealth of Nations. I can give you proof. There is the Labour Party.

G. I believe you are a growing party. All the same, I feel you are still insignificant. But you mention Labour Party, which is a dismal failure today. It takes its seat in the House of Lords!

Sir E. After the war would you consider every problem if you felt India was to be free?

G. I have shut my mind against nothing and I am a friend of Great Britain. I always have been. I have no axe to grind. Whatever I do is out of love.

The Spectator, 6-3-1942

616. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM,
WARDHA,
December 8, 1941

CHI. MRIDU,

I have your letter. I cannot bear to see you fall ill. One who wants to serve must acquire control over the body.

There is nothing wrong in your involving yourself with women's organizations. You have to come in close contact with women.

We ourselves create obstacles for ourselves. Had you got rid of your fear, you would have come to stay at Sevagram earlier. People may not like to be here permanently. But I notice that many people have liked it at least for a few days.

Miss Moore's situation is as you have described. Having lived in the same social milieu, her ideas are unsympathetic. She appeared to me to be a good woman. She lived here very nicely. Now you may not have to go.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 11221. Courtesy : Sarabhai Foundation

617. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHAGANJ,
December 9, 1941

In the midst of the human conflagration which envelops the world powers who believe in the strength of their arms, little knowing

what in reality they are fighting for, it is healthy and uplifting to contemplate what a man like Badshah Khan, the first among the Khidmatgars, is doing for the cause of peace and for qualifying himself for taking an effective part by non-violent means in the freedom movement. He has undying faith in non-violence though he has not worked out all its implications. For the last few months, he has been holding little camps for non-violent training of Khudai Khidmatgars. But during the third week of November he held a biggish one[1], to which he had invited neighbouring workers from the Punjab, Kashmir and Baluchistan. Charkha was the important activity. Over three hundred wheels plied daily. *Dhanush takli* was also introduced in the camp. Its cheapness and the ease with which it could be manufactured in every village appealed to everyone. Sanitation work was done in the surrounding villages and there were speeches explaining non-violence. A resolution was passed appealing to tribesmen to be peaceful and non-violent. Copies of it were printed for distribution among those tribesmen who came into British territory. Here is the daily routine :

6 a.m. *azan*[1] for prayers; from 6 to 7.30 prayers; from 7.30 to 7.45 morning exercise; from 7.45 to 8 tea; from 8 to 10.55 village cleaning; from 11 to 12 noon, school; from 12 to 2 p.m. morning meal and rest; from 2 p.m. to 3.30 p.m. spinning; from 3.30 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. public meeting; 4.30 p.m. to 5 p.m. flag salutation; from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. informal discussion; 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. evening meal; 8 p.m. to 9 p.m. roll call.

Village cleaning was done in perfectly orderly manner. Workers were divided into several parties, carrying their own brooms. Villagers supplemented these from their own stock and joined Khidmatgars in this loving service. They did not leave out even police stations. Men in charge of these gratefully accepted the service.

The camp worked like this for seven days from November 16 to 22. There were about 20 Hindus and two women in the party. Badshah Khan, though ill himself, took part in every activity. The camp was of the simplest character. There were no servants. One medical man had volunteered his services which were most useful as many men were suffering from malaria. The Government had also sent a doctor with some medicines.

[1] For Gandhiji's message to this camp, *vide* "Message to Frontier People", before 20-11-1941.

[1] Call to the faithful

The following was the daily menu: 7.45 a.m. tea and bread; 12 noon, bread made from wheat and maize with dal or vegetables; 7 p.m. ditto.

The camp consisted of about five hundred representatives and guests from all over the N. W. F. Province. They were accommodated in little tents without side flaps. The total cost of running the camp was about Rs. 1,500. Congressmen and others could profitably copy the simplicity, economy and orderliness of this camp.

The Hindu, 12-12-1941

618. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
December 9, 1941

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Your letter. I am off to Bardoli tonight with Rajen Babu.

Do come as early as you can.

Maulana Saheb wires W[orking] C[ommittee] is to be held on 18th at Bardoli. If he has not already issued notice I have suggested 23rd as I have heavy meetings on 17, 18, 19. But I have left the decision to Maulana Saheb.

I hope you got my letter.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1941. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

619. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

December 9, 1941

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

I have your letter. You may start a goshala. You must have a good cattle-breeder. But the question is whether you will be permitted to put up constructions at the place.

I shall certainly love to spend one month every year at the goshala. If possible I may let you have the next October or November. Keep this to yourself.

Do not close the paper department. We should absorb the boys who are well-trained.

Madhav Prasad is very liberal; I write to him from time to time.

I am taking the account with me.

Those who embrace Sikhism should not be regarded as Harijans.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 1080

620. LETTER TO AMARNATH JHA

BARDOLI,
December 12, 1941

BHAI AMARNATHJI,

I have your letter. I did not answer your previous letter because Kakasaheb and Shrimanji were going to visit you.

Kakasaheb has given me a full report. Let us see what Tandonji has to say. We must at all cost avoid friction.

Yours

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi : C.W. 10261

621. "CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME : ITS MEANING AND PLACE"[1]

[*December 13, 1941*][2]

INTRODUCTORY

The constructive programme may otherwise and more fittingly be called construction of *poorna* swaraj or complete independence by truthful and non-violent means.

Effort for construction of independence so called through violent and, therefore, necessarily untruthful means we know only too painfully. Look at the daily destruction of property, life and truth in the present war.

Complete independence through truth and non-violence means the independence of every unit, be it the humblest of the nation, with-

[1]According to *Mahatma,* Vol. VI, Gandhiji wrote this on the train from Wardha to Bardoli. Gandhiji left Sevagram on December 9, 1941, and reached Bardoli on December 10, 1941. However, in his letter to Mirabehn dated December 13, 1941, Gandhiji says, "I was immersed in writing work which is just finished." Apparently he commenced writing this on the train and finished it later at Bardoli.

The version reproduced here was "thoroughly revised" and date-lined "Poona, 13-11-1945". The Foreword and the two Appendices appear in their chronological places under the dates November 13, 1945, January 16, 1946, and January 27, 1948.

[2] *ibid*

out distinction of race, colour or creed. This independence is never exclusive. It is, therefore, wholly compatible with interdepen-dence within or without. Practice will always fall short of the theory, even as the drawn line falls short of the theoretical line of Euclid. Therefore, complete independence will be complete only to the extent of our approach in practice to truth and non-violence.

Let the reader mentally plan out the whole of the constructive programme, and he will agree with me that, if it could be successfully worked out, the end of it would be the independence we want. Has not Mr. Amery said that an agreement between the major parties, translated in my language, any agreement *after* communal unity which is only one item in the constructive programme, will be respected? We need not question his sincerity, for if such unity is honestly, i.e., non-violently, attained, it will in itself contain the power to compel acceptance of the agreed demand.

On the other hand there is no such thing as an imaginary or even perfect definition of independence through violence. For it presupposes only ascendancy of that party of the nation which makes the most effective use of violence. In it perfect equality, economic or otherwise, is inconceivable.

But for my purpose, which is to convince the reader of the necessity of following out the constructive programme in the non-violent effort, the acceptance of my argument about the ineffectiveness of violence for the attainment of independence is not required. The reader is welcome to the belief that independence of this humblest unit is possible under a scheme of violence, if this effort enables him also to admit that it is a certainty through the complete execution of the programme by the nation.

Let us now examine the items :

1. COMMUNAL UNITY

Everybody is agreed about the necessity of this unity. But everybody does not know that unity does not mean political unity, which may be imposed. It means an unbreakable heart unity. The first thing essential for achieving such unity is for every Congressman, whatever his religion may be, to represent in his own person Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Zoroastrian, Jew, etc., shortly, every Hindu and non-Hindu. He has to feel his identity with every one of the millions of the inhabitants of Hindustan. In order to realize this, every Congressman will cultivate personal friendship with persons represent-ing faiths other than his own. He should have the same regard for the other faiths as he has for his own.

In such a happy state of things there would be no disgraceful cry at the stations such as "Hindu water" and "Muslim water" or " Hindu tea" and " Muslim tea". There would be no separate rooms or pots for Hindus and non-Hindus in schools and colleges, no communal schools, colleges and hospitals. The beginning of such a revolution has to be made by Congressmen without any political motive behind the correct conduct. Political unity will be its natural fruit.[1]

We have long been accustomed to think that power comes only through Legislative Assemblies. I have regarded this belief as a grave error brought about by inertia or hypnotism. A superficial study of British history has made us think that all power percolates to the people from parliaments. The truth is that power resides in the people and it is entrusted for the time being to those whom they may choose as their representatives. Parliaments have no power or even existence independently of the people. It has been my effort for the last twenty-one years to convince the people of this simple truth. Civil disobedience is the storehouse of power. Imagine a whole people unwilling to conform to the laws of the legislature, and prepared to suffer the consequences of non-compliance. They will bring the whole legislative and executive machinery to a standstill. The police and the military are of use to coerce minorities however powerful they may be. But no police or military coercion can bend the resolute will of a people who are out for suffering to the uttermost.

And parliamentary procedure is good only when its members are willing to conform to the will of the majority. In other words, it is fairly effective only among compatibles.

Here in India we have been pretending to work the parlimentary system under separate electorates which have created artificial incompatibles. Living unity can never come out of these artificial entities being brought together on a common platform. Such legislatures may function. But they can only be a platform for wrangling and sharing the crumbs of power that may fall from rulers whoever they may be. These rule with rod of iron, and prevent the opposing elements from flying at one another's throats. I hold the emergence of complete independence to be an impossibility out of such a disgrace.

[1] The first edition here has the following additional paragraph : "The implication of such heart unity may seem startling, though it is the logical necessity. Congressmen cannot aim at parliamentary power in opposition to persons of other faiths. Congressmen, therefore, will refrain, so long as these differences last, from entering the parliamentary arena."

Though I hold such strong views, I have come to the conclusion that so long as there are undersirable candidates for elective bodies, Congress should put up candidates in order to prevent reactionaries from entering such bodies.

2. REMOVAL OF UNTOUCHABILITY

At this time of the day it is unnecessary to dilate upon the necessity of the removal of this blot and curse upon Hinduism. Congressmen have certainly done much in this matter. But I am sorry to have to say that many Congressmen have looked upon this item as a mere political necessity and not something indispensable, so far as Hindus are concerned, for the very existence of Hinduism. If Hindu Congressmen take up the cause for its own sake, they will influence the so-called *sanatanis* far more extensively than they have hitherto done. They should approach them not in a militant spirit but, as befits their non-violence, in a spirit of friendliness. And so far as Harijans are concerned, every Hindu should make common cause with them and befriend them in their awful isolation—such isolation as perhaps the world has never seen in the monstrous immensity one witnesses in India. I know from experience how difficult the task is. But it is part of the task of building the edifice of swaraj. And the road to swaraj is steep and narrow. There are many slippery ascents and many deep chasms. They have all to be negotiated with unfaltering step before we can reach the summit and breathe the fresh air of freedom.

3. PROHIBITION

Although like communal unity and removal of untouchability prohibition has been on the Congress programme since 1920, Congressmen have not taken the interest they might have taken in this very vital social and moral reform. If we are to reach our goal through non-violent effort, we may not leave to the future government the fate of lakhs of men and women who are labouring under the curse of intoxicants and narcotics.

Medical men can make a most effective contribution towards the removal of this evil. They have to discover ways of weaning the drunkard and the opium addict from the curse.

Women and students have a special opportunity in advancing this reform. By many acts of loving service they can acquire on addicts a hold which will compel them to listen to the appeal to give up the evil habit.

Congress committees can open recreation booths where the tired labourer will rest his limbs, get healthy and cheap refreshments, and find suitable games. All this work is fascinating and uplifting. The

non-violent approach to swaraj is a novel approach. In it old values give place to new. In the violent way such reforms may find no place. Believers in that way, in their impatience and, shall I say, ignorance, put off such things to the day of deliverance. They forget that lasting and healthy deliverance comes from within, i.e., from self-purification. Constructive workers make legal prohibition easy and successful even if they do not pave the way for it.

4. KHADI

Khadi is a controversial subject. Many people think that in advocating khadi I am sailing against a headwind and am sure to sink the ship of swaraj and that I am taking the country to the dark ages. I do not propose to argue the case for khadi in this brief survey. I have argued it sufficiently elsewhere. Here I want to show what every Congressman, and for that matter every Indian, can do to advance the cause of khadi. It connotes the beginning of economic freedom and equality of all in the country. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. Let everyone try, and he or she will find out for himself or herself the truth of what I am saying. Khadi must be taken with all its implications. It means a wholesale swadeshi mentality, a determination to find all the necessaries of life in India and that too through the labour and intellect of the villagers. That means a reversal of the existing process. That is to say that, instead of half a dozen cities of India and Great Britain living on the exploitation and the ruin of the 7,00,000 villages of India, the latter will be largely self-contained, and will voluntarily serve the cities of India and even the outside world in so far as it benefits both the parties.

This needs a revolutionary change in the mentality and tastes of many. Easy though the non-violent way is in many respects, it is very difficult in many others. It vitally touches the life of every single Indian, makes him feel aglow with the possession of a power that has lain hidden within himself, and makes him proud of his identity with every drop of the ocean of Indian humanity. This non-violence is not the inanity for which we have mistaken it through all these long ages; it is the most potent force as yet known to mankind and on which its very existence is dependent. It is that force which I have tried to present to the Congress and through it to the world. Khadi to me is the symbol of unity of Indian humanity, of its economic freedom and equality and, therefore, ultimately, in the poetic expression of Jawaharlal Nehru, “the livery of India’s freedom”

Moreover, khadi mentality means decentralization of the production and distribution of the necessaries of life. Therefore, the for-

mula so far evolved is, every village to produce all its necessaries and a certain percentage in addition for the requirements of the cities.

Heavy industries will needs be centralized and nationalized. But they will occupy the least part of the vast national activity which will mainly be in the villages.

Having explained the implications of khadi, I must indicate what Congressmen can and should do towards its promotion. Production of khadi includes cotton-growing, picking, ginning, cleaning, carding, slivering, spinning, sizing, dyeing, preparing the warp and the woof, weaving, and washing. These, with the exception of dyeing, are essential processes. Every one of them can be effectively handled in the villages and is being so handled in many villages throughout India, which the A.I.S.A. is covering. According to the latest report the following are the interesting figures :

2,75,146 villagers, including 19,654 Harijans and 57,378 Muslims, scattered in at least 13,451 villages, received, as spinners, weavers, etc., Rs. 34,85,609 in 1940. The spinners were largely women.

Yet the work done is only one-hundredth part of what could be done if Congressmen honestly took up the khadi programme. Since the wanton destruction of this central village industry and the allied handicrafts, intelligence and brightness have fled from the villages, leaving them inane, lustreless, and reduced almost to the state of their ill-kept cattle.

If Congressmen will be true to the Congress call in respect of khadi, they will carry out the instructions of the A. I. S. A. issued from time to time as to the part they can play in khadi planning. Only a few broad rules can be laid down here :

1. Every family with a plot of ground can grow cotton at least for family use. Cotton-growing is an easy process. In Bihar the cultivators were by law compelled to grow indigo on 3/20 of their cultivable land. This was in the interest of the foreign indigo planter. Why cannot we grow cotton voluntarily for the nation on a certain portion of our land? The reader will note that decentralization commences from the beginning of khadi processes. Today cotton crop is centralized and has to be sent to distant parts of India. Before the war it used to be sent principally to Britain and Japan. It was and still is a money crop and, therefore, subject to the fluctuations of the market. Under the khadi scheme cotton-growing becomes free from this uncertainty and gamble. The grower grows what he needs. The farmer needs to know that his first business is to grow for his own needs. When he does that, he will reduce the chance of a low market ruining him.

2. Every spinner would buy—if he has not his own—enough cotton for ginning, which he can easily do without the hand-ginning roller frame. He can gin his own portion with a board and an iron rolling-pin. Where this is considered impracticable, hand-ginned cotton should be bought and carded. Carding for self can be done well on a tiny bow without much effort. The greater the decentralization of labour, the simpler and cheaper the tools. The slivers made, the process of spinning commences. I strongly recommend the *dhanush takli*. I have used it frequently. My speed on it is almost the same as on the wheel. I draw a finer thread and the strength and the evenness of the yarn are greater on the *dhanush takli* than on the wheel. This may not, however, hold good for all. My emphasis on the *dhanush takli* is based on the fact that it is more easily made, is cheaper than and does not require frequent repairs like the wheel. Unless one knows how to make the two *mals*[1] and to adjust them when they slip or to put the wheel right when it refuses to work, the wheel has often to lie idle. Moreover, if the millions take to spinning at once, as they well may have to,[2] the *dhanush takli*, being the instrument most easily made and handled, is the only that can meet the demand. It is more easily made even than the simple *takli*. The best, easiest and cheapest way is to make it oneself. Indeed one ought to learn how to handle and make simple tools. Imagine the unifying and educative effect of the whole nation simultaneously taking part in the processes up to spinning ! Consider the levelling effect of the bond of common labour between the rich and the poor !

Yarn thus produced may be used in three ways : by presenting it to the A.I.S.A. for the sake of the poor, by having it woven for personal use, or by getting as much khadi for it as it can buy. It is clear enough that the finer and better the yarn the greater will be its value. If Congressmen will put their hearts into the work, they will make improvements in the tools and make many discoveries. In our country there has been a divorce between labour and intelligence. The result has been stagnation. If there is an indissoluble marriage between the two, and that in the manner here suggested, the resultant good will be inestimable.

In this scheme of nationwide spinning as a sacrifice, I do not expect the average man or woman to give more than one hour daily to this work.

[1] Straps

[2] The first edition here has, “even under the stress of war”.

5. OTHER VILLAGE INDUSTRIES

These stand on a different footing from khadi. There is not much scope for voluntary labour in them. Each industry will take the labour of only a certain number of hands. These industries come in as a handmaid to khadi. They cannot exist without khadi, and khadi will be robbed of its dignity without them. Village economy cannot be complete without the essential village industries such as hand-grinding, hand-pounding, soap-making, paper-making, match-making, tanning, oil-pressing, etc. Congressmen can interest themselves in these and, if they are villagers or will settle down in villages, they will give these industries a new life and a new dress. All should make it a point of honour to use only village articles whenever and wher-ever available. Given the demand there is no doubt that most of our wants can be supplied from our villages. When we have become village-minded , we will not want imitations of the West or machine-made products, but we will develop a true national taste in keeping with the vision of a new India in which pauperism, starvation and idleness will be unknown.

6. VILLAGE SANITATION

Divorce between intelligence and labour has resulted in criminal negligence of the villages. And so, instead of having graceful hamlets dotting the land, we have dung-heaps. The approach to many villages is not a refreshing experience. Often one would like to shut one's eyes and stuff one's nose; such is the surrounding dirt and offending smell. If the majority of Congressmen were derived from our villages, as they should be, they should be able to make our villages models of cleanliness in every sense of the word. But they have never considered it their duty to identify themselves with the villagers in their daily lives. A sense of national or social sanitation is not a virtue among us. We may take a kind of a bath, but we do not mind dirtying the well or the tank or river by whose side or in which we perform ablutions. I regard this defect as a great vice which is responsible for the disgraceful state of our villages and the sacred banks of the sacred rivers and for diseases that spring from insanitation.

7. NEW OR BASIC EDUCATION

This is a new subject. But the members of the Working Committee felt so much interested in it that gave a charter to the organizers of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh which has been functioning since the Haripura session[1]. This is a big field of work for many

[1] Of the Congress in 1938

Congressmen. This education is meant to transform village children into model villagers. It is principally designed for them. The inspiration for it has come from the villages. Congressmen who want to build up the structure of swaraj from its very foundation dare not neglect the children. Foreign rule has unconsciously, though none the less surely, begun with the children in the field of education. Primary education is a farce designed without regard to the wants of the India of the villages and for that matter even of the cities. Basic education links the children, whether of the cities or the villages, to all that is best and lasting in India. It develops both the body and the mind, and keeps the child rooted to the soil with a glorious vision of the future, in the realization of which he or she begins to take his or her share from the very commencement of his or her career in school. Congressmen would find it of absorbing interest benefiting themselves equally with the children with whom they come in contact. Let those who wish put themselves in touch with the Secretary of the Sangh at Sevagram.

8. ADULT EDUCATION

This has been woefully neglected by Congressmen. Where they have not neglected it, they have been satisfied with teaching illiterates to read and write. If I had charge of adult education, I should begin with opening the minds of the adult pupils to the greatness and vastness of their country. The villager's India is contained in his village. If he goes to another village, he talks of his own village as his home. Hindustan is for him a geographical term. We have no notion of the ignorance prevailing in the villages. The villagers know nothing of foreign rule and its evils. What little knowledge they have picked up fills them with the awe the foreigner inspires. The result is the dread and hatred of the foreigner and his rule. They do not know how to get rid of it. They do not know that the foreigner's presence is due to their own weaknesses and their ignorance of the power they possess to rid themselves of the foreign rule. My adult education means, therefore, first, true political education of the adult by word of mouth. Seeing that this will be mapped out, it can be given without fear. I imagine that it is too late in the day for authority to interfere with this type of education; but if there is interference, there must be a fight for this elementary right without which there can be no swaraj. Of course, in all I have written, openness has been assumed. Non-violence abhors fear and, therefore, secrecy. Side by side with the education by the mouth will be the literary education. This is itself a speciality. Many methods are being tried in order to shorten the period of education. A temporary or permanent board of experts may be appointed by the

Working Committee to give shape to the idea here adumbrated and guide the workers. I admit that what I have said in this paragraph only points the way but does not tell the average Congressman how to go about it. Nor is every Congressman fitted for this highly special work. But Congressmen who are teachers should find no difficulty in laying down a course in keeping with the suggestions made herein.

9. WOMEN

I have included service of women in the constructive programme, for though satyagraha has automatically brought India's women out from their darkness as nothing else could have in such an incredibly short space of time, Congressmen have not felt the call to see that women become equal partners in the fight for swaraj. They have not realized that woman must be the true helpmate of man in the mission of service. Woman has been suppressed under custom and law for which man was responsible and in the shaping of which she had no hand. In a plan of life based on non-violence, woman has as much right to shape her own destiny as man has to shape his. But as every right in a non-violent society proceeds from the previous performance of a duty, it follows that rules of social conduct must be framed by mutual co-operation and consultation. They can never be imposed from outside. Men have not realized this truth in its fulness in their behaviour towards women. They have considered themselves to be lords and masters of women instead of considering them as their friends and co-workers. It is the privilege of Congressmen to give the women of India a lifting hand. Women are in the position somewhat of the slave of old who did not know that he could or ever had to be free. And when freedom came, for the moment he felt helpless. Women have been taught to regard themselves as slaves of men. It is up to Congressmen to see that they enable them to realize their full status and play their part as equals of men.

This revolution is easy, if the mind is made up. Let Congressmen begin with their own homes. Wives should not be dolls and objects of indulgence, but should be treated as honoured comrades in common service. To this end those who have not received a liberal education should receive such instruction as is possible from their husbands. The same observation applies, with the necessary changes, to mothers and daughters.

It is hardly necessary to point out that I have given a onesided picture of the helpless state of India's women. I am quite conscious of the fact that in the villages generally they hold their own with their menfolk and in some respects even rule them. But to the impartial

outsider the legal and customary status of woman is bad enough throughout and demands radical alteration.

10. EDUCATION IN HEALTH AND HYGIENE

Having given a place to village sanitation, the question may be asked why give a separate place to education in health and hygiene? It might have been bracketed with sanitation, but I did not wish to interfere with the items. Mention of mere sanitation is not enough to include health and hygiene. The art of keeping one's health and the knowledge of hygiene is by itself a separate subject of study and corresponding practice. In a well-ordered society the citizens know and observe the laws of health and hygiene. It is established beyond doubt that ignorance and neglect of the laws of health and hygiene are responsible for the majority of diseases to which mankind is heir. The very high death-rate among us is no doubt due largely to our gnawing poverty, but it could be mitigated if the people were properly educated about health and hygiene.

Mens sana in corpore sano is perhaps the first law for humanity. A healthy mind in a healthy body is a self-evident truth. There is an inevitable connection between mind and body. If we were in possession of healthy minds, we would shed all violence and, naturally obeying the laws of health, we would have healthy bodies without an effort. I hope, therefore, that no Congressman will disregard this item of the constructive programme. The fundamental laws of health and hygiene are simple and easily learnt. The difficulty is about their observance. Here are some :

Think the purest thoughts and banish all idle and impure thoughts.

Breathe the freshest air day and night.

Establish a balance between bodily and mental work.

Stand erect, sit erect, and be neat and clean in every one of your acts, and let these be an expression of your inner condition.

Eat to live for service of fellow-men. Do not live for indulging yourselves. Hence your food must be just enough to keep your mind and body in good order. Man becomes what he eats.

Your water, food and air must be clean, and you will not be satisfied with mere personal cleanliness, but you will infect your surroundings with the same threefold cleanliness that you will desire for yourselves.

11. PROVINCIAL LANGUAGES[1]

Our love of the English language in preference to our own mother tongue has caused a deep chasm between the educated and politically-minded classes and the masses. The languages of India have suffered impoverishment. We flounder when we make the vain attempt to express abstruse thought in the mother tongue. There are no equivalents for scientific terms. The result has been disastrous. The masses remain cut off from the modern mind. We are too near our own times correctly to measure the disservice caused to India by this neglect of its great languages. It is easy enough to understand that unless we undo the mischief the mass mind must remain imprisoned. The masses can make no solid contribution to the construction of swaraj. It is inherent in swaraj based on non-violence that every individual makes his own direct contribution to the Independence movement. The masses cannot do this fully unless they understand every step with all its implications. This is impossible unless every step is explained in their own languages.

12. NATIONAL LANGUAGE

And then for all-India intercourse we need, from among the Indian stock, a language which the largest number of people already know and understand and which the others can easily pick up. This language is indisputably Hindi. It is spoken and understood by both Hindus and Muslims of the North. It is called Urdu when it is written in the Urdu character. The Congress, in its famous resolution passed at the Cawnpore session in 1925, called this all-India speech Hindustani. And since that time, in theory at least, Hindustani has been the *Rashtra-bhasha*. I say "in theory" because even Congressmen have not practised it as they should have.[2] In 1920 a deliberate attempt was begun to recognize the importance of Indian languages for the political education of the masses, as also of an all-India common speech which politically-minded India could easily speak and which Congressmen from the different provinces could understand at all-India gatherings of the Congress. Such national language should enable one to understand and speak both forms of speech and write in both the scripts.

I am sorry to have to say that many Congressmen have failed to carry out that resolution. And so we have, in my opinion, the shameful

[1] In the first edition this and the following topic are discussed under the heading "Propaganda of Rashtrabhasha".

[2] The first edition here adds : "The picture that I have drawn in this paragraph is true to life as it was before 1920."

spectacle of Congressmen insisting on speaking in English and compelling others to do likewise for their sakes. The spell that English has cast on us is not yet broken. Being under it, we are impeding the progress of India towards her goal. Our love of the masses must be skin-deep, if we will not take the trouble of spending over learning Hindustani as many months as the years we spend over learning English.[1]

13. ECONOMIC EQUALITY

This last is the master-key to non-violent independence. Working for economic equality means abolishing the eternal conflict between capital and labour. It means the levelling down of the few rich in whose hands is concentrated the bulk of the nation's wealth on the one hand, and the levelling up of the semi-starved naked millions on the other. A non-violent system of government is clearly an impossibility so long as the wide gulf between the rich and the hungry millions persists. The contrast between the palaces of New Delhi and the miserable hovels of the poor labouring class nearby cannot last one day in a free India in which the poor will enjoy the same power as the richest in the land. A violent and bloody revolution is a certainty one day unless there is a voluntary abdication of riches and the power that riches give and sharing them for the common good.

I adhere to my doctrine of trusteeship in spite of the ridicule that has been poured upon it. It is true that it is difficult to reach. So is non-violence. But we made up our minds in 1920 to negotiate that steep ascent. We have found it worth the effort. It involves a daily growing appreciation of the working of non-violence. It is expected that Congrssmen will make a diligent search and reason out for themselves the why and the wherefore of [2] non-violence. They should ask themselves how the existing inequalities can be abolished violently or non-violently. I think we know the violent way. It has not succeeded anywhere.[3]

[1] The first edition here has the following additional paragraph: "Love of one's own language: I need hardly add anything to what I have said in the foregoing paragraph. The two propositions hang together for those who view India as one country."

[2] The first edition has after this: "what they are called upon to do," and adds: "They may not be satisfied with the mere conformity, honest or half-hearted, with the instructions issued from time to time."

[3] The first edition here adds: "Some claim that it has in Russia in a large measure. I doubt it. It is too early to make an unchallengeable claim. And now that the war has broken out between Russia and Germany, we are unable to say what the ultimate result will be."

This non-violent experiment is still in the making. We have nothing much yet to show by way of demonstration. It is certain, however, that the method has begun to work though ever so slowly in the direction of equality. And since non-violence is a process of conversion, the conversion, if achieved, must be permanent. A society or a nation constructed non-violently must be able to withstand attack upon its structure from without or within. We have moneyed Congressmen in the organization. They have to lead the way. This fight[1] provides an opportunity for the closest heart-searching on the part of every individual Congressman. If ever we are to achieve equality, the foundation has to be laid now. Those who think that major reforms will come after the advent of swaraj are deceiving themselves as to the elementary working of non-violent swaraj. It will not drop from heaven all of a sudden one fine morning. But it has to be built up brick by brick by corporate self-effort. We have travelled a fair way in that direction. But a much longer and weary distance has to be covered before we can behold swaraj in its glorious majesty. Every Congressman has to ask himself what he has done towards the attainment of economic equality.

14. KISANS[2]

The programme is not exhaustive. Swaraj is a mighty structure. Eighty crores of hands have to work at building it.[3] Of these *kisans*, i.e., the peasantry, are the largest part. In fact, being the bulk of them (probably over 80%) the *kisans* should be the Congress. But they are not. When they become conscious of their non-violent strength, no power on earth can resist them.

[1] The first edition here adds, "which is conceived as the last."

[2] In the first edition this and the succeeding two topics, viz., "Labour" and "Students", are discussed under a single heading "Kisan, Labour and Students", which begins as follows: "I have now finished the inquiry about the thirteen items of the constructive programme. I have attempted to show how each item fits in with the scheme of swaraj and how it can be worked by individual Congressmen.

[3] The first edition here has: "Therefore, many other items of a piece with the thirteen can be added, the centre being always the charkha round which all other activities should come from the charkha.

"The reader will notice, as some of my co-workers have noticed, the absence of any reference of *kisans*, factory hands or labour and students. I have deliberately avoided reference to their work as parts of the constructive programme. They have to work the thirteen items same as any other worker in the cause. My avoidance is not intended to belittle the part they can play in the movement. I am quite conscious of the great importance they have in the movement for freedom. The question underlying the inquiry is who is to organize them and how."

They must not be used for power politics.[1] I consider it to be contrary to the non-violent method. Those who would know my method of organizing *kisans* may profitably study the movement in Champaran when satyagraha was tried for the first time in India with the result all India knows. It became a mass movement which remained wholly non-violent from start to finish. It affected over twenty lakhs of *kisans.* The struggle centred round one specific grievance which was a century old. There had been several violent revolts to get rid of the grievance. The *kisans* were suppressed. The non-violent remedy succeeded in full in six months. The *kisans* of Champaran became politically conscious without any direct effort. The tangible proof they had of the working of non-violence to remove their grievances drew them to the Congress and led by Babu Brijkishore Prasad and Babu Rajendra Prasad they gave a good account of themselves during the past civil disobedience campaigns.

The reader may also profitably study the *kisan* movements in Kheda , Bardoli and Borsad . The secret of success lies in a refusal to exploit the *kisans* for political purposes outside their own personal and felt grievances. Organization round a specific wrong they understand. They need no sermons on non-violence. Let them learn to apply non-violence as an effective remedy which they can understand, and later when they are told that the method they were applying was non-violent, they readily recognize it as such.

Form these illustrations Congressmen who care could study how work can be done for and among *kisans.* I hold that the method that some Congressmen have followed to organize *kisans* has done them no good and has probably harmed them. Anyway they have not used the non-violent method. Be it said to the credit of some of these workers that they frankly admit that they do not believe in the non-violent method. My advice to such workers would be that they should neither use the Congress name nor work as Congressmen.

The reader will now understand why I have refrained from the competition to organize *kisans* and labour on an all-India basis. How I wish that all hands pulled in the same direction ! But perhaps in a huge country like ours it is impossible. Anyway, in non-violence there is no coercion. Cold reason and demonstration of the working of non-violence must be trusted to do the work.

In my opinion, like labour, they should have under the Congress a department working for their specific questions.

[1] The first edition here has: "About the *kisan* movement too, there is, I fear, an ugly competition to use *kisans* for power politics."

15. LABOUR

Ahmedabad Labour Union is a model for all India to copy.[1] Its basis is non-violence, pure and simple. It has never had a set-back in its career. It has gone on from strength to strength without fuss and without show. It has its hospital, its school for the children of the mill-hands, its classes for adults, its own printing press and khadi depot, and its own residential quarters. Almost all the hands are voters and decide the fate of elections. They came on the voters' list at the instance of the Provincial Congress Committee. The organization has never taken part in party politics of the Congress. It influences the municipal policy of the city. It has to its credit very successful strikes which were wholly non-violent. Mill-owners and labour have governed their relations largely through voluntary arbitration. If I had my way, I would regulate all the labour organizations of India after the Ahmedabad model. It has never sought to intrude itself upon the All-India Trade Union Congress and has been uninfluenced by that Congress. A time, I hope, will come when it will be possible for the Trade Union Congress to accept the Ahmedabad method and have the Ahmedabad organization as part of the All-India Union. But I am in no hurry. It will come in its own time.

16. ADIVASIS[2]

The term *adivasi*, like *raniparaj*[3], is a coined word. *Raniparaj* stands for *kaliparaj* (meaning black people, though their skin is no more black than that of any other). It was conined, I think, by Shri Jugatram. The term *adivasi* (for Bhils, Gonds, or others variously described as Hill Tribes or aboriginals) means literally original inhabitants and was coined, I believe, by Thakkar Bapa.

Service of *adivasis* is also a part of the constructive programme. Though they are the sixteenth number in this programme, they are not the least in point of importance. Our country is so vast and the races so varied that the best of us cannot know all there is to know of men and their condition. As one discovers this for oneself, one realizes how difficult it is to make good our claim to be one nation,

[1] The first edition here has : "As to labour, I am responsible for the organization of Ahmedabad labour. I am of the opinion that it is a model for all India to copy."

[2] The first edition does not have this and the following topic.

[3] "Forest people"

unless every unit has a living consciousness of being one with every other.

The *adivasis* are over two crores in all India. Bapa began work among the Bhils years ago in Gujarat. In about 1940 Shri Balasaheb Kher threw himself with his usual zeal into this much-needed service in the Thana District. He is now President of the Adivasi Seva Mandal.

There are several such other workers in other parts of India and yet are too few. Truly, "the harvest is rich but the labourers are few". Who can deny that all such service is not merely humanitarian but solidly national, and brings us nearer to true independence?

17. LEPERS

Leper is a word of bad odour. India is perhaps a home of lepers next only to Central Africa. Yet they are as much a part of society as the tallest among us. But the tall absorb our attention though they are least in need of it. The lot of the lepers who are much in need of attention is studied neglect. I am tempted to call it heartless, which it certainly is in terms of non-violence. It is largely the missionary who, be it said to his credit, bestows care on him. The only institution run by an Indian, as a pure labour of love, is by Shri Manohar Diwan near Wardha. It is working under the inspiration and guidance of Shri Vinoba Bhave. If India was pulsating with new life, if we were all in earnest about winning independence in the quickest manner possible by truthful and non-violent means, there would not be a leper or beggar in India uncared for and unaccounted for. In this revised edition I am deliberately introducing the leper as a link in the chain of constructive effort. For what the leper is in India, that we are, if we put look about us, for the modern civilized world. Examine the condition of our brethren across the ocean and the truth of my remark will be borne home to us.

18. STUDENTS

I have reserved students to the last. I have always cultivated close contact with them. They know me and I know them. They have given me service. Many ex-collegians are my esteemed co-workers. I know that they are the hope of the future. In the heyday of non-co-operation they were invited to leave their schools and colleges. Some professors and students who responded to the Congress call have remained steadfast and gained much for the country and themselves. The call has not been repeated for there is not the atmosphere for it. But experience has shown that the lure of the current education, though it is false and unnatural, is too much for the youth of the

country. College education provides a career. It is a passport for entrance to the charmed circle. Pardonable hunger for knowledge cannot be satisfied otherwise than by going through the usual rut. They do not mind the waste of precious years in acquiring knowledge of an utterly foreign language which takes the place of the mother tongue. The sin of it is never felt. They and their teachers have made up their minds that the indigenous languages are useless for gaining access to modern thought and the modern sciences. I wonder how the Japanese are faring. For their education, I understand, is all given in Japanese. The Chinese Generalissimo knows very little, if anything, of English.

But such as the students are, it is from these young men and women that the future leaders of the nation are to rise. Unfortunately they are acted upon by every variety of influences. Non-violence offers them little attraction. A blow for a blow or two for one is an easily understandable proposition. It seems to yield immediate result though momentary. It is a never-ending trial of brute strength as we see in time of war among brutes or among human beings. Appreciation of non-violence means patient research and still more patient and difficult practice. I have not entered the list of competitors for the students' hand, for the reasons that have dictated my course about *kisans* and labour. But I am myself a fellow-student, using the word in its broader sense. My university is different from theirs. They have a standing invitation from me to come to my university and join me in my search. Here are the terms :

1. Students must not take part in party politics. They are students, searchers, not politicians.

2. They may not resort to political strikes. They must have their heroes, but their devotion to them is to be shown by copying the best in their heroes, not by going on strikes, if the heroes are imprisoned or die or are even sent to the gallows. If their grief is unbearable and if all the students feel equally, schools or colleges may be closed on such occasions, with the consent of their principals. If the principals will not listen, it is open to the students to leave their institutions in a becoming manner till the managers repent and recall them. On no account may they use coercion against dissentients of against the authorities. They must have the confidence that if they are united and dignified in their conduct, they are sure to win.

3. They must all do sacrificial spinning in a scientific manner. Their tools shall be always neat, clean, and in good order and condition. If possible, they will learn to make them themselves. Their yarn will naturally be of the highest quality. They will study the

literature about spinning with all its economic, social, moral and political implications.

4. They will be khadi-users all through and use village products to the exclusion of all analogous things, foreign or machine made.

5. They may not impose *Vandemataram* or the national flag on others. They may wear national flag buttons on their own persons but not force others to do the same.

6. They can enforce the message of the tricolour flag in their own persons and harbour neither communalism nor untouchability in their hearts. They will cultivate real friendship with students of other faiths and with Harijans as if they were their own kith and kin.

7. They will make it a point to give first aid to their injured neighbours and do scavenging and cleaning in the neighbouring villages and instruct village children and adults.

8. They will learn the national language, Hindustani, in its present double dress, two forms of speech and two scripts, so that they may feel at home whether Hindi or Urdu is spoken and Nagari or Urdu script is written.

9. They will translate into their own mother tongue everything new they may learn, and transmit it in their weekly rounds to the surrounding villages.

10. They will do nothing in secret, they will be above board in all their dealings, they will lead a pure life of self-restraint, shed all fear and be always ready to protect their weak fellow-students, and be ready to quell riots by non-violent conduct at the risk of their lives. And when the final heat of the struggle comes, they will leave their institutions and, if need be, sacrifice themselves for the freedom of their country.

11. They will be scrupulously correct and chivalrous in their behaviour towards their girl fellow-students.

For working out the programme I have sketched for them, the students must find time. I know that they waste a great deal of time in idleness. By strict economy, they can save many hours. But I do not want to put an undue strain upon any student. I would, therefore, advise patriotic students to lose one year, not at a stretch but spread it over their whole study. They will find that one year so given will not be a waste of time. The effort will add to their equipment, mental, moral and physical, and they will have made even during their studies a substantial contribution to the freedom movement.

PLACE OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

I have said in these pages that civil disobedience is not absolutely necessary to win freedom through purely non-violent effort, if the co-operation of the whole nation is secured in the constructive programme. But such good luck rarely favours nations or individuals. Therefore, it is necessary to know the place of civil disobedience in a nationwide non-violent effort.

It has three definite functions :

1. It can be effectively offered for the redress of a local wrong.

2. It can be offered without regard to effect, though aimed at a particular wrong or evil, by way of self-immolation in order to rouse local consciousness or conscience. Such was the case in Champaran when I offered civil disobedience without any regard to the effect and well knowing that even the people might remain apathetic. That it proved otherwise may be taken, according to taste, as God's grace or a stroke of good luck.

3. In the place of full response to constructive effort, it can be offered as it was in 1941[1]. Though it was a contribution to and part of the battle for freedom, it was purposely centred round a particular issue, i.e., free speech. Civil disobedience can never be directed for a general cause such as for independence. The issue must be definite and capable of being clearly understood and within the power of the opponent to yield. This method properly applied must lead to the final goal.

I have not examined here the full scope and possibilities of civil disobedience. I have touched enough of it to enable the reader to understand the connection between the constructive programme and civil disobedience. In the first two cases, no elaborate constructive programme was or could be necessary. But when civil disobedience is itself devised for the attainment of independence, previous preparation is necessary, and it has to be backed by the visible and conscious effort of those who are engaged in the battle. Civil disobedience is thus a stimulation for the fighters and a challenge to the opponent. It should be clear to the reader that civil disobedience in terms of independence without the co-operation of the millions by way of constructive effort is mere bravado and worse than useless.

CONCLUSION

This is not a thesis written on behalf of the Congress or at the instance of the Central Office. It is the outcome of conversations I had

[1] The first edition here has : "as it is being offered at present."

with some co-workers in Sevagram. They had felt the want of something from my pen showing the connection between the constructive programme and civil disobedience and how the former might be worked. I have endeavoured to supply the want in this pamphlet. It does not purport to be exhaustive, but it is sufficiently indicative of the way the programme should be worked.

Let not the reader make the mistake of laughing at any of the items as being part of the movement for independence. Many people do many things, big and small, without connecting them with non-violence or independence. They have then their limited value as expected. The same man appearing as a civilian may be of no consequence, but appearing in his capacity as General he is a big personage, holding the lives of millions at his mercy. Similarly, the charkha in the hands of a poor widow brings a paltry pice to her, in the hands of a Jawaharlal it is an instrument of India's freedom. It is the office which gives the charkha its dignity. It is the office assigned to the constructive programme which gives it an irresistible prestige and power.

Such at least is my view. It may be that of a mad man. If it makes no appeal to the Congressman, I must be rejected. For my handling of civil disobedience without the constructive programme will be like a paralysed hand attempting to lift a spoon.

Constructive Programme : Its Meaning and Place

622. THE PLACE OF SILK

Shri Jajuji writes :[1]

All these are good points. They have also been pretty well discussed. But some questions are raised again and again and need to be discussed again and again.

I shall answer the questions in the order in which they have been asked.

(1) The question of violence and non-violence does arise, for there is violent silk and non-violent silk. The best thing of course is for people who like to consider everything from the point of view of

[1] The letter is not translated here. Shrikrishnadas Jaju, Secretary, All-India Spinners' Association, had formulated the following views and sought Gandhiji's opinion on them : (1) Bearing in mind that sericulture involves violence, the worker should give it at best secondary importance; (2) silk competes with fine khadi; (3) it tends to make people luxury-loving; and (4) it calls for a much larger capital outlay.

non-violence to give up silk altogether.

But from the point of view of khadi we should not raise this question. We should stock both kinds of silk in our bhandars, though we should give encouragement only to non-violent silk.

(2) We should never allow silk to reach a point where it can compete with khadi. The idea behind giving a place to silk was that it should supplement khadi. It has also been the view that hand-spun silk is always to be preferred to foreign silk and silk manufactured in Indian mills. But silk must never be given the place of cotton cloth. That is why a limit has been put upon the quantity of silk to be stocked in khadi bhandars.

(3) This is not an important point. In a way even Andhra khadi, coloured khadi and khadi with woven designs make us luxury-loving. Khadi is as much for the fastidious as it is for the poor. From the very beginning it has been our endeavour to introduce into khadi as much beauty and decoration as we can. We display this at every khadi exhibition. We have been showing progress in the appearance of khadi every year. This was and still is the correct [attitude]. Khadi-mindedness does not mean that art and design should have no place in khadi, and that it is to be only the attire of the poor. Therefore the restraint we should place on ourselves here is that we should put what art and design we can into khadi and be satisfied. From this point of view silk is to be and should be discarded. From this point of view too we compare the fine Andhra khadi with silk. Then the silk-lovers say they find silk cheaper than the Andhra khadi. I answer that we cannot advance the work of khadi in this way. Khadi, though it may be costly, comes out cheap in the end.

(4) If silk-making calls for twice as large a capital outlay, we have a very strong reason for giving it up. But having regard to human nature we do not or cannot wholly renounce silk. In our definition of khadi we have given a place to hand-spun silk and hand-spun wool. But we cannot encourage woollens and silk with a view to increasing profits. There will have to be some restraint in regard to these. Service of the millions is possible only through cotton khadi.

BARDOLI, December 13, 1941

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, December 1941

623. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

BARDOLI,
December 13, 1941

CHI. MIRA,

This is just to tell you that you are never out of my mind. I was immersed in writing work which is just finished. I hope you are getting stronger and having greater inner peace.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I am in excellent form.

From the original : C.W. 6491. Courtesy : Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9886

624. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

December 13, 1941

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter. I am glad Indu will be coming with you. There is no winter worth the name here. The nights are cool, the days hot.

The questions we have to discuss are many. I trust you and Maulana Saheb will be here before the date of the Working Committee.

I have heavy meetings of the A. I. S. A. and G. S. S. beginning from 17th. I expect to finish all on 20th.

Sardar is bearing himself well.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1941. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

625. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

December 13, 1941

CHI. ANAND,[1]

I am now comparatively free to write to you. The photograph I have signed.

[1] The superscription is in the Devanagari script.

You may publish the books according to your notion. But it is not possible to bind Jivanji[1] not to publish anything of the kind himself. You are catering for one class of readers, he for another. You have no pecuniary ambition, nor has J. All the earnings from the books, etc., go to the public purpose, so I must not prevent either.

You can pass on to me all the requests for translations. Ihope you are better and that Vidya[2] is flourishing.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI ANAND HINGORANI
UPPER SINDH COLONY
KARACHI SADAR

From a microfilm. Courtesy : National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

626. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

December 13, 1941

CHI. PRABHA,

How is it that there is not a single letter from you? Ba makes inquiries every day. How are you and what are you doing? And is your work now properly arranged? My health is fine. There is no sign of winter yet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3563

627. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

December 13, 1941

CHI. SHARMA,

How are you getting on? How do you pass your day? I am somewhat worried. I am here till January 9.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi : *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, facing p. 309

[1] Jivanji D. Desai, Manager, Navajivan Press
[2] Addressee's wife

628. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

BARDOLI,
December 14, 1941

CHI. DEVDAS,

You will be released soon now. I shall expect a detailed letter from you. You must have got in jail all the rest you needed. Did you eat jail food or did you get any from outside? Who were your companions, how did you spend the month, how much weight did you lose or gain? What was the result of the appeal?

Ramu was to follow you. Tell him that he will be my first satyagrahi next time and ask him to win over the jailors.

I hope Lakshmi and the others were all right during your absence.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am perfectly happy here in Sardar's regime.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 2145

629. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

December 14, 1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I hope you are well. Be patient both in solving your mental problems and doing your work. Do only what you can. Kanchan is getting along. It is rather warm here. There is no sign at all of winter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8482. Also C.W. 7161. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

630. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

December 14, 1941

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I keep thinking about your health. You must bring it round. Sankaran wrote and told me that he was planning something. Write to me and give me the news. Babu is expected in a day or two.

I am all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10605

631. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

BARDOLI,
December 15, 1941

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

Of course I will try to show you how utterly wrong you are. But when a man believes in a different philosophy from the one another subscribes to, it is difficult for that other to carry conviction. Such is my plight.

You quote from the Bible but your application is quite new and utterly selfish. You turn a donation into a debt. What is to be done? I brought you out of Bengal because you were disgusted and now you think that you did me a favour in coming out.

Of course a labourer is worthy of his hire. You want money without work. And when you do work, you want more than the highest you and I have agreed upon, viz., 8 as. for 8 hours' work. But you think you have a claim upon me, i.e., society, for Rs. 2-12 per day for practically very little work. Let me not be misunderstood. I know Abha is doing something, so also perhaps you. But your letter shows that even if all of you were doing nothing, you will claim the above amount as if it was a right. I suggest to you that you are wholly wrong in making the claim and defending it on high morality. My notion is different. I must not carry the argument any further.

God will give you light if you are humble and will seek it in the right spirit.

If my letter does not convince, you should wait till we can meet some day, if ever we do. Meanwhile we must agree to differ.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : C.W. 10330. Courtesy : Amrita Lal Chatterjee

632. LETTER TO CHANDAN S. KALELKAR

December 15, 1941

CHI. CHANDAN,

I am glad that you wrote to me, though only from a selfish motive.[1] You would certainly have money in Baroda, but your Prince may have to sell his soul there. Occasions may arise in Indian States when, if you refuse to obey the State's order, you would in no time find yourself disgraced. That is why, when an opportunity arose earlier, it was decided that a hundred rupees else-where would be preferable to a lakh in an Indian State. You will not get elsewhere the opportunity for service which you two have in Kashi. Did you not know, when you decided to marry Shankar, that he was a poor man's son and had grown up in simplicity, that he was a man of self-respect and that he would be prepared to sacrifice his all for the sake of his honour? Yes, he might welcome comfort if he can have it by straightforward means. Perhaps there is this difference between Kaka and him.

See that you do not tempt Shankar. If he is patient, he will rise where he is at present. What he earns is enough to meet your needs. Have patience. Remember the line "Be equiminded in happiness and suffering, for they are born with the body", and let Shankar follow his straight path.

You and Baby will be well. I have written at greater length than I had intended. Of course I could not afford the time, but, then, it was you !

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati : C.W. 955. Courtesy : Satish D. Kalelkar

[1] The addressee had complained about her husband's reluctance to take up a more lucrative job in Baroda.

633. LETTER TO TARAMATI M. TRIKUMJI

December 15, 1941

If Mathuradas[1] is destined to render still more service, he will come to no harm. I have no doubt in my mind that if he observes complete silence and fixes his thoughts exclusively on God, that would be the best medicine.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 181-2

634. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

BARDOLI

December 15, 1941

Where are you going to put up here? If you wish to come here, you will not be a burden. Do not unnecessarily tax your body.

What is the news about Mummy? What is Bharati[2] doing?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11222. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

635. LETTER TO NARENDRA DEV

BARDOLI,

December 16, 1941

BHAI NARENDRA DEV,

I deliberately withheld the reply to your letter. I was hesitating to say no. In the mean while other demands also started coming in. I realized that the time for accepting invitations had gone. I resisted many from Kashi. But I could not reject them all. How long could I resist Malaviyaji's pressure? So please spare me Lucknow.

I hope you are all right. Will you come here?

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Gandhi-Nehru Correspondence. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Addressee's husband

[2] Addressee's sister

636. LETTER TO SUNDERLAL

December 16, 1941

BHAI SUNDERLAL,

I have your letter. Your optimism is terrific. I have answered Sultana.[1] She has not written back. I am ready. So far as I am concerned there is no quarrel.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

637. LETTER TO SULTANA RAZIA

BARDOLI,
December 17, 1941

MY DEAR SULTANA,

I have your letter. I will write to Maulana Saheb. You have to come again.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 10860

638. SPEECH AT A. I. S. A. MEETING

BARDOLI,
December 17, 1941

I had received Jajuji's letter[2] many days ago. I liked many things in the letter. But I feel that we should have some discussion on the letter today. If I were to put down the things that Jajuji has said in his letter, my language would have been a little different though the substance would have been the same. The principles he has enunciated are sound. It is another matter to what extent they can be put into practice. But it is better that we clearly understand the principles. When the principles have been clearly formulated we are able to look at things in a uniform way. There is then no room left for disagreements. If there is some slackness in practice we must put in more

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sultana Razia", 25-11-1941.

[2] Saying that khadi workers did not show the qualities of self-sacrifice and hard work required of them

effort. What else could we do but make the effort?

As Jajuji has pointed out, no matter how much khadi we produce, if we have not understood the principles behind khadi, khadi work is bound to languish. India wore khadi even before. Indeed, we exported khadi to the biggest countries of the world. But we cannot pride ourselves upon it today. Khadi then was not associated with politics. Kings and officials, out of avarice, forced the poor to part with khadi and sold it to make themselves rich. This makes it difficult for us even today to explain khadi activity to the masses.

But today we agree that khadi is the means to our freedom. This first occurred to me in 1908. The very thing that was a cause of our slavery will open the door to our freedom. We have to understand this.

We have therefore based khadi on truth and non-violence. If we forget it and think of producing khadi anyhow, a time will come when we shall be burning khadi. No other constructive activity is so much ridiculed and denounced as khadi. The coming of the mills has given people all the more occasion to do so. In their own way they are justified. Since khadi was there in the past, they ask, why did we become slaves. How can we treat the same khadi as a means to our freedom? It is the duty of the Sangh to answer them. This is the question Jajuji has placed before us.

We have to produce khadi on a large scale. We also have to think how. But if we forget truth and non-violence, no matter how much khadi we may produce, we shall lose it in the end. If we do not hold on to the basic thing, impurities will creep in. Khadi workers should therefore see that the whole khadi business is kept pure. Today when we contemplate producing khadi on a mass scale we ought not to forget the basic thing. Today I shall not say that all our spinners too should understand truth and non-violence. But I must say this about our 3,000 workers. If they do not abide by truth and non-violence we shall sink. Shri Bharatanandaji has formulated a graduated plan to provide for meeting the demand of khadi for the whole of India at the end of ten years. Today the plan is a mere set of figures on paper. But it can be turned into reality. How is it possible, however, if we do not find good workers? If we but make up our minds we can become really good workers. Jajuji is right in giving this matter the first place. The question before us is: ‘How can we produce such workers?’ If we are always awake we shall develop the spirit of non-violence and self-sacrifice. Even a votary of violence is capable of self-sacrifice. Hitler too is said to be self-sacrificing. He is violence incarnate. It is said he is a vegetarian. I find it difficult to imagine

how, if he is one, he is able to countenance so much slaughter. Anyway, his is said to be a life of self-sacrifice. He has no vices. He has not married. His character is said to be clean. He is always alert. What we require is both self-sacrifice and non-violence. Non-violence means love. First the chief workers should manifest it. We may begin with myself, then Jajuji and then the members of the Council. Let us be vigilant and alert. Our example is bound to influence the workers, even if unconsciously. Then we shall be able to make ourselves free of doubts and fears about khadi. It does not matter if our speed is slow. We must never renounce the principles we have evolved. If we do not forsake them, we are bound to be successful.[1]

The question of a living wage is a difficult one.[2] I myself have not been able to form any opinion on it. If I come across a man who is good and qualified I should be tempted. I shouldn't want to lose him. If we frame a certain rule then we must follow that rule. I have been trying to frame some rule. But we must confess that at the moment we are helpless. We cannot frame a rule which will make it difficult for us to find workers. To make such a rule would mean that we do not move with the times. We shall thereby even lose the ability to pay a wage of three annas to each spinner. It is true and just that if we pay spinners three annas we should ourselves learn to live on three annas. Today we are taking many times more than what the spinners get. Even the lowest paid worker amongst us receives many times more. But I must confess with shame that this disparity has put us in difficulties. However, I have no satisfactory solution.

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, December 1941, and January 1942

639. LETTER TO MIRABEHN[3]

December 18, 1941

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. Of course, you should now have your correspondence and everything. You must lead your own natural life

[1] What follows is from *Khadi Jagat*, December 1941.

[2] Shrikrishnadas Jaju had also raised certain questions concerning a living wage for khadi workers and suggested that the workers should be satisfied with what they got.

[3] The addressee had sent this along with a letter to Prithvi Singh.

without let or hindrance and grow to your fullest stature. The heat here continues but I bear it well. The place is full but Sardar's arrangements are perfect.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 10874. Courtesy : Prithvi Singh

640. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

BARDOLI,
December 19, 1941

As the war approaches the Indian border, people begin to get scared. I have a typical letter from Assam and others from various parts. They expect guidance from me as a war-resister and director of satyagraha.

So far as satyagraha is concerned, in areas such as Assam responsible Congressmen should not offer satyagraha but should devote themselves to steadying those who are under Congress influence.

As to the guidance of those who would listen to the Congress or me, the people will presently have directions from the Working Committee.

But so far as I am concerned, I am quite clear that the people should refuse to be scared even though bombs may be dropped in their midst. For the time being at any rate the danger is to be expected only in the big cities. Those who do not wish to run any risk would do well quietly to leave their cities.

It is wrong to make a rush on every scare and crowd the railway stations. The railway staff cannot possibly cope with sudden rushes. It is unmanly to rush for saving oneself. A wise and brave man will wait till the last man is safely out. What I have said applies to all Congressmen and others. I would not like it to be said of us as a nation that we run about like mad men on the approach of the slightest danger. We must face bravely any situation that may befall us.

Congressmen who are war-resisters will remain at their posts and offer such assistance to the people as is within their power. They will run, at any risk, to the help of those who may be injured.

Whilst I have been and am still against Congressmen joining A.R.P., I have never thought or suggested that Congressmen should leave points of danger or fields of service.

It is not necessary to belong to any Government organization to be able to render effective service without expectation of reward or praise.

The chief thing is to preserve complete equanimity, no matter what danger faces us. This is especially so for those who are warresisters and fear no enemy.

The Bombay Chronicle, 20-12-1941

641. TELEGRAM TO THIMMA REDDY[1]

December 19, 1941

NEVER SAID CONGRESSMEN SHOULD NOT.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

642. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

BARDOLI,
December 19, 1941

CHI. LILI,

I have your two letters. Who is to blame if, even though I write, you do not get the letter? I dropped you a postcard on December 10. After that I have a letter from you only today.

You must make good preparation. You are not forbidden to come here, but overcome that temptation if you can and go on studying there. The gas trouble was due to your own negligence. Ba had fever. Mahadevbhai has taken away Durga[2].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 10114. Courtesy : Lilavati Asar

[1] The addressee who was President, Nandidurga Labour Association, had in his telegram dated December 18 sought Gandhiji's advice regarding the propaganda carried on by the Ramachandra group that Gandhiji disapproved of Congressmen guiding labour organizations.

[2] Mahadev Desai's wife

643. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

BARDOLI,
December 20, 1941

I have been asked for a brief statement on the entry of America in the war. It is not possible for me to join the chorus of current opinion. I cannot welcome this entry of America. American tradition singles her out as an arbitrator and mediator between the warring nations. By her territorial vastness, amazing energy, unrivalled financial status and owing to the composite character of her people she is the one country which could have saved the world from the unthinkable butchery that is going on.

I do not know whether America could have avoided the entry. I have no data for giving a decisive opinion on the question. I have only expressed my fervent wish that it might have been possible for her to play her natural part. It is tragic to contemplate that with America as party to the war there is no great Power left which can mediate and bring about peace for which I have no doubt the peoples of all lands are thirsting. It is a strange phenomenon that the human wish is paralysed by the creeping effect of the war fever.

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-12-1941

644. MESSAGE TO BHAGINI SAMAJ, BOMBAY

BARDOLI,
December 20, 1941

I hope the silver jubilee of the Bhagini Samaj will be celebrated in a splendid manner and the Samaj will grow from day to day.

M. K. GANDHI

BHAGINI SAMAJ
MAGANLAL GHIA BUILDING
255 KHETWADI MAIN ROAD
BOMBAY 4

From a facsimile of the Gujarati : *Bapujini Shital Chhayaman*, facing p. 1

[1] Gandhiji gave this statement in response to a request from abroad.

645. LETTER TO VIJAYA M. PANCHOLI

December 20, 1941

CHI. VIJAYA,

I have your letter. Your mother and brother were here only yesterday. I also would have been happy if you had been here. Nothing is certain about Ahmedabad. I shall let you know if I decide to go. It is enough for me that you are quietly doing your work there. Ba has been slightly ill. She is better now. Mahadev has gone to Unai with Durga, but she has taken ill there. There is no cause for worry. Tell Nanabhai that Bhai Vithaldas Jerajani wishes to join the Kathiawar Khadi Committee. They should take him and inform him, and invite him to attend when a meeting is called.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 7143. Also C.W. 4635. Courtesy : Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

646. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

December 20, 1941

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have your letter. You can introduce this change immediately. The telephone cabin should be located outside the office, so that the telephone would be accessible even when the office is closed and the cabin should be so fitted that the receiver could be picked up from inside the office and the telephone used whenever necessary. If it can be shifted outside the dak-room, there would be sufficient accommodation. If you have followed this, make the change. This answers your question. I have spared some hours for Kanchan. She is getting on with her studies.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 7162. Courtesy : Munnala G. Shah

647. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
December 21, 1941

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Get the work done through the All-India Spinners' Association as suggested by Bhai Jugalkishore in his letter. We will certainly spend as much as possible in Kangra as also in Pilani.

I think it would be best to call a meeting of the A. I. C. C. in Wardha. If you agree, send invitations by wire. The meeting should start on the day after my arrival and be over before the 19th.

Indu has come here.

I hope Madalasa is all right. The baby must be growing.

I missed you very much at the All-India Spinners' Association and will miss you again at the Working Committee. But I think your good lies in my not pressing you.

I am keeping good health. I hope you too are all right.

You can fix a meeting of the Goseva Sangh on any date after January 27. Has Janakimaiya[1] returned? I hope she has not spoiled her health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3027

648. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

BARDOLI,
December 21, 1941

CHI. TARAMATI,

I have your letter. You have given good news. If the improvement continues as now, he will soon be rid of the trouble.

Dr. Gilder said that there was certainly a chance for improvement. Everything depends on patience, courage and observance of

[1] Janakidevi, addressee's wife

rules on the part of Mathuradas. He must observe silence properly.

It is always crowded here.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI TARAMATIBEHN MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
WINDI HALL
DEOLALI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

649. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

December 21, 1941

CHI. SHARMA,

I am not worried about the house. My worry is this : You do not carry on your work as a physician in the way I would like you to do. There are so many sick persons in the Ashram. Why do you not treat them? If a man or a woman falls ill I cannot send you to attend to the patient. So far as I know you do nothing at Khurja, either. You have given me to understand that you can do nothing until the house is ready. Where there are houses already you will not work. Do you follow what I Mean? I have a moral responsibility towards you. It irks me that I cannot give a satisfactory account to people about you. Patients come to me. Why should I have to call a doctor rather than you? Your letter which is before me gives me no satisfaction. I have not written this for the sake of argument.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

650. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

December 24, 1941

CHI. JAMNALAL,

How foolish and selfish I am ! I had no consideration for your health, and thought only of myself. I sought your permission but did not wait for it, and insisted on the Committee holding the meeting at Wardha.[1] In this I committed violence and that too not of an ordinary kind. I misused our friendship, your generosity. To beg pardon of you is no atonement. True atonement would be not to repeat such

[1] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 21-12-1941.

callousness towards you or anyone else.

You only deserve to be congratulated. You were courageous enough to tell me what you felt and also accepted your limitations.[1] This is not a small thing. Do not worry at all. By your saying no, my regard and love for you have only increased, if that were possible.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 3028

651. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

BARDOLI,
December 27, 1941

The action of the Bihar Government in banning the meeting of the Hindu Mahasabha has always appeared to me to be inexplicable.[2] Those who had proclaimed their desire to hold the meeting were responsible men and, what is more, so far as I am aware, trusted by the Central Government and known to be pro-Government. They had and have identified themselves with the war effort. Why such people could not be trusted by the Bihar Provincial Government to behave decently passes my comprehension. I see that Vir Savarkar[3] had accommodated the Bihar authorities to the extent of postponing the session with a view to coming to an understanding.

When all attempts at a settlement failed, civil resistance was the only remedy open to the suppressed Hindu Mahasabha. And I must confess it fills me with delight to find Vir Savarkar, Dr. Moonje and other leaders being arrested[4] in their attempt to assert the very primary and very fundamental right of holding an orderly meeting subject to all reasonable restrictions about the preservation of the public peace. I observe that even Dr. Shyama

Prasad, the new Finance Minister of the Bengal Government, has successfully courted arrest by committing the same honourable offence that his colleagues have committed. I congratulate the leaders of the Sabha on their dignified and peaceful protest against the utterly arbitrary action of the Bihar Government. There is surely something

[1] The addressee had expressed his inability to make arrangements for the A.I.C.C. meeting at Wardha.

[2] The Bihar Government had banned the annual session of the Hindu Mahasabha from being held between December 1, 1941 and January 10, 1942, "so as to avoid the possibility of communal clashes" at the time of Bakr-id.

[3] V. D. Savarkar, President, All-India Hindu Mahasabha

[4] On December 23

terribly wrong in it. But out of evil somehow or other good often results. Let me hope that this action of the Bihar Government has brought the Hindus and Muslims of Bihar, and even all India, together on the common platform of human liberty. For I am quite sure that the Muslim League could not possibly wish the denial to their sister organization of a liberty which they could claim for themselves. I hope that there will be only one end to this Bihar episode, viz., lifting of the ban on the Hindu Mahasabha and the men who are imprisoned today holding their session without let or hindrance.

The Hindu, 28-12-1941

652. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
December 27, 1941

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. I have accepted Punamchandji's[1] suggestion believing that he would give you no trouble and that he has the ability to complete this work[2]. I cannot think of your taking any trouble in this regard.

Indu will certainly come on the occasion of the A. I. C. C. [meeting]. She is happy here.

About the States' People's Conference, as discussed between us I have given my opinion that its office should be brought over to Wardha.

Bapu could not finish this but wants it to be dispatched as it is. . . .

AMRIT KAUR

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 3029

653. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

December 27, 1941

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I had hoped to write to you at length on purity. But I have not a minute to spare. I will say in brief that a person who understands the relation between the body and the spirit can easily attain inner purity

[1] Punamchand Ranka, President, Nagpur Provincial Congress Committee
[2] Of arranging the A.I.C.C. meeting at Wardha

by meticulously practising external purity. On the contrary, one who disregards external purity in the struggle for inner purity loses both.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 4408

654. LETTER TO NELLIE FISCHER[1]

BARDOLI,
December 28, 1941

DEAR SISTER,

I have yours of October 17th received yesterday.

To send you season's greetings is a mockery when hatred reigns supreme and God of Love and Truth is disowned.

Here are a few lines for your book[2].

"I had the privilege of coming in close contact with the late Bishop Fischer. He seemed to me to be one among the few Christians who walked in the fear of the Lord and therefore feared no man."

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

655. LETTER TO DR. A. G. TENDULKAR

BARDOLI,
December 28, 1941

MY DEAR TENDULKAR,

I was glad to hear from you. Nasik weather must suit you well.

I would the like to see Indumati again and have her in the Ashram as long as she wishes to be there.

Love.

BAPU

(M. K. GANDHI)

From a photostat : C.W. 10953. Courtesy : Indumati Tendulkar

[1] Wife of Frederick B. Fischer
[2] Biography of Frederick B. Fischer

656. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

December 28, 1941

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Babudi has gone to Surat. Anand had cough and felt uncomfortable in the crowded atmosphere here. They will come here on Tuesday to get Anand's stitches removed. I shall try and detain them.

Shakaribehn has gone to Ahmedabad. Ba has gone to Maroli for four days.

I hope you are doing well.

What did you do about the book and the money with Surendra? Does Lakshmidas wish now to work under Balvantsinha?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10606

657. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

BARDOLI,
December 28, 1941

CHI. BABUDI,

I was not at all happy to let you go, but I felt that I ought to. When I told Ba, she got angry. She said she was not at all inconvenienced. I would be glad if you come over on Tuesday prepared to stay here longer. The doctor says he can treat Anand only if he can examine him daily. Ba has gone to Maroli and I have sent Sumi with her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10041. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

658. MESSAGE TO ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

[Before *December 29, 1941*][1]

The most important work before the Conference is to recognize the special obligation of the women of India to enforce the constru-

[1] The sixteenth session of the All-India Women's Conference commenced in Cocanada from December 29 under the Presidentship of Vijayalakshmi Pandit.

ctive programme which I have put before the nation in my recent pamphlet[1]. It should satisfy the highest ambition for service of the tallest woman in India.

The Hindu, 31-12-1941

659. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SWARAJYA ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
December 29, 1941

MY DEAR C.R.,

I have studied the resolution[2] sent by you. Maulana Saheb came in and just introduced it to me. I am sorry I do not like it. It evades the main issue and does not give the true lead to the nation. I am quite clear that the difference between the Committee and me should be brought out and dealt with. If we do not want to help this Government on other grounds than those of non-violence, they ought to be clearly stated. If we can under certain circumstances they should be defined. The scope of Congress non-violence should also be defined.

You can share this with J[awaharlal] and come to me at 1.30 if you think it necessary. The silence finishes at 1.25.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat : C.W. 10903. Courtesy : C. R. Narasimhan

[1] *Constructive Programme : Its Meaning and Place*; *vide* "Constructive Program: Its meaning and Place", 13-12-1941.

[2] For the final resolution, *vide* Appendix "Congress Working Committee's Resolution", 30-12-1941.

660. DISCUSSION AT WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING[1]

[On or before *December 30, 1940*][2]

So far as I am concerned, even if I was given the utmost power conceivable, even if I was made the Viceroy of India today, would I ask the people of India to take up the sword to keep the Empire alive? I for one should feel that I was committing moral suicide in that I would be abandoning the faith of a lifetime, the faith which I had persuaded the Congress to accept for twenty years as a policy. The steady unflinching pursuit of that policy has brought us quite close to the achievement of the objective. Am I to abandon the very boat which has brought me quite close to the shore? Yudhishthira[3] would not forsake his faithful dog and enter the gates of Heaven without him. For he knew that the Kingdom of Heaven would be as naught to him without the dog, i.e., his faith. Would the Arab (i.e., the Congress) give up towards the end of the journey the faithful steed (i.e., non-violence) that had made it possible for [him][4] to make that journey? It would be an act of betrayal or faithlessness on my part. Could I, when the war is at my door and when I am in the same predicament as they, forget the sovereign remedy I suggested to them[5] and clutch at the

[1] In his article "The Month in Bardoli—I" from which this discussion is reproduced, Mahadev Desai gives the following introduction : "Though the actual decision [of the Working Committee] came to be made on the basis of the interpretation of the Bombay Resolution, what was of vital importance was the actual feeling in the minds of men. No matter how the Bombay Resolution was interpreted, were we clear about certain fundamentals? Were we clear that the policy of non-violence that we had followed, to the best of our ability, for twenty years was no religious creed or for no religious purpose, but a wholly political method for the achievement of the political independence of India? Gandhiji had no doubt on the question. The next question was—could we at this critical hour in our nation's history give up that policy even for the sake of proffered freedom?"

[2] The Congress Working Committee meeting concluded on December 30, 1941.

[3] Eldest of the Pandavas, also known as Dharmaraja for his adherence to truth

[4] The source has "it".

[5] Gandhiji had advised the same course to the Abyssinians ("Message on Italo-Abyssinian Crisis", on or before 1-8-1935 and "Statement on "Italo-Abyssinian Crisis", on or before 1-8-1935), the Chinese, the Gzechs, the Spaniards "Discussion with Hengchih Tao", before 15-8-1938; "If I were a Czech", 6-10-1938 and "Letter to Juan Negrin", 15-10-1938), and the Poles ("Message to the Poles", before 30-8-1939 and "Cable to Paderewski", 8-9-1939).

method I have denounced and discarded? No matter what the country would say, what should be the attitude of individual Congressmen who had sworn by the method of non-violence?

He was clear that, if it was felt that we had committed a mistake, that it was worth while bargaining a principle for what seemed to be a richer gain, they should declare their conviction, and if and when the objective was gained, they should convert the whole of India into a recruiting ground, ask every man and woman to contribute his or her share in the war effort, and even extinguish themselves in so doing. What was needed was downright honesty. He at any rate had never conceived this possibility. If he knew that some day India would have to engage in a violent war in order to win independence, he would long ago have addressed every youth to go in for military discipline, and he would not have placed tireless emphasis, day in and day out, on the various items of the constructive programme.

Harijan, 18-1-1942

661. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

BARDOLI,
December 30, 1941

DEAR MAULANA SAHIB,

In the course of discussion in the Working Committee, I discovered that I had committed a grave error in the interpretation of the Bombay Resolution. I had interpreted it to mean that the Congress was to refuse participation in the present or all wars on the ground principally of non-violence. I found to my astonishment that most members differed from my interpretation and held that the opposition need not be on the ground of non-violence. On rereading the Bombay Resolution I found that the differing members were right and that I had read into it a meaning which its letter could not bear. The discovery of the error makes it impossible for me to lead the Congress in the struggle for resistance to war effort on grounds in which non-violence was not indispensable. I could not, for instance, identify myself with opposition to war effort on the ground of ill will against Great Britain. The resolution contemplated material association with Britain in the war effort as a price for guaranteed independence of India. If such was my view, and I believed in the use of violence for gaining independence and yet refused participation in the effort as the price of that independence, I would consider myself guilty of unpatriotic conduct. It is my certain belief that only non-violence can save India and the world from self-extinction. Such being the case, I must continue my mission whether I am alone or assisted by an organization or individuals. You will, therefore, please relieve me of the responsibility laid upon me by the Bombay Resolution. I must

continue civil disobedience for free speech against all war with such Congressmen and others whom I select and who believe in the non-violence I have contemplated and are willing to conform to prescribed conditions.

I will not, at this critical period, select for civil disobedience those whose services are required to steady and help the people in their respective localities.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 1375. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also C.W. 10904. Courtesy : C.R. Narasimhan

662. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

BARDOLI,
December 30, 1941

If anyone had thought, as I had thought, that the door to Congress participation in the present war on the ground of Congress non-violence was closed for ever by the Bombay Resolution, then they may now know that the Bombay Resolution had not quite closed the door. Undoubtedly, as the resolution said, the Poona resolution had lapsed, therefore, the Poona offer had lapsed. But the Congress has now, through the Working Committee, made it clear that the door is not barred altogether against Congress participation, certainly not on the ground of non-violence.

The key for unlocking the door remains principally in the hands of the British Government. The Working Committtee has very properly declined to state the terms on which that door can be opened. It will depend upon varying circumstances, but, in my opinion, the chief circumstance is the Government. Having been insulted often enough, the Working Committee would not court any further insult by making any offer. After all, its position is absolutely clear. Everbody knows what the Congress stands for and what it wants. Everyone should, therefore, know that nothing will be accepted by the Congress short of what it stands for. Therefore, the burden of the next step is cast on the Government. This is the chief thing that is relevant at the present time.

I have a pressing cable from those English friends who are interested in India's freedom and who are lovers of their own people.

[1] For the Congress Working Committee's resolution in response to this, *vide* Appendix "Congres Working Committee's Resolution", 30-12-1941.

I have not replied to that cable. They have reminded me of Mr. Andrews' legacy. Whatever the meaning of their reminder, my meaning could only be one. The one indissoluble bond between Charlie Andrews and myself was that we would never compromise our conscience on any account whatsoever. And, in all that I have done, I can fearlessly claim that I have been guided by my conscience.

I have made it clear in my letter[1] to the Maulana Sahib that I could not possibly identify myself with the door to participation being kept open in any shape or form, because that would mean, in my opinion, a recantation of all that the Congress has stood for the last twenty years or more. I would not be guilty of selling that heritage even for the independence of India because it would not be real independence.

I feel that if any country has a message for the world, which is groaning under violence unknown perhaps to history, it is India. When India, through the Indian National Congress, accepted the policy of non-violence, so far as I know, no Congressman had thought that another war—and such a bloody war—was to come so soon as it has. The testing time, however, has come for India and I, who have an unchangeable belief in the efficacy of non-violence for the present distemper from which mankind is suffering, could not possibly in any manner, directly or indirectly, associate myself with participation in the war; and so I have stood out.

But the Congress contains men and women holding varying shades of opinion and, therefore, it should be no wonder that the Working Committee represents those varying shades of opinion. It has at least three bodies or, rather, it has at least three bodies representing three schools of thought: a minority party, believing in non-participation on the ground of non-violence, pure and simple; the other believing that the Congress should not carry non-violence to the point of refusing association in the war under any circumstances and there is the third, which has many reasons almost as strong as the decisive reason of non-violence guiding the minority. The resolution[2] which has been just handed by the Secretary of the Working Committee to the Press is a resultant of the efforts of these bodies. I would like the public and Congressmen to read that resolution in that light. I hope everybody will appreciate the fact that the Working Committee has not come to any hasty decision. It did not mind what time it took in order

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] *Vide* Appendix "Congres Working Committee's Resolution", 30-12-1941.

to produce a resolution worthy of the great national organization that it represents.

I would say one thing to Congressmen that those who are believers in non-violence in the same sense that I am, have nothing to fear, as I interpret the resolution of the Working Committee. It not only leaves them absolutely free to hold that opinion but to propagate it for the acceptance of anybody who chooses. Only they remain in the Congress so long as the Congress is not called upon to participate in the war effort. It is open to them to convert all Congressmen to their view. I am quite sure that the Working Committee will welcome such a conversion but I would warn Congressmen against indecision at this critical period in the national life and I would warn them also against weakly following this party or that for the sake of gaining power in the Congress. Those who do so will miserably fail to gain power for the nation. Personally, I would like the Congress, as I would like the whole world, to accept non-violence as the law of life in every department, social, political and domestic. But there is no room for cowardliness. I would far rather that we all became violent than cowards. Let me hope, therefore, that every Congressman will have his own convictions and the courage to enforce them.

The Hindu, 31-12-1941

663. LETTER TO PRABHULAL

[*December 30, 1941*][1]

BHAI PRABHULAL,

I have your postcard. We learn and grow only through experience. Though today the khadi was spoiled tomorrow it may improve, provided we learn the correct lesson.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4137

664. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

BARDOLI,
December 31, 1941

CHI. ANAND,

Jairamdas informs me that Vidya had fallen ill. God is testing you. You have to pass the test. Do not worry about the deafness,

[1] From the G.N. Register

either. Everything depends on God. Do not labour beyond your capacity.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy : National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

665. LETTER TO KHWAJA SAHEB

[*1941*][1]

KHWAJA SAHEB,

I am much obliged to you for your kindness in sending me a Hindi version of the Koran.

I hold Urdu in the greatest respect. I am also a student of Urdu and I desire its progress. In my opinion the Hindus who want to serve both should know Urdu and read Urdu books and newspapers. Similarly the Muslims who wish to serve both should know Hindi and keep in touch with Hindi books and newspapers.

From the Hindi original : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

666. LETTER TO SURESH SINGH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, XSC.P.,
[*1941*][2]

BHAI SURESH,

I got your letter. It is good that you have volunteered. I hope you are spinning regularly. Your turn will come after the three batches have gone ahead. I shall prepare a programme for new batches.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original : G. N. 8693

[1] The letter is placed in the file for 1941.

[2] From the reference, presumably to individual satyagraha offered in 1941; *vide* also "Letter to Suresh Singh", 14-2-1939

667. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

Sunday, [*1941*][1]

CHI. SUSHILA,

This chit will go with Mahadev's letter. That is all the time I can spare. I am all right. Kumarappa[2] is keeping well. Krishnadas's health causes some anxiety. He has fever today. He has passed a little blood. Do not worry. I hope there was no inconvenience on the way. Keep writing to me regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

668. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[*1941*]

STUPID DAUGHTER,

How foolish you are! Where can you go to escape from me? Wherever you go, you will find me. It is very difficult to abandon me. On Sunday you have to sleep near me.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

669. LETTER TO FARID

January 2, 1942

MY DEAR FARID,

I have seen yours to A. K. I have read the judgment. If what the magistrate says is true about her[3] speech, it was not non-violent. The B class should be accepted not because it is B class but because of the food obtainable. She need not use the other facilities which are not

[1] It appears from the contents that this and the following item belong to the year 1941.

[2] J. C. Kumarappa

[3] The reference is to Satyawati, grand-daughter of Swami Shraddhanand; *vide*, "Letter to Satyawati", 3-1-1942.

required from the medical standpoint.

About the situation you will know from any statement[1].

How is Zohra[2]? Are you keeping well?

Love to you all.

M. K. G.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

670. LETTER TO MADALASA

January 2, 1942

CHI. MADALASA,

I got your letter and was very pleased. Your joy was evident in it. Your welfare is assured. Remember that there is no happiness except through self-control. It is very happy news indeed that you sisters are all together just now and enjoying yourselves.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 324

671. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

January 2, 1942

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. Inform Bhai Haribhau[3] that I welcome his decision. Now he should not leave the Khadi Vidyalaya.

About the States we shall talk when I reach there.

Hold back Poonamchandji from heavy expenditure. I hope you are careful about your diet.

Jawaharlal will reach one day in advance.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 3030

[1] *Vide* "statement to the Press", 30-12-1941.

[2] Addressee's wife

[3] Haribhau Upadhyaya

672. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
January 3, 1942

CHI. MIRA,

You catch scorpions, rats, snakes! [1] Presently you will have a museum!!! I am glad you are nearing the end of your selections.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 6492. Courtesy : Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9887

673. LETTER TO JAFAR HASAN

BARDOLI,
January 3, 1942

MY DEAR JAFAR HASAN,

Your letter.

My address was written and distributed. My remarks in the course of the discussion could only be in the same strain as my address. My address was published in the papers too. There is nothing in that address to warrant the Maulana's criticism.

Yours,

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

674. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

BARDOLI,
January 3, 194[*2*][2]

CHI. BABUDI,

I really owe an apology to Anand. Will he forgive me now? I do not get even a minute. Tell Anand I wish him to grow up, live long

[1] The addressee explains : "I had now come out of my silence and was staying in Ashadevi's home, in order to revise and complete, with her assistance, my English rendering of selected Vedic hymns. In the cottage, where I had stayed during the last months of silence, I had caught and removed to the fields not less than 52 scorpions. One or two snakes also inhabited the place. In Ashadevi's house, I set about catching the rats and within about a week removed over thirty to a distant upland."

[2] The source has 1941 which is obviously a slip. Gandhiji was at Bardoli on this date in 1942.

and give *ananda*[1] to everybody. Ba will come on the 7th or maybe even later than that. See if you can go to Sevagram earlier. I do not like your keeping poor health. Go and join Shakaribehn wherever she is. I should advise you to leave Surat and improve your health. What Ghia says regarding the effect of circumcision is not likely to be correct. There will be no harm in repeating the operation once, if it is necessary to do so. But there may possibly be some risk in removing too much skin.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 10031. Courtesy : Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

675. LETTER TO SATYAWATI

BARDOLI,
January 3, 194[*2*][1]

CHI. SATYAWATI,

I received your letter. I hope you are well. There is no need to refuse B class. We should accept such amenities as the rules permit. We may well refuse others.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy ; Pyarelal

676. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI,
January 4, 1942

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You may or may not attend the meeting but ought not to miss your [hip-] bath. You must, therefore, have it, just now.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 378

[1] Happiness or joy

[1] The source has "41", which is evidently a slip. The letter is written below another dated January 2, 1942, on which date Gandhiji was in Bardoli.

677. SPEECH AT GUJARAT PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE MEETING[1]

BARDOLI,
January 4, 1942

[Gandhiji] first asked everyone if he had understood all the implications of the Bardoli Resolution.[2]

Then let me put it to you in a nutshell. The resolution means that, if the Government gave a guarantee that full freedom would be given after the war, the Congress would help in keeping this Empire alive. It was not that the bargain had been actually made, but the terms had been agreed upon, whereas, if I did not want to enter into any bargain at all, I should plainly say so. If you feel that on your agreeing to offer full co-operation in the war effort, India will have complete independence after the war, that the British will thereafter remain in India at your mercy and sufferance, that even during the war you will run your own affairs provided of course that your Defence Minister will carry on the war to victory, you must confirm the Bardoli Resolution. The temptation is very great indeed. If for that sake you are ready to reverse the Congress policy and purchase swaraj and pay as price thereof ahimsa, you must confirm the resolution. Remember that the very greatest of our leaders are party to the resolution and they have not chosen to do so lightly. As against this there are those who think that ahimsa is a pearl of great price and that it cannot be given up, that it can never be the price of swaraj, then their position is different. But if you are in doubt, if you feel that in sticking to ahimsa you lose both ahimsa, because you are incapable of it, and swaraj, that Gandhi is a good man but it would be prudent not to go the whole length with him, then you must accept the resolution. Only those will express their disapproval of it who are sure in their heart of hearts that prudence, political insight, policy, every consideration demands that ahimsa may not be sacrificed for swaraj. Now let those who will vote for the Bardoli Resolution raise their hands.[3]

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "The Month in Bardoli–I"

[2] In reply several people did not raise their hands. For the Resolution, *vide* Appendix "Congress Woring Committee Resolution", 30-12-1941.

[3] Thirty-six raised their hands.

Good. Now let the *acharyas* (masters) of ahimsa raise their hands.[1]

There were about ten neutrals who wanted to put questions, but Gandhiji said as the vote was quite informal the neutrals need not trouble themselves.[2]

Mahatma Gandhi stated that he had not left the Congress, and his position was the same even at Bombay. He said :

I am a servant of the Congress and I want to serve the Congress in consonance with the principles of truth and non-violence. The Working Committee has decided to co-operate with the Government in war if Britain grants swaraj to India.

Whatever be my opinion, you must exercise our free judgement in this matter.

It is not a fact that the Congress has violated the principle of non-violence but it has only made a small opening for violence just with a view to shaking hands with Britain.

Rajaji thinks that all of us should go to war fully armed, but it may not be the opinion of all.

We should continue the constructive programme. Of course it will be now very much restricted. I do not want to send workers to jail nowadays when their services can be better availed of in alleviating panic.

Harijan, 18-1-1942, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 6-1-1942

678. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

BARDOLI,
January 5, 1942

CHI. MARY,

You can come at any time. You can never be a burden. Your friends too may come if they can be cooped up in odd corners. Do just what you like. There is no depression in me.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 6083. Also C.W. 3413. Courtesy : F. Mary Barr

[1] Twenty-seven voted for ahimsa.
[2] What follows is from *The Bombay Chronicle.*

679. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

January 5, 1942

BHAI NARAHARI,

Sardar and I send our good wishes for the success of the inauguration function of the school.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./XXII

680. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

BARDOLI

January 6, 1942

CHI. MANUDI[1]

I have your letter. You did well in going there. Write to me regularly from Bombay. The cold seems to have ended here.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. MANUBEHN MASHRUWALA

BAL KIRAN

P.O. JUHU, BOMBAY 24

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 2680. Courtesy : Kanubhai Mashruwala

681. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

January 6, 1942

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

Who has ever succeeded in controlling his mind? One should not, therefore, let the mind remain empty. How will impure thoughts enter it if it is never empty? It is for this reason that so much importance is attached to reading, pondering and seeking the company of the good. And this is also why Ramanama is the supreme remedy.

Your diet, etc., seem all right.

You need not start a dispensary, but you should practise as a vaid. You may, if necessary, store the required drugs. It is necessary to remain in practice, too.

[1] Daughter of Harilal Gandhi, married to Surendra Mashruwala

The evils of registration are indeed showing themselves. The fraud will continue for some time, but will end by and by. Do not pret over it at all, for it cannot be prevented.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Why must you fall ill? And if you do should not your own treatment cure you soon?

From Gujarati : C.W. 2920. Courtesy : Vallabhram Vaidya

682. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

BARDOLI,

January 7, 1942

As far as may be, I have been endeavouring to study the internal and external reaction to the Working Committee resolution.[2] My being relieved of the direction of Congress civil disobedience does not reduce my responsibility but increases it manifold. For one thing, my official disconnection with the Congress itself increases my detachment; but since detachment never means indifference, my attachment to every Congressman increases and I must speak to him more than before. The voice of silence was enough to direct the campaign of civil disobedience, but it is not enough to explain and interpret in terms of non-violence the day-to-day puzzles that arise in the minds of Congressmen and others by reason of the overwhelming events happening near us.

Rangoon was naturally and culturally part of us before Burma years ago became part of British India and, therefore, it remains part of us though now sundered. What has happened there,[3] has had its repercussions all over India.

So far as I can see, civil disobedience in the sense in which it was launched is not likely to be revived on behalf of the Congress till the war has ended. In a purely symbolic manner it may have to be kept up not in the name of the Congress but on behalf of resisters of all war on the pure ground of non-violence, no matter how few they are. It will be kept up for the sake of asserting the right of resisters to carry on propaganda against all war. They dare not keep still in the midst of

[1] This appeared in *Harijan* under the title "The Next Phase".

[2] This sentence is from *The Bombay Chronicle*. For the Working Committee resolution, *vide* Appendix "Congress Woring Committee Resolution", 30-12-1941.

[3] Rangoon was bombed by the Japanese on December 23, 1941.

the unhuman slaughter that is going on. They must not only speak and write against it, they must, if need be, sacrifice themselves in the attempt to stop the torrent of blood. Whether they are a few or many they have to live their mission.

Before taking any step in the direction of civil disobedience I propose to restart the three weeklies[1] and understand the reaction of Government to the new orientation. I hope that they will have no objection to propaganda, naturally non-violent, against all war. It would be non-embarrassing in the sense that there cannot be, as there never was, any idea of surrounding or picketing munition factories or recruiting offices.

If the right is not conceded, there must be token civil disobedience by the fewest possible, even one or two known believers in resistance to all war. I must not select many, because every worker is wanted to educate the people in the art of non-violent behaviour in the face of impending danger.

Strange as it may appear, I suggest that ceaseless occupation in constructive programme is the best preparation to face danger. For it means concentration in villages of the city people and their being occupied and occupying the villagers in productive and educative work.

This removes unemployment and with it fear. Such movement on a large scale at once inaugurates a new social order. It will constitute the greatest contribution to internal peace, and should render nugatory formidable panicky ordinances just issued.

Harijan, 18-1-1942, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 8-1-1942

683. LETTER TO VIJAYA M. PANCHOLI

January 7, 1942

CHI. VIJAYA,

I have your postcard. I see that you will not be able to recover completely. Why does Nanabhai fall ill so often? Would he not come to Sevagram for a few days?

Vasumati has reached Sevagram. We leave the day after tomorrow. Ba is expected to return from Maroli today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 7144. Also C.W. 4636. Courtesy : Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

[1] Namely, *Harijan, Harijan Sevak* and *Harijanbandhu*

684. LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA KAMDAR

January 7, 1942

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA,

Valjibhai tells me that your husband has passed away. You are a brave woman and have wisdom. Bear the separation patiently. Look after the children and engage yourself in some public service. Do not cry. Write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 7473. Also C.W. 4919. Courtesy : Hari-ichchha Kamdar

685. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

BARDOLI,
January 7, 1942

CHI. TARAMATI,

Dr. Bhaskar's letter to Sardar has arrived today. It reports great improvement in Mathuradas's health. Observing silence has been very beneficial. Let Mathuradas take good care and observe silence without being impatient at all to talk. Tell Dilip[1] to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI TARAMATIBEHN MATHURADAS
WINDI HALL
DEOLALI– G. I. RLY.

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

686. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

BARDOLI,
January 8, 1942

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. Yes, since Bombay agrees with you it will be good if you go there. Weakness and cough must not persist. It would never do if they become chronic. Come over to Sevagram when I

[1] Addressee's son

return from Kashi. You may come even earlier. But it is true that without Shakaribehn you will take no rest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 10042. Courtesy : Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

687. SPEECH AT KHADI VIDYALAYA[1]

BARDOLI,
January 8, 1942

Needless to say that it gives me pleasure to declare this Khadi Vidyalaya open. There should be many such *vidyalayas* in Gujarat. As a matter of fact Khadi Vidyalaya may be said to have been opened when in 1921 we decided to prepare for launching satyagraha. I had not then discovered the word *vidyalaya*[2] and had at any rate not associated it with khadi, though I knew that khadi was a *vidya* (science), and most important of sciences. But I had then not the courage to say it. But the beginning was made here, anything that was invented in the line took the name of Bardoli—as for instance, the 'Bardoli *pinjan*' (carding-bow.) Then we had a big depot here for the manufacture of all our implements. This depot has, for several reasons, been moved to Sabarmati. Whilst, therefore, it is a pleasure to me to open the Vidyalaya, it is a matter of sorrow that we should be opening it at this late day.

It needs no argument today to prove that the charkha is linked with ahimsa and therefore with swaraj. What is going to be the part that crores of our people will play during the deadly carnage that is going on? We know the part that Government are playing, we know the part that some of us are playing at their behest, and to satisfy the pangs of hunger and starvation. They are rushing headlong to take part in the work of destruction. Millions are being collected from the rich and the poor, and yet the Government coffers are ever empty. But barring those that are thus directly and indirectly helping in the work of destruction, what are the rest going to do, what *can* they do? How are they to carry on? There is starvation and poverty everywhere. There is scarcity of water, and unlike in South Africa where there is

[1] The translation has been collated with Mahadev Desai's report "The Month in Bardoli-I" published in *Harijan*, 18-1-1942.

[2] Literally, 'abode of learning'

every provision against droughts, there is none here, and we and our cattle die like flies for want of water. Those that go to war do so in the hope of returning alive after killing others, some may not return at all. But shall we be content to die like flies? We have sworn by ahimsa and pledged ourselves to win swaraj by ahimsa. It is twenty years since we took the pledge, yet we do not know how to redeem it. What then is the thing that will enable us to work for swaraj, and to stand erect and strong in the face of this conflagration? It is the charkha and all it means. Land we have, but the land system, uneconomic holdings and methods, have reduced us to the level of beasts of burden, it does not yield us enough to eat all the year round, and we are workless for almost half the year. We have, therefore, to take up subsidiary industries. Those are the charkha and the allied activities.

I do not want to repeat the argument or go into the implications of the science of khadi. It is a good thing that this vidyalaya is being opened. Let this Vidyalaya generate a force that may universalize the charkha in Gujarat. There are, I am told, seventy thousand Congress members in Ahmedabad. If all these were regular spinners, did they give their quota of yarn to the Congress? Congress soldiers should not forget that their chief weapon is the charkha and spinning regularly is their 'military' discipline. The military weapons and munitions today have proved futile. They have failed to keep Czechoslovakia, Poland and France free or alive, though they boasted of renowned soldiers. Hitler has enslaved them all. Besides, we can no more guarantee the welfare of a country that engages in armed warfare. President Roosevelt says he and the Allied Powers are fighting the Axis Powers to make the nations of the world free, and that the Axis Powers are fighting to enslave the world. But to me both the parties seem to be tarred with the same brush.

What shall we do in the midst of this mutual destruction which spells freedom for none? The charkha and all it means is the only thing that will enable us to live and make us stand in honour and self-respect . This we can do if we can combine faith with understanding, for un-understanding faith will not carry us far. The work has been placed into Uttamchand's hands. The responsibility has been entrusted to him, not because he is an expert, but because he has the faith. If he refuses other responsibilities and concentrates on this task, he is sure to bring credit to this venture, difficult as it is.

Don't think that you have come here just to learn the art of khadi. If you labour under such a misunderstanding you will not be

able to turn out any work anywhere. You have come here to bear the burden of the work for swaraj. It is a tremendous burden to bear, and the very first lesson you have to learn is to know the qualifications of the soldiers of swaraj. The very first is restraint and patient labour. That is what the charkha will teach you. The renowned cities of the world are crumbling into dust. London is changed out of recognition, the edifices which the builders thought would stand the revages of time are no more. St. Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, Buckingham Palace have all been bombed with the result that what is called the capital of the world today looks, to use Narmadashankar's word, "devastated". And our cities like Rangoon will share the same fate. The age of cities is thus coming to an end. The slogan of 'Back to the villages' was never so true as today. Therefore all of you at any rate have to go to the villages. The mills will not be of any avail. They are producing cloth for the belligerents and may ere long cease even to do that work, and may have solely to engage in producing munition. We have therefore to produce all our cloth and to make our villages self-sufficient in all respects. That you cannot do without a life of restraint and patient toil. For this you will have to know all the processes right from identifying the different varieties of cotton to the stage when it becomes fit to be woven into khadi. The course you have to prepare for is not simple. It will require all your energies and your faculties, for it is an all-comprehensive one. What about girls? Girls also may be admitted, but that depends upon Uttamchand's courage. We cannot admit them right now. Every one of us, man or woman, has to lend his hands and his mind and his heart to the work of building our nation and swaraj.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 18-1-1942

688. DISCUSSION WITH HARIJAN WORKERS [1]

BARDOLI,
January 8, 1942[2]

The first was the question about the wells: Should we seek the co-operation of Harijans, and, if so, to what extent?

Co-operation is necessary, but we must not take the Harijans in a body and invade the *savarna* quarters. We should visit the wells,

[1] This is reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "The Month in Bardoli–II". Harijan workers who had met in Sabarmati under the Presidentship of Thakkar Bapa came to Gandhiji with ready-framed questions.

[2] From *Gandhi—1915–1948 : A Detailed Chronology*

ascertain the classes of people using them, and reason with these to let the Harijans use them. Regarding Local Board wells the help of officials may be freely sought, and such Harijans may be asked to go and use the wells as may be prepared to stand ill-treatment. But the brunt should be borne by the sevaks[1], care being taken to stand between the Harijans and those who would threaten to molest or belabour them. The Harijans should be invariably asked to use clean vessels and observe all the ordinary rules of cleanliness. We can also dig wells for Harijans and invite the *savarnas* to use them. It is likely that the Harijans may be boycotted, we should see that they get employment elsewhere. The Harijans have to be taught to learn to assert themselves firmly and non-violently, and the *savarnas* may be gently reminded that injustice cannot last for ever. These are broad principles, but everyone has to take measures suited to the circumstances in each case.

Q. Can't we insist on the admission of Harijan boys to hostels where *all* non-Harijan Hindu boys are admitted?

A. Of course, but care should be taken to see that the hostel is not exclusively for a particular community or section of Hindus. Where all sections are admitted and only the Harijans are excluded, the workers should strain every nerve to get the Harijans admitted.

When I said that removal of untouchability did not include the removal of restrictions on inter-dining and intermarriage, I had the general Hindu public in mind, not the Congress workers or Congressmen. These have to abolish untouchability from every part of their life.

The next question was about the temptations given by missionaries in the shape of books, school fees, etc., with a view to the boys' ultimate conversion. How was one to deal with them?

[A.] The missionaries have of course the right to preach the gospel of Christ and to invite non-Christians to embrace Christianity. But every attempt to press material benefits or attractions in the aid of conversion should be freely exposed, and the Harijans should be educated to resist these temptations.

Q. What are the qualifications that a Harijan *sevak* should have in order to make his work felt?

A. Such a question is rather late in the day. But I shall try to answer it again. It is a misfortune that politics have been mixed up with anti-untouchability work, which is essentially one of self-

[1] Workers

purification, justice, humanity. Long before I took to politics I felt that abolition of untouchability and Hindu-Muslim unity were essential for national well-being. In order to prevent the vivisection of Hinduism I had to fight it with my life, and the question did receive a political complexion, but in essence it is a purely religious and moral question. Every *sevak* must be fired with a passion to purify Hinduism, and must be ready to lay down his life in the attempt. Such a *sevak* will be ready to sacrifice his all—family connections, social advantages, and life itself—in order to wipe out the blot on Hinduism. The work should be as one of life's essential functions, e.g., offering one's prayers, ablutions, etc., not carrying emolument or reward. If the worker is fired with this passion, the way will be clear before him. Thus a worker would rather starve than allow the Harijans to be starved, would hesitate to use amenities which are denied to the Harijans and feel increasing identification with them every day. All this work is to be done without regard to the political results. Assuming for a moment that swaraj does not come as a result of the abolition of untouchability, the work has to be done in order to keep Hinduism pure and alive. I know that with some of the Congressmen the work has only a political meaning, but it is wrong. If they seek justice from an alien Government, they must first do justice to their own kith and kin. That is the fundamental maxim of equity—he who seeks equity must do equity.

There is, I know, a section who says that political freedom must be won first and social reform would follow later. It is a wrong idea, and certainly inconsistent with one who would win swaraj by non-violent means. But the Harijan worker has to educate both the orthodox and exclusively political-minded people. Let him not judge others, but by selfless self-effacing service set an example to them.

Harijan, 1-2-1942

689. ADVICE TO KHADI WORKERS[1]

BARDOLI,

[On or before *January 9, 1942*][2]

[Q.] We are producing two lakhs of rupees worth of khadi, but the demand exceeds 12 lakhs. How are we to meet it? We have not enough weavers and workers, and there is the question of funds too.

[A.] Let me take up the last question first. It is my firm conviction which has grown upon me with the years that, if there are

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "The Month in Bardoli–II"

[2] Gandhiji left Bardoli on January 9, 1942.

workers, no work suffers for want of funds. But the real question is of the capacity to produce. Supposing someone gave you one crore of rupees, I know you cannot produce ten crore rupees worth of khadi. The reason is lack of workers, lack of efficiency, and lack of faith. It is good that there is a growing demand for khadi—though twelve lakhs of rupees worth of khadi is nothing extraordinary where eight crores of rupees worth of khadi could be used. But the increased sales mean that the liking for khadi is also on the increase. We should contact these consumers and persuade them to spin. And here comes in the *dhanush takli*. You may know that I can spin on the ordinary wheel better, but I have made a point of using only the *dhanush takli*, and I am now almost an expert in it. The reason is that, whereas Lakshmidasbhai[1] cannot execute an order for 25 lakhs of wheels, the people can themselves make as many *dhanush taklis*. It is so easy to make, so cheap, takes very little material and practically no technical skill. It is a wrong policy to manufacture wheels in Sabarmati in order to export them to the Punjab or South India. They should be made locally everywhere, and for that purpose the *dhanush takli* is the thing. Universalization of this will increase production by leaps and bounds.

You have to catch the increasing love of spinning by the forelock. In none of our previous campaigns was spinning done on such a large scale as during the last campaign. The figures for Sabarmati Jail were good, but the figures for Agra and Bareilly were also good. Badshah Khan has been able to popularize spinning as he had never been before. We have, therefore, to take this tide at the flood and bring expert knowledge to bear on the love for spinning that is growing.

We have to go from house to house and enlist willing spinners ready to contribute their yarn.

I take it that all khadi workers are believers in the attainment of swaraj by non-violent means. Yours then should be the largest contribution to constructive work.

Some of you have to be weavers too. There are enough handloom weavers in India to produce all the cloth we need. We have to persuade them to take to weaving hand-spun yarn and also to get their womenfolk and children to produce yarn in their homes.

Harijan, 1-2-1942

[1] Lakshmidas Asar

690. NOTES

TO THE SUBSCRIBERS

The Manager tells me that the subscribers of *Harijan* have appreciated the unavoidable suspension and exercised extraordinary patience. With a few understandable exceptions they have not recalled the balance of the unused subscription due to them. I am glad to be able now to say that they will have their copy again regularly. It will not be possible to retain the old rate for reasons they know. The subscriptions left over will be credited to the subscribers who will be notified when they are to be exhausted. I hope that the three editions will retain their old popularity. I expect even visible increase, for I believe in the intrinsic value of the menu that will be served to the reader from week to week. The three weeklies are purely and simply media of service. Never have they been a business enterprise.

"VIOLENCE IS DISASTROUS"

Shri S. V. Thakar, the quiet but efficient worker in the Harijan and other causes, sends me a note drawing attention to a violent feud between two parties of Bhils which his intervention with Government assistance has just prevented. The late Gula Maharaj, himself a Bhil reformer, had by his earnestness and simplicity appealed to the Bhil imagination, and thousands of them inspired by him had abandoned drink and other evil habits. He died a year ago leaving a successor. There was a social boycott proclaimed by the reform party against those who would not give up bad habits. This bred bad blood. Violence seemed imminent. Shri Thakar's timely intervention referred to above stopped bloodshed. But the reform has suffered a setback. The party of opposition is in the ascendant, and unless the pure ethical spirit again pervades the movement it may collapse. Shri Thakar rightly wishes to draw the moral that violence even in a good cause will not answer, and that every reform must be broadbased on the willing and enlightened association of the people concerned. They cannot be coerced into good habits.

ADIVASIS

Thakkar Bapa complains that, whilst he likes the pamphlet dealing with the constructive programme, he misses in it mention of *Adivasis* or the so-called aboriginals, such as Santhals, Bhils, etc.[1] The

[1] A chapter on *Adivasis* was added in the revised edition of the *Constructive Programme : Its Meaning and Place*; *vide* "Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place", 13-12-1941.

complaint is just. Many other causes are included in the constructive programme by implication. But that cannot and should not satisfy such a humanitarian as Thakkar Bapa. The *Adivasis* are the original inhabitants whose material position is perhaps no better than that of Harijans and who have long been victims of neglect on the part of the so-called high classes. The *Adivasis* should have found a special place in the constructive programme. Non-mention was an oversight. They provide a vast field of service for Congressmen. The Christian missionary has been more or less in sole occupation of the field. Great as his labour has been, it has not prospered as it might have, because of his ultimate aim being

the *Adivasis'* conversion to his fold and their becoming de-Indianized. Anyway, no one who hopes to construct swaraj on the foundation of non-violence can afford to neglect even the least of India's sons. *Adivasis* are too numerous to be counted among the least.

ON TRAIN BARDOLI-WARDHA, January 9, 1942

Harijan, 18-1-1942

691. PEACE ORGANIZATION

If the Congress were an organization with a military bias, there is no doubt that today it would be a full-fledged military unit every member becoming trained to be an efficient soldier. Fortunately for India and humanity, the Congress is not such an organization. No other purely national organization is or can be in the India of today. Fortunately again for India and humanity, the Congress has pledged itself since 1920 to win India's freedom through non-violent means. But up to now it has been largely a debating society, offering civil disobedience at intervals and all the time only playing with its vital programme of construction. At one time every Congressman was expected to create something for the nation. He or she was to spin for the nation. Congressmen would not respond, and the clause about spinning was dropped. There were other items too which every Congressman was to work. But he has not done so to the extent expected. The moment has now come for him to make a definite choice. The only programme before him is to become a servant or soldier of peace. A soldier of peace, unlike the one of the sword, has to give all his spare time to the promotion of peace alike in war time as in peace time. His work in peace time is both a measure of prevention of, as also that of preparation for, war time.

If then I was a Congressman with a vote, I would vote, as an emergency measure, for requiring every Congressman now on the

Congress register or to come hereafter to possess the minimum qualifications for working the constructive programme. It would be wrong to remind me that the Congress should retain its democratic character. It will not lose it because, of its own motion, it becomes an efficient working body which anybody undertaking to obey its discipline and conditions of membership may join. The Congress will cease to be popular, if it cannot deserve popularity in times of stress. If it cannot provide work for the workless and hungry, if it cannot protect the people from depredations or teach them how to face them, if it cannot help them in the face of danger, it will lose its prestige and popularity. No person or corporation can live long on his or its capital. The latter has to circulate and multiply itself.

The Congress has become popular because it has been foremost in fighting imperialism. Today the old way is of no avail. Nobody thinks of mass revolt at the present moment. The best, quickest and most efficient way is to build up from the bottom. The psychological moment has come. 'Back to the villages!' has become a necessity from every point of view. Now is the time to decentralize production and distribution. Every village has to become a self-sufficient republic. This does not require brave resolutions. It requires brave, corporate, intelligent work. As far as I know at the present moment this is common ground between the rulers and the people.

Let every Congressman answer for himself whether he will be a soldier or servant of peace or whether he will become a non-entity unwilling to take his place in building up swaraj.

ON TRAIN BARDOLI-WARDHA, January 9, 1942

Harijan, 18-1-1942

692. WHY?

While I was engaged in organizing and conducting the civil disobedience movement on behalf of the Congress I could not issue the three weeklies without noticing the doings of civil resisters and the general progress of the movement. That would have been to turn the weeklies into civil disobedience organs and to challenge the Government to suppress them. The Government in their turn could not but have accepted the challenge and suppressed the papers and even prosecuted me. Whilst I must always be ready to welcome imprisonment, I was not then ready to court it. Nor was it my plan to invite suppression when my avowed object was to organize strictly and only individual civil disobedience. Therefore, even at the price of sacrificing the pleasure of serving the people in various ways through the

weeklies, duty demanded their stoppage. I feel that the step taken was correct in every way.

The reason for suspension now no longer exists. On the contrary I should fail in my duty, if I did not resume publication. As I have repeatedly said I am no enemy of Britain. I have many dear and personal friends among Britishers. I cannot wish ill to Britain. My resistance to war does not carry me to the point of thwarting those who wish to take part in it. I reason with them. I put before them the better way and leave them to make the choice.

But we have arrived at a stage where it is no longer merely a question of resisting war effort. There are questions which confront war-resisters as much as they confront war-mongers. And they can be decided only one way by both, though the approach must vary. Such are questions of dealing with scarcity of food and clothing, looting and bread riots, etc. I have views on all these and like questions. Resumption of the weeklies is needed for the dissemination of my views on these and like matters. In the ability of the people to deal with them without fuss and even without Government effort lies the way to swaraj whose basis is non-violence. Mere Government effort cannot deal with crises affecting millions of people unless there is voluntary response from them.

If we wish to achieve swaraj through truth and non-violence, gradual but steady building up from the bottom upwards by constructive effort is the only way. This rules out the deliberate creation of an anarchical state for the overthrow of the established order in the hope of throwing up from within a dictator who would rule with a rod of iron and produce order out of disorder.

These columns will then deal with the day-to-day problems that face the people.

ON TRAIN BARDOLI-WARDHA, January 9, 1942

Harijan, 18-1-1942

693. TALK AT SEVAGRAM[1]

[On or after *January 10, 1942*][2]

I knew the Sardar's power of organization, but I discovered for the first time that the Sardar was a skilled agriculturist. Every inch of space in the banana garden and every drop of water that was being given to it had been made careful use of. The banana yielded a yearly

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "The Month in Bardoli–I".

[2] Gandhiji returned to Sevagram on January 10, 1942.

crop, but in between the plants at convenient distances were fruit trees like the mango and the *lichi* and the *chiku* and grape fruit, and on the ridges were various vegetables. Surrounding the garden had been planted permanent trees, and inside the garden were walks making it easy for the field-worker to take care of the trees and also providing enough space with velvety earth for those who desired to have their morning and evening constitutional. All this was enough to rest and please the eyes and the mind. The Sardar's labour had yielded the Ashram several thousand rupees and set an example to others. As a result dozens of people had taken to banana-growing.

Harijan, 18-1-1942

694. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
January 11, 1942

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have just learnt that both you and Maulana Saheb have arrived. I had told M. S. that I would take silence at 2. When I said so I had forgotten that I had given an appointment to Prof. Copeland for 4.30 p.m. I could not cancel it. I took silence, therefore, at 5.25 p.m. I should be at your and his disposal after that time. I am sorry but I was helpless.

Please read this to M. S.

Indu should be coming tomorrow.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1941. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

695. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

January 11, 1942

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

Herewith a letter for Kanta. I like your observing silence.[1] I will not ask you to give it up. You may, however, give it up, if you like, for the sake of serving others or even without any reason.

I would like it if Lakshmidas or someone like him works with you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 1942

696. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA (C.P.)

January 12, 1942

MY DEAR C.R.,

I like your letter to the president of your Committee immensely. Of course your resignation adds to your dignity.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
48 BAZLULLAH ROAD
THYAGARAYA NAGAR
MADRAS

From a photostat : C.W. 10906. Courtesy : C.R. Narasimhan

697. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

January 12, 194[*2*][2]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I had dictated two letters to you C/o Brij Bihari[3]. The address was given by you. You need not get frightened by anybody's criticism. I

[1] On Gandhiji's advice the addressee observed silence for two months and broke it on January 16, 1942.

[2] From the postmark. The source, however, has "1941" which is a slip.

[3] Addressee's brother

shall reach Benares on the 21st, and return from there on the 22nd. Babuji will be accompanying me. If you reach earlier, go to Sir Radhakrishnan's or Shankar's and come over to me after I arrive there. There will be no harm if you cannot come. Do not come at the cost of your work. Shankar's address is : Prof. Kalelkar, Chandan Kutir, University.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3550

698. HAND-SPUN AS MEASURE OF VALUE[1]

In my part of India shells and seedless dried almonds were used as coins accepted by the people and the State treasury. They had no intrinsic value. They were a measure of people's deep poverty. They could not afford the lowest metal coin. Five shells would buy them a little vegetable or a needle. I have suggested a measure which will not be a mere token but which will have always an intrinsic value which will also be its market value. In that sense it will be an ideal measure. For the present and by way of experiment I have suggested a warp length of a single thread of yarn as the lowest measure and to be used in dealings principally with the spinners and generally with khadi-lovers. The spinners can have all their daily wants supplied as against a fixed quantity of yarn. Stores will need to be maintained by the A. I. S. A. in combination with the A. I. V. I. A. and ultimately with those who will give their co-operation. As I conceive it, the system can be worked only if it is decentralized. This is not its demerit but merit. The end to be sought is human happiness combined with full mental and moral development. I use the adjective moral as synonymous with spiritual. This end can be achieved under decentralization. Centralization as a system is inconsistent with non-violent structure of society. I have presented to khadi workers and those who are interested in the solution of the problem of India's poverty, the idea of a measure of value in its barest outline. Let them work it out and find for themselves flaws, if any, in the conception, and if they do not, let them enforce it where they can.

SEVAGRAM, January 13, 1942

Harijan, 18-1-1942

[1] This appeared under "Notes"

699. NOTE TO BALVANTSINHA

January 13, 1942

I have felled hundreds of palm-trees with my own hands, and got them felled before my eyes. I cannot bring those trees back. According to your argument any tree can be cut down. Of course, it is all right that you did what you deemed proper. I am pained that you cut down so many trees without consulting the others. The palm is a poor man's tree. Do I have to explain to you its usefulness? If all the palm-trees are cut down, life at Sevagram will be severely affected. The palm-tree is interwoven with our life. Grass, etc., could have been sown in some other place. But you should not brood over it. It would be good if you take whatever lesson you can from it. I cannot spare any time. Speak to Gajanan[1]; explain this to others. Assess the utility of the palm-tree.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, pp. 293-4

700. SIR AKBAR HYDARI[2]

The late Sir Akbar Hydari[3] was a rare combination. He was a great scholar, philosopher and reformer. He was a devout Muslim, but he saw nothing antagonistic to Islam in Hinduism. He was a student of various religions. He was catholic in the choice of his friends. On the return voyage from the second Round Table Conference[4] we found ourselves in the same boat. He was a regular attendant at the evening prayers I used to have on board. He was so interested in the *Gita* verses and the *bhajans* we sang that he had got them all translated for him by Mahadev Desai. He had made me promise that we should tour together in India the interest of communal unity. But God had willed otherwise. The late Lord Willingdon had a different programme for me. I was plunged into the civil disobedience fight. Sir Akbar and I could never carry out the programme. He had come under the

[1] Gajanan Nayak who was in charge of the palm-gur department of the Ashram

[2] This appeared under "Notes".

[3] Who died in Delhi on January 8

[4] In December 1931

influence of Shri Aurobindo Ghose. He was almost invariably in Pondicherry during the days when the sage of Pondicherry gave the quarterly *darshan* to his devotees. Sir Akbar's death is a great loss to the country. My respectful condolences to the deceased's family.

SEVAGRAM, January 14, 1942

Harijan, 18-1-1942

701. LETTER TO SIR FRANCIS WYLIE

January 14, 1942

DEAR SIR FRANCIS WYLIE[1],

Rajkumari showed me your letter containing reference to me. I must plead guilty. I was angry over what I considered to be unworthy of you of whom I had glowing accounts. I had been told that you were a follower of Tolstoy. I could not very well write to you about my great grief. For though I have accepted your adjective, I was more grieved than angry. Needless to say that I would have been delighted to have your son with me. He would have enjoyed the novel life at Sevagram. And of course I was and am sorry that we could not meet each other though we were so near each other.

I hope you are having a pleasant time in Afghanistan, if anywhere at this time life could be called pleasant.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

702. LETTER TO AMARITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM,
January 14, 1942

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

I hope you got my letter from Bardoli.

Abha is most disconcerted. You will see my letter[2] to her.

My suggestion is that you should bring her to Benares and I shall take her with me. She should promise her mother that she will not marry Kanu without her blessing, but that she will marry no other person. Abha shall remain under my charge. I may send her to Rajkot, if she wishes.

[1] British Minister to Afghanistan since August 1941

[2] This is not available

But of all this we can talk in Benares. Of course, I shall pay the fares.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy : C.W. 10335. Courtesy : Amrita Lal Chatterjee

703. LETTER TO MANJULA M. MEHTA

January 15, 1942

CHI. MANJULA,

I had your letter. There was one from Magan, too. Can't you stay in the room next to Champa's? If you cannot do that, will you stay in the same block? If you cannot do even that, you may stay in my room. You will not be a burden to me. You will get there privacy, too. I will not mind . . .[1] In short, I will make whatever arrangements you wish.

I am going to Benares on the 19th and will return on the 24th or the 25th. Come after that. You may come even during my absence.

Ratilal is in a miserable plight in Rajkot. I would still advise Magan to go there. He will be able to find an attendant. I cannot find one from here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati : C.W. 1615. Courtesy : Manjulabehn M. Mehta

704. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
January 15, 1942

CHI. NARANDAS,

Champa tells me that Ratilal's condition is very bad. She is staying here. A letter from Atmasarupanand is enclosed. Can you suggest or do anything in this matter?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am leaving for Kashi on the 19th, and shall return on the 24/25th.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8597. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

[1] Illegible

705. SPEECH AT A. I. C. C. MEETING[1]

WARDHA,
January 15, 1942

The President has put me in a quandary by raising me skyhigh, as if, one may think, I were a dweller in the clouds. That is not at all true. I have not yet used an aeroplane—of course, I have seen them flying in the skies, like birds but I have not touched one. So the question of flying does not arise. It is misuse of language to call such a man a dweller in the skies. I am of the earth, earthy. I am an ordinary mortal composed of common clay.

The question of ahimsa would not have come up before you, had it not come up before the Working Committee at Bardoli. We discussed it for seven days. And it was well that it came up. The result has been good, not bad. But before I say anything on this question, let me make one or two things clear.

Please note that I am, as I have said, an ordinary mortal like you. Had this not been the case, we should not have been able to work together these twenty years. Ahimsa with me is a creed, the breath of life. But it is never as a creed that I placed it before India or, for that matter, before anyone except in casual or informal talks. I placed it before the Congress as a political weapon, to be employed for the solution of political problems. It is a new experiment in ahimsa which I have undertaken. As far as I am aware, no one has hitherto employed ahimsa in the political arena in this manner. If someone has, at least I am not aware of it. Maybe it is a novel method, but it does not on that account lose its political character. I tried this for the first time in South Africa, with good results. I have brought it from there. The question there was exclusively of the political existence of Indians who had no political consciousness but had settled in South Africa as merchants, petty hawkers, etc. And there I used ahimsa as a political weapon. It was for them a question of life and death. The whites wanted them to quit. They had only two alternatives. They could either quit or stay there with the status of animals. We tried everything that was humanly possible. We found that all the so-called constitutional remedies, with which the Congress work in India had made me familiar, had failed. I was an expert in petition-writing which had yielded me lots of money. I have been for long a draftsman for

[1] This translation has been collated with the summary by Mahadev Desai published in *Harijan*, 25-1-1942, under the title "Don't Divide the House".

the Congress here, which work I used to do there also. They submitted many petitions, but when all other methods failed they resorted to satyagraha. The various measures that I adopted there were not the work of a visionary or a dreamer. They were the work of an essentially practical man dealing with practical political questions. As a political method, it can always be changed, modified, altered, even given up in preference to another. If, therefore, I say to you that our policy should not be given up today, I am talking political wisdom. It is political insight. It has served us in the past, it has enabled us to traverse many stages towards independence, and it is a politician that I tell you that it would be a grave mistake to think of giving it up. If I have carried the Congress with me all these years, it is in my capacity as a politician. It is hardly fair to describe my method as religious because it is new.

Maulana Saheb has affectionately used high words of praise for me, but I cannot accept them. A thing can yet be discarded after showering all praise on it. A person can be raised sky-high and then cast down to the dust. I have been taunted as a Bania. It is all right. How can I help it? I was born a Bania. I shall stay a Bania and shall die as a Bania. Trade is my profession. I am trading with you and with the world. The article in my possession is an invaluable pearl. It has to be weighed in the proper scales—as Maulana Saheb rightly said, pearls, grass and men need different scales. I am a trader in ahimsa. Those who can pay the price for it may have it. In my view, it cannot be bartered away even for independence. But you do not value this thing as I do; because you do not have the scales with which to weigh it.

Please do not think that I am speaking to you from a high pedestal. The simple question is why are we prepared today to discard a thing which we have cherished for so many years. No doubt, you have not discarded it yet, but you will if your terms are accepted. This much I am able to see. I do not raise the question of what we shall do after swaraj. I am myself not aware what I will do after swaraj. But today you are eager to barter away ahimsa for swaraj. You had taken a pledge that you would win swaraj only through ahimsa, and through no other means. Today you are ready to depart from it. I want to tell you that this bargain will not bring you complete independence. Independence for me means the independence of the humblest and poorest among us. Today we are at the threshold of independence on the strength of ahimsa. For the Congress to abandon ahimsa and to

join war[1] is to undo the work of the past twenty years. It is my discomfiture that I could not make you see this.

This is not the time for counting votes.

In spite of holding this view, I stand before you today to plead with you to accept this resolution[2], and not even to divide the house. If I can convince you of this, you should accept my advice, otherwise leave it. This is not the time when we may canvass support for our groups and seek a vote. If we merely talk tall about independence but do nothing to attain it, how can we aspire for it? I had once said that everyone would become his own leader after my arrest. Today also you can become your own leaders and think for yourselves. But I want you to remember one thing. I am a man who won't exchange ahimsa even for independence; and yet I am giving you this advice as an exponent of ahimsa.

Along with this, I wish to reiterate that I do not wish to with-draw a single word from what I had written about the Poona Resolution and I have no regrets for what I said. However, the Bardoli Resolution, though it looks like the Poona Resolution, is a different thing. The Poona Resolution attempted to interpret ahimsa. The Bardoli Resolution does not do so. The Poona Resolution was the outcome of my mistake for which I have already atoned. But the Bardoli Resolution is the outcome of deliberations over many days. At one time after the Bardoli Resolution, I had thought of dividing the A. I. C. C. and testing how many members supported my view. But as the situation developed stage by stage, as I saw the climate in the country and the criticism of our Congress in the world, I came to the conclusion on the basis of my ahimsa that if I could persuade the A. I. C. C. I should advise them to accept this resolution deliberately and whole-heartedly. My advice to those who agree with me, that is, to those who have faith in total ahimsa, is to remain neutral and not vote for or against the resolution. But if their abstention helps the opponents of this resolution to defeat it, they should vote in support of this resolution and not allow it to be defeated.

I have no doubt that the Working Committee has taken a retrograde step in passing this resolution. Rajaji may not agree, because he thinks I am in the wrong. Jawaharlal also may say that there is no retrograde step in this resolution. But in my opinion this step-back is a prelude to a step forward. A withdrawal sometimes becomes necessary. We have a right to take a step back for jumping forward.

[1] Mahadev Desai here adds : "before the attainment of complete independence".

[2] Adopted by the Working Committee at Bardoli. For the resolution, *vide* Appendix "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 30-12-1941.

Therefore a man who has parted company with you, who claims to be a satyagrahi and in whose life there is no room for tactical manipulations comes to you and advises you to accept this resolution, however imperfect, because it correctly reflects the Congress mind. Even if the protagonists of ahimsa have a majority in this house, they should help the adoption of this resolution. The Congress does not know its own mind but I know that the attitude of the Congress is reflected in this resolution.

The Congress has a great reputation. This resolution has enhanced it. The whole world is watching us, the eyes of our countrymen are fixed on us. Several people contemplated the prospect with trepidation, lest the Congress should flounder in response to Gandhi's formula and become a religious organization instead of a political one. Let me dispel their fear, and say that the Congress which accepted ahimsa as a creed can do no such thing, that we have not wasted the past twenty years. Whatever a doubting Thomas may think, when the moment of settlement arrives in Delhi, everyone will realize that the Congress remains the same with or without Gandhi. The language may differ, but the demand will remain the same. No one can cheat it. It will go on repeating '*Neti, neti*'[1] until it wins the real substance it wants. If you can get what you want and you strike the bargain, you may be sure that I will not shed a single tear. If I am allowed to vent my views through my three weeklies, you will find me saying that I did become a trader but I could not sell my ahimsa.

Whatever, therefore, our opponents inside and outside India may think and feel happy about, I won't let them say that Gandhi was after all a crazy person. I do not want the Congress to look ridiculous in the eyes of the world. I do not want it to be said that in order to retain my leadership you bade good-bye to your senses because you had no courage to give give me up. I do not covet leadership by undermining anyone's manhood. If the Congress alters its resolution for fear of losing my leadership and if I allow this transaction, this will result in the degradation of the Congress as well as my own. This is not the way I work. It is a fraudulent way. Am I going to cheat the Congress after fifty years of national service?

I have removed the very roots of this risk. I have told Maulana Saheb that you have not lost me by relieving me. You would lose me only if I cease to be loyal to the Congress, only if I become a visionary, only if I cease to be a practical man. It is not at Bardoli that

[1] 'Not this, not this', formula in the Vedas rejecting all verbal descriptions of the Reality; here, rejection of every offer falling short of the national goal of complete independence.

I left the Congress; I did so seven years ago in Bombay[1] and I did so in order to be able to render greater service to the country and the Congress. If I am relinquishing the Congress now, I do so only to serve it better. Colleagues like the Sardar and Rajendra Babu are not happy over the resolution but I am asking them not to leave the Congress. If the real hour for leaving the Congress arrives, and if they continue to cling to their present convictions, then they may say good-bye to the Congress. But even if they leave the Congress, the Congress is not going to cease to function. Its work will go on whether they are there or not. No man, however great, is indispensable to the Congress. Those who built up the Congress like Dadabhai, Pherozeshah and Lokamanya are no more, but the Congress still functions. For they have left for us an edifice to work upon and expand. Why should then my withdrawal or that of other leaders make any difference? The Congress will survive and will strike the bargain it is striving for.

I wish to stop you from dividing the house by seeking a vote on this resolution. I do not want the Congress to look ridiculous in the eyes of the world. We have not a clean slate to write on. Our leaders have taken a step which has produced world-wide reactions. To alter the resolution out of shape is to ignore these. It would be unwise to change the policy adopted by the Working Committee. It will make the Congress appear ridiculous before the world. The world has a right to expect that the Working Committee's policy will be endorsed by the A. I. C. C. We have no valid grounds to alter it. To those who want to catch up with me and introduce a new resolution for preserving ahimsa, I would say: 'Yes, it does bring you credit. If you have chewed and digested ahimsa, I shall follow in your footsteps and so will Maulana Saheb. But I see no such evidence in you. If you bring another resolution merely to retain my leadership, it will be a foolish step. In fact, it will amount to violence. Therefore you should accept this resolution, however imperfect it may be.'

Do not please go away with the idea that there is a rift in the Congress lute. As Maulana Saheb has said, the Working Committee has functioned like members of a happy family. Somebody suggested that Pandit Jawaharlal and I were estranged. This is baseless. Jawaharlal has been resisting me ever since he fell into my net. You cannot divide water by repeatedly striking it with a stick. It is just as difficult to divide us. I have always said that not Rajaji, nor Sardar

[1]In October 1934; *vide* "Letter to Secretary, Gujrat Provincial Congress Committee", 30-10-1934.

Vallabhbhai[1], but Jawaharlal will be my successor. He says whatever is uppermost in his mind, but he always does what I want. When I am gone he will do what I am doing now. Then he will speak my language too. After all he was born in this land. Every day he learns some new thing. He fights with me because I am there. Whom will he fight when I am gone? And who will suffer his fighting? Ultimately, he will have to speak my language. Even if this does not happen, I would at least die with this faith.

There is another reason why this resolution should be supported. (By chance this resolution has) become a mirror of the Congress in which all groups can see themselves. I can see my own reflection, and so can Rajendra Babu, Badshah Khan, Sardar and the rest. Those who have spent a lifetime in cursing the Government as also those who wish to compromise with the Government can see their own reflections in this mirror.

Maulana Saheb has not properly described how this resolution was framed. This is not the resolution as drafted by Jawaharlal. His draft has been materially amended. Rajaji also had a hand in revising it. People have an erroneous impression about Jawaharlal that he never budges from his views. Today at least he cannot get that certificate. He argues vehemently, but when the time for action arrives, he can make considerable compromises. This resolution is a product of a general consensus. The views of all the members of the Working Committee are reflected in this resolution. Like *khichri* it contains pulses, rice, salt, chilli and spices. Maulana Saheb has already explained the different points of view within the Working Committee. We have many groups amongst us. One is represented by Jawaharlal. His opposition to participation in the war effort is almost as strong as mine, though his reasons are different. He will not concede that he has retraced his steps in consenting to this resolution. But he himself will agree that the Rajaji group can take a different view of this resolution. The original draft had left no room for Rajaji and his followers to function. Rajaji would like to participate in the war effort if the Government accepted the conditions laid down by the Congress. So he has opened a tiny window for himself. Through this window Rajaji will try to pull Jawahar towards him and Jawahar will pull in the opposite direction. It is no longer open to the Government and the Congress critics to say that the Congress has banged the door against negotiation on the

[1] Mahadev Desai's summary here makes no mention of Sardar Patel.

doctrinaire ground of non-violence. The resolution throws on the Government the entire burden of wooing the Congress by meeting its legitimate demands and securing its participation in the war effort. That nothing much is to be expected from the Government is probably too true. Only the resolution puts the Congress right with the expectant world by debunking the criticism that the Congress is an organization of doctrinaires. And since there is a party in the Congress ready to welcome an honourable offer that will satisfy the rigidest test, it is as well that the resolution has accommodated this party. It has to be seen which group ultimately pulls the others. Whichever group wins, how can it harm us? We need have no objection.

Although different points of view have thus been accommodated in this resolution, it is not open to the charge of duplicity. It seeks to give an opportunity to different points of view to influence one another. This is how I understand it. Jawahar, Rajaji, Rajendra Babu as well as a man like me have each some elbow room in this resolution.

How does this resolution leave scope for Rajendra Babu? We have contemplated some step for the future, which upsets him. But we are not here to decide what we shall do in the future. When India becomes free, the resolution says, we can defend ourselves with arms. If we wish to help China and Russia, the resolution leaves us free to do so. We have no ill will against the Britishers, and for that matter against Germans, Italians or Japanese. How then can we have an ill will against China and Russia? The Russians[1] have created a brave new thing. But I have my doubts as to how long they can defend their freedom in this manner. Experience tells us that any great work founded on force does not last. The Chinese sail in the same boat with us. It is a vast country and I am proud of it. I would like all these nations to be at peace with one another. If China seeks to defend herself with arms, she will have to become like Japan. She will have to do everything that Hitler and Mussolini are doing. I would like to think that when the occasion arises India would defend herself through non-violence and thus be a messenger of peace to the whole world. Jawahar will also then work for it—not for war. Rajendra Babu can therefore support this resolution. As a political [weapon] non-violence is no small thing; it can bring about all these results.

[1] Mahadev Desai's summary has : "who have done great things for the proletariat".

You should all remember that non-violence is the common factor among Jawaharlal, Rajaji, Rajendra Babu and Maulana Saheb. We are all agreed that today we have to work only through non-violence. We will think of other things at the appropriate time. That is why I find myself supporting this resolution. Rajendra Babu can today propagate to his heart's content the message of ahimsa from the Congress platform. This resolution leaves him free to do so. Besides this, the instructions about the constructive programme[1] for Congressmen will promote ahimsa. It includes almost all the items of the thirteen-point constructive programme put forward by me. The U. P. Congress Committee has recently passed a resolution which is praiseworthy. It refers to ahimsa too. It covers everything that I should like it to.

We have made a clean breast of everything in this resolution. When all of us are sailing in the same boat, why do you want to introduce a new resolution? Ahimsa is not a thing which can be established through mechanical means. Did I serve the Congress for the last twenty years on the strength of a 'vote'? On the contrary, when matters reached the stage demanding a 'vote' I voluntarily retired from the Congress. Voting is all right in small matters, but our work will be hampered if we decide larger issues by 'vote'. The Congress is like a non-violent army. Our effort will be to keep it non-violent to the end. I am not going to restrain it if on the basis of experience we realize that we were on the wrong path.

The real strength of the Congress lies in those people who are outside the Congress but rally to its support when the call goes out. They do not care for name or fame, nor have they any personal axe to grind. We have to become their true representatives. You have to forge the Congress into a strong, solid and disciplined organization.

In the past 15 months Congressmen have evinced some sense of discipline. Occasionally there were lapses but I tolerated them because I had to steer the Congress ship. But now we shall have to observe stricter discipline. The time has now arrived when the Congress should act with one mind. The ultimate weapon of the Congress today is ahimsa. Until this creed is altered, no Congressman can preach violence openly or secretly. If he does so, he will be disloyal. No one can however judge what lies inside a man's heart. But we will have to enlist all those who promise to march in step with us. This resolution keeps the door open for every honest Congressman.

Finally, some friends ask, 'What has the Congress done, after all?' They complain that the resolution has no operative clause. The

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Congress Working Committee's Instructions", 25-1-1942.

complaint is true so far as the resolution is concerned. The Congress will issue separate instructions for this purpose. The resolution had to be merely explanatory. It is addressed less to Congressmen than to the world. It is not even addressed to the Government.

Let there be no misunderstanding nor lack of zeal among Congressmen because the resolution has postponed satyagraha. Neither Jawaharlal nor Rajaji will let you remain idle. I certainly will not. Let those who think the constructive programme is insipid know that there is nothing in the Working Committee's resolution to prevent a Congressman at his own risk from leading civil disobedience—individual or mass. If he succeeds, he will win nothing but praise from all and I myself will kiss his feet. The more a person advances in ahimsa, the more proud will the Congress feel of him. But such advance should not need any *imprimatur* from the Congress. But let me warn the enthusiasts that they will not handle the weapon with any success. They will only damage themselves and the cause by any hasty or ignorant action. And let me say as an expert in the art of satyagraha that those who regard the constructive programme as insipid do not know what non-violence is and how it works. So much for civil disobedience.

Let us now turn to the parliamentary mentality. Though it has come to stay in spite of my efforts to eradicate it, the parliamentary programme can, I hold, have no place in Congress work so long as the war lasts. The Congress cannot handle it without identifying itself with the war effort. I have always held that at all times it is the least important part of a nation's activity. Legislators are not the masters but servants of their electors—the nation. The less, therefore, we look at and depend upon parliaments the better. Power resides in the people either through their arms or through their civil disobedience, more comprehensively described as non-violent non-co-operation. But the power of non-co-operation comes only through solid, incessant constructive work. Non-violent strength comes from the constructive programme only and not through destructive activities. Hence the constructive programme is the only thing before the Congress today. And in this all parties are at one.

There are instructions about the constructive programme for Congressmen. They form the operative part. If properly implemented, this would be a complete substitute for civil disobedience and the parliamentary programme. Civil disobedience has been wisely reserved for me as an expert in satyagraha. It is good, so long as I am alive and well in mind, that it is so reserved. I have almost put a stop to it today. But the suspension of satyagraha is not linked with the resolution. So far as I am concerned, there will be no need for

satyagraha, if the Government do not interfere with *Harijan*. For these three weeklies will constitute enough propaganda against all war. *Harijan* will try to carry the message of peace to all corners of the country. But if this is not permitted, then will be the time for civil disobedience as a gesture. I want every worker to be out for constructive activity.

Today we have to serve the millions and that work does not allow us to get shut up in prisons. We do not wish that thieves and robbers may ransack the country. Even if we want to unleash a revolution, we shall have to provide for the prevention of pillage. The Congress will disappear if it fails to do this. The work of providing adequate food and clothing to the famished devolves on our shoulders. But if even the pen is snatched away from my hands, I may be compelled to become the sole resister. But I have no fixed plans. Events will point the way.[1]

The suspension of satyagraha has connection only with the present condition of the country, and I want every single man who thinks with me to remain outside and do work rather than go to jail and read the Koran and the *Gita* and lead an easy life there. I won't let them lead an easy life. Jawaharlal will ask for diaries from thousands of men. He is not going to sleep. Therefore, if you will go away with the real message to the country, do not criticize this resolution. Nobody is rendered incapable of giving the fullest possible service, in fact he is made capable of the fullest growth, by reason of this resolution. Civil disobedience remains under my control, and the reason for its suspension is wholly extraneous to my retirement from office. Every one of you has to give a good account of yourself. If all will pull your full weight in the fulfilment of the constructive programme, you will find a different India in six months' time.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 25-1-1942, and *Harijan*, 25-1-1942

[1] What follows is a report of Gandhiji's brief English speech, in reply to Shri Prakasam's question, reproduced from *Harijan*.

706. LETTER TO SULTANA RAZIA

January 16, 1942

MY DEAR SULTANA,

You are quite right about non-violence.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 10861

707. LETTER TO D. D. SATHAYE

January 16, 1942

DEAR SHRI SATHAYE,

Gandhiji had your letter in Bardoli and now he has your p.c. He has been so busy that his personal correspondence is in arrears. He wishes me to tell you that you are of course on his list of satyagrahis but there is no satyagraha just now. The constructive programme is there for everyone to follow.

Yours sincerely,

AMRIT KAUR

SHRI D. D. SATHAYE
127 GIRGAON ROAD, BOMBAY 4

From the original : D. D. Sathaye Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

708. LETTER TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

SEVAGRAM,
January 17, 1942

DEAR KHAN SAHEB,

Here are the two copies[1]. You will show them to the Maulana Saheb and to Jawaharlal. The letter to the Government you will send when and if you come to the conclusion that you will better serve the cause by being in the jail than by being outside and working among the people. For you are not likely to get the permission asked for.

The resignation you will send if your co-workers and Dr. Khan Saheb agree.[2]

Yours,
BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] Not available
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Abdul Ghaffar Khan", 18-1-1942.

709. ADDRESS TO CONGRESS WORKERS[1]

WARDHAGANJ,
January 17, 1942

Gandhiji explained what had been achieved at Sevagram in regard to the restoration of communal unity and removal of untouchability and urged that they were assets which should be acquired whether freedom was obtained or not. He also pointed out what work had been done with regard to khadi and basic education.

He dealt with the various aspects of the constructive programme, with particular reference to Hindu-Muslim unity, the removal of untouchability, charkha and the organization of a volunteer corps.

Mahatma Gandhi emphasized that a mere pact between the Congress and the Muslim League would not solve the problem; such a pact was applicable only to the carrying out of the parliamentary programme. He referred to the Lucknow Congress-League Pact[2] and said that real Hindu-Muslim unity could only be brought about by active constructive work.

Answering a question, Gandhiji said that volunteer bodies must be organized but only on the basis of non-violence. The volunteers must render all help to the people. It was possible that these organizations might not be allowed to function. In such circumstances, they must carry on their work, if it was indispensable, even at the risk of their lives.[3]

Everyone who is a four-anna member of the Congress must become a Khudai Khidmatgar now by service to the people.

Concluding, Gandhiji exhorted them to carry out the instructions given by the Working Committee carefully, which alone would strengthen them in the struggle for freedom.

The Hindu, 18-1-1942

[1] Gandhiji addressed representatives of the the Provincial Congress Committees and members of the Congress Working Committee.

[2] Of 1916; *vide* Appendix "The Congress League Scheme", November 1917.

[3] For another question, and Gandhiji's answer to it, *vide* "Constructive Programme and Government", 19-1-1942.

710. TALK WITH A WORKER[1]

[Before *January 18, 1942*]

The would-be satyagrahi[2] said he was a believer in ahimsa. Gandhiji asked him :

How much do you spin—5 yards or 50 yards?

Never more than 50, and sometimes even less than 5.

Do you spin every day, or once every week, or every month?

I don't spin more than 50 or 100 yards in a month.

Do you make your own slivers?

No, Mahatmaji.

Then where do you get them from? Get them by post?

No, I get them from the khadi bhandar, and when I do not get them there, I get them through friends coming from places where slivers can be had.

Do you make you *mal* (string) yourself or do you purchase a reel from the market?

His friend intervened and said : "Mahatmaji, he is a believer in ahimsa, and that, I thought, was the essential qualification. According to the test you now apply we are all likely to fail."

Well, then it is better that none of you takes part in satyagraha than that you should go without being properly qualified. My standard is inexorable. I want you to spin not only regularly but intelligently. I want you to know how to test your yarn, how to draw fine yarn and coarse yarn, to know the economics of khadi and so on. And when you will say to me, 'I know all these things', I will ask you : 'What about you life?' Do you observe non-violence in your relations with the members of your family and in your daily affairs? Where is the good of your saying you accept non-violence in theory? Supposing you said you accepted the theory of khadi, but purchased and used foreign cloth, how would your acceptance of the theory help me? And please understand that, while in British India I am prepared to reconcile myself to belief in ahimsa as a policy, I want you in the States to believe in it as a creed. Violence in many Indian States is greater than in British India, and we want the supreme purity and sacrifice of a Prahlada to meet the violence there. Give me a Prahlada, and I shall give him my blessings.

Harijan, 18-1-1942

[1] This is reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "On the Path of Ahimsa"

[2] From an Indian State

711. LETTER TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

SEVAGRAM,
January 18, 1942

DEAR KHAN SAHEB,

Maulana Saheb and Jawaharlal had a long talk with me over your retiring from the Congress. They say that they never understood that you had contemplated withdrawal from the Congress. They said that the talk was plainly about withdrawal from the Working Committee only. They said too that in their opinion your withdrawal even from the W.C. was sure to be misunderstood and would harm the very cause you have at heart. Naturally you are the best judge of the situation. You would give due weight to their opinion. I can have no opinion. I rely entirely upon your judgement on the facts. If the facts are as they say, their opinion should prevail. If they are otherwise and you have no such fear as they entertain, your opinion should prevail.

They further said that you should take no step without the approval of Dr. Khan Saheb and your co-workers. They say too that if you go, Dr. K. S. must come to the W.C. You will now tell me and Maulana Saheb what is to be your judgement.[1]

I hope my letter is clear. With love,

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

712. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

January 19, 1942

CHI. LILI,

I have your letter. I have not a single minute to spare. It is not proper for you to lose heart. You must make up your mind to pass. We are going to Kashi today, and shall be back on the 24th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 10089. Courtesy : Lilavati Asar

[1] The addressee resigned from the Congress Working Committee on February 8, 1942.

713. REAL WAR EFFORT

The greatest need of the immediate present is to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. There is already scarcity in the land both of food and clothing. As the war progresses, both the scarcities must increase. There are no imports from outside, either of food-stuff or of cloth. The well-to-do may not feel the pinch as yet or at all, but the poor are feeling it now. The well-to-do live on the poor. There is no other way. What is then their duty? He who saves gains as much, that is to say, he produces as much. Hence those who feel for the poor, those who would be one with them must curtail their wants. There are many ways. I shall only mention some here. There is much, too much food eaten and wasted by the well-to-do.

Use one grain at a time. Chapati, rice, and pulses, milk, *gur*, ghee, and oil are used in ordinary households besides vegetables and fruit. I regard this as an unhealthy combination. Those who get animal protein in the shape of milk, cheese, eggs or meat need not use pulses at all. The poor people get only vegetable protein. If the well-to-do give up pulses and oils, they set free these two essentials for the poor who get neither animal protein nor animal fat. Then the grain eaten should not be sloppy. Half the quantity suffices when it is eaten dry and not dipped in any gravy. It is well to eat it with raw salads such as onion, carrot, radish, salad leaves, tomatoes. An ounce or two of salads serves the purpose of eight ounces of cooked vegetables. Chapatis or bread should not be eaten with milk. To begin with, one meal may be raw vegetables and chapati or bread, and the other cooked vegetables with milk or curds.

Sweet dishes should be eliminated altogether. Instead, *gur* or sugar in small quantities may be taken with milk or bread or by itself.

Fresh fruit is good to eat, but only a little is necessary to give tone to the system. It is an expensive article, and an over-indulgence by the well-to-do has deprived the poor and the ailing of an article which they need much more than the well-to-do.

Any medical man who has studied the science of dietetics will certify that what I have suggested can do no harm to the body, on the contrary it must conduce to better health.

This is only one way of saving food-stuff. It is obvious. But by itself it cannot produce much visible effect.

Grain-dealers have to shed their greed and the habit of making as much profit as possible. They must be satisfied with as little as possible. They run the risk of being looted, if they do not gain the credit of being keepers of grain for the sake of the poor. They should

be in touch with the people in their neighbourhood. Congressmen have to visit grain-dealers within their beat and give them the message of the time.

By far the most important part of the work consists in educating the villagers to keep what they have and to induce cultivation of fresh crops wherever water is available. This requires widespread and intelligent propaganda. It is not generally known that bananas, potatoes, beetroot, yam and *suran*, and in a measure pumpkin are a food crop easily grown. They can take the place of bread in time of need.

There is, too, scarcity of money. There may be grain available but no money to buy it with. There is no money because there is no employment. This has to be found. Spinning is the readiest and the handiest. But local needs may supply other sources of labour. Every available source has to be tapped so that there is no want of employment. Only the lazy ones need and must starve. Patient handling will induce even this class to shed their laziness.

The problem of clothing is much easier than feeding, if it is handled well and in time. The mills may not be relied on in these times. There is ample cotton to be had in India. It is a problem for cotton cultivators how to dispose of their stock. The outside market is closed to them. Our mills cannot absorb the whole of the crop. It can be utilized, if the nation takes to spinning not for wages but for the sake of clothing the naked. Of course those who need employment will spin for profit. This number must be limited. They need organizing. Much money will be needed for the purpose. But national spinning does not need so much organizing. Profit motive being eliminated and willingness being assumed, organization is reduced to simplest terms.

This is no time for multiplying wheels. They take time to manufacture. Raw materials are daily becoming dearer. Wheels cannot be manufactured everywhere. Places where they are can be counted on the fingers of one hand.

Therefore I suggest the plying of the *dhanush takli* and even the simple *takli*. The former should be manufactured locally. Indeed it is difficult to manufacture the simple *takli* at once in lacs. The *dhanush takli* is the only thing which can be easiest manufactured. Slivers cannot be supplied to spinners. Each one should get some cotton for himself or herself, and card it as well as may be with the hand or with a home-made small bow such as the children in the Bihar basic schools have. All this can be done because no one is expected to manufacture a large quantity of yarn. If every one of our available

millions span for one hour daily, there would be enough yarn to keep every handloom going. The reader should know that there are lacs of handloom weavers in the land. There is danger of their starving for want of yarn.

Here is a great task for every Congressman to undertake. He has to become a good spinner and carder and know how to manufacture the *dhanush takli*. Let every Congressman begin with himself and his family and neighbours, and he will find that the life-giving contagion spreads like wild fire which envelops you before you hardly know what you are witnessing.

Any organization that tackles these two problems successfully will command the love and confidence of the people. I hope that all will join in this real war effort. It is none the less effective because it is peaceful and constructive.

Will the Princes let their people do this work without let or hindrance? Will Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah allow the members of the Muslim League to co-operate with the Congress workers in this truly national but non-political work which is also humanitarian? There are 23,000 Muslim spinners, carders and weavers earning their daily bread through the A.I.S.A.

ON THE WAY TO KASHI, January 19, 1942

Harijan, 25-1-1942

714. CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME AND GOVERNMENT

Will not the working of the constructive programme bring Congressmen into conflict with the Government? This was one of the many questions asked at the meeting of the principal members of the A. I. C. C. I addressed in Wardha on the 17th. My answer was that the whole programme was so conceived as to avoid conflict. Of course the most innocent activity may be so manipulated as to provoke conflict. I expect every Congress worker to do his best to avoid it. But there is no help for it, if the Government prohibit such activities because they are undertaken by Congressmen who believe that the working of the constructive programme will bring swaraj. That is the only non-violent way to achieve the end. Swaraj by non-violent means must come from the creative effort of those who desire it. The Government should welcome every such effort, unless they want to prevent even cent per cent non-violent movement. In that case conflict will become unavoidable. But I am of opinion that no conflict is possible, at any rate while the war lasts, unless the Congress workers want or provoke it. They have to work, work and work. They will make no speeches or

demonstrations in doing their constructive work. As I have already said, today most of the items of constructive work happen to be—like feeding and clothing—common cause between the Government and the people.

ON THE WAY TO KASHI, January 19, 1942

Harijan, 25-1-1942

715. COMMUNAL UNITY

Freedom will not come through parliamentary effort. Therefore communal pacts, whilst they are good if they can be had, are valueless unless they are backed by the union of hearts. Without it there can be no peace in the land. Even Pakistan can bring no peace, if there is no union of hearts. This union can come only by mutual service and co-operative work.

Separate electorates have resulted in the separation of hearts. They presupposed mutual distrust and conflict of interests. They have tended to perpetuate differences and deepen the distrust.

How to get out of the tangle is the question. I want just now to confine myself to the four Muslim majority provinces. In them there is natural Pakistan in the sense that the permanent majority can rule the minority. I hold it to be utterly wrong thus to divide man from man by reason of religion which is liable to change. What conflict of interest can there be between Hindus and Muslims in the matter of revenue, sanitation, police, justice, or the use of public conveniences? The difference can only be in religious usage and observances with which a secular State has no concern.

Congressmen, if they are not to merge in the Hindus as Hindus, must rigidly abstain from the legislatures and local bodies governed by separate electorates. In these provinces the separate electorates must be taken to have come from the Hindu demand and in the supposed Hindu interest. But a Congress Hindu has no interest apart from his Muslim brother. Therefore he must not enter the electoral bodies where Hindu and Muslim interests are falsely regarded as separate and even antagonistic. If he enters these bodies, he can do so only to divide the majority members, i.e., to take sides with one Muslim party or another. If I could make all Hindus Congress-minded, I would withdraw every Hindu member from these bodies and put the Muslim members on their honour. I would seek to influence them from outside these bodies by being friends with them and rendering disinterested service. I would be indifferent to their manning all the services. At the most an infinitesimal percentage can

have a share in them. And it is a superstition to suppose that these services can oppress a people who have become

conscious of human dignity and human rights and know how to enforce them. Since the vast majority of Congressmen are Hindus in at least three Muslim majority provinces, they have a rare opportunity of showing their non-violent strength, their disinterestedness, their utter freedom from the communal taint, and their ability to submit to the rule of their Muslim fellow-countrymen. They will do this not in a huff but as true nationalists and friends of the Muslims. Remaining outside they will probably better protect the just interests of Hindus as citizens. For a Congress Hindu is not any the less a Hindu because he claims to represent equally, as he must, all the other faiths in himself. For as I have said, so far as the State is concerned, its capacity for service stops short of the service of the different faiths, and the services it can render apply to all irrespective of their faiths. Therefore Congressmen have a rare opportunity of showing undefiled nationalism in these provinces. They will incidentally show the other minorities that they have nothing to fear from the majorities if they know the true way. We must get out of the miasma of religious majorities and minorities. Why is a Parsi's interest different from a Hindu's or Muslim's so far as the State is concerned? Did not Dadabhai and Pherozeshah rule the Congress while they lived, not by Congress grace or patronage, but by right of service and merit? Did their rule injure any Hindu or Muslim interest? Were these interests ever in conflict on the Congress platform? And is not the Congress a voluntary State?

ON THE WAY TO KASHI, January 20, 1942

Harijan, 25-1-1942

716. QUESTION BOX

CONGRESS AND A. R. P.

Q. Can a Congressman belong to A.R.P. and such other committees connected with the war?

A. I think not. But this does not mean that he will render no help in caring for those who may be injured by bombs or otherwise. On the contrary he will be expected to be most assiduous in rendering such help.

ECONOMIC EQUALITY

Q. While working the constructive programme, can a Congressman preach economic equality? How can working the civil disobedience programme bring it about?

A. You can certainly preach it, if your speech is strictly non-violent and not in the manner of some who, I know, have preached forcible dispossession of landowners and capitalists. But I have shown a better way than preaching. The constructive programme takes the country a long way towards the goal. This is the most auspicious time for it. The charkha and the allied industries, if fully successful, practically abolish all inequalities, both social and economic. The rising consciousness of the strength which non-violence gives to the people, and their intelligent refusal to co-operate in their slavery must bring about equality.

STRENGTHEN THE ORGANIZATION

Q. What is the meaning of strengthening the Congress organization?

A. You can strengthen it no doubt by enlisting members who know the meaning of the fundamental article of the Congress, namely, attainment of Purna Swaraj by peaceful and legitimate means. Enlisting of bogus members and members for seizing power in the Congress is vicious and harmful.

There is no room for power politics within the Congress, if the Congress is to end the power or the system that grinds the people and be itself in power. Therefore real strengthening of the organization consists in every Congressman working the constructive programme to its fullest capacity. Enlisting *bona fide* members without much effort provides running expense of the Congress, only if the enlisting itself does not eat up the subscriptions you collect from members.

'OTHER ORGANIZATIONS'

Q. What do you mean by associating with other volunteer organizations working for similar ends? Do you include communal organizations?

A. I do. Unfortunately we have very few other non-communal organizations. 'Similar ends' naturally means constructive ends, using 'constructive' in the widest sense of the term. Thus you will tender your help to a Muslim League or Hindu Sabha volunteer in putting out fire or tending the wounded. You will also invite their help in such matters.

ON THE WAY TO KASHI, January 20, 1942

Harijan, 25-1-1942 and 1-2-1942

717. SPEECH AT BENARES HINDU UNIVERSITY[1]

January 21, 1942

REVERED MALAVIYAJI, SIR RADHAKRISHNAN, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You all know very well that I have neither the physical strength nor the inclination to undertake a long journey, and yet when I received Sir Radhakrishnan's invitation to deliver an address on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee Convocation of the Benares Hindu University I had not the heart to decline it. You know the strong bond of affection that binds me to Malaviyaji, and it is with a certain amount of pride and satisfaction that I obey his behest whenever it is at all possible for me. I therefore could not say 'no', Sir Radhakrishnan's letter was a call to a pilgrimage.

Great as are Malaviyaji's services to the country, I have no doubt that this University constitutes his greatest service and achievement, and he has worn himself out for the work that is dear to him as life itself. It was out of my great regard for him that twenty-five years ago I accepted his invitation to attend the foundation ceremony of this University.[2] I knew that in that august function, which was to be attended by the Viceroy and the ruling Princes of India, there was no place for a poor man like me. I had not then been made a Mahatma, and if anyone called me by that name, I knew I must have been mistaken for Mahatma Munshiramji, as the late Swami Shraddhanand was then called. For there cannot be a number of Mahatmas, and I knew even when I was in South Africa that Munshiramji's great work had entitled him to that name. He also was one of those who sent me messages of congratulations and compassion. In those days too Malaviyaji Maharaj showered his kindness on me. But he has a knack for detecting servants of the people, however obscure they may be, and bringing them into his fold. This is his usual trick.

People have great admiration for Malaviyaji Maharaj as you must have heard today. He deserves every word of it. I know the Hindu University is a huge affair. There is no greater beggar than Malaviyaji on the face of the earth. He has never begged for himself; by the grace of God he has never been in want, but he became a voluntary beggar for causes he has made his own, and God has always filled his bowl in an overflowing measure. But he has an insatiable

[1] This has been collated with Mahadev Desai's translation in *Harijan*, 1-2-1942, under the title "Kashi Vishwavidyalaya Address".

[2] *Vide* Speech at Benares Hindu University", 6-2-1916.

appetite, and although he got a crore and ten lacs instead of the crore he wanted he is still asking for more. Even at this moment he whispered into my ears that he had a good donation from the Maharaja of Darbhanga, our Chairman. I know how Malaviyaji leads his own life. It has been my privilege to be acquainted with every aspect of his life. It is a rare good fortune to have him still in our midst, a living example of a pure life of plain living and high thinking; the students particularly can draw many a lesson from his life but I have a fear that, though he is physically in your midst, many of you are untouched by his great example. The fault is wholly ours, not his. The sun radiates heat and light to all on earth, but how can even the sun help those who will shut themselves from him? But I am not here to sing Malaviyaji's praises. Who can be more unfortunate than the one who in spite of being so near to him fails to imbibe his noble qualities such as his simplicity, sacrifice, patriotism, generosity and universal love?

I must now address a few words to you—the teachers and the students of the Vidyapith. When I accepted Sir Radhakrishnan's invitation he had asked me to send a copy of my address to him. I told him that I had no time to write anything, I did not even know what I should be able to say. A feeling of nervousness overpowers me when I am in the midst of learned men. Ever since my return to India my lot has been cast among the poor and the downtrodden—those whom the Congress represents—and whilst in their midst I feel no sense of constraint or hesitation. In your midst I feel tongue-tied. I simply said to Sir Radhakrishnan that I should trust to the inspiration of the moment. That inspiration has come, but I do not know how you will welcome my plain-speaking.

As speaker after speaker spoke and left the dais, I longed for someone who would address the audience in Hindi or Urdu, or Hindustani, aye, even in Sanskrit,—even in Marathi, or for that matter in any of the Indian languages. But no such good luck befell me and you. Why? We are slaves and have hugged the language of those who have kept us enslaved. It has become a fashion to blame the Englishmen for all our ills. I have not hesitated to blame them for many things they have done. I have never charged them with compelling us to adopt English as the medium of expression. We devote precious years of our lives to learning the English language, our ambition being to be able to speak English as Englishmen, and our breast swells with pride when an Englishman pats us on our back for speaking flawless English. Think of the time and energy of our youth expended on learning the English language, as if it was our mother tongue, and calculate by simple multiplication the number of

years and the volume of precious energy that are lost to the nation.

And yet all this is happening in the Benares Hindu University which has been extolled today as the living embodiment of Indian culture. Malaviyaji did all that was necessary to draw the best possible teachers by attractive salaries, but he could not do the rest. It was not his fault that Hindi did not take the place of English. The teachers are the product of the tradition which they have inherited, and the students are content to accept what they get from them. They need not be. They go on strikes and even hunger-strikes, often for trivial reasons. Why will they not insist on having their tuition in the all-India language? There are, we were told today, 250 students here from the Andhra Province. Let them go to Sir Radhakrishnan and ask for an Andhra section of the University and ask to be taught through the medium of Telugu if they will not learn the all-India language. But if they were to be guided by my lights, being Indians they should demand as the medium of instruction a language understood throughout India. And Hindustani alone can be that language.

You know what has happened in Japan—a country which I do not regard as essentially great—but which is regarded as great in Asia in that it has successfully challenged the supremacy of America and England. The thouands of boys and girls in the Japanese schools and colleges receive their education not through the medium of English but through Japanese. Their script is difficult, but it is no bar to their learning it and they have not given it up in preference to the Roman. Not that they boycott English and other European language. But they economize their energy. Those who need to learn them do so for enriching the Japanese thought with knowledge which the West alone can give. They take care to turn into Japanese all that is worth taking from the West. That is because the mind of Japan's youth is fresh and alert. The knowledge gained thus has become national property. There would have been no greater folly if instead of doing so they had thrown their mother tongue to the winds and opened English medium schools and colleges such as we find in other countries. In this way they might well have learnt a new language but the Japanese people could not have gained the new knowledge. Our ambition does not go beyond becoming clerks in Government offices, lawyers, barristers, judges, all helplessly serving the system they would fain destroy. And we have not succeeded in mastering the English language either. After all, is it not an alien language? I get numerous letters from English-educated people—some of them possessing the highest degrees of our universities—but they betray a woeful ignorance of the English language. The reason is simple. Malaviyajis and Radhakrishnans are rare, and the thousands cannot achieve what

they have done.

As I was listening to the English speeches I was amazed at the patience and innate courtesy of our people who, though they do not understand a word of what is said, do not mob us, as they well might do. If there is any doubt in your minds about this, I can demonstrate to you by a show of hands how few—even from among the students—have followed the proceedings here. I had said all this when I came here twenty-five years ago. What I have seen today compels me to repeat it all.

There is another thing to which I am tempted to draw your attention. I witnessed this morning a scene that I had least expected here. There was a Vasant Panchami day[1] procession of the students who had to march past Malaviyaji's house after receiving his silent blessings. The way in which they were walking betrayed a lack of even elementary physical training. Instead of walking in step, erect and disciplined like soldiers on the march, they walked haphazardly in a desultory fashion. Their walking could hardly be called a march. In my opinion they are so much burdened with English that they find no time to attend to other things. That is why they are unable to learn the things they must.

I noticed another thing while returning after a visit to Shri Shivprasad Gupta in the morning. I cannot help saying a word about the sight that greets you as you enter the great portals of the University. Thanks to the money that Malaviyaji can get for the asking, the gate is in consonance with the splendour of the edifices here. But what did I find on the top of the gate?—the bulk of the space (three-fourths) taken up by the words BENARES HINDU UNIVERSITY in English, and one-fourth given to the inscription in Hindi which is the language through which you would derive your knowledge. I wondered what need there was of the English language? Malaviyaji cannot be blamed for this. It must have been the work of some engineer. Just a little thought on the part of those who were in charge of such things would have been enough to tell them that what was needed there was the name written in Devanagari and Persian scripts—which would have symbolized to the people the desire on the part of Malaviyaji's University and Sir Radhakrishnan for communal harmony. It would have been in the fitness of things too, as both Hindi and Urdu are understood in this region and both the scripts are familiar. The fact that it is written in English is an indication of the domination of the English language over our minds.

We are scared of learning a new language or a script, whereas

[1] On which the Goddess of Learning is worshipped

for us learning an Indian language or a script should be as easy as anything. Surely it is no difficult thing for a non-Hindi-speaking person to learn Hindi or Hindustani. I can undertake to teach Hindi to anyone knowing Gujarati, Bengali or Marathi in the space of three months. Even the South Indian languages—Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada—are full of Sanskrit words and, if there was just a little fervour and love of the country in us, we should not hesitate to decide to write all the languages derived from Sanskrit as also the Southern group in the Devanagari script. These languages have not only a fairly common vocabulary, there is also a striking resemblance in the scripts. If our minds were not fagged, we would easily know half a dozen Indian languages. Then there is Urdu which should not be difficult to learn, if only our Urdu scholars did not make it a matter of pride to pack it with Persian and Arabic words, as the pundits pack Hindi with Sanskrit words. The result is that I am completely at a loss when high-flown Urdu of the Lucknow style is flung at me.

One more thought I should like to leave with you. Every university is supposed to have its tradition, its distinctive feature—Oxford and Cambridge, for instance, have theirs. They take pride in the fact that the students they turn out can at once be identified for the distinctive impression left on them by the universities. Our universities leave no such distinctive mark. But I am afraid our universities are the blotting-sheets of the West. We have borrowed the superficial features of the Western universities, and flattered ourselves that we have founded living universities here. Do they reflect or respond to the needs of the masses? Now I am told that a special feature of your University is that engineering and technology are taught here as nowhere else. I should not consider this a distinguishing feature. Let me make a suggestion to you. Have you been able to attract to your University youths from Aligarh? Have you been able to identify yourselves with them? That, I think, should be your special work, the special contribution of your University. Money has come in, and more will come in if God keeps Malaviyaji in our midst for a few more years. But no amount of money will achieve the miracle I want—I mean a heart-unity between Hindus and Muslims. I would like you to go out to invite Mussalmans to come here, and not to mind if they reject your advances. You are the representatives of a great civilization which according to Lokamanya Tilak is 10,000 years old and according to later scholars even older. This civilization regards ahimsa as the supreme dharma. This has been our tradition from the times of the Vedas. The special contribution of that civilization is to befriend the world, to turn so-called foes into friends. Our civilization has absorbed, like the holy Ganga, many streams from outside, and it

is my prayer that the Hindu University which is endeavouring to represent Hindu culture and Hindu civilization may invite and absorb all that is best in other cultures and nurse hostility towards none. That should be its distinctive feature. English will not help you to evolve this. It is our own ancient learning that will teach you this—our scriptures learnt and understood in the proper spirit.

One thing more and I have done. You are living in palatial hostels, but you should not get used to living in palaces. Look at the little house in which Panditji lives in utter simplicity and without the least splendour. You enter his room. There is no decoration and only the barest furniture. You, who will be his heirs, should model your lives accordingly. Many of you are children of poor parents. Don't forget that you have to represent the poor, and that therefore a life of ease and luxury is inconsistent with the poverty of our land. May you be all models of plain and simple living and high thinking like Malaviyaji. May God bless you with long life and the wisdom to carry out what I have said, if it has appealed to you.

[From Hindi]

Benares Hindu Vishwavidyalaya Rajat Jayanti Samaroh, pp. 41-7.

718. DISCUSSION WITH CONGRESS WORKERS[1]

BENARES,

January 22, 1942

Q. What is your ultimate object? Do you want the Congress to accept your principles or to achieve its object?

A. Every plan and programme that I have placed before the Congress has been placed with a view to achieving the goal of independence. Truth and non-violence are a matter of creed for me—you may call it my religion, but it has not been my object to propagate that religion through the Congress. Before the Congress they have been placed as effective means to an end—as political means for a political objective, as I did in South Africa. If it was otherwise, I should cease to be a political worker and occupy the position of a *dharmaguru*[2]. The political method can be changed whenever expedient, but the change should be honest and deliberate. But one should not pretend to adhere to the method when really in practice one has given it up. That would be deceiving oneself and the

[1] Mahadev Desai in "Benares Notes—II", from which this is extracted, reported the proceedings of two meetings—one of the Executive of the U.P. Provincial Congress Committee and the other of the U.P.P.C.C.

[2] Religious head

world.

Q. We should like to have a glimpse of the next six months of a year as you picture it to yourself. You have often said that this is a fight to the finish, your last fight which will not end until the goal is won. What are likely to be the future developments as you can visualize them?

A. It is a good question, and also a difficult question. Not that I am not clear, but because it takes us into the realm of speculation. I let things and happenings react on me—though I confess I do not follow everything as Jawaharlal with his study of foreign affairs can. Jawaharlal is convinced that the British Empire is finished. We all wish that it may be finished, but I do not think it is finished. We know that the Britishers are tough fighters, we know what the Empire—especially India—means to every home in Britain, and therefore they will never consent to be 'Little Englanders'. Mr. Churchill has said that they are not "sugar candies", and that they can meet rough with rough. Therefore it will be long before the Empire is finished. There is no doubt, however, that they are nearing the end, and what Jawaharlal has said is very true that, if we could do nothing to prevent the war, we certainly will do much to prevent a peace in which we have no voice. That is what every Congressman has to bear in mind. We have, therefore, to be up and doing. If we sit with folded hands, we may have a peace which we do not desire.

I adhere to the statement that it is my final fight, but we have had to alter our programme because of the latest developments, because war has come to our door. The suspension had nothing to do with my retirement from the official leadership of the Congress. Even if it had continued, how could I today ask Jawaharlal to march back to jail? Of course he will be in jail, if he is prevented from doing the work we have chalked out. But things have happened so rapidly that we had not the slightest idea of what was coming. How then can I talk of a year or even six months ahead? That we are marching swiftly towards independence I have no doubt. There is no doubt about the programme ahead of us. No Congressman should rest content with just paying his four-anna fee. He has to be active all the twenty-four hours. Even the one concrete programme of production of cloth is sufficient to occupy all our energies. There are 4,000 students in the Benares Hindu University. Will they spin an hour every day? I am talking of spinning because it is a thing nearest my heart, but there are a hundred and one other things. Have the villagers enough food to eat? Have they enough to cover themselves in this bitter cold? These are the questions that occur to me again and again. On our capacity to feed the starving and clothe the naked and generally to serve the masses in the time of their need will depend our capacity to influence

the peace whenever it comes. What I have said applies to all parties. Whoever serves the purpose best will survive and have an effective voice.

Q. You think they cannot have a treaty just as they like?

A. I do. The days of secret treaties are gone, I hope. If we behave ourselves, we can have a decisive voice at least so far as we are concerned. But Jawaharlal can explain these things better. I am no student of history or even of contemporary events in the world.

Q. Why did you advise the A.I.C.C. members to support the Bardoli Resolution, though at one stage you had decided to divide the house? Rajaji's speeches after the A.I.C.C. are against the Bombay Resolution, and even expediency dictates that there can be no co-operating with a dying Empire.

A. I am afraid you are 'estopped' from asking the question, if I may use a legal term. But as you have asked the question, and there is nothing to hide, I may answer it. In fact I answered it in my speech before the A. I. C. C.,[1] if you listened to it with attention. Well, then, let me tell you that, though I am old in age, my mind is not decaying. It is ever growing, and the decision not to divide the house indicates my growth or evolution in my own non-violence.[2]

Mahatma Gandhi said that after he had made his attitude on the question known since the Bardoli decision, he had come to realize that as the majority of the Working Committee members, representing, as they do, the large bulk of Congressmen, were not prepared to go the whole hog with him on the question of non-violence, it would have become unfair to clinch the issue at Wardha, for he was confident that if he had insisted upon the question being decided by a vote, a large number of the A.I.C.C. members, perhaps in spite of their conscience, would have voted in support of his attitude. That could have been a decision obviously misrepresenting the real situation. It would have been harmful in the extreme, and hence he decided that he should plead for the support of the Working Committee's resolution. Wrong assumptions could never lead to right results.[3]

To divide the house appeared to me a piece of violence. If every one of the members of the A. I. C. C. was a pukka believer in political non-violence, it would have been a different matter. But I knew that such was not the case. The Bardoli Resolution was a true reflection of the Congress mind. In such matters majority and minority do not count. And there was nothing to prevent the whole-hoggers to go whatever length they liked.

The contingency of co-operation is, if anything, very remote.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting", 15-1-1942.

[2] The following paragraph is from *National Herald*.

[3] This sentence is from *The Hindu*.

Until then all have to act in terms of non-violence. When the contingency does arise the whole-hoggers can secede from the Congress. In fact we can then meet again and put the whole matter to vote.

Q. Would it be proper or improper to defend oneself with arms against *atatayis* (confirmed offenders) in case of disturbances?

A. The answer has been already given by me and also by the Congress. And the word *atatayi* is bad for our purpose. And don't ask what is proper and improper. If you were to ask *me*, I should say it is improper. If you are non-violent, do not have resort to arms. If you cannot muster non-violence of the brave, defend yourself as best [as] you can. The law gives everyone the right of self-defence against a dacoit, and the Congress does not take away the legal right. But in riots or communal disturbances, he who calls himself a Congressman has to act non-violently. That is the resolution of the Congress. Even there if your courage fails you and you use force, the Congress will not censure you, for the simple reason that the Congress never intended to encourage cowardice.

Q. You are said to have permitted khadi bhandars to sell blankets to Government. It is not co-operation in the war effort?

A. I did. It was not proper for me to ask whether the blankets were for the use of soldiers or for someone else. The case is different when a man sells fire-arms or swords or poison. The vendor has to inquire how the fire-arms are to be used, and the chemist has to ask for the doctor's certificate. On the other hand a rice-seller will not, and is under no obligation to inquire who is going to consume the rice.[1]

Admitting that it was very difficult to draw the line of demarcation, Mahatma Gandhi said the principal criterion from his point of view was for the supplier to consider how his supply would be utilized. Of course, his view on the question was not necessarily that of the Congress and Congressmen were free to object to it without acquiescing in the butchery in which the soldiers were engaged. It was quite conceivable that the blankets supplied to them served to spare them the hardships of a severe winter, the more so when they were maimed or wounded in the battle. There was the underlying humanitarian motive in making these supplies and that could not be questioned as co-operation in the war effort.

But you may go further than I did. If you think I erred, you are at liberty to denounce me. If you think a non-violent man may not sell rice or blankets to soldiers, you are welcome to your interpretation of non-violence. I for one will not hesitate to give water or food to a

[1] The following paragraph is from *National Herald*.

soldier who comes to me with hands red with murder. My humanity would not let me do otherwise.

The question of spurious khadi was next discussed, and Gandhiji said :

A great deal depends on intelligent and wide-awake public opinion. If the public takes it into its mind to prevent the spread of this khadi, it can easily do so. But we have not cultivated what Lord Willingdon used to call the courage to say 'No'. Those who are interested in khadi are all shareholders of the A. I. S. A., and it is their duty to take up this work. To feed the hungry and clothe the naked is our immediate programme, and you have all to lend a hand effectively. If you all do so, the question of spurious khadi will not arise. No Congressman can deal in spurious khadi.[1]

Stressing the importance of Congressmen concentrating on khadi, Mahatma Gandhi said that by virtue of their commitment to the Congress constructive programme whereof the khadi movement was the most important part, the responsibility of clothing Indians in the immediate future was devolving upon the shoulders of Congressmen and they would soon be tested as to their ability to discharge it. Inquiries made by him from Indian millowners had revealed that cloth stocks were very limited and fast diminishing. And such of them as were held were being manipulated by persons dealing in futures (*satta*). Not only the public, said Mahatma Gandhi, but also the Government of the country would knock at his doors for more and ever more of khadi in the near future. That time was fast approaching. He hoped that Congressmen would not be found unprepared to meet the situation.

The last question was about the Congressmen's duty in times of raids and scares and consequent disturbances.

The emergency is there today. Dacoities are rampant, and unless the Congress asserts itself effectively, the situation will go out of our hands. The need for peace brigades was never more urgent than now.[2] The risk of death is there, whether you choose violence or non-violence. Why not then prepare yourselves to die non-violently? It will also enable you to offer effective resistance in case of a civil war. As for the protection of the wounded in air raids, the bulk of the work will come upon yourselves. You will not join the A. R. P., simply because you will be then parts of a machine over which you have no control and you would be active participants in the war effort[3]. But it

[1] The following paragraph is form *National Herald*.

[2] *National Herald* add here : "In this connection he said that the danger, far from lying in the future, was ever present and, saying that his suggestion for the formation of peace brigades still held the field, he complained that Congressmen had doubted his seriousness in making it and had dismissed it as impracticable without earnestly examining its implications and potentialities."

[3] *National Herald* adds here : "in regard to which the Congress position had been already made clear."

is certain that the Government will not be able to render assistance everywhere. Did they do so in Rangoon? We have harrowing tales of the dead and wounded lying on the streets of Rangoon uncared for. Wherever, therefore, the authorities fail there will be enough scope of work for us. We have to prepare

volunteers for this work ready to take risks and to act with initiative. We may have to remove the dead and wounded, take charge of vacant houses, and so on. In this work you will heartily co-operate with the authorities wherever they will accept your co-operation.[1]

Mahatma Gandhi said that . . . nothing was expected to deter them from organizing volunteer squads and offering such relief as was possible in emergencies in co-operation with the Government organization, if necessary, and in spite of it, if possible, regardless of the consequences. For instance, after an air raid if there were persons trapped in a crumbling house or a house on fire, it was the duty of Congressmen to extricate them and pull down the house, lest it should collapse and take a toll of life, without waiting to see whether the official organization's aid, sanction or a request for co-operation was forthcoming.

Mahatma Gandhi was all humour at the conference and Acharya J. B. Kripalani, General Secretary of the Congress, was the butt of it. Mahatma Gandhi said :

Kripalani was morose formerly, because I thought he was not married. But, even when he is married and has a very good partner in life, his mood haunts him.

Harijan, 8-2-1942, and *National Herald*, 24-1-1942

719. HINDUSTANI

(a) The proceedings of the Congress, the A.I.C.C. and the Working Committee shall ordinarily be conducted in Hindustani. The English language or any Provincial language may be used, if the speaker is unable to speak in Hindustani or whenever permitted by the President.

(b) The proceedings of the Provincial Congress Committee shall ordinarily be conducted in the language of the Province concerned. Hindustani may also be used.

—Article 25 of the Congress Constitution

The Congress has not carried out this resolution to any appreciable extent. It is a sad reflection. The fault is Congressmen's. They will not take the trouble of learning Hindustani. Their effort for learning languages is evidently exhausted with the performance of the impossible task of acquiring a knowledge of the English language equal to a learned Englishman's. The result is tragic. It has meant

[1] What follows is from *National Herald*.

impoverishment of the provincial languages and displacement of the all-India language described by the Congress as Hindustani. It has also meant a break between the millions and the English-educated few who happen to be the natural leaders for the simple reason that they are the only educated class. There is no education worth the name apart from the schools established by the Government. The Congress has to perform the Herculean task of dissplacing the English language with Hindustani. With the passing of the resolution it should have created a bureau for fulfilling, the purpose as it might do even now. But if it does not, individual Congressmen and those who are interested in evolving an all-India language should do so.

But what is Hindustani? There is no such language apart from Urdu and Hindi. Urdu has sometimes been called Hindustani. Did the Congress mean Urdu in the Article quoted? Did it exclude the more extensively known Hindi? Such a meaning would be absurd. It evidently meant, and could only mean, a scientific blend of Hindi and Urdu. There is no such written blend extant. But it is the common speech of the unlettered millions of Hindus and Muslims living in Northern India. Not being written, it is imperfect, and he written language has taken two different turns tending to widen the difference by each running away from the other. Therefore the word Hindustani means Hindi and Urdu. Therefore also Hindi can call itself Hindustani, if it does not exclude Urdu but tries to assimilate Urdu as much as is scientifically possible without damaging the natural structure and music of the original. Urdu can do likewise. There is no separate Hindustani body attempting to blend the two streams which today threaten to run away from each other.

The noble task can be performed by the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan and Anjuman-e-taraqqi-e-Urdu. I have been connected with the former since 1918[1] when I was invited to preside at its session of that year. I aequainted the audience with my views on the all-India medium. When I presided again at its session in 1935[2], I was able to persuade the Sammelan to define Hindi as the language spoken by Hindus and Muslims of the North of India and written either in Devanagari or Persian script. The natural consequence should have been for the members of the Sammelan to expand their knowledge of Hindi by living up to the definition and producing literature that

[1] The source has "1917"; Gandhiji had presided over the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan in March 1918 in Indore. *Vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909.

[2] Also at Indore; *vide* "Speech at Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Indore", 20-4-1935.

could be read by both Hindus and Muslims. This

should have meant the members learning the Persian script. They seem to have denied themselves this proud privilege. But better late than never. Will they bestir themselves now? They need not wait for the Anjuman to respond. It will be a great thing, if the Anjuman does. Each Association can, if it will, work in harmony with the other. But I have suggested unitary action independent of the other party. That Association which will adopt my plan will enrich the language it stands for, and will ultimately be responsible for producing a blend which will serve the whole nation.

It is unfortunate that the Hindi-Urdu question has assumed a communal shape. It is possible for either party to undo the mischief by recognizing the other and incorporating the acceptable part in a generous spirit. A language that borrows unstintingly from the others without harming its special characteristic will be enriched, even as the English language has become enriched by free borrowings.

ON THE WAY TO WARDHA, January 23, 1942

Harijan, 1-2-1942

720. SPEECH AT CHOKHAMELA BOARDING HOUSE[1]

NAGPUR,

January 24, 1942

Gandhiji began to address the gathering. There was noise. In a moment a youth[2] sprang to his feet and said : "This is not the ordinary noise. We are protesting against your coming." Gandhiji invited him to come to the rostrum and say what he wanted to say. He had nothing more to say than this : "We do not want you here. Those who invited you here had no right to do so." Asked Gandhiji of him :

But why don't you want me here?

Because you have done nothing for the Harijans.

That's all? Have you anything more to say?

"Nothing more," he said, and after a while disappeared.

I am told by the friend who raised the voice of protest that those who invited me here had no right to do so. The fact is that it was the students of the Chokhamela[3] Boarding House who came to Wardha to invite me. I had begged to be excused, but Shri Chaturbhuj

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "An Unexpected Experience". Gandhiji spoke in Hindustani on the occasion of the silver jubilee of the Boarding House. On his arrival a number of Mahar youths shouted anti-Gandhi slogans.

[2] S. K. Mathurkar

[3] Name of a Harijan saint of the Mahar community

Jasani intervened and told me that, if the work that carried me to Benares was after my heart, this might be even dearer in as much as it was the silver jubilee of an institution that had served Harijan boys. And since the abolition of untouchability is my life's work and I even toured the country for the same cause for one whole year[1], I agreed.

But assuming that those who invited me had no right to do so, it was surely not my fault. These protests do not displease me. The Harijans have suffered all these centuries at the hands of the *savarna* Hindus as from no one else, and as I am one of the latter I am participant in their sin. And I am never accustomed to weigh my sins in golden scales. I can atone for them only if I made a mountain of a molehill. The reason is simple. Man can never see his faults in proper perspective, and if he really did so, he would scarcely survive them. The remedy is, therefore, to magnify one's shortcomings. And the sin of untouchability is so heinous that it is impossible to exaggerate it. Those who suffer from it are naturally liable to be angry with those who are trying to wipe it out. They may well say to me : 'Who are you to remove untouchability? We shall wipe it out our own strength.' Now the way of demonstrating one's strength is of two kinds : one is the eternal, God-given way of self-purification, where man takes the blame upon himself of all the wrongs he is suffering from; the other is the way of retaliation, the Mosaic law of tooth for a tooth and nail for a nail. The latter is quite natural in that we have descended from the state of brutes, and some of their qualities may have been exaggerated in us. It is Hitler's way. Because a Jew or many Jews may have wronged the Germans he thinks it is his duty to exterminate the whole Jewish race. To those Harijans who would destroy caste Hindus and Hinduism I would say that the Hindus deserve it. But the caste Hindus too owe a duty to themselves and their religion. Let them receive lathis and stones from Harijans. But they should continue to serve them.

What, however, is to be done, if they will not receive our service?[2]

Let the stones rain on us, we have to keep quiet and to hold this meeting. I had promised to stay here for ten minutes, but I am in no hurry to go now. Send word to the demonstrators that, if they will have a separate meeting, I am prepared to stay and address that meeting and answer the charges they may have to make against me. And what after all is my crime? That I am labouring for them? That I am endeavouring to put a little money into their pockets? That I am

[1] From November 1933 to August 1934

[2] At this stage there was a slight interruption because stones were thrown at the audience, injuring a few persons.

telling the sanatanists day in and day out that they have to purge themselves of their sin? And why rain stones on the innocent audience?

They wanted to hurt me, but what have they succeeded in doing? They have hurt a few innocent people including two children in the audience. If they wanted to punish me or those who invited me, they should have gone directly for us. Let me tell them that this hooliganism is the opposite of bravery, humanity, civility. Let me tell them they are going about the wrong way. They are injuring their own cause.

Now a word to those assembled here. Though this is a boarding house, those who receive their board and lodging here are all students. I hope your stay here will be fruitful and give you what is real education. Let today's demonstration be a lesson to you. It should make you neither angry nor afraid, for anger and fear are twin sins. Let the demonstration awaken you to your sense of duty and burn the eternal truth indelibly on your minds that only Truth quenches untruth, Love, quenches anger, self-suffering quenches violence. This eternal rule is a rule not for saints only but for all. Those who observe it may be few but they are the salt of the earth, it is they who keep the society together, not those who sin against light and truth.

I ask you not only *not* to punish the demonstrators but not even to have the wish. They are not wicked. It is through them that God works to open our eyes to the wickedness within us. Let, therefore, today's demonstration purify you, as I know it will purify me. True *vidya* (knowledge) is the art of self-purification. Now I want you to stay here until the storm ceases, lest your going out just now should infuriate them. Let us wait until their fury ceases, and then quietly go back to our homes. In the mean while let us all recite *Ramdhun* together, let someone give us a hymn, and we shall disperse only when we are told that everything is quiet outside.[1]

Harijan, 1-2-1942

721. TO GUJARATIS[2]

You have sacrificed a great deal in the cause of swaraj. But it is not enough. You can contribute still more in the form of money, labour, and increasingly intelligent and fresh minds.

Is it not sad that Rs. 2 lakhs worth of khadi only is being

[1] Krishnanand Sokhta then invited the audience to join him in reciting Ramanama and the meeting dispersed peacefully thereafter.

[2] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 1-2-1942.

produced in Gujarat whereas Rs. 12 lakhs worth is wanted? It may be that there is not so much poverty in Gujarat as in the other provinces. But that does not mean that Gujaratis cannot, if they wish, produce all the khadi they need. Reckoning the population of Gujarat at 1 crore, the people would need at least 3 crores worth of cloth. You should produce at least this quantity, i.e., 15 crore yards.

The time is fast approaching when we shall not be able to get mill-cloth. There is scarcity even today, and what if the mills are bombed, what if they are used as munition factories? Either each one of us, young and old, rich and poor, man and woman, has to spin and provide for his own clothing or else go naked. There is not the least exaggeration in this. In the warring countries people are rationed for food and clothing,[1] and as the war is prolonged even the necessities of life are being used up and munitions are produced only to end in smoke. The war is thus working double destruction.

We have been will-nilly dragged into the vortex. But we are not yet so hard put to it as the people in the warring countries. If, however, we sit with folded hands until the trouble comes upon us, we shall be found to have been fools[2]. We must be wise and adopt the necessary measures in time.[3]

It is my request then to those Gujaratis whose ears I can reach that they should give as much money and as much yarn as they can to the Mahagujarat Khadi Mandal. Receiving centres should be opened where necessary so as to save people the cost of posting yarn. The master-key to producing the requisite khadi lies in the wheel plying in every home. If good yarn is spun, weavers will be available, though I have already advised that we should take time by the forelock and train voluntary weavers also.

Will every Congressman rise to the occasion and spin for the nation?

SEVAGRAM, January 25, 1942

Harijan, 1-2-1942

[1] The Gujarati here adds : "no one can get more than his rations."

[2] The Gujarati here adds : "who would start digging a well only when overcome by thirst."

[3] The Gujarati here adds : "We should erect our bunds before the waters overtake us."

722. A DEPLORABLE INCIDENT[1]

As Sardar Vallabhbhai was leaving Sevagram the other day he told me of a dacoity in a home[2] in Kheda District. Armed dacoits entered the house, belaboured the inmates, and escaped with the loot. The story was heart-rending. What should I do under similar circumstances, I thought to myself. What should Congressmen do in the circumstances was the next thought; and since then the train of thought arising from the dacoity has taken possession of me. The Congress has been working continuously since 1920 under the policy of non-violence. The province of Gujarat has also had the advantage of a leader of the Sardar's calibre. And yet daring dacoities can take place. How far then can Congress influence be said to have penetrated? People imagine that, if the British Government were to cease to function today, it would be the non-violent Congressmen who would automatically take over. But it is not so. I have been working to this end for the last twenty years, but my dream has not materialized. For the Congress has not had a living faith in the very means which it adopted in 1920. Therefore the non-violence of the Congress has really been non-violence of the weak. But governments can only be run by the strong. And a non-violent government can only be run by those who believe that non-violence is the mightiest force on earth. If we had had this strength, there would be no HinduMuslim riots, there would be no robbers or dacoits. Some might say that for such strength you need either a Jesus or a Buddha. But this is not so. Neither Jesus nor Buddha tried non-violence in the political sphere, or it would be truer to say that the present-day type of politics did not exist in their day. The Congress experiment is, therefore, a new one. The tragedy is that Congressmen have not tried it with full faith, full understanding and sincerity. If they had had these three essential qualities, the Congress would today have been far taller than it is. But I may not cry over spilt milk. I refer to the past only in order to guide us in the present. Even if we wake up now, the game is ours; if we do not, we shall surely lose. Power invariably elects to go into the hands of the strong. That strength may be physical or of the heart, or, if we do not fight shy of the word, of the spirit. Strength of the heart connotes soul force. If today we decide that we should try to get power by force of arms, we shall have to undo all the work of twenty years among the masses. We shall have to spend a considerable time in giving people a contrary training. We cannot afford to give the required time at this

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 1-2-1942.

[2] The house of one Jesangbhai

critical juncture. It is certain that today whoever has any strength of any kind will use it for seizing power. It is my firm conviction that, if Congressmen are to get power, it should only be through non-violence or soul force.

We have neither time nor material to do new work even in this line. When we have so far employed non-violence as a weapon of the weak, how can we all of a sudden expect to convert it into a weapon of the strong? But in spite of this I feel that at the present moment this experiment alone is feasible and proper for us. There is no risk involved in it. Even failure in it takes the form of success because, even if the people are not able to go the whole length in the experiment, they cannot possibly be led into a ditch. By following the way of physical force they may not only be proved cowards, but in attempting to follow an untrodden path thousands may also be destroyed.

It is then the duty of Congressmen to seek out dacoits and robbers. They should try to understand and convert them. Such workers cannot be had for the asking; but Congressmen should know that this work is just as important as it is fraught with risk, and a certain number of them have to devote themselves to it.

The second thing requisite is that we should prepare such workers as would, under difficult circumstances, stand up to dacoits and, whilst trying to check or convert them from their evil ways, be prepared to suffer hurt or even death. Perhaps few workers will be forthcoming for this task too, but peace brigades throughout the country are a definite necessity. Or else in times of chaos Congressmen will lose all the reputation they have so far gained[1] .

Thirdly, the rich should ponder well as to what is their duty today. They who employ mercenaries to guard their wealth may find those very guardians turning on them. The monied classes

have got to learn how to fight either with arms or with the weapon of non-violence. For those who wish to follow the latter way the best and most effective *mantra* is : तेन त्यक्तेन भुंजीथा—[2] (Enjoy thy wealth by renouncing it.) Expanded, it means : 'Earn your crores by all means. But understand that your wealth is not yours; it belongs to the people. Take what you require for your legitimate needs, and use the remainder for society.' This truth has hitherto not been acted upon; but, if the monied classes do not even act on it in these times of

[1] The Gujarati here adds, "and whatever we have achieved till now will be undone".

[2] *Ishopanishad*, 1

stress, they will remain the slaves of their riches and passions and consequently of those who overpower them.

But I have visions that the end of this war will mean also the end of the rule of capital. I see coming the day of the rule of the poor, whether that rule be through force of arms or of non-violence. Let it be remembered that[1] physical force is transitory even as the body is transitory. But the power of the spirit is permanent, even as the spirit is everlasting.

SEVAGRAM, January 25, 1942

Harijan, 1-2-1942

723. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

January 25, 1942

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter. Your pathetic note was received in Kashi. I could not understand why you should have felt so grieved at our not meeting as I went.[2] You had met me in the morning, had you not? But even if you had not, you should be now above these outward demonstrations of affection which is a permanent thing independent of outward manifestation. Let your work be your sole absorption.

I am glad you are keeping fit.

Babla[3] is all right.

Ignore what you may read about the row in Nagpur.[4]

I am all right.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 6493. Courtesy : Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9888

[1] The Gujarati here adds : "the power acquired by."

[2] The addressee explains : "Never in all these years had I not touched Bapu's feet before he left for a journey; but on this occasion he had departed before I realized what was happening."

[3] Narayan, Mahadev Desai's son

[4] *Vide* "Speech at Chokhamela Boarding House", 24-1-1942.

724. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
January 25, 1942

CHI. NARANDAS,

I had your letter in Kashi. Pay the money as may be desired by the Association. I was very pleased by your decision to stay on in it.[1]

I have brought Abha with me. May I send Vina, her elder sister, to you? She keeps weak. She may work well under your protection and guidance. I am sure Jamna will like it.

Vina is in Calcutta at present. I am trying to fix her up somewhere and hence the question. Do not say yes merely to please me. I do not not wish to put the slightest burden on you. I only wish to train a worker.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8598. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

725. LETTER TO NRISIMHAPRASAD K. BHATT

SEVAGRAM,
January 25, 1942

BHAI NANABHAI,

Received your letter only today. It was good that you were able to keep Narandas. Your encouragement will drive away his fear. I have him with me because we have only a small number of honest and able workers like him. The money should be deposited with Bachharaj & Co. only. But do what all of you think proper. If Jerajani[2] continues to insist, take him on. He too is an old hand. He will be useful to you. You will have to look carefully into this. Don't give too much of your time and certainly not your physical strength. But if you are aware of this responsibility, you can without stirring from Ambla rectify everything and remove the irregularities. You are the helmsman.

Preserve your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] Kathiawar Khadi Mandal
[2] Vithaldas K. Jerajani

[PS.]

Please give the enclosed to Narandas. Don't starve him of finances for khadi work.

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

726. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

January 25, 1942

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have read all. I see no need for making any payment today before the office[1] moves over. Menon's[2] monthly salary must be paid under any circumstances; so also in the cases of Vaze[3] and Aryabhushan. Has Vaze's bill been stopped? I think Menon should be asked to send over the things. He will send them to Wardha from where they will be brought in a bullock-cart.

We must think over the annual budget and also about the sum of Rs. 1,500. We shall discuss this later.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I will write to Balwantrai[4].

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 3031

727. LETTER TO BALWANTRAI MEHTA

January 25, 1942

BHAI BALWANTRAI,

I was able to read your letter only today. You should certainly be relieved. Talk to Prof. Dantawala. Let me know his requirements. So long as alternate arrangements are not made and your visits are necessary, please do the needful. If Himmatlal takes over, what else can we hope for?

Send him immediately to the office. Dr. Menon will certainly look after the general work in your absence. R. K. will supervise it. Jamnalalji has decided to keep the office at Sevagram for the present.

[1] Of the States' People's Conference
[2] K. B. Menon
[3] S. G. Vaze
[4] Balwantrai Mehta; *vide* the following item.

The other staff is freshly recruited, isn't it? You will have to go there once.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

728. LETTER TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

January 26, 1942

DEAR KHAN SAHEB,

Puri tells me you would like me to appeal for funds for your work. If he has undersood you correctly I would gladly make the appeal. Will you please confirm the information and tell me how much is the need?

I hope you had my letter[1] sent to you at the Maulana's instance.

Love.

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

Are the teeth giving satisfaction?

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Abdul Ghaffar Khan", 18-1-1942.

729. LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

January 26, 1942

BHAI SAHEB,

How can I express the joy I experienced on meeting you? I hope you have started what you spoke of. Please arrange to send a wire.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI 5 MADANMOHAN MALAVIYAJI

P. O. BENARES HINDU UNIVERSITY

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 2202

730. "CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME"

While I was writing the pamphlet[1] on the thirteenfold, now fourteenfold, constructive programme, Rajendra Babu was doing likewise in his own way. His pamphlet[2] has now been published by the Navajivan Press, Ahmedabad, at 4 annas (postage 1 anna extra). It may be called a companion to mine. The reader will find much of interest and instruction in Rajendra Babu's treatise. It gives details which I have omitted. No worker should be without either.

SEVAGRAM, January 27, 1942

Harijan, 1-2-1942

[1] *Constructive Programme : Its Meaning and Place; vide* 13-12-1941.

[2] *Constructive Programme—Some Suggestions*

731. QUESTION BOX

UNITARY METHOD

Q. You seem to be advocating what you call the unitary method in the solution of many questions. Will you explain it a little more fully than you have done?

A. It is as simple as it is sure. A contract or pact is between two parties. There is also consideration passing from one to the other. Such was the Lucknow Pact between the Congress and the Muslim League. The same thing could have been accomplished by the unitary method. Only then there would have been no compromise dictated by fear and distrust. The Congress could have done, according to its notion, absolute justice, i.e., yielded the maximum consistent with the welfare of the whole nation without the expectation of any consideration from the League. In a well-regulated family the relations are governed by the unitary method. Thus a father gives to his children not as a result of a pact. He gives out of love, a sense of justice without expecting any return therefor. Not that there is none. But everything is natural, nothing is forced. Nothing is done out of fear or distrust. What is true of a well-regulated family is equally true of a well-regulated society which is but an extended family. My advice about the adoption of two scripts by Hindus and Muslims is based on the unitary method. My equal love for all communities dictates its adoption. Properly applied, the method never fails. It disarms criticism and opposition. It presupposes a clean conscience and clean action. I propose to unfold in these columns the application of the method in all our communal relations. The views will be personal to me, as are all such since the Bardoli Resolution. They will be addressed to Congressmen for adoption only in so far as they appeal to their reason.

RAJAJI

Q. What has come over Rajaji? You and he seem to be drifting away from each other.

A. Yes, we seem to be and yet we are not. The seeming drift is but a prelude to a closer bond and clearer understanding. His loyalty is above suspicion. He would have gladly suppressed himself, if I had not strongly encouraged him to propound his views with a view to their adoption by the public. We owe allegiance to the same goddess. Our interpretations differ. If he is erring, he will retrace his steps as soon as he discovers it. And he knows that I would do likewise, if I

discover mine. I feel, therefore, absolutely safe with him, and I ask all questioners to do likewise.

UNTRUTH

Q. Do you know that you are reported to have said at Benares that it is sinful for any Indian ever to study or speak in English and you are charged with insincerity in that you make such liberal use of the hated language when it suits you?

A. The report is wholly untrue. But once an untruth gets a start it is most difficult to overtake. Many untruths about me have had such a start. They created a temporary sensation and got a decent burial without any effort on my part. So will this one. No untruth has ever done any harm to anyone if there was no bottom to it. I am answering the question, not to protect my reputation but to carry my point further. The charge of insincerity is itself the best refutation of the untruth. For my free use of the English language is not a thing of today. The charge should have been regarded as unworthy of belief. Let it be known that I am a lover of the English language and the English. But my love is wise and intelligent. Therefore I give both the place they deserve. Thus I do not allow the English language to displace the mother tongue or the natural all-India language—Hindustani. Nor do I let my love of the English displace my fellow-countrymen whose interest I can in no way allow to be injured. I recognize the great importance of the English language for international intercourse. I hold its knowledge as a second language to be indispensable for specified Indians who have to represent the country's interest in the international domain. I regard the English language as an open window for peeping into Western thought and sciences. For this too I should set apart a class. Through them I would spread through the Indian languages the knowledge they have gained from the West. But I would not burden India's children and sap their youthful energy by expecting the expansion of their brains through the medium of a foreign language. I do hold it to be a sin on the part of those who are responsible for producing the unnatural condition under which we are being educated. Such a thing is unknown in any other part of the world. Being too near the scene of the wreck we are unaware of the damage the nation has suffered by it. I can see the enormity of the damage because of my daily and close contact with the dumb and suppressed millions.

ANOTHER UNTRUTH

Q. You are reported by the Press to have approvingly referred to the progress made by the Japanese in adopting Western methods with a thoroughness hitherto unknown in the East. Is not this a contradiction of all you have written about the West? Or is there one law for India and another for Japan?

A. This is another untruth like the one about the English language. The reader will find out for himself from Mahadev Desai's report of my Benares speech[1] as to what I actually said about the Japanese. The burden of my speech was the undesirability of making English the medium of instruction and all-India speech. I said in this connection that, however harmful in my opinion the Japanese adaptation of the West was, the rapid progress was due to the restriction of the learning of the Western mode to a select few and using them for transmission of the new knowledge among the Japanese through their own mother tongue. Surely it is easy enough to understand that the Japanese could never have adapted themselves to the new mode, if they had had to do so through a foreign medium.

SEVAGRAM, January 27, 1942

Harijan, 1-2-1942

732. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

January 28, 1942

CHI. LILI,

I am replying to your letter the moment I got it. I did not like your account of how you were working. I have told you a thousand times not to get impatient. Whatever knowledge you acquire will not be wasted. You should thoroughly understand the subjects. Learn only what you can without over-exerting yourself. Have a talk with your Principal and other professors. Let me know what they say. I would not at all like your giving up your studies. I am not keen that you should take the examination this year. Of course if you can do so without difficulty, you may. But I should regard it as sheer folly and theft of public money for you to benumb your brain by keeping awake at night and drinking pots of tea. A person like you ought not to throw away money like this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9597. Also C.W. 6569. Courtesy : Lilavati Asar

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Benares Hindu University", 21-1-1942.

733. TALK TO KHADI VIDYALAYA STUDENTS[1]

SEVAGRAM,
January 29, 1942

I have something to say about the manner in which you just came and sat here.[2] The task before us is so great and pure that it should influence our manner of speech as well as movement, in fact all our actions as well as thoughts. When we assemble to hear someone we should sit in a decent posture, without being huddled together. And we should make it a point to sit up straight and erect and in an attentive posture. The way you are huddled together, one upon another, shows a lack of manners, of culture. Every tradition has its own definite style of deportment. In Western countries, people sit on chairs in a prescribed manner. The military training they receive also influences their style. We also have our own concept of good manners. But we have forgotten it. We have learnt nothing new from the West. That is why our plight is like Trishanku's[3], neither here nor there. We have our own code of postures, which helps make physical as well as spiritual progress. It is something we can offer the world provided we assimilate it in our lives. But we have now grown indolent. This is about the ancient Hindu tradition. The Arabs too have their own code of etiquette. They also have a graceful manner of sitting and rising. Their prayers too are offered in their own prescribed style. In short, the only purpose of my saying all this is that whatever we do should have a method about it—a code to govern it. If you fulfil the expectations entertained about you, you can surpass the students of Government schools or colleges. In my view the importance of this Vidyalaya is not less but in fact more than that of a school or college. You are judged also by the way you lie and sit, by the manner and matter of your talk. Every action of a man from the cradle to the grave should be steeped in his culture. I would like to see your own culture in every one of your actions. It is not enough for you merely to learn spinning and weaving; it is only a means.

Two things are most essential for man to subsist. One is food and the other clothing. There are three ways of solving the problem of food and clothing. One of them is to get them in the form of charity. But it is not proper. It does not mitigate the poverty of the people. On

[1] After the evening prayer Gandhiji addressed the students from different provinces who had one month's training at the Vidyalaya.

[2] There was some confusion when the students took their seats at the meeting.

[3] Who hung between heaven and earth

the contrary, it makes beggars of them. The other way is to take up employment and earn wages with which to subsist. This too makes us dependent. The third way is to arrange the production of food and clothing. This can be done in two ways. Either through spinning-wheels or through mechanized factories. By mass-producing the goods we can certainly become self-dependent collectively, but not individually. In case of air-raids where will they drop the bombs if not on the workshops and factories? Certainly not on the [small] dwelling units where *taklis* and spinning-wheels are plying. If eventually we are left with no other means of producing cloth, we shall be obliged to depend on others for our needs. And if the factories are diverted to the manufacture of ammunitions, there will be no other means but the spinning-wheel left with us.

All this can happen in future. If we can foresee it we should provide for it right from today. Today we need khadi worth one billion rupees, out of which we shall be able to produce at the most khadi worth one crore. It is no great achievement in my view. You are being trained here so that when you leave you may teach the people to produce their own requirements and stand on their own legs.

Today if someone comes to me even after passing his M.A., I would ask him too what his ultimate aim in life was. What does he want to do? Employment of some sort, isn't it? To secure employment and earn his bread. But that is not your aim. If you come here to be trained so that you can earn your bread you cannot interest a man like me. Here is before you a course covering one year, not several as in the schools and colleges. The aim is to devise a scheme by which the whole of India, every single man in the country, can stand on his own feet. By producing cloth in the mills the money does not go to the poor but it moves from the poor man's pocket into the rich man's. On the other hand, if I buy khadi, I transfer some money to the poor and help them to be self-reliant. In this way if we succeed in making them self-reliant in one matter alone, they will themselves learn to be so in all other matters. Khadi is like the carpenter's set square. When with its help he corrects one angle, the remaining angles stand corrected in consequence. In the same way, if we could establish khadi, many other things would take root without special effort on our part. As a result of the work we have done for khadi, many village industries have now been revived and the activities of the A. I. V. I. A. are gaining ground. If you look at khadi work from this angle, you will realize what splendid thing khadi is and consequently your work and its impact too will be equally splendid.

Bear in mind that you are learning the way of filling the poor man's pocket and not your family's. If we fail to appreciate this point, we all shall have to repent in the end. You had better look out now, quit this work and take up another profession or employment.

In this context, I have deliberately omitted to mention the country's independence and politics, although they are all interconnected. If we could make the poor people of India self-reliant in necessaries, swaraj will be within our reach. In my view, that alone would be real swaraj, and nothing else. If you will go through Shri Rajendra Babu's recent essay on constructive programme you will know what an important role khadi has in the struggle for independence.

Those of you who are leaving today should understand that whatever they have learnt or done here during these four weeks is nothing more than superficial introduction. They must increase their knowledge. If you have not developed a scientific outlook, if you have not learnt to think the scientific way, you will not be able to develop whatever you have gained here, nor will you be able to fulfil the expectations entertained of you. Here you have been entrusted with a key to a store of knowledge and if you have learnt to use it, I trust you will draw from that store new things every day and enrich yourselves.

A teacher who establishes rapport with the taught, becomes one with them, learns more from them than he teaches them. He who learns nothing from his disciples is, in my opinion, worthless. Whenever I talk with someone I learn from him. I take from him more than I give him. In this way, a true teacher regards himself as a student of his students. If you will teach your pupils with this attitude, you will benefit much from them.

In my opinion the late Maganlal Gandhi was such an ideal khadi worker. He proved his worth beyond my expectations. Even struggling against the most formidable difficulties, he used to learn something useful to him wherever he could. He was neither afraid nor tired of hardships. Till his death he engaged himself in learning more and more about khadi. I want you to follow in your life this ideal of Maganlal Gandhi. Remember, if on returning to your home provinces you do not develop the knowledge acquired here, you will lose very soon what you carry with you. If you want to develop your knowledge, know that it can grow only by teaching it to the others. If you continue to be such progressive and brilliant workers you will, I am sure, grow from 13 to 130 in a very short time.

So, I am placing a great burden on the teachers who are leaving this place today. Please carry it with you. From wherever you will go and work I expect to hear that you are honest gentlemen and devoted servants of the country.

If anyone wants to ask any question he may do so.

Q. What should a khadi worker do to guard himself against lethargy and pride?

GANDHIJI : He should spin regularly and attentively for eight hours every day without a break. If, while plying the wheel, he thinks only of service to *Daridranarayana*, pride will not be able to cast its shadow on him, and how can lethargy remain?

Q. What should a khadi worker do in case his subordinates do not carry out his instructions? Should he punish them? Should he get angry?

GANDHIJI : He should try to convert them through patience without losing his temper. It has been my experience that when I become angry, I fail to convince. Anger is an enemy of reason. That is why we should not lose temper. Similarly, we cannot also mete out punishment. If any punishment is necessary, we should ourselves undertake a fast. But if the interest of khadi work demands it, the person concerned can be relieved.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 15-2-1942

734. LETTER TO MANJULA M. MEHTA

January 30, 1942

CHI. MANJULA,

I have your letters. I acted upon them immediately. I took Champa to task. She has realized her error somewhat and feels ashamed. But my words are likely to have no permanent effect on her. After my rebuke, she gave me the accompanying letter[1]. I have read it. It means nothing.

When are you coming here? If you wish, I would shift Champa from that room. It is reserved for you exclusively. It will take some time before your building is ready. Till then you may treat this room as your own. I have put Champa there as your representative.

[1] This is not available.

Ratilal has run away to Wankaner on somebody's mare. It is not proper for Magan not to go and see him. An attendant can be found there.

I hope all of you are doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 1025. Courtesy : Manjula M. Mehta

735. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

SEVAGRAM,
January 30, 1942

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. Your work there seems to be going on quite well.

You did well to draw my attention to my habit of talking too much. I will continue to call you silly, but I will bear in mind your criticism. You cite the remarks of others in support of your criticism and they too will caution me.[1] I do admit that there is substance in one point. My past experiences are no valid arguments. They may give me strength, but as arguments their value is limited. If the experiments in the past were based on error, the error is not mitigated but multiplied by repeating those experiments.

I plead completely guilty to your second charge. I am in no position now to write long and interesting letters. I can do that only if I went to jail. Nor can I talk interestingly. The pressure on my time has become much too heavy for that.

Lakshmibai is leaving today. I like her very much. Her health is fully restored.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10422. Also C.W. 6861. Courtesy : Prema Kantak

[1] The addressee had conveyed to Gandhiji, the criticism of some leaders and constructive workers that he had grown argumentative and referred too often to his experiences in South Africa.

736. MY SINCERITY

I have been asked which way my sympathy lies. From a purely humanitarian point of view, undoubtedly, it is all with England. I do not wish that the British should be defeated, nor do I wish the defeat of the Germans. There will be very little meaning and charm for us in the rest of the world if an entire people, to whichever nation they belong, remain downtrodden, humiliated and embittered. Will not bitterness in any one nation constitute seeds of a future war? Whatever it is, if the present war continues till the bitter end, civilization itself will be reduced to ashes in this conflagration. Let us pray that it will stop before it is too late. Still, can it stop so long as there is hatred in the hearts of men? If I have hatred for even one individual, will it not imperceptibly spread to all his countrymen? Of course, there is ample reason for condemning the German dictator. But if I wish that armies bid farewell to arms and refrain from bloodshed—since this is the only meaning and message of ahimsa—I should adhere to my conviction and should have no hatred for any living human being. Although I am pained at his deeds, I can have no hatred even for Adolf Hitler.

[From Hindi]

Sarvodaya, January 1942

737. DHANUSH TAKLI

I think *dhanush takli* is going to play a big role in the constructive programme. Today I am not going to enter into the relative merits and demerits of *dhanush takli* and the spinning-wheel. I am convinced that we cannot manufacture spinning-wheels by thousands. It requires plenty of money which we do not have. Nor can they be manufactured at every place. They are also hardly portable.

It is not possible either to make good *taklis* at every place, nor can we spin fast with them.

That leaves only the *dhanush takli* which can be made with little labour and less money. We can also spin fast with it.

Therefore, I request all khadi workers to study the *dhanush takli*, learn to make it and popularize it.

Manufacture of new spinning-wheels should be postponed for the time being. By all means make the best use of the existing ones. Those who can and wish to manufacture the spinning-wheels locally

may do so. But in order to create an atmosphere for *dhanush takli* all the new spinners should be supplied with *dhanush taklis* only.

All khadi workers should peruse from *Harijan* my article[1] on the subject.

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, January 1942

738. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 1, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your question is right. Ordinarily such things cannot be passed. But it is reasonable to give this much to Lakshmidas. He should be paid every month, if he asks for it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 4411

739. SPEECH AT ALL-INDIA GOSEVA SANGH CONFERENCE[2]

WARDHA,

February 1, 1942

Gandhiji with biting irony . . . cast . . . lurid light on the worship of the cow as seen in the streets of Bombay.

We catch her by the tail and sanctify our eyes with its sacred touch. We regard even her urine as sacred and full of medicinal value and drink it. Alas, the poor cow is innocent of all this worship, and so our worship is lost on her. It even scares her. When it scares her she answers our attentions with a kick; when she is not scared she suffers us. . . .

All this is too true and those who claim to protect the cow betray a criminal ignorance of the real method of protecting her and her progeny. Those who claim to worship the cow cruelly ill-treat the bullocks. Chaunde Maharaj has been working at the problem assiduously for years, but whilst he accepts my facts and even argument, he says, 'What about the public sentiment? They somehow want to save the cow from the butcher.' But they go about the wrong way and succeed in defeating the very object they are trying to achieve. I do

[1] *Vide* "Real War Effort", 19-1-1942.

[2] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Goseva Sangh—I and II". Gandhiji inaugurated the first conference held under the presidentship of Vinoba Bhave.

not say this in a carping spirit, but shocking ignorance and want of understanding of the essentials of the problem betrayed by most of the people who run our pinjrapoles[1] dismay me.

He referred in passing to the wrong way of protecting the cow from a Mussalman wanting to slaughter her, and said that he would repeat *ad nauseam* that to quarrel with the Mussalman and to kill him in order to protect the cow was to instigate more slaughter.

The whole milk and ghee trade is in the hands of the Hindus. But have we been able to ensure a supply of pure milk and ghee? The milk is adulterated, and even the water used for adulteration is not clean. The cruel and criminal process of *phooka*[2] is well known. The ghee sold in the market can often be described as poison rather than ghee. The butter we get from New Zealand, Australia or Denmark is guaranteed pure cow's butter, but there is no guarantee about the butter or ghee available here. There is not a shop in Wardha, where some of us are keen on this problem, where one could go and buy a seer of cow's ghee of guaranteed purity.[3]

I therefore say that if I can really protect the cow by adopting proper ways and means, I would protect the rest of the animals. But it can be done only if we know the true science and economy of it. Only then shall we be able to interest Perinbehn in the problem.[4] I am amazed at our partiality for buffalo's milk and ghee. Our economics is short-sighted. We look at the immediate gain, but we do not realize that in the last analysis the cow is the more valuable animal. Cow's butter (and ghee) has a naturally yellowish colour which indicates its superiority to buffalo's butter (and ghee) in *carotene*. It has a flavour all its own. Foreign visitors who come to Sevagram go into raptures over the pure cow's milk they get there. Buffalo's milk and butter are almost unknown in Europe. It is only in India that one finds a prejudice in favour of buffalo's milk and ghee. This has spelt all but extinction of the cow, and that is why I say that, unless we put an

[1] Place where aged and infirm cattle are cared for

[2] Blowing

[3] Mahadev Desai introduces the next paragraph with the following note : "Every animal—in fact all life—is sacred and should be protected, but unless we really protect the one that was most valuable in national economy, other animals could not be protected. In our neglect of the cow we had brought both the cow and the buffalo at death's door."

[4] Perinbehn Captain, on being invited to the conference, had declined saying : "None of this travesty of worship for me. I might attend when you have put it on a rational footing and shown by concrete work that the Hindus really care for the cow. And if you will protect the cow, why not the horse and the dog too—both of them equally noble?"

exclusive emphasis on the cow, she cannot be saved. It is a tragedy that all the cows and buffaloes put together cannot give us enough milk for the 40 crores of our people. We ought to realize the value of the cow as a giver of milk and the mother of draught and agricultural cattle. And how far is one to pamper popular prejudices? A cow proves valuable even if she dies, if we would make use of the skin, the bone, the flesh, the entrails and so on. But the good Chaunde Maharaj wonders if people can be persuaded to believe that dead cow's hide is sacred. Why not? I would not hesitate to go into my house with shoes made of dead cow's hide, provided of course the shoes are clean. I should not hesitate to have my meal with such clean shoes on. I have to do all this in order to show that the cow is an asset and not a liability. Today in many places they bury dead cows or sell them away for a song. We despise the Harijans who eat carrion, but we forget that it is due to our own fault. If we treated the hide properly, if we knew the manurial value of the flesh, and the use of the bone and the entrails—which we are demonstrating at Nalwadi—there would be no carrion-eating.

Ever since my return to India from South Africa I have been harping on the question of the reform of pinjrapoles. Unless we realize and define their proper functions, they are sure to remain the economic waste they are. Their proper function is to take care of dry, old and disabled cows, of which individual owners cannot possibly take care—certainly not in towns and cities. Their function is not that of a dairy—though they may run a separate dairy if they can—but the care of the old and the disabled animals, and to provide the raw material for a tannery. There should be a well-equipped tannery attached to every pinjrapoles. They should maintain the best stud-bulls and loan them out for public use, they should provide every facility for the humane and scientific castration of bulls to be turned into bullocks, and there should be instruction centres for the agriculturist and the dairy farmer. Here is plenty of scope for our agricultural and dairy graduates who should receive additional training for the special work and then be attached to every one of our pinjrapoles. All the pinjrapoles should then be affiliated to our Association which should be the central institution for expert advice, collection and co-ordination of information and statistics, and so on. The Association has made it a rule to have as its members those who take the following pledge :

> I agree with the object and means of the Association.
>
> I promise to use cow's milk and its products exclusively, except for medical purposes or under unavoidable circumstances or in the articles of food containing milk and its products in a negligible quantity. I will refrain from

the use of the leather of slaughtered cows, bullocks and calves.

I will donate a sum of rupee one or 2,000 yards of self-spun yarn to the Association every year.

Do not magnify the so-called difficulties and the embarrassment you would cause to your hosts. You can go about with cow's ghee wherever you go—as Kakasaheb does—or you can do without it. It will be good propaganda, and you may succeed in converting your hosts also. But duty is not always easy of performance. To run away from it is the opposite of manliness, opposite of humanity.[1]

Answering a question, Gandhiji said that *goseva* formed part of the constructive programme of the Congress.

Mahatma Gandhi appealed to the audience to stabilize and organize pinjrapoles. Even Muslims could co-operate in this cow-protection and preservation work, as it would increase milch cattle, give nutrition and preserve a good supply of bullocks for cultivation.

Unless you offer your full co-operation to Jamnalalji, especially on the question of pinjrapoles, his best efforts cannot succeed. Today the cow is on the brink of extinction, and I am not sure that our efforts will ultimately succeed. But if she dies, we also die along with her—we, i.e., our civilization. I mean our essentially non-violent and rural civilization. We have, therefore, to make our choice. We can choose to be violent and kill all uneconomic cattle. Like Europe we should then breed our cattle for the purposes of milk and meat. But our civilization is fundamentally different. Our life is wrapped up in our animals. Most of our villagers live with their animals, often under the same roof. Both live together, both starve together. Often enough the owner starves the poor cattle, exploits them, ill-treats them, unmercifully extracts work out of them. But if we reform our ways, we can both be saved. Otherwise we sink together, and it is just as well that we swim or sink together.

The question today is to solve the problem of our starvation and poverty, but I have confined myself to the problem of the starvation and poverty of our cattle. Our *rishis*[2] showed us the sovereign remedy. 'Protect the cow,' they said, 'and you protect all.' We have to add to the talents they have left us, and not to waste them. We have invited the experts,[3] and we shall make every use of their advice. Nothing that we laymen say is final, we shall get the experts to test it with their

[1] The following two paragraphs are from *The Hindu*.

[2] Seers

[3] Kothawala of the Bangalore Dairy, Sam Higginbottom of the Allahabad Agricultural Institute, Viswanathan of the Agricultural Research Institute and Datar Singh of the Montgomery Dairy Farm attended the conference.

knowledge and experience. We shall, therefore, always seek their advice and invite their criticism.

Harijan, 8-2-1942 and 15-2-1942, and *The Hindu*, 2-2-1942

740. THREE ESSENTIALS

Assuming the presence of the will among the millions, rapid spread of hand-spinning is possible only by the adoption of the following three things :

1. Use of unginned cotton from the nearest spot when it is not grown on one's own plot.

2. Ginning it on a polished board with an iron or smooth wooden rod and carding the cotton by manipulation of the cotton with fingers assisted by a wooden knife made on the spot. This process is called *tunai* (तुनाई).

3. Spinning the slivers on the *dhanush takli*.

Hand-gins cannot be manufactured to order today. All available unginned cotton should be prepared first by the method explained in 2 above.

Where unginned cotton is not available ginned cotton from factories has got to be used. It too lends itself to *tunai*, though much more time is required for carding by the *tunai* process when bale cotton has to be used. Where a carding-bow is available, naturally it will be used. But what is true of ginning is equally true of carding. It is not possible to manufacture bows and gut in a moment. *Tunai* is a method devised and being perfected by Shri Vinoba with an artist's skill and ardour.

When spinning spreads among the millions it will be impossible to supply slivers from a centre or centres. The utmost that is possible is for families or groups to set apart one or two hands per a fixed number for carding. The ideal, the best, and in the long run the quickest, way is for each one to prepare his own slivers. It makes spinning more interesting, and the variety of occupation breaks the monotony.

I suggest that, though the crisis is not yet felt and the mills are working, khadi workers will do well from now to adopt the suggestions I have made. When the crisis does come, we shall then be found ready.

SEVAGRAM, February 2, 1942

Harijan, 22-2-1942

741. HINDI + URDU = HINDUSTANI

The following letter[1] was written on the 29th ultimo and sent to me by its writer by registered post. It was received at Sevagram on the 31st ultimo :

The writer has signed the letter, but as it is marked personal I refrain from giving his name. In any case the name does not matter. What the writer says is, I know, the belief held by many Muslims. My repudiation has not undone the mischief.

But my article[2] which was written on the 23rd ultimo and has appeared in *Harijan* of the 1st instant, should soothe the writer so far as I am concerned.

I entirely agree with my correspondent that all who want one all-India speech should today learn both the forms—Hindi and Urdu. Those who do will ultimately give us a common language. That form which is more popular and more understood by the masses, whether Hindu or Muslim, will surely be the all-India speech. But if my proposal finds general acceptance, the language question will cease to be a political issue or a bone of contention.

I do not subscribe to the correspondent's statement that Urdu is "more developed, more beautiful, more attractive, more concise, and more expressive". No language is intrinsically all that the correspondent says. A language becomes what its speakers and writers make it. English had no merit apart from what Englishmen made it. In other words, a language is a human creation and takes the colour of its creators. Every language is capable of infinite expansion. Modern Bengali is what Bankim[3] and Rabindranath have made it. If, therefore, it is true that Urdu is more everything than Hindi, it is because its creators are abler than those of Hindi. I can give no opinion, for I have not studied either as a linguist. I know just enough of both for my public work.

But is Urdu a language distinct from Hindi as, say, Bengali is from Marathi? Is not Urdu a direct descedant of Hindi, written in the Persian character with a tendency to borrow new words from Persian and Arabic rather than Sanskrit? If there was no estrangement between the two communities, such a phenomenon would have been

[1]The letter, not reproduced here, alleged that Gandhiji was advocating the cause of Hindi in the name of Hindustani.

[2]Entitled "Hindustani"; *vide* 23-1-1942.

[3] Bankimchandra Chatterjee

welcomed. And when the animosities have died out, as they will one day, our descendants will laugh at our quarrels and will be proud of the common Hindustani speech which will be a mixture of words indifferently borrowed from many languages according to the tastes and equipment of its multitude of writers and speakers.

Let me correct one misimpression of my correspondent. He seems to think that Hindustani will finally displace all the provincial languages. That is neither my dream nor of those who have been thinking of an all-India speech. Their dream is that Hindustani should displace English which has almost become a common medium of communication between the educated classes resulting in a gulf being created between them and the masses. The tragedy can be prevented only if the common speech spoken by the largest number of India's inhabitants is adopted as the interprovincial speech. The fight, therefore, is not between Hindi and Urdu, but between the two on the one hand and English on the other. The result is a foregone conclusion in spite of the heavy handicap that the sisters are labouring under, not to speak of the temporary mutual quarrel.

My correspondent quarrels with my connection with the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. I am proud of my connection with that body. It has a record of which it has no reason to be ashamed. The name Hindi was common to both the communities. Both have written in Hindi and promoted its growth. Evidently my correspondent is ignorant of what my connection with that body has meant. It was under my instigation that it wisely, and shall I say patriotically and generously, adopted the definition of Hindi to cover Urdu. He asks whether I ever joined an Urdu Anjuman. I have never been seriously asked to join any. If I was, I would have made a stipulation with my inviters similar to the one I made with those who induced me to preside at the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. I would have asked the Urdu-speaking inviters to let me ask the audience to define Urdu so as to include Hindi speech written in Devanagari script. No such luck came my way.

But now, as I have already hinted in my article of the 1st instant already referred to, I would like to form an association advocating the learning of both forms of speech and both the scripts by its members and carrying on propaganda to that end in the hope finally of a natural fusion of the two becoming a common interprovincial speech called Hindustani. Then the equation would be not Hindustani = Hindi + Urdu, but Hindustani = Hindi = Urdu.

SEVAGRAM, February 2, 1942

Harijan, 8-2-1942

742. THE ASHRAM PRAYER[1]

The Ashram prayer has become very popular. Its development has been spontaneous. The *Ashram Bhajanavali*[2] (Hymn Book) has gone into several editions and is increasingly in demand. The birth and growth of this prayer has not been artificial. There is a history attached to almost every *shloka* and every selected *bhajan*. The *Bhajanavali* contains among others *bhajans* from Muslim Sufis and Fakirs, from Guru Nanak, and from the Christian Hymnary. Every religion seems to have found a natural setting in the prayer book.

Chinese, Burmese, Jews, Ceylonese, Muslims, Parsis, Europeans and Americans have all lived in the Ashram from time to time. In the same way two Japanese sadhus came to me in Maganwadi in 1935. One of them was with me till the other day when war broke out with Japan. He was an ideal inmate of our home in Sevagram. He took part in every activity with zest. I never heard of his quarrelling with anyone. He was a silent worker. He learnt as much Hindi as he could. He was a strict observer of his vows. Every morning and evening he could be seen going round with his drum and heard chanting his *mantra*. The evening worship always commenced with his *mantra* नं म्यो हो रेंगे क्यो, which means "I bow to the Buddha, the giver of true religion." I shall never forget the quickness, the orderliness, and utter detachment with which he prepared himself the day the police came without notice to take him away from the Ashram. He took leave of me after reciting his favourite *mantra* and left his drum with me. "You are leaving us, but your *mantra* will remain an integral part of our Ashram prayer," were the words that came spontaneously to my lips. Since then, in spite of his absence, our morning and evening worship has commenced with the *mantra*. For me it is a constant reminder of Sadhu Keshav's purity and single-eyed devotion. Indeed its efficacy lies in that sacred memory.

While Sadhu Keshav was still with us, Bibi Raihana Tyabji also came to stay at Sevagram for a few days. I knew her to be a devout Muslim but was not aware, before the death of her illustrious father, of how well-versed she was in Koran Sharif. When that jewel of Gujarat, Tyabji Saheb, expired no sound of weeping broke the awful silence in his room. The latter echoed with Bibi Raihana's sonorous recitation of verses from the Koran. Such as Abbas Tyabji Saheb cannot die. He is

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 8-2-1942.

[2] *Vide* "Ashram Bhajanavali", 15-12-1930.

ever alive in the example of national service which he has left behind.[1] Bibi Raihana is an accomplished singer with an ample repertory of *bhajans* of all kinds. She used to sing daily as well as recite beautiful verses from the Koran. I asked her to teach some verses to any of the inmates who could learn them, and she gladly did so. Like so many who come here she had become one of us. Raihana went away when her visit was over, but she has left a fragrant reminder of herself. The well-known 'al Fateha' has been included in the Ashram worship. The following is a translation of it.

1. I take refuge in Allah from Satan the accursed.
2. Say : He is God, the one and only
God, the Eternal, Absolute,
He begetteth not nor is He begotten,
And there is none like unto Him.
3. Praise be to God,
The Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds,
Most Gracious, most Merciful,
Master of the Day of Judgment,
Thee do we worship
And Thine aid we seek.
Show us the straight way,
The way of those on whom
Thou hast bestowed Thy Grace,
Those whose (portion) is not wrath
And who go not astray.

I am writing this note in reply to an ardent Hindu friend who has thus gently reproached me : "You have now given the *Kalma* a place in the Ashram. What further remains to be done to kill your Hinduism?"

I am confident that my Hinduism and that of the other Ashram Hindus has grown thereby. There should be in us an equal reverence for all religions. Badshah Khan, whenever he comes, joins in the worship here with delight. He loves the tune which the *Ramayana* is sung, and he listens intently to the *Gita*. His faith in Islam has not lessened thereby. Then why may I not listen to the Koran with equal reverence and adoration in my heart?

[1] The Hindi here has : "On her arrival I said to Raihana jestingly, 'You convert the Ashram inmates to Islam. I shall convert you to Hinduism."

Vinoba and Pyarelal studied Arabic and learnt the Koran in jail. Their Hinduism has been enriched by this study. I believe that Hindu-Muslim unity will come only through such spontaneous mingling of hearts and no other. Rama is not known by only a thousand names. His names are innumerable, and He is the same whether we call Him Allah, Khuda, Rahim, Razaak, the Bread-giver, or any name that comes from the heart of a true devotee.

SEVAGRAM, February 2, 1942

Harijan, 15-2-1942

743. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
WARDHA,
February 2, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

An ideal secretary keeps her chief straight where he is going astray. She hovers round him and watches all the movement about him, picks up his papers, even torn, lest he might have torn important ones in mistake, collects all she has given him, if it is to be found anywhere. Therefore she leaves after him and seeks what he has left behind and if not owned by anybody else, collects it.

Now I was right in correcting you yesterday but wholly wrong in showing disappointment or irritation. Forget the wrong and treasure the right. What I have said is by way of indication. Follow the spirit of this note and you will be an ideal secretary.

This is my birthday present which goes loaded with all the good wishes that I am capable of conceiving.

Love.

BAPU

RAMJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
SEVAGRAM

From the original : C.W. 3686. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6495

744. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ[1]

Unrevised *Silence Day, February 2, 1942*

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Your question deserves to be considered. Does the Goseva Sangh belong to Hinduism or is it a public institution? If it is a public institution, then do all religions accept it, or will they? If it is not a sectarian body, then we should try to draw to it followers of all religions.

Your list does not contain names of persons from different provinces; there is nothing like *goseva* in the South nor in Bengal and the Punjab. Is no one from these places to be included?

Of late I have not come in contact with Chaunde Maharaj, but my experience of him is not quite encouraging. He has one or two workers who are good. My attitude is to accept from him whatever help he can give. He has his own institution. It should not be interfered with. We should learn from each other, and have a fraternal feeling.

Yes, there ought to be a woman. By all means do have Manibehn. It will be very difficult to get Rajkumari. At home it will not be possible for her to follow the rules about the cow. If you enlist supporters or friends, you can include persons like Rajkumari.

I shall look into the accounts of the old Sangh.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 3032

745. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

Silence Day, February 2, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You should see the knife they give me. It is full of dirt. In jail the knives are kept shining clean. This can also be as clean; in fact all our implements should be as clean.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 4412

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter of the same date. He has however noted in his diary that he did not understand Gandhiji's reply.

746. QUESTION BOX

HINDU-MUSLIM PUZZLE

Q. In your proposed solution of the Hindu-Muslim puzzle[1], do you expect all the Hindus to abstain from the legislatures or only a part? If only a part, will not the most reactionary Hindus get in and make things worse than now? And if you expect Congressmen to affect the Muslim mind from outside, why can't you do the same and perhaps more effectively by being inside?

A. I do not expect all the Hindus to abstain. I know that all Hindu seats will be filled by non-Congress Hindus. Congress Hindus, if they go in, will be ground down between the two stones of the communal *chakki*[2] without doing any good to anybody. I do not approach the question as a Hindu. I approach it as a Congressman seeking to represent equally all communities. But for the artificial system introduced in the composition of the Indian legislatures, all the members would be representing not communities but their parties grouped according to their non-communal shibboleths. As one representing all communities I would expect not only Hindus but Congress-minded Muslims and others too to avoid the legislatures and elective bodies. These abstainers will hold the scales evenly between all communities and seek to affect the legislatures from outside. Whether they are many or only a few, they will play the role of wise men. If all listened to me, the communal question would disappear from our midst. By entering the legislatures the Congress Hindus become interlopers, and act weakly for fear of offending one party or the other. This I know, that at the present moment the legislatures are, and must become, part of the war machinery. They have no choice. They will not be allowed to function, if they obstruct the war effort. How could the rulers whose sole occupation is to prosecute the war do otherwise?

WHY NOT IN HINDU MAJORITY PROVINCES?

Q. Why not advise Congressmen to withdraw from the provincial legislatures too where the Hindus are in a majority?

A. Because I do not want the non-Muslim minority parties to act as if they were the majority and carry on the government in these provinces. It would be a false position to which the Congress would be

[1] *Vide* "Communal Unity", 20-1-1942.

[2] Grinding-stone

a willing party, if the Congress members withdrew. In these provinces, therefore, abstention cannot solve the communal tangle, and will bring about an unintended and undesirable state of things.

TORTURING THE LANGUAGE?

Q. Surely you are torturing the language when you use the world "unitary" in the place of 'unilateral'.[1] For that is obviously what you mean.

A. I must plead not guilty.'Unilateral' has a definite legal meaning which does not fit in with what I am struggling to convey. It is not onesidedness. It is no-sidedness. It has impartiality implied in it. But it is not the method of impartiality. It is something more. I represent a party, say, the Congress. For the solution of the problem I apply a method whereby I seek to affect those who are estranged from me. I am not merely impartial, because I may or may not please them. Impartiality has to be felt by the aggrieved party. I go the utmost length to placate the offended party, and trust my out-and-out pure conduct to affect them. I may not succeed at once. But if there is a real sense of justice in the method, it must succeed. For want of a better word I have called the method "unitary". The dictionary meaning satisfies my test which I have imperfectly described here.

SEVAGRAM, February 3, 1942

Harijan, 15-2-1942

747. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

February 3, 1942

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Sailendra has many complaints. He says he does not get the *bhaji*[2] soup regularly, and that there is nobody to help him in preparing the *bhaji*. Have a talk with him and make the necessary arrangements.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8479. Also C.W. 7164. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

[1] *Vide* "Unitary Method", "Question Box", 27-1-1942.

[2] Leafy vegetable

748. DISCUSSION AT ALL-INDIA GOSEVA SANGH CONFERENCE [1]

February 3, 1942[2]

Did Gandhiji mean to say that even as khadi saved the Indian mill-cloth, the protection of the cow would mean the protection of the buffalo?

Gandhiji said :

Yes, but I mean something more. I have often said that I should not shed a single tear, if all the mills were to be destroyed. I would never say this regarding the buffalo.

Explaining the matter at greater length he said :

No, my point is that, unless we protect the cow today, we will fail to save both the cow and the buffalo. And it is not possible to make a combined endeavour to save both. The combined endeavour will result in the buffalo devouring the cow. The cow is the more neglected animal, and that is why we should concentrate on the cow. But not even if Jamnalalji got a few crores of rupees can we achieve our object until we have converted the people to our view—especially the people who run goshalas and pinjrapoles.

There is no question of 'boycott', much less of the killing of buffaloes. Slaughter is a thing that suggests itself easily to Western economists. That is why they cut the Gordian knot by slaughtering the inferior breed of cows and bulls. But that solution is not good for me. It is my firm conviction that, if we master the real science of saving the cow, the science of saving the buffalo and other animals would automatically be revealed to us.

[Q.] But, supposing you were to boycott all the buffaloes in Sevagram, what would happen to them and their owners?

I promise to take charge of the buffalo in case you succeed in your mission of the cow to that extent. If the mill-owners voluntarily

[1]In his article "Goseva Sangh—II", from which this is reproduced, Mahadev Desai gives the following introduction : ". . . no one seemed to be clear as regards the attitude to be adopted regarding the buffalo, and no one seemed to see how, if we saved the cow, the buffalo would also be saved."

[2] From *Bapu-smaran*

close down the mills, I shall dance with joy, but not if the owners of the buffaloes were to slaughter them. Western economics is divorced from ethics; our ethics and economics coincide or should, if they do not. My exclusive emphasis on the protection of the cow is due to the undue neglect of the cow although she in my opinion is a sound economic proposition. I do not need the aid of the Vedas to show me this, and this is a matter in which I would test the Vedic precept on the anvil of reason. Reason convinces me that if I save the cow I save the cow and the buffalo both. If anyone can convince me that the cow is dead beyond redemption, and that the buffalo alone needs to be protected, I am quite prepared to organize a 'Buffalo Protection Association'. But the reverse is the case. The buffalo needs no special protection, the cow needs it. The buffalo and the goat are as much my mothers as the cow. But I know that the poor goat cannot be saved, that the cow badly needs to be saved, and when we have saved the cow the buffalo will be automatically saved.[1]

Gandhiji tentatively suggested that co-operative owning of cows and co-operative owning of pasture for them would go a great length in improving both the breed and the milk yield and in helping to solve the question of grazing.

For the next year the Goseva Sangh should, suggested Gandhiji, concentrate on making cow's milk available throughout Wardha and its neighbourhood, on sending experts to pinjrapoles in order to collect material, throw out suggestions, and help in making them approximate to the ideal pinjrapole contemplated by the Sangh, and on having a laboratory in Wardha for the testing of milk and ghee, and so on. The Sangh will also try to enlist at least a thousand members.

Harijan, 15-2-1942

[1] Various other questions were then discussed, the most important one being that of grazing-areas.

749. TO CORRESPONDENTS

Correspondents will please note that I neither open nor read all the correspondence that comes to me. And now that I have taken up the care of the three weeklies, the fewest possible letters are put before me, and even those I often do not get the time to read. Correspondents should regard the weeklies as my public letter to them. Therefore they may not as a rule expect personal replies. Many apply for admission to the Sevagram Ashram. For one thing there is hardly room for further admissions. Some insist on replies in my own hand. It is not possible to satisfy this desire, much as I should like to. I would therefore request all correspondents to spare me and my overworked assistants as much as possible.

SEVAGRAM, February 4, 1942

Harijan, 8-2-1942

750. BASIC CURRENCY

Bharatanandji's active brain, having approved of my note[1] on hand-spun yarn as a measure of value, has produced the following note[2]. Let knowing workers study it and see if they can improve upon the scheme propounded by the author.

SEVAGRAM, February 4, 1942

Harijan, 15-3-1942

751. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
February 5, 1942

CHI. LILI,

I have your letter. I do not like it at all that you are accepting defeat. You will become fully qualified if you devote one more year. Why should you become a coward after having spent two years? Hence, you must complete the term and gain whatever knowledge you can even if you are not appearing for the examination. Knowledge thus gained will never go waste. You must become proficient in physics, which is an interesting subject. And chemistry is a very useful

[1] *Vide* "Hand-spun as Measure of Value", 13-1-1942.

[2] Not reproduced here

subject. If you acquire a good knowledge of it, it will be very useful in the Ashram. Hence my advice is : Never give up even unto death.

It rained here one day. it is biting cold. The Goseva meeting took my time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

752. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[After *February 6, 1942*][1]

CHI. SUSHILA,

Pyarelal is very much puzzled. Everything is going wrong with him. Take pity on him if not on me and come here for a couple of days. You may talk to me only if you feel like it. Otherwise, at least meet the others. Look into the hospital affairs. Give necessary instructions to Shankaran. Examine my health so that you may know. Otherwise at the moment we are oscillating between yes and no. Let it be so. If you come only for a day or two, you may not like to interfere in the routine fixed by me. If you decide to stay on here, you will consider my conditions and I shall consider yours. We shall try to find some solution or shall put up with our differences. You could attend to my work from a distance. For the moment I would only ask you to come here without any protest. You may then go back to Delhi whenever you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

753. ASHRAM NOTES

February 7, 1942

I think it is very good to eat raw vegetables at least once a day. The vegetables may include spinach or *luni* as also turnip, carrots, cauliflower, radish and tomatoes. They give us the salts, strengthen the teeth and help digestion. Raw vegetables are four times as valuable as the same quantity when cooked. They lead to better mastication and

[1] The sheet of paper on which this letter is written carries on one side some writing bearing the date February 6, 1942.

taste better than when cooked. I have tried them for two months. Those who have no special objection may try this experiment.

Everyone should be more alert in his or her work. The work hitherto has not been as systematic as it should be. Our standard of cleanliness leaves much scope for improvement.

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, p. 387

754. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
February 7, 1942

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have been intending to write to you for some time, when, lo and behold, today I got your letter. Do try and arrange to get uncooked vegetables from somewhere. The experiment has benefited me greatly. I have, therefore, advised Ghanshyamdas to make the same experiment and have him put on four ounces of butter. This has increased his energy and strength. Please do not, therefore, give up the experiment. If you keep the leaves immersed in salt water solution, they will remain fresh. It will be enough if you eat only four or five of these. But you can eat onions, carrot, knoll-cole, radish, etc., even after two or more days. You need not take more than two ounces in all. The rest is all right.

I am writing to Prithvi Singh.

You may send . . .[1] over here. I will train him further here and then let him go. He may then utilize your help. He is indeed a good man. He is a little immature, but will learn here. You may send for him if you need him again.

Please take it that the adhesions in your intestines can be cured only through a carefully selected diet. You should not strain at all when passing stools.

I understand your eagerness to get Mahadev over there. But he cannot look after *Harijan* properly from there. He would naturally like to show me what he writes and I to see it. After reading what he writes I often find it necessary to make some essential, though only a few, changes. I have asked Narahari to go over there.

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

Ghanshyamdas is staying in the room which you used to occupy. If he were to stay in Wardha, I would not be able to treat him. I would not be able to judge clearly what to do.

Ba is not keeping quite well. When your planned stay at Hajira is over, please remember you have to come here. You may go out from here only when necessary. You must have read my suggestion regarding spinning in Gujarat.[1] See that it is fully implemented. And collect some money for the Spinners' Association.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
HAJIRA, *via* SURAT

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 266

755. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

February 7, 1942

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. I am writing to Mathura Babu regarding the honey. There is no stock here just now.

There is no harm in adding salt to vegetables, but it would be better not to. Or you may add just a little. There is no need to add salt to uncooked vegetables.

Ripe tomatoes should never be cooked.

When you get honey, you need not eat palm *gur*.

Sushilabehn's address is : C/o Dr. Gopichand[2], Lajpat Rai Bhavan, Lahore.

Ba's health is not quite good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3570

[1] *Vide* "To Gujaratis", 25-1-1942.

[2] Gopichand Bhargava

756. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 7, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Read both your letters. What you say is quite correct. Advance notice about [the arrival of] guests must be sent. But extraordinary situations will always arise. We should be prepared for that—whether as regards utensils or accommodation. If you have none, you should send word that the guests would be called in as soon as accommodation becomes available. If the food is not enough you will make do with whatever you have. If we have some we should serve it to the guests and ourselves go without any. This will be an emergency decision. If you do not get proper notice owing to carelessness, you will warn those responsible for the confusion. What more can we do?

As for the plates, do this. Collect all the utensils. The new ones should be withdrawn. So many new utensils have come and still there is shortage ! What could be the reason?

Collect all the spoons; they should be given to those who need them.

If you find any difficulty in doing either of these things, take my help.

The rest later.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 4413

757. LETTER TO PUSHPA SUNDARAM

February 7, 1942

CHI. PUSHPA,

Father[1] has to give another twenty-five years to the Kashi Vishwavidyalaya. Who is going to be satisfied with twenty-five years?

Why do you write in English?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 3189

[1] V. A. Sundaram

758. DISCUSSION WITH DR. JOHN[1]

[Before *February 8, 1942*][2]

Gandhiji laughingly said :

I will not accept the messages, unless Dr. Carver[3] comes and delivers them himself.

Dr. John said Dr. Carver was too old now to come to India. But he . . . remembers Gandhiji whenever he has an Indian visitor. . . . The very first question that Gandhiji asked Dr. John about Dr. Carver was :

But even this genius suffers under the handicap of segregation, does not he?

Oh yes, as much as any Negro.

And yet these people talk of democracy and equality ! It is an utter lie.

But Dr. Carver is never bitter or resentful.

I know, that is what we believers in non-violence have to learn from him. But what about the claim of these people who are said to be fighting for democracy?

Harijan, 15-2-1942

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "British and American Nazism", dated February 8, 1942

[2] *ibid*

[3] Dr. George Washington Carver, Professor of Botany at Tuskegee, had sent through Dr. John messages and pamphlets for Gandhiji.

759. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

5.45 a.m., February 8, 1942

MY DEAR KU[MARAPPA],

I have decided to drink the cup to the full. I become President of the A. I. V. I. A.

I would like Jairamdas[1] to come on the Executive if it is at all possible.

You may occupy a column of *Harijan* every week.

You should give me a plan for the use of the threatened plot of land. The quicker the better.

You all three must do your Hindi as quickly as possible.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10162

760. NOTES

MISBEHAVIOUR OF TROOPS

I have piteous letters from correspondents complaining of misbehaviour by troops, white and Indian. There are detailed letters from Dohad and Rutlam stations and others too. The troops are said to have molested the hawkers on the platforms, helped themselves to eatables and hit the salesmen who protested. The station-masters were powerless to afford protection. I do not know how much credit is to be attached to the descriptions I have received. The evidence is so detailed and given with so much moderation as to command belief. Anyway I draw the attention of the authorities to the complaints. Any such misbehaviour should be put down summarily and repetition made practically impossible, If panic is to be prevented and bitterness avoided. I would advise the aggrieved parties to lodge their complaints to the proper authorities with authentic evidence in support.

HYDERABAD STATE

Swami Ramanand Tirtha of the banned State Congress has issued the following sober statement[2] :

[1] Jairamdas Doulatram

[2] Of which only extracts are reproduced here

Some of the workers of the Hyderabad State Congress which was banned on 2nd March, 1940, offered individual satygraha in the month of September 1940. . . . The Government of H.E.H. the Nizam released them unconditionally on 16th December, 1941. Immediately after the release, I issued a statement saying. . . that it was incumbent upon us to continue the satyagraha till our demend for lifting the ban was conceded by the Government. After our release we consulted Mahatmaji and. . . he advised us to abstain from re-offering satyagraha at this hour, and directed us to concentrate our energies wholly on the constructive programme. . . . We therefore appeal to the people in general and workers in particular to devote their energies to this programme. . . . This suspension, however, does not mean any alteration in our goal which is the attainment of responsible government under the aegis of H.E.H. the Nizam and the Asafjahi Dynasty.

How I wish the Government of H. E. H. the Nizam would remove the ban. They cannot wish to prevent people from carrying on a constitutional movement in favour of responsible government under the aegis of H. E. H. the Nizam. The recent release of the satyagrahis loses all grace if the ban on the State Congress is not removed.

SEVAGRAM, February 8, 1942

Harijan, 15-2-1942

761. NOT NECESSARILY IMPURE

Thus writes Shri Shankerrao Dev:

In the last issue of *Harijan*, in your article "A Deplorable Incident"[1] you say to the rich: "Earn your crores by all means. But understand that your wealth is not yours; it belongs to the people. Take what you require for your legitimate needs, and use the remainder for society." When I read this, the first question that arose in my mind was: 'Why first earn crores and then use them for society?' As society today is constituted the means of earning crores are bound to be impure; and one who earns crores by impure means cannot be expected to follow the *mantra* तेन त्यक्तेन भुंजीथा— because in the very process of earning crores by impure means the man's character is bound to be tainted or vitiated. And moreover you have always been emphasizing the purity of means. But I am afraid that there is a possibility of people misunderstanding that you are laying an emphasis here more on the ends than on the means.

I request you to emphasize as much, if not more, on the purity of means of earning money as on spending. If purity of means is strictly observed, then, according to me, crores could not be accumulated at all and the difficulty of

[1] *Vide* "A Deplorable Incident", 25-1-1942.

spending for society will assume a very minor prospect.

I must demur. Surely a man may conceivable make crores through strictly pure means, assuming that a man may legitimately possess riches. For the purpose of my argument, I have assumed that private possession itself is not held to be impure. If I own a mining lease and I tumble upon a diamond of rare value, I may suddenly find myself a millionaire without being held guilty of having used impure means. This actually happened when Cullinan diamond, much more valuable than the Kohinoor, was found. Such instances can be easily multiplied. My argument was surely addressed to such men. I have no hesitation in endorsing the proposition that generally rich men and for that matter most men are not particular as to the way they make money. In the application of the method of non-violence one must believe in the possibility of every person, however depraved, being reformed under humane and skilled treatment. We must appeal to the good in human beings and expect response. Is it not conducive to the well-being of society that every member uses all his talents, only not for personal aggrandisement but for the good of all? We do not want to produce dead equality where every person becomes or is rendered incapable of using his ability to the utmost possible extent. Such a society must ultimately perish. I therefore suggest that my advice that monied men may earn their crores (honestly only, of course) but so as to dedicate them to the service of all is perfectly sound. तेन त्यक्तेन भुंजीथा— is a *mantra* based on uncommon knowledge. It is the surest method to evolve a new order or life of universal benefit in the place of the present one where each one lives for himself without regard to what happens to his neighbour.

SEVAGRAM, February 8, 1942

Harijan, 22-2-1942

762. INDIVIDUAL OR COLLECTIVE? [1]

Shri Jamnalal Bajaj has bravely taken the burden of the great work of cow service (in other words, cattle preservation) on his shoulders. The most important question for consideration before the recent Goseva Sangh Conference[2] was whether cow-farming should be in the hands of individuals or done collectively. I myself had no hesitaton in saying that she could never be saved by individual

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 15-2-1942.

[2] Held on February 1, 1942

farming. Her salvation, and with her that of the buffalo, could only be brought about by collective endeavour. It is quite impossible for an individual farmer to look after the welfare of his cattle in his own home in a proper and scientific manner. Amongst other causes lack of collective effort has been a principal cause of the deterioration of the cow and hence of cattle in general.[1]

The world today is moving towards the ideal of collective or co-operative effort in every department of life. Much in this line has been and is being accomplished. It has come into our country also, but in such a distorted form that our poor have not been able to reap its benefits. *Pari passu* with the increase in our popultion land-holdings of the average farmer are daily decreasing. Moreover, what the individual possesses is often fragmentary.[2] For such farmers to keep cattle in their homes is a suicidal policy; and yet this is their condition today. Those who give the first place to economics and pay scant attention to religious, ethical or humanitarian considerations proclaim from the house-tops that the farmer is being devoured by his cattle due to the cost of their feed which is out of all proporation to what they yield. They say it is folly not to slaughter wholesale all useless animals.

What then should be done by humanitarians is the question. The answer obviously is to find a way whereby we may not only save the lives of our cattle but also see that do not become a burden. I am sure that co-operative effort can help us in a large measure.

The following comparison may be helpful:

1. Under the collective system no farmer can keep cattle in his house as he does today. They foul the air and dirty the surroundings. There is neither intelligence nor humanitarianism in living with animals. Man was not meant to do so. The space taken up by the cattle today would be spared to the farmer and his family if the collective system were adopted.

2. As the number of cattle increases, life becomes impossible for the farmer in his home. Hence he is obliged to sell the calves and kill the male buffaloes or else turn them out to starve and die. This inhumanity would be averted, if the care of cattle were undertaken on

[1] The Hindi here adds: "This burden is no doubt beyond the strength of an individual farmer."

[2] The Hindi here adds: "And whatever little he has only adds to his problems."

a co-operative basis.

3. Collective cattle-farming would ensure the supply of veterinary treatment to animals when they are ill. No ordinary farmer can afford this on his own.

4. Similarly one selected bull can be easily kept for the need of several cows under the collective system. This is impossible otherwise except for charity.

5. Common grazing ground or land for exercising the animals will be easily available under the co-operative system, whereas today generally there is nothing of the kind for individual farmers.

6. The expense on fodder will be comparatively far less under the collective system.

7. The sale of milk at good prices will be greatly facilitated, and there will be no need or temptation for the farmer to adulterate it as he does as an individual.

8. It is impossible to carry out tests of the fitness of every head of cattle individually, but this could easily be done for the cattle of a whole village and would thus make it easier to improve the breed.

9. The foregoing advantages should be sufficient argument in favour of co-operative cattle-farming. The strongest argument in its favour is that the individualistic system has been the means of making our own condition as well as that of our cattle pitiable. We can only save ourselves and them by making this essential change.

I firmly believe too that we shall not derive the full benefits of agriculture until we take to co-operative farming. Does it not stand to reason that it is far better for a hundred families in a village to cultivate their lands collectively and divide the income therefrom than to divide the land anyhow into a hundred portions? And what applies to land applies equally to cattle.

It is quite another matter that it may be difficult to convert people to adopt this way of life straightaway. The straight and narrow road is always hard to traverse. Every step in the programme of cow-service is strewn with thorny problems. But only by surmounting difficulties can we hope to make the path easier. My purpose for the time being is to show the great superiority of collective cattle farming over the individual effort. I hold further that the latter is wrong and the former only is right. In reality even the individual can only safeguard his independence through co-operation. In cattle-farming the individual effort has led to selfishness and inhumanity, whereas the

collective effort can abate both the evils, if it does not remove them altogether.

SEVAGRAM, February 8, 1942

Harijan, 15-2-1942

763. ASHRAM NOTE

February 8, 1942

My advice is that no one should keep with him more utensils than required and those who have the new utensils should exchange them for old ones, so that we can keep the former for our guests.

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, p. 387

764. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
February 8, 1942

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

As I have suspended civil disobedience, I make bold to write this letter for humanity's cause.

The statutory law says that charitable institutions, though they make profits, are free from income-tax. I am the founder and President of the All-India Spinners' Association. I can give you my word that it is a purely charitable association. It exists to serve the poorest in the land through hand-spinning and hand-weaving. But simply through legal quibbles, disbelief of the evidence tendered and, I apprehend, for its connection with the Congress in that it got its charter from the Congress, the officials have decided do levy the income-tax. The profit are not denied but they have never been used for private or personal gain. The whole of the Executive of the Association is honorary. The Association has gone to the High Court of Bombay which has thrown out its petition on a legal flaw. It is appealing to the Privy Council. I do not know what will be the result. Meanwhile the Association has already paid a certain amount of the tax and is likely to be called upon to pay up to five lacs. They will not stay the levy pending the proceedings. But my request is for you to intervene and save the five lacs for the poor. Let me tell you that during the past 20 years of its existence the Association has distri-

buted among the poor nearly four crores as wages.

I am not burdening you with further facts or any papers. You can have these for the asking.

You will forgive me for inflicting this on you when every moment of yours is pre-mortgaged for winning the war. Though I cannot sympathize with your enterprise, much less help in the manner you would wish, you will believe me when I say that I am as much today a friend of your people as I ever have been. Hence I understand what a strain it must be for you and Lady Linlithgow.

When you write to Lady Anne[1] and Southby[2] please send my love to them. I have purposely refrained from acknowledging their letters in answer to my congratulations. I hope they with the baby are faring well.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Transfer of Power, Vol. I, pp. 135-6

765. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C.P.,
February 8, 1942

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

The thorny crown that I wanted to put upon your head has come upon me. The Executive won't have you or anybody else but me. They want the same man for the sun and the planets.

But you must be in the A.I.V.I.A. as also in the A.I.S.A. if you are not in the latter.

Hope you are flourishing and following what I write in *Harijan.*

I wish you, Devi[3] and Premi[4] will make up your Hindi and Urdu. How high would Premi have gone if she had given one quarter of the years to Hindi and Urdu just as she has given to English. The knowledge then gained would have flown to the masses. Now it is dammed and damned too.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 11054. Courtesy : Arjun Jairamdas

[1] Lady Anne Hope, addressee's eldest daughter, and her husband Patrick H. J. Southby

[2] *ibid*

[3] Addressee's wife and daughter respectively

[4] *ibid*

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTION[1]

December 30, 1941

The Working Committee have received the following letter from Gandhiji and recognize the validity of the point he has raised and therefore relieve him of the responsibility laid upon him by the Bombay Resolution referred to by Gandhiji. But the Committee assure him that the policy of non-violence adopted under his guidance for the attainment of swaraj and which has proved so successful in leading to mass awakening and otherwise will be adhered to by the Congress. The Working Committee further assure him that it would like to extend its scope as far as possible even in free India. The Committee hope that Congressmen will render him full assistance in the prosecution of his mission, including the offering of civil disobedience.

A.I.C.C. File No. 1375. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX II

CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTION[2]

December 30, 1941

Fourteen months have elapsed since the Working Committee held their last meeting and during this period the world has fallen ever deeper into the abyss of war and rushed headlong towards self-destruction. The members of the Committee have met again on their release from prison and given earnest thought to all the national and international developments during this fateful period of human history. The burden of guiding the Congress and the nation at this critical stage, when old problems assume a new significance and war approaches the frontiers of India bringing new problems in its train, is a heavy one which the Committtee can only shoulder worthily with the full co-operation of the people of India. The Committee have endeavoured to keep in view the principles and objectives for which the Congress has stood during these past many years and considered them in the larger context of world conditions and world freedom. The Committee are convinced that full

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Abul Kalam Azad", 30-12-1941 and "Statement to the Press", 7-1-1942.

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 30-12-1941; "Speech at Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee Meeting", 4-1-1942; "Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting", 15-1-1942 and "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari" 12-1-1942.

freedom for the people of India is essential even, and more especially, in the present state of world turmoil, not only for India's sake but for the sake of the world. The Committee also hold that real peace and freedom can only be established and endured on the basis of world co-operation between free nations.

The Committee gave full expression to their attitude towards the war in their statement issued on September 14, 1939,[1] wherein they condemned Nazi and Fascist aggression and expressed their willingness to help the cause of freedom and democracy, provided the objectives of the war were clearly stated and acted upon, in so far as was possible, in the present. If freedom and democracy were those objectives, then they must necessarily include the ending of imperialism and the recognition of the independence of India. Subsequent pronouncements made on behalf of the British Government and their reactionary and oppressive policy made it clear that this Government was determined to maintain and intensify its imperialist hold and exploitation of the Indian people. British policy was one of deliberate insult to Indian nationalism of a perpetuation of unrestrained authoritarianism and the encouragement of disruptive and reactionary elements. Not only has every offer made by the Congress for an honourable compromise been rejected, but public opinion voiced by organizations regarded as moderate has also been flouted.

The Congress was, therefore, compelled, in order to defend the honour and the elementary rights of the Indian people and the integrity of the nationalist movement, to request Gandhiji to guide the Congress in the action that should be taken. Mahatma Gandhi desirous of avoiding embarrassment to his opponent as far as possible, especially during the perils and dangers of war, limited the satyagraha movement which he started to selected individuals who conformed to certain tests he had laid down. That satyagraha has now proceeded for over fourteen months and about twenty-five thousand Congressmen have suffered imprisonment, while many thousands of others who offered satyagraha in the Frontier Province and elsewhere were not arrested. The committee desire to express their respectful appreciation of Gandhiji's leadership and of the response of the nation to it, and are of opinion that this has strengthened the people.

Throughout this period the attitude of the British Government has been hostile to Indian freedom and it has functioned in India as a completely authoritarian government, insulting the deeply cherished convictions and feelings of the people. Neither the professions of freedom and democracy nor the perils and catastrophes that have come in the wake of war have affected this attitude and policy, and such changes as have taken place have been for the worse.

The recent release of a number of political prisoners has no significance or importance, and the circumstances attending it, and official pronouncements made,

[1] *Vide*, Appendix "Working Committe Manifesto", 14-9-1939.

make it clear that it is not connected with any change of policy. Large numbers of detenus, who are kept in prison under the Defence of India Act without trial, and whose only offence seems to be that they are ardent patriots impatient of foreign rule and determined to achieve the independence of the country, still remain in prison. Recent arrests of prominent persons and their treatment in prison also indicate that the old policy is being pursued as before.

While there has been no change in Britain's policy towards India, the Working Committee must nevertheless take into full consideration the new world situation that has arisen by the development of the war into a world conflict and its approach to India. The sympathies of the Congress must inevitably lie with the people who are the subject of aggression and who are fighting for their freedom. But only a free and independent India can be in a position to undertake the defence of the country on a national basis and be of help in the furtherance of the larger causes that are emerging from the storm of war. The whole background in India is one of hostility and of distrust of the British Government and not even the most far-reaching promises can alter this background, nor can a subject India offer voluntary or willing help to an arrogant imperialism which is indistinguishable from Fascist authoritarianism.

The Committee is, therefore, of opinion that the resolution[1] of the A. I. C. C. passed in Bombay on September 16, 1940, holds today and defines Congress policy still.

A. I. C. C. File No. 1375. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX III

CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE'S INSTRUCTIONS[2]

This meeting of the A. I. C. C. endorses the following instructions issued by the Working Committee and calls upon all Provincial and other subordinate Congress Committees to give effect to them within their respective areas. The Provincial Congress Committees are authorized to supplement them wherever necessary. The Committee expects every member of an elective Congress Committee to devote himself actively to the execution of some item of this programme, and to send periodical reports of the work done by him to his Committee :

Recent developments in the world situation have brought war near to India's frontiers. This may lead to internal dislocation in certain parts of the country and

[1] *Vide* "All-India Congress Committee Resolution", 22-9-1940.
[2] *Vide* "Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting", 15-1-1942 and"Question Box", 19-2-1942.

there is a possibility of some cities being subjected to aerial attack. Whatever dangers and difficulties might arise, the real antidote to them is to remain cool and collected and on no account to give way to nervousness and excitements. Congressmen must remain at their posts and continue their service of the people; wherever necessity arises they should yield places of safety to those in greater need and be ready to render aid to those who may require it.

The Congress can help and serve the people in the difficult times ahead only if its organization is strong and disciplined and Congressmen individually and Congress Committees are able to command confidence in their respective localities. Congress Committees and Congressmen should therefore address themselves immediately to the task of strengthening the organization and reviving and maintaining contacts with the people in the villages and towns. Every village should, as far as possible, receive the message of the Congress and be prepared to face such difficulties as might arise.

The constructive programme adopted by the Congress, and explained from time to time by Gandhiji, is of particular importance at this juncture. It is meant not only to bring about unity among various groups, to remove disabilities which keep sections of the community backward and depressed, to promote self-reliance and the co-operative spirit among the people, to increase production and have fairer distribution but it also furnishes the best opportunity and means of contacts with the people and service to them which are necessary for winning their confidence. The Working Committee therefore call upon Congress Committees and workers to further this programme intensively, and thus exercise a steadying and strengthening influence in times of dislocation and uneasiness.

During such times there is always a possibility of trouble being created by un-social elements in the country. To avoid the emergence of such a situation and to meet it when it arises, volunteers should be organized in both the urban and rural areas. Such organizations should be formed on the basis of strict non-violence, and it should always be remembered that the Congress adheres to this principle. These volunteers may co-operate with other organizations working for other ends, this volunteer organization is meant for rendering service to the people both normally and in the event of possible internal commotion. It should therefore avoid conflict with the authorities.

Prices of commodities have already risen and are causing distress among the people and no adequate steps have so far been taken by the authorities to meet this situation. These tendencies are likely to be accentuated in the future, and dislocation

of trade and transport, due to stress of war, may lead to scarcity of the necessaries of life as well as of many other things which are of everyday use. Big-scale industries in other countries have suffered heavily on account of the war, and transport of goods has become difficult on account of military requirements. China has largely overcome these difficulties by a widespread development of village industries. India may have to face similar problems, and village and cottage industries afford a solution, desirable in itself, and more particularly, suited to the needs of the moment. Such industries can escape to a large extent the effects of dislocation of trade and transport. It is therefore necessary that this item of the constructive programme should be widely taken up and worked up with vigour and earnestness so that the countryside may be rendered, as far as possible, self-sufficient in regard to the necessaries of life. The Committee would specially recommend to the villagers the growing of food crops at least to cover the needs of the village and appeal to the grain dealers not to hold up stores for profit but release them for consumption at fair prices.

In cases of emergency, when instructions are issued to the public by the authorities for the preservation of life and property and the maintenance of public order, Congressmen should avoid conflict with the authorities. They should carry out such instructions, unless they are contrary to Congress directions.

Harijan, 25-1-1942

1. ADIVASIS

Adivasis have become the fourteenth item in the constructive programme.[1] But they are not the least in point of importance. Our country is so vast and the races so varied that the best of us, in spite of every effort, cannot know all there is to know of men and their condition. As one comes upon layer after layer of things one ought to know as a national servant, one realizes how difficult it is to make good our claim to be one nation whose every unit has a living consciousness of being one with every other.

The *Adivasis* are $2\frac{1}{4}$ crores in all India, i.e., $6\frac{1}{4}$ per cent of the total population or nearly half of the Harijan population.

Shri Balasaheb Kher has thrown himself with his usual zeal into this much needed service in the Thana District. He says in the pamphlet issued by him, on behalf of the Adivasi Seva Mandal of which he is President:[2]

Balasaheb has made a modest beginning. He has started with a hostel for *Adivasi* boys. His work is all unassuming and solid. If he gets the true type of workers, what is a small beginning may one day blossom forth into an all-India organization covering the whole of the *Adivasi* population. Truly "the harvest is rich and the labourers few." Who can deny that all such service is not merely humanitarian but solidly national and brings us nearer to true independence?

SEVAGRAM, February 9, 1942

Harijan, 15-2-1942

[1] *Vide "Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place"* 13-12-1941. In the revised edition it became the sixteenth item.

[2] The pamphlet, not reproduced here, described the miserable plight of the *Adivasis* and their exploitation by zamindars and forest contractors.

2. QUESTION BOX

THE ETERNAL PROBLEM

Q.Why can't you see that whilst there is possession it must be defended against all odds? Therefore your insistence that violence should be eschewed in all circumstances is utterly unworkable and absurd. I think non-violence is possible only for select individuals.

A.This question has been answered often enough in some form or other in these columns as also in those of *Young India*. But it is an evergreen. I must answer it as often as it is put, especially when it comes from an earnest seeker as this one does. I claim that even now, though the social structure is not based on a conscious acceptance of non-violence, all the world over mankind lives and men retain their possessions on the sufferance of one another. If they had not done so, only the fewest and the most ferocious would have survived. But such is not the case. Families are bound together by ties of love, and so are groups in the so-called civilized society called nations. Only they do not recognize the supremacy of the law of non-violence. It follows, therefore, that they have not investigated its vast possibilities. Hitherto out of sheer inertia, shall I say, we have taken it for granted that complete non-violence is possible only for the few who take the vow of non-possession and the allied abstinences. Whilst it is true that the votaries alone can carry on research work and declare from time to time the new possibilities of the great eternal law governing man, if it is the law, it must hold good for all. The many failures we see are not of the law but of the followers, many of whom do not even know that they are under that law willy-nilly. When a mother dies for her child she unknowingly obeys the law. I have been pleading for the past fifty years for a conscious acceptance of the law and its zealous practice even in the face of failures. Fifty years' work has shown marvellous results and strengthened my faith. I do claim that by constant practice we shall come to a state of things when lawful possession will command universal and voluntary respect. No doubt such possession will not be tainted. It will not be an insolent demonstration of the inequalities that surround us everywhere. Nor need the problem of unjust and unlawful possessions appal the votary of non-violence. He

has at his disposal the non-violent weapon of satyagraha and non-co-operation which hitherto has been found to be a complete substitute of violence whenever it has been applied honestly in sufficient measure. I have never claimed to present the complete science of non-violence. It does not lend ittself to such treatment. So far as I know no single physical science does, not even the very precise science of mathematics. I am but a seeker, and I have fellow-seekers like the questioner whom I invite to accompany me in the very difficult but equally fascinating search.

SEVAGRAM, February 9, 1942

Harijan, 22-2-1942

3. PASSING OF THE FIRST STAGE OF THE A.I.V.I.A[1]

One would have thought that I had enough on my hands without taking the additional burden of the presidentship of the A. I. V. I. A. I have been its guide ever since its inception[2], but the importunity of the Board was irresistible. Readers will lighten my task by sharing it with me by (a) becoming members, (b) contributing funds (c) contributing solid work.

SEVAGRAM, February 9, 1942

Harijan, 22-2-1942

4. FROM THE OLDEST CONGRESSMAN

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

> I congratulate you upon your dissociation with the believers of violence as far as possible. God gave you an opportunity to do so at Poona, but at Bombay you forgot all about that God-given opportunity. At Bardoli God gave you that opportunity again. I am exceedingly glad that you did not make the same mistake at Wardha as you had done at Bombay. . . .
>
> . . . Violence was created by God who gave it a limited life. God in His infinite wisdom now finds that violence was given a trial and found wanting in preserving world peace. . . . This world war may not be the longest but it must

[1] J. C. Kumarappa's article about the new constitution of the A.I.V.I.A. to which this note was appended is not reproduced here.

[2] In 1934

be the last, and a new world with perfect peace and tranquillity will emerge out of the ashes of violence and armament for the benefit of mankind. . . .

God-believing India will not have man-given violence and armament-controlled freedom for exploiting the weaker section of humanity. She must have God-given freedom for their service—*seva*.

God-given freedom can be obtained only by satyagraha, sufferings for which can be successfully undertaken only by those whose surrender to Him is complete. The number of satyagrahis is steadily increasing. Let the advocates of violence say and do whatever they may, the number of believers in non-violence will steadily go on increasing and the world will have real peace.

HARA DAYAL NAG

Chandpur, 24-1-1942

Though the foregoing[1] has an intrinsic value as an expression of robust faith, it is printed as being from the pen of the oldest living Congressman who clings to non-violence as an infant to its mother's breast.

SEVAGRAM, February 9, 1942

Harijan, 22-2-1942

5. *LETTER TO MAGANLAL AND MANJULA MEHTA*

February 9, 1942

CHI. MAGAN AND MANJULA,

I have the letters of you both. Why this infatuation for the examination? It is strange that Manjula should press you. A man may sacrifice his all for his parents, children or brothers. Would you mind so much sacrificing studies for the sake of Ratilal? If you are determined to complete your studies, what is the harm in dropping the examination once? I still think you are failing in your duty to Ratilal.

How can you expect to impose on somebody else a duty which you yourself are not ready to perform? If I had anybody with me, I would have taken charge of Ratilal long ago. I acknowledge no duties

[1] Of which only extracts are reproduced here

even to my sons now, otherwise I myself would have run down to Rajkot. You have no reason to refuse to go.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I will certainly try to shift Champa from your room to some other room.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1026. Courtesy: Manjula M. Mehta

6. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 9, 1942

Inform Balvantsinha that the scales are meant exclusively for men. They are costly and belong to the hospital. We have another for vegetables which should be kept in order.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4414

7. LETTER TO B. S. PATHIK

SEVAGRAM,
February 9, 1942

BHAI PATHIKJI,

I duly received your letter. I have also read what you wrote to Ramnarayanji. I need all the sincere comrades I can find. What answer can I give to your questions? I remain what I have always been. There has been no change in my ideas. If my writing or my work has provided any light to you, and if your reason accepts it, do come and have further experience of my method. I generally can spare very little time for conversation. What I want is that you should acquaint yourself with the atmosphere here and get to know the people.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. B. S. PATHIK

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

8. 'SUPPOSE GERMANY WINS'

> Suppose Germany wins with India not having entered the war, would Hitler leave India alone? Certainly not, my dear Mr. Gandhi, he will have a greater say in India than what Britain has now. The difference is this. You can fight the Englishman, but you cannot fight the German once he puts his foot on India's soil. Civil disobedience is the terror of the Englishman, it is the daily bread of the Nazi.

This is a question extracted from a very long and earnest letter from an English correspondent from South Africa. The first fallacy is that India is assumed not to have entered the war when to all intents and purposes she is in the war in spite of the powerful protest of the Congress. She is so much in the war that Great Britain is effectively using all the available fighting material which her generals have brought into being and trained, and is draining all the money she can.

Politically-minded Indians have never been trained except for doing the rulers' clerical work. They are certainly holding themselves aloof until certain obviously necessary conditions are fulfilled. I do not see how they can be blamed for demanding the very liberty in defence of which the Allied Powers are said to be fighting. What Indians can do even if their demand is accepted is to give their moral weight to the struggle. This the rulers evidently do not care for. It cannot, in their opinion, turn the scales in their favour. Moral values do not count when each party swears by its material and physical resources. The Congress, with all the will in the world to defeat Nazism, cannot thrust its help on Great Britain which evidently does not want it or about which it is at least indifferent. If, therefore, Great Britain suffers defeat, it will not be for want of Congress co-operation but for causes over which the Congress can have no control.

If the Nazis come to India, the Congress will give them the same fight that it has given Great Britain. I do not underrate the power of satyagraha as the questioner does. But that is pure speculation. Imperialism has kept its grip on India for more than 150 years. If it is overthrown by a worse type of rule, the Congress can have the negative satisfaction of knowing that no other 'ism' can possibly last beyound a few years even if it establishes a foothold in India. That is as I read the Congress mind. Personally I think the end of this giant

war will be what happened in the fabled Mahabharata War. The *Mahabharata* has been aptly described by a Travancorian as the permanent History of Man. What is described in that great epic is happening today before our very eyes. The warring nations are destroying themselves with such fury and ferocity that the end will be mutual exhaustion. The victor will share the fate that awaited the surviving Pandavas. The mighty warrior Arjuna was looted in broad daylight by a petty robber. And out of this holocaust must arise a new order for which the exploited millions of toilers have so long thirsted. The prayers of peace-lovers cannot go in vain. Satyagraha is itself an unmistakable mute prayer of an agonized soul.

SEVAGRAM, February 10, 1942

Harijan, 15-2-1942

9. SETH JAMNALAL BAJAJ [1]

In Seth Jamnalal Bajaj, death has taken a mighty man.[2] Whenever I wrote of wealthy men becoming trustees of their wealth for the common good I always had this merchant prince principally in mind. If his trusteeship did not reach the ideal, the fault was not his. I deliberately restrained him. I did not want him in his enthusiasm to take a single step which in his cool moments he might regret. His simplicity was all his own. Every house he built for himself became a dharmashala. His contribution as a satyagrahi was of the highest order. In political discussions he held his own. His judgements were sound. As an act of renunciation his last was the crown of all. He wanted to take up a constructive activity to which he could devote the rest of his life and in which he could use all his abilities. This was the preservation of the cattle wealth of India personifed in the cow. He threw himself into the work with a single-mindedness and zeal I had never seen surpassed. His generosity knew no distinction of race, creed or colour. He wanted to perform a rare thing for a busy man. He wanted to control his thoughts so as to prevent a single intruder

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

[2] Jamnalal Bajaj had died of cerebral haemorrhage in the afternoon. For an account by Mahadev Desai, *vide* Appendix "Mahadev Desai's Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 14-2-1942.

from comming in. The world is poorer for his death. The country has lost one of the bravest of its servants. Janakidevi, the widow, has decided to take up the work to which he had dedicated himself. She has divested herself of all her personal property valued at about two and a half lacs. May God enable her to fulfil the trust she has undertaken.

SEVAGRAM, February 11, 1942
Harijan, 15-2-1942

10. LETTER TO CHIANG KAI-SHEK

February 11, 1942

DEAREST FRIEND,

As you know I am living in a village out of touch with the outside world. I came to know of your arrival in my country side by side with the precious message from Pandit Nehru that you were coming to Wardha and to grace my cottage with your presence. And so I refrained from sending you a word of welcome. But to my great sorrow I have just learnt that you would not be able to come to Wardha and you would not think of letting me come to you. I must leave you to imagine my sorrow that although you are in my country I shall miss seeing you and your noble partner. We know each other through correspondence but much more through Jawaharlal Nehru. I have many ties with your country. I know that yours is a vaster country than mine. And I do not know that yours is not a more ancient culture than ours. I know what it is to lose one's liberty, having lost it for so many centuries. My whole heart goes out to you in your fight to preserve your own. May God crown your effort with success. The knowledge that circumstances over which you and I have no control make it impossible for us to meet brings us closer in spirit.[1]

I am,
Your sincere friend,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. GENERALISSIMO CHIANG KAI-SHEK

From a copy: Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1942 Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] However, Gandhiji met the addressee on February 18, 1942.

11. LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

February 11, 1942

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have your letter. You may not take charge of Ratilal, but you must go there, see him, and make whatever arrangement you can for him.

I could not read correctly the name you have mentioned, but take whomever you can get and save a dying brother.

Manjula may come over whenever she wishes. One part is occupied by Champa. Is it necessary to shift her from there? But I will consider after Manju arrives. I am not shifting her till then1.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1029. Courtesy: Manjula M. Mehta

12. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

February 11, 1942

We wondered where we should perform the cremation rites—at the Sevagram hillock, the public cremation ground or Gopuri. And it was decided to perform the rites at Gopuri where Jamnalalji had finally settled and for which work he had finally dedicated himself by renouncing his all. I was neutral in the matter but I welcomed the decision.

Thousands of people converged on Gopuri to bid farewell to the body. After the cremation Vinoba recited the full text of the *Ishavasyopanishad* in his sweet voice. Then I asked him to recite Chapter XII from *Gitai*[1] so that all those who were assembled could understand. He recited the 9th. I had suggested the 12th because it is short. But Vinoba has everything committed to memory. Hence he recited the 9th. But I was not to be satisfied with that. I asked him to

[1] Vinoba Bhave's metrical Marathi rendering of the Gita. Chapters IX and XII deal with devotion.

recite an *abhanga*.[1] He recited one from Tukaram. Lastly I requested him to sing *'Vaishnavajana'*. He then sang this *bhajan* too. Parachure Shastri had of course arrived there. He recited hymns from the Vedas and, at my request, explained their gist to the assembly. The hymns selected conveyed, as was proper, the most solemn thoughts. Their purport was to this effect:

> The light that was confined within Jamnalalji has now merged in the Cosmic Light [present] in us all. The body is reduced to ashes but what was enduring and yet confined within certain bounds has now come to us all. Jamnalalji belonged to a few, now he belongs to the universe. The body has been cast off, but his vows, his pledges, his *goseva*, his khadi work, his devotion to truth and non-violence, these have merged in us all; they have become our legacy. Whatever he has done in pursuance of all his vows belongs to us no doubt, but what remains to be done is for us to complete. Today he hands it over to us to learn and practise.

What message could have been more proper? How can I say that I am not grieved over his passing away? It is but natural. I may say he was for me a *Kamadhenu* cow. If I was in a quandary, I would send for Jamnalalji; if I wanted to undertake anything I would consult Jamnalalji. He always responded to my call. How can I then help being grieved? But I forget my grief when I think of the work he has done and the message he has left for us.

What we have to bear in mind today is that we are occupying what he built. I know his love for Sevagram. He was concerned how every cowrie in Sevagram was spent and how it was accounted for, because in his life he kept account of every pie. And he always insisted that the conduct and behaviour of anyone who went out of Sevagram were worthy of its fair name.

And what a life he himself lived! Once he came to me saying: "You love me well enough, but I want to be a son to you just as Devdas is." How could I make a son of that mountain of a man? But I gave in to his love and insistence and granted his request. One adopts another as a son but here the son adopted the father. And having

[1] Devotional verse

adopted me mark what he said to me: "Now I have to entrust my heart as well as my outward [life] to you. Impure thoughts persist in my mind but I shall speak them out before you so that I may be pure and have peace." He kept his word to the last. [Government] had conferred the title of Rai Bahadur on him. My association with him is as old as the conferment of this title. I let him accept it assuming it would be of some use. When the question of giving it up arose he discarded it in a moment. His fearlessness had hardly any parallel. Since he became my son he made it a practice to discuss with me every activity of his. And his act of final renunciation was also backed by my advice after he had fully discussed it with me. Having once undertaken a task he would not mind dying for it. When he was earning money he did earn a lot of it. But I can say that never to my knowledge did he earn a single pice by unfair means. And his money he used for the public benefit.

We can all imaging Janakidevi's agony. She had almost gone mad. She said she wanted to commit *sati*; she could not live without him. I said to her, "Don't think that people will worship you if you committed *sati*. On the contrary, they will criticize you.[1] But neither I nor anyone else will restrain you, if you kindle the fire of yoga and consign yourself to its flames. But this is not possible. That is why I say you can now prove yourself a devoted wife only by becoming a yogi, i.e., by pursuing his ideals. You can become a true *sati* by renouncing your all for the sake of his work." Ghanshyamdasji who was present said, "We have a custom of taking a pious vow on such occasions. Advise Janakidevi to take one." Janakidevi spontaneously said, "Here is my vow: I dedicate for his ideals everything that he has left me." She showed me her accounts also. The amount was more than two lacs. All this she has devoted to *goseva* and vowed to bury herself in the work at Gopuri. In this way she became the *sati*. But who can say whether all this is a result of pure renunciation or of momentary impulse? She herself wondered if God would grant her the strength to do all this . Vinoba who was present there told her that if there was a pious wish God was sure to give the strength to realize it. This reminds me of Queen Victoria. She was just nineteen when she

[1] The following three sentences are from the Hindi.

succeeded to the throne. When the elderly Prime Minister came to pay her his obeisance as the Queen she left the throne and came down to bow to him. When it was announced that she was to be the Queen she simply said: "I will be good."[1] That was all. It was a pious pledge and was fulfilled with the help of her ministers and others. We were under her rule. It is not that we never suffered during her reign but history stands testimony to the fact that she did mean to serve her subjects when she took the solemn vow. Janakidevi can achieve complete success in keeping her vow, as Queen Victoria did, by taking up the task of *goseva*.[2]

Later as she stood in the glow of the pyre I said to her again: "This is not enough. You have now become penniless by surrendering your all to the Lord. You shall now eat only if your sons feed you, otherwise you will come to me and share my beggar's bowl. But besides this, you shall now dedicate yourself too to this cause, with the pyre as witness. Henceforth, you shall live not for your own sake, but for Jamnalalji's work of *goseva.*"

Let me say it again. We must always bear in mind that we stand on Jamnalalji's ground. We have to exalt his good name. May we never do anything that might tarnish it. Let us make thoughtful use of the wealth he built up through fair dealings. May our hands never misuse it and may we follow the example of self-restraint he set.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 22-2-1942 and *Harijan Sevak,* 22-2-1942

[1] This sentence is in English.
[2] The following paragraph is from the Hindi.

13. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
February 11, 19[*42*][1]

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

Why should I not write to you too in the national language after my Kashi speech[2]? I write to Sarup in the national language and to Ranjit in Gujarati. Why should I write to you in English?

Here are the two letters[3]. Pass them on if you approve of them. I shall send a telegram[4] also to the Generalissimo. I am writing this letter at night after returning from the cremation ground so that it may be cleared in the morning.

What should I write about Jamnalalji?

Chandra Singh[5] has settled down here. He is happy. He is learning khadi work on his own initiative. His wife cannot remain calm at the Vikasgriha. She writes letters to Chandra Singh. I have written to Mridu[6] that she may send her when she likes.

The office of the States' People's Conference is being shifted here. Should Jamnalalji's death make any difference? The office can, of course, work here with the help of Amrit. But you have to think this over. Now it is getting late and I shall not write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The source has "1941", which is a slip, as is evident from the reference to Jamnalal Bajaj's death.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Benares Hindu University", 21-1-1942.

[3] One of which is not available; for the other, *vide* "Letter to Chiang Kai-shek", 11-2-1942

[4] *Vide* "Telegram to Chiang Kai-Shek", 13-2-1942.

[5] Of the Garhwal Regiment who in 1930 had refused to fire upon the Khudai Khidmatgars and had undergone a long sentence

[6] Mridula Sarabhai

14. TALK WITH BAJAJ FAMILY

February 12, 1942

To Kamalnayan Bajaj, the eldest son of Jamnalal Bajaj, Gandhiji said :

According to Hinduism the eldest son like the other sons does inherit the father's wealth but along with it he also becomes the trustee of the family's traditions and his father's ethics and principles. Hence I would say to you that if you are already engaged in business, continue to do so; earn wealth if you want, but like Jamnalalji all your earnings should be fair earnings. Again, bear in mind that for the good of the people you too have to be a trustee of your wealth. you shall spend what you earn not for your own self but to serve the people. Only then will your trusteeship have meaning.

Then explaining things to the younger brother, Ramakrishna, he said:

Now, I expect you to dedicate your whole life to service and completing whatever work Jamnalal left incomplete. But I don't want to compel you to do it. Pledge yourself to it, if you have the strength.

Remember God always grants us the strength to carry out all our pious vows. And there will be no harm even if we do not succeed.

According to the *Gita* even one who has fallen from yoga does not meet with a sad end.

Then he spoke to Jamnalalji's brother's son, Radhakrishnaji :

You very well know the vow that Janakidevi has taken. I think if she comes by a right adviser, as Queen Victoria had in Melbourne, she is sure to add prestige to the Presidentship of the Goseva Sangh. She is a daughter to Mother Cow, she can therefore render the best service to her own 'mother'. I don't want to lay greater burden on her in her present failing health. But I know the strength born of resolve makes the body of an 'incarnation of sacrifice' strong as the thunderbolt. You will remember that after all the responsibilities are shared what remains shall rest on your shoulders.

Finally, talking to Jamnalalji's daughters[1] Gandhiji said:

You have heard all that I have just spoken to Kamalnayan and

[1] Kamala Nevatia, Madalasa and Umadevi Agrawal

Ramakrishna and the others. Remember you too have to do likewise. I shall expect from you too sacrifice according to your own strength. Never forget, whatever Jamnalalji had earned he had surren-dered to Lord Krishna. If you have any share from it know that you have it subject to the conditions of trusteeship. It is not for your personal comforts and luxuries but only so that you too like Jamnalalji should act as its trustees.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 22-2-1942

15. TELEGRAM TO CHIANG KAI-SHEK

WARDHAGANJ,
February 13,[1] *1942*

GENERALISSIMO CHIANG KAI-SHEK

DELHI

IT HAS CAUSED ME GREATEST GRIEF TO LEARN YOU AND YOUR PARTNER CANNOT VISIT SEVAGRAM WHERE MY WIFE AND THE LITTLE SETTLEMENT WERE LOOKING FORWARD TO RECEIVING YOU. FAILING THIS I WOULD HAVE GONE ANYWHERE TO SEE Y OU WHILST YOU WERE ON INDIAN SOIL. BUT I UNDERSTAND FROM PANDIT NEHRU THAT IT COULD NOT BE. I MUST BE SATISFIED WITH BEING IN SPIRIT WITH YOU. ALL GOOD WISHES FOR YOURSELVES AND YOUR COUNTRY FOLLOW YOU.

GANDHI

From a copy: Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1942. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] This was sent on February 12, 1942, to Jawaharlal Nehru who passed it on to the addressee the next day.

16. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

February 13, 1942

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

Your letter,

You can send Vina when you like. She will be well kept in Rajkot.

Sailen will send you at least Rs. 25 per month.

As for yourself I am not sure of your being happy here, less sure of your wife. Then the Ashram is crowded. Where to put you is also a question. If you come, how many will you be? Will you be where I put you and do the work that may be entrusted to you? You will see that I am anxious to help you to the best of my ability.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10336. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

17. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

February 14, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter and wire. I am keeping quite fit. B.P. is under restraint, therefore don't worry.

I am still engrossed in looking after J's[1] affairs. He is growing on me. I can't think of anything outside him. The meeting of friends comes of on 19th.[2] The invitation goes as from me.[3]

Love.

BAPU

SHRI RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
C/O COLONEL DEENANATH PRADHANJI
INDORE

From the original: C.W. 4117. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7426

[1] Jamnalal Bajaj

[2] The meeting, however, took place on the 20th and 21st; *vide* "Talk with Friend", 20-2-1942 and "Talk with Friends—II", 21-2-1942.

[3] *Vide* "A Letter", 14-2-1942.

18. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

February 14, 1942

CHI. AMALA,

It seems I have not written to you. If I have not, it is not through any negligence on my part but because I forgot about it owing to pressure of work.

You may come whenever you wish.[1]

Come when you wish.

Love.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

19. A LETTER [2]

SEVAGRAM,

February 14, 1942

DEAR BROTHER/SISTER,

You know how close Jamnalal and I were. I seldom undertook an activity in which he did not co-operate with body, mind and wealth. I never fancied what goes by the name of politics, nor did he.He came into it because I was involved in it. But my real political activity was confined to the constructive programme. So was his. I had hoped that after me he would completely take over all those activities which are regarded as peculiarly mine. He had even assured me to this effect. But man's wish is fulfilled only by God. Our wish could not bear fruit. My faith teaches me that fulfilment will be found in this disappointment. Whatever it be, now I have to decide who would attend to Jamnalalji's work in his absence, and how. I am giving you this trouble so that this question can be further discussed and a solution found out. In this connection no one can be prevailed upon

[1] What follows is in English.

[2] This was addressed to about 190 friends of Jamnalal Bajaj. Copies in Urdu script were also sent.

to come. A list, in chronological order, of all those activities in which Jamnalalji had a special interest is attached herewith. Do come and take up these activities if you want to participate in these and if you can. It is not that you should come just for the sake of courtesy although you cannot participate.

If, in spite of your interest, you cannot take up an activity for any reason, you may write to me in what activity and in what way you would like to take active part. A discussion and deliberation will be held at 2 p.m. on Friday, February 20, 1942. It would be convenient if you inform by wire whether you can attend. A list of the invitees is also enclosed. I have mentioned all those names that occurred to us. If any have been left out such persons can ask for the invitation, regarding the omission as nothing more than a slip.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

Jamnalalji's activities—in chronological order

1. *Goseva*
2. Nayee Talim
3. Village Industries
4. Women's Service
5. Service of Harijans
6. Gandhi Seva [Sangh]
7. Khadi
8. States' People's [Conference]
9. Propagation of Rashtrabhasha Hindi as well as of Urdu
10. Satyagraha Ashram and Service of the Villages
11. Marwari Education Society, 1910—Navabharat Vidyalaya and College.

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 261-2

20. LETTER TO SHAMLAL

February 14, 1942

BHAI SHAMLAL,

Consider this letter to be for you, for Bapa[1] and for Viyogiji[2]. Balkoba is a saintly person. Mojubhai will no doubt do all his work but give him whatever facilities he wants. Give him whatever he needs for his expenses and put it down to my account.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1190

21. TESTIMONIAL TO GANESHRAM

February 14, 1942

Bhai Ganeshram the barber had come to Sevagram to serve. He lived here for many months and shaved the Harijans free and with great love. He has vowed that wherever he might be he would serve the Harijans. May God increase Bhai Ganeshram's spirit of service day by day.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3092

22. LIMBDI EXODUS ANNIVERSARY[3]

The Limbdi exodus has entered upon its fourth year.[4] The *hijratis*[5] who took part in it deserve congratulations. Some have dropped out, out of weakness, as happens in all movements. Not all that are born into this world live. Quite a lot die at birth. Many survive their childhood. Only a few cover the full span of life. Even so it is

[1] Amritlal V. Thakkar

[2] Viyogi Hari

[3] This appeared under "Notes". The Gujarati original appeared in Harijanbandhu, 22-2-1942.

[4] *Vide* "Lawless Limbdi", 20-2-1939 and "Limbdi", 31-8-1939.

[5] Evacuees

with human endeavour. Many rally to the call, but only a few persevere till the end. But those who do, vindicate the sacrifice of those who have dropped by the wayside, and serve as beacon-lights to subsequent generations. The *hijratis* must be prepared to prove their mettle in the final heat. Success will be theirs, only if they show themselves to be capable of making full sacrifice for the cause which they hold dear and to which they have dedicated themselves.

SEVAGRAM, February 15, 1942

Harijan, 22-2-1942

23. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

February 15, 1942

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. You should write to the sisters and to Janakibehn. A meeting will of course be held here on the 20th. I myself have called it.[1] I have asked Rajen Babu to attend. I do not have the courage to ask you. I had a letter from Jayaprakash. It is good. They have struck out three lines from it.[2] A full account of Jamnalalji's passing away has appeared [in the newspapers] and, therefore, I am not writing about it here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3567

24. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

February 15, 1942

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your letter, together the matter enclosed. I have gone through everything. I liked your reply. Others also gave you good help. You could have taken up a stronger attitude. This is not a time for gentleness. A very heavy responsibility rests on you, not the least

[1] *Vide* "Letter", 14-2-1942.

[2] The last three lines of the letter were struck off by the jail authorities in Hazaribagh where Jayaprakash Narayan was imprisoned. Vide also "Letter to Jayaprakash Narayan", 17-2-1942.

to the country. If you fail to treat with it [the Government] to some plain speaking, who else can be expected to do so? It is the duty of journalists to guide the Government as much as the people. If the Government does not permit you to do so, it will be their responsibility. If the journalists, however, lead the people astray, would it not be their responsibility? Broadly that is our plight, for everybody is concerned about his own stomach. You have no such problem. This is not by way of criticism of you, but is intended to make you alert. Manilal is fighting in South Africa, and that is a matter of credit for us. You will get a detailed letter from him. I have asked him to write. Ba is better today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2150

25. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

February 15, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter. I expect you have the letter I wrote yesterday. Everything is all right. Ba is well. I am not taking on any great burden.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
C/O PRINCIPAL SECRETARY
INDORE

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4260. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7892

26. OASIS IN A DESERT[1]

In the midst of the desert of adverse but ill-thought criticism of Government officials of basic education it is refreshing to find the following appreciation of the basic schools of Bihar from the pen of Mr. E. R. J. R. Cousins, Adviser to H.E. the Governor of Bihar, received by Shri Aryanayakum, Secretary of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh.[2]

> . . . I was able to meet the teachers and pupils of 18 out of the 27 schools . . . I was impressed with the cleanliness, intelligence and obvious pleasure of the pupils in their work, and I am confident that we are proceeding on the right lines, and that children of 14 who have gone through the entire basic curriculum will not fail in comparison with those who have gone through the ordinary school course up to the same age.
>
> A particularly encouraging feature, and one upon which I place the greatest emphasis, is that the schools have undoubtedly succeeded in capturing the goodwill and interest of the village people, and as long as this can be retained it is impossible for the system to fail of being a success. . . . I feel confident that . . . in addition to education in the ordinary sense the village boys of the future will acquire at the school such attributes of mental alertness, manual dexterity, health and cleanliness as will make the villages in future more healthy, attractive and enlightened places than they have been in the past.

SEVAGRAM, February 16, 1942

Harijan, 22-2-1942

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

[2] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.

27. MODEL SCHOOLS FOR HARIJANS

Seth Ghanshyamdas Birla, President of the Harijan Sevak Sangh, writes :

We are thinking of establishing a few residential schools mainly for educating Harijan boys, though not exclusively. So far, whenever we have talked of Harijan hostels or schools, we have thereby meant cheap schools or cheap hostels conducted by ill-educated and ill-paid teachers and wardens with boys half-starved. So long as we educate Harijans or children of poor parents in these cheap institutions, the boys will never succeed in shedding the inferiority complex from which they often suffer. And what will they learn from these unqualified and ill-paid teachers? These boys never get the opportunity to mix with the other boys. The harm due to this lack of contact between the poor and the well-to-do or between Harijans and *Savarnas* is mutual. I therefore propose that we should have a few residential schools established in pleasing environment. They should be of a standard that would compare favourably in every respect with a well-conducted public school. We should start a few such schools first of all as a trial.

They should be of the matriculation standard and affiliated to a university. They should, of course, be mostly residential. Personal attention to students should be a speciality. Education should be imparted through the medium of the mother tongue. English should be taught as a second language. During the period of this education, the boys should be taught useful handicrafts chosen for their educative value.

In order to make this education thorough and self-sufficient, we should take two years more than the time needed for the matriculation examination. These two years should be utilized in giving extra training to the boys besides what they learn for the matriculation course.

We propose to have three crafts, one of which will be taken up by every boy at his option. These will be :

Either (1) Carding, Spinning, Weaving, Dyeing and Bleaching; or (2) Carpentry and Smithy; or (3) Paper-making, Book-binding, and Ordinary Composing.

It is intended to employ a superior staff, adequately paid, to ensure good qualifications. The underlying idea is that the boys may not feel the want of a

college education. There will be no bar to such. The boys, it is hoped, will not find it difficult to earn an honest livelihood after finishing the course. It will be the duty of the Board to accommodate such boys as may like to be.

Besides the university course and craft, special attention will be given to increasing their general knowledge and hygiene. Music games, exercises, riding, swimming, etc., should be taught. Religious or moral training should not be neglected. Equal respect for all religions should be inculcated, along with a good grounding in the principles of Hinduism and the peculiar beauties of our own culture.

Half the number of the students should be Harijans who would have free education and free boarding and lodging. The other half of the students, i.e., *Savarnas*, should be charged fees.

This is a very rough and brief outline of my idea of a good high school.

But there is difference amongst us about this outline. Some say: Why should we have the matriculation course? Others say: We should not undertake costly education as this will be a bad example to set. It is argued that we may employ most qualified men, but only if they come on a bare maintenance and out of a spirit of sacrifice. In other words, in their opinion, in this school there would be no room for teachers other than those prepared to lead a simple life of sacrifice. Some go to the extent of saying that we should rather have no school than start one which is not manned by a highly self-sacrificing staff.

I consider all this unpractical. I need not give my arguments. They are obvious.

Will you express your views on this question?

I whole-heartedly support Seth Ghanshyamdas's scheme. The arguments advanced in opposition seem to be based more on caution than on principle. I too should side with the opposition, if the scheme was to be financed out of the meagre funds of the Harijan Board. But I assume that the model schools would be financed by special donations enough to guarantee their full working. Having lived in South Africa for twenty years where every Indian is treated almost as a pariah, I know how sensitive the mind becomes under unnatural treatment. I took some time to regain my balance though I never lost the sensitiveness. I felt that I was a strange creature in the company of the general body of Europeans. The plight of Harijans in India is much worse because of their much greater ignorance and still greater

poverty. Therefore, if we are to break down the double complex, we have to bring up a fair number of Harijan lads in surroundings in no way inferior to those that are available to the well-to-do class boys. The scheme under examination does not contemplate the production of clerks who would be too big for their boots and who would be naturally discontented because no one would have them as clerks. Boys trained under the scheme would be in no way inferior in knowledge to the other matriculates. But these will be better placed because their bodies will be specially looked after and their hands will have their cunning fully developed. Such boys will have their future assured. They will have self-confidence. They will not be torn from their kith and kin; on the contrary, they will be expected to serve fellow Harijans and give them benefit of the teaching they have received.

It may be objected that I am inconsistent in that I have written and spoken against the present system of education. The objection would be superficial. In the first place, the worst features of the system will be eliminated in that the training will be in the mother tongue and the boys will be taught handicrafts which should enable them to earn an independent and decent living. Secondly, an objection that may be applicable to boys who can be better educated cannot be held good in the case of boys who have no choice and who smart under the knowledge that they cannot have the education that thousands of boys have simply because they are not Harijans. I would not insult Harijan lads by arguing with them that what the thousands of non-Harijan lads are doing is wrong, and that therefore they had better be satisfied with the shanties which Seth Ghanshyamdas has referred to in his letter.

I plump for his scheme. I wish him all success. The sooner it is launched, the better for Harijans and better for India. These schools will be potent instruments for exorcising the demon of untouchability.

SEVAGRAM, February 16, 1942

Harijan, 22-2-1942

28. FIERY ORDEAL

Twenty-two years ago a young man of thirty came to me and said, "I want to ask something of you."

"Ask, and it shall be given, if it is at all within my power to give," I replied with some surprise.

"Regard me as your son Devdas," the young man said.

"Agreed," I replied. "But what have you asked of me? You are the giver, I am the gainer."

The young man was no other than Jamnalal Bajaj. People know something of what this sacrament meant. But few know the extent of the part played by the self-adopted son. Never before, I can say, was a mortal blessed with a 'son' like him. Of course I have many sons and daughters in the sense that they do some of my work. But Jamnalalji surrendered himself and his without reservation. There is hardly any activity of mine in which I did not receive his full-hearted co-operation and in which it did not prove to be of the greatest value. He was gifted with a quick intelligence. He was a merchant prince. He placed at my disposal his ample possessions. He was constantly on the vigil and looked after my work, my comforts, my health and my finances. He would also bring up the workers to me. Where am I to get another son like him now? The day he died he and Janakidevi were to come to me. We had to decide a number of things. But God willed it otherwise and he died almost at the very hour he should have been with me. The death of such a son is a stunning blow to the father. Never before have I felt so forlorn except when Maganlal was snatched from me fourteen years ago[1]. But I had no doubt then, as I have none now, that a calamity of that kind is a blessing in disguise. God wants to try me through and through. I live in the faith that He will give me the strength too to pass through the ordeal.

SEVAGRAM, February 16, 1942

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 22-2-1942

[1] In April 1928; *vide* "My Best Comrade Gone", 26-4-1928.

29. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

Silence Day, February 16, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Treat Kanchanbehn as ill, give her whatever fruit she would have, such as a couple of *mosambis* or oranges with milk. The same quantity in the evening. In the afternoon give *papaya* or tomatoes, whichever is available.

I have passed on the information. You may write what you have in your mind when the [time] comes. What you had mentioned in your letter of yesterday you may write out. I shall deal with the rules and regulations myself. Let us see what the result is.[1]

If *mosambi* is taken with lemon it will taste just like orange. Take the pulp of the *mosambi* and then add the lime [juice] to it.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4415

30. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

Silence Day, February 16, 1942

I feel neither you nor anyone else is to blame for this. Circumstances alone are responsible for it. However, things will improve gradually. Sooner if I could devote my attention to it. In the mean while the only course open is to bear with it.[2]

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4416

[1] The following paragraph is in Gujarati.

[2] This was in reply to the question: "What is the reason for people's apathy to social service activities?"

31. LETTER TO SULTANA RAZIA

February 16, 1942

DEAR SISTER,

Bapuji has received your letter. He says he has not had any further correspondence with Maulana Abdul Haq.

These days, we are all learning Urdu with great interest.

Yours,

AMRIT KAUR

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 10862

32. PLEA FOR CALMNESS

The recent British reverses ought not to create panic in the land. In all the wars that Britain has fought or in which she has been engaged there have been reverses some of which may be considered disastrous. But the British have a knack of surviving them and turning them into stepping-stones to success. Hence the saying peculiar to them that they blunder through to success. Failures do not dismay or demoralize them. They take them with calmness and in a sportsmanlike spirit. Wars are for them a national game like football. The defeated team heartily congratulates the successful one almost as if it was a joint victory, and drowns the sorrow of defeat in an exchange of glasses of whisky. If we have learnt nothing worth from the contact with the British, let us at least their calmness in the face of misfortunes.

And is there the slightest cause for alarm? Certainly not for those who believe in non-violence. For fear and distrust of self are no part of their composition, nor are they part of a panoplied soldier. The attribute of non-violence is perhaps only a copy-book maxim. We do not see it in actual practice in any measure. But this war is abundant proof that neither party though steeped in violence betrays any fear or distrust. I am filled with amazement and admiration at the reckless bravery displayed by combatants on either side. This war is a demonstration of the unthinkable nerve that human beings are capable

of possessing. Looked at from either standpoint, therefore, we should be ashamed of fear, distrust and nervelessness in the face of danger. It is, therefore, the sacred duty of every worker to steel himself against cowardly panic and prevent its spread as far as he can. “Cowards die many times before their death.” Let this not be proved of us.

The true danger exists only for cities. It may be very near due to the fall of Singapore and probable loss of Burma. One of the best precautions consists in those people who are not wanted in the cities or those who want to shun danger, migrating to the villages in an orderly manner. There should be no panicky rush. Those who must remain in the cities whether for business or otherwise should carry out instructions that may be issued by the authorities from time to time. Those who will not, for any reason whatsoever, should clear out in good time. If this simple precaution is taken, we may face the future without perturbation. More I cannot say, for we are a house divided against itself and there is no living bond between the rulers and the ruled. It is tragic but it is true. The tragedy is deepened by the knowledge that all parties feel so helpless.

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA, February 17, 1942
Harijan, 22-2-1942

33. EYES TO THE BLIND[1]

Though I had heard a lot about the reputation of Dr. Mathuradas of Moga, I had never had occasion to witness any of his famous operations for cataract, until I saw them in Wardha last month. He came specially at the invitation of Jamnalalji, and with his assistants restored eyes to about three hundred people who had been blinded by cataract.

These mass operations have been described as a *yajna* (sacrifice). And *yajna* it certainly is, as any act of selfless service is a sacrifice. This *yajna* began some years ago in the Bhagavadbhakti Ashram at Rewari, with which Jamnalalji was closely connected. He therefore invited the doctor this time to Wardha. I bowed to Dr.

[1] This appeared under “Notes” The Hindi original appeared in Harijan Sevak, 22-2-1942.

Mathuradas in admiration for his unerring and quick surgical hand. He performed operations at the rate of one in a minute, there was scarcely a mishap. Thousands thus get back their eyes free, as he charges no fee to the poor.

The doctor told me that nowhere except in India was cataract so common as was also rhinoplasty. These operations, therefore, place him in the forefront of the surgeons for cataract throughout the world. No doubt many doctors have now taken up the work and copy his example. It is just as it should be, for the medical profession should be one of selfless service. And there was no humanitarian mission for which Jamnalalji was not ready. It came to him as naturally as any of his business enterprises. That was why he had a scheme in hand for making these operations a periodical feature in C.P.

I hope that the scheme will not be interrupted by his death, and Dr. Mathuradas is always ready for these *yajnas*.

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA, February 17, 1942

Harijan, 22-2-1942

34. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

GONDIA,

February 17, 1942

Owing to my preoccupations due to the untimely death of Jamnalalji I have not been able to attend to even important matters. I have just learnt of the arrests of Shri Hare Krushna Mahtab, a staunch believer in non-violence, and other co-workers.[2] Shri Mahtab wanted to be bailed out but the application has been rejected. I hope that the matter will be taken to the High Court. It is preposterous that bail should be refused in such cases.

I have learnt further that the Orissa Ministry has effected these arrests in order to prevent a motion of 'no-confidence' being carried at the forthcoming meeting of the Orissa Legislature. If this is true, the

[1] This appeared in Harijan, 22-2-1942, under "Notes", sub-title, "Mean and Vindictive", with the date-line "On the train to Calcutta, 17-2-1942".

[2] Harijan here has "workers".

action is mean and vindictive. Let us hope that the members of the Orissa Assembly will have the courage and gentlemanliness to support the motion of 'no-confidence' irrespective of party bias.

The Hindu, 18-2-1942

35. LETTER TO MUNSHI AHMED[1]

February 17, 1942

Let us agree to differ where we cannot meet.

I have been invited to attend conferences and have also been invited to join associations. I do not call that serious.[2]

Although my opinion may not be of a learned man, it may be given for what it is worth, surely, if you have no quarrel with those who do not know Urdu learning Urdu ! My effort merely means that and *vice versa*.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

36. LETTER TO MILDRED

February 17, 1942

MY DEAR MILDRED[3],

Just a p.c. to send you and yours our love. Your contribution is welcome. Every copper tells when it becomes part of a heap. Yes, we are going through a terrible ordeal.

Love to you both.

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Of Meerut

[2] *Vide* "Hindi + Urdu = Hindustani", 2-2-1942.

[3] A Canadian lady who had met Gandhiji in Kingsley Hall, London

37. LETTER TO ALFRED BARKER

February 17, 1942

DEAR PROF. BARKER[1],

Many thanks for your kind letter. May we have peace.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

38. LETTER TO SAM HIGGINBOTTOM

February 17, 1942

I thank you for your letter of sympathy. I know that the Sangh[2] can rely upon your full co-operation. I have a meeting at Wardha on the 20th instant to consider the ways and means of continuing Sheth Jamnalal's work.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

39. LETTER TO SARANGADHAR DAS

February 17, 1942

DEAR SARANGDHAR,

I hope you have seen my statement about Mahtab in the Press. Please let me know the progress of the prosecution. It is terrible. Who will look after his activities in his absence?

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Of the University of Melbourne. He had once come to the Ashram.

[2] Goseva Sangh

40. LETTER TO DR. BARETO

ON THE TRAIN,

February 17, 1942

MY DEAR BARETO,

As you left the amount of the bill[1] to me, I have taken the liberty of reducing it by Rs. 50. I hope you had the cheque for Rs. 150 from Sevagram.

From a photostat: G.N. 133

41. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

February 17, 1942

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I was able to read your letter of 4th only last night. This is being written on the train taking me to Calcutta.

You know the reason for the delay.

I feel like writing to you in Hindi or Urdu. But I will spare you for a month or two. You must learn both the scripts and write too.

You are making good progress.

You shall have a chairman. I shall try to send you Kher, failing him someone else.

Enclosed is a letter to Swami Bhagwandas.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 948

42. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS

February 17, 1942

SWAMI BHAGWANDASJI,

Bhai Malkani writes that you are regularly helping him in his

[1] For the dental treatment of Amtussalaam

work of service. My thanks to you for the same.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 945

43. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

February 17, 1942

I am going to Calcutta to meet Chiang Kai-shek. I have not taken Pyarelal with me. Ba is not too well and, therefore, one of us three must remain with her. Pyarelal also thought so. Ba's complaint is the old one. She has lost heart now. If she remains alive till you arrive, you will examine her and see what can be done. Just now I am trying out things without much hope. A mere doctor cannot help her. She must have somebody who would command her respect. Let us see now what miracle Pyarelal works. He accompanied me today when he went to fetch Shirin. She has got herself admitted in the hospital at Wardha. I have not gone and seen her yet. Rajkumari will arrive tomorrow at Sevagram from Indore. Lilavati has come. She did not get the form[1]. Let us wait and see what happens now. She refused to go back and continue her studies.

We shall return tomorrow itself. On the 20th I have called Jamnalalji's friends. I have sent about 190 invitations.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

44. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

February 17, 1942

I had your letter. The last three lines had been struck off. I have conveyed all the answers to Prabha. Even then I am giving here the answers to your questions. There is no danger in practising *pranayama*[2] Western style. Breathe slowly through the nose in and out sitting erect or standing in the open air. Doing it on an empty stomach daily morning and evening will make you feel better.

[1] To appear for her examination
[2] Breathing exercise

Your giddiness must go with hip-baths. Many people have been cured thus.

Eat raw lettuce, radish, carrot and onion with your meals. Take garlic also, not more than one *tola*, with curds or with cooked vegetables. I prefer castor oil in small quantity instead of liquid paraffin.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

45. LETTER TO GOVINDLAL, SHIVLAL AND MOTILAL

February 17, 1942

GOVINDLAL, SHIVLAL, MOTILAL,

Your letter. It is no more as clear to me as you think. You know of course that I am not responsible for the present policy of the Congress, nor have I any influence over it.

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

46. LETTER TO MAYADEVI BHANDARI [1]

February 17, 1942

My blessings to Chi. Mohini[2] and her groom[3]. May they both live long.

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Wife of Colonel Bhandari
[2] Addressee's daughter
[3] Captain Bhagat

47. LETTER TO R. ACHUTHAN

February 18, 1942

DEAR ACHUTHAN,

I have your letter. I am glad you are all spinning and make wise use of your time. I am asking Dr. Pattabhi[1] to attend to your requirements.

Yours,

BAPU

(M. K. GANDHI)

SHRI R. ACHUTHAN

STUDENT DETENU

CENTRAL JAIL

RAJAHMUNDRY, ANDHRA

From a photostat: G.N. 10852

48. DISCUSSION WITH CHIANG KAI-SHEK AND WIFE [2]

CALCUTTA,

February 18, 1942[3]

"I would not think of asking you to come to the Government House," said the Generalissimo. "We would come again, after you have had your meal and rest." Gandhiji replied :

But I have had my meal on the train in order to give you the whole of my time here, and I would suggest, if it were not inconvenient to you, to stay here, have an Indian meal with us, and we can then talk until the minute of my departure. We can thus save the time of going to and coming back from Barrackpore.

And so the guests stayed on . . . and talked with Gandhiji until the moment of his departure for the station . . . .

[1] Pattabhi Sitaramayya

[2] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "A Historic Meeting". Chiang Kai-shek and his wife called on Gandhiji within an hour of his arrival at Birla Park.

[3] From Amrita Bazar Patrika

Part of the time was taken up by Gandhiji in explaining the genesis and course of satyagraha and non-co-operation, and also in demonstrating to the Generalissimo and the Madame the action of his "weapon of war"—a weapon which, as he explained, "makes no noise, which does not kill, but which, if anything, gives life". The Madame watched the working of the *dhanush takli* and said: "You will have to teach me this."

Come to Sevagram, and I shall teach it to you. Let the Generalissimo leave you here as his ambassador, and I adopt you as my daughter.

For half an hour or so the official interpreter who accompanied the Generalissimo interpreted him. Then, said Gandhiji :

But surely ours is not a formal official talk. Why should not the Madame interpret you?

"Now, now, Mahatmaji, that is devastating", she said. "Now I know how everyone succumbs to you. My husband is most taxing. Whenever there is something very difficult to interpret, some delicate nuances of his thought to be conveyed, I must interpret him. But for one year I have been having an easy time asking the official interpreter to do it for me." Said Gandhiji, laughing :

That means that you are a faithless wife.

"Surely," retorted the Madame, "he did not marry an interpreter, he married a woman."[1]

The Generalissimo was sure that non-co-operation was good for India, but he was not sure that it would serve equally well for other countries—unless of course they were like India in their circumstances and environments. He was naturally full of indignation at what Japan had done and was doing in China, and he had grave fears of India having to go through China's terrible fate if the Japanese overran India. It was not possible for Gandhiji to discuss the whole of our non-violent technique, but he left the Generalissimo in no doubt that Japan or Germany would be confronted with fierce non-co-operation or civil resistance. "Your civil resistance," said the Generalissimo, "is not mere passivity, I am sure. But these foes may not listen to active civil resistance, and may make even the preaching of non-violence impossible."

All I can say is that God gives me the guidance to react to situations as they arise. Though, therefore, I cannot say how exactly I

[1] At the end of the first talk the Madame said: "I have met too many men to succumb to anyone. But the Mahatma has captivated me."

Introducing the next paragraph, Mahadev Desai writes: "The rest of the talk had better be guessed."

will react in case of an invasion, I know that God will give me the proper guidance. But this talk cannot, I know, satisfy you. I would invite you to come to Sevagram where we can discuss the subject quietly for days. I know of course that it is an impossible request, for you cannot possibly stay.

"Who knows," said the Madame, "we may be back here sooner than later. And after all Calcutta is only 12 hours from Chunking."

As he bade a hearty good-bye to the distinguished visitors, Gandhiji said :

Then you will pay me a monthly visit.

"Where's my wheel?" said the Madame, "where's my wheel?" as she was leaving the Birla Park.[1] Gandhiji said :

You shall have it. I shall send it on to you from the station.[2]

Harijan, 1-3-1942

49. A LEGITIMATE GRIEVANCE

A Bengali correspondent writes :[3]

> I am sorry to inform you that Dr. Suresh Bannerji has been interned within Naria P. S. . . . there is no qualified medical man available in the vicinity. The nearest steamer station is 20 miles from the village, where the conveyance is a country boat. . . . the present order savours even of vindictiveness. . . . there was a labour strike in the Budge Budge jute mill area. Labourers wanted dearness allowance . . . . If Dr. Bannerji's stay in the labour area was undesirable in the opinion of the Government, they could have externed him from the labour area.
>
> There is another case also which you should know. Shri Pitabas Das, of village Kakra, post Gopinathpur in the Contai sub-division of Midnapur, has been interned in his village. He had been offering satyagraha for nine months and was moving from village to village and uttered the slogan as usual. He was not arrested. He stopped satyagraha on 30th December after the Bardoli

[1] By mistake the dhanush takli offered to the Madame had been taken to the station along with Gandhiji's luggage.

[2] Approached by correspondents regarding the nature of the talks, Gandhiji said: "Take it from Jawaharlal, I won't give you anything."

[3] Only excerpts from the letter are reproduced here.

Resolution. Then on the 23rd of January, he was served with an internment order to reside within his village and not to communicate or converse with several Congressmen. . . . I cannot understand why a man who was not arrested for reciting the anti-war slogan for months together is interned under the Defence of India Rules as soon as he stops satyagraha. I know Pitabas Babu thoroughly well. He is perfectly non-violent. I cannot understand this action of the Bengal Government which is supposed to depend for its existence upon the vote of Congressmen who are in the legislature.

The action against Dr. Suresh Bannerji is decidedly cruel. ‘ Vindictive’ may be a strong word to use in this connection. I prefer to use the word ‘cruel’, for Suresh Babu is not an unknown man. He is himself a member of the Bengal legislature. He is known to be an ill man. He was dying of tuberculosis of the bone. But by his indomitable will to live, not for the sake of living but for the sake of the country, he survived the fell disease. He put himself in a plaster of Paris jacket for a long time, rigorously carried out medical instructions, and reached a workable condition. All this is known to the Bengal Government. They know that he needs constant medical advice. He needs careful nursing and the use of medical amenities. It is therefore cruel to intern Dr. Bannerji. I do not know how far the Bengal Government are justified in interning the Doctor. I do not know their side of the case. But there can be no case for his internment, and that in a place, though his own village, where he cannot keep his health and where medical aid and other comforts are not easily procurable. I do hope that the Bengal Government will redress this palpable grievance.

The other case my correspondent refers to is of a different category. To all intents and purposes there seems to be no cause for the internment of Pitabas Babu. The Bengal Government is responsible to the people. The order could not have been passed over their heads by the Governor. They cannot enforce the Defence of India Act in an arbitrary manner. They must justify to the public every action they take. The Assembly, if it is to justify its existence, has to keep itself informed of the reasons for the acts of the responsible Executive. The taunt of the correspondent against the Congress members of the Bengal legislature has substance behind it. They have a special reason to demand justification of steps like those

taken against Suresh Babu and Pitabas Babu.

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA, February 19, 1942

Harijan, 1-3-1942

50. CRIMINAL ASSAULTS[1]

The whole world is on trial today. No one can escape from the war. Whilst the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* are products of poets' imagination, their authors were not mere rhymsters. They were seers.[2] What they depicted is happening before our very eyes today. Ravanas are warring with each other. They are showing matchless strength. They throw their deadly weapons from the air.[3] No deed of bravery in the battlefield is beyond their capacity or imagination.

Man would not fight in this manner, certainly not the gods. Only brutes can.[4] Soldiers drunk with the pride of physical strength loot shops and are not even ashamed to take liberties with women. The administration is powerless in war time to prevent such happenings. The army fulfils their primary need, and they wink the eye at their misdeeds. Where a whole nation is militarized the way of military life becomes part and parcel of its civilization. Therefore a soldier's taking such liberties is not a matter for condemnation.[5] But it would take generations for India to become so.

Hence arise questions like the following which a sister sends me:

(1) If a soldier commits an assault on a woman, can she be said to have lost her virtue?

(2) Is such a woman to be condemned and ostracized by society?

(3) What should women and the public do under such circumstances?

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in Harijanbandhu, 1-3-1942, under the date-line "Sevagram, 23-2-1942".

[2] The Gujarati here adds: "Of these artists the medium was not words, but human nature. We, therefore, need not try to ascertain whether what they wrote actually happened in their times."

[3] The Gujarati here has: "They had been shedding, as if it were water, their own blood and blood of those whom they regarded as enemies."

[4] The Gujarati here adds: "Thus we see that the brute in man has cast off his sense of shame."

[5] The Gujarati here adds: "It has almost assumed the garb of civilization."

Whilst the woman has in point of fact lost her virtue, the loss cannot in any way render her liable to be condemned or treated as an outcast. She is entitled to our sympathy for she has been cruelly injured and we should tend her wounds as we would those of any injured person.

A woman is worthy of condemnation only when she is a willing party to her dishonour.[1] In no case are adultery and criminal assault synonymous terms. If we were to view the matter in this light, we would not hide such instances as has thus far been our wont. Public opinion against such conduct on the part of men towards women would then be created and freely exercised.

If the Press carried on a sustained agitation, soldiers white or brown would probably cease to behave in this manner. Their officers would be compelled to prevent such misbehaviour.[2]

My advice to women is that they should leave the cities and migrate to the villages where a wide field of service awaits them. There is comparatively little risk of their being assaulted in villages. They must, however, live simple lives and make themselves one with the poor. If they will display their wealth by dressing in silks and satins and wearing jewellery, they will, in running away from one danger, expose themselves to a double. Naturally the advice cannot refer to those whom duty compels to live in cities.

The main thing, however, is for women to know how to be fearless. It is my firm conviction that a fearless woman who knows that her purity is her best shield can never be dishonoured. However beastly the man, he will bow in shame before the flame of her dazzling purity. There are examples even in modern times of women who have thus defended themselves. I can, as I write, recall two such instances. I therefore recommend women who read this article to try to cultivate this courage. They will become wholly fearless, if they can, and cease to tremble as they do today at the mere thought of assaults. It is not, however, necessary for a woman to go through a bitter

[1] The Gujarati here adds: "But the woman who suffers the injury can more aptly be described as a victim of rape rather than as one who has lost her virtue."

[2] In the Gujarati the following paragraph begins with the sentence: "Today every city-dwelling woman is faced with this risk and hence the menfolk are worried on her account."

experience for the sake of passing a test of courage. These experiences mercifully do not come in the way of lakhs or even thousands. Every soldier is not a beast. It is a minority that loses all sense of decency.[1] Only twenty per cent of snakes are poisonous, and out of these a few only bite. They do not attack unless trodden on. But this knowledge does not help those who are full of fear and tremble at the sight of a snake. Parents and husbands should, therefore, instruct women in the art of becoming fearless. It can best be learnt from a living faith in God. Though He is invisible, He is one's unfailing Protector. He who has this faith is the most fearless of all.

But such faith or courage cannot be acquired in a day. Meantime we must try to explore other means. When a woman is assaulted she may not stop to think in terms of *himsa* or ahimsa. Her primary duty is self-protection. She is at liberty to employ every method or means that come to her mind in order to defend her honour. God has given her nails and teeth. She must use them with all her strength and, if need be, die in the effort. The man or woman who has shed all fear of death will be able not only to protect himself or herself but others also through laying down his [or her] life. In truth we fear death most, and hence we ultimately submit to superior physical force. Some will bend the knee to the invader, some will resort to bribery, some will crawl on their bellies or submit to other forms of humiliation, and some women will even give their bodies rather than die. I have not written this in a carping spirit. I am only illustrating human nature. Whether we crawl on our bellies or whether a woman yields to the lust of man is symbolic of that same love of life which makes us stoop to anything. Therefore only he who loses his life shall save it; तेन त्यक्तेन भुंजीथाः। Every reader should commit this matchless *shloka* to memory. But mere lip loyalty to it will be of no avail. It must penetrate deep down to the innermost recesses of his heart. To enjoy life one should give up the lure of life. That should be part of our nature.

So much for what a woman should do. But what about a man

[1] The Gujarati here adds: "Knowledge of a single case is enough to frighten a woman who is already a victim of fear."

who is witness to such crimes? The answer is implied in the foregoing. He must not be a passive onlooker. He must protect the woman. He must not run for police help; he must not rest satisfied by pulling the alarm chain in the train. If he is able to practise non-violence, he will die in doing so and thus save the woman in jeopardy. If he does not believe in non-violence or cannot practise it, he must try to save her by using all the force he may have. In either way there must be readiness on his part to lay down his life.

If old, decrepit and toothless as I am, I were to plead non-violence and be a helpless witness of assault on the honour of a sister, my so-called Mahatmaship would be ridiculed, dishonoured and lost. If I or those like me were to intervene and lay down our lives whether violently or non-violently, we would surely save the prey and at any rate we would not remain living witnesses to her dishonour.

So much about the witnesses. But if the courageous spirit pervades the entire atmosphere of our country and it is known that no Indian will stand women being assaulted, I venture to say that no soldier will dare to touch them. That such a spirit does not exist is a matter of shame for us. But it will be something, if persons ready to wipe out this blot are forthcoming.

Those who have influence with the Government will try to get authorities to take the necessary action. But self-help is best help. In the present circumstances we may rely only on our own strength and God's help.[1]

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA, February 19, 1942

Harijan, 1-3-1942

[1] The Gujarati here adds: "Those who use their strength to subdue others get none from the Lord. Thus they fritter away their strength. Those who merge their own strength into the Lord's become unassailable."

51. QUESTION BOX[1]

HINDUSTANI

Q.Will you tell me what I should do? You should know that I believe in the Wardha Resolution.

A. That is to say, you believe that, if the Congress demand is satisfied, you will take your full share in the war effort. But whatever happens the Wardha Resolution on the constructive programme[2] invites you to contribute your full quota to the fourteen fold constructive programme. Therefore, and even apart from it, I suggest your learning Hindustani so as to be able to establish contact with the masses. And Hindustani, as I have shown, means today Hindi and Urdu till a chemical compound is formed of the two. You may not quarrel with this labour of love. Your earnestness will make everything easy. You know some Hindi. You should make considerable advance in it. The Persian script is very easy to learn. There are very few fundamental signs to represent the thirty-seven letters. No doubt the joining of the letters causes some difficulty, but learning of the alphabet including the joining is matter of a week at the most, if you give one hour every day. Then it is a question of daily practice for half an hour, and you will have a workable knowledge of Urdu in six months. Surely it is a fascinating study to compare the two scripts and the two styles for the same speech. All this would be true, if you have love of the country and its people. If our minds were not fatigued by the effort to master the difficult English language, we should find it a light labour, or rather recreation, to study provincial languages.

But the learning of Hindustani in its double form is but the beginning of the constructive programme. You have also to spin regularly, if you are to identify yourself with the poorest in the land, and then add to this the many things in the programme whose complete fulfilment is Complete Independence in the truest sense of the word.

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in Harijan Sevak, 15-3-1942.

[2] For the instructions recommended by the Congress Working Committee at Bardoli and passed by the A.I.C.C. at Wardha, vide Appendix "Congress Working Committee's Instructions", 25-1-1942.

Q.What you have said about Congressmen in the Muslim majority provinces is true enough.[1] But your honesty will be tested by the readiness with which Congressmen follow your advice.

A.I must emphatically repudiate the test. I have begun to write about the subject in order to educate the Congress mind. If I had carried conviction to the members of the Working Committee, I would not have needed to preach my solution. It would have been reduced to practice long ago. But I failed. The step I have advised carries weighty implications without whose acceptance the solution has no meaning. One implication is confidence in the truth of one's step.

I admit it is unusual. The general tendency is to make use of the opportunities which seem to be open to you for seizing power. It is difficult for people to understand when I suggest that the opportunity is a trap. To my mind it has already proved to be so. But it is not so clear to the average Congressman. I hope through these columns to make clear what is at present obscure. Those who doubt my honesty do not help me or themselves. But whether they do or not, I must continue to preach so long as I hold to the truth of my solution.

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA, February 19, 1942
Harijan, 1-3-1942

52. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

NAGPUR,
February 19, 1942

"Will there be any rapprochement between the Congress and Government in view of your meeting Marshal Chiang Kai-shek?" asked our representative[2] of Gandhiji when the Mahatma passed through Nagpur *en route* to Wardha this evening. The emphatic reply was :

No.

Our representative queried, "Gandhiji, you had four hours' meeting with the Generalissimo. Did your discussions include politics?" Gandhiji smilingly said :

[1] *Vide* "Communal Unity", 20-1-1942.
[2] Of *The Bombay Chronicle*

Four hours were not enough for our conversation. We discussed many things and also politics but in the broader sense of the term. We wanted to discuss many other things but time did not permit. . . .[1]

When his attention was drawn by the Associated Press to the comment that his interview with the Generalissimo might have resulted in the creation of a united front of China and India against Japan, Mahatma Gandhi smiled and said :

Let *The New York Times* ask the Generalissimo what the result of the interview is.

Mahatma Gandhi did not give a direct reply to questions about the interview.

The Bombay Chronicle, 20-2-1942, and *The Hindu*, 20-2-1942

53. TALK WITH FRIENDS—I [2]

WARDHA,

February 20, 1942

There has never been an occasion like this in the past nor, as far as I can see, will there be one in future. You must have noticed that we have not elected a president to conduct the proceedings. The reason why I cannot preside will soon be revealed to you. My relations with Jamnalal began with my entry into public life in my own country. He had completely identified himself with all my activities. So much so that I was hardly required to do anything. As soon as I embarked upon a new project he would take responsibility for it on himself and relieve me of most of my burdens. It had almost become with him the mission of his life. Thus our activities were going on smoothly, but with his departure the entire responsibility has fallen on my shoulders. I therefore thought that friends who had been participating in the various activities should be invited to share my burden. I am before you as a beggar. How then could I preside over the meeting? Though a beggar I am not begging for money. I have done enough of this too in my life. I have utilized the poor man's pice and the millionaire's millions. But money does not matter so much in the fulfilment of my

[1] What follows is from *The Hindu.*

[2] Gandhiji had invited about 190 friends and co-workers of Jamnalal Bajaj to "discuss the best ways and means" of honouring his memory. The meeting was held in the Navabharat Vidyalaya in the afternoon.

present task. If I were so inclined I could have called together Jamnalal's monied friends and compelled them to open their eoffers by coaxing them and appealing to their sentiments. I know this art and I have practised it all my life. But if I were to do so, it would be a blot on the name of the departed one who had given me his all, who had come to test me but instead became my son and shouldered all my burden. I want to know how many of you will share the burden that has come to me owing to Jamnalal's death—this I beg of you. This task cannot be accomplished by a single man; all of us have to make our contribution and share the responsibility.

Before I proceed further, let me tell you what I have done in this regard. By the time I arrived at Jamnalal's home on February 11, he had already breathed his last. Earlier I had received a message only for sending medicine to bring down bloodpressure. I could have contented myself by sending the medicine but I was impelled to go there personally. When I arrived on the scene the situation had taken an altogether different turn.[1]

No one can really be heartless on such occasions, but I may have seemed so, for instead of sorrowing with Janakidevi I pleaded with her to renounce her all and carry on Jamnalalji's work and be a living *sati* in the place of burning herself on the funeral pyre as she wanted to. It has been my wont throughout life to throw burdens on people and get the most from them. Janakidevi hesitated a bit and said she had not the ability. I said, if she had the desire, Vinoba would tell her that God would give her the ability and strength. She rose to the occasion. She has renounced not only all her material possessions—about $2\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs—but has dedicated all her time to the work of the Goseva Sangh.

After Janakidevi had taken her vow of renunciation, I thought her sons, daughters and sons-in-law should also follow her example, and I became heartless in their case too. I said: By all means carry on your business as Jamnalal did but also follow his tradition, that is, conduct your business in a religious or charitable spirit. Earn what you can through rightful means and spend it on sacred purposes—not on your comforts or luxuries. That is to say, you must act as the

[1] The following paragraph is from *Harijan*, 8-3-1942.

trustees of your earnings.[1]

Jamnalal had entrusted about Rs. 6 lakhs to his sons to be used for public work—that is, for beggars like me. The sons could have argued that once they had enjoyed all the luxuries and comforts to their hearts' content they could turn to sacrifice. But, no, after deliberations for a day or two they made over the entire sum to me. Besides, they have, on behalf of Bachchhraj Jamnalal and Co., taken up the responsibility to continue the expenditure of Rs. 2,000—an amount which during Jamnalal's time was spent annually on hospitality to Congressmen and other workers, etc. Jamnalal had made provision of a portion in Bajajwadi, for his children and Janakidevi. But his family have decided not to occupy any of these bungalows which instead will be utilized solely for public work or housing the guests. The family itself has chosen to live in Gopuri.

This work has thus begun with noble resolves. No sooner did Jamnalalji's eyes close than I set about distributing his burdens. You will see that in the catalogue of his works[2] that has been sent to you the first place is occupied by the very last work that he took up. This work is more difficult than winning swaraj. With the coming of swaraj this will not be accomplished by itself. Nor can money alone accomplish it. I can testify to the unique dedication which this man brought to this task, this man who worked with a superhuman faith all his life. Seeing him working thus I could not help asking him whether his body would be able to stand the tempo. What if it should fail in the middle of it? The words have turned out to be prophetic. It is as if God had spoken through me. To sum up, this work can be accomplished by dedication alone. Of the Rs. 2,50,000 that Janakidevi has donated she had already earmarked Rs. 2,500 for khadi work. Then she has also wished to set up a maternity home in Wardha. Some money will go into that. That leaves about Rs. 2,25,000 for the service of the cow. We also have some twenty thousand or twenty-five thousand rupees of the Goseva Sangh. This, added to the sum donated by Janakidevi, is sufficient for our present purposes. But there are not enough workers. The way this work has so far been conducted

[1] *Vide* also "Talk with Bajaj Family", 12-2-1942.
[2] *Vide* "A Letter", 14-2-1942.

satisfied neither Jamnalalji nor me. To carry on the work satisfactorily I shall require your physical and mental co-operation. So long as this remains undone, I shall know no peace. Properly speaking he should have succeeded me. But he has gone ahead and won the race. Now the test is mine. Now I have become his successor, that is to say, I have inherited the burden of all his work. But this is an inheritance which you can all share with me. If you can together take up all these activities, they can be carried on even more systematically and satisfactorily than before, and only then can I pass the test.

Jamnalalji was blessed with good fortune. We can also be blessed with good fortune provided we can see clearly after he is no more what we were not able to see so clearly during his lifetime, provided the awakening that was denied us can come to us now. It is all quite difficult, but also in a way easy. If you can undertake this arduous work go ahead, but I do not want you to undertake it merely as a matter of form, for then you would not be showing genuine devotion to Jamnalalji. But if you can, without misgivings and after calm reflection, render even the least little help to Jamnalalji's work you will have done a great thing.

His most important activity was that of *goseva*. The work had been carried on even before him, but it was slow. He was not satisfied with it. He wished to increase its tempo and he increased it to such an extent that he himself succumbed to it. If we wish to save the cow we must work with the same speed and sacrifice our lives. If we can save the cow we ourselves shall be saved. One way is that which people in the West follow, namely, to sell the cow and thrive on her flesh. This way is not acceptable to you and me, nor was it acceptable to Jamnalalji. We must therefore work within the four corners of the restrictions he had accepted for himself. Today we are caught up in the web of many doubts and illusions. If we can free ourselves of these and adopt a proper attitude towards this work the cow will be saved from the blot of being a cause of strife between Hindus and Muslims, between duty and self-interest. Jamnalalji has shown us the way. You are probably aware that he had prepared two schemes of *goseva*—one for the country as a whole and one for Wardha. First I shall speak of the scheme for the country as a whole. In brief, it meant our making the pinjrapoles throughout the country conform to our

ideas. If we can work according to the plan we have formulated for this a good deal can be accomplished with little effort. It has behind it the spirit of religion. Crores of rupees can be spent on it. This is a work in which you can all help.

The other scheme, which Shri Rameshwardas Birla has formulated, is that of producing stud-bulls. Improvement in the breed of cattle is only possible through stud-bulls. It is an intricate task. Collecting money alone, without all of us helping, will not achieve anything. By myself alone I should not even be able to spend the money. Stud-bulls are not bred in moment. I shall require your whole-hearted co-operation for this. Technical knowledge is an essential prerequisite for this. You will have to go wherever this technical knowledge can be had and acquire it through humility and service. "Learn it through humble homage and service and by repeated questioning."[1]

Now take another thing, khadi work for instance. Jamnalalji's interest in it was no whit less than mine. He gave as much time to khadi as I did. And he gave as much thought. He used to hunt for workers and bring them to me. In a word, if I invented the *mantra* of khadi he informed it with reality. After khadi work was initiated I withdrew and sat quietly in jail. But Jamnalalji knew that to me khadi meant swaraj. If he had not given himself to it and organized it the whole work would have languished away in my absence. The same is true of village industries. He had of course given Maganwadi for it. But he had also made up his mind to buy some land adjacent to Maganwadi for it. Now Chi. Kamalnayan has added that land too to Maganwadi. The work of village industries is so vast in scope that untold amounts of money can be spent on it. But at the moment I do not want to speak to you of money. You can help this work in two ways. Of the khadi-wearers that are here some use only a quarter part khadi, some half and some three-quarters. All of their friends and relatives too are not khadi-wearers. This means that enough propaganda has not been done to take khadi to all homes. This is an occasion for weeping but I do not want to make you weep. There are moments when weeping best expresses love. But I wish to change your

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, IV. 34

weeping into something else. How shall we use this occasion of grief and lamentation? Shall we rise from here with the resolve to make ourselves and those near and dear to us full khadi-wearers? Recently I had occasion to see Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek in Calcutta[1]. All through the interview I kept plying the *dhanush takli* and when we parted I presented the yarn I had spun as also the *takli* to the Generalissimo so that the message of the charkha may also reach China. Thus love suggested to me that I should use the occasion for propaganda. If we can thus influence a guest, can't we likewise influence friends and relatives?

Another thing. Jamnalalji used to say that people were willing to wear khadi everywhere except when visiting a bank. They seem to think that their prestige would suffer if they did not wear their Marwari turban on the occasion. But Jamnalalji himself gave no thought to this whatever the consequences. I want that we should develop in ourselves enough self-respect to be able to go anywhere without hesitation, clad in khadi.

Today a great threat hangs over our heads. Singapore is gone. Rangoon seems to me on the way and Calcutta itself is in danger. If some third power enters India tomorrow shall we bow before it and sell our freedom to it to protect our businesses? Or shall we declare that we do not wish to get rid of one slavery to embrace another? Jamnalalji's spirit today wants us to answer this question.Wha this own answer would have been I know as well as I know my own answer.

A point to ponder. Shall we also love one who approaches us as an enemy, who has malice for us? Shall we have compassion for him? Today the hearts of many of us are filled with violence and hatred towards the British, because we have not properly understood non-violence. It is true that we can show compassion only towards one whom we have the power to forgive. What can it mean if a poor mouse forgives a cat? But if we can associate a mouse with courage it will cease to be the food of a cat. And as for the cat it will never become the food of a mouse. The hatred which we have for the British in our hearts today springs from the fear we have of them. If we eject this fear from our hearts and secure swaraj not through the non-violence

[1] On February 18

of the weak but through the non-violence of the strong, we shall be afraid of no one in the world and shall become invincible. I would wish you not to harbour enmity against the invader, not to wish him ill but at the same time not to surrender to him. Are you ready for this? The future is in God's hands. The British are a brave nation. They have weathered many a storm before this. But they never gave up courage and fate was good to them. We should learn from them never to give up courage in the face of danger and to meet any crisis boldly.

The business community bears a large share of responsibility for India losing her freedom. Jamnalalji was always troubled by it. I therefore had to explain all this to you at length. I had said the same thing twenty years ago. But then no one could even imagine the present situation. At that time the British Empire had appeared to be as permanent as the sun and the moon. But today when Japan is knocking at our door we must search within our hearts to see what it says.

I do not want to speak of the other activities of Jamnalalji and take up more of your time. They are already known to you. Take the Mahila Ashram. It is his special personal creation. It has been running according to his conception. The question before Jamnalalji was how the children of those who had become destitute in the country's service should be educated. He thought at least the girls would get here better education than in Government schools. With this idea he started the Mahila Ashram. Today the Ashram needs a self-sacrificing educated woman. You can help in finding someone to fill the place.

It is the same about Basic Education and the work of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. You can take part in these activities. Jamnalalji was dedicated to Hindu-Muslim unity. He was wholly free from communal hatred. You should imbibe this quality from Jamnalalji's life.[1]

There is again the question of the national language. As you know he was interested in the propagation of Rashtrabhasha. He was principally concerned in drawing me to the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. It was due to his sole effort that the great work of propagating Hindi in the South became possible. It was again due to his help that I was

[1] The following paragraph is from *Harijan*, 8-3-1942.

able to carry the resolution about giving an extended meaning to Hindi so as to include Urdu. I ask you all as a token of your regard for Jamnalalji, to try, if you will, to learn the Urdu character today. You will find it quite easy to learn the primary letters.

I have said what I wished to say. If any of you have made any resolves let me know. I may again remind you that you should not say anything that you do not mean. You should not say anything out of fear of what people might say or from politeness. I wish to rid you of all fear. Only today Ghanshyamdasji asked me if I wanted him to speak at the meeting. I said no. Of course if someone on his own feels like saying something, something which he cannot contain and must express in words, I should very much like to hear it.

This will also point a way to others. Today I do not want anything for show. We cannot perpetuate Jamnalalji's memory by erecting a memorial to him. People will read the inscription and forget it after a time. But if someone resolves to perpetuate the work of this man, who did so much for the world, it will be a true memorial to him. But I do not want to force you, nor do I expect anything from you. If anyone wants to do anything let him do it for the good of his own soul. If anything is done for appearances it will hurt me and it will hurt the spirit of Jamnalalji.[1]

I have deliberately conducted everything today in an informal manner because I do not want any artificiality in this work. I consider this a grave moment in my life. I want to keep alive the religious spirit that Jamnalalji showed to the very end. Therefore if anyone wants to do anything he must do it in the same religious spirit. Let him withdraw into solitude, turn his thoughts inward and with God as witness pledge himself to what he wants to do.

Before the meeting adjourned [Gandhiji] had made one more suggestion. What pledge could everybody translate into action the day it was taken? He spoke of two things, one of which was learning the national language, which means Urdu as well as Hindi. The late Jamnalalji paid special attention to this task in his later jail life. He learnt the Urdu script, besides Devanagari which he knew already. Gandhiji told the assembled people that the Urdu script could be learnt easily, hence they should immediately start learning it.

[1] At this point a number of proposals were put forward which Gandhiji did not like.

The other pledge was to be taken in the form prepared by the Goseva Sangh.[1] At one time this was regarded as a difficult task but Gandhiji explained that by his example Jamnalalji had shown the way. How hard the discoverer of the law of gravitation must have had to work to prove it ! Today even a child understood it with ease. If later generations too experienced as much difficulty in understanding the law as Newton himself did, one would be constrained to say that all Newton's labours had gone in vain.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 8-3-1942 and 15-3-1942

54. LETTER TO KULSUM SAYANI

February 21, 1942

DEAR KULSUM[2],

I inadvertently began the letter in English. I shall convey your feelings to Janakibehn.

My congratulations on your doing the work of teaching.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Begum Kulsum Sayani Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

55. LETTER TO BHAILALBHAI D. PATEL

February 21, 1942

BHAI BHAILALBHAI,

Narahari described to me the help you gave him. God himself rewards such services. Sardar also had talked to me about you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Dr. Bhailalbhai Patel 75mi Varshaganth Abhinandan Granth. p. 21

[1] *Vide* "Speech at All-India Goseva Sangh Conference", 1-2-1942.

[2] The superscription is in English.

56. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
February 21, 1942

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

So at last you are caught in the bond of marriage. I always knew it. Those who are not the marrying type have a different way of life. But there is nothing to be ashamed of in this. You are doing what everyone does. May you both be happy and render fourfold service.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2790

57. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 21, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I never lost sleep on account of your letter. Who told you so? I had lost it with Jamnalalji's death.

When I heard about the utensils, I sent the girls to perform their duty.

When each one brings the utensils they should be checked then and there so that everybody knows how to clean them. Since everybody cannot be supplied with a towel, it is better that one person wipes the utensils with it as they come.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4417

58. TALK WITH FRIENDS—II

WARDHA,
February 21, 1942

I feel a little hesitant; nevertheless there is something I must ask you. Yesterday I had told you that if you understood Jamnalalji's thoughts and feelings you ought to start learning the Urdu language and script right away. I want to know how many of you made such a

beginning yesterday.[1]

You ought to have begged for me. Had you come to me, I would have sent you to any one of my co-workers. Then Babu Rajendra Prasad was there within your reach. You could have gone to him. Yudhishthira had asked: "How may one know dharma?" The answer was, "Through practice and effort." If we want to profit from Jamnalalji's death we shall have to be much more alert, learn much more restraint and self-sacrifice. There is a terrible war going on in the world today. When I think of the hardships of those who are participating in it, I am astounded. They have to be alert all the twenty-four hours. You must know that a soldier of non-violence has to be even more alert.

One night during the Zulu rebellion in South Africa an order was issued that no matches were to be used and if any fires had been lighted they were to be put out. We used to camp in tents at the time and were always afraid that if there was the least little light showing the enemy would discover our camp. If therefore anyone was found lax in obeying the order he was immediately arrested or shot. Another order followed the same night that we were to march, and in darkness. No one could carry any light. We were to guide ourselves only by sound. Everyone had to obey.

I often think if each one of us had a year's experience of army discipline our condition today would be very different. Jamnalalji had been to no military school. But through his own efforts he had learnt to obey discipline as any army's. We shall all have to cultivate such discipline.

No one coerces us. We merely get advice, and even that only if we seek it; it is for us to accept or not to accept it. I have been telling you for the last twenty-one years that any advice regarding the practice of ahimsa is as good as an order to a satyagrahi. A satyagrahi can defy an order from without, as he can a Government law, but he voluntarily accepts something that comes from within. He cannot ignore the advice coming from within. Yesterday should have been a golden day for us, for we were engaged in awakening the religious spirit in us. If the question that has been raised today had been raised yesterday I could have suggested a way. If nothing else I would have got a lesson or two written down on the black-board. What has happened is indicative of our mental lethargy. We have to rid ouerselves of it. Do you suppose that during the days of the Zulu rebellion, if that night we had been ordered to learn a few key Zulu

[1] Someone from the audience then said that the books were not available.

words before the break of day any laxity in this regard would have been tolerated? Often the armed forces are made to learn some rudiments of the language of the enemy country before marching into that country. Here I had asked you to learn the language of friends. Please do not think that I am complaining. I am only telling you what your duty is. There is a saying in Gujarati, 'Morning is when you wake up'. Forget about yesterday and make an earnest beginning today. Learning of Urdu requires perseverance and if we can acquire similar perseverance in other things a great power can arise out of the number of people sitting here. But today we have fallen a prey to a kind of inertia which makes it difficult for us to do anything. Inertia by itself is a very useful thing. Without it nature cannot proceed even one step. But when it grows too much it becomes a flaw. Many today say: 'Today we are sunk in *tamoguna*[1]. We shall first have to traverse through *rajoguna*[2] and then we shall arrive at *sattva*[3].' Is this necessary? Today we permit heaps of garbage to lie in front of our homes and thus feed the disease and the doctors. Is not this same inertia at the bottom of it?

I had therefore told myself yesterday that if on this occasion rather than collect money I could caution you I would be doing better business. I again ask you to examine your hearts. If you find inertia in any corner of it cast it out. And go from here with a resolve for the future that when you get some good advice or inspiration from within, you will at once set to work. What better beginning could there be for setting up a real memorial to Jamnalalji ![4] Swami Anand said Jamnalalji had hoped to enlist at least 1,000 members for the Goseva Sangh during the year. You can all help in this direction.[5]

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 15-3-1942

[1] Quality of blindness and lethargy

[2] Quality of restlessness and selfishness

[3] Quality of purity and selflessness

[4] What follows is from *Harijan*, 8-3-1942.

[5] Several persons pledged support to Jamnalal Bajaj's activities. Proposing Janakidevi's name for the presidentship of the Goseva Sangh, Gandhiji said: "When I asked Janakidevi to take up this difficult task I thought that it was perhaps woman's work, and that where men had so far failed women might succeed." Janakidevi was then unanimously elected.

59. KHADI STUDENTS[1]

I have been asked to write something in regard to khadi students of today. I have already written a little but it cannot be too clearly stated nor enough stressed that knowledge of spinning, carding and the other processes alone does not constitute true khadi learning. That may be termed its mechanics. To understand the inner meaning of khadi one has to know why it has to be turned out by hand and not by power machinery. Why should innumerable hands be employed when a single person can manipulate an engine which can produce the same amount of cloth in far less time? If khadi has to be produced by hand, why not by the *takli* only? And if the *takli*, why not the bamboo *takli*? And if we could get the necessary work by suspending yarn by means of a stone, why even *takli*? Such questions are perfectly natural. To find proper answers to all such is a necessary part of khadi research. I do not want to discuss these questions here. All I want to say is that true knowledge of khadi goes far beyond the mechanical processes, and requires patient research. We have not the means of imparting such knowledge today. Therefore khadi instructors have to improve their knowledge even whilst they are teaching. And students have to acquire knowledge through their own diligence. In olden times when no scientific knowledge was available, students used to be their own teachers and became firstrate scholars and experts. We are more or less in the same position today.

SEVAGRAM, February 22, 1942

Harijan, 1-3-1942

60. "HARIJAN" IN MARATHI [2]

A Marathi edition of *Harijan* will be published from Bajajwadi, Wardha, from March 1st. The subscription will be Rs. 5 per annum. Shri Gopalrao Kale, one of the early members of Satyagraha Ashram,

[1] This appeared under "Notes". The Hindi original appeared in *Khadi Jagat*, February 1942.

[2] This appeared under "Notes".

is the Editor. He will be assisted by Shri Dada Dharmadhikari of *Sarvodaya*. I have advised that the weekly ought not to be published unless it becomes self-supporting. Shri Gopalrao and his associates have accepted the advice. I hope that the venture will be supported by the Marathi-reading public.

SEVAGRAM, February 23, 1942

Harijan, 1-3-1942

61. LETTER TO RAM MANOHAR LOHIA[1]

February 23, 1942

MY DEAR RAM MANOHAR,

I have received your letter.[2] How far can the term "open" be applied? How can one believe that a town occupied by the enemies is an open town? According to Japan, Hindusthan is an enemy country.

If Japan declares Tokyo an open city will it be spared by the English? In modern times it is very difficult to believe the enemies. If you[3] differ, please come and convince me. What shall I understand if you do not come?

Quit India Movement, p. 372

[1] The Hindi original, of which this is a translation, is not available.

[2] The addressee had sought Gandhiji's support for launching an agitation to have the big towns like Calcutta, Bombay, etc., declared "open cities"

[3] The source here has "I".

62. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
February 23, 1942

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Mahadev has had a serious attack. Yesterday he left with Ghanshyamdas for a seven-day visit to Nasik, but felt giddy on the way to the station. He, therefore, wisely decided not to proceed further and went to the Civil Surgeon instead. After getting himself treated there for a while, he returned home. He is better now. The blood-pressure has come down to normal. But he had a narrow escape. This is an indication that he needs a long rest. Do not worry. He has the same trouble that Narahari had. He is of course sure to get well.

How are you yourself?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

If Prithvi Singh comes to you, give him some time.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 268.

63. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

February 23, 1942

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got all your letters. I sent Vinabehn yesterday under Narahari's escort. He will bring her to you. I am hopeful that she will prove a worthy worker. If she works well, we will fix some pay for her. Money must be remitted to Pyarelal's mother regularly. Or is it necessary for her to ask for it? I do not know the position. I note that you have paid the money for khadi. Do you still continue to do khadi work, or does it mean that you have given it up? I hope Jamna is quite well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8599. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

64. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

February 23, 1942

BHAI JIVANJI,

Mahadev is down. He has had a narrow escape. The blood-pressure has come down, but yesterday's attack of giddiness is an indication that he will have to take prolonged rest. There is no cause for worry. It only means that I will have to carry a slightly heavier burden. But since your work is very well organized, I have no misgivings.

Send me the figures from time to time. Ask me whenever necessary.

The article on British History[1] included in this week's matter may be held over for the next week.

I will await your reply concerning Urdu. It would be an excellent thing if it could be done.[2]

The burden of translating from English into Gujarati will now fall chiefly on Chandrashankar[3]. Let him take care of his health.

There will of course be no increase in Kashinath's[4] burden.

See that everything is done so well as to bring you credit. I am not able to revise anything, though I should very much like to do. Where is the time? I am conserving my strength as much as I can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9947 and 9953. Also C.W. 6922. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

[1] "A Peep into British History" by Mahadev Desai which appeared in *Harijan*, 8-3-1942.

[2] What follows is from G.N. 9953.

[3] Chandrashankar Pranshankar Shukla

[4] Kashinath Trivedi

65. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

February 23, 1942

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

Now you may be a little free. What is to be done about the office of the States' People's [Conference]? And what about the journal[1]? Pattabhi writes that he can publish the paper from Masulipatnam. His letter is enclosed. Dr. Menon is here. Balwantrai cannot take up the secretaryship. Nor can Jainarayan Vyas. Rangildas is available. Bapa does not like it. If the office is here, it can, of course, be kept going; but financial arrangements will have to be made.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope you find no difficulty in deciphering my handwriting.

From the Hindi original: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

66. LETTER TO HAMIDULLAH AFSAR

February 23, 1942

BHAI SAHEB,

I have your letter. Please read my article again. You will find that I have answered all your questions.

Yours

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Urdu: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *States' People*

67. QUESTION BOX[1]

RICHES *V.* POVERTY

Q. How is it possible to earn lakhs in a righteous way?[2] Jamnalalji, the merchant prince, used to say it was not. Moreover, however careful a rich man is, he is bound to spend more on himself than his actual requirements merit. Therefore why not lay more stress on *not* becoming wealthy than on trusteeship of riches?

A. The question is apt and has been put to me before.[3] What Jamnalalji could have meant was in the *Gita* sense that every action is tainted. It is my conviction that it is possible to acquire riches without consciously doing wrong. For example, I may light on a gold mine in my one acre of land. But I accept the proposition that it is better not to desire wealth than to acquire it and become its trustee. I gave up my own long ago, which should be proof enough of what I would like others to do. But what am I to advise those who are already wealthy or who would not shed the desire for wealth? I can only say to them that they should use their wealth for service. It is true that generally the rich spend more on themselves than they need. But this can be avoided. Jamnalalji spent far less on himself than men of his own economic status and even than many middle-class men. I have come across innumerable rich persons who are stingy with themselves. For some it is part of their nature to spend next to nothing on themselves, and they do not think that they acquire merit in so doing.

The same applies to the sons of the wealthy. Personally I do not believe in inherited riches. The well-to-do should educate and bring up their children so that they may learn how to be independent. The tragedy is that they do not do so. Their children do get some education, they even recite verses in praise of poverty, but they have no compunction about helping themselves to parental wealth. That being so, I exercise my common sense and advise what is practicable.

Those of us, however, who consider it a duty to adopt poverty

[1] The Hindi original appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 1-3-1942.

[2] *Vide* "A Deplorable Incident", 25-1-1942; also "Talk with Bajaj Family", 12-2-1942.

[3] *Vide* "Not Necessarily Impure", 8-2-1942.

and who believe in and desire economic equality may not be jealous of the rich but should[1] exhibit real happiness in their poverty which others may emulate. The sad fact is that those who are thus happy are few and far between.[2]

THE DUTY OF A MANAGER

Q.Is it correct for the head of an institution, while demanding the utmost from his subordinates in the way of simple life, to live in comparative luxury himself even though the money he spends on himself be his own earnings?

A.The manager who expects more from his co-workers than what he does is bound to fail. This of course applies only to philanthropic institutions whose managers have accepted the ideal of poverty.

INDIVIDUAL *V.* COLLECTIVE COW-KEEPING

Q.Please explain more fully why individual care of the cow is violent and collective effort non-violent.

A.The present pitiable condition of cattle is surely enough proof. The cow today is a burden simply because individual ownership and care have failed. In a previous article[3] I have explained how the individual cannot take proper care of his cattle, how he cannot keep a bull or grazing-ground for himself, and how difficult it is for him to make proper arrangements for the sale of milk and ghee. It would be quite impossible for individuals in any country to make their own arrangements for sending their letters with the ease that the postal department does for crores of people, rich and poor alike. The same applies to cows. If at all the problem can be solved, it will be through collective ownership or use. Ownership and service go ill together. I may belong to one person, but thousands can serve me. If one person alone were to claim the right to serve me, where would I be? This is exactly what is happening to the cow. Individuals own the cow, they do not serve it.

[1] The Hindi here adds: "be content if the latter put their wealth to noble use, and".

[2] The Hindi here adds: "We should therefore show through our own lives that poverty adopted as a matter of dharma is the true wealth."

[3] *Vide* "Individual or Collective?", 8-2-1942.

Q.You say we should devote our body, intellect and wealth to Jamnalalji's many activities. I can understand giving [wealth] and to some extent I can understand how we can serve with our intellect. But how with the body?

A.[1] A's heart may lean towards cow-service or khadi. But he has no money, he has to earn his own living, then how can he spare time for either service? When he can spare a few moments after his day's work he can persuade his friends to become members of the Goseva Sangh. He can sell and distribute literature without charge; he can do propaganda for and sell cow's milk and ghee or sandals made from non-violent cow hide; he can sell khadi too. If he wants to devote his whole life to the cause, he can do so by entering on a living wage the service of the Sangh concerned.

SEVAGRAM, February 24, 1942

Harijan, 1-3-1942 and 8-3-1942

68. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,

February 25, 1942

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I must reply to your letter addressed to Mahadev. He is completely out of danger now, but he has stopped all work and will do none for some time.

About Chiang Kai-shek you will read in *Harijan*. He came empty-handed and left empty-handed. He amused himself and entertained me. But I cannot say that I learnt anything. And in any case what was there to learn? He had only one thing to say: "Help the British anyhow. They are better than the others and will improve further hereafter."

We had a gathering of friends here. It would of course have been a fine thing if you could have come. All met in a friendly atmosphere. There were long discussions regarding Jamnalalji's work. A plan of work was chalked out. Ghanshyamdas took a leading part in the discussions. Janakibehn has become President.

[1] The Hindi begins with the following: "The question sounds rather puzzling. But in fact it is not as puzzling as it appears to be."

I would add bread to your diet only under my supervision. You may eat papaya and increase the quantity of dates. I am afraid about bananas. But you may try perfectly ripe ones, pulped. There will be no harm in increasing the calories. Are you satisfied with this?

I did not at all like Indulal's[1] letter. Can you not reply to him thus: 'You have been so unsteady in the past that it is difficult to judge when you can be trusted. It is therefore better that you should work independently of the Congress or of me. If your work strengthens the Congress, there will be no friction. You should not mind my writing to you frankly.'

Raja left yesterday and Rajendra Babu is leaving today. He will meet Maulana in Calcutta and then go to Patna. We had a discussion about the Hindustani [Talimi] Sangh. Learn Urdu.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 268-70

69. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

February 25, 1942

BHAI HARIBHAUJI,

Bapu received your long letter yesterday evening.

Since Mahadevbhai has taken ill he will not be able to go to Kota. He will need complete rest for a long time. Janakibehn too will not be able to go now. She will not be going anywhere for the time being. What should be done about Kota now? Bapu says if you invite Dr. Katju[2] he might accept the invitation. At the moment he has no other person in view. Dada Dharmadhikari does not want to go out since he has taken up the responsibility of *Marathi Harijan.*

Bapu was pained learn that Omkarnathji could not meet his mother. . . .[3]

Yours,

AMRIT KAUR

From the Hindi original: Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Indulal Yajnik

[2] Kailash Nath Katju

[3] The rest of the letter, not being connected with Gandhiji's message, is not reproduced here.

70. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON

February 25, 1942

BHAI TANDONJI,

I had your letter. The group of friends whom I had invited after Jamnalalji's death included Rajendra Babu, Rajaji, Kaka-saheb, Bhai Satyanarain and Bhai Shriman. I had discussed with them the formation of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. Rajaji advised me, and others agreed with him, that I should write to you in detail. The said Sabha will propagate both the forms simultaneously, prepare the [text-] books and sell them, conduct the examinations and so on. Could the members of such a sabha also work for the Rashtrabhasha Samiti which is functioning at Wardha? How could they call Hindi alone the national language? If national language means Hindi + Urdu, Hindi or Urdu should only be regarded as a part of the national language and not *the* national language. Does not your Abohar resolution imply that Hindi alone should be considered the national language, not Urdu? If this interpretation is correct, would it not be better for the members of the Hindustani Prachar [Sabha] to sever their connection with the [Hindi] Sahitya Sammelan? Whatever it be, all of us desire that the Standing Committee should discuss the point dispassionately and come to a decision.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Rajendra Prasad Papers. File No. 1-H/42. Courtesy: National Archives of India

71. MESSAGE TO "MARATHI HARIJAN"

SEVAGRAM,

February 26, 1942

I am very glad that *Marathi Harijan* is coming out. I hope the Maharashtrian community will appreciate it.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Marathi Harijan, 1-3-1942

72. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

February 26, 1942

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

Very many thanks for your kind letter[1] and all the trouble you took over the matter about the A. I. S. A. referred to you by me.[2] Your decision tides over my present difficulty.

Your postscript breaks the pervading gloom. I wish the general public had the privilege of knowing that your cheerfulness never forsakes you. May God be with you always.

I am,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

The Transfer of Power, Vol. I, p. 254

73. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

February 26, 1942

DEAR MOTI BABU,

I have a complaint from Barisal that the P. Sangh[3] is to open an uncertified khadi shop and that propaganda is being carried on against the A. I. S. A. for maintaining the system of certificates; what is this?

I understand too that the promissory notes have yet not been sent. All this is surely against the spirit of your teaching.

I hope you are keeping well.

Love.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 11056

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 20-2-1942.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow," 8-2-1942.

[3] The Pravartak Sangh of Calcutta

74. LETTER TO KAMALADEVI CHATTOPADHYAYA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C.P.,

February 26, 1942

DEAR KAMALADEVI,

I received your letter of 12th only today. You had no business to have the accident. I hope, however, you are out of the wood now.

Of course, you will come when you like.

Yes, Jamnalalji's death[1] is a personal loss to many of us.

Love.

Yours,

BAPU

From the original: Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

75. LETTER TO SARANGADHAR DAS

February 26, 1942

DEAR SHRI SARANGADHAR DAS,

Bapuji desires me to acknowledge yours to him of the 23rd instant. He wants you during your leisure to study both Hindi and Urdu in their respective scripts and get a working knowledge of them. He has noted the other news you give. Re: what you say about Sri Gopabandhu will be borne in mind. Bapu will ask him to do the needful.

Yours sincerely,

AMRIT KAUR

From a copy: C.W. 10445. Courtesy: Government of Orissa

[1] Jamnalal Bajaj had died of cerebral haemorrhage on February 11, 1942.

76. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

February 26, 1942

CHI. MUNNALAL,

What can I do? I simply could not reply to your letter before now. How may I calm you? What you regard as bondage and burdensomeness, I regard as freedom and lightness; this being so, how can we see eye to eye? The only way left is that you should pour out your heart in letters and, feeling light, smile, and that I should carefully read your letters. Do not so over-exert yourself as to fall ill. You may certainly go out somewhere whenever you think it necessary for your peace of mind. You may go for the sake of your health also. You must not let your health suffer in any circumstances.

What should we do regarding Kanchan? Do you wish that she should go to Dehra?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8478. Also C.W. 7165. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

77. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKWASA

February 26, 1942

BHAI MANGALDAS,

I saw your letter of the 16th only just now. Mahadev is ill and in bed. Does load of work ever leave a man unharmed? May your labours for adult education bear fruit, and let nobody in Bombay remain illiterate.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Why do you write in English?

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 4686. Courtesy: Mangaldas Pakwasa

78. LETTER TO VIJAYA M. PANCHOLI

February 26, 1942

CHI. VIJAYA,

I should have written this letter four days ago, but I could find no time at all. I would not have known about your heroism had Vallabhram Vaidya not written to me about it. Why need you feel embarrassed about the fact or hide it from me? When you got married I knew that there could be but one result, and we have it now. It is indeed a blessed one. The real test of you two will come now. We have to see whether, even while living a householder's life, you can render the fullest service. "Fullest" means not double but four times [the previous service]. As the number increases, strength increases not in the same proportion but at least twice as much as the increase in the number, that is, four times, if the number has doubled and six times if it has trebled. This is by the way.

It is your duty now to be calm always and nourish the baby inside you. The baby's education starts from the moment of conception. Your thoughts, the work you do and the food you eat, will have an effect on it. Get a copy of Dr. Tribhovandas's very old—but ever-fresh—book, *Mane Shikhaman*[1], and read it. Nanabhai will help you to get one. Manubhai will be knowing of other books of that type. Go through them also. Start preparing from now on. Make your body strong. Don't stint in the matter of your food. Drink milk and eat ghee, fruit and uncooked vegetables in quantities you can digest.

If uncooked vegetables do not agree with you leave them out.

Ba is quite well.

After Jamnalalji's passing away the burden on me has increased very much indeed. But God still gives me enough strength. Otherwise I would stop working.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7145. Also C.W. 4637. Courtesy: Vijaya M. Pancholi

[1] Meaning "Advice to a Mother"

79. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

February 27, 1942

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I am stupid. I forgot to tell you yesterday that the A. I. S. A. had tried to keep within and under the law. But I will not weary you with the technicalities. You know how the law often floors the lawyers. This case is one such. But no more at the present juncture.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Transfer of Power, Vol. I, p. 255

80. LETTER TO A. V. THAKKAR

February 27, 1942

BAPA,

Spend up to Rs. 300, from the amount marked, for putting up four lavatories in the fair at Okha. Why did you not think of it earlier?[1]

* * *

Have gone through the papers about Dharma Prakash. It was good that they were sent to Viyogi Hari. The payment should be made only when the account is submitted and I pass it.

* * *

I have sent Balkrishna there. I hope I have not encumbered you thoughtlessly. In my view, it is beneficial to us to accommodate people like him. But if you hold a different view, I will not do such a thing again. I do not believe that everybody should relish what I like.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The paragraphs which follow have been separated in the source by two dashes.

81. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

February 27, 1942

CHI. BRIJKISAN,

I have your letter. Blessings on your birthday. What can I do? I have sent you not one but many letters. How is it possible that I could write to all others and not to you? Mahadev himself had written quite a few letters to you. How is it that you did not receive them? The register here has also the dates. Send me your reply soon.

You are gaining good experience. Since you are in good health there is nothing to worry about.

Everything is all right here. Because of Jamnalal's death the work-load has increased very much.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2486

82. PLEA FOR MORE FRUITS

Dr. Menkel, who is also a dietetist, comments[1] as follows in *The Oriental Watchman* on my note on 'Real War Effort'[2] in *Harijan* of January 25th :

While I appreciate Dr. Menkel's endorsement of my remarks, I like better his correction of my apparent lukewarmness about fruit. No one perhaps, as far as I know, has eaten as much fruit as I have, having lived for six years entirely on fruits and nuts and always having had a liberal supply of fruit as part of my ordinary diet. But I had in my mind, when writing, the special conditions of India. Its people should have, by reason of its extent and variety of climate, a most liberal supply of fruit, vegetables and milk. Yet it is the poorest country in this respect. I therefore suggested what seemed to me to be feasible. But I heartily endorse the proposition that for retaining health fresh fruit and fresh vegetables should form the main part of our diet. It is for the medical profession to study the peculiar

[1] This is not reproduced here.

[2] *Vide* "Real War Effort", 19-2-1942.

conditions of India and suggest the list of vegetables and fruits which are or can be easily and cheaply grown in the villages for local consumption. Wild berries, for instance, grow abundantly. They may not be taken to the market for sale but can be had[1] for the picking. This is a vast field for research. It can bring neither money nor perhaps fame. But it may earn the gratitude of the dumb millions.

SEVAGRAM, February 28, 1942

Harijan, 15-3-1942

83. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,

February 28, 1942

CHI. NARANDAS,

Why is Jamna getting fever? Do you need Kanaiyo? I have sent him to learn the art of training a stronger and more powerful body than Prithvi Singh has. He has gone for two weeks. If, however, you need him to look after Jamna, send for him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II/489. Also C.W. 8600. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

84. LETTER TO JAMNA GANDHI

[*February 28, 1942*][2]

CHI. JAMNA,

Why are you getting fever? Give up all worries. Come over here whenever you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8600. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] The source has "used".

[2] The letter is written below the one to Narandas Gandhi of this date.

85. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

February 28, 1942

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your letter. Did I seem to have written to you to criticize you?[1] I had no such intention. I did try to warn you, of course. But I entirely agree that you can act only within the limits of your capacity and according to your lights.

I concede that the existence of your Association has enabled the newspapers to do something, but that is very little. The newspapers have no real freedom. But I do admit that whatever little they have is not to be sacrificed.

You did well in sending a cable to Manilal. I have not sent any. I did not intend to send one, either.

Ba is keeping very well these days. Mahadev is better. He will of course have to take prolonged rest.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Keep in touch with Balkrishna[2].

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2149

86. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

February 28, 1942

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I learnt only today that a cable was sent to you regarding Nanabhai.[3] Kishorelalbhai has come here. Both have become a little thin. But otherwise both are sensible and have stood the loss well. The other members of the family also have behaved in a manner worthy of it. Vijayabehn[4] has displayed great courage. She will come here. I think she should stay here now. My intention in saying all this in this letter is not to console you but to point out to you your dharma. I

[1] *Vide* letter to the addressee dated February 15, 1942.

[2] This appears to be a slip for "Brijkrishna".

[3] Nanabhai I. Mashruwala, Sushila Gandhi's father, had passed away.

[4] Widow of Nanabhai I. Mashruwala

myself behaved thus on Jamnalalji's death and advised others, too, that instead of crying over it they should meditate over the virtues of the beloved one who had passed away and cultivate them in their own lives, so that they could claim that that he was still living through them. Did I not say that in its essence every soul was immortal? I am sure you will follow my advice.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4927

87. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,

February 28, 1942

CHI. KANTI,

We got a letter about Saraswati's[1] illness when we were all expecting her to come. Even if she had come here instead of going there she would have had treatment. But we ought to do what you think right, shouldn't we? Everything here is all right. Mahadevbhai has however grown a little weak.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Ahmedabad

[1] Addressee's wife

88. TALK TO MEMBERS OF MAHILA ASHRAM[1]

SEVAGRAM,

[Before *March 1, 1942*][2]

Members of the Mahila Ashram, in particular, owed a deep debt of gratitude to him. How were they going to repay it? There must be no idle tears. The best memorial to him was service.

The soul does not die. It is the body alone that perishes. But not everyone lives for ever in the hearts of men as Jamnalalji will. The Mahila Ashram students and staff must pull their full weight in making Wardha an ideal town. Clean it, remove illiteracy, spread the gospel of khadi, remove untouchability and serve the women. Then all of you can become members of the Goseva Sangh and help in enlisting members too. The pledge is not a rigid one, and, if you love the cow, you will willingly sign it. Last but not the least there is Urdu. Each one of you should begin to study the Urdu script. Only those who know both Hindi and Urdu will be able in due course to create that beautiful mixture, the Hindustani of my dream, which shall be the national language.

Jamnalalji created the Mahila Mandal in order to create women workers. The least each one of you can do is to imbibe his spirit of service and take it as your armour when you go into the wider sea of life. Most of you will marry. It is the natural thing to do, and I used to chaff Jamnalalji and call him a registrar of marriages because he was always arranging marriages. He was no less anxious than I that many of our girls should elect to remain unmarried for the sake of serving their less fortunate sisters, but such women are rare. In any case I shall expect service from you, and when married you will be two persons and will have to give fourfold. In many ways married life—if well and truly lived, not for the sake of satisfying carnal desires—is harder than celibacy.

[1] Reproduced from Amrit Kaur's article "Jamnalalji and Women", dated March

[1] 1940. The members of the Mahila Ashram joined the evening prayers and presented their sacrificial yarn, spun in memory of Jamnalal Bajaj.

[2] *ibid*

Jamnalalji was a rare man. He was born to serve and serve universally. Nothing that he did was done half-heartedly. His diligence was amazing. He had even begun to tend the cow that gave him milk. Such was his thoroughness. He died in harness as he would have wished. Everyone cannot follow him in everything, but, at any rate, if you really loved and admired one who did so much for you, you should learn one lesson from his life. Work hard and give yourselves utterly to the fulfilment of those high ideals of womanhood which he set before you.

Harijan, 15-3-1942

89. DISGRACEFUL[1]

The Punjab Press reports a deliberate and unprovoked attack on Pandit Sunderlal and Lala Jagannath of the Servants of People Society by four young Hindus at 11 o'clock at night while they were on their way to Lajpatrai Bhavan. The attack is said to have been made because of Pandit Sunderlal having delivered addresses in Lahore on Hindu-Muslim unity in which all offensive language was studiously avoided. One can understand, though never pardon, an attack on some provocation. But an attack such as was delivered on Pandit Sunderlal has no extenuating circumstances. These young men are reported to be members of the Hindu Mahasabha. I hope that the responsible officials will repudiate the action of the youths. Public opinion should make such hooliganism impossible. As for Pandit Sunderlal, his cause will prosper for the savagery, and more so because of his dignified disregard and forgiveness of it.

SEVAGRAM, March 1, 1942
Harijan, 8-3-1942

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

90. LETTER TO VITHALDAS V. JERAJANI

March 1, 1942

BHAI JERAJANI,

I got your letter and the copies enclosed with it. I cannot think of any modifications in your suggestion. The time may come, of course, when it may be necessary to stop all our activities in cities. The better course would be for the people to buy up now all the cloth they might need. I can see no harm in advancing money to the bhandars. Let us see what Jajuji has to say about it.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI JERAJANI
AKHIL BHARATIYA CHARKHA BHANDAR
396 KALBADEVI ROAD
BOMBAY 2

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9804

91. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

March 1, 1942

CHI. MUNNALAL,

You are a king unto yourself. What shall I say to you? Go as God leads you. There are two types of powers that lead us, the demoniac and the divine. See that you are not led by the former.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8480. Also C.W. 7166. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

92. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
March 1, 1942

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I replied to your letter regarding food the moment I got it.[1] You can make up the calories with jaggery, glucose, raisins and dates. It is quite possible to do so.

Do not worry in the least about Mahadev. He is resting, he ought to rest. He eats well. Ba also is all right. Maganlal[2] and his family came today. That Garhwali Chandra Singh's wife also has come. The place is thus crowded again. But you may rest assured that accommodation will be available for you when you come. There is a bath-tub, too. Is the Working Committee meeting to be held here?

How is Dahyabhai's daughter?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 270

93. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

March 1, 1942

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Please don't worry about Mahadev. He is all right. He must have rest. Mental peace is absolutely essential for him. I do not wish to send him out for the time being.

I hope your experiment is going on well. How about [your] weight and strength? What did you do about what I wrote to you regarding Jamnalalji?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8053. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 25-2-1942.
[2] Maganlal Mehta

94. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

March 1, 1942

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

I got your letter yesterday. I did not intend replying, nor do I want to do so now. I wish to remind you of the hot weather. The heat is severe. I am having a wet-pack on my head. Indu should not come this side during such heat. I would suggest that both of them should go to Khali or Kashmir. They should visit Sevagram and other places only after the rains. But if Indu has the courage to face the heat here, I shall, of course, be happy to meet the two.[1]

One thing more. Khurshedbehn had written to you. She says you have written to her that you are awaiting an invitation from the Mahatma. Why do you need an invitation from me? It is always there for you. There was no special work for which I should put you to the trouble of coming here. I do not understand the implications of an "open city", that is why I have said: "I must consult Jawaharlal before I say anything. I depend upon Jawaharlal in such matters."

We are meeting soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

95. NOTES

INDIRA NEHRU'S ENGAGEMENT

I have received several angry and abusive letters and some professing to reason about Indira's engagement with Feroz Gandhi. Not a single correspondent has anything against Feroz Gandhi as a man. His only crime in their estimation is that he happens to be a Parsi. I have been, and I am still, as strong an opponent of either party changing religion for the sake of marriage. Religion is not a garment to be caste off at will. In the present case there is no question of change of religion. Feroz Gandhi has been for years an inmate of the

[1] Indira Nehru was engaged to Feroz Gandhi on February 26.

Nehru family. He nursed Kamala Nehru in her sickness. He was like a son to her. During Indira's illness in Europe he was of great help to her. A natural intimacy grew up between them. The friendship has been perfectly honourable. It has ripened into mutual attraction. But neither party would think of marrying without the consent and blessing of Jawaharlal Nehru. This was given only after he was satisfied that the attraction had a solid basis. The public know my connection with the Nehrus. I had also talks with both the parties. It would have been cruelty to refuse consent to this engagement. As time advances such unions are bound to multiply with benefit to society. At present we have not even reached the stage of mutual toleration, but as toleration grows into mutual respect for religions such unions will be welcomed. No religion which is narrow and which cannot satisfy the test of reason will survive the coming reconstruction of society in which the values will have changed and character, not possession of wealth, title or birth, will be the sole test of merit. The Hinduism of my conception is no narrow creed. It is a grand evolutionary process as ancient as time, and embraces the teachings of Zoroaster, Moses, Christ, Mohammed, Nanak and other prophets that I could name. It is thus defined :

विद्वद्भिः सेवितः सद्भिर्नित्यमद्वेषशगिभिः।

हृदयेनाभ्यनुज्ञानो यो धर्मस्तं निबोधत॥

> Know that to be (true) religion which the wise and the good and those who are ever free from passion and hate follow and which appeals to the heart.

If it is not that, it will perish. My correspondents will pardon me for not acknowledging their letters. I invite them to shed their wrath and bless the forthcoming marriage. Their letters betray ignorance, intolerance and prejudice—a species of untouchability, dangerous because not easily to be so classified.

SEVAGRAM, March [2][1] 1942

[1] The source has this under the date-line "1-3-1942". However, in the letter to Jawaharlal Nehru dated March 4, 1942, Gandhiji mentions having written this on Monday which fell on March 2.

Charity begins at home. As I was speaking to Jamnalalji's friends[1] on the necessity of their learning Urdu if they believed in Rashtrabhasha as recommended by the Congress, I thought of the good English proverb, and I began the charity of spreading the knowledge of Urdu in Sevagram. The result was a quick and good response. A class commenced last Wednesday, i.e., 25th February. Practically all, young and old,women and men, joined the class. The teacher captured their imagination. They learnt the primary letters in two sittings of thirty minutes each. By the time this is in print they should have learnt the forms for joining the letters. They will have learnt the alphabet in practically three hours. I know a friend who mastered it in four hours at a single sitting. The difficulty of reading Urdu is undoubtedly there. That can only be overcome by practice. Given the will, the way is easy. And love of the country should surely be sufficient spur to the will.

SEVAGRAM, March 2, 1942

Harijan, 8-3-1942

96. QUESTION BOX

PRAJA MANDALS AND THE CONGRESS

Q. Please clarify the position of the Congress *vis-a-vis* Praja Mandal Committees in States. Who should be responsible for political policies there?

A. Praja Mandals are independent bodies having no official connection with the Congress. They may or may not take their inspiration from the Congress policies. Such being the case I should advise them not to irritate State authority by an unnecessary identification with the Congress.

WOMEN

Q. While you have advised women in cities to go into the villages in order to escape from the danger of assaults,[2] do you not think that some of us, at any rate, should be brave enough to face the risk? After all women cannot become brave or self-

[1] *Vide* "Talk with Friends", 20-2-1942 and 21-2-1942.

[2] *Vide* "Criminal Assaults", 19-2-1942.

reliant, if they are always to be kept out of harm's way. Will not one death bravely faced help the woman's cause? There is danger today of our girls being put back into *purdah*, as it were by their parents.

A. Of course, those who are wanted in the cities must remain at all cost and face the worst. Nothing should be done in bravado. When they go to the villages there will be no *purdah*. It will be all work and no freedom from danger anywhere on this godforsaken little ball which two teams are kicking for all they are worth. The days of the *purdah* are gone for good.

SEVAGRAM, March 2, 1942
Harijan, 8-3-1942

97. AN APPEAL TO QUAID-E-AZAM

I have been painfully but regularly going through the English weeklies that come to me and that are devoted to the cause of the Muslim League. I read them so as to keep myself informed of what the Muslim mind as influenced by the Muslim League thinks. Not a week passes but these weeklies contain what to me appear to be distortions of truth and vilification of the Congress and Congressmen and Hindus. What has prompted me to write these lines is a virulent attack on Hinduism in one of the weeklies. Here is an extract from the article :

> Hinduism is the greatest curse of India, and it is based on intolerance and inequality. To call oneself a 'Hindu' is to confess that one is reactionary and narrow-minded. No decent, civilized, honest and sincere human being who knows what Hinduism is and what it stands for, would like to be known as a Hindu or join this faith of primitive barbarians. For it is on barbarity that this so-called religion is based. No other word can describe the state of 97 per cent of the population who have been decreed by the gods and goddesses of this precious religion as impure and unclean beings fit only to serve the remaining 3 per cent of the population. . . . We would far rather suggest to the students to prepare in their laboratories of the mind deadly bombs which would completely smash and destroy Hinduism, the greatest menace to India's welfare and well-being.

I hope I shall not be told that the article in question is taken

from another newspaper. It has been taken in order to hold up Hinduism to scorn. Though the founder of this paper is Quaid-e-Azam himself and it is issued under the direction of Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, Hon. Secretary of the League, I fancy that they have not seen the article in question.

What will be the state of Hindus under Pakistan? Will they be suppressed as barbarians? There is no attempt in the papers at looking at the other side. The policy adopted in the papers must lead to the promotion of bitterness and strife between the two communities. If the end is to be attained through strife and force and not by persuasion and argument, I can have nothing to say. But I observe from Quaid-e-Azam's speeches that he has no quarrel with the Hindus. He wants to live at peace with them. I plead, therefore, for a juster estimate of men and things in papers representing the policy and programme of the Muslim League.

SEVAGRAM, March 2, 1942

Harijan, 8-3-1942

98. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

March 2, 1942

CHI. MARY,

I have your letter for which I was waiting. I am glad you are flourishing. Continue to report progress. Yes, Jamnalalji's death is a great blow. We must resign ourselves to God's will.

Love.

BAPU

Bapu—Conversations and Correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 206

99. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

March 2, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

What you say is not brutal. Fear is writ large on our faces. Fear of doing wrong, fear of running into the imaginary enemy's trap, is all a species of fear and dangerous at that. However, you have to submit till you patiently convert your companions. They are the best material we have. And it is from that that we have to weave the national fabric. What about the Quaid-e-Azam?

I am counting the days against 20th.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2084

100. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA

March 2, 1942

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

You are foolish. You have not at all fallen by marrying. How can you conquer your nature? But you could surely be said to have fallen if you led a life of luxury and forgot your duty. Marriage can become a means of rising high if it can be utilized for practising restraint. You would be committing a great mistake if you think you have fallen because of marriage, for then it would slacken your effort to rise. Hence have the faith that by marrying you are sure to rise higher.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI ANNAPURNA DEVI
GANDHI ASHRAM
P.O. BARI
CUTTACK
ORISSA[1]

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9299. Also C.W. 10270

[1] The address is in English.

101. THE MARRIED ESTATE [1]

A sister, who is a good worker and was anxious to remain celibate in order better to serve the country's cause, has recently married having met the mate of her dreams. But she imagines that in doing so she has done wrong and fallen from the high ideal which she had set before herself.[2] I have tried to rid her mind of this delusion.[3]

It is no doubt an excellent thing for girls to remain unmarried for the sake of service, but the fact is that only one in a million is able to do so. Marriage is a natural thing in life, and to consider it derogatory in any sense is wholly wrong. When one imagines any act a fall it is difficult, however hard one tries, to raise oneself. The ideal is to look upon marriage as a sacrament and therefore to lead a life of self-restraint in the married estate. Marriage in Hinduism is one of the four *ashramas*. In fact the other three are based on it. But in modern times marriage has unfortunately come to be regarded purely as a physical union[4]. The other three *ashramas* are all but non-existent.

The duty of the above-mentioned and other sisters who think like her is, therefore, not to look down upon marriage but to give it its due place and make of it the sacrament it is. If they exercise the necessary self-restraint, they will find growing within themselves a greater strength for service. She who wishes to serve will naturally choose a partner in life who is of the same mind, and their joint service will be the country's gain.

It is a tragedy that generally speaking our girls are not taught the duties of motherhood. But if married life is a religious duty, motherhood must be so too. To be an ideal mother is no easy task. The procreation of children has to be undertaken with a full sense of responsibility. The mother should know what is her duty from the moment she conceives right up to the time the child is born. And she who gives intelligent, healthy and well-brought up children to the

[1] This appeared under "Notes". The Hindi original appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 8-3-1942.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] The Hindi here adds: "But I know there are many other sisters like her and for their benefit I am giving a gist of the letter I wrote to her"

[4] The Hindi here adds: "thus giving rise to harmful results".

country is surely rendering a service. When the latter grow up they too will be ready to serve. The truth of the matter is that those who are filled with a living spirit of service will always serve whatever their position in life. They will never adopt a way of life which will interfere with service.

SEVAGRAM, March 3, 1942

Harijan, 22-3-1942

102. TOURING BY THAKKAR BAPA AND RAMESHWARI NEHRU

Old age flees from Thakkar Bapa. He never takes a moment's rest. If he did he would fall ill. Service has become his food, and he has chosen such a form of service that he is required to undertake frequent travelling. He does not travel first or second. Of course he can, if he wants to, but mostly he prefers to travel third. Rameshwaridevi is infected with his spirit. Therefore they both travel together to many places. Sometimes they go to different places. Thakkar Bapa's speech also deserves notice; it also hurries along like the speaker himself. He has many things to say and so he speaks in short, sweet sentences that can be understood even by a child, and after reading his articles the reader longs for more and more. How can a person writing in haste and from odd places afford to adorn his language? Why should he choose his words? Words as it were rush in to carry his thoughts and he picks them up as they occur.

The reader will see all this in the following letter[1].

SEVAGRAM, March 4, 1942

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 8-3-1942

[1] Not reproduced here. In it A. V. Thakkar had given an account of his Rajputana tour.

103. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 4, 1942

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

Received your letter yesterday. Hope you will not find it difficult to read this letter.

About Indu's marriage, I hold the firm opinion that no one from outside need be invited. A few persons who are at Allahabad may, however, be called as witnesses. You can send invitation cards to as many people as you like. Ask for blessings from everybody but make it clear that no one in particular need take the trouble of coming. If one person is asked to come, others cannot be left out.

It has to be considered whether or not Indu likes to go to this extent of simplicity. In case you too do not like to go so far, you can rule out my suggestion.

I have seen your statement about Indu. I like it. I receive letters [concerning her marriage] every day. Some are horrid. I have destroyed all of them. In reply to all these, I have sent a note in *Harijan*[1], a copy of which I am sending herewith. The note was written on Monday. Since yesterday, letters from Muslims are pouring in, making Sarup the target of their attack. This will go on.

I will do all that is possible for the Indian States. Funds will be a constant difficulty. Jamnalalji had taken all the responsibility upon himself; how he would have done it was not decided. I am now wondering how to raise the money. I am consulting Pattabhi about the paper.[2] Balwantrai will not be able to come. That will not make much difference. We shall be getting help from here. When you come here, we shall talk over the matter. Menon is going to Bombay today to complete the work there.

I saw Chiang Kai-shek's statement. It was good. Your consent was received but I thought that there was no need now to make that letter public. The subject has become stale.

[1] *Vide* "Indira Nehru's Engagement", 2-3-1942.
[2] *Vide* the following item.

Bhagirathi has come. It is rather difficult to keep Chandra Singh. He is very much given to indulgence; and she is very weak.[1] He quarrels on petty matters. I will not be surprised if he beats up someone. I, however, find him hard-working. You need not worry. If you feel any difficulty in reading my letters, I will try to write more legibly. But it is our duty to start writing to each other in the national language. After some time we will find it easier to do so. The poor will be immensely benefited.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

104. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

SEVAGRAM,

March 4, 1942

BHAI GOPICHAND,

I have gone through all your articles. They are good. I shall not suggest any emendations. Do you wish to get them published? If so, you must give them a close scrutiny. Would they be in the three Punjabi scripts and not in Hindustani?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *A Bunch of Old Letters* however has: "He is very much given to indulgence and has little intelligence".

105. LETTER TO PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

SEVAGRAM,
March 5, 1942

MY DEAR PATTABHI,

I have now heard from Jawaharlal. He leaves everything to me. With Jamnalalji's death the question of finance becomes most difficult. I suggest some such notice by you as Editor. 'Arrangements are being made to turn the *States' People* into a weekly and to make it a kind of guide to the people of the States from week to week. For the time being therefore the publication will be suspended. Meanwhile I would like the workers in the different States to inform me how many copies they would take, the payment being in advance. The idea is to make the paper self-supporting from the start. The paper is intended to supply a felt want. A sure test of a felt want is that there are enough subscribers to pay for the upkeep. The estimated cost of the paper for one year would be not more than, say, Rs. 5,000, the Editor being honorary. For 1,000 subscribers, therefore, the annual subscription will be Rs. 5 each. This ought not to prove an unbearable burden. The sooner the names are sent to me the better it is for the cause. In any case all the names should be sent to me with contributions which will be refunded if the paper is not issued within one month from the date of closing the list.'

This you will issue if you agree with my proposal. You will check the estimates before publishing this figure and I presume that you have no difficulty about paper. I would like you to keep yourself in touch with Jawaharlal.

Either I have destroyed your estimates or have mislaid your letter and estimates. Please send me a copy of the latter. If you feel like coming, do come.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy. Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

106. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

[*March 5, 1942*][2]

(1) Should human society be constituted by holding it within the confines of religion or by means of the levelling-stone of democracy? What should be a man's contribution to it? Does the training in truth and non-violence pass from an individual to society or does society train the individual?

With the bonds of religion alone. A man can make his contribution by fulfilling his dharma. All the training comes to society through its members.

(2) A community can be raised high through one's own [spiritual] uplift. You are achieving public weal through your efforts towards spiritual uplift whereas we all seem to have equated our entire duty with the welfare of the masses. Could it be the reason why we meet with difficulties in achieving either?

Ultimately the obstruction is bound to go.

(3) Is it proper to employ the language of war in a movement based on truth and non-violence? Indeed, isn't it true that aspirants to this category cannot be guided by the ways of war?

There is nothing wrong in employing the same phraseology, although it would surely be better to adopt a new one.

(4) I believe, after having accepted a certain way [of life], one must perform the ritual practices that go with it. If however they are found to be uninteresting, it should mean that one's own faith in it or one's understanding of it is not perfect.

It is quite natural that what is good seems [at first] uninteresting. However, after it has its impact what is good is bound to hold one's interest.

(5)The idea of Pakistan is a result of Muslim fears and the want of a liberal attitude on the part of our Hindu brethren. One of the demands of the Muslim League is for equal representation on the central cabinet. It may be an unjust demand. But if we want to achieve independence and trust that communal strife will not survive the passage of time, doesn't it deserve to be accepted? Since the present circumstances will then have undergone a change, will not the hearts of both communities unite?

[1] Submitted in writing from time to time by Ghulam Rasul Qureshi

[2] The last answer was written on this date.

If [the idea of] Pakistan is not right its acceptance is a violation of truth. Pakistan to my mind is far from right. Unity ought to be that of hearts, and unity of hearts cannot be achieved by dishonest acts.

(6) If the state of affairs cannot be mended by top-level [approaches] we should start from the bottom to establish contacts with the Muslims. A man like you had to spend so much time to persuade prominent Hindu leaders. Then, will the common man's mentality change easily? There is no sincere desire for it, nor enough effort in the direction. In some quarters the attitude is that the Muslims should come forward if they care.

It is right that we should start from the bottom. There is a serious flaw in the attitude that Muslims should come forward if they care. It ought to be overcome.

(7) Under the Act of 1935 members of the School Boards are elected on communal basis. A few of the seats are reserved as general seats. In order to popularize joint electorates, it would be good to set an example by electing from these constituencies candidates belonging to other communities.

Morarjibhai[1] should be a better guide in these matters.

(8) One of the tenets of Islam lays down that no one but God deserves to be worshipped. Will you please say something on the subject?

It is true. I understand it to mean that no one is as worthy of worship as God is. Our parents no doubt deserve to be worshipped, but they cannot take the place of God.

(9) So many of our country's workers wish to benefit from your company. Since you no more undertake tours this advantage no more reaches them. So now they have to come to you. If some regular programme can be organized, without rushing through it, it is likely to have a fine effect on the thinking of many workers.

This is quite true. And if some such arrangement can be made it should prove very convenient.

(10) I seem to be constantly thinking about the Muslim community. Is that all right? I try to look upon all as equals. And being myself a Muslim I am quick to perceive the weakness of my own people and promptly draw the attention of my fellow-beings to it. Is this communalism?

I see no communalism in it. Fair-mindedness does not mean that

[1] Morarji R. Desai

one may not think of one's own religion, or refrain from serving one's own community. But it certainly implies that given an opportunity one should serve members of another faith as well as those belonging to one's own.

(11) In these parts it is difficult for the nationalist Muslims to obtain monetary help from their own community. The nation's Muslim wing is weak. If it is considered improper to accept help from Hindu brethren this wing will have little ground for growing strong. Is it right to divide the people of a nation on the basis of religion only to obstruct the flow of aid?

You should not put it this way. Receiving aid from members of another faith will only expose your own weakness. Besides, other members of your own faith will view it with suspicion and the poison will spread. The matter needs to be viewed with discretion. We come across very few nationalist Muslims who are strong enough. They lack self-confidence. They would not even be able to explain why they are nationalist. The whole question deserves to be studied.

(12) A majority of the well-to-do Muslims belong to the League, because they see their interests better served that way. The poorer Muslims are handicapped by paucity of funds in their nationalist activities. If they ask for funds it is assumed that they are [in it] for the sake of money, and then they are advised to make their own arrangements for their finances. How can this dilemma be avoided?

By carrying on your work. All the reformers of the world had sold their shirts to subsist, yet gone ahead with their mission. If the poorer Muslims love their country and do not wish to vivisect it they will withstand any calamity.

(13) Although it has been a victim of the terrible flare-up, Ahmedabad, I feel, still has possibilities of a favourable atmosphere for establishing emotional integrity. I have succeeded in rallying men and women for the task. I have briefly outlined the programme to be undertaken which is likely to prove useful in the present circumstances. Please advise me what I should do for the funds required for organizing the activities.

I think this job has now been completed, hasn't it? Sardar has sanctioned the budget as it was presented.

(14) We should appoint tribunals, either permanent or temporary, consisting of members who enjoy the confidence of both the communities, for the whole country, the provinces, cities, etc., to prevent incidents likely to hurt

communal feelings. And then act according to their decision. Where this cannot be done the Congress should have a tribunal of their own impartial workers appointed to see that no injustice is done to the minorities.

This is quite all right.

(15) Isn't it proper to have laws enacted to deal with the questions of music [before mosques] and cow[-slaughter]? What will be the advantages and disadvantages of such a measure?

This cannot be achieved by legislation. In the first instance people ought to be trained. Hindus have got to put up with cow-slaughter. Killing Muslims will not stop them from slaughtering the cow. Similarly Muslims also should bear with the Hindus' music. This is one's dharma. What can the law do in this? The middle path is that they should make mutual allowances. But these, [I am afraid,] would be vain efforts.

(16) When violence erupts in a frightening form, such as during communal riots, should we offer such sacrifices as it demands or should we try to escape from it by adopting all possible measures to quell it? The first alternative appeals [to me]. But I cannot swallow the other as I interpret Kakasaheb's statement to suggest.

What is it about the second alternative that you do not understand? We have got to take all possible measures.

(17) Your views on inter-communal marriages between Hindus and Muslims.

I would approve of such alliances only if they are formed as a result of pure love and without detriment to either's faith.

(18) The A. I. S. A. was established for khadi, the Harijan Sevak Sangh for the uplift of Harijans. Can we not have a small permanent board to keep the feeling of unity alive and growing? It should keep us ever aware of this feeling and help us take the steps needed for this purpose from time to time.

What kind of a board do you mean over and above the one that already exists?

(19) It is not difficult to see that God is Truth. But it gives me a jolt from within when I try to persuade myself that Truth is God. Is it due to my *samskaras*[1]? According to this conception Truth takes the concrete form of certain reality whereas God is beyond conception.

[1] Influence of upbringing

God is Truth, then why isn't Truth God?

(20) There are some overzealous champions of Hindu-Muslim unity in the country. One comes across such people with differing degrees [of zeal]. How can we make use of them all? Do you think it would be desirable to have some limits in this respect? Will it be all right to organize it?

Such things tend to organize themselves. It cannot be done artificially.

(21) You have defined "non-violence" in your own way. Can other people also similarly restrict or widen it for the purpose of their resolve? You regard Zeke as non-violent. Thus, whoever faces his wicked assailants single-handed is a non-violent person, is he not?

One can certainly restrict or widen [one's idea of non-violence]. You ought to understand why Zeke was considered non-violent. If a lone unarmed person struggling against an attack by a hundred, uses his teeth, shouldn't he still be regarded as non-violent? Can you say that the mouse is violent to the cat? Try to grasp this thoroughly.

(22) Your thoughts on Islam, please.

Islam is a true religion. Corruption has crept into it as into all the other religions.

(23) Your opinion of Paighambar Saheb.

I regard the Prophet as a prophet.

(24) Your idea of reforming the Muslims if you were entrusted with their helmsmanship.

If I were entrusted with the helm I would rid them of their bigotry. I would remove their dislike of the Hindus.

(25) In connection with the note on page 24[1] Sjt. Jugatrambhai says that people subscribing to the Ashram's philosophy should settle in Muslim localities and also cultivate direct contact.

This is right.

(26) When national leaders are seen to be enthusiastic about opening, running or supporting communal institutions, it is not likely to have a healthy influence on the minds of the other communities. Will you say something about it? Please tell us something in this regard.

[1] The reference is to question (18).

National leaders should never have a hand in such communal institutions as are anti-national.

(27) I have met Dr. Deshmukh at Bombay in connection with Amina's[1] fistula and her indifferent health. He had advised me to have her examined at Bombay. He was very nice to me. For fistula he gives a course of injections, and the improvement lasts for many years. May we then have the benefit of his treatment which he had offered in the course of our talks? The treatment will involve staying in the place. Can you suggest a convenient place to stay?

You may have the benefit of his services. You can put up with Kanti Parekh.

(28) What are the possibilities of a peace brigade? Can you suggest ways of expanding it?

What I think about a peace brigade has already appeared in *Harijan*.[2]

(29) Don't you feel that religious zeal is gradually fading away? Can we say it will lead to the disappearance of minority religions? Isn't the League agitating partly because of such fears?

Religious zeal will ultimately become pure and strong. If it does not, human values will come to nought.

(30) There is hardly any education of women among the Muslims of Gujarat. The community does not seem to take note of it. Thus ignorance among the masses is ever growing. What can we think of doing in this matter?

You can start with educating the girls that come under your influence. If Sultana[3] grows into an ideal girl she would do any amount of work. I had brought her here with many fond hopes.

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10898. Courtesy: Ghulam Rasul Qureshi

[1] Wife of Ghulam Rasul Qureshi

[2] *Vide* "Qualifications of a Peace Brigade", 18-6-1938.

[3] Daughter of Ghulam Rasul Qureshi

107. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

March 5, 1942

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have relieved Vaidyaraj today. I had kept him for so many days in order to console Ba. Now that Ba has also agreed, I am relieving him. I hope the work did not suffer. After keeping him here for so long it appears pointless to say this. But it is not so, because it makes one cautious for the future. I should have made prior enquiries whether the work in the dispensary was likely to suffer. I did ask you but that was just by the way. Now it is a thing of the past. Narayandas is a gentleman.

Were you affected by the heat outside or the internal heat? Whatever it be, it is good you have reduced the quantity of butter. It has to be reduced during summer. Whether it is due to the weather or the heat in your system the quantity of leafy vegetables, carrots, onion, knoll-cole and celery should be increased. Out of these lettuce leaves and celery are the best.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C. W. 8054. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

108. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

SEVAGRAM,
March 6, 1942

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

Your long letter is not long enough for the news you have packed into it. It is all illuminating. I shall keep you to the 1st July.

Devibehn should religiously practise writing Hindi every day even if it is 10 minutes by the watch. She will find a vast improvement.

You know the Persian characters because Sindhi is written in it with slight changes. Why do you not write in Urdu then? In the Ashram here a splendid Urdu atmosphere has been created. Pyarelal has become the Maulvi. As you know he is original in many things he does and so he is in teaching Urdu. The way he imparts Urdu instruction has created special interest among the inmates and almost all, including little children, attend the class. Therefore, if you write in Urdu there will be no difficulty in deciphering your letters. I can but I take time. Pyarelal and Amtul Salaam are to the manner born.

Nevertheless I do not want to put an undue strain upon your loyalty. Therefore do not exert yourself to write in Urdu unless you feel the impulse from within.

What you say about the Hurs and Pagaro is most instructive as also very painful.[1] How are we to make a nation out of this material?

The problem becomes tremendous from the non-violent standpoint.

What you are doing in the way of constructive work is good. I am sure your search will result in giving you a village after your liking.

Chandwani[2] is expected here any day between 9th and 15th instant.

[1] For several months preceding, the Hurs, under the instigation of the Pir of Pagaro, had been on a rampage, killing, burning and plundering on wholesale scale. On April 1 Martial Law had to be proclaimed in the areas most affected; *vide* also "Lawlessness in Sindh", 19-5-1942.

[2] P. B. Chandwani

Maulana[1] wires to say he is calling a W. C. Meeting on the 17th.

Wardha heat has already commenced. It will be a sorrowful meeting of the W. C. without Jamnalalji.

Your notes about the questions addressed to you and your answers, I return. I think your answers are all correct. I cannot improve upon them.

If you can stand the strain of a journey I would certainly like you to attend the meeting of the A.I.V.I.A.

I hope Premi will pass her exam with distinction.

Mahadev is all right.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 11055. Courtesy: Arjun Jairamdas

109. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

March 6, 1942

CHI. PRABHA,

I had your letter. Everybody is well here. Ba is fairly well. A letter from Jayaprakash is enclosed. I am also sending a copy of my reply[2], so that if my letter gets lost on the way he may get the copy sent to you. And if you have anything to ask, you may also be able to write immediately.

Mahadevbhai also is better. Janakibehn has come to stay here. Kamala and her children also have come with her.

I did not invite you for the meeting in connection with Jamnalalji because I did not think it proper to do so. I did not mean anything more by "courage".[3] Does not dharma-consciousness make a man timid? My feelings would always be in favour of inviting you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] Abul Kalam Azad, President of the Indian National Congress

[2] The reference is not ascertainable. *Vide*, however, "Letter to Jayaprakash Narayan", 17-2-1942.

[3] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Prabhavati", 25-2-1942.

[PS.]

Khursedbehn and Lohia[1] have arrived for talks. The Working Committee may perhaps meet here on the 17th.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3572

110. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 6, 1942

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I received your letter yesterday. I had duly received all the dhotis sent by you and I promptly began using them. Your letter was received in Bardoli.

It is a good sign that Satyawati is keeping good health.

Mahadev is well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

My blessings to all the companions.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2487

111. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

March 7, 1942

CHI. AMALA,

To help you, I better write in English. Khursedbehn says you are likely to come on 10th with your mother and dog. You are welcome but if the dog needs meat it is not to be had in Sevagram. I do not know if it is even obtainable in the village bazaar.

Love.

BAPU

[1] Ram Manohar Lohia

[PS.]

CHI. AMALA,

Will you get a box of Spratts biscuits which has meat extract in it and you can arrange [for them] after a day or two in Wardha. Be happy.

With love from

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

112. LETTER TO M. K. SYED AHMED

[*March 7, 1942*][1]

DEAR SYED SAHEB,

Your undated letter before me. My blessings on your marriage. May your union result in happiness to you and greater service to the nation.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

JANAB M. K. SYED AHMED
MEMBER DISTRICT BOARD
DEEVO STREET
KAYALPORTNAM, S. INDIA

From a photostat: G.N. 8036

113. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
March 7, 1942

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. If you do not have the courage to stay in Sevagram in the summer, I will try to go where you may be staying. I believe that your health can be completely restored. Till then you may go wherever you like, but keep the hours of rest, baths and meals. If the Viceroy is careful about all this, why should we too not be?

[1] From the postmark

There was a letter from Maulana saying that he would start in a day or two and come here. Aunt[1] is coming tomorrow to see Janakibehn.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
VITHAL KANYA VIDYALAYA, NADIAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 271

114. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 7, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your letter of yesterday I could read early in the morning and that of today I could read only now.

Yes, I shall help you fully. You will have to look after the management. It is not possible to manage things otherwise. You shall do physical work, no doubt, as also whatever else has to be done. Ask me if need be about the management. There can be no harm in pointing out the mistakes committed by others. Of course it is only proper that you should try to explain things to them. But do ask me if my speaking to them will expedite the work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4418

115. TRIBUTE TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ [2]

March 7, 1942

The more I think the more I am convinced that there was no activity for the good of the nation with which Jamnalalji was not connected, and therefore he was sure to have been associated with the

[1] Sarojini Naidu
[2] This was sent for the *Jamnalal Smriti Anka*.

Sasta Sahitya Mandal[1]. His life was a living literature.

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 262

116. ON ITS TRIAL

I am a pacifist still in one sense; that is to say, I realize that Christians should be able to meet material force with spiritual power. It is horrifying to reflect that after nineteen hundred years, we are still unable to do it except in individual cases and on a small scale. But to me it seems merely 'wishful thinking' to act as though we had a power which in fact we have not and for which we have neither trained nor disciplined ourselves in the past. Such power does not come to those who have not disciplined themselves, at the last moment, in the hour of need. It has not come to us. I would rather, therefore, do what I can in defence of principles which I believe to be both right in themselves and of enormous importance to the future of the human race, than stand aside and do nothing. It is *doing nothing* that is the worst expedient of all.

When, therefore, my pacifist friends ask me whether I can imagine Jesus Christ dropping a bomb or firing a gun I am entitled to reply: 'No, I cannot; but neither can I imagine him standing aside and doing nothing at all.'

I am compelled to echo the words of a very dear relative of mine who, loathing war as much as any pacifist that ever breathed, said to me at the beginning of the last war (in which he lost his life): "If you can stop war with spiritual power, do it. If you can't, let me do what I can; and if you are right in thinking that war is so damnable that anyone who takes part in it is damned, then I would rather be damned than let these things go on without doing all I can to stop them, even at the cost of my own life."

Is this not very close to the meaning of our Lord when he said: "He that loseth his life shall save it"?

The foregoing is the concluding portion of a touchingly sorrowful article contributed to *The Survey Graphic* of December 1941 by the celebrated Dr. Maude Royden of the Guildhouse, London. She is one of the foremost pacifists of the West. Like many she has felt compelled to revise her position and is now most

[1] Publishers of Hindi books.

reluctantly but fully ranged on the side of the defenders of the British Isles.

The article demands a considered reply. I have been in constant touch with the Western pacifists. In my opinion Dr. Royden has surrendered her position in the portion I have quoted. If individuals have lived up to the Christian teaching (i.e., on non-violence) and that on a small scale, one would think practice should make such a life possible for many people and on a large scale. It is undoubtedly wrong and foolish "to act as though one had the power which in fact one has not". "But," says the worthy writer, "such power does not come to those who have not disciplined themselves, at the last moment, in the hour of need."

I suggest that with the knowledge of the defect no time should be lost in seeking to remove it. That by itself is doing not only something but the right thing. To deny one's faith by contrary practice is surely the worst thing one can do.

And I am not sure that "doing nothing is the worst expedient of all." In sceptic treatment, for instance, doing nothing is not only expedient, it is obligatory.

There is no cause whatsoever for despondency, much less for denial of one's faith at the crucial moment. Why should not British pacifists stand aside and remodel their life in its entirety? They might be unable to bring about peace outright, but they would lay a solid foundation for it and give the surest test of their faith. When, in the face of an upheaval such as we are witnessing, there are only a few individuals of immovable faith, they have to live up to their faith even though they may produce no visible effect on the course of events. They should believe that their action will produce tangible results in due course. Their staunchness is bound to attract sceptics. I would also suggest that individuals like Dr. Maude Royden are not mere camp-followers. They are leaders. Therefore, they have to live their lives in strict accord with the Sermon on the Mount, and they will find immediately that there is much to give up and much to remodel. The greatest thing that they have to deny themselves is the fruit of imperialism. The present complicated life of the Londoner and his high living is possible only because of the hoards brought from Asia,

Africa and other parts of the world. In spite of the fierce criticism which has been levelled against my letter "To Every Briton",[1] I adhere to every word of it, and I am convinced that posterity will adopt the remedy suggested therein against violence however organized and fierce. And now that the enemy is at the gates of India I am advising my countrymen the same course of action I advised the British people. My advice may or may not be accepted by my countrymen. I would remain unmoved. Their non-acceptance will be no test of failure of non-violence. I would subscribe to the charge of my imperfection. But a satyagrahi does not wait for perfection before he invites others to experiment with him, provided always that his faith is immovable like a mountain. The advice that Dr. Royden's relative gave her and which she quotes approvingly is altogether wrong. If the war is damnable, how can he stop the things that go on by taking part in it, even though it may be on the defensive side and at the cost of his own life? For the defence has to resort to all the damnable things that the enemy does, and that with greater vigour if it has to succeed. Such a giving of life is not only not saving it but a mere waste.

I have attended the Doctor's services in her Church where a living belief in the efficacy of prayer is much in vogue. When the impenetrable gloom surrounded her, why did she not find strength and consolation and real action in heart-prayer? It is never too late to mend. She and her fellow-pacifists, many of whom I have the privilege of knowing, should take heart and, like Peter, repent of the momentary loss of faith and return to the old faith in non-violence with renewed vigour. Their return will mean no material loss to the war effort but will mean a great deal to the anti-war effort which is bound to succeed sooner rather than later, if man is to live as man and not become a two-footed brute.

SEVAGRAM, March 8, 1942

Harijan, 15-3-1942

[1] *Vide* "To Every Briton", 2-7-1940.

117. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[Before *March 9, 1942*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. That Jamna got well was good news.

I believe that you say regarding Nanabhai. But I will not be able to do anything in the matter. Let them do what they wish. I will do what you suggest, if I can, when an opportunity offers itself. You possess a special gift for working, which others lack.

I wish to send Kanchan there as I did Vina. She also is filled with the spirit of service. She is Munnalal's wife. He wants to observe *brahmacharya*. If, therefore, they live in the same place, he might find it difficult to adhere to his vow. Kanchanbehn is willing to go there. Let me know if you can absorb her also. If you have no place for her there or cannot keep her for any other reason, please tell me so.

About Pyarelal's mother I shall write later.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8601. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

118. NOTES

UNTOUCHABILITY AND INDORE

The Maharaja Saheb of Indore sent a message to the organizers of the Harijan Day in Indore on the 1st instant. It is published in the *Holkar Government Gazette* of 2nd March, and will repay perusal. It is on a par with the Travancore Proclamation[2] which declared the abolition of untouchability. The opening lines[3] demonstrate the spirit in which the problem is approached by the Maharaja. They are :

[1] According to the C.W. source the letter was received on March 9, 1942.

[2] In November 1936; *vide* "An Example for Hindu Princes and their Advisers", before 16-11-1936.

[3] Of which only excerpts are reproduced here

. . . I, for one, could not conceive of the continuance of this evil in Holkar State, and with a view to eliminating it issued a proclamation in 1938 thereby placing the so-called untouchables on the same footing as any of us. .. . There is plenty more to be done in this field, and I can commend this urgent work to everyone interested in public welfare. I want to point out with all the emphasis at my command that it is impossible to evolve a sound body politic on democratic lines in this country unless we achieve social solidarity among ourselves. In achieving this we must, in the first place, liquidate the very word 'untouchability' from our vocabulary.

GRAM PANCHAYATS IN AUNDH

The Raja Saheb writes :[1]

Since we last met at Wardha three years ago, the system of village administration by the panchayats has been introduced in Aundh State, and I have great pleasure in saying that the results so far achieved are most hopeful and encouraging. Every village now has a school. Most of these schools are built with local help and partial grants from the taluk *samitis*[2]. The villagers have made their own roads, they have made water arrangements, and every inhabitant in almost all the villages has come to feel a sort of consciousness of his right as well as of responsibility and of love for his village. . . .

STUD-BULLS

At the meeting of friends of the late Jamnalalji which recently met in Wardha[3], one of the schemes announced was the production of 1,000 good bulls. It was conceived by Seth Rameshwardas Birla. He has not allowed the grass to grow under his feet. He has already issued an appeal for assistance. The scheme is likely to cost five lacs which should be forthcoming without an effort. The following form the committee of management :

1. Shri Rameshwardasji Birla—President
2. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
3. Shrimati Suvratadevi Ruia
4. Shri Laskhminarainji Gadodia
5. Shri Bhagirathji Kanodia

[1] nly an excerpt is reproduced here.
[2] Committees
[3] On February 20 and 21

6. Shri Hiralalji Shastri
7. Shri Keshavdevji Nevatia—Secretary

GOPALAN NAMBIAR

Gopalan Nambiar is a patriotic youth who in the heat of the moment is said to have instigated a crowd, at a meeting in Malabar, to assault a Sub-Inspector of Police resulting in his unfortunate death.

The High Court at Madras has sentenced him to be hanged. I take it that the evidence justified the sentence, but it is a clear case for commutation of the sentence by the Government. This is no case of private murder deliberately committed. We are living in the midst of murders on a wholesale scale which no court of law can ever reach. It is a mockery to send a young man to the gallows for an act, however indefensible otherwise, in which malice is wholly absent. I am glad, therefore, that leaders of public opinion and the Press are moving in order to secure a reprieve. It is hoped that the Government will listen to the public voice.

SEVAGRAM, March 9, 1942

Harijan, 15-3-1942

119. HINDUSTANI [1]

Dr. Tara Chand, who has made a close study of the vexed question of the national language, recently wrote a Hindi letter to Shri Kakasaheb, from which the following important extracts are translated below :[2]

Hindustani and Brij were both colloquial languages at one time. Hindi or Hindustani made its first appearance in the 13th century, and its literature actually came into being in the 14th and 15th centuries in South India. Its language is the same as *Khari Boli* (खड़ी बोली) and is the basis of modern Hindi. . . .

The Muslims were the first to create literature in Hindustani. Their fakirs and saints used this language for their religious teachings and explained the principles of the Sufi religion in it also. Later, poets adopted it, and because Muslims used the language there came about

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 15-3-1942.

[2] Of which only excerpts are reproduced here

a mixture of Persian and Hindi words. The sounds of Persian and Arabic letters also crept in which are not found in Brij but which have remained in Hindi up to date.

The colloquial language which the Muslims employed is the language spoken even today round about Meerut and Delhi. It is termed *Khari Boli* or Hindustani.

Modern Hindustani, Hindi and Urdu are three forms of this language. Hindi and Urdu are its literary forms, into which many Sanskrit and Persian and Arabic words have freely crept. Hindustani is that form of the language which includes both Sanskrit and Persian words. Writers of Hindustani lean towards one or the other according to their taste. But they try to avoid both as much as possible.

In my opinion neither Hindi nor Urdu should be the lingua franca of India. Either we must agree to call Hindi the language of the Hindus and Urdu that of the Muslims, or we must try to make Hindustani the common language. So long as we call either Hindi or Urdu the national language we are certain to raise a controversy.

SEVAGRAM, March 9, 1942

Harijan, 29-3-1942

120. SCARCITY OF WATER [1]

The Secretary of the Kathiawar Harijan Sevak Sangh, Shri Chhaganlal Joshi, has issued a statement apprehending scarcity of water at many places in Kathiawar this year. Death by starvation is already rampant. In this context, khadi activity has to be intensified along with other constructive work. For all this, workers are in greater demand than funds. The statement asks for both. Those workers who are willing have to send their application in detail to the Kathiawar Harijan Sevak Sangh at Rajkot. Everywhere there is a dearth mainly of workers. The scarcity of water can be overcome only if the Kathiawar Princes make joint efforts. Private institutions will be able to achieve precious little in spite of their great efforts. Kathiawar can be saved

[1] This appeared under “My Notes”.

only if the Princes fully co-operate with one another as well as with their subjects.

SEVAGRAM, March 9, 1942

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 15-3-1942

121. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

March 9, 1942

BHAI JIVANJI,

I am going to send less matter in English this week, so that you may be able to include whatever is lying with you excepting the long articles in English. I will of course send something more in addition to what is being sent today.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Keep yourself ready for Urdu.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9948. Also C.W. 6923. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

122. LETTER TO SHASHI R. MEHTA

March 9, 1942

CHI. SHASHI[1],

I tried but could not reply to your letter immediately. Come soon after you have passed the examination. Tell Prabhashankarbhai[2] that I got his letter. I have asked Maganbhai to write to him and he does, so that I need do nothing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1051. Courtesy: Champabehn Mehta

[1] Daughter of Ratilal P. Mehta

[2] Addressee's maternal grandfather

123. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 9, 1942

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter. I had promptly replied to your earlier letter. I hope you got it.

Mukerji is a good and honest worker. He has some land. I had asked him. He said he did not seek charity. I have no doubt he will return the entire amount. He was prepared even to pay interest. We have given much aid to other workers. I am clearly of the view that we should lend Rs. 3,000 to Bhai Mukerji for six months.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

124. DESIRABILITY OF EXODUS

A correspondent asks for my detailed views on the exodus that I have advised[1] from the cities of all who are not wanted there and all who are unfit or unwilling to stay there. No one is obliged to stay in against his will. In the event of bombardment, it is clear that non-combatants can only be a burden in every way. Successful defence against a powerful enemy requires exclusive concentration on holding the enemy at bay. The defenders' attention must not be divided. This is from the military point of view.

But we have war-resisters too, either humanitarian or political. They may not stay unless their object is merely to cause embarrassment for the sake of it. I hope there are none such. They should, therefore, be out of the cities. Then there are those who do not know what to do in the event of bombardment. They should all evacuate. As the reader will see, my opinion has little to do with my

[1] *Vide* "Plea for Calmness", 17-2-1942.

war-resistance. For in this case and up to a point military necessity and duty of war-resisters demand the same action. If I could convert any city or all cities wholly, including the combatants of yesterday, I should welcome the invading host and try to convert even them or challenge them to do their worst, without offering retaliation. But no such good luck awaits me. If the cities were converted, all India including the rulers would be converted and there would be peace in India and peace in the world. But that must remain a day-dream yet awhile. Only I won't be moved from my position by being told that the Jap or the Nazi is not the same man as the Englishman. I draw no such fundamental distinction between man and man. But I must not detain the reader on the speculative side of the matter-of-fact question that faces us.

Assuming then that all who should or a part of them have evacuated the cities and have gone to the villages or are about to go, what should they do? They must go with the village mind to live the village life as much as possible. They may not reproduce city conditions and build temporary palaces. They should go to villages in a spirit of service, study their economic and other conditions, and ameliorate them not by giving alms but by giving the villagers work of a permanent nature. In other words, they should work the constructive programme among the villagers. Thus they will identify themselves with the villagers and become a kind of co-operative society with an ordered programme of economic, social, hygienic and political reconstruction.

The greatest problem the new-comers will have to tackle will be to deal with loot and dacoities. It will tax their resources to the utmost. The non-violent way is there. If that is not clear to them, with the co-operation of the villagers they should organize themselves for armed defence against robbers and dacoits. We have too long looked to the Government to do this elementary work for us, not excluding even the reclamation of castes called criminal tribes. The Government cannot do much, if anything at all, at this critical time. The work has perforce to be done by the evacuees violently, non-violently, or both ways.

SEVAGRAM, March 10, 1942

Harijan, 15-3-1942

125. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

March 10, 1942

CHI. BEHRAMJI,

I hear that you have again fallen ill. If you have survived so many illnesses in the past, why may you not survive this one, too? But after all we are in God's hands. He will do what He wills. Let not, therefore, your serenity be affected.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7562. Also C.W. 5037. Courtesy: Tehmina B. Khambhatta

126. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
March 10, 1942

CHI. KANTI,

Got your letter. I shall certainly try to detain Saraswati. I shall train her in whatever I can. She will certainly be useful in the dispensary. Shanti[1] will get many companions.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Ahmedabad

[1] Addressee's son

127. LETTER TO PADAMPAT SINGHANIA

March 10, 1942

BHAI PADAMPATJI,

I have your letter and the draft. I had no knowledge of what talks you had with Jamnalalji, so I thought it would be better to ask Shriman Narayan. I enclose his letter. The question arises because the Rashtra-bhasha Prachar Samiti is related to the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. A situation has now arisen in which the Samiti here may have to break away. Jamnalalji, I and other members had agreed that Urdu must have a place in the national language. The language that is formed from the blending of the two is Hindustani as defined in the Congress Resolution. It is possible that the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan will not be prepared to accept this change. What will be your position in such an event? Would you give your approval to the propagation of Hindustani, that is, Hindi plus Urdu? Your wishes will be respected.

Some money from the previous Rs. 15,000 is in Jamnalalji's office. I shall not send the cheque to the bank till I hear from you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

128. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

[After *March 10, 1942*][1]

CHI. KANTI,

I am just not able to write to you. You do understand the pressure on my time. I am trying to detain Saraswati. At one time she had agreed to work in a hospital. But now she says she is uncertain, and that I should not depend on her. She is as simple as she was. Shanti mixes with all well. He is as full of pranks as you were. His face

[1] The source has "February 26, 1942", obviously a slip. From the contents it is evident that this letter was written after the letters to the addressee dated February 28 and March 10. *Vide* "Letter to Kanti Gandhi", 28-2-1942 and 10-3-1942.

too resembles yours. Like an old friend he has taken possession of my bed. He likes jaggery as much as you like it. On the whole he is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Ahmedabad

129. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

March 11, 1942

BHAISHRI JIVANJI,

You should keep here a stock of English copies of *Constructive Programme*[1]. Either give an agency to somebody or send the copies here. I will try to sell them. A note may be published in *Harijan*, too.

Regarding *Bhajanavali*, I will have to study the question carefully. How is that possible? Please, therefore, be satisfied with what we have. If I am imprisoned any time, I may undertake this and other such tasks.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9949. Also C.W. 6924. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

[1] *Vide* "Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place", 13-12-1941.

130. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHASTRI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 11, 1942

BHAI HIRALAL SHASTRI,

You did well to remind me about the Jaipur worker. I had forgotten. Jamnalalji should be the model for all constructive workers generally and for Jaipur workers particularly. To sing praises of Jamnalalji's virtues or to commission statues of him would be an insult to him. You may do it, but if along with it you do not emulate Jamnalalji all the praising of Jamnalalji will be in vain.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Hiralal Shastri Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

131. TALK TO STUDENTS OF KHADI VIDYALAYA[1]

SEVAGRAM,
March 11, 1942

Every day morning and evening we recite the *Ekadashavrata mantra* at the conclusion of the prayer. Mere observance of a vow, whether it is big or small, is enough to make one's life. The whole world of sentient beings, the whole universe, the earth, the sun, the moon and the like are said to follow, each its own vow, for they move on their different paths according to their set motions. After all even inertia is relative. We cannot call it mere inertia where laws are so strictly followed. Astronomers tell us that if a single planet or stellar body in the sky should cease in its motion or deviate in the slightest degree the whole planetary system would go out of order and come to an end. Thus if the whole of Nature reveals the supremacy of laws there must be some agency to preserve and to enforce those laws. That agency is God. With Him as witness the cosmos follows its

[1] The students had assembled to observe the *masika* (the monthly ceremony) of Jamnalal Bajaj. After half an hour's spinning they read out the vows they had taken.

preordained path. But we puny creatures cannot follow even the little vows that we take.

You who have taken vows here are all students of the Khadi Vidyalaya. You have come here in pursuit of a specific aim, to fulfil a specific programme. You must remember that in the years to come the Charkha Sangh will depend on you. Our experience showed that if the Charkha Sangh was to make progress a school was necessary where instruction in the techniques of khadi should be imparted. What is taught in ordinary school is forgotten as soon as the examinations are over. But you have to absorb in your lives what you learn here. So far as I know there is no other institution of this kind anywhere in India. You therfore carry a great responsibility. If after completing your education here some of you want to become rich you may, but the ideal which has brought you here requires that your entire life should be dedicated to Lord Krishna. You have a loftier aim than riches. You have to transact business worth crores of rupees, but not for yourselves. You have to do so in order to meet the wants of the poor. Today we do not have enough khadi even to meet the needs of the poor. But in the years to come you will have to manage the production, sale and accounting of Khadi worth hundreds of crores of rupees, and, what is more, you will have to do it scientifically. Today we do not have a theory of khadi production. We do not even know the rudiments of village economics. We have to learn all this. Thus you have taken upon your shoulders something that affects the whole world. For this we require workers who are firm in keeping vows. If we unite the heart and the head the result will be far-reaching and beyond our imagination. You should move ever forward. You should develop the habit of introspection and correction. You should observe what happens around you in the Ashram. But you should have eyes only for what is good, not for flaws. If you can absorb good qualities the result is bound to be good.

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, March 1942

132. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 13, 1942

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your two letters. Your work is always clean and steady. Your speech was short and to the point.

Ba may improve with some quack remedy, as Jamna did. A man who is a quack like me is here and is treating Ba. Acharya Narendra Dev also has been put in his hands. We have some hope now that he will recover. Ba suffered a great deal. Chimanlal also is examined by the same man.

See that Vina looks after Jamna properly. I am arranging to send Abha there. I like to send girls to you. I am assuming that when the burden on you become too heavy, you will unhesitatingly refuse to accepts any more.

I suppose the money being sent to Pyarelal's home is sent from the Satyagraha Ashram Fund. Do you keep on hand any balance from it?

Kanaiyo will arrive here the day after tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8602. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

133. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA C. MEHTA

March 13, 1942

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

Why should you fall ill? Anyway, make the necessary changes and get well soon. Do you read anything?

Ba is well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9435

134. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

March 15, 1942

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. I am glad you have seen the untruth. Danger is not yet over. But God is your sure guide and friend. Trust Him through and through. Your body is a good index for you.

The Ashram is overcrowded but it goes on.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6494. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N.9889

135. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

SEVAGRAM,
March 15, 1942

MY DEAR KU[MARAPPA]

Jhaverbhai tells me you have approved of his plan and budget for oil-presses in selected areas throughout India. Please let me have your formal approval so as to enable me to examine the plan.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10163

136. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

March 15, 1942

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. Jayaprakash must take milk if he cannot take curds. It may even be better. He may drink as much milk as he wants.

It would be better to avoid butter for the present. He can grow some vegetable in the jail garden to meet his needs of uncooked vegetables. Throughout the year Khan Saheb ate vegetables, grown by himself. It is difficult to preserve good health without greens.

You need not feel unhappy for not being able to stay with

Father. You are wedded to service. You should not worry. I can see no other way.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3573

137. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

March 15, 1942

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. The Vaidya did take great pains but Ba could not get the desired relief. Now a naturopath has come.

He has many faults, but he has some knowledge. Today is the fourth day [of his treatment] and Ba is feeling better. For three days he made her vomit with *akda*[1] milk, which removed the phlegm, and she felt some relief.

I will write about the policy regarding. . .[2] .

Can I send someone to the Nasik sanatorium, that is, is accommodation usually available? If it remains full I do not want any special arrangement to be made.

I do not wish to trouble Bhaiji to come here specially.

I shall be glad, however, if he comes of his own accord.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8055. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

138. 'SCORCHED EARTH'

The Russian technique of scorched earth has staggered humanity, but humanity has been powerless to do anything except applaud the amazing sacrifice and bravery that counted no cost too great to circumvent the enemy. I have shared the amazement with the admirers but not their admiration.

[1] Ceiotropis Gigantica

[2] One word is illegible.

We like to imitate what we admire. Now that the prospect faces us, are we able to contemplate with equanimity, or feel the glow of bravery and sacrifice at the prospect of India's earth being scorched and everything destroyed in order that the enemy's march may be hampered?

As a war-resister my answer can only be one. I see neither bravery nor sacrfice in destroying life or property for offence of defence. I would far rather leave, if I must, my crops and homestead for the enemy to use than destroy them for the sake of preventing their use by him. There is reason, sacrifice and even bravery in so leaving my homestead and crops, if I do so not out of fear but because I refuse to regard anyone as my enemy—that is, out of a humanitarian motive.

But in India's case there is, too, a practical consideration. Unlike Russia's, India's masses have no national instinct developed in the sense that Russia's have. India is not fighting. Her conquerors are.

Supposing that the conquerors are worsted and the Japanese come, the inarticulate masses will not even notice the change for the time being or for a long time. The intelligentsia are divided on the issue of the war. The motive here is irrelevant. India's soldiers are in no sense a national army. They are soldiers because it is their profession. They will as soon fight under the Japanese or any other provided they are paid for fighting. In these circumstances the policy of scorched earth would be a wholly indefensible act.

It is therefore a matter for satisfaction that Indian opinion is being expressed against the policy of scorching. I know nothing of the requirements of the military, but they can never be allowed to supersede national or humanitarian considerations which the nation may have accepted. The military must thus be an arm of the dominant civil power, not its substitute. The Government of India will considerable ease the situation and allay anxiety by declaring in unequivocal terms that they will not apply, if the occasion ever arise, the scorched earth policy to India, especially regard being had to her peculiar position.

SEVAGRAM, March 16, 1942
Harijan, 22-3-1942

139. A HARIJAN COLONY IN BIHAR [1]

Raja Bahadur Kamakhya Narayan Sinha, while opening a Harijan Colony in Arrah the other day, spoke against the sin of untouchability in a way which reminds one of the recent message[2] to Harijans sent by the Maharaja Saheb of Indore :

> It is a crime on tha part of us so-called caste Hindus to treat lakhs of people as untouchables. They too are God's creation. They have the same physical form as we, they are activated by the same human desires, they feel insults and misery just as keenly as we do. But they are today powerless to raise their voice in protest. Their cry of distress, however, does go up to heaven, and we shall surely be damned by it if we do not mend. We must atone for our sins. That we have put up for them a dwellng-place of brics and mortar is only a drop in the ocean. We shall have atoned only when we give them a dwelling-place in our hearts and shall embrace them as the great Bharat embraced the humble boatman Guha and thereby raised himself.

If all caste Hindus were to root out untouchability from their hearts as Raja Bahadur has done, this blot would soon be removed from our society.

SEVAGRAM, March 16, 1942
Harijan, 22-2-1942

140. QUESTION BOX [3]

HOW TO WARD OFF STARVATION?

Q. Is it not far more important today to find some solution for the shortage and high price of food-stuffs than to orgnize civic gurads? Speeches will not quench the fire of hunger. And we have neither enough capitalists nor capitalists with the right ideals to set things right.

A. It should be part and parcel of the work of civic guards to protect people as far as possible from hunger and exploitation. I have already given some advice as to how to economize in food during

[1] This appeared under "Notes".
[2] *Vide* "Untouchability and Indore", "Notes", 9-3-1942.
[3] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 22-3-1942.

times of stress.[1] Such economy should begin from today.

1. Food should be regulated scientifically so that there is no waste and a maximum of economy.

2. Whatever seasonable food-stuffs can be sown should be planted at once.

3. Use should be made of herbs, etc., which grow wild and which can be eaten with advantage. Research therein is necessary.

4. No one must remain idle. If he cannot find employment, he should provide work for himself, such as spinning.

5. I fear that if the war does not come to a speedy end and the Japanese invade India, it will become difficult or even impossible to transport food-stuffs. Therefore, if there happens to be any surplus anywhere, efforts should be made to send it where it is most needed.

I am aware that all this is no easy task. But I see no other way out of the difficulty.

WHAT FOR CITY EMPLOYEES?

Q. You have given the rich an idea of what their duty is if they migrate to the villages.[2] But there will be thousands of evacuees who have been employed in the cities all their lives. They have no money and no ancestral homes in the villages where they can take refuge. What of them?

A. It is possible that many such workers will migrate with their masters. Those who do not will have to seek out some occupation for themselves in the villages. One of these is spinning. It would be as well for all such to prepare themselves for the crisis.

SEVAGRAM, March 16, 1942
Harijan, 22-3-1942

[1] *Vide* "Real War Effort", 19-1-1942.
[2] *Vide* "Desirability of Exodus", 10-3-1942.

141. DEFENDING THE INDEFENSIBLE[1]

I have read Quaid-e-Azam's answer to my appeal[2]. It has caused me deep pain. I had expected a better response. The reproduction of the whole offending article would make worse reading. For the whole of it is venomous. Quaid-e-Azam knows that I do not hesitate to criticize any party or person whenever the occasion demands criticism. I have more than once criticized unbecoming writings in the non-Muslim Press.

I do not know the writer of the offending aricle. If he is a Hindu, it makes Quaid-e-Azam's defence of it all the worse for it. I am sorry that Quaid-e-Azam has resorted to special pleading for defending the indefensible. This unexpected defence of an article designed to wound deep susceptibilities makes ominous reading.

SEVAGRAM, March17, 1942

Harijan, 22-3-1942

142. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

SEVAGRAM,

March 17, 1942

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. And the dhotis[3], too. I will wear one of them when I go out tomorrow. I will not write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10423. Also C.W. 6862. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

[2] *Vide* "An Appeal to Quaid-e-Azam", 2-3-1942.

[3] Woven from yarn spun by the addressee who had sent them through Shankarrao Deo and wanted him to see Gandhiji wearing them.

143. A CORRECTION [1]

In *Harijan* of February 22nd 1942[2], there was an announcement that Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ghosh had been nominated a member of the Board of Management of the A.I.V.I.A. This was a mistake, as he being a member of the Congress Working Committee cannot become a member of the A.I.V.I.A Board.

SEVAGRAM, March 18, 1942

Harijan, 29-3-1942

144. FOREWORD TO "THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION"

March 18, 1942

Principal Shriman Narayan Agrawal's treatise is timely and should go a long way in dispelling the fear and distrust about the possibility and desirability of giving the highest instruction through the mother tongue. For me it is tragic that such an obvious truth requires arguing. Although Principal Agrawal imbibed all that his ambition could desire of the English language, he never allowed his love of mother tongue to be displaced by his regard for English. He is, therefore, well equipped for the mission which he has made his own. I hope that he will not rest till the mother tongues in the various provinces have come into their own.

I have no doubt whatsoever that if those who have the education of the youth in their hands will but make up their minds, they will discover that the mother tongue is as natural for the development of the man's mind as mother's milk is for the development of the infant's body. How can it be otherwise? The babe takes its first lessons from its mother. I, therefore, regard it as a sin against the motherland to inflict upon her children a tongue other their mother's for their mental development.

The Medium of Instruction

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

[2] In the article "Passing of the First Stage of the A.I.V.I.A."

145. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 18, 1942

CHI. MRIDU,

I have your letter. I have not received the scheme. There is no hurry at all. I understand about Mirabehn. I had a long letter from her. Look after your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11223. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

146. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

March 19, 1942

CHI. MALKANI,

I like your letters in Hindi very much. I am returning the cheque for Rs. 200. It has been signed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 943

147. THE ANDHRAS

The following has been sent to me by Maharaj Kumar Vijaya Anand of Vizianagram:

> There is a strong feeling amongst us Andhras that you do not like us, that you are against the formation and the establishment of a separate province. Despite Andhra Desh being overwhelmingly Congress, it never received your blessings. If three crores of yearning hearts are asking for a separate existence, would you not allow them the "right to sing" as the great Tilak Maharaj once said? People of my Desh are so definite about your dislike for the Andhras that they even attribute your visit to Benares recently for the purpose of commanding me to drop the Andhra agitation. The Andhras would like to know whether you ever gave any advice to Tamil Nad regarding Andhras, and also wish to know whether during the last ministry the Andhra question was

referred to you or not; if so, what advice did you give them? Do you put the Andhra question on the same footing as that of Karnataka and Kerala whose revenues may not be enough to have separate provinces? Pray, what is your opinion regarding Andhra Desh being self-supporting? Is it not a fact that, owing to steadfast loyalty of the Andhras to the Congress movement, they did not achieve what Orissa did? It is felt that, had the Andhras taken a different line of action when the Simon Commission came to India, they would have got their hearts' desire.

I can only say that the Maharaj Kumar is in bad hands. Being a novice in the art of handling masses, he has evidently not taken care to inquire into the credentials of his informants. I should like to know the Andhras who have given him the information which he has chosen to transmit to me. I am not a stranger to Andhra Desh myself. I refer the Maharaj Kumar to Deshabhakta Konda Venkatappayya, Shri Prakasam, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Shri Kaleshwara Rao and Shri Sitaram Sastry. They will probably bear witness to the fact that I was principally instrumental in securing from the Congress the recognition of the redistribution of the Provinces for Congress purposes on a linguistic basis. I have always agitated for the acceptance by the Government of such redistribution. I have indeed advised Tamil Nad, when such advice was needed, not to resist the Andhra demand. I know that the Congress ministry headed by Shri C.

Rajagopalachari tried its best to get Andhra recognized as a separate province, and it was no fault of the ministry that Andhra Desh has not yet been so recognized. But it is true that I recognize no distinction between Karnataka, Kerala and Andhra or for that matter any other province recognized by the Congress as a separate province.

I do not know enough about any province to be able to say which can be self-supporting on being recognized as separate. As to my visit to Benares, the purpose is too well-known to need any clarification. The Maharaj Kumar is a sportsman, and he should be above worrying about baseless suggestions made about him. He would be an unworthy leader who can be deflected from his mission even by a Mahatma. I hope this answer will satisfy the Maharaj Kumar, if not even those who duped this him into putting the questions he has.

Sevagram, March 20, 1942

Harijan, 29-3-1942

148. LETTER TO NATWARLAL M. PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
March 20, 1942

BHAI NATWARLAL,

I have your letters. Considering everything I feel that the Spinners' Association cannot sanction another store. The existing store is almost under the Spinners' Association. It is a result of considerable efforts. I am afraid, sanctioning the two stores will be harming both of them. If you really love khadi, build up the existing store as much as you can.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

NATWARLAL MOTILAL PATEL
JOGIDAS VITTHALNI POLE, BARODA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

149. LETTER TO DESMOND YOUNG

March 21, 1942

DEAR MR. YOUNG,

I was glad to read your letter to Mahadev Desai and know that you had returned safe and sound. I hope you are none the worse for the hard life you must have had at the front.

With reference to the subject matter of your letter, I can only give you my assurance that I am not in the habit of writing anything without ascertaining facts. And when I have evidence from persons I know, for the sake of truth and for the sake of protecting the public I write and then, too, cautiously. If you think that absence of complaint means absence of guilt, you are vastly mistaken. The behaviour of troops, white or brown, has become a public scandal. Even respectable and well-known women are not free from danger. You may not know that an Indian official's wife was recently ravished by soldiers (Indian) on the train. The official had lodged a complaint too but at the instance of his superiors he withdrew it. The instances of looting in

the open are too common to be decently challenged. There are guarded admission of some of these by high functionaries. I get almost daily complaints of such cases. Having been absent for some time you do not know how things have deteriorated in such matters.

No wonder. Full-blooded soldiers not on duty find vent for their exuberant physical energy by taking liberties which cannot be allowed in a society not used to such conduct.

In Wardha, only a few days ago, soldiers who were loitering in the streets of the town were molesting a woman. A strong gymnast, seeing the molestation, belaboured the soldiers and they took to their heels. A wealthy merchant was waiting for his train at Wardha Station when a troop train steamed in. He saw two of them take milk from an old woman on the platform without payment. On seeing the latter weeping this merchant intervened. He was thereupon slapped, caught by the neck and taken to the soldiers' compartment to receive proper punishment. Happily, the bystanders who knew the merchant intervened and he was saved from serious injury. I can multiply such cases. I have thought fit not to give publicity to them. Nor have I advised reporting to the authorities.

You will ill serve the common cause by ignoring facts behind the worn-out plea that absence of complaint before the police means absence of crime. Happily in responsible quarters there has come over a slow but sure awakening. I wish you would find leisure to study facts and help as much as you can to remove a growing menace.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10369. Courtesy: India Office Library, London

150. LETTER TO VITTHAL L. PHADKE

March 21, 1942

MAMA,

Ramprasad tells me that you are very much troubled by the itch.

If you are eating dal, give it up. Take the juice of as many lemons as you can, eat uncooked onions, chew one *tola* of uncooked *luni* or spinach . If you have no teeth, crush the *bhaji* and eat it. Sit in cold water in the afternoon and wrap the whole body with a wet sheet.

Eat oranges, *mosambis* and other fruits if available. Eat less of starchy foods. Take milk and curds. And take soda-bi-carb regularly.

If you do this, the itch will disappear.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MAMASAHEB PHADKE
HARIJAN ASHRAM
DOHAD, B.B.& C.I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3845

151. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

March 21, 1942

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I am firmly of the view that Kanchan must not come here. Let her stay where she has gone and then go to Valod. I think it futile to attempt to ascertain the truth in such matters. Please, therefore, hold back the express telegram and write a letter.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8477. Also C.W. 6167. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

152. A LETTER

SEVAGRAM,
March 22, 1942

DEAR FRIEND[1],

I have your letter. There is a fallacy running throughout your letter. Conversions without conviction I hold to be always bad. They are no conversions. They are a convenience. They are no proof of the looseness or badness of the religion changed. They proceed from selfishness or worse. I am not intolerant when I deplore my friend's forsaking his religion for a selfish motive.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

153. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

March 22, 1942

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

The accompanying is for your information. I have given no reply.

You must have got your teeth treated. I am also eager to know about the yogi.

Acharya[2] is improving very rapidly. He even went out for a walk today. His digestion is improving.

It is getting hotter.

Mahadev and Vanu[3] must get well. As for news, it is for you to give me some.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 271-2

[1] An Englishman
[2] Acharya Narendra Dev
[3] Vanamala, daughter of Narahari D. Parikh

154. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

March 22, 1942

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. I wear Deo's gift[1] every day. The dhoti[2] is very light. It is beautiful.

Write to Sucheta[3] thus[4]: 'I have been asked to take up this work. Please let me kn

Write as above and let me know what her reply is.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1042. Also C.W. 6863. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

155. COW'S MILK FOR LEPERS

Dr. Santra is an authority on leprosy. What he says should carry weight.[5] Apart from my views on the cow, the medical profession owes a duty to the country to discover the relative values of different milks.

SEVAGRAM, March 23, 1942

Harijan, 29-3-1942

[1] The addressee had two shawl lengths woven out of yarn spun by Shankarrao Deo and had them presented to Gandhiji.

[2] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Prema Kantak", 17-3-1942.

[3] Wife of J. B. Kripalani, Chief of the Women's Wing of the A.I.C.C., had suggested to the addressee to accept leadership of its Maharashtra branch.

[4] The rest of the paragraph is in Hindi.

[5] Dr. Santra's views are not reproduced here.

156. INHUMAN IF TRUE

The Honorary Secretary of the Social Service Department of the Marwari Relief Society writes:[1]

> I have to place before you a very brief review of the activities of the Marwari Relief Society, Calcutta, in connection with rendering relief to evacuees from Burma and Malaya, absolutely irrespective of caste, creed and colour, and also to humbly seek your invaluable advice on a very grave matter. . . .
>
> In this connection I beg to report a certain very regrettable incident to you, and shall be grateful if you kindly advise me as to my duties in the matter.
>
> On the night of the 14th March, shortly after the arrival of the Chittagong Mail, as I, in company with a number of volunteers, was attending to the wants of the evacuees, a British tommy got hold of a small child belonging to one of the poor evacuees and threw it under the train. Although I am a humble follower of your noble creed of non-violence, it was with the greatest difficulty that I restrained myself and my volunteers from punishing the soldier bodily for his brutal act. I reported the matter to the station military authorities, but their attitude was anything but sympathetic. I later approached Mr. K. C. Sen, I.C.S., over the matter, and though he promised to duly enquire into the matter, nothing has been done as yet to rectify it. There are still large numbers of soldiers loitering about the platforms every night, and a violent clash between these soldiers and relief volunteers and the public is a possibility which has to be tackled in no time. I have already placed the matter before the Bengal Congress Civil Protection Committee.
>
> I should be thankful, if you kindly advised me on the following points:
>
> 1. Should I start an agitation in the press over the matter?
>
> 2. Supposing a soldier behaves indecently towards a helpless female evacuee, are we to put up with it silently, or should the soldier be forcibly dealt with?
>
> It would help us very greatly, if you kindly issued a statement in *Harijan* in this connection. I am prepared to accept all responsibility regarding the truthfulness of the above incident.

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

I have suppressed many letters giving me authentic details about the misbehaviour of soldiers. I have published them when it would have been wrong, if not cowardly, to suppress them. The letter in question demands, in my opinion, the widest publicity, not merely for the safety of the public but also for the sake of the soldiers and the Government. The Marwari Relief Society is a big philanthropic institution of twenty-five years' standing having an all-India reputation. It has funds and seasoned workers. Its prestige should have been enough security for the good behaviour of the soldiers in the presence of its workers. The soldier must have run amuck or been under the influence of drink to have behaved as he is reported to have done. I trust that the Marwari Relief Society will not leave the matter till it is thoroughly thrashed out; and I trust too that the authorities will not wish to hush up the matter but will make ample amends, if the case is proved as reported by my correspondent.

So much for the case itself. The correspondent desires my guidance about similar cases in future. The action of *himsa* or ahimsa would have been identical. The volunteers should have, if they could, bodily prevented the soldier from touching the child or snatched the child from him, even if the soldier had been hurt in the act of preventing or snatching. The proceedings after the delivery of the child or the failure of the attempt would vary according as the deliverers were actuated violently or non-violently. Non-violent behaviour would dictate generous and gentle behaviour towards the culprit. But generosity and gentleness would have to be thoughtful and reasoned. It is difficult to lay down in advance the rule of conduct applicable in all cases. I can say this much that a truly generous act demands sincere recognition on the part of the culprit. I have known instances of Africans in South Africa insulted at railway stations saying to the rude white men, "My brother, God will forgive you for your rudeness," and the white men giggling, if not adding injury to insult. In similar circumstances I have myself remained silent and suffered the insult. I am quite clear that the Africans' so-called generosity was a mere mechanical act justly evoking derision. Mine was timidity. I did not wish to evoke further insult. I certainly did not want to take legal proceedings. I was trying then to shape my non-violent conduct. If I had the real courage, I would have expostulated

with the insulters and risked the worst.

I have interpolated an examination of so-called non-violent conduct in cases of personal insult or injury. What about the child injured or the injury imagined by my correspondent? I think non-violent conduct would not, should not, be different. The distinction that is often drawn between personal injury and injury done to wards is unjustified, if not wrong. A man is not expected to do more for his wards than he would for himself. He would no doubt sacrifice himself for his ward's honour, but he would be expected to do likewise for his own. If he did otherwise, he would be voted a coward and is not likely to protect his ward's honour, if he is not able to protect his own. But I own that correct non-violent conduct does not come through mere reasoning. Reason is a necessary preliminary. But correctness of conduct will come only through repeated practice, may-be even repeated failures.

What violent conduct should be surely needs no examination.

SEVAGRAM, March 23, 1942
Harijan, 29-3-1942

157. QUESTION BOX

ABOUT CHILDREN

Q. I quite agree that as society advances marriages between the different communities will increase and should be welcomed. You rightly advocate no change of religion for the parties con cerned.[1] But what do you advocate for the children? In which religion should they be brought up, the father's or the mother's?

A. Presumption in such marriages is that the parents respect each other's religions. If they are religiously minded, the children will unconsciously imbibe what they think is best for them and choose their own faith without let or hindrance from the parents. If the latter are indifferent, the children will also be probably indifferent and label themselves anyhow. This is what I have observed in such marriages.

The difficulty crops up when there is a serious difference arising between the parents as to the upbringing of the children.

[1] *Vide* "Indira Nehru's Engagement" sub-title of "Notes", 2-3-1942

CONVERSION WITHOUT CONVICTION

Q. You oppose all conversion without conviction. But are you not inconsistent? You profess equal respect for all religions. Why then worry about how the conversion is brought about?

A. I have extracted the question from your long and plausible letter, cleverly written. Conversion without convicition is a mere change and not conversion which is a revolution in one's life. You seem too to forget that equal respect implies respect for my own faith as much as for yours or any other neighbour's. My respect for my own faith forbids my being indifferent to my children abandoning their parents' faith without conviction. And I should have little respect for you, if you led my children astray by making all kinds of worldly promises in which matters of the spirit had no play.

SEVAGRAM, March 23, 1942
Harijan, 29-3-1942

158. NOTES

THE NATIONAL WEEK

The National Week comes every year with the certainty of seasons. It has come for over twenty years now, and yet we seem to be as far as ever from our freedom or communal unity or universalization of khadi. We started the celebration with these three definite things. They were convertible terms. If we had unity, we could get freedom, and so also if all were converted to the khadi cult. Though we have added many things since to our constructive programme, the original is true today as it was when it was first conceived and started.

How shall we behave during the forthcoming Week? Let us not treat freedom apart from its components. Then there remain communal unity and the thirteen other items, at the centre of which stands khadi in its widest sense.

Communal unity at the top will come in its time. We want freedom for the masses, and so do we want communal unity for and among the masses. If we have it in our hearts, let us show it in our daily little acts towards one another.

I will not mention the other items. All organizations will look after them. A word is necessary about khadi. Hitherto we have had khadi sales. This time, thanks to many causes, we have no khadi to sell. But we can all produce, we can all collect funds. If we have enough capital, we can produce more khadi. But we can also do *tunai* or carding and even weaving, not for self but for the nation. We would therefore give our output to the A.I.S.A. at its depots in our localities.

And let me not forget the 24 hours' fast on the 6th and the 13th April.[1] Thousands believed in it when we began. We did not err in fasting. Let those who have faith in it not forget fasting and prayer.

THE CURSE

A Harijan *sevak writes:*

> 1. There are in our country hotels, hair-cutting saloons, etc., which deny admission to Harijan. Is it not expected of our national workers—khadi, Hindi and Congress propagandists—to boycott such institutions and use their influence to get these disabilities of the Harijans removed?
>
> 2. There are washermen employed by the A.I.S.A. Some of these washermen observe untouchability in their profession and are not prepared to wash the clothes belonging to persons other than Brahmins and Nairs. The A.I.S.A. dispenses with the washermen who are addicted to drink. Similarly, should not the A.I.S.A. dispense with those washermen who observe untouchability in their profession?

The questions are appropriate. Both have to be answered only in one way. All institution which deny access to Harijans should be boycotted by those, whether Congressmen or others, who feel keenly that the curse of untouchability has to be removed if Hinduism is to remain as a faith to live for and, if need be, to die for. In the posers put by the *sevak* the difficulty is sometimes serious. But nothing can be achieved unless serious difficulties are seriously faced and surmounted.

The question gives rise to a dilemma on some occasions. The washermen are supported by the A.I.S.A. in common with the other artisans. These cling to untouchability with a tenacity that defies all attempt to make them see the superstition that the curse is. Whilst I cannot off hand ask A.I.S.A. workers to boycott the artisans that

[1] *Vide* "Letter to the Press on Satyagraha Movement", 23-3-1919

observe untouchability, there is no doubt that there should be greater vigilance than heretofore in these matters. Preference should certainly always be given to those who have shed the superstition. Much will depend upon the spirit in which the persons afflicted with the virus of untouchability are approached.

SEVAGRAM, March 23, 1942

Harijan, 29-3-1942

159. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

March 23, 1942

BHAI JIVANJI,

All the English matter is being dispatched today. I hope there is enough.

I do not know how much Hindi and Gujarati matter is being sent. If what is being sent today is not enough, supply the rest from there.

Why does Kashinath feel hurt? What did Pyarelal write? He says he did not write a word which could have pained him.

Give me more details.

Blessings from

BAPU[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9951. Also C.W. 6926. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

160. LETTER TO VIJAY M. PANCHOLI

March 23, 1942

CHI. VIJAY,

I replied to you and also made immediate arrangements for oranges. Nanavati will send [them] every week. You must have already received one basket. Everybody is well here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7146. Also C.W.4638. Courtesy: Vijaya M. Pancholi

[1] In the postscript Amrit Kaur writes: "Please send one copy of *Harijan* to Shri Mirabai, Women's Conference Camp, Abrama, *via* Vedchhi, B.B.&C.I. Rly., for the duration of the camp, i.e., $3\frac{1}{2}$ months. Bapu is agreeable."

161. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
March, 23, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I realized its importance, that is why I acted promptly. I agree, you have to wait when I am busy. It cannot be helped. I have got to attend to the problems of the Ashram as quickly as I can, for does not form a part of swaraj?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4419

162. LETTER TO HAMID QURESHI

March 24, 1942

CHI. HAMID,

Today I have a letter from Father[1] telling me that you have not received my reply. I distinctly remember to have replied to you. Well, whatever it is, here is another. It seems you are doing well. Come over here some time. Why does not Sultana write to me?

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. HAMID QURESHI
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI, B.B.& C.I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10774. Courtesy: Hamid Qureshi

[1] Ghulam Rasul Qureshi

163. LITERARY v.CRAFT WORK[1]

Shri Narahari Parikh writes:

> I feel that in many of our khadi and other schools the emphasis laid on literary training is wholly wrong. Certain hours are assigned to craft work and certain to literary work, but it is believed that knowledge can only be imbibed through book-reading. I hold that more intellectual progress is possible for our students through craft work than books. I shall be grateful if you will give your opinion on this issue.

The writer's complaint is justified. Literary training does not always mean expansion of the intellect. Primarily it is a matter of memorizing. A letter is imprinted on the brain in the same way as any other picture. But literary training is more than mere reading.[2] The same thing is true of handicrafts. A knowledge of handicrafts is not limited to the mere craft. It includes a knowlege of its science. Then the expansion of the intellect is much greater and quicker than in high schools and colleges.[3] Therefore, to run down craft work or give it a secondary place in the school programme is greatly to be deplored.

Students thus underrate the value and place of craft knowledge in the expansion of the intellect.[4] Book-learning damages the eyes and cramps thought and originality.[5] There is no such danger in learning crafts and their science. This too involves some study of books. But that study is related to crafts and, therefore, requires the exertion of the intellect. This is what I mean by basic training. It must, in time, come into its own, for it is so true. But meanwhile let there be no

[1] This appeared under "Notes". The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 5-4-1942.

[2] The Gujarati here has: "Reading and understanding books on different subjects is also included in literary training."

[3] The Gujarati here adds: "It is memory rather than intellect that is developed by literary training. This can be said of hundreds of students who graduate from the high schools and colleges. But in the case of scientific knowledge of a craft there can be no such undesirable result. And the hours of training should not be divided under the heads 'Learning' and Craft'."

[4] The Gujarati here adds: "They are lured by books and then both suffer. Mere reading does not develop the intellect."

[5] The Gujarati here has: "And when one develops a dislike for craft work one's knowledge of its science remains superficial. Everything fits into its own place."

differentiation made between book-learning and craft work. The latter must be looked upon as an integral part of education and must have the same status as any other subject.[1] This obvious truth should be recognized at least in national schools.

SEVAGRAM, March 25, 1942
Harijan, 5-4-1942

164. TELEGRAM TO STAFFORD CRIPPS [2]

[*March 25, 1942*][3]

THANKS FOR YOUR WIRE. I WAS PRESENT AT THE MEETING OF THE WORKING COMMITTEE.[4] IT WAS AGREED THAT ON BEHALF OF THE CONGRESS ONLY THE PRESIDENT AND PANDIT NEHRU SHOULD SEE YOU. YOU KNOW MY ANTI-ALL-WAR VIEWS. IF DESPITE THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE ME I SHALL BE GLAD TO SEE YOU.

Political Life of Pandit Govind Ballabh pant, Volume I, pp. 334-5

[1] The Gujarati here adds: "The illusion that craft work is a subject outside the scope of education must go. So long as it does not, the students' development is likely to be arrested."

[2] Sir Stafford Cripps arrived in New Delhi on March 23, with the proposals of the British War Cabinet, for discussion with the Indian leaders. He wired Gandhiji, expressing his desire to meet him. For the proposals and the report of the interview with Stafford Cripps, *vide* Appendices "British War Cabinet's Proposals", after 20-2-1942 and "Interview with Sir Stafford Cripps", 27-3-1942.

[3] From *Gandhi: 1915-1948—A Detailed Chronology*

[4] Which met at Wardha on March 17 and 18

165. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 25, 1942

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. I am not very much inclined to publish the list of contributions to the Gandhi Jayanti Fund. Most of them will have to remain anonymous. I do feel inclined, however, to go as far as sending the list to all important persons. Show this to Nanabhai.

Ba is fine. I understand about the women. I will send those I can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8603. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

166. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

March 25, 1942

CHI. MUNNALAL,

If you must leave you may. I leave the decision to you. You may take up the Charkha Sangh work if you can. You yourself will have to decide that. Peace you will find only in the cave of your heart, neither in the nether world nor in heaven, nor in the forest. But that is only my personal opinion. Do not write anything during the night even if you wake up and are unable to sleep again.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8475. Also C.W. 7168. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

167. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

March 25, 1942

CHI. MUNNALAL,

If you lose sleep during the night, you may start repeating Ramanama, but do not yield to the temptation of taking up writing.

What is written at such an hour is useless. Without peace of mind you will not know what your duty is.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8476. Also C.W. 7169. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

168. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

March 25, 1942

BHAI JIVANJI,

It seems we will have to bring out the Urdu Harijan, in litho. Can this be done there? I think you did point out som difficulty. I am trying to make the arrangements at this end about the editor and so on. The matter thus has not been forgotten. We also wish to run an Urdu press.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI JIVANJI
NAVAJIVAN KARYALAYA
P.O.B. 105
AHMEDABAD
B. B. & C.I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9950. Also C.W. 6925. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

169. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

March 25, 1942

CHI. VANUDI,

One hour you are pleased and the next displeased. This won't do. If there is somebody to teach the *asanas*[1], etc., they do benefit. Since nobody has studied the technique scientifically, they have not been systematically popularized. Learn them patiently.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5788. Also C.W. 3011. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

170. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 25, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Munnalal's is not an example for you to follow. Do whatever you can, and be content.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Who would be the next to go after Shastriji?

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4420

[1] Postures of yogic exercises

171. NOTES

PRAJA MANDALS AND CONGRESS

Thus writes a correspondent from an Indian State:

> On page 67 of *Harijan* (of March 8, 1942) there is a question which is of great interest and importance to Praja Mandals in Indian States.[1] The latter part of the question is, "Who should be responsible for political policies there (in States)?" I am afraid that the answer does not sufficiently clear the position. From what appeared in this connection in *Harijan* before, and from the present answer, in an indirect way, it seems that you wish the Praja Mandals to be responsible for the political policy in the States concerned. It would follow that the local branch of the Congress would not independently initiate any politcal policy or come into conflict with the policy of the local Praja Mandal.

I think there was no confusion about my answer. The Congress organization has its centre and chief work in British India. It has branches in some States. They are not expected to dabble in local politics. They are, therefore, advised to confine themselves to constructive work. But Praja Mandals have to do constructive work always, and political work properly so called wherever it is allowed or where there are brave and able enough men to carry on the political struggle. It is thus purely a question of local ability and opportunity.

At the present moment when everything is in the melting pot, no heroics in politics are called for in the States.

STOPPING ANIMAL SACRIFICE

A Belgaum correspondent writes:[2]

This is indeed good news. Shri Keshwain deserves congratulations for his humanitarian spirit. Those who wish to may eat what meats they like, but it is defaming God to offer animal sacrifices in temples. What God wants, if He can be said to want anything, is the sacrifice made by a humble and contrite heart.

ON THE WAY TO DELHI, March 26, 1942

Harijan, 5-4-1942

[1] *Vide* "Question Box", 2-3-1942.

[2] The letter, not reproduced here, described how S.N.Keshwain, President, Canara District Harijan Sevak Sangh and one of the trustees of the Sirsi temple, had the custom of animal sacrifice abolished.

172. A YOUNG CANADIAN'S QUESTION

From my American post I pick up the following typical letter from Vancouver:[1]

Denuded of the courtesies, the writer's straight question is, "Will there be room for Britishers and foreigners in free India?" The question should have nothing to do with my spirituality supposed or real. It does not arise for free America or free Britain. And it will not arise when India become really free. For India will then be free to do what she likes, without let or hindrance from anybody. But it is pleasing to speculate what India would do if she becomes free, as she must sooner or later. If I have any influence over her policies, foreigners will be welcome, provided their presence is beneficial to the country. They will never be allowed to exploit and impoverish the country as they have done hitherto.

What free India will otherwise look like remains to be seen.[2] She has nothing to fear from the contemplation of the helplessness of the small nations of Europe, if she continues to tread the non-violent course she has done with more or less perfection and with more or less success. For a non-violent State bigness is wholly unnecessary for its protection against aggression. Such a State will need spend nothing for protection against aggression from without. Whether such a State will ever come into being is a fair question to ask. Reason suggests no flaw in the theoretical conception of it. Whether human nature will respond to what has been called an exacting[3] call is another question.

It has been known in individual cases to rise to unimaginable heights. There is nothing to prevent its multiplication by patient endeavour. Anyway I am not going to lose my faith and abandon the attempt because I can show no visible sign of such a response from India. One might as well abandon all hope, as some have done, for the attainment of India's unadulterated freedom. For they say, it will take

[1] The letter is not reproduced here.

[2] The correspondent had further asked: "I should like to know just what stand your new democracy would take in world politics. The small countries of Europe thought that they would keep their finger out of the pie, as the saying goes, but look where they are now."

[3] The source has "exactious".

centuries for India, which is largely and wholly unarmed, to become a military nation. I refuse to be prey to such despair. In the ringing words of Lokamanya, "Freedom is India's birthright, and she will have it cost what it may." Glory lies in the attempt to reach one's goal and not in reaching it. I passionately believe in the possibility of attainment through the perfection of the non-violent technique whose hidden resources no one has fathomed. We have only found a foothold. Perseverance opens up treasures which bring perennial joy.

If the toil is great, so is the fruit thereof.

ON THE WAY TO DELHI, March 26, 1942
Harijan, 5-4-1942

173. VACATION WORK

A Poona correspondent writes:

Students are now going on long leave for their summer vacation. Most of them will leave the cities and go to their native places. Looking to the urgent exigencies in the country due to the war situation, and its consequent responsibilities on the people of India, will it not be useful if a message is sent to the student world reminding them of their responsibility and duty at this critical juncture? May I therefore request you to kindly issue an appeal at the earliest to the students calling them for some action during the vacation and after? My humble suggestions are as follows:

1. Reading out the news to the villages about the war and the Indian political situation and special articles from *Harijan.*

2. Explaining to them the present emergency and possible events.

3. Organizing *Nagarik samrakshan dals*[1].

4. Propagating and organizing the idea of self-sufficiency in villages, so far as food and clothing is concerned.

5. A persistent campaign against untouchability. It is possible that the students, some of whom are under the fanatic influence of communal organizations, might harm rather than help the cause in view. But we have to take the chances with the students as they are, and hence I have deliberately dropped, out of the above list, items of communal unity and Congress ideology and mentioned only such items as would give least scope for either communal or ideological differences.

[1] Civil defence corps

I have no difficulty in endorsing the suggestions made by the correspondent.

Self-sufficiency is a big word. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has adopted that and self-reliance as slogans in his U.P. speeches. They should prove catching at this juncture. Villages will be swept away, if they are not self-sufficient as to their primary wants and self-reliant as to their protection against internal disruption by dissensions and disease and external danger from thieves and dacoits. Self-sufficience, therefore, means all the cotton processes and growing of seasonal food crops and fodder for cattle. Unless this is done there will be starvation. And self-reliance means corporate organization ensuring adjustment of internal differences through arbitration by the wise men of villages and cleanliness by corporate attention to sanitation and common diseases. No mere individual effort is going to suffice. And above all villagers must be taught to feel their own strength by combined effort to make their villages proof against thieves and dacoits. This is best done by corporate non-violence. But if the way to non-violence does not seem clear to workers, they will not hesitate to organize corporate defence through violence. I am not having in mind Congressmen who have adopted non-violence as their final creed and so have no choice in the matter.

Thus the students, if they will, can have a strenuous vacation. Who knows that the vacation may not prove even indefinite? But if it is not, two months are good enough time for laying down a good foundation for self-sufficiency and self-reliance.

My correspondent is timid. There is no cause to fear communal strife. Student who take the village reorganization cannot afford to be communal. Communalism is an urban product fated to flourish only on urban soil. In rural areas the people are too poor and too interdependent to find time for communal quarrels. Be that as it may, student workers are assumed, for this note, to be free from the virus.

ON THE WAY TO DELHI, March 26, 1942

Harijan, 5-4-1942

174. FROM UNOFFICIAL NOTES

I extract the following useful information from the unofficial notes[1] published from time to time by the Principal Information Officer of the Government of India, which sometimes make interesting and instructive reading.

ON THE WAY TO DELHI, March 26, 1942
Harijan, 5-4-1942

175. QUESTION BOX

WEAKENING NON-VIOLENCE?

Q. In the instructions issued by the Working Committee of the Congress in the matter of organizing Congress volunteers it has been clearly stated that the organization should be based on "strictly non-violent basis". In the pledge forms prepared in this behalf by some Congress committees, however, it is stated that volunteers when on duty only should observe non-violence.

The Karnataka P. C. C. has prepared the volunteers' pledge in this form. The Chief Organizer of volunteers in the Province appointed by the K.P.C.C. declared in a public meeting held for the prupose of enrolling volunteers that a Congress volunteer even on duty might exercise the right of private defence by resorting to violence in an emergency, and further that such an action on his part did not contravene the instructions of the Working Committee. All this is creating confusion. If the instructions of the Working Committee are not to be strictly carried out, it would be better that the condition of non-violence were dropped altogether rather than were allowed to be diluted to suit individual ideas. What is your opinion in the matter?

A My answers must not be taken as authentic in questions the answers to which require the *imprimatur* of the Congress as this one does. My personal opinion is Decisive. Violence in self-defence has no place in any corps organized by or in the name of the Congress.

There can be no laxity in the enforcement of this rule without risking a breakdown of the whole non-violent structure in the Congress. Use of violence in private self-defence is said to be

[1] Not reproduced here. They deal with reports of researches in indigenous medicinal plants, fish-liver oils, manuring of paddy and registration of cattle.

permitted by the Congress because the Congress does not and cannot regulate the personal and private life of individual Congressmen. The individual in his private life is unfettered by the rules of the Congress.

He is dominated by his own ethical code, if any.

FULL FAITH IN NON-VIOLENCE

Q. There are some Congressmen, though their number is very small, who have full faith in non-violence and who desire to organize on that basis. Should not Congress committees organize such men? Or should not Congress committees allow such men to form their corps under the auspices of the Congress?

A. Congress committees cannot organize sections. The Congress can have only one policy. Today it is pure non-violence so far as internal affairs are concerned. Therefore I see no reason for separate peace committees. Purists, if they are humble and not self-opinionated, will act as a leaven in bodies which may contain men and women even of doubtful faith, as there must be in democratic organizations.

BEWILDERING CONFLICT

Q. There is a bewildering conflict of opinion among Congress leaders. Sardar speaks with one voice, Rajaji with another, Maulana with a third and Jawaharlalji with a fourth—not to speak of the lesser lights. Whom is one to follow, who is to be regarded as the sole authority to interpret the Congress policy and resolutions?

A. Legally and constitutionally the President is the sole authority. If there is a conflict of opinion between the majority of the Working Committee and the President, as was once the case in the early stages, the majority view would supersede the President's. But on critical occasions legal opinion is not of much value. People have their favourite heroes, and they will follow the heroes even blindly. My advice, therefore, is that in the ticklish question of ahimsa each one should be his own authority not on the law but on interpretation. If all the four distinguished leaders whom you have mentioned were to sit together, they would probably give the same interpretation, but in the course of their speeches each would put his special emphasis on one aspect or another of the same matter.

ON THE WAY TO DELHI, March 26, 1942

Harijan, 5-4-1942

176. DEPLORABLE

A student writes from Poona :[1]

> I am a student of the Law College in Poona. After reading your article *"Sacho Yuddhaprayaina"*[2] I thought of a total abjuration of sweets. And I have vowed not to partake of such rich food so long as the war lasts.
>
> I am a boarder in the college hostel where, on every Sunday, they serve two or more kinds of sweets. These are more wasted than consumed. . . . After the feast some students stealthily throw at one another things like pies. They are proud of indulging in this kind of fun. . . . While on your way to Benares you spoke of students boycotting you. Bapu, this is not the whole truth.

The talk of my being boycotted was only a joke. I am experiencing every day the sorrows of being called a great man. If there is any joy in it I am yet to experience it. I do have sweet memories of the days before I became a Mahatma. I can however fill several pages with the unpleasant memories of the days after I became a Mahatma. One such experience that I have to undergo every day is that I cannot utter a single word without being reported in the papers.

It is no doubt painful to have the words reported, although correctly; but one can bear it. But it becomes insufferable when all sorts of meanings are attributed to them. I am now hardened and don't care if I am hurt. This is only my nature, not that they no more hurt me.

This talk of my being boycotted is such an instance of twisting words. Had they interpreted the boycott as a joke they could have derived a different kind of pleasure and an altogether different meaning from it. But let it be. How have I wronged the students that they would boycott me? There is bound to be ebb as well as flow.

Indeed, I cannot always say or write sweet things. I have to administer bitter rebukes too and then some students are annoyed for a little while. But their annoyance is momentary. I consider myself a student and hence my contact with students is sure to endure.

The correspondent deserves to be congratulated on his sacrifice I hope it will be sustained.

He gives a painful picture of student-life. In my view, student-life should be one of restraint. Students should [learn to] enjoy the

[1] Only extracts from the letter are translated here.

[2] *Vide* "Real War Effort", 19-1-1942.

special pleasure that is to be found in restraint. 'They may have innocent pleasure from wherever they like.' It is a grave error to delight in tossing about things like food or in filthy jokes or in committing secret acts of sin.

Many boarding-houses have the practice of serving sweets every week. If the students and their guardians realized that education in our country is had at the cost of the poor millions, no thoughtful student would live a life of luxury. And at this time when there is an ever-growing scarcity of all food-stuffs, anyone consuming a grain more than necessary should be regarded as more then committing a crime.

What then need I say about the students?

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, March 26, 1942

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 5-4-1942

177. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

March 26, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

You are a child in several things. You were cut up because I would not take you to Delhi even as I was because I was not to be sent to Kanpur by my father!!! How stupid! I am quite positive that it would have looked and been bad to have taken you with me. And in Sevagram your presence is most essential. There are the patients, there is Chandrasinha and several others. There is Hayatulla. If you do not realize these things now, when will your? You must be *wise.* Cheer up and do your work there.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

The enclosed[1] is for A[mtul] S[alaam].

From the original: C.W. 4118. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7427

[1] This is not available.

178. LETTER TO PADAMPAT SINGHANIA

ON THE WAY TO DELHI,
March 26, 1942

BHAI PADAMPATJI,

I had received your letter quite promptly but I am able to answer it only today.[1] There is one question you must still answer: Do you approve in your heart of the course I have adopted? The course is this: to give a wider shape to the resolution passed at Indore and to teach Urdu along with Hindi and arrange for examinations in Urdu. I shall be able to decide on hearing from you.

Blessings from
BAPU

SETH PADAMPAT SINGHANIA
KANPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

179. LETTER TO GULABCHAND AGRAWAL

ON THE WAY TO DELHI,
March 26, 1942

BHAI GULABCHANDJI,

I have only now been able to reach your letter of January 12. What can I do? Please forgive me.

Nothing will be gained by discussing in the Press the question you have raised. What has first to be asked is: Is the disease in a very advanced stage? I doubt it. When you have time and can see me we shall talk about it and perhaps even find some solution.

Blessings from
BAPU

SETH GULABCHAND AGRAWAL
DALMIA COMPANY
15 F, ELPHINSTONE CIRCLE
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Padampat Singhania", 10-3-1942.

180. TELEGRAM TO HIRALAL SHASTRI

NEW DELHI,
March 27, 1942

HIRALAL SHASTRI
JAIPUR
HERE TILL SUNDAY.

From the original: Hiralal Shastri Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

181. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

[After *March 27, 1942*][1]

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

Khurshedbehn is very unhappy. She feels that your heart has dried up towards her. Send for her, give her some affection. You know she adores you.[2]

Today I woke up at two. I was thinking of you and Rajaji only. I am clearly of the view that we cannot accept this 'offer'[3]. If you also agree, then talk to Rajaji and reach a final decision. If you are inclined to agree with Rajaji then the matter deserves further consideration.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] This was written on the back of a bill bearing this date. This is also confirmed by the reference to the "offer" brought by Sir Stafford Cripps. Gandhiji met him on March 27. *Vide* also Appendix "Interview with Sir Stanfford Cripps", 27-3-1942.

[2] Gandhiji started writing this letter during massage. It appears from a dash in the source that the following paragraph was written some time later.

[3] The British War Cabinet's proposals. *Vide* Appendix "British War Cabinet's Proposals", before 27-3-1942.

182. INTERVIEW TO EVE CURIE [1]

[Before *March 29, 1942*][2]

Miss Curie's question was direct—on the present situation. She admired the sincerity with which Sir Stafford Cripps was trying to bring about a settlement, and she wanted to know Gandhiji's reaction to his efforts.

Sir Stafford is a very good man, but he has entered bad machinery—British Imperialism. He hopes to improve that machinery, but in the end it will be the machinery that will get the better of him.

"Axis Powers' triumph would bring India to a fate comparable to that inflicted on Poland and France. That is why the average citizen of conquered countries puts his belief and hope in Allied victory," she said.

India can win her laurels only through non-violence. What we have achieved during the last twenty years shows what immense results could be obtained if the principle of non-violence was generally practised by our people.

But Indians will have a tougher time opposing by non-violence German and Japanese divisions than undermining British rule.

Quite possible. But this is the hour to live up to our faith. If the Japanese invaded India, I would not encourage our people to fight with arms. Neither would I suffer them to make a pact with aggressors.

Our struggle will be hard, but it will bring out the best in us.

So you accept the idea of India refusing to fight or even to be defended by others.

It is physically impossible to transform India suddenly into an armed nation. To give our people weapons and to teach them non-violence are two different methods of making them strong. Both take time. I simply believe that my method is surer, more precise, and in the long run more successful. In order to beat the Japanese and German armies by force, you must become stronger than they are,

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's report entitled "With Foreign Correspondents". Eve Curie represented *New York Herald, Tribune* and allied news-papers in London.

[2] The interview took place before the Congress Working Committee session began on March 29.

and therefore worse and more ruthless. Then what have you won? Nothing. On the contrary, nations fighting with non-violence are unconquerable, for their strength does not depend on the number of rifles and machine-guns they possess. And when the method is good, there is no need to worry about immediate results. Success is bound to come in the end. In a non-violent struggle there are two alternatives: either the enemy comes to terms with you, then you win without blood; or the enemy annihilates you. This last solution is not worse than what a violent war in any case brings about. I don't blame you for wanting to liberate France just as I want to see India free; but it is a sign of too great impatience to think that any country can really be liberated by use of arms.

Harijan, 19-4-1942

183. CAVEESHAR [1]

Lala Dunichand of Ambala writes :[2]

> I have been asked by the dear and near ones of S. Sardul Singh Caveeshar, who is being detained without trial, to write this letter to you.
>
> Since his arrest about a fortnight ago, he is being detained inside the Lahore Fort, and he is not being allowed to have any kind of contact with his relations and friends. . . . I am reliably informed that S. Caveeshar is being kept by himself in a cell, and this amounts to solitary confinement. He is not being allowed even those few facilities such as newspapers, correspondence, etc., which other detenus enjoy. The fact that he had been suffering from fever for a long time at the time of his arrest adds poignancy to his case. Other detenus of similar position such as Babu Sarat Chandra Bose and others are being treated properly.

One can understand detention, in these times, of persons who are suspected of complicity with the Japanese. Therefore, in spite of my having received angry letters, I have observed silence about Sarat Babu's detention[3] though I have felt keenly about it. There was no question of his ill-treatment. Sardar Sardul Singh's is a different case,

[1] This appeared under "Notes".
[2] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.
[3] Sarat Chandra Bose was arrested in December 1941.

if what Lala Dunichand says is true. There can be no cause for the ill-treatment of any prisoner, no matter what his offence is. Caveeshar is detained on mere suspicion. The public know nothing about the evidence against him. In war times it is difficult to demand an open trial or even disclosure of evidence in certain cases. All the greater, therefore, is the reason for the special treatment of such prisoners. I hope that Caveeshar's case will receive the attention of the authorities concerned and all cause for complaint will be removed.

NEW DELHI, March 29, 1942
Harijan, 5-4-1942

184. TELEGRAM TO PRABHAVATIDEVI BOSE [1]

NEW DELHI,
March 29, 1942

THE WHOLE NATION MOURNS WITH YOU THE DEATH OF YOUR AND HER BRAVE SON. I SHARE YOUR SORROW TO THE FULL. MAY GOD GIVE YOU COURAGE TO BEAR THE UNEXPECTED LOSS.[2]

GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-3-1942

185. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
March 29, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I had your letter. No time till now to write to you. I am sorry J[awahar] L[al] won't let me leave till Tuesday. I wonder what you have done about coming here. I adhere to my opinion though you did not like it.

I know this, if I have to be out of Sevagram I cannot keep my health.

[1] Mother of Subhas Chandra Bose

[2] For the contradiction of this, *vide* "Telegram to Prabhavatidevi Bose", 30-3-1942.

I am writing this in the midst of a meeting.

M[ahadev] is here looking well.

Love.

BAPU

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA, C.P.

From the original: C.W. 4119. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7428

186. LETTER TO DR. B. S. MOONJE

March 29, 1942

DEAR DR. MOONJE,

I had your two letters. Want of time is my excuse for the lateness of reply.

I am out of all this thing. The Working Committee has the matter in hand.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

B. S. Moonje Papers, File No. 40/1945-48. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

187. SCORCHED EARTH [1]

From the well-reasoned Press statement of Shri Gaganvihari L. Mehta, President of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, I give below the following important extracts[2] :

> It should be pointed out that economic relationships are so close, complex and delicate that it would be impossible to demolish important industries or plants without grave repercussions on the economic fabric and life of the country. For example, if industrial plants like those of jute, cotton or sugar are destroyed, they will take years to be rebuilt even after the war and, meanwhile, not merely the owners of the factories but also the cultivators of these commodities, the industrial workers as well as those engaged in ancillary and subsidiary industries, trades and occupations would all suffer.

[1] This appeared under "Notes".
[2] From which only an excerpt is reproduced here

Such demolition of industries built up after years of struggle at large expense and often against heavy odds will cause economic dislocation and disorganization altogether disproportionate to any benefits secured as a measure of war. . . .

Scorched earth policy is a self-defeating measure.[1] Time will show how true this remark is.

NEW DELHI, March 30, 1942

Harijan, 5-4-1942

188. TELEGRAM TO PRABHAVATIDEVI BOSE [2]

NEW DELHI,

March 30, 1942

THANK GOD WHAT PURPORTED AUTHENTIC HAS PROVED WRONG. WE CONGRATULATE YOU AND NATION.

The Bombay Chronicle, 31-3-1942

189. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,

March 30, 1942

RAJKUMARI

SEVAGRAM

WARDHA

SORRY. DETAINED TOMORROW. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4120. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7429

[1] *Vide* "Scorched Earth", 16-3-1942.

[2] This was sent by Gandhiji and Abul Kalam Azad.

190. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

March 30, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I have not a minute to spare. I shall try to start tomorrow. I hope Ba, Narendra Dev, Sharda and Abha are well. Tell Krishnaverma to take proper care of Janakibehn. What happened to the friend from Morvi who was on a fast?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4261. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7893

191. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

DELHI,
March 30, 1942

DEAR SISTER,

I got your letter. The statement is good. Very good work has been done in Multan. It is surely a very good thing to meet our Muslim brethren in this manner.

Chandwani had come to Wardha and had a long talk. Rajkumari must have written all about it, or even Chandwani might have. I do not have the time to write a long letter.

I hope I shall be able to leave for Sevagram tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8002. Also C.W. 3100. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

192. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

DELHI,
March 31, 194[*2*][1]

DEAR SISTER,

Read your letter of March 21, 1942. The resolutions you have sent are no doubt good. They should be placed before the Board. Let us see what happens. Both the things are important.

Blessings from
BAPU

RAMESHWARI NEHRU
2 WARIS ROAD
LAHORE
PUNJAB

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7993. Also C.W. 3091. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru.

193. NOTE TO SAVITRI BAJAJ [1]

[*March-April 1942*][3]

It does not seem to me advisable to give such drugs to children.

They recover naturally. But I do not want to interfere. The letter seems to show it is dysentery for which a little castor-oil is enough.

Call the doctor, I shall talk to him and then we shall see what to give. There is no need to worry. She will be all right.

From a copy of the Hindi: G. N. 3061; also *Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad*, pp. 297-8

[1] The source has "1941"; the postmark, however, bears the date 1-4-1942.
[2] Wife of Kamalnayan Bajaj
[3] As given in the printed source

194. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
April 1, 1942

RAJKUMARI

SEVAGRAM

WARDHA

SORRY. DETAINED PROBABLY THREE MORE DAYS. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4121. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7430

195. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

April 1, 1942

CHI. VANUDI[1],

I have your letter. You must either get well there or come over.

Do not lose patience and courage. Make up your mind that the ear trouble has to be cured.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5789. Also C.W. 3012. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

196. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN CHOUDHARI

DELHI,
April 1, 1942

CHI. RAMNARAYAN,

I have brought with me your letter dated March 12, 1942. I have gone through the rules and the curriculum. The letter is good. So are the rules.

What you are doing to improve hygiene and to popularize Hindi

[1] Daughter of Narahari Parikh. She later married Mahendra V. Desai.

is satisfactory. Spread as much fragrance as you can.

Mahadev is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapu: Maine Kya Dekha Kya Samjha?, p. 132

197. TALK WITH AN AUSTRALIAN JOURNALIST[1]

[Before *April 3, 1942*][2]

What I cannot understand is man hating brother man and thirsting for his blood. I can see no justification for the war that is going on and fast enveloping the earth. It is based on hate and vengeance and will leave a crop of hate and vengeance behind. The waste of human life and material that might be useful otherwise for the world is appalling and sickening. Why should your country and mine have to be involved in this war? You are a fine resourceful people. Rather than that you should build up your country and make it useful to the rest of the world. Why should you be asked to sacrifice your manhood? And what is more painful is that it is all to no purpose. I do not know why all this fighting is going on, for whose benefit, with what great end in view.

JOURNALIST: I doubt if anyone knows.

GANDHIJI: There is this thing. Perhaps God wills peace to come as a lesson of this carnage.

J. Could you possibly say something about what is going on at present.

G. For that, you must go to the men in office. I can say nothing.

J. But, Sir, you are with them.

G. And, yet, it will surprise you when I tell you that those things do not interest me. I relinquished my membership of the Congress

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Two Australian Visitors". The source does not mention the name of the journalist, who was a war correspondent. Gandhiji talked to him while out on a stroll.

[2] Mahadev Desai has referred to the visit of this journalist in an article "How to Be Worthy of Our Heritage", dated April 3 and published in *Harijan*, 12-4-1942 .

eight years ago.[1] I go to the Congress, attend meetings of the Working Committee, even advise in a detached way when my advice is sought.

You will be surprised to hear that I have never listened to a radio, nor have I ever been to a cinema.

J. Do you think these things are bad?

G. I will not say so. I may say that cinema films are often bad.

About the radio I do not know. I can certainly say this that I do not care to have news from all quarters of the globe within the space of half an hour. It leaves one little time to think. And why must one have news from all quarters of the globe every half an hour or so? I should be content to react to my nearest surroundings and happenings therein.

J. But the youth whispered some question about the Working Committee.

G. I do not mind telling you that there are differences between me and the Working Committee. The whole nation is not with me on the non-violence question. If the nation as a whole was absolutely peaceful, I am sure we should not be in the war, I am sure we should not have this foreign domination here. The alien rulers should not be dictating to us. We should have people here from foreign lands on terms of friendship, and we should gladly make use of their talents at our will. But I am not worrying over the nation not being with me.

When I have failed to convert my nearest associates, the members of the Working Committee, I have no business to be impatient with my people. It must be my fault. It means that there is not sufficient non-violence in me to enable me to carry everyone with me. But my faith in non-violence is undimmed and unshaken. In fact it is growing every day.

Harijan, 3-5-1942

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 17-9-1934, 15-10-1934, "Speech at Subjects Committee Meeting", A.I.C.C.", 23-10-1934 and 26-10-1934.

198. INTERVIEW TO BERTRAM STEVENS[1]

DELHI,
[On or before *April 4*, 1942][2]

BERTRAM STEVENS: I have heard a lot about you from Mr. Birla. You have been to England, to Europe, and you stayed long in South Africa. But you have never been to Australia.

GANDHIJI: No, thanks to you.

B. S. You have made a very good reply, Mr. Gandhi.

G. Haven't I? You have vast living spaces, you can absorb millions and millions of human beings. But I know what you are doing. I have followed the history of your country for over 35 years. White Australia is your policy, and as a result you are without the wonderful accession of strength that would have been yours if you had followed a policy of brothering all.

B. S. I agree. But our country is only 150 years old. Prejudices die hard, but they are dying.

G. You might very well have absorbed our people. Wherever they have gone they have been able to show that they are business-like, able, and quite competent to take care of themselves. Your country with its infinite resources would have been a different country with these Indian settlers.

B. S. Yes, Australia is half as big again as India. But it is not quite so fertile as India. But I agree with what you say. There is nothing like developing vital contacts between the peoples of different countries. During my sojourn in India I have met many people. I have found them quite capable and industrious, and the more our business people could know and come together with your business people the better for both Australia and India. And, Sir, we must not forget that the old world is already passing, old ideas are fast changing, and we are getting ready for the coming of a new world.

G. I am sure.

Harijan, 3-5- 1942

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Two Australian Visitors". Bertram Stevens was a member of the Eastern Group Conference and sometime Prime Minister of the Province of New South Wales in Australia.

[2] Gandhiji left Delhi on April 4.

199. NON-VIOLENT RESISTANCE

Japan is knocking at our gates. What are we to do in a non-violent way? If we were a free country, things could be done non-violently to prevent the Japanese from entering the country. As it is, non-violent resistance could commence the moment they effected a landing. Thus non-violent resisters would refuse them any help, even water. For it is no part of their duty to help anyone to steal their country. But if a Japanese had missed his way and was dying of thirst and sought help as a human being, a non-violent resister, who may not regard anyone as his enemy, would give water to the thirsty one.

Suppose the Japanese compel resisters to give them water, the resisters must die in the act of resistance. It is conceivable that they will exterminate all resisters. The underlying belief in such non-violent resistance is that the aggressor will, in time, be mentally and even physically tired of killing non-violent resisters. He will begin to search what this new (for him) force is which refuses co-operation without seeking to hurt, and will probably desist from further slaughter. But the resisters may find that the Japanese are utterly heartless and that they do not care how many they kill. The non-violent resisters will have won the day in as much as they will have preferred extermination to submission.

But things will not happen quite so simply as I have put them.

There are at least four parties in the country. First the British and the army they have brought into being. The Japanese declare that they have no designs upon India. Their quarrel is only with the British. In this they are assisted by some Indians who are in Japan. It is difficult to guess how many, but there must be a fairly large number who believe in the declaration of the Japanese and think that they will deliver the country from the British yoke and retire. Even if the worst happens, their fatigue of the British yoke is so great that they would even welcome the Japanese yoke for a change. This is the second party. The third are the neutrals, who though not non-violent will help neither the British nor the Japanese.

The fourth and last are non-violent resisters. If they are only a few, their resistance will be ineffective except as an example for the future. Such resisters will calmly die wherever they are but will

not bend the knee before the aggressor. They will not be deceived by promises. They do not seek deliverance from the British yoke through the help of a third party. They believe implicitly in their own way of fighting and no other. Their fight is on behalf of the dumb millions who do not perhaps know that there is such a thing as deliverance. They have neither hatred for the British nor love for the Japanese. They wish well to both as to all others. They would like both to do what is right. They believe that non-violence alone will lead men to do right under all circumstances. Therefore, if for want of enough companions non-violent resisters cannot reach the goal, they will not give up their way but pursue it to death.

The task before the votaries of non-violence is very difficult.

But no difficulty can baffle men who have faith in their mission.

This is going to be a long drawn out agony. Let non-violent resisters not make impossible attempts. Their powers are limited. A resister in Kerala is not physically responsible for the defence of Assam which is just now in imminent danger. If Assam is non-violently inclined, it is well able to take care of itself. If it is not, no party of non-violent resisters from Kerala can help it or any other province. Kerala can help Assam, etc., by demonstrating its non-violence in Kerala itself. The Japanese army, if it gets a foothold in India, will not stop at Assam. In order to defeat the British, it has to overrun the whole country. The British will fight every inch of the ground. Loss of India will probably be admission of complete defeat for them. But whether it is so or not, it is quite clear that Japan will not rest till India is wholly in her hands. Hence non-violent resisters must remain at their posts wherever they are.

One thing has to be made clear. Where the British army is actually engaging the 'enemy', it would be perhaps improper for direct resistance to function. It will not be non-violent resistance when it is mixed with, or allies itself to, violence.

Let me therefore reiterate what I have said so often. The best preparation for, and even the expression of, non-violence lies in the determined pursuit of the constructive programme. Anyone who believes that without the backing of the constructive programme he will show non-violent strength when the testing time comes will fail

miserably. It will be, like the attempt of a starving unarmed man to match his physical strength against a fully fed and panoplied soldier, foredoomed to failure. He who has no belief in the constructive programme has, in my opinion, no concrete feeling for the starved millions. He who is devoid of that feeling cannot fight non-violently. In actual practice the expansion of my non-violence has kept exact pace with that of my identification with starved humanity. I am still far from the non-violence of my conception, for am I not still far away from the identification of my conception with dumb humanity?

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA, April 5, 1942

Harijan, 12-4-1942

200. CURIOUS NON-VIOLENCE [1]

A friend sends the following extract from A. Vambery's[2] translation of *Travels and Adventures* by Sidi Ali Reis (16th Century):

> Amongst the learned of this land of Banians (Gujarat), there is a tribe which they call the Bats (Bhats), whose business it is to escort merchants or travellers from one land into another, and, for a very small remuneration, they guarantee their perfect safety. Should the Rajputs, i.e., the mounted troops of the land, attack the caravan, the Bats (Bhats) point their daggers at their own breasts, and threaten to kill themselves, if they should presume to do the slightest harm to the travellers entrusted to their care. And out of respect for the Bats (Bhats), the Rajputs generally desist from their evil purpose, and the travellers proceed on their way unmolested. Occasionally, however, the Bats (Bhats) carry out their threat, otherwise it would have no force. But if such a thing does happen, if a caravan is attacked and the suicide of the Bats (Bhats) becomes necessary, this is considered a terrible calamity, and the superstition of the people demands that the offenders be put to death, and not only the offenders themselves but the chief of the Rajputs deems it necessary to kill their sons and daughters also, in fact to exterminate the whole of their race. The Mohammedans of Ahmedabad had given us two such Bats (Bhats) as an

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

[2] (1832-1913), Hungarian traveller and writer.

escort, and so, about the middle of *Safar* of the said year, we started on our overland journey to Turkey.

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA, April 5, 1942

Harijan, 12-4- 1942

201. CREED v. POLICY OF NON-VIOLENCE[1]

More than a month ago Dr. Katju sent to Shri Kishorelal Mashruwala what may be called a short thesis on non-violence. The latter was to decide what to make of it and, if he liked, show it to me. Shri Mashruwala gave it to me some time ago. But I could get time to read it only during the journey. I read it carefully. It was too long for publication in *Harijan;* and yet I felt that it should be placed before the readers of *Harijan* in some form. The following is the result. I have spent considerable time in reducing the original without leaving out the essential argument. I wholly agree with Dr. Katju that non-violence cannot make further headway without the Congress making it a creed. He suggests that there should be a plan to show how it can be worked under given circumstances. He suggested a book or a series for the guidance of the votaries. Much literature has sprung up on the subject. Richard Gregg has spent years of labour in research. He has written text-books for the guidance of the votaries of the West. His books are very readable. Let Dr. Katju set apart time for producing a book which would be a guide for us in India at this critical hour.

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA, April 5, 1942

Harijan, 26-4-1942

[1] Kailash Nath Katju's article under this heading is not reproduced here.

202. LETTER TO JAGANNATH

ON THE TRAIN,
April 5, 1942

MY DEAR JAGANNATH,

I had your letter in mind all the time I was in Delhi. You want no separate answer now.[1]

Yours,
BAPU

LALA JAGANNATH
LAJPATRAI BHAVAN
LAHORE, PUNJAB

From a photostat: C.W. 988. Courtesy: Lala Jagannath

203. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

ON THE TRAIN,
April 5, 1942

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter last evening in Delhi. I read the whole of it in the train today. I was sorry to read about Jayaprakash. There was no cause for him to fall ill. It is very difficult to say anything without examining him. You ask how long he will have to live on fruit. That also is difficult to say. If improvement had continued, I could have guided him by letters. But you will understand from the copy of the letter[2] that I am sending you. About the women, do as you think proper. Do not take up more work than you can manage. What you are doing is more than enough. Consult Rajendra Babu. You did not write anything about Father. I think Rajkumari will be going in May

[1] The addressee had cautioned Gandhiji in regard to negotiations with Stafford Cripps.

[2] This is not traceable.

Khurshedbehn[1] is with me. Mahadev has stayed back in Delhi. He will go to Bombay with Sardar on Monday or Tuesday. He will take some treatment there and then come to Sevagram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3574

204 . QUESTION BOX

THE THEORY OF TRUSTEESHIP[2]

Q. From your writings one gathers the notion that your 'trustee' is not anything more than a very benevolent philanthropist and donor, such as the first Parsi Baronet, the Tatas, the Wadias, the Birlas, Shri Bajaj and the like. Is that so?

Will you please explain whom you regard as the primary or rightful beneficiaries of the possessions of a rich man? Is there to be a limit to the amount or part of the income and capital which he can spend upon himself, his kith and kin and for non-public purposes? Can one who exceeds such limit be prevented from doing so? If he is incompetent or otherwise fails to discharge his obligations as a trustee, can he be removed and called upon to render accounts by a beneficiary or the State? Do the same principles apply to Princes and zamindars, or is their trusteeship of a different nature?

A. If the trusteeship idea catches, philanthropy, as we know it, will disappear. Of those you have named only Jamnalalji came near, but only near it. A trustee has no heir but the public. In a State built on the basis of non-violence, the commission of trustees will be regulated. Princes and zamindars will be on a par with the other men of wealth.

SEVAGRAM, April 6, 1942

Harijan, 12-4-1942

[1] Grand-daughter of Dadabhai Naoroji.

[2] *Vide* also Appendix "Talk with Pyarelal", 13-12-1942.

205. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

April 6, 1942

CHI. KANTI[1],

Here is Saraswati's[2] letter. I returned last night at 11-30 p.m.

The train was late. And then today I got the accompanying note.

I told her that she could leave this place if she found it impossible to stay in. It seems she will not stay. In fact the heat has not even started yet. But where one is not at home even a cold place feels hot. Ba had again fallen ill. She is better now. She will go on like that.

Devdas[3] aud Lakshmi[4] were all right.

There was nothing in Delhi. Consider all these days as wasted.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I saw Harilal. He had a fracture in the hand. I sent him to a hospital and got the fracture set. He started talking about coming back to me, but that was only a ruse for getting money out of me. He has no sense of truth and falsehood. He is always drunk. You need not worry.

From Gujarati: C.W. 7365. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

206. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

April 6, 1942

CHI. VANUDI,

I got your slip. After you get well you will be coming here for a few days to appear in the examination, won't you? If Mahadevbhai has arrived, tell him that I have not sent his two short articles. I will explain the reasons when he comes here, if he wants me to do so and if I still remember the matter. Today everybody is well. What it would

[1] Gandhiji's grandson and Harilal Gandhi's son.
[2] Addressee's wife.
[3] Gandhiji's youngest son.
[4] Devdas Gandhi's wife.

be like tomorrow, God alone knows. The weather is curious. It rains, too, occasionally.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5790. Also C.W. 3013. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

207. LETTER TO PREMI JAIRAMDAS

SEVAGRAM,
April 6, 1942

CHI. PREMI,

I received your letter in Delhi. Even though there are a few mistakes in your Hindi, I find it sweeter than your English. You will certainly pass because you have worked hard. Do not worry. My blessings to Devibehn also.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C. W. 11047. Courtesy: Arjun Jairamdas

208. QUESTION BOX

EXPEDIENCE

Q. Several years ago I once had the temerity to ask whether the fact that you had allowed non-violence to come into the Congress as an expedient rather than as a creed would not be conducive to its breakdown at the critical time: You said you did not think so. But do you still feel the same? Would you not today have had an organized band of believers in non-violence whom you could have sent in groups all over the country? It almost seems as if we had lost time and are found unprepared, as it were, to shoulder responsibility?

A. Yes, I adhere to my opinion that I did well to present to the Congress non-violence as an expedient. I could not have done otherwise if I was to introduce it into politics. In South Africa too I introduced it as an expedient. It was successful there because resisters were a small number in a compact area and therefore easily controlled. Here we had numberless persons scattered over a huge

country. The result was that they could not be easily controlled or trained. And yet it is a marvel the way they have responded. They might have responded much better and shown far better results. But I have no sense of disappointment in me over the results obtained. If I had started with men who accepted non-violence as a creed, I might have ended with myself. Imperfect as I am, I started with imperfect men and women and sailed on an uncharted ocean. Thank God that, though the boat has not reached its haven, it has proved fairly storm-proof.

THE ROMAN SCRIPT

Q. You are prejudiced against the Roman script because you are prejudiced against the English. Otherwise you would unhesitatingly advocate it in the place of Devanagari and Persian.

A. You are wrong. I am prejudiced against neither. But I am against anything or anybody usurping a place not belonging to it or him. The Roman script has come to stay in India. But it cannot take the place of the Indian scripts. If I had my way, there would be only the Devanagari script, for all the provincial languages, and Devanagari and Persian for the all-lndia speech. The Arabic script, from which the Persian is derived, is a necessity for Muslims as Sanskrit is for Hindus.

Roman has been suggested as a compromise and not for its merits. It has none except that it is almost universal in the West. But it must not displace either Devanagari, which is the parent of most provincial languages and is the most perfect of all the known scripts, or Persian, because it is written by millions of Hindus and Muslims in the North. So far as the scripts are keeping them apart, Hindus and Muslims will not come together by adopting a neutral and imperfect script. But they will, if both take the trouble, for the love of one another, to learn both scripts. The Roman script has its own great and unique place. It need not aspire after greater.

SEVAGRAM, April 7, 1942

Harijan, 12-4-1942

209. SCORCHED EARTH

Thus writes a correspondent on my article "Scorched Earth''[1] in *Harijan*.

> In your article headed 'Scorched Earth' appearing in *Harijan* of the 22nd March you say as follows:
>
> "As a war resister my answer can only be one. I see neither bravery nor sacrifice in destroying life or property for offence or defence. I would far rather leave, if I must, my crops and homestead for the enemy to use than destroy them for the sake of preventing their use by him. There is reason, sacrifice and even bravery in so leaving my homestead and crops, if I do so not out of fear but because I refuse to regard anyone as my enemy—that is, out of a humanitarian motive."
>
> Firstly, although I do not approve of the violence which characterized Russia's resistance, 1 am of the view that there is great bravery and sacrifice in the scorched earth policy which they are adopting to resist the invader. I cannot, therefore, understand your saying that there is neither bravery nor sacrifice in destroying property for defence. Secondly, although you ask people to resist the invader, you would prefer them to leave their crops and homestead for the invader to use, not out of fear but out of a humanitarian motive. I cannot understand how this can be reconciled with your teaching of resistance to evil. I think that non-violent resistance to the invader demands it of me that I should prevent anything which will be of use to him, such as crops or homestead, etc., from falling into his hands even if this means sacrificing my life. May I request you to clarify this subject because it is of vital importance that people should know how they should offer non-violent resistance to the invader?

Surely the meaning is plain. There is no bravery in my poisoning my well or filling it in so that my brother who is at war with me may not use the water. Let us assume that I am fighting him in the orthodox manner. Nor is there sacrifice in it, for it does not purify me, and sacrifice, as its root meaning implies, presupposes purity. Such destruction may be likened to cutting one's nose to spite one's face.

Warriors of old had wholesome laws of war. Among the

[1] *Vide* "Scorched Earth", 16-3-1942.

excluded things were poisoning wells and destroying food crops. But I do claim that there are bravery and sacrifice in my leaving my wells, crops and homestead intact, bravery in that I deliberately run the risk of the enemy feeding himself at my expense and pursuing me, and sacrifice in that the sentiment of leaving something for the enemy purifies and ennobles me. My questioner has missed the conditional expression "if I must". I have imagined a state of things in which I am not prepared just now to die and therefore I want to retreat in an orderly manner in the hope of resisting under other and better auspices. The thing to consider here is not resistance but non-destruction of food crops and the like. Resistance, violent or non-violent, has to be well thought out. Thoughtless resistance will be regarded as bravado in military parlance, and violence or folly in the language of non-violence. Retreat itself is often a plan of resistance and may be a precursor of great bravery and sacrifice. Every retreat is not cowardice which implies fear to die. Of course a brave man would more often die in violently or non-violently resisting the aggressor in the latter's attempt to oust him from his property, but he will be no less brave if wisdom dictates present retreat.

SEVAGRAM, April 7, 1942
Harijan, 12-4-1942

210. THE LATE HIRJI JERAM—A SILENT WORKER

Bhai Nagardas of Pandya Khadi Karyalaya, Charala writes:[1]

I did not know at all that Bhai Hirji had died. I remember his face very well. All the work Bhai Hirji undertook he did silently. He felt self-conscious even when he gave away his land near Thana. His services were devoid of all ostentation. He was a man of humble means and had had only a little education but all the services he rendered were solid. He never aspired for fame. Service alone was his reward and his testimonial. Such a soul is immortal.

SEVAGRAM, April 7, 1942

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 12-4-1942

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had informed Gandhiji of the death of Hirjibhai Jeram Mistri who, besides being a good Khadi worker, had rendered considerable financial assistance to the khadi and Harijan activities.

211. LETTER TO MULCHAND PAREKH

SEVAGRAM,
April 7, 1942

BHAI MULCHAND,

Bhai Khushal seems to know you. He has come here unnecessarily. I have told him to go back. Do what you think proper.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 68

212. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

April 8, 1942

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Vidya must be sent away. It is not dharma to put up with misbehaviour. About Babu and Saryu also we must think.[1] However, I am continuing my efforts. I will try again after I return from Bombay. I am not very hopeful. Babu Mahatma seems to have cast a powerful spell. As a last resort, we can adopt the remedy I have suggested. If they don't listen to us, we should boycott them.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10607

213. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

April 8, 1942

BAPA,

I have read your note. About Bhai Jagannath, it is somewhat complicated. I shall see. I have done nothing much about your fever.

The old must protect themselves against fever. Take complete rest.

[1] Vidya, Babu and Saryu were relations of the addressee. The three young people had come under the influence of an impostor, Babu Mahatma of Ahmedabad, and attempts were being made to save them from him.

I hope Balkrishna has started Gadodiyaji's treatment. I have had no news about him.

BAPU

SHRI BAPA
HARIJAN NIVAS
KINGSWAY
DELHI 7

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1191

214. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
April 8, 1942

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have replied to your telegram. Your essay[1] is good but it has become very controversial, and it is full of politics. I expected from your pen something of a more permanent value. Jamnalal's politics were not his strong point. You might have seen that at the meeting of Mill-owners' Association I did not even touch upon his political work.

Even his politics could have been presented in moral terms. The criticism of the British should find no place in your essay. I am surprised that Kaka did not notice it. We shall talk in greater detail when we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I hope you are well and you have found out what quantity of butter you need.

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8056. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] On Jamnalal Bajaj, *vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 15-4-1942.

215. LETTER TO PARACHUTE SHASTRI

April 8, 1942

SHASTRIJI,

One does not see you any more. But I hope you are well and also doing some work of service.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10667

216. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

April 9, 1942

DEAR KU.,

This is Shri Thanu Pillay, President of the Travancore State Congress. He is on his way back to T. Please show him what can be shown during the little time he has at his disposal.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10164

217. LETTER TO NIMBKAR

April 9, 1942

MY DEAR NIMBKAR,

I was glad to have your letter and to find that you were keeping well. I like your dignified reply to the Government and hope that you will soon be free.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

218. LETTER TO GOVINDDAS

April 9, 1942

BHAI GOVINDDAS,

May the marriage of Chi. Jagmohan and Chi. Vidyavati go through without hitch and may they both be happy.

Blessings from

BAPU

SETH GOVINDDAS
RAJA GOKULDAS PALACE
JABALPUR, C. P.

From Hindi: C.W. 10269

219. TELEGRAM TO HASRAT MOHANI [1]

SEVAGRAM,
April 10, 1942

MAULANA HASRAT MOHANI

CONGRATULATIONS FOR WHAT? I KNOWN NOTHING. NEVERTHELESS YOU ARE WELCOME.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram dated April 9, 1942, which read: "Congratulations. Extremes meet. I also insist retirement policy meaning neither obstruction nor encouragement official war effort. Permit interview."

220. LETTER TO MANU S. MASHRUWALA

April 10, 1942

CHI. MANUDI[1],

You must not expect a separate letter from me. I am too busy.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MANORAMABEHN MASHRUWALA
BALKIRAN
SOUTH AVENUE
SANTACRUZ
BOMBAY

From Gujarati: C.W. 2681. Courtesy: Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

221. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON

SEVAGRAM,
April 10, 1942

BHAI TANDONJI,

I have your letter[2]. I could not have expected them to be more generous.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Daughter of Harilal Gandhi

[2] The addressee had conveyed to Gandhiji the resolution of the standing committee of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, for the text of which, *vide* "Hindustani Prachar Sabha", 22-4-1942.

222. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON,
April 11, 1942

CHI. MIRA,

I wrote to you yesterday. You will, I know, do the best you can for the camp[1]. As to other work I have nothing in view just now and may not have any at any time. But no one knows what will happen the next moment.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: C. W. 6495. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9890

223. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEGAON, *via* WARDHA, (C. P.),
April 11, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

On the off chance that you will be on today's G.T., Khursh-edbehn is going to fetch you. You must come and finish the national week here and give us a report of your doings.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10910. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan

[1] A women's camp which she was helping in running

224. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

April 11, 1942

CHI. KANTI,

I have your letter. You alone can train Saraswati. There the interests of all the three of you are suffering. Shanti[1] is a very simple

child. I am prepared to welcome Saraswati again and again.[2]

About Harilal I have talked to Devdas and asked him to tell Harilal that if he is ready I will get him admitted to some jail or asylum for some time. But he is not likely to accept any reasonable suggestion. What you suggest about yourself becomes you. But such sacrifice is not necessary, at present at any rate. It is also futile to put such a proposal to him. He is devoid of human feelings.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7366. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

225. SPEECH ON OPENING OF SWARJYA BHANDAR

WARDHA,
April 11, 1942

Fifteen leaders sitting in Delhi cannot achieve much unless they are backed by the constructive programme. For many days I have been contemplating why we cannot introduce yarn currency like Government currency. Vinoba Bhave, with my consent, had introduced yarn currency from one pice to five-rupee notes with which one could purchase corn, leather goods, charkhas and other articles stocked in Gramseva Mandal shops in Wardha.

I warn the people against counterfeiting such notes. Our currency will encourage yarn produce and khadi and increase its value. I bless this Bhandar and its activities. We have named this Swarajya Bhandar, which is significant, as by carrying on constructive

[1] Addressee's son

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Kantilal Gandhi", 6-4-1942.

activities we can win swaraj. We must approach villagers by mixing with them and organize and strengthen ourselves. I wish that transactions should be in yarn.

I cannot say whether our leaders in Delhi have succeeded or not, but I can assert that their hands will be strengthened if we follow the constructive programme.

The Hindu, 12-4-1942

226. NOTES

LINGUISTIC BASIS

My reply[1] to .the Maharajkumar of Vizianagram on the Andhra Province has brought me lengthy correspondence about Hindi and Marathi-speaking provinces. The argument is that all Hindi-speaking areas should be regarded as one province, as also should Marathi-speaking areas. So far as I am concerned I am quite in sympathy with the suggestion. I believe that the linguistic basis is the correct basis for demarcating provinces. I should not mind two provinces speaking the same language, if they are not contiguous. If Kerala and Kashmir were speaking the same language, I would treat them as two distinct provinces. The writers suggest, however, that I should lead the agitation for the redistribution, or in this case amalgamation, of the Marathi-speaking and Hindi-speaking areas.

This is an impracticable proposition. The demand for amalgamation has to be made by Congressmen living in the respective areas. If it is unanimous, the Congress cannot resist it. The thing is entirely in their own hands. Let my correspondents and others not mix up the Andhra agitation with their proposals. Andhra is already a separate province for the Congress. But, whilst the Congress ministry was in office, the Andhras agitated for legal recognition. My correspondents ask for Congress recognition of their proposals. Whilst on merits I endorse the proposal, I would discountenance any such agitation and diversion from the main then before the country—the duty of every Indian in face of the impending invasion of India by Japan.

[1] *Vide* "The Andhras", 20-3-1942.

Redistribution of provinces, etc., important matters though they are in themselves, pale in insignificance before the question which overshadows every other. Those things may easily await the termination of the war. We hope to see a new vision and a new order at the end of the present catastrophe.

HISSAR FAMINE AND SPINNING

Dr. Gopichand has been discussing with me famine in Hissar. It seems to have become almost chronic. The A.I.S.A. has been working for many years in that district and giving relief to the poor people through spinning. Dr. Gopichand thinks that, if more capital can be made available, much aid can be given. It is perhaps not possible to make a successful appeal outside Hissar. There is so much distress everywhere, and with the terrible spectre of war much more is to be expected. Therefore everywhere local charity has to be depended upon. As often happens even in poor areas there are to be found monied men. Bhiwani is a big trade centre in Hissar, and it has several monied men. Let me hope that they and those others in Hissar who can will come to the rescue and do what they can for the much-needed relief.

SEVAGRAM, April 12, 1942
Harijhan, 19-4-1942

227. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEGAON WARDHA,
April 12, 1942

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

I hope you are doing well. I would like to send Abha[1] to Rajkot. Vina[2] is doing extraordinarily well. Abha too would do better there than here. But she perhaps should not go to Rajkot till she is finally engaged to Kanu[3]. Please consult your wife and let me know. I am convinced that Abha's happiness depends on her being tied to Kanu.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10337. Courtey: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

228. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

April 12, 1942

CHI. VALJI,

I got your article. I have passed it. I have been forgetting to inform you that you will not get anything more, that is at the [higher] rate of Rs. 25. The trustees did not pass the increase. There was no point in insisting on it. I will, therefore find the additional sum from some other source. Do you need it urgently? Ba is well.

Blessings from
BAPU

PROF. V. G. DESAI
DEVAGIRI
POONA 4

From Gujarati: C.W. 7497. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1] Addressee's daughters
[2] *ibid*
[3] Son of Narandas, Gandhiji's nephew

229. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

April 12, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You have to take the responsibility for Ch. No one will interfere. Love can be tested only when love operates in freedom.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4421; also S.N. 24477

230. UNITY IS VITAL IN INDIA[1]

[After *April 12, 1942*][2]

The proposals that Sir Stafford Cripps advanced for settling the Political deadlock in India contemplated splitting the country into three parts, each part to have a different system of government.[3] These proposals, it would seem, would be to the liking of many of India's Muslim leaders, since they have for long advocated dividing the country between Hindus and Muslims. Yet Sir Stafford's plan differed in many respects from the Muslim League's plan, and so it received no more enthusiastic a reception from them than it received from the Indian National Congress.[4] The Muslim League represents Muslims; the Indian National Congress purports to represent Hindus and Muslims alike. Can the Congress claim be supported? It can. From its beginning it has been national, representing all beliefs, not one alone.

Its originator was an Englishman, strange though that may seem

[1] The article had originally been published in the November 1942 issue of *Picture World*, an American magazine.

[2] This was obviously written after Sir Stafford Cripps left India on April 12, 1942

[3] Sir Stafford Cripps arrived in Delhi on March 22, 1942 for resolving he 'Indian deadlock'. For his proposals, *vide* Appendix "British War Cabinet's Proposals", before 27-3-1942.

[4] Both the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League rejected the Cripps formula; the Congress because it did not concede independence immediately, left the control of defence of India with the British Government and indirectly envisaged partition of India by giving rights to the provinces to secede if they wished. The Muslim League opposed it because the fundamental proposals were not open to any modifications.

to some. It has always had one or two Muslim secretaries. It has had Muslim, English, Christian and Parsi Presidents. Through its whole history, now running into the second half of a century, the Congress has ever striven to represent the whole of India, in a manner no other organization has done. Every victory scored by the Congress has benefited all communities, Muslims and Hindus alike.

I believe that the Congress embodies the hopes and aspirations of all India. Its traditions unfit it to represent Hindus as against Muslims or *vice versa*. It is fit only to represent the common interest of all sons of Hindustan. Yet, differences between Hindus and Muslims remain, and it is said that Hinduism and Islam represent two antagonistic cultures and doctrines that cannot live peacefully together, and that therefore they must be separated into two different nations.

I myself could never subscribe to the partitioning of the country. I would fight it with every means at my disposal and yet I must declare that national independence is an impossibility until Indians have solved this communal problem. There are two ways of solving it. One is the way of non-violence, the other the way of violence. Unfortunately, at the present moment, those Hindus who do not know the use of violence, of deadly weapons, would fain learn the trick, so as to be able to match what they describe as Muslim violence.

If peace is ever to come in that manner, through both parties being equally matched in violent weapons, I know that it will not come in my lifetime, and if it came, I should not care to be a witness of it.

For it will be an armed peace, to be broken at any moment.

Whether those who believe in the two-nation theory can live as friends with those who believe in one nation, I do not know. If the vast majority of Muslims regard themselves as a separate nation having nothing in common with the Hindus and others, no power on earth can compel them to think otherwise. If they want partition of India on that basis, they must have partition, unless the Hindus want to fight against such a division. So far as I can see, preparation for such a fight is going on now on behalf of both parties.

I dread to see it. That way lies national suicide. One party or the other will call in outside help. In that case, good-bye to independence.

The only true and just way is the way of unity and non-violence of regarding one another not as members of hostile cultures but as sons of the same great motherland. Hindus and Muslims have worked and do work together in peace; they lived together in peace in the past; they can live together in peace in the future. Our task is to assure each son of the motherland that whatever his beliefs, his rights and religious and cultural interests will be protected by the laws of the land, formulated by a national assembly democratically elected.

Now, with the aggressor at the gates, more than ever unity is vital in India. I desire above all things to see a joint struggle against him and to achieve independence. In the very process of doing this, it is highly likely that we shall have forgotten our quarrels in the same common goal. But if we find that we have not forgotten them, then will be the time to quarrel among ourselves, if quarrel we must. Not now. Now India herself stands in the balance.

The Bombay Chronicle, 25-4-1942

231. NOTES

ACHARYA ANANDSHANKAR DHRUVA[1]

The death of Acharya Anandshankar Dhruva[2] is an irreparable loss not only to Gujarat but also to the U.P., for he had rendered invaluable services to the Benares Hindu University for a number of years.[3] It will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to replace him.

He was an active educationist to the end. Many students have lost a true friend in him. He was Malaviyaji's right hand. Malaviyaji's grief can be better imagined than described. But Anandshankar Dhruva was no mere educationist. His interests were many and varied.

He was a keen student of politics, a worshipper at the shrine of swaraj, and a social reformer. His relations with the orthodox were cordial, for he was an observer of many of their ceremonials. But his instinct and heart were always with the reformer, and he expressed his

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 19-4.1942. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

[2] He died in Ahmedabad on April 7, 1942.

[3] He was Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the Benares Hindu University from 1920 to 1937.

views fearlessly. He was widely respected for his outstanding knowledge of Sanskrit and the Hindu scriptures, and was a fine representative of the Hindu religion. As for me I had invariably received his help. He was friends equally with labour and capital and, having gained the confidence of both, was able to render great services to both in Ahmedabad. The bereaved family's sorrow will be shared by, and they will have the sympathy of, all who had the privilege of knowing the late Acharya.

LALA SHANKERLAL

I have two letters about the treatment accorded to Lala Shankerlal of Delhi in jail. They say he is no better off than Sardar Sardul Singh Caveeshar. I have nothing to do with Lala Shankerlal's politics or views, but the same remarks apply to his case as to Caveeshar's. He is as much entitled to decent and humane treatment as Caveeshar. This is what his nephew writes:

> I went to the place in the company of my aunt, the wife of Lala Shankerlal, for an interview at 3-30 p.m. on the 23rd inst. When face to face, I at once detected signs of great weakness and reduction in the energy of Lalaji. He was reduced physically, his complexion was pale, and his face drawn. To my great horror and dismay I found that he is confined day and night to a dark, damp and unhealthy dungeon which could hardly be a befitting place for confinement even for a criminal, much less a gentleman of Lalaji's status.

If this statement is true, the matter calls for immediate attention and redress.

ECONOMY IN TRAVELLING

B.B. & C.I. Railway management are discountenancing travelling as far as possible. It is a timely warning. People should travel as little as possible. Only urgent necessity can warrant railway travelling. One fine morning we may find that all civil booking is stopped. Movement of troops may render this precaution absolutely necessary. It is a good thing to accustom ourselves to the practice well in advance of the necessity.

SEVAGRAM, April 13, 1942

Harijan, 19-4-1942

232. QUESTION BOX

WHY NOT IN UNIVERSITIES?

Q. You have expressed yourself against communalism in cricket. Are not communal universities also to be deplored? In colleges and hostels that are open to all, deep friendships spring up and religious tolerance becomes a natural thing, Would not well-endowed chairs in common centres of learning serve the purpose of advancing different cultures?

A. You are right. If we can do without communal institutions, it would be good. But I am unable to say that there should be no Muslim or Hindu Universities as I am able to say positively that there should be no communal cricket. The communal universities, if their origin is not tainted, may conceivably serve a national purpose. Thus the Hindu University and the Muslim University may, as they ought to, be seats of communal concord. But communal sports seem to be a contradiction in terms. I wholly agree with you that there should be, as there are, non-communal colleges and hostels. Unfortunately the virus has entered even these. Let us hope that it is a passing phase.

WHEN LEADERS DIFFER

Q. You say people in the cities should evacuate under certain circumstances.[1] Panditji and Rajaji say they should not on any account. What are we to do?

A. I appreciate your difficulty. I can only advise you to use your judgment and choose that advice which appeals to your reason. We are living in hard times such as we have never experienced before.

I am quite sure of my ground. People who are not wanted should evacuate from cities which are within the danger zone. There is no cowardice in orderly withdrawal. Women and children and aged people and all those who are not wanted should evacuate so as to enable the defenders the better to regulate defence of cities under their control. The evacuees will show real courage if they will settle down in villages and tackle problems that face villagers. Differences of opinion between leaders ought not to worry people. Honest differences are often a healthy sign of progress. And the differences you refer to are honest.

SEVAGRAM, April 13, 1942

Harijan, 19-4-1942

[1] *Vide* "Desirability of Exodus", 10-3-1942.

233. THAT ILL-FATED PROPOSAL

It is a thousand pities that the British Government should have sent a proposal[1] for dissolving the political deadlock, which, on the face of it, was too ridiculous to find acceptance anywhere. And it was a misfortune that the bearer should have been Sir Stafford Cripps, acclaimed as a radical among radicals and a friend of India. I have no doubt about his goodwill. He believed that no one could have brought anything better for India. But he should have known that at least the Congress would not look at Dominion Status even though it carried the right of secession the very moment it was taken. He knew too that the proposal contemplated the splitting up of India into three parts each having different ideas of governance. It contemplated Pakistan, and yet not the Pakistan of the Muslim League's conception. And last of all it gave no real control over defence to responsible ministers.

The fact is that Sir Stafford Cripps, having become part of the Imperial machinery, unconsciously partook of its quality. Such is its strength. It is the almost invariable experience in India that those Indians who are drawn into it lose their originality and become like their companions in the service and often outdo the latter in their loyalty to the Moloch of Imperialism. Had Sir Stafford remained detached, he would have conferred with his radical friends in India and secured their approbation before undertaking his very difficult mission. If it be said in answer that he could not very well do so, that is exactly what I mean when I say that, having become part of the machinery, he was bound to fall under its spell and could not do the obvious thing. But it is no use brooding over the past or British mistakes. It is more profitable to look within. The British will take care of themselves, if we will take care of ourselves. Our mistakes or rather defects are many. Why blame the British for our own limitations? Attainment of Independence is an impossibility till we have solved the communal tangle. We may not blind ourselves to the naked fact. How to tackle the problem is another question. We will never tackle it so long as either or both parties think that independence will or can come without any solution of the tangle.

There are two ways of solving what has almost become

[1] *Vide* Appendix "British War Cabinet's Proposals", before 27-3-1942.

insoluble. The one is the royal way of non-violence, and the other of violence. In the first way the formal consent or co-operation of the other party is unnecessary. If there is a dispute between two boys over the ownership of an apple, the non-violent way is to leave the apple for the other party to take, the latter well knowing that it would mean non-co-operation on the surrendering party's part. The second way is the usual way of violence. There the parties fight with each other till one is for the time being worsted. All interested in freedom have to make the choice. I suppose the choice has already been made by the chief actors. But the rank and file do not know their own minds. It is necessary for them, if they can, to think independently and take to non-violent action in terms of unity. It consists in Hindus and Muslims on the wayside fraternizing with one another, if they believe that joint life is a perfect possibility, nay, a necessity. Whether those who believe in the two-nation theory and communal partition of India can live as friends co-operating with one another I do not know. If the vast majority of Muslims regard themselves as a separate nation having nothing in common with Hindus and others, no power on earth can compel them to think otherwise. And if they want to partition India on that basis, they must have the partition, unless Hindus want to fight against such a division. So far as I can see such a preparation is silently going on behalf of both the parties. That way lies suicide.

Each party will probably want British or foreign aid. In that case, good-bye to independence. The fight will then range round not independence but the imaginary apple after the manner of the imaginary boys. I dare not contemplate the actuality. I should not like to be its living witness. I would love to see a joint fight for independence. In the very process of securing independence it is highly likely that we shall have forgotten our quarrels. But if we have not, it will be then only time to quarrel, if we must.

SEVAGRAM, April 13, 1942

Harijan, 19-4-1942

234. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA

April 13, 1942

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

You were punished as you deserved. Do not make such a mistake again. You can do a lot of service even while resting. What is necessary is the urge to serve. That you certainly have.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI ANNAPURNA
SWARAJYA ASHRAM
BARDOLI
TAPTI V. RLY.
B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9436

235. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

SEGAON,
April 13, 1942

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I read your letter addressed to Kishorelal. You must both stop grieving over the dead.[1] Keep yourselves immersed in your work there. Keep away from quarrels. Let those who indulge in backbiting do so. Settle the disputes, if you can. Otherwise keep away from them.

I can well realize even at this distance that your task is difficult.

Carve your way through it. God is our Protector in all misfortunes. He cannot be seen, but is always with us. If you cultivate this faith,you will never feel helpless.

Ba is much better. The others also are quite well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4928

[1] The reference is to the death of Sushila's father, Nanabhai I. Mashruwala.

236. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
April 13, 1942

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got a letter from you after many days. I went on writing and dictating letters to Mahadev. But you were stuck in the capital. Never mind. You did well.

I am not surprised to learn that the intestines are not coming round. They do need long rest.

Jawaharlal now seems to have completely abandoned ahimsa.

You should go on doing what you can. Restrain the people if you can.

His speech[1] reported today seems terrible. I intend to write to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI

68 MARINE DRIVE

BOMBAY

CHI. MANI,

I got your note, too. Tell Vanu[2] that I got her letter.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 272

[1] Nehru had advised the people in the event of a Japanese invasion to resort to the scorched-earth policy and guerilla warfare.

[2] Vanamala N. Parikh.

237. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

April 13, 1942

CHI. MITHUBEHN,

I have your letter. If Ba is willing, I will send her. But it seems to me she will not go at such a time. I will talk to her, though I can have no objection to sending her to you. I hope you are quite well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MITHUBEHN
KASTURBA ASHRAM
P.O. MAROLI BAZAAR, *via* NAVSARI
B.B. & C.I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2720

238. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

April 13, 1942

CHI. CHIMANLAL ,

I do not at all feel enthusiastic about offering a plot to Prabhashankar[1]. But if he is prepared to spend money, we may build a house for him without conceding to him any rights over it. It would be convenient to get the alterations asked for by Champa[2] carried out at her expense. It has become my duty and that of the Ashram too, to accommodate Champa and her children. We will not, therefore, make this case a precedent for a general rule. The general rule should be not to give accommodation to anyone.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10608

[1] Prabhashankar Mehta, father-in-law of Ratilal Mehta
[2] Ratilal Mehta's wife

239. NOTE TO BALVANTSINHA

April 13, 1942

One may dedicate oneself only to God, never to a man. So you cannot dedicate yourself to me nor may I accept such dedication. I am not perfect, nor am I a *jivanmukta*. I have not had the realization. It is still an aspiration. When I have the realization the world will know.

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 303

240. LETTER TO VIDYAVATI

April 13, 1942

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. My blessings and Ba's to the newly-wed couple.[1] May Jogendra[2] be well soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

RANI VIDYAVATI
T. R. N. SANYAL BUILDING
11 BLOCK, JOGENDRA PATHAK ROAD
LUCKNOW

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

[1] The addressee's son and his bride
[2] Addressee's son

241. DISTRESS IN BENGAL[1]

Bengal has suffered from communal riots, it is suffering from famine, and now it threatens to be the target of Japan. Military preparations are inevitable. This means eviction of villagers. Satis Babu sends me a graphic account of an eviction near Chittapore.

Thirty-three villages have been evacuated under very short notice. The notices were dated 1st April, served on the 2nd, and the villagers had to leave on the 4th. The troops entered on the 4th. In one village the villagers got the notice on the same day that the troops entered. The evacuees were paid removal cost at the rate of Rs. 10 to 100 according to the Union rates they were paying. Compensation is to be determined and paid hereafter. The rules framed for evacuation are elaborate and read reasonable. But however reasonable they may be, the hardship of sudden evacuation is inevitable, and the enforcement of the rules having unavoidably to be left in the hands of many and petty officials, fairness cannot be ensured. Under the circumstances the utmost that workers like Satis Babu can do is to cheer up the people. Their solid contribution must be to teach the villagers to face the inevitable hardships calmly and bravely and derive comfort from within. Unless they are depressed by their so-called comforters, they respond to the best in them and cheerfully face the worst. This is not to say that the authorities should be callous to the sufferings of the poor. In the present case I do not see what they could have done if the troops had to be located where they have been all of a sudden. Laymen cannot judge whether the military officers should not have anticipated events and made arrangements in good time.

SEVAGRAM, April 14, 1942

Harijan, 19-4-1942

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

242. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

SEVAGRAM,
April 14, 1942

CHI. MAGANBHAI,

I have gone through the whole correspondence between Nanavati and you. It has been decided that so long as the new arrangement does not come to stay I myself should continue to write to you. I hope you remember my detailed letter. Will you be able to take care of so many *pracharakas*? Are you yourself interested in this new task or have you agreed to shoulder the burden only because I want you to do it? It is an important task and I can foresee great results from it.

Enclosed is a draft of the new scheme[1]. You may suggest any changes in it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have drafted today a pamphlet for Nanavati. I will also send you a copy of it.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

243. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

April 14, 1942

CHI, PURUSHOTTAM[2],

I have your letter. You have lived a third of your life. Complete the remaining two-thirds in a worthy manner. May you go on rendering more and more service. You have done well in including the reading of the *Ramayana* in the prayer. Recite the *chhandas*, *chopais*, etc., in the correct style and understand the meaning properly. The *Ramayana* has always had a special place in the Gandhi family.

[1] Of yarn currency, *vide* "Meaning of Yarn Currency", 17-4-1942.
[2] Son of Narandas Gandhi, Gandhiji's nephew

Paramanand Gandhi[1] had a very sweet voice. He had almost the whole of the *Ramayana* by heart. He knew its deeper meaning. I have not heard another such voice. Be like him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

244. LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA KAMDAR

April 14, 1942

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA,

I have your letter. For the time being let him remain where you have put him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N.7474. Also C.W. 4920. Courtesy: Hari-ichchha Kamdar

245. LETTER TO SURENDRARAI B. MEDH

April 14, 1942

CHI. SURENDRA MEDH[2],

I have your letter. This time you gave me no news about happenings there. They do not allow *Indian Opinion* into India. We hardly get any letters. If Bhai Hamid comes to me, I will do what I can. I do not have much say in such matters. Still I will try. At present there is a scarcity of khadi and woollen material here. We cannot get enough to send to anybody outside.

Ba is quite well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4929

[1] Cousin of Gandhiji

[2] A co-worker of Gandhiji in South Africa

246. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
April 14, 1942

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Again there has been no letter from you. The Professor[1] has given me a detailed account[2]. If you are not well do not go to Allahabad.[3] But you must let them know your views. If the Congress adopts the policy of violence, I think you should resign. This is not the time for anybody to suppress his views and keep quiet. Things are going the wrong way in most matters. It does not seem proper for one to remain a silent spectator of them. It is immaterial whether one is praised or blamed.

I should like you to read carefully what I have been writing in *Harijan*. In Orissa while on the one hand the Communists are said to be preparing for a guerrilla war, on the other hand members of the Forward Bloc are said to be preparing to help Japan. Both these are rumours. Nothing is known for certain. But both things are possible.

An attack on Orissa seems quite likely. The Government has massed a large number of troops there. How is your health? What does that sadhu say? How is Vanu? She does not seem to be improving at all.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

There is a proposal to take up Patil[4] in the [Village] Industries Association. Will he have to be paid? And how much? He will have to assume responsibility for Maharashtra.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 273-4

[1] J. B. Kripalani
[2] Of discussions with Cripps
[3] For the Congress Working Committee meeting
[4] L.M. Patil

247. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEGAON,
April 14, 1942

CHI. MRIDU,

I have received your letter. I am a little afraid that Jawaharlal and I are beginning to follow different paths. You will have noticed it.

In such a situation, I shall not have you swing between two viewpoints. I advise you to follow Jawaharlal. My days are now numbered. My views appear in *Harijan*. Balance them against other views, but where your own mind does not work, follow Jawaharlal.

If you do not find your field in Gujarat and are upset, then go where Jawaharlal puts you. Wherever you go, it will all be well with you. Whenever you go, be patient. Do not neglect your health.

I have preserved your old letter. Some day I shall definitely reply to it.

I had a letter from Mirabehn. I do not wish to settle her anywhere else for the present.

It is a good sign that even the mill-owners of Gujarat have started taking interest in the Congress work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11224. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

248. KHADI AND VILLAGE INDUSTRY [1]

[Before *April 15, 1942*][2]

Q. You have often said that khadi and village industry are supplementary to each other. But you have created separate organizations for them with the result that a khadi worker, when he goes to a village, is unable to spare time from his own particular work for either village industries or uplift. Recently you have asked for khadi and village industry *bhandars* to be run jointly. Times are such that transport of goods is becoming increasingly difficult. Should not khadi and village industry centres, therefore, be converted into one? Would it not be a good thing if khadi

[1] This appeared in *Harijan* under "Notes", and was originally published in *Sarvodaya* and *Khadi Jagat* under the date 15-4-1942.

[2] *ibid.*

workers gave up all ideas of sending locally produced khadi to distant places and concentrated on both khadi and village industry production for local use? Khadi workers are asked to penetrate into the houses of artisans with charkha and train them, to rouse a love of village products in them, improve their ways of living, health, sanitation, etc. But if they have no time to spare, how can they do all that is expected of them?

A. I admit that, if a khadi worker's entire time is employed in khadi work, he cannot possibly attend to either village uplift or industry. Three persons would be required for the three tasks. My idea is that in a well-organized village one person should suffice. For example, one worker may devote two hours to taking in yarn, distributing slivers and spinning tools, and sales of khadi; village industry work might take even less, and the remainder of the time he could give to village uplift and general education. This has not till now been possible because the khadi workers' time has been devoted to teaching people how to spin, etc. But now the time has come when khadi and village products, locally produced, must also be locally absorbed. In that case one person will be able to do all the work.

Today it suffices to say that all this work is complementary—and must become one as far as possible. The amalgamation cannot be imposed; it must be a natural growth. I do not, I cannot, apportion any blame to anyone for the existing position. Our plans have progressed as far as our intelligence and experience could have taken them. The creation of khadi *vidyalayas* is meant to expand and improve the technique of work. We shall learn from them how all departments of village work can be amalgamated.

Harijan, 31-5-1942

249. LETTER TO CHUNILAL

April 15, 1942

BHAI CHUNILAL,

My blessings to Chi. Pushpa and Chi. Kanchan on their marriages. May the married lives of both couples be ideal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10093

250. LETTER TO A. S. PATWARDHAN

SEVAGRAM,
April 15, 1942

BHAI PATWARDHAN,

I am definitely of the opinion that Bhayya[1] should form a trust for the money[2] as early as possible and an arbitrator should be appointed to advise on its utilization.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

251. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

April 15, 1942

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. You are right. Such severe criticism of the British is not appropriate in a biography of Jamnalalji.[3] This criticism has a place but not in a book of this kind. Jamnalal would never have entered politics if he had not been impelled by moral principles. I feel that ill-will against the British had little part in his life. Be that as it may, criticism of the British appears improper in this article of yours and will obstruct your future work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8058. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

252. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 15, 1942

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

The Professor is here. He has told me everything. I also heard about your Press interview. Whereas we have always had differences of opinion it appears to me that now we also differ in practice. What can

[1] Annasaheb Sahasrabuddhe
[2] Belonging to the Tilak Vidyalaya
[3] *Vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 8-4-1942,

Vallabhbhai and others do in such a situation? If your policy is accepted the Committee should not retain its present shape. The more

I think of it the more I feel that you are making a mistake. I see no good in American troops entering India and in our resorting to guerrilla warfare.

It is my duty to caution you.

I hope Indu and Feroze are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I heard yesterday that the Forward Bloc people in Utkal are armed and that the Communists are ready for guerrilla warfare. I do not know how much truth there is in it.

From the Hindi original: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

253. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

WARDHA,
April 15, 1942

I asked Gandhiji if he could express his views on the Delhi talks. He said:

I have nothing to say. I left the Working Committee in the middle[1] and in any case I am an all-war resister. But did I have to be with them?

When I pointed out that the reason he gave for leaving the Working Committee during its session was not held by many to be convincing, Gandhiji said:

It may not be convincing to those who do not want to believe.

But it is cent per cent true and it was more for Acharya Narendra Deo's[2] sake than for my wife's, for I had heard on the phone that she was all right. But the news about Acharya Narendra Deo was disconcerting and Maulana Azad disengaged me very reluctantly.

The Hindu, 16-4-1942

[1] The Working Committee met in Delhi from March 29 to April 11, 1942. Gandhiji withdrew from the proceedings and left Delhi for Wardha on April 5.

[2] Socialist leader; then a teacher at Kashi Vidyapith

254. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

SEVAGRAM,
April 16, 1942

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter.

Everybody envies me Shankarrao's shawl[1]. Any arrangement that you propose will be accepted.[2]

There is no possibility of Shankarrao being arrested[3]. I give in my articles as much as I can. Read them carefully and ask me if you do not understand anything in them. You must have read my reply to the doubt raised by Shankarrao. Ultimately everybody will have to act on their own as I have suggested. I have no doubt at all that we shall bring credit to the movement only to the extent that we spread out in villages. Read and understand my scheme for using yarn as currency.

It is to appear in *Khadi Jagat*.[4]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 6864. Also G.N. 10425. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

255. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SEVAGRAM,
April 16, 1942

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Bhai Shantikumar, Rai Bahadur Virji Sheth and Bhai Dadajan also have come. There are about 8 lakh people in Burma. They are all suffering. To bring them over is our duty. These friends wish that we

[1] Made from the yarn spun by Shankarrao Deo, presented by the addressee to Gandhiji

[2] The addressee had told Gandhiji that she would give him two shawls made from yarn spun by Shankarrao Deo every year along with two dhotis made from her yarn which she gave to Gandhiji regularly.

[3] For offering civil disobedience

[4] *Vide* "Meaning of Yarn Currency", 17-4-1942.

should form a special committee and that you too should be on it. Do what you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8057. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

256. MEANING OF YARN CURRENCY[1]

I find that I have not been able fully to explain to my co-workers my idea of yarn currency. I attempt to do so here. Metal coins or paper notes are not a true standard because their value is arbitrarily determined. The value of the paper of a five-rupee note is even less than one pice. It has a value because of the government stamp on it. However, this or any such standard is very necessary for carrying on business transactions on a very large scale. But the idea behind khadi and other village industries is quite different. We do not want business on a large scale. We want to restrict our attention to only one of the seven lakhs of villages. We want the same independence for that village as we want for any other of the seven lakh villages and the world at large. So our villages should at least become self-reliant as far as food and clothing are concerned.

In such villages there cannot be any need for metal or any other imposed currency for mutual transactions. Our standard should be a rural product, which everyone can make, which can be stored and the price of which does not fluctuate daily. What can this be? It can neither be soap, nor oil, nor vegetables. Thus after enumerating and eliminating all the things only yarn remains. Everyone can produce it. There is always a demand for it. It can be stored well. If we can introduce yarn currency in the villages, they will make great progress and become self-reliant very soon. This is not an attempt to enumerate all the advantages of yarn currency. I want to tell you only what it means and how it will function.

For this a shop is needed where items of daily use for villagers can be available. All the villagers could buy anything from this shop by giving only yarn—there should not be any exception to this. As a

[1] This was originally published in the April issue of *Khadi Jagat.*

result all the villagers will have to spin to buy things from the above mentioned shops. In these shops yarn of given strength and in given quantity will be accepted and therefore the yarn spun by the villagers will be properly tied. A villager will not let even a single strand of it be wasted because so many things could be bought with it. The importance of yarn will increase. The commodities secured in exchange of yarn will be of good quality and will not be expensive. Even a child will be able to buy from there without fear of being cheated. As the shops cannot accept any kind of yarn, there will be need for a yarn examiner whose function will be to test the yarn currency. To prevent the yarn from getting dirty it will have to be wrapped in paper or some such thing. The shopkeeper will blindly accept the yarn which is well wrapped by the examiner.

As the examiner and the shopkeepers are connected with an institution such as the Charkha Sangh, the yarn will be daily sent to the Sangh office and from there to the weavers.

There is no room for loss in such shops. There is no possibility of much fluctuation in the prices of things sold there. Generally only those things which are available in the villages will be kept. The number of such things will increase gradually.

In such a scheme every house can become a mint and can make as much money (yarn) as it wants. It is clear that in such shops intoxicants, imported things and harmful products will not be sold.

And therefore the yarn nexus will remain more or less pure.

SEVAGRAM, April 17, 1942

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 3-5-1942

257. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

April 17, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

So you could not give me a day ! ! ! Supposing you had to give one more day to Delhi. But you know best what to do at a given moment. I hope you will find at least a day for Sevagram on your way to Allahabad.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2085

258. LETTER TO S. SATYAMURTI

April 17, 1942

DEAR SATYAMURTI,

Your letter.

I am doing all I can in the way of showing the non-violent approach to the pending menace. But I am helpless if the Congress policy changes from moment to moment.

I do not know how Hindu-Muslim understanding can be brought about. Our meeting can be easily brought about. I have only to walk to his place. Having gone there, what am I to do or say? If I knew that, I would go. There seems to me to be no meeting ground.

Ba is quite well. Thanks.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: S. Satyamurti Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also G.W. 10371

259. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS SHAH

April 17, 1942

BHAI KRISHNADAS,

I have your letter. I do have faith in Ayurveda but what can I do if the vaidyas lack competence? All the same I keep in touch with them and take what I can out of them. It is precious little, however.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. KRISHNADAS SHAH

BHARATIYA UDYOG PRACHAR

14 BHASKAR LANES 3RD FLOOR

BHULESHWAR, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 11536

260. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

April 18, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Even now I am clear about rice. But if the women insist on it, they should be given it. What about the men? They should be consulted. In such things there is much room for judiciousness and generosity.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4422

261. TEN QUESTIONS REGARDING THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE[1]

Q. 1. The Persian script did not originate in India. It came during the Mogul period just as the Roman script has with the advent of the British. But you do not advocate the Roman script for the national language. Why then the Persian?

A. If the Roman script had made a home for itself in India in the same way as the Persian, I would agree with you. But the knowledge of the former is confined to a mere handful of English-knowing persons, while crores of Hindus and Muslims are conversant with the latter. You should try to find out the exact number of persons knowing the Roman and Persian scripts respectively.

Q. 2. If you advocate the learning of Urdu for the sake of Hindu-Muslim unity, then please remember that a large number of Mussalmans in India do not know Urdu. They are conversant only with their own provincial languages. These people would far more easily understand a national language comprising words familiar to their provincial languages. The North Indian languages are all derived from Sanskrit and therefore resemble each other a good deal. Sanskrit words have even crept to a large extent into the Southern languages. Then why advocate for these people the learning of an unfamiliar Urdu tongue full of Arabic and Persian words?

A. There is force in your argument. But I would like you to delve a little deeper into the question. I admit that in asking people to learn the Persian script I have at the back of my mind a contribution to Hindu-Muslim unity. There has been a long-standing conflict between the Hindi and Urdu tongues as between the two scripts.

Today it has assumed a virulent form. In 1935 in Indore the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, while defining Hindi, gave a definite place to the Persian script.[2] In 1925 the Congress gave the national language the name of Hindustani.[3] Both scripts were made permissible. Thus Hindi plus Urdu was recognized as the national language. The question of Hindu-Muslim unity was definitely in the forefront in all

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu,* 26-4-1942. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan.*

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Indore", 20-4-1935.

[3] *Vide* "The Annual Demonstration", 7-1-1926

these decisions. I have not raised this issue today. I have only given it a concrete form. It is a logical outcome of events. If we want to develop the national language to the fullest extent, it behoves us to give the two scripts an equal status. In the end whichever is appreciated more by the people will be the more widespread.

The provincial languages are closely allied to Sanskrit, and it is true that lacs of Muslims are conversant only with their provincial languages, and that Hindi and the Devanagari script will, therefore, be easier for them to learn than Urdu and the Persian characters. My scheme will not interfere with this. In fact the people will benefit more than ever by learning the Persian script. Your trouble arises because you look upon this as a burden. Whether it is a gain or a burden depends on the outlook of the learner. He who is filled with a love of country will never consider such learning a burden. There will be no compulsion by my scheme. Only those who consider it a gain will learn the Persian script or the Devanagari as the case may be.

Q. 3. A very large proportion of persons in India know the Devanagari script. Surely Punjabis, Sindhis and the Frontier folk can easily learn it too.

A. The reply to this is really embodied in the preceding answer.

Frontier people and others will have to learn the Devanagari script.

Q. 4. A national language is really more for speech than literary purposes. Its script is, therefore, not so essential or is, at any rate, of secondary importance. Moreover is it not easier to learn the national language through the script of the mother tongue? And where would be the harm in so doing?

A. You are right. It is easier to learn the national language through the script of the mother tongue. As far as I know this is being done in Southern India though perhaps not systematically. Unlike you I do not look upon the learning of two scripts as a burden. It is not so hard as you fear. I can never be opposed to the learning of the national language through the script of the mother tongue. Given the keenness to learn it, all systems will be employed.

Q. 5. If it is not possible to make real contacts with the non-Hindi-knowing provinces until some of us have learnt the national language, why not limit the acquiring of this knowledge to workers only? Why make it obligatory for the whole of India?

A. The question of everyone learning Hindustani does not arise. Indeed everyone will never do so. The necessity is for those who have to travel and those who want to serve. The latter's ability for service will be greatly increased by a knowledge of both languages and scripts. If you agree, your opposition and suspicion should subside.

Q. 6. Today the national language is written in both scripts. Whoever wants to learn can choose the one he prefers. Why the insistence on both?

A. In spite of my so-called insistence, only those will learn it who find real gain in so doing. In my eyes he who knows only one of the languages and one script will be half-equipped. If he desires a full certificate from me, he must be conversant with both. I am sure you will have no objection to the desirability of there being many such persons in the country. And unless this number goes on increasing there will never be a proper blending of Hindi and Urdu. The Congress ideal of Hindustani will never be fulfilled. That Hindus and Mussalmans in the Hindi-knowing provinces should have a common speech is a consummation devoutly to be wished. Many of us cling to this hope, and some day it will certainly come to pass.

Q. 7. Will it not be a terrible burden and a futile endeavour for people of the non-Hindi-speaking provinces to learn the national language through both scripts at the same time? To learn first one and then the other would surely be simple.

A. The answer to this will best come from experience. He who does not know either script will not learn both at the same time. He will master one before commencing on the other. So far as the vocabulary is concerned the words used in the text books in the early stages will more or less be the same. I look upon my scheme as a most important and useful experiment. If it is properly worked, it will be found to have energized the nation and made a big contribution towards giving practical shape to the Congress resolution. I hope lacs of patriotic men and women will take to it.

Q. 8. Certain changes must inevitably take place in any language, as for example, the ingress of foreign words which become part of the language and cannot be evicted. But Devanagari has been the traditional script all through the ages. During the period of the Mogul dynasty the Persian script came in. But Gujarati, Marathi, etc., while assimilating Persian, Arabic and English words, have not abandoned the script. Why should the Devanagari script then not be maintained?

A. There is no question of giving up anything that is ours by tradition. It is a question of adding to or improving what already exists. If I know Sanskrit, what harm if I learn Arabic too, or *vice versa*? The result will probably be an enrichment of my knowledge of either language. And my contacts with the Arabs or Hindus, as the case may be, will increase. Surely there can be no opposition to the acquiring or right knowledge in any sphere.

Q. 9. From the point of view of easy mastery over the pronunciation of the national language, is not the Devanagari script the best? The Persian script is surely defective for the purpose.

A. You are right, but your opposition to the Persian script has no place here. Devanagari is not to be displaced. It is a question of adding to the existing knowledge.

Q. 10. Where is the need for a national language? Will not the mother tongue and an international language suffice? And then why not the Roman script for both?

A. Your question surprises me. English no doubt is the international language. But can it ever be our national language? The latter must be the common property of millions of our people. How can they sustain the burden of learning the English tongue?

Hindustani is the natural national language, for it is already understood by 21 crores. The remainder of the population can also easily understand it. But English may be said to be the mother tongue of a mere handful—say, a lac at the most. If India is a nation, it must have a national language. English will appropriately remain the international language with the Roman script. But the latter can never be the script of the national language.

SEVAGRAM, April 19, 1942
Harijan, 26-4-1942

262. FOREIGN SOLDIERS IN INDIA

Among the multitude of questions contained in my correspondence is the one referring to the advent of foreign soldiers in India. We have foreign prisoners enough. Now we have promise of a never-ending stream of soldiers from America and possibly China. I must confess that I do not look upon this event with equanimity. Cannot a limitless number of soldiers be trained out of India's millions? Would they not make as good fighting material as any in the world? Then why foreigners? We know what American aid means. It amounts in the end to American influence, if not American rule added to British. It is a tremendous price to pay for the possible success of Allied arms. I see no Indian freedom peeping through all this preparation for the so-called defence of India. It is a preparation pure and simple for the defence of the British Empire, whatever may be asserted to the contrary. If the British left India to her fate as they had to leave Singapore, non-violent India would not lose anything. Probably the Japanese would leave India alone. Perhaps India, if the main parties composed their differences as they probably would, would be able effectively to help China in the way of peace and in the long run may even play a decisive part in the promotion of world peace. But all these happy things may not happen if the British will leave India only when they must. How much more creditable, how much braver it would be for Britain to offer battle in the West and leave the East to adjust her own position! There is no guarantee that she will be able to protect, during this war, all her vast possessions. They have become a dead weight round her. If she wisely loosens herself from this weight, and the Nazis, the Fascists or the Japanese instead of leaving India alone choose to subjugate her, they will find that they have to hold more than they can in their iron hoop. They will find it much more difficult than Britain has. Their very rigidity will strangle them. The British system had an elasticity which served so long as it had no powerful rivals. British elasticity is of no help today. I have said more than once in these columns that the Nazi power had risen as a nemesis to punish Britain for her sins of exploitation and enslavement of the Asiatic and African races.

Whatever the consequences, therefore, to India, her real safety and Britain's too lie in orderly and timely British withdrawal from India. All talk of treaties with the Princes and obligations towards minorities are a British creation designed for the preservation of British rule and British interests. It must melt before the stern reality that faces all of us. Princes, in so far as they rely upon their armed strength, are more than able to defend themselves against unarmed India. The fiction of majority and minority will vanish like the mist before the morning sun of liberty. Truth to tell there will be neither majority nor minority in the absence of the paralysing British arms. The millions of India would then be an undefined but one mass of humanity. I have no doubt that at that time the national leaders will have wisdom enough to evolve an honourable solution of their difficulties. This presupposes Japan and other powers leaving India alone. If they do not, I should hope even then for wisdom to guide the principal parties to devise a scheme whereby they can act with one mind to face the new menace.

Holding the views I do, it is clear why I look upon the introduction of foreign soldiers as positive danger thoroughly to be deplored and distrusted. The present state of things and the attempt to uphold it are a distinct sign of corroding consumption of the body politic in India.

SEVAGRAM, April 19, 1942
Harijan, 26-4-1942

263. QUESTION BOX

IF THEY REALLY MEAN?

Q. If the Japanese really mean what they say and are willing to help to free India from the British yoke, why should we not willingly accept their help?

A. It is folly to suppose that aggressors can ever be benefactors. The Japanese may free India from the British yoke, but only to put in their own instead. I have always maintained that we should not seek any other Power's help to free India from the British yoke. That would not be a non-violent approach. We should have to pay a heavy price if we ever consented to take foreign aid against the British. By

our non-violent action we were within an ace of reaching our goal. I cling to my faith in non-violence. I have no enmity against the Japanese, but I cannot contemplate with equanimity their designs upon India. Why do they not realize that we as free men have no quarrel with them? Let them leave India alone. And if they are well-intentioned, what has China done to deserve the devastation they have wrought there?

GUERRILLA WAR

Q. You declared the other day at Wardha that Jawaharlal Nehru was your 'legal heir'[1]. How do you like the idea of your legal heir advocating guerrilla warfare against the Japanese? What will happen to your ahimsa when Jawaharlal openly advocates violence and Rajaji wants arms and military training for the whole nation?

A. As you have put it the situation does appear awful. But it really is not so awful as it appears to you. In the first instance 'legal heir' is not my phrase. I had spoken in Hindi. I had said that he was not my 'legal heir' but that he was virtually my heir. That means that he will take my place when I am gone. He has never accepted my method in its entirety. He has frankly criticized it, and yet he has faithfully carried out the Congress policy largely influenced, when it was not solely directed, by me. Those like Sardar Vallabhbhai who have followed me without question cannot be called heirs. And everybody admits that Jawaharlal has the drive that no one else has in the same measure. And have I not said also that when I am gone he will shed the differences he often declares he has with me? I am sorry he has developed a fancy for guerrilla warfare. But I have no doubt that it will be a nine days' wonder. It will take no effect. It is foreign to the Indian soil. Twenty-two years' incessant preaching and practice of non-violence, however imperfect it has been, could not be suddenly obliterated by the mere wish of Jawaharlal and Rajaji, powerful though their influence is. I am, therefore, not perturbed by the 'apostasy' either of Jawaharlal or Rajaji. They will return to non-violence with renewed zest, strengthened by the failure of their effort. Neither goes to violence for his belief in it. They do so because they think probably that India must have a course of violence before coming to non-violence. No one can say beyond doubt how events will shape

[1] *Vide* "Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting", 15-1-1942.

themselves. It may be that their instinct is correct and mine, backed though it is by experience, is not. I know this, however, that my line is cut out for me. Even though I may be alone in my faith, I must follow it unfalteringly, believing that the masses will never take to the violent method. They will either remain inert or take to non-violent action. Guerrilla warfare can take us nowhere. If it is practised on any large scale, it must lead to disastrous consequences. Non-violent non-co-operation is the most effective substitute for every kind of violent warfare. If the whole nation takes to non-violent action, it can be wholly successful. It could not be quite so against the British because their roots have gone deep into the soil. The Japanese have not even got a foothold. I hope that the forthcoming A.I.C.C will revert to the non-violent method and give the clearest possible instructions about non-violent non-co-operation. To aid the British effort in the violent way without any official connection and after the failure of the recent negotiations appears to me to court national disgrace.

SEVAGRAM, April 19, 1942

Harijan, 26-4-1942

264. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 19, 1942

CHI. PREMA,

I got all your letters, and have replied to them all. The replies were quite long. You tell me, what am I to do when the Postal Department is irregular? Read *Harijan* and do what you think proper.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10426. Also C.W. 6865. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

265. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, *via* WARDHA,
April 19, 1942

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

A letter from the Maulana arrived today. He writes that I have to go to Allahabad. How can I go? I had said even when I was there that I was not any more fit for travel. And what shall I do by going there? I have the same one thing to offer and I have called three meetings here. One of them has been planned for a long time. I cannot miss any of them. You must therefore excuse me. Write to Maulana to spare me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Janakibehn wrote to you yesterday to hold both the meetings at Wardha. I withheld the letter. Meetings should be held at Wardha when my presence is considered essential.

From the Hindi original: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

266. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

April 19, 1942

MAULANA SAHEB,

I have your letter. I will write to you only in Urdu. This time you will forgive me. I had already told you in Delhi that now my health does not permit me to move around. Moreover I do not have any work there and I have convened three meetings here which I must attend. People from faraway places have been invited. You will understand my position and excuse me for my absence.

Yours

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Urdu: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

267. DEENBANDHU ANDREWS MEMORIAL

Deenbandhu Andrews Memorial and Gurudev Memorial are convertible terms. Gurudev had initiated the Deenbandhu Memorial, but before it had fully materialized Gurudev followed Deenbandhu.[1] Therefore Deenbandhu Memorial has become also Gurudev Memorial. The purpose is worthy of the two great souls—the improvement and upkeep of Santiniketan, Visvabharati and Sriniketan. These are all in reality one. It is a matter of great shame and sorrow that the paltry sum of five lacs of rupees has still not come whether from the rich or the students or the labour world. Everybody admitthat Gurudev and his institution have brought a name and prestige to India which no one and nothing else have done. It was Santiniketan which stirred Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kaishek who gave very handsome contributions. For the work done at Santiniketan, the expense is ridiculously small. The reason is the comparatively low salaries paid where the work done is not purely honorary. The donations so far collected amount to nearly one lac. I hope that the balance will be forthcoming without delay and absolve me from having to venture out on a collection tour. I am in honour bound to finish the collection. When Gurudev was dying the last letter I wrote to him was that, if it was God's will, I would finish the Deenbandhu collection. It was also a trust handed by Andrews in that Santiniketan's financial condition was his daily concern. It is a call from these two servants of India and humanity which I dare not neglect. Let those who revere their memory and who value Gurudev's living creation help me to discharge the self-imposed trust.

SEVAGRAM, April 20, 1942

Harijan, 26-4-1942

268. EVACUEES FROM BURMA[2]

Much has been written about the hardships of evacuees from Burma. Making allowance for all possible exaggerations, the remainder itself is a horrible tale of woes. Some of them must be

[1] Rabindranath Tagore died on August 7, 1941.

[2] This appeared under "Notes".

inevitable in the circumstances that face us. What has to be dealt with is the avoidable hardships and blatant discrimination said to be in vogue in the treatment of Britishers and Indians. I understand that there are over eight lacs of Indians in Burma yet to be evacuated. Life for them in Burma is impossible. The question is too big to be tackled by any existing organization. It requires a special temporary committee of experienced men whose sole work would be to attend to the orderly and quick evacuation of the eight to nine lacs of men and their disposal after they are on Indian soil. Let us hope that there are enough public-spirited men who will make it their business to form themselves into a committee and see this very humanitarian work through.

SEVAGRAM, April 20, 1942
Harijan, 26-4-1942

269. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

[*April 20, 1942*][1]

IF YOU FEEL LIKE THAT COME AT ONCE.

Bapu's Letters to Mira, p. 334

270. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM,
April 20, 1942

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. I must let you come here and see what can be done. You are undertaking a job which leaves you no other

[1] The addressee says: "Just at this time Bapu was writing his leader for *Harijan* entitled 'Foreign Soldiers'. It must have been at practically the same hour when I wrote Bapu a long letter expressing almost exactly the same sentiments, to which I had added that, if Bapu would agree, I should like to go to the A.I.C.C. meeting shortly to be held at Allahabad and plead behind the scenes with leaders for organizing nation-wide non-violent resistance to the Japanese." *Vide* also the following letter.

consideration. I have sent you a wire. I do not know whether it will reach you. Everything has become so uncertain nowadays.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6496. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9891

271. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

April 20, 1942

BHAI JIVANJI,

I have your letter. I did think of sending a wire, but the temptation to save money was stronger. It will be all right if the article appears even this time. Today also a lot of matter is going. From out of it mine has got to be included. The translations of my articles should also appear. Besides that there are Mahadev's articles and one by Kumarappa. See if you can manage by reserving more pages for English. I understand about Urdu. Do I have to send urgently anything more from here? How did you run short of English matter?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9952. Also C.W. 6927. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

272. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS G. KAPADIA

April 20, 1942

CHI. MADHAVDAS[1],

Why this panic? Illness comes and goes. Men die as they are born; some die early, some die late. What need for him to fear who has faith in God? And why should one who has no fear become panicky? Have courage. Keep me informed. Treat this letter as from

[1] Kasturba's brother

Ba also. Krishna[1] should keep calm.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MADHAVDAS GOPALDAS
NAVI KHADAKI
PORBANDAR, KATHIAWAR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M U./XXII

273. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

April 21, 1942

C HI. KANTI,

I have corrected in the letter itself what you could not read and am returning the letter. Do you understand now? Ordinarily I would not like to keep a frivolous girl like Saraswati with me, but I showed my willingness to keep her because I understand your difficulty. You alone can manage her. She will stay here only if you are firm and persuade her to do so. Mascarene is a woman without brains. I feel nothing but pity for her. And then she got Mathew's support. All types of persons have gathered in the Ashram, and they indulge in slander and back-biting. I am glad that you could make her see reason. She does write sweet letters to me. Her case is pathetic. Now that Ramachandran and Thanu Pillay have gone to jail, she has become all the more helpless. Both the propositions you have cited may be said to be valid. One can say that the validity of a principle does not depend on its practice, and also that it does. The second statement would be more befitting in the case of a moral principle.

What is the use of a principle that nobody puts into practice?

What is the test of its validity? What would be the value of ahimsa if nobody observed it?

If Harilal could be legally put in jail, I would have got it done long ago. But there is no such law and he also knows it. That can be done only if one day he himself yields. I do cherish the hope that he will. But the stratagem that he attempted this time has weakened my

[1] Addressee's wife

hope. Devdas continues to do his best.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7367. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

274. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS G. KAPADIA

April 21, 1942

CHI. MADHAVDAS,

You must have got the letter[1] I wrote to you yesterday. Today I got your second letter. You have lost a companion, but Krishna is released from suffering. Rest assured she has attained peace. Have patience. Keep calm. Try to pay off the debts if you owe any, and spend your days in devotion to God. Ba wishes the same.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII

275. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,

April 21, 1942

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your letter. It is heart-rending. I am publishing Satis Babu's letter[2] in *Harijan*. Send your scheme about *goseva*. The meeting will be on the 29th. Come if you want to.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1715

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Madhavdas G. Kapadia", 20-4-1942.

[2] This was published under the title "Simple Treatment for Cholera" in *Harijan*, 26-4-1942.

276. LETTER TO PADAMPAT SINGHANIA

SEVAGRAM,
April 21, 1942

BHAI PADAMPATJI,

I deliberately withheld the reply to your letter. Even now I have not met the trustees. I have however sent you the constitution of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. It would facilitate my arriving at a decision if you could let me have your opinion on it. But if you would rather not, I will not insist.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

277. HINDUSTANI PRACHAR SABHA

The Hindustani Prachar Sabha to which I referred in *Harijan Sevak* is about to be formed now. A draft constitution has been prepared. It has been sent to some friends. In a few days the scheme of the Sabha will be put before the public. Many people are under the impression that the Sabha will be a rival of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. How can I knowingly oppose the Sammelan with which I have been associated since 1918? There has to be a solid reason for my doing so. But there is none. Yes, it is true that as far as Urdu is concerned I go a little further than the other members. They think I am going back. Only time will decide who is right.

To make it clear that I am not opposed to the Sammelan, I entered into correspondence with Shri Purushottamdas Tandon, as a result of which the standing committee of the Sammelan passed the following resolution.

> The Hindi Sahitya Sammelan has from its very inception regarded Hindi as the national language and it continues to do so. Urdu is a literary style deriving from Hindi and having an admixture of Arabic and Persian words. The Sammelan propagates Hindi but is not opposed to Urdu.
>
> In the opinion of this Committee, members of Mahatma Gandhi's proposed Hindustani Prachar Sabha can become members of the Hindi Sahitya

Sammelan and its sub-committees, but from the practical point of view it will be better that the office-bearers of the Rashtrabhasha Prachar Samiti should not become office-bearers of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha.

I could not have expected more generosity than this. I was and still am of opinion that there could have been no question of conflict if the office-bearers could be the same. There is a possibility of conflict in the present arrangement but if both the parties behave with gentlemanliness this can be avoided. If the Hindustani Prachar Sabha succeeds, national language will no longer remain a political issue. In fact it should never have been associated with politics.

SEVAGRAM, April 22, 1942

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 26-4-1942

278. TELEGRAM TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

10 a.m., April 22, 1942

MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD

BALLYGUNJ, CALCUTTA

WROTE SUNDAY REGRETTING INABILITY ACCOUNT WEAKNESS AND HAVING PREVIOUSLY FIXED MEETINGS[1] SAME TIME.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Of the A.I.C.C.; *vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 24-4-1942.

279. TELEGRAM TO ABUL KAKAM AZAD

2 p.m., April 22, 1942

MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD
BALLYGUNJ, GALUTTA

TOO MUCH PHYSICAL FATIGUE. SENDING MY PROPOSALS[1] FOR CONSIDERATION. PLEASE EXCUSE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

280. LETTER TO HORACE ALEXANDER

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA (C.P.),
April 22, 1942

MY DEAR HORACE,

I have been wanting to write to you and Agatha all this time but my preoccupations have come in the way. But more than that, the reluctance to send you a cheerless letter has been the cause. It is still there greater than ever. Nevertheless I must write what I feel. I hope you had my wire about Olive[2]. How well I remember her radiant face in spite of her permanent disability. God gave and He has taken her away. I know it is well with her, for she walked in His light. Sir Stafford has come and gone. How nice it would have been if he had not come with that dismal mission. He of all people should never have without having at least ascertained Jawaharlal's wishes. How could the British Government, at this critical hour, have behaved as they did?

Why should they have sent proposals without discussing them with the principal parties? Not one single party was satisfied. In trying to please all the proposals pleased none.

I talked to him frankly but as a friend, if for nothing else, for Andrews's sake. I told him that I was speaking to him with Andrews's

[1] Addressee's wife
[2] *ibid.*

spirit as my witness. I made suggestions but all to no avail. As usual they were not practical. I had not wanted to go. I had nothing to say being anti-all-wars. I went because he was anxious to see me. All this I mention in order to give you the background. I was not present throughout the negotiations with the W.C. I had come away. You know the result. It was inevitable. The whole thing has left a bad taste in the mouth.

My firm opinion is that the British should leave India now in an orderly manner and not run the risk that they did in Singapore and Malaya and Burma. That act would mean courage of a high order, confession of human limitations and right-doing by India. Britain cannot defend India, much less herself on Indian soil with any strength. The best thing she can do is to leave India to her fate. I feel somehow that India will not do badly then. I must not argue this point if it is not obvious to you.

I am sending a copy of this to Agatha. Of course you are at liberty to share this with anybody else.

Love.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1434

281. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

April 22, 1942

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. Maulana's wire would seem to leave you no choice but to go, though it does not seem to me advisable for you to do so. Be firm. If they do not adopt an unambiguous resolution of non-violent non-co-operation, your duty will be to resign. You must also oppose the scorched-earth policy and any suggestion to invite foreign troops. They are pressing me to attend but I have categorically refused. I have already fixed three or four meetings here at about the same time. The main meeting was fixed long ago. It cannot be shifted now. Drop in here on your way back from Prayag even if it be only for a day or two. It is a hundred times better here

than in Prayag. Bring along Rajendra Babu, too, and Deo[1] also. You have given me no reply to my question regarding Patil.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vllabhbhaine, p. 274

282. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 23, 1942

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

Your letter[3].

I do not like your answer about Abha. It was with your hearty consent I took Abha. I told you too that I might want to send her to Rajkot. I want to do all for her good. But now I won't send her. Nor will I cross your wife's wishes. Things will take their own course. I have put a ban on their meeting in private but not on Kanu teaching her. That would be unnatural. Abha won't marry without her mother's blessing but she would marry no other person in any case.

That is her condition and also Kanu's. You will now instruct me what you would like me to do about Abha. About your wanting messages, please spare me. You should go on in your own way and on your own responsibility. I can have no notion of the work there.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10338. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[1] Shankarrao Deo

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 14-4-1942.

[3] Of April 17, in which the addressee had said that his wife was opposed to Abha being married to Kanu Gandhi

283. DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR A.I.C.C.[1]

[Before *April 24, 1942*][2]

Whereas the British War Cabinet's proposals sponsored by Sir Stafford Cripps have shown up British imperialism in its nakedness as never before, the A.I.C.C. has come to the following conclusions: The A.I.C.C. is of opinion that Britain is incapable of defending India. It is natural that whatever she does is for her own defence. There is an eternal conflict between Indian and British interests. It follows that their notions of defence would also differ. The British Government has no trust in India's political parties. The Indian army has been maintained up till now mainly to hold India in subjugation. It has been completely segregated from the general population who can in no sense regard it as their own. This policy of mistrust still continues and is the reason why national defence is not entrusted to India's elected representatives.

Japan's quarrel is not with India. She is warring against the British Empire. India's participation in the war has not been with the consent of the representatives of the Indian people. It was purely a British act. If India were freed her first step would probably be to negotiate with Japan. The Congress is of opinion that if the British withdrew from India, India would be able to defend herself in the event of Japanese or any aggressor attacking India. The A.I.C.C. is, therefore, of opinion that the British should withdraw from India. The plea that they should remain in India for protecting the Indian Princes is wholly untenable. It is additional proof of their determination to maintain their hold over India. The Princes need have no fear from unarmed India. The question of majority and minority is a creation of

[1] The A.I.C.C. at its meeting on April 27, took up consideration of the resolution, which Mirabehn carried with her from Wardha to Allahabad since Gandhiji did not attend the meeting, and continued discussion on it till May 1 along with certain amendments proposed by Rajendra Prasad. The text of this revised version is to be found in *The Transfer of Power*, pp. 66-70. Finally on May 1 an alternative resolution proposed by Nehru was passed, for the text of which *vide* Appendix "Resolution passed by A.I.C.C.", 1-5-1942.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 24-4-1942.

the British Government and would disappear on their withdrawal. For all these reasons the Committee appeals to Britain, for the sake of her own safety, for the sake of India's safety and for the cause of world peace to let go her hold on India even if she does not give up all Asiatic and African possessions.

This Committee desires to assure the Japanese Government and people that India bears no enmity either towards Japan or towards any other nation. India only desires freedom from all alien domination. But in this fight for freedom the Committee is of opinion that India while welcoming universal sympathy does not stand in need of foreign military aid. India will attain her freedom through her non-violent strength and will retain it likewise. Therefore, the Committee hopes that Japan will not have any designs on India. But if Japan attacks India and Britain makes no response to its appeal the Committee would expect all those who look to Congress for guidance to offer complete non-violent non-co-operation to the Japanese forces and not render any assistance to them. It is no part of the duty of those who are attacked to render any assistance to the attacker. It is their duty to offer complete non-co-operation. It is not difficult to understand the simple principle of non-violent non-co-operation:

1. We may not bend the knee to the aggressor nor obey any of his orders.

2. We may not look to him for any favours nor fall to his bribes. But we may not bear him any malice nor wish him ill.

3. If he wishes to take possession of our fields we will refuse to give them up even if we have to die in the effort to resist him.

4. If he is attacked by disease or is dying of thirst and seeks our aid we may not refuse it.

5. In such places where the British and Japanese forces are fighting our non-co-operation will be fruitless and unnecessary. At present our non-co-operation with the British Government is limited.

Were we to offer them complete non-co-operation when they are actually fighting, it would be tantamount to placing our country deliberately in Japanese hands. Therefore not to put any obstacle in the way of the British forces will often be the only way of demonstrating our non-co-operation with the Japanese. Neither may

we assist the British in any active manner. If we can judge from their recent attitude, the British Government do not need any help from us beyond our non-interference. They desire our help only as slaves—a position we can never accept.[1] It is necessary for the Committee to make a clear declaration in regard to the scorched-earth policy. If, in spite of our non-violent resistance, any part of the country falls into Japanese hands we may not destroy our crops, water-supply, etc. if only because it will be our endeavour to regain them. The destruction of war material is another matter and may under certain circumstances be a military necessity. But it can never be the Congress policy to destroy what belongs to or is of use to the masses.

Whilst non-co-operation against the Japanese forces will necessarily be limited to a comparatively small number and must succeed if it is complete and genuine, the true building up of swaraj consists in the millions of India whole-heartedly working the constructive programme. Without it the whole nation cannot rise from its age-long torpor. Whether the British remain or not it is our duty always to wipe out unemployment, to bridge the gulf between rich and poor, to banish communal strife, to exorcise the demon of untouchability, to reform dacoits and save the people from them. If crores of people do not take a living interest in this nation-building work, freedom must remain a dream and unattainable by either non-violence or violence.

FOREIGN SOLDIERS

The A.I.C.C. is of opinion that it is harmful to India's interests and dangerous to the cause of India's freedom to introduce foreign soldiers in India. It therefore appeals to the British Government to remove these foreign legions and henceforth stop further introduction. It is a crying shame to bring foreign troops in spite of India's inexhaustible manpower and is a proof of the immorality that British Imperialism is.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, pp. 283-5, also *The Transfor of Power, 1942-7*, Vol. II, pp. 66-70

[1] In the version reproduced in *The Transfer of Power* the words "a position we can never accept" form part only of the revised draft.

284. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 24, 1942

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

Mirabehn agrees that I must take some step and that she will have to make a sacrifice. She wanted to go to Allahabad[1] even if I did not go. I have therefore called her here. I am sending through her my views in the form of a resolution[2]. Maulana Saheb has been urging me to go to Allahabad. I have told him I am helpless. I find travelling difficult these days. What is more, I have called three meetings for the same period. I have therefore asked Maulana Saheb to excuse me and told him that I shall be sending my views in the form of a resolution. I do not think it necessary to give arguments in support of the resolution. If you do not like my resolution I really cannot insist. The time has come when each of us must choose his own course.

The behaviour of the Government in Feni and other places is simply intolerable. What will such a Government do even if it survives? And today it is only trying to save itself. I am now certain that if this Government goes we shall be well able to deal with Japan. It is another matter that after the Government is removed we may fight among ourselves. Even if that should be so, do we want to save ourselves from internal quarrels through the good offices of this Government?

Acharya Narendra Dev has seen the resolution and liked it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* footnote to "Telegram to Mirabehn", 20-4-1942.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

285. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

SEAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 24, 1942

DEAR SISTER,

Bapa wrote about Father's injury. I can understand your grief. It does not matter if you cannot come. Your resolutions will be taken up. But I hope Raja Saheb will recover.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8003. Also C.W. 3101. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

286. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 25, 1942

CHI. MRIDU,

I have your letter. I have no time today to write a long letter. Come away from there and tell me what you want. Whatever the course you adopt, you have no reason to worry. I have conveyed my views to Jawaharlal in the form of a proposal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11225. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

287. FOREWORD TO ''DEAD ANIMALS TO TANNED LEATHER"

This very useful pamphlet is in answer to an imperative demand by Sheth Jamnalalji, just a few days before his death. He wanted a booklet of instructions for those who would learn more to treat dead animals, so as to make the best use of the remains. May it serve the purpose for which it is intended.

SEVAGRAM, April 26, 1942

Dead Animals to Tanned Leather

288. QUESTION BOX

ARE YOU NOT INVITING JAPANESE?

Q. It is all very well for you to invite bravery, but are you not inviting the Japanese to attack India by asking the British rulers to withdraw?

A. I am not. I feel convinced that the British presence is the incentive for the Japanese attack. If the British wisely decided to withdraw and leave India to manage her own affairs in the best way she could, the Japanese would be bound to reconsider their plans. The very novelty of the British stroke will confound the Japanese, dissolve the subdued hatred against the British, and the atmosphere will be set up for the ending of an unnatural state of things that has dominated and choked Indian life. As far as I can see the Japanese seem to have made their plans independently of Indian opinion. They are not to be affected by any writing of mine. But they will be confounded by the action I have advised the British to take.

EVACUATION

Q. You have advised evacuation from the cities of those who are not wanted for service or other reasons.[1] But what are those poor people to do who have no homes to go to and who would be unwelcome wherever they go?

A. This is a real difficulty. They must be provided for by the people of the provinces to which they belong. If we are one nation, we

[1] *Vide* "Question Box", sub-title, "When Leaders Differ", 13-4-1942.

should have no difficulty in providing for every contingency that may arise. If we are to establish a new order of society, we can act from now. I can only speak from the non-violent angle and no other. If the national mind is working in that direction, consciously or unconsciously individuals and institutions will, without fuss, be absorbing all such persons as you mention. I know that the process is going on, but not on a scale large enough to be impressive. No able-bodied person should be put on charity; he should be given work enough to feed him properly. This shifting of the population, if it is wisely done, must result in a silent re-organization of villages.

SEVAGRAM, April 26, 1942

Harijan, 3-5-1942

289. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
April 26, 1942

CHI. VANAMALA,

I do not mind your running away, but you will have to come again. Sushila will come after some time. Her examination has been postponed. Come when she does. Go on doing your exercises, and have faith that your ears will be cured.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5791. Also C.W. 3014. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

290. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

April 26, 1942

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

We can understand Ramakrishnaji's grief. I had sent a telegram.

Tell him that Brijkrishna should be released shortly. Mahadev has been promised. If nothing is done, then there is no harm in filing an appeal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hind; G.N 1101

291. QUESTION BOX

NO NARROW PROVINCIALISM

Q. There are, in certain places, some people who have come from other provinces but who have practically settled in those places. There is already a feeling in certain provinces that when time were good these people came from outside, earned, and enjoyed themselves, but that when danger is drawing near and when their help and assistance would be needed by the residents of the province, they are thinking of fleeing to their 'homes' Should you not advise such people to stay where they are and not to give vent any narrow provincialism?

A. This question has come to me in various forms. It comes from Bengal and Assam. Merchants from other provinces have settled there for generations. Though they went to the respective provinces for their own sakes, they supplied a want, often useful. There is no doubt that their sudden withdrawal must hit hard those who have been hitherto used to make their daily purchases from these merchants.

They cannot be easily and suddenly replaced, especially at a critical time like this. there for these merchants to wind up their businesses would certainly amount to desertion of duty, if they do not before leaving, ensure the continuance of shops by proper substitute.

It would be a different thing if the customers themselves evacuated and the merchants had to follow. The situation that faces

the country is so novel that no opinion or solution can claim infallibility, nor can judgment be pronounced without carefully weighing all the facts. But it seems to me to be the duty of mercantile organizations to examine the situation and give guidance to the merchants affected.

NOT AN INCITEMENT

Q. You have written:"If the vast majority of Muslims regard themselves as a separate nation . . . no power on earth can compel them to think otherwise. And if they want to partition India on that basis, they must have the partition, unless Hindus want to fight against such a division. So far as I can see such a preparation is silently going on behalf of both parties."[1]

As far as the Muslims are concerned I can say with better knowledge than you that there is no such preparation. It would be foolish in the midst of the present Armageddon. But since you are apparently aware of the preparation to fight on the part of Hindus, is it not criminal for you not to prevent your co-religionists from this suicidal activity? Your article is both cowardly and mischievous; indeed it is an incitement to the Hindus.

A. This is the mildest indictment I have picked up from many I have received. Even from this much poison has been removed. It is perhaps wise to notice some of the criticism to which I am exposed. I must not mind it. It has been my lot throughout my public career. I suppose it is that of every public servant. But when the criticism is ignorant, as this is, it harms the critic and the cause he espouses. I take notice of it in the hope that sober men will use their influence to restrain ignorant criticism. I have no special knowledge of the preparation on behalf of the Hindus. All the knowledge I have is derived from the speeches of the leaders of both the parties and from the cuttings I receive from correspondents. They are proof positive of the preparations to which I have referred. But if what you say is right, in spite of the writings in the Muslim Press, no preparation on one side alone can possibly provoke strife. It takes two to make a quarrel. You would be right, if I did not do so, in saying that it would be criminal on my part not to prevent my ''co-religionists from this suicidal activity". You write about my co-religionists. I recognize none in

[1] *Vide* "That Ill-fated Proposal", 13-4-1942.

such matters. Nor do they recognize me. For I claim Indians of all religions as my equal brothers, whether they believe me or not. I would, therefore, love to prevent everyone from quarrelling. All I write in these columns is designed to make reason rather than the sword the arbiter between rival parties. Hence the sentence you quote from my writing. I invite you to help me in my mission of peace. You can begin by understanding me and my writings.

SEVAGRAM, April 27, 1942
Harijan, 3-5-1942

292. SCORCHED-EARTH POLICY AGAIN

Thus writes a correspondent:

> The controversy on the scorched-earth policy has had reference to what the people have to do when their fields are touched by the 'enemy'. That may or may not happen. But what about the destruction that is going on of crops, wells, tanks, houses, boats, cycles, etc., in the name of preparation for war? The people are summarily driven out of their villages and houses in cities. If you will suffer this destruction, then how can you oppose destruction to prevent destruction?

This is a very difficult question. The destruction that is going on is certain. The destruction that the enemy may work or which the receding portion of the population affected may have to do is problematical. And, in any case, such destruction would be nothing, even if it overtook us, compared to the crores already drained from the country for warding off a threatened danger. Money taken through taxation has not been felt so keenly as is the direct deprivation of thousands of homesteads as in Feni. No promise of compensation can be any comfort for the dispossession of the present tenements. To the poor people it is like taking away their bodies. The dispossession of the country boats is almost like that of the tenements.

To deprive the people in East Bengal of their boats is like cutting off a vital limb. I wrote almost in defence of the procedure adopted by the authorities in Feni. I have polite but angry protests against my endorsement. The correspondents tell me that I know nothing of the conditions of life in East Bengal. I cannot plead guilty

to the charge. Only I felt that people must be asked to resign themselves to the inevitable. Later information from Feni compels a revision of the attitude I had adopted. I had assumed considerate action by the authorities in the face of the impending danger. But I must defer final judgement. The authorities are reported to be carrying on an investigation. I hope it will be comprehensive.

Certain risks have to be taken even when danger overtakes us. Thus people cannot be asked or advised to starve or die of thirst for fear of the Japanese helping themselves to the people's provisions or water. They may fight them to prevent their use, but they must risk their loss and not die before their death in order to prevent their use by the Japanese forces.

It is time I came to the last and the most vital part of the question. As an out-and-out war-resister, is it my duty to ask the affected people to resist, non-violently of course, the deprivation of their holdings including boats? But my very non-violence has deterred me from offering opposition to the point of embarrassment. Whether embarrassment through opposition in Feni would have been avoidable or not is a question of fact on which I cannot yet pronounce opinion. I would hesitate up to the last moment. I can only hope that the authorities will find a way whereby they can avoid distress such as has been caused in Feni.

SEVAGRAM, April 27, 1942
Harijan, 3-5-1942

293. TO SEVAGRAM WORKERS

April 27, 1942

In the Ashram, let no one from among us eat to please the palate, let us eat to live. Life itself is not for living but for service. Let us not therefore imitate one another. For example, if rice is cooked because someone needs it, let others not demand it. Generally, no one should eat both rice and wheat, but if someone needs both, he or she should be given both. The rule remains the same, no pandering to the palate.

A natural corollary flows from this: Those to whom God has given money, should not tickle the palate as a matter of right. They will miss all the benefit of staying in the Ashram if they purchase anything to pander the palate.

It would be advisable for all to gargle with red water twice a day.

Dr. Das will explain how red the water may be. The common standard is that water should take the shade of a rose flower.

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, pp. 387-8

294. LETTER TO N. S. VARADACHARI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C.P.,
April 27, 1942

MY DEAR VARADACHARI,

I was glad to have your letter. There is no doubt about Rajaji's intense earnestness. But I cannot help thinking that he is wholly wrong even if the Congress adopted violence. You are right but I go much further than you go. You will see what I mean from the current number of *Harijan*.[1] If you have doubts even then, you will write to me.

Love.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10941. Courtesy: N. S. Varadachari

295. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEVAGRAM,
April 27, 1942

GHI. KAKA,

Though I had no time I went through your note. Send the accompanying letter and your note as it is or get it rewritten by

[1] *Vide* "Question Box", sub-title, "Guerrilla War", 9-4-1942.

Nanavati and send it. Keep copies. Send one to me also.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10956

296. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

April 27, 1942

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have your long letter. It makes only one point. I have already given you my firm opinion that there has been no organization anywhere in the world in which in each section one person does not exercise supreme authority. Even in a small kitchen one person's instructions are followed. Who this person should be is a separate question. Only one person looks after a well and only one person supervises the construction of a building. A managing committee does not supervise everything. It also has one person to do that on its behalf and appoints heads for the different sections. No work can be done in any other manner. All this is in reply to your letter. Do what you yourself wish. one day you will see your error, or will be able to convince me of mine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8473. Also C.W. 7170. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

297. "HARIJAN" IN URDU

Dr. Gopichand Bhargava is bringing out *Harijan* weekly in Urdu from Lahore. Articles from *Harijan* have for long been published in *Hindustan* of Lucknow. Arrangements are being made to publish an authentic edition at the Navajivan Press. The latter will be possible only when I can get an Urdu scholar who can throw in his lot with me. The two have their own individuality. And if the Navajivan Press succeeds in the venture, there will be a third with its own individuality. With the impetus that is being given to Urdu learning

through the proposed Hindustani Prachar Sabha such a venture has become a possibility.

SEVAGRAM, April 28, l 942

Harijan, 3-5-1942

298. TRAVANCORE

In spite of the high percentage of education among men and women in Travancore, there is no such thing as real liberty in that unhappy land. Shri Thanu Pillai, the President of the State Congress, and Shri Ramachandran, a member of the Executive of the Travancore State Congress, have been sentenced to six months' rigorous imprisonment for defying the ban on meetings of the Congress. If bans are imposed on public meetings because they are held under the auspices of certain organizations which ask for responsible government, they have to be defied. The leaders of such movements cannot stultify themselves by entirely gagging themselves.

It is too great a price to pay for nominal liberty. Shri T. Pillai and Shri Ramachandran will serve the cause better through their imprisonment than they will by submitting to gagging orders. Here is Shri Ramachandran's statement before the Magistrate:

> There was first of all a communiqué issued by the Chief Secretary to the Government of Travancore, in which he had said that the celebration of the All-India States' Peoples' Day would not be permitted. This was followed by an order of the District Magistrate, Trivandrum, served on some of us prohibiting the celebration of the States' Peoples' Day. My offence relates to this order of the District Magistrate. In that order it was made out that, if such a meeting was held and speeches made, there was the likelihood of a breach of the peace in Trivandrum. It further stated that, if the meeting was held and speeches made, there would come about an estrangement between the people and the Government. Immediately on receipt of this prohibitory order Shri Pattom Thanu Pillai and myself wrote a letter to the District Magistrate, in which we made it clear that this meeting was to be held not for the purpose of initiating an agitation but that it was just in response to an all-India observance. The meeting was to be held not in a public place but inside the Congress House premises. We made it clear also that the apprehension of a breach of the peace was absolutely unfounded. We had said that, if in spite of

this clarification the meeting was prohibited, we would be violating the order. This explanatory letter did not elicit any reply from the District Magistrate. So the meeting was held. After Shri Thanu Pillai's arrest I took charge of the meeting and spoke for an hour. I must observe here that I had never seen a quieter meeting in my life. The position we took, therefore, viz., that there would be absolutely no breach of the peace, was confirmed by the meeting itself. The second point in the District Magistrate's order was that the meeting would bring about estrangement between the Government and the people. In my view this certainly was not one of the results of the meeting. It was, therefore, proved beyond any shadow of doubt that the District Magistrate's apprehensions were absolutely unfounded. Therefore, though I am technically guilty— because I certainly did violate the District Magistrate's order—the District Magistrate and not I was in the wrong. I am entitled, therefore, to an honourable acquittal. This technical guilt I had to take upon myself for the simple reason that I was not going to be persuaded not to do a thing which I considered wholly right and which my self-respect dictated that I should do.

SEVAGRAM, April 28, 1942
Harijan, 3-5-1942

299. AHIMSAK VYAYAM SANGH

As the readers are aware, an Ahimsak Vyayam Sangh was inaugurated at Malad a few days ago. Sardar Prithvi Singh is the soul of the Association. Shriyuts Rameshwardas Birla, Purshottam Kanji and Keshavadev Nevatia are its Trustees. Prithvi Singh is imparting training to young men and women selected by himself. But the Association will fulfil its real mission when Provincial Congress Committees send their selected workers for training. The programme of the Association is unique. Sardar Prithvi Singh is himself experimenting with the practicability of non-violence along with the building of a strong and vigorous body. He has devoted the first half of his life to the belief that India could be liberated through violence alone; and now he himself has become a convert to non-violence. I am convinced that his is an honest experiment. It is a difficult undertaking. To believe in a theory is one thing; to translate it into action is another. And then, the attempt is to be made through means with which one is habitually acquainted and which are today associated

with diametrically opposite ends. Those who are assigned to Sardar Prithvi Singh for training should have at least a working faith in non-violence.

SEVAGRAM, April 28, 1942

[From Marathi]

Marathi Harijan, 3-5-1942

300. A NOTE

April 28, 1942

This means "No". That is why I had asked you to consult Balvantinha and Parnerkar and said that if they agreed, I would have no objection. They have not have not understood your point. Talk to them.

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen p. 303

301. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

April 29, 1942

BHAI HARIBHAU,

Please convey my blessings to Chi. Brihaspati and Chi. Ramkunwar. I do hope they will both render service to the country.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA
P.O. RAJKOT *via* VADNAGAR
MARWAR

From the Hindi original: Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

302. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

May 1, 1942

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. It is good that you left. It is also good that the tumour has disappeared. I am sure Anand[1] will not get cough. It is good news for me that you have regained your health. It will be desirable to go to Hajira for a week at least. The heat has gone up here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of Gujarati: C.W. 10043. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

303. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

May 1, 1942

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I had got your letter. You can eat only *paraval* and cucumber.

You must not harm your health. Do not worry about Father. Ba is quite well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3375

[1] Addressee's son

304. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

May 1, 1942

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have read through your article. I feel pained. It is ignorance to invoke the name of God here. Your article shows egotism. What had I to settle by sending for you? If the Goseva Sangh takes up all our work we should feel happy. None of them are selfish, yet you smell selfishness in them. Where was the question of offering you threats?

Poor. . .[1] had been sent by me. She had gone to plead with you.

I had also said she should plead with you. Do what seems proper to you. I wouldll say that you should do what the Sangh says. That will become you. If there is anything you want to explain to me, explain it. They themselves will be doing anything they want to do only after consulting me. They are also workers like you. They worship the same God as you worship. The only difference is that although you invoke God's name you want to do as you please.

There is so much egotism in you that you cannot work with anyone. Come down a little and try to understand.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, pp. 306-7

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

305. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHASTRI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 2, 1942

BHAI HIRALAL SHASTRI,

I have your letter. It will not be hypocritical if the parents, knowing that the couple will not be wearing khadi after marriage, still dress them for the wedding only in khadi.

Herewith Dugarji's letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Hiralal Shastri Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

306. LETTER TO SOHANLAL DUGAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 2, 1942

BHAI SOHANLAL,

My blessings to the couple on the occasion of your son's wedding. I hope they will both render true service.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Hiralal Shastri Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

307. STATEMENT ON HINDUSTANI [1]

May 2, 1942

The work for the propagation of the national language among the people has brought the realization that what the Congress calls 'Hindustani' is a simplified blend of Urdu and Hindi. This is the

[1] This was signed by Gandhiji, Rajendra Prasad and others.

language that is spoken and understood in North India and is understood and used in a large measure in other parts of India too. Hindi and Urdu, which are the literary forms of this language, are drifting apart more and more. The need is for these two forms to be brought closer to each other and to propagate Hindustani as the national language in those parts of the country where other languages are spoken. We therefore propose to establish an association which will simultaneously propagate both simple Hindi and simple Urdu and every member of which shall know both these forms as well as both the scripts of Hindustani and be able to employ either whenever the need arises. This will lead, first, to an easy and clear language coming into use all over the country and, secondly, to a literature being developed in the same simple language, capable of giving expression to sophisticated thoughts and sentiments. In pursuance of this objective we are this day, the 2nd May, 1942, convening an association to be called the Hindustani Prachar Sabha.[1]

[From Hindi]

Rashtrabhasha Hindustani, Part I, pp. 151-2

308. . HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH

The Harijan Sevak Sangh met in Wardha on 28th and 29th April. Sheth G.D. Birla was considerate and took very little of my time. I have developed a dislike for making speeches, but I consented to answer some of the questions the members had brought with them to Sevagram on the 29th morning. The answers to these will be of use to all Harijan workers. Most were in Hindustani, some in English, and one in Gujarati. I suggested that in future all questions should be in Hindustani. Those who do not know either Hindi or Urdu should make it a point to learn the national language, and until such time as they are unable to write in Hindustani themselves, they must get someone to do so for them.

Q. The Harijan Sevak Sangh is looked upon as a part of the Congress. But very

[1] For the aims and objects of Hindustani Prachar Sabha, *vide* Appendix "Section in the Constitution of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha defining its Aims and Functions", before 1-6-1942

few Congressmen are Harijan workers. Why?

A. The Sangh is not a part of the Congress. It was the outcome of the fast I undertook in 1932 when I was in jail.[1] The meeting of Hindus drawn from every class, which was held under the presidentship of Pandit Malaviyaji and which gave birth to the Sangh, deliberately decided to keep the organization separate from the Congress and non-political. It was this quality of the Sangh that enabled Sheth G.D. Birla to become its President and Shri Thakkar Bapa its Secretary. Nevertheless there are and ought to be many Congressmen in the Sangh, because practically all reformers are drawn into the Congress fold. But it is true that there are plenty of non-Congress persons in the Sangh. It is also true that those Congressmen who are only interested in politics do not come into it. It is, therefore, sometimes wrongly thought that Congressmen do not take an interest in the Sangh. It is the duty of every Congressman to remove untouchability, root and branch, from his life.

Q. Harijan service has really developed into mere Harijan uplift. Practically no work is done among caste Hindus for the removal of untouchability. What is the remedy for this?

A. Experience shows that propaganda among caste Hindus can only be successfully carried out by influential persons whose word carried weight with the general public. Such persons are hard to find.

But it is within the capacity of every Harijan worker to carry on mute propaganda. Our caste-Hindu workers are often satisfied with mere uplift work among the Harijans, which is not sufficient. Many workers, while they do not observe untouchability themselves, are unable even to convert their own families. How then can they influence the outside world? Moreover it is my confirmed opinion that every Harijan worker has to make it a point to beg for even one pice for Harijans from those caste Hindus with whom he comes in contact. If all devoted themselves, heart and soul, to this task, very good results would ensue.

Q. Should not the Sangh take upon itself the service of those Harijans who have been converted to Christianity or Islam and are yet treated as untouchables? Are

[1] *Vide* "Interview to the Press", 20-9-1932.

we not out to remove untouchability root and branch and therefore help all who come under its sway?

A. This question has already been answered in the columns of *Harijan* but must bear repetition so long as it is raised. The moment untouchability is utterly banished from Hindu society it will, *ipso facto*, disappear from elsewhere too. Whatever the merits or demerits of the case, it is clear that our interference with converts will be the cause of strife with Muslims and Christians. Such converts have either broken off all contacts with, or they have been in their turn boycotted by, Hindus. They have thrown in their lot with other sects whose leaders will not allow them to maintain their old contacts. Hence the H.S.S. quite rightly decided from its inception to confine its area of work to Harijans who had not left the Hindu fold. A convert, having left his original fold, is no longer guided or controlled by it.

Q. What should be the attitude of the Sangh if Harijan boys wish to enlist in the army?

A. They should be allowed to do so. They may not be controlled by the Congress policy or ahimsa. They must be given absolute freedom of choice.

Q. Harijans are of opinion that caste Hindus who are sympathetic to their cause should not use those temples where they are not allowed entry.

A. They are right. It is the bounden duty of Harijan workers not to go where Harijans are not allowed and likewise to dissuade caste Hindus.

Q. Harijans are legally entitled to send their children to many educational institutions as also to draw water from public wells. But public sentiment still militates against this being put into practice. Should Harijans resort to the law courts for justice in these matters or wait patiently until the caste Hindus are converted?

A. Where there is no danger of violence being done to them, the Harijans should exercise their legal right and where necessary resort to law courts. Harijan workers must continue agitation among caste Hindus and not rest content with mere legal rights.

Q. Is it not essential to reform the insanitary methods employed by sweepers for cleaning latrines and scavenging?

A. It is most necessary. What is more, until this is done the

condition of sweepers will remain pitiable. To this end it is the duty of Harijan workers and caste Hindus to do sweepers' work themselves. No caste Hindu will employ the methods used by sweepers. He will do the work scientifically. For example, he will never remove excreta in a basket or carry it on his head; he will cover excreta with dry earth and remove it in a metal vessel. He will avoid touching dirt with his hands as far as possible; he will clean the vessels with water and a rod; he will bathe immediately after doing the work; he will wear special clothes when scavenging. These reforms do not cost much. They require intelligence, hard work and love of an ideal. We may not relegate sweepers' work to one particular class. Therefore all should learn it in the same way as cooking. Each person should be his own Sweeper. If this ideal were to be put into practice in society, the miserable condition of sweepers would at once be rectified.

SEVAGRAM, May 3, 1942
Harijan, 10-5-1942

309. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

May 3, 1942

CHI. KAKA,

You did not seem sufficiently interested yesterday. I do forget small details. I suggested your name but kept quiet when you declined. You yourself should have suggested someone for Vice President[1]. All that, however, can be rectified. All that we wanted was to put the ship to sea. We shall do something for the Sammelan Committee. But only when Shriman comes. Won't he? Carry on the correspondence. Ask Amritlal to send yesterday's report.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10957

[1] Of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha

310. LETTER TO INDUMATI N. GUNAJI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
May 3, 1942

CHI. INDU,

I have your letter. Bharatanandji's[1] plan is only an idea. Nothing has yet materialized. It will be all right if you take something from what I have written in *Harijan*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10945. Courtesy: Indumati Tendulkar

311. NOTES

STATES AND THEIR PEOPLE

I have suggested in these columns that the people of the States should remain calm and so far as possible not precipitate a clash,[2] as events are shaping themselves in spite of us. But there is a limit to every such proposal. In Travancore, Mysore and Jodhpur things seem to have gone beyond endurance.

I have already referred to Travancore where two of its best workers[3] have been cast into prison for the simple reason that they are too public-spirited to submit to autocracy.

The same thing is happening in Mysore though in a slightly different manner. The cause is identical. The Mysore State Congress must not be tolerated. I know how the members have tried to placate authority. They have refrained from raising large issues save that they must keep the goal of liberty before the Mysoreans.

And now comes serious news from Jodhpur. There, as in the other States, the local Parishad people have tried to work in co-

[1] Maurice Frydman, a Polish engineer, who became a follower of Gandhiji

[2] *Vide* "Question Box", 2-3-1942.

[3] Pattom Thanu Pillai, President of the State Congress and G. Rama- Member of the Executive Committee; *vide* "Travancore", 28-4-1942.

operation with authority. They have raised no awkward questions. But the Rajputana States, like many others, have many jagirdars who are co-sharers with the Princes and derive authority from them. They may be termed States within States. These have no law governing them. The British Power has no direct control over them! The Princes are ever afraid of them. They dare not interfere with the exercise of the jagirdars' authority over the people within their jurisdiction. The result is that the people within these *jagirdaris* are the worst off in the Indian hierarchy. There was a clash, as far as my information goes, between the people and one of the jagirdars. This incident promises to lead to a major issue. Associations favoured by authority as in British India are, it is said, being set up against the popular Parishad. If a deliberate attempt is being made to suppress the local associations, the latter must accept the challenge and risk the worst in the full faith that liberty and truth cannot be suppressed for ever. But I would fain hope that the Princes and their advisers will, for their own sakes and for the good of India, curb the tendency in many States which cannot be described by any other adjective than lawless.

OPIUM ADDICTS

A correspondent writes as follows:

> I do not know whether you are aware that in Rajputana (Marwar) the inhabitants are terrible opium addicts. A wedding or death or any ceremonial occasion necessitates the offering of opium to the visitors. It may even mean the pawning of goods or mortgaging of property, but the opium has to be offered. It is quite an ordinary matter for a person to take $1^1/2$ or 2 *tolas* of opium per day and sometimes even more. I know of some who can swallow as much as five. When my father died I went home. A Brahmin friend came to condole. The first thing was to offer him opium which is generally kept in a special box. There were three *tolas* in it. The Brahmin said he would help himself. To my astonishment he emptied the entire contents on the palm of his hand and swallowed them. Having done so he said he was not satisfied. When I asked him how much was sufficient he replied 'four *tolas*'! And of course, if opium-eaters do not get their dope at the proper time, they are no better than useless lumps of flesh. This drug habit is eating as a canker into our society.

Deenbandhu Andrews and Pearson[1] laboured on behalf of these addicts. We have not cared for them half as much as we have for the drink addicts. The effects of opium are not so patent as of drink so far as society is concerned. But both the vices have nothing between them to choose. Slaves of opium have their reasons atrophied. They become living automata, having no interest in anything but their opium. How to deal with them is a tremendous question. Not until we have an unlimited band of workers, well trained and seasoned, will it be possible to produce an effect on these helpless members of society.

The medical profession can render valuable assistance by carrying on researches and discovering remedies for dealing with this social disease.

SEVAGRAM, May 4, 1942

Harijan, 10-5-1942

312. ONE THING NEEDFUL

> To those of us who love India and Indians and have tried to serve her people faithfully, the fact that in our hour of distress the hatred against us is growing is a matter of infinite sorrow. I admit we have not played and are still not playing fair by India; but can two wrongs make a right? When even the 'enemy' is in dire distress should he not be given some quarter? In asking us to withdraw are you not inviting your own people to bend the knee to Japan, knowing full well that you have not the non-violent strength as a country to resist any foreign aggression or domination? If you had had it, we could never have kept our hold on you. Will you not forgive past sins and rely on the goodwill of the new generation of Englishmen and women who can no longer think in terms of empire? Barring you, among the Congress leaders, is there anyone who believes whole-heartedly in non-violence? Yours is the only logical position, and you alone are a real friend of Britain.

This is an epitome of a pathetic English letter. I can but repeat what I felt and said in my letter[2] to Lord Linlithgow recording my

[1] W.W. Pearson, a British Missionary, who worked in Bengal was for sometime a teacher in Santiniketan.

[2] Presumably the article, "The Simla Visit", 5-9-1939, which Gandhiji had sent to the Viceroy; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 5-9-1939.

impressions of the first interview with him after the declaration of war. I have nothing to withdraw, nothing to repent of. I remain the same friend today of the British that I was then. I have not a trace of hatred in me towards them. But I have never been blind to their limitations as I have not been to their great virtues.

I do not deny the existence of hatred among the people at large, nor its increase with the march of events. But I claim that my national prescription has kept it under subjection and even sterilized it to an extent.

I am convinced, therefore, that the time has come during the war, not after it, for the British and the Indians to be reconciled to complete separation from each other. That way and that way alone lies the safety of both and, shall I say, the world. I see with the naked eye that the estrangement is growing. Every act of the British Government is being interpreted, and I think rightly, as being in its own interest and for its own safety. There is no such thing as joint common interest. To take the extreme case, a British victory over the Japanese will not mean a victory for India. But that is not a near event. Meanwhile the introduction of foreign soldiers, the admitted inequalities of treatment of Indian and European evacuees, and the manifestly overbearing behaviour of the troops are adding to the distrust of British intentions and declarations. I feel that they cannot all of a sudden change their traditional nature. Racial superiority is treated not as a vice but as a virtue. This is true not only in India; it is equally true in Africa, it is true in Burma and Ceylon. These countries could not be held otherwise than by assertion of race superiority.

This is a drastic disease requiring a drastic remedy. I have pointed the remedy—complete and immediate orderly withdrawal of the British from India at least, in reality and properly from all non-European possessions. It will be the bravest and the cleanest act of the British people. It will at once put the Allied cause on a completely moral basis and may even lead to a most honourable peace between the warring nations. And the clean end of imperialism is likely to be the end of Fascism and Nazism. The suggested action will certainly blunt the edge of Fascism and Nazism which are an offshoot of imperialism.

British distress cannot be relieved by nationalist India's aid in the manner suggested by the writer. It is ill-equipped for the purpose, even if it can be made enthusiastic about it. And what is there to enthuse nationalistic India? Just as a person cannot feel the glow of the sun's heat in its absence, even so India cannot feel the glow of freedom without the actual experience of it. Many of us simply cannot contemplate an utterly free India with calmness and equanimity. The first experience is likely to be a shock before the glow comes. That shock is a necessity. India is a mighty nation. No one can tell how she will act and with what effect when the shock is delivered.

I feel, therefore, that I must devote the whole of my energy to the realization of the supreme act. The writer of the letter admits the wrong done to India by the British. I suggest to the writer that the first condition of British success is the present undoing of the wrong. It should precede, not follow, victory. The presence of the British in India is an invitation to Japan to invade India. Their withdrawal removes the bait. Assume, however, that it does not; free India will be better able to cope with the invasion. Unadulterated non-co-operation will then have full sway.

SEVAGRAM, May 4, 1942
Harijan, 10-5-1942

313. QUESTION BOX

BARREN COWS

Q. Why may not work such as ploughing or grinding corn be taken from barren cows? Would that not be one way of preventing their going to the slaughter-house?

A. This question used to be much discussed at one time owing to the enthusiasm of a Punjabi who used to advocate the use even of milch cows for draft purposes. He used to claim that they would yield more and richer milk for the exercise given to them. Anyway my devotion to the cow does not preclude me from taking such labour as she can perform without the slightest detriment to her body. The fact is that our treatment of draft animals leaves much to be desired. I would welcome the use of barren cows for gentle labour, if only it

would make people more considerate than they are towards the other animals.

FROM THE FRYING-PAN?

Q. You advise evacuation[1] of cities likely to be bombed and migration to the villages. Do you imagine the villages to be safe? As a matter of fact the villagers are more panic-stricken than the city-dwellers. There is inadequate police protection, and villagers live in hourly terror of dacoits and robbers. Is it not a matter of jumping from the frying-pan into the fire?

A. I have not suggested migration to the villages for the soft life they will provide. Fright was no ingredient of my plan. It was and still is good even from a military point of view as has now been made abundantly clear. All the danger you present is undoubtedly bound up with the migration to the villages. But that to my mind is an additional reason for it. Who will put heart into the villagers and dispel panic, if it is not the right type of experienced city people? They will cover not only the aged and the infirm who may migrate to the villages, but they will also help and serve the villagers in the many ways I have pointed out in these columns. Courage is indispensable in these times for every true act.

ROTATORY GOVERNMENT

Q. In order to solve the communal tangle, why not divide India into two sections as far as population goes, e.g., Mussalmans, Christians and Parsis in one, and Hindus, Sikhs and Depressed Classes in the other. Let the first section rule for a period of five years by means of elected representatives and the second section come in similarly later. Would this not allay the present mistrust? As for Princes' India, could a Committee of elected Princes be entrusted with the work of governing all the States?

A. Your question reads well on paper; but your suggestion, if acted upon, must break down in practice. The act of government is not the simple thing you seem to imagine. What you suggest may work as a toy when the strings are pulled by armed authority. It won't be our government. The puller of the strings will govern. That is the oldway.

I have presented the better way—the non-violent method. In

[1] *Vide* Question Box", 13-4-1942 and 26-4-1942.

either case the first condition is that every trace of foreign authority should be removed from the land. Then and then only shall we know our real selves—our strength as well as our weaknesses. When we are untrammelled by foreign or other authority and free, we shall know how to deal with the day-to-day problems. We won't then be governed in the neat way mentioned by you. The arbiter then will be either the sword or reason.

SEVAGRAM, May 4, 1942

Harijan, 10-5- 1942

314. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

SEVAGRAM,

May 5, 1942

MAULANA SAHEB,

I sent yesterday a brief reply to your letter. After that I had a long talk with Rajendra Babu, Profulla Babu and Dev. They gave news about Allahabad. In my opinion it is better that Sardar, etc. are allowed to leave the Committee. As it is the working of the present Committee hinders our work. It is not proper to insist on staying together. It is good that we remain together as far as possible but once a major difference of opinion emerges it is better that we part company amicably. Sardar and others also share this view.

I had expressed this opinion to you even earlier. Experience has now confirmed it all the more. In my opinion you should accept the resignations of Sardar and five or six other members and form a new Committee. When it is clear that there are two factions within the Committee why should we pretend that there is only one?

There is a vast difference between the resolution passed and the resolution I had sent. What I intended to tell the world through my resolution is missing here. Sardar tells me that the public opinion is in favour of my resolution.

I do not think it necessary to convene a meeting of the Working Committee to clear the matter. In my opinion first we both should

meet and it will be better still if Jawaharlal can join us. After that if you think proper you may convene a meeting of the Working Committee.

Hope you are well.

Yours

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Urdu: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

315. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 6, 1942

CHI. MRIDU,

I read your letter and immediately destroyed it.

You have no reason at all to worry. I had sent Mirabehn merely to give you the letter and to gain some experience. She was free to discuss non-violence with anyone she chose. Had the Sardar left on that very day, I would have sent the letter through him. More when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11226. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

316. LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

May 7, 1942

CHI. MAGAN,

I did not like your letter. It is not right for you to find your own brother a burden to you. But in this respect, I cannot put pressure on you. I am sure that Ratilal[1] will improve if he can be bathed in love.

That love he cannot have from anybody but you. I cannot

[1] Addressee's brother

arrange for his separate stay. I have no doubt that he will be ruined if he leaves this place. How can Champa[1] live with him? You may therefore do what you think best.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 1028. Courtesy: Manjula M. Mehta

317. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May 7, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have told Mathuranath that he can work in the goshala only if you permit him. Even if he works there how can he live in the Ashram? I also believe that those who do not contribute to the work in the Ashram should not live in the Ashram. This is the correct policy.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Do ask me whatever you want to. Nothing is settled about my going.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4423

318. TELEGRAM TO CHUNILAL SEN[2]

[On or after *May 7, 1942*][3]

THUMB IMPRESSION MUST BE GIVEN.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Ratilal's wife

[2] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram of May 4, 1942 saying: "Satin Sen convicted six months. Authorities insist thumb impression under Defence of India Rules. Wire instructions."

[3] The addressee's telegram was received at Wardha on May 7.

319. LETTER TO PARACHURE SHASTRI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
May 8, 1942

SHASTRIJI,

I had your letter. Manharji has told me everything. Janakibehn will send the money. I am doing all the rest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10670

320. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 9, 1942

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

I have been awaiting your letter every day. It has arrived today.

You do need a little rest. Many people have given me reports of Indu's work. She will become perfectly fit if she always maintains good health. They tell me also that Feroze too is doing good work. Everything possible is being done for Chandra Singh. Madhavi has got whooping cough. I visit her every day. Chandra Singh and Bhagirathi appear happy. They do not complain much about the heat now. The problem of Chandra Singh's education is difficult. I am going to Bombay for eight days in connection with the Deenbandhu Memorial. I shall do whatever I can on my return. You should not worry.

Maulana's letters come regularly. He too is unwell. He writes to say that he will be coming to Wardha towards the end of this month. Perhaps you too will be coming along with him?

Ba is well.

Blessings to both from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

321. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May 9, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

About Dhiren and Pratap, whatever is proper should be done. Chandra Singh's case is different. Go slow with him. Such an exception will have to be made. The true remedy is to take people who are compatible, otherwise the Ashram will lose its homeliness.

Do not worry about non-indulgence of the palate. Let each one go as far as he can. Only go on reminding. Consider that the Ashram is not an Ashram, but we are going to try and become Ashramites a little bit. Here understanding alone can help. About milk and ghee we can do nothing. We should be satisfied with what little we can get.

Tooth-picks should not be used everywhere.

Do whatever you can about water. Let me know on my return. No more today. I hope to leave on the 18th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4425; also S.N. 24479

322. MYSORE

Reference has already been made in these columns about the Mysore Government's repressive measures against the State Congress.[1] Now comes the news of a worse tragedy in the shape of a police charge at Bhadravati resulting in three deaths including a child three years old, from firing by the police on an unarmed crowd. I do not wish to enter into the details. According to the Congress version the whole tragedy arose out of a peaceful labour demonstration. There is a suggestion on the Government side that the firing had to be resorted to because the crowd had attacked the police station in Bhadravati. The President of the Congress denies the charge and demands an inquiry. It will be worthless unless it is admittedly impartial. If the crowd had attacked the police station, what was the cause? If the crowd was non-violent, was the firing a mere wanton

[1] *Vide* "Notes", sub-title, "States and Their People", 4-5-1942.

awe-inspiring process? In either case the people must learn the art of being killed, and if they are non-violent, without any reason therefore save for their love of liberty. It is a duty then to face death as cheerfully as we face imprisonment. Indeed, I do not know that such a swift ending is not more welcome than the prolonged agony that jail life sometimes becomes. As the struggle becomes wider and more earnest and more real, imprisonment is bound to be, as past experience teaches, increasingly hard to bear. Death for a brave and strong-willed man will then be a welcome relief.

ON THE WAY TO BOMBAY, May 10, 1942

Harijan, 17-5-1942

323. QUESTION BOX

CONGRESS AND LEAGUE

Q. Maulana Saheb has made what I consider a very wise and patriotic suggestion that the Congress Working Committee will nominate five representatives to meet the representatives of the Muslim League when the latter so desire to do. I trust it will commend itself to you. lf it does, I should like you publicly to support it. It will go a long way to bring the Hindus and the Muslims together.

A. I have no hesitation in endorsing Maulana Saheb's suggestion. No one would be more glad than I if, with or without my endorsement, the two can come together. I have always felt that there is something radically wrong with both that the most obvious thing, viz., the coming together of the wise men of both with a will to find a solution of the deadlock, has not happened.

INGENIOUS METHOD

Q. Your advocacy of the learning of Urdu as part of the national language which you have called Hindustani is all very well. What do you say to the propaganda that is being carried on in the Nizam's Dominions on behalf of Urdu? Here is the first question in a Telugu examination paper:

> "If for the purposes of Federation a common language for India is indispensable and the case of Hindustani is strong enough, then it seems to me that as far as this University is concerned it should immediately make Urdu its medium of instruction especially when it happens to be the mother tongue of

this province. Those who would wait till it grows richer are sadly mistaken and argue in a circle. It will remain poor as long as the universities make no use of it in teaching all branches of knowledge."

Remember that Telugu and not Urdu is the mother tongue of the majority of the people in this part of the country. What do you say to the ingenious method adopted of carrying on pro-Urdu propaganda through examination papers?

A. I admit that the method adopted is both ingenious and strange. An examination paper is hardly a vehicle for propaganda on a question on which sharp division of opinion prevails. I agree that Urdu is not the mother tongue of the people of H.E.H. the Nizam's Dominions. What proportion of the population knows Telugu I do not know. My notion of an all-India speech does not involve the displacement of the great provincial languages, but its knowledge is meant to be an addition to that of the provincial speech. Nor do I expect that the millions will ever learn the all-India speech. It will be learnt by the politically and those who have inter-provincial connections. Indeed a correspondent suggests that in the place of an all-India speech I should advocate the learning of the languages of neighbouring provinces. Thus he says:

> It is far more useful for the Assamese to know Bengali than Hindi or Urdu and now according to you Hindi and Urdu.

If we had not the intolerable burden of learning English not merely as a second language but as a language through which all higher instruction is imparted to us, we should find it child's play to learn our neighbours' speech and certainly learn the all-India speech for all-India contacts. In my opinion a boy or girl lacks culture and accomplishment, if he or she does not know half a dozen languages of India. It is a sure sign of brain fag on the part of English-knowing Indians when they tremble at the very thought of learning a language other than English, not excluding even their mother's speech. For the majority of objectors are English-knowing Indians. I have found no difficulty about the Ashram inmates learning Urdu in addition to Hindi. And I know that in South Africa the Tamil labourers could speak Telugu and *vice versa*, and they had a working knowledge of Hindi. No one had told them that they should learn Hindi. Somehow or other they knew intuitively that they should know Hindi. Of course

they were no scholars, but for mutual intercourse they picked up what was necessary. They picked up also the speech of their neighbours, the Zulus. They could not carry on their business, if they did not. Thus most Indians knew besides their mother tongues two more Indian languages, Zulu, and a smattering of even English. Needless to say many of them wrote no language, and most could write only ungrammatically their own mother tongues. The moral of this is obvious.

If you dispense with the script, you pick up your neighbour's language without effort and without difficulty, and if you are fresh and the brain is not wearied, you can learn as many scripts as you wish without any difficulty. The study is any day interesting and stimulating. The study of languages is an art and valuable at that.

ON THE WAY TO BOMBAY, May 10, 1942

Harijan, 17-5-1942

324. QUESTION BOX

INTELLECTUAL CONVICTION

Q. Intellectually I am convinced that non-violence is the only solution of quarrels between man and man. But by nature I cannot but react violently to acts of hostility to my country or myself. So I am unable to be content with non-violent resistance only against the Japanese. I feel that, in addition to whatever I may be able to do by way of non-violent resistance, I should also do my utmost to help the war effort against them. They have no right to invade my country even though it is in British hands and not ours. But when I think of helping the war effort, my intellectual conviction of non-violence does not allow me to do so with peace of mind.

A. Your difficulty is a common difficulty. But if you have real intellectual *conviction*, it will overcome your nature which is nothing but habit. Your conviction should tell you that non-violence is a force infinitely superior to violence. Hence you do not need to rely upon violent assistance. Moreover you are labouring under a fallacy. Why do you say that the Japanese have no right to invade your country although it is in foreigners' hands? In the first place, the country is not yours while it is in others' hands. You cannot do what you like with it. The foreigners can and do. Secondly, if the Japanese have

enmity against your master, they have every right to attack what your master possesses. We are not examining here the correctness of Japan's conduct in going to war against Great Britain. I am simply pointing out what seems to me to be your mental confusion. The proper course for you is to ask the wrongful possessor to vacate your country. When he has done it you will have the choice between violence and non-violence against the Japanese attack, if it comes. But the thing is not so simple as I have put it. Your difficulty is real. You feel that you cannot defend your country. You have lost it. The English can, if you help them. If the English vacate the country, the Japanese are much more likely to attack undefended India if only for strategic purposes, and you will be utterly helpless against the invading host. Therefore, seeing that the English are in India and they can defend, why not make common cause with them and answer the impendingattack? After victory, have they not said, they would go away if they are not wanted? This, I expect, is your argument. In my opinion it is only plausible. The British do not want your help on your terms, as witness the failure of the Cripps mission. They want it on their terms. If, therefore, victory is achieved, the British hold will be ever so much stronger than before. If they will not trust you now, there is no warrant for supposing that they will after victory. They will then ask you with greater force than now to produce the unity which cannot be produced whilst they are here. You get out of all this tangle, if you adopt my method. If you have intellectual conviction, you can approach the problem with the utmost confidence. You are friend to all. You say to the British with the greatest goodwill that, if they leave India, she will take care of herself and will probably escape Japanese attention, and if she cannot, she will answer it with non-violence. Then by that simple act of justice they gain your eternal friendship. It may stand them in good stead even during the present war. For India will then of her own free will help China, Russia and others. If India sets her own house in order, as I have no doubt she will, India can work wonders.

BOMBAY, May 10, 1942
Harijan, 17-5-1942

325. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

BOMBAY,
May 10, 1942

I had a letter from Jawaharlal only yesterday. He writes that he will be reaching Allahabad on the 22nd and will then decide about coming to Wardha. The Maulana writes that he too will be coming around the same time. I do not know about his coming to Bombay.

He also writes that his health is bad.

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11227. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

326. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY,
May 10, 1942

CMI. AMRIT,

Yesterday the train arrived after ten. Got seats comfortably.

Rangaswami had much to do with our getting the seats. We arrived safe here at 1 p.m. Now I am writing this after beginning my silence. It is 2.35 p.m. I hope it will not be necessary to stay here for more than 8 days. Ba and other patients I hope, are well and Balvantsinha is quiet.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4270. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7902

327. QUESTION BOX

IF "HARIJAN" IS PROHIBITED

Q. You are going strong. You should know that if the people follow you it must hinder the present war effort. The Government cannot allow it. If they do, you will admit that only the British Government can show such generosity. And what will you do if they suppress it?

A. No Government can afford to be generous. A man is generous when he does something at his own expense. Governments can do nothing at their own expense. But they always succeed in making people believe that they are generous even when they are barely or less than just. Justice is like a debt which has to be discharged. Therefore, if the Government permit *Harijan* to continue its even course, they will do so because it is proper from their point of view. They will not hesitate to suppress it when they think it is improper not to do so. I stated at the time of the resumption of publication that it was no part of my plan to persist in publication in spite of prohibition. I will, therefore, again suspend publication when the Government desire it. If they do, it will be a loss to the public. For, apart from the three weeklies, its articles appear by special permission in Urdu *Hindustan*—Lucknow, *Urdu Harijan*—Lahore, *Marathi Harijan*—Wardha. It is also published in Telugu and Oriya. Articles are sent to them in advance. Numerous other newspapers copy or translate articles from it week by week. There is no generosity in tolerating the publication of such a popular weekly. And my writings will not hinder war effort, if it is voluntary. If they influence the people, surely there is something wrong somewhere. It is not *Harijan* that should be stopped, but the wrong it exposes should be undone. I look upon my writings as a solid contribution to war effort, for he serves a cause best who exposes its weaknesses or those of its representatives. You ask what I would do if they suppress *Harijan*. I must frankly confess I do not know. I have cultivated the habit of not anticipating evil. I am able to know the remedy instinctively when I am face to face with an evil. That is how a godfearing man acts. The fear of God disposes of every other fear. But I can give you this

assurance that suppression of *Harijan* can never mean suppression of me.

BOMBAY, May 11 , 1942

Harijan, 17-5-1942

328. TO EVERY BRITON

When I had just begun my public career in South Africa I wrote "An Open Letter to Every Briton in South Africa"[1]. It had its effect. I feel that I should repeat the example at this critical juncture in the history of the world. This time my appeal must be to every Briton in the world. He may be nobody in the counsels of his nation. But in the empire of non-violence every true thought counts, every true voice has its full value. *Vox populi vox dei* is not a copy-book maxim. It is an expression of the solid experience of mankind. But it has one qualification. Its truth is confined to the field of non-violence. Violence can for the moment completely frustrate a people's voice. But since I work on the field of non-violence only, every true thought expressed or unexpressed counts for me.

I ask every Briton to support me in my appeal to the British at this very hour to retire from every Asiatic and African possession and at least from India. . That step is essential for the safety of the world and for the destruction of Nazism and Fascism. In this I include Japan's 'ism' also. It is a good copy of the two. Acceptance of my appeal will confound all the military plans of all the Axis Powers and even of the military advisers of Great Britain.

If my appeal goes home, I am sure the cost of British interests in India and Africa would be nothing compared to the present ever-growing cost of the war to Britain. And when one puts morals in the scales, there is nothing but gain to Britain, India and the world.

Though I ask for their withdrawal from Asia and Africa, let me confine myself for the moment to India. British statesmen talk glibly of India's participation in the war. Now India was never even formally consulted on the declaration of war. Why should it be? India does not belong to Indians. It belongs to the British. It has been even called a

[1] The title in fact was "Open Letter", *Vide* "Open Letter", before 19-12-1894.

British possession. The British practically do with it as they like. They make me—an all-war resister—pay a war tax in a variety of ways. Thus I pay two pice as war tax on every letter I post, one pice on every postcard, and two annas on every wire I send. This is the lightest side of the dismal picture. But it shows British ingenuity. If I was a student of economics, I could produce startling figures as to what India has been made to pay towards the war apart from what are miscalled voluntary contributions. No contribution made to a conqueror can be truly described as voluntary. What a conqueror the Briton makes ! He is well saddled in his seat. I do not exaggerate when I say that a whisper of his wish is promptly answered in India. Britain may, therefore, be said to be at perpetual war with India which she holds by right of conquest and through an army of occupation. How does India profit by this enforced participation in Britain's war? The bravely of Indian soldiers profits India nothing.

Before the Japanese menace overtakes India, India's homesteads are being occupied by British troops—Indian and non-Indian. The dwellers are summarily ejected and expected to shift for themselves. They are paid a paltry vacating expense which carries them nowhere. Their occupation is gone. They have to build their cottages and search for their livelihood. These people do not vacate out of a spirit of patriotism. When this incident was referred to me a few days ago, I wrote[1] in these columns that the dispossessed people should be asked to bear their lot with resignation. But my co-workers protested and invited me to go to the evacuees and console them myself or send someone to perform the impossible task. They were right. These poor people should never have been treated as they were. They should have been lodged suitably at the same time that they were asked to vacate.

People in East Bengal may almost be regarded as amphibious. They live partly on land and partly on the waters of the rivers. They have light canoes which enable them to go from place to place. For fear of the Japanese using the canoes the people have been called upon to surrender them. For a Bengali to part with his canoe is almost like parting with his life. So those who take away his canoe he regards as his enemy.

[1] *Vide* "Scorched-earth Policy Again", 27-4-1942.

Great Britain has to win the war. Need she do so at India's expense? Should she do so?

But I have something more to add to this sad chapter. The falsity that envelopes Indian life is suffocating. Almost every Indian you meet is discontented. But he will not own it publicly. The Government employees, high and low, are no exception. I am not giving hearsay evidence. Many British officials know this. But they have evolved the art of taking work from such elements. This all-pervading distrust and falsity make life worthless unless one resists it with one's whole soul.

You may refuse to believe all I say. Of course I shall be contradicted. I shall survive the contradictions.

I have stated what I believe to be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

My people may or may not approve of this loud thinking. I have consulted nobody. This appeal is being written during my silence day. I am just now concerned with Britain's action. When slavery was abolished in America many slaves protested, some even wept. But protests and tears notwithstanding, slavery was abolished in law. But the abolition was the result of a bloody war between the South and the North; and so though the Negro's lot is considerably better than before, he still remains the outcaste of high society. I am asking for something much higher. I ask for a bloodless end of an unnatural domination and for a new era, even though there may be protests and wailings from some of us.

BOMBAY, May 11 , 1942

Harijan, 17-5-1942

329. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

BOMBAY,

May 11, 1942

BA,

I am well. Here it cannot be as hot as it is there. But it is certainly sultry. The night was sufficiently cool. Everyone remembers you. But I do feel that you are better there. You would soon fall ill here, and once you fell ill you would be compelled to stay back, to say nothing of other people having to serve you.

Take plenty of rest. Varma has not yet met me. Today is silence day. Look after Ratilal. You may take it that I will return on the 18th. For the rest, God alone knows.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

330. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BOMBAY,

May 11, 1942

CHI. NARANDAS,

I had just taken up the pen to write a letter to Jamna[1] when I saw your article. I do not see any point in publishing it. So I am not doing so. Write to me.

Kanaiyo[2] is quite well.

Since I have no time, I stop here.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] Addressee's wife
[2] Addressee's son

[PS.]

We are returning on Sunday.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8604. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

331. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

BOMBAY,
May 11, 1942

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have got your loving gift which I am crediting to the Deenbandhu Memorial Fund. May you live long and fill the purses of many deserving beggars. Why do you write in Gujarati to me alone and to Mahadev in English? The practice of writing in Gujarati will improve both your handwriting and language. When you are in great hurry, you can dictate to a Gujarati amanuensis. You should make a determined effort to overcome your deficiency.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarat :C.W. 4738. Courtesy: Shantikumar N. Morarjee

332. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI [1]

BOMBAY,
May 11, 1942

It was a pity I could not see you, though I passed through Nasik[2]. But such is my condition. I am now arranging to send someone there. I read your letter. I had thought that you had already crossed the Sahara, but it seems you have not.[3] Who knows how many

[1] Gandhiji's nephew

[2] Gandhiji had passed through Nasik on his way to Bombay for collecting funds for the Andrews Memorial.

[3] The addressee was suffering from tuberculosis and his condition at this time was very bad.

deserts you will still have to cross. Do not lose heart. Many others like you have risen from the sickbed. Am I also not one such? I am not, therefore, giving up hope. The only thing which makes me unhappy is that I cannot keep you with me at this time. But why should I be unhappy even for that reason? You have given a great deal, and if God wills, you will give more.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 182

333. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY,
May 11, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I wrote to you yesterday.[1] I hope you got the letter. Today I am writing during the silence. The silence will end at 2.35 p.m. I finished *Harijan* matter at 12 o'clock. Wrote a lot.

I hope all the patients are well. Manjula will have gone to Maganwadi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4263. C:ourtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7895

334. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 11, 1942

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

Bari Khan often rings me up to say I should let you come. He says you have been asking him to obtain my permission for you to come. This does not seem right. You have been staying there because it is your duty to do so. How then do you say that you want my permission to come? Mother is going to Patiala. If you want to see her you can do so at a wayside station. I have suggested that she should

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 10-5-1942.

go *via* Wardha and stay there for a few days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 473

335. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

May 11, 1942

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I hope you have calmed down. What happened is really to be laughed over; not lamented. There was no question of any insult.

Aren't you laughing?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1943

336. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

BOMBAY,

May 12, 1942

CHI. BABUDI,

There is no other medicine for Anand but patience. Children suffering from a cough like his do improve. You alone should notsacrifice sleep. The less Anand eats the better. He should take more of hot water with either honey or glucose. He should drink milk, only in small quantities. If you give him mango juice it should be wholly sweet. Put soda bicrab in it. I shall leave for Wardha on Sunday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10044. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

337. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY,
[*May 12, 1942*][1]

CHI. AMRIT,

Ashadevi has arrived, also the post. It is difficult to write today. I am collecting money. Everything is going on well. Arrange about Balkrishna in Delhi. You must leave on the 28th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4262. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7894

338. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

BOMBAY ,
May 14, 1942

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. Your complaint about my letters is not justified. What can I do if the letters are lost in transit?

As for Sucheta's[2] suggestion, you may accept it[3] if you think you can shoulder the burden. But first ascertain in detail what work you have to do. You should also consider what will be its place in my preparations. Shankarrao alone should mostly guide you in this respect, for it is he who will have to carry the burden of activities there. I cannot say right now what I shall do. But whatever I decideto do will have to be done immediately.

It is too much to say that I am eager to assume the leadership myself.

[1] The source has April, which is obviously a slip as the postal stamp bears the date 12-5-1942.

[2] Sucheta Kripalani. She was in charge of the Women's Department of All-India Congress Committee.

[3] Charge of the Women's Department of Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee

I expect to leave this place on Saturday. My health can be said to be good.

I do not even know that Sushila is here, then how could she have come to see me?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev, Pyarelal and Kanaiyo are with me. Pyarelal has gone to Nasik to see Mathuradas.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10427. Also C.W. 6866. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

339. INTERVIEW TO "THE NEWS CHRONICLE"

BOMBAY,

May 14, 1942

Q. You have recently asked the British to withdraw from India. Do you think it possible in the present circumstances for them to withdraw all at once? To whom are they to entrust the administration?

A. It has cost me much to come to the conclusion that the British should withdraw from India, and it is costing me still more to work out that conclusion. It is like asking loved ones to part, but it has become a paramount duty. And the beauty [of] and the necessity for withdrawal lie in its being immediate. They and we are both in the midst of fire. If they go, there is a likelihood of both of us being safe. If they do not, Heaven only knows what will happen. I have said in the plainest terms that in my proposal there is no question of entrusting the administration to any person or party. That would be a necessary consideration if the withdrawal was part of a settlement. Under my proposal, they have to leave India in God's hands, but in modern parlance to anarchy, and that anarchy may lead to internecine warfare for a time or to unrestrained dacoities. From these a true India will rise in the place of the false one we see.

Q. How is your policy of non-embarrassment reconcilable with this advice?

A. My policy of non-embarrassment remains intact in terms in which I have described it. If the British withdraw, surely there is no embarrassment; not only so, they become eased of a tremendous burden, if they would calmly consider the meaning of the enslavement of a whole people. But if they persist, well knowing that they are surrounded by hatred, they invite embarrassment. I do not produce it by stating the truth, however unpalatable it may appear for the moment.

Q. Already there are signs of civil insecurity, and would not life be even more insecure, were the present administration suddenly to withdraw?

A. Of course, there is civil insecurity, and I have already confessed that insecurity is likely to increase very much only to give place to real security. The present insecurity is chronic and therefore not so much felt. But a disease that is not felt is worse than one that is felt.

Q. Were the Japanese to invade India, what would your advice be to the Indian people?

A. I have already said in my articles that it is just likely that the Japanese will not want to invade India, their prey having gone. But it is equally likely that they will want to invade India in order to use her ports for strategic purposes. Then, I would advise the people to do the same thing that I have advised them to do now, *viz.*, offer stubborn non-violent non-co-operation, and I make bold to say that, if the British withdraw and people here follow my advice, then non-co-operation will be infinitely more effective than it can be today, when it cannot be appreciated for the violent British action going on side by side.

Harijan, 24-5-1942

340. INTERVIEW TO BOMBAY SUBURBAN AND GUJARAT CONGRESSMEN[1]

May 15, 1942

Q. It is said that you are going to advise the British to leave India. Is this true? And if they do not listen to your advice, do you intend to non-co-operate with them?

GANDHIJI: Usually an advice is given with the idea that it will be followed. But it may also not be heeded. The advice has, therefore, to be prepared for both contingencies. I do advise the British to leave India. I tell them to go away. And why do I say so? Because they will have to go anyway. They have been suffering defeats right from Singapore, through Burma and now even at the gates of India. Their continuation will therefore mean suffering for India. Yes, I ask them to go. And if they will not? Then I shall have to see. If my advice is not heeded by them, I shall have to force them to go, by non-co-operation or by civil disobedience. Or it may be by both. Of course, you may ask that in the beginning of the war I was for non-embarrassing the British and you may say: What is that policy now? Is this consistent with it? Let me tell you here that I think this is perfectly consistent with it. For the British need my advice. There will be no embarrassment for them; on the contrary. For I say that at present the war is far from their shores. On the Indian front they lack material. At home they have plenty. Let them therefore go back home. That will enable them to fight the Japs better. So, my policy is consistent. Of course, if they do not listen, I must cause them embarrassment. I am helpless. And I do not think it can be individual satyagraha this time. No, it will be mass satyagraha—an all-out satyagraha against the British demanding their withdrawal forthwith. Mind, I am not pro-Japanese. Indeed, Japan is too much of an aggressor for me to be that. But I emphatically differ from Rajaji. For,

[1] According to the source those present at the interview which lasted for about 85 minutes, were Vallabhbhai Patel, Bhulabhai Desai, B.G. Kher, Morarji Desai and other prominent Congressmen. The report of the interview, sent by Sharaf Athar Ali, a Communist worker, to P. C. Joshi, was intercepted. It is not possible to vouch for its authenticity, but the Government placed a high degree of reliance in it and the Viceroy cabled a summary of it to Amery on May 27.

with what can I fight the Japs? The British are the immediate aggressors. Indeed I believe that the entire danger to India would be less if the British withdraw from here. I do not think Japan will invade India then. She wants to fight Britain. She has no concern whatsoever with India. What has India done to incur her wrath? It is Britain who has fought Japan and crossed her path. Therefore Japan wants to fight it. And therefore it is possible that when the British withdraw we shall be able to come to terms with Japan. And if even then she does not listen, then I have the same weapon against Japan that I have against Britain. Japan will not get a drop of water in India. We shall see to that. But resistance to the Japanese by whom? By a free India, not by an India who is not asked whether she would enter the war or not. Here I may point out that I disagree with Rajaji. Rajaji is an old colleague of mine, and my love for him remains as strong as ever. But I do no feel like Rajaji that of the two Britain is better and can be dealt with later—now, Japan. For me an exploiter of other nations is an exploiter, whether he be imperialist or a totalitarian. Names do not matter. Besides, who says the British are better? I do not want to say for a moment that Rajaji will accept National Government outside the Congress, i.e., without its sanction. But have the British offered it? Rajaji is prepared to help them in every way against the Japanese. Then why the hitch? Simply because they do not want us to get the power.

They will not give it. They are what they are and nothing will change them. Yes, Cripps has gone back. But why do not they negotiate again? Through Sapru or Jayakar or even Rajaji? Because, as I said, they do not want to. Their time to go has come. Rajaji concedes Pakistan. But has Jinnah even moved an inch to discuss matters with him? No. For Jinnah's game is to bring Government pressure on the Congress, and Congress pressure on the Government, or both. Rajaji says, let India be split up. But I cannot agree. I cannot swallow the splitting of India. I alone know what pain the thought has caused me. Rajaji is an old friend and an astute politician. And only I know what I suffered to let him go. But he is strong-willed. He believes that he will achieve Hindu-Muslim unity. But what, after all, is Pakistan? What does it mean? Besides, when Cripps came Rajaji was for acceptance. Jawaharlal tried his utmost to get the demand conceded. You know what Jawahar is: a straightforward man. But

nothing doing. And that is what I had said all along with terrible suffering of mind. And that is what people—millions of India—told me at the station. No settlement. Don't settle! Even in Calcutta, some Muslims—good fellows you know—said: "You haven't accepted, have you?" That is what Indians felt. And how can the Government deny it? They go as far as to say: not a single Burman helped the Japs (laughter). But Rajaji still hopes to achieve that which the British have determined will not be achieved: Hindu-Muslim unity. What really is Pakistan? Jinnah has never really explained. Can you tell me? Yes, yes, who denies that?[1] But what is the demand? The masses are duped. Good Mussalmans have failed to explain it to me. Indeed, when I am asked to solve the deadlock, I admit I can't do anything about it. The British make us fight, although I don't hide for a moment that we too want to fight. Else, we would never fight. But the only way to achieve unity is by getting India to ourselves and achievingit. Rajaji talks of the Lahore Resolution[2]. But the resolution is out of consideration. For where is Independence? Anarchy is the only way. Someone asked me if there would be anarchy if the British go. Yes, it will be there. But I tell the British: give us chaos. I say, in other words, leave India to God. But that is putting it in my language, in a language that the masses will not understand. Therefore, I say, leave India to anarchy. We shall have to face it. Better face it than the present state. The Congress mind is neither Hindu nor Muslim nor Christian nor Parsi. It is this Congress mind—a live reality—that will have to take charge of the anarchy and fashion it into Hindustan. I therefore ask the British to give us the gift of anarchy. If the British withdraw it will be given automatically. If not, then we will create anarchy, by launching satyagraha. I know the general confusion. You find Maulana says one thing. Jawahar another, Rajaji a third and now I a fourth thing. What are we to do? My advice to you is to weigh all the four and decide which to accept for yourself. I have not yet met Jawahar nor Maulana. But as you know well, although Jawahar and myself have differed quite often, he has always been with me as far as action goes. And I hope to win him to me. As for Maulana, we have always stood together since years. So I hope to

[1] Someone had said it was the demand of the Muslim masses.

[2] Passed by the 44th session of the Indian National Congress on December 31, 1929 declaring that the aim of the Congress was complete independence for India

reduce the four different notes to two. Then there will be only my voice and the voice of Rajaji and you can decide which of the two to follow. I cannot say. But I can only say that in this decision do not be influenced by a Bhulabhai here or a Khersaheb there. Decide for yourself. But decide with your reason, for if you just come my way then you will become an obstacle to me. And as for yourself, you will find yourself no more.

B. G. KHER: But will such a mass civil disobedience not mean direct help to the Japanese?

A. Oh, no! We are driving the British. We do not invite the Japanese. No, I disagree with those who think them liberators. Chinese history points that out. In fact I advised Chiang Kaishek when he came here to fight the Japs my way. In fact I believe that Subhas Bose will have to be resisted by us. I have no proof, but I have an idea that the Forward Bloc has a tremendous organization in India. Well, Subhas has risked much for us; but if he means to set up a Government in India, under the Japanese, he will be resisted by us.

And I fear the Forward Bloc people will try their utmost to do so.And again, as I said, we launch our movement only against the British. The Japs can expect us to sign a neutrality pact with them. And why not? Why should they invade us? But if they do we shall resist.

Q. I am in charge of a public trust building. Soldiers want it. They say I should sign a paper saying I gave the building willingly and give it or they will take it by force. Have I to resist them?

A. Not at all, unless of course you want to start satyagraha on your own. For the fight has not begun yet. It will take two months yet for me to launch it. And that is why I wish this talk with all of you today to be kept secret. Please see it does not get into the Press. This language is too high for the Press to grasp. As far as possible, do not let even your friends know.

Q. I want to ask just this: A man is strangling me. Meanwhile another man comes to strangle him. Should I not help the other fellow to strangle my strangler?

A. I am a non-violent person, and I say by all means struggle for your freedom but then stop. My self-esteem will not allow me to help in strangling my strangler. No, I cannot help the Japanese. Having

earned my freedom I remain neutral. But that is a non-violent man like me. The ethics of the violent, as many of you are, are different. Indeed, Russia, erstwhile hater of Britain, can take her aid, and Britain, similar hater, give it to her because both have violence-favouring mind. So to those of you to whom non-violence is not a belief but only a weapon, I say you needn't desist from helping Japan. Nay, to be true to yourselves, you should help it by every means, by even violent means, if possible.

G. P. HUTHEESING: But Bapu . . .

GANDHIJI: Sorry, I didn't know you were here (loud laughter).

G. P. HUTHEESING: But Bapu, some people say that one's outlook should be wider. That India should not think of her own freedom, but should stand by the international forces of freedom. For example, the Communists: they say that this is a people's war and India should fight Japan as China does. Needless to say, I don't agree with them. But what is your opinion?

A. None could be greater fools (loud laughter). But where is India? India as India does not exist. It is in Britain's pocket How can such India help? And why? The British give us nothing while they demand everything. And after all what help are we not giving?I do not devour the newspapers like you but I have got the information that 1,50,000 recruits are recruited monthly out of which 50,000 are selected. That's not a small matter. Besides Britain gets financial help. Who is going to resist its taxes? The postcard has risen from six pies. But even if it rises to a rupee, am I going to stop writing letters? Then why this clamour for our help? Besides, it is different with China. Her manpower is immense and her armies, unlike ours, are not mercenaries. And most of all her people are military-minded. And what is all this talk of a new mode of life and of international freedom? Can we depend upon Britain and America, both whose hands are stained with blood? India's name can be found nowhere on the Atlantic Charter. Even before the Communists ever said it, I have been thinking of a new mode of life. But it is impossible unless Britain withdraws to let the Indians and the Negroes be free. Then talk to me of a new mode of life. For I believe that such an India will then really serve as an ideal nation in the world and render it service.

The Transfer of Power, 1942-7, Vol. II, pp. 128-32

341. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[1]

BOMBAY,
May 16, 1942[2]

Q. Would you review the situation created by the Allahabad A.I.C.C. meeting? What would you say regarding Rajaji's quoting your words regarding Pakistan in support of his latest move?

A. I would leave the Allahabad resolutions to themselves. C. R. has quoted me correctly, and I repeat that, if Muslims want anything—no matter what it is—no power on earth can prevent them from having it. For the condition of refusal will be to fight. Supposing Muslims ask for something which non-Muslims do not want to give or could not give, it means a fight. This applies to both the communities. If the Hindus want a thing and if they are all united in the demand, no non-Hindus can resist them, unless they want to fight. But my hope is that some day or other all parties will come to their senses and notinsist on their demands being accepted, and consent to go to arbitration. It is an age-long method and a civilized method, and I hope it will be accepted.

But it is from the frustration of every effort made to bring about unity by me, among many others, that has arisen the, for me, logical step that not until British power is wholly withdrawn from India can there be any real unity, because all parties will be looking to the foreign power. For the time being it is British but it may be French, Russian, Chinese, even then it would be the same thing. I have, therefore, come to the conclusion that real heart-unity, genuine unity, is almost an impossibility unless and until British power is withdrawn and no other power takes its place, that is to say, when India not only feels but is actually independent without a master in any shape or form. Nevertheless I shall try and welcome every effort for peace, well knowing that it is likely to be fruitless.

Q. There is a report about some new scheme that you want to propound in one

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "The Bombay Interview". According to *The Hindu*, 18-5-1942, the interview lasted for an hour and some sixty Press representatives were present.

[2] From *The Hindu*

of your *Harijan* articles about non-violent non-co-operation if any invader came to India. Could you give us an idea?

A. It is wrong. I have no plan in mind. If I had, I should give it to you. But I think nothing more need be added when I have said that there should be unadulterated non-violent non-co-operation, and if the whole of India responded and unanimously offered it, I should show that without shedding a single drop of blood Japanese arms—or any combination of arms—can be sterilized. That involves the determination of India not to give quarter on any point whatsoever and to be ready to risk loss of several million lives. But I would consider that cost very cheap and victory won at that cost glorious. That India may not be ready to pay that price may be true. I hope it is not true, but some such price must be paid by any country that wants to retain its independence. After all, the sacrifice made by the Russians and the Chinese is enormous, and they are ready to risk all. The same could be said of the other countries also, whether aggressors or defenders. The cost is enormous. Therefore, in the non-violent technique I am asking India to risk no more than other countries are risking and which India would have to risk even if she offered armed resistance.

Q. But, unadulterated non-violent non-co-operation has not been successful against Great Britain. How will it succeed against a new aggressor?

A. I combat the statement altogether. Nobody has yet told me that non-violent non-co-operation,unadulterated, has not succeeded. It has not been offered, it is true. Therefore, you can say that what has not been offered hitherto is not likely to be offered suddenly when India faces the Japanese arms. I can only hope that, in the face of danger, India would be readier to offer non-violent non-co-operation. Perhaps India is accustomed to British rule for so many years that the Indian mind or India's masses do not feel the pinch so much as the advent of a new power would be felt. But your question is well put. It is possible that India may not be able to offer non-violent non-co-operation. But a similar question may be put regarding armed resistance. Several attempts have been made and they have not succeeded. Therefore, it will not succeed against the Japanese. That leads us to the absurd conclusion that India will never be ready for

gaining independence, and seeing that I cannot subscribe to any such proposition, I must try again and again till India is ready to respond to the call of non-violent non-co-operation. But if India does not respond to that call, then India must respond to the call of some leader or some organization wedded to violence. For instance, the Hindu Mahasabha is trying to rouse the Hindu mind for an armed conflict. It remains to be seen whether that attempt succeeds. I for one do not believe it will succeed.

Q. Would you advise non-violent non-co-operation against scorched-earth policy? Would you resist the attempt to destroy sources of food and water?

A. Yes. A time may come when I would certainly advise it, for I think it is ruinous, suicidal, and unnecessary—whether India believes in non-violent non-co-operation or in violence. And the Russian and Chinese examples make no appeal to me. If some other country resorts to methods which I consider to be inhuman, I may not follow them. If the enemy comes and helps himself to crops, I may be obliged to leave, because I cannot or care not to defend them. I must resign myself to it. And there is a good example for us. A passage was quoted to me from the Islamic literature. The Caliph issued definite instructions to the armies of Islam that they should not destroy the utility services, they should not harass the aged and women and children; and I do not know that the arms of Islam suffered any disaster because the armies obeyed those instructions.

Q. But what about factories—especially factories for the manufacture of munitions?

A. Suppose there are factories for grinding wheat or pressing oil-seeds. I should not destroy them. But munitions factories, yes; for I would not tolerate munitions factories in a free India if I had my way. Textile factories I would not destroy and I would resist all such destruction. However, it is a question of prudence. I have not suggested immediate enforcement of the whole programme in pursuance of the demand for British withdrawal. It is there of course. But I am trying, if I am allowed to continue to cultivate and educate public opinion, to show that behind this demand of mine there is no ill-will, no malice. It is the most logical thing that I have suggested. It is in the interests of all, and since it is an entirely friendly act, I am

moving cautiously, watching myself at every step. I will do nothing in haste, but there is the fixed determination behind every act of mine that the British must withdraw.

I have mentioned anarchy. I am convinced that we are living today in a state of ordered anarchy. It is a misnomer to call such rule as is established in India a rule which promotes the welfare of India. Therefore, this ordered disciplined anarchy should go, and if there is complete lawlessness in India, as a result, I would risk it, though I believe, and should like to believe, that 22 years of continuous effort at educating India along the lines of non-violence will not have gone in vain, and people will evolve real popular order out of chaos. Therefore, if I find that all the best effort fails, I would certainly invite people to resist destruction of their property.

Q. Can India give her moral sympathy or support to either of the parties to the war?

A. My own personal view is well known. And if I can convert India to my view, there would be no aid to either side; but my sympathies are undoubtedly in favour of China and Russia.

Q. But what about Britain?

A. I used to say that my moral support was entirely with Britain.

I am very sorry to have to confess that today my mind refuses to give that moral support. British behaviour towards India has filled me with great pain. I was not quite prepared for Mr. Amery's performances or Sir Stafford Cripps's Mission. These have, in my estimation, put Britain morally in the wrong. And, therefore, though I do not wish any humiliation to Britain—and therefore no defeat—my mind refuses to give her any moral support.

Q. What about America?

A. I expressed my opinion some time ago that it was a wrong thing for America and unfortunate for the world peace that America, instead of working, as she could have worked, for world peace, identified herself with war.

Q. But was there any alternative for her?

A. I am sure she would have, if she had intended, brought about peace. But it is my firm opinion that she did not use her opportunity.

I know that I have no right to criticize such a big nation. I do not know all the facts that determined America to throw herself into the cauldron. But somehow or other, opinion has forced itself upon me that America could have remained out, and even now it can do so if she divests herself of the intoxication that her immense wealth has produced. And I would like to repeat what I have said about the withdrawal of British power from India. Both America and Britain lack the moral basis for engaging in this war, unless they put their own houses in order, while making a fixed determination to withdraw their influence and power both from Africa and Asia, and remove the colour-bar. They have no right to talk about protecting democracies and protecting civilization and human freedom until the canker of white superiority is destroyed in its entirety.

Q. Would you advocate arbitration for the Indo-British problem? And if so, of what sort?

A. Any day. I suggested long ago that this question could be decided by arbitration. How to bring that arbitration about, I do not know. But if the British rulers will accept the principle, it should not be impossible to find impartial arbitrators though I admit it is a tremendously difficult problem to find impartial arbitrators in this case.

Q. But you may say the same thing about finding arbitrators on the domestic question too?

A. No. It is a comparatively simpler thing. Where British power is concerned it has such great influence and power—and rightly so—it would be difficult to get hold of arbitrators who would not be biased in favour of Great Britain and deliver a fearless and just award.

Q. Cannot there be any arbitration on the question of independence?

A. No, not on the question of independence. It is possible only on questions on which sides may be taken. The outstanding questionof independence should be treated as common cause. It is only then that I can conceive possibility of arbitration on the Indo-British question. But, as I have said, it is a most difficult question. If ever there is a real adjustment, it will come only when Britain feels that it is wrong to rule over another nation. But when that conviction goes home, they won't need arbitration—we in India

won't. But if there is to be any arbitration—and I cannot logically say there should not, for if I did, it would be an arrogation of complete justice on my side —it can be done only if India's independence is recognized.

Q. Why did you not go to America in 1931, even though you were pressingly invited by Bishop Fisher?

A. Because I had no faith in myself. The invitation was very pressing indeed, and the offer was sincere, and I could easily have spared a fortnight, but I had no faith that I would be able to do any good to India. It would have been a nine days' wonder. I would be lionized and torn to pieces. The American people would listen to you, lionize you, but would go their own way. Gurudev had been there, Vivekanand had been there, and his followers are still there. But the soul of America is untouched because of her worship of 'the golden calf'. As a people they are, after all is said and done, worshippers of Mammon.

Q. Does not America send her troops to India for a personal and selfish motive?

A. I suggest a better way of putting the question: "Is it not disastrous for foreign armies to come to India when India has sufficient man-power?" If you put the question like that, my answer is: "Decidedly so."

BOMBAY, May 18, 1942

Harijan, 24-5-1942

342. TALK TO DONORS[1]

BOMBAY,
[Before *May 17, 1942*][2]

I am not exaggerating when I say that Santiniketan is worthy of greater support than the Bangalore Research Institute for which Tata gave Rs. 30 lakhs. I wonder if the Research Institute is known anywhere outside India. But Santiniketan is known wherever the Poet's name is known, and known as an institution that inspired the Poet's great poetry. The Poet used to call it his toy or plaything, but his poesy would have been barren without the plaything. Santiniketan, whose school of art and culture attracts students from far and near, has produced painters and poets and scholars. There are among those who humbly serve it a scholar like Kshiti Babu and an artist like Nanda Babu, who are both unrivalled in their respective domains. And no institution of this type in India is managed with so little finance.

Our devotion to the Poet will remain as long as we live. But how can we have the same devotion for Santiniketan? How long will it last?

The institution which inspired the Poet received in its turn inspiration from the Poet, and you may be sure that there are people there who will devote their lifetime to its service. Santiniketan is a romance. It grew out of the Poet's father's idea to found a home of peace and culture. It is a tragedy that monied men, who have gained so much from Santiniketan, do not appreciate its full worth. The Poet is an asset for India and for the world for all time, and it is the duty of monied men to put his institution on a sound basis....

You can never give too much to Santiniketan.

Q. But we are in the midst of turmoil. These are not times for money collection. Can't we wait until we have won our freedom?

A. Rabindranath could not wait to come to the world until freedom was won.

Harijan, 24-5-1942

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's report "Bombay Responds Generously"
[2] Gandhiji left Bombay for Sevagram on May 17, 1942

343. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

[*May 17, 1942*][1]

CHI. AMRIT,

All well. Off to the station. Collections finished.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4122. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7431

344. NOTES

DEENBANDHU MEMORIAL

I am glad to be able to inform the readers of *Harijan* that the efforts of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Sheth Ghanshyamdas Birla, who had asked me to go to Bombay for eight days for the purpose of finishing the Deenbandhu Memorial collections, have been crowned with full success. Only over Rs. 60,000 were collected in response to the appeal through the papers. The whole of the balance of five lacs was collected during the eight days' strenuous labour. Bombay has never disappointed me whenever I have gone there for collections. I am most grateful to the donors for their generosity. They have taken a great load off my mind. I am quite clear that they have never given to a better cause. The memorial to Deenbandhu started by and at the wish of Gurudev became on his death memorial to Gurudev, in which the former merged. The object of both could only be identical. Subscriptions were required partly for the discharge of monies due by Santiniketan and largely for the building, etc., mentioned in the original appeal. I may mention that while the donations received included large sums from wealthy men they included also small sums from unknown persons from all over India. They were received from all communities, Parsis, Christians, Jews, Muslims and Hindus. I repeat the thanks on behalf of the fellow signatories and myself to the donors for their generous donations as also to the friends who

[1] From the postmark

organized the collection and laboured to make it a success.

HARIJAN COLLECTIONS

If the collections I make at railway stations and at evening prayer when I am out of Sevagram are any index to the progress of the removal of untouchability it must be very substantial, for I notice that the response is more liberal than before. Hardly a bystander at stations or a visitor to the prayer meeting refrains from giving his mite. Much need not be made of the response. But there can be no doubt that if the cause did not make any appeal, the response would be meagre, if any. Whereas it was hearty and willing. It gave me great joy as I studied the smiling faces of those who gave. The Bombay collection for the seven meetings was Rs. 4,000. Each day's collection showed a substantial rise on the previous day. Thus the first day's collection was Rs. 205-5-6 and the last Rs. 1342-10-9.

ON THE WAY TO WARDHA, May 18, 1942

Harijan, 24-5-1942

345. NOTES

CONFUSION

There is evidently confusion in some minds about my invitation to the British to withdraw. For a Britisher writes to say that he likes India and her people and would not like willingly to leave India. He likes too my method of non-violence. Evidently the writer has confused the individual as such with the individual as the holder of power. India has no quarrel with the British people. I have hundreds of British friends. Andrews's friendship was enough to tie me to the British people. But both he and I were fixed in our determination that British rule in India in any shape or form must end. Hitherto the rulers have said, "We would gladly retire if we know to whom we should hand over the reins." My answer now is, "Leave India to God. If that is too much, then leave her to anarchy." I invite every Britisher who loves Britain, India and the world to join me in the appeal to the British Power, and if it is rejected, to adopt such non-violent measures as would compel the Power to comply with the appeal.

WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN DONE?

Some Pressmen asked me in Bombay what Sir Stafford could have done in the absence of an agreement between the Congress and the League. I gave the answer. I do not know whether it has appeared anywhere.[1] Anyway it is better for the public to know what answer I gave to the question. Sir Stafford could have asked either the Congress or the League to form the cabinet. If he had done so, probably the party they entrusted with responsibility would have succeeded in having the co-operation of the other party. In any event the Government would then have dealt with the real representatives of their party rather than having their own nominees. I do not know that they made any such offer either to the Congress or the League. So far as the public know the negotiations did not break over the want of agreement between the two organizations but over differences with Sir Stafford as to what powers the British Government wanted to part with during the war.

Sevagram, May 18, 1942

Harijan, 24-5-1942

346. QUESTION BOX

THE DIFFERENCE

Q. You have repeated in your interview to the Press in Bombay what you have said often that nothing can prevent the Muslims from having what they want unless the objecters would fight over the issue.[2] What is the difference between you and Shri Rajagopalachari's attitude?

A. Though he has quoted me in his support I see the same difference between him and me that there is between chalk and cheese. He yields the right of secession now to buy unity in the hope of keeping away the Japanese. I consider the vivisection of India to be a sin. My statement amounts to the enunciation of the proposition that

[1] *Vide* "Interview to the Press", 16-5-1942. This particular question and answer did not, however, appear in the report of the interview as published.

[2] *Ibid.*

I cannot prevent my neighbour from committing a sin. Shri Rajagopalachari would be party in the sin, if the neighbour chooses to commit it. I cannot be party. What is more, I am firmly of opinion that there is no unity whilst the third party is there to prevent it. It created the artificial division and it keeps it up. In its presence both Hindus and Muslims and for that matter all seemingly conflicting or disgruntled interests and elements will look to it for support and will get it. Their interest is greater than the independence of their country.No one need throw my other statement in my face, viz., that there is no independence without unity. I do not withdraw a word of it. It is an obvious truth. From its contemplation I have discovered the formula of inviting the British power to withdraw. Their withdrawal does not by itself bring independence. It may induce unity or it may lead to chaos. There is also the risk of another power filling in the vacancy if it is there. If, however, the withdrawal is orderly and voluntary the British not only gain a moral height but secure the ungrudging friendship of a great nation. I wish all conflicting elements and interests will make a combined effort to rid India of foreign domination. If they do not, any understanding with them will be like a house built on sand. Fear of the Japanese occupation of India has blinded C. R. to the obvious truth. Independence sheds all fear—fear of the Japanese, of anarchy, and of the wrath of the British lion.

SEVAGRAM, May 18, 1942
Harijan, 24-5-1942

347. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

May 18, 1942

CHI. MIRA,

Your first letter was received in Bombay. You will keep me posted. Things moving well. Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABEHN

CONGRESS HOUSE

CUTTACK

ORISSA

From the original: C.W .6497. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9892

348. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

May 18, l 942

CHI. AMRIT,

It is the *Harijan* day today. Where is the time for writing letters? It is warm no doubt but I do not feel it much. Everyone is well. Mathew is ill. I brought along Jaisukhlal's little daughter[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4264. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7806

[1] Manu Gandhi

349. LAWLESSNESS IN SINDH

Prof. Ghanshyam, assisted by Shri Assandas, a worker in Thar Parkar, has recently visited the area affected by the Hurs' rebellion.[1] He has prepared an elaborate report of which he has sent me a copy. The following is a condensed summary of the report in the Professor's own language:

> Not many people in Sindh realize the grave situation that has arisen owing to the activities of the Hurs. Hurs are followers of the Pir of Pagaro who has been arrested by Government and is said to be under detention in Nagpur. All his followers are not Hurs. His following is said to run in lacs. The Hurs are mostly concentrated in Sanghar, Sinjhoro and Shahdadpur Talukas. They are considered to be a criminal tribe and several of them were kept in criminal settlements. These were abolished some years ago. But they were still under orders to report themselves regularly to the police. The Hurs believe that their Pir has been arrested on the false reports of the police against him. They nurse the grievance that none of them is allowed to interview him. They are said to complain of policeoppression in having to report themselves daily at police stations.
>
> After the arrest of the Pir of Pagaro, search of his house near Sanghar and destruction by fire of the huts attached to the bungalow where the Pir's followers used to gather, have so enraged the Hurs that they have started on a fierce campaign, as a challenge to Government, of murders, dacoities, attacks on railway stations, destruction of property in P.W.D. bungalows, cutting of telephone and telegraph wires, making breaches in canals, etc. There is not a day when reports of these criminal activities are not received. They were in the beginning mostly confined to Sanghar, Sinjhoro and Shahdadpur Talukas, but have now spread to other parts of Sindh also, specially the Khipro Taluka which adjoins Sanghar Taluka. The Hurs may be said to have risen in rebellion against the Government with a view to get the Pir of Pagaro released. They

[1] On April 1, 1942, Martial Law had been proclaimed in the area. An official communique said, "Over a period covering more than six months the Hurs have by wholesale murder, sabotage and dacoity terrorized whole district . ." On May 13, 1941, the Government of Sindh had issued orders under the Arms Act and under the Defence of India Rules, suspending all gun, rifle and revolver licenses held by individual non-officials. (The *Indian Annual Register*, 1942, Vol. I, pp. 65 and 83-4)

have such an intense faith in him that they are prepared to sacrifice their all and even their lives for his sake. It is now more than six months since the Pir of Pagaro was arrested. In the beginning of this period the frequency of the criminal activities of the Hurs was not as great as now. With the passage of time their activities have assumed not only greater frequency but have extended to other talukas than the original three. The Hurs have started their own Government. Not only have they appointed a leader whom they call their King but have appointed commanders, captains, etc. They are said to have divided themselves into groups, and assigned separate jurisdiction to each group Their activities were in the beginning directed against Government and those whom they considered as enemies of the Pir of Pagaro or who in any way aided Government against them. But it appears they have changed their tactics and are now attacking all and sundry. No one seems to be free from their attacks, whether he be a zamindar or a *sethia*, Hindu or Muslim, a high-paid official or a petty *kotar* or *beldar*, rich or poor, innocent or guilty. Even women are not spared There is a tradition that Hurs do not attack women or innocent persons. But it is said latterly young and mischievous elements among them have thrown the old traditions to the winds and spare no one. With a view to make their activities more effective, they have started a deliberate move for collecting rifles, guns, ammunitions, clothes, and money. Latterly their attacks in many cases have been directed against those who are in possession of these things. In this way they are said to have collected many guns and a large amount of money—cash or ornaments. They organize their attacks in military fashion and are on occasions dressed in khaki shirts and shorts. When the Khipro-Sanghar bus was attacked on the 16th April, the commander of the groups was not onlydressed in khaki but wore a hat also. Those who attacked ex-military zamindar Beantsing near Shahpur Chakar were also clad in military dress. This put Khalsa Beantsing off guard. He approached to greet them thinking they were some military soldiers. They attack and shoot under orders. They are also said to be levying taxes from zamindars and merchants. Threats are given to them that their 'Kharas' of wheat would be burnt or they would be dealt with in some other way if they did not pay taxes to them, as they declare themselves to be the Government in those areas. It is said that many people do yield to their threats as otherwise not only their property but even their lives are at stake. There is a general belief in the affected areas that Government are powerless to protect those who render aid to the authorities or who refuse to submit to the dictates of the Hurs. Several

persons who have acted thus have been murdered or been targets of other attacks. People are in a state of sheer helplessness. It must not be supposed that Hurs are responsible for all the crimes that are now being committed in Sindh or even in the above talukas. Taking advantage of the situation created by the Hurs several unsocial and criminal elements, of which there is an abundance in Sindh, have let themselves loose, thinking either that the suspicion of their crimes would fall on the Hurs or the police would not take effective steps against them being preoccupied with the Hur menace. The two main streams of criminal activities: one of the Hurs and the other of non-Hur criminals, have combined into a mighty current which has now flooded the whole of Sindh in general and the above talukas in particular. The enormity of the situation can be realized from the fact that normal functioning of the Government machinery in this area has ceased. In the Sanghar Taluka all the police posts are said to have been abolished and only one police station has been retained in the Taluka Headquarters, for fear of their being attacked and overpowered by the Hurs and their rifles being taken away. The police parties that go out for investigation of crimes return to the headquarters before sunset. Being afraid of attack at night, they do not venture to do their normal work after sunset. The withdrawals of police posts and the return of police parties to Taluka Headquarters before sunset have so emboldened the Hurs and other elements that they think the British Government has ceased to exist for them. Like the police, the normal functioning of the Revenue Department has also to some extent ceased. The *tapadars*, I was informed, find it very hazardous to move out in 'Tapas' and so they are working in Taluka Headquarters. All revenue collection is done at the Taluka Headquarters and not at the *tapadar's deras*, as is normally done. One *tapadar* was robbed of his revenue collection; two *kotars* were killed. It was said that one Mukhtiarkar had to go under police escort for remission work and had to change his dress forthat of an ordinary rustic to escape detection as an official. Officials and subordinates are so terror-stricken that they do not function as they would normally do. Even the District Magistrate has to guard himself very strongly during his movements. It was said that trees have been cut off from near his bungalow lest dacoits under cover of these make an attack on him. Even when he goes to play tennis in the club near his bungalow, he has to go heavily protected. Armed police men are stationed near the tennis-court and round about the club. Camel-men who carried the kit of Deputy Collector were threatened with dire consequences. They reported the matter and were given strong armed escort.

Similar is the fate of the Public Works Department in the affected area. P.W.D. bungalows have been attacked. There is no safety even for zamindars who keep themselves protected with arms as they are being now selected for attacks with a view to rob them of their guns and ammunition.

The Government have taken some measures to bring the situation under control. Special police has been stationed in hundreds in the affected areas. A special District Magistrate and a special District Superintendent of Police have been put on duty to suppress the Hur menace, with jurisdiction over both the Thar Parkar and Nawabshah Districts, as the area affected forms part of both these districts. Military has been sent to aid the police. The Sindh Assembly passed a special Hur Menace Act in secret session to meet the situation, setting aside ordinary procedure of criminal law in the matter of security proceedings and trials for scheduled offences against Hurs and those who aid them. All these measures have so far proved ineffective in bringing the situation under control. The things are going from bad to worse. The police is concentrated in Taluka Headquarters and a large portion of it is used in guarding Government offices and officers. It was complained that it was not sufficient for the task before it. The offences are so many that it is not possible for it to trace each one. The military simply gives patrol rounds at times. These have ceased to create any awe among the Hurs and so have become ineffective in suppressing their rising. The public will be surprised to learn that up to this time, most of the arrests in connection with specific offences in the affected area are those of '*non-murids*', that is those who do not follow the Pir of Pagaro. I have stated above that some unsocial and criminal elements other than Hurs have, taking advantage of the situation, started indulging in crime. Some of these elements have been arressted, but so far as the Hurs are concerned, who are directly connected with any specific offence, there has been almost no arrest, compared to the long list of the offences committed. It is true a large number of Hurs, which is estimated to be overfifteen hundred, have been roped in, but they have been arrested not as a result of pursuit in specific offences but were rounded up with a set plan of which they were not aware, on the occasion of their reporting their presence to police as most of them are required to do.

None, or almost none, of those who are absconding and who are said to be responsible for murders, dacoities, robberies, etc., have been arrested.

The Government machinery has evidently broken down. The

real remedy is for Congress members to withdraw from the Assembly and Khan Bahadur Allabux and his fellow-ministers to resign. These should form a peace brigade and fearlessly settle down among the Hurs and risk their lives in persuading these erring countrymen to desist from the crimes. A deputation known to Pir Pagaro should visit him and induce him to issue unequivocal instructions to his followers to stop their murderous activities. This should not be on condition of release. If he is aggrieved he is entitled to an inquiry. The Government should take the public into their confidence. All this can be done without the resignation of Congressmen and the ministers, it may be urged. My answer would be that the resignations are necessary as proof of the earnestness of the members and the Khan Bahadur and his co-ministers. If they remain in the Assembly they cannot give undivided attention to their task. The decisive reason, however, for my recommendation is that there should be an admission of their helplessness to do anything effective through the Assembly to put a stop to these rebellious activities. That should be an earnest of their desire to make room for those who think they can deal with the grave situation with better effect. The resignations must produce a healthy effect among the people. The selflessness and courage of resigners is likely to prove infectious and induce others to join them. The murder of Sheth Sitaldas, a member of the Assembly, regrettable though it is in every respect, pales into insignificance in face of Prof.

Ghanshyam's gruesome report. Let the murder serve as a spur to the other members to go among the Hurs and court murder in the act of weaning them from their unlawful and inhuman activities.

ON THE WAY TO WARDHA, May 18, 1942

[PS.]

Since writing the above, I have heard about the terrible railway accident resulting in several deaths including that of Sir Gulam Hussain Hidayatulla's son. The shooting by the Hurs thereafter shows the state of desperation they have reached. This emphasizes the recommendation I have made. Nothing short of such heroic action will bring the Hurs to their senses. Frightfulness will only make matters worse. I hope that all parties will join in the attempt to rid Sindh of the spreading rebellion.

SEVAGRAM, May 19, 1942

Harijan, 24-5-1942

350. LETTER TO TAYYABULLA

May 19, 1942

DEAR TAYYABULLA,

I am helpless. You should approach the President.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 63

351. WHAT SHOULD BE THE MAXIMUM DEDUCTIONS FROM THE SPINNERS' WAGES[1]

Q. There are many opinions on what should be the percentage to be deducted from the spinners' wages, for providing khadi to them.... I request you to guide the khadi workers by explaining through *Khadi Jagat* what the policy is and how the percentage of deduction should be determined.

A. In fact in raising the wages of the spinners the Charkha Sangh was guided by only one consideration: namely, that it was its duty as a philanthropic organization to give adequate wages to those who had never got them. The Charkha Sangh came into existence neither for those who wear khadi nor for those who want to be self-sufficient in clothes but for those who produce khadi by their labour, particularly the spinners. The idea behind it is that spinning is a source of livelihood for crores of people and if they get sufficient work, starvation can be mitigated to some extent.

Now if we want to raise the wages of the spinners we can do so only if all the people wear khadi, otherwise all the spinners cannot get enough work. There is no need for an organization like theCharkha Sangh for helping only a few persons. If it is obligatory for all the persons to wear khadi, then certainly the spinners must also wear it. It will be as good as giving them a dole if the spinners do not wear khadi and we go on giving them higher wages than they demand. To give such a dole was never the aim of the Charkha Sangh.

[1] This was originally published in *Khadi Jagat.*

So on the one hand it was our duty to give more wages to the spinners, on the other it was our duty to make them and their families wear khadi. For the observance of the latter dharma we can certainly tell the spinners to utilize the extra wages they are getting in meeting the expenses on khadi.

But we would not have succeeded in doing that and so we adopted the middle path. We made whatever progress we could. We had no means of forcing others, have none and shall have none. The Charkha Sangh is a symbol of ahimsa and at the same time a great experiment in it. It is based purely on a sense of justice. It endeavours to do justice to those who have long been denied it. All of our decisions should therefore be guided purely by a sense of justice.

It must be remembered that our aim is to give to all the spinners an anna for an hour. But we have fallen short of it. We do not have the means to reach that rate. Our tools are not such that they would enable the spinners to earn an anna for an hour's work.

It is our duty to give higher wages to the spinners if we can in these days of rising prices. Only the experts on charkha and those experienced in this field can decide about it.

One has to use one's discretion while arriving at a decision. If common sense suggests that from the increased wages of the spinners we should not make a deduction in order to make them khadi-wearers, then we should under no circumstances make any deduction. We should never make deductions by which the spinners are compelled to buy more than their family requirements. In other words we have to regard the spinners as members of our family and collect money from them accordingly. We should never take undue advantage of their ignorance. We should realize their requirements and take the necessary steps.

SEVAGRAM, May 20, 1942

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 31-5-1942

352. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
May 20, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I had all your letters. No difficulty in deciphering your Hindi. As easy as your English. This I write in English for your pleasure. It is being written with the cent per cent swadeshi pen. It is giving good work.

I note the questions you have raised. I must try to answer them next week.

Ba is keeping well.

The weather is not too trying. The nights are quite pleasant. On my return I found I was reduced to 98_. I was bound to lose that much. The work was strenuous. There is no cause for worry for I am otherwise quite well.

Here is a letter received today as also one from Badshah Khan. I should not wonder if some Hindu girls are kidnapped or Hindus murdered. I do not know how much truth there is in the charge against the official world. However, we must wait, watch and pray.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: 3687. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6496

353. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

May 20, 1942

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

I have your answer at last.

I won't argue with you about Abha. You had consented to her betrothal. It was I who because of her fault had suggested the suspension. At the time of the betrothal you were sure of securing your wife's consent. I do not know what has happened now. But that is your concern. It is news to me that in Bengal people are averse to

their girls going out of Bengal or out of so-called caste. I know many Bengali girls who are married out of Bengal and are perfectly happy.You have yourself contemplated Veena's marriage anywhere. You want her to make her own choice. And she is likely to do so, if she lights upon a young man to her liking.

In any case I propose to send Abha to Rajkot. People here won't believe that Abha's marriage with Kanu is an uncertainty. Naturally neither Abha nor Kanu like such talk. Abha will have Veena's company and Narandas's personal attention.

So far as *Harijan* articles are concerned, you may take any you like so long as the translation is accurate and you do not mention my name. I should not be understood to have in any way identified myself with your activity. But of course you have my blessing in the performance of any worthy service.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10340. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

354. LETTER TO LAKSHMI GANDHI

May 20, 1942

CHI. LAKSHMI,

You have passed in the first division. I am glad. Keep up the progress.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1994

355. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 21, 1942

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. From my writings my opinion must be clear to you. For yourself I can say quite clearly, if your heart tells you that you should take the sword you will not hesitate to do so. In these times everyone must be left to himself to do what impels him to [*sic*]. If the Congress discipline comes in the way you should resign even as I advised Munshi[1] to do. The country should get your full service.

Dr. Gopichand saw me after his return from Sindh.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 949

356. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

May 21, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I got your two letters together. I simply can't write letters.

Mahadev explains everything. I will not be hasty. You will have to go to Delhi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4265. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7897

[1] K. M. Munshi

357. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHASTRI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 21, 1942

BHAI HIRALAL SHASTRI,

Your lamenting is needless. Let us be vigilant. Everyone makes mistakes. Sohanlalji is well, I expect,

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Hiralal Shastri Papers. Courtesy Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

358. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
May 21, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I seem to recollect that I had answered your previous letter. The present one is easy to answer. Your wishes should prevail in the work that has been entrusted to you. But in a non-violent constitution law as law vanishes and we never feel its stress. So when someone violates a law we are charitable towards him. Have you understood this?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4426; also S.N. 24480

359. QUESTION BOX

The six[1] questions that follow are from workers who endorse my plan for the withdrawal of the British Power. The answers have to be read in the light of the plan. The workers should know that no plan, however wise it may be, can produce the intended effect if it does not commend itself to those for whose benefit it is presented, or if they are too weak to follow it out. Now for my answers:

NOT RIGHT

Q. Are we right in believing that you wish the Congress and the people to become capable as soon as possible of taking over the administration and to do so on the first opportunity?

A. You are not right. I cannot speak for the Congress. But I want no organization or individual to become capable of taking over the administration. In non-violent technique, it is unthinkable. You do not take over power. It may descend to you being given by the people. In an anarchical state, all turbulent elements will make a bid for power. Those who will serve the people and will evolve order out of chaos willspend themselves in removing chaos. If they survive, the popular will may put them in as administrators. This is wholly different from what you have imagined. People who make a bid for power generally fail to achieve it.

Q. In resisting unjust military or civil orders, is the primary motive (a) protest against the Government action, (b) alleviation of the peoples' sufferings, or (c) a preliminary step towards the capture of power?

A. The central point of my conception is non-violence. In trying to educate the people to be without the British or any power, the chief thing is to resist all injustice, no matter how or by whom it is perpetrated. Here resistance is not by way of protest, certainly not a preliminary step towards gaining power. I want thousands of people to resist injustice. If they all were to do so to seize power, they will never succeed. It is surely enough for them to resist the injustice they feel. It

[1] The answer to the sixth question was written on May 23, 1942, and hence appears under that date under the heading "Question Box".

is in itself a duty.

Q. Do you expect individual Congressmen to offer resistance in cases where the villagers or general public are not prepared to come forward?

A. If I can speak for Congressmen I would say most emphatically "yes". People who are terror-struck have no gumption.

Those who have, have to intercede even at the cost of their lives.

SELF-PROTECTION

Q. Shall we go to reason with the officials who refuse to allow the organization of self-protective units? And if they do not listen. shall we still go on?

A. People have to protect themselves against officials, against dacoits and possibly Japanese. If they do not, they are doomed.

Therefore they may not brook any interference with their preparation. But they may not bear arms without licence. What I have in mind is gymnastics, drill, lathi play and the like. The authorities are not likely to interfere with these practices. But if they do, the people affected may disregard prohibition and take the consequences.

SALT

Q. Villagers here are much troubled for want of salt which they used to get largely from Calcutta. If they defy the Salt Laws they can easily make sufficient stocks for the needs of the Province. Cattle in these parts are given no salt. If salt became free this serious defect could also be removed. May we advise the people to make all the salt they need for the Province? After the rains begin they will not be able to make salt.

A. Manufacture of salt for home consumption is covered by the Irwin-Gandhi Pact. The ten-mile radius at present is unworkable. I do think that in these hard times the restriction should be relaxed and as far as possible the people should be left to help themselves. The main revenue from salt is not likely to be affected by the laxity of administration in favour of the poor people. I would advise local adjustment with the authorities.

The idea underlying my plan, however visionary or even mischievous it may appear to be, is that if the setting given is non-violent and the workers understand and carry it out, the withdrawal of British authority can take place without much disturbance and certainly without the Japanese replacing that authority

unless, as has been suggested, the popular mind is in favour of the Japanese.

While I was preparing this note, I received a letter from Rajen Babu who writes as follows about salt:

> During my tour I have made it a point to meet representatives of merchants and traders at every place I visit, with a view to ascertaining the position of stock of food-stuffs, kerosine oil and salt and other necessary articles of daily consumption. At every place it has been impressed on me, both by merchants and members of public, that a most serious situation is developing with regard to supply of salt. A big shortage in salt is apprehended at almost every place that I have visited and unless immediate steps are taken it may cause great hardships and sufferings to the people, particularly to the poor who very often have to depend only on salt to enable them to gulp the coarse food they can somehow manage to get. The steps to control the price of salt are ineffective. It is worse than useless to control the price of an article of vital necessity, without ensuring a regular supply of it. The price fixed remains only on paper and cannot be enforced unless there is arrangement to ensure a supply of the commodity. Despite the price fixed by the Government, salt sells at higher prices at many places particularly in mofussil. But what is feared is much more serious than mere high prices, viz., more or less total disappearance of salt from the market and grocers' shops. I am told that orders placed by the merchants are not executed by the people at the centres like Khewra and Shambhar. There is nothing like price control there and a lot more than the apparent price has to be paid by the merchants if they want to get a supply. It is said that this extra cost comes to something like Rs. 300 to Rs. 400 or even more per waggon in addition to the standard price of Rs. 1,075 for 550 maunds. At Calcutta although the price control has fixed Rs. 170 for 100 maunds the actual price paid by the buyers is Rs. 270. This is the stateof price control. The difficulty in securing a waggon is not the least of the difficulties that has to be encountered. With increasing difficulty in supply of waggons the prospect is dismal. The Government should take immediate steps to ensure a regular supply of salt: (a) by securing a regular supply of waggons, (b) by ensuring a just and fair distribution of the available stock among dealers, (c) by opening new sources of supply of salt, and (d) by removing all restrictions on the manufacture of salt from sea-water at seacoast and from earth in the interior. It must be realized that dislocation of transport may make

it impossible for salt to be carried from long distances and efforts should be made to make it available within manageable distances so that ordinary means of country transport like bullock-carts, boats, pack bullocks, horses and mules may be employed for transporting it. With the monsoon already in sight it is already very late and any further delay in taking effective steps may mean untold sufferings.

I wish the authorities will listen to Rajen Babu and relax the restrictions before it is too late and people suffer before actual war overtakes the land.

IN CASE OF REQUISITION

Q. Land is being requisitioned for military aerodromes and villagers are being ordered to vacate. If no reasonable arrangements are being made for the villagers should the orders be resisted? Or should we resist in any case as we do not want the aerodromes which are in themselves a danger, not a protection, and no arrangements can ever adequately compensate a peasant for his house and fields?

A. No resistance on the ground of all war resistance is contemplated in the present plan. Resistance is permissible only if villagers do not get equal facilities elsewhere in the shape of land and cottages. No monetary compensation can give evacuated people the land they will need. High-handedness should be resisted.

SEVAGRAM, May 22, 1942
Harijan, 31-5-1942

360. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 22, 1942

CHI. MIRA,

You must have received my p.c.s or letters, I forget which. If you get *Harijan*, it is more than my weekly letter.

I have fully discussed your questions with Gope Bapu. Nevertheless I am answering all your important questions in *Harijan*. Herewith is an advance copy. The answers should not be published before they appear in *Harijan*.

I have shared your letter with Asha, Mahadev and Kishorelal. Your power of description is of a high order. It makes your letters delightful reading.

From my answers you will see that I want to hasten slowly. I do not want to precipitate matters. Our steps must be firm but gradual so that people may understand them so far as it is possible. A time must come when the thing may become beyond control. We may not purposely let it go out of control. Is this clear?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6498. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9893

361. LETTER TO KRISHNA VARMA

May 22, 1942

BHAI KRISHNA VARMA,

Kakasaheb has been suffering from an itch for the past one year. Please examine him and if you can diagnose the disease, treat him. Kakasaheb is addicted to work and, therefore, will not be able to spare much time to stay there. See what you can do. Please write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10992

362. WHY THE DIFFERENCE?[1]

A professor writes:

> You have advised the British to withdraw. About the Princes you say, "But I would fain hope that the Princes and their advisers will, for their own sakes and for the good of India, curb the tendency in many States which cannot be described by any other adjective than lawless." Why not ask the Princes whose tyranny is older and perhaps more deep-rooted than that of the British

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

to abdicate immediately?

I am surprised that the professor has failed to see the distinction between the Princes and the Paramount Power. The Princes (present) are a creation of the Paramount Power. They derive their authority from it. Their abdication will not end the Princely rule. Another will immediately take the vacant place and in the absence of one the State will be under British administration. Thus, whichever way you look, you will find the British power by its very nature blocking the way to Truth.

SEVAGRAM, May 23, 1942

Harijan, 31-5-1942

363. FRIENDLY ADVICE

Thus reasons a friend:

> Most people will agree with you that Britain's inability to play fair by India deprives them of the right to expect even our moral support. Ideologically also most people will agree with you that their only honourable course would be to withdraw from India. But inevitably the withdrawal will confront us with immense difficulties which you yourself have admitted. You say you are willing to take all risks. Every brave man is. At the same time is it not your duty to prepare the ground up to a point so as to minimize the risks as far as possible? The people must, for instance, be made to shed cowardice and feel that it is possible for us to stand on our own legs. They must not desire, as so many do, Japanese help or even submit to Japanese domination as theywould have to if that help were taken. They must be weaned, as far as possible, from hatred of the British. And then every effort must be made to secure Muslim support. This is your last and supreme effort to bring freedom to India. Let no step be taken in haste or without due preparation. The time is too critical to bear failure.

As these columns show, with the overwhelming sense of the truth as it appears to me, I am taking every care humanly possible to prepare the ground. I know that the novelty of the idea, and that too at this juncture, has caused a shock to many people. But I could not help myself. Even at the risk of being called mad, I had to tell the truth if I was to be true to myself. I regard it as my solid contribution to the

War and to India's deliverance from the peril that is and the peril that is threatening. It is too my real contribution to communal unity. No one can visualize what it will be like. Only it will not be the sham we have had up to now. It has touched only the few politically minded people. The masses have remained unaffected by it.

Whilst therefore I will take every imaginable care consistent with the urgency, I cannot guarantee freedom from cowardice before taking any forward step. The cowardice will probably not be shed without much travail. Nor is waiting possible, till hatred abates. Withdrawal of the hated power is the only way to rid the land of the debasing hatred. The cause gone, hatred must cease.

Of course the people must not, on any account, lean on the Japanese to get rid of the British power. That were a remedy worse than the disease. But as I have already said, in this struggle every risk has to be run in order to cure ourselves of the biggest disease—a disease which has sapped our manhood and almost made us feel as if we must for ever be slaves. It is an insufferable thing. The cost of the cure, I know, will be heavy. No price is too heavy to pay for the deliverance.

SEVAGRAM, May 23, 1942

Harijan, 31-5-1942

364. QUESTION BOX

OUT OF TOUCH

Q. Do you know, being confined in Sevagram, how much you are out of touch with the public? If you were not you would not talk of resisting the Japanese as you do. For the dislike of the British is so great that the man in the street is ready to welcome the Japanese.

A. I cannot endorse your proposition that I am out of touch with the public. Though I am confined in Sevagram I see all sorts of people and receive correspondence from every nook and corner of India. Probably, therefore, I am more in touch with the people than you can be though living in a big town. You have not the opportunity that I have of gauging the public mind. But let us grant that what you say is right—I believe you are partially right,—my suppressing the

true remedy will not alter the public mind. On the contrary, I am showing the futility of hatred. I am showing that hatred injures the hater never the hated. An Imperial power cannot act otherwise than it has been doing. If we are strong the British becomes powerless. I am therefore trying to wean the people from their hatred by asking them to develop the strength of mind to invite the British to withdraw and at the same time to resist the Japanese. With the British withdrawal the incentive to welcome the Japanese goes and the strength felt in securing British withdrawal will be used for stemming the Japanese inroad. I endorse C.R.'s proposition that the millions of India can resist the Japanese even without the possession of arms, modern and ancient, if they are properly organized. I differ from him when he says that this can be done even when the British arms are operating without co-ordination when you force yourself on the British power. Experience teaches us that hearty co-ordination and co-operation is impossible where mutual trust and respect are wanting. British presence invites the Japanese, it promotes communal disunion and other discords, and what is perhaps the worst of all, deepens the hatred born of impotence. Orderly British withdrawal will turn the hatred into affection and will automatically remove communal distemper. So far as I can see the two communities are unable to think or see things intheir proper perspective as long as they are under the influence of the third power.

SEVAGRAM, May 23, 1942

Harijan, 31-5-1942

365. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 23, 1942

MY DEAR C.R.,

So Laxmi has passed first class![1] This is mere introduction.

Though we differ as poles asunder, my heart goes out to you in

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lakshmi Gandhi", 20-5-1942.

your stand against hooliganism at your meetings.

I found in Bombay it was no use my making any attempt to see Q. A.[1] Moreover he was not there. You know you are to come here almost monthly to rest here and be free from the care of attending meetings.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Kamalnayan asks me whether the house you are in may be transferred to you or any of the family.

From a photostat: G.N. 2086

366. LETTER TO RATHINDRANATH TAGORE

May 23, 1942

DEAR RATHI[2],

I finished the collection last Sunday. It was a sight to see the subscribers coming in. There were some complaints which I must discuss with you when I have a bit of time.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI RATHINDRA NATH TAGORE
SANTINIKETAN
EAST BENGAL

From C.W. 10352. Courtesy: Visvabharati, Santiniketan

367. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
May 23, 1942

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Since Prithvi Singh has lost faith in me,[3] our relations have come

[1] Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah
[2] Rabindranath Tagore's son
[3] Prithvi Singh was of the opinion that India should co-operate with the British in the war against Japan

to an end. Gopalrao[1] will leave that work. I think Nathji[2] and Kishorelal[3] will end their connection with the Sangh. What Prithvi Singh does we shall know by and by.

Give me news from there. Something must happen soon.

I have suggested to Prithvi Singh that he will himself have to announce his loss of faith in me. If he does nothing, I shall have to say something ultimately. You may tell our people about the break in our relationship. I suppose it would be best to keep silent about Limdi for the present.[4]

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

68 MARINE DRIVE

BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 275

368. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

May 23, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I have your letter. You are right. You have been writing every day. Continue writing in the same way.

I was to reach Sevagram on the 18th. Quaid-e-Azam was not in Bombay. I also learnt that it would be no use seeing him. There is no occasion to go to Bombay again.

You should take rest, lots of rest and improve your health.

I have a letter from Balkrishna saying he has arrived at

[1] Gopalrao Kulkarni, an instructor in the Ahimsak Vyayam Sangh which was started by Prithvi Singh

[2] Kedarnath, Vice-President of the Ahimsak Vyayam Sangh

[3] Kishorelal Mashruwala

[4] A large number of people had left the State because of harassment by the State Government. *Vide* "Lawless Limbdi", 20-2-1939 and"Limbdi", 31-8-1939.

Dalhousie. Lala Hansraj should not be troubled. I am sending Balkrishna's letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4266. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7898

369. FOR RAJAJ1

There is no doubt that Rajaji is handling a cause which has isolated him from his colleagues. But his worst enemy will not accuse him of any selfish motive behind the extraordinary energy with which he has thrown himself into the controversy of which he is the author. It reflects the greatest credit on him. He is entitled to a respectful hearing. His motive is lofty. It is a noble thing to strive for Hindu-Muslim unity, equally noble to strive to ward off the Japanese intrusion. In his opinion the two are intertwined.

Hooliganism is no answer to his argument. The disturbances at his meetings are a sign of great intolerance. Evolution of democracy is not possible if we are not prepared to hear the other side. We shut the doors of reason when we refuse to listen to our opponents or having listened make fun of them. If intolerance becomes a habit, we run the risk of missing the truth. Whilst with the limits that nature has put upon our understanding we must act fearlessly according to the light vouchsafed to us, we must always keep an open mind and be everready to find that what we believed to be truth was, after all, untruth. This openness of mind strengthens the truth in us and removes the dross from it, if there is any. I plead therefore with all who are disturbing Rajaji's meetings not to do so but to give him a patient and respectful hearing to which he is entitled.

The reader knows that I hold Rajaji to be in the wrong. He is creating a false atmosphere. He does not believe in Pakistan nor do the nationalist Muslims and others who concede the right of separation or secession. They and Rajaji say that that is the way to wean the Muslim League from the demand for separation. I am surprised that many Muslims rejoice over a concession of doubtful value. I see nothing but seeds of further quarrel in it. It should be

enough to state the proposition that nothing can prevent the Muslim League from having it if the Muslims really want it. They will take it by the vote or the sword unless they will submit to arbitration. But all this can only happen when the British Power is entirely withdrawn and the Japanese menace has abated. Till then there is neither Pakistan nor Hindustan or any other 'stan'. It is today Englishtan and may be tomorrow Japanistan, if we do not take care. If all who consider India to be their home now and for ever will pull their full weight to deliver it from the present and the impending peril, and when both the perils are finally removed, it will be time to talk of Pakistan and other 'stan's and to come to an amicable decision or fight. No third party will or should decide our fate. It should be reason or the sword. Rajaji's method leads us to the blind alley unless his admirable and patriotic persistence opens a way unknown to him or any of us. Whatever the fate of different opinions, my plea is for mutual toleration and respect.

SEVAGRAM, May 24, 1942

Harijan, 31-5-1942

370. LETTER TO TOFAIL AHMAD[1]

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 24, 1942

MY DEAR TOFAIL AHMAD,

Though your argument is good I am afraid no good will come out of publishing it at the present juncture.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 11395

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter dated May 19, 1942, enclosing an article on joint electorates for publication in *Harijan.*

371. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

May 24, 1942

MY DEAR KU,

Strange I was counting the days to see when you were coming. Since you promise to labour you will be deemed worthy of your hire.

I am glad B.[1] has returned. It is good Sita has not returned. June is the month when the hot winds stop. She is too frail to take kindly to this heat.

It will be time before I can deal with your speech. I need much peace for developing my theme.

Love,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10165

372. LETTER TO PRATAPRAI M. MODI

May 24, 1942

BHAI PRATAPRAI,

I have received your book[2]. I would like to read it, but I cannot spare a single moment to read such books. You will please, therefore, excuse me.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

PROF. PRATAPRAI MODI
'PARIMAL'
TAKHTESHWAR PLOT
BHAVNAGAR (KATHIAWAR)

From Gujarati: C.W. 1637. Courtesy: Prataprai M. Modi

[1] Bharatan Kumarappa
[2] *Hindu Dharmana Mul Tatvo*

373. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

May 24, 1942

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I feel that it would be desirable to give some formal position to Krishnachandra. We may call him Assistant Manager and define his field of work. If you approve, you may, if you like, put the suggestion before the Executive Committee. You are the best judge of what would be the proper thing to do. I do not remember the rules.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10609

374. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May 24, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

We have so arranged it here that anyone who needs anything should ask for it. The designation may be Assistant Manager and the sphere of work may be defined. My suggestion did not mean that you were to make the announcement. That will be done by Chimanlal or me. I merely suggested the remedy.

The next step can be taken after I have received your suggestion. I shall see about it now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4428

375. A NOTE[1]

May 24, 1942

The solution is simple. Everyone should be told what each one's field of work is.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4427

376. LETTER TO PARACHURE SHASTRI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 24, 1942

SHASTRIJI,

I have your letter. Yes, what you write about mother cow is right. Janakibehn lives here. She is happy. I am in good health. We shall meet some day.

Get well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10669

[1] This was written on a letter received from Krishnachandra.

377. TERRIBLE IF TRUE[1]

A terrible tale of ordered anarchy comes from Khurja. A correspondent writes to say that, for no cause he can understand, practically all normal activities have been stopped.[2] Even the sale of bamboos and mats for biers was prohibited. Even building activities have been stopped causing the greatest inconvenience and damage. Money is taken from the people on the slightest pretext and a reign of terror prevails. I have given here the barest outline of the doings in Khurja in the hope that there will be full investigation and if the facts are true further damage will be prevented.

SEVAGRAM, May 25, 1942

Harijan, 31-5-1942

378. INDIAN SOLDIERS RUN AMUCK?

I take the following from the report of the Secretary, B.P.C.C., on the shooting alleged to have taken place by soldiers of Indian Signal Corps on 17th and 18th instant at Nivodhai near Duttaparkar in Barasat sub-division, Bengal:

> A batch of Indian troops about 7 or 8, while engaged in sinking telephone posts entered the garden of Rabindranath Bose at about 1 p.m. on the 17th May, plucked fruits and wilfully damaged green mangoes and jack-fruits, etc., whereupon Rabindra and Shashindra protested against their conduct. The soldiers thereupon assaulted them and kicked Shashindra when he fell down. Shashindra was attended by Dr. Tulsidas Sarkar, a local medical man. The soldiers also raided the house of Hari Charan Das and Sashanka Das and damaged the cooking and other utensils and threatened the local people with dire consequences.
>
> .. Pachu Gopal Mookherjee, President, Union Board, Suresh Chandra Dey (Honorary Magistrate) and Dr. Tulsidas Sarkar lodged the first information at Barasat Thana at about 5-30 p.m. and reported the matter to the S.D.O., Barasat and sought his protection. The S.D.O., thereupon, directed the Thana

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

[2] *Vide* "Letter to H. L. Sharma", 25-5-1942.

officer to post four constables at Nivodhai village in themorning of the 18th and 19th May. The complainants carried written instructions from the S.D.O. to the Thana officer, but unfortunately no police constable was found in the village on the 18th morning, when that unfortunate firing took place.... Next day on the 18th May, the soldiers numbering about 25 came to the scene of occurrence with arms at about 7 a.m. Out of these men about 12 or 13 entered the Nivodhai village at 8.30 a.m. and started patrolling the streets using abusive language to the villagers and womenfolk and threatened them with their rifles and bullets. They, then entered the tailoring shop of Ratan Das and assaulted him. After assaulting Ratan Das they again entered the garden of Robin Bose, knocked at the door and threatened to assault the female members of the house. The panic-stricken inmates having raised a hue and cry, a large number of villagers (40 to 50) assembled there to rescue them. Thereupon, the troops gave a signal to the other members of the corps who were waiting in the neighbourhood, when they also ran to the place of occurrence.

Four or five local young men, namely, Sushil Kanjilal, Bejoy Kumar Mukherjee, Sambhu Nath Dutta and Santosh Nath approached the soldiers and requested them not to intimidate the innocent people and asked them to leave the place, whereupon they got enraged and assaulted Sushil Kanjilal on the head with the butt end of a gun (he has since been removed to Calcutta Medical School Hospital for treatment). At this the villagers got frightened and tried to run away when Bejoy Mukherjee was pushed down by the soldiers and a tussle ensued between them, then he fell into the adjacent tank and the soldiers got hold of him and ducked him in water. The villagers, thereupon, being exasperated ran to his rescue and some of them pelted stones at the soldiers. They then left Bejoy in the tank and opened six rounds of shot as a result of which Bejoy was wounded and fell down. Santosh Nath and Sambhu Dutta also received gun-shot wounds and have subsequently been removed to Calcutta Medical School for treatment. The condition of Santosh Nath is reported to be very serious. Immediately after firing the signallers left the place dragging the body of Bejoy towards the place where the military lorry was standing. After the soldiers had gone away, villagers began to search for the victim when Sudarshan Mukherji, Sripada Mukherji, Bojomohon Bose and others found Bejoy in a dying condition with intestines ripped open and groaning under the bush, near the Railway Home Signal in a ditch close to Rabindra's garden. He was carried to the nearest Kalibari where he died saying that he was dragged in and trampled upon by the booted-soldiers on his chest and other parts of the body and was also bayonetted. He could say no more and he succumbed

immediately.

It was a deliberate and cold-blooded murder. The whole village seems to be exceedingly panic-stricken. The police did not arrive on the 18th morning although the S.D.O., Barasat, apprehending some trouble directed them to post constables at Nivodhai from the 18th morning. If the police authorities had been a bit more vigilant the catastrophe could have been averted.

Santosh Nath who had since been Iying in a precarious condition died on the 20th morning at Calcutta Medical School Hospital.

No comment is necessary on this wantonness on the part of the so-called defenders of India, assuming the truth of the statement.

SEVAGRAM, May 25, 1942

Harijan, 31-5-1942

379. LETTER TO GOPARAJU SATYANARAYANA MURTI

May 25, 1942

DEAR MURTI,

If you and your wife can put up with the hard life here, live separately and your wife can undergo the Ashram discipline, you can come.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6089

380. LETTER TO PURATAN J. BUCH

May 25, 1942

CHI. PURATAN,

I have your letter. You should tell him what you have told me. If you wish me to tell him on your behalf, I can do so. Constructive work should not produce such effect. All our activities have swaraj as their aim. We may give them up whenever it becomes necessary to do so. It would be better for you to discuss your views with Naraharibhai.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9185

381. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

May 25, 1942

CHI. NARAHARI,

There is a report in the newspapers that burglars broke into the Ashram and made away with some things. How far is it true? I would not be surprised if something like this had really happened. Do you remember the remedy I had suggested? I hope you do. We have not been able to employ it fully. No time would be inopportune for making a start.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9127

382. LETTER TO MULJIBHAI T. SHARMA

May 25, 1942

BHAI MULJIBHAI,

You are unduly sensitive. We should not resent harmless popular sayings. Why should a Baniya take the saying, 'I see you are after all a Baniya', to be a reflection on himself? What if cowardice is attributed to a Baniya? Or if a Brahmin is believed to get wise after the event? As for me, I look upon the barber's occupation as an honourable one, for barbers have some knowledge of home remedies too.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAI MULJIBHAI TULSIDAS SHARMA

NAYEE HIND SABHA

DANDIA BAZAAR

BARODA, B.B.& C.I. RLY.

From a photostat of Gujarati: G.N. 3966; also C.W. 1

383. LETTER TO ABDUL HUQ

SEVAGRAM,
May 25, 1942

BHAI SAHEB,

You had promised to send me your scheme concerning Hindustani. It is yet to come. Do please send it.

An Association has already been formed at Wardha. I enclose a copy of its rules. May I hope you will be a member? A number of posts on the executive have been left vacant with a view to accommodating persons like you.

Dr. Tara Chand has agreed to join the Association provided Abid Saheb also joins it. It would be good if you could join it.

From Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

384. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEVAGRAM,
May 25, 1942

CHI. SHARMA,

I received your two letters. They are distressing. I am sending a small note[1] for *Harijan*. Let us see what happens. Your duty on such occasions is to fight to the death. I cannot tell you from here how. Bamboo should be made available for biers to carry corpses and building activities should go on. You have however stopped building the house. If the order is still in force, you can resume construction after giving notice. You should not depend on my advice for everything. Do you read what I write in *Harijan* these days?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

From a facsimile: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 310 and 311

[1] *Vide* "Terrible If True", 25-5-1942.

385. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

SEVAGRAM,

May 25, 1942

MAULANA SAHEB,

I had received your letter. Since there was nothing particular to write I did not reply. However, the Sind affair is worrying me.

Dr. Choithram[1], Prof. Ghanshyam[2] and others have written to me. I have written to them that as long as they are in the Congress, they will have to do as you say. But for how long can they be held back?

There are other issues too about which I am writing in *Harijan.* I hope you do read *Harijan.*

I hope you will come here after you have recovered. Jawahar is coming tomorrow.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

386. LETTER TO DR. A. U. KAZI

May 25, 1942

BHAI KAZI,

I have your letter. I remember you quite well. I can certainly take work from you but, I suppose, your requirements would be considerable.[3] Please let me know what they are. Can you stay in Ahmedabad or would you like to be with me at Sevagram?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Urdu original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Dr. Choithram Gidwani, President of the Sind Provincial Congress Committee

[2] Prof. K. T. Ghanshyam

[3] The addressee had expressed a wish to work for the *Urdu Harijan.*

387. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

May 26, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

You have given me a graphic account of the interview.[1] It was a good thing you wrote and you got an appointment. Of course, he was sweet and friendly and will always remain so. But that makes no difference to the plan. It will mature slowly. You therefore need not be in a hurry to come away. The weather is much too hot for you.

Love.

BAPU

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR

MANORVILLE

SIMLA W.

From the original: C.W. 4123. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7432

388. LETTER TO VITHALDAS V. JERAJANI

May 26, 1942

BHAI VITHALDAS,

I am thinking over your letter of the 12th. Who can predict what will happen if there is a conflagration? But, without worrying about it, we have to think of what we can do. We will discuss that at the forthcoming meeting.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of Gujarati: S.N. 9803

[1] The addressee had met the Viceroy on May 23 and, according to the report sent by the latter to Amery, pleaded "that first the Americans and then the British should vacate India bag and baggage". *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. II p. 134

389. LETTER TO HANUMANTHA RAO

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 26, 1942

BHAI HANUMANTHA RAO,

I have only now been able to reach your letter of May 2. I feel you ought to have written with greater frankness. If your heart is fully cleansed, I think you should clearly say something like "For a lapse in the performance of public duty I have decided to . . ."[1] I think it is your duty to make some such statement. You can still make amends even by issuing a simple statement.

I hope you will be able to read my handwriting.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

390. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 26, 1942

BHAI MOTI BABU,

I hope you can read Devanagari. I am glad you like my articles.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 11057

[1] The words within quotes are in English.

391. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 27, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

J. L.[1] has passed the whole day here. We have had a heart to heart talk. It is all to the good. We shall meet again. He has got to go for the Lucknow meeting.

Your letter. I told J. L. about your anxiety to meet him, but Shummy's boil prevented you. He thought it was your visit to the V.[2] I hope he is better for the lancet cut.

The heat is on the increase. It increases but to decrease. I don't want you to witness the process.

Ba is flourishing. Did I tell you I had gone up to 101 lb.? I think I have.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA W.

From the original: C.W. 4124. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7433

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru
[2] Viceroy

392. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 27, 1942

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I had talks with Jawaharlal all day long. They were cordial and we understood each other perfectly. Choithram[1] leaves things to you. You should be firm. If you go by my opinion, you should write a letter. I asked Jawaharlal. He says that the Congress member should quit and so should Allabuksh. This is the position. If, however, you yourself think differently, I have nothing to say.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

It is surprising that there is no improvement in your health. The cold must go. Do you clean the nose by taking in soda and salt through it? If there is no improvement you should come and stay here.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 276

[1] Dr. Choithram Gidwani, President of the Sindh Provincial Congress Committee

[2] *Vide* also "Lawlessness in Sindh", 19-5-1942.

393. CONVERSATION WITH MEMBER'S OF THE RASHTRIYA YUVAK SANGH[1]

May 28, 1942

Commenting on the poor physique of the members Gandhiji said:

These days our bodies are completely devoid of muscles. The bodies of the boys sitting opposite me, just like my body, are without muscles. What message should I give them? I can tell them only one thing: have good bodies and be healthy....

Instead of repeating what I have said so often it would be better that you should ask me questions and I should answer them.

Q. How can we drive away the British from here?

GANDHIJI (humorously): You do learn how to wield the lathi. Drive them away with its help.

Q. We can do that provided we have lathis.

G. In that case you belong to my creed. I have given up the lathi. You too have given it up. You people learn how to wield the lathi. I too keep this with me. But I do not strike anyone with it. It is only meant for giving me support. You should put the lathi to similar use. Your lathis are not meant for striking others.

Two questions are implied in your question. 'Do we want to drive away the British or do we want to put an end to their domination?'

Members with one voice: We want to end their domination.

G. That is the correct attitude. I have many friends among Englishmen. But I cannot say that about all Englishmen, though I would like to be friends with all of them. There should not be a single Englishman who is not my friend. I want to be friendly with all the peoples of the world, not only Englishmen. But I want to be friendly

[1] About a hundred members of the Rashtriya Yuvak Sangh, C. P., called on Gandhiji at Sevagram after their annual training camp at Wardha was over. They spent half an hour with Gandhiji during his morning walk. A brief report of the interview was also published in *Harijan*, 7-6-1942, under the heading "To Resist the Slave Drivers".

particularly with Englishmen because I have been associated with them for the last many years. It is immaterial what kind of association it was—let it be that they were masters and I was a slave—but we were associated. That is the reason I want to be friendly with the British particularly. But it is British domination and British imperialism which I want to banish from this land. I am telling the British rulers to withdraw quietly. It is the British domination that we want to end altogether because it is a poison which corrupts everything it touches. This rule is an obstacle to all progress.

There are two ways of getting rid of imperialism: either we wipe out the Empire or we quit it. I have suggested a method of quitting it. For that we do not require lathis; the two things required are the knowledge that the domination is a greater evil than any other evil and that we have to get rid of it no matter what it may cost. We have to be masters of our own mind. Take me for an example. I do not feel that I am a slave of anyone. Even if the whole world tries to make me a slave, it will fail. It cannot make me a slave, that is to say, it cannot become the master of my mind. It can do whatever it may like with my body. Suppose someone asks me to pick this stick and keep it there. No doubt I have the strength to lift the stick but I do not want to submit to his bidding. He would instruct the police to beat me to death. I will submit to his beating but not to his bidding. I am the master of my mind. A man is not a slave as long as he does not submit to others. I would have done my work if I was beaten to death. That would be my complete victory because he would not have made me do what he wanted. He could very well have my dead body. Whoever came to know about my death would at least say that here was a brave man who did not submit to anyone's bidding even though he was beaten to death.

Similarly we have to withdraw ourselves from the British Empire. It is better if they leave. I am trying to persuade them to do so. I am trying to persuade the world also. How can we dislodge them if they refuse to listen to us? We can remove their domination if not them, that is to say, we have to withdraw ourselves from their Empire. We can refuse to submit to their orders. I have explained this thing to you by giving a trivial example about removing a stick. We have to

make up our minds to throw off our yoke. We have to intensify our determination about not submitting to the rulers' bidding. Is that very difficult? How can one compel others to become one's slaves?

The authority of the Empire is exercised on us in a very subtle way—it is so subtle that we hardly know that the Empire exists. What proof do the Sevagram peasants have about the existence of the Government except the presence of the local Patel. There won't be any proof if there was no Patel armed with administrative authority. Peasants are afraid of the Patel. To them the Empire is an invisible power. The means of exercising this power are very subtle. We cannot get out of it with the help of the lathi. We can be victorious if we do not submit to the lathis of others.

Two forces of the same type are ranged against each other at present. Violence is being practised between England, America, China and Russia on one side and Germany, Italy and Japan on the other side. All these nations are intelligent, powerful and prosperous. A dangerous war is being fought between them. No one knows who will win. At the present moment there is mutual destruction of life and property. The worst of it is that it is not only the combatants who are being killed but innocent children, old men and women too. I am not interested in such war. It is the grace of God that we do not have such strength. I do not even want such favour from Him. I do not want to become either a Hitler or a Churchill. I for my part would like to become an independent peasant of India but I have not succeeded so far. I need milk while he cannot get milk. My body cannot subsist without milk. I wish I could compete with him. I envy him.

But the peasant of India is a peasant by force of circumstances. He for his part would like to become a king. But by force of circumstances he has remained a peasant. I wish to become a peasant and a labourer by choice. The only difference between him and me would be that I would be satisfied with my lot while he is not. I do not wish to become a dissatisfied beggar like him. I would be master of myself. I would be happy with that life. That is my ideal.

On the day I am able to teach him to become a peasant and a labourer by choice I would have taught him to throw off the shackles that now keep him bound and that compel him to do the masters'

bidding.

I have just pointed the way. You will get guidance from that. Try to follow my ideals as far as you can. For that we should have a good physique. We have to build up our muscles by regular exercise. But that should not be done to indulge in violence. We will not be fit for agriculture and labour if we develop our physique for indulging in violence. To become a Sandow is not our ideal. If he were asked to carry a load from here to Wardha in the sun, he would break down. On the other hand a labourer will carry that much load on his head in the hot sun for the sake of only five or six paise. Our ideal is to become such tough labourers and our exercises should be towards that end. We should be impervious to day and night, heat and cold. To us heat or cold should not make any difference.

We should learn to hop and jump not for beating others but to save them. Suppose a man has become unconscious on the other side of a ditch or a wall and in order to rescue him, we have to jump across. We should have all these abilities. That is what non-violent exercises teach. However, we do not want to be strong only in body. We have to cultivate resistance. And for that we have to develop our intellect and will-power. If you have imbibed this kind of strength then there is no doubt that you will become very good workers.

Q. When are you going to start a new movement?

G. On the one hand I am in a hurry to start it but on the other I am not. I am creating the necessary atmosphere for it. I know my limitations as well as those of others. It is necessary to explain to the people. As long as I can write I will go on explaining. I know that neither the people nor the government realizes the full implications of my plan and therefore whatever I do, I shall do keeping in mind these limitations.

Q. Would it be violence if instead of killing a tyrant we were to tie him up tightly with a rope?

G. It is not violence if you tie up a mad person. But it is certainly violence if you tie up others. We cannot make progress in non-violence by asking such a question. Non-violence teaches us to love a tyrant. A non-violent person is not afraid of a tyrant but is kind

to him. The law of compassion tells us that we cannot be kind to those of whom we are afraid. Forgiveness is the virtue of the brave.

We are not non-violent when we ask such questions. We want to curb the violence of the tyrant, and therefore the question of tying him up arises. Under such circumstances I will advise you to oppose him in whatever way you can, because the only other alternative would be to run away. I can never think of running away. He who is non-violent has love and kindness for others. He is not afraid of anyone. God gives him strength.

Q. But our efforts to end the British rule would result in anarchy. All the people are not non-violent and therefore there will be clashes, violence and oppression. Won't this anarchy be worse than the existing ordered anarchy? Won't the remedy be worse? How can we deal with it? Or is there no need to take any steps in advance?

G. Your question is very apt and important. That is the consideration that has weighed with me all these twenty-two or twenty-three years. I always thought that I would have to wait till the country was ready for a non-violent struggle. But my attitude has undergone a change. I feel that if I continue to wait I might have to wait till doomsday. For the preparation that I have prayed and worked for may never come, and in the mean time I may be enveloped and overwhelmed by the flames of violence that are spreading all around. I have noticed this shortcoming in my ahimsa. However, in spite of that the results of the experiments I have conducted have always been good. I do not feel sorry for these.

But today we have to go a step further. We have to take the risk of violence to shake off the great calamity of slavery. But even for resort to violence one requires the unflinching faith of a non-violent man. There cannot be any trace of violence either in my plans or in my thoughts. A non-violent person has complete faith in God. My ahimsa was always imperfect and therefore it was ineffective to that extent. But I have faith in God. In this context I say: "Rama is the strength of the weak." There is no trace of violence in my consciousness or in the remotest corner of my being. My very being is full of consciousness. How can a man who has consciously pursued ahimsa for the last fifty years change all of a sudden? So it is not that I have become violen.

The people do not have my ahimsa. And therefore I have to take a risk, if I cannot curb their violence. I cannot remain inactive. I will certainly launch a non-violent movement. But if people do not understand it and there is violence, how can I stop it? I will prefer anarchy to the present system of administration because this ordered anarchy is worse than real anarchy. I am sure that the anarchy created by our efforts to mitigate this dangerous anarchy will be less dangerous. The violence exerted then would be just a trifle compared to the existing violence. Violence which is due to the weakness of human nature, is bound to be there. Crores of people in the country have no weapons. Even if they indulge in violence among themselves how long can they do it? Ultimately they will have to listen to me even if some of them die in mutual violence. We have to take the risk of anarchy if God wills it. However, we shall try our best to prevent violence. If in spite of that there is violence then it is His wish. I am not responsible for that. But if I enjoy my milk and remain inactive and unconcerned about the terrible violence that is going on in the name of resisting a possible foreign aggression and about the prevalent, dangerous, orderly anarchy in the name of administration, I will be proved guilty. My ahimsa will not be effective at all then. For me such a situation will be intolerable. I will be ashamed of such ahimsa. Ahimsa is not such a useless thing. I hope that pure ahimsa will arise out of such anarchy.

Your question is very pertinent and thought-provoking. It arises from my writings. I have dealt with it in my writings also. But it is not easy to understand. Language is but a poor and an imperfect vehicle for one's thoughts. I could write less than what I have in mind—that is the limitation of language. But if you ponder over what I have written you will be able to understand me. Read it in Hindi, Marathi and Gujarati. If you read in English you will not be able to understand it. Think over it. I am putting before the country a great idea in my imperfect language. I am also sure that those who cannot or will not understand me will do so in the light of experience—if they survive the present catastrophe

[From Hindi]

Sarvodaya, June 1942

394. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 28, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I hope you have been having my letters regularly. They are posted all right.

Maulana Saheb is definitely leaving tomorrow and reaching here the day after. Khurshed is coming with him. Mira is still in Orissa.

I am really keeping very well. What I am eating is enough.

I hope Shummy is better and that you are putting on weight.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Here is a letter from Sarup[1]. You should attend after you descend.

From the original: C.W. 4125. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7434

395. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

May 28, 1942

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

I was thinking of writing to you at the Rishikesh Naka, but in the mean time I got your letter. I wanted to tell you that there should be some limit even to one's roaming about. Identifying of plants for its own sake is no part of dharma. Therefore render what service you can through such knowledge as you already possess and acquire proficiency in the course of service. You should show, if you can, that indigenous medicine is simple, inexpensive and capable of giving relief to 99 patients out of a hundred. If you feel that this cannot be done, then you should give up the profession.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2918. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya

[1] Vijayalakshmi Pandit

396. INTERVIEW TO " THE HINDU"

May 28, 1942[1]

Answering the question of a Press correspondent whether his present policy as revealed by his writings did not vitiate his own declaration that he was a friend of China, Gandhiji said:

My answer is an emphatic 'no'. I remain the passionate friend of China that I have always claimed to be. I know what loss of freedom means. Therefore, I could not but be in sympathy with China which is my next-door neighbour in distress. And, if I believed in violence and if I could influence India, I would put in motion every force at my command on behalf of China to save her liberty. In making, therefore, the suggestion which I have made about withdrawal of British power, I have not lost sight of China. But because I have China in mind, I feel that the only effective way for India to help China is to persuade Great Britain to free India and let a free India make her full contribution to the war effort. Instead of being sullen and discontented, India free will be a mighty force for the good of mankind in general. It is true that the solution I have presented is a heroic solution beyond the ken of Englishmen. But being a true friend of Britain and China and Russia, I must not suppress the solution which I believe to be eminently practical and probably the only one in order to save the situation and in order to convert the war into a power for good instead of being what it is, a peril to humanity.

Pandit Nehru told me yesterday that he heard people in Lahore and Delhi saying that I have turned pro-Japanese. I could only laugh at the suggestion, for, if I am sincere in my passion for freedom, I could not consciously or unconsciously take a step which will involve India in the position of merely changing masters. If, in spite of my resistance to the Japanese menace with my whole soul the mishap occurs, of which I have never denied the possibility, then the blame would rest wholly on British shoulders. I have no shadow of doubt about it. I have made no suggestion which, even from the military

[1] The date is from *The Hindu.*

standpoint, is fraught with the slightest danger to British power or to Chinese. It is obvious that India is not allowed to pull her weight in favour of China. If British power is withdrawn from India in an orderly manner, Britain will be relieved of the burden of keeping the peace in India and at the same time gain in a free India an ally not in the cause of Empire—because she would have renounced *in toto* all her imperial designs, but in a defence, not pretended but wholly real, of human freedom. That I assert and that only is the burden of my recent writings and I shall continue to do so long as I am allowed by the British power.

Q. Now what about your plan—you are reported to have matured plans for launching some big offensive?

Well, I have never believed in secrecy nor do I do so now. There are certainly many plans floating in my brain. But just now I merely allow them to float in my brain. My first task is to educate the public mind in India and world opinion, in so far as I am allowed to do so. And when I have finished that process to my satisfaction, I may have to do something. That something may be very big, if the Congress is with me and the people are with me. But British authority will have a full knowledge of anything I may wish to do before I enforce it. Remember I have yet to see the Maulana Saheb. My talks with Pandit Nehru are yet unfinished. I may say that they were wholly of a friendly nature and we have come nearer to each other even with the unfinished talk of yesterday. Naturally I want to carry the whole of the Congress with me if I can, as I want to carry the whole of India with me. For my conception of freedom is no narrow conception. It is co-extensive with the freedom of man in all his majesty. I shall, therefore, take no step without the fullest deliberation.

Asked about the situation in Sind and the Hur menace Gandhiji said:

I have a telegram from Hyderabad pressing me either to go to Sind or to see Pir Pagaro. I am afraid I can't go to Sind. I have pointed out the way which, if adopted, must succeed. So far as seeing Pir Pagaro is concerned, I would gladly see him, if I received proper authority enabling me to do so.

Harijan, 7-6-1942, and
The Hindu, 30-5-1942

397. CABLE TO "THE SUNDAY DESPATCH"[1]

[On or before *May 29, 1942*]

CABLE JUST RECEIVED. EVIDENTLY YOU HAVE NOT MY FULL STATEMENT. PART RELATING TO AMERICA RUNS THUS: 'I KNOW THAT I HAVE NO RIGHT TO CRITICIZE SUCH A BIG NATION. I DON'T KNOW ALL THE FACTS WHICH HAVE DETERMINED AMERICA TO THROW HERSELF INTO THE CAULDRON. BUT SOMEHOW OR OTHER OPINION HAS FORCED ITSELF ON ME THAT AMERICA COULD HAVE REMAINED OUT AND EVEN NOW SHE CAN DO SO IF SHE DIVESTS HERSELF OF INTOXICATION THAT HER IMMENSE WEALTH HAS PRODUCED. AND THERE I WOULD LIKE TO REPEAT WHAT I HAVE SAID ABOUT THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE BRITISH POWER FROM INDIA. BOTH AMERICA AND BRITAIN LACK THE MORAL BASIS FOR ENGAGING IN THIS WAR UNLESS THEY PUT THEIR OWN HOUSES IN ORDER BY MAKING IT THEIR FIXED DETERMINATION TO WITHDRAW THEIR INFLUENCE AND POWER BOTH FROM AFRICA AND ASIA AND REMOVED THE COLOUR BAR. THEY HAVE NO RIGHT TO TALK OF PROTECTING DEMOCRACY AND PROTECTING CIVILIZATION AND HUMAN FREEDOM UNTIL THE CANKER OF WHITE SUPERIORITY IS DESTROYED IN ITS ENTIRETY.'[2] I ADHERE TO THAT STATEMENT. HOW AMERICA COULD HAVE AVOIDED WAR I CANNOT ANSWER EXCEPT BY RECOMMENDING NON-VIOLENT METHOD. MY AMERICAN FRIENDSHIP HAD LED ME TO BUILD HIGH HOPE ON AMERICAN CONTRIBUTION TO PEACE. AMERICA IS TOO BIG, FINANCIALLY, INTELLECTUALLY, AND IN SCIENTIFIC SKILL, TO BE SUBDUED BY ANY NATION OR EVEN COMBINATION. HENCE MY TEARS OVER HER THROWING HERSELF IN CAULDRON.

Harijan, 7-6-1942

[1]Extracted from Mahadev Desai's article "Unfair to America?", 29-5-1942. This was in reply to a cable from *The Sunday Despatch* which read: "You are reported as saying that America could have kept out of the war if she had wished. How can you justify such a statement in view of the fact that while at peace America was attacked by the Japanese who simultaneously declared war on her?"

[2] *Vide* "Interview to the Press", 16-5-1942.

398. SARDAR PRITHVI SINGH[1]

I am sorry that after association with me since his discovering himself and allowing himself to be arrested, Sardar Prithvi Singh has parted company with me, having lost all faith in me all of a sudden and as a result of a single talk with me.[2] This naturally led him to tender his resignation from the Ahimsak Vyayam Sangh. As a natural corollary to this step, the trustees of the Sangh have decided to wind up the Sangh and close the Vyayam Shala, which was established by the Sangh, purely to let him make an experiment and find out, under guidance, the scope and quality of non-violent Vyayam.[3] I am hoping that, though he has lost faith in me, he has not lost it in ahimsa to which he was led after close and careful self-examination during years of secrecy.

SEVAGRAM, May 29, 1942

Harijan, 7-6-1942

399. DIFFERENCES VERY REAL

Your latest advice to the British to withdraw from all Asiatic possessions or at least India[4] is in accord with a general but undefined wish of a good section of the Indian public. Rightly or wrongly that wish is based upon the feeling that but for the Britisher making India the arsenal of his fight against the Axis, Japan may not have good cause for attacking India and will not do so. Even supposing Britain were to accede to this position, you do not suppose that Japan will on no account attack us. Very probably they may, and I am sure they will if only to get control of the vast material resources we have and use the same against their enemy. In which event you have advised non-violent resistance by us, but the Britisher will still carry the war against his enemy into our country (as is now done over the air in Burma, Siam, Indo-China, and occupied Europe) dictated, so they will say, solely by military considerations. None of these troubles may arise if the belligerents accept

[1] This had appeared under the heading "Notes".
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 23-5-1942.
[3] *Vide* "Ahimsak Vyayam Sangh", 28-4-1942.
[4] *Vide* "To Every Briton", 11-5-1942.

your method of settling disputes. But I see no near prospect of it nor do you. Meanwhile we may still have war in our midst each side saying that it is absolutely necessary to prevent the other from getting support for his operations. The resultant suffering will be ours and even if we hold on non-violently against the invader, it will not prevent the erstwhile possessor, from showering death and destruction on account of the enemy but all in our land and exactly over our heads. Perhaps Rajaji's attempt to organize a nation-wide resistance to the invader even at the cost of co-operating with the British arms is aimed at avoiding this futility of suffering. Even his method involves suffering, but is it not likely to be accepted more readily and with enthusiasm as being connected with the sole desire of preserving freedom and independence from aggression? It may also be that he feels that during and by that actual operation of mutual co-operation there may arise on our side a greater strength to achieve our independence and on their side a real appreciation of that strength and induce a feeling that it would serve no purpose to refuse the Indian demand any longer.... I should entreat you to let me know if I am correct in the above analysis and if so it does not reveal a fundamental difference between you and Rajaji in this critical hour of our history. In which event, you alone can show us the good and real way out, without futile suffering.

This is a very cogent letter from a friend who is most anxious to bridge the political gulf between Rajaji and me. But it cannot be by any make-believe. On the contrary any make-believe will mislead the country and serve neither his immediate purpose nor mine. We love the country with an equal passion. But our modes of service for the time being are diametrically opposite. He believes in resisting the threatened Japanese attack with the British aid. I regard this as impossible in the long end. India is not the home of the British people. If they are overwhelmed they will retire from India every man and woman and child, if they have facilities enough to carry them, even as they retired from Singapore, Malaya and Rangoon. This is no reflection on them or their bravery. Every army would have done likewise. But most probably from India they will not take with them the Indian army. They will perhaps expect them to carry on the battle by themselves. No doubt they would try to harass the Japanese army if they can from outside. So there would be no difference in the position

imagined by my correspondent and what I have adumbrated. Only under my plan what is contemplated is an orderly withdrawal by the British as if it was a premeditated military movement which will, let us assume, please millions of Indians. Then the hated British will become esteemed friends and allies. They will operate in concert with their allies. The Indians even as they would, say, with the Chinese. The whole thing becomes natural and a mighty force is voluntarily available to the British and to us. Add to this the moral height which Britain will occupy.

As for communal unity, the third party being removed unity will follow as day follows night. Unity will not precede but will succeed freedom. Today we do not even know that the goal of the Congress and the League is one. And you cannot bribe the League to co-operate for independence. Either the League believes that India is as much the home of Muslims as of non-Muslims, or it does not. If it does, it must first free the home from bondage before partitioning it. Today there is nothing to partition. After ridding the home of the foreign occupant, it can demand partition if it wishes and get it by negotiation or force. However, if it does not believe in India being the home of the Muslims, there is no question of negotiations for freeing India from bondage.

Rajaji's plan is, in my opinion, wholly unnatural. He wants to thrust himself on the British power which does not want him, for as the possessor by right of conquest it gets all it wants. In order to thrust himself on the British he gives the League the right of self-determination which every single individual has whether the others recognize it or not. Rajaji does not like partition and hugs the belief that his superfluous recognition of the inherent right will enable him to avoid partition.

I advise my correspondent not to worry over our differences. We know and love each other enough to let time correct the error, whether it lies on my side or his. Meanwhile a frank and bold admission of differences and their exact nature makes for healthy education of public opinion. What is needed is avoidance of anger and intolerance, the twin enemies of correct understanding.

SEVAGRAM, May 29, 1942

Harijan, 7-6-1942

400. JODHPUR [1]

From Jodhpur comes the news that Shri Jainarayan Vyas has been arrested for daring to seek an interview with the Maharaja and for proposing to carry on the movement for responsible government in Jodhpur.[2]

Evidently Shri Jainarayan Vyas had no other choice. I wish to Jodhpur workers all success. But I hope they have realized that they have to plough the lonely furrow. They will have abundant sympathy from all over India, but dry sympathy will give them no help. Help must come from their own resolute will and unflinching courage.

SEVAGRAM, May 30, 1942

Harijan, 7-6-1942

401. QUESTION BOX

Q. Is it a fact that your present attitude towards England and Japan is influenced by the belief that you think the British and the allies are going to be defeated in this War? It is necessary that you clear the position in this respect. A very important leader in the Congress thinks like that and he says that he is sure because he had this knowledge from his personal talks with you.

A. I wish you could have given the name of the leader. Whoever he is, I have no hesitation in saying that it is not true. On the contrary I said only the other day in *Harijan* that the Britisher was hard to beat. He has not known what it is to be defeated. Of the Americans in this very issue you will see my answer to *The Sunday Despatch*.[3] It contradicts the "leader's" statements. He has therefore either misunderstood me or you have misunderstood him. But I have said in my talk for the past twelve months and more that this war is not likely to end in a decisive victory for any party. There will be peace when the exhaustion point is reached. This is mere speculation. Britain may

[1] This had appeared under the heading "Notes".

[2] *Vide* "Notes", 4-5-1942.

[3] *Vide* "Cable to *The Sunday Despatch*", 6-7-1942.

be favoured by nature. She has nothing to lose by waiting. And with America as her ally she has inexhaustible material resources and scientific skill. This advantage is not available to any of the Axis powers. Thus I have no decisive opinion about the result of the War. But what is decisive with me is that I am made by nature to side with weak parties. My policy of non-embarrassment is based upon that nature and it persists. My proposal for British withdrawal is as much in Britain's interest as India's. Your difficulty arises from your disinclination to believe that Britain can ever do justice voluntarily. My belief in the capacity of non-violence rejects the theory of permanent inelasticity of human nature.

SEVAGRAM, May 30, 1942
Harijan, 7-6-1942

402. ALCHEMY OF PRODUCING FOOD

Below will be found an extract from a letter of the Hon. Secretary of Marwari Relief Society's Social Service Department:

> We are on the threshold of an acute food shortage crisis today. A good deal is being heard of the "grow more food" campaign, and it is no doubt a move in the right direction. But in my humble opinion, our leaders have not given due consideration to one considerable potential source of food supply in our country, which if successfully tapped, would feed at least 50 lakhs of our starving fellowmen. I refer to the tremendous waste of food that every one of us in this country indulges in, when taking our meals morning and evening and also the disgraceful waste that is usually seen on festive occasions. The aggregate amount thus thrown into the dust-bins could easily keep 5 millions of our countrymen from a perpetual state of semi-starvation. While passing along the streets of Calcutta, I have been shocked to find my own brothers and sisters picking up rotten food from the dustbins and eating it. The thought of such a ghastly scene which can be described as nothing short of a national disgrace has haunted me day and night and I have felt ashamed to take my food at home.

The Secretary further asks me to suggest ways and means of organizing a campaign popularizing the plan suggested in the letter. The plan I can heartily recommend. All the belligerent countries have

been forced to cut food supplies all round. There is naturally therefore not much scope for wastage in these countries. In our country seemingly we are not reduced to the straits to which the belligerent countries are reduced. In reality, however, the wastage which is truly enormous is confined to the few within the cities. The millions are living in a state of perpetual semi-starvation. For them it is like living in a chronic state of war. Day in and day out they know not what a square meal is. For them who have no margin the pressure of the present war can better be imagined than described.

What the Secretary suggests is worthy of consideration. A campaign against waste can be easily organized in all the cities. No householder should be without the knowledge of how he or she can avoid waste. There is here no question of denial. The question is only one of consideration for the poor. All saving thus made will be equal to so much food production without effort. There will have to be literature on the subject. It should not be elaborate. Leaflets should suffice. They must not be argumentative. By facts and figures they should tell the citizens how much waste they are responsible for and how they can avoid it. The horrible superstition that the dishes of the rich should always be over-full so as to leave an ample margin for leavings should be banished forthwith. It should be considered a sign of bad breeding to leave one's plate with a heap of uneaten things, whether at home or in a hotel. One should regulate the helpings with strict regard to wants. If all who are given to the evil habit of having plates piled up and merely sampling the courses served out were to follow the healthy rule here recommended much food can be saved for distribution among those who are in daily want. I think the Marwari Relief Society which has had rich and varied experience in social service is perhaps the fittest body to take the initiative in organizing the work. Though the problem will be much the same in all the cities, with every city there will be variations according to people's habits. I suggest, therefore, that the work is begun in Calcutta. The experience gained there could be utilized in extending the scope of service. It ought not to take more than a week to organize the work in Calcutta. Naturally great concentration of energy and a large body of willing workers will be required for this essential and urgent service.

SEVAGRAM, May 30, 1942

Harijan, 7-6-1942

403. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

May 30, 1942

CHI. SUSHILA AND MANILAL,

You two seem to have been left alone there. That is good. It is enough if you are happy in that state. Frequently the joy we find in following a lonely path is not to be found in travelling in the company of many, because in the latter case there is the danger of one's being dragged in a certain direction against one's wishes. I shall be content if all of you keep good health and are happy.

All are well here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4930

404. LETTER TO VIJAYA M. PANCHOLI

May 30, 1942

CHI. VIJAYA,

I am not at all responsible for your not getting my letters. You should either fight with the Postal Department or put up with it. I did write several letters to you. I see no harm at all in eating mangoes. You can take fresh milk of a healthy cow or sweet (in the natural way) curd. You should eat butter in moderate quantities. During pregnancy a woman must drink milk and eat butter, vegetables, fruit, etc. She should eat mangoes when they are in season. It does not matter if they are a little sour. Take 20 grains of soda bicarb in some way or other. Running about is not advisable. Walking is essential.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VIJAYABEHN
GRAM DAKSHINAMURTI
AMBALA, *via* SONGARH
KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7147. Also C.W. 4639. Courtesy: Vijaya M. Pancholi

405. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
May 30, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Why such impatience? I am so burdened with work! Your letters confuse me. The root of your unhappiness and agitation is your lack of respect for Chi. It is not going to be cured by anything I may write. The remedy for it is entirely in your own hands. If Chi. is a fool—and in your opinion he is—then you will tolerate anything he does. What is one to do in such a case? Tell me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4429

406. A TRIPLE TRAGEDY[1]

The *National Herald* is an institution. It has a directorate which has no personal or financial interest in it. It is founded by Jawaharlal Nehru. It is only in India that the security of such a paper can be forfeited. In fact why any security[2] at all from it? And they need the greatest assistance possible from him in the war effort. They have exploited his stray sayings torn from their context. In any case, what do the Government expect from their repressive policy? Consider this forfeiture of security in conjunction with the arrest and detention of Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, ex-Minister, the organizer of the Congress in U. P. and a Director of *The National Herald*. Put these two acts side by side with the wanton and almost indecent search of the A. I. C. C. Office, and the tragedy is complete. This triple act is in my opinion a great hindrance to national war effort. It is so mad as to amount to an invitation to the Japanese to walk into India. It is a justification for my friendly invitation to the foreign Government to abdicate in favour of

[1] This had appeared under the heading "Notes".
[2] The Printer and Publisher of *The National Herald* was asked to furnish a cash security of Rs. 6,000 by the District Magistrate of Lucknow.

the nation whatever it may be. It is bold, it is hazardous The British are capable of taking risks such as very few are. Let them take the risk I have suggested and it will be their greatest war effort. It alone can save the situation, if anything can, so far as India is concerned. As a first step let them revoke the forfeiture order, discharge Rafi Saheb, and return the papers seized from the A. I. C. C.

SEVAGRAM, May 31, 1942
Harijan, 7-6-1942

407. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA, C. P.,
May 31, 1942

CHI. MIRA,

I have your very complete illuminating letter. The report of the interview[1] is perfect, your answers were straight, unequivocal and courageous. I have no criticism to make. I can only say, 'Go on as you are doing.' I can quite clearly see that you have gone to the right place at the right time. I therefore need do nothing more than come straight to your questions which are all good and relevant.

(1) I think we must tell the people what they should do. They will act according to their capacity. If we begin to judge their capacity and give directions accordingly, our directions will be halting and even compromising which they should never be. You will therefore read my instructions in that light. Remember that our attitude is that of complete non-co-operation with Japanese army, therefore we may not help them in any way, nor may we profit by any dealings with them. Therefore we cannot sell anything to them. If people are not

[1] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira* the addressee, who was then in Orissa, says: "I had had an interview with two English officials of the then Advisory regime. Since we were in possession of the fact that the Government officials were to retire to the hills, forty or fifty miles inland, the moment there was news of the Japanese coming and such files as they could not take in their motor-cars were to be burnt and all bridges were to be blown up, my object at the interview was to request them to retire in an orderly fashion, leaving the administrative machinery in our hands. I specially pleaded with them to hand us over the keys of the jails and also not to take away the doctors and medical supplies of the civil hospitals."

able to face the Japanese army, they will do as armed soldiers do, i.e., retire when they are overwhelmed. And if they do so the question of having any dealings with Japanese does not and should not arise. If, however, the people have not the courage to resist Japanese unto death and not the courage and capacity to evacuate the portion invaded by the Japanese, they will do the best they can in the light of instructions. One thing they should never do—to yield willing submission to the Japanese. That will be a cowardly act, and unworthy of freedom-loving people. They must not escape from one fire only to fall into another and probably more terrible. Their attitude therefore must always be of resistance to the Japanese. No question, therefore, arises of accepting British currency notes or Japanese coins. They will handle nothing from Japanese hands. So far as dealings with our own people are concerned they will either resort to barter or make use of such British currency that they have, in the hope that the National Government that may take the place of British Government will take up from the people all the British currency in accordance with its capacity.

(2) Question about co-operation in bridge-building is covered by the above. There can be no question of this co-operation.

(3) If Indian soldiers come in contact with our people, we must fraternize with them if they are well disposed, and invite them, if they can, to join the nation. Probably they have been brought under promise that they will deliver the country from foreign yoke. There will be no foreign yoke and they will be expected to befriend people and obey National Government that might have been set up in place of British Government. If the British have retired in an orderly manner leaving things in Indian hands, the whole thing can work splendidly and it might even be made difficult for Japanese to settle down in India or any part of it in peace, because they will have to deal with a population which will be sullen and resistant. It is difficult to say what can happen. It is enough if people are trained to cultivate the power of resistance, no matter which power is operating—the Japanese or the British.

(4)[1] Covered by (1) above.

(5)[2] The occasion may not come, but if it does, co-operation will be permissible and even necessary.

(6) Your answer about the arms found on the wayside is most tempting and perfectly logical.[3] It may be followed but I would not rule out the idea of worthy people finding them and storing them in a safe place if they can. If it is impossible to store them and keep them from mischievous people yours is an ideal plan.

Love.

BAPU

Bapu's Letters to Mira, pp. 341-2; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44,* pp. 250-1

408. NOTE TO PERIN CAPTAIN[4]

May, 1942

I cannot come soon. If notwithstanding my continuing to work for Hindustani they will still have me and if their policy is not anti-Hindustani I shall stay on. I have been contending for years, that is, ever since the Indore convention, that Hindi is incomplete without Urdu. At my instance a resolution to this effect was also passed[5] but I believe their policy has since undergone a change. Now I want to work simultaneously for both if possible. If not I propose to opt out in order to do it. If Urdu is only a style of Hindi it does not deserve to be rejected.

From a facisimile of the Gujarati: Kulsum Sayani Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The question was what should be done about currency after the British retreated.

[2] The question was whether it would be permissible to co-operate with the Japanese in attending to the dead and wounded after a battle.

[3] The addressee had said her instinct was to take them out to sea and drown them.

[4] This appeared in a pamphlet issued on 1-8-1949 in the name of the addressee, who was then Hon. Secretary of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha.

[5] *Vide* "Letter to the Press", 31-3-1918.

409. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

[*May-June 1942*][1]

MY DEAR C. R.,

Love of you and J[inna]h woke me up at 2.00 a.m. Your brief, neat and well-argued speech [did not] appeal to me. That way lies destruction of all that is noble. But do thoroughly what you want to do. You must convince your colleagues.

You should know J[inna]h's mind. You must put me out of mind and sight. My way lies in a direction quite opposite of yours.

What is the use of my presenting my side before the W. C. today? You should let me go. You should give the whole of your time to convincing and converting the others.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 10931. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan

410. WATER FOR HARIJANS IN GUJARAT[2]

The ghastly form of untouchability which we find in Gujarat is not found anywhere else. How frightening can be the cruelty where Harijans are deprived of water! Bhai Parikshitlal has sent me a brief report of whatever little the Harijan Sevak Sangh is doing to soften the cruelty, which I give below.[3]

In fact this work should not be limited to a handful of Harijan workers. It is humanitarian work. The rich people can dip their hands into their pockets and get wells sunk at various places and thus bring

[1] From the contents it appears that the letter was written during this period; *vide* "For Rajaji", 24-5-1942; "Differences Very Real", 29-5-1942; "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 2-6-1942, 3-6-1942, 6/7-6-1942, 7-6-1942 and "Rajaji", 7-6-1942.

[2] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

[3] Not translated here. The correspondent had written that till the end of 1941 the Harijan Sevak Sangh had spent about Rs. 1,70,000 on sinking new wells and repairing old ones. But that had not solved the problem of the Harijans.

solace to the poor people. I know that the pace of dharma is slow but in this case it seems slower than usual.

How can I tell you how slow it is!

SEVAGRAM, June 1, 1942

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 7-6-1942

411. KHADI PRODUCTION AND EDUCATION IN KARADI

For the last many years Bhai Dilkhush Diwanji has been silently doing khadi work in Karadi and imparting education through it. He has sent me an interesting account of his work which I give below.[1]

The description does not require any criticism or appreciation. Readers should study it and emulate the example.

SEVAGRAM, June 1, 1942

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 7-6-1942

412. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
June 1, 1942

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

Your letter is clear. I am now sending Abha to Rajkot. If they are constant to each other they will marry when Abha is of age. I think she will be happier in Rajkot than here. Anyhow I shall be free from care. And Veena will have Bengali company.

I hope you are giving a good account of yourself in these stirring times.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10341. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[1] Not translated here. The report mentioned the contribution of the students in the successful working of the Karadi Khadi Production Centre. Many students met their education expenses from the spinning wages they received, and those belonging to poorer families helped their parents to augment their family income.

413. LETTER TO VITHALDAS V. JERAJANI

June l, 1942

BHAI VITHALDAS,

May your new enterprise bear fruit and may you live long to carry it through.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9802

414. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

June 1, 1942

CHI. PRABHA,

I am not in a position these days to write to you or to anyone who does not write to me. I am hard pressed for time.

I get letters from Jayaprakash regularly. I learn from his last letter that he is improving. I have not made any new suggestion and hence I did not write to you. Narendra Dev is still here. He is very calm. He takes regular treatment. He has shown some improvement, too. He is weak, but is gradually gaining strength. He goes out for a walk twice daily. He gets sound sleep. He will not be in a hurry to leave.

You should take care of your health. You should now find no difficulty in getting the money from there. You may come when you can do so without inconvenience. You can certainly come to improve your health. You should come. You should not worry at all.

Is it not time now for the weather there to become cooler? It is still hot here. Hot winds are blowing.

Rajkumari is in Simla. She will stay there for the time being. Amtussalaam is here. She is all right. Ba is fine. Vasumati is here.

Sushila's examination is over. Most probably she will get through. She is expected here in a few days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3575

415. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

June 1, 1942

CHI. PRABHA,

Here is a letter from an unhappy woman. I have advised her to see you. If she comes to you, please guide her. Ask for the letter which I have given to her. Mridula[1] is coming tomorrow. Khurshedbehn is here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3576

416. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 2, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Today seems to be *dies non* for you. No letter for the first time.

This is to tell you that Sushila has passed her examination. Thank God! She deserved to pass.

Mridula and Dhebarbhai[2] are here. So.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: c.w. 4126. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7435

[1] Mridula Sarabhai
[2] U.N. Dhebar, Congress leader of Saurashtra

417. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
June 2, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

Yours. Nothing will delight me more than to come near to you [rather] than you to me. It seems to me that the time has come for you to come here and convert me before you go on further with your propaganda. It is ugly to find ourselves talking at each other. I suggest that we talk to each other. It would be a great tragedy if you cannot convert your best friend whose love you do not doubt.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10915. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan

418. LETTER TO NAGJIBHAI

SEVAGRAM,
June 2, 1942

BHAI NAGJI,

You have made a handsome gift. The Sangh was in need of such a building. But I want a much greater contribution from you. My appetite, therefore, is not likely to be satisfied with this building. I hope your business is flourishing.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6252

419. QUESTION BOX

IF THEY COME

Q. (1) If the Japs come, how are we to resist them non-violently?

(2) What are we to do if we fall into their hands?

A. (1) These questions come from Andhradesh where the people rightly or wrongly feel that the attack is imminent. My answer has already been given in these columns. Neither food nor shelter is to be given nor are any dealings to be established with them. They should be made to feel that they are not wanted. But of course things are not going to happen quite so smoothly as the question implies. It is a superstition to think that they will come as friends. No attacking party has ever done so. It spreads fire and brimstone among the populace. It forces things from people. If the people cannot resist fierce attack and are afraid of death, they should evacuate the infested place in order to deny compulsory service to the enemy.

(2) If unfortunately some people are captured or fall into the enemy's hands, they are likely to be shot if they do not obey orders, e.g., render forced labour. If the captives face death cheerfully, their task is done. They have saved their own and their country's honour. They could have done nothing more if they had offered violent resistance, save perhaps taking a few Japanese lives and inviting terrible reprisals.

The thing becomes complicated when you are captured alive and subjected to unthinkable tortures to compel submission. You will neither submit to torture nor to the orders of the enemy. In the act of resistance you will probably die and escape humiliation. But it is said that death is prevented to let the victim go through the agony of tortures and to serve as an example to others. I however think that a person who would die rather than go through inhuman tortures would find honourable means of dying.

SEVAGRAM, June 3, 1942

Harijan, 14-6-1942

420. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 3, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Your two letters today.

I do take note of things that go on. Of course many things will happen. A big system will not die without much effort.

It is still terribly hot here. There is no sign of the wind changing. I am not likely to call you before the end of this month. There is no need for you to worry about anything at this end.

Abha is going to Rajkot, Laxmi to her husband and Vasumati to Ahmedabad.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4127. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7436

421. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
June 3, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

I see you have answered me by quoting me against me.[1] I hope you got my letter of yesterday. If you are yielding nothing more than I have, why was not my statement acclaimed? But if we have both meant cheese, why don't you get a statement from the League? Why don't you now go to Q. A. and discuss the whole thing with him? And think over my proposal of yesterday. Anyway, no more wordy warfare with you by me in the Press.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2087

[1] The addressee had said at Coimbatore in a speech that the Cripps proposal failed not because of defence but because of the other points. The speech was presumably in reply to Gandhiji's article "For Rajaji", 24-5-1942.

422. LETTER TO AMBALAL SARABHAI

June 3, 1942

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I have your letter. I have accordingly written to Rameshwardasji to accept your cheque. There really never was any misunderstanding between us. Whatever little had arisen was from our employing English. The first part of your letter of May 22, 1942 is quite all right. The Tagore Memorial should be what the Andrews Memorial is. Later on you state that it should be different from the Andrews Memorial, that it should be worthy of Tagore and that I should see about it. How can the entire Memorial be got ready with just Rs.5,000? How can I do it? The Andrews Memorial means improvements and innovations in Santiniketan. And that will be a memorial to Tagore. This is one thing and what you ask for is another. It is possible that what you had in mind was the same thing that I said. In that case it has not come out in English. If the portion that I have referred to from your English letter should mean—and it does mean—what I understand it to mean, then it is wholly inconsistent with the talk we had.

It was necessary to write all this to have things clarified.

Rathi Babu writes to say that he has already made some changes and he is willing to make more if they are found to be necessary. He keeps regular accounts of course.

Blessings from

M. K.GANDHI

From a copy of the Gajarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

423. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 3, 1942

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have had a long talk with Dhebarbhai. I think the Limdi State had never accepted the settlement. But Bhagwandas[1] did believe that it had. When the emigrants returned, they found no sign of the settlement.[2] Your statement, therefore, should be revised accordingly.

But before it is published, there remains something to be done. Dhebarbhai has come to understand that Fatehsinhji[3] seems desirous of meeting you. If that is true and if he wishes to arrive at a settlement, you should show readiness to meet him. You should think about your statement only after that.

The existing situation is satisfactory.

Emigrants who are outside may well stay outside. The boycott of cotton continues and it should. There seems, therefore, no immediate necessity for your issuing the statement. If you think I should write something, please send me a wire and I will do it. There will be time for the next week's issue of *Harijan*.

Observe one point very strictly regarding your health. You should spend the minimum time on the commode and should not strain in the least. Observe it as an inviolable rule.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
68 MARINE DRIVE
BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 276-7

[1] A worker of the Praja Mandal

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 23-5-1942 and "Letter to Bhagwandas Harakhchand", 30-6-1942.

[3] Member of the Regency Council and son of the Limdi ruler

424. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SEVAGRAM,
June 3, 1942

BHAI MALKANI,

Jajuji has sent me your letter about money. He says:

> In my opinion this expenditure was not necessary. I had advised against it. Even so it has been incurred.

His advising against it has hurt me a little. What is all this and how did it happen?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 942

425. QUESTION BOX

THE PRINCES' DETERMINATION

Q. The Princes seem to be determined to maintain their privileges even after the departure of the British. Therefore there is need for a plain declaration that they would have no place in a free India. My feeling is that you have so far shown them more consideration than they deserve.

A. If you are right in your judgment, the privileges themselves will destroy the Princes. Privileges that service of the people bestows will always persist. But most of the paraphernalia that 'pomp and circumstance' account for will most certainly go.

But I cannot make the declaration you will have me to make. It is contrary to the spirit of non-violence which seeks not to destroy but to purify. That which is beyond purification dies without any outside effort even as a body which has become wholly diseased dies.

If after the total withdrawal of the British power, there is found to be no awakening among the masses India will be split up into so many feudal strongholds each striving to swallow the small fry and some bidding for overlordship. What I am hoping and striving for is an irresistible mass urge on the part of the people and an intelligent response on the part of all privileged classes to the popular demand.

But because I know that this picture is for the time being imaginary, I am quite prepared for the worst. Hence my statement that I would end the present state of things even at the risk of anarchy reigning supreme in the land.[1]

SEVAGRAM, June 5, 1942

Harijan, 14-6-1942

426. YARN CURRENCY[2]

The above note[3] has been sent by Shri Kanubhai Joshi. It is a very good beginning. I on my part would like that in every home men and women should spin and send the yarn to the bhandars not for the sake of money but to reduce the scarcity of cloth. But I must warn the spinners that it is a bad habit to use ready-made slivers. That will ultimately be injurious to khadi. Now with the development of hand-carding it has become very easy to make slivers. Everyone should learn how to do it.

SEVAGRAM, June 5, 1942

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 14-6-1942

427. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

June 5, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I have your English letter.

J.'s letter was received today. He says he is ready to come when Maulana comes. There is nothing from Maulana.

[1] *Vide* "Interview to *The News Chronicle*", 14-5-1942.

[2] This was published under the heading "Notes".

[3] Not translated here. It stated that in Bombay yarn was being used as currency and that the local sales depot of the All-India Charkha Sangh gave khadi or money in exchange for yarn.

I have told Rajaji[1] I am not going to engage in a public controversy with him.

Hot wind is blowing. I had expected the weather to cool down by this time. Having had the expectation, it is disconcerting to find the expectation unfulfilled. "Blessed are they that expect nothing."

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4128. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7437

428. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

June 5, 1942

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

I received your letter.

There is nothing from Maulana. In one letter he had said that he would be accompanying you here.

Fischer[2] has arrived. I do manage to give him an hour every day. He is staying at the Ashram. Hot winds are blowing here.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Gandhi-Nehru Correspondence. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* "Letter to C:. Rajagopalachari", 3-6-1942.

[2] Louis Fischer. For an account of his talks with Gandhiji, *vide* Appendix "Interview with Louis Fischer", 4-6-1942.

429. IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

[*June 6, 1942*][1]

A friend[2] was discussing with I me the implications of the new proposal. As the discussion was naturally desultory, I asked him to frame his questions which I would answer through *Harijan*. He agreed and gave me the following:

Q. You ask the British Government to withdraw immediately from India. Would Indians thereupon form a national government, and what groups or parties would participate in such an Indian Government?

A. My proposal is one-sided, i.e., for the British Government to act upon, wholly irrespective of what Indians would do or would not do. I have even assumed temporary chaos on their withdrawal. But if the withdrawal takes place in an orderly manner, it is likely that on their withdrawal a provisional government will be set up by and from among the present leaders. But another thing may also happen. All those who have no thought of the nation but only of themselves may make a bid for power and get together the turbulent forces with which they would seek to gain control somewhere and somehow. I should hope that with the complete, final and honest withdrawal of the British power, the wise leaders will realize their responsibility, forget their differences for the moment and set up a provisional government out of the material left by the British power. As there would be no power regulating the admission or rejection of parties or persons to or from the council board, restraint alone will be the guide. If that happens probably the Congress, the League and the States' representatives will be allowed to function and they will come to a loose understanding on the formation of a provisional national Government. All this is necessarily guesswork and nothing more.

Q. Would that Indian national government permit the United Nations to use Indian territory as a base of military operations against Japan and other Axis powers?

A. Assuming that the national government is formed and if it

[1] From *A Week with Gandhi*

[2] Louis Fischer

answers my expectations, its first act would be to enter into a treaty with the United Nations for defensive operations against aggressive powers, it being common cause that India will have nothing to do with any of the Fascist powers and India would be morally bound to help the United Nations.

Q. What further assistance would this Indian national government be ready to render the United Nations in the course of the present war against the Fascist aggressors?

A. If I have any hand in guiding the imagined national Government, there would be no further assistance save the toleration of the United Nations on the Indian soil under well-defined conditions. Naturally there will be no prohibition against any Indian giving his own personal help by way of being a recruit or and of giving financial aid. It should be understood that the Indian army has been disbanded with the withdrawal of British power. Again if I have any say in the councils of the national government, all its power, prestige and resources would be used towards bringing about world peace. But of course after the formation of the national government my voice may be a voice in the wilderness and nationalist India may go war-mad.

Q. Do you believe this collaboration between India and the Allied powers might or should be formulated in a treaty of alliance or an agreement for mutual aid?

A. I think the question is altogether premature and in any case it will not much matter whether the relations are regulated by treaty or agreement. I do not even see any difference.

Let me sum up my attitude. One thing and only one thing for me is solid and certain. This unnatural prostration of a great nation—it is neither 'nations' nor 'peoples'—must cease if the victory of the Allies is to be ensured. They lack the moral basis. I see no difference between the Fascist or Nazi powers and the Allies. All are exploiters, all resort to ruthlessness to the extent required to compass their end. America and Britain are very great nations, but their greatness will count as dust before the bar of dumb humanity, whether African or Asiatic. They and they alone have the power to undo the wrong. They have no right to talk of human liberty and all else unless they have washed their hands clean of the pollution. That necessary wash will be

their surest insurance of success, for they will have the good wishes—unexpressed but no less certain—of millions of dumb Asiatics and Africans. Then, but not till then, will they be fighting for a new order. This is the reality. All else is speculation. I have allowed myself, however, to indulge in it as a test of my *bona fides* and for the sake of explaining in a concrete manner what I mean by my proposal.

Harijan, 14-6-1942

430. DR. TARACHAND AND HINDUSTANI

The following was sent for the question box by Shri Murlidhar Srivastava, M.A.:

> When prejudices come in, one is led to distort history. Dr. Tarachand is an ardent advocate of Hindustani as you are. He has every right to hold his view as you or I have to hold my own, but in his zeal he has grossly misrepresented the history of Brajbhasha by declaring that no writing in Braj is known to have appeared before the 16th century, in an attempt to prove that Hindustani ('Khari Boli') has older literature than Brajbhasha.[1] According to him Surdas was the first poet to write in Braj in the 16th century. As the learned Doctor has been quoted by you in the *Harijan*, dated 29-3-42, which commands wide publicity and authority, the mistake must be pointed out. For literature prior to Surdas, you have only to read the poems of Kabir, not to speak of Amir Khusru, some of whose verses are also in Brajbhasha. Several small pieces of poems are attributed to several *santas* and *bhaktas* prior to Surdas and they can be looked into any standard history of Hindi literature.

I have removed the portion that had no bearing on the question at issue. I sent the letter to Kakasaheb Kalelkar who made it over to Dr. Tarachand who has now sent the following reply[2] which speaks for itself:

> My view that the literature of Brajbhasha is not older than the sixteenth century is based on the following considerations:
>
> 1. Brajbhasha is a modern language which belongs to the group named tertiary Prakrits or New Indo-Aryan. This group developed from the secondary

[1] *Vide* "Hindustani", 9-3-1942.

[2] Only extracts are reproduced here.

Prakrits or Middle Indo-Aryan.... But most scholars are agreed that secondary Prakrit stage lasted from 600 B.C. to 1000 A.D.

2. The secondary Prakrits which were spoken dialects received the impetus towards literary development from the religious movements inaugurated by Mahavira and Buddha. Of these Prakrits, Pali became the most important....

3. By the sixth century A.D. the Prakrits had become fixed and dead languages.... In that century the languages of common speech, from which literary Prakrits had diverged, began to be used for literary purposes. This phase of literary growths of the Prakrits is given the name Apabhramsha. It lasted from 600 to 1,000 A.D. Among the Apabhramshas one acquired a position of eminence, namely, Nagara. The varieties of Nagara were used as vehicles of literary expression in the greater part of northern India. But besides Nagara and its varieties, there had developed Apabhramshas of the other Prakrits, like Saurseni, also.

4. The modern Indian languages or the tertiary Prakrits developed from these Apabhramshas. Nagara became the parent of Rajasthani and Gujarati languages, through a variety to which Tessitori gave the name old Western Rajasthani.

Saurseni Apabhramsha is represented in the Prakrit grammar of Hemchandra (d. 1172 A.D.). But it is difficult to determine the relationship of Saurseni Apabhramsha with Nagara. It seems that the Saurseni Apabhramsha underwent a further change, which has been variously called old Western Hindi, Avahattha, Kavyabhasha.

5. With the arrival upon the scene of this language the stage of secondary Prakrits comes to an end, and the stage of new Indo-Aryan speech begins. The old Western Hindi which is the earliest form of the new midland speech appears to have become established in the eleventh century. From the old Western Hindi branched out Hindustani ('Khari') of the North midland, Braj of the middle region and Bundeli of the southern parts. In the twelfth century they were all spoken dialects. In the course of the following centuries they assumed literary form.

6. From a study of the development of these languages I have arrived at the conclusion that Hindustani ('Khari') was the first to develop into a literary language. We have a continuous history of Hindustani (Deccani Urdu) from the last quarter of the 14th century onwards. On the other hand the history of Braj literature before the 16th century is very doubtful.

SEVAGRAM, June 6, 1 942

Harijan, 14-6-1942

431. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 6, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

It seems that there is no more now of the other pads.

One rupee was paid to Nanavati before your letter came.

There is nothing wrong with Mahadev's spectacles. The terrific heat is responsible for all the mischief. It will go some day and the cool air will be all the more appreciated.

You will have to prove your proposition about the balances.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I think I have told you about Sushila having passed.

From the original: C.W. 4129. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7438

432. LETTER TO BAQER ALI MIRZA

June 6, 1942

BHAI BAQERALI MIRZA SAHEB,

I have your letter and also your book. I have glanced through it. I could hardly have done more.

I think no one could have offered to the country a loftier goal (i.e., Urdu) than I have.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

433. LETTER TO JAGANNATH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
June 6, 1942

BHAI JAGANNATH,

I have your letter. I can understand your condition. May God give you such strength that the sentiments you have cherished these twenty years do not disappear.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 996. Courtesy: Jagannath

434. LETTER TO PARACHURE SHASTRI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 6, 1942

SHASTRIJI,

I have your letter. I had to bear your expense. But I had hoped that you would keep a check on the expenses and would spend only what was necessary.

It is enough if you are careful. If the occasion should arise I can sacrifice you too.

We are all in the hands of God.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10671

435. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SEVAGRAM,
June 6, 1942

BHAI SATIS BABU,

How can I go to Bengal? I have clearly expressed my view. Those who are asked to move in this manner should flatly refuse and should not budge from their places even if they have to be shot unless and until they have been provided with alternative accommodation and all the amenities. There is no other course open. If in offering resistance thus some of us have to die, it can't be helped. They ought to give prior notice.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

436. INTERVIEW TO AMERICAN JOURNALISTS[1]

SEVAGRAM,
[*June 6, 1942*][2]

GANDHIJI: You came in an air-conditioned coach?

THE JOURNALISTS: No, but we had armed ourselves with some ice.

G. One American[3] has been vivisecting me. I am now at your disposal.

Q. Why non-violent non-co-operation rather than honest straight forward resistance against the Japanese? Far from preventing the Japanese, non-violent non-co-operation might prove an invitation to them, and would not that be flying from the frying pan into the fire?

A. Supposing England retires from India for strategic purposes,

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "An Important Interview". The journalists were Chaplin of the International News Service and Belldon of *Life* and *Time*.

[2] The date is from *Gandhi—1915-1948*.

[3] Louis Fischer

and apart from my proposal—as they had to do in Burma —what would happen? What would India do?

Q. That is exactly what we have come to learn from you. We would certainly like to know that.

A. Well, therein comes my non-violence. For we have no weapons. Mind you, we have assumed that the Commander-in-Chief of the united American and British Armies has decided that India is no good as a base and that they should withdraw to some other base and concentrate the Allied forces there. We can't help it. We have then to depend on what strength we have. We have no army, no military resources, no military skill either, worth the name, and non-violence is the only thing we can fall back upon. Now in theory I can prove to you that our non-violent resistance can be wholly successful. We need not kill a single Japanese, we simply give them no quarter.

Q. But that non-violence can't prevent an invasion?

A. In non-violent technique, of course, there can be nothing like preventing an invasion. They will land, but they will land on an inhospitable shore. They may be ruthless and wipe out all the 400 millions. That would be complete victory. I know you will laugh at it, saying all this is superhuman, if not absurd. I would say you are right; we may not be able to stand that terror and we may have to go through a course of subjection worse than our present state. But we are discussing the theory.

Q. But if the British don't withdraw?

A. I do not want them to withdraw under Indian pressure, nor driven by force of circumstances. I want them to withdraw in their own interest, for their own good name.

Q. But what happens to your movement, if you are arrested, as we heard you might be? Or if Mr. Nehru is arrested? Would not the movement go to pieces?

A. No, not if we have worked among the people. Our arrests would work up the movement, they would stir everyone in India to do his little bit.

Q. Supposing Britain decides to fight to the last man in India, would not your non-violent non-co-operation help the Japanese?

A. If you mean non-co-operation with the British, you would be

right. We have not come to that stage. I do not want to help the Japanese—not even for freeing India. India during the past fifty or more years of her struggle for freedom has learnt the lesson of patriotism and of not bowing to *any* foreign power. But when the British are offering violent battle, our non-violent battle—our non-violent activity—would be neutralized. Those who believe in armed resistance and in helping the British militarily are and will be helping them. Mr. Amery says he is getting all the men and money they need, and he is right. For the Congress—a poor organization representing the millions of the poor of India—has not been able to collect in years what they have collected in a day by way of what I would say 'so-called' voluntary subscription. This Congress can only render non-violent assistance. But let me tell you, if you do not know it, that the British do not want it, they don't set any store by it. But whether they do it or not, violent and non-violent resistance cannot go together. So India's non-violence can at best take the form of silence—not obstructing the British forces, certainly not helping the Japanese.

Q. But not helping the British?

A. Don't you see-non-violence cannot give any other aid?

Q. But the railways, I hope, won't stop; the services, too, will be, I hope, allowed to function.

A. They will be allowed to function, as they are being allowed today.

Q. Aren't you then helping the British by leaving the services and the railways alone?

A. We are indeed. That is our non-embarrassment policy.

Q. But what about the presence of American troops here? Every American feels that we should help India to win her freedom.

A. It's a bad job.

Q. Because it is said we are here really to help Britain and not India?

A. I say it is a bad job, because it is an imposition on India. It is not at India's request or with India's consent that they are here. It is enough irritation that we were not consulted before being dragged

into this war—I am not sure that the Viceroy even consulted his Executive Council. That is our original complaint. To have brought the American forces is, in my opinion, to have made the stranglehold on us all the tighter. You do not know what is happening in India—it is naturally not your business to go into those things. But let me give you some facts. Thousands of villagers are being summarily asked to vacate their homes and go elsewhere, for the site of their homesteads is needed by the military. Now I ask, where are they to go? Thousands of poor labourers in a certain place, I have heard today, have been asked to evacuate. Paltry compensations are offered them, and they are not even given sufficient notice. This kind of thing will not happen in an independent country. The Sappers and Miners there would first build homes for these people, transport would be provided for them, they would be given at least six months' maintenance allowance before they would be uprooted from their surroundings. Are these things to happen, even before the Japanese have come here? There is no other way, but saying to them, 'you must go', and if British rule ends, that moral act will save America and Britain. If they choose to remain here, they should remain as friends, not as proprietors of India. The American and British soldiers may remain here, if at all, by virtue of a compact with free India.

Q. Don't you think Indian people and leaders have some duty to help accelerate the process?

A. You mean by dotting India with rebellions everywhere? No, my invitation to the British to withdraw is not an idle one. It has to be made good by the sacrifice of the invitors. Public opinion has got to act, and it can act only non-violently.

Q. Is the possibility of strikes precluded?

A. No, strikes can be and have been non-violent. If railways are worked only to strengthen the British hold on India, they need not be assisted. But before I decide to take any energetic measures I must endeavour to show the reasonableness of my demand. The moment it is complied with, India instead of being sullen becomes an ally. Remember I am more interested than the British in keeping the Japanese out. For Britain's defeat in Indian waters may mean *only the loss of India*, but if Japan wins India loses *everything*.

Q. If you regard the American troops as an imposition, would you regard the American Technical Mission also in the same light?

A. A tree is judged by its fruit. I have met Dr. Grady[1], we have had cordial talks. I have no prejudice against Americans. I have hundreds, if not thousands of friends, in America. The Technical Mission may have nothing but goodwill for India. But my point is that all the things that are happening are not happening at the invitation or wish of India. Therefore they are all suspect. We cannot look upon them with philosophic calmness, for the simple reason that we cannot close our eyes, as I have said, to the things that are daily happening in front of our eyes. Areas are being vacated and turned into military camps, people being thrown on their own resources. Hundreds, if not thousands, on their way from Burma perished without food and drink, and the wretched discrimination stared even these miserable people in the face. One route for the whites, another for the blacks! Provision of food and shelter for the whites, none for the blacks! And discrimination even on their arrival in India! India is being ground down to dust and humiliated, even before the Japanese advent, not for India's defence —and no one knows for whose defence. And so one fine morning I came to the decision to make this honest demand: 'For Heaven's sake leave India alone. Let us breathe the air of freedom. It may choke us, suffocate us, as it did the slaves on their emancipation.

But I want the present sham to end.'

Q. But it is the British troops you have in mind, not the American?

A. It does not make for me the slightest difference, the whole policy is one and indivisible.

Q. Is there any hope of Britain listening?

A. I will not die without that hope. And if there is a long lease of life for me, I may even see it fulfilled. For there is nothing unpractical in the proposal, no insuperable difficulties about it. Let me add that if Britain is not willing to do so whole-heartedly Britain does not deserve to win.

Q. Would a free India declare war against Japan?

[1] Dr. Henry Grady, head of the American Technical Mission then in India

A. Free India need not do so. It simply becomes the ally of the Allied Powers, simply out of gratefulness for the payment of a debt, however overdue. Human nature thanks the debtor when he discharges the debt.

Q. How then would this alliance fit in with India's non-violence?

A. It is a good question. The *whole* of India is not nonviolent. If the whole of India had been non-violent, there would have been no need for my appeal to Britain, nor would there be any fear of a Japanese invasion. But my non-violence is represented possibly by a hopeless minority, or perhaps by India's dumb millions who are temperamentally non-violent. But there too the question may be asked: 'What have they done?' They have done nothing, I agree; but they may act when the supreme test comes, and they may not. I have no non-violence of millions to present to Britain, and what we have has been discounted by the British as non-violence of the weak. And so all I have done is to make this appeal on the strength of bare inherent justice, so that it might find an echo in the British heart. It is made from a moral plane, and even as they do not hesitate to act desperately in the physical field and take grave risks, let them for once act desperately on the moral field and declare that India is independent today, irrespective of India's demand.

Q. But what does a free India mean, if, as Mr. Jinnah said, Muslims will not accept Hindu rule?

A. I have not asked the British to hand over India to the Congress or to the Hindus. Let them entrust India to God or in modern parlance to anarchy. Then all the parties will fight one another like dogs, or will, when real responsibility faces them, come to a reasonable agreement. I shall expect non-violence to arise out of that chaos.

Q. But to *whom* are the British to say—'India is free'?

A. To the world. Automatically the Indian army is disbanded from that moment, and they decide to pack up as soon as they can. Or they may declare they would pack up only after the war is over, but that they would expect no help from India, impose no taxes, raise no recruits—beyond what help India chooses to give voluntarily. British rule will cease from that moment, no matter what happens to India

afterwards. Today it is all a hypocricy, unreality. I want that to end.

The new order will come only when that falsity ends. It is an unwarranted claim Britain and America are making, the claim of saving democracy and freedom. It is a wrong thing to make that claim when there is this terrible tragedy of holding a whole nation in bondage.

Q. What can America do to have your demand implemented?

A. If my demand is admitted to be just beyond cavil, America can insist on the implementing of the Indian demand as a condition of her financing Britain and supplying her with her matchless skill in making war machines. He who pays the piper has the right to call the tune. Since America has become the predominant partner in the

Allied cause she is partner also in Britain's guilt. The Allies have no right to call their cause to be morally superior to the Nazi cause so long as they hold in custody the fairest part and one of the most ancient nations of the earth.

Harijan, 14-6-1942

437. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C.P.,
June 6/7, 1942

MY DEAR C.R.,

Here is a typical letter[1] from Satyamurti—you will know what weight to give to it.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

June 7[2], 1942

This was overlooked yesterday. Meanwhile I have your two letters. You will come when you can. Your argument makes no appeal to any of us. Surely they are not all blinded by my reactions. Anyway you have to reason with them. I am glad the depression is leaving you.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10917. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan

[1] This is not traceable.

[2] The source, however, has "6".

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

MAHADEV DESAI'S LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[1]

SEVAGRAM,

February 14, 1942

MY DEAR RAJAJI,

You are right. Bapu is in greatest need of consolation. He is bearing himself up bravely, trying to console all—Janakibehn and the children—and incessantly think of plans to carry on with redoubled zeal his great work, but as he was speaking to these members of the family yesterday he broke down. I think his grief is as deep and profound as it was on Maganlal Gandhi's death. Everything here—even Sevagram with Bapu—seems empty without him.

The whole thing happened so suddenly. He was here two days before his death to see Ghanshyamdasji. He did not look well and even complained of a giddy feeling in the head. On the 11th evening he spoke to me at length on the phone about Chiang Kai-shek's expected arrival, discussed the arrangements of his reception and cracked a few jokes with me. "If Bapu will not release me from work of this kind, why should he have entrusted me with the work of *goseva*?" he asked. "But you must have guests like Chiang Kai-shek nevertheless! For some days you can leave Gopuri and come to stay in Janakipuri," I said. "You don't know', he rejoined. "Janakidevi is already in Gopuri which therefore is Janakipuri. And as for guests I have the greatest man of the world as my guest and I can't have a greater guest." The next morning, i.e., the day of his death—a talk on the phone in the same merry strain. Om and her husband had arrived from Bombay that morning and they were entertained to a meal by Kamalnayan's wife at the old paternal home. Jamnalalji would not consent to go—as he was observing *Ekadashi*—but Janakidevi insisted and he went. He had the *Ekadashi* food, there is a fear that he ate slightly more as he was pressed by all, played cards with the daughter and son-in-law and daughter-in-law, and felt like going to sleep. He had a vomit and within a few minutes had a splitting headache which made him almost scream. Doctors were call[ed] in. The b[lood] p[ressure] was 250/125. They thought of blood-letting. Bapu was immediately informed and a car was sent to Sevagram to take him. But he reached when all was over. The whole thing happened in about ten or fifteen minutes.

[1] *Vide* "Seth Jamnalal Bajaj", 11-2-1942.

And now he has gone leaving us all desolate. It is difficult to recover from the shock.

You are having a stre[nuous] time. I hope you are not overdoing it. Are you keeping well? Don't address more than two meetings a day.

I had a talk with Dr. Radhakrishnan, but about it in my next.

Yours affectionately,

MAHADEV

[PS.]

Bapu wants you, if it is at all possible, to attend a private meeting he is calling of Jamnalalji's fri[end]s, on the 20th. Your presence will be a solace and a sure consolation to him.

MAHADEV

From a photostat : C.W. 10907. Courtesy : C. R. Narasimhan

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM LORD LINLITHGOW [1]

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE,

NEW DELHI,

February 20, 1942

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I have now been able to ascertain the position about the Income-tax demanded from the All-India Spinners' Association.

You may rest assured that the action taken to assess the profits of the Association to tax was not dictated by any ulterior motive on the part of my Government or of the higher Income-tax authorities, but was a simple performance of his duties by an office who is bound under the law to take action to assess the profits of any business within his jurisdiction. The Bombay High Court which decided the case was, I am informed, prepared to admit the charitable nature of the objects of the Association, but could not hold the Association exempt from the liability to pay Income-tax because the property of the Association is not held *under trust or other legal obligation* for charitable purposes.

As the law stands my Government are themselves powerless to grant an

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 26-2-1942.

exemption from the provisions of the law and cannot refrain from giving effect to the Court's decision unless it is reversed, but as an earnest of their goodwill instructions have been issued to stay the collection of the tax pending the result of the Privy Council appeal which has been lodged.

4. In this state of affairs I think you will agree that the Association would be well advised so to arrange its affairs legally as to come within the exemption conferred by law on property held under trust for charitable purposes. But the exemption that would follow from such a course would be prospective only, and I regret that it is beyond the power either of my Government or myself to make such exemption retrospective if the present decision of the Court stands.

Yours sincerely,

LINLITHGOW

[PS.]

The closing paragraphs of your letter are kindly, and I understand, even when I cannot agree.

I will give your message to Southby and my daughter, and I know they will value it. We hear often from her. "Richard" is the most wonderful baby in the world, and the very flower of the flock! So life will triumph in the end despite all our blunders!!

The Transfer of Power, Vol. I, pp. 212-3

APPENDIX III

BRITISH WAR CABINET'S PROPOSALS[1]

The conclusions of the British War Cabinet as set out below are those which Sir Stafford Cripps has taken with him for discussion with the Indian Leaders and the question as to whether they will be implemented will depend upon the outcome of these discussions which are now taking place.

His Majesty's Government having considered the anxieties expressed in this country and in India as to the fulfilment of promises made in regard to the future of India have decided to lay down in precise and clear terms the steps which they propose shall be taken for the earliest possible realization of self-government in India. The object is the creation of a new Indian Union, which shall constitute a Dominion,

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Stafford Cripps", 25-3-1942 and "Letter to Jwaharlal Nehru", after 27-3-1942.

associated with the United Kingdom and other Dominions by a common allegiance to the Crown but equal to them in every respect, in no way subordinate in any aspect of its domestic or extenal affairs.

His Majesty's Government, therefore, make the following Declaration :—

(a) Immediately upon the cessation of hostilities steps shall be taken to set up in India in the manner described hereafter an elected body charged with the task of framing a new Constitution for India.

(b) Provision shall be made, as set out below, for the participation of the Indian States in the Constitution-making body.

(c) His Majesty's Government undertake to accept and implement forthwith with Constitution so framed subject only to :

(I) The right of any province of British India that is not prepared to accept the new Constitution to retain its present constitutional position, provision being made for its subsequent accession if it so decides.

With such non-acceding provinces, should they so desire, His Majesty's Government will be prepared to agree upon a new Constitution, giving them the same full status as the Indian Union and arrived at by a procedure analogous to that here laid down.

(ii) The signing of a treaty which shall be negotiated between His Majesty's Government and the Constitution-making body. This treaty will cover all necessary matters arising out of the complete transfer of responsibility from the British to Indian hands, it will make provision, in accordance with the undertakings given by His Majesty's Government for the protection of racial and religious minorities; but will not impose any restriction on the power of the Indian Union to decide in the future its relationship to other Member States of the British Commonwealth.

Whether or not an Indian State elects to adhere to the Constitution it will be necessary to negotiate a revision of its treaty arrangements so far as this may be required in the new situation.

(d) The Constitution-making body shall be composed as follows unless the leaders of Indian opinion in the principal communities agree upon some other form before the end of hostilities :

Immediately upon the result being known of the provincial elections which will be necessary at the end of hostilities, the entire membership of the Lower Houses of Provincial Legislatures shall as a single electoral college proceed to the election of the Constitution-making body by the system of proportional representation. This

new body shall be in number about one-tenth of the number of the electoral college.

Indian States shall be invited to appoint representatives in the same proportion to their total population as in the case of representatives of British India as a whole, and with the same powers as British Indian members.

(e) During the critical period which now faces India and until the new Constitution can be framed His Majesty's Government must inevitably bear the responsibility for and retain the control and direction of the defence of India as part of their world war effort, but the task of organizing to the full the military, moral and material resources of India must be the responsibility of the Government of India with the co-operation of the peoples of India. His Majesty's Government desire and invite the immediate and effective participation of the leaders of the principal sections of the Indian people in the counsels of their country, of the Commonwealth and of the United Nations. Thus they will be enabled to give their active and constructive help in the discharge of a task which is vital and essential for the future freedom of India.

The Transfer of Power, Vol. I, pp. 565-6; *The Indian Annual Register, 1942*, pp. 220-1

APPENDIX IV

INTERVIEW WITH SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS[1]

March 27, 1942

I gave Mr. Gandhi the document to read after a few short introductory remarks, and he impressed upon me that he had not, of course, anything to do with Congress officially and that any views he expressed would not necessarily be those of the Congress. In the first instance he expressed the very definite view that Congress would not accept the document, basing this upon two main points—firstly, the paragraph dealing with the Indian States, secondly, that dealing with accession or non-accession of Provinces. Curiously enough, he also, in rather a vague way, questioned the point as regards the retention of Defence in the British hands.

So far as the Indian States point was concerned, he stated that Congress took the view that they could not tolerate the continuance of those autocratic States under the aegis of the British Government with the right to call upon the British armed forces to enforce the arbitrary power of their rulers. He elaborated a number of instances of the arbitrary action of the rulers against the States' peoples and

[1] As reported by Sir Stafford Cripps. *Vide* "Telegram to Stafford Cripps", 25-3-1942 and "Letter to Jwaharlal Nehru", after 27-3-1942.

suggested that the document envisaged the continuance in perpetuity of a such regime in the case of those States that did not actually come into the new Indian Union. I pointed out that this was not so, but that the first basis for any reform in State administration was the setting up of an independent British India which by its influence and its economic power would inevitably set up a movement of democratization in the States, immediately in so far as they came into the new Indian Union and more gradually so far as those that stayed out were concerned; that beyond this the question was an administrative one and that I was certain once the new basis was laid down for British India that it would be the object of the British administration to encourage the States in the direction of a greater amount of democratic government in order that they might more easily associate themselves with British India. I asked him what his solution was, whether he suggested that we should immediately force all the States into the Indian Union; and he replied that he was against any such idea, he would like to see them all converted immediately into independent States having no reliance upon the paramountcy of the British Government as he felt certain that this would accelerate a movement for power by the States' peoples. He did not wish to see the States' rulers disappear immediately but he wished them to convert their States, in the case of the larger ones into constitutional democracies, while the smaller States would have to be absorbed into the larger ones or into the Indian Union. After a very lengthy argument on this subject, he seemed inclined rather to moderate his view as to the difficulties raised by the document in this relation, though he did not withdraw it.

As regards the second point, he started by asserting that the document was an invitation to the Moslems to create a Pakistan. He acknowledged the great influence of Jinnah and that the movement for Pakistan had grown tremendously in volume during the last two years, though he was inclined to agree, when I expressed a doubt as to whether, when it came to the question of practical application, there would be as much support for the Pakistan idea as there was at the present time. I went through the document with him, pointing out that it was primarily based upon the conception of a united India and that it was only in the case of Congress being unable to come to an agreement with the Moslems in the Constitution-making body that any question of non-accession would arise. I told him that I had always understood the attitude of Congress was that, once the British Government were out of the way, as they would be in the Constitution-making body, it would be possible for the Congress and Moslems to come to an agreement. I also stressed my belief that agreement was more likely if we did not force the Moslems in but gave them the option of not coming in if they so desired when negotiations had been tried over the Constitution-making

period. Again, after very lengthy discussion, he seemed to be rather less certain of the antagonism of Congress on this point.

I then asked him frankly as a friend and not as a member of the Congress Working Committee or as the direct adviser of Congress to tell me what he thought was the best method of proceeding. He said he thought it would have been better if I had not come to India with a cut and dried scheme to impose upon the Indians, but when I reminded him that the first time I had met him he had told me that once it was made absolutely clear that India would achieve self-government on some ascertained date, what happened in the intervening period was of comparatively small importance, he seemed inclined to accept the view that this document was merely a finalizing of the date and of the method which might be adopted pending the agreement of the parties upon any other or better one. He accepted, I think, this approach to the document and then said that he thought it was extremely inadvisable to have the document published in any way whatsoever unless first agreement had been obtained from both the major communities. I told him that the intention was that it should be published on Monday and he asked me many time to see that it was not so published. He asked me what Jinnah's views were as to publication. I told him that he had suggested that, in view of the danger of leakage, it would be wise to publish it before too long; and he interpreted this as being an indication that Jinnah would accept the scheme. I rather formed the view myself that the desire he expressed that it should not be published was because he was afraid of the pressure of public opinion upon Congress to accept the scheme against, perhaps, their wishes, and as to some extent depriving them of an opportunity of bargaining for a better position.

I then asked him how, supposing Jinnah were to accept the scheme and Congress were not to, he would himself advise me to proceed. He said that in these circumstances the proper course would be for me to throw the responsibility upon Jinnah and tell him that he must now try to get Congress in either by negotiating direct with them or by meeting them in association with myself. He thought that if it was pointed out to Jinnah what a very great position this would give him in India if he succeeded, that he might take on the job and that he might succeed. Similarly, if Congress accepted and Jinnah refused, he though the onus should be thrown upon Congress to get in Jinnah. I told him quite definitely that I should have to make up my mind as regards acceptance or not within the next few days and that, if this scheme was not accepted, there would be no question of any other scheme, anyway before the end of the war, and that those people who had taken the Congress point of view in the past, like myself, would not be in a position to exercise further influence in England as regards the solution of the Indian problem, as it would generally be thought that

this offer was one which Congress should have accepted and that it was no good making any further offer until the Moslems and Hindus agreed. He expressed, I think quite sincerely, his hopes that I should succeed in spite of what he had said, but more I think, as a personal matter than as an indication that he wanted the scheme to go through.

He stated that he would be remaining in Delhi until Sunday night[1] as the Working Committee was meeting tomorrow, and that he would be most willing to come and see me again at any time I liked if I thought it would be of any assistance. I thanked him and indicated that I would either come and see him or ask him to come and see me some time on Sunday.

The Transfer of Power, Vol. I, pp. 498-500

APPENDIX V

TALK WITH PYARELAL[2]

[*December 13, 1942*][3]

During the last detention at Poona in 1942, I had the opportunity to discuss at length with Gandhiji various aspects of his ideal of trusteeship... In the course of our talk one day he remarked: "The only democratic way of achieving it today is by cultivating opinion in its favour."

I put it to him that perhaps the reason why he had presented trusteeship basis to the owning class was that while non-violence would command many sacrifices from the people, it was not reasonable to expect anyone to present his own head in a charger. "So instead of asking the owning class to do the impossible, you presented them with a reasonable and practicable alternative."

GANDHIJI: I refuse to admit that non-violence knows any limit to the sacrifice that it can demand or command. The doctrine of trusteeship stands on its own merits.

PYARELAL: Surely, you do not mean that the change would depend upon the sufferance of the owning class and we shall have to wait till their conversion is complete? If social transformation is effected by a slow, gradual process, it will kill the revolutionary fervour which an abrupt break with the past creates. That is why our Marxist friends say that a true social revolution can come only through a proletarian dictatorship. . .

[1] March 29, 1942
[2] *Vide* "Question Box", 6-4-1942
[3] The date is from *Harijan*, 25-10-1952.

G. Perhaps you have the example of Russia in mind. Wholesale expropriation of the owning class and distribution of its assets among the people there did create a tremendous amount of revolutionary fervour. But I claim that ours will be an even bigger revolution. We must not underrate the business talent and know-how which the owning class have acquired through generations of experience and specialization. Free use of it would accrue to the people under my plan. So long as we have no power, conversion is our weapon by necessity, but after we get power, conversion will be our weapon of choice. Conversion must precede legislation. Legislation in the absence of conversion remains a dead letter. As an illustration, we have today the power to enforce rules of sanitation but we can do nothing with it because the public is not ready.

P. You say conversion must precede reform. Whose conversion? If you mean the conversion of the people, they are ready even today. If, on the other hand, you mean that of the owning class, we may as well wait till the Greek Calends.

G. I mean the conversion of both. You see, if the owning class does not accept the trusteeship basis voluntarily, its conversion must come under the pressure of public opinion. For that public opinion is not yet sufficiently organized.

P. What do you mean by power?

G. By power I mean voting power for the people so broad-based that the will of the majority can be given effect to.

P. Can the masses at all come into power by parliamentary activity?

G. Not by parliamentary activity *alone*. My reliance ultimately is on the power of non-violent non-co-operation, which I have been trying to build up for the last twenty-two years.

P. Is the capture of power possible through non-violence? Our Socialist friends say . . . they do not see how it can enable to seize power. You also have said the same thing.

G. In a way they are right. By its very nature, non-violence cannot 'seize' power, nor can that be its goal. But non-violence can do more; it can effectively control and guide power without capturing the machinery of Government. That is its beauty. There is an exception of course. If the non-violent non-co-operation of the people is so complete that the administration ceases to function or if the administration crumbles under the impact of a foreign invasion and a vacuum results, the people's representatives will then step in and fill it. Theoretically that is possible.

Moreover, I do not agree that Government cannot be carried on except by the use of violence.

P. Does not the very concept of the State imply the use of power?

G. Yes. But the use of power need not necessarily be violent.

A father wields power over his children; he may even punish but not by inflicting violence. The most effective exercise of power is that which irks least.

Power rightly exercised must sit light as a flower; no one should feel the weight of it. The people accepted the authority of the Congress willingly. I was on more than one occasion invested with the absolute power of dictatorship. But everybody knew that my power rested on their willing acceptance. They could set me aside at any time and I would have stepped aside without a murmur. In the Khilafat days my authority, or the authority of the Congress, did not irk anybody. The Ali Brothers used to call me *Sarkar.* Yet they knew they had me in their pocket. What was true about me or the Congress then can be true about the Government also.

I conceded that a non-violent State or even a non-violent minority dictatorship—a dictatorship resting on the moral authority of a few—was possible in theory. But it called for a terrible self-discipline, self-denial and penance....”

“Personally I agree”, I concluded, “that such a person alone is fit to be a dictator under non-violence. . . .”

Gandhiji confirmed that under non-violence people have to be prepared for heavier sacrifices if only because the goal aimed at is higher. “There is no short-cut to salvation,” he said.

“That would mean,” interpolated my sister, “that only a Jesus, a Muhammad or a Buddha can be the head of a non-violent State.”

G. That is not correct. Prophets and supermen are born only once in an age.

But if even a single individual realizes the ideal of ahimsa in its fullness, he covers and redeems the whole society. Once Jesus had blazed the trail, his twelve disciples could carry on his mission without his presence. It needed the perseverance and genius of so many generations of scientists to discover the laws of electricity but today everybody, even children, use electric power in their daily life. Similarly, it will not always need a perfect being to administer an ideal State, once it has come into being. What is needed is a thorough social awakening to begin with. The rest will follow. To take an instance nearer home, I have presented to the working class the truth that true capital is not silver or gold but the labour of their hands and feet and their intelligence. Once labour develops that awareness, it would not need my

presence to enable it to make use of the power that it will release.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 630-3

APPENDIX VI

BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSAL: NOTE BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DOMINION AFFAIRS [1]

11, DOWNING STREET, S.W.I.,

March 2, 1942

On the 25th February the Prime Minister asked me to preside over a Cabinet Committee to consider the present position in India, and to make recommendations.

I now submit, on behalf of the Committee, for the consideration of the War Cabinet, the draft of a Declaration by His Majesty's Government, regarding the future government of India.

DRAFT DECLARATION

His Majesty's Government, having considered the anxieties expressed in this country and in India as to the fulfilment of the promises made in regardto the future of India, have decided to lay down in precise and clear terms the steps which they propose shall be taken for the earliest possible realization of self-government in India. The object is the creation of a new Indian Union which shall constitute a Dominion, equal in every respect to the United Kingdom and the other Dominions of the Crown, and free to remain in or to separate itself from the equal partnership of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

His Majesty's Government therefore make the following declaration:

(a) Immediately upon the cessation of hostilities, steps shall be taken to set up in India, in the manner described hereafter, an elected body charged with the task of framing a new Constitution for India.

(b) Provision shall be made, as set out below, for the participation of the Indian States in the constitution-making body.

(c) His Majesty's Government undertake to accept and implement forthwith the Constitution so framed subject only to:

(i) the right of any Province of British India that is not prepared to accept the new Constitution to retain for the time being its present constitutional position, provision being made for subsequent accession.

[1] *Vide* "That Ill-fated Proposal", 13-4-1942.

With such non-acceding Provinces, should they so desire, His Majesty's Government will be prepared to agree upon a new Constitution following the lines laid down above.

(ii) the signing of a treaty which shall be negotiated between His Majesty's Government and the constitution-making body covering all necessary matters relating to the complete transfer of responsibility from British to Indian hands.

Whether or not an Indian State elects to adhere to the Constitution, it will be necessary to negotiate revised Treaty arrangements, so far as this may be required in the new situation.

(d) The constitution-making body shall be composed as follows, unless the leaders of Indian opinion in the principal communities agree upon some other form before the end of hostilities:

Immediately upon the result being known of the Provincial elections which will be necessary at the end of hostilities, the entire membership of the Lower Houses of the Provincial Legislatures shall, as a single electoral college, proceed to the election of the constitution-making body by the system of proportional representation. This new body shall be in number about one-tenth of the number of the electoral college.

Indian States shall be invited to appoint representatives in the same proportion of the total population as the average for British India, and with the same powers as the British Indian members.

(e) While during the critical period which now faces India, and until the new Constitution can be framed, His Majesty's Government must inevitably the full responsibility for India's defence, they desire and invite the immediate and effective participation of the leaders of the principal sections of the Indian people in the counsels of their country, to give their active and constructive help in the discharge of a task so vital and essential for the future freedom of India.

The Transfer of Power, Vol. I, pp. 291-3

APPENDIX VII

RESOLUTION PASSED BY A.I.C.C.[1]

May 1, 1942

In view of the imminent peril of invasion that confronts India and the attitude of the British Government, as shown again in the recent proposals sponsored by Sir Stafford Cripps, the All-India Congress Committee has to declare afresh India's policy and to advise the people in regard to the action to be undertaken in the emergencies that may arise in the immediate future.

The proposals of the British Government and their subsequent elucidation by Sir Stafford Cripps have led to greater bitterness and distrust of that Government and the spirit of non-co-operation with Britain has grown. They have demonstrated that even in this hour of danger, not only to India but to the cause of the United Nations, the British Government functions as an imperialist government and refuses to recognize the independence of India or to part with any real power. India's participation in the war was a purely British act imposed upon the Indian people without the consent of their representatives. While India has no quarrel with the people of any country, she has repeatedly declared her antipathy to Nazism and Fascism as to imperialism. If India were free she would have determined her own policy and might have kept out of the war, though her sympathies would, in any event, have been with the victims of aggression. If, however, circumstances had led her to join the war, she would have done so as a free country fighting for freedom, and her defence would have been organized on a popular basis with a national army under national control and leadership, and with intimate contacts with the people. A free India would know how to defend herself in the event of any aggressor attacking her.

The present Indian Army is in fact an offshoot of the British Army and has been maintained till now mainly to hold India in subjection. It has been completely segregated from the general population, who can in no sense regard it as their own.

The essential difference between the imperialist and the popular conceptions of defence is demonstrated by the fact that while foreign armies are invited to India for that defence, the vast manpower of India herself is not utilized for the purpose. India's past experience teaches her that it is harmful to her interest and dangerous to the cause of her freedom to introduce foreign armies in India. It is significant and extraordinary that India's inexhaustible manpower should remain untapped while India develops

[1] *Vide* "Draft Resolution for A.I.C.C.", before 24-4-1942.

into a battle-ground between foreign armies fighting on her soil or on her frontiers, and her defence is not supposed to be a subject fit for popular control. India resents this treatment of her people as chattels to be disposed of by foreign authority. The All-India Congress Committee is convinced that India will attain her freedom through her own strength and will retain it likewise. The present crisis, as well as the experience of the negotiations with Sir Stafford Cripps, makes it impossible for the Congress to consider any schemes or proposals which retain, even in a partial measure, British control and authority in India. Not only the interests of India but also Britain's safety, and world peace and freedom demand that Britain must abandon her hold on India. It is on the basis of independence alone that India can deal with Britain or other nations. The Committee repudiates the idea that freedom can come to India through interference or invasion by any foreign nation, whatever the professions of that nation may be. In case an invasion takes place it must be resisted. Such resistance can only take the form of non-violent non-co-operation as the British Government has prevented the organization of national defence by the people in any other way. The Committee would therefore expect the people of India to offer complete non-violent non-co-operation to the invading forces and not to render any assistance to them. We may not bend the knee to the aggressor nor obey any of his orders. We may not look to him for favours nor fall to his bribes. If he wishes to take possession of our homes and our fields we will refuse to give them up even if we have to die in the effort to resist them. In places wherein the British and the invading forces are fighting our non-co-operation will be fruitless and unnecessary. Not to put any obstacle in the way of British forces will often be the only way of demonstrating our non-co-operation with the invader. Judging from their attitude the British Government do not need any help from us beyond our non-interference.

The success of such a policy of non-co-operation and non-violent resistance to the invader will largely depend on the intensive working out of the Congress constructive programme and more especially the programme of self-sufficiency and self-protection in all parts of the country.

The Indian Annual Register, 1942, Vol. II, pp. 205-6; also *The Transfer of Power,* Vol. II, pp. 66-70

APPENDIX VIII

SECTION IN THE CONSTITUTION OF THE HINDUSTANI PRACHAR SABHA DEFINING ITS AIMS AND FUNCTIONS[1]

3. AIMS: To propagate Hindustani, the national language so that it can meet the social, political, administrative and other requirements of the country as a whole and become the medium of communication and intercourse between the different linguistic regions.

NOTE: Hindustani is that language which in the towns and villages of North India Hindus, Muslims and all other people speak, understand and employ for mutual intercourse, which is written in both the Devanagari and the Persian scripts and the literary styles of which are today known by the names of Hindi and Urdu.

4. FUNCTIONS OF THE SABHA: the Sabha shall conduct the following activities to achieve its aims.

(1) To prepare a dictionary of Hindustani which all can rely upon. To evolve a grammar of Hindustani and prepare similar other reference works for the different provinces.

(2) To prepare Hindustani text-books for use in schools.

(3) To bring out easy-to-understand books in Hindustani.

(4) To conduct examinations in various places in order to propagate Hindustani and to extend help and recognition to associations that conduct such examinations.

(5) To prepare a glossary of technical terms in Hindustani.

(6) To endeavour to have Hindustani accepted as a compulsory subject by provincial governments, municipal and district boards and national educational institutions.

(7) To set up branches of the Sabha, appoint committees, collect contributions, offer aid to publishers of Hindustani books, run schools, libraries, reading-rooms, training schools, nightschools and other institutions of a similar nature with a view to achieving the above mentioned aims and encouraging activities.

(8) To associate with or affiliate to the Sabha such institutions as are capable of co-operating in these activities.

(9) To make all such efforts as will help fulfil the objects of the Sabha.

NOTE: no member of the Sabha shall, in his capacity as a member, derive any

[1] *Vide* "Statement of Hindustani", 2-5-1942.

personal gain from the Sabha's assets.

Rashtrabhasha Hindustani, pp. 152-3

APPENDIX IX

INTERVIEW WITH LOUIS FISCHER [1]

June 4, 1942

GANDHIJI: Now I am fully at your disposal.

LOUIS FISCHER: I feel that the Cripps mission was a turning point in Indian history. The country is probably now beginning to grasp the significance of Cripps's failure, and from that understanding big things might flow.

G. When Cripps arrived, he sent me a telegram asking me to come and see him in New Delhi. I did not wish to go, but I went because I thought it would do some good. I had heard rumours about the contents of the British Government's offer he brought to India, but I had not seen the offer. He gave it to me, and after a brief study, I said to him, "Why did you come if this is what you have to offer? If this is your entire proposal to India, I would advise you to take the next plane home." Cripps replied, "I will consider that."

L.F. What is your criticism of the Cripps offer? Didn't it promise you dominion status with the right to secede from the British Commonwealth?

G. C. F. Andrews always used to assert that dominion status is not for India.

We have not the same relation to Britain as the dominions which are white and settled, for the most part, by emigrants from Britain or their descendants. We do not wish any status conferred on us. If a status is conferred on us, it means we are not free.

As to secession, there are big flaws. One of the chief flaws is the provision in the Cripps proposal regarding the Princes. The British maintain that they must protect the Princes under treaties which they forced on the Princes for Britain's advantage. The Maharaja of Bikaner, and I take him as any X,Y,Z, reigned before the British came and had more power then than now. The second flaw is the recognition of Pakistan. The differences between Hindus and Muslims have been accentuated by British rule. Now they have been given their maximum scope by the Cripps offer.

Lord Minto started this when he was Viceroy [1909][2] by establishing separate electorates for the two religious communities, and since then the British have sought

[1] *Vide* "Important Questions", 6-6-1942. Only extracts from Louis Fischer's book have been reproduced here.

[2] Square brackets are as in the source.

to divide us still further. Lord Curzon was a great administrator. I never met him as I have met Chelmsford, Irwin [Halifax][1], and Linlithgow. But he said one thing to one man, another to a second man, and still a third thing to a third man. With Sir Samuel Hoare, I know whom I am talking to. I know where he stands. But not with Curzon.

The division of Bengal, as carried out by Curzon, was a necessaryreform. It was a good measure. But it had the effect of dividing the province according to religion. Cripps introduced this same principle in his offer; that is the second big flaw. There can be no unity in India, therefore, as long as the British are here. L.F.

Well, you did not like the outlines of the post-war settlement proposed by Cripps. But was there nothing desirable in the interim or immediate provisions? Did you not think that, irrespective of the plan for the future, there might be some value in the immediate arrangements which would give your people experience in government and earn you the right to demand freedom after the war?

G. Roughly, this was the spirit in which I approached it. But when I saw the text of the Cripps offer, I was certain that there was no room for co-operation. The main issue was defence. In war time, defence is the chief task of government. I have no desire to interfere with the actual conduct of the war. I am incompetent to do so.

But Roosevelt has no special training in strategy or, if he has it is partial. Or, let me take Churchill. L.F. No, you needn't hesitate to take Roosevelt as an example. I understand the point.

G. The point is that in war time there must be civilian control of the military, even though the civilians are not as well trained in strategy as the military. If the British in Burma wish to destroy the golden pagoda because it is a beacon to Japanese airplanes, then I say you cannot destroy it, because when you destroy it, you destroy something in the Burmese soul. When the British come and say, we must remove these peasants to build an aerodrome here, and the peasants must go today, I say, 'Why did you not think of that yesterday and give the poor people time to go, and why don't you find places for them to go to?'

L.F. If these are the matters which you wish Indians to control, I am sure General Wavell would have regarded them as interference in the prosecution of the war.

G. The British offered us war-time tasks like the running of canteens and the printing of stationery, which are of minor significance. Though I am no strategist, there are things we could have done which would have been more conducive to success in the war The British have fared so badly in the Far East that they could do with help

[1] Square brackets are as in the source.

from us.

L.F. Apparently, then, you placed chief stress on defence. He agreed.

Did Nehru and other Congress leaders take the same view?

G. I hope so, I hope Nehru takes the same view, and that the Maulana Sahib takes the same view.

L.F.. In other words, you found nothing good in the Cripps proposals?

G. I am glad you put this direct and definite question to me. No I found nothing good at all in them.

L.F. Did you tell that to Cripps?

G. Yes, I said to Cripps, 'You performed a miracle in Russia.'

L.F.. Why did you say that? It wasn't Sir Stafford Cripps who brought Russia into the war, but a gentleman named Adolf Hitler.

G. But I and thousands of Indians, believed that it was Cripps who performed the miracle.

L.F. Didn't Cripps protest when you said that?

G. No, he took the compliment. We thought Stalin had asked for British aid before the invasion of Russia.

L.F. No, that is not correct. After the invasion, Russia got help and is now obtaining increasing help from America and Britain. But before the attack, Stalin, fearing Hitler, could show no friendship for Britain or for Cripps.

G. In any case, I asked Cripps to perform a miracle here too, but it was not in his power.

L.F. I think there is a vast popular ferment going on in England. I flew to England last summer and stayed nine weeks. The mass of the people are resolved not to be ruled after the war by the sort of people who ruled them before the war and brought on this war. Cripps could become the expression and embodiment of this popular protest. His rise to office is therefore an encouraging phenomenon.

G. Yes, and a discouraging one too, for I wonder whether Cripps has the qualities of a great statesman. It is very discouraging to us that the man who was a friend of Jawaharlal's and had been interested in India should have made himself the bearer of this mission.

Lord Sankey once told me to take care of myself, and I said him, 'Do you think I would have reached this green old age if I hadn't taken care of myself?' This is one of my faults.

L.F. I thought you were perfect.

G. No, I am very imperfect. Before you are gone you will have discovered a hundred of my faults, and if you don't I will help you to see them. Now, I have given you an hour.

L.F. You helped recruit soldiers for the British Army in the first World War. When this war started, you said you wished to do nothing to embarrass the British Government. Now, obviously, your attitude has changed. What has happened?

G. In the first World War I had just returned from South Africa. I hadn't yet found my feet. I wasn't sure of my ground. This did not imply any lack of faith in non-violence. But it had to develop according to circumstances, and I was not sufficiently sure of my ground. There were many experiences between the two wars. Nevertheless, I announced after some talks with the Viceroy in September 1939, that the Congress movement would not obstruct this war. I am not the Congress. In fact, I am not in the Congress. I am neither a member nor an officer of the Party. Congress is more anti-British and anti-war than I am, and I have had to curb its desires to interfere with the war effort. Now I have reached certain conclusions. I do not wish to humiliate the British. But the British must go. I do not say that the British are worse than the Japanese.

L.F. Quite the contrary.

G. I would not say quite the contrary. But I do not wish to exchange one master for another. England will benefit morally if she withdraws voluntarily and in good order.

June 5, 1942

Gandhi came in, greeted me and lay down on his bed.

G. I will take your blows Iying down.

The Muslim woman gave him a wet mud-pack for his abdomen. He said:

This puts me in touch with my future. I see you missed that one.

L.F. I hadn't missed it but thought he was too young to think about returning to the dust.

G. Why, you and I and all of us, some in a hundred and twenty years, but all sooner or later, will do it.

L.F. When I hear a suggestion about some arrangement for the future I try to imagine how it would look if it were actually adopted. I am sure you have done the same in connection with your proposal that the British withdraw. Then how do you

see that withdrawal, step by step?

G. First, there are the Princes who have their own armies. They might make trouble. I am not sure that there will be order when the British go. There could be chaos. I have said, 'Let the British go in an orderly fashion and leave India to God.' You may not like such unrealistic language. Then call it anarchy. That is the worst that can happen. But we will seek to prevent it. There may not be anarchy.

L.F. Could not the Indians immediately organize a government?

G. Yes, There are three elements in the political situation here: the Princes, the Muslims and Congress. They could all form a provisional government.

L.F. In what proportion would power and the posts be divided?

G. I do not know. Congress being the most powerful unit might claim the largest share. But that could be determined amicably.

L.F. It seems to me that the British cannot possibly withdraw altogether. That would mean making a present of India to Japan and England would never consent to that, nor would the United States approve. If you demand that the British pack up and go bag and baggage, you are simply asking the impossible; you are barking up a tree.

You do not mean, do you, that they must also withdraw their armies? G. You are right. No, Britain and America, and other countries too, can keep their armies here and use Indian territory as a base for military operations. I do not wish Japan to win the war. I do not want the Axis to win. But I am sure that Britain cannot win unless the Indian people become free. Britain is weaker and Britain is morally indefensible while she rules India. I do not wish to humiliate England.

L.F. But if India is to be used as a military base by the United Nations, many other things are involved. Armies do not exist in a vacuum. For instance, the United Nations would need good organization on the railroads.

G. Oh, they could operate the railroads. They would also need order in the ports where they received their supplies. They could to have riots in Bombay and Calcutta.

These matters would require co-operation and common effort.

L.F. Could the terms of this collaboration be set forth in a treaty of alliance?

G. Yes, we could have a written agreement with England.

L.F. Or with Britain, America and the others? Why have you never said this? I must confess that when I heard of your proposed civil disobedience movement I was prejudiced against it. I believed that it would impede the prosecution of the war. I think the war has to be fought and won. I see complete darkness for the world if the Axis win. I think we have a chance for a better world if we win.

G. There I cannot quite agree. Britain often cloaks herself in a cloth of hypocrisy, promising what she later doesn't deliver. But I accept the proposition that there is a better chance if the democracies win.

L.F. It depends on the kind of peace we make.

G. It depends on what you do during the war.

L.F. I would like to tell you that American statement have great sympathy for the cause of Indian freedom. The United State Government tried to dissuade Churchill from making the speech in which he declared that the Atlantic Charter did not apply to India. Important men in Washington are working on the idea of a Pacific Charter, but they tell me that they have not got very far because the first principle of such a charter would be the end of imperialism, and how can we announce that while Britain holds India?

G. I am not interested in future promises. I am not interested in independence after the war. I want independence now. That will help England win the war.

L.F. Why have you not communicated your plan to the Viceroy? He should be told that you have no objection now to the use of India as a base for Allied military operations.

G. No one has asked me. I have written about my proposed civil disobedience movement in order to prepare the public for it. If you put me some direct questions in writing about this matter, I will answer them in *Harijan.* Only make the questions brief.

L.F. If you knew anything about my writing you would know that I always try to be brief, direct, and squeeze out the water.

G. Jawaharlal told me about you before you came. He said you were honest and had no axe to grind. You don't have several irons in the fire. He said you were a solid man. I can see that by looking at you.

L.F. Yes, solid, at least physically.

G. I have talked freely and frankly to you. I think you are a *sahib loke*.

L.F. Did you say 'sahib bloke'? Is that the English word bloke?

G. No, *loke*. Miss Katherine Mayo came here and I was good to her and then she wrote only filth. You know what I have called her?

L.F. No.

G. Drain inspector.

L.F. I come from a very poor family. I know what it means to be hungry. I have

always sympathized with the downtrodden and the poor. Many Americans feel the greatest friendship for India. I think it very unfortunate, therefore, that you have recently uttered some unfriendly words at the expense of America.

G. It was necessary. I wanted to shock. I think many Americans have a soft corner in their hearts for me, and I wished to tell them that if they continue to worship Mammon they will not make a better world. There is a danger that the democracies will defeat the Axis and become just as bad as Japan and Germany.

L.F. Of course there is a danger. But many people said that England would go Fascist if it went to war. Yet in fact England is more democratic now than she was before the war.

G. No. We see in India that this is not so.

L.F. At least in England.

G. It cannot be true in England and not in the Empire. I cannot depend on your future goodness. 1 have laboured for many decades for Indian national freedom. We cannot wait any longer. But I believe that there is goodwill for us.

England is sitting on an unexploded mine in India and it may explode any day. The hatred and resentment against Britain are so strong here that Britain can get no help for her war effort. Indians enlist in the British Army because they want to eat, but they have no feeling in their hearts which would make them wish to help England.

L.F. If you permit me to summarize the suggestions you have made today about a settlement in India, you have reversed the Cripps offer. Cripps offered you something and kept the rest for England. You are offering England something and keep the rest for India.

G. That is very true. I have turned Cripps around.

I saw from his watch that the end of the hour was approaching. I said I would not dare ask him to read my book, *Men and Politics*, which Dev had, but 1 hoped he would page through it. A secretary asked what "paging through" meant.

G. It means looking first at the last page, then at the first page, then at a page in the middle.

L.F. And then throwing the book away and saying it is excellent. Now I have kept you the agreed hour.

G. Yes, you have. Go and sit in the tub.

June 6, 1942

I asked him what was the theory behind his weekly day of silence.

G. What do you mean by theory?

L.F. I mean the principle, the motivation.

G. It happened when I was being torn to pieces. I was working very hard, travelling in hot trains incessantly, speaking at many meetings, and being approached in trains and elsewhere by thousands of people who asked questions, made pleas, and wished to pray with me. I wanted to rest for one day a week. So I instituted the day of silence. Later of course I clothed it with all kinds of virtues and gave it a spiritual cloak. But the motivation was really nothing more than that I wanted to have a day off.

Silence is very relaxing. It is not relaxing in itself. But when you can talk and don't, it gives you great relief—and there is time for thought.

I asked Gandhi about Rajaji's programme.

G. I don't know what his proposals are. I think it unfortunate that he should argue against me and that I should argue with him, so I have given order that, as far as we are concerned, the discussion should be suspended. But the fact is that I do not know what Rajaji proposes.

L.F. Isn't the essence of his scheme that the Hindus and Muslims collaborate and in common work perhaps discover the technique of peaceful co-operation?

G. Yes. But that is impossible. As long as the third power, England, is here, our communal differences will continue to plague us. Far back, Lord Minto, then Viceroy, declared that the British had to keep Muslims and Hindus apart in order to facilitate the domination of India.

I told Gandhi I had seen the Minto quotation.

G. This has been the principle of British rule over since.

L.F. I have been told that when Congress ministries were in office in the province, during 1937, 1938 and 1939, they discriminated against Muslims.

G. The British governors of those provinces have officially testified that is not so.

L.F. But isn't it a fact that in the United Provinces, Congress and the Muslims entered into an electoral pact because Congress was not sure of winning, that, then, Congress won a sweeping victory and refused to form a coalition with the Muslims?

G. No. There were four Muslim ministers in the United Provinces Government formed by Congress. There were no representatives of the Muslim League, but there were Muslims. No. We have always tried to collaborate with Muslims. It is said that

the Maulana is a puppet in our hands. Actually, he is the dictator of Congress. He is its president. But the Cripps proposals have divided Hindus from Muslims more than ever. Thanks to the British Government, the divergence between the two communities has been widened.

L.F. It was sad that Congress leaders and Muslim Leaguers came to New Delhi to talk to Cripps, and talked to Cripps but did not talk to one another.

G. It was not only sad, it was disgraceful. But it was the fault of the Muslim League. Shortly after this war broke out, we were summoned to meet the Viceroy at New Delhi. Rajendra Prasad and I went to speak for Congress, and Mr. Jinnah for the Muslim League. I asked Jinnah to confer with us in advance and face the British Government unitedly. We agreed to meet in New Delhi, but when I suggested that we both demand independence for India he said, 'I do not want independence.' We could not agree. I urged that we at least make the appearance of unity by going to the Viceroy together; I said he could go in my car or I would go in his. He consented to have me go in his car. But we spoke to the Viceroy in different tones and expressed different views.

In actual life, it is impossible to separate us into two nations. We are not two nations. Every Muslim will have a Hindu name if he goes back far enough in his family history. Every Muslim is merely a Hindu who has accepted Islam. That does not create nationality. If some influential Christian divine converted us all to Christianity, we should not become one nation if we really were two nations, and in the same manner the two religions of India do not make two nationalities. Europe is Christian, but Germany and England, so much alike in culture and language, are grimly at one another's throats. We in India have a common culture. In the north, Hindi and Urdu are understood by both Hindus and Muslims. In Madras, Hindus and Muslims speak Tamil, and in Bengal they both speak Bengali and neither Hindi nor Urdu. When communal riots take place, they are always provoked by incidents over cows and by religious processions. That means that it is our superstitions that create the trouble and not our separate nationalities.

L.F. Caroe[1] and Jenkins[2] told me that there were no communal differences in the villages, and I heard from others too that the relations between the tworeligious communities are peaceful in the villages. If that is so, that is very important because India is ninety per cent village.

[1] Olaf Kirkpatrick Caroe, Secretary, External Affairs Department, who worked for many years as a British official in the Punjab

[2] Sir Evan Jenkins, Seeretary, Department of Supplies

G. It is so, and that of course proves that the people are not divided. It proves that the politicians divide us.

L.F. The Muslim bartender in my hotel in New Delhi said to me— although he is a member of the Muslim League and an advocate of Pakistan that the communal troubles always started where Muslims were a minority and never where the Hindus were a minority.

G. Fischer, you have been here only for a short time. You cannot study everything. But if you make any investigations and find that we are wrong or guilty, please say so in a loud voice.

These are my patients. She is one of my best patients.

L.F. Wouldn't it be better to leave her to the doctor?

G. No, there is much quackery in all this. She is not my patient, she is my relaxation. This baby's father was a sergeant in the British Army [*sic*] stationed at the North-West Frontier. He was ordered to shoot at Indians. He refused and was sentenced to sixteen years' imprisonment. He served six years, but there were so many petitions for his liberation that he was released two years ago. Now he lives here with us.

Fischer, give me your bowl and I will give you some vegetables. You don't like vegetables?

L.F. I don't like the taste of these vegetables.

G. Ah, you must add plenty of salt and lemon.

L.F. You want me to kill the taste.

G. No, enrich the taste.

L.F. You are so non-violent. You wouldn't even kill a taste.

G. If that were the only thing men killed, I wouldn't mind.

I perspired and said: Next time I am in India . . . You either ought to have air-conditioning in Sevagram, or live in the Viceroy's palace.

G. All right.

I began my interview with Gandhi this afternoon by reading this passage[1] to him. I said it confirmed his statement to me this morning that the Muslim peopleare much less interested in separatism than their leaders.

[1] From the Indian Statutory Commission Report, Vol. I, which read: There is among the Hindu minority in Sind a feeling that the independence of the British Commissioner is too great, while on the Muhammadan side there is a well-known cry for separation from Bombay. This demand has gathered strength not so much in the homes of the people or among the Muhammadan cultivators of Sind, as among the leaders of Muhammadan thought all over India to whom the idea of a new Muslim province, contiguous to the predominantly Muslim areas of Baluchistan, the North-West Frontier Province, and the Punjab, naturally appeals as offering a stronghold against the fear of Hindu domination.

G. Of course.

L,F. But how real are the fears of the Muslim leaders? Perhaps they understand better than the Muslim masses that the Hindus desire to dominate. Can you say quite objectively that the Hindus have not tried to gain the upper hand?

G. Here and there, individuals may entertain regrettable ideas. But I can say that the Congress movement and the Hindus in general have no desire to control. The provinces must enjoy broad autonomy. I myself am opposed to violence or domination and do not believe in powerful governments which oppress their citizens or other States. So how could I wish for domination? This charge is a cry originated by leaders to obtain a better hold on their people.

L.F. Very highly placed Britishers had told me that Congres was in the hands of big business and that Gandhi was supported by the Bombay mill-owners who gave him as much money as he wanted. What truth is there in these assertions?

G. Unfortunately, they are true. Congress hasn't enough money to conduct its work. We thought in the beginning to collect four annas from each member per year and operate on that. But it hasn't worked.

L.F. What proportion of the Congress budget is covered by rich Indians?

G. Practically all of it. In this ashram, for instance, we could live much more poorly than we do and spend less money. But we do not, and the money comes from our rich friends.

L.F. Doesn't the fact that Congress gets its money from the moneyed interests affect Congress politics? Doesn't it create a kind of moral obligation?

G. It creates a silent debt. But actually we are very little influenced by the thinking of the rich. They are sometimes afraid of our demand for full independence.

L.F. The other day I noticed in *The Hindustan Times* an item to the effect that Mr. Birla had again raised wages in his textile mills to meet the higher cost of living and, the paper continued to say, no other mill-owner had done so much. *The Hindustan Times* is a Congress paper.

G. No, it is completely owned by Birla. I know, because my youngest son is the editor. The facts are true, but it has nothing to do with Congress. You are right, however, that the dependence of Congress on rich sponsors is unfortunate. I use the word 'unfortunate'. It does not pervert our policy.

L.F. Isn't one of the results that there is a concentration on nationalism almost to the exclusion of social and economic problems?

G. No. Congress has from time to time, especially under the influence of

Pandit Nehru, adopted advanced social programmes and schemes for economic planning. I will have those collected for you.

L.F. But is it not a fact that all these social changes are projected to a time when independence will have been achieved?

G. No. When Congress was in office in the provinces (1937-39) the Congress ministries introduced many reforms which have since been cancelled by the British administration. We introduced reforms in the villages, in the schools, and in other fields.

L.F. I have been told, and I read in the Simon report that one of the great curses of India is the village money-lender to whom the peasant is often in debt from birth to death. In European countries, private philanthropy and governments have in similar circumstances created land banks to oust the usurious money-lender. Why could not some of your rich friends start a land bank on a purely business basis except that, instead of getting forty to seventy per cent interest per year, they would get two or three per cent? Their money would be secure, they would earn a small profit, and they would be helping their country.

G. Impossible. It could not be done without Government legislation.

L.F. Why?

G. Because the peasants wouldn't repay the loans.

L.F. But surely the peasant would realize that it was better to repay money which he borrowed at three per cent than to mortgage his life away to the money-lender?

G. Money lending is an ancient institutions and it is deeply rooted in the village. What you advocate cannot be done before we are free.

L.F. What would happen in a free India? What is your programme for the improvement of the lot of the peasantry?

G. The peasants would take the land. We would not have to tell them to take it. They would take it.

L.F. Would the landlords be compensated?

G. No. That would be fiscally impossible. You see, our gratitude to our millionaire friends does not prevent us from saying such things. The village would become a self-governing unit living its own life.

L.F. But there would of course be a national government.

G. No.

L.F. But surely you need a national administration to direct the railroads, the telegraphs, and so on.

G. I would not shed a tear if there were no railroads in India.

L.F. But that would bring suffering to the peasant. He needs city goods, and he must sell his produce in other parts of the country and abroad. The village needs electricity and irrigation. No single village could build a hydro-electric power station or an irrigation system like the Sukkur barrage in Sind.

G. And that has been a big disappointment. It has put the whole Province in debt.

L.F. I know, but it has brought much new land under cultivation, and it is a boon to the people.

G. I realize that despite my views there will be a central government administration. However, I do not believe in the accepted Western form of democracy with its universal voting for parliamentary representatives.

L.F. What would you have India do?

G. There are seven hundred thousand villages in India. Each would be organized according to the will of its citizens, all of them voting. Then there would be seven hundred thousand votes and not four hundred million. Each village, in other words, would have one vote. The villages would elect their district administrations, and the district administrations would elect the provincial administrations, and these in turn would elect a president who would be the national chief executive.

L.F. That is very much like the Soviet system.

G. I did not know that. I don't mind.

L.F. Now, Mr. Gandhi, I would like to ask you a second question about Congress. Congress has been accused of being an authoritarian organization. There is a new book out by two British authors, Shuster and Wint, called *India and Democracy*, which makes the charge that when the Congress provincial ministries resigned in 1939 they did so not of their own volition but on the orders of the district [*sic*] dictators of Congress.

G. This is nonsense. Do you think all questions are decided in the House of Commons or are decisions taken in party caucuses and in the clubs of London? Congress officers are elected by the members of Congress, and ministers who are members of Congress abide by the principles of Congress. Sir Samuel Hoare has told me a few things about the workings of democracy in Britain.

L.F. He seems to be your favourite British statesman.

This provided much laughter.

G. At least, I always know where he stands. Parliamentary democracy is not immune to corruption, as you who remember Tammany Hall and the Mayor of Chicago should know. I do not think a free India will function like the other countries of the world. We have our own forms to contribute.

I said, I would like to talk to him for a few moments about Subhas Chandra Bose, the Indian leader who had escaped to Axis territory. I told Gandhi that I was rather shocked when I heard that he had sent a telegram of condolence to Bose's mother on the receipt of the report, since proved false, that Bose had died in an airplane accident.

G. Do you mean because I had responded to news that proved to be false?

L.F. No, but that you regretted the passing of a man who went to Fascist Germany and identified himself with it.

G. I did it because I regard Bose as a patriot of patriots. He may be misguided. I think he is misguided. I have often opposed Bose. Twice I kept him from becoming president of Congress. Finally he did become president, although my views often differed from his. But suppose he had gone to Russia or to America to ask aid for India. Would that have made it better?

L.F. Yes, of course. It does make a difference to whom you go.

G. I do not want help from anybody to make India free. I want India to save herself.

L.F. Throughout history, nations and individuals have helped foreign countries. Lafayette went from France to assist America in winning independence from Britain. Thousands of Americans and other foreigners died in Spain to save the Spanish Republic.

G. Individuals, yes. But America is the ally of England which enslaves us. And I am not yet certain that the democracies will make a better world when they defeat the Fascists. They may become very much like the Fascists themselves.

L.F. This is where, as I told you the other day, we must agree to differ. I find the concentration of Indians on problems of their freedom to the exclusion of social problems a disappointment and a shortcoming. Bose is a young man with a propensity for dramatic action, and were he to succumb in Germany to the lure of Fascism and return to India and make India free but Fascist, I think you would be worse off than under British rule.

G. There are powerful elements of Fascism in British rule, and in India these are

the elements which we see and feel every day. If the British wish to document their right to win the war and make the world better, they must purify themselves by surrendering power in India. Your President talks about the Four Freedoms. Do they include the freedom to be free? We are asked to fight for democracy in Germany, Italy and Japan. How can we when we haven't got it ourselves?

June 7, 1942

Gandhi asked me how I had slept. I told him I had slept very well and asked how he had slept. He said he usually sleeps from 9.30 to 4.30.

"Without interruption?", I asked.

G. No, with two or three very brief interruptions. But I have no trouble falling asleep again. And then I have half an hour's sleep every afternoon.

I told him that Churchill did the same.

G. I hear that this is becoming more and more customary in Europe. Especially in old age it is very important.

I told him that it had been reported that Roosevelt falls asleep the moment he gets into bed. Gandhi inquired about Roosevelt's health and then asked me to describe Mrs. Roosevelt to him.

G. Then she has an influence on American politics?

I tried to explain the progress in social legislation, trade union organization, and social thinking which had taken place under the New Deal. I also stressed the fact that the American Government is financing foreign governments and financing domestic war industries. I compared that with the private financing of foreign governments and to American industry during the first World War.

G. What about the Negroes?

I talked about the Negro situation in the North and South. I said I did not, of course, wish to defend the treatment meted out to Negroes, but it seemed to me that it was not so cruel as untouchability in India.

G. As you know, I have fought untouchability for many years. We have many untouchables here in the ashram. Most of the work in the ashram is done by the untouchables, and any Hindu who comes to Sevagram must accept food from untouchables and remain in their proximity.

I asked whether the discrimination against untouchables had been somewhat alleviated.

G. Oh, yes, but it is still very bad.

L.F. Very thoughtful and otherwise progressive people, for instance Varadachariar[1], have tried to justify it in conversation with me; it seems to arise from the belief in the transmigration of the soul which apparently is part of the Hindu religion. Do you believe in the transmigration of the soul?

G. Of course. I cannot admit that the soul dies with the body. When a man's house is blown away, he builds himself another. When his body is taken away, his soul finds another. Nor do I accept the view that when the body is laid in the ground the soul remains suspended somewhere waiting for judgment day when it will be brought to the bar and confronted with its crimes. No, it immediately finds itself a new home.

L.F. This is obviously another form of man's eternal striving for immortality. Does it not all arise from the weak mortal's fear of death? Tolstoy was irreligious until his old age, when he started dreading the end.

G. I have no fear of death. I would regard it with relief and satisfaction. But it is impossible for me to think that that is the end. I have no proof. People have tried to demonstrate that the soul of a dead man finds a new home. I do not think this is capable of proof. But I believe it.

L.F. I think we all seek immortality, only some believe they live in their children or their works and some believe they live in transmuted form in animals, or otherwise. Some men live longer because their works last longer, but I believe that faith in one's immortality, if it is distinct from one's acts, is really fear of death and an attempt to find comfort in an illusion.

Gandhi thereupon reiterated his view with much passion and in fineflowing English prose; he always spoke a rich, fluent English with a British university accent.

I said students had told me that the new generation in India was less inclined to make a distinction between high-caste Hindus and untouchables, or between Hindus and Muslims, and that they were not much interested in religion.

G. The first is correct. But Hinduism is not a religion. The students do not perform religious ceremonies. But Hinduism is life. It is a way of life. Many who do not practise formal religion are nearer to this way of life than some who do.

He added that untouchability pained him deeply and he hoped that India's freedom would hasten the solution of the problem of untouchability. This brought him back to his favourite subject. He spoke of "the challenge, for it is a challenge,

[1] A member of the Supreme Court of India who was a high-caste Brahmin

which I have flung to the British to go. They will be purified if they go and better equipped for the task of making a new world. Otherwise all their professions are a cloak of hypocrisy."

L.F. Don't you think that in view of the diversities of India you will need here a federation which will satisfy the Princes and the Muslims?

G. I am in no position to say which system would suit us better. First, the British must go. It is a matter of pure speculation what we will do later. The moment the British withdraw, the question of religious minorities disappears. If the British withdraw and there is chaos, I cannot say what form will ultimately rise out of the chaos. If I were asked what I would prefer, I would say federation and not centralization. There is bound to be a federal system of some sort. But you must be satisfied with my answer that I am not disturbed by the problem of whether we are to have a federation or not. Perhaps your cast-iron mind mocks at this. Perhaps you think that with millions unarmed and accustomed to foreign rule for centuries, we will not succeed in the civil disobedience movement which I have decided to launch.

L.F. No. I do not think that. I believe that history is moving fast and that before long you will be an independent country like China. The struggle you began years ago cannot end in any other way.

G. I do not want to be independent like China. China is helpless even now and in spite of Chiang Kai-shek. Notwithstanding China's heroism and her readiness to risk all in this war, China is not yet completely free. China should be able to say to America and England, 'We will fight our battle of independence single-handed, without your aid.' That I would call independence.

I asked him how he got on in his long interview with Chiang.

G. Very well.

L.F. Only you did not understand him, and he did not understand you. G. I found him inscrutable. Maybe it was the matter of language. We spoke through Madame Chiang. But I do not think it was only that.

L.F. Of course China is not completely free, but freedom does not come in a day. Through this war, if we win it, China will become free. We may be approaching the Asiatic century. India and China may shape a great deal of history in the coming decades. I see no sign, however, that the British realize this. They will not go as you ask. If they could not save themselves by their arms in Singapore and Malaya, they will not save themselves by their brains in India.

G. I would like you to understand that I am not criticizing China. Only I wanted

to emphasize that I do not wish to imitate China. I do not want India to be in the same predicament as China. That is why I am saying I do not want British and American soldiers here. I do not want Japanese or German soldiers here. The Japanese broadcast every day that they do not intend to keep India—they only propose to help us win our freedom. I do not welcome their sympathy or help. I know they are not philanthropists I want for India a respite from all foreign domination. I have become impatient. I cannot wait any longer. Our condition is worse than China's or Persia's.

I may not be able to convince Congress. Men who have held office in Congress may not rise to the occasion. I will go ahead nevertheless and address myself directly to the people. But whatever happens, we are unbendable. We may be able to evolve a new order which will astonish the whole world. I would ask you to cast off your prejudices and enter into this new idea of mine of a civil disobedience campaign and try to find flaws in it if there are any. You will then be able to help our cause and, to put it on a higher plane, you will be able to do justice to yourself as a writer. The literature that is being produced on India is piffling and of no consequence. There is nothing original in most of it. It is all Cast-iron. I ask you to struggle out of that groove. I would like you to penetrate through my language to what I am attempting to express. That is difficult, I know; you came here with all the glamour, brilliance, culture and armed strength of American and British civilization. I would understand your refusing to grasp anything that does not fit into your groove or that is not desirable for that groove. But if your mind cannot rise above that beaten track, then your days in Sevagram will have been wasted.

L.F. Yes, but will you help me to see the new order you speak of? I am not so sure of my own new order as to reject yours out of hand. I think India has much to contribute, but how do you see future developments?

G. You see the centre of power now is in New Delhi, or in Calcutta and Bombay, in the big cities. I would have it distributed among the seven hundred thousand villages of India. That will mean that there is no power. In other words, I want the seven hundred thousand dollars now invested in the Imperial Bank of England withdrawn and distributed among the seven hundred thousand villages. Then each village will have its one dollar which cannot be lost.

The seven hundred thousand dollars invested in the Imperial Bank of India could be swept away by a bomb from a Japanese plane, whereas if they were distributed among the seven hundred thousand shareholders, nobody could deprive them of their assets. There will then be voluntary co-operation between these seven hundred thousand units, voluntary co-operation—not co-operation induced by Nazi

methods. Voluntary co-operation will produce real freedom and a new order vastly superior to the new order in Soviet Russia. Some say there is ruthlessness in Russia but that it is exercised for the lowest and the poorest and is good for that reason. For me it has very little good in it. Some day this ruthlessness will create an anarchy worse than we have ever seen. I am sure we will escape that anarchy here. I admit that the future society of India is largely beyond my grasp. But a system like the one I have outlined to you did exist though it undoubtedly had its weakness, else it would not have succumbed before the Moguls and the British. I would like to think that parts of it have survived, and that the roots have survived despite the ravages of British rule. Those roots and the stock are waiting to sprout if a few drops of rain fall in the form of a transfer of British power to Indians. What the plant will be like I do not know. But it will be infinitely superior to anything we have now. Unfortunately, the requisite mood of non-violence does not now exist here, but I refuse to believe that all the strenuous work of the last twenty-five years to evolve a new order has been in vain. The Congress Party will have an effective influence in shaping the new order, and the Muslim League will also have an effective influence.

L.F. I would like you to pursue this idea of the symbolic seven hundred thousand dollars. What will the villages do with the dollar that has come back to them from the Imperial Bank of England?

G. One thing will happen. Today the shareholders get no return. Intermediaries take it away. If the peasants are masters of their dollars they will use them as they think best.

L.F. A peasant buries his money in the ground.

G. They will not bury their dollars in the ground because they will have to live. They will go back to the bank, their own bank and utilize it under their direction for purposes they think best. They may then build windmills or produce electricity or whatever they like. A central government will evolve, but it will act according to the wishes of the people and will be broadbased on their will.

L.F. The State, I imagine, will then build more industries and develop the country industrially.

G. You must visualize a central government without the British Army. If it holds together without that army, this will be the new order. That is a goal worth working for. It is not an unearthly goal. It is practicable.

L.F. I agree. Ten years ago I might not have agreed, but after my experiences in Russia and elsewhere I feel that the greatest danger the world faces is the emergence of the all-powerful State which makes individual freedom impossible. Apparently,

capitalist economics have made it necessary for the State to intervene more and more in economic affairs. That gives the State more power. The next generation's real problem will be to-devise checks and balances on such a State. One question is: Can we safeguard personal liberty in a country where the government is all powerful? Another question is: Will nations co-operate inside an international organization, or will we reject internationalism and have some more wars?

G. My question would be: how to prevent the rise of these gigantic States. That is why I do not want the Allied powers to asssume the roles of Fascist States. It is therefore that I ask them to declare that what India says is good. Let them take this jump and give India her freedom, and, if necessary, remain in India On India's terms for the duration. Let us see if we can get a free co-operation among peoples.

L.F. I am absolutely certain that you ought to have your independence. I think it would be good for you and good for all of us. Certainly the British have not shown any startling ability to defend their empire or to win its sympathy.

G. You must say that to America.

L.F. I will say it, but not in those terms. We are now financing all of Britain's purchases of munitions. We are making sixty thousand planes this year, but a hundred and forty thousand in 1943. As far as America's role in India is concerned, the crisis here has matured a bit too early. If we were making one hundred and forty thousand planes per year now and had two million men at the front, our views on India would receive more attention in London. The British do not understand today what is happening in India. With American help they may understand tomorrow.

G. Therefore it is that I come to brass tacks and say that the British will understand not while we are reasoning with them and showing them the great justice and feasibility of our proposal, but when we begin to act. That is British history. They are impressed by action, and it is action that we must take now. For the moment, however, I must popularize the idea of an Indian national government now and demonstrate that there is nothing chimerical or visionary about it. It is based on non-violence although I do not need the idea of non-violence to prove the validity or justice of my aim. The same aim might have evolved even if I were violently inclined. Even if I were violently inclined I might have said, 'Go and do not use India as your military base.' But today I say, 'If you must use India as a base lest someone else appropriate it, use it, and stay here on honourable terms and do no harm.' I would go further and add that if the central government which India evolves is military-minded the British may have its help.

L.F. If the British, under pressure, were to accept your offer, how would you

launch your republic of seven hundred thousand villages?

G. I cannot give you a concrete plan. I cannot work it out today. It is all theoretical. It has to come out as a plan drafted by a body of representatives and not out of the brain of one whom many label a dreamer.

L.F. Well, I am not so completely cast-iron as not to understand homespun cotton.

G. But you do not understand vegetables.

L.F. I do not like the same vegetables every day for lunch and dinner.

June 8, 1942

I started by saying that we had not even mentioned India's biggest problem, the problem most difficult of solution.

G. What's that?

L.F. India's population is increasing by five million each year. British official statistics show that the population of India increased from three hundred and thirty-eight million in 1931 to three hundred and eighty-eight million in 1941. Fifty million more mouths to feed and bodies to clothe and shelter. Fifty million more in ten years. How are you going to deal with that?

G. One of the answers might be birth control. But I am opposed to birth control.

L.F. I am not, but in a backward country like India birth control could not be very effective anyway.

G. Then perhaps we need some good epidemics.

L.F. Or a good civil war. But, Soviet Russia had famines, epidemics, and a civil war and yet her population grew very rapidly, and the Bolsheviks, in 1928, took certain economic measures.

G. You want to force me into an admission that we would need rapid industrialization. I will not be forced into such an admission. Our first problem is to get rid of British rule. Then we will be free, without restraints from the outside, to do what India requires. The British have seen fit to allow us to have some factories and also to prohibit other factories. No! For me the paramount problem is the ending of British domination.

L.F. Well, how do you actually see your impending civil disobedience movement? What shape will it take?

G. In the villages, the peasants will stop paying taxes. They will make salt

despite official prohibition. This seems a small matter; the salt tax yields only a paltry sum to the British Government. But refusal to pay it will give the peasants the courage to think that they are capable of independent action. Their next step will be to seize the land.

L.F. With violence?

G. There may be violence, but then again the landlords may co-operate.

L.F. You are an optimist.

G. They might co-operate by fleeing.

Nehru, who had been sitting by my side, said, "They might vote for confiscation with their legs just as you say in your *Men and Politics* that, as Lenin put it, the Russian soldier voted for peace with his legs in 1917--he ran away from the trenches. So also the Indian landowners might vote for the confiscation of their land by running away from the village."

L.F. Or, they might organize violent resistance.

G. There may be fifteen days of chaos, but I think we could soon bring that under control.

L.F. You feel then that it must be confiscation without compensation?

G. Of course. It would be financially impossible for anybody to compensate the landlords.

L.F. That accounts for the villages. But that is not all of India.

G. No. Workingmen in the cities would leave their factories. The railroads would stop running.

L.F. General strike. I know that you have in the past had a large following among the peasants, but your city working-class support is not so big.

G. No, not so big. But this time the workingmen will act too, because, as I sense the mood of the country, everybody wants freedom, Hindus, Muslims, untouchables, Sikhs, workers, peasants, industrialists, Indian Civil Servants and even the Princes. The Princes know that a new wind is blowing. Things cannot go on as they have been. We cannot support a war which may perpetuate British domination. How can we fight for democracy in Japan, Germany and Italy when India is not democratic? I want to save China. I want no harm to come to China. But to collaborate we must be free. Slaves do not fight for freedom.

L.F. Do you think that the Muslims will follow you in your civil disobedience movement?

G. Not perhaps in the beginning. But they will come in when they see that the movement is succeeding.

L.F. Might not the Muslims be used to interfere with or stop the movement?

G. Undoubtedly, their leaders might try or the Government might try, but the Muslim millions do not oppose independence and they could not, therefore, oppose our measures to bring about that independence. The Muslim masses sympathize with the one overall goal of Congress: freedom for India. That is the solid rock on which Hindu-Muslim unity can be built.

June 9, 1942

L.F. I have found you so objective about your work and the world that I want to ask you to be objective about yourself. This isn't a personal question but a political question: how do you account for your influence over so many people?

G. I can see the spirit in which you ask this. I think my influence is due to the fact that I pursue the truth. That is my goal.

L.F. I do not underestimate the power of truth. But this explanation seems to me inadequate. Leaders like Hitler have achieved power by telling lies. That doesn't mean that you cannot become influential by telling the truth. But truth in itself has not always availed others in this country or elsewhere. Why is it that you, without any of the paraphernalia of power, without a government or police behind you, without ceremonies or even tightly-knit organization—for I understand that Congress is in no sense a disciplined, tightly-co-ordinated body—how is it that you have been able to sway so many millions and get them to sacrifice their comforts and time and even their lives?

G. Truth is not merely a matter of words. It is really a matter of living the truth.

It is true, I have not much equipment. My education is not great. I do not read much.

L.F. Isn't it that when you advocate independence you strike a chord in many Indians? A musician does something to the members of his audience. You play a note which Indians are waiting to hear. I have noticed that people applaud most the arias they have heard often and liked. A lecture audience applauds views it agrees with. Is it that you say and do what your people want you to say and do?

G. Yes, maybe that is it. I was a loyalist in respect to the British, and then I became a rebel. I was a loyalist until 1896.

L.F. Weren't you also a loyalist between 1914 and 1918?

G. Yes, in a way, but not really. By 1918, I had already said that British rule in

India is an alien rule and must end.

I will tell you how it happened that I decided to urge the departure of the British. It was in 1916. I was in Lucknow working for Congress. A peasant came up to me looking like any other peasant of India, poor and emaciated. He said, 'My name is Rajkumar Shukla. I am from Champaran, and I want you to come to my district.' He described the misery of his fellow agriculturists and prayed me to let him take me to Champaran, which was hundreds of miles from Lucknow. He begged so insistently and persuasively that I promised. But he wanted me to fix the date. I could not do that. For weeks and weeks Rajkumar Shukla followed me wherever I went over the face of India. He stayed wherever I stayed. At length, early in 1917, I had to be in Calcatta.

Rajkumar followed me and ultimately persuaded me to take the train with him from Calcutta to Champaran. Champaran is a district where indigo is planted. I decided that I would talk to thousands of peasants but, in order to get the other side of the question, I would also interview the British Commissioner of the area. When I called on the Commissioner he bullied me and advised me to leave immediately, I did not accept his advice and proceeded on the back of an elephantto one of the villages. A police messenger overtook us and served notice on me to leave Champaran. I allowed the police to escort me back to the house where I was staying and then I decided to offer civil resistance. I would not leave district. Huge crowds gathered around the house. I co-operated with the police in regulating the crowds. A kind of friendly relationship sprang up between me and the police. That day in Champaran became a red-letter day in my life. I was put on trial. The Government attorney pleaded with the magistrate to postpone the case but I asked him to go on with it. I wanted to announce publicly that I had disobyed the order to leave Champaran. I told him that I had come to collect information about local conditions and that I therefore had to disobey the British law because I was acting in obedience with a higher law, with the voice of my conscience. This was my first act of civil disobedience against the British. My desire was to establish the principle that no Englishman had the right to tell me to leave any part of my country where I had gone for a peaceful pursuit. The Government begged me repeatedly to drop my plea of guilty. Finally the magistrate closed the case. Civil disobedience had won. It became the method by which India could be made free.

L.F. This is perhaps another clue to your position in India.

G. What I did was a very ordinary thing. I declared that the British could not order me around in my own country.

L.F. It was ordinary, but you were the first to do it. It's like the story of

Columbus and the egg.

G. What's that?

L.F. Have you never heard the story of Columbus and the egg?

G. No, tell me.

I told him. He laughed.

G. That's right, it was an ordinary thing to say that I had the right to go peacefully anywhere in my own country. But no one had said it before.[1]

G. Now fire.

L.F. That would be violence,

G. And have you any objection to violence?

L.F. But you have never heard a word from me as to whether I am for or against violence.

G. You don't have to tell me. I look at you and know.

L.F. In case your impending civil disobedience movement develops a violent phase, as it has sometimes in past years, would you call it off? You have done that before.

G. In my present mood it would be incorrect to say that no circumstances might arise in which I would call off the movement. In the past, however, I have been too cautious. That was necessary for my own training and for the training of my collaborators. But I would not behave as I have in the past.

L.F. Since I am going away soon from your village, I want to be quite sure that I understand your ideas correctly. Would there be any chance of a compromise between what you want and what the British authorities are ready to offer? Might some kind of a modified Cripps proposal be acceptable to you?

G. No. Nothing along the lines of the Cripps offer. I want their complete and irrevocable withdrawal. I am essentially a man of compromise because I am never sure that I am right. But now it is the unbending future [*sic*] in me that is uppermost. There is no halfway house between withdrawal and non-withdrawal. It is, of course, no complete physical withdrawal that I ask. I shall insist, however, on the transfer of political power from the British to the Indian people.

L.F. What about the time factor? When you launch your civil disobedience movement, and if the British yield, will it be a matter of the immediate transfer of

[1] By this time the party had returned to Gandhiji's dwelling. At 3 o'clock Fischer came for his regular interview.

political power?

G. The British would not have to do that in two days or in two weeks. But it must be irrevocable and complete political withdrawal.

L.F. Suppose the British say they will withdraw completely after the war?

G. No. In that case my proposal loses much of its value. I want them to go now so I can help China and Russia. Today I am unable to pull my full weight in favour of them. It is my philanthropy that has made me present this proposal. For the time being, India disappears from my gaze. I never wanted independence for India's sake alone. I never wished to play the role of frog-in-the-well.

L.F. You have not felt this way before, Mr. Gandhi.

G. The whole idea keeps blossoming out within me. The original idea of asking the British to go burst upon me suddenly. It was the Cripps fiasco that inspired the idea. Hardly had he gone when it seized hold of me.

L.F. Exactly when did the idea occur to you?

G. Soon after Cripps's departure. I wrote a letter to Horace Alexander in reply to his letter to me. Thereafter the idea possessed me. Then began the propaganda.

Later I framed a resolution. My first feeling was, we need an answer to Cripps's failure. What a diabolical thing if the Cripps mission were without any redeeming feature. Suppose I ask them to go. This idea arose from the crushed hope that had been pretty high in our minds. We had heard good things about Cripps from Jawaharlal and others. Yet the whole mission fell flat. How, I asked myself, am I to remedy this situation? The presence of the British blocks our way. It was during myMonday day of silence that the idea was born in me. From that silence arose so many thoughts that the silence possessed me and the thoughts possessed me too and I knew I had to act for Russia and China and India. My heart goes out to China. I cannot forget my five hours with Chiang Kai-shek and his attractive partner. Even for China's sake alone I must do this. I am burdening my thoughts with the world's sorrow.

L.F. Why will it not wait until after the war?

G. Because I want to act now and be useful while the war is here.

L.F. Have you any organization with which to carry on this struggle?

G. The organization is the Congress Party. But if it fails me, I have my own organization, myself. I am a man possessed by an idea. If such a man cannot get an organization, he becomes an organization.

L.F. Have you sufficient confidence in the present mood of the country? Will it follow you? This civil disobedience movement may involve heavy sacrifices for the

people. Has anybody opposed your idea?

G. I had a letter today from Rajagopalachari. He is the only one opposed. I know his views. But how does he expect the Muslim League to work with him when he wishes to work with the Muslim League in order to destroy Pakistan?

L.F. Do you think Jinnah is set on Pakistan? Perhaps it is a bargaining counter with him which he will give up if Hindu-Muslim co-operation can be achieved.

G. As I have told you before, he will only give it up when the British are gone and when there is therefore nobody with whom to bargain.

L.F. So you intend to tell the British in advance when you will launch your movement?

G. Yes.

L.F. You had better not tell them too far in advance.

G. Is that a tip from you?

L.F. No.

G. They will know in good time.

L.F. If you look at this in its historic perspective, you are doing a novel and remarkable thing—you are ordaining the end of an empire.

G. Even a child can do that. I will appeal to the people's instincts. I may arouse them.

L.F. Let us try to see the possible reaction throughout the world. Your very friends, China and Russia, may appeal to you not to launch this civil disobedience movement.

G. Let them appeal to me. I may be dissuaded. But if I can get appeals to them in time, I may convert them. If you have access to men in authority here, tell them this. You are a fine listener. No humbug about you. Discuss this with them and let them show me if there are any flaws in my proposal.

L.F. Have I your authority to say this to the Viceroy?

G. Yes, you have my permission. Let him talk to me; I may be converted. I am a reasonable man. I would not like to take any step that would harm China.

L.F. Or America?

G. If America were hurt, it would hurt everybody.

L.F. Would you wish President Roosevelt to be informed about your attitude?

G. Yes. I do not wish to appeal to anybody. But I would want Mr. Roosevelt to

know my plans, my views, and my readiness to compromise. Tell your President I wish to be dissuaded.

L.F. Do you expect drastic action when you launch the movement?

G. Yes. I expect it any day. I am ready. I know I may be arrested. I am ready.

A Week with Gandhi, pp. 14-20, 24-5, 30-7, 42-59, 67-71, 76-85, 89-93 and 96-106

1. KHADI IN KATHIAWAD

Readers must be aware that in order to make the khadi activity more extensive and more popular a Committee has been set up. Shri Nanabhai has been appointed its President and Shri Nagardas Doshi is its Secretary. The money which was collected on the occasion of the *Rentia Jayanti*[1] and which I had deposited with Shri Narandas Gandhi has been given to the Committee.[2] I have received a report of this khadi activity for the period 1938 to 1941 entitled *Kathiawadna Khadikamno Heval*, published by Pandya Khadi Karyalaya, Chalala. The following paragraphs[3] from that will give some idea of the khadi activity.

The number of spinners in 1938 was 150 which rose to 600 in 1941. In 1941 there were 500 caste Hindus, 18 Muslims and 12 Harijan spinners. In 1938 the wages given came to Rs. 3,481 while in 1941 the amount was Rs. 18,948. The monthly income of a spinner in 1938 was Rs. 4-12 while in 1941 it rose to Rs. 10. The weavers' wages increased from Rs. 12 to Rs. 30 and that of carders to Rs. 18 from Rs. 7.

The report is good. There is scope for raising the figures. The progress of the work is satisfactory. We can easily gauge the efforts of Shri Nagardas. But Kathiawad is a small province with a population of 26 lakhs. There is scope for much work. How can we increase the number of workers? In other words how can we make the work more interesting and attractive?

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 7-6-1942

[1] Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram Calendar

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 30-6-1942.

[3] Not translated here. The report stated that the Chalala Khadi Karyalaya had become the headquarters for khadi production and sales centres in Kathiawar. There was no paid worker to carry On the routine office work, which was done by workers over and above their other activities.

2. RAJAJI

Although I retain the opinion I have expressed about my differences with Rajaji, and although I adhere to every word I have said and he has quoted, and although I reaffirm my opinion that my language taken in its context does not bear the interpretation Rajaji puts upon it. I do not propose henceforth to enter into any public controversy with him. I join him in hoping that some day I shall see the error of my views which he sees so clearly. But public controversy with close companions like Rajaji repels me. He has a new mission and he has need to speak.

SEVAGRAM, June 7, 1942

Harijan, 14-6-1942

3. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

June 7, l 942

MY DEAR C.R.,

Nonsense. You are not fallen. These differences mean nothing. I have already written a note[1] for *H*[*arijan*] that I shall no longer enter into controversy with you. You must not feel dejected either. Therefore you should come here for rest, jokes and a renewal of strength and joy.

Your argument I do not understand. Come here and explain.

Tell me in whose name the houses should go. Better write to Kamalnayan.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2088

4. NO SALVATION WITHOUT SACRIFICE

Accounts pour in upon me from all quarters about the action of the authorities demanding evacuation without notice. Sometimes it is a zamindar who is to surrender his bungalow and sometimes it is a middle-class man who has to surrender his house with fans and

[1] *Vide* the preceding item

furniture for the use of the military. More often it is villagers or labourers who are called upon under promise of compensation to vacate their quarters. The condition of these people is piteous. They do not know where to go. To these I can only say, 'Do not move—and take the consequences. They cannot be forcibly ejected. Even if they are, their cry will be heard whereas newspaper articles will be of little avail.

SEVAGRAM, June 8, 1942

Harijan, 14-6-1942

5. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 8, I 942

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter.

Sushila comes here on 18th for a week. I think she has come first—nothing much among five candidates. Sushila says nothing about the place she has got.

I hope there is nothing serious with S.'s eyes.

J.L. came in yesterday. He slept in Sevagram, Maulana comes tomorrow.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 413O. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7439

6. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

June 8, 1942

CHI. KAKA,

I got your letter. Since there is already an agreement between us made long ago that you should consult me before taking up anything new, where is the need of a fresh one? You have assumed heavy responsibilities, and the work about Hindustani is not an easy one either. However, you must fulfil this responsibility. Do it as well as you can. You must categorically refuse to go anywhere else, whether it is to Vanasthali or Vedchhi or Ambala. If you cannot remember the decisions taken by you, you should ask either Amritlal or Saroj to remind you and to get them implemented.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10958

7. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

SEVAGRAM,
June 8[1]*, 1942*

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

I could read the whole of your letter only today. It did help me to understand your mind but it did not satisfy me. That is because the task which you seek to accomplish cannot be accomplished with what you intend doing. Many vaidyas have raised farms of the kind you want. No doubt you can improve upon them, but you cannot reform the vaidyas.

I offered to entrust my entire treatment to the vaidyas but I was disappointed. Lakshmipati wanted to settle here and made all the preparations but never turned up. I sent a patient to him whom he dismissed telling him that he was all right. The patient came back as ill as ever. I tried to lure you to come and settle down here and conduct experiments but there were difficulties in your way.

[1] Pyarelal Papers has “9”.

Although I have said all this my blessings are with you. Your intentions are pure; may they bear fruit.

At present it is allopathy that commands enterprise, industry and knowledge. It is a developing science. It has many defects. Its pharmacopoeia is vast and yet very restricted. But it is systematic and so can draw upon whatever is special in Ayurveda. However, it is worth reflecting upon that if Ayurveda were to take what is special in allopathy the latter would be left with nothing but a few drugs.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

23 SAURASHTRA SOCIETY

AHMEDABAD

From Gujarati: C.W. 2921. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

8. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 8, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

What you say about Ram Prakashji is true, but we should have the strength to assimilate such persons. Some work should be found for them. And if they cannot do it they should be clearly told that they cannot live in the Ashram. As to your first letter all I can say is that you should continue to do the work that you have been doing. I will write whenever you say. So long as you do not have confidence in Chi. it is better to keep quiet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4430; also S.N. 24481

9. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 9, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I am having long and pleasant chats with J. L. I have a journalist with me recommended by J. L. He leaves tomorrow. L. Fischer is his

name.

Khurshedbehn is still here. She has been looking after the guests. Maulana comes tonight.

Here is a letter from Benares. Perhaps you remember the thing.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4131. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7440

10. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 9, 1942

CHI. MRIDU,

I have your letter. It is good the resolutions were passed. There is no harm in there having been amendments.

Jawaharlal stayed at the Ashram for two days. He has gone to Wardha today because the Maulana is coming. He will now be here for at least a day. We are having discussions.

S. has written to me in detail about you. In this way we often get unexpected help. He is a gentleman. Obtain the book regarding Juthabhai.

I have been told about Kamala Devi being appointed President. My congratulations to her.

Take care of your health. Why did you have bleeding from the nose ? Does it happen occasionally ? Your suggestions about the bulletin, etc. are good. Right now the conditions are not congenial. Let me see what can be done. This time it is likely to be a bitter fight. We are ready for anything that may happen.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11228. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

11. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS

SEVAGRAM,
June 9, 1942

BABUJI,

I was delighted to have your letter. I had also received your book. I have even glanced through it.

I think what I am doing these days is the thing you want. Be it as

it may, I feel overwhelmed by your great effort. May God keep you with us for many many years for the sake of India, for the sake of the world.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

BABUJI DR. BHAGWANDAS

SEVASHRAM

BANARAS

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

12. LETTER TO KRISHNACHNDRA

June 9, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

What kind of a letter have you sent me? I had thought that I could fearlessly write to you whatever I felt and you would read the right meaning in it. I did not write what I did because I had lost faith in you. I only feel that so long as you have no confidence in Chi. as manager you should dedicate to God whatever work you do and thus you will continue to be happy. In my view this is quite easy to see. But if you do not see it this way, you should tell me. There is no cause for you to feel unhappy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4424; also S.N. 24478

13. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

June 10, 1942

CHI. KAKA,

I got your note yesterday evening after prayer. I feel that sending for Krishna Varma[1] here will not help. It would be better to give him fifteen days. That will pay. You will soon be able to judge whether there was any improvement. If no improvement is observed, you need not stay. But it does appeal that you will not be able to judge before fifteen days. The earlier you go the better. Go today if

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Krishna Varma", 22-5-1942.

you can. You will have returned by the time Shriman arrives.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

A letter[1] for Varma is enclosed.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10959

14. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

June 10, 1942

CHI. KAKA,

It is good that you are leaving for Bombay. Remember that you are going to Varma not only to gain something from him, if possible, but also to give him the benefit of your company. Restrain his bad habits. He talks too much. His language also is not always pure. Pull him up. He listens to criticism lovingly made and reforms himself too. Understand his remedies. If you do not like any of them, leave them alone.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10960

15. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA (C. P.),
June 10, 1942

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. I had a long talk with Dhebarbhai. I do not think that that gingili will yield any oil. There is no sense in your meeting him[2] not as a Congressman, not as a representative of the Prajamandal, but only as an old friend. You should not meet him.

You should issue no statement. We need not go into the question whether or not there was a settlement. Those who can stand on their own feet may do so and fight on. Let the Rulers, if they desire, carry

[1] Not traceable

[2] Fatehsinh, the *durbar* of Limdi; *vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 3-6-1942.

on business among themselves. But the boycott committee should continue and keep up the boycott. Even if one single person remains firm, he will be looked upon as a symbol of the struggle, and it can well be said that it is still carried on although it should not be worth even a pice.

I am going (to Wardha) to see Maulana Saheb. He has really become weak. I hope you are all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
68 MARINE DRIVE
BOMBAY

[From Hindi]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 278

16. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
June 10, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Why do you feel tired? You are right in saying that you can have no cause for enmity or malice towards Chi. or any one else. You should therefore cheerfully do what work you have agreed to do. It should not be hampered. You have my co-operation and my blessings.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4431

17. LETTER TO TARACHAND

SEVAGRAM,
June 10, 1942

BHAI TARACHANDJI,

I had your letter. I have sent your reply as it was for being published in *Harijan*.[1]

You of course have to be in the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. I am

[1] *Vide* "Dr. Tarachand and Hindustani", 6-6-1942.

trying my best to rope in Maulvi Abdul Huq Saheb. Enclosed is Maulvi Saheb's reply. Please do what you yourself can.

Kindly return the letter.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

18. INTERVIEW TO PRESTON GROVER[1]

WARDHA,

[*June 10, 1942*][2]

Q. There has been a great deal of questioning in America and India to as to the nature of your activities during the balance of the War. I should like to know what it will be like.

GANDHIJI: But can you tell me when the War will end?

Q. There is a good deal of speculation that you are planning some new movement. What is the nature of it?

A. It depends on the response made by the Government and the people. I am trying to find out public opinion here and also the reaction on the world outside.

Q. When you speak of the response, you mean response to your new proposal?

A. Oh yes, I mean response to the proposal that the British Government in India should end today. Are you startled?

Q. I am not. You have been asking for it and working for it.

A. That's right. I have been working for it for years. But now it has taken definite shape and I say that the British power in India should go today for the world peace, for China, for Russia and for the Allied cause. I shall explain to you how it advances the Allied cause. Complete independence frees India's energies, frees her to make her contribution to the world crisis. Today the Allies are carrying the burden of a huge corpse—a huge nation lying prostrate at the feet of Britain, I would even say at the feet of the Allies. For America is the predominant partner, financing the war, giving her mechanical ability

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Throw Away the Carcass". Preston Grover of the Associated Press of America had especially come over from New Delhi for the interview.

[2] From *Gandhi—1915-1948*

and her resources which are inexhaustible. America is thus a partner in the guilt.

Q. Do you see a situation when after full independence is granted American and Allied troops can operate from India?

A. I do. It will be only then that you will see real co-operation. Otherwise all the effort you put up may fail. Just now Britain is having India's resources because India is her possession. Tomorrow whatever the help, it will be real help from a *free* India.

Q. You think India in control interferes with Allied action to meet Japan's aggression?

A. It does.

Q. When I mentioned Allied troops operating I wanted to know whether you contemplated complete shifting of the present troops from India?

A. Not necessarily.

Q. It is on this that there is a lot of misconception.

A. You have to study all I am writing. I have discussed the whole question in the current issue of *Harijan*.[1] I do not want them to go, on condition that India becomes entirely free. I cannot then insist on their withdrawal, because I want to resist with all my might the charge of inviting Japan to India.

Q. But suppose your proposal is rejected, what will be your next move?

A. It will be a move which will be felt by the whole world. It may not interfere with the movement of British troops, but it is sure to engage British attention. It would be wrong of them to reject my proposal and say India should remain a slave in order that Britain may win or be able to defend China. I cannot accept that degrading position. India free and independent will play a prominent part in defending China. Today I do not think she is rendering any real help to China. We have followed the non-embarrassment policy so far. We will follow it even now. But we cannot allow the British Government to exploit it in order to strengthen the stranglehold on India. And today it amounts to that. The way, for instance, in which thousands are being asked to vacate their homes with nowhere to go to, no land to cultivate, no resources to fall back upon, is the reward of our non-embarrassment. This should be impossible in any free country. I cannot tolerate India submitting to this kind of treatment. It means greater degradation and servility, and when a whole nation accepts

[1] *Vide* "Question Box", 12-6-1942.

servility it means good-bye for ever to freedom.

Q. All you want is the civil grip relaxed. You won't then hinder military activity?

A. I do not know. I want unadulterated independence. If the military activity serves but to strengthen the stranglehold, I must resist that too. I am no philanthropist to go on helping at the expense of my freedom. And what I want you to see is that a corpse cannot give any help to a living body. The Allies have no moral cause for which they are fighting, so long as they are carrying this double sin on their shoulders, the sin of India's subjection and the subjection of the Negroes and African races.

Mr. Grover tried to draw a picture of a free India *after* an Allied victory. Why not wait for the boons of victory? Gandhiji mentioned as the boons of the last World War the Rowlatt Act and martial law and Amritsar. Mr. Grover mentioned more economic and industrial prosperity—by no means due to the grace of the Government, but by the force of circumstances, and economic prosperity was a step further forward to swaraj. Gandhiji said the few industrial gains were wrung out of unwilling hands, he set no store by such gains after this war, those gains may be further shackles, and it was a doubtful proposition whether there would be any gains—when one had in mind the industrial policy that was being followed during the war. Mr. Grover did not seriously press the point.

Q. You don't expect any assistance from America in persuading Britain to relinquish her hold on India.

A. I do indeed.

Q. With any possibility of success?

A. There is every possibility, I should think. I have every right to expect America to throw her full weight on the side of justice, if she is convinced of the justice of the Indian cause.

Q. You don't think the American Government is committed to the British remaining in India?

A. I hope not. But British diplomacy is so clever that America, even though it may not be committed, and in spite of the desire of President Roosevelt and the people to help India, it may not succeed. British propaganda is so well organized in America against the Indian cause that the few friends India has there have no chance of being effectively heard. And the political system is so rigid that public opinion does not affect the administration.

Q. It may, slowly.

A. Slowly? I have waited long, and I can wait no longer. It is a terrible tragedy that 40 crores of people should have no say in this war. If we have the freedom to play our part we can arrest the march of Japan and save China.

Mr. Grover, having made himself sure that Gandhiji did not insist on the literal withdrawal of either the British or the troops, now placing himself in the position of the Allies, began to calculate the gains of the bargain. Gandhiji of course does not want independence as a reward of any services, but as a right and in discharge of a debt long overdue.

Q. What specific things would be done by India to save China, if India is declared independent?

A. Great things, I can say at once, though I may not be able to specify them today. For I do not know what government we shall have. We have various political organizations here which I expect would be able to work out a proper national solution. Just now they are not solid parties, they are often acted upon by the British power, they look up to it and its frown or favour means much to them. The whole atmosphere is corrupt and rotten. Who can foresee the possibilities of a corpse coming to life? At present India is a dead weight to the Allies.

Q. By dead weight you mean a menace to Britain and to American interests here?

A. I do. It is a menace in that you never know what sullen India will do at a given moment.

Q. No, but I want to make myself sure that if genuine pressure was brought to bear on Britain by America, there would be solid support from yourself?

A. Myself? I do not count—with the weight of 73 years on my shoulders. But you get the co-operation—whatever it can give willingly—of a free and mighty nation. My co-operation is of course there. I exercise what influence I can by my writings from week to week. But India's is an infinitely greater influence. Today because of widespread discontent there is not that active hostility to Japanese advance. The moment we are free, we are transformed into a nation prizing its liberty and defending it with all its might and therefore helping the Allied cause.

Q. May I concretely ask—will the difference be the difference that there is between what Burma did and what, say, Russia is doing?

A. You might put it that way. They might have given Burma independence after separating it from India. But they did nothing of

the kind. They stuck to the same old policy of exploiting her. There was little co-operation from Burmans; on the contrary there was hostility or inertia. They fought neither for their own cause nor for the Allied cause. Now take a possible contingency. If the Japanese compel the Allies to retire from India to a safer base, I cannot say *today* that the whole of India will be up in arms against the Japanese. I have a fear that they may degrade themselves as some Burmans did. I want India to oppose Japan to a man. If India was free she would do it, it would be a new experience to her, in twenty-four hours her mind would be changed. All parties would then act as one man. If this live independence is declared today I have no doubt India becomes a powerful ally.

Mr. Grover raised the question of communal disunion as a handicap, and himself added that before the American Independence there was not much unity in the States.

G. I can only say that as soon as the vicious influence of the third party is withdrawn, the parties will be face to face with reality and close up ranks. Ten to one my conviction is that the communal quarrels will disappear as soon as the British power that keeps us apart disappears.

Q. Would not Dominion Status declared today do equally well?

A. No good. We will have no half measures, no tinkering with independence. It is not independence that they will give to this party or that party, but to an indefinable India. It was wrong, I say, to possess India. The wrong should be righted by leaving India to herself.

Q. May I finally ask you about your attitude to Rajaji's move?

A. I have declared that I will not discuss Rajaji in public. It is ugly to be talking *at* valued colleagues. My differences with him stand, but there are some things which are too sacred to be discussed in public.

But Mr. Grover had not so much in mind the Pakistan controversy as C.R.'s crusade for the formation of a national government. Mr. Grover had the discernment to make it clear that C. R. "could not be motivated by British Government. His position happens to harmoizne with them".

G. You are right. It is fear of the Japanese that makes him tolerate the British rule. He would postpone the question of freedom until after the war. On the contrary I say that if the war is to be decisively won, India must be freed to play her part today. I find no

flaw in my position. I have arrived at it after considerable debating within myself; I am doing nothing in hurry or anger. There is not the slightest room in me for accommodating the Japanese. No, I am sure that India's independence is not only essential for India, but for China and the Allied cause.

Q. What are the exact steps by which you will save China?

A. The whole of India's mind would be turned away from Japan. Today it is not. C. R. knows it, and it worries him as it should worry any sane patriot. It worried me no less, but it drives me to a contrary conclusion. India lying at the feet of Great Britain may mean China lying at the feet of Japan. I cannot help using this language. I feel it. You may think it startling and big. But why should it be startling? Think of 400 million people hungering for freedom. They want to be left alone. They are not savages. They have an ancient culture, ancient civilization, such variety and richness of languages.

Britain should be ashamed of holding these people as slaves.

You may say: 'You deserve it!' If you do, I will simply say it is not right for any nation to hold another in bondage.

P. G. I agree.

G. I say even if a nation should want to be in bondage it should be derogatory to one's dignity to keep it in bondage. But you have your own difficulties. You have yet to abolish slavery !

Q. In United States, you mean?

A. Yes, your racial discrimination, your lynch law and so on. But you don't want me to remind you of these things.

Harijan, 21-6-1942

19. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"[1]

[Before *June 11, 1942*][2]

Q. Till the last day you said there can be no swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity. Now why is it that you say that there will be no unity until India has achieved independence?

A. Time is a merciless enemy, if it is also a merciful friend and healer. I claim to be amongst the oldest lovers of Hindu-Muslim unity and I remain one even today. I have been asking myself why every

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Only If They Withdraw", 11-6-1942
[2] *ibid*

whole-hearted attempt made by all including myself to reach unity has failed, and failed so completely that I have entirely fallen from grace and am described by some Muslim papers as the greatest enemy of Islam in India. It is a phenomenon I can only account for by the fact that the third power, even without deliberately wishing it, will not allow real unity to take place. Therefore I have come to the reluctant conclusion that the two communities will come together almost immediately after the British power comes to a final end in India. If independence is the immediate goal of the Congress and the League then, without needing to come to any terms, all will fight together to be free from bondage. When the bondage is done with, not merely the two organizations but all parties will find it to their interest to come together and make the fullest use of the liberty in order to evolve a national government suited to the genius of India. I do not care what it is called. Whatever it is, in order to be stable, it has to represent the masses in the fullest sense of the term. And, if it is to be broad-based upon the will of the people, it must be predominently non-violent.

Anyway, up to my last breath, I hope I shall be found working to that end, for I see no hope for humanity without the acceptance of non-violence. We are witnessing the bankruptcy of violence from day to day. There is no hope for humanity if the senseless fierce mutual slaughter is to continue.

Harijan, 21-6-1942

20. EDUCATION THROUGH HANDICRAFTS[1]

[On or before *June 11, 1942*][2]

Shrimati Ashadevi sends the following interesting figures:

> The 27 basic schools in the small compact area in the Bettiah Thana, Dist. Champaran, Bihar, completed three years of work in April 1942. The annual economic chart of Grade I, II and III of these schools for the year 1941-42 makes encouraging study for all workers of basic education. The chart will be published in detail in '*Nai Talim*', the monthly organ of basic education. Here we give a brief summary of the principal facts for all who are

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

[2] The Hindi translation of this which appeared in *Harijan Sevak* is dated June 11.

interested in the progress of basic education. The average attendance for these 27 schools is 70% in Grade I, 76% in Grade II and 79% in Grade III; the average individual earning is 0-11-0 in Grade I, Rs. 2-4-2 in Grade II and Rs. 6-1-1 in Grade III. The total earning of 390 (number based on average attendance) children of 10,264 total hours of work in all the schools is Rs. 267-8-6 in Grade I, of 356 (number based on average attendance) children of 14,082 total hours of work in all the schools is Rs. 804-13-8 in Grade II, and of 319 (number based on average attendance) children of 14,362 total hours of work in all the schools is Rs. 1,935-14-11 in Grade III, i.e., the total earning of 1,065 children is Rs. 3,008-2-1 for the whole year. The average maximum individual earning of these schools is Rs. 15-12-0 in Grade III, Rs. 6-2-0 in Grade II and Rs. 2-10-1 in Grade I. The average maximum speed is 480 rounds per hour on the charkha and 281 rounds per hour on the *takli* for Grade III; 350 rounds per hour on the charkha and 242 rounds per hour on the *takli* for Grade II; and 164 rounds per hour on the *takli* for Grade I.

These figures are not given to show the output and the income, important as they are in their place. The output and the income have a secondary place in an education chart. But they are given to demonstrate the high educational value of handicrafts as a means of training the youth. It is clear that without industry, care and attention to detail the work could not have been done.

Harijan, 21-6-1942

21. QUESTION BOX

ITS MEANING

Q. What is the meaning of your appeal to the British power to withdraw from India? You have written much recently on the subject. But there seems to be confusion in the public mind about your meaning.

A. So far as my own opinion is concerned, British authority should end completely irrespective of the wishes or demand of various parties. But I would recognize their own military necessity. They may need to remain in India for preventing Japanese occupation. That prevention is common cause between them and us. It may be necessary for the sake also of China. Therefore I would tolerate their presence in India not in any sense as rulers but as allies of free India.

This of course assumes that after the British declaration of withdrawal there will be a stable government established in India.

Immediately the hindrance in the shape of a foreign power is altogether removed the union of parties should be an easy matter. The terms on which the Allied powers may operate will be purely for the Government of the free State to determine. The existing parties will have dissolved into the National Government. If they survive they will do so for party purposes and not for dealings with the external world.

WHAT ABOUT NON-VIOLENCE?

Q. But what about your non-violence? To what extent will you carry out your policy after freedom is gained?

A. The question hardly arises. I am using the first personal pronoun for brevity, but I am trying to represent the spirit of India as I conceive it. It is and will be a mixture. What policy the National Government will adopt I cannot say. I may not even survive it much as I would love to. If I do, I would advise the adoption of non-violence to the utmost extent possible and that will be India's great contribution to the peace of the world and the establishment of a new world order. I expect that with the existence of so many martial races in India, all of whom will have a voice in the government of the day, the national policy will incline towards militarism of a modified character. I shall certainly hope that all the effort for the last twenty-two years to show the efficiency of non-violence as a political force will not have gone in vain and a strong party representing true non-violence will exist in the country. In every case a free India in alliance with the Allied powers must be of great help to their cause, whereas India held in bondage as she is today must be a drag upon the war-chariot and may prove a source of real danger at the most critical moment.

WHAT ABOUT RADIO MESSAGES?

Q. You do not hear the radio messages. I do most assiduously. They interpret your writings as if your leanings were in favour of the Axis powers and you had now veered round to Subhas Babu's views about receiving outside help to overthrow the British rule. I would like you to clear your position in this matter. Misinterpretation of your known views has reached a dangerous point.

A. I am glad you have asked the question. I have no desire whatsoever to woo any power to help India in her endeavour to free herself from the foreign yoke. I have no desire to exchange the British for any other rule. Better the enemy I know than the one I do not. I have never attached the slightest importance or weight to the friendly professions of the Axis powers. If they come to India they

will come not as deliverers but as sharers in the spoil. There can therefore be no question of my approval of Subhas Babu's policy. The old difference of opinion between us persists. This does not mean that I doubt his sacrifice or his patriotism. But my appreciation of his patriotism and sacrifice cannot blind me to the fact that he is misguided and that his way can never lead to India's deliverance. If I am impatient of the British yoke I am so because India's sullenness and suppressed delight of the man in the street over British reverses are dangerous symptoms which may lead to the success of Japanese designs upon India, if they are not dealt with in the proper manner; whereas India finding herself in possession of complete freedom will never want the Japanese to enter India. India's sullenness and discontent will be changed as if by magic into joyful and hearty co-operation with the Allies in consolidating and preserving her liberty from any and every evil design.

SEVAGRAM, June 12, 1942

Harijan, 21-6-1942

22. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

[*June*][1] *12, 1942*

CHI. AMRIT,

I am writing this in Gujarati. I got your letter. The discussions with the Maulana and Jawaharlal take up a good deal of my time. They will continue for one or two days more. They are carried on peacefully. The weather seems to have changed somewhat today. A hot wind is still blowing.

I am keeping good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7899. Also C.W. 4267. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur

[1] The source has the date 12-2-42, which is obviously an error, as the date of the postmark is June 12.

23. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

June 12, I 942

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

You have volunteered to shoulder the responsibility for Lilavati[1]. Her college reopens on the 20th. I am trying to spare you. But if I fail, will you please see, or have someone see, about her boarding and lodging?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4739. Courtesy: Shantikumar N. Morarjee

24. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 12, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Mill sugar should not be bought. But so long as Ba is there it will have to continue. And if it comes others may also take it. Try to prevent this.

If rice is cooked for Ba and a guest wants it, it is difficult not to serve it to him also. I explained about this. But who listens?

Asha's sari is nothing when we have to put up with so many other things.

I understand the utility of Parnerkar's septic tank. It is all right.

Lilavati has committed a heinous crime. I consider it unforgivable. I shall write to her.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4432

25. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

June 13, 1942

MY DEAR C.R.,

Your letters. The big people will be going in a day or two. You must come and have a little rest before you embark on another tour. I

[1] Lilavati Asar

want you to come for a little rest, a little fun. But you should try to let me see my error which you see so clearly.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2090

26. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C.P.,
June 13, 1942

MY DEAR SINGER,

I had love letters from all of you three. But this is to draw your attention to the enclosed. I want you to show the note to your son and my friend the Nawab Bahadur Yar Jung. If the facts are as stated why should they happen where you and your son live?

Love to the family.

SPINNER

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

27. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

June 13, 1942

CHI. VALJI,

I have got your articles. I am returning them. You will get them back safe. It is not advisable to publish such articles at present. They forget every time to send you the money. I am sending you the amount on condition that you will use it only for your family needs and not for helping Gopalan or others like him.

From among the articles that you wanted, one seems to be still missing. I will send it when I find it.

I hope all of you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.W. 7498. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

28. QUESTION BOX

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

Q. What will you do if in response to your invitation the British Government withdraws from India and as you predict there is chaos in the country? What advice will you give to the workers who follow you? What non-violent steps will you take to put an end to the chaos?

A. If such a situation arises I myself and my co-workers will take such steps as are necessary to overcome the chaos. That is to say, we shall plead with those who are responsible for creating the chaos and dissuade them. If in doing so we have to die we shall die. If we have enough co-workers with the spirit of non-violence in them the chaos will soon come to an end. Here one must bear in mind that there is no place for the non-violence of the weak once the British Government withdraws. Those who want to plunder and loot are neither going to arrest anyone nor show mercy to anyone. Because they themselves are weak they will not have any other slogan except "kill, kill" and it will not be easy to arouse in them feelings of kindness or to appeal to their reason. In other words we shall have to sacrifice many lives to awaken the humanity of such men.

I am afraid when there is chaos non-violence alone will not operate. Some other agencies will have appeared which will be engaging themselves in subduing by force those who indulge in looting and plundering. When there is chaos it will be a test for everyone.

IF YOU ARE ARRESTED

Q. What will you do if the Government arrests you because of your strong writings appearing in the *Harijan*? And what will happen if all the other leading Congressmen are also arrested?

A. I can't say at the moment what we shall do in the jail if the Government arrests me and others because I myself do not know. I shall have to do what occurs to me at the time. What is more important is what those who stay behind will do. The conditions which are imposed every time will not be there this time. There will be only one condition, that of ahimsa, and that is indispensable. This should not be interpreted to mean that people will be exempted from constructive work. Those who know its value will never give it up. But when masses are called upon to sacrifice themselves on the altar of independence some specified conditions will be relaxed as had been done in the

earlier mass movements. So when the leaders are arrested every Indian will consider himself a leader and will sacrifice himself, and will not worry if his action results in anarchy. The blame for the anarchy will go to the Government which under the pretext of anarchy or under some other pretext goes on consolidating its own anarchy. Our ahimsa will remain lame as long as we do not get rid of the fear of anarchy. This is the time to prove that there is no power stronger than ahimsa in this world.

[From Hindi]

Harijanbandhu, 14-6-1942

29. JODHPUR TRAGEDY

As I had feared, Jodhpur satyagraha has taken a serious and ugly turn. Heaps of papers have come in. From these I gather that arrests are multiplying. Lathi charges are a daily occurrence. Official circulars have been issued prohibiting the use of private premises by satyagrahis. In fact all the worst things that were experienced during the satyagraha campaigns in British India are being repeated in Jodhpur. Only in Jodhpur they are being done far from the public gaze and a first-class tragedy may pass unnoticed and may be buried like many such that have been buried and are being buried even today. The cause of all these troubles is one and so is the remedy. Till it is successfully applied, the painful drama will continue in some shape or form. The British Government cannot escape blame and responsibility for every such happening in the States. It is bound by treaty obligation to protect the people of the States from inhumanities such as those going on in Jodhpur in the name of law and order. The prisoners have no respite even behind the prison bars. The food is bad, usual facilities are denied to them. By way of protest Shri Jai Narayan Vyas has undertaken hunger-strike till the grievances are redressed or unto death. If he has to die, the death will be upon those who are primarily responsible for the grievances which compel hunger-strikes unto death. Dr. Dwarkanath Kachru[1] has sent an instructive note on Jodhpur from which I take the following for public information:

> The direct authority of the Jodhpur Government extends over 17% of the total area of the State; the remaining area—about 83% —is owned by the

[1] He was not a "Dr."; *vide* "Jodhpur", 29-6-1942.

Jagirdars, about 1,300 in number. These Jagirdars are mostly autonomous internally and pay fixed tributes to the Maharaja .

For a long time now the Political Department has been controlling the affairs in Jodhpur. Thrice during this century the State passed under the direct control and supervision of the Political Department. At present Englishmen—a large number of them—occupy prominent positions in the State. The Prime Minister is also a retired British official.

Apart from the British officials, other non-State subject elements also predominate in the State administration. There is thus a "Mulki Movement" which is becoming stronger day by day. There is also a very strong rivalry between the different castes, Rajputs, Brahmins, etc., which is very often exploited by the government to play one against the other or to prevent the Lok Parishad from growing stronger.

The Marwar Lok Parishad, formed in 1938, became, during the course of these four years, a tremendous force in Jodhpur. Because of the general political backwardness of the Rajputana States, a more advanced mass movement in Jodhpur was destined to lead the vanguard of the popular movement in the whole of Rajputana. An All-Rajputana Political Conference was also announced to be held in Jodhpur in March 1940. The mass awakening in Rajputana caused grave anxiety to the Political Department and the Jodhpur Government was instructed to act promptly. The Jodhpur Government therefore declared the Lok Parishad illegal and put all its prominent men in jails. Mass arrests, followed by terrible repression, ended in a compromise with the Government. Marwar Lok Parishad began its constructive work once again and soon came to be recognized by all the people in Marwar, both in the *khalsa* and *jagiri* territories. The Parishad contested the Municipal elections and emerged as the majority party in the Board. Its leader became the chairman.

Since the war began the governments of Indian States have changed their attitude towards popular movements. The war had in fact provided an excuse to suppress civil liberties and check the growth of popular forces. In Jodhpur, where the Political Department has a hand in shaping the policy of the government, Prime Minister Sir Donald Field set to work according to the instructions from above. Funds had to be procured for war and the whole State had to be put on war footing. Money had largely to be procured from the Jagirdars, who must in turn be protected against the popular movement in the Jagirs led by the Lok Parishad. The State Government thus assumed an attitude of neutrality towards the Jagirs and allowed the Jagirdars to squeeze even the last drop of blood from their subjects.

But the Lok Parishad could not ignore the grievances and demands of the masses of Marwar living in Jagirs. The Parishad did not want the abolition of the Jagirs, but it certainly wanted the betterment of the people of Jagirs. Repeated requests were made to the Government to intervene and secure a just and a humane treatment for the tenants in Jagirs, but unfortunately the Government chose to act differently. They encouraged the Jagirdars and suppressed the Lok Parishad workers. Briefly stated the conditions in Jagirs are: (a) the tenants demand regular *latai* (allocation of the shares of the Jagirdars and their tenants). But the Jagirdars would not arrange to do it regularly and often evaded with the result that the tenants suffered, (b) the tenants also want the abolition of such cesses which have been declared illegal in the courts of the States.

The Government of Jodhpur repeatedly refused to come to the help of the tenants and even refused to stop the exaction of such cesses which were declared illegal in their own courts of law. The Government went a step further and encouraged the Jagirdars themselves to take up cudgels against the Lok Parishad. Thus when the Jagirdars beat and victimized and even burnt the houses of the Parishad workers the government refused to intervene.

SEVAGRAM, June 14, 1942
Harijan, 21-6-1942

30. LETTER TO CHIANG KAI-SHEK

SEVAGRAM,
June 14, 1942

DEAR GENERALISSIMO,

I can never forget the five hours' close contact I had with you and your noble wife in Calcutta.[1] I had always felt drawn towards you in your fight for freedom, and that contact and our conversation brought China and her problems still nearer to me. Long ago, between 1905 and 1913, when I was in South Africa, I was in constant touch with the small Chinese colony in Johannesburg. I knew them first as clients and then as comrades in the Indian passive resistance struggle in South Africa. I came in touch with them in Mauritius also. I learnt then to admire their thrift, industry, resourcefulness and internal unity. Later in India I had a very fine Chinese friend living with me for a few years and we all learnt to like him.

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with Chiang Kai-Shek and Wife", 18-2-1942.

I have thus felt greatly attracted towards your great country and, in common with my countrymen, our sympathy has gone out to you in your terrible struggle. Our mutual friend, Jawaharlal Nehru, whose love of China is only excelled, if at all, by his love of his own country, has kept us in intimate touch with the developments of the Chinese struggle.

Because of this feeling I have towards China and my earnest desire that our two great countries should come closer to one another and co-operate to their mutual advantage, I am anxious to explain to you that my appeal to the British power to withdraw from India is not meant in any shape or form to weaken India's defence against the Japanese or embarrass you in your struggle. India must not submit to any aggressor or invader and must resist him. I would not be guilty of purchasing the freedom of my country at the cost of your country's freedom. That problem does not arise before me as I am clear that India cannot gain her freedom in this way, and a Japanese domination of either India or China would be equally injurious to the other country and to world peace. That domination must therefore be prevented and I should like India to play her natural and rightful part in this.

I feel India cannot do so while she is in bondage. India has been a helpless witness of the withdrawals from Malaya, Singapore and Burma. We must learn the lesson from these tragic events and prevent by all means at our disposal a repetition of what befell these unfortunate countries. But unless we are free we can do nothing to prevent it, and the same process might well occur again, crippling India and China disastrously. I do not want a repetition of this tragic tale of woe.

Our proferred help has repeatedly been rejected by the British Government and the recent failure of the Cripps Mission has left a deep wound which is still running. Out of that anguish has come the cry for immediate withdrawal of British power so that India can look after herself and help China to the best of her ability.

I have told you of my faith in non-violence and of my belief in the effectiveness of this method if the whole nation could turn to it. That faith in it is as firm as ever. But I realize that India today as a whole has not that faith and belief, and the Government in free India would be formed from the various elements composing the nation.

Today the whole of India is impotent and feels frustrated. The

Indian Army consists largely of people who have joined up because of economic pressure. They have no feeling of a cause to fight for, and in no sense are they a national army. Those of us who would fight for a cause, for India and China, with armed forces or with non-violence, cannot under the foreign heel, function as they want to. And yet our people know for certain that India free can play even a decisive part not only on her own behalf, but also on behalf of China and world peace. Many like me feel that it is not proper or manly to remain in this helpless state and allow events to overwhelm us when a way to effective action can be opened to us. They feel, therefore, that every possible effort should be made to ensure independence and that freedom of action which is so urgently needed. This is the origin of my appeal to the British power to end immediately the unnatural connection between Britain and India.

Unless we make the effort there is a grave danger of public feeling in India going into wrong and harmful channels. There is every likelihood of subterranean sympathy for Japan growing simply in order to weaken and oust British authority in India. This feeling may take the place of robust confidence in our ability never to look to outsiders for help in winning our freedom. We have to learn self-reliance and develop the strength to work out our own salvation. This is only possible if we make a determined effort to free ourselves from bondage. That freedom has become a present necessity to enable us to take our due place among the free nations of the world.

To make it perfectly clear that we want to prevent in every way Japanese aggression, I would personally agree that the Allied Powers might, under treaty with us, keep their armed forces in India and use the country as a base for operations against the threatened Japanese attack.

I need hardly give you my assurance that, as the author of the new move in India, I shall take no hasty action. And whatever action I may recommend will be governed by the consideration that it should not injure China, or encourage Japanese aggression in India or China. I am trying to enlist world opinion in favour of a proposition which to me appears self-proved and which must lead to the strengthening of India's and China's defence. I am also educating public opinion in India and conferring with my colleagues. Needless to say, any movement against the British Government with which I may be connected will be essentially non-violent. I am straining every nerve to avoid a conflict with British authority. But if in the vindication of the freedom which has become an immediate desideratum, this becomes

inevitable, I shall not hesitate to run any risk however great.

Very soon you will have completed five years of war against Japanese aggression and invasion and all the sorrow and misery that these have brought to China. My heart goes out to the people of China in deep sympathy and in admiration for their heroic struggle and endless sacrifices in the cause of their country's freedom and integrity against tremendous odds. I am convinced that this heroism and sacrifice cannot be in vain; they must bear fruit. To you, to Madame Chiang and to the great people of China, I send my earnest and sincere wishes for your success. I look forward to the day when a free India and a free China will co-operate together in friendship and brotherhood for their own good and for the good of Asia and the world.

In anticipation of your permission, I am taking liberty of publishing this letter in *Harijan*.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Non-violence in Peace and War, Vol. I, Also C.W. 10367. Courtesy: India Office Library, London. Also *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. II, pp. 346-8

31. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

June 14, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

I have yours about Ramanathan. He has written. I am giving it immediate attention.[2] When you come, you will discuss the thing with me.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2089

[1] It was not published. On July 8, H. Seymour reported to Eden that in answer to this letter Chiang Kai-shek had sent to Gandhiji a message to the following effect: "Situation in Egypt appears to be at critical stage and Chiang Kai-shek's fervent wish is that nothing should take place in India to harm prosecution of the war and which would also harm India in those countries sympathetic to her." *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. II, pp. 351-2

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Ramanathan", 18-6-1942.

32. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
June 14, 1942

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

We had long talks. Mahadev will write about that. Somebody should go to Jodhpur.[1] If Sri Prakasa is willing I will ask him to go. Otherwise Munshi, if his health permits it. Discuss it with Jawaharlal.

But my aim in writing this letter is different. Cases of robbery are on the increase in Gujarat. We must find some means to cope with that. I do not mind if the people get ready to defend themselves with lathis. But they must get ready. Think over this.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuna Patro 2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 279

33. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

June 14, 1942

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. You have given me good news about Jayaprakash. I have to send him a book, which I will after getting it from Acharya. You may come here when you can, and I will set you right. Sushila is expected tomorrow. Ba's health is fine. Sushila will stay here for ten days. She will be free in July.

I am sending this letter with Ramananda[2].

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3577

[1] *Vide* "Jodhpur Tragedy", 14-6-1942.
[2] A worker in Gandhiji's office

34. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 15, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I was unable to send you anything yesterday. M.[1] left this morning and J. L. will leave for Bombay this evening. He is passing the day here and dining with Mahadeo. In one sentence, M. is not satisfied with my demand or the manner of enforcement; he needs time for thought. J. L. not quite so dissatisfied as M. but not quite convinced either. The W. C. will meet early July.

The weather is better but still oppressive. No sign of a downpour.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I have just got today's post. Your knee has got to be right soon.

From the original: C.W. 3688. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6497

35. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 15, 1942

I am glad I have been opening your post. I have dealt with Madalasa, I have advised you about Prema. Now this extraordinary letter[2]. You should reply. It is easy. Unity must come. Without it there will be no real independence. But with the third party in possession, no unity—cultural, political or other—is possible. That is why withdrawal is a necessary preliminary to unity. But you will deal with the letter as you like.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4133. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7442

[1] Maulana Azad

[2] This was Atulanand's letter to Amrit Kaur, on which Gandhiji was writing the note.

36. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

[*June 15, 1942*][1]

CHI. PRABHA,

I am sending your report with this letter, but by separate book post. I read it. It is good. My note is enclosed. You will like it.

Heavy rains have started here. No more today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3571

37. LETTER TO MADALASA

June 15, 1942

CHI. MADALASA,

I was sorry to learn about Surendra Narayan[2]. Let him be on a simple diet for the present. He may take milk, curds, fruit juice and vegetable juice. He must see that he does not swallow seed or shell. Mud-pack on the abdomen will help. He should not groan. If he cannot pass stools without straining he should take light enema. He should take the earliest opportunity to go to Bombay and do as the doctors there advise. There is every chance that with the diet I have prescribed the pain will cease if it is only due to inflammation. He can take chapatis provided he masticates them well. Pulses should be eschewed. Strenuous exercise should be avoided. Hip-baths can help a lot. Also friction-baths.

Do not give any medicine to the baby. Vegetable soups and fruit juice will be as good as medicine to him. Exercise is of course necessary. The rest when you come. Shriman should go to Allahabad and settle everything there.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 473-4

[1] From *Bapuna Patro-10; Shri Prabhavatibehnne*

[2] Addressee's brother-in-law

38. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 15, 1942

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

It is good that the ashes have been consigned to the Ganga. Mother will now have peace of mind. Stay in Hardwar as long as you wish.

There is no harm in sending Madan here. If he wants to come, he may.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3057

39. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
June 14/16, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Yours. What is wrong with your knee? Why should you have anything wrong with you there unless you are erring about your diet?

June 16, 1942

The foregoing was begun on 14th and then the whole pad was forgotten.

Did I suggest your writing to Mayurbhanj[1]? The authorities are molesting people for building a bund. If you feel like it you may write to them.

Sushila came in yesterday with a bad wound on the skull. A lot of luggage fell on her head leaving a fairly deep cut. She lay in that condition for six hours. The wound was dressed and stitched in

[1] A princely State in Orissa

Wardha. Brijkrishna has come in. Shri Prakasa has also come for a few days.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4132. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7441

40. A CHALLENGE

I have before me three letters rebuking me for not going to Sind to face the Hurs personally. Two are friendly. The third comes from a critic who has no faith in non-violence. His letter demands an answer. Its main part runs as follows:

> I am deeply interested in your writings and in the effect that they make upon the minds of the ignorant masses and your blind followers. I would therefore feel obliged if you enlighten me on the following points, especially because points nos. 3 & 4 raise novel and fundamental issues about non-violence.
>
> You have been training a number of satyagrahis in your Ashram and they must have had the advantage of your supervision and instruction. You have been proclaiming that violence could be effectively met by non-violent means. Japan is now attacking India in the East and Hurs are creating trouble in the West. Is this not then the long-awaited opportunity when you can practise what you have so long preached?
>
> Instead of doing that, you are contenting yourself by writing articles in the *Harijan.* Imagine Hitler or Stalin, without sending their armies to the front line, writing such articles in *Pravda* or such other paper. Instead of asking the Sind M.L.A.s to resign and go to Hurs, why should you not send a 'company' of your trained satyagrahis and try the luck of your doctrine?
>
> Is it not the duty and business of a satyagrahi to go and meet the danger where it exists and threatens the country? Or is it your case that your satyagrahis will meet it only when it reaches the Ashram and not before? If so, is not your doctrine a doctrine of inaction?

I have no doubt that if I could have gone to Sind, I might have been able to do something. I have done such things before, not without success. But I am too old for such missions. What little energy I have, I am storing up for what promises to be the last fight of my life.

I have not conceived my mission to be that of a knight-errant

wandering everywhere to deliver people from difficult situations. My humble occupation has been to show people how they can solve their own difficulties. So far as Sind is concerned, I mainiain that my advice was perfect. It was clearly Congressmen's duty to proceed to the infested areas and spend themselves in the effort to convert the Hurs to the way of peace. Indeed they could have used arms if they had no faith in non-violence. They should have resigned from the Congress to free themselves from the obligation to observe non-violence. If we are to be fit for independence, we have to learn the art of self-defence either non-violently or violently. Every citizen should consider himself liable to render help to his neighbour in distress.

If I had adopted the role my critic has suggested, I would have helped people to become parasites. Therefore it is well that I have not trained myself to defend others. I shall be satisfied if at my death it could be said of me that I had devoted the best part of my life to showing the way to become self-reliant and cultivate the capacity to defend oneself under every conceivable circumstance.

My correspondent has committed the grave error of thinking that my mission is to deliver people from calamities. That is an arrogation only claimed by dictators. But no dictator has ever succeeded in proving the claim.

Indeed if I could say, as the correspondent thinks I could, that if the menaces of the kind described by him face the Ashram, it will give a good account of itself, I should be quite content and feel that my mission was wholly successful. But I can lay no such claim. The Ashram at Sevagram is only so called. The visitors gave it the name and it has passed current. The Ashram is a medley of people come together for different purposes. There are hardly half a dozen permanent residents having a common ideal. How these few will discharge themselves when the test comes remains to be seen.

The fact is that non-violence does not work in the same way as violence. It works in the opposite way. An armed man naturally relies upon his arms. A man who is intentionally unarmed relies upon the unseen force called God by poets, but called the unknown by scientists. But that which is unknown is not necessarily non-existent. God is the Force among all forces known and unknown. Non-violence without reliance upon that Force is poor stuff to be thrown in the dust.

I hope now my critic realizes the error underlying his question and that he sees also that the doctrine that has guided my life is not

one of inaction but of the highest action. His question should really have been put thus:

How is it that, in spite of your work in India for over 22 years, there are not sufficient satyagrahis who can cope with external and internal menaces? My answer then would be that twenty-two years are nothing in the training of a nation for the development of non-violent strength. That is not to say that a large number of persons will not show that strength on due occasion. That occasion seems to have come now. This war puts the civilian on his mettle no less than the military man, non-violent no less than the violent.

SEVAGRAM, June 18, 1942

Harijan, 28-6-1942

41. LETTER TO RAMANATHAN

June 18, 1942

MY DEAR RAMANATHAN,

I have now had an hour's chat with Jajuji. I have gone through the correspondence that has passed between you and him. Perhaps I read more into Jajuji's complaint then was warranted by the word. Your letters betray irritation. I want you to be patient with Jajuji. We shall never get a more careful and painstaking Secretary[1].

It is nonsensical to think of resigning. We are all members of a family having to bear with one another. We must straighten out everything when we meet at the end of the month.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 9259; also C.W. 3076

42. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 19, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I have your letters. Rajaji has just come. He should be in the

[1] Of A.I.V.I.A.; *vide* "Passing of the First Stage of the A.I.V.A.", 9-2-1942.

Ashram any moment.

Later

He has come.

J.L.'s statement[1] you must have seen. That is his latest. Let us see what God has in store for us. I am satisfied with things as they are shaping themselves. Difficult of course everything is.

There's the bell.

Later

The day passed in discussions with C. R.

Love

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3689. courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6498

43. LETTER TO K. SUBBA RAO

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
June 19, 1942

DEAR SUBBA RAO,

Do let me know if you had further development over that Press correspondence.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI K. SUBBA RAO
FREE PRESS
P.O.B. 400
MADRAS

From a photostat: G.N. 5665. Also C.W. 2977. Courtesy: K. Subba Rao

44. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 19, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

My true help is in my good wishes. The eyes should either be fixed on the ground, or on the work which is to be done. The image

[1] In an interview to the Press on June 17, Jawaharlal Nehru had reaffirmed his and Gandhiji's opposition to Fascism and Nazism but said that the defence of India was primarily an Indian concern and free India would defend herself to the utmost.

of the monkey should be engraved on the heart. Every woman is either a sister or a mother. There should never be any other feeling. Ramanama should be uttered every moment. Forget whatever has happened. Take care of the present. Do not he unhappy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N, 4433; also S.N. 24482

45. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 19, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your unhappiness is understandable, but there is no cause to be disheartened. If you make the effort success will be yours. Yes, there is a lesson of humility, which you should learn. There is no need to give up work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4434; also S.N. 24483

46. INTERVIEW TO THE UNITED PRESS

June 19, 1942

In an interview by the representative of the United Press of London regarding Sir Stafford Cripps' statement[1] published in the Press Gandhiji said:

I have read Sir Stafford Cripps' statement to the United Press representative in London. It is not conducive to the proper understanding between different parties, if ascertainable facts are not admitted by all. Sir Stafford knows that I was disinclined to proceed to New Delhi. Having gone there, I intended to return the same day that I reached there. But Maulana Saheb would not let me go. I wish that I could have induced the Working Committee to take up its stand on pure non-violence. But it did not and could not. With it, rightly,

[1] On June 16, 1942, Sir Stafford Cripps referring to Gandhiji's repeated demand for British withdrawal from India had observed: "We are not going to walk out of India right in the middle of the war though we have no wish to remain there for any imperialistic reasons."

politics were all important and it could not, not having the conviction, allow its deliberations to be affected by the issue of non-violence. The deliberations, therefore, of the Working Committee at New Delhi were carried on without any interference or guidance on my part. Therefore, the negotiations had nothing to do at any stage with the question of non-violence. I would not have brought out thisfact, if it was not relevant to a calm consideration of the situation that faces British and Indian statesmen.

Nor do I like Sir Stafford's description of my appeal for withdrawal of the British power as a walk-out. The appeal has been made in no offensive mood. It is the friendliest thing that I could do. It is conceived in the interest of the Allied cause. I have made it in a purely non-violent spirit and as a non-violent step. But this is merely personal to me. It is necessary to remember in considering my proposal that it is essentially a non-violent gesture. Such non-violence as India has or may have becomes impotent without the Withdrawal of the British power—even as that part of India which will put up an armed fight becomes impotent. The step that I have conceived overcomes all difficulties, shuts all controversy about violence and non-violence and immediately frees India to offer her best help to the Allied cause and more especially to China which is in imminent danger. I am convinced that the independence of India, which the withdrawal of the British power involves, would ensure China's freedom and put the Allied cause on an unassailable basis.

Harijan, 28-6-1942

47. INTERVIEW TO REUTER[1]

[Before *June 21, 1942*]

Asked by Reuter's London representative to amplify his statement about the possibility of Free India entering into a treaty with the United Nations, Gandhiji said:

There can be no limit to what friendly Independent India can do. I had in mind a treaty between United Nations and India for

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes", dated Sevagram May 21, 1942. The source does not mention where and when Reuter interviewed Gandhiji, but May 21 could be a misprint for June 21 for it is unlikely that the item would have been kept for five weeks before it was published. Besides, Gandhiji first mentions a treaty with the United Nations in answer to a question on June 6; *vide* "Important Question", 6-6-1942.

defence of China against Japanese aggression. But given mutual goodwill and trust, the treaty should cover protection of human dignity and rights by means other than resort to armament. For this involves competition in capacity for greatest slaughter. I wish British opinion could realize that Independence of India changes character of Allied cause and ensures speedier victory.

Replying to the criticism of the London *Times* on his latest proposal Gandhiji said:

Every time nationalists have suggested solutions, however sound intrinsically, there has been distortion of their speeches and writings, followed later by persecution. My latest proposal, conceived in the friendliest spirit and in my opinion intrinsically sound, has already begun to be distorted. I regard my proposal as foolproof. The operations of the Allied forces against Japanese aggression have been left intact under my proposal which amounts to this that Britain should become true to her declaration, withdraw from India as conqueror and therefore controller of her destiny, and leave India to shape her own destiny without the slightest interference. This, as I can see, puts her case on a moral basis and gives her in India a great ally not in the cause of Imperialism but in the cause of human freedom. If there is anarchy in India, Britain alone will be responsible, *not* I. What I have said is that I would prefer anarchy to the present slavery and consequent impotence of India. Any person, however great he may be, who distorts the proposals I have made will be condemned by history as an enemy of the Allied cause. Sir Stafford Cripps' proposals have been weighed by India and after great deliberation rejected by all parties. It is an insult to India to repeat those proposals as the final word of British statesmanship.

Harijan, 28-6-1942

48. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

June 21, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Here the monsoon has set in in right earnest. So the heat of May is over. However, I do not advise you to come just yet. It would be better to rest there for some time. The knee must be put right.[1]

[1] This pararagph is in Gujarati. What follows is in English.

Our course is absolutely clear. Risk there is. But attainment of freedom without risk is not worth looking at.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4268. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7900

49. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

June 21, 1942

CHI, MATHURADAS,

I have not been writing to you because I believe that you are out of danger. Your postcard today has startled me. Whatever is to happen, let it happen. Even while striving to live, does not man keep himself ready for death ?

What is the advantage of going to Poona? I for one feel that you should go to Bombay. You can certainly get medical treatment there. In Poona there was only Trivedi[1] who could have given you any help you needed. But he is no more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

50. A POSER

A correspondent writes to Mahadev Desai:

> Referring to Gandhiji's demand for an orderly withdrawal of the British from India or for a complete and immediate ending of the British rule in this country, some friends here want to clearly understand the implications of the suggestion that on free India becoming an ally of the United Nations, British and American troops may remain on Indian soil and operate from here under a treaty with free India, because defence of India will be then our 'common cause'. *Theoretically* from the standpoint of India's independence the position is no doubt quite clear. But some questions arise as to its practical implications. It is of course understood that Gandhiji here is not stating his personal non-violent position but is visualizing one of the possibilities,

[1] J. P. Trivedi

namely, that of a free nationalist India going in for a policy of armed resistance or of collaboration of some kind with foreign troops in armed resistance, to aggression. But what about the British position? A cordial acceptance of Gandhiji's demand by the British will not only completely change the moral basis of the war but will in fact negative, for them, its political and economic *sine-que-non.* If the British are not driven out of India by force of circumstances, but they give up their hold on India as a voluntary repayment of a debt long overdue, this moral act cannot, by its very nature, be an isolated one, but should fundamentally affect Britain's relations with her other Asiatic and African possessions also. If Britain is *forced* to leave India to God or to the Japanese she will go on fighting to save her other possessions on Asia and Africa and to regain those already lost; but if she voluntarily dispossesses herself of her ill-gotten properties, her *material* reasons for prosecuting the war will practically vanish. From the economic point of view, Britiain could never inflict upon herself this terrible costly war if she did not hope afterwards to reimburse herself somehow out of the possessions she was fighting to retain. It will be absolutely beyond the resources of Britain, divested of her foreign possessions, to carry on the war on anything like its present scale. To try to do that would be a most senseless and inhuman infliction on the British people themselves.

As regards *ideal* reasons, these have no substance now, because so long as Britain is holding millions upon millions of human beings in subjugation she has no right to speak for democracy, etc. But the *ideal* reasons will gain substantiality on Britain responding to Gandhiji's appeal. And then it is true Britain may look forward to the sympathy and co-operation of the peoples she will have freed and may to some extent rely on their resources too. But just here we are brought face to face with the old question of means and ends, namely, whether war can be a proper and effective instrument of policy for the attainment of the democratic ends of justice and human freedom. It would be a disaster if anything were said or done that would give rise to a misunderstanding on this issue so as to jeopardize or prejudice the historic lead which Gandhiji has given in this matter to the world at this unprecedented crisis in human affairs. On no account can that moral world leadership be endangered. Why does not Gandhiji persist in the line which he enunciated sometime ago, namely, that the voluntary abdication of the British power in respect of her imperial possessions is sure to bring about a moral situation in the world that will baffle Hitler and Mussolini and their war machines? The voluntary liquidation of British Imperialism in India, if it comes about, will be a tremendous act of non-violence on the part of the British. When we are visualizing its effect, why should we not think in terms of non-violence also?

If the tree is non-violence the fruit also should be non-violence

There are so many side issues arising from the question of allowing foreign troops on Indian soil. Foreign troops cannot at all function in this part of the world without India being made a vast arsenal and supply-base for the United Nations. Any suggestion, however tentative and hypothetical, in this direction is frought with danger.

While Gandhiji is desperately anxious to prove his *bona fides* as to his determination to keep the Japanese out, his utterances regarding the future position of foreign troops in India are likely to be misunderstood by the other party who may be already seeking an opening for bargaining. Not that negotiations as such are objectionable, but if the other party's approach is vitiated by the spirit of bargaining, that will not only detract from the value of the British action, if any, but will also introduce unwanted complications on the Indian side. The effect on the mind of the Indian masses has to be taken into consideration. At this stage of the new movement it is most essential to attune the public mind to the thought and conviction that India must get ready to fall back exclusively upon her own resources, moral and material. Can we at this psychological moment emphasize a possibility which will suggest to the man in the street that 'after all they will be here'? The mind of the man in the street will hardly be able to juxtapose national freedom and the presence of thousands and thousands of foreign troops in the country.

This letter demands an answer. The difficulty about the confusion in the public mind by the contemplated stay of the Allied troops in the country is very real. Neither the masses nor even the classes will appreciate the necessity of the military operations of the Allied powers after the declaration of withdrawal. But if the necessity is proved, the public may be expected to reconcile themselves to the inevitable.

There was obviously a gap in my first writing. I filled it in as soon as it was discovered by one of my numerous interviewers. Non-violence demands the strictest honesty, cost what it may. The public have therefore to suffer my weakness, if weakness it may be called. I could not be guilty of asking the Allies to take a step which would involve certain defeat. I could not guarantee foolproof non-violent action to keep the Japanese at bay. Abrupt withdrawal of the Allied troops might result in Japan's occupation of India and China's sure fall. I had not the remotest idea of any such catastrophe resulting from my action. Therefore I feel that if in spite of the acceptance of my proposal, it is deemed necessary by the Allies to

remain in India to prevent Japanese occupation, they should do so, subject to such conditions as may be prescribed by the national government that may be set up after the British withdrawal.

The writer's argument about Britain having no cause left for pursuing the war, if she accepts my proposal and logically follows it in Africa, is sound. But that is the acid test proposed. India has every right to examine the implications of high-sounding declarations about justice, preservation of democracy and freedom of speech and individual liberty. If a band of robbers have among themselves a democratic constitution in order to enable them to carry on their robbing operations more effectively, they do not deserve to be called a democracy. Is India a democracy? Are the States a democracy? Britain does not deserve to win the war on the ground of justice if she is fighting to keep her Asiatic and African possessions. I am not unaware of the tremendous change in Britain's economic policy that the acceptance of my proposal involves. But that change is a vital necessity if this war is to have a satisfactory ending.

Who knows if Britain's acceptance of my proposal will not by itself mean an honourable end of the war resulting in a change even in the mentality of the Axis powers?

The writer is afraid that my reconciliation to the presence of the British troops would mean a descent on my part from my non-violent position. I hold that my non-violence dictates a recognition of the vital necessity. Neither Britain nor America share my faith in non-violence. I am unable to state that the non-violent effort will make India proof against Japanese or any other aggression. I am not able even to claim that the whole of India is non-violent in the sense required. In the circumstances it would be hypocritical on my part to insist on the immediate withdrawal of the Allied troops as an indispensable part of my proposal. It is sufficient for me to declare that so far as India is concerned, she does not need troops to defend herself, having no quarrel with Japan. But India must not by any act of hers short of national suicide let China down or put the Allied powers in jeopardy. So long therefore as India lacks faith in the capacity of non-violence to protect her against aggression from without, the demand for the withdrawal of the Allied troops during the pendency of the war would itself be an act of violence, if the

controllers of the troops hold it to be necessary for their defence to keep them in India for that purpose and that alone.

SEVAGRAM, June 22, 1942

Harijan, 28-6-1942

51. TWO ACTIONS

My proposal for the withdrawal of the British power involves two actions. One is to deal with the present emergency, and the other to secure freedom from British supremacy. The second admits of delay. There is a lot of confusion about its implications. I am trying to the best of my ability to deal with the questions as they arise from time to time.

The first admits of no delay and demands specific action irrespective of the proposal for British withdrawal. This is in connection with (1) the behaviour of troops, (2) the impending salt famine, (3) control of food grains, (4) evacuation for the sake of the military, (5) discrimination between Europeans and Anglo-Indians and Anglo-Burmans on the one hand and Indians on the other.

On the first item the people have the law and public opinion wholly on their side. The Government machinery is always slow to move, more so now, when it is all pre-mortgaged for military preparations. People must everywhere learn to defend themselves against misbehaving individuals, no matter who they are. The question of non-violence and violence does not arise. No doubt the non-violent way is always the best, but where that does not come naturally the violent way is both necessary and honourable. Inaction here is rank cowardice and unmanly. It must be shunned at all cost. Pandit Nehru told me that at the stations in the north, platform hawkers have banded themselves for self-defence, so the troops are careful at those stations.

As to salt famine, the law is not quite on the people's side but right is wholly on their side. I am hoping that the Government will put the widest construction on the clause referring to salt in Gandhi-Irwin pact and allow people to manufacture salt wherever they can. And I would advise them to manufacture salt even at the risk of prosecution. Necessity knows no law. A starving man will help himself to food wherever he finds it. Rishi Vishwamitra did so.

Number three is difficult to deal with. But the same rule applies as to the second. Food cannot be manufactured as easily as salt. It is

up to the merchants to band themselves to do what they can and force the hands of the Government to do the right thing by suggesting wise rules for the supply of food to the poor people at fixed prices. If this is not done in time looting shops is sure to be a daily event.

As to four, I have no doubt that the authorities may not ask people to vacate except where they are ready to offer equivalent land and buildings and cart the people and their belongings to the places prepared for them and pay them a living wage till they find suitable occupation. The people, if they have nowhere to move to, should simply refuse to vacate and suffer the consequences.

As to the fifth, the people should refuse to submit to discrimination and it will break down. Most of these difficulties take place because we have cultivated the habit of submitting to them. In the words of the late Lord Willingdon, we must learn resolutely to say 'no', when that is the real answer possible and take the consequences.

SEVAGRAM, June 22, 1942

Harijan, 28-6-1942

52. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 22, 1942

CHI. NARANDAS,

I hope what I have written in *Harijanbandhu* is all right.[1] Abha must now be a familiar figure there. I hope all of you like her. Is it necessary to give some more help to Gokibehn[2]. Send arrears of the money that goes to Pyarelal's home from the day it became due to the present day, to Mohanlal Nayyar, Arya Samaj Mandir Building, Hanuman Road, New Delhi.

Here the monsoon has started very well indeed. Kanaiyo[3] is fine. Kusum must be well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8605. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* "Yarn Currency", 5-6-1942.
[2] Raliatbehn, Gandhiji's sister
[3] Addressee's son, Kanu Gandhi

53. THE LATE DR. DATTA

In Dr. Datta, Principal of Forman Christian College, the country has lost a staunch Christian nationalist. I had the privilege of knowing him intimately soon after my return from South Africa. He was an intimate friend of the late Deenabandhu Andrews and he would not be satisfied until he had brought me in touch with every one of his friends. Dr. Datta worked whole-heartedly day and night at the Unity Conference during the anxious time of my 21 days' fast in 1924 in Delhi. I saw him again equally earnestly at work at the time of the Second Round Table Conference. His loss at this critical juncture in the country's history would be doubly felt. I tender my condolences to Mrs. Datta. His numerous friends will share her sorrow.

SEVAGRAM, June 23, 1942

Harijan, 28-6-1942

54. TALK WITH HORACE ALEXANDER[1]

SEVAGRAM,
[On or after *June 23, 1942*][2]

HORACE ALEXANDER: We were wondering if it was auspicious for an English party to arrive in India, when you were asking the British to withdraw. Agatha suggested that we might have a party from India to work with us, and make of our party a mixed party.

GANDHIJI: My first writing did, I am afraid, give rise to that kind of fear. That was because I had not given expression to the whole idea in my mind. It is not my nature to work out and produce a finished thing all at once. The moment a question was asked me, I made clear that no physical withdrawal of every Englishman was meant, I meant the withdrawal of the British domination. And so every Englishman in India can convert himself into a friend—as you have come as

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Friends' Ambulance Unit in Indian". Some of the members of the Unit felt that their experience in the bombed areas of Britain might prove of value in India and so a band of eight workers was sent to work in co-operation with the volunteer agencies in India. Horace Alexander, who arrived a little earlier with Richard Symonds, was the leader of the party.

[2] Horace Alexander arrived in Sevagram on June 23.

Friends—and remain here. The condition is that every Englishman has to dismount from the horse he is riding and cease to be monarch of all he surveys and identify himself with the humblest of us. The moment he does it, he will be recognized as a member of the family. His role as a member of the ruling caste must end forever. And so when I said 'withdraw', I meant 'withdraw as masters'. The demand for withdrawal had another implication. You have to withdraw, irrespective of the wishes of anybody here. You do not need the consent of a slave to give him freedom. The slave often hugs the chains of slavery. They become part of his flesh. You have to tear them asunder and throw them away. You must withdraw because it is your duty to do so, and not wait for the unanimous consent of all the sections or groups in India.

There is thus no question of the moment being inauspicious for you. On the contrary, if you can assimilate my proposal, it is the most auspicious moment for you to arrive in India. You will meet many Englishmen here. They may have entirely misunderstood what I have said, and you have to explain to them what exactly I want them to do.

Really speaking, therefore, this should become the major part of your mission, and even the India Office who facilitated your coming here cannot possibly misunderstand you. You have, therefore, not only the humanitarian mission—there may not be any bombing here, and in this vast country even if there is bombing you may not be able to reach everywhere—but you have also this peculiar mission of interpretation and reconciliation. And it is well perhaps that your mission begins with me. Begin it with finding out what exactly is at the back of my mind by putting to me all the questions that may be agitating you.

You will see that I have used the words 'orderly withdrawal'. I had, when I used the phrase, Burma and Singapore in mind. It was a disorderly withdrawal from there. For there left Burma and Malaya neither to God, nor to anarchy, but to the Japanese. Here I say: 'Don't repeat that story here. Don't leave India to Japan, but leave India to Indians in an orderly manner. . . . So you have now to do what Andrews did—understand me, pitilessly cross-examine me, and then if you are convinced be my messenger.

H. A. We dare not assume his mantle. We can but try.

Harijan, 5-7-1942

55. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 24, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter.

The weather is oppressive. I am not going to ask you to come here before August or even later. If there is anything serious I will tell you.

Khurshedbehn comes on 28th.

Horace Alexander and his friend Symonds are here for 3 days.

The train incident is startling. Has it any significance?

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

If Richardson writes, I shall let him come.

From the original: C.W. 4134. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7443

56. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 24, 1942

CHI. LILA,

I had been anxiously awaiting your letter. Something somewhere will be arranged. Do not worry. You must be attending college regularly. If a separate room is the only remedy, try that. Do not lose courage.

Vasumati has arrived. The Ashram is full. Sushila has gone to Delhi today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

57. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

June 24, 1942

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

As Swami is going, I am sending this with him.

I feel this meeting of Goseva Sangh was inevitable. The land and other things given to us are in two parts. One is that which Jamnalalji gave and the other that for which the Ashram has paid. This money was given for both immovable and movable property. What the Ashram has paid now was from the money mostly given by you brothers. That means it was your donation. We shall now do what you consider best. If you want to draw the amount from the Goseva Sangh, you will save that much money; otherwise that will be your additional donation to Goseva Sangh. I on my part can neither make donation out of a donation nor earn any merit from it. I hope I have been able to make myself clear. Now do whatever you think best.

My mind is working fast on what I have undertaken. The Empire's wickedness is terrible. I feel unhappy and also angry at what is said against me. But one should not feel either unhappy or angry—all these things are transitory.

I have almost finalized the strategy for the struggle. I am waiting for the Working Committee meeting. As far as I am concerned, I am fully prepared. The rest when we meet. I hope you are in good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8059. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

58. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

SEVAGRAM,
June 24, 1942

BHAI GOPICHAND,

You are carrying on your struggle well.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. GOPICHAND
LAJPAT BHAWAN
LAHORE
PUNJAB

From the Hindi original: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

59. LETTER TO ABDUL WADOOD SARHADI

June 24, 1942

SAHEBZADA SAHEB,

I thank you for your letter. I sincerely want unity among Hindus and Muslims, but I do not know how it is to be brought about.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

60. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

June 25, 1942

CHI. KANCHAN,

I got your letter. It is good that you wrote. I am pleased that you saw your error. Improve now.

I believe that your good lies in living with Munnalal, but only after Munnalal is more properly settled. Then also you must watch what happens to me. You should, therefore, work with Manjubehn for the present, and become proficient in work. If you engross yourself in work, no matter what it is, it will do you good. It will be desirable for you to spend at least a year there. Keep writing to me from time to time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8269. Also C.W. 7171. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

61. FOR THE SIKH FRIENDS

Thus writes Sardar Mangal Singh:

> I wish to bring to your notice the objections raised against the Congress and against your personal attitude towards the Sikhs. I hope you will deal with them in a proper way in *Harijan.*
>
> (1) The first and the great point made against the Congress is that the Congress does not care for the Sikhs. No Sikh has been taken on the Working Committee or even specially invited to attend the Working Committee meetings during the last 7 years. We tell them that Working

Committee is not constituted on a communal basis, but this does not carry conviction with the general Sikh masses.

(2) Several years ago while discussing the thesis of non-violence in *Young India* you said that 'Guru Govind Singh was a misguided patriot' or words to that effect.[1] When fiery speakers mention this it makes a great sentimental appeal to the Sikhs. I think you should explain your point of view.

(3) That you are against the bearing of *kirpan* by the Sikhs.

(4) That you said to certain Sikhs that they should either follow Guru Govind Singh or yourself.

I personally know that the last two allegations have no foundation, but lies when repeated do acquire some importance. I hope you will agree with me that some elucidation is necessary from you. This will help the nationalist Sikhs and the Congress in the Punjab.

It is painful for me to have to write on this subject. Some of the points have been discussed threadbare. When however suspicion usurps the place of reason, it becomes most difficult to remove it. But I cannot resist the inquiry of a fellow worker especially when he makes it to smooth his way.

The first question is really for the Congress Secretary to answer. But I can say that for years Sardar Shardul Singh Caveeshar was a member of the Working Committee. It is not always possible to provide for communal representation on the Working Committee. The policy should be and is to get the best men. The fact is that the Congress has always given the greatest consideration to the Sikh sentiment. It was for them that a special committee was appointed on the question of the colour of the National Flag. It was for them that the famous Lahore resolution[2] on the communal question was framed. They have therefore the least cause for complaint against the Congress.

As to what I am supposed to have said about Guru Govind Singh, I can only repeat what I have said about the charge that I have no recollection whatsoever of having made the remark attributed to me. Whoever brings the charge should at least refer me to the passage

[1] *Vide* also "Guru Govind Singh", 4-7-1942.

[2] In December 1929. This assured the Sikhs, Muslims and other minorities that no solution of the communal question in any future constitution "would be acceptable to the Congress that did not give full satisfaction to the parties concerned".

in question in my writings. I have searched in vain. What is however more to the point is to know what I think about Guru Govind Singh. I have the highest regard for him. The popular belief is that it was he who gave the sword to the Khalsa. I have believed that to the extent that he did so he departed from the non-violence of his predecessors. This is not the place to examine or question the justification for the great Guru's step. A learned Sikh friend tells me that he could show that Guru Govind Singh never departed from the teachings of the preceding Gurus on non-violence. But such proof may have an academic value. The common belief as I have understood it among the Sikhs is that Guru Govind Singh accepted resort to the sword in well-defined circum-stances as quite valid. Be that as it may, there never was the slightest disrespect on my part for the great Guru or the Sikh *Panth*. Indeed among the *bhajans* sung at the Ashram prayers there are several of Guru Nanak's.

As to *kirpans* I am afraid I must say that I do not like the wearing of *kirpan* or the like by human beings as part of their religion. But my likes or dislikes can produce no effect on the Sikh practice. If by the question is meant whether I should vote for legislation prohibiting the wearing of *kirpans* by the Sikhs, I can unhesitatingly say 'no' for the simple reason that I do not believe in making people non-violent by legislation.

The suggestion made in the fourth question is ridiculous. I have never considered myself as a religious teacher. I have never asked anyone to disown his own faith, in order to accept non-violence or my teaching. I have not known any religion to make violence obligatory. Most religions have permitted it where non-violence is not possible. But I have no right to judge other religions. I entertain equal respect for all religions. I must if I expect others to respect mine.

SEVAGRAM, June 26, 1942
Harijan, 5-7-1942

62. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

June 26, 1942

. . .[1] it is good that you wrote, but stop worrying about it. . . .[2] If I am alive by then, I will definitely see about the selection of a

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] *ibid*

husband for her.[1] However, today's children will make the selection for themselves and they should be allowed to do so. . . .[2]

Why do you despair? Death is not an enemy but a friend. Nobody can live outside His realm and those who submit themselves to His rule are always happy. I will keep you with me if you come over here. I cannot offer you cool air, but everything else is there. If, however, it is not possible for you to come, bear in mind that you are getting more than what millions get and be content. Why should you worry about what will happen when you are no more. Leave that to God. Anyone to whom you may entrust the charge is in the same battered boat. What will you gain by relying on them?

[From Hindi]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 183-4

63. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 26, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Chandra Singh will leave in a few days. Till then it is your duty to put up with his tantrums. You should not even notice his insults.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4435; also S.N. 24484

64. SPEECH TO THE STUDENTS OF KHADI VIDYALAYA[3]

June 26, 1942

These examinations are unlike the orthodox university examinations which are at best a test of book-knowledge and depend on the whims of examiners. Here even if you do not pass in your examinations what you have learnt is not lost; it has profited the country. Failure means inadequate practice or work, and the next year

[1] The addressee was worried about the marriage of his daughter Jyotsna.

[2] Omission as in the source

[3] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "With Khadi Workers". The occasion was the distribution of certificates.

you will increase your knowledge and production. Then the orthodox examinations prepare the examinees at best for clerkships, and those who pass have no illusions about adding anything to the wealth of the country, while even the failures amongst you have added something to the wealth of the country, if not quite as much as those who have passed. Then there is another very vital difference. The boys in the schools and colleges pay heavy fees, but far heavier than their fees are the expenses incurred by Government on their education. The country gets nothing by way of return for this enormous expenditure; if there is any little gain it belongs to an alien government. Then the system of examinations is most mechanical and tiring and calculated to add little to the examinees' intellectual calibre. Here the end in view is to qualify students to add more and more to the country's wealth, to stimulate originality and, apart from giving them a living, render service of the country. One last point which if you have not grasped I want you to grasp today. Inasmuch as service of the country is the final aim, the failures have no cause for disappointment, the passes have no reason to look down upon the failures, and there is little scope for unhealthy rivalry. The students in the ordinary schools and colleges throw away their books after they have passed their examinations, for they think they are no longer going to be of use to them. Here you cannot afford to throw away your books or tools, for they are always of value, and once a khadi student is always a khadi student, he goes on adding to his knowledge and fitness as a khadi worker.

Gandhiji next addressed himself to a vital difference between spinning as practised in ancient times and as it is being taught and practised now. It is a thing which has to be borne in mind by both the taught and the teachers and the examiners, for the latter not only teach the students but teach themselves in the process

The distinction I desire to invite your attention to is fundamental. Our ancestors did spin and weave and produce their own cloth, but they were just spinners and weavers, toiling either for their bread or for their employers, e.g., the East India Company. There was little joy about their work, and no spirit of service or knowledge. They toiled because they could not help it, and often it was such irksome drudgery that it drove them to cut off their own fingers in order that the slave-drivers may drive them no more. Their toil was their slavery. They have left nothing for us to emulate. We have to do penance for and wipe out that slavery. Their toil would have been perfectly honourable, if there had been knowledge at the back of it, as also the

desire for the country's freedom, the determination not to bend the knee to the slave-driver, and a sense of art. A revival of the industry means adoption of all these life-giving virtues, it means infusing new life into the dead bones of the old industry.

Harijan, 5-7-1942

65. DISCUSSION WITH KHADI WORKERS[1]

SEVAGRAM,
June 26, 1942

The first question discussed was about adding to the capital by making collections and raising loans. The collections could, it was explained, be made by every one of the branches, but they should be made on behalf of the A.I.S.A., which must determine the way of their disposal. Gandhiji had no objection to raising loans, but those who advanced loans must be told, in this uncertain time of war, they were taking obvious risks, though perhaps no more then deposits in banks. If we survive the war and the terrible struggle ahead, we should repay every pie, but if we don't survive, they stand every risk of losing their money. It is likely that no one would care to advance loans. It was better therefore to concentrate on self and sacrificial spinning, and on getting gifts of yarn and cotton.

"But those who advance loans to us may have another fear," someone asked "Even as it is, there is the obvious risk of war, but by advancing loans to *us* they may feel that they add to their risk."

GANDHIJI: Then let them know they will have earned the merit of having lost money in a good cause.

Q. Would the struggle involve the khadi workers?

A. I am not going to make a call to the khadi workers. But if there is a general conflagration khadi workers cannot escape it, *should* not escape it. You must know the full implications of that beautiful phrase, 'livery of freedom' applied to khadi by Jawaharlal. Khadi must not fetter us. You must also understand that I am not thinking of civil disobedience or non-co-operation of old. But there may be quixotic and arbitrary orders given to the people in the midst of whom we are working. We could reason with the authorities, but if they do not listen, we might be involved in spite of ourselves. Therefore no hard and fast rules can be laid down this time. Let us go

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "With Khadi Workers". The khadi workers were those who had come to attend the annual meeting of the A. I. S. A.

on as usual unmindful of risks. Our inflexible rule is not to take part in politics, not to meddle with them.

There were a number of administrative questions asked and discussed. Summing up Gandhiji said:

All these may well prove irrelevant before the crisis that faces us. You must make no mistake about it. A conflagration is imminent and let us not have the slightest thought of saving our skins. If we do, we shall have plied our wheels and worn khadi in vain. Let it never be said the A.I.S.A. was an institution which would run no risk.

And with this he invited the workers to vivisect him regarding his new move.

If you feel it is mid-summer madness you must unhesitatingly tell me so. If you think anything I am doing is prompted by anger or passion you must not spare me. I think all that I am doing is prompted by the highest sense of non-violence and therefore for universal good. My readiness to allow foreign armies to stay in India for their own self-protection and for saving China should be enough proof of this.

Harijan, 5-7-1942

66. OH! THE TROOPS

I have to pay a heavy price for having drawn up an entrancing picture of a free India without a single British soldier. Friends are confounded now to discover that my proposal admits of the presence of British and even American troops under any circumstance at all. In vain do I argue that the Allied troops, if they remain, will do so not to exercise authority over the people, or at India's expense, but they will remain under treaty with the Government of free India at the United Nations' expense for the sole purpose of repelling Japanese attack and helping China.

It has been pointed out that not to consent to the Allied troops remaining in India during the period of the war is to hand over India and China to Japan, and to ensure the defeat of the Allied powers. This could never have been contemplated by me. The only answer, therefore, to give was to suffer the presence of the troops but under circumstance the reverse of the existing. They will remain under permission of free India and not at all in the role of masters but of friends. My proposal presupposes shedding of all fear and distrust. If we have confidence in ourselves, we need neither fear nor suspect the

presence of Allied troops.

May I suggest also that it is altogether premature and wrong to pore over the weakest points of a very difficult project which may not be accepted even with the troops remaining in India? It will be most assuredly an event of the century and may be a turning point in the war if Britain can honestly perform the act of renouncing India with all that the renunciation would mean. The virtue and the value of the renunciation in my opinion will not be affected in the least, because the Allied troops will be operating in India with the sole object of preventing Japanese attack. After all India is as much interested as the Allies in warding off the attack and yet under my proposal India will not have to pay a single pie over the expenses of the troops.

As I have already said in the previous issue of *Harijan*, the British acceptance of my proposal may itself lead to a most honourable peace and hence automatic withdrawal of the troops. I would therefore ask the doubters to concentrate their attention upon the grandeur of the proposed renunciation and help to the utmost of their power the fruition of the great act. Let them not dread the presence of the troops in India for the purpose indicated but regard it as an inevitable part of the proposal so as to make it not only justifiable but foolproof. So far as I can see free India will run no risk by their presence. Her freedom will certainly suffer no diminution thereby.

The implications of my proposal are:

(1) India becomes free of all financial obligation to Britain;

(2) The annual drain to Great Britain stops automatically;

(3) All taxation ceases except what the replacing government imposes or retains;

(4) The dead weight of an all-powerful authority keeping under subjection the tallest in the land is lifted at once;

(5) In short, India begins a new chapter in her national life, as I shall hope to affect the fortunes of the war with non-violence as her predominant sanction. This non-violence will no longer take the shape of non-co-operation and the like. It will express itself in her ambassadors going to the Axis powers not to beg for peace but to show them the futility of war for achieving an honourable end. This can only be done if and when Britain sheds the gains of perhaps the most organized successful violence the world has seen.

All this may not come to pass, I do not mind. It is worth fighting for, it is worth staking all that the nation has.

SEVAGRAM, June 27, 1942

Harijan, 5-7-1942

67. HOOLIGANISM[1]

The report of hooliganism at Rajaji's meeting in Matunga makes painful reading. Has Rajaji lost every title to respect because he has taken what seems to be an unpopular view? He went to Matunga on invitation. He was entitled to a patient hearing. Those who did not share his views might have abstained from attending the meeting, but having gone there they should have given him a hearing. They might have cross-questioned him. Those who tarred him and created a disturbance have disgraced themselves and have harmed their cause. Their way is neither the way to swaraj nor 'Akhand Hindustan'. It is to be hoped that the hooliganism at Matunga will be the last exhibition of barbarism. The calmness, good humour, presence of mind and determination that Rajaji showed at that trying time were worthy of him. These must bring him many admirers, if not even followers. For people generally do not weigh the pros and cons of a problem. They follow their heroes. And Rajaji has never lacked the qualities that go to make a hero.

SEVAGRAM, June 28, 1942

Harijan, 5-7-1942

68. QUESTION BOX

A FALLACY

Q. You consider it a vital necessity in terms of non-violence to allow the Allied troops to remain in India. You also say that, as you cannot present a foolproof non-violent method to prevant Japanese occupation of India, you cannot throw the Allies over-board. But, don't you consider that the non-violent force created by your action which will be sufficient to force the English to withdraw will be sufficiently strong to prevent Japanese occupation also? And is it not the duty of a non-violent resister to equally consider it a vital necessity to see that his country, his home and

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

his all are not destroyed by allowing two foreign mad bulls to fight a deadly war on his soil?

A. There is an obvious fallacy in the question. I cannot all of a sudden produce in the minds of Britishers, who have been for centuries trained to rely upon their muscle for their protection, a belief which has not made a very visible impression even on the Indian mind. Non-violent force must not act in the same way as violence. The refusal to allow the Allied troops to operate on the Indian soil can only add to the irritation already caused by my proposal. The first is inevitable, the second would be wanton.

Again, if the withdrawal is to take place, it won't be due merely to the non-violent pressure. And in any case what may be enough to affect the old occupant would be wholly different from what would be required to keep off the invader. Thus we can disown the authority of the British rulers by refusing taxes and in a variety of ways. These would be inapplicable to withstand the Japanese onslaught. Therefore, whilst we may be ready to face the Japanese, we may not ask the Britishers to give up their position of vantage merely on the unwarranted supposition that we would succeed by mere non-violent effort in keeping off the Japanese.

Lastly, whilst we must guard ourselves in our own way, our non-violence must preclude us from imposing on the British a strain which must break them. That would be a denial of our whole history for the past twenty-two years.

SEVAGRAM, June 28, 1942

Harijan, 5-7-1942

69. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 28, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

You may not expect long letters from me. I have read both the enclosed.

Sri Prakasa came last night. He did good work in Jodhpur.[1] It is good he went.

[1] *Vide* "Jodhpur", 29-6-1942.

Khurshed too came today. Rajen Babu is here. I won't ask you to come down so long as I can help. It is good for you and Shummy that you are there during this season. For the last two days the weather is mild. We are having magnificent rains.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4135. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7444

70. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

June 28, 1942

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

I have already told you that Ayurveda cannot be saved either by money or by State help. Would the State be able to revive Ayurveda even if it gave thousands of rupees every month to the purveyers of indigenous tonics? Hundreds of people have laid down their lives to spread allopathy. Allopathy by itself is not expensive but the doctors and the chemists have made it so. You have not seen their books giving the formula and cost of each important medicine. The cost price of Bayer's Sarsaparilla is one and a half pice but its market price today is ten rupees. The same is true of the doctors' fees. Ayurvedacharya Gananath Sen charges one thousand rupees for a day when he goes out of station. Without *yajna* there can be no achievement. *Yajna* implies ceaseless intelligent labour to the extent that it makes a person sweat and all that, again, dedicated to the Lord. Ayurveda has not yet become a science. In a science there is always scope for progress. Where is any progress here? Come when you feel like it.

Shankerlal Banker has again gone there. He has again fallen ill. Go and see him. Treat him if you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2919. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya

71. QUESTION BOX

A BENGALI MOTHER'S Two Questions

Q. Bengal is threatened by the Japanese menace. It is time now the political workers in this province composed their differences. I believe they will readily forget their domestic squabble only if the right person mediates. Would you not exert yourself to that end and save Bengal from the impending disaster?

A. What you say is too true. But I doubt if I am the right person to mediate. A Bengali should tackle the question. I would go to Bengal today, if I had the confidence that I could perform the trick. When one comes to think of it, the differences are too trivial to need any mediation.

Q. My husband is a teacher employed in a school of Calcutta. His income is already alarmingly diminished. It is apprehended in a month or so he will have no income at all. He has now seven dependants. Formerly he earned just enough to provide his family with the ordinary necessities of life. He has now nothing to fall back upon. I know my husband is patriotic and Congress-minded. But in order to be able to give us food he finds no alternative but to join war-service. What else can he do? What is your advice to those who are similarly stranded?

A. This is a very serious question. I know that joining the military is the shortest cut to bread-winning. If you and your husband are averse to all war like me, you will face starvation and prove your aversion. God will prevent you from dying of starvation. You might have to revise your way of living. Middle classes have to come down to the level of the peasantry. Then only shall we know real India and the way to deal with growing distress of the millions. But if you have no such aversion, I see no harm in your husband joining military serivce. He will do no worse then many are doing.

SEVAGRAM, June 29, 1942
Harijan, 5-7-1942

72. JODHPUR[1]

Shri Sri Prakasa who went to Jodhpur at my request to do whatever he could to ease the atmosphere, interview the authorities and know their version of the affair has returned and given me his report which leaves no doubt that free use has been made by the authorities of the lathi in order to repress the people. He nevertheless tells me that some members of the Lok Parishad have not always been discreet in

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

their language. He was told by the authorities that they had no objection to the Lok Parishad holding meetings and asking for responsible government so long as the language was kept within bounds. He also tells me that the Jodhpur Government are anxious to reduce to some kind of order the admitted irresponsibility of Jagirdars, but that the passage from feudalism to legalism must take some time. So far as the treatment of political prisoners is concerned, Shri Sri Prakasa has hope that it would be better, though he has also hope that, given some accommodation on the part of the local workers, there should be no political prisoners at all. If all his hopes are fulfilled, the visit although brought about accidentally will have borne ample result and the hunger-strike of the prisoners and the sad death of Balmukund Bisa would not have gone in vain. Shri Sri Prakasa tells me too that though the death was due somewhat, no doubt, to bad prison accommodation, there was no callousness on the part of the prison authorities. Deaths will occur even in the best of circumstances. We may not therefore always blame authorities whenever a death occurs in a prison. Every case has to be examined and judged on merits. I understand that Balmukund Bisa was a very fine worker. He leaves a large family to mourn him. It is hoped that the citizens of Jodhpur will provide for the widow and children to whom I send my condolences.

Shri Sri Prakasa has brought me a leaflet from Beawar, which contains language which a satyagrahi will not use. It is to be hoped that the workers will be careful in the choice of the language they use. I would ask them to keep themselves in touch with Shri (not Dr. as I had called him by mistake)[1] Kachru who will be in Jodhpur till the whole trouble has subsided.

SEVAGRAM, June 29, 1942

Harijan, 5-7-1942

73. LETTER H.E.B. CATLEY

SEVAGRAM,
June 29, 1942

DEAR MR. CATLEY,

I wish I could send you an encouraging reply to your effort.

[1] *Vide* "Jodhpur Tragedy", 14-6-1942.

Time alone will show which way the right lay.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. B. CATLEY ESQ.
EDITOR, "PIONEER"
LUCKNOW

From a Copy: Pyarelal Papers, Courtesy: Pyarelal

74. LETTER TO F. A. FAJALBHAI

June 29, 1942

BHAI FAJALBHAI,

The ideal must be what you state. But it is difficult to win over the trustees at once. I have not gone deep into this, nor have I the time for that.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10665

75. LETTER TO GAJANAN T. MADKHOLKAR

June 29, 1942

BHAI MADKHOLKAR[1],

Your letter is lying before me. The thing is I am in a dilemma. I fully endorse the idea of bringing together all the areas of Maharashtra into one province. But I am doubtful about the wisdom of starting a movement for the purpose at the present juncture. I don't know how far it is proper to attach special importance to this one problem when everything is threatened. If in the end India attains independence all such problems will be solved automatically. That being my view, what help can I give you?

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Marathi novelist and editor of *Tarun Bharat* of Nagpur

76. LETTER TO PARACHURE SHASTRI

June 29, 1942

SHASTRIJI,

Prof. Rajwade's opinion is the best. He may come whenever he feels like it. I will try to give him some time, however little it may be.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10672

77. BADSHAH KHAN'S POPULARITY

The Associated Press has circulated the following note about Khan Saheb:

> The Frontier Provincial Congress Committee has released the following statement:
>
> "We warn the public against the false propaganda that is being carried on against Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the undisputed leader of the Pathans and the Khudai Khidmatgar movement, in certain sections of the Press. It has been hinted that the differences have arisen among the workers and party-politics is raising its ugly head. Not a single Khudai Khidmatgar has so far resigned. They are all united like one man under Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's leadership. All talk about parties among them has no foundation whatsoever. All these so-called differences, etc., exist only in the imagination of a few interested people who are craving for offices and think that by encouraging such talk they can gain their end. The Government is at the back of all such propaganda. But these people have no following among the Frontier masses. Every true nationalist in the Frontier clearly realizes that we can have nothing to do with the British Government in India, much less with offices. Whatever attraction the parliamentary programme may have elsewhere in India, it has certainly no place in the Frontier.
>
> "Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's peaceful constructive humanitarian work among the villages for the maintenance of internal security and self-sufficiency in matters of food and cloth has further endeared him to the people especially the poor, He has been hoping to carry his message of peace and goodwill even to the neighbouring tribes. He has been devoting all his energy to raise a non-violent and peaceful army who can render true service

to the people under difficult days ahead. What the Government has failed to achieve at the cost of millions of rupees he is attempting to do with purely voluntary help. He deserves the sympathy and co-operation of every man, woman and child of the Frontier in this noble work. We hope that the Frontier masses will respond to his call and the Press and journalists of India who have the true interests of the country at heart will take a dispassionate interest in his work."

The Frontier Provincial Congress Committee has done well to pass the resolution and circulate the note. But Badshah Khan's reputation rests on much more solid ground than the resolution of the Frontier Provincial Congress Committee. It rests on the strength of selfless service rendered for nearly a quarter of a century and the affection of the people won through that service. In spite of traducers Khan Saheb has come triumphant through every ordeal so far. And I have little doubt that when the next test comes, he will show the same popularity as he has shown before.

SEVAGRAM, June 30, 1942

Harijan, 5-7-1942

78. LETTER TO SYED JAMIL WASTI

June 30, 1942

DEAR SYED SAHEB,

Many thanks for your letter with enclosure. I have read the letter with interest. Whether social reform has connection with political liberty in the manner you state or not, I agree with you that it must come. I am doing all I can in that direction.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

79. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS HARAKHCHAND

June 30, 1942

BHAI BHAGWANLAL,

You have not been fair. You are angry. It is not a question of trusting or not trusting. I have not read Dhebarbhai's report at all. It is a question of how one looks at it. The terms which you find

satisfactory might be irksome to me.[1] That is why I suggested that you should let a person who could see it with my eyes examine it. Are you and Rasiklal opposed to each other there? You were always together. How come you have suddenly turned adversaries? Under the circumstances how can I have the facts?

I can understand your inability to have one of my men admitted, but I cannot understand your anger.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

80. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 30, 1942

CHI. NARANDAS,

What did you expect?

The whole plan about Jayanti was yours. I do not think it is proper to wind up the work. Let them do what they like in Chalala. You may keep the fund you have collected for Rajkot only. Consult the Association if you want. It would not be proper if you do not. However, I cannot insist if you are not keen.

It is really a sad thing that Abha fell ill soon after arriving there. It would be better to give her a mosquito-net. She should be careful about her chronic constipation. Here we are having welcome rains.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8606. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

81. LETTER TO FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA (INDIA.),
July 1, 1942

DEAR FRIEND,

I twice missed coming to your great country. I have the privilege [of] having numerous friends there both known and

[1] The reference is to the compromise over the struggle in the State of Limdi; *vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 3-6-1942 and 10-6-1942.

unknown to me. Many of my countrymen have received and are still receiving higher education in America. I know too that several have taken shelter there. I have profited greatly by the writings of Thoreau and Emerson. I say this to tell you how much I am connected with your country. Of Great Britain I need say nothing beyond mentioning that in spite of my intense dislike of British rule, I have numerous personal friends in England whom I love as dearly as my own people. I had my legal education there. I have therefore nothing but good wishes for your country and Great Britain. You will therefore accept my word that my present proposal, that the British should unreservedly and without reference to the wishes of the people of India immediately withdraw their rule, is prompted by the friendliest intention. I would like to turn into goodwill the ill will which, whatever may be said to the contrary, exists in India towards Great Britain and thus enable the millions of India to play their part in the present war.

My personal position is clear. I hate all war. If, therefore, I could persuade my countrymen, they would make a most effective and decisive contribution in favour of an honourable peace. But I know that all of us have not a living faith in non-violence. Under foreign rule however we can make no effective contribution of any kind in this war, except as helots.

The policy of the Indian National Congress, largely guided by me, has been one of non-embarrassment to Britain, consistently with the honourable working of the Congress, admittedly the largest political organization, of the longest standing in India. The British policy as exposed by the Cripps mission and rejected by almost all parties has opened our eyes and has driven me to the proposal I have made. I hold that the full acceptance of my proposal and that alone can put the Allied cause on an unassailable basis. I venture to think that the Allied declaration that the Allies are fighting to make the world safe for freedom of the individual and for democracy sounds hollow so long as India and, for that matter, Africa are exploited by Great Britain and America has the Negro problem in her own home. But in order to avoid all complications, in my proposal I have confined myself only to India. If India becomes free, the rest must follow, if it does not happen simultaneously.

In order to make my proposal foolproof I have suggested that, if the Allies think it necessary, they may keep their troops, at their own expense in India, not for keeping internal order but for preventing Japanese aggression and defending China. So far as India is

concerned, we must become free even as America and Great Britain are. The Allied troops will remain in India during the war under treaty with the free Indian Government that may be formed by the people of India without any outside interference, direct or indirect.

It is on behalf of this proposal that I write this to enlist your active sympathy.

I hope that it would commend itself to you.

Mr. Louis Fischer is carrying this letter to you.

If there is any obscurity in my letter, you have but to send me word and I shall try to clear it.

I hope finally that you will not resent this letter as an intrusion but take it as an approach from a friend and well-wisher of the Allies.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

From a photostat: G.N. 873. Also facsimile in *Mahatma*, Vol. VI, between pp. 152 and 153

82. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

July 1, 1942

CHI. SUSHILA,

Do not stop writing to me altogether. Pyarelal and Mahadev have gone to Bombay today. M. has gone there for the recommended check-up and Pyarelal for his eyes. Mahadev will return within two days. Pyarelal will be staying on for eight days if necessary. My health one may say is good. The times are hard. Mostly I observe silence. Janakibehn has come today.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR, M.D.
L.H.M.C.
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

83. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
July 2, 1942

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I venture to approach you again on a humanitarian matter wholly unconnected with politics.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad, who has been touring in Bihar, brings me the news that British and American troops are spread all over Bihar and that numberless cattle are slaughtered for their beef. These include milch cows and plough cattle. Though the number of cattle in India is great a vast number, if not the majority, are, as you are aware, a burden upon the land. Now if plough cattle and milch cows are slaughtered the burden increases and ploughing becomes difficult and the milk supply which is already poor suffers further reduction. I wonder if you can use your influence with the Military so as to save milch cows and plough cattle from slaughter.[1]

When you write to them please send my regards to Lady Anne[2] and Southby[3]. I hope they and the baby are getting on well.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Transfer of Power, Vol. II, p. 303

84. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

July 2, 1942

CHI. KRI [SHNA] CH [ANDRA],

Let Sinhraj be there. I will see about Chandrashekhar.

I understand about Mohan Singh. I think it should suffice to put some potassium permanganate in the water but it would be better for those who have any doubt to boil it. Ask them. We shall manage with

[1] For further correspondence on the subject, *vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 27-7-1942.

[2] Lady Anne Hope, eldest daughter of Lord Linlithgow

[3] Patrick H. J. Southby, R.N., Lady Anne Hope's husband

some other cereal in place of wheat. We shall live on potatoes and other roots if we do not get even *bajra, jawar*, rice, etc., or, if the situation worsens still further, on whatever God gives. However, everything should be given by weight.

If you can give facilities to Rajarao without much difficulty, then do so.

Let the Ferozepur people stay.

Whatever is necessary should be done for Ramdas's friends.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4436; also S.N. 24485

85. QUESTION BOX

AN OMISSION

At the Goseva Sangh Conference of 1st February last held at Wardha I said:

> Chaunde Maharaj . . . whilst he acepts my facts and even arguments . . . says, 'what about the public sentiment? They somehow want to save the cow from the butcher.'

And again

> But the good Chaunde Maharaj wonders if people can be persuaded to believe that dead cow's hide is sacred.[1]

Shri Chaunde Maharaj of Govardhan Sanstha, who was present at the meeting, came to me and told me that the remark could not be applied to him as he did not favour the purchase of cows from butchers and did not discard the use of dead cattle hide. I told him that I would mention his assurance in *Harijan*. He reminds me that the report has appeared without the mention and it is likely to harm the Institution. I am sorry, I forgot to mention the conversation in *Harijan* and that my omission caused grief to the Maharaj. As to the use of dead cattle hide, I may point out that it is not enough not to discard the use of dead cattle hide, it is necessary to discard the use of

[1] *Vide* "Speech at All-India Goseva Sangh Conference", 1-2-1942.

slaughter hide and insist on the use of dead cattle hide where slaughter hide was used. Probably that is what his letter means but has failed to convey.

Sevagram, July 3, 1942

Harijan, 12-7-1942

86. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 3, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

You are too much disturbed about me. There is nothing but fatigue. I shall try to give me as much rest as possible.

J. L. and Mridula are coming tomorrow. Satyavati comes tonight. Profulla tomorrow.[1] Ku. and Kamla are here. So you see we are a large family. Kher was here about Goseva and several others. They all went yesterday or the day before.

Jodhpur's letter is bad but what more can you expect from these gentlemen. Let us hope that Sri Prakasa's visit will be fruitful.

Ba has a little fever today after a long spell of freedom. I think she will be free tomorrow.

Narendra Dev is splendid. He has 4 lb. of milk and still feels hungry !!!

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4136. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7445

87. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

July 3, 1942

CHI. SUSHILA,

This is for you to see. I have written to Shirin that I shall decide after consulting Mahmud and Zohra. I have called Dr. Yusuf. If you have any suggestions, you will let me know.

The weather is quite cool at the moment and so I am feeling

[1] In the margin somebody has written "has come today".

quite fit. Ba had fever yesterday. Today it has almost come down. She is fine. Her temperature is 99∞. Pyarelal is in Bombay.

Amar is spinning, reading and having a good time.

You will be doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

88. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
[About *July 3, 1942*][1]

CHI. AMRIT,

Don't worry about me. The fatigue is due purely to want of rest. You may descend when you wish to but not so as to offend Shummy. Of course I will send for you when necessary. The weather just now is superb.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4269. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7901

89. GURU GOVIND SINGH

At last after diligent search Mahadev Desai and others have traced the writing in which I have referred to Guru Govind Singh.[2] It appears in *Young India* of 9th April, 1925. It is headed 'My Friend the Revolutionary'. I would commend it to my Sikh friends and, for that matter, others the whole of the article. It is seasonable and they will profit by it, whether they accept or reject the views propounded in it. Here I must content myself with only relevant extracts from that article. Here they are:

[1] *Vide* the preceding item where too Gandhiji speaks of fatigue.

[2] In the article "For the Sikh Friends", 26-6-42, Gandhiji had said that he could not find the writing in which he was alleged to have said that Guru Govind Singh was a misguided patriot. For the text of the article, *vide* "My Friend, The Revolutionary", 9-4-1925.

One of your objections against the revolutionaries is that their movement is not mass-movement, consequently the mass at large will be very little benefited by the revolution, for which we are preparing. That is indirectly saying that we shall be most benefited by it. Is it really what you mean to say? Do you believe that those persons who are ever ready to die for their country—those mad lovers of their country—I mean the revolutionaries of India in whom the spirit of *Nishkama Karma* reigns, will betray their motherland and secure privileges for a life—this trifling life? It is true that we will not drag the mass just now in the field of action, because we know that it is weak; but when the preparation is complete we shall call them in the open field. We profess to understand the present Indian psychology full well, because we daily get the chance of weighing our brethren along with ourselves. We know the mass of India is after all Indian, it is not weak by itself but there is want of efficient leaders; so when we have begot the number of leaders required by constant propaganda and preaching, and the arms, we shall not shrink from calling, and if necessary, dragging the mass in the open field to prove that they are the descendants of Shivaji, Ranjit, Pratap and Govind Singh. Besides we have been constantly preaching that the mass is not for the revolution but the revolution is for the mass. Is it sufficient to remove your prejudice in this connection?

I neither say nor imply that the revolutionary benefits if the masses do not. On the contrary, and as a rule, the revolutionary never benefits in the ordinary sense of the word. If the revolutionaries succeed in attracting, not 'dragging', the masses to them, they will find that the murderous campaign is totally unnecessary. It sounds very pleasant and exciting to talk of 'the descendants of Shivaji, Ranjit, Pratap and Govind Singh'. But is it true? Are we all descendants of these heroes in the sense in which the writer understands it? We are their countrymen, but their descendants are the military classes. We may in future be able to obliterate caste, but today it persists, and therefore the claim put up by the writer cannot in my opinion be sustained.

Last of all, I shall ask you to answer these questions: Was Guru Govind Singh a misguided patriot because he believed in warfare for noble cause? What will you like to say about Washington, Garibaldi and Lenin? What do you think of Kamal Pasha and De Valera? Would you like to call Shivaji and Pratap well-meaning and sacrificing physicians who prescribed arsenic when they should have given fresh grape-juice? Will you like to call Krishna Europeanized because he believed also in the *vinasha of dushkritas*? This is a hard or rather awkward question. But I dare not shirk it. In the first instance Guru Govind Singh and the others whose names are mentioned did not believe in secret murder. In the second, these patriots knew their work and their men,

whereas the modern Indian revolutionary does not know his work. He has not the men, he has not the atmosphere, that the patriots mentioned had. Though my views are derived from my theory of life I have not put them before the nation on that ground. I have based my opposition to the revolutionaries on the sole ground of expedience. Therefore, to compare their activities with those of Guru Govind Singh or Washington or Garibaldi or Lenin would be most misleading and dangerous. But by test of the theory of non-violence I do not hesitate to say that it is highly likely that, had I lived as their contemporary and in the respective countries, I would have called every one of them a misguided patriot, even though a succeessful and brave warrior. As it is, I must not judge them. I disbelieve history so far as details of acts of heroes are concerned. I accept broad facts of history and draw my own lessons for my conduct. I do not want to repeat it in so far as the broad facts contradict the highest laws of life. But I positively refuse to judge men from the scanty material furnished to us by history. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*. Kamal Pasha and De Valera too I cannot judge. But for me as a believer in non-violence out-and-out they cannot be my guides in life in so far as their faith in war is concerned. I believe in Krishna perhaps more than the writer. But my Krishna is the Lord of the Universe, the creator, preserver and destroyer of us all. He may destroy because He creates. But I must not be drawn into a philosophical or religious argument with my friends. I have not the qualifications for teaching my philosophy of life. I have barely qualifications for practising the philosophy I believe. I am but a poor struggling soul yearning to be wholly good—wholly truthful and wholly non-violent in thought, word and deed, but ever failing to reach the ideal which I know to be there. I admit, and assure my revolutionary friends, it is a painful climb, but the pain of it is a positive pleasure for me. Each step upward makes me feel stronger and fit for the next. But all that pain and the pleasure are for me. The revolutionaries are at liberty to reject the whole of my philosophy. To them I merely present my own experiences as a co-worker in the same cause even as I have successfully presented them to the Ali Brothers and many other friends. They can and do applaud whole-heartedly the action of Mustafa Kamal Pasha and possibly De Valera and Lenin. But they realize with me that India is not like Turkey or Ireland or Russia and that revolutionary activity is suicidal at this stage of the country's life at any rate, if not for all time, in a country so vast, so hopelessly divided and with the masses so deeply sunk in pauperism and so fearfully terror-struck.

I reverted to the same subject in another article written a short time after, from which I need take only the following lines:

My belief about the Sikh Gurus is that they were all deeply religious

teachers and reformers, that they were all Hindus, and that Guru Govind Singh was one of the greatest defenders of Hinduism. I believe too that he drew the sword in its defence. But I cannot judge his actions nor can I use him as my model so far as his resort to the sword is concerned.[1]

It must be clear even to him who runs that I never applied the word 'misguided patriot', to the Great Guru and that I have not written a word in disrespect or of which I have any reason to be ashamed or to repent. I abide by every word I have said in that article. I hope that now that the source of the mischief has been traced it will abate entirely and the Sikhs will count me, though a humble Hindu, as a fellow devotee of the Panth.

SEVAGRAM, July 4, 1942

Harijan, 12-7-1942

90. "SARVODAYA"[2]

Lovers of Hindi already know that the *Sarvodaya* is a monthly published from Wardha. Kaka Kalelkar and Dada Dharmadhikari are its editors. In fact there are three editors because Kishorelal generally contributes to every issue. The aim of this monthly is to conduct a theoretical discussion of the science of satyagraha and to propagate it in its purest form, so that the whole world may be uplifted. This monthly is being published for the last four years but every year there has been a loss of about two to three thousand rupees. The question therefore is whether it should be continued in spite of so much loss. Many friends are of the opinion that *Sarvodaya* should be continued even at a loss. While others ask if it is any use continuing it when it is not worth the cost of its production. Both these views can be defended to some extent. But the middle course would be to consult the subscribers. They do not have a clear picture of the loss. If they think that the publication of *Sarvodaya* is necessary, then each one of them should enroll at least one new subscriber, then alone can we make up the loss. At present there are about nine hundred subscribers. The loss can be covered if there are two thousand of them. Those who are unable to enroll new subscribers but are rich can themselves pay for one or two subscribers. There are always some people who are curious

[1] *Vide* "Sikhism", 1-10-1925.

[2] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

but would want a free copy. In fact they cannot afford to pay the subscription. So if we have someone to pay their subscription, *Sarvodaya* can be sent to them regularly. The main reason for publishing this in *Harijan Sevak* is that those other than the subscribers of *Sarvodaya* may also know about the loss. The policy of *Sarvodaya* is exactly the same as that of *Harijan*. But in *Sarvodaya* the policy advocated in *Harijan* is discussed theoretically and objectively. However, it is not obligatory on the part of the editors of *Sarvodaya* to follow the policy of *Harijan*. They propagate it as far as they agree with it. There is another temptation in continuing *Sarvodaya*, i. e., since its editors try to keep it away from so-called politics it will remain safe in case *Harijan* is in danger and people will get at least something through it.

SEVAGRAM, July 4, 1942

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 12-7-1942

91. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 4, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

There is nothing wrong with me. What can I report? What was to be reported I did report. The magnificent weather has not brought me strength. It can come only from rest. I am making adjustments.

Your letter to Jodhpur is quite all right; not much is to be expected from these people.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Ba is much better.

From the original: C.W. 4137. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7446

92. LETTER TO B. M. CHAUNDE

July 4, 1942

It is good you have reminded me. I shall correct the error.[1] You say that you do not refuse to use hides of dead cattle. You should have said that you object to hides of slaughtered animals and use leather got only from dead cattle.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI GORAKSHA SAMSTHA

455 SADASHIV PETH

POONA CITY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

93. QUESTION BOX

THE CONFLAGRATION

Q. What is the difference between Nero and yourself? Nero was fiddling when Rome was burning. Will you be also fiddling in Sevagram after you have ignited the fire which you will not be able to quench?

A. The difference will be known if match, if I have ever to light it, does not prove a 'damp squib'. Instead of fiddling in Sevagram you may expect to find me perishing in the flames of my own starting if I cannot regulate or restrain them. But I have a grouse against you. Why should you shove all the blame on to me for all that may happen by reason of my taking action for the discharge of an overdue debt and that, too, just when the discharge has become the necessary condition of my life?

In their schools the rulers teach us to sing "Britons never shall be slaves." How can the refrain enthuse their slaves? The British are pouring blood like water and squandering gold like dust in order to preserve their liberty. Or, is it their right to enslave India and Africa? Why should Indians do less to free themselves from bondage? It is misuse of language to liken to the action of Nero that of a man who, in order to escape living death, lights his own funeral pyre to end the agony.

[1] *Vide* "Question Box", 3-7-1942.

Q. You have, no doubt unintentionally, rather adversely affected Maharaj Kumar Sir Vijaya Anand's popularity in Andhra by your ridiculing a part of Sir Vijaya's letter on Andhra separation;[1] and do you regard Andhra separation in the same light as Pakistan, as some people in Andhra fear you do?

A. You are right in saying that I ridiculed Sir Vijaya's letter. I could take that liberty with him. But nothing could be further from my thought than to discredit him in any way. What reflection there was was meant for his informants. As his letter showed, he had given me the impressions of his informants. Every one of us is liable to be misled by our informants. He is among the very few zamindars who have taken up the popular cause. It will be a pity if the Andhras, by putting a wrong construction on my letter to him, fail to avail themselves of his services.

As to the second question, there can be no comparison between Pakistan and Andhra separation. The Andhra separation is a redistribution on a linguistic basis. The Andhras do not claim to be a separate nation having nothing in common with the rest of India. Pakistan on the other hand is a demand for carving out of India a portion to be treated as a wholly independent sovereign State. Thus there seems to be nothing common between the two.

SEVAGRAM, July 5, 1942

Harijan, 12-7-1942

94. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 5, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

Mahadev was telling me how sad you were over my obstinacy in not appreciating what was so plain to you.[2] All I can say is that there is no want of will about me. But I am built that way. Once an idea possesses me I can't easily get rid of the possession. I suppose you are of the same build. Therefore there seems to be no escape but to suffer

[1] *Vide* "The Andhras", 20-3-1942.

[2] The addressee was of the opinion that in order to hasten the formation of the National Government, the Congress should acknowledge the Muslim League's claim for separation.

each other's limitations.

But the reason for writing this is different. Vallabhbhai came today. He is firmly of opinion that in carrying on your propaganda, you are breaking the written word. So long as you remain a member of the Assembly under the Congress ticket, which binds its members to carry out the policy from time to time laid down by the A. I. C. C., you are bound to carry it out. If that is so, it is your duty to resign the membership of the Assembly.[1] You may not discuss at this stage the reasonableness or otherwise of the pledge. I want you to be above board. You should obey Vallabhbhai's ruling. The other members too feel likewise.

And in any case I have told you it will be most becoming for you to sever your connection with the Congress and then carry on your campaign with all the zeal and ability you are capable of.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2091

95. TO MUSLIM CORRESPONDENTS

"How can you think of a mass movement for liberation without first closing with Muslims?", ask Muslim correspondents whose letters fill my file. I used at one time to think like my correspondents. But I see that for the moment I cannot reach the Muslim mind. The Muslim League blocks my way. I try to read the League newspapers. They give me a peep into the League mind in so far as they represent it. In their opinion I am thoroughly untrustworthy. Even my services during the Khilafat days wear for them a sinister meaning. I am quite clear in my mind that this is a passing phase. I am not aware of having done a single disservice to any Muslim cause or a Muslim person. Thank God, even today I claim numerous Muslim friends.

I do not know how to get rid of the distrust. "Give Pakistan," say my critics. I answer, "It is not in my giving." If I felt convinced of the rightness of the demand, I should certainly work for it side by side with the League. But I do not. I would like to be convinced. Nobody has yet told me all its implications. Those that are described

[1] He resigned from the Congress and the Assembly on July 15. *Vide* also "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 12-7-1942.

in the anti-Pakistan Press are too terrible to contemplate. But I cannot take them from the opposition. Only the protagonists know what they want and mean. I plead for such an exposition. Surely Pakistanis want to convert the opposition, not to force them? Has an attempt been ever made to meet the opposition in a friendly manner and to convert them? I am sure the Congress is willing to be converted, let alone me.

But what am I to do meanwhile? I feel that now is the time for India to play an effective part in the fortunes of the war, if she becomes free from British servitude. I am convinced too that nothing stands in the way of that freedom except British unwillingness to give up India as the happy hunting-ground for the British that she has been for three centuries. If she gives up India, she might as well give up fighting, says the imperialist. If such is the case, what is all this war for? The original fighters are Great Britain and Germany. Was India the hidden stake between the two? This is all speculation I know. The truth will be known presently. Thinking Indians cannot idle away their time. I think that even a large number, if not all of us, are prepared to undergo any sacrifice that may fall to our lot, would impress the British rulers that they can no longer hold India as a British possession. I believe too that such a number is available. Needless to say, their action must be non-violent, irrespective of their belief, as even a military man's has often to be, on behalf of his cause. The fight has been conceived in the interest of the whole of India. The fighters will gain no more than the poorest Indian. They will fight, not to seize power but to end the foreign domination, cost what it may.

What will happen after, if ever we reach that stage, will depend upon how we act when the all-powerful British hand is withdrawn. We may quarrel among ourselves or we may adjust our quarrels and agree to set up ordered rule on behalf of the people. It may be a democratic constitution or unadulterated autocracy or oligarchy. The conception is not that of a settlement with the British Government. That could happen only if there is a settlement between the principal parties, and as a preliminary the Congress and the League. But that so far as I can see is not to be.

Therefore the only settlement with the British Government can be that their rule should end leaving India to her fate. Thus assuming that the British leave, there is no government and no constitution, British or other. Therefore there is no Central Government. Militarily the most powerful party may set up its rule and impose it on India if the people submit. Muslims may declare Pakistan and nobody may

resist them. Hindus may do likewise, Sikhs may set up their rule in territories inhabited by them. There is no end to the possibilities. And to all this idle speculation let me suggest one more addition. The Congress and the League being best organized parties in the country may come to terms and set up a provisional government acceptable to all. And this may be followed by a duly elected Constituent Assembly.

The movement has only one aim—that is, of displacing the British Power. If that happy event comes about and if it is followed by a stable government, it will most assuredly decide the fate of the war—I shall hope in a non-violent manner. India can show no other strength during this war at any rate. Why should not Muslims who believe in Pakistan but also believe in independent India join such a struggle? If on the other hand they believe in Pakistan through British aid and under British aegis, it is a different story. I have no place in it.

SEVAGRAM, July 6, 1942

Harijan, 12-7-1942

96. A. I. S. A. AND KINDRED INSTITUTIONS[1]

The question of the connection with present politics of the members and the staff of the A.I.S.A., A. I. V. I. A., the Hindustani Talimi Sangh and the kindred institutions was raised at the recent meeting of the A. I. S. A. held in Wardha and is being raised by numerous correspondents. It is better therefore for me to give my opinion in sufficient detail for the guidance of the persons concerned. These institutions, though some are creations of the Congress, are wholly autonomous and unconnected with Congress or other politics. Their mission is humanitarian, social, educational, economic or all combined. Their work is wholly constructive and creative. But it is true that most men and women in charge of them are Congressmen or Congress-minded, though they are open to all. There are cases of men unconnected with the Congress being found actively engaged in working or aiding them. These institutions must not lose this non-political character of theirs, if they are to retain their prestige, usefulness, and efficiency such as it is.

This is simple enough. But the question raised is complicated. It is clear that the members and the staff may not take part in any civil

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

resistance movement and be still connected with these organizations. But what are they to do if they see a civil resister belaboured or a general lathi charge takes place in front of them? I say unhesitatingly that the workers in these institutions are bound to render such aid as they can at the moment without considering the consequences. This intervention is itself pure humanitarian work. Persons engaged in these institutions must not be cowards nor may their work be used as a halter round their necks making them useless for service. It is this fear of losing one's job or risking the safety of one's organization that has played a large part in hindering our march to freedom. During the previous struggles all the most scrupulous care to avoid even the remotest suspicion of participation in politics did not save the men and these organizations from the attention of the authorities. Therefore the golden rule is to dare to do the right at any cost. But there should be no camouflage, no secrecy, no make-believe. Those who feel the urge to take part in the coming movement must resign before joining it. In all other respects the organizations should run their even course. Every moment they are building the temple of liberty and when it is won they will all be required as specialists for the numerous nation-building activities. Let them therefore diligently add to their knowledge and usefulness. During all these twenty-two years the true workers have proved their worth, they are responsible for creating and distributing lacs worth of material and lacs of rupees among lacs of poor men and women who, but for the work provided, would have lived in a state of semi-starvation.

SEVAGRAM, July 6, 1942

Harijan, 12-7-1942

97. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 6, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

M. and Sardar came yesterday. The W. C. is sitting today. All have not yet arrived. I have been excused from attendance for today. Maulana and J. L. are coming in at 5 p. m. Mira and Mahtab came last night. Mira is cheerful. Satyavati and Brijkishen went today and Kamala went yesterday. Mridula came with M. Ba is quite well. Khurshed had a scorpion sting on her finger. She is brave about it.

This completes the news.

I am well. The weather has given me more energy. I sleep as much as I can—three times in the day and four sometimes. Silence and closed eyes during walks.

Shummy should have nature-cure. He can certainly have a renewed constitution. But that is like preaching to the winds.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4138. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7447

98. LETTER TO D.

July 6, 1942

MY DEAR D.,

Your letter does not surprise me. But you have to smile over these trifles. You should come here and assist. You know there is always a place for you with me. I am writing this in the midst of work. Come in when you can. Drop a line or a wire in advance.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

99. FOR MIDDLEMEN[1]

I am having pathetic letters from a number of[2] people bitterly complaining about grain merchants. The substance of these letters is, "why should we serve these merchants when they will not sell grain, though they have the stock, unless we pay prices higher than those fixed by the Government and in every case at prices beyond our reach? 'What is there left for us but to starve or loot?"

The complaint is just and universal. The Government is no doubt most answerable for this state of things. They have sent out grain and they do not know how to deal with the stock there is in the country. Prices must be regulated and there must be grain offices like post offices where people can buy grain like stamps. But people

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

[2] The source has "from upper poor people".

cannot starve while Government are learning wisdom. It is therefore the duty of the whole mercantile community to take the matter into their own hands and ensure a regular supply of grain to the poor at reasonable rates. The Government can't interfere with any such humanitarian effort. It will be a real help to them if the merchants perform what is their obvious duty. This requires voluntary co-operation of the whole mercantile community of India. But the beginning must be made with the provinces or even districts. The matter brooks no delay. Hunger knows no law and bread—or rather grain—riots are sure to break out all over the country if energetic benevolent measures are not taken in time.

SEVAGRAM, July 7, 1942

Harijan, 12-7-1942

100. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

SEVAGRAM,
July 5, 1942

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. You have sought my permission to come here. So far as I am concerned, you have it. Deo's permission also is essential. Get your doubts removed when you come. If you use your intelligence, you yourself can solve all your doubts. I assure you that there is no substance in them. There is no time to write more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10428. Also C.W. 6867. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

101. LETTER TO JAGDISH AND CHANDRAMUKHI

SEVAGRAM,
July 8, 1942

CHI. JAGDISH AND CHI. CHANDRAMUKHI,

Chi. Kamalnayan has sought my blessings for both of you through Jankibehn. How can I refuse? I hear that money was spent without any restraint on your marriage. As far as I am concerned I do not like all that. Live long, be happy and at the same time have

consideration for the poor and serve them in whatever you do.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 345

102. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHAGANJ,
July 9, 1942

RAJKUMARI
MANORVILLE
SIMLA WEST

CONSERVING ENERGY. DON'T WORRY. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4139. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7448

103. LETTER TO HORACE ALEXANDER

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 9, 1942

MY DEAR HORACE,

I have your dear letter. Of course you will do as the spirit moves you. You will come when you like and so will Symonds. But when you find anything to criticize you will do so as frankly and fearlessly as Charlie used to do. Of course your primary mission is ambulance work and if you found avoiding of me or Sevagram necessary, you will unhesitatingly avoid me.[1] I shall not misunderstand you in any way whatever.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1435

[1] The addressee, after a visit to New Delhi, had written to say that he had sensed that his association with Gandhiji was not liked there.

104. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

July 9, 1942

CHI. SUSHILA,

You will have seen the doctors' bulletin in the Press. There is no cause for worry at all. The Sardar unnecessarily called them. I feel nothing but exhaustion. He only suggests rest. I have given up *roti.* I am taking more of *mosambis.* I am of course taking vegetables.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

105. DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR THE CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE[1]

July 9, 1942

Events happening from day to day and the experience that the people of India are passing through confirm the opinion of the Congressmen that British rule must end immediately, not merely because foreign domination, even at its best, is an evil in itself, but because India in bondage can play no effective part in affecting the fortunes of the war that is desolating men and their possessions; that is to say not merely in the interests of India, but for the safety of the world and for the destruction of Nazism, Fascism and whatever other 'ism' Japan stands for. Ever since the outbreak of the war the Congress has studiedly pursued the policy of non-embarrassment. Even at the risk of making its satyagraha ineffective it deliberately

[1] This is the earliest available revised version of the resolution, finally passed by the Congress Working Committee on July 14 (various other intermediate versions of the Resolution are to be found in the *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*). The original draft was by Gandhiji. To Nehru Gandhiji says: "I have read the resolution. I note that you have tried to include some of my points" (p. 293). In a Press interview he says: " . . . the Working Committee has worked on my draft . . . the Working Committee tried to accommodate me as much as they could . . . (p. 294). To Amrit Kaur again, he writes: "The resolution is my draft. Changes have been made for J. L.'s satisfaction, and of course Maulana's", p. 306. For the text, *vide* Appendix "Resolutions Passed by Congress Working Committee", 14-7-1942.

gave it a symbolic character, in the hope that this policy of non-embarrassment carried to its extreme limit would be duly appreciated, and that enough real power would be transferred to the popular representatives so as to enable the nation to make its fullest contribution towards the realization of human freedom throughout the world, which is in danger of being crushed. It had also hoped that negatively nothing would be done which was calculated to tighten Britain's stranglehold on India. These hopes have however been dashed to pieces. The abortive Cripps proposals showed in the clearest possible manner that there was no change in the British attitude towards India and that the British hold on India was in no way to be relaxed. It has also been observed that the ill-will against the British is rapidly increasing and people openly wish success to the Japanese arms. The Congress would like to avoid the experience of Singapore, Malaya and Burma and turn ill-will into goodwill and make India a willing partner in their trial and troubles. This is possible only if India feels the glow of freedom from foreign domination.

The Congress is convinced that the only cure for this intolerable state of affairs is that the British rule in India should end forthwith. The Congress representatives tried their utmost to come to a settlement. But this has been made impossible by reason of the presence of the foreign power whose history has been to follow relentlessly the policy of divide and rule. Only after withdrawal of the British power can the wise men and women of the country put their heads together and evolve a scheme whereby a Constituent Assembly can be convened in order to prepare a constitution for the Government of India. When the British power is withdrawn the present unreality will give place to reality *and the prince and the peasant will stand on a par*, the present political parties formed chiefly with an eye to the attention of the British power will probably be dissolved. For the first time in India's history realization will come home that Princes, *jagirdars*, zamindars, propertied and monied classes derive their wealth and property from the workers in the fields or factories to whom alone all power and authority must belong. In making the proposal for withdrawal the Congress has no desire whatsoever to embarrass Great Britain or the Allied powers in their prosecution of the War. The proposed withdrawal therefore should not in any way be interpreted as an invitation to Japan or the other members of the Axis to attack India and thus immediately to suffocate China. Nor does the Congress intend to jeopardize the defensive capacity of the Allied

powers. Therefore the Congress would he reconciled, if the Allies regard it to be necessary, to the presence *at their own expense* of their troops in India in order to ward off Japanese or other aggression and to protect and help China.

The proposal of withdrawal was never intended to mean the physical withdrawal of all Britishers from India, certainly not of those who would make India their home and live there as citizens and as equals with the others.

If the withdrawal takes place with goodwill, it is highly likely that there would be little difficulty in establishing a stable provisional government in India. The Congress however is not unmindful of the possibility of a temporary breakdown of the ordered machinery of government. Anarchy may set in and instead of different parties coming together for the common good they may compete with one another in establishing their own authority. It is a risk which has got to be run in any country in order to achieve freedom. The Congress therefore wishes to take no hasty step but would bespeak the help of the Allies in securing British acceptance of its demand.

Should however the appeal fail, the Congress will be reluctantly compelled to utilize all the non-violent strength it might have gathered since 1920 when it adopted non-violence as part of its policy for the vindication of political lights and liberty. The struggle this time would have to resolve itself into a mass movement on the widest scale possible involving voluntary strikes, voluntary non-co-operation on the part of all those who are in Government employ or in departments connected with Government in any shape or form and it may involve also non-payment of land revenue and taxes.

For the regulation and quick development of the mass movement the Working Committee authorize Gandhiji to take charge of it and regulate it in the manner he may think advisable. In order that adequate time may be given to the Allied powers to consider and respond to the Congress appeal, as also to educate public opinion and to let the A.I.C.C. share the responsibility with the Working Committee for the tremendous step contemplated, the Committee fixes . . .for the meeting of the A. 1. C. C at. . .until which time the resolution should remain suspended.

SEVAGRAM, July 9, 1942

From a typed copy: Jawaharlal Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

106. CONGRESS AND WAR CONTRACTS[1]

Q. Is it proper for Congressmen, especially members of Congress committees, to accept war contracts?

A. This question should be properly addressed to the Working Committee. Personally however I think that Congressmen cannot accept war contracts.

SEVAGRAM, July 10, 1942

Harijan, 19-7-1942

107. QUESTION BOX

HONOURABLE MEANS OF DYING

Q. Will you please explain more fully your dictum that "a person who would die rather than go through inhuman tortures would find honourable means of dying"? Do you endorse suicide in such cases? Or do you suggest that mere intense will to die will result in death?

A. I would not rule out suicide in such cases as a means of escape from torture—not for the pain of it, but for showing the tyrant that his torture would not bend the suicide. Tyrants have prevented suicide for the purpose of the pleasure tortures give them. But I do not regard suicide as necessarily an honourable means of dying. Of course, the most honourable means would be the intense longing to die, so intense as to induce death for the mere will. But this is given to one in a billion. What I had in mind when I wrote the paragraph was a variety of struggles of the prisoners with the warder in which resistance through non-violence must end in death. Thus supposing that A compels B to crawl on his belly, resistance can be carried to the breaking point. Every form of such resistance unto death I would count as honourable. This resistance can be offered by the weakest as well as the strongest—by the weakest perhaps more effectively, certainly more expeditiously. The indispensable condition is the possession of a stout heart and an iron will. I am not writing theory. My opinion is based on personal experience and that of others who have been under my observation. A very weak woman could not be bent under the cruel will of her imperious husband. Youngsters frail in body have successfully defied the orders of hard schoolmasters or

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

heartless parents. The crux of the question is whether there is real readiness, nay, will to die. The will will most assuredly point the way.

INEFFECTIVE SYMPATHY

Q. Why should not the Congress declare that as long as India is herself in bondage, she can be neither a friend nor an enemy of any country? What is the value of her sympathies with China, Russia, etc., when she has no freedom to assist them in her own way? Has Russia thought of India?

A. You are right. India's sympathy can give no effective help as her enmity can do no harm to any person or nation so long as India is herself not free. Nevertheless Pandit Jawaharlal with his international outlook and generosity has accustomed us to express our sympathy to nations in distress without expectation of like return. We lose nothing by expressing sympathy even though we realize that it can cut no ice. If Russia has no thought of India today, in the long run she is bound to recognize the utterly unselfish character of our sympathy. It should not be forgotten that sympathy without ability to render effective help has its own moral value. We receive with appreciation sympathy from those who we know are unable to render us effective help in our struggle.

Your question is itself an additional justification for our demand for the immediate withdrawal of the British power. Having learnt to show sympathy to nations in distress the knowledge of our helplessness and the knowledge that if we are free we can render much effective help makes us or should make us specially anxious and oblige us to realize our ambition even during the war.

SEVAGRAM, July 10, 1942

Harijan, 26-7-1942

108. INTERVIEW TO "THE DAILY EXPRESS"[1]

[Before *July 11, 1942*]

Q. Would you say that your movement will make it more difficult or less difficult for us to keep the Japanese out of India?

A. Our movement will make it more difficult for the Japanese to come in. But of course if there is no co-operation from Britain and the Allies, I cannot say.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Two Minutes' Interview" dated 11-7-1942

Q. But think of the war as a whole. Do you think that your new movement will help the Allied nations towards victory, which you have said you also desire?

A. Yes, if my submission is accepted.

Q. What do you mean by your submission—that Britain should offer non-violent battle?

A. No, no. My submission that British rule in India should end. If that is accepted victory for the Allied powers is assured. Then India will become an independent power, and thus a real ally, while now she is only a slave. The result of my movement, if it is sympathetically responded to, is bound to be speedy victory. But if it is misunderstood by the British and they take up the attitude that they would like to crush it, then they would be responsible for the result, not I.

Q. Mr. Gandhi, you have been in London yourself. Have you no comment to make on the heavy bombings which the British people have sustained?

A. Oh yes. I know every nook and corner of London where I lived for three years so many years ago, and somewhat of Oxford and Cambridge and Manchester too; but it is London I specially feel for. I used to read in the Inner Temple Library, and would often attend Dr. Parker's sermons in the Temple Church. My heart goes out to the people, and when I heard that the Temple Church was bombed I bled. And the bombing of the Westminster Abbey and other ancient edifices affected me deeply.

Q. Then don't you think, it would be wiser to postpone your movement until we have settled with the Germans and the Japanese?

A. No, because I know you will not settle with the Germans without us. If we were free, we could give you cent per cent co-operation in our own manner. It is curious that such a simple thing is not understood. Britain has today no contribution from a free India. Tomorrow as soon as India is free, she gains moral strength and a powerful ally in a free nation—powerful morally. This raises England's power to the *n*th degree. This is surely self proved.

Harijan, 19-7-1942

109. IF "HARIJAN" IS SUPPRESSED

Anxious inquiries are being made as to what I would do if *Harijan* was suppressed. Rumours are afloat that orders are on their way. I would ask inquirers not to be agitated if *Harijan* is suppressed. The paper may be suppressed. The manager has been instructed to

stop the paper immediately orders are served on him. It is no part of the movement to publish *Harijan* in defiance of orders. But *Harijan* may be suppressed, its message cannot be, so long as I live. Indeed, the spirit will survive the dissolution of tile body and somehow speak through the millions. For, with due apologies to Veer Savarkar and Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah, I claim to represent the joint spirit of millions of Hindus and Mussalmans, and other non-Hindus who call themselves children of Hindustan. I am living, and hope to have the strength to die, for the freedom of every inhabitant of this land.

Let us see what *Harijan* is today. It is being published in English, Hindi, Urdu (2 places), Tamil, Telugu (2 places), Ooriya, Marathi, Gujarati, Kanaree (2 places). It is ready to be published in Bengali, only awaiting legal permission. Applications have come from Assam, Kerala and Sind. All but the one edition have a large circulation compared to the other weeklies. I suggest that it is no small matter to suppress such a paper. The loss will be more Government's than the people's. They will incur much ill-will by suppressing a popular paper.

Let it be known too that *Harijan* is a views-paper as distinguished from a newspaper. People buy and read it not for amusement but instruction and regulating their daily conduct. They literally take their weekly lessons in non-violence. It cannot pay the authorities to deprive the people of their weekly food.

And *Harijan* is not an anti-British paper. It is pro-British from head to foot. It wishes well to the British people. It tells them in the friendliest manner where in its opinion they err.

The Anglo-Indian papers I know are Government favourites. They represent a dying Imperialism. Whether Britain wins or loses, Imperialism has to die. It is certainly of no use now to the British people whatever it may have been in the past. In that sense therefore Anglo-Indian papers are really anti-British as *Harijan* is pro-British. The former are disseminating hatred day by day by hiding the reality and bolstering Imperialism which is ruining Britain. It is in order to arrest the progress of that ruin that, frail as I am, I have put my whole soul into a movement which, if it is designed to free India from the imperial yoke, is equally intended to contribute the mightiest war effort in their behalf. If they suppress *Harijan* let them know what they will seek to suppress.

Let me add too that without needing any pressure from outside,

I am using the greatest restraint in the choice of printing matter. Nothing is being consciously published that would give any clue to the 'enemy' as to military objectives or dispositions. Care is being exercised to avoid all exaggeration or sensational matter. Adjectives and adverbs are well-weighed before being used. And they know that I am ever ready to acknowledge errors and mend them.

SEVAGRAM, July 1 2, 1 942

Harijan, 19-7-1942

110. NOTES

IN CASE OF ILLNESS

Someone tells me that B.B.C. have been asking how I can hope to lead the impending non-violent movement if I am ill and bed-ridden. Well, the doctors have not pronounced me such. I am fatigued and they advise rest and a change to a cooler place for a fortnight. I am struggling to give myself rest. But sometimes duty, maybe passion or infatuation, forbids it. But the relevant fact is that so long as the reason is unimpaired, physical illness is no bar to the conduct of a non-violent struggle. The peremptory belief in non-violent conduct is that all urge comes from God—the Unseen, even Unfelt save through unconquerable faith. Nevertheless as a seeker and experimenter I know that even physical illness, even fatigue, is counted as a defect in a non-violent person. *Mens sana in corpore sano* is literally accepted by votaries of truth and non-violence. But that is said of perfect men. Alas I am far from the perfection I am aiming at.

TIMELY ACTION

Numerous inquiries have been made as to what should be done by evacuees and others who find it difficult and even impossible to comply with orders. The comprehensive instructions of the Working Committee in the matter are quite timely. The persons affected should know that these instructions are no part of the impending movement. They are necessary in every case for the very existence of the persons affected. Therefore, as the Working Committee very properly say, every precaution should be taken for obtaining relief through negotiation. Disregard of orders should be resorted to only when it

becomes peremptory. Needless to say there is no room here for profiteering or exorbitant demand.

SEVAGRAM, July 12, 1942

Harijan, 19-7-1942

111. PERTINENT QUESTIONS

1. If non-violent activity is neutralized by and cannot go along with armed violence in the same area, will there remain any scope for non-violent resistance to aggression in the event of India allowing foreign troops to remain on her soil and operate from here?

2. If the maintenance of India's freedom is allowed to be made dependent upon arms which, in the existing circumstances, will be led and controlled by Britain and America, can there be a feeling of real freedom experienced by the people of India, at any rate during the duration of the war?

3. Whatever may be the terms of the 'treaty', if the Anglo-American military machine is allowed to operate for the 'defence' of India, can Indians play any but a minor and subordinate role in the defence of this country?

4. Supposing the British, not from any moral motive but only to gain a political and strategical advantage for the time being, agree to a 'treaty' under which they are allowed to maintain and increase their military forces in India, how can they be dislodged afterwards if they prefer to remain in possession?

5. Is not the position postulated in the preceding question comparable to the position that would arise if, for instance, Subhas Babu made a treaty with Germany and Japan under which India would be declared 'independent' and the Axis forces would enter India to drive the British out?

6. If the Congress, as Maulana Saheb has just stated, 'considers defence as armed defence only', is there any prospect of real independence for India, in view of the fact that India simply has not got the resources 'independently' to offer effective armed resistance to a formidable aggressor? If we are to think in terms of armed defence only, can India, to mention only one thing, expect to remain independent with her 4,000 miles of coastline and no navy and ship-building industry?

7. What material aid could India send to China today, even if she

were declared 'independent' by the British?

A. (1) The flaw pointed out in the first question cannot be denied. I have admitted it before now. The tolerance of Allied troops by free India is an admission of the nation's limitations. The nation as a whole has never been and never been claimed to be non-violent. What part is cannot be said with any accuracy. And what is decisive is that India has not yet demonstrated non-violence of the strong such as would be required to withstand a powerful army of invasion. If we had developed that strength we would have acquired our freedom long ago and there would be no question of any troops being stationed in India. The novelty of the demand should not be missed. It is a demand not for a transference of power from Great Britain to a free India. For there is no party to which Britain would transfer such power. We lack the unity that gives strength. The demand therefore is not based on our demonstrable strength. It is a demand made upon Britain to do the right irrespective of the capacity of the party wronged to bear the consequences of Britain's right act. Will Britain restore seized property to the victim merely because the seizure was wrong? It is none of her concern to weigh whether the victim will be able to hold possession of the restored property. Hence it is that I have been obliged to make use of the word anarchy in this connection. This great moral act must give Britain moral status which should ensure victory. Whether without India Britain would have any reason to fight is a question I need not consider. If India is the stake and not British honour we should know. My demand then loses force but not justness.

Such being the case my honesty and honour require me to provide for the flaw. If to ask for the withdrawal of the Allied forces means their certain defeat, my demand must be ruled out as dishonest. Force of circumstances has given rise to the demand and also to its limitations. It must be admitted therefore that there will be little scope for non-violent resistance of aggression, with the Allied troops operating in India, as there is practically none now. For the troops are there today enjoying fill I mastery over us. Under my demand they will operate under the nation's terms.

2. If Britain's declaration is honest I see no reason why the presence of the troops should, in any shape or form, affect the feeling of real freedom. Did the French feel differently when during the last war the English troops were operating in France? When my master of yesterday becomes my equal and lives in my house on my

terms, surely his presence cannot detract from my freedom. Nay, I may profit by his presence which I have permitted.

3. The conception in my scheme is that we do not want these troops for our defence or protection. If they left these shores we expect to manage somehow. We may put up non-violent defence. If luck favours us, the Japanese may see no reason to hold the country after the Allies have withdrawn, if they discover that they are not wanted. It is all speculation as to what can happen after withdrawal, voluntary and orderly or forced.

4. We assume their or rather British honesty. It would be not a matter of dislodging them, it is one of their fulfilling their plighted word. If they commit breach of faith, we must have strength enough, non-violent or violent, to enforce fulfilment.

5. Surely there is as much difference between the South Pole and the North as there is between the imagined conditions. My demand deals with the possessor; Subhas Babu will bring German troops to oust the possessor. Germany is under no obligation to deliver India from bondage. Therefore Subhas Babu's performance can only fling India from the frying pan into the fire. I hope the distinction is clear.

6. Maulana Saheb, it is well known, does not hold my view that any country can defend itself without force of arms. My demand is based on the view that it is possible to defend one's country non-violently.

7. India at present gives such indifferent and ill-conceived aid as the Allies think desirable. Free India can send men and material that China may need. India has affinities with China being part of Asia which the Allies cannot possibly possess and exploit. Who knows that free India may not even succeed in persuading Japan to do the right by China?

SEVAGRAM, July 12, 1942

Harijan, 19-7-1942

112. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

July 12, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

I like your letter to the President of your Committee immensely. Of course your resignation adds to your dignity.[1]

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2092

113. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

July 12, 1942

CHI. SUSHILA,

How much did you get by way of fees ? I have no idea at all if I shall still be here when you come or where I shall be. But you must complete your term there.

Pyarelal has been having fever for the last three days. It has come down a little today. The Bombay doctors attribute it to vitamin deficiency. That is also the cause of his weak eyes. Let me see what I can do.

It has been raining quite well here. The air is cool.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

114. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 13, 1942

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

I have read the resolution. I note that you have tried to include some of my points. I do not desire any modification.

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 5-7-1942.

But I do desire that, as far as possible, all of us should interpret the appeal in the same way. It will not be good if we speak in different voices.

I stick to the hundred per cent support I gave you in what you said about yourself. I have thought over the matter a great deal and still feel that your capacity for service will increase if you withdraw. And to that extent you will find satisfaction. You may attend the Committee occasionally as I do or as Narendra Dev does. This will ensure your help being available and at the same time your fully retaining your freedom.

This is my plea about Maulana Saheb. I find that the two of us have drifted apart. I do not understand him nor does he understand me. We are drifting apart on the Hindu-Muslim question as well as on other questions. I have also a suspicion that Maulana Saheb does not entirely approve of the proposed action. No one is at fault. We have to face the facts. Therefore I suggest that the Maulana should relinquish Presid-entship but remain in the Committee, the Committee should elect an interim President and all should proceed unitedly. This great struggle cannot be conducted properly without unity and without a President who comes forth with a hundred per cent co-operation.

Please show this letter to Maulana Saheb. At the moment it is intended for you two only. If you do not like either or both of my suggestions, you may reject them. My motive in writing this is only to help. Whether you approve of it or not, it should not cause any unpleasantness.

The date and venue for the A.I.C.C. have not been indicated in your draft.

As far as I am concerned, you are free to issue this appeal to the Press.

It is not necessary to come here for a discussion of the resolution. But it has to be as Maulana Saheb orders.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

115. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[1]

July 14, 1942

To a question whether the Working Committee's resolution met with his approval, Gandhiji said:

It is difficult for me to answer the question. When you are working in a committee you can't have it all your own way. Therefore, you have to compromise. All this has happened in the Committee. If I were an autocrat, undoubtedly the resolution would have been perhaps in somewhat different language. As a matter of fact, the Working Committee has worked on my draft and I must say, too, that the Committee has been most considerate. It was not humanly possible for people, however they may be alike in thought, to agree to the same language. Here the Working Committee tried to accommodate me as much as they could and therefore, I must be entirely satisfied.[2]

Q. Is it possible for you to tell us the things you might do after the All-India Congress Committee meets and adopts the W. C. resolution?

A. Is not that question a little premature? Supposing the A. I. C. C. vetoes the resolution, the whole things wears a different aspect. But you may know that it will be a mass movement of a strictly non-violent character and then you can fill in the details. It will include all that a mass movement can include.

Q. Will you include closing of liquor shops and foreign cloth shops?

A. It will depend on the circumstances. I don't want rioting as a direct result. If in spite of all precautions rioting does take place, it cannot be helped.

Q. Will you court imprisonment?

A. I am not going to court imprisonment. The struggle does not involve courting imprisonment. It is too soft a thing. We had, no doubt, made it a business to court imprisonment up to now, but there will be no such thing this time. My intention is to make the thing as short and swift as possible.

Q. Will you resort to fasting if sent to jail?

A. It is not my desire this time, as I have said, to court

[1] Mahadev Desai's report of the interview published in *Harijan* under the heading "The Wardha Interview" has been collated with the report published in *The Hindu.*

[2] This question and answer have been taken from *The Hindu.*

imprisonment. But if I am dragged into jail, it is difficult to say what I may do. But I *can* fast, as I have fasted before now, though I should try to avoid such an extreme step so far as possible.

Q. Do you hope that negotiations may be opened by the British Government?

A. They may, but with whom they will do it I do not know. For it is not a question of placating one party or another. For it is the unconditional withdrawal of the British Power without reference to the wishes of any party that is our demand. The demand is therefore based on its justice. Of course it is possible that the British may negotiate a withdrawal. If they do, it will be a feather in their cap. Then it will cease to be a case for withdrawal. If the British see, however, late, the wisdom of recognizing the independence of India, without reference to the various parties, all things are possible. But the point I want to stress is this, viz., that there is no room left for negotiations in the proposal for withdrawal. Either they recognize independence or they don't. After that recognition many things can follow. For by that one single act the British representatives will have altered the face of the whole landscape and revived the hope of the people which has been frustrated times without number. Therefore whenever that great act is performed, on behalf of the British people, it will be a red letter day in the history of India and the world. And, as I have said, it can materially affect the fortunes of war.

Q. After the recognition of free India it starts to function at once?

A. Yes, from the very next moment. For independence will not be on paper, but in action. But your next legitimate question would be— 'How will free India function?' And because there was that knot, I said 'Leave India to God or anarchy'. But in practice what will happen is this—if withdrawal takes place in perfect goodwill, the change will be effected without the slightest disturbance. People would have to come to their own without disturbance. Wise people from among the responsible sections will come together and will evolve a Provisional Government. Then there will be no anarchy, no interruption, and a crowning glory.

Q. Can you visualize the composition of the Provisional Government?

A. I do not need to do so. But I am clear that it won't be a party government. All parties—including the Congress— will automatically dissolve. Of course other parties may come into being afterwards.[1]

[1] This sentence is from *The Hindu.*

They may function later and when they do they may function complementary to one another, each looking to the other in order to grow. No party can grow at the expense of another.[1] Then, as I have said, all unreality disappears like mist before the morning sun—we don't know how, though we witness the phenomenon every day.

Q. But looking to all their past record will the British have the sense to come to terms?

A. Why not? They are human beings and I have never discounted the possibility of human nature's upward growth, and no other nation had ever had to face a freedom movement based not principally but wholly on non-violence.

Q. But there is an apparent contradiction in your resolution. The first paragraphs recount the fact that there is no intention on the part of the British to part with power. Then suddenly you postulate such a desire on their part!

A. There is nothing inconsistent. The facts are narrated in order to justify the suddenness of the demand for withdrawal. The other paragraphs refer to possibilities. Many things may happen and they may be altogether creditable to the British.

Q. May not your movement hamper the efforts of the Allies in China?

A. No, since the movement is intended to make common cause with the Allies, it should not hamper the Allied effort.

Q. But if there is no withdrawal, then disturbances are bound to happen?

A. You see ill-will is already there. It will grow apace. Immediately the movement is started, the ill will may be changed into goodwill if the British people respond. But even if they don't respond, when people make an effort to free themselves from a foreign yoke, ill-will needs no other opening. It takes a healthy turn instead of the bad turn that it has today.

Asked if this was the last chance that was being given to the British Government, Gandhiji said:

This is open rebellion of a non-violent character. There is no question of last chance.[2]

Q. But only last week Mr. Amery reminded us that nothing is going to be done?

A. I am very much afraid that we shall have the misfortune to listen to a repetition of that language in stronger terms if possible. But

[1] This sentence is from *The Hindu.*

[2] This paragraph has been taken from *The Hindu.*

it can't change the will of a group of people who are determined to go their way.

Q. You desire to have India's freedom in order to help the Allies. Will free India carry out total mobilization and adopt methods of total war?

A. That question is legitimate but it is beyond me. I can only say free India will make common cause with the Allies. I cannot say that free India will take part in militarism or choose to go the non-violent way. But I can say without hesitation that if I can turn India to non-violence I will certainly do so. If I succeed in converting 40 crores of people to non-violence, it will be a tremendous thing, a wonderful transformation.

Q. But you won't oppose a militarist effort by civil disobedience?

A. I have no such desire. I cannot oppose free India's will with civil disobedience; it would be wrong.

Harijan, 19-7-1942, and *The Hindu*, 15-7-1942

116. A MESSAGE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 15, 1942

This is an occasion when everyone—rich and poor, young and old, men and women—ought to take up spinning for the sake of the country. If the charkha is not there, there is a distinct possibility of a time coming when we shall have to go about naked.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Gujarati: *Sutarne Tantane Swaraj*

117. INTERVIEW TO FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS[1]

WARDHA,
[*July 15, 1942*][2]

STUART EMENY: Could you give me an idea of the plans of your movement? Would it include breach of the Salt Laws, calling out Government servants and labour?

GANDHIJI: As I said yesterday the programme covers every activity of a strictly non-violent character included in a mass movement. Therefore undoubtedly the things you have mentioned are included. But it is not my intention to undertake at once any overwhelming programme. I want to watch and see, because whatever may be said to the contrary, even in conducting the movement I want to guard against a sudden outburst of anarchy or a state of things which may be calculated to invite Japanese aggression. I believe that India's demand is fundamental, it is indispensable for national existence as I conceive it to be. Therefore I shall take every precaution I can to handle the movement gently, but I would not hesitate to go to the extremest limit, if I find that no impression is produced on the British Government or the Allied Powers. I hold it to be legitimate to make the Allied Powers responsible for all that may happen in India, because it is open to them in the interests of the common cause to prevent the happening of anything that might disturb the even course of the war. I think I have sufficiently answered your very pertinent question. I am unable to give you a more detailed answer, not because I want to suppress or shirk it, but I am not ready with a planned programme as yet.

E. It will be your biggest movement?

G. Yes, my biggest movement.

E. But if there is no response, what time limit would you set before launching your campaign?

G. Assuming that the A. I. C. C. confirms the resolution there will be some time—but not very long—taken. As far as I can see just

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "With Three Press Correspondents". The correspondents were Steele of the *Chicago Daily News*, Stuart Emeny of *The News Chronicle* and Richard Jen of the Central News Agency of China.

[2] According to Mahadev Desai this interview took place the day following the general Press interview, which was on the 14th; *vide* "Interview to the Press", 14-7-1942.

now it may be a week or two.

E. But you will give time?

G. Of course—as I have always done before launching on every struggle.

E. If the Viceroy asks you to go to Delhi, will you accept his invitation?

G. Oh yes. And then you forget that the Viceroy and I have become personal friends, if a public man and a Viceroy may be so called.

E. Will your campaign collapse if Government sent you and thousands of your followers to jail?

G. I hope not, on the contrary it should gain strength if it has any vitality.

E. With the enemy at the gates, what is your objection to calling a truce?

G. This struggle has been conceived in order to avert a catastrophe. At the critical moment an unfree India is likely to become a hindrance rather than a help. The Congress resolution itself hints at the possibility of a large number of Indians going over to the Japanese side—if they effected a landing on the Indian shores—as we now know happened in Burma, Malaya and for aught I know Singapore too. I am of the opinion that this might have been prevented at least so far as Burma is concerned, if she had been made independent. But it was not done. We know the result. We are determined so far as it is humanly possible to secure our independence, so that no Indian worth the name would then think of going over to the Japanese side. It would then become as much India's interest as the Allies' interest to resist Japanese aggression with all her might.

E. But with time so short don't you think you have a moral duty to stand beside the Russians and the Chinese?

G. Don't you see if it was a purely personal question, what you say would have been perfectly possible. But even with the combined influence of every member of the Working Committee, it would have been impossible to enthuse the masses in favour of the Allied cause, which they do not understand, cannot understand.

E. But I have the feeling myself that you could, if you would, with your tremendous authority with the masses, do anything. They are sure to listen to you.

G. You credit me with an influence which I wish I had but, I assure you, I do not possess. And in proof of this I shall give you two solid facts. If I had that influence you will agree that we would already

have won our independence without causing any trouble to anybody. But, as you know, I have no influence, nor has the Working Committee with the Muslim League and the Princes. That is one solid fact. Then, there is another thing. During the last War as you perhaps know, I had thrown myself heart and soul into it. I had become a voluntary recruiting agent for the British. And I began my agency in the district in which I had just been leading a campaign for agricultural relief with fair success. I should have made great headway there. But I tell you I did not do so. I used to walk miles in the hot burning sun in order to collect recruits and to make an impression on the people about the urgency of it. But I could not. You will see, therefore, that my influence, great as it may appear to outsiders, is strictly limited. I may have considerable influence to conduct a campaign for redress of popular grievances because people are ready and need a helper. But I have no influence to direct people's energy in a channel in which they have no interest.

STEELE: Then, what part of the people, you think, will believe in your movement?

`G. I wish I could tell you definitely. It is all problematical. I simply trade on the absolute purity of the cause and the equal purity of the means which are non-violent.

S. Are you not apprehensive that the Working Committee's resolution will antagonize American opinion?

G. Of course it may. But I have never embarked upon any campaign in the belief that I would have world sympathy at my back. On the contrary, the odds, almost in every case, have been against me. And in the very first satyagraha struggle which started in South Africa, every outward element was hostile to me. I had stated then—though I had no experience of the working of satyagraha that I have now—that a handful though we were in the midst of millions who had no sympathy for us, we had to rely upon our own inner strength and the absolute justice of our cause. And that sustained us through the long-drawn-out agony lasting eight years. I do not know why I should lose the sympathy of the American people, or the British people, for that matter. And why should they fight shy of a just demand for absolute freedom?

s. Speaking as an American, I can say that the reaction of many Americans would be that a movement for freedom may be unwise at this moment for it would lead to complications in India which may be prejujudicial to the efficient prosecution of the war.

G. This belief is born of ignorance. What possible internal complication can take place if the British Government declare today that India is absolutely independent? It would be in my opinion the least risk the Allies could take on behalf of the war effort. I am open to conviction. If anybody could convince me that in the midst of war, the British Government cannot declare India free without jeopardising the war effort, I should like to hear the argument. I have not as yet heard any cogent one.

S. If you were convinced, would you call off the campaign?

G. Of course. My complaint is that all these good critics talk *at* me, swear *at* me, but never condescend to talk *to* me.

RICHARD JEN: You have implicit faith in non-violence. But we have seen that armed resistance alone can succeed against the Japanese.

G. China never tried any experiment in non-violence. That the Chinese remained passive for some time is no proof that it was a non-violent attitude. For the first time in history non-violence instead of being confined to individuals, religious enthusiasts and mystics, has been brought down to the political field and been experimented on by vast masses of mankind. Just imagine, that instead of a few Indians, or even a million or so, all 400,000,000 Indians were non-violent, would Japan make any headway in India, unless they were intent upon extermin-ating all the four hundred million?

S. If India were made of four hundred million Gandhis.

G. Here we come to brass tacks. That means India is not sufficiently non-violent. If we had been, there would have been no parties, and there would be no Japanese attack. I know non-violence is limited in both numbers and quality, but deficient as it is in both these respects, it has made a great impression and infused life into the people which was absent before. The awakening that showed itself on April 6, 1919, was a matter of surprise to every Indian. I cannot today account for the response we then had from every nook and corner of the country where no public worker had ever been. We had not then gone among the masses, we did not know we could go and speak to them.

R. J. What can free India do for China?

G. If India were to listen to me, she would give non-violent help to China. But I know that will not be. Free India would want to be militarist. She will then get all the material and men she needs—

although it appears that China with her vast populations will not need men. Today unfree India cannot send a single person to China. I go further—free India can even plead with Japan and Japan will have to listen.

R. J. Can you give me an idea who would take the lead in forming a Provisional Government—you, Congress, or the Muslim League?

G. The Muslim League certainly can; the Congress can. If everything went right, it would be a combined leadership. No *one* party would take the lead.

R. J. Would it be within the present constitutional structure?

G. The constitution will be dead. The Government of India Act of 1935 *is* dead. The I. C. S. would have to go and it might be anarchy but there *need* be no anarchy, if the British withdraw with goodwill. Free India Government would set up a constitution suited to Indian genius, evolved without dictation from outside. But whether India would be cut up into autonomous provinces or not, I do not know. The permanent structure may take time—all the time the war may require. But the Provisional Government may continue to function. It may be somewhat after the pattern of the present government, but with great modifications. The two communities will certainly work in hearty combination. It would be a combination not superimposed, but brought about by internal effort. The dictating factor will not be an outside one, but wisdom. And I believe there will be abundant wisdom among us.

R. J. Would the Viceroy cease to exist as such?

G. We shall be friends *even* then, but on a par, and I have no doubt that Lord Linlithgow will welcome the day when he will be one of the people.

E. Why can't all this be done today, without the British withdrawal?

G. The answer is simple. Why can't a prisoner do a thing which a free man can do? You may not have been behind prison bars, but I have been and I know. Imprisonment means civil death, and I suggest to you that the whole of India is civilly dead. The very breath is controlled by British power. Then there is another experience that you lack. You have not been a member of a nation that has been under subjection for several centuries. Our *habit* has been that we can never be free. You know the case of Shri Subhas Bose, a man of great self-sacrifice who might have had a distinguished career in the Indian

Civil Service, but who is now an exile because he cannot possibly tolerate this helpless condition and feels that he must seek the help of Germany and Japan.

Q.[1] You have said there is no more room for negotiation. Does it mean that you would ignore any conciliatory gesture if it was made?

G. So far as we are concerned, we have closed our hearts. As we have said in our resolution all hopes have been dashed to pieces. The burden is shifted. But it is open to America, to Britain, to China and even to Russia to plead for India which is pining for freedom. And if an acceptable proposal is made, it would certainly be opened to the Congress or any other party to entertain and accept it. It would be churlish on our part if we said 'We don't want to talk to anybody and we will by our own strong hearts expel the British.' Then the Congress Committee won't be meeting; there would be no resolutions; and should not be seeing Press representatives.

Harijan, 26-7-1942

118. TELEGRAM TO PADAMPAT SINGHANIA

July 16, 1942

TANDONJI WHOM I SHOWED YOUR LETTERS HAS DEMONSTRATED MY ERROR IN READING WRONG MEANING IN THEM. ITS PLAIN MEANING IS THAT YOUR DONATION WAS GIVEN PURELY TO RASHTRABHASHA SAMITI FOR HINDI ONLY. OTHERS TOO READ SAME MEANING. HAVE THEREFORE CREDITED WHOLE AMOUNT SAMITI.[2]

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

119. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 16, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

There is comparative rest today. All the meetings and Press interviews are over. All my fatigue and physical weakness are gone.

[1] This was from all the three correspondents.

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Padampat Singhania", 16-7-1942.

There is no cause for worry. This change is due I think to the increase in the milk intake. I have dropped bread and butter.

If Shummy wants you there till 15th August you can stay there. Nothing extraordinary is likely to happen meanwhile.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3690. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6499

120. LETTER TO RATHINDRANATH TAGORE

SEVAGRAM,
July 16, 1942

MY DEAR RATHI,

I have been long dealing with your letter. I had not a moment to spare. Now I am comparatively free. Either you come to Wardha for a day and we may discuss plans for using the money or you may send me your proposals which I would circulate among the trustees. Better still it would be if you sent me your proposals for my examination and if I approve you can save me the labour by circulating the proposals among the others.

I hope you are keeping well.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

121. LETTER TO PADAMPAT SINGHANIA

SEVAGRAM,
July 16, 1942

BHAI PADAMPATJI,

I deliberately postponed answering your letters. Tandonji was to come here. I wanted to see him first, since he is the spirit behind the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. In regard to questions pertaining to Hindi I always try to take him along with me. I placed all your letters before him with a few introductory remarks. He thought the burden of your letters was that your donation to the Rashtrabhasha [Prachar] Samiti was for the spread of Hindi alone. I showed the letters to other

members also. They too were of the same opinion. And later when Tandonji, having examined the Samiti's records, showed me Jamnalalji's note no doubt remained in my mind. It was only out of stupidity that I troubled you. Please excuse me. I am certainly obliged to Tandonji who opened my eyes to my own foolishness. My folly lay in my wanting to know Jamnalalji's wishes, which made me place on your letters an arbitrary construction. I am now crediting all the money to the account of the Rashtrabhasha Prachar [Samiti].

The second point concerns the inclusion of your name on the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. I had not read the letter you wrote to the Secretary. Tandonji pointed out that the letter showed that you did not want to be a member and had agreed to become one only at my insistence. I have no right to prevail upon you in this manner. Hence if you so wish I shall have your name struck off.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have also sent you a telegram.[1] Enclosed is a copy of it.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

122. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 17, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter.

The A. I. C. C:. takes place in Bombay. You may come if you wish. I hope to be there on 4th or may be even 3rd.

P.[2] is down with fever—103. Something wrong with the bladder.

Asaf Ali went because he was indisposed. But he is *against* the resolution. The Maulana's statement you must have seen.

The resolution[3] is my draft. Changes have been made for

[1] This is not traceable.

[2] Pyarelal

[3] For the draft and the resolution as passed, *vide* "Draft Resolution for the Congress Working Committee", 9-7-1942 and Appendix "Resolution Passed by Congress Working Committee", 14-7-1942.

J. L.'s satisfaction, and of course Maulana's.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3691. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6500

123. LETTER TO SAILENDRANATH CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
[*July 17, 1942*][1]

MY DEAR SAILEN,

I have your letter. The girls came at Father's wish. They are in Rajkot with Father's consent and at their wish. If they wish to return or if they must be taken away, this can also be done. I may not be expected to spend public money on these charges. As for Abha's marriage I am wholly indifferent. She is too young to decide for herself. The parents must be her guides. I will not have her married until they consent or Abha comes of age and makes her own choice.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a photostat : C. W. 10571. Courtesy : Amrita Lal Chatterjee

124. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

July 17, 1942

MY DEAR KU,

Of course you are coming on Saturday to eat and also talk as little as possible. The limitation does not apply to eating!!!

I am due in Bombay on 4th—may even go a day earlier. Therefore the meeting must be before 2nd or after return from B[om]bay.

Love,

BAPU

[1] The source has 1947, but from the reference to Abha's stay in Rajkot, the correct year would appear to be 1942; *vide* "Letter to Prabhavati", 1-6-1942 and "Letter to Amrit Lal Chatterjee", 3-8-1942.

[PS.]

What progress in Hindi and Urdu?

From a photostat: G.N. 10166

125. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS

SEVAGRAM,
July 17, 1942

BABUJI,

I have gone through your letter. I am amazed at the amount of work you do at your age. I should be very happy if I could send you a satisfactory reply. But I am helpless. How can I give something I do not possess?

We just cannot have a scheme for swaraj from the Working Committee. I therefore cannot give you what you want. I shall however endeavour to present my own conception through *Harijan.*

As was only to be expected I could not read the whole of the book you so lovingly sent me. But I have acquainted myself with parts of it.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. BHAGWANDAS
SIGRA
KASHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

126. QUESTION BOX

VILLAGE SWARAJ

Q. In view of the situation that may arise at any moment in India, would you give an outline or skeleton of a village swaraj committee, which could function in all village matters in the absence of, and without relying upon, an overhead Government or other organization? In particular, how would you ensure that the Committee should be fully representative and that it would act impartially, efficiently and without favour or fear? What should be the scope of authority and the machinery to enforce its commands? And what should be the manner in which a committee or an individual

member of it could be removed for corruption, inefficiency or other unfitness?

A. My idea of village swaraj is that it is a complete republic, independent of its neighbours for its own vital wants, and yet interdependent for many others in which dependence is a necessity. Thus every village's first concern will be to grow its own food crops and cotton for its cloth. It should have a reserve for its cattle, recreation and playground for adults and children. Then if there is more land available, it will grow *useful* money crops, thus excluding *ganja*, tobacco, opium and the like. The village will maintain a village theatre, school and public hall. It will have its own waterworks, ensuring clean water supply. This can be done through controlled wells or tanks. Education will be compulsory up to the final basic course. As far as possible every activity will be conducted on the co-operative basis. There will be no castes such as we have today with their graded untouchability. Non-violence with its technique of satyagraha and non-co-operation will be the sanction of the village community. There will be a compulsory service of village guards who will be selected by rotation from the register maintained by the village. The government of the village will be conducted by a Panchayat of five persons annually elected by the adult villagers, male and female, possessing minimum prescribed qualifications. These will have all the authority and jurisdiction required. Since there will be no system of punishments in the accepted sense, this Panchayat will be the legislature, judiciary and executive combined to operate for its year of office. Any village can become such a republic today without much interference even from the present Government whose sole effective connection with the villages is the exaction of the village revenue. I have not examined here the question of relations with the neighbouring villages and the centre if any. My purpose is to present an outline of village government. Here there is perfect democracy based upon individual freedom. The individual is the architect of his own government. The law of non-violence rules him and his government. He and his village are able to defy the might of a world. For the law governing every villager is that he will suffer death in the defence of his and his village's honour.

The reader may well ask me—I am asking myself while penning these lines—as to why I have not been able to model Sevagram after the picture here drawn. My answer is: I am making the attempt. I can see dim traces of success though I can show nothing visible. But there

is nothing inherently impossible in the picture drawn here. To model such a village may be the work of a lifetime. Any lover of true democracy and village life can take up a village, treat it as his world and sole work, and he will find good results. He begins by being the village scavenger, spinner, watchman, medicine man and schoolmaster all at once. If nobody comes near him, he will be satisfied with scavenging and spinning.

SEVAGRAM, July 18, 1942

Harijan, 26-7-1942

127. TO EVERY JAPANESE[1]

I must confess at the outset that though I have no ill-will against you, I intensely dislike your attack upon China. From your lofty height you have descended to imperial ambition. You will fail to realize that ambition and may become the authors of the dismemberment of Asia, thus unwittingly preventing World Federation and brotherhood without which there can be no hope for humanity.

Ever since I was a lad of eighteen studying in London, over fifty years ago, I learnt, through the writings of the late Sir Edwin Arnold, to prize the many excellent qualities of your nation. I was thrilled when in South Africa I learnt of your brilliant victory over Russian arms. After my return to India from South Africa in 1915, I came in close touch with Japanese monks who lived as members of our Ashram from time to time. One of them became a valuable member of the Ashram in Sevagram, and his application to duty, his dignified bearing, his unfailing devotion to daily worship, affability, unruffledness under varying circumstances and his natural smile, which was positive evidence of his inner peace, had endeared him to all of us. And now that owing to your declaration of war against Great Britain he has been taken away from us, we miss him as a dear co-worker. He has left behind him as a memory his daily prayer and his little drum, to the accompaniment of which we open our morning and evening prayers.

In the background of these pleasant recollections I grieve deeply as I contemplate what appears to me to be your unprovoked

[1] This was published in three Japanese newspapers—*Nichi Nichi*, *Yomiuri* and *Miyako*.

attack against China and, if reports are to be believed, your merciless devastation of that great and ancient land.

It was a worthy ambition of yours to take equal rank with the great powers of the world. Your aggression against China and your alliance with the Axis powers was surely an unwarranted excess of the ambition.

I should have thought that you would be proud of the fact that that great and ancient people, whose old classical literature you have adopted as your own, are your neighbours. Your understanding of one another's history, tradition, literature should bind you as friends rather than make you the enemies you are today.

If I was a free man, and if you allowed me to come to your country, frail though I am, I would not mind risking my health, maybe my life, to come to your country to plead with you to desist from the wrong you are doing to China and the world and therefore to yourself.

But I enjoy no such freedom. And we are in the unique position of having to resist an imperialism that we detest no less than yours and Nazism. Our resistance to it does not mean harm to the British people. We seek to convert them. Ours is an unarmed revolt against British rule. An important party in the country is engaged in a deadly but friendly quarrel with the foreign rulers.

But in this they need no aid from foreign powers. You have been gravely misinformed, as I know you are, that we have chosen this particular moment to embarrass the Allies when your attack against India is imminent. If we wanted to turn Britain's difficulty into our opportunity we should have done it as soon as the war broke out nearly three years ago.

Our movement demanding the withdrawal of the British power from India should in no way be misunderstood. In fact if we are to believe your reported anxiety for the independence of India, a recognition of that independence by Britain should leave you no excuse for any attack on India. Moreover the reported profession sorts ill with your ruthless aggression against China. I would ask you to make no mistake about the fact that you will be sadly disillusioned if you believe that you will receive a willing welcome from India. The end and aim of the movement for British withdrawal is to prepare India, by making her free for resisting all militarist and imperialist ambition, whether it is called British Imperialism, German Nazism, or

your pattern. If we do not, we shall have been ignoble spectators of the militarization of the world in spite of our belief that in non-violence we have the only solvent of the militarist spirit and ambition. Personally I fear that without declaring the independence of India the Allied powers will not be able to beat the Axis combination which has raised violence to the dignity of a religion. The Allies cannot beat you and your partners unless they beat you in your ruthless and skilled warfare. If they copy it their declaration that they will save the world for democracy and individual freedom must come to naught. I feel that they can only gain strength to avoid copying your ruthlessness by declaring and recognizing *now* the freedom of India, and turning sullen India's forced co-operation into freed India's voluntary co-operation.

To Britain and the Allies we have appealed in the name of justice, in proof of their professions, and in their own self-interest. To you I appeal in the name of humanity. It is a marvel to me that you do not see that ruthless warfare is no body's monopoly. If not the Allies some other power will certainly improve upon your method and beat you with your own weapon. Even if you win you will leave no legacy to your people of which they would feel proud. They cannot take pride in a recital of cruel deeds however skilfully achieved.

Even if you win it will not prove that you were in the right; it will only prove that your power of destruction was greater. This applies obviously to the Allies too, unless they perform *now* the just and righteous act of freeing India as an earnest and promise of similarly freeing all other subject peoples in Asia and Africa.

Our appeal to Britain is coupled with the offer of free India's willingness to let the Allies retain their troops in India. The offer is made in order to prove that we do not in any way mean to harm the Allied cause, and in order to prevent you from being misled into feeling that you have but to step into the country that Britain has vacated. Needless to repeat that if you cherish any such idea and will carry it out, we will not fail in resisting you with all the might that our country can muster. I address this appeal to you in the hope that our movement may even influence you and your partners in the right direction and deflect you and them from the course which is bound to end in your moral ruin and the reduction of human beings to robots.

The hope of your response to my appeal is much fainter than that of response from Britain. I know that the British are not devoid of

a sense of justice and they know me. I do not know you enough to be able to judge. All I have read tells me that you listen to no appeal but to the sword. How I wish that you are cruelly misrepresented and that I shall touch the right chord in your heart! Anyway I have an undying faith in the responsiveness of human nature. On the strength of that faith I have conceived the impending movement in India, and it is that faith which has prompted this appeal to you.

I am,

Your friend and well-wisher,

M. K. GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, July 18, 1942

Harijan, 26-7-1942

128. TO MY CRITICS

The critics who impute motives to the Working Committee or to me harm the cause they profess to serve. The members of the Working Committee are all seasoned servants of the nation with full sense of their responsibility. It is no use damning me as a dictator like Herr Hitler. He does not argue with his co-workers if he may be said to have any. He merely issues orders which can only be disobeyed on pain of death or worse. I argue with my friends for days. I argued at the last meeting for eight days. The members agreed when their reason was satisfied. My sanction with my friends as well as self-styled enemies has ever been reason and love. It is a travesty of truth therefore to compare me with Hitler or to call me a dictator in any current sense of the term. It is an equal travesty of truth to abuse the Congress by calling it a Hindu or communal organization. It is national in the fullest sense of the term. It is a purely political organization with which can undoubtedly be compared the Liberal Party which is without the slightest communal taint. Unfortunately today although it has politicians who have a record of distinguished service, it has admittedly little or no following in the country by reason of its members holding unpopular views. Thus the Congress remains the sole representative national organization in India with a mass following. Its gains belong not merely to itself but to the whole nation, irrespective of caste or creed or race. It is mischievous and misleading to discredit this organization in America and Great Britain as a communal or pro-Axis or a purely Hindu organization. If it was a

pro-Axis organization, it has courage and influence enough to make a public declaration to that effect in disregard of the consequences that might overtake it. It is not, and has never been, a secret or a violent organization. If it had been either, it would have been suppressed long ago.

So much about some manifest misrepresentations.

Now about suppression of relevant Congress position.

Nobody has contended that the demand for withdrawal of British power is not an inherent right of the nation, irrespective of the demand to the contrary by those who by centuries of habit have lost the sense of freedom. It is said that it is wrong not intrinsically, but because of the Congress declaration of non-embarrassment to ask for such withdrawal at this moment.

The critics conveniently omit to mention the fact that in order to prove its *bona fides* and to prevent the Japanese attack the Congress has agreed that, in spite of the withdrawal of the British, the Allied troops should remain in India, naturally under a treaty with the free India Government to be. So long as that Government, provisional or otherwise, has not come into being, there will be no authority to check their operations save their honour. For by declaring India free they will have absolved themselves from consulting anybody formally as they have to consult today members of their nomination. In this sense the declaration of independence leaves them freer to adopt the military measures they may consider necessary. I know that this is an anomalous position for a free country to be in. But honesty dictates the course. As I have said and repeat here the Congress demand is foolproof. Critics who are anxious to serve the Allies would do well to examine the Congress position and point out flaws if there are any. Let me inform them that those who have come to me to understand my demand and who had serious misgivings went away convinced that it was wholly just and that if justice was not done the Congress would be right in taking action to vindicate its position.

SEVAGRAM, July 19, 1942

Harijan, 26-7-1942

129. QUESTION BOX

FIVE QUESTIONS BY A HARIJAN M. L. A.

Q. 1. What will be the position of the Harijans in the future constitution to be framed?

2. Will you advise the Government and the Congress to agree to fix the seats from a Panchayat Board upwards to the State Council on population basis?

3. Will you advise the Congress and the leaders of the various majority parties in the legislatures in the provinces to nominate the cabinet members from among the Scheduled Caste legislators who enjoy the confidence of the majority of Scheduled Caste members?

4. In view of the backwardness of the Harijans will you advise the Government to make a provision in the Act that executive posts in the Local Boards and Municipal Councils be held on communal rotation so as to enable the Harijans to become presidents and chairmen?

5. Why do you not fix some percentage of seats for Harijans from District Congress Committee upwards to the Working Committee of the Congress?

A. 1. The constitution which I could influence would contain a provision making the observance of untouchability in any shape or form an offence. The so-called 'untouchables' would have seats reserved for them in all elected bodies according to their population within the electoral area concerned.

2. You will see that the answer is covered by the foregoing.

3. I cannot. The principle is dangerous. Protection of its neglected classes should not be carried to an extent which will harm them and harm the country. A cabinet minister should be a topmost man commanding universal confidence. A person after he has secured a seat in an elected body should depend upon his intrinsic merit and popularity to secure coveted positions.

4. In the first place I am not interested in the present Act which is as good as dead. But I am opposed to your proposal on the ground already mentioned.

5. I am opposed for the reasons mentioned. But I should like to compel large elective Congress organizations to ensure the election of Harijan members in proportion to their numbers on the Congress register. If Harijans are not interested enough in the Congress to become 4-anna members, they may not expect to find their names in

elective bodies. But I would strongly advise Congress workers to see that they approach Harijans and induce them to become members of the Congress.

SEVAGRAM, July 19, 1942

Harijan, 2-8-1942

130. FOR MUSLIM FRIENDS

I have read with attention Quaid-e-Azam's reply to my article[1] in *Harijan*. "Pakistan," according to him, "in a nutshell," "is a demand for carving out of India a portion to be wholly treated as an independent and sovereign State."[2] This sovereign State can conceivably go to war against the one of which it was but yesterday a part. It can also equally conceivably make treaties with other States. All this can certainly be had, but surely not by the willing consent of the rest.

But it seems he does not want it by consent. For he says:

> Pakistan is an article of faith with Muslim India and we depend upon nobody except ourselves for the achievement of our goal.

How is one to offer one's service in these circumstances?

But later he gives me hope, for he says: "Show your sincerity and frankness for an honourable settlement." In order to show both, I wrote the article to which the Quaid-e-Azam has objected. How else is one to show sincerity and frankness except through one's action and speech or pen?

Let me state my limitations. I cannot speak as a mere Hindu, for my Hinduism includes all religions. I can speak only as an Indian. If Pakistan as defined above is an article of faith with him, indivisible India is equally an article of faith with me. Hence there is a stalemate.

But today there is neither Pakistan nor Hindustan. It is Englistan. So I say to all India, let us first convert it into the original Hindustan and then adjust all rival claims. This is surely clear. After the restoration of India to the nation, there will be no Central Government. The representatives will have to construct it. It may be one Hindustan or

[1] *Vide* "To Muslim Correspondents", 6-7-1942.

[2] The words are Gandhiji's (*vide* "Question Box", sub-title, "Andhra Separation", 5-7-1942). Jinnah quoting them had said, "He has himself put the Muslim demand in a nutshell."

many Pakistans.

If the Quaid-e-Azam really wants a settlement, I am more than willing and so is the Congress. He will forgive me for suggesting that his reply leaves on one the impression that he does not want a settlement. If he wants one, why not accept the Congress President's offer that Congress and League representatives should put their heads together and never part until they have reached a settlement. Is there any flaw or want of sincerity in this offer?

SEVAGRAM, July 20, 1942

Harijan, 26-7-1942

131. PANDIT KACHRU EXTERNED

Pandit Kachru is a well-known public worker attached to the States People's Conference. When Shri Jainarayan Vyas went on hunger-strike at Jodhpur, he was deputed by the President Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to proceed to Jodhpur and watch events and report to me. For reasons known to the authorities and unknown to Pandit Kachru he was served with an externment order on the 5th instant, at 11.40 p.m., to depart from Jodhpur the next morning by 7.15 a. m. train. He telephoned to me for instructions and Mahadev Desai who answered the phone advised him in the first instance to obey the order and report. He is now in Wardha trying to finish his report to the point he was able to reach in Jodhpur.

Here is the order:

> From information received the Government of Jodhpur is satisfied that Dwarkanath Kachru (name) is acting in a manner prejudicial to the maintenance of public order and the efficient prosecution of war.
>
> With a view to prevent the said Dwarkanath Kachru from so acting, the Government of Jodhpur, in exercise of its powers conferred by Rule 26(I)(a) of the Defence of India Rules as applied to the Jodhpur State territory is pleased to order that the said Dwarkanath Kachru shall remove himself from Marwar in railway train I up of 6-7-42 (manner) which leaves Jodhpur at 7.15 a.m. *(via* Marwar Junction) and further that the said Dwarkanath Kachru shall not return to Marwar for a period of one year from the date of this order.
>
> The Inspector General of Police, Jodhpur, is hereby directed to see that the above order is promptly carried out.

The important question arising is how long will the States regard

people from outside their jurisdiction as foreigners and deal with them summarily as the Jodhpur authorities have done? And how long must they allow themselves to be treated as such? The Congress has exercised the greatest self-restraint in this matter. Its men deserve a better treatment. If the authorities have justification for their order, they should publicly state it. It is not a matter that can be forgotten. Pandit Kachru ought to be able to return unless satisfactory explanation is offered for his externment.

SEVAGRAM, July 12, 1942

[PS.]

Since the foregoing was written, much is reported to have happened in Jodhpur. Fortunately the fast has satisfactorily ended. But repression is said to be going on merrily. I refrain from giving the details. I understand that the State has made a generous use of my last note for it contains certain statements crediting them with what appeared to be praiseworthy. Now I have angry letters repudiating principally the admission made by Shri Sri Prakasa that Balmukund Bisa's death was not due to any ill-treatment by the State. My correspondents say that Shri Sri Prakasa having not had much time was misled. I have asked the correspondents for proofs and if I get them I hope to submit them to the authorities, instead of publishing them straightway. I can only hope that the favourable impression created on Shri Sri Prakasa will not be belied by any action of the authorities. I hope next week to deal with the simple demands of the Lok Parishad.

SEVAGRAM, July 20, 1942

Harijan, 26-7-1942

132. FASTING IN NON-VIOLENT ACTION

If the struggle which we are seeking to avoid with all our might has to come, and if it is to remain non-violent as it must in order to succeed, fasting is likely to play an important part in it. It has its place in the tussle with authority and with our own people in the event of wanton acts of violence and obstinate riots for instance.

There is a natural prejudice against it as part of a political struggle. It has a recognized place in religious practice. But it is considered a vulgar interpolation in politics by the ordinary politician

though it has always been resorted to by prisoners in a haphazard way with more or less success. By fasting, however, they have always succeeded in drawing public attention and disturbing the peace of jail authorities.

My own fasts have always, as I hold, been strictly according to the law of satyagraha. Fellow satyagrahis too in South Africa fasted partially or wholly. My fasts have been varied. There was the Hindu-Muslim unity fast of 21 days in 1924 started under the late Maulana Mahomed Ali's roof in Delhi. The indeterminate fast against the MacDonald Award was taken in the Yeravda Prison in 1932. The 21 days' purificatory fast was begun in the Yeravda Prison and was finished at Lady Thakersey's, as the Government woul not take the burden of my being in the Prison in that condition. Then followed another fast in the Yeravda Prison in 1933 against the Government refusal to let me carry on anti-untouchability work through *Harijan* (issued from prison) on the same basis as facilities had been allowed me four months before. They would not yield, but they discharged me when their medical advisers thought I could not live many days if the fast was not given up. Then followed the ill-fated Rajkot fast in 1939. A false step taken by me thoughtlessly during that fast thwarted the brilliant result that would otherwise certainly have been achieved. In spite of all these fasts, fasting has not been accepted as a recognized part of satyagraha. It has only been tolerated by the politicians. I have however been driven to the conclusion that fasting unto death is an integral part of satyagraha programme, and it is the greatest and most effective weapon in its armoury under given circumstances. Not everyone is qualified for undertaking it without a proper course of training.

I may not burden this note with an examination of the circumstances under which fasting may be resorted to and the training required for it. Non-violence in its positive aspect as benevolence (I do not use the word love as it has fallen into disrepute) is the greatest force because of the limitless scope it affords for self-suffering without causing or intending any physical or material injury to the wrongdoer. The object always is to evoke the best in him. Self-suffering is an appeal to his better nature, as retaliation is to his baser. Fasting under proper circumstances is such an appeal *par excellence*. If the politician does not perceive its propriety in political matters, it is because it is a novel use of this very fine weapon.

To practice non-violence in mundane matters is to know its true value. It is to bring heaven upon earth. There is no such thing as the other world. All worlds are one. There is no 'here' and no 'there'. As Jeans has demonstrated, the whole universe including the most distant stars, invisible even through the most powerful telescope in the world, is compressed in an atom. I hold it therefore to be wrong to limit the use of non-violence to cave-dwellers and for acquiring merit for a favoured position in the other world. All virtue ceases to have use if it serves no purpose in every walk of life. I would therefore plead with the purely political-minded people to study non-violence and fasting as its extreme manifestation with sympathy and understanding.

SEVAGRAM, July 20, 1942

Harijan, 26-7-1942

133. LETTER TO NAZIR AHMAD

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C.P.,
July 20, 1942

DEAR FAKIR SAHEB,

I have your kind letter. There is no question of my or the Congress's changing attitude if doubts are removed. Both are ready at any moment to settle with the League on the usual terms, i.e., arbitration in the absence of agreement.

For myself what I have said is that I would accept Pakistan if I know its contents and if it satisfied my sense of justice. You must have seen Q. A.'s reply to my note. His definition of Pakistan must be unacceptable to you as it is to me.[1]

If an honourable understanding can be effected many things are, no doubt, possible. The best of possibilities is inexhaustible.

The rest of your letter does not call for any answer.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Gandhi-Sapru Papers. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta

[1] *Vide* "For Muslim Friends", 20-7-1942.

134. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 20, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I get not a moment for letter-writing. *Harijan* and interviews absorb my time.

I have replied to your repeated question. You can join me in Bombay. But if S[hummy] would be better pleased for you to stay in Simla till 15th August, I should stay on if I were you. You will gain nothing in Bombay. But I leave it entirely to you. You can do whatever pleases you.

Mira is still in Delhi doing good work. P. is better today. Sushila is due today for his sake. I have gained 2 lb. during the week. This increase is solely due to the increase in the milk in-take.

I hope S. is better and that your knee trouble you are going to leave there.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4140. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7449

135. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 20, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

I was about to write to you when your letter[1] came.

Of course I understand and appreciate the exquisite consideration running through your letter. I invite you all four to come here and pour out your love and argument to wean me from what appears to be an error. Anyway your monthly visit is due. You can come any day you like.

[1] The letter expressed misgivings of the addressee and others about the Working Committee's resolution of July 14. For the text, *vide* Appendix "Resolution Passed by Congress Working Committee", 14-7-1942.

What I wanted to write to you about was this. Why don't you form a league with Muslim friends to propagate your idea of settlement?[1] Have you seen Q.A.'s reply to my note[2]? Do you accept his definition of Pakistan?

What is the common idea about independence.[3] Surely you should have a common understanding over fundamentals before you come to an agreement.

Let not your fear of the Japs betray you into a worse state of things.

But more of all this when you come.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 10922. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan. Also *The Indian Annual Register, 1942,* Vol. II, p. 207

136. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

July 20, 1942

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

I have your letter. I see that your work is going on well. It is good. Who can say at the moment what is going to happen? We should all be ready and do whatever comes to our lot.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1092

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Rajagopalachari's Formula", July 1942.

[2] *Vide* "For Muslim Friends", 20-7-1942.

[3] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "If Japanese Come?", 21-7-1942. The questions were cabled by the United Press.

137. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[4]

[On or before *July 21, 1942*]

Q. 1. Whether Gandhiji is willing to see British go while Japanese on the frontier.

A. This question should not occur to anybody who has read my writings, for they contemplate Allied arms operating in India during the war.

Q. 2. Whether he would urge non-co-operation with Japanese after Japanese occupation.

A. Japanese occupation is inconceivable while Allied arms are operating on the Indian soil. If Japanese inflict defeat on Allied arms and succeed in occupying India I would most decidedly advise full non-co-operation.

Q. 3. Whether he would persist in urging non-co-operation if Japs shot non-co-operators .

Q. 4. Whether he would rather be shot than co-operate himself.

A. TO 3 & 4: Non-co-operation worth the name must invite shooting. In any case I would rather be shot than submit to Japanese or any other power.

Harijan, 26-7-1942

138. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C.P.,
July 21, 1942

CHI. MIRA,

You are living up to the certificate I have given you—you a born letter-writer of descriptive character. Your picture of your talk with Laithwaite is true to life.

I can understand and even appreciate the Viceroy's hesitation

about seeing you. But your talk with L. will serve the purpose.[1]

Sushila has told me about your meeting Maulana Saheb and J.L. It was good both were in Delhi. Give my love to Maulana Saheb if he is still there and tell him I hope he is completely restored.

I hope you had a good time in Hariana. You will return here or meet me in Bombay as time demands. I expect to leave here on 2nd, reaching Bombay on 3rd. I am keeping well. Pyarelal who was ill is definitely on the mend.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10365. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, p. 343

[1] The Viceroy, writing to Amery, summarized Mirabehn's talk with Laithwaite on July 17, as follows: (a) She continued to insist on vital necessity for full acceptance of Gandhi's demand for recognition of Indian independence. Nothing else could possibly save a situation which was very rapidly deteriorating. Gandhi was inspired by pure friendship for us. We were loathed through the country by all parties, Congress or non-Congress. Only Congress (subject to the declaration of independence) could remedy the situation. Once the declaration had been made everything would fall properly into its place. Disunity would disappear, etc., etc. (b) Gandhi had on the last occasion taken steps to call off the movement where there had been cases of violence. On this occasion, he would do his very utmost to ensure non-violence. But he would not feel justified in calling the movement off merely because cases of violence occurred. He could not do so without doing greater violence to the ideals for which he was working. (c) Gandhi was greatly moved in his decision to press this policy by the state of moral degradation into which he thought the country had fallen. It must regain its own soul. At the moment it was prepared, while hating the British, to lick their boots. This is an intolerable position and no price was too high to pay to remedy it. (d) On the last occasion Congressmen put in prison had obeyed the rules and been strictly non-violent. That would not be so now. It would be a case of victory or death. Gandhi might be put in prison, etc., but could not be kept there. She hinted definitely that he intended to see the business to a finish, even at the cost of his own life. He would do all he could to guide the movement on non-violent lines, but must be left free to guide it. If he was not left to guide it by word or writing there was nothing left for him but death. (That no doubt may be the meaning of Gandhi's statement to the Press about a short and swift struggle.) She was given no reason to hope that any modification of our attitude could be looked for or that the Congress claim could be entertained. *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. II, pp. 407-8

139. LETTER TO RANVIRSINH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 21, 1942

BHAI RANVIRSINH,

You showed great enthusiasm in bringing the letters of Mirabehn and others. Service should be the aim of everyone.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1221-a

140. CHARKHA JAYANTI[1]

'Gandhi Jayanti' is just a pretext, the real thing is Charkha Jayanti. Had there been no charkha, there would perhaps have been no Jayanti (Birthday) celebrations, and even if there had been such celebrations, they would have had little importance. There is no point in having birthday celebrations of any person without any definite end in view, otherwise they must be confined to just the innocent rejoicings of relatives and friends. But because Gandhi Jayanti has been turned into Charkha Jayanti—a great and comprehensive end—the celebration has assumed a national importance.[2]

The Charkha Sangh has decided to celebrate the Jayanti by collecting funds for khadi work, by enlisting self-spinners, and making yarn collections. In fixing up its programme it has had before it the example of Shri Narandas Gandhi's annual work in this direction. He and those who associate with him pledge themselves to do a certain amount of work each year, and he has had more and more success every year. There is no reason why such success should not attend the Charkha Sangh's efforts. Only it needs workers with a will to bring the work to fruition. Without khadi there may come a time when people may have to go without any clothing. Only the Charkha Sangh can prevent this catastrophe. I hope that all will co-operate with the Sangh in its noble endeavour.

SEVAGRAM, July 22, 1942

Harijan, 9-8-1942

[1] This was originally published in Hindi in *Khadi Jagat.*

[2] In the source here are added the words "and comprehensive end in view"—apparently a printer's error.

141. LETTER TO BALKRISHANA BHAVE

July 22, 1942

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

It is surprising that your appetite was not fully restored there. Stay there as long as you can preserve your strength. There is no need at all for you to worry about me. Of course, my weight had gone down.It is now going up. It has reached 103.5. This time even persons like you will be able to sacrifice themselves. Wait and see. If such a time is to come, it will come of itself.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI BALKRISHNA

TUPAROO, DALHOUSE

PUNJAB

From Gujarati: C.W. 807. Courtesy: Balkrishna Bhave

142. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

July 22, 1942

CHI. PRABHA,

You seem to be somewhat worried. There is no cause for worry. You can come here whenever you can free yourself. In the meantime take care of your health. There has been no letter from Jayaprakash recently, but I assume that he is all right. I am well. I take milk. Sushila has arrived here as Pyarelal had fallen ill. She will be returning on Sunday. Pyarelal has recovered.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3569

143. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

July 23, 1942

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. May your aspirations be fulfilled. Everything is covered by this.

Meet me in Bombay and, if you are not satisfied with that you may accompany me, if at all I come back. "Enjoy yourself today, for who has seen tomorrow?"

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10429. Also C.W. 6868. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

144. TELEGRAM TO RATHINDRANATH TAGORE

[On or after *July 23, 1942*][1]

RATHINDRANATH TAGORE
SANTINIKETAN

BETTER COME AFTER RETURN FROM BOMBAY ABOUT 10TH.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

145. THE FIRST VICTIM

Shri Satis Chandra Das Gupta of Khadi Pratishthan has been arrested[2] and sentenced to two years imprisonment for disobedience of an order under 26(1) of the Defence of India Rules. His offence consisted in advising distressed people not to move from their places unless provided with an equivalent. This procedure was in strict accord with my writings in *Harijan* and the recent resolution of the Congress Working Committee.

[1] The telegram was in reply to the addressee's letter of July 23, 1942.
[2] He was arrested in Noakhali on July 23.

There is no doubt that Satis Babu's breach was deliberate. It was broken at the dictates of humanity, as will be clear from his letter to the District Magistrate printed elsewhere. Satis Babu and his men have worked for years in these parts and distributed thousands of rupees among the spinners and weavers. Satis Babu's letter shows that the grievance is real. A great war claimed to be for the emancipation of the human mind and human body cannot be won by the suppression of those whose willing association is desired and desirable. The masses of India are undoubtedly steeped in ignorance. They are meek and regarded by historians as the gentlest on earth. They are easily led. They follow the guidance of their leaders. Hence the proper way to deal with them is to deal with the leaders.

Leaders are of two kinds: self-styled, who become leaders to exploit them, and those who become leaders by right of service. They are the trusted ones. It is quite easy to distinguish between the two species. It is wrong to tear these latter from their men.

Satis Babu belongs to the second category. He is no politician, though he knows politics. He is a businessman. He is one of the favourite pupils of Acharya Ray, the distinguished scientist and life-philanthropist, who never earned a pie for himself. Satis Babu is one of the makers of the famous Bengal Chemical Works—one of Acharya Ray's many creations. He gave up the Chemical Works of which he was the manager on a high salary. He took up khadi and became a poor man. His partner in his joys and sorrows followed him heart and soul in his austere life, and so did his brother and promising sons, one of whom died while he was serving. His brother Shri Kshitish Chandra Das Gupta is also a chemist, and has dedicated himself to the Khadi Pratishthan, giving all his time and energy to handicrafts like bee-keeping, paper-making and so on. Satis Babu deprived his sons of the high education he had himself taken. He threw himself into his new work with such great energy that he became an expert in khadi work and built up Khadi Pratishthan, which has become a great centre of philanthropic activities. Satis Babu is one of the truest and gentlest of men I have had the privilege of working with. He tries with all his might to live up to the message of truth and

non-violence which he accepted not as a political expedient but as a rule of life. If this country was not ruled by the law of exploitation on behalf of its conquerors but by popular representatives, men like Satis Babu would be much in demand by those in authority in times of need. This is a time of great need. But all the use the authorities have for him is to punish him for the breach of their laws which express not the will of the nation but of one man whose rule is imposed upon them. Satis Babu has kindled a light which will not be extinguished. The law is wrong, Satis Babu the servant of his people is right.

SEVAGRAM, July 24, 1942
Harijan, 2-8-1942

146. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

July 24, 1942

CHI. MUNNALAL,

There is nothing in Kanchan's letter which would require a telegram to be sent. Your letter is enough. Let us await her reply.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8472. Also C.W. 7173. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

147. INTERVIEW TO JOURNALIST[1]

[Before *July 25, 1942*][2]

He talked of the public feeling in his province. "It is more anti-British than pro-Japanese", he said. "There is a vague notion that we have had enough of this rule, and almost anything would be better than the existing state of things. People are happy when Subhas Babu says on the radio that there are no differences between him and you and when he says you are now out to fight for liberty at any cost."

GANDHIJI: But I suppose you know that there he is wrong and I cannot possibly appropriate the compliments he is paying me. 'Liberty at any cost' has a vastly different connotation for me from what it has for him. 'At any cost' does not exist in my dictionary. It does not for instance include bringing in foreigners in order to help us win our liberty. I have no doubt that it means exchanging one form of slavery for another possibly much worse. But of course we have to fight for our liberty and make whatever sacrifice it demands. In spite of all the hypocrisy that you find in all the inspired Press of Britain and America I do not relent. I deliberately use the word hypocrisy, for they are now proving that when they were talking of the freedom of India they did not mean it. So far as I am concerned I have no doubt about the righteousness of my step. It seems to me to be axiomatic that the Allies are in for a defeat this time if they will not do this initial act of justice, and thus put their own case on an unassailable basis. If they don't, they must face the opposition of those who cannot tolerate their rule and are prepared to die in order to get rid of it. 'Convert the deepening ill-will into goodwill' is a sound proposition. It is not open to them to say that we must smother our consciences and say or do nothing because there is war. That is why I have made up my mind that it would be a good thing if a million people were shot in a brave and non-violent rebellion against British rule. It may be that it may take us years before we can evolve order out of chaos. But we can then face the world, we cannot face the world today. Avowedly the different nations are fighting for their liberty. Germany, Japan, Russia, China are pouring their blood and money like water. What is *our*

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Fire Raging in Me", 25-7-1942. The journalist was present not in his capacity as a journalist "but as one interested in Gandhiji's movement".

[2] *Ibid*.

record? You talk of the newspapers doing good business out of the war. It is a shame to be thus bought and to refrain from speaking out at Government's dictation. There is many a way of earning an honest crust of bread. If British money—which is our money—can buy us Heaven help our country !

We are betraying a woeful cowardice. I do not mind the blood-bath in which Europe is plunged. It is bad enough, but there is a great deal of heroism—mothers losing their only children, wives their husbands and so on. Lord Lytton's only son was killed the other day. British history is filled with such heroic sacrifice. It is not the criticism of the British and American Press that worries me, but it is our Press listening to the British censor. If only to resist that awful atmosphere I must gird up my loins.

I do not feel flattered when Subhas Babu says I am right. I am not right in the sense he means. For there he is attributing pro-Japanese feeling to me. If I were to discover that by some strange miscalculation I had not realized the fact that I was helping the entry of the Japanese in this country, I should not hesitate to retrace my steps. As regards the Japanese, I am certain that we should lay down our lives in order to resist them as we would to resist the British.

But it won't be the work of human hands. It will be the work of a Force—incalculable and invisible—which works, often upsetting all our calculations. I rely implicitly on it. Otherwise I should go mad in face of all this torrent of what I must call irritating criticism. They do not know my agony. I cannot express it except perhaps by dying.

Was there the slightest suspicion that he wished victory to the Axis arms in order that the British may be humbled and their power in India may be destroyed? Gandhiji asked the friend to disabuse himself of any such nation.

Destruction of the British Power is not dependent on Japanese or German arms. If it depended on them, there would be nothing to be proud of, apart from the blight that would settle upon the world. But what matters to me is that I cannot be happy or proud if someone comes in and drives away my enemy. Where do I come in there? I cannot possibly enthuse over such a thing. I want to have the pleasure of having offered up my sacrifice for fighting the enemy in my own house. If I have not that strength I cannot prevent the other from coming in. Only I must find a middle path to prevent the new enemy coming in. I am sure God will help me to find the way.

I do not mind honest, strong, healthy criticism. All the

manufactured criticism that I find being made today is sheer tomfoolery, meant to overawe me and demoralize the Congress ranks. It is a foul game. They do not know the fire that is raging in my breast. I have no false notions of prestige; no personal considerations would make me take a step that I know is sure to plunge the country into a conflagration.

Harijan, 2-8-1942

148. A PLEA FOR REASON

The chorus of indignation from Great Britain and America with which the Working Committee resolution on the contemplated mass action has been greeted and the veiled or open threats which it has hurled at the Congress will not deter the Congress from its purpose. Hitherto it has thriven on opposition and attempts at suppression. It will not be otherwise this time. The suppression, of which perhaps the hysterical outburst in America and Great Britain is a precursor, may cow down the people for the moment but it will never put out the light of revolt once it has been lighted.

The Daily Herald and the Labour Party[1] have excelled all other critics in exaggeration and abuse. How nice it would have been if they had taken the trouble to understand the Congress demand.

The justice of the demand for ending the British Power has never been questioned, the moment chosen for enforcing it is the target of attack. It is clear as crystal in the Working Committee resolution why this moment is chosen. Let me paraphrase it. India is not playing any effective part in the War. Some of us feel ashamed that it is so and, what is more, we feel that if we were free from the foreign yoke, we should play a worthy, nay, a decisive part in the World War which has yet to reach its climax. We know that if India does not become free *now*, the hidden discontent will burst forth into a welcome to the Japanese, should they effect a landing. We feel that such an event would be a calamity of the first magnitude. We can avoid it if India gains her freedom. To distrust this simple, natural and honest declaration is to court disaster.

[1] A resolution passed by the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party on July 23 had denounced the "very contemplation" of a civil disobedience movement as "a proof of political irresponsibility". *The Transfer of Power,* Vol. II, Note, p. 455*fn*.

But the critics say: "To whom are the British rulers to hand the keys on their withdrawal?" It is a good question. Here is what Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, has said:

> The Congress always stands, firstly for sympathy towards democratic countries, secondly, never desires to embarrass Britain and war efforts, and, thirdly, it stands for opposition to the Japanese aggression. The Congress does not desire to take power for itself but for all. If real power is handed over to the Congress, surely it will approach other parties and will persuade them to join.

The Congress President added that he

> had no objection to Britain handing over power to the Muslim League or any other party provided it was real independence. That party will have to approach other parties as no single party can function properly without the co-operation of other parties.

The only thing needful is to hand over complete control without reservation save that during the war period the Allied troops will operate to stem Japanese or Axis attack. But they will have no power of interference with the affairs of India which will be as free as Great Britain herself.

Surely, there is nothing here to cavil at for anyone. That party or a combination which takes over control of India will have to look to the remaining parties for its retention of power. There is no hope of the parties coming together so long as they have to look not to one another but to an outsider for support and sustenance. Not one of the Viceroy's numerous Indian councillors are dependent upon anybody but the Viceroy for the positions they hold. How can the great or small representative parties operate without mutual support? In a free India even the Congress could not function efficiently for a day without the support of the smallest party. For in a free India, at least for some time to come, even the strongest party will have no military backing. There will be no military to back. There will only be raw police in the first stage unless the existing police will serve the National Government on its terms. But the support, such as it may be, that free India will be able to render to the Allied cause, will be of a sterling character. Its possibilities will be limitless and there will be no motive left for welcoming Japanese arms. On the contrary, they will then look to the Allied arms to repel any Japanese or other attack, unless all India has by then become non-violent. In any case, the Allied arms are there today and tomorrow and till the end of the War

whether they are needed for India's protection or not.

If this presentation of the implications of the Congress demand is not appreciated by the Allies' Press or the Allies themselves, Indian public men should be forgiven if they doubt the sincerity of the fierce opposition which is being organized with ominous unanimity. The latter can only stiffen India's suspicion and resistance.

SEVAGRAM, July 26, 1942

Harijan, 2-8-1942

149. MESSAGE TO "THE DAILY HERALD"

July 26, 1942

Amid universal bullying, *The Daily Herald's* is the unkindest cut.[1] This bullying seems inspired, for it has no foundation.

The Hindu, 28-7-1942

150. TALK WITH VINOBA BHAVE AND OTHERS

July 26, 1942

I have sent for you here so that I can lay before you what is going on in my mind, and if you find in me impatience or any other fault you may let me know.

I have tried, as I am trying, my best to give up the idea of fasting which has occupied my mind these days. But I find that it has taken firm hold of my mind. So far I have undertaken a number of fasts and I do not think any of them was unsuccessful. Some of these were resorted to for personal or domestic reasons. Their result was also good. The fast undertaken for Hindu-Muslim unity, too, had a good effect though it did not last long. The fast unto death undertaken against the proposed separation of the Harijans had instantaneous effect. People did not come and sit down with me but went into action.

[1] *The Daily Herald,* replying the following day, denied having been inspired and said it was merely "interpreting the outlook of Labour men and women. . . ." However, Amery, writing to Linlithgow on July 24, said, "Gandhi's antics have really been too much this time for the Press here and in America. I dare say I may have helped by some very frank talks to the Lobby correspondents. . . . Even *The Daily Herald* and now the official Labour Party have turned against him. . . ." *The Transfer of Power,* Vol. II, pp. 454-5

Even the president of the Hindu Mahasabha came to me and conceded my point. I liked all that. The twenty-one days' self-purification fast, occasioned by the impurity which had crept into the movement, was intended to be the first of a series of such fasts which was to go on for a year. But co-workers did not like the idea and I had to postpone it. But now I find that I cannot postpone it further. At the moment violence is on the rampage and darkness has descended upon the world. The poison has spread to India also. The Government wants to pit our own people against us and watch the spectacle. How can I tolerate that? I therefore feel that without sacrifice this raging fire cannot be quenched.

There are two kinds of fasts: one which is undertaken of one's own volition and the other which is undertaken in obedience to a gen- eral. What happens in a violent war? The soldiers put their faith in the general and plunge into the fire. Why cannot this be done in a non-violent war? This time I have also made a slight change in my concept concept of non-violence. In 1920 and 1930 I had laid down that obser-vance of ahimsa in thought, word and deed was indispensable. Now I feel that it is not right to expect four hundred million people to accept this view and to wait till they do. Now I only tell them to abstain from violence in word and deed. When I send any satyagrahi to break a law, I merely say: "Leave your lathi here and go and do this work without using abusive language." The success of the work which this will ensure will drive out thoughts of violence from his heart also. Supposing a non-violent struggle has been started at my behest and later on there is an outbreak of violence, I will put up with that too, because eventually it is God who is inspiring me and things will shape as He wills. If He wants to destroy the world through violence using me as His instrument, how can I prevent it? He is so subtle that it is beyond man to know Him. Though electricity is a subtler power, we can certainly find out something about it. But God is still subtler and all-pervading. All that we can say about Him is that it is a Power at whose bidding everything goes on. But it is impossible to find out what that Power is. We can only put our faith in Him and it is that faith which is moving me.

When I hear of the destruction of the Germans, the British and the Japanese, the value of their sacrifices greatly increases in my eyes. How brave must have been the man who sank H. M. S., *Prince of Wales*! He threw himself against the engine and sank the enemy ship. What courage!

We have not shown any courage as yet. After going to jail we

have fought for small things. A few like you have studied there. But that has no place in my present programme. If Pyarelal says that he would like to finish the Koran or if you say that you would like to complete the writing of an unfinished book, it will not do. This time we have to finish the entire work in three or four days. Breaking all the laws of the Government includes fasting also. If they put us in jail we will give up food and water and immolate ourselves.

Now the question arises—with whom should the beginning be made? For that I have selected myself because the work won't make any progress without my sacrifice. I want your co-operation. There is no cause for anyone to get alarmed or feel unhappy. It is only a matter of doing one's duty. After all the body has to perish one day. It is therefore better to let it perish in a noble cause.

KISHORELAL : If the General himself should die at the beginning, what would happen to the army? Therefore in my opinion you should choose someone and begin with him. You should first make use of his sacrifice and offer yourself only afterwards, when you think the time has arrived.

GANDHIJI: Who can that be? Suppose Jankibehn says 'My body is not worth much, let me go' or Shastriji says 'I will go!'

KISHORELAL: No, no, I meant those who count.

GANDHIJI: That is what I say. Suppose Shastriji is worth a pice, Jankibehn worth a rupee and I worth a guinea. If we have to pay a guinea for the thing, then I must sacrifice myself. Moreover who will decide that the time to sacrifice myself has come?

KISHORELAL: You yourself will decide.

GANDHIJI: If that is so I decide it right now that first of all I should sacrifice myself. What do you think?[1]

VINOBA BHAVE: I think you are right. But let me repeat what I have understood you to say. To my mind you mean that a fast may be undertaken from one's own choice or in obedience to a general in whom one has faith.

GANDHIJI: That is right. Let me add that to check the violence that is raging there is no other alternative. This therefore has become necessary. I am prepared to find more time for a fuller discussion if it is considered necessary.

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, pp. 335-8

[1] Gandhiji here turned to Vinoba Bhave.

151. FOR THE PRINCES

A kind of nervousness creeps over me as I think of the Princes of India, although I have the privilege of knowing many and some even intimately. My nervousness arises from the painful knowledge that they are a creation of the British rulers. Though some of them pre-existed before the British advent, their existence thereafter depended solely on British goodwill, which in its turn depended upon the price the then incumbents paid for that commodity. The present incumbents are sole creation of the Imperial Power. Its simple frown can undo them.

But they need not feel so helpless if they could consider themselves as an integral part of the nation instead of being, as they are, an integral part of the Imperial machine. If the machine topples they may disappear unless they become part of, and depend upon, the nation.

The Empire is going either by the will of the British people or by the force of circumstances beyond their control. India shall not always be a slave country. Will the Princes march with the times or must they remain tied to the Imperial chariot-wheel? If they take their courage in both their hands and make common cause with the nation they can run the risk of dispossession.

This I admit is a heroic step. They can adopt the middle course. They may earn the goodwill of their people by sharing their powers with them. They will never be able to retain their absolutism for all time. But they may certainly hope to retain much if they can secure the contentment and active co-operation of the people within their jurisdiction, in the administration of their own affairs. I think it is wrong of the Princes to let their critics say of their people that they are too backward to deserve freedom. It is a reflection on them. The people in the States belong to the same stock as those outside their borders. The Princes can lose nothing by being liberal. And they can lose everything by holding on to their autocracy.

For my part I desire not abolition, but conversion of their autocracy into trusteeship, not in name but in reality. The arbitrary powers they enjoy should go. The liberty of the people should not depend upon the will of an individual however noble and ancient may be his descent. Nor can any person, whether Prince or a Princely zamindar or merchant, be the sole owner and disposer of possessions hereditary or self-acquired. Every individual must have the fullest

liberty to use his talents consistently with equal use by his neighbours but no one is entitled to the arbitrary use of the gains from the talents. He is part of the nation or say the social structure surrounding him. Therefore, he can only use his talents not for self only but for the social structure of which he is but a part and on whose sufferance he lives. The present inequalities are surely due to people's ignorance. With a growing knowledge of their natural strength, the inequalities must disappear. If the revolution is brought about by violence the position will be reversed, but not altered for the better. With non-violence, i.e., conversion, the new era which people hope for must be born. My approach and appeal are in terms of non-violence pure and undefiled. The French have a noble motto in Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. It is a heritage not for the French only but for all mankind.

What the French never realized it is open to us to do. Will the Princes and the Princely landholders and merchants take the lead? It is for them to take the lead, not for the 'have-nots', who have nothing to share with anybody except their pauperism and abjectness. I am addressing weekly appeals to the British Power. They are made exactly in the same friendly spirit as this is. The British may not respond. If the 'haves', who are in fact the pillars on which the mighty British Power rests, can realize their obvious duty, the British Power must yield. It was because I had despaired of response from the pillars, that I have thought of moving the masses on whom the pillars rest. I may not leave a single stone unturned to avoid, if I can, what is undoubtedly a great risk. Hence this appeal.

SEVAGRAM, July 27, 1942

Harijan, 2-8-1942

152. URDU EXAMINATION[1]

The Hindustani Prachar Sabha has begun its work in right earnest. It is purely a body of workers who believe in the message and mission of the Sabha. The message is that the national language of India is not English but Hindustani, i.e., Hindi plus Urdu. Shri Purushottamdas Tandon, who is the soul of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, was the author of the Congress resolution on Hindustani. It was he who made it crystal clear to me that Hindustani at present must

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

mean Hindi plus Urdu. Everyone who attends Congress meetings realizes this truth, for when a Congressman speaks in Hindi the Urdu-speaking men do not fully understand him, if at all, and the same thing applies to Urdu speakers. Therefore if you wish to be understood by all, you have to speak a combination of the two as I have heard Malaviyaji and Babu Bhagwandas doing. Hence the necessity of Indian nationalists speaking both the varieties of Hindustani speech. No one may be said to speak Hindustani who is not equally at home with both the varieties. Hence the necessity also of their knowing equally well both the scripts. To supply this felt want is one of the main causes of founding the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. Its founders were and are members of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. But their ambition was not satisfied with mere Hindi propaganda. Therefore, with the approval of the Sammelan, they have founded the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. Naturally the Sabha's first act should be to induce all the Hindi-knowing persons to learn Urdu and to provide facilities for them. To this end I am in communication with Maulana Abdul Haq Saheb, the learned secretary of the Anjuman Taraqui-e-Urdu for help and guidance. The council of the Sabha has decided to hold the first examination in Urdu on the 22nd November. The particulars, including the syllabus, will be published as soon as possible. Those who would appear for this examination are requested to send in their names to Acharya Shriman Narayan Agarwal, Hindustani Prachar Office, Wardha. I hope that all those who have passed the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan examinations will be eager to pass the forthcoming Urdu examination. Of course those who do not know Hindi would also be welcome. A knowledge of any language at any time enriches one's mind and enables one to cultivate closer contact with the people who speak that language. How much more valuable must a knowledge of Urdu be to the one who knows Hindi only, as that of Hindi must be to the one who knows Urdu only? If living Hindustani is to come into being it can only be through a natural and happy fusion of the two. Such a fusion is impossible without a large number of persons having an equal command over both the sister languages.

SEVAGRAM, July 27, 1942

Harijan, 2-8-1942

153. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

July 27, 1942

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

How exceedingly nice of you to have listened to the cry of the dumb cow?[1] May I say, God bless you for your kind act!

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Transfer of Power, Vol. II, p. 469

154. NOTE TO BALVANTSINHA

July 27, 1942

Do not have any anxiety on my account.[2] It is worth considering whether one can undertake a fast for the sake of others. I have discussed it only from a theoretical standpoint.

I keep thinking about you. But I do not worry at all. I do not have any fear about you. Your remaining here and keeping yourself busy with Ashram work is enough for me and you must take it that Goseva work is included in those activities. Meet Swami and others and love them. Your being here is like a fire bucket. You know how powerful a fire bucket is. In case I perish, God will show you the way. In fact you have been in the Ashram from its inception, so you should die here. I shall send for you if I get the time, but it is difficult.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, p. 338

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 2-7-1942. The Viceroy, writing on July 25, had said that he had "taken steps which will I hope result in reducing to quite insignifcant proportions any future accidents of this kind".

[2] The addressee was haunted by the fear that Gandhiji would not live long and had wanted to know what he must do after Gandhiji's death.

155. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

Q. 1. Will you be satisfied by a joint guarantee by America, China and Soviet Russia?

A. No guarantee is contemplated by the Congress demand, because present delivery of independence is the need of the hour, not because of distrust about future delivery but because India as an independent Power wants to play, if it is at all possible, a decisive part in favour of the Allies. India today is becoming progressively hostile to the Allied Powers notwithstanding their ability to command recruits and the like. What is wanted is an enthusiastic response from a free and willing India. Many of us think that that is the indispensable condition of the success of Allied arms.

Q. 2. What should be the nature of the provisional government and who should be the possible members?

A. It is difficult to foresee what will happen when India is declared free but I imagine that any provisional government to be stable in the absence of outside imposition can only be by the willing consent of different popular parties. This willing consent is impossible so long as the third party is present to look up to for favours. The Congress President has already suggested that the Government may simultaneously with the declaration of independence deliver their power to any of the organized popular parties including the Muslim League and the Congress. It will be up to the deliveree to compose with the remaining parties in order to secure stability, because in free India Government must depend wholly upon the willing consent of the people. It should be remembered that all the time that free India Government is functioning, the Allied troops will carry on their operations without let or hindrance, subject to the treaty that will be negotiated between free India Government and the Allied Powers.

Q. 3. How do you hope to avert anarchy during the transitional period?

A. The anarchy is automatically averted if a provisional Government is formed, which will be the case under the Congress president's suggestion.

Q. 4. Will you accept a joint guarantee by the Socialist and Liberal parties of England for Indian independence?

A. Reply to this is contained in reply to the first.

SEVAGRAM, July 28, 1942

Harijan, 2-8-1942

[1] The questions were from the United Press, London.

156. LETTER TO ASAF ALI

July 28, 1942

MY DEAR ASAF ALI,

Many thanks for your letter. The propaganda you refer to is vicious. I am going to notice it in *Harijan.*[1]

As to the charges against me, it has been my lot for the past 50 years to be misunderstood. This last attack is not surprising. I shall, however, see what is to be done. Both the Congress and I will survive the venom. My love to you both.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 36

157. LETTER TO MAURICE FRYDMAN

SEVAGRAM,
July 28, 1942

MY DEAR BHARATANAND,

I have your letter. You will misunderstand me. I told you that I was at one with you and that I was trying to take the Congress and everybody towards world federation. I also tell you that if it ever comes it will come through Sevagram or Sevagram way. I want free India too for that purpose. If I can get freedom for India now through non-violent means, power of non-violence is firmly established, Empire idea dissolves and world State takes its place, in which all the States of the world are free and equal, no State has its military, there may be a world police to keep order in the absence of universal belief in non-violence.

If this cannot satisfy your ambition, nothing else will. This is not said to tempt you to come back to Sevagram. That you will do when you are tired of being outside your natural surroundings.

But your return to your profession is not necessary to enable you to do federation work. Return to the profession will be a

[1] *Vide* "Unseemly If True", 9-8-1942.

hindrance. You may carry on a whirlwind campaign for the idea, if that satisfies your soul.

Keep your health.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

158. LETTER TO ABDUL HAQ

DELHI,
July 28, 1942

BHAI SAHEB,

I am sending herewith a copy of the constitution of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. You will find some mistakes of Urdu. I do not have anyone who is proficient in Urdu. I am looking for such a person. Can you help? The person must know Hindi as well.

I have left it to you whether or not you will join the Sabha. I remain hopeful that you will come when you find the right occasion. You will see from the constitution that all the posts on the executive committee have not been filled in the hope that an opportunity will certainly come for you to be included.

And now I come to the main purpose of this letter. In Hindustani Prachar our first step should be to hold an examination for beginners. We have decided to hold one such examination on November 22. Does your Anjuman hold any examination which even those who know no Urdu can take? If so we shall prepare candidates for such an examination provided you open examination centres wherever candidates are available. If you like we are willing to be your agents. If you are not equipped to do this, can you send us some instructions? Can you suggest some books? Will you agree to be the examiner or will you send some names from your office? We shall all be obliged to you for any help you can give.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers Courtesy: Pyarelal

159. LETTER TO SYED MAHMOOD

July 28, 1942

BHAI MAHMOOD,

I read the book from the first page to the last. It reflects your mind. It is good but in my opinion it is not worth publishing. All your information does not seem correct. It should be such that there is not any scope for two opinions. In the last three chapters there are many things which are not desirable. Your information should be such as both Hindus and Muslims can accept. Let their conclusions be different.

Your duty is to bring the two together. I do not wish that your book should start a controversy.

My last advice is: do what Maulana Saheb says.

I hope you have started learning Hindi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5116

160. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

July 29, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Nothing from you for the last two days. I must not expect, if I do not write regularly. And I can't. I hope you are well.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4141. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7450

161. LETTER TO T. B. SAPRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
July 29, 1942

DEAR DR. SAPRU,

Nothing from your pen I can possibly disregard. If I had the slightest faith in a Round Table Conference when British authority

reigns supreme, I would accept your proposal. You know what happened when Sir Sankaran Nair presided, when I presided in Delhi—was it not?—and in London when I was thrust into the chair. Of course you are at liberty to say that each time the fault was mine. My interpretation is different. The result is the same. I am not the fit person for such a task. But if you have faith and you call it, I shall be at your service. You at least will acquit me of haste or pride. I have seen nothing impossible of acceptance in my or, rather, now, the Congress demand.

I hope you have got rid of all your illness.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi-Sapru Papers. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta. Also G.N. 7578

162. CABLE TO AGATHA HARRISON

WARDHAGANJ,
July 30, 1942

AGATHA HARRISON
2 CRANBOURNE COURT
ALBERTBRIDGE ROAD
LONDON SW 11

HAVE NO ANXIETY. ANDREWS WITH ME.[1] TRUST GOD.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1523

163. LETTER TO GLADYS OWEN

July 30, 1942

MY DEAR GLADYS,

Your dear letter just received. Andrews' spirit is ever with me just as it is with you. I have only discussed the possibilities. No fast of

[1] The addressee has noted: "Shortly before the Quit India resolution was passed in August 1942, I had written or cabled Gandhiji reminding him of his words in 'Andrews' Legacy', (about both sides coming together)."

the nature you have in mind immediately in view. Be careful for nothing. God's will be done. I shall not act in haste. Do come after my return from Bombay.

Love.

BAPU

MISS GLADYS OWEN
NEW MANZIL
LALBAGH
LUCKNOW, U.P.

From a photostat: G.N. 6198

164. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

July 30, 1942

CHI. JAISUKHLAL[1],

It is good that you wrote. Chi. Manu[2] is a very sensible and smart girl. She serves Ba devotedly. She has become friendly with all. There is no complaint against her. She is quite good in her studies too. I see that she is happy. She comes every evening to massage my legs. Of course she also accompanies me in my walks. There is no need for- you to worry about her. It is enough if you keep yourself mentally ready. There is no need for you to resign. Cultivate self-control as much as possible. But that should not be done out of compulsion. Do not at all worry about me. I am in God's hands and always seek shelter in Him. And so I enjoy supreme peace of mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U.-IXXIV

165. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

July 30, 1942

CHI. KAKA,

The accompanying letter was left behind here. It was meant for me to see, was it not? I have read it.

Send a note about that dictionary.

[1] Gandhiji's nephew
[2] Addressee's daughter

We should have a book-store through which we can sell books selected by us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10961

166. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

July 30, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You are responsible for the conduct of the Ashram inmates all the twenty-four hours. How you can discharge that responsibility is a different thing. This can be possible only when they willingly submit to observation. You should act as if I was not there. Do what you can. See how far your ahimsa goes. If things are thrust on you of which you do not even have any knowledge you should put up with it. By all means take my help whenever it is needed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4437; also S.N. 24486

167. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
July 31, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I was wrong in telling [you] there was nothing from you for two days. M. had no time to give me your letters.

You were wrong in not wanting to tell me of your illness. You do no good by such well-meaning but ill-serving suppression. However, that is past. I hope you are now fully restored.

I am quite clear that it is far better that you miss Bombay to be with S. than that you should cause him grief to come to Bombay. If it turns out (which I hope it won't) as S. imagines, you would never forgive yourself for not being with him as long as you could.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4142. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7451

168. LETTER TO TEJA SINGH

July 31, 1942

Many thanks for your letter[1]. You will pardon me for not entering into a discussion of the question. I would say the same thing of everyone, including Krishna, as a man who cannot create but can only destroy. But that would not diminish my regard for him or his bravery.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

169. LETTER TO WANDA DYNOWSKA[2]

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 31, 1942

DEAR UMA,

I have your two dear letters. I cannot be offended by what you write. I appreciate your frankness. You do not want me to argue with you.

I hope you are better.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

You must not mind the old method of addressing and subscribing. We may differ in opinions but there should be no change in our love.

SHRI UMADEVI
RAMANA ASHRAM
TIRUVANNAMALAI
S. INDIA

From a photostat: G.N. 1205 and 8059. Also C.W. 5100. Courtesy: Wanda Dynowska

[1] The addressee in his letter had taken exception to Gandhiji's description of Guru Govind Singh as "a misguided patriot"; *vide* "Guru Govind Singh", 4-7-1942.

[2] A Polish admirer of Gandhiji

170. LETTER TO KRISNACHANDRA

July 31, 1942

CHI. KRI[SHNA]CHA[NDRA],

How can I test you in this way? Why should you take it as a defeat if you cannot keep anyone? No, the question simply was whether you conld be naturally generous and tolerant in your dealings with difficult persons or not. For that you yourself will be both the examinee and the examiner.

You gave good news about Ramji.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4438; also S.N. 24487

171. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

SEVAGRAM,
July 31, 1942

BHAI GOPICHAND,

I have only now been able to read your letter of July 24. The case is sad. Your reply is very good. But who will listen ? There is nothing for me to do in the matter, is there ? And what after all can one do ? Please reassure Dukhiya's relatives on my behalf.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA
C/O THE POSTMASTER, BATOTE
(JAMMU & KASHMIR STATE)

From the Hindi original : Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

172. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

July 1942

The discussion that took place yesterday on Kishorelal's instructions[1] was not proper. He had issued those instructions to

[1] Kishorelal Mashruwala had issued instructions, in July, 1942, that no one could see Gandhiji without the previous permission of the Managing Committee. Munnalal Shah and Balvantsinha protested against this and spoke about it to other inmates of the Ashram including Kishorelal after the prayers.

protect me. This is a dharmashala, but even then there should be some rules. This is also a hospital. Even the patients have to observe rules. However, Bhansali is the best person of us all. Why should he observe any rules? Munnalal is also free. He is a king unto himself. We have ourselves seen, at Kishorelalbhai's house, how much work he does. He too is an exception. Balvantsinha is the best labourer among us all. He cannot remain alive without the cow and farming. But today he is at my service. He is also an exception.

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, p. 334

173. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
[*August*][1] *1, 1942*

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter. You must not worry. You have remained for the sake of S. There must be joy in that sacrifice. Why should you doubt the correctness of the step? You will gain more by your restraint than by coming to Bombay and this notwithstanding what happens in Bombay. I hope to be back in Sevagram before 14th and not before 10th. You may leave when you know the date for certain.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3692. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6501

174. INSTRUCTIONS TO THE ASHRAM INMATES

[*August 1, 1942*][2]

I am going to Bombay tomorrow. I cannot say what will happen. But I hope to be back by August 11, and in any case not later than August 13. Those who are in the Ashram should know that anything can befall them. It is possible that Government may even stop the supply of our food. Only those therefore should stay here who are ready to live even on leaves. The rest should leave. It will be a matter of shame for us if they leave after the trouble.

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, p. 339

[1] The source has "1-9-1942" in Hindi in Gandhiji's hand which appears to be a slip for 1-8-1942.

[2] Gandhiji left Sevagram for Bombay on August 2.

175. SPEECH AT OPENING OF HINDUSTANI TALIMI SANGH BHAWAN

SEVAGRAM,
August 1, 1942

So far, we could not produce better results in the basic education system, which has been introduced in Government-controlled institutions, but we hope to do so in the Hindustani Talimi Sangh Bhawan, as we have free scope here for research, experiments and development in the seven years' course prescribed under what is called the Wardha Education System.

An institution founded on truth is bound to succeed. The world is based on Truth. Truth is better than any other religion. God is Truth and *vice versa.* Truth alone lives even though all things perish. I bless this institution whose guiding principle is stated to be Truth, and appeal to you all to give your blessings and help it whole-heartedly.

The Hindu, 3-8-1942

176. QUESTION BOX

SEVAGRAM,
[On or before *August 2, 1942*][1]

WORLD FEDERATION

Q. Instead of striving for India's freedom why would you not strive for a far greater and nobler end—world federation? Surely that will automatically include India's freedom as the greater includes the less.

A. There is an obvious fallacy in this question. Federation is undoubtedly a greater and nobler end for free nations. It is a greater and nobler end for them to strive to promote federation than be self-centred, seeking only to preserve their own freedom. They are finding it difficult if not impossible for individuals to retain freedom without a combination. It has become a necessity while the war lasts and it

[1] This and the following item were written in Sevagram where Gandhiji remained up to this date.

would be good if they voluntarily pledge themselves now, to remain united even after the war. Defeat of any one member should make no difference. The survivors will not rest content till the defeated member is avenged. Still this won't be a world federation. It would be a mere defensive alliance between a certain combination. The very first step to a world federation is to recognize the freedom of conquered and exploited nations. Thus, India and Africa have to be freed. The second step would be to announce to and assure the aggressor powers, in the present instance, the Axis powers, that immediately the war ends, they will be recognized as members of the world federation in the same sense as the Allies. This presupposes an agreement among the members of the world federation as to the irreducible fundamentals. If this is not forthcoming, the federation will fall to pieces under the slightest strain. Therefore it has to come about voluntarily. I suggest that non-violence is the basis of voluntariness. It is because of all the nations of the world India is the one nation which has a message, however limited and crude it may be, in that direction that it must have immediate freedom to enable it to play its part. You may not quote against me Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. I know that they do not hold the view I hold on non-violence. When India gets her freedom the probability is that I shall no longer be wanted by any party and everybody would be war-mad. Nevertheless there will be, I am quite sure, a respectable number of votaries of nonviolence who will make their contribution. But this subject is not germane to the question. Moreover, I am discussing that aspect more fully elsewhere. I hope you will agree with me that India, in seeking first to be free, is not retarding federation. It wants her freedom for the sake of the nations in distress, especially China and Russia and for the whole of humanity—in your language world federation. You will also, I hope, see that no universal federation is possible without India becoming free now. It would be an earnest too of the Allied declarations.

WHAT ABOUT NEPAL?

Q. When India is free will she treat Nepal as an independent country that she is now or will she be annexed to free India?

A. If I know India's mind at all, having tasted the bitter fruit of dependence, she will not want to annex or steal any country. She can have no imperial ambition. Nepal therefore will be an honoured and independent neighbour. I am not sure that Nepal is as independent as you think it is. But I do not know enough of Nepal to challenge your statement. I hope that you are wholly right.

Harijan, 9-8-1942

177. HINDUSTANI

SEVAGRAM,

[*On or before August 2, 1942*]

Apropos of the work that is now being done by Hindustani Prachar Sabha, Kakasaheb sends me the following excerpt from *Young India,* August 18th, 1921.

> So many Hindi-speaking friends have been anxious for me to make myself responsible for publishing a Hindi edition of the *Navajivan*....
>
> I know that several translations in Hindi appear in different parts of India. But the desire has been to put under one cover an authorized free translation of selected articles from the *Navajivan* and *Young India.* This is now being done. The Hindi of the edition will really be Hindustani, a resultant of Hindi and Urdu—simple words understood by both Hindus and Mussalmans. An attempt will be made to avoid ornamentation. Indeed I would love to give a simultaneous transcript in the Urdu characters. But that cannot be as yet.

It reminds the readers and me that I expressed years ago the views I am now expressing and seeking to emphasize. The way to accomplish the end has been only now found, namely, that a large number of persons should speak and write Hindi and Urdu with equal facility. The forthcoming first examination will show how many have accepted the way.

Harijan, 9-8-1942

178. PRODUCE KHADI[1]

You should apply the slogan "Grow more food" which we hear everywhere to khadi also. If we do not produce khadi crores of people

[1] This was originally published in *Khadi Jagat.*

will be compelled to remain naked just as if we do not produce food crores of people will die of starvation —and the number will be much larger than the number of those dying in war. The only difference will be that in the war they die knowingly and they are honoured as heroes while no one remembers those who die of starvation. And they die because of our ignorance and lethargy.

We shall not die for want of clothes, but we would not like to remain naked either. If the war is prolonged the mills will cease to function [as at present]. They will produce war material.

How can then khadi be produced? I have already said that at the moment we can get the yarn produced not by hired labour but by plying the charkha voluntarily in every home. If we keep an account of every minute and put that to good use, there will never be a scarcity of cloth. Since the yarn given to us as a gift will definitely be cheaper than that produced by hired labour, the khadi will also be comparatively cheaper.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 2-8-1942

179. 'MAGAN DIPA'

Gram Udyoga Patrika is little known to the general public. It is the organ of the A.I.V.I.A., edited by Dr. Bharatan Kumarappa and published from Maganwadi. It contains solid reading matter for those who are interested in the revival of village industries. The worth of such writings is specially appreciated during these times when we are compelled more and more to rely upon what villages can supply. Thus we may have no paraffin for domestic use. We have very little even now. Maganwadi has produced a lamp which enables one to use the indigenous oils. The experiment that has so far succeeded refers to the use of *sarso*[1] oil. The success is so gratifying that in Maganwadi only that oil is used for lighting purposes. The lantern is an adaptation of the usual hurricane article. Sri Satyan of the Nalwadi Ashram is its inventor. He is adopting these lanterns for dispatch as samples only. The current number of the *Patrika* is devoted solely to the 'Magan Dipa' as the adapted lantern has been named. For the inventive faculty as applied to village tools and products is the special legacy of

[1] Mustard

the late Maganlal Gandhi after whom the institution and the museum are named. For further particulars I must refer the curious reader to the *Patrika* which can be had on application to the Manager, Maganwadi, Wardha.

SEVAGRAM, August 2,1942

Harijan, 9-8-1942

180. AN APPROPRIATE QUESTION

[*August 2, 1942*][1]

I take the following from *The Hindu:*

> The *Manchester Guardian,* in an editorial commenting on the Wardha resolution, says that the resolution suggested that if Britain would immediately withdraw, India would help her and the Allies to 'resist aggression'. In India, as here, it is being asked what is meant by 'resistance'. Would it be armed resistance or would it be 'resistance' of the kind which Mr. Gandhi has always advocated—non-violent non-co-operation? The text of the resolution ought to settle the question, but it does not. Pandit Nehru and some other Congress leaders have said that they themselves believe in offering armed resistance, provided that Britain makes the necessary political concessions. But Mr. Gandhi's belief is that Indians would most effectively 'resist' Japan and any other aggressor by pure non-violence. How is Britain to know what sort of 'resistance' the proposed Indian Government would organize, concludes the *Manchester Guardian.*

This is a good question. But who can speak for the proposed Indian Government? It must be clear that it won't be Congress Government; nor will it be Hindu Mahasabha Government, nor Muslim League Government. It will be all-India Government. It will be a government not backed by any military power unless the so-called military classes seize the opportunity and overawe the populace and declare themselves the Government as Franco has done. If they play the game then the proposed government would be a government though provisional in the first instance, broad-based upon the will of the people. Let us assume that the military-minded persons being without the backing of the powerful British arms will think [it] wise not to seize power. The popular Government to be must represent Parsis, Jews, Indian Christians, Muslims and Hindus not as separate

[1] From the Gujarati version published in the *Harijanbandhu,* 9-8-1942

religious groups but as Indians. The vast majority won't be believers in non-violence. The Congress does not believe in non-violence as a creed. Very few go to the extreme length I do as the *Manchester Guardian* properly puts it. The Maulana and Pandit Nehru believe in offering armed resistance. And, I may add, so do many Congressmen. Therefore, whether in the country as a whole or in the Congress, I shall be in a hopeless minority. But for me even if I find myself in a minority of one my course is clear. My non-violence is on its trial. I hope I shall come out unscathed through the ordeal. My faith in its efficacy is unflinching. If I could turn India, Great Britain, America and the rest of the world, including the Axis Powers, in the direction of non-violence I should do so. But that feat mere human effort cannot accomplish. That is in God's hands. For me, 'I can but do or die.' Surely the *Manchester Guardian* does not fear the real article, genuine non-violence. Nobody does nor need.

Harijan, 9-8-1942

181. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

AT THE STATION,
August 2, 1942

CHI. KAKA,

I got your note. Continue on the Board[1] for the present. If necessary we will consider leaving it when the time comes.

You will have to make a concrete suggestion about the Sammelan. I shall then be able to give my decision. Otherwise my intellect will simply not work. You know its problems better than anybody else, and so you will have to take an active part. You may also make whatever suggestion you like regarding the election of the President. I understand your difficulty. Rest assured that it will be solved.

I understand about the books. Do not neglect your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10962

[1] Hindi Board of the Bombay Government

182. DEMANDS OF MARWAR LOK PARISHAD

The following are the demands of the Marwar Lok Parishad in Jodhpur as supplied to me:

1. The Government of Jodhpur shall reaffirm the terms of the compromise of 1940 arrived at between the Government and the Marwar Lok Parishad as a result of the last satyagraha movement in Marwar.

2. The Government shall see that rule of law is established in the State and more especially in the jagiri areas and that full civil liberties (in terms of the agreement of 1940) are enjoyed by the Lok Parishad workers without any fear of intimidation or victimization (i.e., physical violence or damage to property, etc.) at the hands of jagirdars or their subordinates.

3. The New Reforms (Advisory Assembly) recently introduced shall immediately be scrapped and the Constitutional Reforms originally passed in the Council and assented to by His Highness the Maharaja shall instead be introduced as an earnest of further constitutional development on the path to full responsible government under the aegis of His Highness the Maharaja Saheb Bahadur.

4. The Municipal Act (passed in 1940 but not yet enforced) shall be revised consistently with the growing needs and aspirations of the people and real local self-government shall be established with the people's representatives enjoying real powers.

5. Government shall make effective and satisfactory arrangements for regular *Latai.*

NOTE: In this connection mention must be made of the circular of the Government to the district officers ordering them to arrange for regular *Latai* at places where it was delayed. The circular was unfortunately withdrawn by the Government in 1941 thereby leaving the district authorities powerless and the cultivators at the mercy of the jagirdars.

6. The exaction of illegal and unlawful cesses and other exactions shall immediately be stopped and proper arrangements shall forthwith be made to see that the practice is not resumed. In addition, the Government shall appoint a commission of inquiry to go into the jagiri problem as a whole to make necessary recommendations regarding the levy of various cesses, taxes and other exactions held lawful at present.

7. The Government shall immediately enforce the Registration of Arms Act in the case of jagirdars also. The present policy of making invidious discrimination between the jagirdar class, in whose case the date of registration is being postponed from month to month, and the rest of the

people, who have been compelled to register their arms and secure licences for possessing them, is fraught with grave consequences for the internal peace and security of Marwar, especially In these days of grave crisis.

8. An inquiry shall also be held into the following happenings:

(a) The excesses committed by the jagirdars and their men on the Lok Parishad workers in the jagirs of Chandawal, Ladnun, Roru, etc

(b) Ill-treatment meted out by the jail authorities to the political prisoners.

(c) The lathi charge and other excesses of the 19th June and the subsequent days.

There is nothing in the demands that one can cavil at. There is nothing extravagant in them. They take note of the limitations of Rajputana States whatever the cause thereof. It is for the compliance with these demands that Shri Jainarain Vyas and his companions are in jail and Bisa lost his life.[1] It is for that reason that many Jodhpuris including women—a strange sight in Jodhpur—have resolved to offer civil disobedience. Let me hope that the Jodhpur Durbar will satisfy the moderate demands of the Parishad and let me further hope that the people of Jodhpur having resolved upon achieving their purpose through suffering will not rest till they have reached their immediate goal.

ON WAY TO BOMBAY, AUGUST 2, 1942

Harijan, 9-8-1942

183. TO AMERICAN FRIENDS

ON WAY TO BOMBAY,
August 3, 1942

DEAR FRIENDS,

As I am supposed to be the spirit behind the much discussed and equally well abused resolution of the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress on independence, it has become necessary for me to explain my position. For I am not unknown to you. I have in America perhaps the largest number of friends in the West—not even excepting Great Britain, British friends knowing me personally

[1] *Vide* "Jodhpur", 30-5-1942, "Jodhpur Tragedy", 14-6-1942, "Jodhpur", 29-6-1942 and "Pandit Kachru Externed", 20-7-1942.

are more discerning than the American. In America I suffer from the well-known malady called hero worship. The good Dr. Holmes, until recently of the Unity Church of New York, without knowing me personally became my advertising agent. Some of the nice things he said about me I never knew myself. So I receive often embarrassing letters from America expecting me to perform miracles. Dr. Holmes was followed much later by the late Bishop Fisher who knew me personally in India. He very nearly dragged me to America but fate had ordained otherwise and I could not visit your vast and great country with its wonderful people.

Moreover, you have given me a teacher in Thoreau, who furnished me through his essay on the 'Duty of Civil Disobedience' scientific confirmation of what I was doing in South Africa. Great Britain gave me Ruskin, whose *Unto This Last* transformed me overnight from a lawyer and city-dweller into a rustic living away from Durban on a farm, three miles from the nearest railway station and Russia gave me in Tolstoi a teacher who furnished a reasoned basis for my non-violence. He blessed my movement in South Africa when it was still in its infancy and of whose wonderful possibilities I had yet to learn. It was he who had prophesied in his letter to me that I was leading a movement which was destined to bring a message of hope to the downtrodden people of the earth. So you will see that I have not approached the present task in any spirit of enmity to Great Britain and the West. After having imbibed and assimilated the message of *Unto This Last,* I could not be guilty of approving of Fascism or Nazism, whose cult is suppression of the individual and his liberty.

I invite you to read my formula of withdrawal or, as it has been popularly called, 'Quit India', with this background. You may not read into it more than the context warrants.

I claim to be a votary of truth from my childhood. It was the most natural thing to me. My prayerful search gave me the revealing maxim 'Truth is God' instead of the usual one 'God is Truth'. That maxim enables me to see God face to face as it were. I feel Him pervade every fibre of my being. With this Truth as witness between you and me, I assert that I would not have asked my country to invite Great Britain to withdraw her rule over India, irrespective of any demand to the contrary, if I had not seen at once that for the sake of Great Britain and the Allied cause it was necessary for Britain boldly

to perform the duty of freeing India from bondage. Without this essential act of tardy justice, Britain could not justify her position before the unmurmuring world conscience, which is there nevertheless. Singapore, Malaya and Burma taught me that the disaster must not be repeated in India. I make bold to say that it cannot be averted unless Britain trusts the people of India to use their liberty in favour of the Allied cause. By that supreme act of justice Britain would have taken away all cause for the seething discontent of India. She will turn the growing ill-will into active goodwill. I submit that it is worth all the battleships and airships that your wonderworking engineers and financial resources can produce.

I know that interested propaganda has filled your ears and eyes with distorted versions of the Congress position. I have been painted as a hypocrite and enemy of Britain under disguise. My demonstrable spirit of accommodation has been described as my inconsistency, proving me to be an utterly unreliable man. I am not going to burden this letter with proof in support of my assertions. If the credit I have enjoyed in America will not stand me in good stead, nothing I may argue in self-defence will carry conviction against the formidable but false propaganda that has poisoned American ears.

You have made common cause with Great Britain. You cannot therefore disown responsibility for anything that her representatives do in India. You will do a grievous wrong to the Allied cause if you do not sift the truth from the chaff whilst there is yet time. Just think of it. Is there anything wrong in the Congress demanding unconditional recognition of India's independence? It is being said, 'But this is not the time.' We say, 'This is the psychological moment for that recognition.' For then and then only can there be irresistible opposition to Japanese aggression. It is of immense value to the Allied cause if it is also of equal value to India. The Congress has anticipated and provided for every possible difficulty in the way of recognition. I want you to look upon the immediate recognition of India's independence as a war measure of first class magnitude.

I am,

Your Friend,

M. K. GANDHI

Harijan, 9-8-1942

184. QUESTION BOX

WHAT EDITORS CAN DO

Q. What do you expect the editors to do in the crisis that has overtaken us?

A. I am proud of the way the Indian Press as a whole has reacted to the Congress resolution. The acid test has yet to come. I hope that the Press will then fearlessly represent the national cause. It is better not to issue newspapers than to issue them under a feeling of suppression. At the same time I do not want them to be blind followers of the Congress and to endorse what their reason or conscience rebels against. The national cause will never suffer by honest criticism of national institutions and national policies. The danger to be guarded against is the inflaming of communal passions. The forthcoming movement will mean nothing if it does not end in bringing communal harmony and honourable peace with the British people. Whatever may be said to the contrary I maintain that the Congress policy has been framed in no hostile spirit against the British people. For the spirit behind the policy is wholly non-violent. I do hope, therefore, that the Press will warn those who have the nation's cause at heart against countenancing violence either against the British people or among ourselves. It must retard our progress towards our goal.

ON THE WAY TO BOMBAY, August 3, 1942

Harijan, 9-8-1942

185. NOTE ON LETTER FROM HORACE ALEXANDER[1]

[*August 3, 1942*][2]

This is a letter from a well-known English friend, who is also one of the best English friends India has. It demands as gentle and genuine an answer as his letter is gentle and genuine. I believe every

[1] The source does not identify Horace Alexander as the author of the letter which elicited this note. But it is clear from the contents as also the following item that it was he. In the letter Horace Alexander had conveyed to Gandhiji the strong feelings aroused in England by the 'Quit India' resolution, which had come at a time when England was facing "the greatest ordeal that her population has ever known" and must be seen by even friends of India in England as "a most cruel stab in the back". He had asked Gandhiji to say something "that will show... why you have felt driven to open this way to their possible annihilation".

[2] *Vide* the following item, where Gandhiji says he wrote the note in the train.

word of what he says about British emotion. Agatha Harrison sends me cable after cable revealing her deep pain over what I am doing and the Congress is doing. And Agatha Harrison, weak in body though she is, is wearing herself out in removing the cobwebs of misunderstanding. She sees every responsible English statesman who will see her (and let me admit that they all see her) and pleads for India's cause. But she is up against a blind wall. I seem to have lost the credit that I thought I used to enjoy in those circles. It is most difficult to repair a loss for which there is no accountable reason that the loser can see. For the moment I must content myself with repetition of assurances and protestations of good faith. I would not lose credit even for entrance into heaven. But there are moments when it becomes necessary to risk (not to incur) the loss of credit for the sake of the creditor himself.

I began my experiments in non-co-operation with the members of my family. I had no occasion to regret the adventure, for the risks were run for their sakes as they themselves discovered, some soon and some late. Love and truth are as gentle as they are sometimes hard beyond endurance.

I have passed many sleepless nights to discover the various ways of ending the struggle with the least commotion. But I saw that some form of conflict was inevitable to bring home the truth to the British mind. I have no doubt that events would show that I was right, that I acted in the spirit of pure friendship. British authority would deal summarily with the movement. The sufferings will be all on the side of the people. True, but in the end Britain will lose in the moral fibre. But to let her continue as she is doing is to make her bankrupt and, perhaps, lose the battle, whereas the movement, which I have advised the Congress to take up, is designed to prevent bankruptcy and enable Great Britain to acquire a moral height which must secure victory for her and her Allies. There is no claim here for philanthropy.

The fact stands and nobody has ever denied it that by this movement India stands to gain her goal of independence. But this is irrelevant here. What is relevant here is the fundamental fact that the movement is designed to help Britain in spite of herself. This is a very big, almost arrogant claim. I am not ashamed to advance it because it comes from an agonized heart. Time alone will show the truth or

falsehood of the claim. I have no doubt as to the verdict. For the testimony of reason may be wrong, but of the heart never.

From a photostat: G.N. 1438

186. LETTER TO HORACE ALEXANDER

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
August 3, 1942

MY DEAR HORACE,

I read your touching letter[1] for the second time in the train. And I decided to print it without giving your name and without the prefatory part. If possible I shall enclose a copy of my note on it.[2] I wrote it then and there in the train. I could not do better than that. Often I have found that silence is more eloquent than speech and action the best of all. But as I have been writing and explaining, I thought I must not make an exception in this case. Moreover your letter has invited an answer.

If there is anything more you think I should do, I am ever ready. Do tell me fully and frankly; no stone should be left unturned to remove misunderstandings. My grave misgiving is that those who are in authority do not want to part with India. With them it seems that to lose India is to lose the battle. It is terrible if it is true. In my opinion to keep India as a possession is to lose the battle. Help me to solve my doubt which I have expressed in the columns of *Harijan.*

Love.

HORACE ALEXANDER
BUCHANAN'S HOTEL
SUDDAR STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 1436; also File No. 3001/41/(p.69) of the Police Commissioner's office, Bombay

187. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CAHATTERJEE

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
August 3, 1942

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

I am pained over the two brothers' behaviour but much more so

[1] *Vide* the preceding item. It was not however published in *Harijan.*
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

over yours.[1] They said definitely to me (Dhiren after reconsideration) that Abha should marry Kanu. You said definitely that she should wait till she was a major and then marry K. if she so wished even if by then her mother's consent could not be received. I informed all parties accordingly. I was disinclined to bring Vina but you persuaded me. I sent her to Rajkot with your consent. Abha, too, I brought out at your wish and sent her to Rajkot with your consent. All this has meant public money. Now you have unsettled everything. Poor Narandas and his wife are disconcerted and so are the girls. I won't spend anything more from public money. If they are to be withdrawn, you should do so immediately. For they cost something to keep them in Rajkot. You may withdraw the boys also. What will they do, if they are so unreliable? The girls are miserable over the prospect of going to Calcutta. But I will send them if you want them and if you send enough money.

You are proving so hopelessly unreliable that I cannot guide you about the struggle or anything else. I am sorry that false pity moved me to take you to the Ashram. Please disengage me from all this bother.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10345. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[1] The addressee had written to say that, since his wife and his two sons were opposed to the idea of Abha marrying Kanu Gandhi, it might be better to abandon the proposal. He had also asked that his two daughters, who were in Rajkot, be sent back to the family.

188. DRAFT INSTRUCTIONS FOR CIVIL RESISTERS[1]

Confidential BOMBAY,

For Working Committee Members Only *August 4, 1942*[2]

On the day of the hartal no processions should be taken out nor meetings held in the cities. All the people should observe a twenty-four hours' fast and offer prayers. If the owners of shops approve of our satyagraha struggle, they will all close their shops, but no one should be made to close his shop under coercion. In the villages, however, where there is no fear of violence or disturbance, meetings may be held and processions taken out and responsible Congressmen who believe in mass civil disobedience should explain the meaning of the contemplated satyagraha struggle to the people. The object of our satyagraha is to secure the withdrawal of British rule and the attainment of independence for the whole of India. After the withdrawal of British rule, the constitution of the future government of the country will be settled by the joint deliberation of the whole nation, including all parties. That government will belong not to the Congress nor to any particular group or party, but to the entire 35 crores of the people of India. All Congressmen should make it clear

[1] In his introduction to this dated Panchgani, 24-7-1944, Gandhiji says: ''The following is the literal translation of draft instructions for the guidance of civil resisters. The draft was in Hindustani and copies were prepared in both Devanagari and Persian scripts. It was prepared on 7th August 1942 and was placed before the Working Committee and discussed on the 8th of August. The Working Committee was again to have met on the morning of the 9th August. But that was not to he.

I was to put before the Working Committee my view of the negotiations which I was to carry on with the Government. They were to cover a period of at least three weeks. The instructions were to see the light of day only on failure of the contemplated negotiations.

The object of publishing the draft at present is twofold. It shows how my mind was running at the time. The draft is an additional answer to the adverse suggestions made in the Government indictment about my non-violence. The second and more relevant object is to let Congress workers know how I would have acted at the time.

I have come to know that my name was freely used to justify acts of sabotage and the like. I would like every Congressman and for that matter every Indian to feel that on him and her lies the responsibility of freeing India from the incubus of foreign rule. Non-violent suffering is the only way. Freedom of India means everything for us but it means also much for the world. For, freedom won through non-violence will mean the inauguration of a new order in the world.

There is no hope for mankind in any other way."

[2] Although Gandhiji says in his introduction that this "was prepared on 7th August" the copy of the original Hindu available clearly dates it: "Bombay, 4-8-42."

that it will not be the rule of the Hindus or of any particular community. It should also be well explained that this satyagraha is not directed against Englishmen but against British rule only, for we regard no one as our enemy. This should be brought home to villagers.

Local Congress workers should send all reports about the hartal and other activities to their Provincial Congress Committee and the latter to the central Congress office. In case the leader in a particular place is arrested by the Government, another should be chosen in his place. Every province should make necessary arrangements suited to its particular circumstances. In the last resort, every Congressman is his own leader and a servant of the whole nation. A final word: No one should think that those whose names are on the Congress register are the only Congressmen. Let every Indian, who desires the freedom for the whole of India and fully believes in the weapon of truth and non-violence for the purpose of this struggle, regard himself as a Congressman and act as such. If anybody has the spirit of communalism or harbours hatred or ill-will in his heart against any Indian or Englishman, he will best help the struggle by keeping aloof. Such an individual will hinder the cause by joining the struggle.

Every satyagrahi should understand before joining the struggle that he is to ceaselessly carry on the struggle till independence is achieved. He should vow that he will be free or die. Those employed in Government offices, Government factories, railways, post offices, etc., may not participate in the hartal, because our object is to make it clear that we will never tolerate Japanese, Nazi or Fascist invasion, nor British rule. Therefore, we shall not for the present interfere in the above-mentioned Government departments. But an occasion may certainly arise when we shall ask all those people who are employed in Government offices to give up their positions and join the satyagraha struggle. But all Congress members in the Central and Provincial Assemblies ought to vacate their seats and come out forthwith. In case an attempt is made to fill their places with enemies of the country's freedom, or henchmen of British Government, local Congressmen should be put up to oppose their election. The same applies to the Congress members of the municipalities and other public bodies. As conditions in different provinces are not the same, every Provincial Congress Committee shall make arrangements suited to its special circumstances.

If any government servant is called upon to perpetrate excesses or injustice it will be his clear duty to resign at once, giving the real reasons. Free Indian Government will be under no obligation to continue in its service all those Government functionaries who are at present serving the Empire on huge salaries; nor will it be under an obligation to continue the large pensions which are being drawn at present.

All students reading in institutions conducted or controlled by the Government should come out of these institutions. Those who are above sixteen years of age should join the Satyagraha. Those who so leave these institutions should do so with a clear understanding that they are not to return to them until independence is achieved. There should be no coercion whatsoever in this matter. Only those who of their own free will wish to do so, should come out. No good can come out of coercion.

If excesses are committed in any place by the Government, people should offer resistance and endure the penalty. For instance, if villagers, labourers or householders are ordered to vacate their farms or homes they should flatly refuse to obey such orders. If an adequate compensation is offered or if they are suitably provided for by grant of land, etc., elsewhere, they may vacate their farms or homes. Here there is no question of civil disobedience, but of simply refusing to submit to coercion or injustice. We do not want to hinder military activities, but neither shall we submit to arbitrary high-handedness.

The salt tax causes great hardship to the poor. Therefore, wherever salt can be made, poor people may certainly manufacture it for themselves and risk the penalty.

Land tax is due only to a government which we recognize as our own. It is long since we have mentally ceased to recognize the existing Government as such, but until now we have not gone to the length of refusing the payment of land tax because we felt that the country was not prepared to go so far. But the time has now come when those who have the courage and are prepared to risk their all, should refuse to pay it. The Congress holds that the land belongs to those who work on it and to no one else. If they part with a share of the produce to anyone, it is for the furtherance of their own interests. There are various systems of collecting land revenue. Where the zamindari system prevails the zamindars pay the tax to the Government and the

ryot to the zamindar. In such cases, if the zamindar makes common cause with the ryot, his portion of the revenue, which may be settled by mutual agreement, should be given to him. But if a zamindar wants to side with the Government, no tax should be paid to him, This will, in the immediate present, spell ruin to the ryot. Therefore, only those who are prepared to face utter ruin should refuse payment of land revenue.

Besides these, there are several other items which could be taken up. Directions in regard to these will be issued when the occasion arises.[1]

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, pp. 286-8. Also from Hindi: Nehru Papers. Subject file No. 31 B, Vol. 130, pp. 419-23. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

189. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

BOMBAY,
August 4, 1942

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
THYAGARAYANAGAR
MADRAS

YOUR STRANGE WIRE[2]. HOW CAN DISTRUSTED MAN PROFITABLY GO.[3] LOVE.[4]

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10929. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan

[1] At the time of the publication of the above instructions Gandhiji added the following postscript dated "Sevagram, 28-6-45": "These would have been issued, if they had been passed by the Working Committee. Now they are a part of historical record only."

[2] Dated August 2 which said: "Jinnah's statement should not upset your decision."

[3] Jinnah in his statement on July 31, 1942, to the foreign Press had said: "The latest decision of the Congress Working Committee on July 14, 1942, resolving to launch a mass movement if the British do not withdraw immediately from India is the culminating point in the policy and programme of Mr. Gandhi and his Hindu Congress of blackmailing the British and coercing them to concede a system of Government and transfer power to that Government which would establish a Hindu raj immediately under the aegis of the British bayonet thereby throwing the Muslims and other minorities and interests at the mercy of the Congress raj." *Vide* also "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 4-8-1942.

[4] In reply to this Rajaji wired: "Your telegram. Earnestly plead see remove distrust."

190. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
August 4, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Everything going on well. J. came yesterday an hour after me. Maulana came today. Prabhavati has come. Doctors pronounce me to be quite fit and better than when they saw me at Sevagram the other day. Of the company now only you are missing. For Mira too is here. But the loss here is Shummy's gain. So I am quite satisfied.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3693. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6502

191. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
August 4, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

How can you expect me to approach Q. A. after his performance?[1] Will he not be right in showing me the door if I dare to go to him? I should certainly refuse to see a person whom I thoroughly distrust and discredit. Supposing he is great and good enough to see me, what am I to say to him? Begin by giving him an explanation of all the charges? I had thought that you would wire to me not to go and that you were disowning him after his performance. The Muslims who had expected me to see him no longer think so. I do not think I shall wire you to come here. This has nothing to do with your wire. There is not the atmosphere.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Of course you must pay your monthly visit.

From a photostat: G. N. 2093

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to C. Rajagopalachari", 4-8-1942.

192. LETTER TO T. B. SAPRU

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
August 4, 1942

DEAR DR. SAPRU,

I have your kind letter.[1] On the question of C. D. we have differed from the very commencement years ago. Yet its mere mention has brought new hope to the people and set the world athinking. Nevertheless you may depend upon my doing all I can to avert the crisis, if by milder measures I can possibly reach the same result. But I have no faith in my capacity to shoulder the burden[2] you would put upon me.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi-Sapru Papers.Courtesy:National Library,Calcutta.Also G.N. 7577

193. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

August 5, 1942

I want to make a remark or two about the manner in which the Government have got this document.[3] I think that the procedure thus adopted of searching the A.I.C.C. Office and seizing documents was in itself reprehensible. The Congress is not an illegal organization. It is acknowledged to be the oldest representative national organization.

[1] The addressee in his letter to Gandhiji, of August 1, had said: "I fear that if civil disobedience is started at this juncture it may lead to very serious consequences, some of which we do not realize".

[2] The addressee had suggested that Gandhiji should call an inter-communal conference.

[3] On May 28, the police raided the offices of the All-India Congress Committee at Allahabad and seized certain documents, including what appeared to be a record of discussions in the Congress Working Committee on the "War Resolution" (*vide*"Draft Resolution to A.I.C.C.", before 24-4-1942) and a resolution in which the Committee "noted with dismay that frequent and well-authenticated reports have been received of molestation of women by soldiers in railway trains and evacuated and other places". Publication of the latter had been banned by Government.

On August I Linlithgow telegraphed to Amery saying, the Viceroy's Council were arranging for publication of these documents in morning papers of August 5 for they could be "taken as evidence of Gandhi's readiness to surrender to Japan and of which telling use could be made". *The Transfer of Power,* Vol. II, pp. 5 and 516.

Its representatives have, under the partial autonomy given by the Government of India Act, successfully administered seven large provinces of India, and, so far as I am aware, without a single exception, the Governors of those provinces have nothing but praise for the considerable administrative talent and devotion to duty shown by the Ministers who were Congress representatives.

Such an organization deserves, to say the least, a better treatment than the Government had accorded it by its procedure with the A.I.C.C.

Their action becomes more reprehensible when they make what I consider illegitimate use of the documents seized. They might have had the courtesy of referring the documents to the A.I.C.C. and heard what the Committee had to say before making public use thereof.

In spite of the effort of the Home Department to discredit the members of the Working Committee, *the reading of the notes*, unauthenticated though they are, will not make any difference, at least in India, in the prestige which the Congress enjoys. There is nothing in it of which any member has any cause to be ashamed.

I do not know what should be the journalistic attitude to such use of documents seized in the manner I have shown and sprung upon an unsuspecting public at a most critical time both for the Government and the people. But I leave the profession to judge for itself.

Q. The whole inference of Pandit Nehru's statements in the documents is that your belief is that Japan and Germany will win the war. Does that represent your considered opinion?

A. You have been good enough to show me Panditji's statement[1] on the document issued by the Government. After his full and frank explanation I hardly think I need answer your questions. I wholly agree with the opinion expressed by him.

That, however, is his own reaction to the draft resolution[2] sent to the Working Committee.

As the language of that draft shows, it had many i's to be dotted and t's to be crossed. It was sent through Mirabehn to whom I had explained the implications of the draft and I said to her or to the friends of the Working Committee who happened to be in Sevagram to whom I had explained the draft, that there was an omission,

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Jawaharlal Nehru's Statement to the Press", 5-8-1942.
[2] *Vide* "Draft Resolution to A.I.C.C.", before 24-4-1942.

deliberate, from my draft as to the foreign policy of the Congress and, therefore, any reference to China and Russia.

For as I had said to them, I derived my inspiration and knowledge from Panditji about foreign matters of which he had been a deep student. Therefore, I said that he could fill in that part in the resolution.

But I may add that I have never even in the most unguarded moment expressed the opinion that Japan and Germany would win the war. Not only that. I have often expressed the opinion that they cannot win the war, if only Great Britain will once for all shed her imperialism. I have given expression to that opinion more than once in the columns of *Harijan* and I repeat here that in spite of all my wish to the contrary and of others, if disaster overtakes Great Britain and the Allied Powers, it will be because even at the critical moment—most critical in her history—she had most obstinately refused to wash herself of the taint of imperialism which she has carried with her for at least a century and a half.

The suppressed races of the earth will never see the fine distinction that Panditji and following him I can see and make between Fascism and imperialism. The difference, if any, discerned by the man in the street will be not of kind but only of degree, and therefore I have pleaded and shall plead even as I am fighting with all the earnestness I command that Britain will shed that taint, and that her great ally America will make her do so, and then be sure of victory, no matter how prolonged the struggle and what cost it requires.

To say the least, then the Allied Powers will earn the blessings of the dumb but countless millions, apart from the gain in men and material that the free association of these peoples will bring to the Allies. I would count their blessings to be of far higher value than every other consideration.

I have, therefore, nothing to withdraw and nothing to be ashamed of about the draft I had the privilege of sending to the Working Committee.

Q. Nehru states that according to your plans after British withdrawal, India would possibly negotiate with Japan and even allow her a large measure of civil control, military bases in India and right of passage for her troops

A. As to your second question, I can only say that you have put it because, I regret to have to say, you have not studied my writings in *Harijan* before the draft was written and after. Having such

confidence—for which many of my friends say I have no warrant—in the efficacy of the weapon of non-violent non-co-operation with all its implications that I have presented to the nation, I maintain that I could not be guilty of harbouring any such thought you have attributed to me. Panditji has explained quite clearly what could be his own meaning and interpretation of my draft.

I add by way of emphasis that I had purposely incorporated the sentence about negotiations with Japan, and if ultimately it was dropped and I associated myself with the deletion, I did so out of my regard for my co-workers not because I was uncertain as to what I meant to do.

It is the essence of the use of the weapon that you will always give your opponent the opportunity of doing the right thing, and if India became an independent nation tomorrow and I was witness to the grand phenomenon, I would certainly advise and plead with the Provisional Government to send me—old as I am—to Japan and I would plead with her in the first instance, to free China, her great neighbour, from the menace that Japan has become and to tell her that if she does not do this elementary justice, she will have to count upon the stubborn resistance of millions who had at long last found themselves in possession of a thing which every nation prizes before everything else.

That gentle notice—or entreaty it should be called—that entreaty will not be backed at least tomorrow with any military show, because I will not dangle before Japan the show that will still be made by the Allied Powers whose operations will still go on in India with the free consent of India. [India] become free will carry with it the power implied in the use of the matchless moral weapon of non-violent non-co-operation. And I am sure I will make the appeal not without hope of success.

That was the meaning of the sentence the use of which at the present juncture is intended to bring discredit upon my devoted head. I shall take the discredit and so much the better if I can take India's freedom also with it.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-8-1942

194. INTRODUCTION TO GOVERNMENT SECRET CIRCULAR[1]

BOMBAY,
August 6, 1942

I have had the good fortune to have friends who have supplied me with titbits of national importance such as I am presenting to the public herewith. Mahadev Desai reminds me that such an occasion occurred some seven years ago when a friend had unearthed the famous Hallett Circular. Such was also an occasion when the late Swami Shraddhanandji was given an important document, though not of the sensational character as the Hallett Circular or Sir Frederick Puckle's very interesting production and that of his lieutenant Shri D. C. Das. The pity of it is that the circulars were secret.

They must thank me for giving the performance as wide a publicity as I can. For it is good for the public to know to what lengths the Government can go in their attempt to suppress national movements, however innocent, open and above board they are. Heaven knows how many such secret instructions have been issued which have never seen the light of day. I suggest an honourable course. Let the Government by all means influence public opinion in an open manner and abide by its verdict. The Congress will be satisfied with a plebiscite or any other reasonable manner of testing public opinion and undertake to accept the verdict. That is real democracy. *Vox populi vox dei.*

Meanwhile, let the public know that these circulars are an additional reason for the cry of "Quit India", which comes not from the lips but the aching hearts of millions. Let the Dases know that there are many other ways of earning a living than betraying national interests. Surely it is not part of their duty to lend themselves to the

[1] Immediately after the July 14 resolution of the Congress Working Committee, Frederick Puckle, Director-General of Information, Government of India, issued on July 17, a circular to the Chief Secretaries of all the local governments to mobilize public opinion against the Congress resolution, which he described as a party manifesto, opposed by other communities and organizations. He made a number of suggestions for publishing cartoons and posters, among which one was to show Hitler, Mussolini, Tojo, each with microphones saying, "I vote for the Congress Resolution " *History of the Freedom Movement in India,* pp. 374-5

very questionable methods as evidenced by Sir Frederick Puckle's instructions.

The History of the Indian National Congress, Vol. II, p. 360; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 8-8-1942

195. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

BOMBAY,
August 6, 1942

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

I got your postcard. There is still time to rope you in. Have patience. When the time comes, you will certainly get the call some way or another. Your *sadhana* lies in improving your health, for the sake of this *yajna* at any rate. But that also without worrying. We may try every remedy we know, and remain unconcerned with the result. I wrote out this letter in the early morning, having got a few moments to spare.

I hope everybody is well there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 808. Courtesy: Balkrishna Bhave

196. INTERVIEW TO THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BOMBAY,
August 6, 1942

Q. Does the resolution[1] mean peace or war? There is an interpretation particularly among the foreign journalists, that it means declaration of war and that the last three paragraphs of the resolution are the really operative part. Is the emphasis on the first part or the last part of the resolution?

A. The emphasis in any non-violent struggle, projected or in operation, is always on peace. War, when it becomes an absolute necessity.

Q. Do you contemplate the immediate establishment of a provisional government and, if so, how do you expect it to come into being? 'Do you think that

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Resolution Passed by All-India Congress Committee", 8-8-1942.

there would be a period of interregnum between the endorsement of the resolution by the A. 1. C. C. and the starting of the mass struggle?

A. If independence is ushered in with perfect British goodwill, then I expect an almost simultaneous establishment of a provisional government which, being just now based, as it must be of necessity, on non-violence, will, to command universal confidence, represent the free and voluntary association of all parties.

Q. Do you contemplate any negotiation between the Congress and the British Government before launching a mass struggle?

A. I have definitely contemplated an interval between the passing of the Congress resolution and the starting of the struggle. I do not know that what I contemplate doing according to my wont can be in any way described as being in the nature of negotiation, but a letter will certainly go to the Viceroy, not as an ultimatum but as an earnest pleading for avoidance of a conflict. If there is a favourable response, then my letter can be the basis for negotiation.

Q. What is the maximum time you are prepared to wait to see if there is any response from the British Government and the United Nations to the 'last-minute appeal' of the A. I. C. C.

A. The object with which the demand for immediate withdrawal is made does not allow of a long interval for the simple reason that the war will not be suspended while, in expectation of something turning up, the interval is contemplated. The Working Committee itself, which is sincerely eager to mobilize the whole of free Indian opinion in favour of the war effort, is impatient to do so, and in view of the terrible suspense created throughout India it is altogether wrong both for the Congress and British Power to prolong the suspense for a day longer than is warranted by force of circumstance beyond control.

The Statesman, 7-8-1942, and *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44,* pp. 54-5

197. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

BOMBAY,
August 7, 19/2

RAJAJI
THYAGARAYANAGAR
MADRAS

EVERY EFFORT HAS BEEN AND WILL BE MADE IN

DIRECTION INDICATED BY YOU[1] THOUGH NOT IDENTICAL. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10934. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan

198. MESSAGE TO CHINA

August 7, 1942

Let China know that this struggle is as much for her defence as it is for India's liberation, for, in that liberation is involved her ability to give effective assistance whether to China or to Russia or even to Great Britain or America.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 9-8-1942

199. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING

BOMBAY,
August 7, 1942

Before you discuss the resolution, let me place before you one or two things. I want you to understand two things very clearly and consider them from the same point of view from which I am placing them before you. There are people who ask me whether I am the same man that I was in 1920 or whether there has been any change in me. You are right in asking that question. I may tell you that I am the same man today that I was in 1920. The only difference is that I am much stronger in certain things now than I was in 1920. I may explain it by pointing out that a man goes about heavily clothed in winter but the same man may be found without such clothing in summer. This outward change does not make any difference in the man. There are people who may say that I say one thing today and another thing tomorrow. But I must tell you that there is no change in me. I stick to

[1] The addressee in his telegram of August 6, 1942, had said: "Nothing new in Jinnah's allegations. Feel you should ignore them and definitely offer him such quota of Provisional Government as he wants and ask him to nominate his men. This along with your names on behalf of Congress will rationalize your demand of Britain and force acceptance of proposals."*Vide* also Appendix "Letter from C. Rajagopalachari", 8-8-1942.

the principle of non-violence as I did before. If you are tired of it then you need not come with me. It is not necessary or incumbent upon you to pass this resolution. If you want swaraj and independence and if you feel that what I place before you is a good thing and a right thing then only accept it. It is only that way you can give me complete support. If you do not do that I am afraid you will have to rue for what you do. There is not much harm if a man does a wrong thing and repents but in the present case you will be putting the country also in danger. If you do not believe fully in what I say then I will request you not to accept it but leave it. But if you accept it and do not understand me properly then there is bound to be friction among us although it may be of a friendly nature.

Another point I want to impress upon you is your responsibility. The members of the All-India Congress Committee are like members of Parliament representing the whole of India. The Congress from its very inception has not been of any particular group or any particular colour or caste or of any particular province. It has claimed ever since its birth to represent the whole nation and on your behalf I have made the claim that you represent not only the registered members of the Congress but the entire nation.

Referring to the Princes, Mahatma Gandhi stated that they were the creation of British power.

Their number may be six hundred or more. They were created by the ruling power as you know to create differences between Indian India and British India. It may be true that there are differences in the conditions obtaining in British and Indian India but according to the people of the Indian States there is no difference as such. The Congress claims to represent them as well. The policy which the Congress has adopted towards States was drawn up at my instance. There has been some change but the basis remains the same. Whatever the Princes may say, their people will acclaim that we have been asking for the very thing that they want. If we carry on this struggle in the way I want it, the Princes will get more through it than they can ever expect [from the British power]. I have met some Princes and they stated their helplessness by saying that we are more free than they are because they can be removed by the paramount power.

I will remind you that you should accept the resolution only if you approve of it from the heart because if you do not you may expose yourself to danger.

We had the opportunity of running the Government at least in seven provinces. We did put in good work which was praised even by the British Government. Your work does not finish with the attainment of freedom. There is no place for dictators in our scheme of things. Our object is to achieve independence and whoever can take up the reins may do so. It may be, you decide to place it in the hands of Parsis. You should not say why the Parsis should be entrusted with power. Maybe that power may be given to those whose names had never been heard of in the Congress. It will be for the people to decide. You should not feel that the majority of those who fought for it were Hindus and the number of Muslims and Parsis in the fight was small.[1] Once they got freedom, they should change their whole mentality. If there is the slightest communal taint in your minds, keep off the struggle.

There are people who have hatred in their hearts for the British. I have heard people saying that they were disgusted with them. Common people's mind does not differentiate between British Government and British people. To them both are the same. They are the people who do not mind the advent of the Japanese. To them perhaps it would mean change of masters. But it is a dangerous thing. You must remove it from your mind. This is a crucial hour. If we keep quiet and do not play our part it would not be right on our part. If it is only Britain and the United States who fight this war and if our part, is only to give monetary help, whether given willingly or taken from us unwillingly, it is not a very happy proposition. But we can show our real grit and valour only when it becomes our own fight. Then even a child will be brave. We shall get our freedom by fighting. It cannot fall from the skies. I know fully well that the Britishers will have to give us freedom when we have made sufficient sacrifices and proved our strength. We must remove any hatred for the British from our hearts. At least in my heart there is no such hatred. As a matter of fact, I am a greater friend of the British now than I ever was. The reason for this is that at this moment they are in distress. My friendship demands that I must make them aware of their mistakes. As I am not in the position in which they are, I can point out their mistakes. I know they are on the brink of a ditch and about to fall into it. Therefore, even if they want to cut off my hands, my friendship demands that I should try to pull them out of that ditch.

[1] The following two sentences have been taken from *The Bombay Chronicle.*

This is my claim, at which many people may laugh, but all the same I say this is true. At a time when I am about to launch the biggest fight in my life there can be no hatred for the British in my heart. The thought that because they are in difficulties I should give them a push is totally absent from my mind. It never has been there. Maybe that in a moment of anger they might do things which might provoke you. Nevertheless you should not resort to violence and put non-violence to shame. When such a thing happens you may take it that you will not find me alive, wherever I may be. My[1] blood will be on your head. If you don't understand this it will be better if you reject this resolution. It will redound to your credit. How can I blame you for things which you may not be able to grasp. There is one principle in the fight which you must adopt. Never believe—as I have never believed —that the British are going to fail. I do not consider them to be a nation of cowards. I know before they accept defeat every soul in Britain will be sacrificed. They may be defeated and they may leave you just as they left the people of Burma, Malaya and other places with the idea of recapturing the lost ground when they can. That may be their military strategy. But supposing they leave us what happenes to us? In that case Japan will come here. The coming in of Japan will mean the end of China and perhaps of Russia, too. In these matters Pandit Nehru is my guru (teacher). I do not want to be the instrument of Russia's defeat nor of China's. If that happens I would hate myself.

You know I like to go at a rapid speed. But it may be I am not going as rapidly as you want me to. Sardar Patel is reported to have said that the campaign maybe over in a week. I do not want to be in a hurry. If it ends in a week it will be a miracle and if this happens it would mean melting the British heart. Maybe wisdom will dawn on the British and they will understand that it will be wrong for them to put in jail the very people who want to fight for them. Maybe that a change may come in Mr. Jinnah's mind after all. He will think that those who are fighting are the sons of the soil and if he sits quiet of what use would Pakistan be for him.

Non-violence is a matchless weapon which can help everyone. I know we have not done much by way of non-violence and therefore, if such a change comes about I will take it as the result of our labours during the last twenty-two years and that God has helped us to achieve it. When I raised the slogan 'Quit India' the people in India who were

[1] The source has "Their".

then feeling despondent felt I had placed before them a new thing. If you want real freedom you will have to come together and such coming together will create true democracy—democracy the like of which has not been so far witnessed nor have there been any attempts made for such type of true democracy. I have read a good deal about the French revolution. Carlyle's works I read while in jail. I have great admiration for the French people. Pandit Jawaharlal has told me all about the Russian revolution. But I hold that though theirs was a fight for the people it was not a fight for real democracy which I envisaged. My democracy means every man is his own master. I have read sufficient history and I did not see such an experiment on so large a scale for the establishment of democracy by non-violence. Once you understand these things you will forget the differences between the Hindus and the Muslims. The resolution that is placed before you says we do not want to remain frogs in a well. We are aiming at a world federation[1] in which India would be a leading unit. It can come only through non-violence. Disarmament is only possible if you use the matchless weapon of non-violence. There are people who may call me a visionary but I tell you I am a real bania and my business is to obtain swaraj.[2] Speaking to you as a practical bania, I say, if you are prepared to pay the full price [of nonviolent conduct], pass this resolution, otherwise, do not pass it. If you do not accept this resolution I won't be sorry for it, on the contrary I would dance with joy because you would then relieve me of the tremendous responsibility which you are now going to place on me. I want you to adopt non-violence as a matter of policy. With me it is a creed, but so far as you are concerned I want you to accept it as policy. As disciplined soldiers you must accept it *in toto* and stick to it when you join the struggle.

The Hitavada 9-8-1942; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 8-8-1942

200. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

CONGRESS HOUSE,
VITHALBHAI PATEL ROAD, BOMBAY,
August 7, 1942

MY DEAR LOTUS-BORN,

I have your dear letter. I miss you at this meeting which you would have liked. But your contribution to the struggle is to restore

[1] The rest of the sentence has been taken from *The Bombay Chronicle*.
[2] The following sentence has been taken from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

your broken body to full health and then report yourself to me for the next order. Therefore, concentrate on the full restoration of your health. First thing first. Cheer up.

Love.

PLAYMATE

SHRI PADMAJA NAIDU
ZAHEER MANZIL
RED HILLS
HYDERABAD
DECCAN

From the original : Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

201. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

[On or after *August 7, 1942*][1]

MALAVIYAJI

TREASURE YOUR BLESSINGS. THEY WILL ENCOURAGE ME ALONG ARDUOUS JOURNEY.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *The Hindu,* 11-8-1942

202. LETTER TO A MUSLIM[2]

[*August 8, 1942*]

With reference to your letter giving me the purport of your conversation today with the Quaid-e-Azam, I wish to say in as clear language as possible that when in a *Harijan* article I reproduced Maulana Azad's published offer to the Muslim League I meant it to be a serious offer in every sense of the term. Let me explain it again for your edification. Provided the Muslim League co-operated fully with the Congress demand for immediate independence without the

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram dated 7-8-1942.

[2] The source has quoted the letter from *The Times of India* with the following explanation from 'Candidus': "The writer reproduces below the transcript of notes dictated to him by the late Mr. Mahadev Desai, being extracts from correspondence between a Muslim citizen of Bombay and Mr. Gandhi a few hours before the arrest."

slightest reservation, subject, of course, to the proviso that independent India will permit the operations of the Allied armies in order to check Axis aggression and thus to help both China and Russia, the Congress will have no objection to the British Government transferring all the powers it today exercises to the Muslim League on behalf of the whole of India, including the so-called Indian India.[1] And the Congress will not only not obstruct any Government that the Muslim League may form on behalf of the people, but will even join the Government in running the machinery of the free State. This is meant in all seriousness and sincerity. Naturally I cannot give all the implications of the offer and its far-reaching consequences in a hurried reply to your note. You are at liberty to show this to Quaid-e-Azam and to any person who is interested in the question of immediate independence for India and of a free India.

The Hindu, 20-8-1942

203. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[2]

BOMBAY,
August 8, 1942

If the resolution goes through this evening, I shall be the chief actor in the tragedy; it is therefore dreadful if any responsible Englishman considers me to be guilty of hatred of the British and admitted partiality for appeasement. In recent times I have not heard any other Englishman accusing me of hatred of the British. Anyway, I emphatically plead not guilty. My love of the British is equal to that of my own people. I claim no merit for it, for I have equal love for all mankind without exception. It demands no reciprocity. I own no enemy on earth. That is my creed.

I have never admitted any partiality for "appeasement" which has become a term of reproach in the English language. Peace I want among all mankind, but I don't want peace at any cost, and certainly not by placating the aggressor or at the cost of honour. Anyone,

[1] Gandhiji's offer in the letter was taken serious exception to by C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar who called it a "very astute and menacing move" and used it as an occasion for taking "his gloves off and definitely and publicly to arouse the States to a sense of impending danger" *(The Transfer of Power, p. 759).* He resigned from the Viceroy's Executive Council ostensibly on this issue.

[2] Gandhiji was replying to a *News Chronicle* editorial.

therefore, who thinks I am guilty of either vice will do great harm to the immediate purpose.

The resolution is intended to compass the very end which the article in question has at heart. We here feel that Britain cannot be extricated from its critical position unless India's hearty co-operation is secured. That co-operation is impossible without the people realizing that they are independent today. And they have to act swiftly, if they are to retain the independence regained after an insufferable period of foreign domination. No one can change the nature of a whole mass of mankind by promises, when the reality [of freedom] is the indispensable requisite for energizing them.

The resolution has provided for difficulty that the framers could anticipate. They have accounted for every valid criticism and I can say on behalf of the Congress that it would any time be prepared to consider and make allowance for any valid difficulty. No one responsible has even taken the trouble of discussing with the Working Committee of the Congress the difficulty there is about immediate recognition of India's independence. The Congress consent of the military operation of the Allied arms during pendency of the War surely is sufficient answer to any difficulty that we could conceive. British or the Allies run no risk in recognizing independence.

The risk is all on the side of India, but Congress is prepared to take it. Not only the British run no risk so far as conduct of war is concerned, but they gain by this one act of justice an ally counting 400 millions, and accession of strength that is derived from a consciousness of having done that justice.

By that act alone could Great Britain be distinguished from Nazis and Fascists and by no other.

It therefore passes comprehension that such tremendous fuss is being made over doing a tardy act of simple justice.

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-8-1942

204. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING[1]

BOMBAY,
August 8, 1942

I congratulate you on the resolution that you have just passed. I also congratulate the three comrades on the courage they have shown in pressing their amendments to a division, even though they knew that there was an overwhelming majority in favour of the resolution, and I congratulate the thirteen friends who voted against the resolution. In doing so, they had nothing to be ashamed of. For the last twenty years we have tried to learn not to lose courage even when we are in a hopeless minority and are laughed at. We have learned to hold on to our beliefs in the confidence that we are in the right. It behoves us to cultivate this courage of conviction, for it ennobles man and raises his moral stature. I was, therefore, glad to see that these friends had imbibed the principle which I have tried to follow for the last fifty years and more.

Having congratulated them on their courage, let me say that what they asked this Committee to accept through their amendments was not the correct representation of the situation. These friends ought to have pondered over the appeal made to them by the Maulana to withdraw their amendments; they should have carefully followed the explanations given by Jawaharlal. Had they done so, it would have been clear to them that the right which they now want the Congress to concede has already been conceded by the Congress.

Time was when every Mussalman claimed the whole of India as his motherland. During the years that the Ali Brothers were with me, the assumption underlying all their talks and discussions was that India belonged as much to the Mussalmans as to the Hindus. I can testify to the fact that this was their innermost conviction and not a mask; I lived with them for years. I spent days and nights in their company. And I make bold to say that their utterances were the honest expression of their beliefs. I know there are some who say that I take things too readily at their face value, that I am gullible. I do not think I am such a simpleton, nor am I so gullible as these friends take

[1] Gandhiji spoke first in Hindi and then in English. This is a translation of his Hindi speech. For the English speech, *vide* the following item.

me to be. But their criticism does not hurt me. I should prefer to be considered gullible rather than deceitful.

What these Communist friends proposed through their amendments is nothing new. It has been repeated from thousands of platforms. Thousands of Mussalmans have told me that if the Hindu-Muslim question was to be solved satisfactorily, it must be done in my lifetime. I should feel flattered at this; but how can I agree to a proposal which does not appeal to my reason? Hindu-Muslim unity is not a new thing. Millions of Hindus and Mussalmans have sought after it. I consciously strove for its achievement from my boyhood. While at school, I made it a point to cultivate the friendship of Muslim and Parsi fellow students. I believed even at that tender age that the Hindus in India, if they wished to live in peace and amity with the other communities, should assiduously cultivate the virtue of [good] neighbourliness. It did not matter, I felt, if I made no special effort to cultivate the friendship with Hindus, but I must make friends with at least a few Mussalmans. It was as counsel for a Mussalman merchant that I went to South Africa. I made friends with other Mussalmans there, even with the opponents of my client, and gained a reputation for integrity and good faith. I had among my friends and co-workers Muslims as well as Parsis. I captured their hearts and when I left finally for India, I left them sad and shedding tears of grief at the separation.

In India, too, I continued my efforts and left no stone unturned to achieve that unity. It was my life-long aspiration for it that made me offer my fullest co-operation to the Mussalmans in the Khilafat movement. Muslims throughout the country accepted me as their true friend.

How then is it that I have now come to be regarded as so evil and detestable? Had I any axe to grind in supporting the Khilafat movement? True, I did in my heart of hearts cherish a hope that it might enable me to save the cow. I am a worshipper of the cow. I believe the cow and myself to be the creation of the same God, and I am prepared to sacrifice my life in order to save the cow. But, whatever my philosophy of life and my ultimate hopes, I joined the movement in no spirit of bargain. I co-operated in the struggle for the Khilafat solely in order to discharge my obligation to my neighbour who, I saw, was in distress. The Ali Brothers, had they been alive today, would have testified to the truth of this assertion. And so would many

others bear me out in that it was not a bargain on my part for saving the cow. The cow, like the Khilafat, stood on her own merits. As an honest man, a true neighbour and a faithful friend, it was incumbent on me to stand by the Mussalmans in the hour of their trial.

In those days I shocked the Hindus by dining with the Mussalmans, though with the passage of time they have now got used to it. Maulana Bari told me, however, that though he would insist on having me as his guest, he would not allow me to dine with him, lest some day he should be accused of a sinister motive. And so, whenever I had occasion to stay with him, he called a Brahmin cook and made special arrangements for separate cooking. Firangi Mahal, his residence, was an oldstyled structure with limited accommodation; yet he cheerfully bore all hardships and carried out his resolve from which I could not dislodge him. It was the spirit of courtesy, dignity and nobility that inspired us in those days. The members of each community vied with one another in accommodating members of sister communities. They respected one another's religious feelings, and considered it a privilege to do so. Not a trace of suspicion lurked in anybody's heart. Where has all that dignity, that nobility of spirit, disappeared now? I should ask all Mussalmans, including Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah, to recall those glorious days and to find out what has brought us to the present impasse. Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah himself was at one time a Congressman. If today the Congress has incurred his wrath; it is because the canker of suspicion has entered his heart. May God bless him with long life, but when I am gone, he will realize and admit that I had no designs on Mussalmans and that I had never betrayed their interests. Where is the escape for me if I injure their cause or betray their interests? My life is entirely at their disposal. They are free to put an end to it, whenever they wish to do so. Assaults have been made on my life in the past, but God has spared me till now, and the assailants have repented for their action. But if someone were to shoot me in the belief that he was getting rid of a rascal, he would kill not the real Gandhi, but the one that appeared to him a rascal.

To those who have been indulging in a campaign of abuse and vilification I would say, 'Islam enjoins you not to revile even an enemy. The Prophet treated even enemies with kindness and tried to win them over by his fairness and generosity. Are you followers of that Islam or of any other? If you are followers of the true Islam, does

it behove you to distrust the words of one who makes a public declaration of his faith? You may take it from me that one day you will regret the fact that you distrusted and killed one who was a true and devoted friend of yours.' It cuts me to the quick to see that the more I appeal and the more the Maulana importunes, the more intense does the campaign of vilification grow. To me, these abuses are like bullets. They can kill me, even as a bullet can put an end to my life. You may kill me. That will not hurt me. But what of those who indulge in abusing? They bring discredit to Islam. For the fair name of Islam, I appeal to you to resist this unceasing campaign of abuse and vilification.

Maulana Saheb is being made a target for the filthiest abuse. Why? Because he refuses to exert on me the pressure of his friendship. He realizes that it is a misuse of friendship to seek to compel a friend to accept as truth what he knows is an untruth.

To the Qaid-e-Azam I would say: 'Whatever is true and valid in the claim for Pakistan is already in your hands. What is wrong and untenable is in nobody's gift, so that it can be made over to you. Even if someone were to succeed in imposing an untruth on others, he would not be able to enjoy for long the fruits of such coercion. God dislikes pride and keeps away from it. God would not tolerate a forcible imposition of an untruth.'

The Qaid-e-Azam says that he is compelled to say bitter things but that he cannot help giving expression to his thoughts and his feelings. Similarly I would say: I consider myself a friend of the Mussalmans. Why should I then not give expression to the things nearest to my heart, even at the cost of displeasing them? How can I conceal my innermost thoughts from them? I should congratulate the Qaid-e-Azam on his frankness in giving expression to his thoughts and feelings, even if they sound bitter to his hearers. But even so why should the Mussalmans sitting here be reviled, if they do not see eye to eye with him? If millions of Mussalmans are with you, can you not afford to ignore the handful of Mussalmans who may appear to you to be misguided? Why should one with the following of several millions be afraid of a majority community, or of the minority being swamped by the majority? How did the Prophet work among the Arabs and the Mussalmans? How did he propagate Islam? Did he say he would propagate Islam only when he commanded a majority? I, therefore, appeal to you for the sake of Islam to ponder over what I

say. There is neither fair play nor justice in saying that the Congress must accept a thing even if it does not believe in it and even if it goes counter to principles it holds dear.

Rajaji said: 'I do not believe in Pakistan. But Mussalmans ask for it, Mr. Jinnah asks for it, and it has become an obsession with them. Why not then say 'yes' to them just now? The same Mr. Jinnah will later on realize the disadvantages of Pakistan and will forgo the demand.' I said: 'It is not fair to accept as true a thing which I hold to be untrue and ask others to do so in the belief that the demand will not be pressed when the time comes for settling it finally. If I hold the demand to be just, I should concede it this very day. I should not agree to it merely in order to placate Jinnah Saheb. Many friends have come and asked me to agree to it for the time being to placate Mr. Jinnah, disarm his suspicions and to see how he reacts to it. But I cannot be party to a course of action with a false promise. At any rate, it is not my method.'

The Congress has no sanction but the moral one for enforcing its decisions. It believes that true democracy can only be the outcome of non-violence. The structure of a world federation can be raised only on a foundation of non-violence, and violence will have to be totally abjured from world affairs. If this is true, the solution of the Hindu-Muslim question, too, cannot be achieved by resort to violence. If the Hindus tyrannize over the Mussalmans, with what face will they talk of a world federation? It is for the same reason that I do not believe in the possibility of establishing world peace through violence as the English and American statesmen propose to do. The Congress has agreed to submitting all the differences to an impartial international tribunal and to abide by its decisions. If even this fairest of proposals is unacceptable, the only course that remains open is that of the sword, of violence. How can I persuade myself to agree to an impossibility? To demand the vivisection of a living organism is to ask for its very life. It is a call to war. The Congress cannot be party to such a fratricidal war. Those Hindus who, like Dr. Moonje and Shri Savarkar, believe in the doctrine of the sword may seek to keep the Mussalmans under Hindu domination. I do not represent that section. I represent the Congress. You want to kill the Congress which is the goose that lays golden eggs. If you distrust the Congress, you may rest assured that there is to be a perpetual war between the Hindus and the Mussalmans, and the country will be doomed to continue warfare

and bloodshed. If such warfare is to be our lot, I shall not live to witness it.

It is for that reason that I say to Jinnah Saheb, 'You may take it from me that whatever in your demand for Pakistan accords with considerations of justice and equity is lying in your pocket; whatever in the demand is contrary to justice and equity you can take only by the sword and in no other manner.'

There is much in my heart that I would like to pour out before this assembly. One thing which was uppermost in my heart I have already dealt with. You may take it from me that it is with me a matter of life and death. If we Hindus and Mussalmans mean to achieve a heart unity, without the slightest mental reservation on the part of either, we must first unite in the effort to be free from the shackles of this Empire. If Pakistan after all is to be a portion of India, what objection can there be for Mussalmans against joining this struggle for India's freedom? The Hindus and Mussalmans must, therefore, unite in the first instance on the issue of fighting for freedom. Jinnah Saheb thinks the war will last long. I do not agree with him. If the war goes on for six months more, how shall we be able to save China?

I, therefore, want freedom immediately, this very night, before dawn, if it can be had. Freedom cannot now wait for the realization of communal unity. If that unity is not achieved, sacrifices necessary for it will have to be much greater than would have otherwise sufficed. But the Congress must win freedom or be wiped out in the effort. And forget not that the freedom which the Congress is struggling to achieve will not be for the Congressmen alone but for all the forty crores of the Indian people. Congressmen must forever remain humble servants of the people.

The Qaid-e-Azam has said that the Muslim League is prepared to take over the rule from the Britishers if they are prepared to hand it over to the Muslim League, for the British took over the Empire from the hands of the Muslims. This, however, will be Muslim raj. The offer made by Maulana Saheb and by me does not imply establishment of Muslim raj or Muslim domination. The Congress does not believe in the domination of any group or any community. It believes in democracy which includes in its orbit Muslims, Hindus, Christians, Parsis, Jews—every one of the communities inhabiting this vast country. If Muslim raj is inevitable, then let it be; but how can we give it the stamp of our assent? How can we agree to the domination of one

community over the others?

Millions of Mussalmans in this country come from Hindu stock. How can their homeland be any other than India? My eldest son embraced Islam some years back. What would his homeland be—Porbander or the Punjab? I ask the Mussalmans: 'If India is not your homeland, what other country do you belong to? In what separate homeland would you put my son who embraced Islam?' His mother wrote him a letter after his conversion, asking him if he had on embracing Islam given up drinking which Islam forbids to its followers. To those who gloated over the conversion, she wrote to say: 'I do not mind his becoming a Mussalman so much as his drinking. Will you, as pious Mussalmans, tolerate his drinking even after his conversion? He has reduced himself to the state of a rake by drinking. If you are going to make a man of him again, his conversion will have been turned to good account. You will, therefore, please see that he as a Mussalman abjures wine and women. If that change does not come about, his conversion goes in vain and our non-cooperation with him will have to continue.'

India is without doubt the homeland of all the Mussalmans inhabiting this country. Every Mussalman should therefore cooperate in the fight for India's freedom. The Congress does not belong to any one class or community; it belongs to the whole nation. It is open to Mussalmans to take possession of the Congress. They can, if they like, swamp the Congress by their numbers, and can steer it along the course which appeals to them. The Congress is fighting not on behalf of the Hindus but on behalf of the whole nation, including the minorities. It would hurt me to hear of a single instance of a Mussalman being killed by a Congressman. In the coming revolution, Congressmen will sacrifice their lives in order to protect the Mussaalman against a Hindu's attack and *vice versa.* It is a part of their creed, and is one of the essentials of non-violence. You will be expected on occasions like these not to lose your heads. Every Congressman, whether a Hindu or a Mussalman, owes this duty to the organization to which he belongs. The Mussalman who will act in this manner will render a service to Islam. Mutual trust is essential for success in the final nation-wide struggle that is to come.

I have said that much greater sacrifices will have to be made this time in the wake of our struggle because of the opposition from the Muslim League and from Englishmen. You have seen the secret

circular issued by Sir Frederick Puckle. It is a suicidal course that he has taken. It contains an open incitement to organizations which crop up like mushroooms to combine to fight the Congress. We have thus to deal with an Empire whose ways are crooked. Ours is a straight path which we can tread even with our eyes closed. That is the beauty of satyagraha.

In satyagraha, there is no place for fraud or falsehood, or any kind of untruth. Fraud and untruth today are stalking the world. I cannot be a helpless witness to such a situation. I have travelled all over India as perhaps nobody in the present age has. The voiceless millions of the land saw in me their friend and representative, and I identified myself with them to an extent it was possible for a human being to do. I saw trust in their eyes, which I now want to turn to good account in fighting this Empire upheld on untruth and violence. However gigantic the preparations that the Empire has made, we must get out of its clutches. How can I remain silent at this supreme hour and hide my light under the bushel? Shall I ask the Japanese to tarry a while? If today I sit quiet and inactive, God will take me to task for not using up the treasure He had given me, in the midst of the conflagration that is enveloping the whole world. Had the condition been different, I should have asked you to wait yet awhile. But the situation now has become intolerable, and the Congress has no other course left for it.

Nevertheless, the actual struggle does not commence this moment. You have only placed all your powers in my hands. I will now wait upon the Viceroy and plead with him for the acceptance of the Congress demand. That process is likely to take two or three weeks. What would you do in the mean while? What is the programme, for the interval, in which all can participate? As you know, the spinning-wheel is the first thing that occurs to me. I made the same answer to the Maulana. He would have none of it, though he understood its import later. The fourteenfold constructive programme is, of course, there for you to carry out. What more should you do? I will tell you. Every one of you should, from this moment onwards, consider yourself a free man or woman, and act as if you are free and are no longer under the heel of this imperialism.

It is not a make-believe that I am suggesting to you. It is the very essence of freedom. The bond of the slave is snapped the moment he considers himself to be a free being. He will plainly tell

the master: ‘I was your bondslave till this moment, but I am a slave no longer. You may kill me if you like, but if you keep me alive, I wish to tell you that if you release me from the bondage of your own accord, I will ask for nothing more from you. You used to feed and clothe me, though I could have provided food and clothing for myself by my labour. I hitherto depended on you instead of on God, for food and raiment. God has now inspired me with an urge for freedom and I am today a free man and will no longer depend on you.’

You may take it from me that I am not going to strike a bargain with the Viceroy for ministries and the like. I am not going to be satisfied with anything short of complete freedom. Maybe, he will propose the abolition of salt tax, the drink evil, etc. But I will say: ‘Nothing less than freedom.’

Here is a *mantra*, a short one, that I give you. You may imprint it on your hearts and let every breath of yours give expression to it. The *mantra is:* ‘Do or Die.’ We shall either free India or die in the attempt; we shall not live to see the perpetuation of our slavery. Every true Congressman or [Congress] woman will join the struggle with an inflexible determination not to remain alive to see the country in bondage and slavery. Let that be your pledge. Keep jails out of your consideration. If the Government keep me free, I will spare you the trouble of filling the jails. I will not put on the Government the strain of maintaining a large number of prisoners at a time when it is in trouble. Let every man and woman live every moment of his or her life hereafter in the consciousness that he or she eats or lives for achieving freedom and will die, if need be, to attain that goal. Take a pledge with God and your own conscience as witness, that you will no longer rest till freedom is achieved and will be prepared to lay down your lives in the attempt to achieve it. He who loses his life will gain it; he who will seek to save it shall lose it. Freedom is not for the coward or the faint-hearted.

A word to the journalists I congratulate you on the support you have hitherto given to the national demand. I know the restrictions and handicaps under which you have to labour. But I would now ask you to snap the chains that bind you. It should be the proud privilege of the newspapers to lead and set an example in laying down one’s life for freedom. You have the pen which the Government can’t suppress. I know you have large properties in the form of printing-presses, etc., and you would be afraid lest the Government

should attach them. I do not ask you to invite an attachment of the printing-press voluntarily. For myself, I would not suppress my pen, even if the press was to be attached. As you know my press was attached in the past and returned later on. But I do not ask from you that final sacrifice. I suggest a middle way. You should now wind up your Standing Committee, and you may declare that you will give up writing under the present restrictions and take up the pen only when India has won her freedom. You may tell Sir Frederick Puckle that he can't expect from you a command performance, that his Press notes are full of untruth, and that you will refuse to publish them. You will openly declare that you are whole-heartedly with the Congress. If you do this, you will have changed the atmosphere before the fight actually begins.

From the Princes I ask with all respect due to them a very small thing. I am a well-wisher of the Princes. I was born in a State. My grandfather refused to salute with his right hand any Prince other than his own. But he did not say to the Prince, as I feel he ought to have said, that even his own master could not compel him, his minister, to act against his conscience. I have eaten the Princes' salt and I would not be false to it. As a faithful servant, it is my duty to warn the Princes that if they will act while I am still alive, the Princes may come to occupy an honourable place in free India. In Jawaharlal's scheme of free India, no privileges or the privileged classes have a place. Jawaharlal considers all property to be State-owned. He wants planned economy. He wants to reconstruct India according to plan. He likes to fly; I do not. I have kept a place for the Princes and the zamindars in India that I envisage. I would ask the Princes in all humility to enjoy through renunciation. The Princes may renounce ownership over their properties and become their trustees in the true sense of the term. I visualize God in the assemblage of people. The Princes may say to their people: 'You are the owners and masters of the State and we are your servants.' I would ask the Princes to become servants of the people and render to them an account of their own services. The Empire too bestows power on the Princes, but they should prefer to derive power from their own people; and if they want to indulge in some innocent pleasures, they may seek to do so as servants of the people. I do not want the Princes to live as paupers. But I would ask them: 'Do you want to remain slaves for all time? Why should you, instead of paying homage to a foreign power, not accept the sovereignty of your own people?' You may write to the Political

Department: ‘The people are now awake. How are we to withstand an avalanche before which even the large Empires are crumbling? We, therefore, shall belong to the people from today onwards. We shall sink or swim with them.’ Believe me, there is nothing unconstitutional in the course I am suggesting. There are, so far as I know, no treaties enabling the Empire to coerce the Princes. The people of the States will also declare that though they are the Princes’ subjects, they are part of the Indian nation and that they will accept the leadership of the Princes, if the latter cast their lot with the People, but not otherwise. If this declaration enrages the Princes and they choose to kill the people, the latter will meet death bravely and unflinchingly, but will not go back on their word.

Nothing, however, should be done secretly. This is an open rebellion. In this struggle secrecy is a sin. A free man would not engage in a secret movement. It is likely that when you gain freedom you will have a C.I.D. of your own, in spite of my advice to the contrary. But in the present struggle, we have to work openly and to receive the bullets on our chest, without taking to heels.

I have a word to say to the Government servants also. They may not, if they like, resign their posts yet. The late Justice Ranade did not resign his post, but he openly declared that he belonged to the Congress. He said to the Government that though he was a judge, he was a Congressman and would openly attend the sessions of the Congress, but that at the same time he would not let his political views warp his impartiality on the bench. He held Social Reform Conference in the very pandal of the Congress. I would ask all the Government servants to follow in the footsteps of Ranade and to declare their allegiance to the Congress as an answer to the secret circular issued by Sir Frederick Puckle.

This is all that I ask of you just now. I will now write to the Viceroy. You will be able to read the correspondence not just now but when I publish it with the Viceroy’s consent. But you are free to aver that you support the demand to be put forth in my letter. A judge came to me and said: “We get secret circulars from high quarters. What are we to do?” I replied, “If I were in your place, I would ignore the circulars. You may openly say to the Government: ‘I have received your secret circular. I am, however, with the Congress. Though I serve the Government for my livelihood, I am not going to obey these secret circulars or to employ underhand methods.’ ”

Soldiers too are covered by the present programme. I do not ask them just now to resign their posts and leave the army. Soldiers come to me, Jawaharlal and to the Maulana and say: "We are wholly with you. We are tired of the governmental tyranny." To these soldiers I would say: "You may say to the Government, 'Our hearts are with the Congress. We are not going to leave our posts. We will serve you so long as we receive your salaries. We will obey your just orders, but will refuse to fire on our own people.' "

To those who lack the courage to do this much I have nothing to say. They will go their own way. But if you can do this much, you may take it from me that the whole atmosphere will be electrified. Let the Government then shower bombs, if they like. But no power on earth will then be able to keep you in bondage any longer.

If the students want to join the struggle only to go back to their studies after a while, I would not invite them to it. For the present, however, till the time that I frame a programme for the the struggle, I would ask the students to say to their professors: 'We belong to the Congress. Do you belong to the Congress or to the Government? If you belong to the Congress, you need not vacate your posts. You will remain at your posts but teach us and lead us unto freedom.' In all fights for freedom, the world over, the students have made very large contributions.

If in the interval that is left to us before the actual fight begins, you do even the little I have suggested to you, you will have changed the atmosphere and will have prepared the ground for the next step.

There is much I should yet like to say. But my heart is heavy. I have already taken up much of your time. I have yet to say a few words in English also. I thank you for the patience and attention with which you have listened to me even at this late hour. It is just what true soldiers would do. For the last twenty-two years, I have controlled my speech and pen and have stored up my energy. He is a true *brahmachari* who does not fritter away his energy. He will, therefore, always control his speech. That has been my conscious effort all these years. But today the occasion has come when I had to unburden my heart before you. I have done so, even though it meant putting a strain on your patience; and I do not regret having done it. I have given you my message and through you I have delivered it to the whole of India.

Mahatma, Vol. VI, pp. 154-64

205. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING

BOMBAY,
[*August 8, 1942*][1]

I have taken such an inordinately long time over pouring out what was agitating my soul to those whom I had just now the privilege of serving. I have been called their leader or, in military language, their commander. But I do not look at my position in that light. I have no weapon but love to wield my authority over anyone. I do sport a stick which you can break into bits without the slightest exertion. It is simply my staff with the help of which I walk. Such a cripple is not elated, when he is called upon to bear the greatest burden. You can share that burden only when I appear before you not as your commander but as a humble servant. And he who serves best is the chief among equals.

Therefore I was bound to share with you, such thoughts as were welling up in my breast and tell you in as summary a manner as I can, what I expect you to do as the first step.

Let me tell you at the outset that the real struggle does not commence today. I have yet to go through much ceremonial as I always do. The burden is almost unbearable and I have got to continue to reason in those circles with whom I have lost my credit for the time being. I know that in the course of the last few weeks I have forfeited my credit with a large number of friends, so much so that some of them have now begun to doubt not only my wisdom but even my honesty. Now, I hold that my wisdom is not such a treasure which I cannot afford to lose; but my honesty is a precious treasure to me and I can ill afford to lose it.

Such occasions arise in the life of a man who is a pure seeker after truth and who would seek to serve humanity and his country to the best of his lights without fear or hypocrisy. For the last fifty years I have known no other way. I have been a humble servant of humanity and have rendered on more than one occasion such service as I could to the Empire; and here let me say without fear of challenge that throughout my career never have I asked for any personal favour. I have enjoyed the privilege of friendship, as I enjoy it today, with

[1] From *The Indian Annual Register 1942*, Vol. II, p. 144

Lord Linlithgow. It is a friendship which has outgrown official relationship. Whether Lord Linlithgow will bear me out I do not know; but there has sprung up a personal bond between him and myself. He once introduced me to his daughter. His son-in-law, the A.D.C., was drawn towards me. He fell in love with Mahadev more than with me, and Lady Anne and he came to me. She is an obedient and favourite daughter. I take interest in their welfare. I take the liberty to give out these titbits only to give you an earnest view of the personal bond which exists between us. And yet let me declare here that no personal bond will ever interfere with the stubborn struggle which, if it falls to my lot, I may have to launch against Lord Linlithgow, as the representative of the Empire. It seems to me that I will have to resist the might of that Empire with the might of the dumb millions, with no limit but non-violence as policy confined to this struggle. It is a terrible job to have to offer resistance to a Viceroy with whom I enjoy such relations. He has more than once trusted my word, often about my people. I mention this with great pride and pleasure. I mention it as an earnest of my desire to be true to the British nation, to be true to the Empire. I mention it to testify that when that Empire forfeited my trust, the Englishman who was its Viceroy came to know it.

Then there is the sacred memory of Charlie Andrews which wells up within me at this moment. The spirit of Andrews hovers about me. For me he sums up the brightest tradition of English culture. I enjoyed closer relations with him than with most Indians. I enjoyed his confidence. There were no secrets between us. We exchanged our hearts every day. Whatever was in his heart he would blurt out without the slightest hesitation or reservation. It is true he was friend of Gurudev, but he looked upon Gurudev with awe, not that Gurudev wanted it. Andrews had that peculiar humility. But with me he became the closest friend. Years ago he came to South Africa[1] with a note of introduction from the late[2] Gokhale. He is unfortunately gone.[3] He was a fine Englishman.[4] I know that the spirit of Andrews is listening

[1] The words "to South Africa" were added by Gandhiji.

[2] The words "the late" were added by Gandhiji.

[3] This is in Gandhiji's hand. The original had: "Pearson and he are both unfortunately gone."

[4] This is in Gandhiji's hand. The original had: "They were the finest specimen of Englishmen."

to me. Then I have received a warm telegram from the Metropolitan (Dr. Westcote[1]) of Calcutta, conveying his blessings, though, I know, he is opposed to my move today. I hold him to be a man of God. I can understand the language of his heart, and I know that his heart is with me.

With this background, I want to declare to the world that, whatever may be said to the contrary, and although I might have forfeited the regard and even the trust of many friends in the West, and I bow my head low, but even for their friendship or their love, I must not suppress the voice within, call it 'conscience', call it the 'prompting of my inner basic nature'. There is something within me impelling me to cry out my agony. I have known humanity. I have studied something of psychology though I have not read many books on it. Such a man knows exactly what it is. That something in me which never deceives me tells me now: 'You have to stand against the whole world although you may have to stand alone. You have to stare the world in the face although the world may look at you with bloodshot eyes. Do not fear. Trust that little thing which resides in the heart.' It says, 'Forsake friends, wife, and all; but testify to that for which you have lived, and for which you have to die.'

Believe me, friends, I am not anxious to die. I want to live my full span of life. According to me, it is 120 years at least. By that time India will be free, the world will be free. Let me tell you, too, that I do not regard England, or for that matter America, as free countries. They are free after their own fashion, free to hold in bondage the coloured races of the earth. Are England and America fighting for the liberty of these races today? You shall not limit my concept of freedom. The English and American teachers, their history and their magnificent poetry have not said you shall not broaden the interpretation of that freedom. And according to my interpretation of that freedom, I am constrained to say, they are strangers to that freedom which their poets and teachers have described. If they will know the real freedom, they should come to India. They have to come not with pride or arrogance but in the spirit of earnest seekers of Truth.

[1] This name was added by Gandhiji.

It is the[1] fundamental truth with[2] which India has been experimenting for 22 years. Unconsciously, from its very foundations, long ago, the Congress has departed though non-violently from what is known[3] as the constitutional method. Dadabhai and Pherozshah who held the Congress India in the palm of their hands had held on to the latter[4]. They were lovers of the Congress. They were its masters. But above all they were real servants. They never countenanced murder and secrecy and the like. I confess there are many black sheep amongst us Congressmen. But I trust the whole of India to launch upon a non-violent struggle on the widest scale[5]. I trust[6] the innate goodness of human nature which perceives the truth and prevails during a crisis as if by instinct. But even if I am deceived in this, I shall not swerve[7]. From its very inception the Congress based its policy on peaceful methods, and the subsequent generations added non-co-operation. When Dadabhai entered the British Parliament, Salisbury dubbed him as a black man, but the English people defeated Salisbury, and Dadabhai, went to Parliament by their vote. India was delirious with joy. These things, however, now India has outgrown.

It is with all these things as the background that I want Englishmen, Europeans and all the United Nations to examine in their heart of hearts what crime India has committed in demanding independence today. I ask: Is it right for you to distrust us? Is it right to distrust such an organization with all its background, tradition and record of over half a century and misrepresent its endeavours before all the world by every means at your command? Is it right, I ask, that by hook or crook, aided by the Foreign Press, aided, I hope not, by the President of the U.S.A. or even by the Generalissimo of China, who has yet to win his laurels, you should present India's stand in shocking lights?

I have met the Generalissimo. I have known him through Madam Chiang who was my interpreter, and though he seemed

[1] This is in Gandhiji's hand. The original had 'a".

[2] The word "with" was added by Gandhiji.

[3] This is in Gandhiji's hand. The original had "been building on non-violence known".

[4] This is in Gandhiji's hand. The original had "become rebels".

[5] The words "son the widest scale" were added by Gandhiji.

[6] This is in Gandhiji's hand. The original had "because of my nature to rely upon".

[7] This is in Gandhiji's hand. The original had "I shall not flinch".

inscrutable to me, not so Madam Chiang. And he allowed me to read his mind through her. He has not as yet said that we were wrong in demanding our independence. There is a chorus of disapproval and protest all over the world against us. They say we are erring, the move is inopportune. I had great regard for the British, but now British diplomacy stinks in[1] my nostrils. Yet others are learning their lessons. They may succeed in getting, through these methods, world opinion on their side for a time; but India will raise her voice against all the organized propaganda. I will speak against it. Even if the whole of the world forsakes me, I will say: 'You are wrong. India will wrench with non-violence her liberty from unwilling hands.'

Even if my eyes close and there is no freedom for India, non-violence will not end. They will be dealing a mortal blow to China and to Russia if they oppose the freedom of non-violent India which today is pleading with bended knees for the fulfilment of a debt long overdue. Does a creditor ever go to the debtor like that? And even when India is met with such angry opposition, she says: 'We won't hit below the belt. We have learnt sufficient gentlemanliness. We are pledged to non-violence.' I have been the author of the non-embarrassment policy of the Congress and yet today you find me talking this strong language. My non-embarrassment plea was always qualified by the proviso 'consistent with our honour and safety'. If a man holds me by the neck and wants to drown me, may I not struggle to free myself directly? There is no inconsistency in our position today.

There are representatives of the Foreign Press assembled here today. Through them I wish to say to the world that United Nations, who say that they have need for India, have the opportunity now to declare India free and prove their *bona fides*. If they miss it, they will be missing opportunity of their lifetime, and history will record that they did not discharge their obligations to India in time and lost the battle. I want the blessing of the whole world, so that I may succeed with them. I do not want the United Powers to go beyond their obvious limitations. I do not want them to accept non-violence and disarm today. There is a fundamental difference between Fascism and even this imperialism which I am fighting. Do the British get from India all they want? What they get today is from the India which they hold in bondage. Think what difference it would make if India was to

[1] This is in Gandhiji's hand. The original had "into".

participate as a free ally. That freedom, if it is to come, must come today. It will have no taste left in it if today you, who have power to help, do not exercise it. If you can exercise it, what seems impossible today will, under the glow of freedom, become possible tomorrow. If India feels that freedom, she will command that freedom for China. The road for running to Russia's help will be opened. Englishmen did not die in Malaya or on the soil of Burma. What shall enable us to retrieve this situation? Where shall I go and where shall I take the forty crores of India? How is this vast mass of humanity to be aflame in the cause of world-deliverance, unless and until it has touched and felt freedom? Today they have no touch of life left. It has been crushed out of them. If lustre is to be put into their eyes, freedom has to come not tomorrow but today. I have, therefore, pledged the Congress and the Congress has pledged herself that she will do or die.

From a typed office copy. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

206. MESSAGE TO KARNATAKA

August 8, 1942

I hope the people of Karnataka will all participate in this *yajna.*

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Mahatma,*Vol. VI, between pp. 224 and 225

207. UNSEEMLY IF TRUE

Asaf Ali Saheb, President of the Delhi P.C.C. writes:

> The enclosed complaint was first brought up before the Delhi Provincial Congress Committee. The writer has now secured two supporters. I know the writer personally as a truthful and unbiased nationalist and I believe his word.
>
> I had heard of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and its activities; and I also knew that it was a communal organization. The slogan and the speech complained of have been brought to my notice for the first time. I can think of no means of counteracting the effect of such slogans and speeches on other communities, except inviting your attention to them. Perhaps you will take notice of it in the *Harijan.*

The complainant's letter is in Urdu. Its purport is that the organization referred to in Asaf Ali Saheb's letter consisting of 3,000

members goes through a daily lathi drill which is followed by reciting the slogan, “Hindustan belongs to Hindus and to nobody else.” This recital is followed by a brief discourse in which speakers say: “Drive out the English first and then we shall subjugate the Muslims. If they do not listen, we shall kill them.” Taking the evidence at its face value, the slogan is wrong and the central theme of the discourse is worse. I can only hope that the slogan is unauthorized and that the speaker who is reported to have uttered the sentiments ascribed to him was no responsible person. The slogan is wrong and absurd, for Hindustan belongs to all those who are born and bred here and who have no other country to look to. Therefore, it belongs to Parsis, Beni Israels, to Indian Christians, Muslims and other non-Hindus as much as to Hindus. Free India will be no Hindu raj, it will be Indian raj based not on the majority of any religious sect or community but on the representatives of the whole people without distinction of religion. I can conceive a mixed majority putting the Hindus in a minority. They would be elected for their record of service and merits. Religion is a personal matter which should have no place in politics. It is in the unnatural condition of foreign domination that we have unnatural divisions according to religion. Foreign domination going, we shall laugh at our folly in having clung to false ideals and slogans.

The discourse referred to is surely vulgar. There is no question of “driving out” the English. They cannot be driven out except by violence superior to theirs. The idea of killing the Muslims if they do not remain in subjection may have been all right in bygone days; it has no meaning today. There is no force in the cry of driving out the English if the substitute is to be Hindu or any other domination. That will be no swaraj. Self-government necessarily means government by the free and intelligent will of the people. I add the word ‘intelligent’ because, I hope that India will be predominantly non-violent. Members of society based on non-violence must all be so educated as to be able to think and act for themselves. If their thought and action be one, it will be because they are directed both to a common goal and common result even as the thought and action of a hundred men pulling a rope in one direction would be one.

I hope that those in charge of the Swayamsevak Sangh will inquire into the complaint and take the necessary steps.

Harijan, 9-8-1942

208. MESSAGE TO THE COUNTRY[1]

BOMBAY,
5 a.m., August 9, 1942

Everyone is free to go the fullest length under ahimsa. Complete deadlock by strikes and other non-violent means. Satyagrahis must go out to die not to live. They must seek and face death. It is only when individuals go out to die that the nation will survive.

Karenge ya marenge.[2]

M. K. GANDHI

From the documents in the office of the D. I. G., I. B., West Bengal Government

209. MESSAGE TO THE COUNTRY[3]

August 9, 1942

Let every non-violent soldier of freedom write out the slogan 'do or die' on a piece of paper or cloth and stick it on his clothes, so that in case he died in the course of offering satyagraha, he might be distinguished by that sign from other elements who do not subscribe to non-violence.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, p. 53; also *Mahatma*, Vol. VI, p. 174

210. LETTER TO SIR ROGER LUMLEY

[THE AGA KHAN'S PALACE, POONA,]
August 10, 1942

DEAR SIR ROGER LUMLEY[4],

After the train that carried me and other fellow prisoners reached Chinchwad on Sunday, some of us were ordered to alight. Shrimati Sarojini Devi, Shrimati Mirabai, Shri Mahadev Desai and I

[1] On the morning of August 9, Gandhiji, along with the Working Committee and some fifty Congress leaders of Bombay, was taken into custody.

[2] "We will do or die."

[3] This, according to Pyarelal, was the parting message Gandhiji gave the country through him at the time of his arrest.

[4] Governor of Bombay

were directed to get into a car. There were two lorries lined up alongside the car. I have no doubt that the reservation of the car for us was done out of delicate considerations. I must own too that the officers in charge performed their task with tact and courtesy.

Nevertheless I felt deeply humiliated when the other fellow prisoners were ordered to occupy the two lorries. I realize that all could not be carried in motor-cars. I have been before now carried in prison vans. And this time too we should have been carried with our comrades. In relating this incident my object is to inform the Government that in the altered conditions and the altered state of my mind, I can no longer accept special privileges which hitherto I have accepted though reluctantly. I propose this time to accept no privileges and comforts which comrades may not receive, except for the special food so long as the Government allow it for my bodily need.

There is another matter to which I must draw your attention. I have told my people that this time our method is not courting imprisonment, that we must prepare for much higher sacrifice and so those who choose may peacefully resist arrest. So a young man[1] who was in the party offered such resistance. He was therefore hauled to the prison van. This was ugly enough.

But it was a painful sight when an impatient English sergeant rough-handled him and shoved him into the lorry as if he was a log of wood. In my opinion the sergeant deserves correction. The struggle has become bitter enough without such scenes.

This temporary jail is commodious enough to take in all who were arrested with me. Among them are Sardar Patel and his daughter. She is his nurse and cook. I have great anxiety about the Sardar who never got over the intestinal collapse which he had during his last incarceration. Ever since his release I have been personally regulating his diet, etc. I request that both he and his daughter be placed with me. And so should the other prisoners though not on the same imperative grounds as are applicable in the case of the Sardar and his daughter. I submit that it is not right to separate co-workers arrested for the same cause unless they are dangerous criminals.

I have been told by the Superintendent that I am not to be supplied with newspapers. Now I was given by one of my fellow

[1] G. G. Mehta

prisoners on the train a copy of the Sunday edition of the *Evening News.* It contains the Government of India's resolution[1] in justification of their policy in dealing with this crisis. It contains some grossly incorrect statements which I ought to be allowed to correct. This and similar things I cannot do, unless I know what is going on outside the jail.

May I expect an early decision on the points raised herein?

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, pp. 1-2

211. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

August 13, 1942

BAPA,

Look into the accounts of Dharmaprakash and pay him what you think right. I hope you are fully recovered.

BAPU

BAPA
HARIJAN NIWAS
KINGSWAY
DELHI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

212. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

THE AGA KHAN'S PALACE,
August 14, 1942

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

The Government of India were wrong in precipitating the crisis. The Government resolution justifying this step is full of distortions and misrepresentations. That you have the approval of your Indian "colleagues" can have no significance, except this, that in India you

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Resolution of the Government of India", 7-8-1942.

can always command such services. That co-operation is an additional justification for the demand of withdrawal irrespective of what people and parties may say.

The Government of India should have waited at least till the time I inaugurated mass action. I had publicly stated that I fully contemplated sending you a letter before taking concrete action. It was to be an appeal to you for an impartial examination of the Congress case. As you know, the Congress has readily filled in every omission that has been discovered in the conception of its demand. So could I have dealt with every difficulty if you had given me the opportunity. The precipitate action of the Government leads one to think that they were afraid that the extreme caution and gradualness with which the Congress was moving towards direct action might make world opinion veer round to the Congress, as it had already begun doing, and expose the hollowness of the grounds for the Government's rejection of the Congress demand. They should surely have waited for an authentic report of my speeches on Friday and on Saturday night after the passing of the resolution by the All-India Congress Committee. You would have found in them that I would not hastily begin action. You should have taken advantage of the interval foreshadowed in them, and explored every possibility of satisfying the Congress demand.

The resolution says:

> The Government of India have waited patiently in the hope that wiser counsels might prevail. They have been disappointed in that hope.

I suppose wiser counsels here means abandonment of its demand by the Congress. Why should the abandonment of the demand legitimate at all times be hoped for by a Government pledged to guarantee independence to India? Is it a challenge that could only be met by immediate repression instead of patient reasoning with the demanding party? I venture to suggest that it is a long draft upon the credulity of mankind to say that the acceptance of the demand; "would plunge India into confusion". Anyway the summary rejection of the demand *has* plunged the nation and the Government into confusion. The Congress was making every effort to identify India with the Allied cause.

The Government resolution says:

> The Governor-General-in-Council has been aware too for some days past of dangerous preparations by the Congress Party for unlawful and in some

> cases violent activities, directed among other things to interruption of communications and public utility services, the organization of strikes, tampering with the loyalty of Government servants, and interference with defence measures including recruitment.

This is a gross distortion of the reality. Violence was never contemplated at any stage. A definition of what could be included in non-violent action has been interpreted in a sinister and subtle manner, as if the Congress was preparing for violent action. Everything was openly discussed among Congress circles, for nothing was to be done secretly. And why is it tampering with your loyalty if I ask you to give up a job which is harming the British people?

Instead of publishing behind the backs of principal Congressmen the misleading paragraph the Government, immediately they came to know of the "preparations", should have brought to book the parties concerned with the preparations. That would have been the appropriate course. By their unsupported allegations in the resolution they have laid themselves open to the charge of unfair dealing.

The Congress movement was intended to evoke in the people the measure of sacrifice sufficient to compel attention. It was intended to demonstrate what measure of popular support it had. Was it wise at this time of the day to seek to suppress a popular movement avowedly non-violent?

The Government resolution further says:

> The Congress is not India's mouthpiece. Yet in the interests of securing their own dominance and in pursuit of their totalitarian policy its leaders have consistently impeded efforts made to bring India to full nationhood.

It is a gross libel thus to accuse the oldest national organization of India. This language lies ill in the mouth of a Government which has, as can be proved from published records, consistently thwarted every national effort for attaining freedom and sought to suppress the Congress by hook or by crook.

The Government of India have not condescended to consider the Congress offer that if simultaneously with the declaration of the independence of India, they could not trust the Congress to form a stable provisional government, they should ask the Muslim League to do so and that any national government formed by the League would be loyally accepted by the Congress. Such an offer is hardly consistent with the charge of totalitarianism against the Congress.

Let me examine the Government offer:

> It is that as soon as hostilities cease, India shall devise for herself, with full freedom of decision and on a basis embracing all and not only a single party, the form of government which she regards as most suited to her conditions.

Has this offer any reality about it? All parties have not agreed now. Will it be any more possible after the war? And if the parties have to act before independence is in their hands? Parties grow up like mushrooms, for without proving their representative character, the Government will welcome them as they have done in the past and if they, the parties, oppose the Congress and its activities, though they may do lip homage to independence, frustration is inherent in the Government offer. Hence the logical cry of withdrawal first. Only after the end of the British power and a fundamental change in the political status of India from bondage to freedom, will the formation of a truly representative government, whether provisional or permanent, be possible. The living burial of the author of the demand has not resolved the deadlock, it has aggravated it.

Then the resolution proceeds:

> The suggestion put forward by the Congress Party that the millions of India uncertain as to the future are ready, despite the sad lessons of so many martyr countries, to throw themselves into the arms of the invaders, is one that the Government of India cannot accept as a true representation of the feeling of the people of this great country.

I do not know about the millions, but I can give my own evidence in support of the Congress statement. It is open to the Government not to believe the Congress evidence. No imperial power likes to be told that it is in peril. It is because the Congress is anxious for Great Britain to avoid the fate that has overtaken other imperial powers that it asks her to shed imperialism voluntarily by declaring India independent. The Congress has not approached the movement with any but the friendliest motives. Congress seeks to kill imperialism as much for the sake of the British people and humanity as for India. Notwithstanding assertions to the contrary, I maintain that the Congress has no interests of its own, apart from that of the whole of India and the world.

The following passage from the peroration in the resolution is interesting:

> But on them lies the task of defending India, of maintaining India's

capacity to wage war, of safeguarding India's interests, of holding the balance between the different sections of her people without fear or favour.

All I can say is that it is a mockery of truth after the experience of Malaya, Singapore and Burma. It is sad to find the Government of India claiming to hold the "balance" between the parties for which it is itself demonstrably responsible.

One thing more. The declared cause is common between the Government of India and us. To put it in the most concrete terms, it is the protection of the freedom of China and Russia. The Government of India think that the freedom of India is not necessary for winning the cause. I think exactly the opposite. I have taken Jawaharlal Nehru as my measuring rod. His personal contacts make him feel much more the misery of the impending ruin of China and Russia than I can—and may I say than even you can. In that misery he tried to forget his old quarrel with imperialism. He dreads much more than I do the success of Fascism and Nazism. I have argued with him for days together. He fought against my position with a passion which I have no words to describe. But the logic of facts overwhelmed him. He yielded when he saw clearly that without the freedom of India that of the other two was in great jeopardy. Surely you are wrong in having imprisoned such a powerful friend and ally. If notwithstanding the common cause, the Government's answer to the Congress demand is hasty repression, they will not wonder if I draw the inference that it was not so much the Allied cause that weighed with the British Government, as the unexpressed determination to cling to the possession of India as an indispensable part of the imperial policy. This determination led to the rejection of the Congress demand and precipitated repression. The present mutual slaughter on a scale never before known to history is suffocating enough. But the slaughter of truth accompanying the butchery and enforced by the falsity of which the resolution is reeking adds strength to the Congress position.

It causes me deep pain to have to send you this long letter. But however much I dislike your action, I remain the same friend you have known me. I would still plead for reconsideration of the Government of India's whole policy. Do not disregard the pleading

of one who claims to be a sincere friend of the British people. Heaven guide you![1]

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Transfer of Power, Vol. II, pp. 702-5; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44*, pp. 12-6

213. TELEGRAM TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH[2]

August 15, 1942

CHIMANLAL, ASHRAM

SEVAGRAM

WARDHA

MAHADEV DIED SUDDENLY GAVE NO INDICATION. SLEPT WELL LAST NIGHT HAD BREAKFAST WALKED WITH ME SUSHILA. JAIL DOCTORS DID ALL THEY COULD BUT GOD HAD WILLED OTHERWISE. SUSHILA AND I BATHED BODY. BODY LYING PEACEFULLY COVERED WITH FLOWERS, INCENSE BURNING. SUSHILA AND I RECITING GITA. MAHADEV HAS DIED YOGI'S AND PATRIOT'S DEATH. TELL DURGA, BABLA[3] AND SUSHILA NO SORROW ALLOWED. ONLY JOY OVER SUCH NOBLE DEATH. CREMATION TAKING PLACE FRONT OF ME. SHALL KEEP ASHES. ADVISE DURGA REMAIN ASHRAM, BUT SHE MAY GO TO HER PEOPLE IF SHE MUST. HOPE BABLA WILL BE BRAVE AND PREPARE HIMSELF FILL MAHADEV'S PLACE WORTHILY. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: File No. 3/21/42, Vol. I. Courtesy: National Archives of India; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44*, p. 5

[1] The Viceroy replying on August 22 said that he feared "it would not be possible for me either to accept the criticism which you advance of the resolution of the Governor-General in council, or your request that the whole policy of the Government of India should be reconsidered."

[2] The authorities posted this as a letter; *vide* "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of Bombay", 27-8-1942.

[3] Narayan Desai, Mahadev Desai's son

214. A NOTE

[After *August 15, 1942*][1]

We should make an announcement that the programme is meant for the inmates of the Ashram and those connected with the Ashram. There should be fasting, recitation of the *Gita* and hymns from the Vedas and prayer. Then those who knew Mahadev should speak on the life of the departed for five minutes each. This will stretch the prayer time a little. This is not a public meeting and so is not open to the general public. This programme is not intended for a public gathering. Do what you think right and inform people accordingly.

From a copy of the Gujarati : C. W. 11324

215. PREFACE[2]

For the benefit of the readers of *Indian Opinion* (South Africa), I wrote a few articles under the heading "Guide to Health" in or about the year 1906.[3] These were later published in book form. I found that it was known to the Indian public. But copies were not available in India. The late Swami Akhandanand asked for my permission to publish an Indian edition. The enterprise proved very popular. The book was translated into several Indian languages. An English translation also appeared. This reached the West, and was translated into several European languages. The result was that the book became the most popular of all my writings. I have never been able to understand the reason for this popularity. I had written those articles casually, and I did not attach much importance to them. But perhaps the reason for the popularity is to be sought in the fact that I have looked upon the problem of health from a novel point of view, somewhat different from the orthodox methods adopted by doctors

[1] From the contents; Mahadev Desai died on August 15, 1942.

[2] In "A Word by the Publisher", in the source, Jivanji D. Desai explains: "The original was written in Gujarati and Gandhiji got it translated into Hindustani and English by Dr. Sushila Nayyar under his own guidance. He also went through both the translations to give them the final touches. The reader can therefore take the translation as Gandhiji's own rendering." The item here is placed according to the date on which the last chapter of the book was revised by Gandhiji.

[3] The articles were serialized under the title "General Knowledge about Health" in 1913. They appeared in thirty-three instalments from January 4 to August 16.

and vaidyas. Whether my presumption is correct or not, many friends have been pressing me to publish a new edition, putting forth my views to date. I have never been able to revise the original. I have never had the time for it. The present enforced rest[1] offers me such an opportunity and I am taking advantage of it. I have not even got the original with me. The experience of so many years cannot but have left its mark upon my thought. But those who have read the original book will notice that there is no fundamental difference between my ideas of today and those of 1906. But my mind is responsive. Therefore whatever change the reader may find will, I hope, be in the nature of a progress.

I am giving a new name: "Key to Health". Anyone who observes the rules of health mentioned in this book will find that he has got in it a real key to unlock the gates leading him to health. He will not need to knock at the doors of doctors or vaidyas from day to day.

M. K. GANDHI

AGA KHAN PALACE, YERAVDA,

August 27, 1942

Key to Health

216. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

DETENTION CAMP,

August 27, 1942

TO

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOMBAY GOVERNMENT

HOME DEPARTMENT

DEAR SIR,

With reference to the Government orders about the writing of letters by the security prisoners, it seems that the Government do not know that for over thirty-five years, I have ceased to live family life and have been living what has been called Ashram life in association with persons who have more or less shared my views. Of these Mahadev Desai, whom I have just lost, was an associate beyond

[1] In the Aga Khan's Palace, Poona

compare. His wife and only son have lived with me for years sharing the Ashram life. If I cannot write to the widow and her son or the other members of the deceased's family living in the Ashram, I can have no interest in writing to anyone else. Nor can I be confined to writing about personal and domestic matters. If I am permitted to write at all, I must give instructions about many matters that I had entrusted to the deceased. These have no connection with politics which are the least part of my activities. I am directing the affairs of the A.I.S.A. and kindred associations. Sevagram Ashram itself has many activities of a social, educational and humanitarian character. I should be able to receive letters about these activities and write about them. There is the Andrews Memorial Fund. There is a large sum lying at my disposal. I should be able to give instructions about its disposal. To this end I must be in correspondence with the people at Santiniketan. Pyarelal Nayyar who was co-secretary with Mahadev Desai, and whose company as also that of my wife was offered to me at the time of my arrest, has not yet been sent. I have asked the I.G.P. about his whereabouts. I can get no information about him, nor about Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel who was under my care for the control of his intestinal trouble. If I may not correspond with them about their health and welfare, again the permission granted can have no meaning for me.

I hope that even if the Government cannot extend the facilities for correspondence in terms of this letter, they will appreciate my difficulty.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, pp. 3-4

217. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

DETENTION CAMP,
September 19, 1942

THE SECRETARY
HOME DEPTT.
BOMBAY GOVT., BOMBAY

SIR,

Khan Bahadur Kateley kindly handed me yesterday the letters written by late Shri Mahadev Desai's wife and son. At the time of

handing me the letters, Khan Bahadur told me that he has to explain to me the delay caused in sending my "letter"[1]. He could however give no explanation. I missed even a formal expression of regret for the inordinate delay. There appears to have been in the Bombay Secretariat a disregard of the feelings of a bereaved wife and bereaved son.

From these letters I gather that what was on the face of it a telegram, and was handed to the I.G.P. with the request that it should go as an express telegraphic message was posted as a letter. I should like to be informed why the telegraphic message was posted as a letter. May I remind the Government that I am without any reply to my letter of 27-8-42? The widow and her son are instances in point. They cannot but be comforted to receive letters from my wife and me. But under the prohibitory orders we may not write to them.

I am,

Yours etc.,

(Security Prisoner)

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, p. 6

218. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

September 23[2]*, 1942*

TO,

THE SECRETARY
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME DEPARTMENT

SIR,

In spite of the chorus of approval sung by the Indian Councillors and others of the present Government policy in dealing with the Congress, I venture to assert that, had the Government but awaited my contemplated letter to His Excellency the Viceroy and the

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Chimanlal N. Shah", 15-8-1942.

[2] In "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 19-1-1943, Gandhiji by mistake referred to this letter as of September 21 which led to some confusion in the House of Commons. Amery clarified that it was "referred to in Mr. Gandhi's letter of January 19, though incorrectly, as the letter of September 21 and was consequently so described in the correspondence given to the Press in London". Hence also the error in *The Transfer of Power* which carries the date as September 21.

result thereafter, no calamity would have overtaken the country. The reported deplorable destruction would have most certainly been avoided.

In spite of all that has been said to the contrary, I claim that the Congress policy still remains unequivocally non-violent. The wholesale arrest of the Congress leaders seems to have made the people wild with rage to the point of losing self-control. I feel that the Government, not the Congress, are responsible for the destruction that has taken place. The only right course for the Government seems to me to be to release the Congress leaders, withdraw all repressive measures and explore ways and means of conciliation. Surely the Government have ample resources to deal with any overt act of violence. Repression can only breed discontent and bitterness.

Since I am permitted to receive newspapers, I feel that I owe it to the Government to give my reaction to the sad happenings in the country. If the Government think that as a prisoner I have no right to address such communications, they have but to say so and I will not repeat the mistake.[1]

I am,

Yours etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, pp. 16-7; *The Transfer of Power,* Vol. II, pp. 1002-3

[1] Government did not send any formal reply to this letter, which was acknowledged orally. It was also not included in Gandhiji's correspondence with the Viceroy as released to the Press. This gave rise to a widespread feeling that Government had suppressed the letter expressing Gandhiji's disapproval of acts of violence. Rajagopalachari, in a statement on March 9, 1943, deplored the suppression of this letter and Sorensen, on June 24, 1943, asked in the House of Commons why no reference had been made to it either by the Viceroy or the Secretary of State.

219. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

September 26[1]*, 1942*

THE SECRETARY
GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY
HOME DEPARTMENT

SIR,

With reference to your letter[2] of 22nd September, I beg to say that I cannot exercise the privilege extended by the Government since I may not refer in my letters even to non-political matters mentioned in my letter of 27th August, 1942.

I am,
Yours etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10366; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44*, p. 5

220. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

DETENTION CAMP,
October 26, 1942

THE SECRETARY
BOMBAY GOVERNMENT
(HOME DEPARTMENT) BOMBAY

SIR,

I beg to enclose herewith a cutting[3] from *The Bombay Chronicle* dated 24th instant. I shall be obliged if I am told whether the fear

[1] *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government* has September 25. However the photostat has September 26.

[2] In this the addressee had asked Gandhiji to furnish a list of the inmates of the Sevagram Ashram with whom he wished to correspond on personal and domestic matters only. But in response to Gandhiji's request that he should be allowed to write and receive letters on certain other matters he was informed that this could not be allowed.

[3] It reported the seizure of the Navajivan Press and feared the destruction of the old files of the *Harijan* publications. The Bombay Government replied on 5th of November that the old files had actually been destroyed.

expressed by the writer of the note in question is justified and if it is, to what extent.

I am,
Yours etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, p. 7

221. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

DETENTION CAMP,
November 5, 1942

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I have just read about the sad but heroic death of Hon'ble Peter Wood[1] in action. Will you please convey to Lord Halifax my congratulations as well as condolences on the sad bereavement?[2]

I am,
Yours etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

TheTransfer of Power, Vol. III, p. 209

222. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

Express *November 24, 1942*

SECRETARY HOME DEPARTMENT

BOMBAY GOVERNMENT

PROFESSOR BHANSALI, ONE TIME FELLOW ELPHINSTONE COLLEGE, LEFT COLLEGE 1920 AND JOINED ASHRAM SABARMATI. HE IS REPORTED BY DAILY PRESS TO BE

[1] Son of Lord Halifax

[2] According to a note in the source Lord Linlithgow acknowledged this letter on November 14, adding that he would at once forward the letter to Lord Halifax. He did this on November 16 when writing to Amery he said: "I have had from Gandhi a manuscript letter forwarding a letter of sympathy to Edward Halifax on his son's death in action and I am sending it so that it can go on to Halifax by this bag. It is characteristic of the Mahatma in more ways than one." *The Transfer of Power,* Vol. III, p. 268

FASTING[1] WITHOUT WATER NEAR SEVAGRAM ASHRAM WARDHA OVER ALLEGED CHIMUR EXCESSES. WOULD LIKE ESTABLISH DIRECT TELEGRAPHIC CONTACT WITH HIM THROUGH SUPERINTENDENT FOR ASCERTAINING CAUSE FASTING HIS CONDITION. I WOULD LIKE TO DISSUADE HIM IF I FIND HIS PAST MORALLY UNJUSTIFIED. I MAKE THIS REQUEST FOR HUMANITY'S SAKE.[2]

GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government 1942-44, p. 10. Also File No. 3/21/42, Vol I. Courtesy: National Archives of India.

223. LETTER TO INSPECTOR GENERAL OF PRISONS

November 25, 1942

THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF PRISONS

BOMBAY PRESIDENCY

SIR,

About 8.45 a.m. yesterday I sent you the text of an express telegram to the Secretary, Bombay Government, Home Department, about Professor Bhansali who is reported to be fasting. As the Professor seems to have been fasting since 11th instant according to the report in the *Hindu* of Madras and since last Wednesday according to the *Bombay Chronicle,* I am naturally filled with anxiety. Time in such cases is the greatest factor. I shall therefore be obliged if you could convey by telephone or wire my request to the Bombay Government for an urgent reply in regard to my wire.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, p. 10

[1] G. P. Bhansali began his fast on or about November 12, demanding inquiry into the outrages committed by British and Indian troops and police men at the village of Chimur. *The Transfer of Power,* Vol. III, p. 440

[2] The Government refused Gandhiji's request to be allowed to communicate with Bhansali. Linlithgow, in a cable to Amery on January 11, said he had no intention of agreeing to an enquiry and if Bhansali wanted to die, "I am perfectly prepared to let him die." *(The Transfer of Power,* Vol. III, p. 483) Bhansali broke his fast on January 12, 1943.

224. LETTER TO ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

DETENTION CAMP,
December 4, 1942

ADDITIONAL SECRETARY TO
THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY (D. H.)

SIR,

I beg to acknowledge your letter[1] of 30th ultimo received by me yesterday afternoon (3rd instant). I note with deep regret that my telegraphic message[2] with regard to a dear co-worker, whose life seems to be in jeopardy, should have been answered by a letter which reached me ten days after the despatch of my message !

I am sorry for the Government rejection of my request. As I believe in the legitimacy and even necessity of fasting under given circumstances, I am unable to advise abandonment of Prof. Bhansali's fast, unless I know that he has no justifying reason for it. If the newspaper report is to be believed, there seems to be legitimate ground for his fast and I must be content to lose my friend, if I must.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, p. 11

225. KEY TO HEALTH[3]

December18, 1942[4]

PART 1

1. THE HUMAN BODY

It is necessary to understand the meaning of the word health,

[1] In this the addressee had said, "Government is unable to sanction your request to be allowed to communicate with him. If, however, you desire to advise him, for humanitarian reasons, to abandon his fast, this Government will make arrangements to communicate your advice to him."

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Secretary, Home Department Government of Bombay", 24-11-1942.

[3] In "A Word by the Publisher", in the source, Jivanji D. Desai explains: "The original was written in Gujarati, and Gandhiji got it translated into Hindustani and English by Dr. Sushila Nayyar under his own guidance. He also went through both the translations to give them the final touches. The reader can therefore take the translation as Gandhiji's own rendering." The item here is placed according to the date on which the last chapter of the book was revised by Gandhiji. For Gandhiji's Preface to this, *vide* "Preface", 27-8-1942.

[4] This and the subsequent date-lines are reproduced from *Arogyani Chavi,* the Gujarati original.

before entering upon a description of the human body. 'In health' means body ease. He is a healthy man whose body is free from all diseases; he carries on his normal activities without fatigue. Such a man should be able with ease to walk ten to twelve miles a day, and perform ordinary physical labour without getting tired. He can digest ordinary simple food. His mind and his senses are in a state of harmony and poise. This definition does not include prize fighters and such like. A man with extraordinary physical strength is not necessarily healthy. He has merely developed his musculature, possibly at the expense of something else.

It is necessary to have enough knowledge of the human body which is expected to attain the above standard of health.

God alone knows what kind of education was prevalent in ancient times. Research workers on the subject may be able to tell us something, but only something, about it. But all of us have some experience of modern education in this country. It has no relation with our everyday life. Thus it leaves us almost utterly ignorant about our own body. Our knowledge of our own village and our fields shares a similar fate. We are taught, on the other hand, much about things that have no bearing on our daily life. I do not mean to say that such knowledge is of no use. But everything has its own place. We must first know enough of our own body, our own house, our village and its surroundings, the crops that grow there and its history before going on to anything else. General knowledge broad-based on this primary knowledge alone can enrich life.

August 29, 1942

The human body is composed of what the ancient philosophers have described as the five elements. These are earth, water, ether, light and air.

All human activity is carried on by means of the mind aided by the ten senses. These are the five senses of action, i.e., hands, feet, mouth, anus and the genitals, and the five senses of perception, i.e., the sense of touch through the skin, of smell through the nose, of taste through the tongue, of seeing through the eyes and of hearing through the ears. Thinking is the function of the mind and some people have called it the eleventh sense. In health all the senses and the mind act in perfect co-ordination.[1]

[1] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Few enjoy such good health."

The inner working of the human machine is wonderful. The human body is the universe in miniature. That which cannot be found in the body is not to be found in the universe. Hence the philosopher's formula[1], that the universe within reflects the universe without. It follows therefore that if our knowledge of our own body could be perfect, we would know the universe. But even the very best of doctors and hakims and vaids have not been able to acquire it. It will be presumptuous for a layman to aspire to it. No one has yet discovered an instrument which can give us any information about the human mind. Scientists have given attractive descriptions of the activities going on within and without the body, but no one can say what sets the wheel going. Who can explain the why and wherefore of death or foretell its time? In short, after infinite reading and writing, after infinite experience, man has come to know how little he knows.

A happy working of the human machine depends upon the harmonious activity of the various component parts. If all these work in an orderly manner, the machine runs smoothly. If even one of the essential parts is out of order, it comes to a stop. For instance, if the digestion is out of order, the whole body becomes slack. Therefore he who takes indigestion and constipation lightly does not know the A B C of the rules of health. These two are the root causes of innumerable ailments.

August 30, 1942

The question that demands our attention next is: What is the right use of the human body? Everything in the world can be used and abused. This applies to the body also. We abuse it when we use it for selfish purposes, for self-indulgence or in order to harm another. It is put to its right use if we exercise self-restraint and dedicate ourselves to the service of the whole world. The human soul is a part of the universal spirit of God. When all our activity is directed towards the realization of this link, the body becomes a temple worthy for the spirit to live in.

The body has been described as a mine of dirt. Looked at in its proper perspective, there is no exaggeration in this statement. If the body was nothing else but this, there could be no point in taking such pains to look after it. But if this so-called mine of dirt can be put to its

[1] यथा पिण्डे तथा ब्रह्माण्डे।

proper use, it becomes our first duty to cleanse it and keep it in a fit condition. The mines of precious stones and gold also have the look of ordinary earth on the surface. The knowledge that there are gold and precious stones underneath, induces men to spend millions and engage scientific brains in order to get at what lies in those mines. Similarly, we cannot take too much pains over keeping in a fit condition the temple of the spirit—the human body.

Man came into the world in order to pay off the debt owed by him to it, that is to say, in order to serve God and (or through) His creation. Keeping this point of view before him, man acts as a guardian of his body. It becomes his duty to take such care of his body as to enable it to practise the ideal of service to the best of its ability.

August 31, 1942

2. AIR

No one can live without air as one can without water for a few days and without food much longer. Therefore, nature has surrounded us with air on all sides so that we can get it without any effort.

We take in air through the nose into our lungs. The lungs act as a sort of bellows. The atmospheric air which we breathe in has a life-giving substance—a gas known as oxygen. The air that we breathe out contains poisonous gases. These can kill us if they are not immediately allowed to spread out and get diluted by the atmospheric air. Hence the necessity of proper ventilation.

The air comes into close contact with blood in the lungs and purifies it. Many people do not know the art of breathing. This defect prevents an adequate purification of their blood. Some people breathe through the mouth instead of through the nose. This is a bad habit. Nature has so designed the nose that it acts as a sort of filter for the in-going air and also warms it. In mouth-breathers the atmospheric air reaches the lungs without the preliminary filtration or warming. It follows therefore that those who do not know how to breathe should take breathing exercises. They are as easy to learn as they are useful. I do not wish to go into a discussion of the various *asanas* or postures. I do not mean to say that these are not important or useful. But I do wish to emphasize that a well-regulated life outweighs the advantage

of studying and practising elaborate postures or exercises. Any comfortable posture that ensures breathing through the nose and free chest expansion is enough for our purpose.

If we keep the mouth tightly closed, the breathing will have to be carried out by the nose. Just as we wash our mouth every morning, the nose should also be cleaned. Clean water, cold or lukewarm, is the best agent for that purpose. It should be taken in a cup or in the palm of the hand and drawn up through the nostrils. It is possible to draw the water up through one nostril, the other remaining closed, and expel it through the other by opening it and closing the former. The process should be carried out gently so as to avoid discomfort. In order to cleanse the back portion of the nose known as nasopharynx, water should be brought out by the mouth or even swallowed.

We must see that the air that we breathe in is fresh. It is good to cultivate the habit of sleeping in the open under the stars. The fear of catching a chill should be dismissed from the mind. Cold can be kept out by plenty of covering. This covering should not extend beyond the neck. If cold is felt on the head, it can be covered with a separate piece of cloth. The opening of the respiratory passage—the nose—should never be covered up.

The day clothes should be changed for loose night clothes before retiring. As a matter of fact no clothes are necessary at night when one sleeps covered with a sheet. Tight-fitting clothes should be avoided even during the day.

The atmospheric air around us is not always pure, neither is it the same in every country. The choice of the country does not always lie in our hands but the choice of a suitable house in a suitable locality does rest with us to some extent. The general rule should be to live in a locality which is not too congested and insist upon the house being well-lighted and well-ventilated.

September 1, 1942

3. WATER

Next to air, water is a necessity of life. We cannot live without it for more than a few days, just as without air we cannot live for more than a few minutes. Therefore, as in the case of air, nature has provided us with ample amount of water. Man cannot live on barren land where there is no water. Vast tracts of desert land such as Sahara lie utterly uninhabited.

In order to keep healthy, everyone should take 5 lb. of water or other liquid food in 24 hours. Drinking-water must be pure. In many places it is difficult to get pure water. There is always risk in drinking well water. The water of shallow wells, and even deep wells with a staircase leading down to the water level, should be considered absolutely unfit for drinking purposes. The difficulty is that the appearance and even the taste of water are no guide to its purity. Water which appears perfectly harmless to look at and to taste can act as a poison. The old custom of not drinking from an unknown well or from a stranger's house is worth copying.

In Bengal almost every house has a cutcha tank attached to it. As a rule the water of these is unfit for drinking purposes. River water also is frequently not fit for drinking, particularly where the river is used for navigation or where it passes by a big city and receives its drainage and sewage water.

In spite of what I have said, I know there are millions of people who have to drink what I have described as impure water. But that does not mean that their example is worthy of being copied. Nature has provided us with sufficient reserve of vitality. But for that, man would have long ago disappeared from the face of the earth because of his own mistakes and transgressions of the rules of health.

Here we are concerned merely with the role of water with regard to health. Wherever we are doubtful about the purity of water, it should be boiled before drinking. In practice it amounts to this that everyone should carry his drinking-water with him. Many orthodox Hindus in India do not drink water whilst travelling on account of religious prejudices. Surely the enlightened can do for the sake of health what the unenlightened do in the name of religion.[1]

September 2, 1942

4. FOOD

Whilst it is true that man cannot live without air and water, the thing that nourishes the body is food. Hence the saying, food is life.

Food can be divided into three categories: vegetarian, flesh and

[1] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "The custom of straining water deserves mention. Dirt is in this way removed from the water though not the microscopic germs. For that one has to boil the water. The cloth used for straining water should always be clean. There should not be any holes in it."

mixed.[1] Flesh foods include fowl and fish. Milk is an animal product and cannot by any means be included in a strictly vegetarian diet. It serves the purpose of meat to a very large extent. In medical language it is classified as animal food. A layman does not consider milk to be animal food. On the other hand, eggs are regarded by the layman as a flesh food. In reality, they are not. Nowadays sterile eggs are also produced. The hen is not allowed to see the cock and yet it lays eggs. A sterile egg never develops into a chick. Therefore he who can take milk should have no objection to taking sterile eggs.

Medical opinion is mostly in favour of mixed diet although there is a growing school, which is strongly of the opinion that anatomical and physiological evidence is in favour of man being a vegetarian. His teeth, his stomach, intestines, etc., seem to prove that nature has meant man to be a vegetarian.

Vegetarian diet, besides grains, pulses, edible roots, tubers and leaves, includes fruits, both fresh and dry. Dry fruit includes nuts like almond, pistachio, walnut, etc.

I have always been in favour of pure vegetarian diet. But experience has taught me that in order to keep perfectly fit, vegetarian diet must include milk and milk products such as curds, butter, ghee, etc. This is a significant departure from my original idea. I excluded milk and ghee from my diet for six years. At that time I felt none the worse for the denial. But in the year 1918[2], as a result of my own ignorance, I was laid up with severe dysentery. I was reduced to a skeleton, but I stubbornly refused to take any medicine and with equal stubbornness refused to take milk or buttermilk. But I could not build up my body and pick up sufficient strength to leave the bed. I had taken a vow of not taking milk. A medical friend suggested that at the time of taking the vow, I could have had in mind only the milk of the cow and buffalo, why should the vow prevent me from taking goat's milk? My wife supported him and I yielded.[3] Truly speaking, for one who has given up milk, though at the time of taking the vow only the cow and the buffalo were in mind, milk should be taboo. All animal milks have practically the same composition, though the proportion of the components varies in each case. So I may be said to have kept

[1] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Countless people take mixed diet."

[2] The source, however, has "1917"; *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", on or about 14-8-1918.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 10-1-1919.

merely the letter, not the spirit of the vow. Be that as it may, goat's milk was produced immediately and I drank it. It seemed to bring me new life. I picked up rapidly and was soon able to leave the bed. On account of this and several similar experiences, I have been forced to admit the necessity of adding milk to the strict vegetarian diet. But I am convinced that in the vast vegetable kingdom there must be some kind, which, while supplying those necessary substances which we derive from milk and meat, is free from their drawbacks, ethical and other.[1]

In my opinion there are definite drawbacks in taking milk or meat. In order to get meat we have to kill. And we are certainly not entitled to any other milk except the mother's milk in our infancy. Over and above the moral drawback, there are others, purely from the point of view of health. Both milk and meat bring with them the defects of the animal from which they are derived. Domesticated cattle are hardly ever perfectly healthy. Just like man, cattle suffer from innumerable diseases. Several of these are overlooked even when the cattle are subjected to periodical medical examinations. Besides, medical examination of all the cattle in India seems to be an impossible feat, at any rate for the present. I am conducting a dairy at the Sevagram Ashram. I can easily get help from medical friends. Yet I cannot say with certainty that all the cattle in the Sevagram Dairy are healthy. On the contrary, a cow that had been considered to be healthy by everybody was found to be suffering from tuberculosis. Before this diagnosis was made, the milk of that cow had been used regularly in the Ashram. The Ashram also takes milk from the farmers in the neighbourhood. Their cattle have not been medically examined. It is difficult to determine whether a particular specimen of milk is safe for consumption or not. We have to rest content with as much safety as boiling of the milk can assure us of. If the Ashram cannot boast of fool-proof medical examination of its cattle, and be certain of the safety of its dairy products, the situation elsewhere is not likely to be much better. What applies to the milch cattle applies to a much greater extent to the animals slaughtered for meat. As a general rule, man just depends upon luck to escape from such risks. He does not seem to worry much about his health. He considers himself to be quite safe in his medical fortress in the shape of doctors, vaids and hakims. His main worry and concern is how to get wealth and position

[1] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "But this discovery is yet to come,"

in society. This worry overshadows all the rest. Therefore so long as some selfless scientist does not, as a result of patient research work, discover a vegetable substitute for milk and meat, man will go on taking meat and milk.

Now let us consider mixed diet. Man requires food which can supply tissue-building substances to provide for the growth and daily wear and tear of the body. It should also contain something which can supply energy, fat, certain salts and roughage to help the excretion of waste matter. Tissue-building substances are known as proteins. They are obtained from milk, meat, eggs, pulses and nuts. The proteins contained in milk and meat, in others words the animal proteins, being more easily digestible and assimilable, are much more valuable than vegetable proteins. Milk is superior to meat. The medicos tell us that in cases where meat cannot be digested, milk is digested quite easily. For vegetarians milk, being the only source of animal proteins, is a very important article of diet. The proteins in raw eggs are considered to be the most easily digestible of all proteins.

But everybody cannot afford to drink milk or eat eggs. Nor are they available in every place. I would like to mention here a very important fact with regard to milk. Contrary to the popular belief, skimmed milk is a very valuable article of diet. There are times when it proves even more useful than whole milk. The chief function of milk is to supply animal proteins for tissue-building and tissue-repair. Skimming, while it partially removes the fats, does not affect the proteins at all. Moreover the available skimming instruments cannot remove all the fat from milk. Neither is there any likelihood of such an instrument being constructed.

September 4, 1942

The body requires other things besides milk, whole or skimmed. I give the second place to cereals—wheat, rice, *juwar, bajri,* etc. These are used as the staple diet. Different cereals are used as staple in different provinces of India. In many places, more than one kind of cereals are eaten at the same time; for instance, small quantities of wheat, *bajri* and rice are often served together just for the sake of taste. This mixture is not necessary for the nourishment of the body. It makes it difficult to regulate the quantity of food intake, and puts an extra strain upon digestion. As all these varieties supply starch mainly, it is better to take one only at a time. Wheat may well be described as the king among cereals. If we glance at the world map,

we find that wheat occupies the first place. From the point of view of health, if we can get wheat, rice and other cereals become unnecessary. If wheat is not available and *juwar*, etc., cannot be taken on account of dislike or difficulty in digesting them, rice has to be resorted to.

September 6, 1942

The cereals should be properly cleansed, ground on a grinding-stone, and the resulting flour used as it is. Sieving of the flour should be avoided. It is likely to remove the *bhusi* or the pericarp which is a rich source of salts and vitamins, both of which are most valuable from the point of view of nutrition. The pericarp also supplies roughage, which helps the action of the bowels. Rice grain being very delicate, nature has provided it with an outer covering or epicarp. This is not edible. In order to remove this inedible portion, rice has to be pounded. Pounding should be just sufficient to remove the epicarp or the outer skin of the rice grain. But machine-pounding not only removes the outer skin, but also polishes the rice by removing its pericarp. The explanation of the popularity of polished rice lies in the fact that polishing helps preservation. The pericarp is very sweet and unless it is removed, rice is easily attacked by certain organisms. Polished rice and wheat without its pericarp, supply us with almost pure starch. Important constituents of the cereals are lost with the removal of the pericarp. The pericarp of rice is sold as rice polishings. This and the pericarp of wheat can be cooked and eaten by themselves. They can be also made into chapatis or cakes.[1] It is possible that rice chapatis may be more easily digestible than whole rice and in this form a lesser quantity may result in full satisfaction.

We are in the habit of dipping each morsel of the chapati in vegetable or dal gravy before eating it. The result is that most people swallow their food without proper mastication. Mastication is an important step in the process of digestion, especially that of starch. Digestion of starch begins on its coming into contact with saliva in the mouth. Mastication ensures a thorough mixing of food with saliva. Therefore starchy foods should be eaten in a relatively dry form, which results in a greater flow of saliva and also necessitates their thorough mastication.

After the starch-supplying cereals come the protein-supplying

[1] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "In Konkan, poor people use rice flour for making chpatis."

pulses—beans, lentils, etc. Almost everybody seems to think that pulses are an essential constituent of diet. Even meat-eaters must have pulses. It is easy to understand that those who have to do hard manual work and who cannot afford to drink milk, cannot do without pulses. But I can say without any hesitation whatsoever that those who follow sedentary occupations as, for instance, clerks, businessmen, lawyers, doctors, teachers and those who are not too poor to buy milk, do not require pulses. Pulses are generally considered to be difficult to digest and are eaten in a much smaller quantity than cereals. Out of the varieties of pulses, peas, gram and haricot beans are considered to be the most and *mung* and *masoor* (lentils) the least difficult to digest.[1]

Vegetables and fruits should come third on our list. One would expect them to be cheap and easily available in India. But it is not so. They are generally considered to be delicacies meant for the city people. In the villages fresh vegetables are a rarity and in most places fruit is also not available. This shortage of greens and fruit is a slur on the administration of India. The villagers can grow plenty of green vegetables if they wish to. The question of fruit cannot be solved so easily. The land legislation is bad from the villagers' standpoint. But I am transgressing.

Among fresh vegetables, a fair amount of leafy vegetables must be taken every day. I do not include potatoes, sweet potatoes, *suran*, etc., which supply starch mainly, among vegetables. They should be put down in the same category as starch-supplying cereals. A fair helping of ordinary fresh vegetables is advisable. Certain varieties such as cucumber, tomatoes, mustard cress and other tender leaves need not be cooked. They should be washed properly and then eaten raw in small quantities.

As for fruits, our daily diet should include the available fruits of the season, e.g., mangoes, *jambu*, guavas, grapes, papaws, limes—sweet or sour—oranges, *mosambi*, etc., should all be used in their season. The best time for taking fruit is early in the morning. A breakfast of fruit and milk should give full satisfaction. Those who take an early lunch may well have a breakfast of fruit only.

Banana is a good fruit. But as it is very rich in starch, it takes the place of bread. Milk, banana and leafy vegetable make a perfect meal.

[1] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "It is quite obvious that non-vegetarians do not need dal at all. They eat it just for the taste. Whole pulses soaked in water overnight and about a *tola* of them chewed after they sprout, are beneficial."

A certain amount of fat is also necessary. This can be had in the form of ghee or oil. If ghee can be had, oil becomes unnecessary. It is difficult to digest and is not so nourishing as pure ghee. An ounce and a half of ghee per head per day should be considered ample to supply the needs of the body. Whole milk also is a source of ghee. Those who cannot afford it should take enough oil to supply the need for fat. Among oils, sweet oil, groundnut oil and coconut oil should be given preference. Oil must be fresh. If available, it is better to use handpressed oil. Oil and ghee sold in the bazaar are generally quite useless. It is a matter of great sorrow and shame. But so long as honesty has not become an integral part of business morals, whether through legislation or through education, the individuals will have to procure the pure article with patience and diligence. One should never be satisfied to take what one can get, irrespective of its quality. It is far better to do without ghee and oil altogether rather than to eat rancid oil and adulterated ghee. As in the case of fats, a certain amount of sugar is also necessary. Although sweet fruits supply plenty of sugar, there is no harm in taking one to one and a half ounces of sugar, brown or white, in the day. If one cannot get sweet fruits, sugar may become a necessity. But the undue prominence given to sweet things nowadays is wrong. City folk eat too much of sweet things. Milk puddings, milk sweets and sweets of other kinds are consumed in large quantities. They are all unnecessary and are harmful except when taken in very small quantities. It may be said without any fear of exaggeration that to partake of sweetmeats and other delicacies, in a country where the millions do not even get an ordinary full meal, is equivalent to robbery.

What applies to sweets applies with equal force to ghee and oil. There is no need to eat food fried in ghee or oil. To use up ghee in making *puris* and *laddus* is thoughtless extravagance. Those who are not used to such food cannot eat these things at all. For instance, Englishmen on their first coming into our country cannot eat our sweets and fried foodstuffs. Those that do eat them, I have often seen, fall ill. Taste is acquired, not born with us. All the delicacies of the world cannot equal the relish that hunger gives to food. A hungry man will eat a dry piece of bread with the greatest relish, whereas one who is not hungry will refuse the best of sweetmeats.

September 8, 1942

Now let us consider how often and how much one should eat.

Food should be taken as a matter of duty—even as a medicine—to sustain the body, never for the satisfaction of the palate. Thus pleasurable feeling comes from satisfaction of real hunger. Therefore we can say that relish is dependent upon hunger and not outside it. Because of our wrong habits and artificial way of living, very few people know what their system requires. Our parents who bring us into this world do not, as a rule, cultivate self-control. Their habits and their way of living influence the children to a certain extent. The mother's food during pregnancy is bound to affect the child. After that, during childhood the mother pampers the child with all sorts of tasty foods. She gives the child a little bit out of whatever she herself may be eating and the child's digestive system gets a wrong training from its infancy. Habits once formed are difficult to shed. There are very few who succeed in getting rid of them. But when the realization comes to man that he is his own bodyguard and his body has been dedicated to service, he desires to learn laws of keeping his body in a fit condition and tries hard to follow them.

September 9, 1942

We have now reached a point where we can lay down the amount of various foods required by a man of sedentary habits, which most men and women who will read these pages are.

Cow's milk	2 lb.
Cereals (wheat, rice, *bajri)* in all	6 oz.
Vegetables leafy	3 oz.
,, others	5 oz.
,, raw	1 oz.
Ghee	1_ oz.
Or butter	2 oz.
Gur or white sugar	1_ oz.

Fresh fruit according to one's taste and purse. In any case it is good to take two sour limes a day. The juice should be squeezed and taken with vegetables or in water, cold or hot.

All these weights are of raw stuff. I have not put down the amount of salt. It should be added afterwards according to taste.

Now, how often should one eat? Many people take two meals a day. The general rule is to take three meals: breakfast early in the morning and before going out to work, dinner at midday and supper in the evening or later. There is no necessity to have more than three

meals. In the cities some people keep on nibbling from time to time. This habit is harmful. The digestive apparatus requires rest.

5. CONDIMENTS

I have not said anything about condiments in the last chapter. Common salt may be rightly counted as the king among condiments. Many people cannot eat their food without it.[1] The body requires certain salts, and common salt is one of them. These salts occur naturally in the various foodstuffs but when food is cooked in an unscientific way, e.g., throwing away the water in which rice, potatoes or other vegetables have been boiled, the supply becomes inadequate. The deficiency then has to be made up by a separate addition of salts. As common salt is one of the most essential salts for the body, I have said in the last chapter that it might be supplemented in small quantities.

But several condiments are not required by the body as a general rule, e.g., chillies, fresh or dry, pepper, turmeric, coriander, caraway, mustard, *methi*, asafoetida, etc. These are taken just for the satisfaction of the palate. My opinion, based on my personal experience of fifty years, is that not one of these is needed to keep perfectly healthy. Those whose digestion has become very feeble might take these things as medicines for a certain length of time, if considered necessary. But one should make it a point to avoid their use for the satisfaction of the palate. All condiments, even salt, destroy the natural flavour of vegetables and cereals, etc. Those whose palate has not become vitiated enjoy the natural flavour of the foodstuffs much more than after the addition of salt or other condiments. That is why I have said that salt should be taken when necessary as an adjunct. As for chillies, they burn the mouth and irritate the stomach. Those who are not in the habit of taking chillies cannot bear them in the beginning. I have seen several cases of sore mouth caused by the taking of chillies. I know of one case who was very fond of chillies, and an excessive use resulted in his premature death. The Negro in South Africa will not touch condiments. He cannot bear the colour of turmeric in his food. In the same way, Englishmen also do not readily

[1] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "That is why it is also called *sabras*"

take to our condiments.

6. TEA, COFFEE AND COCOA

None of these is required by the body. The use of tea is said to have originated in China. It has a special use in that country. As a rule, one cannot rely on the purity of drinking water in China and therefore it must be boiled before use to ensure safety. Some clever Chinaman discovered a grass called tea which when added to boiling water in a very small quantity gave it a golden colour. The colour did not appear unless the water was really boiling. Thus the grass became an infallible test for seeing when a given quantity of water was boiled. The way the test is used is to put the tea leaves in a strainer and let the boiling water pass through the strainer. If the water is boiling it will assume a golden colour. Another quality of tea leaves is said to be that they impart a delicate flavour to the water.

September 10, 1942

Tea prepared as above is harmless. But the tea that is generally prepared and taken has not only nothing to recommend it, it is actually harmful. The leaves contain tannin which is harmful to the body. Tannin is generally used in the Tanneries to harden leather. When taken internally it produces a similar effect upon the mucous lining of the stomach and intestine. This impairs digestion and causes dyspepsia. It is said that in England innumerable women suffer from various ailments on account of their habit of drinking tea which contains tannin. Habitual tea-drinkers begin to feel restless if they do not get their cup at the usual time. In my opinion, the usefulness of tea, if any, consists in the fact that it supplies a warm sweet drink which contains some milk. The same purpose may well be served by taking boiled hot water mixed with a little milk and sugar.

What I have said about tea applies more or less to coffee also. There is a popular saying about coffee in Hindustani which says, ‘Coffee allays cough and relieves flatulence, but it impairs physical and sexual vigour and makes the blood watery, so that there are three disadvantages against its two advantages.’ I do not know how far the saying is justified.

October 7, 1942

I hold similar opinion with regard to cocoa. Those whose digestion works normally, do not require the help of tea, coffee or cocoa. A healthy man can get all the satisfaction that he needs out of

ordinary food. I have freely partaken of all the three. I used to suffer from one ailment or another while I was using them. By giving them up I have lost nothing, and have benefited a good deal. I can get the same satisfaction from a clear vegetable soup that I used to derive from tea, etc. Hot water, honey and lemon make a healthy nourishing drink, which can well substitute tea or coffee.

October 8, 1942

7. INTOXICANTS

The intoxicants used in India might be taken as the following: alcohol, *bhang*, *ganja*, tobacco and opium. Alcohol or liquor includes the country-made liquor and *arak*, besides the large quantities of liquor imported from foreign countries. All these should be strictly prohibited. Alcohol makes a man forget himself and while its effects last, he becomes utterly incapable of doing anything useful. Those who take to drinking ruin themselves and their people. They lose all sense of decency and propriety.

There is a school who favour limited and regulated consumption of alcohol and believe it to be useful. I have not found any weight in their argument. Even if we accept their view for a moment, we have still to face the fact that innumerable human beings cannot be kept under discipline. Therefore it becomes our duty to prohibit alcoholic drinks even if it were only for the sake of this vast majority.

Parsis have strongly supported the use of toddy. They say that although toddy is an intoxicant, it is also a food and even helps to digest other foodstuffs. I have carefully examined this argument and have read a fair amount of literature pertaining to this subject. But I have been a witness of the terrible straits to which toddy reduces the poor and therefore I have come to the conclusion that it can have no place in man's food.

October 9, 1942

The advantages attributed to toddy are all available from other foodstuffs. Toddy is made out of *khajuri* juice. Fresh *khajuri* juice is not an intoxicant. It is known as *nira* in Hindustani and many people have been cured of their constipation as a result of drinking *nira.* I have taken it myself though it did not act as a laxative with me. I found that it had the same food value as sugar-cane juice. If one drinks a glass of *nira* in the morning instead of drinking tea, etc., he should not need anything else for breakfast. As in the case of

sugar-cane juice, palm juice can be boiled to make palm jaggery. *Khajuri* is a variety of palm tree. Several varieties of palm grow spontaneously in our country. All of them yield drinkable juice. As *nira* gets fermented very quickly, it has to be used up immediately and therefore on the spot. Since this condition is difficult to fulfil except to a limited extent, in practice, the best use of *nira* is to convert it into palm jaggery. Palm jaggery can well replace sugar-cane jaggery. In fact some people prefer it to the latter. One advantage of palm jaggery over sugar-cane jaggery is that it is less sweet and therefore one can eat more of it. The All-India Village Industries Association has done a great deal to popularize palm jaggery, but much remains to be done. If the palms that are used for making toddy are used for making jaggery, India will never lack sugar and the poor will be able to get good jaggery for very little money. Palm jaggery can be converted into molasses and refined sugar. But the jaggery is much more useful than refined sugar. The salts present in the jaggery are lost in the process of refining. Just as refined wheat flour and polished rice lose some of their nutritive value because of the loss of the pericarp, refined sugar also loses some of the nutritive value of the jaggery. One may generalize that all foodstuffs are richer if taken in their natural state as far as possible.

Talking of toddy, I naturally began to talk of *nira* and from that I went on to the topic of jaggery. But let us return to liquor for the moment.

None of the public workers perhaps have the same bitter experience of the evils of drinks as I have had. In South Africa, most of the Indians going there as indentured labourers were addicted to drinking. The law there did not in my time permit Indians to take liquor to their houses except under a medical certificate. They could go to the drinking booths and drink as much as they liked. Even the women had fallen victims to this evil habit. I have seen them in a most pathetic condition. One who has seen those scenes near the public bars will never support drinking.

African Negroes were not given to drinking originally. Liquor may be said to have simply ruined them. Large numbers of Negro labourers are seen to waste all their earnings in drinking so that their lives become devoid of any grace.

And what about Englishmen? I have seen respectable Englishmen falling in the gutter under the effect of alcohol. There is

no exaggeration in this statement. During the war many Englishmen had to leave the Transvaal. Some of them were taken in my home. One of them was an engineer and a good man in every way, when not under the effects of alcohol. He was a theosophist. Unfortunately, he was addicted to drink and lost all control over himself when he was drunk. He tried hard to give up the habit but as far as I know he never succeeded.

October 10, 1942

On my return from South Africa to India I had a similar painful experience of the evils of drink. Several Princes have been and are being ruined by liquor. What applies to them applies more or less to many a rich youth. The condition of labour as a result of taking alcohol is also pitiable. That as a result of such bitter experiences, I have become a staunch opponent of alcohol will not surprise the readers.

In a nutshell, alcohol ruins one physically, morally, intellectually and economically.

8. OPIUM

The criticism levelled against alcohol applies equally to opium, although the two are very different in their action. Under the effects of alcohol a person becomes a rowdy, whereas opium makes the addict dull and lazy. He becomes even drowsy and incapable of doing anything useful. The evil effects of alcohol strike the eye every day, but those of opium are not so glaring. Anyone wishing to see its devastating effect should go to Assam or Orissa. Thousands have fallen victims to this intoxicant in those provinces. They give one the impression of living on the verge of death.

But China is said to have suffered the most from the evils of opium. The Chinese possess a better physique than the Indians. But the Chinese addicted to opium look miserable and more dead than alive. An opium addict will stoop to anything in order to procure his dose of opium.

Several years ago, what is known as the Opium War took place between China and Great Britain. China did not wish to buy opium from India. But the English wanted to impose it on China. India was also to blame, in that several Indians had taken opium contracts in India. The trade paid well and the treasury received crores of rupees as opium revenue. This was obviously an immoral trade and yet it

went on flourishing. Finally, as a result of a mighty agitation in England, it was stopped. A thing of this type, which simply ruins people, should not be tolerated for a single minute.

October 11, 1942

After having had my say on opium as an intoxicant, I must admit that its place in *Materia Medica is* incontestable. It is impossible to do without this drug as a medical agent. But that can be no reason for using it as an intoxicant. Opium is a well known poison and its use as an intoxicant should be strictly prohibited.

9. TOBACCO

Tobacco has simply worked havoc among mankind. Once caught in its tangle, it is rare to find anyone get out again. The use of tobacco is prevalent all over the world in one form or another. Tolstoy has called it the worst of all intoxicants. This verdict of that great man should command our attention and respect. He had freely indulged in the use of tobacco and alcohol in his early days and was familiar with the harmful effects of both. I must admit, however, that in spite of this, I cannot talk about the evils of tobacco with the same authority and knowledge as in the case of alcohol and opium. But I can certainly say that I am not aware of a single advantage accruing from the use of tobacco. Smoking is an expensive habit. I know of an Englishman who used to spend five pounds, i.e., seventy-five rupees on tobacco every month. His monthly earnings were twenty-five pounds, that is, he smoked away one-fifth of his monthly income !

Tobacco-smokers become callous and careless of others' feelings. Non-smokers generally cannot bear the smell of tobacco smoke, but one often comes across people in railway trains and tramways who just go on smoking, heedless of the feelings of their neighbours. Smoking causes salivation and most smokers have no hesitation in spitting anywhere.

Tobacco-smokers' mouths emit a foul smell. Probably tobacco kills the finer feelings and perhaps it is to this end that men take to smoking. There is no doubt that tobacco is an intoxicant and while under its effect one forgets one's worries and misfortunes. One of Tolstoy's characters had to do a ghastly deed. Tolstoy makes him drink liquor at first. The man was to murder someone. In spite of the effects of liquor, he hesitated to do so. Lost in thought he lights a cigar and begins to smoke. As he watched the smoke curling up he

exclaimed, 'What a coward I am! When it is my duty to commit this murder, why should I hesitate to do so? Get up, go ahead and do your job.' Thus his wavering mind finally decided to commit it. I know this argument is not very convincing. All smokers are not bad men. I know that millions of smokers seem to live ordinary straightforward lives. All the same the thoughtful should ponder over the above quotation. What Tolstoy perhaps means is that the smoker keeps on committing minor crimes which generally pass unnoticed.

In India, people use tobacco for smoking, snuffing and also for chewing. Some believe that snuff produces a beneficial effect, and they use it under the advice of vaids and hakims. I think that it is not necessary. A healthy man should never have such requirements.

As for chewing tobacco, it is the dirtiest of the three ways in which tobacco is used. I have always maintained that its usefulness is a mere figment of the imagination. I have found no reason to change my opinion. There is a popular saying in Gujarati which says, 'All the three are equally guilty—the smoker fills his house with smoke, the chewer dirties every corner and the snuffer his clothes.'

Tobacco-chewers, if they are sensible, keep a spittoon at hand. But the vast majority spit on the floor, in the corners and on the walls unabashed. The smoker fills his house with the smoke and runs the risk of its catching fire, and he who takes snuff soils his clothes. If there are any who keep handkerchiefs and thus save their clothes from soiling, they are exceptions that prove the general rule. Lovers of (or seekers after) health, if they are slaves to any of these evil habits, will resolutely get out of the slavery. Several people are addicted to one, two or all the three of these habits. They do not appear loathsome to them. But if we think over it calmly, there is nothing becoming about blowing off smoke or keeping the mouth stuffed with tobacco and *pan* practically the whole day long or opening the snuff-box and taking snuff every now and then. All the three are most dirty habits.

10. BRAHMACHARYA

Brahmacharya literally means that mode of life which leads to the realization of God. That realization is impossible without practising self-restraint. Self-restraint means restraint of all the senses. But ordinarily *brahmacharya is* understood to mean control over the sexual organs and prevention of seminal discharge through complete control over the sexual instinct and the sexual organs. This becomes natural for the man who exercises self-restraint all round. It is only

when observance of *brahmacharya* becomes natural to one that he or she derives the greatest benefit from it. Such a person should be free from anger and kindred passions. The so-called *brahmacharis* that one generally comes across behave as if their one occupation in life was the display of bad temper.

One notices that these people disregard the ordinary rules of *brahmacharya* and merely aim at and expect to prevent seminal discharges. They fail to achieve their object. Some of them become almost insane while others betray a sickly appearance. They are unable to prevent the discharge and if they succeed in restraining themselves from sexual intercourse, they think they have attained all that was needed. Now mere abstention from sexual intercourse cannot be termed *brahmacharya*. So long as the desire for intercourse is there, one *cannot* be said to have attained *brahmacharya*. Only he who has burnt away the sexual desire in its entirety may be said to have attained control over his sexual organs. The absence of seminal discharges is a straightforward result of *brahmacharya*, but it is not all. There is something very striking about a full-fledged *brahmachari*. His speech, his thought, and his actions, all bespeak possession of vital force.

Such a *brahmachari* does not flee from the company of women. He may not hanker after it nor may he avoid it even when it means rendering of necessary service. For him the distinction between men and women almost disappears. No one should distort my words to use them as an argument in favour of licentiousness. What I mean to say is that a man, whose sexual desire has been burnt up, ceases to make a distinction between men and women. It must be so. His conception of beauty alters. He will not look at the external form. He or she whose character is beautiful will be beautiful in his eyes. Therefore, the sight of a woman called beautiful will not ruffle or excite him. Even his sexual organs will begin to look different. In other words, such a man has so controlled his sexual instinct that he never gets erections. He does not become impotent for lack of the necessary secretions of sexual glands. But these secretions in his case are sublimated into a vital force pervading his whole being. It is said that an impotent man is not free from the sexual desire. Some of my correspondents belonging to this group tell me that they desire erection but they fail to get it and yet have seminal discharges. Such men have either become impotent or are on the way to become so for loss of the necessary secretions. This is a pitiable state. But the cultivated

impotency of the man, whose sexual desire has been burnt up and whose sexual secretions are being converted into vital force, is wholly different. It is to be desired by everybody. It is true that such a *brahmachari* is rare to find.

I took the vow of *brahmacharya* in 1906.[1] In other words, my effort to become a perfect *brahmachari* started 36 years ago. I cannot say I have attained the full *brahmacharya* of my definition, but in my opinion I have made substantial progress towards it. If God wills it, I might attain even perfection in this life. Anyway, there is no relaxation of effort nor is there any despondence in me. I do not consider thirty-six years too long a period for the effort. The richer the prize, the richer must the effort be. Meanwhile my ideas regarding the necessity for *brahmacharya* have become stronger. Some of my experiments have not reached a stage when they might be placed before the public with advantage. I hope to do so some day, if they succeed to my satisfaction. Success might make the attainment of *brahmacharya* comparatively easier.

December 11, 1942

But the *brahmacharya* on which I wish to lay emphasis in this chapter is limited to the conservation of sexual secretions. The glorious fruit of perfect *brahmacharya is* not to be had from the observance of this limited *brahmacharya*. But no one can reach perfect *brahmacharya* without reaching the limited variety.

And maintenance of perfect health should be considered almost an utter impossibility without the *brahmacharya* leading to the conservation of the sexual secretions. To countenance wastage of a secretion which has the power of creating another human being is, to say the least, an indication of gross ignorance. A firm grasp of the fact that semen is meant to be used only for procreation and not for self-indulgence, leaves no room whatsoever for indulging in animal passion. Assimilation of the knowledge that the vital fluid is never meant for waste should restrain men and women from becoming crazy over sexual intercourse. Marriage will then come to have a different significance and the way it is treated at present will appear disgusting. Marriage ought to signify a union of hearts between the two partners. A married couple is worthy of being considered *brahmacharis* if they never think of sexual intercourse except for the

[1] *Vide* "*An Autobiography*—Part III, Chapter VII".

purposes of procreation. Such an intercourse is not possible unless both parties desire it. It will never be resorted to in order to satisfy passion without the desire for a child. After intercourse which has been performed as a matter of duty, the desire to repeat the process should never arise.

What I am saying may not be taken as copy-book wisdom. The reader should know that I am writing this after a long personal experience. I know that what I am writing contrary to the common practice. But in order to make progress we have often to go beyond the limits of common experience. Great discoveries have been possible only as a result of challenging the common experience or commonly held beliefs. The invention of the simple match-stick was challenge to the common experience and the discovery of electricity confounded all preconceived notions.

What is true of physical things is equally true of things spiritual. In the early days there was no such thing as marriage. Men and women, as in the case of animals, mated promiscuously. Self-restraint was unknown. Some advanced men went beyond the rut of common practice and discovered the law of self-restraint. It is our duty to investigate the hidden possibilities of the law of self-restraint. Therefore, when I say it is the duty of every man and woman to take the marital relations to the state indicated by me, it is not to be dismissed as utterly impracticable. If human life is moulded as it ought to be, conservation of the vital fluid can become a natural thing for everyone.

The sexual glands are all the time secreting the semen. This secretion should be utilized for enhancing one's mental, physical and spiritual energy. He who would learn to utilize it thus will find that he requires very little food to keep his body in a fit condition. And yet he will be as capable as any of undertaking physical labour. Mental exertion will not tire him easily nor will he show the ordinary signs of old age. Just as a ripe fruit or an old leaf falls off naturally, so will such a *brahmachari* when his time comes pass away with all his faculties intact. Although with the passage of time the effects of the natural wear and tear must be manifest in his body, his intellect instead of showing signs of decay should show progressive clarity.[1] If all this

[1] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "The lustre on his face should also increase. One in whom this lustre is not seen is to that extent lacking in *brahmacharya.* He has not learnt the art of conserving the vital force."

is correct, and I claim that it is, the real key to health lies in the conservation of vital energy.

December 12, 1942

I give here the rules for the conservation of vital force, as I know them.

1. Sexual desire has its root in one's thought. Therefore complete control over thought is necessary. The way to achieve it is this: Never let your mind remain idle. Keep it filled with good and useful ideas. In other words keep thinking of whatever duty you have on hand. There need be no worry about it, but think out how you can become an expert in your department and then put your thoughts into action. There should be no waste of thought.[1] *Japa* (repetition of God's name) is a great support when idle thoughts haunt you. Contemplate God in the form you have pictured Him unless you know Him as formless. While *japa is* going on, no other thought should be allowed to enter one's mind. This is the ideal state. But if one cannot reach it and all sorts of uninvited thoughts invade one's mind, one should not become disheartened. *Namajapa* should be continued faithfully and in the confidence that ultimate victory is bound to follow.

2. As with our thoughts, so with our reading and talking. These should be healthy and clean. Erotic literature should be avoided. Idle, indecent talk leads to indecent action.[2] It is obvious that one who does not wish to feed his animal passions will avoid occupations which tend to induce them.

3. Like the mind, the body must also be kept well and usefully occupied, so that the fatigue of the day may lead to refreshing dreamless sleep. As far as possible, work should be in the open. Those who for some reason or the other cannot undertake physical labour, should make it a point to take regular exercise. In my opinion, a brisk walk in the open is the best form of exercise. During the walk the mouth should be closed and breathing should be done through the

[1] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "But man is not occupied all the time. He feels tired and the body needs rest. When he does not get sleep, it is possible that such uninvited thoughts invade his mind."

[2] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "There is a good deal of prurient literature about. One should not let one's attention turn to it. One should read and ponder over noble works or works pertaining to one's occupation. Arithmetic, etc., have an important place here."

nose. Sitting or walking, the body must be held erect. To sit or stand otherwise is a sign of laziness and laziness is the enemy of self-restraint. Yogic exercises—*asanas*—are also useful. This much I can say from my personal experience that one who keeps his hands and feet, eyes and ears healthily occupied does not have much difficulty in controlling the animal appetite. Everyone can test this for himself.

4. A Sanskrit text says that a man becomes what he eats. A glutton who exercises no restraint in eating is a slave to his animal passions. One who has not been able to control his palate, will never be able to control the other senses. If this is true, it is clear that one should take just enough food for the requirements of the body and no more. The diet should be healthy and well-balanced. The body was never meant to be treated as a refuse bin holding the foods that the palate demands. Food is meant to sustain the body. His body has been given to man as a means of self-realization. Self-realization means realization of God. A person who has made this realization the object of his or her life, will never become a slave to the animal passion.

5. Man should look upon every woman as his mother, sister or daughter. No one ever entertains impure thoughts with regard to his mother, sister or daughter. Similarly woman should look upon every man as her father, brother or son.

I have given more hints than these in my other writings, but they are all contained in the five given above. Anyone who observes them should find it easy to overcome what has been called the greatest of all passions. A person who has a real desire for *brahmacharya* will not give up the effort because he or she regards the observance of these rules as impossible or at least within the reach of one in a million. The effort is a joy in itself. To put it in another way, the joy of possessing perfect health is not to be compared with any other, and perfect health is unattainable by slaves. Slavery to one's animality is perhaps the worst of all.

A few words about contraceptives will not be out of place here. The practice of preventing progeny, by means of artificial methods, is not a new thing. In the past such methods were practised secretly and they were crude. Modern society has given them a respectable place and made improvements. They have been given a philanthropic garb. The advocates of contraceptives say that sexual desire is a natural instinct. Some call it a blessing. They therefore say that it is not

desirable to suppress the desire even if it were possible. Birth-control by means of self-restraint is, in their opinion, difficult to practise. If a substitute for self-restraint is not prescribed, the health of innumerable women is bound to suffer through frequent pregnancies. They add that if births are not regulated, over-population will ensue; individual families will be pauperized and their children will be ill-fed, ill-clothed and ill-educated. Therefore, they argue, it is the duty of scientists to devise harmless and effective methods of birth-control. This argument has failed to convince me. The use of contraceptives is likely to produce evils of which we have no conception. But the worst danger is that the use of contraceptives bids fair to kill the desire for self-restraint. In my opinion it is too heavy a price to pay for any possible immediate gain. But this is not the place to argue my point. Those who would like to pursue this subject further should procure the booklet called *Self-restraint v. Self-indulgence*[1], read and digest what I have said therein and then do as their heads and hearts may dictate. Those who have not the desire or the leisure to read the booklet will, if they follow my advice, avoid contraceptives as poison. They should try their best to exercise self-restraint. They should take up such activities as would keep their bodies and minds fully occupied and give a suitable outlet to their energy. It is necessary to have some healthy recreation when one is tired by physical labour. There should not be a single moment of idleness for the devil to creep in. In this way, true conjugal love will be established and directed into healthy channels. Both the partners will make a progressive rise in their moral height. The joy of true renunciation once they come to know it, will prevent them from turning to animal enjoyment. Self-deception is the greatest stumbling block. Instead of controlling the mind, the fountain of all animal desire, men and women involve themselves in the vain endeavour to avoid the physical act. If there is a determination to control the thought and the action, victory is sure to follow. Man must understand that woman is his companion and helpmate in life and not a means of satisfying his carnal desire. There must be a clear perception that the purpose of human creation was wholly different from that of the satisfaction of animal wants.

[1] Containing a collection of Gandhiji's and Mahadev Desai's writings as reproduced from *Young India* and *Harijan.* For Gandhiji's Prefaces to the second and third editions of the book, *vide"*Preface to Second Edition of *Self Restraint v. Self-Indulgence*", 24-3-1927, and"Preface to *Sel-Restraint v. Self-Indulgence*", 3-8-1928.

December 13, 1942

PART II

NATURAL THERAPEUTICS

1. EARTH

These chapters are written in order to introduce the reader to this most important branch of therapeutics and tell him how I have made use of these methods in my own life. The subject has been touched upon in the foregoing chapters. It will be dealt with in some detail here. The science of natural therapeutics is based on a use, in the treatment of disease, of the same five elements which constitute the human body. To refresh the reader's memory, these are earth, water, ether, light and air. It is my effort to point out how they can be utilized for health purposes.

Up till the year 1901, although I did not rush to doctors whenever I happened to get ill, I did use their remedies to a certain extent. I used to take fruit-salt for constipation. The late Dr. Pranjivan Mehta who had come to Natal introduced me to certain drugs to remove general la-ssitude. This led me to read literature on the uses of drugs. Add to this a little more knowledge I gained by a certain amount of work I had put in at a cottage hospital in Natal. This enabled me to carry on for sometime, but none of the drugs did me any good in the end. Headaches and loss of a sense of general well-being persisted.[1] I was very dissatisfied with this state of things and what little faith I had in medicines began to fade.

All through this interval my experiments in dietetics were continued. I had great faith in nature-cure methods, but there was nobody to help me with practical guidance in their use. With the help of whatever knowledge I could gather by reading a little of nature-cure literature, I tried to treat myself by diet regulation. My habit of going out for long walks also stood me in good stead, and thanks to that habit I did not have actually to take to bed. While I was thus managing to keep going somehow, Mr. Polak handed me Just's[2] book, called *Return to Nature.* He did not follow Just's instructions himself, except that he tried to regulate his diet more or less according

[1] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "So I used to take iron and *nux vomica* prescribed by Dr. Pranjivan Mehta."

[2] Adolf Just

to Just's teaching. But knowing me as he did, he thought I would like the book. Just lays great emphasis on the use of earth. I felt that I ought to give it a trial. For constipation, Just advises cold mud-poultices on the lower abdomen. I made a mud-poultice by mixing clean, dry earth with water, packed it in a piece of thin cloth and kept it on the abdomen throughout the night. The result was most satisfactory. I had a natural well-formed motion the next morning and from that day onwards I have hardly ever touched fruit-salt. Occasionally I feel the need of a purgative and take less than a dessert-spoonful of castor oil early in the morning. The mud-poultice should be three inches broad, six inches long and half an inch thick. Just claims that mud can cure man bitten by a poisonous snake. He would pack wet earth all round the body. I mention this for what it is worth. I would like to put down here what I have tested and proved for myself. It is my experience that a mud-poultice applied to the head, relieves headache in most cases. I have tried it in hundreds of cases. Headache may be due to several causes, but whatever the cause, as a general rule, an application of mud-poultice relieves it for the time being.

Mud-poultices cure ordinary boils. I have applied mud to discharging abscesses as well. For these cases I prepare the poultice by packing the mud in a clean piece of cloth dipped in potassium permanganate lotion, and apply it to the abscess after washing clean with permanganate lotion. In the majority of cases this treatment results in complete cure. I do not remember a single case in which it has failed me. Mud application immediately relieves the pain of a wasp sting. I have used it in many cases of scorpion sting, though with much less success. Scorpions have become a nuisance in Sevagram. We have tried all the known treatments for scorpion sting, but none has proved infallible. I can say this that the results of mud application are not inferior to those of any other form of treatment.

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In high fever, an application of mud-poultice on the head and abdomen is very useful. Although it does not always bring down the temperature, it does invariably soothe the patient and make him feel better, so that the patients themselves ask for these applications. I have used it in several cases of typhoid fever. The fever no doubt runs its own course but mud applications seem to relieve restlessness and abate the suffering. We have had about ten cases of typhoid fever in

Sevagram with complete recovery in every case, so that the inmates of the Ashram are no longer afraid of typhoid fever. I have not used any drugs in the treatment of these cases. I have made use of other nature-cure methods besides mud-poultices, but about those in their own place.

In Sevagram we have made free use of hot mud-poultices as a substitute for antiphlogistine. A little (mustard) oil and salt is added to the mud and it is heated sufficiently long to ensure sterilization.

I have not told the reader what kind of earth should be used for mud-poultices. In the beginning I used to procure sweetsmelling clean, red earth. It emits, a delicate smell when it is mixed with water. But this kind of earth is not easy to obtain. In a city like Bombay it is a problem to get any kind of earth. It is safe to use soft alluvial clay, which is neither gritty nor sticky. One should never use earth taken from manured soil. Earth should be dried, pounded and passed through a fine sieve. If there is any doubt as to its cleanliness, it should be well heated and thus sterilized. Mud used as a poultice on a clean surface need not be thrown away after use. It can be used again and again after drying it in the sun or on fire and pounding and sieving it. I am not aware that mud-poultice made out of the same earth again and again as described above, is any the less efficacious. I have myself used it in this way and did not find it any the less efficacious for repeated use. Some friends who regularly use mud-poultices, tell me that mud from the Jumna banks is particularly good for this purpose.

EATING EARTH: Just[1] writes that clean earth may be eaten in order to overcome constipation. Five to ten grams is the maximum dose. The rationale is said to be this. Earth is not digested. It acts as roughage and must pass out. The peristalsis thus stimulated pushes out the faecal matter as well. I have not tried it myself. Therefore those who wish to do so should try it on their own responsibility. I am inclined to think that a trial or two is not likely to harm anyone.

2. WATER

Hydrotherapy is a well-known and ancient form of therapy. Many books have been written on the subject, but in my opinion the form of hydrotherapy suggested by Kuhne[2] is simple and effective.

[1] *Arogyani Chavi*, however, has "Kuhne".
[2] Louis Kuhne

Kuhne's book on nature cure is very popular in India. It has been translated in several languages of India. Andhra has the greatest number of Kuhne's followers. He has written a good deal about diet as well, but here I wish to confine myself to his experiments in hydrotherapy.

Hip-bath and sitz-bath[1] are the most important of Kuhne's contribution to hydrotherapy. He has devised a special tub for use though one can do without it. Any tub thirty to thirty-six inches long according to the patient's height generally serves the purpose. Experience will indicate the proper size. The tub should be filled with fresh cold water so that it does not overflow when the patient sits in it. In summer the water may be iced, if it is not cold enough to give a gentle shock to the patient. Generally water kept in earthen jars overnight answers the purpose. Water can also be cooled by putting a piece of cloth on the surface of the water and then fanning it vigorously. The tub should be kept against the bathroom wall and a plank put in the tub to serve as back rest. The patient should sit in the tub keeping his feet outside. Portions of the body outside water should be kept well covered so that the patient does not feel cold.[2] After the patient is comfortably seated in the tub, gentle friction should be applied to his abdomen with a soft towel. This bath can be taken for five to thirty minutes. When it is over, the body should be rubbed dry and the patient put to bed.

Hip-bath brings down the temperature in high fever, and given in the manner described above, it never does any harm, and may do much good. It relieves constipation and improves digestion. The patient feels fresh and active after it. In cases of constipation, Kuhne advises a brisk walk for half an hour immediately after the bath. It should never be given on a full stomach.

I have tried hip-baths on a fairly large scale. They have proved efficacious in more than 75 cases out of 100. In cases of hyperpyrexia, if the patient's condition permits of his being seated in the tub, the temperature immediately invariably falls at least by two to three degrees, and the onset of delirium is averted.

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[1] *Arogyani Chavi*, however, has "friction-bath",

[2] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "The room where the tub is kept should have sufficient light and proper ventilation."

The rationale of the hip-bath according to Kuhne is this: Whatever the apparent cause of fever, the real cause in every case is one and the same, i.e., accumulation of waste matter in the intestines. The heat generated by the putrefaction of this waste matter is manifested in the form of fever and several other ailments. Hip-bath brings down this internal fever so that fever and other ailments which are the external manifestations thereof subside automatically. How far this reasoning is correct, I cannot say. It is for experts to do so. Although the medical profession have taken up some things from nature-cure methods, on the whole they have given a cold shoulder to naturopathy. In my opinion both the parties are to be blamed for this state of affairs. The medical profession have got into the habit of confining themselves to whatever is included in their own curriculum. They present an attitude of indifference, if not that of contempt, for anything that lies outside their groove. On the other hand, the nature-curists nurse a feeling of grievance against the medicos and, in spite of their very limited scientific knowledge, they make tall claims. They lack the spirit of organization. Each one is self-satisfied and works by himself instead of all pooling their resources for the advancement of their system. No one tries to work out in a scientific spirit all the implications and possibilities of the system. No one tries to cultivate humility (if it is possible to cultivate humility).

I have not said all this in order to belittle the work of the naturopaths. As a lay co-worker, I wish them to see things in their true colour so that they may make improvements wherever possible. It is my conviction that so long as some dynamic personality, from among the naturopaths themselves, does not come forward with the zeal of a missionary, things will continue as they are. Orthodox medicine has its own science, medical unions and teaching institutions. It has too a certain measure of success. The medical profession should not be expected to put faith, all of a sudden, in things which are yet to be fully tested and scientifically proved.

In the mean time the public should know that the speciality of nature-cure methods lies in the fact that being natural, they can be safely practised by laymen. If a man suffering from headache wets a piece of cloth in cold water and wraps it round his head, it can do no harm. The addition of earth to cold water enhances the utility of the cold pack.

Now about the sitz or friction-bath. The organ of reproduction

is one of the most sensitive part of the body. There is something illusive about the sensitiveness of the glans penis and the foreskin. Anyway, I know not how to describe it. Kuhne has made use of this knowledge for therapeutic purposes. He advises application of gentle friction to the outer end of the external sexual organ by means of a soft wet piece of cloth, while cold water is being poured. In the case of the male the glans penis should be covered with the foreskin before applying friction. The method advised by Kuhne is this: A stool should be placed in a tub of cold water so that the seat is just about the level of water in the tub. The patient should sit on the stool with his feet outside the tub and apply gentle friction to the sexual organ which just touches the surface of the water in the tub. This friction should never cause pain. On the contrary the patient should find it pleasant and feel rested and peaceful at the end of the bath. Whatever the ailment, the sitz-bath makes the patient feel better for the time being. Kuhne places sitz-baths higher than hip-baths. I have had much less experience of the former than of the latter. The blame, I think, lies mostly with myself. I have been lax. Those whom I advised sitz-baths, have not been patient with the experiment, so that I cannot express an opinion on the efficacy of these baths, based on personal experience. It is worth a trial by everyone. If there is any difficulty about finding a tub, it is possible to pour water from a jug or a *lota* and take the friction-bath. It is bound to make the patient feel rested and peaceful. As a general rule people pay scant attention to the cleansing of the sexual organ. The friction-bath will easily achieve that end. Unless one is particularly careful, dirt accumulates between the foreskin and the glans penis. This must be removed. Insistence on keeping the sexual organ clean and patiently following the treatment outlined above will make the observance of *brahmacharya* comparatively easier. It will result in making the local nerve endings less sensitive and unwanted seminal emissions less likely. To say the least it is very unclean to allow seminal emissions to occur. Greater insistence on cleanliness should and will cause a feeling of revulsion against the process and make one much more particular than otherwise in taking all the precautions to avoid them.

Having dealt with the two Kuhne baths, a few words about wet-sheet packs will not be out of place. It is very useful in pyrexia and insomnia. The method of giving wet-sheet packs is this: Spread three or four thick broad woollen blankets on a cot and on top of them a thick cotton sheet dipped in cold water with the water wrung

out. The patient lies flat on the wet sheet with his head resting on a pillow outside the sheet. The wet sheet and the blankets are wrapped round the patient covering the whole body except the head which is covered with a damp towel treated after the manner of the wet sheet. The sheet and the blankets are wrapped round the patient, so that outside air cannot get inside. Though the patient feels a gentle shock when first laid in the wet-sheet pack, he finds it pleasant afterwards. In a minute or two he begins to feel warm. Unless the fever has become chronic, in about five minutes it begins to come down with sweating. In resistant cases I have kept the patient wrapped in the wet-sheet pack up to half an hour. This has finally resulted in sweating. Sometimes there is no sweating but the patient goes off to sleep. In that case he should not be awakened. The sleep indicates that the wet-sheet pack has produced a soothing effect and he is quite comfortable. The temperature invariably falls at least by one or two degrees as a result of the wet-sheet pack.

It was over thirty years ago that my second son[1] suffered from double pneumonia and high fever resulting in delirium. I had a medical friend advising me as to his condition. I would not, much to his sorrow, try his prescription. But I tried water cure. I used to put him in wet-sheet packs when fever shot up very high. After six or seven days the temperature went down. So far as I remember I gave him orange juice also, but nothing else. Typhoid supervened. It lasted 42 days.[2] There was no treatment beyond simple nursing. I gave him milk and water for food. He had daily sponges. He was completely cured and is today the strongest and healthiest of all my four sons. At least this much might be said of the treatment that he was none the worse for it.

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Wet-sheet packs are also useful in the treatment of prickly heat, urticaria, other forms of skin irritation, measles, smallpox, etc. I have tried them on a fairly large scale for these ailments. For smallpox and measles cases, I added enough potassium permanganate to the water to give it a light pink colour. The sheet used for these patients should afterwards be sterilized by soaking it in boiling water and leaving it in

[1] Manilal Gandhi; *vide* "*An Autobiography*—Part III, Chapter XXII.

[2] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "The temperature went up to 103^0. It is possible that my memory fails me as to degrees. I gave this treatment against the advice of my doctor friends. I did not give him any medicine."

it till it cools down sufficiently and then washed with soap and water.

In cases where circulation has become sluggish, the leg muscles feel sore and there is a peculiar ache and feeling of discomfort in the legs, an ice massage does a lot of good. This treatment is more effective in summer months. Massaging a weak patient with ice in winter might prove a risky affair.

Now a few words about the therapeutics of hot water. An intelligent use of hot water gives relief in many cases. Application of iodine is a very popular remedy for all sorts of injuries and the like. Application of hot water will prove equally effective in most of these cases. Tincture of iodine is applied on swollen and bruised areas. Hot water fomentations are likely to give equal relief, if not more. Again, iodine drops are used in cases of earache. Irrigation of the ear with warm water is likely to relieve the pain in most of these cases. The use of iodine is attended with certain risks. The patient may have allergy towards the drug. Iodine mistaken for something else and taken internally might prove disastrous. But there is no risk whatever in using hot water. Boiling water is as good a disinfectant as tincture of iodine. I do not mean to belittle the usefulness of iodine or suggest that hot water can replace it in all cases. Iodine is one of the few drugs which I regard most useful and necessary, but it is an expensive thing. The poor cannot afford to buy it and moreover its use cannot be safely entrusted to everybody. But water is available everywhere. We may not despise its therapeutic value because it is obtained so easily. Knowledge of common household remedies often proves a godsend in many a crisis.

In cases of scorpion-stings where all remedies have failed, immersion of the part in hot water has been found to relieve the pain to a certain extent.

A shivering fit or a *rigor* can be made to subside by putting buckets of hot boiling water all round the patient who is well wrapped up or by saturating the atmosphere of the room with steam by some other device. A rubber hot-water bag is the most useful thing, but it is not to be found in every household. A glass bottle with a well-fitting cork, filled with hot water and wrapped in a piece of cloth, serves the same purpose. Care should be taken to choose bottles that will not crack on hot water being poured into them.

Steam is a more valuable therapeutic agent. It can be used to make the patient sweat. Steam-baths are most useful in cases of

rheumatism and other joint-pains.[1]

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The easiest as well as the oldest method of taking steambath is this: Spread a blanket or two on a sparsely but tightly woven cot and put one or two covered vessels full with boiling water under it. Make the patient lie flat on the cot and cover him up in such a- way that the ends of the covering blankets touch the ground and thus prevent the steam from escaping, and the outside air from getting in. After arranging everything as above, the lid from the vessels containing boiling water is removed and steam soon gets on to the patient lying between the blankets. It may be necessary to change the water once or twice. Usually in India people keep an *angithi* under pots to keep the water boiling. This ensures continuous discharge of steam, but is attended with risk of accidents. A single spark might set fire to the blankets or to the cot and endanger the patient's life. Therefore it is advisable to use the method described by me even though it might seem slow and tedious.

Some people add *neem* leaves or other herbs to the water used for generating steam. I do not know if such an addition increases the efficiency of steam. The object is to induce sweat and that is attained by mere steam.

In cases of cold feet or aching of legs, the patient should be made to sit with his feet and legs immersed up to the knees in as hot a water as he can bear. A little mustard powder can be added to the water. The foot-bath should not last for more than fifteen minutes. This treatment improves the local circulation and gives immediate relief.

In cases of common cold and sore throat a steam kettle which is very much like an ordinary tea kettle with a long nozzle can be used for applying steam to the nose or throat. A rubber tube of required length can be attached to any ordinary kettle for this purpose.

3. AKASH (ETHER?)

Akash is a difficult word to translate as are indeed all the other four elements so-called. For *pani is* not mere water in the original, nor *vayu* wind, or *prithvi* earth, or *teja* light. *Akash* is ether least of all. Perhaps the nearest equivalent is emptiness taken in its literal sense.

[1] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Steam is very useful for people who are overweight."

And it is horribly inexpressive of the original. All the five in the original are as living as life. If, however, we take ether as the nearest equivalent for *akash*, we must say that we know very little about ether itself and *akash* much less. Our knowledge of its therapeutic uses is still more limited. *Akash* might be taken for the empty space surrounding the earth and the atmosphere round it. On a clear day, on looking up, one sees a beautiful mauve blue canopy which is known as the *akash* or sky. So far as we are concerned, this sky or the ether is limitless. We are surrounded by it on every side, and there is no nook or corner without it. Generally we imagine that the sky is something resting upon the high— it is the blue canopy above us. But the sky is as much above us as below and all around us. We move round and round with the earth. Therefore the *akash* is round and everybody is within it. It is an envelope whose outermost surface is measureless. The lower strata of the *akash* for a number of miles are filled with air. But for this man would become suffocated in spite of the emptiness. True, we cannot see the air, but we can feel it when in motion. Sky or the ether is the abode of the atmosphere. One can pump out air, say, from an empty bottle and create a vacuum, but who can pump out the vacuum itself?[1] That is *akash*.

This *akash* we have to make use of to maintain or to regain health. Air being most essential to sustain life, nature has made it omnipresent. But the omnipresence of air is only relative. It is not limitless in reality. Scientists tell us that after a certain number of miles above the earth there is no air. It is said that earthly creatures cannot exist outside this atmosphere. This statement may or may not be true. All that we are concerned with here is that *akash* extends beyond the atmosphere. Some day the scientists might prove that what we call ether is also something which fills the empty space—*akash*. Then we will have to discover a new name for the empty space that holds neither air nor the ether. Be that as it may, the mystery of this empty space all around us is most intriguing. We cannot solve it unless we can solve the mystery of God Himself. This much might be said that the more we utilize this great element *akash* the healthier we will be. The first lesson to be learnt is this, that we should not put any partition between ourselves and the sky—the infinite—which is very near and yet very far away. If our bodies could be in contact with the sky

[1] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "We do fill the sky but because it is infinite any number of people can be accommodated in it."

without the intervention of houses, roofs and even clothes, we are likely to enjoy the maximum amount of health. This is not possible for everyone. But all can and should accept the validity of the statement and adapt life accordingly. To the extent that we are able to approach the state in practice, we will enjoy contentment and peace of mind. This train of thought taken to the extreme leads us to a condition where even the body becomes an obstacle separating man from the infinite. To understand this truth is to become indifferent to the dissolution of the body. For, to lose oneself in the infinite is to find oneself. The body thus ceases to be a vehicle for self-indulgence. Man will make use of his body for the realization of this unity with the infinite. In the course of the attempt he will discover that he is part of and one with all the life that surrounds him. This must mean service of mankind and through it finding God.

To return from the high flight, this train of thought will make the thinker keep his surroundings as open as possible. He will not fill the house with unnecessary furniture, and will use the minimum of clothes that are necessary. Many houscholds are so packed with all sorts of unnecessary decorations and furniture which one can very well do without, that a simple living man will feel suffocated in those surroundings. They are nothing but means of harbouring dust, bacteria and insects. Here in the house where I am under detention, I feel quite lost. The heavy furniture, chairs, tables, sofas, bedsteads, innumerable looking-glasses, all get on my nerves. The expensive carpets on the floors collect large amount of dust and act as a breeding place for insect life. One day the carpet in one of the rooms was taken out for dusting. It was not one man's work. Six men spent the afternoon in doing the job. They must have removed at least ten pounds of dust. When the carpet was put back in its place it had a new feel about it. These carpets cannot be taken out and dusted everyday. Such treatment will wear out the carpets and greatly increase the expenditure of labour. But this is by the way. What I meant to say is that my desire to be in tune with the infinite has saved me from many complications in life. It led not merely to simplicity of household and dress but all round simplicity in the mode of my life. In a nutshell, and in the language of the subject under discussion, I have gone on creating more and more contact with *akash.* With the increase in the contact went improvement in health. I had more contentment and peace of mind and the desire for belongings almost disappeared. He who will establish contact with the infinite possesses nothing and yet

possesses everything. In the ultimate analysis, man owns that of which he can make legitimate use and which he can assimilate. If everybody followed this rule, there would be room enough for all and there would be neither want nor overcrowding.

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It follows that one should make it a point to sleep in the open. Sufficient covering should be used to protect oneself against the inclemencies of the weather—against cold and dew. In rainy season an umbrella like roof without walls should be used for keeping the rain out. For the rest, the starlit blue canopy should form the roof so that whenever one opens one's eyes, one can feast them on the everchanging beautiful panorama of the heavens. One will never tire of the scene and it will not dazzle or hurt one's eyes. On the contrary, it will have a soothing effect on one. To watch the different starry constellations floating in their majesty is a feast for the eyes. One who establishes contact with the stars as living witnesses to all his thoughts will never allow any evil or impurity to enter his mind and will enjoy peaceful, refreshing sleep.

Let us descend from the *akash* above to the *akash* within and immediately about us. Thus the skin has millions of pores. If we fill up the empty space within these pores, we simply die. Any clogging of the pores, therefore, must interfere with the even flow of health. Similarly we must not fill up the digestive tract with unnecessary foodstuffs. We should eat only as much as we need and no more. Often one overeats or eats indigestible things without being aware of it. An occasional fast, say once a week or once a fortnight, will enable one to keep the balance even. If one is unable to fast for the whole day, one should miss one or more meals during the day. That nature abhors a vacuum is only partially true. Nature constantly demands a vacuum. The vast space surrounding us is a standing testimony of the truth.

4. SUN

As in the case of the other elements, which have been already dealt with, man cannot do without sunlight. The sun is the source of light and heat. If there was no sun, there would be neither light nor warmth. Unfortunately we do not make full use of sunlight and consequently we are unable to enjoy perfect health. Sun-bath is as useful as ordinary water-bath though the two cannot replace one

another. In cases of debility and slow circulation, exposure of the uncovered body to the morning sun acts as an all-round general tonic and accelerates the metabolism. The morning sun has the largest amount of ultra-violet rays which are a most effective component of the sun's rays. If the patient feels cold, he should lie in the sun covered up and gradually expose more and more of his body as he gets used to it. One can also take sun-bath pacing up and down in the sun without any clothes on, in a private enclosure or in any other place away from public gaze. If such a place is not within easy reach, one can just cover up the private parts by tying up a piece of cloth or a *langoti* and expose the rest of the body to the sun.

I know of many persons who have been benefited by sun-baths. It is a well-known treatment for tuberculosis. Sun-baths or heliotherapy is no longer confined to the sphere of naturopathy. Orthodox medicine has taken it up from naturopathy and developed it further. In cold countries, special glass buildings have been constructed under medical supervision, so that the glass lets in the sun's rays and at the same time protects patients against the cold.

Sun treatment often results in the cure of intractable ulcers. To produce sweating, I have made patients lie in the sun at about 11 a.m., i.e., a little before midday. The experiment has been successful and the patients are soon bathed in sweat. In these cases the head should be protected from the sun by means of a cold mud-poultice. Banana or any other leaves can be used to cover up the head and face and thus further help in keeping the head cool and well protected. The head should never be exposed to strong sunlight.

5. AIR

This fifth element is as important as the four already discussed in the foregoing pages. The human body which is composed of the five elements cannot do without any one of them. Therefore no one should be afraid of air. Generally, wherever our people go, they make devices to keep out the sun and the air and thus jeopardize their health. If one cultivates the habit of living in the open in the midst of plenty of fresh air, right from childhood, the body will become hardened and one will never suffer from cold in the head and the like ailments. I have said enough about the importance of fresh air in an earlier chapter. There is no occasion, therefore, to repeat here what has already been said.

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[1] In the source, this is preceded by "Contents" and is followed by "Preface". The publisher explains: "This synopsis of the topics discussed in the book was prepared by Gandhiji himself in the original Gujarati. . . . We have thought it proper to include it in the English translation in place of an index at the end. . . ." The page numbers, however, denote the references here.

[2] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Indigestion—constipation"

[3] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Day clothes"

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[1] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Filtered water", and "What type of cloth to be used"
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[1] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Sprouted pulses"
[2] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Seasonal fruits"
[3] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Fatty food-stuffs"

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[1] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Sweetmeat"

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[1] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Place of toddy in man's diet"
[2] *Chavi* adds: "Qualities of refined sugar made out of *nira*"
[3] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Liquor and Englishmen"

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[1] *Arogyani Chavi* adds; "Vital force and indulgence"

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[2] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Sexual desire and sleep", "Place of arithmetic in conservation of vital force", and "Sexual desire and business"

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[1] Arogyani *Chavi* adds: "Iron *(dylyde)"*, and "*Nux Vomica*"
[2] From *Arogyani Chavi*
[3] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Ways of cleaning earth"

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[1] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "How to sit in the tub"
[2] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Man and humility"

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[1] *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Hot water and swelling"

226. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

Personal DETENTION CAMP[1],
New Year's Eve, 1942

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

This is a very personal letter. Contrary to the biblical injunction, I have allowed many suns to set on a quarrel I have harboured against you, but I must not allow the old year to expire without disburdening myself of what is rankling in my breast against you. I had thought we were friends and should still love to think so. However what has happened since the 9th of August last makes me wonder whether you still regard me as a friend. I have perhaps not come in such close touch with any other occupant of your gadi as with you.

Your arrest of me, the communique[2] you issued thereafter, your reply[3] to Rajaji and the reasons given therefor, Mr. Amery's attack[4] on

[1] The Aga Khan Palace, Poona, where Gandhiji was detained without any charge being framed against him, after his arrest in Bombay on August 9, 1942.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 14-8-1942.

[3] The reference, presumably, is to the Viceroy's refusal to forward C. Rajagopalachari's telegram to Gandhiji, dissuading him from any intended fast, or to permit him to meet Gandhiji. A request from Rajagopalachari for an interview with the Viceroy had also been negatived. The Viceroy's correspondence as published in *The Transfer of Power,* Vol. II, pp. 683-4 and 840, discloses that he was "not prepared to allow communication with Gandhi or the Working Committee. Once that starts, there would be no end to it." Also "a talk with Mr. Rajagopalachari . . . would certainly be taken to mean that we are willing to discuss, and would be regarded as a sign of approaching compromise, possibly even of weakness, by the many substantial interests in this country which are not in agreement with the point of view represented by him."

[4] According to *The Indian Annual Register,* 1942, Vol. II, pp. 350-1, on September 11, 1942, L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, replying to a debate in the House of Commons had, *inter alia,* said: "... soon after Sir Stafford Cripps left India, it became clear that under Mr. Gandhi's inspiration, the Congress was steadily swinging towards a policy of direct defiance aimed at paralysing the existing Government of India. . . . He was reported by his secretary, Mr. Desai, in June as saying: 'My attitude has undergone a change. I cannot afford to wait. I must even at obvious risks ask the people to resist slavery.' Mr. Gandhi declared that for national independence they might have to face bombs, bullets and shells. Does this look like a purely non-violent movement? Mr. Gandhi added, as to the method of resistance: 'No doubt the non-violent way is the best but where that does not come naturally . . . violent way is both necessary and honourable, and inaction here is rank cowardice and unmanly.'... The Government of India showed remarkable patience.... It took no action as long as there was a possibility of the All-India Congress Committee not endorsing the sinister designs of the Working Committee influenced by Mr. Gandhi."

me and much else I can catalogue go to show that at some stage or other you must have suspected my *bona fides.* Mention of other Congressmen in the same connection is by the way. I seem to be the *fons et origo* of all the evil imputed to the Congress. If I have not ceased to be your friend, why did you not, before taking drastic action, send for me, tell me of your suspicions and make yourself sure of your facts? I am quite capable of seeing myself as others see me, but in this case I have failed hopelessly. I find that all the statements made about me in Government quarters in this connection contain palpable departures from truth. I have so much fallen from grace that I could not establish contact with a dying friend; I mean Prof. Bhansali[1] who is fasting in regard to the Chimur affair; and I am expected to condemn the so-called violence of some people reputed to be Congressmen, although I have no data for such condemnation save the heavily censored reports of newspapers. I must own that I thoroughly distrust these reports. I could write much more but I must not lengthen my tale of woe. I am sure that what I have said is enough to enable you to fill in details.

You know I returned to India from South Africa at the end of 1914 with a mission which came to me in 1906, namely, to spread truth and non-violence among mankind in the place of violence and falsehood in all walks of life. The law of satyagraha knows no defeat. Prison is one of the many ways of spreading the message, but it has its limits. You have placed me in a palace where every reasonable creature comfort is ensured. I have freely partaken of the latter purely as a matter of duty, never as a pleasure, in the hope that some day those that have the power will realize that they have wronged innocent men. I had given myself six months. The period is drawing to a close, so is my patience. The law of satyagraha, as I know it, 'prescribes a remedy in such moments of trial. In a sentence it is: "Crucify the flesh by fasting." That same law forbids its use except as a last resort. I do not want to use it if I can avoid it. This is the way to avoid it: convince me of my error or errors, and I shall make ample amends. You can send for me or send someone who knows your mind and can carry conviction. There are many other

[1] Jaikrishna P. Bhansali, an inmate of Sevagram Ashram, was on an indefinite fast from November 26 in protest against the Government's refusal to institute a public inquiry into Chimur atrocities of October 17, 1942.

ways, if you have the will. May I expect an early reply? May the New Year bring peace to us all.[1]

I am,
Your sincere friend,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, pp. 18-9; also Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi, p. 5

227. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

Personal *January 19, 1943*

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I received your kind letter[2] of 13th instant yesterday at 2.30 p.m. I had almost despaired of ever hearing from you. Please excuse my impatience.

Your letter gladdens me to find that I have not lost caste with you.

My letter[3] of 31st December was a growl against you. Yours is a counter-growl. It means that you maintain that you were right in arresting me and you were sorry for the omissions of which, in your opinion, I was guilty.

The inference yon draw from my letter is, I am afraid, not correct. I have re-read my letter in the light of your interpretation, but have failed to find your meaning in it. I wanted to fast and should still want to, if nothing comes out of our correspondence and I have to be a helpless witness to what is going on in the country, including the priv-ations of the millions owing to the universal scarcity stalking the land.

If I do not accept your interpretation of my letter, you want me to make a positive suggestion. This I might be able to do, only if you put me among the members of the Working Committee of the Congress.

[1] According to *The Transfer of Power,* Vol. III, pp. 439 and 458 the Viceroy cabled the text of this letter on January 3 to Amery, who in his reply dated January 5 ruled out any "great haste for an immediate reply". The addressee, however, sent his reply, after consultations with Amery and the British Cabinet, on January 13; *vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 13-1-1943.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 13-1-1943.

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

If I could be convinced of my error or worse, of which you are evidently, I should need to consult nobody, so far as my own action is concerned, to make a full and open confession and make ample amends. But I have not any conviction of error. I wonder if you saw my letter to the Secretary to the Government of India of 21st[1] September, 1942. I adhere to what I have said in it and in my letter[2] to you of 14th August, 1942.

Of course, I deplore the happenings which have taken place since 9th August last. But have I not laid the whole blame for them at the door of the Government of India? Moreover I could not express any opinion on events which I cannot influence or control, and of which I have but a one-sided account. You are bound *prima facie* to accept the accuracy of reports that may be placed before you by your departmental heads. But you will not expect me to do so. Such reports have before now often proved fallible. It was for that reason that, in my letter of 31st December, I pleaded with you to convince me of the correctness of the information on which your conviction was based. You will perhaps appreciate my fundamental difficulty in making the statement you have expected me to make.

This, however, I can say from the house-top, that I am as confirmed a believer in non-violence as I have ever been. You may not know that any violence on the part of Congress workers I have condemned openly and unequivocally. I have even done public penance[3] more than once. I must not weary you with examples. The point I wish to make is that on every such occasion I was a free man.

This time the retracing, as I have submitted, lies with the Government. You will forgive me for expressing an opinion challenging yours. I am certain that nothing but good would have resulted, if you had stayed your hand and granted me the interview, which I had announced[4] on the night of the 8th August, I was to seek. But that was not to be.

Here may I remind you that the Government of India have before now owned their mistakes as, for instance, in the Punjab when

[1] It was actually dated 23rd; *vide* "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 23-9-1942.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 14-8-1942.

[3] From November 19 to 21, 1921; February 12 to 16, 1922; and August 7 to 13, 1934.

[4] *Vide* "Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting", 8-8-1942.

the late Gen. Dyer was condemned,[1] in the United Provinces when a corner of a mosque in Kanpur was restored,[2] and in Bengal when the partition was annulled[3]? All these things were done in spite of great and previous mob violence.

To sum up—

1. If you want me to act singly, convince me that I was wrong, and I will make ample amends.

2. If you want me to make any proposal on behalf of the Congress, you should put me among the Congress Working Committee members. I do plead with you to make up your mind to end the impasse.

If I am obscure or have not answered your letter fully, please point out the omissions, and I shall make an attempt to give you satisfaction.

I have no mental reservation.

I find that my letters to you are sent through the Government of Bombay. This procedure must involve some loss of time. As time is of the essence in this matter, perhaps you will issue instructions that my letters to you may be sent directly by the Superintendent of this Camp.[4]

I am,

Your sincere friend,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, pp. 21-2; also *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, pp. 6-7

[1] As an aftermath of the Jallianwala Bagh firing on April 13, 1919, Gen. Dyer was censured by an inquiry committee and required to resign from the Army.

[2] In 1913 there was rioting in Kanpur when a part of a mosque was demolished to broaden a street. Lord Hardinge had to order the mosque to be rebuilt.

[3] The partition of Bengal in 1905 led to grave unrest and the partition was annulled in 1912.

[4] According to *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. III, p. 536, in his reply dated January 25, the Viceroy reiterated his view that Gandhiji and the Congress were responsible for the disturbances. He reassured Gandhiji that should he "repudiate" the resolution of August 8, he would be "very ready to consider the matter further". The Viceroy also said: "It is of course very necessary to be clear on that point and you will not, I know, take it amiss that I should make that clear in the plainest possible words".

228. INDEPENDENCE DAY PLEDGE[1]

[*January 25, 1943*][2]

My immediate objective is and for years has been for India to gain her independence, complete in every sense of the term by truthful and non-violent means. And in prosecution of that objective, I re-pledge myself on this [thirteenth anniversary of][3] Independence Day not to rest; [nor will I let those on whom I have some influence to rest][4] till it is gained. I seek for the fulfilment of my pledge the assistance of that divine and unseen Power which we recognize by such familiar names as God, Allah and *Paramatma*.

The Hindu, 24-1-1945

229. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

DETENTION CAMP,
January 29, 1943

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I must thank you warmly for your prompt reply[4] to my letter of 19th instant. I wish I could agree with you that your letter is clear. I am sure you do not wish to imply by clearness simply that you hold a particular opinion strongly. I have pleaded and would continue to plead till the last breath, that you should at least make an attempt to convince me of the validity of the opinion you hold that the August

[1] The pledge appeared under the date-line "Wardhaganj, January 22", as given in a statement by Pyarelal, who explained that Gandhiji wrote it while in detention "for celebrating the Independence Day" on January 26. Pyarelal also stated: "The pledge was revised by Gandhiji and his companions on the first anniversary of August 8, 1942 [Quit India Movement], and also on the Independence Day in 1943 and 1944." Originally drafted by Gandhiji on January 10, 1930 *(vide*"Draft Declaration for January 26", 10-1-1930), the pledge was amended by the Congress Working Committee in December 1939 *(vide* Appendix "Resolution on Independence Day Pledge", 30-12-1939), to which Gandhiji added a paragraph on January 11, 1941; *vide* "Instructions for Independence Day", 11-1-1941. In *Bapuki Karavas-Kahani*, Sushila Nayyar, however, explains that the pledge was written by Gandhiji while observing silence on January 25, 1943.

[2] *ibid*

[3] From *Bapuki Karavas-Kahani*

[4] *Vide* last footnote of "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 19-1-1943

resolution[1] of Congress is responsible for the popular violence that broke out on 9th August last and after, even though it broke out after the wholesale arrest of principal Congress workers. Was not the drastic and unwarranted action of the Government responsible for the reported violence?

You have not even said what part of the August resolution is bad or offensive in your opinion. That resolutions is in no way a retraction by the Congress of its policy of non-violence. It is definitely against Fascism in every shape or form. It tenders co-operation in war-effort under circumstances which alone can make effective and nation-wide co-operation possible.[2] The Government have evidently ignored or overlooked the very material fact that the Congress by its August resolution asked nothing for itself. All its demands were for the whole people. As you should be aware, the Congress was willing and prepared for the Government inviting Qaid-e-Azam[3] Jinnah to form a national government, subject to such agreed adjustments as may be necessary, for the duration of the war, such government being responsible to a duly elected assembly. Being isolated from the Working Committee except Shrimati Sarojini Devi, I do not know its present mind. But the Committee is not likely to have changed its mind. Is all this open to reproach? Objection may be raised to that clause of the resolution which contemplated civil disobedience. But that by itself cannot constitute an objection since the principle of civil disobedience is impliedly conceded in what is known as the "Gandhi Irwin Pact".[4] Even that civil disobedience was not to be started before knowing the result of the meeting for which I was to seek from you an appointment.

Then, take the unproved and in my opinion unprovable charges[5] hurled against the Congress and me by so responsible a Minister as the Secretary of State for India.

Surely I can say with safety that it is for the Government to

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Resolution Passed by All-India Congress Committee", 8-8-1942.

[2] The following five sentences, "inadvertently omitted" and hence included as a postscript in the original letter, were, however, restored to their proper place, as found here, in a fair copy of the letter which Gandhiji enclosed along with the letter dated February 7, 1943, to the Viceroy.

[3] Honorific meaning 'the supreme leader'

[4] *Vide* Appendix "Provisional Settlement", 12-3-1931.

[5] *Vide* 4th footnote of "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 31-12-1942 .

justify their action by solid evidence not by mere *ipse dixit.*

But you throw in my face the facts of murders by persons reputed to be Congressmen. I see the fact of the murders as clearly, I hope, as you do. My answer is that the Government goaded the people to the point of madness. They started leonine violence in the shape of the arrests already referred to. That violence is not any the less so because it is organized on a scale so gigantic that it displaces the Mosaic law of tooth for tooth by that of ten thousand for one—not to mention the corollary of the Mosaic law, i.e., of non-resistance as enunciated by Jesus Christ. I cannot interpret in any other manner the repressive measures of the all-powerful Government of India.

Add to this tale of woe the privations of the poor millions due to India-wide scarcity which I cannot help thinking might have been largely mitigated, if not altogether prevented, had there been a *bona-fide* national government responsible to a popularly elected assembly.

If then I cannot get soothing balm for my pain, I must resort to the law prescribed for satyagrahis, namely, a fast according to capacity. I must commence after the early morning breakfast of the 9th February, a fast for 21 days ending on the morning of the 2nd March. Usually, during my fasts, I take water with the addition of salts. But nowadays my system refuses water. This time, therefore, I propose to add juices of citrus fruits to make water drinkable. For, my wish is not to fast unto death but to survive the ordeal, if God so wills. This fast can be ended sooner by the Government giving the needed relief.

I am not marking this letter 'Personal' as I did the two previous ones[1]. They were in no way confidential. They were a mere personal appeal.[2]

I am,

Your sincere friend,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, pp. 24-6; also *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, pp. 8-9

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 31-12-1942.

[2] For the Viceroy's reply, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 5-2-1943.

230. LETTER TO SIR J. G. LAITHWAITE

DETENTION CAMP,
February 7, 1943

DEAR SIR GILBERT[1],

I was delighted to see your signature after such a lapse of time. When I said that the two personal letters were not confidential, I certainly meant what you say.[2] But I meant also that though they were not confidential on my part, if His Excellency wanted to treat them as such, being personal, he was free to do so, and therefore equally free to regard his two replies also as such. In that case he could have the four letters withheld from publication. So far as I am concerned my request of course is that the whole correspondence beginning with my letter of 14th August last, and including my letter to the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, should be published.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, p. 29

231. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

DETENTION CAMP,
February 7, 1943

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I have to thank you for your long reply[3], dated the 5th instant, to my letter of 29th January last. I would take your last point first, namely, the contemplated fast which begins on 9th instant. Your letter, from a satyagrahi's standpoint, is an invitation to fast. No doubt the responsibility for the step and its consequences will be solely mine.

[1] Private Secretary to the Viceroy

[2] In his letter dated February 5, the addressee had referred to the last paragraph in Gandhiji's letter dated January 29 to the Viceroy *(vide* the preceding item), and said: "As you would no doubt have expected, H. E. had hitherto attached to the word 'personal' its normal conventional meaning, and had accordingly given the same marking to his replies. He assumes . . . you would have no objection to his publishing these letters with his replies. . . ."

[3] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 5-2-1943.

You have allowed an expression to slip from your pen for which I was unprepared. In the concluding sentence of the second paragraph, you describe the step as an attempt "to find an easy way out". That you, as a friend, can impute such a base and cowardly motive to me passes comprehension. You have also described it as "a form of political blackmail". And you quote my previous writings on the subject against me. I abide by my writings. I hold that there is nothing inconsistent in them with the contemplated step. I wonder whether you have yourself read those writings.

I do claim that I have approached you with an open mind when I asked you to convince me of my error. "Profound distrust" of the published reports is in no way inconsistent with my having an open mind.

You say that there is evidence that I—I leave my friends out for the moment "expected this policy to lead to violence", that I was "prepared to condone it", and that "the violence that ensued formed part of a concerted plan, conceived long before the arrest of Congress leaders". I have seen no evidence in support of such a serious charge. You admit that part of the evidence has yet to be published. The speech of the Home Member[1], of which you have favoured me with a copy, may be taken as the opening speech of the prosecution counsel and nothing more. It contains unsupported imputations against Congressmen. Of course he has described the violent outburst in graphic language. But he has not said why it took place when it did. I have suggested why it did. You have condemned men and women before trying them and hearing their defence. Surely there is nothing wrong in my asking you to show me the evidence on which you hold them guilty. What you say in your letter carries no conviction. Proof should correspond to the canons of English jurisprudence.

If the wife of a member of the Working Committee is actively engaged in "planning the bomb outrages and other acts of terrorism", she should be tried before a court of law and punished, if found guilty. The lady you refer to could only have done the things attributed to her after the wholesale arrests of 9th August last, which I have dared to describe as leonine violence.

You say that the time is not yet ripe to publish the charges against the Congress. Have you ever thought of the possibility of their

[1] Reginald Maxwell, who spoke on September 15, 1942, in the Central Legislative Assembly

being found baseless when they are put before an impartial tribunal? Or that some of the condemned persons might have died in the mean while or that some of the evidence that the living can produce might become unavailable?

I reiterate the statement that the principle of civil disobedience is implicitly conceded in the settlement[1] of 5th March, 1931, arrived at between the then Viceroy on behalf of the Government of India and myself on behalf of the Congress. I hope you know that the principal Congressmen were discharged before the settlement was even thought of. Certain reparations were made to Congressmen under that settlement. Civil disobedience was discontinued only on conditions being fulfilled by the Government. That by itself was, in my opinion, an acknowledgment of its legitimacy, of course, under given circumstances. It, therefore, seems somewhat strange to find you maintain that civil disobedience "cannot be recognized as being in any circumstances legitimate" by your Government. You ignore the practice of the British Government which has recognized its legitimacy under the name of "passive resistance".

Lastly, you read into my letters a meaning which is wholly inconsistent with my declaration, in one of them, of adherence to unadulterated non-violence. For, you say in your letter under reply that 'acceptance of my point of view would be to concede that the authorized Government of the country on which lies the responsibility for maintaining peace and good order, should allow movements to take place that would admit preparations for violence, interruption of communications, for attacks on innocent persons, for murders of police officers and others to proceed unchecked'. I must be a strange friend of yours whom you believe to be capable of asking for recognition of such things as lawful.

I have not attempted an exhaustive reply to the views and statements attributed to me. This is not the place nor the time for such a reply. I have only picked out those things which in my opinion demanded an immediate answer. You have left me no loophole for escaping the ordeal I have set before myself. I begin it on the 9th instant with the clearest possible conscience. Despite your description of it as "a form of political blackmail", it is on my part meant to be an appeal to the Highest Tribunal for justice which I have failed to secure from you. If I do not survive the ordeal, I shall go to the

[1] Gandhi-Irwin Pact; *vide* Appendix "Provisional Settlement", 12-3-1931.

Judgment Seat with the fullest faith in my innocence. Posterity will judge between you as representative of an all-powerful Government and me as a humble man who has tried to serve his country and humanity through it.

My last letter was written against time, and therefore a material paragraph went in as postscript.[1] I now send herewith a fair copy typed by Pyarelal who has taken Mahadev Desai's place. You will find the postscript paragraph restored to the place where it should have been.

I am,

Your sincere friend,

Enclosure 1 M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10377. Courtesy: India Office Library. Also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government*, pp. 30-2, and *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, pp. 11-2

232. LETTER TO SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM

February 8, 1943

DEAR SIR RICHARD[2].

I have very carefully studied your letter[3]. I am sorry to say that there is nothing in the correspondence which has taken place between His Excellency and myself, or your letter, to warrant a recalling of my intention to fast. I have mentioned in my letters to His Excellency the conditions which can induce prevention or suspension of the step.

If the temporary release is offered for my convenience, I do not need it. I shall be quite content to take my fast as a detenu or prisoner. If it is for the convenience of the Government, I am sorry I am unable to suit them, much as I should like to do so. I can say this much that I, as a prisoner, shall avoid, as far as is humanly possible, every cause of inconvenience to the Government save what is inherent in the fast itself. The impending fast has not been conceived to be taken as a free man. Circumstances may arise, as they have done before now, when I

[1] *Vide* 3rd footnote of "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 29-1-1943.

[2] Additional Secretary to the Government of India in the Home Department

[3] Dated February 7, this informed Gandhiji of the Government's proposal to set him at liberty "for the purpose and for the duration" of his proposed 21-day fast.

may have to fast as a free man. If, therefore, I am released, there will be no fast in terms of my correspondence above mentioned. I shall have to survey the situation *de novo* and decide what I should do. I have no desire to be released under false pretences. In spite of all that has been said against me, I hope not to belie the vow of truth and non-violence which alone makes life livable for me. I say this, if it is only for my own satisfaction. It does me good to reiterate openly my faith, when outer darkness surrounds me, as it does just now.

I must not hustle the Government into a decision on this letter. I understand that your letter has been dictated through the telephone. In order to give the Government enough time, I shall suspend the fast, if necessary, to Wednesday next, 10th instant.

So far as the statement proposed to be issued by the Government is concerned, and of which you have favoured me with a copy, I can have no opinion. But if I might have, I must say that it does me an injustice. The proper course would be to publish the full correspondence and let the public judge for themselves.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, p. 38; also *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, p. 13

[1] In his reply dated February 9, the addressee said: " . . . The Government of India note your decision with great regret. Their position remains the same. . . . But if you are not prepared to take advantage of that fact and if you fast while in detention, you will do so solely on your own responsibility and at your own risk. In that event, you will be at liberty to have your own medical attendants, and also to receive visits from friends with the permission of Government during its period. Suitable drafting alterations will be made in the statement which the Government of India would, in that event, issue to the Press."

233. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

DETENTION CAMP,
February 12, 1943

DEAR COL. BHANDARI[1],

You have told me that the Government have instructed you to convey to them urgently any wish I might have to express. You have also given me a copy of the instructions[2] of the Government about the regulating of friends' visits. This is my submission about the visits:

1. It is not fair to leave the initiative to me. In the present state of my mind I have no initiative about such visits. If, therefore, the Government wish that I should receive visitors, they should inform the public that, if any member of the public specially desires to see me, they will give him the permission. Their names need not be referred to me. For, I will not thwart the wish of any friend to see me. It is highly probable that my children and other relatives as also inmates of the Ashram and other friends who are intimately connected with me through one or more of my many activities may want to see me. If Rajaji, for instance, who had already applied to the Government for permission to see me in connection with the communal problem, wants to see me about that matter or any other, I should be glad to see him. But even regarding him I would not take the initiative of submitting his name to the Government.

2. If the visitors are permitted to see me without any restrictions as to the matters they might discuss with me, the object of discussions would be largely frustrated if the discussions cannot be published. I would, of course, always and in every circumstance, myself rule out, without needing any external pressure, any discussion that can, by any stretch of imagination, be helpful to the Fascist powers, including Japan. If visits contemplating discussions are to be allowed, the

[1] Madan Gopal Bhandari, Inspector-General of Prisons, Bombay

[2] In *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government*, p. 46, Pyarelal reproduces the following as "communicated by Col. Bhandari personally to Gandhiji at 1.10 p.m. on February 12, 1943": "(1) In respect to procedure, the initiative is left entirely to Gandhiji. (2) The absence of any restrictions on the subjects discussed. (3) The fact that an official will be present during interviews. (4) Restrictions on the publications of discussions."

declaration I have suggested to be made by the Government should obviously be made forthwith so that such visits may take place in the early stages of the fast.

3. It is possible that those who have been serving or nursing me in the Ashram or those who were attending on me during my previous fasts may want to stay with me to take part in the nursing. If they should so wish, they should be permitted. I see difficulty in the way of making public announcement on this point. If my proposal commends itself to the Government, I suggest their addressing Shrimati Janaki Devi, the widow of the late Seth Jamnalal Bajaj telling her that if anyone desires during my fast to take part in serving me, he would be permitted to do so on her submitting their names to the Government. She knows all those who have served me before.

Then there are two other matters. I have been most anxious all these months to know all about the state of health of Shri Mathuradas Trikumji, ex-Mayor of Bombay, a grandson of one of my sisters long since dead. The Government may either let me have the information or they may permit Shri Mathuradas Trikumji himself to write to me, or if he is physically unable to do so, anybody may be allowed on his behalf to give me the fullest information. When I was arrested, his life was almost despaired of. I read in the papers, however, that he had undergone a successful operation.

The other thing is in connection with the news that appears in *The Bombay Chronicle* received here today, that Professor Bhansali has embarked on another fast, this time out of sympathy with me. I would like, in order to save time, the Government to convey the following message to him by express wire or through telephone, whichever may be the quickest way:

"I have just read about your sympathetic fast. You have just ended your very long fast over Chimur. You have made that your special task. You should therefore quickly rebuild your body and fulfil the self-allotted task. Leave God to do with me as He likes. I would not have interfered, if you had not just risen from a fast that might have proved fatal and if you had not imposed on yourself a special duty."

If the Government would comply with my request on this point, I would like them to send the message without any alteration and

further to let me correspond with him if my message does not produce the desired result.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10381. Courtesy: India Office Library. Also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government*, pp. 44-5, and *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. III, pp. 665-7

234. INTERVIEW TO SYED ABDULLAH BRELVI[2]

February 21, 1943

From those who had already seen him, I had gathered that Gandhiji was passing through unprecedented mental agony. It distressed him beyond words that of all persons Lord Linlithgow should have so far misunderstood him as to believe that he who had dedicated his life to non-violence and who valued non-violence more than life itself, could ever countenance or condone violence of any kind. It hurt him deeply that though grave charges were made by Government against him and the Congress, no opportunity was given to them to refute them. This agony as well as the anxiety of the fast was writ large on his face.

He responded to my salutation with his characteristic smile. When I sat beside him he asked me in a whisper if I had anything to tell him. I replied that I had come only to pay my respects to him and had nothing to tell him, adding that I had already learnt from friends, who had seen him, what he had told them. He closed his eyes and thought. For half a minute he remained silent, I could sense that he was making a great effort to speak. Then he began speaking in whispers, and as he spoke his voice grew more and more audible. "Yes," he said, "but I had not completed what I wanted to

[1] The Government's reply dated February 14, conveyed by the addressee to Gandhiji on February 16, explained that (1) "no public announcement" could be made about the visitors; (2) no account of any interview should be published "without their specific approval"; (3) requirement of "extra nurses" would be "considered sympathetically"; (4) the message to Bhansali would not be communicated to him because of "the reference to Chimur", but that he would be informed that Gandhiji wished him "to give up his fast", or any alternative "message in Gandhiji's own words"; and (5) the Bombay Government would after enquiry inform Gandhiji about Mathuradas Trikumji, and in the mean while permission was being granted to him to "write letters to Gandhiji on personal and domestic matters".

[2] The interviewer, editor of *The Bombay Chronicle*, was a nationalist Muslim and a member of the All-India Congress Committee. The report is extracted from a communication on behalf of the Home Secretary, Bombay, to Richard Tottenham of the Home Department for "orders of Government of India" for its publication. The interview was in the afternoon.

say." He added, he could never approve of violence, but he did not want to criticize or condemn those who were reported to have resorted to it, until he had studied all facts. If he had not been arrested, he would have carried on negotiations with the Viceroy for a settlement. If he had been compelled to start a mass movement, he would never have permitted violence of any kind. His intention was, if the movement was started, to raise it to the highest pitch of non-violence yet reached in history.

Then, referring to Hindu-Muslim problem, he said, in a most earnest and touching tone, that before his arrest this question was nearest to his heart and he had determined to do all he could to have it settled and had, therefore, decided to go to Mr. Jinnah even if the latter did not give him an appointment.[1]

File No. 33/4/43. Courtesy: National Archives of India

235. NOTE TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

February 22, 1943

I had sent you a message that you should restrain yourself and not come here. Now get well completely so that you can be pardoned for having come here.[2]

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 189

236. DISCUSSION WITH HORACE G. ALEXANDER[3]

February 23, 1943

The question was put:

> If you were assured now, by the Viceroy, that you would be given full opportunity to examine the evidence about your and Congress' alleged

[1] Brelvi concluded: "There is no Indian leader today who is more anxious to settle the communal problem to the satisfaction of the Muslims than Mahatma Gandhi. None , too, who could be more helpful. May I appeal to my Muslim brethren to ponder over the words of the great leader who is now hovering between life and death?"

[2] *Vide* also "Ltter to M. G. Bhandari", 12-2-1943.

[3] This was an enclosure to a letter from Horace Alexander, leader of Friends' Ambulance Unit in India, to Sir Lawrence Roger Lumley, Governor of Bombay; *vide* Appendix "Letter from Horace G. Alexander to Sir Roger Lumley", 24-2-1943. According to the source, the report was "revised under the direction of Gandhiji on February 24, 1943".

responsibility for violence and to discuss it with the Viceroy himself or with someone chosen by him, would you be willing to break your fast?

I got the impression that Mr. Gandhi did not seriously think of the possibility, now, of ending his fast before the 21 days are ended. He was looking further ahead, as if the question had been, 'Under what circumstances would you be prepared to review and redirect the whole Congress effort?'

I understood him to indicate that the proposal suggested in the question was good enough as a first step, but it did not go far enough. Supposing that, after his examination of the evidence, he was still unconvinced, what then? A judicial inquiry is needed, which can really decide the case. He is accused of being the very fount and origin of all the violence that has taken place. Surely he can fairly claim that this accusation against him and against other Congress leaders should be judicially considered and decided.

If he was out of detention, he would naturally deal with all the forces of violence in the way he knows, and he would also naturally plunge into the task of bringing relief to those who are suffering from the present scarcity of food and other necessities.

From a photost.at: C.W. 10437. Courtesy: India Office Library. Also *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. III, pp. 733-5

237. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

DETENTION CAMP,
February 24, 1943

DEAR COL. BHANDARI,

There seems to be between Khan Bahadur Kateli[1] and me a conflict in the understanding of Government instructions about interviews. From the correspondence and instructions you were good enough to read to me, I had gathered that those who were permitted to visit me were not restricted as to the nature of discussion or its duration, a Government representative, if necessary, being present. Where I

am physically unable to carry on discussion I leave it to Shri Pyarelal to finish it. Naturally also the visitors who are intimately connected with me are seen and talked to by my wife. I personally can do very little talking. Doctors, for one thing, have to limit it to the fewest possible minutes. The Khan Bahadur's instructions are that the

[1] Ardeshir Eduljee Kateli, Superintendent of Prisons on special duty

talk must be confined only as between them and me. If such is the position, it is hopeless. Thus Seth R. D. Birla came and so did Shri Kamalnayan Bajaj. They know all about the trusts that I used to regulate. Naturally I took the opportunity of their visits and instructed Shri Pyarelal accordingly, and he has been talking to them regarding them. The Khan Bahadur had a very delicate duty to perform. He did it firmly but as gracefully as was possible under the circumstances. The Khan Bahadur also says, he has strict instructions not to allow visitors to take any notes or papers. During the remaining days of the fast and convalescence, I would like, if possible, to be undisturbed by such things. I would, therefore, like clear instructions which Khan Bahadur and I can mutually understand. I have no desire to go behind them.

Shri Devdas Gandhi, my son, has permission to stop at the Palace as long as he likes. During the permission period he talks during odd minutes when he thinks he can. Naturally the Khan Bahadur cannot be present at those times. I have asked Shri Pyarelal to show him all the correspondence that has passed between the Government of India and the Government of Bombay and myself. I had also the intention of supplying him with copies of such correspondence. But since the Khan Bahadur's prohibition, pending Government instructions, I have asked my son not to take any copies.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, pp. 47-8

[1] According to Pyarelal, the addressee, in reply to this, communicated to Gandhiji the following "order dated February 26", which, *inter alia,* read: "It has throughout been the intention of Government that an official should be present during all interviews. . . . Government has not so far insisted on this . . . with Devdas and Ramdas Gandhi in view of the condition of their father, but now that he is improving . . . they should be allowed . . . subject to the same conditions as other interviews. . . . Government has no objection . . . other detenues . . . joining in the conversation, but when Mr. Gandhi himself terminates an interview or is unable to continue it, it should be regarded as closed. . . . Government does not think that copies of its correspondence with Gandhiji should be allowed to go out. . ."

238. AN EXPLANATION[1]

February 26, 1943

I had to choose between death on the one hand and sweet lime-juice on the other. I had promised to live; I must try to live and hence mixed sweet lime-juice with water on Sunday[2] to enable me to drink water and get over nausea.

The Hindu, 27-2-1943

239. TALK WITH MIRABEHN[3]

February 27, 1943

What does it matter if people try to distort the meaning of my fast.

This fast was taken solely for service of God and in His presence. Other people may believe it or not, that does not worry me. Those against me are thinking they can make a good job of falsehood, but they are bound to fail. Truth will out—I have said everything that is to be said in my letters.

No fast of mine has ever had such a wonderful ending as this

[1] The correspondent explained that Gandhiji was "reported" to have said this on "the seventeenth day of his fast" while "recalling the happenings of last week-end". The correspondent added: "Doctors found Gandhiji in a cheerful mood when they visited him at 10 o'clock: 'His pulse and heart are in the same condition as yesterday. He continues to drink water mixed with sweet lime-juice, but he has further reduced the quantity of lime-juice as he is now able to take water freely. His mental alertness is as bright as ever. He distinctly remembers his condition was grave on Saturday and Sunday last.' Gandhiji spends most of his time on the eastern verandah of the Aga Khan Palace sunning himself for some time. On a carpet spread near his cot, Mrs. Kanu Gandhi and Pyarelal sit and recite *Gita.* Two chairs have been placed near his cot for visitors. . . ."

[2] February 21; according to *The Transfer of Power,* Vol. III, p. 719, "a bulletin signed by Mr. Gandhi's six doctors and published by Bombay Government" read: "After a restless day on 21st, Mr. Gandhi entered a crisis at 4.30 p.m. He was seized with severe nausea and almost fainted, and pulse became nearly imperceptible. Later he was able to take water with sweet lime-juice. He rallied from the crisis and slept for about 5_ hours during the night . . . ."

[3] The talk has been written down by Mirabehn under the following note: "Bapuji to me on morning of February 27, 1943". In this and other talks with Mirabehn, the text, as written down by Mirabehn, has been corrected by Gandhiji.

one is having. I do not mean what is going on in the outside world, but what is going on inside me. There is a heavenly peace.[1]

Correct, March 7, 1943.[2]

From a photostat: G.N. 9099

240. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

DETENTION CAMP,
March 2, 1943

DEAR COL. BHANDARI,

You were good enough yesterday, my day of silence, to tell me that the Government had restricted to my two sons the admission of outsiders at the breaking of the fast tomorrow. Whilst I am thankful for the concession, I am unable to avail myself of it. For, as the Government know, I make no distinction between sons born to me and numerous others who are as dear to me even as they are. I told you three or four days ago that, if the Government allowed any outsiders to be present at the breaking of the fast, they should allow all—nearly fifty—who are at present in Poona, and who have been allowed to visit me during the fast. I see that that was not to be.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, p. 49

[1] Mirabehn continues: "Bapuji murmured something more which I could not catch. Something about liking to take complete silence and not troubling to answer or explain anything further—but that he must not turn down Rajaji and others like that—and something about gaining strength to fling himself against the whole world and dying in peace and joy."

[2] This remark was written by Gandhiji, evidently, after he read through the talk.

241. TALK BEFORE BREAKING THE 21-DAY FAST[1]

March 3, 1943

Before sipping it, the Mahatma, in a feeble voice thanked the doctors for the great care and attention which they bestowed on him, and said that more than anything else it was their love and affection for him that must have saved his life. Further, he told those present, there must be something higher than the doctors' power that had saved him.[2]

I do not know why Providence has saved me on this occasion. Possibly, it is because He has some more mission for me to fulfil.

The Indian Annual Register, 1943, Vol. I, pp. 337-8

242. ANSWER TO QUESTIONS[3]

[After *March 3, 1943*][4]

QUESTION: It is alleged that you have compromised with your faith in non-violence. Is it true?

ANSWER : Not only does my faith in non-violence remain unshaken but you could even say that after the detention of six months, my faith in non-violence has, if possible, gone up further

[1] N. N. Mitra explains: "Mahatma Gandhi broke his fast at 9.34 a.m. I.S.T. (and 8.34 a.m. according to time maintained at Aga Khan Palace). . . . Besides the doctors only inmates of the detention camp were present.... The earliest to arrive . . . was Dr. B. C. Roy, and at 9 a.m., the Surgeon-General to the Government of Bombay, Maj-Gen. R. H. Candy, Lt.-Col. M. G. Bhandari and Lt.-Col. B. Z. Shah drove in. The inmates . . . sang . . . '*Vaishnava jana to*' and two stanzas from . . . *Gitanjali.* "Lead Kindly Light" and the Koran were also recited. After prayers, those present observed a five minutes' silence. With folded hands Mahatma Gandhi was seen to close his eyes and to be in meditation. Prayers over, Kasturba . . . handed him a glass containing six ounces of orange juice. He is reported to have taken twenty minutes to sip the juice."

[2] What follows, according to the source, was "revealed by Dr. B. C. Roy, presiding at a meeting of the staff and students of Calcutta University held at the Darbhanga Hall on March 7, 1943, in observance of the 'Thanks-giving Day' for the successful termination of Gandhiji's fast". For Dr. Roy's impressions of the fast at an interview to the United Press before he left Poona on March 4, and at the Calcutta University, *vide* Appendix "Dr. B. C. Roy's Impressions on Gandhiji's Fast", 4-3-1943.

[3] G. D. Birla explains: "These are the recorded answers to questions put to Gandhiji while he was interned."

[4] From the reference to Gandhiji's fast which ended on March 3

high.

How do you then reconcile your faith in non-violence with the allegations made against you and the Congress that all these acts of sabotage and violence that took place after the 8th of August so happened because of some secret instructions issued by you or by the Congress?

There is absolutely no truth in it. I never issued any secret or overt instructions in favour of sabotage or any other kind of violence. Had Congress issued instructions, I would have known it. No such instructions were issued either by me or by the Congress.

Do you then disapprove of these acts of sabotage and violence?

I definitely disapprove of them. I have made it clear to all those friends who have met me during the period of my fast. I do not want to judge anyone who believes in violence. But then I would say to them to declare it unequivocally that they are committing these acts of violence on their own behalf and because of their belief in violence. It is but fair to the Congress that these perpetrators of violence and sabotage should make it absolutely clear. I would also say that though one may not be a Congressman and yet has respect for me, should give up all methods of secrecy and violence. If they would listen to my advice, I would suggest that they should surrender themselves to the police. In this way they would only help the cause of the country. But if one does not believe in the Congress creed and my method, he should make it clear to all concerned.

It has been suggested that you started this movement under the notion that the Allies were going to be defeated and that you synchronized the movement with the time when Allied nations were in difficulties and that you wanted to take undue advantage of their position.

There is absolutely no truth in it. You can read my writings in *Harijan*, and I have made it more than clear that this was not my intention.

Yes, I have read your articles in *Harijan*, and what I gathered therefrom was that you are not only not pro-German or pro-Japan, but you are anti-Nazi and anti-Fascist. Am I right?

Definitely. No one has used stronger words than myself about Nazism and Fascism. I have called the Nazis and Fascists the scum of the earth. I wrote a letter[1] some time in May 1942 to Mirabehn while she was in Orissa. I cannot give you a copy of that letter since I am in

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 31-5-1942.

jail. I understand Mirabehn has sent a copy of that letter to the Government. You can ask the Government to supply you with a copy of it and satisfy yourself. I have given in that letter complete instructions as to how to resist the Japanese, if they at all invade India. No one after reading that letter could charge me with any sympathy with Nazism and Fascism or with Japan.

Is it not the position that the Congress has pledged itself to give military help for Allied cause in case of India being free and a national government being established?

You are absolutely correct in drawing the conclusion that you have drawn. The national government will, no doubt, in case of India being made free, fight for the Allies' cause with all the military resources at its disposal and will co-operate with the Allied nations in every possible manner.

Yes, this is the policy of the Congress. But you being a pacifist, would you obstruct the Congress plan to give military help to the Allied nations?

Certainly not. I am a pacifist. But if the national government is formed and takes power on the basis of giving military help to the Allied nations, I obviously cannot obstruct and will not obstruct. I cannot directly participate in any act of violence. But Congress is not pacifist in the manner as I am. And I naturally would not do anything to obstruct the execution of the Congress intention.

It would surprise you to know that, although you claim to be the best friend of U. K., you are just now very much distrusted.

I know this and say that this is very unfortunate. But I am not at all worried about it. I have no doubt that the distrust will disappear, and the trust will come back with the same strength as the distrust.

From a copy: C.W. 7867. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also *In the Shadow of the Mahatma*, pp. 261-3

243. LETTER TO SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM

DETENTION CAMP,
March 5, 1943

DEAR SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM,

Gandhiji wishes me to inquire whether he is to be favoured with a copy of the

pamphlet[1] issued by the Home Department containing a portion of the evidence in support of the charges against the Congress and himself.

Yours truly,

PYARELAL

SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM

ADDITIONAL SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

HOME DEPARTMENT, NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, p. 89; also *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, p. 33

244. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

DETENTION CAMP,
March 13, 1943

DEAR COL. BHANDARI,

With reference to this morning's conversation about Kanu Gandhi's presence with me during the convalescence period, not extending beyond a month according to the doctors' opinion, I beg to say that, if the Government will not permit him to stay with me during that period, I am afraid, I must go without his services however valuable they are. I must confess that I do not like this kind of treatment which seems to me to be one of the sharp reminders, even during my helpless period, for which I am quite aware I am solely responsible, that I am a prisoner. But even a prisoner may give himself the privilege of denying himself conveniences whose acceptance may humiliate him, as the offer to give a substitute for Kanu Gandhi seems to do.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, p. 50

[1] The reference is to *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances*, 1942-43, which the addressee sent to Gandhiji on April 5. The pamphlet, released by the Government of India on February 22, was, however, withdrawn in January 1946. For Gandhiji's detailed reply to the pamphlet, *vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943.

245. NOTE ON DIARY OF MANU J. GANDHI[1]

March 13, 1943

You must keep an account of the yarn you have spun. Thoughts coming into your mind should also be noted down. You should keep a record of all that you have read.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIII

246. NOTE ON DIARY OF MANU J. GANDHI

May 3, 1943

You should improve your handwriting. You have not kept the account of the yarn spun. Write down whatever you learn from others. It will show how much you have digested.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIII

247. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

DETENTION CAMP,
May 4, 1943

DEAR QAID-E-AZAM,

When some time after my incarceration the Government asked me for a list of newspapers I would like to have, I included the *Dawn* in my list. I have been receiving it with more or less regularity. Whenever it comes to me, I read it carefully. I have followed the proceedings of the League as reported in the *Dawn* columns. I noted your invitation[2] to me to write to you. Hence this letter.

[1] Daughter of Jaisukhlal Gandhi, and granddaughter of Amritlal Gandhi, Gandhiji's cousin

[2] According to *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. III, p. 982, on April 24, in his Presidential address to the annual session of the Muslim League at Delhi, Jinnah had said: "Nobody would welcome it more than myself, if Mr. Gandhi is even now really willing to come to a settlement with the Muslim League on the basis of Pakistan. . . . If he has made up his mind, what is there to prevent Mr. Gandhi from writing direct to me?. . . I cannot believe that they will have the daring to stop such a letter if it is sent to me. . . ."

I welcome your invitation. I suggest our meeting face to face rather than talking through correspondence. But I am in your hands.

I hope that this letter will be sent to you and, if you agree to my proposal, that the Government will let you visit me.

One thing I had better mention. There seems to be an "if" about your invitation. Do you say I should write only if I have changed my heart? God alone knows men's hearts. I would like you to take me as I am.

Why should not both you and I approach the great question of communal unity as men determined on finding a common solution, and work together to make our solution acceptable to all who are concerned with it or are interested in it?[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

QAID-E-AZAM M. A. JINNAH

MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD

BOMBAY

From a photostat: C.W. 10434 b. Courtesy: India Office Library. Also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government*, p. 71, and *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, p. 14

[1] The Government did not forward the letter to the addressee; *vide* the following item; also "Letter to Sir Richard Tottenham", 27-5-1943.

248. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

DETENTION CAMP,
May 4, 1943

THE SECRETARY
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME DEPARTMENT

SIR,

Will you please forward the enclosed[1] to Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah?

I am,

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10434 a. Courtesy: India Office Library. Also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government,* p. 71, and *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, p. 14

[1] *Vide* the preceding item. In his reply dated May 24, the addressee, E. Conran-Smith, informed Gandhiji of the Government's decision to withhold the letter to Jinnah. He also drew Gandhiji's attention to an advance copy of the Government's Press communique dated May 26, which he had enclosed. The Communique stated: "The Government of India have received a request from Mr. Gandhi to forward a short letter from himself to Mr. Jinnah expressing a wish to meet him. In accordance with their known policy in regard to correspondence or interviews with Mr. Gandhi, the Government of India have decided that this letter cannot be forwarded and have so informed Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Jinnah. They are not prepared to give facilities for political correspondence or contact to a person detained for promoting an illegal mass movement which he has not disavowed, and thus gravely embarrassing India's war effort at a critical time. It rests with Mr. Gandhi to satisfy the Government of India that he can safely be allowed once more to participate in the public affairs of the country, and until he does so the disabilities from which he suffers are of his own choice." However, from the document published in *The Transfer of Power,* Vol. III, pp. 974-6, it is evident that the Viceroy of India was of the view that the letter should be forwarded and that Jinnah, if he wished to meet Gandhiji, should be allowed to do so.

249. LETTER TO LORD SAMUEL

DETENTION CAMP,
May 15, 1943

DEAR LORD SAMUEL[1],

I enclose herewith a cutting from *The Hindu* dated 8th April last, containing Reuter's summary of your speech in the House of Lords during the recent debate. Assuming the correctness of the summary, I feel impelled to write this letter.

The report distressed me. I was wholly unprepared for your unqualified association with the one-sided and unsifted[2] statement of the Government of India against the Congress and me.

You are a philosopher and liberal. A philosophic mind has always meant for me a detached mind and liberalism, a sympathetic understanding of men and things.

As it seems to me, there is nothing in what the Government has said to warrant the conclusion to which you are reported to have come.

From the summary, I select below a few of the items which, in my opinion, are inconsistent with facts.

> 1. The Congress Party has to a great extent thrown over democratic philosophy.

The Congress Party has never "thrown over democratic philosophy". Its career has been one progressive march towards democracy. Everyone who subscribes to the attainment of the goal of independence through peaceful and legitimate means and pays four annas per year can become its member.

> 2. It shows signs of turning towards totalitarianism.

You have based your charge on the fact that the Working Committee of the Congress had control over the late Congress Ministries. Does not the successful party in the House of Commons do likewise? I am afraid even when democracy has come to full maturity, parties will be running elections and their managing committees will be controlling the actions and policies of their members. Individual Congressmen did not run elections independently of the party machinery. Candidates were officially chosen and they were helped

[1] Herbert Louis Samuel, First Viscount; Liberal Party leader
[2] *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government* has "unjustified".

by all-India leaders. 'Totalitarian', according to the Oxford Pocket Dictionary, means "designating a party that permits no rival loyalties or parties". 'Totalitarian State' means "with only one governing party". It must have violence as its sanction for keeping control. A Congress member, on the contrary, enjoys the same freedom as the Congress President, or any member of the Working Committee. There are parties within the Congress itself. Above all the Congress eschews violence. Members render voluntary obedience. The All-India Congress Committee can at any moment unseat the members of the Working Committee and elect others.

> 3. They (Congress Ministers)[1] resigned (not?)[2] because they had not the support of their Assemblies.
>
> They resigned because *de jure* they were responsible to their electorates, *de facto* they were responsible to the Working Committee of the Congress and the High Command. That is not democracy. That is totalitarianism .

You would not have said this if you had known the full facts. The *de jure* responsibility of the Ministers to the electorate was not diminished in any way by their *de facto* responsibility to the Congress Working Committee, for the very simple and valid reason that the Working Committee derives its power and prestige from the very electorate to whom the Ministers were responsible. The prestige that the Congress enjoys is due solely to its service of the people. As a matter of fact, the Ministers conferred with the members of their parties in their respective Assemblies and they tendered their resignations with their approval. But totalitarianism is fully represented by the Government of India which is responsible to no one in India. It is a tragic irony that a Government which is steeped in totalitarianism brings that very charge against the most democratic body in India.

> 4. India is unhappy in that the line of party division is the worst any country can have—it is a division according to religious communities.

Political parties in India are not divided according to religious communities. From its very commencement the Congress has deliberately remained a purely political organization. It has had Britishers and Indians, including Christians, Parsis, Muslims and

[1] Words in parentheses are Gandhiji's.
[2] *ibid*

Hindus, as Presidents. The Liberal Party of India is another political organization, not to mention others that are wholly non-sectarian. That there are also communal organizations based on religion and that they take part in politics is undoubtedly true. But that fact cannot sustain the categorical statement made by you. I do not wish in any way to minimize the importance of these organizations or the considerable part they play in the politics of the country. But I do assert that they do not represent the political mind of India. It can be shown that historically the politico-religious organizations are the result of the deliberate application by the alien Government of their "divide and rule" policy. When the British imperial influence is totally withdrawn, India will probably be represented solely by political parties drawn from all classes and creeds.

5. The Congress can claim at best barely more than half the population of India. Yet in their totalitarian spirit they claim to speak for the whole.

If you measure the representative character of the Congress by the number of members on the official roll, then it does not represent even half the population. The official membership is infinitesimal compared to India's vast population of nearly four hundred millions. The enrolled membership began only in 1920. Before that the Congress was represented by its All-India Committees whose members were mainly elected by various political associations. Nevertheless the Congress has, so far as I know, always claimed to speak the mind of India, not even excluding the Princes. A country under alien subjection can only have one political goal, namely, its freedom from that subjection. And considering that the Congress has always and predominantly exhibited that spirit of freedom, its claim to represent all India[1] can hardly be denied. That some parties repudiate the Congress, does not derogate from the claim in the sense in which it has been advanced.

6. When Mr. Gandhi called upon the British Government to quit India, he said it would be for the Congress to take delivery.

I never said that when the British quitted India, "the Congress would take delivery". This is what I said in my letter to His Excellency the Viceroy, dated 29th January last:

The Government have evidently ignored or overlooked the very material

[1] *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government* has "the whole of India".

fact that the Congress by its August resolution asked nothing for itself. All its demands were for the whole people. As you should be aware, the Congress was willing and prepared for the Government inviting Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah to form a national government, subject to such agreed adjustments as may be necessary, for the duration of the war, such government being responsible to a duly elected assembly. Being isolated from the Working Committee, except Shrimati Sarojini Devi, I do not know its present mind. But the Committee is not likely to have changed its mind.[1]

7. If this country or Canada, Australia, New Zealand or South Africa or the United States had abstained from action as the Congress in India abstained . . .[2] then perhaps the cause of freedom everywhere would have gone under. . . [3] It is a pity that the leaders of the Congress do not realize that glory is not to be won in India by abandoning the cause of mankind.

How can you compare India with Canada and other dominions which are virtually independent entities, let alone Great Britain or the United States—wholly independent countries? Has India a spark of the freedom of the type enjoyed by the countries named by you? India has yet to attain her freedom. Supposing the Allied powers were to lose, and supposing further that the Allied forces were to withdraw from India under military necessity, which I do not expect, the countries you name may not lose their independence. But unhappy India will be obliged to change masters, if she is even then in her defenceless state. The Congress does not abstain out of cussedness. Neither the Congress nor any other organization can possibly kindle mass enthusiasm for the Allied cause without the present possession of independence, to use your own expression either *de jure* or *de facto*. Mere promises of future independence cannot work that miracle. The cry of "Quit India" has arisen from a realization of the fact that if India is to shoulder the burden of representing, or fighting for the "cause of mankind", she must have the glow of freedom now. Has a freezing man ever been warmed by the promise of the warmth of sunshine coming at some future date?

The great pity is that the ruling power distrusts everything that the Congress does or says under my influence which it has suddenly discovered is wholly evil. It is necessary for a clear understanding that you should know my connection with the Congress and Congressmen.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 29-1-1943.
[2] Omissions as in the source
[3] *ibid*

It was in 1935 that I was successful in my attempt to sever all formal connections with the Congress. There was no coolness between the Congress Working Committee members and myself. But I realized that I was cramped and so were the members whilst I was officially connected with the Congress. The growing restraints which my conception of non-violence required from time to time were proving too hard to bear. I felt therefore that my influence should be strictly moral. I had no political ambition. My politics were subservient to the demands of truth and non-violence as I had defined and practised for practically the whole of my life. And so I was permitted by the fellow members to sever the official connection even to the extent of giving up the four-anna membership. It was understood between us that I should attend the meetings of the Working Committee only when the members required my presence for consultation in matters involving the application of non-violence or affecting communal unity. Since that time I have been wholly unconnected with the routine work of the Congress. Many meetings of the Working Committee have, therefore, taken place without me. These proceedings I have often seen only when they have been published in the newspapers. The members of the Working Committee are independent-minded men. They engage me often in prolonged discussions before they accept my advice on the interpretation of non-violence as applied to the problems rising from new situations. It will be, therefore, unjust to them and to me to say that I exercise any influence over them beyond what reason commands. The public know how even until quite recently in matters of moment the majority of the members of the Working Committee have on several occasions rejected my advice.

> 8. They have not merely abstained from action, but the Congress has deliberately proclaimed the formula that it is wrong to help the British war effort by men or money and that the only worthy effort is to resist all war with non-violent resistance. In the name of non-violence they have led a movement which was characterized in many places by the utmost violence, and the White Paper gives clear proof of the complicity of the Indian leaders in the disorders.

This charge shows to what extent the British public has been misled by imaginary stories as in the Government of India publication on the disturbances; statements have been torn from their context and put together as if they were made at one time or in the same context. The Congress is committed to non-violence so far as the attainment of freedom is concerned. And to that end the Congress has been

struggling all these twenty years, however imperfectly it may be, to express non-violence in action, and I think it has succeeded to a great extent. But it has never made any pretence of war resistance through non-violence. Could it have made that claim and lived up to it, the face of India would have been changed and the world would have witnessed the miracle of organized violence being successfully met by organized non-violence. But human nature has nowhere risen to the height which full non-violence demands. The disturbances that took place after the 8th of August were not due to any action on the part of the Congress. They were due entirely to the inflammatory action of the Government in arresting Congress leaders throughout India and that at a time which was psychologically wholly wrong. The utmost that can be said is that Congressmen or others had not risen high enough in non-violence to be proof against all provocation.

It surprises me that although you have admitted that "this White Paper may be good journalism but it is not so good as a State document", you have based your sweeping judgment on the strength of that paper. If you would read the very speeches to which the paper makes reference, you will find there ample material to show that the Government of India had not the slightest justification in making those unfortunate arrests on August 9 last and after, or in making the charges they have brought against the arrested leaders after their incarceration—charges which have never been sifted in any court of law.

9. Mr. Gandhi faced us with an utterly illegitimate method of political controversy, levying blackmail on the best of human emotions, pity and sympathy, by his fast. The only creditable thing to Mr. Gandhi about the fast was ending it.

You have used a strong word to characterize my fast. His Excellency the Viceroy has also allowed himself to use the same word. You have perhaps the excuse of ignorance. He had no such excuse, for he had my letters before him. All I can tell you is that fasting is an integral part of satyagraha. It is a satyagrahi's ultimate weapon. Why should it be blackmail when man under a sense of wrong crucifies his fIesh? You may not know that satyagrahi prisoners fasted in South Africa for the removal of their wrongs; so they have done in India. One fast[1] of mine you know, as I think you were then a Cabinet Minister. I refer to the fast which resulted in the alteration of the

[1] From September 20 to 26, 1932.

decision of His Majesty's Government. If the decision had stood, it would have perpetuated the curse of untouchability. The alteration prevented the disaster.

The Government of India communique, announcing my recent fast issued after it had commenced, accused me of having undertaken the fast to secure my release. It was a wholly false accusation. It was based on a distortion of the letter[1] I had written in answer to that of the Government. That letter dated the 8th February was suppressed at the time when the communique was issued. If you will study the question, I refer you to the following which were published in the newspapers:

My letter[2] to His Excellency the Viceroy dated New Year's Eve, 1942.

His Excellency's reply[3] dated January 13, 1943.

My letter[4] dated January 19, 1943.

His Excellency's reply[5] dated January 25, 1943.

My letter[6] dated January 29, 1943.

His Excellency's reply[7] dated February 5, 1943.

My letter[8] dated February 7, 1943.

Sir R. Tottenham's letter[9] dated February 7, 1943.

My reply[10] dated February 8, 1943.

And I do not know from where you got the impression that I ended the fast, for which supposed act you give me credit. If you mean by it that I ended the fast before its time, I would call such an ending a discredit to me. As it was, the fast ended on its due date, for which I can claim no credit.

> 10. He (Lord Samuel) considered that the negotiations broke down on points on which they could not have broken down, had there been any real desire on the part of the Congress to come to a settlement.

The statements made by the President of the Congress, Maulana

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Richard Tottenham", 8-2-1943.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 31-12-1942.
[3] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 13-1-1943.
[4] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 19-1-1943.
[5] *Vide* last footnote of "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 19-1-1943.
[6] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 29-1-1943.
[7] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Linthgow", 5-2-1943.
[8] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 7-2-1943.
[9] *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Letter to Sir Richard Tottenham", 8-2-1943.
[10] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Richard Tottenham", 8-2-1943.

Abul Kalam Azad, and Pandit Nehru, who carried on the prolonged negotiations, I venture to think, make it quite clear that no true man could have shown more real or greater desire for a settlement. In this connection it is well to remember that Pandit Nehru was and, I have no doubt, still remains, an intimate personal friend of Sir Stafford Cripps at whose invitation he had come down from Allahabad. He could, therefore, leave no stone unturned to bring the negotiations to a successful issue. The history of the failure has yet to be written. When it is, it will be found that the cause lay elsewhere than with the Congress.

I hope my letter has not wearied you. Truth has been overlaid with much untruth. If not, justice to a great organization, the cause of Truth, which is Humanity, demands an impartial investigation of the present distemper.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure 1

THE RT. HON'BLE LORD SAMUEL
HOUSE OF LORDS
LONDON

From a photostat: C.W. 10378. Courtesy: India Office Library. Also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government*, pp. 75-82, and *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, pp. 25-9

[1] In his reply dated July 25, 1944, the addressee reiterated his view and said: "Let me add how much I regret that the policy adopted hitherto by yourself and the Congress Party during the present war has compelled me, with almost all the friends of the Indian national movement in this country, to take up an attitude of opposition, and how much I should rejoice if the case should be altered."

250. LETTER TO ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

DETENTION CAMP,
May 15, 1943

SIR,

Will you please forward the enclosed[1] to the Right Hon'ble Lord Samuel?

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi, p. 25

251. LETTER TO SIR REGINALD MAXWELL

DETENTION CAMP,
May 21, 1943

DEAR SIR REGINALD MAXWELL,

It was only on the 10th instant that I read your speech delivered in the Legislative Assembly on the 15th February last on the adjournment motion[2] about my fast. I saw at once that it demanded a reply. I wish I had read it earlier.

I observe that you are angry, or at least were, at the time you delivered your speech. I cannot in any other way account for your palpable inaccuracies. This letter is an endeavour to show them. It is written to you, not as an official, but as man to man. The first thought

[1] *Vide* the preceding item. In his reply dated May 26, the addressee conveyed to Gandhiji that "for reasons which have been explained to you in another connection", the Government decided that the letter could not be forwarded. Gandhiji, however, after his release in 1944, sent a copy of the letter to Lord Samuel and some correspondence ensued; *vide* "Letter to Lord Samuel", 8-6-1945.

[2] In *The Indian Annual Register, 1943,* Vol. I, p. 156, N. N. Mitra explains that the adjournment motion moved by L. K. Maitra "appealed to members of the House to set aside all political considerations and unite in demanding the 'immediate and unconditional' release of a great Indian who was revered by all classes of people". Maitra was supported by N. M. Joshi, Sant Singh, Dr. P. N. Banerjee and T. T. Krishnamachari.

that came to me was that your speech was a deliberate distortion of facts. But I quickly revised it. So long as there was a favourable construction possible to put upon your language, the unfavourable had to be rejected. I must assume, therefore, that what appeared to me to be distortions were not deliberate.

You have said that "the correspondence that led to the fast is there for anyone to interpret as he chooses," yet you have straightway told your audience that "it can perhaps be read in the light of the following facts." Did you leave them the choice?

I now take your "facts" seriatim:

> 1. When the Congress Party passed their resolution of August 8, a Japanese attack on this country was thought to be likely.

You seem to have conveyed the meaning that the thought was that of the Congress and that it was gratuitous. The fact is that the Government gave currency to the thought and emphasized it by action which even seemed ludicrous.

> 2. By demanding the withdrawal of British power from India and by placing the Congress in open opposition to it, the Congress Party might be thought to have hoped for some advantage to themselves if the Japanese attack succeeded.

Now this is not a fact, but your opinion wholly contrary to facts. Congressmen never hoped for, nor desired any advantage from Japanese success, on the contrary, they dreaded it and that dread inspired the desire for the immediate end of the British rule. All this is crystal clear from the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee (8th August, 1942) and my writings.

> 3. Today, six months after, the Japanese danger has, at any rate for the time being, receded and there is little immediate hope from that quarter.

This again is your opinion; mine is that the Japanese danger has not receded. It still stares India in the face. Your fling that "there is little immediate hope from that quarter" should be withdrawn unless you think and prove that the resolution and my writings adverted to in the previous paragraphs did not mean what they said.

> 4. The movement initiated by the Congress has been decisively defeated.

I must combat this statement. Satyagraha knows no defeat. It flourishes on blows the hardest imaginable. But I need not go to that bower for comfort. I learnt in schools established by the British Government in India that "freedom's battle once begun" is

"bequeathed from bleeding sire to son". It is of little moment when the goal is reached so long as effort is not relaxed. The dawn came with the establishment of the Congress 60 years ago. Sixth of April 1919, on which All India satyagraha[1] began, saw a spontaneous awakening from one end of India to the other. You can certainly derive comfort, if you like, from the fact that the immediate objective of the movement was not gained as some Congressmen had expected. But that is no criterion of "decisive" or any "defeat". It ill becomes one belonging to a race which owns no defeat to deduce defeat of a popular movement from the suppression of popular exuberance—maybe not always wise—by a frightful exhibition of power.

> 5. Now, therefore, it is the object of the Congress Party to rehabilitate themselves and regain, if they can, the credit they have lost.

Surely your own experience should correct this opinion. You know, as well as I do, that every attempt at suppression of the Congress has given it greater prestige and popularity. This the latest attempt at suppression is not likely to lead to a contrary result. Hence the question of "lost credit" and "rehabilitation" simply does not arise.

> 6. Thus they are now concerned to disclaim responsibility for the consequences that followed their decision. The point is taken up by Mr. Gandhi in his correspondence with the Viceroy. The awkward facts are now disowned as unproved.

"They," here can only mean me. For, throughout your speech I was the target. "Now" means at the time of my fast; I remind you that I disclaimed responsibility on 14th August last when I wrote[2] to His Excellency the Viceroy. In that same letter I laid it on the Government who, by the wholesale arrests of 9th August, provoked the people to the point of madness. "The awkward facts" are not awkward for me when the responsibility rests on the Government and what you put forward as "facts" are only one-sided allegations awaiting proof.

> 7. Mr. Gandhi takes up his stand: "Surely I can say with safety that it is for the Government to justify their action by solid evidence." To whom are they to justify themselves?[3]

Was not Sardar Sant Singh's answer a proper answer? How nice

[1] As a protest against the Rowlatt Act

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 14-8-1942.

[3] To this question, Sant Singh answered; "Before an impartial enquiry committee".

it would have been, if you had not put in the interjection. For, have not the Government of India been obliged before now to justify their acts by appointing inquiry committees as, for instance, after the Jallianwala Bagh massacre? But you proceed:

> 8. Elsewhere in his letters Mr. Gandhi makes this clear. He says: "Convince me that I was wrong and I will make ample amends."[1] In the alternative he asks: "If you want me to make any proposal on behalf of the Congress, you should put me among the Working Committee members."[2] So far as can be seen, these were the demands when he conceived his fast. There is no other solid demand made.

Here there is a double wrong done to me. You have ignored the fact that my letters were written to one whom I considered to be a friend. You have further ignored the fact that the Viceroy in his letter had asked me to make clear proposals. If you had borne these two facts in mind, you would not have wronged me as you have done. But let me come to the ninth count of your indictment, and it will be clear to you what I mean.

> 9. But now, fresh light emerges. Government without granting any of his demands informed Mr. Gandhi that they would release him for the purpose and for the duration of the fast in order to make it dear that they disclaimed responsibility for the consequences. On that Mr. Gandhi replied[4] that if he was released, he would at once abandon the fast, and that he had conceived the fast only as a prisoner. Thus, if he were released, the objects for which he declared his fast, although still unfulfilled, would recede into the background. As a free man he would neither demand these objects nor fast. Interpreted in this way, his fast would seem to amount to little more than a demand for release.

Together with the letter containing the offer of release, a copy of the draft communique that was to be issued by the Government was delivered to me. It did not say that the offer was made in order "to make it clear that the Government disclaimed responsibility for the consequences". If I had seen that oflending sentence, I would have sent a simple refusal. In my innocence, I put a fair meaning on the offer and in my reply I argued why I could not accept it. And, according to my wont, in order that the Government may not be misled in any shape or form, I told them how the fast was conceived and why it could not be taken by me as a free man. I went out of my way even to postpone for the convenience of the Government the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 19-1-1943.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Richard Tottenham", 8-2-1943.

commencement of the fast by a day. Mr. Irwin[1] who had brought the offer and the draft communique appreciated the courtesy. Why was this reply of mine withheld from the public at the time the revised communique was issued, and why was an unwarranted interpretation given instead? Was not my letter a material document?

Now for the second wrong. You say that if I were released, my objects for which I had declared the fast would recede into the background, and even gratuitously suggest that as a free man I would neither demand these objects nor fast. As a free man I could and would have carried on an agitation for an impartial public inquiry into the charges brought against Congressmen and me. I would also have asked for permission to see the imprisoned Congressmen. Assume that my agitation had failed to make any impression on the Government, I might then have fasted. All this, if you were not labouring under intense irritation, you could have plainly seen from my letter, supported as you would have been, by my past record. Instead you have deduced a meaning which, according to the simple rules of construction, you had no right to deduce. Again, as a free man I would have had the opportunity of examining the tales of destruction said to have been wrought by Congressmen and even by non-Congressmen. And if I had found that they had committed wanton acts of murder, then also I might have fasted as I have done before now. You should thus see that the demands made in my letter to His Excellency the Viceroy would not have receded to the background, if I had been released, for they could have been pressed otherwise than by the fast, and that the fast had not the remotest connection with any desire for release. Moreover imprisonment is never irksome to a satyagrahi. For him a prison is a gateway of liberty.

10. I could quote several resolutions of the Congress Working Committee against him. . . Mr. Gandhi himself took up the subject in *Harijan* dated 19th August, 1939. There he says:[2] "Hunger-strike has positively become a plague."

11. On the ethics of hunger-striking, Mr. Gandhi had something to say[3] in the *Harijan* of 20th May, 1939, after his Rajkot fast: "I now see that it was tainted with *himsa*." Further on he remarks: "This was not the way of ahimsa

[1] Joseph Boyd Irwin, Secretary to the Government of Bombay
[2] *Vide* "Hunger-Strike", 14-8-1939.
[3] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 17-5-1939.

or conversion."

My views quoted by you have not undergone the slightest change. If you had read the quotations without passion, it would have prevented you from putting upon my letter the construction you have.

I am sorry to have to say that you have wholly misread my article. Fortunately I happen to have Anand Hingorani's collection of my writings, *To the Princes and Their Peoples.* I quote from the *Harijan* article referred to by you:

> At the end of my fast I had permitted myself to say that it had succeeded as no previous fast had done. I now see that it was tainted with *himsa.* In taking the fast I sought immediate intervention of the Paramount Power so as to induce fulfilment of the promise made by the Thakore Saheb. This was not the way of ahimsa or conversion; it was the way of *ahimsa* or coercion. My fast to be pure should have been addressed only to the Thakore Saheb, and I should have been content to die, if I could not have melted his heart. . . .

I hope you realize that you misapplied the stray sentences taken from their setting. I described my fast as "tainted" not because it was bad *ab initio* but because I sought the intervention of the Paramount Power. I have given you the credit of being unaware of the article. I wish you could read it. In any case, may I expect you to correct the error? For me the Rajkot episode is one of the happiest chapters of my life, in that God gave me the courage to own my mistake and purge it by renouncing the fruits of the award. I became stronger for the purging.

> 12. I must confess that speaking for myself it is certainly repugnant to Western ideas of decency to exploit against an opponent his feelings of humanity, chivalry or mercy or to trifle with such a sacred trust as one's own life in order to play on the feelings of the public for the sake of some purely mundane object.

I must tread with extreme caution upon the ground with which you are infinitely more familiar than I can be. Let me, however, remind you of the historic fast of the late MacSwiney. I know that the British Government let him die in imprisonment. But he has been acclaimed by the Irish people as a hero and a martyr. Edward Thompson in his *You Have Lived Throuh All This* says that the late Mr. Asquith called the British Government's action a "political blunder of the first magnitude". The author adds:

> He was allowed to die by inches, while the world watched with a passion of admiration and sympathy, and innumerable British men and women begged

their Government not to be such a damned fool.

And is it repugnant to Western ideas of decency to exploit (if that expression must be retained) against the opponent his feeling of humanity, chivalry or mercy? Which is better, to take the opponent's life secretly or openly or to credit him with finer feelings and evoke them by fasting and the like? Again, which is better, to trifle with one's own life by fasting or some other way of self-immolation, or to trifle with it by engaging in an attempt to compass the destruction of the opponent and his dependants?

> 13. What he says, in effect, is this: 'You say, Government is right and the Congress is wrong. I say the Congress is right and the Government is wrong. I choose to put the burden of proof on you. I am the only person to be convinced. You must either admit you are wrong or submit your reason to me and make me the sole arbiter in the matter. . . .' It seems to me that Mr. Gandhi's demand is rather like asking the United Nations to appoint Hitler to adjudge the responsibility for the present war. It is not usual in this country to put the accused person on the bench to judge his own case.

This is an unbecoming caricature of my letters to the Viceroy. What I said, in effect, was this: 'You have allowed me to consider myself as your friend. I do not want to stand on my rights and demand a trial. You accuse me of being in the wrong. I contend that your Government is in the wrong. Since you would not admit your Government's error, you owe it to me to let me know wherein I have erred. For, I am in the dark as to how I have erred. If you convince me of my guilt, I will make ample amends.' My simple request you have turned against me and compared me to an imaginary Hitler appointed to adjudge his own case. If you do not accept my interpretation of my own letters, can I not say, 'let an impartial judge examine the rival interpretations'? Will it be an offensive comparison, if I recall the fable of the wolf who was always in the right and the lamb who was always in the wrong?

> 14. Mr. Gandhi is the leader of an open rebellion. . . . He forfeits that right (the right of being heard) so long as he remains an open rebel. He cannot claim to function except through the success of his own method. He cannot take part in public life under the protection of the law that he denies. He cannot be a citizen and yet not a subject.

You are right in describing me as the leader of an open rebellion except for a fundamental omission, namely, strictly non-violent. This omission is on a par with the omission of 'not's

from the Commandments and quoting them in support of killing, stealing, etc. You may dismiss the phrase or explain it away in any manner you like. But when you quote a person you may not omit anything from his language, especially an omission which changes the whole aspect of things. I have declared myself an open rebel on many occasions, even during my visit[1] to London on the occasion of the Second Round Table Conference. But the anathema that you have pronounced against me has not been pronounced before. You will perhaps recall the time when the late Lord Reading was willing to hold a Round Table Conference in which I was to be present, although I was leading a mass civil disobedience movement.[2] It was not called because I had insisted that the Ali Brothers who were then in prison should be released. British history which I was taught as a lad had it that Wat Tyler[3] and John Hampden[4] who had rebelled were heroes. In very recent times the British Government treated with Irish rebels whilst their hands were still red with blood. Why should I become an outcaste although my rebellion is innocent and I have had nothing to do with violence.

In spite of the validity of my claim that you have enunciated a novel doctrine, I admit that you made a perfect statement when you said, "He cannot claim to function except through the success of his own method." My method, being based on truth and non-violence, ever succeeds to the extent it is applied. Therefore I function always and only through the success of my method and to the extent that I correctly represent, in my own person, its fundamentals.

The moment I became a satyagrahi, from that moment I ceased to be a subject but never ceased to be a citizen. A citizen obeys laws voluntarily and never under compulsion or for fear of the punishment prescribed for their breach. He breaks them when he considers it necessary and welcomes the punishment. That robs it of its edge or of the disgrace which it is supposed to imply.

15. In some of the published correspondence, Mr. Gandhi has made much of his intention to seek an interview with the Viceroy. But the Congress resolution still stood, together with Mr. Gandhi's own words "do or die". The

[1] In 1931.

[2] In December 1921.

[3] Leader of the "Peasant Revolt" (1381) who was killed by the King's men

[4] English Parliamentary leader (1594-1643) who led the popular resistance against the tax levied by King Charles I without the sanction of the Parliament

Government communique on the subject of his fast has already reminded the public of Mr. Gandhi's statement[1] made on 14th July that there was no room left in the proposal for withdrawal or negotiation. . . . I may again quote Mr. Gandhi's own words: "Every one of you should, from this moment onwards, consider yourself a free man or woman and act as if you are free and are no longer under the heel of this imperialism." Now listen to this:

"You may take it from me that I am not going to strike a bargain with the Viceroy for Ministries or the like. I am not going to be satisfied with anything short of complete freedom. We shall do or die. We shall either free India or die in the attempt. This is open rebellion."

Let me first of all make a vital correction of the quotation you have taken from my Press statement made on the 14th July and reported in the *Harijan* of 19th July. You have quoted me as saying that "there was no room left in the proposal for withdrawal or negotiation." The real quotation is, "there is no room left for negotiations in the proposal for withdrawal." You will admit that the difference is material. The faulty quotation apart, you have omitted from my statement, which occupies nearly three columns of the *Harijan*, all the things which amplify my meaning and show the caution with which I was working. I take a few sentences from that statement.

It is possible that the British may negotiate a withdrawal. If they do, it will be a feather in their cap. Then it will cease to be a case for withdrawal. If the British see, however late, the wisdom of recognizing the freedom of India without reference to the various parties, all things are possible but the point I want to stress is this.

Here follows the sentence misquoted by you. The paragraph then proceeds:

Either they recognize independence or they don't. After recognition many things can follow; for, by that single act, the British representatives will have altered the face of the whole landscape and revived the hope of the people which has been frustrated times without number. Therefore whenever that great act is performed on behalf of the British people, it will be a red-letter day in the history of India and the world. And, as I have said, it can materially affect the fortunes of the war.

From this fuller quotation, you will see how everything that was being done was done in order to ensure victory and ward off Japanese

[1] *Vide* "Interview to the Press", 14-7-1942.

aggression. You may not appreciate my wisdom but you may not impugn my good faith.

Though I have no verbatim report of my speeches before the All-India Congress Committee, I have fairly full notes. I accept the correctness of your quotations. If you bear in mind that all things were said with non-violence always as the background, the statements become free from any objection. "Do or die" clearly means do your duty by carrying out instructions and die in the attempt, if necessary.

As to my exhortation[1] to the people to consider themselves free, I take the following from my notes:

> The actual struggle does not commence this very moment. You have merely placed certain powers in my hands. My first act will be to wait upon His Excellency the Viceroy and plead with him for the acceptance of the Congress demand. This may take two or three weeks. What are you to do in the mean while? I will tell you. There is the spinning-wheel. I had to struggle with the Maulana Saheb before it dawned upon him that in a non-violent struggle it had an abiding place. The fourteenfold constructive programme is all there for you to carry out. But there is something more you have to do and it will give life to that programme. Every one of you should from this very moment consider yourself a free man or woman and even act as if you are free and no longer under the heel of this imperialism. This is no make-believe. You have to cultivate the spirit of freedom before it comes physically. The chains of a slave are broken the moment he considers himself a free man. He will then tell his master: 'I have been your slave all these days but I am no longer that now. You may kill me, but if you do not and if you release me from the bondage, I will ask for nothing more from you. For, henceforth instead of depending upon you, I shall depend upon God for food and clothing. God has given me the urge for freedom and therefore I deem myself to be a free man.'

Apart from your resentment of the "Quit India" cry, ask yourself whether the quotation as found in its own setting is in any way offensive? Should not a man, longing to be free, first of all cultivate the spirit of freedom and act accordingly irrespective of consequences?

> 16. It is not the method of peaceful persuasion to go to the person whom you wish to convince armed with a resolution declaring mass rebellion. The essence of negotiation is that both parties should be uncommitted and that neither should exert the pressure of force on the other. That is true in any

[1] *Vide* "Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting", 8-8-1942.

circumstances. But as between a subject and the State which rules him, the position is still more emphatic. It is not for the subject to deal with the State on equal terms, still less to approach it with an open threat.

At the outset let me make one correction. The resolution did not "declare" mass rebellion. It merely sanctioned the "starting of a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale so that the country might utilize all the non-violent strength it has gathered during the last twenty-two years of peaceful struggle". I was to "guide the nation in the steps to be taken". The paragraph sanctioning the mass struggle also "appeals to British and the United Nations in the interest of world freedom".

The essence of negotiation should undoubtedly be that the parties are uncommitted and that neither "exerts the pressure of force" on the other. In the case under consideration the actual position is that one party has overwhelming force at its disposal and the other has none. About non-committal too the Congress has no commitments except the immediate attainment of freedom. Subject to that there is the widest latitude for negotiation.

Your proposition about the subject and the State is I know a reply to the cry of "Quit India". Only the cry is intrinsically just and the subject-and-the-State formula is too antediluvian to have any real meaning. It is because the Congress has felt the subjection of India as an insufferable reproach, that it has been against it. A well-ordered State is subject to the people. It does not descend upon the people from above but the people make and unmake it.

The resolution of 8th August did not contain any threat open or veiled. It prescribed the limitations under which the negotiations could be carried on and its sanction was free of all "force", i.e., violence. It consisted of self-suffering. Instead of appreciating the fact that the Congress laid all its cards on the table, you have given a sinister meaning to the whole movement by drawing unwarranted inferences. In so far as there was any violence after the 8th of August last on the part of any Congressman, it was wholly unauthorized as is quite clear from the resolution itself. The Government in their wisdom left me no time whatsoever for issuing instructions. The All-India Congress Committee finished after midnight on the 8th August. Well before sunrise on the 9th, I was carried away by the Police Commissioner without being told what crime I had committed. And so were the members of the Working Committee and the principal Congressmen

who happened to be in Bombay. Is it too much when I say that the Government invited violence and did not want the movement to proceed on peaceful lines?

Now let me remind you of an occasion of an open rebellion when you played an important part. I refer to the famous Bardoli satyagraha[1] under Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. He was conducting a campaign of civil disobedience. It had evidently reached a stage when the then Governor of Bombay felt that there should be a peaceful end to the struggle. You will remember that the result of an interview between His Excellency the then Governor and the Sardar was the appointment of a committee of which you were a distinguished member. And the committee's findings were for the most part in favour of the civil resisters. Of course, you may say, if you wish, that the Governor made a mistake in negotiating with a rebel, and so did you in accepting the appointment. Consider the reverse position, what would have happened if, instead of appointing a committee, the Governor had attempted heavy repression. Would not the Government have been held responsible for any outbreak of violence, if the people had lost self-control?

> 17. Government does hold Mr. Gandhi responsible for the recent happenings that have so disturbed the peace of India, caused so much loss of life and property of innocent persons and brought the country to the brink of a terrible danger. I do not say, he had any personal complicity in acts of violence . . . but it was he that put the match to the train carefully laid beforehand by himself and his colleagues. That he was forced to do so prematurely was not his fault but our fortune. This was the method by which they hoped to gain their ends. They may seek to repudiate it, now that it has proved unsuccessful, but the responsibility is theirs none the less. . . . If Mr. Gandhi wished to dissociate himself from them, he could have spoken for himself without consulting the members of the Working Committee. Can he then, without cancelling the Congress rebellion, without reparation, without even assurances for the future, claim at any moment to step back as though nothing had happened into the public life of the country and be received by Government and society as a good citizen?

I can accept no responsibility for the unfortunate happenings described by you. I have no doubt whatsoever that history will record that the responsibility for the happenings was wholly that of the Government. In the nature of things I could not put a match to a train

[1] From February 12 to August 6, 1928.

which for one thing was never laid. And if the train was never laid, the question of prematureness does not arise. The deprivation of the people of their leaders you may consider "our fortune". I consider it a misfortune of the first magnitude for all concerned. I wish to repudiate nothing of what I have done or intended. I have no sense of repentance for I have no sense of having done any wrong to any person. I have stated times without number that I detest violence in any shape or form. But I can give no opinion about things of which I have no first-hand knowledge. I never asked for permission to consult the Congress Working Committee to enable me to dissociate myself from violence. I asked for permission to see them, if I was expected to make any proposals on behalf of the Committee. I cannot cancel the Congress rebellion which is of a purely non-violent character. I am proud of it. I have no reparation to make, for I have no consciousness of guilt. And there can be no question of assurances for the future when I hold myself guiltless. The question of re-entering the public life of the country or being received by Government and society as a good citizen does not arise. I am quite content to remain a prisoner. I have never thrust myself on the public life of the country or on the Government. I am but a humble servant of India. The only certificate I need is a certificate from the inner voice. I hope you realize that you gave your audience not facts but your opinions framed in anger.

To conclude, why have I written this letter? Not to answer your anger with anger. I have written it in the hope that you may read the sincerity behind my own words. I never despair of converting any person even an official of the hardest type. Gen. Smuts was converted, or say reconciled, as he declared in his speech introducing the Bill giving relief in the terms of the settlement arrived at between him and me in 1914. That he has not fulfilled my hope or that of the Indian settlers which the settlement had inspired is a sad story, but it is irrelevant to the present purpose. I can multiply such recollections. I claim no credit for these conversions or reconciliations. They were wholly due to the working of truth and non-violence expressing themselves through me. I subscribe to the belief or the philosophy that all life in its essence is one, and that the humans are working consciously or unconsciously towards the realization of that identity. This belief requires a living faith in a living God who is the ultimate arbiter of our fate. Without Him not a blade of grass moves. My belief requires me not to despair even of converting you, though your speech warrants no such hope. If God has willed it, He may put power

in some word of mine which will touch your heart. Mine is but to make the effort. The result is in God's hands.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

THE HON'BLE SIR REGINALD MAXWELL
HOME MEMBER
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, pp. 58-70; also *Correspondence wtih Mr. Gandhi*, pp. 17-24

252. LETTER TO ARDESHIR E. KATELI

May 26, 1943

BHAI KHAN BAHADUR,

I gave you on the 4th a letter addressed to the Central Government and along with it was a letter[2] to Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah. Another I gave you on the 15th. With that there was a letter to Lord Samuel. Please be good enough to inquire and let me know whether these two letters have reached the proper quarters, and whether the letters to Qaid-e-Azam and Lord Samuel have been forwarded to them.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6302

[1] In his reply dated June 17, the addressee said: "I see you still maintain the position which you took up in your letters to His Excellency the Viceroy regarding the Congress resolution of the 8th August and responsibility for the disturbances that followed it. As you know, Government have never accepted the construction you sought to put upon those events. So long as this fundamental difference exists, I must regretfully conclude that there is not sufficient common ground for profibtable discussion of the other points raised."

[2] *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 4-5-1943.

253. LETTER TO SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM

DETENTION CAMP,
May 27, 1943

DEAR SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM,

I received last evening your letter[1] of the 24th instant refusing my request to forward my letter addressed to Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah. I wrote[2] only yesterday to the Superintendent of this camp asking him kindly to inquire whether my letter to Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah, and the later one, dated the 15th instant to Right Hon'ble Lord Samuel, had been forwarded to the respective addressees.

I am sorry for the Government's decision. For, my letter to the Qaid-e-Azam was sent in reply to his public invitation to me to write to him, and I was especially encouraged to do so because his language had led me to think that, if I wrote to him, my letter would be forwarded to him. The public too are anxious that the Qaid-e-Azam and I should meet or at least establish contact. I have always been anxious to meet the Qaid-e-Azam, if per chance we could devise some solution of the communal tangle which might be generally acceptable. Therefore the disability in the present instance is much more that of the public than mine. As a satyagrahi I may not regard as disabilities the restrictions which the Government have imposed upon me. As the Government are aware, I have denied myself even the pleasure of writing to my relatives as I am not allowed to perform the service of writing to my co-workers who are in a sense more to me than my relatives.

The advance copy of the contemplated communique[3] with which you have considerably favoured me requires emendation in more places than one. For, as it stands, it does not square with facts.

As to the disavowal referred to in the proposed communique, the Government are aware that I regard the non-violent mass movement, for the launching of which the Congress gave me authority on the 8th of August last, as perfectly legitimate and in the interest

[1] This was from E. Conran-Smith; *vide* footnote of "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 4-5-1943.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] *Vide* footnote of "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 4-5-1943.

both of the Government and the public. As it is, the Government left me no time to start the movement. Therefore how could a movement, which was never started, embarrass "India's" war effort? If then, there was any embarrassment by reason of the popular resentment of the Government's action in resorting to the wholesale arrests of principal Congressmen, the responsibility was solely that of the Government. The mass movement, as the resolution sanctioning it said in so many words, was sanctioned in order to promote India-wide effort on behalf of the Allied cause, including the causes of Russia and China, whose danger was very great in August last and from which, in my opinion, they are by no means free even now. I hope the Government will not feel offended when I say that all the war effort that is being put forth in India is not India's but the alien Government's. I submit that, if the Government had complied with the request of the Congress as embodied in its August resolution, there would have been a mass effort without parallel for winning the battle for human freedom and ridding the world of the menace that Fascism, Nazism, Japanism and imperialism are. I may be wholly wrong; anyway this is my deliberate and honest opinion.

In order to make the communique accord with facts, I suggest the following alterations in the first paragraph: After "Mr. Jinnah" add "in response to his public invitation to Mr. Gandhi to write to him, stating that he (Mr. Gandhi) would be willing to correspond with or meet him according as he wished".

I hope that the remaining portion of the communique too will be suitably amended in the light of my submission.[1]

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10433. Courtesy: India Office Library. Also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government*, pp. 73-4, and *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, p p. 15-6

[1] Acknowledging this letter on June 4, Conran-Smith informed Gandhiji: "... the Government of India have considered it but see no reason to modify their communique already published." *Vide* also the following item.

254. LETTER TO SIR RICHAD TOTTENHAM

May 28, 1943

DEAR SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM,

I handed my reply[1] to your letter[2] of the 24th instant, at about one o'clock yesterday, to the Superintendent. I hurried the writing and the despatch in the hope of my letter reaching you before the publication of the communique. I was, therefore, astonished and grieved to find the communique in the papers received in the afternoon, and Reuter's report[3] of the reactions[4\] upon it in London. Evidently there was no meaning in an advance copy of the communique being sent to me. I regard the communique not only to be inconsistent with the facts but unfair to me. The only way partial redress can be given to me is the publication of the correspondence between us. I, therefore request that it may be published.[5]

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10435. Courtesy: India Office Library. *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, p. 16. Also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government*, pp. 74

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* footnote of "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 4-5-1943.

[3] *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. III pp. 1021-3, records that according to Amery's letter to Lord Linlithgow, the reaction in London was better than what they had expected. Only *The Manchester Guardian* was critical; "others entirely supported the Government of India's action". Jinnah's comments, as reported by Reuter, on Gandhiji's proposal to invite him to visit him, was that "Gandhi's letter could only be construed as a move to embroil the Muslim League with the British Government as a means of helping his release.... if Gandhi was prepared to write a letter and abandon his policy culminating in revolution and was willing to settle on the basis of Pakistan, the Muslim League were prepared to bury the past. He still believed that the British Government would not stop such a letter...."

[4] *ibid*

[5] Acknowledging this letter on June 8, Conran-Smith explained: " . . . the advance copy of the communique . . . was sent for your personal information, and the Government regret they see no reason to publish the correspondence."

255. TALK WITH MIRABEHN

May 29, 1943

I asked Bapuji how one could best help races who have an undeveloped idea of God, and suggested that one should not put before them any orthodox religion, but speak only in a very simple way of the Supreme Soul, and for the rest serve them and strive according to the ideals in which one believes. Bapu replied:

You should not even talk of the Supreme Soul. It is my profound conviction that Truth is self-acting. Truth, which is God, is ever present, ever working in all beings. Therefore one should[1] simply live one's own life amongst them and serve them according to their needs. Three R's have a value all their own. Therefore giving that knowledge to the illiterate is a special service obligatory on those who have that knowledge. For the rest, if we have Truth in us, it will go out to them without effort, for it is self-acting. God, i.e., Truth, comes to those who seek Him. If we know Him more than they (of which we can never be sure) the more will doubtless go out to them.

[PS.]

I had it copied for you.[2]

From a photostat: G.N. 9100

256. TALK WITH MIRABEHN

May 31, 1943

When I looked through what you had written down of our conversation[3], I saw that I should express what I had said in a shorter and clearer manner. I have now put it in the form of an aphorism. As a matter of fact it was only yesterday that I fully realized the value of the three R's In the past, I have often expressed indifference to them. But yesterday it came to me that the three R's have unique place and value, and in serving illiterate peoples it is a vital part of one's duty to give them this knowledge. The man who cannot read, write or add, must remain in many ways an ignoramus. Whereas with this knowledge at his command he can reach out to further and further development. Of course this means that when I impart the three R's, I

[1] What follows is in Gandhiji's hand.

[2] *Vide* also the following item.

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

must try to do it in such a way as to whet the man's appetite for further knowledge. There can be no question for me of just counting heads and passing on. I do not impart the knowledge for all-round advance. If he advances materially all very well and good. Though my concern is with his spiritual development, it is through material service that I have to approach him. His body is all there, his soul is as yet unknown to him. Day by day, as he goes on accepting my material services, he will become more curious about my life. He will begin to notice something more than the physical side of my life: why do I sometimes sit in certain postures, why do I shut my eyes at times, what is it I am murmuring. When his curiosity leads him to ask me what it all means, I can explain it to him. How the information will affect him is not my concern. It is not for me to interfere with the working of the spirit. When I am face to face with a man, in proportion as I have God's spirit in me will it go out to him.[1] My purpose is not to give him my religion. My purpose is to let him see God through me if I have Him and express Him in reality, in my daily doings.

June 10, 1943

From a photostat: G.N. 9101

257. LETTER TO SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM

DETENTION CAMP,
June 1, 1943

DEAR SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM,

I have your note[2] of the 26th ultimo conveying the Government's decision about my letter[3] to the Rt. Hon'ble Lord Samuel. I would just like to say that the letter is not political correspondence but it is a complaint to a Member of the House of Lords pointing out misrepresentations into which he has been betrayed, and which do me an injustice. The Government's decision amounts to a ban on the ordinary right belonging even to a convict of correcting damaging misrepresentations made about him. Moreover I

[1] What follows is in Gandhiji's hand.

[2] *Vide* footnote of "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Fgovernment of India", 15-5-1943.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Samuel", 15-5-1943.

suggest that the decision about my letter[1] to Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah is wholly inapplicable to this letter to the Rt. Hon'ble Lord Samuel. Therefore I request reconsideration of the decision.[2]

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, pp. 82-3; also *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi,* p. 31

258. LETTER TO SIR REGINALD MAXWELL

DETENTION CAMP,
June 23, 1943

DEAR SIR REGINALD MAXWELL,

I thank you for your reply[3] of 17th instant received on 21st instant to my letter[4] of 21st May last.

I had not hoped that my reply would remove the fundamental difference between us, but I had hoped and would still like to hope that the difference would be no bar to an admission and correction of discovered errors. I had thought, as I still think, that my letter did point out some errors in your Assembly speech of 15th February last.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi, p. 24

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 4-5-1943.

[2] Acknowledging this letter on June 7, 1943, Conran-Smith informed Gandhiji that the Government "do not see their way to alter the decision".

[3] *Vide* last footnote of "Letter to Sir Reginald Maxwell", 21-5-1943.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Reginald Maxwell", 21-5-1943.

259. LETTER TO ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

DETENTION CAMP,
July 15, 1943

THE ADDITIONAL SECRETARY
HOME DEPARTMENT
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

SIR,

In reply to my request[1] dated 5th March last for a copy of Government of India publication entitled *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942-43*, I received a copy on 13th April. It contains several corrections marked in red ink. Some of them are striking.

2. I take it that the Government have based the charges made in the publication against the Congress and myself on the material printed therein and not on the evidence which, as stated in the Preface, is withheld from the public.

3. The Preface is brief and is signed by Sir R. Tottenham, Additional Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department. It is dated 13th February last, i.e., three days after the commencement of my recent fast. The date is ominous. Why was the period of my fast chosen for publishing a document in which I am the target?

4. The Preface commences thus:

> In response to demands which have reached Government from several sources, Government have now prepared a review which brings together a number of facts . . . bearing on the responsibility of Mr. Gandhi and the Congress High Command for the disturbances which followed the sanction of a mass movement by the A.I.C.C. on August 8, 1942.

There is an obvious mis-statement here. The disturbances followed not the "sanctioning of the mass movement by the A.I.C.C." but the arrests made by the Government. As for the "demands", so far as I am aware, they began soon after the wholesale

[1] The request was actually made by Pyarelal on behalf of Gandhiji; *vide* "Letter to Sir Richard Tottenham", 5-3-1943

arrests of principal Congressmen all over India. As the Government are aware, in my letters to His Excellency the Viceroy, the last[1] being dated 7th February, 1943, I had asked for proof in support of my alleged guilt. The evidence now produced might have been given to me when I raised the question. Had my request been complied with, one advantage would certainly have accrued. I would have been heard in answer to the charges brought against me. That very process would have delayed the fast and, who knows, if Government had been patient with me, it might have even prevented it.

5. The Preface contains the following sentence:

> Almost all the facts presented in this review are, or should be, already within the knowledge of the public.

Therefore, so far as the public are concerned, there was no such hurry as to require publication of the document during the fast. This train of reasoning has led me to the inference that it was published in expectation of my death which medical opinion must have considered almost a certainty. It was feared even during my previous long fasts. I hope my inference is wholly wrong, and the Government had a just and valid reason for choosing the time that they did for the publication of what is after all an indictment of the Congress and me. I hope to be pardoned for putting on paper an inference which, if true, must discredit the Government. I feel that I am being just to them by unburdening myself of a suspicion instead of harbouring it and allowing it to cloud my judgment about their dealings with me.

6. I now come to the indictment itself. It reads like a presentation of his case by a prosecutor. In the present case the prosecutor happens to be also the policeman and jailor. He first arrests and gags his victims, and then opens his case behind their backs.

7. I have read it again and again. I have gone through the numbers of *Harijan* which my companions happened to have with them, and I have come to the conclusion that there is nothing in my writings and doings that could have warranted the inferences and the innuendoes of which the indictment is full. In spite of my desire to see myself in my writings, as the author has seen me, I have completely failed.

8. The indictment opens with a misrepresentation. I am said to have deplored "the introduction of foreign soldiers into India to aid

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 7-2-1943.

in India's defence". In the *Harijan* article[1], on which the charge is based, I have refused to believe that India was to be defended through the introduction of foreign soldiers. If it is India's defence that is aimed at, why should trained Indian soldiers be sent away from India and foreign soldiers brought in instead? Why should the Congress—an organization which was born and lives for the very sake of India's freedom —be suppressed? I am clearer today in my mind than I was when I penned that article on 19th April, that India is not being defended, and that if things continue to shape themselves as they are, India will sink at the end of the war deeper than she is today, so that she might forget the very word freedom. Let me quote the relevant passages from the *Harijan* article referred to by the author.

> I must confess that I do not look upon this event with equanimity. Cannot a limitless number of soldiers be trained out of India's millions? Would they not make as good fighting material as any in the world? Then why foreigners? We know what American aid means. It amounts, in the end, to American influence, if not American rule, added to British. It is a tremendous price to pay for the possible success of Allied arms. I see no Indian freedom peeping through all this preparation for the so-called defence of India. It is a preparation pure and simple for the defence of the British Empire, whatever may be asserted to the contrary.

9. The second paragraph of the indictment opens with this pregnant sentence:

> It will be suggested that during the period of Mr. Gandhi's first advocacy of British withdrawal from India and the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee in Bombay on August 7, the Congress High Comm-and, and, in the later stages, the Congress organization as a whole, were deliberately setting the stage for a mass movement designed to free India finally from British rule.

Let me italicize the phrase, *It will be suggested.* Why should anything be left to suggestion about a movement which is open and above board? Much ado has been made about the simplest things which nobody has cared to deny and of which Congressmen are even proud. The Congress organization as a whole "deliberately set the stage designed to free India finally from British rule" as early as the year 1920, and not since my "first advocacy of British withdrawal from India" as suggested in the indictment. Ever since that year the effort for a mass movement has never relaxed. This can be proved

[1] *Vide* "Foreign Soliders in India", 19-4-1942.

from numerous speeches of Congress leaders and from Congress resolutions. Young and impatient Congressmen and even elder men have not hesitated, at times, to press me to hasten the mass movement. But I who knew better always restrained their ardour, and I must gratefully admit that they gladly submitted to the restraint. The contraction of this long period to the interval between my advocacy of British withdrawal from India and the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee in Bombay on August 7, is wholly wrong and misleading. I know of no special staging since 26th April, 1942.

10. The same paragraph then says that "an essential preliminary" to an examination of the type of movement "is a clear understanding of the real motives underlying the move". Why should motives be searched when everything is there in black and white? I can say without any hesitation that my motives are always plain. Why I asked for the immediate withdrawal of the British power from India has been discussed by me almost threadbare in public.

11. At page 2 of the indictment[1], a phrase has been taken from my article[2] entitled "One Thing Needful" dated 10th May, 1942, and I am represented as saying that I would devote the whole of my "energy" to this "supreme act". By simply detaching the phrase from its context, mystery has been made to surround it. The phrase "supreme act" occurs in an argument addressed to an English friend and, if it is read in its setting, it ceases to be mysterious or objectionable, unless the very idea of withdrawal is held objectionable. Here are the relevant parts from the argument:

> I am convinced, therefore, that the time has come during the war, not after it, for the British and the Indians to be reconciled to complete separation from each other. That way, and that way alone, lies the safety of both and, shall I say, the world. I see with the naked eye that the estrangement is growing. Every act of the British Government is being interpreted, and I think rightly, as being in its own interest and for its own safety. There is no such thing as joint common interest.... racial superiority is treated not as a vice but a virtue. This is true not only in India; but it is equally true in Africa, it is true in Burma

[1] Which reads: "Although his earlier proposals for British withdrawal all emphasized the importance of this withdrawal being a voluntary act willingly performed, Mr. Gandhi had already by May 10 decided that he must devote the whole of his energy to this 'supreme act'; and it is clear that very shortly afterwards, he began to think in terms of a struggle to achieve his object" (*The Indian Annual Register, 1942*, Vol. II, p. 177).

[2] *Vide* "One Thing Needful", 4-5-1942.

and Ceylon. These countries could not be held otherwise than by assertion of race superiority.

This is a drastic disease requiring a drastic remedy. I have pointed out the remedy complete and immediate orderly withdrawal of the British from India at least, in reality and properly from all non-European possessions. It will be the bravest and the cleanest act of the British people. It will at once put the Allied cause on a completely moral basis and may even lead to a most honourable peace between the warring nations. And the clean end of imperialism is likely to be the end of Fascism and Nazism. The suggested action will certainly blunt the edge of Fascism and Nazism which are an offshoot of imperialism.

British distress cannot be relieved by nationalist India's aid in the manner suggested by the writer. It is ill-equipped for the purpose, even if it can be made enthusiastic about it. And what is there to enthuse nationalistic India? Just as a person cannot feel the glow of the sun's heat in its absence, even so Indians cannot feel the glow of freedom without the actual experience of it. Many of us simply cannot contemplate an utterly free India with calmness and equanimity. The first experience is likely to be a shock before the glow comes. That shock is a necessity. India is a mighty nation. No one can tell how she will act and with what effect when the shock is delivered.

I feel, therefore, that I must devote the whole of my energy to the realization of the supreme act. The writer of the letter admits the wrong done to India by the British. I suggest to the writer that the first condition of British success is the present undoing of the wrong. It should precede, not follow, victory. The presence of the British in India is an invitation to Japan to invade India. Their withdrawal removes the bait. Assume, however, that it does not; free India will be better able to cope with the invasion. Unadulterated non-co-operation will then have a full sway *(Harijan,* 10-5-1942, p. 148).

In this long extract, the phrase "supreme act" takes its legitimate place. It does not refer simply to the British withdrawal. But it sums up all that must precede and succeed it. It is an act worthy of the energy not of one person but of hundreds. This is how I began my answer to the English friend's letter:

I can but repeat what I felt and said in my letter to Lord Linlithgow recording my impressions of the first interview[1] with him after the declaration of war. I have nothing to withdraw, nothing to repent of. I remain the same friend today of the British that I was then. I have not a trace of hatred in me towards them. But I have never been blind to their limitations as I have not

[1] On September 4, 1939; for Gandhiji's statement, *vide* "Statement to the Press", 5-9-1939.

been to their great virtues *(Harijan*, 10-5-1942, p. 148).

To read and fully understand my writings, it is necessary to understand always this background. The whole of the movement has been conceived for the mutual benefit of India and England. Unfortunately, the author, ignoring this background, has approached my writings with coloured spectacles, and torn sentences and phrases from their context, and dressed them up to suit his preconception. Thus he has put out of joint "their withdrawal removes the bait", and omitted the sentence that immediately follows and which I have restored in the foregoing extract. As is clear from the above article, unadulterated non-co-operation here refers exclusively to the Japanese.

12. The last paragraph at page 2 begins thus:

> In its earlier stages Mr. Gandhi's "Quit India" move was meant and was widely interpreted as a proposal for the physical withdrawal from India of the *British*[1], and of all Allied and British troops.

I have searched, and so have the friends with me, in vain, for some expression in my writings which would warrant the opinion that "Quit India" move was *meant* as a proposal for the physical withdrawal of the British from India. It is true that colour was lent to such an interpretation by a superficial reading of a sentence[2] in the article of *Harijan* of April 26, already quoted. As soon as my attention was drawn to it by an English friend, I wrote[3] in *Harijan* of 24th May as follows:

> There is evidently confusion in some minds about my invitation to the British to withdraw. For a Britisher writes to say that he likes India and her people and would not like willingly to leave India. He likes too my method of non-violence. Evidently the writer has confused the individual as such with the individual as the holder of power. India has no quarrel with the British people. I have hundreds of British friends. Andrews's[4] friendship was enough to tie me to the British people.

With this clear enunciation of my views before him at the time of penning the indictment, how could he say that I had *meant;* physical withdrawal of the British as distinguished from the British

[1] Italicized by Gandhiji

[2] Presumably, the one which follows immediately after the last sentence of the passage quoted in paragraph 8 above; *vide* "Foreign Soliders in India", 19-4-1942.

[3] *Vide* "Notes", 24-5-1942.

[4] C. F. Andrews

power? And I am not aware that my writing was "widely interpreted as such". He has quoted nothing in support of this statement.

13. The author proceeds in the same paragraph:

> As late as June 14, he makes, for the purpose of his scheme, the assumption that the Commander-in-Chief of the United American and British armies has decided that India is no good as a base.

"For the purpose of his scheme" is a gratuitous interpolation here. The extract is taken from an interview[1] with several journalists. I was answering a series of questions. At one stage I had put a counter-question thus:

> Supposing England retires from India for strategic purpose, and apart from my proposal—as they had to do in Burma—what would happen? What would India do?

They replied:

> That is exactly what we have come to learn from you. We would certainly like to know that.

I rejoined:

> Well, therein comes my non-violence. For, we have no weapons. Mind you, we have assumed that the Commander-in-Chief of the United American and British armies has decided that India is no good as a base, and that they should withdraw to some other base and concentrate the Allied forces there. We can't help it. We have then to depend on what strength we have. We have no army, no military resources, no military skill either worth the name, and non-violence is the only thing we can fall back upon.

It is clear from this quotation that I was not expounding any scheme. I was merely arguing about possibilities based on assumptions agreed between the interviewers and myself.

14 The author proceeds:

> Added strength is given to the belief that this is a correct interpretation of Mr. Gandhi's original intentions by the prominence, to which attention has already been drawn, of the theme that the British withdrawal would remove any Japanese motive for invading India; for, with the British and Allied armies still in India, how is the bait removed?

I have just now shown that the physical withdrawal of the British was never contemplated by me, of the Allied and the British troops was certainly contemplated in the first instance. Therefore it is not a

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Amreican Journalists", 6-6-1942

question of "interpretation", because it is one of fact. But the sentence has been impressed in order to make what is straight look crooked.

15. Then proceeds the author:

> At the same time he made it clear that on the British departure the Indian army would be disbanded.

I made clear no such thing. What I did was to discuss with interviewers the possibilities in the event of British withdrawal. Indian army, being a creation of the British Government, I assumed, would be automatically disbanded when that power withdrew, unless it was taken over by a treaty by the replacing Government. If the withdrawal took place by agreement and with goodwill on both sides, these matters should present no difficulty. I give in the Appendix, the relevant passages from the interview on the subject. *Vide* Appendix I (S).

16. From the same paragraph I take the following:

> Owing to the gathering force of this opposition and also, as will be shown later, with a possible view to reconciling disagreement among members of the Working Committee, Mr. Gandhi discovered the 'gap' in his original proposals. In *Harijan* of June 14, he paved the way—by the slightly cryptic assertion that, if he had his way, the Indian national government when formed would tolerate the presence of the United Nations on Indian soil under certain well-defined conditions but would permit no further assistance—for the more definite statement made to an American journalist in the following week's *Harijan*, when in reply to a question whether he envisaged free India's allowing Allied troops to operate from India, he said: 'I do. It will be only then that you will see real co-operation.' He continued that he did not contemplate the complete shifting of Allied troops from India and that, provided India became entirely free, he could not insist on their withdrawal.

This is for me the key thought opening the author's mind. It is built on finding motives other than those that are apparent from my language. Had I been guided by the force of the opposition whether from the foreign or the Indian Press or from Congressmen, I should not have hesitated to say so. It is well known that I am as capable of resisting opposition that makes no appeal to my head or my heart, as I am of readily yielding when it does. But the literal fact is that when I gave the country the withdrawal formula, I was possessed by one idea and one only, that if India was to be saved and also the Allied cause,

and if India was to play not merely an effective but, maybe, a decisive part in the war, India must be absolutely free now. The "gap" was this: although the British Government might be willing to declare India's independence, they might still wish, for their own and for China's defence, to retain their troops in India. What would be my position in that case? It is now well known that the difficulty was presented[1] to me by Mr. Louis Fischer. He had come to Sevagram and stayed with me for nearly a week. As a result of the discussions between us, he drew up certain questions for me to answer. My reply to his second question the author describes as a "slightly cryptic assertion" paving the way for a "more definite statement in the following week's *Harijan*". I give below the whole of the article[2] embodying the questions and answers. It was written on 7th June, 1942, and appeared in *Harijan* dated 14th June, p. 188. . . .

What is described as the "more definite statement" is nothing but an impromptu reply given to an American journalist, Mr. Grover, representative of the Associated Press of America. If that interview[3] had not chanced to come about, there might have been no statement "more definite" than what appeared in my reply to Mr. Louis Fischer. Hence the writer's suggestion that I "paved the way" for "the more definite statement in the following week's *Harijan*" is altogether unwarranted, if I may not call it even mischievous. I do not regard my answers to Mr. Louis Fischer as a "slightly cryptic statement". They are deliberate answers given to deliberate questions framed after a full discussion lasting a week. My answers show very clearly that I had no scheme beyond the "Quit India" formula, that all else was guess, and that immediately the Allied nations' difficulty was made clear to me, I capitulated. I saw the "gap" and filled it in the best manner I knew. The "definite statement" fortunately for me, in my opinion, leaves little room, if any, for conjectures and insinuations in which the writer has indulged. Let it speak for itself. Here are the relevant portions[4]:

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Interview to Louis Fischer", 4-6-1942.

[2] Not reproduced here; *vide* "Important Questions", 6-6-1942.

[3] *Vide* "Interview to Preston Grover", 10-6-1942.

[4] These are not reproduced here. Only the last six paragraphs were omitted by Gandhiji.

17. The rest of the chapter[1] is taken up with a colourful description of the draft resolution I sent to Allahabad and a quotation containing remarks attributed to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru[2] and

[1]Chapter I of the six chapters. The passage under reference reads: "Before any attempt is made to assess the motives actuating Mr. Gandhi in his 'Quit-India' move, reference must be made to the important evidence as to the working of his mind and the reactions of the members of the Working Committee furnished by the record (Appendix I) of the latter's Allahabad meeting, which was recovered in a subsequent police search of the All-India Congress Committee's office. Mr. Gandhi was not present at this meeting, but he sent for the consideration of the Working Committee a draft resolution which was the direct precursor of the resolution of July 14. 'Japan's quarrel,' he states in the draft, 'is not with India. She is warring against the British Empire. . . . If India were freed, her first step would probably be to negotiate with [Japan] whereas if the British withdrew, India would be able to defend herself against Japan.' Britain, Congress was of opinion, was incapable of defending India from the Japanese or any other aggressor. The draft goes on to assure the Japanese Government that India bears no enmity against Japan and desires only freedom from alien domination, which she will attain and retain through her non-violent strength. The hope is expressed that Japan will not have any designs on India; but should she attack India, all Indians who look to the Congress for guidance would be expected to offer non-violent non-co-operation to the Japanese" *(The Indian Annual Register, 1942,* Vol. II, pp. 177-8). For Gandhiji's draft resolution, *vide* "Draft Resolution for A.I.C.C.", before 24-4-1942.

[2] The "remarks attributed to" him read: "Withdrawal of troops and the whole apparatus of civil administration will create a vacuum which cannot be filled up immediately. If we said to Japan that her fight was with British imperialism and not with us, she would say: 'We are glad the British army is withdrawn; we recognize your independence. But we want certain facilities now. We shall defend you against aggression. We want aerodromes, freedom to pass our troops through your country. This is necessary in self-defence.' They might seize strategic points and proceed to Iraq, etc. The masses won't be touched if only the strategic points are captured. If Bapu's (Mr. Gandhi) approach is accepted, we become passive partners of the Axis powers. . . . The whole background of the draft is one which will inevitably make the world think that we are lining up passively with the Axis powers. The British are asked to withdraw. After the withdrawal we are to negotiate with Japan and possibly come to some terms with her. These terms may include a large measure of civil control by us, a certain measure of military control by them, passage of armies through India, etc.... Whether you will like it or not, the exigencies of the war situation will compel them to make India a battle-ground. In sheer self-defence they cannot afford to keep out. They will walk through the country. You can't stop it by non-violent non-co-operation . . . the whole thought and background of the draft is one of favouring Japan. It may not be conscious. Three factors influence our decisions in the present emergency: (i) Indian freedom (ii) sympathy for certain larger causes (iii) probable outcome of the war—who is going to win. It is Gandhiji's feeling that Japan and Germany will win. This feeling unconsciously governs his decision" *(The Indian Annual Register, 1942,* Vol. II, p. 178).

Shri Rajagopalachari[1] on that resolution. Immediately after the publication of the extracts from the notes seized by the Government, Panditji issued a statement which I append hereto. *Vide* Appendix V(C). I cannot understand why the author has disregarded that important statement, unless for the reason that he disbelieved Panditji's explanation. As for Shri Rajagopalachari's statement, the author stands on less insecure ground. Rajaji certainly holds the views attributed to him. In the interview with Mr. Grover, the American correspondent, this is what I said[2] about Rajaji's difference with me:

18. The first chapter concludes with the following commentary on the draft which had been sent by me to the Working Committee at Allahabad:

> A draft, to repeat, of which the whole thought and background is one of favouring Japan, a resolution which amounts to running into the arms of Japan.

And this is written in spite of Pandit Jawaharlal's repudiation of the statement attributed to him, and in spite of my explanation about differences with Rajaji—all of which was before the writer.

19. In support of my contention that the author had no warrant for the opinions expressed in the sentences quoted, I would like to draw attention to the following extracts from my Press statement[3] reported in *The Bombay chronicle* of 5th August last:

> As the language of the draft (the one that was sent to Allahabad) shows, it had many 'i's to be dotted and 't's to be crossed. It was sent through Mirabehn to whom I had explained the implications of the draft, and I said to her or to the friends of the Working Committee who happened to be in Sevagram to whom I explained the draft, that there was an omission—deliberate—from my draft as to the foreign policy of the Congress and, therefore, any reference to China and Russia.
>
> For, as I had said to them, I derived my inspiration and knowledge from Panditji about foreign matters of which he had been a deep student. Therefore I said that he could fill in that part in the resolution.

[1] The "remarks attributed to" him read: "I do not agree that if Britain goes away, India will have some scope for organizing itself even if Japan should make some headway. Japan will fill the vacuum created by the British withdrawal. Our reaction to the evils of Britain should not make us lose our sense of perspective. It is no use getting upset on small matters. Do not run into the arms of Japan, which is what the resolution comes to" (ibid.).

[2] *Vide* "Interview to Preston Grover", 10-6-1942.

[3] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 5-8-1942

> But I may add that I have never even in a most unguarded moment expressed the opinion that Japan and Germany would win the war. Not only that, I have often expressed the opinion that they cannot win the war, if only Great Britain will once for all shed her imperialism. I have given expression to that opinion more than once in the columns of *Harijan,* and I repeat here that in spite of all my wish to the contrary and of others, if disaster overtakes Great Britain and the Allied powers, it will be because even at the critical moment— most critical in her history—she had most obstinately refused to wash herself of the taint of imperialism which she had carried with her for at least a century and a half.

How in the face of this categorical statement the author could say that the actuating motive behind the "Quit India" move was that I was "convinced that Axis would win the war" passes understanding.

20. In support of the same charge the author says:

> That this attitude persisted long after the Allahabad meeting of the Working Committee is shown by the following remark made by Mr. Gandhi in *Harijan* of July 19, in reply to a question whether it would not be wiser to postpone his movement until Britain had settled with the Germans and the Japanese: "No, because I know you will not settle with Germans without us."

I quote below from the article[1] in which this opinion is expressed. It is from *Harijan* of July 19, pages 234 and 235, and is entitled "A Two Minutes' Interview", the interviewer being a correspondent of *The Daily Express,* London.

> But the correspondent of *The Daily Express* (London) who was among the first to arrive, and who was not staying until the end said,he would be content with just a couple of minutes' interview, and Gandhiji acceded to his request. He had made up his mind that if the demand for withdrawal which seemed to gather strength every day was rejected, there would be some kind of a movement. So he asked:[2]

It is curious that sentences taken out of a piece breathing concern for the success of the Allied arms are here presented as an indication of my "pro-Axis" mentality!

21. The following passage is then reproduced from my letter[3] to His Excellency the Viceroy of 14th August last as "significant":

> I have taken Jawaharlal Nehru as my measuring-rod. His personal contacts

[1] By Mahadev Desai

[2] For the text of the interview which followed, *vide* "Interview to *The Daily Press*", before 11-7-1942.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 14-8-1942.

make him feel much more the misery of the impending ruin of China and Russia than I can.

"The misery of the impending ruin of China and Russia" has been italicized by the author who thus comments on the passage:

> They foresaw a British rear-guard action across India and the devastation that this must entail!

According to his wont, the author has failed to quote the whole of the relevant part of the letter. Nor has he guided the reader by quoting the letter in the appendix. I quote below the relevant part:

> One thing more. The declared cause is common between the Government of India and us. To put it in the most concrete terms, it is the protection of the freedom of China and Russia. The Government of India think that freedom of India is not necessary for winning the cause. I think exactly the opposite. I have taken Jawaharlal Nehru as my measuring-rod. His personal contacts make him feel much more the misery of the impending ruin of China and Russia than I can and, may I say, than even you can. In that misery he tried to forget his old quarrel with imperialism.
>
> He dreads much more than I do the success of Nazism and Fascism. I argued with him for days together. He fought against my position with a passion which I have no words to describe. But the logic of facts overwhelmed him. He yielded when he saw clearly that without the freedom of India that of the other two was in great jeopardy. Surely you are wrong in having imprisoned such a powerful friend and ally.

The full letter is given in the appendix *(vide* Appendix IX[1]).

I suggest that the full quotation gives a meaning wholly different from that given by the author. The following passages from *Harijan* will further prove the baselessness of the charge of "pro-Axis" or "defeatist" tendency on my part:

> Q. Is it a fact that your present attitude towards England and Japan is influenced by the belief that you think the British and the Allies are going to be defeated in this war?...
>
> A. I have no hesitation in saying that it is not true. On the contrary, I said only the other day in *Harijan* that the Britisher was hard to beat. He has not known what it is to be defeated... *(Harijan,* 7-6-1942, p. 177)[2].
>
> America is too big financially, intellectually and in scientific skill to be subdued by any nation or even combination.... *(Harijan,* 7-6-1942, p. 181)[3].

22. A further complete answer to the same charge, if one were

[1] Not reproduced here; *vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 14-8-1942.

[2] *Vide* "Question Box", 30-5-1942.

[3] *Vide* "Cable to *The Sunday Despathch*", on or before 29-5-1942.

still needed, is furnished by my letter[1] to Shrimati Mirabehn, dictated on the spur of the moment and never meant for publication. The letter was written to her in answer to her questions which carried to me her belief that the Japanese attack was imminent and that they were likely to have a walkover. My answer leaves no doubt whatever as to my attitude. The letter was written after the Allahabad meeting of the All-India Congress Committee. It was dictated by me to the late Shri Mahadev Desai. The original is in Shrimati Mirabehn's possession. I know that she wrote a letter to Lord Linlithgow from this camp on December 24 last, sending copies of this correspondence and requesting its publication. She never received even an acknowledgement of her communication. I hope it was not pigeonholed without so much as being read. I give it in the appendix for ready reference. *Vide* Appendix II (H).

23. In view of the colourful description of my draft resolution sent to Allahabad, I reproduce apposite passages from the resolution to show that the author has gone to everything connected with the Congress with the deliberate intention, as it seems to me, of seeing nothing but evil. Thus "Britain is incapable of defending India" is followed by these sentences:

> It is natural that whatever she (Britain) does is for her own defence. There is an eternal conflict between Indian and British interests. It follows, their notions of defence would also differ. The British Government has no trust in India's political parties. The Indian army has been maintained up till now mainly to hold India in subjugation. It has been completely segregated from the general population who can in no sense regard it as their own. This policy of mistrust still continues and is the reason why national defence is not entrusted to India's elected representatives.

24. Then there is this sentence taken from the draft: "If India were freed, her first step would probably be to negotiate with Japan." This has to be read in conjunction with the following paragraphs from the draft:

> This Committee desires to assure the Japanese Government and people that India bears no enmity either towards Japan or towards any other nation. India only desires freedom from all alien domination. But in this fight for freedom, the Committee is of opinion that India while welcoming universal sympathy does not stand in need of foreign military aid. India will attain her freedom through her non-violent strength and will retain it likewise. Therefore

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 31-5-1942.

the Committee hopes that Japan will not have any designs on India. But if Japan attacks India, and Britain makes no response to its appeal, the Committee would expect all those who look to Congress for guidance to offer complete non-violent non-co-operation to the Japanese forces and not render any assistance to them. It is no part of the duty of those who are attacked to render any assistance to the attacker. It is their duty to offer complete non-co-operation.

It is not difficult to understand the simple principle of non-violent non-co-operation:

1. We may not bend the knee to the aggressor nor obey any of his orders.

2. We may not look to him for any favours nor fall to his bribes. But we may not bear him any malice nor wish him ill.

3. If he wishes to take possession of our fields, we will refuse to give them up even if we have to die in the effort to resist him.

4. If he is attacked by disease or is dying of thirst and seeks our aid, we may not refuse it.

5. In such places where the British and Japanese forces are fighting, our non-co-operation will be fruitless and unnecessary.

At present our non-co-operation with the British Government is limited. Were we to offer them complete non-co-operation when they are actually fighting, it would be tantamount to placing our country deliberately in Japanese hands. Therefore not to put any obstacle in the way of the British forces will often be the only way of demonstrating our non-co-operation with the Japanese. Neither may we assist the British in any active manner. If we can judge from their recent attitude, the British Government do not need any help from us beyond our non-interference. They desire our help only as slaves—a position we can never accept.

Whilst non-co-operation against the Japanese forces will necessarily be limited to a comparatively small number and must succeed if it is complete and genuine, the true building up of swaraj consists in the millions of India whole-heartedly working the constructive programme. Without it the whole nation cannot rise from its age-long torpor. Whether the British remain or not, it is our duty always to wipe out unemployment, to bridge the gulf between the rich and the poor, to banish communal strife, to exorcise the demon of untouchability, to reform dacoits and save the people from them. If crores of people do not take a living interest in this nation-building work, freedom must remain a dream and unattainable by either non-violence or violence.

I contend that from this setting it is impossible to infer pro-Japanese attitude or anti-British attitude on my part or that of the

Working Committee. On the contrary, there is determined opposition to any aggression and meticulous concern for the Allied arms. The demand for immediate freedom itself is born of that concern. If the search be for implacable opposition on my part to British imperialism, that search is superfluous; for, it is patent in all my writings.

25. I would like to close this subject by quoting some passages from my speeches on the 7th and 8th August last:

EXTRACT FROM THE HINDUSTANI SPEECH ON 7TH AUGUST

Then there is the question of your attitude towards the British. I have noticed that there is hatred towards the British among the people. They say, they are disgusted with their behaviour. The people make no distinction between British imperialism and the British people. To them the two are one. This hatred would even make them welcome the Japanese. This is most dangerous. It means that they will exchange one slavery for another. We must get rid of this feeling. Our quarrel is not with the British people, we fight their imperialism. The proposal for the withdrawal of British power did not come out of anger. It came to enable India to play its due part at the present critical juncture. It is not a happy position for a big country like India to be merely helping with money and material obtained willy-nilly from her while the United Nations are conducting the war. We cannot evoke the true spirit of sacrifice and valour so long as we do not feel that it is our war, so long as we are not free. I know the British Government will not be able to withhold freedom from us when we have made enough self-sacrifice. We must, therefore, purge ourselves of hatred. Speaking for myself I can say that I have never felt any hatred. As a matter of fact I feel myself to be a greater friend of the British now than ever before. One reason is that they are today in distress. My very friendship, therefore, demands that I should try to save them from their mistakes. As I view the situation they are on the brink of an abyss. It, therefore, becomes my duty to warn them of their danger even though it may, for the time being, anger them to the point of cutting off the friendly hand that is stretched out to help them. People may laugh, nevertheless that is my claim. At a time when I may have to launch the biggest struggle of my life, I may not harbour hatred against anybody. The idea of taking advantage of the opponent's difficulty and utilizing it for delivering a blow is entirely repugnant to me.

There is one thing which I would like you always to keep before your mind. Never believe that the British are going to lose the war. I know that they are not a nation of cowards. They will fight to the last rather than accept defeat. But suppose, for strategic reasons, they are forced to leave India as they

had to leave Malaya, Singapore, and Burma, what shall be our position in that event? The Japanese will invade India and we shall be unprepared. Occupation of India by the Japanese will mean, too, the end of China and, perhaps, Russia. I do not want to be the instrument of Russia's and China's defeat. Pandit Nehru was only today describing to me the wretched condition of Russia. He was agitated. The picture he drew still haunts me. I have asked myself the question: "What can I do to help Russia and China?" And the reply has come from within: "You are being weighed in the balance. You have in the alchemy of ahimsa a universal panacea. Why don't you give it a trial? Have you lost faith?" Out of this agony has emerged the proposal for British withdrawal. It may irritate the Britishers today and they may misunderstand me; they may even look upon me as their enemy. But some day they will say that I was their true friend.

FROM THE HINDUSTANI SPEECH ON 8TH AUGUST

After showing concern for China, I said:

I, therefore, want freedom immediately, this very night, before dawn, if it can be had. It cannot now wait for the realization of communal unity. If that unity is not achieved, sacrifice for attaining freedom will need to be much greater than would otherwise have been the case. The Congress has to win freedom or be wiped out in the effort. The freedom which the Congress is struggling to achieve will not be for Congressmen alone but for the whole of the lndian people.

FROM THE CONCLUDING SPEECH IN ENGLISH

It will be the greatest mistake on their (United Nations') part to turn a deaf ear to India's non-violent pleading and refuse her fundamental right of freedom. It will deal a mortal blow to Russia and China if they oppose the demand of non-violent India which is today, on bended knee, pleading for the discharge of a debt long overdue. … I have been the author of the non-embarrassment policy of the Congress and yet today you find me talking in strong language. My non-embarrassment plea, however, was always qualified by the proviso, "consistently with the honour and safety of the nation". If a man holds me by the collar and I am drowning, may I not struggle to free myself from the stranglehold? Therefore there is no inconsistency between our earlier declarations and our present demand.... I have always recognized a fundamental difference between Fascism and the democracies, despite their many limitations, and even between Fascism and British imperialism which I am fighting. Do the British get from India all they want? What they get today is from an India which they hold in bondage. Think what a difference it would make, if India were to participate in the war as a free ally.

That freedom, if it is to come, must come today. For, she will utilize that freedom for the success of the Allies, including Russia and China. The Burma Road will once more be opened and the way cleared for rendering really effective help to Russia.

Englishmen did not die to the last man in Malaya or on the soil of Burma. They effected instead what has been described as a "masterly evacuation". But I cannot afford to do that. Where shall I go, where shall I take the forty crores of India? How is this mass of humanity to be set aflame in the cause of world deliverance unless and until it has touched and felt freedom? Today there is no life left in them. It has been crushed out of them. If lustre has to be restored to their eyes, freedom has to come not tomorrow but today. Congress must, therefore, pledge itself to do or die.

These quotations show clearly why I advised the Congress to make the demand for the withdrawal of British power. The quotations also show that non-violence, i.e., self-suffering and self-sacrifice without retaliation was the key-stone of the movement.

26. The author has had difficulty in finding an adequate explanation for my agreement to the stationing of Allied troops in India in spite of the withdrawal of British power. If he had an open mind, there should have been no difficulty. My explanation was there. There was no occasion to doubt its sincerity unless there was positive evidence to the contrary. I have never claimed infallibility or a larger share of intellect for myself than the ordinary.

27. The author says that no "satisfactory solution" of the difficulty raised by Rajaji, namely, that the stationing of the Allied forces without civil power being with the British Government, would be "reinstallation of the British Government in a worse form" was "ever made public by Mr. Gandhi". The author, therefore, suggests that "the solution was one which he (I) preferred should remain a secret"; and he proceeds to say:

Now while the details of Mr. Gandhi's personal solution of this problem must remain a matter for speculation, an explanation which fulfils the logical requirements of the above situation immediately comes to mind; it is that, as has been shown above to be probable, Mr. Gandhi's admission of this amendment to his scheme was intended primarily as a bid for American support and secondarily as a sop to his opponents on the Working Committee, but that he envisaged, or planned to create, circumstances in which this permission would be meaningless, that is to say, circumstances in which the troops would either be forced to withdraw, or would, if they remained, be rendered ineffective.

It is difficult to characterize this suggestion. I take it that the secrecy suggested was to be secret even from the members of the Working Committee. If not, they would also become conspirators with me in the fraud to be perpetrated on the Allied powers. Amazing consequences would flow from such a fraud. Assume that the British Government has shed all power in India, that by an agreement between the free India government and the Allied powers, their troops are stationed in India. This assumption carries with it the further assum-ption that the agreement has been arrived at without any pressure, violent or non-violent, and simply from the British recognition of the necessity of recognizing independence of India. Assume further that the secret has all this time remained buried in my bosom, and that I suddenly divulge it to the free India government and, therefore, to the world and they carry out my plan to frustrate the terms of the agreement, what would be the result? The Allied powers, having all the overwhelming military strength at their disposal, would forfeit my head to themselves—which would be the least—and would further let their righteous rage descend upon the free India government and put an end to independence, which was won, not by military strength, but simply by force of reason and, therefore, make it impossible, so far as they can, for India to regain such lost independence. I must not carry this train of thought much further. The author's suggestion, if it were true, would also conclusively prove that all of us conspirators were thinking, not of the deliverance of India from bondage, or of the good of the masses, but only of our base little selves.

28. The difficulty pointed out by Rajaji, and on which the writer has laid stress in order to infer "secret motive" on my part, was pointed out even more forcibly by another correspondent, and I dealt with it in the issue of *Harijan* dated 19th July, 1942, pages 232 and 233. As the whole of the article[1] consists of questions and answers which have a bearing on the author's insinuations, I reproduce them without apology....

Why has the author ignored the explanation, for instance, in answers 2 and 4 which was before him? Boiled down, my explanation means that I would trust the Allies to carry out faithfully the conditions of the contract to be fulfilled by them, just as I would expect them to trust the government of free India to carry out their

[1] Not reproduced here; *vide* "Pertinent Questions", 12-7-1942.

part of the contract. British withdrawal, whenever it comes, will carry with it so much honour that everything to be done thereafter by either party will be done with the greatest goodwill and utmost sincerity. I hold that this solution of the difficulty presented is perfectly comprehensible and satisfactory.

29. As to secrecy, this is what I said on the 8th August in my Hindustani speech before the A.I.C.C. meeting:

> Nothing, however, should be done secretly. This is an open rebellion. In this struggle secrecy is a sin. A free man would not engage in a secret movement. It is likely that when you gain freedom, you will have a C.I.D. of your own, in spite of my advice to the contrary. But in the present struggle we have to work openly and to receive bullets in our chests, without running away. In a struggle of this character, all secrecy is sin and must be punctiliously avoided. See also Appendix I (C).

It is somewhat hard for a man who has avoided secrecy as a sin to be accused of it, especially when there is no evidence whatsoever for the charge.

30. The author proceeds:

> ... and it is no coincidence that at the same time as Mr. Gandhi was developing his "Quit India" theme in *Harijan,* he was also inveighing against any form of "scorched earth" policy (Mr. Gandhi's solicitude for the property, largely industrial property, be it noted, which it might have been necessary to deny to the enemy, contrasts strangely with his readiness to sacrifice countless numbers of Indians in non-violent resistance to the Japanese. The property must be saved; it is perhaps legitimate to ask—for whom?).

"No coincidence" is a gratuitous suggestion for which there is no proof. The suggestion behind the parenthetical gloss is evidently that I was more solicitous about the property of moneyed men than of the lives and property of the masses. This appears to me to be a wilful distortion of truth. I give the following quotations which show the contrary:

> As a war-resister my answer can only be one. I see neither bravery nor sacrifice in destroying life or property for offence or defence. I would far rather leave, if I must, my crops and homestead for the enemy to use than destroy them for the sake of preventing their use by him. There is reason, sacrifice and even bravery in so leaving my homestead and crops, if I do so not out of fear but because I refuse to regard anyone as my enemy—that is, out of humanitarian motive.
>
> But in India's case there is, too, a practical consideration. Unlike Russia's, India's masses have no national instinct developed in the sense that

Russia's have. India is not fighting. Her conquerors are *(Harijan,* 22-3-1942, p. 88).

There is no bravery in my poisoning my well or filling it in, so that my brother who is at war with me may not use the water. Let us assume that I am fighting him in the orthodox manner. Nor is there sacrifice in it, for it does not purify me, and sacrifice, as its root meaning implies, pre-supposes purity. Such destruction may be likened to cutting one's nose to spite one's face. Warriors of old had wholesome laws of war. Among the excluded things were poisoning wells and destroying food crops. But I do claim that there are bravery and sacrifice in my leaving my wells, crops and homestead intact, bravery in that I deliberately run the risk of the enemy feeding himself at my expense and pursuing me, and sacrifice in that the sentiment of leaving something for the enemy purifies and ennobles me.

My questioner has missed the conditional expression "If I must". I have imagined a state of things in which I am not prepared just now to die and, therefore, I want to retreat in an orderly manner in the hope of resisting under other and better auspices. The thing to consider here is not resistance but non-destruction of food crops and the like. Resistance, violent or non-violent, has to be well thought out. Thoughtless resistance will be regarded as bravado in military parlance, and violence or folly in the language of non-violence. Retreat itself is often a plan of resistance and may be a precursor of great bravery and sacrifice. Every retreat is not cowardice which implies fear to die. Of course, a brave man would more often die in violently or non-violently resisting the aggressor in the latter's attempt to oust him from his property. But he will be no less brave if wisdom dictates present retreat *(Harijan,* 12-4-1942, p. 109).

So far there is solicitude only for the poor man's property. There is no mention of industrial property. I have also given my reasons, which I still hold to be perfectly sound, for non-destruction of such property. I have found only one note in the issues of *Harijan* in my possession which refers to industrial property. It is as follows:

Suppose there are factories for grinding wheat or pressing oilseed, I should not destroy them. But munitions factories, yes;. . . Textile factories I would not destroy, and I would resist all such destruction *(Harijan,* 24-5-1942, p. 167).

The reason is obvious. Here too the solicitude is not for the owners, but for the masses who use food products and cloth produced in factories. It should also be remembered that I have all along written and even acted against both kinds of factories, in normal times, in the interests of village industries, my creed being to prefer the products of

hand-labour in which millions can be engaged, to those of factories in which only a few thousands or at best a few lakhs can be employed.

31. Mark, too, the last sentence in the penultimate paragraph of the draft resolution sent to Allahabad:

> But it can never be the Congress policy to destroy what belongs to or is of use to the masses.

It is incomprehensible how the author could, in the face of the foregoing, distort truth as he has done.

32. In the same paragraph from which I have quoted the parenthetical remark of the author, I find the following:

> We have, however, his own admission that he would not guarantee that non-violent action would keep the Japanese at bay; he refers indeed to any such hope as an "unwarranted supposition".

And this is cited to support the conclusion that in order to prevent India from becoming a battle-field between the Allied nations and Japan I was prepared "to concede to their (Japanese) demands". Let me quote where the phrase is taken from. In an article entitled "A Fallacy" in *Harijan* dated 5th July, 1942, I have dealt with the following question[1] addressed to me by a correspondent:

My reply[2] to this runs as follows:

The supposition referred to here is my correspondent's, namely, that the non-violent force created by my action which will be sufficient to force the English to withdraw, will be sufficiently strong to prevent Japanese occupation also and, therefore, I should not have resiled from my original proposition that the British power should withdraw their troops from India. I have shown the absurdity of such a supposition made for the sake of preventing the retention of British troops. My belief in the power of non-violence is unchangeable, but I cannot put it before the British in order to prevent their use of India as a base, if they consider it necessary, for dealing with the Japanese menace.

33. The author has further sought to strengthen his inference by quoting the following from my appeal to the Japanese:

> And we are in the unique position of having to resist an imperialism that we detest no less than yours (the Japanese) and Nazism.

The author has conveniently omitted the sentences which follow

[1] Not reproduced here; *Vide* "Question Box", 28-6-1942.
[2] *ibid*

and which instead of strengthening his inference would negative it altogether. These are the sentences:

> Our resistance to it (British imperialism) does not mean harm to the British people. We seek to convert them. Ours is an unarmed revolt against the British rule. An important party in the country is engaged in a deadly—but friendly—quarrel with the foreign rulers.
>
> But in this they need no aid from foreign powers. You have been gravely misinformed, as I know you are, that we have chosen this particular moment to embarrass the Allies when your attack against India is imminent. If we wanted to turn Britain's difficulty into our opportunity we should have done it as soon as the war broke out nearly three years ago. Our movement demanding the withdrawal of the British power from India should in no way be misunderstood. In fact, if we are to believe your reported anxiety for the independence of India, a recognition of that independence by Britain should leave you no excuse for any attack on India. Moreover the reported profession sorts ill with your ruthless aggression against China.
>
> I would ask you to make no mistake about the fact that you will be sadly disillusioned, if you believe that you will receive a willing welcome from India. The end and aim of the movement for British withdrawal is to prepare India by making her free for resisting all militarist and imperialist ambition, whether it is called British imperialism, German Nazism, or your pattern. If we do not, we shall have been ignoble spectators of the militarization of the world in spite of our belief that in non-violence we have the only solvent of the militarist spirit and ambition. Personally I fear that without declaring the independence of India the Allied powers will not be able to beat the Axis combination which has raised violence to the dignity of a religion. The Allies cannot beat you and your partners unless they beat you in your ruthless and skilled warfare. If they copy it, their declaration that they will save the world for democracy and individual freedom must come to nought. I feel that they can only gain strength to avoid copying your ruthlessness by declaring and recognizing *now* the freedom of India, and turning sullen India's forced co-operation into free India's voluntary co-operation.
>
> To Britain and the Allies we have appealed in the name of justice, in proof of their professions, and in their own self-interest. To you I appeal in the name of humanity. It is a marvel to me that you do not see that ruthless warfare is nobody's monopoly. If not the Allies, some other powers will certainly improve upon your method and beat you with your own weapon. Even if you win, you will leave no legacy to your people of which they would feel proud. They cannot take pride in a recital of cruel deeds, however skillfully achieved.
>
> Even if you win, it will not prove that you were in the right, it will

only prove that your power of destruction was greater. This applies obviously to the Allies, too, unless they perform *now* the just and righteous act of freeing India as an earnest, and promise of similarly freeing all other subject peoples in Asia and Africa.

Our appeal to Britain is coupled with the offer of free India's willingness to let the Allies retain their troops in India. The offer is made in order to prove that we do not in any way mean to harm the Allied cause, and in order to prevent you from being misled into feeling that you have but to step into the country that Britain has vacated. Needless to repeat that, if you cherish any such idea and will carry it out, we will not fail in resisting you with all the might that our country can muster. I address this appeal to you in the hope that our movement may even influence you and your partners in the right direction and deflect you and them from the course which is bound to end in your moral ruin and the reduction of human beings to robots.

The hope of your response to my appeal is much fainter than that of response from Britain. I know that the British are not devoid of a sense of justice and they know me. I do not know you enough to be able to judge. All I have read tells me that you listen to no appeal but to the sword. How I wish that you are cruelly misrepresented and that I shall touch the right chord in your heart! Anyway I have an undying faith in the responsiveness of human nature. On the strength of that faith I have conceived the impending movement in India, and it is that faith which has prompted this appeal to you. *(Harijan,* 26-7-1942, p. 240, *et seq.)*

I have given this long quotation because I see that it is a complete answer to the author's insinuations, as it is also an open gate to the whole of my mind regarding the movement contemplated in the resolution of 8th August last. But the author has many arrows in his quiver. For, in defence of his inference that I was prepared to "concede to their (Japanese) demands", he proceeds:

> Only in the grip of some dominant emotion would he (I) have contemplated such a capitulation. This emotion was, there seems little doubt, his desire to preserve India from the horrors of war.

In other words, I would exchange Japanese rule for British. My non-violence is made of sterner stuff. Only a jaundiced eye can read such an emotion in the face of the clearest possible writings of *Harijan* that I would face all the horrors of war in order to end the horror of horrors which British domination is. I am impatient of it because I am impatient of all domination. I am in "the grip" of only one "dominant emotion" and no other, that is, INDIA'S FREEDOM. The

author has admitted this in the same breath that he has charged me with an unworthy emotion. He has thus condemned himself out of his own mouth.

34. At page 14 of the indictment the author says:

> In conclusion, there are the famous words uttered by Mr. Gandhi at a Press conference[1] at Wardha, after the Working Committee had passed the resolution of July 14, which show clearly how even at that early stage he was fully determined on a final struggle:
>
> "There is no room left in the proposal for withdrawal or negotiation. There is no question of one more chance. After all it is an *open rebellion.*"
>
> There also lies the answer to those who have since accused Government of precipitating the crisis by the arrest of Mr. Gandhi and the Congress leaders, and have suggested that the period of grace referred to by Mr. Gandhi in his Bombay speech should have been utilized for negotiation: "There is no room left for withdrawal or negotiation," Mr. Gandhi had said a month earlier. Moreover the Wardha resolution merely threatened a mass movement, if the demands of Congress were not accepted. The Bombay resolution went further.
>
> It no longer *threatened* a movement with the delay that that might entail. It *sanctioned* the movement and if any further delay was intended, are there not at least good grounds for believing in the light of all that had been said, that it was to be used not for the purpose of negotiation but for putting the finishing touches to a plan to which its authors were already committed but which might not yet be completely ready to put into execution?

I shall presently show that the "famous words" attributed to me are partly a distortion and partly an interpolation not to be found in the authentic report of the Wardha interview as published in *Harijan* of 19th July, 1942. Let me quote in full the portion of the Wardha interview in which that part of the quotation which I claim is distorted appears in its correct form:

> "Do you hope that negotiations may be opened by the British Government?"
>
> "They may, but with whom they will do it I do not know. For, it is not a question of placating one party or other. For it is the unconditional withdrawal of the British power without reference to the wishes of any party, that is our demand. The demand is, therefore, based on its justice. Of course, it is possible that the British may negotiate a withdrawal. If they do, it will be a feather in their cap. Then it will cease to be a case for withdrawal. If the British see, however late, the wisdom of recognizing the independence of India, without

[1] *Vide* "Interview to the Press", 14-7-1942.

reference to the various parties, all things are possible. But the point I want to stress is this, viz., that THERE IS NO ROOM LEFT FOR NEGOTIATLONS IN THE PROPOSAL FOR WITHDRAWAL. (Capitals mine.) Either they recognize independence or they don't. After that recognition many things can follow. For, by that one single act the British representatives will have altered the face of the whole landscape and revived the hope of the people which has been frustrated times without number. Therefore whenever that great act is performed, on behalf of the British people, it will be a red-letter day in the history of India and the world. And, as I have said, it can materially affect the fortunes of war" *(Harijan*, 19-7-1942, p. 233).

The corresponding quotation in the indictment I reproduce below in the capital letters:

THERE IS NO ROOM LEFT IN THE PROPOSAL FOR WITHDRAWAL OR NEGOTIATION.

I suggest that in the context from which this is torn and distorted, it is entirely out of place. I was answering the question: "Do you hope that negotiations may be opened by the British Government?" As an answer to the question, the sentence, as it appears in *Harijan*, "there is no room left for negotiations in the proposal for withdrawal", is perfectly intelligible and harmonizes with the sentences preceding and succeeding.

35. The distorted sentence in the indictment has two others tacked on to it. They are:

There is no question of one more chance. After all it is an *open rebellion.*

The italicizing is the author's. The two sentences are not to be found anywhere in the report of the interview as it appears in *Harijan.* "There is no question of one more chance" can have no place in the paragraph about negotiations with my approach to them as revealed in my answer. As to "open rebellion", I have even at the Second Indian Round Table Conference used that expression coupled with the adjective non-violent. But it has no place anywhere in the interview.

36. I have taxed myself to know how the two sentences could have crept into the author's quotation. Fortunately, on 26th June, while this reply was being typed, there came *The Hindustan Times* file for which Shri Pyarelal had asked. In its issue of 15th July, 1942, there appears the following message:

WARDHAGANJ, *July 14*

"There is no room left in the proposal for withdrawal or negotion; either they recognize India's independence or they don't," said Mahatma Gandhi answering questions at a Press interview at Sevagram on the Congress

resolution. He emphasized that what he wanted was not the recognition of Indian independence on paper, but in action.

Asked if his movement would not hamper war efforts of the United Nations, Mahatma Gandhi said: "The movement is intended not only to help China but also to make common cause with the Allies."

On his attention being drawn to Mr. Amery's latest statement in the House of Commons, Mahatma Gandhi said: "I am very much afraid that we shall have the misfortune to listen to a repetition of that language in stronger terms, but that cannot possibly delay the pace of the people or the group that is determined to go its way."

Mahatma Gandhi added: "There is no question of one more chance. After all, it is an open rebellion."

Asked what form his movement would take, Mahatma Gandhi said: "The conception is that of a mass movement on the widest possible scale. It will include what is possible to include in a mass movement or what people are capable of doing. This will be a mass movement of a purely non-violent character."

Asked if he would court imprisonment this time, Mahatma Gandhi said: "It is too soft a thing. There is no such thing as courting imprisonment this time. My intention is to make it as short and swift as possible."—A.P.I.

37. This message is an eye-opener for me. I have often suffered from misreporting or coloured epitomes of my writings and speeches even to the point of being lynched[1]. This one, though not quite as bad, is bad enough. The above A.P. summary gives, if it does, the clue to the author's source for the misquotation and the additional sentences. If he used that source, the question arises why he went out of his way to use that doubtful and unauthorized source, when he had before him the authentic text of the full interview in *Harijan* of 19th July last. He has made a most liberal, though disjointed and biased use of the columns of *Harijan* for building up his case against me. At page 13 of the indictment he thus begins the charge culminating in the misquotation at page 14.

From this point onwards Mr. Gandhi's conception of the struggle developed rapidly. His writings on the subject are too lengthy to quote in full, but the following excerpts from *Harijan* illustrate the direction in which his mind was moving.

On the same page he has quoted passages from page 233 of *Harijan* from the report of the interview in question. I am, therefore,

[1] *Vide* "*An Autobiography*—Part II", Chapter XXV and "—Part II", Chapter III and IV.

entitled to conclude that the quotation under examination was taken from *Harijan*. It is manifest now that it was not. Why not? If he took the three sentences from the aforementioned A.P. report, why has he quoted them without asterisks between the sentences that appear apart in the A.P. report? I may not pursue the inquiry any further. It has pained me deeply. How the two sentences not found in the authentic text of the interview found place in the A.P. summary, I do not know. It is for the Government to inquire, if they will.

38. The author's quotation having been found wanting, the whole of his conclusions and inferences based upon it must fall to the ground. In my opinion, therefore, the Government does stand accused not only of "having precipitated" but of having invited a crisis by their premeditated coup. The elaborate preparations they made for all-India arrests were not made over-night. It is wrong to draw a distinction between the Wardha resolution and the Bombay one in the sense that the first only *threatened* and the second *sanctioned* the mass civil disobedience. The first only required ratification by the All-India Congress Committee but the effect of either was the same, i.e., both authorized me to lead and guide the movement, if negotiations failed. But the movement was not started by the resolution of 8th August last. Before I could function, they arrested not only me but principal Congressmen all over India. Thus it was not I but the Government who started the movement and gave it a shape which I could not have dreamt of giving, and which it never would have taken while I was conducting it. No doubt, it would have been "short and swift", not in the violent sense, as the author has insinuated, but in the non-violent sense, as I know it. The Government made it very short and very swift by their very violent action. Had they given me breathing-time, I would have sought an interview with the Viceroy and strained every nerve to show the reasonableness of the Congress demand. Thus there were no "grounds", good or bad for believing, as the author would have one believe, that the "period of grace" was to be used for "putting the finishing touches to a plan to which its authors were already committed but which might not yet be completely ready to put into execution". In order to sustain such a belief it has become necessary for the author to dismiss from consideration the whole of the proceedings of the Bombay meeting of the All-India Congress Committee and seven vital parts of its resolution—save the clause referring to the mass movement—and the very awkward word "non-violence" to which I shall come presently.

39. I give below extracts from my speeches and writings to show how eager and earnest I was to avoid conflict and achieve the purpose by negotiation and to show that the Congress aim never was to thwart the Allies in any way:

> . . . It would be churlish on our part if we said: 'We don't want to talk to anybody, and we will by our own strong hearts expel the British.' Then the Congress Committee won't be meeting; there would be no resolutions; and I should not be seeing Press representatives *(Harijan*, 26-7-1942, p. 243)[1].
>
> Q. Cannot there be any arbitration on the question of independence?
>
> A. No, not on the question of independence. It is possible only on questions on which sides may be taken. The outstanding question of independence should be treated as common cause. It is only then that I can conceive possibility of arbitration on the Indo-British question.... But if there is to be any arbitration—and I cannot logically say there should not, for, if I did, it would be an arrogation of complete justice on my side—it can be done only if India's independence is recognized *(Harijan*, 24-5-1942, p. 168)[2].
>
> AN ENGLISH CORRESPONDENT: . . . Would you advocate arbitration for the Indo-British problem?...
>
> A. Any day. I suggested long ago that this question could be decided by arbitration... *(Harijan*, 24-5-1942, p. 168).
>
> The actual struggle does not commence this very moment. You have merely placed certain powers in my hands. My first act will be to wait upon His Excellency the Viceroy and plead with him for the acceptance of the Congress demand. This may take two or three weeks. What are you to do in the mean while? I will tell you. There is the spinning-wheel.
>
> I had to struggle with the Maulana Saheb before it dawned upon him that in a non-violent struggle it had an abiding place. The fourteen-fold constructive programme is all there for you to carry out. But there is something more you have to do and it will give life to that programme. Every one of you should from this very moment consider yourself a free man or woman and even act as if you are free and no longer under the heel of this imperialism. This is no make-believe. You have to cultivate the spirit of freedom, before it comes physically. The chains of the slave are broken the moment he considers himself a free man. He will then tell his master: "I have been your slave all these days but I am no longer that now. You may kill me, but if you do not and if you release me from the bondage, I will ask for nothing more from you. For, henceforth instead of depending upon you I shall depend

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Foreign Correspondents", 15-7-1942.
[2] *Vide* "Interview to the Press", 16-5-1942.

upon God for food and clothing. God has given me the urge of freedom and therefore I deem myself a free man."

You may take it from me that I am not going to strike a bargain with the Viceroy for ministries and the like. I am not going to be satisfied with anything short of complete freedom. Maybe, he will propose the abolition of the salt tax, the drink evil, etc., but I will say, "Nothing less than freedom".

Here is a *mantra*—a short one—that I will give you. You may imprint it on your hearts, and let every breath of yours give expression to it. The *mantra is* this: "We shall do or die. We shall either free India, or die in the attempt. We shall not live to see the perpetuation of slavery." Every true Congressman or woman will join the struggle with an inflexible determination not to remain alive to see the country in bondage and slavery. Let that be your badge. Dismiss jails out of your consideration. If the Government leaves me free, I will spare you the trouble of filling the jails. I will not put on the Government the strain of maintaining a large number of prisoners at a time when it is in trouble. Let every man and woman live every moment of his or her life hereafter in the consciousness that he or she eats or lives for achieving freedom and will die, if need be, to attain that goal. Take a pledge with God and your own conscience as witness that you will no longer rest till freedom is achieved, and will be prepared to lay down your lives in the attempt to achieve it. He who loses his life shall gain it; he who will seek to save it shall lose it.[1] Freedom is not for the faint-hearted (From the concluding speech in Hindustani on 8th August before the A.I.C.C.).

Let me tell you at the outset that the struggle does not commence today. I have yet to go through much ceremonial, as I always do, and this time more than ever because the burden is so heavy. 1 have yet to continue to reason with those with whom I seem to have lost all credit for the time being (From the concluding speech in English on 8th August before the A.I.C.C.).

In the same connection, I give extracts from the utterances Maulana Saheb and others in the Appendix. *Vide* Appendices VI, VII and VIII.

40. At page 11 of the indictment the author says:

To summarize briefly, Mr. Gandhi did not believe that non-violence alone was capable of defending India against Japan. Nor had he any faith in the ability of the Allies to do so: "Britain," he stated in his draft Allahabad resolution, "is incapable of defending India." His "Quit India" move was intended to result in the withdrawal of the British Government to be succeeded

[1] *St. Matthew*, XVI. 25; the verse reads: "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it,"

by a problematical provisional government or, as Mr. Gandhi admitted to be possible, by anarchy; the Indian army was to be disbanded and Allied troops were to be allowed to operate only under the terms imposed by this provisional government, assisted by India's non-violent non-co-operation to Japan for which, as Mr. Gandhi had already admitted, there could be little scope with Allied troops operating in India. Finally, even if, in the face of the above arguments, it could be supposed that Mr. Gandhi and the Congress proposed to pin their faith on the ability of Allied troops to defend India, it should be noted that the former himself admitted that the ability of Allied troops to operate effectively would depend upon the formation of a suitable provisional government. Now, since this government was to be representative of all sections of Indian opinion, it is clear that neither Mr. Gandhi nor the Congress could legitimately commit it in advance to any particular course of action; they could not, that is to say, undertake that it would support the Allies in defending India against Japan. They could not in fact make any promise on behalf of this provisional government unless they intended that it should be dominated by Congress; the whole trend of Congress policy, however, coupled with the extravagant promises made in the Bombay A.I.C.C. resolution on behalf of this provisional government, leave little doubt that this *was* their intention—a view held, significantly, by the Muslim League and Muslims in general. You have then a situation in which the Allied troops would be dependent for support on a government dominated by a clique which has already been shown to be thoroughly defeatist in outlook, and whose leader had already expressed the intention of negotiating with Japan.

It is not the intention here to examine the third aim, the establishment of communal unity followed by the formation of a provisional government, at all closely. It has been suggested in the preceding paragraph that the Congress intended this government to be under their domination and a note has been made of the strength added to this view by the unity of Muslim opinion that the Congress move was aimed at establishing Congress-Hindu domination over India. It will suffice here to show, from Mr. Gandhi's own writings, the doubts that he entertained as to the feasibility of establishing any such government.

This brief summary is a perfect caricature of all I have said or written, and the Congress has stood for and expressed in the resolution of 8th August last. I hope I have shown in the foregoing pages how cruelly I have been misrepresented. If my argument has failed to carry conviction, I should be quite content to be judged on the strength of the quotations interspersed in the argument and those in the appendices hereto attached. As against the foregoing caricature, let

me give a summary of my views on the quotations referred to above.

I. I believe that non-violence alone is capable of defending India, not only against Japan but the whole world.

II. I do hold that Britain is incapable of defending India. She is not defending India today; she is defending herself and her interests in India and elsewhere. These are often contrary to India's.

III. "Quit India" move was intended to result in the withdrawal of British power, if possible, with simultaneous formation of a provisional government, consisting of members representing all the principal parties, if the withdrawal took place by the willing consent of the British Government. If, however, the withdrawal took place willy-nilly, there might be a period of anarchy.

IV. The Indian army would naturally be disbanded, being British creation—unless it forms part of Allied troops, or it transfers its allegiance to the free India government.

V. The Allied troops would remain under terms agreed to between the Allied powers and the free India government.

VI. If India became free, the free India government would tender co-operation by rendering such military aid as it could. But in the largest part of India where no military effort was possible, non-violent action will be taken by the masses of the people with the utmost enthusiasm.

41. Then the summary comes to the provisional government. As to this, let the Congress resolution itself speak. I give the relevant parts below:

> The A.I.C.C., therefore, repeats with all emphasis the demand for the withdrawal of the British power from India. On the declaration of India's independence, a provisional government will be formed and free India will become an ally of the United Nations, sharing with them in the trials and tribulations of the joint enterprise of the struggle for freedom. The provisional government can only be formed by the co-operation of the principal parties and groups in the country. It will thus be a composite government, representative of all important sections of the people of India. Its primary functions must be to defend India and resist aggression with all the armed as well as non-violent forces at its command, together with its allied powers, and to promote the well-being and progress of the workers in the fields and factories and elsewhere to whom essentially all power and authority must belong.The provisional government will evolve a scheme for a Constituent Assembly which will prepare a constitution for the government of

India acceptable to all sections of the people. This constitution, according to the Congress view, should be a federal one with the largest measure of autonomy for the federating units, and with the residuary powers vesting in these units. The future relations between India and the Allied nations will be adjusted by representatives of all these free countries conferring together for their mutual advantage and for their co-operation in the common task of resisting aggression. Freedom will enable India to resist aggression effectively with the people's united will and strength behind it. . . .

Lastly, whilst the A.I.C.C. has stated its own view of the future governance under free India, the A.I.C.C. wishes to make it quite clear to all concerned that by embarking on a mass struggle, it has no intention of gaining power for the Congress. The power, when it comes, will belong to the whole people of India.

I claim that there is nothing in this clause of the resolution that is "extravagant" or impracticable. The concluding sentence proves, in my opinion, the sincerity and non-party character of the Congress. And as there is no party in the country which is not wholly anti-Fascist, anti-Nazi and anti-Japan, it follows that a government formed by these parties is bound to become an enthusiastic champion of the Allied cause which by the recognition of India as a free State will truly become the cause of democracy.

42. As to communal unity, it has been a fundamental plank with the Congress from its commencement. Its president is a Muslim divine of world-wide repute, especially in the Muslim world. It has besides him three Muslims on the Working Committee. It is surprising that the author has summoned to his assistance the Muslim League opinion. The League can afford to doubt the sincerity of Congress professions and accuse the Congress of the desire of establishing a "Congress-Hindu domination". It ill becomes the all-powerful Government of India to take shelter under the Muslim League wing. This has a strong flavour of the old imperial *mantra*—divide and rule. League-Congress differences are a purely domestic question. They are bound to be adjusted when foreign domination ends, if they are not dissolved sooner.

43. The author winds up the second chapter as follows:

Whether the authors of the resolution genuinely believed that the Congress demand would, if accepted, help rather than hinder the cause of the United Nations, and intended that it should have that effect, depends on the answer to two questions: In the first place, could any body of men who

> honestly desired that result have deliberately called the country, if their way of achieving it was not accepted, to take part in a mass movement the declared object of which was to have precisely the opposite effect by paralysing the whole administration and the whole war effort? In the second place, bearing in mind that less than a year previously it had been proclaimed under Mr. Gandhi's order to be a 'sin' to help the war with men or money, can it be denied that these men saw their opportunity in Britain's danger and believed that the psychological moment for the enforcement of their political demands must be seized while the fate of the United Nations hung in the balance and before the tide of war turned—if it was ever going to turn—in their favour? The answer to these two questions is left to the reader.

I have to answer these two questions both as reader and accused. As to the first question, there is no necessary inconsistency between the genuine belief that an acceptance of the Congress demand would help the cause of the United Nations, i.e., of democracy all the world over and a mass movement (which moreover was merely contemplated) to paralyse the administration on non-acceptance of the Congress demand. It is submitted that the attempt "to paralyse the administration" on non-acceptance proves the genuineness of the demand. It sets the seal on its genuineness by Congressmen preparing to die in the attempt to paralyse an administration that thwarts their will to fight the combine against democracy. Thus it is the administration's dead set against the Congress which proves the hollowness of its claim that it is engaged in a fight for democracy. My firm belief is that the administration is daily proving its inefficiency for handling the war in the right manner. China is slowly pining away while the administration is playing at war-handling. In the attempt to suppress the Congress it has cut off the greatest source of help to the millions of China who are being ground down under the Japanese heel.

44. The second question hardly demands a separate answer. Congressmen who proclaimed a year ago under my "orders" that it is a "sin" to help the war with "men or money" need not be considered here, if I give different "orders". For me, I am as much opposed to all war today as I was before a year or more. I am but an individual. All Congressmen are not of that mind. The Congress will give up the policy of non-violence today, if it can achieve India's freedom by so doing. And I would have no compunction about inviting those who seek my advice to throw themselves heart and soul

into the effort to help themselves and thus deliver from bondage those nations that are wedded to democracy. If that effort involves military training, the people will be free to take it, leaving me and those who think with me to our own non-violence. I did this very thing during the Boer War and during the last war. I was a "good boy" then, because my action harmonized with the British Government's wishes. Today I am the arch enemy, not because I have changed but because the British Government which is being tried in the balance is being found wanting. I helped before, because I believed in British good faith. I appear to be hindering today because the British Government will not act up to the faith that was reposed in them. My answer to the two questions propounded by the author may sound harsh, but it is truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth as God lets me see it.

45. The gravamen, however, of the charges[1] against me is that "every reference to non-violence in the forecasts of the forms the movement would take, made by Mr. Gandhi and his Congress disciples, and in the post-arrest programmes and instructions is nothing more than a pious hope or at best a mild warning which was known to have no practical value." It is also described as mere "lip service".

46. The author gives no proof to show that it (the warning) "was known to have no practical value". If the references to non-violence are removed from my writings and my utterances in order to condemn me and my "Congress disciples", the removal would be on a par with the omission of 'not's from the commandments and quoting them in support of killing, stealing, etc. The author in robbing me of the one thing I live by and live for robs me of all I possess. The evidence given in support of dismissing references to non-violence as "valueless" mostly consists of innuendoes. "It was to be a struggle, a fight to the finish in which foreign domination was to be ended, cost what it may."[2] In a non-violent struggle the cost has always to be paid by the fighters in their own blood. "It was to be an unarmed revolt, short and swift."

[1] Given in the concluding chapter; *vide* Appendix "Concluding Chapter of *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances*, 1942-43", after March 1943.

[2] The passage under reference appears in Chapter III. It reads: "The general character of the movement contemplated by Mr. Gandhi emerges clearly from the foregoing extracts. It was to be a struggle, a fight to the finish, in which foreign domination must be ended, cost what it may; it was to be an unarmed revolt, short and

The prefix 'un' in "unarmed", unless it be regarded as "valueless", gives "short" and "swift" an ennobling meaning. For, to make the struggle "short and swift" prisons have to be avoided as too soft a thing and death to be hugged as a true friend enabling the fighters to affect opponents' heart much quicker than mere jail-going can. Mention by me of "conflagration" meant *giving* of lives in thousands or more, if need be. The author has called it a "grimly accurate forecast". This has a *post-facto* meaning unintended by the author in that a heavy toll of lives was taken by way of reprisals by the authorities, and an orgy of unmentionable excesses let loose upon the people by the soldiery and the police, if the Press reports and statements by responsible public men are to be believed. "Mr. Gandhi was prepared to risk the occurrence of riots." It is true that I was prepared to take such a risk. Any big movement whether violent or non-violent involves certain risks. But non-violent running of risks means a special method, a special handling. I would have strained every nerve to avoid riots. Moreover my first act would have been to woo the Viceroy. Till then no question of running any risks could arise. As it was, the Government would not let me run the risk. They put me in prison instead! What the mass movement was to include and how the risk was to be taken, if at all, the author could not know, for the movement was never started. Nor had any instructions been issued by me.

47. The author complains of my "making full use of existing grievances". The use began even before the birth of the Congress. Ithas never ceased. How could it, so long as the foreign domination, of which they were a part, lasted?

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domination must be ended, cost what it may; it was to be an unarmed revolt, short and swift, sure to plunge the country into a conflagration a grimly accurate forecast!—in which Mr. Gandhi was prepared to risk the occurrence of riots, in which he was prepared to go to the extremest limit, including, if necessary, the calling of a general strike; the struggle was to include everything that a "non-violent" mass movement could do, including strikes and the stoppage of railways, and possibly interference with British troop movements; and full use was to be made of existing grievances against the British; former Congress methods such as courting imprisonment were to be eschewed as too soft for the present occasion; finally every man and woman was to consider himself free and act for himself. These last words, or at least their sense, find a place in the resolution itself and any body of men that makes such an appeal to its followers can hardly disclaim responsibility for anything that may follow" (*The Indian Annual Register, 1942*, Vol. II, pp. 184 5).

48. “Finally every man and woman was to consider himself free and act for himself. These last words or at least their sense finds a place in the resolution itself.” This last sentence is a specimen of *suppressio veri.* Here is the relevant extract from the Congress resolution:

> They must remember that non-violence is the basis of this movement. A time may come when it may not be possible to issue instructions or for instructions to reach our people, and when no Congress Committees can function. When this happens, every man and woman who is participating in this movement must function for himself or herself within the four corners of the general instructions issued. Every Indian who desires freedom and strives for it must be his own guide, urging him on along the hard road where there is no resting place and which leads ultimately to the independence and deliverance of India.

There is nothing new or startling in this. It is practical wisdom. Men and women must become their own leaders when their trusted guides are removed from them, or when their organization is declared illegal or otherwise ceases to function. True there were formerly nominal “dictators” appointed. This was more to court arrest than to guide followers by being in touch with them. For, touch was not possible except secretly. This time not prison but death was to be sought in the prosecution of the movement. Therefore everyone was to become his own leader to act within the four corners of the square foundation—non-violence. The omission of the two conditions for everyone becoming his or her own guide was an unpardonable suppression of relevant truth.

49. The author then proceeds to consider whether the movement contemplated by me could, by its very nature, be non-violent and further whether “Mr. Gandhi (I) intended that it should be so or hoped that it would remain so”. I have already shown that the movement never having been started, nobody could say what I had contemplated or hoped unless my intention or my hope could be justly deduced from my writings. Let me, however, observe how the author has arrived at this conclusion. His first proof is that I have employed military terms in connection with a movement claimed to be wholly non-violent. I have employed such language from the commencement of my experiment in South Africa. I could more easily show the contrast between my move and the ordinary ones by using identical phraseology, so far as possible, and coupling it with non-violence. Throughout my experience of satyagraha since 1908, I cannot recall an instance in which people were misled by me by my

use of military phraseology. And, indeed, satyagraha being a "moral equivalent of war", the use of such terminology is but natural. Probably all of us have used at some time or another or are at least familiar with, expressions such as "sword of the spirit", "dynamite of truth", "shield and buckler of patience", "assaulting the citadel of truth", or "wrestling with God". Yet no one has ever seen anything strange or wrong in such use. Who can be ignorant of the use of military phraseology by the Salvation Army? That body has taken it over in its entirety, and yet I have not known anyone having mistaken the Salvation Army with its colonels and captains for a military organization trained to the use of deadly weapons of destruction.

50. I must deny that "it has been shown that Mr. Gandhi had little faith in the effectiveness of non-violence to resist Japanese aggression". What I have said is that the maximum effectiveness cannot be shown when it has to work side by side with violence. It is true that Maulana Saheb and Pandit Nehru have doubts about the efficacy of non-violence to withstand aggression but they have ample faith in non-violent action for fighting against British domination. I do believe that both British and Japanese imperialisms are equally to be avoided. But I have already shown by quoting from *Harijan* that it is easier to cope with the evil that is, than the one that may come. *Vide* Appendix II (D)[1].

51. I admit at once that there is "a doubtful proportion of full believers" in my "theory of non-violence".[2] But it should not be forgotten that I have also said that for my movement I do not at all need believers in the theory of non-violence; full or imperfect. It is

[1] Not reproduced here. *Vide* "Question Box", 12-6-1942.

[2] The passage under reference reads: "Again he had, as shown above, no illusions as to the very doubtful proportion of Indians who were full believers in his theory of non-violence. Yet he proposed embarking on a movement in which he expressed the hope that all classes and communities would join, and in which he directed every man and woman to consider themselves free and to think and act for themselves. Contrast this with his previous movement, the 'satyagraha campaign' of 1940-41, in which, in order to maintain the desired standard of non-violence, he had been forced to limit participation to specially selected satyagrahis, who were even then only allowed to commit a special formal offence; remember too that he had before him the example of his previous movements, each professedly non-violent, yet each giving rise to the most hideous violence. The certainty that his movement could not remain non-violent is plain enough and, if further indication were wanted, it is supplied in the extracts, from Mr Gandhi's own writings quoted in the preceding paragraphs, which make it clear that even if violence and rioting occurred during the movement, this would not deter him, that he was prepared to go to the extremest limit" *(The Indian Annual Register, 1942,* Vol. II, p. 185).

enough if people carry out the rules of non-violent action. *Vide* Appendix IV (A).

52. Now comes the author's most glaring lapse of memory or misrepresentation in the paragraph under discussion. He says:

> . . . remember too that he had before him the example of his previous movements, each professedly non-violent, yet each giving rise to the most hideous violence.

I have before me a list of 20 civil resistance movements beginning with the very first in South Africa. I do recall instances in which popular frenzy had broken out resulting in regrettable murders. These instances of mob violence, though bad enough, were but a flea-bite in proportion to the vast size of this country—as big as Europe less Russia territorially and bigger numerically. Had violence been the Congress policy, secretly or openly, or had the Congress discipline been less strict, it is simple enough to realize that the violence, instead of being a flea-bite, would have been more like a volcanic eruption. But every time such outbreaks took place, the most energetic measures were taken by the whole Congress organization to deal with them. On several occasions I had myself resorted to fasting. All this produced a salutary effect on the popular mind. And there were also movements which were singularly free from violence. Thus the South African satyagraha, which was a mass movement, and similar movements in Champaran, Kheda, Bardoli and Borsad—not to mention others in which collective civil disobedience on a wide scale was offered were wholly free from any outburst of violence. In all these the people had conformed to the rules laid down for their observance. The author has thus gone against history in making the sweeping statement that I had before me the "example of previous movements each professedly non-violent, yet each giving rise to the most hideous violence". My own experience being quite to the contrary, I have not the shadow of a doubt that if the Government had not by their summary action unnecessarily provoked the people beyond endurance, there never would have been any violence. The members of the Working Committee were anxious that violence on the part of the people should be avoided, not from any philanthropic motive, but from the conviction borne in upon them from the experience of hard facts, that violence by the people could not usher in independence. The education that the people had received through the Congress was wholly non-violent, before 1920,

because of the leaders' belief in constitutional agitation and faith in British promises and declarations, and since 1920, because of the belief, in the first instance induced by me and then enforced by experience, that mere constitutional agitation, though it had served up to a point, could never bring in independence, and that regard being had to the condition of India, non-violent action was the only sanction through which independence could be attained in the quickest manner possible. The accumulated experience of the past thirty years, the first eight of which were in South Africa, fills me with the greatest hope that in the adoption of non-violence lies the future of India and the world. It is the most harmless and yet equally effective way of dealing with the political and economic wrongs of the downtrodden portion of humanity. I have known from early youth that non-violence is not a cloistered virtue to be practised by the individual for his peace and final salvation, but it is a rule of conduct for society if it is to live consistently with human dignity and make progress towards the attainment of peace for which it has been yearning for ages past. It is, therefore, sad to think that a Government, the most powerful in the world, should have belittled the doctrine and put its votaries, however imperfect they may be, out of action. It is my firm opinion that thereby they have injured the cause of universal peace and the Allied nations.

53. For the author "the certainty" was "that his (my) movement could not remain non-violent". For me "the certainty" was quite the contrary, if the movement had remained in the hands of those who could guide the people.

54. It is also now "clear" what I meant when I said I was prepared to go to the extremest limit, that is, that I would continue the non-violent movement even though the Government might succeed in provoking violence. Hitherto I have stayed my hand when people have been so provoked. This time I ran the risk because the risk of remaining supine in the face of the greatest world conflagration know to history was infinitely greater. If non-violence be the greatest force in the world, it must prove itself during the crisis.

55. The final proof given by the author of my non-violence being "mere lip service" consists of the following caricature of my writing in defence of the Polish bravery:

> In other words in any fight the weaker of the two combatants may employ as violent measures as he likes or is able, and may still be considered to be fighting non-violently; or to put it in another way, violence when employed

against superior odds automatically becomes non-violence. Surely a very convenient theory for the rebels in an "unarmed revolt".

I claim the writing quoted by the author does not warrant the misleading deduction. How can I possibly lay down a proposition against everyday experience? There is rarely a fight among absolute equals. One party is always weaker than the other. The illustrations I have given[1], taken together, can lead to one conclusion only, namely, that the weaker party does not make any preparation for offering violence, for the simple reason that the intention is absent, but when he is suddenly attacked 'he uses unconsciously, even without wishing to do so, any weapon that comes his way. The first illustration chosen by me is that of a man who having a sword uses it single-handed against a horde of dacoits. The second is that of a woman using her nails and teeth or even a dagger in defence of her honour. She acts spontaneously. And the third is that of a mouse fighting a cat with its sharp teeth. These three illustrations were specially chosen by me in order to avoid any illegitimate deduction being drawn in defence of offering studied violence. One infallible test is that such a person is never successful in the sense of overpowering the aggressor. He or she dies and saves his or her honour rather than surrender to the demands of the aggressor. I was so guarded in the use of my language that I described[2] the defence of the Poles against overwhelming numbers as "almost non-violence". In further elucidation of this, see discussion with a Polish friend. *Vide* Appendix IV (N).

56. Here it will be apposite to give extracts from my speeches bearing on non-violence on the 7th and 8th August last before the All-India Congress Committee at Bombay:

> Let me, however, hasten to assure you that I am the same Gandhi as I was in 1920. I have not changed in any fundamental respect. I attach the same importance to non-violence that I did then. If at all, my emphasis on it has grown stronger. There is no real contradiction between the present resolution and my previous writings and utterances. . . . occasions like the present do not occur in everybody's and but rarely in anybody's life. I want you to know and I feel that there is nothing but purest ahimsa in all that I am saying and doing today. The draft resolution of the Working Committee is based on ahimsa, the contemplated struggle similarly has its roots in ahimsa. If, therefore, there is any among you who has lost faith in ahimsa or is wearied of it, let him not

[1] In a paragraph preceding the one quoted in the text above

[2] *Vide* "Notes", 18-9-1939.

vote for this resolution. . . .

Let me explain my position clearly. God has vouchsafed to me a priceless gift in the weapon of ahimsa. I and my ahimsa are on our trial today. If, in the present crisis when the earth is being scorched by the flames of *himsa* and crying for deliverance, I failed to make use of the God-given talent, God will not forgive me and I shall be adjudged unworthy of the great gift. I must act now. I may not hesitate and merely look on when Russia and China are threatened. . . .

Ours is not a drive for power but purely a non-violent fight for India's independence. In a violent struggle, a successful general has been often known to effect a military coup and set up a dictatorship. But under the Congress scheme of things, essentially non-violent as it is, there can be no room for dictatorship. A non-violent soldier of freedom will covet nothing for himself, he fights only for the freedom of his country. The Congress is unconcerned as to who will rule when freedom is attained. The power, when it comes, will belong to the people of India, and it will be for them to decide to whom it should be entrusted. Maybe, that the reins will be placed in the hands of the Parsis, for instance—as I would love to see happen or they may be handed to some others whose names are not heard in the Congress today. It will not be for you then to object saying: 'This community is microscopic. That party did not play its due part in the freedom's struggle; why should it have all the power?' Ever since its inception the Congress has kept itself meticulously free of the communal taint. It has thought always in terms of the whole nation and acted accordingly. . . .

I know how imperfect our ahimsa is and how far away we are still from the ideal, but in ahimsa there is no final failure or defeat. I have faith, therefore, that if, in spite of our shortcomings, the big thing does happen, it will be because God wanted to help us by crowning with success our silent, unremitting *sadhana* (striving) for the last twenty-two years. . . . I believe that in the history of the world there has not been a more genuinely democratic struggle for freedom than ours. I read Carlyle's *History of the French Revolution* while I was in prison, and Pandit Jawaharlal has told me something about the Russian revolution. But it is my conviction that inasmuch as these struggles were fought with the weapon of violence they failed to realize the democratic ideal. In the democracy which I have envisaged, a democracy established by non-violence, there will be equal freedom for all. Everybody will be his own master. It is to join a struggle for such democracy that I invite you today. Once you realize this you will forget the differences between Hindus and Muslims and think of yourselves as Indians only, engaged in the common struggle for independence. (From the Hindustani speech on 7th

August before the All-India Congress Committee)

After describing the personal relations with the Viceroy, the late Deenabandhu C. F. Andrews and the Metropolitan of Calcutta, I proceeded:

> With the background of this consciousness, I want to declare to the world that whatever may be said to the contrary and although I may have today forfeited the regard of many friends in the West and even the trust of some—even for their love and friendship—I must not suppress the voice within. . . . That something in me, which has never deceived me, tells me that I shall have to fight on even though the whole world be against me. . . .
>
> I hold that there can be no real freedom without non-violence. This is not the language of a proud or an arrogant man but of an earnest seeker after truth. It is this fundamental truth with which the Congress has been experimenting for the last twenty-two years. Unconsciously, from its very inception, the Congress has based its policy on non-violence known in those early days as the constitutional method. Dadabhoy and Pherozeshah Mehta carried Congress India with them. They were lovers of Congress. They were, therefore, also its masters. But above all they were true servants of the nation. They became rebels but they never countenanced murder, secrecy and the like. Subsequent generations have added to this heritage and expanded their political philosophy into the principle and policy of non-violent non-co-operation which the Congress has adopted. It is not my claim that every Congressman conforms to the highest tenet of non-violence even as a policy. I know that there are several black sheep, but I am taking all on trust without subjecting them to cross-examination. I trust, because I have faith in the innate goodness of human nature which enables people instinctively to perceive the truth and carries them through crisis. It is this fundamental trust which rules my life and enables me to hope that India as a whole will vindicate the principle of non-violence during the coming struggle. But even if my trust is found to be misplaced I shall not flinch. I shall not abandon my faith. I shall only say: "The lesson is not yet fully learnt. I must try again." (From the English speech on 8th August)
>
> The Congress has no sanction but the moral for enforcing its decisions. I believe that true democracy can only be an outcome of non-violence. The structure of a world federation can be raised only on a foundation of non-violence, and violence will have to be totally given up in world affairs. Solution of the Hindu-Muslim question, too, cannot be achieved by resort to violence. If Hindus tyrannize over Mussalmans, with what face will they talk of a world federation? It is for the same reason that the Congress has agreed to submit all differences to an impartial tribunal and to abide by its decisions.

In satyagraha there is no place for fraud or falsehood. Fraud and falsehood are today stalking the world. I cannot be a helpless witness of such a situation. I have travelled all over India as perhaps nobody in the present age has. The voiceless millions of the land saw in me their friend and representative, and I identified myself with them to the extent it was possible for a human being to do so. I saw trust in their eyes, which I now want to turn to good account in fighting this Empire which is built on and upheld by untruth and violence. However tight the Empire's control of us, we must get out of it. I know how imperfect an instrument I am for this great task, and how imperfect is the material with which I have to work. But how can I remain silent at this supreme hour and hide my light under a bushel? Shall I ask the Japanese to tarry a while? If today I sit quiet and inactive in the midst of this conflagration which is enveloping the whole world, God will take me to task for not making use of the treasure He has given me. But for this conflagration I should have asked you to wait a little longer, as I have done all these years. The situation has now become intolerable, and the Congress has no other course left for it. (From the concluding speech in Hindustani on 8th August)

57. Having given proof against me to show that my professions about non-violence were "valueless", the author turns to my colleagues in the Congress High Command to observe how they interpreted my "views to their Congress followers and to the masses". The author sees objection in Pandit Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Shri Shankerrao Deo having singled out the student community for attention. Attention paid to the student community and peasantry was no new thing introduced for the first time, for the sake of the struggle, in the history of the Congress. As early as 1920, students were specially invited to join the non-co-operation movement and several thousand had responded to the call by suspending their studies. I do not know what happened after the August arrests, in the Banaras Hindu University. But, assuming that some students belonging to it went astray, that is no ground for associating Pandit Nehru with their acts. Positive proof would be necessary to establish such connection. Overwhelming proof can be produced in support of the contention that his faith in non-violence, for the purpose of achieving swaraj, is inferior to nobody's. The same thing can be said about his exhortation to the *kisans*[1] of the United Provinces. There is, too, nothing in favour of violence in the other leaders' speeches so far as one can judge from the extracts given in the indictment.

[1] Farmers

58. Having dealt with the leaders' speeches, the author comes to "detailed instructions regarding the conduct of the movement in existence before the All-India Congress Committee meeting in Bombay". The "first example" has been "chosen" from *Harijan* of August 9. The article is entitled "Ways of Non-violent Non-co-operation". As it happens, it is a discussion in connection with the threatened invasion from Japan. Thus the article opens:

> Ever since 1920 we are familiar with some of the ways of offering non-violent non-co-operation. These included boycott of all Government institutions and services, and extended to the non-payment of taxes. They were directed against a foreign Government in occupation of the country for years. The ways of non-co-operation to adopt against a new foreign invader would naturally differ in details. It would as Gandhiji has said extend to the refusal of food or water. All non-co-operation calculated to make the functioning of the enemy impossible has to be resorted to within the limits of non-violence.

Then the writer of the article (Mahadev Desai) has given samples of non-violent non-co-operation offered elsewhere than in India. They are not examples of non-violence consciously exercised. That the whole article was written to show what could be non-violently done to repel the invader, is clear from the final paragraph:

> What one has to remember is that in war repression would be ten times as severe as was resorted to in France, but if there is the will to suffer, the resourcefulness to devise ways and means on the lines indicated in these different instances of passive resistance, and above all the determination to drive out the invader, cost what it may, victory is certain. The vastness of our country, far from being a disadvantage, may be an advantage, as the invader would find it difficult to cope with resistance on a thousand and one fronts.

The theme of the article is not racial but anti-invader.

59. The other example given by the author is an extract from an article by Shri K. G. Mashruwala in *Harijan* of 23rd August, 1942. Shri Mashruwala is a valued co-worker. He carries non-violence to an extreme which baffles those who know him intimately. Nevertheless I do not propose to defend the paragraph quoted. He has guarded himself by saying that it represents his personal opinion only. He must have heard me debating the question whether interference with bridges, rails and the like could be classified as non-violent. I had always questioned the practicability of the interference being non-violent. Even if such interference could conceivably be

non-violent, as I hold it can be, it is dangerous to put it before the masses who cannot be expected to do such things non-violently. Nor would I expect the classification of the British power in the same category as the Japanese for the purposes of the movement.

60. Having allowed myself to criticize the opinion of a respected colleague, I wish to say that Shri Mashruwala's opinion is no evidence of violent intention. At best it is an error of judgment which is much more likely in a novel subject like the applicability of ahimsa practised in all walks of life by masses of mankind. Great generals and statesmen have been known before now to have committed errors of judgment without losing caste or being accused of evil intentions.

61. Then comes the Andhra circular. I must regard it as forbidden ground for me inasmuch as I knew nothing about it before my arrest. Therefore I can only comment on it with reserve. Subject to that caution I consider the document to be harmless on the whole. This is its governing clause:

> The whole movement is based on non-violence. No act which contravenes these instructions should ever be undertaken. All acts of disobedience committed should be overt never covert (open but not under cover).

The parenthesis is in the original, The following warning is also embodied in the circular:

> Ninety-nine chances out of hundred are for the inauguration of this movement by Mahatmaji at an early date, possibly a few hours after the next All-India Congress Committee meeting at Bombay. The District Congress Committees should be alert and begin to act immediately, but please also take note that no movement should be launched or any overt act done till Mahatmaji decides. After all he may decide otherwise and you will be responsible for a great unwarranted mistake. Be ready, organize at once, be alert, but by no means act.

As to the body of the circular, I could not make myself responsible for some of the items. But I must refuse to judge a thing which I cannot correct, especially in the absence of what the Committee has to say on them, assuming, of course, that the circular is an authentic document. I miss in the indictment the text of the alleged "written amendment" "raising" the ban on the removal of rails.

62. Attention is then drawn to the fifth appendix showing how my mind was working in the direction of violence under the "valueless" cover of non-violence, as the author would say. The appendix gives what purport to be All-India Congress Committee

instructions with extracts from my writings in parallel columns. I have tried to study that appendix. I have nothing to withdraw from my writings. And I contend that there is not a trace of violence in the instructions alleged to be from the All-India Congress Committee.

63. Independently of the argument in the indictment, I must now say something about non-violence as I know it. Its spread in all walks of life has been my mission from early youth. This covers a period of very nearly sixty years. It was adopted at my instance as a policy by the Congress in 1920. In its very nature it was not meant to be paraded before the world, but it was accepted as a means indispensable for the attainment of swaraj. Congressmen saw at an early date that its mere adoption on paper had no value. It was of use only in so far as it was put into practice individually and collectively. It was of no more use as a badge than a rifle in the hands of a person who did not know how to use it effectively on due occasion. Therefore if non-violence has raised the Congress prestige and popularity since its adoption, it has done so in exact proportion to its use, even as the power which the rifle gives to its possessor is in exact proportion to its effective use. The comparison cannot be carried very far. Thus while violence is directed towards the injury, including the destruction of the aggressor and is successful only when it is stronger than that of the opponent, non-violent action can be taken in respect of an opponent, however powerfully organized for violence. Violence *per se* of the weak has never been known to succeed against the stronger in violence. Success of non-violent action of the very weak is a daily occurrence. I make bold to say that I have applied to the present struggle the principles of non-violence as enunciated here. Nothing could be farther from my thought than injury to the person or property of those who are manning and regulating the machinery of British imperialism as it operates in India. My non-violence draws a fundamental distinction between the man and his machine. I would destroy a harmful machine without compunction, never the man. And this rule I have enforced in my dealings with my nearest relatives as also friends and associates, not without considerable success.

64. After disposing of non-violence the author has summarized what he calls the "ostensible aims" of the Wardha resolution[1] of July 14 and the Bombay resolution[2] of August 8 as follows:

[1] *Vide* "Resolutions passed by Congress working Committee", 14-7-1942.
[2] *ibid*

Three main *ostensible* aims are common to both the Wardha resolution of July 14 (Appendix III-1) and the Bombay resolution of August 8 (Appendix III-2). These are:

1. To remove foreign domination over India.

2. To check the growing ill-will against Britain, with its danger of passive acceptance by the masses of aggression against India; to build up a spirit of resistance to aggression among Indians; and by granting India's millions immediate freedom to release that energy and enthusiasm which alone can enable India to play an effective part in her own defence and in the war as a whole.

3. To achieve unity, by the removal of the foreign power with its policy of divide and rule, which will be followed by the formation of a provisional government representative of all sections of the Indian people.

Three further aims appeared for the first time in the Bombay resolution:

4. To bring all subject and oppressed humanity to the side of the United Nations, thus giving these Nations the moral and spiritual leadership of the world.

5. To assist Asiatic nations under foreign domination to regain their freedom and to ensure that they are not again placed under the rule of any colonial power.

6. To bring about world federation, which would ensure the disbanding of national armies, navies and air forces, and the pooling of the world's resources for the common good of all.

He says that "the genuineness of the first of these aims is undeniable. The freedom of India, in whatever terms it may have been expressed, has long been the main goal of the Congress and it has been shown above how this aim coincides with one of the main motives underlying the 'Quit India' move." Strange as it appears to me, notwithstanding this admission of the genuineness of the first aim, he ridicules the others in some shape or form. I contend that all the others follow from the first. Thus if the foreign domination goes by agreement, ill-will against Britain is automatically turned into goodwill, and the energy of millions is set free on behalf of the Allied cause. Similarly communal unity must follow as day follows night when the night of foreign domination is gone. If nearly four hundred million people become free, other portions of oppressed humanity must also become free and naturally the Allied nations being privy to this freedom, the moral and spiritual leadership of the world comes to them without seeking. The fifth aim is included in the fourth, and the sixth is but a repetition of the aim of the whole of humanity which it

must attain or perish without. It is true that the three last aims were added in Bombay. That surely is not a matter to cavil at. Even if they were a result of criticism, what is there wrong about it? No democratic organization can afford to defy criticism, for it has to live upon the fresh air of criticism. As a matter of fact, however, world federation and rights of non-white people are no new ideas for Congressmen. They have been mentioned in Congress resolutions on other occasions. The paragraph about world federation found place in the August resolution at the instance of a European friend, and about non-white people at mine.

65. As to the disturbances that took place after the arrests of 9th August, I have carefully read Chapters IV and V of the indictment detailing them as also the appendices purporting to be instructions from various bodies. I must refuse to judge these one-sided statements or unverified documents. As to the so-called instructions, I can say that, so far as they are contrary to non-violence, they can never have my approval.

66. One searches in vain in the indictment for a detailed account of the measures taken by the Government by way of reprisals. And if one is to believe what has been allowed to appear in the Press about these measures, the so-called misdeeds of exasperated people, whether they can be described as Congressmen or not, pale into insignificance.

67. Now for the responsibility for the happenings after the wholesale arrests of 9th August last. The most natural way to look at the disturbances is that they broke out after the arrests which were, therefore, the cause. The indictment has been framed for the sole purpose, as the title shows, of fastening the responsibility on the Congress. The argument seems to me to be this. First I and then the Congress had been setting the stage for a mass movement since April 1942 when I first bruited the idea of British withdrawal popularly known as "Quit India". Mass movement was bound to result in the outbreak of violence. I and the Congressmen who had accepted my guidance had intended that violence should take place. Leaders had been preaching it. Hence the disturbances were to take place in any case. The arrest, therefore, merely anticipated the violent movement and nipped it in the bud. This sums up the reasoning in the indictment.

68. I have endeavoured to show that no special stage for a mass movement was set or contemplated because of my proposal for British

withdrawal, that violence was never contemplated by me or any Congress leader, that I had declared that, if Congressmen indulged in an orgy of violence, they might not find me alive in their midst, that the mass movement was never started by me, the sole charge for starting it was vested in me, that I had contemplated negotiations with the Government, that I was to start the movement only on failure of negotiations and that I had envisaged an interval of "two or three weeks" for the negotiations. It is, therefore, clear that but for the arrests no such disturbances would have taken place as happened on 9th August last and after. I would have strained every nerve first to make the negotiations successful and secondly, if I had failed, to avoid disturbances. The Government would have been no less able to suppress them than they were in August last. Only they would have had some case against me and the Congress. It was the duty of the Government, before taking action, to study the speeches of the Congress leaders and myself at the All-India Congress Committee meeting.

69. The Congress leaders were desirous that the movement should remain non-violent, if only because they knew that no violent movement in the existing circumstances could possibly succeed when matched against a most powerfully equipped Government. Whatever violence was committed by people, whether Congressmen or others, was, therefore, committed in spite of the leaders' wishes. If it is held otherwise by the Government, it should be proved beyond doubt before an impartial tribunal. But why seek to shift the responsibility when the cause is patent? The Government action in enforcing India-wide arrests was so violent that the populace which was in sympathy with the Congress lost self-control. The loss of self-control cannot imply Congress complicity but it does imply that the power of endurance of human nature has limitations. If Government action was in excess of the endurance of human nature, it and, therefore, its authors were responsible for the explosions that followed. But the Government may assert that the arrests were necessary. If so, why should the Government fight shy of taking the responsibility for the consequences of their action? The wonder to me is that the Government at all need to justify their action when they know their will is law.

70. Let me analyse the system of Government in vogue here. A population numbering nearly four hundred millions of people,

belonging to an ancient civilization, are being ruled by a British representative called Viceroy and Governor-General aided by 250 officials called Collectors and supported by a strong British garrison with a large number of Indian soldiers, trained by British officers, and carefully isolated from the populace. The Viceroy enjoys within his own sphere powers much larger than the King of England. Such powers, as far as I know, are not enjoyed by any other person in the world. The Collectors are miniature Viceroys in their own spheres. They are first and foremost, as their name implies, collectors of revenue in their own districts and have magisterial powers. They can requisition the military to their aid when they think necessary. They are also political agents for the small chieftains within their jurisdiction, and they are in the place of overlords to them.

71. Contrast this with the Congress, the most truly democratic organization in the world—not because of its numerical strength, but because its only sanction deliberately adopted is non-violence. From its inception the Congress has been a democratic body, seeking to represent all India. However feeble and imperfect the attempt may have been, the Congress has never in its history of now nearly sixty years shifted its gaze from the Pole Star of India's freedom. It has progressed from stage to stage in its march towards democracy in the truest term. If it is said, as it has been, that the Congress learnt the spirit of democracy from Great Britain, no Congressman would care to deny the statement, though it must be added that the roots were to be found in the old panchayat system. It can never brook Nazi, Fascist or Japanese domination. An organization whose very breath is freedom, and which pits itself against the most powerfully organized imperialism, will perish to a man in the attempt to resist all domination. So long as it clings to non-violence it will be uncrushable and unconquerable.

72. What can be the cause of the extraordinary resentment against the Congress into which the Government have betrayed themselves? I have never known them before to exhibit so much irritation. Does the cause lie in the "Quit India" formula? Disturbances cannot be the cause, because the resentment began to show itself soon after the publication of my proposal for British withdrawal. It crystallized into the wholesale arrests of 9th August last which were prearranged and merely awaited the passing of the resolution of 8th August. Yet there was nothing novel in the resolution

save the "Quit India" formula. Mass movements have been known to be on the Congress programme ever since 1920. But freedom seemed elusive. Now the Hindu-Miuslim disunity, now the pledges to the Princes, now the interests of the scheduled classes, now the vested interests of Europeans barred the gateway to freedom. Divide and rule was an inexhaustible well. The sands of time were running out. Rivers of blood were flowing fast among the warring nations, and politically-minded India was looking on helplessly—the masses were inert. Hence the cry of "Quit India". It gave body to the freedom movement. The cry was unanswerable. Those who were anxious to play their part in the world crisis found vent in that cry of anguish. Its root is in the will to save democracy from Nazism as well as imperialism. For, satisfaction of the Congress demand meant assurance of victory of democracy over any combination of reactionary forces and deliverance of China and Russia from the menace of Japan and Germany respectively. But the demand irritated the Government. They distrusted those who were associated with the demand and thereby they themselves became the greatest impediment to the war effort. It is wrong, therefore, to accuse the Congress of hindering war effort. Congress activity up to the night of 8th August was confined to resolutions only. The dawn of the 9th saw the Congress imprisoned. What followed was a direct result of the Government action.

73. The resentment over what I hold to be a just and honourable desire confirms the popular suspicion about the *bonafides* of the Government professions about democracy and freedom after the war. If the Government were sincere, they would have welcomed the offer of help made by the Congress. Congressmen who have been fighting for India's liberty for over half a century would have flocked to the Allied banner as one man for the defence of India's freedom newly won. But the Government did not wish to treat India as an equal partner and ally. They put out of action those who made this demand. Some of them are even being hounded as if they were dangerous criminals. I have in mind Shri Jayaprakash Narayan and others like him. A reward of Rs. 5,000, now doubled, has been promised to the informant who would show his hiding place. I have taken Shri Jayaprakash Narayan purposely as my illustration because, as he very rightly says, he differs from me on several fundamentals. But my differences, great as they are, do not blind me to his indomitable courage and his sacrifice of all that a man holds dear for the love of

his country. I have read his manifesto which is given as an appendix to the indictment. Though I cannot subscribe to some of the views expressed therein, it breathes nothing but burning patriotism and his impatience of foreign domination. It is a virtue of which any country would be proud.

74. So much for politically-minded Congressmen. In the constructive department of the Congress also the Government have deprived themselves of the best talent in the country for the organization of hand-industries which are so vital a need in war time. The All-India Spinners' Association, which is responsible for having distributed without fuss over three crores of rupees as wages among the poor villagers whom no one had reached and whose labour was being wasted, has come in for a heavy hand. Its President Shri Jajuji[1] and many of his co-workers have been imprisoned without trial and without any known reason. Khadi centres which are trust property have been confiscated to the Government. I do not know the law under which such property can be confiscated. And the tragedy is that the confiscators are themselves unable to run these centres which were producing and distributing cloth. Khadi and charkhas have been reported to have been burnt by the authorities. The All-India Village Industries' Association worked by Kumarappa brothers[2] has also received much the same treatment. Shri Vinoba Bhave is an institution by himself. Many workers were incessantly doing creative labour under his guidance. Most men and women of constructive organization are not political workers. They are devoted to constructive work of the highest merit. And if some of them have found it necessary to appear at all on the political field, it is a matter for the Government to reflect upon. To put such organizations and their supervisors under duress is, in my opinion, an unpardonable interference with war effort. The self-satisfaction with which the highest officials proclaim that limitless men and material are being had from this unhappy land is truly amazing while the inhabitants of India are suffering from shortage of food, clothing and many other necessaries of life. I make bold to say that this scarcity would have been largely minimized, if not altogether obviated, if, instead of imprisoning Congress workers throughout India, the Government had utilized their services. The Government had two striking illustrations of the efficient working by the Congress agency—I mean the handling of the disastrous Bihar earthquake[3] by Congressmen under

[1] Shrikrishnadas Jaju

[2] J. C. Kumarappa and Bharatan Kumarappa

[3] In 1934

Dr. Rajendra Prasad and of the equally disastrous flood[1] in Gujarat under Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

75. This brings me to the end of my reply to the indictment. It has become much longer than I had wanted to make it. It has cost me and my co-workers in the camp no end of labour. Although I must ask, in fairness to myself and the cause I represent, for the publication of this reply, my chief purpose is to carry conviction to the Government that the indictment contains no proof of the allegations against the Congress and me. The Government know that the public in India seem to have distrusted the indictment and regarded it as designed for foreign propaganda. Men like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and the Rt. Hon. Shri M. R. Jayakar have given their opinion that the "evidence" produced in the indictment is of no judicial value. Therefore the Government should withdraw the indictment. I see from the preface to the indictment that the Government have in their possession "valuable evidence", presumably incriminating the detenus. I submit that if the Government cannot safely divulge the evidence, they should discharge the detenus and bring to book those who, after discharge, may be caught in the act of committing or promoting crimes. With limitless power at their back, they need not resort to unsustainable accusations.

76. It will be noticed that although the indictment is a Government publication, I have only criticized its unknown author in the fond hope that the individual members composing the Government of India have not read the originals on which it is based. For, I am of opinion that no one having a knowledge of the originals could possibly endorse the inferences and innuendoes with which it is replete.

77. Lastly I wish to state that if I have anywhere erred in analysing the indictment, and if my error is pointed out to me, I shall gladly correct myself. I have simply written as I have felt.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.][1]

It is requested that the appendices should be regarded as an integral part of the reply.

M. K.G.

[1] In 1927

APPENDIX I

BRITISH WITHDRAWAL

In its earlier stage, Mr. Gandhi's "Quit India" move was meant and was widely interpreted as a proposal for the physical withdrawal from India of the British, and of all British and Allied troops (Indictment p. 2).

(A) CONFUSION[1]

(B) OUT OF TOUCH[2]

(C) FREE INDIA CAN HELP BEST

Answering to the question of a Press correspondent whether his present policy as revealed by his writings did not vitiate his own declaration that he was a friend of China, Gandhiji said:

"My answer is an emphatic 'No'. I remain the passionate friend of China that I have always claimed to be. I know what the loss of freedom means. Therefore I could not but be in sympathy with China which is my next-door neighbour in distress. And, if I believed in violence and if I could influence India, I would put in motion every force at my command on behalf of China to save her liberty. In making, therefore, the suggestion which I have made about withdrawal of British power, I have not lost sight of China. But, because I have China in mind, I feel that the only effective way for India to help China is to persuade Great Britain to free India and let a free India make her full contribution to the war effort. Instead of being sullen and discontented, India free will be a mighty force for the good of mankind in general. It is true that the solution I have presented is a heroic solution beyond the ken of Englishmen. But, being a true friend of Britain and China and Russia, I must not suppress the solution which I believe to be eminently practical and probably the only one in order to save the situation, and in order to convert the war into a power for good instead of being what it is, a peril to humanity.

[1] This postscript is reproduced from *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government*, p. 91, where it precedes the letter. According to *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, "the cover of Mr. Gandhi's original reply contained the request". The postscript and appendices are not available in the photostat source. Gandhiji's articles, speeches or statements, reproduced *in toto* as appendices, are not included here as they appear in their appropriate chronological order in *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*.

[2] For the text under these titles, *vide* "Notes", 18-5-1942 and "Question Box", 23-5-1942.

I AM NOT PRO-JAPANESE

"Pandit Nehru told me yesterday that he heard people in Lahore and Delhi saying that I have turned pro-Japanese. I could only laugh at the suggestion for, if I am sincere in my passion for freedom, I could not consciously or unconsciously take a step which will involve India in the position of merely changing masters. If, in spite of my resistance to the Japanese menace with my whole soul, the mishap occurs, of which I have never denied the possibility, then the blame would rest wholly on British shoulders. I have no shadow of doubt about it. I have made no suggestion, which, even from the military standpoint, is fraught with the slightest danger to British power or to Chinese. It is obvious that India is not allowed to pull her weight in favour of China. If British power is withdrawn from India in an orderly manner, Britain will be relieved of the burden of keeping the peace in India and at the same time gain in a free India an ally not in the cause of the Empire—because she would have renounced *in toto* all her imperial designs—but in a defence, not pretended but wholly real, of human freedom. That I assert and that only is the burden of my recent writings, and I shall continue to do so, so long as I am allowed by the British power."

NO SECRECY

"Now what about your plan; you are reported to have matured plans for launching some big offensive?" was the next question. Gandhiji replied:

"Well, I have never believed in secrecy nor do I do so now. There are certainly many plans floating in my brain. But just now I merely allow them to float in my brain. My first task is to educate the public mind in India and world opinion, in so far as I am allowed to do so. And when I have finished that process to my satisfaction, I may have to do something. That something may be very big, if the Congress is with me and the people are with me. But British authority will have a full knowledge of anything I may wish to do, before I enforce it. Remember, I have yet to see the Maulana Saheb. My talks with Pandit Nehru are yet unfinished. I may say that they were wholly of a friendly nature and we have come nearer to each other even with the unfinished talk of yesterday. Naturally I want to carry the whole of the Congress with me, if I can, as I want to carry the whole of India with me. For, my conception of freedom is no narrow conception. It is co-extensive with the freedom of man in all his majesty. I shall, therefore, take no step without the fullest deliberation."

TO RESIST SLAVE-DRIVERS

"How are we to help in driving away the British from here?" was the first question that was asked.

"We don't want to drive away the British people from here. It is the British rulers whom we are asking quietly to withdraw. It is the British domination that we want to vanish from our land. We have no quarrel with the Englishmen, many of whom are my friends, but we want the rule to end altogether, for that is the poison that corrupts all it touches, that is the obstacle that stops all progress.

"And what is needed for this are two things the knowledge that the domination is a greater evil than any other evil we can think of, and that we have to get rid of it no matter what it may cost. The knowledge is so necessary because the British exercise their power and domination in all kinds of subtle and insidious ways that it is sometimes difficult to know that we are bound hand and foot. Next is the will to throw off the chains. We have simply to cultivate the will not to do the rulers' biddings. Is it very difficult? How can one be compelled to accept slavery? I simply refuse to do the master's bidding. He may torture me, break my bones to atoms and even kill me. He will then have my dead body, not my obedience. Ultimately, therefore, it is I who am the victor and not he, for he has failed in getting me to do what he wanted done.

"That is what I am trying to impress both on those whom I want to retire and those who are bound in their chains. I am going to use all my powers to do so, but not violence—simply because I have no faith in it....

"But I am going to be patient, I am not going to hurry or hustle you. I am busy preparing the atmosphere and whatever I will do I shall do having in view the limitations of our people. I know that neither the rulers nor the public opinion understand the implications of my proposal."

"But," asked a friend, "have we not to see that the remedy may not be worse than the disease? There will be, in the course of resistance, in spite of all our will to prevent them, clashes and resultant anarchy. May not that anarchy be worse than the present anarchy which you have called ordered anarchy?"

"That is a very proper question. That is the consideration that has weighed with me all these 22 years. I waited and waited until the country should develop the non-violent strength necessary to throw off the foreign yoke. But my attitude has now undergone a change. I feel that I cannot afford to wait. If I continue to wait, I might have to wait till doomsday. For the preparation that I have prayed for and worked for may never come, and in the mean time I may be enveloped and overwhelmed by the flames that threaten all of us. That is why I have decided that,

even at certain risks which are obviously involved, I must ask the people to resist the slavery. But even that readiness, let me assure you, depends on the non-violent man's unflinching faith. All I am conscious of is that there is not a trace of violence in the remotest corner of my being, and my conscious pursuit of ahimsa for the last 50 years cannot possibly fail me at this crisis. The people have not my ahimsa; but mine should help them. There is ordered anarchy around and about us. I am sure that the anarchy that may result because of the British withdrawal or their refusal to listen to us, and our decision to defy their authority, will in no way be worse than the present anarchy. After all, those who are unarmed cannot produce a frightful amount of violence or anarchy, and I have a faith that out of that anarchy may arise pure non-violence. But to be passive witness of the terrible violence that is going on in the name of resisting a possible foreign aggression is a thing I cannot stand. It is a thing that would make me ashamed of my ahimsa. It is made of sterner stuff" (*Harijan*, 7-6-1942, pp. 183-4).

(D) WHY NON-VIOLENT NON-CO-OPERATION

"Supposing England retires from India for strategic purposes, and apart from my proposal—as they had to do in Burma—what would happen? What would India do?"

"That is exactly what we have come to learn from you. We would certainly like to know that."

"Well, therein comes my non-violence. For, we have no weapons, mind you, we have assumed that the Commander-in-Chief of the United American and British armies has decided that India is no good as a base and that they should withdraw to some other base and concentrate the allied forces there. We can't help it. We have then to depend on what strength we have. We have no army, no military resources, no military skill either, worth the name, and non-violence is the only thing we can fall back upon. Now in theory I can prove to you that our non-violent resistance can be wholly successful. We need not kill a single Japanese, we simply give them no quarter."

"Supposing Britain decides to fight to the last man in India, would not your non-violent non-co-operation help the Japanese?" asked Mr. Chaplin reverting to the first question he had asked.

"If you mean non-co-operation with the British, you would be right. We have not come to that stage. I do not want to help the Japanese—not even for freeing India. India during the past fifty or more years of her struggle for freedom has learnt the lesson of patriotism and of not bowing to *any* foreign power. But, when the British are offering violent battle, our non-violent battle—our non-violent

activity—would be neutralized. Those who believe in armed resistance and in helping the British military are and will be helping them. Mr. Amery says he is getting all the men and money they need, and he is right. For the Congress—a poor organization representing the millions of the poor of India has not been able to collect in years what they have collected in a day by way of what I would say "so-called" voluntary subscriptions. This Congress can only render non-violent assistance. But let me tell you, if you do not know it, that the British do not want it, they don't set any store by it. But whether they do it or not, violent and non-violent resistance cannot go together. So India's non-violence can at best take the form of silence—not obstructing the British forces, certainly not helping the Japanese."

"But not helping the British?"

"Don't you see non-violence cannot give any other aid?"

"But the railways, I hope, you won't stop; the service, too, will be, I hope, allowed to function."

"They will be allowed to function, as they are being allowed today."

"Aren't you then helping the British by leaving the services and the railways alone?" asked Mr. Belldon

"We are indeed. That is our non-embarrassment policy."

A BAD JOB

"Don't you think Indian people and leaders have some duty to help accelerate the process (process of withdrawal)?"

"You mean by dotting India with rebellions everywhere? No, my invitation to the British to withdraw is not an idle one. It has to be made good by the sacrifice of the inviters. Public opinion has got to act, and it can act only non-violently."

"Is the possibility of strikes precluded?" wondered Mr. Belldon.

"No," said Gandhiji, "strikes can be and have been non-violent. If railways are worked only to strengthen the British hold on India they need not be assisted. But before I decide to take any energetic measures, I must endeavour to show the reasonableness of my demand. The moment it is complied with, India instead of being sullen becomes an ally. Remember I am more interested than the British in keeping the Japanese out. For Britain's defeat in Indian waters may mean *only the loss of India* but if Japan wins, India loses *everything*.

THE CRUCIAL TEST

"If you regard the American troops as an imposition, would you regard the American Technical Mission also in the same light?" was the next question.

"A tree is judged by its fruit," said Gandhiji succinctly. "I have met Dr. Grady, we have had cordial talks. I have no prejudice against Americans. I have hundreds, if not thousands of friends in America. The Technical Mission may have nothing but goodwill for India. But my point is that all the things that are happening are not happening at the invitation or wish of India. Therefore they are all suspect. We cannot look upon them with philosophic calmness, for the simple reason that we cannot close our eyes, as I have said, to the things that are daily happening in front of our eyes. Areas are being vacated and turned into military camps, people being thrown on their own resources. Hundreds, if not thousands, on their way from Burma perished without food and drink, and the wretched discrimination stared even these miserable people in the face. One route for the whites, another for the blacks. Provision of food and shelter for the whites, none for the blacks! And discrimination even on their arrival in India! India is being ground down to dust and humiliated, even before the Japanese advent, not for India's defence—and no one knows for whose defence. And so one fine morning I came to the decision to make this honest demand: 'For Heaven's sake leave India alone. Let us breathe the air of freedom. It may choke us, suffocate us, as it did the slaves on their emancipation. But I want the present sham to end.' "

"But it is the British troops you have in mind, not the American?"

"It does not make for me the slightest difference, the whole policy is one and indivisible."

"Is there any hope of Britain listening?"

"I will not die without that hope. And if there is a long lease of life for me, I may even see it fulfilled. For there is nothing unpractical in the proposal, no insuperable difficulties about it. Let me add that if Britain is not willing to do so whole-heartedly, Britain does not deserve to win" (*Harijan*, 14-6-1942, pp. 185-7).

(E) IMPLICATIONS OF WITHDRAWAL[1]

(F) ITS MEANING

(G) ONLY IF THEY WITHDRAW

(H) DELIBERATE DISTORTION

(K) A POSER

There was obviously a gap (about Allied troops) in my first writing. I filled it in as soon as it was discovered by one of my numerous interviewers.

Non-violence demands the strictest honesty cost what it may. The public have therefore to suffer my weakness, if weakness it may be called. I could not be guilty of

[1] For the text under these titles, *vide* "Interview to *The News Chronicle*", 14-5-1942, "Question Box", 12-6-1942, "Interview to *The Hindu*", 11-6-1942 and "Interview to Reuter", beffore 21-6-1942. The items under 'E' and 'H' appear as interviews. Titles under (I) and (J) are not given in the source.

asking the Allies to take a step which would involve certain defeat. I could not guarantee fool-proof non-violent action to keep the Japanese at bay. Abrupt withdrawal of the Allied troops might result in Japan's occupation of India, and China's sure fall. I had not the remotest idea of any such catastrophe resulting from my action. Therefore I feel that if in spite of the acceptance of my proposal, it is deemed necessary by the Allies to remain in India to prevent Japanese occupation, they should do so, subject to such conditions as may be prescribed by the national government that may be set up after the British withdrawal *(Harijan,* 28-6-1942, pp. 204-5).

(L) A FALLACY[1]

(M) OH ! THE TROOPS

I have to pay a heavy price for having drawn up an entrancing picture of a free India without a single British soldier. Friends are confounded now to discover that my proposal admits of the presence of British and even American troops under any circumstance at all....

It has been pointed out that not to consent to the Allied troops remaining in India during the period of the war is to hand over India and China to Japan, and to ensure the defeat of the Allied powers. This could never have been contemplated by me. The only answer, therefore, to give was to suffer the presence of the troops but under circumstances the reverse of the existing....

My proposal presupposes shedding of all fear and distrust. If we have confidence in ourselves, we need neither fear nor suspect the presence of Allied troops.

It will be most assuredly an event of the century and may be a turning-point in the war, if Britain can honestly perform the act of renouncing India with all that the renunciation would mean....

As I have said already in the previous issue of *Harijan,* the British acceptance of my proposal may itself lead to a most honourable peace and hence automatic withdrawal of the troops....

It (non-violence) will express itself in her ambassadors going to the Axis powers not to beg for peace but to show them the futility of war for achieving an honourable end. This can only be done if and when Britain sheds the gains of perhaps the most organized and successful violence the world has seen.

All this may not come to pass. I do not mind. It is worth fighting for, it is worth staking all that the nation has *(Harijan,* 5-7-1942, p. 212).

(N) FRIENDS' AMBULANCE UNIT IN INDIA

"We were wondering if it was auspicious for an English party to arrive in India,

[1] For the text under this title, *vide* "Question Box", 28-6-1942.

when you were asking the British to withdraw," said Prof. Alexander with a kindly smile. "Agatha suggested that we might have a party from India to work with us, and make of our party a mixed party."

"My first writing," said Gandhiji, "did, I am afraid, give rise to that kind of fear. That was because I had not given expression to the whole idea in my mind. It is not my nature to work out and produce a finished thing all at once. The moment a question was asked me, I made it clear that no physical withdrawal of every Englishman was meant, I meant the withdrawal of the British domination. And so every Englishman in India can convert himself into a friend and remain here. The condition is that every Englishman has to dismount from the horse he is riding and cease to be monarch of all he surveys and identify himself with the humblest of us. The moment he does it, he will be recognized as a member of the family. His role as a member of the ruling caste must end for ever. And so when I said 'withdraw' I meant 'withdraw as masters'. The demand for withdrawal had another implication. You have to withdraw, irrespective of the wishes of anybody here. You do not need the consent of a slave to give him freedom. The slave often hugs the chains of slavery. They become part of his flesh. You have to tear them asunder and throw them away. You must withdraw because it is your duty to do so, and not wait for the unanimous consent of all the sections or groups in India.

"There is thus no question of the moment being inauspicious for you. On the contrary, if you can assimilate my proposal, it is the most auspicious moment for you to arrive in India. You will meet many Englishmen here. They may have entirely misunderstood what I have said, and you have to explain to them what exactly I want them to do.

" . . . And it is well perhaps that your mission begins with me. Begin it with finding out what exactly is at the back of my mind by putting to me all the questions that may be agitating you."

That put both the friends at ease and prompted them to try to understand the whole of the background of Gandhiji's mind. And in this connection I may mention a curious but very significant fact. When Sir Stafford Cripps's mission was announced, Prof. Horace Alexander and Miss Agatha Harrison had sent Gandhiji a cable reminding him of the phrase Gandhiji himself had used, viz., "Andrews's legacy" meaning thereby that in memory of Andrews the best Englishmen and the best Indians should come together to bring about a permanent understanding between England and India. 'Here,' their cable seemed to say in effect, 'is one of the best Englishmen coming to India. You had better settle with him, as there is a great opportunity.'

It was in reply to this cable that Gandhiji wrote a long letter[1] to Prof. Horace Alexander soon after the failure of the Cripps mission—a letter in which he gave

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Horace Alexander", 22-4-1942.

expression for the first time to the demand for British withdrawal. He had not discussed it with any soul on earth, but as he was writing the letter the thing that was, so to say, cooking in his mind ever since his return from Delhi came to his pen. "Sir Stafford," he said in that letter, "has come and gone. How nice it would have been if he had not come with that dismal mission. How could the British Government at this critical hour have behaved as they did? Why should they have sent proposals without discussing them with the principal parties? Not one single party was satisfied. In trying to please all, the proposals pleased none. I talked to him frankly but as a friend, if for nothing else, for Andrews's sake, I told him that I was speaking to him with Andrews's spirit as my witness. I made suggestions, but all to no avail. As usual they were not practical. I had not wanted to go. I had nothing to say, being 'anti-all wars'. I went because he was anxious to see me. All this I mention in order to give you the background. I was not present throughout the negotiations with the Working Committee. I came away. You know the result. It was inevitable. The whole thing has left a bad taste in the mouth."

And now comes the key paragraph: "My firm opinion is that the British should leave India now in an orderly manner and not run the risk that they did in Singapore, Malaya and Burma. That act would mean courage of a high order, confession of human limitations, and right-doing by India."

Gandhiji's talk was almost a commentary on the parts of the letter I have quoted: "You will see that I have used the words 'orderly withdrawal'. I had, when I used the phrase, Burma and Singapore in mind. It was a disorderly withdrawal from there. For they left Burma and Malaya neither to God, nor to anarchy, but to the Japanese. 'Here,' I say, 'don't repeat that story here. Don't leave India to Japan, but leave India to Indians in an orderly manner,' '' said he, concluding the talk. The whole talk, even as the letter I have reproduced, was inspired by the spirit of C.F.A., and the idea of asking the British to withdraw was conceived in the friendliest spirit, as it was done with a remembrance of C.F.A. and all his noble work. As Gandhiji said, "So you have now to do what Andrews did—understand me, pitilessly cross-examine me, and then if you are convinced, be my messenger." Prof. Alexander felt overwhelmed and said: "We dare not assume his mantle. We can but try" (Harijan, 5-7-1942, pp. 214-5).

(O) IF HARIJAN IS SUPPRESSED[1]

(P) THE WARDHA INTERVIEW

A MASS MOVEMENT

"Is it possible," asked the A.P. (America) representative, "for you to tell us the

[1] For the text under this title, *vide* "If *Harijan* is Suppressed", 12-7-1942.

things you might do after the All-India Congress Committee meets and adopts the W.C. Resolution?"

"Is not that question a little premature? Supposing the All-India Congress Committee vetoes the resolution, the whole thing wears a different aspect. But you may know that it will be a mass movement of a strictly non-violent character and then you can fill in the details. It will include all that a mass movement can include."

"Will you include closing of liquor shops and foreign-cloth shops?"

"It will depend on the circumstances. I don't want rioting as a direct result. If, in spite of all precautions, rioting does take place, it cannot be helped."

IF IMPRISONED?

"Will you court imprisonment?"

"I am not going to court imprisonment. The struggle does not invoive courting imprisonment. It is too soft a thing. We had, no doubt, made it a business to court imprisonment up to now, but there will be no such thing this time. My intention is to make the thing as short and swift as possible."

Quick came another question: "Will you resort to fasting if sent to jail?"

"It is not my desire this time, as I have said, to court imprisonment. But if I am dragged into jail, it is difficult to say what I may do. But I can fast, as I have fasted before now, though I should try to avoid such an extreme step so far as possible".

NEGOTIATIONS?

"After the recognition of free India it starts to function at once?"

"Yes, from the very next moment. For, independence will not be on paper but in action. But your next legitimate question would be—'How will free India function?' And because there was that knot, I said: 'Leave India to God or anarchy.' But in practice what will happen is this—if withdrawal takes place in perfect goodwill, the change will be effected without the slightest disturbance. People would have to come to their own without disturbance. Wise people from among the responsible sections will come together and will evolve a provisional government. Then there will be no anarchy, no interruption, and a crowning glory."

SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

"Can you visualize the composition of the provisional government?"

"I do not need to do so. But I am clear that it won't be a party government. All parties—including the Congress—will automatically dissolve. They may function later and when they do they may function complementary to one another, each looking to the other in order to grow. Then, as I have said, all unreality disappears like mist before the morning sun—we don't know how, though we witness the

phenomenon every day."

"But," asked two of the Indian correspondents rather impatiently, "looking to all their past record will the British have the sense to come to terms?"

"Why not? They are human beings and I have never discounted the possibility of human nature's upward growth, and no other nation had ever had to face a freedom movement based not principally but wholly on non-violence." . . .

"May not your movement hamper the efforts of the Allies in China?"

"No, since the movement is intended to make common cause with the Allies, it should not hamper the Allied effort."

"But if there is no withdrawal, then disturbances are bound to happen?"

"You see ill-will is already there. It will grow apace. Immediately the movement is started, the ill-will may be changed into goodwill if the British people respond. But even if they don't respond, when people make an effort to free themselves from a foreign yoke, ill-will needs no other opening. It takes a healthy turn instead of the bad turn that it has today."...

FREE INDIA'S CONTRIBUTION

"You desire to have India's freedom in order to help the Allies?" was Mr. Edgar Snow's question, and the last question: "Will free India carry out total mobilization and adopt the methods of total war?"

"That question is legitimate," said Gandhiji, "but it is beyond me; I can only say free India will make common cause with the Allies. I cannot say that free India will take part in militarism or choose to go the non-violent way. But I can say without hesitation that, if I can turn India to non-violence, I will certainly do so. If I succeed in converting 40 crores of people to non-violence, it will be a tremendous thing, a wonderful transformation".

"But you won't oppose a militarist effort by civil disobedience?" Mr. Snow pertinently asked.

"I have no such desire. I cannot oppose free India's will with civil disobedience, it would be wrong" *(Harijan*, 19-7-1942, pp. 233-4).

(Q) AMERICAN OPINION MAY BE ANTAGONIZED

. . . "Speaking as an American," said Mr. Steele, "I can say that the reaction of many Americans would be that a movement for freedom may be unwise at this moment, for it would lead to complications in India which may be prejudicial to the

efficient prosecution of the war."

"This belief is born of ignorance," replied Gandhiji. "What possible internal complication can take place, if the British Government declare today that India is absolutely independent? It would be, in my opinion, the least risk the Allies could take on behalf of the war effort. I am open to conviction, if anybody could convince me that, in the midst of war, the British Government cannot declare India free without jeopardizing the war effort, I should like to hear the argument. I have not as yet heard any cogent one."

OPEN TO CONVICTION

"If you were convinced, would you call off the campaign?"

"Of course. My complaint is that all these good critics talk *at* me, swear *at* me, but never condescend to talk *to* me. . . ."

. . . "If India were made of four hundred million Gandhis," interrupted Mr. Steele.

"Here," said Gandhiji, "we come to brass tacks. That means India is not sufficiently non-violent. If we had been, there would have been no parties, and there would be no Japanese attack. I know non-violence is limited in both numbers and quality, but deficient as it is in both these respects, it has made a great impression and infused life into the people which was absent before. The awakening that showed itself on April-6, 1919, was a matter of surprise to every Indian. I cannot today account for the response we then had from every nook and corner of the country where no public worker had ever been. We had not then gone among the masses, we did not know we could go and speak to them."

PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

"Can you give me an idea who would take the lead in forming a provisional government—you, Congress or the Muslim League?"

"The Muslim League certainly can; the Congress can. If everything went right, it would be a combined leadership. No *one* party would take the lead."

"Would it be within the present constitutional structure?"

"The constitution will be dead," said Gandhiji. "The Government of India Act of 1935 is dead. The I.C.S. would have to go and it might be anarchy; but there *need* be no anarchy, if the British withdraw with goodwill. *Free India government* would set up a constitution suited to Indian genius, evolved without dictation from outside. . . . The dictating factor will not be an outside one, but wisdom, and I believe there will be abundant wisdom among us."

"Would the Viceroy cease to exist as such? "

"We shall be friends *even* then, but on a par, and I have no doubt that Lord Linlithgow will welcome the day when he will be one of the people."

WHY NOT TODAY?

"Why can't all this be done today, without the British withdrawal?" said Mr. Emeny returning to the charge.

"The answer is simple. Why can't a prisoner do a thing which a free man can do? You may not have been behind prison bars, but I have been and I know. Imprisonment means civil death, and I suggest to you that the whole of India is civilly dead. The very breath is controlled by British power. Then there is another experience that you lack. You have not been a member of a nation that has been under subjection for several centuries. Our *habit* has been that we can never be free. You know the case of Shri Subhas Chandra Bose, a man of great self-sacrifice, who might have had a distinguished career in the Indian Civil Service, but who is now an exile because he cannot possibly tolerate this helpless condition and feels that he must seek the help of Germany and Japan" . . . (*Harijan*, 26-7-1942, pp. 242-3).

(R) TO AMERICAN FRIENDS

. . . I claim to be a votary of truth from my childhood. It was the most natural thing to me. My prayerful search gave me the revealing maxim "Truth is God" instead of the usual one "God is Truth". That maxim enables me to see God face to face as it were. I feel Him pervade every fibre of my being. With this Truth as witness between you and me, I assert that I would not have asked my country to invite Great Britain to withdraw her rule over India, irrespective of any demand to the contrary, if I had not seen at once that for the sake of Great Britain and the Allied cause it was necessary for British boldly to perform the duty of freeing India from bondage. Without this essential act of tardy justice, Britain could not justify her position before the unmurmuring world conscience, which is there nevertheless. Singapore, Malaya and Burma taught me that the disaster must not be repeated in India. I make bold to say that it cannot be averted unless Britain trusts the people of India to use their liberty in favour of the Allied cause. By that supreme act of justice Britain would have taken away all cause for the seething discontent of India. She will turn the growing ill-will into active goodwill. I submit that it is worth all the battleships and airships that your wonder-working engineers and financial resources can produce.

. . . We say: 'This is the psychological moment for that recognition.' For then and then only can there be irresistible opposition to Japanese aggression. It is of immense value to the Allied cause, if it is also of equal value to India. The Congress has anticipated and provided for every possible difficulty in the way of recognition. I want you to look upon the immediate recognition of India's independence as a war measure of first-class magnitude (*Harijan*, 9-8-1942, p. 264).

(S) A PLEA FOR REASON

The suppression, of which perhaps the hysterical outburst in America and

Great Britain is a precursor, may cow down the people for the moment but it will never put out the light of revolt once it has been lighted....

JUSTICE OF CONGRESS DEMAND

The justice of the demand for the ending of British power has never been questioned; the moment chosen for enforcing it is the target of attack. It is clear as crystal in the Working Committee resolution, why this moment is chosen. Let me paraphrase it: India is not playing any effective part in the war. Some of us feel ashamed that it is so and, what is more, we feel that if we were free from the foreign yoke, we should play a worthy, nay, a decisive part in the world war which has yet to reach its climax. We know, that if India does not become free now, the hidden discontent will burst forth into a welcome to the Japanese, should they effect a landing. We feel that such an event would be a calamity of the first magnitude. We can avoid it if India gains her freedom. To distrust this simple, natural and honest declaration is to court disaster.

AZAD'S STATEMENT CITED

But the critics say: 'To whom are the British rulers to hand the keys on their withdrawal?' It is a good question. Here is what Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, has said: "The Congress always stands, firstly, for sympathy towards democratic countries, secondly, never desires to embarrass Britain and war efforts, and thirdly, it stands for opposition to the Japanese aggression. The Congress does not desire to take power for itself but for all. If real power is handed over to the Congress, surely it will approach other parties and will persuade them to join." The Congress President added that he "had no objection to Britain handing over power to the Muslim League or any other party, provided it was real independence. The party will have to approach other parties as no single party can function properly without the co-operation of other parties."

The only thing needful is to hand over complete control without reservation save that, during the war period, the Allied troops will operate to stem the Japanese or Axis attack. But they will have no power of interference with the affairs of India which will be as free as Great Britain herself.

NOTHING TO CAVIL AT

Surely there is nothing here to cavil at for anyone. That party or a combination which takes over control of India will have to look to the remaining parties for its retention of power. There is no hope of the parties coming together so long as they have to look not to one another but to an outsider for support and sustenance. Not one of the Viceroy's numerous Indian Councillors are dependent upon anybody but the Viceroy for the positions they hold. How can the great or small representative parties operate without mutual support?

In a free India, even the Congress could not function efficiently for a day without the support of the smallest party. For, in a free India, at least for some time to come, even the strongest party will have no military backing. There will be no military to back. There will only be a raw police in the first stage unless the existing police will serve the national government on its terms. But the support, such as it may be, free India will be able to render to the Allied cause, will be of a sterling character. Its possibilities will be limitless and there will be no motive left for welcoming Japanese arms.

On the contrary, they will then look to the Allied arms to repel any Japanese or other attack, unless all Indians by then become non-violent. In any case, the Allied arms are there today and tomorrow and till the end of the war whether they are needed for India's protection or not.

If this representation of the implications of the Congress demand is not appreciated by the Allies' Press or the Allies themselves, Indian public men should be forgiven if they doubt the sincerity of the fierce opposition which is being organized with ominous unanimity. The latter can only stiffen India's suspicion and resistance (*The Bombay Chronicle*, 3-8-1942, being extract from article in *Harijan*, 2-8-1942, p. 252).

(T) AN IMPORTANT INTERVIEW

. . . "But to *whom* are the British to say—'India is free'?" asked the friends with a certain degree of exasperation.

"To the world," said Gandhiji without a moment's hesitation."Automati-cally the Indian army is disbanded from that moment, and they decide to pack up as soon as they can. Or they may declare, they would pack up only after the war is over, but that they would expect no help from India, impose no taxes, raise no recruits—beyond what help India chooses to give voluntarily. British rule will cease from that moment, no matter what happens to India afterwards. Today it is all a hypocrisy, unreality. I want that to end. The new order will come only when that falsity ends."

"It is an unwarranted claim Britain and America are making," said Gandhiji concluding the talk, "the claim of saving democracy and freedom. It is a wrong thing to make that claim, when there is this terrible tragedy of holding a whole nation in bondage."

Q. What can America do to have your demand implemented?

A. If my demand is admitted to be just beyond cavil, America can insist on the implementing of the Indian demand as a condition of her financing Britain and supplying her with her matchless skill in making war machines. He who pays the piper has the right to call the tune. Since America has become the predominant partner in the Allied cause, she is partner also in Britain's guilt. The Allies have no

right to call their cause to be morally superior to the Nazi cause so long as they hold in custody the fairest part and one of the most ancient nations of the earth (*Harijan*, 14-6-1942, p. 187).

(U) FOREIGN SOLDIERS IN INDIA[1]

APPENDIX II

NOT PRO-JAPANESE

We can only infer that in the admittedly possible event of Japanese aggression on India after the departure of the British, he (I) was prepared to concede to their (Japanese) demands (Indictment p. 8).

(A) IF THEY REALLY MEAN?[2]

(B) FRIENDLY ADVICE

"... You say you are willing to take all risks. Every brave man is. At the same time, is it not your duty to prepare the ground up to a point so as to minimize the risks as far as possible? The people must, for instance, be made to shed cowardice and feel that it is possible for us to stand on our own legs. They must not desire, as so many do, Japanese help...."

As these columns show, with the overwhelming sense of the truth as it appears to me. I am taking every care humanly possible to prepare the ground. I know that the novelty of the idea and that too at this juncture has caused a shock to many people. But I could not help myself. Even at the risk of being called mad, I had to tell the truth, if I was to be true to myself. I regard it as my solid contribution to the war and to India's deliverance from the peril that is threatening. It is, too, my real contribution to communal unity. No one can visualize what it will be like. Only it will not be the sham we have had up to now. It has touched only the few politically-minded people. The masses have remained unaffected by it.

Whilst, therefore, I will take every imaginable care consistent with the urgency, I cannot guarantee freedom from cowardice, before taking any forward step. The cowardice will probably not be shed without much travail. Nor is waiting possible till hatred abates. Withdrawal of the hated power is the only way to rid the land of the debasing hatred. The cause gone, hatred must cease

Of course, the people must not, on any account, lean on the Japanese to get rid of the British power. That was a remedy worse than the disease. But as I have already said, in this struggle, every risk has to be run in order to cure ourselves of the

[1] For the text under these titles, *vide* "Foreign Soliders in India", 19-4-1942 and "Question Box", 19-4-1942.

[2] *ibid*

biggest disease—a disease which has sapped our manhood and almost made us feel as if we must for ever be slaves. It is an insufferable thing. The cost of the cure, I know, will be heavy. No price is too heavy to pay for the deliverance *(Harijan,* 31-5-1942, p. 172).

(C) IF THEY COME[1]

(D) WHAT ABOUT RADIO MESSAGES?

(E) IF JAPANESE COME?

(F) QUESTION BOX

(G) UNFAIR TO AMERICA?[2]

(H) MIRABEHN'S LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

DETENTION CAMP,
AGA KHAN'S PALACE, POONA,
Christmas Eve, 1942

DEAR LORD LLNLITHGOW,

My only excuse for writing you this letter is the deep pain I feel, as one born of English parents, over the falsehoods regarding Gandhiji and the Indian National Congress which seem to have appeared in certain English papers without being officially contradicted.

Within the limits of the newspapers that reach me here, I have been watching the ever-growing volume of anti-Congress propaganda in the British Press. Of the various untruths that are being circulated, I want, in this letter, to deal with only one, namely, the assertion that Gandhiji and the Congress are pro-Japanese. For samples of such propaganda that has come to my notice, I would refer to *The Bombay Chronicle Weekly* of November 29, 1942, page 22, and to *The Hindu,* (Dak Edition) of December 19, 1942, page 4, column 3.

Amongst the quotations and facsimiles given in *The Bombay Chronicle Weekly,* is a photograph of the first page of the London *Daily Sketch* of August 5, 1942, showing a full page headline "Gandhi's India-Jap Peace Plan Exposed", and lower down, on the same page, a photograph of myself with the sub-heading "English Woman Gandhi's Jap-Peace Envoy". The *Punch* cartoons of which facsimiles are also given, are, if possible, even more disgraceful. In *The Hindu,* there is a protest by Shri K. M. Munshi from which it would appear that this libellous propaganda has spread even to the London *Daily Herald.*

[1] For the text under these titles, *vide* "Question Box", 3-6-1942; 12-6-1942; 30-5-1942; "Answers to Questions", on or before 21-7-1942 and "Cable to *The Sunday Despatch*", on or before 29-5-1942.

[2] *ibid*

Now the reason for my bringing this matter before you is that I have in my possession correspondence that passed between Gandhiji and myself while I was in Orissa, *after* the April meeting of the All-India Congress Committee at Allahabad, which proves beyond the shadow of a doubt that Gandhiji is cent per cent anti-Japanese.

The correspondence of which I enclose copies, consists of a confidential report, with questionnaire regarding the then anticipated Japanese invasion, which I sent to Gandhiji by special messenger from Orissa, where he had deputed me for helping the Congress workers generally, especially as a Japanese attack on the East Coast was hourly expected.

The report which I have with me is the original draft, written in my own hand. It is not dated or signed, as these things I affixed to the typewritten copy which was sent; but it must be just about 3 to 4 days previous to Gandhiji's reply dated 31st May, 1942, which he dictated to the late Shri Mahadev Desai, and forwarded to me at once by the returning special messenger. Of this I have the original in Shri Mahadev Desai's own handwriting, and signed "Bapu" by Gandiji. The interview referred to in the first paragraph of the letter was the one I had on 25th May, 1942, with Mr. Wood, then Chief Secretary to the Government of Orissa, at which Mr. Mansfield was also present.

Seeing that no godfearing ruler could, with any peace of mind, allow the above-mentioned slanderous propaganda on the part of his own people, against those whom he had rendered unable to reply, to continue unchecked once he had had unchallengeable proof of its falsehood, I put trust in the belief that you will publish the enclosed correspondence together with this covering letter, and refute the assertions of these British journals.

I may add that since I am personally acquainted with the members of the Working Committee and have freely discussed these matters with them, I can say with confidence that their feelings have been unequivocally anti-Japanese and anti-Fascist throughout.

Believe me

Yours sincerely,

MIRABEHN

[I] MIRABEHN'S QUESTION ON THE FEARED INVASION AND OCCUPATION BY THE JAPANESE

We may take it that the Japanese will land somewhere along the Orissa coast. Probably there will be no bombing or firing at the time of landing, as there are no

defence measures on the coast. From the coast they will advance rapidly across the flat, dry rice fields, where the only obstructions are rivers and ditches, now mostly dry and nowhere unfordable. As far as we are able to make out, there will be no serious attempts to hold the Japanese advance until the hilly and wooded regions of the Orissa State are reached. The army of defence, whatever it is, is reported to be hidden in the jungles of those parts. It is likely to make a desperate attempt to defend the Jamshedpur road, but the chances of its being successful must be very small. That means we may expect a battle to be fought in the north-west of Orissa, after which the Japanese army will pass on into Bihar. At that time the Japanese are not likely to be broadly distributed over the country, but concentrated on their lines of communication between the sea and their advancing army. The British administration will have previously disappeared from the scene.

The problem before us is, in the event of these things happening how are we to act?

The Japanese armies will rush over the fields and through the villages not as avowed enemies of the population, but as chasers and destroyers of the British and American war effort. The population in its turn is vague in its feeling. The strongest feeling is fear and distrust of the British, which is growing day by day, on account of the treatment they are receiving. Anything that is not British is therefore something welcome. Here is a funny example. The villagers in some parts say: "Oh, the aeroplanes that make a great noise are British, but there are silent planes also, and they are Mahatma planes." I think the only thing possible for these simple innocent people to learn is the attitude of neutrality, for, it is, in reality, the only position that can be made logical to them. The British not only leave them to their fate without even instructing them in self-protection from bombing, etc., but they issue such orders as will, if obeyed, kill them before the day of battle comes. How then can they be ready enthusiastically to obstruct the Japanese who are chasing this detested raj, especially when the Japanese are saying: "It is not you we have come to fight." But I have found the villagers ready to take up the position of neutrality. That is to say, they would leave the Japanese to pass over their fields and villages and try as far as possible not to come in contact with them. They would hide their food-stuffs and money, and decline to serve the Japanese. But even that much resistance would be difficult to obtain in some parts, the dislike of the British raj being so great that anything anti-British will be welcomed with open arms. I feel we have got to try and gauge the maximum resistance which the average inhabitants may be expected to put up, and *maintain,* and make that our definite stand. A steady, long-sustained stand, though not cent per cent resistance, will be more effective in the long run than a stiff stand which quickly breaks.

This maximum sustainable stand which we may expect from the average people is probably:

1. To resist firmly, mostly non-violently, the commandeering by the Japanese of any land, houses, or movable property.

2. To render no forced labour to the Japanese.

3. Not to take up any sort of administrative service under the Japanese. (This may be hard to control in connection with some type of city people, Government opportunists and Indians brought in from other parts.)

4. To buy nothing from the Japanese.

5. To refuse their currency and any efforts on their part at setting up a raj. (Lack of workers and lack of time make it very hard, we have to strive to stem the tide.)

Now as to certain difficulties and questions which arise:

1. The Japanese may offer to pay for labour, food and materials in British currency notes. Should the people refuse to sell for good prices or work for a good wage? For long-sustained resistance over many months it may be difficult to prevent this. So long as they refuse to buy or take "service", the exploitation danger is kept off.

2. What should be done about the rebuilding of bridges, canals, etc., which the British will have blown up? We shall also need the bridges and canals. Should we, therefore, set our hands to their rebuilding, even if it means working side by side with the Japanese, or should we retire on the approach of Japanese bridge-builders?

3. If Indian soldiers, who were taken prisoners in Singapore and Burma, land with the Japanese invading army, what should be our attitude towards them? Should we treat them with the same aloofness as we are to show the Japanese, or should we try to win them over to our way of thinking?

4. After the exodus (before the approaching Japanese) of the British raj what shall we do about currency?

5. After the battles have been fought and the Japanese armies will have advanced, the battle-fields will be left strewn with dead and wounded. *I think we must unhesitatingly work side by side with the Japanese in burning and burying the dead and picking up and serving the wounded.* The Japanese are likely to attend to the lightly wounded of their own men and take prisoners the lightly wounded of their enemy, but the rest would probably be left, and it will be our sacred duty to attend to them. For this we are from now planning the training of volunteers under the guidance of local doctors. Their services can also be used in case of internal disturbances, epidemics, etc.

6. Besides dead and wounded on the battle-field, a certain amount of rifles, revolvers and other small arms are likely to be left lying about unpicked up by the Japanese. If we do not make a point of collecting these things, they are likely to fall into the hands of robbers, thieves and other bad characters, who always come down like hawks to loot a battle-field. In an unarmed country like India this would lead to

much trouble. In the event of our collecting such arms and ammunition, what should we do with them? My instinct is to take them out to sea and drop them in the ocean. Please tell us what you advise.

[J] MY REPLY TO THE ABOVE

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,

May 31, 1942

I have your very complete and illuminating letter. The report of the interview is perfect, your answers were straight, unequivocal and courageous. I have no criticism to make. I can only say: 'Go on as you are doing.' I can quite clearly see that you have gone to the right place at the right time. I, therefore, need do nothing more than come straight to your questions which are all good and relevant.

1. I think we must tell the people what they should do. They will act according to their capacity. If we begin to judge their capacity and give directions accordingly, our directions will be halting and even compromising which we should never do. You will, therefore, read my instruction in that light. Remember that our attitude is that of complete non-cooperation with the Japanese army. Therefore we may not help them in any way, nor may we profit by any dealings with them. Therefore we cannot sell anything to them. If people are not able to face the Japanese army, they will do as armed soldiers do, i.e., retire when they are overwhelmed. And if they do so, the question of having any dealings with the Japanese does not and should not arise. If, however, the people have not the courage to resist the Japanese unto death and not the courage and capacity to evacuate the portion invaded by the Japanese, they will do the best they can in the light of instructions. One thing they should never do to yield willing submission to the Japanese. That will be a cowardly act, and unworthy of a freedom-loving people. They must not escape from one fire only to fall into another and probably more terrible. Their attitude, therefore, must always be of resistance to the Japanese. No question, therefore, arises of accepting British currency notes or Japanese coins. They will handle nothing from Japanese hands. So far as dealings with our own people are concerned, they will either resort to barter or make use of such British currency that they have in the hope that the national government that may take the place of British Government will take up from the people all the British currency in accordance with its capacity.

2. Question about co-operation in bridge-building is covered by the above. There can be no question of this co-operation.

3. If Indian soldiers come in contact with our people, we must fraternize with them if they are well-disposed, and invite them, if they can, to join the nation. Probably they have been brought under promise that they will deliver the country from foreign yoke. There will be no foreign yoke and they will be expected to befriend people and obey national government that might have been set up in place

of British Government. If the British have retired in an orderly manner leaving things in Indian hands, the whole thing can work splendidly, and it might even be made difficult for Japanese to settle down in India or any part of it in peace, because they will have to deal with a population which will be sullen and resistant. It is difficult to say what can happen. It is enough if people are trained to cultivate the power of resistance, no matter which power is operating—the Japanese or the British.

4. Covered by 1 above.

5. The occasion may not come, but if it does, co-operation will be permissible and even necessary.

6. Your answer about the arms found on the wayside is most tempting and perfectly logical. It may be followed but I would not rule out the idea of worthy people finding them and storing them in a safe place, if they can. If it is impossible to store them and keep them from mischievous people, yours is an ideal plan.

(K) "FIRE RAGING IN ME"

A journalist was on a visit here the other day. . . . He was full of the happenings in his province. . . .

He talked of the public feeling in his province. "It is more anti-British than pro-Japanese," he said. "There is a vague notion that we have had enough of this rule, and almost anything would be better than the existing state of things. People are happy when Subhas Babu says on the radio that there are no differences between him and you and when he says you are now out to fight for liberty at any cost."

"But I suppose you know that there he is wrong," said Gandhiji, "and I cannot possibly appropriate the compliments he is paying me. 'Liberty at any cost' has a vastly different connotation for me from what it has for him. 'At any cost' does not exist in my dictionary. It does not, for instance, include bringing in foreigners to help us in our liberty. I have no doubt, it means exchanging one form of slavery for another, possibly much worse. But, of course, we have to fight for our liberty and make whatever sacrifice it demands. In spite of all the hypocrisy that you find in all the inspired Press of Britain and America, I do not relent. I deliberately use the word hypocrisy, for they are now proving that when they were talking of the freedom of India, they did not mean it. So far as I am concerned, I have no doubt about the righteousness of my step. It seems to me to be axiomatic that the Allies are in for a defeat this time if they will not do this initial act of justice and thus put their own case on an unassailable basis. If they don't, they must face the opposition of those who cannot tolerate their rule and are prepared to die in order to get rid of it. 'Convert the deepening ill-will into goodwill,' is a sound proposition. It is not open to them to say that we must smother our consciences and say or do nothing because there is war. That is why I have made up my mind that it would be a good thing if a million people were shot in a brave and non-violent rebellion against British rule. It may be that it

may take us years before we can evolve order out of chaos. But we can then face the world; we cannot face the world today. Avowedly the different nations are fighting for their liberty. Germany, Japan, Russia, China are pouring their blood and money like water. What is *our* record? You talk of the newspapers doing good business out of the war. It is a shame to be thus bought and to refrain from speaking out at Government's dictation. There is many a way of earning an honest crust of bread. If British money—which is our money—can buy us, Heaven help our country....

"I do not feel flattered when Subhas Babu says, I am right. I am not right in the sense he means. For there he is attributing pro-Japanese feeling to me. If I were to discover that by some strange miscalculation I had not realized the fact that I was helping the entry of the Japanese in this country, I should not hesitate to retrace my steps. As regards the Japanese, I am certain that we should lay down our lives in order to resist them as we would resist the British.

"But it won't be the work of human hands. It will be the work of a Force—incalculable and invisible—which works often upsetting all our calculations. I rely implicitly on It. Otherwise I should go mad in face of all this torrent of what I must call irritating criticism. They do not know my agony. I cannot express it except perhaps by dying."

Was there the slightest suspicion that he wished victory to the Axis arms in order that the British may be humbled and their power in India may be destroyed? Gandhiji asked the friend to disabuse himself of any such notion:

"Destruction of the British power is not dependent on Japanese or German arms. If it depended on them, there would be nothing to be proud of, apart from the blight that would settle upon the world. But what matters to me is that I cannot be happy or proud if someone comes in and drives away my enemy. Where do I come in there? I cannot possibly enthuse over such a thing. I want to have the pleasure of having offered up my sacrifice for fighting the enemy in my own house. If I have not that strength, I cannot prevent the other from coming in. Only I must find a middle path to prevent the new enemy coming in. I am sure God will help me to find the way.

"I do not mind honest, strong, healthy criticism. All the manufactured criticism that I find being made today is sheer tomfoolery, meant to overawe me and demoralize the Congress ranks. It is a foul game. They do not know the fire that is raging in my breast. I have no false notions of prestige, no personal considerations would make me take a step that I know is sure to plunge the country into a conflagration" *(Harijan,* 2-8-1942, pp. 257-8).

(L) LETTER TO CHIANG KAI-SHEK[1]

Further reference to the same subject will be found in Appendix I:

[1] For the text under this title, *vide* "Letter to Chiang Kai-Shek", 14-6-1942.

B. OUT OF TOUCH

C. "I AM NOT PRO-JAPANESE"

E. IMPLICATIONS OF THE WITHDRAWAL

K. A POSER

L. A FALLACY

Q. AMERICAN OPINION MAY BE ANTAGONIZED

R. TO AMERICAN FRIENDS

S. "JUSTICE OF CONGRESS DEMAND"

" "AZAD'S STATEMENT CITED"

" "NOTHING TO CAVIL AT"

APPENDIX III

CONGRESS NOT FOR POWER

It has been suggested in the preceding paragraph that the Congress intended this Government to be under their domination and note has been made of the strength added to this view by the unity of Muslim opinion that the Congress move was aimed at establishing Congress-Hindu domination over India (Indictment p. 12).

(A) NOT RIGHT

Q. Are we right in believing that you wish the Congress and the people to become capable as soon as possible of taking over the administration and to do so on the first opportunity?

A. You are not right. I cannot speak for the Congress. But I want no organization or individual to become capable of taking over the administration. In non-violent technique, it is unthinkable. You do not take over power. It may descend to you being given by the people. In an anarchical State, all turbulent elements will make a bid for power. Those who will serve the people and will evolve order out of chaos will spend themselves in removing chaos. If they survive, the popular will may put them in as administrators This is wholly different from what you have imagined. People who make a bid for power generally fail to achieve it *(Harijan,* 31-5-1942, p. 173).

(B) WHAT ABOUT MUSLIMS?

Q. But what does a free India mean, if, as Mr. Jinnah said, Muslims will not accept Hindu rule?

A. I have not asked the British to hand over India to the Congress or to the Hindus. Let them entrust India to God or, in modern parlance, to anarchy. Then all the parties will fight one another like dogs, or will, when real responsibility faces them, come to a reasonable agreement. I shall expect non-violence to arise out of that chaos *(Harijan,* 14-6-1942, p. 187).

(C) TO MUSLIM CORRESPONDENTS

. . . I think that even a large number, if not all of us, prepared to undergo any sacrifice that may fall to our lot, would impress the British rulers that they can no longer hold India as a British possession. I believe, too, that such a number is available. Needless to say, their action must be non-violent, irrespective of their belief, as even a military man's has often to be, on behalf of his cause. The fight has been conceived in the interest of the whole of India. The fighters will gain no more than the poorest Indian. They will fight, not to seize power but to end the foreign domination, cost what it may. . . .

The Congress and the League being best organized parties in the country may come to terms and set up a provisional government acceptable to all. And this may be followed by a duly-elected constituent assembly *(Harijan,* 12-7-1942, p. 220).

(D) AN APPROPRIATE QUESTION[1]

(E) UNSEEMLY IF TRUE

. . . Hindustan belongs to all those who are born and bred here and who have no other country to look to. Therefore it belongs to Parsis, Beni-Israels, to Indian Christians, Muslims and other non-Hindus as much as to Hindus. Free India will be no Hindu raj, it will be Indian raj based not on the majority of any religious sect or community but on the representatives of the whole people without distinction of religion. I can conceive a mixed majority putting the Hindus in a minority. They would be elected for their record of service and merits. Religion is a personal matter which should have no place in politics. It is in the unnatural condition of foreign domination that we have unnatural divisions according to religion. Foreign domination going, we shall laugh at our folly in having clung to false ideals and slogans.

The discourse referred to is surely vulgar. There is no question of "driving out" the English. They cannot be driven out except by violence superior to theirs. The idea of killing the Muslims, if they do not remain in subjection, may have been all right in bygone days; it has no meaning today. There is no force in the cry of driving out the English if the substitute is to be Hindu or any other domination. That will be no swaraj. Self-government necessarily means government by the free and intelligent will of the people. I add the word "intelligent" because I hope that India will be predominantly non-violent *(Harijan,* 9-8-1942, p. 261).

Further reference to the same subject will be found in Appendix I:

F. ITS MEANING

[1] For the text under this title, *vide* "An Appropriate Question", 2-8-1942.

G. ONLY IF THEY WITHDRAW

P. "NEGOTIATIONS?"

" "SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME"

S. "AZAD'S STATEMENT CITED"

" "NOTHING TO CAVIL AT"

APPENDIX IV

ABOUT NON-VIOLENCE

Mr. Gandhi knew that any mass movement started in India would be a violent movement (Indictment p. 39).

(A) EXPEDIENCE[1]

(B) NON-VIOLENT NON-CO-OPERATION

Q. There is a report about some new scheme that you want to propound, in one of your *Harijan* articles about non-violent non-co-operation, if any invader came to India. Could you give us an idea?

A. It is wrong. I have no plan in mind. If I had, I should give it to you. But I think nothing more need be added when I have said that there should be unadulterated non-violent non-co-operation and, if the whole of India responded and unanimously offered it, I should show that without shedding a single drop of blood, Japanese arms—or any combination of arms—can be sterilized. That involves the determination of India not to give quarter on any point whatsoever and to be ready to risk loss of several million lives. But I would consider that cost very cheap, and victory won at that cost glorious. That India may not be ready to pay that price may be true. I hope it is not true, but some such price must be paid by any country that wants to retain its independence. After all the sacrifice made by the Russians and the Chinese is enormous, and they are ready to risk all. The same could be said of the other countries also, whether aggressors or defenders. The cost is enormous. Therefore, in the non-violent technique, I am asking India to risk no more than other countries are risking and which India would have to risk even if she offered armed resistance.

Q. But "unadulterated non-violent non-co-operation" has not been successful against Great Britain. How will it succeed against a new aggressor?

A. I combat the statement altogether. Nobody has yet told me that non-violent non-co-operation, unadulterated, has not succeeded. It has not been offered, it is true. Therefore you can say that what has not been offered hitherto is not likely to be offered suddenly when India faces the Japanese arms. I can only hope that, in the face

[1] For the text under this title. *vide* "Question Box", 7-4-1942

of danger, India would be readier to offer non-violent non-co-operation. Perhaps India is accustomed to British rule for so many years that the Indian mind or India's masses do not feel the pinch so much as the advent of a new power would be felt. But your question is well put. It is possible that India may not be able to offer non-violent non-co-operation. But a similar question may be put regarding armed resistance. Several attempts have been made and they have not succeeded. Therefore it will not succeed against the Japanese. That leads us to the absurd conclusion that India will never be ready for gaining independence and, seeing that I cannot subscribe to any such proposition I must try again and again till India is ready to respond to the call of non-violent non-co-operation. But, if India does not respond to that call, then India must respond to the call of some leader or some organization wedded to violence. For instance, the Hindu Mahasabha is trying to rouse the Hindu mind for an armed conflict. It remains to be seen whether that attempt succeeds. I for one do not believe it will succeed *(Harijan* 24-5-1942, p. 167).

(C) SCORCHED EARTH POLICY

Q. Would you advise non-violent non-co-operation against scorched earth policy? Would you resist the attempt to destroy sources of food and water?

A. Yes. A time may come when I would certainly advise it; for, I think it is ruinous, suicidal and unnecessary—whether India believes in non-violent non-co-operation or in violence. And the Russian and Chinese examples make no appeal to me. If some other country resorts to methods which I consider to be inhuman, I may not follow them. If the enemy comes and helps himself to crops, I may be obliged to leave; because I cannot or care not to defend them, I must resign myself to it. And there is a good example for us. A passage was quoted to me from the Islamic literature. The Khalipha issued definite instructions to the armies of Islam that they should not destroy the utility services, they should not harass the aged, and women and children; and I do not know that the arms of Islam suffered any disaster because the armies obeyed these instructions.

Q. But what about factories—especially factories for the manufacture of munitions?

A. Suppose there are factories for grinding wheat or pressing oilseeds, I should not destroy them. But munitions factories, yes; for, I would not tolerate munitions factories in a free India, if I had my way. Textile factories I would not destroy, and I would resist all such destruction. However, it is a question of prudence.

I have not suggested immediate enforcement of the whole programme in pursuance of the demand for British withdrawal. It is there, of course. But I am trying, if I am allowed to continue to cultivate and educate public opinion, to show that behind this demand of mine there is no ill-will, no malice. It is the most logical thing that I have suggested. It is in the interests of all, and since it is an entirely friendly

act, I am moving cautiously, watching myself at every step. I will do nothing in haste, but there is the fixed determination behind every act of mine that the British must withdraw.

I have mentioned anarchy. I am convinced that we are living today in a state of ordered anarchy. It is a misnomer to call such rule as is established in India a rule which promotes the welfare of India. Therefore this ordered, disciplined anarchy should go, and if there is complete lawlessness in India, as a result, I would risk it, though I believe, and should like to believe, that 22 years of continuous effort at educating India along the lines of non-violence will not have gone in vain, and people will evolve real popular order out of chaos. Therefore if I find that all the best effort fails I would certainly invite people to resist destruction of their property *(Harijan,* 24-5-1942, p. 167).

(D) WHAT WOULD FREE INDIA DO?

Gandhiji had over and over again said that an orderly withdrawal would result in a sullen India becoming a friend and ally. These American friends now explored the implications of that possible friendship: "Would a free India declare war against Japan?"

"Free India need not do so. It simply becomes the ally of the Allied powers, simply out of gratefulness for the payment of a debt, however, overdue. Human nature thanks the debtor when he discharges the debt."

"How then would this alliance fit in with India's non-violence?"

"It is a good question. The whole of India is not non-violent. If the whole of India had been non-violent, there would have been no need for my appeal to Britain, nor would there be any fear of a Japanese invasion. But my non-violence is represented possibly by a hopeless minority, or, perhaps, by India's dumb millions who are temperamentally non-violent. But there, too, the question may be asked: 'What have they done?' They have done nothing, I agree, but they may act when the supreme test comes, and they may not. I have no non-violence of millions to present Britain, and what we have has been discounted by the British as non-violence of the weak. And so all I have done is to make this appeal on the strength of bare inherent justice, so that it might find an echo in the British heart. It is made from a moral plane, and even as they do not hesitate to act desperately in the physical field and take grave risks, let them for once act desperately on the moral field and declare that India is independent today, irrespective of India's demand" *(Harijan,* 14-6-1942, p. 187).

(E) A CHALLENGE

The fact is that non-violence does not work in the same way as violence. It works in the opposite way. An armed man naturally relies upon his arms. A man who

is intentionally unarmed relies upon the unseen force called God by poets, but called the Unknown by scientists. But that which is unknown is not necessarily non-existent. God is the Force among all forces known and unknown. Non-violence without reliance upon that Force is poor stuff to be thrown in the dust.

I hope now my critic realizes the error underlying his question and that he sees also that the doctrine that has guided my life is not one of inaction but of the highest action. His question should really have been put thus:

'How is it that, in spite of your work in India for over 22 years, there are not sufficient satyagrahis who can cope with external and internal menaces?' My answer then would be that 22 years are nothing in the training of a nation for the development of non-violent strength. That is not to say that a large number of persons will not show that strength on due occasion. That occasion seems to have come now. This war puts the civilian on his mettle no less than the military man, non-violent no less than the violent *(Harijan,* 28-6-1942, p. 201).

(F) [A.I.S.A. AND KINDRED INSTITUTIONS]

... Therefore the golden rule is to dare to do the right at any cost. But there should be no camouflage, no secrecy, no make-believe... *(Harijan,* 12-7-1942, p. 217).

(A) GURU GOBIND SINGH

... But for me as a believer in non-violence out and out, they (Guru Govind Singh, Lenin, Kemal Pasha, etc.) cannot be guides in life so far as their faith in war is concerned. I believe in Krishna perhaps more than the writer. But my Krishna is the Lord of the universe, the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of us all. He may destroy because He creates. But I must not be drawn into a philosophical or religious argument with my friends. I have not the qualifications for teaching my philosophy of life. I have barely qualification for practising the philosophy I believe. I am but a poor struggling soul yearning to be wholly good, wholly truthful and wholly non-violent in thought, word and deed, but ever failing to reach the ideal which I know to be true. I admit, and assure my revolutionary friends, it is a painful climb, but the pain of it is a positive pleasure for me. Each step upward makes me feel stronger and fit for the next. But all that pain and the pleasure are for me. The revolutionaries are at liberty to reject the whole of my philosophy. To them I merely present my own experience as a co-worker in the same cause even as I have successfully presented them to the Ali Brothers and many other friends. They can and do applaud whole-heartedly the action of Mustafa Kemal Pasha and possibly De Valera and Lenin. But they realize with me that India is not like Turkey or Ireland or Russia and that revolutionary activity is suicidal at this stage of the country's life at any rate, if not for all time, in a country so vast, so hopelessly divided and with the masses so deeply sunk in pauperism and so fearfully terror-struck *(Harijan,* 12-7-1942, p. 219).

(H) THE CONFLAGRATION[1]

(K) IN CASE OF ILLNESS

... But the relevant fact is that so long as the reason is unimpaired, physical illness is no bar to the conduct of a non-violent struggle. The peremptory belief in non-violent conduct is that all urge comes from God —the Unseen, even unfelt save through unconquerable faith. Nevertheless as a seeker and experimenter I know that even physical illness, even fatigue is counted as a defect in a non-violent person. *Mens sana in corpore sano is* literally accepted by votaries of truth and non-violence. But that is said of perfect men. Alas! I am far from the perfection I am aiming at *(Harijan*, 19-7-1942, p. 229).

(L) FASTING IN NON-VIOLENT ACTION[2]

(M) WHEAT ABOUT NON-VIOLENCE[3]

(N) ANOTHER DISCOURSE

Bharatanandji[4], whose acquaintance the reader will make in another column, demurred to the compliment given to his countrymen, the Poles, by Gandhiji: "You say that the Poles were 'almost non-violent'. I do not think so. There was black hatred in the breast of Poland, and I do not think the compliment is deserved."

"You must not take what I say, so terribly literally. If ten soldiers resist a force of a thousand soldiers armed cap-a-pie, the former are almost non-violent, because there is no capacity for anything like proportionate violence in them. But the instance I have taken of the girl is more appropriate. A girl who attacks her assailant with her nails if she has grown them, or with her teeth if she has them, is almost non-violent, because there is no premeditated violence in her. Her violence is the violence of the mouse against the cat."

"Well then, Bapuji, I will give you an instance. A young Russian girl was attacked by a soldier. She used her nails and teeth against him and tore him, so to say, to pieces. Was she almost non-violent?"

"How can it cease to be non-violence, if offered on the spur of the moment, simply because it was successful?" I[5] interposed.

"No," said Gandhiji almost inadvertently.

"Then I am really puzzled," said Bharatanandji. "You say, there should be no premeditated violence and no capacity to offer proportionate violence. Here in this case she by her success proved that she had the capacity."

"I am sorry," said Gandhiji, "that I inadvertently said 'No' to Mahadev. There

[1] For the text under this title, *vide* "Question Box", 5-7-1942. Titles under (I) and (J) are not given in the source.

[2] *Vide* "Fasting in Non-Violent Action", 20-7-1942 and "Question Box", 12-6-1942.

[3] *ibid*

[4] Maurice Frydman, a Polish Engineer

[5] Mahadev Desai, Gandhiji's Private Secretary

was violence there. It was equally matched."

"But then, is not intention ultimately the test? A surgeon uses his knife non-violently. Or a keeper of the peace uses force against miscreants in order to protect society. That too he does non-violently," said Bharatanandji.

"Who is to judge the intention? Not we. And for us the deed in most cases is the test. We normally look at the action and not at the intention."

"Then God alone knows what is *himsa* and what is ahimsa."

"Yes, God alone is the final judge. It is likely that what we believe to be an act of ahimsa is an act of *himsa* in the eyes of God. But for us the path is chalked out. And then you must know that a true practice of ahimsa means also, in one who practises it, the keenest intelligence and wide-awake conscience. It is difficult for him to err. When I used those words for Poland, and when I suggested to a girl believing herself to be helpless that she might use her nails and teeth without guilty of violence, you must understand the meaning at the back of my mind. There is the refusal to bend before overwhelming might in the full knowledge that it means certain death. The Poles knew that they would be crushed to atoms, and yet they resisted the German hordes. That was why I called it almost non-violence" *(Harijan*, 8-9-1940, p. 274).

Further reference to the same subject will be found in Appendix I:

C. "NO SECRECY"

" "TO RESIST SLAVE-DRIVERS"

D. WHY NON-VIOLENT NON-CO-OPERATION

K. A POSER

L. A FALLACY

M. OH ! THE TROOPS

Q.[1] "OPEN TO CONVICTION"

APPENDIX V

(A) EXTRACTS FROM PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S ADDRESS TO THE JOURNALISTS' ASSOCIATION AT ALLAHABAD

"We do not wish to take advantage of the peril to Britain, Russia or China, nor do we want the Axis powers to win. We mean to stop the Japanese and to help China and the wider cause of democracy and freedom, but the nature of the peril is such now not only to us but through us to China also that we want to meet it by converting the war into a people's war as China has done. The preparation of the Government of India is entirely inadequate. We want to build up the national will to resistance.

[1] The source, however, has 'P'.

"We want to take up the present situation, even if we have to take risk in doing so. We want to save ourselves from immediate peril, and not to take advantage of any situation in order to gain independence. If we remain passive, we allow the popular will against the British Government to be broken gradually, and that will break the popular will to resistance. We want to gamble with fate, if one chooses to call it so—and we will do it bravely."

Pandit Nehru said that it was not going to be a long-drawn-out affair but it would be short and swift. How short and swift he did not know because that depended on psychological factors. "Ours is not armed force. Our struggle depends upon the psychological reaction of a few million."

In reply to a question by an American journalist, Pandit Nehru said "The movement can gain by what we do, and can be accelerated by what the Government does."

Gandhiji in his *Harijan* has indicated the steps, and the first step may be within a fortnight after the All-India Congress Committee meeting. That might be a preparatory step unless the Government takes such action as might accelerate it.

The present decision, the Pandit said, was not taken in a huff, but they came to the conclusion, following a close analysis of the current world politics and the method of the British Government in fighting the war. He emphasized that when the Congress talked of independence, it was thought that it was in the nature of bargaining. Therefore the demand for the withdrawal of British power from India had irritated the British. He explained that this demand was inherent in the nationalist movement. They were told that the "Quit India" demand was in the nature of blackmail, and India should wait till the situation was clear after the war.

Continuing, Pandit Nehru said that they waited these years and the Congress was on the point of starting satyagraha in 1940, but at the fall of France they desisted form starting the movement, because they did not want to embarrass England during her moment of great peril. They wanted to face peril as far as possible. They wanted to prevent the Japanese aggression upon India and help China. He said that he could not have thrown in his weight with the British Government because the British policy was so deep-rooted that they could do nothing. There was no loophole to function effectively. The Congress wanted India not to be a passive onlooker.

In conclusion, Pandit Nehru said that the average man in India looked to the Congress for a lead, and if the Congress failed, the result would be so much spiritual disillusionment that it might break their spirit. So the alternative left to them was to take the risk to shake this spirit and change the whole of Europe and America into the conception of the war of freedom (United Press of India, *The Bombay Chronicle*, 1-8-1942).

(B) EXTRACTS FROM PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S SPEECH, TILAK DAY CELEBRATIONS, ALLAHABAD

"My mind is quite clear that our decision is correct. I can say this with all the authority and dignity of a member of the Working Committee. My mind is at rest. I can clearly see the path before us. We can tread it fearlessly and bravely."

NO TRUCK WITH AXIS

Pandit Nehru said that he wanted to make it clear that there was no intention to help Japan or to injure China. He said:

"If we succeed, that will release tremendous spiritual forces for the cause of freedom and democracy, and will greatly increase the resistance against Japan and Germany. If, on the other hand, we fail, Britain would be left to fight against Japan as best she can."

"CORRECT SLOGAN"

"Gandhiji's 'Quit India' slogan correctly represents our thoughts and sentiments. Passivity on our part at this moment and hour of peril would be suicidal. It will break down all our will to resistance. It would destroy and emasculate us. Our step is not merely for the love of independence. We want to take it to protect ourselves, to strengthen our will to resistance, to give a fresh orientation to the war, to fight and to help China and Russia: it is an immediate and pressing necessity with us."

PEOPLE'S WAR

Answering the question "How would you fight against Japan?", Pandit Nehru said:

"We would fight in every way possible with non-violence and with arms, by making it a people's war, by raising people's army, by increasing production and industrialization. By making it our primary consuming passion, by fighting like Russia and China and no price would be too big to pay to achieve our success against the aggressor.". . .

"Struggle—eternal struggle! That is my reply to Mr. Amery and Sir Stafford Cripps," said Pandit Nehru spiritedly criticizing the latest statements of Mr. Amery and Sir Stafford Cripps.

"India's national self-respect cannot be a matter of bargaining," he added, "I am galled with sorrow and anger to note that I for years wanted some settlement because I felt that Britain was in trouble. They have had their suffering and sorrow. I wanted my country to move forward step in step with them as a free country. But what is one to make of such statements!" *(The Bombay Chronicle,* 3-8-1942).

(C) PANDIT NEHRU'S STATEMENT ON THE SEIZED DOCUMENTS

I have just seen for the first time the Government's communique issuing certain documents obtained during the police raid from the All-India Congress Committee office. It is astonishing to what a pass the Government of India has been reduced when it has to adopt these discreditable and dishonourable tactics. Normally such tactics require no answer. But as there is likely to be misapprehension, I wish to clear up some matters.

It is not our custom to keep detailed minutes of the Working Committee's meetings. Only final decisions are recorded. On this occasion the Assistant Secretary took brief notes unofficially apparently for his own record. These notes are very brief and disjointed and represent several days' prolonged debate during which I must have spoken on various occasions for two or three hours. Only a few sentences were taken down and torn from their context. They often give a wrong impression. None of us had a chance of seeing these notes, or of revising them. The record is very unsatisfactory and incomplete and hence often incorrect.

In our discussions, Mahatma Gandhi was not present. We had to consider every aspect of the question fully and to weigh the implications of words and phrases in the draft resolutions. If Gandhiji had been there, much of this discussion might have been avoided as he could have explained to us his attitude more fully.

IMPORTANT OMISSION

Thus when the question of British withdrawal from India was considered, I pointed out that if the armed forces were suddenly withdrawn, the Japanese might well advance and invade the country without hindrance. This obvious difficulty was removed when Gandhiji later explained that British and other armed forces might remain to prevent aggression.

In regard to the statement that Gandhiji expected an Axis victory, an important qualification has been omitted. What he has repeatedly said and what I have referred to is his belief that unless Britain changes her whole policy in regard to India and her colonial possessions, she is heading for disaster. He has further stated that if a suitable change in this policy was made and the war really became one for freedom for all people, then victory would assuredly come to the United Nations.

MAHATMA'S WAY

The references to negotiations with Japan were also incorrect and entirely torn from their context. Gandhiji always sends notice to his adversary before coming into conflict. He would thus have called upon Japan not only to keep away from India, but to withdraw from China, etc. In any event he was determined to resist every aggressor in India and he advised our people to do so even to the point of death. They were never to submit.

It is absurd to say that any of us envisaged any arrangements with Japan giving her right of passage, etc. What I said was that Japan would want this, but we could never agree. Our whole policy has all along been based on uttermost resistance to aggression (Associated Press of India —*The Bombay Chronicle*, 5-8-1942).

(D) EXTRACTS FROM PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S SPEECH AT THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE MEETING

August 7, 1942

If the British Government were to accept the proposal, it would lead to an improvement of the position both internal and international from every point of view. The position of China would be improved. He was convinced that whatever change might come about in India would be for the better. The All-India Congress Committee knew that Mahatma Gandhi had agreed to retain and allow the British and armed forces stationed in India. This he agreed so as not to facilitate Japanese action on the Indian frontier. Those who wanted to bring about a change should agree to this.

Referring to criticisms from America that Congress was blackmailing, Pandit Nehru said that it was a curious and amazing charge. It was curious that people who talked in terms of their own freedom should level this charge against those who were fighting for their freedom. It was a curious charge to be made against a people who had been suffering for the last 200 years. If that was blackmail, then "our understanding of the British language has been wrong".

Concluding, he said, he could not take any more risks and that they should go forward although such step might involve perils and risks.

The attitude of the Government was one of defeatism. He could not tolerate it. His only object was to remove the defeatists and put in their place valiant fighters *(The Bombay Chronicle*, 8-8-1942).

APPENDIX VI

EXTRACTS FROM MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD'S SPEECH AT THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE MEETING

August 7, 1942

The extraordinary danger which India was facing was such that they could not face it, unless they had in their hands the reins of power. Danger was knocking at India's doors and it was necessary that they should make all preparations to check the enemy as soon as he jumped into our courtyard. That could be done only when they used every power in their possession. At Allahabad it had been decided that if Japan stepped into the land, they would resist aggression with all their non-violent strength; but during the last three months the world had not stood still. It had moved

fast. The sound of war drums was coming nearer, while the world was flowing in blood, and nations were fighting and pouring out their life-blood to preserve their precious possession of freedom.

The Congress had made repeated proposals to Britain to give the people of India that freedom which would enable them to fight the aggressor. They had not asked for the keys of power so that they could sit back and make merry. That was not the way of the world today. The whole world was straining at its leash, was rushing towards freedom. In those circumstances, if they felt that conditions in India required a change, if they felt that their only salvation lay in making and bringing about drastic changes, then they should take such steps as would bring about those changes. At the same time they had to consider the possible consequences of their step on the entire world. They had to weigh the consequences of their action and inaction carefully in the balance.

WHEN INDIANS WILL FIGHT

Therefore the Working Committee had passed a resolution three weeks ago, after fully considering their responsibilities, their duties, the consequences of their action and how best they could achieve their object. Their view was that unless some change was brought about at once, the same fate which overtook Burma, Malaya and Singapore would overtake this country also. If they wanted to fight for the safety, freedom and honour of India, it was necessary that they should cast off the shackles that were holding them down, to shake off that lethargy and go to work in an entirely new spirit. It was only when they felt that they were fighting for something which they held sacred that the people of this country could fight, pour out their energy and blood and lay down their lives. They had made repeated appeals and entreaties to bring about this change and as they had failed, it had become their duty to take a positive step. That step was certainly fraught with hardships; but they could do nothing unless they were prepared to suffer hardships and make sacrifices. It was only by suffering and strife that they could achieve anything at all. That was the meaning of the resolution of July 14. During these three weeks the message had spread throughout the land. The resolution only reiterated the position which they had always taken. As long as three years ago, the Congress had made its position clear and had cast its lot in favour of democracy and against Fascism. Nothing that they had done since then was inconsistent with this fundamental position. They had always said that they would whole-heartedly aid the cause of freedom and democracy, if they were free. For freedom itself they could wait. But the present question was not merely of freedom, but of their very existence. If they survived and lived, they could have freedom. But the position now was that they could not live and survive without freedom.

Continuing, the Congress President said that the demand they were putting forward before Britain and the United Nations was to be judged by the one and the only test, and that test was whether for the sake of the defence of India, for her very survival, freedom was necessary. India had become a vital field of battle. If India were free, she could have kindled a new light throughout the land and the cry of victory would ring from every corner. No army could wage a relentless war unless it had behind it an administration which had the fullest popular support. If anybody could show them that what they were doing would contribute to the defeat of freedom powers, they would be prepared to change their course. But, if the argument was merely a threat holding out the prospect of civil war and chaos, he for one would tell them: 'It is our right to wage a civil war; it is our responsibility to face chaos.'

Proceeding, the Congress President observed that having thus once tested the gold of their demand they took the bright gold and applied to it yet another test and that test was: 'Are we contributing to others' defeat, to others' misfortune?'

If their demand was such that it would not contribute to the strength of the freedom powers, would not promote the cause of those powers fighting with valour for their freedom, they would never have put it forward. They had considered this question for full nine days. And the Congress President said: "Our demand is twice-tested pure gold." He challenged: "Is the British Government prepared to allow its actions and policies to be subjected to these same tests?"

Answering critics of the Congress, he said that there was no right thinking man who would not accept the tests he had propounded as valid. It was the duty of the critics to understand their position correctly and not merely to give it a bad name.

In this connection he referred to the statement of Sir Stafford Cripps that if the Congress demand was accepted, the whole Government from the Viceroy to the sepoy would have to leave. This was misrepresentation with a vengeance. Their resolution had said in clear terms that as soon as Britain or the Allied nations declared India's independence, India would enter into a treaty with Britain for the carrying out of the administration and the conduct of the war to victory. They had not asked that all the Government officials should go home bag and baggage, and after reaching England, return to India for negotiations. Gandhiji had repeatedly made it clear that "Quit India" demand meant only the removal of the British power and not the physical removal of British officers, administrators and army personnel. All of them, including the armies of Britain and the Allies, would continue to stay here—only under an agreement with us and not against our will as at present. Not to see this clear point was suicidal blindness.

SIMULTANEOUS DECISION ON BOTH ISSUES

The Maulana stated: "There was a time for mere promises. But the resolution of July 14 makes one thing clear, namely, the condition of India and of the world has reached a stage when it was absolutely necessary that everything should be done at once. What we ask for from Britain and the Allied powers should be done here and now. We do not rely on mere promises about the future. We have had bitter experiences of promises having been broken. They also suspect our promise to fight with them against the Axis. Let us come together today, and simultaneously decide both the issues —the freedom of India and India's complete participation in the war efforts. Let there be simultaneous declaration of India's independence and the signing of a treaty between India and the United Nations. If you do not trust us in this, we cannot trust you either."

Concluding, Maulana Azad observed that even in this grave hour when every minute counted, we had decided to make one last minute appeal to the United Nations to demonstrate to them that the object of India and the Allied powers was the same, that their interests were the same, that the satisfaction of India's demand would promote the welfare of the Allies. But if the Allies were obdurate and deaf to all appeals, it was their clear duty to do what they could to achieve freedom (*The Bombay Chronicle*, 8-8-1942).

APPENDIX VII

EXTRACTS FROM SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL'S PUBLIC SPEECHES

August 2, 1942

(A) AT CHOWPATTY, BOMBAY

The war was coming nearer India, and the fall of Malaya, Singapore and Burma which were lost led India to consider all possible steps to prevent a similar fate.

Gandhiji and the Congress thought that such a situation could be avoided, if only the British left the country. Public sympathy and co-operation was necessary to keep the enemy away. If the British left the country, the people could be galvanized and could be made to fight in the same manner as the Russians and the Chinese.

It was also Gandhiji's belief that as long as an imperialist power remained, it could also act as a temptation to another imperialist power to covet this land, and in this vortex of imperialist ambitions, war would extend and continue. The only way to stop this was to end the imperialist regime. . . .

The Congress did not desire anarchy or the defeat of the British power. But they found themselves helpless. The curtain had to be rung down before further harm could be done. If the independence of the country was secured, then the Congress

would have achieved its goal. It was prepared to give a pledge now that the Congress organization would be disbanded, if that purpose was fulfilled . . . (*The Bombay Chronicle*, 3 8-1942).

(B) AT SURAT

Let Britain only transfer power to Indian hands, whether it is to the Muslim League or any other party, and the Congress is prepared to dissolve itself, declared Sardar Patel, addressing a public meeting here. The Sardar added that the Congress was started with independence of India as its main and only goal and once that was achieved, the body would willingly cease to function (Associated Press of India—*The Bombay Chronicle*, 3-8-1942).

(C) AT THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE MEETING

August 7, 1942

NO SECRET PLANS

Referring to the charge levelled against the Congress Working Committee that it had secret plans, the speaker said that there was nothing secret about the Congress plans. There were no differences of opinion among the members of the Working Committee regarding the means of achieving India's independence.

Japan professed love for India and promised her freedom. But India was not going to be fooled by the Axis broadcasts. If Japan genuinely wished to secure freedom for India, why did the Japanese Government still continue the war against China? It would be Japan's duty to set China free before talking of India's freedom.

FOLLOW MAHATMA'S LEAD

Referring to the struggle ahead, Sardar Vallabhbhai said that it would be strictly non-violent. Many people were anxious to know the details of the programme. Gandhiji was going to place the details before the nation when the time came. The nation would be called upon to follow him. In case of arrest of the leaders, it would be the duty of every Indian to be his own guide. It was necessary to bear in mind that no nation had won independence without sacrifices *(The Bombay Chronicle*, 8-8-1942).

APPENDIX VIII

EXTRACTS FROM DR. RAJENDRA PRASAD'S SPEECH AT THE BIHAR PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE MEETING

July 31, 1942

Explaining the implications of the present Wardha resolution, Dr. Rajendra Prasad emphasized that it was not going to be mere jail-going this time. It was going

to be more drastic, calling for the worst repression—shooting, bombing, confiscation of property, all were possible. Congressmen, therefore, had to join the movement fully conscious that they might be exposed to all these. The new plan of action included all forms of satyagraha based on pure non-violence and this was going to be the last struggle for the independence of India. They could face all the armed might of the world with non-violence, the greatest weapon in the armoury of satyagraha, he declared.

But the Congress had now come to the conclusion that there could be no unity until British power disappeared. The foreign element in the body politic of the country created such new problems that they proved difficult of solution. Mahatma Gandhi, therefore, was now of the definite opinion that there could be no unity in India without swaraj, though formerly he held the opposite view. This opinion was the result of bitter experience and the outcome of the Cripps mission.

Concluding, Dr. Rajendra Prasad affirmed that the Congress had no quarrel with anyone. The Congress only hoped to convert its opposition by its suffering and sacrifice. He was confident that the opposition would also join them in the great cause of India's freedom *(The Bombay Chronicle, Weekly,* 2-8-1942)[1]

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, pp. 76-213, and *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi,* pp. 34-111. Also from a photostat: C.W. 10385. Courtesy: India Office Library

260. LETTER TO ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

July 16, 1943

THE ADDITIONAL SECRETARY

HOME DEPARTMENT

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

SIR,

I observe from the daily papers that there is a persistent rumour going round that I have written to His Excellency the Viceroy withdrawing the A.I.C.C resolution of the 8th August last. I observe, too, that much speculation is being built upon the rumour. I suggest that the Government should issue a contradiction of the rumour. For, I

[1] For Appendix IX, the concluding one, which contained Gandhiji's letter dated August 14, 1942, to the Viceroy, *vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 14-8-1942. For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix "Resolutions Passed by Congress Working Committee ", 14-7-1942.

have neither the authority nor the wish to withdraw the resolution. My personal opinion is that the resolution was the only one the A.I.C.C. could have passed, if the Congress was to make any effective contribution to the cause of human freedom which is involved in the immediate independence of India.[1]

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi, p. 32. Also from a photostat: C.W. 10379 a. Courtesy: India Office Library

261. LETTERTOADDITIONALSECRETARY,HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

September 10, 1943

THE ADDITIONAL SECRETARY

HOME DEPARTMENT

SIR,

On 15th July last I handed to the Superintendent of this camp for despatch to you my reply[2] to the Government of India publication entitled *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942-43.* As yet I have no acknowledgment of the receipt of my reply, let alone answer to what I hold to be complete refutation of the charges set forth against me in that publication.[3]

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi, pp. 111-2

[1] The addressee, in his reply dated July 29, said that the Government of India did not "think it necessary to issue a contradiction of the rumour". According to *The Transfer of Power,* Vol. IV, p. 97, in the course of a cable

to the Secretary of State for India, the Viceroy reported that, the Government had, however, informed the Press in reply to enquiries that there was no foundation for the rumour.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943.

[3] The addressee, in his reply dated September 20, said that it was "still under consideration".

262. LETTER TO ARDESHIR E. KATELI[1]

September 16, 1943

RESPECTED KATELI SAHEB,

You have informed me that the Central Provinces Government desires to release me, since I was detained by that Government, but that if I want to stay here, I can do so under the present restrictions. In reply to this, I have to say that I have come here only to serve Smt. Kasturba Gandhi and, so long as she wants me here, I shall stay with her under the present restrictions.

Truly speaking, I should ascertain the wishes of my father, but I think that he will certainly want me to stay here to look after her. I understand that if I wish to, I can obtain my release; hence there is no need to ascertain the wishes of my father. However, when I write to my father, I shall let him know my desire to stay here for the present.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

263. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

Personal

DETENTION CAMP,
September 27, 1943

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

On the eve of your departure from India, I would like to send you a word.

Of all the high functionaries I have had the honour of knowing, none has been the cause of such deep sorrow to me as you have been. It has cut me to the quick to have to think of you as having countenanced untruth, and that regarding one whom, at one time, you considered as your friend. I hope and pray that God will some day put it into your heart to realize that you, a representative of a great nation, had been led into a grievous error.

With good wishes,[2]

I still remain,
Your friend,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10394. Courtesy: British High Commission, New Delhi

[1] This was drafted by Gandhiji for Manu Gandhi, daughter of Jaisukhlal Gandhi.

[2] The addressee, in his reply dated October 7 said: "I am indeed sorry that your feelings about any deeds or words of mine should be as you describe. But I must be allowed, as gently as I may, to make plain to you that I am quite unable to accept your interpretation of the events in question. As per the corrective virtues of time and reflection, evidently these are ubiquitous in their operation and wisely to be rejected by no man."

264. LETTER TO ARDESHIR E. KATELI[1]

October 2, 1943

SHRI KHAN BAHADUR SAHEB,

You have sent me a copy of the reply given by the Government of Bombay to my letter. Pyarelalji has translated it to me. I understood the first letter of the Bombay Government according to my lights. But now I understand that, once I convey my intention to stay here, I cannot subsequently change my mind. This does not fully conform to the complete idea of 'one's free will'. But I have come here and am staying here for the sake of service. That is why I accept the condition laid in the reply to my letter, and it suits me well. Why should a *sevika* even entertain any wishes of her own? So long as revered Kasturba is here, I shall also be here.[2]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

265. LETTER TO ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

DETENTION CAMP,
October 26, 1943

THE ADDITIONAL SECRETARY

HOME DEPARTMENT

SIR,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter[3] of 14th instant received on 18th instant.

2. Your letter makes it clear that my reply[4] to the charges brought against me in the Government publication *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942-43*, has failed in its purpose, namely, to convince the Government of my innocence of those charges. Even my good faith is impugned.

[1] This was drafted by Gandhiji for Manu Gandhi.

[2] *Vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Ardeshir E. Kateli", 16-9-1943.

[3] *Vide* Appendix "Letter to Sir Richard Tottenham", 14-10-1943.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1942.

3. I observe, too, that the Government did not desire "comments" upon the charges. Previous pronouncements of the Government on such matters had led me to think otherwise. Be that as it may, your current letter seems to invite an answer.

4. In my opinion, I have, in my letter of 15th July last, unequivocally answered all charges referred to in your letter under reply. I have no regret for what I have done or said in the course of the struggle for India's freedom.

5. As to the Congress resolution of 8th August, 1942, apart from my belief that it is not only harmless but good all round, I have no legal power to alter it in any way. That can only be done by the body that passed that resolution, i.e., the All-India Congress Committee which is no doubt guided by its Working Committee. As the Government are aware, I offered[1] to meet the members of the Working Committee in order to discuss the situation and to know their mind. But my offer was rejected. I have thought and still think that my talk with them might have some value from the Government standpoint. Hence I repeat my offer.[2] But it may have no such value so long as the Government doubt my *bona fides*. As a satyagrahi, however, in spite of the handicap, I must reiterate what I hold to be good and of immediate importance in terms of war effort. But if my offer has no chance of being accepted so long as I retain my present views, and if the Government think that it is only my evil influence that corrupts people, I submit that the members of the Working Committee and other detenus should be discharged. It is unthinkable that when India's millions are suffering from preventable starvation and thousands are dying of it, thousands of men and women should be kept in detention on mere suspicion, when their energy and the expense incurred in keeping them under duress could, at this critical time, be usefully employed in relieving distress. As I have said in my letter of 15th July last, Congressmen abundantly proved their administrative, creative and humanitarian worth at the time of the last

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 19-1-1943.

[2] The offer was again rejected. In his letter dated November 18, the addressee said: "I am directed to say that since there is no change in your attitude towards the Congress resolution of August 8, 1942, and Government have received no indication that the views of any of the Members of the Working Committee differ from your own, a meeting between you would appear to serve no useful purpose. Both you and they are all aware of the conditions on which such a proposal could be entertained. I am to add that the other points in your letter have been noted."

terrible flood in Gujarat, and equally terrible earthquake in Bihar. The huge place in which I am being detained with a large guard around me, I hold to be waste of public funds. I should be quite content to pass my days in any prison.

6. As to "satisfactory assurances" about my "good conduct", I can only say that I am unaware of any unworthy conduct at any time. I presume that the impression Government have of my conduct is referable to the charges mentioned in the indictment, as I have succinctly called, *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942-43*. And since I have not only denied the charges *in toto* but, on the contrary, have ventured to bring counter-charges against the Government, I think that they should agree to refer both to an impartial tribunal. Seeing that a big political organization and not a mere individual is involved in the charges, I hold that it should be a vital part of the war effort to have the issue decided by a tribunal, if mutual discussion and effort are considered by the Government to be undesirable and/or futile.

7. Whilst your letter rejects my request that my letter of 15th July last should, in fairness to me, be published[1], you inform me that their decision in this matter, however, "is without prejudice to the freedom of Government to use at any time and in any manner which they think fit the various admissions contained in the communication which you have voluntarily addressed to them". I can only hope that this does not mean that as in the case of the *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942-43,* garbled extracts will be published. My request is that my letter should be published in full, if and when the Government think fit to make public use of it.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi, pp. 114-5. Also from a photostat: C.W. 10380. Courtesy: India Office Library

[1] It was published by the Government of India on June 21, 1944.

266. LETTER TO ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

DETENTION CAMP,
November 16, 1943

THE ADDITIONAL SECRETARY
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (HOME DEPARTMENT)
NEW DELHI

SIR,

Dr. Nayyar[1], whom the Government of India, or maybe the Government of Bombay have placed with me, received on the 12th instant a wire addressed to her by her brother[2] who is a railway employee in New Delhi, to the effect that his wife had a Caesarian operation and had lost so much blood, that he had applied for Dr. Nayyar's temporary discharge. This wire was received in Yeravda, as appears from the date marked on it, on the morning of the 5th. The second wire, which was sent from New Delhi on the 9th instant and received at Yeravda on the same afternoon, was delivered to her on the 15th instant. The wire reports the patient's death. Dr. Nayyar has already complained about the delay in the delivery of the first wire. She is naturally prostrate with grief which has been aggravated by the delay in the delivery of the wires. I do not know that, if she were a condemned criminal, the news of the death of a dear one would be withheld from her as this has been, without any cause that I can guess. It seems to me that those who are lodged with me have to suffer extra hardship by reason of their being so lodged. For, it is not only Dr. Nayyar who has to suffer, others do likewise. Thus Dr Gilder is debarred from receiving visits even from his ailing wife or his daughter. Little Manu Gandhi can receive neither her father nor her sisters, nor can my wife receive visits from her sons or grandchildren. I discount the fact that the former could have gone out if she resented the restrictions. I know too, that my son Ramdas was permitted to visit his mother when she was very ill. I do not understand this denial of ordinary rights of prisoners. I can understand the restrictions against me by reason of the Government's

[1] Dr. Sushila Nayyar
[2] Mohanlal Nayyar; *vide* "Talk with Nirmala and Devdas Gandhi", 7-12-1943.

special displeasure against me. But the restrictions on the others it is difficult to understand, unless it be that the Government do not trust those who are put in charge of us. On any other basis it is difficult to understand why the Superintendent of the camp, or even the Inspector-General, cannot deal with the wires of the nature I have referred to, and with the visitors who may be permitted to visit the co-detenus.

I request early relief.[1]

I am,

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3922. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts: Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 46, p. 5

267. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

DETENTION CAMP,
November 16, 1943

THE SECRETARY,
GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY (H.D.)
BOMBAY

SIR,

I enclose herewith for dispatch a letter[2] addressed to the Government of India, but it need not be dispatched, if the Government

[1] The Bombay Government's reply dated November 23 read: "Government most regrets that there has been so much delay in the transmission to Miss Nayyar of the two telegrams addressed to her. Arrangements have now been made by which telegrams will be handled more expeditiously. . . . On the subject of Dr. Gilder's interviews with members of his family, a letter was recently received from his daughter, and it has been referred to the Government of India. A copy of your letter under reference has now been forwarded to the Government of India in continuation. . . ." A letter dated November 30, addressed to Gandhiji from the Government of India, read: "Government of India have agreed to allow Dr. Gilder to have an interview with his wife and daughter under certain conditions, and they will be prepared to consider requests for similar interviews under suitable conditions for other members of the party who are detained with you, if any special need for them arises."

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

of Bombay can *suo moto* deal with the matters referred to therein. My object is to secure as prompt a relief as possible.

I am,

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3923. Also from Bombay Secret Abstracts: Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 46, p. 17

268. TALK WITH MIRABEHN

November 18, 1943

When I asked Bapuji as to how we should deal with dangerous wild animals such as tigers, bears, panthers, etc., and also snakes and scorpions, he said:

It is a difficult question. If I am to give a definite answer for acting upon, I must debate it in my mind for a while.

I suggested to Bapuji that it was a question which we would have to settle on a nation-wide scale before long, and I would ask him again after he had thought it over for two or three days. When I again asked Bapuji he replied:

If I were faced with the option of killing a tiger or a snake, or otherwise being killed by it, I would rather be killed by it than take its life. But that is a personal position, not to be put forward for adoption by others. If I had the fearless power to tame these dangerous creatures by the force of my love and my will, and could show others how to do likewise, then I should have the right to advise other people to follow my example.

But I have not that power. I must, therefore, advise others to kill all creatures, dangerous to human life, such as tigers, bears, snakes, scorpions, etc., and also vermin such as fleas, flies and mosquitoes as well as rats and other crop-destroying vermin. It should be done in the most human way possible, and with regard to vermin, which is often the outcome of carelessness and dirt, we should try to live in such a way as not to give rise to its occurrence.

"Then," I replied, "this means that you are no longer satisfied with the catching of snakes, rats, etc., and the turning of them loose elsewhere, as is done in Sevagram and other places."

That is so. If one is not prepared to live in the company of these creatures oneself, one has no right to turn them loose on other people's lands. For that is what it comes to. One may remove them

from the Ashram and let them go in a jungly place, but that jungly place also belongs to someone, and women and children will, as likely as not, be going there to gather cow-dung and wood, or if it is rats one is letting loose, they will be sure to find their way to the nearest fields. One has either got to live with these creatures or destroy them. And to turn one's own place into a vermin sanctuary is not fair on one's neighbours either. Therefore live cleanly and carefully, and if even then these creatures appear, they must be destroyed.

Then I said to Bapuji: "Seeing that tigers, bears, etc., have got to be killed, and that in the most human way possible, should not some suitable person in each village be provided with a rifle?"

That is a difficult question. If one man may have a rifle, why not all people who are capable of handling arms. But be that as it may, if rifles are to be used and one man is to be chosen for the job, I think he should be elected by the villagers.[1]

This is correct but I am not satisfied as it appears in cold writing.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 9103

269. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

DETENTION CAMP,
December 1, 1943

THE SECRETARY
GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY (HOME DEPARTMENT)
BOMBAY

SIR,

I write this in continuation of my letter[2] of November 16, 1943. As the Government are aware, Dr. Nayyar's brother's wife who had an abdominal operation for delivery, died leaving behind a week-old infant. The only female member of the family is Dr. Nayyar's mother, a widowed old lady, who is a chronic invalid. Dr. Nayyar received from her brother in New Delhi the following wire on November 16, 1943:

[1] What follows is in Gandhiji's hand with the signature in Devanagari.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 16-11-1943

Proposing sending you baby with Prakash, Government permitting.Wire approval applying Government you yourself too.

To this she sent the following reply on November 17, 1943:

Just received wire. Permission improbable. Hence advise Prakash, Satya alternatively staying with mother till baby out of danger.

She has had no reply yet from her brother. But she has now heard from her uncle's daughter, Dr. Prakash Nayyar, who is Assistant Superintendent at the Bettiah Raj Hospital (Bihar). She went to Delhi specially for the purpose of helping the bereaved family. She says, she cannot stay any length of time in Delhi, and is strongly of opinion that the best place for the motherless baby is near Dr. Nayyar. Dr. Satyavati Malhotra (Satya) is also a cousin and is serving in the Lady Dufferin Hospital, Quetta. A postcard was received from her on 29th ultimo saying that she cannot get leave to go to Delhi till January next. Dr. Nayyar tells me, she would gladly take charge of the baby, if the Government can see their way to grant the necessary permission. Naturally the responsibility regarding the baby would be solely hers. It would be the best way out of the difficulty. If, however, Government cannot grant the permission, the next best thing would be to grant Dr. Nayyar a brief parole (say, two months') to enable her to look after the baby during the initial period and make arrangements for its future care. Dr. Nayyar has been placed here, according to the Government communique of 30th August, 1942, for my sake. She has been medical attendant to my wife and me for several years. She and her brother are like our children. Therefore, even her temporary absence will be for us a deprivation. Dr. Gilder was brought here during my fast. His aid is, of course, inestimable both on account of his great knowledge and experience. But for obvious reasons he cannot replace Dr. Nayyar. Moreover she is effectively dividing the secretarial work with her brother. I know it is open to the Government to take away both the doctors from us. I simply mention the facts as they are, to help the Government to a correct decision. Whatever the inconvenience to my wife and to me, we would rather that Dr. Nayyar got the parole if she cannot have the baby here.

As the suspense is great, and as the life of the baby hangs in the balance, may I request an early decision? If the Bombay Government have not the power of decision in their hands, this letter

may be kindly treated as addressed to the Government of India and the decision obtained through the phone.[1]

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Chief Commissioner's Office, Bombay, File No. 1110(108), p. 13. Courtesy: Government of Maharashtra

270. TALK WITH NIRMALA AND DEVDAS GANDHI[2]

December 7,1943

3.30 to 4.35 p.m.

Talk about domestic affairs and enquiry about the health of relations, friends and some people of Sevagram Ashram.

Mrs. Ramdas asked about the health of other inmates of the palace.

Mrs. Ramdas said that Dr. Dinshaw Mehta, with whom she is now staying, had sent word that he was willing to offer his services for Mrs. Gandhi, if permitted by the Government. . . .

Mr. Gandhi told her to inform Mr. Ramdas that there was no need for him to come from Nagpur for the present.

4.45 to 6.45 p.m.

After making mutual enquiries about the family members, Mr. Devdas mentioned about the talk which took place between him and Sir Richard Tottenham, before he left Delhi for Poona, regarding (1) Nayyar's family, (2) the newly-born baby of her [brother] Mohanlal Nayyar, and (3) whether he would discuss with his father about some political affairs. Mr. Devdas said that he was not permitted by Sir Richard to discuss about the political affairs.

Then they talked and discussed lengthily about the baby's care and where and how to arrange for it and also about the release on parole of Dr. Nayyar. During the parole discussion Mr. Gandhi said that it was the duty of every satyagrahi to court jail again, if released. He also said that he was in correspondence with the Government about the baby and regular monthly interviews for other inmates of this camp.[3] Some

[1] In his letter dated December 11, the addressee "regretted that neither request could be granted".

[2] This and the following item are extracted from enclosures to a secret letter dated March 9, 1943, addressed to Secretary, Home Department, Government of Bombay, by the officer-in-charge, Aga Khan Palace, who described these as "notes taken at the time of interviews".

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 16-11-1943, and the preceding item.

talk took place about the Bengal famine, and Mr. Devdas said that latterly some good arrangements were being made and the funds raised were used through public hands and not through Government.

Mr. Devdas asked his father how he passed his time. Mr. Gandhi replied that he taught Sanskrit to Dr. Nayyar and Miss Manu, and the major part of his time was passed in preparing an index in all subjects from the various newspapers and filing the cuttings from the papers.[1]

Mr. Gandhi said that there was some correspondence between him and Government of India on *Congress Responsibility*, and he had asked[2] the Government to release the correspondence but Government had refused.

From the replies received from Government, I understand that I will be kept in custody for five years more. . . .

Enquiry about health of: Prithvi Singh, Jayaprakash, Pandit Govind Malaviya, Vallabhbhai and Meherali.

Chief Commissioner's Office, Bombay, File No. 76-1, Secret, Home Department, Special Branch (6), 1943-44. Courtesy: Government of Maharashtra

271. TALK WITH DEVDAS GANDHI[3]

December 9, 1943

4.15 to 5.20 p.m.

Mr. Devdas informed his father about the telegram he had sent to Sir Richard Tottenham regarding the condition of his mother.

He asked his father whether he received the following newspapers: *Free Press, Social Reformer* and *Indian Express.*

Mr. Gandhi replied that these papers were not supplied to him, though a copy of *Reformer* came during the week.

Enquiry about the health of: Prabhudas Gandhi, Narahari Parikh, Kishorelal Mashruwala and Rajaji.

Mr. Gandhi said about the ill-health of Mirabehn that she was getting acute pain in her back and arm for the last six months. Doctors, civil surgeons and specialists examined and treated her but there was no visible relief. . . .

Chief Commissioner's Office, Bombay, File No. 76-1, Secret, Home Department, Special Branch (6), 1943-44. Courtesy: Government of Maharashtra

[1] For a detailed report of Gandhiji's daily routine, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Officer-in-Charge, Aga Khan Palace to Inspector-General of Prisons, Poona", 15-12-1943.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 26-10-1943.

[3] *Vide* 1st footnote of "Talk with Nirmala and Devdas Gandhi", 7-12-1943.

272. LETTER TO ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

DETENTION CAMP,
December 14, 1943

THE ADDITIONAL SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME DEPARTMENT
NEW DELHI

SIR,

I beg to acknowledge your letter about Dr. Nayyar of 6th instant in reply to mine[1] of the 1st instant. It was received yesterday afternoon together with that of the Government of Bombay after 12 days of suspense and anxiety. I am sorry that the Government could not recognize the humanity underlying my alternative request. In the absence of reasons for the unexpected decision, my conclusion, that the punishment inflicted by the decision on the Nayyar family is due to Dr. Nayyar being housed with me, receives additional strength. The sorrow caused by the decision is somewhat balanced by the fact that the baby, as far as can be judged, is still living.

I am,
Yours, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

Chief Commissioner's Office, Bombay, File No. 1110 (108), p. 27. Courtesy: Government of Maharashtra

273. LETTER TO SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM

DETENTION CAMP,
December 22, 1943

SIR,

This letter is to approach the Government about Shri Mirabehn who, forsaking the easy life of her English home came to me 19 years ago in search of things of the spirit for which her heart had been yearning. I feel, therefore, a special responsibility for her welfare.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of Bombay", 1-12-1943.

Now, she has been suffering for the last seven months from pains in the region of the left shoulder blade, which often extend from the neck to the tips of her fingers. She wrote to the Inspector-General of Prisons describing her condition, and I understand her letter is before the Government.

Lt. Col. Shah consulted the Civil Surgeon of Poona and the treatment he advised was carried out but without substantial benefit. The Civil Surgeon then very kindly consulted Captain Simcox, R. A. M. C. of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London, who had made a special study of this condition. He immediately diagnosed her case as adhesions, for which he said four or five manipulations together with daily exercises would be necessary. He gave her the first manipulation then and there. Unfortunately he had to leave the same day for Karachi and is not likely to return to Poona. Shri Mirabehn has done her best with the exercises and the arm has considerably improved, but pains persist, and whenever she is a little run down, has a slight temperature or a sore throat, the pains return in full force and disable her for any work for some days. She has become anxious lest the trouble may become chronic, and permanently incapacitate her for an active life.

I would suggest that she be either transferred to wherever Captain Simcox may be at present for completion of the manipulations started by him, or that she be released on parole for getting available treatment. I am sure the Government would not wish her to be permanently damaged.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : India Office Library and Records. Courtesy : The British Library, London

274. TALK WITH MIRABEHN

December 24, 1943

The fundamental essential in non-violence is right thinking.

It may be asked —'What is right thinking?' Right thinking is not right contemplation or right planning; it is right conception of fundamentals, for example, 'God is' is right thinking, and 'God is not' is wrong thinking. 'I must be honest' is right thinking, 'I may be

dishonest', is wrong thinking.

When the mind is habituated to right thinking, right action follows spontaneously, but when the mind turns to wrong thinking, wrong action will follow. And, even if circumstances lead one[1] to right action, if the mind is given to wrong thinking, the right action will be lacking in convincing force, and it will also not bring to the doer all the fruits[2] of right action.

Non-violence without right thinking will never carry within itself the vital power of faith—or, if you prefer, conviction. Nor will the man who is not a habitual right thinker be able to depend on himself to act rightly (even if he wants to) at a given moment.

The foregoing is the cream of a conversation I had with Bapuji during the morning walk on December 24, 1943.

After discussing the meaning of right thinking, Bapuji applied it to the present situation in the country. He pointed out how lack of right thinking led people to seek advancement of India through co-operation with evil (in the form of the British system). They pursue false hopes and empty promises. And again it is wrong thinking which fills them with fear of the growing consolidation of the Muslims. All these things are illusions after which and from which they run because they lack the right conception of fundamentals.

During the talk Bapuji said in parenthesis one very striking thing. When he gave, as an illustration of wrong thinking, 'I may be dishonest', he added:

Of course there is no such thing as 'I must be dishonest.'[3]

Correct, December 29, 1943.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 9104

[1] Gandhiji had substituted the word for Mirabehn's expression: "the reason".
[2] Mirabehn's note has: "doer the true fruits".
[3] What follows is in Gandhiji's hand.

275. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON[1]

DETENTION CAMP,
December 29, 1943

DEAR AGATHA,

It was a perfect pleasure to receive your unexpected letter yesterday afternoon. Dr. Gilder and Mira and Pyarelal and Sushila have shared it with me. I gave Ba its gist. She is oscillating between life and death. The complications are many and great. She is receiving all the attention possible in a detention camp.

As for the subject matter of your letter, I am the same man you have known me. The spirit of Andrews is ever with me. But suspicion about my motives and utter distrust of my word in high places has hitherto rendered every move made by me nugatory. However, I am watching, waiting and praying. Truth and non-violence remain my sheet-anchor as never before. They sustain me. I do not give up the hope that light will shine through the surrounding darkness.

Much love to you and all our friends,

Yours,
BAPU

MISS AGATHA HARRISON
2 CRANBOURNE COURT
ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD
LONDON S.W.11

From a photostat: G.N. 1524; also Bombay Secret Abstracts: Home Department, Special Branch (6), File No. 13-I, p. 13

[1] The addressee was Secretary of India Conciliation Group formed in 1931 by members of the Society of Friends and others. According to the G.N. source, she said: "In past years it had been possible to write to Gandhiji in prison. Now this was not possible. So I asked the India Office to let me send a few letters through them, *via* the Viceroy. In the one to which this is in answer, I wrote at length giving him an interpretation, as I saw it, of the situation here after the resolution, etc." For excerpts from the letter, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Agatha Harrison", 2-12-1943.

276. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT , GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

DETENTION CAMP,
December 29, 1943

THE SECRETARY
GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY (H.D.)
BOMBAY

SIR,

The Superintendent of this camp gave me yesterday afternoon a letter from Miss Agatha Harrison. According to her letter, she wrote to me by permission of the Rt. Hon. Secretary of State for India. I enclose herewith for dispatch to Miss Agatha Harrison my reply[1] to her letter.

I am,

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3924; also Bombay Secret Abstracts: Home Department, Special Branch (6), File No. 13-I, p. 11

277. LETTER TO ARDESHIR E. KATELI

DETENTION CAMP,
January 6, 1944

BHAI KHAN BAHADUR,

After the talk I had with my son Devdas today, I have ascertained Kasturba's wishes which are as follows:

1. In case Kanu Gandhi[2] cannot stay here during patient's illness, he should be allowed to visit her for about an hour daily so that he can sing her some *bhajans* and also do some little nursing. As you are aware, the patient is insistent upon having Kanu as a whole-time nurse.

2. The son and daughters of Jayabehn, whose names I have already given, and Dhirendra Gandhi should be permitted to come and sing and play to her, whenever they can come.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Also called 'Kanaiyo'; younger son of Narandas Gandhi

3. Including my father they were six brothers. Their descendants and sons-in-law would, according to the common practice, be regarded as near relations. Such of them whose names may be sent up by Devdas, Shamaldas or Jamnadas Gandhi, should be permitted to come and see her. The idea underlying this is that if some of the relations can see the patient once a week, it would give her some mental peace. In case they are given the permission, it is necessary that those who can come should be able to see her all together. The patient does not mind their number. On the contrary, the greater the number, the more pleased she would be.

4. I must confess that the patient has got into very low spirits. She despairs of life, and is looking forward to death to deliver her. If she rallies on one day, more often than not, she is worse on the next. Her state is pitiful. The aim behind seeking permission for visits from relations is that they may give her some peace.

5. I regard the experiment of having an ayah as having failed. Shrimati Prabhavati Jayaprakash Narayan has done a lot of nursing for the patient before. She is like a daughter to us. Her father himself sent her to stay in the Ashram when she was quite young. If she is sent here, she will be of great help.

I am,
Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3925

278. LETTER TO SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM

DETENTION CAMP,
January 13, 1944

SIR,

I beg to thank the Government for their reply to my letter of 22nd ultimo regarding Shri Mirabehn and for the arrangements made to send Capt. Simcox from time to time for the completion of the treatment begun by him.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

THE ADDITIONAL SECRETARY
TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
(HOME DEPARTMENT)
NEW DELHI

From a photostat : India Office Library and Records. Courtesy : The British Library, London

279. MESSAGE TO VIJAYALAKSHMI PANDIT

[After *January 14, 1944*][1]

Mahatma Gandhi conveyed his feelings of grief to Mrs. Pandit on the death of her husband through Mr. Devdas Gandhi when the latter saw him during Mrs. Gandhi's illness. Mahatma Gandhi could not write to her personally as he feels his hands are tied. He has asked Mrs. Pandit to remember that henceforth Mr. Pandit would live in her actions.

The Hindu, 19-2-1944

280. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

DETENTION CAMP,
January 24, 1944

SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY
(HOME DEPARTMENT)
BOMBAY

SIR,

I have been served with a notice[2] showing the cause of my detention and informing me that I have a right to make representation against the order. In the exercise of the right thus conferred upon me, I beg to say as follows:

I admit that I took a leading part in the passage of the Congress resolution of 8th August, 1942. I must deny emphatically that the mass movement sanctioned by the Congress was "calculated to

[1] From the reference to Ranjit Pandit who died in Lucknow on January 14; *vide* also "Letter to Vijayalakshmi Pandit", 1-2-1944.

[2] Issued by the addressee under Section 7 of the Restriction and Detention Ordinance, 1944 (III of 1944). It reads "(1) In pursuance of Section 7 of Ordinance No. III of 1944, you, MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI, are informed that the grounds for your detention were that you took a leading part in the passing of the Congress resolution of August 8, 1942, sanctioning a mass movement which was calculated to impede the successful prosecution of the war, and there was reason to suppose that, if not detained, you would take an active part in directing the movement. (2) You are informed that you have a right to make a representation in writing against the order under which you are detained. If you wish to make such a representation, you should address it to the undersigned and forward it through the officer-in-charge of your place of detention as soon as possible" (File No. 3/41/44. Courtesy: National Archives of India).

impede the successful prosecution of the war". Moreover I am in a position to show conclusively from my speeches at the Congress meeting and otherwise that there was no intention on my part, as the person in sole charge of the movement, to start it immediately and that, as publicly announced by me, I was to enter into correspondence with H.E. the Viceroy with a view to avoiding the contemplated movement. Had the correspondence proved abortive, being a firm and tried believer in non-violence, I would have taken every precaution to keep the movement under restraint.

By their hasty and ill-conceived action in arresting me and leading Congressmen, the Government goaded the populace to acts which they would otherwise have never done and thus did disservice to the Allied cause. By their persistence in continuing the unfortunate policy of August 1942, the Government are increasing the existing bitterness between the Government and the people. And this I say in spite of the fact that they are able to procure recruits and money enough for the military.

I have little hope of getting a fair or impartial hearing for my representation. By their pamphlet *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942-43*, Government have condemned unheard Congressmen and me. That pamphlet bristles with inaccuracies and reckless statements.

In view of the foregoing, I ask for an open investigation by an independent tribunal into the charges against the Congress, Congressmen and me, and counter-charges against the Government, or, in the alternative, the discharge of detained Congressmen and myself.[1]

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6642

[1] This letter was forwarded, on January 26, to Sir Richard Tottenham who advised the Government of Bombay, on February 17, to send the following reply to Gandhiji: "Government have considered your representation and have decided not to cancel the order under which you are detained. The order will, therefore, remain in force until July 15, 1944, unless sooner revoked or Government decide to extend it under Section 7 of ordinance No. III (File No. 3-41-44. Courtesy: National Archives of India).

281. TALK WITH DEVDAS GANDHI[1]

January 26, 1944

Mr. Devdas suggested that some country medicine should be tried for his mother. She has faith in Ayurvedic physician. Mr. Gandhi replied that Devdas should try for this and approach Government for allowing some vaidya to treat her. Further he said that he was going to write to Government for allowing Dinshaw Mehta[2] and Shiv Sharma of Lahore to give treatment to Mrs. Gandhi.

Mr. Devdas said that Mr. Pyarelal and Miss Nayyar were not applying to the authority for interview with their mother. . . . He applied to the Government of India three times on behalf of their mother for the interview, but the request was turned down. Mr. Gandhi replied that he had once written[3] to Government on the subject and would write again.

Bombay Secret Abstracts: Home Department, Special Branch (6), File No. 76-I, 1943-44

[1] This is extracted from a letter dated January 27, 1944, addressed to Secretary, Home Department, Government of Bombay, by the Officer-in-charge, Aga Khan Palace.

[2] Of the Nature-cure Clinic, Poona

[3] Probably the reference is to Gandhiji's suggestion to the Home Secretary, Government of Bombay, for two months' parole to Dr. Sushila Nayyar; *vide* "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of Bombay", 1-12-1943.

APPENDIX I

RESOLUTIONS PASSED BY CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE[1]

July 14, 1942

The events happening from day to day and the experience that the people of India are passing through confirm the opinion of Congressmen that British rule in India must end immediately, not merely because foreign domination even at its best is an evil in itself and a continuing injury to the subject people, but because India in bondage can play no effective part in defending herself and in affecting the fortunes of the war that is desolating humanity. The freedom of India is thus necessary not only in the interest of India, but also for the safety of the world and for the ending of Nazism, Fascism, militarism and other forms of imperialism, and the aggression of one nation over another. Ever since the outbreak of the World War, the Congress has studiedly pursued a policy of non-embarrassment. Even at the risk of making its satyagraha ineffective, it deliberately gave it a symbolic character in the hope that this policy of non-embarrassment carried to its logical extreme would be duly appreciated and that real power would be transferred to popular representatives so as to enable the nation to make its fullest contribution towards the realization of human freedom throughout the world, which is in danger of being crushed. It had also hoped that negatively nothing would be done which was calculated to tighten Britain's hold on India.

These hopes have, however, been dashed to pieces. The abortive Cripps proposals showed in the clearest possible manner that there was no change in the British Government's attitude towards India and that the British hold on India was in no way to be relaxed. In the negotiations with Sir Stafford Cripps, Congress representatives tried their utmost to achieve a minimum, consistent with the national demand, but to no avail. This frustration has resulted in a rapid and widespread increase of ill-will against Britain and a growing satisfaction at the success of Japanese arms.

The Working Committee view this development with grave apprehension as this, unless checked, will inevitable lead to a passive acceptance of aggression. The Committee hold that all aggression must be resisted, for any submission to it must mean the degradation of the Indian people and the continuation of their subjection. The Congress is anxious to avoid the experience of Malaya, Singapore, and Burma and desires to build up resistance to any aggression on or invasion of India by the

[1] *Vide* "Draft Resolution for the Congress Working Committee", 9-7-1942.

Japanese or any foreign power. The Congress would change the present ill-will against Britain into goodwill and make India a willing partner in a joint enterprise of securing freedom for the nations and peoples of the world and in the trials and tribulations which accompany it. This is only possible if India feels the glow of freedom.

The Congress representatives have tried their utmost to bring about a solution of the communal tangle. But this has been made impossible by the presence of the foreign power and only after the ending of foreign domination and intervention, can the present unreality give place to reality and the people of India, belonging to all groups and parties, face India's problems and solve them on a mutually agreed basis.

The present political parties formed chiefly with a view to attract the attention of and influence the British power, will then probably cease to function. For the first time in India's history, the realization will come home that the Princes, 'jagirdars,' 'zamindars' and propertied and moneyed classes derive their wealth and property from the workers in the fields and factories and elsewhere, to whom essentially power and authority must belong. On the withdrawal of British rule in India, responsible men and women of the country will come together to form a provisional government, representative of all important sections of the people of India which will later evolve a scheme by which a Constituent Assembly can be convened in order to prepare a Constitution for the Government of India acceptable to all sections of the people. Representatives of free India and representatives of Great Britain will confer together for the adjustment of future relations and for the co-operation of the two countries as allies in the common task of meeting aggression.

It is the earnest desire of the Congress to enable India to resist aggression effectively with the people's united will and strength behind it. In making the proposal for the withdrawal of the British rule from India, the Congress has no desire whatsoever to embarrass Great Britain or the Allied powers in their prosecution of the war, or in any way to encourage aggression on India or increase pressure on China by the Japanese or any other power associated with the Axis group. Nor does the Congress intend to jeopardize the defensive capacity of the Allied powers.

The Congress is, therefore, agreeable to the stationing of the armed forces of the Allies in India, should they so desire, in order to ward off and resist Japanese or other aggression and to protect and help China. The proposal of withdrawal of the British power from India was never intended to mean the physical withdrawal of all Britishers from India, and certainly not of those who would make India their home and live there as citizens and as equals with the others. If such a withdrawal takes place with goodwill it would result in the establishing of a stable provisional government in India and co-operation between this government and the United Nations in resisting aggression and helping China. The Congress realizes that there may be

risks involved in such a course. Such risks, however, have to be faced by any country in order to achieve freedom, and more especially at the present critical juncture in order to save the country and the larger cause of freedom the world over from far greater risks and perils. While, therefore, the Congress is impatient to achieve the national purpose it wishes to take no hasty steps and would like to avoid, in so far as is possible any course of action that might embarrass the United Nations. The Congress would be pleased with the British power if it accepts the very reasonable and just proposal herein made not only in the interest of India but also that of Britain and of the cause of freedom, to which the United Nations proclaim their adherence. Should, however, this appeal fail the Congress cannot view without the gravest apprehension the continuation of the present state of affairs involving a progressive deterioration in the situation and the weakening of India's will and power to resist aggression. The Congress will then be reluctantly compelled to utilize all the non-violent strength it might have gathered since 1920 when it adopted non-violence as part of its policy for the vindication of the political rights and liberty. Such a widespread struggle would inevitably be under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. As issues raised are of the most vital and far-reaching importance to the people of India as well as to the peoples of the United Nations the Working Committee refer them to the All-India Congress Committee for final decision. For this purpose the A.I.C.C. will meet in Bombay on the 7th of August, 1942.

The Transfer of Power, Vol. II, pp. 385-7; also The Indian Annual Register, 1942, Vol. II, pp. 207-9

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM C. RAJAGOPALACHRI AND OTHERS[1]

MADRAS,
July 18, 1942

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

We have carefully read the resolution passed by the Congress Working Committee at Wardha on July 14, which is to be placed before the meeting of the A. I. C. C. next month. In view of the far-reaching consequences of the adoption of this resolution, we feel it our duty, having worked with you since 1920, to place before you our considered views in this matter. While there can be no difference of view over India's demand for complete freedom from foreign domination, the idea of the withdrawal of Government being automatically replaced by another Government is altogether impossible. The State is not a mere superstructure, but is so intimately

[1] *Vide* "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 20-7-1942.

bound up with the functioning of every activity of the people that the withdrawal of the Government without a simultaneous replacement by another must involve a dissolution of the State and of society itself. It is unnatural for any Government to withdraw without transferring power to a successor by consent or without being forcibly replaced by another. The formation of a provisional government as well as the convening of the Constituents assembly are possible only if the continuity of the State is assured.

We feel, therefore, that, however difficult of achievement the Hindu-Muslim settlement may be, while the British Government is here and functioning, it is essential that, before a demand for withdrawal can be reasonably made, the major political organizations of this country, namely, the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League, should evolve a joint plan with regard to the provisional government which can take over power and preserve the continuity of the State. Even if we imagine that the British could ever under moral compulsion be made to withdraw unconditionally, we are convinced that the chaos that would follow under existing conditions would not permit within any reasonable time the formation of a provisional government such as you contemplate.

We consider it wrong to formulate a demand which, if complied with, must necessarily lead to anarchy or to frame a programme of widespread self-inflicted suffering based on the refusal of such a demand.

Your proposal that while the civil power may be withdrawn, the British and Allied forces may Continue in India in anticipation of a treaty with a problematic provisional Indian government will only lead to the exercise of all governmental functions by the military forces. This will happen if only for their own safety and effective functioning. They are further likely to be urged towards this step by local chieftains and suffering people. This would be the reinstallation of the British Government in a worse form.

In spite of these objections we might have submitted to your proposal if only because of the fact that the British are not going to withdraw, and in actual operation the movement would amount to a nationwide protest against the existing Government and may be productive of a satisfactory settlement in due course. But the critical international situation in which India is directly involved makes it certain that the party to gain immediately by the movement will be Japan. If the movement could possibly displace the British Government, installing a national government capable of resisting Japanese aggression, it might be worth taking all risks attached to it. But as this result is not even remotely probable, it will only produce more intense and large-scale repression and suffering which will facilitate Japaneses invasion and occupation.

It is hardly likely that the authorities will allow the movement to proceed under central direction in an orderly and direct fashion. Even if we do not mind sporadic violence that may result from lack of proper control, there is another serious danger. When responsible leaders are removed and their guidance is no longer available the movement can easily be taken advantage of by the enemy and be converted into a fifth-column activity on his behalf.

Any movement started by you would have commanded our loyal participation, in spite of differences of opinion, if the movement did not involve such grave consequences as pointed out above. Our conviction is strong enough to make it our duty publicly to oppose the proposal on these grounds. But it may be thought at this stage that your move will operate as a protest with an international appeal and bring about a fresh approach towards a political settlement for India without actually plunging the country in direct action. In order that any step on our part may not lessen this chance we refrain from giving public expression to our opposition but send this letter to entreat you to desist from taking the steps you have adumbrated.

(Sd.) C. Rajagopalachari,
K. Santhanam,
S. Ramanathan,
Dr. T. S. S. Rajan

The Indian Annual Register, 1942. VoI. II, PP. 206-7

APPENDIX III

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI'S FORMULA[1]

Basis for terms of settlement between the Indian National Congress and the AII-India Muslim League to which Gandhiji and Mr. Jinnah agree and which they will endeavour respectively to get the Congress and the League to approve:

(1) Subject to the terms set out below as regards the Constitution for free India, the Muslim League endorses the Indian demand for independence and will co-operate with the Congress in the formation of a provisional interim government for the transitional period.

(2) After the termination of the War, a commission shall be appointed for demarcating contiguous districts in the north-west and east of India, wherein the Muslim population is in absolute majority. In the areas thus demarcated, a plebiscite of all the inhabitants held on the basis of adult suffrage or other practicable franchise shall ultimately decide the issue of separation from Hindustan. If the majority decide in favour of forming a sovereign State separate from Hindustan, such decision shall

[1] *Vide* "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 20-7-1942.

be given effect to, without prejudice to the right of districts on the border to choose to join either State.

(3) It will be open to all parties to advocate their points of view before the plebiscite is held.

(4) In the event of separation, mutual agreements shall be entered into for safeguarding defence, and commerce and communications and for other essential purposes.

(5) Any transfer of population shall only be on an absolutely voluntary basis.

(6) These terms shall be binding only in case of transfer by Britain of full power and responsibility for the governance of India.

Gandhi-Jinnah Talks, p. 36

APPENDIX IV

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

August 5, 1942

I have just seen for the first time the Government's 'communique' issuing certain documents obtained during the police raid from the A.I.C.C. office. It is astonishing to what a pass the Government of India has been reduced when it has to adopt these discreditable and dishonourable tactics. Normally such tactics require no answer. But as there is likely to be misapprehension, I wish to clear up some matters.

It is not our custom to keep detailed minutes of the Working Committee's meetings. Only final decisions are recorded. On this occasion the Assistant Secretary took brief notes unofficially apparently for his own record. These notes are very brief and disjointed and represent several days' prolonged debate during which I must have spoken on various occasions for two or three hours. Only a few sentences were taken down and torn from their context. They often give a wrong impression. None of us had a chance of seeing these notes or of revising them. The record is very unsatisfactory and incomplete and hence often incorrect.

In our discussions Mahatma Gandhi was not present. We had to consider every aspect of the question fully and to weigh the implications of words and phrases in the draft resolutions. If Gandhiji had been there, much of this discussion might have been avoided as he could have explained to us his attitude more fully.

Thus when the question of British withdrawal from India was considered, I pointed out that if the armed forces were suddenly withdrawn, the Japanese might well advance and invade the country without hindrance. This obvious difficulty was

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 5-8-1942.

removed when Gandhiji later explained that British and other armed forces might remain to prevent aggression.

In regard to the statement that Gandhiji expected an Axis victory, an important qualification has been omitted. What he has repeatedly said and what I have referred to is his belief that unless Britain changes her whole policy in regard to India and her colonial possessions, she is heading for disaster. He has further stated that if a suitable change in this policy was made and the War really became one for freedom for all people, then victory would assuredly come to the United Nations.

The references to negotiations with Japan are also incorrect and entirely torn from their context. Gandhiji always sends notice to his adversary before coming into conflict. He would thus have called upon Japan not only to keep away from India, but to withdraw from China, etc. In any event he was determined to resist every aggressor in India and he advised our people to do so even to the point of death. They were never to submit.

It is absurd to say that any of us envisaged any arrangements with Japan giving her right of passage, etc. What I said was that Japan would want this, but we could never agree. Our whole policy has all along been based on uttermost resistance to aggression.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-8-1942, *and Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government,* 1942-44, pp. 205-6

APPENDIX V

RESOLUTION PASSED BY ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE[1]

[*August 8, 1942*]

The All-India Congress Committee has given the most careful consideration to the reference made to it by the Working Committee in their resolution dated July 14, 1942, and to subsequent events, including the development of the war situation, the utterances of responsible spokesmen of the British Government, and the comments and criticisms made in India and abroad. The Committee approves of and endorses that resolution, and is of opinion that events subsequent to it have given it further justification, and have made it clear that the immediate ending of British rule in India is an urgent necessity, both for the sake of India and for the success of the cause of the United Nations. The continuation of that rule is degrading and enfeebling India and making her progressively less capable of defending herself and of contributing to the cause of world freedom.

[1] *Vide* "Interview to the Associated Press", 6-8-1942.

The Committee has viewed with dismay the deterioration of the situation on the Russian and Chinese fronts and conveys to the Russian and Chinese peoples its high appreciation of their heroism in defence of their freedom. This increasing peril makes it incumbent on all those who strive for freedom and who sympathize with the victims of aggression, to examine the foundations of the policy so far pursued by the Allied Nations, which have led to repeated and disastrous failure. It is not by adhering to such aims and policies and methods that failure can be converted into success, for past experience has shown that failure is inherent in them. These policies have been based not on freedom so much as on the domination of subject and colonial countries, and the continuation of the imperialist tradition and method. The possession of Empire, instead of adding to the strength of the ruling power, has become a burden and a curse. India, the classic land of modern Imperialism, has become the crux of the question, for by the freedom of India will Britain and the United Nations be judged, and the people of Asia and Africa be filled with hope and enthusiasm.

The ending of British rule in this country is thus a vital and immediate issue on which depend the future of the war and the success of freedom and democracy. A free India will assure this success by throwing all her great resources in the struggle for freedom and against the aggression of Nazism, Fascism and Imperialism. This will not only affect materially the fortunes of the war, but will bring all subject and oppressed humanity on the side of the United Nations, and give these nations, whose ally India would be, the moral and spiritual leadership of the world. India in bondage will continue to be the symbol of British Imperialism and the taint of that Imperialism will affect the fortunes of all the United Nations.

The peril of today, therefore, necessitates the independence of India and the ending of British dominations. No future promises or guarantees can affect the present situation or meet that peril. They cannot produce the needed psychological effect on the mind of the masses. Only the glow of freedom now can release that energy and enthusiasm of millions of people which will immediately transform the nature of the war.

The A. I. C. C., therefore, repeats with all emphasis the demand for the withdrawal of the British power from India. On the declaration of India's independence, a provisional government will be formed and free India will become an ally of the United Nations, sharing with them in the trials and tribulations of the joint enterprise of the struggle for freedom. The provisional government can only be formed by the co-operation of the principal parties and groups in the country. It will thus be a composite government, representative of all important sections of the people of India. Its primary functions must be to defend India and resist aggression with all the armed as well as the non-violent forces at its command, together with the Allied powers, and to promote the well-being and progress of the workers in the fields

and factories and elsewhere, to whom essentially all power and authority must belong. The provisional government will evolve a scheme for a constitutent assembly which will-prepare a constitution for the government of India acceptable to all sections of the people. This constitution, according to the Congress view, should be a federal one, with the largest measure of autonomy for the federating units, and with the residuary powers vesting in these units. The future relations between India and the Allied nations will be adjusted by representatives of all these free countries conferring together for their mutual advantage and for their co-operation in the common task of resisting aggression. Freedom will enable India to resist aggression effectively with the people's united will and strength behind it.

The freedom of India must be the symbol of and prelude to this freedom of all other Asiatic nations under foreign domination. Burma, Malaya, Indo-China, the Dutch Indies, Iran and Iraq must also attain their complete freedom. It must be clearly understood that such of these countries as are under Japanese control now must not subsequently be placed under the rule or control of any other colonial power.

While the A. I. C. C. must primarily be concerned with the independence and defence of India in this hour of danger, the Committee is of opinion that the future peace, security and ordered progress of the world demand a world federation of free nations, and on no other basis can the problems of the modern world be solved. Such a world federation would ensure the freedom of its constituent nations, the prevention of aggression and exploitation by one nation over another, the protection of national minorities, the advancement of all backward areas and peoples, and the pooling of the world's resources for the common good of all. On the establishment of such a world federation, disarmament would be practicable in all countries, national armies, navies and air forces would no longer be necessary, and a world federal defence force would keep the world peace and prevent aggression.

An independent India would gladly join such a world federation and co-operate on an equal basis with other countries in the solution of international problems.

Such a federation should be open to all nations who agree with its fundamental principles. In view of the war, however, the federation must inevitably, to begin with, be confined to the United Nations. Such a step taken will have a most powerful effect on the war, on the peoples of the Axis countries, and on the peace to come.

The Committee regretfully realizes, however, that despite the tragic and overwhelming lessons of the war and the perils that overhang the world, the governments of few countries are yet prepared to take this inevitable step towards world federation. The reactions of the British Government and the misguided criticism of the foreign Press also make it clear that even the obvious demand for India's independence is resisted, though this has been made essentially to meet the present peril and to enable India to defend herself and help China and Russia in their hour of

need. The Committee is anxious not to embarrass in any way the defence of China or Russia, whose freedom is precious and must be preserved, or to jeopardize the defensive capacity of the United Nations. But the peril grows both to India and these nations, and inaction and submission to a foreign administration at this stage is not only degrading India and reducing her capacity to defend hereself and resist aggression, but is no answer to that growing peril and is no service to the peoples of the United Nations. The earnest appeal of the Working Committee to Great Britain and the United Nations has so far met with no response, and the criticisms made in many foreign quarters have shown an ignorance of India's and the world's need, and sometimes even hostility to India's freedom, which is significant of a mentality of domination and racial superiority which cannot be tolerated by a proud people conscious of their strength and of the justice of their cause.

The A. I. C.C. would yet again, at this last moment, in the interest of world freedom, renew this appeal to Britain and the United Nations. Bat the Committee feels that it is no longer justified in holding the nation back from endeavouring to assert its will against an imperialist and authoritarian government, which dominates over and prevents it from functioning in its own interest and in the interest of humanity. The Committee resolves, therefore, to sanction, for the vindication of India's inalienable right to freedom and independence, the starting of a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale, so that the country might utilize all the nonviolent strength it has gathered during the last twenty-two years of peaceful struggle. Such a struggle must inevitably be under the leadership of Gandhiji and the Committee requests him to take the lead and guide the nation in the steps to be taken.

The Committee appeals to the people of India to face the dangers and hardships that will fall to their lot with courage and endurance, and to hold together under tile leadership of Gandhiji and carry out his instructions as disciplined soldiers of Indian freedom. They must remember that nonviolence is the basis of this movement. A time may come when it may not be possible to issue instructions or for instructions to reach our people, and when no Congress committees can function. When this happens, every man and woman who is participating in this movement must function for himself or herself within the four corners of the general instructions issued. Every Indian who desires freedom and strives for it must be his own guide urging him on along the hard road where there is no resting place and which leads ultimately to the independence and deliverance of India.

Lastly, whilst the A. I. C. C. has stated its own view of the future governance under free India the A. I. C. C. wishes to make it quite clear to all concerned that by embarking on mass struggle it has no intention of gaining power for the Congress. The power, when, it comes, will belong to the whole people of India.

The Indian Annual Register, 1942, Vol. II, pp. 209-11*;* also *Harijan,* 9-8-1942 and *The Transfer of Power,* Vol. II, pp. 621-4

APPENDIX VI

LETTER FROM C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[1]

48 BAZLULLAH ROAD,
THYAGARAYANAGAR,
MADRAS,
August 8, 1942

MY DEAR BAPU,

I am a great nuisance, but you must bear with me. Your last telegram to the effect that everything is being done in the direction indicated by me, "though not identical" gives me some vague relief. But I urge that the straight approach is better than a suspicious and niggardly one, the very error which we feel the British are guilty of in their dealings with us. This is the psychological moment to give what we must to the Q.A. when he perhaps feels neglected by the British. Do not think he has been forgotten by them or that he has receded into unimportance by reason of the storm raised by you. Others may think so, but you won't. The British are deliberately refraining from referring to him or to the Muslim question in order to avoid irritation. But the apparent is also....[2] Going to him now may produce better results than when he. . .[3] obviously in the way and therefore important. It may be amusing that I should address a lecture on non-violence to you. But Newton himself may listen to his newest pupil sometimes! And Newton may go wrong if he refuses to do so. Anyway I have your [certifi]cate that did not go to my head at the time you gave that richly. I suppose you will not withdraw them because I have to differ from you now *a la* the nawabs.

You may reiterate and insist as much as you like on non-violence. But there is not a shadow of doubt. The momentum of your present move is wholly —almost wholly—the violence of the Axis powers and the critical state to which the British have been thereby reduced—not the non-violence or love inherent in your proposals and plans. You are scientific enough to see this as plain as the chemist in a laboratory.

What am I driving at? It is this. What you are now doing is not an adventure in non-violence though it may have that delusive appearance. It is generating intense hatred in the British mind as a result of the utilization of the violence of others that they feel you are pitilessly making at a most critical point of time in the war. There

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to C. Rajagopalachari", 7-8-1942. According to C. R. Narasimhan this was airmailed to Bombay on August 8, and since Gandhiji was arrested early on August 9, he could not have seen it.

[2] Omissions as in the source

[3] *ibid*

is no room in this for fasting and all that. If you undertake it, the great hatred you have generated will prevent the operation of the forces of non-violence. It is politics, pure and simple, and let it be done as politics are done. There is no ahimsa in what you have got the Congress finally to accept or rather what the Congress has got you to accept. Plans suitable only for ahimsa have no place in this.

Love.

RAJA

From a copy: C.W. 10925. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan

APPENDIX VII

RESOLUTION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA[1]

NEW DELHI,
August 7, 1942

The A. I. C. C. have ratified the resolution passed by the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress on 5th August. That Resolution demands the immediate withdrawal of British power from India, and sanctions "the starting of a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale". The Governor-General in Council has been aware, too, for some days past of dangerous preparations by the Congress Party for unlawful, and in some cases violent activities, directed among other things to the interruption of communications and public utility services, the organization of strikes, tampering with the loyalty of Government servants, and interference with defence measures, including recruitment.

2. The Government of India have waited patiently in the hope that wiser counsels might prevail. They have been disappointed in that hope. To a challenge such as the present there can only be one answer. The Government of India would regard it as wholly incompatible with their responsibilities to the people of India, and their obligations to the Allies, that a demand should be discussed the acceptance of which would plunge India into confusion and anarchy internally, and would paralyze her effort in the common cause of human freedom.

3. For the demand of the Congress leaders there is no warrant. In the view of the Government of India that demand is difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile with a full sense of responsibility on the part of the leaders of the Congress Party, or a full appreciation by them of the realities of the present situation. The Congress Working Committee admit that "there may be risks involved". They are right. Acceptance of the resolution must mean the exposure of India to Axis attack from without. Internally the withdrawal of British rule invites civil war, the collapse of law and

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Roger Lumley", 10-8-1942.

order, the outbreak of communal feud, the dislocation of economic life with its inevitable hardships. Nor can the Government of India accept the claim of the Congress Party to speak for India as a whole. The Congress Party has for long occupied a position of great prominence and great importance in Indian political life. At this day its importance is substantial. But it is the duty of the Government of India to take a balanced view of the interests of all sections of Indian thought and Indian opinion. And looking as they must to the repeated protests even in these last few days by the leaders of great communities and solidly established interests, by so many leaders of liberal thought, by those great sections of the population which are giving unstinted and invaluable support to war against Axis aggression, they are confirmed in their view that that claim has no solid foundation, and that acceptance of the proposals now put forward by the Congress Party must mean the abandonment of all those large and powerful elements in the population which have condemned the course of action proposed by the Congress Party and which resent and resist the widespread dislocation which its acceptance would involve of India's war effort and of the general life of the community.

4. Nor can the Congress leaders claim that only thus can India's future be assured. The Congress Party is not India's mouthpiece, yet, in the interests of securing their own dominance, and in pursuit of their totalitarian policy its leaders have consistently impeded the efforts made to bring India to full nationhood. But for the resistance of the Congress Party to constructive endeavours, India might even now be enjoying self-government. British policy for India's future stands clear. It is that once hostilities cease, India shall devise for herself with full freedom of decision, and on a basis embracing all, and not only a single party, the form of government which she regards as most suited to her conditions: and that in the mean time Indian leaders shall fully participate in the government of their country, and in the counsels of the Commonwealth and of the United Nations. The fullest opportunity for the attainment of self-government by the people of India has been guaranteed by His Majesty's Government. It is on the basis fully accepted by His Majesty's Government and by the people of Great Britain, that the fullest opportunity shall be given for the attainment of self-government by the Indian people, that when the day of victory comes the final structure of India's constitution will be erected by Indians themselves. That those guarantees given by the British Parliament and the British people are accepted by the people of India we firmly believe. The suggestion put forward by the Congress Party that the millions of India uncertain as to the future are ready, despite the sad lessons of so many martyr countries, to throw themselves into the arms of the invader is one that the Government of India cannot accept as a true representation of the feeling of the people of this great country.

5. The leaders of the Congress Party have claimed that the withdrawal of British rule "with goowill" will "result in establishing a stable provisional

government in India, and co-operation between this Government and the United Nations in resisting aggression and helping China". There is no justification for those claims. Nor can the Government of India accept the suggestion that a stable provisional government could be formed in a moment of time within a day or two of the withdrawal of British power. Past experience has shown to their profound regret the existence of the deep differences in this country, the harmonizing of which must be the object of all on whom responsibility falls, the removal of which is the ambition and the hope of the present Government of India. But to deny that those problems confront India today would be to ignore the facts: and the Government of India are satisfied that the interval between the withdrawal of British rule and the establishment of a stable provisional government would provide an open opportunity for the enemies of order and for all dissident elements in the population. In the view of the Government of India it is not too much to say that acceptance of the demand now put forward by the Congress Party must mean the betrayal of the Allies, whether in or outside India, the betrayal in particular of Russia and China, the betrayal of those ideal to which so much support has been given and is given today from the true heart and mind of India, the betrayal of India's fighting men, whose glory is so great, and the betrayal of all those loyal and co-operating elements in India which do not support the Congress Party, but which have played so active and so valuable a part in the prosecution of the War.

6. India has today a government stronger and more representative than ever in the past, a government predominantly Indian and non-official, a government determined to prosecute the War and no less determined to lead India on to her political goal. There is nothing that the Government of India regret more than this challenge at so critical a juncture. But on them there lies the task of defending India, of maintaining India's capacity to wage War, of safeguarding India's interests, of holding the balance between the different sections of her people without fear or favour. That task the Government of India will discharge in face of the challenge now thrown down by the Congress Party with clear determination, but with an anxiety that action shall be preventive of the interruption of war effort and the other dangers to which they have referred rather than punitive, and with a full consciousness of responsibility to India and to the cause of the Allies and of civilization. Their duty is plain, and they have to discharge it, profoundly as they must deplore the situation which they have been called upon to face. They urge the people of India to unite with them in resistance to the present challenge of a party. They appeal to them to lay aside all political differences and for the period of the War to place before all other considerations the defence of their country, and the achievement of those common aims on which depends the future not only of India but of all the freedom-loving peoples of the world.

The Transfer of Power, Vol. II, pp. 600-3

APPENDIX VIII

TALK WITH PYARELAL ON MARXISM

[After *August 9, 1942*]

. . . After an extensive reading of Marxian literature during his last detention at Poona, he remarked: "I think I could have written Marx better than Marx, provided, of course, I had his scholarship which I do not have. He has the knack of making even simple things appear difficult.". ..

On the fly-leaf of *A Handbook of Marxism* he scribbled: "All for each and each for all." "From each according to his capacity to each according to his need."...

I tried to get him to give his appraisal of some aspects of the Marxist philosophy....

I said, "Marx showed us that our ideologies, institutions, and ethical standards, literature, art, customs, even religion, are a product of our economic environment."

G. I do not agree that our ideologies, ethical *standards* and values are altogether a product of our material environment without any absolute basis outside it. On the contrary as we are so our environment becomes.

Is not the Wardha scheme of Basic Education based upon the assumption that purposive activity of the hand moulds not only our thinking but our whole personality? Does that not come very near the materialistic theory of knowledge as propounded by Marx?

But the Marxist wants to abolish the labouring hand altogether and substitute in its place the machine. He has no use for the hand. Dependence on manual labour, according to Marx, is the symbol and root cause of the destitution and slavery of the worker. It is the function of the machine to emancipate him from this state. I, on the other hand, hold that machine enslaves and only intelligent use of the hand will bring to the worker both freedom and happiness....

The Marxist regards thought, as it were, 'a secretion of the brain' and the mind 'a reflex of the material environment'. I cannot accept that. Above and beyond both matter and mind is He. If I have an awareness of that living principle within me, no one can fetter my mind. The body might be destroyed, the spirit will proclaim its freedom. This to me is not a theory; it is a *fact of experience.*

P. The Marxists concede that an individual may transcend his material environment but class behaviour is essentially determined by it. It cannot change unless the economic environment is altered. To transform the capitalist the capitalistic order must be destroyed.

G. What an individual can do, a whole class of people can be induced to do, it is all a question of discovering the right technique. The whole of our non-violent

non-co-operation movement, which aims at transforming the British ruling class, is based on this hypothesis. Trusteeship is my answer to the issue of class-conflict.

I passed on to the Marxist doctrine of economic motivation of history. The wars were an inevitable consequence of the institution of private property in the capitalistic system. Gandhiji rejected the one and disagreed with the other.

G. No, not the economic factor alone. Ultimately it is the Unseen Power that governs the course of events—even in the minds of men who make those events. Supposing Hitler were to die today, it would alter the whole course of current history. Similarly, supposing all capitalists were wiped out as a result of an earthquake or some other natural cataclysm, the history of class-war would then be changed in a way least dreamt of by the exponents of economic interpretation of history. Would not the history of the present war have been different if instead of Chamberlain a more dynamic figure had been the Prime Minister of England? Or, if Chamberlain had not shown lack of political courage at the last moment?

P. The Marxists say that to abolish war we have but to abolish the institution of private property. You have also taught that property is incompatible with the non-violent way of life.

G. This is only partly true. Was not Helen of Troy the cause of the Trojan War? Were the wars of the Rajputs related to the institution of private property? No, to banish war we have to do more. We have to eradicate possessiveness and greed and lust and egotism from our own hearts. We have to carry war within ourselves to banish it from society.

P. The remedies prescribed by Marx are of course wrong but can we not make use of his diagnosis of the malaise that affects our society for a proper understanding of the problem and devising right remedies for the same? . . . My point is that Marx knew of only one effective sanction, viz., of violence —force. If only he had been aware of the sanction of non-violence or satyagraha and its potency, he might have adopted it in place of violence. Even in our own time industry is being changed over from steam to oil and electricity.

G. 1 have also heard it said that often it is more economical to dispose of the old plant than to try to adapt it from one kind of motive power to another. In the present case, the difference between violence and non-violence is fundamental. It cuts at the very root of the Marxist theory. If you alter the foundation the whole superstructure will have to be changed.

P. 1 agree. But you have derived non-violence from the *Gita.* I find a powerful support in the Marxist analysis for your method of non-violent non-co-operation.

G. My interpretation of the *Gita* is rejected by those who do not believe in ahimsa and those who are believers in ahimsa do not need it. Your interpretations will

be dubbed un-Marxist by convinced Marxists. It will not appeal to them....

After some further discussion Gandhiji said:

You can advance this as your own original thesis on Marx. It might provide a rationale for the practice of satyagraha to those who lack the spiritual background. What has made the teaching of Marx dynamic is that he regarded mankind as a whole and transcending class divisions indentified himself with the cause of the poor oppressed toilers of the world. But in that he is not alone. Others besides him have done the same.

He would not concede that Marx had founded an absolute science of society or discovered any laws of social dynamics which *a priori* have an objective validity. The Marxian system was just an attempt to forge a tool for the achievement of a certain goal which Marx held to be desirable. Finally he said:

We may criticize Marx but that he was a great man who can deny? His analysis of social ills or the cures he prescribed for them may or may not be correct. I do not accept his economic theories but this much I know that the poor are being ground down. Something has got to be done for it. Marx set about to do that in his own way. He had acumen, scholarship, genius.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 136-9

APPENDIX IX

LETTER FROM LORD LINLITHGOW[1]

Personal *January 13, 1943*

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Thank you for your personal letter of December 31 which I have just received. I fully accept its personal character, and I welcome its frankness. And my reply will be, as you would wish it to be, as frank and as entirely personal as your letter itself.

2. I was glad to have your letter, for, to be as open with you as our previous relations justify, I have been profoundly depressed during recent months; first, by the policy that was adopted by the Congress in August, secondly, because while that policy gave rise, as it was obvious it must, throughout the country to violence and crime (I say nothing of the risks to India from outside aggression), no word of condemnation for that violence and crime should have come from you, or from the Working Committee. When you were first at Poona, I knew that you were not receiving newspapers, and I accepted that as explaining your silence. When

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 19-1-1943 and "Letter to Lord Samuel", 15-5-1943.

arrangements were made that you and the Working Committee should have such newspapers as you desired, I felt certain that the details those newspapers contained of what was happening would shock and distress you as much as it has us all, and that you would be anxious to make your condemnation of it categorical and widely known. But that was not the case; and it has been a real disappointment to me, all the more when I think of these murders, the burning alive of police officials, the wrecking of trains, the destruction of property, the misleading of these young students, which has done so much harm to India's good name, and to the Congress party. You may take it from me that the newspaper accounts you mention are well-founded—I only wish they were not, for the story is a bad one. I well know the immense weight of your great authority in the Congress movement and with the party and those who follow its lead, and I wish I could feel, again speaking very frankly, that a heavy responsibility did not rest on you. (And unhappily, while the initial responsibility rests with the leaders, others have to bear the consequences, whether as lawbreakers, with the results that that involves, or as the victims.)

3. But if I am right in reading your letter to mean that in the light of what has happened you wish now to retrace your steps and dissociate yourself from the policy of last summer, you have only to let me know and I will at once consider the matter further. And, if I have failed to understand your object, you must not hesitate to let me know without delay in what respect I have done so, and tell me what positive suggestion you wish to put to me. You know me well enough after these many years to believe that I shall be only too concerned to read with the same close attention as ever any message which I receive from you, to give it the fullest weight, and to approach it with the deepest anxiety to understand your feeling and your motives.

Yours sincerely,

LINLITHGOW

Correspondence with Mr. Gandh, pp. 5-6

APPENDIX X

LETTER FROM LORD LINLITHGOW[1]

February 5, 1943

DEAR MR . GANDHI,

Many thanks for your letter of 29th January which I have just received. I have read it, as always, with great care and with every anxiety to follow your mind and to do full justice to your argument. But I fear that my view of the responsibility of

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 29-1-1943; 7-2-1943 and "Letter to Lord Samuel", 15-5-1943.

Congress and of yourself personally for the lamentable disorders of last autumn remains unchanged.

2. In my last letter I said that my knowledge of the facts left me no choice but to regard the Congress movement, and you as its authorized and fully empowered leader at the time of the decision of last August, as responsible for the campaign of violence and crime that subsequently broke out. In reply, you have reiterated your request that I should attempt to convince you that my opinion is correct. I would readily have responded earlier to that request, were it not that your letters gave no indication such as I should have been entitled to expect, that you sought the information with an open mind. In each of them you have expressed profound distrust of the published reports of the recent happenings, although in your last letter, on the basis of the same information, you have not hesitated to lay the whole blame for them on the Government of India. In the same letter, you have stated that I cannot expect you to accept the accuracy of the official reports on which I rely. It is not, therefore,clear to me how you expect or even desire me to convince you of anything. But, in fact, the Government of India have never made any secret of their reasons for holding the Congress and its leaders responsible for the deplorable acts of violence, sabotage and terrorism that have occurred since the Congress resolution of the 8th August declared a "mass struggle" in support of its demands, appointed you as its leader and authorized all Congressmen to act for themselves in the event of interference with the leadership of the movement. A body which passes a resolution in such terms is hardly entitled to disclaim responsibility for any events that followed it. There is evidence that you and your friends expected this policy to lead to violence; and that you were prepared to condone it, and that the violence that ensued formed part of a concerted plan, conceived long before the arrest of Congress leaders. The general nature of the case against the Congress has been publicly stated by the Home Member in his speech in the Central Legislative Assembly on the 15th September last and, if you need further information, I would refer you to it. I enclose a complete copy in case the Press versions that you must have seen were not sufficient. I need only add that all the mass of evidence that has since come to light has confirmed the conclusions then reached. I have ample information that the campaign of sabotage has been conducted under secret instructions, circulated in the name of the All-India Congress Committee, that well-known Congressmen have organized and freely taken part in acts of violence and murder; and that even now an underground Congress organization exists in which, among others, the wife of a member of the Congress Working Committee plays a prominent part, and which is actively engaged in planning the bomb outrages and other acts of terrorism that have disgusted the whole country. If we do not act on all this information or make it publicly known, it is because the time is not yet ripe, but you may rest assured that the charges against the Congress will have to be met sooner or later and it will then be for you and your

colleagues to clear yourselves before the world, if you can. And if in the mean while you yourself, by any action such as you now appear to be contemplating, attempt to find an easy way out, the judgment will go against you by default.

3. I have read with some surprise your statement that the principle of civil disobedience is implicitly conceded in the Delhi Settlement of the 5th March, 1931, which you refer to as the "Gandhi-Irwin Pact". I have again looked at that document. Its basis was that civil disobedience would be "effectively discontinued" and that certain "reciprocal action" would be taken by Government. It was inherent in such a document that it should take notice of the existence of civil disobedience. But I can find nothing in it to suggest that civil disobedience was recognized as being in any circumstances legitimate. And I cannot make it too plain that it is not so regarded by my Government.

4. To accept the point of view which you put forward would be to concede that the authorized Government of the country, on which lies the responsibility for maintaining peace and good order, should allow subversive and revolutionary movements, described by you yourself as open rebellion, to take place unchallenged; that they should allow preparations for violence, for the interruption of communications, for attacks on innocent persons, for the murder of police officers and others to proceed unchecked. My Government and I are open indeed to the charge that we should have taken drastic action at an earlier stage against you and against the Congress leaders. But my anxiety and that of my Government has throughout been to give you, and to give the Congress organization, every possible opportunity to withdraw from the position which you have decided to take up. Your statements of last June and July, the original resolution of the Working Committee of the 14th July and your declaration on the same day that there was no room left for negotiation and that after all it was an open rebellion, are all of them grave and significant, even without your final exhortation to "do or die". But with a patience that was perhaps misplaced, it was decided to wait until the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee made it clear that there could be no further toleration of the Congress attitude, if Government was to discharge its responsibility to the people of India.

5. Let me, in conclusion, say how greatly I regret, having regard to your health and your age, the decision that you tell me that you now have in mind to take. I hope and pray that wiser counsels may yet prevail with you. But the decision whether or not to undertake a fast with its attendant risks is clearly one that must be taken by you alone, and the responsibility for which and for its consequences must rest on you alone. I trust sincerely that in the light of what I have said you may think better of your resolution; and I would welcome a decision on your part to think better of it, not only because of my own natural reluctance to see you wilfully risk your life, but because I regard the use of a fast for political purposes as a form of political blackmail

(*himsa*) for which there can be no moral justification and, understood from your own previous writings, that this was also your view.

Yours sincerely,

LINLITHGOW

Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi, pp. 9-11

APPENDIX XI

LETTER FROM HORACE G. ALEXANDER TO SIR ROGER LUMLEY[1]

February 24, 1943

DEAR SIR ROGER LUMLEY,

I am venturing to send you the enclosed note of what Mr. Gandhi said to me yesterday. In view of the message that I received from Col. Bhandari on my return from Bombay on Monday, I did not know quite how it was best to proceed; but, as Mr. Gandhi was expecting me to raise this subject with him, I thought it right to do so, and it was clear that he wished to speak about it. I did not tell him that the proposal had already been put to the Viceroy and, as I understood, rejected. But you will note that he himself was speaking, not in terms of possible calling off of the fast before the end of the 21 days but of possible development later on.

There are two or three further points that I would like to add. First, as to the fast itself, he seems very confident that he will survive it and he even referred playfully to it as a "fraudulent fast", since he is now, under medical advice, taking rather more orange juice. I do not think he is much interested in the movement for his release. It is a 21-day fast and, he would, I rather think, only welcome release, if he thought it meant that the Government is assured that he, as a free man, will be an asset, not a liability.

The second point is this: he is evidently under the most acute stress of mind at the sense that he, who has devoted his life to the promotion of non-violence, is now suspected—or under accusation—by men whom he respects, as being not merely the unwitting and misguided agent but the deliberate instigator of the violence which is admittedly rampant in some parts of the country today. I believe the main reason why he chose to open up in the way he did (and I believe he wanted to say a good deal more, but we naturally had to end the talk so as to avoid tiring him) to me was that he

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with Horace G. Alexander", 23-2-1943.

felt he must express this distress of mind to some Englishman who still believes in his good faith.

If, as I rather gathered from the message Col. Bhandari gave me, the Viceroy does not think it appropriate for me to do anything further in this matter, I can only express the hope that someone may be found, as soon as Mr. Gandhi is a little stronger, who could go into the matter further, as he seems so genuinely anxious to find means of restoring goodwill.

In a few days I ought to return to my work in Bengal. Would you feel able, I wonder, to allow me a few minutes of your time before I leave, when I could perhaps give you a rather fuller report?

This house is not on the telephone; but, on receipt of a telegram or other message, I could come to Bombay at any time.

Yours sincerely,

HORACE G. ALEXANDER

PS.

Although it seemed to me proper to address this to you, I realize that, if you think it sufficiently important, it would naturally be forwarded to the Viceroy.[1]

The Transfer of Power, Vol. III, pp. 733-4

APPENDIX XII

DR. B. C. ROY'S IMPRESSIONS ON GANDHIJI'S FAST[2]

1. AT THE INTERVIEW TO UNITED PRESS, POONA

March 4, 1943

Full control of the mind over the body, and strong determination to live, for which he fought every inch of the ground—this was how Gandhiji could tide over the crisis that threatened his life at one stage of the fast.

Gandhiji helped his doctors so far as elimination is concerned. He tried to take as much water as possible—plain water and water mixed with salts or with sweet lime juice which also contains salts. In the world of today physical organs of body get more and more under the control of mind. Many of the physical functions like hunger and thirst and the different types of secretions and excretions are being brought more

[1] According to a communication from the Bombay Government, it was considered that Horace Alexander's assistance as intermediary was not required and he was accordingly informed that a further interview with the Viceroy would be unnecessary.

[2] *Vide* "Answers to Questions", after 3-3-1943.

and more under the control of higher centres. That is why the modern man is so complex as compared to the village man of older days.

In the case of Gandhiji, partly as a result of the forces operating in all of us and partly as a result of self-discipline by which he has deliberately brought the physical function under the control of his mind, the functions of the different organs of his body are being more and more directed by the central nervous system. Therefore our forecast proved to be erroneous. We could only depend upon the law of averages and could only give our opinion on the basis of what would happen to an average man under similar conditions.

2. AT THE CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY

March 7, 1943

The whole fast was in the nature of a religious ceremony. If you start from the beginning and go on to the end, you will perceive that the whole thing was conceived by him as part and parcel of a religious ceremony. He started by informing the Government that under certain conditions, he was prepared to undertake a fast which he called a 'capacity fast'. I think the expression has not been properly understood by the people. The expression 'capacity fast' was used in contradiction to another expression which he used in 1932, namely, 'fast unto death'. In this instance he mentioned definitely that it was not his desire to die, but that he would fast for 21 days because that was, in his opinion, the period which he had today before himself as a period of *tapasya*.

The Indian Annual Register, 1943, Vol. I, pp. 338-9

APPENDIX XIII

CONCLUDING CHAPTER OF "CONGRESS RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DISTURBANCES, 1942-43"[1]

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION

At the risk of some repetition, it is necessary to emphasize again the fact that Mr. Gandhi knew that any mass movement started in India would be a violent movement. He knew this from his bitter experience of the movements he had led ten and twenty years before. In spite of this knowledge, he was prepared to take the risk of outbreaks of rioting and disorder—a risk which in his writings he tried to minimize but in his mind he must have estimated correctly. Consider again this series of statements:

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943.

1. Leave India to God. If that is too much, then leave her to anarchy (*Harijan*, 24-5-1942).

2. That anarchy may lead to internecine warfare for a time or to unrestrained dacoities (*Harijan*, 24-5-1942).

3. This ordered, disciplined anarchy should go, and if there is complete lawlessness in India as a result, I would risk it (*Harijan*, 24-5-1942).

4. I waited and waited until the country should develop the non-violent strength necessary to throw off the foreign yoke. But my attitude has now undergone a change. I feel that I cannot afford to wait.... The people have not my ahimsa, but mine should help them. I am sure, there is ordered anarchy around and about us. I am sure that the anarchy that may result because of the British withdrawal or their refusal to listen to us, and our decision to defy their authority, will in no way be worse than the present anarchy. After all, those who are unarmed cannot produce a frightful amount of violence or anarchy, and I have a faith that out of that anarchy may arise pure non-violence (*Harijan*, 7-6-1942).

5. I don't want rioting as a direct result. If, in spite of all precautions rioting does take place, it cannot be helped (*Harijan*, 19-7-1942).

Once it is realized, as has been clearly demonstrated, that Mr. Gandhi the fountain-head of non-violence, knew perfectly well that the Indian masses were incapable of non-violence, a new light is shed on the events of the six months which have elapsed since the August arrests. It follows that every reference to non-violence, in the forecasts of the forms the movement would take, made by Mr. Gandhi and his Congress disciples and in the post-arrest programmes and instructions, is nothing more than a pious hope, or at best a mild warning, which was known to have no practical value. Since such references have been shown to be valueless, they may be ignored and the pre-arrest it forecasts and post-arrest instructions may be examined shorn of their "non-violence" mask. Omitting these valueless references, Mr. Gandhi wrote in *Harijan* of 19th July, 1942, "It would be a mass movement.... It will include all that a mass movement can include"; and again in *Harijan* of 26th July, 1942, "The programme covers every activity included in a mass movement.... I would not hesitate to go to the extremest limit, if I find that no impression is produced over the British Government or the Allied powers.... (It will be) my biggest movement. . .. (With the arrests of leaders) it should gain strength, if it has any vitality." The Working Committee of Congress in the resolution passed at Bombay on August 4 and endorsed by the All-India Congress Committee on August 8 stated: "The Committee resolves, therefore, to sanction for the vindication of India's inalienable right to freedom and independence, the starting of a mass struggle on the widest possible scale so that the country might utilize all the strength it has gathered during the last 22 years." Again, omitting the lip-service to "non-violence", the 12-point

programme called for "non-co-operation on the widest possible scale" in a "titanic clash between the people and the alien Government", a struggle in which "victory or death" is to be the motto of every son and daughter of India, a struggle which would "include all activities that a mass struggle can include", a struggle in which "whatever helps in the attainment of that objective" (of ending foreign rule) "is permissible and legitimate" and in which"people in the provinces have to devise and adopt all ways of paralysing the administration". As a description of what actually occurred, these instructions present a very accurate picture bearing in mind the limitations imposed by the prompt and firm action taken by the Central and Provincial Governments and the lack of sympathy for the Congress programme in large sections of the population.

In the face of all this evidence—the evidence of the atmosphere produced by Mr. Gandhi's writings in *Harijan*, the evidence of the speeches of the members of the Working Committee before and at Bombay, the evidence of the programmes involving violent action distributed at the time of the arrests, the evidence of the form of the uprising, the evidence of known Congressmen personally proved guilty of violent action, the evidence of the pamphlets broadcast in the name of the Congress—only one answer can be given to the question as to who must bear the responsibility for the mass uprisings and individual crimes which have disgraced and are still disgracing the fair name of India. That answer is—the Indian National Congress, under the leadership of Mr. Gandhi.

The Indian Annual Register, 1942, Vol. II, pp. 199-20O

APPENDIX XIV

LETTER FROM SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM[1]

HOME DEPARTMENT,

October 14, 1943

SIR,

I am directed to reply to your letter of the 15th July in which you have attempted to controvert certain passages appearing in the Government publication *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942-43*. At the outset I am to remind you that the document in question was published for the information of the public and not for the purpose of convincing you or eliciting your defence. It was supplied to you only at your own request and in forwarding it Government neither invited nor desired your comments upon it. Since, however, you have thought fit to address

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 16-7-1943 and 26-10-1943.

Government on the subject, I am to say that Government have given due consideration to your letter.

2. Government regret to observe that, although your letter contains lengthy quotations from your own utterances and writings, it contains no fresh or categorical statement of your own attitude in regard to the material issues or any clear repudiation of the disastrous policy to which you and the Congress party committed yourselves in the series of events leading up to the Congress resolution of the 8th August, 1942. The purpose of your letter appears to be to suggest that you have been misrepresented in some way in *Congress Responsibility* but in what substantial respect is not clear. No attempt was made in the book, as you seem to think, to charge you with pro-Japanese sympathies and the sentence[1] at the end of the first chapter, to which you have taken exception in paragraph 18 of your letter, was merely an echo of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's own words[2] quoted on the previous page. He has not, as you wrongly allege, repudiated those words in the published statements to which you refer. It was, however, one of the purposes of the book to find an explanation of your actions in your own defeatist outlook towards the threat from Japan and your fear that, unless the Allied forces withdrew in time, India would become a battle-field in which the Japanese would ultimately win. This feeling was attributed to you by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru himself in the course of his remarks to which reference has been made above and your own draft of the Allahabad resolution makes it plain that, both in the "Quit India" campaign and the Congress resolution which was intended to enforce it, your object was to be left in a position in which you and the Congress would be free to make terms with Japan. The Government of India note that your letter makes no attempt to meet this imputation which they still regard as true. It is the only explanation which is consistent with your own statement that "the presence of the British in India is an invitation to the Japanese to invade India. Their withdrawal removes the bait". Nor have you been able to explain, on any theory other than that suggested in the book, the contradiction between this statement and your subsequent avowal of your willingness to permit the retention of Allied troops on Indian soil.

3. The Government of India are not disposed to follow you into the various verbal points that you have raised. They do not deny that owing to your habit of reinterpreting your own statements to suit the purposes of the moment, it is easy for you to quote passages from your utterances or writings which are in apparent contradiction to any view attributed to you. But the fact that you admit the discovery of important gaps in them, or that you have found it necessary from time to time to

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943.

[2] *Vide* 1st two footnotes of point 17 of "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943,

put glosses on what you have said, is itself evidence of the incredible levity with which, in a moment of grave crisis, you made pronouncements in regard to matters of the most vital importance to India's defence and her internal peace. Government can only interpret your statements in the plain sense of the words as it would appear to any honest or unbiased reader and they are satisfied that the book *Congress Responsibility* contains no material misrepresentation of the general trend of your utterances during the relevant period.

4. You have devoted considerable space in your letter[1] to an apparent attempt to disown the phrase attributed to you in the A. P. I. report of a Press conference which you held at Wardha on the 14th July, 1942, where you are reported to have said: "There is no question of one more chance. After all, it is an open rebellion." This Press message was reproduced at the time in newspapers throughout India. You now wish the Government of India to believe that you first became aware of it on the 26th June, 1943. They can only regard it as highly improbable that, if it did not correctly represent what you said, it should not have been brought to your notice at the time or that you should have left it uncontradicted during the following weeks while you were still at liberty.

5. The Government of India also note that you still seek to cast on the Government the responsibility for the disturbances for reasons which they can only regard as trivial and which have already been answered in your published correspondence with His Excellency the Viceroy. The point which is clearly established by the book *Congress Responsibility* is that those disturbances were the natural and predictable consequence of your declaration of an "open rebellion" and the propaganda which preceded it. That you yourself could have foreseen those consequences is clear from the statement[2] which you yourself made in court, in 1922, when you admitted the impossibility of dissociating yourself from the "diabolical crimes of Chauri Chaura or the mad outrages in Bombay" and went on to say that you knew that you were playing with fire, but you had taken the risk and would do so again. If you now contend that the consequences were unintended and unforeseen, this fact is itself an admission of your own inability to judge the reactions of your followers. You now seek to excuse, if not to defend, the barbarities committed in your own name and that of the Congress rather than to condemn them. It is clear where your sympathies lie. Your letter does not contain one word of explanation of your own message[3] "Do or Die" nor does it throw any light on your message quoted in

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943.

[2] *Vide* "The Great Trial", 18-3-1922.

[3] The reference is to Gandhiji's speech at Bombay on August 8, after the A.I.C.C. had passed the "Quit India" resolution; *vide* "Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting", 8-8-1942.

Appendix[1] of the book, which, if you cannot disown it, is sufficient to refute your contention that no movement had been launched by you at the time when the disturbances took place.

6. I am finally to refer to your request for the publication of your letter. In the first place, I am to remind you of your own position, which has already been explained to you, viz., that, so long as the grounds for your detention remain unchanged, Government are not prepared to afford you any facilities for communication with the general public, nor are they prepared themselves to act as agents for your propaganda. In the second place, I am to point out that you had ample opportunities during the months preceding the Congress resolution of the 8th August, 1942, to make your meaning unequivocally clear before you were arrested. The fact that your own followers interpreted your intentions in the same way as Government, leaves no scope for further explanations. I am to inform you, therefore, that Government do not propose to publish your letter unless and until they think fit.[2] This decision is, however, without prejudice to the freedom of Government to use, at any time and in any manner which they think fit, the various admissions contained in the communication which you have voluntarily addressed to them.

7. To the extent that your present letter may be designed to relieve you of responsibility for the Congress rebellion and the connected events that have taken place, Government regret that they cannot accept it as in any way relieving you of that responsibility, or indeed, to their regret, as a serious attempt to justify yourself. They observe again with regret that you have taken no step in your letter to dissociate yourself personally from the Congress resolution of 8th August, 1942; to condemn unequivocally the violent outrages which took place in your name after the passing of that resolution; to declare yourself unequivocally in favour of the use of all the resources of India for the prosecution of the war against the Axis powers and in particular Japan, until victory is won; or to give satisfactory assurances of good conduct in the future. And, in the absence of any sign of any change of mind on your part and of any disclaimer of the policy as the result of which it has been necessary to restrain your movements and those of the Working Committee of the Congress, they are unable to take any further action on your present communication.

I am, etc.,

R. TOTTENHAM

Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi, pp. 112-4

[1] Given under the title "Mr. Gandhi's Last Message", it reads: "Every man is free to go to the fullest length under ahimsa by complete deadlock, strikes and all other non-violent means. Satyagrahis should go out to die and not to live. It is only when individuals go out to seek and face death that the nation will survive. *'Karenge Ya Marenge'*. ('We shall do or die')." Reference to the Appendix occurs in Chapter IV of the official publication. Gandhiji had disapproved of it in paragraph 65; *vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943.

[2] The Government, however, published it on June 21, 1944.

APPENDIX XV

LETTER FROM OFFICER-IN-CHARGE, AGA KHAN PALACE TO INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF PRISONS, POONA[1]

AGA KHAN PALACE, YERAVDA

December 15, 1943

THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF PRISONS

POONA

SIR,

With reference to your confidential D.O. No. 6247 dated December 14 1943, I have the honour to give below the required information.

1. Mr. Gandhi discusses political questions with other inmates, especially with Mr. Pyarelal and Miss Slade; Miss Nayyar is always there. Very rarely with Dr. Gilder. This takes place generally when they are reading newspapers.

2. The daily routine of life of Mr. Gandhi:

He gets up about 6.30 a.m. and, after finishing morning ablution and breakfast, he reads books or newspapers.

From 8.15 to 9.0 a.m. morning walk in the garden with Pyarelal and Misses Slade, Nayyar and Manu. While walking, they talk on political and other subjects.

Doctors Gilder and Nayyar give him massage for about 45 minutes and then bath upto 11.15.

From 11.15 to 12 noon he takes his food, and Miss Slade talks or reads books to him.

From 12 noon to 1.0 p.m. teaching Sanskrit to Miss Nayyar.

1.0 to 2.0 p.m. rest.

From 2.0 to 3.0 p.m. Mr. Pyarelal reads papers to him and discusses on several points arising from the papers, while he is either spinning or filing cuttings from the papers.

From 3.0 to 4.0 p.m. teaching Miss Manu.

From 4.0 to 5.30 p.m. indexing of newspaper cuttings on various subjects. He is assisted in this work by Pyarelal, Drs. Gilder and Nayyar. They remove the selected and marked portions from the papers, paste them on slips of paper and give them to Mr. Gandhi for indexing and filing.

From 5.30 to 6.30 p.m. Miss Slade reads papers to him and discusses on various political and other subjects.

From 6.30 to 7.15 p.m. evening walk with other inmates in the garden.From 7.30 p.m. to 8.15 p.m. spinning, while Pyarelal reads to him some books.

From 8.15 to 9.0 p.m. prayer.

From 9.0 to 10.0 p.m. reading and talking with Mr. Pyarelal and Miss Nayyar.

He goes to bed at 10 p.m.

He changes his time according to climatic conditions.

[1] *V de* "Talk with Nirmala and Devdas Gandhi", 7-12-1943.

3. Mr. Pyarelal does the typing work of Mr. Gandhi.

When the big letter was sent to the Government of India regarding the reply to the *Congress Responsibility,* Dr. Gilder typed the major part of the letter.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

(Signed)

OFFICER I/C, AGA KHAN'S PALACE

Chief Commissioner's Office, Bombay, File No. 46, Secret, Home Department, Special Branch (6), 1943-44. Courtesy: Government of Maharashtra

APPENDIX XVI

LETTER FROM AGATHA HARRISON[1]

2 CRANBOURNE COURT,
ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD,
LONDON S.W. 11

December 2, 1943

DEAR GANDHIJI,

I am writing this letter in the faith that it will reach you. I asked Mr. Amery if he would expedite its delivery to India, and he very kindly said, he would. At the same time, he reminded me of the restrictions[2] that have been placed on all correspondence.[3] . . .

With all this in memory, I write to you now as ten years later India is faced with famine, not earthquake; and it is set, as in the case of the Bihar disaster, in the midst of political deadlock. This time a world war is added and a stifling atmosphere of distrust and suspicion is abroad.

We watch this tragedy. The suffering of India is stirring people here very deeply. (I wish you could see the evidence of this in the letters that accompany money sent to the relief funds.) From the articles you wrote some time ago in *Harijan,* it is clear to see that you foresaw the disaster. Horace Alexander, who is now back amongst us, tells of the brief talk he had with you in February and how the situation was then burdening your mind, and of your wish to help. Those of us who are

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Agatha Harrison", 29-12-1943. only excerpts are reproduced here.

[2] The source has "strictures".

[3] The addressee then recounted her visit to India in 1934.

privileged to call you and your colleagues our friends, realize that there is a reservoir of help and experience, as yet untapped that, if utilized, might change the situation overnight. We press this conviction and cite the precedent of Bihar. But we are met with answers such as these: 'Yes, that happened in 1934; what proof have we that it would happen now? The threat of civil disobedience remains. There is far too much at stake to risk a recurrence of all that happened after August 1942', etc. And the same fears as were expressed at the time of the Bihar disaster (of Congress taking political advantage) are expressed again now.

Reading this, I can hear you say, 'It is for the Government to take the initiative,' and you would refer to the correspondence that passed between Lord Linlithgow and you and what you said about the need for consultation with your colleagues. And so this vicious, hopeless circle goes round. Who will cut it?

I bring this "circle" to you, Gandhiji. In doing so, you will appreciate that this is no one-sided approach. The responsibility for cutting it at this end is ever pressed. But political limits seem to have been reached. When that is the case, then something else has to come in. The close contact I have had with you since the London days, together with the knowledge I gleaned from working with C. F. Andrews of you and your methods, leave me with the belief and conviction that you will find a way to cut the circle. You have done so, many times in the past, for you have an understanding of the limitless possibilities of the forces of the spirit....

As I write this letter, I have on my desk a cartoon by Low that appeared the other day in the *Evening Standard*. The caption reads "Between the unhelpful and the helpless". It depicts an Indian street: the pavements on each side are crowded with dead and starving men, women and children. In the middle of the road is a huge broken-down motor lorry labelled "India-Food Distribution". Two ropes are attached to the front of the lorry, one tightly bound to the straining figure of Lord Wavell. The other rope he is holding out with a beckoning hand to a seated Indian figure in front of him, who is reading a paper entitled "Political Platitudes".

I would have made a very different picture. For, I would have shown *you* coming swiftly to meet Lord Wavell—and with you Mr. Jinnah. One of your hands would be held out for the second rope and the other would be holding a paper with the words "We call a truce on civil disobedience".

My caption for this cartoon would be your own words spoken in Bihar: "This Is No Time for Differences between Government and Congress— Between Hindu and Muslim."

Yours very sincerely,

AGATHA HARRISON

Chief Commissioner's Office, Bombay, File No. 13-I. Courtesy: Government of Maharashtra

1. LETTER TO ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

DETENTION CAMP,
January 27, 1944

ADDITIONAL SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
(HOME DEPARTMENT)
NEW DELHI

SIR,

Some days ago Shri Kasturba Gandhi told the Inspector-General of prisons and Col. Shah that Dr. Dinshaw Mehta of Poona be invited to assist in her treatment. Nothing seems to have come out of her request. She has become insistent now and asked me if I had written to the Government in the matter. I, therefore, ask for immediate permission to bring in Dr. Mehta. She has also told me and my son that she would like to have some Ayurvedic physician to see her.[1] I suggest that the I.G.P. be authorized to permit such assistance when requested.

2. I have no reply as yet to my request[2] that Shri Kanu Gandhi, who is being permitted to visit the patient every alternate day, be allowed to remain in the camp as a whole-time nurse. The patient shows no signs of recovery and night-nursing is becoming more and more exacting. Kanu Gandhi is an ideal nurse, having nursed the patient before. And what is more, he can soothe her by giving her instrumental music and by singing *bhajans.* I request early relief to relieve the existing pressure. The matter may be treated as very urgent.

3. The Superintendent of the camp informs me that when visitors come, one nurse only can be present. Hitherto more than one nurse has attended when necessary. The Superintendent used his discretion as to the necessity. But when difficulty arose I made a reference to the I.G.P. The result was that an order was issued that a doctor in addition may be present. I submit that the order has been issued in ignorance or disregard of the condition of the patient.She often requires to be helped by more persons than one. Therefore I ask

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Ardeshir E. Kateli", 6-1-1944.

that there should be no restriction as to the number of the attendants.

4. It would be wrong on my part, if I suppressed the fact that in the facilities being allowed to the patient grace has been sadly lacking. The order about the attendants is the most glaring instance of pin-pricks, besides being in defeat of the purpose for which attendance during visits of relatives is allowed. Again, my three sons are in Poona. The eldest, Harilal, who is almost lost to us, was not allowed yesterday, the reason being that the I.G.P. had no instructions to allow him to come again. And yet the patient was naturally anxious to meet him. To cite one more pin-prick, every time visitors who are on the permitted list come, they have to apply to Government Office, Bombay, for permission. The consequence is that there is unnecessary delay and heart-burning. The difficulty, I imagine, arises because neither the Superintendent nor the I.G.P. has any function except that of passing on my requests to Bombay.

5. I am aware that Shri Kasturba is a Government patient, and that even as her husband I should have no say about her. But, as the Government have been pleased to say that instead of being discharged she is being kept with me in her own interest, perhaps, in interpreting her wishes and feelings, I am doing what the Government would desire and appreciate. Her recovery or at least mental peace when she is lingering is common cause between the Government and me. Any jar tells on her.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3926

2. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

DETENTION CAMP,
January 27, 1944

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY
(HOME DEPARTMENT)
BOMBAY
SIR,

I enclose herewith for dispatch a letter[1] addressed to the Government of India, but it need not be dispatched if the Government of Bombay can *suo moto* deal with the matters referred to therein. As

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

the object is to obtain relief as promptly as possible, instructions from the Central Government, if necessary, may be obtained on the phone.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3927; also Bombay Secret Abstracts: Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 76, p. 179

3. TALK WITH RAMDAS GANDHI[1]

January 28, 1944

Mr. Ramdas said that Government was taking unnecessary risk in detaining Mrs. Gandhi. The old man (Gandhiji) replied that there was a greater risk in releasing her. In case she was released and if she died, Government would be compelled to release him, which they did not like to risk.

Mr. Ramdas said that it was his impression that Harilal, being an irresponsible man, might give in papers anything about the Palace, and hence Government were reluctant to give Harilal frequent interviews. Mr. Gandhi laughed and said:

Perhaps I may take advantage of Harilal's weakness and ask him to do something for me.

Bombay Secret Abstracts: Home Department, Special Branch (6), File No. 76-1, 1943-44

4. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

DETENTION CAMP,

January 31, 1944

SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY (H.D.)

BOMBAY

SIR,

I sent on the 27th instant a very urgent letter[2] addressed to the Government of India. I am still without a reply. The patient is no better. The attendants are about to break down. Four only can work—

[1] This is extracted from a letter dated January 29, 1944, addressed to Secretary, Home Department, Government of Bombay, by the Officer-in-charge, Aga Khan Palace.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 27-1-1944.

two at a time on alternate nights. All the four have to work during the day. The patient herself is getting restive, and inquires: "When will Dr. Dinshaw come?" May I know as early as may be—even tomorrow, if possible:

1. Whether Shri Kanu Gandhi can come as full-time nurse,

2. whether Dr. Dinshaw's services may be enlisted for the present, and

3. whether the restriction on the number of attendants during visits can be removed.

I hope it may not have to be said that the relief came too late.[1]

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3928; also Bombay Secret Abstracts: Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 76, p. 215

5. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO SUPERINTENDENT, DETENTION CAMP[2]

[*January 31, 1944*][3]

She has no particular Ayurvedic physician in mind, but my son

[1] According to *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government,* p. 228, the addressee's reply dated February 3, 1944, read: (1) Government have agreed to Kanu Gandhi staying in for the purpose of helping in nursing Mrs. Gandhi on condition that he agrees to be bound by the same regulations as other security prisoners in the detention camp. Government consider that with Kanu Gandhi staying in, the nursing assistance provided should be adequate and they cannot agree to any requests for further assistance. (2) Government have decided that no outside doctors should be allowed unless the Government medical officer considers that it is absolutely necessary for medical reasons. . . . (3) Interviews with near relatives have been sanctioned for Mrs. Gandhi. While Government have no objection to your being present during those interviews, they consider that other inmates should not be present except to the extent demanded by the condition of Mrs. Gandhi's health. . ." For a joint letter from Dr. Sushila Nayyar and Dr. M. D. D. Gilder to Col. Bhandari for further medical assistance, *vide* Appendix "Letter form Dr. Nayyar and Dr. Gilder to Col. Bhandari", 31--1-1944.

[2] Pyarelal explains that the letter was scribbled out by Gandhiji at 4 p.m. on "Monday, the silence-day", and "handed immediately to the Superintendent of the Camp" who had conveyed the following communication from the Government: "Government wants to know whether Mrs. Gandhi has any particular physician in mind and whether she would want one in addition to Dr. Dinshaw Mehta."

[3] *ibid*

Devdas suggested the name of Vaidyaraj Sharma of Lahore. Any physician who is admitted will be in addition to Dr. Dinshaw, and that too, if and when the latter has failed to give satisfaction. She has often expressed a desire to be seen by an Ayurvedic physician. If the permission is granted, it should be of a general character. She is losing will-power and I have to judge between a multiplicity of advice so long as I am permitted to have responsibility for her peace of mind, which is about all that is possible at this stage.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, p. 226

6. LETTER TO VIJAYALAKSHMI PANDIT[1]

AGA KHAN PALACE,
February 1, 1944

THROUGH THE BOMBAY GOVERNMENT

DEAR DAUGHTER,

Your letter[2] reached me yesterday about 2 p.m. What can I write to you? The news which I read in the papers was read out by me to Ba. Thereupon with tears in her eyes Ba said: "Oh God (Rama) I am at death's door and I am not taken away while Ranjit is taken away! What will happen to Sarup?" I did not feel like that. You cannot become helpless. You are a brave daughter of a brave father,and brave sister of a similarly brave brother. The disease of Ranjit was such that he had to go before his time. His body was not meant to suffer jail life. But all these are my imaginations. The fact is that God gives you birth and whenever He likes He takes you up. And this is all for the body. Soul, however, neither takes birth nor dies. You had married a soul named Ranjit. You can never become a widow. You have rightly stated that you will represent all the qualities of Ranjit. May God satisfy this wish of yours. You should look after your body and be engrossed in your duty.

It is good that Rita[3] is with you. Please send my blessings to Chand[4] and Tara[5]. Also give my blessings to Krishna[6], Feroze[7] and

[1] Originally written in Hindi, this is a translation by the jail authorities.
[2] Dated January 15, conveying the news of her husband's death
[3] Rita, addressee's daughter
[4] Chandralekha, addressee's daughter
[5] Nayantara, addressee's daughter
[6] Krishna Hutheesing, addressee's sister
[7] Feroze and Indira Gandhi

Indu[1]. May God bless you.

Your letter has been delivered to me against the rules[2]. And this will also be delivered against the rules. This is my first letter from jail. Ba has been counting her days in the hope of death.

Blessings to you from us both,

SHRIMATI VIJAYALAKSHMI PANDIT
2 MUKHERJI ROAD
ALLAHABAD

Bombay Secret Abstracts: Home Department, Special Branch (6), File No. 13-I (5), p. 47

7. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

DETENTION CAMP,
February 3, 1944

SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY
BOMBAY

SIR,

Shri Kasturba asked me yesterday when Dr. Dinshaw was coming, and whether a vaidya (Ayurvedic physician) could see her and give her some drugs. I told her, I was trying for both but that we were prisoners and could not have things as we liked. She has since been repeatedly asking me whether I could not do something to hasten matters. She had a restless night again. This is, of course, nothing new for her at present. I request immediate orders about Dr. Dinshaw and Vaidyaraj Sharma of Lahore. The latter will be some time coming. But Dr. Dinshaw can come even today if authority is given for calling him in.

I must confess that I do not understand this delay when a patient's life is hanging in the balance and may be saved by timely

[1] Feroze and Indira Gandhi
[2] Allowing security prisoners to correspond only with family members

aid. After all, for a patient alleviation of pain is as important as the highest matters of State.[1]

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3929, also Bombay Secret Abstracts: Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 76, p. 229

8. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

DETENTION CAMP,
February 7, 1944

SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY (HOME DEPARTMENT)

BOMBAY

SIR,

On 29th December, 1943, I sent for dispatch to the addressee a letter[2] addressed to Miss Agatha Harrison of [2][3] Cranbourne Court, Albert Bridge Road, London. May I know whether that letter was sent to Miss Harrison?

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3930; also Bombay Secret Abstracts: Home Department, Special Branch (6), File No. 13-I, p. 21

[1] For the addressee's reply of even date, *vide* 2nd footnote of "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 31-1-1944.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Agatha Harrison", 29-12-1943.

[3] Illegible in the source

9. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

DETENTION CAMP,
February 7, 1944

SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY (HOME DEPARTMENT)
BOMBAY

SIR,

In pursuance of the right conferred upon me of making a representation against my detention, I sent one[1] on 24th January, 1944. May I know when I shall be favoured with a reply thereto?

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3931, also Bombay Secret Abstracts: Home Department, Special Branch (6), File No. 13-I, p. 23

10. NOTE TO INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF PRISONS, BOMBAY[2]

DETENTION CAMP,
February 11, 1944

The responsibility for bringing in a non-allopath assistant would be wholly mine, and the Government shall stand absolved from responsibility for any untoward result following such treatment. I am not sure that I shall accept the advice that such vaidyas or hakims may give. But if I do, and if the prescription is ineffective, I would like to reserve the right to revert to present treatment.

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, p. 229

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 24-1-1944.

[2] In an introductory note to this, in the source, Pyarelal explains: "In pursuance of the request for an Ayurvedic physician for Shrimati Kasturba Gandhi, Gandhiji had a talk with the Inspector-General of Prisons on the morning of February 11, 1944. He then wrote out the following confirming what he had already told the jail authorities."

11. LETTER TO INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF PRISONS, BOMBAY

Immediate DETENTION CAMP,

February 14, 1944

THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF PRISONS

POONA

SIR,

I told you yesterday that Shri Kasturba was so bad during the night that Dr. Nayyar got frightened and awakened Dr. Gilder. I felt that she was going. The doctors were naturally helpless. Dr. Nayyar had, therefore, to wake up the Superintendent who kindly phoned the Vaidyaraj. It was then about 1 a.m. Had he been on the premises he would certainly have given relief. I, therefore, asked you to let him stay at the camp during the night. But you informed me, theGovernment orders did not cover night stay. The Vaidyaraj, however, you said, could be called in during the night. I pointed out the obvious danger of delay but you were sorry, the orders would not allow you to go further. In vain I argued that the Government having given the authority to call in Vaidyaraj on condition that I absolved them from responsibility for any untoward result of the *vaidic* treatment, they could not contemplate any restriction on the duration of the physician's stay at the camp so long as it was thought necessary in the interest of the patient. In view of your rejection of my request, I had to trouble the Vaidyaraj to rest in his car in front of the gate so that in case of need he might be called in. He very humanly consented. He had to be called in and he was able to bring the desired relief. The crisis has not passed as yet. I, therefore, repeat my request and ask for immediate relief. I would like, if I can, to avoid the last night's experience. I do wish that the vexations caused by the delay in granting my requests about the patient's treatment came to an end. Both Dr. Mehta and the Vaidyaraj were permitted to come in after protracted delay. Precious time was lost making recovery more uncertain than it was. I hope you will be able to secure the necessary authority for the vaid's stay in the camp during night, if the patient's condition requires it. The patient needs constant and continuous attention.

I am,

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3932; also Bombay Secret Abstracts: Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 76, p. 299

12. LETTER TO INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF PRISONS, BOMBAY

Immediate DETENTION CAMP,

February 16, 1944

THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF PRISONS

POONA

SIR,

This is in continuation of my letter[1] of the 14th instant. When I asked[2] for Vaidyaraj and took upon myself the responsibility[3] of changing Shri Kasturba's treatment, and absolved the Government physician of all responsibility, I naturally took for granted that the Vaidyaraj would be allowed such facilities as would in his opinion be necessary for carrying out his treatment. The patient's nights are much worse than her days and it is essentially at night that constant attendance is necessary. The Vaidyaraj considers himself handicapped in his treatment of the case under the present arrangement.

In order to be within immediate call, he has been good enough to sleep in his car outside the gate of this camp for the last three nights, and every night he has had to be called up at least once. This is an unnatural state of things and, though he seems to have infinite capacity for suffering inconvenience for the sake of the patient, I may not take undue advantage of his generous nature. Besides, it means disturbing the Superintendent and his staff (in fact the whole camp) once or more often during the night. For instance, last night she suddenly developed fever with *rigor*. The Vaidyaraj, who had left the premises at 10.30 p.m., had to be called in at 12 midnight. I had to request him to leave her soon afterwards, although he would have liked to have stayed with her longer, because so long as he stayed in, it would have meant keeping the Superintendent and his staff awake which might have been even for the whole night. I would not do this even for saving my life-long partner especially when I know that a

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 27-1-1944, "Silence-DAy Note to Superintendent Detention Camp", 31-1-1944 and "Note to Inspector-General of Prisons, Bombay", 11-2-1944.

[3] *ibid*

humane way is open.

As I have said already, the Vaidyaraj considers it necessary to be in constant attendance on the patient. He varies the drugs from moment to moment as the patient's condition requires. Drs. Gilder's and Nayyar's assistance is at my disposal all the time—they are more than friends and would do everything in their power for the patient. But, as I have said in my last letter, they cannot help while treatment of a wholly different nature from theirs is going on. Besides, being in its very nature impracticable, such a course would be unjust to the patient, to the Vaidyaraj and to themselves.

I, therefore, submit below the following three alternative proposals:

I. Vaidyaraj should be permitted to remain in the camp day and night so long as he considers it necessary in the interests of the patient.

II. If the Government cannot agree to this, they may release the patient on parole to enable her to receive the full benefit of the physician's treatment.

III. If neither of these two proposals are acceptable to the Government, I request that I be relieved of the responsibility of looking after the patient. If I as her husband cannot procure for her the help she wants or that I think necessary, I ask for my removal to any other place of detention that the Government may choose. I must not be made a helpless witness of the agonies the patient is passing through.

The Government have kindly permitted Dr. Mehta to visit the patient at her repeated requests. His help is valuable, but he does not prescribe drugs. She needs the physical therapy given by him which soothes her greatly but she cannot do without drug treatment either. Drugs can only be prescribed by the doctors or the Vaidyaraj. The doctors' treatment has already been suspended. In the absence of a satisfactory reply to this letter by this evening, I shall be constrained to suspend Vaidyaraj's treatment also. If she cannot have the drug treatment which she should in full, I would rather that she did without it altogether.

I am writing this by the patient's bedside at 2 a.m. She is

oscillating between life and death. Needless to say she knows nothing of this letter. She is now hardly able to judge for herself.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3933; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 76, pp. 311-3

13. TELEGRAM TO FINANCE MEMBER, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Express Telegram DETENTION CAMP,
February 16, 1944

HONOURABLE FINANCE MEMBER[1]

NEW DELHI

HAVING READ YOUR STATEMENT[2] ABOUT SALT CLAUSE IN GANDHI-IRWIN AGREEMENT I BEG TO DRAW YOUR ATTENTION TO NOTICE THAT WAS ISSUED BY SIR GEORGE SCHUSTER[3] EXPLAINING IMPLICATIONS OF THAT CLAUSE. ANY AMENDMENT SHOULD BE IN TERMS OF THAT NOTICE.[4]

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts: Home Department, Special Branch (6), File No. 13-II, p.5

[1] Sir Jeremy Raisman

[2] In the Central Legislative Assembly, on February 14, during a debate on Finance Member's "Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to Central Excise duties, as reported by the Select Committee", T. T. Krishnamachari (Nationalist), moved an amendment for according legislative sanction for the practice which had been in existence ever since Gandhi-Irwin Pact of March 3, 1931, in respect of salt manufactured for domestic purposes. The Finance Member had stated "that the Government did not intend to retract from the Irwin-Gandhi Pact, would be quite willing to meet the desire of the House, if there was no technical difficulty". He had also added, "that the Government did not intend to levy any duty on salt collected or manufactured for domestic purposes by any person" (*The Indian Annual Register, 1944,* Vol. I, p. 134).

[3] The then Finance Member, for Gandhiji's subsequent correspondence with him and his successor, Sir James Grigg, in 1934.

[4] The addressee's reply, forwarded through the Government of Bombay by their letter dated February 25, read: "After discussion in the House it was felt best course to leave matters to be regulated as hitherto by notification issued in 1931, terms of which have been scrupulously observed by Government. No amendment was therefore made."

14. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

February 17, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

Although I have not had the pleasure of meeting you, I address you on purpose as "dear friend". I am looked upon by the representatives of the British Government as a great, if not the greatest, enemy of the British. Since I regard myself as a friend and servant of humanity including the British, in token of my goodwill I call you, the foremost representative of the British in India, my "friend".

2. I have received in common with some others, a notice informing me, for the first time, why I am detained and conferring on me the right of representation against my detention. I have duly sent my reply[1], but I have as yet heard nothing from the Government. A reminder[2], too, has gone after a wait of thirteen days.

3. I have said some only have received notices because out of the six of us in this camp, only three have received them. I presume that all will receive them in due course. But my mind is filled with the suspicion that the notices have been sent as a matter of form only, and not with any intention to do justice. I do not wish to burden this letter with argument. I repeat what I said[3] in the correspondence with your predecessor, that the Congress and I are wholly innocent of the charges brought against us. Nothing but an impartial tribunal to investigate the Government case, and the Congress case against the Government, will bring out the truth.

4. The speeches recently made on behalf of the Government in the Assembly on the release motion,[4] and on the gagging

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 24-1-1944 and "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 7-2-1944.

[2] *ibid*

[3] In letters to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India; *vide* "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943

[4] On February 8, the Central Legislative Assembly rejected Lalchand Navalrai's resolution for releasing political prisoners. In his speech, Sir Reginald Maxwell, Home Member, had said that "if Government were asked to release the Congress leaders, they must be assured that the results would be beneficial to India

order[1] on Shri Sarojini Devi, I consider to be playing with fire. I distinguishbetween defeat of Japanese arms and Allied victory. The latter must carry with it the deliverance of India from the foreign yoke. The spirit; of India demands complete freedom from all foreign dominance and would, therefore, resist Japanese yoke equally with British or any other. The Congress represents that spirit in full measure. It has grown to be an institution whose roots have gone deep down into the Indian soil. I was, therefore, staggered to read that Government were satisfied with things as they were going. Had they not got from among the Indian people the men and money they wanted? Was not the Government machinery running smooth? This self satisfaction bodes ill for Britain, India and the world, if it does not quickly give place to a searching of hearts in British high places.

5. Promises for the future are valueless in the face of the world struggle in which the fortune of all nations and therefore of the whole of humanity is involved. Present performance is the peremptory need of the moment, if the war is to end in world peace and not be a preparation for another war bloodier than the present, if indeed there can be a bloodier. Therefore real war effort must mean satisfaction of India's demand. "Quit India" only gives vivid expression to that demand and has not the sinister and poisonous meaning attributed to it without warrant by the Government of India. The expression is charged with the friendliest feeling for Britain in terms of the whole of humanity.

6. I have done. I thought that, if I claim to be a friend of the British, as I do, nothing should deter me from sharing my deepest thoughts with you. It is no pleasure for me to be in this camp, where all my creature comforts are supplied without any effort on my part, when I know that millions outside are starving for want of food. But I

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and to war effort" (*The Indian Annual Register, 1944,* Vol. I, p. 131).

[1] On February 7, the Assembly rejected A. C. Datta's adjournment motion to censure the Government on this order under Defence of India Rules passed on Sarojini Naidu on January 26. Sir Reginald Maxwell who defended the prohibitory order had, in his speech, argued that it was unfair to give freedom of speech to Mrs. Naidu which was denied to her colleagues of the Congress Working Committee.

should feel utterly helpless, if I went out and missed the food by which alone living becomes worth while.[1]

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi, p. 118. Also C.W. 10505. Courtesy: India Office Library

15. LETTER TO INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF PRISONS, BOMBAY

DETENTION CAMP,
February 18, 1944

THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF PRISONS
POONA

SIR,

Vaidyaraj Shri Shiv Sharma regretfully informs me that having put forth all the resources at his disposal, he has been unable to produce a condition in Shri Kasturba so as to give him hope of final recovery. As his was simply a trial to see whether Ayurvedic treatment could yield better result, I have now asked Drs. Gilder and Nayyar to resume the suspended treatment. Dr. Mehta's assistance was never suspended and will be continued till recovery or the end.

I want to say that the Vaidyaraj has been most assiduous and attentive in the handling of this most difficult case, and I would have willingly allowed him to continue his treatment, if he had wished to do so. But he would not continue it, when his last prescription failed to bring about the result he had expected. Drs. Gilder and Nayyar tell me that they would like to receive the benefit of the Vaidyaraj's assistance in the matter of sedatives, purgatives and the like. These have proved effective both from the doctors' and the patient's point of view. I hope that the Government will have no objection to the Vaidyaraj continuing to come in for the purpose. Needless to say, under the altered circumstances, he will not be required for night

[1] In his reply dated February 25, Lord Wavell said that the question of issuing notices "will be looked into at once". He also forwarded a copy of his speech of February 17 to the Legislature which, according to him, stated "his point of view". For Gandhiji's comments on the speech, *vide* "Letter to Lord Wavell", 9-3-1944.

duty. I cannot refrain from regretfully saying that had there not been the wholly avoidable delay in granting my request for allowing the services of the Vaidyaraj and Dr. Mehta, the patient's condition might not have been so near the danger point as it is today. I am well aware that nothing happens outside the Divine Will, but man has noother means of interpreting that Will apart from the results he can see.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3934; also Bombay Secret Abstracts: Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 76, p. 335

16. CABLE TO SHIRINBAI JALBHOY RUSTOMJEE[1]

Immediate [On or before *February 21, 1944*]

SHIRINBAI JALBHOY RUSTOMJEE

BOX 1610, DURBAN

SOUTH AFRICA

THANKS. BA SLOWLY GOING. MANILAL SUSHILA SHOULD CONTINUE THEIR WORK. LOVE.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts: Home Department, Special Branch (6). File No. 76-I, 1943-44

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's cable to Kasturba Gandhi which read: "Regret your serious illness. If you desire Manilal-Sushila's presence, can arrange their passage. We pray for you and Bapu's blessings." The Home Department, Government of India, which communicated the cable to Bombay Government, in a telegram, said: "Following cable for Mrs. Gandhi received from Durban. . . . Please convey urgently to Gandhi with intimation that Government are prepared to give him facilities for reply which you should pass or refer to us, if necessary."

[2] The cable was forwarded by Bombay Government to Home Department, Government of India, on February 21, 1944.

17. REQUEST TO GOVERNMENT ON KASTURBA'S FUNERAL[1]

[*February 22, 1944*][2]

1. Body should be handed over to my sons and relatives which would mean a public funeral without interference from Government.

2. If that is not possible, funeral should take place as in the case of Mahadev Desai[3]; and if the Government will allow relatives only to be present at the funeral, I shall not be able to accept the privilege unless all friends who are as good as relatives to me are also allowed to be present.

3. If this also is not acceptable to the Government, then those who have been allowed to visit her will be sent away by me and only those who are in the camp (detenus) will attend the funeral. It has been, as you will be able to bear witness, my great anxiety not to make any political capital out of this most trying illness of my life companion. But I have always wanted whatever the Government did, to be done with good grace which, I am afraid, has been hitherto lacking. It is not too much to expect that now that the patient is no more, whatever the Government decide about the funeral will be done with good grace.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, p. 233

[1] Kasturba Gandhi died at 7.35 p.m. Pyarelal explains that this was "Gandhiji's reply taken down by the Inspector-General of Prisons in writing from dictation at 8.07 p.m. on February 22, 1944, in answer to his inquiry on behalf of the Government as to what Gandhiji's wishes in the matter were". *Vide* also "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 4-3-1944.

[2] *ibid.*

[3] On August 15, 1942, when Gandhiji lit the pyre on the Aga Khan Palace grounds

18. LETTER TO ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

DETENTION CAMP,
February 26, 1944

THE ADDITIONAL SECRETARY
HOME DEPARTMENT

SIR,

I have read the speech of the Hon'ble the Home Member in the Assembly on the debate[1] arising out of the ban on Shrimati Sarojini Devi. The speech has reference, among other things, to the correspondence between Shrimati Mirabai and myself and the Government's refusal to publish that correspondence. The following is the relevant portion of the speech:

> She (Shrimati Sarojini Devi) refers, and the point has been raised in this debate, to a letter said to have been written[2] by Miss Slade to Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Gandhi's reply [3] and I have been asked why no publicity was given to that letter. That letter was written and answered long before the Congress leaders were placed in detention. If Mr. Gandhi had wished to give publicity to that letter, he was perfectly free to do it himself. But it was a confidential communication addressed to him, and I do not see any reason why Government should disclose a communication of that nature. I might say that it would not help the Congress case, if it were disclosed.
>
> Then it has been said that Mrs. Naidu wishes to defend the Congress from the implication of being pro-Japanese. Government have never at any time, either here or at home, charged the Congress with being pro-Japanese. Well, the allusion to that in the booklet called *Congress Responsibility* refers to a statement quoted from Pandit Nehru himself. I have not the time to quote it at length but if Hon'ble Members will refer to the quotation given in the *Congress Responsibility* pamphlet, they will easily find the passage in question.

Assuming that the report is correct, it makes strange reading. Firstly, as to the non-publication by me of this correspondence

[1] *Vide* 5th footnote of "Letter to Lord Wavell", 17-2-1944.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India" sub-title [I} and [J], 5-7-1943.

[3] *ibid*

between Shrimati Mirabai and myself, surely the publication wasunnecessary until the charge of my being pro-Japanese was spread abroad. Secondly, why do the Government feel squeamish about publishing "confidential" correspondence when both the correspondents have specially invited publication?

Thirdly, I do not understand the reluctance of the Government to publish the correspondence when, according to the Hon'ble the Home Member, the correspondence will not serve the Congress case. Fourthly, the Government seem intentionally or unintentionally to have suppressed the very relevant fact that Shrimati Mirabai wrote to Lord Linlithgow drawing attention to the libellous propaganda in the London Press at the time, containing allegations that I was pro-Japanese, which allegations she invited him to repudiate. Her letter[1] to Lord Linlithgow enclosed copies of the correspondence referred to and asked for its publication. It was written on December 24, long before the Government publication entitled *Congress Responsibility* which bears the date February 13, 1943, appeared. Fifthly, as to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's alleged statement before the Working Committee, I have already made it clear in my reply[2] to the Government pamphlet that it was wholly wrong on their part to make use of the unauthorized notes of the discussions at the Allahabad meeting of the Working Committee, after Pandit Nehru's emphatic repudiation[3] published in the daily Press.

It is difficult for me to understand the Hon'ble the Home Member's speech and the Government's persistence in making charges and innuendoes against Congress people whom they have put in custody and thus effectively prevented from answering those charges. I hope, therefore, that the Government will at the very least see their way to publish the correspondence referred to, namely,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India" sub-title [H], 5-7-1943.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 5-7-1943, point 17 and Appendix "Concluding Chapters of *Congress Responsibility for the disturbances, 1942-43*", after 4-3-1944.

[3] *ibid.*

Shrimati Mirabehn's letter to Lord Linlithgow of the 24th December, 1942, together with the enclosures.[1]

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi, pp. 116-7

19. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO MANU GANDHI

[*February 27, 1944*][2]

CHI. MANUDI,

Did you sleep well? Yesterday I drafted a long letter about keeping you and Prabhavati here, but I kept thinking over the matter the whole of last night and could get no sleep. In the end, I saw light. We cannot make such a request. Aren't we prisoners after all? We must endure our separation. You are a sensible girl. Forget your sorrow. You want to do great service. Stop crying and live cheerfully. Learn what you can after leaving the jail. After all this service that you have given, you are bound to prosper no matter what happens.

More after my silence ends. I am your mother. Am I not? It is enough, if you understand this much.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Preserve this letter.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

[1] Sir Richard Tottenham, in his reply dated March 11, said: ". . . I am directed to say, the Government do not think that any useful purpose would be served by publishing the correspondence in question. So far as the Government are concerned, there is the statement in the Home Member's speech: 'Government have never at anytime, either here or at home, charged the Congress with being pro-Japanese.' They do not see how this can be regarded as 'Government persistence in making charges and innuendoes against Congress people'. So far as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is concerned, I am again to refer you to para 2 of my letter of October 14, 1943, in which it was made clear that he did not, in his public statement, repudiate the words in the *Congress Responsibility* pamphlet to which you take exception in paragraph 18 of your letter of July 15, 1943. There can, therefore, be no question of Government's having made use of that passage after his repudiation of it.

[2] According to an entry in the addressee's diary, the note was received on this date.

20. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO MANU GANDHI

AGA KHAN PALACE,
February 27, 1944

I feel much worried about you. You are a class by yourself. You are good, simple-hearted and ever ready to help others. Service has become dharma with you. But you are still uneducated and silly also. If you remain illiterate, you will regret it, and if I live long, I too will regret it. I will certainly miss you, but I do not like to keep you near me as that would be weakness and ignorant attachment. I am quite sure that at present you should go to Rajkot. You will get there the benefit of the company of Narandas; such good company you will get nowhere else. You will learn there besides music, the art of working methodically. You will learn Gujarati, too. There may be other benefits also. If you spend at least one year there, your slovenliness will disappear. If you go to Karachi or anywhere else you like after you have become more mature, you will get all that you want. Gurudayalji[1] will not be in Karachi for long now. Hence you will get only education there. That also will be useful, of course. Living in the company of so many girls will also do you good. But what you will get in Rajkot you will get nowhere else.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

21. LETTER TO ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

DETENTION CAMP,
March 4, 1944

THE ADDITIONAL SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
(HOME DEPARTMENT), NEW DELHI

SIR,

In reply to a question in the Assembly, the Hon'ble the Home Member is reported to have said:[2]

[1] Gurudayal Malik

[2] Reginald Maxwell was answering K. C. Neyogi in the Central Legislative Assembly on March 2.

> The provision for the expenses of Mr. Gandhi and those detained with him in the Aga Khan's Palace amounted to about Rs. 550 a month.

In my letter[1] to you dated 26th October last I remarked as follows:

> The huge place in which I am being detained with a big[2] guard around me, I hold to be waste of public funds. I should be quite content to pass my days in any prison.

The Hon'ble the Home Member's reply quoted above is a sharp reminder to me that I should have followed up the remark just referred to by me. But it is never too late to mend. I, therefore, take up the question now.

The expenses on behalf of my companions and me are not merely Rs. 550 per month. The rent of this huge place (of which only a portion is open to us) and the expense of maintaining the big outer guard and an inner staff consisting of Superintendent, *jamadar* and sepoys have got to be added. And to this a large squad of convicts from Yeravda to serve the inmates and to look after the garden. Virtually the whole of this expense is, from my point of view, wholly unnecessary; and when people are dying of starvation, it is almost a crime against Indian humanity. I ask that my companions and I be removed to any regular prison Government may choose. In conclusion, I cannot conceal from myself the sad thought that the whole expense of thiscomes from taxes collected from the dumb millions of India.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, pp. 268-9

22. LETTER TO ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT INDIA

DETENTION CAMP,
March 4, 1944

THE ADDITIONAL SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
(HOME DEPARTMENT) , NEW DELHI

SIR,

It is not without regret and hesitation that I write about my dead wife. But truth demands this letter.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 26-10-1943.

[2] The letter of October 26, however, has "large".

According to the newspapers, Mr. Butler[1] is reported to have said in the House of Commons on 2nd March, 1944:

> "...She was receiving all possible medical care and attention, not only from her regular attendants but from those desired by her family...."

Whilst I gratefully acknowledge that the regular attendants did all they could, the help that was asked for by the deceased or by me on her behalf, when at all given, was given after a long wait, and the Ayurvedic physician, was permitted to attend only after I had to tell[2] the prison authorities that, if I could not procure for the patient the help that she wanted or I thought necessary, I should be separated from her, I ought not to be made a helpless witness of the agonies she was passing through. And even then I could make full use of the Vaidyaraja's services only after I wrote a letter[3] to the Inspector General of Prisons of which a copy is hereto attached. My application[4] for Dr. Dinshaw was made in writing on 27th January, 1944. The deceased herself had repeatedly asked the Inspector-General of Prisons for Dr. Dinshaw Mehta's help during practically a month previous to that. He was allowed to come only from February 5, 1944. Again, the regular physicians Drs. Nayyar and Gilder made a written application[5] for consultation with Dr. B. C. Roy of Calcutta on31st January, 1944. The Government simply ignored their written request and subsequent oral reminders.

Mr. Butler is further reported to have said:

> No request for her release was received and the Government of India believe it would be no act of kindness to her or her family to remove her from the Aga Khan's Palace.

Whilst it is true that no request was made by her or by me (as satyagrahi prisoners it would have been unbecoming), would it not have been in the fitness of things, if the Government had at least offered to her, me and her sons to release her? The mere offer of release would have produced a favourable psychological effect on her

[1] R. A. Butler, President of the Board of Education, had expressed British Government's regret at the death of Kasturba Gandhi.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Inspector-General of Prisons, Bombay", 16-2-1944.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Inspector-General of Prisons, Bombay", 18-2-1944.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 27-1-1944.

[5] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Dr. Nayyar and Dr. Gilder to Col. Bhandari", 31-1-1944.

mind. But unfortunately no such offer was ever made.

As to the funeral rites, Mr. Butler is reported to have said:

> I have information that the funeral rites took place at the request of Mr. Gandhi in the grounds of the Aga Khan's Palace at Poona, and friends and relatives were present.

The following[1], however, was my actual request which the Inspector-General of Prisons took down in writing from dictation at 8.07 p.m. On February 22, 1944. . . .

Government will perhaps admit that I have scrupulously avoided making any political capital out of my wife's protracted illness and the difficulties I experienced from the Government. Nor do I want to make any now. But in justice to her memory, to me and for the sake of truth, I ask the Government to make such amends as they can. If the newspaper report is inaccurate in essential particulars or the Government have a different interpretation of the whole episode, I should be supplied with the correct version and the Government interpretation of the whole episode. If my complaint is held to be just, I trust that the amazing statement said to have been made in America by the Agent[2] of the Government of India in U.S.A. will be duly corrected.[3]

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, pp. 233-5

[1] *Vide* "Request to Government on Kasturba's Funeral", 22-2-1944.

[2] Girija Shankar Bajpai who was reported to have told the American public that "at various times, the Government considered her (Kasturba's) release for health reasons but she wished to remain with her husband, and her wishes were respected. Furthermore, living on the premises, she has the benefit of care from an eminent doctor living on the premises" *(History of the Indian National Congress,* Vol. II, p. 776).

[3] For the Government's reply, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Additional Secretary, Home Department, Governmentof India", 21-3-1944. *Vide* also "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 1-4-1944.

23. LETTER TO GEN. CANDY

DETENTION CAMP,
March 7, 1944

DEAR GENERAL CANDY[1],

Pray accept my deep sympathy in your bereavement. I know from my own recent experience what the death of a life-long partner must mean to the survivor.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2343.

24. LETTER. TO LORD WAVELL

March 9, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

I must thank you for your prompt reply[2] to my letter of 17th February. At the outset, I send you and Lady Wavell my thanks for your kind condolences on the death of my wife. Though for her sake I have welcomed her death as bringing freedom from living agony, I feel the loss more than I had thought I should. We were a couple outside the ordinary. It was in 1906 that after mutual consent and after unconscious trials we definitely adopted self-restraint as a rule of life. To my great joy this knit us together as never before. We ceased to be two different entities. Without my wishing it, she chose to lose herself in me. The result was she became truly my *better* half. She was a woman always of very strong will which, in our early days, I used to mistake for obstinacy. But that strong will enabled her to become quite unwittingly my teacher in the art and practice of non-violent non-co-operation. The practice began with my own family. When I introduced it in 1906, in the political field, it came to be known by the more comprehensive and specially coined name of satyagraha. Whenthe course of Indian imprisonment commenced in South Africa, Shri Kasturba was among the civil resisters. She went through greater physical trials than I. Although she had gone through several

[1] Surgeon-General, Government of Bombay
[2] *Vide* footnote 1 of "Letter to Lord Wavell", 17-2-1944.

imprisonments, she did not take kindly to the present incarceration during which all creature comforts were at her disposal. My arrest simultaneously with that of many others, and her own immediately following, gave her a great shock and embittered her. She was wholly unprepared for my arrest. I had assured her that the Government trusted my non-violence, and would not arrest me unless I courted arrest myself. Indeed the nervous shock was so great that after her arrest she developed violent diarrhoea and, but for the attention that Dr. Sushila Nayyar, who was arrested at the same time as the deceased, was able to give her, she might have died before joining me in this detention camp. My presence soothed her, and the diarrhoea stopped without any further medicament. Not so the bitterness. It led to fretfulness ending in painfully slow dissolution of the body.

2. In the light of the foregoing, you will perhaps understand the pain I felt when I read in the papers the statement made on behalf of the Government, which I hold was an unfortunate departure from truth regarding her who was precious to me beyond measure. I ask you please to send for and read the complaint[1] in the matter which I have forwarded to the Additional Secretary to the Government of India (Home Department). Truth is said to be the first and the heaviest casualty in war. How I wish in this war it could be otherwise in the case of the Allied powers!

3. I now come to your address which you delivered before the Legislature and of which you kindly sent me copy. When the newspapers containing the address were received, I was by the bedside of the deceased. Shri Mirabai read to me the Associated Press report. But my mind was elsewhere. Therefore the receipt of your speech in a handy form was most welcome. I have now read it with all the attention it deserves. Having gone through it, I feel drawn to offer a few remarks, all the more so, as you have observed that the views expressed by you "need not be regarded as final". May this letter lead to a re-shaping of some of them!

4. In the middle of page two, you speak of the welfare of the"Indian peoples". I have seen in some Viceregal pronouncements the inhabitants of India being referred to as the people of India. Are the two expressions synonymous?

[1]*Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 4-3-1944

5. At page thirteen, referring to the attainment of self-government by India, you say:

> I am absolutely convinced not only that the above represents the genuine desire of the British people, but that they wish to see an early realization of it. It is qualified only at present by an absolute determination to let nothing stand in the way of the earliest possible defeat of Germany and Japan; and by a resolve to see that in the solution of the constitutional problem full account is taken of the interests of those who have loyally supported us in this war and at all other times—the soldiers who have served the common cause; the people who have worked with us; the Rulers and populations of the States to whom we are pledged; the minorities who have trusted us to see that they get a fair deal. . . but until the two main Indian parties at least can come to terms, I do not see any immediate hope of progress.

Without reasoning out I venture to give my paraphrase of your pronouncement. 'We, the British, shall stand by the Indian soldier whom we have brought into being and trained for consolidating our rule and position in India, and who, by experience, we have found can effectively help us in our wars against other nations. We shall also stand by the Rulers of the Indian States, many of whom are our creation, and all of whom owe their present position to us, even when these Rulers curb or actually crush the spirit of the people whom they rule. Similarly shall we stand by the minorities whom too we have encouraged and used against the vast majority when the latter have at all attempted to resist our rule. It makes no difference that they (the majority) seek to replace it by a rule of the will of people of India taken as a whole. And in no case will we transfer power unless Hindus and Muslims come to us with an agreement among themselves.' The position taken up in the paragraph quoted and interpreted by me is no new thing. I regard the situation thus envisaged as hopeless, and I claim in this to represent the thought of the man in the street. Out of the contemplation of this hopelessness was born the anguished cry of "Quit India". What I see happening in this country day after day provides a complete vindication of the "Quit India" formula as defined by me in my considered writings.

6. I note, as I read your speech, that you do not regard the sponsors of the formula of "Quit India" as outcastes to be shunned by society. You believe them to be high-minded persons. Then treatthem as such and trust their interpretation of their own formula

and you cannot go wrong.

7. After developing the Cripps offer you have said at page sixteen in the middle of the paragraph:

> . . . the demand for release of those leaders who are in detention is an utterly barren one until there is some sign on their part of willingness to co-operate. It needs no consultation with anyone or anything but his own conscience for anyone of those under detention to decide whether he will withdraw from the Quit India resolution and the policy which had such tragic consequences, and will co-operate in the great tasks ahead.

Then again, reverting to the same subject you say on pages nineteen and twenty:

> There is an important element which stands aloof, I recognize how much ability and high-mindedness it contains; but I deplore its present policy and methods as barren and unpractical. I should like to have the co-operation of this element in solving the present and the future problems of India. If its leaders feel that they cannot consent to take part in the present Government of India, they may still be able to assist in considering future problems. But I see no reason to release those responsible for the declaration of August 8, 1942, until I am convinced that the policy of non-co-operation and even of obstructions has been withdrawn—not in sack-cloth and ashes that helps no one, but in the recognition of a mistaken and unprofitable policy.

8. I am surprised that you, an eminent soldier and man of affairs, should hold such an opinion. How can the withdrawal of a resolution, arrived at jointly by hundreds of men and women after much debating and careful consideration, be a matter of individual conscience? A resolution jointly undertaken can be honourably, conscientiously and properly withdrawn only after joint discussion and deliberation. Individual conscience may come into play after this necessary step, not before. Is a prisoner ever *free* to exercise his conscience? Is it just and proper to expect him to do so?

9. Again, you recognize "much ability and high-mindedness" in those who represent the Congress organization and then deplore their present policy and methods as "barren and unpractical". Does not the second statement cancel the first? Able and high-minded men may come to erroneous decisions, but I have not before heard such people's policy and methods being described as "barren and unpractical". Is it not up to you to discuss the pros and cons of their policy with them before pronouncing judgment, especially when they are also admittedly representatives of millions of their people? Does it

become an all-powerful Government to be afraid of the consequences of releasing unarmed men and women with a backing only of men and women equally unarmed and even pledged to non-violence? Moreover why should you hesitate to know their minds and reactions?

10. Then you have talked of the "tragic consequences" of the "Quit India" resolution. I have said enough in my reply[1] to the Government pamphlet *Congress Responsibility*, etc., combating the charge that the Congress was responsible for those consequences. I commend the pamphlet and my reply to your attention, if you have not already seen them. Here I would just like to emphasize what I have already said. Had Government stayed action till they had studied my speeches and those of the members of the Working Committee, history would have been written differently.

11. You have made much of the fact that your Executive Council is predominantly Indian. Surely their being Indians no more makes them representatives of India than non-Indians. Conversely it is quite conceivable that a non-Indian may be a true representative of India, if he is elected by the vote of the Indian people. It would give no satisfaction even if the head of the Indian Government was a distinguished Indian *not* chosen by the free vote of the people.

12. Even you, I am sorry, have fallen into the common error of describing the Indian forces as having been recruited by "voluntary enlistment". A person who takes to soldiering as a profession will enlist himself wherever he gets his market wage. Voluntary enlistment has come to bear by association a meaning much higher than that which attaches to an enlistment like that of the Indian soldier. Were those who carried out the orders at the Jallianwala massacre volunteers? The very Indian soldiers who have been taken out of India and are showing unexampled bravery will be ready to point their rifles unerringly at their own countrymen at the orders of the British Government, their employers. Will they deserve the honourable name of volunteers?

13. You are flying all over India. You have not hesitated to go among the skeletons[2] of Bengal. May I suggest an interruptionin your scheduled flights and a descent upon Ahmednagar and the Aga Khan's Palace in order to probe the hearts of your captives? We are

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 5-7-1943.

[2] The reference is to the Bengal famine.

all friends of the British, however much we may criticize the British Government and system in India. If you can but trust, you will find us to be the greatest helpers in the fight against Nazism, Fascism, Japanism and the like.

14. Now I revert to your letter of the 25th February. Shri Mirabai and I have received replies to our representations. The remaining inmates have received their notices. The reply received by me I regard as a mockery; the one received by Shri Mirabai is an insult. According to the report of the Home Member's answer to a question in the Central Assembly, the replies received by us seem to be no replies. He is reported to have said that the stage "for the review of the cases had not yet arrived. Government at present were only receiving representations from prisoners." If the representations in reply to the Government notices are to be considered merely by the executive that imprisoned them without trial, it will amount to a farce and an eye-wash, meant perhaps for foreign consumption, but not as an indication of a desire to do justice. My views are known to the Government. I may be considered an impossible man—though altogether wrongly I would protest. But what about Shri Mirabai? As you know, she is the daughter of an Admiral[1] and former Commander-in-Chief of these waters. But she left the life of ease and chose instead to throw in her lot with me. Her parents, recognizing her urge to come to me, gave her their full blessings. She spends her time in the service of the masses. She went to Orissa at my request to understand the plight of the people of that benighted land. That Government was hourly expecting Japanese invasion. Papers were to be removed or burnt, and withdrawal of the civil authority from the coast was being contemplated. Shri Mirabai made Chaudwar (Cuttack) airfield her headquarters, and the local military commander was glad of the help she could give him. Later she went to New Delhi and saw General Sir Alan Hartley[2] and General Molesworth[3], who both appreciated her work and greeted her as one of their own class and caste. It, therefore, baffles me to understand her incarceration.The only reason for burying her alive, so far as I can see, is that she has committed the crime of associating herself with me. I suggest your

[1] Sir Edmond Slade

[2] Commander-in-Chief, India, since March, 1942

[3] Lt.-Gen. George Noble Molesworth, Deputy Chief of General Staff, India, 1941-42; Secretary, Military Department, India Office, 1943-44

immediately releasing her, or your seeing her and then deciding. I may add that she is not yet free from the pain for the alleviation of which the Government sent Captain Simcox[1] at my request. It would be a tragedy if she became permanently disabled in detention. I have mentioned Shri Mirabai's case because it is typically unjust.

15. I apologize to you for a letter which has gone beyond the length I had prescribed for myself. It has also become very personal and very unconventional. That, however, is the way my loyalty to friends works. I have written without reservation. Your letter and your speech have given me the opening. For the sake of India, England and humanity, I hope, you will treat this as an honest and friendly, if candid, response to your speech.

16. Years ago, while teaching the boys and girls of Tolstoy Farm in South Africa, I happened to read to them Wordsworth's "Character of the Happy Warrior". It recurs to me as I am writing to you. It will delight my heart to realize that warrior in you. There will be little difference between the manners and methods of the Axis powers and the Allies, if the war is to resolve itself into a mere trial of brute strength.[2]

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, pp. 256-62

25. LETTER TO ARDESHIR E. KATELI

DETENTION CAMP,
March 16, 1944

DEAR KHAN BAHADUR,

You have given me the following memorandum:

> Mr. Gandhi may reply to messages from his relatives, and Government will, if he so wishes, inform other correspondents that their messages have been delivered to him.

In reply, I beg to say that unless I can write to senders of condolences irrespective of relatives, I would not care to exercise the

[1] Of the Royal Army Medical Corps

[2] For Lord Wavell's reply, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Wavell", 29-3-1944.

facility Government have been pleased to give me. As to the other messages, I have no wish in the matter beyond what I have said above. From the newspaper notices of the messages sent to me, I observe that all the messages sent to me have not yet been handed to me. From the memorandum I infer that they will be handed to me in due course. I should perhaps mention that the messages received and given to me during my son Devadas's presence were handed by me to him.

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

KHAN BAHADUR KATELI

SUPERINTENDENT, DETENTION CAMP

From a photostat: G.N. 3935, also Bombay Secret Abstracts: Home Department, Special Branch (6), File No. 67, p. 13

26. LETTER TO ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

DETENTION CAMP,
March 20, 1944

THE ADDITIONAL SECRETARY

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (H.D.)

NEW DELHI

SIR,

I have read with painful interest the answer given on behalf of the Government in the Central Assembly about the facilities, medical and otherwise, given to my deceased wife. I had hoped for a better response to my letter[1] of 4th March, 1944, assuming that it was in Government's hands when the answer was given. Beyond the admission[2] that the deceased was never offered release, the statement makes no amends for the misrepresentations pointed out in that letter. On the contrary, it adds one more by stating that "trained nurses were made available. . . ." No trained nurse was asked for or supplied. An ayah, however, was sent in the place of Shri Prabhavati Deviand Shri Kanu Gandhi for whom my wife had asked. The ayah left in less than

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 4-3-1944.

[2] In the Central Legislative Assembly, on March 13, by Sir Olaf Caroe, Secretary, External Affairs, in his reply to K. S. Gupta

a week because she found herself ill-fitted for the work entrusted to her. Only then, and after some further delay and repeated requests about Shri Kanu Gandhi, were the two allowed to come. The facilities have been recited as if they had been granted promptly and willingly. The fact is that most of them, when not refused, were granted as if grudgingly and when it was almost too late. My object in writing this letter is not to make the complaint (though quite legitimate) that the facilities came too late. My complaint is that in spite of my representation of 4th instant, the Government instead of giving the naked truth have seen fit to give a varnished version.[1]

I am,

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, pp. 242-3. Also C.W. 10507. Courtesy: India Office Library

27. LETTER TO ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

DETENTION CAMP,

April 1, 1944

THE ADDITIONAL SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT

OF INDIA (HOME DEPARTMENT)

NEW DELHI

SIR,

I beg to acknowledge your letter[2] of 21st March handed to me on the 27th. As to extra medical aid, I wish to state that the first request for the services of Dr. Dinshaw Mehta was made by the deceased verbally to Col. Advani[3] some time in December last. When repeated verbal requests met with little or no response, I had to make a written request[4], addressed to the Government of

[1] In his reply dated March 30, the addressee stated that the "reply given in the Legislative Assembly . . . was substantially correct".

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 21-3-1944.

[3] He was the Government doctor officiating for Col. Bhandari.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 27-1-1944.

India, dated January 27, 1944. On the 31st of January, I senta reminder[1] to the Government of Bombay (Appendix A), and so did Drs. Nayyar and Gilder in a letter[2] addressed to the Inspector-General of Prisons (Appendix B). I wrote[3] again on the 3rd of February to the Government of Bombay (Appendix C), who sent a reply[4] (Appendix D) which resulted in Dr. Dinshaw being brought in on the 5th of February last, i.e., after an interval of over six weeks from the date of the first request. And even when permission was granted, restrictions were placed upon the number of the visits and the time he was to take in administering treatment. It was not without difficulty that these restrictions were later relaxed and then removed.

As to the reference in the letter under reply to Dr. Gilder, I showed it to him. The result was the attached letter[5] addressed by him to the Government which he has asked me to forward (Appendix E). While it shows that Dr. Gilder never expressed the opinion attributed to him, it does not alter the tragic fact that Dr. Dinshaw's services were held up for over six weeks.

The question of calling in a non-allopath was definitely and formally raised before the Inspector-General of Prisons by my son after his visit to this camp early in December last.[6] On Col. Bhandari mentioning to me my son's request to him, I told him that if my son thought that non-allopathic treatment should be tried, the Government should permit it. While the consideration of my son's request was on the anvil, the patient's condition began to worsen and she herself pressed for the services of an Ayurvedic physician. She spoke to both the Inspector General of Prisons and Col. Shah several times, again with no result. In despair I wrote[7] to the Government of India on

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of Bombay", 31-1-1944.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Dr. Nayyar and Dr. Gilder to Col. Bhandari", 31-1-1944.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of Bombay", 3-2-1944.

[4] *Vide* footnote 2 of "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of Bombay", 31-1-1944.

[5] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Dr. Gilder to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Governmentof India", 31-3-1944.

[6] *Vide* "Talk wqith Devdas Gandhi", 26-1-1944.

[7] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 27-1-1944.

January 27, 1944. On the 31st of January, the Superintendent of this camp enquired on behalf of the Government, among other things, whether the deceased had any particular Ayurvedic physician in mind to which I replied[1] in writing, it being my silence day (Appendix F). As no relief was forthcoming as a result, and the patient's condition admitted of no delay, I sent an urgent letter to the Government of Bombay on the 3rdof February (Appendix C). It was on the 11th of February that a local vaidya was sent and on the 12th that Vaidyaraj Sharma was brought in. Thus there was an interval of more than eight weeks between the first request for non-allopathic aid and of actual bringing in of that aid.Before Vaidyaraj Sharma came, I had been asked to give a written undertaking[2] (which I gladly did) that I absolved the Government of all responsibility about the result of his treatment (Appendix H). The Vaidyaraj was thus in sole charge of the case for the time being. One would have thought that a physician in sole charge of a patient would have all such facilities of visiting and watching the patient as he considered necessary. And yet there was no end to the difficulties in getting these facilities for him. These have been alluded to in the enclosure[3] to my letter[4] of March 4, 1944, and in Appendix G[5]. . .

All this time the patient was passing through great sufferings and her condition was deteriorating so rapidly that every delay weighed against chances of her recovery. Whether the delays and difficulties experienced by the patient and me were caused by one department of the Government or another, or even by the Government doctors, the responsibility surely rests with the Central Government.

I note that the Government have maintained complete silence over the written request (which was reinforced by subsequent verbal reminders) of Drs. Nayyar and Gilder to call Dr. B. C. Roy in consultation, and have not even condescended to give their reasons for not granting the request.

Similarly the letter under reply is silent about the discrepancy,

[1] *Vide* "Silence-Day Note to Superintendent, Detention Camp", 31-1-1944.

[2] *Vide* "Note to Inspector-General of Prisons, Bombay", 11-2-1944.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Inspector-General of Prisons, Bomaby", 18-2-1944.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 4-3-1944.

[5] *Vide* "Letter to Inspector-General of Prisons, Bombay", 14-2-1944.

pointed out by me in my letter[1] dated March 20, 1944, in the Hon. the Home Member's statement in the Assembly that trained nurses were in attendance. The fact is that they never were. Let me add here that nurses of the deceased's choice who were permitted were brought after considerable delay, especially Shri Kanu Gandhi.

I hope, after a calm perusal of this bare recital of facts and of the relevant copies of correspondence attached hereto, it will be conceded that the claim of the Government of India that "they did everything possible" to ensure that the deceased received all the treatment that I *wished* during her illness is not justified.Much less can Mr. Butler's claim be justified. For, he went further when he said, "she was receiving all possible medical care and attention, not only from her regular attendents, but from those *desired by her family*." Does not the statement of the Government of Bombay (Appendix D), "Government have decided that no outside doctors should be allowed unless the *Government Medical Officer* considers that it is absolutely necessary for medical reasons" contradict the above claims?

On the question of release, and the report received by the Government of India of a "private conversation" my son had with his mother in this connection, a prisoner can have no "private" conversation with anybody from outside. Therefore, so far as I am concerned, the Government are free to make use of the conversation after verification (usual and obligatory in such cases) by my son. In any case the Government would have been absolved from all blame, if they had made an offer of release and laid on me the burden of deciding what was "best and kindest" for her. As to the arrangement for the funeral, my letter to the Government dated March 4, 1944, embodying my actual request, which the Inspector-General of Prisons took down in writing from dictation, speaks for itself. It, therefore, astonishes me that on "enquiries" made by the Government, they were "informed" that I had "no special preference between the first two alternatives" mentioned in my letter. The information given to the Government is wholly wrong. It is inconceivable that, given the freedom of choice, I could ever be reconciled to the cremation of a dear one being performed in a jail compound (which this camp is today) instead of the consecrated cremation ground.

It is not pleasant or easy for me to write about such personal matters to the Government. But I do so in this case for the sake of the memory of one who was my faithful partner for over sixty-two years.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

I leave it to the Government to consider what could be the fate of other prisoners not so circumstanced as Shri Kasturba was.[1]

I am,

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Enclosures: A to H

From a photostat: G.N. 3936; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government*, pp. 237-40

28. LETTER TO ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

DETENTION CAMP,

April 2, 1944

THE ADDITIONAL SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

SIR,

This is in continuation of my letter[2] of yesterday's date to the Government of India. For, after handing the letter to the Superintendent of the camp, on looking at the papers I came upon the following startling statement in *The Hindustan Times*, 30-3-1944:

> New Delhi, Wednesday [March 29, 1944]—Today in the Council of State, Lala Ramsarandas asked whether and when Mahatma Gandhi had asked Government to permit the eminent Ayurvedic physician Pandit Shiv Sharma to take up the treatment of Mrs. Gandhi.
>
> The Home Secretary, Mr. Conran-Smith, replying said the first definite request for Pandit Sharma's services was made to the Government of India on February 9 and was granted on February 10. He understood that Pandit Sharma paid his first visit a day or two later. —A.P.I.

The fact is that Vaidyaraj Shiv Sharma's name was first submitted to the Government on 31st January, 1944, and not on the 9th February. But my letter of yesterday will show further that the first

[1] *Vide* also the following item.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

request for a non-allopathic physician was made early in December 1943. May I look for correction of the statement referred to?[1]

I am,

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, p. 242

29. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

DETENTION CAMP,
April 2, 1944

DEAR COL. BHANDARI,

In the Government of India's letter[2] to me dated March 21[3],1944, there occur these two passages:

> It was on January 28 that they were first informed that Mrs. Gandhi had asked for the services of Dr. Dinshaw Mehta. . . . If Dr. Dinshaw Mehta was not called in earlier, it was due to the view originally expressed by both Col. Bhandari and Dr. Gilder that his services would not be of any use, but he was summoned as soon as the Government doctors revised that opinion.
>
> The arrangements for the funeral were understood here to be in accordance with your wishes. The Government made enquiries on the point and were informed that you had no special preference between the first two alternatives mentioned in your letter[4].

Dr. Gilder has no recollection of his having given the opinion attributed to him.[5] I have never expressed indifference as to whether the deceased was cremated in the consecrated public cremation ground or in the jail compound which this camp is. Can you please throw light on the discrepancies?

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, p. 241

[1] For the Government's reply to this letter and the preceding one, *vide* 2nd footnote of "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Governmentof India", 13-4-1944

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Additional Secretary, Home Department, Governmentof India", 21-3-1944.

[3] The source, however, has "31".

[4] *Vide* "Request to Government on Kasturba's Funeral", 22-2-1944.

[5] *Vide* also Appendix "Letter from Dr. Gilder to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Governmentof India", 31-3-1944.

30. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

April 9, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1] of 28th March received by me on the 3rd instant. Please accept my thanks for it.

I take up the general matter first. You have sent me a frank reply. I propose to reciprocate your courtesy by being perfectly frank. Friendship to be true demands frankness even though it may some time appear unpleasant. If anything I say offends you, please accept my apology in advance.[2]

It is a pity that you have refused to deal with important points raised in my letter.

Your letter is a plea for co-operation by the Congress in the present administration, and failing that, in planning for the future. In my opinion, this requires equality between the parties and mutual trust. But equality is absent and Government distrust of the Congress can be seen at every turn. The result is that suspicion of Government is universal. Add to this the fact that Congressmen have no faith in the competence of the Government to ensure India's future good. This want of faith is based upon bitter experience of the past and present conduct of the British administration of India. Is it not high time that you co-operate with the people of India through their elected representatives instead of expecting co-operation from them?

All this was implied in the August resolution. The sanction behind the demand in the resolution was not violence, but self suffering. Anyone, be he Congressman or other, who acted against this rule of conduct had no authority to use the Congress name for his action. But I see that this resolution repels you as it did Lord Linlithgow. You know that I have joined issue on the point. I have seen nothing since to alter my view. You have been good enough to credit me with "intelligence", "experience", and "acumen". Let me say that all these three have failed to make me realize that the effect of

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Wavell", 28-3-1944.

[2] According to *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. IV, p. 898, in his report to the Secretary of State for India, the addressee said: "Gandhi has sent me an ill-tempered letter in reply to mine. I am sending you a copy and am not continuing the correspondence."

the Congress resolution "must be to hamper the prosecution of the war". The responsibility for what followed the hasty arrests of Congressmen must rest solely on the Government. For, they invited the crisis, not the authors of the resolution.

You remind me that you were Commander-in-Chief at the time. How much better it would have been for all concerned if confidence in the immeasurable strength of arms had ruled your action instead of fear of a rebellion! Had the Government stayed their hand at thetime, surely all the bloodshed of those months would have been avoided. And it is highly likely that the Japanese menace would have become a thing of the past. Unfortunately it was not to be. And so the menace is still with us, and what is more, the Government are pursuing a policy of suppression of liberty and truth. I have studied the latest ordinance about the detenus, and I recall the Rowlatt Act of 1919. It was properly called the Black Act. As you know, it gave rise to an unprecedented agitation. That Act pales into insignificance before the series of ordinances that are being showered from the Viceregal throne. Martial Law in effect governs not one Province as in 1919, but the whole of India. Things are moving from bad to worse.

You say, "it is clear to me that you had lost confidence in our ability to defend India and were prepared to take advantage of our supposed military straits to gain political advantage." I must deny both the charges. I venture to suggest that you should follow the golden rule, and withdraw your statement and suspend judgment till you have submitted the evidence in your possession to an impartial tribunal and obtained its verdict. I confess that I do not make the request with much confidence. For, in dealing with Congressmen and others, Government have combined the prosecutor, judge and jailor in the same person and thus made proper defence impossible on the part of the accused. Judgments of courts are being rendered nugatory by fresh ordinances. No man's freedom can be said to be safe in this extraordinary situation. You will probably retort that it is an exigency of the war. I wonder !

As I visualize India today, it is one vast prison containing four hundred million souls. You are its sole custodian. The Government prisons are prisons within this prison. I agree with you that whilst you hold the views expressed in your letter under reply, the proper place for one like me is a Government prison. And unless there is a change of heart, view and policy on the part of the Government, I am quite

content to remain your prisoner. Only I hope you will listen to the request made by me through the proper channels to remove me and my fellow-prisoners to some other prison where the cost of our detention need not be even one tenth of what it is today.

As to my complaint[1] about Mr. Butler's statement and later the Home Secretary's, I have received two letters from the HomeDepartment in reply. I am sorry to say, they have appeared to me highly unsatisfactory. They ignore patent facts, and betray an obstinate refusal to face truth even on a wholly non-political issue. My correspondence with the Home Department continues. I invite your attention to it, if you can spare the time and are interested in the subject.

I am glad and thankful that Shri Mirabai's (Miss Slade's) case is being considered in the light of what I say[2] about her in my letter.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY

VICEROY'S CAMP

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, pp. 264-6, and *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi,* pp. 124-5. Also C.W. 10503. Courtesy: India Office Library

31. NOTE TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

April 10, 1944

You must forget about Paramanand's daughter. You can have Ghia's daughter if she is free. I cannot find a girl right away. Moreover, my programme is never certain.

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 4-3-1944and 20-3-1944.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Wavell", 9-3-1944.

32. LETTER TO ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

DETENTION CAMP,

April 13, 1944

ADDITIONAL SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

SIR,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter[1] of 30th March, received by me on the 6th of April. It is good proof to show how ill-informed the Central Government were about the whole situation.

As to "trained nurses", I draw attention to the statement made on behalf of the Government that they "were made available for a short period". That my wife preferred an ayah to a trained nurse is hardly relevant to the consideration whether trained nurses were in fact supplied. Therefore that statement seems to me clearly to demand public adjustment.

I hope to have satisfactory reply[2] regarding other matters contained in my letter[3] of April 1, 1944.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, pp. 244-5

[1] *Vide* lst footnote of "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 20-3-1944.

[2] The Government's reply dated April 29, read: "The Government of India have read with regret your letters of April 2 and 13. They believe that no impartial judgment would support the complaints you have made against them. At the same time they feel that it is impossible to expect from you in your bereavement a fair recognition of their endeavours to do all that was reasonably possible to meet the requests that reached them and that no useful purpose would be served by continuing the correspondence."

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 1-4-1944.

33. LETTER TO ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

DETENTION CAMP,
April 21, 1944

THE ADDITIONAL SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

(HOME DEPARTMENT)

NEW DELHI

SIR,

I wrote to you on the 4th March[1] requesting the Government to transfer the party of detenus in this camp to a prison where the expense entailed in our detention here may be materially reduced.

I request an early decision in the matter.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, p. 269

34. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

DETENTION CAMP,
May 3, 1944

SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

(HOME DEPARTMENT)

BOMBAY

SIR,

Shri Jamnadas Gandhi came in yesterday. When I was asked whether I would see him, I had consented so as to cause as little disappointment as possible. For the future, my position is that whilst I would be glad to see any relatives who might secure Government permission, I must not break the rule I have made for myself that I would deny myself the pleasure, so long as the Government restrict

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 4-3-1944.

the permission only to relatives and exclude the members of the Ashram or those who stand in the same category. I regard them as equal with my relatives. The Government were good enough to grant such permission during my fast last year[1] without any untoward result so far as I know. Can they do likewise during my convalescence[2] which bids fair to be protracted?

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3937

35. LETTER TO SECRETARY , HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

DETENTION CAMP,
7.45 a.m., May 6, 1944

SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY
(HOME DEPARTMENT)
BOMBAY

SIR,

I have been told by the Inspector-General of Prisons that the party of detenus in this camp is to be discharged at 8 a.m., today. I wish to put on record the fact that by reason of the cremation of the corpses of Shri Mahadev Desai and then my wife, the place of cremation which has been fenced off becomes consecrated ground. The party has daily visited the ground twice and offered floral tributes to the departed spirits and said prayers. I trust that the plot will be

[1] From February 10 to March 3, 1943

[2] According to *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. IV, pp. 948-9, in a cable dated May 4, 1944, to the Secretary of State for India, the Viceroy reported: "Latest reports show progressive deterioration in Gandhi's anaemia, blood-pressure and kidney functions, all of which in opinion of Dr. B. C. Roy shared by Surgeon-General Candy, have tendency to produce coronary or cerebral thrombosis. . . . This is a case in which I consider we must be guided by medical opinion. Deterioration in Gandhi's health appears such that his further participation in active politics is improbable and I have no doubt that death in custody would intensify feeling against Government. . . . I am accordingly instructing Bombay Government to release Gandhi unconditionally at 8 a.m. On Saturday, 6th May, with announcement that release is entirely on medical grounds and am informing all Governors accordingly." For the British Premier Winston Churchill's displeasure at Viceroy's decision, *vide* footnote 1 of "Letter from Lord Wavell", 15-8-1944.

acquired by the Government with the right of way to it through H. H. the Aga Khan's grounds so as to enable those relatives and friends who wish to visit the cremation ground whenever they like. Subject to the permission of the Government, I would like to arrange for the upkeep of the sacred spot and daily prayers. I hope that the necessary steps will be taken by the Government in terms of my prayer. My address will be: Sevagram, *via* Wardha (C.P.)[1]

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3938

36. TELEGRAM TO M. M. MALAVIYA[2]

May 6, 1944

AT A STROKE YOU HAVE CUT OFF TWENTY-FIVE YEARS.[3] ADD TWENTY-FIVE TO YOURS!

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. I, Book One, p. 14

[1] According to *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government*, p. 271, the Government's reply dated July 7, 1944, stated: " . . . it is legally impossible for Government to acquire the site compulsorily under the Land Acquisition Act. Government considers that the matter is one for private negotiations between you and His Highness the Aga Khan. . . . Your request has been communicated to His Highness the Aga Khan and is now understood to be under his consideration. Government understands that he has no objection, in the mean while, to the relatives of Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Mahadev Desai and any other person suggested by you going through the Palace grounds to the place of cremation. . ."

[2] Pyarelal explains that this was in reply to the addressee's telegram which read: "Thank God. He has heard prayers of vast millions and set you free to breathe fresh air. Have every hope. He will let you live a hundred years to serve motherland and mankind."

[3] Pyarelal says: "The allusion was to Gandhiji's last speech in the All-India Congress Committee before his arrest in August 1942, when he had said that he would like to live and serve the country for 125 years."

37. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[1]

PARNAKUTI,
YERAVDA HILL, POONA,
May 6, 1944

CHI. RAJAGOPALACHARI

BAZULULLAH ROAD

MADRAS

YOUR WIRE. PHYSICIAN HEAL THYSELF. LOVE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. I, Book One, p. 14

38. TELEGRAM TO DR. KHAN SAHEB

PARNAKUTI, POONA,
May 6, 1944

DR. KHAN SAHEB[2]

PESHAWAR

WIRE BADSHAH'S[3] HEALTH. LOVE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] According to Pyarelal, the addressee "whose health was never too robust" had inquired about Gandhiji's health and expressed joy at his release.

[2] He led the Congress Ministry in the North-West Frontier Province, which resigned on November 7, 1939, along with other Congress Ministries.

[3] Addressee's brother, Abdul Ghaffar Khan

39. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

[After *May 6, 1944*][1]

. . . I had condemned it in my letter to Linlithgow without waiting for evidence. Did you not see it ? In my very first letter[2] written in August the day before Mahadev passed away, I had condemned all violence, including the violence that had taken place. It had been the Government's design to get me to admit responsibility for the violence which would justify their repression, and show them to be innocent before the world. I did not oblige. Nothing would make me do so. Being in jail how could I be expected to know about it ? So when I heard about Kishorelal, I immediately lodged a protest. You must try to understand this. Think over it. I have not been guilty of the slightest error. None but the Government says that I committed an error. That was a false charge. I had condemned all acts of violence. They wanted me to accept the Government's version and condemn popular violence and condemn it from the jail. I refused to do that. There is no difference between what I am saying now and what I said in 1942. On the basis of the evidence available today, I have condemned certain acts of violence. When that information was given to me without any evidence, I promptly and unequivocally protested. Did you not read my reply to the Government ? I have not gone back upon it. I believe that all type of killing and burning is bad. So, it taught a lesson at least to those who killed and burnt, did it not ? The fact is that my correspondence was released only after the fast. You should read those letters. I have certainly condemned the violence. But how can I admit without any direct evidence that people resorted to such and such acts ?

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari- Pannalal Jhaveri, p. 35

[1] The letter appears to have been written following Gandhiji's release from jail on May 6, 1944, when certain instances of mass action during the Quit India Movement were judged in retrospect in terms of violence and non-violence; *vide* also "Discussion with a Friend", after 6-5-1944; "Letter to Annada Babu Chowdhary", 9-6-1944.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 14-8-1942.

40. DISCUSSION WITH A FRIEND[1]

[After *May 6, 1944*][2]

Gandhiji questioned the statement that sabotage could be part of the non-violent programme or that it was derivable from the principle of ahimsa as he understood it. The friend, however, persisted that sabotage had come to stay whether one liked it or not.

GANDHIJI: Irresponsible prophesying leads to nowhere. The real question is where *we* stand, what *our* attitude towards it is going to be.

FRIEND: Was destruction of Government property violence? You say that nobody has a right to destroy any property not his own. If so, is not Government's property mine? I hold it is mine and I may destroy it.

There is a double fallacy involved in your argument. In the first place, conceding that Government property is national property—which today it is not—I may not destroy it because I am dissatisfied with the Government. But even a national government will be unable to carry on for a day if everybody claimed the right to destroy bridges, communications, roads, etc., because he disapproved of some of its activities. Moreover the evil resides not in bridges, roads, etc., which are inanimate objects but in men. It is the latter who need to be tackled. The destruction of bridges, roads, etc., by means of explosives does not touch this evil but only provokes a worse evil in the place of the one it seeks to end.[3] To sterilize it needs not destruction but self-immolation of the purest type, which would demonstrate that the authorities might break but would not be able to bend a will that has

[1] The discussion appeared under the title "A Pointer for the Future" by Pyarelal who explains that "a friend" had asked Gandhiji "How is the cutting of telegraph wires contrary to the principle of ahimsa?" And another who met him some time after he left the Aga Khan Palace had posed the problem thus: "There are two schools of thought amongst our youth today. One school holds, and openly says, that as a programme of action ahimsa is played out. It has done its work, which was to awaken the masses, and has set the stage for the final struggle for independence. In this struggle, force of arms cannot be excluded. The other school, while professing belief in ahimsa, says that there is room for modification and further elaboration in its technique. They aver that the next phase of our struggle would be characterized by organized sabotage on an extensive scale."

[2] *ibid*

[3] The rest of the paragraph is from *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. I, Book One, p. 38

resigned itself to the God of truth.

I agree that the evil is within ourselves, not in the bridge which can be used for a good purpose as well as an evil one. I also agree that its blowing up provokes counter-violence of a worse type. But it may be necessary from a strategic point of view for the success of the movement and in order to prevent demoralization.

It is an old argument. One used to hear it in old days in defence of terrorism. Sabotage is a form of violence. People have realized the futility of physical violence, but some people apparently think that it may be successfully practised in its modified form as sabotage.[1] It lacked the quality of non-violence and could not take the place of full-fledged armed conflict. . . . We have to deal with a power which takes pride in not recognizing defeat. In the early part of the British rule there were powerful risings. In several places the British were actually beaten. But they won in the end. A British statesman used to say, "I do not believe in wooden guns." National struggles could not be won by "wooden guns".

It is my conviction that the whole mass of people would not have risen to the height of courage and fearlessness that they have, but for the working of full non-violence. How it works we do not yet fully know. But the fact remains that under non-violence we have progressed from strength to strength even through our apparent failures and set-backs. On the other hand, terrorism resulted in demoralization. Haste leads to waste.

You characterized the "Quit India" movement as a non-violent rebellion. Is not non-violent rebellion a programme of seizure of power?

No. A non-violent rebellion is not a programme of seizure of power. It is a programme of transformation of relationship ending in a peaceful transfer of power. . . . It will never use coercion. Even those who hold contrary views will receive full protection under it.[2]

We have found that a person who has had a schooling in violent activity comes nearer to true non-violence than one who has had no such experience.

That can be true only in the sense that having tried violence again and again he has realized its futility. That is all. Would you maintain also that a person who has had a taste of vice is nearer to virtue than the one who had none? For, that is what your argument amounts to.[3]

[1] The rest of the paragraph is from *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. I, Book One, p. 38

[2] These two paragraphs are reproduced from *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. I, Book One, pp. 38-9.

[3] *ibid*

It is no secrecy, if the person concerned is boldly prepared to face the consequences of his action. He resorts to secrecy in order to achieve his object. He can refuse to take any part in subsequent interrogations during his trial. He need not make a false statement.

No secret organization, however big, could do any good. Secrecy aims at building a wall of protection round you. Ahimsa disdains all such protection. It functions in the open and in the face of odds, the heaviest conceivable. We have to organize for action a vast people that have been crushed under the heel of unspeakable tyranny for centuries. They cannot be organized by any other than open, truthful means. I have grown up from youth to 76 years in abhorrence of secrecy. There must be no watering down of the ideal. Unless we cling to the formula in its fulness, we shall not make any headway.

I know we have not always lived up to our ideals. There have been grave lapses. Had our instruments been less imperfect, we would have been nearer our goal. But in spite of our temporizing with our ideal, non-violence has worked like a silent leaven among the dumb millions. That does not mean that we can afford to go on like this for ever. We cannot remain static. We must move forward or we shall slide back.

Are you of opinion then, that the August resolution caused a set-back in the struggle for independence; that all the heroism and courage which our people showed in the course of it was useless?

No, I do not say that. In the historical process, the country will be found to have advanced towards freedom through every form of struggle, even through the August upheaval. All that I have said is that the progress would have been much greater, if we had shown the non-violent bravery of my conception. In this sense the sabotage activity has retarded the country's freedom. I have the highest admiration for the courage, patriotism and spirit of self-sacrifice of people, say, like Jayaprakash Narayan. But Jayaprakash cannot be my ideal. If I had to give a medal for heroism, it would go not to him but to his wife who, though simple and unlearned in politics, typifies in her person the power of satyagraha in its purest form before which even Jayaprakash has to bow. What I have said about the August upheaval is not by way of judgment upon the past—I have consistently refused to condemn it—but as a guidance for the future.

Our people have faith in non-violence but they do not know how to make it

dynamic. What is the reason for this failure?

By hammering away at it through painful years, people have begun to see that there is a potency in non-violence, but they have not seen it in all its fulness and beauty. If they had responded to all the steps that had to be taken for the effective organization of non-violence and carried out in their fulness the various items of the eighteen fold constructive programme, our movement would have taken us to our goal. But today our minds are confused because our faith in constructive work is so weak. I know, one must push forth undaunted by difficulties.[1]

Harijan, 10-2-1946

41. ANSWER TO VISITORS

POONA,
May 7, 1944

Do not worry about my health or my life which is in the hands of God. He, in His infinite mercy, would do what best pleased Him.[2]

The Hindu, 8-5-1944

42. TELEGRAM TO T. B. SAPRU

PARNAKUTI, POONA,
May 8, 1944

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU
ALLAHABAD

THANKS. TRYING UTMOST FOR SPEEDY RECOVERY. BUT GOD DISPOSES. HOPE YOU ARE WELL.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] For a discussion on the same subject with a woman worker and Appa Pant, *vide* Appendix "discussion on Underground Activities", after 31-3-1944.

[2] According to the report, "these were the words which Gandhiji told all those who asked him about his health". For the Viceroy's brief report on Gandhiji's health, *vide* "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of Bombay", 3-5-1944.

43. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

POONA,
May 9, 1944

AMTUSSALAAM
CARE HUMAYUN KABIR
26 AMIR ALI AVENUE
CALCUTTA

PROGRESSING SLOWLY. SEE DAILY BULLETINS. GET WELL. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 475

44. TELEGRAM TO FRANK MORAES

PARNAKUTI, POONA,
May 9, 1944

MORAES
CARE "TIMES OF INDIA"
BOMBAY

THANKS. PLEASE WAIT A WHILE. WILL WRITE WHEN READY.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

45. TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT, MYSORE STATE CONGRESS [1]

[Before *May 13, 1944*][2]

THANKS BUT INADVISABLE TO GO THERE.

The Bombay Chronicle, 15-5-1944

[1] According to the report, the telegram was in reply to the addressee's "invitation to Gandhiji to stay at Nandi Hill for recuperation and rest". It appeared under the date-line "Bangalore, May 13".

[2] *ibid*

46. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

BOMBAY,
May 13, 1944

AMTUSSALAAM
CARE PIONEER BANK
COMILLA

SLOWLY PROGRESSING. NO CAUSE ANXIETY. EXPECT YOU CONTINUE YOUR EXCELLENT WORK[1] WITH REDOUBLED ENERGY. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 476

47. TELEGRAM TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

BOMBAY,
May 13, 1944

ANAND HINGORANI
SADAR VILLA
FYZABAD ROAD
LUCKNOW

NO FORLORNNESS[2] PERMISSIBLE. GOD OUR ETERNAL COMPANION. YOU CAN COME AFTER EAR TREATMENT.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India, and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] In *Bapuke Patra-8: Bibi Amtussalaamke Nam*, the addressee explains that she started working at Kasturba Seva Mandir, Borkamata, East Bengal, as soon as she got this wire. *Vide* also "Letter to Amtussalaam", 22-5-1944.

[2] The addressee had lost his wife. *Vide* also "Letter to Anand T. Hingorani", "Letter to Anand T. Hingorani", 2-6-1944.

48. LETTER TO POTHAN JOSEPH

PALM BUN, JUHU,
May 13, 1944

DEAR POTHAN JOSEPH,

As you probably know Gandhiji asked the Government to provide him with *Dawn* while he was in detention. And whenever it came–which was fairly regularly–he perused it carefully. Since our coming here, however, he has been missing it. For, naturally, the Government copy has ceased to come. He has, therefore, asked me to request you to send him a copy of the *Dawn* regularly. In case it is not the practice of your management to send it free to anybody, he says the subscription should be paid by you out of your capacious pocket. You know well enough that Gandhiji has no money to buy newspapers with.

Please send the back-numbers too as from the 1st of May, 1944. The address should be as above until further notice.

With regards.

Yours sincerely,
PYARELAL

POTHAN JOSEPH, ESQ.
NEW DELHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

49. LETTER TO TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU

PALM BUN, JUHU,
May 14, 1944

DEAR SIR TEJ,

I showed your letter to Gandhiji. He was sorry to learn about your son's serious illness[1] and he hopes that he will be completely restored to health in the bracing climate of Kashmere. I shall let you

[1] The addressee's third son, Anand, was suffering from paralysis of the whole body excepting the head and the neck after taking anti-rabies injections under medical advice.

know as soon as he is declared free to undertake public work.

Yours sincerely,

PYARELAL

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU

19 ALBERT ROAD

ALLAHABAD

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

50. ANSWER TO A FRIEND[1]

[*May 14, 1944*][2]

If you had put me this question yesterday, I should have been at a loss for an answer. But today I can say that it is well with me for, during the night, I have got back what I had lost for a while—a living faith in God. He is the Master Physician—the Great Healer.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book One, p. 15

51. NOTE TO ZAVERCHAND MEGHANI [3]

[On or after *May 14, 1944*][4]

I think we have not met after our meeting at Ranpur. I heard your songs today to my fill and was pleased. My stomach becomes empty soon. You need not fear, therefore, that it will become overfull.[5]

[From Gujarati]

Li. Hun Avun Chhun, p. 454

[1] Pyarelal explains that Gandhiji gave this answer during his convalescence at Juhu, where he reached on May 11. Gandhiji was asked "how he was".

[2] From the contents it is presumed that Gandhiji gave the answer before he commenced his 15-day silence at noon on this date. *Vide* also "Silence-Day Note to Doctors", 15-5-1944.

[3] Zaverchand Meghani (1896-1947); Gujarati poet and author known for his work on the folksongs of Gujarat.

[4] According to the source, Gandhiji wrote this note on a silence-day at Juhu after his release from the Aga Khan Palace at Poona. Gandhiji was released on May 6, 1944; he reached Juhu on May 11 and commenced a fortnight's silence on May 14.

[5] The addressee, at Gandhiji's request, had sung some of his patriotic songs and had probably said that he hoped he had not tired him.

52. TELEGRAM TO INAYATULLAH KHAN MASHRIQUI[1]

[On or before *May 15, 1944*][2]

MY LAST YEAR'S REQUEST[3] TO QAID-E-AZAM JINNAH STILL STANDS AND I WILL BE READY TO DISCUSS THE QUESTION OF HINDU-MUSLIM UNDERSTANDING AS SOON AS I GET BETTER.[4]

The Hindu, 17-5-1944

53. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO DOCTORS[5]

May 15, 1944][6]

The oppression was the fancied or real control of the doctors rather than the mind. I believe I have freed myself from the doctors' control. It does not matter if the freedom is imaginary or imagined. The effect on me is the same. Whatever I may now do will be due either to my weakness or strength. Next fortnight will show us all what is in store for me and us. I am approaching the thing with a detached mind. The difference is this. If I have the strength of mind, what I announced yesterday will abide. If the mind has become weak I do not know to what extent I shall go.

If the medicine is the least thing, you are safe and I am safe. About visitors I shall be stricter than the doctors have [advised].

From a facsimile: *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. I, Book One, between pp. 144 and 145

[1] This was in reply to a telegram dated May 9 from the addressee, leader of Khaksars, a militant Muslim organization. The addressee said: "Your release delightful. Pray speedy recovery. Requesting Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah to make appointment for meeting you as soon as possible in response to your last year's request. Shall accompany him if necessary. Please wire condition for possible interview."

[2] The telegram was reported under the date-line "Lahore, May 15".

[3] *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 4-5-1943.

[4] *Vide* also "Letter to Inayatullah Khan Mashriqui", 18-6-1944.

[5] Pyarelal, describing Gandhiji in his own words as 'a very fiend of destruction so far as papers and documents. . . were concerned', explains that this and other such "scribblings" preserved by him "give in part the story of Gandhiji's tussle with doctors".

[6] From the reference to the fortnight silence which Gandhiji "announced" on May 14, 1944

54. TELEGRAM TO SUPERINTENDENT, CENTRAL PRISON, AJMER

PALM BUN, JUHU,
May 17, 1944

SUPERINTENDENT
CENTRAL PRISON
AJMER

JUST HEARD FROM MRS. BALKRISHNA KAUL HER HUSBAND ON HUNGER-STRIKE IN YOUR JAIL.[1] PLEASE TELL HIM ON MY BEHALF HE SHOULD GIVE UP HUNGER-STRIKE. I HOPE HE WILL BE PERMITTED WRITE TO ME CAUSE FASTING.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

55. TELEGRAM TO MRS. BALKRISHNA KAUL

PALM BUN, JUHU,
May 17, 1944

MRS. BALKRISHNA KAUL
SREENAGAR ROAD
AJMER

HAVE WIRED SUPERINTENDENT. WRITE WHY FASTING.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Balkrishna Kaul, All-India Congress Committee member, who was undergoing imprisonment from August 1942, began his fast on April 25, 1944. He gave it up in response to Gandhiji's appeal; *vide* also "Interview to the Press", 14-7-1944.

56. CABLE TO "NEWS CHRONICLE[1]

PALM BUN, JUHU,

May 18, 1944

News Chronicle

LONDON

HAVING LEARNT FROM AUTHORITIES NO ASSURANCE CAN BE GIVEN ABOUT NON-MUTILATION MESSAGES. REGRET INABILITY COMPLY WITH YOUR REQUEST.

PYARELAL

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

57. LETTER TO ANNADA SHANKAR CHOWDHARI

May 18, 1944

Your letter is very good. You are right and so am I – each in his own way. Therefore, you should do only what appeals to your heart and head. I have learnt now not to blame anybody for his action so long as that action has come from the heart as has yours and many other co-workers'. You know my view. Weigh it and act according to your light. This ought to satisfy you. Don't expect orders from me especially while I am on a sick-bed.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : India Office Library and Records. Courtesy : The British Library, London

[1] The draft of this is in Gandhiji's hand.

58. LETTER TO R. R. DIWAKAR

May 18, 1944

Your letter is very good. You are right and so am I, each in his own way.[1] Therefore you should do only what appeals to your heart and head. I have learnt now not to blame anybody for his action so long as that action has come from the heart as has yours and many other co-workers'.[2] You know my view. Weigh it and act according to your light. This ought to satisfy you. Don't expect orders from me especially while I am on a sick-bed.

Love.

BAPU

From a facsimile: *Mahatma—Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, Vol. VI, between pp. 328 and 329

59. LETTER TO KUMI T. MANIAR

May 19, 1944

This is my second letter from the bed. The first letter was to Durga[3]. I always think about you. I am able to write only today. I wish you would get well. But if you have got to go on suffering, I also wish you freedom from that living death. Life and death are not in the hands of doctors and physicians. God has kept those things only in His hands. So, either way, we should be calm. God will protect the boys. And then, God has given you a sister as strong as Bali[4].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] In *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. I, Book One, p. 35, Pyarelal explains that some of the underground workers, of whom the addressee was one, had been "forced to the same conclusion" as was expressed in Gandhiji's advice to them; *vide* also Appendices "Discussion on Underground Activities", after 31-3-1944 and "Discussion with Underground Workers", after 31-3-1944.

[2] According to Pyarelal, R. R. Diwakar had reported to Gandhiji: "Possibly my trying to remain outside influenced me in not trying to dissuade workers from evading arrest after they had done some action. It became a part of the technique of dislocation activities to go on doing things without being arrested."

[3] Durga Desai

[4] Balibehn Adalaja

60. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

JUHU,
May 20, 1944

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Bapa[1] just informs me of your loss.[2] Why should I be the only loser through death of a dear one. My sympathy in abundance, if your philosophy stands in such need.

I feel like being in a wilderness. The so-called freedom jars. But God is our help. And so I take heart.

With love.

Yours,
LITTLE BROTHER

From a photostat: G.N. 8821; also *Letters of the Right Honourable V. S. Srinivasa Sastri*, pp. 358-9

61. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR[3]

JUHU,
May 20, 1944

DEAR DR. JAYAKAR,

The country expects much from me. I do not know how you feel about this release. I am not at all happy. I feel even ashamed. I should not have fallen ill. I tried hard not to, but failed at length. I feel that they will imprison me as soon as I am declared free from the present weakness. And, if they do not arrest me, what can I do? I cannot withdraw the August resolution. As you have very properly said, it is innocuous. You may differ about the sanction. It is the breath of life for me. I am silent till 29th. Meanwhile shall I send

[1] Amritlal V. Thakkar, Secretary, Harijan Sevak Sangh

[2] The reference is to the death of the addressee's brother, V. S. Ramaswami Sastri.

[3] This appeared in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 1-6-1944, with the following note by Pyarelal: "In view of the garbled and unauthorized version in a newspaper, Gandhiji has asked me to release for publication the full text of his letter to Dr. Jayakar. . . . Gandhiji hopes that no deeper meaning would be read into the letter which was not meant for publication and was necessarily brief."

Pyarelal to you? That, too, depends upon your health.

I know you are none too well.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi-Jayakar Papers: File No. 826, p. 1. Courtesy: National Archives of India

62. LETTER TO VIJAYA M. PANCHOLI

JUHU,

May 20, 1944

CHI. VIJAYA,

From today I am exercising the liberty of writing a few letters.[2] I am in Juhu till the 29th at any rate. Then, maybe three weeks, in Poona. The silence will end on the 29th. But do come over here. Perhaps it may be difficult to accommodate you here. I am staying in a hut. You may, therefore, stay somewhere else. I am helpless. In Sevagram all of you could have been accommodated. I am glad that Nanabhai[3] has been released. About me it is as you say.

Blessings to all of you from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7148. Also C.W. 4640. Courtesy: Vijaya M. Pancholi

[1] The addressee's reply dated May 21 read: "Thank you for your letter. It shows the anguish you are feeling. If I can be of the slightest use in helping to ease it, I shall be most happy. Please don't trouble to send Pyarelal to me. I am now sufficiently well to come and see you at Juhu, if your doctors will permit such a visit. Please let me know what your wishes are."

[2] The Government had laid a condition, while Gandhiji was in jail, that he could not write to anyone besides his family. So he took a vow not to write any letter for twenty-one months. This was one of the "few letters" that Gandhiji wrote after the fulfilment of the vow.

[3] Nrisimhaprasad Kalidas Bhatt, Principal, Lok Bharati, Sanosara

63. LETTER TO DURGA M. DESAI

JUHU,
May 20, 1944

CHI. DURGA[1],

I may be regarded as crippled for the present. God does not allow even a Mahatma's pride to last. These lines are for all. Once I start writing letters everyone expects one from me, but before I can satisfy their wish, maybe I will be there. Write to me in detail. Let all those who wish to write do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIII

64. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

JUHU,
May 20, 1944

CHI. NARANDAS,

I went carefully through your Annual Report. I have not yet started writing anything. I have written only three letters to invalids. But *Daridranarayana* is the greatest invalid in the world. You are one of His matchless devotees dedicated exclusively to His service. You celebrate the *Rentia Baras*[2] on the occasion of my birthday and every year you make your plan of service more rigorous. This year the test will be the hardest so far. May you succeed in it. This time, while in jail, I read about Marx and whatever literature I could get about the great experiment in Russia. What a great difference between that experiment and our spinning wheel? There also, as in India, the whole nation is invited to join in the *yajna*. But the experiments there and here are as different from each other as East from West or North from South.

[1] Wife of Mahadev Desai

[2] Sacrificial spinning initiated by the addressee in honour of Gandhiji's birthday; this was also called *Rentia Yajna* meaning non-stop spinning beginning on *Bhadarva Vad* 12, Gandhiji's date of birth according to Vikram era, usually falling in the second half of September, to October 2. *Vide* also "Notes", 12-7-1939.

What a difference between our spinning-wheel and their machines driven by steam or electricity? But all the same I prefer the snail-like speed of the spinning-wheel. The spinning-wheel is a symbol of ahimsa, and ultimately it is ahimsa that will triumph. If, however, we who claim to be its votaries are weak, we shall dishonour ourselves and discredit ahimsa. Your activity is excellent indeed. But you should now introduce some new changes in it. There is a science of the spinning-wheel, as there is one of machines. We have still not fully evolved the "technique" of the spinning-wheel. It requires deep study.

Just as knowledge without faith is useless, even so faith without knowledge is blind.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8607. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

65. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

JUHU,

May 20, 1944

CHI. NARANDAS,

I drafted an article for you while lying in bed. I was afraid that it would have too many corrections, but that did not happen. I didn't feel like making a fair copy with ink. If you want any changes to be made in the draft, send it back to me. I will think over your revisions and will make a fair draft and send it over to you. We have enough time still.

Secondly, you know Manu (Jaisukhlal's); she has created a very good impression on me. I have not seen any other girl in our family with the same spontaneous spirit of service that she has. The devotion with which she looked after Ba has captured my heart. She would like to remain with me, but I do not wish it. I am a broken reed just now and, therefore, can give her nothing. The others are busy with their work. And what can they give her now? Her education must go on regularly. That can be done only if she is with you. She is not the type of girl whose presence will irritate you. She is simple-hearted. She is dull in her studies, has a good voice, and her health is fairly good. She

does not know how to take care of her health. She forgets everything concerning herself while serving. She is obedient. She will do whatever work you give her. I do wish that her knowledge of Sanskrit and Gujarati should improve. I myself taught her the *Gita.* She can recite it fairly well. Purushottam[1] or you can help her to improve her pronunciation still further. Jaisukhlal will pay whatever expenses on her account you think reasonable to ask for. Send me a wire whether or not you can receive her. I intend to send her with the first available escort. If you are inclined to refuse, do not hesitate to say so.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8608. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

66. LETTER TO G. L. MEHTA

May 20, 1944

BHAI SHRI GAGAN,

I read your article on Mahadev. May I entrust you with a job for Mahadev as long as you are here? Narayan[3] does not like to attend school or college and whatever he has acquired has been through Mahadev. I cannot, in my present condition, do anything for him. After I get well, I do think, I will be free. As long as I am out [of jail] he wishes to stay with me. It would be nice, if you can spare some time for him. You can teach him economics, Sanskrit, Bengali, etc. If, on reflection, you think it would overtax you, then please do not take it up. I have made this request because I saw in your article your overflowing love for Mahadev.

Secondly, Smt. Saudamini[4] also kindly offered whatever help I might need. If Chi. Uma[5] does not care any more to be nursed as an invalid, by all means let her give some time to me. I will think over

[1] Addressee's son

[2] *Vide* also "Silence-Day Note to Manu Gandhi", 27-2-1944.

[3] Also called Bablo, son of Mahadev Desai

[4] Addressee's wife

[5] Addressee's daughter, Uma Randeria

what she can give. How much time and when, that also I will have to think over. Maybe you two will not be able to spare time. I am only hungry for the company of the good and, therefore, I accept whatever is offered or is available from any source.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIII

67. TELEGRAM TO M. M. MALAVIYA

PALM BUN, JUHU,
May 21, 1944

BHARATBHUSHAN MALAVIYAJI

BENARES

YOUR KIND WIRE[1]. DOCTORS WON'T COUNTENANCE SUCH JOURNEY. SUGGEST TALKING THROUGH MESSENGER AFTER END MONTH. TILL THEN COMPLETE SILENCE.[2]

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

68. LETTER TO ASHFAQ HUSSAIN

JUHU,
May 21, 1944

MY DEAR ASHFAQ,

Your welcome letter. I can write only love letters. Do come when, if at all, I reach Sevagram.

I have to be under doctors' care yet for a while.

Love to all friends there.

Yours,

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Dated May 20, 1944, it read: "If doctors permit, suggest your staying Allahabad two months. Consultation necessary important matter. Wish meet you when your health permits."

[2] *Vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to M. M. Malviya", 21-5-1944.

69. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May *21, 1944*

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I could just read your letter. At present I am not able to write much. Please, therefore, be content with the little I write. What I write to one of you should be regarded as addressed to all. I do notknow anything about the quarrel between Balvantsinha and Amtussalaam. I think it is good that Munnalal is leaving. It is desirable that he should settle down somewhere. But he is a restless soul and will not do that. God protects him because his intentions are good. What is Parnerkar[1] doing? How is his health?

Even if I don't write, those who wish to write to me may do so.

I will not be in a hurry to go there. My heart is there, of course. Now I will go over only after it cools down. The silence will end on the 29th. After that I am eager to spend a couple of weeks at Dr. Mehta's sanatorium. Blessings to all. Why is Shankaran displeased?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIII

70. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

JUHU,

May 21, 1944

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I am now able to write a little. I, therefore, write to persons like you. I see nothing wrong in the letter you have written. Keep on writing even though you may make mistakes unintentionally. Many a time we learn to avoid mistakes only by making them. We can only try, it is God Who gives the reward. We must be content with whatever happens. I need not write all this to you. Do not worry about me. Just now I am observing silence which will end on the 29th.

Blessings to all from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10212. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] Yashwant Mahadev Parnerkar of Sevagram Ashram dairy

71. LETTER TO M. M. MALAVIYA

May 21, 1944

PUJYA BHAI SAHEB,

The doctor has permitted me to write such letters. I don't deserve your love. I know that I am unable to fulfil your wishes[1].

The doctors don't permit my travelling long distances. The fact is I don't feel as if I am out of jail. Is being released on grounds of health any release at all? Let us see what way God shows me after I am all right.

YOUR YOUNGER BROTHER

From a microfilm of the Hindi: M.M.U./XXIII

72. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

JUHU,
May 22, 1944

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I got your wire and letter. Pyarelal has replied to them. I have been given permission to write to a few and am, therefore, writing this letter. If your health is good enough, give there[2] whatever service you can, otherwise go to Sevagram. I am regaining strength fairly well. My health is certainly better than yours. But who will let me work, and am I a person who will work?

Kanti arrived here yesterday. He is all right. He will return to Mysore in a couple of days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 477

[1] *Vide* footnote 1 of "Tellegram to M. M. Malviya", 21-5-1944.

[2] Kasturba Seva Mandir, Borkamata; *vide* also telegram to the addressee, "Telgram to Amtussalaam", 13-5-1944.

73. LETTER TO GOMATI K. MASHRUWALA

JUHU,
May 22, 1944

CHI. GOMATI,

Today I feel like writing to you. This letter is for all of you. Vijayabehn and the others came and saw me. Manju too came.

I do not worry about Kishorelal[1]. He has come into this world to endure joy and sorrow silently.

I get news about you, too. I feel satisfied.

Tell Durga that she may accept Shantikumar's[2] invitation and come. Lilavati tells me that she is unhappy there. We should not be unhappy. This is only philosophizing. That she is unhappy is, however, a fact; so let her come here. She will get some peace of mind at any rate. Bablo is here, and that is also one reason why she should come. I am, of course, here too. Let her do what she thinks best. . . .[3]

Ask her to write to me in detail about her activities.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIII

74. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

May 23, 1944

DEAR DR. JAYAKAR,

Many thanks for your prompt reply.[4] As soon as the doctors permit me I shall trouble you to come.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi-Jayakar Papers: File No. 826, p. 3. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Addressee's husband
[2] Shantikumar N. Morarjee
[3] Omission as in the source
[4] *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Letter to M. R. Jayakar", 20-5-1944.

75. LETTER TO PRANLAL D. NANJI

By hand with Mathuradas JUHU,

May 23, 1944

BHAI PRANLAL,

You certainly have the blessings you ask for. If I could not look at such a matter in a detached spirit, it would be shameful for me to associate myself with the collection of this Fund[1]. But instead I am taking as much interest as I can in its success. How can a Fund, the appeal for which has the signatures of so many wealthy men like you, be anything but a success?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PRANLAL DEVKARAN NANJI

BOMBAY

From a facsimile of the Gujarati: *Pranlal Devkaran Nanji Abhinandan Granth,* between pp. 14 and 15

76. LETTER TO PANNALAL JHAVERI

JUHU, BOMBAY,

May 23, 1944

CHI. PANNALAL,

I was glad to have your letter. I am permitted to write only a few letters and in brief. I am making use of that facility. I am continuing my unbroken silence. It is good that you restrain yourself from coming now. I shall be happy if you come to Sevagram when I am there. I hope you are well, also Gangabehn.

I find that Gangabehn has written a separate letter. I shall not reply to her separately. This letter is for both.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Manavtana Prahari – Pannalal Jhaveri, p. 34

[1] Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust

77. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[*May 23, 1944*][1]

I will ask him [the doctor].You also may ask him. If he permits, you may come daily. Do keep troubling me often.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 198

78. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

May 23, 1944

What you said in your note[2] is perfectly true. In reply I have to say that I am doing exactly that. I will take no hasty step and am not going to take a blind plunge. For most of the time I observe silence.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 200

79. LETTER TO DINKAR

JUHU,
May 23, 1944

CHI. DINKAR,

I have been granted permission to write a few short letters. Hence this, just for the sake of love. I have persuaded myself to believe that what has happened is nothing but good. As to the question of going deep into the matter, we shall see about it when I am well enough. I am happy to learn that your health is improving. I know, you are weaker in body than I am. You have acted rightly in restraining your desire to come over. These days I am observing unbroken silence.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In the source, the addressee explain that he visited Gandhiji on the seventh and thirteenth day after his arrival at Juhu on May 11. This note was written when he visited Gandhiji the second time.

[2] The reference is to the addressee's letter dated May 20 in which he had said that it would be proper to take up the question of Hindu-Muslim unity only after Gandhiji had decided the policy of the Congress as regards the Government.

80. LETTER TO DADUBHAI DESAI

JUHU,
May 23, 1944

BHAI DADUBHAI,

I have your loving letter. My entire life has been full of experiments which have borne fruit. But please don't worry. I believe that my experiment has been prompted by God. I am quite sure that God will sustain my life as long as He wants to take work from me. You did well in refraining from rushing down here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

81. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

JUHU,
May 23, 1944

DEAR SISTER,

I was very glad to get your letter. I am not yet permitted to write much. I am improving slowly. Naturally it will take some time to regain strength.

Do come over when you are done with things there, and when I reach Sevagram.

I hope your health is all right.

Blessings to both of you from
BAPU

SHRIMATI RAMESHWARI NEHRU
SRINAGAR
KASHMIR

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8004. Also C.W. 3104. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

82. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND

JUHU,
May 23, 1944

BHAI MOOLCHADJI,

I got your letter. I find no reason to complain for what has happened. One can only act according to one's capacity.

Your work must be going on smoothly.

I am permitted to write just a little.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 843

83. LETTER TO INDRA VIDYAVACHASPATI

JUHU,
May 23, 1944

CHI. INDRA,

Come over when you wish to. But why should you take the trouble just to see me, when travelling is so difficult these days? I am observing silence which will end on the 29th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7206. Also C.W. 4864. Courtesy: Chandragupta Vidyalankar

84. LETTER TO A. KALESWARA RAO

JUHU,
May 24, 1944

MY DEAR KALESWARA RAO[1],

Your letter. *Rishis* are made of sterner stuff.

Let me remain what I am—a striving servant of India and, through her, of humanity.[2]

Hope you are well.

Yours,
BAPU

SHRI A. KALESWARA RAO
NANDIGAM, KRISHNA DISTRICT

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

85. LETTER TO TARA AND RAMNIKLAL MODI

JUHU,
May 24, 1944

CHI. TARA AND RAMNIKLAL,

Shouldn't Tara have precedence as in the compound 'Sitarama'. I am making progress although very slowly.[3] God has brought down my pride, which is what I deserved. I used to consider myself healthier than all of you. But I now realize that we are all made of the same stuff! You can see that I have gained enough strength to write this.

No one should rush here.

Blessings from
BAPU

17 SHANTINAGAR
ASHRAM ROAD
SABARMATI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Member of A.I.C.C., also of Madras Legislative Assembly

[2] In *Reminiscences of Gandhiji*, p. 141, Chandrashanker Shukla explains that the addressee, in his letter, had "described Gandhiji as a great *rishi* of the present age and wished him 116 years of life and activity to fulfil his mission on earth".

[3] Literally: "My cart is moving slowly."

86. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May 24, 1944

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

When an inadvertent mistake can wipe out even our own lives, it is no surprise if some pictures fade out. We should derive not only a lesson from this but some consolation also. The rest from Pyarelal's letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4440

87. MESSAGE TO CHINA[1]

May 25, 1944

My heartiest good wishes to China from which the world expects much. I am sorry that I cannot write Chinese.

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-5-1944; also *The Hindu*, 27-5-1944

88. LETTER TO KRISHNAVARMA

JUHU,

May 25, 1944

BHAISHRI KRISHNAVARMA[2],

I have told you that I used to go through the *Divya Jivan* with great care. I have, however, not been able to get anything out of it. A reader cannot undertake an experiment [on its basis]. The journal lacks scientific knowledge. Of course, I know Mahadevprasad verywell. His writings suggested to me that his knowledge was rusting. Please pass on this to him to read. I write this only to tell you that either the two of you should fill the pages of your journal with

[1] The report in *The Hindu* said: "Six Chinese saw Gandhiji after evening prayers. Gandhiji signed an album of photographs containing some photos of himself which the visitors had brought with them. The Chinese then made a collection among themselves and handed the sum to Gandhiji as their contribution towards the Harijan Fund."

[2] Of the Nature-cure clinic at Malad, in suburban Bombay

knowledge or close down the monthly.

I am a votary of nature cure. But the practitoners neither work hard nor go deep into the subject. They do not pursue the science with single-minded devotion. They neither study it [themselves] nor try to co-ordinate [one another's efforts].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

89. LETTER TO S. K. VAIDYA

May 25, 1944

BHAI VAIDYA,

It is my keen desire that you should take up some social work with this idea in your mind, if for no other reason, that you are thus identifying yourself with the poor.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5754

90. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

[*May 26, 1944*][1]

MY DEAR AMRIT,

You won't expect letters from me but love I can send now. Hope you are keeping well.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4202. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7838

[1] In the source, the letter appears on top of a letter dated May 26, 1944, from Dr. Sushila Nayyar to Amrit Kaur.

91. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

JUHU,
May 26, 1944

MY DEAR C. R.,

I have seen your postcard and letter. It is enough for me to know that you understand my joke[1] all right. Your letter admits that you are worse than I am in physical health. Whilst you are free to come any time you like, I shall not press you to come till I feel I am ready for sustained discussion. Meanwhile you can send me, in writing, whatever you have to say. Just now I pass the time reading some literature I had not read and the correspondence which Pyarelal chooses to show me.

I hope Papa[2] and Narasimhan[3]are flourishing.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2094

92. NOTE TO GULAM ALI KHAN[4]

May 26, 1944

I like songs in praise of God. I don't know much of music; neither have I heard many *ustads*[5].

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-5-1944; also *The Hindu*, 28-5-1944

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to C. Rajagopalachari", 6-5-1944.

[2] Addressee's daughter, Namagiri, and son

[3] *ibid*

[4] The report in *The Hindu* said: "Gandhiji wrote this on a slip of paper appreciating the rendering of classical songs and *bhajans* by Gulam Ali Khan of Lahore."

[5] *Maestri*

93. LETTER TO E. W. ARYANAYAKAM

JUHU,
May 27, 1944

MY DEAR ARYANAYAKAM,

I thank God and His instrument Asha that you are alive. She has been your Savitri to deliver you from the jaws of death. God bless you both. Don't do it again. Even a Savitri has her limits. I see you are in harness again. I am wrong. You were in harness even in your sick-bed.

Don't waste your time in answering this.

Love to you.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

94. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

JUHU
May 27, 1944

CHI. MAGANBHAI,

I read your letter[1]. Let them acquire it if they want to. After all does it not belong to them? Remember what the poet said in the *bhajan*[2]*:* "It is useless to sorrow over what God ordains." Who could be the Divine Preceptor of our world? He also has a Lord over him. But the *mantra* of worshipping Him is altogether different. "You may enjoy things only after renouncing them, etc."[3]

MAGANBHAI DESAI
VIDYAPITH
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Which reported that the Government intended to requisition the Gujarat Vidyapith buildings

[2] *Vide* "Ashram Bhajanavali", 20-12-1930.

[3] *Ishopanishad*, v. 1

95. LETTER TO SAMYUKTA GANDHI

JUHU
May 27, 1944

CHI. YUKTI[1],

. . . [2] death and disease stalk us right from our birth. They are both. . .[3] fruits of our own actions. We should suffer them with patience.

YUKTIBEHN
SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

96. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

JUHU,
May 27, 1944

DAUGHTER,

Your letter is painful reading. I am surprised that you pull on in spite of your illness. It also pains me, for I don't understand how a worker like you can fall ill. But then you are what you are. Ultimately you are sure to die in harness. You have sent for Munnalal. What for, may I ask? If you stick to the place in spite of all this illness, how much work do you expect to do? A better course would be to go to the Ashram and get well. I write this and yet wonder who am I to guide you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I hope you can decipher my handwriting.

AMTULBEHN

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Elder sister of Manu Gandhi
[2] Omission as in the source

97. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

PALM BEACH, JUHU,
May 27, 1944

If I were keeping good health, I would not have let you go anywhere but would have given you what I myself could. But I am a broken reed now. After I get well, they will certainly not let me remain free. Your good, therefore, lies in going down to Rajkot as early as you can. I will write to Narandas about your education. The things which Yukti has asked for can be sent to her. You may send for them. In all this overcrowding [in trains] I would not like to send you there even in Abha's[1] company. Please guess what I mean from this. God is sure to look after your well-being. Your services can never go unrewarded. Preserve this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

98. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

May 27, 1944

CHI. KANTI,

I have done what you wanted. Write a short letter of thanks on behalf of both. Write, in Hindi, saying that you will both try to be worthy of his generosity. Write to this effect, if you don't mind.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI KANTI GANDHI
1882-4 WESLEY ROAD
NEAR BUS STAND
MYSORE

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7368. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] Daughter of Amrita Lal Chatterjee

99. A LETTER

JUHU,

May 27, 1944

I myself have not seen the papers, but Sushila told me that you obtained Nathubhai's signature on your bulletin. Nathubhai was the last to come into my life, through Mahadev. But Jivraj and Purushottam Patel had come into it even before you did. They were followed by Deshmukh and then Nerulkar. Dalal is dead. I sent a gentle note of reproach to Nathubhai and asked him why he had not called. If, now, Nathubhai signs as a doctor, you should rope in Deshmukh and Nerulkar too. I know that you were prevailed upon by Dr. Gilder. This protest, therefore, is not addressed to you. It is against that Mayor. The bulletin, of course, is not to be issued. But this is one reason for my blood-pressure. There are other reasons, too, but I will not bother you with them. The pressure, of course, will come down, and then a day will come when I also will go the way Dalal has gone. Despite the different therapies, I and all others will have to go one day under some pretext or other. That is why I tell you that you are welcome to go on torturing me till you have conquered death.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2719. Courtesy: Nathubhai Patel

100. LETTER TO GULZARILAL NANDA

[After *May 27, 1944*][1]

CHI. GULZARILAL,

I read your letter to Pyarelal. Dr. Das visits me from time to time. Dr. Chugh has not impressed me, Dr. Das has. He does not propose to administer any medicine to me. By all means bring over anyone you like from among the names that you suggest. I wish I could have faith in homoeopathy and biochemic medicines, but I don't. Now I am thinking of taking allopathic drugs to get rid of thehook-worms and the amoebae. Your work seems to be going on well. Can one say that you have completely recovered?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In the source, the letter is placed between the letters of May 27 and June 4, 1944.

101. MESSAGE TO NATIONALIST CHRISTIAN PARTY[1]

May 28, 1944

I thank you all for having taken the trouble to come to Juhu and offer prayers for my health. If God has any service still to take from me, I am sure that your prayers and that of so many others in many lands will be answered. God bless you all.

The Hindu, 4-6-1944

102. A MESSAGE TO FRANK MORAES[2]

JUHU,
May 29, 1944

I have complete and categorical replies to all the charges. As soon as I get well, and if I am left free, I shall deal with the questions put.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

103. LETTER TO LORD SAMUEL

PALM BUN, JUHU,
May 31, 1944

DEAR LORD SAMUEL,

My unfortunate illness has prompted the Government to set me at liberty pending, it seems, restoration to health. I take the opportunity of sending you a copy of the letter I wrote to you during detention. The Government would not send you the letter for the reasons you will glean from copies of the correspondence attached hereto.

[1] The report said that this was given, "in writing, to a gathering of about 400 Christians organized by the Nationalist Christian Party . . . when prayers were held for the health of Mahatmaji and for the peace of the world".

[2] The message was communicated over the phone at 9.05 p.m.

I take this opportunity of thanking you for your kind message of sympathy on my wife's death.[1]

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

THE RT. HONOURABLE LORD HERBERT SAMUEL

HOUSE OF LORDS

LONDON

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

104. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

JUHU,

May 31, 1944

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter. Let me write a few words to you too, since I am writing a little to all those dear to me. You seem tobe well settled there. Satis Babu gets, I hope, the help which you should give him. Take care of yourself. Restrain your desire to visit me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1944

105. TELEGRAM TO MANUBHAI PANCHOLI

JUHU,

June 1, 1944

MANUBHAI

GRAM, DAKSHINAMURTI

AMBLA, SONGADH

AM JUHU TILL FIFTEENTH

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Kasturba Gandhi had died on February 22, 1944.

106. LETTER TO BRIJMOHAN BIRLA

PALM BUN, JUHU,
June 1, 1944

DEAR BRIJMOHANJI,

I have your letter of 29th ult. Bapuji would like you to wait till you hear from him. He proposes to write to Shri Khabardar[1] himself and will then let you know.

Yours sincerely,

SETH BRIJMOHAN BIRLA
8 ROYAL EXCHANCE PLACE
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

107. LETTER TO HARIHAR VYAS

PALM BEN, JUHU,
June 1, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

I have read out your letter to Gandhiji. He says he is unable to advise on the use of a purely communal donation. He suggests that the scope may be made general. Whoever benefits by the donation, the benefit will go to India. If the advice is accepted, he will make suggestions.

Yours sincerely,
PYARELAL

SHRI HARIHAR VYAS
JAWAHAR GUNJ
JUBBELPORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Ardeshir Framji Khabardar

108. NOTE TO RADHAKANT MALAVIYA

[After *June 1, 1944*][1]

Come to Sevagram as soon as you get the permission. Whatever has to be done will be done after hearing everyone. I am collecting all the information.

From a Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

109. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

JUHU,
June 2, 1944

MY DEAR ANAND,

Since you have written in English I answer likewise. You must cease to grieve. You should summon to your aid all you have read and digested. Here is a true thought[2] a lady has sentme. Inwardly digest it. Vidya[3] is not dead. She has gone elsewhere leaving the body which she was inhabiting and taking another suitable to her

[1] The note is scribbled on the addressee's letter of June 1, 1944.

[2] Gandhiji sent with the letter a poem received from Glen E. Snyder of U.S.A. when Kasturba died. The poem, by James Whitecomb Riley (1849-1916), American poet, read:

"You cannot say, you must not say
That she is dead.
She is just away!
With a cheery smile
And a wave of the hand
She has wandered into an unknown land
And left us dreaming how very fair
It needs must be, since she lingers there;
So think of her faring on, as dear
In the love of There, as the love of Here;
Think of her still as the same, and say
She is not dead, she is just away!"

[3] Addressee's wife

estate. Of course, you will come when you have finished the course of treatment. I am making slow progress.

BAPU

SADAR VILLA
FYZABAD ROAD
LUCKNOW

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India, and Anand T. Hingorani

110. LETTER TO SAROLA

PALM BAN, JUHU,
June 2, 1944

MY DEAR SAROLA,

I did have your wire. Pyarelal acknowledged it, too. You must have got it by this time. I do not know what is going to happen to me on recovery. I cannot guide you from a sick-bed. As yet I am allowed only to tackle light correspondence. All I can say is that you should do such national service as comes your way. How is Dipak?

Yours,
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

111. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

JUHU,
June 3, 1944

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Your note in reply to mine[1]. Your first letter was never received. Sushila will write to you fully. I am progressing steadily though slowly. You must not worry. If God wants more servicefrom me, He will surely keep me and give me sufficient strength to do His work. How about you? How about Shummy[2] and Beryl? Give me all the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 26-5-1944.
[2] Addressee's brother, Lt.-Col. Kanwar Shumshere Singh

details you are permitted to give. Are all the old attendants still with you?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4144. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7779

112. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

JUHU,
June 3, 1944

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. Thanks to your rheumatism, I was able to get news about you. For some time I had given up hopes about you. If Gordhandas[1] had not been released, you might not have been alive. It can be said that you owe your life to his labour and care. May you both live long. I am also eager to see you. But let us both observe self-control. When I get well and go to Sevagram, do come over and meanwhile get well completely. You had this serious illness at the wrong time! I am improving. Keep on writing to me. I think Anand[2] must have grown so much as not to be recognized.

Blessings to all three of you from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10045. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

113. LETTER TO KAUSALYA MALHOTRA

JUHU,
June 4, 1944

CHI. KAUSALYA,

Do you not know Hindi or any other Indian language? You need not unlearn English to be able to learn your mother tongue and write in it.

I have read your letter though my prescription holds. If you will

[1] Addressee's husband
[2] Addressee's son

be true to yourself, marry without becoming a doll but for the sake of having a partner to serve the country.

With love.

BAPU

MISS KAUSALYA MALHOTRA

C/O H. R. MALHOTRA

CHIEF SECRETARY TO JAMMU AND KASHMIR GOVERNMENT

SRINAGAR, KASHMIR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

114. LETTER TO MANEKLAL GANDHI

JUHU,
June 4, 1944

CHI. MANEKLAL,

I got your postcard. You are not far ahead of me in age. You have preserved your health well and it can also be said that you have given good service. May you excel me.

I am progressing slowly.[1] Manu has gone to Sevagram on account of Yukti. Both the sisters will come from there on the 23rd to catch the boat. To keep Manu with me now will mean ruining her life. Ba, of course, valued her service. I too would welcome it, but I don't need it. Now she must pay attention exclusively to study.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MANEKLAL AMRITLAL GANDHI

DEVALI THANA

KATHIAWAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 891. Courtesy: Maneklal Amritlal Gandhi

[1] Literally: "My cart is jogging along slowly,"

115. LETTER TO INDU N. PAREKH

JUHU,
June 4, 1944

CHI. INDU,

I have your letter. You have decided to do the right thing. You will be steadier when you marry. After all one has to marry, sooner or later. It is no easy task to observe unbroken *brahmacharya.* Practising abstention after marriage is, however, comparatively easier. Don't let your health deteriorate.

I still cannot work as much as before.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

116. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

JUHU,
June 5, 1944

DEAR DR. JAYAKAR,

I am glad you have returned. I hope to send you in a day or two the papers I had intended to. I propose that we should meet after you have studied the papers.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi-Jayakar Papers. File No. 826, p. 8. Courtesy: National Archives of India

117. LETTER TO SAILENDRANATH CHATTERJEE

JUHU,
June 5, 1944

MY DEAR SAILEN[1]

I was glad to have your letter. Abha will be with me whilst I am free. She has become very weak but there is no cause for anxiety.

[1] Son of Amrita Lal Chatterjee

About your difficulty, we shall talk when I am in Sevagram.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10494. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

118. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

JUHU,
June 5, 1944

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I read the *ghazal*[1] sent by you. I can understand it. But it does not have the same effect on my mind as it has on yours. I have read a good deal of Manibhai's writings. He was my professor. Your ship seems to be sailing fairly well. Do not be eager to come here. The other papers also were shown to me. Send me details of your work.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI BHAGWANJI PURUSHOTTAM

HARIJAN ASHRAM

WADHWAN CITY

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 398. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

119. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

JUHU,
June 5, 1944

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I read your anguish-filled letter. Constant efforts do result in purity. Meditate upon chapters VI and XII[2]. More when we meet. Shankaran is quite distressed and I feel that, if his father is ill, he should be permitted to go.

What work was Parnerkar doing?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4441

[1] By Mamilal Nabhubhai Dwivedi, Gujarati poet and thinker
[2] Of *Bhagavad Gita*

120. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 6, 1944

MY DEAR MADELEINE,

You will bear with me in addressing you thus. I wonder whether I did right in giving you another name. The moment I feel that I did right I shall resume the old style. Enough to know that the same love that gave you a new name has prompted the withdrawal.

I have your letter. I have read yours to Sushila. I see you are getting on.

Narandas writes to me that your account having been discontinued, he will take a little time in tracing the amounts received from time to time. There will be no avoidable delay. If you want money badly, I can have a fairly large sum transferred in your name at once.

I wrote a short note to the Viceroy and he has sent a firm 'no' for the same reasons that determined his actions whilst I was in detention. This is not for publication, only for you, Devdas and company.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

121. LETTER TO PREMI JAIRAMDAS

June 6, 1944

CHI. PREMI,

I was very happy to have your letter. Sushilabehn will write in greater detail. I am glad that you are keeping good health. I was of course worried. What do you propose to do now ?

I do often remember Jairamdas. Blessings to Devibehn. Let her write to me.

Do not come here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original : C. W. 11058. Courtesy : Arjun Jairamdas

122. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

BOMBAY,
June 7, 1944

AMTUSSALAAM
105 HARRISON ROAD

CALCUTTA

BAPUJI SEEN YOUR POSTCARD. HE IS LEAVING FOR POONA NEXT WEEK. ASKS YOU PROCEED SEVAGRAM. SENDS BLESSINGS.

SHANTIKUMAR

From a photostat: G.N. 478

123. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

June 8, 1944

CHI. MANU,

Instead of calling you Manu I should call you Mridulabehn[1]. Even before leaving Bombay you have disobeyed me. At this rate, how much of my advice are you going to follow? You have not earned a single pie yourself. You have a generous father, and so are wasting his money. Do you wish to spoil the baby[2]? But I will not let you do so while I am alive. If you think the silver rattle and cups are all right for you, you may keep them yourself. If you do not want them, give them to someone like you. I myself want that you should keep them as a reminder of your foolishness. I am returning the cup and rattle along with this letter.[3]

Rama Rama from your unhappy

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

[1] Addressee's full name
[2] Nandini, daughter of Pyarelal's brother, Mohanlal
[3] *Vide* also "Letter to Jaisukhlal Gandhi", 12-6-1944.

124. LETTER TO VITHALDAS

June 8, 1944

BHAI VITHALDAS,

I read your letter. My mind has become confused. If I hear both sides, it might throw some light. But is that possible in my present condition? I would advise you to assume that I have not been released and do what all of you think best. If that is not possible, then I may spare some time, listen to both the parties and give my decision.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9805

125. LETTER TO KANAM GANDHI

June 8, 1944

CHI. KANAM[1],

I received the plans sent by you. I learnt about your perseverance, as also about the service you are rendering to your grandmother. We can serve our elders even when they are no more. There is likely to be greater purity in such service. My purpose in writing this is, however, different. That you are immersed in study is good, no doubt, but you must realize its limitation, which is this: Spiritual progress is as essential as intellectual progress; so also development of the body. We often tend to forget this. Don't you forget this. The rest when we meet, although, I am afraid, it will be some time before we can meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Son of Ramdas Gandhi

126. SPEECH AT JUHU

June 8, 1944

I thought you were all good men and that you had faith in prayer. But if the report that has reached me is correct, I do not think that you answer to that description. If I am mistaken, you can correct me. You have gate-crashed and broken in. If that is so, I do not wish to have your *darshan*[1], neither do I wish to give you my *darshan.* When it rained, I came out and begged to be excused. I thought that none of you were left out. But you were late, though you had come in time for the usual prayers.[2] So I was helpless. I thought that if Sarojini Devi had allowed you and if you had come quietly, I would have had no objection. Instead you howled and broke open the gate. I am pleased to see you. But the way you have come here has pained me greatly. I hope you will not repeat this. I do not wish to say any more.

I shall be obliged, if you disperse quietly. Even this much speaking is beyond my strength and against the orders of my doctors. But I have spoken because I felt that, unless I gave expression to my anguish, I would not be able to sleep peacefully. You gate-crashed and it hurts me. If you disperse peacefully, my anguish will be lightened. But if you do not remain peaceful and disperse in an orderly manner, I shall have to come back. Those of you who wish to contribute to the Harijan Fund may do so. But you will not expect me to keep standing here. That is beyond my strength.[3]

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-6-1944

[1] Sight of a person, place or thing considered holy

[2] The report said: "Due to the inclement weather Gandhiji went to the usual prayer ground facing the sea, a little earlier than usual, and begged to be excused. It was decided to hold the prayers inside the compound. . . ." The report in *The Hindu*, 10-6-1944, said: "After waiting for more than an hour, they were told that they could proceed to Mr. Gandhi in batches. But the crowd rushed in. . . ."

[3] The report concluded: "After Gandhiji turned back some people made their contributions to the Fund and all of them walked out of the grounds peacefully."

127. LETTER TO T. B. SAPRU

June 9, 1944

DEAR SIR TEJ,

I have your kind letter[1]. I am glad your son is making rapid progress. May the residence in Kashmir bring about complete recovery.

The publication of my letter[2] to Dr. Jayakar had become inevitable. You need fear no hasty statement[3] from me till I am declared passable by the doctors. I shall look forward to meeting you in Sevagram. I shall be for a fortnight from 15th instant in Dr. Dinshaw's sanatorium and may have to go to Panchgani thereafter.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi-Sapru Papers. Courtesy: National Library. Also G.N. 7576

128. LETTER TO ARUNA ASAF ALI

June 9, 1944

I have been filled with admiration for your courage and heroism. I have sent you messages that you must not die underground.[4] You are reduced to a skeleton. Do come out and surrender yourself and win the prize offered for your arrest. Reserve the prize money for the Harijan cause.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book One, p. 36

[1] Dated June 4, 1944

[2] *Vide* "Letter to M. R. Jayakar", 20-5-1944.

[3] The addressee had said in his letter that "any statement at this stage . . . might make the task of general reconciliation difficult" and reserved his "suggestions for a personal discussion".

[4] Pyarelal explains: "Aruna Asaf Ali had been suffering from acute dysentery. It had been accentuated by the vicissitudes of her underground life."

129. LETTER TO ANNADA BABU CHOWDHARY

June 9, 1944

Secrecy, in my opinion, is a sin and symptom of violence, therefore, to be definitely avoided, especially if the freedom of the dumb millions is the goal. Hence all underground activity, in my opinion, is taboo. What I, however, say is that even the content of violence and non-violence, whether as policy, or creed, should be judged by every individual worker according to the dictates of his head and heart. And when there is a conflict between the head and the heart, the heart wins.

I am not saying anything as the leader of the movement, I must be regarded still as a prisoner with freedom to give opinions, not to issue instructions.

Glimpses of Gandhiji, pp. 74-5

130. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKVASA[1]

June 9, 1944

Don't you think I have beaten you? You were only able to sign, but I have been able to write two lines also.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4782. Courtesy: Mangaldas Pakvasa

131. DRAFT LETTER TO THE VICEROY[2]

JUHU,

June 10, 1944

The Committee of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry congratulate His Excellency the Viceroy on the step taken by him in releasing Mahatma Gandhi. Although it is stated that the action has been taken on medical grounds, the

[1] This was written as postscript to Pyarelal's reply to the addressee who was not keeping well.

[2] The draft carries heavy revisions in Gandhiji's hand.

Committee feel that to ignore the political potentialities of Gandhiji's release would be a great mistake on the part of the Government.

The Committee firmly believe that the situation in 1942 was thoroughly mishandled by the Government of India leading to the arrest of Gandhiji and other leaders and other responsible Congressmen throughout the country. The disturbances were the natural consequence which the Government should have foreseen. The Committee is convinced that had the Government waited and responded to the way of negotiation which was clearly contemplated as can be proved from Gandhiji's and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's and Panditji's speeches and statements made at the time and not exhibited a panicky mood showed by the arrests, the history of India would be much different today from what it is. While deploring the past mistakes, the Committee feel that these could be rectified by reviewing the position afresh and making a firm attempt to solve the political deadlock. The Committee is convinced that Mahatmaji is a man of peace and goodwill and that his method is not one of giving advantage to the enemy. The Committee, therefore, feel that a solution is not impossible if the Government were to reciprocate the friendliness of Gandhiji. The Com[mittee] feel that in order to enable the Mahatma to render effective help in the war effort, the first natural action should be the release of the members of the Working Committee and all others who have been interned. It is clear to the Committee [that] Gandhiji is powerless without the backing of the Working Committee.

We believe that even the economic development, for which His Excellency the Viceroy has expressed such great sympathy, is impossible unless there is at the centre a Government which can inspire confidence and enthusiasm among the people. Only a National Government could fulfil the above condition. The Com[mittee], therefore, strongly appeal to His Excellency the Viceroy that in the interest of winning the war, the future Indo-British relations and the improvement of the economic condition of India, it is imperative that the Government should take immediate steps to achieve conditions for the establishment of a truly National Government. The Committee also appeal to Mahatma Gandhi and Mr. Jinnah to make fresh efforts to solve the communal deadlock for the purpose of creating an atmosphere for establishment of a National Government.

From a original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

132. LETTER TO H. P. MODY[1]

SUNDER BUN, JUHU,
June 10, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

I send you herewith in two volumes copies of correspondence between the Government of India or the Bombay Government and myself during my incarceration in the palace of H. H. the Aga Khan in Yeravda.

The second volume is a copy of my reply[2] to the Government of India pamphlet entitled *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942-43*. The first contains copies of correspondence arising out of the above mentioned reply and on miscellaneous matters of public importance.

I had the copies cyclostyled with the help of kind friends. For fear of censorship difficulties I did not try to have the copies printed at any printing press. But lest the Government of India may think that there is anything in the correspondence objectionable from military standpoint, I am circulating for private use only the copies among friends who, I think, should know the nature of the correspondence that took place between the two Governments and me. You are free to show your copy to any friends you like, subject to the precaution that applies to you.

You will confer on me a favour, if you will take the trouble of letting me have your reaction upon the correspondence, especially upon the points arising from my reply to the Government of India pamphlet. I have endeavoured to answer every item of importance in the Government indictment. I should like to know the points, if any, which require elucidation.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original: H. P. Mody Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also G.N. 1192, and *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government,* p. xxvii

[1] In *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government,* this appears as "Gandhiji's Prefatory Covering Letter".

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943.

133. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

June 10, 1944

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I have your love letter[1] delivered through a precious messenger. I agree with you in the main. But I understand you will be in Poona at least up to the 15th. I reach Poona on that date. Could you not postpone your departure for one day? Then we can meet face to face. You are to have with this a parcel[2] which will tell its own tale.

Love from,

Your little brother,

From a photostat: G.N. 8822. Also *Letters of the Right Honourable V. S., Srinivasa Sastri*, pp. 361-2

134. LETTER TO THORNE [3]

GANDHIGRAM, JUHU,
June 10, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

I send you herewith in two volumes copies of correspondence between the Government of India and the Bombay Government and myself during my incarceration in the palace of H. H. the Aga Khan in Yeravda.

The second volume is a copy of my reply to the Government of India pamphlet entitled *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942-43.* The first contains copies of correspondence arising out of the above-mentioned reply and on miscellaneous matters of public importance.

I had the copies cyclostyled with the help of kind friends. For fear of censorship difficulties, I did not try to have the copies printed at any Printing Press. But lest the Government of India may think that there is anything in the correspondence objectionable from [a]

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 2-6-1944.

[2] The reference is, presumably, to the volumes of copies of correspondence between Gandhiji and the Government; *vide* the preceding item.

[3] For a copy of this to H. P. Mody, *vide* "Letter to H. P. Mody", 10-6-1944.

military standpoint I am circulating for private use only the copies among friends who, I think should know the nature of the correspondence that took place between the two Governments and me. You are free to show your copy to any friends you like, subject to the precaution that applies to you.

You will confer on me a favour if you will take the trouble of letting me have your reaction upon the correspondence especially upon the points arising from my reply to the Government of India pamphlet. I have endeavoured to answer every item of importance in the Government indictment. I should like to know the points, if any, which require elucidation.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : India Office Library and Records. Courtesy : The British Library, London

135. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 10, 1944

CHI. NARANDAS,

We have had Abha's tonsils removed. She is better today. The wound still bleeds a little. I have been discussing the matter with Kanaiyo. I have already talked with Abha. I feel inclined to get them married soon, either in Poona or in Sevagram, wherever I am. According to me, it is not necessary either for any of you, or for Amrita Lal and others, to be present. But I should not like to discourage you or Jamna[1], if either of you desires to attend. The same view I hold about Amrita Lal. If both of them fully agree, I will fix the date and the place and inform you. Tell me in time whether or notyou wish to attend. We shall be leaving for Poona on the 15th. Abha will be with us. She will stay with me so long as I remain out.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8609. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Addressee's wife

136. LETTER TO P. C. JOSHI

JUHU,
June 11, 1944

MY DEAR JOSHI[1],

I had expected a prompt reply to the questions I had raised at our meeting[2]. Meanwhile some additional questions have arisen which please, answer when you answer my first questions.

1. What is the meaning of "people" in "people's war"? Does it mean war on behalf of India's millions, or the Negroes in East, South or West Africa, or the Negroes of America, or all of them? Are the Allies engaged in such a war?

2. Are the finances of the Communist Party, represented by you, subject to public audit? If they are, may I see them?

3. It is stated that the Communist Party has actively helped the authorities to arrest leaders and organizers of labour strikes during the last two years.

4. The Communist Party is said to have adopted the policy of infiltrating the Congress oranization with a hostile intent.

5. Is not the policy of the Communist Party dictated from outside?[3]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Correspondence between Mahatma Gandhi and P. C. Joshi, p. 2

137. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SUNDER BUN, JUHU
June 11, 1944

CHI. MIRA,[4]

This is after much debating for 48 hours within myself and

[1] Puran Chandra Joshi, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India

[2] According to the addressee, it was early in June.

[3] For excerpts from the addressee's letter in reply to this, *vide* Appendix "Letter from P. C. Joshi", 14-6-1944.

[4] In Devanagari

sleepless nights over my duty towards you on our differences and towards doctors regarding treatment.

It hurt me yesterday when Ammajan told me that you had doubt about my willingness to part with the money that you gave me from time to time. The fact is that you having parted with the money even resented it standing in your name in the Ashram books and insisted on the money being made part of the Ashram funds and the expenses on your account being treated as from the Ashram funds. I felt a delicacy in mentioning that it could be retransferred to you without any deduction. I, therefore, allowed Ghanshyamdas to tell you that you could have the money back whether the condition of the Ashram funds permitted the return or not. So when you told me that you would be glad to have the money, the measure of esteem in which I held you went down. It is due to you that I should not withhold this fact from you. But this is not written to affect your decision. The return of the money is irrevocable.

The second thing I want to tell you is the things I have been hearing from reliable sources about Prithvi Singh. They are terribly disturbing.[1] He has been using questionable means to extort money. He made, without success, indecent approaches to two girls of Kathiawar.

The girl whom he has married was engaged to a person who was her benefactor. Nanabhai who was the person to bring him to me and who testified to his complete change from violence to non-violence has been sadly disillusioned.

His profession of non-violence when he came to me and in his letters from the jail appears to have been a deep-laid plot to deceive me and through me some day or other to secure his release from the life of hiding which was worrying him. Thus, my prejudice is deepening. I should love to know from experience that the prejudice has no basis.

It is generally believed that the Communist Party is exploiting you through him. I am carrying on correspondence with Joshi. This you can see from Pyarelal.

In the circumstances my advice to you is that you should hold your project for a season and judge the situation and watch

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943.

developments. I do not know how Devdas and those who are connected with you will be able to guide you or interest themselves in your activities. Anyway I shall have to let the public know somehow or other that I am not at the back of any of your activities which are being undertaken in spite of my disapproval.

This letter is my last warning. I shall trouble you no more. God be your only guide.[1]

[P.S.]

There is nothing withheld from the office staff. I am keeping a copy of this letter and enclose herewith a typed copy. Please give me a copy of the letter I wrote to you before this.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

138. TELEGRAM TO P. C. RAY

[On or before *June 12, 1944*][2]

HOPE YOU WILL INSIST ON FINISHING AT LEAST A CENTURY.[3]

The Hindu, 14-6-1944

139. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SUNDER BUN, JUHU,
June 12, 1944

DEAR MISS SLADE,

There is nothing wrong about being formal. "Familiarity breeds contempt." The letters will not be destroyed. I have nothing to be ashamed of. I wrote after intense prayer. My language failed to transmit the love and the greatest goodwill that prompted it. The only regret is that I dared to be familiar. My love would have been as true as now if I had refused to call you by any other name than

[1] For the addressee's answer, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 14-1-1943.

[2] According to the report, the telegram was received by the addressee, an eminent scientist, on June 12.

[3] The addressee, who was ailing, died on June 16.

Miss Slade. I like the English coldness and correctness. But my regret is superficial. The change is good and substantial. I have given the warning. You have no reason to change your course because of any opinion I express. What I did was to suggest your waiting. But you need not since it does not commend itself to you.

Yes, time and action will show what we are and what we meant. I have patience.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

140. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

June 12, 1944

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I wanted to write this letter immediately after Manu's departure but I could not. Manu disappointed me very much just before she left. I thought she had understood everything and would do as she had promised, but I was wrong. Before leaving, she bought and sent a silver toy and a silver cup for Pyarelal's brother's daughter. I was very much pained. I poured out all my pain in my letter[1] to her and returned the things. You must have come to know about all this. Now you will have to be on your guard. I had suggested that she should stay for a year at Rajkot in the hope that that would develop all her fine qualities and cure her weaknesses. But Manu was reluctant. On receipt of an enthusiastic letter from the teacher at Karachi, she was beside herself with joy, and I, therefore, sent her there.

I should like to tell you the thoughts which occurred to me about you. You seem to have such a lot of money that you have taught Manu to spend money as if she was more than even a multi-millionaire. I very much appreciate your love for your daughters. But the question is from where you got all this money. You could not have saved it from khadi work. Did you, then, save it from your job there? Is it possible to save so much money in this way? If you have kept accounts, I should certainly like to see them. How can I hide from you the suspicion

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Manu Gandhi", 8-6-1944.

that has arisen in my mind? When I got angry, Shantikumarwas present. When I asked him, he told me that you could not have saved so much from the Scindia job. He had no reason to suspect you, as strict care was taken to see that there was no scope for corruption among their employees. Now let me have your reply. Sushila must have written to you about Yukti. Take good care of her. Manu's eyes are very weak. They can be saved only with great care. Otherwise in a few years' time she might not be able to read and write.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

141. MESSAGE TO BOMBAY KERALEEYA SAMAJ[1]

June 12, 1944

I am glad you took the trouble of coming to me and giving me a purse for the Harijans. I hope your efforts on behalf of the poor in the country will prosper. God be with you.

The Hindu, 14-6-1944

[1] The report said: "Over a hundred members of the Bombay Keraleeya Samaj offered prayers . . . for Gandhiji's speedy recovery . . . and presented him with a purse of Rs. 501. The party was led by Mr. K. Subramaniam."

142. SILENCE-DAY INTERVIEW TO JOURNALISTS[1]

BOMBAY,

June 12, 1944

Amen. So help us God. The contract is that there should be silence on both sides. You may read what you can from the silence.

Another spell of a few minutes' silence followed and Mahatma Gandhi was asked, how long they could stay there. By a sign of his finger he replied that the interview would last ten minutes. The journalists replied that they had been waiting at Juhu practically all the days since his arrival, and therefore the time of the "silent interview" should be extended. Mahatma Gandhi wrote in reply:

If there is a good singer amongst you, you can take extra time; otherwise what is the use of your wasting time? There is no such thing as silence in journalists.

The reporters were taken aback at the request, but one journalist came to the rescue of the party, and he sang a song, which seemed to have pleased Mahatma Gandhi. Another gentleman, to everybody's surprise, volunteered to follow up and Mahatma Gandhi wrote:

I would gladly listen to more, but ill though I am, the time is all pledged to the nation[2].

The Hindu, 14-6-1944

[1] The report said: "Mahatma Gandhi . . . received some thirty journalists at his shack at Juhu this evening. Today was his day of weekly silence and since he was leaving the city for Poona on Thursday, he agreed to 'see' Pressmen today. He was seen in his characteristic pose, squatting crosslegged on a mattress, busy writing something. The Pressmen crowded around him and someone passed on a chit to him, stating that the Press was not satisfied with 'this silent interview' and that they were eagerly looking forward to the day when he would be completely restored to health and would speak to them again as before. Mahatma Gandhi wrote back on the same chit.

[2] The report concluded: "The journalists then pooled some money for Harijan Fund, gave it to Mahatma Gandhi and left the shack."

143. LETTER TO H. P. MODY

SUNDER BUN, JUHU,
June 12/13, 1944

BHAI HOMY MODY,[1]

I promised[2] to give you a written reply to your very kind letter of 9th instant. Here is my reply. The conferences that are meeting to consider the future, I regard as one of the methods of diverting public attention from the grim realities of the war.[3] The future will be decided not by conferences but by the way in which the principal actors behave now. We should, therefore, control the present so that the future may correspond to the present. We shall reap as we sow. The realities are that we allow ourselves to be exploited with our eyes shut and/or open.

I feel that I know the way out but I am helpless not merely because I am ill, but principally because the censorship tightens round me like the coil of a snake. I am taxing God to show me how to disengage myself from the coil.

I shall take no hasty step. Before I take any step, I shall certainly correspond with H. E. the Viceroy.

As to communal unity, I am wedded to it. All I can say is that I shall leave no stone unturned to make my contribution towards a just solution.[4]

There is a ring of despair running through your letter. I wish I

[1] The salutation and subscription are in Gujarati.

[2] The addressee had discussion with Gandhiji on June 9 and 11.

[3] The addressee had said in his letter (C.W. 4891): "India is looking on as a distant spectator; even when her representatives are admitted to a conference table, they have to play the role of spokesmen of a subordinate member of the British Commonwealth. . . ."

[4] The addressee had stated: " . . . the issue seems to lie between acceptance of the Muslim demand, and determination to uphold the political integrity of India even at the cost of an indefinite postponement of swaraj ... there is a tendency to underrate the strength of the Muslim insistence on Pakistan, and that there is an increasing number of people who feel that nothing is to be gained by postponing a Hindu-Muslim settlement. . . continuance of the present stalemate would have a certain measure of justification only if there were reasonable grounds for hoping that, by patiently marking time, it would be possible to achieve political unity as well as freedom."

could induce you to share my optimism. Time never runs against a just cause, especially when it is backed by equally just means.

Anyway you must not despair of me, even though we may not see eye to eye on things of common interest.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR HOMY MODY

BOMBAY

From a photostat: C.W. 4882. Courtesy: H. P. Mody

144. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

JUHU,

June 13, 1944

CHI. AMRIT,

This is merely my love letter, not a business letter. For the latter you will look to Pyarelal and Sushila. I was delighted to receive your letter through Dr. Sen. I may not meet him, for I go to Poona tomorrow. I have also your annual gifts. I am already in your newdhotis. They are too wide for me. But that matters little. They are well woven. The shawl also I prize. I did not know that you had begun to spin wool too.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4145. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7780

145. LETTER TO BHAYANKARANAND

June 13, 1944

DEAR BHAYANKARANAND,

Your letter. Much as I should like to see you, I have no time left. You may come and talk to Pyarelalji. Of course, I have read and heard much about Bengal and other places. The question is how to deal with the situation. We must not lose patience, faith or nerve.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

146. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 14, 1944

DEAR MISS SLADE,

Of course you are to me what you have been always. I have been writing to you so that I may be rid of the fear that has possessed me.

Your decision to go to Panditji soothes me. I was and am against haste which often proves to be waste. When I am filled with fear and distrust of wisdom, you should suffer the adopted parent's warning. Of course I shall dance with joy when I discover that my fears were groundless and my suspicion unjustified.

From the foregoing it should be clear to you that I have never doubted your devotion.

The change of form in addressing you was necessary because I saw my mistake. My love for you remains wholly unaffected by it.

I have already left the rest to time.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

147. LETTER TO KANAM GANDHI

JUHU,

June 14, 1944

CHI. KANAM,

I have your letter. Your handwriting, I must say, is very shabby. You ought to cultivate tidiness in all respects. You should properly space your words, and use punctuation marks. I hope, you don't want to forget the Gujarati script altogether. We will certainly play odds-and-evens when we meet. But shouldn't you play games involving vigorous physical exercise? Your English handwriting also needs improvement. How can one believe in both violence and non-violence? Can one ride two horses simultaneously?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

148. LETTER TO BISHOP OF CALCUTTA

GANDHIGRAM, JUHU,
June 15, 1944

REVEREND LORD BISHOP,

Gandhiji desires me to thank you for your very kind letter. He was deeply touched by it. He had expected to be able to reply to it himself. But he is still not permitted to resume his normal work.

Although he could not be reached through correspondence while he was undergoing incarceration he knew that the prayers of so many men of God were with him all the time and that knowledge sustained him.

Yours sincerely,

PYARELAL

THE LORD BISHOP OF CALCUTTA

BISHOP'S HOUSE

CALCUTTA

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

149. LETTER TO JITENDRA BHATIA[1]

[After *June 15, 1944*][2]

During my stay in Juhu the volunteers rendered devoted service. God alone can repay them.

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-6-1944

[1] Head of the volunteers who had kept guard at Gandhiji's shack during his stay in Juhu

[2] According to the report, Gandhiji wrote the letter in Hindustani and sent from Poona, where he arrived on June 15.

150. LETTER TO R. K. PRABHU

POONA,
June 16, 1944

DEAR PRABHU,

I have read your letter to Pyarelal. I want to see you when I have finished the medical treatment and am free for work. I wanted to write to you even before your letter reached me. That was in connection with the book you have written.[1] I am now discussing with the Navajivan Trust the whole thing. I shall do nothing in haste and certainly not without meeting you. You are no stranger to me.

Yours,
BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

151. LETTER TO MOTICHAND

POONA,
June 16, 1944

BHAI MOTICHAND,

I got your gift of grace. I have not brought over all the books in the packet. I have brought with me only one book. But I now see that perhaps I shall not be able to touch any literature. I have not been able to cope with even the material collected by Pyarelal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943, and also "Letter to R. K. Prabhu", 19-6-1944 *fn*.

152. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

POONA,
June 16, 1944

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. At present I don't feel like going to any other place besides Bombay, Poona, Panchgani and places nearby. Of course, I do wish to go to Sevagram when the doctors permit. I shall surely stay with you, if I feel like going to Kashmir. Birlaji told me about the responsibility you are shouldering. May God give you success. I am recovering.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8005. Also C.W. 3105. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

153. INTERVIEW WITH G. V. MAVALANKAR

POONA,
June 16, 1944

On being requested as to how Mr. Mavalankar should act with reference to the work of the Fund[1] in Ahmedabad, Gandhiji said :

You can as well represent the capitalists as I do, effectively influencing their contributions. You will not be able at the same time to appeal to the masses. The whole conception seems to me to be that the few rich should ensure the declared amount. Only a popular body can collect from the masses.

As to the constitution of the Board he advised the inclusion of some more public workers like Vijayalaxmi Pandit.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Fund; *vide* also "Letter to G. V. Mavalankar", 21-6-1944.

154. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

NATURE-CURE CLINIC,
6 TODDIWALA ROAD, POONA,
June 17, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

But for the fact that this letter is along the lines of your pre-occupation, I should not have troubled you with any letter from me. Though there is little cause for it, the whole country and even many from outside expect me to make some decisive contribution to the general good. I am sorry to say, my convalescence threatens to be fairly long. Even if I was quite well, I could do little or nothing, unless I knew the mind of the Working Committee of the Congress. I pleaded[1] as a prisoner for permission to see them. I plead now as a free man for such permission. If you will see me before deciding, I shall gladly go wherever you want me to, as soon as I am allowed by my medical advisers to undertake long-distance travelling.

I have circulated among friends for private use, copies of the correspondence that passed between the authorities and me during detention. I do feel, however, that in fairness to me Government should permit its publication in the Press.[2]

My address will be as above till 30th instant.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-7-1944

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 19-1-1943.

[2] In his reply dated June 22, the Viceroy declined both the requests and said: "If, after your convalescence and after further reflection, you have a definite and constructive policy to propose for the furtherance of India's welfare, I shall be glad to consider it. . . . Since . . . the correspondence . . . has . . . appeared in the Press, I have given instructions for the publication of the whole of political letters written during your detention." *Vide* also "Telegram to Private Secretary to Viceroy", 27-6-1944.

155. LETTER TO RANCHHODDAS PATWARI

June 17, 1944

BHAI RANCHHODDAS,

I like your letter, although I don't like your writing to me in English. You certainly know Gujarati and so do I. Why should not we write to each other in our mother tongue?

I understand the change in your thinking.[1] I want you to come and see me at Sevagram, after I am all right. I can take quite a good amount of work from you. I had at heart nothing but esteem for you even when you used to write and speak against me because I always knew that you had no personal grudge against me. You believed that I was doing harm to the country, and hence you opposed me thinking it to be your duty to do so.

Write to me frankly whenever you wish to.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

156. LETTER TO SURENDRA

[After *June 17, 1944*][2]

CHI. SURENDRA,

I have your letter. Are you troubled by the menace of dogs? Of jackals? Rabid foxes? Snakes? How is the dwelling? Is the foundation high enough? Does it have a verandah? How many rooms does it have? How is the roofing? What are you reading these days? Do you take any exercise? What work are you doing among the people? I have nothing to say about your not participating in any public activities. It is good that you refrain from coming to me. But don't hesitate to pay me a visit, if you wish to, when I reach Sevagram. Nathji[3] had met me. He

[1] The addressee had previously opposed Gandhiji's campaign against untouchability; *vide* "Letter to Ranchhoddas Patwari", 11-1-1933.

[2] In the source, the letter is placed between the letters of June 17 and 21, 1944.

[3] Kedarnath Kulkarni, Kishorelal Mashruwala's guru

will come here. I am here till the 30th. I am keeping fairly well. The two [kinds of] worms[1] won't leave me yet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

157. LETTER TO INAYATULLAH KHAN MASHRIQUI[2]

June 18, 1944

I may say at once that nothing has been issued from this office to say that you were coming to see Gandhiji. He certainly endorses your view that Qaid-e-Azam is the man he should try to see. He does not remember the warning you gave him through the late Dr. Ansari. He has no objection to your publishing your letter under reply. But he very much doubts the wisdom of carrying on public correspondence of the nature of your letter. Premature publicity robs such correspondence of its intrinsic value and use, and lays the publisher open to the charge of self-advertisement.

From File No. 51/4/44. Courtesy: National Archives of India

158. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

June 18, 1944

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter today. You are as impatient as you have always been. Come over when you wish to. Here I am my own sentry. People respect my wishes and no visitors come. It is only those whom I send for or have given an appointment to, that come. Do not believe any rumour without first referring it to me for verification. Nobody has been able to come and see me regardless of my wishes. If you have any information [about such persons], ask me whether it is true.

[1] Hook-worms and amoeba; *vide* "Letter to Gulzarilal Nanda", after 27-5-1944.

[2] This was written by Pyarelal in reply to the addressee's letter dated June 12 to Gandhiji, which, *inter alia,* read: "You must be remembering in what exact terms I warned you in 1930 . . . I must avoid coming to see you at Bombay until I have exhausted all efforts to make your meeting with Qaid-e-Azam possible.... I understand that a report was recently issued from your office that I was coming over to see you to discuss the question of Hindu-Muslim understanding.... I still consider Mr. Jinnah the proper man for this unless he totally refuses to meet you. *Vide* also telegram to the addressee, "Telegram to Inayatullah Khan Mashriqui", on or before 15-5-1944.

About Juhu, too, you may ask me whatever you wish to.[1] Nobody holds back your letters.

I have come here with the sole intention of meeting Prof. Limaye[2]. He can bring along anybody else whom he wishes. These days the Professor himself is ill. I wish to do here what I could not in Juhu. I think it a matter of shame for me that Prof. Limaye should ask for my permission through you. I have the greatest regard for him.

I hope you will be satisfied with this much today. I need not write separately about Deshpandeji[3], need I?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10430. Also C.W. 6869. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

159. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

POONA,

June 18, 1944

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

Krishnachandra writes and tells me that just because a man deceived you, you have given up milk at one meal and that you castigated yourself too. Both these things can be done on the right occasion but was it the right occasion in your case? During the last imprisonment I learnt one thing, namely, that one must never be hasty in judging the actions of one's co-workers, one should put before the person concerned the other side for consideration and then let him judge himself. Think over your action from this point of view.

Do not hesitate to write anything to me. My going there keeps on getting postponed. I think I would be lucky, if I could go there by the end of July. I can say that I do not intend to wait much longer after the end of August.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 809. Courtesy: Balkrishna Bhave

[1] Sarojini Naidu had stopped the addressee from meeting Gandhiji at Juhu

[2] Prof. V. P. Limaye of Vidhayak Samiti

[3] G. A. Deshpande, alias Tatyasaheb, Secretary, Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee

160. LETTER TO R. K. PRABHU

POONA,
June 19, 1944

MY DEAR PRABHU,

I hope you had my letter. Will 28th instant (Wednesday) 5 p.m. suit you? I can't give you an earlier time.[1] I want to take things easy.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 9227

161. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

POONA,
June 19, 1944

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I hope you had my note[2] addressed to you at Poona. Your letter of 17th does not seem to be a reply to it.

Of course, I would love you to come any time you can, i.e., if your health permits. There will be much noise about our meeting and more conjecture, but it is inevitable.

I need not think of the past but what of the present?[3] Will not the present which I can see mould the future? Must I not get rid of the present hook-worm and amoeba, if I am to ensure the future good of the body?

Think it over and answer the question when we meet unless

[1] Regarding compilation of *The Mind of Mahatma Gandhi* by R. K. Prabhu and U. R. Rao, published by the Oxford University Press in March 1945. *Vide* also "Letter to G. V. Mavalankar", 5-7-1944.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 10-6-1944.

[3] In his letter, the addressee had said: "You have had great wrongs and they cry aloud for redress. But at this moment the future is more important than the past. While I don't venture to say that you shouldn't seek to re-establish yourself, I would beseech you earnestly to attend to the demands of the world's peace. India's cause and yours may—who knows—be best served that way."

you would do otherwise. I am making fair progress in spite of the two enemies.

Love.

Yours,

LITTLE BROTHER

[PS.]

Will you rather have my letters typed?

From a photostat: G.N. 8823. Also *Letters of the Right Honourable V. S. Srinivasa Sastri*, pp. 362-3

162. LETTER TO KAMALA DEVI

POONA,

June 19, 1944

MY DEAR KAMALA DEVI[1],

If I had the mischievous intention of teaching you a lesson, I would have given you 26th instant. You did not look up your calendar when you wrote. It is my silence day. But I shall be good. You can come on 27th instant and see me at 5 p.m.

With love,

BAPU

SHRIMATI KAMALA DEVI

84 NAPEAN SEA ROAD

BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Presumably, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya, President, All-India Women's Conference

163. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

POONA,
June 19, 1944

BHAI MUNSHI,

We shall meet on the 24th at five o'clock. I am maintaining my progress, although slowly.[1]

Blessings to all from
BAPU

SHRI KANU MUNSHI
ADVOCATE
26 RIDGE ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 7674. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

164. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

POONA,
June 19, 1944

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. I would have allowed you to come for my sake and it would have been a pleasure to see you; but I stopped you for your own sake. Never mind even if you are fit enough to travel from Surat to Bombay. You will improve still further if you observe self-control. And haven't you learnt self-control from me? I do not remember having ever spoilt you, not even at the time of your wedding.

Chokhawala has broad shoulders and is a soldier. Anand is really *anand*[2].

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10046. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

[1] Literally : "My village cart moves at its own speed."
[2] Literally, "joy"

165. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

POONA,
June 19, 1944

CHI. MANUDI,

I have your lettter. If you behave as you promise, I shall be very happy. I am glad that you did not go to the cinema. Even if I do not write to you, you should write to me regularly. It would be very good if the climate suits Yukti. The weather there is supposed to be good.

I am improving day by day.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

166. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

POONA,
June 20, 1944

CHI. ANAND,[1]

You must not brood over Vidya's death nor get disconcerted. If she was the inspiration of your life whilst she was in the flesh, she must be more so having gone to her resting place. That to me is the meaning of the true union of souls. The classic example is that of Jesus and, in modern times, of Ramakrishna. They became greater influences after their death. Their spirit did not die, nor is Vidya's dead. You must, therefore, leave off sorrowing and think of your duty in front of you. Do not think of running to me whilst you are having your treatment and whilst I am having mine. You will come when I go to Sevagram.[2]

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Try to write in Hindustani.

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India, and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] This is in Devanagari.

[2] *Vide* also "Telegram to Anand T. Hingorani", 13-5-1944 and "Letter to Anand T. Hingorani", 2-6-1944.

167. LETTER TO SHIRLEY HUMPHREY

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
TODDYWALA ROAD
POONA, INDIA,
June 20, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

Gandhiji has your letter of the 4th April. I regret to have to say that his present state of health does not permit him to comply with your request. But you will find all the information you want in his *My Experiments with Truth* published by the Navajivan Press, P. O. Box No. 105, Ahmedabad.

Yours sincerely,

SHIRLEY HUMPHREY, ESQ.
SOLWAY COLLEGE
MASTERTON
NEW ZEALAND

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

168. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

June 20, 1944

VALJIBHAI,

This certainly reads well.[1] But the whole thing deserves to be reconsidered. The writing can be misinterpreted. For instance, what can a man do in the present war? As you say, he cannot remain neutral which means that either he should participate in the war or commit *harakiri* by plunging into it. Isn't it?

Should he go to jail? The answer is not as simple as we might think. The second part deserves a more serious consideration. Must only the brave grant forgiveness? One seldom comes across brave people. Hence the quotations cited by you, although true, are like

[1] The reference is to a collection of passages, extracted by the addressee from his article "The Quintessence of Gandhism" published in *Young India*, 22-1-1925. For the passages which the addressee considered as "suitable mottoes to be printed inside the cover page of *History of Satyagraha in South Africa*", *vide* Appendix "Passages from *The Quintessence of Gandhism*", before February 1944.

reciting the *Bhagavata* before a buffalo, or casting pearls before a swine, or maybe, attaching gold trappings on to an ass!

These are but random thoughts as they come to my mind, and I am flinging them at you! It is only for your understanding. Under the circumstances it is best to go on doing our work silently.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

169. LETTER TO BHAGIRATHI DEVI UPADHYAYA

POONA,
June 20, 1944

CHI. BHAGIRATHI,

I was happy to get your letter but was equally unhappy to learn about Haribhau[1]. Keep writing to me.

I shall be in Poona till the 30th. It would be at least one and a half months before I can go to Sevagram. I am getting better gradually. The doctors say that it will be some time before I regain my full strength. There is not the slightest cause for worry about me.

Durgabehn, Narayan and Aryanayakam are with me and, of course, Pyarelal, Sushilabehn and Kanu. Abha was unwell and, therefore, she also is here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's husband

170. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

POONA,
June 21, 1944

BHAI MAVALANKAR[1],

Pyarelal could not deal with the papers you had sent. He was not attending to our discussion with sufficient care for that. Besides, he has never concerned himself with that subject. So I myself have done what I thought proper in this matter. I could have written more, but I think this much will be sufficient for you. If you think any points need further clarification, please ask me and I will immediately explain. Your two questions regarding the Kasturba Fund could have been drafted differently. But I have not touched them. I wanted to save time. I have made only a slight change regarding copyright, and it is self-explanatory.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Maganbhai's letter is enclosed. According to our understanding, I assume that you yourself will explain the matter to him, won't you?[2]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1249

171. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

POONA,
June 21, 1944

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have your letter. The party had gathered at Juhu and it was decided that whatever problems were brought to me should be referred by me to anyone I like from among the list of certain names. The question may, if at all, be referred to me after this.

I have accordingly passed on your letter to Dada Mavalankar. If he cannot satisfy you, you can have Rs. 8,000 from me. You are not

[1] Speaker, Bombay Legislative Assembly, 1937 to 1945; later Speaker, Central Legislative Assembly and Lok Sabha

[2] *Vide* also the following item.

to waste any time over it. Herewith find a copy of my letter to Vidyabehn[1] regarding the [Gujarat] Vidyapith. It did not occur to me, although it ought to have occurred, to consult you in the matter. Still, I hope you will like my reply.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

172. LETTER TO NRISINHAPRASAD K. BHATT

June 21, 1944

BHAI NANABHAI,

I have your letter. I have also heard a lot from Manubhai[2] and Vijaya[3]. There seems to be some trouble about Prithvi Singh. They have asked for your experience. Do not for a moment think that it is your responsibility. You talked open-heartedly and were, in consequence, deceived. Why then feel hurt about it? How can the world go on, if we do not have such faith? I could understand your pain from what Manubhai told me. Hence this letter. Never mind, if you did not get my earlier letter. Come over to Sevagram, if and when I go there.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

173. LETTER TO PARACHURE SHASTRI

POONA,
June 21, 1944

BHAI PARACHURE SHASTRI[4],

I have preserved your postcard. I have always been pained that the country cannot fully utilize your learning. I have looked in vain for possibilities. You should yourself find a way through persistent effort. The rest when we meet. It appears almost impossible to reach

[1] Vidyagauri Ramanbhai Nilkanth
[2] Manubhai Pancholi
[3] Vijaya Pancholi
[4] A leprosy patient who came to Sevagram in November 1939, and stayed there till his death on September 5, 1945

there by the end of July. Bhai Manohar's[1] *tapascharya* is incomparable.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

174. LETTER TO HARIBHAU PHATAK

POONA,
June 22, 1944

MY DEAR HARIBHAU,

I could not trace your precious letter when Baburao called. I admitted him, being sent by you. He had nothing to say. I found your letter after you had gone.

I did not know that there was no Board here. I am more than agreeable that you should take charge. As you know, the whole thing is under the Sangh's[2] charge. Bapa is arriving here on 1st July. Probably he is here today. I advise your seeing him and showing this letter to him. You need have no delicacy about offering your services. Of course, cases like Baburao's should be helped, and helped promptly. The collection made here should principally, if not wholly, be used in Poona or perhaps Maharashtra proper. This again should pass through the Sangh who accept my recommendation without demur. This I shall do. Could you come on Sunday at 4.30 p.m.?

I do not know whether I ever acknowledged your letter accompanying the sweets you sent. I have not yet tasted them.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 2803. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] Manohar Divan who "dedicated himself to the service of lepers"; *vide* "Civil Disobedience", 15-10-1940.

[2] Harijan Sevak Sangh

175. LETTER TO LAKSHMIBAI ABHYANKAR

POONA,
June 22, 1944

DEAR SISTER,

Of course, I remember your husband very well. I was struck by his sincerity, and the accuracy with which he approached the subject he had made his own.

And only two days ago I had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Belvalkar and receiving from him his volumes on the *Bhagavad Gita*.

It gives me, therefore, much joy to be able to send my blessings to your son and to Usha Belvalkar on their forthcoming marriage.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SMT. LAXMIBAI ABHYANKAR
SARDAR GRIHA
BOMBAY

From a copy: pyarelal papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

176. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

POONA,
June 22, 1944

CHI. KANCHAN,

I waited for you in Bombay. If you had met me there, you could have travelled with me up to Poona. Now I cannot send for you here. If I send for you, why not Amtul Salaam? Why not the other women also who wish to come? Vasumati is pining to come. Even the present number in Panchagani is too large. When I go there you all can have the pleasure of my company to your hearts' content. I am impatient to go there just for that reason. I hope that you will understand my position and have patience. There are lots of people here to attend on me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8268. Also C.W. 7174. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

177. LETTER TO GOKHALE

POONA,
June 23, 1944

MY DEAR GOKHALE,

I am quite clear that you should try to cure yourself of pleurisy. It is unnecessary to think ahead of four or five months. You will then act according to the circumstances then existing. If I am out, you will write to me.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

178. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI[1]

POONA,
June 23, 1944

CHI. MANUDI,

Your falling ill as soon as you arrived there has shaken me. If you faithfully carry out all that I have told you, you would never fall ill. The decision to study is a good one. But you must not study just to get through the examination. Study whatever you can without straining your eyes. You are impatient as all young people are. But I expect patience from you. The virtues that I have seen in you are not found in all girls. Having regard to them, when I see the smallest drawback in you it seems to me a mountain and something unbearable.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U/XXIV

[1] The addressee had been upset by Gandhiji's letter to Jaisukhlal Gandhi, *vide* "Letter to Jaisukhlal Gandhi", 12-6-1944, and had asked Gandhiji to forgive her.

179. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

POONA,
June 23, 1944

BHAI PRITHVI SINGH,

I should be betraying you if I did not convey to you something more I have heard about you.[1]

It appears that you had spread your net beforehand, got Nanabhai to side with you and through him influenced me. When the time came you cast me aside. That is to say, you cast aside non-violence.

You clung to Mirabehn and tried to win me back through her.

You cast lustful eyes on two girls but neither of them fell into your hands.

The woman whom you have married was to marry her benefactor. But she abandoned him and linked herself to you.

Apart from these, there are various small things I am overlooking. I am carrying on correspondence with Nanabhai. I should be extremely happy if you could satisfy me in the above matter. I have nothing to say if you think that there is no need to satisfy me. If you just acknowledge this letter, I shall know that you have received it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

180. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

POONA,
June 24, 1944

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

Just a line to tell you that I had a long chat with Abha and Kanu. They are both prepared to be married after we descend from Panchgani, if your and your wife's blessings can be had. Narandas

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943.

and Jamnabehn have given their consent. Narandas won't be present at the ceremony.[1] Kanu is trying to persuade his mother, too, to abstain. I hope you two will also be able to exercise restraint. What is the use of spending money for a sentiment? But if you cannot, you will, of course, come. Please let me know your wishes per return. Write to me at Panchgani[2], Satara District.Abha and Manu will be with me. Hope you are all well.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10495. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

181. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

POONA,
June 24, 1944

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I have your two letters. You did right in giving all the details. I will write about that later. There is no need at all to send Manu to Rajkot. She has come there only with my permission. Let her get well soon and then study. Let her not be impatient to get through the examination. She knows household chores; let her, therefore, busy herself a little in that work. She will have to do it because of the difficulty regarding servants. If she remains ill there, I will conclude that her place is at Sevagram. But if she follows my instructions, I am sure she would never fall ill. If the vaid's medicine agrees with Yukti, and if he wishes to give some medicine to Manu also, he may do so. Her health is good and it must not be impaired. She must study with due care for her eyes.[3]

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I intend showing your letter to Shantikumar. He should know what you have written.[4]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 10-6-1944.

[2] Where Gandhiji reached on July 4

[3] *Vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Jaisukhlal Gandhi", 12-6-1944, and "Letter to Manu Gandhi", 23-6-1944.

[4] *ibid.*

182. LETTER TO VIJAYA ANAND

POONA,
June 25, 1944

MY DEAR VIJAYA ANAND[1],

I have your dear letter. You did well in writing to me so frankly as you have done.

I have signed 10 albums for you.

I hope the Maharaniji is well. Love to you all.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

183. LETTER TO V. P. LIMAYE

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,[2]
June 25, 1944

DEAR ACHARYA LIMAYE,

I have seen a copy of the notice. It reads awful. It gives the occasion[3] a public character. Have you seen it? And it advertises the time as 4 to 6. I see that I shall be unequal to it. Not more than half an hour should be given in all. If the questions are the fewest possible, I can wind up the whole thing in a few minutes. Let there be an exhaustive report of the work done sent to me and the questions well beforehand. Let me have also a list of those invited with their addresses and status in the organization. I trust that Prof. Javdekar and Bhagwat are included in the list.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C:.W. 999. Courtesy: V. P. Limaye

[1] The Maharajkumar of Vizianagaram

[2] Permanent address

[3] The reference is to Gandhiji's proposed meeting with the representatives of the Maharashtra Congress on June *29; vide* "Speech to Congressmen, Poona", 29-6-1944.

184. LETTER TO V. P. LIMAYE

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,[1]
June 26, 1944

DEAR ACHARYA,

No apology needed. The fault was initially mine. I overrated my strength. And Sushila was not near me to repress my oversanguine nature. What followed was excusable. Of course, whatever happened was unconscious and with the best of intentions. What I am anxious about is that we should make the most of the forthcoming meeting and so ensure efficient previous preparation. I shall be very busy tomorrow. If, therefore, I am unable to see you, you will have full chat with Pyarelal.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 998. Courtesy: V. P. Limaye

185. LETTER TO DUNICHAND

POONA,
June 26, 1944

DEAR LALA DUNICHAND,

I have read your letter. My advice is that you should not submit to the conditions; it is better to go to prison.

As to the Bengal distress, my illness renders me useless.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also G.N. 5594

[1] Permanent address

186. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

[*June 26, 1944*][2]

Too busy to send you more than my love of which you have as much as you can carry.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 4200. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7836

187. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

June 26, 1944

BHAI DINSHAW,

I could have only a brief talk with you. But all the time I have been thinking about the nature cure. The result is:

This institution should remain as it is, with some modifications, because it is your creation. Do not enlarge its sphere of work.

Buy about a thousand acres of land near a village under your supervision. There should be enough space for patients and also provision for the healthy ones to remain so. The rich and the poor should stay in the same way, and food for them should be produced there itself. Almost all the things should be grown there. Treatment through earth, water, light, air and ether should be given. Manage everything in such a way that the poor can get what they require. Such new institutions should come up as you get more workers. The management should be such that the institution is able to meet its expenses. Do not take Government aid so long as power is not in the people's hands.

Convene a meeting of naturopaths and discuss the issue. Take workers from among them.

There should be a trust for this and the new institution which will come into being. At least you, Ghanshyamdas and myself should

[1] & [2] The letter was written as postscript to one dated Poona, June 26, 1944, from Dr. Sushila Nayyar to Amrit Kaur, which read: "I went to Bombay yesterday . . . when I returned at night I found that a reply had been received from my 'Dear Friend' [M. A. Jinnah]. He has said a firm 'No'. I must say that though we did not expect much from him, we were not quite prepared for that. Now the end is clear. It is only a matter of weeks. . . ."

be among the trustees. You can take any fees you think proper. But take [only] the sum fixed for your personal expense. The rest should be debited to the institution's account. Define what items can come under nature cure, and write books of general knowledge about them.

There is no need to wait for some occasion to arise. So long as I am out and alive, it will be under my supervision. But it should be so planned that it will function even during my absence.

I have already started discussing it with Ghanshyamdas. He has agreed to do as I say.

Think over this and let me know what changes you would like. You are absolutely free to suggest them. This can be accomplished only if you have your heart and mind in it. I can think only of you in this matter. I wish to forget about it, if you are not convinced. I believe we can get the help we need for the institution.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

188. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

POONA,
June 27, 1944

PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY
VICEROY'S CAMP

IN VIEW PERSISTENT INQUIRY ABOUT EXCHANGE RECENT LETTERS SUGGEST RELEASE THEREOF FOR PUBLICATION.[1]

GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, p. 4

[1] The correspondence was released to the Press from New Delhi on July 1, 1944.

189. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

POONA,
June 27, 1944

MY DEAR BROTHER,

The enclosed copies[1] speak for themselves. The Viceregal reply does not dishearten me. I had expected nothing else. The reply, however, makes it clear to me that they cannot keep me free after discharge by the doctors. For, I see no way of giving co-operation in the continuing degradation of the people. Even the food relief is only so-called. But we must discuss the whole thing when we meet. Come to Panchgani when and if your health permits. I am in no hurry to make any public declaration. I am simply storing and digesting the information I gather.

Love from
YOUR LITTLE BROTHER

From a photostat: G.N. 8824

190. LETTER TO GAJANAN N. KANITKAR

POONA,
June 28, 1944

DEAR BALUKAKA,

Apart from everything else, I plead for pity on me. I have not a moment to spare. I tell you, I have been longing to have your son[2] by me to teach me spinning on his improved *takli*. But I had to give up the attempt. So you should excuse me for old times' sake. Write out all you have to say. The Congress can't be compromised by you or me. It will be compromised by the collective activities of its members, if the sum total is discreditable. Do see the distinguished friends you mention. Your work need not be affected by the absence of the contemplated interview with me.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 971. Courtesy: Gajanan N. Kanitkar

[1] Of Gandhiji's letter to Lord Wavell and his reply; *vide* "Letter to Lord Wavell", 17-6-1944.

[2] Dhundiraj; *vide* also "Letter to Dhundiraj G. Kanitkar", 9-7-1944.

191. SPEECH TO CONGERSSMEN, POONA[1]

June 29, 1944

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

When some of you came to Juhu, doctors forbade me to speak a word to you. And I felt very unhappy. When I came over to Poona I thought I would be able to meet you. Even now I am unwell, but still I meet many people and am able to talk to them. Why not with you then? I had hoped to spend some more time with you, but the doctors have permitted only half an hour. I have promised not to take more than the allotted thirty minutes. Hence I omit all preliminaries.

At my request[2], the Secretary kindly sent me a report of the happenings in Maharashtra since August 9, 1942. Besides the names of those assembled here, he has sent some questions. I have read all these papers carefully. I do not propose to reply to all the questions. This will not be possible within half an hour. You will, therefore, excuse me for confining my remarks only to the main issues.

Today I do not meet you in any representative capacity. In terms (the language) of satyagraha, the moment I was imprisoned I ceased to wield the authority reposed in me by the Congress. And if I am now out of prison, it is not because of my strength or yours, but because of my illness. In a satyagrahi, illness is a thing to be ashamed of. This fortuitous release does not restore to me the authority that lapsed with my imprisonment.

I discussed my position with some lawyer-friends[3] in terms of the law prevalent in the land, and they are of the opinion that what I hold to be true in terms of satyagraha happens to be true legally too. What then is my status today? You who have gathered here occupy certain positions of authority in the Congress. I do not hold any such position. I am not even a four-anna member of the Congress. Iresigned from the Congress some years ago to try out the subtler laws of satyagraha. Nevertheless, I know that I hold a big place in your

[1] About 50 representative Congressmen of Maharashtra met Gandhiji at the Nature-cure Clinic of Dr. Dinshaw Mehta. Gandhiji spoke in Hindustani. The translation given here has been collated with that of *The Hindu*, 1-7-1944.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to V. P. Limaye", p. 333.

[3] Bhulabhai Desai, V. F. Taraporewala and K. M. Munshi. For their opinion, *vide* Appendix "Opinion on Gandhiji's Responsibility", 6-2-1944.

hearts, and you would give weight to whatever I might say. What I may say is to be regarded merely as an individual opinion, to be accepted or rejected by you at will. It could have been otherwise, if I were speaking in a representative capacity. Then I would have expected you as disciplined soldiers to carry out my instructions. I thought of many things after reading the documents sent by you. But instead of discussing past happenings, I shall speak only of our present duties. What work I have done and am still doing in India or abroad is rooted in truth and non-violence. I have been experimenting all along with the introduction of truth and non-violence in day-to-day life. Some people believe that truth and non-violence have no place in the practice of politics and public affairs. I do not agree. I have always believed that these weapons are entirely useless, if they are meant only for personal salvation. I would not like to have even beatitude for myself alone. I am no slave of any rigid school. I have no guru. If I discover a guru, I shall bow before him. My religion teaches me the need for a guru and how to honour one. But today my heart is my only guru. I do not propose to give you a religious discourse today. I must say that if you have lost faith in the efficacy of truth and non-violence, I have no remedy for your despondency. Inside the prison I used to read the newspapers and now, when I am out, I hear from people that a sense of frustration has overpowered the country. But I felt no frustration in my heart in the prison and I feel none outside. If Congressmen feel frustrated, it is because they lack faith in truth and non-violence. Examine your hearts. Has your faith dwindled? You are good for nothing, if you are still in the Congress but have no faith in truth and nonviolence. Your being in the Congress would then be a sign of your ignorance.

Who are Congressmen? Only those whose names are in its register? The Congress should be a poor organization, if it depended for its strength on the few lakhs of members whose names appeared on Congress rolls. At the Faizpur Congress[1], Deo and Dastane used to stress the point that the work done on behalf of the Congress was beyond description. Huge crowds gathered at Faizpur. But a very small proportion of them was on the Congress rolls. I noticed atFaizpur that not even untouchability had disappeared from the place. A cow could drink water at a well, but not an untouchable. Deo and Dastane did not notice this, but it did not escape my eyes. It has

[1] In December 1936

been my endeavour from childhood to identify myself with the masses. I am one of them and not separate or different. That has enabled me to enter their hearts and to understand them. At the Round Table Conference I claimed that I represented the whole of India, those who supported the Congress and also those who had nothing to do with it. Since the Congress claims to serve all, it represents them all. Congress represents to a greater extent the poor, hungry and helpless millions. I shall not discuss today why they lost the lustre in their eyes. I will merely affirm that you represent Congress, and you cannot represent it without subscribing to truth and non-violence.

Experience has led me to the firm conviction that our success has been mathematically proportionate to the extent to which we have adhered to truth and non-violence. The phenomenal awakening in the masses during the last 25 years has been entirely due to the purity of our means. And to the extent untruth and violence have crept in, they have hindered our progress. Whatever harm has come our way, it is due to our lack of faith in truth and non-violence. Today I do not wish to sit in judgment upon your actions. I only wish to place my convictions before you. Your faith in me overwhelms me. My fortuitous release has given rise to great expectations. I am doubtful whether I deserve all this confidence. But this much I know that whatever strength I may have is entirely due to my being a votary of truth and non-violence. If I make any suggestions, they are based on my faith in these fundamentals. You want to follow a man like me. You raise minor doubts which trouble me. If you feel frustrated, ask yourself whether your faith in truth and non-violence has ebbed away. If so, you should strengthen it. Dark clouds surround us. The Government is sitting tight. We do not see the way ahead of us. The communal tangle is, of course, there. Many people are cursing me. And yet I suffer from no sense of frustration. Frustration can spring only from one's own weakness and loss of faith. So long as we do not lose faith in ourselves, it is well with India. My talking to you would have served its purpose, if I am able to drive away your frustration.

You will ask me, what about the political deadlock, the communal tangle, the food-scarcity and the like? I have an answer for each of these. But I may not attempt it at this meeting. I am convinced that the sufferings of the people cannot be alleviated until India has real political power. I cannot alleviate the food situation by feeding a

few hungry mouths. I have friendly relations with millionaires, not for personal gain or in order to flatter them, but in order to get a portion of their wealth for the service of the poor. They too know this. But their money cannot serve the hungry millions at present.

What is the root cause of this widespread starvation? Under the cover of war, the Government is extorting huge sums. I am of the opinion that if India had been free, there would have been no war with Japan. And if Japan attacked us, we would have defeated it much earlier. I do not want to bring in Japan. I do not want a change of masters. I want to he free from all foreign control. For me the four corners of India are enough for us. If India understands my message thoroughly, freedom can come to us this moment.

You must have seen my recent correspondence with the Government. Starvation and destitution are stalking the land. Millions of rupees are being drained out of India. We may not be deceived by the wealth to be seen in the cities of India. That wealth does not come from England or America. It comes from the blood of the poorest. I claim to be an economist though not of the academic sort. I understand the roots of misery and [poverty] of India. Are you going to stamp out India's starvation by feeding a few hungry mouths? There are said to be 7,00,000 villages in India. Some of them have been simply wiped out. Who has kept count of them? I am a villager. I can recognize at a glance the traces of a ruined village. Where has it gone? Where are the villagers? If anyone raises a doubt about my allegations, I can go round with him and show him the devastation. God will give me the strength for that. The Government reports, though an underestimate, of the thousands who have died of starvation and disease in Bengal, Karnataka and elsewhere are shocking. But this devastation is negligible compared to the wider havoc wrought over India through the centuries. Why this havoc? It is because the blood of the poorest is being sucked; whoever eats a morsel more than he really needs, is sucking the blood of the poor. The money that goes to England and America is not your money, it is the blood of the poorest. I tell you that the pressure from the top crushes those at the bottom. What then is the remedy? All that is necessary is to get off their backs. This is the meaning of non-co-operation with evil. Wehave the mighty weapon of ahimsa. In action, it takes the form of civil disobedience and non-violent non-co-operation. Civil disobedience is a very potent weapon. But everyone cannot wield it.

For that, one needs training and inner strength. It requires occasions for its use. But non-violent non-co-operation can be practised by everybody. I have already indicated the areas where we could non-co-operate. If we had stuck to non-co-operation, the prevailing mood of frustration would never have arisen.

I have been receiving most depressing letters and also stimulating ones. Many Congressmen write to me saying that we must do something. Should we co-operate with the Government in the famine-relief work? The present deadlock, they say, must somehow be ended. Imitating the language of the Government, I would say, where is the deadlock? If the Government does not seek our co-operation, let it be so. The country, no doubt, belongs to us. If we do not co-operate with the Government, it will come to a halt in one day. But we run after the Government. We do so for a mess of pottage, for a monthly salary. The whole country has to suffer because a few fall a prey to the temptation. But we are born to suffer. Our capacity for suffering should not weaken. Many people believe that they are serving the poor by drawing a salary of Rs. 300 a month and contributing Rs. 290 for the welfare of the poor. But this is not correct. One who non-co-operates with the Government, and gives up the remaining ten rupees and prefers to die starving with the poor, renders the greatest service to the poor.

I cannot offer you any further guidance today. If you grasp the significance of all that I have said, your way will be clear. I have no strength to get into details. The August resolution is still there. I cannot alter, nor do I wish to alter, a single comma in that resolution. You too cannot do so without sanction from the Working Committee. Remember the last few golden lines of the August resolution. On the arrest of the principal Congressmen on the 9th day of August, 1912, every Congressman became his own leader competent to act as he liked, provided that his action fell within the limits prescribed by truth and non-violence. Today you are in a position to meet and exchange notes. Even this is, in fact, not necessary. No hair-splitting discussions are called for. One step is enough. We must learn resolutely to say ‘No’ when it becomes a duty. Lord Willingdon used to say, ‘You are all yes-men.’ We must give up that tendency. If someone forcibly raises my hand to my forehead, it will not be a salute. And, in fact, despite his raising my hand, he cannot make me salute, if I have the strength to

resist. My hand will involuntarily refuse. No one can force us to do anything against our will. No one can enslave us against our will.

[From Hindi]

Maharashtrake Congress Karyakartaonke sath Mahatma Gandhijiki Baatcheet

192. LETTER TO ARUNA ASAF ALI

POONA,
June 30, 1944

CHI. DAUGHTER ARUNA,[1]

I have just read your letter. My whole heart goes out to you. I consider myself to be incapable of asking anybody, much less you, of doing anything that would hurt your pride.[2] If you surrender yourself, you would do so to raise yourself and the country with you. The surrender won't be out of your weakness but out of your strength. This struggle has been full of romance and heroism. You are the central figure. I would love to see you since you are so near. Therefore come, if you at all can. Lest you cannot, this is my advice: I do not want you to surrender unless you feel that it is the better course. I have brought myself to regard secrecy as a sin in the application of non-violence. But it cannot be followed mechanically. I am working for and in the name of the dumb and the downtrodden millions. They are strangers to the art of secrecy as I am. You must, therefore, be the best judge of what is proper. And is that not the final message of the Congress in the closing sentence of the great resolution of 8th August, 1942? Every Congressman is the bearer, in his (or her) own person, of the Congressmessage which he (or she) is

[1] This is in Devanagari.

[2] In *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. I, Book One, pp. 40-1, Pyarelal explains: "The upshot of Gandhiji's discussions with underground workers [*vide* Appendix "Discussion with Underground Workers", before 2-6-1944] was that most of the Congressmen who were engaged in carrying on or directing underground activities in various parts of the country came out into the open. Some surrendered themselves to the authorities while others courted imprisonment by offering civil disobedience openly. Achyut Patwardhan and Aruna Asaf Ali could not reconcile themselves to the idea of surrendering to the British authorities.... out of deference to Gandhiji's judgment, Achyut decided to withdraw from underground activity. But Aruna preferred to continue her outlaw career till the last.... Both Achyut and Aruna came out in the open when the warrants against them were cancelled in the beginning of 1946."

to carry out according to his (or her) own will, remaining within truth and non-violence. My being out does not entitle me to issue any instructions. Apart from the technicality I really do not know how to guide you. God be your sole guide and do as He bids you. This I promise: I will not judge you, no matter what you do.

More if we meet.

Much love from

BAPU

From a facsimile: *Link*, 6-10-1968

193. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

POONA,

June 30, 1944

CHI. MRIDU,

Why are you waiting for my letter ? Why should I thus be burdened ? I have already written to you that you may come. But you must not rush. Come with the readiness to stay as long as I ask. Your last letter has been received. It will be answered when we meet, don't you think ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 11229. Courtesy : Sarabhai Foundation

194. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR H. PAREKH

[*June 1944*][1]

BHAI PRABHASHANKAR,

Maganbhai has at last decided to accept whatever judgment I give. But he has told me that I should give my judgment after considering his statement and your reply to him. I have agreed. If you also think it is proper then have a lawyer draft a reply to Maganbhai's statement and send it to me. Engage a competent lawyer. It would be

[1] From the contents it appears that the letter was written in June 1944; *vide* "Letter to Maganbhai P. Desai", 21-6-1944 and "Letter to Prabhshanker H. Parekh", 9-7-1944.

best if you could have Mavalankar. If you have any papers, send them to me. I hope you have now recovered.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

195. LETTER TO RAMDAS AND NIRMALA GANDHI

[Before *July 1, 1944*][1]

CHI. RAMDAS AND NIMU,

Since Ba is not here, who is there gently to rebuke you for not writing at all? Every day I hope that I will see the handwriting of either of you. Just now, I am in a clinic. I feel better. It will take time. Perhaps I may go to Panchgani after the 1st. How are you all getting along?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RAMDAS GANDHI

TATA'S OFFICER

NAGPUR, C.P.

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

196. TELEGRAM TO BRIJLAL NEHRU

July 1, 1944

BRIJLAL NEHRU

SRINAGAR (KASHMIR)

RECEIVED TELEGRAM. HAVE NO ANXIETY. WRITING.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji being "in a clinic" at the time and his proposed visit to Panchgani "after the Ist"; in June, 1944, Gandhiji was convalescing at Dr. Mehta's clinic in Poona and thereafter went to Panchgani on Juluy 2.

197. SPEECH AT POONA[1]

July 1, 1944

Gandhiji said that when he saw in the papers in the detention camp that he was appointed Chairman of the Trust he was surprised, but he reconciled himself to the position by the thought that the conception behind the proposal to make him Chairman was that he should, on his release, guide the trustees in determining the object of the Fund and regulating its application from time to time. The belief was reinforced by the fact that the chief originator of the idea was Shri Narandas Gandhi who had set up the practice of presenting him with a purse collected chiefly in Kathiawar for the purpose of helping the spread of the hand-spinning movement and allied activities in Kathiawar. Gandhiji, however, could not shoulder the burden of attending meetings of the Trust regularly and guiding its day-to-day work. The real Chairman was Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas, the Vice-Chairman.

While the Fund was taking shape, the tragic death of Kasturba came. The idea of a National Memorial possessed the public, and the originator responded by combining the purse with the Memorial and merging the former in the latter. Thus the present Trust was formed. Kasturba was a simple woman devoted to village life, actually living and serving among villages. The object of the Fund was very properly the welfare of village women and children. It was well that the trustees and the donors should know the whole of his mind on the question of the welfare of women and children in the numerous villages of India. The welfare of his conception encompassed the whole life of the women and children in the villages. It, therefore, included maternity, hygiene and the treatment of diseases, and education. Education meant the basic education of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh. The scope of the Fund, therefore, excludes its use in towns and cities or in education abroad or even in the Universities of India. He said that it would be readily conceded that while the sum of rupees 75 lakhs appeared to be big for the purpose of a Memorial, it was ridiculously small for the scope he had indicated. Gandhiji said that he would be a useless Chairman and guide, if the trustees did not share his idea as to the scope of the Fund.

Proceeding, Gandhiji said that there was talk that he had said that the collection should be confined to capitalists and that the general public need take no part in the collection. It was a travesty of truth. The principal men who could move in the matter of organizing country-side collection were behind prison bars. He was himself disabled. He, therefore, expected his rich friends to pull their fullest weight. He could never be guilty of harbouring even the thought that the Congress and other

[1] Gandhiji presided over a meeting of trustees of Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Fund. He spoke in Gujarati.

workers should sit supine. The Memorial was a National Memorial in which everyone, no matter what his politics, was expected to put in his best effort. It would be no Memorial, if the collections were confined to capitalists. Indeed Mridulabehn, who was one of the most active of workers, had come to him for guidance in the matter of collections in Gujarat.

An unwarranted but pardonable suspicion seems to have been created by the currency of the conversation he had with Dadasaheb Mavalankar who had come for discussion. Gandhiji had told him that so far as he was concerned his work should be confined to the exercise of his unrivalled influence among the moneyed men. "He is, like me, an ailing man," said Gandhiji. He would not like him to risk his health in doing the taxing work of house-to-house collection. That could be easily organized by the workers that are still available.

It would be a thousand pities, if anyone who had faith in the object of the Memorial avoided paying his quota, or inducing his friends to pay theirs, under the false belief that Gandhiji wishes people other than capitalists to refrain from contributing to the Memorial. Indeed he considered it a good sign that so many millionaires of India were not deterred by any real or imaginary fear of harm from identifying themselves with the Memorial of the dead wife of a detenu condemned by the powers that be. For him, the Chairman, it was a matter of gratification.

Gandhiji said that he did count moneyed men among his friends. He knew that critics were not wanting who considered his association with moneyed men a sign of weakness unworthy of a votary of truth and non-violence. The speaker, on the other hand, considered such association as essentially a sign of his non-violence. His many friends knew well the motive for his association with them. He received money from them for many constructive activities, some of which were also supremely humanitarian. They allowed him to put his hands into their pockets for the All-India Spinners' and Village Industries' Associations, and for basic education as defined by the Hindustani Talimi Sangh, and other similar causes. So far as he knew, they had nothing to gain by his association with them. His contact with them took place after they had proved their success as businessmen. His mission was to convert capitalists not into mere friends and patrons of the millions of unemployed, but willing sharers of their goods with them.

Further he had observed that some had doubted whether the Funds collected would not be used for political ends. He had no hesitation whatsoever in giving the assurance that he had no such idea in view. The All-India Spinners' Association and the other bodies just referred to by him, even though initiated by the Congress, had no political character about them.

This Memorial movement, Mr. Gandhi added, had been initiated not by the Congress or Congressmen, but by non-Congressmen and for a purely humanitarian

purpose. In a higher sense, no great act done by an Indian, whether politician or no, could be without political significance. He had in mind the activities of Indians in the field of literature and science and philosophy.[1]

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-7-1944

198. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

July 3, 1944

BHAI DINSHAW,

I saw the houses. I found them dirty. You must attend to this. How can one bear to see dirty chairs in a hospital? The patients should also be taught how to use them. Your assistant should know about it. The houses of the labourers are not good at all. They should be simple but at the same time good enough for people like us to live in. You saw the lavatory and noticed the stink. Improving this does not involve much expense. Take this up as soon as you come down. There is room for improvement in the kitchen also. Things will not improve till you yourself take it up.

I was very much impressed by your management. There is peace all over in the institution. Nobody talks loudly. You are yourself soft-spoken, and you seldom talk. Usually we shout while talking.

I hope to write more about the new scheme immediately.

I often call to mind Gulbai's[2] services.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The report added that during a discussion which followed "Gandhiji's definition of the object of Memorial Fund was unanimously agreed to .... it was decided . . . to amend the previous resolution on the definition of the aims and objects of the Fund and to restrict it to the welfare and education of women and children in the villages."

[2] Addressee's wife

199. LETTER TO GOMATI MASHRUWALA

PANCHGANI,
July 3, 1944

CHI. GOMATI,

Wrote just this much on the 1st and the invasion of visitors began. Today is the 3rd. I feel quite well here. If the place suits me, I hope to beagain on my feet. Whether or not I recover, I hope to be there in August, assuming of course that no unexpected obstacle prevents me from going there.

I was glad that Kishorelal[1] discovered the error. I was sure that he would do so. Nobody in the world ever had a more sincere co-worker than him. I at any rate, never had. It was distressing to me to discourage you in your desire to come here but that was the right thing to do. It therefore hurts me that my going to Sevagram is being delayed. I cannot give up the desire to get perfectly well. How can I give it up? I have nothing which I may call my own. Do not we sing every day: *ten tyakten bhunjithah?* I had specially invited Nathji[2] to Poona. We met daily from [June] 20 to July 2. We have never been together for so many days. Both of us were pleased. He stayed in separate quarters. I am always surrounded by a crowd. It would have been difficult for him to observe his rules in the midst of them all. Vasumati and Amtussalaam have badly disappointed me. I placed both of them in Dinshaw's clinic for treatment, but they did not like it. Now I see the matter with the . . . .[3] eye, and see no reason for disappointment. One is disappointed only if one hopes. Is it not so? There was no reason for . . .[4]. My suggestion may have been for their good, but even so, is it not a delusion for me to believe that their good lies in doing what I wish? So they [may do][5] as they think fit. Send this to them, so that I may not have to write separately to them.

I have received Kanchan's reply. I was glad that she exercised patience. When I arrive there, she should spend with me as much time as possible. I feel like writing separately to her but control the desire.

[1] Addressee's husband, Kishorelal Mashruwala
[2] Kedarnath Kulkarni, Kishorelal's religious guide
[3] The source is blank at these places.
[4] *ibid*
[5] *ibid*

Though I meet fewer visitors, I have a heap of papers to attend to and the treatment I am taking for my health leaves me so little time that I cannot attend to them all. Here is my schedule for today.

There is no light here from 11 p.m. to 5.30 a.m. From 7 to 7.30 prayer. At 8, fruit juice and jaggery. Up to 8.30, work. Up to 12.15, walking, massage and bath. At 1.30 eating, reading or asking someone to read out to me. Thereafter upto 3.30 in the water-closet, followed by a siesta and writing of letters (for half an hour). At 4.30, mud-pack and reading or writing, lying in the bed. I started writing this letter thus lying in the bed and it is now 4.45. After finishing this, I wish to attend to nature's call and so might visit the water-closet. After 5, I will spin. As far as possible, I spin for an hour. A few days ago, I started observing silence while spinning. Today, of course, is my silence day. At 6, I will have some curd and fruit. After that, there will be prayer. I will attend to it, and then go for a walk and after that, hope to work for one hour. The fact is that my capacity for work is still limited. I am using up what little strengthI have gained. It does not seem proper not to use it up in that way. Thus, I act as God prompts me to. If professing to act in the name of God, I am in fact acting through ignorant attachment, it cannot but . . .[1] Show this letter to all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of Gujarati : S.N. 33128

200. INTERVIEW TO STUART GELDER[2]

July 4, 1944

I saw Gandhi at Panchgani on the 4th July. I told him: "My Editor is anxious to help in solving the political deadlock in India. I went to Delhi and I was disappointed. I hope you will not disappoint me." I asked: "Supposing you saw the Viceroy, what would you say to him?" He immediately replied:

I would tell him that I sought the interview with a view to help and not to hinder the Allied war-effort. But I can do nothing without

[1] Some words here are illegible in the source.

[2] This appeared under the date-line "Panchgani, July 12" as "notes" prepared by Gandhiji for publication in *News Chronicle* which Gelder represented. The interview was "distributed over three days"; *vide* "Telegram to S. Sadanand", 12-7-1944, and "Statement to the Press", 12-7-1944.

seeing the members of the Working Committee for I believethat my authority under the August resolution ended with my imprisonment. It was not revived by my release. You are not interested in my personal views, but you should be, if I spoke as a representative.

I interrupted and said: "The Viceroy and everybody else is interested to know your mind because of your hold on the masses of India." He replied:

I am a democrat and I cannot exploit that hold except through the organization in the building of which I had a hand.

But again I interrupted and said: "Before the Viceroy permits you to see the Committee, he would want to know how you would influence the members." He said:

History does not repeat itself. The conditions of 1942 do not exist today. The world has moved on during the last two years. The whole situation has to be reviewed *de novo.* The point, therefore, for me to discuss with the Working Committee is to know how they react to the knowledge that I gained since my release.

I have to take up the thread that was broken by the Government in 1942. I was first to negotiate and, on failure, to offer civil resistance, if I thought it necessary. I want to plead with the Viceroy. I can do so only when I know the Working Committee's mind.

But I tell you that the common talk among us is that whatever the Viceroy may wish personally, he has no authority in the political sphere. Mr. Churchill does not want any settlement. He wants to crush me, if he has been correctly reported.[1] He has never denied the report. The beauty of it, for me, and the pity of it, for him, is that no one can crush a satyagrahi; for, he offers his body as a willing sacrifice and this makes the spirit free.[2]

The Bombay Chronicle, 13-7-1944

[1] In *This Was Bapu,* p. 139, R. K. Prabhu explains that while referring to Gandhi-Irwin talks in his address to the Council of the West Essex Unionist Association on February 23, 1931, Churchill was reported to have said: "It is alarming and also nauseating to see Mr. Gandhi, an Inner Temple lawyer now become a seditious fakir of a type well-known in the East, striding half-naked up the steps of the Viceregal palace while he is still organizing and conducting a defiant campaign of civil disobedience, to parley on equal terms with the representative of the King Emperor. I am against these conversations. . . . The truth is that Gandhism and all it stands for will have to be grappled with and finally crushed."

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Winston Churchill", 17-7-1944.

201. INTERVIEW TO STUART GELDER[1]

July 4[*to6*][2] *1944*

I saw Mahatma Gandhi on July 4th at Panchgani. I told him: "My Editor is anxious to help in solving the political deadlock in India. I went to Delhi and I was disappointed. I hope you will not disappoint me." I asked him: "Supposing you saw Lord Wavell how would you begin to talk? What would you say to him?"

He promptly replied that he would tell the Viceroy that he had sought the interview with a view to help and not to hinder the Allies, and it was to this end he had asked for permission to see the members of the Congress Working Committee. He said, he had no authority to act in the name of the Congress. According to the canons of satyagraha, when a civil resister was imprisoned, the authority vested in him automatically came to an end. Hence the need for him to see the members of the Working Committee.

I said: "The Viceroy might feel, as you swear by the August resolution and by the weapon of civil disobedience, your meeting the Working Committee members may only result in their re-investing you with authority to carry on civil disobedience in the name of the Congress, and the result will be that when you come out of the interview you will hold the pistol on the Viceroy's head and say: 'Do this or I start civil disobedience.' That would make things worse than they are today." Gandhi replied:

At the back of that is total distrust of my profession that I am, and have always been, a friend of the British. Therefore I can never use the weapon of civil disobedience during the war, unless there was a very grave reason as, for instance, the thwarting of India's natural rights to freedom.

My next question was: "Supposing the Working Committee was let out of jail tomorrow and the Government refuses to give India what they want, would you start civil disobedience?" Gandhi replied:

If the Working Committee came out, they would take stock of the situation and discuss things among themselves and with me. I can tell you this, that I have no intention of offering civil disobedience today. I cannot take the country back to 1942. History can never berepeated. Even without the authority of the Congress, if I wanted to

[1] In the source, the interview appeared as "Second Statement" and followed Gandhiji's version, *vide* the preceding item.

[2] *ibid*

do it, I could start civil disobedience today on the strength of my supposed influence with the masses. But I would be doing so merely to embarrass the British Government. This cannot be my object.

But the Working Committee would not sit still while people are suffering. It is my conviction that we cannot meet fully the situation and alleviate the sufferings of the people, unless power and responsibility are transferred from British into Indian hands. Without such transfer, the attempts of Congressmen and others to alleviate the people's sufferings are most likely to lead to conflict with the Government.

I interrupted and said: "When things are as they are, I cannot believe that they will transfer authority now; that is, Government will not concede the demand for independence while the war is on."

Gandhi replied that there was a difference between what he would ask today and what was asked in 1942. Today he would be satisfied with a national government in full control of civil administration. It was not so in 1942. Such a government would be composed of persons chosen by the elected members of the Central Assembly. "This would mean declaration of independence of India, qualified as above, during the war."

I thought it was a great improvement on the 1942 position. I asked him if the military would control railways and the ports, etc.

Gandhi replied that the national government would let the military have all the facilities that it might require. But the control would be that of the national government. Ordinance rule would give place to normal administration by the national government.

"Will the Viceroy be there?", I asked. [Gandhiji replied:]

Yes, but he will be like the King of England guided by responsible Ministers. Popular government will be automatically restored in all the provinces so that both the provincial and the central government will be responsible to the people of India. So far as military operations are concerned, the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief will have complete control. But it must be possible for the national government to offer advice and criticisms even in military matters.

Thus the portfolio of Defence would be in the hands of the national government which would be genuinely interested in the defence of the country and may render great assistance in the shaping of policies.

The Allied forces would be allowed to carry on their operations on Indian soil; I realize that they cannot defeat Japan without that.

Gandhi made it clear that the expenses of the Allied operations on the Indian soil should not be borne by India. I asked: "If a national government is formed, would you advise the Congress to participate in it?"

Gandhi replied in the affirmative. I asked: "So it means that if a national government is formed, the Congress will join and help the war effort. What would be your position?" [Gandhiji replied:]

I am a lover of peace through and through. After independence was assured I would probably cease to funtion as adviser to the Congress and, as an all-war resister, I would have to stand aside; but I shall not offer any resistance against the national government or the Congress. My co-operation will be abstention from interfering with the even tenor of life in India. I shall work with the hope that my influence will always be felt to keep India peace-minded and brotherhood among all without the distinction of race and colour.

I next asked: "Supposing there is a conflict between the civil and military authorities, how would the dispute be settled? If, for example, civil authorities want to use the railway to carry two thousand tons of food, and the military authorities wanted it for carrying munitions, what would you advise?" Gandhi replied:

As I said before, I would not have to advise on such matters. But supposing I had, I can conceive of the necessity of allowing precedence to the military. But supposing the military wanted to blow off places or practice manoeuvres in disregard of the life of the people, I would say: 'Hands off.'

The thing is that with mutual trust such difficulties would not arise and if they did, they would be easily adjusted. If there is no trust, I cannot work. I cannot work for Allied victory without trust. If they trusted, a settlement would be easy to achieve. Freedom for India will bring hope to Asiatics and other exploited nations. Today there is no hope for the Negroes, but Indian freedom will fill them with hope.

Finally I asked: "What about the Hindu-Muslim differences?" Gandhi replied:

If the British meant well, there would be no difficulties.

Gandhi said in conclusion:

Most of us believe that whatever the Viceroy may wish personally, he has not the authority in the political sphere. Mr. Churchill does not want a settlement. He wants to crush me, if he has

been correctly reported[1]. He has never denied the report. The beauty of it, for me, and the pity of it, for him, is that no one can crush a satyagrahi; for, he offers his body as a willing sacrifice and thus makes the spirit free.

In the course of his explanatory statement, Mahatma Gandhi said that throughout his talks with the British journalist he had emphasized the fact that he was speaking for himself and in no sense involving the Congress in what he said. He added:

I do not know how far today I represent the views of the members of the Working Committee. And about Hindu-Muslim formula which has nothing to do with these two statements, I have not spoken as a Hindu. I have spoken as an Indian first and an Indian last. My Hinduism is my own—I personally think it embraces all faiths. Therefore I have no authority to speak as a representative of the Hindus. That I respond to mass mind and the masses know me instinctively is a fact which cannot be gainsaid but I have not built my case upon it.[2]

The Bombay Chronicle, 13-7-1944

202. A NOTE

July 5, 1944

This is not Ramachandran's letter. The signature is altogether different. Let the money be sent here. There are no indications that *Harijan* will be published.[3] But if it is published, you may certainly bring out its Tamil and Telugu editions.

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

203. LETTER TO RAMANATHAN

PANCHGANI,
July 5, 1944

MY DEAR RAMANATHAN,

I was delighted to have your letter. If any member as such of

[1] *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Interview to Stuart Gelder", 4-7-1944.

[2] *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 12-7-1944.

[3] Publication of the journal was suspended on October 24, 1940. It was subsequently revived on February 10, 1946.

the A.I.S.A. took part in the movement, it was contrary to the constitution and my direction. The latter was that those who contemplated taking part were to resign.

As to sabotage and the like, I have expressed my opinion against them as also against secrecy[1]

As to the particulars you mention, I would like you to see me at Sevagram, if I reach there and am declared free from the present illness.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 9258. Also C.W. 3075

204. DRAFT LETTER TO THACKER & CO. AND OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS[2]

July 5, 1944

It was after much thought that I declared a trust in connection with my writings. I had observed misuse of Tolstoy's writings for want of a trust. By curing the defect, I preserved fully the idea lying behind dislike for copyright, i.e., for personal gain for one's writings. The idea also was to prevent profiteering by publishers or distortion or misrepresentation, wilful or unintentional. I have requested the Navajivan Trust to permit you to publish Shri Prabhu's compilation with the right for you to multiply editions as long as there is demand for it, provided that the price will be reduced to the minimum, leaving to you a profit of not more than five per cent—one half of which shall be paid to Shri Prabhu as honorarium for his labours. One hundred copies of each edition should be given free of cost to the Navajivan Trust. The Navajivan Trust should have the right to publish a cheaper edition (in English or in any Indian languages) for sale in India including Burma and Ceylon. If, per chance, any profit accrues, it will be equally divided among your firm, Shri Prabhu and the Navajivan Trust.

Samsmarano, pp. 164-5

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Annada Babu Chowdhary", 9-6-1944; also Appendices "Discussion on Underground Activities", after 31-3-1944 and "Discussion with Underground Workers", before 2-6-1944.

[2] This was an enclosure to the following item.

205. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

PANCHGANI,
July 5, 1944

BHAI MAVALANKAR,

I had a talk[1] with Bhai Prabhu. I didn't get the impression that he had done anything through a selfish motive. I went through the papers submitted by him. I don't find copies of our communications to him. I will go through them when they arrive. I don't need them, however, for future use. I am, therefore, sending herewith a draft[2] of the letter to be addressed to both the publishing firms. If you approve of it, I will write accordingly. If you wish to suggest changes, you may do so.

I have been discussing what to say on the blurbs. If you have any suggestions to make in regard to it, please do so. I have also been thinking about the title of the book on *brahmacharya.* You would not probably like to waste time in thinking over a matter like this.

If you have any suggestions or comments to make regarding the arrangements for the Kasturba Memorial Fund, you may do so. Would you like to make any suggestions regarding the names of the ten trustees?

The air here is quite humid. Its magic will be known by and by.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1719

206. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

AS AT SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,[3]
July 6, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

I was much touched by your letter of 10th May last.

Dissolution of my wife's body has enriched my life. For, I remember only her great merits. Her limitations were reduced to ashes

[1] On June 28; *vide* "Letter to R. K. Prabhu", 19-6-1944.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] Permanent address

with the body.

As for me, I am making slow but steady progress. We are all passing through anxious times. Sympathy of friends like you sustains me in my struggle against forces of evil.

Mirabehn has gone to the Himalayas for health's sake.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES[1]

10 PARK AVENUE

NEW YORK 16 N. Y.

From a photostat: C.W. 10965. Courtesy: S.P.K. Gupta. Also from a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

207. LETTER TO DR. JOSIAH OLDFIELD

AS AT SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,[2]

July 6, 1944

MY DEAR OLDFIELD,

Your letter revives very old and sweet memories. Of course, you could point out many omissions in my writings. I was not writing an autobiography. I wrote about my experiments with truth. WhateverI deemed necessary for the purpose and recollected, I reduced to writing.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 4518. Courtesy: Dr. Josiah Oldfield

[1] 1879-1964; American clergyman; founder-member of American Civil Liberties Union, and the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People; Editor of *Unity;* Rabindranath Tagore Memorial Visiting Professor (under the auspices of the Watumull Foundation) at Banaras Hindu University from October 1947 to January 1948; author of *My Gandhi,* and books on religion and social subjects

[2] Permanent address

208. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

PANCHGANI, SATARA DIST.,
July 6, 1944

DEAR MRS. NAIDU,

Bapu was very glad to have your note of the 28th ult. His acquaintance with the late Nawab Yarjung was so slight that he does not feel any enthusiasm about sending the message you have suggested.

Bapu has a grouse against you. Sir Radhakrishnan was here yesterday. He said that you were as incorrigible about taking care of your health as ever. When are you going to turn a new leaf in this respect ? How is Padmaja ?

With regards,
Yours sincerely,
PYARELAL

[PS.]

Dear Ammajan, Bapu's anaemia is better. Bhai forgot to mention it.

How are you ?

Love.

SUSHILA

MRS. SAROJINI NAIDU
"SUKH NIWAS"
RAMKOTE
HYDERABAD
DECCAN

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar:

209. LETTER TO MANU S. MASHRUWALA

PANCHGANI,
[*July 6, 1944*][1]

CHI. MANUDI,

Are you offended with me? How long will you remain so? And is it right for children to feel offended with their parents?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5062. Courtesy: Surendra Mashruwala

210. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

PANCHGANI,
July 6, 1944

CHI. MANUDI,

Your letter is good. The work that you have undertaken is fine but it will come in the way of your study. But never mind that. It will save your eyes from harm. Study as much as you can with due care for your eyesight. God has endowed you with capacity for service and, therefore, you get such work unasked. Overcome your habit of thoughtless spending. Take care of everything and use it as a poor person would.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

To Jaisukhlal later.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

[1] In the source, the letter appears below the one dated July 6, 1944, from Kishorelal Mashruwala to the addressee.

211. LETTER TO GIRIRAJ KISHORE[1]

PANCHGANI,
July 6, 1944

Just now be content with only my blessings.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8772

212. LETTER TO R. R. KEITHAHN

PANCHGANI,
July 7, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

I hope you will have a successful gathering. Twenty real votaries of Truth and Love are equal to or rather more than a match for a number of indifferent persons raised to Nth power.

Love.

BAPU

REV. R. R. KEITHAHN[2]
156 BANVARGHATTI ROAD
BANGALORE CITY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

213. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

PANCHGANI,
July 7, 1944

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

Indeed we have suffered a great loss in the passing away of your father[3]. He is relieved of the burden. Although I knew very little about him, I had heard a lot about his love of khadi. The straight and noble

[1] The letter appears below the one from Pyarelal to the addressee.

[2] American missionary and social worker in India; the Mysore Government served an externment order on him on August 8, 1944.

[3] Kanjibhai Jerajani

way to fill the void created by his passing away is to emulate that love of his.

Blessings from

BAPU

KHADI BHANDAR

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

214. LETTER TO CHHOTUBHAI

PANCHGANI,

July 7, 1944

BHAI CHHOTUBHAI,

I like your letter very much because it is so candid. But you have raised questions one would not expect from a man of your intelligence. There are other co-workers like you and I sometimes wonder if my company is stifling their intelligence. All the same, I answer the questions.

1. I have not the least doubt of Russia's bravery. But I would not weigh it on the scales of non-violence.

2. It does not appear to me that anything that is happening today can be likened to the Dharasana episode. I can understand the hardship resulting from the refusal of the farmers to sell the stocks of grains lying with them to the Government at rates lower than they can afford. But the looting of Government grain stocks cannot be called non-violent whether it is done after serving prior notice or not. I have always considered and still consider salt public property like water and air. I cannot include acts like sabotage of railways, etc., in non-violence.

3. It is of course not easy to decide on a programme for someone who is bent upon facing bullets in a non-violent way, but it is not impossible. One is not duty-bound to give one's name. Informing about the action contemplated would suffice. If at the time fixed one finds that no one has come to the spot because the notice, being anonymous, had been thrown away, another notice can be sent. If this is done again and again, one day the tiger is sure to come. However, do not conclude from this that I consider the programme mentioned in the second question non-violent even if carried out after giving

prior information. My answer is intended only to clear the difficulty about the third question.

4. The information contained in the cutting is more or less correct. My advice to Raojibhai was not in exercise of a right. One does not advise as a matter of right. One commands. Is that not so ? I lost the right to command from the moment of my incarceration.

5. Post Offices, courts, and so on, today do not belong to the people. Even when they come to belong to the people, they will not be personal property. Even personal property will be property belonging to the people. Out of that, only what the nation has given unto itself or kept for itself would belong to it. I hope this provides you all the explanations you seek.

I have not revised the above.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

215. LETTER TO B. S. MOONJE

July 8, 1944

DEAR DR. MOONJE,

In reply to your letter of the 2nd inst. to Gandhiji, I am to say that you are at liberty to publish your letter of the 27th June to him.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

216. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

PANCHGANI,
July 8, 1944

BHAI MUNSHI,

I got your opinion.[1] In the circumstances stated by you, it is not desirable to publish it. I will preserve it with me. Your labour will

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Opinion on Gandhiji's Responsibility", 6-2-1944.

not go in vain; I am already using it for my own purpose. I am enclosing a note for Sarla[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 7676. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

217. LETTER TO GUNOTTAM HUTHEESING

July 8, 1944

CHI. RAJA,

I am simply waiting for the 20th. One need not fear the climate of this place because one can always return to one's own place, if the climate does not suit one. Death strikes a man but once; cowardice hundreds of times. Moreover you had better pay a visit, if only to fulfil a promise. If you are still hesitant in spite of all this persuasion, you should stay put. It is surprising that Krishna[2] cannottake care of herself. She must stay on for the sake of Indira[3], else I would have dragged along both of you. Let me have your final decision.

Blessings from

BAPU

HUTHEESING
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

218. LETTER TO BHARATI SARABHAI

[*After July 8, 1944*][4]

CHI . BHARATI,

I have forgotten the talk I had with Pyarelal. But I like your book[5]. It certainly has a beautiful theme. I like best the portrayal of your heart, as presented in the book. I cannot be a judge of the language. I have hardly read a few poems and can appreciate little. I found the language affected. Moreover I certainly wish that your poetic faculty blossoms through the medium of Gujarati. Is there any

[1] Addressee's daughter, Sarla Seth
[2] Addressee's wife
[3] Indira Gandhi
[4] In the source, the letter is placed after the letters of July 8, 1944.
[5] *The Well of the People*, published in 1943

dearth of lovers of English? How many lovers can Gujarati boast of?

Blessings from
BAPU

B. SARABHAI
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

219. LETTER TO JATINDERNATH

PANCHGANI,
July 9, 1944

DEAR JATINDERNATH,

I have gone through your letter. It makes me sad. Ill as I am, I am powerless to help much. But taking the recital as true, the question is why did not the two men who were so brutally assaulted resist unto death. Non-violent resistance is possible without inflicting injury onthe injurer. I know this is more easily said than done. But if we are to learn the art of non-violence, we must refuse to be living witnesses of our own degradation. You are at liberty to show this to any friend you like. Mind, I cast no reflection on the living ones. My object is to point the moral.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

220. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

'DILKHUSHA, PANCHGANI,
July 9, 1944

SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY (H.D.)
POONA

SIR,

I have received your letter[1] of 7th instant in connection with the ground in H.H. the Aga Khan's Palace where Shri Mahadev Desai's and Smt. Kasturba Gandhi's bodies were cremated. My purpose is served by the present arrangement for which I thank the Government.

Yours, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3939

[1] In reply to Gandhiji's letter dated May 6, 1944, *vide* "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 6-5-1944.

221. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR H. PAREKH

PANCHGANI,
July 9, 1944

BHAI PRABHASHANKAR,

I have your letter. You are in great distress but you are enduring it with courage. From Champa's[1] letters, I learn that you have been freed [from attending to Dr. Mehta's finances.] For what work am I appointed an arbitrator? I am not even aware of it. My appointment and continuance as an arbitrator depend only upon the goodwill of friends. May I know what kind of guidance you expect from me? I have no idea what I should do. Without going deep into the matter I should only advise you to give Champa whatever she wants. What is there left for you now? Repeat the Lord's name in solitude and render as much service as you can.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

SHRI PRABHASHANKAR HARCHANDBHAI PAREKH
DERA SHERI
RAJKOT CITY
KATHIAWAR

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XX

[1] Addressee's daughter, wife of Ratilal, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's son

222. LETTER TO DHUNDIRAJ G. KANITKAR

PANCHGANI,
July 9, 1944

CHI. DHUNDIRAJ,

I have your letter. My recovery is slower than I had expected; so now I would reluctantly ask you not to come over. It keeps raining all day. Besides, I do not have sufficient accommodation for you. Please ask your father to forgive me.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI DHUNDIRAJ GAJANAN KANITKAR
HINDMATA MANDIR
341 SADASHIVPETH
POONA

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 972. Courtesy: Gajanan N. Kanitkar

223. A LETTER

PANCHGANI,
July 10, 1944

As for Bapa's reference[2] of July 6, I see no discrepancy in my opinion regarding Nanjibhai's[3] proposed donation and the previous opinion quoted by Bapa. My point is that no donor should arbitrarily keep part or whole of the donation with himself. He may send recommendation about ear-marking. If it satisfies our conditions, the ear-marking may be allowed. If my opinion is held good, the fourth condition is superfluous.

Thus while I see no discrepancy in my present opinion and the past, my emphasis has changed. In my weakness, I was anxious to make up the total of 75 lacs somehow. Now I am strong enough to resist that temptation. We shall better serve the object of the Memorial by securing what we can by October 2 next, than by letting donors to

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Gajanan N. Kanitkar", 28-61944.
[2] As Secretary, Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Fund Trust
[3] Nanji Kalidas; *vide* also "Letter to Nanji Kalidas", 20-9-1944.

fritter away the sum by local earmarkings and keeping the bulk with themselves. In the States, generally, we are likely to experience difficulty in spending money in the villages. I prefer the use of the word 'villages' to that of the expression 'rural areas'. There may be rural area of Calcutta but it may not be composed of villages properly so-called. Santa Cruz is a suburban area but not a village. I hope the distinction I have made is capable of being easily understood.

Again our large donors will be townsmen. Their natural-wish will be to spend their donation in their own way and in their own place. This may defeat the purpose of this Memorial.

I see the prospect of such questions arising frequently. They will be largely of interpretation. I am most anxious to spare Bapa's time and trouble. Let him unhesitatingly interpret rulings to the best of his ability and risk difference of opinion with the chairman. In matters of interpretation, Bapa's shall be final except where he has previously referred any such question to me.

I would like Bapa, if he can, to be satisfied with my Gujarati. I know it is difficult in old age to change confirmed habits. I have strong objection to the use of English when the use of the mother tongue or the national language is possible. But here again let Bapa's wish prevail. He is on the active list. I am on the sick list and have therefore time for indulging in preferences.

This letter should be sent to Bapa wherever he may be. It should also be shown to Sir Purushottamdas. If he differs on the question referred to me by Bapa, I should know.[1]

This opinion was drafted yesterday. It was typed today. Bapa's bombshell came later. I hope it will not explode.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] What follows is in Gujarati.

224. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

[*July 10, 1944*][1]

CHI. AMRIT[2]

I better conserve my time and energy for the business before me. I have no news to give you. Play I dare not when there is work which calls me. And I have hardly enough energy to cope with the daily post.

Love to all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4201. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7837

225. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

PANCHGANI,
July 10, 1944

CHI. VANAMALA,

So the fat on your body has proved completely deceptive, hasn't it? More deceptive even than mine? You have got what you deserved. If you had given up salt, etc., from the beginning, don't you think you wouldn't have been obliged to give them up now? But never mind. Rest for four months now and make your body quite strong. Maybe, this ordeal will improve your hearing too. Show this to the doctor. He is no doctor who treats a patient only for one symptom. The root cause of all diseases is generally one. But all this is idle philosophizing intended for your amusement while lying in bed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5792. Also C.W. 3015. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

[1] In the source, the letter appears below the one dated July 10, 1944, from Pyarelal to the addressee. Pyarelal said: "By the time this reaches you, you will have seen in the papers the latest bombshell, i.e., Rajaji-Jinnah correspondence which was released yesterday. That ought not to surprise you. Bapu had shown his preparedness for exploring some such formula even as far back as August 4, 1942, when he wrote to C. R. about it. . . ." For the text of C. Rajagopalachari's Formula, drafted in 1943, *side* Appendix "C. Rajagopalachari's Formula", before 5-8-1942.

[2] This is in Devanagari.

226. LETTER TO ISHVARLAL G. VYAS

PANCHGANI,
July 10, 1944

BHAI ISHWARLAL,

I have read your letter carefully. Most of the women have been provided for by you and Purbai. That is as it ought to be. If I go to Sevagram, and if you find it convenient and think it necessary, both of you may come and see me there. Workers have no time or money to waste. I, therefore, try to stop most of them. But there are some who need reassurance. And these do come. Orissa has been in my thoughts all the time, but I have deliberately refrained from speaking about it. You have an eternal famine there. Its protector is God. Appealing in my name is not going to be of any particular help.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI ISHWARLAL G. VYAS
PURBAI ASHRAM, SORO P.O .
BALASORE DISTRICT

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5061

227. TELEGRAM TO ZIAUDDIN CHAUDHARI

PANCHGANI,
[On or after *July 10, 1944*][1]

ZIAUDDIN CHAUDHARI[2]
CARE EMDESSONS
KARACHI

RAJAJI'S OFFER SUPERCEDES PREVIOUS WRITING IF CONTRARY.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In the source, the telegram is placed among the items of 1944; the date is inferred from the reference to "Rajaji's offer" which was published on July 10. *Vide* 1st footnote of "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 10-7-1944.

[2] Sir Ziauddin Ahmed, Member, Central Legislative Assembly, Vice Chancellor, Aligarh Muslim University

228. LETTER TO MIR MUSHTAQ AHMED

July 11, 1944

DEAR MIR SAHIB,

I am clear that the conditions are derogatory and unacceptable. Detenus who decline to avail of facilities with humiliating restrictions do well.

But my opinion carries no authority.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MIR MUSHTAQ AHMED SAHEB

34 PREM HOUSE

CONNAUGHT PLACE

NEW DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

229. LETTER TO S. ZAHEERUL MUJAHID

PANCHGANI,

July 11, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

I feel wholly unable to undertake the task[1] you have entrusted me with.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

230. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

PANCHGANI,

July 11, 1944

MY DEAR MATHEW,

I am glad you are fixed up at last. Of course, I have not

[1] The addressee had asked for an article on Jinnah from Gandhiji, as he proposed to publish a series of biographies of all prominent Muslim leaders of India.

forgotten you but I have not written to the people I have not forgotten. I write only when I must.

Love.

BAPU

PROF. P. G. MATHEW

S. H. COLLEGE

THEVARA, *via* ERNAKULAM

From a photostat: G.N. 1544

231. LETTER TO LILAVATI K. MUNSHI

July 11, 1944

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. I do not know what has appeared in the newspapers. I merely repeated in Ahmedabad what I had said in Bombay. I did not describe my note as a definition in Ahmedabad. There also I described it as a working guide.

I cannot yet do my own writing.

Your discovery about Kumarappa is excellent. I will keep it in mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 7677. Courtesy : K. M. Munshi

232. TELEGRAM TO S. SADANAND[1]

July 12, 1944

YOUR WIRE[2]. THANKS. APOLOGIZE TO NATIONALIST PRESS FOR APPEARANCE ACCOUNT INTERVIEW EXCLUSIVELY ANGLO-INDIAN PRESS[3]. THIS WAS UNAUTHORIZED. I DID GIVE[4] FOR PUBLICATION "NEWS CHRONICLE" SHORT INTERVIEW PART WHEREOF IS PUBLISHED. MY TALK[5] COVERING THREE HOURS DURING THREE DAYS MEANT CHIEFLY FOR GELDER'S INSTRUCTION. THOUGH HIS REPORT FAIRLY ACCURATE REQUIRES CORRECTION. HOPE THROUGH EARLY PRESS INTERVIEW[6] CORRECT INACCURACY. MY VIEWS MERE PERSONAL. WHETHER THEY PROMOTE COUNTRY'S GOOD OR NOT MATTER OF OPINION. SIMULTANEOUS PUBLICATION RAJAJI'S FORMULA[7] ACCIDENTAL. REGARD FORMULA CONSISTENT WITH NATIONAL INTEGRITY AND MY OPINION WITH SPIRIT CONGRESS RESOLUTION. UNDER NON-VIOLENCE NATIONAL UNITS CANNOT BE FORCIBLY HELD TOGETHER. ALL ARE FREE TO INTERPRET SATYAGRAHA. BUT I SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO BE SOLE INTERPRETER OF SATYAGRAHA OF MY CONCEPTION WHICH HAS HELD FIELD SINCE 1908.

The Bombay Chronicle, 13-7-1944

[1] Managing Editor, *Free Press Journal*, Bombay

[2] According to *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. IV, p. 1086, the Viceroy's Private Secretary, E. M. Jenkins, in his letter dated July 13, 1944, to F.F. Turnbull, the Private Secretary to the Secretary of State for India, reported that Sadanand had telegraphed Gandhiji "protesting against communication of his views on important matters to Gelder, a representative of British and Anglo-Indian Press, rather than to Nationalist Press, and adding that Gandhi's [? Proposal] to Jinnah, if correctly reported, 'betrayed trust Congress and nation had placed in him' " .

[3] The reference is to *The Times of India*, 11-7-1944, in which Stuart Gelder's cable to *News Chronicle* had appeared; *vide* Appendix "Staurt Gelder's Cable to *News Chronicle*", 12-7-1944.

[4] *Vide* "Interview to Stuart Gelder", 4-7-1944.

[5] *Vide* "Interview to Stuart Gelder", 4-7-1944.

[6] *Vide* the following item and "Interview to the Press", 13-7-1944.

[7] *Vide* Appendix "C. Rajagopalachari's Formula", before 5-8-1942.

233. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

[*July 12, 1944*][1]

I had not authorized publication of the interview or even the substance. I had said that it should not be published, unless I authorized its publication, and in no case had I ever dremt that the interview would be published, with exclusive rights to any one paper. If it was to be published, it should have been broadcast throughout India.

Therefore I had to offer that apology[2] publicly in order to soothe myself and also to show to the Press my appreciation that they have respected my desire to be left alone, and also not to report anything which I had not authorized.

I know that some things have appeared in the Press without authority but, generally speaking, I must confess the Press has obliged me by refraining from reporting things that are not authorized. My object in seeing the Press people is purely to advance the cause for which I am living, namely, the freedom of India through truth and non-violence.

I do not seek publicity for the sake of it and just now I feel I would serve the cause better by remaining in obscurity, if such things were possible. Therefore I had warned Gelder that he was not to publish anything from me unless I authorized it. He has published[3] what he has, I have no doubt, with the best of intentions, but somehow or other I feel he has not served the cause as well as he might have.

I passed nearly three hours with him distributed over three days in order that he might know the whole of my mind. I believed him, and still believe him, to be a well-wisher of India as he is a lover of his own country, and I accepted his word entirely when he told me that he approached me not as a journalist principally but as one desiring to see that the political deadlock was resolved.

Whilst I declared my views with absolute freedom, I told him that his first business should be to go to Delhi and, if I could reach the

[1] The statement, though released by Gandhiji, on this date, along with the notes on his interview to Stuart Gelder, *vide* pp. 347-8 and 349-52 appeared under the date-line "Panchgani, July 13".

[2] In telegram to S. Sadanand, *vide* the preceding item.

[3] *Vide* Appendix "Stuart Gelder's Cable to *News Chronicle*", 12-7-1944.

Viceregal throne, he should see the Viceroy[1] and give him what impressions he had gathered. Having myself failed to get an interview with the Viceroy, I felt that Gelder being reporter of a prominent English daily might be able to serve the cause. Even in South Africa, where I was working in a hostile atmosphere, I was fortunate enough to get journalists and editors to help me when they became impressed by my earnestness and the justice of my cause. I was handling the disabilities of Indians in South Africa.

The publication, therefore, at this stage, of an abstract [by Gelder] of two interviews seems to me to be misfired. I, therefore, propose to give you two notes prepared after discussion with Gelder one of which, namely, the shorter one, after his pilgrimage to Delhi he was free to send to his paper, and the other he could discuss privately with anybody who cared to understand me or who Gelder thought, should know how my mind was working

You will see after you have read the two notes that he has compressed the two in the report published by him. You will notice also that there are some glaring inaccuracies in the report as published. I want to guard myself against being undrestood as accusing Gelder of wilful distortion.

But I have found it times without number during my public life, covering a period of over 50 years, that my statements do not admit of being easily abridged or paraphrased. In 1897, I very nearly lost my life when Reuter sent an abridged summary of a pamphlet[2] I had written and distributed in India in 1896. The summary was, I have no doubt, an unconscious distortion of what I had written. Fortunately my life was spared when I was lynched, and I was able to show that the case based against me on the strength of the summary was utterly wrong.

Here the abridgement has no such mischievous consequences. I recall the South African incident in order to emphasize my point. All my life I have handled what seemed to be forlorn causes. I have been also a fairly successful journalist, but I did not embark upon that calling for a living. It was a venture in order to advertise the cause I was handling, and I gave this long preface before handing the two statements to fellow-journalists in the hope that they would respondto

[1] Who, however, declined to see him

[2] The “Green Pamphlet”.

my earnest wish that they would co-operate with me in dealing with the situation which, if properly handled, may yield promising results for mankind.

I was ill-prepared for this ordeal that is in front of me. I am in Panchgani trying to rebuild my broken body. The desire not to see statements published at this stage was also prompted by regard for my health. I want to get well quickly and to be in full working order. Since things are so shaping themselves that I might not be able to carry out that wish; the statement being before the public, I have to watch the reaction and deal with misunderstandings.

I have kept you, gentlemen, away from me and you have been very kind to me. You have waited in the hope that some day I would satisfy your natural inquisitiveness. I am afraid that you will be perhaps oversatisfied because, if your chiefs still keep you here, you will give me daily summary of reactions in the Press. I do not expect that I shall want to deal with them all, but in so far as there are misunderstandings I will have to remove them, if I possibly can. Throughout this I have emphasized the fact that I was speaking for myself and in no sense involving the Congress in what I said. I do not know how far today I represent the views of the members of the Working Committee.

As regards the Hindu-Muslim Formula[1], which has nothing to do with these two statements, I have not spoken as a Hindu. I have spoken as an Indian first and an Indian last. My Hinduism is my own—I personally think it embraces all faiths. Therefore I have no authority to speak as a representative of the Hindus.

That I respond to mass mind and the masses know me instinctively is a fact which cannot be gainsaid, but I have not built my case upon it. As a representative of satyagraha, as I know it, I feel it my duty to pour out my heart to an Englishman who I thought, and still think, is a sympathetic listener. I claim no further authority for my views. I stand by every word that appeared in the two statements I have given to you, but I speak on behalf of no one else than myself.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-7-1944

[1] The reference is to Rajaji Formula; *vide* Appendix "C. Rajagopalachari's Formula", before 5-8-1942.

234. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

[*July*][1] *12, 1944*

MY DEAR HORACE,

I have your long letter—long for the time and the way in which it had to be sent, not for the subject matter. Some of what you tell me I had known already after coming out, and some of it is startling. All of it is good as coming from you, even the part that I know to be wrong. But that which is wrong does not diminish the importance of what you have said. The defects of your narrative arise from your good nature. I would rather have the latter than have the defects removed at the sacrifice of it. I need not thus have qualified my appreciation of your letter but for the fear of misleading you into the belief that I accept the whole of your version without any deduction. To discuss the deduction is not germane to what I want to say. You know the other side of the picture. The popular fury was pardonable; the vindictive and inhuman retribution wholly indefensible. But I will not take your time over this.

Your anxiety that I should offer co-operation at least for the alleviation of hunger, I fully understand. My difficulty is that I cannot, for the very valid reason that the alleviation is only apparent. The Viceroy's good intentions in the matter are not to be doubted. His promptness in rushing to Bengal on arrival was worthy of the soldier that he is. The agency through which he had and has to work is not designed to carry out the work of alleviation. You are entitled to put your noble work and experience against what I am saying. That only shows that evil by itself and in itself has no life. It requires the prop of good for its sustenance. Hospitals, roads, railways are probably good in themselves but when they are instruments of evil they are to be shunned. They become snares. You will now realize somewhat my meaning. Sufficient to say that at no time has India been so bound down as now. The remedy is liberty consistent with the movements of Allied troops. But there is deep mutual

[1] The source, however, has "June". The inference here is from the reference to Gandhiji's attempts "in vain to see the Viceroy or be permitted to see the Working Committee members"; *vide* "Letter to Lord Wavell", 17-6-1944. Also Dr. James Vail, Secretary, Foreign Service Section, American Friends' Service Council, had met Gandhiji in the last week of June.

distrust.Authority distrusts the Congress and every public body including the Muslim League. Public opinion is flouted at almost every turn. In this state of things voluntary co-operation becomes impossible. I have tried in vain to see the Viceroy or be permitted to see the Working Committee members. Now tell me what to do. I know what not to do. I am praying to God to tell me what to do. You can assist.

I had a pleasant union with James Vail. Love to all who think of me.

Love.

From a photostat: G.N. 1440

235. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

AS AT SEVAGRAM, "*VIA*" WARDHA (C.P.),
CAMP PANCHGANI,
[*July*][1] *12, 1944*

MY DEAR MURIEL,

I have your two dear letters. You are going through wonderful if also frightful experiences. Let us hope it is the darkness before dawn. But we must so work that the hope may be realized. We too are having our own experiences though of a different type from yours. I am working with might and maintain the direction through prayer and fasting. My energy is still very limited. Ba and Mahadev live as inspirations. More from Agatha and Horace to whom I have written at length.[2]

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The source has "June", evidently a slip.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Horace G. Alexander", 12-7-1944.

236. LETTER TO SHAMALDAS GANDHI

[After *July 12, 1944*][1]

CHI. SHAMALDAS,

I do not remember whether I have said anything to you about Bhai Munshi. I had a long talk with him. I have not found anything to justify the attack you made on him in *Vandemataram* [2]. If there is any truth in the charge, please let me know. He is quite frank with me.

I have not been able to read the comments on my talks with Gelder in full, either in English or Gujarati. Do not defend me out of modesty if my views differ from yours. You have full right to guide people according to your understanding.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Beldevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

237. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

"DILKHUSHA", PANCHGANI,
July 13, 1944

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I have your letter of 14th June. Everything I do turns to dust. It must be so, so long as I am 'untrustworthy'. If I could plead guilty, I would at once mend my way. On the contrary, I know, I have done nothing to forfeit the confidence I used at one time to enjoy among the official circles.

You know the attempt I made to see the members of the Working Committee and, failing that permission, to see the Viceroy. Perhaps the chief difficulty is the opinion[3], reported to have been held by Mr. Churchill about me. You know the oft-quoted passages attributed to him. He is said to want to "crush" me "the naked fakir". The body can be crushed, never spirit. But if the report is true

[1] From the contents, it appears that the letter was written after "The Statement to the Press", 12-7-1944; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 12-7-1944.

[2] A Gujarati daily

[3] *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Interview to Stuart Gelder", 4-7-1944.

and it has never been denied—it gives the clue to all my so-called failures.

I can give you this assurance that nothing dismays or disappoints me. If I represent the truth and if I do as God bids me, I know that the wall of distortion and suspicion will topple. Only be patient with me. I feel for you and friends like you.[1]

Recently I had sent to me a letter written by Henry[2] to the Press whilst he was in America. Tell him, if you see him, that it distressed me deeply. I never could have thought that he could believe lies about me without verification from me.

Ere this reaches you, you will have known from the Press about the attempt I made to solve the communal tangle in collaboration with Rajaji who has been with me these few days[3].

My love to all the friends. I sent a letter to Muriel.

Yours,

BAPU

MISS AGATHA HARRISON

2 CRANBOURNE COURT

ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD, LONDON S.W. 11

From a photostat: G.N 1525

[1] In her letter, the addressee had quoted the substance of a cable sent by C. F. Andrews to Gandhiji some ten years earlier. It read: "When two men meet without conditions, a way of peace may be found." She had also said: "Uppermost in my mind is another meeting between the Viceroy and you, the result of which might well be 'a way of peace'. . . . So often during these days my thoughts have turned to you who for fifty years have pioneered in finding a way of settling disputes other than by force. Persistently there comes to my mind a supreme contribution that could be made by you to this sorely tried world. It is this: that in the midst of total war, without bloodshed an honourable way of peace could be found between our two countries. What a disarming thing it would be, a tangible, living proof of the power of non-violence."

[2] H. S. L. Polak (1882-1959); joined Gandhiji at Phoenix Settlement; edited *Indian Opinion;* founded Indian Overseas Association in London in 1919. In *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, p.* 34, Pyarelal explains: "In the letter in question, Henry Polak had made certain remarks about Gandhiji's attitude in regard to the war and his role in 'Quit India' struggle at a time when Britain was in distress. . . ." of the two missions which spoke against the Congress and its political demands in America, H. S. L. Polak, along with S. K. Ratcliffe and T. A. Raman, formed one in late 1943; the second being that of Sir S. Ranganathan, High Commissioner for India in England.

[3] The reference is to Rajaji Formula, *vide* Appendix "C. Rajagopalachari's Formula", before 5-8-1942.

238. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

'DILKHUSHA', PANCHGANI,
July 13, 1944

DEAR MR. ABELL[1],

I had your undated letter enclosing Miss Agatha Harrison's letter to me for which I thank you.

Could I have the courtesy extended to me of sending the enclosed reply[2] through the Viceroy's air-mail bag?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ.
THE VICEROY'S CAMP
INDIA

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, p. 33

239. LETTER TO S. SADANAND

'DILKHUSHA', PANCHGANI,
July 13, 1944

MY DEAR SADANAND,

Your wire. Though this reply is to you as a journalist, and for publication, the manner of my reply will be on the basis of your claim to be my son, a claim which you have often repeated. You have verbally accepted my amends[3] but in action rejected them. Re-read the opening parts of your telegram and you will understand my meaning. If you do, you will make a public acknowledgement of the offence you have given me even in the act of accepting amends.

As a pleasing contrast to this, I may tell you that the four reporters whom I had the pleasure of meeting[4] yesterday were

[1] Deputy Private Secretary to the Viceroy

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] R. K. Prabhu explains that *The Free Press Journal,* 12-7-1944, in its reference to the Rajaji Formula, had reported that Gandhiji had been "misled". When "Gandhiji privately remonstrated against this" with the addressee he "offered some sort of apology".

[4] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 12-7-1944.

graceful enough to accept my amends and to understand fully its implication.

I have a categorical reply for every one of the questions you have asked me. But I very much fear that they are not sincere but meant to advertise your bravery, and newspaper propaganda of an unworthy type.

I have read with much pain your writings in your issue of July 12, 1944. They caption a wicked attack upon Rajaji and milder one on esteemed public men. You are doing a great injustice to yourself and shaming your nationalism by attacking Rajaji who, to my knowledge, has no axe to grind, has forsaken everything for love of his country and

has risked popularity in pursuing the dictates of his conscience. Let me tell you that Rajaji has not discussed his politics with me. My dissent from his politics, as I understood him in jail, continues. Now that I have been involuntarily and prematurely drawn into political controversy, I shall certainly discuss them with him as I am doing with respect in spite of wide political divergence. Courtesy towards opponents and eagerness to understand their view-points is the ABC of non-violence. But you of all persons should know that they are not likely to deflect me from the straight and narrow path I have chosen to tread. They can but strengthen me in my resolve to follow it, never weaken me.

And I should be all utterly unworthy leader or exponent of non-violence, if I could be led astray by eminent leaders or constant companions like Rajaji.

In a way the honest mistake made by Mr. Gelder, as his premature publication[1] of an abridgement of the notes of interviews with him appears to have been, is a blessing in that the country once again has an opportunity of knowing the measure of my compromising nature. I have no reason to be ashamed of it and I have never considered it a sign of weakness in me but strength.

If you will prove a worthy son of mine, you will revise the whole of your policy and use your journalistic gifts so as to serve the country by the way of truth and non-violence.

You have had a fair portion of material goods out of your journalistic venture. Now dare to be poor, if need be, and instead of

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Stuart Gelder's Cable to *News Chronicle*", 12-7-1944.

feeding the public on sensationalism, give them nothing but solid gold. And, if you do not know how to do so, accept a humbler vocation. You will then at least have the credit of ceasing to do mischief.

I hope that you will publish this without alteration.[1]

Yours sincerely,

This Was Bapu, pp. 152-4

240. LETTER TO SHUAIB QURESHI

July 13, 1944

MY DEAR SHUAIB,

Your note and message. I have told you my head is on your lap. I do not remember the talks I had with you. Remember I am not like you. I am in the evening of life. If you see [any] conflict between the Rajaji formula[2] and our talk tell me and I shall know. I have gone on [the] feeling that there was no conflict. Anyway the Rajaji formula is my last word unless you differ and convince me to the contrary. Am I clear ? Let not your effort be interrupted.

Love to you and the whole family.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] R. K. Prabhu explains: "Gandhiji's letter . . . was . . .published in . . . *The Free Press Journal*, 19-7-1944, with the following 'in explanation' from. . . Sadanand: 'Gandhiji's letter to me dated July 13, the telegram to Gandhiji dated July 14 and Gandhiji's reply dated July 15 are published in these columns. There could not be an earlier publication, as I returned from Delhi only this (18th) afternoon. Gandhiji has honoured me by recalling my allegiance to him, as a son. I claim to be true to that allegiance even today. It is within Gandhiji's knowledge that, according to my concept, a son may not defend himself against parental chastisement. I see no reason to break the golden rule on this occasion.' "

[2] *Vide* Appendix "C. Rajagopalachari's Formula", before 5-8-1942.

241. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

PANCHGANI,
July 13, 1944

Some have said that I have admitted that the August resolution has lapsed. Not only have I never said it, on the contrary, at the Maharashtra Workers' meeting[1], I made it clear to the friends who had gathered around me at Poona that no comma of that resolution could be altered by anybody except those who passed it, namely, the Working Committee and finally the A.I.C.C. What I have said and what I reaffirm is that my authority under the resolution had undoubtedly lapsed according to my view of the working of satyagraha.

The premature publication[2] of the interview to Mr. Gelder has led to some confusion in the minds of Congressmen. Let me make it clear that the lapsing of my authority has nothing to do with the normal activities of the Congress. What no one can do in the name of the Congress is mass civil disobedience which was never started and which, as I have said, I cannot at the present moment, even in my personal capacity, start.

The "Quit India" resolution I hold to be absolutely innocuous. The Gelder interview notes[3] now published are in no way in conflict with the "Quit India" resolution as I have interpreted it and, as the joint author of it, I have every right to interpret it.

The question before me and before the All-India [Congress Committee] is how to implement the resolution at the present time, i.e., nearly two years after the passing of the resolution. The Gelder interview notes show the way how it can be done in a perfectly honourable manner. Those who approve of the stand I have taken up will naturally support it. People having difficulty are free to refer to me but their approval of the stand taken by me must not be interpreted to mean suspension of the normal activities of the Congress and, if the Government interfere with those activities, the inherent right of individual civil disobedience is in no way suspended

[1] *Vide* "Speech to Cngressmen, Poona", 29-6-1944.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Stuart Gelder's Cable to *News Chronicle*" , 12-7-1944.

[3] *Vide* "Interview to Stuart Gelder", 4-7-1944 and "Interview to Stuart Gelder", 4-7-1944.

under the statement referred to by me. The statements constitute my individualpersonal effort to end the political deadlock. They are more addressed to the powers that be than to the people. If there is a hearty response, there will be no occasion for civil disobedience, individually or not.

Answering a question put by a reporter whether the Cripps proposals could be compared with his recent statements, Mahatma Gandhi said:

My proposal is wholly different. The Cripps proposals were unacceptable to me for the simple reason that they contemplated almost perpetual vivisection of India and would have created an effective barrier against Indian independence. I want to say this without the slightest disrespect to Sir Stafford Cripps.[1] He still remains to me the same friend that he claimed to be when he was here. For me friendships abide in spite of political differences.

One fundamental element in my attitude is that I shall never be a party to the sale of the rights of the people of the States for the sake of freedom of the people of British India. At the same time I am no enemy of the Princes. I consider myself to be their friend and, if anybody cares to understand, I am quite prepared to suggest a solution at once honourable to them and to the people. I live for a cause and, if I perish, it is for the cause.

A reporter suggested that it might be that His Majesty's Government do not, for the duration of the war, entertain any idea for the transference of power, and it was feared that Mr. Jinnah would not be agreeable to accept Mahatma Gandhi's suggestion because a national government might, in his opinion, consolidate the position of the Hindus in the centre. Mahatma Gandhi explained:

If Mr. Jinnah does not accept my suggestion or if the powers that be do not, I would consider it most unfortunate. That would show that neither of them wants India to be really free at this juncture and give India a full share in winning the war for freedom and democracy.

I myself feel firmly that Mr. Jinnah does not block the way, but the British Government do not want a just settlement of the Indian claim for independence which is overdue, and they are using Mr. Jinnah as a cloak for denying freedom to India. I have uttered my warning in the talk I gave to Mr. Stuart Gelder.

Mahatma Gandhi said that it must be the duty of all fair-minded people to break what he called "the diabolical conspiracy to stifle India's aspiration". He declared:

[1] *Vide* also "Answers to Questions", 15-7-1944.

I have the firmest faith that they may win the war in the trial of brute strength, because brute strength when applied to limitless finances will naturally be supreme, but it will be only a physical victory and lead to another world war. This is the outpouring of a lacerated heart.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-7-1944

242. LETTER TO STUART GELDER

PANCHGANI,
July 14, 1944

GELDER,

Many thanks for your wire. Englishmen do not know how to treat dysentery. One has to be very careful about diet. When Dr. Nayyar told me about the liberty you had taken about your food, I told her you were bound to get ill. You dare not touch Indian sweets. They are too rich and concentrated. How I wish you would take a course at Dr. Mehta's health clinic. You will be radically cured.

I know that your haste was due to your overzeal and with the best of intentions. You could not be conscious of the discrepancies. I wonder if they are now clear to you. I can forgive the premature publications[1] of the interviews, but how can I forgive your giving the exclusive right to *The Times of India?* You were to send the thing, when the time came, to your paper or if you wished to publish the thing here too, you should have shared it with all. You do not know what abuse[2] has been poured on my poor head.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Stuart Gelder's Cable to *News Chronicle*" , 12-7-1944.
[2] *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Telegram to S. Sadanand", 12-7-1944.

243. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

PANCHGANI,
July 14, 1944

DEAR DR. JAYAKAR,

Many thanks for your kind letter[1]. Publication of the interview was premature as I have explained in my public statement[2]. Having given the fullest weight to your advice[3], I could not say to the Viceroy more than I did.

I am not going to put you to the trouble of coming to Panchgani. If Sir Tej comes as he had said he would, I would like you to join him. In any case now I know your mind.[4]

I have the lawyers' opinion[5]. I am not making public use of it.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

THE RT. HON'BLE, DR. M. R. JAYAKAR
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY 8

Gandhi-Jayakar Papers, File No. 826, p. 15. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Dated July 11, 1944

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 12-7-1944.

[3] The addressee had suggested to Gandhiji to add in his letter to the Viceroy, *vide* "Letter to Lord Wavell", 17-6-1944, the words: "Under altered conditions the resolution of 1942 was not capable of being revived" in order to explain what he would advise the Working Committee, if and when he met them.

[4] Jayakar had said: " . . . having now disclosed your view very clearly, I do not think it will be right to rely upon lawyers' opinions in confirmation of it.... Mr. Munshi gave me a draft in Poona of a statement to be issued to the Press under the signature of a few lawyers.... you are big enough to announce to the world your own conclusions arrived at independently of any adventitious aids.... India will accept your conclusions with grace and, as an aid to a future settlement, they have a value of their own, which will not certainly be increased but may be diminished by the support of lawyers."

[5] *Vide* Appendix "Opinion on Gandhiji's Responsibility", 6-2-1944.

244. LETTER TO D. N.. SHIKHARE[1]

"DILKHUSHA', PANCHGANI,
July 14, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

I am herewith sending you a corrected report of your talk with Gandhiji at Poona on the 28th ultimo.

With regard to your request[2] in your letter of the 29th ultimo to Gandhiji that he should remove the ambiguity about his attitude towards the Hindu Mahasabha, Shri Savarkar and Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah respectively, I am to say that Gandhiji does not think the latter portion of the report of his interview that is now being sent to you leaves any room for ambiguity.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI D. N. SHIKHARE
623/26 SADASHIVPETH
DESHMUKHWADI
POONA

From a copy: C.W. 10512

[1] The addressee, a journalist and Editor, *Mahatma Magazine*, wanted to "embody the correct version of the interview in the biography" of Gandhiji, which he published in 1945. The enclosure to this letter is not traceable. However, the addressee had requested Gandhiji "to write in your own handwriting the most inspiring sentences of yours", which he quoted: "I believe freedom is coming to India with an incredible velocity. The present moment is the darkest hour before the dawn. To me, mere prayer, if it is sufficiently deep, can bring about the desired change."

[2] The addressee wanted to know why Gandhiji went after Jinnah, and ignored V. D. Savarkar, President, Hindu Mahasabha, when neither of them was pledged to non-violence.

245. MESSAGE TO BENGAL PROVINCIAL STUDENTS FEDERATION-I[1]

July 14, 1944

Fight and you will win through your work even without a message.

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-7-1944

246. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM[2],
July 14, 1944

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I did not expect a wire from you, but had hoped for a letter today. I hope you reached there safely and did not lose any luggage. Did you make a list of the articles? Did you get a good seat?

I hope you have settled down there comfortably. You must have heard from Bhagirathji[3]. Write to me about everything in detail. Devote yourself exclusively to the work for which you have gone. Have faith that it will include everything else. If you try to do more, there will be a danger of your losing everything. Write to me and tell me what you did about Nyamat's[4] daughter. I doubt whether by taking her you have done real service to Nyamat or to the girl. I am all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 479

[1] This is extracted from a statement to the Press by Arun Das Gupta and Ajit Roy, leaders of the Bengal Provincial Students' Federation, regarding their interview with Mahatma Gandhi. The statement read: "We, together with some other workers of the Bengal Provincial Students' Federation, toured Assam in June to help Sjt. Bardoloi and other Congress leaders of Assam in raising the anti-Jap morale of the people. With a letter of introduction from Sjt. Bardoloi we came to see Gandhiji and tell him about conditions in Assam and our work. On the 14th July, we met Mahatmaji. He discussed with us the report of our work in Assam. We told him: 'For the last two years we have been working for Congress-League unity. We shall work for it all the harder now. A message from you will be invaluable.' " *Vide* also "Message to Bengal Students' Federation-II", 17-7-1944

[2] Permanent address

[3] Bhagirathji Kanodia, businessman of Calcutta

[4] An inmate of Sevagram

247. LETTER TO SURESH

PANCHGANI,
July 14, 1944

BHAI SURESH,

I have your blazing letter. I appreciate your feelings and you had better appreciated mine. I speak and act according to my lights. I have never done anything to appease people. Fortunately for me people are pleased by my words. If you will have patience, you will see that what I have said is quite all right. Rest assured that I am not likely to be misled by anybody's bluff. The one and only one who leads me is God.

Yes, one thing is certain, that all the rich men are not the country's enemies. And my non-violence draws no line between friend and foe. It makes a friend out of a foe.[1]

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

248. ANSWER TO QUESTON[2]

PANCHGANI,
July 14, 1944

I should gladly do so if there is no restraint. I have never, so far as I can recall, been responsible for editing newspapers under restraint or security. If I commit breach of the common law of the land, I am there to be punished as I was in 1922. But I know I cannot expect any such treatment from Government so long as I am distrusted.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-7-1944

[1] *Vide* also "Speech at Poona", 1-7-1944.

[2] The report said that Gandhiji was "replying to a question on the publication of *Harijan"* which was discontinued from August 16, 1942, to February 10, 1946.

249. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

PANCHGANI,

July 14, 1944

I have been receiving letters from several provinces complaining of the ill-treatment of detenus. I cannot vouch for their accuracy. I have no means of verifying the accounts. But correspondents who have written are most of them known personally to me and they are not likely to exaggerate.

One instance came to my notice only yesterday. It is from Ajmer. The prisoner was fasting. His wife wrote several letters to me asking me to advise her husband to give up the fast. As it was, the prisoner was willing. I telegraphed[1] to the Superintendent conveying my advice to the prisoner to desist from fasting. He accepted it and gave up his fast. I now learn that the prisoner was being prosecuted under some jail regulations for having committed the crime of fasting.

I know when I was a prisoner in Yeravda that there was some such regulation and I thought that when a prisoner gave up his fast, he would not be prosecuted. I also fasted, and I could also be punished, but I escaped punishment, I suppose, because I was regarded as a celebrity. Assuming that I have been correctly informed, I would plead with the authorities that they should ignore such cases. There would be nothing wrong if they allowed prisoners to fast at will. The most reasonable thing would be to investigate the complaints for which they were fasting and promptly give redress, if the complaints were found justified. These things have been done before. There is no reason why that admirable practice should not be followed now.

I plead for humane treatment to prisoners, more especially when they are in detention on mere suspicion or found guilty of crimes created by special ordinances and not under the ordinary law.

Other cases that have come to my notice are not of fasting but of alleged ill-treatment in order to break the spirit of prisoners. I dealt with such cases when I edited the *Young India* and later the *Harijan*, and in many cases the authorities gave redress.

I happen to know that such cases sometimes do not reach the higher authorities. My purpose in bringing this to public notice is to

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Superintendent, Central Prison, Ajmer", 17-5-1944.

seek redress. It is well known that in most provinces prisoners are suffering hardships which are perfectly avoidable. All those who are at all ill or are losing weight should at once be discharged. This will surely not prejudice the war-effort or endanger the peace of the country.[1]

I have received bitter criticism of my views[2] expressed in the Gelder interview. Some of my correspondents say that under the influence of Moderates and moneyed men, I have betrayed the cause of the country. If for nothing else, for dealing with such criticism, I am glad of the premature publication[3] of the interview. I do not want to sail under false colours. The country as well as the Government should know me exactly as I am. I have never concealed the fact that I am a friend of everybody, Moderates, moneyed men, Englishmen, Americans or any other, irrespective of caste, colour or persuasion. My belief and practice are directly derived from my non-violence. My non-co-operation is non-co-operation with evil, not with the evil-doer. Underneath my non-co-operation is my earnest desire to wean the evil-doer from the evil or harm he is doing, so that I can give him hearty co-operation. Again if I associate with the so-called Moderates or with moneyed men, I do so to seek their co-operation in the cause I am handling. But I approach them with an open mind, so that I correct myself where I find myself in the wrong. I have known of no cause that I have espoused that has suffered because of such association.

Some critics have suggested that by my present attitude I am lending moral weight to the Allied cause. They forget that my offer, such as it is, is conditioned upon the Allies, in this case the British Government, recognizing full independence, qualified during the pendency of the war. I see, therefore, no conflict between the principles enunciated in August resolution and what I have now suggested. May I suggest to critics that they should wait till the British Government have spoken? The statements made by me were meant in the first instance for the Government. Mr. Gelder sprang a surprise.

[1] What follows appeared independently in *The Bombay Chronicle*.

[2] *Vide* "Interview to Stuart Gelder", 4-7-1944.

[3] *Vide* Appendix "Stuart Gelder's Cable to *News Chronicle*" , 12-7-1944.

He has done so with the best of motives. After all, there is a higher Power ruling all the actions of human beings.[1]

The Hindu, 16-7-1944, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 15-7-1944

250. LETTER TO EDITOR-IN-CHARGE, "FREE PRESS JOURNAL"

'DILKHUSHA', PANCHGANI,
July 15, 1944

DEAR EDITOR-IN-CHARGE,

I have your wire[2]. My letter[3] to Shri Sadanand is a public reply to a public question and is meant for publication. The proper thing was to have waited for my reply before publishing the complaint against me. Delay appears to me to be suspicious.

If Shri Sadanand is away, and if direction is considered necessary, in a matter of ordinary course, you have means of taking directions by telephone.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

This Was Bapu, pp. 154.5

251. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

PANCHGANI,
July 15, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

You have no doubt seen the authentic copies, now published in the Indian Press, of the statements[4] given by me to Mr. Gelder of the

[1] The report in *The Bombay Chronicle* concluded: "Criticisms to Gandhiji's proposal still pour in here. Gandhijih as replied to them lying full length on a pallet. He was speaking in a feeble voice and those close to him say that he can regulate his voice and he often does so to conserve his energy. Rajaji was a silent listener again today when Gandhiji talked to the Press. At the conclusion of the meeting, Gandhiji humorously said, looking at Rajaji, 'he would pass whatever his "Sub-editor" passed for publication."

[2] Dated July 14, 1944, it read: "Your letter. Sadanand now at Delhi. Returning latest Tuesday. Will then attend."

[3] *Vide* "Letter to S. Sadanand", 13-7-1944.

[4] *Vide* "Interview to Stuart Gelder", 4-7-1944 and 4/6-7-1944.

News Chronicle. As I have said to the Press, they were meant primarily to be shown to you. But Mr. Gelder, no doubt with the best of motives, gave the interview premature publicity[1]. I am sorry. Thepublication will nevertheless be a blessing in disguise, if the interview enables you to grant at least one of my requests contained in my letter[2] of 17th June, 1944.[3]

I am,

Yours, etc.

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 19-8-1944. Also C.W. 10506. Courtesy: India Office Library

252. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

PANCHGANI,

July 15, 1944

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

You were not present but Sumati[4] and Jehangirji [Patel] witnessed the beast in me.[5] They forgot that beast and understood my love. I am tied to you all by the bonds of love. My unworthiness prevents me from sending for you. But how long can I do without you? I am sure you will wash off Sushila's pain with love.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 844

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Stuart Gelder's Cable to *News Chronicle*" , 12-7-1944.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Wavell", 17-6-1944.

[3] The Viceroy's reply dated July 22, read: " . . . I do not think, I can usefully comment at present except to repeat what I said in my last letter that if you will submit to me a definite and constructive policy, I shall be glad to consider it."

[4] Addressee's wife

[5] The addressee had been sent by Gandhiji to the dockyard to hand over the gifts and a letter to Manu Gandhi; *vide* "Letter to Manu Gandhi", 8-6-1944.

253. LETTER TO ANANTRAI P. PATTANI

PANCHGANI,
July 15, 1944

BHAI ANANTRAI,

I have your letter. I had already learnt from Mathuradas[1] that the 'Castle'[2] will have accommodation for me. But it is not my business to run after conveniences. But they pursue me and sometimes I am caught by one of them.

I don't wish to enter into any discussion with you regarding other subjects. Moreover you can always have Nanabhai's help now that he has been released.

I shall not let you compare yourself with Vajalbhai[3] because I was indirectly acquainted with Gagabhai's[4] expertise. I place your father[5] above Gagabhai. Besides, as far as my knowledge goes, since Vajalbhai became the divan only in his old age, there cannot be any comparison. Hence I am going to measure you with the yardstick applied in the case of your father.

Blessings from
BAPU

BHAVNAGAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Mathuradas Trikumji
[2] Addressee's residence at Panchgani
[3] Vajalbhai Gaurishanker Oza, and his father, Gaurishanker Udayshanker Oza, divan of Bhavnagar
[4] *ibid*
[5] Prabhashankar Pattani

254. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

PANCHGANI,
July 15, 1944

QUESTION: Will you kindly explain the exact difference between the Cripps Plan and your own as revealed in the Gelder interview?

ANSWER: My plan contemplates an immediate recognition of full independence for India as a whole, subject to limitations for the duration of the war to meet the requirements of the Allied operations. The Cripps Plan, as I understood it, dealt more with the future than with the immediate arrangements. Moreover, in my opinion, the Cripps Plan meant dismemberment of India, the Indian States being set up as an all-extensive disintegrating factor. But if my plan is considered by British statesmen to be not very different from the Cripps Plan, it should be all the easier for them to accept it.[2]

What if Mr. Jinnah sticks to a plebiscite of Muslims only in the districts or provinces where the Muslims are in majority?

Neither Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah nor the Muslim League have pronounced their opinion on Rajaji's Formula[3]. I would deprecate anticipating them. Rajaji is with me. We have agreed for the sake of conserving my limited energy that he should deal with the questions arising from the Formula. For my part I would appeal to the questioners, foreign or Indian, not to forestall the Muslim League.

How do you propose to fix the ratio of the League and Congress in the national government?

I must not be drawn into details. If the indication of my mind affords any satisfaction to the authorities, they should open the gates of the prison, and let those who can speak with authority pronounce upon my proposal or at least let me confer with them. As it is, I do not know that I have not embarrassed them by my sharing my personal opinion with the public before first sharing it with them. The publication[4] is premature and not of my seeking.

[1] Sent by the London office of the United Press of India

[2] *Vide* also "Interview to the Press", 13-7-1944.

[3] *Vide* " C. Rajagopalchari's Formula", before 5-8-1942

[4] By Stuart Gelder of *News Chronicle*, *vide* Appendix "Stuart Gelder's Cable to *News Chronicle*" , 12-7-1944.

Will you meet Mr. Jinnah personally?

The question arises from ignorance of facts. I am always willing to meet Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah.

What are your views on the Bombay Plan[1]? Do you think crisis like the one which overtook Bengal could be permanently avoided by acceptance of such a plan?

The Bombay Plan is a post-war plan. Anyway, the question should be addressed to the authors[2].

Gandhi-Jinnah Talks, pp. 81-2

255. LETTER TO NANDU KANUGA

[*After July 15, 1944*][3]

SHRI NANDUBEHN,

. . .[4] The important part was about to be left out. I don't think there was anything wrong in our people approaching the millionaires in connection with Ba's Memorial. How can we refuse what theyoffer? Surely we may not hate them. More when we meet.

AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

256. LETTER TO NAVIN GANDHI

[After *July 15, 1944*][5]

CHI. NAVIN[6],

Aren't you a lazy fellow? You must be thinking that I am not at all concerned about Manju[7] and hence you don't write to me. However it be, I must have a postcard from you regularly. Sushilabehn talked to me about medical fees. Sushilabehn has already proceeded to Delhi; so I have to think about it. Have you had a talk with the doctors? If you have, write to me in detail so that I can write to them. I did not even dream that the question of fees would come

[1] A fifteen-year plan for the economic development of India

[2] Purushottamdas Thakurdas, J. R. D. Tata, G. D. Birla, Ardeshir Dalal, Shriram, Kasturbhai Lalbhai, A. D. Shroff and John Mathai

[3] In the source, the letter is placed after the letters of July 15, 1944.

[4] Omission as in the source

[5] In the source, the letter is placed after the letters of July 15, 1944.

[6] Son of Vrajlal A. Gandhi, brother of Jaisukhlal Gandhi

[7] daughter of Vrajlal A. Gandhi, brother of Jaisukhlal Gandhi

up. Anyway you need not worry on that account; it is my concern. Let me have your opinion. Who is there with you now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

257. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

[On or before *July 16, 1944*][1]

I have thought over the matter carefully. I think that Sita[2] should stay on in Sevagram. She will get the good company of Aryanayakam and Ashadevi, and be educated on the lines of the Talimi Sangh. She will get Gomati's protection. Gomati is a saintly woman. Kashi[3] and Durga also are there. And so her Gujarati, Sanskrit, Hindi and English will be taken care of. If you do not like this, you can put herin the Parsi school here which I visit daily. Beyond this you cannot go.

About you, we shall think later.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4942

258. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

PANCHGANI,

July 16, 1944

A correspondent asks me what those who, on being discharged, have been served with restriction orders confining them within certain areas or requiring them to report themselves periodically at police *thanas,* should do. I regard all such restrictions as degrading and could not myself submit to them. However I know men who, being unable any longer to bear the jail hardships, have preferred the restricted freedom. I must refuse to judge their conduct. Everyone suffers according to his capacity. But it is a serious question for the Government to consider whether it is a necessary part of war-effort to wound the spirit of young men and women, whose only fault is that they love their country's independence before everything else.

The Hindu, 17-7-1944; also *The Bombay Chronicle,* 16-7-1944

[1] From the postmark

[2] In the source, the letter is placed after the letters of July 15, 1944.

[3] Son and daughter of Vrajlal A. Gandhi, brother of Jaisukhlal Gandhi

259. LETTER TO TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU

PANCHGANI,
July 16, 1944

DEAR SIR TEJ,

Gandhiji has your letter of the 11th inst. as also the enclosure. Your statement had appeared only in part in the Bombay papers. He was, therefore, glad to get the full text. You must have seen in the Press the statements he has issued including the authorised texts of the two notes of his talks with Mr. Gelder.[1] For the present, having thrown a 'bombshell' he is being inundated with 'shell-shocked' letters, protests, abuse and what not. That was but to be expected. He is eager to have your considered view.

He was thankful you remembered him. He reciprocates your kind sentiment. Gandhiji felt very grateful to hear that your son was steadily improving.[2] He hopes that he will be fully restored soon.

Yours sincerely,
PYARELAL

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

260. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

PANCHGANI,
July 16, 1944

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I can understand your lamentation. But you do not listen to my advice. You are bedridden. If instead of worrying about me you prayed to God, you would recover quicker. Even if that did not happen, you would have peace.

I am not an invalid that you imagine me to be. And mentally

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Stuart Gelder", 4-7-1944.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Additional, Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943.

not at all. That is why whatever I do, I do with deliberation and care[1]. There was a time when you could understand me from a mere hint. You could explain to others my intentions and my words. Why is it that that is no longer so ? Think about it. The reason lies only in you. If I were as ill as you and did not forget the outside world, I too would be in the same situation. You do not understand Rajaji at all. His modesty and his conduct are worth emulating. I did not lose my alertness during my fast. And when I broke my fast he showed me his draft. I am astonished that you can think him so mean as to take advantage of my weakness. To say that my statement means Pakistan shows ignorance. What can one do if Gelder bruit about it ? Rajaji's draft had nothing to do with the interview. Contain your anger. Calm youself. And be sure that there is no contradiction in what I have done. As for Paramanand, let me see what is possible. I hope Dilip is calm. Send him to me if he is disturbed. Did your cloak fit ? I am fine.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

261. LETTER TO JAIKRISHNA P. BHANSALI

PANCHGANI,
July 16, 1944

CHI. BHANSALI,

Discipline demands that you should ask me. If you do not observe it, who else will? But what guidance can I give you in this matter? If you have faith in yourself, by all means go and relieve the suffering of the people. I must admit, however, that you have excelled me and I derive comfort from the thought that my teaching has proved fruitful. Isn't he a true teacher who is surpassed by his own pupil? May God increase your strength still further.

I keep on reminding myself daily that I must go there as early

[1] The addressee did not like Stuart Gelder publishing the interview; *vide* Appendix "Stuart Gelder's Cable to *News Chronicle*" , 12-7-1944

as possible in August. The climate here does suit me, of course. Inform everybody. Manilal and Sita are arriving today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8365. Also C.W. 7175. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

262. LETTER TO WINSTON CHURCHILL[1]

'DILKHUSHA', PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1944

DEAR PRIME MINISTER,

You are reported to have a desire to crush the simple "naked fakir" as you are said to have described me. I have been long trying to be a fakir and that naked—a more difficult task. I, therefore, regardthe expression as a compliment though unintended. I approach you then as such and ask you to trust and use me for the sake of your people and mine and through them those of the world.

Your sincere friend,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10499. Courtesy: India Office Library. Also *This Was Bapu,* p. 140

263. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

'DILKHUSHA', PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1944

H. E. THE VICEROY
VICEROY'S CAMP

DEAR FRIEND,

I ventured to write to you yesterday[2] repeating my previous

[1] In *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. I, Book I, p. 32, Pyarelal explains: "This letter to the Prime Minister miscarried. It was the first instance, in Gandhiji's experience, of an important letter of his failing to reach its destination. A copy was, therefore, sent to Churchill two months later. The only reply it fetched was an acknowledgement with thanks through the Viceroy!" According to *The Hindu,* 19-7-1945, Gandhiji released this along with a statement to the Press on July 18, 1945.

[2] The letter was, however, dated July 15; *vide* "Letter to Lord Wavell", 15-7-1944.

request. I feel that my effort would be incomplete unless I sent the accompanying[1] to the Prime Minister. May I seek your help, if you agree, to send the enclosed in the quickest manner possible?

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10502. Courtesy: India Office Library. Also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government,* p. 11

264. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1944

MY DEAR AMMAJAN,

Your precious letter. You must not be angry with poor me. Bear with me for a while. Mists will roll away some time. You are my message. At the Urdu Conference[2] you will be all in all. Therefore do not ask me for a formal message. That will landme in a sea of troubles. I have refused to send messages. Let me spare every ounce of energy for the task before us.

You should all behave better about the upkeep of the body. Or is that to be reserved for me only?

Love from

SPINNER

SHRIMATI SAROJINI NAIDU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

265. LETTER TO ASHFAQ HUSSAIN

July 17, 1944

MY DEAR ASHFAQ[3],

I never knew that you were a careless reader. Do you not see that if the thing was to be put on the League Committee without the

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] The All-India Urdu Congress to be held at Hyderabad on July 22
[3] An associate of Mahomed Ali

President sponsoring it, it should be before the public for discussion? The League and others can now pronounce upon it.

Expect to see you at Sevagram.

Yours,

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

266. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

'DILKHUSHA', PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1944

BHAI JINNAH,

There was a time when I was able to persuade you to speak in our mother tongue. Today I venture to write in the same. I had already invited[1] you while I was in jail. After my release I have not written to you so far. But today I am prompted to do so. Let us meet when you wish to. Please do not regard me as an enemy of Islam and the Muslims here. I have always been a friend and servant of yours and of the whole world. Do not dismiss me. I am enclosing a translation of this letter in Urdu.[2]

Your brother,

GANDHI

[PS.]

Please write in Urdu. Kanu[3] writes Gujarati in a beautiful hand.[4]

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *Hitavada,* 1-8-1944

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 4-5-1943.

[2] This sentence is reproduced from *Hitavada.* What follows is in Gandhiji's hand at the bottom of the Urdu translation of the letter.

[3] To whom Gandhiji, presumably, dictated

[4] The addressee's reply of July 24, *inter alia,* read: "I shall be glad to receive you at my house in Bombay on my return which will probably be about the middle of August. . . . I would like to say nothing more till we meet. I am very pleased to read in the Press that you are making very good progress, and I hope you will soon be all right."

267. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1944

CHI. MANUDI,

You must overcome your dislike of milk. You should cheerfully take as much as the vaidya wants you to. After having stayed with me, how can you have likes and dislikes? What one should eat, one must like, and what one must not eat, one must not like. If Yukti gets well completely, my faith in vaidyas will be deepened. And, if your vision improves as also your malaria and other complaints are cured, then you may send medicine for me.

Your handwriting is improving but it requires a lot of further improvement still. Sushilabehn has left for Delhi. It will, therefore, be some time before you get her letters again.

I am glad that Devdas paid a visit there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

268. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1944

BHAI MUNSHI,

I have your letter. I see no harm in starting a society. However ask Sir Purushottamdas. Consult Mangaldas[1] and Mavalankar also.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 7678. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

[1] Mangaldas Pakvasa

269. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1944

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

Read the accompanying letter. If such a man can be accommodated in any capacity, please make use of him. I think he is trustworthy. You need not create a special job for him. The letter may be used only if you think that such a man can be of real use somewhere. Do you have in mind any shorthand writer? The Hindi speeches may be published and sold by the Maharashtra Committee.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 4802. Courtesy: Shantikumar N. Morarjee

270. LETTER TO B. G. KHER

PANCHGANI
July 17, 1944

BHAI KHER,

Why did you run away without calling on me? Do come when you are free and I will forgive you this lapse. Send me yours and other people's opinion about what I am doing.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI BALA SAHEB KHER
EX-MINISTER
KHAR, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2769

271. LETTER TO NAGESH V. GUNAJI

PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1944

BHAI GUNAJI[1],

If you cannot read, Indu[2] will read out this to you. Why should we write to one another in English?

It is good that you have had a change of heart about Indu and Bhai Tendulkar. After Doctor's release, I shall have the marriage solemnized at Sevagram, if you all wish it. Indu knows the conditions attending weddings at Sevagram.

Blessings from

BAPU

BELGAUM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

272. MESSAGE TO BENGAL PROVINCIAL STUDENTS' FEDERATON- II[3]

Not for publication

PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1944

My blessings you have in abundance for all the good work you may have done. My advice to all the workers is that they should learn to regard all good service as in itself a blessing. What is the use of blessings of any man, however great he may be, if there is no real, sustained work? Blessings often deceive receivers into believing that

[1] Nagesh Vasudev Gunaji

[2] Indumati, addressee's daughter, and Dr. A. G. Tendulkar who were married on August 19, 1945.

[3] The message was given to Ajit Rai and Arun Das Gupta who stated: "On the 17th, Mahatmaji gave us another interview. We told him that we worked in Assam according to our understanding of the Congress programme. We had called for unity to resist the Japanese, to fight hoarders, to secure food for the people and for relief to Bengal. In response to our request for his blessings, Gandhiji wrote out a message. . . ." *Vide* also "Message to Bengal Provincial Students' Federation—I", 14-7-1944.

their work is finished. Let these words be an incentive to greater effort. You should keep me in touch with your activities.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 21-7-1944

273. MESSAGE TO AJIT RAI AND ARVIND DAS GUPTA

Not for publication

PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1944

My blessings you have in abundance for all the good work you may have done. My advice to all the workers is that they should learn to regard all good service as in itself a blessing. What is the use of blessings of any man however great he may be if there is no real sustained work. Blessings often deceive receivers into believing that their work is finished. Let these words be an incentive to greater effort. You should keep me in touch with your activities.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

274. LETTER TO A. KALESWARA RAO

PANCHGANI,
July 18, 1944

DEAR KALESWARA RAO,

Your illuminating note I have read with eagerness. May I make use of it in my talks or correspondence with Communists?[1] Some of the things you relate are painful. You will give me your reaction to my latest exploit. Your exploitation[2] of selections from the

[1] Gandhiji did make use of it in his correspondence with P. C. Joshi; *vide* "Letter to P. C. Joshi", 30-7-1944.

[2] In *Reminiscences of Gandhiji*, p. 141, Chandrashanker Shukla explains that the addressee, in his letter, had quoted some passages from the Upanishads corresponding to Gandhiji's teachings of truth and non-violence. The addressee also published *Upanishad Pathamala* during the year.

Upanishads lies in front of me to be picked when I have a few moments.

Yours,

BAPU

SHRI A. KALESWARA RAO

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

275. LETTER TO SUDHIR GHOSH

'DILKHUSHA', PANCHGANI,
July 18, 1944

DEAR SUDHIR,

I have seen your letter to Pyarelal and Nargisbehn[1] too. Do come whenever you have the time and wish to see me. Mr. Elmhirst[2] I know. I think I had the pleasure of meeting him once. He visited Sabarmati Ashram when I was not there and then he expressed the opinion that the babul plantation there was the best conceived and most useful. Apart from any other interest I would like to meet him, if he would come and is allowed to come to me.

Panchgani may be too early. I expect to be in Sevagram, *Deo volente,* in the early part of August. You will have the date from the Press.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Nargis Captain

[2] Leonard Elmhirst, an agricultural economist and an educationist, who was a close associate of Rabindranath Tagore, and Agricultural Adviser to the Government of Bengal from 1944. He founded Sriniketain, the Rural Development Institute of Santiniketan. Elmhirst was returning to England after completing an assignment "to work out a development plan for harnessing the water resources of Bengal". In *Gandhi's Emissary,* pp. 49-50, the addressee explains: ". . . I thought it would be a good thing if he had a meeting with Gandhiji and conveyed to his friends in the British Government. . . his impression of the state of Gandhiji's mind and the possibilities of a *rapprochement* between Gandhiji and the British. The two sessions he and I had with Gandhiji did not give much of an indication about the possible course of Gandhiji's next political move. . . ."

276. LETTER TO ROY WALKER

'DILKHUSHA', PANCHGANI,
July 18, 1944

DEAR WALKER,

I was delighted to receive your letter[1]. I had your booklet also. I glanced through it. Nothing jarred on me. I must confess, I did not read it critically; but I am asking Pyarelal and Khurshed Naoroji to read it carefully and to send you their reactions. I shall look forward to reading your second compilation[2].

As to the last paragraph[3]—all I can say is that I am endeavouring to follow God's guidance. I do not believe in a personal deity, but I believe in the Eternal Law of Truth and Love which I have translated as non-violence. This Law is not a dead thing like the law of a king. It is a living thing—the Law and the Law-giver are one. For those who realize this Truth, the Law-giver becomes a personal deity.

ROY WALKER, ESQ.
DICK SHEPPARD HOUSE
ENDSLEIGH STREET
LONDON W. C. I

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Dated May 10, 1944, it requested Gandhiji to comment on *The Wisdom of Gandhi in His own Words, a* selection of Gandhiji's sayings, published by the addressee in 1943.

[2] Presumably, *Sword of Gold,* a biography of Gandhiji, published in 1945

[3] Which read: "It is with a feeling akin to triumph that those of us who are pacifists in a war-torn Europe hear of your return to physical liberty, for spiritual liberty cannot be limited by any action of the India Office. We pray that you may, for many years to come, continue to be one of the greatest forces for good in the world."

277. LETTER TO SHYAMA PRASAD MUKHERJEE

"DILKHUSHA",
PANCHGANI,
July 18, 1944

DEAR DR. SHYAMA PRASAD,

It was a pleasure to receive your letter of 10th in appreciation of my correspondence with Government. This however I write not merely to acknowledge your letter, but to complain about the opinion you have expressed on Rajaji's formula on the communal tangle. I had heard that you were in sympathy with the formula if you had not fully endorsed it. Be that as it may I should have thought that regard being had to the relations between us and also yourself and Rajaji, you would have come and discussed the pros and cons before publishing your views. I suppose it is common cause between us that the problem should be solved, the earlier the better. If you have the time and are so minded, we can still discuss the question.[1] I expect Rajaji will be with me at Sevagram which D[eo] V[olente][2] I expect to reach early in August.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

278. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

PANCHGANI,
July 18, 1944

CHI. MIRA,

Your best and descriptive letter is before me. Devdas described your grief over my reverting to your original name. I have capitulated. I am having rich experiences of life. I am learning every day. I must not cause dear ones grief when it is avoidable. This was and is avoidable. I know you forgave me long ago. But it is good to ask for forgiveness.

My love never suffered any diminution. My fears about you have not left me. I know you have given me your assurances. But I

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Shyama Prasad Mookerjee", 5-8-1944.
[2] God willing

must inform you of my doubts if I have any. I like your choice of trustees. Panditji is a tower of [a] trustee. Kanaiyalal[1] is a good soul. Devdas is a sound businessman and naturally entertains great regard for you.

Your money causes me anxiety. I am eager to transfer the sum to you. But I cannot get the proper account. You can understand the difficulty. For donations separate accounts are never kept, so at a given moment it is a difficult process to say what the Ashram's donations are.

That is your case when account was closed. And Narandas has nothing free. I shall overtake that difficulty. I shall take some time. But when you need the money for your adventure you have but to tell me and I shall place a sum at your disposal. Khurshedbehn is here. She is writing. You are following the papers.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

279. LETTER TO KAMALADEVI CHATTOPADHYAYA

July 18, 1944

DEAR KAMALADEVI,

I am late answering your letter of 4th. I am glad you thoroughly realize the virtue of the wheel and the importance of the village programme. Mridula is coming here. Khurshedbehn is already with me. With two such stalwarts by my side, I am not likely to go wrong. My dream is to have India's women to lead the world of men who have led women up to now.

Yours,

BAPU

From the original : Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Kanaiyalal Butail

280. A LETTER

'DILKHUSHA', PANCHGANI,
July 18, 1944

Your wire of 11th instant was received here on 14th, but due to pressure of work on the staff that is here, it was given to me onlytoday. Pressure on my time is answerable for the absence of the promised letter. Evidently I forgot all about the letter I had promised.

I am sorry because I know your care and affection for me. This is the treatment I am having: massage for about an hour all over the body and a hot-water bath, lying in a full length tub for about 20 minutes. This is all very soothing for me. Often before entering the tub I have hot-and-cold hip baths for five minutes each. My food, you know, milk, vegetables, fruit and *gur.* Between three and four, I have an earth bandage—this too, I think, you know. Clean earth is mixed with water and made into a dough. I take a similar bandage before retiring. Horrible medicine I have *is bhilama.* Boiled in water, strained, mixed with milk, I had it for seven days. There has been an interval of more than seven days. I propose to take it from tomorrow again for seven days.

In Poona, I had what is supposed to be a specific against hook-worm. It is called Carbon Tetrachlor Ethylene.

I am on the onward march. Dr. Jivraj Mehta is in Panchgani looking after me. Sushila whom you know was with me even in jail. I have sent her to Delhi.

The medical report is that anaemia is subsiding and probably the two enemies, hook-worm and entamoeba histolytica, are lying low, not gone altogether. I expect to go to Sevagram, *Deo volente,* in the early part of August. I am here at least till the end of the month.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

281. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

PANCHGANI,
July 18, 1944

RESPECTED MRIDULABEHN,

Your letter has been received. It was read out to Bapu. Respected Bapuji wants me to say that he has no doubt made changes in the translation but such changes will not distort or modify the meaning. Even so, if there are any doubts, somebody who comes can check. As it is, it has been sent after checking.

It does not matter if the Congress Committee is not involved. We are concerned only with propaganda. Hence, it is enough if it has been delivered at Poona. It would be good if it could be translated into other languages also. It will not be bad if it is translated into Marathi and published in newspapers. There is after all nothing in it that we should regret. It was and is an open talk. Hence, Shri Audh and you should in consultation decide how best this thing can be propagated. Bapu was pleased to know that Bharatanandji[1] would be looking after correspondence with the Government.

You are free to come here whenever you choose.

Bapu is recovering slowly. Bapu gave an interview to the Press after hearing from you. You will have seen in the newspapers the views that he expressed. What is your opinion ?

Regards from
KANU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 11116. Courtesy : Sarabhai Foundation

282. LETTER TO K. B. JOSHI

'DILKHUSHA', PANCHGANI,
July 19, 1944

DEAR JOSHI,

I was wondering why you had not written all these days. I was inquiring about you only the other day. Vaikunthbhai[2] gave me all the information in his possession. I quite agree with you that

[1] Indian name given by Gandhiji to Maurice Frydman, a Polish engineer
[2] Vaikunth L. Mehta, brother of G. L. Mehta

something should be done and that quickly. Fortunately Vaikunthbhai is wide awake, and I am hoping that something will be done. You will please keep in touch with me but you know our ultimate goal. We have to reach a process whereby everyone can manufacture paper in his own house just as everyone can do spinning in his own house. I know that the problem is difficult; but if we are to serve 40 crores of people, we must be able to devise some such method as I have adumbrated. If I have relaxed the original restriction, it is in order to reach that goal.

Yours,
BAPU

SJT. K. B. JOSHI
C/O TULPULE'S BUNGALOW
1195/3 SHIVAJI NAGAR
POONA 4

From a photostat: G.N. 2761

283. LETTER TO DR. K. C. GHARPURE

PANCHGANI,
July 19, 1944

DEAR DR. GHARPURE,

I have been having dismal reports about poor Manju[1]. I would esteem it a favour, if you would kindly let me know her exact condition. Dr. Jivraj Mehta being with me, he will help me to understand your report even if it is technical.

Dr. Sushila Nayyar is just now not here. I have asked her to go to Poona and be there till Manju can be discharged. She described her talk with you about the surgeon's fees. I had thought that there would [be] no fees in a case like this. Manjula has no means of her own. Her brothers are budding artists. They can pay with difficulty. But I can understand the other side. I would have written to Dr. Peet if I was at all acquainted with him. You can show this to him, if necessary. I can well understand his needs, if he is a poor army surgeon. I have friends to fall back upon. There need be no hesitation about charging the

[1] Sister of Navin Gandhi, *vide* "Letter to Navin Gandhi", after 15-7-1944.

fees. You will please send me the bill in that case.

I hope Manjula's case will end well.[1]

Yours sincerely,

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

284. A LETTER

"DILKHUSHA",
PANCHGANI,
July 19, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

I appreciate your very frank letter. I shall return the courtesy by being equally frank.

The difference between now and August, 1942 is that at that time I had no knowledge of the response the people both pro-Congress and anti-Congress would make. Now I know the kind of response they made. The heroism, the suffering and the self-sacrifice of those who took part in the struggle are beyond praise; but weighed in the scales of Truth and Non-violence there were glaring defects in the demonstration and I can only say that India failed to reach her natural goal because of those defects. Whatever may be true of other nations I have no doubt that India can come to her own fully only by truthful and non-violent means. In the face of sabotage and the like the rulers as usual lost their heads and resorted to reprisals unheard of before. I write under correction. I have asked for an impartial tribunal for investigation of the charges against the Congress and counter-charges against the Government. Unless I am convinced to the contrary, I shall continue to believe that the mole-hill of popular violence has been shown on behalf of the Government to have been a mountain and the Himalayan violence of the authorities has been generally defended as no more than necessary for the occasion. I must, therefore, refuse to judge popular action by the footrule of Truth and Non-violence unless I can apply the same measure for the

[1] The addressee in his reply dated July 28, 1944, said: "The operation on Miss Manju has been a complete failure. The facial graft that was introduced has sloughed away and as such Miss Manju is no better or worse after the operation. This sometimes happens in grafts. They either take or don't take. The grafting can, however be repeated after six months."

Governmental action. This is one difference.

The second difference is the terrible and progressive starvation of the people. Whether it is due to the wrath of God or the incompetence of the rulers or the universal pressure of the War is not relevant to the elucidation of my reply.

I hold that these two causes mark a decisive difference between now and 1942. I would be unworthy of my creed if I failed to make use of all the resources of head and heart that God has vouchsafed to me for discovering a solution of the deadlock. What is that solution submitted by me ? It is nothing less than the present declaration of freedom of India, limited during the War period by the exigencies of the War. This limitation you know. If that offer is accepted then I would be criminally guilty if I did not advise the Congress to accept it. If my proposal reaches full fruition, what is today a war of brute strength against brute strength would be turned into a war for the liberation of the exploited people of the world. Then it would be a war between predominantly moral strength plus minimum of brute strength matched against pure brute strength which is being used for the exploitation of China and the weaker states of Europe. I hope you will now agree with me that my move is not one of political expendiency but a necessary corollary of the creed which I cherish dearer than life. If you have further difficulty about understanding my position, please write again.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

285. LETTER TO SWAMI ANAND

July 19, 1944

BHAI SWAMI,

I have your letter and also Vaikunthbhai's. This time I am including my reply to him in your letter. I have to cope with the mail. We are not bent on securing importance, are we? On my part I would suggest that all three of you should continue,[1] which would be better than the best.[2] If, however, Bapa cannot accept you as you are, you should move out of his clutches. You should manage without

[1] As trustees of Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust

[2] Literally: "sweeter than jaggery"

tendering your resignation, if you can. What I mean is that we would have fulfilled our duty, if we earned a good name for the activity.

Please write to Nanabhai that he should carry on the work. I am corresponding with Bhai Anantrai.[1] His response has been good enough. I expect everything will get along smoothly. Please send me a copy of the decision given by Bapa so that I can guide you. You may come over whenever you are confronted with a problem.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

286. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

PANCHGANI,
July 19, 1944

CHI. ANAND,

Got your letter only today. Vidya was a very virtuous woman. She had a golden heart and a keen urge for sacrifice. Her love was as vast as the ocean. You have to live up to her expectations.

I hope to go to Sevagram in August.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

287. LETTER TO R. R. DIWAKAR

PANCHGANI,
July 19, 1944

BHAI DIWAKAR,

I have not been able to read the entire material. You already know my views[2].

I would like all to court imprisonment on or before the 9th[3] while doing something or other. But that something should be a

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Anantrai P. Pattani", 15-7-1944.

[2] About secret and underground activities, *vide* "Discussion with a Friend", after 6-5-1944 and "Letter to R. R. Diwakar", 18-5-1944; also Appendix "Discussion with Underground Workers", before 2-6-1944.

[3] Of August, the second anniversary day of "Quit India" movement

normal activity of the Congress, not satyagraha. Do you get the difference?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am disgusted at our people writing in English.

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Mahatma*, Vol. VI, between pp. 336 and 337

288. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[1]

PANCHGANI,
July 19, 1944

I am glad you have put the question exactly as you have seen it in the critical Press. I confess that I am not able to go through all Press criticisms and, therefore, I find myself at a disadvantage. Your question, therefore, is doubly helpful to me. Let me remind critics at the outset that publicity of the interview[2] (to Mr. Stuart Gelder of the *News Chronicle*) was not of my seeking. As I have already remarked[3], it was meant for the powers that be. I ask for a dispassionate examination of my proposals on their merits. I should not mind a climb down, if it resulted in the attainment of Indian independence. I may say that the favourable war situation had nothing to do with my proposal, if only for the simple reason that in the flush of approaching victory, my proposal was not likely even to receive a hearing. But as a lover of peace, not merely in India, but peace among all mankind, I could not but make a proposal for what it is worth. After all, there is such a thing as world opinion, apart from the opinion of authorities.

A united, enlightened, powerful opinion of the world is bound to affect those who are today wielding what appears to be absolute power in waging the war, and experience has taught me that one should not be afraid of being misunderstood or of rejection of one's

[1] The report said: "A journalist suggested to Gandhiji that it had been said by a large section of the overseas Press that he (Gandhiji) had revised his attitude because of the favourable war situation and also because the Congress suffered 'a heavy defeat' and that his latest stand was considered as 'a climb down'."

[2] *Vide* "Interview to Stuart Gelder", 4-7-1944 and 4/6-7-1944.

[3] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 12-7-1944 and "Interview to the Press", 13-7-1944.

proposal, if it is sound in itself.

The heavy defeat of the Congress I do not feel at all. I have not a shadow of doubt that this passage through fire and suffering by thousands of Congressmen and Congress sympathizers has raised the status of India and the strength of the people. Throughout all my long public life I have not experienced a sense of defeat, heavy or otherwise. I know many Congressmen are labouring under a sense of frustration. Poor men, they do not know the value of self-suffering. But even that frustration is only momentary. Victory, that is, independence of India as a whole, is a certainty. That it may not come in my lifetime is a matter of indifference to me. I can but work for it till the end of my life. Victory will come when God wills it.

Only today I wrote to a friend who wanted to know the difference between now and August 1942. From it I quote relevant sentences. I have said the difference between now and August 1942 is that at that time I had no knowledge of the response the people, both pro-Congress and anti-Congress, would make. Now I know the kind of response they made. The heroism, suffering and self-sacrifice of those who took part in this struggle are beyond praise, but weighed in the scale of truth and non-violence there are glaring defects in the popular demonstration. And I can only say that India failed to reachher natural goal at the time because of these defects. Whatever may be true of other nations, I have no doubt that India can come to her own fully by truth and non-violent means. In the face of sabotage and the like, rulers have as usual lost their heads and resorted to reprisals unheard of before. I write this under correction. I have asked[1] for an impartial tribunal for the investigation of charges against the Congress and my counter-charges against the Government. Unless I am convinced to the contrary, I shall continue to believe that the molehill of popular violence has been shown on behalf of Government to have been a mountain and the Himalayan violence of the authorities has been generally defended as no more than necessary for the occasion. I must, therefore, refuse to judge popular action by the footrule of truth and non-violence unless I can apply the same measure for Government action. This is one difference. The second difference is the terrible progressive starvation of the people. Whether it is due to wrath of God or incompetence of the rulers or universal

[1]*Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943 and 26-10-1943.

pressure of war, is not relevant to the elucidation of my reply. I hold that these two causes mark decisive differences between now and August 1942. I would be unworthy of my creed, if I failed to make use of all the resources of head and heart that God has vouchsafed to me for discovering a solution of the deadlock. What that solution is, is submitted[1] by me. It is nothing less than the present declaration of freedom of India, limited during the war period by the exigencies of the war. This limitation you know. If the offer is accepted, then I would be criminally guilty if I did not advise the Congress to accept it.

If my proposal reaches full fruition, what is today a war of brute strength would be turned into a war for the liberation of the exploited peoples of the world. Then it would be a war between predominantly moral strength plus the minimum of brute strength matched against pure brute strength which is being used for the exploitation of China and the weaker States of Europe.

Rajaji's offer[2] has seen the light of day only now, but I had personally subscribed to it when I was fasting in prison camp. It is now sixteen months old. For the rest of the offer, I must carry out the contract between Rajaji and myself. He is to bear the brunt of all criticism that might be made about that offer.

Finally I would say to my critics to enter with me into the sufferings not only of the people of India but of those, whetherengaged in the war or not of the whole world. I cannot look at this butchery going on in the world with indifference. I have an unchangeable faith that it is beneath the dignity of men to resort to mutual slaughter. I have no doubt that there is a way out. I am vain enough to think that my malaria was a godsend, and He used Government as His instrument for discharging me.

I should be never reconciled to myself if, for fear of hostile criticism or wrath of impatient Congressmen or even possible displeasure of members of the Working Committee, I did not express personal opinion, the acceptance of which, I hold, must result in bringing peace to the world, even out of the present turmoil.[3]

The Hindu, 22-7-1944

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Stuart Gelder", 4/6-7-2944 and "Interview to the Press", 14-7-1944.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "C. Rajagopalachari's Formula", before 5-8-1942.

[3] *The Bombay Chronicle*, 20-7-1944, reported: "Gandhiji made it clear that those who attributed motives to him did not touch him—it was like water on duck's back. He started the conference by saying: 'I am empty-headed' and ended by saying: 'I hope I have given enough food', and the Press agreed, 'he had'."

289. TELEGRAM TO STUART GELDER

Express *July 20, 1944*

GELDER

CARE FRANK MORAES

GREENFIELDS, CHURCHGATE RECLAMATION

BOMBAY

RECEIVED BOTH WIRES. READ YESTERDAY'S PRESS INTERVIEW.[1] WIRE IF FURTHER CLARIFICATION NECESSARY. WILL IMMEDIATELY ATTEND CLIFF'S[2] QUESTION WHEN RECEIVED. HOPE YOU WILL SOON BE WELL.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

290. LETTER TO AMIYA CHAKRAVARTY

PANCHGANI,
July 20, 1944

DEAR AMIYA,

I was delighted to receive your letter. Death leaves no family without His toll. Why should we not treat His messengers as friends and pay the toll with a willing heart? I had to make His acquaintance when I was quite a youth and I learnt to regard Death as a welcome deliverance whether it is a suckling baby or one in prime of life like your brother or an elderly person. I long ago ceased to regard as affliction or punishment the so-called misfortunes. On my return to India I think it was Kakasaheb who recited a verse and reminded me that I was presenting no new thought when I expounded the view just mentioned. From that time onward we have recited at the morning prayer the following verse[3]:

foinks uSo foin % lainks u So lain%Afoin~ foLej.ka fo".kks%

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Norman Cliff of the *News Chronicle*, London; *vide* also "Cable to *News Chronicle*", 23-7-1944.

[3] Meaning: That which goes by the name of adversity is not such; nor is that prosperity which goes by that name. To forget God is adversity, ever to think of Him is prosperity, *Vide* "*Ashram Bhajanavali*" subitem 16, 20-12-1930.

laEiUukjk;.k Le`fr% A A

Hence the puzzle that taxes the philosphers of the West and the East has no worry for me. I know this arises from my ignorance of writings on philosophy. I console myself with the thought that my ignorance is bliss if it promotes my peace of mind.

This is my contribution towards assuaging your grief and my answer to the question propounded by you.

The second question is simple. Of course, there must be organized resistance to organized evil. The difficulty arises when the organizers of satyagraha try to imitate the organizers of evil. I tried and failed hopelessly. The way of organizing forces of good must be opposite to the evil way. What it exactly is I do not yet know fully. I feel that it lies through perfection, as far as may be, of individuals. It then acts as the leaven raising the whole mass. But I am still groping.

I hope I have given you sufficient food for thought for the time being. More when we meet. I hope to be in Sevagram in the beginning of August. Gurudev was an institution. We must feel the loss.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

291. LETTER TO HARIBHAU JOSHI

PANCHGANI,
July 20, 1944

DEAR JOSHI,

I am very sorry to learn about Acharya Javadekar's indisposition. I hope he will soon recover.

I remember Shripad well. He is brave and will go through the mill cheerfully. Please give him my love when you next meet him. If you represent Rajaji correctly, the version is only true so far as it goes. But I will forbear and wait till we meet. Your questions are interesting. I have promised to meet you in Panchgani even if the others cannot join you. Therefore I shall conserve my limited energy till the time of our meeting. But, if you do not mind, I would fix the date of our meeting towards the end of the month. I am not gaining as much as I had expected. Do you mind the delay? I suggest 25th instant at 4

p.m., i.e., if I am here till then. If the place does not finally suit me, I shall have to pass the rest of the month in Poona.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 934. Courtesy: Haribhau Joshi

292. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

PANCHGANI,
July 20, 1944

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Today I read your letter and application carefully through. The work you are doing is very good. Keep it up. Regard it a sin to fall ill. Please do not minimize the seriousness of that sin because I too have committed it. Holding a belief is one thing and putting it into practice quite another. Let nobody get infected by my shortcomings.Let what is good in me infect people freely. *Sadhana* can infect us in this sense.

Why is Kanchan silent? Tell her to write regularly.

The time is drawing nearer for my arrival in Sevagram.

Bhai Patil is a gentleman. I intend to write a note to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8471. Also C.W. 7176. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

293. LETTER TO BHANUSHANKAR

PANCHGANI,
July 20, 1944

BHAI BHANUSHANKAR,

I have both your letters. I have just been able to finish reading the second long one. You could have abridged both the letters and at the same time conveyed more. I do not say this by way of criticism. I see this defect in many writers. I have just pointed it out so that you may try and learn brevity in writing.

What you have written is all right. But it is a half truth. This does

not mean that you have anywhere tried to hide the truth. I have no doubt that you have written what you believe to be the whole truth. But I who know the other side see but half truth in your letter. Just think over this: If we give up all those whom you have criticized, who will be left to work in the Congress? You and I? As a matter of fact you alone can work because I sit with those whom you have criticized. What then is my value? I do not write this to criticize you but to show the defect in your argument. We have to work with the best possible people available. Since we are imperfect ourselves we can make progress only by putting up with imperfect co-workers. Though there is some truth in your criticism, the world has seen the strength of the Congress. That proves that on the whole the achievement of the Congress is not bad. I shall write no more just now. Think over this and, if you still do not see your way, write to me. The world is good, if we are good. Let others do nothing or do something wrong. You go on with your own proper work. There is no time to sit idle.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

294. LETTER TO R. R. DIWAKAR

PANCHGANI,
July 20, 1944

BHAI DIWAKAR,

I wrote to you yesterday.[1] Pundalik[2] is still here, hence the second letter. This shows how these things occupy my thoughts. I think those who are underground should discover themselves and then do whatever they like. It would be better if no militant step is taken as long as I am out.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Mahatma*, Vol. VI, between pp. 336 and 337

[1] *Vide* "Letter to R. R. Diwakar", 19-7-1944

[2] Pundalik Katagade.

295. ANSWER S TO QUESTIONS[1]

PANCHGANI,
July 20, 1944

QUESTION:

1. Do you agree with inferences being drawn in London following the publication of your interview[2] that you favour full entry of free Indian government into war against Japan?

ANSWER: Yes.

2. Regarding Pakistan there is a tendency here to interpret your last contact with Mr. Jinnah as indicating your acceptance of Pakistan. Is this so?

Mr. Rajagopalachari's Formula[3] indicates my way of meeting the communal difficulty. I am indifferent whether it is called Pakistan or not.

3. In the event of free Indian government taking control of finance, what policy will you advise regarding Anglo-American capital interest in India?

My advice would be to respect Anglo-American capital interest, which, in the absence of agreement, is not considered by an impartial tribunal inconsistent with Indian national interests.

4. Will you outline your conception of the role of a free India in the post-war world with special relationship to the peoples of the British Commonwealth and the United States of America?

If I have any say in post-war policy, the free national government of India will promote a Commonwealth of all world States naturally including British Commonwealth and America and also, if possible, belligerent States so as to reduce to the minimum the possibility of armed conflict between different States.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-7-1944

[1] The report said that the questions were cabled to Gandhiji from London, on July 18, by *Cavalcade*, a British news magazine, which claimed that it had "consistently supported the cause of Indian freedom, and added that it was advised by Mr. Pulin Seal, Chairman of the Executive Committee of Indian Congressmen in London, to ask if Gandhiji would give for publication his answers to four questions". According to the report, Gandhiji "handed over copies of" the questions and answers to the Press on July 21 when he gave a statement; *vide* the following item.

[2] *Vide* "Interview to Stuart Gelder", 4-7-1944 and 4/6-7-1944.

[3] *Vide* Appendix "C. Rajagopalachari's Formula", before 5-8-1942.

296. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

PANCHGANI,
July 21, 1944

1 have answered the question[1] as a confirmed war resister; and if I became a party to the August resolution and I now suggest what I consider to be a perfectly honourable solution, it is because thereby I expect to promote the war-resistance effort. I dream of a world where there will be no strife between nations and nations. It is possible only if Great Britain, America and Russia contemplate such world peace. I deliberately omit China for, unfortunately China is not able like Russia, Britain or America to stand alone, though much bigger than all these three powerful nations and more ancient.

China is still menaced by Japan and needs all the assistance that she can get before she can rise to her full height.

I see no chance for the groaning world, unless the three States now demonstrate to the world that they have one mind, that they are not putting forth the effort they are doing for any selfish design, butthat they are truly fighting for all democracies on the face of the earth.

My proposal is an acid test, and I have no shadow of doubt that its hearty acceptance by Britain will immediately turn the scales and ensure the defeat of the belligerent powers and fill exploited nations of the earth with hope. You see that I am, therefore, fighting for no small stake.[2]

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-7-1944

[1] The reference is to the fourth question of the preceding item.

[2] The report concluded: "Gandhiji invited questions and the Pressmen fired out a few questions and when they stumbled and seemed to get stuck up, Gandhiji smiled and said that he would lead them on. He could put even mischievous questions, he said, but thought that was not the proper time for it."

297. LETTER TO DWARKADAS SHAH

PANCHGANI,
July 21, 1944

BHAI DWARKADAS SHAH,

I have your letter. An organization which has only Hindu members can hardly be called a national organization. Moreover, those who believe that independence can be achieved through non-violence, should from today eschew any training based on violence. I myself do not know what will happen after the attainment of independence and therefore believe that that may be true in the case of others too. I feel that this should clear your doubts.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

298. INTERVIEW TO THE UNITED PRESS OF INDIA[1]

PANCHGANI,
July 22, 1944

I am not afraid of the word 'diarchy'.[2] The arrangement proposed seems to me to be as natural as the present is unnatural. If Allied operations have to continue with India as the base, as they must, my proposal is that they are only feasible and consistent with immediate declaration of India's independence. But I heartily agree that there must be mutual trust. If it cannot be established, my proposal is valueless. The winter of mutual distrust among the Boers and Britons was overnight turned into a summer of mutual trust after the sanguinary Boer War. In our case, when the victory becomes a mutual interest, mutual trust follows as a matter of course.

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-7-1944

[1] The report said that a special representative of the United Press of India "sought elucidation from Gandhiji on the points raised by the British Press, specially the Delhi correspondent of the *London Times*, on Gandhiji's proposals that military control shall be in the hands of the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief".

[2] The *Times* correspondent had remarked: "What is proposed in fact is a kind of diarchy in the military field which would be practicable only on the assumption that there is complete identity of aims and; mutual trust, and past events have done nothing to create these."

299. CABLE TO NORMAN CLIFF [1]

PANCHGANI,
July 23, 1944

NORMAN CLIFF
FOREIGN EDITOR
"NEWS CHRONICLE"
LONDON

YOUR CABLE. I SHARE FULLY BRITISH SORROWS AND SUFFERINGS. MY ONLY EXCUSE FOR INTERVENING IS THAT MY PROPOSALS ARE AS MUCH IN THE INTERESTS OF BRITAIN AS OF INDIA AND I WANT THE POOREST IN INDIA SO FAR AS THEY ARE INFLUENCED BY CONGRESS TO BE ACTIVELY IDENTIFIED WITH THOSE SUFFERINGS. ANSWER FIRST QUESTION. "RAJAGOPALACHARI'S PROPOSAL ALREADY SUBMITTED PUBLICLY MUSLIM LEAGUE PRESIDENT WITH MY APPROVAL. PUBLIC BODIES ALREADY DISCUSSING FREELY EXPRESSING OPINION." ANSWER TO TWO "NO QUESTION WHATEVER OF MASS STRUGGLE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT FORMED AFTER MANNER PROPOSED BY ME. ASSUMING GOVERNMENT AND CONGRESS ACCEPT PROPOSAL, IT PRESUPPOSES HEARTY CO-OPERATION WAR EFFORT WITHOUT INCURRING FINANCIAL LIABILITY." ANSWER TO THREE. "YOU SHOULD KNOW I CEASED TO BE MEMBER CONGRESS IN NINETEEN-THIRTY-FOUR BUT CONGRESS CONSTITUTION DEFINITELY PLEDGES CONGRESS TO NON-VIOLENCE." ANSWER TO FOUR. "AUGUST RESOLUTION IS NOBLE DECLARATION OF WHICH I AM PROUD. HOPE CONGRESS WILL NEVER SUPERSEDE IT. CLAUSE RELATING TO SANCTION HAS CAUSED OFFENCE. I HAVE SAID IT WAS NEVER PUT INTO OPERATION BY ME AND AT THIS STAGE I CANNOT DO SO EVEN IF MY POWER IS REVIVED AFTER MY DISCHARGE. IF GOVERNMENT DESIRE CONGRESS CO-OPERATION MY PROPOSAL HONOURABLE BOTH PARTIES AND PROVIDES FOR ALL THAT GOVERNMENT CAN POSSIBLY WANT." END MESSAGE.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] An extract from this has been reproduced in "Cable to *News Chronicle*", 23-7-1944.

300. LETTER TO STUART GELDER

"DILKHUSHA",
PANCHGANI,
July 23, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

In terms of your last telegram Gandhiji has asked me to send you his replies to Mr. Norman Cliff's questions for transmission to the *News Chronicle* instead of writing them direct to London. I am enclosing too herewith a copy of Mr. Cliff's wire to Gandhiji, although I now understand that you have received the same also from Mr. Cliff himself. Gandhiji desires me to say that he would like his replies to be sent without any alteration or addition. You may, however, add your comment for purposes of elucidation, if you find it necessary.

Gandhiji hopes that you are now on the road to recovery.

Yours sincerely,
PYARELAL

STUART GELDER, ESQ.
C/O FRANK MORAES, ESQ.
"GREEN FIELDS"
CHURCHGATE RECLAMATION
BOMBAY

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

301. LETTER TO S. MOHAN KUMARAMANGALAM

PANCHGANI,
July 23, 1944

DEAR MOHAN[1],

Do come with your friend at 4 p.m. on 28th instant. Your friend may take two snap-shots without any notice to me.

[1] Son of Dr. P. Subbaroyan

I am glad Joshi wants my reply. I have not been idle. I hope to be able to send a reply[1] at an early date.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

M. KUMARAMANGALAM SUBBAROYAN
COMMUNIST PARTY
190 B KHETWADI MAIN ROAD
BOMBAY 4

Chief Commissioner's Office, Bombay, File No. 3001/H/, p. 123. Courtesy: Government of Maharashtra

302. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

PANCHGANI,
July 23, 1944

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letters. I no longer have the strength to give orders. I would only advise you to do what you think best. Whenever you wish to come to the Ashram for treatment, you may do so. Serve wherever you like. I do not know what work to take from you. It is my nature to be content with whatever service people give. Those who are content to stay in the Ashram may do so. Those who think they can do better service elsewhere may work outside.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 480

303. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

July 23, 1944

Do not get in the least impatient. Observe with detachment whatever happens. . . . Doctors have examined me. There has been good improvement. The climate has agreed with me. But I do not wish to stay on much longer now. Nor is it necessary to do so. I am pining to return to Sevagram.

[From Gujarati]
Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 201-2

[1] *Vide* "Letter to P. C. Joshi". 30-7-1944.

304. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

PANCHGANI,
July 23, 1944

The Sind Home Minister[1], in defending the forcible prevention of a member of the Sind Legislative Assembly from exercising his right of attending the Assembly meeting, is reported to have said: "Our information is that, since the release of Mahatma Gandhi, the subversive movement had been restarted throughout India and that leading personalities behind that movement were again trying to direct it." He referred in this connection to the escape from Karachi jail of three under-trial prisoners concerned in the Marriot Road dacoity case and said, "this is all in pursuance of the policy of reviving the movement."

All the information that I have gathered since my discharge is absolutely contrary to the statement alleged to have been made by the Sind Home Minister. May it be that he is badly served by his informants? Is it not his duty to supply the public with details of the information in his possession? Who are the leading personalities, and what is the subversive movement?

If there is any connection between the escape from Karachi jail of the under-trial prisoners and the supposed revival of the so-called subversive movement, the least that is necessary is to mention these names and show the connection.

I would not have taken notice of the Sind Home Minister's statement but for the fact that it is likely to be used by enemies of India's freedom to frustrate the efforts that I am making for the cause of independence. I am sure the Sind Home Minister is as anxious as I am for India's freedom, attained through peaceful means.

I may add, too, that throughout this anxious period my attempt has been, through the Press and in my talks with Congressmen and others, to show that I am opposed unequivocally to sabotage and the like. I have also stated in explicit terms that I never have had an opportunity of starting civil disobedience and that the authority vested in me by the A.I.C.C. expired on my imprisonment, and could not automatically be revived by my discharge on grounds of ill-health.

[1] Haji Muhammad Hashim Gazdar

Therefore assuming that civil disobedience is described as subversive movement, which I deny, even that cannot be offered by anybody on behalf of Congress.

But I have said at the same time that normal Congress activities of a purely peaceful nature must be carried on even if restrictions are imposed upon them. It is up to the authorities, therefore, if they are at all inclined to respond to my advice, not to interfere with such activities as were permissible, say, before August 1942, such as, for instance, monthly flag demonstration, public meetings and the like.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-7-1944

305. INTRODUCTION TO "DRAFT INSTRUCTION FOR CIVIL RESISTERS"

PANCHGANI,
July 24, 1944

The following is the literal translation of draft instructions[1] for the guidance of civil resisters. The draft was in Hindustani and copies were prepared in both Devanagari and Persian scripts. It was prepared on 7th August, 1942, and was placed before the Working Committee and discussed on the 8th of August. The Working Committee was again to have met on the morning of the 9th August. But that was not to be.

I was to put before the Working Committee my view of the negotiations which I was to carry on with the Government. They were to cover a period of at least three weeks. The instructions were to see the light of day only on failure of the contemplated negotiations.

The object of publishing the draft at present is twofold. It shows how my mind was running at the time. The draft is an additional answer to the adverse suggestions made in the Government indictment about my non-violence. The second and more relevant object is to let Congress workers know how I would have acted at the time.

I have come to know that my name was freely used to justify acts of sabotage and the like. I would like every Congressman and for that matter every Indian to feel that on him and her lies the responsibility of freeing India from the incubus of foreign rule.Non-violent suffering is the only way. Freedom of India means

[1] *Vide* "Draft Instructions for Civil Resisters", 4-8-1942.

everything for us but it means also much for the world. For, freedom won through non-violence will mean the inauguration of a new order in the world.

There is no hope for mankind in any other way.

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, pp. 285-6

306. TELEGRAM TO MANORANJAN CHAUDHARY[1]

PANCHGANI,
July 24, 1944

MANORANJAN CARE NIRMAL BHATTACHARJI
RUSTOM MANSION
ADENWALLA ROAD, MATUNGA
BOMBAY
WELCOME TWENTY-SEVENTH FOUR AFTERNOON.[2]

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10514

307. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

PANCHGANI,
July 24, 1944

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. Without yet having any definite statement from Narandas. I have already arranged for transfer to Devdas of Rs. 25,000/- to be placed at your disposal. You are not likely to want more at once. I hope to transfer more as soon as I hear from Rajkot.

I got rid of the cold long ago. The weather here has agreed with me. Manilal and his daughter Sita are with me. We leave here for Sevagram on 3rd or 4th.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Of the Bengal Hindu Sabha
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to P. C. Joshi", 30-7-1944.

308. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

PANCHGANI,
July 24, 1944

CHI. AMRITLAL,

May you live long and render plenty of service. My blessings to both the sisters.

I had read the pamphlets. I shall go through the new ones too. I will start for Wardha on the 2nd of August.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI AMRITLAL NANAVATI
64 A/B 4TH FLOOR, PANNALAL TERRACE
GRANT ROAD
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10803

309. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

PANCHGANI,
July 24, 1944

CHI. PREMA,

Sushila has left for Delhi. I shall start on the 2nd of August and go direct to Wardha. I do not know whether I will go *via* Bombay or Kalyan. You may come along with me, or come afterwards whenever you wish to. I am all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10431. Also C.W. 6870. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

310. TELEGRAM TO T. B. SAPRU[1]

[*July 25, 1944*][2]

ARRANGEMENTS MADE FOR YOU HERE. LEAVING PANCHGANI FIRST AUGUST. REACHING SEVAGRAM THIRD.

Gandhi-Sapru Papers. Courtesy: National Library

311. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

PANCHGANI,
July 25, 1944

MY DEAR C. R.,

It is early morning. I feel your absence. Questions regarding Pakistan crop up. Papers are being sent to you. But that is not enough. Some questions I must answer myself. It is not right that I shouldanswer them without you. I won't drag you to Panchgani. But I do want you to be in Sevagram when I reach there. I hope to be there on 3rd August. Try to reach there that day and come with the intention of settling down there till my fate is decided one way or the other. Every decision of my fate must necessarily be final just for the time being.

It is as wet as when you left. But I am flourishing. And I see that I can like this place if there is a refuge for poor people. It has been built for the rich or the upper middle class.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2095

[1] The telegram is extracted from Pyarelal's letter dated July 25 to the addressee, which, *inter alia*, read: "Gandhiji has decided to leave for Sevagram. . . . The stay here had done him good and from the point of view of his health a further stay for a fortnight would have been eminently desirable. But his soul yearned for Sevagram and the doctors saw no good in thwarting his innate nature. Gandhiji has just sent you the following wire."

[2] *ibid*

312. LETTER TO LALA DUNICHAND

"DILKHUSHA",
PANCHGANI,
July 25, 1944

DEAR LALA DUNICHAND,

Gandhiji has your letter of the 15th inst. He desires me to thank you for the information you have conveyed to him. He was not ignorant of those facts. He is doing all he can. His statements and interviews in the Press will serve to give you a picture of his present mind.

His health is fair only in the sense that it might have been worse. He intends returning to Sevagram on the 2nd of August.

Yours sincerely,

LALA DUNICHAND, B. A.
KRIPANIVAS COTTAGE
AMBALA CITY

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

313. LETTER TO NATARAJAN

PANCHGANI,
July 25, 1944

DEAR MR. NATARAJAN,

It was good of you to have sent your letter through Balasaheb[1]. I appreciate the kind thought that prompted it. I do not want to send an argumentative letter in reply. All I wish to say is that it is the logical corollary of the Congress resolution to which I was party.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I have read your letter three times. You know how I value your opinion. It occurs to me that you should invite Rajaji for a private and friendly discussion.

M. K. G

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] B. G. Kher

314. LETTER TO B. G. KHER

PANCHGANI,
July 25, 1944

BHAI KHER,

Herewith letter from Natarajan. Read it. If his suggestion appeals to you, persuade others to accept it. I myself would have explained but, as you know, I have neither the time nor the energy to do so. If you have fully understood Rajaji's Formula[1], canvass for it earnestly.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Pyarelal committed no mistake in that.[2] He deliberately told you about it. The thing is not to be kept secret from persons like you. The truth is that it is to be kept secret only from newspapers. The intention is to avoid embarrassment to Churchill.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2771

315. LETTER TO KANAM GANDHI

July 25, 1944

CHI. KANAM,

I got your letter today. I shall not be able to always fulfil your expectation of a reply by return of post. You have spoilt your handwriting so much that now it is difficult to read it. Sita's[3] handwriting is so beautiful that it deserves to be emulated by all of you. No doubt she writes in English but whoever writes a good hand in one script must necessarily write equally well in another.

About the injustice to the residents of Sevagram, ask me when we meet.

I have had enough of watching the cinema[4] all by myself without my compatriots at Sevagram. When I am out and engaged in

[1] *Vide* Appendix "C. Rajagopalachari's Formula", before 5-8-1942.

[2] The reference is to Gandhiji's letter dated July 17 to Winston Churchill; *vide* "Letter to Winston Churchill", 17-7-1944.

[3] Addressee's cousin.

[4] Gandhiji saw feature film "Ramarajya" at his residence.

some good activity I would remember all of you. There was no such thing in the present case. Hence nobody has lost anything by not witnessing the show. On the contrary, I have lost something after having seen the picture. You may ask me what it is.

I hope to reach Sevagram on the 3rd.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

316. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

PANCHGANI,
July 25, 1944

CHI. MRIDU,

I have your letter. I have explained everything to Kher Saheb[1]. Hence I am not writing a separate letter to you. Are you coming or not ? We are waiting.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 11230. Courtesy : Sarabhai Foundation

317. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

PANCHGANI,
July 25, 1944

MY DEAR MATHEW,

I am grieved at your father's passing away. I can understand your remorse. How can one be angry with one's father even if he leaves nothing for the one? But let that be. Giving away in charity all that you have come into, will be an adequate penance.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1543

[1] B. G. Kher

318. LETTER TO C. M. DOKE

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1944

MY DEAR CLEMENT[1],

I had your sweet letter whilst I was a prisoner. From there I wrote no letters.

Ba is ever with me though her body has been consigned to the flames. Though I see this truth through the reason and the heart, world-wide sympathy I have prized. It has made me realize the goodness of God as never before.

I was glad to have some account of you from Manilal. He was able to tell me that you had kept up the old tradition. Do tell me all about the whole family—how and what they are doing. As I write this, all the old associations revive and make me glad.

With love to you all,

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 745

319. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1944

CHI. SUSHILA,

I am glad that Manilal and Sita have come. I am still more pleased that you yourself stayed behind. I had thought that that would be beyond your capacity. You have risen higher in my estimation. May God keep you both on a high plane.

I have had quite long talks with Manilal, though not to my heart's content. There wasn't sufficient time for that. We will talk still more after we reach Sevagram or on our way there.

[1] Son of J. J. Doke who was a close associate of Gandhiji in South Africa; a missionary on the staff of South African Baptist Missionary Society, Lambaland, 1914-21; Head of the Department of Bantu Studies, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

Sita is a very good girl. I have not been able to make friends with her as much as I would wish. But I think, I will be able to do so. She is intelligent. The most important thing is to see that she always remains as healthy as she is today. Good health is the most important blessing of life. Do not worry about her. If you worry about Manilal, I would certainly consider you silly.

About myself Manilal will write. There is no cause for worry. I am in God's hands. He will do what He wants.

According to the present plan, I understand that you will arrive after December. The immediate plan is that Manilal and Sita will join me in Sevagram, *via* Akola, provided of course there are no unforeseen developments.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4935

320. LETTER TO MANJULA M. MEHTA

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1944

CHI. MANJULA[1],

I have your letter. I feel that whatever is due to Ratilal[2] should be paid up. He will use it as he is destined to. How long can we keep a watch over a person who has come of age? I regularly get from Champa letters which are quite sensible.

I intend to start from here on the 1st for Sevagram. Do come and see me there when you can.

I do not remember having received your letter in jail. Very few letters were delivered to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MAGANLAL PRANJIVANDAS MEHTA, BARRISTER
82 GHODBUNDER ROAD
ANDHERI

From a photostat of the Gujarati; C.W, 1029. Courtesy: Manjula M. Mehta

[1] Wife of Maganlal Mehta
[2] Maganlal Mehta's brother

321. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1944

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

I got your letter and liked it. I like Dinshaw's temperament. His wife also has a loving nature. Though there is no privacy, his place is very peaceful. It has all the facilities. He knows everything about milk diet and also other methods of treatment. If, therefore, you fully make up your mind, you may go and stay for a year in Poona. Perhaps your health may be completely restored. Even if it is not, you will lose nothing. You will in any case be doing some service there. If you are prepared to see everybody who wants to see you, you may even be able to help some. In the Arogyabhavan your presence will itself benefit the inmates. Think over all these points. As I am soon going over there, we shall reach a final decision after I arrive.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 810. Courtesy: Balkrishna Bhave

322. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

July 26, 1944

BAPA,

I have your letter. Why such a decision? May not anyone tender his resignation? But whether you undertake tours or refuse to budge from your Delhi camp, Swami[1] is willing to be relieved this moment. But none from amongst Sir Purushottamdas and others is willing to let you go. Swami wants the matter to be entrusted to an arbitrator who should give his award. But should we take such a dispute to an arbitrator? It is a question of difference of opinion. Some people cannot see eye to eye. Yet both the parties or all of them might be doing good work. Under the circumstances, they work separatelyand preserve mutual amity. I am not issuing orders, I am simply comparing notes.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Swami Anand; *vide* "Letter to Swami Anand", 19-7-1944.

323. LETTER TO MANJULA GANDHI

July 26, 1944

CHI. MANJU,

I have your letter. Capitalize on your *bhajans* and forget all your worries after putting your full trust in God. There is no rule that because you are young in age you cannot acquire *jnana. Jnana,* that is, *atmajnana is* not necessarily associated with age. I have seen many an old and erudite fool. On the other hand an unlettered person like Raichandbhai had come to possess *atmajnana* even at a tender age. I hope to see you on the 1st evening or the 2nd morning. I very much want you to pay me a visit after you are all right.[1] Even if I am arrested and taken away, you can stay at the Asharm or you may reconsider your plans.

Blessings from

BAPU

MANJU GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

324. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

PANCHGANI,

July 26, 1944

I have read the debate in the Lords' on the Indian question with attention. I confess, I am disappointed. Lord Munster has correctly summarized[2] my proposals. It is the most constructive suggestion that I could conceive. If it is not accepted, even as a basis for a friendly discussion and for permission to be given to see members of the Working Committee, who alone can speak with authority, I must reluctantly come to the conclusion that the British Government do not want a fair solution of what I consider is a deadlock, but what they may not consider as such.

However earnest I may be in my efforts to reach a solution, I know I can do nothing, if there is no response from the British

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. K. C. Gharpure", 19-7-1944.

[2] For excerpts from Munster's speech, *vide* Appendix "Lord Munster's Speech", 25-7-1944.

Government. How I wish that the bogey of communal differences had not been raised in the debate. I have contended, as I contend even now, that differences there must be so long as there is a ruling third party to exploit them. I have spoken what I feel to be the truth. The occasion is too serious for me to hide it.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-7-1944

325. LETTER TO RADHIKADEVI

[After *July 26, 1944*][1]

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. What else can one do but resort to a fast when one is treated as less than human? I do not dare to interfere. Have faith in God and put up with whatever happens.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. RADHIKADEVI

VISHWANATH PRASAD CHAUBE

GOPALPUR

BALLIA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

326. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

PANCHGANI,

July [*26/*][2] *27, 1944*

DEAR FRIEND,

I must admit my disappointment over your letter[3] of the 22nd instant. But I am used to work in the face of disappointment. Here is my concrete proposal.

I am prepared to advise the Working Committee to declare that in view of the changed conditions, mass civil disobedience envisaged by the resolution of August 1942 cannot be offered and that full

[1] In the source, the letter is placed after the letters of July 26, 1944.

[2] From the reference to "Lord Munster's Speech"; *vide* Appendix "Lord Munster's Speech", 25-7-1944.

[3] *Vide* last footnote of "Letter to Lord Wavell", 15-7-1944.

co-operation in the war-effort should be given by the Congress,if a declaration of immediate Indian independence is made and a national government responsible to the Central Assembly be formed subject to the proviso that, during the pendency of the war, the military operations should continue as at present but without involving any financial burden on India. If there is a desire on the part of the British Government for a settlement, friendly talks should take the place of correspondence. But I am in your hands. I shall continue to knock so long as there is the least hope of an honourable settlement.

After the foregoing was written, I saw Lord Munster's speech in the House of Lords. The summary given by him in the House of Lords fairly represents my proposal. This summary may serve as a basis for mutual friendly discussion.[1]

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, p. 6; also *The Hindu*, 19-8-1944

327. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

PANCHGANI,
July 27, 1944

CHI. MANUDI,

I have your letter. That your weight should go down to 871b. is a matter of shame. It is sinful to read up to 2 o'clock at night. If that is the condition for passing, then I will have none of that kind of education. If you are unable to obey the rules, you will have to come to me. I would rather you remained uneducated than get educated in this way. You are irregular about taking medicine too. What does that indicate?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

[1] *Vide* also "Interview to the Press", 26-7-1944. For the Viceroy's reply, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Wavell", 15-8-1944.

328. TALK TO PANCHGANI CITIZENS[1]

PANCHGANI,
July 27, 1944

Mahatma Gandhi said that he had been greatly benefited by his stay in Panchgani and his health had considerably improved.

The Nawab of Wai who introduced the citizens to Mahatma Gandhi expressed the hope that he would visit the place annually.

Mahatma Gandhi talked to the gathering quite informally, and replying to the Vice-Principal of a local European school who said, he had seen Mahatma Gandhi in Charlestown while he was a young boy nearly forty years ago in South Africa, Mahatma Gandhi said, "Oh yes. I remember Charlestown well. Don't I know Charlestown where I got a good hiding?"[2] and burst into laughter.

Mahatma Gandhi said that he liked Panchgani better than other hill stations he had visited in India, but referred to the lack of accommodation and said that wealthy people should construct quarters so that the poor could also take advantage of the climate for recuperating their health.

The Bombay Chronicle, 28-7-1944

329. TELEGRAM TO STUART GELDER

Express *July 28, 1944*

GELDER
CARE FRANK MORAES
GREENFIELDS, CHURCHGATE RECLAMATION
BOMBAY

SORRY YOU STILL ILL. LET MORAES COME TAKE CHANCE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The report said that "heads of educational institutions, medical practitioners and businessmen" met Gandhiji in the afternoon and "spent nearly half an hour with him".

[2] *Vide* "*An Autobiography*—Part II", Chapter IX.

330. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

PANCHGANI,
July 28, 1944

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I was pained to read your letter. Your duty is to go to Indore. I will issue no order. I do not want any service from you. It would be a different matter if you fell ill and needed some nursing and came to Sevagram. Your duty is to stay outside and do whatever work you know. It is not a question of my being angry. It is a question of my own limitations. You may, therefore, do whatever service you like, but outside Sevagram. Now that your health is all right there is no need at all to go to Sevagram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 481

331. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

PANCHGANI,
July 28, 1944

CHI. KUSUM,

I have your letter. I hope to reach Sevagram, on the 3rd. I will not go to Bombay. I shall catch the train at Kalyan. You may travel by that train. If you do, meet Shantikumar. I myself am keen, of course.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KUSUMBEHN DESAI

MEHTA POLE

BARODA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1851

332. LETTER TO VIJAYA M. PANCHOLI

PANCHGANI,

July 28, 1944

CHI. VIJAYA,

I have your letter. I will reach Sevagram on the 3rd. Come over there whenever you wish to. I will wait for your letter. Please reply this letter. Tell Nanabhai that I have received his letter. Tell him that he should certainly come to Sevagram. I am not stopping at Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7149. Also C.W. 4641. Courtesy: Vijaya M. Pancholi

333. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

PANCHGANI,

July 28, 1944

The question most discussed with me by visitors is whether I approve of underground activities. These include sabotage, the publication of unauthorized sheets, etc. It has been suggested to me that without some workers going underground they could have done nothing. Some have contended that destruction of property, including dislocation of communication, provided that safety of human life could be ensured, should surely be counted as non-violence. Examples of other nations as having not hesitated to do all these things and much worse have been cited. My reply is that no nation has, so far as I know, deliberately used truth and non-violence as exclusive means for the attainment of freedom. Judged by that standard, I say unhesitatingly, that underground activities, even though utterly innocent in themselves, should have no place in the technique of non-violence. Sabotage and all it means, including destruction of property, is in itself violence. Though these activities may be shown to have touched the imagination and enthusiasm, I have no doubt that they have harmed the movement as a whole.

I swear by the Constructive Programme. Let me recount the

items of that programme:

1. Communal unity
2. Removal of untouchability
3. Prohibition
4. Khadi
5. Other village industries
6. Village sanitation
7. New or basic education
8. Adult education
9. Uplift of women
10. Service of the so-called aboriginals
11. Education in health and hygiene
12. Propaganda of *rashtra bhasha*
13. Love of one's own language
14. Working for economic equality.

Unfortunately the workers have not developed in that programme the living faith which I have. I can but re-emphasize the importance of that programme. And, if the whole of India could be converted to take to that programme, we should reach our goal in the quickest manner possible.

To the workers who are still underground, I advise:

If you share my conviction that underground activity is not conducive to the growth of the spirit of active non-violence, you will discover yourselves and take the risk of being imprisoned, believing that imprisonment, thus undergone, itself helps the freedom movement.[1]

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-7-1944

[1]*Vide* also Appendices "Discussion on Underground Activities", after 31-3-1944 and "Discussion with Underground Workers", after 31-3-1944.

334. LETTER TO SIR EDWARD JENKINS

AS AT SEVAGRAM,
CAMP PANCHGANI,
July 29, 1944

DEAR SIR EDWARD,

I thank you for your letter[1] of 16th July. I am thankful for the enclosure of the letter to Miss Agatha Harrison.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR EDWARD JENKINS
THE VICEROY'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, p. 35

335. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

PANCHGANI,
July 29, 1944

CHI. BABUDI,

I got your clean letter. I hope to reach Sevagram on the 3rd. When will I see you and Anand? Though eager, I am not impatient. Come only after you are completely all right. I did try but I could not find a homoeopath who could convince me. I can put faith only if I see some cases [of successful treatment]. Just now I don't intend to send for the book you mention. There is no time. But what can your doctor teach me?

Blessings to you all from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9973. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

[1] Which read: "I am dealing with your letter [*vide* "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 13-7-1944] of 13th July to Mr. Abell who is in Simla. I am sending your letter [*vide* "Letter to Agatha Harrison", 13-7-1944] to Miss Agatha Harrison through the bag as you wish."

336. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

July 29, 1944

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I am worried about Balkrishna. I hope he will get through the present crisis. Will he like to stay at Dr. Mehta's nursing home in Poona? I don't know whether or no Dr. Mehta will take up his case.[1] Though I am there, I cannot be relied upon.[2]

I am very busy these days. My pen has strayed into Gujarati, so I will let it go on. I haven't read the whole of Munnalal's letter. He seems all right; that is all I can say now. I am happy that Krishnadas[3] and Jajuji have been released. I am hoping to hear from them in detail.

Mitu[4] must be doing well.

What is the matter with Manojna's[5] sister? Ask her to write to me. I have sent Pyarelal to Bombay. He will be back by Saturday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4442

337. LETTER TO GANGADHARRAO DESHPANDE

PANCHGANI,
July 29, 1944

BHAI GANGADHARRAO,

I have heard everything from Bhai Pundalik. I have read your account also. I hope that what I am doing will solve the problem. And if any doubt still remains, write to me. You must keep yourself in good health. You have yet to render a lot of service.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5224

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Balkrishna Bhave", 26-7-1944.
[2] What follows is in Gujarati.
[3] Krishnadas Gandhi
[4] Aryanayakam's daughter
[5] Wife of Krishnadas Gandhi

338. TALK TO BOMBAY CONGRESS LEADERS[1]

PANCHGANI,
[*July*][2] *29/30, 1944*

Ninth August is a great day and it is the duty of all to observe it. But that part of the resolution which speaks of mass civil disobedience cannot be brought into force because the authority to put it into force was vested solely in me. Today I see no possibility of mass civil disobedience either according to that authority or according to circumstances.

Mass civil disobedience is one thing and the exercise of citizen's right and civil disobedience in pursuance of it is different. The people have been exercising the right of defensive individual civil disobedience since 1920. People in general may not understand the difference between mass civil disobedience and civil disobedience for the defence of individual citizen's rights. But it is necessary to know the differences.

On such occasions as 9th August, people have to understand the difference, and exercise this right of individual civil disobedience for the defence of civil rights. In such places where it is necessary to take the permission of police for meetings, processions and such common civil rights, permission from the police should be asked for. But, if such permission is not granted, people should exercise their civil right in spite of the refusal.[3]

Chief Commissioner's Office, Bombay, File No. 3001/HP. Courtesy: Government of Maharashtra

[1] According to the source, this is a summary.

[2] The source has "August", evidently a mistake.

[3] In the source, this was followed by a "copy of the draft letter to be addressed to the Commissioner of Police, Bombay, by the leader of the procession on August 9", which appeared as "approved" by Gandhiji "in pursuance of this policy", *vide* Appendix "Draft Letter to the Commissioner of Police, Bombay", 15-8-1944.

339. LETTER TO P. C. JOSHI

AS AT SEVAGRAM,
CAMP PANCHGANI,
July 30, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

I had duly received your letter[1] of 14th June and also your letter of 26th of July sent with Shri Kumaramangalam.

Your answer to my first question provokes further question for your reply. I understand that although the chief actors among the Allied powers are by no means inclined towards real democracy, you think that by the time the war ends, their designs will be confounded and that the people all the world over will suddenly find self-expression and overthrow the present leaders. In the peoples, according to answer, I am entitled to include us, other Asiatics and Negroes, for that matter perhaps, also the proletariat of Japan and Germany. If such is your belief, I must confess that I do not share it but I keep myself open to conviction. Meanwhile I suggest that the title 'people's war' is highly misleading. It enables the Government in India to claim that at least one popular party considers this as people's war. I suggest, too, that Russia's limited alliance with the Allied powers cannot by any stretch of imagination convert what was before an imperialistic war against that Nazi combine, into a people's war.

Holding the view I do, it is superfluous for me now to answer your argument that "this war has split the world into two camps". Between Scylla and Charybdis, if I sail in either direction, I suffer shipwreck. Therefore I have to be in the midst of the storm. I suggested a way out. Naturally it has been rejected because the powers that be do not want to relax their grip on India. As I am composing this letter to you, I have read and re-read your argument. Every paragraph offends; for, to me, it lacks reality. Please believe me that my prejudice against your party has nothing to do with my examination of your answer to the first question.

Q. 2. Your answer, as far as it goes, I hold to be completely satisfactory. I will not ask you for further proof about your finances.

After I have dealt with your answers, I will put my difficulties before

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from P. C. Joshi", 14-6-1944.

you. Your answers to the other questions do not admit of a categorical reply. I understand your answers and appreciate them too. If I was free from prejudices, I would have no hesitation in accepting your answers.[1] But my difficulty is real and I ask for your sympathy. When I make the admission that I have prejudices, it is an appeal to you to have patience with me and to disarm my prejudices in the best manner you can. I can only give you my assurance that I am ready to see anybody you want me to see, to read anything you want me to read and to examine every argument or fact produced by you as dispassionately as I can. I give you this further assurance that I have not acted upon my prejudice, nor shall I do so, unless the prejudices harden into a confirmed belief that your party represents a force of evil and is really an obstacle in the way of the fight for freedom. I am not likely to have that belief easily and, if I have it, you shall have ample notice so as to enable you to wean me from it. I know your worth. You have very able young men and women, as selfless as I would claim to be. You are all hard working and possess great energy and you impose strict discipline on your workers. All this I prize and admire. I would not easily lose such a force because of any preconceived notions of mine.

If I have been inordinately long in dealing with your answers which you sent me so promptly, it was because, as you are aware, I was preoccupied and also because I was examining the evidence that was pouring in upon me unsolicited against your party.[2] I asked them to let me use their names and they have given me the permission. I take the latest first, i.e., Babu Manoranjan Chaudhary. I did not even know that he was coming and when he did ask for an appointment[3], it was in connection with my acceptance of the Rajaji Formula[4]. Butreally he took the greater part of my time to tell me that the communists had done great injury to the national cause. I am using a milder term than

[1] Referring to this, the addressee, in his reply dated September 12, said: "It hurts us more than you can imagine to read that our nation's leader pleads prejudices as standing in the way of examining slander against a young patriotic party."

[2] In his reply, the addressee said: "Mudslinging at political opponents is an old weapon of those who have lost faith in the people and given up all moral values."

[3] Manoranjan Chaudhary was asked (*vide* "Letter to Manoranjan Chaudhary", 24-7-1944) by Gandhiji to meet him on July 27. Dealing with this, Joshi said in his reply that Manoranjan Chaudhary was the agent of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee who was bitterly anti-communist as he had been exposed by the communists.

[4] *Vide* Appendix "C. Rajagopalachari's Formula", after 5-8-1942.

was really used before me. He has left papers which I have not been able to study. And he has also left with me a printed book[1] which I have glanced through personally and it makes bad reading. The printed book can be seen by any deputy you may choose to send. Probably you have seen it yourself.[2]

The other is Sjt. Kaleswara Rao of Bezwada. He also sent me a long letter from which I quote the salient passages[3] (see enclosure[4]). Add to this the numerous letters I have received from correspondents, known and unknown, all impeaching the party. I understand, too, that Shri Jayaprakash Narayan is also 'disillusioned'.

You have referred me to Mian Iftikharuddin[5] and Shaukat Ansari, both of whom I know well and for whom I have great regard. Unfortunately Iftikharuddin is in jail. I have never talked about Communism to Shaukat, because I know him and his wife Zohra apart from their politics. But no general assurance from them will obliterate the evidence that has forced itself upon me and of which I have given you a bird's-eye view. I will ask you not to dismiss all this evidence as so much prejudice. I would ask you not to be angry with your critics, however ignorant they may be. You will have legitimate cause for anger, if their criticism is malicious and conceived with a hostile intent. Lastly, I ask you to believe me that I want to impress the services of every one of you for the cause of independence to be fought along the lines that I have chalked out for myself and the whole country. And if I am convinced that I am going astray and that yours is the correct method, I would like to be won over by you

[1] *War Against the People*, by Kalyani Bhattacharya. Joshi alleged that she was not the author, but Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee got it written and paid for its publication.

[2] Joshi said that he had not read it but glanced through it. Immediately on receiving it, he had asked the Bengal Committee of Communist Party whether he should answer it in *People's War* to which they replied: "Need not bother because it had been withdrawn from circulation as all decent Bengalees who read it felt disgusted over it."

[3] Regarding Kaleswara Rao's accusation, Joshi asked Gandhiji to call Sundarayya, the Andhra Communist leader, and Kaleswara Rao together and judge or to hold a trial in public with C. Rajagopalachari and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu as judges.

[4] Not reproduced here.

[5] President, Punjab Provincial Congress Committee

toyour side and I will sincerely and gladly serve as an apprentice wanting to be enlisted as a unit in your ranks.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Correspondence between Mahatma Gandhi and P. C. Joshi, pp. 17-22

340. INTERVIEW TO "NEWS CHRONICLE"[1]

[PANCHGANI,
July 30, 1944][2]

Mr. Amery knows better, but it is convenient for him to brush aside my offer[3] by saying that the formula is not even the starting point. Had it not been the starting point, there would not have been all the discussion about my formula that has taken place in the Press.

Asked if he shared the feeling that the British Government is planning to by-pass the political problem by focussing public attention on economic issues, Gandhiji said:

Imagine the economic regeneration of England if she is

[1] The report said that this was in answer to the statement made by L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, during a debate in the House of Commons on July 28. According to *The Indian Annual Register,* 1944, Vol. II, p. 308, Amery had said: " . .. So far as India's future constitution is concerned . . . an agreed constitution could only be arrived at if the predominantly Muslim provinces were free to adhere or stand out.... Apart from that particular issue . . . one central demand upon which he does not leave any room for ambiguity . . . is the demand for the immediate recognition of India's independence under a provisional government, in which the only powers reserved to the Viceroy are those which deal with the control of active military operations. All reserve powers indispensable to ensure that the various functions of administration are co-ordinate with war effort and also those indispensable to safeguard the constitutional position for minority elements—all those are to disappear. Well, that is, after all, just the demand upon which the negotiations with the Congress broke down two years ago and were bound to break down. I will only invite the House to read Mr. Gandhi's statements side by side with those then issued by Congress leaders, to see that, in this respect at any rate, there has been no real advance. Indeed Mr. Gandhi now adds the further stipulation that India is to bear no part of the cost of her own defence. So long as those are the basis for his proposals, they obviously do not form even the starting point for a profitable discussion either with Lord Wavell or with the interned Congress leaders."

[2] The interview appeared as reported under this date-line.

[3] *Vide* "Interview to Stuart Gelder", 4/6-7-1944 and "Interview to the Press", 14-7-1944.

politically subjected to an extraneous power. I can understand theruthless exploitation of the economic resources of India by a power that has held her in bondage for over 150 years, but that will not be economic prosperity for India. It will spell economic dejection and political degradation. I am amazed that British statesmen who happen to be ruling India today are not satisfied with the mere rejection of a plan conceived in all honesty, but that they should even suggest that the political question should be shelved during the war and that attention should be concentrated on India's economic salvation[1].

The Hindu, 1-8-1944

341. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

PANCHGANI,
July 30, 1944

I have noticed this.[2] It has caused me pain as also amazement that the representatives of the British nation, who have a long and distinguished record of heroic fight for political freedom, should divorce the economic development of India from political subjection and give the former preference over the latter. To me it looks like putting the cart before the horse, and I have not yet seen any horse performing the trick of pushing the cart with its nose. It was, therefore, a pleasure to find two noted industrialists, Mr. J. R. D. Tata and Sir Homi Mody, summarily rejecting the idea put forth in the House of Commons and holding out, I suppose, from bitter experience, that the economic development of India was dependent upon the solution of the political deadlock, in other words a proper national government functioning at the Centre. I suppose they had in mind the gigantic concessions that have been made during recent years to British monopolists. They must have had in mind also the strangling of Indian enterprise. What can, therefore, happen without a national government is not the economic development of India, but its exploitation and degradation.

[1] *Vide* also the following item.

[2] According to the report, Gandhiji was alluding to "the House of Commons debate with particular reference to the consensus of opinion . . . that the economic development of India was of greater importance than the solution of the political deadlock". *Vide* also the preceding item.

Members of the House of Commons, not knowing the realities in India, may philosophize and talk of the immediate importance of economic development. I wish they can see what is going on today inIndia. I have no shadow of doubt in my mind that the Bengal famine, as also famines in other parts of India, were man-made and not God-made. I need not impugn the honesty of the rulers who have been sent out to India from Britain.

I hold that in spite of all the honesty that the British rulers can summon to their assistance, it is impossible for them to get behind the Indian skin and know the real disease. The consensus of opinion in the House of Commons, therefore, is for me a terrible pointer. It confirms me in my opinion that the "Quit India" resolution was no hasty cry conceived in anger. To put the same in parliamentary language, it demands that India must be now governed by Indians chosen by her own people—not a coterie but the whole mass of the people without distinction of race, creed or colour. It is unfortunate that the House of Commons has once more missed the opportunity of making the issue between the Allied powers and the Axis powers a real issue of democracy versus autocracy, or the exploitation of classes or nations by a class or a nation armed to the teeth. My offer presented that issue in the clearest possible language that I could command. It was presented on behalf of all the exploited nations and races of the earth. It is a great pity that the Lords and the Commons have turned down my offer. The Allies will have their victory, but the exploited races will not feel the glow of it. They will know that the seeds of another and deadlier war will be sown by that very victor. I ask myself the question: 'Must rivers of blood flow for such an empty victory?'

Asked when he expected to meet Mr. Jinnah, Mahatma Gandhi said:

I expect to meet the Qaid-e-Azam as soon as he wants me, of course, health permitting. The publication of the Formula[1] is in pursuit of negotiations for a communal settlement. It is not an idle effort. It is conceived in all sincerity. It is unfortunate that the criticism that has been levelled against it, so far as I can see, has been conceived out of prejudice or careless study of the Formula. Nor is it an offer on the part of any party. It is a contribution from two life-servants of the nation towards the solution of the communal tangle, which has hitherto defied solution. It is in open invitation to all

[1] Rajaji Formula; *vide* Appendix "C. Rajagopalachari's Formula", after 5-8-1942.

parties to apply their minds to the solution. The Rajaji Formula is intended as a help to all lovers of the country. It is the best we could conceive, but it is open to amendment, as it is open to rejection or acceptance.

Gandhiji told that British Government's rejection of the offer does not affect the Rajaji Formula in anyway whatsoever. As far as he remembered, Gelder did notthe proposal, and, if he did, he must have got it from Rajaji and not from him.[1]

In a way the rejection of my offer for the resolution of the political deadlock enables all parties to concentrate their attention on communal settlement. Whilst I had said and repeat that the presence of a third party effectively prevents a solution, it was never meant to convey that I would make no attempt at an honourable solution, even while the third party continued to dominate this land of ours. No one will be more pleased than I, if we can pull through a solution which satisfied all parties.

To a reporter who asked if Mahatma Gandhi would advocate Congressmen going back to jail in view of the British Government's rejection of his proposals, Mahatma Gandhi said:

Have you ever known any sane person without any cause going to jail, or after discharge going back to jail? But a person who holds his self-respect or his country's liberty dearer than life itself invites suffering even unto death in defending either and, in that process, if jail comes his way, he welcomes it. The question, therefore, should be addressed to the Government: 'When do you propose to take back to jail those whom you have released?' I know that Government are not going to oblige you by answering your question.

The Hindu, 1-8-1944

342. LETTER TO SHWAIB QURESHI

PANCHGANI,
July 31, 1944

MY DEAR SHWAIB,

Your description of the boy brings tears to the eyes. I have a vivid recollection of my struggle with the child. God's peace on him and you, the parents.

So, you see, the Qaid-e-Azam and I are to meet. If the publication of the C. R. Formula was blameworthy, I must share the

[1] This paragraph is reproduced from *The Bombay Chronicle*, 31-8-1944.

blame equally with him. Anyway you will work away, I know.

Love to both.

BAPU

SHWAIB SAHEB QURESHI

BHOPAL

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

343. LETTER TO REKHDE

AS AT SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,[1]

July 31, 1944

MY DEAR REKHDE,

Your letter makes me sad. Yours is not the only case of its kind. And I am quite helpless. Cases such as yours are inevitable in a national struggle. Values have to be changed. We cannot live the old life and still be in the struggle.

I am extremely sorry, I cannot send an encouraging letter to your liking.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

344. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

July 31, 1944

CHI. JANAKIBEHN,

If God is kind, I shall arrive there on the 3rd just to see how you are doing. I said "kind" through ignorance. God is always kind. If we do not recognize that kindness, that is our stupidity. We are, however, all subject to His Will, whether willingly or unwillingly. If, therefore, it is His Will, we shall meet on the 3rd. I am glad that Madalasa[2] and Om[3] will be there. I will, of course, miss Savitri[4]. About

[1] Permanent address

[2] Addressee's daughter

[3] *ibid*

[4] *ibid*

Kamala[1] I needn't say anything. She is a very busy woman. Now, if I mention more names, I will have to take another slip of paper and, moreover, where is the time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3033

345. LETTER TO A. V. THAKKAR

July 31, 1944

BAPA,

This is just to make you laugh, if I can. When there is a clash of temperaments, father-son, husband-wife, friend-friend, do not break off their relationship but live separately. Compared to you, Swami is as meek as a woman. We have among us men who have more than one wife. You have a right to have many wives like Swami. All these days you put up with him. Pull on for a few more years. Little more of life remains. And I have explained how to carry on.

You are working with all your strength. But how many tasks can you look after? When the volcano has burst, this memorial seems a very trivial matter. I cannot bear to see people like you sacrificing their all for its sake. But I am keeping silent because I think that the women and children in the villages may gain something from it.

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope to reach Sevagram on the 3rd.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1193

346. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

[*July 31, 1944*][2]

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

What about Amritlal? Do bring Prahlad here if you wish to. How is the new arrangement working? If there is much work in the field,

[1] Addressee's daughter-in-law, Kamalnayan's wife

[2] From the G.N. Register

some of us should give to it as many hours as we can spare. The work of weeding and so on is easy. Stock the grass, etc., in the godown.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10614

347. LETTER TO KASHIBEHN GANDHI

[*July 31, 1944*][1]

CHI. KASHI,

I might say, you have now crossed the threshold of old age. You have, however, to live for many more years, not merely for the sake of living but for rendering service. One who lives merely for the sake of living does not truly live; only he who lives for the sake of service can be said to live [truly]. And he who dies in harness also lives [for ever]. Hence give up all worries, and devote yourself to such service as your mind and body permit.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

348. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNA SINHA

[*July 31, 1944*][2]

BHAI SHRIKRISHNA SINHA,

Read the enclosed wire. Do as you think right. I do agree that no time should be given to the collection of the Kasturba purse at the cost of any social service. Whatever can be collected without any great effort should be considered valuable [enough]. I have not replied to the wire. You should do it yourself.

Bapa writes and says that you and Anugraha Babu[3] keep indifferent health. Preserve your health. You have yet to render a lot of service.

I leave Panchgani tomorrow. God willing, I shall reach Sevagram on the 3rd.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In the source, the letters are placed among those of this date.
[2] *ibid.*
[3] Anugrah Narayan Sinha.

349. MESSAGE TO PEOPLE OF ASSAM[1]

PANCHGANI,
July 1944

If the people feel that the present policy of the Government on settlement and immigration is oppressive and anti-national, let them fight it non-violently or violently, if necessary.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-12-1944

350. LETTER TO ARUNA ASAF ALI

[On or before *August 2, 1944*][2]

PRIYA ARUNA,

You must not discover yourself unless you feel the wrong of secrecy. You must not be displeased if I hold an opinion which does not coincide with yours. I shall not love you the less because I cannot see eye to eye with you. You should be patient with me. Do nothing in a hurry. I have not judged anyone. I have given my opinion about certain acts. You will harm the cause by acting against your judgement.[3] See me when you like. Don't be in a hurry. Don't be sad.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: K. M. Panikkar Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] The report said that Gopinath Bardoloi, ex-Premier of Assam, had "told the United Press [of India] that in view of the seriousness of the problems as a result of the Assam Government policy on the matter vitally affecting the province, it was referred to Mahatma Gandhi in July last when two Congressmen of Assam were sent to Panchgani". *Vide* also "Message to People of Assam", before 16-8-1944.

[2] The text of this letter suggests that it was written after Gandhiji's statement to the Press dated July 28, 1944 (*vide* "Statement to the Press", 28-7-1944), and before the addressee's letter dated August 2, which appears to have been written in reply to this. It read: "If only I could honestly feel that our mode of resistance was wrong, life would become so simple. To be permitted to act under what is known as the willing suspension of disbelief or better still blind discipline would take an enormous load off my shoulders. But you are bent on testing our mettle. We will now go into voluntary inaction for a while."

[3] In her letter dated August 1 the addressee, writing on behalf of her co-workers who were still underground, had written that they were willing to submit to Gandhiji's orders, suspend their activities and surrender themselves.

351. INTERVIEW TO "DAILY WORKER"

BOMBAY,
August 2, 1944

Q. You promise all aid to the Allied war effort.[1] How concretely will the character and quantity of the war effort in India and other countries be changed through the establishment of a national government in India?

Mahatma Gandhi replied that the question required a detailed answer, whereas the basis of his offer was to give moral weight to the Allied cause. This the cause lacked at present.

Asked to explain what he meant by "adding moral weight to the Allied cause", Mahatma Gandhi said:

The Allies are today making brave declarations about democracy and liberty which to me, or, to put it plainly, to the exploited nations, mean nothing. Mere declarations, pleasing to the ear, can give no satisfaction to the sufferers. By "the exploited nations" I mean the Asiatics and Africans. If the Allies are fighting for democracy, their democracy should include all the exploited races of the earth. Facts, as I see them, prove the contrary. Almost all, if not all, parties agree that India was never so much under foreign domination as it is today.

A clear acceptance of the Indian demand for independence and the consequent establishment of a national responsible government, subject to the limitations I have mentioned, would immediately change the character of the Allied cause. It will be immediately differentiated from the cause of the Axis Powers, if the latter's fight can be described as a cause.

What material gain will accrue to the Allies from the recognition of India as an independent country, subject to the provision accepted by you?

I must refuse to descend from the platform I occupy. Surely, if the character of the Allied cause is so radically altered, as I claim it must be by the acceptance of my offer, all else must follow as a matter of course. But whether it does or not, I want the acceptance of my offer to be on the unadulterated moral basis. It should be enough for the Allies to have the guarantee that their military operations will not, in any way, be adversely affected by India being counted as an

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Stuart Gelder", 4-7-1944.

independent nation, not merely in word but in fact.

I hold that the effect of the declaration of India's independence, accompanied by simultaneous sincere action, should, by itself, take the wind out of the sails of the Axis Powers. And I should be surprised if they do not capitulate almost immediately on the declaration.

Suppose England was under foreign rule today, like India, and the ruling power was engaged in a war with some other nation or nations, and involved England willy-nilly in the war. Suppose further that the foreign power suddenly declared England independent without the latter having put up an armed fight for freedom, would not every Englishman enthusiastically support the erstwhile foreign ruler, now turned a friendly power? You can now understand what will happen to India if, when Britain is in sight of victory, she were to declare the independence of India.

Having said all this to elucidate my answer, I wish to suggest that my offer furnishes a basis for honourable negotiation and release of the members of the Congress Working Committee. A discussion of details and filling in the gaps, deliberately left in my offer, must follow as a matter of course.

The correspondent then told him that the Tory Press in Britain confuses the people by stating that "Gandhi still adheres to the 'Quit India' resolution[1].'' They exploit the fact that the British people are unaware of the burning anti-Fascist and patriotic content of the resolution. The correspondent asked him to clarify his statement that the resolution was "innocuous[2]".

The whole of the resolution is a noble document. The 'Quit India' slogan is an innocuous and natural cry. The sting was in the sanction clause of the resolution authorizing me to offer mass civil disobedience in the event of the rejection of the national demand. As I have said, my authority has lapsed, and even if it has not, I cannot organize mass civil disobedience at the present moment. Therefore, the resolution should be read without the sanction clause, and I challenge anybody to take exception to a single word in that resolution. 'Quit India', read together with the Congress offer that the Allied operations on the Indian soil might continue, means nothing more and nothing less than that the British rule should end in its

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Resolution Passed by All-India Congress Committee", 8-8-1942.

[2] *Vide* "Interview to the Press", 13-7-1944.

entirety, even while the war is going on—if the war is merely for the deliverance of the exploited nations of the earth.

The correspondent next reminded him of his statement that the Cripps offer[1] contemplated almost perpetual vivisection of India and asked him what it meant. Mahatma Gandhi smiled and said:

Surely it can mean only one thing. The Cripps offer divided India into Princely India and democratic India. Is not that vivisection?

The correspondent told him that a lot of propaganda was being made in reactionary circles in England, particularly by the Tory Press, to the effect that if Gandhiji's demand was granted, the minorities would suffer. Mahatma Gandhi replied:

That is a function belonging to the Rajaji Formula[2]. I can only say that the Formula contemplates the fullest protection to the smallest minority. If there are any gaps left in it, they will be filled in at the time of mutual discussion that must precede a final settlement.

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-8-1944

352. A FOOTNOTE[3]

[After *August 2, 1944*][4]

We do not think Gandhiji would make any such admission. Has he not said that every art would be richer for the artist spinning? Gandhiji would accept the Poet's offering for what it is worth but he would accept nothing as a substitute for hand spinning.

From a photostat: C.W. 10510. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1] *Vide* Appendix "British Government's Proposal : Note by the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs", 2-3-1942.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "C. Rajagopalachari's Formula", before 5-8-1942.

[3] This footnote, revised by Gandhiji, appears in K. R. Kripalani's article "Gandhi and Tagore" in *Gandhiji—His Life and Work*. It refers to the following passage " . . . and Gandhiji today would be the first to admit that the Great Sentinel had more than earned his right to his bread and did not need to spin to justify his existence. . . ." The draft of the footnote submitted to Gandhiji read: "Gandhiji would admit nothing of the sort. Gurudev claimed exemption from spinning on the ground of his being a poet, but Gandhiji said: 'No. Your art will be all the richer if you spin." For Gandhiji's foreword to the book, *vide* "A Word for the Reader", 29-8-1944.

[4] Valji G. Desai had sent the draft of the footnote to Gandhiji on August 2, 1944.

353. LETTER TO ACHYUT PATWARDHAN

[After *August 2, 1944*][1]

BHAI A.,

I have your letter. I do not wish that you should come out in the open until you are convinced at heart. I have only pointed out to the contradiction between non-violence and underground activities and destruction of property. There is no question at all of the Congress control in this matter. I would like to go to the extent of saying that anything done without full understanding will harm the Congress. I shall not be hurt at all if you and other workers do not agree with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

354. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 3, 1944

CHI. MIR

All your letters were received. Came here today with a large party including S. Kumar[2] his wife[3], Dr. J. Mehta[4] and Khurshedbehn[5]. I am very well. Yes, you should go slow, make no haste in choosing the soil.[6] The Ashram has grown out of all proportion.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABAI
BUNDRA TEA ESTATE
P. O. PALAMPUR
KAGRA VALLEY, PUNJAB

From the original: C.W. 6499. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9894

[1] This letter was in reply to the addressee's letter of August 2, 1944

[2] *ibid*

[3] The supersription in this and the other letters of the addressee is in Devanagari script.

[4] Shantikumar Morarjee

[5] Sumati Morarjee

[6] The addressee explains: "This was in connection with the site of a small ashram which I was planning to start on my own, in the north-west of the United Provinces."

355. LETTER TO GOPINATH BARDOLOI

August 3, 1944

MY DEAR BARDOLOI,

I have your letter. I have read the papers and I have had long chats with the friends. I will not, because I cannot, give specific instructions. But I would lay down general principles to guide you. There should never be the slightest departure from truth and non-violence. There should be perfect fearlessness. There should be no secrecy, and there should be complete non-co-operation with evil. Thus under the lure of saving starving people I may not co-operate with evil even as I may not pour milk in a poison bowl in the hope of feeding the poor.

The Bihar example will mislead if not properly understood. I co-operated and spent the money that was collected. There were two parallel collections. Ours was the biggest and best spent. Today there is no such scope. Do not think of the past except to learn lessons from it.

Love.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

356. LETTER TO K. SRINIVASAN

August 3, 1944

DEAR SRINIVASAN[1],

Khurshedbehn who is with me just tells me that you have lost your dear daughter. I am lying down, so she takes this to my dictation.It was like news to me, when she mentioned the tragedy and yet as I think of it I have a fear that I saw the news somewhere and might also have thought of writing to you, and then [some]thing intervened between the thought and the execution of it. Very often such things have happened in my life. Whether I have written to you or spoken to you about the tragedy, my writing to you now need not be superfluous. Having suffered myself in the same manner I can appreciate all the more your grief. Accept therefore the sympathy of a fellow-sufferer in life's march.

Did you ever know that in Sevagram Mahadev was a regular reader of *The Hindu* and in the detention camp first Pyarelal and then I took Mahadev's place and often found things in *The Hindu* which we did not find in the other papers?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

357. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM ,
August 3, 1944

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have gone through your letter. I hope Usha is all right now. In operations, our calculations do not prove true. Do not be in a hurry to come here. When everything is all right, you may pay a short visit. I arn quite well. Dr. Mehta is here and looks after me. Manilal is still at Akola.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Editor, *The Hindu*

358. DISCUSSION WITH D. RAMASWAMI[1]

SEVAGRAM,
[On or after *August 3, 1944*][2]

Re-organization of the villages is a very intricate problem, but if we can find even half a dozen workers of the right type, we can solve it in due time. The time factor is important, but given the right start the thing will grow like a snowball. You have heard of Booker T. Washington. We have to produce better workers than even him in order to achieve our object.

As for you, your ambition will be fulfilled if, besides your ability and enthusiasm, you introduce something else in your life, i.e., a living faith in God. Then all insipidity will vanish. A cosmopolitan[3] outlook is a necessity but it can never be a substitute for God. God is there, but our conception of God is limited by our mental horizon and by our physical environment. For instance, when you read the Bible, you find that the God of the Hebrews was quite different from the God of Jesus Christ. You are dissatisfied with the prevalent idea about God for the simple reason that those who profess belief in God do not present a living God in their own lives.

Unless you have a living faith in God to sustain you, when failure stares you in the face, there is disappointment for you. You may develop a revulsion for the work that you have taken up. You may begin to feel that after all what Dr. Ambedkar said was the right thing and you made a mistake in rejecting the high posts which you had been offered. My advice to you is that you should not leave this Ashram till you have found God. In spite of my limitless failings I am a seeker after Truth and so are my companions in this place. The Ashram, apart from its inhabitants, the sum total of energy that it represents, the principles for which it stands, may enable you to know God to the extent that you may be able to say 'God is', just as you can say 'Truth is'.

RAMASWAMI: I can say that in the sense that Truth is the antithesis of

[1] A young Harijan graduate who gave Gandhiji a report of his work in the villages and sought his help and guidance. Gandhiji was pleased with his report.

[2] The discussion took place at Sevagram Ashram. After his release Gandhiji reached there on August 3, 1944.

[3] *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase* here has "humanitarian".

falsehood.

GANDHIJI: That is good enough. The seers have described God as "*Neti, neti*" ('Not this, not this'). Truth will elude you. The sum total of all that is true is Truth. But you can't sum up all that is true. Like most of those who have had Western education, you have got an analytical mind. But there are things that can't be analysed. God who can be analysed by my poor intellect won't satisfy me. Therefore I do not try to analyse Him. I go behind the relative to the absolute and I get my peace of mind.

R. I have carefully gone through your writings in the *Harijan* and *Young India* . Your way of life appeals to me very much. It offers scope for the exercise of individual will. The idea of God introduces a determinism and that limits man. It interferes with his free will.

G. Is there such a thing as free will? Where is it? We are mere playthings in the hands of Providence.

R. What is the relationship between God and man, between-Truth and God?

G. I used to say 'God is Truth'. That did not completely satisfy me. So I said 'Truth is God'. He and His law are not different. God's law is God Himself. To interpret it man has to resort to intense prayer and merge himself in God. Each one will interpret the same in his or her own way. As for the relationship between man and God, man does not become man by virtue of having[1] two hands. He becomes man by becoming a tabernacle of God.

R. When my idea of God itself is not clear, your talk of man becoming a tabernacle of God makes things still more confusing. . . .

G. Yet it is the true conception Unless we have the realization that the body is the house of God, we are less than men. And where is the difficulty or confusion in conceiving Truth as God? You will concede that we are not tabernacles of Untruth; we are of Truth[2].

Everyone who wants to live a true life has to face difficulties in life, some of which appear insurmountable. At that time it is faith in God, that is, Truth alone, that will sustain you. The fellow-feeling which makes you feel miserable because of your brother's misery is godliness. You may call yourself an atheist, but so long as you feel akin with mankind you accept God in practice. I remember of

[1] *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase* here adds "two feet and".

[2] Gandhiji was then silent for a moment.

clergymen who came to the funeral of the great atheist Bradlaugh[1]. They said they had come to pay their homage because he was a godly man.

If you go back with a living faith in God, in Truth, I have no doubt that your work will flourish. You should feel dissatisfied with everything till you have found Him and you will find Him.[2]

An Atheist with Gandhi, pp. 28-31; also *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. I, Book I, pp. 57-8

359. DISCUSSION WITH A FRIEND[3]

[On or after August *3, 1944*][4]

FRIEND: If you pray to God, can He intervene and set aside the law for your sake?

GANDHIJI: God's law remains unaltered but since that very law says that every action has a result, if a person prays, his prayer is bound to produce an unforeseeable result in terms of His law. . . .[5]

But do you know the God to whom you pray?

No, I don't.

To whom shall we pray then?

To the God whom we do not know—we do not always know the person to whom we pray.

Maybe, but the person to whom we pray is knowable.

So is God; and since He is knowable, we search. It may take a billion years before we find Him. What does it matter? So, I say, even if you do not believe, you must continue to pray, i.e., search. "Help thou my unbelief" is a verse from the Bible to be remembered. But it is not right to ask such questions. You must have infinite patience, and inward longing. Inward longing obviates all such questions. "Have faith and you will be whole" is another tip from the Bible.

[1] Charles Bradlaugh

[2] According to *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, D. Ramaswami had decided to stay at the Ashram for some time and search for God through the service of his fellow-beings.

[3] According to the source "a veteran nationalist leader from South India" came to see Gandhiji at Sevagram about the same time as Dr. Ramaswami; *vide* the preceding item.

[4] *ibid*

[5] Omission as in the source

When I look at nature around me, I say to myself, there must be one Creator, one God and to Him I should pray.

That again is reasoning. God is beyond reason. But I have nothing to say if your reason is enough to sustain you.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, p. 59

360. LETTER TO USHA GANDHI

[After *August 3, 1944*][1]

CHI. USHI,

Your letter is very good. But why with a pencil? Now that your tonsils have been removed, won't you put on some flesh?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

361. MESSAGE FOR TAGORE DAY[2]

[On or before August *4, 1944*][3]

Organizing yourself, you will achieve success. This is the message of Gurudev. Make this message your motto.

The Hindu, 6-8-1944

362. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

SEVAGRAM,
August 5, 1944

Many Congressmen ask me how to celebrate the forthcoming 9th of August. That date was a turning point in India's fight for freedom. I had intended to spend 9th August, 1942 in peaceful introspection and to inaugurate negotiations for a settlement. But the Government or Fate had decided otherwise. The Government went mad, and so did some people. Sabotage and the like were resorted to

[1] From the contents; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] This was read out at a public meeting held in Hyderabad on August 4 under the Presidentship of Hasan Yar Jung Bahadur.

[3] *ibid*

and many things were done in the Congress name or in my name. I am aware that I do not represent the Congress mind always. Many Congressmen repudiate my non- violence. The Working Committee is the only body which can legitimately and truly represent the Congress.

As an old servant of the country, however, I can advise, and Congressmen are at liberty to treat my advice as instructions. I have already said[1] that mass civil disobedience cannot be offered now; but mass civil disobedience is one thing and individual action in defence of self-respect and liberty is wholly another. It is a universal duty for all time, the discharge of which requires no sanction save that of one's own conscience. In a previous note, I have pointed out when and where the duty arises. But the forthcoming 9th is a special occasion.

There has arisen much misunderstanding about the Congress purpose and mind. I must avoid all avoidable risks. Therefore, in all places except in Bombay, my advice is not to disregard special police prohibitions for that day. For Bombay, I have already given advice through the Mayor of Bombay. I need not reiterate the advice here. I have selected Bombay as the most suitable place for the simple reason that it is most easily accessible to me and is the place where the historic meeting of August 1942 was held. Whatever it is to be, it will be a symbolic act. Curiosity is natural and pardonable, but I plead for restraint. The self-imposed curb will be finished if I succeed in carrying conviction to the human family, that every man or woman, however weak in body, is the guardian of his or her self-respect and liberty. This defence avails, though the whole world may be against the individual resister.

I have suggested the present symbolic procedure to see whether those who organize the demonstration have co-operation from the local public. Freedom of 400 million people through purely non-violent effort is not to be gained without learning the virtue of iron discipline, not imposed from without, but sprung naturally from within. Without the requisite discipline non-violence can only be a veneer.

The second thing that I should like done on the forthcoming 9th August is for those who have gone underground to discover themselves. They can do so by informing the authorities of their

[1] *Vide* "Talk to Bombay Congress Leaders", 29/30-7-1944.

movements and whereabouts or by simply and naturally doing their work in the open without any attempt to evade or elude the police. To go underground is to elude the police. Therefore, real discovery is to discover oneself to the party eluded. Nothing should be done unless the conviction has gone home that a particular action is essential for the cause. In the absence of such a conviction, those who see this note may ignore it and should follow what they consider best for the country.

What everyone should do on the 9th, whether they have the conviction as to nonviolence or not, or whether they are Congressmen or not, is to carry out on the 9th the whole or any part of the fourteenfold programme reiterated in my recent note[1]. Just for example, everyone should spin. Communities should find ways of giving expression to mutual understanding and brotherhood. Hindus and Muslims may organize joint programmes of prayers—God may bless the Quaid-e-Azam and me with wisdom to reach a common understanding in the interest of India. Hindus should visit Harijans and render them the service they may need. The spirit of service and helpfulness should pervade the atmosphere everywhere.

I have experienced friendliness from Englishmen and Americans wherever I have met them, whether officials or laymen. I invite their co-operation especially on the 9th. Let them realize that the August resolution was not conceived in hatred. It was an unvarnished statement of the natural right of the people of this land.

To those who share my faith I would advise fasting and prayers on the auspicious day. This must not be a mechanical act. It must be done without ostentation, for self-purification and penance. Its uplifting power is capable of being tested by every individual for himself.

If the demonstration is carried out in the spirit in which I have conceived it, I have no doubt that it will lead to an early end of the misery of the masses.

The Hindu, 7-8-1944

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 28-7-1944

363. LETTER TO NAGINDAS T. MASTER

SEVAGRAM,
August 5, 1944

BHAI NAGINBHAI[1],

You will see my statement[2] today in the newspapers. First I thought of detailing my entire programme in Bombay in my statement. But I propose to make some changes in the programme. I shall however have them only with your consent. This is very important. So either you may come personally or should send one of your trusted men. Much depends upon the success of the programme. Premabehn will give you this letter. If for some reason you cannot come or you cannot send some representative then send the reply through Premabehn. Premabehn will tell you in brief the changes that I propose to make.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

364. INTERVIEW TO SHYAMA PRASAD MOOKERJEE[3]

SEVAGRAM,
August 5, 1944

Gandhiji says that his association with the Rajaji Formula is personal and is meant to commit nobody but himself. He is, therefore, anxious that people should express their opinion freely and fearlessly. I gathered from our conversation that he welcomed such criticism for he was open to conviction. If he discovered any flaw in the Formula he would have no hesitation in correcting the error. In his opinion the Formula is intended to be just to all. If, therefore, any community was likely to be unjustly affected by the Formula being given effect to, the flaw should be brought to his notice. He was also anxious that people should remember that if an agreement was

[1] Mayor of Bombay

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] This was issued to the Press on August 6 by Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, Working President, Hindu Mahasabha, who had stated: "I had a long interview with Mahatmaji yesterday in my individual capacity and fully explained why I and those who think like me are so strongly opposing Mr. Rajagopalachari's Formula from the point of view of India as a whole. The discussion was full and frank. . . . This is not the gist of the whole conversation. That part of it only is given which is necessary to ease the public mind of the fear that any criticism of the Formula would weaken Gandhiji's influence or position." This was published with Gandhiji's approval.

reached between Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah and himself it would be open to all parties to advocate their points of view before the plebiscite is held and the plan would come into effect only in case of transfer by Britain of full power and responsibility in the governance of India. There was, therefore, ample time for a calm and dispassionate discussion. He also said that the Rajaji Formula was a way of reducing to a concrete form the Congress resolution on self-determination[1] and nothing could operate without the consent of all sections. . . . He assured me that he had always welcomed criticism and that he had flourished on it and that his influence could not be weakened by it.

Gandhi-Jinnah Talks, p. 83

365. LETTER TO B. R. AMBEDKAR

SEVAGRAM,
August 6, 1944

Thank you for yours[2] of July 31 received yesterday. The Hindu-Muslim question is for me a lifelong question. There was a time when I used to think that when that question was solved India's political troubles would be over. Experience has taught me that it was only partly true. Untouchability I began to abhor when I was in my teens, But it was a question with me of religious and social reform. And though it has attained a great political importance its religious and social value is for me much greater. But I know to my cost that you and I hold different views on this very important question. And I know, too, that on broad politics of the country we see things from different angles. I would love to find a meeting ground between us on both the questions. I know your great ability and I would love to own you as a colleague and co-worker. But I must admit my failure to come nearer to you. If you can show me a way to a common meeting ground between us I would like to see it. Meanwhile, I must reconcile myself to the present unfortunate difference.

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-1-1945

[1] *Vide* Appendix "A Resolution", before 9-8-1944.

[2] Which *inter alia* read: " . . . the Hindu-Muslim problem is not the only communal problem that has to be settled. . . there is a communal problem between the Hindus and the untouchables, which is also awaiting solution. . . . An all-round settlement between the Hindus and other minorities, I am sure, will become necessary if India's political goal is to be achieved. . . . But, if you are anxious to solve the Hindu-untouchable problem as you are to solve the Hindu-Muslim problem, I shall be glad to formulate points on which a settlement is necessary. . . ."

366. LETTER TO M. VISVESVARAYYA

August 6, 1944

DEAR SIR VISVESVARAYYA,

It was good of you to send me such a full letter. In the political field one has to receive with as much good grace as is possible knock-out blows. I have therefore regarded it as a school for learning self-control and training in non-violence I should have thought that, having dabbled in the *dewangiri* of a big Indian State,[1] you would not run away from the political field. This is not to lead you into any temptation. You have enriched the life of the country by your unrivalled engineering skill. I have been following too your writings on planned economy.

Besides your contribution as a great engineer, what has captivated me is the art you have cultivated of keeping up in old age robust physical and mental energy. I have not forgotten the way in which you used to climb up the Nandi Hill without any effort. I would like you to give the young men and women of the country the secret, as you have known it, of feeling young and vigorous even in old age. It is a rare gift in our country.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

367. LETTER TO S. K. BELVALKAR

August 6, 1944

DEAR DR. BELVALKAR,

I thank you for your letter. Usha[2] has misled you if she told you that I had read through your volume on the *Gita.* I wish I could have found time to do so. What, however, I did tell her was that the volume was before me and from the little time I was able to give to it I found it fascinating and I expected to profit greatly by my study of it.

Though I call myself a devotee of the *Gita* I cannot lay claim to any scholarship. My knowledge of Sanskrit is limited and so is my knowledge of the Hindu scripture. All I can claim is an inexhaustible

[1] The addressee was Dewan of Mysore State from 1912 to 1918.

[2] Addressee's daughter

love for them. However, I shall certainly give you my further reaction when I have been able to read through your book.

Of course I never thought that you wrote your book with any commercial intention.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

368. TELEGRAM TO M. R. JAYAKAR

WARDHAGANJ,
August 7, 1944

DR. JAYAKAR
WINTER ROAD
BOMBAY

SAPRU[1] COMING WEDNESDAY. PLEASE COME IF CONVENIENT.

GANDHI

Gandhi-Jayakar Papers: File No. 826. Courtesy: National Archives of India

369. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

August 7, 1944

CHI. AMRIT,[2]

I have your letters. I was glad S.[3] was able to go to Simla and give you some time. She is still in Poona looking after Manjula[4]. Did I tell you that Dr. Jivraj Mehta was with me? I must ask him to write to you. He helps in a variety of ways and looks after my body without the slightest fuss. I do not even know that he is doing it. He is supposed to have come merely to keep company.

You must not worry.

Love to all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4146. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7781

[1] T. B. Sapru

[2] The superscription in this and the subsequent letters to the addressee is in Devanagari script.

[3] Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[4] Vrajlal Gandhi's daughter who had paralysis of the face following a mastoid operation.

370. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM,
August 7, 1944

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I was wondering why I had not received the customary *rakhadi* from you. Well, I got it today. Has Shankerlal also returned ? What are your plans ?

Blessings to all of you. I am all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI ANASUYABEHN

MARINE DRIVE

BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original : S. N. 32769

371. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

August 7, 1944

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

This is a painful story. There is only one remedy for this, viz., to act as Chimanlal[1] advises. You should yourself talk it over with him. Regard me as non-existent. If a difference still remains in your viewpoints, then please accept his. In no case, however, should there be ideological differences. If there is any let me know.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4443

[1] Chimanlal Shah

372. INTERVIEW TO UNITED PRESS OF INDIA

SEVAGRAM,

August 7, 1944

QUESTION: You said in Panchgani: "All my recent declarations are quite consistent with all my previous declarations on the communal problem." But in the past you had said: "Partition means a patent untruth. My whole soul rebels against the idea . . . . To assent to such a doctrine is for me denial of God (*Harijan*, 13-4-1940).[1] The partition proposal has altered the face of the Hindu-Muslim problem. I have called it an untruth. There can be no compromise with it. . . . It cannot come by honourable agreement (*Harijan*, 4-5-1940).[2] I consider vivisection of India to be a sin. . . . (*Harijan*, 24-5-1942) ."[3] Would you kindly enlighten me how they are consistent? The Mahasabhaites seem to argue in the above style and hence clarification is sought.

ANSWER: Though I would avoid answering all questions on the subject before the forthcoming meeting between Quaid-e-Azam and me, I must not postpone answering yours. I know my present attitude has puzzled and pained many people. I have not revised the opinion quoted by you. At the same time that I made the statement you refer to, I was also a party to the self-determination resolution of the A. I. C. C. I hold that the Rajaji Formula gives effect to that resolution. I would however urge critics not to mind my inconsistencies, so-called or real. Let them examine the question on merits and bless the effort if they can.

Q. What is your reaction to Mr. Jinnah's speech[4]? If Mr. Jinnah does not accept your proposal or your talks with him end in failure, will you withdraw your support to Rajaji's proposals or will the proposals stand?

A. I do not believe in dying before my death. I do not approach the forthcoming visit with the expectation of failure. I always hope for the best and prepare for the worst. I would therefore ask you not to anticipate failure. Ask me when failure stares you and me in the face.

[1] *Vide* "My Position", 9-4-1940.

[2] *Vide* "Hindu-Muslim Tangle", 29-4-1940.

[3] *Vide* "Question Box", 18-5-1942.

[4] Presiding over the half-yearly session of the All-India Muslim League Council at Lahore on July 30, M. A. Jinnah spoke at length criticizing Rajagopalachari's Formula and Gandhiji's association with it.

Q. What have you got to say to the Sikhs who have expressed apprehension in the All-Party Sikh Conference at [Amritsar][1] that you will further surrender to the Muslim League?

A. My Sikh friends are unnecessarily perturbed. I can settle nothing for anybody but myself. The Congress Resolution is a sacred trust and I have no doubt that it will be discharged fully. Brave people are never frightened by bogeys. Let the Sikh friends examine the proposal on merits. And if they find an evident flaw in it, I shall correct it and so, I am sure, will the Quaid-e-Azam if he is satisfied that there is a flaw.

Gandhi-Jinnah Talks, pp. 83-4; also *The Hindu*, 9-8-1944

373. LETTER TO JOACHIM ALVA[2]

[Before *August 8, 1944*][3]

You should save every ounce of my energy. You have abundant material from my writings on the Press. . . .[4] You should have pity on me. . . .[5] I should make no exception. If I do, I shall be done for. Say you have excused me.

The Bombay Chronicle, 15-8-1944

374. LETTER TO TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU

[Before *August 8, 1944*][6]

DEAR SIR TEJ,

I have put P. on an important job. I presume you will reach Wardha in the evening on 8th. Though I have gained much by my stay in P[anch]gani, I must be cautious. Mornings are, therefore,

[1] The source has "Lahore". The Working Committee of the All-Parties Sikh Conference, which met on August 1, rejected the Rajaji Formula.

[2] Editor, *Forum*

[3] The letter was written in connection with the first anniversary of *Forum* which fell on August 8, 1944.

[4] Omissions as in the source

[5] *ibid*

[6] Gandhiji had returned to Wardha from Panchgani on August 3, 1944 and had discussions with the addressee on August 9, 1944. From the reference to the addressee reaching Wardha on August 8, it appears that the letter was written before that date.

devoted to massage. I am at your disposal after 12 on 9th. K. B. has made all arrangements for your stay in Wardha. You will be rec[eived] at the station on 8th and you decide where you will stay. If I have misunderstood your letter, you will please wire. The rest when we meet.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

375. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

August 8, 1944

The question asked is whether my statement contemplates civil disobedience or its avoidance. It asserts a universal right which becomes a duty when there is an attack upon its ordinary exercise. It therefore contemplates civil disobedience if Government wants it. Twenty-five citizens of Bombay sent notices on the 3rd instant to the Police Commissioner of their intention to march in batches of five and offer silent prayers and sing *Jhandavandan* and *Vandemataram* at a common gathering place and asked for permission to perform the act.[1] If permission is not granted, there will certainly be disobedience. In order that the public may not know the time or place, the Police Commissioner has been fully informed, while the public has not been. If this extraordinary forbearance is not appreciated and the authorities withhold permission and interfere with the simple symbolic exercise of a public right, the fault would be that of the authorities. The Press and the public have to judge whether, under circumstances such as these, civil disobedience does not become a duty.

The Hindu, 10-8-1944

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Draft Letter to the Commissioner of Police, Bombay", after 19-8-1944.

376. LETTER TO RAJA GOVINDALAL SHIVLAL

ASHRAM,
SEVAGRAM,
August 8, 1944

DEAR RAJA SAHEB,

Gandhiji has your letter of 16th inst.

Your argument is built partly on fallacy and partly on disregard of facts. Acceptance of the C.R. formula by Gandhiji concedes nothing but the insistent demand of the minorities for self-determination. It carries no other implication. Far from absolving the seceding units from 'moral obligation' to give their support to [the] freedom movement, it lays down that the separation can only come after attainment of complete independence with [the] co-operation of those who claim the right to secede. Further, it stipulates the creation of a special machinery for the joint administration of matters of common concern to the two sovereign states such as defence, foreign affairs, railways, currency, economic planning, etc. The provision embodying this arrangement will be an integral part of the charter for separation.

Nationalist Muslims are not let down by the formula, since they were parties to the self-determination resolution of the Working Committee that met at *Delhi in April, 1942.*

The need for them to stand by their principles will be even greater under independence. That will be the real testing time for them.

Yours sincerely,

RAJA GOVINDALAL SHIVLAL
SHRI SADAN
15 NARAYAN DABHAOLKAR ROAD
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY-6

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

377. LETTER TO PRATAP DIALDAS

ASHIRAM, SEVAGRAM,
August 8,1944

DEAR FRIEND,

I do not know whether I sent you any reply to your letter of 24th July to Bapu.

This is just to say that he will thankfully accept the donation of Rs. 10,000/- which Shrimati Jasodabai Lokoomal proposes to make.

As desired by her it will be equally divided between the Harijan and the Rashtrabhasha cause.

He has also accepted your request and you therefore would be free to draw according to requirement for Rashtrabhasha work in Sind from the portion earmarked for [the] Rashtrabhasha cause.

I have sent a copy of your letter and Bapu's directions on that to Shri Shantikumar Morarjee.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI PRATAP DIALDAS
HYDERABAD
SIND

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

378. TELEGRAM TO SHYAMA PRASAD MUKHERJEE

SEVAGRAM,
August 9,1944

DR. SHYAMA PRASAD MOOKERJEE
ASUTOSH MOOKERJEE ROAD
CALCUTTA

YOU MAY PUBLISH YOUR LETTER 7TH INSTANT BUT YOUR INTERPRETATION OF MY REMARKS REQUIRES AMENDMENT. ADVISE AWAITING MEETING.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

379. LETTER TO GENERAL MANAGER, OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

SEVAGRAM,
August 9, 1944

DEAR SIR,

With reference to your letter of 2nd inst., since the Oxford University Press is not conducted for profit, I should think that a net profit being stipulated for, there should be no objection to a minimum profit. The only inducement to the Navajivan Trust, and for that matter also for me, to have a well-known concern like yours publishing Shri R. K. Prabhu's compilation can be to acquire the widest publicity possible outside India for it.

The Navajivan Press exists only for printing writings like Shri Prabhu's compilation as cheaply as possible for Indian readers. The object therefore undoubtedly is to publish an edition as cheap as possible and certainly cheaper than yours. Therefore it would be improper to hold over publication of such an Indian edition till your stock is exhausted. If you rely chiefly on Indian sales, I think the contemplated publication by you might be dropped. Labours of the authors will not go unrewarded in any case. I will ask the Navajivan Trust to cover them and publish their compilation whenever they are in a position to do so.[1]

Yours sincerely,

THE GENERAL MANAGER
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
POST BOX 31
BOMBAY

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* also "Draft Letter to Thacker & Co. and Oxford University Press", 5-7-1944.

380. LETTER TO KAILASH NATH KATJU

ASHRAM, SEVAGRAM,
August 9, 1944

DEAR KATJUJI,

I had your letter of 24th July which I placed before Bapuji.

By the time this reaches you you will have seen the summary of Bapu's recent talk with Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherji—not the United Press summary that has appeared in the *Bombay Chronicle* of the 7th August, but the authentic and authorised version. . . .

Gandhiji cannot and will not be party to an arrangement which implies freedom to wage war against India and imperil her defence. "That would be sin", and it cannot be had by 'agreement'. That would be a contradiction in terms.

Yours sincerely,

DR. K.N.KATJU
19 EDMONDSTONE ROAD
ALLAHABAD

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

381. SPEECH AT SEVAGRAM

August 9, 1944

Gandhiji made enquiries from the Superintendent of Police . . . about local restrictions and he assured him that he would abide by them.

This day is different from the other days Today you pray that God may bless Quaid-e-Azam and me with wisdom to reach a common understanding in the interest of India. Let this be your constant prayer as you go on spinning.[1]

The Hindu 11-8-1944

[1] Gandhiji was opening the 60-minute non-stop mass spinning in the afternoon.

382. TRIBUTE TO MAHADEV DESAI[1]

WARDHAGANJ,
August 10, 1944

August l5 is the second anniversary of Mahadev Desai's death. Two or three correspondents have administered a gentle rebuke. The following is my paraphrase of the first of their remarks:

> You have become President of the Kasturba Memorial Fund Trust. Mahadev renounced everything for your sake and even laid down his life for you. He died at a much younger age than Kasturba and yet how much he achieved in that relatively short space of time! Kasturba was verily a *sati*, but while India has produced many *satis*, all will admit that it has produced only one Mahadev. If he had not chosen to throw in his lot with you, he might have been living today. His talents would have enabled him to achieve front rank distinction as a savant and man of letters. He might have even been rich, brought up his family in all material comfort and provided his son with the highest education. Instead, he chose to merge himself in you. You regarded him as your son. May I ask what you have done for him?

These sentiments seem to me to be natural. The contrast between the two is too striking to be missed. The one was ready to drop off like a fully ripe fruit. The other had yet to ripen and mature. Life still lay before Mahadev as ordinary standards go. He had aimed at living up to a hundred years. The amount of material that he had piled up in his voluminous note-books called for years of patient labour to work up and he had hoped to do all that. In his trunk was found a memo of my talks taken down on the day previous to his final end. Probably, none besides myself can today make them out, and even I don't know to what use he would have put them. He was a living example of "the wise, who live and work as if they were born to immortality and everlasting youth".[2] But, if all our dreams could be realized, life would become a phantasmagoria, and there would be utter chaos on

[1] The Gujarati original appeared in *Gujarat Samachar*, 13-8-1944. This is an "authoritative translation" by Pyarelal.

[2] अजरामवत्प्राश विद्यामर्थ च चिन्तयेत् गृहित इव केशेषु मृत्युना धर्ममाचरेत ्॥ "The wise should devote themselves to learning and worldly welfare as if they were immortal and would never grow old, and follow the path of dharma as if Death had seized them by the hair."

earth. God in His mercy, therefore, has ordained that His will alone should prevail on earth.

Mahadev, though an idealist and a dreamer, never allowed his feet to be taken off the firm earth. He, therefore, adorned everything that he attempted. To Mahadev's admirers, I can only offer this consolation, that he lost nothing by his association with me. His dreams rose above scholarship or learning. Riches had no attraction for him. God had blessed him with high intellect and versatile tastes but what his soul thirsted for was the devotional spirit. Even before he came to me, he had assiduously sought and cultivated the company of devotees and men of God after his heart. One may say that it was in furtherance of this quest that he came to me and, not obtaining full satisfaction even with me, (shall I say) he turned his back upon me in the fullness of youth, leaving behind him his weeping relations and friends, and set forth to seek realization of his quest in the bosom of his Maker. The only fitting service that I can render his memory is to complete the work which he has left behind him unfinished, and to make myself worthy of his devotion—obviously a more difficult task than merely raising a fund for his memorial. It can be fulfilled only through Divine grace. Mahadev's external goal was the attainment of swaraj; the inner, to fully realize in his own person his ideal of devotion, and if possible to share the same with others.[1]

The raising of a material memorial to the deceased's memory is outside my scope. That is a task for his friends and admirers to take up. Does a father initiate a memorial for his son? I was not responsible for the Kasturba Memorial. In my previous statement[2] I have explained its origin. I have become the President of the Committee only in order to ensure the use of the fund in accordance with its object. If friends and admirers of Mahadev similarly set up a committee to raise a memorial fund and invite me to become its president and give guidance for its proper use, I shall gladly accept it.[3]

A word to litterateurs. They know or should know that he put the charkha above literature. He took delight in spinning for hours. It was a daily duty. He would encroach upon his sleeping hours to finish

[1] The Gujarati here adds: Mahadev did love showing off his erudition. Let no one have any illusion about it. However, he cast it off after coming to me.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Poona", 1-7-1944.

[3] The Gujarati here adds: "It has been my profession for fifty years." The paragraph which follows is not found in the Gujarati original.

his daily minimum of spinning. Why this insistence? Not, I assure them, to please me. He threw in his lot with me after much deliberation. I never knew him do a thing without conviction. He thought with me that the material salvation of India's teeming but famishing millions was bound up with the charkha. He discovered too that this daily labour with the hand enriched whatever literary work he did. It gave it a reality which it otherwise lacked. The raising of funds is good and necessary. But a sincere imitation of Mahadev's constructive work is better. The monetary contribution to a memorial fund ought not to be a substitute for the more solid appreciation.

The Hindu, 12-8-1944

383. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL SETALVAD

WARDHA,
August 11, 1944

I am writing to you in my mother tongue[1] which I believe you will tolerate.

The Congress policy has been definite and determined. With this nothing can be mixed. An independent India cannot entertain any other stranger in its midst. The consent which I have given to a particular scheme depends upon the fact that it is based on a cardinal principle of the Congress.[2] I command an influence over the masses and therefore I cannot hide that which I consider against the good of my country. An advantage would be taken of this situation by my opponents and this was not outside the pale of my thoughts. But this fear comes out of the weakness of our forces.

To remove this fear, the way lies in freely but respectfully expressing our opinion and only in this way can we conquer and win; this is my respectful opinion. Permit me to tell you that no particular work of mine has resulted in any loss to my country. At least I have never heard that it has. All your writings, I have read with great patience and care but I have always felt that you do not examine my side with patience and care. Your time is occupied mostly in different types of work and this is not beyond my constant thought.

In the end it seems to me that the substance of your letters leads

[1] The Gujarati original is not available.
[2] The addressee was against the Rajaji Formula and Gandhiji's acceptance of it.

to the inference that India is going to be for very long time under the rule and sway of the English. From your writings this appears to be India's destiny. But my firm belief is quite the opposite of this. Moreover you crush our spirit and make us appear blind. Our leaders also forget this fundamental difference in our views. This is the reason I believe why you are so pessimistic and we so optimistic.

It is my sincere desire that a so-called rash step[1] which I propose to take may not result in any loss to the country.

Your younger brother,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR CHIMANLAL SETALVAD

MALABAR HILL, BOMBAY

From a copy: File No. 3001/H-P. 129. Commissioner of Police, Bombay

384. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,

August 11, 1944

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have been forgetting to write about Dinshawji[2]. In case you have not received a copy of my letter to him, I shall have one enclosed with this. We have to make the trust deed[3] on these lines. Ghanshyamdas[4], Mahavir Prasad Poddar, Dinshaw, you and I will be the trustees. Ghanshyamdas was to talk to you about this matter. If he has not spoken to you, consult him before finalizing it. Send me the draft of the document. I believe it can be drafted in Hindi. It will have to be registered.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The reference is to Gandhiji's proposed talks with M. A. Jinnah.

[2] Dinshaw K. Mehta

[3] For the proposed nature-cure clinic; *vide* "Letter to Mahavir Prasad Poddar", 17-8-1944.

[4] G. D. Birla

385. LETTER TO JAYANTILAL

SEVAGRAM,
August 11, 1944

CHI. JAYANTILAL,

I have your letter. Your modesty has vanquished me. If what you say is the whole truth, I have nothing to say. I shall use the money. I shall not disclose your name. You come to Sevagram after I am finished with Jinnah Saheb. We shall talk further. I shall try to understand you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

386. NOTE TO JAGDISH K. MUNSHI[1]

[On or before *August 12, 1944*][2]

1. Division of India is like poison to my mind; because I am also of the view that it is sinful to do so.

2. The Delhi Resolution of April 2[3][, 1942] was concerned with

[1] Gandhiji dictated this note in Gujarati to the addressee, eldest son of K. M. Munshi, with the remark: "I intend appointing you as my lawyer and so listen to what I am saying and argue it out with Bapaji." The Gujarati original however is not available. For K. M. Munshi's letter dated August 9 to which this was a reply, *vide* Appendix "Letter from K. M. Munshi", 9-8-1944. Regarding this note K. M. Munshi writes: "My opposition to the proposed negotiations with Jinnah evidently annoyed Gandhiji. For, before replying to me, he adopted the rather curious method of sending me a message dictated to my son who was staying with him. This was a warning to me. In my long and intimate association with him, such a thing had never happened before, nor after."

[2] From the contents it is obvious that this note was written before the letter to K. M. Munshi dated August 12, 1944; *vide* the following item.

[3] The source says in a footnote that the resolution was passed on April 11, 1942. According to *The Indian Annual Register* the resolution was communicated to Sir Stafford Cripps on April 2. It was however released to the Press on April 11 after the failure of the negotiations. For the text of the resolution, *vide* Appendix "A Resolution", before 9-8-1944.

self-determination. After this on April 30[1], Rajaji's Resolution was turned down and Jagat Narayan's Resolution[2] about not partitioning India was adopted. In my view this was a highly inappropriate and hasty step and due to this alone Jinnah has been able to spread poison in the Muslim masses.

3. I had discussed this matter with Maulana[3] also. According to him, in spite of Jagat Narayan's Resolution, I still retain the authority to discuss the matter with Jinnah because the Resolution of April 2 still stands.

4. Later on when I had negotiations with Jinnah I had asked him whether he would accept help from a foreign Power if he was granted a sovereign State. To this he said: "Yes."

I then asked him if, after securing that help, he would invade India. To this (also) he said: "Yes."

Then I told him: "It would be a sin to do such a thing and I cannot be a party to it."

5. When Dr. Latif[4] mentioned Pakistan I asked him to discuss the question with Maulana; but it was in deference to Maulana's wish that I discussed it with him.

6. Rajaji's offer does not seem to have the virulence of his earlier talk and hence I am in agreement with it. According to this offer if there can be a separate treaty regarding Defence, Foreign Affairs and Communications, I do not see any harm in giving him the rest. And after this, Pakistan seems to have no meaning at all.

7. It is not that everybody has been in agreement with me about everything from the beginning of [my] life. There is bound to be a difference of opinion and it is good that it is there. But nobody has ever told me that I have done anything in bad faith. Thus it was that I had won over Motilal[5], C. R. Das and others. In spite of difference of opinion they often came to me and shed tears when they saw my

[1] "April 29" according to a footnote in the source.

[2] Which read: "The A.I.C.C. is of opinion that any proposal to disintegrate India by giving liberty to any component State or territorial unit to secede from the Indian Union or Federation will be detrimental to the best interests of the people of the different States and provinces and the country as a whole and the Congress, therefore, cannot agree to any such proposal."

[3] Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President

[4] Syed Abdul Latif

[5] Motilal Nehru

determination to abide by Truth. From his death-bed C. R. Das had enjoined upon his followers: "Do as this man says. He is a true leader." I wish to conquer even Jinnah with trust and love. I have no other weapons at all.

8. Jinnah too has complete faith in me. He knows that I have no axe to grind in these negotiations. And he seems to have somewhat softened by my last letter[1], and hence, my only advice can be that at such a time nobody should create any obstacle. Jinnah has hated me since the day I asked him in a meeting to give up English and speak in Gujarati. Sir Chimanlal Setalvad also feels the same way about me from that day and it has not changed to this day.

9. Jinnah is definitely not unselfish. He is prone to be easily led by others because of his vanity. (Just) because I am going to meet him I am not led away by him. I have not accepted everything that he has said. Otherwise it would mean that he has won me round. That is why even when I meet him it will be with some misgivings.

10. Munshi has raised a new cry, and I cannot stop him. And it would not befit me even if I did it.

11. But Munshi very much loves to dominate everywhere and become a leader. I know that everybody hates him for that reason. Everybody believes that even in the Congress he wants to set up his own protagonists. But how can one prevent a person if he is capable of spreading his influence because of his own power? Only the person who has all his teeth intact can crack a betel-nut and so, there is no need to be scared of him. He seems to be much perturbed. Hence, at such a time we should do only that which we feel is correct. If he shows me the statement[2], I shall certainly go through it.[3]

Pilgrimage to Freedom, Vol. I, pp. 438-40

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 17-7-1944.

[2] *Vide* "Note to K. M. Munshi", after 14-8-1944.

[3] This is followed by the following note, presumably by the addressee:

Rajaji's and Dr. Subbaroyan's talks would imply the following:

(1) Gandhiji and all others believe that the negotiations will most probably break down and maybe we shall have to court imprisonment.

(2) Gandhiji feels that if these negotiations do not have the sanction of the people, it would mean that it is his last contribution to politics, and he would have to make his exit for good.

(3) All will be released by September 15.

387. TELEGRAM TO ANIL CHANDRA

Express

August 12, 1994

ANIL CHANDRA
32 NANDAN ROAD
CALCUTTA

PROVISIONALLY THIRD SEPTEMBER SEVAGRAM. WRITING.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

388. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

August 12, 1944

BHAI MUNSHI,

Your letter[1]. I have told a few things to Jagdish[2] but I am still writing this reply for your satisfaction. It does not matter if others do not understand me. You are among those who do know me. I am sure you know that, in spite of my accepting *Akhand*[3] Hindustan on principle, I am the originator of the Congress principle of self-determination. A believer in non-violence, I can maintain the unity of India only if I accept the freedom of every part. The moment I felt that the Pakistan of Jinnah's imagination was sinful, I started believing in the Congress principle of self-determination, for instance, during my talks with Dr. Latif.

I understand what you have written about the Punjab. I shall study whatever comes from there. If I have committed a mistake, it would not take long to put me right. All my statements imply the usual proviso that mistakes, if any, should be provided for. I would certainly find no fault at all if you fearlessly oppose Rajaji's Formula. Where the intentions are honest, fear of public blame has no place at all. Possibly your statement will not be ready by the time I meet

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from K. M. Munshi", 9-8-1944.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] Undivided

Jinnah. But if you have prepared it, do send it. I shall go through it. If it needs to be improved or changed, I shall do so. Have no fear. I shall do nothing in haste. If you have time and if you think it is necessary, meet Rajaji and me. And I think it will certainly be necessary to meet after our interview.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7680. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

389. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS BIRLA

August 12, 1944

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

I have been wanting since long to write to you but just couldn't find the time. However, now I must. Jinnah Saheb's letter may arrive any time now. I have written to him to let me know three or four days in advance. I am under a great deal of pressure that in no case should I put up at Birla House.[1] I have plainly said that I cannot give up staying at Birla House without any reason. The question arises only if for some reason my stay at Birla House is deemed improper. In that case you should not hesitate to tell me. This issue arose in Poona also, and at that time it was agreed that there could be no hesitation from your side. I do not remember if you were present then. I had discussed the matter with Ghanshyamdas. By way of caution and in order to safeguard your interests, it is my duty to ask you now that I will be leaving for Bombay shortly.

The other matter is more important though it is not as urgent as the question of where to stay in Bombay. If I am about to be arrested it will give me some satisfaction if I am able to accomplish all that I must before my arrest. I believe that the work of the Talimi Sangh[2] is quite valuable, and I wish to arrange for half a lakh of rupees for it.

I wish to return the money that was received as donation for Mirabehn. It would only be proper to return it to her. Normally the money for the Talimi Sangh must be drawn from the Satyagraha Ashram funds. There is some money there but Narandas has invested

[1] Some friends had argued that it would not be in the interests of the Birla family if Gandhiji were to be again arrested while staying with them.

[2] Hindustani Talimi Sangh

it in constructive work. I can draw upon it but I can only do so at the cost of that work. And as far as possible I don't want to do that. All told, it may require half a lakh or one lakh. I do not know the exact amount that has to be paid. The amounts that have been coming over the years are registered as charities, and it takes time to trace them out. All the books of the Ashram are lying here and there. To trace out such amounts even from well-maintained ledgers is like seeking a needle in a haystack. Nevertheless I have given instructions that all such accounts should be examined.

There is some miscellaneous expenditure too. Something has to be done about that. That will require about half a lakh, though I have not figured out the exact sum.

Can you easily provide for all this? You can certainly say 'no' without any hesitation. All my undertakings are in the hands of God. If God does not wish that a particular work should be held up, He provides me with the means through someone or another as His agent. Hence, even if I do not get the money I will not be angry with God or with you. Till now I have never cut the tree under which I have taken shelter and with God's grace I shall not do so in future.

I hope all of you are keeping well. I am sending this letter with Chi. Jagdish. He has come here with Bhai Munshi's letter[1]. Nowadays it is difficult to decide what should and what should not be sent by post.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8060. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

390. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

August 12, 1944

BHAI GOPICHAND,

I have read your letter to Pyarelal. Munshiji had been there and he has posted me with news from there.

What you write about Rajaji is not correct. I have already discussed the matter with Rajaji. Whatever be the case, I am not going to meet him[2] with that in mind. To me, Rajaji's formula is the final

[1] *Vide* "Letter to K. M, Munshi", 12-8-1944.

[2] M. A. Jinnah

thing. If it is proved that there is any fault in it, I can amend it. You at least should not have any fear in your mind. If anybody from Puniab desires to meet me, I shall certainly meet him. For instance people from Bengal were here. Even if I have not been able to satisfy them, at least I have succeeded in removing their feeling of disappointment. In fact my impression is that I have even been able to satisfy them. Even if somebody cannot come here from Punjab, he can certainly write.

You will have recovered your health.

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

391. TELEGRAM TO M. A. JINNAH

Express August 13, 1944

QUAID-E-AZAM JINNAH

MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD

BOMBAY

THANKS WIRE JUST RECEIVED. NEXT SATURDAY FOUR AFTERNOON SUITS ME.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

392. LETTER TO UMASHANKAR DIXIT

ASHRAM, SEVAGRAM,
August 14, 1944

DEAR DIXIT,

Gandhiji had your letter of the 10th instant.

He would naturally like to know your views, but he has hardly any time left, every available minute being already booked up, to give an appointment before leaving for Bombay.

He expects to be in Bombay for only a day or so. In case his stay there is extended you can try to see him in Bombay.

In the meantime he would like you to send him your formula.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI UMASHANKAR DIXIT
231-234 KALBADEVI ROAD
BOMBAY

393. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

SEVAGRAM,
August 14, 1944

CHI. VALJI,

I feel relieved that I am able to pay off today this measure of my debt to you. I feel that something still remains to be paid. You are not bound to accept the changes I have suggested. You may accept them if you feel that they are improvements. This will be sent by registered post.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7499. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

394. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM,
August 14, 1944

CHI. LILI,

You are still what you were at the age of fourteen-extremely restless and scared and never satisfied in any situation whatever. Must you go on like this the whole of your life ? Why can you not understand the simple thing that you are engaged in studies and it is your duty to complete them ? The Ashram teaches you to do only limited work of service while carrying on the studies. Try to understand this if you can. Even if you do not understand, you will hear nothing else from me. Think of something else only when you have completed your studies.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI LILAVATIBEHN UDESHI
G. E. MEDICAL COLLEGE
LADIES STUDENTS' HOSTEL
PAREL, G.I.P. RLY.
BOMBAY

From a copy Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

395. NOTE TO K. M. MUNSHI[1]

[After *August 14, 1944*][2]

My reluctance to comment on the Rajaji Formula has led to my attitude being misunderstood by many friends all over the country.

On the whole it is my advice that you should maintain peace till the conference to be held between us is over.

BAPU

I cannot approve of the Rajaji Formula. The division of a Hindu and a Muslim area is conditional in the Formula. . . . A partition, on the other hand, will enable the Hindus and Muslims in those provinces to settle down in their respective areas.

The second argument does not seem to support the first One.

My objections to the Rajaji Formula, however, go deeper. . . . The force behind disruptionism is the urge to convert Islam in India into a religio-political party and to dominate the country by overawing the Nationalists into submission. . . . Mr. Jinnah's recent utterances are too fresh to be forgotten easily. He will accept no alliance on a conditional acceptance of Pakistan as in the Formula, and if any is made it will not last a day after the principle of Pakistan is accepted by the Nationalists.

These objections are not deeply rooted. If you have no better argument, nothing will be lost by remaining silent.[3]

Pilgrimage to Freedom, pp. 435-6

[1] The addressee had sent the draft of his statement to Gandhiji to "suggest changes if necessary", along with his letter dated August 14, 1944. The draft, from which only extracts are reproduced here, was in English. Gandhiji's comments in Gujarati were published along with the English translation.

[2] *ibid*

[3] The statement was not issued to the Press.

396. LETTER TO TARA SINGH[1]

SEVAGRAM,
August 15, 1944

DEAR MASTER TARA SINGH,

I thank you for your reasoned letter of the 5th instant. It came into my hands only today. It was received here on the 10th. The post has become very heavy. Even important letters such as yours do not come into my hands immediately they are received. I have not so recovered as to permit my working all hours of the day. This preface is merely to show you the importance I attach to your letter.

But nothing is lost by the delay. We shall come to no final terms. The smallest interest will have the same weight as the largest. That is the requirement of my creed. It is a lapse if I do not live up to it. With this assurance, I would leave you for the time being. Pray that both of us may have the strength to do what is wholly right and not to tone down the right for the sake of expedience.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 8-10-1944

397. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

August 15, 1944

MY DEAR VENKATAPPAYYA,

I have your two letters and your three notes. You are truly amazing. I suppose you are much older than I. But your energy never wanes. May it be always thus. How about Savitri?

With love,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3226

[1] Releasing the letter to the Press, Sarmukh Singh Jhabal, a Sikh Congressman of the Punjab, had stated: "Master Tara Singh released his own letter to Gandhiji with regard to the Rajaji Formula, but Gandhiji's reply has not been published, although it was in Masterji's hands at the time he released his own letter."

398. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

August 15, 1944

DEAR DR. JAYAKAR,

I am grateful to you for your two letters. The long one is illuminating. I am aware of the dangers. I am not afraid of coming away with empty hands.[1] I am doing what I have done all my life. I know you believe in the all-pervading Deity. I ask you to pray that I may be blessed with the strength to do the right thing.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi-Jayakar Papers: File No. 826. Courtesy: National Archives of India

399. LETTER TO DADACHANJI

August 15, 1944

DEAR DADACHANJI,

I have read your letter to Pyarelalji. You are too lawyer-like for my taste. Your goodness is marred by your lawyer-likeness. You should have mercy on me and mine. We are all overworked and I am an ailing man though in harness. I know the Indo-Burman question but the way is not clear to me. That was all that Pyarelal meant though he could not convey his meaning to you. Can you goad a willing horse? You have owned horses, motors, etc. Just recall your experience of your horses and your friends. Believe me to be more than a willing horse.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The reference is to the proposed meeting with M. A. Jinnah.

400. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI V. PATEL

August 15, 1944

CHI. DAHYABHAI,

I was pressed hard to stay with you but I did not yield. I cannot leave Birla House just because my staying there displeases some. I should certainly like to stay with you and moreover I have never seen your home. But I must do what I think is my duty.[1]

I am hoping to arrive there on Saturday. It is possible that I might return on Sunday.

Blessings to all from

BAPU

SHRI DAHYABHAI PATEL

68 MARINE DRIVE

BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 162

401. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR AND SUMATI MORARJEE

August 15, 1944

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR AND SUMATI,

We are all arriving there on Saturday. We shall be staying at Birla House. You should both call there, as you are aware what comforts I require at present.[2] The rest when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 848

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Rameshwardas Birla", 12-8-1944

[2] Gandhiji had stayed with the addressees while convalescing at Juhu from May 11 to June 15, 1944.

402. INTERVIEW TO DUTY SOCIETY DEPUTATION[1]

SEVAGRAM,
August 15, 1944

Mahatma Gandhi was in a cheerful mood talking to the deputationists and was smiling throughout. When asked by the Mahatma, Mr. Ibadat Yar Khan explained to him about the development that has taken place during the last 20 years, specially the establishment of an engineering college and the foundation of a medical college during the term of Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmed, the Vice-Chancellor of the University . . .

The deputation also discussed the present political situation with the Mahatma and urged for an honourable settlement between the League and the Congress in the forthcoming meeting of the two great leaders of the Hindus and the Muslims. Mr. Gandhi showed his willingness to concede every reasonable demand of the Mussalmans and said:

I want that myself and the Quaid-e-Azam should be locked up and should not be allowed to come out till we come to some decision to remove this deadlock.

The members of the deputation again requested him to end the deadlock and see India governed by Indians themselves for which he had been trying for such a long time. Gandhiji replied:

I wish to see a free India in my lifetime, for God knows what will happen when I am no more.

The Bombay Chronicle, 20-8-1944

403. ADVICE TO ASSAM CONGRESS LEGISLATORS

[Before *August 16, 1944*][2]

The United Press learns that Gandhiji has advised the Assam Congress legislators who are outside jail to attend the Legislature to register their views on important matters such as land settlement, food, evacuation, etc.

Regarding the question of Congressmen co-operating with Government measures with regard to the food problem, Gandhiji is understood to have stated that co-operation [with] Government measures regarding the food problem in the country was impossible.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-8-1944

[1] Of the Aligarh Muslim University, led by Ibadat Yar Khan and consisting of Mohammed Ashfaq, Amiruddin Alvi and A. M. Safi

[2] The report of this and the following item appeared under the dateline: "Gauhati, August 16".

404. MESSAGE TO PEOPLE OF ASSAM

[Before *August 16, 1944*]

I have no message of hope for my Assamese brothers and sisters but I send my deep sympathy for them. May God bless you all to come out of the ordeal successfully.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-8-1944

405. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SEVAGRAM,
August 16, 1944

BHAI SATIS BABU,

Received your letter. Balvantsinha has well apprised me of your work. I am amazed at your tireless efforts. Isn't it your discovery that cow's milk is available in so much quantity in Bengal? And that the milkmen are all Muslims! Balvantsinha has become your devotee. I like it. He himself is a *goseva* enthusiast. He works hard. I have found his knowledge to be haphazard and his outlook is not scientific. He therefore needs guidance. He has strongly refuted this opinion and believes—or had been believing—that I have, maybe unknowingly, done him an injustice. There always has been antagonism between Parnerkar[1] and Balvantsinha and it has always caused me trouble. I was not able to take from them as much work as I wanted to because of this antagonism. Now Parnerkar is also there and he has got the work of his liking. He also loves to serve the cow. I happily watch from this distance this confluence of the three and also hope that its outcome will be good.

I have a few minutes during which I am dictating this letter. You must have understood the reason for my giving a little background. I shall be satisfied if both of them remain there and you can take full work from them although both are required here. The work of the goshala here goes on but perhaps it is not satisfactory. I do not at all want either of them to leave your work to come here. Nor do I want both of them to come here. I can have no definite programme. God only knows what will happen. I am reaching Bombay on the 19th. Let

[1] Yashwant M. Parnerkar

us see what happens.

I hope Hemprabha[1] is all right, and Arun[2], too.

Amtul Salaam has reached there. She certainly will meet you. She will work under Bhagirathji.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

406. LETTER TO MAHAVIR PRASAD PODDAR

August 17, 1944

MAHAVIR PRASAD,

I do not know whether Ghanshyamdas has told you about my scheme for nature cure. If my ideas can be implemented, I would have used, to the best of my ability, all my God-given talents. These ideas came to me while I was at Dinshaw's Arogya Bhavan[3]. I shall not give a full account of their evolution. Here I am giving you in short the ideas in their final form.

Select a plot of a thousand acres near any village. It will be better if the land is situated in a salubrious region. It does not matter if the village is far away from a town or the railway station. Select two such plots or at least one. Get a layout of the land made right now—even before purchasing the land. Keep in view the following points while making the plan. Have the roads marked out in the plan. One road shall be broad but right now it will not be made motorable, only bullock-carts or horse-driven carriages will ply on it. The plot must be provided with fresh water. There should be a nice swimming-pool, a gymnasium or two to provide facilities for physical exercise. Arrangement should be made to grow fruits, trees, vegetables and foodgrains. There shall be facilities on this land to treat patients by nature-cure methods. Nature cure will include the various methods of mud-pack, treatment with water, such as hip-bath, friction-bath, steam-bath, etc., treatment with light, such as sun-bath, *suryanamaskara*[4], moon-bath, watching the stars, utilizing all the lights of the rainbow through the medium of cloth, water, glass bottle, etc., treatment with air such as *pranayama*[5], subsisting on air, etc. In the

[1] Addressee's wife
[2] Addressee's son
[3] At Poona
[4] Name of an exercise; literally, 'worship of the Sun'
[5] Breathing exercises

initial stage, use of modern devices like electricity, etc., will be avoided. This is with a view to initially using mechanical aids to the minimum and developing such devices as the villagers can use easily as also exploring their usefulness. Not only will sick persons be treated in this institution, but even normal persons likely to benefit from nature cure will be admitted to it. We should try to give vigour and vitality to the weak. Children will be admitted to the institution with this view, and efforts will be made to build their health according to the laws of nature. Health will be our prime concern. Special emphasis will be placed on preservation and improvement of health. Thus the aim of this institution will be self-reliance in all respects and its message will be universal. It will tend to become an ideal village with facilities for basic education and village industries like khadi, etc. Initially it will certainly require a lot of money but I cannot think of a better use of money than this. A trust should be constituted for this purpose. I had thought of Dinshaw Mehta, Ghanshyamdas, and myself as trustees; Ghanshyamdas added two more—Devdas and you. I had of course thought of you but I had no idea how far you could go with this. If I accept your name you should free yourself from all other work and devote yourself to this work. Ghanshyamdas believes in nature cure and he can either attract donations or give one himself. Devdas will fulfil this function by becoming Ghanshyamdas's representative. I will be the guide—since the whole idea is mine. It can be said that I am a devotee of nature cure for the last fifty years. This venture was conceived with the expectation that Dinshaw could be put in charge of fully implementing the ideas. And I shall like very much your joining this provided you can devote the rest of your life entirely to this work. Meet me at the earliest if you find these ideas good enough.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

407. INTERVIEW TO PEGGY DURDIN[1]

[After *August 17, 1944*][2]

Q. Does the Viceroy's rejection[3] of your offer in any way lessen the desirability of or urgency for a communal settlement now?

A. Not in the least. As I have already said in several interviews the simultaneous publication of my offer to the Viceroy and the Rajaji Formula established a wholly unintended connection between the two. The rejection makes the urgency doubly urgent. This I say although I believe that past experience shows that so long as there is a third party dividing communities and interests there is no adjustment possible. This has never meant for me that I should not strive for a settlement even before independence.

Q. From the point of view of non-violence, is it not preferable for a national government to take office after, rather than during, the present war?

A. Not if a national government comes into being even during the war by the spontaneous act of Great Britain or the Allies. For then the war itself will have changed its course and the peace to come will be wholly honourable and calculated to promote non-violence.

Q. Would not a strong group of nationalist ministers, Hindu and Muslim, responsible under the present constitution to the Viceroy rather than to the Legislature in point of fact, nullify the Viceregal veto? Would not a common front presented by strong nationalist leaders make acceptance of their programme and plans inevitable?

A. No such manipulation can possibly electrify the whole nation. Such an experiment is doomed to failure *ab initio*. It would lack trust on the part of the British Government in the people of India.

Q. I am not clear on your attitude toward mass civil disobedience. Am I right in thinking that you would consider its use justified if your appeal to the Viceroy and the talks with Mr. Jinnah fail?

A. Mass civil disobedience can only take place if other efforts to

[1] Correspondent of *Time* and *Life*. The source had reproduced the interview from *The Free Press Journal*.

[2] The correspondent met Gandhiji in August shortly after the Viceroy's rejection of Gandhiji's proposals. Gandhiji's correspondence with the Viceroy was released to the Press on August 17, 1944.

[3] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Wavell", 15-8-1944.

achieve the object aimed at fail. Here the object is independence. Appeal to the Viceroy was for a settlement. The appeal having failed the case for civil disobedience is complete. Successful negotiations with the Quaid-e-Azam need not affect the case for civil disobedience. But as I have said—for reasons I need not enter into here but which I have already publicly stated—I may not offer civil disobedience at the present moment. Mass civil disobedience is conceived as an entirely effective substitute for a bloody war and is any day far superior to it. But just as wars do not take place just for the sake of war, but only for a cause just or unjust, mass civil disobedience can take place only for a cause wholly just. If I have understood your question correctly, this answer ought to set at rest all your doubts.

Q. By American management of a section of the Burma-Assam Railway and part of the port of Calcutta I think we can say that the war in Burma is being shortened. Would a national government permit such American controls?

A. I have already answered the question in my previous public statements. Permission for all such controls is clearly indicated under my offer. Of course, it is only for the purpose of the war.

Q. Would you consider courting rearrest if your proposals or those of yourself and Mr. Jinnah are not accepted?

A. I really do not know future plans. You will believe me when I say that they are in God's hands.

Q. Non-violence may be relative, not absolute. Some participation in the already existing violence, participation for the purpose of producing real and lasting peace, may be unavoidable and even desirable. Is this a fair statement of the position?

A. It is a fair statement. I cannot challenge it merely because it is likely to lead to dangerous abuse from the non-violent standpoint. Pure unmixed non-violence is impossible as Euclid's line.

Q. I understand your answer to mean that mass civil disobedience presents no solution of the present deadlock.

A. You are right.

Q. May I quote you as saying that the national government you conceive of would do nothing which, as far as the war in the Far East is concerned, would jeopardize one additional American life or which would lengthen the war for an American soldier—that such a government would on the contrary make every effort to hasten the conclusion of the war against Japan?

A. You will be safe in using the language as if it was mine.

The Hindu, 4-10-1944

408. TELEGRAM TO M. A. JINNAH

Express SEVAGRAM,

August 18, 1944

QUAID-E-AZAM M. A. JINNAH
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

YOUR PHONE AND WIRE. DEEPLY. GRIEVED. HOPE YOU WILL SOON RECOVER. ANXIOUSLY AWAIT FURTHER NEWS.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

409. LETTER TO MRS. K. L. RALLIA RAM

SEVAGRAM,
August 18, 1944

DEAR SISTER,

Gandhiji had your letter of 4th August and the enclosure. He desires me to thank you for both. He is glad that you wrote. I regret that owing to heavy pressure of work he cannot write himself. Of course all genuine attempts to establish unity have his blessings.

Yours sincerely,
PYARELAL

MRS. K. L. RALLIA RAM
5 MASON ROAD
LAHORE, N.-W. RLY.

From the original: Gandhi Papers, File No, 84. Courtesy: National Archives of India

410. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

August 18, 1944

BHAI JINNAH,

How was it you fell ill all of a sudden? The whole world was looking forward to our meeting. I had entertained high hopes, although, I must admit, I had my own apprehensions. Hence when Fatimabehn[1] conveyed to me the news of your illness, I was shaken. I hope God will soon restore you to health, hasten the meeting to which the whole world is looking forward and that the meeting will lead to the welfare of India.

I hope Fatimabehn or someone else will keep me informed about your health.

Your brother,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

411. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
August 18, 1944

CHI. MRIDULA,

I had your telegram. I have replied to it. I hope Kanjibhai will be able to come on Tuesday.

It is not right that you keep falling ill. I think you alone are to blame for it. You do not take care of your health and are stubborn. You are thereby wasting your body and you will end up by becoming unfit for work. Had you been a little patient and spent a fortnight at Panchgani, you would have greatly benefited. Had you come to Poona, I would have had you treated by Dinshaw right before my eyes. It is quite likely that you would have learnt a wonderful way to improve your health. I cannot accept your explanation that there was a lot of work to do in Gujarat. Satyagrahis of the front rank should also learn to look after their health. I have not written all this to admonish you but to warn you for the future. Keep me informed

[1] Addressee's sister

about your health. If you are well enough to come here, do come. Bring your mosquito-net with you. Then you will have nothing to fear from the climate here.

I find the mosquitoes a nuisance, otherwise the air is good.

I cannot say when it will be possible for me to meet the Quaid-e-Azam.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 11117. Courtesy : Sarabhai Foundation

412. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

SEVAGRAM, (WARDHA),
August 18, 1944

The published correspondence[1] shows that I left no stone unturned to conform to the Viceregal requirements. The final Government reply is positive proof that the British Government have no intention of winning public support. I do not confine myself to the Congress, since its main demand has been backed by almost all political parties.

So far as the technical winning of the war is concerned, they have evidently no need for such support. Moral support they seem to despise. Boiled down, the Viceroy's proposition means that unless all the main parties agree as to the constitution of the future and there is agreement between the British Government and the main parties, there is to be no change in the constitutional position, and the Government of India as at present is to be carried on. The names of the parties given in the Government reply are illustrative only. I have no doubt that on due occasions more will be exhibited as from a conjurer's bag and who knows how and when the British Government will agree to surrender control?

It is as clear as crystal that the British Government do not propose to give up the power they possess over four hundred millions, unless the latter develop strength enough to wrest it from them. I shall never lose hope that India will do so by purely moral means.

The problem of food, meanwhile, remains unsolved. Only a

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Wavell", 15-7-1944 and 26/27-7-1944.

national Government envisaged by me can provide a genuine solution. Any other will be a mirage. It is most unfortunate that at this critical juncture the Quaid-e-Azam has fallen ill and under medical advice cannot see me till he is free from his illness. A proper heart-agreement between us can induce a revision of the firm refusal of the British Government as conveyed through His Excellency's letter. Let us all pray that the Quaid-e-Azam may be soon restored enough to see me and that God may so dominate our hearts as to lead us to a right solution.

I would like to assure all parties to be affected by our solution that we will not come to any terms which will compromise or ignore a single interest. The Rajaji Formula is capable of being amended if it is found to contain flaws as many Hindu and Sikh friends have suggested it does. No solution is likely to last unless, on the face of it, it is right and is acceptable to the people of India as a whole.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-8-1944

413. LETTER TO AMRITLAL SHETH

SEVAGRAM,
August 19, 1944

BHAI AMRITLAL,

You have indeed removed my fear by taking a pledge. Even so I continue to have some fear. I have been wanting to write to you these many days, but have not had the time.

Why can't you two warriors meet ? I have not written to Shamaldas. We have a gigantic task before us. I have come to understand from our talks that you have started believing in ahimsa and truth. The strength derived from these two virtues should be organized. It seems to be going waste these days. True ahimsa needs no organization. It is always organized.

Chi. Chhaganlal has given me clippings from a Gujarati paper. I enclose the ones which concern you. Can't newspapers be published without such advertisements ?

Blessings from
BAPU

A. J. SHETH

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

414. LETTER TO ANUGRAHA NARAYAN SINHA

SEVAGRAM,
August 19, 1944

BHAI ANUGRAHA BABU,

In a worthy cause the effort carries its own blessing. Your work is noble, no doubt, still, if you need my blessings, you have them. I hope Shrikrishna Babu and you are in good health. Write to me about Rajendra Babu.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

415. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 20, 1944

DEAR DR. JAYAKAR,

Many thanks for your letter[1] of 17th instant [and] good wishes. Do you know for the moment our meeting has been delayed owing to Quaid-e-Azam's illness?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Your letter which was marked for express delivery was received only today.

Gandhi-Jayakar Papers: File No. 826. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Which, *inter alia*, read: "I wish you all success in your efforts, although I feel more or less certain that, between the arrogance of the Government of India and the equal arrogance of the Muslim League leader, your work is very difficult, if not impossible. . . . With all differences of view, I wish you success in your magnificent undertaking."

416. LETTER TO POTHAN JOSEPH

August 20, 1944

DEAR POTHAN[1],

So your daughter Cookie[2] is to be married on 10th September. May the pair be happy and live long for the service of God and man.

Love.

Yours,

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

417. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

SEVAGRAM,
August 20, 1944

MY DEAR BULBUL-E-HIND,

Though I seem to have neglected you, you have not neglected me. Thank you for it. The reason for not sending you even love letters is that work before me has taxed all my time and energy. I have not asked you to come because I have relied only on God's guidance. I do not know what I am going to say when I face beard the lion.[3] I rely on Him giving me the word. You can fill in the details.

Love to you all.

SPINNER

[P.S.]

I have your latest A.R.S.'s letter.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Editor of a number of dailies which included *The Voice of India, The Indian National Herald, The Indian Daily Mail, The Hindustan Times, The Indian Express* and *The Dawn*

[2] Anna

[3] The reference presumably is to Gandhiji's impending meeting with Jinnah

418. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

August 20, 1944

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Shakaribehn[1] is very unhappy because of what Sharda[2] had to go through here. I remember Kanu[3] telling me something about it. Please write to me and tell me all that you know about the matter. Shakaribehn says that Lilavati[4] and Krishnachandra had displayed an altogether wrong attitude. I should know everything about this in detail. You are a very patient man, but you also have a duty towards the Ashram. It is not your absolute duty to suffer any injustice meted out to Shakaribehn or Sharda. Your duty towards the Ashram is a thing like. . . .[5]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10610

419. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

August 20, 1944

You have entered the forest.[6] May you cross it and live many more years. After all your faith in me is not blind. It is unshakable and will remain so. Mustn't I become and continue to be worthy of such faith?

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 202

[1] Addressee's wife
[2] Addressee's daughter
[3] Son of Narandas Gandhi
[4] Lilavati Asar
[5] Omission as in the source
[6] In the 51st year of one's life one is supposed to enter *vanaprastha,* the third of the four *ashramas* or stages of life.

420. LETTER TO V. V. NENE

August 20, 1944

BHAI NENE,

I have your letter. I had no knowledge that I would be arrested so soon or arrested at all. I did have a plan but was arrested before it could be announced. And there were to be negotiations first. I cannot say whether or not I would have met Jinnah Saheb.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

421. LETTER TO HUMAYUN KABIR

SEVAGRAM,
August 21, 1944

MY DEAR HUMAYUN,

I value your frank letter received today. You deserve a long reply but I must be brief, if I am to reply at once which I am doing.

I do not endorse any Pakistan but I do endorse Rajaji's scheme even if it be called Pakistan. It is a concrete form of the Congress resolution. The Rajaji Formula merely furnishes a basis for discussion. It opens a way to the solution of the communal tangle. Everybody who does not like it is free to oppose it. If you think that it will harm the country you are bound to oppose it. If Muslim opinion dislikes it, it must go. It will go also if Hindus and others oppose it. The Rajaji Formula furnishes a scheme for voluntary acceptance. There is no room for discussion, if it is to be imposed by force. I could be no party to a forcible imposition of a thing even if of my own coining. Here therefore there is no question of ignoring or disregarding nationalist Muslims of any other section. Quaid-e-Azam represents the League. I represent nobody but myself.

I did read your contribution to *Bharat Jyoti.* Your book, I am sorry, I have not been able to touch.

You should know that we (Rajaji and I) have reserved the right to oppose even the modified scheme of partition, if it ever goes to the

poll. We are not enamoured of it. But if there must be sovereign states, we have said what we will voluntarily endorse. But we would be pleased if the country, i.e., in this case the majority of Muslims concerned reject it jointly with other inhabitants of the areas concerned.

So you see that you should come if you can spare the time. It is not too late.

Amtul Salaam had a lot to say about you and your wife's kindness to her. She also told me that you had stolen a Hindu girl for wife[1], that she was extremely devoted to you and that she was able to remain Hindu.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

422. LETTER TO K. G. GOKHALE

SEVAGRAM,
August 21, 1944

BHAI GOKHALE,[2]

The question of parole is most difficult.

What is good for one need not be good for all. The general rule should be no acceptance of parole. It admits of many exceptions. I must not judge past cases.

Membership of Food Committees also presents difficulties. If a person like Gangadhar Rao finds that he can serve the people without compromising national interest, I must refuse to sit in judgment on him. And I have no time to examine his conduct on merits.

Post of jail visitor I hold generally to be of little advantage. But I cannot lay down hard and fast rules.

I must plead with you to absolve me from advising you personally. You must judge for yourself and act fearlessly. Principles of conduct can be, and have been laid down. Their application is no easy task. Appasaheb's letter was not shown to me. There was no

[1] Shanti
[2] The superscript and subscription are in Devanagari.

need. He was asked to deal with your letter. He did according to his light.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

K. G. GOKHALE, B. A. PLEADER, M.L.A.

C/O A.V. GHARE, ESQ.

ESTATE MANAGER OF SARDAR RASTE

P. O. TALIKOT

DISTT. BUAPUR

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

423. LETTER TO BARI KHAN

SEVAGRAM,

August 21, 1944

MY DEAR BARI[1],

You have done well in writing to me. I have advice from all quarters. But I have chosen the one Infallible Adviser. I feel secure in His bosom.

You should come after I have seen the Q. A.

Love.

BAPU

BARI KHAN SAHIB

21 ALKAPURI

BARODA

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Brother of Amtussalaam

424. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

BOMBAY,
August 21, 1944

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Your letter and the Government's action on it have agitated everyone. I could not bring myself to pull up Gomati. When all is said and done she is a well brought up and responsible girl. Still, it is difficult to be patient at such times. So she is coming. Manilal of course will come. It might be all right if Nilkanth were not to come. As for Gomati's poor brother, why should he be left out ? Without Swami of course everything will seem dreary. But what will you do ? I am hoping you will send back everyone with laughter on their faces. But even if this hope is not realized, I am ready for it. Many sacrifices will have to be made. He will do as He wills. We have to learn the *mantra* of living by dying.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

425. LETTER TO ABDUR REHMAN

August 21, 1944

BHAI ABDUR REHMAN,

The Nightingale of India has sent on to me the letter you wrote her. I have perused it carefully. As far as I am concerned I have made up my mind that Dominion Status will not be acceptable to me, even if the Congress changes its stand. So long as the Hindus and the Muslims live in fear of each other, we will always have the British as our overlords. It has been my endeavour to give up that fear myself and persuade others to do the same. It is with that very purpose that I am going to meet the Quaid-e-Azam. Let us see what God grants us.

. . .[2] I have faith in democracy. In non-violence nothing else is

[1] For Gandhiji's affirmation, twenty-four years earlier, of his faith in the power of the soul which 'lives' by 'dying', *Vide* "Doctrine of the Sword", 15-8-1920.

[2] The letter is demaged here.

conceivable. It is another matter whether ultimately we accept it or not. For me there is no other way.

From the Hindi original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladvi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

426. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

Silence Day, August 21, 1944

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I do not wish to get work from you beyond your capacity. "Regard me as non-existent"[1] merely means that I shall be in jail or some such situation. There doesn't seem to be any other way for me. You know yourself the high regard I have for you. So long as I am out, I am with you. I am aware of your faith in me.

Chimanlal is the principal manager. His sacrifice is great indeed. You yourself admire his sacrificing his family life and other things. Doesn't this show that he would not be taking any decision with a view to his own self-interest? I have had a talk with him and in order to save my time he has agreed that if there is any complaint or difference of opinion Jajuji's[2] decision will be acceptable to all. I hope you will at least agree that when there is a difference of opinion one should not claim that one's view is always correct. You are right in saying that the work should be divided. But even then sometimes there is a clash of views. In organizations someone's opinion has to be accepted as final.

This should clear all your doubts. However, if there is still anything more you may ask me. You should not get upset at all. Come what may, don't lose your peace of mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4444; also C.W. 5980

[1] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Krishnachandra", 7-8-1944.

[2] Shrikrishnadas Jaju

427. LETTER TO NAGINDAS T. MASTER[1]

August 22, 1944

BHAI NAGINBHAI,

Whatever best you think you should do. I have not thought over it seriously. If you want to do Satyagraha or act against law you must give previous notice. If you do not act [up] to this, it shall not be called a non-violent satyagraha. I am not in favour of [a] mass civil disobedience movement.

From a copy: File No. 3001/H, Commissioner of Police, Bombay

428. LETTER TO ANUPAM N. KAVI

SEVAGRAM,
August 22, 1944

BHAISHRI ANUPAM,

It is good that you opened my eyes. If you continue to show me my errors in this way I shall correct them. At the moment I feel ashamed neither on account of the Rajkot episode[2] nor the present one. My nature will make me act only in the manner I do.

ANUPAM NANALAL KAVI
129 GREAT WESTERN BUILDINGS
BAKEHOUSE LANE
FORT, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The Gujarati original is not traceable.

[2] On March 3, 1939, Gandhiji had undertaken a fast on "the moral issue of restoring a solemn pact between the Thakore Saheb of Rajkot and its people". The fast was broken on March 7.

429. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

August 23, 1944

QUESTION : Mahatmaji, you have been during your whole political career a strong supporter of the integrity of India and an opponent of vivisection. How do you reconcile your present position in giving support to Rajaji's proposals ?

ANSWER : There is no change in my views. I am even today as much against vivisection of India as ever before. Rajaji's formula concedes right of self-determination, but it does not concede Pakistan—an indefinite and undefined expression. As a believer in non-violence I cannot use force in keeping people of a particular area inside India if they want to separate. All I can do is to persuade them.

Q. Whatever be the result of your negotiations with Mr. Jinnah, don't you think that the British statesmen taking advantage of Rajaji's offer, which has your support, will divide India into two parts and establish two rival federations instead of one and thereby find an additional reason for the continuance of British control ?

A. I do not think the British statesmen will do it, unless they want it themselves and have independently so decided. They know that forty crores of people cannot be kept under permanent bondage. The world forces are moving so fast that whether the British Government will or not India must be free at no distant date. Furthermore, Rajaji's formula definitely lays down that the exercise of the right of self-determination can only accrue after independence.

Q. The non-Muslims of the Punjab and of Bengal feel panicky about Rajaji's formula because they are afraid that under this formula the non-Muslims in the separated areas will be thrown into Pakistan.

A. From the reports that I receive it is evident that so far as the Punjab is concerned there is already Pakistan in action. The religious and cultural rights of the non-Muslims they say are denied to them. My informants say that undue restrictions are placed on non-Muslim leaders and their womenfolk cannot even move about freely for fear of molestation. If this is a true picture I don't think the position will be in any way worse in "Pakistan" if ever it is established.

The people of the Punjab and Bengal need entertain no false fears, as I am not going to sell them off. I have no right to do so. No individual can barter away rights of brave people endowed with self-

[1] The questions were asked by Lala Brijlal.

confidence. Today I enjoy the confidence of the people because they believe that their interests are safe in my hands and I cannot betray them. If tomorrow I act against their wishes and interests I shall be stoned by these very people who now trust me. I am rather pained at the nervousness exhibited by the Sikhs who are a brave community. Unless they have lost the chivalrous spirit and bravery which the Gurus infused in them, they need entertain no fear about my coming talks with Mr. Jinnah.

I have already explained in my Press statement and I repeat again that nothing will be done by me or us to the prejudice of any section of the Indian population and whatever proposals are agreed to between Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah and myself will be open to confirmation, amendment and rejection by the representatives of various communities and interests. There is no idea of forcing anything on anybody against his will.

Q. If Pakistan ever comes into existence don't you think, Mahatmaji, the existence of a rival independent state in the north-west will be a constant danger to the independence of India ?

A. Thirty crores and over of inhabitants living in India have nothing to fear from two crores of Muslims living in the north-west. If the former are so weak as not to be able to defend themselves against two crores in the north-west, then they have no right to ask for independence.

I have no doubt in my mind that if India becomes independent, Indians will be able to defend themselves against any outside aggression with the resources at their disposal.

Q. Mahatmaji, all your attempts during the last twenty years or over for bringing about Hindu-Muslim unity have gone in vain and Hindu-Muslim relations today are as much strained as ever before. Don't you think that India has been put on the wrong track and communal electorates are the bane of the Indian constitution? The Muslim demand for Pakistan and Mr. Jinnah's propounding of the two-nation theory are the natural sequences of separate electorates and communal reservations and so long as the principle of separate electorates on religious basis continues to disfigure the constitution of our country, there is no chance of the Hindus and Muslims living at peace as members of the great Indian nations ? If you agree with the above contention why don't you give a right lead to the country by pressing for joint electorates as the basis of political rights ?

A. I do believe that separate electorates have done more harm than good.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

430. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

SEVAGRAM

August 23, 1944

BHAI JINNAH,

I learn from the newspapers that your fever has gone down. Thank God. But you continue to be weak and the doctors have advised visitors not to insist on appointments just yet. I had your letter yesterday. May Allah grant you early and complete recovery. I don't want you to hurry for my sake. Only I can fix up my time for other work and for visitors if you inform me the earliest possible date for our meeting. I shall be grateful if you ask someone to intimate this to me through a letter, a telephone call or a telegram.

Your brother,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

431. LETTER TO JHAVERBHAI PATEL

August 23, 1944

1. In the social order of my conception, as much production as possible would be located in the villages, and that too through the power of people's hands and feet. But this ideal cannot always be realized. We have to accept compromise at some point. Experience alone can decide the limits of such compromise. Every worker can decide the limit for himself; but when he works as a member of some institution he has to submit to the limit accepted by the institution. He helps the institution and accelerates its progress towards its goal if he further narrows the limit accepted by it, as Vinoba has done.[1] I cannot go further than this in my reply. But you will perhaps be able, on the basis of this, to formulate in fewer words a policy befitting or supporting my conception. Try to do it and if you frame any such formula, please show it to me.

2. For me, India begins and ends in the villages; that is, what I

[1] Vinoba Bhave had restricted himself to the activities of the Paunar Ashram near Nalwadi.

find possible in one village I would apply to all villages in similar conditions. If I think, and can persuade the institutions concerned to think, about paper-making from this point of view, we might find it easier to reach our goal. If the people of a village can produce energy from some source in the village itself so that they can invent a device whereby, instead of every person making paper, a few hands are able to produce all the paper needed, I would welcome such an invention. If the attempt to produce everything through the power of man's hands and feet puts such constraints on him that further development of this triple faculties would be completely arrested, I would regard such an arrangement as faulty. By triple faculties I mean those of the body, the mind and the spirit.

3. If I have understood the third question correctly, you will see that it is implied in the second. If you do not, please put it up to me [accordingly]. I have deliberately compressed the language to enable persons like you to solve more easily the problems that arise in the course of their work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1357

432. LETTER TO SHAMALDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
[Before *August 24, 1944*][1]

CHI. SHAMALDAS[2],

I take it that your letter about Munshiji will yet come.

Today I shall write on another subject. Some Gujarati newspapers come here. I hardly read any but others do. One of them is Chhaganlal. He and other readers of the Gujarati newspapers are of the opinion that vulgarity in advertisements displayed in Gujarati papers is frightening. Pyarelalji says that some Urdu and Hindi newspapers surpass Gujarati papers in this respect. Some years ago I had commented on the subject in *Harijan.* It yielded good results for

[1] From the reference to advertisements in Gujarati newspapers it appears that this was written before the letter to the addressee dated August 24, 1944; *vide* "Letter to Shamaldas Gandhi", 24-8-1944 and also "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 24-9-1944.

[2] Editor, Vandemataram

a time. Later on it became as bad as before. I therefore asked Chhaganlal to give me clippings. One of the clippings of the Gujarati papers he has given me is from *Vandemataram.* I send it herewith. I have now only a short while to live. God will take as much work from me as He wants. Are these the drumbeats of approaching independence ? Can't you do without this earning ? Is it only on this condition that you can bring out the newspaper ? Ponder over it and let me know.

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Baladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

433. LETTER TO SITA

SEVAGRAM,
August 24, 1944

MY DEAR SITA,

What a refreshing thing to hear from you. So you are a practising barrister. I hope with plenty of work! Are you in possession of full health now? I shall certainly read Dr. John's effort.

Yours,
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

434. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

August 24, 1944

CHI. SHARDA,

I have not heard from you recently. I would say that I have detained you for the sake of your health. I see now that you do not like to come over here. I do not mention here, for want of time, all that I have heard.[1] But if your health permits, come over here immediately. You would not be an additional burden wherever I go. I do not know when I shall go to Bombay. But if you wish to meet me there, and then come along with me, you may do so. I hope everyone is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10048. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chimanlal N. Shah" , 20-8-1944.

435. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

SEVAGRAM,
August 24, 1944

BHAI JIVANJI,

Mridulabehn[1] has a good many complaints against Navajivan Karyalaya and the [Gujarat] Vidyapith. She says that when one seeks your help for my work, one always gets a negative reply. The result is, you do not profit from the ideas that occur to workers like her. You attach no value to the help offered by these workers. You behave with absolute confidence in yourself as if whatever you do is beyond criticism or improvement. Since you are involved in these complaints, and since you are one of the founders of these institutions, people generally believe that what the Gandhians do can hardly warrant any criticism. And the Gandhians, on their part, boastfully say to workers like her: 'Look at our work and our skill in keeping our balance. We are supplying cheap and ennobling literature to the people; and we never sit idle. We have acquired the secret of unremitting work. Now, we do not understand what you critics want to say. You cannot find fault with the work we are doing. We do not work the way you do. It does not suit us. The field for service is very wide. You can do as you please and let us do what we like. So our plea is that we should bear with each other and carry on our work. Moreover, we are always ready to carry out Gandhiji's wishes.' Mridulabehn depicts this picture of Navajivan Karyalaya and the Vidyapith and allied institutions. The language is not hers but mine. I have used garish words. Without them I cannot make you see Mridulabehn's meaning as I understand it. She is sarcastic but not virulent. I have regarded her criticism as friendly. You also should take it in the same spirit and give her whatever help she needs and you can give. She has cited two instances. The reply[2] which I gave to the Government's allegations has been translated into many languages by the Aundh Press. According to Mridulabehn, a Gujarati translation in simple language and in my style can be rendered truthfully only by those who are called Gandhians. Mridulabehn is particular about this style of language. She tried to

[1] Daughter of Ambalal Sarabhai

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943.

secure this translation but no one paid any heed. It is getting late and I shall therefore cut my letter short. But this is enough to explain to you what Mridulabehn wants. Please send your reply to me.

I gave this letter to Mridulabehn to read. She wants to add two points to it. First, it was my idea to send the material to the Aundh Press. This is right. I thought that due to the scarcity of paper, etc., it would be difficult to sort out things anywhere else. Secondly, she expects mutual understanding between you and her, so that she should not be required to rush to me. This is right so far as it goes. But sometimes it may become unavoidable to come to me. There is no means in the world to bar this road in anticipation.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

436. LETTER TO SHAMALDAS GANDHI

[*August 24, 1944*][1]

CHI. SHAMALDAS,

I am pleased that you sent your reply by return of post. Congratulations and blessings. I wish you would lead the people along the right path keeping your own hands clean in spite of any number of temptations. Such workers do not starve to death. I am satisfied with the restrictions you have imposed on yourself. I had your telegram too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The source places this letter among those of August 24, 1944.

437. LETTER TO SATYAVATI

August 24, 1944

CHI. SATYAVATI[1],

A question has arisen whether I have written in respect of the two points. I think I have. If I am mistaken, here I write again. I don't believe you can gain anything by violating [the restrictions][2] imposed upon you. If you can, do come over in the cold season wherever I might be. Let us see what happens. I see your letters to Khurshedbehn.

Sushilabehn[3] arrived here today. Today she told me what was written about you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

438. LETTER TO TARADEVI NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,
August 25, 1944

DEAR SISTER,

I know you want to have Sushila with you for a good many days. Sushila was going there direct. You may as well say that I have made her get down on the way. Her luggage too is lying at Bajajwadi. I need Sushila here. Hence I wish you would let her remain here. What I would like most is all the three of you coming here. Then I shall be able to see you, Pyarelal will be able to see you, and it will be convenient in every way. If you really cannot come, then I shall send Sushila when I conveniently can. Remember that my days are numbered. Hence I would again urge you to come.

Blessings to the three of you,

BAPU

From the Hindi original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Granddaughter of Swami Shraddhanand
[2] Illegible
[3] Sushila Nayyar

439. LETTER TO R. K. PRABHU

SEVAGRAM,
August 26, 1944

my dear prabhu,

Yours to hand. I have offered what has appeared to me the fairest terms. If the main source of revenue is India, then there is not much in seeking publishers with a foreign fame. I am quite clear that we in India must sell at the lowest price. Will the Oxford Press be satisfied if the Navajivan Trust covers the cost hitherto incurred and let us have what they have printed. I write this subject to confirmation by the Trust. Do not be agitated. Come to see me if necessary.

Yours,
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

440. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

August 26, 1944

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I expressed myself in my usual way. What I said[1] is for everyone. When the complaints regarding utensils, etc., continue unabated the person in charge of the section takes the blame upon himself. Why should this then upset you? I have even said that if we cannot mend such matters we should either forget about running the Ashram, or accept the rule of living in utmost simplicity. We should not have guests and should be content with whatever activities we are able to carry on. You should have been thoroughly satisfied with what I had said.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4445

[1] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Krishnachandra", 21-8-1944.

441. LETTER TO GANESHSHASTRI JOSHI

August 27, 1944

SHRI VAIDYARAJ JOSHIJI,

Gandhiji has received your letter of the 24th. He has directed me to reply to you.

As it is time for postal clearance today I just want to inform you that since yesterday he has been having three to four loose motions a day. He has started using the commode. If you have any other suggestion, please let us know. An examination of the stools indicates that the germs of dysentery are causing the havoc.

Yours,

SUSHILA NAYYAR

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 932. Courtesy: Ganeshshastri Joshi

442. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM,

August 28, 1944

CHI. MIRA[1],

Yours of 22nd received yesterday. You are having a bad time. You must take care of yourself. If you feel like coming here, of course you will not hesitate. You will not fear me. I am a changed man I hope. You may look to me to find you Rs. 50,000. Narandas is over head and ears in work. I do not care to trouble him. You can either recall what was received or tell me what is the limit up to which you would spend.

Love.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] In Devanagari

443. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

SEVAGRAM,
August 28, 1944

DADA[1],

Raojibhai[2] writes to tell me that there has been a terrible calamity in Gujarat. The rains have been excessive. This means that we shall have to start a relief fund. Think over this. Write to me and give details. Let me know if I have to do anything. I read very few newspapers. A single activity takes up all my time.

Blessings from
BAPU

DADA MAVALANKAR
MAHARASHTRA SOCIETY, ELLIS BRIDGE
AHMEDABAD, B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1250

444. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI M. PATEL

August 28, 1944

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

I have your letter. Keep me informed about the calamity. I have written to Dada and asked him to make inquiries and do what is necessary.[3] If my help is required, he may ask for it. Kanjibhai will probably be there. If so, show him this letter. We really miss Sardar. Now all of you must become *sardars*[4]. I am utterly useless.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI RAOJIBHAI
RAVINDRA & CO., PRARTHANA SAMAJ
CHARNI ROAD, BOMBAY 4

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10219. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

[1] Ganesh Vasudev Mavalankar (1888-1956); Speaker, Legislative Assembly, Bombay; Speaker, Lok Sabha, 1947-56

[2] Raojibhai M. Patel

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

[4] Literally, 'leaders'

445. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 28, 1944

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Sushilabehn has come and she hunts up the letters addressed to me. In one of them you have asked for a couple of lines from me. If I have not sent them earlier, here they are.

Worthy work needs no support. I am already convinced of the value of your work[1]; why then do you need my support? All of you have a better knowledge of Hindustani than I. Go further ahead.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI AMRITLAL NANAVATI

CHUDA RANGANARNI KHADKI, KELAPITH

SURAT, B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10804

446. LETTER TO KANAM GANDHI

[SEVAGRAM, "VIA" WARDHA, (C.P.)][2]

August 28, 1944

CHI. KANAM,

Your letter of August 15 is lying with me. I see that you have tried to improve your handwriting. You should pay still more careful attention to improving it. I will not discuss now the matters you have raised in your letter. I see that much of what you write, you do just for the sake of writing, What you write shows intellectual speculation but not good sense. Good sense is very necessary. Write little, but whatever you write, write after careful deliberation, courteously and with genuine curiosity for knowledge. You are no longer a mere child. I was certainly glad that all of you came here but I was not satisfied with the way you behaved and with what you said. I did not see any courtesy in your behaviour. I saw a good deal of impertinence in your

[1] Propagation of Hindustani

[2] As on the letterhead on which the letter is written

way of talking. What you said was all superficial. It can be seen even in your letter. If you can get rid of these defects, you will go far.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

447. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

August 28, 1944

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter. It is worthy of a *sinha*[1]. Ghanshyamdasji worked according to his capacity and so did Swami. The thing is that we should rest content with whatever anyone offers us or else there is only disappointment in store for us. Is it a small thing that Satis Babu appreciated your merits much more than others? There will never be a cause for disappointment if you work with detachment. We should not sit in judgment on others.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1946

448. TELEGRAM TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

August 29, 1944

IF GUJARAT FLOOD SITUATION DEMANDS CESSATION KASTURBA FUND, YOU SHOULD SUSPEND AND DEVOTE YOURSELF FLOOD DISTRESS COLLECTION.

BAPU

Sansmarano, p. 156

[1] 'Sinha' means a lion.

449. A WORD FOR THE READER[1]

AUTHORIZED TRANSLATION[2]

Who can accept the propriety of my writing a preface for this venture? But if by doing so, I can help fill the purse for the poor, why need I hesitate? I understand this is not meant to be a presentation volume. The profit from its sale will add to the purse to be presented to me for *Daridranarayana*. A few words from me by way of a foreword will, they argue, help the sale. This is enough temptation for me. If the book correctly expresses my views on truth and non-violence and kindred matters I am sure its circulation will do good. Looking at the list of contributors[3], I feel they must have done justice to what I stand for.

M. K. GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,

August 29, 1944

From a facsimile: *Mahatma*, Vol. VI, facing p. 337

450. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

August 29, 1944

BHAI JINNAH,

I have your letter. I got neither a telegram nor a letter by the return of post. That made me impatient and I sent the telegram. Afterwards I got your reply. Thanks. I am glad to learn that you are keeping well.

I have fixed my engagements up to the 7th September. I have kept myself free after that date. Hence I can present myself on or after the 9th, whenever you call me.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Gandhiji drafted this in Gujarati for a souvenir volume *Gandhiji-His Life and Work* which was to be published on his 75th birthday.

[2] This is in Gandhiji's hand.

[3] Which among others included Albert Einstein, Pearl S. Buck, Verrier Elwin, F. R. Moraes, Marjorie Sykes, J. B. Kripalani, Mahadev Desai, S. A. Brelvi, Maurice Frydman, G. A. Natesan and R. K. Prabhu with an introduction by Jawaharlal Nehru

451. NOTE TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

August 29, 1944

The foregoing is not enough for my satisfaction. Nor should you be satisfied with this. We should not be so easily satisfied.

BAPU

[PS.]

About Munnalal's objection, I feel that meetings of the permanent ashramites should be called from time to time and a record should be kept of the suggestions made and decisions taken. Is there anything impractical in this?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10604

452. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM,
August 29, 1944

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

In my letter of yesterday I forgot to answer a question of yours. Bhagirathji writes to me that the work will not be held up for lack of funds.

Everything is fine. Parnerkar is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 482

453. LETTER TO V. V. NENE

August 29, 1944

BHAI NENE,

I have your letter. I had no idea that I would be arrested so soon, if at all. I had planned a programme but before it could be released I was arrested.[1] But there were to be negotiations first, isn't it? I cannot say whether I would have met Jinnah Saheb or not.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

454. LETTER TO DR. JAYADEV KULKARNI

August 29, 1944

BHAI KULKARNI,

The same question has been raised by others too. I have answered it. It is impossible for me to be acquainted with all the circumstances. Therefore it is almost impossible for me to answer questions individually. I have, of course, laid down the general rule.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. JAYADEV KULKARNI

577 MATHGALI

BELGAUM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The reference is to the Quit India movement of 1942.

455. LETTER TO B. L. RALLIA RAM

August 29, 1944

BHAI RALLIA RAMJI,

Although my reply is delayed, this much I can say with certainty that neither of us will take any step to the detriment of the interests of others.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

REV. B. L. RALLIA RAM

OFFICE OF THE HONORARY SECRETARY

C/O Y. M. C. A., LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

456. LETTER TO BHAGIRATH KANODIA

SEVAGRAM,

August 29, 1944

BHAI BHAGIRATH,

Your letter astonishes me. Rajaji can never dupe me. Those who talk thus understand neither Rajaji nor me. Those who say such things would do better to put it in writing. I have never said anything of the kind.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAGIRATHJI KANODIA

8 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLACE

CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

457. MESSAGE FOR ALL-INDIA STUDENTS' FEDERATION[1]

WARDHAGANJ,
August 30, 1944

Conduct your proceedings in your mother tongue, in the national language or if necessary in all the languages of India, but not in a foreign language.

And for the sake of *Daridranarayana*, do spin for at least half an hour every day.

If you cannot do these two things kindly return this to me.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-9-1944, and *The Hindu*, 1-9-1944

458. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

August 31, 1944

I have seen an Orient Press report to the effect that I have consented to receive the salute of Khaksars on my arrival in Bombay. I may say that I have given no such consent. I am going to Bombay as an individual. I can, therefore, receive no salute. I invite individuals and organizations to devote themselves to silently praying that we may both be wisely guided by the Almighty. I would ask then to avoid all demonstrations. Let the leaders of all communities devise ways and means of cultivating friendly relations with one another.

The Hitavada, 1-9-1944

459. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C.P.,
August 31, 1944

MY DEAR BELOVED BROTHER,

I had your letter. I wanted to write immediately on receiving it. But overwhelming work delayed my reply till now. I have received all you have been saying. My whole heart goes out to you in your grief.

[1] Lalu Shah, Joint Secretary of the Federation, met Gandhiji to take a message from him to the Students' Conference to be held on September 2 and 3 in Bombay and discussed with him questions regarding the constructive programme and other aspects of the students' movement.

But I would beseech you to bear it. You will find in the end that we have not betrayed the country. A society based on non-violence cannot be built except With the free and willing consent of all its component parts. I plead for trust. You should not despair of me.

With love,

Yours,

LITTLE BROTHER

T. R. Venkatarama Sastri Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

460. LETTER TO HOOTEN

August 31, 1944

DEAR COL. HOOTEN,

Many thanks for your kind letter. How can I forget you? I recall our many cordial chats about medical work in villages.

About the part I have played during this terrible world crisis, my conscience is absolutely clear.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

COL. HOOTEN
EUROPE HOTEL, GERARDS CROSS
BUCKS, ENGLAND

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

461. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

August 31, 1944

BHAI JINNAH,

I have your telegram. Thanks.

I had written a letter to you on the 29th. You must have got it. As mentioned in it I have already fixed up appointments with various people up to the 7th. I can, therefore, start from here on 8th September at the earliest and reach there on the 9th. I hope the day will suit you. If it does, kindly let me know.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

462. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

August 31, 1944

CHI. NARANDAS,

A fund of Rs. 75 lakhs is being collected[1]. Let its fate be what it will. I do not know how much from it will be made available to you. You who are at the root of this collection should however carry on with your work in your own manner. This means that you should be able to collect money according to your plan. Those who have been always helping you for the *Rentia Baras*[2] purse should understand this. And if they do, they should send you their contributions this time also as they have been doing in the past. Whenever you feel that such donors require a word from me, you may use this letter. It would certainly pain me if the purpose of the Kasturba Fund is misunderstood and in consequence further expansion of your work is obstructed. I will regard the Fund as having been put to good use only if its work, like your work, spreads throughout the country.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8610. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

463. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM,
August 31, 1944

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

Seven annas had to be paid for your unstamped letter. Why are you in such a great hurry? Such waste is not a sign of our poverty.

I do not remember that I failed to address you as 'Daughter'. I allowed the pen free play. I do not see any difference between 'Daughter' and 'Chi'. It might have made some difference if I had written 'Behn'. But is there any cure for suspicion?

You can do any work without seeking my consent. Then the

[1] For the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial

[2] *Bhadrapad Vad* 12, Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram calendar, which was observed as spinning day

question of my displeasure will not arise at all. When you had asked me earlier, I had told you what was proper work for you. The work which you are doing covers the Hindu-Muslim problem too.

I waited for the Maulvi you mention. But he never turned up. It was clear you had made a mistake. In spite of it, I had sent word to the Maulvi that he could certainly come.

You must have received the letter I sent through Bhagirathji.

You can certainly draw Rs. 75 a month for your expenses. Do not ask your brothers for it. If they send anything of their own accord, pass it on to the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 483

464. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

August 31,1944

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. You did a good thing in passing on Ba's diary for Sushilabehn. I have held it up with me. I want to read it and may even have to make use of it. Sushilabehn says that it has been given as a trust to her. I told her that entrusting it to me would be as good as entrusting it to her. What you write about tile case there is terrible, but such things keep happening. It will be enough if you learn to be alert. More if and when we meet. Find some time, if you can, to meet Mamasaheb[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. LILAVATIBEHN UDESHI

G. S. MEDICAL COLLEGE, LADY STUDENTS' HOSTEL

PAREL, G.I.P. [RLY.], BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: (C.W. 10215. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] V. L. Phadke

465. LETTER TO SUCHAN

[*August 1944*][1]

DEAR SUCHAN,

Not only our country but all countries can go on for ever with the help of hand-labour.

My swadeshi excludes mill-cloth. Mills can take the country downhill. You should look up the literature on this subject.

Yours,

BAPU

P. R. COLLEGE

COCANADA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

466. NOTE TO DEVPRAKASH NAYYAR

[*August 1944*][2]

After discussing everything with Aryanayakum[3] do what you think best.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi: Documents relating to Gandhiji. Courtesy: National Archives of India

467. TELEGRAM TO M. A. JINNAH

SEVAGRAM,
September 1, 1944

QUAID-E-AZAM JINNAH

MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD

BOMBAY

YOUR WIRE[4]. THANKS. HOPING REACH YOU FOUR O'CLOCK NINTH.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The letter is placed among those of August 1944.

[2] The note is written on a letter of August 1944.

[3] E. W. Aryanayakum, Secretary, Hindustani Talimi Sangh

[4] Dated August 30, saying that September 7 or any day thereafter would suit the addressee for meeting Gandhiji

468. LETTER TO B. G. KHER

September 1, 1944

BHAI BALASAHEB[1],

Bhai Lalubhai had brought the resolution drafted by students for the students' conference. His sincere entreaty created a good impression on me. He pressed me hard and somehow exacted a message[2] also. That message is not a message but an invitation to bind the students. I was not very willing to do even that much, nor did I have the time. I did not like the resolution. Pyarelal offered and tried to shorten it. His draft was fairly good but I was not satisfied. He does not get a minute to spare. After the arrival of the Bishop of Rangoon his work has increased a lot. I, therefore, took up the drafting of the resolution in my own hand. I did this on the spur of the moment, but the work was too much. Whatever I have done is enclosed herewith.[3] It seems to me that I have compressed a great deal in a short space, *multum in parvo*. But persons with superficial knowledge of a subject sometimes suffer from such a delusion and are pleased with themselves. I would not be surprised if that is what has happened in the case of this draft, for I have finished it somehow in intervals snatched from a busy schedule. You may, therefore, add anything to or remove anything from the draft. You need not fear that I would feel offended. He is a true co-worker who finds out the shortcomings of his colleague and helps him to correct them in a friendly spirit.

The interview with the Bishop shaped very well. The result lies in the hands of God.

I hope your study of Urdu is going on. If it was discontinued owing to pressure of work, please resume it. Drop by drop fills the ocean.

I am reaching Bombay on the 9th to meet the Quaid-e-Azam.

I hope you will have no difficulty in reading and understanding this letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2772

[1] Premier of Bombay, 1937 to 1939

[2] *Vide* "Message for All-India Students Federation", 30-8-1944.

[3] The draft resolution is not available.

469. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKVASA

September 1, 1944

BHAI MANGALDAS[1],

I got your letter and your note. Both are useful. I hope to reach there on the 9th. I shall return at the earliest on the 10th. If you can get time while I am there, please do come and see me. Otherwise write to me at Sevagram and ask for power of attorney of any kind you need. It is a matter of satisfaction that your health is improving, though slowly.

Blessings from

BAPU

MANGALDAS PAKVASA
29 DUNGARSINH ROAD
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4687. Courtesy: Mangaldas Pakvasa

470. SPEECH AT A. I. S. A. MEETING-I

SEVAGRAM,
September 1, 1944

More than two years have passed since we last met. I have come to know a little, that is to say, not the whole of what happened outside [the jail] during these two years. It seemed as though one age had succeeded another, bringing in the process trouble for the whole of India. How could the Charkha Sangh have escaped it?

Today, we have once again come together under these circumstances but whatever little work we might yet be able to do would not be enough for us. A large amount of the Charkha Sangh property has either been destroyed or is in Government custody. Besides, many of our colleagues could not be among us today. Here, I am not talking of Congressmen but of those who were especially helpful in the Sangh work and are its trustees. But I have realized that even with these few we can carry on the Sangh work. We are sure of

[1] President, Legislative Council, Bombay, 1937-47

their ability to do it.

I have thought a great deal over the subject of khadi during my detention. I shall briefly state the conclusions I have arrived at.

The most important discovery I made was that the foundation of the A.I.S.A. was so weak that the Association could be easily wiped out of existence. It had not taken root in the life of the people. The Government could destroy it by imprisoning its leaders. Though some of its activities continued, I saw clearly that the Government could exterminate it at its pleasure. That is to say, my belief that the movement for the revival of the spinning-wheel was indestructible, whatever the circumstances, had been dashed to the ground. The work had not been organized on an imperishable basis.

I am not a man to accept defeat easily but it was in the jail that I discovered that we live at Government's mercy and it hurts me. If it were in my power I would choose to live at no one's mercy except God's. True, it is Divine dispensation that no man may live without the goodwill of his fellow-beings but I am not talking of such help. My activities are founded on my own thinking. The Charkha Sangh was also founded on the same principles. In South Africa, I discovered that if India was to survive and progress non-violently, it could only be through the charkha—the charkha alone can be a symbol of non-violence. We may draw strength from other symbols as well but such strength may not lead to the world's well-being.

I realized in jail that there was something wrong in our method of khadi work, which must needs be amended. I had asked India to carry on spinning. I knew how this spinning work was to be carried on. But I did not lay the necessary stress on the requisite outlook and the spirit which was to underlie it. I looked at it from its immediate practical aspect. All my co-workers also laid stress on this practical side. So I suffered it, and also lent my helping hand to it. We have gone far in that direction. But today I cannot continue to ask people to spin in that manner.

I contemplated how to work in the future. I even thought of disbanding the Sangh on my own and distributing its property and funds among the people. I saw that our work would be incomplete, so long as we did not carry the message of the charkha to every home. That, I thought, accounted for our being far from our ideal. There are seven lakh villages in India. Thousands of them do not even know what the charkha is. This is our fault and it is because of this fault that

we have failed to put khadi work on a sound basis. You must ponder over it.

All the thought and study I have been giving to this subject lately make me feel that the work would have to be decentralized if it is to spread far and wide and take permanent root. The above line of thought led to the idea of decentralization and I thought it would be very good indeed if its worth could be proved. I realize that the difficulties in my way are many but then hardly anyone has devoted as much thought and effort to the charkha as I have. This is a rather tall claim and it also smacks of pride, but not to mention it on the right occasion would be false modesty. In the jail too I had no other thought but the charkha.

The strength behind all my activities including civil disobedience is derived wholly from the charkha to which I have devoted most of my energy and funds. Most of the ten million rupees of the Tilak Swaraj Fund was also used up for the spinning activity. This brought about a spate of charges against me but I regard them as so many bouquets. For whatever I did, I did after due deliberation and with full knowledge of its consequences. I did not deceive anyone. Nothing was spent on the charkha without convincing the public about it. That is how this institution came into being.

After much reflection and study I have arrived at the definite conclusion that, however intense, my *sadhana*[1] of the charkha has remained imperfect and I must admit that my study too has not been as thorough as it ought to have been. Today, my words have a greater force because I can see these things more clearly.

Besides the Charkha Sangh members, as well as sympathizers and those who share my feelings, today's gathering includes some representatives of the public also. Had we only directed the strength the country displayed during the movement along the right channels, we could have shown how much public support we had. But we failed to do so. The fault is not yours but mine and when I say all this, it is not so much to blame you, as to whip up your intelligence and my own.

We plied the charkha but mechanically, not intelligently. Had you yourselves appreciated the full significance of the charkha, you would have given it the same importance as I do. It also has political

[1] Spiritual discipline

significance. It has however no place in the dishonest game of politics. More than any other thing it is the charkha that stands for clean, noble politics. If there is [no] truth in this statement, how can we claim swaraj through the charkha? It certainly does not mean that as soon as the yarn snaps swaraj comes to nought.

It is often alleged that workers of the A.I.S.A. and the A.I.V.I.A., if not Gandhiites in general, are unintelligent and lifeless. People repose trust in them. But they (the Gandhiites) are not able to tell the people what exactly are the problems facing the country and how our programme is calculated to resolve these problems and take us to our goal. On the other hand, Marxian literature is fast increasing in the country and Gandhiites are not able to resist the impact of these external forces.

We say that we are devoted to non-violence. If so, we must reveal in our lives the force of non-violence. Unless we can reveal its force in our own lives, we will not be true Gandhiites. In fact, there is no such thing as Gandhism. If anything, it is non-violence that deserves to be called an ideology. Every member of the Charkha Sangh should be a living witness of non-violence. If he is a devotee of non-violence or Gandhism, he must be a live wire. Today Gandhism is a word of reproach. It no more connotes something virtuous or praiseworthy. Let us admit we have failed to make non-violence a part of our being. Otherwise we would find the charkha established in every village. I confess that I have failed. Had I been an adept in this art, I would have produced a concrete pattern of reconstructed village life in Sevagram at any rate. But today even if I put the charkha in the hands of the people of Sevagram they do not accept it. We teach them how to use it, tempt them by providing them with work, pay them more wages and serve them in various ways, yet all to little purpose. But my faith in the charkha is unshakable even when I have failed as President of the Sangh.

That is why I said that we should admit that we have failed to do what we ought to have done. It is not due to want of sacrifice in us. Amongst us are men and women who have sacrificed much. My head bends low before them. When I think of each of them my heart is deeply moved. My conscience tells me that a country which abounds in persons instilled with such a spirit of sacrifice can never fail. Yet in spite of this sacrifice, we have not yet made our country free. Freedom is coming, perhaps sooner than we believe. But it does

not satisfy me. I even question my own share in it and then console myself with the thought that we have at least tried our best. I do not hold anybody guilty. I am only pointing to the situation as it is. Correct assessment of a situation is also a sign of intelligence. We should not feel satisfied with what we have done. We have tried our best, no doubt. But had we been able to develop the work of the Sangh according to the standard we had set before ourselves, there will not be the despair amongst us which we see today. In that case we would have accomplished forthwith a non-violent swaraj.

I lay before you a hard prescription. If you are prepared for it, well and good. But it should not be accepted in ignorance, nor out of foolhardiness. You should examine it thoroughly. If you agree with me you would wind up the A.I.S.A. and distribute all its property and assets among its workers for carrying on the work. The Sangh need not keep even a pice for future activities. All of us should be convinced that the charkha is the symbol of non-violent economic self-sufficiency. If we and the people grasp this significance of the charkha not a pice need be spent on propaganda for the charkha. There would then be no reason to fear Government ordinances either. Nor need we look to the rich for alms. We shall without effort become the centre of hope, and the people will come to us of their own accord. They will not go elsewhere to seek work. Every village will become the nerve-centre of independent India. India will then not be known by her cities like Bombay and Calcutta, but by her 400 millions inhabiting the seven lakhs of villages. The problems of Hindu-Muslim differences, untouchability, conflicts, misunderstandings and rivalries will all melt away. This is the real function of the Sangh. We have to live and die for it.

You will argue it is a very big task requiring much intelligence. I tell you that this cannot be acquired by mere study in libraries. We have to develop it by the labour of our hands. This is the idea underlying the Nayee Talim according to which the intellect is developed by the effort put forth by the hands and feet. Books need not be burnt but their importance is only secondary. The charkha has to rank first of all. In the same manner the pursuit of the charkha must become the mainspring of manifold other activities like village industries, Nayee Talim, etc. If we are able to adopt the charkha intelligently we can revive the entire economic life of our villages once more. But we can progress only as far as the strength of our

members takes us. I do not wish to create a fresh universe, like Vishwamitra, who wanted to take Trishanku to heaven but the poor fellow remained suspended half way. Therefore, we have to work within the limits of our strength with our feet on the hard earth.

If we ourselves disband the Sangh the Government will have little left to attach. They could surely not destroy us all, for our strength would have gone up to forty crores. If they want to liquidate us we shall submit to it cheerfully. And what does it matter if a few million among us are done away with? An ocean does not dry up if a few drops evaporate. Nothing can diminish its greatness. Similarly, the more we are suppressed, the more powerful we shall grow. The only condition is that we must recognize the power of non-violence.

We must carry on untiring research on the charkha. No doubt we have put in a lot of effort for the charkha and made some improvements in it. We have also manufactured scores of charkhas but now we have to produce an expert, a *shastri* who is well-versed in the manufacture of machines. We should like him to devise such charkhas as can yield more and better quality of yarn. But even if we fail to find such an expert, I am not going to accept defeat. I will prove my point with the help of reasoning. We should have undying faith in the charkha. When faith materializes it manifests itself through reason. It is not self-luminous. For when faith transcends its bounds and finds another medium to express itself it shines forth all the more. Faith is never lost; in fact it grows and sharpens the intellect. And then faith can challenge reason. It is no use merely making speeches or giving lectures; we must make scientific experiments and declare from the house-tops the results of our experiments. We have been suppressed and we have to work our way up. Let us therefore do away with mutual recriminations, disabuse our minds of any reservations, iron out all the differences and thus simplify our work. We should repose full confidence in our representatives and be frank. We are votaries of truth and should, therefore, not be afraid of speaking the whole truth, for the greater the fear in our hearts, the less we shall be able to speak the truth. That is why the *Gita* gives the pride of place to fearlessness.

I am telling you this on the strength of my inner experience. We should be fearless and not hide anything. Selfishness has already impeded our progress and unless we get rid of it, we would not be able to organize our strength and would thus prove traitors to Mother India.

[From Hindi]

Charkha Sanghka Navasamskaran, pp.

471. SPEECH AT A.I.S.A. MEETING-II

SEVAGRAM,
September 2, 1944

Yesterday, I was a little hasty while talking to you. Some work was indeed done but later I kept thinking over it. I had undertaken the stupendous task of preparing a draft for you. I even entered silence for the purpose. After much reflection last night and this morning I have prepared a draft which I shall now read out for your consideration.

1. The village is the centre for the charkha, and the Charkha Sangh can realize its highest ambitions only when its work is decentralized in the villages. Keeping this in view, this meeting of the A. I. S. A. resolves that the following changes be implemented in its present methods of work:

(a) The largest number of workers whose one passion is the charkha and whom the A. I. S. A. approves should go to the villages.

(b) The present sales-depots and production-centres should be curtailed.

(c) Training institutions should be developed and teaching courses enlarged.

(d) The Sangh should permit any province or district which wants to be independent and self-sufficient to become so.

2. A Standing Committee composed of the members of the A.I.S.A., A.I.V.I.A. and the Hindustani Talimi Sangh should be formed in order to issue necessary directions in the light of the new ideology. The three institutions must realize that their task is to achieve perfect non-violence. Complete swaraj will follow in its wake. The three institutions must be so equipped that the entire government machinery should depend upon them and not *vice versa*. This means the workers of these three bodies should attain in some measure the quality of a *sthitaprajna*[1]. They must be men of secure understanding. If this is not possible we should stop making tall claims for the charkha. We shall have to lower our ideal and plan our work accordingly.

This united body composed, as suggested above, of members of

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II, 54-72

the three Sanghs should so regularize the constructive work that all political activity will be dependent on it. Today our condition is most pitiable.

Some workers of the A. I. S. A. complained to me that they do not receive any help from Congressmen. The experience of the last two years is also before us. During my detention, I read a lot of newspapers and was aware of the wretchedness that was apparent in our workers.

Now after talking to them it has all become very clear to me.

In the jail, I read all the Communist literature [I could get]. It contained nothing new for me. Whenever Maulana Hasrat Mohani visited the Ashram, we used to spend the day in such discussions. Today the Socialists have a number of sincere workers holding university degrees. Those among them who are neutral come to me and ask me to put my philosophy and my faith before the world. I have placed before the world a novel idea which, although it has no long history of its own, represents my achievement based On forty years' experience.

We must admit that we have few degree-holders among us. We have neither much money nor any comparable efficiency. I realize all these difficulties but undaunted I made my way through them cheerfully for seventy-five years. I hope you will be equally fearless.

We can make intelligent progress along our chosen path and face the challenge coming our way only if we have this courage. What indicates light is its progressive dispelling of darkness. Absence of light is darkness. It has been the law of the world that light spreads. Darkness then has nowhere to go but cease to be. That is the way of non-violence too. My deep-rooted faith in non-violence gives me the courage to fear nothing—and in spite of impediments my progress has not stopped. This manifestation of non-violence will be clear to you only after my death, not before it.

We have been looking up to the Congress because we have been crippled so far. It is true that with the Congress help, our work can be carried on, but then it was I who had introduced the Charkha Sangh Resolution[1] in the Congress realizing that the Sangh was to continue

[1] The Resolution, passed on September 22, 1925, *inter alia*, read: "It is resolved that the Congress do now take up and carry on all such political work as may be necessary in the interests of the country, and for this purpose do employ the whole

longer.

But it is our fault that we have not won the confidence of Congressmen sufficiently to make them come to us to help them in village work. If we were capable of doing this, which Congressmen would dare remain outside the Sangh? Nay, the Congress and the Sangh would then have felt one with each other, and the one would have acted as a supplement to the other, i.e., the Sangh would have carried out the Congress constructive programme, and the Congress would have fought the Government in the legislatures. There would then have been no antagonism between the two.

Therefore, we have to look at the whole thing from a new angle and a new order of priorities. I have put nothing new before you. It would indeed be a great achievement if you could prove the power of the charkha through your own lives. Today, we are in a strange situation. I have no doubt at all that we have failed to realize the significance of the charkha only because of the inadequate manner in which we have done our khadi work.

It cannot be denied that believers in big industry and industrialization are also the friends of India. But the difference between them and me is like that between the two poles. Citydwellers might well follow those who advocate mill production. But if you of the countryside were, even by mistake or oversight, to take to it, the picture of India would be thoroughly changed. Her face would then be altered beyond recognition. Thereby hundreds of millions of our poor people will meet their end while only a few millions will survive. I do aspire to live for 125 years. But I cannot bear the sight of a crore of people living after reducing to ashes 39 crores. What I have tried to do is to serve the most oppressed and the handicapped, and to keep pace with them. It has been our endeavour to do this work through khadi during these years. Not many years ago we began. If you feel that no changes are desirable, well and good, but I will not accept defeat. You should come to a decision after weighing all the pros and

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of the machinery and funds of the Congress, save and except such funds and assets as are specially earmarked and belong to the All-India Khaddar Board and Provincial Khaddar Boards, which shall be handed over with all existing financial obligations to the All-India Spinners' Association started by Mahatma Gandhi as an integral part of the Congress organization, but with independent existence and full powers to administer these and other funds for the fulfilment of its object." For Gandhiji's speech introducing the Resolution, *vide* "Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting, Patna", 22-9-1925.

cons. Who knows when it will be possible for so many of us to meet again? I have laid my heart open before you.

If you believe that the charkha is the supreme symbol of our objective and that we have not been able to achieve our objective by the present methods then our mode of working must needs be changed.

I do not mean to say that all we did so far was absolutely wrong. Whatever we did, we did with devotion to truth. And that is no small matter. Even with our limited funds, we were able to distribute among our village brethren more than four and a half crores of rupees up to date. The amount we spent in organizing this work was in comparison little. Yet from the standpoint of our objective, the work is not up to the standard. We must not allow ourselves to be weighed down by the commercial aspect of our work. Jawaharlal has sent me a book describing the achievements of the co-operative movement in China. That movement, it seems to me, is nothing compared with what we are doing here. But judged by our own objective we have done little, very little. We have not yet reached the seven hundred thousand villages. We have done only one per cent of what the mills have done. Then what is there to be proud of? That is why I say that if we are not prepared to change our methods we shall be reduced to a mere philanthropic institution. I shall not be ashamed of it. If, on the other hand, we want to uphold our claim for khadi we shall have to live up to it. We should not deceive the public. We must think out ways and means of increasing our strength. If in seeking to change our mode of work you agree that it would be well to close the A.I.S.A. in its present form, rest assured that it would add to your strength.

[From Hindi]

Charkha Sanghka Navasamskaran, pp. 9-14

472. LETTER TO METROPOLITAN OF CALCUTTA

SEVAGRAM,
September 3, 1944

DEAREST FRIEND,

It is now 3.30 a.m. I must write now or the work before me may crowd out this note.

I have your clear letter written during your tour in the villages. I

know you will believe me when I tell you that in all I have written about the rulers, I have written as I have felt and never with evil intention. I have never hidden my own people's failings or errors. I hope I shall never forfeit your friendship.

I had a rare time with the Bishop of Rangoon and his chaplain.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

THE METROPOLITAN
BISHOP HOUSE
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

473. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 3, 1944

CHI. AMRIT,[1]

I have got up very early to write a few important letters. This is one of them. The A. I. S. A. meeting leaves me little leisure during the day. I read no newspapers and very little correspondence. The marvel is I am keeping well in spite of the stress. How I wish you were here. But God's will be done and it is the best that can happen.

No extension to the hospital can be made today. Everything is uncertain and things are expensive. Let your money go to the contemplated Mahadev Memorial Fund. The use may be decided afterwards. You should make your suggestion.

Do not worry about the women's conference. Everything is in the melting pot.

Sushila is getting on.

Mrs. Swaminathan[2] and Mrs. Menon, her relative, are here.

Have lovely khadi from Beryl and of course your annual shawls. It has struck four and I must not tarry long with you.

Love from us all.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

You must keep well and not fret or be impatient.

From the original: C.W. 4147. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7782

[1] The superscription and the subscription are in Devanagari script.
[2] Ammu Swaminathan

474. TELEGRAM TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

September 3, 1944

YOUR LETTER. RULE IS NON-CO-OPERATION, BUT IF YOUR ASSOCIATION WITH AUTHORITIES BRINGS REAL RELIEF TO DISTRESSED PEOPLE, YOU NEED NOT HESITATE. GOLDEN RULE IS FOLLOW FEARLESSLY YOUR OWN CONSCIENCE.

Sansmarano, p. 158

475. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

September 3, 1944

Reference has been made to me from Gujarat[1] as to the association by Congressmen with the authorities in relieving distress which has overtaken areas through devastating floods. The Congress, as an organization, is not functioning. The general rule is non-co-operation, while the Government is warring against the Congress. There should be no hesitation about individuals associating, if effective relief can thereby be given to the distressed people. Every case should be judged on its own merits. The test should be, is any initiative and responsibility left with the individuals? The golden rule is to follow fearlessly one's own judgment even at the risk of its proving erroneous.

The Hindu, 5-9-1944

[1] According to *The Bombay Chronicle*, 7-9-1944, Kanaiyalal Desai, President, Surat District Congress Committee, and President, Gujarat Central Congress Workers' Committee, had "three hours' discussion with Gandhiji on the present political situation and relief work in Gujarat. . . . Gandhiji had also made it clear that Congressmen in no circumstances should resort to mass civil disobedience."

476. LETTER TO ABDUL MAJID KHAN

September 3, 1944

MY DEAR KHWAJA,

Or shall I call you Khwaja Saheb and be formal?

Minister Nurie has broken his journey to tell me about his talks with you and generally about your Majlis. He says you are angry with me for having neglected you. What can be the meaning of my neglecting you? When heart speaks to heart, there is no occasion for speaking. I have been following your writings. Surely you will not want me to waste my time telling you how well you were doing your work !!! All I want to assure you about is that I shall not be faithless to you or the Majlis or Islam. Now do say you are not angry. How are you keeping?

Love.

Yours,

BAPU

ABDUL MAJID KHAN SAHEB

GANDHI ASHRAM

CHARKHA SANGH KHADDAR BHANDAR

ALLAHABAD

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

477. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

September 3, 1944

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Please give Bhai Baburam[1] the fare and food, and also Rs. 10 in addition.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10611

[1] An inmate of the Ashram who worked under Bharatanand (Maurice Frydman)

478. SPEECH AT A. I. S. A. MEETING—III

SEVAGRAM,
September 3, 1944

Today, I will try to explain my thoughts to you more clearly and present them to you in a different frame from what I have said during the last two days. Our work had a very humble beginning. When I started khadi I had with me, apart from Maganlalbhai[1] and others who had elected to live and die with me, Vithaldasbhai[2] and a few sisters. Vithaldas was, at that time, fighting for the labourers, but [at my call] he gave up his shop and joined me in this unremunerative work. We had then not the faintest idea as to what the future had in store for us. We have travelled a long way since then and today about two crores of people have come under the influence of the charkha. So far, we have maintained that the charkha has the power to bring us freedom. With its help we have been able to provide the village people with a large amount of money. But can we still hold, as we have always maintained, that swaraj is impossible without the charkha? So long as we do not substantiate this claim the charkha is really no more than a measure of relief, to which we turn because we can do nothing else about it. It would not then be the means of our salvation.

Secondly, we have failed to carry our message to the crores of our people. They have neither any knowledge of what the charkha can do for them nor even the necessary curiosity for it.

The Congress did accept the charkha. But did it do so willingly? No, it tolerates the charkha simply for my sake. The Socialists ridicule it outright. They have spoken and written much against it. We have no clear or convincing reply to offer to them. How I wish I could convince them that the charkha is the key to swaraj! I have not been able to justify the claim all these years.

Now for my third point: non-violence is not something of the other world. If it is, I have no use for it. I am of the earth and if non-violence is something really worth while I want to realize it here on this earth while I am still alive. The non-violence I want is one which the masses can follow in practice. And how else can it be

[1] Maganlal Gandhi
[2] Vithaldas Jerajani

realized except in a society which has compassion and other similar virtues as its characteristics?

If you go to the house of one who has use for violence you will find his drawing-room decorated with tigers' skins, deers' horns, swords, guns and such like. I have been to the Viceregal Lodge, I also saw Mussolini. In the houses of both I found arms hanging on the walls. I was given a salute with arms, a symbol of violence.

Just as arms symbolize violence the charkha symbolizes non-violence, in the sense that we can most directly realize non-violence through it. But it cannot symbolize non-violence so long as we do not work in accordance with its spirit. The sword in Mussolini's hall seemed to say 'Touch me and I will cut you.' It gave a vivid picture of violence. It seemed to ask you to touch it and realize its power. So also we must illustrate the power of the charkha so that a mere look at it may speak to us about non-violence. .But we are bankrupt today. What is our answer to the Socialists? They complain that we have been harping on the charkha for years and yet we have achieved nothing.

The charkha was there during Muslim rule also. Dacca was famous for its muslin. The charkha then was a symbol of poverty and not of non-violence. The kings took forced labour from women and depressed classes. The same was later repeated by the East India Company. Kautilya[1] mentions in his *Arthashastra* the existence of such forced labour. For ages the charkha was thus a symbol of violence and the use of force and compulsion. The spinner got but a handful of grain or two small coins, while ladies of the court went about luxuriously clad in the finest of muslins, the product of exploited labour.

As against this, I have presented the charkha to you as a symbol of non-violence. If I did not make it clear to you so far, it was my mistake. You know I am among the maimed and can move but slowly. Yet I do believe that the work done so far has not been a waste.

I shall now pass to my fourth point. We have not yet proved that there can be no swaraj without the charkha. It cannot be proved so long as you do not explain it to Congressmen. The charkha and the Congress should become synonyms.

The task of proving the superiority of non-violence is a difficult one. We have to fathom its depths if we are to realize its truth. I have

[1] Chanakya, the celebrated writer on statecraft

always supported all that I have said so far. The world is going to put me to the test. It may declare me a fool for my tall talk about the charkha. The task of making the charkha, which for centuries had been a symbol of poverty, helplessness, injustice and forced labour, the symbol now of mighty non-violent strength, of the new social order and of the new economy, has fallen on our shoulders. We have to change history. And I want to do it through you.

I hope you follow what I am saying. But if in spite of it you do not believe that the charkha has the power to achieve swaraj, I will ask you to leave me. Here you are at the crossroads. If you continue with me without faith you will be deceiving me and doing a great wrong to the country. I beg of you not to deceive me in the evening of my life.

It is I who am responsible for defects in our working so far. The fault is mine because I have remained the head even when I was conscious of its defects. But let bygones be bygones. Do we honestly believe today that the charkha is the emblem of non-violence? How many of us are there who believe so from the depths of our heart?

Now we have the tricolour flag. What is it but a piece of khadi of specific length and breadth? You can well have another piece in its place. But behind that khadi cloth lie encased your feelings. It is a symbol of swaraj, a symbol of national emancipation. We cannot forget it. We will not remove it. We are prepared to die for it. So also the charkha should be an emblem of non-violence.

What does the charkha, as an emblem of non-violence, signify in the economic sphere? Call it self-sufficiency or what you like. In the name of national reconstruction and self-sufficiency millions are being bled white in Western countries, as also in other countries for their sake. Ours is not a self-sufficiency of that pattern. The charkha is the way to get rid of exploitation and domination. I am not so much concerned with words as with the thing itself. Still, words have a miraculous power. They embody the feelings, which then acquire a definite shape with the aid of language.

We are familiar with the controversy in our religion as to whether God has a form or no. The believers in form prefer to worship God through an emblem. So if non-violence is to be pursued as an ideal, the charkha must be acknowledged as its true form and emblem, and kept ever before view. Whenever I think of non-violence

the picture of the charkha comes before me. A *nirakaravadi*[1] would not accept Krishna. He has one foot on the mountain top and the other in the clouds above. But we tread the solid ground. We cannot visualize non-violence in the abstract. So we choose an object which can symbolize for us the formless. That is what the charkha does for me and that is why I worship it. If you can realize this truth, you will understand the force of my argument. Even to Jajuji I had never before spoken with so much conviction. Jerajani says I am being hasty. Unless you understand and imbibe this spirit behind my worship of the charkha you will not gain an understanding of non-violence even for a hundred years. That capacity for non-violence which I find in the charkha can also be perceived by you only if you approach it with a heart like mine. That is why I say: Follow me or leave me. If you want to come with me, I will give you a scheme and do everything possible. If you have not understood what I mean I am prepared to sit and discuss it with you the whole day. But if you say that you have grasped my meaning when you really have not, you will be deceiving both yourselves and me. Ours is not an association for making profit. We do not seek loaves and fishes. There are a thousand fields in which we can serve the country. Why then remain in charkha work and sail under false colours? Please do not therefore remain with me under an illusion. Let me go my way alone. But if it were found that I was myself suffering from an illusion and that my belief in the charkha was mere idol-worship, either you may burn me to ashes with the wood of the charkha, or I myself would set fire to the charkha with my own hands.

If the Charkha Sangh has to go, let us wind it up with our own hands. That will put an end to all our struggle like the sun clearing the mist. Then the charkha which has for the moment put us into a labyrinth of difficulties will be left in the hands of a few who believe in it, and may in their hands prove to be a mighty weapon. If you regard it as sheer folly I certainly have no ambition to run an idiots' association and thus degrade the country. On the other hand, if you can demonstrate non-violence through the charkha, it will not merely move but sweep forward. You will not then have to worry about keeping it alive.

I repeat that you either leave me alone or digest what I say and follow me. I have brought this new idea to you after two years

[1] One who holds that the Supreme is formless

of penitential thinking. I do not know if I have succeeded in conveying my idea to you. If I have been able to carry conviction please do one thing. Those of you who want to remain with me give me in writing that you regard the charkha from today as the emblem of non-violence. You have to make your decision today. If you do not or cannot regard the charkha as the emblem of non-violence and yet remain with me, then you will thereby put yourself in an awkward plight and also drag me down with you.

[From Hindi]

Charkha Sanghka Navasamskaran, pp. 14-20

479. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

3.25 a.m., Silence-day

[On or before *September 4, 1944*][1]

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I saw yesterday that my point had not been understood.

The matter of utensils, etc., was only an instance. It made me see the extent of our imperfections.

In my view, in moments of crisis we have not shown the qualities that the inmates of the Ashram should have. Those qualities cannot be cultivated in a day. A handful of you may maintain some order. But how does that help ? What knowledge do women have ? What part can they intelligently play ? Can everybody sacrifice himself in a way that would befit the Ashram ? Can you stand today before India as an embodiment of the Ashram ? Let us realize our weakness. There is something lacking in my training. If that is the case, then we must proceed with that realization. Balkrishna cannot be of much help in this. Jajuji can. Vallabh can. If you want, do discuss it with me. If I have been able to put across my point, you can take a decision without discussing it with me. I shall accept whatever you do. I see no harm since Jajuji has been involved. His guidance would be invaluable. You should not think it shameful to wind up the Ashram. Its winding up may mean building it up. If you wind it up, give thought to my idea

[1] From the reference to the winding up of the Ashram and Gandhiji's visit to Bombay, it appears that this was written before Gandhiji left for Bombay on September 9, 1944. Silence-day, i.e., the Monday before that, was on September 4. *Vide* also "Letter to Chimanlal N. Shah", 16-9-1944.

of a smaller one.

Do not feel perturbed. Have the utmost patience. All of you should read this and think it over. There is no harm if you cannot come to any decision before I go to Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10664-A

480. LETTER TO R. K. PRABHU

SEVAGRAM,

September 4, 1944

MY DEAR PRABHU,

You shall certainly be present at the interview with Mr. Hawkins.

Yours,

BAPU

SHRI PRABHU

"THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat: G.N. 9228

481. LETTER TO R. E. HAWKINS

SEVAGRAM,

September 4, 1944

DEAR MR. HAWKINS,

Do please see me in Bombay. I hope to reach on 9th. You will arrange the time when I reach there.You won't feel disappointed if I cannot find the time. I should be obliged if we can discover a way out.

Yours sincerely,

M. K.GANDHI

THE GENERAL MANAGER

THE OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

B. I. BUILDING

NICOL ROAD

BOMBAY

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

482. LETTER TO BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
September 4, 1944

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

If you do not know my mind as you presume to know my pulse, the fault is wholly yours. If you have not found me forward to initiate political discussions with you, it is due to a delicate consideration for you. I may not take an undue advantage of your kindness in coming to me in your medical capacity. People have a right to expect you to know my mind.

I have not accepted the two-nation theory. I have accepted the principle of self-determination underlying it.

The second thing has been assured in the formula.

Ask any questions you like.

Yours,

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

483. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

September 4, 1944

CHI. BABUDI,

Please do come. I will be in Bombay on the 9th. I showed your letter to both. I thought it would please them, and it did.

Blessings to all from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10049. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

484. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 4, 1944

DAUGHTER,

The silken mosquito-net is not required. I got the jaggery. Jiten Babu[1] has come to get my signature when I am very busy. We shall think later about the rules and so on.

Sushila tells me that you have fallen sick. What is to be done now? It won't do you any good if you insist on staying there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 484

485. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

Silence Day, September 4, 1944

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter. Why are you wasting so much time over such a trivial matter? You did what seemed to be proper at the time. This should be enough. Your letter is a symptom of an unhealthy mind. Get rid of it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4446

486. NOTE TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

[On or after *September 4, 1944*][2]

Read the letter I have written to Chhaganlal. Think over it and then do what you consider right. It does not matter if you do not include Abha's[3] name just now. I have no objection.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8470. Also C.W. 7177. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1]Jitendra Chakraborty, Secretary of the Bengal Charkha Sangh and Joint-Secretary of the Kasturba Seva Mandir, who had come to get Gandhiji's approval for the Mandir's constitution

[2] The letter is written below a letter from the addressee dated September 4, 1944.

[3] Daughter of Amrita Lal Chatterjee

487. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

WARDHAGANJ,
September 5, 1944

NARANDAS GANDHI
RAJKOT
JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ PRESIDING OUR FUNCTION[1]. WRITING.

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8611. Courtesy: Narandas dGandhi

488. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR H. PAREKH

September 5, 1944

BHAI PRABHASHANKAR,

I have your postcard. Please bear in mind that it is for you to win over Champa[2]. You alone know how to do it.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI PRABHASHANKARBHAI
DERA SHERI
RAJKOT[3]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XX

489. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

[On or after *September 5, 1944*][4]

Your letter is as usual frank. If I consulted my friends in carrying out my experiments, it could not be said that they were undertaken with God's permission. Besides, whom can I expect to come with me when I plough in fresh fields? More or less all my

[1] *Rentia Baras* Day; *vide* also letters to the addressee, "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 6-9-1944 and 10/12-9-1944.

[2] Champa R. Mehta, addressee's daughter

[3] The address is in the Devanagari script.

[4] The letter is written below a letter from the addressee dated September 5, 1944.

important experiments were started single-handed and co-workers came in later. I know that this experiment is a very dangerous one indeed. But it is also capable of yielding very great results. I can forget about it only when I realize that it is harmful. All of you can attack my reason. But you can strike at my heart only in One way—by repudiating me. If you are convinced that the views you have expressed are correct, it is your dharma to repudiate me and expose me. The examples you have cited from the Shastras are faulty. You form your opinions in haste and change them equally hastily. Whatever you do, do after careful thinking.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8469. Also C.W. 7176. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

490. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

[On or after *September 5, 1944*][1]

All this has been written very frankly. My experiment has not been understood fully. The fact that all my conduct seems to be contrary to the statement[2] you have quoted should make you think. But this discussion . . .[3]

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 811. Courtesy: Balkrishna Bhave

491. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
September 6, 1944

CHI. NARANDAS,

I sent you a wire yesterday saying that Janakibehn would arrive there on the *Rentia Baras* Day. She will of course be accompanied by

[1] The letter is written below a letter from the addressee dated September 5, 1944.

[2] The reference is to a private statement issued in 1938 regarding the discontinuance of accepting from women such service as would involve bodily contact, *vide* "To Ashram Inmates", 2-6-1938.

[3] The letter is incomplete.

somebody.

About the fund, do what I have suggested in my letter.[1] I will, however, do whatever I can. Kanaiyo will write more.

I am likely to be in Bombay on the 9th.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You have entered the sixtieth year of your life, haven't you? We must all try to live up to a hundred. You have much work to do yet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8612. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

492. LETTER TO VIJYALAKSHMI PANDIT

SEVAGRAM,
September 6, 1944

CHI. SARUP,

I want to include your name as a trustee for the Kasturba [Memorial] Fund. But I can have your name only if you can give time for it and attend the Trust meetings and you are fully convinced of the object of the Trust, namely, that it will be utilized only for the children and women of the villages of India. Inform me telegraphically. I shall be in Bombay on the 9th and 10th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 31-8-1944.

493. TALK WITH STUDENTS' DELEGATION[1]

September 6, 1944

H. P. MISHRA: We won't like your seeing Mr. Jinnah as you are likely to be duped and the Hindus are likely to be exploited by Mr. Jinnah at our cost.[2]

GANDHIJI: I will not ignore or compromise a single interest, be sure.

Students from Bengal who requested Mahatma Gandhi not to decide on a settlement were asked by the Mahatma:

Have I not done any good for Hindus?

Hari Prasanna Mishra questioned Mahatma Gandhi whether he accepted responsibility for what was going on in Bengal resulting from the Communal Award. To this Gandhiji replied:

How can I?

The Bengal students requested Mahatmaji to leave the communal question to the Sabha and the League.[3]

Mahatma Gandhi assured the students that he would not do anything without consulting Bengal. Despite these assurances, the students informed Gandhiji of their intention to continue picketing and Gandhiji replied:

If you thus prevent me, I will have to wire Mr. Jinnah that I am arrested and so postpone the meeting.

The Hindu, 9-9-1944, and *The Hitavada*, 8-9-1944

494. LETTER TO MASTERJI MAHARAJ

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
September 7, 1944

MASTERJI MAHARAJ[4],

Thank you for the cheque you have sent for the Kasturba Memorial Fund. I hope to see you some day.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2167

[1] The students, led by Hari Prasanna Mishra, General Secretary of the All-India Hindu Students' Federation, picketed Gandhiji's hut in Sevagram.

[2] These two sentences are from *The Hitavada.*

[3] *ibid*

[4] One of the gurus of the Radhaswami sect of Hindus

495. LETTER TO BAGARJI

September 7, 1944

BHAI BAGARJI,

I send herewith a letter[1] for Masterji Maharaj acknowledging receipt of his cheque. I have written this with the pen you gave me.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2162

496. A CIRCULAR LETTER

SEVAGRAM,
September 8, 1944

BHAI,

Day before yesterday, that is, on the night of the 6th, Shri Deshpandeji told me that Jajuji is not fit for the post of Secretary as he does not have administrative, that is, management talent although he is a saintly man. He can hold the highest position in a society of saints. In support of his opinion he told me that the Provincial Secretaries or Agents of the A.I.S.A., who have returned from here, have all gone back disappointed and helpless. Therefore, hefears that the A.I.S.A. is going to die under its own weight. If this is true, as head of the A.I.S.A., I have to give it a second thought because my experience is completely contrary to Deshpandeji's opinion. My experience tells me that true saintliness implies efficiency, and Jajuji is a living embodiment of this truth. I have, therefore, decided to have Jajuji's administrative talents verified. I have already talked to Jajuji and he also agrees to this. If you have accepted Jajuji as Secretary out of despair and only to please me, you have not been truly faithful to the A.I.S.A. and if Deshpande's prophecy comes true and the A.I.S.A. comes to nought, in my opinion, it will not be on account of Jajuji but due to your own weakness. How can any secretary, however able, attain success without the whole-hearted co-operation of his subordinates? The A.I.S.A. has no power to compel any one. Its strength lies in the whole-hearted co-operation among all its office-

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

bearers, i.e., their mutual love and fellow-feeling. If this is lacking nothing avails. Please, therefore, let me have your true opinion whether Jajuji is unfit for the secretaryship, whether he lacks administrative talents, whether you have reluctantly accepted his candidature. If your answer is in support of Deshpandeji's statement, please write to me substantiating your objections with concrete instances so that I can decide the course of my duty.

Kindly send an early reply.

Yours,

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

497. LETTER TO T. B. SAPRU

ON THE WAY TO BOMBAY,
September 8, 1944

DEAR SIR TEJ,

I have your letter. I am going in hope but without expectation. So if I return empty-handed, I shall not be disappointed. I hope you will find the patient substantially on the ro[ad] to full recovery.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi-Sapru Papers. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta. Also G.N. 7575

498. LETTER TO BISHOP OF RANGOON

ON THE TRAIN FOR BOMBAY,
September 9, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your kind letter bringing me your good wishes. I am in God's good hands. I fancy I understand what you mean.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

RT. REVD. BISHOP OF RANGOON
HOTEL CECIL
DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

499. LETTER TO SECRETARY, KASTURBA MEMORIAL FUND

BIRLA HOUSE,
BOMBAY,
September 9, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

I am enclosing herewith a scheme outlining the curriculum for the education of women for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,

SECRETARY
KASTURBA NATIONAL MEMORIAL FUND COMMITTEE
SCINDIA HOUSE
BOMBAY

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

500. LETTER TO SUDHIR GHOSH

BIRLA HOUSE,
BOMBAY,
September 9, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

Gandhiji desires me to thank you for your letter of the 29th August enclosing a letter from Mr. Graham White.

You certainly can come to Sevagram with Mrs. Ghosh on Gandhiji's return after the meeting with Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah.

Yours sincerely,
PYARELAL

SRI SUDHIR GHOSH
TISCO HOTEL
JAMSHEDPUR

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

501. TALK WITH M. A. JINNAH[1]

BOMBAY,
September 9, 1944

It was a test of my patience. . . . I am amazed at my own patience. However, it was a friendly talk.

His (Jinnah's) contempt for your Formula (Rajaji Formula) and his eontempt for you is staggering. You rose in my estimation that you could have talked to him for all those hours and that you should have taken the trouble to draw up that formula.

He says you have accepted his demand and so should I. I said, "I endorse Rajaji's Formula and you can call it Pakistan if you like." He talked of the Lahore Resolution[2]. I said, "I have not studied it and I do not want to talk about it. Let us talk about Rajaji's Formula and you can point out any flaws that you find there."

In the middle of the talk he came back to the old ghost: "I thought you had come here as a Hindu, as a representative of the Hindu Congress." I said, "No, I have come here neither as a Hindu nor as a representative of the Congress. I have come here as an individual. You can talk to me as an individual or as the President of the League, whichever way you prefer. If you had agreed with Rajaji and accepted his Formula, you and he would have gone before your respective organizations and pleaded with them to accept it. That is why Rajaji came to you. You would then have placed it before other parties, too, in the same way. Now you and I have to do it." He said he was the President of the League. Where was the basis for a talk if I was there representing nobody except myself? Who was to deliver the goods? I was the same man as he had found me in 1939. There was no change in me. I almost felt like saying, "Yes, I am the same man and since you think it is no use talking to me, I will go away." But I resisted the temptation. I told him, "Is it not worth your while to convert an individual? I am the same man no doubt. You can change my views if you can and I will support you whole-heartedly." "Yes, I

[1] The meeting lasted three and a quarter hours. Gandhiji reported the talk to C. Rajagopalachari.

[2] Of March 23, 1940; *vide* Appendix "Resolution Passed by All-India Muslim League", 23-3-1940.

know, if I can convert you, you will be my Ali[1],” he said.[2]

He said I should concede Pakistan and he would go the whole length with me. He would go to jail, he would even face bullets. I said, “I will stand by your side to face them.” “You may not,” he said. “Try me,” I replied.

We came back to the Formula. He wants Pakistan now, not after independence. “We will have independence for Pakistan and Hindustan,” he said. “We should come to an agreement and then go to the Government and ask them to accept it, force them to accept our solution.” I said I could never be a party to that. I could never ask the Britishers to impose partition on India. “If you all want to separate, I can’t stop you. I have not got the power to compel you and I would not use it if I had.” He said, “The Muslims want Pakistan. The League represents the Muslims and it wants separation.” I said, “I agree the League is the most powerful Muslim organization. I might even concede that you as its President represent the Muslims of India, but that does not mean that all Muslims want Pakistan. Put it to the vote of all the inhabitants of the area and see.” He said, “Why should you ask non-Muslims?” I said, “You cannot possibly deprive a section of the population of its vote. You must carry them with you, and if you are in the majority why should you be afraid?” I told him of what Kiron Shankar Roy had said to me “If the worst comes to the worst, we in Bengal will all go in Pakistan, but for goodness sake do not partition Bengal. Do not vivisect it.”

“If you are in majority,” I said, “you will have your choice. I know it is a bad thing for you, but if you want it all the same you will have it. But that will be an adjustment between you and me. It cannot occur while the Britishers are here.”

He began to cross-examine me on the various clauses of the Formula. I said to him, “If you want clarification of those things, is it not better to have it from the author of the Formula?” “Oh, no”, he did not want that. I said, “What is the use of your cross-examining me?”

He recollected himself. “Oh, no. I am not cross-examining you”, and then added: “I have been a lawyer all my life and my

[1] A cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet. He was among the first to accept the Prophet’s message.

[2] According to the source, Gandhiji observed afterwards: “It was a most revealing remark. I was meeting the prophet of Pakistan looking for his Ali!”

manner may have suggested that I was cross-examining you." I asked him to reduce to writing his objections to the Formula. He was disinclined. "Must I do so?" he asked. "Yes, I would like you to." He agreed.

In the end he said, "I would like to come to an agreement with you." I answered, "You remember that I have said that we should meet not to separate till we had come to an agreement. He said, yes, he agreed. I suggested, "Should we put that also in our statement?"[1] He said, "No, better not. Nevertheless that will be the understanding between us and the cordiality and friendliness of our talk will be reflected in our public utterances, too."[2]

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, pp. 84-6

502. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[3]

September 9, 1944

"We have had frank and friendly talks and we are resuming our talks on Monday at 5.30 p.m. Tomorrow is the 21st day of Ramzan[4] and, therefore, all Mussalmans have to observe it. And I have, therefore, requested Mr. Gandhi to oblige me not to have a meeting on the 21st day of Ramzan." Here Gandhiji interrupted and said:

No obliging; willing to surrender.

Mahatma, Vol. VI, p. 341

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] After Gandhiji gave this report to C. Rajagopalachari the following conversation took place:

RAJAJI: Do you think he wants a settlement?

GANDHIJI: I am not certain. He thought he probably did.

RAJAJI: Then you will get it through.

GANDHIJI: Yes. . . . If the right word comes to me.

[3] At the end of the first day's talks, M. A. Jinnah, on behalf of Gandhiji and himself, dictated this statement. Earlier, in reply to a question by a newsman whether he had brought anything from Jinnah, Gandhiji had said: "Only flowers."

[4] Ninth month of the Hijri year in which Muslims observe fast during daytime.

503. LETTER TO VICEROY

CAMP "BIRLA HOUSE", BOMBAY,
September 10, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

I wrote[1] to you on July 17, 1944, asking you kindly to send a letter of same date addressed to the Prime Minister. May I know whether that letter was sent as requested? I am asking because so far I have had no acknowledgement of my letter.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
VICEROY'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI

From a copy: C.W. 10500. Courtesy: India Office Library, London

504. LETTER TO WANDA DYNOWSKA

BOMBAY,
September 10, 1944

DEAR UMA[2]

All I can say about the affliction through which Poland is passing is that no small nation of Europe is to expect any real help from the Allied Powers in spite of their professions to the contrary. You know I proposed a solution. It was summarily rejected. Let us rely upon God, the Rock of Ages.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1206. Also C.W. 5101. Courtesy: Wanda Dynowska

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Winston Churchill", 17-7-1944.
[2] *ibid.*

505. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BOMBAY,
September 11, 1944

NARANDAS GANDHI
RASHTRIYASHALA
RAJKOT

KAMALNAYAN COMING WITH JANAKIDEVI['S] MESSAGE[1]. KEEP HIM NOT LONGER THAN THREE DAYS.

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8614. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

506. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

September 11, 1944

DEAR QUAID-E-AZAM,

I received your letter[2] yesterday at 3.30 p.m. I was in the midst of appointments. I hasten to reply at the earliest opportunity.

I have said in my letter to you, it is implied in the Rajaji Formula and I have stated publicly that I have approached you as an individual. My life mission has been Hindu-Muslim unity, which I want for its own sake, but which is not to be achieved without the foreign ruling power being ousted. Hence the first condition of the exercise of the right of self-determination is achieving independence by the joint action of all the parties and groups composing India. If such joint action is unfortunately impossible, then too. I must fight with the assistance of such elements as can be brought together. I am glad, therefore, that you did not break off our talks when I refused to assume or accept a representative capacity. Of course I am pledged to use all the influence I may have with the Congress to ratify my agreement with you. May I remind you that the Rajaji Formula was designed in the first instance for your acceptance, and submission thereafter to the League?

It is true that I said an ocean separated you and me in outlook.

[1] *Vide* also telegram and letters to the addressee, "Telegram to Narandas Gandhi", 5-9-1944; "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 6-9-1944 and 10/12-9-1944.

[2] Dated September 10; *vide* Appendix "Letter from M. A. Jinnah", 10-9-1944.

But that had no reference to the Lahore Resolution of the League. The Lahore Resolution is indefinite. Rajaji has taken from it the substance and given it a shape.

Now for the points raised by you:

1. I have already answered this in the foregoing.

2. The constitution will be framed by the Provisional Government contemplated in the Formula or an authority specially set up by it after the British power is withdrawn. The independence contemplated is of the whole of India as it stands.

The basis for the formation of Provisional Interim Government will have to be agreed to between the League and the Congress.

3. The Commission will be appointed by the Provisional Government. "Absolute majority" means a clear majority over non-Muslim elements as in Sind, Baluchistan or the Frontier Province. The form of plebiscite and the franchise must be a matter for discussion.

4. "All parties" means, the parties interested.

5. "Mutual agreement" means agreement between contracting parties. "Safeguarding defence, etc.," means for me a central or joint board of control. Safeguarding means safeguarding against all who may put the common interests in jeopardy.

6. The power is to be transferred to the nation, that is, to the Provisional Government. The Formula contemplates peaceful transfer by the British Government. So far as I am concerned I would like the transfer to take place as early as possible.[1]

Yours sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 29-9-1944

507. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

September 11, 1944

Speaking in Hindustani[2] at the end of the prayers at Bombay, on September 11, Gandhiji as usual appealed for contributions to the Harijan Fund. Referring next to the exuberant affection of the crowd on the previous evening he said that after

[1] For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix "Letter from M. A. Jinnah", 11-9-1944.

[2] The Hindustani version is not available.

years of training such exhibition was a reflection on the good name of Bombay. It was a bad sign. But for the precautions taken on the spur of the moment he and some of the sisters accompanying him might have been hurt and so too Mr. Shantikumar[1]. And what is more, in the confusion, the latter might have easily lost the Harijan purse that he was carrying. They knew how jealous he was of every pie belonging to the Harijans. Therefore he requested the public never again to repeat the performance of the day before. Why should the volunteers have to form a cordon around him? He did not want to have any guard. God alone was his guard. He was doing God's work and he had faith that so long as He required his services He would protect him.

Referring to his meeting with Mr. Jinnah, he said, he knew how eager they must be to be acquainted with the progress of the talks. It was a natural eagerness on their part which he would like to satisfy as far as possible consistently with the interest of the cause which they all shared with him in common.

All that he could say at the present stage was that Jinnah Saheb and he had met as old friends on Saturday (September 9), and again that day (Monday). He added that they would be meeting again the next day from 10.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 5.30 to 7 p.m. This would leave them a little time to attend to other work and to digest the substance of the talks. They fully realized what a heavy responsibility rested on their shoulders. They knew that millions were watching the talks and were anxious that a settlement should be arrived at which would subserve the interests not of any particular group or community, but of the whole of India. Gandhiji said:

Our goal is the attainment of independence for the whole of India. It is for that we pray and are pledged to lay down our lives. Jinnah Saheb and I have only God between us as witness. My constant prayer these days is that He may so guide my speech that not a word might escape my lips so as to hurt the feelings of Jinnah Saheb or damage the cause that is dear to us both. I am sure the same is the case with Jinnah Saheb. He told me today, "If we part without coming to an agreement, we shall proclaim bankruptcy of wisdom on our part." What is more, the hopes of millions of our countrymen will be dashed to pieces. Today the eyes of all the oppressed people of the world are on us. We therefore are fully alive to our responsibility and are straining every nerve to come to a settlement. But we realize that ultimately the result lies in God's good hands. You should therefore all pray that He may guide us and give us wisdom to serve the cause of India.

An assurance that he would not sacrifice the interests of a single individual or

[1] Shantikumar N. Morarjee

community was given by Mahatma Gandhi.[1]

In conclusion, Mahatma Gandhi appealed to the Press to put a curb on their inventiveness and not to give free rein to their imagination. Since neither he nor Mr. Jinnah was opening his lips to anybody, there could be no question of leakage.

Gandhi-Jinnah Talks, pp. 38-9, and *The Hindu*, 13-9-1944

508. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BOMBAY,
September 10/12, 1944

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. I understand what you say. I like your suggestion. Give on loan to the Kathiawar Khadi Mandal the money not already invested. When a new association is formed, it may make its own arrangement. Make some suggestions regarding the new association. Consult friends there.

Janakibehn will not be able to go. Chi. Kamalnayan is going with her message. Do not detain him for more than a day or two. He is sparing time from an extremely tight schedule. I hope your programme will succeed. If the programme does not succeed so well there this time as in the previous years, console yourself with the thought that it is your own venture that has now become a country-wide movement. If, therefore, your little rivulet, which was the source, looks small in comparison, you should not feel bad about it. Whether I will live long enough to see the National Fund put to good use or whether others who follow me will manage it in a worthy manner, is entirely in God's hands. For us one step is enough.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

September 12, 1944

On further reflection, I feel that our real money is neither gold nor silver nor copper, but yarn. And at present we have no rival in regard to that. How nice would it be if the quantity this time is much larger than before! I should be happy if in the end you become the

[1] This paragraph is from *The Hindu.*

first mint of yarn. Yarn is produced at many places. But not all of them become mints. Think what makes a mint what it is.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8613. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

509. TALK WITH M. A. JINNAH[1]

September 12, 1944

GANDHIJI: He drew a very alluring picture of the Government of Pakistan. It would be a perfect democracy. I asked him if he had not told me that democracy did not suit Indian conditions. He did not remember it. He asked me to tell him what he had said. So I told him all that and said that I might have misunderstood him. In that case he should correct me. But when I repeated in detail what he had said, he could not say no. He said, yes, he had said that, but that was with regard to imposed democracy.

Then he said, "Do you think it is a question of religious minority with us?" I said, "Yes." If not, he should tell me what it was. He harangued. I won't repeat all that here. I asked him what would happen to the other minorities in Pakistan: Sikhs, Christians, Depressed Classes, etc. He said they would be part of Pakistan. I asked him if he meant joint electorates. He knew I was coming to it. He said, yes, he would like them to be a part of the whole. He would explain the advantages of joint electorates, but if they wanted separate electorates they would have it. Sikhs would have Gurumukhi if they wanted and the Pakistan Government would give them financial aid. I asked, "What about Jats?" At first he pooh-poohed the idea. Then he said, "If they want it, they will also have it. They will have separate existence if they want it." I said, "What about Christians? They also want some place where they are in a majority and where they can rule, as for instance in Travancore?" He said that was a problem for the Hindus. I said supposing Travancore was in Pakistan? He said he would give it to them. He cited the instance of Newfoundland. The rest of the talk was nothing. I am to continue exploring his mind.[2]

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, p. 86

[1] Gandhiji reported the talk to C. Rajagopalachari.

[2] For the discussion which followed with Rajaji, *vide* the following item.

510. DISCUSSION WITH C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

BOMBAY,
September 12, 1944

RAJAJI: Find out what he[1] wants.

GANDHIJI: Yes, that is what I am doing. I am to prove from his own mouth that the whole of the Pakistan proposition is absurd. I think he does not want to break. On my part I am not going to be in a hurry. But he can't expect me to endorse an undefined Pakistan.

RAJAJI: Do you think he will give up the claim?

GANDHIJI: He has to, if there is to be a settlement. He wants a settlement, but what he wants he does not know. I want to show him that your Formula is the only thing that he can reasonably ask for.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, pp. 86-7

511. LETTER TO AHMED NAWAZ JUNG

[After *September 12, 1944*][2]

JANAB NAWAB BAHADUR,

I have your English letter as also a Hindi translation of the holy Koran. I have with me the Hindi translation by Hasan Nizami Saheb. I shall try to compare both the translations. If you can, please send three more copies.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

512. TELEGRAM TO DR. SHAUKAT ANSARI

BOMBAY,
September 13, 1944

DOCTOR SHAUKAT ANSARI
RAJPUR ROAD
DELHI

PLEASE CONVEY FARID MY CONDOLENCES OVER HIS LOSS.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] M. A. Jinnah

[2] This draft letter was written ill reply to the addressee's letter dated September 12, 1944.

513. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

September 13, 1944

After the morning session of the talks, as Jinnah and Gandhiji emerged . . . the waiting group of reporters asked the usual question: "Anything for us?" The leaders halted and . . . Gandhiji spoke:

I have nothing, but I will go for you. Yesterday you read something in our faces. Here are we both. I would like you not to read anything in our faces except hope and nothing but hope.

At this stage Gandhiji turned to Mr. Jinnah and asked:

Am I right? Have you seen the papers this morning?

"Why bother," answered Mr. Jinnah.

They have written so much terrible.

Gandhiji turned round to the Pressmen again and said:

You do not know what people who are bent on mischief will do. All of you know both of us. You should leave us absolutely alone or if you can read our hearts and faces you must submit what you have written to one of us. Otherwise you should be asbolutely silent if you want to serve India and humanity.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-9-1944

514. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

September 14, 1944

DEAR QUAID-E-AZAM,

I have your letter of the 13th instant.[1] I understood from our talks that you were in no hurry for my answer I was, therefore, taking the matter in a leisurely fashion, even hoping that as our talks proceeded and as cordiality increased, mutual clarification would come of itself and that we would only have to record our final agreement. But I understand and appreciate the other viewpoint. We should take nothing for granted. I should clarify your difficulties in understanding the Rajaji Formula and you should do likewise regarding yours, i.e., the Muslim League Lahore Resolution of 1940.

[1] In his letter the addressee had complained that he had not received Gandhiji's reply to his letter of September 11.

With reference to the Lahore Resolution, as agreed between us I shall deal with it in a separate letter.

Perhaps at the end of our discussion, we shall discover that Rajaji not only has not put the Lahore Resolution out of shape and mutilated it but has given it substance and form.

Indeed, in view of your dislike of the Rajaji Formula, I have, at any rate for the moment, put it out of my mind and I am concentrating on the Lahore Resolution in the hope of finding a ground for mutual agreement.

So much for the first paragraph of your letter.

As to the second, I do hold that unless we oust the third party we shall not be able to live at peace with one another. That does not mean that I may not make an effort to find ways and means of establishing a living peace between us.

You ask for my conception of the basis for a provisional interim government. I would have told you if I had any scheme in mind. I imagine that if we two can agree it would be for us to consult the other parties. I can say this, that any provisional government to inspire confidence at the present moment must represent all parties. When that moment arrives, I shall have been replaced by some authoritative person, though you will have me always at your beck and call when you have converted me or I you, or by mutual conversion we have become one mind functioning through two bodies.

As to the third point, the provisional government, being the appointing authority, will give effect to the findings of the Commission. This I thought was implied in my previous answer.

Rajaji tells me that ‘absolute majority’ is used in his Formula in the same sense as it is used in ordinary legal parlance wherever more than two groups are dealt with. I cling to my own answer. But you will perhaps suggest a third meaning and persuade me to accept it.

The form of the plebiscite and franchise must be left to be decided by the provisional interim government unless we decide it now. I should say it should be by adult suffrage of all the inhabitants of the Pakistan area.

As to the fourth, ‘all parties’ means you and I and everyone else holding views on the question at issue will and should seek by peaceful persuasion to influence public opinion as is done where democracy functions wholly or in part.

As to the fifth, supposing that the result of the plebiscite is in favour of partition, the provisional government will draft the treaty and agreements as regards the administration of matters of common interest, but the same has to be confirmed and ratified by the governments of the two States. The machinery required for the settlement and administration of matters of common interest will, in the first instance, be planned by the interim government, but subsequently will be matter for settlement between the two governments acting through the agencies appointed by each for that purpose.

As to the sixth, I hope the foregoing makes superfluous any further reply.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 29-9-1944

515. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

September 15, 1944

DEAR QUAID-E-AZAM,

This is in terms of our talks of Wednesday the 13th instant.

For the moment I have shunted the Rajaji Formula and with your assistance am applying my mind very seriously to the famous Lahore Resolution of the Muslim League.

You must admit that the Resolution itself makes no reference to the two nations theory. In the course of our discussions, you have passionately pleaded that India contains two nations, i.e., Hindus and Muslims, and that the latter have their homelands in India as the former have theirs. The more our argument progresses, the more alarming your picture appears to me. It would be alluring if it was true. But my fear is growing that it is wholly unreal. I find no parallel in history for a body of converts and their descendants claiming to be a nation apart from the parent stock. If India was one nation before the advent of Islam, it must remain one in spite of the change of faith of a very large body of her children.

You do not claim to be a separate nation by right of conquest, but by reason of acceptance of Islam. Will the two nations become

[1] For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix "Letter from M. A. Jinnah", 14-9-1944.

one if the whole of India accepted Islam? Will Bengalis, Oriyas, Andhras, Tamilians, Maharashtrians, Gujaratis, etc., cease to have their special characteristics if all of them become converts to Islam? These have all become one politically because they are subject to oneforeign control. They are trying today to throw off that subjection.

You seem to have introduced a new test of nationhood. If I accept it, I would have to subscribe to many more claims and face an insoluble problem. The only real, though awful, test of our nationhood arises out of our common political subjection. If you and I throw off this subjection by our combined effort, we shall be born a politically free nation out of our travail. If by then we have not learnt to prize our freedom, we may quarrel among ourselves and, for want of a common master holding us together in his iron grip, seek to split up into small groups or nationalities. There will be nothing to prevent us from descending to that level and we shall not have to go in search of a master. There are many claimants to the throne that never remains vacant.

With this background, I shall present you with my difficulty in accepting your Resolution.

I. Pakistan is not in the Resolution. Does it bear the original meaning Punjab, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Sind and Baluchistan, out of which the name was mnemonically formed? If not what is it?

2. Is the goal of Pakistan pan-Islam?

3. What is it that distinguishes an Indian Muslim from every other Indian, if not his religion? Is he different from a Turk or an Arab?

4. What is the Connotation of the word "Muslims" in the Resolution under discussion? Does it mean the Muslims of India of geography or of the Pakistan to be?

5. Is the Resolution addressed to the Muslims by way of education, or to the inhabitants of the whole of India by way of appeal, or to the foreign ruler as an ultimatum?

6. Are the constituents in the two zones to constitute "Independent States", an undefined number in each zone?

7. Is the demarcation to take place during the pendency of British Rule?

8. If the answer to the last question is in the affirmative, the proposal must be accepted first by Britain and then imposed upon

India, not evolved from within by the free will of the people of India.

9. Have you examined the position and satisfied yourself that these "Independent States" will be materially and otherwise benefited by being split up into fragments?

10. Please satisfy me that these Independent Sovereign States will not become a collection of poor States, a menace to themselves and to the rest of India.

11. Pray show me by facts and figures or otherwise how the independence and welfare of India as a whole can be brought about by the acceptance of the Resolution?

12. How are the Muslims under the Princes to be disposed of as a result of this scheme?

13. What is your definition of "minorities"?

14. Will you please define the "adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards" for minorities referred to in the second part of the Resolution?

15. Do you not see that the Lahore Resolution contains only a bare statement of the objective and does not give any idea as to the means to be adopted for the execution of the idea and the concrete corollaries thereof? For instance: (a) Are the people in the regions falling under the plan to have any voice in the matter of separation and, if so, how is it to be ascertained? (b) What is the provision for Defence and similar matters of common concern contemplated in the Lahore Resolution? (c) There are many groups of Muslims who have continuously expressed dissent from the policy of the League. While I am prepared to accept the preponderating influence and position of the League and have approached you for that very reason, is it not our joint duty to remove their doubts and carry them with us by making them feel that they and their supporters have not been practically disfranchised? (d) Does this not lead again to placing the Resolution of the League before the people of the zones concerned as a whole for acceptance?

As I write this letter and imagine the working of the Resolution in practice, I see nothing but ruin for the whole of India. Believe me, I approach you as a seeker. Though I represent nobody but myself, I aspire to represent all the inhabitants of India, for I realize in my own person their misery and degradation, which is their common lot, irrespective of class, caste or creed. I know that you have acquired a

unique hold on the Muslim masses. I want you to use your influence for their total welfare, which must include the rest.

In this hastily written letter, I have only given an inkling of my difficulty.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 29-9-1944

516. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

September 15, 1944

DEAR QUAID-E-AZAM,

I have yours of the 14th instant,[1] received at 9.40 a.m.

I woke up at 3 a.m. today to finish my promised letter[2] on the Lahore Resolution.

There is no mistake about the date, for I wrote in answer to your reminder of the 13th instant.

Independence does mean as envisaged in the A.I.C.C. Resolution of 1942. But it cannot be on the basis of a united India. If we come to a settlement, it would be on the basis of the settlement, assuming, of course, that it accrues general acceptance in the country. The process will be somewhat like this. We reach by joint effort independence for India as it stands. India becoming free will proceed to demarcation, plebiscite and partition if the people concerned vote for partition. All this is implied in the Rajaji Formula.

As to the provisional interim government, I am afraid I cannot carry my answer any further than I have done. Though I have no scheme for the provisional government, if you have one in connection with the Lahore Resolution, which also, I presume, requires an interim government, we can discuss it.

The Formula was framed by Rajaji in good faith. I accepted it in equal good faith. The hope was that you would look at it with favour. We still think it to be the best in the circumstances. You and I have to put flesh on it, if we can. I have explained the process we have to go through. You have no objection to it. Perhaps, you want to know how I would form the provisional government if I was invited thereto. If I

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from M. A. Jinnah", 14-9-1944.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

was in that unenviable position, I would see all the claimants and endeavour to satisfy them. My co-operation will be available in that task.

I can give you full satisfaction about your inquiry, "What I would like to know would be, what will be the powers of such a provisional interim government, how it will be formed, to whom it will be responsible." The provisional interim government will be responsible to the elected members of the present Assembly or a newly elected one. It will have all the powers less that of the Commander-in-Chief'during the war and full powers thereafter. It will be the authority to give effect to the agreement that may be arrived at between the League and the Congress and ratified by the other parties.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 29-9-1944

517. LETTER TO P. C. JOSHI

BOMBAY,
September 15, 1944

DEAR JOSHI,

Many thanks for your letter[1].

I do not mind the warmth into which you have been betrayed. I must apologize for the offence my language has caused you. You will believe me when I tell you that I wrote in all good faith. I could not come close to the party if I did not disclose even my prejudices. I had expected appreciation for my friendly approach and frankness. Nevertheless I must continue my study of the party and its leaders.

I have accepted your advice. I placed your letter in Shri Bhulabhai's hands and asked him to instruct and guide me.I shall not worry you directly with letters. I shall try to know you through the common friends you mention. Sarojini Devi is with Shri Bhulabhai. Rajaji is with me. I shall show your letter to him when it comes back from Shri Bhulabhai.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Correspondence between M. K. Gandhi and P. C. Joshi, p. 36

[1] Dated September 12, which was in reply to Gandhiji's letter dated July 30; *Vide* "Letter to P. C. Joshi", 30-7-1944.

518. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

BOMBAY,
September 16, 1944

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
BIRLAHOUSE
BENARES

MY DEFINITE WISH YOU SHOULD GO MUSSOORIE. YOU WILL SHORTEN STAY THERE IF I WANT YOU.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 7869. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

519. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

BOMBAY,
September 16, 1944

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I read your letter addressed to Manilal. I have some free time today and, therefore, am writing letters.

I have written to Sharda and told her that she should not put off her visit for fear of public criticism.

Your idea of disbanding the Ashram seems right. We should let ourselves be seen as we are. We are likely to make better progress as individuals after disbanding the Ashram. Even after it is disbanded, those who are one at heart may stay together and jointly take up some activity. Those who wish to stay on in Sevagram may do so. Everybody may leave in an orderly manner and after due thought. Talk and exchange views among yourselves along these lines.

I understand what you say regarding me. It should involve no burden on Chhaganlal and Kashi. Neither of them should have to join directly in the cooking.

This letter may be read by all concerned.

I hope Shakaribehn is perfectly calm. You must have thought about the problem of her training. It must not be neglected.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

If Lajjavati's Patel arrives there, send him over here.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10644

520. LETTER TO MUNNALAL AND KANCHAN SHAH

September 16, 1944

CHI. MUNNALAL AND KANCHAN,

My return has been delayed. If I had definitely known that I would be staying here so long, I would have brought Kanchan with me. Still, if she had come, God knows what she would have done because I hardly talk with anyone. She would not have been able to serve me either. The chief service is being done by Dinshawji, and the rest by Manilal. From that point of view, therefore, it is all to the good that Kanchan stayed there. Both of you got an opportunity for introspection.

I hope you meet Bhai Patil often. His health must have improved.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8385. Also C.W. 7178. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

521. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

BOMBAY,
September 16, 1944

CHI. BABUDI,

A man had gone to receive you [at the station]. It's a pity your husband's younger brother has passed away. May God help both of you and your family to bear [the loss]. The cycle of life and death is bound to go on. If you are refraining from coming for fear of public opinion let me tell you that both of you have passed beyond all this and need not yield to this false sense of shame. Mourning of this kind is futile. It should not come in the way of our routine. You are not going to pay me a visit for pleasure. It is your duty to come to me, especially on an occasion like this. I shall surely be here till Tuesday, if not longer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

522. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

September 16, 1944

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I hope you are at peace. This is a time of severe trial for all of us. Think Over what must be done now, and if possible be ready with the answers before my return.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4447

523. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

September 16, 1944

Gandhiji said that at prayer time there was usually great rush. People came to him to give money for the Harijan Fund and to take autographs. Due to this, children and weak persons experienced considerable difficulty every day. Gandhiji, therefore, said that only those who wanted autographs or who wanted to give him money should stay behind while the rest should leave the prayer ground immediately the prayers were over.

Secondly he said that the moment he started moving, everybody rushed after him. This caused trouble. Women and children were put to inconvenience. At Juhu there was a lot of space. Though there was not as much space here, there was enough. There was no need to crowd. If nobody crowded and followed him, people would be able to go away from the prayer ground soon. They would be happy and he would be comfortable. He would also be able to collect money and give autographs at leisure.

Thirdly Gandhiji said that the prayers began with a Buddhist invocation followed by two minutes' silence. The silence was an integral part of the prayer. He found people talking during the silence. When silence was a part of prayer they should close their eyes and contemplate. Nobody should talk. This was the proper behaviour and correct discipline. Everyone should observe this discipline.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-9-1944

524. LETTER TO SIR EVAN M. JENKINS

BIRLA HOUSE,
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD,
MALABAR HILL, BOMBAY,
September 17, 1944

DEAR SIR EVAN,

I thank you for your letter of 13th instant[1]. This is the first time in my experience that an important letter has miscarried. Here are copies of the missing Communications.[2]

Though the psychological moment has passed, I attach very great importance to my letter which was written in answer to a deep heart searching. Therefore even at this late hour I should like my letter to be sent to the Prime Minister.[3]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR EVAN M. JENKINS, K. C. S. I.

VICEROY'S CAMP

INDIA

From a photostat: C.W. 10501. Courtesy: India Office Library, London

[1] Intimating that Gandhiji's letter dated July 17 to the Viceroy had not been received and requesting Gandhiji to send a copy of it as well as the enclosure

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Winston Churchill", 17-7-1944.

[3] G. E. B. Abell in his letter dated September 20 informed Gandhiji that the letter was forwarded to the Prime Minister by "Fast air-mail".

525. LETTER TO VISHWAS N. NAIK

BOMBAY,

September 17, 1944

DEAR NAIK,

The matter you refer to has been fixed up.[1] I return Shri Munshi's letter.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

526. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 17, 1944

CHI. NARANDAS,

Your programme seems to have succeeded all right. Send me a report of the work there. How did Kamalnayan acquit himself. A letter from Kamalabai is enclosed. Fix a monthly allowance of Rs. 30 for her, with effect from September.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8615. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

527. LETTER PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON TO

September 17, 1944

BHAI PURUSHOTTAMDASJI,

Today I have some leisure, so I am going through the file of old letters. Your letter is there. You must have tried a truss for your hernia. How could a man like you get hernia? Or does anyone develop hernia without provocation?

I did not mean what you interpret from my telegram. I had

[1] The addressee had requested Gandhiji to write a letter to K. M. Munshi permitting him to appear in the trial of his elder brother Vasant Naik, M.L.A., on September 21, 1944.

written only about the matter of health. However, the opinion you have sent will prove helpful to me. Our talks are going on. I cannot say what the outcome will be.

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

528. LETTER TO PUNDALIK KATAGDE

September 17, 1944

BHAI PUNDALIK,

I have your letter. I do believe that those who have committed mistakes should admit them only if they are convinced that it is their duty to do so, and not because I want them to. The call for observance of duty must come from within. Hence I will not issue a public statement. It would be misunderstood.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4226

529. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[Before *September 18, 1944*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter which I have passed on to Narandas for his information. It would have saved me trouble if you had first discussed the matter with him and written to me only in the event of an impasse. And don't you have there veterans like Nanalal[2] and Nanabhai[3]?

Why be tired of collecting money? An area which has need for a certain kind of work will always provide funds for the activity. True, there are different ways of working in an area where such need is not felt. However, if a worker wants to collect funds in connection with his work and he enjoys doing it, he also learns through it. If funds were showered on us from above, we would not have known how to use them.

[1] In the source this letter is placed before those of September 18, 1944.

[2] Nanalal Kalidas Jasani, Secretary and partner of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta and also member of Saurashtra Harijan Sevak Sangh

[3] Nrisimhaprasad Kalidas Bhatt, Principal, Lok Bharati Sanstha, Sanosara

If Bhagwanji[1] gives us work worth Rs. 80 doesn't it become our duty to pay him an equal amount?

Are we not at present using the building of the Kelavni Mandal? Why do they want to evict us from there?

If they did, where would you carry on your work? Why not in the Dhedh or Bhangi colony?

As for Bhangwanji, he is already used to working in this manner. You seem to feel embarrassed. Come over whenever you wish to. Nothing is definite about me, so you can even come over here. You can accompany me wherever I might proceed from here, in case I am unable to spare any time here.

I am returning the letter concerning Wankaner.

Blessings from

BAPU

C. JOSHI

HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH,

RAJKOT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

530. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

BOMBAY,

September 18, 1944

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter from Rewari. Devdas has given me your messages. He adds that your body has become dilapidated. I fear I have to take the blame for it in part, if not wholly. How I wish I could also take the credit of repairing it! Why not take a course at Dinshaw's or under Shiv Sharma? Both are here at present. S. S. has come specially. I have not begun his drugs but he is here to induce me.

I have dismissed all fear about your coming under anybody's influence. After all we are under God's guidance.

I am handing Devdas another Rs. 5,000 for you. You shall certainly have whatever comes for you in future. I am asking Sevagram to send you the 500.

[1] Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya of Wadhwan, Kathiawar, who was collecting money for Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust

Tell me how the cows were saved from the butcher's hand. I would plead with you to put your body in order before you take up the serious responsibility of building and running an ashram.[1] My talks are dragging on. God alone knows the end of them. There is one good thing. I am bearing the strain well. I am keeping fit in spite of the two enemies within—the hookworm and the amoebae. It is good too that we are within stone's throw of each other. Manilal is attending on me. He is my bed-fellow. Devdas too is here, so is Rajaji. Khurshedbehn is on the office staff and so is Mridula, I expect, temporarily. They are all working full speed—not to mention Pyarelal, Sushila and Kanu. Pyarelal has a shorthand writer and typist. He is a rare man—silent and hard-working. He is from the extreme South. Abha is here for medical examination. There is nothing wrong with her. Manu has come back from Karachi with her father[2]. Pyarelal's mother and baby[3] are too here. And they are all very happy. I have given you a full budget of news. Today is the silence day which I am devoting to clearing arrears.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6500. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9895

531. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

September 18, 1944

CHI. MARY,[4]

I have seen your letter to Manilal. You seem to be flourishing there[5]. I suppose you are not to be expected to be back in the near future. I do not mind; you are doing good work there as you were doing here. Kamala[6] was with me for a few days in Sevagram. She seems to be quite happy in Khedi and loves her work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6084. Also C.W. 3414. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] *Vide* last footnote of "Letter to Mirabehn", 3-8-1944.

[2] Jaisukhlal Gandhi

[3] Nandini, Pyarelal's brother's daughter who had lost her mother

[4] The subscription and the superscription are in Hindi.

[5] South Africa

[6] Margaret Jones, an English friend of the addressee who was carrying on the khadi work during her absence

532. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

September 18, 1944

MY DEAR C.R.,

Here is my draft reply[1] unrevised. You may add, amend or do what you like with it. The reply should go tomorrow as early as possible.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2096

533. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

BOMBAY,
September 18, 1944

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

You will see I am in Bombay almost daily meeting M.A. Jinnah.[2] God only knows what the result will be.

I had your wires. Of course, they were withheld from me whilst I was in detention.[3] Manilal is with me in personal attendance. He reminds me of old days. He is very restrained. Though I know he wants me to fix up the Phfinix Trust, he never mentions it. But I have it constantly in mind. Sita[4] is in Sevagram. She is a most lovable girl. Devdas too is here for the time being.

And how are you faring? Is there the slightest chance of your coming here for a short stay? Manilal says you are too aged to undertake the, for you, fatiguing stay in India. Is Hannah nursing you as devotedly as ever?

Love to you all,

UPPER HOUSE

From the original : Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy : National Archives of India

[1] Presumably, to M. A. Jinnah; *vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 19-9-1944.

[2] For the purport of Gandhiji's talks and correspondence with Jinnah during this period, vide "Talk with M. A. Jinnah", 9-9-1944 to "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 27-9-1944 and Appendix "Letter from M. A. Jinnah", 10-9-1944 to 27-9-1944; ibid., "Statement on Proposed Fast" ,29-10-1944; and Gandhiji's letters of November 1944.

[3] In the Aga Khan Palace Jail from August 9, 1942 to May 6, 1944

[4] Daughter of Manilal Gandhi

534. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 18, 1944

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter about Kamalnayan. What you say is correct. Are you still suffering from any after-effects of your fall? I would be happy if you thought of paying a visit to Sevagram some time.

What is your opinion regarding the suggestion in Chhaganlal's letter?

I am enclosing a letter from Mirabehn also. Send me your reply to her. I will forward it to her. Follow the suggestion made by her.I am tied up here. I don't know when I shall be able to get away.

Blessings from

BAPU

Enclosures: 2

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8616. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

535. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

BOMBAY,
[*September 18, 1944*][1]

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Your letter is full of news. I have written a letter to Chokhawala[2] advising patience.

The arrival of Gokhale is welcome. I am hoping to reach there on 27th October, when I hope to do something for him. There is no need for him to lose heart. Sushilabehn has gained a great reputation. She may succeed with Gokhale too. Where was Govind taking his meals till now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10612

[1] From the G.N. Register
[2] Gordhandas Chokhawala, addressee's son-in-law

536. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

September 18, 1944

CHI. SUSHILA,

I got your two letters. The country's condition is exactly as you describe it to be. But surely God's hand must be behind this. We shall have performed our dharma if we acquit ourselves creditably in our own field and shed lustre on it.

Manilal has devoted himself completely to my service, and is thus paying his filial debt. Do not worry about him. Sita[1] has taken her place in the Nayee Talim school at Sevagram. Sumi[2] is with her, as also the daughter of a Bihari gentleman named Lakshmi Babu. The fourth is Ashadevi's own daughter. There are thus four girls in all. Ashadevi has become their mother. She is a learned woman. According to me this type of education is the best. All these four girls learn with the other children at Sevagram, and also teach them a few things. Do not get frightened at this news. Sita herself voluntarily decided to join this school. But of course it was I who was responsible for putting the idea in Manilal's and Sita's minds and luring them on. I would have tried to lure you too, if you had been here. God alone knows, of course, whether you would have yielded or not. Now that you have learnt to drive a car, how can I keep pace with you? By all means go ahead.

I have talks with Jinnah Saheb practically daily. Before you get this letter you will have known the result.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4936

[1] Addressee's daughters

[2] *ibid*

537. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS P. ASAR

September 18, 1944

CHI. LAKSHMIDAS,

I have your two letters, which are both transparent. Replies for the question of Jajuji[1] are coming in from others as well. I shall therefore write nothing for some time. I am thinking about a clarification regarding non-violence. It is not necessary at all to quit the Council[2] simply because you cannot manipulate your hand and hence cannot spin. Can we not imagine the possibility of some people who might have lost one hand and therefore cannot spin and yet be the greatest khadi workers of them all? Is there any rule that a person's hand may not remain unoccupied?

Blessings from

BAPU

HARIJAN ASHRAM

SABARMATI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

538. LETTER TO BHAGIRATH KANODIA

September 18, 1944

BHAI BHAGIRATHJI,

I read your letter to Pyarelal. I never said that Rajaji had betrayed me. He can never betray me. He has never done so. My association with Rajaji is very old. Lately our opinions have come to differ but our love for each other continues to be what it has always been. What Monoranjan Babu writes has only been written in jest. What can I do if people do not appreciate my jokes? You may use this letter in any way you consider necessary.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Shrikrishnadas Jaju; *vide* "A Circular Letter", 8-9-1944.
[2] Of A.I.S.A.

539. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

September 19, 1944

DEAR QUAID-E-AZAM,

Many thanks for yours[1] of the 17th instant. I am sorry to have to say that your answers omitting 1, 2 and 6 do not give satisfaction.

It may be that all my questions do not arise from the view of mere clarification of the Lahore Resolution. But I contend that they are very relevant from the standpoint of a seeker that I am. You cannot expect anyone to agree to or shoulder the burden of the claim contained in the Lahore Resolution without, for instance, answering my questions 15 (a) and 15 (b)[2] which you brush aside as not arising by way of clarification.

Dr. Ambedkar's thesis, while it is ably written, has carried no conviction to me. The other book mentioned by you, I am sorry to say, I have not seen.

Why can you not accept my statement that I aspire to represent all the sections that compose the people of India? Do you not aspire? Should not every Indian? That the aspiration may never be realized is beside the point.

I am beholden to you, in spite of your opinion about me, for having patience with me. I hope you will never lose it, but will persevere in your effort to convert me. I ask you to take me with my strong views and even prejudices, if I am guilty of any.

As to your verdict on my policy and programme, we must agree to differ. For, I am wholly unrepentant. My purpose is as a lover of communal unity to place my services at your disposal.

I hope you do not expect me to accept the Lahore Resolution without understanding its implications. If your letter is the final word, there is little hope. Can we not agree to differ on the question of "two nation" and yet solve the problem on the basis of self-determination? It is this basis that has brought me to you. If the regions holding Muslim majorities have to be separated according to the Lahore

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from M. A. Jinnah", 17-9-1944.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 15-9-1944.

Resolution, the grave step of separation should be specifically placed before and approved by the people in that area.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 29-9-1944

540. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

BOMBAY,
September 19, 1944

In the course of his speech at the prayer meeting, Gandhiji said that he did not know how many Muslim brothers and sisters were there in the audience but there was at least one, namely, Raihanabehn Tyabjee. That was enough for his present purpose. His earnest prayer to all present was that if they had the good of the country at heart and wanted India to be free and independent at the earliest moment they should establish the closest bonds of friendship between Hindus and Mussalmans and members of all other communities. That was the least that every one of them was expected to do and could do. Was there anyone among them who doubted that if they could become one at heart the coming of independence would be accelerated? Ever since his return to India he had been proclaiming that truth from house-tops. That did not mean that they could afford to rest in idleness and freedom would by itself drop into their lap. If that was realized many other things would follow as a matter of course.

Referring to his talks with Mr. Jinnah he said that he considered it to be their great good fortune that they—two brothers—were having their friendly talks. He was not at liberty to divulge the nature of their talks. But they could rest satisfied that they were not talking without hope. The day he felt that there was no more hope, he would not hesitate to say so. He wanted them all to fraternize with one another on the Id Day and pray that God may guide them aright.

Concluding, he warned the people against putting faith in speculations in which both the foreign and the Indian Press were indulging.

Sometimes they found all kinds of prophecies. God was with them. They were not being led by prophecies, but by the spirit of God. The papers published all kinds of guesses and messages were also sent abroad. It would not benefit the people to depend on these reports. It would, in fact, be wrong to believe in them.

The Bombay Chronicle, 20-9-1944

[1] For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix "Letter from M. A. Jinnah", 21-9-1944

541. LETTER TO NANJI KALIDAS

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
September 20, 1944

BHAISHRI NANJIBHAI,

I read your telegram and letter to Bapa[1]. It has made me unhappy. You had told me clearly that your donation would go to the central fund without any condition. Your letter says that a committee has been formed to manage your contribution and that the money would be in its possession. If it is so, your contribution will not be included in the existing Fund. Then you can use it as your committee thinks proper. But I would urge that an illiterate village woman's name should not be associated with it.

I hope there is some improvement in your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

RAJSHRI SETHSHRI NANJI KALIDAS
PORBANDAR (KATHIAWAR)

From Gujarati: C.W. 8617. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

542. LETTER TO B. ORELAND

CAMP BIRLA HOUSE,
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD,
MALABAR HILL, BOMBAY,
September 21, 1944

DEAR LIEUT. ORELAND,

I was pleased to receive your letter of 17th instant. I do not remember the pundit mentioned by you. Your question is very appropriate. My interpretation of the *Mahabharata* is that it is a penetrating study of man and shows that fruits of violence whether used for a good cause or bad are evil. The Pandavas won but an empty victory. Bhishma was right in accordance with the social usage in vogue in those days. He was true to the salt he ate. We would go entirely wrong in estimating the men and women of the *Mahabharata*

[1] Amritlal V. Thakkar

according to the modern standard, which need not be considered necessarily higher than in the times of the *Mahabharata*. The story of the epic has to be read in its setting. Then Bhishma would appear to be a lofty soul.

M. K. GANDHI

LIEUT. B. ORELAND
104 FIELD PARK
S.E.A.C.
B.A.P.O.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

543. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

BOMBAY,
September 21, 1944

CHI. SITA,

I got your letter written in a beautiful hand. We will now be meeting soon. Talk to me then.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

The correct word is not *raha* but *rah*[1].

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4937

544. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

September 21, 1944

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have your letter. Even if our talks remain inconclusive, I have decided to reach there on the 1st. I shall return after attending to the 2nd[2].

I hope Vallabh Swami undertook the fast after due thought. It has become difficult to fix the proper conditions for fasting.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10613

[1] Way or path
[2] Gandhiji's birthday celebrations

545. A CIRCULAR LETTER

BOMBAY,
September 21, 1944

BHAISHRI,

I am writing this circular in Gujarati since all those to whom I intend to send it know the language. I send with this a list of ten additional trustees. At first I thought I would send the names merely for your information. As my duty becomes clearer to me, I realize that I must function as Chairman without insisting on having my own way. A list of members of the Executive Committee is also attached.

I have kept the following considerations in mind in drawing up both these lists. We should include those who understand my method of work best and who have had some experience of village work or who share my point of view regarding village work. I am painfully aware that I have not been able to include as many women as I should have liked to. This Memorial Fund is in memory of an uneducated woman who had been touched by the ideal of service to villages, and it would, therefore, be but fitting that the Board consists wholly of women. I would then feel that my efforts in this field have been fully rewarded. But the time for this has not yet come. Let us all hope that such mature and able women will get trained up for this work.

You may, without any hesitation whatever, reject any names in the list which you disapprove of. If you wish, we may elect the additional members at a meeting of the trustees. Kindly send me your opinion at an early date.

List of additional trustees:

1. Shri Mangaldas Pakvasa
2. Smt. Ashadevi Aryanayakum
3. Smt. Gosibehn Captain
4. Smt. Raihana Tyabji
5. Smt. Mridula Sarabhai
6. Shri Gulzarilal Nanda
7. Shri Ganesh Vasudev Mavalankar
8. Shri Shrikrishnadas Jaju
9. Shri Lakshminarayan Babu (of Bihar)

10. Smt. Janakibehn Bajaj
Members of Executive Committee
1. Shri M. K. Gandhi (Chairman)
2. Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas (Vice-Chairman)
3. Shri Amritlal V. Thakkar
4. Smt. Ashadevi Aryanayakum
5. Smt. Mridula Sarabhai
6. Shri Ganesh Vasudev Mavalankar
7. Shri Shrikrishnadas Jaju
8. Shri Devdas Gandhi

I am,
Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 4873. Courtesy: N. B. Khare

546. TELEGRAM TO PURUSHOTTAM M. PATEL

September 22, 1944

PURUSHOTTAM MOTIBHAI PATEL
CHAIRMAN, INDO-BRITISH FRIENDSHIP GROUP
BRAUNTON 114
MANY THANKS[1]. GOD'S WILL.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

547. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

September 22, 1944

DEAR QUAID-E-AZAM,

Your letter of yesterday[2] (21st instant) so disturbed me that I thought I would postpone my reply till after we had met at the usual time. Though I made no advance at our meeting, I think I see some what clearly what you are driving at. The more I think about the

[1] The addressee had wished Gandhiji success in his efforts to achieve unity and freedom

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from M. A. Jinnah", 21-9-1944.

two-nation theory the more alarming it appears to be. The book recommended by you gives me no help. It contains half-truths and its conclusions or inferences are unwarranted. I am unable to accept the proposition that the Muslims of India are a nation, distinct from the rest of the inhabitants of India. Mere assertion is no proof. The consequences of accepting such a proposition are dangerous in the extreme. Once the principle is admitted there would be no limit to claims for cutting up India into numerous divisions, which would spell India's ruin. I have, therefore, suggested a way out. Let it be a partition as between two brothers, if a division there must be.

You seem to be averse to a plebiscite. In spite of the admitted importance of the League, there must be clear proof that the people affected desire partition. In my opinion, all the people inhabiting the area ought to express their opinion specifically on this single issue of division. Adult suffrage is the best method, but I would accept any other equivalent.

You summarily reject the idea of common interest between the two arms. I can be no willing party to a division which does not provide for the simultaneous safeguarding of common interests, such as Defence, Foreign Affairs and the like. There will be no feeling of security by the people of India without a recognition of the nutural and mutual obligations arising out of physical contiguity.

Your letter shows a wide divergence of opinion and outlook between us. Thus you adhere to the opinion often expressed by you that the August 1942 Resolution is "inimical to the ideals and demands of Muslim India". There is no proof for this sweeping statement.

We seem to be moving in a circle. I have made a suggestion. If we are bent on agreeing, as I hope we are, let us call in a third party or parties to guide or even arbitrate between us[1].

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 29-9-1944

[1] For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix "Letter from M. A. Jinnah", 23-9-1944.

548. NOTE TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

[*September 22, 1944*][1]

I have gone through this letter.[2] I also listened to what Bhadantji had to say. Your letter seems to have been written in a hurry. You should have waited for Nanavati's[3] reply. It is one's duty to correct any lapse of memory or mistakes due to haste. I see nothing wrong in what Nanavati tells me.

I expect to arrive there on the 1st.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 300-l

549. LETTER TO AZIZ-UL-HAQUE

[On or after *September 22, 1944*][4]

DEAR ERIEND,

I am deeply grateful to you for your kind letter and book[5]. I shall read it, I know, with interest.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] According to the source this note is written under a letter dated September 22, from Maganbhai Desai to the addressee, which he had shown to Gandhiji before posting. The letter had sought to clarify the position implied in a letter from the addressee to Bhadant Anand Kausalyayan that the Hindustani Prachar Sabha would conduct examinations only in Urdu.

[2] *ibid*.

[3] Amritlal T. Nanavati

[4] The letter is written under the addressee's letter dated September 22, 1944.

[5] *Man behind the Plough*

550. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

September 23, 1944

DEAR QUAID-E-AZAM,

Last evening's talk has left a bad taste in the mouth. Our talks and our correspondence seem to run in parallel lines and never touch one another. We reached the breaking point last evening but, thank God, we were unwilling to part. We resumed discussion and suspended it in order to allow me to keep my time for the evening public prayer.

In order that all possibility of making any mistake in a matter of this great importance may be removed I would like you to give me in writing what precisely on your part you would want me to put my signature to.[1]

I adhere to my suggestion that we may call in some outside assistance to help us at this stage.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 99-9-1944

551. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

Id [*September 23, 1944*][2]

BHAI JINNAH,

I was wondering what I shall send you today. It should be fair on my part to let you and your sister[3] share equally the crisp chapatis they make for me. Here is your share. Please regard it as a token of my love and do please help yourself to it.

Id greetings from

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee in his reply said: " . . . I may say that it is not a case of your being asked to put your signature as representing anybody till you clothe yourself with representative capacity and are vested with authority. We stand by, as I have already said, the basic and fundamental principles embodied in the Lahore Resolution of March 1940. I appeal to you once more to revise your policy and programme, as the future of this sub-continent and the welfare of the peoples of India demand that you should face realities."

[2] The letter has been placed among those for September 1944. Id fell on this date.

[3] Fatima

552. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

BOMBAY,
September 24, 1944

Whoever has given currency to the news about the Sevagram Ashram has not served the cause of truth. The only truth about the news is that the disbandment and transformation of the Sevagram Ashram is under contemplation. No decision has yet been taken. But the suggestion that it has anything to do with my supposed dissatisfaction with the conduct of the Ashram during my incarceration is altogether untrue. On the contrary I have expressed my unstinted admiration for the single-minded devotion with which they carried on the Ashram under those difficult and anxious 21 months. If it is ultimately decided to disband the Ashram it would be for the purpose of raising the activities of the members to a higher level than heretofore.

The Bombay Chronicle, 25-9-1944

553. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH[1]

September 24, 1944

DEAR QUAID-E-AZAM,

I have your two letters of September 23[2] in reply to my letters of the 22nd and 23rd.

With your assistance, I am exploring the possibilities of reaching an agreement, so that the claim embodied in the Muslim League Resolution of Lahore may be reasonably satisfied. You must, therefore, have no apprehensions that the August Resolution will stand in the way of our reaching an agreement. That Resolution dealt with the question of India as against Britain, and it cannot stand in the way of our settlement.

I proceed on the assumption that India is not to be regarded as two or more nations, but as one family consisting of many members

[1] Gandhiji's draft is available under G.N. 2056.

[2] *Vide* last footnote of "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 23-9-1944 and Appendix "Letter from M. A. Jinnah", 23-9-1944.

of whom the Muslims living in the north-west zones, i.e., Baluchistan, Sind, North-West Frontier Province and that part of the Punjab where they are in absolute majority over all the other elements and in parts of Bengal and Assam where they are in absolute majority, desire to live in separation from the rest of India. Differing from you on the general basis, I can yet recommend to the Congress and the country the acceptance of the claim for separation contained in the Muslim League Resolution of Lahore, 1940, on my basis and on the following terms:

The areas should be demarcated by a commission, approved by the Congress and the League. The wishes of the inhabitants of the area demarcated should be ascertained through the votes of the adult population of the areas or through some equivalent method.

If the vote is in favour of separation, it shall be agreed that these areas shall form a separate State as soon as possible after India is free from foreign domination and can, therefore, be constituted into two sovereign independent States.

There shall be a treaty of separation, which should also provide for the efficient and satisfactory administration of Foreign Affairs, Defence, Internal Communications, Customs, Commerce and the like, which must necessarily continue to be matters of common interest between the contracting parties. The treaty shall also contain terms for safeguarding the rights of minorities in the two States. Immediately on the acceptance of this agreement by the Congress and the League, the two shall decide upon a common course of action for the attainment of the independence of India.

The League will, however, be free to remain out of any direct action, to which the Congress may resort and in which the League may not be willing to participate.

If you do not agree to these terms, could you let me know in precise terms what you would have me to accept in terms of the Lahore Resolution and bind myself to recommend to the Congress? If you could kindly do this, I shall be able to see, apart from the difference in approach, what definite terms I can agree to. In your letter of 23rd September, you refer to “the basis and fundamental principles embodied in the Lahore Resolution” and ask me to accept

them. Surely, this is unnecessary when, as I feel, I have accepted the concrete consequence that should follow from such acceptance.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 29-9-1944

554. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

BOMBAY,
September 24, 1944

DADA,

I read your letter to Bapa. If you can make it possible somehow, please do come to Wardha on the 2nd.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1251

555. TALK WITH M. A. JINNAH[2]

September 24, 1944

Jinnah had refused even to discuss Bapu's proposal, as he (Bapu) was not vested with authority; he represented nobody.

[JINNAH:] "If you want defence and so many things in common, that means that you visualize a centre?"

[GANDHIJI:] No, but I must say, in practice, there will have to be a body selected by both parties to regulate these things. Then he came to the August (1942) Resolution. He said it was inimical to Muslims. "But don't you see that it is absolutely a baseless charge? With all the legal acumen that is attributed to you, why cannot you see that it deals with only India and the British rule? It has nothing to do with the Muslims. You can refer the matter to a lawyer of eminence impersonally and take his opinion whether there is anything in it

[1] For extracts from the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix "Letter from M. A. Jinnah", 25-9-1944.

[2] According to the source this report is taken from Pyarelal's diary which appears to have been based on Gandhiji's narrative to C. Rajagopalachari, giving "the story of the final breakdown of the talks".

which could be considered inimical to the Muslim League or the Muslims." He said he did not need to do so. "Why should I want another's opinion when I know it for myself?" I broached the subject that I had fixed up to be at Sevagram on the 2nd October. I would like to leave on the 30th and would be back in four or five days. He said, "Why must we take so long? We had better close up now. I will have everything ready on Tuesday. You will examine the copies[1] and I will do so." He had the introduction also ready and read it out. I said I had nothing to say against it, but if I had a copy I could examine it. He said I could do so on Tuesday. I said all right. He would not have a third party, nor would he produce his own scheme. He condemned the August Resolution. He suggested in so many words that amends should be made, i.e., it should be retracted.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, pp. 93-4

556. A MESSAGE

September[2] *25, 1944*

I have omitted sending messages to a number of friends but I must associate myself with the Acharya's cause since we are childhood friends. We have been together since the days of his father. Please let him see this.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

557. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

[*September 25, 1944*][3]

MY DEAR C. R.,

If you are satisfied that my letter of yesterday[4] is the last word you should do the following:

1. You should ask Jinnah to see you. He told me he had nothing against you, etc. If Bhulabhai has thoroughly understood the position he too may see Jinnah. You may both offer to see him together.

[1] The reference is to their correspondence.

[2] The source has "August/September".

[3] From the reference to the letter to M. A. Jinnah of September 24, 1944, as "letter of yesterday"; *vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 24-9-1944.

[4] *ibid.*

2. I attach great importance to the legal opinion on Jinnah's interpretation of August Resolution.

3. Consider the following letter to Jinnah:

"MY DEAR QUAID-E-AZAM,

Yesterday's talk[1] leads me to inflict this letter on you for which please forgive me.

I see force in your argument that the para[5] in my letter of yesterday can be interpreted to touch the League sensitiveness. Please therefore read the following instead: 'Any member or group from among the Congress or the League members will be free to resort to direct action including C. R. in the course of the campaign of Independence.' This is however a minor matter. In the context in which the offending paragraph appears, its friendly intention is unmistakable.

The main purpose of this letter is to ask you to think fifty times before you throw away my offer. It is an earnest effort to meet essential requirements of the Lahore Resolution. I would like you, before you reject it, to let me address the League Council, indeed even the open session of the League.

I ask you not to take responsibility on your shoulders of rejecting my offer. You are too technical when you dismiss my proposal for arbitration or guidance on the ground that I have approached you as an individual and not in any representative capacity. Is it not enough that I have approached you in the spirit of service in the cause of unity?

I repeat the suggestion I made you during our talk of yesterday that counsel's opinion should be invited on your interpretation of the August (1942) Resolution of the A. I. C. C. Rajaji for whose integrity and legal ability you have high regard, agrees with me that the August Resolution is in no way inimical to the Muslims. You are wrong in saying that the Congress is a Hindu or communal organization. Will you be inimical to non-Muslims if the League fought single-handed for the Independence of the whole of India whether considered as one India or two or more?"

4. It may be good to call in Shiva Rao, if you have not done so already.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2057

[1] *Vide* "Talk with M. A. Jinnah", 24-9-1944.

558. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

September 25, 1944

DEAR QUAID-E-AZAM,

Yesterday's talk leads me to inflict this letter on you, which I trust you will not mind.

Our conversations have come about as a result of your correspondence with Rajaji in July last over his Formula and your consultations with the League Working Committee thereon, and my own letter[1] to you suggesting a meeting between you and me. My proposal of yesterday is an earnest effort to meet the essential requirements of the Lahore Resolution. I would like you, therefore, to think fifty times before throwing away an offer which had been made entirely in the spirit of service in the cause of communal harmony. Do not take, I pray, the responsibility of rejecting the offer. Throw it on your Council. Give me an opportunity of addressing them. If they feel like rejecting it, I would like you to advise the Council to put it before the open session of the League. If you will accept my advice and permit me, I would attend the open session and address it.

You are too technical when you dismiss my proposal for arbitration or outside guidance over points of difference. If I have approached you as an individual, and not in any representative capacity, it is because we believe that if I reach an agreement with you, it will be of material use in the process of securing a Congress-League settlement and acceptance of it by the country. Is it irrelevant or inadmissible to supplement our efforts to convince each other without help, guidance, advice or even arbitration?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu 29-9-1944

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 17-7-1944.

559. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

September 26, 1944

DEAR QUAID-E-AZAM,

In view of my letter to you of yesterday, left to myself, I would have refrained from dealing with your letter[1] before our meeting today. But I have deferred to Rajaji's advice to finish the chain of correspondence.

I confess I am unable to understand your persistent refusal to appreciate the fact that the Formula presented to you by me in my letter of the 24th as well as the Formula presented to you by Rajaji give you virtually what is embodied in the Lahore Resolution, providing at the same time what is absolutely necessary to make the arrangement acceptable to the country. You keep on saying that I should accept certain theses, while I have been contending that the best way for us, who differ in our approach to the problem, is to give body to the demand as it stands in the Resolution and work it out to our mutual satisfaction. It is on this plan that I understand Rajaji's Formula is to be conceived, and it is on the same plan that I have tried to work it out in the course of and as a result of our talks. I contend that either gives you the substance of the Lahore Resolution. Unfortunately, you reject both. And I cannot accept the Lahore Resolution as you want me to, especially when you seek to introduce into its interpretation theories and claims which I cannot accept and which I cannot ever hope to induce India to accept.

Your constant references to my not being clothed with representative authority are really irrelevant. I have approached you so that, if you and I can agree upon a common course of action, I may use what influence I possess for its acceptance by the Congress and the country. If you break, it cannot be because I have no representative capacity, or because I have been unwilling to give you satisfaction in regard to the claim embodied in the Lahore Resolution.[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 29-9-1944

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from M. A. Jinnah", 26-9-1944.

[2] For the addressee's reply of even date, *vide* Appendix "Letter from M. A. Jinnah", 26-9-1944.

560. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

September 26, 1944

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

I have read your letter. We shall not do it at the time announced, we shall do it in the Ashram. I shall receive the purse at 2 o'clock. We cannot ask for regular permission. No harm will come to those who join. Sometimes it benefits to be ignorant of the law. This is one such instance.

Please take things easy. It will be enough if the visiting friends are properly accommodated. All else is in God's hands.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

561. TELEGRAM TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

Express BIRLA HOUSE, MALABAR HILL, BOMBAY,

September 27, 1944

KISHORELAL MASHURWALA

SEVAGRAM

WARDHA

GOD BLESS YOU. TAKE FULL REST. REACHING SOON.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

562. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI

Vijayadashami[1], *Wednesday, September 27, 1944*

CHI. KASHI,

It was by chance that I learnt that today was Dussehra. My purpose in writing this letter is to inform you that Pyarelal's mother will be reaching there. If she comes, she should be given Ba's[2] room.

[1]The tenth day of the bright half of *Ashwin* or *Aso*, considered to be an auspicious day

[2] Kasturba Gandhi had died on February 22,1944 in the Aga Khan Palace, Poona.

If you are there, you may live in my room, that is, occupy the room which Manilal used as his sitting room. If more accommodation is needed after my return, we will arrange for it. Upto Monday, I believe, there will be some ceremony or religious worship going on in Ba's room. Think over what arrangement should be made for Pyarelal's mother till then. We will all arrive there on Sunday. Accompanying me will be Sumatibehn, Patel, Shantikumar, Mridulabehn, Khurshedbehn, Jaisukhlal, Kanu, etc., Dr. Jivaraj and another Doctor friend, Mataji and Sharda (Babu).

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33078

563. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

BOMBAY ,
September 27, 1944

Gandhiji said he was not addressing them in Hindustani as before, because he wanted his words to go straight to the hearts of the audience, most of whom were Gujaratis. He had particularly the women in mind who were not accustomed to Hindustani speech.

Referring to the leakage of the correspondence between him and Quaide-e-Azam and its unauthorized publication in a certain section of the Press, he observed that he had warned[2] the Press before against indulging in conjectures, because he felt that would damage the cause. But what had appeared in the Press now was more than a mere conjecture. It seemed that they had somehow managed to get actual copies of the correspondence. Perhaps it was clever on their part, but that did them little credit. Journalism, like every institution, had its own code of ethics and he was not there to pass judgment. All he could say was that he himself had, perhaps, followed a different code of ethics even in the field of journalism.

He assured them that the leakage had not occurred from his office, and he had strong reasons for his belief. He had the other day drawn the Quaid-e-Azam's attention to the leakage, but the Quaid-e-Azam was indifferent. Public men had to cultivate that indifference, or else life would become impossible. But it was for the public not to take relish in such happenings. If the public strongly disapproved all such practices, the Press would not repeat them. It was intolerable that anyone should try to pry into

[1] This was issued as an "authorized version" of the Gujarati speech.
[2] *Vide*, "Interview to the Press", 13-9-1944.

and give publicity to private correspondence without authority.

He told them that when the talks were over, he would let them know the result. That stage had been reached yesterday, but as copies of the correspondence were not ready, its actual release had to be postponed till today. Authorized copies of the correspondence had now been sent to the Press with a prefatory statement by the Quaid-e-Azam.

Hitherto he had told them that he was not without hope with regard to the outcome of the talks. He had to confess that the result that he was hoping for had not materialized. But he had no sense of disappointment or despondency. He was convinced that even out of that breakdown good would result.

Although Quaid-e-Azam and he had known each other fairly well in public life before, they had never come into such close personal contact. Their conversations were carried out with friendliness and cordiality. He wanted all the communities to cultivate the same spirit of friendliness and cordiality in their relations with one another. They should try to convert one another through it.

They might ask, "Why was it then that he and the Quaid-e-Azam had failed to convert each other?" His reply was that he had tried his level best to go as far as he could to meet the Quaid-e-Azam's viewpoint. He had taken incalculable pains to understand him and to make himself understood. But he had failed.

He had placed before the Quaid-e-Azam Rajaji's Formula, but that did not commend itself to him. He had thereupon put forth another proposal of his own in its place, but even that had failed to secure Jinnah Saheb's approval. In the same way, Jinnah Saheb's proposal had failed to commend itself to him. If either of them had been weak, they would have possibly come to some sort of agreement, but as responsible men they could not afford to be weak. A helmsman had to be firm and unwavering, or else the ship would founder upon the rocks. Each one of them had tried to convince the other. It was possible that both of them might be in the wrong. But so long as each felt himself to be in the right, he could not let go his hold.

The news of breakdown, he knew, would cause grief to the friends of India and might give cause for jubilation to their enemies. He drew their attention to the last sentence in his[1] statement in which he had said that it was not the final end of their effort.

Although they had been unable to appreciate each other's viewpoint, the public could help them to do so. They should not lose heart. If there was anyone who had reason to feel disappointed it was he. He had knocked at the Quaid-e-Azam's door. But he had already observed there was no despondency in him. It was not for a votary

[1] The source has "their". The reference is to M. A. Jinnah's statement; *vide* Appendix "M. A. Jinnah's Statement", 27-9-1944.

of truth and non-violence to feel despondent if his effort at times failed to yield the result aimed at. Failure should only serve as a spur to further effort. God alone knew what was best for them. It was not for them to question God's ways. Therefore, instead of feeling despondent, they should regard the breakdown as a challenge to their faith and as an incentive for greater effort for establishing true unity among the various communities.

The Hindu, 29-9-1944

564. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

[After] *September* [*27,*][1] *1944*

CHI. SHRIMAN,

I got your manuscript[2]. I will try to read it. Maganbhai says that what you have written about Hindi-Urdu has caused much confusion. You must have received my letter[3]. I will be leaving on the 30th; or may be even earlier,

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 301

565. TELEGRAM TO VIJAYALAKSHMI PANDIT

Express *September 28, 1944*

VIJAYALAKSHMI PANDIT

2 MUKERJEE ROAD

ALLAHABAD

SEND FORMAL NONCOMMITTAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT PROMISING FURTHER REPLY. REACH SEVAGRAM SECOND OCTOBER IF CONVENIENT.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Gandhiji's date of departure was not decided till September 27; *vide* "Telegram to Kishorelal G. Mashruwala", 27-9-1944.

[2] Of *The Gandhian Plan*

[3] *Vide* "Note to Shriman Narayan", 22-9-1944.

566. LETTER TO M. S. SUBBULAKSHMI[1]

BOMBAY,
September 28, 1944

DEAR SUBBULAKSHMI,

Rajaji has told me everything about your good work in connection with Kasturba Memorial Fund by using your musical gifts. May God bless you.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI[2]

From a photostat: C.W. 10600. Courtesy: T. Sadasivam

567. LETTER TO GIRDHARLAL T. MODI

BOMBAY,
September 28, 1944

BHAI GIRDHARLAL,

Sushilabehn told me about your illness. I wish very much to call on you, but you know how helpless I am.

Pyarelalji will tell you more. Get well soon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10213. Courtesy: Jayabehn Modi

[1] (b.1916); a renowned Carnatic musician, she received the Magsaysay Award in 1974 for public service through music.

[2] The signature is in Tamil.

568. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[1]

September 28, 1944

It is a matter of deep regret that we two could not reach an agreement. But there is no cause for disappointment. The breakdown is only so-called. It is an adjournment *sine die*. Each one of us must now talk to the public and put our viewpoints before them. If we do so dispassionately and if the public cooperate, we may reach a solution of the seemingly insoluble at an early date. My experience of the previous three weeks confirms me in the view that the presence of a third power hinders the solution. A mind enslaved cannot act as if it was free. I need not impute base motives to the rulers to prove what seems to me to be an axiomatic truth. Nevertheless, I am going to continue to work for the solution as I have been during these three weeks. The questions for consideration are simple. Has the Rajaji Formula or mine made a reasonable approach to the Lahore Resolution? If they or either of them is such an approach, all parties, and especially the members of the Muslim League, should ask the Quaid-e-Azam to revise his opinion. If Rajaji and I have stultified the Lahore Resolution we should be educated. The chief thing is for the Press and the public to avoid partisanship and bitterness.

To a question on his future plans, whether he proposed to concentrate on a Hindu-Muslim settlement or take up political work, seeking imprisonment if necessary, Mahatma Gandhi replied:

I shall act as my inner voice tells me.

Asked how far the offer he had made had conceded the demand made in the Lahore Resolution of the League, Mahatma Gandhi emphasized that the Rajaji Formula or the formula that he presented conceded the substance of the League demand. He said:

In my opinion, either formula gives as much as can reasonably be expected with due regard to the interests of the whole of India.

In answer to a question whether his offer was to be treated now as withdrawn, he said that so far as he was concerned the offer he had made stood. It was not made in

[1] A Press conference of about 40 Indian and foreign journalists was held at Birla House; Sarojini Naidu, C. Rajagopalachari, Bhulabhai Desai, Nagindas Master, M. Y. Nurie, Dr. M. D. D. Gilder and S. K. Patil were among others present. Gandhiji first read out his statement.

any bargaining spirit. He said:

I think it is a just solution of the problem and it is in the spirit of the policy which the Congress has consistently adopted in connection with the communal question, namely, self-determination.

A number of questions were put on the representative character of the two leaders who conducted the negotiations and why Mahatma Gandhi prolonged the talks when he was apprised of Mr. Jinnah's views on the first day of the talks. Mahatma Gandhi answered:

I am a man reputed to have inexhaustible patience and I had no reason to despair of either being converted by the Quaid-e-Azam or in my turn converting him. Therefore, so long as there was the slightest possibility, I clung to the hope that we shall pull through to a solution. Haste in such cases is a most dangerous thing. You should, therefore, conclude that yesterday was really the moment when the public should have been taken into confidence. As for myself, I am entirely satisfied that we have not wasted these three weeks. I have no doubt whatsoever that we know now each other better than ever before.

When you agreed to meet Mr. Jinnah, did you meet him on the basis that he was the sole representative of the Muslims?

I have never admitted that claim, but I have said throughout that the Muslim League is by far the most representative Muslim organization. It would have been folly on my part not to recognize this, but I have always been aware that there is outside the League a large body of Muslims which does not see eye to eye with the League and which does not believe in the two nations theory.

Mahatma Gandhi asserted that the fight for freedom had not been suspended when he approached the Quaid-e-Azam. He said:

My approach to the Quaid-e-Azam was itself a part of the fight for freedom.

Asked if there was any possibility of the two leaders meeting again in the near future, Mahatma Gandhi said:

I hope so. It is for the Press and the public to make it possible and hasten the date. I assure you that we have not parted as enemies, but as friends.

If the Rajaji Formula or his own formula had conceded the substance of the Lahore Resolution, then why not agree to the Resolution itself?

Although the Resolution does not say so, if you study the

correspondence, it shows that it is based on the two nations theory and it has been known as the Pakistan Resolution. Further, I had to examine the Resolution in view of the interpretation put upon it by the Quaid-e-Azam in his numerous speeches and statements in elucidation of the Resolution. It is indisputable that the Resolution, while it does not enunciate that theory, is based upon that theory. The Quaid-e-Azam has insisted upon that. Therefore, I urge that apart from the two nations theory, if I could accept the principle of division of India in accordance with the demand of the League, he should accept it. But unfortunately it was just there we split.

Asked about Mr. Jinnah's views regarding a provisional interim government, he said:

I am not sure that the Quaid-e-Azam puts great weight on the interim government. I gave all the explanation of my conception of an interim government without any reservation. It is quite clear in my letters[1]. If I did not go any further, it was because I could not and, even if you cross-examine me any further, I would have to say I could not go any further. But if, as you suggest, the Quaid-e-Azam attached greater weight to it, then it was open to him to put it into concrete form. I would have then taxed myself and spared no effort to accept the proposition or to make some other suggestions.

Mahatma Gandhi was told that those Muslims who did not see eye to eye with the League had no real Muslim backing. He replied:

Therefore, I have said that the League is by far the most representative of Muslim opinion, but I cannot despise the others by simply saying that they have no Muslim backing. What does it matter if they have no more Muslim backing if the opinion represented by a single Muslim, or by a body of Muslims whom you can count on your fingers, is intrinsically sound? The way of approaching a question is not to examine the numerical strength of those behind the opinion, but to examine the soundness of the opinion on merits, or else we will never reach a solution, and if we reach one, it will be a blind solution simply because it is the wish of the largest body. If the largest body goes wrong, it is up to me to say you are wrong and not to submit. The rule of majority does not mean that it should suppress the opinion of even an individual, if it is sound. An individual's opinion should have greater weight than the opinion of many, if that

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 14-9-1944 and 15-9-1944.

opinion is sound on merits. That is my view of real democracy.

Mahatma Gandhi was asked what he thought of the idea of formation of provinces on linguistic, cultural and communal basis. He replied that since 1920 he was for provinces on a linguistic basis. As for redistribution on a cultural basis, he did not really know what it meant and he was unable to understand how provinces could be reconstituted on communal lines unless there was a suggestion that there should be inter-migration of the various communities to concentrate in particular areas. It seemed to him to be fantastic and impossible. He said:

We are not inhabiting a country full of deserts and wastelands. We are a densely populated country and I do not see the slightest chance for such redistribution. In that respect the Lahore Resolution is quite sound—where there is an obvious Muslim majority they should be allowed to constitute a separate State by themselves and that has been fully conceded in the Rajaji Formula or my formula. There is not much distinction between them. That right is conceded without the slightest reservation. But if it means utterly independent sovereignty so that there is to be nothing in common between the two, I hold it is an impossible proposition. That means war to the knife. It is not a proposition that resolves itself into a voluntary or friendly solution.

Therefore, the Rajaji Formula and my formula have presented certain things to be in common between sovereign States. Therefore, there is no question of one party overbearing the other or the Centre having an overbearing Hindu majority. I think our formula should be critically and sympathetically examined and it would be found that the formula concedes everything that could reasonably be conceded if we consider ourselves to be one family. Children of the same family, dissatisfied with one another by reason of change of religion, if they should separate, then the separation should be within ourselves and not separation in the face of the whole world. When two brothers separate, they do not become enemies of one another in the eyes of the world. The world will still recognize them as brothers.

A journalist said that some of the Nationalist Muslims felt that the Congress through Mahatma Gandhi meeting Mr. Jinnah had put them in a false position and that they might have to change their attitude towards Indian nationalism.

Mahatma Gandhi replied that it was an extraordinary suggestion. Nationalist Muslims were nationalists simply because they could not be otherwise. He said:

I am a nationalist, not in order to please anybody, but because I cannot be otherwise. And If I approached the Quaid-e-Azam, I approached him in the common interests of myself and Nationalist

Muslims and other Nationalists. Nationalist Muslims, so far as I know, were delighted when I approached the Quaid-e-Azam and were looking forward to a proper solution in the confidence that I would not sell the interests represented by them.

Undoubtedly, a Nationalist Muslim represents the nation, but he represents the Muslims also, who are a part of the nation. He would be guilty of disloyalty, if he sacrifices the Muslim interests. But my nationalism has taught me that I would be guilty of disloyalty if I sacrifice the interests of a single Indian.

Asked if there was any difference between his present attitude towards the Muslim League demand and the stand he took in 1942, Mahatma Gandhi said:

There is very great difference. In 1942, Rajaji had not 'burst' on the scene as he did at the Aga Khan Palace with a concrete proposition. It reflects very great credit on his persistence. He never takes up a standpoint without the fullest consideration and having taken it up, he follows it to the bitterest end. He had abundant faith in my loyalty and he never gave me up as I have never given him up. When he found me in the Aga Khan Palace and presented the Formula, I did not take even five minutes and I said 'Yes' because I saw it in a concrete shape.

My mind is narrow. I have not read much literature. I have not seen much of the world. I have concentrated upon certain things in life and beyond that I have no other interest. Therefore, I could not realize the meaning of Rajaji's stand and I disliked it. But when he came with a concrete formula—I myself a concrete being of flesh and blood—and when he had put something in concrete shape, I felt I could hug it and touch it. Therefore, you see the vast difference between 1942 and today. However, thereby I have not departed from the Congress standpoint in general terms. Congress has accepted self-determination and the Rajaji Formula has also accepted the principle of self-determination and therefore the Formula had become common ground.

Proceeding, Mahatma Gandhi explained that he accepted the principle of sovereign States, consistent with friendliness. He said:

Friendliness suggests that before the whole world we must act as one nation, not united by extraneous circumstances, or united by force of British arms, but united by a greater force, that is, our own determined will.

Gandhi-Jinnah Talks, pp. 42-6, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 29-9-1944

569. INTERVIEW TO "NEWS CHRONICLE"[1]

BOMBAY,
September 29,[2] *1944*

Mr. Gandhi told me today why his talks with Mr. Jinnah failed to produce a solution of the Hindu-Muslim differences.

I could not accept the two nations basis. This was Mr. Jinnah's demand. He wants immediate recognition of the North-West Frontier Province, Sind, the whole of the Punjab, Bengal and Assam as sovereign and completely independent Pakistan.

He wants Mr. Gandhi to agree to this amputation from the rest of India without consulting the wishes of the inhabitants by plebiscite. He has rejected the Rajagopalachari Formula. I asked Mr. Gandhi what he was prepared to recognize as Pakistan and on what basis there could be any hope of agreement in future. He was frank and precise. He replied:

I want to make it clear that I believe Mr. Jinnah is sincere, but I think he is suffering from hallucination when he imagines that an unnatural division of India could bring either happiness or prosperity to the people concerned. It was my suggestion that provided there was the safeguard of a plebiscite there could he sovereignty for the predominantly Muslim areas, but it should be accompanied by bonds of alliance between Hindustan and Pakistan. There should be common policy and working arrangement on foreign affairs, defence, communications and similar matters. This is manifestly vital to the welfare of both parts of India.

This arrangement, Mr. Gandhi said, could not interfere with the internal life of Muslims who would not be subject in any way to Hindu domination. Such a division would not create an artificial split between people who whatever their religious faiths are descended from a common stock and are all Indians.

Unfortunately, Mr. Jinnah would have none of it and asked me to agree to the principle of two nations entirely separate.

I asked Mr. Gandhi if he had adopted the attitude because he thought he could not 'sell' such a division to the country or because he thought it wrong in principle. He replied.

[1] Of London, represented by Stuart Gelder

[2] *The Hindu*, 2-10-1944, however reports this interview under the dateline, September 30.

Because it is fundamentally wrong in principle. If I had thought Mr. Jinnah's view was right, even though the whole world were against me, I would have accepted it personally and given him my unquestioned allegiance.

If Mr. Jinnah agreed to your view of division, but insisted there should be no plebiscite or a plebiscite in which only Muslims would vote, would you settle on this basis?

Never. How could I agree in a personal or any other capacity to decide the future of millions of people without their having anything to say about their destiny?

What was your impression of Mr. Jinnah's attitude on the question of an interim national government which you outlined[1] to me in July?

Mr. Jinnah has said that he is deeply interested in independence, but it did not seem to me that he set as great store by it as immediate recognition of the Pakistan he wants. Whereas, you see, my view has been all along that we cannot be free among ourselves until we are free from imperial domination. We have parted as friends. These days have not been wasted. I am convinced that Mr. Jinnah is a good man. I hope we shall meet again. I am a man of prayer and I shall pray for understanding. In the mean time, it is the duty of the public to digest the situation and bring the pressure of their opinion upon us.

Gandhi-Jinnah Talks, pp. 47-8

570. SPEECH AT: PRAYER MEETING[2]

BOMBAY,
Friday, September 29, 1944

Addressing them at the end of prayers, Gandhiji said that he had been seeing large number of men and women joining in prayers every evening and contributing to the Harijan Fund. He wished to tell them something about Harijans this evening since he would have no opportunity of addressing the people tomorrow in view of his decision to leave for Sevagram tomorrow afternoon. For years he had been working for the removal of untouchability. Wherever he went, he emphasized that untouchability was a curse which required to be removed, root and branch. It was a

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Stuart Gelder", 4/6-7-1944.

[2] Since it was the eve of Gandhiji's departure for Sevagram, the evening prayers in the Rungta House compound were attended by a crowd of three thousand—the biggest congregation of the week.

tragedy that this curse still persisted in India. Many Harijans had been coming and seeing him. He was ashamed to find that even in a place like Bombay which claimed to do so much for the downtrodden, Harijans found it difficult to find houses to live in. It was no use merely contributing to the Harijan Fund. The real duty of the people lay in working for the uplift of the Harijans. Gandhiji said:

> It is not for you and me to decide who is low or who is high for we are all children of God. The Hindu religion would not survive without the eradication of the curse of untouchability.

Even in the matter of communal unity, concluded Gandhiji, if we treated all as brothers and sisters, the present dark clouds would clear and give place to bright sunshine.

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-9-1944

571. LETTER TO MOHAN KUMARAMANGALAM

BOMBAY,
September 30, 1944

MY DEAR MOHAN,

You have done this very cleverly. But I had better not Say more just now.

BAPU

SHRI KUMARAMANGALAM

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

572. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

BOMBAY,
September 30, 1944

DEAR DR. JAYAKAR,

Many thanks for your kind letter[1]. I did what I thought was the best for the country. Of course, you should now express yourself freely on the question. That way only we shall arrive at the truth.

I am preparing for my departure and writing this against time. Hence this brief note.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi-Jayakar Papers: File No. 826. Courtesy: National Archives of India

573. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

September 30, 1944

BHAI MUNSHI,

See the enclosed[2] and, if you can throw light on it, do so. Homi Taleyarkhan had asked me about this and my reply[3] was published in the *Jame* [*Jamshed*][4].

I am writing this in a hurry. Take care of your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7682. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

[1] Dated September 29, which read: "So your talks have failed. I am not surprised. There could be no meeting-ground between you two. . . . Your efforts have now ended and I suppose I am at liberty now to express my sentiments on the nature and result of your effort if I choose to do so.... It is frankly my opinion that the Muslim League leader has gained more from you than he has lost to you. . . . Your formula is in Mr. Jinnah's hands and . . . he will use this formula as a bargaining counter with the British Government and also as the starting point in future negotiations with Indian leaders. If at such negotiations Mr. Jinnah revives the Formula . . . you will be powerless to resist it. Therein lies the danger in my opinion. To me . . . Jinnah would prefer a settlement with the British, rather than with his own countrymen. . . ."

[2] Not available

[3] *ibid*

[4] *ibid*

574. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

BOMBAY,
September 30, 1944

CHI. ANAND,

I am leaving for Wardha today. I have your letter. You may come over to Wardha when you want. Be at peace.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI ANAND HINGORANI
SHARDA VILLA
FYZABAD ROAD
LUCKNOW, U. P.

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

575. LETTER TO HUNDRAJ M. PARWANI

October 1, 1944

DEAR PARWANI,

I had your letter.[2] I am powerless. I have no authority. Moreover I do not understand Sind politics.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI HUNDRAJ MULCHAND PARWANI
BUNDER ROAD
KARACHI, SIND

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] A Gujarati daily published from Bombay

[2] The addressee, in his letter dated August 1, had suggested that under the extraordinary circumstances prevailing in Sind Province the Congress members of the Sind Legislative Assembly should have resigned.

576. LETTER TO DONALD G. GROOM

SEVAGRAM,
October 1, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sure you will be welcome on your terms whenever you return.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

FRIEND DONALD G. GROOM

FRIENDS SETTLEMENT

HOSHANGABAD (C. P.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

577. LETTER TO MOHAMMED ABDULLA

October 1, 1944

DEAR SHEIKH SAHEB[1],

I got your telegram at Bombay. I could not spare a minute. I hope your function was a success. Mridulabehn[2] has given me a full report. She has also given me your book on Kashmir. I shall read it when I get the time.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Leader of the National Conference, later Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir State

[2] Mridula Sarabhai

578. LETTER TO JAUHARILAL JHANJHORIA

SEVAGRAM,
October 1, 1944

BHAI JAUHARILAL

I had sent your letter to Baijnathji[1]. I see that you people have to resolve the dispute yourselves. I have already said what I wanted to.

Blessings from
BAPU

JAUHARILAL JHANJHORIA
OLD TOPKHANA, MAIN ROAD
INDORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Baijnath Mahodaya

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM DR. NAYYAR AND DR. GILDER TO COL. BHANDARI[1]

DETENTION CAMP,

January 31, 1944

DEAR COL. BHANDARI,

As you know, Smt. Kasturba Gandhi has been gradually losing ground. Last night she had very little sleep, and this morning she had a bad collapse. She became very short of breath (respiration 48), the pulse was very feeble in volume and tension and 100 to the minute, and her colour was ashy grey. She recovered after about twenty minutes' treatment. Now—at midday—she is restless, complains of pain in the left chest and back, is cyanotic and dyspnoeic. The pulse rate is 108, the B.P. is 90/50, respiration

Under these circumstances we would like to have the help in consultation of Dr. Jivraj Mehta (Yeravda Central Prison) and Dr. B. C. Roy (Calcutta) who have been here in her former illness and in whom she has faith. We might state that the patient's condition is such that if the help of these doctors is to be of any use it should not be delayed.

We might also point out that, as she has to be watched all night and day, nursing has become difficult and the patient herself has been constantly asking for Kanu Gandhi and Dr. Dinshaw Mehta.

Yours sincerely,

S. NAYYAR

M. D. D. GILDER

PS.

Gandhiji's blood-pressure this morning was 206/110.

Gandhi ji's Corres pondence with the Govern ment, pp. 226-7

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Secreatry, Home Department, Government of Bombay", 31-1-1944; "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 4-3-1944 and 1-4-1944.

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA[1]

NO. III/43-M.S.,

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, H.D.,

NEW DELHI,

March 21, 1944

FROM

THE ADDITIONAL SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

HOME DEPARTMENT

NEW DELHI

TO

M. K. GANDHI, ESQUIRE

SIR,

In reply to your letter of 4th March regarding Mr. Butler's reply to a question in the House of Commons on the 2nd March, 1944, I am directed to say that the Government of India regret that you should feel that they were unreasonable or obstructive about the calling in of special medical attendants. The Government of India were always ready to allow any extra medical aid or consultation which the Government doctors considered necessary, and they do not think that there was any delay in summoning outside aid when the Government doctors decided that it was needed. It was on January 28 that they were first informed that Mrs. Gandhi had asked for the services of Dr. Dinshaw Mehta, and it was not until January 31 that they were told that Dr. Gilder had asked for consultation with certain other doctors. On February 1, the Bombay Government were explicitly informed that any extra medical aid or consultation might be allowed which the Government doctors considered necessary or useful. If Dr. Dinshaw Mehta was not called in earlier, it was due to the view originally expressed by both Col. Bhandari and Dr. Gilder that his services could not be of any use, but he was summoned as soon as the Government doctors revised that opinion. Your letter of January 27, which did not reach the Government of India until February 1, made some reference to your wife's wish to see an Ayurvedic physician, but no name was mentioned and it was not until February 9 that a definite requestfor the services of Vaidyaraj Sharma was received. The request was then granted within 24

[1]*Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 4-3-1944; 1-4-1944 and "Letter to M. G. Bhandari", 2-4-1944.

hours and as soon as the Government of India were made aware of the difficulties resulting from his not being accommodated inside the Palace, the necessary permission was given for him to reside there. In the circumstances, the Government of India feel that they did everything possible to ensure that your wife received all the treatment that you wished during her illness.

2. As to the question of release, the Government of India still feel that the course they adopted was the best and kindest. It was reported to them on January 25 that your son, Devadas Gandhi, had asked his mother whether she would like to be released on parole and she had replied that she would not like to leave the Palace without her husband. Government have made no use of this report, since it was the record of a private conversation; but it confirmed them in the view expressed above. The misunderstanding about the statement in America quite wrongly attributed to Sir Girjashanker Bajpai has been cleared up by answers to questions in the Legislative Assembly which you have doubtless seen.

3. The arrangements for the funeral were understood here to be in accordance with your wishes. The Government made enquiries on the point and were informed that you had no special preference between the first two alternatives mentioned in your letter.

4. In these circumstances, the Government of India do not think that Mr. Butler's reply to the parliamentary question was incorrect in substance.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

R. TOTTENHAM

ADDITLONAL SECRETARY TO

THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Gandhi ji's Corres pondence with the Govern ment, pp. 235-7

APPENDIX III

LETTER FROM LORD WAVELL[1]

March 28, 1944

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I have your letter of March 9. You will receive a separate reply from the Home Secretary on your complaint about Mr. Butler's answer to a question in the House of Commons. I can only say that I deeply regret, if you are left with the impressionthat the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Wavell", 9-3-1944 and 9-4-1944.

Government of India have been unsympathetic in the matter of Mrs. Gandhi's illness. Miss Slade's case will be examined in the light of what you say about her.

I do not think it profitable that we should enter into lengthy argument, and do not propose to answer in detail the points you raise in your letter. But I think it best to give you a clear statement of my views on the future development of India and the reasons for your present detention.

The draft declaration of His Majesty's Government which Sir Stafford Cripps brought to India stated in unmistakable terms the intention of His Majesty's Government to give India self-government under a constitution of her own devising, arrived at by agreement between the principal elements. I need hardly say that I am in entire accord with that aim, and only seek the best means to implement it without delivering India to confusion and turmoil. Much wisdom and a spirit of goodwill and compromise will be required to arrive at the right solution, but with good leadership, I am sure, a solution can be found.

Meanwhile there is much work to be done, particularly in the economic field, in preparing India to take her proper place in the modern world. She must be ready to welcome change and progress in many hitherto-unfamiliar directions and to raise the standard of living of her population. Such work is primarily non-political; it may well hasten a political settlement, but cannot await it. It will give rise to many new and absorbing problems demanding the best abilities that India can bring to bear on them. India cannot be expected to tackle these problems in isolation from the rest of the world, or without the aid that Britain can give and the services of an experienced administration. But it is work in which leaders of all parties can co-operate with the certainty that they are helping the country towards the goal of freedom.

I regret that I must view the present policy of the Congress party as hindering and not forwarding Indian progress to self-government and development. During a war in which the success of the United Nations against the Axis powers is vital both to India and to the world, as you yourself have recognized, the Working Committee of Congress declined to co-operate, ordered Congress Ministries to resign, and decided to take no part in the administration of the country or in the war-effort which India was making to assist the United Nations. At the greatest crisis of all for India, at a time when Japanese invasion was possible, the Congress party decided to pass a resolution calling on the British to leave India, which could not fail to have the most serious effect on our ability to defined the frontiers of India against the Japanese. I am quite clear that India's problems cannot be solved by an immediate and complete withdrawal of the British.

I do not accuse you or the Congress party of any wish deliberately to aid the Japanese. But you are much too intelligent a man, Mr. Gandhi, not to have realized that the effect of your resolution must be to hamper the prosecution of the war; and it

is clear to me that you had lost confidence in our ability to defend India, and were prepared to take advantage of our supposed military straits to gain political advantage. I do not see how those responsible for the safety of India could have acted otherwise than they did and could have failed to arrest those who sponsored the resolution. As to general Congress responsibility for the disturbances which followed, I was, as you know, Commander-in-Chief at the time; my vital lines of communication to the Burma frontier were cut by Congress supporters, in the name of Congress, often using the Congress flag. I cannot, therefore, hold Congress guiltless of what occurred; and I cannot believe that you, with all your acumen and experience, could have been unaware of what was likely to follow from your policy. I do not believe that the Congress party's action in this matter represented the real feeling of India, nor that the Congress attitude of non-co-operation represents the opinion of anything like a majority of India.

To sum up, I believe that with general co-operation, we can in the immediate future do much to solve India's economic problems, and can make steady and substantial progress towards Indian self-government.

I believe that the greatest contribution that the Congress party can make towards India's welfare is to abandon the policy of non-co-operation and to join whole-heartedly with the other Indian parties and with the British in helping India forward in economic and political progress—not by any dramatic or spectacular stroke, but by hard, steady work towards the end ahead. I think that the greatest service you could do to India would be to advise unequivocally such co-operation.

In the mean time, I regard it as my task, in the interests of India, of which I am a sincere friend, to concentrate all my efforts on bringing this war to a victorious conclusion, and to prepare for India's advancement after the war. In this task, I feel, I can count on very considerable co-operation from the majority of Indians.

Yours sincerely,

WAVELL

Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi, pp. 122-3

APPENDIX IV

LETTER FROM DR. GILDER TO ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA[1]

DETENTION CAMP,

March 31, 1944

THE ADDITIONAL SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

HOME DEPARTMENT

NEW DELHI

SIR,

Your letter of the 21st March to Mahatma Gandhi contains the statement:

> It was on January 28 that they were first informed that Mrs. Gandhi had asked for the services of Dr. Dinshaw Mehta.... If Dr. Dinshaw was not called in earlier, it was due to the view originally expressed by both Col. Bhandari and Dr. Gilder that his services would not be of any use, but he was summoned as soon as the Government doctors revised that opinion.

Surely coupling of my name with that of Col. Bhandari is a mistake! The Government doctors in attendance were Col. Bhandari and Col. Shah. As far as I am concerned, some time in December last, at one of Col. Advani's evening visits (when he was officiating for Col. Bhandari) Smt. Kasturba Gandhi asked him to allow Dr. Dinshaw Mehta to come in and Col. Advani was good enough to ask my opinion on the advisabiIity of Dr. Dinshaw's coming. As I had not talked over the matter with my colleague, Dr. Sushila Nayyar, nor with the patient or her husband, I told Col. Advani, I would give him a reply later. At his visit the next morning, I told him my considered opinion that Dr. Dinshaw's presence would be a great help.

When the whole of January had passed and permission for Dr. Dinshaw had not come, Dr. Nayyar and myself sent a gentle reminder in our letter of 31st January. A copy is hereto appended.

I might state that though in that letter we had asked for a consultation with Dr. B. C. Roy, no notice seems to have been taken of it or of verbal reminders.

You will permit me to draw your attention to another inaccuracy, viz., about the employment of trained nurses. No trained nurse ever came inside the camp. Before the arrival of Smt. Jayaprakash Narayan and Shri Kanu Gandhi, when nursing was

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 1-4-1944 and "Letter to M. G. Bhandari", 2-4-1944.

becoming difficult, we were given the services of a woman who had acted as a *badli ayah*[1] at the mental hospital. She struck work inside of a week and asked the Superintendent for her discharge.

I have, etc.,

M. D. D. GILDER

Gandhi ji's Corres pondence with the Govern ment, pp. 240-1

APPENDIX V

DISCUSSION ON UNDERGROUND ACTIVITIES[2]

WOMAN WORKER: You told us, we should be our own leaders after your arrest. In the absence of the Working Committee, everyone of us was to think for himself or herself. We acted according to our light. Your recent utterances make us feel that we have been let down.

GANDHIJI: I have blamed no one. But, when a thing is wrong, I must say so.

W.W. Will it not cause a set-back?

G. No, we learn from our mistakes. By correcting them we advance.

W.W. Some say: 'If this is your narrow interpretation of non-violence, we shall have none of it. Call it violence or by whatever name you like, we cannot dislodge the Government without sabotage.'

G. It cannot succeed though for some time it may seem to or even actually succeed. But I have said that those who do not believe in my way can say so openly, and courageously try their own method and see if they will succeed better.

W.W We admit that public opinion has veered round to your view. The public has come to feel, whether through enlightenment or fear, that sabotage won't do. But you cannot expect everyone to become a perfect being, which your method implies.

G. I agree. That is why I launched forth with imperfect men. But whether the people develop the required non-violence or not, I cannot play fast and loose with my principles.

W.W. What is the quickest way to reach our goal?

G. The straightest way, though it may appear to be long.

W.W. Then you do not visualize independence in the near future?

[1] Substitute nurse

[2] *Vide* "Discussion with a Friend", after 6-5-1944; "Letter to R. R. Diwakar", 18-5-1944; "Letter to Ramanathan", 5-7-1944 and "Statement to the Press", 28-7-1944.

G. I visualize it in the nearest future, if my way is followed.

W.W. You want us to feel indignant and yet sit quiet.

G. No, I want you to feel very indignant with yourself. It is no use feeling angry with a snake, the snake will bite. Follow any way that commends itself to you if mine does not, but do not sit still.

W.W. We have not the courage, we can't get on if we oppose you.

G. You must develop that courage.. .[1] It is because of this courage to stand alone that I am supposed to represent India's urge for freedom....[2] Swaraj is not for the weak. If you say, you follow me, when you really do not, you are weak.

The women worker was nonplussed. Gandhiji noticed her dilemma. Reassuringly he proceeded:

"However, you can say, 'We do not follow your reasoning, but we yield to your experience.' You can tell your co-workers, 'We went there. We were not convinced. But we could not convince him either. Therefore, we will follow him as disciplined soldiers.' But if this course does not appeal to them, it is equally open to them to say, 'The Mahatma has told us to follow our own reason, if we have no faith in his way.' That will be equally honourable—perhaps more. I shall then defend them."

Appa Pant, the Rajkumar of Aundh, had been advising and guiding underground workers. He put before Gandhiji his dilemma: "With me truth and non-violence are not a policy but my creed. I know of underground workers who would not willingly hurt a fly. They are patriots to the core. I have to shelter them when they come to me and seek my advice. I want to wean them from secret methods. But, in doing so, I have myself to resort to secrecy. I feel puzzled and perplexed." Gandhiji replied:

"Your attitude is unexceptionable. You cannot jump out of a running train, as it were. No outside agency can give you effective guidance. It must come from within. If you dive within yourself and search prayerfully for an answer, a stage will come when suddenly your eyes will be opened and you will conceive such a disgust for untruth and secrecy that you will go to the underground workers and tell them that they will find you useless as a guide if they want to go their way. They will then see it in your face and understand, and very likely it will be the beginning of a new chapter in their lives."

Mahatm a Gandhi —The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book One, pp. 39-40

[1] Omissions as in the source
[2] *ibid*

APPENDIX VI

DISCUSSION WITH UNDERGROUND WORKERS[1]

As the onslaught of Governmental repression gathered volume and intensity, more and more workers went underground. . . . Some of these friends wanted to meet Gandhiji soon after his release. He sent them word that they could come at their risk. Several of them accordingly came and saw him at Juhu and later at Panchgani. They included R. R. Diwakar . . . Annada Chowdhury . . . Achyut Patwardhan and Aruna Asaf Ali . . .

Gandhiji's advice to them was emphatic. He held all secrecy to be sin. "To the extent to which secrecy has crept in, it has hurt our cause. We have not to think in terms of one or two, we have to think in terms of forty crores. Today they feel lifeless. We cannot revive them by resorting to secret methods. Only by adhering to Truth and Non-violence can we bring back lustre to their lustreless eyes."

Looking at their immediate surroundings, he said to them, they might feel that if some of them had not gone underground, the movement would have suffered. But this was only apparently so. When you come to bigger issues, "you will find that it is only by eschewing all secrecy and working openly that you can advance. . . . Today you may be two, tomorrow you will be twenty, if you come out in open, and so the struggle will go on gathering momentum from day to day."

Mahatm a Gandhi —The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book One, pp. 34-5

[1] *Vide* "Letter to R. R. Diwakar", 18-5-1944; 19-7-1944; "Letter to Aruna Asaf Ali", 30-6-1944; "Letter to Ramanathan", 5-7-1944 and "Statement to the Press", 28-7-1944. Only excerpts are reproduced here.

APPENDIX VII

LETTER FROM V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI[1]

SVAGATAM, MYLAPORE,
MADRAS,
June 2, 1944

MY DEAR BROTHER,

This letter I mean only for you and your trusted friends. Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Sastri, now on his way to Srinagar, will deliver it in person.

I must first thank you for your 'sympathy in abundance'. My philosophy is not so stoical but it needs the human touch. You know, as only a very few do, how in simple words to get to a man's heart. It takes a big heart to do so.

Don't fear a long political screed from me. I do not see Government arresting you as soon as you are well for another term in jail. You say in your letter to Jayakar, they will do so. If you have reasons to think so, I don't know them.

Listen to my story. It shall be brief. You can fill in the outline.

The greatest event to happen in the remaining days of your life will be the World Conference of Peace. You must attend it. If they won't let you go as the representative of India, you must go still. To the good and true men at the Peace table your name will be sufficient credential.

Don't waste your energy on details. Experts will handle them. Concentrate on the sovereign issues.

I. Disarmament of *all* nations. I would allow the International Authority to have some armed forces. But you won't. Go ahead. You will have valiant support all over the world. What if you fail? You will have given your evangel to a stricken and listening world.

II. Equality of economic as well as political opportunities for all peoples of this principle the implications are too many and too intricate for a single human brain. The comprehending proposition is all you can safeguard.

III. Elimination of the colour bar in the British Commonwealth and in the world at large. To fail under this head is to leave a wide door for future wars. Whether India is within or without the Commonwealth, this issue is supreme. At the Peace table one is a citizen of the world.

No doubt it would be a giant's strength to be armed with the Government of

[1] *Vide* "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 10-6-1944.

India's authority. Whether they made you the delegation's leader or not, you would be looked up to as leader. A necessary condition is the end of Section 93 rule and the restoration of popular government. To this end I have been for nearly two years now pleading that:

(i) political prisoners and detenus should be released;

(ii) general elections should be held, and the Central and local legislatures be put back in power; and

(iii) a national government be formed at the Centre of which the personnel should be drawn from elected leaders. I wouldn't make a fetish of parliamentary legislation during the war or complete control of the country's defence.

Tall order, you say. A keen eye will also see in the sketch gaping defects and crudities. There are wise and strong men among us to look after all that.

The Hindu-Muslim rift is there to puzzle, dishearten and paralyse. I despair at the very thought. You see farther and more clearly than most others. I shall, for mypart, abide by your decision—always short of Pakistan, mind you.

I am too feeble for active propaganda.

The means suggested to these mighty ends may be tested only by the standards of Truth and Non-violence. Smaller standards are utterly, utterly out of place—prestige, consistency, or party prospects.

Don't miss the wood for the trees.

Always and at the very core,

Your loving brother,

V. S. SRINIVASAN

Letter s of the Right Honour able V. S. Sriniv asa Sastri , pp. 359-60

APPENDIX VIII

LETTER FROM MIRABEHN TO M. K. GANDHI[1]

SUNDER BUN, JUHU,
June 12, 1944

BELOVED BAPU,

I have your letter. I had not realized the position regarding the fund kept in my name, and that my expenses were being drawn. I had the impression that the whole sum was being kept intact and that I was receiving food, clothing, travelling expenses, etc., like some others who gave their whole time to the cause according to their individual capacity. But this was a misunderstanding. So, I will gladly put the matter straight at once. I cannot bear any bargaining in such matters. I, therefore, ask that Rs. 20,000 should be deducted from the total, which should cover the expenses incurred by the Ashram for me during these 20 years. The remainder can be transferred to my name.

I had understood that when I had this money, I should be free to do constructive national work without let or hindrance, so long as I made it clear that the scheme of work was entirely my own and without your personal approval. I did not realize that you would feel called upon publicly to express disapproval of my work.

You have given me my freedom with one hand and taken it away with the other. To give me my money and freedom, and at the same time to say that as soon as I begin to use them you will publicly disapprove, is to sabotage anything I may try to do. You at the same time sabotage any chance of my being able to prove to you that you are wrong.

You have brought up a whole lot of reports and prejudices against Sardarji. I have avoided discussing these matters with you because I could see that everything I said excited you. The result is that you have not understood my position. You have made up your mind that I am completely under his influence. It is you who have tried to urge me to that position, but as you know, I have protested all along. You said I should have to join the Communist Party. I said no. You said as a true Hindu wife I should have to follow him in everything. I said my opinion was the opposite, and that my whole instinct told me that I must resist him wherever necessary and live my own life according to the ideals in which I believe, by which means, he would some day know that I was right. If I had followed his advice, I should not have undertaken my scheme but I knew that I must resist him and I did. My faith in God is my guide.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943.

But now you propose to throttle, by the warning of public disapproval, any attempt on my part to put my ideals into practice. My ideals have not changed in the last few days. I am the same person that I was when we used to talk happily together.

Believing, as I did, that everything is finally settled I started the ball rolling. I have put out enquiries regarding co-workers, land, maps and other details. I have explained the scheme (as my personal idea) to many people. Must I now understand if I go on with my plans you will feel called upon to disapprove. The fact that there will be Rs. 20,000 less does not worry me at all. I can start in a smaller way and make up with donations. But the possibility that you might broadcast public or semi-public disapproval of my work, which statement I should feel obliged equally publicly to answer, means that for decency's sake I must avoid any such catastrophe, and therefore cancel all my projects of work. I would, in that case, take the balance of the money after the deduction of Rs. 20,000, invest it somewhere, and go to live in seclusion until time as you revised your ideas.

Yours ever devoted daughter,

MIRA

From the origin al : Pyarel al Papers . Nehru Memori al Museum and Librar y. Courte sy : Belade vi Nayyar and Dr. Sushil a Nayyar

APPENDIX IX

LETTER FROM P. C. JOSHI[1]

BOMBAY,

June 14, 1944

DEAR GANDHIJI,

Your small chit came as a pleasant surprise that you were so eager to know more about us. . . .

I am answering your points in a very brief manner. . . .

1. People in people's war means all peoples the world over without exception. It, of course, includes India's millions and also the Negroes wherever they be. . . . This war has split the world into two camps. On the one side . . . Fascists are fighting the war for the imperialist domination of the world. . . . On the other side are the freedom-loving peoples of the world. . . the camp of freedom and democracy. . . fighting Fascism is the only path of national liberation from imperialist domination for us today. . . . The more we unite our patriotic parties, the weaker and more isolated becomes the alien Government and the more irresistible our national and other demands, the greater our capacity to save and serve our people. The more our patriotic parties engage themselves in those tasks which any war-time government should successfully lead, but an alien Government cannot, the more speedily we get the united intervention of all the peoples of the world behind our national demand for national government in the common interest of fighting the common enemy.

2. If you desire to examine the accounts personally, they will present themselves with all the registers where and when you desire. If you decide to appoint a representative, he should besuch whom we also know to be an honest man and notalready prejudiced against us. You will not find our accounts as well kept as by a commercial firm but I am sure you will give us a pass. . . . You will find some anonymous donors, but I believe that you also accept anonymous donors. But to dispel any suspicion that "anonymous" may be code for Government cash, I am prepared to give you (not your representative) the names. . . .

If you have yet any doubts left and in any case, I give you some references. . . . Iftikharuddin and his Begum, Shaukat Ansari and Zohra, N. M. Joshi. You can ask Dr. and Mrs. Subbaroyan as to what they think is going to happen to their property when Mohan and Parvati (their children and our comrades) get it, and in fact what they know happens to the property of the whole-time workers of the party. . . .

[1] *Vide* "Letter to P. C. Joshi", 11-6-1944 and 30-7-1944. Only excerpts are reproduced here.

3. I know it is easy enough to make such a vile charge but very difficult to prove it. . . . Firstly, I believe, if you find that we are not paid by the Government, you will easily believe that we are not likely to hand over labour leaders to the police. Secondly, our party, except in Ahmedabad and Jamshedpur, is as much the unquestioned leader of the working class as the great Congress is of the Indian people as a whole. . . . We gave up our strike policy because we considered it anti-national in the conditions of today, aiding the Jap aggressors on the one hand and intensifying the economic crisis for our own people on the other. That we successfully prevented the Indian working class from resorting to strikes even in a period of their worsening material conditions is the measure not only of our influence over it but its capacity to *understand* national interests as its own.

4. There is no question of our "adopting the policy of infiltrating the Congress organization". We have been in the Congress ever since we were born as a party. . . . Whether our intent is hostile or not, it is for our fellow Congressmen to judge and for us to prove otherwise through our practice. . . . We are inside the Congress on our right, as patriotic sons and daughters of the people who join the common national organization, so that we may be able to fight our hardest and best in realization of the common goal of national emancipation and no slanders can ever provoke us to give up this stand and forgo the glorious privilege.

5. The Communist Party decides its own policy as it understands the interests of its own people and of the peoples of the world. As long as the Communist International was there, we were dubbed as 'Moscow Agents'. It is rather surprising to come across the same insinuation even after its dissolution. . . . The Communist Party is one great revolutionary brotherhood. It exists in every country of the world. All have the same ideology and are moved by the common aims of fighting for the liberation of their own and all peoples. I can send you the journals and documents of the Communist Parties of Britain, U.S.A., South Africa, Australia, which have nailed down Amery & Co. as slanderers and provocateurs after August 9 and which have unfalteringly demanded the release of the Congress leaders and settlement with India on the basis of a real national government. . . .

P. C. JOSHI

Corres pondence betwee n Mahatm a Gandhi and P. C. Joshi, pp. 3-16

APPENDIX X

PASSAGES FROM "THE QUINTESSENCE OF GANDHISM"[1]

Thou shalt fight for the protection of good men and the destruction of wrong-doers and for the establishment of righteousness.

The side you take up and the weapons you wield are indeed important but the obligation to fight is perfectly absolute and independent of every other consideration, and the emphasis is all upon this obligation. It may be that you take the wrong side in the conflict. But if you are on the wrong side today, you may turn to the right side tomorrow. But those who sit upon the fence have already qualified for admission into Dante's Inferno. . . .

II

Thou shalt fight for the right, for . . . 'Truth alone prevails, not untruth.' . . .

You may not take the wrong side or employ questionable means to attain even a perfectly legitimate end, and still hope to succeed. . . .

III

When you are ready to fight for the right, Gandhiji arms you with the all-conquering and never-failing weapon, namely . . . suffering *cum* forgiveness. . . .

. . . Mankind must have recourse to love and non-violence, if they will escape from the vicious circle of hatred and violence. Two wrongs can never make one right. Violence in response to violence only provokes more violence and so on *ad infinitum*.

For a true theist, the Gandhian is the only position he can take up consistently with his theism. If God is there ever present—present in a more real sense than you or I—as Judge and Defender of the right, the theist, imperfect as he is in knowledge as well as in strength, will think it no business of his to judge his adversary or to punish him for what he thinks to be the adversary's wrong-doing. . . .

Young India, 22-1-1925

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Valji G. Desai", 20-6-1944.

APPENDIX XI

OPINION GANDHIJI'S RESPONSIBILITY[1]

February[2] *6, 1944*

We are asked to examine the question whether the authority conferred upon Mahatma Gandhi by the resolution of the A.I.C.C. dated the 8th of August, 1942, to "start a mass struggle on non-violent lines" is still subsisting, apart from the legality or otherwise of the purpose for which the authority was given.

The authority conferred by the said resolution must be construed with reference to the circumstances under which and the purposes for which it was given. It appears from the resolution as a whole that the steps to be taken under such authority were conceived by the framers of the resolution to meet the situation which had then arisen.

In our opinion, the recitals and the purpose of the said resolution and the circumstances under which the same was passed limit the authority so as to confine it to the immediate circumstances and the purpose which the A. I. C. C. had then in view. The said authority was intended to be exercised for and in the then immediate situation. Before Gandhiji could exercise such authority, he was arrested on the 9th of August, 1942, and was prevented from acting on the resolution by reason of his ceasing to be a free agent. By his being so prevented, the exercise of the authority was rendered impossible and it came to an end.

The authority conferred upon him was neither permanent nor recurring and there can be no question of its revival by the recent release of Gandhiji in the present situation.

BHULABHAI J. DESAI

V. F. TARAPOREWALA

K. M. MUNSHI

Pilgri mage to Freedo m, pp. 433-4

[1] *Vide* "Speech to Congressmen, Poona", 29-6-1944; "Letter to K. M. Munshi", 8-7-1944 and "Letter to M. R. Jayakar", 14-7-1944.

[2] This seems to be an error; according to the source (p. 91), Gandhiji consulted the lawyers after his release which was on May 6.

APPENDIX XII

STUART GELDER'S CABLE TO "NEWS CHRONICLE"[1]

Mr. Gandhi is prepared to accept and to advise the Congress to participate in a war-time national government in full control of the civil administration, leaving the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief in full control of the British and Indian armies. It would be expected that the establishment of such a government would be accompanied now by a guarantee of Indian independence after the war.

Mr. Gandhi has also approved the proposals submitted to Mr. Jinnah by Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, which agree to a solution of the Hindu-Pakistan dispute by a plebiscite and demarcation of the districts where Muslims are in a majority, if the Muslim League will endorse the demand for independence and co-operate with the Congress in the formation of a provisional interim government for the transitional period.

Despite the fact that he is still far from well and wishes to be relieved as far as possible from being burdened by dealing with political problems in detail for the time being, I talked with Mr. Gandhi for more than three hours in Panchgani this week. If the Muslim League accepts Mr. Rajagopalachari's proposals and the Government will now discuss the situation with Mr. Gandhi, the deadlock can be solved and a new page opened in Indian history. Mr. Gandhi pointed out that he had no authority to speak in the name of the Congress without consulting the Working Committee, but there is no doubt whatever that his views and the Hindu-Muslim proposals as endorsed by him would be accepted by them without hesitation.

I asked Mr. Gandhi whether he would start civil disobedience, if the Working Committee were released from jail and the Government felt unable to give India what they wanted. He replied:

"I have no intention of offering civil disobedience today. I cannot take the country back to 1942. History can never be repeated. Even without the authority of the Congress, if I wanted to do it, I could start civil disobedience today on the strength of my supposed influence with the masses, but I would be doing so merely to embarrass the British Government. This cannot be my object."

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to S. Sadanand", 12-7-1944; "Statement to the Press", 12-7-1944; "Telegram to S. Sadanand", 13-7-1944; "Interview to the Press", 12-7-1944; 14-7-1944; "Letter to Stuart Gelder", 14-7-1944; "Letter to Lord Wavell", 15-7-1944; "Answers to Questions", 15-7-1944 and "Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", 16-7-1944.

But Mr. Gandhi pointed out, the Working Committee could not sit still while the people were suffering. It is his conviction that the food situation cannot beimproved and suffering ameliorated, unless power and responsibility for civil administration are transferred from British to Indian hands.

I told Mr. Gandhi that, with things as they are, I could not believe that the Government would transfer authority now or concede independence during the war. He replied that there was a difference between what he would ask today and what was asked in 1942. Today India would be satisfied with a national government in full control of the civil administration. This was not the position in 1942.

Such a government would be formed of people chosen by the elected members of the Central Assembly. This would involve a declaration now of Indian independence after the war.

Such a national government would give the military all railway, port and other communication facilities they required, although these would be under the national government's control. The ordinance rule would give way to a normal civil administration by the government. The Viceroy would remain and have complete control with the Commander-in-Chief of the British and Indian armies. In other affairs he would be like the King of England guided by responsible Ministers. Popular government would be automatically restored in all provinces, so that both the Provincial and Central governments would be responsible to the people of India.

The national government would be in the position of offering advice and criticism on military affairs, and the portfolio of Defence would be in the hands of the national government which would be genuinely interested in the defence of the country and would be in the position of being able to give valuable help in shaping policies. Mr. Gandhi realizes that the Allies cannot defeat Japan without carrying on operations on the Indian soil and, therefore, they would continue to do so, but the expenses of these operations should not be borne by India.

When I asked Mr. Gandhi, if he would advise the Congress to participate in such a government formed under such conditions and with such stipulations, he replied "Yes". In view of Mr. Gandhi's uncompromising pacifism, readers will ask what his position would be under such a government. After independence had been assured by the formation of a provisional government and the declaration of Indian independence after the war, he would probably cease to function as adviser to the Congress.

As a teacher and exponent of non-violence, he would have to stand aside, but he would certainly not offer any resistance to the government or to the Congress party participating in such a government. His co-operation would take the form of abstention from interfering with the even tenor of life in India. He would continue to work in the hope that his influence would always be felt to keep India peace-minded

and to affect world policy in the direction of real peace and brotherhood among all without distinction of race or colour.

I am not in a position at present to write an account of all the details of my conversation with Mr. Gandhi. Last week I visited Delhi to give the Viceroy a complete account of my talk with him in Poona. I am now laying before him a complete report of my recent conversation with Mr. Gandhi.

This week, after Lord Wavell had declined to see him in the immediate future, I asked Mr. Gandhi what he would say to the Viceroy if he met him. He replied:

"I would tell him that I sought the interview with a view to helping, and not to hindering, the Allied effort. But I can do nothing without seeing the members of the Working Committee, for I believe that my authority under the August resolution ended with my imprisonment. It was not revived by my release."

I pointed out that, before the Viceroy would permit a meeting with the Working Committee, he would want to know how Mr. Gandhi would influence the members. To this, Mr. Gandhi replied that history did not repeat itself. "The whole situation has to be reviewed anew," he said. "The point, therefore, for me to discuss with the Working Committee is to know how they react to the knowledge I have gained since my release. I have to take up the thread that was broken by the Government in 1942. I was first to negotiate and, on failure, to offer civil resistance, if I thought it necessary. I want to plead with the Viceroy. I can only do so when I know the Working Committee's mind.

"But I tell you that the common talk among us is that, whatever the Viceroy may wish personally, he has no authority in the political sphere. Mr. Churchill does not want a settlement. He wants to crush me, if he has been correctly reported—he has never denied the report. The beauty of it for me, the pity of it for him, is that no one can crush a satyagrahi, for he offers his body as a willing sacrifice, thus making the spirit free."

There was deep disappointment, but no bitterness, in Mr. Gandhi's voice when he expressed this fear.

Mr. Gandhi feels that, if the British Government has good intentions, there would be no difficulty about an agreement. But there is an uneasy feeling among Indians of both extreme and moderate views that whatever the Viceroy may wish personally, Mr. Churchill does not wish a settlement now. It may be ill-founded, but it is of vital importance that Indian opinion should be officially reassured on this point.

It was expressed to me in friendly conversation with Mr. Rajagopalachari which was not intended to be an interview. His view that the Congress should have accepted the Cripps offer and co-operated in the war is well-known, and he has been a sincere and outspoken critic of the policy of the Congress and of Mr. Gandhi, while

remaining a firm advocate of independence. It seemed to me, therefore, that his appealand warning was of such importance and significance that I asked his permission to quote it for publication in the *News Chronicle*, and he gave his consent.

He said: "It seems that the British Government is not now interested in a settlement. They have come to feel that power is the only real thing. Ideals have been put aside and so they are content to drift. They are not planning for the future. They do not know what shape things will take after the war, and so they are not thinking of Indo-British relationship. But, if the war ends on this note, relations between India and Britain will be permanently embittered. It would be a miserable ending for the war, so far as Asia is concerned."

It is quite possible for the British Government to make a friend of Gandhiji. Those who know him intimately would confirm this opinion of mine. It may not be necessary for the British war effort to go out of the way to befriend him; but for the future of Indo-British relationship, which is not unimportant, such befriending is necessary and the present is the psychological moment for it. A victorious Britain would lose nothing by such a gesture, but gain a great deal of permanent value. His mind today leans towards seeing a national government installed in India before the end of the war and advantage should be taken of this.

With Mr. Gandhi's consent, I have discussed my talks with him with some people influential in Indian affairs. They have included staunch supporters of the Congress, some strong critics of its policy and a member of the Viceroy's Council. Despite their difference in political outlook they all expressed the hope that a meeting between the Viceroy and Mr. Gandhi would be arranged. One of them said to me: "There is no doubt that he is not only ready but anxious to be friendly and they would do well to take his hand now. We are all suffering from a sense of frustration. If a national government is formed and the Muslims will come in under the proposals for a settlement of differences, it will make a tremendous difference to the Indian war effort."

I do not wish to place myself in the position of a political commentator but only a journalist who has discussed the situation fully and intimately with Mr. Gandhi and for what it is worth. I would record my impression that the Government now has a better opportunity than at any time since Sir Stafford Cripps landed in India to put an end to the deadlock and create an India which, instead of being half-hearted or sullenly indifferent, is enthusiastically on the side of Britain. It will not depend entirely on the British Government. The Congress is faced with a great responsibility to make a provisional government work.

At least it cannot now be argued that there are no new grounds for a resumption of relations.

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-7-1944

APPENDIX VIII

TALK WITH C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[1]

RAJAJI: I am afraid, your letter will be misunderstood; it is a naughty letter.

GANDHIJI: I don't think so. I meant it seriously.

R. You have touched him on the raw by rubbing in a past utterance of his, of which he is probably not very proud.

G. I have taken out the sting by appropriating his remark as an unintended compliment.

R. I hope you are right.

G. I am sorry, but I think you are wrong!

Mahatm a Gandhi —The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book One, pp. 31-2

APPENDIX XIV

LORD MUNSTER'S SPEECH[2]

July 25, 1944

Mr. Gandhi had advanced the following views: Firstly, Mr. Gandhi said, he would never use the weapon of civil disobedience during the war unless for a very grave reason, such as the thwarting of India's right to freedom. Secondly, he would be satisfied with a national government during the war with full control of the civil administration, composed of persons chosen by the elected members of the Legislative Assembly. Thirdly, the Viceroy would be, like the King of England, guided by responsible Ministers. Fourthly, popular government would be automatically restored in all provinces, that is, provinces at the moment under Section 93. Fifthly, while under national government, the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief would have complete control of military operations, there would be a portfolio of Defence in the hands of the national government, which would be genuinely interested in the defence of the country and may render great assistance in the shaping of policies. Sixthly, the Allied forces would be allowed to carry on operations on Indian soil, but the expense of such operations would not be borne by Indians. Seventhly, Mr. Gandhi would advise Congress participation in the national government, if formed.

The procedure followed is a little complicated and a little difficult to

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Winston Churchill", 17-7-1944.

[2] *Vide* "Interview to the Press", 26-7-1944 and "Letter to Lord Wavell", 26/27-7-1944. Only excerpts are reproduced here.

understand. A few days after Mr. Gandhi published these seven suggestions through the intermediary of the Press, he gave further explanations to Press correspondents, in which he emphasized that his statements constituted his personal effort to end the deadlock, but that if his suggestions are not acceptable to Mr. Jinnah or the powers that be, he would consider it a most unfortunate incident. In clarification—if indeed it be clarification—of his offer to Mr. Jinnah, he stated that his proposals were wholly different from the Cripps offer which, he insisted, contemplated almost perpetual vivisection of India. Frankly, it is difficult to understand if these statements by Mr. Gandhi have, in point of fact, definitely improved the chances of an inter-communal settlement.

The main point, so far as His Majesty's Government are concerned, is that he (Mr. Gandhi) is still clinging to precisely that claim which wrecked the Cripps Mission and put an end to negotiations in April 1942, for he is no more prepared today than he was then, to accept the formation of an interim government with the Viceroy maintaining his existing reserve powers. He demands a so-called 'interim' government in full control of the civil administration, with the Viceroy occupying the position of a constitutional monarch as we understand it in this country. Let it not be forgotten that, if an agreement is set up under the present existing constitution, there are still a number of very important questions, not the least of which is the protection of the minorities, to be resolved. All these matters must be settled before the final constitution can be evolved. In this, it will seem that Government have not departed one iota from the pledge they gave some time ago, and which I will repeat now, that the proposals which were taken to India by Sir Stafford Cripps still stand in their entirety.

Referring, in conclusion, to the question by Lord Strabolgi, who asked whether the Viceroy was prepared to allow Mr. Gandhi to see the members of the Working Committee, Lord Munster said: "I would refer Lord Strabolgi to the letter which the Viceroy sent to Mr. Gandhi on June 22 last. He said that another meeting between himself and Mr. Gandhi could only raise false hopes. He said that Mr. Gandhi had publicly stated that he adhered to the 'Quit India' resolution which he (Mr. Gandhi) regarded as innocuous. The Viceroy did see that as soon as Mr. Gandhi had any definite or constructive policy to put up, he would be very glad to consider it at that time."

The Indian Annual Regist er, 1944, Vol. II, pp. 293-4

APPENDIX XV

LETTER FROM LORD WAVELL[1]

NEW DELHI,

August 15, 1944

DRAR MR. GANDHI,

Thank you for your letter of 27th July. Your proposals are:

1. That you should undertake to advise the Working Committee:

(a) that, in view of changed conditions, mass civil disobedience envisaged by the resolution of August 1942 cannot be offered, and

(b) that full co-operation in the war effort should be given by Congress, provided that His Majesty's Government (a) declare immediate Indian independence, and (b) form a 'national government' responsible to the Central Assembly, 'subject to the proviso that, during the pendency of the war, the military operations should continue as at present but without involving any financial burden on India.'

2. His Majesty's Government remain most anxious that a settlement of the Indian problem should be reached. But proposals such as those put forward by you are quite unacceptable to His Majesty's Government as a basis for discussion, and you must realize this, if you have read Mr. Amery's statement in the House of Commons on July 28 last. They are indeed very similar to the proposals made by Maulana AbulKalam Azad to Sir Stafford Cripps in April 1942, and His Majesty's

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Wavell", 26/27-7-1944. According to *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. IV, pp. 1138 and 1191, this reply from the Viceroy was an outcome of hectic correspondence between Delhi and London, and led almost to a direct collision between Churchill and Wavell. The draft reply proposed by the Viceroy contained, among other conciliatory sentiments, the following sentence: "You and Mr. Jinnah have my good wishes for your approaching discussion." The War Cabinet pruned the original draft and, after considerable give and take, Wavell dispatched the final draft. At one stage, during this heated debate, Churchill telegraphed to the War Cabinet: "I hope the Cabinet will stand firm and not be disturbed by the attitude of the Viceroy. He thinks that because Gandhi wrote a letter to him, he is entitled to reply in terms which do not commend themselves to the War Cabinet. As a matter of fact, he has no right to negotiate with Gandhi at all, considering he was responsible for passing to us the medical opinion on which we were told that he would never be able to take part in politics again. The root of the matter is that, after what Wavell said about Gandhi's state of health, he has no right to enter upon correspondence with him which cannot fail to wear the aspect of a great parley between the Viceroy and newly released invalid." *Vide* also "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of Bombay", 3-5-1944.

Government's reasons for rejecting them are the same as they were then.

3. Without recapitulating all these reasons in detail, I should remind you that His Majesty's Government at that time made it clear:

(a) that their offer of unqualified freedom after the cessation of hostilities was made conditional upon the framing of a constitution agreed by the main elements of India's national life and the negotiation of the necessary treaty arrangements with His Majesty's Government;

(b) that it is impossible during the period of hostilities to bring about any change in the constitution, by which means alone a "national government", such as you suggest, could be made responsible to the Central Assembly.

The object of these conditions was to ensure the fulfilment of their duty to safeguard the interests of the racial and religious minorities and of the Depressed Classes, and their treaty obligations to the Indian States.

4. It was upon the above conditions that His Majesty's Government invited Indian leaders to take part in an interim government which would operate under the existing constitution. I must make it quite clear that until the war is over, responsibility for defence and military operations cannot be divided from the other responsibilities of Government, and that until hostilities cease and the new constitution is in operation, His Majesty's Government and the Governor-General must retain their responsibility over the entire field. So far as the question of India's share of the cost of the war is concerned, this is essentially a matter for settlement between His Majesty's Government on the one hand and the Government of India on the other, and existing financial arrangements can only be re-opened at the instance of one or the other.

5. It is clear, in these circumstances, that no purpose would be served by discussion on the basis which you suggest. If, however, the leaders of the Hindus, the Muslims and the important minorities were willing to co-operate in a transitional government established and working within the present constitution, I believe good progress might be made. For such a transitional government to succeed, there must, before it is formed, be agreement in principle between Hindus and Muslims and all important elements as to the method by which the new constitution should be framed. This agreement is a matter for Indians themselves. Until Indian leaders have come closer together than they are now, I doubt if I myself can do anything to help. Let me remind you too that minority problems are not easy. They are real and can be solved only by mutual compromise and tolerance.

6. The period, after the termination of hostilities, for which the transitional government would last, would depend on the speed with which the new constitution could be framed. I see no reason why preliminary work on that constitution should not begin as soon as the Indian leaders are prepared to co-operate to that end. If they

can arrive at a genuine agreement as to the method of framing the constitution, nounnecessary time need be spent after the war in reaching final conclusions and in agreeing on treaty arrangements with His Majesty's Government. There again, the primary responsibility rests on the Indian leaders.

Yours sincerely,

WAVELL

The Hindu, 19-8-1944

APPENDIX XVI

DRAFT LETTER TO THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, BOMBAY[1]

For many of us 9th of August, 1942, is a Red Letter Day. Of the resolution of the 8th August we are proud. It is a declaration of India's hope. Though roughly national, it is international in outlook. Thus it has sanction clause which too the Congress has nothing to be ashamed of. It replaces for its sanction armed force by normal force of self-suffering in the shape of mass civil disobedience. If some Congressmen and others went astray during the days following the 8th of August, 1942, they did so contrary to the resolution. Mahatma Gandhi, the authority appointed by the A. I. C. C. to enforce the sanction, never got the chance of enforcing it. He says, the authority lapsed with his imprisonment and was not revived by his release. He says further that, even if it has not lapsed, he thinks that under the altered circumstances it would be improper to revive the sanction clause. I confess that none of us has a knowledge of the technique of mass civil disobedience. Therefore there is no question of enforcing the sanction. Hence any act my fellow-workers may wish to do on the 9th of August next must not be confused with the sanction clause. This letter would be unnecessary but for the extraordinary powers given to you. Under the ordinance rule, no procession or public meeting can be held without your previous permission. This is an encroachment upon an ordinary civil right. Now on the 9th, as a symbol and token, I propose to organize five parties of five persons each with tricolour flags. They will march, in order to avoid crowds gathering, without notice towards Chowpatty Sands, reach the Lokamanya statue at 5.30 a.m. and stand for five minutes in silent prayer, then recite the resolution in Hindustani and sing the *jhandavandan*[2] song and disperse. I sincerely hope that you have no objection to this simple ceremony. I shall thank you to let me have your permission.

[1] *Vide* "Talk to Bombay Congress Leaders", 29/30-7-1944.

[2] Flag salutation

NOTE: Gandhi is expected to issue a detailed circular of instructions to all Congressmen by the 5th. On the 9th, 25 persons are starting in procession, in batches of five from quarters of Bombay, and converging at 5.30 a.m. (time dictated by Gandhi) at Chowpatty Sands and carry out the day's programme.

Police Commissioner's Office, Bombay, File No. 3001/H. Courtesy: Government of Maharashtra

APPENDIX XVII

A RESOLUTION[1]

The Working Committee have given their full and earnest consideration to the proposals made by the British War Cabinet in regard to India and the elucidation thereof by Sir Stafford Cripps. These proposals, which have been made at the very last hour because of the compulsion of events, have to be considered not only in relation to India's demand for independence, but more especially in the present grave war crisis, with a view to meeting effectively the perils and dangers that confront India and envelop the world.

The Congress has repeatedly stated, ever since the commencement of the War in September 1939, that the people of India would line themselves with the progressive forces of the world and assume full responsibility to face the new problems and shoulder the new burdens that had arisen, and it asked for the necessary conditions to enable them to do so to be created. An essential condition was the freedom of India, for only the realization of present freedom could light the flame which would illumine millions of hearts and move them to action. At the last meeting of the All-India Congress Committee, after the commencement of the War in the Pacific, it was stated that: "Only a free and independent India can be in a position to undertake the defence of the country on a national basis and be of help in the furtherance of the larger causes that are emerging from the storm of war."

The British War Cabinet's new proposals relate principally to the future upon the cessation of hostilities. The Committee, while recognizing that self-determination for the people of India is accepted in principle in that uncertain future, regret that this is fettered and circumscribed and certain provisions have been introduced which gravely imperil the development of a free and united nation and the establishment of a democratic State. Even the constitution-making body is so constituted that the people's right to self-determination is vitiated by the

[1] A copy of the resolution, passed by the Congress Working Committee, was handed over to Sir Stafford-Cripps on April 2, 1942. The Resolution however was released to the Press on April 11 after the negotiations failed. *Vide* "interview to Shyama Prasad Mookerjee", 5-8-1944.

introduction of non-representative elements. The people of India have as a whole clearly demanded full independence and the Congress has repeatedly declared that no other status except that of independence for the whole of India could be agreed to or could meet the essential requirements of the present situation. The Committee recognize that future independence may be implicit in the proposals but the accompanying provisions and restrictions are such that real freedom may well become an illusion. The complete ignoring of the ninety millions of the people of the Indian States and their treatment as commodities at the disposal of their rulers is a negation of both democracy and self-determination. While the representation of an Indian State in the constitution-making body is fixed on a population basis, the people of the States have no voice in choosing those representatives, nor are they to be consulted at any stage, while decisions vitally affecting them are being taken. Such States may in many way become barriers to the growth of Indian freedom, enclaves where foreign authority still prevails and where the possibility of maintaining foreign armed forces has been stated to be a likely contingency, and a perpetual menace to the freedom of the people of the State as well as of the rest of India.

The acceptance beforehand of the novel principle of non-accession for a province is also a severe blow to the conception of Indian unity and an apple of discord likely to generate growing trouble in the provinces, and which may well lead to further difficulties in the way of the Indian States merging themselves in the Indian Union. The Congress has been wedded to Indian freedom and unity and any break in that unity, especially in the modern world when people's minds inevitably think in terms of ever larger federations, would be injurious to all concerned and exceedingly painful to contemplate. Nevertheless the Committee cannot think in terms of compelling the people in any territorial unit to remain in an Indian Union against their declared and established will. While recognizing this principle, the Committee feel that every effort should be made to create conditions which would help the different units in developing a common and co-operative national life. The acceptance of the principle inevitably involves that no changes should be made which result in fresh problems being created and compulsion being exercised on other substantial groups within that area. Each territorial unit should have the fullest possible autonomy within the Union, consistently with a strong national State. The proposal now made on the part of the British War Cabinet encourages and will lead to attempts at separation at the very inception of a Union and thus create friction just when the utmost co-operation and goodwill are most needed. This proposal has been presumably made to meet a communal demand, but it will have other consequences also and lead politically reactionary and obscurantist groups among different communities to create trouble and divert public attention from the vital issues before the country.

Any proposal concerning the future of India must demand attention and scrutiny, but in today's grave crisis, it is the present that counts, and even proposals for the future are important in so far as they affect the present. The Committee have necessarily attached the greatest importance to this aspect of the question, and on this ultimately depends what advice they should give to those who look to them for guidance. For the present the British War Cabinet's proposals are vague and altogether incomplete and it would appear that no vital changes in the present structure are contemplated. It has been made clear that the Defence of India will in any event remain under British control. At any time defence is a vital subject; during war time it is all-important and covers almost every sphere of life and administration. To take away defence from the sphere of responsibility at this stage is to reduce that responsibility to a farce and a nullity, and to make it perfectly clear that India is not going to be free in any way and her Government is not going to function as a free and independent government during the pendency of the War. The Committee would repeat that an essential and fundamental prerequisite for the assumption of responsibility by the Indian people in the present is their realization as a fact that they are free and are in charge of maintaining and defending their freedom. What is most wanted is the enthusiastic response of the people which cannot be evoked without the fullest trust in them and the devolution of responsibility on them in the matter of defence. It is only thus that even at this grave eleventh hour it may be possible to galvanize the people of India to rise to the height of the occasion. It is manifest that the present Government of India, as well as its provincial agencies, are lacking in competence, and are incapable of shouldering the burden of India's defence. It is only the people of India, through their popular representatives, who may shoulder this burden worthily. But that can only be done by present freedom, and full responsibility being cast upon them.

The Committee, therefore, are unable to accept the proposals put forward on behalf of the British War Cabinet.

The Indian Annual Regist er: 1942, Vol. I, pp. 224-5

APPENDIX XVIII

LETTER FROM K. M. MUNSHI[1]

BOMBAY,

August 9, 1944

RESPECTED BAPU,

I had been to Lahore in connection with a case and returned today.

1. Khizr's man had contacted me. He himself was out of town. He wishes that no commitments be made with Jinnah regarding the Punjab. He is not concerned with whatever else you may do. He will oppose the partition. He is not a man of daring. Glaney[2], Sir Zafrulla[3], Sultan Ahmed[4], are on his side. He will send a messenger to you in a few days.

2. Chhoturam[5] and his party are greatly upset. They are preparing against the partition of the Punjab and are against Pakistan.

3. The Hindu leaders too are very much enraged. Your message was conveyed to Sir Tek Chand Bakshi[6] by telephone at Dalhousie. He is keeping indifferent health, otherwise he would have come to see you. It is naturally difficult to comprehend from your statements how the Rajaji Formula and Akhand Hindustan can be reconciled.

4. Dr. Gopichand[7] met me here. They will not violate discipline; but their minds are greatly perturbed. They are not satisfied with the written consolation you gave them at Juhu.

5. The Sikhs who were the protagonists of Azad Punjab have now become supporters of Akhand Hindustan, at least for the present. Master Tara Singh sent a message that he would meet me; but did not turn up. He is anxious to meet you. He is possibly nursing a grievance that he was not accorded a proper reception during one of his visits to Wardha.

6. I had talks with Sant Singh and other Nationalist Sikhs also. They do not mind if some final settlement is arrived at.

7. Jinnah had held several secret negotiations and part of their trend has come

[1] *Vide* "Letter to K. M. Munshi", 12-8-1944.

[2] Sir Bertrand Glaney, Governor of the Punjab

[3] Sir Muhammad Zafrulla Khan

[4] Sir Sultan Ahmed, Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council

[5] Sir Chhoturam, Minister in the Punjab Cabinet

[6] Ex-Chief Justice of the Punjab

[7] Dr. Gopichand Bhargava, leader of the Congress Party in the Punjab Assembly

to be known: (1) He would start by demanding 50% in the National Government; but would accept 42% in the end. (2) He had discussed five plans for plebiscite, though it is not known what those plans were.

8. As far as possible, I am keeping quiet about the Rajaji Formula. But (my) mind remains perturbed. Friends press me and in most cases misunderstandings arise. My Congress friends hint that I am thus staging a come-back to the Congress. Others say that I am betraying the cause of Akhand Hindustan on your account. Should I say something explicitly or should I maintain silence?

According to my humble opinion, (1) Akhand Hindustan is a fundamental principle for me. I am unable to change anything in it. (2) Whatever the Constitution, only the areas having Muslim majority in India should constitute separate units. We cannot reconcile ourselves till the Punjab and Bengal are not partitioned. (3) It does not seem probable that the policy of Hindu-Muslim unity which has been a failure for the (past) 25 years will now succeed. (4) Today, none but the Muslims are honestly welcoming the Rajaji Formula. You are of course powerful. There would be many who, for several reasons, would accept whatever you say. But what is rankling in their hearts would no doubt continue to do so. (5) By supporting the Rajaji Formula you have been able to prove your readiness to arrive at a communal settlement. (6) Jinnah's ambition of 25 years to determine the future of India in partnership with you is fulfilled. He is now convinced that the British are out to hit at him in the Punjab, and so he is eager to arrive at some settlement. If the settlement arrived at is such that it could be misused or if there is a deadlock, the situation is likely to be worse than it was. I am so disturbed about this thing that I am relieving my burden by expressing myself to you. If, in your opinion, I should publish my viewpoint in the proper form, do kindly let me know. I shall prepare it and send it for your prior approval.

Yours respectfully,
KANU MUNSHI

Pilgri mage to Freedo m, Vol. I, pp. 437-8

APPENDIX XIX

LETTER FROM M. A. JINNAH[1]

September 10, 1944

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

With reference to our talk yesterday, September 9th, I understood from you that you had come to discuss the Hindu-Muslim settlement with me in your individual capacity, and not in any representative character or capacity on behalf of the Hindus or the Congress, nor had you any authority to do so. I naturally pointed out to you

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 11-9-1944.

that there must be someone on the other side with authority holding a representative status with whom I can negotiate and, if possible, come to a settlement of the Hindu-Muslim question, and that for the position you had adopted there was no precedent, and that this raises great difficulties in my way. As you know, I can only speak on behalf of Muslim India and the All-India Muslim League, as the President of the organization which I represent, and as such I am subject to and governed by its constitution, rules and regulations. I think you realize and will admit that the settlement of the Hindu-Muslim question is the foremost and the major hurdle, and unless the representatives of these two nations put their heads together, how is one to make any headway with it?

Nevertheless, I explained to you the Lahore Resolution of March 1940, and tried to persuade you to accept the basic and fundamental principles embodied in that resolution, but you not only refused to consider it but emphasized your opposition to the basic position indicated in the resolution, and remarked that there was "an ocean between you and me", and when I asked you what is then the alternative you suggest, you put forward a formula of Mr. Rajagopalachari, approved of by you. We discussed it, and as the various matters were vague and nebulous, and some required clarification, I wanted to have a clear idea of what it really meant, and what were its implications, and asked you for explanation and clarification regarding the proposals embodied in that Formula. After some discussion, you requested me to formulate in writing my points that I thought required or called for explanation and clarification, and to communicate with you and that you would reply in writing before our next meeting on Monday, September 11th, at 5.30 p.m. I am, therefore, submitting to you the following points which required clarification:

1. With regard to the preamble: in what capacity will you be a consenting party if any agreement is reached between you and me?

2. Clause 1: With regard to "the constitution for free India" referred to in this clause, I would like to know first, what constitution do you refer to, who will frame it, and when will it come into being?

Next, it is stated in the Formula that "the Muslim League endorses the Indian demand for independence." Does it mean the Congress demand for Independence as formulated in the August Resolution of 1942 by the All-India Congress Committee in Bombay or, if not, what is the significance of this term, for you know the Muslim League has made it clear not only by its resolutions but also by its creed, which is embodied in its constitution, that we stand for the freedom and independence of the whole of this subcontinent, and that applies to Pakistan and Hindustan.

Next, it is stated that the Muslim League "will co-operate with the Congress in the formulation of a Provisional Interim Government for the transitional period". I would like to know the basis or the lines on which such a Government is to be set up

or constituted. If you have a complete and definite scheme, please let me have it.

3. Clause 2: Who will appoint the Commission referred to in this clause and who will give effect to their findings? What is the meaning of "absolute majority" referred to in it? Will the contemplated plebiscite be taken district-wise, or, if not, on what basis? Who will determine and decide whether such a plebiscite should be based on adult franchise or other practicable franchise? Who will give effect to the decision or verdict of the above mentioned plebiscite? Would only the districts on the border which are taken out from the boundaries of the present provinces by delimitation be entitled to choose to join either State or also those outside the present boundaries would have the right to choose to join either State?

4. Clause 3: Who are meant by "all parties" in this clause?

5. Clause 4: I would like to know between whom and through what machinery and agency will the "mutual agreements" referred to in this clause be entered into? What is meant by "safeguarding defence and commerce, communi-cations and for other essential purposes"? Safeguarding against whom?

6. Clause 6: "These terms shall be binding only in case of transfer by Britain of full power and responsibility for the Government of India." I would like to know to whom is this power to be transferred, through what machinery and agency, and when?

These are some of the important points that occur to me for the moment, which require explanation and clarification, and hope that you will let me have full details with regard to the various points that I have raised, in order that I may be better able to understand and judge your proposals before I can deal with them satisfactorily.

Yours sincerely,

JINNAH

The Hindu, 29-9-1944

APPENDIX XX

LETTER FROM M. A. JINNAH[1]

September 10, 1944

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I received your letter of September 11 at 5 p.m. today. I note that you have approached me as an individual, and I have already expressed my views about it. Please do not take it that I acquiesce in the position that you have adopted, for which there is no precedent. Nevertheless, I proceeded to discuss matters with you naturally because I am anxious to convert you to my point of view, if possible. I urged you that the only solution of India's problem is to accept the division of India as Pakistan and Hindustan, as briefly laid down in the Lahore Resolution of March 1940, and proceed to settle the details forthwith. You say the Lahore Resolution is indefinite. You never asked me for any clarification or explanation of the terms of the Resolution, but you really indicated your emphatic opposition to the very basis and the fundamental principles embodied in it. I would, therefore, like to know in what way or respect the Lahore Resolution is indefinite. I cannot agree that Rajaji has taken from it its substance and given it shape. On the contrary, he has not only put it out of shape but mutilated it, as I explained in my speech which I delivered at the meeting of the Council of the All-India Muslim League at Lahore on the 30th of July, 1944.

2. You say the "first condition of the exercise of the right of self-determination is achieving independence by the joint action of all the parties and groups composing India. If such joint action is unfortunately impossible, then, too, I must fight with the assistance of such elements as can be brought together". This in my opinion is, as I have repeatedly said, putting the cart before the horse, and is generally opposed to the policy and declarations of the All-India Muslim League, and you are only holding on firmly to the August Resolution of 1942. In order to achieve the freedom and independence of the peoples of India, it is essential, in the first instance, that there should be a Hindu-Muslim settlement. Of course, I am thankful to you when you say that you are pledged to use all the influence that you have with the Congress to ratify your agreement with me, but that is not enough in my judgement, although it will be a very valuable help to me. I once more ask you, please, to let me know what is your conception of the basis for the formation of a Provisional Interim Government. No doubt it will be subject to agreement between the League and the Congress, but I think in fairness you should at least give me some rough idea of the lines of your conception, for you must have thought it out by now, and I would like to

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 11-9-1944.

know what are your proposals or scheme for the formation of a Provisional Interim Government, which can give me some clear picture to understand it.

3. You have omitted to answer my question as to who will give effect to the findings of the Commission, and also it is not clear to me what you mean by absolute majority, when you say it means "a clear majority over non-Muslim elements as in Sind, Baluchistan or the Frontier Province". You have not even replied to my question as to who will decide the form of the plebiscite and the franchise contemplated by the Formula.

4. The answer does not carry any clear idea when you say "all parties means parties interested".

5. You say "mutual agreement means agreement between contracting parties", who are the contracting parties once a Provisional Interim Government is established of your conception? Who will appoint the Central or Joint Board of Control, which will safeguard defence, etc., and on what principle, through what machinery and agency, and subject to whose control and orders will such a Central or Joint Board be?

6. You say "the power is to be transferred to the nation, that is, to the Provisional Government". That is all the greater reason why I would like to know full details of the Provisional Government as contemplated by you and of your conception.

Yours sincerely,

JINNAH

The Hindu. 29-9-1944

APPENDIX XXI

LETTER FROM M. A. JINNAH[1]

September 11, 1944

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I received your letter of September 14 at 4.45 p.m. today in reply to my letter of September 11 (and not of September 13 as you state, which seems to be a mistake) and I thank you for it.

1. Please let me have as soon as you can your promised letter indicating in what way or respect the Lahore Resolution is "indefinite".

2. With regard to the provision in the Gandhi-Rajaji Formula that "the Muslim League endorses the Indian demand for Independence", I asked you in my letter dated September 10, "does it mean the Congress demand for independence, as formulated in

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 14-9-1944and 15-9-1944.

the August 1942 Resolution by the All India Congress Committee in Bombay or, if not, what is the significance of this term?", to which you replied by your letter of September 11, "The Independence contemplated is of the whole of India as it stands." Hence I again ask, does it mean on the basis of a United India? I find that you have not clarified the point satisfactorily.

As regards the next part of the clause, the Formula proceeds to lay down that "the Muslim League will co-operate with the Congress in the formation of the Provisional Interim Government for the transitional period". I requested you by my letter of September 10 to let me know "the basis or the lines on which such a Government is to be set up or constituted. If you have a complete and definite scheme, please let me have it" to which you replied by your letter of September 11 under reply that "the basis for the formation of the Provisional Interim Government will have to be agreed to between the League and the Congress." But that is not meeting my request for clarification, or giving me at least the outlines of such a Government. And that is what I have been asking for. I hope that you do appreciate my point when I am requesting you to let me have rough outlines of the proposed Provisional Interim Government according to the Formula, so that I may have some idea. Of course, I can quite understand that such a Provisional Interim Government will represent all the parties and would be of a character that will inspire confidence at the present moment of all the parties. I can quite understand that when the moment arrives, certain things may follow but before we can deal with this Formula in a satisfactory manner, I repeat again that as it is your Formula, you should give me a rough idea of the Provisional Interim Government that you contemplate and of your conception. What I would like to know would be, what will be the powers of such a Provisional Interim Government, how it will be formed, to whom it will be responsible, and what will be its composition, etc. You, being the sponsor of this Gandhi-Rajaji Formula, should give me some rough idea and picture of it, so that I may understand what this part of the Formula means.

In your letter of September 14 in reply to my letter of September 11, you inform me that you would have told me if you had any scheme in mind. "I imagine that if we two can agree it would be for us to consult the other parties", but that is just the point. Unless I have some outlines or scheme, however rough, from you, what are we to discuss in order to reach any agreement?

As regards the other matters which you have further explained, I have noted the explanation, and I do not think I need press you further, although some of them are not quite satisfactory.

Yours sincerely,

JINNAH

The Hindu, 29-9-1944

APPENDIX XXII

LETTER FROM M. A. JINNAH[1]

September 17, 1944

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I have your letter of September 15, and I thank you for it. I note that you have for the moment shunted the Rajaji Formula and are applying your mind very seriously to the Lahore Resolution of the Muslim League. It is my duty to explain the Lahore Resolution to you today and persuade you to accept it, even though you are talking to me, as you have often made it clear, in your individual capacity. I have successfully converted non-Muslim Indians in no small number and also a large body of foreigners, and if I can convert you, exercising as you do tremendous influence over Hindu India, it will be no small assistance to me, although we are not proceeding on the footing that you are carrying on these talks in your representative character or capacity, and my difficulties remain until you are vested with a representative status and authority in order to negotiate and reach an agreement with you.

You have stated in your letter dated September 11 that the Lahore Resolution is "indefinite". I, therefore, naturally asked you to please let me know in what way or respect the Lahore Resolution is indefinite, and now I have received your letter of September 15 under reply.

The third paragraph of your letter is not seeking clarification, but a disquisition and expression of your views on the point, whether the Mussalmans are a nation. This matter can hardly be discussed by means of correspondence. There is a great deal of discussion and literature on this point which is available, and it is for you to judge finally, when you have studied this question thoroughly, whether the Mussalmans and Hindus are not two major nations in this sub-continent. For the moment, I would refer you to two publications, although there are many more—Dr. Ambedkar's book and "M. R. T.'s" *Nationalism in Conflict in India*. We maintain and hold that Muslims and Hindus are two major nations by any definition or test of a nation. We are a nation of hundred million, and what is more, we are a nation with our own distinctive culture and civilization, language and literature, art and architecture, names and nomenclature, sense of value and proportion, legal laws and moral codes, customs and calendar, history and traditions, aptitudes and ambitions; in short, we have our own distinctive outlook on life and of life. By all canons of international law we are a nation. Now I shall reply to your various points:

1. Yes, the word "Pakistan" is not mentioned in the Resolution and it does not

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 19-9-1944.

bear the original meaning. The word has now become synonymous with the Lahore Resolution.

2. This point does not arise, but still I reply that the question is a mere bogey.

3. This point is covered by my answer that the Mussalmans of India are a nation. As to the last part of your query, it is hardly relevant to the matter of clarification of the Resolution.

4. Surely, you know what the word "Muslims" means.

5. This point does not arise by way of clarification of the text of the Lahore Resolution.

6. No. They will form units of Pakistan.

7. As soon as the basis and the principles embodied in the Lahore Resolution are accepted, the question of demarcation will have to be taken up immediately.

8. In view of my reply to (7), your question (8) has been answered.

9. Does not relate to clarification.

10. My answer to (9) covers this point.

11. Does not arise out of the clarification of the Resolution. Surely, this is not asking for clarification of the Resolution. I have in numerous speeches of mine and the Muslim League in its resolutions have pointed out that this is the only solution of India's problem and the road to achieve freedom and independence of the peoples of India.

12. "Muslims under the Princes": The Lahore Resolution is only confined to British India. This question does not arise out of clarification of the Resolution.

13. The definition of "minorities": You yourself have often said minorities mean "accepted minorities".

14. The adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards for minorities referred to in the Resolution are a matter for negotiation and settlement with the minorities in the respective States, viz., Pakistan and Hindustan.

15. It does give basic principles and when they are accepted, then the details will have to be worked out by the contracting parties. (a & b). Does not arise by way of clarification; (c) The Muslim League is the only authoritative and representative organization of Muslim India; (d) No. See answer (C).

As regards your final paragraph, before receiving clarifications from me you have already passed your judgment and condemned the Lahore Resolution, when you say, "As I write the letter and imagine the working of the Resolution in practice I see nothing but ruin for the whole of India." I understand that you have made clear to me that you represent nobody but yourself, and I am trying to persuade you and to convert you that this is the road which will lead us all to the achievement of freedom and

independence, not only of the two major nations, Hindus and Muslims, but of the rest of the peoples of India, but when you proceed to say that you aspire to represent all the inhabitants of India, I regret I cannot accept that statement of yours. It is quite clear that you represent nobody else but the Hindus, and as long as you do not realize your true position and the realities, it is very difficult for me to argue with you, and it becomes still more difficult to persuade you, and hope to convert you to the realities and the actual conditions prevailing in India today. I am pleading before you in the hope of converting you, as I have done with many others successfully. As I have said before, you are a great man and you exercise enormous influence over the Hindus, particularly the masses, and by accepting the road that I am pointing out to you, you are not prejudicing or harming the interests of the Hindus or of the minorities. On the contrary, Hindus will be the greater gainers. I am convinced that true welfare not only of the Muslim but the rest of India lies in the division of India as proposed by the Lahore Resolution. It is for you to consider whether it is not your policy and programme, in which you have persisted, which has been the principal factor of 'ruin of the whole of India' and of misery and degradation of the people to which you refer and which I deplore no less than anyone else. And it is for that very reason I am pleading before you all these days, although you insist that you are having talks with me only in your individual capacity, in the hope that you may yet revise your policy and programme.

Yours sincerely,

JINNAH

The Hindu, 29-9-1944

APPENDIX XXIII

LETTER FROM M. A. JINNAH[1]

September 21, 1944

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I am in receipt of your letter of September 19, and I have already given you my answers to all your questions relating to clarification of the Lahore Resolution or any part of it, and I am glad that you admit when you say it may be that "all my questions do not arise from the view of mere clarification of the Lahore Resolution", but you particularly emphasize your points 15 (a) and 15 (b).

I regret to say it has no relation to the context of the Resolution or any part thereof. You have brought so many matters into our correspondence, which are entirely outside the matter requiring clarification, so I have perforce to deal with

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 19-9-1944 and 22-9-1944.

them. Let me first deal with your letter of September 11.

1. You say, "My life mission has been Hindu-Muslim unity, which I want for its own sake but which is not to be achieved without the foreign ruling power being ousted. Hence the first condition of the exercise of the right of self-determination is achieving independence by the joint action of all the parties and groups composing India. If such joint action is unfortunately impossible, then too I must fight with the assistance of such elements as can be brought together."

2. The gist of your letters up to date is that you are wedded to this policy and will pursue it. In your next letter of September 14, while you were good enough to furnish me with the clarification of the Gandhi-Rajaji Formula, you were pleased to observe: "I have, at any rate for the moment, put it out of my mind and I am now concentrating on the Lahore Resolution in the hope of finding a ground for mutual agreement." In your letter of September 15, you say "Independence does mean as envisaged in the A.I.C.C. Resolution of 1942." It is, therefore, clear that you are not prepared to revise your policy and that you adhere firmly to your policy and programme, which you have persisted in and which culminated in your demand, final policy, programme and the method and sanction for enforcing it by resorting to mass civil disobedience in terms of the August 8, 1942, Resolution, and you have made it more clear again by stating in your letter of September 19 as follows: "As to your verdict on my policy and programme, we must agree to differ. For, I am whollyunrepentant." You know that the August 1942 Resolution is inimical to the ideals and demands of Muslim India. Then again, in the course of our discussion when I asked you for clarification of the Gandhi-Rajaji Formula, you were pleased to say, by your letter of September 15 as follows: "For the moment I have shunted the Rajaji Formula and with your assistance am applying my mind very seriously to the famous Lahore Resolution of the Muslim League." We discussed it in its various aspects, as you told me you were open to be persuaded and converted to our point of view. I discussed the Resolution at great length with you, and explained everything you wanted to understand, even though you have emphasized more than once that you are having these talks with me in your personal capacity, and in your letter of September 15 you assured me in the following words with regard to the Lahore Resolution: "Believe me, I approach you as a seeker, though I represent nobody but myself," and that you were open to conviction and conversion. You had informed me by your letter of September 11 as follows: "It is true that I said an ocean separated you and me in outlook. But that had no reference to the Lahore Resolution of the League. The League Resolution is indefinite." I naturally, therefore, proceeded in reply to ask you by my letter of September 11 as follows: "You say the Lahore Resolution is indefinite. You never asked me for any clarification or explanation of the terms of the Resolution, but you really indicated your emphatic opposition to the very basis and the fundamental principles embodied in it. I would, therefore, like to know in what way or respect the Lahore Resolution is indefinite," and I sent you a reminder on September 13, to which you replied by your letter of September 15, not confining yourself really

to matters of clarification, but introducing other extraneous matters, with some of which I had already dealt, in reply to this letter of yours of September 15, by my letter of September 17 and furnished you with all the clarifications, informing you that you had introduced several matters which could hardly be discussed in a satisfactory manner by means of correspondence. I have already given you all the clarifications you require so far as the Lahore Resolution goes and its text is concerned. You again raise further arguments, reasons and grounds and continue to persist in a disquisition on the point, amongst others, whether Muslims of India are a nation, and then you proceed further to say: "Can we not agree to differ on the question of two nations and yet solve the problem on the basis of self-determination?" It seems to me that you are labouring under some misconception of the real meaning of the word "self-determination'. Apart from the inconsistencies and contradictions of the various positions that you have adopted in the course of our correspondence, as indicated above, can you not appreciate our point of view that we claim the right of self-determination as a nation and not as a territorial unit, and that we are entitled to exercise our inherent right as a Muslim nation, which is our birth-right? Whereas you are labouring under the wrong idea that "self-determination" means only that of "a territorial unit" which, by the way, is neither demarcated nor defined yet; and there is no Union or Federal Constitution of India in being, functioning as a sovereign Central Government. Ours is a case of division and carving out two independent sovereign States by way of settlement between two major nations, Hindus and Muslims, and not of severance or secession from any existing union, which is non-existent in India. The right of self-determination which we claim postulates that we are a nation, and as such it would be the self-determination of the Mussalmans, and they alone are entitled to exercise that right.

I hope you will now understand that your question 15(a) does not arise out of the Lahore Resolution or of any part thereof. As to 15(b), again it does not arise as a matter of clarification, for it will be a matter for the constitution-making body chosen by Pakistan to deal with and decide all matters as a sovereign body representing Pakistan *vis-a-vis* the constitution-making body of Hindustan or any other party concerned. There cannot be Defence and similar matters of "common concern" when it is accepted that Pakistan and Hindustan will be two separate independent sovereign States. I hope I have now given all satisfactory explanations, over and above the matter of clarification of the Lahore Resolution, in the hope of converting you as an individual "seeker".

Yours sincerely,

JINNAH

The Hindu, 29-9-1944

APPENDIX XXIV

LETTER FROM M. A. JINNAH[1]

September 23, 1944

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I am in receipt of your letter of September 22 and thank you for it. I am sorry that you think I have summarily rejected the idea of common interest between two arms, and now you put it somewhat differently from 15(a), when you say there will be no feeling of security by the people of India without a recognition of the natural and mutual obligations arising out of physical contiguity. My answer, already given, is that it will be for the constitution-making body of Pakistan and that of Hindustan, or any other party concerned, to deal with such matters on the footing of their being two independent States.

I am really surprised when you say there is no proof of what you characterize as a sweeping statement of mine, that the August 1942 Resolution is inimical to the ideals and demands of Muslim India. The Resolution in its essence is as follows:

(a) Immediate grant of Complete Independence [and] setting up immediately of a Federal Central Government on the basis of a united, democratic Government of India with federated units or Provinces, which means establishing a Hindu Raj.

(b) That this National Government so set up will evolve a scheme for a Constituent Assembly, which will be chosen by adult franchise, which will prepare a constitution for the Government of India, which means that the Constituent Assembly chosen will be composed of an overwhelming majority of the Hindus, nearly 75 per cent.

(c) To enforce this demand of the Congress the August Resolution decides on and sanctions a resort to mass civil disobedience at your command and when ordered by you as the sole Dictator of the Congress.

This demand is basically and fundamentally opposed to the ideals and demands of Muslim India of Pakistan, as embodied in the Lahore Resolution, and to enforce such a demand by means of resort to mass civil disobedience is inimical to the ideals and demands of Muslim India, and if you succeed in realizing this demand it would be a death-blow to Muslim India. I see from the correspondence and talks between you and me that you are still holding fast to this fateful resolution.

From the very first day of our talks, you made it clear to me, and you have repeatedly said in the course of our correspondence and talks that you have approached me in your individual capacity, and you assured me that you were a seeker of light and

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 22-9-1944 and 24-9-1944.

knowledge and that you seriously and earnestly wanted to understand the Lahore Resolution and were open to conviction and conversion. Therefore, in deference to your wishes I made every effort all these days and in the course of our prolonged talks and correspondence to convert you, but unfortunately it seems I have failed. And now you have made new suggestions and proposals by your letter under reply.

1. You say, "I have, therefore, suggested a way out. Let it be a partition as between two brothers, if a division there must be". I really do not know what this means, and I would like you to elaborate this proposal and give me some rough outlines of this new idea of yours, as to how and when, the division is to take place, and in what way it is different from the division envisaged by the Lahore Resolution.

2. You say, "Let us call in a third party or parties to guide or even arbitrate between us". May I point out that you have repeatedly made clear to me that you are having these talks as an individual seeker? How can any question of a third party or parties to guide or arbitrate between us arise?

Yours sincerely,

JINNAH

The Hindu, 29-9-1944

APPENDIX XXV

LETTER FROM M. A. JINNAH[1]

September 25, 1944

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I am in receipt of your letter of September 24, and I thank you for it. You have already rejected the basic and fundamental principles of the Lahore Resolution.

1. You do not accept that the Mussalmans of India are a nation.

2. You do not accept that the Mussalmans have an inherent right of self-determination.

3. You do not accept that they alone are entitled to exercise this right of theirs for self-determination.

4. You do not accept that Pakistan is composed of two zones, north-west and north-east, comprising six Provinces, namely, Sind, Baluchistan, North-West Frontier Provinces, Punjab, Bengal and Assam, subject to territorial adjustments that may be agreed upon, as indicated in the Lahore Resolution. The matter of demarcating and defining the territories can be taken up after the fundamentals above mentioned are accepted, and for that purpose, machinery may be set up by agreement.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 24-9-1944. Only extracts are reproduced here.

You do not accept the provisions embodied in the Lahore Resolution for safeguarding the minorities. . . .

. . . I asked you . . . to give me rough outlines of this new idea of yours as to how and when the division is to take place and in what way it is different from the division envisaged in the Lahore Resolution, and now you have been good enough to give me your amplification, in your letter of September 24 under reply. . . .

The terms clearly indicate that your basis is in vital conflict with and is opposed to the fundamental basis and principles of the Lahore Resolution. Now let me take your main terms:

(a) "I proceed on the assumption that India is not to be regarded as two or more nations, but as one family consisting of many members, of whom the Muslims living in the north-west zones, i e., Baluchistan, Sind, North-West Frontier Province and that part of the Punjab where they are in absolute majority over all the other elements and in parts of Bengal and Assam where they are in absolute majority, desire to live in separation from the rest of India." If this term were accepted and given effect to, the present boundaries of these Provinces would be maimed and mutilated beyond redemption and leave us only with the husk, and it is opposed to the Lahore Resolution.

(b) That even in these mutilated areas so defined, the right of self-determination will not be exercised by the Muslims but by the inhabitants of these areas so demarcated. This again is opposed to the fundamentals of the Lahore Resolution.

(c) That if the vote is in favour of separation, they shall be followed to "form a separate State as soon as possible after India is free from foreign domination", whereas we propose that we should come to a complete settlement of our own immediately and by our united front and efforts do everything in our power to secure the freedom and independence of the peoples of India on the basis of Pakistan and Hindustan.

(d) Next you say, "There shall be a treaty of separation which should also provide for the efficient and satisfactory administration of Foreign Affairs, Defence, Internal Communications, Customs, Commerce, and the like, which must necessarily continue to be matters of common interest between the contracting parties." If these vital matters are to be administered by some central authority, you do not indicate what sort of authority or machinery will be set up to administer these matters, and how and to whom again that authority will be responsible. According to the Lahore Resolution, as I have already explained to you, all these matters, which are the life-blood of any State, cannot be delegated to any central authority or government. The matter of security of the two States and the natural and mutual obligations that may arise out of physical contiguity will be for the constitution-making body of

Pakistan and that of Hindustan, or [any] other party concerned, to deal with on the footing of their being two independent States. As regards the safeguarding of the rights of minorities, I have already explained that this question of safeguarding the minorities is fully stated in the Lahore Resolution.

You will, therefore, see that the entire basis of your new proposal is fundamentally opposed to the Lahore Resolution, and as I have already pointed out to you both in the correspondence and in our discussions, it is very difficult for me to entertain counter-proposals and negotiate . . . unless they come from you in your representative capacity. That was the same difficulty with regard to the Gandhi-Rajaji Formula, and I made it clear to you, at the very outset, but the Formula was discussed as you asserted that it had met the Lahore Resolution in substance. But while you were furnishing me with the clarification of this Formula, you shunted it and we confined ourselves to the Lahore Resolution, and hence the question of your representative capacity did not arise regarding this Formula. But now you have, in your letter of September 24, made a new proposal of your own on your own basis, and the same difficulties present themselves to me as before, and it is difficult to deal with it any further unless it comes from you in your representative capacity.

I cannot agree with you when you finally wind up by saying: "In your letter of 23rd September, you refer to 'the basic and fundamental principles embodied in the Lahore Resolution' and ask me to accept them. Surely, this is unnecessary when as I feel I have accepted the concrete consequence that should follow from such acceptance." This is obviously far from correct. Why not then accept the fundamentals of the Lahore Resolution and proceed to settle the details?

Yours sincerely,

M. A. JINNAH

The Hindu, 29-9-1944

APPENDIX XXVI

LETTER FROM M. A. JINNAH[1]

September 26, 1944

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I am in receipt of your letter of September 25. It is entirely incorrect and has no foundation in fact, for you to say that our conversations have come about as a result of my correspondence with Rajaji in July last over his Formula. It is equally baseless to say "and your consultations with the League Working Committee thereon".

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 26-9-1944.

It was entirely in response to your letter of July 17, 1944, which I received while I was at Srinagar, with a fervent request on your part to meet you, and you ended that letter by saying, "Do not disappoint me." In my reply, again from Srinagar, dated July 24, 1944, I intimated to you that I would be glad to receive you at my house in Bombay on my return, which would probably be about the middle of August. This was long before the meeting of the Working Committee or that of the Council of the All-India Muslim League, and long before I reached Lahore, and when you arrived here and told me that you were approaching me in your individual capacity, I at once made it clear to you and informed you, both in our talks and by my letter, that the position you had taken up had no precedent for it, and further that it was not possible to negotiate and reach an agreement unless both the parties were fully represented. For, it is one-sided business, as it will not be binding upon any organization in any sense whatever, but you would as an individual only recommend it, if any agreement is reached, to the Congress and the country, whereas it would be binding upon me as the President of the Muslim League. I cannot accept this position. I hope you do see the unfairness and the great disadvantage to me, and it is so simple and elementary for anyone to understand.

As regards your proposal of yesterday, which you have simplified in your letter of September 24, I have already sent you my reply.

With regard to your suggestion to be allowed to address the meeting of the Council, and if they feel like rejecting your "offer" the matter should be put before the open session, let me inform you that only a member or delegate is entitled to participate in the deliberations of the meetings of the Council or in the open session respectively. Besides, it is a most extraordinary and unprecedented suggestion to make. However, I thank you for your advice.

As regards your proposal for arbitration and outside guidance, I have already replied to you, and it is not merely technical but a matter of substance. I fully reciprocate your desire for securing a Congress-League settlement.

However, I regret I have failed to convince you and convert you, as I was hopeful of doing.

Yours sincerely,

M. A. JINNAH

The Hindu, 29-9-1944

APPENDIX XXVII

LETTER FROM M. A. JINNAH[1]

September 26, 1944

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I have received your letter of September 26, and I note that you have written it with Rajaji's advice. Of course, it is for you to follow such advice as you may choose to do, but I am only concerned for the moment with you. I note that at the last moment you have resurrected the Gandhi Rajaji Formula, although it was shunted all this time and you proceed to say that this Formula gives me virtually what is embodied in the Lahore Resolution. You further say that on the same plan you have tried to formulate your latest proposals, as mentioned in your letter of September 24 and you maintain that either gives me the substance of the Lahore Resolution. In your previous letter you asserted that your Formula gives me the "essence" of the Lahore Resolution. I see a very close family resemblance between the two, and the substance of one or the other is practically the same, only it is put in different language, and I have already expressed my opinion, that in my judgment they neither meet the substance nor the essence of the Lahore Resolution. On the contrary, both are calculated to completely torpedo the Pakistan demand of Muslim India. I have never asked you to accept certain theses nor have I introduced any theories in the Lahore Resolution. Theses and theories are matters for scholars to indulge in.

I am very sorry I have to repeat, but I am compelled to do so, that I cannot agree with you that my references to your not being clothed with representative authority are really irrelevant. On the contrary, they have an important bearing, as I have already explained to you more than once. You again repeat that if you and I can agree upon a common course of action, you may use what influence you possess for its acceptance by the Congress and the country. I have already stated from the very beginning that that is not enough, for the reasons I have already given. Your representative capacity comes into play when you are making counter-proposals, and I cannot understand how you can say that it is irrelevant. No responsible organization can entertain any proposal from any individual, however great he may be, unless it is backed up with the authority of a recognized organization, and comes from its fully accredited representative. However, I need not labour this point any more, as I have already explained it in our previous correspondence.

If a break comes, it will be because you have not satisfied me in regard to the essence of the claim embodied in the Lahore Resolution. It is not a question of your

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 26-9-1944.

being unwilling, but in fact, it is so. If a break comes it will be most unfortunate. If one does not agree with you or differs from you, you are always right and the other party is always wrong, and the next thing is that many are waiting prepared, in your circle, to pillory me when the word goes, but I must face all threats and consequences, and I can only act according to my judgment and conscience.

Yours sincerely,

M. A. JINNAH

The Hindu, 29-9-1944

APPENDIX XXVIII

M. A. JINNAH'S STATEMENT[1]

September 27, 1944

Mr. Gandhi from the very commencement of our talks made it clear that he had approached me in his individual capacity and that he represented no one but himself. However, he assured me that he was really open to conviction and conversion to the Muslim League Lahore Resolution of March 1940.

Without prejudice to my objection that in order to reach any settlement, negotiations can only be carried on properly when the other side is also fully represented and vested with authority, in deference to Mr. Gandhi's wishes I agreed to the task of persuading and converting him to the fundamentals of the Lahore Resolution.

I have placed before him everything and every aspect of the Muslim point of view in the course of our prolonged talks and correspondence, and we discussed all the pros and cons generally, and I regret to say that I have failed in my task of converting Mr. Gandhi.

We have, therefore, decided to release to the Press the correspondence that has passed between us.

Nevertheless, we hope that the public will not feel embittered, and we trust that this is not the final end of our effort.

Gandhi -Jinnah Talks, p. 40

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 27-9-1944.

1. LETTER TO BAIJNATH MAHODAYA

SEVAGRAM,
October 2, 1944

BHAI BAIJNATH,

I read your long letter. Do whatever you think right in the matter. It is beyond my understanding.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI BAIJNATH MAHODAYA
179 RAMBAGH
INDORE (C. I.)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

2. INTERVIEW TO " THE HINDU"

October 2, 1944

When I approached him this morning and asked him whether he had any particular message to give to the country on this auspicious day, Gandhiji said:

I am not accustomed to giving messages on such occasions.

Gandhiji amidst laughter added:

I want life for 125 years. But Malaviyaji cut it down by 25 years when he wired to me in Poona at Parnakuti that I must live for a hundred years.

Bernard Shaw's message arrived here today . . . that he would not send birthday messages to Gandhiji. Gandhiji laughed aloud and said:

There you are. I did not know until a few years ago that I have a birthday.

The Hindu, 4-10-1944

3. SPEECH AT KASTURBA MEMORIAL TRUST MEETING[1]

SEVAGRAM,
October 2, 1944

Gandhiji reminded them that the day's gathering was not a public meeting. There was an order prohibiting general meetings without previous Government permission throughout the Wardha district. They all knew that he was a confirmed civil resister. But this was not the occasion for civil disobedience. Disobedience to be civil implies a certain procedure. This was a meeting of the trustees and collectors of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Fund for presentation of the collection.

Referring to the large number of people from Wardha and outside that had gathered there, he remarked that the reason for their presence on that occasion was that, for years, people all over India had got into the habit of celebrating his birthday according to both the Indian and the Christian calendar. The intervening period between the two dates was also included in the observance. This time, it had become known long before that he intended coming to Sevagram for receiving the purse on October 2.

The Secretary, in his report, had told them how the idea of the Fund had originated. They might like to know how he had come to be the President of the Trust. The collections were started when he was in jail. The trustees had asked for his consent to nominate him as their President. After his accidental release[2], owing to illness, they were able to consult him and he had become President for the purpose of guiding the trustees as to how the money collected should be spent in a manner befitting the memory of the late Smt. Kasturba. The responsibility primarily rested on the trustees, but it rested on him most of all.

The money had to be spent in villages, which were not part of the cities. The poorer and farther away from the cities, the better. The Fund had to be spent for education and welfare of women and children only. At first, the age limit for male children had been fixed at twelve years. He himself had thought of raising it to sixteen. But it was pointed out to him that in that case boys would get a disproportionate share, leaving the girls at a disadvantage and so their age limit was reduced to seven years. As he had already remarked, the money was to be spent for education of women and children. So long as he had any voice in the matter, the education would be of the basic education type. The scope of basic education included the education of the entire society, beginning with the children and going up to adults and old men and women. It had to be imparted through the practice of handicrafts, village sanitation and medical relief, preventive and curative, especially with regard to deficiency diseases.

[1] Gandhiji addressed the trustees and collectors of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Fund in Hindustani. On behalf of the trustees Sarojini Naidu presented him a purse of Rs. 80 lakhs, This report of the speech was issued to the Press by Pyarelal.

[2] On May 6, 1944

It was a tremendous work to carry out these reforms in the seven lakhs of India's villages. A sum of rupees seventy-five lakhs or even of rupees one crore was a trifle, compared to the vastness of the task. Seventy-five per cent of the money collected from a particular area would be spent in that area, not being towns or cities, and the remaining twenty-five per cent would go to the Central Fund. But the money collected from big cities would all go to the Central Fund and nothing out of it would be spent in the cities. In place of collection committees new committees would have to be formed to ensure proper spending of the money. These committees might include some members of the collecting committees, but new names should be added. If in any place ways and means of spending the money satisfactorily in accordance with the aims and objects of the Fund could not be found, the money would remain with the Central Fund. On the other hand, if in any place suitable workers in adequate number could be found to carry out bigger plans satisfactorily, they would be given more money.

It was his wish that, as far as possible, money should be spent through the agency of women workers. It was a matter of regret that women workers with suitable qualifications were not forthcoming in sufficient numbers. The fault lay with the men who had kept the women enslaved in domestic drudgery. They had to draw them out and push them to the fore. After all men were not born efficient as a special creation. It rested on them to produce more and efficient women workers. Men, before they became efficient workers, were prone to make mistakes. Therefore, they must not expect efficiency from women without giving them responsible work. The Fund was collected in commemoration of an old illiterate village-minded woman. It would give peace to her departed soul if women, and especially old women, took a leading part in the execution of the object of the Memorial. The collection had been made out of an overflow of enthusiasm and affection towards the memory of the departed soul. He wanted them to see that it was spent in a way commensurate with that sentiment. That was not a task merely for the twenty-six trustees; hundreds of workers would be needed for it. He had already said that to spend money properly was much more difficult than to collect it, unless they showed as much aptness in the former, as they had done in the latter. So long as he was with them in the flesh, he would, of course, argue with them and fight with them, but it was for them to see that their work was so carried on as to give to the departed soul no cause for dissatisfaction.[1]

The Hindu, 4-10-1944

[1] At one of the meetings of the Trust the question of Kasturba's outlook on life was raised during the discussion. Gandhiji was reported to have said: "Kasturba's outlook on life means the outlook represented by Kasturba Gandhi, not Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi."

4. LETTER TO J. SIVASHANMUGAM PILLAI

October 4, 1944

DEAR PILLAI,

Many thanks for your letter[1]. Am sorry for the delay in replying.

My own opinion is that you should do what you think will best serve the 'Depressed Classes'.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 9257. Also C.W. 5065. Courtesy: J. S. Pillai

5. LETTER TO SHUAIB QURESHI

SEVAGRAM,
October 4, 1944

MY DEAR SHWAIB,

I have done the best I could[2]. Now you have to take up the thread, unless you think I have made a mess of the whole thing. If I have, I know you will be frank enough to tell me so.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

6. A LETTER

SEVAGRAM
Octoer 4, 1944

DEAR NAWAB SAHEB,

This is to seek your intervention in this communal tangle. Show me please where I have erred if at all. I did the best I was capable of.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] In his letter dated July 27, 1944, the addressee, a Depressed Class M.L.A., had sought Gandhiji's permission for forming a ministry in Madras at the initiative of the Depressed Class legislators and with the support of the non-Depressed Class Congress legislators and some others.

[2] The reference is to the talks with M. A. Jinnah.

7. LETTER TO ZAKIR HUSAIN

SEVAGRAM,
October 4, 1944

MY DEAR ZAKIR,

The friends you sent will give you full report of the doings here.

Tell me of your reactions to the talks with the Quaid-e-Azam. What do you think of my extension of the meaning of *Nayee Talim?*

You ought to take an active interest in the Kasturba Trust. Bapa and others were complaining that you had not attended a single meeting.

Lastly, how are you?

Love.

BAPU

DR. ZAKIR HUSAIN

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

8. NOTE TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

October 4, 1944

I wish I had come in greater contact with Laxmidevi than I have been able to. I hope she has benefited by her stay here. You will judge. Krishna Gopal Dutt has written a biting letter against you. I have repudiated all the allegations as unworthy. But he sticks to them. If you have anything to say please do. What has made him so bitter ? What is the charge about some iron having been bought ? I hope you are progressing. Let me know you future plans.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

9. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEVAGRAM ,
October 4, 1944

CHI. SHARMA,

I wanted to write to you. In the mean time Gadodiaji[1] arrived. He is not at all satisfied with your work. He says that nothing gets done. I told him it couldn't be so. What is the truth? Come here for a few days if you can.

Blessings from
BAPU

H. L. SHARMA
KHURJA ROAD, U. P.[2]

From a facsimile of the Hindi: Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, between pp. 324 and 325

10. LETTER TO TEJWANTI DHIR

SEVAGRAM,
October 4, 1944

CHI. TEJWANTI,

I have your letter. It is all right that you went away. Come when you feel like it. Let your elder son go his own way. He will do as God prompts him. If you want you may work among the tribals or render service by taking up residence in the Bhangi Nivas. Do what you think best. Does this answer your letter?

Nothing has yet been decided about the Ashram.

TEJWANTI DHIR
P. O. NAKODAR, DISTT. JULLUNDER
(PUNJAB)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Lakshminarayan Gadodia, Treasurer and Trustee of the Surya Chikitsalaya, Dadhichi Seva Sangh, an institution run by the addressee

[2] The address is from Pyarelal Papers.

11. LETTER TO POTTY SRIRAMULU

SEVAGRAM,
October 5, 1944

DEAR SRIRAMULU,

Carry on propaganda by all means but [no][1] fast as yet.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 110

12. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

SEVAGRAM,
October 5, 1944

DEAR SISTER,

I am quite sure that I sent from Panchgani a reply to your letter.[2] I do not keep copies of such letters. However I do remember one thing. Do not rush to break free of your bonds. It is your duty to look after Father.

Hope you are in good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8006. Also C.W. 3103. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

13. CABLE TO HORACE ALEXANDER

WARDHAGANJ ,
October 6, 1944

HORACE ALEXANDER
144 OAK THULANE
BIRMINGHAM 29

YOU AGATHA[3] MURIEL.[4] WELCOME. LOVE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1439

[1] The source has 'as'.

[2] Gandhiji had written to the addressee from Poona on June 16; *vide* "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 19-11-1944

[3] Agatha Harrison

[4] Muriel Lester

14. LETTER TO DR. SHYAMA PRASAD MUKHERJEE

SEVAGRAM,
October 6, 1944

DEAR DR. MUKHERJEE,

As desired by Gandhiji I am herewith sending you a letter from Smt. Sachi Rani Sinha Roy of village Gobindapur, District Tippera.

It seems to be a genuine case of distress calling for aid. Gandhiji feels that you ought to be able to do something for it. Kindly drop a line in reply and oblige.

Yours sincerely,

PYARELAL

DR. SHYAMA PRASAD MUKHERJEE
77 ASUTOSH MUKHERJEE ROAD
CALCUTTA

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

15. LETTER TO B. DAS

SEVAGRAM,
October 6, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

Gandhiji desires me to thank you for your letter of the 19th September and the kind sentiments expressed in it.

It was good of you to have sent all the news about the members of Shri Gopabandhu Chaudhury's family.

He would like you to keep him posted about the doings in Orissa.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI B. DAS, M.L.A. (CENTRAL)
CHANDNI CHOWK
CUTTACK

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

16. LETTER TO YUVARAJA OF PITHAPURAM

SEVAGRAM,
October 6, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

Gandhiji has your letter of the 3rd inst. and the enclosed statement.

He does not feel like putting you to the inconvenience of coming here. Moroever, at present every moment of his is pre-mortgaged.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

THE YUVARAJA OF PITHAPURAM
VASANTASOBHA
TEYNAMPET P. O.
MADRAS

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

17. LETTER TO J. R. D. TATA

SEVAGRAM ,
October 7, 1944

DEAR JEHANGIRJI,

In order that I may be understood by you as fully as possible I write this in English, though I should love to write to you in Gujarati. For similar reason this will be typed.

Thank you for your cordial letter of greetings. I would like you to make the cordiality concrete by attending the next meeting of the Trustees[1] to be held at Wardha on Saturday the 4th November. Saturday has been specially chosen in order to enable the original Trustees to attend with minimum of inconvenience. That you have already accepted the additional names proposed by me for the Board of Trustees and for the small Executive ought not to bear the meaning that the original trustees are to be sleeping members.[2]

[1] Of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Fund
[2] *Vide* "A Circular", 21-9-1944.

I know I am guilty of having given currency to the thought that the administration of trust funds should in practice be left to the Trustees of my choice. I discovered my mistake before any mischief was done. The more I think about it, the more I feel the narrowness underlying such a conception. The whole board is a very happy combination and if most of the Trustees take an active interest in the administration of the Fund, we may expect even unthought of beneficial results. An active combination and co-operation of top city men and simple village-minded men and women is not an everyday experience. I trust therefore that you will make it convenient to attend the forthcoming meeting and even persuade the Trustees to do likewise, if indeed they need any persuading.

M. K. GANDHI

J. R. D. TATA
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

18. DISCUSSION WITH SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU[1]

October 7, 1944

At the outset Jajuji read out the resolution submitted by Gandhiji before the workers of the A. I. S. A. in the September meeting. There was a suggestion in that draft[2] that the A. I. V. I. A. and the Hindustani Talimi Sangh be also consulted while drawing the future plan of work of the A. I. S. A.

J. Should the Harijan Sevak Sangh, Goseva Sangh and Kasturba Trust be also included in this list?

G. Of course, inasmuch as they are as intimately connected with the programme of village reconstruction as the A. I. S. A., and have an economic background and outlook, not a political one. The idea behind the merging of the Sanghs is only that of co-orclinated service of the villages. But the Kasturba Trust may well be kept out.

J. Keeping the Trust out would mean paralysing an organ of the united body. Out of the six Sanghs we can easily form a united executive of one or more representatives from each Sangh.

[1] This and the subsequent discussions in Hindi with Shrikrishnadas Jaju, Secretary, All-India Spinners' Association, were reported by Swami Anand. This translation is reproduced with alterations to bring it into conformity with the Hindi version appearing in *Charkha Sanghka Navasamskaran.*

[2] *Vide* "Speech at A.I.S.A. Meeting-II", 2-9-1944.

G. We can get our work done through the institutions of the Kasturba Trust, for their work is not anything different from village service. Yet we should not include the Trust in it. When I placed that resolution before the Charkha Sangh the Kasturba Trust was not in my mind. I had only the A.I.V.I.A. and the Hindustani Talimi Sangh in view. My idea was that the heads of these Sanghs should meet together and co-ordinate their activities from the point of view of all-round village service, and influence one another morally without any of them disturbing any of the others in its day-to-day work.

The only work of the Central Office of the A. I. S. A. should be to watch and give moral guidance. It is quite possible that like Euclid's point we might not be able to reach the ideal. Decentralization consists in bothering little about the practical details of the various centres but regulating the over-all work on moral lines. I know that I may not be able to get the Goseva Sangh, the Harijan Sevak Sangh and others to carry out this policy of decentralization. But as service and total uplift of villages is the basis of all their activity I hope and trust the heads and workers of these Sanghs would of their own accord meet and think jointly how best to organize their work. They would also have to consider, for example, why the work of the A. I. S.A. had to be arrested or modified. One may argue that the work had not been arrested in any way. The Sangh's work had expanded to cover 15,000 villages; 4_ crores of rupees had been distributed among the poor. All this is no doubt true but we should not rest content with only this much. Rather it should be a matter of regret for us that we have as yet accomplished only a hundredth part of our task.

A worker of the A. I. S. A. would hereafter not confine himself to khadi work alone but regard himself as well a representative of the A.I.V.I.A., the Goseva Sangh, etc., in the larger sense of the term. And in so doing the worker should not feel that all this other work was beyond his sphere and that a new burden was being imposed upon him. If he did so, it would mean that our policy and outlook were not really based on non-violence. Our worker should be able to identify himself with all that requires to be done in the village, that is, with the entire life of the village and yet feel as light as ever.

J. Like the A. I. S. A., should institutions such as the Goseva Sangh, the A. I. V. I. A. and the Hindustani Talimi Sangh also depute such workers to the villages?

G. Exactly so. This is the real meaning of the merging of the Sanghs and of their having a united policy. It does not mean any regimentation of work but it simply connotes working with the united moral strength of all and with a wholesome integrated outlook.

J. Will the A.I.S.A. have to run commercial and welfare departments separately? I feel that to run all village activities with an all-round outlook and to give general guidance to the workers will be the special function of the joint body of all the Sanghs.

G. I do not think so. The joint body of the various Sanghs can once for all lay down administrative policies. The arrangements so made must be honoured by all the Sanghs, which would greatly facilitate their managerial work. My idea of the united body is that its work will expand like the mighty Krishna river, which starts as a tiny tickle of ten to twenty drops of water and ends as one vast Krishnasagar. So also should flow the ceaseless stream of all-sided work. Such is my conception of the joint body.

J. The real problem is to obtain suitable workers. You suggest various activities, but we cannot undertake them for want of workers. Then again you insist that we should reach the seven lakhs of villages.

G. Of course, I do. But when you fail I am there all along with you to share with you the blame.

J. So we are to take it that good workers are to be trained. For the present we cannot hope to get thoroughly capable first-grade workers. We shall have to get on with second-grade workers. From among them we shall obtain first-grade ones later.

G. Does the A.I.S.A. have about 2,000 workers?

J. About 3,000.

G. Well, then use them. Place upon them the responsibility for this new type of work. Also allow them greater freedom in their work. We shall have to decentralize even at some risk.

J. I do not quite understand what you mean by decentralization.

G. We shall have to expand the work so that it covers every village. This cannot be done by imposition from without. The workers will have to be allowed to carry on the work themselves, more or less free of regulation by a central authority. Were they to refuse to bear this much burden and wish to leave us we shall let them go ungrudgingly. But we are not going to turn anybody out.

I like your idea of giving khadi cloth in exchange for hanks in Maharashtra. This is not yet much in vogue. But it is being done through workers already on our staff. This is the way work will go on

and develop. But workers who create obstructions will have to go. I will have no hesitation in removing them. If they disobey the policy of the A. I. S. A. they will have to quit. And the Sangh is authorized to change its policy from time to time. The plea of the workers that they were not aware of such changes will not be accepted. Compulsory wearing of khadi, provident fund contributions, etc., were introduced in the course of the running of the Association and they were made applicable to all. Those who could not accept them had to go. Workers may leave us in this manner. But we shall not remove them ourselves. Nay, we shall require them to work along the new lines I have indicated. On the other hand, we shall require those who would like to stay under our plan to work extensively on the new lines, others would naturally quit on their own. Not for a moment did I think that we would have to disband the existing set of workers and start on a clean slate. Suppose we have five workers at a centre and we feel that more work of various kinds can be carried out there, we shall ask them to take up manufacture of hand-made paper and other village industries also, and if possible at the same time to produce more and more khadi and sell it in the neighbouring areas. This is decentralization.

Khadi: Why and How, pp. 158-61

19. LETTER TO SYED MAHMUD

October 8, 1944

DEAR MAHMUD,[1]

Bravo. I hope you are fairly fit. I shall expect you here as soon as well enough to come.

Love.

BAPU

DR. SYED MAHMUD
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers.Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee, a member of the Congress Working Committee, was released on October 6, 1944. *Vide* also pp. "Letter to Syed Mahmud", 14-10-1944 and "Statement to the Press", 22-10-1944.

20. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

October 8, 1944

BHAI GANSHYAMDAS,

I have talked to Sohanlalji[1] and to Devdas also. I think that it should be easy enough to collect one lakh rupees towards a memorial for Mahadev. So it doesn't seem proper to sell Sohanlalji's book[2] at higher than its market price for that purpose. The book should be sold at its market price and on its own merit. In this way the extent of public response to such a book may be ascertained.

The subject of Mahadev's memorial should be kept separate. We shall talk about it when you come here.

Sohanlalji has agreed. Devdas and Shriman have also accepted my point. I understand, from what Devdas told me, that you feel some sort of a moral obligation [as you had agreed] that the book would be published for the Mahadev Memorial Fund. In that case too it only means that one lakh rupees will be collected for that fund, isn't that so? I fail to see any advantage in collecting it through the books when its impropriety is quite obvious to me.

A written order from you will be required for Parnerkar's[3] appointment. These days you hold all the authority. The committee has been suspended. If it is to be revived it will be done when we meet. Lakshmanrao, who is the Secretary these days, needs your order; only then Parnerkar can take charge.

You must have read about my exploits in the newspapers. More when we meet.

Your health must have improved in Mussoorie.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8061. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Sohanlal Dwivedi, a Hindi poet who edited the *Gandhi Abhinandan Granth*, a felicitation volume in Hindi

[2] *ibid*

[3] Yashvant Mahadev Parnerkar, a dairy expert

21. DISCUSSION WITH SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

October 8, 1944

J. Please explain what should be the equipment and qualifications of workers.

G. For the present I shall not deal with other institutions but answer your question keeping in view the worker of the A. I. S. A. alone. First, he should know, besides his mother tongue, the language of the province in which he is working as also the national language. I do not feel that knowledge of English is essential. He should know about the economic, social and political condition of the country and also something about the condition of the world. This is rather difficult, it is true, but essential. Unless he knows what is happening in other countries, their political set-up, etc., how can he understand the relative conditions in India and where we are bound for? He must have especially detailed knowledge of the conditions prevailing in and about his place of work.

So much in regard to his general preparation which is only a preliminary part of his equipment. In regard to khadi, he should not only have thorough knowledge of the charkha, but he must also be well acquainted with the *takli*. Spinning alone will not do. He must know the entire science of khadi, i.e., evaluating the count, carding, identifying the variety of cotton, the kind of cotton required for a specific type of carding, spinning, etc. He must be in touch with the history of improvements in technique, viz., how carding reached its present stage, the various improvements effected in the charkha. He must also be able to repair and put the charkha in order. It was in Yeravda that I systematically learnt spinning, repairing of the charkha, etc., and I had no one to help me either. It means that the worker must know the elements of carpentry as well, for if he is not able to set right the damaged charkhas of the villagers, spinning will stop in the village and the cause will suffer.

I have dwelt upon the charkha so much because I regard it as the centre of village uplift. In addition, the worker will have to see what other village crafts can prosper in his village. The first in order among these crafts will be the bullock oil-press. Our worker would have to know its technique which has now been scientifically improved at Maganwadi under the supervision of Jhaverbhai Patel.

Another industry which may be introduced is hand-made paper. This has to be learnt not with the view of supplying paper to the whole country but in order to make the village self-sufficient and capable of earning a little income.

J. If the work of hand-made paper develops it will be like running a small factory.

G. I am only giving its outline.

Next to oil and hand-made paper we must revive the *handchakki* (grinding stone)—a vital thing in every village. Otherwise flour-mills which have been a source of anxiety to me for several years will be our fate. Similarly in regard to rice. Unless we inculcate among the villagers the habit of eating whole rice we shall not be able to solve the problem of food. We must get our people in the villages to take to hand-pounding of rice or *handchakkis* for husking paddy, for it is a well-established fact that the white polished rice put out by mills and white sugar are harmful to health. All the top experts are agreed upon it. We do get enough literature on these subjects from America. There brown, that is, yellow sugar has come in vogue. So much so that traders sell the white polished sugar after colouring it with harmful colours.

Next take agriculture. Our villagers depend on agriculture and cattle for ploughing. I am rather ignorant in this respect for I have no personal experience. But there is not a single village where we have no agriculture or cattle. There is the buffalo, but except in Konkan and a few other places it is not much used for agriculture. Even then it is not as if we have boycotted the buffalo. Our worker will have to keep a careful eye on the cattle wealth of his village. If we cannot use this wealth properly India is doomed to disaster and we also shall perish. For these animals will then, as in the West, become an economic burden to us and we shall have no option before us save killing them.

Our worker, therefore, would have to acquire some knowledge at any rate about these things, and discover a non-violent way of solving them. Therein lies the solution to our problem of increasing population. I do not know whether our non-violent way will succeed or fail. If it fails it will be our fault, not that of non-violence. It means that our sacrifice and efforts were insufficient. Nevertheless all of us will have to make some effort. Again, in the sphere of agriculture chaos reigns supreme. In regard to agriculture, we must do our utmost to prevent further fragmentation of land, and to encourage people to take to co-operative farming. The village worker will fully examine

the circumstances prevailing in his village and induce the villagers to take up co-operative farming.

Next to land is the question of water, not for agriculture but for drinking. The worker will go and examine all the wells in the village. It will be his duty to clean them both inside and around. He will see how many wells of the village are fit for drinking water, whether the surroundings are clean, and whether there are any public urinals and latrines near them. If they are near the wells, he will explain to the people the dangers involved in having them so near. He will seek their co-operation in having them removed to a distance. He will thus attend to the cleanliness of the entire village. Now we know about a worker's field of activity. He should have a thorough knowledge of village sanitation and efficient compost-making. He should convert this knowledge into practice. Of course there will be division of work but it should not be like that of the railway porter showing the green signal or like the woman-worker making soles in a leather factory. Such people are incapable of doing any other work save their own. This extreme division of work is degrading. The village worker should acquire all-round knowledge about building up the whole village. There will be some sewing work in the village, smithy, carpentry, leather work, agriculture, etc. The village worker should seek to bring about co-operation among the workers in these various occupations so as to make them serve as harmonious parts of one whole and thus organize the villages. All these activities appear to be too numerous but in fact they are not. This should not be too difficult for a worker resolved to employ his body and mind fully.

Now for my last point. If the worker going to the village has no faith in non-violence, our work must fail. If he concerns himself with economics alone and disregards ethics and morality, all our efforts are of no avail. Non-violence is the basis on which our work is to be built. It will not do to ignore it. In the initial stages people might achieve something even without it but ultimately the edifice of swaraj will not be raised without the foundation of ahimsa. Workers must demonstrate non-violence in everything they do. They must be living embodiments of non-violence. If they cannot do this, their work will be but a showy nothing. Our history is full of such instances. Merely holding classes on non-violence is of little use.

J. Would it not be better to have two workers instead of one in a village? They could then divide the work between them and one could supplement the other.

G. Many people have asked me this question. I am not going to lay down any definite rules in this regard. I would prefer a worker to go alone. He should tackle the situation single-handed and become fearless in the process. But if one is not enough you may send two. We shall consider the position if lack of finances comes in the way. But so far as I am concerned, I am prepared to go to the length of regarding one worker, if married, as two when both husband and wife serve in the village.

J. Experience often proves the contrary. The wife of a worker is more a handicap to him than a support.

G. That is why I am not going to frame any rules or regulations about it. Do you know that Rajaji insists on workers being married?

J. Some workers will be of higher calibre than others. How do you like the idea of putting under one good worker five or six ordinary workers working in adjoining villages?

G. I have had talks about it with several friends. It will not always be feasible. I asked Timappa Naik to train a large number of workers as otherwise his work was likely to suffer. He is a very capable and efficient worker of Karnataka. He maintains himself on about six rupees. He feels that only local workers could be trained at small expense. He has trained such and they are working with him.

J. How much should we spend on a worker?

G. These are days of war-made dearness. I am afraid it may last for a fairly long time. I am prepared to spend rupees fifty on a worker or even a hundred.

J. Besides food for the worker there is the burden of his family, of the education of his children, etc.

G. We shall take the middle way. We shall leave out those with many burdens. We shall confine ourselves to a family of four, husband, wife and two children, or at the most five. I think it would be better not to take a bigger unit.

J. Many workers argue that they have the responsibility of maintaining their parents, brothers and sisters or other relatives.

G. We cannot take them.

J. While fixing the allowance of a worker, which was to be considered as of greater importance, his capacity or his family responsibilities?

G. To Vallabhswami I would give only five, not hundred. But I would pay the maximum to one with a big family rather than let him go. That is to say, both should live and neither should be envious of the other. Nor should any entertain false hopes.

J. How much response should our workers expect from the villagers? Would it be proper to impose some conditions on villages at the time of selection of our place of work? The situation today is that workers who go to the villages are regarded as moneyed people and villagers think that they should extract from them as much benefit as possible. Consequently the whole work is reduced to nought when the worker leaves the village after working for two years.

G. I think we should not impose any conditions. For example, if we go and settle down for service among the aborigines, what terms can we lay down for them? If we settle down and work resolutely in places where we have already gained some experience, our work will grow and prosper.

In the end everything depends on the worker himself. If he wins the hearts of the villagers he will be able to get them to work with him.

J. How long may it take for a worker to become self-sufficient? Five years?

G. You yourself say five years. The worker will go to the village with one month's allowance in his pocket. He will ask for a piece of land from the villagers and build his hut on it. In case he obtains a vacant house he will occupy it. Taking out the takli from his pocket he will sit under a tree and spin. If the villagers have their spinning-wheels he will repair them and spin along with them. He will also gather the children of the village, play with them, tell them stories, teach them songs and do village cleaning. Apart from his salary I am not going to give him a pie by way of capital to start an industry or anything else. He will have to set up things by dint of his resourcefulness and love. This will put to trial his passion for service and his ability.

J. It is a very hard test.

G. Yes. We don't have to take up a sword, have we? The way of love and service shown by me is the only way. If we have to achieve swaraj by non-violent means I have no other way.

Khadi: Why and How, pp. 161-5

22. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

SEVAGRAM,
October 9, 1944

BHAI MUNSHI,

I was glad you sent your reply so soon. It has served the purpose. But can that prohibitory order be defended from the point

of view of the right of freedom of expression? Do you agree with the opinion I expressed to Homi[1]?

I read your statement made in Jaipur. I did not like it. Is it not opposed to the Congress policy? Do you think the policy enunciated at Jaipur is contrary to the policy that we had jointly adopted at Nagpur[2]? I would not think it wrong if it should be so. I want to know only for my information. Has a difference of opinion arisen between us in this matter too?[3]

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7683. courtesy: K. M. Munshi

23. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKVASA

SEVAGRAM,
October 9, 1944

BHAI MANGALDAS,

Amritlal must declare how he got possession of the papers? I have had a discussion with Bapa. Hope you are in excellent health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4688. Courtesy: Mangaldas Pakvasa

24. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SEVAGRAM,
October 9, 1944

XXX[4]

BAPA,

I read your letter to Pyarelal. The Trustees were present and they resolved to meet at Wardha on 4th November. I think you should have issued a notice to that effect. If you don't think it is too late now, you may still issue one. If you want, you may notify through the

[1] H. P. Mody

[2] At the Akhil Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad on April 24, 1936; *vide* "Speech at Akhil Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad", 24-4-1936.

[3] For the addressee's reply, *vide* "Letter from K. M. Munshi", 12-10-1944.

[4] Omission as in the source

newspapers, so that the Trustees are informed without delay. If it is necessary, you may send telegrams to individuals. Why will only one lawyer be present out of the three? I can understand Mangaldas's inability to attend due to his illness. What about Munshi? And about Dada[1]? I have written to Jehangirji,[2] and Mridulabehn will show the letter to you. I admit that all the botheration will be avoided if I go to Bombay. My unwillingness to go to Bombay is not due to my health, it is due to political considerations. Hence I feel no shame in putting all of you to trouble.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

25. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

October 9, 1944

CHI. DINSHAW,

It took me so many days to write to you.

You have to remember this much:

1. You should not rely upon me. I may go to jail or I may die; or, I might not be able to get away from here. If you do not have courage to undertake this experiment without me you had better not start on it.

2. If you have the courage and self-confidence you should find the required land.

3. After securing the land you should prepare a blueprint indicating all the proposed arrangements. The halls for treatment and experiment should be in the centre or in one corner. They should be surrounded by decent huts for the residence of patients and children entrusted to our care. The sanatorium should grow fruit, flowers, food grains and vegetables. It should have cattle sheds and roads good enough for vehicles. It should also have a gymnasium, a tank for bathing and other facilities. All this cannot be built in a day. But the entire project should be completed within five years. Patients should be admitted right from the beginning. They should be given such treatment as does not involve the use of electricity, for example, hot and cold water, steam, earth and sun-rays.

[1] G. V. Mavalankar
[2] *Vide* "Letter to J. R. D. Tata", 7-10-1944.

Think over all this. Recently a nature-cure practitioner from Andhra had been to me. He has thirty acres of land. And he treats about ninety patients. I would certainly wish to send you to see his sanatorium. You should study such institutions.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

26. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

[*October 9, 1944*][1]

CHI. MRIDU,

After reading Munshi's letter put it in an envelope and return it.

Read Jehangirji's letter to Bapa. Accept any date that is ultimately decided if you approve of the letter. Speak to Ambalalbhai[2] about this letter. In that case, I would not be required to write to anyone else.

If Mahmud[3] is definitely coming, inform me telegraphically and let me know in detail about his requirerments. We shall put him up only at Bajajwadi. We shall not trouble him to come to Sevagram. I shall go to Bajajwadi on that day. If you have understood my argument, discuss it with Bapa and Mangaldas[4], or if you would rather keep quiet, then do so. In my view the question is important. Today there is no one who will hear me in the matter.

Don't spoil your health by running about too much.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 11119. Courtesy : Sarabhai Foundation

[1] From the reference to K. M. Munshi's and J.R.D. Tata's letters, it appears that his letter was written on the same day as the one to Amritlal V. Thakkar, dated October 9,1944; *vide* "Letter to K. M. Munshi", 9-10-1944 and "Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar", 9-10-1944.

[2] Ambalal Sarabhai

[3] Syed Mahmud

[4] Mangaldas Pakvasa

27. NOTE TO MANU J. GANDHI

October 9, 1944

This is for Manudi[1] or Sushilabehn.

A six-week course in First-Aid.

1. General anatomy, including description of the internal sub-division in the stomach, the prominent bones, the arteries and the veins.

2. Descriptions of the ordinary wounds such as are sustained on the battlefield and the various types of bandages for them: on the skull, the abdomen, the fingers, the legs and so on.

3. Tourniquet, for arresting bleeding, as part of curriculum and also extra-curricular improvised techniques, such as with a pebble.

4. The method of treatment in the absence of medical apparatus, e.g., warm ashes in the absence of boiled water, paper and cotton ashes; newspaper, etc., that one carries for reading in the absence of dry cloth or flannel. . . .

5. 'Primitive' remedies in the absence of medical aid for drowning, snake-bite and scorpion sting.

6. Stretcher drill for carrying the wounded or sick persons and making an emergency stretcher with a gun or a stick and a jacket.

7. Marching by thousands in regular formations and marching drill according to the rules. Erecting tents on a battlefield within a few minutes, rules about the use of water, how and when to construct latrines, kitchens, etc.

It may be that something is being omitted. Most of it is covered by the book written by Kettle. Many things are also to be found in "St. John's Ambulance". We did have all these books. Had I been talking I could not have said more. So, you have not lost much.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Ba Bapuni Shili Chhayaman, pp. 218-9

[1] Daughter of Jaisukhlal Gandhi

28. LETTER TO S. G. VAZE

SEVAGRAM,
October 10, 1944

MY DEAR VAZE,

It was good you wrote. Your letter reached me too late even for a wire. Do please congratulate the Rajasaheb[1] on the liberal measure he has adopted for the people of his State. Aundh[2] has no reason to regret the reforms adopted there nor will Phaltan.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI S. G. VAZE
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
POONA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

29. LETTER TO NAGINDAS T. MASTER

SEVAGRAM,
October 10, 1944

BHAI NAGINBHAI,

I have your letter. Doesn't the August Resolution [of 1942] mean that you should do what you think to be right?[3]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The Raja of Phaltan, Malojirao M. Naik Nimbalkar who had introduced full responsible government in the State

[2] Aundh was the first Deccan State to introduce reforms.

[3] According to the *Gujarat Samachar*, 10-10-1944, the addressee was entrusted with the task of carrying Gandhiji's message to the people. The message was to the effect that "our struggle is definite and every citizen of India has to be prepared to make his contribution to the fight for independence".

30. LETTER TO KANTILAL AND SARASWATI GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
October 10, 1944

CHI. KANTI AND SARASWATI,

One letter from Kanti is lying before me. It is full of information. You are doing right. I Will not write more. There is a good family gathering just now. It Will disperse soon. I keep good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7369. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

31. DISCUSSION WITH SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

October 10, 1944

J. How will the workers become self-supporting? Villagers can either give them money or grain, or give them employment. Or they may run an industry and support the worker with a percentage of the profit.

G. Both courses may be adopted. We shall surely pay the workers. But apart from it the villagers or the worker himself can take up a craft for the sake of the village. It may be possible for a good intelligent worker to work in the village and meet his own expenses as also those of his entire activities by his own intellectual work and take nothing from friends. But earning money thus by the use of intellect alone is, as I have often said, a misuse of the intellect. All such income must go to the country.

J. If our worker were to live on khadi production alone, it would not be possible for him to become self-sufficient. He would have to produce commercial khadi; and to earn profit, he must sell it, send it outside and do various other things.

G. This is not what I had visualized in my scheme. I agree of course that if a village has to be made self-supporting through the production of khadi alone, the surplus will have to be sent outside.

Once somebody explained that if we did not produce, in addition to self-sufficient khadi, some amount of other khadi also, and our villagers had no other means of subsistence like land, etc., self-sufficient khadi alone would not suffice to provide all their needs. My idea of self-sufficiency is that villages must be self-sufficient in

regard to food, cloth and other basic necessities. But even this can be overdone. Therefore you must grasp my idea properly. Self-sufficiency does not mean narrowness. To be self-sufficient is not to be altogether self-contained. In no circumstances would we be able to produce all the things we need nor do we aim at doing so. So though our aim is complete self-sufficiency, we shall have to get from outside the village what we cannot produce in the village; we shall have to produce more of what we can in order thereby to obtain in exchange what we are unable to produce. Only nothing of our extra produce would be sent to Bombay or far off cities. Nor would we produce things with an eye to export to those cities. That would run counter to my conception of swadeshi. Swadeshi means serving my immediate neighbour rather than those far away.

Our outlook must be that we would serve the village first, then the neighbourhood, then the district and thereafter the province. Working on these lines the A.I.S.A. must function only as the central protector of this policy. We should not get involved in all sorts of complications. We have three thousand workers and a large number of sales depots. We shall not do away with them today. But I am simply telling you of our new line of approach.

J. What should be the extent of a worker's field of work? Should it be an area of about five miles around his centre?

G. Yes, sometimes even less. In Bengal and Bihar an area of five miles around the centre would cover many villages.

J. Why should we not define his field of activity as the area which he can cover if he left his centre in the morning, and returned to it after having a round by the evening?

G. Yes, we can do so.

J. Would the A.I.S.A. have to take up this work first?

G. Certainly, because the charkha is the sun round which other industries revolve like planets. They would revolve rightly only when the sun's movements are all right. Today the village industries are behaving like comets.

J. The work against untouchability sometimes involves the worker in all kinds of difficulties. How far may our worker entangle himself in them?

G. He should not involve himself in such troubles as would stop his work. But there should be no place at all for untouchability in his personal life. Our worker will draw water from the same well which the Harijans use. He will clean up their wells and take all sanitary steps possible for proper drainage.

J. Then there is the political issue. Suppose my self-respect is wounded in the course of performance of my duties or my freedom is restricted, would it then be proper for me to offer civil disobedience? It may be that I may keep aloof from other political disturbances, but in case of a general civil disobedience movement the worker cannot remain unconcerned. What should he do under such circumstances?

G. General civil disobedience means a sort of anarchy in which everybody is a leader. People start talking in terms of fighting. But ordinarily we must follow the orders of the chief or the commander in charge of that movement. Surely none can remain unconcerned in a movement of that nature. Yet the worker would have to explain his position to the President of the A. I. S. A. who would give his opinion after taking all the pros and cons into consideration. However, I am not thinking of general civil disobedience today.

Khadi: Why and How, pp. 166-8

32. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,
October 11, 1944

Numerous messages of birthday greetings from all over have been received and are still being received. It is impossible for me to send individual acknowledgement. I take this opportunity through the courtesy of the Press of thanking all the senders for their kind wishes.

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-10-1944

33. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SEVAGRAM,
October 11, 1944

DEAR BAPA,

We can do nothing about Chandvani.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

34. LETTER TO KUNDAR DIWAN

October 11, 1944

BHAI KUNDAR,

The spinning-wheel is the symbol of non-violence for those who project non-violence in the spinning-wheel. What I said was only to explain this. There should be no difficulty in understanding this.

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

35. LETTER TO RAMKRISHNA DALMIA

SEVAGRAM,
October 11, 1944

BHAI DALMIA,

I have your letter. I think what I did was right. I know your letter was prompted by love. Do keep writing like this.

Blessings from

BAPU

DALMIA- JAIN NIVAS
NEW DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

36. DISCUSSION WITH SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

October 11, 1944

J. I could not quite follow your views about decentralization. Will you kindly throw more light on it?

G. My view is that we should let as many provinces as wish to be free to develop their work as they desire. I would very much like them to take the entire responsibility on their own shoulders and recognize our authority only in the moral realm. I would allow them to work with complete freedom if they follow my lines, are personally of sparkling character, and are prepared to take risk in honestly implementing our policy. My only condition will be that they should sell all the khadi they produce in the villages near about the centre of production, the tehsil, the district or at the most the province. They

should not, like the people of Chicacole, produce everything for Bombay and use nothing at home.

J. Chicacole is an exception, and is the only production centre in the country for fine khadi.

G. Yes, even in that case I would ask the producers and sellers to wear what they produce or sell. They may send their articles outside but they must also wear them. In case they go on producing fine khadi for Bombay but use only mill-cloth themselves, their centre must cease to be run by the A. I. S. A. I would even insist that it be closed altogether.

J. Deducting something from the income of the craftsmen or women towards supply of khadi to them, we do make them wear some khadi. But this seems to be a sort of imposition. They do not take to it voluntarily.

G. I may put up with such a situation for a short period. I do not expect people to take to khadi immediately and to accept non-violence. We must educate them in true economics and in non-violence. If we succeed in doveloping a true economic outlook in them, they would ultimately understand non-violence as well. An economics which runs counter to morality cannot be called true economics. Our workers can develop an outlook of true economics in the villages only if they work under the inspiration of non-violence and morality.

Their personal conduct should be of the purest nature and they should not be a party to any exploitation of the people. If we try to cover India with khadi but ignore the miseries of the craftsmen, do not pay them living wages, do not share their weal and woe, or worry little if they are drunkards, it will not do at all. It is better to burn all khadi to ashes than to pretend to work for the good of the country in this manner. I would keep the drunkard and give him work, but I would befriend him and sweetly urge upon him daily to abstain from drink. My aim is not to do the work of khadi only but to enter into the entire life of the villager.

I know that Chicacole khadi is very popular and that it fetches a good sale in far off provinces; but this pains me very much. If we want to do khadi work successfully on the new lines in any province, district, taluk or village, we must not make one district lean on any other, or enter into competition with it. All districts must meet their requirements themselves. This would relieve us of our worries about sales. It is quite possible that implementation of this new policy may

for the present reduce a centre to zero. But later on the work is bound to progress. Of course I cannot submit data and figures to prove what I say as I know nothing about them. But you can of course supply them to me. What I know, however, is that if khadi is to disseminate non-violence, we shall have to follow this new policy, come what may.

J. Do you mean to say that the work of the A. I. S. A. will hereafter be entrusted to separate boards of trustees to be newly formed in each province?

G. I cannot say immediately what exactly would have to be done. I know, however, that to promote decentralization such as I want, we would have to do away with the central control now dominating our every activity. Today our machinery is top-heavy. Our approach and method being what they have been hitherto, this was inevitable. It could have been avoided had I followed and insisted from the very beginning on our doing the right thing. It is not that I was not aware that the work was not going on the right lines. But I succumbed to the temptation of doing some work and let the work develop itself, resulting in the present centralization.

J. Yet we shall have to evolve some sort of constitution. . . If the work of the provinces is to be entrusted to some body, registered societies with at least seven trustees for each would have to be set up.

If you allow me I shall soon bring about decentralization in sales. Today khadi is such a profitable business and so full of opportunities for expansion that dealers and tradesmen are ready to take it up. I am flooded with letters asking me for the transfer of one bhandar or the other. But as a clear picture of the coming decentralization is not yet before my eyes I am not able to go ahead. And even were we to entrust khadi work to some individual, trust or institution we shall have to insist on three things: (a) Purity of khadi, (b) Living wage and (c) Non-profiteering. If we are not able to control these three things the whole business will be reduced to a farce. Whatever is to be done has to be done very carefully. For example, take the case of the A. I. S. A. Every now and then we issue circulars to our branches to raise the wages and to impress upon the workers not to put the spinners to any difficulty whatsoever. Nevertheless, our experience is that it is well-nigh impossible to keep every worker of each centre in full control regarding such matters as accurate determination of the count of the yarn, correct payment of wages without adding or subtracting a pice or two here and there, and many little things of such nature. And this happens even though our worker has no axe of his own to grind. We appealed to purchasers of khadi to pay a higher price but those engaged in the craft did not receive an adequate wage. This is as regards the conduct of workers and centres even when run under the direct supervision of the A. I. S. A. If however we introduce decentralization and the control slackens or is almost withdrawn, one cannot say what a fearful mess the certified dealers might not make of it. Whether it is an individual or an

institution, there is acute rivalry among all those engaged in khadi work. Even institutions indulge in a lot of profit-making. Under these circumstances if the A. I. S. A. keeps away from commercial sales, it would be a problem as to who should be entrusted with this responsibility or what sort of conditions or limitations should be imposed on them. Again, if the provinces are to be left free to look after themselves, they do not have enough workers with the proper khadi outlook to be entrusted with the work.

G. Is there no way out of this difficulty?

J. The issue of provincial freedom will not be so difficult in some of the provinces, but it is bound to lead to complications in most of them. For the present, I think, it would be wise to confine decentralization to the district, and not to extend it to the province. The change should not be effected all at once.

G. For the present we may introduce decentralization in production only. It should be binding on the producers to sell in their neighbourhood what they produce. And it must be insisted that the central office should be consulted in case of distant sales.

J. What is the harm if we limit the sales-area of a centre to its tehsil?

G. We may, but we must see that the producers or those who live in that village or in its neighbourhood wear the khadi produced. We do of course recognize that khadi may be required to be produced for other places also.

J. We would ask workers to go to the centres that are well developed and to extend the work on the new lines as far as possible. The A.I.S.A. will withdraw from those places where such workers take up work. Thus decentralization will grow. But one thing is important. We shall ask the workers to sell khadi where they produce it, or in the tehsil or at the most in the district. The A.I.S.A. will help in disposing of the surplus. There is no loss in this work at present, as we know. Today all the khadi that may be produced can easily be sold. There is no worry as regards sales but only about transport.

G. Is the khadi sold in those centres where it is produced?

J. No, not even in the neighbourhood. Today we have our bhandars in the headquarters of the district and sometimes at tehsils also. We have also agents for taking khadi from the district bhandar and distributing it in other places in the district. To those engaged in the craft we supply khadi after deducting two annas, four annas, or even eight annas in the rupee. But apart from it, most of the khadi is sold in the cities.

G. As against this, I want the worker to go to his centre and produce only as much khadi as he can make the people there wear. He must not produce for outsiders. He should not rest content with training people in khadi production alone but should impart

instruction in other crafts also. The earnings from these crafts will also go to the villagers and add to their meagre resources. We shall take the unused or surplus khadi only if the villagers there tell us: 'We are producing khadi in a larger quantity than we can ourselves consume as we want cash for our other needs. Please, therefore, buy our surplus khadi.' It is quite possible that such villages as produce more khadi than they use will develop into centres of khadi production. But I am not thinking now of them. I have in mind only those villages where production of khadi will be carried on as a supplementary industry and so where the people will not depend for their living only on khadi but also on other industries. That is how most of the villages will have to be organized. This is decentralization in the true sense of the term.

J. Agriculture is the main occupation in the countryside. The bullock oil-press can also be run but it can provide a livelihood only to a few. It is khadi alone that can in a large measure relieve unemployment among the poor. But there is little scope for earning money through khadi produced for self-sufficiency. Should we desire to add a few pice to the coffers of the villagers, we shall have to encourage production of khadi for sale outside and we shall have to make arrangements for it. Otherwise we cannot succeed in providing relief to those underemployed villagers who have work only for part of the year.

G. The trouble is that such khadi will continue to provide occupation to a few people only without spreading everywhere.

J. Spinning, I hope, will become universal. Weaving of course will be a skilled craft carried on by a few as it is even today. The fact is that so long as there are mills khadi production cannot be carried on on a large scale. We began cloth self-sufficiency work in Surgaon. Ours was a five-year programme. Vallabhswami's experience is that people do take to khadi but not intelligently. Once we withdraw from the centre, khadi also disappears. Unless the people grasp the place of khadi in the entire economy of the village they will not stick to it. The benefits derived from self-sufficient khadi are so little that it offers hardly any attraction.

G. That also worries me. Vallabhswami's words resound in my ears. Party feeling developed in his village. Fasting had to be resorted to. I feel that behind it all there was a mistake in approach somewhere. We offered inducements to the people, gave them facilities, but these do not serve our purpose. We have to discover to what length khadi, by its own inherent strength, can carry India forward. So far in our quest we have found that khadi is saleable in the cities but not in the villages. We have not yet succeeded in making it acceptable to the villagers. If we have been defeated we must confess our defeat. We should learn from our past experience and adopt new methods of

work if needed. That is why I say that we should stop producing khadi for the cities. Today about a crore of rupees worth of khadi is sold in the cities. We should hereafter make it clear to the cities that we cannot any more supply them ready-made khadi but will teach them how to produce it, leaving them the option of either producing it themselves or getting it from the producer. I am not enamoured of the sales of one crore of rupees worth of khadi in the cities. We should put into khadi work not money but brain and heart. In other words we shall now have ruthlessly to investigate the value of khadi in terms of its real potentialities. In case we find it does not carry us as far as we claimed, let us give it up or lower our claim or let us take up some other basic occupation such as agriculture.

From the very beginning it has been my firm conviction that agriculture provides the only unfailing and perennial support to the people of this country. We should take it up and see how far we can go with it as basis. I would not at all mind if some of our young men serve the country by training themselves as experts in agriculture in place of khadi. I have come to realize that we have yet to overcome a lot of difficulties. The time has now come for us to pay attention to agriculture. Till now I believed that improvement in agriculture was impossible unless we had the administration of the State in our own hands. My views on this are now undergoing modification. I feel that we can bring about improvements even under the present conditions, so that the cultivator may be able to make some income for himself from the land even after paying his taxes. Jawaharlal says that any extra income to the peasant through the improvement of agriculture will be swallowed up under one pretext or the other by the alien Government. But I feel that even if it were so, it should not hinder us from acquiring and spreading as much knowledge about agriculture as possible. It may be that the Government will take away any additional income that may come to the villagers through improvements in agriculture. If they do, we can protest and teach the people to resist and make it clear to the Government that it cannot loot us in this manner. This is only by way of an illustration. I therefore hold that we must hereafter find workers who will interest themselves in agriculture.

J. From the very beginning the question of agriculture as the main problem of the peasantry was before our eyes. But we did not take it up because we thought it too difficult and also because we had to keep in view our own limitations. Besides, in agriculture the peasant is today dependent on external factors altogether beyond his

control. Supposing, for instance, we taught him better methods and he succeeded in producing more, his lot would still continue to be as bad as it always was if in the mean while the prices of cotton were reduced by half, a contingency which he can do nothing to prevent. This is the terrible situation confronting him.

G. There is remedy for this also. We did not train him on the right lines. The capitalists induced him to sow commercial crops that would yield them money, so food crops became scarce.

J. This is inevitable where economics is subservient to the ruler or the capitalist.

G. The same is the condition in the field of cattle farming and dairying. The cow and the bullock are intimately tied up with agriculture. In this field also we have failed to play our part. Therefore, our workers going to the villages will hereafter have to be alert and acquire the necessary knowledge to render effective service along all such lines. God alone knows how far they would be able to accomplish all this. But I have said what I had in my mind and what I thought fit.

Khadi: Why and How, pp. 168-74

37. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

SEVAGRAM,
October 12, 1944

CHI. SUNDARAM,[1]

Your letter and booklet. Come when you want to.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3179

38. LETTER TO A. N. SHARMA

SEVAGRAM,
October 12, 1944

MY DEAR SHARMA,

Are you so devoid of sense of humour? I had no evil thought about your visit to Nagpur. Indeed I thought (and rightly as it has

[1] The superscription is in both the Devanagari and the Tamil scripts.

turned out) that you had gone to render assistance to some friend. You had utilized my day of silence for that purpose. I was interested in you and so asked questions about your work. I paid you a compliment by summing up your life as of a homeless wanderer. I connected you with '*aniketa*'[1] of the *Gita* and envied you. Your home was nowhere and everywhere. How could you mistake all this for a reflection on you. It shows what a sorry thing foreign speech is. What is to be done? Must I cease to use the English idiom to my countrymen? Or are you specially touchy? Anyway I hope you understand the language of this letter.

Yours,

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

39. LETTER TO HERBERT G. WOOD

SEVAGRAM,
October 12, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

I hope you remember your letter to me of 21st July, 1942. You rightly say that if your suggestion is right I would not be deterred from accepting it. As I see it, it is not right even after two years. How can a captive people help other oppressed people except by being free ?

Your letter was given to me on my accidental release in the early part of this year.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

HERBERT G. WOOD, ESQ.
WOODBROOKE,
SELLY OAK, BIRMINGHAM 29

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] One without a home; Xll. 19

40. LETTER TO A. V. THAKKAR

SEVAGRAM,
October 12, 1944

BAPA,

I got your letters. By all means engage one or two paid men. You will of course have to pay a handsome salary. Shatikumarbhai will take your place, and whatever services are assigned by Vaikunthbhai and Swami Anand should be accepted. This will be besides [the work of] the paid man. The latter shall not indulge in politics.

I understand about the Bank. If you wish you may deposit some more money in the Bank.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1194

41. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
October 12, 1944

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. Sita did stay here, but she wants to soar high up in the sky. Most probably she will attend school in Akola. She is a fine girl. She has become quite friendly with me. I am fine. I think you can come over here only when Manilal returns there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4938

42. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

[SEVAGRAM, "VIA" WARDHA, (C.P.,)][1]
October 12, 1944

CHI. NIMU,

How did Usha fall ill? If no milk or soup is given while the fever

[1] As on the letterhead

is on, it will come down sooner. That is how we here begin the treatment in all cases of fever. This applies to all, young or old. Nobody fears fever. Sometimes, it may be necessary to give an enema. Give as much water as she can drink. Warm water will be better. You may add salt and soda to it, also some lemon juice. If Kanam really wants to come here, send him over. Or, bring him along at Diwali time, that is, if you can come. Will not Ramdas also have holidays then?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RAMDAS GANDHI
TORNCO SALES DEPT.
KINGSWAY, NAGPUR, C.P.

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

43. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

October 12, 1944

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You do not want a reply to your letter, do you? Live and act as though you were just a cipher.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4448

44. DISCUSSION WITH SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

October 12, 1944

J. Before discussing the idea of decentralization further, I would like to place before you the present position of khadi work. It will help us in our discourse. Khadi work has been carried on along two lines:

(i) Production and sale of commercial khadi to the utmost extent.

(ii) Extending cloth self-sufficiency as much as possible. Today the A.I.S.A. is blamed for not discharging fully its responsibilities in both these respects.

G. May I interrupt? Have we carried on sufficient research in regard to the self-sufficiency programme to be able to prove that self-sufficient khadi is cheaper than mill-cloth? In case we are not able to prove it, our villagers will not take to self-sufficiency and the workers will have to face despair. Now you may proceed.

J. There will be no cause for despair if we once grasp properly the limitations under which khadi work has to be carried on, whether it is commercial khadi or self-sufficient khadi. For instance, in spite of having made great progress as regards commercial khadi, it cannot be speeded up all of a sudden, for so long as there are textile mills khadi can develop only on public goodwill. Besides, there are other difficulties. Today, for instance, we produce one crore rupees worth of khadi. Last year we discussed a scheme to increase it to five crores. This meant that ignoring all other considerations, we had to make use of whatever workers were available, irrespective of their quality in order to push through our programme. After careful calculation we reached the conclusion that even after our utmost efforts we shall not be able to produce more than one and a half times our maximum production, and that it would be quite impossible to increase production to two to four times. Besides, there are other dangers in so recklessly increasing the work. For then we shall have to recruit all sorts of workers who are neither conversant with khadi work nor observe truth and non-violence. This will not only injure the basic policy of the A.I.S.A. but also bring a bad name to it since the behaviour of the new workers may not always be becoming and clean. I am, therefore, not in favour of developing work on such lines.

So also there are limitations in regard to cloth self-sufficiency. Even if the various processes from cotton-cultivation to ginning, carding and spinning are carried out by the villagers in their own homes, weaving charges are so high that their net saving as compared with the price of mill-cloth is very little, so little that the villager is not easily inclined to put himself to all the trouble involved. Besides, mill-cloth seems more attractive to him than khadi.

Moreover the reasons underlying our self-sufficiency programme require to be explained to the villagers in a manner which will appeal to them. They must see that only through working for self-sufficiency the entire money of the village will remain in the village, that they can control the factors that make for their well-being, that idle time will be profitably utilized and that the people of the village will become industrious. In other words, self-sufficiency khadi work can begin to have permanent effect only when carried out as part and parcel of the wider programme of non-violent village uplift or village reconstruction. A programme, which aims at making a certain number of villages self-sufficient in cloth within a specific period, does not appeal to me. We can succeed only to the extent to which we learn to work intelligently and with the backing of educated public opinion. Work based on momentary sentiment or emotion does not endure.

The same is true about other village industries as well. For the present the bullock oil-press is running well in the countryside. But there are serious misgivings as to whether it will continue always to do so. The fact is that our village economic organization of which khadi, *chakki* and other village industries were the various main organs has collapsed. Further, on account of mill competition, village-made cloth, flour, rice, oil and everything else have become costlier. Should we desire to reinstate them in their proper place, we should have to tackle the entire village economy and build it up anew. Concentration and research on any single aspect will

be of little avail. Inertia has seized our people. Progress cannot be by leaps and bounds but very gradual. The problem is very intricate indeed.

G. I would like to go even a step further. I accept all that you say. That is why for three days I opened my heart before the A.I.S.A,[1] and raised all these issues.

Now we have to do the work anew with the objective of all-round village uplift. Let us see how far we can go. Even if our present activities have to be slackened or reduced to nought for some time on account of these changes, it does not matter. We have created some sentiment about khadi among the people. But if there is some error in what we told the people about the significance of khadi we must pause. If ours was a wrong claim we must declare our error openly and withdraw our claim.

I would ask city-dwellers to produce their own khadi. I would forgo the temptation to supply khadi to them. We shall go and settle in the villages. In case workers want to leave us on account of this change we shall let them go. Unless our head and heart are converted to this extent we cannot achieve the desired result. We of the A. I. S. A. will merely direct policy. By decentralizing our work as much as possible we shall free ourselves from day to day khadi work completely. Thereafter we shall concentrate our energy and attention on the other activities or crafts carried out in the vicinity of the village we settle in. Only then will the real substance of our work be realized. All these years I remained under the delusion that we had made good job of it in that we had put four and a half crores of rupees in the pockets of the poor. I became anxious to increase it to sixty crores, and I claimed swaraj would be in our hands if we produced sixty crores worth of khadi in a year. Had I persisted along that line, I might perhaps have succeeded. But now I realize that even if I had succeeded what was done in a year might possibly have been undone in the next. Today our main concern should be to lay the foundation for this work as deep as possible.

J. It means that the city workers should curtail their present work (which is mainly concerned with pushing up sales in the commercial way) and start selling khadi in lieu of yarn. They should also participate in the programme for the revival of other village industries.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at A. I. S. A. Meeting-I", 1-9-1944 and "Speech at A. I. S. A. Meeting-III", 3-9-1944.

G. Exactly. In case we do not do it we shall be betraying ourselves and the world. Today we rejoice in having sold khadi worth several thousand rupees in one day in the Kalbadevi Bhandar at Bombay.

J. If we arrange to give khadi in lieu of yarn, and the A.I.S.A. does not do it, private dealers would come forward and say that they would willingly take up the work, asking us merely to give them certificates. If we agree to it we shall have to look into their accounts, their procedure, their work, etc., and we shall get engulfed in a maze of difficulties from which it would be hard to extricate ourselves.

G. Satis Babu says that we should give them freedom in this matter.

J. He holds that the entire production and sales work should be handed over to the people, and the A.I.S.A. should keep aloof.

G. It is essential for us to consider his proposal in detail.

J. In matters of money even good men have been found to have failed in resisting the temptations of earning extra profit . . . Human nature being thus what it is, it is very dangerous to hand over khadi work to private persons.

G. I have my answer. I do not know what exactly Satis Babu's proposal means. But in the picture before me there is no question of handing over khadi work to anybody. We shall say only this much to city-dwellers that if they want to put on khadi they cannot do so save according to the principle we have laid down. It is not merely a principle of economics but also invariably of morals and ethics. According to it everyone has to prepare his or her own khadi. If there is no weaving arrangement in the city, weavers can be domiciled in the cities, or somewhere in the neighbourhood in colonies. Weaving can be carried on there. There need be no rivalry. We shall explain to the city people that the khadi we are at present giving to them is of no use, as they are not able to know the extent of relief that the poor obtain thereby, and that therefore they should get khadi woven before their own eyes. Thus we shall change our policy. Today we ask the city people to take to khadi on the plea that it supports lakhs of people. But this compels the A. I. S. A. to resort to trade and commerce. Well, if the Sangh were to carry on commerce alone, it could easily support many people by doing so.

Hence we are not going to lend to khadi dealers the prestige of the A. I. S. A. We shall withdraw from that field of work so that the certificates will cease to have any meaning. The only limitation that we shall observe is that if there is some extra khadi left over in a village or

locality after meeting the local need, and if that khadi is useful to the city people we shall permit it to be sold in the cities. But the khadi should not be produced specially for export to the cities. If this means a reduction in our work it matters little. I am sure I am not providing true work relief to the people from the way in which I am doing khadi work today. What I am doing is tempting them by the handsome wages of the A. I. S. A. This is not the way to make the work permanent. If the poor want employment we must provide it. But it must be in such a manner that they can secure earnings from their own neighbourhood instead of depending on distant cities .

J. I would like you to throw more light on this point.

G. Today we are not really able to help the villagers. By offering the spinners three, four, six or eight annas I comfort myself with the belief that I have given them a livelihood. But it amounts to nothing more than a dole, for the work that I am providing them is not of a permanent nature. In case we get control of the State in our hands and by that means close all mills, it may perhaps then be possible to provide them permanent work. But today I cannot hide from them the truth that I have been only trying to fill their idle hours. If I have to provide them with some money I shall teach them other crafts also. I shall fully acquaint them with the present economic situation and educate them in this regard. No doubt I would wish to give work to every spinner who comes seeking it. But I shall not send the khadi thus produced to Bombay. I shall ask the workers to sell it in the neighbouring villages. But this is not enough. I must investigate what work other than spinning can be provided to them in the village. Only by revising the entire economic life of the village can our work become permanent. Whether for villagers or for us, I agree, cities will always have some sort of attraction. Nevertheless we shall be free from our present day city life. We shall show how in contrast to the cities more amenities can be provided in the villages. But if we merely go on sending to Bombay the khadi produced in the village, this object can never be accomplished, however high a wage we may pay to the village spinners.

I allotted an hour every day for discussion with you because I believed that through such discussion my own thinking would be clarified. I am convinced that we shall have to introduce fundamental changes in our mode of work. If we are destined to fail we shall face it; we shall do so with full knowledge and alertness, not in our

ignorance or folly. Even then If people laugh at me I shall bear it. They might say: 'Gandhi wasted a crore of rupees. But of course no one pocketed it.' I need your help in deciding whether what I am saying is correct. I would like to know your opinion.

J. When we send to the cities the khadi produced in the villages we provide immediate economic benefit to the villagers. But if we stop doing so what else can we give them?

G. If I had my way I would say to those whom I have been supporting through khadi so far that they should get out of this rut and take to some other work. We shall have to find other work for them, as we are doing in Sevagram where the majority of the population consists of Harijans.

J. The situation here in Sevagram is exceptional. There are so many institutions here. Guests are always coming in, new houses are under construction and various other activities are going on. All this provides work to the people.

G. Everywhere I would try to create a similar situation. We shall have to apply our mind and energy to discover new avenues of work.

J. What you say about agriculture, cattle-breeding, etc., is perfectly correct. But we should also consider how to provide permanent economic benefit to the villagers through khadi. Had mill-cloth not been there, it would have been easy. But the question is what are we to do when we have the mills.

G. I would explain to the people that they could not get khadi like mill-cloth. I would try to bring it home to them that if khadi is dearer the extra money goes to the villager, his family and to the village, and that this provides security to the economy of the village. I would explain to them the moral aspect as well. Besides, I would teach them other methods of earning in the village. I have now given up the idea that villagers can earn their living through doing khadi work alone.

J. It means that we have to set them to work by bringing home to them the moral and social value of khadi and other village industries.

G. Yes, I do not want to confine myself to khadi alone now. I am, therefore, thinking of ways and means of improving the condition of the people through a rehabilitation of agriculture, cattle-breeding and all other village industries. My problem will be solved if I succeed even in half a dozen villages, for "as is the part so is the whole".

J. That means we shall have to develop the villages keeping their allround progress in view. We should emphasize not only the economic aspect of khadi but explain its moral and social aspect also.

G. From this point of view even Vallabhswami's method does not appeal to me, for he emphasizes only khadi and promises to make the entire village khadi-clad within a certain period. There was a time when this idea appealed to me immensely, but now I feel that khadi alone cannot revive the villages. Village uplift is possible only when we rejuvenate village life as a whole, revive all village industries and make the entire village industrious.

Khadi: Why and How, pp. 175-81

45. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

SEVAGRAM ASHRAM,
7a.m., October 13, 1944[1]

Those who will look only to God shall cease to look to persons dead or alive.

If you digest this well you will never grieve.

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

46. LETTER TO P. T. RAJAN

SEVAGRAM,
October 13, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

It was an act of self-denial for the students to have given out [of] their pocket money Rs. 133 to the K. B. M. Fund.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI P. T. RAJAN
INDIAN STUDENTS' HOSTEL
KANDY, CEYLON

From a photostat: G.N. 797

[1] As noted by the addressee

47. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

October 13, 1944

MY DEAR C. R.,

Here are the insurance papers. I would like you to put them before Sir Alladi[1] or whomsoever you like and secure his opinion. I think a representation should be sent to the Central Government about the fine.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2097

48. DISCUSSION WITH SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

October 13, 1944

J. Today I would request you to throw more light on decentralization. Narrowly viewed, there is even now decentralization in production because production centres are distributed all over the country. But of course all capital is centralized in the Head Office. I believe that the central control existing today is merely a control exercised by the A.I.S.A. in regard to policy.

Looking at the matter from the point of view of capital we must consider under whose initiative the work is to be carried on in the villages hereafter and who is to bear the profit or loss in the end. Now there are three ways of doing this.

Our worker on the spot can carry on all the work. Or, we may work through a committee of villagers interested in khadi work who may themselves raise shares, subscriptions, etc. Or as a third course the artisans of khadi can form their own societies and carry on the work as their own. If the worker remains solely in charge we shall have to hand over to him all the assets, money, property, etc. Should he then be regarded as a trustee or should some condition be imposed upon him? If the worker carries on his activities with an eye to personal profit there is every likelihood of undesirable developments. I think the best way, therefore, would be to form co-operative societies. Selfish interests may lead to some mismanagement but this fear should not deter us. We may have co-operative societies not only for khadi but also for oil-pressing, hand-paper, etc. In course of time these bodies in the various villages may, if necessary, merge into a union.

[1] A. Krishnaswami Iyer

G. I do not have much to say on this point. Wherever we can get reliable workers work should be started. There is no harm in beginning simultaneously the three types of experiments you have enumerated. But, as we had discussed yesterday, we can get rid of many worries if we do not hold ourselves responsible for khadi sales. So long as khadi remains a saleable commodity, these worries are bound to be there. I also realize that we cannot entirely get rid of them today. But so long as we believe that khadi, like bread, must be made at home and that we should not maintain ourselves on bazar-made biscuits even if cheaper, we shall have to explain to the people that to use bazar-made goods is to court disaster. If the people grasp the idea, we shall have to devise an easy method of khadi manufacture at home. Our slogan will be 'cloth even like bread'. All difficulties will then disappear. The co-operative bodies will then have their own shape and form which need not now be anticipated.

When you said that there was decentralization in khadi production, I was about to contradict you. Even in Lancashire some cloth is made at home, not for the use of the home but for the use of the masters. It would be outrageous to call this decentralization. So also in Japan everything is made at home; but it is not for the use of the home; it is all for the Government which has centralized the whole business. Though things are made at home, and made in a better manner than in England, yet the producers cannot keep any of it for their home consumption. The work is done at the behest of the Government which supplies ships and does everything else to carry such goods to the different markets of the world and thus draw wealth from other countries. The same is happening in Lancashire. Though millions of dhotis are made there, yet not a single one is available to any purchaser on the spot. They are exported to the country for which they are scheduled, be it India, Africa or any other. I would certainly not call this decentralization.

So also with khadi. Our artisans produce not for themselves but for the A. I. S. A. to which they give their finished material for wages paid. They were happy when we raised their wages. But this is not decentralization. What I mean by decentralization is that the artisan must produce for his own or his neighbour's use and not for sale. When we realize that khadi is not a commodity for sale but for self-consumption only then we shall have grasped the message of khadi and understood the scope of its potentialities. We may be

expected to clothe the whole country with khadi after getting political power. Should we not therefore make such an arrangement from today so that we may be able to make the country self-sufficient in clothing in case the future government of free India were to provide the requisite facilities to the A. I. S. A. and ask it, as an expert body, to do this task? But if the government of the day were to close all its mills, and to charge us with this responsibility, we are apt to fail as things are today. We should, therefore, know the extent to which khadi can take us. I myself cannot say that I know it for certain. But what I am quite clear about is that khadi should not be for sale but for self-consumption. Hence the necessity of changing the present policy of khadi work. We have before us the task of reconstructing our whole country, and in this khadi is an important item. So also there are oil-pressing and other industries. It is only if we look at the problem from the point of view of production for use rather than for sale that the country has everything to gain by Our work, and we shall be able to meet the situation squarely without withdrawing a single step when we obtain control over the reins of Government.

J. I presume what you mean is that we should direct all our efforts towards cloth self-sufficiency, i.e., towards spinning for one's own consumption.

G. Exactly so. But as I have no personal experience about it I cannot insist on it. I first introduced khadi and only later studied its implications and experimented with it. I find that I have been deceiving myself. What I gave to the people was money in the form of wages and assured them that it contained swaraj. People took me at my word and believed me, and continue to believe me. But I have now my own misgivings as to how far such khadi can lead to swaraj. I am afraid that khadi has no future if we continue it as today.

J. Do you visualize a stage in which the khadi bhandars running presently in the cities will be closed down?

G. Of course I do.

J. We shall then have to supply khadi to the people in lieu of yarn alone.

G. When we saw that we could not proceed without spinning we learnt spinning. But we did not take to weaving. However, now we feel that weavers will also have to be trained in the same manner. Whatever changes we want to introduce we must introduce intelligently and with discrimination.

I may recall what we did about living wages in spinning. We went along certain lines. Slowly it dawned upon us that khadi so

produced was no philanthropy but an exploitation of spinners. We then raised the wages. I pleaded for eight annas. The rest of you insisted on three annas. I agreed to your three annas. Then you raised it to four annas. Similarly we may proceed in our new attempt. First you must accept the principle, later we shall proceed in the light of our experience. You have pointed out three possible ways of reorganizing the work on the new basis. Think over them. We have got our machinery in every province. Provincial organizers are already there. Call some of the workers and discuss the matter in detail with them. True, it will mean some curtailment of our present work. But that will not deter me. Even if nobody else spins I shall go on spinning alone. When we started khadi production I was told that khadi dhoti was impossible to produce. I replied that I would put on sack cloth or a blanket but would not wear a mill dhoti. And hardly a month passed when Maganlal produced a dhoti; Gangabehn Majmudar also sent me one and asked me to place an order for any number of them.

J. It means we shall have to stop the large-scale sale of khadi in the cities and instead ask the people to take up spinning for themselves. Consequently, at least for some time a lot of our work will come to a stop.

G. I agree that there is practical consideration behind what you say. Today people have become paupers. Therefore if you provide them with bread they will do whatever you ask them to do. But if we carry on our work thoughtlessly we shall be deceiving them as well as ourselves. The livelihood we provide them today is nothing but a sort of dole as is usually handed out during the time Of famine to the people who are offered work on the roads or quarries. It does not have a lasting value.

J. Before asking khadi consumers to spin their own yarn we should consider how much we ourselves are devoted to spinning. Let me take the instance of the A.I.S.A. workers. Our rule requires every worker to spin at least 7_ hanks in a month. But we have not had a satisfactory response. Further, the number of spinners among the khadi customers is quite small. Most of the spinners in the countryside spin only for wages, scarcely for their own use. This is the situation. I wonder how far the experiment you suggest can succeed under these circumstances.

G. At least this much should be clear to all that khadi is not an occupation or a craft merely for earning a livelihood. None of us should harbour this idea. For, if khadi is an industry it would have to be run purely on business lines. The difference between khadi and mill-cloth would then be that while a mill provides employment to a

few thousand people in a city, khadi brings a crore of rupees to those scattered about in fifteen thousand villages. Both must then be classified as industries, and we would hardly be justified in asking anybody to put on khadi and boycott mill-cloth. Nor can such khadi claim to be the herald of swaraj. On the other hand we have claimed that the real significance of khadi is that it is a means for uplifting the villages and thereby generating in the people the spontaneous strength for swaraj. Such a claim cannot then be sustained. It will not do to continue to help the villagers by appealing to the philanthropic sentiments of city-dwellers. What is required is that the villagers should be made strong to face life's problems and march ahead. If we encouraged mills, the nation might get sufficient cloth. And if mills are nationalized cloth prices may also come down, people may not be exploited and may earn adequate wages. But our reason for putting forward khadi is that it is the only way to redeem the people from the disease of inertia and indifference, the only way to generate in them the strength for freedom. If other crafts are also thus revitalized, our villages could be made self-sufficient and self-reliant. They would prepare their own soap from *sajji* clay. That soap will not have the luring fragrance of soaps turned out in the factories of Tata and Godrej. Its packing also will not be so attractive. But it will have the quality of self-sufficiency even like khadi. But this grand picture of khadi as the means of all-round uplift of the villages, which I have been putting forward for so long, is not being realized. The talks I have had with the workers have led me to believe that I must now retrace my steps. As the founder of khadi, I must not grudge doing so. That is the call of truth. I retrace my steps consciously or intelligently, and not in a mood of defeatism or of cowardice. If there was any exaggeration in my claims for khadi it is but right that I must own it publicly and rectify it.

J. Our chief claim was that khadi was a craft whereby those who were forced to remain idle for a few months in the year could have some supplementary earning.

G. No, I did not stop at that. I went further and claimed that it had the capacity to bring swaraj.

J. That is true, but you did not stress so much its life-giving capacity as you are doing today. About three lakhs of people are employed in khadi work. They cannot quickly develop the manifold virtues (other than those of self-sufficiency) that you desire. They may do so in course of time. What you want to do today is to stop khadi sales and make people spin for their own needs, do you not?

G. You are right.

J. But a closure of the sales would mean a suspension of spinning for wages.

G. Of course. But the little amount of spinning we may then have would positively be such as can yield swaraj. For basically that strength is inherent in spinning.

J. Today we are in contact with about three lakhs of people through khadi work. Requiring people to spin for self-sufficiency, we would reduce it to no more than thirty thousand.

G. These thirty thousand would later grow into three crores. Be it as it may, I at least will not be guilty of betraying the cause. Further, we shall then not have to cajole or coax the villagers and artisans to spin. What we do today is to go to the villagers with a money-bag like bankers and promise four or six annas for spinning. Instead, we would enter into the life of the villagers. The workers and the villagers would freely lay bare their hearts before each other. We would raise the wage of the (woman) spinner. I would pay her as much as to a man. But I would tell her clearly that I am not interested in her spinning merely for a wage. I would ask her to spin for herself. I would promise to get her yarn woven, her children educated and trained in one craft or another. I would enquire into her budget and promise every assistance. I would try and relieve her of her woes. Had we done this from the beginning and taken the right type of workers with us, we would have assuredly secured freedom by now. But I have no regret for the past.

J. Do you think that you can get a large number of workers of this type? If so, it is easy sailing.

G. The mistake was undoubtedly ours. We did not keep this point of view ever before us. Nor did we train workers for it. Also we were in too much hurry. Had we devoted ourselves to the task intelligently, we would have got the needed workers.

J. You have said many a time that good workers should go and settle in the villages.

G. Yes, in order that they may make khadi the emblem of non-violence. If we fail, our claim for khadi will lose all force.

J. After all we shall have to get our workers from the material that we have in our country today.

G. If that is our attitude there can be no swaraj through non-violence. In other words, people are not ready for my conception of swaraj.

I would then go my own way even if I have to work all alone. I

would be happy if any of the A. I. S. A., A. I. V. I. A., Hindustani Talimi Sangh or other bodies co-operate with me. It is quite possible that people may not follow us. It would then show that we are full of violence and that the non-violence we talk about is not non-violence but cowardice.

J. That is all right. But the question is one of implementation.

G. We should then renounce the tall claim we have made. We must stick to the truth. Without hesitation, without flattering ourselves we must declare that we are weak like everybody else and that we are in no way better. It would then be clear that swaraj, if and when obtained, will not be due to any special strength of ours.

Khadi: Why and How, pp. 181-7

49. TELEGRAM TO NAGENDRA BIJOY BHATTACHARJI

SEVAGRAM,
October 14, 1944

NAGENDRABIJOY BHATTACHARJI
PRESIDENT, CONGRESS
BARISAL

ASK CONGRESS OFFICIALS.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

50. LETTER TO SYED MAHMUD

October 14, 1944

MY DEAR MAHMUD,

I see quite clearly what you have to do. Your letter must be given to the Press with an explanation. You have to send a wire to the Government asking for permission to release the letter.

You have to make a Press statement pending publication. "I have seen Press paragraphs making baseless suggestions against me. I have asked for permission to publish my letter which was intended to be private and confidential. I ask the public to suspend judgment pending publication of my said letter. I can say this however that I have neither broken with the Congress nor Gandhi with whom I am

now staying and under whose advice I am acting.''[1]

I suggest the following wire to the P.S.V.[2]

"As many innuendoes have appeared in the Press about my release may I publish my letter to H. E. dated . . . I should have no objection to Government releasing same at my request."

More when we meet. I see I cannot come to you before 4.15. I must attend to some of the work in front of me. I hope you had a restful night. Don't worry. Everything will be well.

Love.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5068

51. LETTER TO A. KALESWARA RAO

October 14, 1944

DEAR KALESWARA RAO,

Bapu was very glad to have your letter of the 8th inst.

He is sorry about Shri Narayanarayu's demise. We shall have to make such sacrifices before the battle of freedom is won.

Thanks for your suggestions which have been duly taken note of by Gandhiji.

Yours sincerely,

PYARELAL

SHRI A. KALESWARA RAO
SANTIKUTIR
NANDI GRAM
KRISHNA DISTT

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 22-10-1944.
[2] Private Secretary to the Viceroy

52. LETTER TO ABDUL QAIYUM

October 14, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

Gandhiji has your letter of the 6th instant.

In regard to your question Gandhiji desires me to say that if the party members are in favour of attending the session of the Assembly he is not going to interfere.

Yours sincerely,

PYARELAL

JANAB ABDUL QAIYUM
M. L. A. (CENTRAL)
ABIGUZAR
SRINAGAR

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

53. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

October 14, 1944

Do you know the poem 'Try Again'? No giving in permitted. All other trust is vain. Only trust in God. That is the lesson of Vidya's death. Your love is on trial.

This for today.

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

54. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON

October 14, 1944

BHAI TANDONJI,

Is this Rashtrabhasha?[1]

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The letter is written on a printed circular of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Allahabad, issued in English.

55. DISCUSSION WITH SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

October 14, 1944

J. If your programme of village reconstruction as a whole is to be taken up, we must select and train efficient workers. . . .

Then there will be the question of training workers for which we would have to start *vidyalayas* in every province and frame syllabi for them. There is a great dearth of able teachers. Our first-grade workers have confined themselves to their particular areas—to their village, tehsil or district. . . .

I do not quite see how the new work can be accomplished unless we divert some of these workers from their field to the training centres. Who else can impart the right attitude and approach to village workers?

G. Khadi work started in the beginning from a single centre. So also now we may begin with only one training centre. We shall prepare graduates there and send them to other centres. They will produce other workers who will start yet more centres.

J. It may involve a lot of time, from five to even ten years.

G. Possibly, but I do not think so. Our first batch will consist of those who have already enough prior preparation, and so they will not take long to go out as full-fledged workers. Again, as soon as they have acquired a certain amount of efficiency we shall ask them to go out to the villages and add to their store of knowledge by dint of actual experience in the field. I do not, therefore, feel that a large amount of time will have to be spent on training. But even if it is, we should not worry. If we do not get workers of the highest quality it does not matter. We will try to obtain the finest material, but be ready to do with what we can get at present.

J. The workers we got in 1920 proved their worth. Thereafter we did not secure that high type of workers in so large a measure. Some did come indeed, and do come, but in very small numbers.

G. The fact is our method was defective and there was little in our programme to attract the better type. There seemed to be little scope for intellectual development in our work. Hence a large number of people did not feel attracted to it. Besides the remunerative attraction present in other fields was not there. But what was worse, a sort of ignorance and inertia characterized the khadi workers, which made others look down on them. People felt that khadi workers did not dress properly, looked dirty and were quite often devoid of common sense. The workers did not have adequate knowledge of the science of khadi and so did little to explain it to the people. They were

often not in a position to answer the simple questions of those who wanted to know.

We did settle in the villages where we provided work to the villagers. But the intellectual among us did not, to any large extent. The few who worked did not have the attitude of an anxious and earnest devotee eager to explain his viewpoint to the people.[1] If we had we would have become such experts in our work that we would have been in a position to declare before economists, "We know all that you know. But you lack the practical knowledge that we have. This you can learn from us."

J. True. Our knowledge is incomplete and we have very many defects. But our scale of measuring values is also different.

G. May be, but we must have the capacity to tell them that their scale is not right.

J. But how to compare moral values with material values?

G. Then you could at least place those moral values before them and prove their worth. If I come to realize today that khadi alone is not going to last I shall have to proclaim it to the world. So far as the material value of khadi goes, even Government records show that there is a place for the spinning-wheel as a means of relief, like stone-breaking, road-making, etc. You also can establish this much that khadi has an invariable place as a relief measure. But what we are required to prove above all is the need for khadi to establish a strong, non-violent village economy.

We shall see what difficulties we come across in working the programme of self-sufficiency. Commercial khadi may continue for a time, but the essential programme of the A.I.S.A. hereafter must be that of self-sufficiency, and workers should concentrate all their thought and energy on it.

Khadi: Why and How, pp. 187-9

[1] The Hindi here has: "But a sufficient number of intelligent workers did not come forward from amongst us to work in the villages and those who did so did not learn the art of explaining their viewpoint to an anxious or earnest enquirer."

56. LETTER TO GLADYS OWEN

SEVAGRAM,
October 15, 1944

MY DEAR GLADYS,

This is just to thank you for your letter and to say you must take care of yourself.

Love.

BAPU

MISS GLADYS OWEN
NUR MANZIL
LAL BAGH
LUCKNOW
U.P.

From a photostat : C. W. 11282. Courtesy : Dr. Priyamvada Mathur

57. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

Sevagra me yesterday. First about Henry[1]. If I had received any letter from him I would have answered immediately. But I have nothing from him. I have enquired of both Pyarelal and Kanu and no letter from him can be found. I have registered my complaint. I don't want to ruffle him by repeating the complaint. Everybody I have met is sore at heart about his doings in U.S.A. Please give my love to Henry and Millie.[2]

About the developments here you know enough. I can add nothing except this that I am still trying. My trust in the God of Truth or better still in Truth which is God cannot be shaken under any conceivable circumstance. That for me is the rock of ages.

I hope Horace received my cable welcoming you, Muriel and him or any of you. I am in touch with the Metropolitan of Calcutta and now with the Bishop of Rangoon. This is only by the way to tell you of the company I keep and cultivate.

I am keeping as well as I can.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] H. S. L. Polak
[2] Millie Graham Polak, wife of H. S. L. Polak

58. LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
October 15, 1944

CHI. MAGAN,

All of you may come over whenever you wish. The reason for my writing is a letter from Bhai Mayashankar. He writes about his dues. I think the matter should be settled. Jyotilal writes about Champa[1] and says that she wishes to come here. I think all these matters can soon be settled.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MAGANLAL PRANJIVAN MEHTA, BARRISTER
82 GHODBUNDAR ROAD
ANDHERI, BOMBAY, B.B. & C.I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1030. Courtesy: Manjula M. Mehta

59. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
October 15, 1944

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I read your letter written on the *Rentia Baras* day and also read the one written by Chi. Amba[2] *alias* Sujata. Why should we fear death when we know that wherever we are we are dancing in the jaws of death and they may close any moment to swallow us? Why should we worry about it? One day we have to leave this world, then why not today? We are also aware that death is not the end of the *atman*.

What Tulsiramji says is true but we should not regard it as a rigid law. In the prevailing circumstances your taking a lawyer's help or writing yourself whatever you wish to write is certainly proper. It may also be your duty.

I was glad to read your syllabus. You should not give up [your study of] Urdu. You will progress even if you devote half an hour or 15 minutes to it every day.

Take care of your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Sabarmati Sangrahalaya

[1] Wife of Ratilal P. Mehta, addressee's eldest brother
[2] Addressee's wife

60. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
October 15, 1944

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have had no letter from you. I hope you are quite well and I need never be worried that I do not have a letter from you. May you be happy and remain so.

Bhai Mahmud's reply is enclosed.

May the New Year prove happy for you!

Kanam is absorbed in his play and is bubbling over with joy.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

61. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

October 15, 1944

God's grace descends on those who do His work. You have to do God's work. Do you ever ply the charkha? Plying the charkha constitutes the greatest *yajna*. You should ply it even while weeping. Meditate over this today.

Do as Pandit Shiv Sharma has directed. He has prescribed harmless remedies.

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

62. FOREWORD

SEVAGRAM,
October 16, 1944

Acharya Shriman Narayan Agrawal is one of those young men who have sacrificed a prosperous, perhaps even brilliant, career for the service of the Motherland. Moreover, he happens to be in full sympathy with the way of life for which I stand. This brochure is an attempt to interpret it in terms of modern political science. Acharya Agrawal seems to have made an earnest study of modern literature on the subject. I am sorry to have to say that I have not gone through the treatise with the attention it deserves. Nevertheless I have read enough of it to be able to say that he has not misrepresented me in any place. There is no pretence at an exhaustive presentation of the implications of the charkha economics. It claims to be a comparative study of the charkha economics based on non-violence and the industrial economics which to be paying must be based on violence, i.e., exploitation of the non-industrialized countries. Let me not anticipate the author's argument. I commend the treatise to the careful attention of every student of the present deplorable condition of the country.

The Gandhian Plan of Economic Development for India

63. A FOREWORD

SEVAGRAM,
October 16, 1944

Mrs. Vijayalaxmi Pandit has asked me to pen a few words about the late Ranjit Pandit's unfinished rendering of *Ritusanhar*. I consider myself wholly unfit to do justice to the author's effort nor does Vijayalaxmi expect me to attempt the impossible. But the touching circumstances under which Ranjit Pandit made the effort need emphasising. It is remakable how much India owes to political imprisonments. Lokmanya's celebrated work on the *Gita* would not have seen the light of day but for his imprisonment nor Jawaharlal Nehru's world-known works. Ranjit Pandit's *Rajtarangini* and his labours on *Ritusanhar* might not have been but for his imprisonments. And he was ailing in the prison. His literary labours made him forget his pain. Instead of a preface the author's introductory notes

are deeply interesting and instructive. It reveals to us Ranjit Pandit as a patriot and scholar. Having known him intimately I know what talents he had. It is a sad thought that such a son of India should have died in the prime of life. I congratulate Vijayalaxmi on giving to India and the world her husband's last labour of love.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

64. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

Silence Day, October 16, 1944

CHI. SHRIMAN,

Herewith my foreword[1] or whatever it may be called. Let me know if you want something besides this. However much I tried I could not read the whole book. It requires at least four hours; how can I spare that?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 301

65. LETTER TO P. H. GADRE

SEVAGRAM
October 16, 1944

MY DEAR GADRE,

Incidents like what you describe will happen. You must not mind them. You have to continue to invite visitors. The Managing Committee members may be told to be careful and tactful. If you must come, you may come any Sunday. It is Divali today. For financial strain, I would like you to keep yourself in touch with Bapa.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI P. H. GADRE
NASIK

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Foreword", 16-10-1944

66. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN PATHAK

October 16, 1944

BHAI RAMNARAYAN[1],

I have the letter signed by you and Bhai Umashankar[2]. I was surprised to find that you two made a common cause. The inquiry is now on under Jajuji's supervision. Hence I will not express any clear opinion at the moment. I will write again within three or four days.

Blessings from

BAPU

ACHARYA RAMNARAYAN PATHAK

BHARATI NIWAS

ELLISBRIDGE, AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

67. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKVASA

SEVAGRAM,
October 16, 1944

BHAI MANGALDAS,

It was of course my fault that I misunderstood what you said. I beg your forgiveness for that. However, though my misunderstanding you two may be pardonable, whose forgiveness am I to ask for having taken interest in your story of a theft and the remarks I made on hearing the report? It has relieved me somewhat to know that Jinnah Saheb has punished me fairly well for that. But for me this punishment is not enough.

The alternating improvement and worsening in your health is not a good sign. Please do take care.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4689. Courtesy: Mangaldas Pakvasa

[1] (1887-1955); Gujarati scholar and man of letters
[2] Umashankar J. Joshi, Gujarati poet and man of letters

68. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

SEVAGRAM,
October 16, 1944

CHI. JETHALAL,

Jajuji has investigated the matter. He had passed on [the relevant things] for me to peruse. He also gave me the letter addressed to you which I have read. I find that no office-bearer has made any allegation against you. Bhai Dhotre[1] never had any suspicion. And why should he? You are not asking for the return of some money that had been given away. You have only asked for the substantiation of any charges against you. There is no allegation, however. But I don't like your rejoinder to Jajuji. It reads like a lawyer's reply. It is not worthy of a votary of non-violence. Jajuji had asked the questions only to refresh his memory and you ought to have answered them. I want you to answer them even now.

Do you really have any khadi activity there these days? What do you do nowadays? How far have you merged yourself in the life of the people of Anantapur?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

69. LETTER TO V. L. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
October 16, 1944

BHAI VAIKUNTH,

I read your letter to Pyarelal. We ought to raise a memorial to Mahadev. It is worth considering when and in what way it can be done. I for one have been thinking over it now and then. When you come here for the 4th of November please arrange things so as to have a spare day which you can spend here. We shall then talk it over.

Blessings from
BAPU

VAIKUNTH MEHTA
POST BOX 422
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Raghunath Shridhar Dhotre, Secretary, Gandhi Seva Sangh

70. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

October 16, 1944

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

I had your telegram and today I received your letter. It is quite all right. Subsequently I came to know that this Harijan had come to you. He is a good man; sort of a labourer and a little moody. He insulted a lady and on being scolded he ran away the day before yesterday. He was given the fare and sent home. I think so long as such Harijans are willing to abide by our rules we should have a place for them. Such a situation is the consequence of the sins of Hindu society. I can however understand your difficulties. The student who arrived here must have spoken to you. I don't recall his name.

Blessings from
BAPU

VIYOGI HARI
HARIJAN NIVAS
KINGSWAY, DELHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1100

71. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SEVAGRAM,
October 16, 1944

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I am herewith sending a booklet about Higginbottom[1]. Professor Joshi had been here to get my signature on it. I declined to sign but agreed to write about it to some friends. You might have perhaps seen his farm. Maybe, you can help it a little if you approve of it and ask others to support it. I thought of writing to Singhania also but I shall drop the idea for the moment and be content with this one.

You must have received my letter of yesterday.

Blessings from
BAPU

Encl. Pamphlet

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8062. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Sam Higginbottom, Principal, Allahabad Agricultural Institute

72. LETTER TO SOHANLAL DWIVEDI

SEVAGRAM,
October 16, 1944

BHAI SOHANLALJI,

I have gone through both your letters. I had a vague impression that you liked my idea. It was this: It is a bad practice to over-price a book to secure donations. And associating a name with such a price-rise is worse. I have conveyed the same view to Ghanshyamdasji.[1]

What shall I say about the merits and demerits of your work? I have no capacity to judge poetry. How can I speak about poems written in my own praise? Of course I can say you have put in a lot of labour and no worthy labour is ever wasted.[2]

If you sell your work at market price we would at least know its comparative value. No special effort should be made to sponsor the sale. Many books sell on their own merit without any effort. You may realize your own expenses from the amount you have collected and, with the permission of the donors, send the balance to me for Harijan work or donate it for some altruistic work.

You can make public use of this letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 8-10-1944.

[2] This paragraph is from a facsimile of the Hindi in *Gandhi Abhinandan Granth*, p. iii.

73. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

October 16, 1944

One can do anything when one is peaceful and happy. But the charkha is the support and solace of the unhappy and the hungry. You must not abandon it when you are in grief. I shall write to Kewalramani[1]. Get me to do so in the afternoon.

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

74. LETTER TO K. B. KEWALRAMANI

SEVAGRAM,
October 16, 1944

MY DEAR KEWALRAMANI,

I have your note. Vidya was a priceless girl with her thoughts always turned towards God. I miss her probably as much as you do. But Anand is simply disconsolate. I tell him, in being so he fails to be true to Vidya. Her soul is surely not at peace when she knows that her dear ones grieve over the dissolution of her perishable body, instead of copying her godliness and doing the work of God. Anand is trying to be peaceful and useful.

Yours,

From a copy. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

75. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

7 a.m., October 17, 1944

You should make your time-table so as not to leave a moment free. That is the real love for the departed. Look at the Englishmen. They also love their dear ones. But they devote themselves to service all the more when they lose their dear ones.

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] Addressee's father-in-law; *vide* the following item.

76. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM,
October 17, 1944

BHAI AMRITLAL,

I saw your letters written to Sailen[1]. You should not have assumed that I would let the marriage[2] take place without informing you. But you have of course given your consent for it. They wanted to marry even while I was in jail. Then I did not consent to it. But now even if I tried Abha would not agree to postpone it. They have come very close to each other. They do observe the proprieties, but their mutual affection is growing. I would like the marriage ceremony to take place in Sevagram around the 5th of November.[3] I would expect your blessings for them. Do come if you can.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10356. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

77. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM,
October 17, 1944

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

Received your letter. It is good. Your health is good. Well done. The more you improve your health the better will be the work you do. I can send all the money that is needed. If you send a certificate from Bhagirathji I can even send it from Ba's fund. But in that case a certain procedure will have to be followed. Budget sanction will be required. Satis Babu may himself write about the cow, he can also advise regarding khadi. He is a trustee as well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS]

Akbar[4] has gone to a village in Gujarat. Zohra[5] will join him after having had training in nursing at the Ashram.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 485

[1] Addressee's son
[2] Of the addressee's daughter Abha with Kanu Gandhi
[3] The marriage took place on November 7.
[4] Akbarbhai Chavda and his wife
[5] *ibid*

78. LETTER TO ARUNCHANDRA GUPTA

October 18, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter of October 2nd as also your letter of 27-7-1944 have been duly received by Gandhiji. Thanks for your good wishes.

What you say about Bengal is true. The matter is deeply exercising Gandhiji's mind. But at present the scope for effective action seems to be very limited indeed. He feels the handicap and the limitation galls him. He is therefore waiting upon God to show him the way.

Yours sincerely,

PYARELAL

SHRI ARUNCHANDRA GUPTA
SECURITY PRISONER, SPECIAL RESERVE JAIL
P. O . BUNA DUAR
JALPAIGURI DIST. (BENGAL)

From a photostat: G.N. 8670

79. A LETTER

SEVAGRAM,
October 18, 1944

DEAR SISTER,

You need not transfer the money as proposed by you. Keep it with you or transfer it to the V.[1] Ashram and use it under Sastri's guidance or his nominees.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Vinaya

80. LETTER TO VITHTHALDAS JERAJANI

October 18, 1944

CHI. VITHTHALDAS,

I have your detailed letter. My partiality for you is well known by now. You would think carefully before starting work anywhere. You need not insist on spinning at places where it cannot be easily popularized. If people agree either to card or spin or weave or get cloth woven for their own needs, let them do so. Jajuji will send you a note explaining my views[1] in this matter. Read it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9806

81. LETTER TO INDU PAREKH

Kartak Sud 1 [*October 18, 1944*][2]

CHI. INDU,

New Year's blessings to you all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Expressed during discussions with Shrikrishnadas Jaju; *vide* "Discussion with Shrikrishnadas Jaju", 7-10-1944, "Discussion with Shrikrishnadas Jaju", 8-10-1944, "Discussion with Shrikrishnadas Jaju", 10-10-1944, "Discussion with Shrikrishnadas Jaju", 11-10-1944, "Discussion with Shrikrishnadas Jaju", 12-10-1944, "Discussion with Shrikrishnadas Jaju", 13-10-1944 and "Discussion with Shrikrishnadas Jaju", 14-10-1944.

[2] The letter has been included among those of 1944 in which year *Kartak Sud* 1 fell on this date.

82. LETTER TO NRISIMHAPRASAD K. BHATT

Kartak Sud 1, 2001 [*October 18, 1944*]

BHAI NANABHAI,

I am sure your son's operation will be smooth and successful. Normally this kind of surgery does not involve any risk. You must pay me a visit before you return. Even if you have no questions to ask I have some. You may send Manubhai[1] and Vijaya[2] whenever you can. They may stay on as long as they like. In the mean while who will look after the work at Ambla? Blessings to Hiralal and Ponchibehn.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

83. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

October 18, 1944

We do not know if the dead send anything to the living; but the living do. Hence we should never weep after their death.

God's grace is gained by doing His work. This is done by serving the afflicted—in thought, word and deed.

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

84. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
October 19, 1944

CHI. DAHYABHAI[3],

I have your letter. I feel that we cannot submit to a search. If we are permitted to go only on condition of submitting to a search, we should give up that desire. I think that you may go if they have imposed no such condition and if later they want to make a search,

[1] Manubhai and Vijaya Pancholi
[2] *ibid*
[3] Son and daughter of Vallabhbhai Patel

you should refuse to submit to it.

God will protect Manibehn[1].

I am writing this in great hurry.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI DAHYABHAI PATEL

68 MARINE DRIVE

BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 162

85. LETTER TO B. G. KHER

SEVAGRAM,

October 19, 1944

BHAI BALASAHEB,

I wished to but could not reply to your letter by return of post. There is no need to issue a rejoinder to *The Free Press* [*Journal*]. It will be enough if you give an interview to some paper or to a Press agency. I consider your reply to the Government perfectly harmless and complete in itself. Your health will improve at the Kaivalyadham[3].

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Kishorelal is keeping well.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2773

[1] A yoga institute of Bombay

86. LETTER TO DADUBHAI DESAI

SEVAGRAM,
October 19, 1944

BHAI DADUBHAI,

I have your letter. We should have only women workers for women's institutions. Let them make mistakes, if they will, and learn in the process. Does not the Government tell us that we shall have swaraj when we have gained experience? Let us learn from them that women who have all along been oppressed by us must have a right to make mistakes if we want to help them become independent.

Blessings from
BAPU

DADUBHAI DESAI
NADIAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

87. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

October 19, 1944

CHI. DINSHAW,

I have your letter. I am dictating this to Kanu for fear that my handwriting may not be legible.

I enclose the name and address of the nature-cure specialist in Andhra. I shall have a list prepared of other names and addresses for you.

With regard to Kamubehn my advice is that if she says she is not able to pay, we should leave it to her. I understand that she depends on the income of her husband. It seems her father too is in reduced circumstances. I cannot say for certain. Ardeshir[1] must be growing up. He should become an embodiment of nature in every way.

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Addressee's son

88. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

October 19, 1944

Consider what a poor man would do in your situation. He would labour twice as much if he lost his wife. He too is a devotee of God. The inner joy comes from doing God's work. We should place ourselves in the position of the poor. You should look upon your deafness as a gift from God. Even a moment's idleness should be looked upon as theft of God's treasure. I know no other way to inner or outer happiness.

Do you follow all this? Or would you like me to write in English?[1]

* * *

The best way to celebrate the date is for you to devote yourself wholly to spinning or some ashram labour of your choice and connect Ramanama with it.

* * *

Wholly unnecessary.[2] You may give something for those who are in real need.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

89. LETTER TO ANASUYA AND SHANKERLAL BANKER

SEVAGRAM,
October 20, 1944

CHI. ANASUYABEHN AND SHANKERLAL,

I have letters from both of you. May you both enjoy good health—mental and physical.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 11565

[1] The following two paragraphs and the subscription are in English.

[2] The addressee had asked whether he could continue the practice of distributing fruits and sweets on the 20th of every month.

90. LETTER TO S. P. PATWARDHAN

SEVAGRAM,
October 20, 1944

CHI. APPA,

I have your letter. Let us not gloat over the pleasant nor brood over the unpleasant. It is therefore well and good that you experienced pleasure and pain simultaneously. There is no need to quit the Congress, or to give up the office that might come your way as a result of the election. Maybe, it is your dharma to cling to the office. Dharma to quit can arise if there is risk of being left behind. We must not frantically pursue an elective office so as to lose our senses. You have to decide for yourself which of the two above-mentioned dharmas holds in your case.

Blessings from
BAPU

APPA PATWARDHAN
RATNAGIRI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

91. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

October 20, 1944

Today is an auspicious day for you. I had often made Vidya cry. She would weep like you and implore me to give her God's vision. I chided her and told her to see God in the charkha and not expect to see Him merely by sitting near me. She understood it in the end.

We are machines as well as mechanics. The body is the machine and the soul the mechanic. Today you have to take machine-like work from your body and render an account to me.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

92. LETTER TO G. C. SONDHI

SEVAGRAM,
October 21, 1944

DEAR SONDHI,

This is in reply to yours of 6th.

My blessings you have. Have they any value apart from your own effort?

Yours,
BAPU

SHRI G. C. SONDHI
LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

93. LETTER TO SHUAIB QURESHI

SEVAGRAM,
October 21, 1944

MY DEAR SHWAIB,

Your letter in your usual style. I must await your arrival in patience. The Nawab Saheb's telegram quite becomes him. Let us see what happens.

I hope all is well on your side.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

94. LETTER TO V. VENKATAKRISHNAIAH

SEVAGRAM,
October 21, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

I would like you to make your experiment in Sevagram but I lack the faith you want to inspire in me. Your intention is wholly good, your execution is defective. Nevertheless you shall come to see

me, if I feel settled down. You will know when I am.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI V. VENKATAKRISHNAIAH

KHADDAR SAMSTHANAM

BEZWADA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

95. LETTER TO GOVINDLAL

SEVAGRAM,

October 21, 1944

DEAR GOVINDLALJI,

This is in reply to your kind letter of 13th.

I never had any faith in the parliamentary programme. I have tolerated it as I tolerate many things. You know where my faith lies.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI GOVINDLALJI

15 LANDS END ROAD, MALABAR HILL

BOMBAY

From a copy: File No. 3001/H/P 297. Commissioner of Police, Bombay

96. LETTER TO ATMARAM BHATT

SEVAGRAM,

October 21, 1944

BHAI ATMARAM,

I have just heard that in the name of non-violence you have given up milk and milk-products as also medicines. I do not at all approve of this. After all am I not the sole source of these beliefs? You know that I do take milk although not cow's or buffalo's. Hence there is now no point in my having given up milk. We shall all give up milk when there is someone among us who will guide us towards intelligently giving up all milk as such. Understand that the same

applies to medicines. You can be said to have truly given up medicines if you ate all your food regarding it as medicine. Know it to be your dharma to preserve your body which is to be utilized for public good.

Blessings from
BAPU

ATMARAM BHATT
BHAVNAGAR[1]

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

97. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

October 21, 1944

By all means study Sanskrit. The effort made for learning correct pronunciation will not be wasted. Chaste pronunciation is a requisite for [learning] any language. But perhaps for Sanskrit accuracy of pronunciation is imperative. It is not at all necessary for you to study English. Assimilate the knowledge you already have and add to it.

My blessings of course are with you .

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, p. 358

98. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

October 21, 1944

A man can positively see God through the object of his meditation. The charkha is the best symbol and it produces tangible results too.

Institutions like the Ashram, etc., thrive because one needs the support of others. Physical nearness is not always necessary for such support. Some find it through correspondence, some through meditation and still others through the noble words of the dead, just as we meet Tulsidas every day.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] The letter was dispatched through Sarvashri Jadavji, Rasiklal and Jethalal Joshi.

99. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

SEVAGRAM,
October 22, 1944

Congressmen should read without passion Dr. Mahmud's letters to the Viceroy and his statement to the Press releasing those letters. The motive in writing the letters was undoubtedly pure. He did not want his release before that of his colleagues of the Working Committee and yet the Government could not, consistently with their declaration, detain Dr. Mahmud after his unequivocal dissociation from the very start with the civil resistance clause of the A. I. C. C. Resolution[1] of 8th August 1942.

Where Dr. Mahmud erred was in not informing his fellow detenus of the letters. If he suppressed himself for so long he could not, without consultation and without authority from them, write to the Government what his mind was at the time the Resolution was passed. The practical question for Congressmen is whether they are to make use of Dr. Mahmud's services or ostracize him for the 'impropriety' he admits having committed. I have no doubt whatsoever that they should make the best use possible of the services for which his long and unbroken connection with the Congress makes him eminently fit. For me, in spite of his indiscretion, he remains the same dear friend he has been since the Khilafat and before. The public know my connection with the father-in-law, the late Maulana Mazharul Haque[2].

The Hindu, 24-10-1944

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Resolution passed by All-India Congress Committee", 8-8-1942.

[2] A nationalist leader from Bihar; one of the founders and, later, President of the Muslim League. He supported Gandhiji during the Champaran and Civil Disobedience movements.

100. HINTS FOR CONSTRUCTIVE WORKERS[1]

Workers should definitely realize that the constructive programme is the non-violent and truthful way of winning *purna* swaraj. Its wholesale fulfilment is complete independence. Imagine all the forty crores of people engaged in the constructive programme which is designed to build up the nation from the very bottom upward. Can anybody dispute the proposition that it must mean complete independence in every sense of the expression, including the ousting of foreign domination? When the critics laugh at the proposition, what they mean is that forty crores of people will never co-operate in the effort to fulfil the programme. No doubt there is considerable truth in the scoff. My answer is, it is worth the attempt. Given an indomitable will on the part of a band of earnest workers, the programme is as workable as any other and more so than most. Anyway, I have no substitute for it, if it is to be based on non-violence.

Civil disobedience, mass or individual, is an aid to constructive effort and is a full substitute for armed revolt. Just as military training is necessary for armed revolt, training in constructive effort is equally necessary for civil resistance. And just as the use of arms becomes necessary only when an occasion demands it, even so is the use of civil resistance only occasional. Therefore workers will never be on the look-out for civil resistance. They will hold themselves in readiness, if the constructive effort is sought to be defeated. To take one or two illustrations, effort for communal friendship cannot be defeated, political pacts can.

But political pacts are required because of the previous lack of friendship. Similarly khadi manufacture and its use cannot be defeated if both become fairly universal. The manufacture and use are not to be brought about by imposing them upon the people, but they have to be intelligently accepted by them as some of the necessary items of the freedom movement, when it is worked from the villages as units. Pioneers even in such programmes are likely to be obstructed. They have had to go through the fire of suffering throughout the

[1] This was sent to the Workers' Conference held in Bombay on October 28 and 29 under the presidentship of N. V. Gadgil. Congressmen from Maharashtra, Gujarat and Karnataka also participated in the Conference.

world. There is no swaraj without suffering. In violence truth is the greatest sufferer; in non-violence truth is ever triumphant.

If this preliminary observation has gone home to the reader he will find the constructive programme to be full of deep interest. It should prove as absorbing as politics so-called and platform oratory.

The detailed constructive programme is to be found in my pamphlet[1] on it, and Dr. Rajendra Prasad's[2] which is a running commentary on it. It should be remembered that it is illustrative, not exhaustive. Local circumstances may suggest many more items not touched in the printed programme. These are beyond the scope of a treatise on an all-India programme. They are necessarily for local workers to find out and do the needful.

In these hints I have singled out some items for fuller emphasis in the light of experience gained since the publication of the programme.

The kisan or the peasant, whether as a landless labourer or a labouring proprietor, comes first. He is the son of the soil which rightly belongs or should belong to him, not to the absentee landlord or zamindar. But in the non-violent way the labourer cannot forcibly eject the absentee landlord. He has so to work as to make it impossible for the landlord to exploit him. Closest co-operation amongst the peasants is absolutely necessary. To this end, special organizing bodies or committees should be formed where there are none and those already in existence should be reformed where necessary. The *kisans* are for the most part illiterate. Both adults and young persons of school-going age should be educated. This applies to men as well as women. Where they are landless labourers their wages should be brought to a level that would ensure a decent living which should mean balanced food, dwelling-houses and clothing, which should satisfy health requirements.

Land laws should be examined. The peasant indebtedness offers a limitless field for research. The problem of cattle too is an integral part of agriculture in India and therefore requires the attention of workers skilled in this very intricate and somewhat baffling problem.

Closely allied to the *kisan* work is labour. Here labour means industrial labour and, therefore, concentrated and centralized and

[1] *Vide "Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place;"* 13-12-1941.
[2] *ibid*

much more limited in scope. Moreover, it lends itself readily to political handling; being necessarily confined to the cities it attracts workers more easily than *kisan* work. As part of constructive programme its primary aim is elevation of labour to its deserved status. Therefore a labour worker's aim should be to raise the moral and intellectual height of labour and thus by sheer merit to make him or her capable not merely of bettering his or her material condition but making labour master of the means of production instead of being the slave that it is. Capital should be labour's servant, not its master.

Labour should be able to support itself during strikes. (Labour should be taught the science of conducting a successful non-violent Labour should be made conscious of its duty from whose performance rights follow as a matter of course.

In a concrete form:

(a) Labour should have its own unions.

(b) Education, both general and scientific, of both men and women should be regularly undertaken through night-schools.

(c) Children of labourers should be educated after the Basic Education style.

(d) There should be a hospital, a creche and a maternity home attached to every centre.

(e) Labour strike.)

All the work I have mentioned could be only done through unions mentioned in (a). To my knowledge the Ahmedabad Union is the best managed union. This does not mean that it has reached my ideal. It is trying to. If all the unions worked in the same direction, the lot of labour would be infinitely better than it is today. Labour united and morally and intellectually trained would any day be superior to capital.[1]

Next in importance is the student class above the age of 12. Indeed if we had enough workers of the right type, I would go so far as to say that we should work among them as soon as they begin learning as infants. For they have to be taken in hand from the school-going age. Indeed, I need not say that I have not in mind their political use. For the present the schools are largely under Government control or are influenced by them. Hence the students' education is defective in a vital matter. They are untouched by the political condition of the country save what they learn from the newspapers or platform orators. They should have in a systematic

[1] This sentence is from The Bombay Chronicle, 28-10-1944.

manner their present education supplemented by Congress workers. How this can be fitted into the present system of education is a serious question. But it has to be tackled. Up to the matriculation standard co-operation of parents is necessary.

I adhere to the view often expressed by me that the student world should be aloof from the political turmoil. It would be different if there was mass civil disobedience. But at any rate for the time being that is out of the question. But they should have education in national consciousness. It is the duty of an independent State to teach its citizens to be patriotic. The education is imparted by a foreign agency. It runs contrary to the national aspirations. There should, therefore, be a body of workers whose duty it would be to undertake the big task of taking in hand the work mentioned above. In this sense it is a new field and it is of vital importance to us. We must recognize the fact that the students are not to be weaned from schools and colleges. The rapidly increasing number of entrants is proof positive of it. The best course, therefore, is to supplement their studies in an orderly manner. Deliverance lies through national effort in this direction showing marked superiority over the foreign method.

M. K. GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, October 22, 1944

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

101. LETTER TO UMIA AGRAWAL

SEVAGRAM,
October 22, 1944

CHI. UMIA,

Why do you reprimand me ? I wanted to give you a good husband. Have I not given you one ? I can arrange for divorce if you do not like him. There are always ups and downs in life. They temper us. You will make me feel ashamed by feeling defeated like that. You will hurt the spirit of Jamnalalji and also make Jaya feel ashamed. Why are you becoming a coward ? I have imagined you to be brave. May the New Year be fruitful to both of you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

102. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHASTRI

October 22, 1944

BHAI HIRALAL SHASTRI,

Why should you need anyone's blessings for your function? Even then you have mine. For people like you, however, your work itself ought to be the blessing. I have heard a lot in praise of your work. It would have been fine if you could have come. But why should anyone, immersed in his own work, waste his time going places?

Blessings from

BAPU

BANASTHALI (JAIPUR)

From a copy. of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

103. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI[1]

October 22, 1944

Hope is eternal. Devotion to it never goes in vain.

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuke Ashirvad, p. VI

104. TALK WITH FRIENDS

[*On or after October 22, 1944*][2]

Friends and co-workers tried to argue with him. He had just presented to them his enlarged and revitalized programme of constructive work. Would not the great wave of emotion, which his fast would set up, disturb the "peace and tranquillity" in which many of them were settling down to work? Gandhiji replied:

But that is just what I want. I do not want you or anybody else "to settle down" to anything. In the midst of this frightful triple do so because I know the joy of dying. Because I know that joy and amazing thing is that I still survive and can feel the joy of living. I can grief are the obverse and reverse of the same coin, I remain unaffected

[1] According to the addressee this "was written on a picture entitled 'Hopes' which Vidya used to cherish so much".

[2] From the reference to the "Hints for Constructive Workers", 22-10-1944.

by either and act as God bids me.

Must you speak through the pangs of hunger? Is there no other method?

There are many. They are for you to adopt. I must use mine, which I hold as a special gift from God to appeal to the heart and soul of the people.

a result, it would not let loose a storm with none left to control it?

That may happen. I do not want it. But I would face that risk if the upshot of living a conscious life of truth and non-violence for over half a century is that India, too, has to go through a blood-bath.

"Why should you not in that case invite the risk of chaos in pursuit of non-violence The slaughter of soldiers, civilians and truth, it is impossible to settle down to anything. One has ceaselessly to be on the march body and soul. My business is to stir up myself and my surroundings and shake us out of our complacency.

What reason had he to think that his fast would compel the people to think instead of paralysing their thinking?

While it might be presumptuous on the part of a puny individual like himself to think, he replied, that his fast would galvanize the people, it was his faith that he had not striven all those years in vain to live a life of truth and non-violence, that gave him the right to speak through his fast.

Today millions are experiencing the pangs of hunger in passive helplessness. Even a small fraction of this suffering undergone willingly and with knowledge could change the face of the situation. How can I speak to these millions, or identify myself with them, without [under]taking this fast and knowing myself what pangs of hunger mean?

He could not point to any single thing in explanation of his urge to fast, he said, but the whole situation in its totality overwhelmed him.

The friends were not satisfied. What guarantee was there that if anything happened to him as while you are there in the flesh to control it?" the friends returned to the charge.

Because I do not want anarchy or chaos. I must work for orderliness, not anarchy. But if in that attempt anarchy comes in my way, I would not be deterred by it. The world is thrilled by the reckless bravery of the Japanese. Far greater courage and bravery are expected of non-violence at this juncture if the law of the Jungle is to be replaced by the law of love.

Mahatma Gandhi —The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, pp. 98-9

105. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,
October 23, 1944

Mr. Horniman[1] thoughtfully sent the following wire to Mr. Pyarelal on the 19th:

> Can you confirm or deny the Allahabad report that Gandhiji is contemplating a fast to achieve communal unity?

Pyarelal sent the following reply:

> Thanks. Report without foundation.

The reply is accurate, in that I do not contemplate any fast to achieve communal unity or any particular end. Yet the reply is not complete.

Ever since my premature discharge, I have been saying to myself and some friends that yet another fast is in store for me. Of late what was vaguely felt has been taking a concrete shape, and so I have been sharing the feeling with a larger circle of friends. The report has now crept into the Press. It is as well for the public, therefore, to have a correct version of the talks I have been having with friends.

Fasting has a definite place in the scheme of satyagraha. It is the last weapon in the armoury of non-violence. It is taken by way of penance, purification, protest. If I am at fault, I must do penance. My non-violence rebels against the organized violence that surrounds me. It takes many shapes. Lying is as much violence as doing physical harm to a person. I do not here refer only to the violence of the rulers. I know this, that non-violence has to be most active in the face of what may seem to be invincible violence.

But nothing is clear, nothing is certain. What seems to me to be a call may be no call at all. I am, therefore, testing myself, discussing the pros and cons with friends, and allowing myself to be acted upon. I have never made fasting a fad.

I have never looked forward to it and yet it has often brought solace to the agonized soul, for real fasting puts the soul in tune with the Maker. It puts life into one's prayer. All the while, I am discussing the feeling with friends. I am praying for light and guidance, without

[1] B. G. Horniman of *The Bombay Chronicle*

which there will be no fast. I ask for the co-operation of friends throughout the world in my search for light.

The Hindu, 25-10-1944

106. LETTER TO MRS. HIGGINBOTTOM

October 23, 1944

DEAR SISTER,

I have your very kind letter. I have very few English-knowing girls. I would like you to be able to give me a fairly full course to village-minded Hindi-knowing girls for village maternity work. Must it take four years? I confess I am in the dark and so are my medical friends, not having worked in the villages. You won't think in terms of America. How can the village midwife be trained in the first principles?

My loving regards to both of you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MRS. SAM HIGGINBOTTOM

HOME-MAKING DEPT.

ALLAHABAD AGRICULTURE INSTITUTE

ALLAIIABAD

From a photostat: C.W. 10498. Courtesy: Mrs. Sam Higginbottom

107. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKVASA

23 SEVAGRAM,
October, 1944

BHAI MANGALDAS,

I have your letter. You are needlessly alarmed. There is no question of my doing anything. However, Bapa and you may try to convince me that I have done nothing wrong. For my part, I see my error clearly enough. But I will be glad if it can be proved an illusion. May not your sensitive heart be the cause of the repeated set-backs in your health? Harden your heart.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4690. Courtesy: Mangaldas Pakvasa

108. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
October 23, 1944

CHI. DINSHAW,

I have your detailed letter. I expect you are going ahead with the trust-deed. Devdas is rather slow but I won't let him forget about it.

I don't worry about the difficulties you mention because God is there to take care of both of us. We don't want to do anything for ourselves, do we? I am writing to Rameshwardas regarding the land and travelling facilities.

I hope you had my previous letter[1].

I am sure Ardeshir[2] is making some progress day by day.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Do you want anything to be added to the medicines for our treatment? We shall get it if it is necessary. Your Gujarati is all right.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

109. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SEVAGRAM,
October 23, 1944

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I gather from Dilip's letter to Swami that your health has deteriorated once again. It says you have had influenza and so forth. What is this ? Why has it happened ? I want detailed information. If you cannot write, let Dilip do so. I am deeply immersed in work.

Dilip must be quiet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dinshaw Mehta", 9-10-1944.
[2] Addressee's son

110. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL MAJMUDAR

SEVAGRAM,
October 23, 1944

CHI. PARIKSHITLAL,

As usual with me I am not well informed about the parents and families of my co-workers. I learnt that your father was alive only on hearing that he had [recently] passed away. If I had known about it I have forgotten it. Do I have to condole with you? Some day or other we are sure to lose our near and dear ones and we too are bound to go the same way. There can be no exception to this rule. I expect, therefore, that you have resumed your work after performing the last rites.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

111. LETTER TO GANGA PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
October 23, 1944

DEAR GANGABEHN,

I came to know only through Gokulbhai's letter that your public spirited son has passed away. I don't think you are distraught. Are you? You have as many sons as you like. All the men and women workers are for you sons and daughters. I would therefore ask you not to go on grieving only to frighten everybody else. Life and death are and will ever be inseparable twins.

Blessings from
BAPU

GANGABEHN PATEL

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

112. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS BIRLA

SEVAGRAM,
October 23, 1944

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

Is the land belonging to the Godrej Farm available? How does Jivanlalji help? Dinshaw's search is going on. These days it is difficult to obtain a vehicle for travelling. Can you do anything about it?

It has been proposed that the Birla House at Sevagram be used for the Maternity Home. Is there any difficulty about it?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

113. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

October 23, 1944

There is no harm in sitting near me but on such occasions do ply the *takli* as Mahadev and Kripalani used to do. Then you will not be stealing from God's time. The *takli* is our silent companion. Without making any noise it keeps turning out yarn which the world needs. While plying the takli we can see and hear everything. I would go so far as to believe that with God's grace, being absorbed in this sacrificial activity even your hearing may be restored to you. But if you become such a karmayogi[1], you would hardly care for your ears. The guru in the form of a monkey shuts his ears deliberately since the surrounding noise comes in his way.[2]

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] One who performs action without attachment
[2] The reference is to the Chinese figurine of three monkeys.

114. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEVAGRAM, "*VIA*" WARDHA,
October 24, 1944

DEAR RAJAJI,

Herewith is a letter from Shri Joseph Victoria, a leper. Can you do anything for this unfortunate ?

Yours sincerely,

SHRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR
48 BAZLULLAH ROAD
MADRAS

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

115. LETTER TO JAMILUDDIN AHMED[1]

SEVAGRAM,
October 24, 1944

BROTHER JAMIL SAHEB[2],

Your letter dated October 7, 1944. The book which Quaid-e-Azam gave me contains better arguments than your writings. It produced no effect on me. What to do? How will you be able to do what Quaid-e-Azam could not do? Who does not know his influence over the Mussalmans?

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 13-11-1944

116. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

October 24, 1944

The secret of my peace and sense of humour lies in my unflinching faith in God, that is, Truth. I know that by myself I can do

[1] The Urdu original is not available.
[2] Convener of the Committee of Writers of the All-India Muslim League

nothing. How can I be unhappy when God dwelling within me impels my every act? I know too that whatever He makes me do, is ultimately for my own good. I should be happy in this awareness. If God has taken away Ba, it is for her good as well as mine. Hence Ba's loss should not cause me grief.

And so also you should consider it a sin to grieve over Vidya's death.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

117. LETTER TO T. B. SAPRU[1]

October 25, 1944

DEAR SIR TEJ,

The Press cuttings on the breakdown of the talks[2] between Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah and me show that for the most part the criticism is unhelpful and in some cases even regrettable. In the circumstances if a representative conference is held it might prove profitable. Anyway it can do no harm. No one is better able than your good self to take the lead in this matter.[3] This conference should confine itself to an examination of the Pakistan issue in the light of the

[1] This was sent through Dr. Beni Prasad.

[2] Which were held from September 9 to September 27, 1944

[3] In his letter dated October 14,1944, the addressee had written: "Mrs. Pandit conveyed to me your message about the possibility of my calling a conference. I have for a long time been thinking over it and I have come to the conclusion that not only have I no locus standi to call such a conference but that such a conference will not do any good. In the first place I doubt very much whether Mr. Jinnah or the Hindu Sabha men will make any response as they can very easily dispose of me by saying that I have got no goods to deliver and I have got no party behind me. Secondly—and this is more important—I fear that in a conference like this where people will be actuated by party feeling and will be afraid of criticism from their own following if they take an independent line, no solid results can be achieved and indeed what I fear is that our differences will come to the surface. It is for this reason that I think that if you and Mr. Jinnah can appoint such a committee and that committee can submit a report, it may pave the way for a larger conference at that stage. I am, therefore, definitely of the opinion that a conference should not be called at this stage.

correspondence mentioned above.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU
19 ALBERT ROAD
ALLAHABAD

Gandhi-Sapru Papers. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta. Also G.N. 7574

118. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI M. PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
October 25, 1944

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

I have your letter. About sadhana do as I have suggested. Valjibhai[2] is here and he also says that he has checked up everything with *Indian Opinion*. My information therefore must be correct. You will however not be able to render me any personal service. Besides the sword of a fast is hanging over my head. I cannot say when the Ashram will go to pieces. Hence, I think it is best for you to continue to work among the Baraiyas[3]. I am convinced about what you say regarding education. They should therefore have the training that is offered at present.

Blessings from
BAPU

RAOJIBHAI M. PATEL
NADIAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

119. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

October 25, 1944

Be engaged in more physical work. By all means carry on your studies and teaching but work a lot on the takli and charkha. Clean the vegetables. Participate in the work of the Ashram and see God in whatever you do, since God is omnipresent.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] In his reply dated October 29, 1944, the addressee assured Gandhiji that he would try his utmost to promote the latter's desire in this matter.

[2] Valjibhai G. Desai

[3] A community in Gujarat

120. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

October 26, 1944

From yesterday's experience learn the lesson that you are not to go anywhere alone.[1] Take someone along with you—maybe a boy or, say, a girl. And keep yourself absorbed in a lot of physical work. Weeping is no good. Be cheerful like Nandini[2].

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

121. TALK WITH MRIDULA SARABHAI[3]

SEVAGRAM,
October 26, 1944

The unbearable forces of injustice, exploitation and falsehood prevailing in this country and the world stifle me. Government subsists on falsehood, but amongst us the number of people, who subsist on this falsehood and who have made injustice and exploitation the principles of their lives, is not small. In the presence of this, good elements of life are entirely suppressed and appear helpless. There is nothing left like moral public opinion.

On the one hand, there is a combination of violence effected on an unprecedented scale while, on the other, I have laid a claim that non-violence has strength enough to oppose any amount of well-organized and banded violence, and how to achieve it is the question. There are too good elements in India and the world, but how to awaken them? How can it be done? Fast is the last resort of satyagraha. When people cannot be made to do anything it is the right of a lone satyagrahi to resort to this final measure. If my fast comes about it is possible that it will be the complaining voice of the exploited humanity before the world.

[1] The addressee had broken down while taking a walk alone.

[2] Daughter of Mohanlal Nayyar

[3] The report in Gujarati was released to the Press by Mridula Sarabhai but subsequently she withdrew it on being informed that Gandhiji intended to issue a statement on the subject, which however is not available. While sending this translation to the Home Department, the Deputy Director of the Intelligence Bureau *inter alia* wrote: "These notes are of interest as they furnish some indications of the working of Gandhi's mind."

Those who can foresee the possibility of mass movement, against the prevailing falsehood, they are at liberty to do it. But the individual or the individuals who do it must shoulder its complete responsibility. I cannot give my blessings to it. Today, the circumstances are not favourable for it. Besides, the public is full of resentment, and therefore the mass satyagraha would result in violence. Our little violence will be met by hundredfold violence by Government. We should not expect merciful treatment from them.

This does not mean that we should be a mute spectator of it, or that we should continue to suffer it. Those who consider the present condition as oppressive, and find the laws encouraging injustice and exploitation and depriving of one's liberty, they can definitely resort to satyagraha. Only that it should be done individually and it should not be devoid of politeness. It can only be done with absolute non-violence. There are good many forces contained in it. If a crore of people were to do individual satyagraha it would baffle Government. Then Government would either be helpless or resort to use of guns. You cannot sit silent after saying that individual satyagraha can be offered. It is one's duty to do it. If the public has any stamina, it can oppose thus the looting going on under its nose. Leaving aside the question of a crore of people, if all (local) people do so at one place, it is enough.

If individual satyagraha is not approved, the prevailing falsehood of the present day should be opposed in any other way. Today our own people are depriving the public of their food grains. If they do not do it, people will not starve. The cultivator, who produces food, does not get it to eat in spite of its being there. We have no political power, otherwise its remedy would have been found. This condition is terrible. I cannot tolerate our people behaving thus, and collecting vast fortunes at the cost of people's starvation. If we can rid our people of falsehood and roguery, Government's falsehood cannot work. Let us remove the corruption prevailing everywhere. It is already there in the Government, but it has increased to a very great extent among those middlemen who live on brokerage. If these people improve by themselves, others would do so. Today the chain of violence is made up thus. Against this we have to work non-violently. Fast is the last weapon of non-violence.

Corruption—It is both in the Government and other quarters. If non-Governmental corruption stops, the Government corruption

cannot go on. Non-violence has to bring about the union of good elements. Violence brings about unity among wicked elements. This is the first exhibition of violence.

The second is untouchability. Hindu religion must understand that it is a sin. If untouchability endures, Hindu religion will not survive. If the former is removed, the latter is safe. In the removal of untouchability and in trying to live as brethren Government cannot interfere.

The third exhibition is communal bitterness. Political settlement may be effected or not. As long as the present Government remains, it will not be possible; it would not be allowed. But we can develop good relations between us. We should not give any cause of complaint with regard to matters which are in our hands. The conduct of Congressmen in Allahabad Municipality has grieved me much. In short, we should develop good relations amongst us in the removal of untouchability and securing communal unity. Government cannot interfere in such attempts.

Refer to the supplementary note to the previous suggestions on the constructive programme and ponder over them. The meaning of your turning to me every moment for small things is that you do not want to use your intelligence. Everyone should be his leader. No harm if you commit a mistake. I shall point it out. You mend it and it should be considered as atonement. By making mistakes we shall find the real path. This does not mean that I would not guide you. As long as I can do so, I shall continue to do it.

When Gandhiji was requested to take the public into confidence with regard to all that is troubling his mind and to postpone his fast until then, he said:

I am neither in a hurry for the fast nor have a desire for it, but I think I will have to undertake it. I neither know the time nor the duration of the fast. I am trying to check that idea. How could I be a mute witness of the terrible looting and falsehood going on in India and the world? Then, what should I do? Should I start mass satyagraha? Or a revolution? That is possible. I can bring it about. But I do not want to do it. Non-violence cannot remain in it. I will not take that risk. There is no atmosphere for it. I can foresee it. Therefore the satyagrahi has only one weapon left and it is the fast. If I can move my forces thereby, I would do so. But nothing is certain yet. No decision has been taken on this fast question. Every time the public knew it after the decision was taken. This time I have been putting it

before my companions for discussion and consideration, and now this has been declared to the whole country. If they and the public desire, they might contribute towards its prevention by lessening its causes.

From File No. 51/4/44. Courtesy: National Archives of India

122. DISCUSSION WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF HINDUSTANI TALIMI SANGH

SEVAGRAM,
[Before *October 27, 1944*][1]

The first question that arose was one bearing on the suggestion that the word 'basic education' might be incorporated in the Trust-Deed, so as to make it clear to all concerned that the education contemplated under the Fund[2] would be only of the basic type. Gandhiji did not approve of it. He did not wish to put any restraint upon the trustees. If any unit did not want to adopt basic education, he would leave it free to follow any other system approved by the Board.

But the Talimi Sangh should have the confidence that no one will be able to find a better system than theirs.

Basic education would forge ahead through its intrinsic merit. He knew that the reform would not come by mere argumentation. It would come by ocular demonstration. If they could carry their experiment to a successful end even in one village, the battle would be half won. He was, therefore, content to go slow. It was enough that the trustees had agreed to the money being spent for the education and welfare of women and children in the villages exclusively.

Your work is going chiefly to be among women. I have always had a passion to serve womankind. Ever since my arrival in India, the women have recognized in me their friend and servant. They have come to look upon me as one of themselves. I hold radical views about the emancipation of women from their fetters which they mistake for adornment. If God wills it, I hope one day to place some of my conclusions before the public when my researches are completed. My experience has confirmed me in the view that real advancement of women can come only by and through their own efforts. I am, therefore, anxious that as many women workers as possible should be inspired to carry out the Talimi Sangh activities under the Trust.

The second suggestion put forth by the Talimi Sangh was that the age of the

[1] The report, date-lined "Wardha, October 27, 1944", mentions this discussion as having taken place "recently".

[2] Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Fund

boys to be covered by the scheme should be raised from 7 to 12.

Mahatma Gandhi explained why he had agreed to the reduction of the age limit for boys from 12 to 7 years. It had been brought to his notice that, if there were equal facilities for the education of boys and girls, the mothers would send the boys to school but not the girls, as they would be loath to spare them from domestic work. The result would be that the boys would get a disproportionate share of the benefit and keep out the girls. But if in any place a sufficient number of girls was not forthcoming, they could take in boys above the age of seven, on condition that they would have to make room for the girls as soon as the latter came up and that their education was paid for. The object was not to shut out boys above seven, but to prevent them from being a burden upon the Memorial Fund. The Talimi Sangh should not fall back upon the Fund designed for women. All that he was concerned about was that the money of the Kasturba Fund should not be diverted to the use of boys over seven at the expense of girls.

"Is it desirable that there should be basic schools for girls exclusively if there was not enough room for both?" somebody asked. Mahatma Gandhi said he had no objection.

Supposing crores of boys come to us for education, are we to refuse them for lack of accommodation? I tell you I won't. I will let them sit under the shade of a tree, if necessary, put bamboo *taklis* into their hands and begin to educate them straightway through these.

As to adult education, Gandhiji observed that it had become clear to him that the scope of basic education had to be extended. It should include the education of everybody at every stage of life.[1]

A basic school teacher must consider himself a universal teacher. As soon as he comes in contact with anybody, man or woman, young or old, he should say to himself: 'Now, what can I give to this person?'

Won't that be supererogation on his part?

No. Supposing I come across an old man who is dirty and ignorant. His village is his universe. It would be my job to teach him cleanliness, to remove his ignorance and widen his mental horizon. I need not tell him that I am to be his teacher. I will try to establish a living contact with his mind and win his confidence. He may reject my

[1] Earlier, talking to a friend, Gandhiji had said he had been thinking hard during his detention over the possibilities of the new education. His mind had become restive. He said: "We must not rest content with our present achievements, we must penetrate the homes of the children, we must educate their parents; basic education must become literally education for life."

advances. I won't accept defeat, but continue my effort till I succeed in making friends with him. Once that is achieved, the rest must follow.

Again, I must have my eye on the children right from their birth. I will go a step further and say that the work of the educationist begins even before that. For instance, if a woman becomes pregnant, Ashadevi will go to her and tell her: 'I am a mother as you will be. I can tell you from my experience what you should do to ensure the health of your unborn baby and your own.' She will tell the husband what his duty towards his wife is and about his share in the care of their expected baby. Thus the basic school teacher will cover the entire span of life. Naturally, his activity will cover adult education.

Some work for adult education is being done in many places. It is mostly concentrated among mill-hands and the like in big cities. No one has really touched the village. Mere three Rs and lectures on politics won't satisfy me. Adult education of my conception must make men and women better citizens all round. To work out the syllabus and to organize the work of adult education is a more difficult task than preparation of the seven years' course for children. The common central feature of both will be the imparting of education through village crafts. Agriculture will play an important part in adult education under the basic scheme. Literary instruction must be there.Much information will be given orally. There will be books more for the teachers than the taught. We must teach the majority how to behave towards the minority and vice versa. The right type of adult education should teach good neighbourliness and cut at the very root of untouchability and communal problem.

The particular industry which is to serve as the medium of instruction will be determined by local conditions in each place. For instance, people in a village might tell you that they are interested in agriculture, but they are not interested in the spinning-wheel. In that case, you will choose the former as the medium of instruction. You could make a beginning by taking a census of its cattle. For instance, I find that almost everyone in Sevagram has a bullock and a bullock-cart. It seems wasteful. The villagers should be taught co-operation. Again, we must inculcate in them the right principles of relationship between men and women. Men get almost double the women's wages for identical work. Sometimes men sit lazily at home and smoke while the women toil the whole day. People should be

made to realize that this is doubly wrong and ought to go. If you agree with me that the scope of basic education should be extended, you might have to change your constitution.

The Hindu, 29-10-1944

123. NOTE TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

October 27, 1944

I don't consider anybody to be worthless. Everybody has done his best and I am satisfied. However, my yardstick is rather long and neither you nor I have come up to it. I am firm in what I said yesterday. You should make the kitchen an ideal one. Kanchan[1] may be asked to join in that work only if she is sincerely willing to co-operate, otherwise she will be dispirited. If you get her co-operation, you two, otherwise you alone with the help of anybody whom you select, should go on working silently. Consult me whenever necessary. Everybody must be assigned his or her share of the work, and I should be informed about the arrangement. Only those who can become one with the life in this village may stay here, others should leave and go where they like. I will help them in that. Let us be truthful and non-violent inwardly as well as outwardly.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5806. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

124. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

October 27, 1944

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I see several difficulties in the way of putting off Abha's wedding till December.[2] If a fast is ordained for me, it is best that the wedding should be over before that time. I can understand the love of you both and of Grandmother. But I am sure all of you will be able to understand the difficulty I have explained. If Abha's father does not attend or if, even though present, he does not insist on giving away the bride, Sumati and you may certainly do so. But since you have become so intimate [as to wish to do that], please remember that you

[1] Addressee's wife

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amrita Lal Chatterjee", 17-10-1944.

will have to follow the simplicity of Abha and Kanu, otherwise they also will lose it. Is it not our wish that this inter-caste and inter-provincial marriage should prove to be ideal in every respect?[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4803. Courtesy: Shantikumar N. Morarjee

125. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SEVAGRAM,
October 27, 1944

BAPA,

I have your letter regarding big cities. The question is not how many will stay at the main centre. The question is about utilizing them within and for the sake of the villages. We shall therefore thrash it out at the meeting on the 4th. Please have patience till then.

BAPU

THAKKAR BAPA
DELHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

126. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
October 27, 1944

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You must have understood what I said about *sadhana*. Think deeply over what I said yesterday. This is what I say: unsteadiness of mind implies impurity of thought, it cannot be regarded as *brahmacharya*. This is quite usual in youth, but he who aspires to be a *brahmachari* will grow steadier day by day. Discuss this matter with Balkoba[2] or reach a conclusion by looking within yourself. According to Munnalal's list for yesterday perhaps both of you would like to go to the rural areas of the U. P. You will have my blessings if you take

[1] Finally, the ceremony of giving away the bride was performed by the addressee and his wife, while Ravishankar Maharaj officiated as priest.

[2] Balkrishna Bhave

such a decision. If you decide to stay here then this decision as to the sort of service you prefer should be made after thoughtful consideration. Take a decision, whatever it may be.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4449

127. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

October 27, 1944

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter. It shows your inadequate understanding. I have spoiled nothing by setting up here the Khadi Vidyalaya, etc. The organizations initially started by me had to work in close association with me. If the people engaged in them could not live together as a family, then whose fault is it? Mine? Maybe, the fault is his who sees it. The Sabarmati S[atyagraha] A[shram] was remodelled after thoughtful consideration. It is my belief that we have lost nothing by being truthful. Again, after today's heart-searching we have lost nothing. We were in a slumber but now we are awake.

It is clear from what happened yesterday that it would not be right for us to continue as we have been doing. Those who can be of greater service outside should certainly go. What benefit can one derive from being near to me if one fails to understand my actions and the changes I make? No doubt a fire bucket is a very useful thing but how can one become like a fire bucket just by using it as an illustration? If you wish to be like a fire bucket then be quiet, be humble and be a sort of comfort for all, and do it after proper deliberation. Continue the study of Sanskrit. Your first task is to correct the wrong notions you have expressed in your letter. Consult Kishorelal. Ask for time if you wish to have a discussion with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1947

128. LETTER TO D. D. SATHYE

SEVAGRAM,
October 27, 1944

BHAI SATHYE,

I have carefully gone through your articles on village reconstruction. I find that they show lack of experience. I don't find in this work the attention to detail that is evident in the book on eyes. Yet the work of rural uplift calls for much greater perseverance and thoroughness than is required for the care of the eyes.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

D. D. SATHYE
39 PEDDAR ROAD
CUMBALLA HILL
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

129. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

October 27, 1944

I have come to the conclusion that in your present state you had better stay here and try to come out of your shell. You will do justice to Vidya when you forget her and in so doing your true love for her will reveal itself. Your ears are connected with your mind. Maybe, if you devote all your time to service your ears will open up. Take interest in all the activities of the Ashram and mix with everybody.

BAPU

[PS.]

Get acquainted with Amin.

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

130. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

SEVAGRAM,
October 28, 1944

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

You must have received my wire[1]. Bhai Amrita Lal, his daughter and his younger son have arrived. The whole family is pleased. Amrita Lal is perfectly willing that you should give away the bride. This simplifies everything. I will accommodate you, Jehangirji[2] and any other people whom you may bring along in this very place. Grandmother should not be put to any trouble. Get her operated upon. Her blessings will be enough.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4804. Courtesy: Shantikumar N. Morarjee

131. LETTER TO GOKULBHAI BHATT

SEVAGRAM,
October 28, 1944

I read your letter to Kishorelal. I don't remember having invited you in my letter. I might have asked you to come whenever you chose. I might have also written that you should yourself decide matters concerning your State. How can I make categorical statements about things which I have not seen with my own eyes? However, you may come now if you choose and if your coming is necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This is not available.
[2] Jehangir Patel

132. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

October 28, 1944

CHI. MRIDU,

I am not sending those letters to you. I see that they cannot be published. More when you come.

Blessings from

BAPU

[MRIDULA] SARABHAI

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

133. LETTER TO VIJAYALAKSHMI PANDIT

October 28, 1944

CHI. SARUP,

I got your letter. I again went through my article. Personally I was satisfied with it. But if you send me a sample I shall know what you want. This is what I had asked Jawaharlal to do. You might have heard about it.

Blessings from

BAPU

2 MUKHERJI ROAD

ALLAHABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

134. NOTE TO SWAMI ANANDANAND

[Before *October 29, 1944*][1]

The tussle you had with Thakkar Bapa[2] concerning the official work of the Kasturba Smarak Nidhi involved a matter of principle. There was nothing personal about it.

As a public worker and colleague, your attitude cannot be called

[1] Presumably written before the item that follows.
[2] Amritlal V. Thakkar

objectionable. Your protest was within the limits of discipline and was expressed in private.

Bapa levelled charges against you out of desperation. You had and still have a right to ask from him a fair deal. If you do ask for it, I shall grant it to you.

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

135. LETTER TO SWAMI ANANDANAND

Sunday, 9.15 p.m. [On or before *October 29, 1944*][1]

BHA I SWA MI,

I have not forgotten my promise to you. I have been able to draft the letter only today. I have not talked to Bapa, because my letter as usual, should have your approval. If you do not like this draft, you may make one yourself which I can then place before Bapa. If he refuses to sign it, I am willing to look into your complaint.

Blessings from

BAPU

[Draft]

Bapu tells me that you insist on an open enquiry concerning my attitude towards you, or a letter of apology from me. I know that I am quick-tempered. I have no complaints about your work. but I hold that even though you are my co-secretary, you are still under my control. Such being my position, whenever you have opposed me, I have become impatient and lost my temper. I know I ought not to lose my temper. But I am an ordinary human being. You should forgive me. I hope you will. You are free to publish this letter of apology whenever you wish.

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the contents it appears that the letter was written before the addressee resigned from the Joint-Secretaryship of the Kasturba Memorial Trust on November 3, 1944; *vide* "A Resolution", 3-11-1944.

136. STATEMENT ON PROPOSED FAST[1]

October 29, 1944

My heart is heavily grieved by the injustice, exploitation and falsehood prevailing and increasing, day by day, in the world. The best remedy for it is to awaken the good elements in the whole world. Collective civil disobedience is the way for it, but it is not possible today. It is very likely that such collective activity will result in violence. If we are able to avoid unofficial falsehood and injustice, Government falsehood and injustice will be no more. I feel I must do penance by fasting.

I am asked not to go on fast. I do not know when and for what duration it will come but let me say that the way to avoid the fast is in the people's hands. I desire destruction of exploitation, injustice and falsehood. If they are destroyed my fast will be unnecessary.

As a satyagrahi I cannot be a silent spectator of all these things. Revolution or collective civil disobedience is not possible and hence I must move on my wheels of non-violence through the fast.

I have expressed my views to someone today. I express them to the whole country. People can give their contribution in the work which I intend to do.

I cannot see people starve. Their rights are snatched by others. Nobody must do this. We must avoid falsehood and badmashi. We can improve those working as middlemen and thus lessen the burden upon the people. Activities of exploitation are in full swing and have become unbearable. Government stands firm and is maintaining its position on falsehood. But injustice and the policy of exploitation among the people too cannot be ignored[2].

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-10-1944

[1] According to the source this is the purport of what Gandhiji said during his discussions with different individuals.

[2] For a statement issued from Sevagram regarding Gandhiji's contemplated fast, *vide* Appendix "A Statement", 29-10-1944.

137. LETTER TO RAMLAL VARMA

SEVAGRAM, "*VIA*" WARDHA,
October 29, 1944

DEA R FRI END,

Your letter of the 25th July has been lying in Gandhiji's file all this time. He is very sorry he could not reply to it earlier. He wanted to send you a helpful reply. I am now to say that he is very sorry he does not know what help he can render in the matter.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI RAMLAL VARMA
DAILY "TEJ"
SHRADDHANAND BAZAR
DELHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

138. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

October 29, 1944

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

It is raining today. Detain [him]. Shriram[1] may come any day after the 10th, excepting Monday.

Rameshwardas may accept the agency for ghee, on condition that there will not be the slightest adulteration and that the ghee is not sold as ghee from cow and buffalos' milk and is not used for adulteration of such ghee.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 213

[1] Son of Rameshwardas Poddar.

139. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

October 29, 1944

I have read your letter. Yes, you can take out what you want from my writings. This work is good but you must do a lot of physical work. It is very harmful to keep thinking of Vidya and go on weeping. That remembrance is good which elevates the *atman* and awakens it. The nature of *atman* is *sat* (truth) *chit* (awareness from heart, duly experienced) and *ananda* (bliss). The test of both lies in bliss—the inner bliss which finds outward expression. If you do not get peace here it would be better to go to Andhradesha early. I believe there you will get *satsanga* and treatment as well. If you do not, leave the place.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

140. INTERVIEW TO N. G. RANGA[1]

October 29, 1944

PROF. RANGA, You say that the earth rightly belongs or should belong to the peasant[2]. By this, do you mean only that the peasant ought to gain control over the land he cultivates or that he should also gain effective voice and power in the society and over the State in which he is obliged to live? If the *kisans* are to have only land and not effective political power, their position will be just as bad as in Soviet Russia where political power has been monopolized by the proletarian dictatorship while peasants were first allowed to gain some holdings and later were deprived of those

[1] The report of this and the other interview with N. G. Ranga on November 28, 1944, was released to the Press by Pyarelal with the following note: "Soon after his release from prison Prof. Ranga saw Gandhiji at Sevagram. He had two interviews with him on 29th October, 1944 and 28th November, 1944. It was understood on both sides that the interviews were not for publication. As, however, parts of those interviews have already appeared in the Press, I am, under Gandhiji's instructions, releasing to the Press my full notes of the talks." At the first interview Prof. Ranga presented Gandhiji with a lengthy written questionnaire.

[2] For Gandhiji's statements quoted by N. G. Ranga, *vide* "Hints for Constructive Workers", 22-10-1944.

holdings in the name of collectivization of land.

GANDHIJI: I do not know what has happened in Soviet Russia. But I have no doubt that if we have democratic swaraj, as it must be if freedom is won through non-violence, the *kisan* must hold power in all its phases including political power.

Am I right in interpreting your statement that land should not belong "to the absentee landlord or zamindar" and that ultimately the zamindari system has to be abolished, of course through non-violent means?

Yes. But you should remember that I visualize a system of trusteeship regulated by the State. In other words I do not want to antagonize the zamindars (and for that matter any class) without cause.

When you say that a peasant "has so to work as to make it impossible for the landlord to exploit him" does it include, apart from the satyagrahic campaigns and the legislative and administrative reforms, that the peasants may oblige the State through the exercise of their franchise and political influence to improve their individual and collective conditions and minimize the powers of the landlords?

Civil disobedience and non-co-operation are designed for use when people, i.e., the tillers of the soil, have no political power. But immediately they have political power, naturally their grievances, whatever their character, will be ameliorated through legislative channels.

'But he might not have all that political power', you will perhaps say. My reply is that if swaraj is attained by the effort of the whole people, as it must be under non-violence, the *kisans* must come into their own and have the uppermost voice. But if it is not so and there is a sort of a workable compromise between the people and the Government on the basis of a limited franchise, the interests of the tiller of the soil will need close watching. If the legislature proves itself to be incapable of safeguarding *kisans*' interests they will of course always have the sovereign remedy of civil disobedience and non-co-operation. But as I said as early as in 1921[1] in connection with Chirala Perala, ultimately, it is not paper legislation nor brave words or fiery speeches, but the power of non-violent organization, discipline and sacrifice that constitutes the real bulwark of the people against

[1] The source has 1932. *Vide* "Chirala-Perala", 25-8-1921.

injustice or oppression.

You suggest that the existing *kisan* organizations should be reformed where necessary. I quite recognize the need for Congressmen who have been working among *kisans* to re-orientate the general political attitude of the *kisan* class organizations so that they will recognize the need for a united political leadership for winning our national freedom. I am also convinced that the National Congress provides for us all—especially for peasants—the most effective weapon and leadership to win freedom. But is there any harm if we organize peasants into a 'Kisan Congress' which accepts the political leadership of the Congress?

There may be gross self-deception in this presentation. When I said that the Kisan Sabhas should be reformed, I meant that up till now Kisan Sabhas have been formed not to wrest power from the Government, but to capture the Congress. That applies to the student and labour organizations too.

You are partially right. That was so in the past. But we have now completely abandoned that idea. Since you made your statement on the subject in 1938[1] the thing was completely given up. We have adopted the word Congress not in a spirit of rivalry but because we want to be identified with the Congress. We will have double membership. Every member of the Kisan Congress will also be enrolled as a member of the National Congress.

Then why not run the Congress? Why set up an independent and parallel organization? Don't you see when Kisan Sabhas are *bona-fide* organizations they are the Congress? Today only a fraction of India's population is represented on the Congress register. The Congress aspires to represent the whole nation. It claims by right of service to speak even for those who are not on its register. When it becomes a fully national organization, *de jure* as it is today by moral right, the bulk of its membership will naturally consist of the *kisans* and they will be in a position to dictate its policy.

The trouble is that some of our Congress colleagues think we are ousting them from their legitimate position of power and privilege. They may not be prepared to welcome our existence or trust our *bona fides*. We want to avoid conflicts within the Congress by willingly accepting the political leadership of the Congress. For executing our economic programme we want to have a separate class-conscious organization which will derive power both for itself and the Congress from its

[1] The source has 1929. *Vide* "Discussion with Bengal Congressmen", 13-4-1938.

contact with the masses. Unless we do that, others will come and confuse the *kisans*.

Here you have involved yourself in a fallacy. You should work to make the Congress fully representative of the *kisans*. Unless we get down to this fundamental thing and work from bottom upward, there will be no swaraj. Every Congressman must make up his mind to make the Congress an honest organization, and therefore a *kisan* organization. As for rights they should follow as a natural corollary from the performance of service. Otherwise, there is only usurpation.

You have tried for the last twenty-five years to rebuild the Congress organization and you know the result. I along with others must plead guilty for my share in the responsibility for failure. I must confess we have not got the confidence that we shall be able to so behave and act that the Congress will in the end become a *kisan* organization. Our fear is that by following your line of action in spite of ourselves, we shall allow ourselves to be exploited by vested interests. The very fact that the Birlas and their like are today prepared to give you shelter and you accept it from them prevents radical reform. Therefore, though I shall feel the wrench, I shall feel unable to work on your lines.

Then you admit that whilst you will work under the aegis of the Congress, you will at the same time run a parallel, independent organization. My mind runs in a straight line. I do not understand this zigzag. This can only lead to trouble when the Congress becomes an effective organization. I am thinking of the millions of our downtrodden countrymen who do not know what to hope and what not to hope. A parallel organization will only further confuse their minds. It would be more logical to keep out of the Congress altogether.

We enter the Congress, but we do not fight for position and power. Can you not treat us on the same footing as the Ahmedabad Labour Union?

Well, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. It will all depend on the spirit in which it is done. I have already expressed my apprehension. It is for you to remove it. You can model your organization after the Ahmedabad Labour Union. All the Labour Union members are on the Congress register. They are under the discipline of the Congress. Yet they are a power in the Congress and in the Municipality. You should confine yourself to Andhra alone. All *kisans* should be automatically on your register. But the purpose of enrolment should be educative, to make the *kisans* Congress-minded and politically conscious.

I am glad you are laying special stress on adequate wages which will assure a minimum and decent standard of living for the landless peasants. Do you not also recognize the need for achieving minimum prices for agricultural produce which will assure labouring proprietors a decent and minimum standard of living?

Of course I do.

The Bombay A. I. C. C. Resolution assures the masses that the power in the national Government and swaraj India ought to belong to the toilers on the fields, in the factories and elsewhere.[1] Can we say that the spirit of the Resolution means that the Congress therefore stands for the achievement of democratic-kisan-mazdoor-praja raj after the attainment of swaraj?

Not only after but before also. The Congress stands for democratic-kisan-mazdoor-praja raj.

Do not your new instructions envisage the development of *kisan* organizations from the village upwards, to provide for peasant leadership and co-operative action, but working in harmony with the local National Congress Committee and their leadership? I may say that the Haripura session[2] of the Congress has recognized the right of *kisans* to have their own class organizations. But we are anxious, in the light of these four years' experience, that Congressmen shall take the lead in organizing *kisans* into their own unions so that there can be real unity and co-operation between *kisan* organizations and Congress Committees.

Kisan organization and Congress organization are to me convertible terms. National Congress organizations to be true have either to be *kisan* organizations or nothing else.

Can we organize landless agricultural labour into their separate unions wherever there are workers to undertake such responsibilities in order to win for them the barest economic and social justice? I do not envisage such unions in rivalry with the local peasant unions but as a supplement to them.

Yes, but as part of Congress reorganization work.

Your instructions do not specifically mention the need for awakening and organizing the Hill Tribes and people of backward areas known as the Excluded or Partially Excluded Areas. These people number easily thirty million all over India and they are subject to many disabilities and they need our help very badly. May we take it that Congressmen have to spare their energies to organize these people into their unions?

Certainly. The aboriginal is as backward as the Harijan and more neglected. He calls for all the humanitarian service that

[1] *Vide* "Resolution Passed at All-India Congress Committee", 8-8-1942.

[2] In February 1938

Congressmen are capable of. Unfortunately very few Congressmen have taken to it.

Can our peasants and their organizations undertake satyagraha campaigns against any oppressive measures or policies of a landlord or a revenue authority, i.e., after all possibilities for settlement by negotiations through the good offices of the local Congress Committees have failed? We are aware of the 1939 Bombay A. I. C. C. instructions[1] regarding such campaigns and we accept that when there is a National Government with which the Congress co-operates, peasants' unions as well as local committees have to seek the guidance of the Provincial Congress Committees as to when and how to start and conduct such satyagraha campaigns.

They would be fools if they did not do that.

What flag do you recommend for peasant unions and handloom weavers' unions and such other unions which agree to accept the National Congress leadership? I may inform you that we have decided to drop the Red Flag and adopt the National Flag, with the typical class or professional emblem such as the plough or the loom placed in one corner in addition to the charkha which occupies already the central place.

I don't mind. To differentiate you can have your class emblem by the side of the national emblem.

Do you not recognize the need for all the colonial peoples to try to come nearer to each other, learn from each other's experience in their fight for freedom and help each other?

"Colonial people" is a badly chosen expression, "oppressed races of the earth" expresses the idea better. "Colonial" in the English language means whites who have migrated to the Colonies.

Are we right in thinking that your stand against world imperialism is intended to benefit as much the African, Chinese, Red Indians and other non-white masses as the 400 millions of India?

My correspondence with the Government while under detention shows that most clearly.

May we have your blessings for our attempt to build up the "Colonial Peoples' Freedom Front" and thus develop a research, propaganda and ideological platform with merely advisory and informative functions? I may inform you that several of our friends and your admirers in England, Africa and the West Indies, such as Mr. Reginald Reynolds, Miss Stock Kenyatta, Mr. George Padmore, have already been working on your lines for the emancipation of the colonial and coloured peoples.

[1] *Vide* "A. I. C. C. Resolutions", 23-6-1939.

I want to say ‘Yes’. But I want to understand its implications.

The greatest social problem of the modern world is the exploitation of the vast masses of agricultural people by the industrial peoples and countries through the unequal exchanges imposed upon the former by the latter through their control over the world markets and finance and imperialist machinery. Are we right in thinking that you stand for the abolition of this process of exploitation of the producers of primary commodities and the agricultural masses of the world?

Root and branch.

Are we right in thinking that ours is only a part of the general struggle of colonial peoples against world capitalism and imperialism and that India is the vanguard in the world movement of colonial and agricultural masses for freedom, economic and political?

I hope so.

Is it not our duty to allow Congressmen to join and work in local food councils and such other quasi-official organizations now that every detail of a person’s life has come within the price-controls, grain procurement and requisition and acquisition and rationing activities of Government, provided we feel satisfied that we can render some effective help to our masses or prevent mischief?

Yes. They ought to be allowed if they can do without loss of initiative and independence and can really render effective help.

What shall those peasants do whose Gandhi-Irwin salt privileges have been unjustly withdrawn or curtailed?

They should take the salt if it comes within the clause.

Do you not recognize the need for students and their Students Congress to understand, popularize and act upon the ideology of the I.N.C. consistently with their responsibilities as students?

Of course they should study and understand all that. I have set forth the limitations in my “Hints”.

The Hindu, 23-1-1945

141. NOTE TO SAILENDRA NATH CHATTERJEE

Silence Day [On or before *October 30, 1944*][1]

Take the juice of as many oranges or *mosambis* as possible. You take dextrose with fruit juice if you feel hungry, not otherwise. It will be better to live on fruit juice only for two or three days and you will be all right. You can go to Bombay without any fear.

From a photostat: C.W. 10496. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

142. NOTE TO SAILENDRA NATH CHATTERJEE

Silence Day [On or before *October 30, 1944*]

Tell him[2] I gave the name[3]. Madalasa knows it. I forget now but she won't. Sushila too may remember.

From a photostat: C.W. 10497. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

143. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

SEVAGRAM,
October 30, 1944

CHI. SUNDARAM,[4]

Your note. I thought you were definitely coming. From what fund do you expect me to send you Rs. 1001? You who can command lacs wanting me to send the University [money] for building a lowly hut? Does not the incongruity strike you?

As to printing one lac copies of the little booklet, let those who are interested see to the publication. You have better work to attend to.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3204

[1] According to Amrita Lal Chatterjee, this and the following note were written at Sevagram in October 1944, on a silence day. October 30 was the last Monday of the month.

[2] Gordhandas Chokhawala

[3] Gandhiji had suggested the name 'Ashok' for Gordhandas Chokhawala's son.

[4] The superscription is in Devanagari and Tamil scripts.

144. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

SEVAGRAM,
October 30, 1944

DEAR DESHBHAKTA,

Bapa says you are ailing. You cannot afford to do so when all about you are starving and ailing. Let someone drop me a line about you. Who is nursing you?

Love.

BAPU

DESHBHAKTA KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA
GUNTUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

145. A LETTER[1]

October 30, 1944

DEAR BABY,

You are a baby—as careless as you ever were. You give no address, the date unfinished, spelling defective. And your letter received yesterday, the day of the wedding. Well, better late than never. So you have blessings for X and his wife. Who shall prove worthy of whom?

Love.

BAPU

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, pp. 111-2

[1] This was addressed to a friend's daughter.

146. LETTER TO KULSUM SAYANI

October 30, 1944

CHI. KULSUM,

What a girl you are! You have written to me neither in Gujarati nor in Urdu, nor even in Hindi, but in English! How queer is our feeling for our national languages! What help can I offer you? If the people care, a thousand copies should sell in no time. If the people don't care, hold your patience till they feel that strongly.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. KULSUMBEHN SAYANI

From the Gujarati original: Begum Kulsum Sayani Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

147. LETTER TO DHIRENDRA NATH CHAHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM,
October 30, 1944

CHI. DHIREN,

I like your letter very much. You have got a fine job to do. Serve all and devote yourself to your work. Write to me from time to time. Improve your health, use a mosquito-net.

DHIREN CHATTERJEE
SODEPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

148. LETTER TO ZAINABEHN RAJABALI

[Before *October 31, 1944*][1]

DEAR SISTER,

Indeed, you have given me happy news. Congratulations to you and to Chi. Latif. Let us hope Dr. Latif will carry forward the legacy of his father and earn the blessings of millions.

Blessings from

BAPU

ZAINABEHN RAJABALI
57 C WARDEN ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

149. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

SEVAGRAM,
October 31, 1944

BHAI KUKABHAI,

I carefully read your letter of the 23rd, Jajuji also read it.

He has asked for a clarification, as is his wont, and says that we five should put our heads together. And I should let you all know the conclusion that I should draw from our consultations. But at the moment Jajuji does not propose to trouble any one of you. Hence, if you three come three days before the meeting of the the A.I.S.A., we could discuss things at length and also formulate our policy. We can also bring about a change in the Secretaryship, if it is found necessary. You will of course press Jajuji to accept the Secretaryship. After all it was I who had insisted upon it, wasn't it? By three I mean Vithaldas, Lakshmidas and you. You will yourself write to the two friends.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10853. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

[1] In the source this letter is placed before those of October 31, 1944.

150. LETTER TO MAHADEV A. HINGORANI

SEVAGRAM,
October 31, 1944

CHI. MAHADEV[1],

You do not write yourself but keep asking Anand, "Does Bapu ever remember me?" I do remember you. Now write to me regularly. What do you read? Do you take exercise? What do you eat? When do you go to bed? Write all this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

151. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

[Before *November 1, 1944*][2]

BHAI GOPICHAND,

Do I ever add my signature to an appeal, if I have myself not worked for the cause? My blessings are certainly there. You will get the money, but do not ask for my signature to be published. Consider my plight.

DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA
LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

152. LETTER TO T. B. SAPRU

November 1, 1944

DEAR SIR TEJ BAHADUR,

I appreciate your very affectionate letter of 25th October.[3] I want all the assistance I can get from friends like you for my guidance. I have never found myself in the condition I am in today. My ultimate guide is Truth the name by which I know God best. So far as I know there will be no haste. I am going through the daily routine as if the fast is not coming at all. Please therefore do not

[1] Son of Anand T. Hingorani
[2] In the source this letter is placed before those of November 1, 1944.
[3] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from T. B. Sapru", 25, 10, 1944.

hesitate to warn me as often as you like. I hope you had my letter[1] through Dr. Beni Prasad[2].

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi-Sapru Papers. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta. Also G.N. 7573

153. LETTER TO N. R. JOSHI

SEVAGRAM,
November 1, 1944

DEAR JOSHI,

It is disgraceful that I should reach only today yours of 2nd ultimo.[3] You know the reason why. As you contemplate coming to me, I defer action on your appeal pending your arrival. Do please come whenever you can barring Mondays. If I am away or anything happens to me you will learn from the papers and act accordingly.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI N. R. JOSHI
SECRETARY, HIGGINBOTTOM RECOGNITION FUND
ALLAHABAD AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTE
ALLAHABAD

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to T. B. Sapru", 25-10-1944.

[2] Professor of Political Science, Allahabad University

[3] The addressee had sought Gandhiji's help and guidance for raising the Higginbottom Recognition Fund which was to be used for the development of the Allahabad Agricultural Institute. Dr. Sam Higginbottom, who had completed 70 in October, was retiring from the Institute.

154. LETTER TO A. K. CHANDA

November 1, 1944

DEAR ARUN KUMAR CHANDA,

I hope you are better. I note your advice about fasting.[1] I am in God's hands. Why do you think that I have not the Eastern Provinces in mind?

BAPU

SHRI ARUN KUMAR CHANDA
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

155. LETTER TO HARIBHAU PHATAK

SEVAGRAM, "*VIA*" WARDHA,
November 1, 1944

DEAR SHRI PHATAK,

Shri A. V. Thakkar in a letter dated 16.10.1944 writes to me as follows :

Bapu had transferred Rs. 2,000/- to Shri Haribhau Phatak for Harijan work. But no work seems to have been done so far. A lot of correspondence has been passing between Shri Phatak and Shri Barve of Dhulia, the President of the Maharashtra Sangh. The main point of contention seems to be that Shri Phatak would not agree to realize Rs. 3/- or Re. 1/- from the Members of the Committee as required by the Constitution of the Sangh."

Gandhiji has desired me to draw your attention to it. A line in reply will oblige.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI HARIBHAU PHATAK
POONA

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The addressee, Deputy Leader of the Assam Congress Parliamentary Party, had invited Gandhiji to pay a visit to Bengal, Bihar and Assam and contact the suffering humanity there before undertaking another fast "as his life was no less the nation's than his own".

156. LETTER TO NATINDRA NATH DAS

SEVAGRAM, "*VIA*" WARDHA,
November 1, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

Gandhiji has your letter of the 25th ult. for which he desires me to thank you.

You should seek guidance from Congress leaders. He is unable to advise.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI NATINDRA NATH DAS
CONTAI P.O.
MIDNAPORE

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

157. LETTER TO KODI NARASIMHAN

SEVAGRAM, "*VIA*" WARDHA,
November 1, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

Gandhiji has your letter of 24th ult. for which he desires me to thank you.

He has never said to anyone that Communists as such should not be admitted to the Congress. So far as he knows no one who signs the Congress creed and pays 4 as. can be prevented from becoming a member.

Yours sincerely,
PYARELAL

SHRI KODI NARASIMHAN
NANDYAL

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

158. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
November 1, 1944

CHI. NARANDAS,

If you had used the wedding at least as an excuse for coming, I could have met you both. We could have talked about important matters. But I can understand your not coming. I am not happy that

all of you keep indifferent health. But, knowing that you are a thoughtful man, I trust that you must be using your discretion in all that you do, and so do not worry.

Whether I will fast or not rests with God. He will prompt me to do what is ordained and nothing else.

Whatever I do about the Kasturba Fund I will do after giving careful thought. You on your part should go on sending me whatever ideas occur to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS]

You will get Rs. 3,500.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8618. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

159. LETTER TO T. R. DEVGIRIKAR

November 1, 1944

BHAI DEVGIRIKAR,

What do you want me to write regarding Vasukaka[1]? We were alike in many things. How am I to write any more?

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7914

160. DISCUSSION WITH H. J. KHANDEKAR

[On or before *November 2, 1944*][2]

Send me your scheme[3] immediately and I shall give my thought to it.

When Mr. Khandekar wanted Gandhiji to attend the next session of the Depressed Classes League, the Mahatma replied:

If possible.

[1] Vasukaka Joshi

[2] The report appeared under the date-line "Nagpur, November 2".

[3] Hemchandra J. Khandekar, M.L.A., Working President of the All-India Depressed Classes League, had demanded separate Harijan University, schools and hostels for boys and girls and wanted these institutions to be financed by caste Hindus.

In reply to another question whether sufficient number of Harijan members could be co-opted to the Harijan Sevak Sangh so as to form a Harijan majority, Gandhiji said:

No. It is a body of those who want to undergo *prayashchitta*[1] and this must be done by the caste Hindus only. The touchables should serve the untouchables and the latter should accept the services of the former.

To the question when untouchability would be removed, Gandhiji said:

Perhaps both of us may not live to see it. But it is my firm conviction that untouchability will have to go if the Hindu religion is to live.

The Hindu, 7-11-1944

161. LETTER TO EMILY KINNAIRD

SEVAGRAM,
November 2, 1944

DEAR MOTHER,

What is a Christian luncheon table? What distinguishes it from say a Hindu or a Muslim luncheon table?

You won't fret about my fast, if it comes. For if it does, it will come from God and He will be responsible for the result that may follow.

How can I pay even a pie towards the expenses of a room named after my wife? You may pay an anna yourself.

Your loving son,
BAPU

MRS. EMILY KINNAIRD
Y. W. C. A.
57 CANTONMENT ROAD
LUCKNOW

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Atonement

162. LETTER TO K. P. CHAKRAVARTY

SEVAGRAM,
November 2, 1944

DEAR CHAKRAVARTY,

Your touching letter. Treasure your wife's memory and devote yourself to the service of afflicted humanity round you. No one really dies. Bodies are destined to perish; some today, some tomorrow.

BAPU

SHRI K. P. CHAKRAVARTY
TOLLYGUNGE
CALCUTTA

From a copy Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

163. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

November 2, 1944

I have carefully read your two letters. I will take the last sentence. I will assuredly not undertake a fast unless it is as clear to me as daylight [that it is my duty to do so]. Secondly, at whose call?—of the God of Truth or of the ego? If on the earlier occasion it was that of the God of Truth, so will it be this time, too. I have answers to all the other arguments. After declaring my intention to fast, I am examining myself. If any argument against the fast convinces me beyond the shadow of a doubt, I would give up my intention, but if ultimately I get a clear call from the God of Truth, nobody will be able to dissuade me. You may go on arguing, but please do not worry. I should certainly be pleased to meet you, but it is not essential for us to meet over this problem. Leave me to the mercy of God. Get well completely. . . [1]

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 204

[1] Omission as in the source

164. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

November 2, 1944

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

Your suggestions regarding the Kasturba Memorial [Fund] are excellent. We shall succeed only in the measure that they are implemented. I hope you are doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI BHAGWANJI PURUSHOTTAM
HARIJAN ASHRAM
WADHWAN CITY
KATHIAWAR

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 399. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

165. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SEVAGRAM,
November 2, 1944

BHAI SATIS BABU,

I shall of course send Balvantsinha but, so long as a local worker does not come forward to take up this work on a permanent basis the difficulty in maintaining the cows is bound to be there, is it not? I do not like that Dhiren should leave his work and attend to the cows. However it will be good if he can learn to do that in addition to his present work. It is quite possible though, that I am mistaken in this because *goseva* should be a full-time job.

Blessings from

BAPU

[P.S.]

Why does Arun[1] fall ill? Hasn't he completely recovered yet?

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1639

[1] Addressee's son

166. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

November 2, 1944

Nandini is living, having been brought up by her grandmother. Her mother had died after giving birth to her. Therefore it was my duty to distribute bananas. The memory of Vidya makes you cry and therefore it will be mere attachment if you distribute bananas. If you want to do something for Vidya, I should advise you not to buy bananas but save the amount for those who are really famished. One has to act keeping in mind the individuals concerned. This is the test of good behaviour. Give each one according to his deserts.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

167. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM,
November 2, 1944

DAUGHTER A. S.,

I have your two letters. You may have been angry but this I know that I do what is for your good and what I consider my dharma. You may work hard all your life, but you don't know how to keep accounts. Hence I want someone else to certify [the accounts]. You will have no difficulty if you understand this. The expenses on your food are met from here. Chi[manlal] has just confirmed that he sends money regularly. Do you want it in a lump sum? If you spoil your health and that too by cutting on your food I shall have to quarrel with you.

If at all I must undertake a fast it will be at God's command. You will stick to your work.

Dr. Mahmud and his two sons are with me. They are nice boys.

There is no difference between *shabash*[1] and *dhanyavad.* One is derived from Persian and the other from Sanskrit. The latter I have already sent.[2] Now I send you the former. This is Hindu-Muslim Unity!

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 486

[1] Literally, both mean 'well done' but *dhanyavad* means 'thanks' also.
[2] *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Amtussalaam", 17-10-1944.

168. LETTER TO GOKHALE

SEVAGRAM,
November 2, 1944

BHAI GOKHALE,

I read your letter to Pyarelal. Your questions are good. But I do not wish to be involved in answering them. Please excuse me. If my fast does not come about, I would like to meet you. Even if it does materialize and, provided I survive it, you may come over and we shall have a talk. In the mean time do whatever service you can. Learn Hindi. Have this letter read out to you. I shall be pleased to have a reply either in Marathi or Hindi.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

169. LETTER TO LAKSHMAN PRASAD TIWARI

SEVAGRAM,
November 2, 1944

SHRI PANDIT LAKSHMANSINGHJI TIWARI,

I have before me your daughter's heart-rending letter. She wants that either you should bless her marriage to the boy of her choice, or, if that is not possible, you should never force her to marry anybody else. I think you can have no objection to this. How can we now coerce our daughters?

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

LAKSHMAN PRASAD TIWARI
NARASINGHPUR
HOSHANGABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

170. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[After *November 2,*][1] *1944*

CHI. A. S.,

You are right in saying that I have lost faith in your word; how can I have it? I am not at all angry, my only consideration is my duty towards you. I cannot share the financial responsibility. Submit your budget to Jajuji. You are sure to get the amount he sanctions. It is not proper to trouble Bari Khan[2] for your expenses. It would be better if you can get them from another brother, otherwise take them from the Ashram. There is always a place for you in the Ashram, and positively so in my absence. You should give up building castles in the air. Stick to any job you may take up.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 691

171. LETTER TO BIPINBIHARI CHATPAT

[Before *November 3, 1944*][3]

BHAI BIPINBIHARI CHATPAT,

Shardabehn has given me a copy of your original letter, which I have perused.

I like your ideas. It would be better to carry on the work under a single authority. I had once (before August 1942) made an unsuccessful attempt. I am going to try again.

What was wrong in Bhai Amritlal writing a reply to you? It was his effort at saving me the trouble. The work that he is doing is for putting into practice Kakasaheb's ideas. Like you he does his work regarding it as his dharma. The only difference is that I do not know you, whereas I know him well. Why can't you all work in unison although you work independently? From your letter I see that there is some difference between your way of thinking and mine. I shall not discuss the point here as I don't have the time. Tandonji[4] is likely to come here. Kausalyayanji[5] will surely come. I shall have a discussion.

[1] From the contents it appears that this letter was written after the letter to the addressee dated November 2. *Vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 2-11-1944.

[2] Addressee's brother

[3] In the source this letter is placed before those of November 3, 1944.

[4] Purushottamdas Tandon

[5] Bhadant Anand Kausalyayan

I shall also try to satisfy you if you happen to come some time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

172. A NOTE

November 3, 1944

It is very good but it does not touch me because I have not been able fully to devote my mind to it. The entire constructive programme is the end. Negative non-co-operation is meant to achieve that end. The example of Christian missionaries would not help because the way to realizing God as Truth is different. I cannot describe that way. If someone can see it in my life, let him do so. Here fasting is very important. Natural death comes even to animals and birds as it comes to us. If you feel like writing something after reading this, do so. Send this back to me.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

173. LETTER TO BAL D. KALELKAR

SEVAGRAM,
November 3, 1944

CHI. BAL[1],

I have your very beautiful letter. I can understand that Western music has claimed you. Does it not mean that you have such a sensitive ear as to appreciate this music? All I wish is that you should have all that is to be gained there and come here when your time is up, and be worthy of your country. I don't know whether I shall survive to see you. And what does it avail to know about it beforehand? Aren't we all in God's keeping? I like your letter so much that I would love to reply to it at length but it cannot be. This too I have written out soon after the morning prayer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Sons of D. B. Kalelkar

174. LETTER TO SATISH D. KALELKAR

SEVAGRAM,
November 3, 1944

CHI. SHANKAR[1],

I send you the enclosed letter rather late because I wanted to send through you the letter to Bal also. Please send Bal's letter on to Kaka. Either you or Chandan[2] should make a copy from the aerogramme and send it. I could read it only after I had a copy made.

I hope you are all fine.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

175. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

Express SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 3, 1944

RAJAJI
THYAGARAYANAGAR
MADRAS

SORRY. TELEGRAPH NATURE UNSATISFACTORY HEALTH.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

176. TELEGRAM TO JUGAL KISHORE BIRLA[3]

November 3, 1944

SHETH JUGALKISHORE
CARE LUCKY
BENARES

DEPEND UPON IT I AM IN GOD'S HANDS.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Sons of D. B. Kalelkar
[2] Addressee's wife
[3] The addressee had wired Gandhiji requesting him not to risk his life by undertaking a fast.

177. LETTER TO T. B. SAPRU

November 3, 1944

DEAR SIR TEJ BAHADUR

This is written in a hurry.[1]

I suggest not a tentative public statement but a personal letter to a few representatives asking whether they favour the idea of calling a conference.

I have in mind not a centre but a board composed of representatives of the two States regulating matters of common concern and enforcing the treaty obligations.

The conference will meet to consider the causes of the failure of the talks, to find whose fault it was and to suggest an independent solution, if any. It will inform and educate public opinion. Thus there is no fear of failure unless the conference does not come to a unanimous decision or one tantamount to it.[2]

You must keep well.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi-Sapru Papers. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta. Also G.N. 7572

178. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,

November 3, 1944

CHI. SUSHILA,

Do not get agitated on reading about my fast. What is ordained will happen. I will do only what God prompts me to do. But this time everything seems unusual. I don't worry, though. I am not happy that you are alone there, but in a way I am happy, too. I am happy because

[1] This and the other letter dated November 1 were handed over to the addressee by Devdas Gandhi at the Wardha station on November 3.

[2] For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix "Letter from T. B. Sapru", (a). The Standing Committee of the Non-Party Conference met at Delhi on November 18 and 19 under the chairmanship of the addressee. For the text of the resolution adopted at the meeting, incorporating certain changes suggested by Gandhiji, *vide* "Letter from T. B. Sapru", (b). For a list of names suggested for the Conciliation Committee, *vide* "Letter from T. B. Sapru", (c).

you are passing through a severe test. I am impatient to send back Manilal, but his going has become uncertain because of his fear regarding my fast. How can I send him away against his will? He will surely leave if he is able to muster courage.

I too would have been happy if Sita had stayed with me. But I see that her interest lies in going through the modern style of education . She is a nice girl. She will earn a good name and bring credit to us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4939

179. A RESOLUTION[1]

[After *November 3, 1944*][2]

While accepting the resignation of Swami Anand from Joint Secretaryship, this meeting of Trustees thanks him for his industry and devoted service.

[From Hindi]

Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

180. LETTER TO METROPOLITAN OF CALCUTTA

November 5, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

Utmost frankness is a sure test of friendship. I therefore appreciate all your criticism, being that of a true friend.

Gould you tell your audience in Dacca that religious strife should be impossible especially in a place which is a seat of learning? The influence of a university should travel beyond its four walls. Religion should be a binding, not a disruptive force. I need not elaborate this thought. It came to me as I was reading your letter.

The late Charlie Andrews used to tell me of the good that some missionaries had done among the Frontier tribes. This was

[1] This was drafted by Gandhiji and passed at the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust meeting on November 5. Swami Anand's letter of resignation was dated November 3, 1944.

[2] *ibid*

corroborated by Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan. Your testimony therefore does not come upon me as a surprise.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

THE LORD BISHOP OF CALCUTTA

BISHOP'S HOUSE

CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

181. A NOTE[1]

November 6, 1944

The attempt is good. I can understand the argument. But how far can reason take you ? Hence even though I give due weight to reasoning. I depend on prayer. I act in the light of the answer I get through prayer. I shall be guided by God. It is a difficult task. I am not worried. There is no hurry at all. I continue working. I do not stop work fearing imminent death. Take my fast also in the same way. Do write to me if you can think of something more.

You have written in English. Could you not have conveyed it in Hindi or Gujarati ? You did well to have written to Shankerlal.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

182. LETTER TO S. RADHAKRISHNAN

SEVAGRAM,
November 6, 1944

DEAR SIR RADHAKRISHNAN,

I have your two kind letters.

As to the suggestions about the use of the K. G. M. funds I read your letter to the Trustees.[2] I shall bear your suggestion in mind. I wish you could have attended the meeting.

[1] This is written on a communication in English from Gulzarilal Nanda.

[2] The addressee had suggested that funds should not be spent on purposes which it was the duty of the Government to carry out; they should be utilized for the establishment of orphanages and pilgrim centers and for the selection of women to be sent to Russia and Japan to study rural uplift.

As to the contemplated fast, the ultimate decision will be His, not mine. I would have been untrue to friends, if I had not shared with them the struggle through which I am passing.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR S. RADHAKRISHNAN
VICE-CHANCELLOR
HINDU UNIVERSITY
BENARES

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

183. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

SEVAGRAM,
November 6, 1944

MY DEAR LOTUS-BORN[1],

So you will presently complete another year of the allotted span of your life. Who knows what is your span? So it is forgivable to hope that you will have many years of service of the mother land. Hope you are taking care of yourself.

Love.

BAPU

SMT. PADMAJA
HYDERABAD

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

184. LETTER TO PRINCESS OF BERAR

SEVAGRAM,
November 6, 1944

DEAR PRINCESS[2],

Sarojini Devi[3] has just given me the sad news that your illustrious father is no more. All my sympathies are with you. This death reminds me of the glorious Khilafat days when for the brief period Hindus and Muslims seemed to be united so as never to be parted by any person or thing. Alas! it was not to be. Sarojini Devi

[1] Literal translation of the addressee's name
[2] Durdana Begum, *nee* Durr-e-Shahvar
[3] Sarojini Naidu

also tells me how you are serving the poor in your part of India. May God bless you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

THE PRINCESS OF BERAR

HYDERABAD

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

185. LETTER TO DR. LAXMIPATHI

SEVAGRAM

November 6, 1944

DEAR LAXMIPATHI,

Mine is a most unenviable position. You remember how helpless you were when Ashadevi's son died. I do not want allopathic medicine and yet I do not get out of its coil. You are very good but you refuse to see things as they are. I am now trying Pandit Shiv Sharma. I do not know how I shall fare.

Yours,

BAPU

DR. LAXMIPATHI

BEZWADA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

186. LETTER TO DR. M. E. NAIDOO

SEVAGRAM,

November 6, 1944

DEAR DR. NAIDOO,

I was glad to see your familiar handwriting. I am all with you. Only you are too impatient. Time is on our side.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. M. E. NAIDOO

KOTTAR

From a photostat: G.N. 95. Also C.W. 9197

[1] The addressee felt that the Brahmins of Mylapore and Tanjore were not really for social equality of Harijans. He wanted Gandhiji to introduce inter-caste dinners.

187. LETTER TO P. G. MAVALANKAR[1]

SEVAGRAM,
November 6, 1944

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

You have set for yourself a splendid and difficult ideal. God will help you. Come and see me some time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1717

188. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

SEVAGRAM,
November 6, 1944

CHI. PREMA,

You are quite silly. You are dying before your death! Is not the fast but a threat as yet? It is not at all certain. Is it likely to come unless God wills? Anybody who understands its profound meaning would welcome it, and look upon the day [it starts]as a blessed day. If it comes, I alone will have to undertake it. Nobody else will be permitted to join me. After my passing away, others may be called upon to fast one after another. But why think about that just now? Remain absorbed in your work and keep others absorbed in theirs.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10432. Also C.W. 6871. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

[1] The addressee had sought Gandhiji's opinion on two of his articles, one on his ideal and the other a Gujarati translation of a tribute by the addressee's father to A. B. Dhruva. Gandhiji had handed this letter to G. V. Mavalankar saying he would send his opinion on the tribute later. *Vide* "Letter to G. V. Mavalankar", 28-1-1945.

189. LETTER TO AKBARBHAI CHAVDA

SEVAGRAM,
November 6, 1944

CHI. AKBAR,

I have your beautiful letter. May God bless you with excellent health. Your work is fine.

Zohra will write to you and tell you how she is doing. Sushilabehn will certainly write to you about guinea-worm. The best way is to foment the spot with hot water and bandage it. As and when the worm shows, you should tie it up and not let it snap. BY and by it will come out.

I suppose you know the simple remedy of an enema. Vallabhram Vaidya's pills are available at the Majoor Mahajan. They may also be available with somebody in Palanpur. About this matter, too, Sushilabehn alone can write to you in detail.

Do not worry about my fast. Nothing is certain yet. Write to me regularly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3235

190. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SEVAGRAM,
November 6, 1944

CHI. MATHURADAS,

What shall I write to you? Give up all worrying, whether on my account or Dilip's[1] or any other. You will then get well sooner. You must not write to me yourself but content yourself by dictating to Dilip. I am tied up with so much work. MY health, however, is co-operating with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

MATHURADAS, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's son

191. LETTER TO DILIP M. TRIKUMJI

SEVAGRAM,
November 6, 1944

CHI. DILIP,

I have your letter. Your duty is now to serve your father. Reassure him on your side. His blessings which will be evoked by the service you render will spiritually benefit you in all ways.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

192. LETTER TO JYOTILAL A. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
November 6, 1944

BHAI JYOTI,

I had your wire and also your letter. I have had a talk with Parikshitbhai[1] who is here. You must see to it that no one does physical violence to Ratilal[2]. After all he is Chi. Champa's husband. All we have to see to is that he does not annoy Champa. In all other respects we should be considerate to him.

Doctor[3] had the Bungalow[4] constructed specially for the benefit of the Ashram; only he used to stay there whenever he wished. I was expected to accommodate my guests in the Bungalow. Now Doctor is no more. I never asked him to commit anything to writing. And then Ratilal turned out to be a mental case. How can I convince Prabhashankar[5]? Champa used to be under Prabhashankar's control,

[1] Parikshitlal Majmudar

[2] Eldest son of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

[3] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta; a Gold Medallist of the Grant Medical College, Bombay, Bar-at-Law; was Gandhiji's "oldest friend". From the time he received Gandhiji in London in October 1888 he acted as his "guide and counsellor". A philanthropist, from whom "no deserving poor ever returned empty-handed", he rendered financial help to Gandhiji in his activities from the days of the Phoenix Settlement till his death in August 1932. Author of *M. S. Gandhi and South African Problem.* For Gandhiji's tribute to him, *vide* "Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta", 7-8-1932.

[4] The Lal Bungalow near Sabarmati Ashram, Ahmedabad

[5] Prabhashankar Harchandbhai Parekh, father of Champa R. Mehta

now you have become her adviser. All I wish is that you should not sell the Bungalow. You should either have a separate trust for the Bungalow or entrust its management to the Ashram. I would not in the least think it right to evict any Harijans who might be living there. But the final decision rests with Champa and you. I can say nothing definitely about Maganlal[1].

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

193. LETTER TO SARALA

SEVAGRAM,
November 6, 1944

CHI. SARALA,

Got the yarn. I hope Sheth is all right now. Come when you want. In terrible hurry.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARALABEHN
[C/O] SHETH GATUBHAI JAMIATRAM
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

194. LETTER TO TOTARAM SANADHYA

SEVAGRAM,
November 6, 1944

BHAI. TOTARAMJI,

Parikshitlal has given me all the information. Your body has of course grown old, it will go when it has to. You have been dedicated to service all your life, so it is your dharma to accept it from those who wish to offer it sincerely. Of course Ramanama is always there to sustain us.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2530

[1] Youngest son of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

195. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

Silence Day, November 6, 1944

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

If you work in the Talimi Sangh then too you will be near me, won't you? In the alternative, let me know what you would like [to do].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4450

196. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

[*November 6, 1944*][1]

I do want to write something for you but do not have a moment to spare.

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

197. DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR HINDUSTANI PRACHAR SABHA

[On or before *November 7, 1944*][2]

The objective of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha is to popularize Hindustani rapidly. For this it is essential that those who are learning Hindustani acquire familiarity with the Devanagari and Persian scripts. It is therefore the duty of this Sabha to get the right textbooks published and arrange examinati198ons in order to be able to certify that one knows both the scripts and can read and write Hindustani. The Working Committee should lay down details regarding the curriculum and the examinations.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 18

[1] As supplied by the addressee

[2] According to *Mangal Prabhat*, July 1952, this Resolution was drafted for the meeting held on November 7, 1944.

198. LETTER TO RISHABHDAS RANKA

SEVAGRAM,
November 7, 1944

CHI. RISHABHDAS,

I have heard Guneji's reputation. He should send me the names of the medicines and their properties. I shall make use of the information. It would be best if he prepares a booklet for me. I shall have it printed if I like it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

199. A LETTER[1]

[Before *November 8, 1944*][2]

I don't know when I shall fast, but, if I do fast, it will be for the welfare of the oppressed classes of the world.

Congressmen all over India have been anxious over my intention of fasting. But there is no necessity for becoming anxious.

When people have become inactive and when the day-to-day activities of the Congress are at a standstill, the last and the only effective weapon for a satyagrahi is the fast.

The Hindu, 10-11-1944

200. A LETTER[3]

[Before *November 8, 1944*][4]

When the tongue and the pen fail, the Shastras say, man should resort to fast. Why should there be any objection to fasting?

The soul does not die. It is the body that goes away. Why should one worry? Moreover fasting will be resorted to only when God so wills it.

The Hindu, 10-11-1944

[1] This was addressed to "a prominent Congressman of Gujarat". The Gujarati original, however, is not traceable.

[2] The report appeared under the date-line "Ahmedabad, November 8".

[3] This was addressed to a Congress member of the Central Legislative Assembly. The Hindi original, however, is not traceable.

[4] The report appeared under the date-line "New Delhi, November 8".

201. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
November 8, 1944

CHI. AMRIT,

I have been neglecting you. You know why. I am writing this before the morning walk which commences just after 7 a.m. Dr. J. Mehta is standing by me. He has come for a day on his way to Madras where he is going to deliver an address to physicians.

Rajaji is unwell and so did not come for the various meetings.

Amtul Salaam is in Calcutta doing good work.

Kanu's wedding came off very well. Nearly 300 people dined. Harijans and caste men of Sevagram were in it. Sevagram inmates and guests accounted for over 150.

You are right in not worrying about the fast. It will come if God wants it.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4148. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7783

202. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEVAGRAM,
November 8, 1944

MY DEAR C.R.,

It won't do for you to get ill. I am not going to worry you to come early. You must not strain yourself even to come to Nagpur[1]. You may even send your address or depute someone to read it for you. If however you do come to Nagpur you will give yourself a few days for Sevagram, or Wardha whichever suits you best.

Did I tell you I had carefully read your pamphlet about the Cripps offer? It carried no conviction to me. But you will try again if you wish. Munshi[2] had a chat with me on it. I have invited him to discuss it further. He is likely to come again.

As to the fast I have ceased to think much about it. I am simply

[1] For the Convocation of the Nagpur University, which was to be held on November 25.

[2] K. M. Munshi

watching myself and waiting on Truth to guide me. A double process is going on within me. Let us see what happens.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2098

203. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

November 8, 1944

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I heard from Dr. Mehta about the set-back in your health. There is nothing particularly wrong with your health. You have spoiled your health by over-exertion and worry. You ought to utilize your knowledge for the benefit of your own health. Englishmen are not philosophers, but they keep themselves free from worry so as to preserve their health and for the sake of their health they never let any external trouble overcome them. You have such capacity. Stop worrying about me and about other matters. You are giving your services even from the sick-bed. Nothing at all is definite about the fast.

Blessings from

BAPU

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 204. Also from a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

204. TALK WITH GULZARILAL NANDA[1]

[Before *November 9,* 1944]

If everyone stuck to his dharma and did his duty why should I have to fast? And how would God permit it? But if people become unsettled and remain inactive the fast will not be stopped.

So long as I can work otherwise, there is no possibility of my resorting to a fast. When there is no work for me or no work which can be taken from me, then alone will God ask me to go on a fast. I

[1] Gulzarilal Nanda, Secretary of the Ahmedabad Textile Labour Association, had conveyed Gandhiji's words to the Association's organ, *Majoor Sandesh,* in his letter from Wardha dated November 9, 1944.

can hear a voice echoing that I should fast. Not that I should start a fast right away. But when God bids me no one can prevent me from undertaking the fast. Pray to God that I may not have to fast. Prayer is the only thing that matters. To do sincere work in the name of God is itself prayer. I say what I feel. There is not only one thing that disturbs me today, there are several. I have only mentioned the thing that most perturbs me. If something else comes up, I shall not hesitate to say it. These have little to do with Congressmen. People today are engaged in fraud, black-marketing and amassing of wealth somehow. There is no end to the lies they mouth. Who can change their hearts? I do not know whether my fast will do so. I can only pray. God's will be done. Nobody knows today what is going to happen. If everyone does his duty it is possible that the fast will not come off. One man cannot assume the whole burden, but the concerted effort of many people may bear fruit. Let everyone calmly do his work without being despondent or becoming agitated. This is all I ask for. God too will want no more. I am at peace.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarat Samachar, 14-11-1944

205. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

[On or before *November 9, 1944*][1]

It would be advisable to let Kanchan be examined by the vaid on Friday morning. Her health is none too good. If you can get cloth for a mosquito-net cut, have one stitched so that we may use it when required. Khurshedbehn has agreed to stitch one. Share the work in this manner.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 6973. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

206. TELEGRAM TO K. N. KATJU

SEVAGRAM,
November 9, 1944

DR. KATJU
19 EDMONSTONE ROAD
ALLAHABAD

GLAD HER[2] AGONY HAS ENDED. YOU ARE WISE

[1] From the postmark
[2] Addressee's wife

ENOUGH TO BEAR SEPARATION WITHOUT GRIEVING. MAY GOD BLESS YOU.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

207. LETTER TO K. VENKATARAMANI

SEVAGRAM,
November 9, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

Gandhiji had your letter of 31st October.

Gandhiji says you can come here whenever you like for your week's stay here. You will, of course, send previous intimation of your arrival.

Yours sincerely,
PYARELAL

SHRI K. VENKATARAMANI
34 ALAMELUMANGAPURAM
MYLAPORE
MADRAS

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

208. NOTE TO ANAND KAUSALYAYAN[1]

November 9, 1944

1. Obviously it is obligatory for a member of the Sabha to fulfil at any rate the condition laid down by you. The objective of the Sabha is clearly stated in its constitution. I do wish, however, that all Indians learn both the scripts and speak a language which could be understood by both Hindus and Muslims.

2. The Hindi style and the Urdu style are like the Ganga and the Yamuna. Hindustani is like the Saraswati. It is concealed and yet not concealed. The Sabha should endeavour to make it clearly discernible.

[1] Secretary, Hindustani Prachar Sabha, Wardha. This note was in reply to the following questions:

(1) It appears that, in 1942, when the Hindustani Prachar Sabha was formed, you intended and directed your efforts that persons enrolling themselves as members

3. Hindustani Prachar Sabha will be complementary of both and will seek help from both. But its work will be distinct from theirs, which could also be regarded as the same. If the Sabha tried to undo the work of these two organizations, its own objective would be defeated. How can you have Saraswati without the confluence [of the three]?

4. The work of the Sabha will be, and should be, uniform all over the country. The procedure may be modified here and there to suit the differing needs of the provinces.

5. The new movement of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha should not create difficulties in the work of Rashtrabhasha Prachar Samiti, if the two co-ordinate their activities.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

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of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha must learn both the scripts of the *Rashtrabhasha.* Do you, even today, expect that thing only from the members, or do you want that everybody, both old and young in the country, must learn both the scripts?

(2) Regarding the plan of work of Hindustani Prachar Sabha, some people understand that the Sabha aims at propagating both Hindi and Urdu but there are others who say that it aims at propagating neither Hindi nor Urdu but Hindustani. In 1942, you were of opinion that the Saraswati in the shape of Hindustani had not yet made its appearance. Is the situation different at present? What is it that the Sabha will propagate if Hindustani has not yet made its appearance?

(3) Under the auspices of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan a number of institutions are working for the propagation of Hindi and the Devanagari script, and the Anjuman Taraqqi-e-Urdu for that of Urdu and the Persian script. Will the Hindustani Prachar Sabha be merely co-ordinating the activities of these two institutions or will it be complementary of the two? Or will it be a third body pursuing its own programme undoing the work of these two?

(4) Will the policy and programme of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha with respect to South India and the non-Hindi provinces be the same as in the other provinces—that is, will the propagation of both the scripts be obligatory?

(5) Will the new policy of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha create difficulties in continuing the propagation of *Rashtrabhasha* as it is being carried on in South India and the other non-Hindi provinces for the last so many years?

209. LETTER TO ABDUL GHANI

SEVAGRAM,
November 10, 1944

DEAR ABDUL GHANI[1],

I was delighted to hear from you. I do hope your wife will be fully restored and that you too will have your trouble attended to. As to the restrictions you will do as your instinct guides you. Do please keep me informed of your movements and the progress of your wife and yourself.

Yours,
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

210. LETTER TO DIWANCHAND OBHERAI

SEVAGRAM, "*VIA*" WARDHA, C. P.
November 10, 1944

DEAR OBHERAIJI,

I read out your letter of the 28th to Gandhiji.

He has decided nothing about the fast[1] yet but has simply put himself in God's hands. He won't undertake the fast unless he has a clear call. He cannot rule out fastng altogether as he holds it to be the ultimate and most potent weapon in the armoury of non-violence.

Yours sincerely,
PYARELAL

SHRI DIWANCHAND OBHERAI
SENIOR ADVOCATE
PESHAWAR

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Son of Abdul Ghaffar Khan
[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 23-10-1944.

211. LETTER TO DUNICHAND

SEVAGRAM,
November 10, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

Gandhiji has your letter of 31st ult. and desires me to thank you for the same.

He has decided nothing about the fast. He has only taken the public into confidence as to the working of his mind.

Could you kindly send the address of Maulvi Abdul Ghani though I doubt whether anything effective can be done from this end ?

Yours sincerely,
PYARELAL

SHRI DUNICHAND
7-A BEGUM ROAD
LAHORE

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

212. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,
November 10, 1944

CHI. MUNNALAL,

At last your father has passed away. It was for the best. He was released from suffering and was delivered from the necessity of being obliged to others for their services. You and the other members of the family have no reason for grief. Life, when it attaches itself to a body, is invariably accompanied by death. Only, it does not know the appointed hour of death. Why, then, grieve over death? We should learn this lesson from the death of a dear one. Let us follow his virtues.

Both of you may remain there as long as necessary. Here everything is going on as usual.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8468. Also C.W. 7179. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

213. LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

November 10, 1944

CHI. CHAMPA,

I have your letter. I was sorry to hear that Chi. Sarala had fallen ill again. I should be very happy if she comes here after she has recovered. However, the fast is hanging over me. How can I therefore assume responsibility for Sarala? We will think over this when you and Jyoti arrive hree. I have gone through your letter addressed to Chimanlal. I did not fully understand it. I will ask Chimanlal to explain it. You must have read what I wrote to Jyoti about the Red Bungalow.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

CHAMPABEHN MEHTA

[C/O] M/S SHASHIKANT RATILAL

SIR LAKHAJI ROAD, RAJKOT PARA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8757. Also C.W. 1043. Courtesy: Champa R. Mehta

214. LETTER TO COWASJI JEHANGIR

SEVAGRAM,

November 10, 1944

DEAR SIR COWASJI,

Somebody had conveyed to me the news of your dear son's passing away. I had thought I would write to you a letter of condolence but being burdened with work it slipped from my memory. Last night I remembered it when I happened to read the news again in Vallabhbhai's letter to Dahyabhai. And now I write this. Please know that I share your grief. There must be hundreds like me sharing your grief. May they all lighten your burden and may God grant you peace.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jyotilal A. Mehta", 6-11-1944.

215. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS BIRLA

SEVAGRAM
November 10, 1944

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

I am sending Chi. Sankaran for six months to learn the science of village sanitation and Chi. Sharda for some homoeopathic treatment. Can I put up these two in the dharmshala in your charge? If Sharda is accommodated her husband will also stay with her. Write to me without hesitation what the position is. Ghanshyamdas left today. It was good he came. A lot of work could be done.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Sankaran is leaving today. He will stay with Raihanabehn[1]. But he can do so only for a few days as there is not enough room.

R. BIRLA
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

216. SPEECH AT HINDUSTANI TALIMI SANGH MEETING

November 10, 1944

Speaking to members of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh who are meeting here, Mahatma Gandhi said that the Sangh should now take up the entire span of national education as its field and work out a programme of national education for life in all its stages through manual activity and handicrafts. He pointed out that the future programme of national education thus became only an extension of the present programme of basic education upwards and downwards.

The Hindu, 12-11-1944

[1] Raihana Tyabji

217. A NOTE

November 11, 1944

(1) I have read Shri Wadia's letter of 31-10-'44. I have no recollection whatsoever of having made the remark attributed to me about Shri Agnibhoj. Indeed I had nothing to do with such appointments. I was not then nor am I now a member of the Working Committee.

(2) There was no question of my refusal to have a Harijan on the executive of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. As a matter of fact there are Harijans on the Central Board as well as its branches. But I am opposed on principle to such appointments for the Sangh is formed of a body of caste-Hindu penitents who are vowed to eradicate untouchability. It is therefore a debtors' association. Harijans are creditors. I expressed this opinion to a body of Harijans who recently interviewed me.[1]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

218. LETTER TO K. R. R. SASTRY

November 11, 1944

DEAR PROF. SASTRY[2],

I thank you for your kind letter.

(A) My experience does not bear out the truth of your proposition. I do not claim to be a saint. But I do not regard politics as inconsistent with the strictest moral code. Politics I hold to be a noble art which every good citizen must cultivate ...[3] not in...[4] the game that professional politicians play.

(B) is answered in (A)

(C) Only posterity can judge. Obviously I can't.

(D) I am sorry I cannot subscribe to your opinion. Mine is a new experiment. I plead for patience in coming to a judgement.

As to your constructive suggestions, you will perhaps forgive me if I do not argue about them.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 8810

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with H. J. Khandekar", on or before 2-11-1944.

[2] Of the Department of Law, Allahabad University

[3] Illegible

[4] *ibid*

219. LETTER TO S. RADHAKRISHNAN

November 11, 1944

DEAR SIR RADHAKRISHNAN,

I have your kind letter of 4th instant. Your amendment is too late for revision of the draft deed.[1] It has been passed by the Board. But there will be no difficulty if a village girl is ripe for being sent to foreign lands for gaining further knowledge of use in the villages.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS]

When may I write to you in Hindi ?

SIR S. RADHAKRISHNAN
HINDU UNIVERSITY
BENARES

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

220. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA AND HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

November 11, 1944

CHI. SATISBABU AND CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have letters from both of you before me. To worry about the fast betrays a lack of faith in God. Do you not believe that I will do what God wills? Why should you worry then? Do your duty, that will be enough.

Now about khadi. The ideas contained in the circular[2] sent by Jajuji are mine. I see that you hold a different view. You must point out the fallacy in my ideas. I take it that you will attend the meeting of the Charkha Sangh.

What has to be done about Balvantsinha?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1640

[1] The addressee, Vice-Chancellor of the Benares Hindu University had suggested that funds of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust should not be spent on purposes which it was the duty of the Government to carry out; they should be utilized for the establishment of orphanages and pilgrim centres and for the selection of women to be sent to Russia and Japan to study rural uplift; *vide* also "Discussions with Representatives of Hindustani Talimi Sangh", 27-10-1944.

[2] The circular contained the gist of the discussions carried on from October 7 to 14 between Gandhiji and Shrikrishnadas Jaju.

221. LETTER TO SOHANLAL DWIVEDI

SEVAGRAM,
November 11, 1944

BHAI SOHANLAL,

I have had a talk with Ghanshyamdasji. I hope you have calmed down. The incident has shown me a new way. May I hope the same has happened to you? A few friends, if not many, have understood my point.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

SOHANLAL DWIVEDI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

222. LETTER TO SATYAVATI DEVI

SEVAGRAM,
November 11, 1944

CHI. SATYAVATI,

I got your letter. Send over Chandrani. If you do not get permission to go to Lahore even for reasons of health, write to me before taking any step.

Only this much today. Do not worry about my fast. I am in God's hands.

Blessings from
BAPU

SATYAVATI DEVI
JUHAR, *via* SIMLA HILLS

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sohanlal Dwivedi", 16-10-1944.

223. CABLE TO V. K. KRISHNA MENON[1]

November 12, 1944

JAWAHARLAL, IS A JEWEL AMONG MEN. HAPPY IS THE LAND THAT OWNS HIM. SOMETHING IS RADICALLY WRONG WITH THE SYSTEM THAT HAS NO BETTER USE OF PERSONS LIKE HIM THAN AS PRISONERS.

The Hindu, 14-11-1944

224. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

November 13, 1944

MY DEAR MATHEW,

Yours. Pray that God may guide me aright.

Love.

BAPU

PROF. P. G. MATHEW
S. H. COLLEGE
THEVARA, *via* ERNAKULAM
COCHIN STATE

From a photostat: G.N. 1545

225. LETTER TO CARL HEATH

November 13, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

Your welcome letter came into my hands today. I am in the midst of a raging storm and often hum to myself:

Rock of Ages cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

CARL HEATH
WHITEWINGS, 57 MANOR WAY
GUILDFORD, SURREY (ENGLAND)

From a photostat: G.N. 1051. Also C.W. 4441. Courtesy: F. H. Chopping

[1] This was sent in connection with Jawaharlal Nehru's birthday, November 14

226. LETTER TO K. T. GHANASHAM

SEVAGRAM,
November 13, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

I assure you I am giving due weight to every argument advanced against the contemplated fast. I wonder if this will reach you, as you have given me no address.

Yours sincerely,

K. T. GHANASHAM
KARACHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

227. LETTER TO ERNEST F. PATON

SEVAGRAM,
November 13, 1944

MY DEAR ERNEST,

I have your heartening letter. You will not mind if I find it helpful to publish your letter. I take it you are also a doctor. Have we ever met?

Yours,
BAPU

ERNEST F. PATON
CHRISTU KULA ASHRAM
TIRUPATTUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

228. LETTER TO ATULANAND CHAKRAVARTY

SEVAGRAM,
November 13, 1944

MY DEAR ATULANAND,

Your letter. Thanks.

Many come whom I must not turn away. I don't want to encourage you just now. Let me settle down one way or another.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SADHU ATULANAND
C/O POST MASTER
NEW DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

229. LETTER TO CHARLES A. ISAAC

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA, C . P.,
November 13, 1944

DEAR ISAAC,

Yours is one of the typical letters I am receiving daily. Pray with me that God may guide me aright.

Yours,
BAPU

BRO. CHARLES A. ISAAC
KOCHUMURI
KAYANKULAM, TRAVANCORE STATE
SOUTH INDIA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

230. LETTER TO P. SUBBAROYAN

SEVAGRAM,
November 13, 1944

DEAR SUBBAROYAN,

I am listening to every argument advanced by friends like you but the final arbiter will be the inner voice.

I do hope Rajaji won't stir out unless he is completely restored.

I shall be glad if Radhabai[1] breaks her journey.

Please warn her however that I am reaching the end of my bodily resources.

Yours,
BAPU

DR. SUBBAROYAN
MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

231. LETTER TO SYED MUSTAFA

SEVAGRAM,
November 13, 1944

DEAR SYED SAHEB,

I thank you for your kind note. You have my assurance that I shall do nothing without a call from God.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SYED MUSTAFA, BAR-AT-LAW
LUCKNOW

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's wife

232. LETTER TO H. J. KHANDEKAR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA, C, P.,
November 13, 1944

DEAR KHANDEKAR,

I have your letter. I have become afraid of you after your unauthorized misleading report of our conversation[1]. I express no opinion on your contemplated meeting[2] or its programme.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI H. J. KHANDEKAR, M.L.A.
ITWARI, NAGPUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

233. LETTER TO G. LAKSHMI AMMA

SEVAGRAM,
November 13, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

The condition you mention is truly deplorable. You and I have to do the best we can. Nothing like patience and perseverance.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

G. LAKSHMI AMMA
DEPRESSED CLASSES MISSION
MANGALORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with H. J. Khandekar", on or before 2-11-1944.

[2] Of Harijan workers and provincial leaders of Nagpur to organize Harijans under the banner of the All-India Depressed Classes League, which was to be held in the last week of December 1944

234. LETTER TO DEVIBEHN PANDIT

SEVAGRAM,
November 13, 1944

CHI. DEVI,

I have your letter. Also the money. The yarn is to be handed over to Kakubhai[1] who should use the amount realized from its sale for the service of Harijans. Vasumati[2] tells me you fall ill now and then. How is it?

Blessings from
BAPU

DEVIBEHN PANDIT
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

235. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
November 13, 1944

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

What guidance can I offer? See if you can deduce something from what I am writing. I have had a talk with Ravishankar Maharaj[3], who will offer some [advice]. All of you should do as much [work] as you can.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHIVABHAI PATEL
BOCHASAN

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Purushottam K. Jerajani
[2] Vasumati D. Pandit
[3] Ravishankar Vyas who worked among the Baraiyas, a backward community of Kheda district in Gujarat

236. LETTER TO NRISIMHAPRASAD K. BHATT

SEVAGRAM,
November 13, 1944

BHAI NANABHAI,

I have your letter. I cannot come to such a quick decision; I can say something only after we meet. Let us hope Bachu's affairs are settled without any hitch.

Blessings from
BAPU

NANABHAI BHATT
HINDUSTAN STORES
CHOWPATTY
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

237. LETTER TO ADWAIT KUMAR GOSWAMI[1]

SEVAGRAM,
November 13, 1944

BHAI ADWAIT KUMAR,

In my opinion a Congressman may, as an individual, do anything that is not opposed to the publicly stated policy of the Congress. However, you should remember that I am not a registered member of the Congress.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 804

[1] The addressee, a Congress worker of Brindaban, had asked if a Congressman could take part in satyagraha to be offered in Sind against the Sind Government's ban on the fourteenth chapter of *Satyartha Prakash.*

238. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

November 13, 1944

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

You should go on the 18th. Things will be managed somehow here. The kitchen here must not come in the way of other work.

I have seen Satis Babu's letter and I have written to him.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1948

239. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

November 13, 1944

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

May you be firm in your resolve. I like vigilance. Of course you will always remain an inmate of the Ashram and you will be living here in the Ashram. It is another thing that you may have to be associated with the Talimi Sangh in the interest of your work. For the present your personal expenses will be met by the Ashram. Whether or not you can devote some time to the work at the Ashram is something to be looked into. Experience alone will tell us that. Don't be agitated over such matters, but have faith in God. "One step enough for me."

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS]

Give a copy of this to Chimanlal.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4441

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra and Hemprabha Das Gupta", 11-11-1944.

240. LETTER TO SARASWATI K. GANDHI

November 13, 1944

CHI. SURU,

Received your letter. Kanti[1] has written me a nice and long letter. May you both study well, continue making progress and rendering service. Of course I do hope to see Shanti[2]. I will some day. How do I know that you are not as silly as you used to be?

Blessings to the three of you from

BAPU

SHRI KANTI GANDHI
2994/1 VANI VILIA MOHOLLA
MYSORE

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 3456. Courtesy: Kanti Gandhi. Also G.N. 6182

241. LETTER TO ANIL K. MISHRA

SEVAGRAM,
November 13, 1944

BHAI ANIL,

If you want to draw up your programme after consulting me you will never be able to do anything. Chart your own course from what I have written for the general public.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

242. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

SEVAGRAM,
November 13, 1944

Your duty is obvious. Father is of course being looked after. You must try to get well. You will stay here or go to Andhra only to persist in this effort. Mother though alone is not helpless. Your son is

[1] Addressee's husband, Harilal Gandhi's son
[2] Addressee's son

being looked after. Separation has to be endured. God willing you will get well and all those who are separated today will be united. Having realized this, give up worry and be cheerful with the conviction that God does everything and what He does is for our good.

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

243. LETTER TO SHRIPAD D. SATAVLEKAR

SEVAGRAM,
November 13, 1944

PANDITJI,

I have your letter. Herewith the reply from Appasaheb[1]. Please spare me of such responsibilities. I am no longer capable of taking up such work. My strength is limited and my burden heavy.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

PANDIT SATAVLEKAR
AUNDH

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. . Courtesy: Pyarelal

244. LETTER TO DURLAB SINGH

SEVAGRAM,
November 14, 1944

DEAR SARDAR DURLAB SINGH[2],

This is my answer to your questions:[3]

(1) My association with Rajaji in his formula[4] could not affect the Sikh position in the slightest degree, even if Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah accepted it. The Lahore Resolution[5] of the Congress referred to by you stands. The result of Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah's acceptance would have been that both of us would have gone to the Sikhs and others

[1] Pant, Ruler of Aundh
[2] General Secretary, Central Sikh Youth League
[3] For extracts from the addressee's letter, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Durlabh Singh", 12-11-1944.
[4] *Vide* Appendix "C. Rajagopalachari's Formula", before 5-8-1942.
[5] *Vide* "Speech at Subjects Committee", 1-1-1930.

interested to secure their acceptance. I had made this clear in my letter[1] to Masterjee.

(2) I cannot understand the Akali indignation. My meeting a deputation was unnecessary in view of my absolute assurance. If Masterjee had wanted to bring his friends to me, in spite of my assurance, I would have gladly seen them as I did other friends who sought clarification from me.

(3) Maulana Saheb explained the implications of the Jagat Narain Lal's Resolution[2] which please see. But supposing that it is inconsistent with the Rajaji Formula and the Congress accepts the latter, there is nothing to prevent the Congress from rescinding the Resolution.

(4) How could I favour a contrary opinion when I have always given the closest collaboration to Sikh friends? Those Sikhs, who do not accept the Congress creed, naturally refrain, like many others, from joining the Congress.

(5) I know nothing about the Sikandar[3] -Baldev Singh Pact, much less about the Congress High Command's association with it. Nor do I know the details of the Azad Punjab scheme.

I could never be guilty of blessing anything which is con- trary to the national interest. You can certainly have the assurance that the interests of the nationalist Sikhs, as also of all nationalists, are safe in my hands, also, I presume, in the Congress hands, though as you know I have no authority to speak on behalf of the Congress.

There are many inventions about me going the round. I would warn friends against giving credence to any of them without reference to me.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Indian Annual Register, 1944, Vol. II . p. 222

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Tara Singh", 15-8-1944.

[2] *Vide* 5th footnote of "Note to Jagdish K. Munshi", on or before 12-8-1944.

[3] Sir Sikander Hayat Khan

245. LETTER TO METROPOLITAN OF CALCUTTA

SEVAGRAM,
November 14, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

Many thanks for your letter just received. I wonder if you saw my statement[1]. If the fast comes, it will have nothing to do with the Government. For ready reference I send you a copy of my statement.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

METROPOLITAN
BISHOP'S HOUSE
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

246. LETTER TO MOHAMMED ANSARI

SEVAGRAM,
November 14, 1944

DEAR SARDAR SAHEB,

I have your letter. There was no question of ignoring you. Yours is a nationalist organization not needing any wooing by me. Neither you nor I can afford to ignore the League. We have to win it and other like forces round to our side. I tried Quaid-e-Azam. And though I may be said to have failed, we have lost nothing, You and I have to work in the best manner we can, the objective being to reduce antagonism without sacrificing fundamentals.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SARDAR MOHD. ANSARI
BIHAR MOMIN CONFERENCE
DEHRI-ON-SONE, E.I.R.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 23-10-1944.

247. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM,
November 14, 1944

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have received your two letters which I find very long. The fast will come only when God sends it. He will not send it if we ask for it. How will you carry on your work in such fear? Taking care of your health, carry on your work. If all of you do your work, certainly the fast will not come off. But those who are scared at the mention of a fast do not know even the first lesson of satyagraha.

Zohra is well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 487

248. LETTER TO V. L. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
November 15, 1944

BHAI VAIKUNTH,

I like your note. You will see that I have made a few deletions. May I make a suggestion? Your writing is very close making it difficult to add anything in between the lines. You will find this in the present case. Paper, no doubt, has to be used sparingly. But should not there be a limit to it?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

The note is enclosed.

From the Gujarati original: V. L. Mehta Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

249. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
November 15, 1944

CHI. DINSHAW,

Your letter. Let us not be in a hurry about the land. Things are

being delayed, but there is God's hand in it. I understand what you say regarding my fast. Nothing about it is yet certain, nor even whether it will be for forty days or less. I continue to pray. I should like to be with you when I undertake the fast but nothing about this fast is going to be left to my choice. After all am I to seek my convenience? Is the fast to be undertaken for the sake of my health? It will be for God's work and He will take me where He wants. Please make no preparations for me. Be engrossed in your own work which will be your greatest contribution. Neither of you should worry. Let Ardeshir make progress; he has still farther to go. Teach him non-violence.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. DINSHAW MEHTA
POONA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

250. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI M. PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
November 15, 1944

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

I have your letter. I suggest no one should rush down here at the moment. All of you should immerse yourselves in your own work. Maybe it will avert the fast.

Blessings from
BAPU

RAOJIBHAI MANIBHAI PATEL
VITHAL KANYA VIDYALAYA
NADIAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

251. LETTER TO HARIBHAI DAHYA

SEVAGRAM,
November 15, 1944

BHAI HARIBHAI,

I have your letter. Let us not commit another wrong to undo the first. That cannot be the way of truth or of non-violence. Hence the

straightforward way is to offer all that we legitimately can. If it fails to mend matters we should bear with the suffering whatever it be. If we act in this way, we need never repent.

Blessings from

BAPU

HARIBHAI DAHYA
P.O.B. 89
WELLINGTON
NEW ZEALAND

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

252. LETTER TO TEJWANTI DHIR

SEVAGRAM,
November 15, 1944

CHI. TEJWANTI,

I have your letter. If you want you may stay in Lalaji's house. If you are not perfectly all right within three months, take more time. Go to the village only when you are fully recovered.

Blessings from

BAPU

TEJWANTIBEHN
ADAMPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

253. LETTER TO SECRETARY, MYSORE ASSEMBLY CONGRESS PARTY

[Before *November 16, 1944*][1]

Mr. Pyarelal . . . has sent a letter to the Secretary to the Mysore Assembly Congress Party, conveying Gandhiji's thanks for the invitation to the Party's conference (held yesterday), adding that anything that helped constructive activities and advanced the cause of popular freedom had his blessings. He also congratulated the Party on its good work in the Legislature during the first term of its existence under the new constitution.

The Hindu, 19-11-1944

[1] The conference was held on November 16, 1944, at Mysore.

254. LETTER TO J. J. SINGH

November 16, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you and other friends for your kind message.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SARDAR J. J. SINGH
INDIA LEAGUE OF AMERICA
40 EAST, 49TH ST.
NEW YORK 17, N.Y.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

255. LETTER TO GENERAL SECRETARY, KURNOOL DISTRICT CONGRESS COMMITTEE

SEVAGRAM,
November 16, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

Gandhiji has your letter of 24th ult.

You should be guided by Shri A. Kaleswara Rao who is at present here and will be returning to Andhra Pradesh after his talks with Gandhiji.

Yours sincerely,

PYARELAL

THE GENERAL SECRETARY
KURNOOL DISTRICT CONGRESS COMMITTEE
NANDYAL

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

256. LETTER TO R. S. DESHPANDE

SEVAGRAM,
November 16, 1944

DEAR PROF. DESHPANDE,

Apart from the fact that I have no time, the books have been

transferred to the late Jamnalalji's daughter for whom Prof. Kalelkar had meant them.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI R. S. DESHPANDE
POONA

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

257. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
November 16, 1944

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

You have not acted properly in resuming the experiment of ground-nuts and dates. It is wrong to make such an experiment. To persist in living on uncooked food is a kind of obstinacy. One must know how to carry out such experiments. There is no difficulty in cooking ordinary food, and that is what you should do. Or I may send back Manu there. She herself will not like to remain here after hearing about your experiment.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

258. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM,
November 16, 1944

CHI. LILI,

I have your two letters. People die all over the world and they will go on dying. For your part you have to excel in your studies. Everything else will follow. Try to build up the atmosphere of Sevagram as far as possible.

Blessings from
BAPU

LILAVATI UDESHI
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

259. LETTER TO DR. SANGANI

SEVAGRAM,
November 16, 1944

BHAI SANGANI,

I got your letter. You have given Sanyuktabehn[1] excellent treatment and nursing. She was in great agony. May God repay you. Tell Chi. Sanyukta that I had her letter. She can come over when you allow her to leave.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. SANGANI
HARKISSONDAS HOSPITAL
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

260. LETTER TO JAYENDRA[2]

November 16, 1944

BHAI JAYENDRA,

I have read your letter carefully. I have no time to set out my arguments in reply. I shall do as God bids me. Just now there is no call from Him.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI JAYENDRA, SAHITYARATNA
HINDI PRACHARAK
AMADAL PALLEE

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

261. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

November 16, 1944

CHI. B. S.,

I am sending all the papers. I have nothing to say about others.

[1] Daughter of Jaisukhlal Gandhi
[2] This was not posted for want of complete address.

All I wish to say about the letter received today is that it may be your duty to stay on for the sake of Kishorelal. It is for you to decide that. You are not obliged to stay on for the kitchen work. You should leave it to me. What I would ultimately like you to do, I cannot decide that just yet. Yes! I shall be very happy indeed if you acquire a scientific outlook. I have not heard anything about A. S. I have no misgivings about you. Why should I waste my time?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1949

262. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

November 16, 1944

Weeping and laughing come from the heart. When grieved one weeps. One must turn that grief into joy and laugh. Hence the need for Ramanama. Surrender all to Him and there is only joy. Why grieve over the loss of hearing? You are saved from hearing a lot of drivel. What is relevant you get through the written word. Moreover I believe that if there is joy within, the ears will of themselves regain the power of hearing.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

263. LETTER TO V. G. SAHASRABUDDHE

SEVAGRAM,
November 16, 1944

BHAI SAHASRABUDDHE,

I have your letter. What authority do I have to ask Jajuji to give the yarn to you? And why should the amount be in Jajuji's name? It means you cannot get yarn because the amount did not belong to you. I do not remember all the facts. I am writing this just from conjecture. You should ask for a raise if you cannot make both ends meet. Otherwise choose some other vocation. If the money belongs to you, you should get an injunction from a court of law. In case I have

forgotten something do remind me.

Blessings from
BAPU

V. G. SAHASRABUDDHE
KHADI VASTRALAYA, MAHAL
NAGPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

264. LETTER TO H. J. KHANDEKAR

SEVAGRAM,
November 16, 1944

BHAI KHANDEKAR,

I got your letter. I was grieved to learn about the death of your child. May God give you peace and patience. I have the notes of the talks I had with you but I do not Wish to send them. Not words but your conduct alone can inspire confidence. May God bless you.

M. K. GANDHI

HEMCHANDRARAO JAGOBA KHANDEKAR
ITWARI
NAGPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

265. LETTER TO DR. BALDEV

SEVAGRAM,
November 16, 1944

BHAI BALDEV,

What have you done? Why is Subhadra unhappy? Will you please write to me?

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. BALDEVJI
AMRITDHARA [PHARMACY]
LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

266. LETTER TO T. B. SAPRU

SEVAGRAM,
November 17, 1944

DEAR SIR TEJ,

Gandhiji has your letter of 13th instant. He is of opinion that it will be better not to use his name in public in connection with the forthcoming conference, but if you feel you must he would not mind.

Yours sincerely,
PYARELAL

RT. HON'BLE SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU
19 ALBERT ROAD
ALLAHABAD

Gandhi-Sapru Papers. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta

267. LETTER TO THE NETHERLANDS TRADING SOCIETY

November 17, 1944

DEAR SIRS,

With reference to your draft No. nil, dated 14-11-1944 for £.1,000 in my favour, I have to inform you that I have authorized the Bank of Nagpur Ltd., Wardha, to collect the amount from you.

Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

MESSRS THE NETHERLANDS TRADING SOCIETY
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

268. LETTER TO L. RAJAGOPALA RAO

SEVAGRAM,
November 17, 1944

DEAR RAJAGOPALA RAO,

1. I have not excluded any stage of education. The question is purely one of finding the right type of workers.

2. This is answered. Of course the parents should be contented.

3. Your suggestion is sound. Co-ordination is being attempted.

4. This also, if worthy of consideration.

5. Do try. Don't expect me to do executive work. That is for young people like you to do.

6. I have doubts about the soundness of your suggestion. Your note is being circulated among the Heads of the Associations concerned. I had a talk about you with Shri Kaleshwara Rao.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI L. RAJAGOPALA RAO

P. O. RAZOLE

EAST GODVARI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

269. LETTER TO P. SUBBARAYAN

SEVAGRAM,

November 16, 1944

DEAR DR. SUBBARAYAN,

I read out your letter of 14th inst. to Bapu.

You must have seen his reply to Rajaji's wire. He does not propose to make any public statement with regard to the Congress reorganization work as suggested by you. He has favoured the formation of *ad hoc* unions of Congress workers for carrying out normal Congress work. Don't you think that in these matters *ad hoc* committees should be free to frame their own rules and shape their policy according to local circumstances in the best possible manner they can ? This does not involve any constitutional point. All those who accept the policy and plan of work laid down by these bodies and abide by their discipline would of course be entitled to join these bodies.

Yours sincerely,

PYARELAL

DR. P. SUBBARAYAN

WHITE'S GARDEN

ROYAPETTAH

MADRAS

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

270. LETTER TO KHANDUBHAI DESAI

November 17, 1944

BHAI KHANDUBHAI,

May the Labour Day function[1] bear fruit. Labour has made great strides in Ahmedabad. But much remains yet to be done. I cannot be satisfied till the respect for labour rises higher than that for capital, nor should labour be satisfied. We will not attain that position till it has attained unity, 100 per cent honesty and education with knowledge. There is no place for caste, creed or communalism in the ranks of labour. There should be equality of rights between men and women.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Gujarati: *Gujarat Samachar*, 3-12-1944

271. LETTER TO BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT

SEVAGRAM,
November 17, 1944

BHAI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT,

I read your full long letter today. I see your Union has made good progress. Do make further progress.

Why do you use your letter-heads as your working papers? About one-third of each page is thus wasted besides the useless expenses of printing. This is an additional loss.

Among your activities I do not find service of Harijans given its proper place.

Do you all learn Hindustani (Hindi+Urdu)?

I don't see any Muslim names among your office-bearers. Do you have any in your Union?

Have you seen my hints to constructive workers?[2] I wish your

[1] 26th anniversary of the foundation of the Textile Labour Association of Ahmedabad

[2] *Vide* "Hints for Constructive Workers", 22-10-1944.

Union thinks over what I have written in it regarding students.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT
NATIONAL STUDENTS' UNION
RAIPUR
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

272. LETTER TO DR. JIVRAJ MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
November 17, 1944

BHAI JIVRAJ,

Chi. Sushila[1] is arriving there to see Mathuradas[2] and his ailing friend. I am not very keen just now to start a maternity hospital here. Since Sushila will not devote all her time to this work I am thinking what her position in this project should be. Again I fail to see how the Committee can work efficiently if she were not on it. Sushila believes that with the time she will give, she can do justice both to the local maternity home and the Committee. She should have a doctor under her to attend to the needs of the maternity home. If you wish you may discuss the matter with her. I have told Abid Ali that he should obtain an estimate of expenditure but should not incur any expenditure just now.

I hope you are fine.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. JIVRAJ MEHTA
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Dr. Sushila Nayyar
[2] Mathuradas Trikumji

273. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SEVAGRAM,
November 17, 1944

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I got the impression from your letter today that your work has got on the rails somewhat. S. is leaving today to see you and his friend Pyarelal who is also sick. He will give you further news. There is every chance of your full recovery if you withdraw your mind from all other worries.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

274. LETTER TO VALLATHOL NARAYANA MENON

SEVAGRAM,
November 18, 1944

DEAR VALLATHOL[1],

May Mallika and her husband live long in harmony and serve the country to the best of their ability.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI VALLATHOL
CHERUTHURUTHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

275. LETTER TO OMKARNATH THAKUR

SEVAGRAM,
November 18, 1944

BHAI OMKARNATH[2],

Your letter reached me today. May your pious wishes bear fruit. Your statement is very long. I shall go through it when I have the

[1] An eminent Malayalam poet
[2] An exponent of Hindustani music

leisure and write to you if I have anything to say.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

PANDIT OMKARNATH
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

276. LETTER TO ASHABHAI

SEVAGRAM,
November 18, 1944

BHAI ASHABHAI,

Since I had passed on your original letter to Bapa I did not reply to it. Ravishankar Maharaj gave me a copy of it and we also had a talk. You certainly have my blessings. Your work is fine. And it was good that all of you participated in [raising] the contributions. I suggest you should utilize the fresh amount you might have for whatever work you wish to do and not add it to the Memorial [Fund]. This will not create any difficulty and you will be able to utilize the entire sum locally. I am sure you have a local committee.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

277. LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

SEVAGRAM,
November 18, 1944

BHAI SAHEB,

Sundaram showed me your letter about the Mahadeva temple. It is my request to you that the temple should be very simple. Should Mahadeva's abode be in a grand mansion or in a simple place? In my humble opinion the noblest of ideas dwell in a simple temple. The courtyard is quite good as it is. Thousands of devotees will be able to worship Mahadeva under a simple roof. There is no urgency to build the temple just now. All that is needed is there. You should be happy

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Omkarnath Thakur", 18-11-1944.

if a firm resolve is made and a vow taken to fulfil it.

Your younger brother,
M. K. GANDHI

BHARAT BHUSHAN PANDIT MALAVIYAJI
C/O SHRI SUNDARAM

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10359. Courtesy: Bharat Kala Bhawan

278. LETTER TO OMKARNATH THAKUR

SEVAGRAM,
November 18, 1944

BHAI OMKARNATH,

I read your statement fully. Till this point I wrote in Hindi either inadvertently or because I was possessed by Hindi. Why is your statement in English? Your language too does not follow the English usage and hence sounds out of tune. Very few among us have a perfect command over English. And why must we? When we cannot do without it we may scribble some kind of English to express our thoughts. You want to place your thoughts before the Indian people. They should therefore be either in Gujarati (your mother tongue) or Hindi (the national language).

This was only a point to note.

What have you to do with a charter? Your own merit deserves to be your writ. Certainly, you don't need State patronage. I think the [institutions at] Santiniketan are run without a licence and yet command global reputation. Did Vishnu Digambar[1] ever obtain a licence?

And now the third point.

Your statement is contrary to your new resolve. It smacks of Pakistan. Music till now is untouched [by it]. Please don't let it be defiled by bringing in Pakistan.

What more can you expect from a man on his death-bed except an exchange of notes?

Blessings from
BAPU

PANDIT OMKARNATH, SANGITMARTAND
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] V. D. Paluskar, an exponent of Hindustani music and the addressee's guru

279. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEVAGRAM,
November 19, 1944

MY DEAR C. R.,

This is merely a love-letter. I hope when you come here, you will be fit. Winter has set in here.

Pray that I may look at your pamphlet[1] with your eyes.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2099

280. LETTER TO DR. HARIPRASAD DESAI

SEVAGRAM,
November 19, 1944

BHAI HARIPRASAD[2],

I was very pleased to meet you after so many years and that too in Sevagram.

I was glad to listen to the detailed news from Ahmedabad that you gave me. But you know how greedy I am. I shall be satisfied only if Ahmedabad helps me realize my dream, that is, if untouchability goes root and branch, men and women practise abstention as a matter of dharma and attain equality, the inequality between the rich and the labourers is removed, drink and gambling are stopped, all wear nothing but pure khadi whether at home or outdoors, ideal cleanliness of the heart as well as in outer life is observed and no one suffers hunger. Do whatever you can out of this and persuade others to do so.[3] What more shall I say? Come again.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. HARIPRASAD DESAI
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] About the Cripps offer; *vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 8-11-1944.

[2] Ex-President of the Ahmedabad Municipality

[3] This message was sent for the 'Labour Day'.

281. LETTER TO JIVANLAL DIWAN

SEVAGRAM,
November 19, 1944

BHAISHRI DIWAN,

I was pleased to read your letter. You have not yet regained your full strength. I don't like it. Do the doctors and the vaids have no remedy? Or is it that you are lax in your observance of the rules of hygiene? True, my asking you this question may sound like the pot calling the kettle black, but it is not quite that.

No doubt, you must miss Babubhai at every step. I had regarded you two as inseparable. But he has left us all behind and gone ahead.

Herewith the reply to your student.[1] Read it and tell him what you think right.

The rest you may learn from Dr. Hariprasad.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

JIVANLAL DIWAN
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the following item.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

282. LETTER TO SURYAKANT PARIKH[1]

SEVAGRAM,
November 19, 1944[2]

CHI. SURYAKANT PARIKH,

The sincerity of your letter is unmistakable. The leaders who are in jail are doing their duty by being there. A satyagrahi in prison never rots. He serves his cause by his imprisonment, nor can anyone say with certainty that he could have served the cause better if he had remained outside. But it is the duty of those who are outside not to forget those who are in prison. They must labour to get them out. If we had the requisite strength, many of our leaders should not be today in jail. In its absence, we must strive with whatever measure of strength we may possess. I, therefore, like the idea of students abstaining from going to school on 9th, provided they devote the whole day to self-purification and service. There should be strictest adherence to truth and ahimsa in whatever they do. Mass civil disobedience is today in abeyance; rather, it was never started but the fight for independence shall go on so long as independence is not attained.

Whatever your decision let the bounds of propriety be not transgressed and let the decision be taken after due consultation with your teachers and school management. Do not forget that yours is not a Government school.

You must also remember what I have said in another place about the duties of students.

Blessings from
BAPU

SURYAKANT
C/O JIVANLAL DIWAN
AHMEDABAD

The Hitavada, 21-1-1945

[1] The addressee, a student of the Proprietary High School, Ahmedabad, had written to Gandhiji on behalf of the School Committee asking how the 9th of each month was to be observed. Since Gandhiji was receiving a large number of similar enquiries especially from students and incomplete extracts from this letter had appeared in the Press, this authorized translation was released to the Press on January 19, 1945.

[2] The date, superscription, subscription and the address are from the Gujarati in Pyarelal Papers.

283. SPEECH AT ALL-INDIA TEACHERS' TRAINING CAMP[1]

SEVAGRAM,
November 19, 1944

At the request of Shrimati Ashadevi, Gandhiji delivered a short address to them on the 19th instant, to explain the meaning of New Education. He described in a few words how the Basic Education scheme was born. In 1937 when the Congress took up power for a short term, as it afterwards turned out, in seven out of the eleven Provinces they were confronted with the question of popular education. His advice was sought. Like many others, he had been dissatisfied with the present system of education. He felt that if education was to be linked with the living needs of the masses inhabiting the villages of India, it ought to be imparted through a basic craft. He had no practical experience of agriculture. But he was saturated with the idea of the charkha which he had identified with village life. He, therefore, suggested that it should be used as a medium for the children's education. The idea appealed to Shri Aryanayakum, Shrimati Ashadevi and Dr. Zakir Husain and through their effort the Hindustani Talimi Sangh was founded.

Originally this New Education was intended to cover only the first seven years of a child's education, viz., from the seventh to the fourteenth year. The experiment had already completed six years and was now entering upon the seventh. As a result of further thought, he had come to the conclusion that this education should cover the whole of life from the moment of conception to the moment of death.

Referring to the prayer which had been recited at the beginning of the proceedings, he observed:

There are several things in this prayer which are worthy of your note but I want to draw your attention to that particular portion of it which pledged the reciter to adherence to Truth in speech and action under all circumstances and at all times. One *mantra* means: "Lead me from untruth to Truth, from darkness to Light, from death to Immortality." Similarly the Islamic prayer, which has just been recited is an outpouring of the soul for Light and for being guided on to the straight path of Truth and Righteousness. This quest for Truth is the Alpha and Omega of all education.

After finishing your training here you will go back to your respective Provinces to propagate this New Education. You will keep this ideal of devotion to Truth before you. Your work will be that of pioneers. There will be no one to help or guide you with his previous experience. You shall have to grope your way all by yourselves. It is, therefore, not an easy task that you have before you. Then this New

[1] Organized by the Hindustani Talimi Sangh and attended by about 50 students, the camp was inaugurated by Gandhiji in the afternoon. This is the authorized version of Gandhiji's speech, presumably in Hindi.

Education will not help you to get big jobs carrying high salaries and emoluments. But yours will be the privilege to go among and serve the villagers in their villages. Palatial buildings and costly equipment can, therefore, have no place in your scheme of work. The school of my conception is one where classes are held in the open under the shade of a tree. I know that it cannot be realized at present. Some shelter will be necessary, perhaps always for protection against the sun, wind and rain. True education can only be given under conditions of utmost simplicity.

Pointing to the building in which they were assembled, he continued:

All the buildings here in the Talimi Sangh are built of local material and with the help of local artisans. We have thereby established a living link between ourselves and the people. That by itself is an education for the people and constitutes the foundation of our future educational work.

If you thoroughly assimilate this ideal of simplicity and its importance in the New Education, you will have justified your training here. You will then appreciate your work.

That work consists of cleaning up. Cleanliness of the mind and body is the first step in education. Prayer does for the purification of the mind what the bucket and the broom do for the cleaning up of your physical surroundings. That is why we always commence our proceedings with prayer. No matter whether the prayer we recite is the Hindu prayer or the Muslim or the Parsi, its function is essentially the same, namely, purification of the heart. God has innumerable names but the most beautiful and suitable in my opinion is Truth. Let Truth, therefore, rule every action of our life, be it ever so insignificant. Let every morsel of food that we eat be sanctified with His name and consecrated to His service. If we eat only to sustain the body as an instrument of His service not only will it make our bodies and minds healthy and clean, the inner cleanliness will be reflected in our surroundings also. We must learn to make our latrines as clean as our kitchens.

As with the individual so with society. A village is but a group of individuals and the world, as I see it, is one vast village and mankind one family. The various functions in the human body have their parallel in the corporate life of society. What I have said about the inner and outer cleanliness of the individual, therefore, applies to the whole society. In the mighty world, man, considered as an animal, occupies but an insignificant place. Physically, he is a contemptible worm. But God has endowed him with intellect and the faculty of discrimination between good and evil. If we use this faculty to know

God we become a power for good. Abuse of that talent converts us into an instrument of evil, so that we become like a scourge and a plague and fill this earth with strife and bloodshed and unhappiness and misery.

The struggle between the forces of good and evil is ceaseless and eternal. The former have truth and ahimsa as weapons against the letter's falsehood, violence and brute force. There is nothing more potent in the universe than God's name. If we enthrone Him in our hearts and keep Him there always, we shall know no fear and lay for ourselves rich treasure in life.

The Hindu, 5-12-1944

284. LETTER TO GOPINATH BARDOLOI

SEVAGRAM,
November 20, 1944

DEAR BARDOLOI[1],

I have your letter with enclosures. Concentrate on producing a solid scheme for villages and the names and qualifications of those who would work it. If you can do that there might be no difficulty about funds even if you exceed your allotment. But you must be prepared for a stiff test. Don't take a full bite at once and face disaster.

Yours,
BAPU

SHRI GOPINATH BARDOLOI
GAUHATI
ASSAM

From a photostat: C.W. 10493. Courtesy: Omeyo Kumar Das

[1] Ex-Premier of Assam

285. LETTER TO F. J. CURTERI

SEVAGRAM, INDIA,
November 20, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and the interesting enclosures.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

F. J. CURTERI, ESQ.
425, 112 WEST DORAN
GRENDAEC 3
CALIFORNIA, U. S. A.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

286. LETTER TO A. KALESHWARA RAO

SEVAGRAM,
November 20, 1944

DEAR KALESHWARA RAO,

I see that I cannot bear the burden you want me to shoulder about Rajagopalarao. You should have no difficulty in bearing it.

Yours,
BAPU

SHRI KALESEIWARA RAO
NANDIGRAM

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

287. LETTER TO CHIEF SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF C. P.

November 20, 1944

SIR,

Perhaps the Government are aware that I am intimately connected with the institutions[1] described in the enclosed[2] which has been prepared at my request. The figures are necessarily approximate.

[1] Nalawadi and Paunar Ashrams; *vide*, letter to the addressee, 7-1-1945.
[2] This is not available.

Apart from the question of the legality of the confiscations and without prejudice to the rights of parties interested to claim damages for losses sustained, I venture to suggest that the properties described in the enclosed may be returned to the trustees, so that the constructive and creative activities providing means of livelihood to those for whom they were designed may be resumed as before and further deterioration may be prevented.

I am,
Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

Encl. 1

THE CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE C. P. GOVERNMENT
NAGPUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

288. LETTER TO HIRABHAI S. AMIN

SEVAGRAM,
November 20, 1944

BHAI HARIBHAI [*sic*],

I have seen Chi. Jeram's[1] letter to you. Everyone here is pleased with the service he has rendered. I approve of his desire to learn painting. However I cannot use for this purpose the money that lies with me. But I think it would not be wrong if you encouraged him in his endeavour. The present generation will certainly want to have freedom in the choice of education, etc., when it comes of age. Whatever elders do—except the restraint they exercise upon those going astray—can hardly be anything but coercion.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

HIRABHAI S. AMIN
TARAPORE

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Jeram Patel

289. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

November 20, 1944

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

You have rightly cautioned me.[1] I shall do what I can. The result will be what we all deserve.

Who knows what will happen tomorrow? Ramji hadn't known what was to happen the next morning. You may return after straightening out things there and setting your mind at rest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1950

290. LETTER TO SATYAVATI

SEVAGRAM,
November 20, 1944

CHI. SATYAVATI,

Received your letter.

Chi. Chandrani has arrived here. But since I am observing silence I cannot speak to her today.

You may go to Lahore if there is no answer from the Government and if they impose humiliating restrictions you may break them. It will be best if they allow you to come here, then we shall see what happens. Go to jail if they imprison you and there even if you meet your death it doesn't matter. In death too the victory will be yours; it is yours even as it is. I do not see any point now in complying with the restrictions imposed by the Government. Write to them plainly that your primary duty is to recover your health. I have assumed responsibility for Chandrani.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 10234. Courtesy: Brijkrishna Chandiwala

[1] The addressee had offered some suggestions about the Ashram administration.

291. LETTER TO KALAVATI

SEVAGRAM,
November 20, 1944

CHI. KALAVATI[1],

Chi. Anand has given me Rs. 10 on your behalf and has also told me all about you. Remember, we are after all made up of this country's soil. We belong to the starving millions. And so you should lead a simple life and be one with God.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 10584. Courtesy: Anand T. Hingorani

292. LETTER TO A. C. PATWARDHAN

SEVAGRAM,
November 20, 1944

BHAI PATWARDHAN,

How can I write to Bhaiya? I have no preferences. I have agreed to take up the responsibility only out of love—provided both the parties are willing.[2]

I treasure many sweet memories of the late Abhyankar. Reduced to words they will lose much of their worth.

Blessings from
BAPU

A. C. PATWARDHAN
"TARUN BHARAT"
NAGPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

293. LETTER TO V. G. SAHASRABUDDHE

SEVAGRAM,
November 20, 1944

BHAI SAHASRABUDDHE,

I have your frank letter. I am helpless. Only today I received Patwardhan's letter. He says that I should arbitrate in this dispute also.

[1] Anand T. Hingorani's sister
[2] *Vide* the following item.

I shall do so provided you are also willing. Patwardhan writes that you will agree only if I write to you. I have written to him that it is not my job. I have no wish to undertake this responsibility but I shall agree to arbitrate out of love provided both the parties are willing. And that too on the condition that I should have written statements from both the parties. I cannot accept oral statements. And you must allow me six months' time for the verdict. If you agree please inform him and send me the statements and the letter of authority.

Blessings from

BAPU

V. G. SAHASRABUDDHE
KHADI VASTRALAYA
NAGPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

294. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

November 20, 1944

I saw Vidya's mobile *samadhi*[1]. It is good but I am inclined towards the simple and subtle. Let it be if you get peace and solace from it. It is also transient and if you can free yourself of attachment for it your love for Vidya will become further purified. You will better understand Vidya's true nature and your oneness will become clearer. A photograph shows difference. By identifying yourself with the unmanifest Vidya, that is with her spirit, non-difference can be attained. If you can keep the ashes in a little box which can be put in a pocket you may do so. You do not have to do this because I am saying so, but only if you yourself fully understand its meaning and its importance. Only then can it profit you. What I mean is your peace and your joy should increase more with this sacrifice. If this does not happen then let things be as they are.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] Memorial

295. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 21, 1944

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter came in today.

You have to submit to the relief in instalments for the sake of your brothers. Amid conflict of duties, the choice is often a very delicate affair. In every case you will be cheerful and keep your body in a fit condition. The climate there must be most bracing. I hope you had a good time with Kamalnayan[1].

I am well. Sushila has gone to Bombay to see Mathuradas. She is due any day now.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4149. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7784

296. LETTER TO C. V. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEVAGRAM,
November 21, 1944

DEAR SHRI RAJAGOPALACHARI,

I have your letter of the 18th inst. and also your pamphlet.

I hold the concluding paragraph of your last letter to be offensive. However, let me say briefly that when I wrote the article referred to by you, so far as I recall past events, I had not Rajaji's opinion in mind. My correction was a correlated reflection of my mind.

I have no place in the Congress for several years past. I never court publicity. A sense of duty compels me sometimes to write. I have no desire to enter into a public discussion about the matters raised by you.

Yours truly,

SHRI C. V. RAJAGOPALACHARI
BUCKINGHAMPET
BEZWADA

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Jamnalal Bajaj's eldest son

297. LETTER TO KUSUM GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
November 21, 1944

CHI. KUSUM[1],

Your letter after many days. It was well you spared me. Naturally I remember you very often. It is precisely for your sake that Narandas refrains from coming to me. If he himself comes whom should he bring along and whom should he leave behind? Besides, what is the point in our meeting? All of you there are busy rendering service which is more valuable than our meeting each other. I have Narandas's letter as also Jamna's[2]. I am not writing to either. Kanu and Abha are fine. For my part I have given them permission to go there but they will not for some time.

Blessings from
BAPU

[C/O] NARANDAS GANDHI
RAJKOT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

298. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA P. PATHAK

SEVAGRAM,
November 21, 1944

BHAI BALKRISHNA PATHAK,

True, I had close contact with the late Anandshankarbhai[3]. My greetings for the unveiling of his portrait. But will the University be content with unveiling his portrait by way of commemorating him or will every teacher and student endeavour to follow his noble qualities?

[1] Daughter of Vrajlal Gandhi
[2] Wife of Narandas Gandhi
[3] A. B. Dhruva (1869-1942); Sanskrit scholar and Gujarati man of letters; Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Benares Hindu University

This came off my pen in Gujarati. If a Hindi rendering is necessary do it yourself.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

DR. B. P. PATHAK
AYURVEDIC COLLEGE
BENARES HINDU UNIVERSITY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

299. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

SEVAGRAM,
November 21, 1944

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. You went away too soon after you arrived. I could not listen to your little confidences. I am reduced to a difficult and awkward position. The days when I could give individual satisfaction can be said to be almost over. For the present I see no possibility of getting anything better than the *dharmashala* where you have been accommodated. I hope Anand[1] does not make a nuisance of himself. I trust you are keeping well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHARDABEHN CHOKHAWALA
BIRLA'S DHARMASHALA
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

300. LETTER TO SUJATA

SEVAGRAM,
November 22, 1944

DEAR SUJATA,

Amrit Babu is leaving tomorrow. From the account he gives me of your activity I see you are doing good work. May God bless you for it.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10511

[1] Addressee's son

301. LETTER TO J. C. GUPTA

SEVAGRAM,
November 22, 1944

DEAR GUPTA,

When I saw in the papers months ago a reference to a lawyer brilliantly arguing his case before the Federal Court, I never knew that you had the honour to own that lawyer as your son. May his marriage be a blessing to him and his future wife. I congratulate her on her choice.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI J. C. GUPTA
23 CIRCUS AVENUE
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

302. LETTER TO JYOTILAL A. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
November 22, 1944

BHAI JYOTI,

Your letter is fine. Obviously what you say is correct. I also know that the Bungalow has changed hands. I have raised only a question of dharma.[1] If you sell the property I shall have to bear it without a word.

Who is Keshubhai? I cannot understand why Qureshi should turn inimical. I am writing to him.

I consider it intolerable that anyone should disfigure the Bungalow. I should also consider it wrong on the part of anyone who appropriates the Bungalow. Arrange, if you can, for the property to cease to be negotiable. But you may sell it if it will safeguard Champa's interests and if you think that it will not tarnish Doctor's name. I have a letter from Maganbhai of which I am sending you a

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jyotilal A. Mehta", 6-11-1944.

copy. Just now I am not in a position to arbitrate.

Blessings from

BAPU

J. A. MEHTA
JYOTI & CO.
MORVI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

303. LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

November 22, 1944

CHI. MAGAN,

I had your letter. I have written to Champa's adviser.[1] I will forward the reply to you. I am not in a condition just now to take up a long inquiry. I am buried under public work. Hope you are all happy.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MAGANLAL PRANJIVAN MEHTA, BARRISTER
82 GHODBUNDAR ROAD
ANDHERI, B.B. & C.I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1031. Courtesy: Manjula M. Mehta

304. LETTER TO KUSUM M. KOTHARI

SEVAGRAM,
November 22, 1944

CHI. KUSUM,

I got you letter. How do you meet your expenses? Where you are? You and your sisters should not give up your studies.

Blessings from

BAPU

KUSUM MANILAL KOTHARI
TAKHTESHWAR PLOT
BHAVNAGAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

305. LETTER TO LIMAYE

SEVAGRAM,
November 22, 1944

BHAI LIMAYE,

It is disturbing that both of you keep indifferent health. The only consolation is that you have two doctors with you. Please come when you are free.

I feel that we cannot let those who sell uncertified khadi also have Congress agency. It is not a matter of rules but of morals. You however have to work as the local committee directs.

It is good that you have taken up the work of Nayee Talim. About this when you come.

Chi. Balmohan must be progressing well.

Blessings from
BAPU

ACHARYA LIMAYE
925 SADASHIVPETH
POONA 2

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

306. LETTER TO SUBHADRADEVI

SEVAGRAM,
November 22, 1944

CHI. SUBHADRA,

I have your sorrowful letter. I have written to Dr. Baldev.[1] I shall write to you if I hear anything from him. What else can I do? What could I do for you if I called you here? Nothing is definite about me. God alone is our true help. He will protect you.

Blessings from
BAPU

SUBHADRADEVI
C/O AMRITDHARA [PHARMACY]
LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Baldev", 16-11-1944.

307. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

November 22, 1944

Do not take to heart what Mother says. All mothers say things like this. Laugh over it.

To worship God in His invisible form, watch the stars every night and look at the sun early in the morning. Mingle Vidya with the vision. Has not Vidya too gone up? The Saptarshi[1] is there and so is the Arundhati[2]. Though it is an imagination it helps.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

308. LETTER TO TOTARAM HINGORANI

SEVAGRAM,
November 23, 1944

MY DEAR TOTARAMJI[3],

Anand is somewhat reconciled to Vidya's death. He sees that a soul does not die with the dissolution of the body. His one and real unhappiness is that you are not reconciled to your wife. As a dutiful son the grief is natural to him. Is there no possibility of reconciliation? Pardon me for this intrusion. I feel for Anand.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

309. LETTER TO T. R. NARSIMHACHAR

SEVAGRAM,
November 23, 1944

DEAR FRIENDS

I thank you for your cautions. Everyone is useful. I shall not enter upon the fast unless I have the clearest possible call from the

[1] *Ursa Major*
[2] A star near *Ursa Major*
[3] Anand T. Hingorani's father

inner voice which is God.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI T. R. NARSIMHACHARJI OF TIRUPATI
SRIRANGAM

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

310. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 23, 1944

CHI. JETHALAL,

I am not at all in a condition to write to anybody, but how can I remain without sending you an acknowledgement? I got your detailed letter. I hope you will he able to make your way through the difficulties. You must have written to Jajuji.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9872. Courtesy: Narayan J. Sampat

311. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[*November 23, 1944*][1]

CHI. MANILAL,

This cable [from Sushila] has been just received on the telephone. I suppose it means that you should not go. But we need not act on that. Nothing is definite about the fast. If it comes, Sushila may be with me at the time instead of you.

From Gujarati: C.W. 1354. Courtesy: Sushila Gandhi

[1] From the C.W. Register

312. LETTER TO MARUTI SHARMA

SEVAGRAM,
November 23, 1944

CHI. MARUTI[1],

I was happy to have your letter. It was wise of you to have cancelled your plans of coming here. Who but Bapa would accommodate you? I have not seen many people whose generosity can match Dada's [and] Bapa's. Do as he bids. It is certainly a fine idea to build yourself a house. It is right that you and Lakshmi practise abstention. In the present circumstances it is better not to go about meeting people. It is our duty to save every single pie. I hope the children are fine.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

313. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
November 23, 1944

CHI. SUMI,

I reach your fine letter, which I have preserved since October 21, right up to this day. For a long time I had intended to do you justice. But now I don't have the time, so I shall make do with this little note. See that you get yourself the right food. Keep writing to me regularly. I hope you are fine. Keep the promises you have made me. Have you made friends with any of the girls? Take care of your eyes.

Blessings from
BAPU

[P.S]

I just got your letter. How did Mathuri[2] happen to fall ill? I hope she is all right now.

KUM. SUMITRA RAMDAS GANDHI
BIRLA SCHOOL
PILANI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] An inmate of the Satyagraha Ashram at Sabarmati, married to Gandhiji's adopted daughter, Lakshmi, a Harijan

[2] Mathuri Narayan Khare

314. LETTER TO NATHTHUBHAI PAREKH

SEVAGRAM
November 23, 1944

BHAI NATHTHUBHAI,

I have your letter full of affection. This is only to acknowledge receipt of it. I just don't have the time to write more. Writing even this little thing is burdensome, but how can I forget you?

Blessings from
BAPU

NATHTHUBHAI PAREKH
C/O KISHORE BROTHERS
BANGALORE

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

315. LETTER TO SUNDERLAL

SEVAGRAM,
November 23, 1944

BHAI SUNDERLAL,

Received your letter. I had read about your case in the newspapers.[1] I felt sorry. Is there no scope for an appeal? What does Dr. Sapru say?

I understand what you say regarding the Hindustani Prachar [Sabha]. Dr. Tara Chand[2] could not join it, but do invite Dr. Abdul Haq Saheb[3] to come. Even though there are Muslim members in the Sabha, Abdul Haq Saheb ought to be there.

I have occasionally noticed the activities of the Hindustani Culture Society. We should welcome whatever people are able to do. I note that your lectures are going on. They must be having a good

[1] After the ban on the addressee's book *Bharatmen Angrezi Raj* was lifted, it was reprinted by another publisher. This led to litigation in which the addressee lost the case. Later an appeal was filed leading to a compromise. T. B. Sapru had pleaded the addressee's case.

[2] Head of the Department of History and Politics, Allahabad University

[3] President, Anjuman Taraqui-e-Urdu

impact.

Come whenever you can.

Blessings from
BAPU

PANDIT SUNDERLALJI
8 TUKOGANJ MAIN ROAD
INDORE

From the Hindi original: C.W. 10264. Courtesy: Purushottam Prasad

316. LETTER TO KHWAJA A. HAMID

SEVAGRAM,
November 23, 1944

BHAI HAMID,

Why in English? I can read Urdu written in a clear hand. I can also write it but with some difficulty. I am writing to you in Hindi hoping that you can read the language. I have gone through your letter thoroughly. What have I to discuss with the nationalist [Muslims]? I can meet the nationalists only if I can bring something from Jinnah Saheb. I did not go to him to surrender the rights of the nationalists. Our duty is to reach, if possible, an agreement with the League, is it not?

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

KHWAJA A. HAMID
BYCULLA
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

317. LETTER TO AKBARALI I. LOKHANDWALA

SEVAGRAM,
November 24, 1944

BHAI AKBARALI,

I have your letter. What advice, much less help, can I offer you? I don't even fully understand this kind of work. I am sorry that you are in trouble and that things are getting worse. May God soon relieve

you from your troubles.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

AKBARALI ISMAILJI LOKHANDWALA
GODHRA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

318. LETTER TO GOPE GURBUXANI

November 25, 1944

DEAR DR. GURBUX,

Please wait till I am free. Send me a reminder at the end of December.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1319

319. LETTER TO K. RENGARAJAN

November 25, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

You should have mer[cy] on me. I am one and senders of papers are many. How can I cope with the work except by excluding much unsolicited matter?

Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10232. Courtesy: Gandhi Seva Sangh, Sevagram

320. LETTER TO KAILAS HAKOOR

SEVAGRAM,
November 25, 1944

DEAR SIR KAILAS,

I am late in acknowledging your kind letter of 28th ultimo. I am so much pressed for time. I send these lines to thank you for your letter.

Pray don't be anxious about the contemplated fast. It won't

come except in answer to a call from God.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR KAILAS HAKOOR
SIMLA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

321. LETTER TO KRISHNABAI NIMBKAR

SEVAGRAM,
November 25, 1944

DEAR KRISHNABAI,

I am late in answering your letter. I see you are incorrigible. Obstinacy is both a virtue and a vice. Which it is depends on circumstances. In your case I would fain believe that it is a virtue. You ask for permission to do certain things. Who am I to give or withhold permission? I can only advise where advice is sought. I have given you my answers.

Your attack on Rajaji is ill-founded.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SMT. KRISHNABAI NIMBKAR
192 POONAMALLEE HIGH ROAD
VEPERY, MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

322. LETTER TO JETHALAL JOSHI

November 25, 1944

BHAI JETHALAL JOSHI,

I could not reply to your letter immediately. I have received other letters similar to yours and I am drafting a statement[1] with reference to them. Please read it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1353

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 27-11-1944.

323. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

November 25, 1944

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. I was glad to hear that all of you reached there safely. I am better now. Now in place of Kanu Sushilabehn sleeps here. The massage and bath are given by Kanaiyo. Krishna's teeth caused some anxiety, He had some relief after Sushila arrived. He had sound sleep last night. I have accommodated him in Rustom Bhavan. Your decision to go is perfectly correct. I am in God's hands. I have started sleeping in the verandah since last night. Do not worry about me in the least. I sent you Sushila's cable. I wrote a couple of words below it.[1] You must have received it by now. My blessings to Kishorelal and Gomati and the rest. Let no one worry about me.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MANILAL GANDHI
C/O SHRI NIRMALABEHN SHROFF
ISHVARDAS MANSION
BLOCK-A, 5TH FLOOR
NANA CHOWK, GAMDEVI
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4940

324. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
November 25, 1944

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

I like your letter very much. You can take both the examinations. You will see a statement that I am issuing.

I have correctly understood what you write about music. You should not take anything from the Harijan Sevak Sangh. You should cease to be a burden. Service of Harijans is the warp and woof of our lives. Music is your life's mission. It is the legacy left by Panditji[2]. Merge yourself into music. I should regard it not at all improper if

[1] *Vide* letter to the addressee, 23-11-1944.
[2] Narayan Moreshwar Khare

you earned your maintenance through it. But I am prepared to write to Jivanlal if right now you are shrinking from doing it. He is a sound and dependable person and your relationship with him is not confined to that of a father-in-law and son-in-law. Hence you need not be embarrassed if he pays your expenses for the sake of your music. I shall not write without your consent. You may also consult Narandas and let me know if both of you think of something else. I know that Vijaya[1] is fully co-operating with you. I had also learnt that Aruna is progressing. You are lucky. Acquire full control over your body. Charge only those who are rich and not the poor.

Blessings from

BAPU

PURUSHOTTAM N. GANDHI

RAJKOT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

325. LETTER TO SATYACHARAN

SEVAGRAM,

November 25, 1944

BHAI SATYACHARANJI,

I have your letter. I am considering what I ought to do. I am also having a talk with Ghanshyam Singhji.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SATYACHARANJI

D. A. V. HIGH SCHOOL

ALLAHABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

326. LETTER TO V. N. BARVE

SEVAGRAM,

November 25, 1944

BHAI BARVEJI,

I had your letter. With such a rush of work I forget whether or not I have replied to the letters. I value your Harijan service highly. I

[1] Addressee's wife and daughter

admit that our work is proceeding very slowly. I do not know how to quicken its pace.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

V. N. BARVE
PRESIDENT, HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH
DHULIA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

327. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

SEVAGRAM,
November 26, 1944

DEAR KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA GARU,

Bapu was delighted to see your letter of 4th instant. He was sorry to learn that you are not keeping well. You have got to keep well.

He is not anxious to undertake a fast. He is praying for light.

Yours sincerely,
PYARELAL

DESHABHAKTA KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA
GUNTUR

From a photostat: G.N. 3227

328. LETTER TO T. N. AVINASHILINGAM

SEVAGRAM,
November 26, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

Gandhiji had your letter of 3rd November.

With regard to the Kulasekharapattanam rioting case he is of opinion that the appeal ought to be filed in the Privy Council. He wants to know what the probable costs would be and the extent of assistance that would be required.

Yours sincerely,
PYARELAL

SHRI T. N. AVINASHILINGAM
13-A FEROZESHAH ROAD
NEW DELHI

[P.S.]

I have just finished Ranga's thing.[1] I am taking up yours next without any further delay.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

329. LETTER TO ANNE MARIE PETERSEN

SEVAGRAM, "*VIA*" WARDHA,
November 26, 1944

DEAR SISTER[2],

Bapu was very glad to have your letter of 3rd inst. He is sorry he cannot write to you himself as he has been forced to further curtail his work owing to overstrain. In fact he has almost reached the limit of his capacity and has had nature's warning signals which he cannot ignore.

He does not want to undertake a fast, but he is faced with a moral dilemma and he is praying to God for light. He will not undertake the fast unless he has the clearest indication that it is the will of God.

I hope you had a favourable response from the trustees of the Kasturba Memorial Fund with regard to your proposal about your school.

What you write about Ba is but too true.

You will certainly come whenever you feel like coming.

Yours sincerely,
PYARELAL

SISTER MARIA
SEVA MANDIR
PROTO NOVO

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* footnote of "Interview to N. G. Ranga", 29-10-1944.

[2] The addressee, a former member of the Danish Mission, had founded an ashram—a school for girls—at Porto Novo.

330. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

SEVAGRAM,
November 27, 1944

At present, the Hindustani *prachar* work is being carried on in Gujarat by Shri Amritlal Nanavati. This work is in accordance with the scheme prepared by Kakasaheb in consultation with me. Hindi *prachar* work is being conducted by the Rashtrabhasha Prachar Samiti, Wardha, appointed by the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. Both these activities are supposed to be undertaken for spreading the national language. I regard myself as the founder of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. In 1925, the resolution about Hindustani was passed at the Cawnpore session of the Indian National Congress. But no attempt was made to act upon the resolution. The Hindustani Prachar Sabha was, therefore, established in Wardha on the 2nd May, 1942. The Sabha has defined Hindustani as follows:

> Hindustani is that language which the Hindus, Muslims and all other people of villages and towns in Northern India speak, understandand use for mutual intercourse, which is written and read in both the Nagari and the Persian scripts, and the literary forms of which are recognized today as Hindi and Urdu.[2]

But before the work of the Sabha could be started properly, many people of the country, including the founders of the Sabha, were thrust into jails on account of the August Resolution[3] of the Congress. Shri Nanavati was not in jail, and he felt that he should start the Hindustani *prachar* work. In my opinion he has served the country by doing this work.

Hindi and Urdu are the two literary styles of the same national language. These two styles are, at present, diverging from each other. From the point of view of *Rashtrabhasha*—Hindustani—it is necessary to bring these two styles nearer to each other. Without the knowledge of both these styles and the scripts this is impossible to achieve.

[1] This was issued on January 10, 1945, by Shriman Narayan, Honorary General Secretary, All-India Hindustani Prachar Sabha, in order to remove misunderstandings about the object and work of the Sabha. The Gujarati original appeared in *Gujarat Samachar*, 2-12-1944.

[2] *Gujarat Samachar* has this paragraph in Hindi.

[3] *Vide* Appendix "Resolution Passed by All-India Congress Committee", 8-8-1942.

The venom of Hindu-Muslim differences has entered the sphere of language as well. I have been possessed with the idea of Hindu-Muslim unity ever since my childhood. In order to eliminate this poison of disunity in the domain of language, it is necessary to learn both the styles and the scripts. If the Congress desires to conduct its work without English—and this must be done—it is the duty of each Congressman to learn both the styles and the scripts. This will result in the happy fusion of Hindi and Urdu, and the language that will thus evolve will be the natural Hindustani.

A question is asked whether the enthusiasm for learning both the styles and the scripts should be among both the Hindus and Muslims or only in one of them. A misunderstanding lurks behind this question. Those who make progress in the knowledge of languages will stand to gain: those who do not will be the losers. Moreover, he who cherishes unity will take special pains to know both the styles and the scripts. It should also be remembered that, in provinces like the Punjab, the Hindus, Muslims and all others know only Urdu. To know at least this much is the duty of every patriot. In a vast country like India, the more languages we strive to learn the better equipped shall we become for national service.

Should both the scripts and the styles be learnt by national workers and Congressmen only or by all?

My answer to this question is that all Indians should become Congressmen, and thus everybody should learn both the styles and the scripts. In fact, the very question is irrelevant, because only a very limited number of men and women have so far developed this hobby of learning the national language. We cannot go into raptures over the fact that a few thousands or a few lakhs of people appear at the Rashtrabhasha examinations. Even the number of persons in the non-Hindi and non-Urdu areas who desire to learn only Hindi or Urdu is not sufficient to satisfy our ambition.

Is it not enough that those who desire to learn Urdu should do so through the Anjuman[1] and those who desire to learn Hindi should do so through the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan?

Not at all. It was precisely because of this that the Congress passed the resolution on Hindustani and the need of establishing the Hindustani Prachar Sabha was felt. The scopes of both the institutions (Sammelan and Anjuman) are restricted, and from my point of view, narrow as well. It is my cherished desire that both these sister institutions should co-operate with each other. When that auspicious

[1] Anjuman Taraqui-e-Urdu

day will really dawn, the work of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha will be deemed to be over. So long as this situation does not arise, the Hindustani Prachar Sabha should continue to perform its duty. I do hope that these two sister associations will not only tolerate but also welcome this third sister institution which seeks to establish unity between them.

In Gujarat many workers who are at present engaged in Hindi and Hindustani *prachar* work are my colleagues. Some of them have sought my guidance. This statement is my guidance to them. If those who are working for the Wardha Samiti of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan agree with my views on Hindustani *prachar*, they should take up this work as well. They can certainly teach and coach for the Sammelan examinations those students who desire to learn only the Hindi style and the Devanagari script. But they themselves should popularize both the styles and the scripts and should also try to persuade as many persons as they can to do the same. So far as language is connected with the welfare of the nation, I regard Hindustani *prachar* work to be most essential. There should never develop any conflict between the two activities (of Hindi and Hindustani).

Now a question arises as to what should be done by those who have so far learnt or may learn in future only Hindi or only Urdu.Such persons should learn the other style or script and sit for the Hindustani examinations which are to be conducted in both the scripts. Those who have already learnt one style and script will find it very easy to answer the question papers.

The Hindu, 15-1-1945

331. LETTER TO MALIK WAHID

SEVAGRAM,
November 27, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

You will please forgive me for being late in replying to your letter of 1st ultimo.

Munshiji[1] cannot be disqualified for holding certain political views. He has rendered assistance to the trust in a variety of ways.

[1] K. M. Munshi

I thank you for your good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MALIK WAHID SAHEB

JOGESHWARI

B. S. D.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

332. LETTER TO ATULANAND CHAKRAVARTY

SEVAGRAM,
November 27, 1944

DEAR ATULANAND,

Do be merciful to me. Don't ask me to read anything and don't seek my opinion. Of course you must pursue your mission, come what will.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

333. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS

SEVAGRAM,
November 27, 1944

BABOOJI,

I have treasured your letter of 28-9-44 all these days in the hope of answering it. I came across it today while overtaking arrears.

You lay upon my shoulders a burden they are ill able to carry. I am ill-equipped for the task you call me to.

I hope you are keeping quite well.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. BHAGWANDAS

BENARES CANT.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

334. LETTER TO S. M. PINTO

SEVAGRAM,
November 27, 1944

DEAR PINTO,

As to my fast do your duty and leave me in the strong hands of God. Trust Him to guide me aright. I shall do nothing without His guidance. As to the Trust[1] do you not see that the trustees were self-constituted? Their business was to collect from whomsoever gave. Then I came on the scene. I was permitted to add names of those who I thought would carry out best the object of the Trust. The whole of India now comes in to see that the money is spent on and for the women and children excluding males beyond an age in the 700,000 villages of India. Here there is no religious or other distinction.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

S. M. PINTO
NATIONALIST CHRISTIAN PARTY
FORT, BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

335. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
November 27, 1944

CHI. SITA,

I have your letter. The handwriting is beautiful. You should make your letters slightly bigger. It has now grown pretty cold here. Build up your body with the same devotion with which you are pursuing your studies. Do not be lax about anything.

Blessings to you all from
BAPU

SITA
C/O NANABHAI MASHRUWALA
AKOLA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust

336. LETTER TO BALUBHAI P. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
November 27, 1944

BHAI BALUBHAI,

I have your letter. I am no more useful for personal work. My strength is limited. I can hardly cope with public work either. There are hundreds who are afflicted like you. Would I have the time if I set out to meet all of them? One should find out one's own way out of one's troubles.

Blessings from
BAPU

B. P. MEHTA
GANJIKHET
NAGPUR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

337. LETTER TO VIKRAM A. SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM,
November 27, 1944

CHI. VIKRAM,

I have your letter of the 16th. You have taken a lot of pains but the job can be done only if we have power in our hands. A 'Gallup poll' is conducted by newspapers and it means nothing. Besides, the number of newspaper readers in our country is so small that a research of this kind will not give any worth-while result. Let us see what the Sapru Committee[1] does.

Blessings from
BAPU

VIKRAM SARABHAI
BANGALORE

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The Conciliation Committee appointed by the Standing Committee of the Non-party Conference under the Chairmanship of T. B. Sapru, *vide* Appendix "Letter From T. B. Sapru"(b) and (c) "Names Suggested for Conciliation Committee".

338. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SEVAGRAM,
November 27, 1944

BAPA,

I have gone through your letter. Some people are capable of sitting idle enjoying their leisure. You are certainly not one of them. Your enjoyment lies in doing work. Well, enjoy yourself Narahari is coming tomorrow and he will examine your statement. Sushilabehn is examining it. It seems it will be delayed to some extent. I hope you are getting some peace of mind. Yesterday Pakvasa[1] came and took my signature.

BAPU

THAKKAR BAPA
S[ERVANTS OF] I[NDIA] SOCIETY
POONA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

339. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM,
November 27, 1944

CHI. LILI,

By all means have a mosquito-net. For this you don't have to go up to the Dean. Whatever the rules, one should observe them ungrudgingly. Of course it is a different matter if they are morally wrong.

It is good that you reported your talk with the Dean, which shows that you must clear all the examinations with perseverance. That is your dharma. Forget Sevagram and devote yourself to your studies. About my fast we shall see when one actually comes up. You have to be guided by the straight line that has been chalked out for you. You are not so much as to glance aside this way or that.

You already sign your letters as 'obediently'. Well, you have got

[1] Mangaldas Pakvasa

my command.

Blessings from
BAPU

LILAVATIBEHN UDESHI
MEDICAL HOSTEL
PAREL, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

340. LETTER TO DR. JIVRAJ MEHTA

November 27, 1944

BHAI JIVRAJ,

I have your letter. Your worrying about my health is misplaced. It is quite unnecessary to give any importance to the reeling ensations. Nothing would have happened if I were not observing silence. It am exhausted, no doubt. I have therefore increased the amount of rest and I shall go on increasing it if I feel the need. Yes, the stomach is slightly better. But it is an old story, don't worry about it. I have no desire to move out. The cold does not bother me. There is still the month of December to go. Besides, the echoes from Bengal are resounding in my ears. If the need arises Sushila will send for all three of you.

It is good news that Mathuradas is better.

True, I am no more as keen as I was about the medical section of the Memorial. For the present we are not going to have anything on a large scale here as decided earlier. Let us see what finally comes off. Sushila is trying to do something herself. She is training a few girls, and she will carry on as she thinks right.

Thinking about a board of trustees I see that any scheme coming from outside will necessarily have to be examined. So there will have to be a board. I am considering its final form. You too should think over it and write to me. The onslaught of Ayurveda, πhomoeopathy, etc., is crushing. All this confuses me But a way has to be found. I shall watch where we land.

The Charkha Sangh meetings start tomorrow.

I hope you are up on your two feet. I hope Hansabehn[1] and the children are fine.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. JIVRAJ MEHTA, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's wife

341. LETTER TO KAMAL NARAYAN MALAVIYA

November 27, 1944

CHI. KAMAL NARAYAN,

Received your letter. Your suggestion is very good but it is beyond my capacity to carry it out. To establish a school and a library in every village is a Herculean task. I am glad to know that Babuji[1] is well.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI KAMAL NARAYAN MALAVIYA
BHARTI BHAVAN
ALLAHABAD (U. P.)

From the Hindi original: C.W. 10556. Courtesy: Municipal Museum, Allahabad

342. LETTER TO SHIVLAL GUPTA

SEVAGRAM,
November 27, 1944

BHAI SHIVLAL GUPTAJI,

It is from the Provincial Congress Committee that you should ask for help for Bhai Sant Ram. I am helpless.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHIVLAL GUPTA
JAIPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Madan Mohan Malaviya

343. LETTER TO TEJRAM BHATT

SEVAGRAM,
November 27, 1944

BHAI TEJRAMJI,

You spend money needlessly. I can no longer attend to personal problems. I cannot look into your case. I have no time at all. Please have mercy on me.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

TEJRAM BHATT
DEHRA DUN

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

344. LETTER TO RADHAKANT MALAVIYA

SEVAGRAM,
November 27, 1944

BHAI RADHAKANT[1],

What you say is correct. No doubt I promised but now I plead helplessness. I feel exhausted and the burden of work is quite heavy. I know what you want to tell me. Spare me, if you can. Come if you must but after December 5.

M. K. GANDHI

RADHAKANT MALAVIYA
ALLAHABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

345. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

November 27, 1944

Inspect everything in Andhra and meet the patients. If you find anything lacking in the matter of sanitation report it to the doctor, undergo the treatment he advises and if you do not find it good come back.

[1] Son of Madan Mohan Malaviya

Get to know Babaji[1] and Gokhaleji who accompanies him and extend whatever help they need. Write to me fully. See what the treatment is. Do not become disheartened if you do not recover your hearing. There is no harm in not hearing. There is harm only in forgetting God.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

346. LETTER TO LLOYDS BANK LTD.

November 28, 1944

DEAR SIRS,

Ref: Your letter marked Exchange dated 24-11-1944

With reference to your letter above enclosing your receipt in duplicate dated 24-11-1944, for £539-12-6 in my favour, I have to inform you that I have authorized the Bank of Nagpur Ltd., Wardha, to collect the amount from you.

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

MESSRS LLOYDS BANK LTD.

HORNBY ROAD

BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

347. LETTER TO IFTIKHAR-UD-DIN

SEVAGRAM,

November 28, 1944

DEAR MIAN SAHIB,

Bapu was glad to have yours and Mrs. Iftikhar's letters. He is too tired to write to all those whom he would like to write. He desires me to thank you both for your kind sentiments.

So far as the fast is concerned, he says he won't undertake it unless there is a clear call.

[1] Babaji Moghe

How is your health now ? I hope this will find you fully restored.

Yours sincerely,

PYARELAL

MIAN IFTIKHAR-UD-DIN

21 AIKMAN ROAD

LAHORE

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

348. LETTER TO R. K. KARANJIA

November 28, 1944

BHAI KARANJIA[1],

I have your letter. I read the journal. Is not offering satyagraha also subject to some rules? No satyagraha violating its own rules can be offered even if it were to bring in millions of rupees. One invariable rule is that it is to be offered by one who suffers tyranny. The country should be able to stand by him. I or anybody else who might lead the band of satyagrahis must drift with the current. As things stand now it seems to be impossible.

Blessings from

BAPU

R. K. KARANJIA

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

349. LETTER TO MAHADEV A. HINGORANI

SEVAGRAM,
November 28, 1944

CHI. MAHADEV,

Anand says that you get quite scared at night. Why should you be afraid in the night? God does not sleep at night. He keeps watch for us even while we are asleep, why should we be afraid then? Sleep after reciting Ramanama and have no fear at all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hind. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] Editor of *Blitz*, a Bombay weekly

350. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

SEVAGRAM,
November 28, 1944

You are going not only to have your ears treated but for nature cure in a wider sense. My opinion is that your deafness is closely connected with the state of your mind. Nature cure includes mental activity. In this sense uttering Ramanama, reading the *Gita,* and so on, are part of nature cure. Perhaps Rajuji's[1] centre will provide this. I have a feeling that Raju looks at nature cure in a spiritual way. You too should make such an effort. Give up all other thoughts. Go there determined that you will be cured and you will get back your hearing. Take the treatment that Raju advises and eat what he says you should. Do some reading and writing. Leave all thoughts of Vidya, Father, Mother, myself and Mahadev (son). You will be doing good to them all by giving up their thought. Detachment will help cure your ears. Do not think about the ears. Think about work. Try and remove the shortcomings you notice in Raju's centre. Get to know the patients there. Speak to Gokhale or Babaji. Learn the *Gita* from them. Learn Telugu. We from the North neglect the four Southern languages. It is a great mistake. In short you are going to Andhra for a new life. You must give there what you have taken from here and you have to bring here what you find there. Do spinning and other allied work regularly. What more? God is with you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS]

It will be good if you show this to Gokhale and Babaji. But do as you please.

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] Krishnaraju

351. INTERVIEW TO N. G. RANGA

November 28, 1944

At the second interview[1] Prof. Ranga placed before Gandhiji two alternative proposals for the re-organization of the Kisan Sabhas and their co-ordination with the Congress organization. They were:

(1) To include in the *kisan* councils that may be formed one-third representation from corresponding Congress Committees. This would secure for them the co-operation and the advice of the Congress.

(2) (a) To adopt Congress membership as a basic membership for the *kisan* organization.

(b) To constitute *kisan* councils out of rural delegates to the Congress Committees elected as per the present constitution. Such *kisan* councils would be part of the Congress Committees while retaining their separate Corporate existence for dealing with the problems relating to the *kisans*.

(c) In addition to Congress members some non-Congress but not anti-Congress members also might be taken on the *kisan* councils to provide a suitable representation.

He felt that the first formula would be more acceptable than the second to most Kisan Sabhaites. The final clause in the second formula too had the same object in view, namely, to make it acceptable to them.

GANDHIJI: But this is a variation upon what you suggested last time. Then you suggested that the Kisan Sabha will have no member who is not a member of the Congress also.

PROF. RANGA : We want to have in our organization some non Congress *kisans* also who are not anti-Congress but for various reasons could not afford to join the Congress.

GANDHIJI: Why do you want that? You said that you did not want anything in opposition to the Congress. So, if you have for your members only Congressmen, the *kisan* organization will deal with matters relating to the rights of *kisans* as against landlords and employers. It won't deal with political questions. I thought that I could reconcile myself to it. I said I approached it with hesitation while it was for you to dispel my doubts. So you better stick to your original proposal.

PROF. RANGA : It has been forcibly brought home to us that the Congress people feel nervous about this double membership. So I thought the Kisan Sabha had better remain as a distinct body. Our workers are used to that idea. I have been able to

[1] For the earlier interview, *vide* "Interview to N.G. Ranga", 29-10-1944.

persuade them that so far as politics is concerned we must accept Congress leadership. The idea is that after the Congress elections are over the rural delegates will form themselves into a *kisan* council. This *kisan* council will deal with matters relating to the *kisans* and in politics accept the lead of the Congress.

GANDHIJI: My suggestion is this. You have your own organization where you register all the *kisans*. As soon as the *kisan* becomes your member, he becomes also a Congress member. Matters particularly bearing on the *kisans* and their relationship with the landlords, etc., are then tackled by your organization while political matters will be tackled by the Congress.

PROF. RANGA: In that case may we retain one anna for the *kisan* council out of the Congress membership fee of four annas?

GANDHIJI: You can do that subject to Congress approval. This would mean that the Congress allows a gratuity of one anna to you for doing this special work. If I were at the head of Congress affairs I would certainly allow it.

PROF. RANGA : In the mean time may we start with one-anna membership from now on the clear understanding that those who are now enrolled are to become members of the Congress as soon as the Congress organization again begins to function? Or we can take five annas from each member now and out of it keep four annas in trust for the Congress.

GANDHIJI: I am afraid you cannot do it today. You must do it openly or not at all. Do not collect the four annas Congress membership fee in advance. I will suggest a better plan which I recommended to Shrimati Rama Devi. Have a register of workers only. Don't have Congress members just now.

PROF. RANGA: Can't we have something like a Congress Seva Sangh, an *ad hoc* body of Congress workers but not Congress members, to carry out Congress work?

GANDHIJI: Yes, you may do that. But seeing that ours is a non-violent body their work will only be to carry on the fifteen-fold constructive programme. That will avoid tussle with the Communists also. Today you are not working for power but as Congress servants. If you carry on your work silently and unostentatiously you become irresistible. No one will come in unless he wants to work with you. There will be no eloquence or Press publicity to attract power seekers.

PROF. RANGA: Eloquence by itself, I admit, is no good but has it not its use when coupled with solid public work?

GANDHIJI: Work by itself is eloquence. Here there are workers in Khadi Vidyalaya, Hindustani Talimi Sangh and the Gram Seva Sangh, working themselves to death. They make no speeches. They speak to the villagers through their activity.

PROF. RANGA: As regards the Communists they have done a lot of harm so far as *kisan* work is concerned and as a result have become very unpopular. There are two *kisan* organizations in Andhra, one Congress-minded, the other Communist. So far as we are concerned we keep the Communists out of our organization.

GANDHIJI: You won't be able to keep anybody out of primary membership by merely making rules. But you can keep out trouble if you work on the lines I have indicated.

The Hindu, 23-1-1945

352. MESSAGE TO STUDENTS' CONFERENCE[1]

[Before *November 29, 1944*][2]

The fourteen-point programme is dear to Gandhiji and if you can implement it and give it a dynamic drive you will advance the country towards freedom, peace and progress. The blessings always go to workers in the cause of freedom.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-12-1944

353. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[3]

SEVAGRAM,
November 29, 1944

My heart goes out to you all. Give my love to Maud[4]. She is brave. I hope that the impending examination will show nothing worse.[5] How has Beryl[6] taken the thing? Shummy[7] must be soldier-like and face all this bravely. Of you what shall I say? Do send me a cheerful wire, if you can.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4203. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7839

[1] This was sent by Pyarelal. The Conference was scheduled to be held at Allahabad on December 2 and 3.

[2] The report appeared under the date-line "Allahabad, November 29, 1944".

[3] This is a postscript to Sushila Nayyar's letter to the addressee dated November 29, 1944.

[4] Consort of Maharaja of Kapurthala

[5] The addressee's sister-in-law, Raniji, had undergone an operation and was to be treated at the Tata Memorial Cancer Hospital, Bombay.

[6] Maud's daughter

[7] Shamshere Singh, addressee's brother

354. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN PATHAK

SEVAGRAM,
November 29, 1944

BHAI RAMNARAYAN,

I had asked you to write again regarding the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. There were other letters too, on the basis of which I have issued a statement[1] which both of you should see, and write to me if you have anything to say. You ought to get some guidance.

Blessings from
BAPU

RAMNARAYAN PATHAK
ELLISBRIDGE
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

355. LETTER TO KALANGI

SEVAGRAM,
November 29, 1944

BHAI KALANGI,

I have your letter as well as the money order. I hope you will get this letter. One cannot put an end to the misery of the masses by ending one's life in the way you describe. A number of things happen in the world to which we are helpless witnesses. We should do our utmost and leave the rest to God. He also bears with whatever His creation does, doesn't He? You have no idea at all about what I do and what I refrain from doing. Therefore I would advise you to give up your idea of suicide. If you want I shall return the money.

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. KALANJI [*sic*]
FIRE SERVICE 2
UTTARPADA
DIST. HOOGLY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 27-11-1944.

356. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEVAGRAM,
November 29, 1944

CHI. SHARMA,

There is a letter from Bhai Vichitra[1] from which I gather that you have raised a grand structure. But you have no one to help you. The question is what and how much you will be able to do by yourself. Who can bear your expenses? How and from where can I draw money for what does not look promising? I am convinced that you should do what you can with your own efforts. At times I feel that I have entered your life only to disorganize it. You belong neither here nor there which means you have lost your moorings. Now forget me and make your own decision. I shall make the final decision regarding the trust after hearing from you.

Blessings from
BAPU

HIRALAL SHARMA
SURYA CHIKITSALAYA
KHURJA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

357. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

7.15 a.m., November 30, 1944

These chapters[2] are not bad, but they do not come up to my expectations. Perhaps I should not have entertained those expectations. I have not permitted you to have enough experience or education for that. You could certainly have worked harder. Since you are not lethargic, I assume that you did not get the necessary time for putting in more work. Now revise the Writing at the places I have indicated and hand over the manuscript to Jivanji[3] to deal with it as he likes. You need not at all feel discouraged.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5845. Also C.W. 3068. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

[1] Vichitra Narayan Singh
[2] Of *Amaran Ba*
[3] Jivanji D. Desai, Manager, Navajivan Press

358. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

SEVAGRAM,
November 30, 1944

BHAI MUNSHI,

I have had a talk with Rajaji. The position is as I have explained, namely, that the Princes can preserve their independence and Pakistan can exist only if British power remains. How can I tolerate this? It means that a part of India can be independent, and the British rule will continue in the States ruled by the Princes and in the Muslim majority Provinces. I can never be a willing witness to this. I cannot understand how you can be. You may, if you wish, meet Rajaji and seek clarification. I have stated here the position as I have understood it. See that in trying to secure something you do not lose everything. Go thoroughly into the details.

Sarala[1] must be doing fine.

Blessings from
BAPU[2]

From Gujarati: C.W. 7684. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

359. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
November 30, 1944

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your letter. Rajaji does not feel inclined to go there. His health is impaired. He would not be able to stand the Delhi cold. There is nothing specifically wrong with his health, only he is not keeping robust health. He has made changes in his diet. You and whoever else wants to see him should come over here.

I am also preparing to take a little rest. I think I will stick to this place but stop doing any work. Rajaji strongly insists on it. He has well spread his fragrance in Nagpur. Dr. Mahmud is fairly well although he has grown weak. He is taking Pandit Shiv Sharma's

[1] Addressee's eldest daughter

[2] The letter bears the following instruction: "Send this with anyone going to Bombay."

prescriptions. Krishnadas had to bear a lot of pain in having some of his teeth extracted. He is better now.

Blessings from

BAPU

DEVDAS GANDHI

DELHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

360. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

SEVAGRAM,

November 30, 1944

CHI. SHRIMAN,

Your letter. There is no need to write to Tandonji[1]. I have received the resolution.

Kedar Babu's note is good. I am herewith sending a copy of it. I want you to guide Madalasa in this respect. Talk to Shantabehn if you wish to. I appreciate the letter; something must be done. I am even prepared to meet all the teachers. But I should not be burdened with this responsibility. Owing to fatigue I wish to stop all work from the 3rd until the 31st.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 302

361. LETTER TO SHIV SHARMA

SEVAGRAM,

November 30, 1944

BHAI SHIV SHARMA,

Hope you are in perfect health. Ramesh is a very nice person but he failed to reveal the wonders of Ayurveda to me. He is hard-working. He tries to compete with Allopathy. A great deal of diligence and experience is required to compete with Allopathy.

I have grown very weak. My intake of food is somewhat reduced. Two to three hours' work exhausts me. Now I am thinking

[1] Purushottamdas Tandon

of disengaging myself to some extent from public work. Ganeshshastri Joshiji had prescribed some pills. I did not take them. I am unable to decide what to do. Sushilabehn, of course, recommends her line of treatment. I am still keen on getting well with the help of Ayurveda or my own methods of treatment. Let us see what I decide to do. Instead of sending another vaidya it would be better if you yourself come over whenever you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

PANDIT SHIV SHARMA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

362. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

December 1, 1944

DEAR AMRITLAL,

I have revised the draft[1] sent by you. There should be no reference to fast. You should confine yourself only to the marriage. You will see the addition about the reform.

I hope Sailabala Devi[2] is better and will soon be completely restored. How is Ronu[3]? Love to you all.

BAPU

[PS.]

Sailen's meals and residence are properly fixed up now. I do not think that Sailen can be appointed auditor for the K. B. Trust Fund. They will have well-known chartered accountants for the purpose, I expect.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10509. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[1] Of a Press statement
[2] Addressee's wife and son
[3] *ibid*

363. LETTER TO K. R. AGHARWAL

SEVAGRAM,
December 1, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

Please believe that the fast will not come except for a definite call from within.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI K. R. AGHARWAL
DIBRUGARH

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers,. Courtesy: Pyarelal

364. LETTER TO JAYA

SEVAGRAM,
December 1, 1944

CHI. JAYA[1],

Didn't my sending the yarn by itself mean my blessings? Since, however, you are not satisfied with that, tell Chi. Bindu[2] and Chi. Chandrakant that I bless them and wish that both of them should understand the significance of marriage which I have explained, act accordingly, lead their lives in a spirit of service and be happy.

If you can persuade Manu to go with you, she may certainly do so. I have not held her back. You should, however, understand that on an occasion like this one should entertain no expectation from anybody who may have been entrusted to me.

Blessings from
BAPU[3]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIII

[1] Jaisukhlal Gandhi's sister
[2] Addressee's daughter
[3] The letter bears the following instruction: "Show this to Manubehn."

365. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

SEVAGRAM,
December 1, 1944

CHI. KISHORELAL,

You understand the matter correctly. Maybe, I should proceed in the same direction. In support of my action I quote the fasts in the past that were universally praised. But I should not waver if they were found to be wrongly undertaken or not fully justifiable. It is my firm conviction that even from a purely modern point of view fasting has an important place. It is as much necessary for the *atman* that takes on a body as for the body itself. If in the process the body drops that should be no reason at all for grieving. Nevertheless I should like to read whatever Nathji[1] may write.

Improve your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

366. LETTER TO GOMATI K. MASHRUWALA

[*December 1, 1944*][2]

CHI. GOMATI,

I have your letter. If you have the faith that I am—in fact all of us are—in the hands of God, what is the point in worrying? I am taking all the care I can. I hope to come through. I have decided to retire immediately for rest, mainly urged by Rajaji.[3] It will start on the fourth. The weather here does not disagree with me. Manilal has given me all the news. Both of you seem to be doing well on the whole.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Kedarnath Kulkarni, addressee's guru

[2] The letter was enclosed along with the preceding item.

[3] According to Sushila Nayyar's letter to Amrit Kaur dated November 29, Rajaji "put the suggestion of rest to Bapu in a very original fashion. He said that just as when he fasted he abstained from food, he should take up a fast from work and religiously Abstain from work for one month."

367. LETTER TO V. L. MEHTA

[*December 1, 1944*][1]

BHAI VAIKUNTH,

I saw your letter to Pyarelal. I think you should bring along the Maharaja's money. Maybe, we will not be able to take up the responsibility. He should entrust the amount either to the Talimi Sangh or to someone in Bihar who might take up the burden. It would be all right if he could accomplish the job through Badrinarayan who is in Bihar.

Blessings from

BAPU

PS.

Show this to Bapa if you can. Don't hesitate to write to me if you differ from me.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

368. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

SEVAGRAM,
December 1, 1944

CHI. SHRIMAN,

Your letter is very frank and good. We will all discuss it after my [work] fast is over. I quite understand the importance of your college work. Organization of the students and the responsibility of the Mahila Ashram work will take up all your time. Hence I shall try to relieve you, as much as possible, from the work of the Hindustani Prachar [Sabha]. I will see what call be done.

You must keep yourself in good health. I hope you will not neglect your duty to preserve your health for the sake of service.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 302

[1] In the source this letter is placed at the end of the letters dated December 1, 1944 and before those of December 2, 1944.

369. LETTER TO INDUBHUSHAN BHINGARE

SEVAGRAM,
December 1, 1944

BHAI BHINGARE,

I showed your *bhajans* to Diwanji who is a poet and who has made a study of the *abhangas*[1], *Jnaneshwari*[2], etc. I enclose herewith his opinion. In this condition how can I write a preface for them? I would advise you to see Diwanji and with his help revise [the manuscript] where necessary.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

370. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SEVAGRAM,
December 1, 1944

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I am dissociating myself from all public activity, discussions, etc., from the 4th to the 31st. There is no cause for panic. It is only by way of precaution. I hope I shall be completely all right.

You have sent a telegram to Rajaji but he is reluctant to go. Nor is it necessary. Besides, he cannot be said to be too well. There is no mental exhaustion but his physical energy is at a low ebb. He won't brave the Delhi cold. He wants to leave for Madras soon after I start my [work] fast.

Blessings from
BAPU

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Compositions of Tukaram

[2] The first Marathi commentary on the *Bhagavad Gita by* Jnaneshwar advocating the path of knowledge

371. ADDRESS TO A.I.S.A. TRUSTEES

SEVAGRAM,
December 1, 1944[1]

I am sorry to say that I am physically not so fit and fresh as I had expected to be and that I have decided to take complete rest for four weeks commencing from the 4th December in order that I may be able threafter to take up the work more energetically. However, I warn the members not to take pity on me and spare me in the deliberations.

Shri Jajuji, the General Secretary of the Sangh, has discussed with me[2] the future policy of the Sangh in all its aspects for seven days devoting one hour daily to it The gist of those discussions has been sent to the members of the Board and other prominent khadi workers in the form of a circular letter. Replies thereto have been received from a number of members and they are all before the Board for their consideration.

The chief thing that I want the members to consider is that so far the Sangh work was directed from the Central Office, but henceforth the work is to be decentralized and any province or district which wants to be autonomous is to be allowed to do so. Workers must be prepared to go to organize such autonomous centres with the prestige and moral support of the Sangh. The worker will be paid a maintenance for five years on an annually diminishing scale. He should work there according to the fundamental principles and policy laid down by the Sangh. It is not possible otherwise to decentralize the work in seven lakhs of villages.

There are two schools of thought current in the world. One wants to divide the world into cities and the other into villages. The village civilization and the city civilization are totally different things. One depends on machinery and industrialization, the other rests on handicraft. We have given preference to the latter. After all, this industrialization and large-scale production are only of comparatively recent growth. We do not know how far it has contributed to our development and happiness, but we know this much that it has brought in its wake the recent world wars. This second world war is not still over and even before it comes to an end we are hearing of a third world war.

[1] From *Charkha Sanghka Navasamskaran*
[2] Between October 7 and 14

Our country was never so unhappy and miserable as it is at present. In the cities people may be getting big profits and good wages, but all that has become possible by sucking the blood of villagers.

We do not want to collect lakhs and crores. We do not always want to depend on money for our work. If we are prepared to sacrifice our lives for the cause, money is nothing. We must have faith and we must be true to ourselves. If we have these, we shall be able to decentralize our capital of thirty lakhs in the villages to create national wealth amounting to three hundred crores. To do that, the main thing that is necessary is to make the village self-sufficient and self-reliant. But mind you, my idea of self-sufficiency is not a narrow one. There is no scope for selfishness or arrogance in my self-sufficiency. I am not preaching isolation. We have to be humble as dust for a cause. We have to mix with people even as sugar mixes itself with milk. Though the villagers will be self-sufficient so far as it is possible, they will devote their time also to their intellectual development for the creation of the consciousness for the contemplated non-violent society of the future.

Cloth stands second to food as necessity. If every village begins to produce its own cloth, its strength will greatly be enhanced. But to achieve that we do not want to close down the textile factories by legislation. We want to achieve our purpose by revolutionizing the psychology of the people. By decentralization we want to produce cloth wherever cotton is grown.

But what of the city people who have taken to khadi now? I would ask them to spin their own yarn and to find out for themselves weavers to weave that yarn into cloth.

It is absurd that the cloth should come from Manchester for the poor, who produce cloth for Bombay people. It is also not proper to compel the poor to accept part of their wages in the form of khadi. They should be so educated that they may Spin voluntarily and intelligently and may use with love and pride the cloth produced by them. If the people of Bombay want to wear khadi they should spin for themselves or get their children and other dependents to spin. If people pledged to khadi, spin for themselves, the practice will be contagious. Even if we are able to produce khadi worth ten crores instead of one crore as at present our object of reaching the whole of India will not be achieved.

Gandhiji then read out the resolution[1] which he wanted the Board to consider and adopt. Whilst explaining its implications he said:

The workers of all our five constructive programme institutions (Charkha Sangh, Gram Udyog Sangh, Hindustani Talimi Sangh, Harijan Sevak Sangh, Goseva Sangh) should possess such knowledge that the politics of the whole country may be guided by them.

Today we are all the while thinking that our work will be able to make headway only when Rajaji becomes the Prime Minister of Madras. But that is not proper. In our present politics we are looking with longing eyes to the Viceroy's Secretariat but if we do our work properly the Viceroy will have to come to us. He will see our work and realize that it is not possible to keep such people in subjection or to rule over them. When seven lakhs of villages will take up this work in the new spirit we shall not remain a subject nation. Each one of our villages will be independent and self-reliant. That is true swaraj and that is true democracy. I do not worry when we shall be able to attain our goal, but if we are sure of our path and if we have faith that it is the only true one, we should go on striving for it incessantly and uninterruptedly.

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-12-1944

372. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

SEVAGRAM,
December 1, 1944

That 'man proposes and God disposes' constantly proves true in my case, as I expect it does in every case whether we realize it or not. I was contemplating a food fast for reasons I hold to be entirely spiritual. But for the time being, it is being replaced by a day-to-day-work fast. I had hoped that I had recovered sufficiently to be able to go through the routine work without interruption. But nature's warning has been sounding in my ears during the last ten days. I was feeling fatigued. Even after the noonday siesta, the brain seemed tired. There was a complete disinclination to speak or write. But I continued hoping that I would be all right without having to discontinue mental activity.

But nature would have her way. Rajaji who saw me after a month detected a marked change in my face, and he said, 'You must stop all

[1] For the draft resolution, *vide* "Speech at A.I.S.A. Meeting-II", 2-9-1944 and for the resolution passed, *vide* Appendix "Resolution Passed by A.I.S.A.", on or before 3-12-1944.

this ceaseless mental activity if you want to avoid a disaster.' I seized the suggestion. He even went so far as to say that I should not mind disappointing invited workers of the Charkha Sangh, although I was looking forward eagerly to meeting them and discussing with them my plan for a new orientation of khadi work. But I would not listen. So I am going through these meetings in the best manner I can in the hope that no crisis will overtake me during the remaining two days of these meetings.

From the 4th to the 31st of this month, I have decided rigidly to discontinue all public activities, all interviews for public or private purposes and all correspondence of any nature whatsoever. I shall read no newspapers during the period. This abstention will be subject to exception for unforeseen circumstances of a grave nature.

I shall not deny myself the pleasure of reading non-political literature in which I am interested. This also I shall read without in any way unduly taxing the brain. I have asked friends who were expecting to see me during the month to indulgently postpone their visits for the time being.

Let readers not be alarmed at what is only a precautionary measure. Dr. Sushila Nayyar assures me that there is nothing physically wrong with me except that my old friends, the hookworms and the amoebae, have not left me. I am able to take daily walks without the slightest strain and they will be continued. I had hoped to make one or two public statements in connection with a lot of misrepresentations of my views and doings about the communal question and some other public questions. I must forbear for the time being. But I must repeat the warning I have given before, that nothing that is not authoritatively stated by me should be accepted by the public. There are things which I have seen in the Press which I can only say I am incapable of having countenanced directly or indirectly.

There are some vital questions addressed to me by correspondents. They will forgive me for my inability to deal with them for the moment. If, after a month, they still feel the necessity, they will please repeat their letters and if all goes well, I shall gladly reply. Starvation of millions, black markets, and what I cannot but describe as gambling, will continue to worry me as they do now. I can but entreat my numerous co-workers to do what they can to ease the situation, which can be done, I am perfectly sure, if those concerned will make up their minds that the claims of the famishing millions are the first charge on their care and attention.

The Hindu, 3-12-1944

373. NOTE TO AMINA G. QURESHI

[After *December 1, 1944*][1]

Stay over if you can. No message would be sent up to the 31st; nor a letter.

BAPU[2]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10776. Courtesy: Ghulam Rasool Qureshi

374. TELEGRAM TO RASHID KHAN

December 2, 1944

RASHID KHAN
MUSLIM LEAGUE
KUMBAKONAM

YOUR TELEGRAM. BEST WISHES.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

375. LETTER TO ANIL CHANDRA CHANDA

SEVAGRAM,
December 2, 1944

DEAR ANIL,

Satis Babu has handed me your note. I have not forgotten Santiniketan. As you know Kamalnayan had taken over the whole burden himself. Unfortunately he had to go to Mussourie to look after his wife. He has not returned. I shall attend to the matter as soon as he returns but not before my rest-cure is over.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From C.W. 10515. Courtesy: Visvabharati

[1] This is written on a letter dated December 1, 1944, to the addressee from her Son requesting her to get from Gandhiji a message for the students who had planned to observe the 9th of every month by engaging in patriotic activities.

[2] The signature is in the Urdu script.

376. LETTER TO AKBARBHAI CHAVDA

SEVAGRAM,
December 2, 1944

CHI. AKBAR,

I have made arrangements for a watch for you. You will get it soon. I have read all your letters. You have been doing fine work. God will bless you with success.

You will soon get lots of drugs, but they will not be very helpful. So long as water, fire and earth are available, drugs are not necessary.

Give the people boiled water to drink. This will cure most of the complaints. Use soda [bicarb] if you have it. Water containing soda will stop diarrhoea. Food should be stopped. Persuade the people patiently to stop eating. You may even let them die who do not listen to you. Search for village medicinal herbs. You must have *neem* trees there. If you persuade the people to chew its leaves and see that they fast, the fever will probably disappear. Boil *neem* leaves in water and wash the blisters with that. The water should be bearably hot. Cover the blisters with a mud-pack of clean earth. Get clean cloth for bandaging the blisters. If you can get tamarind you can give a solution of it in place of water mixed with lemon juice. Revive people's knowledge of nature-cure remedies. Local medicinal drugs should be made available. Give rice water instead of milk. If you mix jaggery with it, it will provide more energy. Teach people the rules of hygiene. If food is stopped to people suffering from fever or diarrhoea and they are put on boiled water, more than fifty per cent of the cases will recover. I have no doubt in my mind about this at all. Fifty per cent is a conservative guess. For guinea worm, try fomentation with hot water and tie up the thing as it comes out. Try also a poultice of onions. You must have received the suggestions sent by Kishorelalbhai and Sushilabehn. I have suggested only the simplest remedies. Let Devibehn send whatever she wishes. If cows, buffaloes or goats are offered, accept them. To meateaters you may unhesitatingly give meat-soup. Soup means water in which meat has been boiled. These things should be served hot after boiling them. This is not the time for doing our religious duty of propagating vegetarianism. Soup is bound to be useful where milk is not available.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3236

377. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

December 2, 1944

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Where do you want to keep Chakrayya[1]? Do you want to keep him in Adhyapan Mandir[2] or in Harijan Ashram or with you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10805

378. LETTER TO ABDUL MAJEED

December 2, 1944

BHAI KHWAJA,

I had known it even earlier that my Muslim friends who are not with the League were a little angry with me because I went to Bombay to talk with Jinnah Saheb and did not talk with them. As I have already written to you earlier, I can never be unfaithful to the Muslims or Islam. I had never thought that I would have any settlement with Jinnah Saheb which would be against the interests of my Muslim friends who have joined me in making sacrifices or which would harm the genuine interests of any community in India. Had any such situation arisen, I would have certainly consulted some of you.

I was distressed to learn that some of my Muslim friends think that in my friendliness with Jinnah Saheb I have ignored them. That certainly is not the case. It must be accepted that the majority of the Muslim community belongs to the Muslim League whose Quaid-e-Azam is Jinnah Saheb. It must also be accepted that he is opposed to our line of action. That is why I wished that either he should convert me to his course or I should convert him to mine, and if this could be done, the Hindus and Muslims would march together to freedom. I failed in my attempt. I wish that Maulana Sabeb and certain other friends, particularly Maulvi Hafizur Rehman Saheb, Mufti Kifayatullah Saheb and Maulana Syed Ahmed Saheb would take the trouble of meeting me here. I would try to clear their doubts. We can all work together and pray to God to show us the straight path to freedom. If all of you cannot come, it would be enough if only

[1] An inmate of the Sevagram Ashram

[2] Training school

Maulana Saheb comes. Or, Maulvi Hafizur Rehman Saheb who is the secretary of the Jamiat may come. Please convey my regards to all the friends.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Urdu original: A. M. Khwaja Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

379. LETTER TO VICEROY

SEVAGRAM,
December 3, 1944

DEAR FRIEND[1],

This is with reference to your letter of 2nd November last.

My letter[2] of 17th July to Mr. Churchill was, in my estimation, of a sacred character, not meant for the public eye. I now contemplate an occasion or time when it might need publication without losing the sacred character. Even so I do not wish to publish it without the Prime Minister's permission. May I have it, in case I need to publish it?[3]

I should tell you that I have shown the contents to a few friends.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
VICEROY'S CAMP

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, p. 15

380. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM,
December 3, 1944

CHI. MIRA,

So you have the land of your choice[4]. May all your dreams be fulfilled. If I go to Delhi and get the time of course I should love to

[1] Lord Wavell

[2] *Vide* "A Thought for the Day", November and December, 1944.

[3] In his letter dated December 21, 1944, E. M. Jenkins conveyed the Prime Minister's consent.

[4] For the Kisan Ashram near Roorkee

drive to your place.

Do not be anxious about me. All I need is rest from the routine work, even love-letters. So till the end of the year this is my last letter. This is the final day of writing letters.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6501. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9896

381. LETTER TO METROPOLITAN OF CALCUTTA

SEVAGRAM,
December 3, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your kind letter of 25th November and for responding to Sir Tej Bahadur's invitation[1].

You must have seen from the papers that from tomorrow, I am imposing on myself abstention from day-to-day routine— work-fast. I see clearly that I must take rest, if I am to avoid a breakdown. The fast is to end with the month.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

THE METROPOLITAN
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

382. LETTER TO H. KALLENBACH

SEVAGRAM,
December 3, 1944

MY DEAR KALLENBACH[2],

Manilal will give you all the news about me. I hope you are doing well. I send you these lines to tell you that the Phoenix Trust[3]

[1] To be on the Conciliation Committee of the Non-Party Conference

[2] A German architect, devoted friend and co-worker of Gandhiji during his South African days. He placed his "Tolstoy Farm" at the disposal of the satyagrahis during the satyagraha struggle which lasted for 8 years.

[3] For the original Phoenix Trust-Deed, *vide* "The Phoenix Trust Deed", 14-9-1912. The addressee was one of the Trustees.

requires complete overhauling.

There are now no settlers. Therefore the clause about them should go. There is no formal resignation or withdrawal by them. If the law requires it, a formal resignation should be secured from each one of them. Perhaps their physical withdrawal amounts to resignation.

The following new trustees may be added:

Manilal, Jalbhai[1], Medh[2]

Manilal should be the managing trustee and the manager of the Settlement, including *Indian Opinion*. He should draw from the Trust £100 per month for the maintenance of his family and children and live on the land free of rent with the right to use for his household the fruits, vegetables and cereals grown on the Settlement. He should maintain proper books of account in connection with the Settlement and *Indian Opinion*. He should be free, subject to its being no additional burden on the Settlement, to remove *Indian Opinion* partly or wholly to Durban.

Such changes as may be necessary may be made in the Trust-Deed. In the event of my death before the Deed is prepared and signed by me, this letter may be treated by the present trustees as authority for the changes herein suggested.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

383. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

[December 3, 1944][3]

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I hope you are keeping well and fit even as I am. Don't worry over the threatened fast.[4] If it comes, it will come from God. And where is the cause for worry when a thing is from God?

I had a discussion with Manilal and Jalbhai when he was here. This is the result.

Three new trustees should be added. Jalbhai, Medh and Manilal. Manilal should be the manager of the settlement in my place. He is managing *Indian Opinion* and everything at present and drawing his

[1] Son of Parsee Rustomji

[2] Surendra Medh

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Herman Kallenbach", 3-12-1944.

[4] *Vide* "Statement on Proposed Fast", 29-10-1944, "A Statement", 29-10-1944 and Gandhiji's letters of November 1944.

expenses. I think and he agrees that he should draw for himself and his family a fixed sum per month, say £100. The budget of expenses for the settlement should be prepared annually and passed by the Board.

There should be a clause added giving the trustees authority to sell the proceeds to be utilized for the objects of the trust.

If a Kasturba memorial is to be founded, on the Phoenix ground, it should be properly secured.

If you, the remaining trustees, approve of my suggestions, an amended deed may be prepared and sent to me for my signature. Should I die before my signature is taken, this letter should be used by the trustees as my wish in the matter. I hope that they will give effect to it and free Manilal from the uncertainty that hangs over him.

I feel too that those settlers who are not working on the settlement, although they may be deemed to have resigned, should formally do so, to avoid future complications.

From the original : Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy : National Archives of India

384. LETTER TO DR. PANDIT

SEVAGRAM,
December 3, 1944

DEAR DR. PANDIT,

Shri Parnerkar is a valued co-worker. His mother is in Indore. She is ailing. If you can give her the treatment she needs, I shall feel obliged. You will please pardon me for giving you this trouble, even though I do not happen to know you.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. PANDIT
INDORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

385. LETTER TO SULTANA QURESHI

SEVAGRAM,
December 3, 1944

DAUGHTER SULTANA[1],

Now you are married. It is good that you found a partner within the family itself. May you both be happy and bring credit to Imam Saheb[2] by your selfless service.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10764. Courtesy: Ghulam Rasool Qureshi

386. LETTER TO HAMID AND WAHID QURESHI

SEVAGRAM,
December 3, 1944

SONS HAMID AND WAHID[3],

Amina[4] has talked to me about both of you. You should make very good progress. Wahid has become a cowherd. If he is a true cowherd he will produce pure milk and ghee for the country and will breed such bullocks as would attract universal attention.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10775. Courtesy: Ghulam Rasool Qureshi

[1] Daughter of Ghulam Rasool Qureshi

[2] Abdul Kadir Bawazeer, addressee's grandfather and Gandhiji's associate since the South African days

[3] Sons of Ghulam Rasool Qureshi

[4] Addressees' mother; daughter of Abdul Kadir Bawazeer

387. LETTER TO MOHANLAL

SEVAGRAM,
December 3, 1944

BHAI MOHANLAL,

I don't at all approve of your action. In fact you are no more worthy of anybody's alliance. But that will be difficult. You should therefore form a fresh alliance.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

388. LETTER TO KANAIYALAL DESAI

SEVAGRAM,
December 3, 1944[1]

BHAI KANJIBHAI,

I am deeply pained that I had to stop you from coming. But what could I do? I am helpless. The month will pass quickly and God will have me restored.

I have already spoken at length to Mangaldas, who will explain things to you. The main point is that if Congressmen and Congresswomen feel sore about it, I shall carry on correspondence with none but you as the president or with anybody who happens to be the president. I did not consider Mavalankar an outsider. You may appoint whatever committee you wish for the running of the Kasturba Trust. The rules are formulated with a view to safeguarding the Trust, the purpose being that the money should be spent according to its objectives. It may be said that all parties are, or rather no party is, represented on the Trust. Individuals have contributed on their own behalf whatever they wanted. We should, in view of this, appoint a committee comprising men of all shades of opinion. Indeed, whoever is appointed on the committee should be in his or her own right a representative of India's village women. It will be proper only when all work done in this spirit. Then alone shall we be able to utilize the one crore rupees for our village sisters. There is no place for distinction between rich and poor, Congressmen and non-

[1] *Sansmarano* however has "December 2, 1944".

Congressmen. I indeed desire that a Congressman should harbour no hatred in this heart. All our actions should be based upon love and truth.

You may read out this letter to all the men and women. Please understand it is my earnest wish that there should he no bitterness whatsoever.

Blessings from

BAPU

KANJIBHAI

SURAT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

389. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

December 3, 1944

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

Your letter. I showed it to Satis Babu. He says that you have to stay in the village itself and do what is required. The problem of water, etc., can be met; he has told you something about it and will talk to you more. You should take it that until the 31st you will not hear from me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1951

390. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

December 3, 1944

CHI. SHRIMAN,

I just now received your letter. It is full of the affection that you both have for me. However, it does not seem necessary to have a change of place right now. Let me see what happens during the [work] fast. I would enjoy spending even a little time with you, though. Hope you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 303

391. LETTER TO GANESH SHASTRI JOSHI[1]

SEVAGRAM,
December 3, 1944

I have been taking the little pills, which you gave me, for the last three days. I must say that they have done me some good. What is this pill?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10358

392. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

SEVAGRAM,
December 3, 1944

CHI. ANAND,

I have your letter. May God cure you all. Give me all the news. You would have noticed that from tomorrow I am going to stop writing letters, etc. I shall resume in January.

Blessings to you all

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

393. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM,
December 3, 1944

BETI,

You have done well in not coming. Today is the last day for writing letters. I am taking a reprieve from such activities from tomorrow until the 31st. I have undergone a lot of mental strain and have to get rid of it. You must be keeping well. Akbar is working hard. I shall try and send one of his letters on to you.[2]

Don't worry about me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 541

[1] This is a postscript to Abha Gandhi's letter to the addressee.

[2] The letter bears the following instruction in Gujarati, obviously for the secretary: "Please enclose a letter from Akbar."

394. LETTER TO KRISHNARAJU

SEVAGRAM,
December 3, 1944

BHAI KRISHNARAJU,

My letter-writing acitivity ceases from tomorrow until the end of this month. Hence I am sending this letter to convey my good wishes for your success in your treatment of the three friends[1].

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10357

395. LETTER TO DHIRENDRA CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM,
December 3, 1944

CHI. DHIREN,

I have your letter. From tomorrow my silence starts. I shall not be writing letters till the 31st. I am happy to learn that you are doing well. By any means get rid of your constipation. Sailen has improved a lot.

Blessings from
BAPU

DHIREN CHATTERJEE
KHADI PRATISHTHAN

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Anand T. Hingorani, Gokhale and Babaji Moghe

396. A STATEMENT[1]

[Before *December 4, 1944*][2]

I have never put any ban on individual satyagraha, where self-respect is in danger.

The Bombay Chronicle, 10-12-1944

397. TELEGRAM TO ANUGRAHA NARAYAN SINHA[3]

December 4, 1944

ANUGRAHANARAYAN SINHA

KADAM KUAN

PATNA

BEST WAY CELEBRATE RAJENBABU DIAMOND JUBILEE IS FOR BIHAR AT LEAST TO DO ALL HE STANDS FOR. NEED I SAY WHAT HE STANDS FOR?

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

398. NOTE TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

December 4, 1944

I will not meddle with this during this month. All of you may do what you think best. Everybody has truth and ahimsa in him. This need not have been mentioned in the last meeting of the Charkha Sangh, for the circular[4] was drafted on that assumption. What you are doing about the kitchen must be all right. See that the men whom you engage are clean in body and mind. Their clothes, etc., should be decent. You should look after their all-round education. This should include their children. You should also go and inspect their homes. If they are well trained, we can influence the villages sooner through them. We must go deep into whatever work we do.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5808. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] & [2] Gandhiji said this in reply to an 'enquiry' from some prominent Congress workers. The statement was obviously made before Gandhiji disengaged himself from all public activities on December 4; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 1-12-1944.

[3] This was in response to the request of the Bihar Students' Federation.

[4] Sent by Shrikrishnadas Jaju. It contained the gist of his discussions with Gandhiji carried on from October 7 to 14.

399. LETTER TO G. V. GOKAL

December 6, 1944

DEAR FRIEND,

Gandhiji desires me to thank you for your letter of the 13th ult. and the remittance of £ 1,000/- which you have sent.

You must have seen from the papers that owing to health reasons he has taken four weeks' complete holiday from all work. I regret, therefore, that he cannot write to you himself.

Yours sincerely,
PYARELAL

SHRI G. V. GOKAL
MESSRS. V. GOKAL & CO.
47 MARKET STREET
JOHANNESBURG
SOUTH AFRICA

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

400. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

SEVAGRAM,
December 11, 1944

DEAR SHYAMLALJI,

I have your letter of 2nd inst. and the enclosures.

As desired by Bapu I have written to Dr. Dharam Prakash to send his accounts as he had offered to. His reply is being awaited. Bapu would get the accounts scrutinized when they arrive.

Yours sincerely,
PYARELAL

SHRI SHYAMLALJI
HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH
[CAMP] KINGSWAY
DELHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

401. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
December 11, 1944

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

My idea was that the khadi work should be learnt as part of the Talimi Sangh training while working for the Talimi Sangh itself, in accordance with the sincere wishes of the couple[1]. The work going on in the Khadi Vidyalaya these days is very good. The work of the Talimi Sangh depends on khadi. Whether or not it depends as much or more on agriculture remains to be seen. What I mean to say is that I had very high expectations from you. And I still believe that they will be fulfilled. If there is anything else, you may join me tomorrow during my walk. I shall be taking a walk towards Sevagram [village].

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4452

402. TALK WITH NARAHARI D. PARIKH

[Before *December 12, 1944*]

I see khadi dying. Hence if khadi, which is the main plank of the constructive programme, is to be saved, it ought to become self-supporting. Those who do not spin have no right to wear khadi. All those who wear khadi must spin so that khadi may survive.

[From Gujarati]

Sandesh, 12-12-1944

403. REMARK IN VISITORS' BOOK[2]

December 12, 1944

For me this is a place of pilgrimage. I wanted to visit the institution ever since it was started, but there was no opportunity. May God help the afflicted through this institution. Only He can reward Bhai Manhar Diwan for his pioneering work in this field. But the fact

[1] E. W. Aryanayakum and his wife Ashadevi

[2] This is recorded in the Visitors' Book of a leprosy relief society in Dattapur Colony near Wardha.

is that for him service is its own reward.

M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi original: Maharogi Seva Samiti Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

404. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

December 16, 1944

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I understand what you say. Obviously I expect you to become an ideal teacher in Nayee Talim. That sums up everything. Wherever you go it will be at my instance only. But you must develop the ability to get along with Aryanayakum and Ashadevi. I am in no hurry. You will yourself understand that the experience of comradeship with them is in itself a part of your training in Nayee Talim. After all you have started your own Nayee Talim, haven't you?

Yes, I consider it very essential that you acquire complete mastery of carding. Start [learning] it in the Khadi Vidyalaya after taking permission from both of them. You have already been given one responsibility, haven't you? Do you want another person besides Anantramji?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4453

405. NOTE TO CHANDRANI

December 21, I944

I hope you will prove to be a very good *sevika*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Chandrani Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

406. A NOTE[1]

December 22, 1944

You have done the sums very well. There is room for improvement in the handwriting.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

407. NOTE TO MANU GANDHI[2]

December 23, 1944

This is good enough, but there is plenty of room for neatness. Whatever you do must be neat.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

408. NOTE TO MANU GANDHI

December 25, 1944

It is indeed an achievement that most of the sums are correct. Take your own time to improve the handwriting. See that henceforth not a single [sum] is incorrect.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

409. A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

SEVAGRAM,
December 25, 1944

I had hoped that I would be able to speak a few words today. But God willed otherwise. Today is Christmas Day. We hold all religions in equal respect and all such festivals deserve respect. But our respect is different from the common kind. For us such festivals are for meditation and introspection. On such occasions we should search our hearts and cleanse it of all impurity. We should know that

[1] Presumably this was meant for Manu Gandhi; *vide* the following two items.

[2] This and the following note to the addressee appear in the form of remarks on the lessons done by her.

God is one, whether we call Him Ishwara or Khuda, and that His commands are the same for all. We should not harm others for what we regard as Truth or right. We should be prepared to die for Truth and when the call comes give our life for it and sanctify it with our blood. This in my view is the essence of all religions. On this day we should ponder upon this and remember that Jesus mounted the Cross for what he considered to be the Truth.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7903. Also C.W. 4271. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur

410. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

SEVAGRAM,
December 27, 1944

BHAI BENARSIDAS,

It is natural to feel sad at Father's passing away but if we reflect for a moment we shall realize that it is futile to grieve over the inevitable. Why then should one grieve? And who is it that dies? Surely not the *jiva*[1] which was always associated with us, which is with us now and will remain with us hereafter.

Father's last words are very precious to me. I shall regard them as a blessing.

Blessings from
BAPU

PANDIT BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI
FEROZABAD
DISTRICT AGRA (U. P.)

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2575

[1] Soul

411. A THOUGHT FOR THE DAY[1]

November 20, 1944

Innumerable are the names of God; but if a choice were to be made of one, it would be *Sat* or *Satya,* that is, Truth. Hence verily Truth is God.

November 21, 1944

Realization of Truth is not at all possible without ahimsa. That is why it has been said that ahimsa is the supreme dharma.

November 22, 1944

The quest of truth and the observance of non-violence are impossible without *brahmacharya,* non-stealing, non-possession, fearlessness, equal respect for all religions, removal of untouchability and the like.

November 23, 1944

Brahmacharya here mean control over the sense-organs—in thought, word and deed. One who, while remaining bodily chaste, is impure at heart shall not be deemed a true *brahmachari.*

November 24, 1944

Non-stealing does not mean mere abstention from theft. To keep or take what one does not need is also stealing. And of course stealing is fraught with violence.

November 25, 1944

Non-possession means that we should not hoard anything that we do not need today.

November 26,1944

Fearlessness should connote absence of all kinds of fear—fear of death, fear of bodily injury, fear of hunger, fear of insult, fear of public disapprobation, fear of ghosts and evil spirits, fear of anyone's anger. Freedom from all these and such other fears constitutes fearlessness.

November 27,1944

Let us respect other religions even as we respect our own. Mere

[1] At the request of Anand T. Hingorani Gandhiji on November 20, 1944, started the practice of writing 'a thought' for each day and continued it for about two years. Those written during the period covered by this volume are given here as a single item under the last date, namely, December 31, 1944. The thoughts were originally written in Hindi.

tolerance thereof is not enough.

November 28, 1944

Removal of untouchability means not merely touching the Harijans, but also looking upon them as our own kith and kin; in other words, treating them in the same way as we would our own brothers and sisters. None is high, none low.

November 29, 1944

Yogah Chittavrittinirodhah—This is the first aphorism of Patanjali's *Yoga Darshan*[1]. Yoga is controlling the activities of the mind. Restraining the surging passions, suppressing them, that is yoga.

November 30, 1944

How can one is whose mind passions keep surging ever realize truth? The upsurge of passions in the mind is like a tempest in the ocean. The helmsman who holds fast to the helm in a storm remains safe. Likewise, he triumphs who relies upon Ramanama when the mind is restless.

December 1, 1944

The *bhajan* "Take Thou a Lesson from the Tree"[2] is worth laying to one's heart. The tree bears the heat of the sun, yet provides cool shade to us. What do we do?

December 2, 1944

Let us always beware of false knowledge. That which keeps or turns us away from Truth is false knowledge.

December 3, 1944

For the realization of Truth it is necessary to read the lives of the saints and reflect upon them.

December 4, 1944

Against whom shall we harbour enmity when God Himself says that He dwells in all living beings? (Translation of today's *bhajan*.)

December 5, 1944

The great lesson that we learn from the life of Mirabai is that she renounced her all—even her husband—for the sake of God.

December 6, 1944

What can a person not accomplish by faith? He can do everything.

December 7, 1944

Man can overcome mountains by faith.

[1] Philosophy of Yoga
[2] By Surdas

December 8, 1944

He who concentrates on any one thing with singleness of purpose, will ultimately acquire the capacity to do everything.

December 9, 1944

True happiness does not come from without; it comes from within.

December 10, 1944

He who loses his individuality loses all.

December 11, 1944

The straight path is as difficult as it is simple. Were it not so, all would follow the straight path.

December 12, 1944

"Compassion is the essence of religion," so Tulsidas has said. And he adds: "Abandon not compassion as long as you live." Suppliants for compassion ourselves, all of us, how shall we take compassion, and on whom?

December 13, 1944

A sister said: "I used to pray, but have now given it up." I asked: "Why?" She replied: "Because I used to deceive myself." The reply is of course correct. But let her give up deceiving. Why give up praying?

December 14, 1944

Yesterday's *bhajan* was very melodious and worth pondering over. It says in essence: God dwells neither in the temple, nor in the mosque. Neither within, nor without. If at all He is anywhere, it is in the hunger and the thirst of the humble folk. Let us spin daily in order to sate their hunger and quench their thirst, or, with Ramanama on our lips, engage ourselves in some such labour for their sake.

December 15, 1944

Why is it that even ordinarily we do not escape untruth be it out of fear or even shame? Would it not be better to adopt silence instead, or, shedding fear of one another, speak frankly what is in our mind?

December 16, 1944

Even a little untruth ruins a man, as a drop of poison ruins milk.

December 17, 1944

We are loath to devote time to things that matter, but hanker after worthless things and find pleasure in them!!!

December 18, 1944

"Man is not God; call him not that. But of Divine refulgence he

is part."

December 19, 1944

Listen to the discourses of the sages, study the scriptures, become learned. But if you have not enthroned God in your heart, you have achieved nothing.

December 20, 1944

We all desire *mukti*[1] but, perhaps, we do not know precisely what it means. Deliverance from the cycle of birth and death is one of its several meanings.

December 21, 1944

The poet-saint Narsinh says: "A man of God seeks not deliverance from birth and death; he asks to be born again and again." Viewed from this angle, *mukti* takes on a somewhat different form.

December 22, 1944

Extreme non-attachment is salvation, according to the *Gita*, and we find the same meaning given in the first verse of the *Ishopanishad*.

December 23, 1944

How to develop non-attachment? This can be done by regarding joy and sorrow, friend and foe, mine and thine, as all alike. Thus another name for non-attachment is equanimity.

December 24, 1944

As drops add up to make the ocean, we can be friendly and become an ocean of friendliness. The world would be transformed if everyone in the world lived in a spirit of mutual amity.

December 25, 1944

Today is Christmas Day. For us who believe in the equality of all religions, the birth of Jesus Christ is as worthy of veneration as that of Rama, Krishna, etc.

December 26, 1944

Illness itself should be a matter of shame for man. Illness betokens some lapse. Illness should not beset one whose body and mind are wholly sound.

December 27, 1944

Evil thoughts are also a sign of illness. Let us, therefore, avoid evil thoughts.

December 28, 1944

One infallible means for escaping evil thoughts is Ramanama.

[1] Salvation

The Name should come not merely from the lips but from the heart.

December 29, 1944

Numerous are our ailments; numerous, too, are physicians and their treatments. But we would be spared much bother if we regarded all diseases as one and Rama as the one and only Physician who can eradicate them.

December 30, 1944

How strange that we run after physicians who are mortals themselves but forget Rama, the immortal, eternal and never-failing Physician!

December 31, 1944

Stranger still it is that, knowing that we, too, are mortal and that a doctor's treatment can at best but prolong our life for a few more days, we still run from pillar to post to seek it.

A Thought for the Day, pp. 1-42

412. TELEGRAM TO ANUGRAHA NARAYAN SINHA[1]

Express [*1944*]

ANUGRAHANARAYAN SINHA
KADAM KUAN, PATNA

HOPE SOMEBODY DEFENDING MAHOMMED YASIN'S CASE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

413. LETTER TO PRANLAL D. NANJI

1944

If you have to go to Deolali, you can have exemption from having to come to Wardha. Coming here is chiefly a matter of sentiment, whereas going to Deolali may be your duty.

From a facsimile of the Gujarati in *Pranlal Devakaran Nanji Abhinandan Granth*, between pp. 14 and 15

[1] This is found in the file of documents belonging to the year 1944. The exact date of this and the following item is not ascertainable.

414. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEVAGRAM,
January 1, 1945

MY DEAR C. R.,

This is the first letter to you on 1st January in the place of speaking to you. I shall speak only at the time of opening the prayer at 7.30. My sin in playing with Ayurveda has laid me low. Now I am weak because according to the law of natural science I am throwing off the poison. Don't you be anxious for me.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
BAZULLAH ROAD, THYAGARAYA NAGAR
MADRAS

From a photostat: G.N. 2100

415. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
January 1, 1945

CHI. DEVDAS,

Having written my first letter to Rajaji I now write this to you. Do not at all worry on my account. I am paying for my sins. I had too much of Ayurveda and I suffered. And now I am slowly throwing off the poison. I have therefore grown very weak but I am watching the developments. Hook-worm and amoeba, my old enemies, won't leave me.

All this is but flushing out the poison that I had taken. I do not know what other suffering is in store for me. I shall go on doing as God dictates. You should not worry. Ramdas[1] has come. And now Nimu[2] too.

Blessings from
BAPU

DEVDAS GANDHI
NEW DELHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Ramdas Gandhi, addressee's elder brother
[2] Nirmala, wife of Ramdas Gandhi

416. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
January 1, 1945

CHI. RAJKUMARI,

This is merely in answer to yours received at 4 p.m. after my 3 postcards had gone. This therefore though written today will be posted probably tomorrow.

Yes, a happy New Year to you, such happiness as you can derive from within. Happiness without there is none so far as I can see.

I have your two dhotis. I am wearing them, too. They are fine. But the real fineness comes from the knowledge that the handiwork is yours so far as yarn is concerned.

Yours with love
BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3694. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6503

417. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

January 1, 1945

You should not worry. I have fallen ill through my own sins. I indulged a little too much in Ayurveda and am paying the price. Now I am bed-ridden because according to the law of nature I am throwing off the poison. I am all right. Get well soon.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 205

418. LETTER TO E. W. ARYANAYAKUM

SEVAGRAM,
January 3, 1945

DEAR A. N.,

I have heard that you want to take in someone sent by Akbar but want the Ashram to pay for his upkeep. This is wrong and after I am gone the whole thing will close down. It must not be so. The first 14 years may pay in the end, but altogether in the end. But the adult education and the preparation of school masters should pay from the

beginning, barring of course the expense of the permanent teaching staff. I can argue this out and prove it but I must not do so now. It will tax me unnecessarily. I hope that all those whom we have taken just now have been taken on that basis.

If they have not, the matter requires re-thinking out. I have not allowed the mind to lie quite fallow all this month.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

ARYANAYAKUM

SEVAGRAM

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

419. LETTER TO Y. M. PARNERKAR

SEVAGRAM,

January 3, 1945

BHAI PARNERKAR,

The new gentleman who has been sent over to look after the A.[I.] Goseva Sangh must give us full service if he is strong and useful and if we need him. In that case he should draw as much as he needs for his maintenance and it should be borne by the goshala. If he is not useful he will be a burden to the Goseva Sangh and will not learn anything. If we do not adopt such a policy the G. S. S. will become just another mushroom institution which we should not allow to happen. For after my death all such ventures are sure to close down.We must never let it happen. I am not in a position to talk, hence it is better that I write out what I think.

Blessings from

BAPU

PARNERKAR

GOSHALA

SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

420. LETTER TO SATYAVATI

SEVAGRAM,
January 3, 1945

CHI . SATYAVATI[1],

I am sorry that your disease is getting worse. But that might be God's will. What does it matter? The body is transient. It has to perish one day. We must do as much as we can.

By all means defy all orders. Tell them plainly that you wish to go home, and if it is possible take some treatment there. Do come here if you so wish. I am to some extent an invalid; but that makes no difference. Dr. Sushila is here and there are other friends too. Now the air also is good.

I shall be content if you die in my arms. But if you live, well, what more can one ask! Chand will write the rest.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 10235. Courtesy: Brijkrishna Chandiwala

421. LETTER TO MOHAN PARIKH AND ANASUYA PAREKH

SEVAGRAM,
January 4, 1945

CHI. MOHAN[2] AND ANASUYA[3],

Unfortunately for me I did not even see the letter to which I am replying though it was read out to me. It was torn up.[4] It was good news that you two were engaged to be married. For me, marriage is not a means of enjoyment but a field for practising dharma. It is an important ashrama dharma among the four ashrama dharmas. Hardly anybody looks upon it as such. Everybody looks upon it as a means of enjoyment. I hope that you two will bind yourselves with it regarding it as a dharma and will inspire each other to follow the path of service.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9190

[1] Granddaughter of Swami Shraddhanand
[2] Narahari D. Parikh's son
[3] Kunvarji Parekh's daughter
[4] Narahari Parikh however says that the letter was later found and was read by Gandhiji.

422. LETTER TO KUNVARJI S. PAREKH

SEVAGRAM,
January 4, 1945

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I had just got up from bed when I received your letter. Pyarelal read it out to me and threw it into the waste-paper basket. Then Narahari came and I was reminded of it. I also felt a little strong and sat down to write this. You have all my good wishes for this alliance. I could not imagine a better choice than this for Anasuya. The marriage has my sincere blessings. I have written[1] to Mohan and Anasuya. BhaiNarahari will send you a copy of that letter too. He will also do whatever else is necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9752. Also C.W. 731. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

423. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
January 4, 1945

CHI. SITA[2],

I have your few letters. Now that my month[3] is over I am writing these few lines. Now a month of physical weakness has begun. I am reaping what I sowed. I went on taking Ayurvedic medicines without thinking and had to suffer the consequences. I am now getting rid of the poison. I am daily improving and getting stronger. There is very little cough. The pain in the ribs has also practically disappeared. After reading and showing this letter to the people there, post it to Natal so that I do not have to write a separate letter.

Chi. Manilal served me with great devotion. Let us see now when Sushila comes to take his place.

I am glad that you are studying hard. Taking care of your health you may work as hard as you can. It will not matter if it takes a

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Daughter of Manilal Gandhi
[3] Of work-fast

little longer.

Blessings to everybody there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4943

424. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
January 4, 1945

CHI. SUMI[1],

Though there is no letter from you Ramdas wrote to me about you.

First, about your eyes. You should not be in a hurry to pass the examination. You may do as much work as you can, while taking care of your health and your eyes. It should be enough for you that you are not idling away.

Then, about gold bangles. What will you do with them? There can be bangles made of yarn, sea shells, glass, copper, silver, gold, pearls, diamonds, and so on. But what use are they to you? Your bangles should be in your heart. That alone is the real lasting adornment. All else is false. If nevertheless you cannot do without them you may put on any kind of bangles that you want and your parents can get for you. Consider how it will affect the poor. Do what your heart prompts you to do. Only hear what I say. Write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

SUMITRA RAMDAS GANDHI
PILANI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Daughter of Ramdas Gandhi

425. LETTER TO THE HEAD MISTRESS, BALIKA VIDYALAYA, PILANI

SEVAGRAM,
January 4, 1945

HEAD MISTRESS
PILANI SCHOOL

THE HEAD MISTRESS,

Please find enclosed a letter[1] for Sumitra Gandhi. Please see its contents and pass it on to her. Since her eyes are weak her diet needs some attention.

Please tell Lakshmibehn[2] and Chi. Mathuri[3] to write to me.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

426. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

SEVAGRAM,
January 5, 1945

MY DEAR K.,

It has cost me much trouble to see you free.[4] You are naughty to have been so ill. Poor S.[5] is going after you. She tried to establish connection from here. Now she and Munnalal will try from Nagpur to establish connection with you or Zaverbhai before going further. Meanwhile love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10167

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Widow of N. M. Khare, an inmate of Sabarmati Ashram
[3] Daughter of N. M. Khare
[4] The addressee had been imprisoned in the Jabalpur jail.
[5] Sushila Nayyar

427. LETTER TO THOMAS COOK & SON

January 5, 1945

Ref. Your letter No. TT/CB2708 (Foreign Exchange Dept.), dated 11-12-1944

DEAR SIRS,

With reference to your above-mentioned letter enclosing a receipt in duplicate of even date for Rs. 3,000 in my favour, I have to inform you that I have authorized Messrs Bachhraj & Co., Ltd., Bombay, to collect the amount from you.

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

MESSRS THOS. COOK & SON, LTD.

P. O. BOX NO. 46

BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

428. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,

January 5, 1945

CHI. DINSHAW,

I have read your telegrams. I like them. I fell ill owing to my own folly. Now I am taking only the nature-cure treatment which I know. I am throwing off the poison of Ayurveda. I am improving daily. If I called you now I would take your full treatment. But I cannot bring myself to have faith in the experiment of milk and I have lost faith in daily or frequent enema. I have come to believe that diet and mud-packs are more beneficial. I shall not take up your time merely for the sake of the massage. I shall consult you through letters if I feel the need. Please go on doing your own work. I am of course giving it thought. I hope Ardeshir[1] is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. DINSHAW MEHTA

POONA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's son

429. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
January 5, 1945

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your telegrams, etc. I like the forbearance you have shown. You would laugh if you were here. I am paying for my folly. Ayurveda is not for me, just as doctors are not. I am getting rid of the poison with my own treatment. I shall see what is to be done about the hook-worm and the amoeba after I recover. I am improving daily.

It seems Dr. Dinshaw's trust has not yet come into being. It will be good if it takes shape soon. It has taken too long. I hope Lakshmi and the children are all well.

I have written to Chi. Sumi.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

430. NOTE TO BHULABHAI J. DESAI[2]

January 5, 1945[3]

I understand all that you say. I have trust in you. You know the parliamentary mind. You also know the minds of our people. You may, therefore, do what you think best. My own thinking runs in the opposite direction to the parliamentary one. But I know that there is, and will remain, room for both points of view in the Congress. You may, therefore, go ahead without fear. Let nobody take cover behind this note. Everybody should form an opinion independently and act accordingly. But tell them that I am not against the scheme. This note may be used.

As regards the Hindu-Muslim question, you may do what you can. I would welcome a Congress-League Ministry along the lines I

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sumitra Gandhi", 4-1-1945.

[2] Bhulabhai Desai, leader of the Congress Party in the Central Assembly, had been carrying on negotiations with Liaquat Ali Khan, Deputy Leader of the Muslim League in the Central Assembly, with a view to forming a Congress-League coalition at the centre and had sought Gandhiji's advice. Gandhiji communicated his views in writing.

[3] From *Gandhijini Dinwari*

have suggested. I would also welcome co-operation between them in the parliamentary programme. But you should obtain authorization for it from the Working Committee. Without that I think it will be risky to come to a final agreement. The League should join in the efforts to get the Working Committee released. In my view it will be a test of its sincerity. I should not like you to let yourself be persuaded on just any terms.

This draft is for your perusal. You may suggest any emendations or additions that occur to you. I will make the changes if I like them.

I now wish to rest for a while. Meanwhile think things over and let me know.[1]

From the Gujarati original: Bhulabhai Desai Papers. Courtesy. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

431. LETTER TO RAGHAVDAS

SEVAGRAM,
January 5, 1945

BHAI RAGHAVDAS[2],

What is this? The golden remedy is Ramanama. Recite it from the heart. Let me know what medicine the local vaidya prescribes. I also have some good vaidyas. Get well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

432. LETTER TO BALVANT SINHA

SEVAGRAM,
January 5, 1945

BHAI B. S.,

I have your letter. I am quite well. Your work was sure to proceed well. I have never found you wanting in diligence. Don't leave Satis Babu's work incomplete.

By all means go to Khurja or a few days from there and then come here. There is work here too and there is not. Get well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] For the steps proposed for the formation of an Interim Government, side Appendix I.

[2] Baba Raghavdas, a Gandhian worker from Maharashtra settled in Gorakhpur district of U. P.

433. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM,
January 7, 1945

CHI. MIRA,

I have gone through your letter.

Pray do not disturb yourself on my behalf believing that I am consciously in God's good hands. I have suffered for my sins in over-believing Ayurveda physicians. Now I am treating myself and have shed poison. I am really much better.

But you are yourself unwell. I do not mind. The same law applies to you as to me. You will be well again.

I do not mind the suggested changes. Experience will teach you and you will be right in the end. Do come when you can and you will do well and see many new things and possibly pick up workers.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6502. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9897

434. LETTER TO CHIEF SECRETARY, C. P. GOVERNMENT

January 7, 1945

THE CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE C. P. GOVERNMENT
NAGPUR
Re: Nalwadi and Paunar Ashrams

SIR,

As my work-fast is now over I write this to remind you of my letter[1] of 20-11-1944, and ask for a reply thereto. The property in question is not only going to increasing waste but so much usefuland creative labour is being lost for what may be termed want of human consideration.

I am,
Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy,: Pyarelal

[1] Requesting that Nalwadi and Paunar Ashrams, which had been confiscated by the C. P. Government, be returned to their trustees; *vide* "Letter to Chief Secretary, Government of C. P.", 20-11-1944.

435. LETTER TO PARAMANAND K. KAPADIA

[*January 7, 1945*][1]

This is just to give you my blessings. I shall not condole with you. Father has cast off the body and become one with the elements. What is there in it to grieve over ?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI PARAMANAND KUNVARJI KAPADIA
T. BHAVNAGAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 11589

436. NOTE TO TARA N. MASHRUWALA

SEVAGRAM,
January 7, 1945

What improvement can I suggest in a scheme to which Bhai Kishorelal has put his seal? The scheme, of course, has my blessings, especially because it is for women's uplift.

Blessings from
BAPU

TARABEHN MASHRUWALA
AKOLA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

437. LETTER TO A. N. SHARMA

SEVAGRAM,
January 8, 1945

MY DEAR SHARMA,

Acted upon by you I have banked high on the spiritual and nature-cure attainments of our friend.[2] I now understand that the patients fasted well but are now unable to pick up strength. As you know the patients are from the picked ones. Of course I do not know,

[1] This is a postscript to Narahari D. Parikh's letter of this date to the addressee.

[2] Krishnaraju, who was giving nature-cure treatment to Anand T. Hingorani, Gokhale and Babaji Moghe. *Vide* "Letter to Krishnaraju", 3-12-1944.

but you should know the reactions here and do the needful.

You know that Chakrayya is being suited, according to his letters.

For me I am apparently flourishing on my own nature cure.

Love.

Yours,
BAPU

DR. A. N. SHARMA
PRAKRITI ASHRAM
BHIMAVARAM (ANDHRA)

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

438. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEVAGRAM,
January 8, 1945

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. I shall hear what you have to say but my faith in your ability is diminishing. I find that you do not meet any naturopaths. You now fight shy of coming here. I have been of the opinion that a naturopath should be so endowed that he can mix well with others and be completely free from pride and anger. I feel you have both in good measure.

Still, you should go on doing your work. Produce results and remove my doubts and fears. The money you have been paid, you have been paid. From now on I am not going to beg for donations for you. You are quite capable of raising funds. So collect the funds and carry on your work. Win the trustee's confidence. I am observing silence.

Blessings from
BAPU

HIRALAL SHARMA
KHURJA, U. P.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

439. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
January 9, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

I should be no cause of worry. I am in God's hands and that should be more than enough. I am daily gaining ground.

So Beryl is fixed up. She has sent me a hand-written book "Khalil Gibran" and handspun.

I have not written hitherto. If you think I now can, you may hand her the enclosed.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Don't worry about yourself either, come what will. I envy you your snow.

This is supposed to be the best part in Simla. So said Valji Desai.

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
SIMLA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

440. LETTER TO BERYL

SEVAGRAM,
January 9, 1945

MY DEAR BERYL,

So you are at last fixed up. I hope the choice is good. Do write everything to me.

I prize your khadi and more so your hand-written "Khalil Gibran". I have commenced reading it.

Do write to me all about Mother. She has suffered. R. K. has told me all about her.

Love and kisses.

BAPU

BERYL
C/O RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
SIMLA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

441. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SEVAGRAM,
January 9, 1945

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

I read all your letters or have them read out to me.

I have not got myself involved in Ayurveda in an unscientific way. Such as it is all we have. It would therefore be well if we could take Ayurveda to the villages. I had faith in Pandit Shiv Sharma and I took this treatment. There was no other way of knowing his limitations. Having realized his limitations, I felt I should retrace my steps from the point where I had erred. So I took recourse to my naturopathy. There is very little room for going wrong in naturopathy. Every day I only gain something. If you come here and see it for yourself all your fears will be dispelled. I am feeling very much better indeed. As for the hook-worm and amoeba I have told the doctors that I will take their treatment. I shall be in a better position to think about it after I get rid of whatever little weakness I still feel.

I do not need any change of place. If I do, I shall go to Bombay or Panchgani or, maybe, Poona. I would like to go to Delhi and yet I feel hesitant. I shall not insist, though. I shall go to Delhi if you take me there in connection with the Kasturba Fund. I shall go wherever you take me.

It is absolutely necessary to have a deed about Dinshaw.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8063. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

442. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

SEVAGRAM,
January 9, 1945

CHI. ANAND,

I have your letter. What does it matter whether your ear heals or not? The more we trust in God the happier shall we be. The vaidyas, etc., are there, but they keep us away from God. That is why I preferred to send you three there. Naturecure treatment brings us nearer to God. Even if we give that up I have no objection but why

should we avoid fasting?[1] Naturecure treatment means going towards Nature, towards God. Let us see where I arrive. I shall do as I feel prompted.

Blessings to all of you from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

443. LETTER TO S. H. PANDIT

[After *January 9, 1945*][2]

let you know if anything worthwhile strikes him to add.

Gandhiji is grateful for your assurances and your reminding him of old acquaintances. He is glad to hear of your work and he will read the report when it comes, and From the original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

444. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[After *January 9, 1945*][3]

Write to him a nice letter : "Gandhi will be only too pleased to meet you whenever you can come. His health is improving."

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

445. LETTER TO T. S. S. RAJAN

January 10, 1945

DEAR DR. RAJAN,

On my return from Bombay on the 1st inst. I read out your letter of 15-12-44 to Bapu.

With regard to the action you have taken about the Bharadwaja Ashram, I am to say that you have Bapu's approval.

Yours sincerely,
PYARELAL

DR. T. S. S. RAJAN
TRICHINOPOLY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to A. N. Sharma", 8-1-1945.

[2] This reply by Pyarelal was in response to the addressee's letter of January 9, 1945, wherein recalling his acquaintance with Gandhiji, he gave him his assurance regarding the eye-treatment of Parnerkar's mother.

[3] The note is written on a sheet bearing a letter dated January 9, 1945 from John Sargent to the addressee.

446. TRIBUTE TO ROMAIN ROLLAND[1]

WARDHA,
January 10, 1945

Having been once bitten, I am too shy to believe in Romain Rolland's reported death. But it seems that this report is true. And yet for me as for many millions, Romain Rolland is not dead. He truly lives through his famous writings and perhaps more so through his many and nameless deeds. He lived for truth and non-violence as he saw and believed them from time to time. He responded to all suffering. He revolted against the wanton human butchery called war.

The Hitavada, 12-1-1945

447. LETTER TO KUNDAR DIWAN

January 10, 1945

BHAI KUNDAR,

Here are a few words[2] from me. Call them what you will and print them if you want. Your preface of course is good. Let it stay.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

448. FOREWORD TO "TUKARAM KI RASHTRAGATHA"

SEVAGRAM,
January 10, 1945

Dr. Indubhushan Bhingare had published earlier the first edition of *Sant Tukaram ki Rashtragatha*. The present edition is the revised one. My knowledge of Marathi is very slight. I like Tukaram very much. But I could read only a few of his *abhangas* without effort.I therefore passed on Dr. Bhingare's selection to Kundarji Diwan who took great pains to go through the whole thing.

[1] Romain Rolland died on December 30, 1944, in Vezelay, France.
[2] *Vide* the following item.

The *Gatha* needed a fitting picture. Dr. Bhingare had selected a cheap one. It hurt me very much. I sent it to Shri Nandalal Bose, the renowned Santiniketan artist. He has been kind enough to send me four pictures of Tukaram to go with the *abhangas*. I sent the one that I thought the best among them to Bhingare and it will be published in this edition.

I hope this edition will command the respect of people.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

449. A FOREWORD

January 10, 1945

The *Ishavasya* gripped me during my Harijan tour of Travancore. All my speeches invariably included the first verse of this Upanishad: "All that is pervaded by God. It all belongs to Him, therefore nothing belongs to you. But in a way it is yours too. But why get caught in the argument? Renounce all, and all is yours. Nothing will remain in your hands if you regard anything as yours." This was the note with which I concluded my Travancore tour and I felt that I had come by a treasure. I told Vinoba and requested him to give me a simple Hindi rendering of the *Ishavasya*. As is his wont he granted my request. The result is this translation.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

450. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM,
January 10, 1945

CHI. DAUGHTER A. S.,

I have read your letter to Sushilabehn.

If you must come here, come when you find the time.

Your falling ill is not good and is contrary to our pact. Dying is not an ideal. Indulging in such things is false attachment. You must free yourself from that.

Do preside over the meeting if you wish. But your giving a lecture on the basis of a note sent from here is pointless. You should give to the meeting what you have digested.

If the officer has sent you the money without attaching any

conditions, I see no harm in your accepting it[1]. It is different that having gone into the matter further I may suggest something else. Your worrying about my health shows that you know neither God nor me. If you knew God, you would realize that you, I and everyone else are solely in His hands. If you knew me, you would know that I take every possible precaution. There are lapses nonetheless, but what can one do about it. However, I am maintaining good health. Under any circumstances you need not worry.

I repeat you may come any time you wish.

You have nothing to do with the 26th of January. You are all the time doing that work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 489

451. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

January 10, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your two letters before me. Enclosed please find some letters. Parnerkar's sister's son passed away. It is a sad thing. I understand about Anantramji. It would be good if he could grow leafy vegetables. Find out how much land Aryanayakum requires and where. In my opinion he should be given whatever he wants. I may have left something unanswered; but only this much for now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4454

[1] The Collector of Comilla had offered one thousand rupees to the Kasturba Seva Mandir for relief work.

452. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[Before *January 11, 1945*][1]

[QUESTION]: If it is possible to meet the Working Committee, will you try to persuade the Working Committee to accept this plan[2]?

[ANSWER]: Yes.

Q. What are your arguments in favour of this plan?

A. After my talks with Jinnah, Jinnah told many people that Gandhi had not even mentioned Interim Government. Bhulabhai's effort is a reply to this. But if the intentions of the League are not genuine, nothing will come out of it.

Q. What happens if the Viceroy uses his veto over the head of the Congress and the League?

A. In that case there will be an agreement between Bhulabhai and Liaquat Ali that the Government will resign.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, p. 119

453. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
January 11, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have read the whole thing. It is good. There are many instances of repetition; these can be avoided. A few things have been left out, but that does not matter.

I am sending Ramjibhai's letter on to him. It seems good.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4455

[1]According to the source the conversation took place before the Bhulabhai-Liaquat Ali Pact was concluded on January 11, 1945.

[2] Of a Congress-League coalition at the Centre; *vide* Appendix "Guidelines for Proposed Interim Government", 5-1-1945.

454. LETTER TO RAMJIBHAI

SEVAGRAM,
January 11, 1945

BHAI RAMJI,

Owing to my illness I could not answer your letter sooner. Your resentment is not justified. You are an indefatigable worker; therefore, you will certainly go on working and that is good. Still I am sending you the frank letter from Chi. Krishnachandra. You may come if you feel like it after you have read the letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

RAMJIBHAI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

455. LETTER TO INDUBHUSHAN BHINGARE

SEVAGRAM,
January 11, 1945

BHAI BHINGARE,

I send herewith the manuscript of my foreword[1] and a picture. Please send me the proofs of my foreword.

I have other pictures. If you want to publish them at appropriate places write to me. I shall send them.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. BHINGARE
MAHAL
NAGPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyalelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Foreword to *Tukaramki Rashtragatha*", 10-1-1945.

456. SPEECH AT HINDUSTANI TALIMI SANGH CONFERENCE[1]

SEVAGRAM,
January 11, 1945[2]

DR. ZAKIR SAHEB, ARYANAYAKUMJI, SHRIMATI ASHADEVI AND BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I had hoped to speak a few words while opening this Conference, but God had willed otherwise. I had to observe silence because of a cough, and other things. Therefore I have written down what I wanted to say.

Although we have been working for Nayee Talim all these years, we have so far been, as it were, sailing in an inland sea which is comparatively safer. We are now leaving the shoals and heading for the open sea. So far our course was mapped out. We have now before us uncharted waters, with the Pole Star as our only guide and protection. That Pole Star is village handicrafts.

Our sphere of work now is not confined to Nayee Talim of children from seven to fourteen years; it is to cover the whole of life from the moment of conception to the moment of death. This means that our work has increased tremendously. Yet workers remain the same. But that should not worry us. Our guide and companion is Truth which is God. He will never betray us. But Truth will be our help only if we stand by it regardless of everything. There can be in it no room for hypocrisy, camouflage, pride, attachment or anger.

We have to become teachers of villagers; that is to say, we have to become their servants in the true sense. Our reward if any, has to come from within and not from without. It should make no difference to us whether in our quest for Truth we have any human company or not. Nor does Nayee Talim depend on outside financial help. It must proceed on its own way, whatever critics might say. I know that true education must be self-supporting. There is nothing to feel ashamed of in this. It may be a novel idea if we can make good our claim and demonstrate that ours is the only method for the true development of the mind. Those who scoff at Nayee Talim today will become its ardent admirers in the end and Nayee Talim will find universal acceptance.

[1] The four-day conference, attended by more than 200 educationists, was held under the presidentship of Zakir Husain, who read out Gandhiji's speech.

[2] From *The Hindu*, 11-1-1945

Seven lakhs of our villages, which are today the symbol of our poverty in every sense, ought to become prosperous in the real sense. This prosperity will not come from outside; it will grow from within the villages as a result of the labour of every villager. Whether this is a mere dream or a practical reality, this is the goal of Nayee Talim and nothing short of it. May the God of Truth help us to realize it.

I have gone through the balance-sheet of the Talimi Sangh. It shows that whatever we have spent has been spent with due care and consideration. It is a brief document. I hope everyone will go through it carefully.

The question of language as such does not fall within the scope of Nayee Talim but the question of the medium of instruction does and that must always be the mother tongue. This point cannot be over-emphasized. Equally important is the question of a national or all-India language. It can never be English. English is undoubtedly the language of the rulers and of international commerce. But Hindi-Hindustani alone can be our national language. At present ithas two forms. In order to understand both the forms of the national language, viz., Hindi and Urdu, and for their natural synthesis we must learn the Devanagari and Persian scripts. I find this lacking even in my immediate surroundings. All our sign-boards[1] must be written in both the scripts and there should be none amongst us who cannot easily read and write either.

I want to draw your attention also to another thing. I consider the Sevagram centre to be an ideal centre for conducting the central experiment in Nayee Talim, as it is here that the Charkha Sangh is carrying out its main experiments. Wardha is the centre for the other village industries. Experiments for the improvement of cattle, which is service of the cow in the true sense, are also being conducted here. Sevagram does not stand alone; there are nearly 20 villages lying about it in close proximity. Therefore if experiments in Nayee Talim in its most natural form can be carried out anywhere, it is here. The various institutions mentioned above are not rival organizations; they are complementary and are calculated to supplement one another's efforts. That is the hallmark of a revolution of love.

[From Hindi]

Samagra Nayee Talim

[1] From *The Hindu*, 13-1-1945; the source however has 'teaching'.

457. A LETTER[1]

[Before *January 12, 1945*][2]

I have no partiality for any militant programme for 26th January. According to my idea, the constructive programme is the programme. Therefore, it should be prosecuted with redoubled zeal. Flag salutation with the reading of the independence pledge[3] has become an inseparable item. It should, therefore, be retained.

But I would avoid mass gatherings and processions. My advice should be followed only if it appeals to the head and the heart. However, if the significance of the constructive programme has been properly understood, I am sure my advice will not fail to find a ready response.

The Hindu, 15-1-1954

458. LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL[4]

SEVAGRAM,
January 12, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I appreciate your cordiality. I hope some day we shall be able to meet. Meanwhile please do not worry. I am trying to put myself under the unfailing Chief Medical Officer and to act under His guidance. If I err in interpreting His guidance, He is generous enough to correct me. Read me in that light and you will find that I have not acted unscientifically.

Love to you all.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2187

[1] Addressed to a Congress worker, the letter was released to the Press by Pyarelal on January 12, 1945.

[2] *ibid*

[3] The independence pledge was first drafted by Gandhiji in January 1930; *vide* "Draft Declaration for January 26", 10-1-1930. In December 1939 it was amended and approved by the Congress Working Committee; *vide* "Letter from Dharmandrasinh", 3-3-1939. Gandhiji added a paragraph to it on January 11, 1941; *vide* "Instructions for Independence Day", 10-1-1941. Again in January 1943, Gandhiji, while in detention in Aga Khan Palace, prepared another pledge for "celebrating the Independence Day" *vide* "Independence Day Pledge", 25-1-1943.

[4] Dewan of Mysore

459. LETTER TO GOPE GURBUXANI

SEVAGRAM,
January 12, 1945

MY DEAR GURUBAX,

If you both must come, do; only know that I am not speaking during the whole day. But you will see the whole place and inhabitants and decide what part you can play.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. GOPE GURBAXANI
17 HASAN BUILDING
NICHOLSON ROAD
DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

460. LETTER TO RICHARD SYMOND

SEVAGRAM,
January 12, 1945

MY DEAR SYMOND[1],

Your good letter. I have met Sujata[2] and listened to her and Written out things to her. I am silent the whole day long. This for reasons of health. It suits me.

Davies has 'stolen'. He has to prove worthy of the 'stealth'. Never mind comments. I know you will act as the Spirit guides you and it will be well with you. You can do what others may not and must not. I have explained this to you.

Do come whenever you can.

Love to you both.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

FRIEND RICHARD SYMOND
THROUGH SUJATA DAVIES

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Of the Friends Ambulance Unit
[2] Indian wife of Glan Davies, a fellow-worker of the addressee

461. LETTER TO ABDUL MAJID KHAN

SEVAGRAM,
January 12, 1945

MY DEAR PROFESSOR,

Fortunately you have sent me a Copy of my previous message.

I cannot improve upon it. You should boldly stand and win. They will choose you for your work as a man.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

PROF. ABDUL MAJID KHAN
LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

462. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
January 12, 1945

CHI. SUSHILA,

I got your letter. You must not worry about me. Trust me to God's mercy. He will do as He wills. Come soon.

You are a strong-willed woman. Is it not God's grace that you have the strength to look after so many children? For you look after them, feed them, and so on, while doing your other work.

Sita is getting along very well indeed. She feels perfectly at home. She is very sociable and therefore has made several friends.

The rest from other letters.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4944

463. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM,
January 12, 1945

CHI. LILI,

I have your letter. I am daily getting stronger. I was glad that this time you felt satisfied. You served me with great devotion and have gone there well in time. It does not matter if you have lost a day; you have not missed your lessons. Even where you are, it is me you are serving. Do your work in that faith. You are then bound to pass. You are violating dharma in desiring to leave before I do. What would happen if all the workers did that?

I never said that the students should observe a strike on the 9th.[1] On the contrary they should devote themselves all the more to service on that day. That would please the teachers, too.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9599. Also C.W. 6571. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

464. LETTER TO SATYAVATI

SEVAGRAM,
January 12, 1945

CHI. SATYAVATI,

I have your letter. Even the little improvement in your condition is a matter of consolation to me.

Do write the story of Ba, Mahadev and others if you wish. Is your health all that good? Your writing will not be coming from your own heart if you ask for material from others. This is my opinion. Now do what you like.

My letter was for you alone. Why give a father's letter to his daughter to the papers? But if doing so benefits you in any way give it to the Press by all means.

Others will write the rest.

Blessings from
BAPU

SATYAVATI DEVI
LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] However, Gandhiji had written to Suryakant Parikh, a student leader, on November 19, 1944: "I . . . like the idea of students abstaining from school on the 9th provided they devote the day to self-purification and service."

465. LETTER TO ANATH NATH BASU

SEVAGRAM,
January 14, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I have gone through your paper. It reads well on paper but it appears to me to be largely unpractical. I feel that the new type is made of sterner stuff and is revolutionary in the true sense of the term. I should like you to think deeper and in terms of the starving millions of the villages.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI ANATH NATH BASU
C|O SHRI ARYANAYAKUM

From a photostat: G.N. 9248

466. LETTER TO DR. NIROD MUKHERJEE

SEVAGRAM,
January 14, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I have gone through every bit of what you have given me. It has caused me great pain. Though your Association's work is humanitarian on your own showing, it touches hardly the fringe. The problem is medical only in a very small measure. The deterioration will continue in spite of your medical effort. You have to act humanely and boldly as men and not as mere medical volunteers. You have to be of the masses and tell the rulers the truth. The disease is starvation appearing as malaria and what not. Outsiders will bring little relief, money will bring less. Give the people milk and other food, their dwellings and their boats and I am positive that no medicine will be needed.

Your report makes me more and more eager to rush to Bengal and make common cause with the starving dumb masses. But I know I cannot rush. I do not want a palace like jail. I want to be with the people and touch their decaying bones.

This is my reaction to your paper. That just now I am weak adds to my sorrow.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. NIROD MUKIIERJI
C|O SHRI ARYANAYAKUM

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

467. LETTER TO BARBARA

SEVAGRAM,
January 14, 1945

DEAR BARBARA,

Since you undertake to remain here, at least meanwhile, there should be no difficulty in the Nayakums going for a change. I am with you.

Love.

BAPU

BARBARA
C|O NAYAKUMJI
SEVAGRAM

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

468. LETTER TO E. W. ARYANAYAKUM

January 14, 1945

CHI. ARYANAYAKUM,

Read the letter from Barbara. If she herself wants to stay here, it will be good if the two of you go to Hoshangabad for a few days. I am of course here. If the two of you keep indifferent health all the activities will suffer.

Blessings from
BAPU

NAYAKUMJI
SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

469. LETTER TO VIJAYA M. PANCHOLI[1]

January 14, 1945

We have been talking a great deal about you two[2]. When are you coming?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7150. Also C.W. 4642. Courtesy: Vijaya M. Pancholi

470. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

SEVAGRAM,

January 14, 1945

BHAI JAJUJI,

I know that if a true worker goes to any village he will become self-supporting within a short time. When we pay his personal expenses nothing else need be given him. We shall provide him no paraphernalia because the villagers themselves will supply the things. The worker will keep a *takli* with him one made from bamboo will be the best. He will of course carry a knife with him. If nothing else he will at least teach the children. They will make *taklis* from bamboo and spin. If no cotton is grown in the village he will choose another occupation. But we shall start with a village where cotton is grown. I feel I have given you enough for a beginning. Ask me more questions if you want. I realize it is a new thing but I know also that if one has faith it is no difficult task.

Blessings from

BAPU

JAJUJI

KHADI VIDYALAYA

SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This is a postscript to Kisan Ghumatkar's letter to the addressee.

[2] The addressee and her husband Manubhai Pancholi

471. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
January 15, 1945

CHI. SITA,

I like your letter. It is clear and to the point. Your presumption is correct. In that case Sushila should arrive soon.

I am glad, too, that you are making good progress in your studies. Make as much progress as you can, but see that your body is strong.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4945

472. NOTE TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

January 15, 1945

When I go to visit the sick in the evening, I notice that the so-called servants needlessly throw away water and people leave vegetables, etc., in the dishes. You should look into this. You can tell the guests without being discourteous. You may show them the notices put up for the purpose. They can also be told when being served. I do not like Kanchan continuing to be ill. Yesterday again she had fever. You should find out the cause of the fever. There ought to be perfect cleanliness and peace all over the Ashram.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 5812. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

473. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

January 15, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Dastane[1] writes that if you are willing to go you should let him know. Surely you will consult the people here before you go, won't you ?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4456

[1] Vithal V. Dastane

474. LETER TO SATYAVATI

SEVAGRAM,
January 15, 1945

CHI. SATYAVATI,

Your letter is good. Indeed you will have won a victory if you recover. Yes, it goes without saying that you will come to me when you feel like it.

The rest from Khurshedbehn and others.

Blessings from
BAPU

SATYAVATI DEVI
T. B. HOSPITAL, LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

475. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

January 16, 1945

DEAR DESHABHAKTA,

I have your two letters. I have given full satisfaction to Shri Sitarama Sastry. He will tell you all about it. The wonder to me is that you are showing, at your age, so much interest and energy. Of course I met your daughter.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3228

476. LETTER TO GLADYS E. SUNWANI

SEVAGRAM,
January 16, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

Yours is a case in which I shall value your letter in English before I can usefully reply.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

GLADYS E. SUNWANI
C/O D. E. DEAN
RAIPUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

477. LETTER TO KANAM GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
January 16, 1945

CHI. KANAM[1],

I have your letter. As desired by you, I am returning it. I am glad that Father has now got dentures. Now he should not misuse them by eating indiscriminately.

Your preparation seems all right. What little was taught to you here seems to have borne fruit.

Write an essay comparing Nagpur and Sevagram and send it to me. My health is all right, but the pressure of work is fairly heavy. I shall, therefore, correct the essay when I get the time and return it to you.

I don't believe in ghosts. I have had no such experience. It is all right if Bhansalibhai believes in them. That does not detract from his saintliness. But there is no reason to believe that everything a saint says must be true. No one is omniscient. The planchette business is pure fraud. Do not get involved in it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9515. Courtesy: Kanam Gandhi

478. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

SEVAGRAM,
January 16, 1945

CHI. BABUDI,

I read your postcard addressed to Father and Mother. You have lost your common sense. It is fair neither to Vallabhraibhai nor to you that he should send you medicines by post. You have tried homoeopathy. We have an allopath here, as also a vaid. A homoeopath also may join. I am also here. If, therefore, you can summon up courage, come over. Resolve that you will return only when fully recovered or when I admit defeat. But don't come merely because I ask you to. Come only if you are fully convinced that my advice is correct, for only then will you benefit.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10050. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

[1] Ramdas Gandhi's son

479. LETTER TO INDU MASHRUWALA

[*January 16, 1945*][1]

CHI. INDU[2],

Are you asking my blessing? I have already refused it to Gomati. She understood. What is so novel about your marrying within your caste? Still, if you want my blessing you have it. Never mind if you both belong to the same caste; both of you should break the barriers of caste. Make your own rules. Observe them and do work of service. Be good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

480. NOTE TO INDULAL YAJNIK[3]

January 16, 1945

1. I shall see about Sahajanand.

2.I understand about you. Thakkar Bapa, Kanjibhai, Mavalankar and others are at your back so nothing remains to be said. If they all have some misgiving or other you have to put up with it and remove it by your conduct. All good work has my blessing. I have had confidence in you ever since I knew you. I have been seeing you since 1915. I have worked with you and learnt from you. There have been sweet and bitter experiences. I have noticed your virtues as I have also experienced your unsteadiness. I am therefore a little wary of you. But you must not be afraid of me, a satyagrahi. For I will never interfere with your good work. It is also my experience that a noble act carries with it good wishes of the whole world. You should therefore shed all fear and go on doing your duty.

3. I like what you say about youths. I shall think over it although I see practical difficulties. I have not asked for a hundred thousand. I would consider myself fortunate even if I could get a thousand young people. I am looking for them.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The source has placed the letter at the end of the letters dated January 16, 1945, and before those of January 17.

[2] Niece of Kishorelal Mashruwala

[3] This was Gandhiji's part of the conversation the addressee had with him.

481. NOTE TO H. C. DASAPPA[1]

SEVAGRAM,
January 17, 1945

1. As for my coming, I would love to go to Mysore. But there has been so much tyranny everywhere that I shirk going anywhere for health. I have made an exception in favour of Panchgani for it is so near Bombay and especially Poona. But I want to avoid even Panchgani if I can. Thus if I do not go to Mysore or anywhere else you know why.
2. As to the election I am not enamoured of them. The more you avoid them the better. The more you silently follow the constructive programme the nearer you are to swaraj. But after all I have said, you must follow your own mind. You may weigh, if you like all I say. But my saying should never replace your mind.
3. As to Yashodara[2] she should stay till cured and till she has good command over Hindi. She should not hurry. Ramdas[3] of course is a fixture. As to Dr. M[ahmud], you have done your part; you need not worry now.

I have given you my mental state. Now let us leave it to fate. I shall not pull.

About the Maharaja you should make no overtures but of course you should lose no opportunity of seeing him, if he will see you.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

482. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SEVAGRAM,
January 17, 1945

BAPA,

I have your letter. It is not certain that I shall be going to

[1] Dasappa; President, Mysore Congress Committee, had met Gandhiji and invited him to spend the summer in Mysore State.

[2] Addressee's wife and son

[3] *ibid*

Panchgani. February 22 will have passed. That dismisses the question of inauguration. I have to suit everyone's convenience. Therefore I shall present myself wherever the meeting is held. You ought to give up considering my convenience. You should consider everyone'sconvenience as my convenience. In this lies the good of the memorial, and my own too. If you do not wish to carry the responsibility you may consult others and do as the majority wishes.

BAPU

THAKKAR BAPA

POONA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

483. LETTER TO RATILAL M. VORA

SEVAGRAM,

January 17, 1945

BHAI RATILAL,

Your letter dated 5-10-1944 has been lying around and came into my hands only today. Such things happened while I have been ill and moving about. I hope your son-in-law is there and has recovered too. I would be happy if you could give me his news. I have sent the photograph along with my blessings.

Blessings from

BAPU

RATILAL MAGANLAL VORA

2ND FLOOR, ROOM 62, 47 GOSWAMI BUILDING

PINJARAPOLE LANE

BOMBAY 4

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

484. DISCUSSION WITH PRAHLAD MEHTA[1]

January 17, 1945

PRAHLAD MEHTA : What should the students and Congressmen do at the present juncture?

GANDHIJI: They must find out ways and means to achieve freedom as soon as possible and devote themselves to the constructive

[1] Of the All-India Students' Congress

programme.

P. M. What should the students do to strengthen the Congress?

G. The students must identify themselves with the aims and ideals of the National Congress and, by being part and parcel of it, they must continue to struggle against the foreign rule.

P.M. Should the students' organizations have a separate identity or should they align themselves with the different political parties?

G. Students should do in this case what they think proper and advantageous for their organization and if experience proves otherwise, they must give up party affiliations. Students should not indulge in unnecessary abuse of students belonging to a different ideology. However, they must strengthen the Indian National Congress and prepare it for the final fight for freedom by doing silent service.

The Hindu, 19-1-1945

485. INTERVIEW TO T. V. KUNHIKRISHNAN[1]

January 17, 1945

T. V. KUNHIKRISHNAN: You know the Communists took an attitude of hostility to the political activities of students in 1942 and afterwards. The Indian Students' Congress embodies to some extent the faith and aspirations of students who are opposed to the attitude of the Communist section. Here are some of our questions:

Have we the right to exclude Communists and oppose their attitude and tactics? Please do not tell us that this is a minor provincial question. We want your guidance in this matter.

GANDHIJI: I dislike the idea of excluding anybody because of his label. But use your independent judgment.

T. V. K. Are we right in building up a new all-India organization for students?

G. You [are][2], if it fits in with the Congress idea[3].

T. V. K. What particular item of the Constructive Programme do you think can best be done by students?

G. So many items to choose from. Students must make their

[1] President, Kerala Students' Congress. Gandhiji gave written replies to the questions put to him.

[2] The source has 'have'.

[3] The source has "India".

choice.

T. V. K. Can the Indian Students' Congress have a flag of its own? Can you suggest some flag for us?

G. I cannot suggest a better flag than the Congress flag. It is all-sufficing.

T. V. K. You had said that Congress workers should take charge of students below 12. Can you amplify the statement?

G. Quote my exact words and you will know the meaning.

T. V. K. You had asked students to observe the 9th of every month[1]. This has been characterized as an advice for 'back-door satyagraha' by Communists. Would you allow students to abstain from classes on the 9th?

G. I must see my own statement. I do not think I have said any such thing. There must be something else. As a student and newspaperman you should be quite accurate. Send my own statements.

From a photostat: G.N. 5678

486. TELEGRAM TO CHANDRAPAL SINGH DATTA

January 18, 1945

CHANDRAPAL SINGH DATTA
PILLARS
SIALKOT

WIRE RECEIVED. HOPE FATHER BETTER. REPORT PROGRESS.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

487. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM,
January 18, 1945

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter just received. I hope you had my fairly full letter before this.

Balvant Sinha is not here. He is with Satis Babu. I have no hope

[1] *Vide* footnote to "Letter to Lilavati Asar", 12-1-1945.

of his coming to you. I should encourage him, if he at all felt inclined. I know he will be the man for you.

Anyway you should come and see if you can pick up anyone permanently or even for a time. There are many people here. Therefore you should come whenever you can.

There seems only a small chance of my coming to Delhi towards the end of February. If you come, the sooner the better. For the weather is daily becoming hotter.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6503. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9898

488. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

January 18, 1945

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have an unfinished part of your letter of November 4, 1944. The other part cannot be had.

From your letter I gather that you are correctly reported. And that is, in my opinion, damaging.[1]

I do not recall your previous letter or letters. But there was no intentional negligence. In any event I never said anything against you publicly. On the contrary, on suspicion arising, my first approach was to you. But if you think that it was unnecessary for you even to refer to me before attacking me, of course I have nothing to say.

Love to you all.

BHAI

H. S. L. POLAK, ESQ.
11 HARTFIELD ROAD
LONDON S.W. 19

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Agatha Harrison", 15-10-1944.

489. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

January 18, 1945

I have read the whole thing. You have poured out your heart in it, which was the right thing to do. You are still unsteady. For the unsteadiness to go you must remain in the institution and give yourself wholly to it. So it should be the same to you whether it is Jajuji or Chimanlal or I. You should obey the head whoever he be. Therein lies your training. If, however, that is not possible for you, I shall not mind if you two live together away from the Ashram. I doubt, though, whether you will then be able to observe *brahmacharya*. But what even if you cannot? It will be no crime. You two are married and should be free to do as you like. Whatever you do, you should do together and with deliberation and determination.

Even while remaining in the institution you will continue to serve the people. In fact you will then do it better. But even here you must do as you think best. If you wish me to guide you, you will of course have my guidance whenever you ask it.

If you can be more specific about the difficulties you mention, I may perhaps be able to solve them. The irregularity you mention cannot be tolerated. Give me the details. If something is unavoidable we shall put up with it, but we will do that with our eyes open. I can understand about Nanavati. He is ill, but he is a tried worker. I believe that one should not eat for the pleasure of the palate.

Chimanlal is an old-timer. Well or ill he has stuck on. He goes on working silently. You should have regard for his services. The secret of good life is strictness with oneself and generosity to co-workers. Why need you keep anything private?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5814. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

490. LETTER TO VASUMATI D. PANDIT

SEVAGRAM,
January 18, 1945

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. I had your previous letters too. I am giving this to Zohra.

I am all right. Do not at all worry about me.

It is good you went. You will get a lot of experience. Akbar will no doubt look after you. It is all the better that you have not carried with you a lot of medicines. A number of ailments disappear with very slight treatment. It is superstition to insist on drugs. Local herbs are a different matter. For stomach-ache one should fast, drink hot water and take hot water fomentation. If there are loose motions fasting is imperative. If the patient insists he may be given a pinch of soda bi-carb or powdered *neem* leaves. If anybody has a headache, he should have a mud-pack on the head and drink lots of water and so on. This is just to point the way. Have patience, think for yourself, repeat Ramanama and persuade others to do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

VASUMATIBEHN PANDIT
SAMAU
P. O. OLD DEESA, NORTH GUJARAT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

491. LETTER TO SHIV SHARMA

SEVAGRAM,
January 18, 1945

BHAI SHIV SHARMA,

I read your letter to Khurshedbehn. Let me tell you that I cannot lose faith in you or Ayurveda because of *banafsha*[1] or the *baramula* preparation. Ayurveda for me has a value independently of everything. I am in search of a true practitioner of Ayurveda. You are one of those few but your field is among rich people.I have to see how far I can persuade you to go to the villages.

[1] Viola cineria

Improve your health and come down here when you are free. . . .[1] is trying out his experiment an Balkrishna and Hari-chchha. He has gone to his patients for two days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: Sarika, April 1964

492. ASHRAM NOTE

January 19, 1945

The thing is that we should bring deliberation into our lives. If we want to work less, we may work less. But what we do should as far as possible be perfect. That is why I have said that if we could mould our lives as we sing in the *bhajan* and make Sevagram an ideal village, we would have done everything.

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, p. 388

493. LETTER TO ABDUL MAJID KHAN

January 19, 1945

MY DEAR PROF. ABDUL MAJID KHAN,

You should boldly stand for the coming Panjab University Fellowship elections.[2] They will choose you for your worth as a nationalist. My hearty blessings to you.

Since you have the support of all the eminent Congressmen, if you are defeated it will be because the majority of graduate voters are not Congress-minded. It will also show that in your province at least the Congress hold on the educated men is not as great as it should be.

I hope you will win.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

PROF. ABDUL MAJID KHAN
6 B KAPURTHALA HOUSE
LAKE ROAD, LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Illegible in the source

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Abdul Majid Khan", 12-1-1945.

494. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

January 19, 1945

It was good you wrote. You could have said all that in one paragraph. Brevity is an art. If you cultivate that art you will have a means of achieving steadiness of mind. Of course, if you cannot be brief, you have to say what you must, even if you are long-winded.

I understand about privacy.[1] The reason you give does not appeal to me. Let critics say what they like. I shall, however, respect your wish so long as it remains your wish.

I do not wish that you should hide Chimanlal's defects as long as you see any in him. I only expressed my opinion. It may perhaps be of some help. The same about Nanavati. What you say surprises me. I would ask him further if he were here. I do think he will come back.

It would be good if you addressed brief notes to those who make mistakes or shirk work. I only wish to help. But would it not make it difficult to improve things if I did not mention what you wrote, did not know the names nor what lapses had occurred?

You should have definite work. I assume you have. But if that is not so, I am willing to give you whatever help you ask for.

You should welcome any new suggestions I make. They may seem new, but in fact they are not new. They are at the very root of our way of life. If I am not to make such suggestions, my presence here is useless. How many of the suggestions I make can be implemented is of course another matter and that is for you to decide.

I was indeed very happy to read about *brahmacharya*.[2] I believe it applies to both of you. What you say is news to me and I rejoice at it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5816. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] *Vide* "Letter tro Munnalal G. Shah", 18-1-1945.

[2] The addressee had written that though he was confident of observing *brahmacharya* even staying outside the Ashram, with his wife; he had no intention of setting up house separately.

495. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
January 19, 1945

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

There has been delay in writing to you.

Chi. Manu is getting along well. She is learning nursing with great diligence. There are two other girls with her. She likes the work very much. She is taught by Sushilabehn and Prabhashanker. Along with nursing, she also takes lessons in English, etc., from Bhansalibhai and others. But she is still careless, I am not fully satisfied. I had her sleep with me for three nights. I wanted to continue the practice. I would then have been able to correct her sleeping posture. But she caught cold. Now she goes and sleeps with Mataji. Let me see when she comes back to me. There is no cause for worry, though. She still suffers from constipation. I am watching how she progresses.

Do not send any dried fruit till I ask for it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

496. LETTER TO MANGALDAS

SEVAGRAM,
January 19, 1945

BHAI MANGALDAS,

I have your letter and the cheque. It is good that your blood-pressure is cured. How did it happen? Hereafter try to avoid it.

Blessings from
BAPU

MESSRS MANGALDAS & SONS, BOOKSELLERS
BHAGA TALAO
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

497. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEVAGRAM,
January 19, 1945

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. I have not yet conveyed to Gadodiaji[1] all that you had said. The reason was lack of time. But do you wish to place yourself under him in spite of everything? Is it not better that you should stay as you are and not let them interfere? You can continue to earn money from your wealthy patients, you can do your work there and move forward.

Do come here if you so wish. But I think it is unnecessary. We can manage everything through correspondence.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 326 and 327

498. LETTER TO SONJA SCHLESIN

SEVAGRAM,
January 20, 1945

DEAR MISS SCHLESIN[2],

I do not think there is any chance of my coming to S[outh] Africa or going to America. But whether I do or not, of course I expect you one day to drop in here and pass the rest of your days in India. Of course it may be that the climate here does not suit you as it did neither Kallenbach nor Hannah[3].

I quite agree with you about Manilal and his wife. Sita is working hard for her examination.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

MISS S. SCHLESIN
P. O. BOX 2234
JOHANESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Lakshminarayan Gadodia

[2] A Jewish woman; she worked as Gandhiji's steno-typist and private secretary in South Africa

[3] Niece of H. Kallenbach

499. LETTER TO RICHARD B. GREGG

SEVAGRAM,
January 20, 1945

MY DEAR GREGG,

Your letter makes me glad and sad. Glad because of your faith and enthusiasm and sad because of Radha's[1] illness which you say is beyond recall. I am hoping that in this at least you will prove wrong. Nevertheless you and I can say, "His will not ours be done." I believe also that what passes for misfortune is not always really so. Of these things, in spite of scientific advance, we know so little.

When your revised book[2] comes, of course if I do not read it Pyarelal or others will and I shall know.

Love to you both.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6760

500. LETTER TO JEHANGIR PATEL

January 20, 1945

DEAR JEHANGIRJI,

Bapu had your letter of 11th inst. He is glad you enjoyed the charming scenery and climate of Ooty.

Thanks for the honey and the eucalyptus which you have sent. The parcel was received yesterday.

Bapu was very sorry to hear about the demise of Zabair's wife. He hopes Zubair will take the bereavement bravely. So-called adversities are sent to us to test our faith. Is not life itself a discipline and a probation ?

Bapu is very much on the mend as you guess. The illness is all gone. The weakness is still there but he is slowly regaining lost strength and the whole day silence is serving as his strong shield. Without it one wonders how he would have fared.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevil Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Gandhiji used to call the addressee and his wife Govind and Radha.

[2] *Economics of Khaddar*, the second edition of which came out in December, 1946

501. LETTER TO JAMSHEDJI N. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
January 20, 1945

BHAI JAMSHEDJI[1],

Yesterday I was shown what you had written to Khurshedbehn. What you say is correct. The matter took a turn for the worse because the Government of Sind interfered. They ought to withdraw the ordinance. Only then can people like you and me work. For my part I have talked to the Arya Samajists on the subject at great length. But it was not the business of the Government. We have therefore to consider the development.

Blessings from
BAPU

JAMSHEDJI NUSSERWANJI
BONUS ROAD, KARACHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

502. LETTER TO RAMKUMAR BHUWALKA

SEVAGRAM,
January 20, 1945

BHAI RAMKUMAR,

Of course my blessings are with the bride and the groom. May both be true servants of the country.

Blessings from
BAPU

R. K. BHUWALKA
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Parsi industrialist and philanthropist

503. LETTER TO KAMALA BENKEL

SEVAGRAM,
January 21, 1945

MY DEAR KAMALA,

I see you are taking a further course. I am satisfied so long as you fit yourself for full service and settle down.

I did see Donald and he knew all about me.

Hope you will keep well. Love.

BAPU

KAMALABAI BENKEL

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

504. LETTER TO K. G. SAIYIDAIN

SEVAGRAM,
January 21, 1945

DEAR E FRIEND,

I had your note. I missed you at the conference which was a good success. I know the worth of your word.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. K. G. SAIYIDAIN
HEAD, ED. DEPT.
SHRINAGAR
KASHMIR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

505. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
January 21, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

Got your letter today and I reply. A copy of letters is being made for you. Your letter has been seen by K. and S. Really it does

not matter who sees it here. It is altogether worthy of you. . . .[1]

You have gone through suffering during the snow-time. I envy. Although it was bad while it lasted, the experience was worth having. The attendants were also marvellous. That is human nature at its best. The more you suffer bravely and smilingly the stronger you will become. You will meet me in God's good time. Meanwhile cart-loads of love.

Blessings from
BAPU[2]

From the original: C.W. 4150. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7785

506. LETTER TO J. SIVASHANMUGAM PILLAI

SEVAGRAM,
January 21, 1945

DEAR PILLAI,

I have your letter of 13th instant. I can only repeat what I have said.[3] I cannot go further. I have no authority. I would therefore dissuade you from bringing a deputation. You should know too that my silence continues. Therefore I do all my work by writing which necessarily must be as little as possible.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI J. SIVASHANMUGAM PILLAI, M.A., M.L.A.
EX-MAYOR OF MADRAS
LAKSHMI VILAS, KUTTY STREET
NUNGAMBAKAM, MADRAS
S. INDIA

From a photostat: G.N. 9256. Also C.W. 5066. Courtesy: J. Sivashanmugam Pillai

[1] The rest of the paragraph has been scored out.
[2] The superscription and subscription are in Hindi.
[3] *Vide* "Letter to J. Sivashanmugam Pillai", 4-10-1944.

507. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

SEVAGRAM,
January 21, 1945

MY DEAR MURIEL,

I have your chatty letter filled with news. Most of those you mention are in prison and beyond me even through letters. But of course such is the lot of satyagrahis.

Of course Doris is a tower of strength to you. I can well picture her standing to her post in all weathers.

I am fairly well.

The rest from Pyarelal.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

508. LETTER TO SAHAJANAND

SEVAGRAM,
January 21, 1945

DEAR SWAMIJI,

Many thanks for your letter. Indulal has seen me.[1] He had nothing new to say beyond giving your letter. I have known Prof. Ranga[2] for a long time. When he mentioned the *kisan* work in Andhra in co-operation with Congressmen I had no hesitation in approving of his project. Of your activity I know nothing except through papers. You would please put yourself in touch with the Bihar Congressmen.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SWAMI SAHAJANAND SARASWATI
PRESIDENT, ALL-INDIA KISAN SABHA
SITARAM ASHRAM, BIHTA, PATNA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Note to Indulal Yajnik", 16-1-1945.
[2] N. G. Ranga

509. LETTER TO L. KAMESWARARAO SARMA

SEVAGRAM,
January 21, 1945

DEAR KAMESWARA SARMA,

I have read the whole of your letter. You can come here when you like. I am silent but you will see Dr. Sushila Nayyar and the patients. You may try your remedies.

I adhere to all Dr. Nayyar has said of me. What I have said is a result of hard experience. I had the pleasure of meeting your father. I had sent for him for Sardar Vallabhbhai. He could not help. His admissions were revealing. I have met most naturopaths. They do not agree and they are obstinate and even lazy.

You will now see why I cannot preside or be at your conference even if I was able to do all that work. Nor can I send you any helpful message. It will be critical. But you may make what private use you like of this. I want naturopathy to make real progress.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. L. KAMESWARA SARMA, M.A., B.SC.
THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF NATURAL THERAPEUTICS
PUDUKOTTAI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

510. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

SEVAGRAM,
January 21, 1945

DEAR,

Bapu had your letter of 18th inst. He has also received the typescript of the *Practice and Precepts of Jesus* and will certainly go through it[1]. For the rest, more when the prodigal returns.

Yours sincerely,
PYARELAL

PROF. J. C. KUMARAPPA
C/O SHOORJI VALLABHDAS
CUTCH CASTLE
SANDHURST BRIDGE
GIRGAON, BOMBAY

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* "Letter to J. C. Kumarappa", 25-1-1945.

511. LETTER TO MAHENDRA B. DAVE

SEVAGRAM,
January 21, 1945

CHI. MAHENDRA[1],

I have your letter. Send me Bhogibhai's full name and address so that I can write to him. What do you do? How many brothers and sisters are you? You should not rush to a court of law. I will do what I can. How far have you studied?[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

MAHENDRA BHOGIBHAI
KEVALRAM MAVJI'S BUILDING
RAJKOT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

512. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
January 21, 1945

CHI. DINSHAW,

I have your letter. I am all right. I observe silence during the day to conserve my energy.

I have not yet come to have faith in milk therapy. But if I had an opportunity to stay with you I would certainly take it, watched byyou. At the moment I have no wish to leave this place. I am also attending to the work here. I shall come to you when God takes me there.

There are some differences between us. But that does not worry me. That I can take work from you is enough for me.

Your letter to Devdas is sharp but you did right in writing it. You could only have written what you did. In fact I had written[3] to him before you did. The trust will be formed. But whether it is formed or not, we propose to start the work if we can have just enough land

[1] Grandson of Kevalram Mavji Dave
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Shamaldas Gandhi", 10-2-1945.
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Devdas Gandhi", 1-1-1945.

for it. Even otherwise you are not sitting idle.

Ardeshir will be making good progress. I understand what you say about Jinnah Saheb.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. DINSHAW MEHTA
6 TODDYWALLAH ROAD
POONA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

513. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM,
January 21, 1945

DEAR SISTER[1],

I read both your pieces from beginning to end. I like them. They show how careful and neat you are. If you have worked on it all by yourself one can see how much time you must have devoted to it. Of course I know sister Montessori very well although I may say I have not read any of her writings.

Your writing would be more useful to Ashadevi and Nayakumji and so I have given it to them. Afterwards I shall send it to Bapa.

Get a Hindustani version made, if you can, and send it to me. Otherwise I shall get it done here.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

SARALADEVI SARABHAI
[THE] RETREAT
SHAHIBAGH
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Wife of Ambalal Sarabhai

514. LETTER TO JOYADEVI

SEVAGRAM,
January 21, 1945

CHI. JOYADEVI,

I had promised to send you my blessings on the 1st but it slipped my mind. The girl whom I had asked to remind me did so only today. I hope you are all well.

Blessings from
BAPU

JOYADEVI
8 EXCHANGE PLACE
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

515. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

SEVAGRAM,
January 22, 1945

DEAR MAHMUD,

I do not mind your long letter. It opens out your heart. That is good enough for you.

No Leaguer need come to me. Sir N.[1] has but to write that I could enter Bengal including Midnapore and Chittagong[2] and that no one would interfere with me and I would go, weak or strong. But he has sent me the message that he could not welcome me and that he had no influence with the Government.

As to the Communists, you should see the papers. I went out of my way to meet them and to befriend them. But Joshi wrote peremptorily that I should not write to him any more.[3] He wanted me to speak to him thro[ugh] Bhulabhai, Mrs. Naidu or C. R. The latter declined. Bhulabhai has the case. There is a hitch. Anyway I declaredpublicly that they could not be kept out of primary

[1] Khwaja Nazimuddin, Premier of Bengal since April 1943

[2] Midnapore and Chittagong had been among the districts worst affected by famine and consequent breakdown of economic order.

[3] For Gandhiji's discussion and correspondence with P. C. Joshi, and "Letter to P. C. Joshi", 5-2-1945.

membership if they signed the Congress pledge. Personally I would have here any of them as I have Habib.[1] They can convert me. Some of them have come here and stayed. Can I do more? Must I?

As to Nariman, you do not know what I have done.[2] I must not give you the whole story. You may get it from P. Now I can do nothing. Working Committee alone can act. I think N. has himself the remedy in his hands.

I think this is all you want to know from me. If there is anything left over please ask. Write or speak. Tonight has been given to Hiralal Sastri of Jaipur State.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5067

516. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
January 22, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have read your letter. I am not at all disappointed. You are giving me what you can. . . .[3] You must certainly work in the Sangh. Your account is good. Do whatever you can in the Talimi Sangh. I think you must put in some reading and spare some time for it. Do spare some time for weaving for yourself. This is all that you should try to do. There is scope for improvement in the quern, but that is beyond your province for the present. What you are doing is enough. Keep writing to me. Ask me whatever you want to.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4457

[1] Addressee's son

[2] For the details of the Nariman case, *vide* "Statement to the Press", 20-8-1937, "Note in Nariman-Sardar Case", 14-10-1937, "Statement to the Press", 16-10-1937 and "Letter to K. F. Nariman", 29-10-1937 and "Letter to Perinbehn Captain", 7-8-1938.

[3] A word is illegible here.

517. LETTER TO VASANTLAL MORARKA

SEVAGRAM,
January 22, 1945

BHAI VASANTLAL,

Do you want my blessing for February 11[1]? Anything done for Jamnalalji has my blessing. Do whatever you can yourself or get it done by others.

Blessings from
BAPU

VASANTLAL MORARKA
NAVAJIVAN SANGH
1321 HARRISON ROAD
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

518. CABLE TO V. K. KRISHNA MENON[2]

Express *January 23, 1945*

KRISHNA MENON
INDIA LEAGUE, 165 STRAND
LONDON, W. C. 2

INDEPENDENCE ESSENTIAL FOR WORLD PEACE AS ALSO FOR INDIA'S. IT MUST COME BUT EARLIER IF ENGLAND AND OTHER POWERS SEE THE OBVIOUS. INFORM MOHIUDDIN PULIN SEAL.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *The Hindu*, 26-1-1945

[1] Death anniversary of Jamnalal Bajaj

[2] This was sent in connection with the observance of Independence Day (January 26) in London.

519. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,
January 23, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

The matter about newspapers has been brought to my notice. It seems they are being bought and sold. It is, therefore, very necessary that they should be returned according to instructions. Here, of course, I watch the time of their arrival. Explain the matter to me. I will do as you advise. Everything should be above board. This is a matter which can be quickly set right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8467. Also C.W. 7182. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

520. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

SEVAGRAM,
January 23, 1945

CHI. BABUDI,

What you say is correct. Nevertheless I would certainly pay some attention. And Shakaribehn is bound to look after you. I know, however, that the right place for you is where Chokhawala lives. And I can have nothing to say if you keep good health. After knowing my mind, therefore, you may do as you wish. But please bear in mind that whenever you wish to come here you can do so without hesitation. You need not feel hesitant about coming to me.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10051. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

521. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
January 23, 1945

CHI. RAMDAS,

I got your letter. I am opening the Superintendent's letter. We will now see what Sumi wishes. A letter from her is due. I have no trace of cough at all. I cannot say, either, how weak I am. I observe silence the whole day just to save time. And it agrees with me. I speak at night.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

522. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

January 23, 1945

Go on giving. Keep me informed. The Talimi Sangh should go on. I mean I shall not send you away from the Sangh. Having started work in the Sangh, you cannot leave it so soon. It could not be done now but you should restrict your activities only after explaining things to them. Under all circumstances we must direct all our efforts towards Nayee Talim. This is how I view the loom too. Every activity should fit into the framework of Nayee Talim. Great. . . .[1] If it is available whenever required, it will be all right. I understand from your letter that it is only for eight hours. . .[2]

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4458

523. LETTER TO A. N. SHARMA

SEVAGRAM,
January 24, 1945

MY DEAR SHARMA,

You are going to pick up Hindi soon I hope. I understand what you mean. I want our friend to treat all patients equally in the sense

[1] The meaning of the sentences is not clear in the source.
[2] *ibid*

that each should be treated according to his wants. None can have special care because of his status, therefore our friend ought not to go beyond his capacity even in the matter of assistants and attendants. I want some naturecure man to show that perfection which is humanly possible. Describe to me at your leisure the whole of his treatment. My own nature cure has proved quite efficacious for me.

Love.

Yours,

A. N. SHARMA

BHIMAVARAM

From a copy. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

524. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,
January 24, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I am returning the accompanying with some lines underlined. Those portions are bad in both. One must not be in a hurry to accuse anybody. That is a sign of impatience and irritability. This I write in the few minutes I have free. Come and see me in the evening or before 8.15 in the morning. We shall discuss the matter then and clear up other things.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8645

525. LETTER TO BHULABHAI J. DESAI

SEVAGRAM,
January 24, 1945

BHAI BHULABHAI,

Newspaper reports startle me. Jinnah says one thing and Liaquat Ali another. About me also it is reported that bypassing the Working Committee I want a coalition government to be formed. What do these reports mean? I have complete trust in you. Please see that nothing is done without the approval of the Working Committee. I go by what I wrote to you in Gujarati.[1] It contains nothing which would support the

[1] *Vide* "Note to Bhulabhai J. Desai", 5-1-1945.

newspaper reports.

I can understand everything happening together. But please make it clear that we cannot go a single step without the consent of the Working Committee.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Bhulabhai Desai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

526. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SEVAGRAM,
January 24, 1945

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. My cough was cured a long time ago. The weakness persists, but that too is slowly going. This time I have been taking only nature-cure treatment. I do not have much urge for a change of air. If it becomes necessary I shall go.

I do not insist on any particular place for the meeting of the Sangh. I shall go wherever it is held. I am in touch with Bapa and Mridu.

I shall hear your views about Nayee Talim when we meet. I have discussed the subject with the teachers. Education through crafts has to be self-supporting.

Why wait for the details from Dinshaw? It was evident from what you said. It would be a matter of only a thousand rupees. It will be increased to the extent necessary.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8064. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

527. A NOTE

January 24, 1945

Tell Kakasaheb to make himself thoroughly fit. There should be no ulcers in the mouth. Let him report the effect of the medicine sent by the vaidya from here. Bring full details of his ailment.

I like the study he is engaged in; but I want him to have a full grasp of the Urdu script and to learn the Urdu language. Amritlal is

doing good work only in Kaka's name and regarding it as Kaka's work. So when he comes out he will have to work for Hindi and Urdu. But he should not think about it in jail. I am not in a hurry. The Government will release him when it wants. It is a different matter if it does so under the pressure of the peaceful non-violent power ofthe people. I see no such possibility for the present. But a satyagrahi has nothing at all to do with the question of his release. If he is released, well and good; it is the same to him if he is not. I find that Vinoba and Kaka have worked hard. I am also glad that they are both together. I do wish them both to keep well and come out refreshed when they are released. I feel sorry that I could not remain so. I am ashamed of it. Let this not be the lot of others I had expected seven years for all, in any case certainly for me. But the fever[1] brought about my release. I do not wish this to happen in the case of Kaka and Vinoba.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5611

528. LETTER TO VITHAL V. DASTANE

SEVAGRAM,
January 24, 1945

BHAI DASTANE,

I have gone through your programme. I like it and it has my blessings. You must have received another letter of mine.

Blessings from
BAPU

DASTANE VAKIL
BHUSAVAL

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

529. TELEGRAM TO CHANDI PRASAD VAIDYA

SEVAGRAM,
January 25, 1945

CHANDI PRASAD VAIDYA
BIRLA MANDIR DISPENSARY
N[EA]R BIRLA MANDIR
NEW DELHI

YOU HAVE OVERSTAYED. HARI-ICHCHHA NOT IMPROVING.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Gandhiji had an attack of Malaria.

530. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

SEVAGRAM,
January 25, 1945

MY DEAR K.,

I have read your booklet[1] from beginning to end. You shall have the foreword[2] or whatever you call it. I like it very much.

Get quite well quick. How is Bharatanand?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10168

531. LETTER TO WILLIAM Q. LASH

SEVAGRAM,
January 25, 1945

MY DEAR FATHER LASH,

I am so glad you came. Please tell all our English friends that we all do our duty regardless of result. Has not an English divine said that "duty will be merit when debt becomes a donation"? Non-violence, translated 'love', is the supreme law for human beings. It knows no exception. I have tried all these years to live by that law and hope to die in that state.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 41

532. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

SEVAGRAM,
January 25, 1945

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

You want my blessings for your success in the future, don't you? That you will attain success implies my blessings. On the one hand you are rendering great service to the *avarnas*, on the other you

[1] *Practice and Precepts of Jesus*
[2] *Vide* "A word", 21-3-1945.

are serving the *savarnas*, that is, you are trying to make *avarnas* of them. What face have they to brag? Have they set out to bury Hinduism?

Blessings from
BAPU

CHHAGANLAL JOSHI
RAJKOT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

533. LETTER TO RAJDEV

SEVAGRAM,
January 25, 1945

BHAI RAJDEV,

You have my blessings of course. Ours is to make the effort. Whether finally you are sent to the gallows or are released is something over which we have no control.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

534. LETTER TO RAM NARESH TRIPATHI

SEVAGRAM,
January 25, 1945

BHAI RAMNARESH[1],

Why should I bless you on your daughter's wedding? For you and me birth, death and marriage are just different forms of the same thing, are they not? Still, if you want my blessings you have them.

Blessings from
BAPU

RAM NARESH TRIPATHI
SULTANPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] A Hindi poet

535. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

SEVAGRAM,
January 25, 1945

CHI. ANAND,

I have your letter. Let us hope that in the end you will all benefit by having gone there. I am not able to make out anything. Sharma[1] has written a long letter. He is very confident. But if the doctor says that you can leave him and can continue the treatment at home then by all means come in February. You may do what you think proper. I am not going anywhere in February, but it is another matter.

I am well. You three are in my thoughts.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

536. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
January 25, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You are more closely connected with Talimi Sangh. You can relieve yourself to the extent they allow you to do. There in lies your good and theirs. From the spiritual point of view you must decrease not increase your commitment. But do it after consulting them.

I shall give instructions when necessary. Maintain a diary. You must stop worrying. You have to get complete mastery of Nayee Talim.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4459

[1] A. N. Sharma

537. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

SEVAGRAM,
January 25, 1945

CHI. SHRIMAN,

The love of you two is indescribable. I feel like coming to you if only for the sake of that love.[1] However I cannot leave this place while the Camp[2] is on. Silence is welcome for I can spare myself. You can take it that I have resumed work. Nevertheless I would like to come.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 303

538. NOTE TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

[After *January 25, 1945*][3]

You understand the position about my coming, don't you? The earliest I can come is on the 23rd—25th of course certainly.[4] Then I shall see how long I can stay. There is a lot to be done here. I want to go to your place for its own sake. I like it that way.

Discuss things fully with Sunderlalji. Some names were tentatively suggested but I asked them to be referred to you and said that I would accept only those approved by you. Somebody mentioned that your book[5] had been of help to them.

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 303

[1] The addressee and his wife Madalasa had invited Gandhiji to their house in Wardha for a change of air.

[2] Samagra Gramseva Shibir organized by Kanu Gandhi

[3] The source places this letter after the letter to the addressee, dated January 25, 1945, the preceding item.

[4] The Hindustani Prachar Sabha Conference was scheduled to be held on February 25 and 26 at Wardha.

[5] *The Gandhian Plan of Economic Development for India*

539. LETTER TO G. SITARAMA SASTRY

SEVAGRAM,
Independence Day, January 26, 1945

MY DEAR S. SASTRY,

Deshabhakta Venkatappayya[1] is older than I am. But he shows the same intellect and energy as before. May he live long and die in harness. He deserves it.

Love,

Yours,
BAPU

SITARAMA SASTRY
VINAYA ASHRAM
DIST. GUNTUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

540. LETTER TO RANGANAYAKI

SEVAGRAM,
January 26, 1945

CHI. RANGANAYAKI,

Your good letter. I wish you could be your daughter's first and apt pupil. Then you would write to me in Hindustani.

I am glad you have lost your gloom.

I do think that a woman has the same civic rights as a man and [may] still enjoy the leave when she is carrying. A good woman carries not for herself but for the world; hence the leave will be no privilege.

I return the photo with my blessings on it.

Amtul Salaam is in Calcutta doing great service.

When you come, you will see the place much extended. Love.

BAPU

RANGANAYAKI
SRIRANGAM

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Who was soon to be eighty

541. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, GORAKHPUR

SEVAGRAM,
January 26, 1945

SUPERINTENDENT
JAIL, GORAKHPUR (U.P.)

DEAR SIR,

Persistent letters are being received that Baba Raghavdas is in your custody and is suffering from insanity. I shall be obliged if you will kindly inform me of the true situation and if I may be allowed to send a physician or a vaidya.

Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

542. LETTER TO M. NARAYANAN

January 26, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

Gandhiji has your letter of 19th inst. You should see the two letters he has written to Shri Sivashanmugam Pillai, copies of which are enclosed herewith.[1]

Yours sincerely,
PYARELAL

Encls : 2

SHRI M. NARAYANAN
NUNGAMBAKKAM UNITED CLUB
15 NUNGAMBAKKAM HIGH ROAD
MADRAS

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* "Letter to J. Sivashanmugam Pillai", 4-10-1944 and "Letter to J. Sivashanmugam Pillai", 21-1-1945.

543. LETTER TO VITHAL L. PHADKE

SEVAGRAM,
January 26, 1945

CHI. MAMA,

I got your letter. What you say about Shantikumar and his wife[1] is correct. God alone can reward his services. Neither you nor I can.

You may come when you wish. You may do as you wish.

All watches are costly. I would be glad if you gave up the desire for one. Andrews managed without a watch.

There are other workers also like him. One can easily tell when it is morning, noon and evening. If, however, you cannot overcome your craving for a watch, write to me. I shall procure one for you. If you do want it please let me know what type.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3846

544. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

VAGRASEM,
January 26, 1945

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. Why do you have so much attachment? How nice it would be if you entrusted everything to Harkishan and stopped worrying! Why should you take it upon yourself to translate the *Shakuntala*? What will Jyotsna do with it? And how? After all it is but a play. A lot of it is very sweet. Plays are of no use for the kind of life we are living these days. This life is the real thing. At the most you should ask her to read the relevant portion from the available translations. But you have taken pains over it, so now I shall only say that it may bear fruit. And there can be no doubt that I should like Jyotsna to learn from it. And that is my blessing for her. Get well.I am all right. How can Pyarelal or Sushila attend the wedding? Both of them are immersed in work. We are having a camp.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Sumati S. Morarjee

545. LETTER TO GAJANAN NAIK

SEVAGRAM,
January 26, 1945

CHI. GAJANAN,

Are you concerned with ownership or use? What if we could have the use of the building for a certain rent? I hope you have not assumed that I can do or get done anything that I fancy.

Blessings from
BAPU

GAJANAN NAIK
GULWADI
SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

546. LETTER TO SHEELA

SEVAGRAM,
January 26, 1945

CHI. SHEELA,

I have your postcard. Your description is good. Today is Independence Day, do you remember? Do you write Urdu? If not, learn it. You will not have letters from me for some time.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHEELA
C/O NIRMAL SWARUP
PREMPURI, RAILWAY ROAD
MEERUT, U. P.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

547. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SEVAGRAM
January 26, 1945

With the independence of India is bound up freedom for the whole of exploited humanity in the world—for even exploiters i.e.,

imperialist England and other imperialisms.

Referring to an incident that occurred that morning in front of the Ashram, when the police attempted to interfere with the normal village cleaning programme of the workers, Gandhiji said that it had been repeatedly announced that there was to be no militant programme on the Independence Day and after that it was not possible for anyone to offer civil resistance. Members of the various institutions in Sevagram worked under his guidance.

Gandhiji said he had placed the Constructive Programme before the country years ago and it was the only way of attaining swaraj, i.e., full freedom through truth and non-violence. While he did not want a militant programme he had also said that if anyone interfered with the execution of constructive work, he expected the people to die rather than turn back. One such occasion arose that morning when a batch[1] proceeding mutely with pickaxes, shovels, broomsticks and baskets was stopped. They were not carrying fighting weapons and yet the police would allow them to proceed only if they broke up file. In such circumstances, non-violence would be sheer cowardice if they yielded and bent before authority. Their hymn for that evening was exceptionally appropriate, Gandhiji continuing said, and its central theme was, that true happiness lay only in the womb of unhappiness. For the hearers it meant that true happiness, i.e., swaraj, came only through unhappiness, i.e., self-suffering. The volunteers did right in refusing to break up file and at the same time not breaking through the police cordon. Though the police had fire-arms they were rendered useless through the dignified and yet firm attitude of the volunteers.[2] They were neither to invite firing nor avoid it and for them real authority was the dictate of their hearts which Gandhiji would call God or Truth.

For me, true independence is convertible with God. Tilak has given a *mantra* that "Swaraj is our birthright". It is a simple one. I will only add that the way to realize the *mantra* is through truth andnon-violence and I claim that that way is possible only if millions work the Constructive Programme.

Concluding, Gandhiji warned the volunteers not to gloat over their success, for, if they did so, that very pride would prove their destruction. Humility, he said, should be their touchstone.

The Hindu, 29-1-1945

[1] 250 members of various institutions in Sevagram

[2] After two hours the police withdrew and the cleaning programme was completed.

548. LETTER TO BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

SEVAGRAM,
January 27, 1945

MY DEAR BHARATAN,

Your doctor sister has done well in giving up her post.[1] Do please stay as long as is necessary to put things in order. Yes, I seem to be improving.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3598

549. LETTER TO JAGJIVAN RAM

SEVAGRAM,
January 28, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 22nd inst.

Gandhiji says you can come and see him at your convenience. But you should know that he maintains silence during daytime these days. You will please send intimation of your arrival in advance.

Regarding Gandhiji's correspondence with Shri Sivashanmugam Pillai of Madras, it will be necessary to obtain his permission first as his letters were marked personal.

Yours sincerely,

PYARELAL

SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM
KADAM KUAN
PATNA

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Dr. Prema Kumarappa had given up her job at the tea plantations, Nilgiris, on account of ill health.

550. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

SEVAGRAM,
January 28, 1945

BHAI DADA,

I could finish your essay[1] on Anandshankarbhai[2] only yesterday. I also liked Chi. Purushottam's translation.[3] It is only on reading your tribute that I realized how greatly you admired him. I trust everything is going on well.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI GANESH VASUDEV MAVALANKAR
SPEAKER, ASSEMBLY
AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of Gujarati: G.N. 1718

551. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

January 28, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have gone through your letter from beginning to end. I have made some arrangement for the newspapers. You want other newspapers besides the Bombay papers. Even among the Bombay papers you do not get the *Chronicle* on the same day. Many persons want it, and it is not possible to refuse them. The same is true about the *Patrika*. You will get both of them but late. And if you get the Gujarati, Hindi and Marathi papers, you ought not to insist on the English ones.

If I could have your whole letter shown to the persons concerned it would have made my task easier. Since you have forbidden it I have not shown it to anybody.

I do understand your problem, but I cannot offer you much guidance unless I go deeper into the matter. What took place before me today was a spectacle worth watching. Both of you had lost your tempers. You were not aware of it, either of you. Each could see the other party's error, but neither his own. This is true of everyone of us

[1] Written in Marathi for the magazine *Samajapatrika*; it was later published as a pamphlet.

[2] Anandshankar Bapubhai Dhruva, Gujarati man of letters and Sanskrit scholar

[3] *Vide* "Letter to P. G. Mavalankar", 6-11-1944.

and that includes me. I do not ask you to go and live in the village. The atmosphere in Sevagram having become vitiated I do not wish that you should go there. I myself am waiting and watching. I have already suggested that it would be enough if someone from the Talimi Sangh goes. He must be given the first place. He may do what he can. If he does not, then we shall see. But I see that co-workers have not been able to put up with your nature. They cannot fully appreciate your worth. I, therefore, do wish that since you both are now capable of observing *brahmacharya* even though living together and alone with each other, you should select a village within about four miles from here, settle down there and take up some work. I will continue to guide you in whatever matters you wish. So much for my wish. The decision will have to be made by you two on your own, even if it should go against my wish.

You can use turmeric and salt. I am not sure about pepper. If anybody wishes to add it later, he may do so. What the vaidya[1] says is for ordinary men and women. In my view, a *brahmachari* should shun all these things, including even salt and turmeric. If absolutely necessary, he may take them as medicine but not for the pleasure of the six flavours. But I do not insist; I do not forbid them. My observation may even be erroneous. I have lived for more than forty years without condiments, and for nearly thirty without salt. It might have been a mistake on my part.

What is the matter with Ramdas ?

Let me know if I have left out anything.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5818. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

552. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

January 28, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Keep this pin. Take the letter. You should not spend so much time in chewing sugar-cane. As much as you can easily chew in 15 minutes should be enough.

Why do you have to evacuate the bowels three times in a day? I hope it does not take long every time.

[1] Ganesh Shastri Joshi who had advised that diet should include the six flavours" viz., sweet, salty, bitter, pungent, astringent and sour

Do learn the Malayalam script. If you feel inclined learn all the scripts. You have of course to study Urdu thoroughly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4460

553. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEVAGRAM,
January 28, 1945

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. If you want to hand over everything to Gadodiaji, you may do so. But in that case do not involve me in the matter. I can write to him only on the lines I have indicated. But I shall not write anything now. Do what pleases you. I shall certainly write if you permit me. And then he will give up the management. I shall do as you say.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 326 and 327

554. LETTER TO J. SIVASHANMUGAM PILLAI

SEVAGRAM,
January 29, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

Some Harijan M.L.A.s in Bihar have asked Gandhiji for copies of the correspondence you had with him[1]. Gandhiji would like to know whether you have any objection to the copies in question being supplied to them. It was necessary to ask for this formal permission because one of your letters is marked personal.

Yours sincerely,

PYARELAL

J. Sivashanmugam Pillai
Madras

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

555. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

January 29, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have gone through everything. I have also made an inquiry. I understand your letters but others may not. Therefore it is as well that ordinarily they should be only for me. Remember that improvement in the behaviour of persons whom we have engaged as friends, though on wages, depends entirely on ourselves, i.e., principally on you and Chi[manlal]. This deserves to be given thought. I am not writing anything more. Nor have I the time. If you ask me anything, I shall reply.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5820. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

556. LETTER TO JAYA

SEVAGRAM,
January 29, 1945

CHI. JAYA,

There is no cause at all for fear of Vasant[1] succumbing Typhoid is not a very serious matter. With proper care the patient recovers. Hate courage. Cheer up Vasant.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIII

557. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

January 29, 1945

There is something wrong if you have [to go to the privy][2] three [times][3] even as a matter of habit. I too once thought as you do. The vaidyas pointed out my mistake. Let me know . . .[4] the little of the book you have read. I do not believe in those who want to save time. But, about this, later.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4461

[1] Addressee's son
[2] Some words are illegible here.
[3] *ibid*
[4] *ibid*

558. LETTER TO KAMALA LELE

SEVAGRAM,
January 30, 1945

CHI. KAMALA,

I have your letter. Since the patient here, who was under Chandi Prasad's treatment, had also become very ill I wired him.[1] He was due yesterday. Let us see if he comes today. His address is: Lakshminarayan Mandir, New Delhi. Get well.

Blessings from
BAPU

KAMALA LELE
MAHILA ASHRAM
WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

559. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

SEVAGRAM,
January 30, 1945

CHI. ANAND,

I read your letter to Chi[manlal]. Why should you write in Hindi only to me? It is unnatural. You have time. Write in Hindi to those who know Hindi, in Sindhi to Sindhis and to others in English if you so wish.

I have written to you that you may come by all means. And in my opinion it would be better if Gokhale and Babaji also came. Since it is all the same, why should we leave those two there? They also look upon that place as a prison. I have not sent them to jail. All three of you should come. Probably Amtul will arrive tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Chandi Prasad Vaidya", 25-1-1945.

560. LETTER TO SHRIPAD JOSHI

WARDHA,
[After *January 30, 1945*][1]

I have read what Kakasaheb wrote. I like it. I have read this letter just now. I thought that the typed matter was a copy of it. Ask me whatever doubts come to your mind. You will write to me. Won't you? I will also reply only in writing.[2]

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Gandhiji: Ek Jhalak, p. 49

561. LETTER TO GAURI

SEVAGRAM,
January 31, 1945

DEAR GAURI,

I know you only through your father. He informs me of your forthcoming marriage. May you and yours be happy and jointly serve the country.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

GAURIBEHN
81 VIVEKANAND ROAD
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

562. LETTER TO KHURSHED NAOROJI

SEVAGRAM,
January 31, 1945

VAHLA BEHN[3],

Your two letters. Of course you will stay as long as is necessary but no longer. I agree with you. There is and should be no question

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter dated January 30, 1945.
[2] *Vide* "Note to Shripad Joshi", 22-2-1945.
[3] The superscription is in Gujarati which means 'Dear sister'.

of compromise by us. But letting others go their way is part of ahimsa. I think we agree here. I am well. Love to you and all the sisters.

BAPU

SMT. KHURSHEDBEHN

BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. courtesy: Pyarelal

563. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAJAJ

SEVAGRAM,
January 31, 1945

CHI. RUKMINI[1],

I got your letter only today. At last you have come. You write about Dr. Jussawala. I am glad to learn that. You have enough money for it. By all means put yourself under Jussawala's treatment in Bombay and get well. I follow your argument. We want your health to improve, no matter whether in Bombay or Poona.

I shall be happy if you write to me regularly.

I am well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS]

I am also glad to learn that Radhika's[2] health is improving.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9065

564. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
January 31, 1945

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter. I understand your need. I should advise you to write to Devdas about the books, too. If you are positively disinclined to do that, you may write to Kamalnayan[3]. He will consult me. If I go and tell him, he will not refuse me. You should either send a list of the

[1] Maganlal Gandhi's daughter
[2] Addressee's sister Radha Choudhri
[3] Son of Jamnalal Bajaj

books to Kamalnayan or tell him the amount you need. A list of books with their prices will look more respectable. I would like you not to take any help from Amritlal Sheth. He will certainly send you whatever you ask for. Your present need shows that this is not going to be your last request. This is significant for me, for it shows how costly present-day education is. And at the end of it, you won't earn anything more than your livelihood. I have heard of many doctors who are unable to make both ends meet. Only a few have made good on their own strength. A good many have had to resort to influence even after passing their examination. In writing this it is not at all my purpose to persuade you to give up your study. You must finish it now. I do wish to suggest, though, that the knowledge you acquire at such a great cost should be used for service of the people.

I am glad that you are keeping Suru from the lure of ornaments, etc. It remains to be seen how long you will succeed.

Let Bali[1] pay a visit to you, though I cannot bring myself to approve of it. It will mean unnecessary expenditure over a long journey, with no benefit except momentary satisfaction. But she has done a great deal for you. She is a very affectionate woman. Do, therefore, welcome her. I tried to dissuade her by suggesting, instead, that she should come here. I have, however, permitted her to go to you.

You may come whenever you wish and live here as long as you like.

You have been doing excellent work as regards spinning, etc. Keep up your strictness. Sincere men, however few, are the best.

I should certainly like to go there, but somehow I do not feel the urge.

If Kanu wishes to go there, I will let him. I do not know, though, what help he will give you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS]

I am well. I observe silence the whole day.

Give up the idea of going to Bombay. Personally I should like you to remain where you are and learn all the four languages of the South. You will perhaps be the only one from the North to have done so. But what if there are others too?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7370. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] Balibehn M. Adalaja, sister of addressee's mother

565. LETTER TO BHULABHAI J. DESAI

SEVAGRAM,
January 31, 1945

BHAI BHULABHAI,

You must have seen the report of Liaquat Saheb's speech[1] at Tinnevelli. How can we reach an understanding with him? In public he speaks as he likes and then talks to you in a different tone altogether. And you are obliged to hold your tongue. This is just to inform you and caution you. Do what you think best. I may only let you know what I observe from a distance. I can see nothing else, and what I see frightens me.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Bhulabhai Desai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

566. LETTER TO SURESH CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

January 31, 1945

DEAR SURESH BABU,

I received your letter in three languages. Hindi would have been sufficient. May Chi. Annapurna and her husband be happy and may they continue to render sincere service to the country.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8019

[1] Wherein he had denied that there had been any 'pact' between himself and Bhulabhai Desai

[2] The addressee replied that he would again have a talk with Liaquat Ali and then see Gandhiji.

567. DISCUSSION WITH ANUGRAHA NARAYAN SINHA

WARDHA,
January 31, 1945

Mr. Sinha[1] discussed with Mahatma Gandhi the qualifications of constructive workers whether they choose to work among the labour or among the students. The following appear to be the minimum qualifications for such workers:

(1) Spinning of certain quantity of yarn regularly each month.

(2) Giving preference to such articles for personal consumption as are locally manufactured on the basis of cottage industries.

(3) To have full and active faith in non-violence and truth as understood by Mahatmaji.

Mahatmaji, it is understood, told Mr. Sinha that the above test was good and it could easily be made stiffer.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-2-1945

568. NOTE TO BHULABHAI DESAI[2]

[*January 1945*][3]

BHULABHAI DESAI,

I understand that the steps would be somewhat as follows :

The League agrees with us as to the composition of the interim Government at the Centre. (The agreed nominees will be responsible to the elected legislature.)The League agrees that if the proposal is accepted by the G[overnor] G[eneral] the first step to be taken by the new Government will be to release the Working Committee. On this being done, the G. G. will be requested to accept the composition agreed upon (with the addition of members representing the elected parties or elements). On the G.G. agreeing, an interim Government would be formed and when the Working Committee is thereafter released, you will be good enough to tell them that this step was taken with your approval.

[1] Ex-Finance Minister of Bihar

[2] (1877-1946); Leader of the Congress Party in the Central Assembly; President, Bombay Provincial Congress Committee; Member, Congress Working Committee.

[3] Bhulabhai Desai initiated the move for a Congress-League coalition at the Centre in early January 1845; *vide* "Note to Bhulabhai J. Desai", 5-1-1945 and Appendix "Guidelines for Proposed Interim Government", 5-1-1945.

QUESTIONS: Is the agreement of the League to release the Working Committee as the first step of the new provisional Government (preliminary) proof of their *bona fides* ?

ANSWER : Yes.

Q. If the new provisional Government is formed while the Working Committee is still in detention and if the new Government releases them, why do you see danger in the way of a permanent solution of the Hindu-Muslim question ?

A : The danger lies with the Quaid-e-Azam being equivocal and two-faced.[1]

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

569. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

SEVAGRAM,
February 1, 1945

MY DEAR DESHBHAKTA,

I do not appreciate your appeal. There is no hurry. It should be revised. Give the assets of the ashramam, the liabilities, yearlydonations, the concrete activities, the income therefrom. Then give the prospective expenditure in detail.

Has the ashramam enough workers for the different tasks? Who is the doctor for general work, who is the veterinary surgeon, who is the matron? Are all these experts to be brought in? The thing reads visionary. It must be businesslike. If the burden cannot be borne, the appeal should wait. You will get the funds. Let them not be a curse. Money won't produce men. The latter will produce as much as you need.

Love.

BAPU

DESHBHAKTA KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA
GUNTUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarela

[1] *Vide* also "Silence-Day Note to Bhulabhai Desai", 11-6-1945.

570. LETTER TO JAYA

SEVAGRAM,
February 1, 1945

CHI. JAYA,

I got your telegram. Does it not seem like a dream that Vasant has passed away? However, I feel nothing. I have seen many deaths and many births. They are two sides of the same coin. If on one side there is death, on the other side there is birth. Both the sides are equal in worth. They always, therefore, go side by side. Why then rejoice at one and grieve over the other ? Moreover it is certain to happen to all. Besides getting married and rejoicing is nothing but a part of the game of life. You may resume this game. Will the wedding[1] be put off? If it were in my hands, I would not put it off. I would let the ceremony take place, but drop the celebration part completely. But you know better what is proper. Keep up your courage.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIII

571. LETTER TO NRISINHPRASAD K. BHATT

SEVAGRAM,
February 1, 1945

CHI. NANABHAI,

I have your letter. I understand what you say regarding Bachu. The sea is close to Ghogha and to Bhavnagar. Will not its cooling effect be enough?

I shall consider how much I should leave over for you after Manubhai[2] and Vijaya[3] arrive. I shall do my utmost to lighten your burden.

Blessings from
BAPU

NANABHAI BHATT
AMBALA, KATHIAWAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Bindu and Chandrakant; *vide* "Letter to Jaya", 1-12-1944.
[2] Manubhai Pancholi and his wife
[3] *ibid*

572. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

February 1, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

You tried to be brief but failed. I am sure you have omitted something. To be brief means that you should say everything you want to in as few words as possible. I will show you how to do this when I have the time and the opportunity to do so.

It was not in anger that I wrote what I did about Burhanpur. I was not happy about you or Kanchan going there. But knowing your limitation, I agreed unreservedly. After you had gone there, I saw from your letters that your going there had been fruitful. You made your family happy and you could also improve things to some extent. Besides, there is certainly work to do in the town. Hence, in order to see you become steady and have the proper environment, I also suggested your taking up work there. My intention of course is that you should stay on here and learn through experience. But evenfor doing that, you must have equipoise and you must live in conformity with social norms. If you do not do that, you will not mature. I, therefore, included that also in my suggestions.

You may forgive Gopalrao and others, but you must know their mistake. I saw sarcasm in Pandurang's letter. I did not like the letter. Their explanation for all this lies chiefly in what you two, perhaps four, namely, you and Kanchan, Chimanlal and Shakaribehn, are by nature. These two women cannot be considered different from other women. Perhaps you do not know how many of my plans came to nothing because of Ba's limitations. I exercised as much strictness as I could. But the limitation would always show itself. You may be sure it will be the same in this case. I have explained the rule to you. If, after understanding it, you come to the conclusion that you two should run the Ashram, I would consent to your doing so. Even if you run it in a way different from the way it is run at present, I would let you do so. Or if you decide that the Ashram should be disbanded, I would consent to that too. The correct and best thing would be that all four of you should wake up now while carrying on your present work, and do the best you can. You may seek from me whatever help I can give you.

If Chimanlal also did not understand about Prahlad, ask me when I have free time and when both are present; I will tell you. Writing about it will make the letter too long.

I will see about the newspapers.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 5890. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

573. LETTER TO DAMAYANTI

SEVAGRAM,
February 1, 1945

CHI. DAMAYANTI,

I have your letter. It is good you wrote. I should like to invite you but I am not doing so. Why undertake hardships of a journey and spend money when you can achieve your aim through correspondence. So cancel the trip.

What does your husband do? How many children do you have?

Pass on the enclosed letter to Bhogibhai.[1] I do not have his address. If the letter will not produce any result, you and your brother should act as you think proper.

Look me up when I happen to go to Bombay.

Blessings from
BAPU

DAMAYANTIBEHN
GANDHI NIWAS
GHODBUNDER ROAD
SANTACRUZ, B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

574. LETTER TO V. G. SAHASRABUDDHE

SEVAGRAM,
February 1, 1945

BHAI SAHASRABUDDHE,

A letter of authority is one which is duly signed by both the parties. Perhaps it requires a stamp also. I shall give the verdict if I get the claim of the T. M. E., your reply and the claimant's rejoinder either in the national language or the State language or even in Marathi. Out of the six months some time has already passed. I want everything in writing. No one need personally appear before me. I am sorry about your daughter. My silence continues. Though I have no

[1] The letter is not available.

time I can yet offer some suggestions if I see the girl. It is a difficult task.

Blessings from
BAPU

V. G. SAHASRABUDDHE
MAHAL
NAGPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

575. LETTER TO E. S. PATWARDHAN

SEVAGRAM,
February 1, 1945

BHAI PATWARDHAN,

I have your letter. Send me the letter of authority duly signed by both the parties, as also your claim, Anna's reply, your rejoinder and the necessary evidence. Out of the six months quite a few days have already passed. Send the documents either by post or through someone. There will be no need for you to come. I have said that I shall give the verdict in writing on the basis of the written documents, haven't I? Why should Bhai Mahalkar take the trouble? My silence, of course, continues. Time passes somehow. Still, do come if you want to.

Blessings from
BAPU

E.S. PATWARDHAN
"TARUN BHARAT", NAGPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

576. LETTER TO SANKARAN NAIR

SEVAGRAM,
February 1, 1945

CHI. SANKARAN,

I have your letter. Tell me your views whenever you feel like it.

It is enough that you visited the *samadhis* of Ba and Mahadev once. Your duty is to immerse yourself in your studies.

Keep yourself fit.

The boy is happy. He lives with Shakaribehn and goes to the T[alimi] S[angh].

Blessings from

BAPU

SANKARAN NAIR

ROOM 30, THIRD FLOOR

MORARJEE GOKULDAS SANATORIUM, POONA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

577. ADVICE TO MAHOMED BEG[1]

SEVAGRAM,

[Before *February 2, 1945*][2]

If you really desire to serve the Muslim masses, my only advice to you is that you should totally abstain from being in touch with communal bodies.

The Hindu, 3-2-1945

578. LETTER FO BHULABHAI J. DESAI

SEVAGPBAM,

February 2, 1945

BHAI BHULABHAI,

What you say is correct. Come whenever you wish. I have no fear. It is the newspaper reports that impelled me to caution you.[3]

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Bhulabhai Desai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] A Congress leader from Kheda who had a prolonged discussion with Gandhiji

[2] The report appeared under the date-line "Surat, February 2, 1945".

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Bhulabhai J. Desai", 31-1-1945.

579. LETTER TO BHOLA NATH

February 2, 1945

(1) You are free to do anything, but should do nothing at my instance. My advice is that you should make your own decision in the context of the situation prevailing there.

(2) Sarojini Devi has fallen ill. Take the help of somebody else.

(3) Launch a pure satyagraha against the landlords if there are people who can offer satyagraha. If they are not ready for it do whatever is possible.

(4) I shall certainly meet the people of Alwar if I am able to go to Delhi.

(5) There is nothing at all to prevent our meeting the rulers if they are ready to help us.

Nothing of this is meant for publication under my name. It is meant only for your understanding.

BHOLA NATH MASTER
PRAJAMANDAL
ALWAR, RAJPUTANA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1312

580. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 2, 1945

The incident of sugar-cane shows how we should be generous towards others and strict with ourselves and what should be the right qualification for handling child education.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4463

581. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNA SINHA

SEVAGRAM,
February 2, 1945

BHAI SHRIKRISHNA SINHA,

You ought not to need comforting. Death inevitably follows birth. Why grieve over it? Your wife is released from suffering. Now

you have only service to devote yourself to. So do it.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIKRISHNA SINHA
PREMIER
PATNA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

582. LETTER TO KAMALESH

SEVAGRAM,
February 2, 1945

BHAI KAMALESH,

I have your letter. I can't help it if my article has caused a commotion. I am not satisfied with your work. I do not wish to go into the reasons. The Rashtrabhasha Sammelan is narrow in its scope since it does not teach Urdu. Had Urdu continued to enjoy the place which it deserves and which I tried to give it, the propagation of Hindustani would have become redundant. To me this is self-evident. But why should I argue? If everyone does what he likes where is the room for contention ?

Blessings from
BAPU

KAMALESH
GU[JARAT] PRA[DESH] RA[SHTRABHASHA] PRACHAR SAMITI
KHADIA, AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

583. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

Unrevised

SEVAGRAM,
February 3, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I didn't follow your story about Dwarkanath. Explain it to me.

I understand your difficulties. They are all unavoidable. Find your way patiently through them. You can talk to everyone politely.

Yashodhara[1] is a very good woman. You can speak to her. She has supported many of our workers. For instance, she has been helping Narayan and Kanti. Her house is open to any of our workers whogoes there. They are big people. It is very good indeed that Dr. Mahmud is there as also Ramachandran[2]. You may request them and even if they are not able to help, you may find some other way. If you do not know how to broach the subject to them, do not embark upon the venture. It is surprising that Kanchan does not help as much as she can. Is that intentional or is there some other reason? If you tell me which members of the Ashram refuse to help, I may do something about it.

The only remedy for all the difficulties is patience. Forget about Sevagram for the time being. Assume that Shantabehn has taken over responsibility from today. You may, if you can, give her whatever help she asks for.

I intend to write separately regarding Mahadevi. I hope Vatsala helps you. If you have anything more to ask me, you may.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8466. Also C.W. 7181. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

584. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,

February 3, 1945

CHI. DINSHAW,

I have your letter, the cheque, the photograph, etc. I shall return the photograph with my next letter. No one prevents me. I just cannot bring myself to believe in the efficacy of milk therapy. For the rest I would certainly like to stay with you.

Our differences, such as they are, will disappear of their own accord.

The contribution from Ghanshyamdas at any rate ought to remain anonymous. We may not even identify it by some name. He will continue to pay us till the figure is reached. The amount will not come to us in a lump sum. The records will of course show

[1] Yashodhara Dassappa

[2] G. Ramachandran

a small amount. I should like to include the names of Bhiwandiwala and Fikriyar Jung. I shall write to you about it. I can't think ofanything more to write at the moment. I think I am working a bit too much.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. DINSHAW MEHTA
POONA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

585. LETTER TO BAJRANG SINGH

SEVAGRAM,
February 3, 1945

BHAI BAJRANG SINGH[1],

I have your letter. May God save you. If you have to go to the gallows, face it cheerfully.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

BAJRANG SINGH
CONDEMNED CELL, CENTRAL JAIL
NAINI, U. P.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarclal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

586. LETTER TO LADY CHHOTURAM

SEVAGRAM,
February 3, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I am grieved that Sir Chhoturam[2] has passed away. Only a few months back he had written to me. He had love for me. What consolation can I offer you? Let us live as God ordains.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

LADY CHHOTURAM
C/O DR. GOPI CHAND
LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee was involved in the Kanpur Central Station bomb case.
[2] A prominent Unionist leader and Revenue Minister of the Punjab

587. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 3, 1945

It would be best if you gave up sugar-cane altogether for two or three days.

Select some book for reading. I can choose one for you if you wish. Your acquaintance with Malayalam will be of great help in Nayee Talim. Do not resort to English under any circumstances. It is surprising you do not understand this simple thing.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4569

588. LETTER TO BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

February 4, 1945

MY DEAR BHARATAN,

I have heard from both of you simultaneously. Do stay as long as your sister needs you. You will be working for A.I.V.I.A. wherever you are.

My love to you all.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3597

589. LETTER TO Y. VENKATASUBBAIAH

February 4, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I got your letter only today. Please send me your detailed budget and if it commends itself to me, I shall submit it to the Trust. As to the scheme for an institute, will naturopaths agree? If you are young enough I would like you to come here by appointment and treat patients according to naturopathy. Naturopathy here works but I am sorry to confess that only allopathy flourishes.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI V. VENKATASUBBAIAH, M.L.A.
KASTURIDEVINAGAR
NELLORE (ANDHRA)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

590. NOTE TO SUB-INSPECTOR OF POLICE, WARDHA[1]

SEVAGRAM,
February 4, 1945

He (the wanted person) came and said he believed in me and my teachings and had decided to surrender himself. Hence the note he wrote. I must add that even if he had admitted his guilt to me I would be bound not to disclose it to the police. I could not be reformer and informer at the same time.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, pp. 40-2

591. LETTER TO ARUN CHANDRA GUHA

February 4, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

Yours of 26th ultimo[2] to Gandhiji. He was very much pleased to read that even in jail you were able to renew the pledge and the oath of allegiance. As regards his going to Bengal, though he would very much like to go there, the circumstances are such that he does not think it advisable at present to venture to go to Bengal.

Yours sincerely,
NARAHARI PARIKH

SHRI ARUN CHANDRA GUHA, SECURITY PRISONER,
SPECIAL RESERVE JAIL
P. O. BAKSADUAR (DT. JALPAIGURI)

From a photostat: G.N. 8671

592. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

SEVAGRAM,
February 4, 1945

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I have your letter. You are scared for nothing. Let all the people come together. I do not think it proper to change the programme after everything has been decided. On my part I have no misgivings. After all we only want to do our work. You and Maganbhai should

[1] According to the source an underground worker wanted by the police had met Gandhiji and left a note. The police learning of this wanted the note.

[2] The source has "inst.".

come over. Hope you have completely recovered.

Blessings from
BAPU

AMRITLAL NANAVATI
GUJARAT VIDYAPITH
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

593. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
February 4, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

It is well that you have taken a vow about sugar-cane. If you were to take it for the sake of your health, it would not be necessary to give it up for good. If it were to control the palate you would have to give it up. In this case, both health and palate are involved. That is why I suggested a time-limit.

As for the books, you can read Marx's *Das Kapital*, all my articles on economics and also Shrimanji's and two books by Sampurnanand. The rest I shall tell you later.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4464

594. LETTER TO CHANDRAPRAKASH

SEVAGRAM,
February 4, 1945

CHI. CHANDRAPRAKASH,

I have your two postcards. Although Father is still not out of danger, it is good that he has survived the crisis. May God cure him completely.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

CHANDRAPRAKASH
PILLARS
SIALKOT

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

595. LETTER TO P. C. JOSHI

SEVAGRAM,
February 5, 1945

BROTHER JOSHI,

Received your letter.[1] Shall I reply in the national language?[2]

I did not write to you because you yourself had asked me not to do so. Yes, you are right, complaint was mine. I wanted to come near you. To clear up that I asked, I wrote. In that there was no reason for anger.

I have given everything to Bhulabhai. There was some difficulty about one thing. Rajaji refused, because he is considered a partisan. I have already expressed my view. You must have seen it. I want to come still nearer to the Communists. But complaints continue coming to me. I have told everything to brother Habib. Mohan[3] need not come. But if he wants, he can come.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

Correspondence between Mahatma Gandhi and P. C. Joshi, PP. 39-40

596. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
February 5, 1945

CHI. MANU,

I am very much worried about you. You are always crying and seem restless. You do tell me that you regard me both as your mother and father. Will a child be ever afraid of talking to her parents, or feel shy? You do both. I, therefore, wonder what your real feelings are. Why should you have any secrets? You should not object to others reading your letters. Therefore while I have returned them to you, I did not like doing so. You should have the courage to say whatever you wish in front of everybody. One hides one's guilt even when it is small. He who has acted truthfully hides nothing. If there is any suspicion that truth is being kept back, it comes out.

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from P. C. Joshi", 1-2-1945.
[2] The Hindi original is not available.
[3] Mohan Kumaramangalam

Tell Sushila whatever you wish to say. Why should you be afraid of her? Tell her boldly whatever it is. She tells me that she has not stopped you from attending the class because you share the bed with me. She told you for your own convenience that you might take leave if you wished and get well. She will help you to make up for what you miss.

You may show this letter to Pyarelal, Sushila or anyone else you wish. Get well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

597. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
February 5, 1945

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter written from Mombasa. You worry too much about me. Stop doing that. Leave me in God's hands. At present I am all right. I am active as usual and take my normal food. The blood-pressure is not measured daily now. Khurshedbehn has been inBombay for the last ten days. She will be there a few more days. Neither she nor anyone else will ever disappoint you. Just now Chi. Kishorelal also is here, and so is Narahari. Narahari's son has got engaged to Anasuya, Rami's daughter. It was a mutual choice.

I should like it if all of you could make proper arrangements for your work there and then come here, but I do not think that will be possible. It can be done if Sita gets herself trained and goes there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4946

598. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,
February 5, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I did not ask for the balance-sheet. I only wanted to know the names of those who lived in the Ashram including the servants and the others and the expense per head. This should not be difficult. What I

have written about Mahadevi is one-sided. If you or the others know anything that goes against her, I should like to know that too. You need not believe as perfect truth all that I say. It may be that I know only one side of the story.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10615

599. LETTER TO L. KAMESWARARAO SARMA

SEVAGRAM,

February 5, 1945

BHAI KAMESHWAR SARMA,

I have your letter of January 31, 1945.

My complaint remains. Your letter has, if anything, aggravated it.[1]

All your office-bearers are your own men. So must be the members. This is not the way to unite people.

All your work will be carried on in English. What has this got to do with nature? You have dug up the very foundations of nature. Why inflict English on poor Tandonji who is an advocate of the Rashtrabhasha ? If you did not want the Rashtrabhasha it would have been better if you had chosen one of the South Indian languages.

Father's letter is full of wisdom. What could Dr. Sapru do? There is nothing to obstruct a nature-cure practitioner in India.

Yours,[2]

KAMESWARA SARMA

PUDUKKOTTAI

TRICHY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to L. Kameswararao Sarma", 21-1-1945.

[2] The letter carries the following note in Gujarati: "Sent after a Tamil translation had been made."

600. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SEVAGRAM,
February 5, 1945

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

Dinshaw has sent the draft to De[vdas]. He wants Bhiwandiwala, who had helped him and who has faith in nature cure, as also Fikriyar Jung, who was Finance Minister to the Nizam and believes in these remedies, to be included among the trustees. I think there is no harm in it. About the rest I have written to Dinshaw. If you will show this to Devdas I shall make do with this one letter.

If you take me to Delhi I shall have to visit Pilani, Mira's place and also Dharmadev's. I shall stay at the Harijan Nivas.

Blessings from
BAPU

BIRLAJI
N. D.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

601. LETTER TO BRIJLAL NEHRU

SEVAGRAM,
February 5, 1945

BHAI BRIJLAL,

I have your affectionate telegram. Keep me posted in this way. So far I have not taken anything. But what is to be done if the Ayurvedic as well as the nature-cure people are not able to do anything? That is the question. Allopathic doctors take no less time. Tell me, what should we do?

Blessings from
BAPU

BRIJLAL NEHRU
ACCOUNTANT GENERAL
KASHMIR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

602. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

February 5, 1945

CHI. CHAND,

This is foreign—certainly mill-made. Why should you have it? You ought to have a notebook of hand-made paper. You can keep this. You could use it for some other purpose or give it away. Anyway, you should do only what you wish, not what I suggest.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Chandrani Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

603. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 5, 1945

The very fact that Malayalam appears distant is the reason why it should be learnt. There is no difficulty after one learns the grammar of a language, *Asanas*[1] and water are the remedies for constipation. Instead of sugar-cane, try taking sugar-cane juice.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4466

604. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 5, 1945

An intelligent man will not stop with just learning a script. He who stops there will be defeated. However, a script can certainly be of great help in learning a language. The opposite of it is also true. It is proper to write everything in Hindi. But we want to be practical in our

[1] Yogic exercises

approach. As we want to achieve unity we should learn as many scripts as there are languages here. By doing so we would be moving nearer the goal. Considered from even this point of view all these things fit into the scheme of Nayee Talim.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4465

605. LETTER TO P. SRIRAMULU

February 6, 1945

DEAR RAMULU,

You are right. By mistake your letters were not shown to me. I am glad of the reformed remarriage. I hope both are happy and doing well. Do report about your progress. I know you have difficulties to contend with.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 111

606. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

SEVAGRAM,
February 6, 1945

CHI. BABUDI,

The doctor's advice is not correct. You can give Anand[1] *mosambi* juice in warm water. Or you can warm it by putting the vessel containing it in hot water and give it to him. You can give him honey mixed in hot water, or pure jaggery. Honey would be better. You can give him vegetable soup. This will clear the bowels and normalize motions and then he may drink milk with relish. The cough and the cold must disappear. There was no harm in giving him Santogen. You will soon observe its effect. All children fall ill. You should not worry. You should not give him just any medicine. All children are endowed with the power of self-recovery. Watch what he eats.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10052. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

607. LETTER TO ZABAKBEHN

SEVAGRAM,
February 6, 1945

CHI. ZABAKBEHN,

There is a letter from Chi. Rasik. Trambaklal has passed away. I had not been in much contact with him. But Popatbhai moved a lot with me and so I remember him well. What Consolation shall I offer you? God looks after everybody and protects everyone. We are all subject to our karma. We should patiently submit to whatever happens.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS]

I am not writing separately to Chi. Rasik. I got his letter only today.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10218

[1] Addressee' son

608. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI M. PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
February 6, 1945

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

Bhai Gokuldas is gone. Condole with the family on their loss. Truly speaking, what is there to condole about such a death? He has done a lot of work. I knew him well. He will certainly be missed. It is the duty of those whom he leaves behind to fill the void.

Blessings from
BAPU

RAOJIBHAI MANIBHAI PATEL
VITTHAL KANYA VIDYALAYA
NADIAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

609. LETTER TO ABHAY KUMAR

SEVAGRAM,
February 6, 1945

BHAI ABHAY,

I have heard enough of such wise talk. I do accept its general purpose. But it does not mean that we may have no difference of opinion or see no faults in anyone. I have learnt to love people in spite of their faults. I do it and I feel satisfied.

Is it not enough that I dwell on truth? I follow truth as I see it. We do not all see truth the same way. Outlooks differ.

Blessings from
BAPU

ABHAY KUMAR
P. BOX 85
NEW DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

610. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 6, 1945

Where is the swelling? Change the time of working on the quern; do not give it up. There is much to be gained by doing the work methodically. You will find wonderful nuances in Malayalam. It is easy to understand. Learn Grimm's Law if you are not already familiar with it.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4467

611. LETTER TO CHAKRAYYA

SEVAGRAM,
February 6, 1945

CHI. CHAKRAYYA,

Your letter. Do not give in to difficulties. You are a little distance away but there are advantages in this too. It is certainly good to collect some children and train them. Acquire some knowledge about Nayee Talim. Your way will be clear if you increase your skill in weaving. Krishnadas[1] has evolved an easy process of double twisting. Learn it through letters and then follow it in practice. Then hand-spun yarn can compete with mill yarn. You can overcome all your difficulties by patience, knowledge and diligence.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9114. Also C.W. 9183

612. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,[2]
February 7, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

I wanted to write to you in Urdu. I was crowded out for want of time.

Now I have your question in English. I am quite of opinion that the children of mixed marriage should be taught in the male parent's religion. This seems to me to be self-obvious for common happiness

[1] Son of Chhaganlal Gandhi
[2] This is in Devanagari

and interest. That the instruction should be liberal goeswithout saying. I am considering merely the question of the choice of religion. The children cannot profess two religions. They must respect the female parent's religion. If the female parent has not that much discretion and regard for her husband's religion, the marriage becomes superficial. Of course it is another thing where the husband is wholly indifferent. I know such a case. Am I clear? Tell B. she should not be silent.

Love.

Blessings from

BAPU[1]

From the original: C.W. 3695. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6504

613. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,
February 7, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

It seems the *jowar dalia*[2] was not cooked well. I ate it for two days. Though it was put in the cooker again, I didn't find it soft enough. I found it even hard. I suggest that all food should be cooked so well that even a person like me with false teeth can eat it. My second suggestion is that you should cook *jowar ghensh* instead of *dalia*. To cook *ghensh* the *jowar* should be turned into flour and the flour should then be cooked. I wish to try it. In prison they serve such *ghensh* and it is easy to digest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8465. Also C.W. 7183. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

614. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

SEVAGRAM,
February 7, 1945

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

It is a pleasure to read your letters. Be happy and keep yourself in perfect health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2220

[1] The subscription is in Devanagari script.

[2] Gruel made from milk

615. LETTER TO RAMASWAMI

SEVAGRAM,
February 7, 1945

CHI. RAMASWAMI,

Why should I now write to you in English? You ought to know Hindi by this time.

So you have resolved to go. If the Government don't send you, you will adopt other means. That too is a way. By all means go. Keep whatever links you can. Be a true servant.

Blessings from
BAPU

RAMASWAMI
TALIMI SANGH
SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

616. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

SEVAGRAM,
February 7, 1945

CHI. SHRIMAN,

I have gone through what you wrote about the Mahila Ashram. It is good.

You can explain the objective in two or three lines. Do so.

In doing it keep in mind the promise made by Jamnalalji. So far as possible we should consider and implement it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 304

617. A NOTE

February 7, 1945

I am surprised and sorry that such questions are being repeatedly asked and that workers spend money to come here and take up my time which is valuable. They should look up the answers to all their questions which have already been covered in some form or other.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

618. NOTE TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

[After *February 7, 1945*][1]

I like it.[2] It is good to divide the Mahila Ashram into sections. I do not know whether or not there will be somebody, man or woman, at the head of every section. If all sections are under you and if you remain responsible to Shantabehn, I think everything will be all right. Let the three-member committee stay, but Shantabehn should consult only you and you should take up the entire responsibility. Everything will then run smoothly.

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 304

619. LETTER TO T. B. SAPRU

SEVAGRAM,
February 8, 1945

DEAR DR. SAPRU,

Though I am supposed to be resting and silent between 8.15 a.m. to 8.15 p.m. I am working intensely. Hence the delay in sending you a reply.[3]

If it is no great trouble I should like you to put me specific

[1] In the source this note is placed after the letter to the addressee dated February 7, 1945.

[2] Addressee's scheme for the Mahila Ashram

[3] For the addressee's letter, *vide* Appendix "Letter from T. B. Sapru", 13-1-1945.

questions about my talks with Q[uid-e] A[zam][1]. I would like to confine myself to that question alone.

I see you have entered upon an ambitious programme.[2] I wish you all success and full strength for the work.

I hope the patient[3] is quite out of the wood.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi-Sapru Papers. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta. Also G.N. 7571

620. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM,
February 8, 1945

CHI. LILI,

I have already written to you; nevertheless, since a letter of yours is lying before me, I am writing this. Do not under any circumstances give up your studies even if you should find them tedious. I have purposely sent you there for studies. If you succeed, I shall not grudge the expense and the time spent. Having started a thing one may give it up only if it is found to be basically wrong. That is not so in the present case. We knew what it would involve. You should not have any attachment about serving me, nor any for the Ashram. If afterwards you again merge in the Ashram, what you are doing just now is for the Ashram as well as for me. Now do not give up. Stop thinking and engross yourself in your studies. I am well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9600. Also C.W. 6572. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] In reply the addressee sent a set of questions along with his letter dated February 16, 1945. *Vide* "Answers to T. B. Sapru's Questions", 26-2-1945.

[2] The reference is to the Conciliation Committee formed under the chairmanship of the addressee to examine "the whole communal and minorities question from a constitutional and political point of view, putting itself in touch of different parties and their leaders including minorities interested in the question and present a solution within two months to Standing Committee" of the Non-party Conference. The other members were Jayakar, S. Radhakrishnan, Gopalaswamy Iyengar and Maharaj Singh.

[3] Addressee's son

621. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH[1]

[*February 8, 1945*][2]

. . . then it should be available in the account-books. That is why I thought it should be possible, and easy, to get that figure.

Let me know about any inconsistencies you find in Mahadevi's character. There is a reason why I should know them.

You are likely to lose the money which Sarojini owes you. You may let the thing go and write it off. Read the letter I am writing to her.

Credit to the hospital account the sum of Rs. 5,000 received from Anupama and sent to you from here. Only now I came to know that the money was earmarked for that purpose. I was told about it, of course, but probably I was thinking of something else at the time. It is good that the money has been credited to my account, for now it can be easily transferred to any other account.

Sharda and Anand seem to be unlucky. They always suffer from something or other.

Kanu has written [to you] about the money received from the Bajaj Company.

I have now replied to all the points raised in your letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10616

622. LETTER TO KANAM GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
February 8, 1945

CHI. KANAM,

I could not reply to your letter at once. If you are convinced that ghosts do not exist, then the article in the *Times* should have no effect on you. There are some good things in newspapers but there isa lot of nonsense too. The readers of newspapers, therefore, should be always on their guard. Your method of doing algebra is good. This

[1] This appears below a statement of accounts of the Charkha Sangh under Prabhudas Gandhi's signature. The earlier part of the letter is not available.

[2] From the G.N. Register

shows that your intelligence is developing. That method is actually used in arithmetic. You should develop the habit of assuming 'x' as a quantity. You will realize the value of this as you go on.

Improve your handwriting still further.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9516. Courtesy: Kanam Gandhi

623. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 8, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You can easily obviate disappointment among the teachers. Their main fault or handicap is that they are not hard-working craftsmen, nor do they have faith in craftsmanship.

Tell Dr. Mahmud that you have no time to spare. Why does he at all want to talk to anyone? Why does he not engage himself in some craft? He can certainly do something. He may do some carding and spinning and clean the vegetables. Along with this he may teach Urdu and acquire a good knowledge of Hindi. He may read Tulsidas.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4468

624. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

SEVAGRAM,
February 8, 1945

BHAI MAHMUD,

Why did you write to me in English? From now on write in Hindustani. Why do you hate to apologize? We are all members of the same family. Do not be unhappy; be cheerful. Regain your health.

Yours,

GANDHI

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 5093

625. LETTER TO MADELEINE ROLLAND

SEVAGRAM,
February 9, 1945

DEAR MADELEINE,

My whole heart goes out to you now that the one[1] for whom you seemed to be living has gone. Nevertheless the true position is that you should work ever so much more than before assuming of course that your physical condition makes work at all possible.

Love.

BAPU

MLLE. ROLLAND

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

626. LETTER TO JALBHAI RUSTOMJEE

SEVAGRAM,
February 9, 1945

CHI. JALBHAI[2],

I have your letter. I might have skipped a reply but I was shocked at the news of Sorab's[3] illness. This illness comes on through carelessness. It is sure to disappear if he observes the rules. My blessings are of course with him. Manilal's work is going on well.

Blessings to you all from
BAPU

JALBHAI RUSTOMJI
74 VICTORIA STREET
DURBAN, NATAL

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's brother Romain Rolland
[2] Sons of Parsi Rustomji
[3] *ibid*

627. LETTER TO RASIKLAL U. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
February 9, 1945

CHI. RASIKLAL,

Go to S. A. and do as much public service as you can. You should not hanker after money.

Blessings from
BAPU

RASIKLAL UMIYASHANKAR MEHTA
G/20 SIKKANAGAR
VITHALBHAI PATEL ROAD
BOMBAY 4

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

628. LETTER TO HARSHADA DIWANJI

February 9, 1945

CHI. HARSHADABEHN,

I got all the yarn as well as your letter. Only today it was discovered in the bag. My blessings are always with you. Why do you make the servants spin? If they spin willingly, and with proper understanding of the meaning of spinning, then it is a different matter. It is enough for me that you yourself spin regularly and with both hands.

I spin on Diwanji's spinning-wheel daily. I like it. It has a few defects, but I get them repaired or repair them myself. If I got more time, I should examine it more carefully.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. HARSHADABEHN DIWANJI
15TH ROAD, KHAR
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10222

629. LETTER TO BABA MOGHE

February 10, 1945

BHAI BABAJI,

Sharmaji writes,[1] that doctor Rajuji also wants that you should stay on there. There has been some improvement and there will be more. All three of you are dear to me, you are sensible. I have no doubt given you permission to come here but since Gokhaleji is there I shall be glad if you also stay on there and are cured of your complaint. You will not always get such an opportunity. Anand alone may come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

630. LETTER TO A. N. SHARMA

SEVAGRAM,
February 10, 1945

CHI. SHARMAJI,[2]

I hope you have made some progress in Hindi.

In accordance with your advice, I have asked[3] Babaji to stay and give himself and nature-cure a full chance.

Yours,

From a copy. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

631. LETTER TO SHAMALDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
February 10, 1945

CHI. SHAMALDAS,

Read the enclosed letter.[4] If you could bring justice to the case, it will gladden the soul of Kevalrambhai, wherever it is. In his last days

[1] *Vide* the following item.
[2] The superscription is in the Devanagari script.
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.
[4] This was from Mahendra B. Dave; *vide* also "Letter to Mahendra B. Dave",

he had been in touch with me over spiritual matters, as had been your father. They were both prepared to go to [South] Africa but they passed away. I had even prepared the ground for them to reach S. A. But isn't fate always a couple of steps ahead of us?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHAMALDAS GANDHI
C/O "VANDEMATARAM"
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

632. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

February 10, 1945

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

Read the enclosed[1] and act upon it. Already there has been inordinate delay. Return the paper to me after you have acted on it. I have to send a reply.

Blessings from

BAPU

KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ
WARDHA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

633. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 10, 1945

It is surprising. Those who have had Western education or those who are not craftsmen will not be inclined or eager to become craftsmen. I have seen quite a number of such cases.

2. Things will continue to happen sporadically. They will not follow any sequence. That is all right.

3. You should not in any case despair. Remember [what the *Gita* says] about a *sthitaprajna*[2].

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4469

[1] This was a letter written by Rathindranath Tagore from Santiniketan.
[2] One of steadfast understanding. *Bhagavad Gita*, II 55 *et seq*.

634. ADVICE TO LEPROSY RELIEF WORKERS[1]

February 10, 1945

You have preached to the converted. My interest in leper work is as old as my residence in South Africa. I take it that you have seen the institution (Dattapur Colony run by Manhar Diwan) here.[2] I would like you to send a detailed plan with expenditure to go to the Board. No thanks needed.

The Hindu, 12-2-1945

635. SPEECH AT SEVAGRAM

February 10, 1945

Mahatma Gandhi addressed a few words to the gathering.[3] He told them he had accidentally seen the address which they had presented to Shri Kanu Gandhi, the organizer of the camp. They had said some very nice things in it, but if, as it often happened, it all began and ended with the presentation of the address, without their carrying back with them something of enduring value from the camp, theirs would be merely love's labour lost. He expected them to develop what they had gained during their month of training a hundredfold and become true *gramsevaks*, servants of the villagers in deed as well as in name. They had been selected for training out of a large number of applicants. It was for them to vindicate their selection by going back as messengers and torch-bearers of *samagra gramseva* to their respective provinces. They should go to villages as scavengers and sweep them and clean them and serve the villagers as their humble servants. They should teach those who wished to learn spinning and other village handicrafts in the best way they could. They should never feel helpless in the absence of outside help. In their work, if they had really assimilated the spirit of the teaching that had been imparted to them, it ought to develop their intellect and heart no less than their bodies. Therefore it should develop their character. Their success would depend more on the purity of their hearts than on their skill and knowledge. If they lacked moral purity they would prove a blight instead of a blessing to the villagers among whom they might settle.

[1] T. N. Jagadisan, leprosy relief worker of Madras, and Dr. M. R. G. Cochrane of Vellore met Gandhiji and presented to him a proposal for organizing under the Kasturba Memorial Fund rural leprosy work for the benefit of women and children. Since Gandhiji was observing silence he wrote out his reply.

[2] *Vide* also "Remark in Visitor's Book", 12-12-1944.

[3] On the death anniversary, according to the Indian calendar, of Kasturba Gandhi, a twenty-four-hour spinning *yajna* was organized in which Gandhiji participated. Kanu Gandhi's Samagra Gramseva Shibir also concluded on this day.

He was glad to note, Gandhiji went on, that though they came from different provinces, they had all been able to take and flourish on the same diet. It should lead to a better realization of our oneness as a nation. Customs, dress, food and language were bound to be to a certain extent different in different provinces, but the essential unity underneath this apparent diversity had to be fully grasped and a working uniform standard evolved if they were to realize their destiny as a nation.

Lastly, Mahatma Gandhi exhorted them all to learn Hindustani and acquire proficiency in both the Urdu and the Hindi scripts. Hindustani meant not a highflown Sanskritized Hindi or Persianized Urdu, but a simple dialect which both Hindus and Muslims spoke in the villages of the North. The villagers did not understandhighflown Hindi or Urdu. Their language was either simple and plain Hindustani or a provincial dialect irrespective of their caste or creed. Highflown and sophisticated style in Hindi and Urdu were the disease of cities, bred of mutual distrust. So long as that state lasted it was incumbent on them to learn both the Hindi and Urdu scripts. The third party was there no doubt to accentuate and exploit their differences, but, if they really felt that Hindus and Muslims were kith and kin, blood brethren, no one on earth could divide them or keep them divided. There was a popular saying that it needed two to start a quarrel. He was there to tell them that true ahimsa did not need to wait for a gesture from the other side. If they understood their own part of the duty and acted accordingly, success would assuredly be theirs.

The Hindu, 14-2-1945

636. ASHRAM NOTE

February 11, 1945

I learnt yesterday that Nagu, who has been working in the Ashram for the last six years, has no knowledge of the directions or of the geography and history of India. If this is so, it calls for serious reflection on our part. . . .[1]

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, p. 388

637. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
February 11, 1945

It is with some purpose that I have asked you to give it up. It

[1] Omission as in the source

does not mean that you should give up your work. But it does mean that you are free if you find your promise burdensome. That is to say faith gives us greater strength every day, never diminishes it. This is what discipline means. The teachers have not entered the hearts of the pupils. They have not been able to give up their old ways. If there is concentration in work, discipline follows automatically. Discipline should not be regarded as something apart.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4471

638. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 11, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Why this panic? I only wrote something generally acceptable. I protected your freedom. But it does not mean anything more. Go on doing what you are doing and improve upon it. Become a good scientific weaver. I think what you are doing in the Ashram is sufficient. Take my writing in its plain meaning. It can have no other. Wake up.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4470

639. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

February 11, 1945

CHI. KUMARAPPA,

Come on the 15th at 5 p.m. Then we shall see about the rest.

Ask me about Mrs. Hoffman then. I hope you don't mind my writing in Hindi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10169

640. LETTER TO MRS. DAS

SEVAGRAM,
February 11, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

Only yesterday Mahesh showed me the telegram saying Dasji had passed away. Do not grieve over it. His mission was over and he cast off the body. But though the body has perished, he lives on.We can keep him alive if we carry on his work. Take it that this responsibility rests mainly on you. You cannot bring him back into your life by grieving over his death or by donning white. You can do so only by leading a simple life by learning nature-cure treatment and vanquishing the enemies[1] in the form of anger, etc. Write to me what you are doing and how things are. What does Nimai do? I had a letter from Das recently.

Blessings from
BAPU

MRS. DAS

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

641. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

SEVAGRAM,
February 12, 1945

MY DEAR KU.,

S[ushila] has gone to Nagpur for a patient. She is likely to return tonight. If you want to catch her at the station, you can do so.

I know the remedy. But let the doctors speak. Then if necessary, I shall put in my word.

I had your note about your book. I hope to produce something worth while.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10170

[1] The six enemies, viz., desire, anger, greed, attachment, pride and envy

642. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
February 12, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

After reading the enclosed, pass it on to Krishnadas. After reading he should return it to me.

1. In regard to myself, I have taken the position that even when [a particular form of personal service] may not be necessary a personmay be allowed to offer it after he has been told so—just for his satisfaction. That is why I let the girls massage my legs. I would not let any others do so. I don't mind what Bhansali does, for I have complete faith in him. Nobody is privileged. Nobody can be privileged. This must be clear.

2. The responsibility for anything that you may permit Champa to do will be yours. I will not guide you. You are free to be as strict as you like. I have told Champa that she may secure from you whatever liberty she wants, but must not ask for my permission, since the daily supervision over her is not mine.

3. The Ashram manager should be a *sthitaprajna*, a *gunatita*[1] and a *bhakta*. For this see Chapter II, XII and XIV [of the Gita].

4. For learning English, why should anybody want to hear it read by someone else? One may read it for oneself. Bhansali may read from Ramakrishna and explain in Gujarati. Nobody is forbidden to read English by himself. One may learn any Indian language, and Bhansali may teach it. I would never say that those who knew English should forget their knowledge, except perhaps sarcastically. I myself know English and love the language. But the language must be used only when necessary and not other wise.

5. Omprakash should hand over his watch to the Ashram. I think I shall be able to get Rs. 30 for it. This would be the right thing to do. But if O. prefers to pay that sum to the Ashram and keep the watch himself, he may do so.

6. Certainly, it is one's duty to learn an Indian language, i.e., one's mother tongue.

7. Ordinarily it is desirable that the class should be conducted at the place fixed for the purpose.

This has been written in Gujarati unconsciously. I hope you will follow it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4576

[1] One who has transcended the three *gunas*, viz., *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*

643. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 12, 1945

Read about Grimm's Law from the grammar book in the Library. Ask Pyarelal or Shriman.

A machine does not go wrong so soon. Learn to repair it.

म् is right.

It is not necessary to chew sugar-cane after seven days. If your body does not need it a twig of *neem* or *babul* should do for the teeth.

Come and sit with me. The best thing would be to come and sit when you do your spinning. Do have a talk about labour.

You must not fall ill.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4473

644. INTERVIEW TO GOVIND SAHAY[1]

February 12, 1945

It is understood that Mahatma Gandhi was not able to give an opinion without proper investigation of allegations and without a definite proof. So he advises everyone to act according to his judgment. He said:

This may create some confusion but there is no harm.

The Hitavada, 13-2-1945

645. LETTER TO MAULANA SULEMAN NADVI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
February 13, 1945

BHAI SAHEB,

A Conference of Hindustani Prachar Sabha will be held on February 26 and 27.[2] I should like you to attend it and make your contribution towards finding a solution to the problem. I hope you

[1] Member of A. I. C. C. who had sought Gandhiji's advice regarding the attitude to be adopted towards the Communists

[2] *Vide* "Speech at All-India Hindustani Prachar Sabha Conference-I", 26-2-1945 and "Speech at All-India Hindustani Prachar Sabha Conference-II & III", 27-2-1945.

will come. Inform me about the time and date of your arrival.

M. K. GANDHI

MAULANA SULEMAN NADAVI
SHIBLI MANZIL
AZAMGADH (U.P.)

From a photostat of the Urdu : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

646. TELEGRAM TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

Express *February 14, 1945*

DINSHAW MEHTA
CARE NATURECURE
POONA
COME ANY TIME.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

647. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,
February 14, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

A discussion was going on between Shakaribehn and you when I was in the bathroom. Both of you were talking at the top of your voices. Why? The discussion was between you two only, and was not meant for anybody else to hear. How can this be tolerated? You should try and somehow learn to exercise control over your voice. It is a matter of common sense how loudly one should talk on what occasion. Please bear in mind that others will do what you do. What you preach will be like so much writing on water.

You were to send me the *dalia* cooked at your place. Did you forget to do so, or was the *dalia* not good enough to send? Why not try to *make ghensh* or *raab* of *jowar* flour? Are you afraid that nobody will like it? Are all the people so fastidious?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS]

I have still to write about one thing more. But that next time.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8464. Also C.W. 7184. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

648. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 14, 1945

Sitting and talking with me would depend on your and other people's convenience. Come any time you feel like it. Withdraw yourself when somebody wishes to be alone [with me].

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi; G.N. 4474

649. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,
February 15, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I tasted the *dalia*. I had asked for a sample only from what was cooked in the kitchen. What was sent had been left in the cooker for two hours. It had puffed up but even then it tasted half-cooked. There were hard grains, and bran stuck-in the mouth. I think we cannot cook *dalia* from *jowar* as we can from wheat. After the flour has been removed, no nutrient is left. The *jowar*, therefore, should be turned into fine flour and soaked in water, and then *ghensh* or *raab* should be prepared from it. Your reading of the Gita is too slow. This also is an art. You should read it faster.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8463. Also C.W. 7185. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

650. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 15, 1945

You must write and tell me why the Paunar [programme] was postponed.

I think it is not *auza* but *auz*[1]. Find out from some Muslim friend studying there.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4475

[1]Presumably Gandhiji meant the expression *wuzoo* which means the ceremonial washing of hands and feet before offering *namaz*.

651. A NOTE

February 15, 1945

Celibacy is obligatory only for the inmates of the Ashram. It is not meant for others and it would not apply to servants. It should apply to Ram Prasad; he is not an inmate of the Ashram. Our Ashram is no more an ashram in the real sense. But wherever I stay becomes a kind of an ashram. I had even objected to calling it an ashram; but everybody started referring to it by that name and I acquiesced. This does not in any way mean that those who have taken the vow can break it.

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 5903. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

652. LETTER TO BALTHUSNA[1]

February 15, 1945

BALTHUSNA,

I have your letter. I am sorry I cannot come. I cannot support Urdu or Hindi exclusively. I want them both to progress. Indeed I like them both. I hope you will understand.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Urdu: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

653. LETTER TO SIBTE HASAN

SEVAGRAM,
"*VIA*" WARDHA (C.P.),
February 15, 1945

BHAI SIBTE HASAN,

I have your letter. I just cannot attend the Anjuman[2]. I cannot promote exclusively either Urdu or Hindi. I want both the languages to develop. But I certainly want that both should blend together. I

[1] This was in reply to an invitation to attend a conference of Anjuman-i-Taraqqi Urdu which was to begin in Bombay on February 23. Later it was read out by Allama Kaifi at the Conference of All-India Hindustani Prachar Sabha on February 26.

[2] Presumably, Anjuman Taraqqui-e-Urdu

hope you have understood my viewpoint.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Urdu : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

654. NOTE FOR ANJANA CHAUDHARY

[After *February 15, 1945*][1]

Write to her that Ram Narayan should make a confession in writing, exactly describing his role. If doing so invites greater punishment, he should accept it. That will be his atonement. But he should do it only if it is acceptable to his mind and heart.

Notwithstanding what is said above, if there is any legal loophole and he can be acquitted, he should take the opportunity. In his statement he should say that the statement is by way of atonement. If there is a legal escape, he will certainly be freed. The Government will not misinterpret his statement. Ram Narayan's confession should not be taken to mean that because he admits his offence he should be detained or given stricter punishment. This cannot be done, at least legally.

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

655. SPEECH AT SEVAGRAM[2]

February 15, 1945

Referring to the amount of one crore and twenty-four lakhs that had been collected, Gandhiji remarked that though he was impatient to speed up the work, he was not going to allow the Fund to be squandered away or loosely handled. It had been collected in the name of an illiterate and simple-hearted woman. He had his detractors, not so Ba. Therefore, the work done in her memory must be cent per cent honest. He

[1] The addressee in her letter dated February 5, 1945, had mentioned that her husband, Ram Narayan Chaudhary, had in 1942 advised a student that sabotage activities would be in conformity with non-violence and had now discovered, after Gandhiji's clarification of the matter, that he was mistaken. He was anxious to atone for the mistake.

[2] Gandhiji Addressed the Secretaries of the Provincial Committees of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Fund.

did not care for numbers of workers. If he could find even two capable men or women in the meeting he would begin work with their help and expand it as more suitable workers came forward. So far as he was concerned he would like to exclude men altogether from the various Provincial Committees formed under the Trust and fill them with women. But he would not have them unless they were at least as capable if not better than men. Otherwise he would be exploiting them. He had never done so. One crore and twenty-four lakhs was a mere drop in the ocean when distributed among seven lakhs of India's villages. India was spending more than a crore a day on the war, but one crore and twenty-four lakhs for the service of women and children appeared a big sum in the eyes of everybody. That gave only a measure of the topsyturvydom to which they had got used.

Referring to the way in which the money was to be spent, Gandhiji divided it into three heads. The first in order was medical relief for women and children in the villages. From the schemes that had come everybody seemed to think in terms of maternity homes and free hospitals for women and children. He recognized the need of this kind of work but he frankly confessed that he had yet to feel his way to it. What kind of medical institutions they were to have and what system of medicine they were to adopt was a ticklish question. It was taxing his mind and he requested them all to give their serious attention to it. So far as he was concerned, "prevention is better than cure" was his motto. If he had his way he would make sanitation and hygiene work the principal activity under this head. It did not matter if in doing so they had to exclude a certain class of hard and difficult cases. Some of the patients might even die. He could steel his heart to lose them. But it broke his heart to see even one healthyman fall sick.Our village folk must be taught to look after their health. The root causes were poverty and ignorance. In order of importance these two came first.

Education was to be along the lines of Nayee Talim. As a matter of fact, everything else was included in and was an essential part of Nayee Talim as he conceived its scope.

They had to better their economic condition through khadi and village industries. Today, the sole occupation of woman amongst us was supposed to be to bear children, cook for her husband and otherwise drudge for the household. This was a shame. Not only was woman condemned to domestic slavery, but when she went out as a labourer to earn wages, though she worked harder than the man, she was paid less. Children were forced to go to work at an early age. Some of them worked often as much as the men but were paid even less than women. This state of affairs must be put an end to. He had received no scheme for this kind of work so far. The children in the villages began to earn at an early age. Their parents could not afford to send them to school and spend on their education like the city folk. Their education should fit them for some useful industry or other and it should help to put them on their legs.

The work outlined by him was original and difficult. There were very few men fit to carry it out. Many of them even lacked the desire to train themselves for it. Such men should not come on the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Fund Committees and if they were on them already they should resign and make way for others.

At the end, he invited questions but appealed to the audience to spare. him as far as possible. His energy was limited. He observed silence, he told them, practically for the whole day these days from 3.15 a.m. to 8.15 p. m. He broke it for a short time during the meeting days.

A friend asked what should be considered the maximum population of a village. Gandhiji replied that for the present he would set the outside limit at 2,000. This was subject to adjustments later on. He knew an overwhelming majority of villages in India had a population between 500 and 1,000 or even less. He would like them to begin with the smallest village and then work upwards. He knew of some villages in Gujarat which were miniature towns. Rich towns folk had gone and settled there with their wealth. The money of the Fund was not to be spent on such villages.

Q. What means would you suggest for the economic-uplift of the villagers?

A. True all-round uplift of the villages cannot but result in their economic betterment. Except maternity work, all the other items outlined by me would directly result in their economic uplift as well.

Q. If you were in charge of a district how would you set about the work?

A. A district is too big a bite for me. If I can successfully organize work in one village I would be satisfied. It will serve as a model for the rest of the seven lakhs of villages to follow. We have not set about village work in right earnest so far. We have only tinkered with it here and there amateurishly. I myself was an amateur. But now we are determined to do better.

Q. Some people engage in constructive work only as a side line to their political work. The result is that they can do justice to neither. There should be proper supervision to prevent it.

A. I entirely agree that constructive work and political work should not be mixed. To me constructive work done properly is all sufficient. It leaves no necessity for any other programme. As for supervision, there is the old man who is your Secretary and the young woman, the Organizing Secretary of the Trust—I mean Thakkar Bapa and Mridulabehn.

Q. Today the Provincial Committees have an overwhelming majority of men. In how much time do you hope to be able to replace them by women?

A. I would, if I could, turn out all the men today and myself follow suit. But I would take women on their merit, not merely because they were women. If we could find suitable workers I would certainly wish to spend the money in our hands fairly fast. Anyway, I do hope and expect that by the time the present fund is expended, women would have become capable of managing their own affairs.

Q. If you do not find suitable women workers, why should not the Fund be used

to train them up?

A. That is exactly our object and it is for that purpose that you are all here. But everything must be done in a way befitting the memory of her in whose name the Fund has been collected.

Q. What is to be done in a province like Sind where it is too unsafe for any woman to venture out and work in the villages?

A. So long as women do not come forward, it goes without saying that men have to work in their place. But I have no doubt that you should be able to find women to go to work in the villages. Muslim women at any rate should have nothing to fear in Sind. Anyway the worst that can happen to a woman is that she might lose her life. I am convinced that no one can molest a woman if she has the determination and will to resist and is not afraid of dying. I know of a young missionary girl who went all alone in the midst of Negroes inthe wilds of Africa. Yet she was not afraid and no one ever cast an evil eye on her. We have such women amongst us also. One of them was with me only two days ago. She went to Dacca all alone when Hindus and Muslims had run amok. No one dared to touch her. To enable women to shed their cowardice and to face danger undaunted should in fact be one of the results of our activity under the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Fund scheme.

Q. If we take up work just in one village the pressure of the surrounding area would swamp our work. We can't make any headway unless we tackle the whole area at once.

A. My experience is different. If we put off taking a necessary step till everyone else is ready for it we shall never make a move on. We must have the courage to take the plunge even if we are all alone. There are certain difficulties in the way but we have to overcome them. Many of the difficulties that deter us are imaginary. For instance, no one hinders my work here in Sevagram.

If I can only move the hearts of the people of Sevagram that is all that I need to do. If we cannot succeed in one village we cannot possibly do so in a hundred. Even if we can get a certain law passed by the State, who is going to enforce it in the villages unless there is awakening among the people themselves. For that we have to begin with one village and then extend our field farther and farther.

Q. Those that are already doing constructive work are being drafted for work under the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Fund. There are no new workers forthcoming. In order to do justice to the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Fund work those who take up work under the Trust should not be burdened with other preoccupations.

A. It is true that for many years we have not been able to draw sufficient fresh workers but Mridulabehn tells me that there is no dearth of women workers, if only the men folk remove the stranglehold. I have told her that I would take her side and help her to produce as many women workers as she can.

Q. Many people who have collected large amounts for the Fund or have contributed substantially to it want to be included in the Provincial Committees. Should we take them on?

A. The golden rule is that collecting money or contributing money should neither qualify nor disqualify a man from becoming a member of the Provincial Committee if he is otherwise fitted for it.But if anyone thinks that he has a right to be on the committee because of what he has contributed or collected, such a claim cannot be entertained and he should be excluded. We must not have unwieldy bodies and we must not draw men who are already engaged in one sphere of work into another. There are some men who are good at parliamentary work. I would not like them to be stigmatized for it. But if they leave it for something for which they have no aptitude merely because it is the fashion of the hour, I would take them to task for it just as I would take them to task if they sought to advance their parliamentary ambitions under cover of constructive work.

Q. The custom of slavery of women is still prevalent in some States. Can't the Fund be used to do something for them? Anyone who tries to help these women is clapped into prison under trumped-up charges.

A. Send these women to me and I shall look after them. They can all perform an exodus from the States where their elementary rights are denied.

The Hitavada, 20-2-1945

656. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

February 16, 1945

CHI. MRIDULA,

Since I have nothing to say now, I wish to take advantage of the freedom I have secured. Tomorrow we shall be meeting at Sevagram, shan't we ? My presence in Durgabehn's room between 3 and 4.30 should be sufficient. But if Bapa and others wish something else, please let me know. The Mandal can meet for a longer time and carry on routine business.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 11231. Courtesy : Sarabhai Foundation

657. LETTER TO LAKSHMINARAYAN

SEVAGRAM,
February 16, 1945

BHAI LAKSHMI BABU,

We cannot accept even one of the three conditions even though we concede that the speech was provocative. The constructive programme of today has nothing to do with any movement such as that of 1942. Even if we are opposed to the violent activities of Shri Jayaprakash, we cannot accept any of the three conditions. In other words, we shall not get those things done by coercion. If freedom of India is common cause between us and the Government, why this discrimination ? The truth of the matter is that the Bihar government has committed a mistake in arresting people[1] and instead of admitting the mistake, it wants to throw the responsibility on us. We shall not accept that responsibility even if they destroy us. Even if they seek to prevent us from carrying on our peaceful work, we shall march ahead.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

658. LETTER TO BALVANT SINHA

February 16, 1945

CHI. BALVANT SINHA,

I am not going to Delhi. I shall have to go to Bombay, and that too towards the end of March.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1952

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 17-2-1945.

659. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 16, 1945

(1) Do not give up your work among the children. It will be a test of your understanding of Nayee Talim

(2) You are not dull but slow. The reason evidently is that you have not done much thinking or useful reading. You have to come out of yourself, and get immersed in your work. That is to say, you must put in the reading required to attain perfection in it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4476

660. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

SEVAGRAM,
February 17, 1945

CHI. BABUDI,

I read Gordhandas's letter. Since Anand is very ill Shakaribehn is going there. She has been crying. Let her come. I do hope that Anand will get well. Neither you nor Gordhandas should worry.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10053. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

661. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 17, 1945

When it is closely woven, it is beautiful. And then it is straight. The first roll is not normally straight and is close in some places and loose in other places, because the cross threads are not straight and even.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4477

662. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,
February 17, 1945

I have delayed giving my opinion on the Bihar Government's challenge to Congress workers[1] in the hope that the storm was an isolated mistake and that it will correct itself. I find I was mistaken.On top of the happenings in Bihar comes news that Shri Purushottamdas Tandon has been rearrested. The workers in Bihar are well known, and of them one is an ex-Prime Minister and another is ex-Finance Minister. Tandonji is the Speaker of the U. P. Assembly. Now comes news that Shri Gopabandhu Chowdhury of Orissa, equally well known too, has been rearrested.

This is one picture. The other is, the Viceroy holds talks with Sjt. Bhulabhai Desai. The air is thick with rumours of big changes. The rumour hardly squares with the news I have summarized and which the public knows already.

Congressmen in Bihar were busy devising concerted measures to give effect to the fifteen-point constructive programme sketched by me and in a manner suggested by me when the principal men were arrested though the programme has no political fIavour, using the term politics in its understood sense. I have not hesitated to say that the universal adoption in practice in India of the programme must lead to the attainment of complete independence without either civil non-violent disobedience or even a parliamentary programme. There would then be no necessity for either. The British would not find it worth while to stay in India to rule. They would stay, if they do, as full citizens. In the language of 1942, as rulers they would quit India; for their soldiers would be without occupation, their huge industries without use. That day may not come, but it should be the non-violent soldier's dream which he must try daily to realize and if in its pursuit he is thwarted, he has his non-violent resistance to fall back upon, otherwise called civil disobedience and non-co-operation. Mass civil disobedience is nobody's responsibility except, as yet, mine. It was not offered in 1942. Nobody who has not permeated the masses can

[1] On January 28, 1945, the Bihar Government interned Srikrishna Sinha, ex-Premier, Bihar, Anugraha Narayan Sinha, ex-Finance Minister, Prof. Abdul Bari, Dy. Speaker, Bihar Legislative Assembly, Murli Manohar Prasad, Editor, *Searchlight*, and Prajapati Mishra on the charge of open preparation for another struggle.

shoulder it. Indeed, the masses simply will not move. That is my conviction based on the experience I have gained. Hitherto the action in Bihar is defended on the ground of an alleged speech by Shri Prajapati Mishra. The text of that speech has been suppressed.

There is no question of his or any Congressman making exciting speeches in the prosecution of the constructive programme or about non-violent resistance or much less about resorting to violence or even approving of it. That there is no plan under the present conditions to offer any form of mass civil disobedience has been clearly stated by me and I know that Congressmen all over the country are acting on the advice I have offered. But abstention even from referring to the theoretical possibility of resistance and the like cannot be forced or even made a condition of prosecuting theconstructive programme. It has undoubtedly independence—political, social and economic—as its aim. It is a moral non-violent revolution in all the departments of life of a big nation, at the end of which caste and untouchability and such other superstitions must vanish, differences between Hindu and Muslim must become things of the past, enmity against Englishmen or Europeans must be wholly forgotten and Princes and capitalists must live as perfect friends with the whole mass of India as the real and legal trustees of the people for all the wealth they may possess. Is there anything wrong in the attempt? What are Government protestations about Indian independence if they will not tolerate the movement I have sketched except on conditions impossible of acceptance? Are they not satisfied with the extraordinary power they possess? Must they keep without trial the best known as well as the least known Indians in their custody, lest the latter should preach independence from one end of the country to the other and non-violent acts in pursuit thereof? Must they rearrest released persons the moment they speak and act as free men, if their speech or act does not please the authority?

Another painful experience I am undergoing which I must share with the public is the number of reports of assault and torture resorted to for purposes of extorting confessions from prisoners. Some cases are already before the public, such as the notable one at Kolhapur.[1] Many other instances of comparatively recent occurrence have been brought to my notice. One particular case I have in mind related to a young lad who, on my advice, gave himself up to the police because he had been wanted. If some of the reports that one hears are not well

[1] It was alleged that Kashibai Hanbar was stripped and tortured by a police officer of Kolhapur State to extract information about her son who was declared a political absconder.

founded, I am satisfied several others are perfectly genuine. Is it not time this practice of torture and ill-treatment of people held in captivity is firmly discountenanced and put an end to by the powers that be?

In August 1942, instead of needlessly precipitating a quarrel with the people, if the authority had listened to the pleading of the Congress, India would have enjoyed independence and the war would have already ended with honour for the Allies and happiness for the suppressed peoples of the earth. That is my retrospection. If things go on as they are doing in India, the victory that the Allies will have will be only so called, because they will also have India and other nations in the same plight bleeding at their feet. Such a victory can only lead in the near future to a bloodier war if possible than the one that will have closed. For, as I have said elsewhere, victory won at the expense of India will mean that, out of the ashes of Fascism, Nazism and Japanese militarism will have risen a new monster that will seek to eat all it sees and in the attempt will be eaten up, leaving I know not what.

It has given me no pleasure to pen this statement. There is much more I can say but I shall say no more for the present.

The Hindu, 19-2-1945

663. FOREWORD TO "AMARAN BA"[1]

Narahari Parikh is one of those who joined the Satyagraha Ashram when it was first founded at Kochrab. Whatever, therefore, Chi. Vanamala has learnt, she has learnt at the Ashram. She is untouched by any Government school and the education imparted there. It can therefore be said that she knows how to work hard. She has however gone out to collect material for Kasturba's biography. In this she has also secured contributions from others. Up to the time of writing I have not been able to look at these. It was Chi. Vanamala's wish that I should go through what she has written. Poor girl, she would write about Kasturba but how could she forget me, with whom she romped around and played as a child? I see she has painstakingly collected her facts and ordered them neatly. Her language is homely and simple. I see no artificiality in it. Whether Chi. Vanamala has been successful in this her first effort is solely for the readers to judge.

Chi. Sushilabehn, sister of Chi. Pyarelal, has written about Ba's

[1] This is also available as a draft under C.W. 3069 and G.N. 5946 under the date December 3, 1944, and bears the following note by Gandhiji: "I have not revised the above. This should be sent only if Narahari passes it. In any case Vanamala must pass it."

experiences in jail. Chi. Vanamala thought of taking something from this. But on reading Sushilabehn's account she found that Sushilabehn's writing had a natural flow which she could not disturb. The original is in Hindi and its Gujarati translation is reproduced in this collection. Sushilabehn after all holds a doctor's degree. She has besides an interest in vocal and instrumental music, painting andliterature. She takes interest in public affairs too. The late Mahadev noticed these qualities of her and took a keen interest in them. But he has departed from us. His life is ended. Readers should keep this in mind when they read Sushilabehn's article.

So much for the authors.

But they both assert that if I myself do not say something about Ba the work will remain incomplete. Since I am writing this foreword to the book perhaps it will be appropriate if I say something about Ba. I certainly intend to write more fully about Ba when I have the time. Here I shall only answer the question, if I can, why Ba was able to attract people to her. Ba's chief virtue was her voluntary identification of herself with me. I did not draw her forth. The quality blossomed in Ba on its own when the time came. I never knew that Ba had this thing hidden in her. My earlier experience showed her a very stubborn person. If I tried to compel her in any way she would do exactly what she herself wanted. This led to bitterness between us—short or prolonged. But as my public life gradually developed, Ba blossomed more and more and freely merged herself in me, that is, in my work. In time no distinction remained between me and my work—which was service. Ba too became one with that work. This quality perhaps most naturally arises from the Indian soil. At least that seems to me the chief reason for Ba's sentiments.

The reason why this virtue reached its pinnacle in Ba is to be found in our *brahmacharya*. It came more naturally to Ba than to me. In the beginning Ba was not even aware of it. The idea came to me and Ba took it up and made it her own. In the result the relationship between us was as one between true friends. Since 1906—in fact since 1901—all the time Ba was with me, she had nothing outside of my work. She could have lived apart. There would have been no difficulty in her living apart from me. But being a friend she yet considered it her duty as a woman and a wife to merge herself in my work. Ba gave the paramount place to the service of my person and till death never ceased from the task of attending on me.

M. K. GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, February 18, 1945

[From Gujarati]

664. LETTER TO ARUN CHANDRA GUHA

February 18, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I duly received a khadi *chadar*[1] whose yarn was spun by you. For this many thanks.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 8672

665. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
February 18, 1945

CHI. SUMI,

I will not say that you wrote the letter; Nimu did it because you wrote it at her instance. What is the point in writing a letter unless you are prompted by the heart? If you are happy why should I need any letters from you? When I get the urge I shall write to you without waiting for a letter from you.

Blessings from
BAPU

SUMITRA GANDHI
PILANI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

666. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,
February 18, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your note today. I tasted the wheat [dalia]. I find a great difference between wheat and *jowar* [*dalia*]. I stick to what I have said about the latter. The wheat *dalia* didn't seem half cooked. You may certainly add jaggery to *jowar ghensh* or *raab*. The jaggery should be added only after the *ghensh* or the *raab* is ready and is being

[1] Shawl

removed from the fire.

I follow what you say about the *Gita*. If you do not know the rules about where the stress should fall, learn them from somebody. Pyarelal and Sushila know them. For correct pronunciation, it is absolutely necessary to learn to read fast. Without that the tongue does not move smoothly. Don't suppose that your voice can never improve. If you don't know the story about Demosthenes, ask Pyarelal. If you do not follow it, ask me.

About *rotlis* it is like this. One great disadvantage of folding them is that they do not then require to be properly chewed. Crisp *rotlis* are preferable. It should be made a regular practice to serve a fixed quantity to everybody.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8461. Also C.W. 5569. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

667. NOTE TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA[1]

[*February 18, 1945*][2]

We are sure to meet in April. Ask Gulbehn[3] to continue to write till then. Kisses to Ardeshir.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8461. Also C.W. 5569. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

668. LETTER TO BABA MOGHE

SEVAGRAM,
February 18, 1945

BHAI BABA,

I have just read your letter. In my view your decision is faulty. In my view it would be wrong for you to go to Khandesh now. Your duty is to improve your body. If the body is the temple of God it is sacred. Spinning should not be taken literally; its implications should

[1] This is written in the margin to the letter to Munnalal G. Shah dated February 18; *vide* the preceding item. From the contents it is obvious that this must have been addressed to Dinshaw K. Mehta.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Addressee's wife

be understood. This is my view. If this does not appeal to you, you are entitled to your view.

What I said on your return was only a joke.

Blessings from

BAPU

C/O PRABHAKAR

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9020

669. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

SEVAGRAM,
February 19, 1945

MY DEAR KU.,

You can have the meeting on the date mentioned. I have not commenced the foreword or whatever you call it. I will return the book as soon as I am ready. It is good you have not to go to Bombay in March.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10171

670. LETTER TO GULZARILAL NANDA

SEVAGRAM,
February 19, 1945

CHI. GULZARILAL,

I can say that I have carefully read your letter to Narahari and the papers enclosed with it.

The English pamphlet contains comments and suggestions. Go through it. Revise where necessary. Reject anything I say if it does not appeal to your heart or mind.

How and when did the system of arbitration come to be discontinued? However it be, if it is necessary to fight for it, you must do so. Estimate your strength. Consult Dada Mavalankar about it. Maybe you have already done that. If you want I am prepared to write about this to Kasturbhai[1] and the other mill-owners.

I understood that the necessary figure was reached with the release of Profulla Babu.

My health is not so bad that I cannot attend to the urgent work that daily comes up. It is true that I continue to observe silence. I do most of my work through writing. It is no trouble.

I hope you are well. How are Shankerlal and Anasuyabehn?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

671. LETTER TO KANTA R. VYAS

February 19, 1945

CHI. KANTA,

I think of you often. Only today I have come to know that you have not been keeping good health. I did not like letting you leave this place but I was helpless. May God protect you and your child. Write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

KANTA RAMPRASAD VYAS
DOHAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Kasturbhai Lalbhai of the Lalbhai Group of Mills

672. LETTER TO BALBHADRA

SEVAGRAM,
February 19, 1945

BHAI BALBHADRA,

I have your postcard. It is good that you wrote. Of course Satyavatibehn has my blessings. Let us see what happens now. Keep me informed. Chand is well.

Blessings from
BAPU

BALBHADRA
6 PYARELAL BUILDING
KASHMIRI GATE
DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

673. INTERVIEW TO N.W.F.P. DEPUTATION[1]

[*February 19, 1945*][2]

Gandhiji told the deputation that whatever might be the case with other provinces, he was firmly of opinion that in the Frontier Province Congressmen should form an alternative Ministry if the no-confidence motion was successful. They could make their full contribution to the struggle for freedom without creating a deadlock. He would have asked them—and all Congressmen—to withdraw from the Assembly and resort to total non-co-operation if they had made greater progress in non-violence than he judged they had. As things stood, such a course was fraught with grave risk. There was no atmosphere for it. They could, therefore, go ahead with the no-confidence motion and form a Congress Ministry.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, p. 122

[1] A deputation from the Frontier Province, headed by Mehar Chand Khanna, came to Sevagram and told Gandhiji that a majority of the members were ready to support a no-confidence motion against the Aurangzeb Khan Ministry. The Governor had promised that he would allow the no-confidence motion to be brought in if Dr. Khan Saheb was prepared to form an alternative Ministry.

[2] From The Hindu, 21-2-1945

674. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

Express *February 20, 1945*

AMTULSALAAM
KASTURBA SEVA MANDIR
BARKANTHA
BLESSINGS.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

675. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEVAGRAM,
February 20, 1945

MY DEAR C. R.,

As D.[1] is going to you I send you this love letter. With this intention I went to the bathroom and P. put yours in my hands. I know you thoroughly. I know you are not touched by what the crowd says or does not about you. We two must go on as we are till we see alike. That is what real love demands. Keep well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2101

676. LETTER TO LAJ RALLIA RAM

SEVAGRAM,
February 20, 1945

MY DEAR LAJ,

I was pleased to have your letter. Are you the daughter of the Rallia Ram I know? You have made a fine choice or has Yunus?

I know about Mehrtaj[2].

I am glad Yunus is with Badshah Khan[3]. I am writing to Yunus.

Love.

BAPU

KUMARI LAJ RALLIA RAM
5 MASSON RD.
LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Devdas Gandhi
[2] Daughter of Abdul Ghaffar Khan
[3] Abdul Ghaffar Khan

677. LETTER TO MOHAMMAD YUNUS

SEVAGRAM,
February 20, 1945

MY DEAR YUNUS,

This is to greet you and to express my pleasure at your engagement. Laj writes to me about you and Mehrtaj. Hope you are well and so is Badshah Khan. Do come when you are married, i. e., when you are free.

Love.

BAPU

MOHAMMAD YUNUS
CENTRAL JAIL
HARIPUR
HAZARA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

678. LETTER TO BHULABHAI J. DESAI

SEVAGRAM,
February 20, 1945

BHAI BHULABHAI,

Devdas has talked to me fully. He will report to you in detail. Liaquat Saheb's performances and things going on in the country frighten me.[1] They should frighten you too. Do what is just and proper. It does not matter if the thing fizzles out.[2] Once the consent of the Working Committee is obtained, the form you want to give it shall be all right. Your English should harmonize with my Gujarati. Don't you agree?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Bhulabhai Desai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 17-2-1945.

[2] Earlier, Gandhiji had remarked in the course of his talks with a friend: "Arrests have again started and that is a bad sign. Bhulabhai must take a firm line and tell the Viceroy that this will not do."

679. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
February 20, 1945

CHI. NARANDAS,

Your statement is good. Yes, organize a camp. Everybody must pay the full amount, and that in advance. That is what was done here. Those who cannot pay may not come. Don't mind that. If such persons have influence with anybody in their areas, the latter may send the money. If you permit outsiders to join, they will feel uncomfortable. If any such persons turn up though not invited through a notice, consider at that time what to do. You have not sent the conditions, etc., to be fulfilled by the candidates. I should like to see them. Bhai Kher[1] is undoubtedly a priceless jewel. If your body cannot stand the strain do not take a leading part.

Prabhu[2] still keeps indifferent health. He is going to Nagpur tomorrow to get himself examined. He should, therefore, be spared at present. Kanaiyo[3] is busy trying to finish his own work. The speeches made are to be printed. I have also suggested to him that he should take charge of the kitchen here. He will be involved in that, too. It will, therefore, be difficult for him to go there in the immediate future. If a camp is started, I assume that Khersaheb will spend a month there. Show the statement to him before printing it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8619. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

680. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
February 20, 1945

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter. You should follow my advice. I had not expected that the expenses incurred on you and Lilavati would come

[1] B. G. Kher, ex-Premier of Bombay
[2] Addressee's nephew Prabhudas Gandhi
[3] Addressee's son Kanu Gandhi

to as much as they do.[1] But what even if I had known? I am confident that you will prove your worth. If you do I shall be happy.

There are many other instances like the two you have mentioned. There is no limit to my disappointments. But "a ray of immortal hope lies hidden among hundreds and thousands of disappointments".[2] And so I am still sanguine in spite of the disappointments. There may be more in store.

Whether or not what you write about Kanu and Narayan is correct, only experience will show. I don't cling to that hope, either. What if they too decide to go in for modern education? I am prepared for all that. It will be enough for me if I myself am not carried away. Go on doing your work without worrying. If Kanu wishes to go there, I am certainly not going to stop him. Blessings to you all.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS]

Ramachandran's mother has come. Sundaram too is here. Tomorrow they will all leave.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7371. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

681. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
February 20, 1945

CHI. RAMDAS,

The enclosed letter is for all of you to see and then pass on to Sumi. How well written it is! Sita is making progress.

I have a letter from Sumi but I regard it as one from Nimu because although in Sumi's hand it was written at Nimu's instance.[3] Sumi is bound to me by a promise. But being a child she has forgotten about it. I have not a minute to spare or I should have written separately to her. I have Kanam's letter. I don't have the time to write to him separately. Dr. Mahmud has fever. Kanam should write to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The two had taken up a university course in medicine.
[2] A quotation from Manibhai Nabubhai Dwivedi
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Sumitra Gandhi", 18-2-1945.

682. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
February 20, 1945

CHI. DINSHAW,

Of course I could see your unhappiness. But Sushilabehn made me realize that you were even more unhappy than I had thought. There is no cause for it. Nothing has been spoilt. The matter has been talked out, which is only to the good. We have got to look for the land. All that has happened is that the matter has been somewhat delayed. We are meeting in Bombay. If our talks there are doomed to break down let it be so. We don't want to keep anyone by force. And would a forced association bring credit? It is a stupendous task. I am not at all scared even though it is mainly my work. What you have created will of course go on. I am not so much interested in it. But I am certainly interested in what is being done in Andhra, because it islike village work. Now I learn that even that has defects. But if the finding is correct it is a great discovery. I don't like your drawing conclusions so hastily. If you persist in it you will not be able to achieve anything great. Certainly you will not be able to serve the villages.

Please bear in mind that as from today you are in possession of the Sevagram land. It is not to be thrown away. That experiment is to be conducted directly under my supervision. You should understand the work being done and bring credit to it. Only then can you be said to have made an advance. However, for this you will have to take to simplicity.

I think the Bangalore venture is no good. We must not break up our establishment in Poona. It is impossible to build up in Bangalore without breaking up in Poona. Gulbai must write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. DINSHAW MEHTA
TODDYWALLAH ROAD
POONA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

683. LETTER TO P. C. GHOSH

SEVAGRAM,
February 20, 1945

CHI. PROFULLA,

I have your letter. Get well. I shall not send for Bibi A[mtul] S[alaam] unless you all relieve her. It is your duty not to detain her longer than it is necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

684. LETTER TO MAHADEV A. HINGORANI

February 20, 1945

CHI. MAHADEV,

I was glad to read your letter. There are some mistakes in it. Never mind. It is not प्रीक्षा but प्ररीक्षा [1] and not सिहत but सेहत[2]. It is good to read *Jap Saheb*[3] at night. I have seen your photograph. I wrote my blessing on it too.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS]

Your legs have no muscles. Do some exercise. You seem to be weak.

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] Examination
[2] Health
[3] The introductory chapter of *Japji*, a Sikh scripture, which is a condensation of the *Granth Saheb*

685. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM,
February 20, 1945

DAUGHTER A. S.,

Your letter. I am sending the telegram. Sir Nazimuddin is quite right, isn't he, when he says that he will carry out the orders of those above him.[1] Whatever has been left out is immaterial, because there is no room for it now. It is for him to say: "Gandhi is my friend and I want to invite him. Will there be any objection from your side? If he goes to Midnapur or Chittagong, I shall let him go." This is how he should put the matter.

You have to be there for the time being. Come here when things there are cleared up. Speak to Bhagirathji and P. Babu[2]. You can think of leaving Bengal only when they permit.

I cannot write to Kanchan today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 491

686. LETTER TO CHANDI PRASAD VAIDYA

SEVAGRAM,
February 20, 1945

BHAI CHANDIPRASAD,

Chi. Balkrishna showed me your letter. He is getting a bit fed up with milk. He fasted. He will perhaps lose some weight also. Come if you have faith. B. K. is going on with it. He takes 7 lb. Of milk. Also a few dates. Chi. Hari-ichchha's condition has deteriorated. The treatment has brought no improvement. Now I am sending her to Nagpur for artificial pneumothorax. It would have been better if I had sent her earlier.

Blessings from
BAPU

VAIDYARAJ CHANDIPRASAD
BIRLA MANDIR
NEW DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Syed Mahmud", 22-1-1945.
[2] Profulla Chandra Ghosh

687. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 20, 1945

Shall I talk it over with Shantabehn? You did well in speaking out frankly.

I do not wish to drag you into the management of the Ashram. Carry on the work you are doing.

Do not simply glance through books. Think rather of what you can get out of them.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4478

688. LETTER TO SHRIRAM PODDAR

SEVAGRAM,
February 20, 1945

CHI. SHRIRAM[1],

Your letter is clear enough.

Should I ask a person who is fond of drinking to drink? I shall not suggest what you should do. Do what your heart prompts you to do. Do not listen to your father, or to me or to anyone else. Follow only the promptings of your heart. Perhaps in that alone lies your good.

It is not at all necessary for you to come here. I shall however say that when even the educated are resorting to artificial therapy who is going to find fault with you?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 812

689. TALK WITH DEVDAS GANDHI[2]

SEVAGRAM,
February 20, 1945

I told Bapu that Sjt. Bhulabhai has received his letter regarding consultations with the Working Committee members. I drew his attention to the fact that the above was there in his Gujarati draft, but was not there in Bhulabhai's latest English draft. Bapu said that the Gujarati draft only could be considered correct because the English version followed as an explanatory one.

[1] Son of Rameshwardas Poddar
[2] As reported by Devdas, Gandhiji's fourth and youngest son

However Bapu's independent opinion was that to meet and consult the Working Committee should be considered as an inevitable condition to act upon.

QUESTION : But if the new government releases the Working Committee immediately and at that time if the Working Committee is free to give its independent opinion, and at present as prisoners if they don't give any opinion, will it not be more beneficial ?

ANSWER: No. In that case Bhulabhai will not be able to carry public opinion with him. And also it will not be fair to the Working Committee.

Q. If it is possible to meet the Working Committee, will you accompany Bhulabhai or not ?

A. If Bhulabhai wishes so, I am prepared to go with him.

Q. Will you try to persuade the Working Committee to accept this plan ?

A. Yes.

Q. What are your arguments in favour of this plan ?

A. If the League is prepared to work together with the Congress in any way it is desirable. After the Bombay talks, Jinnah has told many people that Gandhi did not even mention about the interim government. Bhulabhai's efforts are in themselves a reply to him. But if the intentions of the League are not genuine, nothing will come out. I am surprised at the Statement of Jinnah and Liaquat Khan. In case Liaquat Khan has not even asked Jinnah, then it is a question how far we can rely on Liaquat's talks. Arrests have again started and that is a bad sign. Now Bhulabhai must talk in a firm tone and tell the Viceroy that this will not do.

Q. Do we keep aside the question of the Viceroy's veto ?

A. Bhulabhai says that it is a question of procedure and I have accepted it. However, it means that the Government will not act with Viceroy's veto against the vote of the Assembly.

Q. But if the Viceroy uses his veto and function ?

A. In that case there will be an understanding between Bhulabhai and Liaquat that the Government will resign. Even now this fact must be made perfectly clear between them.

Q. On the basis of 4-4-2 will you even include the nationalist Muslims amongst the four of the Congress ?

A. No. But Bhulabhai should tell Liaquat that amongst his four he should take nationalist Muslims.

Q. Hindu Mahasabha ?

A. Viceroy will create Hindu Mahasabha and other such parties. But we are not accepting them. There are two parties—Congress and League. Sikhs and Harijans, we have accepted as a concession.

Q. Can we include persons like Shyamaprasad Mukherji amongst the four ?

A. If Bhulabhai wants to take them, then I would not raise any objection.

Q. If previous consultation with the Working Committee which is in jail is essential, then why should not the Working Committee members in jail form the Government ?

A. That time has not yet come. At present the talk is only limited to Assembly members.

Q. But what about the Whites ?

A. The white, black, all-only those who are appointed by the Congress and League can come, except the Commander-in-Chief. Others will be responsible to them.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

690. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

February 21, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

The programme on the 22nd[1] must be carried out. They have already consulted me. The *Gita* and spinning in the morning is the right thing, also the *Ramayana*. I have never believed, let alone saying, any such thing about Kanchan as you attribute to me. I did explain to you what I believed, and you have also accepted its truth. Kanchan told Sushilabehn that she wants to live with you and have children. I asked her on the very day she left and my impression is that she admitted that it was so. If this is true, what you write is not correct. My own view is that after having slept in the same bed with me once it was wrong to discontinue it through ignorance. I did not know who forbade her. I spoke neither to you nor to her about this. I am mentioning this for the first time to you. This is all I wish to say.My experiment, as you know, has been suspended. If any woman comes to me now, she will do so not for the sake of my experiment but in order to receive from me the spiritual strength I possess. I think I have such strength, though I am not sure whether I am right or wrong in my belief. I have no fear at all that I may take unworthy advantage of anybody or violate my cherished vow.

You are wrong in believing that you are gaining nothing here. But if such be your belief, now or later you must leave the Ashram.

To depend on servants for anything will be the fall of you both. But we may engage for service a person whom we look upon as a brother or sister, with the object of helping him or her to advance in

[1] Kasturba Gandhi's death anniversary

life. If he or she leaves us, we should do without him or her and carry on our work as best as we can. I should welcome such a situation for myself. We would then have neither money nor so-called servants, but that would be a real test for us. I have already been tested in this manner. I have been discussing this with Kanubhai and trying to tempt him. If he can give us the benefit of his recent experience and do something for us, all of you should welcome it.

I understand *about* the dalia. If you send some, I will examine it. I am still of the view that *jowar* grain should not be ground coarse and flour removed.

I think I have now said practically everything I wished to say. Nor have I the time for more. If there is anything left out remind me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5833. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

691. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 21, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I did not talk to Shantabehn. I shall do so now for your sake. It is as well that while living in the Ashram we do not get involved in troubles. Do participate in the discussions. You have to do many other things for the Ashram,

Do not buy books as long as you can manage with the books from the Library. If books have to be bought it is another matter. About the children we shall see.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4479

692. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

February 22, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

From tomorrow morning I intend to stay for five days at Madalasa's place. May I go? Ask Munnalal, B. and others.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10617

693. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

February 22, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I understand about Kanchan. My judgment approves of her opposition. For you have observed no limit in harassing her and now you yourself tell her that from the social point of view your reason does not approve of the thing. Kanchan is bound to interpret that you are opposed. You also desire children, and that is why you cannot regard either yourself or Kanchan fit for *brahmacharya*. You have tested yourself much. I should advise you now to set up house-separately so that both of you can be happy. If you give up the thought of *brahmacharya* and live as a householder no harm will follow. If you wish later to observe abstinence, you will be able to do so. It seems to me that a separate establishment for you two and *brahmacharya* go ill together. However, do what your heart bids. Chi. Kanaiyo tells me that you like his suggestion. I have made a few suggestions. For two days he is going to Wardha. When Sushila comes from Nagpur, he will return here. Meanwhile, all of you may think things over. In my absence you are bound to be under less pressure.

I understand about servants. In this matter also you should regard my view only as a suggestion. You should do whatever all of you like and think. About newspapers, Ramprasad tells me that these days he himself gets them at half past one. It would be better if you discussed the matter further with him. If you can take charge of the newspapers, you may do so. I would not at all advise you, though, to take it up. However, have a talk with Pyarelal.

My desire to run away from here also has at the back of it the consideration of the convenience of you all. But we need not think about this matter. If it is to happen it will happen in the natural

course. And then neither I nor you nor anybody else will be able to stop it.

Are you satisfied now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gajarati: C.W. 5831. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

694. NOTE TO SHRIPAD JOSHI[1]

February 22, 1945

1. There is no need to make confessions to the Government or anybody. One should certainly confess to friends. If reparation can be made to those to whom damage was done, it should be made. The institution in which they work should be informed. In specific cases this advice can be modified.

2. I must say as to this I am doubtful. The above may be taken to apply here too.

3. They can carry on constructive work on the above condition. But if I am asked I shall still say that what they did was not right. It is purely a moral question.

4. I am afraid we cannot stop them. Of course it would be good if they kept out.

5. My answer is the same as above.

6. In a way it remains the duty of the Congress to secure their release.

7. The critics have not read my statement carefully. I have condemned the deeds not the doers. Violent acts have to be

[1] The questions answered in this note were forwarded to Gandhiji by the addressee in his letter of February 11. The questions were, briefly, as follows: (l) Some constructive workers who had indulged in sabotage in 1942 have repented and taken up constructive work. Is it the duty of such workers to volunteer confessions to the police and be ready to accept punishment? Or should they confess only to their friends and acquaintances? (2) Some say they had been carried away into doing what they did and it is enough to regret it in their own hearts and get on with work. Will this not be deceiving you? (3) Some say they had acted in the belief that what they were doing was right and though the futility of it has become clear to them they see no reason for regretting what they did. Can such workers take up constructive work? (4) There are some people who have become too fond of violent activity. They think if and when the people are ready for it, it should be taken up. Since that is not so

condemned. This should not be an obstacle to help being rendered to the concerned families.

8. How can I stop ridicule? The best way to stop it is to ignore it.

If this is inadequate, ask again—but only if it seems inadequate even after repeated readings.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5232

695. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

SEVAGRAM,
February 22, 1945

(1) This pen belongs to Ba.[1]

(2) I like it but the question is how I can do it.[2]

(3) For you and Sarojini.[3] She too is unhappy.

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

today they have to take to constructive work to reach the people. Can such people be taken into organizations doing constructive work? (5) Some want to use constructive work to mobilize people for violent revolution. Will they have a place in such organizations? (6) Is it the duty of the Congress to try and secure release of those convicted on charges of violence even if such people have not given up faith in the ways of violence? (7) Some feel you were hasty in condemning acts of sabotage, that you have in a way disowned workers who had indulged in these acts, with the result that people have stopped giving help to their families. What do you have to say? (8) Some so-called Gandhians in Maharashtra not only condemn violent activities but even make fun of them which hurts the dignity of young men who were involved in these activities. Would you not want to stop them being ridiculed?

[1] The addressee explains that Gandhiji had selected one particular pen to autograph for him a photograph of himself and Kasturba Gandhi.

[2] The addressee had requested Gandhiji to translate into English the "Daily Thoughts" he wrote for him.

[3] The reference is to an appointment for talks.

696. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SEVAGRAM,
February 22, 1945

This day marks the end of a solar year since Ba's departure from the earth. According to the lunar calendar, the anniversary fell on Mahashivaratri Day.[1] This is no occasion for mourning. On the contrary, it should be celebrated with the same joy as a day of birth. I do not make much distinction between birth and death. The *atman* has neither birth nor death. We loved Ba's *atman* which is immortal.

We spend days like this outwardly in religious rites. We had 24 hours' non-stop spinning. To me it was a religious observance. At Balvant Sinha's suggestion, we also have had the reading of the *Ramayana* which lasted throughout the day. In the morning we recited the *Gita*. But these outward acts do not satisfy us. We should go through these rites with full consciousness and understanding and invoke God. God is not somewhere up above or down below. He is in our hearts. In fact He is everywhere. When scientists say that they can create a vacuum, what they mean is that a vessel can be emptied of air but something still remains. Physical scientists have discovered thatthere is something subtler than air. Those with religious leanings realize that God is everywhere and is witness to all our acts.

Yesterday, I said that we must first wipe out our sins. There was a marriage celebration yesterday. Five minutes before [the function] I went to inspect the latrine. It smelled. I found excreta uncovered. Is this not a sign of our outer sin? We are guilty of a great error in keeping the latrine thus. We might have committed other sins as well. We have, therefore, to see that our latrines and kitchens are absolutely clean. We have to see that the kitchen runs smoothly; we must ask why we hurt one another, why the flies and mosquitoes breed. All these are indicative of our sin. I have not yet succeeded in finding out the cause of their growth but that does not absolve us of our sin.

On this sacred day we plied the charkha and observed many other religious ceremonies. Now the test, whether we deserve to undertake it or not, lies in the fact whether we observe cleanliness or not. You may not call it a sin, only a shortcoming. But to me the two are the same. We are punished for these sins not in the life to come but in this very life. Viewed thus, life becomes simple and full of joy.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Sevagram", 10-2-1945.

I had a letter from Kanti. He has mentioned what two learned persons said to him. One of them said that he did not consider spinning to be a religious duty. If he span, it was because it had become a convention to do so. It is obvious that spinning in imitation of others cannot be termed a religious act. Such spinning will not win us swaraj. We will win it only if we understand its science and appreciate its potentiality. Spinners who spin imitatively and therefore mechanically should not be found, of all places, in the Ashram. Everyone here does not ply the charkha and I put up with it. I cannot forbid those who spin just because others do. But I may as well tell them that this is not going to help them achieve their aim.

The other learned person said that he-did not believe in prayer. It is not his fault. The blame lies with us, for we, who believe in prayer, do not make our prayers manifest in our lives and actions. He has warned that those who have gathered round me are not all genuine believers and that I am doomed to despair. But I do not find any particular signs of despair in me. I do my duty and speak of it to others. But if they do not care to act on it, it does not affect me. This learned friend gives discourses on the Gita, attends the prayer but he does so only because it is a convention.

If one's mind wanders during prayer and does not lose itself in meditation, it is clear that one does not fully participate in prayer not withstanding the physical presence. There is in that case a conflict between the body and the mind in which the mind is the winner. What I mean to say is that if we consider this to be a sacred day then we must with all our heart do all we can in the name of an old woman who, though unlettered, was an embodiment of purity. Let all our actions be sincere.

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, pp. 360-2

697. TELEGRAM TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

February [*23*][1], *1945*

RT. HON. SASTRIAR
SWAGATAM
MYLAPORE, MADRAS

YOURS JAGADISAN'S[2] POSTCARDS. THANK GOD YOUR RECOVERY. MUST KEEP YOUR RESOLUTION. LOVE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The source has "24", obviously a slip; *vide* the following item.
[2] T. N. Jagadisan

698. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

SEVAGRAM,
February 23, 1945

DEAR BROTHER,

I never read newspapers. Pyarelal reads extracts. Someone did say yesterday that an accident had happened. Hardly had I time to see what it [was when] I got your most thoughtful p. c. and one from Jagadisan to Sushila. I have wired. This is to confirm and to beseech you to keep to your promise. You can't afford to give your voice to the public. Your written word should satisfy them.

Love.

LITTLE BROTHER

RT. HON. V. S. S. SASTRIAR

SWAGATAM

MYLAPORE, MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

699. LETTER TO RATHINDRANATH TAGORE

February 23, 1945

MY DEAR RATHI,

I hope the money matter is entirely fixed up.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI RATHINDRANATH TAGORE

SANTINIKETAN P. O.

BENGAL

From C.W. 10519. Courtesy: Visva-Bharati

700. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

WARDHA,
February 23, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I find even five days away from the Ashram too much.

Gurbuxani and Vimalabehn seem to me to be real jewels. The latter has resigned her post in the school where she was teaching. She is ready to take up everything gladly. Only we should know how to

deal with her gently, i. e., in the spirit of ahimsa.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8460. Also C.W. 5570. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

701. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

WARDHA,
February 23, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I have been worrying ever since you fell ill. Both of you should think over the matter. I think both of you can be cured with treatment. The first thing is sufficient rest, some nature cure treatment and proper yogic exercises. Hip-bath plays a very important role in treatment. Try it.

Blessings from

BAPU

K. MASHRUWALA
ASHRAM
SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

702. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

WARDHA,
February 23, 1945

CHI. NARAHARI,

I understand about Anand Hingorani. I think he is a very straightforward man. He will write anything you say. He will do what we say. I have known him from his childhood. He has also worked for *Young India*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

703. LETTER TO JAGGANNATH

WARDHA,
February 23, 1945

BHAI JAGANNATH,

I have your letter. You are sure to do well. What do you get now?

Something might be possible if I see the girls, I shall consult Sushilabehn. The girls should write to me. What does the eldest boy do? He should write to me. Write to me in the Devanagari or the Persian script.

Blessings from
BAPU

JAGANNATH
CLOTH MILLS
DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

704. LETTER TO BALVANT SINHA

February 23, 1945

CHI. BALVANT SINHA,

I have started with Chi. Ki. since yesterday. Let us see what happens.

You have to do your duty by reflecting on the nine ways of *bhakti*[1]. Lavatories and kitchen are crucial to our lives. The rest follows if we look after these too.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1953

[1] Namely, hearing, reciting, remembering, waiting upon, worshipping, doing obeisance, serving, companionship and surrendering

705. LETTER TO SHIV SHARMA

SEVAGRAM,
February 23, 1945

BHAI SHIV SHARMA,

It appears Hari-ichchha is nearing her end. Today I sent her to Dr. David. He says her lungs are no longer fit for artificial pneumothorax. Her condition was not so bad at the time she was put under your treatment. On top of your medicine Chandi Prasad made her take a lot of milk. Her condition further deteriorated. Now a rib may have to be removed. Perhaps Hari-ichchha does not have the patience required for this treatment. This is the position. Do you have any treatment to suggest? I hope you are all right now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

706. LETTER TO MEGHADEVI

SEVAGRAM,
February 23, 1945

CHI. MEGHADEVI,

I heard about your illness. Shri Ishwar D. has written to me. You must not lose heart. Even incurable diseases are cured. If you are destined to live, your illness is bound to go. And even if it does not, what does it matter? Life and death are not in our hands, are they? Be cheerful. Reassure your elders too.

Blessings from
BAPU

KUMARI MEGHADEVI
C/O SETH RAMKISHORE
DEHRA DUN, U. P.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

707. A NOTE

February 24, 1945

With women men should behave as they would with men. Two men would not deliberately embrace or kiss each other, or sleep together. But if there is a reason, one man would touch another, sit by his side, or sit on the same seat. We must behave with women in the same manner. We must forget the distinction of sex as far as possible. There is distinction between men and women but it should have no place in our normal dealings. The consciousness of this distinction arises either in the case of carnal desire or outside it in that of a genuine desire for progeny. Let us forget this second category. Probably one in a million may be resorting to intercourse for purposes of procreation. I have not come across any such person so far. I do not consider association with women or keeping away from them in conformity with the conventional restraints of *brahmacharya* asreal*brahmacharya*. My relationships are covered by this explanation. Whatever you may hear to the contrary must be rejected offhand. Think of this instead of being curious about my relationships.

BAPU[1]

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5850

708. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
February 24, 1945

CHI. SITA,

I have your letter. You draw your *matras*[2] too long, as I illustrate with js here. Draw them as I do or if you must have a knot at the end make it very small. Consult your teacher. It will be very hot by 20th April and hotter still in May. I don't know where I shall be then. I should like you to spend the hot season in a cool place. I am very happy that you are getting along nicely.

[1] The following instruction is added to the note: "Make a copy of this and pass it on to Baba Moghe."

[2] Marks over letters to indicate the vowel sounds 'e' or 'o'.

I have come to Madalasabehn's to spend five days. Blessings to all.

Blessings from

BAPU

SITA GANDHI

AKOLA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

709. LETTER TO HARSHADA DIWANJI

February 24, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I received yesterday the packet containing the skein of yarn and the letter. Today I have another letter and a cheque for Rs. 54. I can never remember birthdays. I have no idea how old Diwanji is.Now I send him my blessings. And he has many more years still to live. He has to serve with this very body.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI HARSHADABEHN DIWANJI

15TH STREET, KHAR

BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10223

710. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

WARDHA,

February 24, 1945

BHAI MUNSHI,

I have just finished the book *Zonal Divisions* sent by you. I managed to read it piecemeal during the time for massage every day. The very basis of your argument is brute force. How can I, therefore, reason with you? According to me, the instances which you have cited may go against you. But I won't enter into that argument. Your dharma lies in following the dictates of your conscience. We need not, therefore, argue what is right and what is wrong. For everybody what the conscience says is the truth. Real truth is known only to the God of Truth.

Haven't I already replied to your letter? I have still not seen the

rules drafted by Mavalankar. It is your right as well as your duty to say what you have said. I, therefore, told everybody the substance of it. Continue to point out fearlessly what you think to be right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7685. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

711. LETTER TO Y. M. PARNERKAR

SEVAGRAM,
February 24, 1945

CHI. PARNERKAR,

I shall not express grief. It was time for Mother to go and she went. She had completed her work. You may go whenever you can. Look after yourself and do your duty well.

Blessings from

BAPU

Y. M. PARNERKAR
C/O B. G. KARPE
12 KRISHNAPURA, INDORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

712. LETTER TO CHANDIPRASAD VAIDYA

WARDHA,
February 24, 1945

BHAI CHANDIPRASAD,

I wrote to you about Chi. B. K. Chi. Hari-ichchha came back from Nagpur yesterday. Her lungs have grown extremely weak,[1] so much so that a rib has to be removed now. Three months were lost in trying the Ayurvedic treatment. What grieves me is: why must we take up a case about which we do not have full knowledge. [At the same time] we cannot forsake the poor girl. I have two questions: (1) Can you, i. e., Ayurveda, do something for Hari-chchha? (2) Why do not the vaidyas realize their limitations?

Write to me fearlessly whatever you think right. Do come if you want to, for the sake of H. I. or B. K. I have written a similar letter

[1] Up to this the letter is in Gujarati.

about H. I. to Vaidya Shiv Sharma.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

BIRLA MANDIR
NEW DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

713. NOTE TO RISHABHADAS RANKA

SEVAGRAM,
February 25, 1945

Send the list of contents.[2] I can read Marathi. Bring the child. I shall think of a name.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 10390

714. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRA RAO

SEVAGRAM,
February 25, 1945

BHAI RAMACHANDRA RAO,

The enclosed is a rough draft of the scheme along with details as to its estimated budget. Give it shape and return it to me. It will be placed before the Committee.

Blessings from
BAPU

SEVAGRAM ASHRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Shiv Sharma", 23-2-1945.

[2] The addressee had written that he had received from Ganeshshastri the list of contents of the latter's "*Gramvaidyaka*" in Marathi.

715. CABLE TO VIJAYLAKSHMI PANDIT[1]

February 26, 1945

VIJAYALAKSHMI PANDIT
CARE JOHN DAY COMPANY
40 EAST 49 STREET
NEW YORK

NOT INTERFERING. NOTHING TO DISTURB YOU. LOVE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

716. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

February 26, 1945[2]

CHI. MIRA,

You can have Kisan Ashram.[3] But if that, why not Mazdur or its equivalent? A *kisan* can be a millionaire, not so a working man, a labourer. But I do not mind *kisan*, if you prefer it.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABEHN
ASHRAM, MULDASPUR
P. O. BAHADRABAD
Via JWALAPUR, NEAR HARDWAR

From a photostat: C.W. 10518. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's cable of February 22 which read: "Friends consider my presence necessary San Francisco during April conference. . . . Friends have cabled Ghanshyamdas Birla requesting him finance. . . . work under my direction. Please endorse. . . . Recent statement disturbing. . . ."

[2] The date is in Hindi numerals.

[3] The addressee had suggested this name for her Ashram.

717. LETTER TO DR. NIROD MUKHERJEE

AS AT SEVAGRAM,
February 26, 1945

DEAR MUKHERJEE,

I was able to go through your tale of woe only today. I have pointed the remedy.[1] It's not mere medical relief. Proper food including milk, houses and employment should be found and everything else will follow. The moral sense of the community has to be stirred up to do away with prostitution. If I was permitted free entry, I should love to enter Bengal ill or well. I may be able to do nothing. But that is nothing.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. NIROD MUKERJI
1/5 FERN ROAD
BALLYGUNGE
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: C.W. 9298

718. LETTER TO SATYANARAYAN SINHA

WARDHA,
February 26, 1945

BHAI SATYANARAYAN SINHA,

I have all your letters. I have gone through Prajapati Mishra's letter. There was nothing in the speech to alarm the Government.[2] In discussing the constructive programme such a speech should be considered irrelevant or inopportune. But what was to be done about it? It is a different matter if the Government wants to ban even constructive work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Nirod Mukherjee", 14-1-1945.
[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 17-2-1945.

719. ANSWERS TO T. B. SAPRU'S QUESTIONS

AS AT SEVAGRAM,
February 26, 1945[1]

Q. In your letter[2] of September 14, 1944, to Mr. Jinnah, you said as follows: "You, ask for my conception of the basis for a provisional interim government. I would have told you if I had any scheme in mind." Did you never discuss even the outlines of any scheme during the course of your conversations?

A. What I told Quaid-e-Azam was the exact truth. I had no idea of what he meant, for he never told me what he had in mind. Therefore I can answer your question by saying we never discussed the outlines of any scheme of interim government except what I have said.

Q. In answering the first question, please refer to Mr. Jinnah's letter of September 14, in which he said, "You, being the sponsor of this Gandhiji Rajaji formula, should give me some rough idea and picture of it so that I may understand what this part of the formula means." Did you give any reply to this? If so, what? If not, why not?

A. The foregoing answer deals with your second question.

Q. In his letter of September 17, Mr. Jinnah says that "the word (Pakistan) has now become synonymous with the Lahore Resolution[3]". Did you ask him whether in accordance with the Lahore Resolution of the All-India Muslim League, a scheme of Constitution, in accordance with the basic principles providing for the assumption finally by the respective regions of all powers such as Defence, External Affairs, Communications, Customs and such other matters as may be necessary, had been prepared? Was your attention drawn to any such scheme by Mr. Jinnah?

A. No. Quaid-e-Azam's position unfortunately was that while he could come as far as seeing me and trying to convince me of his position, he, the President of the League, could not discuss details with me, a mere individual. But so far as I could gather from our conversations, he had no prepared scheme. As the correspondence shows, he had referred me to two books both of which I read, but neither of which could help me to understand Quaid-e-Azam's exactposition. One thing he insisted upon was that if I first accepted the Pakistan of his conception, he could then discuss other things with me even though I was but an individual.

[1] From Gandhi-Sapru Papers
[2] *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 14-9-1944.
[3] *Vide* "Resolution passed by All-India Muslim League", 23-3-1940.

Q. Is it true that the real breakdown between you and Mr. Jinnah came about on the question of Central authority or Government? Please refer in this connection to Mr. Jinnah's letter of September 25,[1] clause (d), in which he says, "If these vital matters (suggested in the quotation from your letter with which clause 'd' begins) are to be administered by some central authority, you do not indicate what sort of authority or machinery will be set up to administer these matters, and how and to whom again that authority will be responsible." Did you, at any stage, indicate to him that you wanted a Central Government or a Central Legislature to deal with a limited number of subjects, such as Foreign Affairs, Defence, Internal Communications, Customs, Commerce and the like?

A. It can be said that the breakdown took place because we could not come to an agreement of the two-nation theory of Quaid-e-Azam's. As the correspondence will show I wanted to avoid a Central Government. I suggested an authority acceptable to both the parties, but he would insist first on complete partition as between two nations and then an agreement between them as on foreign affairs, etc. He would not agree to anything simultaneous.

Q. In that very clause (clause 'd'), Mr. Jinnah says, "According to the Lahore Resolution, as I have already explained to you, all these matters, which are the life-blood of any State, cannot be delegated to any Central authority or Government." Then he says that "the matter of security of the two States and the natural and mutual obligations that may arise out of physical contiguity will be for the constitution-making body of Pakistan and that of Hindustan, or [any] other party concerned, to deal with on the footing of their being two independent States." Did you understand Mr. Jinnah's position to be that he intended that Pakistan and Hindustan should be completely independent sovereign States with no connection between them except by a treaty? If so, did he tell you what was to happen if either party broke the treaty and what was the authority which could enforce the provisions of such a treaty?

A. Of course, he wanted two independent sovereign States with no connection between them except by a treaty. If any party broke the treaty, the consequence would be what has happened throughout the world up till now, i e., war. Therefore I did not ask and he did nottell me as to what would happen if either party broke the treaty.

Q. As regards the C. R. Formula[2], can you explain why Mr. Jinnah was opposed to clause (2) of that formula, which demanded a plebiscite of all the inhabitants on the basis of adult suffrage or other practical franchise? Did you understand him to say that in the areas demarcated for Pakistan the minorities shall be given a chance of expressing their choice of staying in Pakistan or not being separated from the rest of the country?

[1] *Vide* "Letter from M. A. Jinnah", 25-9-1944.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "C. Rajagopalachari's Formula", before 5-8-1942.

A. Quaid-e-Azam would not have the plebiscite of the Muslims because he thought the League represented the Muslims of India and that the other communities should have no voice as to Pakistan which was Muslims' exclusive right wherever they were in a majority.

Q. Please refer to your proposals contained in the letter of the 24th of September in which you said "there shall be a treaty of separation which should also provide for the efficient and satisfactory administration of Foreign Affairs, Defence, Internal Communications, Customs, Commerce and the like, which must necessarily continue to be the matter of common interest between the contracting parties." Please explain how that treaty would provide for the efficient and satisfactory administration of these matters, and whether you contemplated any machinery which could give effect to the decisions embodied in that treaty. If so, what is the nature of that machinery which you had in mind?

A. I suggested a board composed of representatives of both the States. It was to be an arbitration board with administrative powers. For the due carrying out of its decisions, it would largely or solely depend upon the goodwill of the parties or States. But I should not object to a machinery jointly devised by the two States.

Q. Have you any objection to the provinces or States enjoying the fullest autonomy with residuary powers vested in them?

A. None whatsoever.

Q. How do you reconcile Mr. Jagat Narain Lal's Resolution[1] of the All-India Congress Committee with the line that you took in regard to the division of India in the course of your conversations and correspondence with Mr. Jinnah?

A. I depended first upon the decisive interpretation given by the President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, and secondly on my own, meaning that the Jagat Narain Lal Resolution should be read together with the others bearing on the question. For these latter were not cancelled by the Jagat Narain Lal Resolution.

Q. Please refer to Appendix 'C' of the pamphlet known as *Gandhi-Jinmah Talks*, and send to the Committee a short memorandum explaining any points in that summary which you may consider necessary. In this connection please refer to your Press statement[2] dated September 28, 1944, in the course of which you stated as follows: "In that respect the Lahore Resolution is quite sound. Where-there is an obvious Muslim majority, they should be allowed to constitute a separate State by themselves, and that has been fully conceded in the Rajaji Formula or my formula. . . . But if it means utterly independent sovereignty so that there is to be nothing in common between the two, I hold it is an impossible proposition. That means war to

[1] *Vide* 5th footnote of "Note to Jagdish K. Munshi", on or before 12-8-1944.
[2] *Vide* "Interview to the Press", 28-9-1944.

the knife." What did you mean by saying "war to the knife", and why did you consider that proposition to be an impossible proposition?

A. "War to the knife" is a simple English idiom. I have never known it used in the literal sense. It simply means a determined quarrel between parties. I hold that if there is nothing in common between the two or nothing which does not come in conflict with each others' culture there can be no friendly mutual agreement.

Q. In your Press statement dated September 28, 1944, you said: "I urge that apart from the two-nation theory, if I could accept the principle of division of India in accordance with the demand of the League, he should accept it. But unfortunately it was just there that we split." Please explain this more clearly.

A. I think I am explicit enough. I meant that apart from conceding the two-nation theory, I accepted the concrete suggestion of division of India as between members of the same family and therefore reserving for partnership things of common interest. But Quaid-e-Azam would have nothing short of the two-nation theory and therefore complete dissolution amounting to full sovereignty in the first instance. It was just here that we split as I have said herein before.

Q. Are you prepared to admit that the Muslims in India are a separate nation? If so, then why do you deny the Muslims the right of having a separate independentState? If you are not prepared to admit that the Muslims are a separate nation, then on what principle do you agree to a division of India to the limited extent to which you seem to have agreed in the course of your conversation and correspondence with Mr. Jinnah? In this connection, please refer to your interview to the *News Chronicle* on September 29, 1944,[1] which is printed at page 64 of the pamphlet known as *Gandhi-Jinnah Talks.*

A. Although I could not agree to the two-nation theory, I agreed on the basis of members of a family desiring severance of the family tie in matters of conflict but not in all matters so as to become enemies one of the other as if there was nothing common between the two except enmity.

The Hindu, 10-4-1945, and Gandhi-Sapru Papers; also G.N. 7570

[1] *Vide* "Interview to the *News Chronicle*".29-9-1944

720. SPEECH AT ALL-INDIA HINDUSTANI PRACHAR SABHA CONFERENCE-I[1]

WARDHA,
February 26, 1945

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I am glad to see you all assembled here at the invitation of Principal Shriman Narayan. Dr. Abdul Haq was to have arrived here today, but he is now expected tomorrow. This association and I wish to have his help. Likewise Sjt. Tandon was to come and I was feeling very happy. Shriman Narayanji had wired to him also. I am sorry that he is unable to come, being ill. Let us hope that he will recover from his illness soon.

The task confronting you is, in one way, small, in another way big. It is small because it requires only very small effort, and yet it promises great consequences. Dr. Tarachand tells us that what is known by various names today was originally one language spoken in the North by both Hindus and Muslims. It is a sad thing that those who were once one have become divided. Their language, too, has either been split or is being split, into Urdu and Hindi.

As a result of the efforts of Sjt. Tandon the Congress at Kanpur[2] gave the name 'Hindustani' to the language which is spoken by both the communities and decided on two scripts, Devanagari and Urdu. But the Congress could not implement the resolution. In 1942, the Hindustani Prachar Sabha took up this work at the instance of the late Shri Jamnalal Bajaj but he passed away soon after. In 1942, Congress leaders and others were arrested; I was among them. I was released later on medical grounds. Even during my illness I followed the progress of the work that was being done by Sjt. Nanavati to propagate Hindustani. It gave me joy to find that it held out the prospect of success. I see no reason why what was at one time the common language of both Hindus and Mussalmans should not again become one. In Northern India, we are the descendants of those Hindus and Muslims who spoke and wrote the same language. It should not require even half the labour to revive that old common language than it would to create two different languages, Urdu and Hindi. Village folk in Northern India, whether Hindus or Mussalmans, even today speak the same tongue and some even write the same language. It is for you to decide what should be done to bring our labours to a successful completion. The function of the Hindustani

[1] Gandhiji presided over the conference and since he was observing silence, his speech was read out by Shriman Narayan.

[2] In December 1925

Prachar Sabha is to implement your decisions.

I am sorry that, for reasons of health, I observe silence for the whole day so far as possible. During the last three months I had to break my silence during day-time only perhaps on three occasions. Today, it being Monday, I am observing my weekly silence. I hope that it will not interfere with our work.

I now leave the conference in your hands. Shriman Narayan will conduct the rest of the proceedings.

Today's proceedings will go on in my presence till 5.30 p. m. Tomorrow our work will commence at 3 p. m. I shall then place my thoughts before you.

You will please excuse any inconvenience which, despite Janakidevi's best efforts, you may have experienced in the matter of arrangements for food and other amenities at Bajajwadi.

[From Hindi]

Rashtrabhasha Hindustani, pp. 160-2

721. TELEGRAM TO DR. KHAN SAHEB

[*February 27, 1945*][1]

DR. KHANSAHEB,

WHAT ABOUT HUNGER-STRIKER AMIR KHAN[2]?

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

722. LETTER TO SITARAM SASTRI

SEVAGRAM,
February 27, 1945

DEAR SITARAM SASTRI,

May I not now begin to write to you in Hindi?[3] You may get my letters read to you if you cannot read them yourself. My blessings to your son and his bride. I hope you will have an additional servant of the country and that your son will not be lost to you because he is married. Bhansalibhai described his experiences to me.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyalelal

[1] From the postmark

[2] Whose son Mohamed Aslam had wired to Gandhiji on February 26 about his critical condition

[3] The Hindi version is not traceable.

723. LETTER TO MAURICE FRYDMAN

SEVAGRAM,
February 27, 1945

DEAR BHARATANAND[1],

Two lines in haste. Unless you are determined, try liver injections and hope to live to serve. But if you regard them as sinful I have nothing to say.

Love.

BAPU

BHARATANAND
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

724. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

February 27, 1945

CHI. MANI,

Chi. Dahyabhai writes to say that you will be released tomorrow and that your health is none too good. Do come and see me if you can. If you cannot come, write a detailed letter. I am looking forward to seeing you. It is long time since we met last.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro— 4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 132

725. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVLEKAR

SEVAGRAM,
February 27, 1945

BHAI SATAVLEKAR,

I have your letter. I have written to Bharatanand to take liver extract injections if it is not contrary to his vows.[2]

[1] A Polish Engineer interested in village reconstruction movement. Gandhiji gave him this name.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Maurice Frydman", 27-2-1945.

I do have an oil-lamp. They are made in Maganwadi. Let the friend who makes them there send me one. On seeing it I shall give my opinion.

Blessings from
BAPU

PANDIT SATAVLEKAR
SWADHYAYA MANDAL
AUNDH, DIST. SATARA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

726. LETTER TO KESHAV DEO MALAVIYA

SEVAGRAM,
February 27, 1945

BHAI KESHAV DEO,

If in the past the A. I. C. C. looked after the repairs of the Swaraj Bhavan it should continue to do so even now. Perhaps Chi. Kamalnayan understands this thing better. If so, consult him. I have an idea that you have with you some A. I. C. C. funds. The building is in a very bad shape and it is getting worse.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

727. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS BIRLA

SEVAGRAM,
February 27, 1945

CHI. RAMESHWARDAS,

I did not speak to you regarding the "Indian sufferers" but I did to Ghanshyamdas. Today I hear that those people have approached you. Gosibehn has come to me.

My advice is:

(1) A substantial amount should be paid to the Committee. It should be paid annually, so that it is convenient in all ways.

(2) I would advise that the amount should be paid in such a way that at least the Government knows about it. I see no need for the amount to be published in the papers. The Government ought to know that it is the duty of everyone to give such assistance. I have of

course fixed its. . . .[1]

Convey the purport of this letter to Ghanshyamdas and do as he says.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

728. LETTER TO DESHPANDE

SEVAGRAM,
February 27, 1945

BHAI DESHPANDE,

Certainly all noble efforts have my blessings. In my view your primary duty is to work in such a way as to win the approval of Jajuji.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

729. SPEECH AT ALL INDIA HINDUSTANI PRACHAR SABHA CONFERENCE-II

WARDHA,
February 27, 1945

I am sorry I cannot give you as much time as I would wish. Please forgive me. My silence continues for the whole day. It is not that it cannot be broken. But I want to continue it for as long as I can and smoothly carry on my work. So I observe silence. If I squandered my energy, I might collapse in a month. My attachment to truth and non-violence would not permit this. But if necessity should arise I could spend this energy with both hands. I could also be a miser. These days I have adopted the latter course.

I want to explain to you what the Hindustani Prachar Sabha is. Its aim is to make as many people as possible learn Hindi and Urdu styles and the Devanagari and the Urdu scripts. There was a time when the people of North India spoke one common language. We are their descendants. Today we see that the gulf between Hindi and Urdu is widening. Protagonists of Hindi use difficult words from Sanskrit and

[1] Omission as in the source

the Urdu enthusiasts do the same from Arabic-Persian. I know this will not continue for long. Villagers care for their bread only. They will continue to speak the language which they have been used to speaking for years.

It is the task of people like me to stop Hindi and Urdu from running into separate orbits. I shall say to both sides that the way adopted by them is not proper. The villagers will not understand their bombastic words. If we learn to write both the scripts, the two languages in the long run will become one. The problem of script is not so complicated. Let both the scripts continue for ever. Or there is no objection if every province started writing the national language in its own script leaving aside these two. But the language should be one. Today we have become slothful. Today we have on our heads the burden of English. But English is also not so difficult. We can learn English in six months. But we want to learn to think in English and study the sciences. So it takes time. We waste as many as fourteen valuable years learning English and yet cannot master it. Today if weask a teacher of English to express his ideas in Hindustani, he pleads inability. Because of his education through English, he is not able to express his ideas in Hindustani. Then how can he teach Hindustani to his students? This is our sorry plight. This also leads to lethargy.

We should not be afraid of learning two scripts. Somebody might say that there are other eight or ten good scripts. Why should we not learn them? I do suggest that we learn at least one of the scripts of the South also. There are four languages there. You should not be frightened of them.

You are living in Hindustan. If you want to serve your Hindustani brethren, why should you be afraid of the labour of learning at least two scripts? We have to learn only one language. It is our misfortune that we have to use two scripts. But I would gladly learn all the languages of India. If we have the interest, we shall not find the task too hard. Today your number is very small, but it does not matter. All of you must at any rate learn the two scripts. I do not want to speculate on what splendid consequences would follow.

It is idleness which prevents one from learning other languages.[1] If anyone comes to me, I can arrange for teaching him not only Hindustani but ten or twelve other important languages. If anyone says 'I can't study Urdu (Hindustani)', I would say 'you are unfit for staying in India as it is the language of many.' I invited you for

[1] This and the following paragraph are from *The Hitavada.*

co-operating in this language (national) task which can be achieved if we work properly and in right earnest.

Some Urdu-speaking people, while engaged in serious talks, employ words which leave me dumb-founded although I frequently talk with them. Why is it so? I have found a way out and it has been placed before you.

[From Hindi]

Rashtrabhasha Hindustani, pp. 162-4, and *The Hitavada*, 1-3-1945

730. SPEECH ALL-INDIA HINDUSTANI PRACHAR SABHA CONFERENCE-III

WARDHA,
February 27, 1945

Dr. Tarachand has poured out his heart while explaining the significance of the history of Hindustani words commonly used in the villages.[1] I was not able to ask Tarachandji to finish soon because I myself was gripped by what he said. He said things which he could have as well said at a gathering of pundits. I am not a pundit. However, I was listening with interest along with others. He did not repeat anything and that is why I did not stop him.[2] Later he narrated how he first joined the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan and left the Bharatiya Sahitya Sammelan after the Nagpur meeting, after which he took up the Hindustani work for making it the national language. I want and desire real democracy even in this field.

I followed what Anand Kausalyayan said. He spoke hesitantly. On behalf of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan he said that the burden of two scripts should be avoided as far as possible. Even today, I happen to be in the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. I did not go there on my own. Jamnalalji used to drag me with him into whatever work he happened to do. He took me to Indore[3] where I gave a new thing to the Sammelan. They all digested it. I said "Hindi is that language which both Hindus and Muslims speak and which people write in both the scripts." The resolution moved by me was passed. I had it included in the Sammelan's constitution. It is a different matter that it was later amended. Hence I should not feel sorry if now I quit the Sammelan.

[1] This sentence is from *The Hitavada.*

[2] The rest of the paragraph is from *The Hitavada.*

[3] In April 1935

There are many among us who are trying to unify Hindi and Urdu. Some wonder why it is necessary. I want real democracy. Democracy degenerates into hypocrisy if people become yes-men. That is why I asked them not to follow others blindly but express their true opinion.

I don't want Hindi to die nor Urdu to be banished. What I wish is that both should become useful to us. The law of satyagraha says that one can clap with one hand. It may not produce sound, but what of that? If you stretch one hand, the other one will follow automatically. Haq Saheb had said something in Nagpur, which I could not then understand. I did not accept his "Hindi *alias* Urdu". It would have been better if I had accepted his point. He came for friendship, but was met with opposition and turned almost an enemy. But I have no enemy. Then, how can Haq Saheb be one? That is why today we are again on the same platform. An all-India literary conference was held at Nagpur, but it was its first and last session. We had gathered to come closer, but were divided. What was the use of such a gathering? It was a literary conference of all India not only Hindustani and so my speech on the occasion was full of Sanskrit words. If I were again required to speak before such a gathering, I should speak the same language.

Anandji says that everybody will find great difficulty in learning two scripts. I say there is no difficulty; and if there is, it will have to be overcome. For, if this is not overcome, how shall we be able to face greater difficulties?

I live for Hindu-Muslim unity. I know the propagation of Hindustani will bring about this unity. But I am not holding out this temptation right now.

I say, let Hindi and Urdu both prosper. I have to take work from both. Even today, Hindustani exists but we do not utilize it. This is the age of Hindi and Urdu. These are two streams from which the third will flow. Hence it will not do if the first two dry up.

The villagers will follow my language. They will not be able to follow a language which is full of Sanskrit and Arabic-Persian words. If those in the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan should say that they are going to sponsor a Sanskritized language, then, as far as I am concerned, the Sammelan does not exist. The language of the villages is only one. They cannot have two languages. The champions of Hindi want me to blow the trumpet for Hindi only and to forget Urdu. But I am a satyagrahi believing in ahimsa. How can I do this? I cannot do this work all alone. I need everybody's help. I am a 'mahatma' precisely because I am aware of my limitations and never go beyondthem. That

is why Moulvi Abdul Haq has come. I have no wings. The veterans are called here so that they may give me wings. If they do I shall soar high and say, "Look, it is well done, is it not?" Else I shall lie in the dust and stay there.

I am considered a big man also in the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. Not in that capacity, but in a general way, I would like to say that nothing will be done against the interest of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. But people will have to take the trouble to learn both the scripts. I want to take work from Anandji also.

I am told that the Muslim boys do not learn the Devanagri script. I would say if it is so you have lost nothing but they have lost something. What do you lose by learning one more script? Such a little thing brings such a great gain. I had said the same thing to Hasrat Mohani. But it did not serve the purpose at that time, because a satyagraha had started. I did not tell all of you to court arrest but I did. It is not just foolishness on the part of those who are in jail. Jawahar, Vallabhbhai and Maulana Saheb are already in jail. They are not fools. If they come out by resorting to flattery they will be dead in my eyes, and if they die during imprisonment, I shall not shed a single tear, I shall say they died a noble death. Because while there, they serve India.

If Hindi and Urdu are unified Saraswati like the Hooghly will be bigger than the Ganga and the Yamuna. The Hooghly is a dirty river, I do not drink its water. But if this one becomes like the Hooghly it will be a grand river.

Now the question of funds. Those who would like to contribute may give either to me or to Shriman Narayan. Everybody should contribute according to his capacity. Those who contribute may do so for the cause, not to gain fame.

[From Hindi]

Rashtrabhasha Hindustani, pp. 164-7, and *The Hitavada*, 1-3-1945

731. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
February 27, 1945

CHI. SITA,

We are poor. We want to live with the poor, hence we should learn to put up with sun and rain. But put up with only as much as you can. Don't ruin your health. I have just returned from a meeting of the Hindustani [Prachar] Sabha; hence I happened to start the letter

in the Devanagari script. Blessings to all.

BAPU

SITA GANDHI
C/O NANABHAI MASHRUWALA
AKOLA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

732. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI PAREKH

February 28, 1945

CHI. MAGANBHAI,

You will see that I have been able to correct up to page 13. The corrections are self-explanatory.

From clause 8 onwards confusion has started. It seems as if you felt tired or wrote piecemeal and the link was broken. Clauses 8 to 12 relating to the work to be done do not seem consistent. I have taken this up in haste soon after the prayer. Maybe, therefore, I myself have got confused in my mind. But I feel that you should have a separate paragraph, with a heading, for self-purification. This can come somewhere earlier. What follows is useful but it should be said differently and arranged in a different manner. I can do all this for you. But I would have to spare more time for that, which I do not have. Nor is it right that I should do your cooking for you. It should be enough for me to tell you whether what you have done is done badly or indifferently. Please, therefore, revise the whole of thatportion and, if you wish, show it to me. But it will be all right even if you don't. Reject what does not appeal to you from among the suggestions I have made. Kishorelal is ill. I myself will not trouble him. I advise you also not to do so. Do what you yourself can. I am in better health than Kishorelal just now and so I have managed to do this much. Otherwise I should have refused and also dissuaded you from approaching Kishorelal. I have not revised this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9067

733. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEVAGRAM,
February 28, 1945

MY DEAR C. R.,

Ramchandran read your p. c. to him. It makes bad reading. This night fever, whatever its cause, must go. I suggest your coming here as soon as possible. If someone should go there to fetch you that can be done. Weather is warm and dry and is likely to be so till the middle of May. Warmer it will be day by day. You do not mind the heat I hope.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2102

734. LETTER TO GAJANAN NAIK

SEVAGRAM,
February 28, 1945

CHI. GAJANAN,

I got your letter today. It does not matter if Kumarappa does not provide you the money. But should you not have his consent to whatever you do? If you carry on your activities on the strength of money when you don't have the consent of the institution to which you belong, it is sure to cause them some embarrassment. If youcannot have Kumarappa's consent you have only to have patience and try to persuade him. Read my reply again.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS]

In reply to yours of February 15, 1945. It is irrelevant in whose name the jaggery complex stands. There should be no problem for you since you have the custody. You should make any arrangement you want after consulting everybody. Kumarappa ought to be informed. Obtain his consent.

Blessings from
BAPU

GAJANAN NAIK
SEVAGRAM ASHRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

735. LETTER TO DR. JIVRAJ MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
February 28, 1945

BHAI JIVRAJ MEHTA,

Chi. Indu writes to say that the Kamala [Nehru Memorial] Hospital committee does not meet at all. The local committee too seems to care little. They have run short of funds. If you can, throw some light on all this.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. JIVRAJ MEHTA
ALTAMAN ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

736. LETTER TO RAMA C. JOSHI

February 28, 1945

CHI. RAMA[1],

I got your letter after a long time. I was glad. The children have settled down well. Do come once when you can. Hot winds have already started here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5367

737. LETTER TO SHANTILAL B. PANDYA

SEVAGRAM,
February 28, 1945

CHI. SHANTILAL,

Your letter was read out to me from beginning to end. I am delighted. I am passing it on to Jajuji to read. I wish you success. Try everything. Don't lend money to anyone. Knowledge, however, cannot be lent. It can only be given. Your capital consists of your

[1] Wife of Chhaganlal Joshi

knowledge. Increase it and make use of it.

Make use of machinery only after careful thought. You will be happy and make others happy if you give up what the millions cannot use.

This time I shall not write to Chi. Kanta. Convey my blessings to her. May she have an easy delivery.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHANTILAL BALASHANKAR PANDYA

RAILWAY FARM

DOHAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

738. LETTER TO INDIRA GANDHI

February 28, 1945

CHI. INDU,

Shall I write to Dr. Katju[1]? I shall write about the Committee too. If you can go to Kashmir, it will be good for you and Rajiv[2]. I am well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9804. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

739. LETTER TO SITARAM

SEVAGRAM,
February 28, 1945

BHAI SITARAM,

I have received your money. Your sending the money in itself carries my blessings, does it not? If you still require them you have them. I had hoped that you would come and see me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Kailash Nath Katju
[2] Addressee's elder son

740. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 28, 1945

You must learn weaving properly. Then alone can you become a real teacher. But it is not necessary to be always at it like a professional weaver. What the professional weaver learns from practice, you have to acquire with your intelligence.

You have heard about my experiment; what do you think of it? Why have you again stopped getting up in time for the prayers?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4491

741. LETTER TO M. C. DAVAR[1]

SEVAGRAM,
February 28, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

Yours of 15th inst. Gandhiji writes in reply to your questions[2]:

1. "Quit India" resolution[3] so called is wholly consistent with ahimsa and truth. I hope you see nothing wrong in the phrase.

2. There was no question of success partly or wholly resulting from the mere phrase or the resolution itself.

Evidently you have not studied the correspondence that led to the fast.[4] It was wholly aimed at the misdeeds of the Government.

[1] This was written by Narahari Parikh. The addressee was the Secretary General of the United Party of India.

[2] The questions, briefly summarized, were: (i) Whether the "Quit India" resolution was consistent with ahimsa and truth. (ii) If it was, did Gandhiji realize any portion of his success from it or from his historic Linlithgow fast? What was in his mind when he told Louis Fischer that he might not call off the civil disobedience movement even if there was violence? (iii) Did it not show that he was not as firm about ahimsa as before the August 1942 movement? (iv) Did it not show that freedom of the country was dearer to Gandhiji than ahimsa? (v) Could not the counter-violence of some of his associates be attributed to a decrease in his own faith in non-violence?

[3] *Vide* Appendix "Resolution Passed by All-India Congress Committee", 8-8-1942.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 29-1-1943 and *passim*.

The fast had great results. You should study the whole event. You should also know that a satyagrahi is never attached to results. His acts, great or small, have their own worth.

My reply to Louis Fischer is complete.[1] As years rolled on people knew that my words carried what they meant. Therefore, I said I might not call off the movement in future even if there was violence. My trial never came. For, I was arrested before I could start the movement.

3. Certainly not.

4. You are quite wrong. I would never put freedom or anything before ahimsa and truth.

5. It is clear to me that you have only superficially studied the movement as also ahimsa.

Gandhiji observes silence, and the above is a copy of what he has writer down.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-3-1945

742. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

SEVAGRAM,
March 1, 1945

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your parting letter. Of course you are brave, you are simple. There you will pave your way, wherever you are. Keep good health and write from your new place. Kh[urshedbehn] is here.

Love from all.

BAPU
(M. K. GANDHI)

DR. M. SPIEGEL

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Interview with Louis Fischer", 4-6-1942.

743. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

SEVAGRAM,
March 1, 1945

CHI. PREMA,

I am able to reach your letter only today. I am helpless.

Do not trust the newspapers. I have given no decision. I have stated two views which seem contradictory. The view that there should be no enrolment is the later one and is the result of fuller thought. But nobody is forbidden to enrol members.

I have had no talk with Patil. It is possible that Khurshedbehn or somebody showed me the resolutions. But what does my consent mean? Everybody, whether Gandhian or anti-Gandhian, should act on his own responsibility. One may say there is no such thing as Gandhism. I have met Socialists more often. Much of what they say has appealed to me. Or you may say they have come closer to me.

But nobody should speak in my name. I do not like people going underground but I do not condemn those who do. It is the act of going underground that I condemn. Understand the distinction.

There was no one with me during my talks with Jinnah Saheb.[1] There were so few of us. Rajaji was one. The others didn't even know anything about it.

I understand all the rest. But I do not have the time to go into the details. Keep on the path you have chosen. Get as many sincere women as you can and go on with the work. Do not take upon yourself the burden of the whole country. Take upon yourself only what you can do. If there are any more questions you want to ask me you may.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS]

There has been no such thing as despair in my life and there never will be. I would not despair even if everybody died. What I am saying is right and what Bhulabhai is doing is also right.[2] You should

[1] The reference presumably is to the talks Gandhiji had with Jinnah from September 9 to 27, at which no agreement was reached.

[2] *Vide* 1st footnote of "Note to Bhulabhai J. Desai", 5-1-1945 and 2nd footnote of "Letter to Bhulabhai J. Desai", 20-2-1945.

go on doing your work.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10433. Also C.W. 6872. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

744. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

March 1, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have read the whole thing. It seems to me I shall have to pay attention to a few things. I will not go too deeply into it. Do not expect any help from me but accept whatever help I can give. It is right that I should see my faults. It keeps me vigilant. In your view it is useless. It would be good if we could start a separate catering service. But that will not be possible. By and large we should serve to the guests the same food that we cook for ourselves. I understand about Kanchan. It will be a triumph for you if you secure her testimonial. Just now you don't have it. Do not think that she is not fully awake. To the extent that she is not, the fault lies with youand me. I do not distrust you. If I did, you would have left. It should be for me to decide what work to assign to whom, don't you think? "Forget Sevagram" means forget the village, not the Ashram. In telling you that you may have a separate establishment I have shown that such a step has my consent and my encouragement. If even then you do not do that, I shall take it as a matter of special credit to both of you. I cannot bear the thought of your refraining from having a separate establishment under the slightest pressure from me. Kanchan seems to wish to have one. I do want you to play a major role in stabilizing the kitchen. But you should do it my way. I think I have now replied to all your questions.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5828. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

745. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 1, 1945

CHI. NARANDAS,

If you cannot honourably take the money for Chi. Purushottam's[1] monthly expenses from there, you may obtain it from me. Let me know what it will come to per month. Take care of your health. Chi. Kanaiyo and Abha[2] may be going that way shortly. If they do, Kanaiyo will bring you another letter from me. Letters from him will continue as of now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II/508. Also C.W. 8690. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

746. LETTER TO VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA

March 1, 1945

CHI. VICHITRA,

I am answering in pencil. Later I shall have it copied out in ink.

The truth is that I want to make the beginning with the kind of person you mention. If with his help we can achieve expansion, well and good, but if we cannot it will not matter. Because in the long run only the new outlook can help us to expand the work. If we stick to the old way, the work will come to a standstill. Khadi will end up by being merely an occupation for the poor. This will not satisfy anyone. If workers have doubts in their hearts, we shall patiently have to remove them.

When I say that we should sincerely believe in the Charkha Sangh as the symbol of truth and non-violence and dedicate ourselves to propagating the idea, it does not at all mean that what we had so far been doing was a mistake. We have benefited from that too. But it would be foolish to imagine that we can continue to do so, for we have certainly gained in knowledge. If the new outlook destroys the fruits of our past work, then we have not understood the new outlook. It is like the elephant's foot that covers all other things. Yes, what will

[1] Addressee's son
[2] Kanu Gandhi's wife

certainly happen is that we shall not be content any more to carry on in the old way and we shall be spared the outcry for expanding it. We have some recent instances of this which I shall not go into here.

It will be false attachment if in our desire to expand the old we forget the new which is priceless. It will be unbecoming, if obsessed with the old, we lose hold of the new. If the old activity can be competently pursued by others they may by all means pursue it.

The question you ask as regards the institution I can answer only if you show me that it is not merely hypothetical but is based on facts.

We shall let the Punjab go ahead with the work if it can, provided we do not have to invest any funds. There can of course be no question of not wearing khadi.

Women spinners may continue to spin. How far we may commit funds for this is a practical question. Each case can be dealt with on the basis of its own merits. We should not invest any capital in silk and allied activities. If, however, there are funds to spare and it is found beneficial to have stocks in khadi bhandars then we may have stocks of silks and woollens. There must be the khadi spirit behind all this and we should ensure genuineness.

In the case of Kashmir, if the State does not impose upon us restrictions which we cannot accept, I should accept money from them under two conditions. All the institutions should be prepared to lose their funds. Maybe if the Charkha Sangh stakes its all nothing will be lost. But they must do so on their own responsibility. Whether the thing has my blessings or not should make no difference. One must base oneself on the situation as it is.

It is indeed the duty of the Sangh to satisfy the public as well as the workers. If however there is a higher duty, we must pursue it, too. After all, khadi and all other work we have done has been informed only by this view.

From Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

747. LETTER TO SHRIPAD JOSHI

SEVAGRAM,
March 1, 1945

CHI. SHRIPAD,

What can be done if others become slack. I find that those who have somebody's backing are able to carry on. By saying "in a way"

I merely mean that a Congressman will never go and beg.[1]

Even though Congressmen may also have taken part in it, it was not a Congress movement. Speeches and resolutions of the 7th and 8th[2] are a proof of this. I alone could have launched the movement and I did not in any manner start it. A wrong impression was created, no doubt. But what of that? See what Maulana Abul Kalam has to say. Laying down one's life was not forbidden but violence was.

I have written much about parliamentary work. Bari is here. Let everyone be his own leader, but only for himself.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4234

748. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
March 1, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter. My experiment can succeed; it can also fail. It can fail in the sense that I may not be able wholly to be free from passion. In satyagraha there is no room for failure causing the least harm.

If my experiment is that of a satyagrahi, no harm at all can come to anyone. I am answering in brief. You may write to me again if you do not get the meaning. I did have experiments with Ba, but that was not enough. If emission took place then, it would have been less regrettable morally than any emission occurring now. Emission was a possibility then. I feel it is not a possibility now. Occasion once came in my life when I came very near to emission. But I was saved. I have mentioned this in one of my articles.

This question gives me the impression that you do not understand the problem fully. It is surprising that you asked the question without trying first to get the correct information from me. What does it mean? What kind of trust is this? I do not have much time. If you want to know, I shall acquaint you with the facts. Then if questions occur to you that will be legitimate.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4492

[1] *Vide* "Note to Shripad Joshi", 22-2-1945.
[2] Of August 1942.

749. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 1, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your letter. You should find your answer in my letter. The idea is this. I deliberately want to become a eunuch mentally. If I succeed in this then I become one physically also. That alone is true *brahmacharya*. I saw an opportunity and seized it.

If it is satyagraha it can never cause physical harm, nor even moral harm. That is to say, it can only do good. This is what experience proves. What can happen when a bad person meets a good person? If my conduct is trusted there can be no harm, whoever may be my associate. This in any case must be clear. My reference is not to 35 years but 21 years.[1] You have either not noticed it or have forgotten it.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5892. Also C.W. 5892

750. LETTER TO DEVI PRASAD

SEVAGRAM,
March 1, 1945

CHI. DEVIPRASAD[2],

I deal with your letter today.

You cannot categorically say either that I would or would not come on a full moon day. My going there or not going there would be guided by considerations of duty.

Bread comes first and adornment afterwards. That has always been my belief. But since you are here, do whatever you conveniently can. Learn here what true art is.

The art teacher should first take up some work which would enable him to earn his livelihood. Later on he may paint and teach painting. Such artists alone will teach true art.

You will remember what I had said about the broom. Sweeping is a great art. Where to keep the broom, how to handle it,should there be one broom or different brooms for different jobs, should one stand erect or bend while sweeping, should one raise dust or sprinkle water

[1] The Hindi here is not clear.

[2] An art graduate of Santiniketan. He was later co-editor with Marjorie Sykes of the journal *Nayee Talim*.

before sweeping, does one sweep the corners, pay attention to the walls and the roof—all these questions should occur to an artist. Only then would he find beauty in sweeping.

There is therefore a place for a true artist in Nayee Talim. I have already told you who is a true artist. Nanda Babu comes very close to my ideal, though perhaps he is not the perfect ideal. However, he is so big a man that it would be highly improper for me to say anything in criticism of him. Read the article I wrote on my talks with Gurudev.[1] Write to me if you wish to ask anything more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

751. LETTER TO K. N. KATJU

SEVAGRAM,
March 1, 1945

BHAI KATJU,

I saw your letter about Father's illness. Your wife has gone and so will Father, some day if not today. Let us do our duty. Everything rests on that.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. KATJU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

752. LETTER TO TEJWANTI

SEVAGRAM,
March 1, 1945

CHI. TEJWANTI,

I have your letter. You should have a certificate from there. When you have that you can come here. You will have to do Ashram work and devote only the spare time to learning. Here theheat has started. It may possibly relent in June. Bear in mind that your coming here will be meaningless if there is a risk of your health being affected. It is better that you come after due deliberation. Write to me if you decide to come and start when you have my reply. I have not

[1] It is not clear which particular article Gandhiji is referring to.

asked anyone but if you wish I will do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

TEJWANTI
CHARKHA SANGH
ADAMPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

753. TELEGRAM TO URMILADEVI[1]

March 2, 1945

URMILADEVI
211, B HINDUSTAN PARK
RASHBEHARI AVENUE POST
CALCUTTA

FIRST LET ME SEE MITRA'S SCHEME. THEN HE CAN COME WHEN I WRITE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

754. TELEGRAM TO VACHCHHRAJBHAI DOSHI

March 2, 1945

VACHCHHRAJBHAI DOSHI
PANCHGANI

WRITING NEED NOT COME.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

755. LETTER TO ALLADI K. KRISHNASWAMY IYER

March 2, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I enclose copies of a communication received from the Bombay Government's departmental officials objecting to the All India Spinners' Association carrying on its work under the name "Akhil

[1] Sister of C. R. Das

Bharat Charkha Sangh" on the ground that the English title of the Association registered under the Charitable Societies' Act should alone be used and the translated name makes it an unauthorized body prohibited by the Companies' Act from doing business without being registered as a company under that Act. It seems to me that this is a silly objection. Kindly go through the papers and please dictate a reply to be sent to the Government of Bombay on behalf of the Spinners' Association.

I was very sorry to learn from Rajagopalachari about the unfortunate accident which has kept you in bed suffering for the past many weeks. I hope you will soon be quite well.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR ALLADI K. KRISHNASWAMY IYER

C/O SHRI A. VAIDYANATH IYER

SANDAI PETTAI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

756. NOTE TO KISHNACHANDRA

March 2, 1945

Do not worry about inconvenience to me. You may do the weaving and look after the children side by side. Spend less time talking.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4495

757. LETTER TO BALVANT SINHA

March 2, 1945

CHI. B.,

It is good you speak about home. I did remember what I had said. If I were to be asked again I would give the same answer.

I am trying to return all your letters.

I have certainly entrusted you with work of responsibility. I value your worth. Why do you worry if it is not as you wish?

I shall give you all the time you ask for to speak about me. Which would you prefer—8 o'clock in the evening or between 7 and

8 in the morning? We shall fix the time after you let me know. Which of you will be coming? It does not matter to me who comes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1954

758. LETTER TO GHULAM HUSAIN HIDAYATULLAH

SEVAGRAM,
March 3, 1945

DEAR PREMIER,

I have had a copy of your letter to Lala Brij Lal. You have either misquoted me or hate been misguided yourself by some garbled report. Here is my full letter[1] (translated) to a Gujarati paper in Ahmedabad. You will see that in my opinion the ban should first be removed. The question of revision can arise only then. Please make the correction yourself.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Encl. 1

SIR GHULAM HUSAIN HIDAYATULLAH

PRIME MINISTER

GOVERNMENT OF SIND

KARACHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

759. LETTER TO L. KAMESWARARAO SARMA

SEVAGRAM,
March 3, 1945

DEAR L. KAMESWARARAO,

I have your good letter. Stick to the resolve you have conveyed to me. Leave all India alone, you have not even all the Southern naturopaths.

Dr. Sapru's committee is not the vehicle you need. Do not be in

[1] This is not traceable.

a hurry. A little but solid work is more than much but useless.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

L. KAMESWARARAO SARMA
PADUKKOTTAI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

760. LETTER TO TARACHAND

SEVAGRAM,
March 3, 1945

DEAR DR. TARACHAND,

I understand and appreciate the principle involved in No. 7 of your scheme. If full local autonomy is granted to Western Bengal and East Punjab as proposed in Nos. l and 2 of your scheme, it may overcome the objections of the Muslim League and obviate the necessity of dividing Bengal or Punjab.

This part of your scheme should be treated as an essential condition and not be considered as mere detail.

I do not follow the argument in No. 5. If, however, the people of the areas concerned are agreeable to dispense with a plebiscite, I would not insist on it. It is a matter for consideration what, apart from a plebiscite, would be a satisfactory proof of the people being agreeable to the proposal.

I presume that the step embodied in No. 4 will be simultaneous with and an integral part of the whole scheme.

Apart from and independent of these proposals I may add that if you can induce the League to accept the award of a board, say consisting of yourself and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, I would accept it.

You will mark the changes I have made in your draft, which I enclose herewith.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[ENCLOSURE]

Suggested changes shown in margin.

My interpretation of Mahatmaji's letter of 24th September, 1944, to Mr. Jinnah is as follows:

(a) that Mahatmaji's terms are an acceptance of the claim for separation according to a reasonable interpretation of the Muslim League resolution of 1940

(a) that Mahatmaji accepts the Muslim claim for separation as contained in the Muslim League resolution of 1940.[1]

(b) Mahatmaji is agreeable to the appointment of a commission consisting of representatives of the Congress and the League immediately for the delimitation of the boundaries of the separate sovereign States.

(c) Mahatmaji wants that the sovereign States will immediately enter into a treaty for the purpose of
(i)safeguarding interests of minorities,
(ii) establishing a machinery for the administration of subjects of common concern.

But Mahatmaji desires that the wishes of the inhabitants of the areas to be demarcated into sovereign States should be ascertained by a plebiscite.

Mahatmaji does not agree with the theory that the Hindus of the whole of India or the Muslims of the whole of India constitute two separate nations. In my (Tarachand's) opinion Mahatmaji has substantially accepted the Muslim demand and agreed to the establishment of two sovereign and independent States in India. The differences between Mahatmaji and Mr. Jinnah are:

(1) Mahatmaji wants before separation a plebiscite.

(2) He does not believe in the theory of religious or communal nationality.

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Resolution Passed by All-India Muslim League", 23-3-1940.

(3) He desires that the machinery for administration of matters of common interest should be embodied in the treaty of separation.

I suggest that the differences between Mahatmaji and Mr. Jinnah can be eliminated provided an agreement is arrived at as follows:

(1) The sovereign and independent States in the North-West and East and in the rest of India should be federations. The units of these federations will be, in the North-West:

(i) Baluchistan,

(ii) North-West Frontier Province,

(iii) Western and Central Punjab,

(iv) South-Eastern Punjab (one or two units)

(v) Sind.

(2) These units will have certain subjects including culture, education, personal law, etc., under the control of the governments of the units. The federal government will have the usual federal and common subjects under its control.

(3) Similarly there may be units in Bengal, if the inhabitants of Bengal so desire and the remaining India will form one federation.

(4) These two federations will by treaty establish a confederation of independent and sovereign federations for the administration of matters of common interest, e. g., defence, customs, foreign affairs, communications.

(5) The establishment of the confederation eliminates the necessity of a plebiscite, which therefore need not be held.

(6) The subjects of each federation will be the full nationals and no discrimination will be made among them on the ground of race or creed.

(7) The establishment of federations in different regions obviates the need for any large adjustment of the present boundaries of the provinces.

(8) The provisions about the establishment of federations and confederations will be embodied in the treaty of separation.

(b) The subjects of each federation will be full nationals and no discrimination will be made among them in the matter of voting or otherwise on the ground of race or creed.

From a photostat: G.N. 5120

761. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

SEVAGRAM,
March 3, 1945

MY DEAR SINGER,

Herewith is a line[1] of magic or no magic for Randheer[2] in the hope that he will pull up.

But are you well?

Love.

BAPU

SMT. SAROJINI DEVI
HYDERABAD (DN.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

762. LETTER TO RANDHEER NAIDU

SEVAGRAM,
March 3, 1945

MY DEAR RANDHEER,

I see you enter upon a fresh year on 7th. That means one year less to live and serve. But you must will to live your full time for service. Do.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

763. LETTER TO B. G. KHER

SEVAGRAM,
March 3, 1945

BHAI BALASAHEB,

I am sure you will at any rate read the enclosed. If you can go, please do give that much time to Kathiawar. It will bear fruit. But if you really cannot go can you suggest some other name?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2774

[1] *Vide* the following item.
[2] Addressee's son who died on April 30, 1945

764. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
March 3, 1945

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have also forwarded to Balasaheb, with my recommendation, your letter addressed to me.[1] He may not come for a month, in which case I have requested him to suggest another name. Perhaps Kanaiyo can be of help there. He is of course writing to him. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8621. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

765. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

March 3, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have gone through all your letters. I did not feel there was anything in them which Su. should see. If I have done an injustice, haven't I washed it off by permitting you to write without any restraint? The truth is that I have done you no injustice. Your way wasclear. You should not have said anything. "We are more than even brother and sister. Why should we involve even you in this?"

I will approve of a catering service. Why should then there be any need for separate arrangements for the Ashram? Everyone can feed there. A catering service could mean that one should be served what one ordered, subject to the normal limitations of the service. The present kitchen itself may be turned into a catering service. That would solve the problem and save us all from bother.

There is no such thing as an avatar. If there is, then all of us are avatars. Aren't we, whether we know it or not, each a part of His being? Rama was not the only avatar. Narasimha also was one, and so were the Fish and the Tortoise. Weren't the monkeys partial avatars? The question you have raised ought not to have been raised at all. I do not see the Ashram as a hospital. But in any case this work serves a useful purpose. It can be organized as a separate department, with seprarate quarters and kitchen. Others would then be concerned with it

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

only when they needed medicine. I thus see no reason for bitterness.

Today I have received letters from Kishorelalbhai and some others in this connection. I should indeed like some of you to read them. If you too think like them you should leave me, or let me go. I am ready for either contingency. I am not in the least afraid of the charge against me, but I am of you all, for any step you take will depend on yourself or myself or ourselves. I had already drafted the public statement I intended to issue, before I received the above mentioned letters. I had been thinking of it for the last two days, but could find the time only today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5836. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

766. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

March 3, 1945

You or Sushila should have said it—either to yourselves or aloud—and then calmed down, because you two and others like you are and should be more to each other than brother and sister. I myselfshould have supplied the quotation marks.[1] But surely I cannot attend to all that. The best thing would be for you to come—either at 5.30 or after 3.30—and remove them.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8640

767. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 3, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Shall I tell Aryanayakum or write to him on your behalf about the library?

Be firm in not indulging in idle talk.

You have interpreted "evidence" correctly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4494

[1]*Vide* "Letter to Munnalal G. Shah", 3-3-1945. The quotation marks are, however, from the source.

768. LETTER TO GHANSHYAMSINGH

SEVAGRAM,
March 3, 1945

BHAI GHANSHYAMSINGH,

I have your letter. I have written to the head. I send you a copy of the letter. There is nothing more that remains to be done, is there?[1]

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

769. LETTER TO SHANTABEHN

SEVAGRAM,
March 3, 1945

CHI. SHANTABEHN,

What Yash has sent me is I suppose a copy. It is all right, but what have I done? Write to the Government about your health. Show me the letter before you send it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

770. LETTER TO VENKATESHWAR RAO

SEVAGRAM,
March 3, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,[2]

Your letter is certainly all right. I hope you will get it. You do much writing. Let me have your requirement with details. The doctors will scrutinize it and then place it before the committee. You will get the help on the same conditions as the others do.

Blessings from
BAPU

VENKATESHWAR RAO
NATUROPATH
GANDHI ASHRAM
KOMAROVOLU, ANDHRA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The letter is unsigned.
[2] This is in English.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM K. M. MUNSHI[1]

BOMBAY VIEW,
MATHERAN,
October 12, 1944

RESPECTED BAPU,

Received your letter dated the 9th. . . .

I too believe in freedom of speech. But the question before me on the night of 1-8-39 was to quell the dreadful riot that had just begun. It was my duty to take promptly all the measures that were imperative to bring the situation under control. And I had (also) to see that some three or four papers that fanned the (communal) passion did not add fuel to the fire. I did not think I was disregarding the principle of freedom of speech in keeping a check on it when it was misused. Even today I do Dot think so.

My Jaipur speech was the result of my study of that problem. You will not find any contradiction in it if I put it (before you) point by point. . . .

(1) Sanskrit is our most valuable treasure. With its help alone we can make our languages as powerful as English and French. . . .

(2) The power of our language which can express thought and creative endeavour belongs in general to the Sanskrit element. And so, if we are going to evolve in India a medium for expressing our thoughts and literature there is no alternative except resorting to the use of Sanskrit words. . . . Today I have before me the problem of the technical terms for law, philosophy and psychology. Where can we have the Indian medium except from Sanskrit? . . . I do not think I have drifted away from your stand at Nagpur (and) Indore and which I had accepted.

(3) I do not also see any opposition to the Congress policy in my address. As I have understood, the Congress aims to make the colloquial Hindustani a common medium for the whole country. . . . But how can the colloquial Hindustani be the medium of thought or literature? The moment it attempts to be (any) such thing, it has got to seek the help of Sanskrit or Perso-Arabic words. . . . I cannot speak in that language unless I use Sanskrit words. There is no intentional Sanskritization; nothing else is possible.

(4) If Hindustani is to be the medium in the legislatures or the colleges, there are bound to be two forms of the language: one will be Sanskritized (and) the other Persianized. . . .

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here; *vide* "Letter to K. M. Munshi", 9-10-1944.

(5) One reason why you have not liked my address may be that in one paragraph the experiment of the 'Hindustani Samiti' (carried on) under your guidance is criticized. What the Samiti is attempting to do is not the propagation of 'colloquial Hindustani' but evolving a new style. Among its characteristics are: (1) abandoning the *tatsama* forms of Sanskrit words, (2) incorporating the *tatsama* forms of Persian words, (3) introducing an Arabic or a Persian word in the form of an Urdu word even if a *tatsama* Sanskrit word has been traditionally accepted, (4) giving preference to Persian words in cases where both Sanskrit and Persian words are current. . . .

Yours respectfully,

KANU MUNSHI

Pilgrimage to Freedom, pp. 446 9

APPENDIX II

A STATEMENT[1]

SEVAGRAM,

October 29, 1944

Talks about the possibility of Gandhiji going on a fast have upset many friends and co-workers. Their love for him makes them shudder at the very thought of his undergoing the ordeal of another fast at his age and in his present state of health. Although he is keeping fairly fit and is putting in a full day's work his reserve of energy is low. He is still slightly anaemic and the two intestinal parasites, hook-worm and amoebae, which are lying latent at present, can get the upper hand at any moment if his general condition is run down. Moreover, they feel that a fast on his part at this stage will add to the general demoralization and increase the popular bitterness against the Government.

Gandhiji is not perturbed by considerations of his age or his frailness. His stand has always been that if God wants to take work from him He will spare him. If his work is over, there is no point in prolonging his sojourn in this world. However, friends have a right to feel that it is not wise to tempt Providence too often.

As for the risk of increase of demoralization and bitterness as a result of the fast, he does not think it likely. A purely non-violent act cannot result in such a thing.

Asked as to why he thinks he may have to fast, he said that ever since his release from prison he had an instinctive feeling that another fast lay in store for him. Of late that feeling had taken a more concrete form. The organized violence and slaughter of Truth all over has oppressed him deeply. To take a few illustrations, the cause of millions dying of starvation according to him is not altogether scarcity of food. Food is allowed to rot in godowns while people die for the want of it. It is a sad

[1] *Vide* "Statement on Proposed Fast", 29-10-1944.

tale of mismanagement and corruption. Those who grow food have to go without it. The Government officials, instead of being their protectors, are acting as their exploiters. And it is not the Government officials alone who are to blame. Our own people, middlemen, petty traders and big merchants have not hesitated to make money at the cost of human life. It is a tragedy. Unofficial and official exploitation go on side by side. Without the former, the latter can have no *locus standi*. From top to bottom the whole system is corrupt. The Government connives at unofficial corruption. That is the way in which violence works. It organizes all the forces of evil. As against this non-violence must act by organizing all the forces of goodness. If the nation had the control of the Government, this terrible bribery and corruption, which might if at all find its parallel in the bribery and corruption of Lord Clive's days, would not take place. A national government having the confidence of the people can very largely mitigate their sufferings. But there seems to be no chance of it. He described to what lengths he had gone to woo the Viceroy. But the Government were blinded by the intoxication of power. The vision of victory, which would be no victory but merely preparation for another war, had made them indifferent. How was he to demonstrate the efficacy of non-violence under the circumstances? How could he relieve the sufferings of the dumb millions? By conducting a mass movement? He had already showed why it was not to be thought of. He could not lead or bless a mass civil disobedience movement today. Then what could he do? He had claimed that non-violence was always more than a match for violence however well organized. How could he make that claim good? At the beginning of the War, English friends had written to him asking how individual pacifists could fight spreading wave of violence and bloodshed. He had suggested fasting as one of the remedies. Some of them had laughed at the suggestion, but he stuck to it. A time might come for him to test that remedy in his own case. That was perhaps the only way to wake up the conscience of mankind.

Untouchability was another manifestation of violence. He had repeated it from house-tops that if untouchability lived Hinduism must perish. The two could not go on side by side. Though much progress was made why did it still persist?

Then. there was the question of communal disharmony. It was also a manifestation of violence. He had striven against it from his early youth.

Why did his non-violence appear to be impotent in the face of these various manifestations of untruth and violence? Was he an unworthy exponent of non-violence? Should he not again crucify the flesh in order to become a better instrument? Knowing the remedy, how could he evade it? That the fast might fail to bring about the desired result or might end in death should not be a deterrent.

Asked about the nature of the fast, he said he did not know it himself. He was still groping. He was not aware as to when it would come, if at all. All he could say was that the call was insistent.

If the fast did come, he hoped that the people would not become panicky or grief-stricken. He expected them to co-operate with him in clearing the air of

violence in every shape or form. That was the best way of ending the fast and even of preventing it.

Gandhi-Sapru Papers. Courtesy; National Library, Calcutta

APPENDIX III

LETTER FROM T. B. SAPRU[1]

Personal *October 25, 1944*

MY DEAR GANDHIJI,

I have just read in *The Hindustan Times* of the 24th of October your statement issued after the enquiry made by Mr. Horniman as to whether you are contemplating another fast to achieve communal unity. I know I have no place as an adviser in these matters and I am most reluctant to offer advice to anyone in regard to any matter which is based on spiritual considerations. I am approaching the whole thing from a secular point of view. I think it would be a great mistake to undertake a fast at this time of your life. The consequences might be disastrous. I do not think that your fast will be helpful in the solution of the communal problem. You may undertake a fast by way of penance, purification or protest, but the real question is as to what effect it is going to produce on the minds of those without whose agreement there can be no communal settlement. I do not think those who are taking a different view will be at all influenced by your fast. Indeed some of them may uncharitably suggest that you are putting undue pressure on them. Personally speaking I think that it is very necessary that you must continue to live. Your failure on the last occasion does not mean that you will always fail. Your motives are pure and I think your approach to the whole question is sound, if I may respectfully say so. What you have not been able to achieve so far, God willing, you may achieve it a few months later. I consider it my duty to write to you as plainly as I possibly can against the step which is said to be within your contemplation.

You will forgive me if I have encroached upon your time . . . .

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHI
SEVAGRAM
WARDHA, C.P.

Gandhi-Sapru Papers. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta

[1] *Vide* Letter to T. B. Sapru", 1-11-1944.

APPENDIX IV

(*a*) *LETTER FROM T. B. SAPRU*[1]

Personal and Confidential

GYAN BAGH,
HYDERABAD DECCAN,
November 4, 1944

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

Your two letters of the 1st and the 3rd of November were handed over to me yesterday at the Wardha station by Devdas. I also received your letter through Dr. Beni Prasad.

I have not issued any statement about an All Parties Conference but have written to certain friends and am awaiting their replies. The idea seems to me to be vague and indefinite. We must decide as to who are the persons to be invited and what will be the agenda. It is quite clear that the gentlemen whom we invite will not come there in their representative capacity. Your presence at the Conference will be a source of great strength and you can certainly make a statement telling us in plain language as to what led to the breakdown of the conversations at Bombay. You say the Conference may meet to consider the causes of the failure of the talks and to find whose fault it was which led to the breakdown. I should not advise that Conference to find whose fault it was, because once we do it will lead to interminable controversy. If we call such a Conference and hear you I think we may consider what further steps it is necessary to take to solve the problem. From this point of view the proposed conference will be an exploratory one and may thus 'inform and educate public opinion'.

I am very anxious that you should on no account undertake a fast. I know how deeply spiritual you are and I also know that in your case the call of religion means much more than in the case of 99 out of a hundred. You will pardon me if I take a matter-of-fact and practical view of the thing. I am definitely certain that although it may bring solace to your heart and you may feel that you have done the penance for what you consider to be the evils of the present day, your fast will not melt the heart of your opponents. On the contrary I feel some of them may be uncharitable enough to attribute to you unworthy motives. Never before in our history was it more necessary than now that you should live to guide the people of this country on tile true path of nationalism. My own conviction is and has been for years that irrespective of what the British Government may or may not do this monster of communalism should be killed. Whatever your critics may say I honestly believe that you are the one man in the country who does not think on communal lines and it would be a disaster for the country if it was deprived at this juncture of your guidance.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to T. B. Sapru", 3-11-1944.

You are the one man who can withstand opposition, ridicule and even the attribution of unworthy motives to you. Above all you have the courage to take the right line. I am saying that in absolute sincerity even though I differ from you and have differed from you in regard to civil disobedience.

I have told Devdas that according to my information some changes in high quarters may be expected, but whether that information is true or not, the existing situation cannot last very long and when the time comes for practical steps to be taken towards the settlement of national differences I believe your voice will be the determining factor. I do not want that voice to be silenced. I am, therefore, appealing to you with all the earnestness I am capable of not to undertake such a fast.

As regards my coming to Wardha if I can get away on the evening of the 7th or the 8th and arrangements can be made for reservations from Wardha to Itarsi and from Itarsi to Allahabad I should in response to your message like to break journey at Wardha for a few hours. . . .

With my profound regards,

Yours sincerely,

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHI

SEVAGRAM

WARDHA, C.P.

Gandhi-Sapru Papers. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta

(b) A RESOLUTION[1]

The Standing Committee of the non-party Conference, having considered the present situation in view of the breakdown of the Gandhi-Jinnah talks on the communal issue, hereby resolves to appoint a committee which will examine the whole communal and minorities question from a constitutional and political point of view, put itself in touch with different parties and their leaders including the minorities interested in the question and present a solution within two months to the Standing Committee of the Non Party Conference. The Standing Committee will take all reasonable steps to get that solution accepted by all parties concerned.

The Standing Committee authorises the Right Hon'ble Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru to appoint members of the Committee and announce their names in due course.

Gandhi-Sapru Papers. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta

[1] This was sent to T.B. Sapru by Devdas Gandhi under instructions from Gandhiji. *Vide* "Letter to T. B. Sapru", 3-11-1944 and "Letter to Vikram A. Sarabhai", 27-11-1944.

(*c*) *NAMES SUGGESTED FOR CONCILIATION COMMITTEE*[1]

The Standing Committee of the non-party Conference should meet at Delhi on the 18th November 1944 and appoint the following committee for the purpose mentioned hereinafter:

1. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Chairman;
2. Sir B. N. Rau;
3. The Metropolitan of Calcutta;
4. Sir Maurice Gwyer;
5. Sir N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar;
6. Mr. Syed Abdulla Brelvi;
7. Sir Mirza Ismail;
8. Mr. Kasturi Srinivasan;
9. Sir S. Radhakrishnan;
10. Mr. J. R. D. Tata (or Sir Homi Modi);
11. Raja Sir Maharaj Singh;
12. Dr. Zakir Husain;
13. Dr. Abdul Huq;
14. Mr. Muniswami Pillai; and
15. Sardar Sant Singh

The purpose of the committee will be as follows:

In view of the breakdown of the Gandhi-Jinnah talks on the communal issue the committee will examine the whole question from a constitutional and political point of view, put itself in touch with the parties and their leaders interested in the question and present a solution within two months and take all reasonable steps to get that solution accepted by all parties concerned.

WARDHA, 9-11-1944

Gandhi-Sapru Papers. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta

[1] *Vide* "Letter to T. B. Sapru", 3-11-1944.

APPENDIX V

LETTER FROM DURLAB SINGH[1]

LAHORE,
November 12, 1944

RESPECTED BAPUJI,

. . . The Congress had promised in its Lahore Resolution of 1929 that no constitution would be acceptable to the Congress which does not give the fullest satisfaction to the Sikhs. You know a large number of Sikhs are perturbed over Rajaji's proposals. Supposing Mr. Jinnah had accepted the proposals in full, or in an amended form, what would have been the position of the Sikhs in that?

Even the Akalis feel very indignant because you did not touch the question of meeting a Sikh deputation as suggested by Master Tara Singh in his letter. Can you please make it clear why it was not considered desirable to invite the Sikh leaders before proceeding to Mr. Jinnah for the talks?

Mr. Jagat Narain Lal's Resolution clearly states that the Congress would be no party to the vivisection of the country. Is it not a fact that Rajaji's proposals run counter to that resolution? The Sikh public is made to believe that Gandhiji does not favour the idea of the Sikhs remaining in the Congress because of their belief in the sword. . . .

Master Tara Singh and other responsible Akali leaders have often declared in the Press and on the platform that the Sikander-Baldev Singh Pact was enacted with the consent and blessings of the Congress High Command and Sardar Patel's special representative who was present in the Punjab throughout the negotiations and that the Sardar was kept informed of all the developments. Further, it is said that the Azad Punjab scheme was introduced with your consent and blessings. The nationalist Sikhs regard both the schemes as anti-national and opposed to the interests of the country and the community. Can you kindly guide us in the matter?

In the end I will request you, Bapuji, to give a general assurance to the nationalist Sikhs that their interests are safe in your hands and that they will not be sacrificed at any cost. The heart of the Sikh masses is with the Congress and nationalism and patriotism are their proud heritage. They cannot depart from these principles, but let them have this satisfaction at least that the Congress will do no injustice to them and . . . that they will have their proper place in free India.

Praying for your long life,

Yours sincerely,
DURLAB SINGH

The Indian Annual Register, 1944, Vol. II, pp. 221-2

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Durlabh Singh", 14-11-1944

APPENDIX VI

RESOLUTION PASSED BY A.I.S.A.[1]

[On or before *December 3, 1944*]

A meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Charkha Sangh was held at Sevagram on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd December 1944, under the presidentship of Shree Gandhiji and the following decisions were taken:

The roots of the spinning-wheel lie in the villages and the consummation of the ideal of the Charkha Sangh is to be completely decentralized among the villages of India to bring about an all-round improvement of village life. This meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Charkha Sangh therefore resolves that with a view to this end the following changes should be made in the policy of the Sangh:

(i) As many qualified workers as are ready and are selected by the Board should be sent to work in the villages.

(ii) The activities of the existing sale depots and production centres of khadi should be curtailed.

(iii) Necessary changes should be made in the curricula of the existing khadi training centres and their scope broadened. New training centres should also be opened.

(iv) If in any area (not bigger than a district) the workers ask to be made self-sufficient and autonomous in order to begin work on the new lines laid down by the Charkha Sangh the Sangh should, if it approves of their plans, withdraw from that area but continue to give its recognition and moral support so long as the work is carried on according to its policy.

(v) A Joint Board of the nominees of the Charkha Sangh, Gram Udyog Sangh, Harijan Sevak Sangh and Goseva Sangh should be constituted to meet from time to time and issue instructions in terms of the new policy.

The Sangh shall be represented in the Joint Board by its President, its Secretary and Shri Dhirendra Majmudar, while the other four Sanghs shall have two nominees each besides Gandhiji.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-1-1945

[1] *Vide* "Resolution Passed by A.I.S.A. Trustees", 1-12-1944.

APPENDIX VII

GUIDELINES FOR PROPOSED INTERIM GOVERNMENT[1]

January 5, 1945

The following were the various steps proposed to be taken in this behalf as they emerged from their discussion and the elucidations provided by Gandhiji from time to time:

1. The Congress and the League would agree that they would join in forming an Interim Government in the Centre (a) consisting of equal numbers of persons nominated by the Congress and the League in the Central Legislature, (b) representatives of minorities, and (c) the Commander-in-Chief.

2. While the Government would be formed and would function within the framework of the existing Government of India Act, it would be clearly understood between the Congress and the League that any measure not passed by the House should not be enforced or sought to be enforced by any of the powers of the Governor-General under the Constitution. This would serve to eliminate in action the veto of the Governor-General and make the nominees responsible to the elected Legislature.

3. The European member, if one had to be included, should be the choice of the Congress and the League.

4. It should be agreed between the Congress and the League in advance that if such Interim Government was formed" their first step would be to release the members of the Working Committee. A firm and clear commitment of the League in regard to this would be a preliminary proof of its *bona fides*.

5. Bhulabhai must make sure before committing himself to anything that the agreement he had in view had the previous approval of Jinnah and the whole thing should be clarified and reduced to writing so as not to lead to any ambiguity or misunderstanding afterwards.

6. If such a Government was formed at the Centre, the next step would be to get the withdrawal of Governor's rule in the Provinces and to form, as soon as possible, Provincial Governments on the lines of a coalition.

7. At the proper moment Gandhiji would tell the Working Committee that Bhulabhai had acted with his approval.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book 1, pp. 117-9

[1] *Vide* "Note to Bhulabhai J. Desai", 5-1-1945.

APPENDIX VIII

LETTER FROM P. C. JOSHI[1]

BOMBAY,

February 1,1945

DEAR GANDHIJI,

My last letter to you was dated 28th September, 1944. You had promised in an earlier letter that you will refer the question of our moral *bona fides* and your what I may call anti-Communist file to your worthy colleagues. I hope they have reached their conclusions and reported to you. But I have not heard anything from you yet.

You perhaps do not know that your name is being used against us in the recent Congressmen's Conferences and even otherwise by persons who pretend to know your mind, etc. I know that most of what they attribute to you could never have been said by you. But my own lips are sealed till my correspondence with you is concluded over the questions you asked me and they were very serious questions, doubting our elementary patriotic and moral *bona fides*. I hope with the help of your Working Committee colleagues" you have reached the conclusion that we are not unworthy children of our great people.

Great things are happening in the world but our country is going to pieces. We are anxious to write to you on the big political issues but as I wrote to you before" it will be waste of your time and mine till you are convinced about our intellectual honesty and moral integrity.

I understand from Dr. Mahmud that you think that you are the aggrieved party. This is exactly the opposite of what we feel. I" of course, meant no offence but only expressed my indignation at my Party being slandered and offered to go into the dock straightaway. I do not know what else I could do. Sjt. Bhulabhai and Mrs. Naidu had promised to speed up the matter but I have not heard from them at all. Rajaji told me that he had already told you all that he had to.

May I request you for an answer as soon as you can and to get your colleagues speed up their report to you.

I could send Mohan to pick up the answer and answer any further questions he feels himself qualified to tackle. I am going to Bengal for three weeks today. Could your answer be ready by the time I am back? Mohan will be very busy in my absenceand will find it very difficult to come there in February" unless you specially want him to; but any date after 7 March will be best.

With respectful salutations,

Yours sincerely,
P. C. JOSHI

Correspondence between Mahatma Gandhi and P. C. Joshi, pp. 38-9

[1] *Vide* "Letter to P. C. Joshi", 5-2-1945.

APPENDIX IX

LETTER FROM T. B. SAPRU[1]

January 13, 1945

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I hope you are better now. I have been reading the news about your health in the newspapers.

I have now much pleasure in sending you herewith a copy of the questionnaire framed by the committee of which I am the Chairman. I dare say your attention has already been called to it. I shall be extremely grateful to you if you will favour the committee with a short memorandum stating your views generally and answering the questions or such of them as you prefer to answer.

So far there has been a good response to the committee excepting in certain quarters. Mr. Jinnah has declined to recognize the committee or to meet me as Chairman of the committee though he has no objection to meeting me in my individual capacity. Dr. Ambedkar promised support when we first met in November last at Delhi but has withdrawn it because he has objection to the personnel of the committee. The attitude of the Sikhs has been very encouraging so far. I am going on the 16th of January to Lahore to see the Sikh and Hindu leaders and shall try also to meet such Muslim leaders as have no objection to meeting me.

The work of the committee is being done at great pressure. We have already collected much material and more will be ready soon. I do not wish to trouble you with details but I shall be extremely grateful if you will favour me with a short memorandum. I am also sending you separately the two pamphlets already brought out, others are in the course of being printed.

With kindest regards and best wishes for your early recovery,

Yours sincerely,

Encl. Questionnaire

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.

Gandhi-Sapru Papers. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta

[1] *Vide* "Letter to T. B. Sapru", 8-2-1945.

1. FOREWORD TO "AHAR ANE POSHAN"[1]

When Dr. Kumarappa has given such an excellent introduction, what more is there for me to say? But Shri Jhaverbhai's[2] love would not leave me alone. For his sake I have gone through the pamphlet from beginning to end. I was not inclined to argue over technical details. Dr. Sushila was with me. I made her read out to me the entire thing. She made a few suggestions which occurred to her. Jhaverbhai made the necessary improvements. This means that this pamphlet hears the stamp of Dr. Sushila and Dr. Manu Trivedi[3]. I liked the pamphlet. Its language is simple and lucid. I hope that this pamphlet will be read by thousands.

M. K. GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
March 4, 1945

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1358. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

2. NOTE TO GOPE GURBUXANI[4]

March 4, 1945

Conscience has to be awakened. There are rules and observances for the purpose. Not everyone can be said to have his conscience awakened.

From a photostat: G.N. 1320

[1] "Diet and Nutrition". This was, however, not used in the book. Another foreword which Gandhiji wrote in Gujarati was published instead; *vide* "Foreword to *Ahar Ane Poshan*", 7-3-1945.

[2] Jhaverbhai Patel. He was in charge of the oil-presses in Maganwadi.

[3] Manshankar

[4] The addressee who was staying at the Sevagram Ashram had asked: "Truth is God, but what is Truth? Is it a thing which appeals to our conscience?"

3. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

March 4, 1945

CHI. MU.,

See my revised [statement] and then speak to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5838. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

4. LETTER TO GOPALASWAMI AYYANGAR

SEVAGRAM,
March 5, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to hear from you. I entirely agree with you regarding the States. As to foreign rule, I could not open the subject with Q.A. Jinnah. He has excluded the States from his calculation. You have not expected me to give any thought to the rest of your scheme. For my opinion is that when the whole of foreign rule goes from the whole of India, then only we shall be free to think with a true sense of responsibility.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. GOPALASWAMI AYYANGAR

WINDSOR PLACE

NEW DELHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

5. NOTE TO GOPE GURBUXANI[1]

March 5, 1945

Why is it easier to go down or slip down than to rise up step by step? By subduing the flesh, i.e., the beast.

From a photostat: G.N. 1321

6. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SEVAGRAM,
March 5, 1945

Herewith the statement on Orissa. Whatever changes it was possible to make have been made. Ramabehn intends to take the responsibility. We have therefore to place it before the committee. Chi. Mridula most probably knows about it. The medical part of it will have to be shown to the doctors.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

7. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
March 5, 1945

CHI. DINSHAW,

I have your letter. You did well in writing to Kaleswara. My visit to Bangalore is not going to come about. And if it does, it will be for those people to decide where I put up. But you simply reply to them: "His going there unlikely."[2]

It seems I have forgotten to write about, the teacher-student relationship. I am not worthy to be anyone's teacher. But if you consider yourself my student and conduct yourself accordingly, how can I stop you from doing so?

[1] The addressee had asked: "Why is it easier to pick up vice than virtue? How should one rise from the grossness to which the flesh is prone?"

[2] This is in English.

You should certainly not feel disappointed if your expectations are not fulfilled. You have had glorious success. And where I am, there cannot be disappointment. Let us see what happens in April.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

8. LETTER TO GULBEHN D. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
March 5, 1945

CHI. GULBEHN,

I was happy to have your letter. Had Sushila not seen Dinshaw, I would not have known about his distress. In fact there was no cause at all for him to be distressed. Nothing had been lost. Now you have to give him courage. How can you afford to lose heart?

You will bring Ardeshar with you in April. Won't you? One may say he is now fairly grown up. It is beginning to be quite hot during the day here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

9. LETTER TO JHAVERBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
March 5, 1945

CHI. JHAVERBHAI,

On the reverse is the Foreword.[1] I wrote it yesterday. I remember having written something like it before. Are you sure it is not in your note book?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1368. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Foreword to *Ahar Ane Poshan*", 4-3-1945.

10. LETTER TO MANZAR ALI SOKHTA

SEVAGRAM,
March 5, 1945

BHAI MANZAR ALI[1],

I have gone through the whole thing. Here the question is one of principle. I am sure that an intellectual can do better than an artisan. If he does not, then he cannot become an administrator. The entire history of England bears testimony to this. But I will not interfere. If your experience tells you to do otherwise, do so. The Trust is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

11. NOTE TO GOPE GURBUXANI

March 5, 1945

Brahmacharya plays an important role in subduing the brute within us. This is my definition: *Brahmacharya* is that path by which we realize the Brahman. This path lies in completely controlling the five sense organs, the five moter organs and the eleventh, the mind. I have deliberately replied in Hindustani.[2]

From the Hindi original: G.N. 1322

[1] A Congress Worker of U. P.

[2] The addressee had asked: "What part does *brahmacharya* play in the subjugation of the flesh and what is your definition of the word *brahmacharya* for married people?"

12. INTERVIEW TO ORIENT PRESS

March 5, 1945[1]

When asked by the representative of the Orient Press on what he had to say about the recent warning given to local Congress workers by the District Magistrate, Nagpur,[2] Gandhiji said:

Congressmen who have associated for the fulfilment of our constructive programme need not be agitated over what local governments say or do. Whether their policy is merely local or represents the Centre, they should learn to shed fear.

The District Magistrate's strictures if they are properly reported are undoubtedly revealing. They need not alarm us.

In reply to another question as to how without any political action and only by social and economic improvement the country could reach its destined goal as revealed by him in his statement published on 20th February,[3] Gandhiji replied:

I must refer you to my statement and you may ask yourself whether, if the programme is universally responded to, it will not lead to swaraj. Indeed the Muslim League and even the Government should join in its prosecution if they are honest about independence.

When asked what he thought about anti-Indian propaganda carried on in America by Britishers Gandhiji replied:

Anti-Indian British propaganda should not matter if we are truthful.

The Hitavada, 6-3-1945

[1] *The Hindu*, 6-3-1945, however, reports this under the date March 4, 1945.

[2] The Additional District Magistrate, Nagpur, had told Congressmen that activities banned in the name of the Congress could not be carried on in the name of any camouflaged Congress organization. He had mentioned such organizations as the Nagpur Provincial Congress Representative Committees,the Political Prisoners' Aid Committee and Congress Ward Committees and warned that action could be taken against them under the Restrictions and Detention Ordinance.

[3] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 17-2-1945.

13. A LETTER

March 6, 1945

My guidance is of no use for you. I do not know your staying capacity or your father's. Hence you should act as you think proper. You know my general advice as I see from your letter.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10520. Courtesy: Government of Assam

14. LETTER TO ADRIENNE

SEVAGRAM,
March 6, 1945

DEAR ADRIENNE,

Your sweet note. You will be doing well if you will never swerve from the truth you have found with sufficient labour.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

15. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,
March 6, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

What do you mean when you say, "Leave aside the question of sleeping together"? I do not know how to solve your difficulty. Why don't you explain it to me more clearly? There is no need now for Balvant Sinha to go to Nathji[1]. But if there is, let him go with such other persons as you choose to send. Come over at 3.30

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10618

[1] Kedarnath Kulkarni

16. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

March 6, 1945

CHI. MU.,

Why need you feel embarrassed? This problem cannot be solved in that way. Ask me any question you wish without the slightest hesitation. My statement has undergone some revision and may undergo more. I don't wish to exclude anybody. I have mentioned four. Perhaps they will say, "We were not objects of your experiment; we slept with you as with a mother." I would not contradict them. It is enough here to mention that such a thing has happened. I don't consider Abha, Kanchan and Vina as part of the experiment. If we distinguish between sleeping together and the experiment, the difference between the two in my view is a big one. Abha slept with me for hardly three nights. Kanchan slept one night only. Vina's sleeping with me might be called an accident. All that can be said is that she slept close to me. If Abha had continued, her case would have been and altogether different one. Kanchan's case was rather tragic. I didn't understand her at all. What Abha or Kanchan told me was this; that she had no intention whatever of observing *brahmacharya*, butwished to enjoy the pleasure of sex. She, therefore, stayed only reluctantly and undressed only for fear of hurting me. If I remember rightly, she was not with me even for an hour. I then stopped both the women sleeping with me, for I realized that Kanu and you were upset. I myself advised them that they should tell you both and also Bhansali. You will thus see that these three names cannot be included in the experiment. Lilavati, Amtussalaam, Rajkumari and Prabhavati are not here. I have deliberately included Pra. in the experiment. Maybe I should not. She often used to sleep with me to keep me warm even before I was conscious that I was making an experiment. I used to draw her to me when she lay on the floor, shivering, for my sake. This is an old, old story. I think I have now told you everything. If you have any more questions, you may ask me. Kanchan's labouring under a misunderstanding pained me, but I was helpless.

I formed no judgment regarding Sushila and you. I did not get sufficient material, for doing that either. If she herself wishes and you too wish it, I would spare some time and hear you both. I will examine witnesses and try to weigh the evidence. But let me repeat that if you

two feel as brother and sister to each other, you should not ask even your father to examine you and pronounce judgment. But do as you wish.

I understand about a separate kitchen. I shall try. Will the purchase of provisions for the hospital and the Ashram kitchens be under one account or two? I see that a catering service can be run only if it is managed by a third party. I think this is enough for today. About the third party and going to villages, etc., later on. I have not revised this. If you feel that anything needs correction, ask me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5841. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

17. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

SEVAGRAM,
March 6, 1945

CHI. SHRIMAN NARAYAN,

I have made a few changes.[1] There is no need to explain them. I have deleted clause eleven. If it is necessary to have it, we shall give it elsewhere. Remember we have decided that we shall strive to become one nation but the movement for swaraj cannot remain in abeyance till we have succeeded in that. The question of language should be removed from that area. It is true that greater unity will be achieved if the two forms are combined.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRIMAN NARAYAN
MAHILA ASHRAM
WARDHA

[From Hindi]

Panchaven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 304

[1] In the scheme for propagation of Hindustani which the addressee had submitted to Gandhiji

18. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 6, 1945

You have raised a pertinent question. I am dealing with it patiently. Asha Devi, Aryanayakum, etc., are looking after this. All the papers are with them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4496

19. NOTE TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH[1]

March 6, 1945

This discussion is somewhat out of place because at present nothing is happening. For this too friends are responsible. I have gone as far as I could to satisfy them. It will not be proper for me to do anything until I have satisfied my co-workers. I am as much against compromise as I am for it. For this very reason my elder brother remained my enemy for 13 years. He asked my forgiveness five or six months before his death. My caste also became my enemy in the same manner. Now it does not show any feeling of animosity. But quite a few sanatanists are still opposed to me. On this account I let myself be deprived of lakhs of rupees. I used to be a friend of the Empire. Today I have become its enemy. What more need I say? I showed the door to a wife like Ba. Thus, I am what I am. There is therefore no point in talking about the welfare of society. What else may I give up? I cannot give up thinking. As far as possible I have postponed the practice of sleeping together. But it cannot be given up altogether. You can say that ever since I went to England I have been pursuing the idea of *brahmacharya*. It has not harmed anyone. It is true of course that I should do what others too can be permitted to do. If I can restrain myself and sleep beside a woman, others can also do so on the same condition. They can fulfil that condition if they so wish.

The same applies to non-violence. If I completely give up sleeping together, my *brahmacharya* will be put to shame. It is not that I would do anything for the mere pleasure of it. I have not done it

[1] Gandhiji wrote this for the addressee when the latter met him at 3.30 p. m.

for years, and I shall not do it now. It is true that people may indulge in licentiousness by imitating me. Who can stop it? Is there any place where *asatyagraha*[1] has never been practised in the name of satyagraha? In any case, the thing has been postponed because it calls for consideration. But since there is need for a halt let it be so. You can ask any questions. I suggest that you should not ask questions individually.You may all discuss it among yourselves and then ask questions. Let it be understood that right now everything is postponed. Manu has been left alone by the others. Hence there is scope for a mature deliberation. I claim that whatever I have done I have done in the name of God. I go to bed reciting His name. I have got up with His name on my lips. So it is in my dreams, whether alone or with some woman. What God will make me do in days to come He alone knows.

Such restrictions should not be imosed on me. Kishorelalbhai's business should be left to him. Do not drag him into this matter. My advice is that everybody should join hands and stand by him. There is no need to plead his case before me. I am glad that I have answered your question but I am not in a position to listen.

I have said that right now everything stands postponed, leaving aside Manu. But Kishorelal is not satisfied with this. It is your duty to understand him. He is right when he says: "I was not consulted at first. Now I shall not create any confusion." In the present situation whoever has any doubt in his mind should follow him. I would in any case do that. I would not create difficulties for him. You should consider his delicate health when you bother him. If you do this you will be serving him, no doubt, but you will also be serving me. My love for him is certainly no less than my love for my brother. What more can I do?

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 5891. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

20. FOREWORD TO "GANDHIJI'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE GOVERNMENT"

I have read the introduction as also the originals. The introduction may be good enough for the hasty reader, but the publication is not designed for the hasty reader. It is designed for the

[1] Opposite of satyagraha.

serious worker who can affect the politics of his country and even the world affairs. To such my advice is that he must read the originals. The introduction may be used as such and as an aid to memory. I want the readers I have in view to take me at my word. I have written as I felt at the moment as a seeker of long standing of Truth and Non-violence. I have written without reservation and without embellishment.

After my accidentally premature discharge from detention[1] and convalescence I studied from reliable witnesses the happenings of the two years after the incarceration of principal Congressmen and myself. I have heard nothing to modify the opinion expressed in my writings under review.

I know first hand what has happened, since my discharge, in the various spheres of life. And I have found bitter confirmation of what I have said in the following pages. Indeed, the whole of India is a vast prison. The Viceroy is the irresponsible superintendent of the prison with numerous jailers and warders under him. The four hundred millions of India are not the only prisoners. There are others similarly situated in the other parts of the earth under other superintendents.

A jailer is as much a prisoner as his prisoner. There is no doubt a difference. From my point of view he is worse. If there is a Day of Judgment, i.e., if there is a Judge whom we do not see but who nevertheless is much more truly than we exist for a brief moment, the judgment will go hard against the Jailer and in favour of the prisoners.

India is the only place on earth which knowingly has chosen Truth and Non-violence as the only means for her deliverance. But deliverance to be obtained through these means must be deliverance for the whole world including the jailers otherwise described by me as tyrants and imperialists. I need not mention Fascists or Nazis or Japanese. They seem to be as good as gone.

The war will end this year or the next. It will bring victory to the Allies. The pity of it is that it will be only so-called if it is attained with India and the like lying prostrate at the feet of the Allies. That victory will be assuredly a prelude to a deadlier war, if anything could be more deadly.

I know that I do not need to plead for non-violent India. If India has the coin with Truth on one face and Non-violence on the

[1] On May 6, 1944

other, the coin has its own inestimable value which will speak for itself. Truth and Non-violence must express humility at every step. They do not disdain real aid from any quarter, much less from those in whose name and for whom exploitation is practised. If the British and the Allies aid, so much the better. Deliverance will then come sooner. If they do not, deliverance is still certain. Only the agony of the victim will be greater, the time longer. But what are agony and time if theyare spent in favour of liberty, especially when it is to be brought about through Truth and Non-violence!

M. K. GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, March 7, 1945

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, pp. xiii-xiv

21. FOREWORD TO "AHAR ANE POSHAN"

Bhai Jhaverbhai has ever been undertaking new studies and adding to his store of useful knowledge. He easily finds use for this increased knowledge in disseminating it. He thinks in his own language or the national language, so that his ideas are understood by thousands with the utmost ease. If he carries on in this manner, the knowledge he has gained will soon become common possession.

Bhai Jhaverbhai has written a beautiful essay and given information about food, etc., in simple language. I hope that the knowledge will be widely used and the suggestions made in the essay implemented. The author's aim is to impart knowledge so that it will be put to use and not merely add to learning.

M. K. GANDHI

March 7, 1945

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1359

22. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

March 7,1945

CHI. MU.,

If you read my previous letters carefully, you will see that I have answered all your questions. If there is anything remaining, wait and watch. What I mean to say is that anybody who wishes to leave is free to do so. Let nobody think that it is his duty to stay on. Nobody

should remain, out of false regard for me or by suppressing his feelings. I will have a talk with Sushilabehn and find out. I should like you to present your case and then I shall ask Sushila to answer. If you wish, I will follow the opposite procedure. I may then call any witness I consider necessary. I am thinking about a separate kitchen. If I can I will arrange that.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5843. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

23. LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

March 7, 1945

CHI. MAGAN[1],

Jekibehn[2] says that the sisters must get a share of their mother's jewellery.[3] Personally I should like that. I had a letter from Mayashankar. I should like you to meet him and satisfy him. He has served your father very faithfully. There is no news about Ratilal[4]. We may get some news if we announce a reward. Most probably I shall go to Bombay at the beginning of April.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have just heard that Ratilal is in Ahmedabad, safe and sound.

SHRI MAGANLAL PRANJIVANDAS

BARRISTOR

ANDHERI, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1032. Courtesy: Manjula M. Mehta

[1] Dr. Pranjivan J. Mehta's son

[2] Jayakunwar M. Doctor, addressee's sister

[3] *Vide* the following item.

[4] Addressee's brother, *vide* also the following item.

24. LETTER TO JAYAKUNWAR M. DOCTOR

SEVAGRAM,
March 7, 1945

CHI. JEKI,

I have your letter. Where should I look for Ratubhai? Sometimes we have found him after six months. We can get a photograph of him published in the newspapers and offer a reward. However, I do not feel like doing that. What can we do if he has left? It will certainly be good if he is found.

I am making inquiries about the jewellery, I had forgotten about it. I am all right. I just heard that Ratilal has safely arrived in Ahmedabad.

Blessings from
BAPU

JEKIBEHN
35 JUHU LANE
ANDHERI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

25. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

SEVAGRAM,
March 7, 1945

BHAI PARSHOTTAMDAS,

Just now I heard that you have fallen ill again. How is that?

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI PARSHOTTAMDAS
NAVSARI CHAMBERS
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

26. LETTER TO GOSIBEHN CAPTAIN

SEVAGRAM,
March 7, 1945

DEAR SISTER[1]

Khurshedbehn is there. She has got disgusted with my contacts with women. And I hear so is N. behn. Is not the same true of you other two ? If so,why not discuss the whole thing with me ? There is quite a storm here. I am contemplating a statement. I do not know whether it will see the light of day.

Do write me fearlessly. I have no reprentance of what I have done. Hope you are well.

Love.

BAPU

GOSIBEHN CAPTAIN
ANDHERI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

27. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM, "VIA" WARDHA,
March 7, 1945

CHI. LILI,

I have your letter. I learnt about the sad fate of the letter. So long as the kitchen is in your charge, what can be wanting ? You should definitely pass the very first examination. Little Baba must have recovered. How can you be spared from nursing him ? I intend reaching there in the beginning of April. Stay with me when I am here.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI LILAVATIBEHN UDESHI
G. S. MEDICAL COLLEGE
LADIES STUDENTS' HOSTEL
BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] This is in Gujarati.

28. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

March 7, 1945

Blessings from Bapu. Pyarelal will be seeing you now. I hope it has not snowed further.

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4205. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7841

29. LETTER TO SHIV SHARMA

SEVAGRAM,
March 7, 1945

CHI. SHIV SHARMA,

The news of your ill-health makes me unhappy. Under such circumstances I will not give you the trouble of coming here. I hope Ramsarandasji is well. You on your part must become perfectly healthy. Hari-ichchha is in mid-sea. She is a girl to be pitied. She does not want to go anywhere to have her rib taken out.

Blessings from
BAPU

PANDIT SHIV SHARMA
CURZON ROAD
NEW DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

30. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 7, 1945

In my view you should continue to take garlic in spite of the unpleasant odour. Throughout the world its benefits have been recognized. Try to avoid being involved in an argument.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4497

[1] This is written as a postscript to Sushila Nayyar's letter to the addressee.

31. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 7, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

There is no discourtesy in your question. Your question shows how imperfect a medium language is.

If I stop sleeping together for all time it will mean that I have been mistaken. Otherwise why should I stop it? There is a limit toabstaining from it for the sake of friends. Sleeping together came with my taking up of *brahmacharya* or even before that. Can you understand it now?

The dangers you have pointed out are certainly there. But for that reason, a good act should not be avoided. Only we should be vigilant.

The experiment is not meant to be imitated. But if I can become a perfect *brahmachari* thereby, would I not be able to contribute more to the welfare of the world? Even if there is a single person who can train himself that way, he should do it. I was not out for an experiment, but when the situation presented itself before me I did what I felt was necessary.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4498

32. NOTE TO GOPE GURBUXANI

March 7, 1945

Ordinarily we can distinguish between good and evil, but on occasion we cannot. If we always seek God's help it becomes a habit to know the distinction. Remember that God is within us. Let us keep Him awake.

Why have you both signed in English? Let Hindi-knowing persons sign in Urdu and Urdu-knowing persons in Hindi. I hope I have not left out any question.[1]

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1323

[1] The addressee had asked: "How can man find divine guidance to distinguish between good and evil?"

33. NOTE TO STUDENTS[1]

[After March 8, 1945][2]

BROTHERS,

I am shocked by your writing to me in English. Why do you not write in Hindustani? I have clearly expressed my opinion. Everyone must decide whether or not to act according to it. I suggest you form your own opinion.

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

34. LETTER TO JAYAKUNWAR M. DOCTOR

SEVAGRAM,
March 8, 1945

CHI. JEKI,

I have written to him about the jewellery.[3] Try to find out why he gave up his job. It will not take him long to find another. He is clever.

Blessings from
BAPU

JEKIBEHN

35 JUHU LANE

ANDHERI

From a copy of the Gujarti: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Of Lucknow University
[2] The letter to which this is an answer is dated March 8.
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Maganlal P. Mehta", 7-3-1945.

35. LETTER TO CHAKRAYYA

SEVAGRAM,
March 8, 1945

CHI. CHAKRAYYA,

It is good you wrote. I shall write to Sharma on hearing from you. But it is your duty first to have a full talk with him yourself. If he does not come, write to him and then write to me also. In the meantime do not spend anything on your house. Spend the very minimum On the arrangements. Meet the Harijans also.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

36. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 8, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Do not give up the quern. You can give up talking. Keep your body and mind engaged in good deeds so that you can observe *brahmacharya* in the Ashram. Do not indulge in idle talk with any man or woman and do not touch anyone without reason. Consider every woman as your mother or sister.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4499

37. LETTER TO RAMDAS GULATI

SEVAGRAM,
March 8, 1945

CHI. RAMDAS[1],

I feel that it is useless for you to run away from there and come here. And if the climate there also suits you, you should suppress the desire to come here.

I will certainly accept machines which can be operated by hand and can be made here. For example I accept the Singer sewing-machine even though it is of foreign make. This much I shall say: in all the Kisan Charkhas so far made there is very little of iron. They make do with a string instead of a spring and Nandlalji has invented a technique of doubling. Both the things you must see and introduce them there. Krishnachandra should send its description and the diagram.

It is good that Viyogiji is giving a lecture.

Blessings from
BAPU

RAMDAS GULATI
HARIJAN ASHRAM
DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

38. NOTE TO GOPE GURBUXANI

March 8, 1945

Forgetting East and West we should consider everything on its own merits.[2]

From a copy of the Hindi: G.N. 1324

[1] The addressee, an engineer, had given up Government service in 1934 and joined Gandhiji's Ashram, devoting himself to the study of weaving.

[2] The addressee had asked: "What should be our attitude towards Western civilization?"

39. A NOTE

[After *March 8, 1945*][1]

Write to Bapa whatever seems right to you and send a copy to Purushottam. Chhaganlal too should be appointed on the Committee. It should have on it only persons who work. No one should be there for show. If everyone refuses then Chhaganlal alone should carry on the work. But everyone will not say no. It is enough if all do not refuse. But some are going to refuse, are they? For example Parikshitlal.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

40. LETTER TO T. B. SAPRU

SEVAGRAM,
March 9, 1945

DEAR DR. SAPRU,

P.[2] is in Simla today, probably with Rajkumari. This letter of greetings will be presented to you by Shri Narahari Parikh, one of the oldest Ashramites.[3] You may trust him with any message you like. I hope you are keeping fit.

Please do not forget your promise about Hindustani, though you said you could not become a member.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi-Sapru Papers. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta. Also G.N. 7569

[1] This seems to be a draft reply to Purushottam Gandhi's letter of March 8, 1945, regarding the Committee of the Kathiawar Harijan Sevak Sangh.

[2] Pyarelal

[3] The addressee was to pass through Wardha on March 9, 1945, on his way to Madras from Delhi.

41. LETTER TO V. VENKATSUBBAIAH

SEVAGRAM,
March 9, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your estimate. Now let me have your qualifications in detail and references. Is Rs. 60 per month meant for you? Is it to be devoted merely to women and children?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

VENKATASUBBAIYA, M.L.A.
ASHRAM
NELLORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

42. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

March 9, 1945

CHI SUMI,

Here are a couple of lines for your perseverance. It is good you passed. If the bangles fit and you want to wear them you may do so. Don't leave anything from fear of me. Sacrifice without renunciation cannot endure. You should only give up things for which you no longer feel attachment.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. SUMITRA GANDHI
C/O HEAD MISTRESS
BIRLA HIGH SCHOOL
PILANI, RAJPUTANA

From the Gujarati original: Sumitra Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

43. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

Match 9, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

You seem to have written the above in haste. Try and see if you can steady your mind. Read *The Hound of Heaven*[1], think over it and understand its meaning. You will not be happy anywhere if you turn your back upon the "Hound"[2].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5845. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

44. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

March 9, 1945

I suggest only this in this connection.[3] In the interest of work you may relieve anybody and accept whoever may be available as substitute. I am asking them to change the arrangement regarding milk.[4] Please do not lose patience if I proceed slowly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8462. Also C.W. 5572. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] By Francis Thompson (1859-1907), English poet and critic

[2] Gandhiji uses the English word.

[3] Ramachandra Rao had discontinued shredding the vegetables and Prabhakar Parekh and Sushila Nayyar had offered themselves for the work.

[4] This used to take up so many utensils that the addressee could hardly find any for cooking.

45. LETTER TO JANAKDHARI PRASAD

March 9, 1945

BHAI JANAKDHARI BABU,

I read your letter to Pyarelal. He has gone to Simla. My health is all right. You can ask me whatever you want to. I will answer as best I can. I trust you are in good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 57

46. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 9, 1945

If you have the slightest doubt you should consult an authority and when in doubt abstain.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4500

47. NOTE TO GOPE GURBUXANI

March 9, 1945

God is not a person. He is the Law and also the Law-giver. Hence He is not like a human being. It means that man would reap as he sows. God neither does anything nor prompts one to do anything.[1]

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1325

[1] The addressee had asked: "Why should there be so much evil and unhappiness in the world in spite of God?"

48. INTERVIEW TO ANDHRA DEPUTATION[1]

SEVAGRAM,
March 9, 1945[2]

(1) Q. At present there are only provincial Congress organizations functioning. Is it not essential to have an all-India Congress organization to enunciate a common policy and common programme?

A. A common all-India Congress organization is an impossibility while the President and other members of the Working Committee are in detention.

(2) Q. What is the definition of a *kisan*? We hope that you agree that we can have an independent Andhra Provincial Kisan Congress as a part of and under the discipline of the Andhra Province Congress Assembly [*sic*]?

A. For me a *kisan* is one who actually works on land belonging to himself or another. In every case, I have pointed the way of relief. You should read what I have written.[3] Local difficulties should be solved locally. For the right answer, accurate knowledge of local conditions is necessary. I lack this. Hence my answer may even mislead. All organizations may be independent and yet a part of the Congress and subject to its discipline.

(3) Q. We think it is better to have for the Kisan Congress also a tricoloured national flag without any additional class emblem.

A. I had full discussion with Prof. Ranga.[4] I agree generally about the points you have raised.

(4) Q. There are many *kisans* in villages who have helped in war efforts under the official influence. They are not entitled to be members of the Congress organizations at present. But they are, all the same, sympathizers of the National Congress. Shall we bring them into Kisan Congress? Both classes of members can have equal voice in the matter of redress against the landlords and the Government. But the first class of members only should decide all questions of a political nature.

A. Those who are real sympathizers will remain so even if for

[1] The deputation consisted of Congress workers from Andhra, including Chandramouli, Kaleshwar Rao, Prof. Ranga and others.

[2] Prow *The Bombay Chronicle*, 10-3-1945

[3] *Vide* "Hints for Constructive Workers", 22-10-1944.

[4] *Vide* "Interview to N. G. Ranga", 29-10-1944 and "Interview to N. G. Ranga", 28-11-1944.

technical reasons today they may not join you. By all means take them if you so wish.

The Deputation asked Gandhiji whether Congress could see local officials in grave and emergent cases of food and other economic difficulties of people for immediate redress and Gandhiji replied that it was not an absolute evil to see officials but there should be no seeing to flatter or please them.

Asked as to whether Congress bodies could apply to officials for permission to hold public meetings, processions or training camps, in any district where prohibitory order by the District Magistrate is in force, Gandhiji replied that no such permission should be applied for.

Winding up the discussion, Mahatmaji said that generally while he made himself available to all friends, they should try to act on their own even though they may make mistakes.

The Hitavada, 13/14-3-1945

49. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

March 10, 1945

CHI. SUNDARAM,[1]

Your letter from the train. My blessings to Pushpa[2] and others. May they fructify your dream.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3184

50. LETTER TO RATHINDRANATH TAGORE

March 10, 1945

MY DEAR RATHI,

I was glad to have your letter and learn that you were putting up a home for destitute women.

Love.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From C.W. 10521. Courtesy: Vishvabharati, Santiniketan

[1] This is in Tamil script.
[2] Addressee's daughter

51. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

March 10, 1945

MY DEAR C. R.,

Your sweet p. c. Short of denying myself I am doing all I can to prevent disruption. Even though it may take place, I feel that the end will be well.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI C. R.

CARE "HINDUSTAN TIMES" BLDGS.

NEW DELHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2103

52. LETTER TO APAJI AMIN

March 10, 1945

BHAI APAJI AMIN,

I have the postcard bearing your signature. I wish you success. I knew Bhai Karunashanker well. He was a gem of Gujarat. His services were matchless.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Vipravar Karunashankerne Shraddhanjali

53. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA C. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,

March 10, 1945

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

I read your statement from beginning to end. I liked it. Learn from somebody how instruction can be given through craft. You have many persons to guide you and, therefore, you are bound to progress.Real guidance however has to come from within you. I approve of your having admitted only the local girls, and only a few of them. You two teachers are enough. The key to success lies in you

two also becoming learners like the girls. If you do so, the girls will never lose interest and the work will steadily progress. You will progress in your own work also. It will be good if you can bring about some improvement in the food. One hardly sees anything besides *rotli* and *dal*. It is a difficult task. Do you grow any vegetables there? You have learnt carding, I am sure.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9421

54. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SEVAGRAM,
March 10, 1945

BAPA,

I have your note. You should get the eye operated upon. Gurupadam will do it skilfully. Get well and come. Leave behind whatever suggestions you want to make. Write to me if you wish to. We will do whatever we can in your absence.

BAPU

THAKKAR BAPA
SCINDHIA HOUSE
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

55. LETTER TO RUPAVANTI

SEVAGRAM,
March 10, 1945

CHI. RUPAVANTI,

Why should you grieve over the death of your husband? Why should you cry? If you do so, the departed soul will be unhappy. Yourduty is to imbibe your husband's virtues and do as much good work as you can, as he did, so that he lives on in you.

Blessings from

BAPU

C|O JAYANT MULJI CHAVDA
MUTHEGANJ
ALLAHABAD, U. P.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

56. LETTER TO B. G. KHER

March 10, 1945

BHAI BALASAHEB,

I can understand your difficulty.[1] You have done right in writing to Narandas. Let me see what he decides now.

Blessings from

BAPU

BALASAHEB

JEHANGIR WADIA BUILDING

51 MAHATMA GANDHI ROAD

FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2775

57. LETTER TO BABA MOGHE

March 10, 1945

I thought that the question related to the inmates of the Ashram and hence it would be better to restrict the answer to them. If however other people too follow it in action I see no [harm] in it.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5849

[1] *Vide* "Letter to B. G. Kher", 3-3-1945.
[2] *Vide* "A Note", 24-2-1945.

58. LETTER TO CHIMANDAS ISARDAS

SEVAGRAM,
March 10, 1945

BHAI CHIMANDAS,

I hope you will be able to read this. What is there to write in English? I heard about Jairamdas. God will guard him. Hope your mother is well.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. CHIMANDAS ISARDAS
10 AMIL COLONY
HYDERABAD—SIND

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

59. LETTER TO P. C. GHOSH

SEVAGRAM,
March 10, 1945

CHI. PROFULLA,

I have your beautiful letter. If you can conveniently reach Bombay on April 2, then do come. It is Amtul Salaam's duty to leave in good shape what she has begun. Retain her. Relieve her only when you can.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. P. C. GHOSH
14/18 GARIAHUT ROAD
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

60. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA SHARMA

SEVAGRAM,
March 10,1945

BHAI BALKRISHNA,

I have your wire. Today I have received your letter too. It is good that you have been released. Kumari Sarala always has my blessings for her health. There is no reason why she should not recover after sufficient rest and proper diet.

Blessings from
BAPU

PANDIT BALKRISHNA
"PRATAP"
CAWNPORE, U. P.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

61. LETTER TO SHANTABAI KALE

SEVAGRAM,
March 10, 1945

CHI. SHANTABEHN,

The letter is all right. Forward it and send me a copy so that I can take necessary action.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHANTABAI KALE
WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

62. LETTER TO SUBRAMANIAM

SEVAGRAM,
March 10, 1945

CHI. SUBRAMANIAM,

I have your letter. All noble endeavours have my blessings. May your camp be a success.

Blessings from
BAPU

SUBRAMANIAM
GANDHI ASHRAM
ANJEUR, ANDHRA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

63. TELEGRAM TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

[On or after *March 10, 1945*][1]

RAMESHWARI NEHRU
FAIRFIELDS
QUEENS ROAD
LAHORE

YOU HAVE LOST GREAT MAN AS FATHER NO CAUSE GRIEF. HE WROTE DR. MAHMUD LONG LETTER THREE DAYS BEFORE DEATH.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

64. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

SEVAGRAM,
March 11, 1945

A conference of Congress workers, limited in number and by special invitation, was recently banned in Akola by the District Magistrate. The order is reported to say that "discussion will take

[1] Raja Narendranath, addressee's father, died on March 10.

place among other subjects on the work and programme of the Congress, particularly in villages". Considering the influence of the invitees, he was of the opinion that this conference would "hamper the successful prosecution of the war". It passes comprehension how a conference, where only discussion could take place, can hamper the prosecution of the war or how the constructive programme, no matter how influentially worked, can hamper the prosecution of the war. Does the Magistrate say one thing and mean something else when he says that a successful working of the constructive programme can and will make the present war with the Japanese impossible? This may need proof, but no proof is needed to show that the constructive work cannot and is not designed to hamper in any way whatsoever the prosecution of the war. What it can do is to bring work and bread to villagers in their own homes, besides making illiterates literate and happy. Or does Government, if the order is prompted by them, want to prevent influential Congressmen from serving the people in any way whatsoever? If so, why have they released Congressmen at all? Anyway Congressmen whose only calling is service of the people will serve mutely and without caring for the consequences that may befall them by reason of their service. That is the true meaning of do or die.

The Hindu, 13-3-1945

65. LETTER TO KANAM GANDHI

March 11, 1945

CHI. KANAM,

Why should you fall ill? Do you observe rules of health? You want to learn much and rise very high. You will not do anything if you start falling ill from now. "First happiness is keeping the health of the person." We get the full meaning if we interpret "the person" to cover the physical, mental and intellectual. Now I receive Sumi's letters regularly. Sita is flying.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. KANAM GANDHI
C/O RAMDAS GANDHI
KHALASI LINE
NAGPUR, C. P.

From the Gujarati original: Kanam Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

66. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 11, 1945

1. Of course one has to pray in solitude. It is rather disturbing that you find more interest in it.

2. What I mean is that I have done it naturally. Almost all of them would strip reluctantly. I have written—haven't I?— that they did so at my prompting. If I wish to be a *brahmuchari* under all circumstances and want the women also to be such this is the one way. Now leave this matter alone and watch what happens.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4501

67. LETTER TO DR. RAMBHAU BHOGE

SEVAGRAM,
March 11, 1945

CHI. RAMBHAU,

Your application is all right. Send it. Secure bail. I met your wife once. I will do what I can if she comes again. She continues to be unwell.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. RAMBHAU BHOGE
C/O JAILOR
JALAGAON, G. I. P.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

68. NOTE TO GOPE GURBUXANI

March 11, 1945

Whatever elevates everybody in society is social service. Its nature varies according to place, time and circumstances. I have shown how it can be done in India.[1]

BAPU

From the Hindi original: G.N. 1326

69. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

[On or after *March 11, 1945*][2]

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I am a little tired now of talking about myself. I have said much, I shall say more. But not in this manner. I do not wish to publicize Kanchan's name. Even you do not have the right to do so. You are not Kanchan's owner, as she is not yours. But after all these years I have not been able to make you understand this. I read your letter regarding Sushilabehn. If you say that both of you lost patience and swerved from the path, then that should be enough. You need no one else's opinion. I therefore advise you to forget the incident. If Sushila should say that she had not swerved, I should have to hear her but it would serve no useful purpose. If, nevertheless, you insist on an impartial judgment, I am ready to hand over all the papers to Narahari. Let him go through them and give his verdict.

Is not your advice to me futile? In practice there is nothing now. As for the thought, how can I change it so long as I feel that it is pure?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5847. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] The addressee had asked: "What is social service and how should it be pursued?"

[2] This is written on the back of the addressee's letter dated March 11, 1945.

70. LETTER TO DURGABAI

SEVAGRAM,
March 12, 1945

DEAR SISTER[1],

Prof. R. Rao says he is not to produce a detailed plan. It has to be produced by the Committee. Unless I have it, nothing can be placed before the Board. Please therefore make haste.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

G. DURGABAI
ANDHRA P. COMMITTEE
89 VEERBHAVAN
MYLAPORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

71. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

SEVAGRAM,
March 12, 1945

CHI. CHHANGANLAL,

If you can keep Purushottam, please do keep him. He has written a letter to Bapa. See it. I understand about his complaint against you. What can be done? It is for you to impress people by your work. Engaging yourself in all the activities will no doubt impress but will not the work suffer? Isn't that my lot? How have I managed so far? I am a thinker as much as I am a doer and can derive a kind of satisfaction by expressing original views. Many others are not able to do that. I shall be in Bombay in April. It will be good if Rama[2] meets me there then.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHHAGANLAL JOSHI
HARIJAN SEVA SANGH
RAJKOT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Durgabai Deshmukh
[2] Addressee's wife

72. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

March 12, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I can find the time, but it seems pointless. Since you want it I give my decision. Both of you are hasty. Both of you first say whatever occurs to you and think afterwards. If Sushila had not intervened that evening, the outcome would have been quite different. But she is unable to restrain herself. Moreover, she believes she cannot hurt you since you are more than a brother to her. There is nothing more left for me to say. What has happened has happened. Sushila could not have removed Chand to quarters reserved for other people, and she assumed that since she had come with a suggestion about the sick, you would readily offer your room. The thing is we ought to have special facilities for the sick, which we have not provided. It will be enough if we take a lesson for the future from this incident. Say to yourself again and again: "Think before you speak." As far as possible one must cultivate silence. And even if we have to work very hard for it, we must have a separate room for the sick. Like a fire bucket, it must not be put to any other use. Sushila's statement is attached, as also yours. I have not shown her this letter, nor your statement.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5849. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

73. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

March 12, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

We have had enough of this. You may not do anything for; Sushila but you should do everything for the hospital. If we have one, we must put up with a good many things. Shushila cannot see any other point of view, but ignore that. You should endure. what you can easily endure and leave what you cannot. It is a condition for apeaceful life. *Gita* which at one place says "what then will restraint avail"[1] teaches restraint elsewhere.[2] If you understand this, your path will be easy.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5851. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] III. 33
[2] II. 61, 68

74. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

March 12, 1945

CHI. MRIDU,

You are perfectly entitled to come to me and understand my action. You need not come immediately. Come whenever you can and take my time. It is true that I am fed up. It is not any more necessary that things should be explained to the public at large in the way it can understand. But I am not applying this to you. Yashodhara is very sensible. She could have asked me. But it is amazing how hesitant women are. I shall not issue my statement right now. I have a telegram from Mathuradas. I made my decision only on that basis. Now I have your letter. So the matter is ended. The sin or merit of the postponement will be divided between you two. If it is merit, would I also not have my share ? From my point of view, I have done nothing wrong. When I came to know, I shall proclaim it from the house-tops. Do not be upset. I am what I have always been.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 11236. Courtesy : Sarabhai Foundation

75. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 12, 1945

If we adopt a pure-minded attitude towards the experiment we shall remain calm and the mind will not become restive. The result will be good and there will be no involuntary emissions. But if there is curiosity it will give rise to desire and there will be involuntary emissions. That is why I have said that curiosity should now stop.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4502

76. LETTER TO MAURICE FRYDMAN

SEVAGRAM,
March 13, 1945

DEAR BHARATANAND,

I won't be happy until you are out of the wood.

Love.

BAPU

78 NAPEAN SEA ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

77. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM AND KANCHAN M. SHAH

March 13, 1945

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM AND CHI. KANCHAN,

I quite followed your letter. P. Babu again writes to say that you should be allowed to stay on for six months and then he will send you back. Isfahani[1] writes nothing at all. You have done all you could. Kanchan is just as you have described her. She does everything that she can possibly do. It will be a great thing if her health improves. You should both keep on writing. Let Kanchan not be in a hurry to come here.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. AMTUL SALAAM BIBI
KASTURBA SEVA MANDIR
BORKAMATA
BENGAL

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 492

[1] An office-bearer of the Calcutta Muslim League

78. LETTER TO KEDARNATH CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM,
March 13,1945

BHAI KEDARBABU,

Will you on my behalf place flowers on Deenabandhu's tomb on April 5?[1] Benarsidas has reminded me. Please tell him that I have acted on his suggestion.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

KEDARNATH CHATTERJEE
"VISHAL BHARAT"
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

79. LETTER TO SARASWATI GANDHI

WARDHA, SEVAGRAM,
March 13, 1945

CHI . SURU[2],

My blessings are always with you. You are certain to pass. All children are unruly. Shanti[3] is no exception. However much you grow, unless you stop losing your temper you will remain crazy.

To both of you, oh no, to all the three of you,

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. SARASWATI GANDHI
C/O KANTILAL GANDHI
GANDHI SEVA SANGH
MYSORE

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6183

[1] C. F. Andrews died on this date in 1940
[2] Wife of Kantilal Gandhi, Gandhiji's grandson
[3] Addressee's son

80. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 13, 1945

Children should sleep longer.

If you are not going to do as I wrote to you, you should forget it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 4480

81. LETTER TO UTTAMCHAND GANGARAM

SEVAGRAM,
March 14, 1945

DEAR UTTAMCHAND,

There has been some delay in sending you a reply. Please excuse the delay. I hope you can understand the enclosed[1]. There is no loss of capital as you suggest and no loss of interest. We are getting more than the original amount. Nevertheless the writer admits his mistake in neither referring to you nor to me. Knowing you as well as I do, I would have sought your permission. But the manager who is an old trained man used his discretion when there was no loss and much bother was saved. The money is being well used. But I shall carry out your wish, if you still so desire. Only realize how difficult it is to deal with promissory notes.

Hope you are keeping well.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

UTTAMCHAND GANGARAM
BOMBAY BAKERY
HYDERABAD—KARACHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This is not available.

82. LETTER TO ATULCHANDRA M. GHOSH

SEVAGRAM,
March 14, 1945

DEAR ATUL BABU,

The questions you have asked should be answered by the people on the spot, regard being had to their will and capacity for suffering[1]. At this distance, I can say I cannot submit to any of theprohibitions, lathi or no lathi. These prohibitions are meaningless except as trials of strength. We may not stop the flag nor the purely constructive programme. But do, not as I advise or say, but as you and people really feel.

Love

BAPU

ATULCHANDRA M. GHOSH
DULMI
PURULIA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

83. LETTER TO ALLADI K. KRISHNASWAMY IYER

SEVAGRAM,
March 14, 1945

DEAR SIR ALLADI,

I thank you for the pains you have taken.[2] May God cure you quickly and spare you for many years to come. Yes, Vaidyanath Iyer has a heart of gold. He is a rare servant of the people.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR ALLADI KRISHNASWAMY IYER
ADVOCATE
MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In spite of the restrictions against the hoisting of the national flag in public places in Bihar, the addressee had decided to hoist it on April 6 at Kanapasu—a constructive work centre—and had sought Gandhiji's advice about it.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Alladi K. Krishnaswamy Iyer", 2-3-1945.

84. LETTER TO GULZARILAL NANDA

SEVAGRAM,
March 14, 1945

CHI. GULZARILAL,

I came to know only today that you had a home. I had always thought you were a homeless person. Well.

I think the reply you have given is all right. I have read everything about the new organization. The proper reply to the objection is that it is not a new institution. Now that it has the requirednumber of members, efforts are going on to keep it functioning as far as possible. The institution has come into being to give advice and maintain uniformity in all the activities, so it does not require any sanction. Those who will listen to its advice will benefit and those who will not will lose. The institution is not going to prevent the activities of anyone. Moreover, most of its members are Congressmen. It functions and will continue to function in order to render help to the Congress.

I hope you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

GULZARILAL NANDA
LABOUR OFFICE
LAL DARWAZA
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

85. LETTER TO DR. B. B. YODH

SEVAGRAM,
March 14, 1945

BHAI YODH,

What you wrote about Sir Purushottam made me happy. I am sure under your treatment he will be fully restored.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. YODH
RAVAL BUILDING
WELLINGTON ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

86. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 14, 1945

Three pounds will be digested in a whole day.[1]

No home work should be given as far as possible. They may read what pleases them or may not read at all. They may be asked how they spend their time. They should be advised in this regard.

Asha Devi said you were taking interest in the children. In that case it is worth considering whether you should stay on with them and have your food with them or they should be put up with you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Did I not write about the 14th?

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4481

[1] This is in Gujarati.

87. LETTER TO JAINARAYAN VYAS

SEVAGRAM,
March 14, 1945

BHAI JAINARAYAN VYAS,

If you must see me then let me know the date before you come. Make it before the 23rd. Do not call the conference.

Blessings from
BAPU

JAINARAYAN VYAS
ALL-INDIA STATES PEOPLES' CONFERENCE
Jodhpur

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

88. LETTER TO RISHABHDAS RANKA

SEVAGRAM,
March 14, 1945

CHI. RISHABHDAS,

I thought that I had conveyed to Madalasa my suggestion regarding the name. I must have been mistaken. Let the name be Rohitashva[1]. It will be a great thing if he has the qualities associated with the name. I got your letter of the 3rd today.

Blessings from
BAPU

RISHABHDAS
BAJAJWADI, WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Rohitashva was the son of king Harishchandra of mythology who underwent great sufferings in upholding truth.

89. LETTER TO J. R. D. TATA

SEVAGRAM,
March 15, 1945

DEAR JEHANGIRJI,

I have just heard from Bapa that you are recouping your health in Ooty. I should like a line to know how you are. Of course I shall not expect you at the Trustees' meeting in Bombay if you are at all unwell. I write this purposely in English as you might not have all your staff there.

Love.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI J. R. D. TATA
OOTY, SOUTH INDIA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

90. LETTER TO M. S. KELKAR

SEVAGRAM,
March 15, 1945

DEAR DR. ICE[1],

Your usual budget of complaints.

You are a rolling-stone ever since I have known you. That I like you notwithstanding is a different thing altogether. Your milk-and-distilled-water treatment I have tried how long? But I was not cured. You have been to Aundh and you had all the facilities. You could not stick there. What will you do now by coming here? You say your treatment is expensive. How can you serve villages? I have asthma cases, others, and I have a consumptive. If you still want to try your hand come and see. It is very hot here just now. I am likely to be away in April. If you would stay here in heat and try, come and stayas soon as you like. There is a fair quantity of milk here. I shall pay you 3rd class fare on your coming here. No return fare if you feel

[1] Gandhiji had given this name to the addressee on account of his enthusiasm for ice treatment.

disappointed. You might, if you prove your worth, get one or two cottages for your hospital work. But you have to carve your way for all this, i. e., prove your worth to the people round you.

I shall inquire about your manuscript.

Love.

BAPU

DR. M. S. KELKAR
C/O R. J. PATKAR
15 MANORAMAGANJ
INDORE
C.P.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

91. LETTER TO JAYA

SEVAGRAM,
March 15, 1945

CHI. JAYA,

I have your letter. If we remember God, we have to forget good and bad, happiness and unhappiness. And all of us have to take that road sooner or later. According to an expression in English that is the path trodden by the majority. Life is only a short spell of moonlight. In the end all is dust.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIII

92. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

March 15, 1945

CHI. LILI,

I have already written one letter to you. The fruits of patience are sweet. I have already taken the step that you expected. Sweet are the fruits of patience. For the present those that are here will stay on. Why should you worry about me? There is

93. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

March 15, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

You must not have Kanchan living separately. If it is necessary, you two may certainly have a separate establishment. Do what will make both of you happy.

It would be good if you could treat Shantabehn as a member of the Ashram and look after her. But I would not wish to foist her on you against your wish.

About the work, if you can arrange things as you want them, do so.[1] I am myself not persuaded, but if you feel confident you may go ahead. Don't you wish to have a separate kitchen for the hospital?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5854. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

94. LETTER TO CHAKRAYYA

SEVAGRAM,
March 15, 1945

CHI. CHAKRAYYA,

I understood your letter. The misunderstanding was on your part. It is good that it has been cleared up. There is no need for any other atonement.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHAKRAYYA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee had suggested entrusting kitchen work to hired staff.

95. LETTER TO TARACHAND

SEVAGRAM,
March 15, 1945

BHAI TARACHANDJI,

I may write in Hindustani, may I not? What I say is clear. If all the leaders are agreeable, I will not insist on a plebiscite. They include independent Muslims, Sikhs and others. Everything can be done if all of them will be happy.

If there is a trace of suspicion, it is better to give a reasonable interpretation[1].

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. TARACHAND
C/O SHRI RAJENDRANARAYAN
CHANDNI CHOWK
DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

96. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

March 15, 1945

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

I heard from Bapa today that you had fever. Your fever worries me. Why should you get fever? If you need Rameshwardas there, keep him. Even so, I will stay only at the Birla House. I will leave here on the 30th[2]. The programme after the meeting is indefinite. lf you cannot come because of weakness I shall manage.

Blessings from
BAPU

SETH GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
BIRLA HOUSE
ALBUQUERQUE ROAD
NEW DELHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8066. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] These two words are in English.
[2] For Bombay, to attend the Kasturba National Memorial Trust meeting

97. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

March 15, 1945

MY DEAR C. R.,

I have just learnt that G[1]. is unwell. I have written to him. This is just to tell you that all is well. Mridula and Bapa came here. More probably from them or later. Love to you all. Hope L.[2] is well.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2104

98. LETTER TO ALUBEHN MISTRI

SEVAGRAM,
March 16, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

You are taking good care of Bhai Dinshaw. God certainly gives him the help he needs. If there is any such provision in the Kasturba Memorial Fund, he will certainly get it.

Blessings from
BAPU

ALUBEHN MISTRI
JAL CHAMBERS
OPPOSITE RAILWAY HOSPITAL
CHURNEY ROAD JUNCTION
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] G. D. Birla; *vide* the preceding item.
[2] Lakshmi Gandhi

99. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

March 16, 1945

CHI. ANAND,

Beware of the boy who is with you. Get some translations done so long as you do not receive something from Bhai Jivanji.

How are you?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI ANAND HINGORANI

UPPER SIND COLONY

KARACHI, SIND

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

100. LETTER TO M. S. ANEY

SEVAGRAM,

March 16, 1945

BAPUJI ANEY,

You send me a nice Sanskrit *shloka* for the New Year and the greetings in English.. . If you wanted to send them in English, then why not in Hindustani or in Sanskrit also? A Hindustani translation of the *shloka* was necessary. I hope you are well.

Greetings for the New Year from

BAPU

BAPUJI ANEY

COLOMBO, CEYLON

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

101. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

March 16, 1945

CHI. BRAJKISAN,

Do not worry about me. Do not believe the newspapers. I have your letter. You must completely recover. Khurshedbehn is with her sisters. My blessings to all the brothers.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2491

102. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 16, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You must either take full responsibility for the children or leave this work. Leaving it now would not be proper. Do as you think best after consulting Asha Devi.

There are two causes for involuntary emissions: over-eating or eating wrong kinds of things and impure thoughts. Sometimes the two causes may combine. It was no doubt negligence. That you did not know of it till the morning, what does it show? Are you reciting Ramanama?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4482

103. LETTER TO CHAUNDE MAHARAJ

SEVAGRAM,
March 16, 1945

CHAUNDE MAHARAJ,

I have your letter. I do advise you. What is the point then in including me in the Mandal? Take work from me. Keep my name out.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

CHAUNDE BUA
C|O GOVARDHAN SANSTHA
SADASHIV PETH
POONA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

104. LETTER TO KRISHNA IYER

SEVAGRAM,
March 16, 1945

CHI. KRISHNA,

Complete your studies. Even after that if you want to come, write to me. How can you be tired of studies? You can do a great deal of my constructive work while studying.

Blessings from
BAPU

KRISHNA IYER
HANSRAJ MAHILA MAHAVIDYALAYA
LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

105. LETTER TO P. C. GHOSH

SEVAGRAM,
March 16, 1945

CHI. PROFULLA,

Dr. Mitra's scheme is not for the villages. Probably he does not even know the villages. This shows that merely being clever is no use to us. I will reach Bombay on the 31st. It will be good if you come there. It has become very hot here now.

Blessings from
BAPU

P. C. GHOSH
1418 GARIAHUT ROAD
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

106. LETTER TO V. G. SAHASRABUDDHE

SEVAGRAM,
March 16, 1945

BHAI SAHASRABUDDHE,

Bring the girl before the 24th What will Balasaheb be able to do? Explain to me when you Come. Remember my time is 3 o'clock.

Blessings from
BAPU

V. G. SAHASRABUDDHE
MAHAL, NAGPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

107. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

SEVAGRAM,
March 16, 1945

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

I have here with me a married Punjabi woman. She will stay in Delhi so long as it is cool there. She is a teacher. In Delhi, too, I want you to put her up in a girls' hostel or with you. She is not to be paid anything, though of course she will have to be fed. If she can go to any place, please write to me or send me a wire. Her name is Vimalabehn Gurbuxani.

Blessings from
BAPU

VIYOGI HARI

HARIJAN CHHATRALAYA

DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

108. NOTE TO GOPE GURBUXANI

March 16, 1945

Fate is the fruition of karma. Fate may be good or it may be bad. Human effort consists in overcoming adverse fate or reducing its impact. There is a continuous struggle between fate and human effort. Who can say which of the two really wins? Let us therefore continue effort and leave the result to God.[1]

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1327

[1] The addressee had asked: "What is fate and how is it related to human effort?"

109. LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENT, BHAGALPUR JAIL

SEVAGRAM,
March 17, 1945

THE SUPERINTENDENT
BHAGALPUR JAIL
BHAGALPUR

DEAR SIR,

Here is a cutting from the *Aj* of 14th instant. It contains disquieting news about Shrimati Prabhavati Devi, your prisoner. I shall thank you to tell me what truth there is in the news.

Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

110. LETTER TO GOPINATH BARDOLOI[1]

SEVAGRAM,
March 17, 1945

MY DEAR BARDOLOI,

Why have you sent a friend all the way from Assam when you have my advice in your pocket ? I repeat—do what you think is best cost what it may. Kill the corruption. Adopt that alternative which is best under the circumstances. Keep all clean men and parties together. I know that difficulties will be many but to cut our way through them makes us.

Yours,
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] A summary of this letter appears in Vol. LXXIX, p. 289.

111. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

SEVAGRAM,
March 17, 1945

BHAI GOPICHAND,

I have gone through all your articles. They are good. I do not propose to make any changes in them. Do you intend to get them published? If you do, then go through them carefully. Will it be in the three Punjab scripts and not in Hindustani?

I hope you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

112. LETTER TO BALVANT SINHA

March 17, 1945

CHI. BALVANT SINHA,

Knowing you as I do I can say from your remarks that at least for some time you must leave Sevagram. Write a sweet letter to Totaramji. I see no need of your going there. The same goes for Surendraji. But you may go to your own village. Or, to Mirabehn or perhaps to Manzar Ali. In any of these three places you will do at least something. Yes, Bengal is a vast field for your *goseva* work. But now that is out.

Now about Sevagram. It is my belief that Sevagram will never break up. It may undergo transformation, as was the case with Sabarmati. As long as I am alive and active, there will not be much change at Sevagram. I do not wish to make any. If I survive, a new order will come in course of time. Those who are attached to Sevagram will not give it up for good either now or after I am gone. Who can say that after I am dead even Vinoba may not possibly make the place his own? If he survives me, his loyalty and his non-violence will not permit him to leave Sevagram.

I am sure that even though all the organizations are independent, they are unknowingly dependent on Sevagram. This is just as well.

When you become meek like a she-goat, you will again come to like Sevagram as you did in the beginning. What does it matter if today the cow has been taken away from you? At least you have not been taken away from the cow? What does it matter if today you and Munnalal do not feel one as before?

I am not saying all this in order to make you change your mind. My advice to you stays. Go where I have suggested. After that you may come here when you feel the urge.

What more can I say?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1955

113. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 17, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You are not going to be cured of involuntary emissions by being upset about them. Find out the cause and remove it and keep yourself fully engaged in your work.

Do what pleases Asha Devi. That alone will please me. It would not be proper to give up the work of Nayee Talim having once taken it up. Still, it is for you to consider.

What will apply in the Vend is the *Gita* maxim "What then will restraint avail?"

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4483

114. NOTE TO GOPE GURBUXANI

March 17, 1945

Asceticism in the English sense is not needed at the present time. But there is all the need for renunciation. Read the *Ishavasya*[1] and reflect on it. Realize the inner meaning of renunciation. It has been explained in the *Gita*.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1328

115. LETTER TO T. B. SAPRU

SEVAGRAM,
March 18, 1945

DEAR DR. SAPRU,

I have heard about your proposed recommendations[3]. I do hope the report will not be weak in any place. *Verb. sap.*

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi-Sapru Papers. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta. Also G.N. 7568

[1] The reference is to verse I of this Upanishad.

[2] The addressee had asked; "How far are asceticism and renunciation beneficial in life?"

[3] The Sapru Committee's proposals about the future constitution of India were made public on April 7, 1945. The proposals envisaged, *inter alia,* parity between Hindus and Muslims in the constitution-making body, the central legislature and the executive, rejected the demand for Pakistan and the right of any province to secede and the transfer of paramountcy to the Indian Union, with a minister in charge of functions in relation to Indian States.

116. LETTER TO ANNIE MASCARENE

SEVAGRAM,
March 18, 1945

DEAR MASCARENE,

I remember you showed me Sir M. Ismail's[1] letter in which he asserted that you had never spoken ill of anyone behind his back.

As to the 2nd question I can give no opinion. I do not profess to understand Travancore politics. You should do what you think is best.

Yours,

BAPU

MISS A. MASCARENE
STATE CONGRESS OFFICE
TRIVANDRUM

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

117. LETTER TO FRANY TALYARKHAN

SEVAGRAM,
March 18, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I got your yearly bulletin. I hope you do not expect me to read it. I just turned the pages for a few minutes.

Blessings from

BAPU

FRANY TALYARKHAN
SHAHARUKH SABAWALA
SIR P. M. ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Sir Mirza Ismail, Dewan of Mysore

118. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

SEVAGRAM,
March 18, 1945

BHAI MUNSHI,

I read the whole of your book[1] on the deadlock[2] too. I liked it. My basic opposition remains. But you have given the reader quite a lot of material to think about.

I hope Sarala[3] and her daughter are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7686. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

119. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
March 18, 1945

CHI. RAMDAS,

You form opinions on incomplete information and feel unhappy. This has been your old habit. You must get rid of it. What wrong notions you have formed on the basis of Su[shila]behn's letter ! I am not a person to waste myself physically and mentally. I do my work and am happy. I put my idea of education into practice in my own case. My fast—it could not really be called a fast because I took fruit juice—was purely physical. I did not find it unbearable. I did not agree to take glucose and so had the feeling of fasting. But that was only for a short time, as later on I had to take glucose. I can tell you more but this should suffice. Bear in mind that I take all possible care of myself. I hope Kanam is well. He wrote to me that he would be coming to Bombay but would be able to do so only after hisexaminations. I do not know whether I shall be there then. We shall see. I hope Ushi has recovered.

Blessings from

BAPU

RAMDAS GANDHI
KHALASI LINES
NAGPUR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *The Indian Deadlock*
[2] Gandhiji has used the English word
[3] Addressee's daughter

120. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 18, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Has it not been proved that in your case proximity to me does not help in observing *brahmacharya?* Otherwise, after so many years, your *brahmacharya* should have been perfect. It is necessary for the sake of *brahmacharya* that one should engage oneself in ennobling work. Nayee Talim is one such work and when children are there what more can you ask? If you stay with the children instead of being here, you will not lose contact with me and you will be kept away from idle talk.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4484

121. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
March 18, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your long letter betrays your state of mind. Is it not right that I should write to you taking what you say to be the complete truth? The others who are here do not feel very intensely about *brahmacharya. You* do and so I write about it. But in the end you must do as you feel. If you do something I say without your heart being in it, you may take it that it will be futile. It will be no good at all if you mechanically do what I say. What you have written is of course true. What does it matter? I do consult people after all. What is the harmeven if the boys leave? There is a lot of work to do. After all our principle is just this: whoever is available is fit to be taught and fit also to teach. You must not become disheartened.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4486

122. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

March 18, 1945

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

I received your telegram just now at 6 o'clock. I do not like it. Go to Mussoorie if you have to. Stay on there for a while. Give up the idea of going to Bombay. Rameshwardas too may stay there. I shall manage.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8068. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

123. LETTER TO GANESH SHASTRI JOSHI

SEVAGRAM,
March 18, 1945

BHAI GANESH SHASTRI JOSHI,

Sushilabehn showed me your letter. She is doing as much as she can. The course is not easy. The votaries of Ayurved have to cut a path for themselves. They will need courage, a spirit of sacrifice and knowledge. I have not come across a single vaidya who would sacrifice everything for this work. I am not worried that there are too many doctors on the committees. When the need arises we can have vaidyas on every committee. I shall never let a good suggestion pass. But what am I to do if I do not come across any. Do as much as you can. Give as much as you can.

I am happy that you are teaching Rambhau.

Blessings from

BAPU

GANESH SHASTRI JOSHI
28 SHUKRAVAR [PETH]
BEHIND TULSI BAGH, POONA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

124. LETTER TO SHRIPAD JOSHI

SEVAGRAM,
March 18, 1945

CHI. SHRIPAD,

I think my reply is contained in my articles. But forget it. "Those" refers to the private householders.[1] The Government' has made good the loss caused to it a hundred times over. We can make good our loss in one way only: by winning swaraj.

In my speech of the 7th[2] I had indicated what was to be done after my arrest. There was of course the fourteen-point programme. Success or failure is in the hands of God. It is my belief that if everybody had followed that programme we should have won freedom by now. I have written enough about the parliamentary programme.

You can show my letters to any of your friends. I am not writing for' the Press. There is nothing secret in my letters but it is not every reader who can understand them.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5615

125. TELEGRAM TO SHYAMLAL

POONA,
March 19, 1945

SHRI SHYAMLAL
BAJAJWADI
WARDHA

IT APPEARS I NEED NOT MOVE BEFORE FIRST APRIL. THEREFORE IT SEEMS MEETING AS ORIGINALLY FIXED POSSIBLE BUT I STILL THINK INADVISABLE. BUT YOU CAN RECONSIDER IF YOU WISH.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Shripad Joshi", 1-3-1945.
[2] i. e., August 7, 1942.

126. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
March 19, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

I am so glad Pyarelal was with you for two days. As soon as I get your manuscript[1] I shall look through it and advise.

If Shummy and Maude have to go to Bombay you have to swallow your pride (which would be false) and go to Bombay even under conditions. But you must feel the call from within, not from me.

You must feel happy and at peace under all circumstances. That is the meaning of the *shlokas* we sing daily.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4151. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7786

127. LETTER TO MAUDE

SEVAGRAM,
March 19, 1945

MY DEAR MAUDE,

Of course I have had all about your operation and your bravery. Purposely I refrained from writing to you. I now learn that you will appreciate a line from me. Well, all I have heard fills me with admiration for you and joy that you have come out of the ordeal so splendidly. Let us hope you will have no more to go through.

Love.

BAPU

SMT. MAUDE
C/O RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Of the addressee's booklet *To Women*

128. LETTER TO SHUMSHERE SINGH

SEVAGRAM,
March 19, 1945

MY DEAR SHUMMY,

So you have passed through the fire in a threefold manner. You can surely shout "God is great and merciful." Have you not had this double demonstration?

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

129. LETTER TO DR. SUBODH MITRA

SEVAGRAM,
March 19, 1945

DEAR DR. MITRA,

I must confess your scheme staggered me. It is after the Chowringhee style, not the village style. You have to study your villages anew.[1]

Yours,
BAPU

DR. SUBODH MITRA
3 CHOWRINGHEE TERRACE
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to P. C. Ghosh", 16-3-1945.

130. LETTER TO GOSIBEHN CAPTAIN

SEVAGRAM,
March 19, 1945

DEAR SISTER[1],

Your dear letter. I must try to give you an hour when you are here. I used the word with due cause. But I had a repudiation from both quarters. It gladdened me.

Love.

BAPU

GOSIBEHN CAPTAIN
ANDHERI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

131. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

March 19, 1945

CHI. BABUDI,

I was glad to learn that Anand was well again. Be careful and the cough also will disappear. Sushila and Pyarelal will of course be with me. But if you also come, you will no doubt serve in some way. I hope to reach Bombay on the 31st.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10054. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

[1] This is in Gujarati.

132. LETTER TO DR. JIVRAJ MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
March 19, 1945

BHAI JIVRAJ,

As is your custom, you have given me a perfect reply and have satisfied Chi. Indu too. Listen to Hansabehn[1]. Do not take upon yourself any extra work and render greater service to the country.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. JIVRAJ MEHTA
22 CURZON ROAD
NEW DELHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

133. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM,
March 19, 1945

CHI. MRIDU,

I have your letter. It is good that you met Mathuradas. I have gone through the speech for the Association. It is good. If all the three think it proper, you too may write. I have done what I had to do. Look after your health. There is a letter from Mummy also. I do not write to her separately.

Blessings from
BAPU

MRIDULA SARABHAI
KASHMIR HOUSE
94 NAPEAN SEA ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's wife

134. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

SEVAGRAM,
March 19, 1945

CHI. NARAHARI,

This is only for you. If you can explain to me, Jajuji will be saved much trouble. If you cannot, then read this out to him. What I have marked with a Cross cannot be the responsibility of the Charkha Sangh. The Sangh may have to contribute to what is intended for women. If it is exclusively for village women then the Kasturba Fund should bear the burden. Whose sanction does Lakshmi Babu want? Any responsibility which falls on the Charkha Sangh can be borne by it only when it conforms to the new course I have suggested. There are other problems no doubt, but I will not raise them just now. The work is a little complicated but we should not use force.

May be Lakshmi Babu intends to place the whole thing before the general body which has been formed!

Blessings from

BAPU

NARAHARI PARIKH
SEVAGRAM ASHRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

135. LETTER TO SHANTILAL

SEVAGRAM,
March 19, 1945

CHI. SHANTILAL,

I was happy to have your letter. I hope to reach Bombay on the 31st. To begin with I shall be at the Birla House. Probably I shall not be able to keep you with me all the twenty-four hours, but certainly you will be with me most of the time. I will try to read your new writing, so please bring it. Is it *vitaraga* or *veetaraga?*

Blessings from

BAPU

SHANTILAL
ANAVIL ASHRAM
SURAT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

136. NOTE TO KAZI NIZAMUDDIN AHMED

[After *March 19, 1945*][1]

Write a postcard as follows:[2]

Why should you write to me in English ? The jaggery was received after I had left Sevagram. Why has Sultana[3] not written to me so far ? I hope she is in good health. Write to her that she should write to me regularly. She may write at Sevagram.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

137. TELEGRAM TO M. S. KELKAR

SEVAGRAM,
March 20, 1945

DR. KELKAR
CARE PATAKAR
15 MANORAMAGANJ
INDORE

COME QUICK SEVAGRAM.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter dated March 19, 1945.
[2] This is in Gujarati.
[3] Addressee's grand-daughter

138. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

WARDHAGANJ,
March 20, 1945

GHANSHYAMDASJI
BIRLA HOUSE
NEW DELHI

REPORT INCOMPLETE[1]. UNCLEAR IF YOU TAKE MILK. STATE VEGETABLES. ANY CASE ADVISE HALF OUNCE BUTTER DIRECT FROM MILK WITH TOAST AND SALAD WELL CHEWED. DRINK HOT WATER HONEY SODA. PRACTISE REGULATED DEEP BREATHING ON EMPTY STOMACH. REPORT. LOVE.

BAPU

From C.W. 7870. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

139. LETTER TO URMILADEVI

SEVAGRAM,
March 20, 1945

MY DEAR URMILA[2],

I hope you got my wire in Reply [to] your first letter. Now I have your second letter. I have seen Dr. Mitra's scheme. I have written to him and also Profulla about it.[3] Dr. Mitra has to revise his scheme in terms of the villages whom he must see in their dangers [*sic*] before he can write anything useful.

As for yourself, you need not worry. The first thing is for you to be fit for nursing. Will you ever be? Mere wish is of little use. When

[1] The addressee had wired: "Fever left but cough still persisting. Am taking toast, vegetable and milk no butter. Would you suggest any change in diet?"

[2] Sister of C. R. Das

[3] *Vide* "Letter to P. C. Ghosh", 16-3-1945 and "Letter to Dr. Subodh Mitra", 19-3-1945.

the wish is backed by fitness, you will be wanted by all.

Hope all is well there.

Love.

BAPU

URMILADEVI
2/1B HINDUSTAN PARK
P. O. R. B. AVENUE
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

140. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

March 20, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have read all that you have written. Give up the notion that I have no trust in you. That you are unmethodical is shown by your writing and your behaviour. What can you do about it? First the realization, then the endeavour, then the time. That is the order.

I do wish that there should be a separate kitchen. I am considering what to do now. I will write nothing now about Sushila. There was no question of my selecting anybody for my office. I employ in it only those whom I cannot fix up anywhere else. Others who joined did so by accident. If I had to start a new office altogether, I should know very well how to do it. You do not know with what type of persons I have run an office in the most difficult circumstances. But can I not run the Ashram also in that manner? Why did I not appoint Vinoba to run the office? You should be able to draw the appropriate conclusions from this. If when I have some free time you ask me for work, I will tell you. Do you really feel like doing some work in the office?

Personally I should like to return from Bombay in about four days' time. But I shall be in the doctors' hands. Maybe I shall have to go to Panchgani if they insist. I don't know. We shall see what happens.

I do not say, or wish, that you should go to Kanchan. But if she or you feel such a desire, I would encourage you. If you tell me your

reasons for not going, or write them down, I might consider. I have to be away for two months. In that time there is a chance that the kitchenarrangements may improve. I am not satisfied with this letter. The circumstances themselves are unsatisfactory. Whom can we blame for that?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5857. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

141. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

March 20, 1945

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. What a narrow escape you have had![1] I hope Lavanyalata is doing well. Kanchan's postcard to Munnalal came today. I see from it that she is very ill. Why? I am asking Munnalal to go there. Let us see what happens. I am all right. I am working regularly. I shall have to go to Bombay towards the end of this month. I am not writing separately to Kanchan.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 493

142. LETTER TO BALVANT SINHA

March 20, 1945

CHI. BALVANT SINHA,

There is no need to think about your state of mind. It seems to me that you should go to your village. Go to Mirabehn and also to Dharmadev Shastri. Staying away at this time can only do you good. No doubt the Ashram remains full because of me, but it has proved its independent existence during my absence, be it here, at Sabarmati, at Kochrab or at Phoenix. The *Autobiography* gives the story up to Sabarmati. It is astonishing. Ask somebody or ask me. It is good to learn veterinary science. There is no hurry.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1956

[1] Lavanyalata and the addressee had met with an accident while travelling by a cycle rickshaw.

143. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SEVAGRAM,
March 20, 1945

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have sent you an express telegram[1], a copy of which is enclosed. What are you taking, how much and when? What leafy vegetables are you taking, and are you taking them raw or boiled? You do not throw away the water, do you? Will not *khakhara*[2] be better than toast? Does the Hour include the bran? If you are taking milk, how much? Whatever happens you must take half an ounce of butter well spread over the toast or *khakhara*, together with the salad. If you have indigestion, reduce other things, but continue the butter. Deep breathing is essential. Close one nostril and breathe deeply through the other. You can gradually increase it to half an hour. Utter Ramanama with every breath you take. When doing breathing exercises, you should have fresh air on all sides. It would be better to do it in the open. You should do it every morning without fail and afterwards at least four times after the food has been digested. Breathe in and breathe out. This exercise should be taken slowly. Do your bowels move properly? Are you able to sleep? If you do all this carefully you will soon get rid of the cough.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8067. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

144. LETTER TO SATYAVATI

SEVAGRAM,
March 20, 1945

CHI. SATYAVATI[3],

I do have news of you. Pyarelal also gave me some. It is good that you are in Harijan Nivas. You must get well. Chand is somewhat agitated. She has received so much from you. Must she not now serve

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to G. D. Birla", 20-3-1945.
[2] Thin, crisp chapatis
[3] Granddaughter of Swami Shraddhanand

you? The thought is noble. If you need Chand's services, I will send her immediately. She is learning to nurse the sick here. But nursing you will be the proper training. However, if you do not need Chand's services, then I do not see any point in sending her merely so that you can look at each other. Let me know your mind.

Khurshedbehn left a few days ago. She is in Poona with Nargisbehn.

The heat has started here. I do not therefore have the courage to send for you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

145. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

March 20, 1945

BHAI JAJUJI,

Those who spin should wear khadi and those who wear khadi should spin. Spinning means picking the cotton bolls from the field, separating the seeds with a rolling-pin, ginning the cotton, making the slivers, spinning the yarn of the required count and doubling it.[1]

It was good as it was. But since I was asked I have put down my ideas. Have a look at it and then I will write down whatever you want me to.

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This was a draft for the message to the Charkha Sangh; *vide* "A Message", 28-3-1945.

146. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

SEVAGRAM,
March 20, 1945

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

Again the same thing has happened. Although I sent you a telegram, Vimaladevi will not be going to Delhi now.[1] She will instead go to Simla with her husband. So forget about her now.

Blessings from
BAPU

HARIJAN ASHRAM
DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

147. NOTE TO GOPE GURBUXANI[2]

March 20, 1945

Read my article on the subject.[3]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1329

148. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

SEVAGRAM,
March 20, 1945

[Q.] Mr. Amery[4] told Karaka, *Bombay Chronicle*'s war correspondent, in the course of an interview, that you could give a lead. He stated that you had spoken for the Congress party before. In the context the suggestion seems to be that you candeal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Viyogi Hari", 16-3-1945.

[2] The addressee had asked: "Why is the cow worshipped in the Hindu religion and not in other religions?"

[3] *Vide* "Hinduism", 6-10-1921, and Appendix "Cow-Protection True and False", 20-9-1928

[4] L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, had given an interview to D. F. Karaka on March 16, 1945.

through Congress members in the legislatures. What are your views on these suggestions? In view of the statement made by Mr. Amery that "the Government Of India would no doubt need also to be satisfied that nothing would be done to impede or injure war efforts by direct opposition or by attempts to dislocate the economic situation", will you be pleased to make things absolutely clear on the point?

[A.][1] Wish is often father to the thought. I see nothing new in Mr. Amery's statement to Shri Karaka. All talk of resolution of the present deadlock is useless so long as the members of the Working Committee and other Congressmen are under detention. Obstruction of war effort is a mere bogey. But if it means that there will be fierce criticism of the bungling and corruption that has gone on in the name of war effort it is true—not that there is no criticism now. When the principal Congressmen are free there will be real national war effort if they are allowed to have an effective say.

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-3-1945

149. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[2]

SEVAGRAM,
[On or before *March 21, 1945*][3]

QUESTION: What is soul force? How is it related to satyagraha?

ANSWER: Soul force is nothing but a manifestation of His power or strength. Satyagraha cannot be practised nor is it possible without it (soul force). Hence satyagraha is directly connected with soul force.

Q. What is the value or worth of independence?

A. The direct or straight road to independence is non-violence. We can or shall be immortal or live in death by dying non-violently (or by sacrificing ourselves for a noble cause) but not by killing others (or by perpetrating violence).

The Hitavada, 28-3-1945

[1] Gandhiji gave this in writing.

[2] The questions were asked by Gope Gurbuxani on different dates. The Hindi originals are not available.

[3] The report appeared under the date-line "Sevagram, March 21, 1945".

150. FOREWORD TO "PRACTICE AND PRECEPTS OF JESUS"

Hating carefully gone through these chapters, I can recommend their careful[1] perusal to every believer in God be he a Christian or a follower of any other religion.

The booklet presents Professor J. C. Kumarappa's views on Christian teaching in a nutshell. It is a revolutionary view of Jesus as a man of God. It is none the less revealing and interesting. The interpretation of the Lord's prayer is novel and refreshing as are many other interpretations.

If all believe as Prof. Kumarappa does there will be no religious feuds and rivalries between sects and sects and different religions. Anyway, this reading of the Bible must bring solace to the Christians of India. If they will read the Bible as Prof. K. does, they need not be ashamed[2] of their forefathers or their ancient faith. What is bad and superstitious in the old they are able to throw off by means of the liberal teaching presented in the following pages but it helps one to see that there is much of the old which is imperishable and worthy of being treasured.

Indeed, Prof. K. has a message beyond the confines of India. He speaks with confidence born of a living faith in the belief that the West, though nominally Christian, has not known the true Jesus of the Gospels.

As I was going through these pages, I was reminded of the late Advocate F. A. Laughton of Durban. I was then no student of Roman Or Dutch Law nor of the case law of the four States of South Africa. In difficulty, therefore, I used to go to Mr. Laughton for help. But, after I had done with my work, he would proudly bring forth from his drawer a green cover book with his father's annotations from the Bible. It was Edwin Arnold's *Song Celestial,* and had Mr. Laughton's father's parallel passages from the Bible showing that there was much in common between the New Testament and the *Gita.* I was then a novice trying to find out Truth in all its aspects without then knowing that I was so doing. Prof. Kumarappa's interpretation with copious quotations from the Bible reminded me of what I used to believe even

[1] This word is omitted in the printed source.
[2] The printed source has "apologetic".

as early as 1894-95. I can therefore speak from experience of thetruth of the interpretation of the Gospels given in the following pages by Prof. Kumarappa.

M. K. GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, March 21, 1945

From a photostat: G.N. 10173. Also *Practice and Precepts of Jesus*

151. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

SEVAGRAM,
March 21, 1945

MY DEAR KU.,

See if this is what you want.[1] If not tell me what you do want. Hope you are flourishing.

Love.

BAPU

Later

Come tomorrow night after 8 p. m. or tomorrow morning at 7 a.m.

From a photostat: G.N. 10172

152. LETTER TO M. S. KELKAR

SEVAGRAM,
March 21, 1945

MY DEAR ICE,

Your letter. Never mind Aundh. I have wired you[2] to come at once as I am in Bombay in April. I hope to present you with some patients. Give me satisfaction, the rest will follow as day follows night.

Yours,

BAPU

DR. M. S. KELKAR
R. J. PATKAR
MANORAMAGANJ
INDORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to M. S. Kelkar", 20-3-1945.

153. LETTER TO P. W. SEBASTIAN

SEVAGRAM,
March 21, 1945

DEAR SEBASTIAN,

Sorry for the death of your wife. But there should be no grief. You, I and all of us have to go where she has gone.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

P. W. SEBASTIAN
PARIS HALL
TRICHUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

154. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
March 21, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

I have gone through your booklet[1]. It is good so far as it goes. Do you see that you have begun with your own experiences? You could not do otherwise. The central disease of India is its deep poverty and deeper ignorance. You have dealt with both but as items. But I do not ask you to rewrite anything. If you touch up anything, you may do so. If not, as it is good enough reading.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4152. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7787

[1] *To Women*; *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 19-3-1945.

155. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

March 21, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

You should never conclude from anything that I write that I must have examined every aspect. That is for you readers to do. I would of course relieve you and put up with whatever hardship follows. But the truth is that you ought not to abandon the work you have taken up. Man may not abandon his duty any more than the ant can abandon the pot of jaggery. We, however, look upon duty not as a pot of jaggery but as a burden. Otherwise how dare A. S. so much as suggest that you should leave? But that is what happened. I like what you say. By all means cling to the kitchen and make it a model one. It will bring you all the joy and you will get training along with the others. The gods will shower flowers and it may be I shall be there to watch. Make it an ideal kitchen. Run it with the help of servants, so called, but let them feel that they are not servants but masters or trustees. What more could you desire?

You now know my ideas fully. Forget Kanchan if possible. Write to her plainly that you are to get tempered here and she there. After both of you have become tempered, you will meet again. If you can do this, you will have brought down many fruits with one stone. The saying is about killing many birds with one stone. That is a wrong one, ours is the right one.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5859. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

156. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 21, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Why should you have even a piece of wood under the head? Sleep in *shavasana*[1], as I do. If you must have something, have a stone or a brick.

[1] A corpse-like posture for relaxation of the body

Do not give up carding and spinning. This one thing has become part of our life. Devote one hour regularly to this. You will acquire speed.

Why should you feel disappointed if you have to give up Nayee Talim? But some work has to be taken up.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4487

157. LETTER TO KHURSHED NAOROJI

SEVAGRAM,
March 22, 1945

VAHALAN BEHN,

I have your letter per friend. I answered all your previous letters. I do hope you had my replies. I can assure you that not a moment is wasted and taken away from the constructive programme. I am dealing with the post as it is brought to me without leaving any arrear.

Love to you all.

BAPU

SMT. KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI
DUNLAVIN LODGE
POONA 5

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

158. LETTER TO BISWANATH DAS

SEVAGRAM,
March 22, 1945

DEAR BISWANATH DAS,

Let the young man you mention write after the hot season, i. e., after June. I am likely to be away about 10th April. Hope you are well.

Love.

BAPU

BISWANATH DAS
BELLAGAM, P. O. PULSORA
DIST. GANJAM, ORISSA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

159. LETTER TO J. R. BHALA

SEVAGRAM,
March 22, 1945

BHAI BHALA,

I read carefully your letter to Pyarelal and your article. I hope to reach Bombay on the 31st. Make an appointment and meet me there. I will make further inquiries so that I can guide your Association.

M. K. GANDHI

BHAI J. R. BHALA
OVERSEAS STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
9 FORJETT HILL, BOMBAY 26

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2335

160. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

SEVAGRAM,
March 22, 1945

BHAI JINNAH,

Having read that you are ill, I am writing this. I trust the illness is a minor one and that you have recovered *by* now.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

Q. A. JINNAH SAHEB
PRESIDENT, MUSLIM LEAGUE
NEW DELHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

161. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
March 22, 1945

CHI. SITA,

I am very happy to have your letter. May you go on making progress. Manilal and Sushila will come when God wills. You should not worry. Look after your health and engross yourself in work. Sumi writes to me every week. I will send you—all of you—her next letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

SITA GANDHI
AKOLA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

162. LETTER TO KULWANT SINGH

SEVAGRAM,
March 22, 1945

SARDARJI,

Why should you write to me in English? The simple answer to the question you have put to me is that those who are in the Congress remain in it as its servants. I am not even a member of it. However I am its servant.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SARDAR KULWANT SINGH
P. O. MOGHAPURA
LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

163. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 22, 1945

CHI, KRISHNACHANDRA,

There is a Sanskrit party and a translation party. Both equally command my allegiance.[1] Because we are social animals we ought to find joy in collective recitation. Ultimately an individual should choose whichever way helps him to rise higher.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4488

164. LETTER TO VINAYAK D. SAVARKAR

SEVAGRAM,

March 22, 1945

BHAI SAVARKAR,

I write this after reading the news of the death of your brother. I had done a little bit for his release and ever since I had been taking an interest in him. Where is the need to condole with you? We are ourselves in the jaws of death. I hope his family are all right.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

VIR SAVARKAR

RATNAGIRI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The reference is to the recitation of Ashram prayers.

165. NOTE TO BALVANT SINHA

March 22, 1945

Ba's interpretation of the Ahalya[1] episode is correct. But it is one of many. There can be as many interpretations as there are devotees and their attitudes.

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, p. 366

166. LETTER TO HAFIZ ZAFFAR HUSSAIN

SEVAGRAM,
March 22, 1945

BHAI SAHEB,

I have your letter. Have patience. Remain quiet. You will see that the Gongres will not abandon freedom-loving Muslims.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

MAULVI HAFIZ ZAFFAR HUSSAIN

From a copy of the Urdu: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

167. A LETTER

SEVAGRAM,
March 22, 1945

BROTHERS,

I am surprised to see your letter in English. Why don't you write in Hindustani? I have already expressed my opinion. Whether to follow it or not is for each person to decide. I advise you to come to your own decision.

From a copy of the Urdu: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Wife of Gautama in the *Ramayana.* She had been turned into stone for adulterous conduct and then regained her human state when Rama touched the stone with his feet.

168. LETTER TO K. S. GOPALASWAMY[1]

[Before *March 23, 1945*][2]

Gandhiji, in his reply, has asked the handloom weavers of Tamil Nad to follow the instructions, issued by him to the handloom weavers and suggested that the weavers' families should begin spinning also and adopt a process of doubling so that handloom weavers may not be idle.

The Hindu, 25-3-1945

169. LETTER TO GOPINATH BARDOLOI[3]

[Before *March 23, 1945*][4]

Do what is best, cost what it may. Kill corruption. Adopt that alternative which is best under the circumstances. I know difficulties will be many but we have to cut our way through.

The Hitavada, 24-3-1945

170. LETTER TO P. B. CHANDWANI

SEVAGRAM,
March 23, 1945

MY DEAR CHANDWANI,

You can come when you like. But these are very hot months and I may be away. Come during the monsoons, or even in November. Of course work can be done in towns. But not out of K. B.[5] funds. You want right teachers, but we must discuss when we meet.

Love.

BAPU

P. B. CHANDWANI
OLD SUKKUR
SIND

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee, General Secretary of the Tamil Nad Handloom Weavers' Association, Karur, had sought Gandhiji's help in improving the condition of the handloom weavers who were undergoing hardships because of the scarcity of yarn.

[2] The report which carries the item bears the date, March 23, 1945.

[3] The addressee had sought Gandhiji's advice on the constitutional position.

[4] The report which carries the item is date-lined: "Shillong, March 23, 1945".

[5] Kasturba Gandhi Memorial Fund

171. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 23, 1945

The cotton seeds are not separated properly. The method is wrong and slow. The hand should barely touch them. The seeds must separate with one stroke. The hands must move very fast.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4489

172. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

March 23, 1945

CHI. ANAND,

I have your letter. How is the boy sent from here? Does he work? How is it about your food? How do you feel? How are Father and Mother? I am all right. How is Bharat?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

173. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 23, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I said what I recollected. Is it not true that at first you had wanted to be a teacher and desired a salary? It was even suggested once that you should be taken in the Wardha school. If this impression of mine is wrong I shall not repeat what I said. But I am certain that you have slowly been progressing. It is beside the point that you had not wanted the money for yourself. Have not these seven years been another journey for you?

It is all right about Nayee Talim. I am not going to let you off.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4490

174. LETTER TO MANAHAR

SEVAGRAM,
March 23, 1945

BHAI MANAHAR[1],

I discovered only today that the money for Shastriji's[2] maintenance was being sent from here. The expenditure in my opinion is too high. All expenditure should be channelled through you. I find even rent included in the expenses. The amount of Rs. 100 was sent to cover four months but almost the whole amount was spent in three months. I am also enclosing Shastriji's letter. Tell me after looking into everything how much should be paid. I do not have any private money of my own. Whatever I have is from donations. Surely I cannot make donations out of donations. I can spend money only for the purpose for which the donations are meant. The money paid to your account depends on donations. Please let me know how much I should give for Shastriji. Whatever is done should be through you. Consider Shastriji to be your patient. He can see this letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am not talking about the past. I say that there should be some restriction now. Shastriji is ill. He cannot even think properly. Whatever has to be done must be done either by you or by me. I can do nothing from here and so it becomes your duty. You must tell me how much should be sent to you. Shastriji has to be placed under your control.

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 5894. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Of Dattapur Lepers House
[2] Parachure Shastri

175. LETTER TO RAMKRISHNA BAJAJ

SEVAGRAM,
March 23, 1945

CHI. RAMKRISHNA[1],

Occasionally I read the letters you write to your mother. I keep getting news of your progress. It pleases me. Today I realized that I too could write to you. So I am writing. I learn from your letter that you have asked for underwear. I suggest you give up the use of underwear. We do not require it in our climate. But of course if you have got used to it and cannot do without it you may continue with it. You do see that it is our duty to minimize our expenses voluntarily and raise our life to the utmost. Develop yourself in every way.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3065

176. LETTER TO VENKATESH BHATT

March 23, 1945

BHAI VENKATESH BHATT,

Why do you write letters in English? Write in Hindustani or in your mother tongue. Damodar is brave. Money should not be collected by undertaking fasts. Money can be collected through work and service. A fast can often take the form of coercion.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3628

[1] Son of Jamnalal Bajaj

177. NOTE TO GOPE GURBUXANI

March 23, 1945

Fighting for peace is a contradiction in terms. How can there be peace for those who fight? There certainly is conflict between peace and restlessness. But this is welcome to the lover of peace for he finds his peace in restlessness.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1330

178. NOTE TO GOPE GURBUXANI

March 23, 1945

One meaning of education is knowledge of the Self and it is perfect in itself. But today it is wrongly interpreted. Hence I would say it is the all-round development of man and a true teacher is one who helps in such development[2].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1331

179. TELEGRAM TO HANUMANT RAI

SEVAGRAM,
March 24, 1945

HANUMANT RAI
1267 CHAITPURI
DELHI

GIVEN NO PERMISSION ANYONE UNNECESSARY COME.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee had asked: "Why is man fighting for peace and how can lasting peace be established?"

[2] The addressee had asked: "What is the aim of education and who can be described as a teacher?"

180. LETTER TO ARUNA ASAF ALI

SEVAGRAM,
March 24, 1945

MY DEAR DAUGHTER,

You cannot hurt me without hurting yourself. I laugh and invite you to share my laughter. "O ye of little faith!" You lose patience quickly because you misread me. Have I not said 1945 is not 1942. Yet I have not changed because you find that I am not covering myself with woollen shawls or even at all.[1]

Wait, watch and pray.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: Aruna Asaf Ali Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

181. LETTER TO KHURSHED NAOROJI

SEVAGRAM,
March 24, 1945

VAHALAN BEHN,

I am so glad you are going for a change to Panchgani. Work there but don't descend till you are really well. I treasure your caution to think of nothing but the constructive programme. You have also done well to tell me that I must meet the co-ordinating committee.

BAPU

SMT. KHURSHEDBEHN
DUNLAVIN LODGE
POONA 5

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In her letter of March 23, the addressee had expressed her grief at what she considered the changed attitude of Gandhiji towards the British.

182. LETTER TO Y. VENKATASUBBAIAH

SEVAGRAM,
March 24, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter. I must see the naturopath face to face before I move.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

V. VENKATASUBBAIAH
KASTURIDEVI NAGAR
NELLORE
S. INDIA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

183. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

SEVAGRAM,
March 24, 1945

CHI. BABUDI,

With children fever comes and goes. After Anand recovers come and stay with me. Do not get nervous.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10055. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

184. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 24, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You should not have lost the four-anna coin like that. About the Talimi Sangh I am sure I am right but I shall not force you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4504

185. NOTE TO GOPE GURBUXANI

March 24, 1945

Personality, i.e., the quality of being oneself, can be good or bad. If it is in conformity with the Self it is good and if it disregards the Self it is bad. It becomes good and develops by meditating on the Self and understanding its attributes.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1334

186. SPEECH AT A. I. S. A. MEETING-I[2]

SEVAGRAM,
March 24, 1945

I regret I shall not be able to be present throughout the entire proceedings. The reason is that I wish to live for 125 years, so that I can serve the country longer. I was not joking when I said so at the August meeting of A. I. C. C., for a satyagrahi never utters a word that he does not mean. I earnestly endeavour to fulfil this wish of mine and to this end I try to conserve as much of my energy as I can.

Whether I succeed in my desire to live to 125 years will not depend on doctors or medical science, though in my own way I have used the aid of both a good deal. It will depend on my ability fully to translate into practice the principles of truth and ahimsa. My experience of ahimsa has taught me that even in the work of service the pace should not be too fast. I confess that in this I have been only partially successful. I cannot regulate my pace sufficiently. Old, settled habits are not overcome all at once. I know undue haste is bad; it impedes work instead of facilitating it.

I have been asked whether it is desirable to mix politics and constructive work. At present some people are doing constructive workin order to strengthen the Congress organization. This mixing of

[1] The addressee had asked: "What is meant by personality and how can we build it up?"

[2] The meeting, attended by the Trustees, Provincial Secretaries and workers of A. I. S. A., was held in the Khadi Vidyalaya Hall.

politics and constructive work helps neither. I entirely concur with the view that for full justice to be done to constructive work it must stand on its own feet and should not be tied to political work. I fear this advice of mine will not have any effect. But as the author of the *Mahabharata* says, 'You must continue to proclaim the truth irrespective of whether anybody listens to you or not.' This comforts me.

Since I first presented through the Congress the constructive programme to the country in 1920, my faith in its efficacy has become stronger. In the light of experience and knowledge gained, its scope has been enlarged. It is my claim, and I have proclaimed it from the house-tops, that my 15-point programme is comprehensive and if it is pursued throughout the country we shall gain swaraj without any other programme.

Mahatma Gandhi referred to the formation of the Congress Ministry in the North-West Frontier Province and the reported efforts of Mr. Bhulabhai Desai to end the political deadlock and said:[1]

I prefer to keep silent on these points for the present. The Parliamentary programme may result in political swaraj; but non-violent swaraj is possible only by fully implementing the constructive programme.

If only the constructive programme was worked in the right spirit, there was no need either to incur the wrath of the ruling race or even to enter the Legislatures. But Gandhiji urged that even if parliamentary work was permitted, the special importance of the constructive programme would always remain and through it alone the freedom of the country could be achieved.

It may be asked whether the people will take up the constructive programme and pursue it in the way I want it pursued. My answer is that whether they do so or not does not take away from the merit of the remedy I advocate which is both good and practicable.

In this connection I have been asked whether, since carrying on of the movement against untouchability and organizing of peasants and workers in the name of the Congress provides a chance to Ambedkar and others to raise opposition and thus impede anti-untouchability work, it would not be better if these programmes were pursued independently of the Congress.

It is my view that if the followers of Ambedkar oppose us we

[1] This and the two following paragraphs are from *The Hindu.*

should not let ourselves be provoked or give up our work because of it. We should reach their hearts and understand their feelings. If we had gone through the experiences that the Harijans have gone through, there is no telling how embittered we might not have become and how little our ahimsa would have endured. Therefore on such occasions we should look inward and if there is the slightest vestige of untouchability left we should purge ourselves of it. It is my firm belief that if Hinduism is to survive, untouchability must go. If untouchability lives, Hinduism is bound to perish and will deserve to perish. The tragedy is that those who should have especially devoted themselves to the work of reform did not put their hearts into the thing and only played with it. What wonder that Harijan brethren feel suspicious, and show opposition and bitterness?

The removal of untouchability root and branch thus becomes a religious duty for me and for other Hindus like me. If we want to achieve swaraj through non-violence then untouchability will have to be eradicated. We cannot attain swaraj without that. Not all Congressmen share this view of mine. The Cangress is a democratic organization and it can have in it people representing many points of view. No one has the right to thrust his own view on others and expect them to work in pursuance of those views. It will be right if those who consider eradication of untouchability a religious duty give themselves up exclusively to this work with single-minded devotion. At the same time it will also be right if those who consider anti-untouchability work as a part of the political programme of the Congress pursue it as such.

Religious duty is a very subtle and complicated thing. It is not a commodity that can be bought and sold. Perpetual inner searching is needed in order to discover it. In essence it is the same for all times and all places but its form and its translation into practice changes from individual to individual and from time to time. If we can but grasp this secret of the many-sidedness of truth we shall be able to see any differences between principles and practice in their proper perspective. I therefore welcome both those who work for the eradication of untouchability independently and those who do so in pursuance of the Congress programme.[1]

The same argument, he said, applied to the question whether Congressmen

[1] The following paragraph is from *The Hindu.*

could organize the kisans and workers. Congressmen could not do it and yet remainCongressmen. He said he had already informed Mr. N. G. Ranga that it would lead to conflict if there was a separate organization for peasants and workers and consequent weakening of both the organizations.

He himself had ceased to be a four-anna member of the Congress and yet he claimed that he was rendering more service to the Congress by remaining outside. Everyone could do like him but no one had the right to lay down the rule for others or expect them to fall into line with himself. To find fault with those whose angle of approach to constructive work was different would be like cutting the very tree on which they were sitting.[1]

Gandhiji concluded the first set of questions by repeating what he had often said before that he was there merely to advise. No one was bound to accept his advice unless it appealed to his head and heart.

The other question asked is whether the funds of the Charkha Sangh can be used for giving training to khadi workers in other branches of constructive work, such as agriculture, animal husbandry and Nayee Talim, in order to equip them for allround village service. My answer is no. Funds collected for one institution cannot be spent on another. According to the constitution of the Charkha Sangh its funds cannot be used for any purpose other than khadi. Therefore expenditure on training in agriculture and animal husbandry should be borne by the institution concerned. Otherwise it will lead to confusion. If money belonging to one institution has to be advanced as loan to another institution, it should be done on proper security and on a reasonable rate of interest. The job of a trustee is difficult and dedicate. I have been atrustee of various institutions for over fifty years and every institution under me has flourished. The secret of my success is not my Mahatmaship but my business sense and the meticulous care I show in maintaining accounts. The success or otherwise of a public institution ought not to depend on the brilliance of an individual or individuals but on the purity of its management and the soundness of its business policy. If you cultivate these money will come to you of itself.

A friend has suggested that khadi work instead of being carried on through the various branches of the Charkha Sangh should, within a specified time, be entrusted to workers engaged in all-round village work who understand the scheme. I agree with the suggestion, but I am not in favour of laying down a time-limit for winding up all khadi production activity. I am however very keen that all the khadi

[1] This and the following paragraph are from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

consumed in the villages should be produced in the villages by thevillagers themselves. That will eliminate all incidental and overhead charges and put khadi beyond commercial competition. This is the work which can very effectively be done through Nayee Talim. Nayee Talim is all-embracing in its scope. That means it has to be like a magnet that attracts all, young and old.

So long as it does not develop this power it will be a body without soul.

If the Charkha Sangh is to free itself of the burden it carries, workers of the type needed will have to be produced. These are lacking at present. I therefore want that none of you should leave Sevagram till you have understood the principles of Nayee Talim.

I am as impatient as any of you to reach our goal but I realize that the task is an uphill one. India has been enslaved for so long—its slavery dates since even before British rule—that all initiative and originality in us has been killed and we are paralyzed with despair. Constructive work cannot make headway without a resuscitation of these lost qualities in us, and the attainment of independence through truth and non-violence must remain an empty dream unless constructive work can be carried through to success. Freedom is bound to come. It is coming. But mere political freedom will not satisfy me. It will certainly not satisfy the world which expects much greater things from India. Independence of my conception means nothing less than the realization of the "Kingdom of God within you and on this earth''.[1] I would rather work for and die in the pursuit of this dream though it may never be realized. That means infinite patience and perseverance. If India is satisfied with the mere attainment of political independence and there is nothing better for me to do, you will find me retiring to the Himalayas leaving those who wish to listen to me to seek me out there.

Gandhiji then offered to answer the remaining questions the next day[2] and before winding up his talk for the day he said that they need not be disheartened at the present state of the country. He was happy that with infinite patience they had achieved something in spite of their slavery and other obstacles, and he was really proud of the achievement.

[From Hindi]

Charkha Sanghka Navasanskaran, pp. 104-9; *The Bombay Chronicle,* 8-9-1945, and The *Hindu,* 27-3-1945

[1] *The Hindu* here has: "I want real freedom, *Ramarajya,* for India in every respect and that can be obtained only through the constructive programme."

[2] *Vide* "Speech at A. I. S. A. Meeting-II", 25-3-1945.

187. MESSAGE ON DEATH OF HERMANN KALLENBACH[1]

SEVAGRAM,
March 25, 1945

South Africa has lost a most generous-minded citizen and the Indians of that subcontinent a very warm friend.

In Hermann Kallenbach's death I have lost a very dear and near friend. He used to say to me often that when I was deserted by the whole world, I would find him to be a true friend going with me, if need be, to the ends of the earth in search of Truth. He used to spend at one time £75 per month on his person alone. But he so revolutionized his life that his monthly personal expenses amounted to under £8. This lasted while we lived together in a cottage seven miles from Johannesburg. When I left South Africa, he reverted in large part to his original life though mostly eschewing the things of life he had deliberately left.

He came in close touch with the late patriot Mr. G. K. Gokhale, who held him in high esteem. It may be noted that together with Henry Polak, Mr. H. Kallenbach was arrested for marching with me from Natal to Transvaal[2].

The Hindu, 27-3-1945

188. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

March 25, 1945

CHI. MIRA,[3]

Better a p. c. than no letter. I am glad you are making progress in the face of difficulties. Am glad too that P. came and kindled hopes in you of taking Godward path. Hope for my coming to you in October. Of course the allowance per month is meant. Nothing certain about my movement except that I go to Bombay on 31st instant. Am keeping well in spite of the heat which has begun in right earnest.

Love.

Blessings from
BAPU[4]

From the original: C.W. 6504. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9899

[1] Hermann Kallenbach died in Johannesburg on March 25, 1945.
[2] On November 10, 1913.
[3] The superscription is in Hindi.
[4] The subscription is in Hindi.

189. LETTER TO UTTAMCHAND GANGARAM

SEVAGRAM,
March 25, 1945

MY DEAR UTTAMCHAND,

Your letter. Many thanks for not insisting on re-conversion. The capital will be left untouched. Do please supplement the interest from time to time. The interest will not be allowed to fall below 3& p. c. If it does, you shall be consulted. Unless things go topsyturvy, it shall not go below 3_%.[1]

I do hope you will keep better. Have you consulted any naturopath? If Mahadev were alive and you had sent him money, he would have instructed me and done according to my wish. I shall see if anybody can make anything of the puzzle.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

UTTAMCHAND GANGARAM
BOMBAY BAKERY
HYDERABAD, SIND

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

190. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 25, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Why the despair? If you cannot find work here where there is so much work, where else will you find it? One may not succeed in finding a needle in a haystack, but does one have to search for the hay?There is work right before your eyes. It is another matter that you should ignore it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4505

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Uttamchand Gangaram", 14-3-1945.

191. SPEECH AT A. I. S. A. MEETING—II

SEVAGRAM,
March 25, 1945

Jajuji says that the quantity of yarn tendered in partial payment for khadi should be increased from two pice to 2_ as., or a hank of yarn per rupee. This is too mild. I would go further. Some days back Bombay had become the Manchester of khadi. Khadi was brought from far and wide and sold there. The credit for this went to the salesmanship of Shri Vithaldas Jerajani. It was thanks to his efforts that first swadeshi goods and then khadi entered Bombay. But now I see that that was not the light way. Khadi, in the first place, should be consumed where it is produced. If in a particular place khadi in excess of the requirement is produced the surplus should be sent to the nearest place where it is needed. The district should be the limit or at most the province. Indeed I would not go even as far as the province. A district is a large enough area for this sort of transaction. The aim of course is that the khadi produced in a village should be sold in that village. But out of the seven lakh villages in India how many are there which can make this claim about themselves? In the villages where khadi is produced the spinners and weavers, for all the efforts of the Charkha Sangh, use very little of the khadi they produce. This is against the ideal of khadi. The condition of two pice per rupee to be tendered in yarn for the purchase of khadi does not apply to villagers. They must sell khadi only in exchange of yarn. Do you fear that if you enforce the yarn condition the sale of khadi in cities will suffer? If you do not get rid of this fear you will kill khadi.[1]

The rule of giving half an anna worth of yarn for one rupee of khadi purchased is generally meant for big cities and I would desire that all should spin and produce their khadi. Khadi is the emblem oftruth and non-violence. Such exchange of yarn may result in reducing the number of khadi wearers but we should carry on our work in that direction and ultimately we shall succeed.

Khadi has won a place of honour in society. The rich feel proud of buying khadi produced by the poor. But this is not enough. If you limit the role of khadi to providing bread to the poor, it cannot be an

[1] The following paragraph is from *The Hitavada*, 27-3-1945.

instrument for securing swaraj through non-violence. I do not want this. Even if I were the only one left to buy khadi on condition of yarn being tendered I should not worry. You have accepted khadi as the symbol of non-violence. You have also accepted it as the means for securing swaraj. If it is the will of God that khadi should die I would rather it died a natural death than that your timidity and lack of faith should be the cause of its demise. Those who for some reason cannot themselves spin can get their wives, mothers, sisters or servants to spin. Failing that they may get yarn from their neighbours but not on payment.[1]

Next he produced some figures[2] which Shri Aryanayakum and Smt. Asha Devi had given him. He considered those figures to be most revealing. They were proof positive of how quickly khadi could be introduced in the villages through Nayee Talim. Cloth produced by the children during the period of their training would be sufficient to cloth the entire village and it would be the cheapest cloth possible.

We should increase our love for khadi and serve the villages. You should make all your dependents khadi wearers.

I have compared khadi to the sun and the other industries to the planets in the solar system. Agriculture is a planet in this solar system but it cannot be the sun, for agriculture is not free. Those who till the land do not own it. The Government controls it through petty officials. The people have lost self-confidence. Harmful customs have led to fragmentation of land. If I am alive fifty years hence and if by that time people have gained control of the land I shall reconsider its place in my solar system. I can say that agriculture by itself cannot develop the intellect as much as khadi and other village industries can. As the late Madhusudan once said, constant company of bullocks turns men into bullocks.

The gist of what I have told you during the past two days is that if you have faith in my ideal you should put your whole effort behind it. The Shastras proclaim that Truth ever triumphs. This is a universally valid principle. If sometimes in life it is seen to fail the reason is not that the principle is at fault. It shows the imperfection of the man who is applying the principle. Once you have understood the principle you will have developed that detachment and that freedom

[1] The two paragraphs that follow are from *The Bombay Chronicle* and *The Hitavada*

[2] Of yarn produced by students during the first five years of their training at the basic school at Sevagram

from fear which is as important for the realization of an ideal as is faith in that ideal.

[From Hindi]

Charkha Sanghka Navasanskaran, pp. 109-12; *The Bombay Chronicle,* 8-9-1945, *and The Hitavada,* 27-3-1945

192. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

March 25, 1945

Q. 1. Some members of the Charkha Sangh took a leading part in sabotage activities. . . .The Government became suspicious and took represssive measures against such organizations. In such a situation, is it not a mistake to put the entire blame on the Government?

A. Just because some worker went astray, it was wrong to punish the Charkha Sangh. I blame the Government entirely for its high-handedness.

Q. 2. Some Congressmen whose faith in non-violence was not very strong ... are full of ideas regarding sabotage. . . . How can these people be weaned away from these ideas?

A. Those who have lost faith in non-violence will recover it through the work of the people who have retained their faith. They will never recover it through reprimands. They are following their own convictions. Let us be perfect as they are imperfect Darkness is dispelled by the rising of the sun.

Q. 3. These days the committees for constructive work appointed by the Congress are full of people with the ideas mentioned in question No. 2. There are some devoted people too. Do you believe that the constructive work can make progress with the help of such committees?

A. The constructive work will proceed if the people having faith can give expression to their faith not through words but through deeds.

Q. 4. Under such circumstances, would it not be better that the people having faith in non-violence should carry on their work independently of others?

A. The answer is contained in the previous answers and also in my speech.[2]

[1] The questions were from Pundalik Katagde.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at A. I. S. A. Meeting-I", 24-3-1945.

Q. 5. Those who have no faith in non-violence and, for that reason, are not able to contribute to the programme based on non-violence are in a very uncomfortable position in the constructive work committees. This has a demoralizing effect on them. In such a situation would it not be proper to let their efforts find scope in Parliamentary activities?

A. Do we restrict anyone from going into the Parliament? It is enough that we do not go ourselves.

Q. 6. Will there not be greater scope for basic education, stopping corruption, improving the food situation, removing the difficulties of the villagers and so on, if the Congress assumes power?

A. It may or may not happen. It will depend on what type of people come forward and on the state of public opinion.

Q. 7…. Can I give my opinion in favour of bringing electricity to the villages, particularly in Hudli? . . .

A. I am strongly opposed to it.

My answers are not meant for publication. Yon can show them to friends.

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this. Correct the slips yourself or get them corrected.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5227

193. TELEGRAM TO HANNAH LAZAR

March 26, 1945

HANNAH[1]
CARE MANILAL
PHOENIX (DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA)

NO SORROW OVER UNCLE'S DEATH HE DID HIS DUTY. CONTINUE HIS SERVICE. SYMPATHY WITH ALL. LOVE .

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Hermann Kallenbach's niece

194. LETTER TO GOSIBEHN CAPTAIN

SEVAGRAM,
March 26, 1945

DEAR SISTER,[1]

I was glad you stayed away for Manekji's sake. I do hope he will pull through his illness and be up and doing. You need not worry about coming to me in Bombay if you cannot. Just write and I shall attend. I had not fainted. I was simply starved for the moment. Love to you both.

BAPU

GOSIBEHN CAPTAIN
122 MARZBAN BAD
ANDHERI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

195. LETTER TO BHUPENDRA NARAYAN SENGUPTA

March 26, 1945

MY DEAR BHUPEN,

I shall be presently off to Bombay. By all means come and pass a few days with me on my return to Sevagram.

Yours,
BAPU

SHRI BHUPENDRA NARAYAN SEN
99/2, BALLYGUNJ PLACE
P. O. BALLYGUNJ
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 10067

[1] This is in Gujarati.

196. LETTER TO N. R. JOSHI

SEVAGRAM,
March 26, 1945

MY DEAR JOSHI,

Have I not helped ? I have the thing still in mind. I may fail to do more. If I do, it won't be for want of effort. Please give my love to them.

Yours,
BAPU

SHRI N. R. JOSHI
ALLAHABAD AGRI. INSTITUTE
ALLAHABD

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

197. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

[*March 26, 1945*][1]

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Here is for your guidance. There must be rules, and they must be obeyed. Manage somehow during these five days. Then after my return we shall see. I am in favour of two kitchens. If I were in your place, I would attend to everything you mention and do it well. I have done that. But that does not mean that, your doing what I would have done will necessarily bear fruit. There is no such rule. You may act as you like, but on one condition, namely, that you must be absolutely sure that you are following truth and ahimsa. If the persons you have named do not observe the rules, you should talk to them one by one and find out why. If a person admits the fact, you may make an exception in his favour, and if you find that the exceptions are so many that they defeat the rule you should revise the rule. I understand from what you write that the exceptions do defeat the rule. This isindeed a hotel. But it is more than that. A hotel is a place where

[1] The addressee's letter, to which this is a reply, was delivered to Gandhiji at 5.15 a. m. on March 25, and this letter was acknowledged at 6.15 a. m. on March 26.

people pay for boarding and lodging. They order and get whatever they want, and feel no embarrassment. It should be so here also. Here, too, we must have some rules, as every hotel has. For instance, we would serve no non-vegetarian food or cater to people's taste in regard to spices. Let Shakaribehn start a separate kitchen. Anybody else who wishes may also do that. Meet every permanent resident and know from him or her their wishes, then frame rules and get them passed in the presence of all and see that everyone observes the rule which he himself has accepted. I knew about Kamle today by chance. He is suffering from dysentery. I have asked him today to go immediately. He should have gone earlier. It was only from your note that I came to know that Gurbuxani and Vimalabehn have made separate arrangements for their meals. You ought to have complete information as to which persons do that and why. Instead, you permit anarchy to reign. Is it right? I think I have given all the guidance you need.

Now think over Sushilabehn's advice. A plate, a cup for water, two bowls and one spoon. The plate, the cup and the bowls should be nickel-plated. About the spoon I am not convinced. Two bowls may be all right, though I am not sure. Serving ghee with the vegetable will not do. Perhaps it will not do even to put it on the chapatis. If the vegetable is served in a bowl, ghee may be added to it. But I have seen only one bowl in many places.

I am giving no ruling in this matter. Personally, I would provide only one bowl. But I give no ruling.

You had told me that you would take out from your notebook and give me the portions regarding myself. Do that before my departure.

The decision to talk to every permanent resident in private, to frame rules and discuss them in the presence of all is for immediate implementation. About the separate kitchen it should be postponed till my return. Show me the rules. Those who wish to have separate arrangements from today may be permitted to have them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5861. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

198. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

March 26, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

It would be better if the thing was done before I left for Bombay.[1] But do not sacrifice your sleep for that.

I was glad that the problem about Sushilabehn had been solved. My success holds no lesson for anybody, but it may give one hope. There may be many reasons for my success. According to me, the chief reason is my ahimsa. From your point of view it is true that your training has not fitted you for managing a kitchen. When you learn non-attachment you will not say that. We are fit enough for any duty that comes to us unsought. The secret is that we do not run after any task; the task comes to us unsought. If you look upon a servant as your own brother or sister, you will never fail. Yesterday the kedgeree was not well cooked. Manu refused to eat it and so I examined it with my fingers. Finding that it was insufficiently cooked I made her a sign that she need not eat it. If I had insisted, she would have consumed it and suffered from stomachache in consequence. If everybody had eaten it that would have been no evidence that it was well cooked.

I explained to Kalukhan himself about Magandeep. I understand about Aundh. I think nothing remains now.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Instead of engraving people's names on the utensils, they should be numbered. This is the practice in jails, as also in institutions. Instead of purchasing additional utensils, find some way out. In the last resort, we can always have [leaf cups][2]. If you can have inexpensive earthen ones you may have them. Everybody may make for himself spoons of wood. We can teach them. It is quite easy to learn. Think what the poor would do and find some way. Discuss the matter with the permanent residents. Mohan Singh will probably suggest something. Moreover, now I shall be leaving, so you will have no difficulty during that time. Think over the matter before I return. You can certainly make wooden ones. We used to do that in S. A. The wood and the knife were supplied by the jail authorities.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5863. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] The source is not clear here.

199. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,
March 26, 1945

CHI. KANCHAN,

I do not like it at all that you have fallen ill. But I am glad that you have been showing courage. Keep on writing to me. Recover fully and do as much service as you can. It is quite warm here. At present meetings are going on. I am all right. I shall be leaving for Bombay on the 30th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8267. Also C.W. 7186. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

200. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM,
March 26, 1945

CHI. AMTUSSALAAM,

I have regularly written to you and also to Kanchan. What can I do if you do not get the letters? It is a pity your health has deteriorated so much. You have got to get well somehow. And both of you should stay there till you get leave. Keep writing to me. Lavanyachanda is brave. I hope she has recovered.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 494

201. LETTER TO KANTILAL AND SARASWATI GANDHI

March 26, 1945

CHI. SURU AND KANTI,

I have letters from both of you. It is good that Harilal has arrived there. You have to serve him in any case. Whatever he may be

he is your father. It will be good if he recovers. [Suru,] you will pass the examination.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Kanti can stay in the Ashram, [if not] with friends. I cannot say what will happen if I go somewhere.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6184. Also C.W. 3458. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

202. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 26, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Disappointment cannot come anywhere near a worshipper of non-violence. Your indecision comes from your fear of committing mistakes. We must quickly take decisions even if they should turn out to be mistaken. Mistakes can be rectified.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4506

203. LETTER TO TEJWANTI

SEVAGRAM,
March 26, 1945

CHI. TEJWANTI,

Read the two letters sent herewith. Sohanlalji is here. You get a scholarship there. There are so many women with you. It is therefore your duty to stay there and give satisfaction to your seniors. At this time it is very hot here and it will continue so for at least two months. If you do good work there, I shall have you here later on. I have to go to Bombay now. I do not even know how long I shall be there. I

would advise you to work with full devotion. Also learn to read and write well.

Blessings from

BAPU

TEJWANTIBEHN

A. I. S. A. BRANCH

ADAMPUR

PUNJAB

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

204. NOTE TO GOPE GURBUXANI

March 26, 1945

Prayer is a cry of the heart. It can be fruitful if it comes from within. But those who pray for an object do not know the meaning of prayer at all.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1332

205. LETTER TO NARGISBEHN CAPTAIN

SEVAGRAM,
March 27, 1945

DEAR SISTER,[2]

Your letter. Whether I go to Panchgani or not will be decided in Bombay. I hope all of you are doing well.

Love to you all.

BAPU

NARGISBEHN
DANLAVIN LODGE
POONA 6

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee had asked: "What is prayer and how can it be made fruitful?"
[2] This is in Gujarati.

206. LETTER TO UTTAMCHAND GANGARAM

SEVAGRAM,
March 27, 1945

MY DEAR UTTAMCHAND,

Here is the answer to your puzzle.[1] It is from one who is familiar with a billiards table.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI UTTAMCHAND GANGARAM
HYDERABAD

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

207. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

March 27, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

One must try to get rid of whatever bad habit one recognizes in oneself. Your pen runs independently of you. Discipline it and then let it climb a hill.

I can only indicate the ideal. It is for you to reach it or not. How can I say that you can do so much and no more? I shall try to adjust myself to you as much as I can. Perhaps there is no spare pair of sandals. You will get the loin-cloth. It cannot be called a *lungi.* A *lungi* cannot be tucked up from behind. Bhansali and Balkrishna wear *lungis.* Give up hope of sandals. I have no spare pair at all.

About the books, after my return. Use the ones which are lying with me. Make notes from them and give me a copy. Wooden sandals are inexpensive and easy to make. You may use leather or webbing or cloth for the strips. You should train people one by one to join in the prayers. If they are not prepared to give that much time, only those who can sing in tune may join. The truth is that even after so many years people have developed no deep interest in the prayers. Theattendance at morning prayers is practically nil. But don't exert yourself about this just now. If nobody joins the [*Gita*] recitation,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Uttamchand Gangaram", 25-3-1945.

drop it. It will be enough if you keep up the other items of the programme. Since you do not know the beauty of joint recitation, you have not been able to describe it. Everybody gets breathing time and yet they all seem to be singing in unison. I am saying this from experience. Don't write to other institutions now to make any inquiry. Will there be a shortage of rooms after I leave? I will see about Hari-ichchha. It is easy to turn steam into water. We should learn to do that. Take Mohan Singh's help.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5866. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

208. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

March 27, 1945

CHI. SITA,

Only this much for today. Why are you afraid of dreams? You must not cry. We get dreams owing to indigestion. Sometimes dreams are due to our impatience. Many a time we worry unconsciously and then we get dreams. In such cases we should keep repeating Ramanama. Remember that it is an unfailing remedy.

Teach me how to row.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4947

209. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

SEVAGRAM,
March 27, 1945

Too much greed is the root of sin. Keep this in mind and then expect me always to write something. True friendship or true love demands nothing and expects nothing. See the Bible which also has similar statements.[2]

Love.[3]

BAPU[4]

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4204. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7840

[1] This is written as a postscript to Sushila Gandhi's letter to the addressee.
[2] Presumably the allusion is to *I Corinthians*, XIII.
[3] These are in English.
[4] *ibid*

210. LETTER TO E. W. ARYANAYAKUM

SEVAGRAM,
March 27, 1945

CHI. ARYANAYAKUM,

This letter is for both of you. Dev's studies will be completed in April. He asks me, since I shall be away then, what he is to do. If you let me have your opinion, I can give him definite advice.

When is the meeting of the representatives of all the institutions? There is going to be one I suppose.

I see from today's telegram that if you do not go to Bombay the quorum will not be complete. Even so if you have work here, I shall not insist that you should leave it and go.

Blessings from
BAPU

TALIMI SANGH
SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

211. LETTER TO GOPE GURBUXANI

March 27, 1945

CHI. GURBUXANI,

Enclosed is the letter to Amrit Kaur. Why do you need a certificate? For a follower of truth, truth is certificate enough. Asking for certificates is a very bad habit. I showed interest in it for some time; but it is 55 years since I gave it up. Do not take any from me or from anyone else. Do not [ask for favours][1] but strive hard on the strength of your truth and non-violence. Keep writing to me. Write in Hindustani. If Vimala can write, both of you should write.

You will know the rest from my letter to Rajkumari.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 10579

[1] This is illegible in the source.

212. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
March 27, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

This letter will be given to you by Dr. Gurbuxani and his wife Vimalabehn. Both are educated. Both come from affluent families. They have given up Government service and also luxurious living in order to be with me. The wife cannot stand this heat. Perhaps she is pregnant too. They have lived in Simla. They are coming to Simla. Put them on to some public work if you can. They will have to be given some salary. Be frank if they cannot be useful. There is no question of favour in service. Here they had started with the cleaning of latrines.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 4272. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7904

213. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR PAREKH

March 27, 1945

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

The mind must be concentrated during these two minutes and in the second half of the prayer. This does not mean that we cannot concentrate on some spiritual thing. That is bound to happen.

What is the meaning of concentrating on Ramanama or Aum? Yes, let us not deceive the mind with regard to spiritual things. That is why I asked why you had not familiarized yourself with the *Gita.* About the hospital, some other time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9021. Also C.W. 9145. Courtesy: Prabhakar Parekh

214. NOTE TO GOPE GURBUXANI

March 27, 1945

He can serve by writing a true and original history of the people. If there is progress he will describe the progress; if he finds there is decline he will record that decline.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1333

215. DRAFT CABLE TO JALBHOY RUSTOMJEE

WARDHAGANJ,
[On or after *March 27,1945*][2]

JALBHOY RUSTOMJEE
74 VICTORIA STREET
DURBAN

BLESSINGS NAVJOT.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

216. A MESSAGE

SEVAGRAM,
March 28, 1945

Spin. Spin with full understanding. Let those who spin wear khadi. Let those who wear khadi compulsorily spin. Full understanding means the realization that spinning symbolizes non-violence. Reflect on it. It will become apparent.

Spinning means picking the cotton, ginning, carding, preparing

[1] The addressee had asked: "How can a historian best serve the country and how can he write a progressive history of India?"

[2] This was in reply to the addressee's cable dated 27-3-1945, seeking Gandhiji's blessings on his brother's daughter's *navjot* ceremony.

slivers, producing yarn of the desired count and doubling and twisting and winding.[1]

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Charkha Sanghka Navasanskaran,* p. iii. AIso C.W. 9897. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

217. TELEGRAM TO VIYOGI HARI

SEVAGRAM,
March 28, 1945

VIYOGIJI
HARIJAN NIVAS
KINGSWAY
DELHI

WIRE SATYAVATI'S[2] HEALTH. DOES SHE REQUIRE CHANDRANI'S SERVICES?

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

218. LETTER TO SHAMDAS P. GIDWANI

SEVAGRAM,
March 28, 1945

DEAR SHAMDAS,

I have your wire and two letters. I cannot interfere. Congressmen must decide for themselves.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHAMDAS P. GIDWANI
NEW TOWN, KARACHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] For the draft, *vide* "Letter to Shrikrishnadas Jaju", 20-3-1945.
[2] Wife of Brajkrishna Chandiwala

219. LETTER TO THE METROPOLITAN OF CALCUTTA

SEVAGRAM,
March 28, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

Sudhir has given me your sweet note. I agree with you when you say that insistence should be not on rights but on duties and that we should love our neighbour as ourselves. With love,

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

METROPOLITAN
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

220. LETTER TO D. L. BANNERJI

SEVAGRAM,
March 28, 1945

DEAR PROFESSOR,

I thank you for your two articles. I had the previous one, too.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

PROF. D. L. BANNERJI
BAKSHI BAZAAR
DACCA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

221. LETTER TO AVANTIKABAI GOKHALE

SEVAGRAM,
March 28, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

Gauribai's passing away must have grieved you more than everyone else.

But where is the need to console anyone? One can Say that Gauribai went after rendering much Service.

Blessings from

BAPU

AVANTIKABAI GOKHALE

KUTCH CASTLE

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

222. LETTER TO DADUBHAI

SEVAGRAM,
March 28, 1945

BHAI DADUBHAI,

Why should I appoint the Durbar or anyone else as arbitrator? It was my duty to send your son's letter to you. I have indeed no reason to disbelieve your letter.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

223. LETTER TO BALVANT SINHA

SEVAGRAM,
March 28, 1945

CHI. BALVANT SINHA,

I cannot take Omprakash with me. Nor should he wish it. His duty is to serve in the Ashram during the summer and live quietly. My true body is the Ashram. If the Ashram is nothing, then I am nothing. His test lies in living there in my absence.

Blessings from

BAPU

BALVANTSINHA

SEVAGRAM ASHRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

224. LETTER TO CHAKRAYYA

SEVAGRAM,
March 28, 1945

CHI. CHAKRAYYA,

Kanubhai has told me everything. What I want is that you should leave that place and stay and work with Subramaniam and make your health perfect. If you want to stay at Bhimavaram for a brief period and gain proficiency in nature-cure treatment, do so. Return the money I have sent. I gave that money thinking that you werefully agreeable. Since no construction is to take place what is there to spend the money on? Show this letter to Sharmaji so that I do not have to write to him. The girl is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9115. Also C.W. 9184

225. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 28, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Stay in the Ashram and do whatever work there is to do. I am happy with the new man. You should not be upset by my insistence. My insistence is really no insistence because I have placed the entire responsibility on your shoulders.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4507

226. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

March 28, 1945

CHI. RAMESHWARI,

I have your beautiful letter. So Father won ultimately.[1] He was short of temper but he had a heart of gold. He was equally generous. I have already received a cheque for Rs. 1,000. I shall see what can be done with it.

Blessings from

BAPU

RAMESHWARI NEHRU

LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

227. TELEGRAM TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

SEVAGRAM,
March 29, 1945

ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

CHARSADA

BOMBAY SATURDAY. COME THERE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

228. TELEGRAM TO BISWANATH DAS

March 29, 1945

B. DAS[2]
"SAMAJ"
CUTTACK

CAN COME EARLIER THE BETTER.

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10446. Courtesy: Government of Orissa

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Rameshwari Nehru", on or before 10-3-1945.

[2] Orissa Congress leader who was Premier of the province in the first Congress Ministry

229. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

March 29, 1945

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I have read your statements. How can I endorse them? How many naked women did you see?[1] Are there no naked men?

How many wealthy men there are who are responsible for misguiding women!

Those who are damaging the trains are not doing a good thing. But this is my view today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10398. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

230. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 29, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

This will not do. If you cling only to the letter, the letter will be your undoing. You should insist and yet it should not be insistence. After all, there has to be a compromise between detachment and insistence.

The responsibility is...[2] but at some point you would also have to assume it. A true worker would take upon himself the complete responsibility of rendering service, would he not? Keep in mind the *shloka* कर्मण्यकर्म य: पश्येत्[3] Why should you be scared of everything? And why should you have been startled? Why do renunciation and sacrifice mean the same thing? How is it that day and night are different and yet the same? A human being is a body and a soul and yet he transcends the body. Understand all these things.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4508

[1] The addressee had written about Indian girls having been forced to satisfy the lust of military personnel in India, how some political workers had rescued some of them by damaging railway lines and coaches, and how these workers were being helped by some rich people of Bombay and Calcutta.

[2] One word is illegible.

[3] Addressee's brother's daughter

231. LETTER TO BALVANT SINHA

March 29, 1945

CHI. BALVANT SINHA,

The reply I sent you was also meant for Om Prakash. Still I am sending one. I am trying for Hoshiari[1]. People will stop being angry if she stays on without being afraid. Do not leave till she is quiet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1957

232. LETTER TO LADY KAUL

SEVAGRAM,
March 29, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I have received your cheque. I shall of course deposit it. The acknowledgment is enclosed. But I have not been able to decide so far whether I should issue the appeal about the Fund. Will you approve if I use this money in the way the late Rajasaheb had wished even if I do not issue an appeal?

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

LADY KAUL
SANGSAR
JIND STATE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's brother's daughter

233. LETTER TO MADHAVENDRAPRASAD SINGH

SEVAGRAM,
March 29, 1945

CHI. KUMAR MADHAVENDRA,

My blessings are always with you in your good work. I may say I am well enough.

Blessings from

BAPU

KUNWAR SHRI MADHAVENDRAPRASAD SINGH
VARANVA, KARAGHANA
DIST. ALLAHABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

234. LETTER TO RANGANAYAKI

SEVAGRAM,
March 29, 1945

CHI. RANGANAYAKI,

I have your postcard. Both of you may come. How long I have to be in Bombay I shall know only when I reach there. Keep me informed.

Blessings to both of you from

BAPU

RANGANAYAKI
SRIRANGAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

235. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

March 29, 1945

BHAI SATISBABU,

What I told you is correct and what I told Kaviraj is also correct. It would be best if the villagers could manage with the herbs available locally. Your work is stabilized and your question is good. The rest when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1641

236. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N, SHAH

[On or before *March 30, 1945*][1]

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Have you read my letter to Krishnachandra? One cannot observe one dharma by violating another. I have not at all given a one-sided decision. Krishnachandra should come to a decision after fullconsideration. I remain neutral. All of you should arrive at a joint decision. And you should do it promptly without fear of going wrong. A mistake can always be corrected.

It is all right if Prabhakar looks after the girl. It is, however, not at all desirable. Some woman ought to look after her. It is not a burden. It is a matter of duty.

I think it will not be possible for me to accommodate Ramprasad. R. P. is an absolutely independent-minded person. Besides, I must have Sushila's consent too. We should act under the assumption that it is her responsibility.

I consider it a serious defect that you could not frame the rules.

Now this covers everything.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10664

237. LETTER TO AMRITALAL CHATTERJEE

March 30, 1945

CHI. AMRITALAL,

You must have received my reply of yesterday.

Now Vina[2] says she does not intend to get married. The problem about Sailen[3] does not arise just now. What you wish is only proper.

Was not Romen[4] to be kept in the Talimi Sangh?

[1] This seems to have been written in Sevagram and before Gandhiji left for Bombay on March 30.

[2] Addressee's daughter

[3] Addressee's sons

[4] *ibid*

Let Mother not come for the sake of living separately. It will be in her own interest if she does not come.

You must stay here till Sailen arrives. After he comes decide about Ronu, etc. Consult Chimanlalji.

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10399. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

238. LETTER TO Y. M. PARNERKAR

March 30, 1945

CHI. PARNERKAR,

Shantabehn wants to live in the jaggery room.[1] Do what is proper in this regard. Gajanan will have to be consulted. . . .[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 5871. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

239. LETTER TO M. S. KELKAR

ON THE TRAIN,
March 31, 1945

DEAR DR. ICE,

I wish you success in your handling of cases. Keep yourself well. I heard about your fever. "Physician heal thyself".

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

240. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL RAINA

March 31, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I have sent "New Kashmir". But I can give no guidance. I have not even seen Kashmir. You must be your own judge.

Yours, sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SHYAMLAL RAINA
P. O. RANBIRGANJ

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This sentence is in Gujarati.
[2] Omission as in the source

241. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

ON THE WAY,
March 31, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I do not like to leave the Ashram any time, and this time I like it the least. But why should one cling to anything?

I read your papers. I had a talk with Jajuji. I think I shall be able to cope with the matter. Let us see what happens.

You should be alert. Understand your responsibility. Give up what your body does not accept. Shakaribehn can do much, but that depends on you. If Hoshiaribehn opens up she can go far. Anasuya cannot be kept with Prabhakar. But if nobody else takes charge of her, there will be no alternative. Do what you think best. Since I shall not be there, some accommodation must be available. Have a frank talk with Ashadevi. Remember the dictum: "Speak the truth, speak gently", and understand its meaning.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10619

242. LETTER TO KANAM GANDHI

March 31, 1945

CHI. KANAM,

I have your letter. I am writing this on the train. I shall certainly be in Bombay for about a week. I cannot say anything about the programme later. However, when it is finalized you will see it in the papers. Nanavati tells me that Ramdas is ill. It is good if he has taken leave and is going to Poona. I am all right.

Blessings to all of you from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

243. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

ON THE TRAIN,
March 31, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

This time I did not like leaving you behind. I cannot bear to see you so frail. Go[1] to Kelkar. He is a good man. He knows a good deal. When one has knowledge one can use that knowledge. He knows well the use of ice and steam. I am of the opinion that your health can certainly be restored. He should also examine Gomati. If Durga can be persuaded, he should treat her also. If you observe fixed hours of silence, it will do you much good. I certainly derive much benefit from it.

We have got a nice compartment in the train.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also C.W. 10725. Courtesy: Gomati Mashruwala

244. LETTER TO NANDLAL PATEL

ON THE TRAIN,
March 31, 1945

CHI. NANDLAL,

Take care of the house as you would of jewellery. Never have others do the work which you can do yourself. I hope Chi. Hari-ichchha is well and happy. You must not lose heart.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9252. Also C.W. 2717. Courtesy: Nandlal Patel

[1] The C.W. source has “write”.

245. LETTER TO RAMPRASAD

ON THE TRAIN,
March 31, 1945

CHI. RAMPRASAD,

On the train I am only thinking of the Ashram. Stay on if you can bear the heat without discomfort. Be friendly with all and do whatever Ashram work you can do. Finish all the pending work. Write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

246. LETTER TO CHANDRAPRAKASH

ON THE TRAIN,
March 31, 1945

CHI. CHANDRAPRAKASH,

Take part in all the activities of the Ashram, including the administration. Improve your knowledge of the language. If it is necessary to go to Bhimavaram for health reasons, do go.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

247. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

ON THE TRAIN,
March 31, 1945

CHI. HOSHIARI,

You may open your mouth but only when necessary. Be true to your name. Take part in all the activities of the Ashram. Keep your body fit and let Balvant Sinha go for a few days. Write to me. Practise writing every day.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

248. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

BOMBAY,
March 31, 1945

The National Week[1] will be presently on us. We began to observe the Week in 1919. We had the unexpected and spontaneous manifestation of the villagers all over India. Seven days after, Jallianwala Bagh massacre, also unthought of, took place. We have observed the Week ever since in triple expectation of achieving communal unity, full establishment of khaddar and swaraj. We seemed to be at one time within an ace of the triple achievement. But today we seem to be very far. I advisedly use the verb "seem". The goal ever seems to recede from us but if we have honestly worked for it, it really comes nearer. Anyhow I feel so. We were never nearer the goal than now in spite of our many blunders. It is as well that we remember our blunders and fail to notice the successes lying underneath. Only our blunders must never dishearten us. We must learn to profit by them and correct them. Then every blunder will hearten us, for we shall mount a step higher by unlearning each blunder. Thus it becomes a cleansing process. Let it be noted that khaddar has attained a wider connotation than before. It has become the central sun round which other village industries revolve like so many planets. Moreover it now represents the fifteenfold constructive programme. Khaddar itself has after much experience got its proper value and thus has received a dignity never before given to it. Everyone is now able, with the introduction by Vinoba of '*tunar*'[2] to make his or her '*punis*'[3] and spin with ease. The wheel too has undergone radical improvement and the new process of doubling yarn has made it as strong as one could wish for weaving. Would that every lover of freedom of India will remember these things during the Week and bring freedom nearer than ever before without parliamentary programme and even civil disobedience unless the Government drive workers to it by talking of India's freedom without meaning it.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-4-1945

[1] From April 6 to April 13
[2] Carding-brush
[3] Slivers

249. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

BOMBAY,
March 31, 1945

If the news is correct that the Ashti and Chimur petition has been rejected, it is disturbing.[1] I am opposed to State hanging in every case, but most so in cases like these. Whatever was done by the people on and after August 9, 1942, was done under excitement. If these hangings are now carried out, it will be cold-blooded, calculated murder and worse, because it will be done ceremoniously and under the name of so-called law.

It will leave behind nothing but a great increase in the already existing woeful bitterness. How I wish that the threatened hangings were given up. They can be if there is the united voice of India against the impending sentences and such other contemplated sentences.

The Hindu, 1-4-1945

250. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

BOMBAY,
March 31, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

You have now an opportunity to set everything right. Use it. Take some work from Mohan Singh and Ramprasad if you can. See how he makes biscuits and bread with tomato juice in them.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8458. Also C.W. 5573. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Seven, out of thirty persons originally sentenced to death for violence at Chimur and Ashti on August 15/16, 1943, and whose sentences had not been commuted had petitioned the King for mercy. The petitions were rejected. Later on, however, the sentences were commuted to life imprisonment. *Vide* also "An Appeal", before 3-4-1945.

251. DRAFT OF POWER-OF-ATTORNEY

April 1, 1945

To all to whom these presents shall come, we Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas, Sir Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, Dr. Kailas Nath Katju, Kasturbhai Lalbhai, Lady Premlila Vithaldas Thackersey, Kanhaiyalal Manecklal Munshi, Devdas Gandhi, Ghanshyamdas Birla, Chakravarti C. Rajagopal-achariar, Jehangir R. D. Tata, Sarojini Naidu, Dr. Zakir Hussain, Amritlal Vithaldas Thakkar, Shantikumar Narottam Morarjee, Ambalal Sarabhai, Jankidevi Bajaj, Ashadevi Aryanayakum, Miss Mridula Sarabhai, Miss Raihana Tyabji, Mrs. Gosibehn Captain, Mangaldas Manchram Pakvasa, Ganesh Vasudeo Mavalankar, Shri Krishna Das Mulchand Jaju, Babu Lakshminarayan of Patna, and Gulzarilal Nanda, the present trustees of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust hereinafter referred to as the Trustees send greeting whereas by a Deed of Settlement dated the 1st day of April 1945 made between the said Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi of the One Part and the Trustees of the Other Part, the Trustees are appointed Trustees of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust (hereinafter for brevity's sake called "The Trust") AND WHEREAS in the Court of administration and management of "The Trust", the Trustees will be required to deal with immoveable and moveable properties and for such purposes will have to execute documents some of which may also require registration and whereas it is not convenient for the Trustees to go to different places where documents are to be executed and/or registered and to present the same for registration and/or admit execution of the documents that may be executed by us as such trustees of the 'Trust' from time to time and attend before any Registrar or Sub-Registrar as the case may be for the purpose aforesaid, we are desirous of appointing Mangaldas Pakvasa, Shantikumar Narottam Morarjee and Shyamlalji, hereinafter called the attorneys to be the true and lawful attorneys on our behalf as also on behalf of any one or more of us, to do all or any of the following acts deeds and things: NOW KNOW YE AND THESE PRESENT WITNESS that we, the Trustees of the said Trust do hereby nominate, constitute the said Mangaldas Pakvasa, Shantikumar Narottam Morarjee and Shyamlalji jointly and severally, i.e., any one of them to be our attorneys for us and in our name to do the following acts and things.1. To execute for

and/or on behalf of the Trustees such documents as they may ressolve upon to execute and/or to appear before the Registrar or Sub-Registrar of Assurances and present and/or admit execution of any document or documents or writing that may be or may have been signed or executed by us for any one or more of us or to which we or anyone or more of us may be any parties or party as such Trustees of the 'Trust' and to do all things that may be required or found necessary for procuring the registration thereof as the attorney or attorneys shall think necessary.

2. For the better doing, performing and executing of the matters and things aforesaid we hereby further grant unto the said attorneys authority to substitute and appoint in his/their place and stead one or more attorney or attorneys to exercise for ourselves as our attorneys or attorney any or all the powers and authorities hereby conferred and to revoke any such appointment from time to time and to substitute or appoint any other or others in the place of such attorney or attorneys as they the said attorneys shall from time to time think fit.

3. We hereby undertake to ratify whatsoever the attorneys or any of them or any substitute or substitutes shall lawfully do or cause to be done in the premises and to indemnify them and each of them against all costs and expenses properly incurred by them or any of them hereunder.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

252. LETTER TO M. R. MASANI

BOMBAY,
April 1, 1945

MY DEAR MASANI,

The step you suggest is good but it cannot be taken in the manner suggested by you. It must be deliberate and calculated. But they must associate themselves in the appeal.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4132. Also C.W. 4890. Courtesy: M. R. Masani

253. LETTER TO L. M. GOPALASWAMY

AS AT SEVAGRAM,
April 1, 1945

MY DEAR GOPALASWAMY[1],

The Executive sat today and among other things considered your budget. The correspondence between you and Bapa was read. Your letter was finished and I saw at the end that you had meant it to be confidential. There was no reason for it. There was nothing to be ashamed of in it. Your own part was creditable to you and so was Kamlabai's and her husband's. Her salary should be drawn to the extent of her needs. She must not be a burden on her husband.

Since Bapa agrees that you can have the furniture, your estimate is right. But I question the necessity of all furniture. You should squat an the ground. Then you don't need chairs and tables at all. Mats are quite enough. You may need a ground desk for the typist. That would be cheap. You may have open racks. You have provided for a safe.

You can draw Rs. 150 and divide between the two institutions as occasion requires. Please redraw your budget in the light of what I have said and send. I shall have the power to sanction your budget if I approve of it.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

[PS.]

You need only a Tamil typewriter. Your correspondence with the head office should be in Hindustani and handwritten. We must learn to manage cheaply.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] A Harijan welfare worker

254. LETTER TO MANZAR ALI SOKHTA

BOMBAY ,
April 1, 1945

BHAI MANZAR ALI,

What I have been told about women seems right. The thing is that they should do something or other and they should not lag behind men in doing any work for the country.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAI MANAZR ALI SOKHTA
SEVAKUNJ
GANGAGHAT, UNAO, (U.P.)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

255. LETTER TO G. N. KANITKAR

BOMBAY,
April 2, 1945

BHAI BALU KAKA,[1]

I have gone through your letter from top to bottom. Your writing is very clear.

I would admit any error I may commit.

But I do not own the error ascribed to me by you. I have defended no malpractice. Trust of the wealth owned I have advocated. I still defend it. You evidently have not followed my writing. When did I negotiate with high Government officials for "concessions" in the Aga Khan Palace?

Satyagraha cannot come by argument or fasting.

I am employing the means I know for saving the lives of the condemned prisoners[2]. Fasting in this case is no remedy.

I omit the other parts of your letter.

You won't enter into correspondence with me.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 973. Courtesy: Gajanan Kanitkar

[1] This is in Devanagari.
[2] Of Chimur and Ashti; *vide* also ''An Appeal", 3-4-1945.

256. LETTER TO KHURSHED NAOROJI

BOMBAY,
April 2, 1945

DEAR SISTER,[1]

Your letter. I do hope you are better.

I knew all about Satyavati. She wrote to me. She wants to see me. I have stopped her unless she can't contain herself. Chand is with me, With the others she is going to join the Borivli camp. Prabhudas and his wife are also to be with the class.

Kamaladevi met me yesterday regarding Chimur prisoners.

Badshah Khan is likely to be here in a day or two. He wired.

My movement beyond 8th is uncertain.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI KHURSHEDBEHN
DUNLAVIN LODGE
POONA 5

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

257. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

BOMBAY,
April 2, 1945

DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

I hope you will be able to read this. Let Yashvantrai write out his story and give me permission to show it to Shantikumar. I will then do what is necessary.

Dr. Yodh may, if he wishes, examine me and take up my case. If, however, he wishes to take on some other patients, he may do that. Whomsoever he takes on, he should do after careful thinking and not act on the impulse of the moment, for I should not like him to fail and be ruined. If he succeeds, I would consider it a great achievement. But it is a difficult job.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9679

[1] This is in Gujarati.

258. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

April 2, 1945

CHI. BABUDI,

I am here till the 8th at any rate. You can hardly come during that time. Anand[1] cannot be put to the strain of a journey, nor can you leave him and come. You will know about my programme after the 8th from the newspapers or I will write. I want Anand to get well soon. I hope you are well.

Blessings to both of you from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10056. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

259. LETTER TO K. G. GOKHALE

[After *April 2, 1945*][2]

I had discussed your case with Baba Saheb Kher before your letter came. He will write to you. As for khadi, can one of your relatives not spin a little for you ? If no one is available, write to your branch. Khadi should be made available in a case like this.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

260. AN APPEAL

[Before *April 3, 1945*][3]

In places where unanimity of public opinion can be recorded and there is no danger of dissent arising, the 3rd of April should be observed as an all-India day by suspension of business as a mark of protest and prayer.

Mahatma Gandhi-The Last Phase, Vol. I, p. 109

[1] Addressee's son

[2] This was in reply to the addressee's letter dated April 2, 1945.

[3] Gandhiji sent this round to be issued by the editors of various newspapers for mobilizing public opinion against the death sentence passed on the Chimur and Ashti prisoners.

261. LETTER TO N. C. VAKIL

BOMBAY,
April 3, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

1 thank you for your letter. I have not a moment to spare. Please, therefore, send me your concrete scheme in a nutshell and if necessary I shall make time for you during my stay in B[om]bay.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. N. C. VAKIL
CHAIRMAN, B.H.A.
311 TARDEO ROAD
BOMBAY 7

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

262. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

BOMBAY,
April 3, 1945

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your letter. Your faith will cure you. It seems Nimu is not with you. Dinshaw is with me. But you must be getting your treatment. I will arrange to send him. I am well. My programme is uncertain.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI RAMDAS GANDHI
DR. MEHTA'S AROGYA BHAVAN
OPP. STATION
POONA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

263. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

BOMBAY,
April 3, 1945

CHI. KANCHAN,

What a woman you are! If I write something for you in a letter to Amtul Salaam, is it not as good as a letter to you? Now have this and write to your heart's content. Hope you are keeping good health. I do not think we can pay A. S.'s doctor's bill. Was the doctor sent for? I hope A. S. is in fine condition. Live there in peace and help A. S. For the present I am here.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI KANCHANBEHN
C/O AMTUL SALAAMBEHN
KASTURBA SEVA MANDIR
BURKAMATA, DISTRICT TRIPURA
BENGAL

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7187. Courtesy: Kanchan M. Shah. Also G.N. 8266

264. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

BOMBAY,
April 3, 1945

Gandhiji said that it was a matter for shame that they had come to pray to God but failed to conduct the prayer peacefully. People shouted and did not allow the prayer to go on, as it should go on.[2]

Continuing, he said that he had been told by a friend that the people of Bombay would derive no benefit from his prayer. They would throw a few rupees for the Harijan Fund, but if he thought that it was going to produce any effect on them or

[1] The meeting was attended by about 30,000 people. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was among those present.

[2] The crowd attending the prayer had become unmanageable at one stage and a number of people including Sushila Nayyar and Krishna Hatheesingh had got hurt in the rush.

that they would embrace the Harijans as their own kith and kin he was mistaken.

"If you want, you go to Bombay. You will get money but as far as prayers are concerned, it is better to stay at home and pray," the friend had warned him.

Gandhiji said that he was not entirely convinced. They could not see God with the naked eye. They could not touch Him with their hands. He had become an untouchable. And no wonder, considering that there was so much sin abroad, such violence, drinking and gambling. Forty crores of people were in serfdom. This was because they only talked of freedom but they did not know what freedom was really worth. But he told this friend that he had always conducted prayers for a long time. He was a firm believer in prayer. Every religion had taught that man was no man if he did not pray to his Maker. Therefore he had told this friend that though there was not much chance of his advice being followed, he could not give up his principles. If he did not trust the people even that much, he would be worth nothing. If he gave up prayer the next thing for him to do would be to give up the struggle for freedom, the striving for truth and non-violence.

He told the people that they should let him come and go without rushing towards him. They should keep silent during prayers.

In conclusion, Gandhiji asked them how, if they could not control themselves, they could wield the reins of power. He would come there the next day and every day thereafter as long as he stayed in Bombay. He would watch how far his words had gone home. He would find out how far they were fit to govern themselves. The man with God in his heart would know how to control himself.

The Bombay Chronicle, 4-4-1945

265. LETTER TO PARNAM JEWANAM

BOMBAY,
April 4, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter.

I have no doctor in view for you. You should seek Rajaji's assistance or Shri Jagadisan's who is deeply interested in the leper problem.

Yours sincerely,
M. R. GANDHI

SHRI PARNAM JEWANAM
MADRAS HINDU SEVAK SANGH
MADRAS, S. INDIA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

266. LETTER TO DR. SUBODH MITRA

BOMBAY,
April 4, 1945

DEAR DR. MITRA,

Your letter. You should make a concrete proposal and present it to the Trust Board through the Bengal Committee.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. SUBODH MITRA, M. D. & C.
3 CHOWRINGHEE TERRACE
112 GOKHALE ROAD
ELGIN ROAD P. O., CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

267. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

BIRLA HOUSE,
April 4, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

You see I am in Bombay and am fixed here up to 14th. God knows the next, if He allows freedom up to 14th. I am well. What about Lahore sister-in-law? Is she getting better? Shummy must get well quickly.

Sushila hurt herself on trying to enter the prayer compound[2]. Her arm is in a sling. There is no fracture. Krishna is also well. Badshah Khan is here as quiet as ever. He is sitting by me as I write this.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4153. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7788

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Dr. Subodh Mitra", 19-3-1945.
[2] On April 3; *vide* ''Speech at Prayer Meeting'", 3-4-1945.

268. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

April 4, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have your letter. I met Pushpa[1] and I have sent her home. If Sarojinibehn[2] wishes to go, let her go. I think it will be harmful to allow her to cook for herself.

I am not happy about Ronu's[3] [coming]. But we have to put up with him. It is good that Durga is looking after him. It is necessary to have a plain talk with Ashadevi. Don't attempt what you cannot do, regardless of what I may wish.

I understand about Hari-ichchha.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10620

269. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS GANDHI

BIRLA HOUSE,
April 4, 1945

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

(1) Your first view is correct.

(2) My view about propagation of music is that that alone is real music which uplifts the soul. This contains everything I should like to suggest.

(3) I have already explained that music is a constructive activity, but that it is not included in the Congress programme. Swaraj can be conceived without it. It cannot, therefore, be one of the objects for which Narandas is collecting a fund. That is why I have said that, if we do not demand a salary for you, you should take the money from me.

[1] Pushpabehn Desai

[2] An old lady from Orissa who had come to stay for a few months in the Sevagram Ashram

[3] A ten-year-old Bengali boy. The addressee wanted to know whether he should be allowed to stay in the Ashram.

It would be all right if you took it from the Satyagraha Ashram money lying with Narandas If there is any difficulty in doing even that, I would find the money in some other way.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 913. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

270. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

BOMBAY,
April 4, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

If Kelkar treats you even for a few days and the treatment is effective, you can continue it wherever you go, can't you?

What I told you about silence was from my experience. You will practise it and can practise it only when it grows from within the heart.

Tell Durga that both the girls and Mahadev's mother came to see me yesterday. Paramanand[1] was with them.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

[RS.]

Pushpa came to see me yesterday. I have sent her home.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

271. LETTER TO LADORANI ZUTSHI

BOMBAY,
April 4, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

Haven't I told you I have not interfered in this work? I wouldn't know anything about it.

M. K. GANDHI

LADORANI ZUTSHI
C/O MANMOHINI SANYAL
ALCAZER, 3RD FLOOR
GAMDEVI ROAD, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Mahadev Desai's brother

272. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

BIRLA HOUSE,
April 5, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

Nonsense! No reason for apology. I must simply have said I might not be expected to write always. I forgot to tell you yesterday that your letter paper with the edges unsmooth is better than with edges smoothed. You must keep well. I must be here for some time for work and medical attention by way of precaution.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4154. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7789

273. LETTER TO KANTA

BOMBAY,
April 5, 1945

CHI. KANTA

Just now I got the news that you have given birth to a son and both of you are well. Both should keep well and you should bring up the child in a way that will make him a true servant.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

274. LETTER TO LILAVATI MUNSHI

April 6, 1945

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have gone through your letter. Why should I feel hurt? But I am not prepared to go to Chembur. Taking me there will be disastrous. I would like to go there for Munshi's sake and for your

sake. But I would not knowingly transgress the limit I have laid down for myself. Do not compel me to do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. LILAVATI MUNSHI
26 RIDGE ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

275. LETTER TO SHASHIBHUSHAN SINGH

BOMBAY,
April 6, 1945

THAKUR SAHEB,

I have your letter informing me of the death of your elder brother. May God give fortitude and peace of mind to the sons ofyour widowed sister-in-law. The late Thakursaheb has won the battle of life.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

THAKUR SHRI SHASHIBHUSHANJI
ZAMINDAR, MANEGAON
P. O. MEKH, TEHSIL NARASINGHPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

276. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

BOMBAY,
April 6, 1945

CHI. MALKANI,

I had your telegram. Today I have received the letter. I have sent a telegram to Jairamdas.[1] You must have seen it. I am here till the 20th. Come over. We shall talk over the whole thing. So I shall not write more. You have done good work in jail.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 944

[1] The telegram is not available.

277. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

BOMBAY
April 6, 1945

Gandhiji began by asking people to keep silent and listen patiently to whatever he had to say. Nobody should clap hands. He wanted their ear; he wanted their heart. If his words reached their hearts through their ears, he would be satisfied.

He congratulated them on their disciplined behaviour since Tuesday. On that day two women had been hurt. They had been perhaps touched by the incident and had decided to maintain discipline and allow the prayers to go on as usual. On that day, there was a large crowd not lakhs but a few thousands. Whether it was because of thefact that there were fewer people or for any other reason, he was glad to find that they had learnt discipline. If they wanted to live together the first lesson they should learn was one of discipline.

Continuing, Gandhiji said that he was a Gujarati and should normally speak in Gujarati. But it had been decided that whenever there was a cosmopolitan gathering they should speak in the national language. He was responsible for that decision as much as others. They had also to learn both the scripts, namely, Nagari and Urdu. And they should learn to speak in such a simple way that everybody would understand it. He had now realized that Urdu, Hindi, and Hindustani were all the same language. If they learnt that language they could deal with members of any community and people from any part of India. It served him when he went to the Punjab. It would serve him if he were to go to Kashmir—he had not been there, but he had some Kashmiri friends—Jawaharlal was one of them. Gandhiji said that it was wrong to refer to a Muslim language or a Muslim script. Both Hindus and Muslims wrote that language and if they wanted to steal the hearts of these people, they should be able to speak the same language and write in that script.

Adverting to the National Week, Gandhiji said that they had been observing the Week for the last 26 years. Its observance was meant for the purification of their thoughts and their language. In the beginning, the Week commenced with a fast. He had since abandoned that. He had also abandoned hartal. The Week, however, had not become less holy on that account. The fifteen-point programme was there. It began with khadi. From that followed other items. On such a holy day the people should begin to observe the fifteen-point programme. He was not asking them to observe it only for the Week but for all time. They should not only follow it themselves but induce other people to do so. If they wanted to make India free and not wait for others to free her, if they wanted to get freedom by truthful and non-violent means, there was no other way. But if it was to be by violence and revolution, that was another thing.

He had not known that method; he had not learnt it. Freedom would not fall from the skies nor would it rise from the deep. If they wanted to get it from their own efforts, there was only one way.

Some people thought in terms of Parliament. He did not want to utter its name. He wanted to forget Parliament but to think only of the constructive programme. An important item of this programme was Hindu-Muslim unity.

Concluding, Gandhiji said:

Freedom is in our hands. When we breathe, we cannot take other people's help. If we resort to artificial methods of respiration, it means that we are on the brink of death. Freedom is like our breath.Having lost it for a long time we do appreciate it. But I know the nature of freedom. I have fully experienced freedom. And if you regard it as holy and worthy of achievement, this is the only way.

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-4-1945

278. TELEGRAM TO G. B. PANT

BOMBAY,
[*April 7, 1945*][1]

GOVIND BALLABH PANT
CARE DOCTOR JOSHI
DELHI

HOPE YOU PROGRESSING.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

279. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

BOMBAY,
April 7, 1945

CHI. MIRA,

Your long and welcome letter. I am making a desperate effort to send you someone—either her Ramprasad or Munnalal. Do not be quite certain about me. I have expressed my wish. But 'there is many a slip between the cup and the lip.' Who knows but He? Your love of

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. B. Pant", 8-4-1945

animals, among them of the cow, is boundless. I agree mostly that there should be personal attention if we are to get the real response. I am here till 20th, then to Mahabaleshwar.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABEHN
KISAN ASHRAM, MULDASPUR,
P. O. BAHADARABAD, *via* JWALAPUR
NEAR HARDWAR, U. P.

From the original: C.W. 6505. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9900

280. LETTER TO POTTI SRIRAMULU

BOMBAY,
April 7, 1945

MY DEAR RAMULU,

Your letter is informing but too long. You could have said your say in a p. c. Untouchability has to go. Truth must be repeated till it becomes universal. You go on with your propaganda whether the others do or do not do it. No fast but taking only from day to day what others give unsolicited is sound.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 109

281. LETTER TO GOPINATH BARDOLOI

BOMBAY,
April 7, 1945

BHAI BARDOLOI,

I hope you can read Hindustani. I have your letter. I am glad you were successful. Take care of your health. Write to me whether you can read or have someone to read my letters. I am in Bombay till the 20th.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI GOPINATH BARDOLOI, M.L.A.
GAUHATI, ASSAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

282. LETTER TO HARIBHAU JOSHI

BOMBAY,
April 7, 1945

BHAI JOSHI,

I have your letter. What can my blessings do, especially when I am somewhat against it. Even so I wish you success. Write to me and to others in Hindustani.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

HARIBHAU JOSHI
LOKSHAKTI
POONA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

283. LETTER TO ARAKSHAN SINHA

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
April 7, 1945

BHAI SINHA,

I was distressed to read your letter. Have faith not in me but in God. How can I help a boy belonging to a big family? The boy will not need anyone's help if he is brave, simple and village-minded. I am passing on your letter to Anugraha Babu. May God help you.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI ARAKSHAN SINHA, PLEADER
VILLAGE KEHILO
P. O. JAINTPUR
DISTT. MUZAFFARPUR
BIHAR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

284. LETTER TO JANAKDHARI PRASAD

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
April 7, 1945

BHAI JANAKDHARI BABU,

I have a feeling that I have replied to your letter. But no one seems to know, so I write this. The remedy for your difficulty is very simple. Do only what is proper. Give Nayee Talim to the boy and the girl. Nayee Talim is self-sufficient and gives an all-round training. Why worry about what will happen after your death? Have faith in God Who is the support of all. Do not spend even a cowrie on the marriage of the girls. They will find husbands for themselves when they grow up. In Nayee Talim that worry has no place. It is a matter of changing the ways of life; but that is the sort of thing you have to expect from me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 58

285. LETTER TO GOPE GURBUXANI

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
April 7, 1945

CHI. GURBUXANI,

I have the letter from you two. I remember both of you at least while spinning. I am here till the 14th, maybe till the 20th. Then Mahabaleshwar. Let us see what God makes me do. It is good that you have met Mother.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1313

286. LETTER TO KERUM NATH BHATT

April 7, 1945

You should follow in your own practice as many of the 15 points of the Constructive Programme as you can and inspire others to do the same. In business you should give first place to service. Give up profiteering. Never abandon truth and rectitude. Promote the charkha, service of the Harijans, use of items of village industries and show love, respect and generosity towards votaries of other faiths.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

287. LETTER TO KHURSHED NAOROJI

BOMBAY,
April 8, 1945

DEAR SISTER,[1]

Your letter. You will hear from me at once if and when Satyavati comes. I am here till 14th, probably till 20th. The latter depends upon

[1] The superscription and subscription are in Gujarati.

the doctors. Narahari went last night and returns at the latest on 5th proximo. Khan Saheb will be with me for days more.

Blessings to both sisters from[1]

BAPU

SHRI KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI

OOMRA HALL

PANCHAGANI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

288. LETTER TO BHULABHAI J. DESAI

BOMBAY,
April 8, 1945

BHAI BHULABHAI,

If, after all that has happened, the Chimur prisoners are to be hanged, I cannot see how a national government can be formed. What can we expect from such a government? Will you consider only your own interests in what you do and give no thought to the interests of the masses? Both you and I need to ponder deeply over this. Please consider what can be done while the prisoners are still alive. If you can do something with the League's co-operation do it, otherwise do what you yourself think proper.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: Bhulabhai Desai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

289. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
April 8, 1945

CHI. SUMI,

It is not good that you often get headaches and dysentery. With such health you should not exert yourself too much. You should

[1] The superscription and subscription are in Gujarat

study less. Everything will be ruined if your health is ruined. I am here at least till the 14th.

Blessings from

BAPU

SUMITRA GANDHI

C/O LADY SUPERINTENDENT

BIRLA HIGH SCHOOL

PILANI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

290. LETTER TO OMKARNATH THAKUR

BOMBAY,
April 8, 1945

BHAI OMKARNATH,

My Hindustani letter is enclosed.[1] You should scrupulously follow Malaviyaji's instructions about the Fund. Collect money from as many places as you like by engaging reliable persons but the entire collection should be credited to the special account of the University opened for the purpose. It will be well if they get receipt books printed. The work will progress and shine only if the account is maintained meticulously.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

291. LETTER TO OMKARNATH THAKUR

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
April 8, 1945

BHAI OMKARNATH,

It is good that Bharat Bhushan Malaviyaji and Sir Radhakrishnan have signed the statement. I believe that if what the statement says is put into effect, you and the University will have rendered much service to the cause of music without any discrimination. In fact that is how it should be in music. True music

[1] *Vide* the following item.

lifts up people. There is no place in it for communal differences and hostility. You tell me that you also hold the same opinion.

I wish your endeavour success.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

292. LETTER TO G. B. PANT

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
April 8, 1945

BHAI GOVIND PANT,

How surprising—yesterday I sent you a telegram and today I receive your letter. Undergo the operation and then come here when doctors permit you. I may be here till the 20th. Then Mahabaleshwar. Let us see where God takes me. Get well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI GOVIND BALLABH PANT
DR. JOSHI'S HOSPITAL
KAROL BAGH
NEW DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

293. LETTER TO KUSUM NAIR

BOMBAY,
April 8, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I hope you will be able to read my hand. I have shown you the way to true success. Work hard, be unpretentious and self-reliant. That is the secret of success in work.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KUSUM NAIR
N. G. P. P. BUREAU
73 LAKSHMI BUILDING
SIR P. MEHTA ROAD
BOMBAY 1

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

294. LETTER TO LILAVATI R. BHOGE

BOMBAY,
April 8, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I am doing what I can. Yes, go to Poona and get ready.

Blessings from
BAPU

SAU. LILAVATI RAMBHAU BHOGE
P. O. RAVER
EAST KHANDESH

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

295. INTERVIEW TO B. E. S. T. WORKERS' DEPUTATION[1]

BOMBAY,
April 8, 1945[2]

In reply to the request of the deputationists for advice Gandhiji said:

My advice in this matter may not be of much use as, with the exception of Abidally, I am not acquainted with any of you. Nor have I any direct, intimate knowledge of the conditions in Bombay. 1 would therefore say to you that you should consult such leaders as enjoy your confidence and are sound and you should do as they say.

Pressed by the deputationists to give a word of guidance on the strength of his own experience of strikes which he had led, Gandhiji observed:

I have conducted many strikes. I can, therefore, give you the conditions of a successful strike. The first is that the cause should be clear and just. Secondly, the strikers should be firm and not be afraid of starvation, physical assaults or even death. Thirdly, they should never deviate from the path of truth and ahimsa in whatever they

[1] The B.E.S.T. workers had been on strike and had sought Gandhiji"s advice. As it was Gandhiji"s silence day he gave his remarks in writing. The report given here was contained in a statement issued by Pyarelal in view of the fact that the Press had earlier published an unauthorized translation.

[2] From *The Hindu*, 10-4-1945

might do. Fourthly, the strikers should have public support behind them. If you can satisfy all these four conditions you should stand firm, but if you fall short in any of these respects you should boldly retrace your steps. I cannot give you further guidance. The details are for you to decide.

In answer to their further request that he should address an appeal to the Directors of the Company, most of whom were Indians, Gandhiji said:

It is not my practice to interfere in a matter with which I am not fully acquainted. I do not even know who are on the Board of Directors. If, as you say, the Board is composed predominantly of Indians your task ought to be easy. My function ceases with the advice. The time is perhaps past when I could lead strikes myself. If you understand this limitation of mine you will save my time as wellas yours. Time in your case is the very essence. You have therefore to act promptly. If you carefully ponder over what I have said you will find that I have told you everything.

The deputationists finally asked whether Gandhiji would not appeal to the public to support them. Gandhiji replied:

It is not my word but your conduct that can win for you public support.

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-4-1945

296. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

April 9, 1945

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

Can you read my handwriting? If you find it difficult, I shall in future dictate my letters.

Days pass and there is no time left for a heart-to-heart talk. I shall, therefore, put down in writing what I have to say. That way I should be able to have my say. You can reply in a few words. This does not, of course, mean that I am withdrawing what I have said. I will not leave here till I have given you time but I do not wish to postpone what I have to say. Profulla Babu said to me: "Krishnakumar and Madhav Prasad have now become so big that they could not even come to see me in my illness. Formerly they did visit me occasionally and also asked me questions." It seems to be a case of negligence. There is no question here of big and small. I had

asked Profulla if I could bring this matter up.

2. My work has increased. My endeavour now is to see that no one expects any money from me and the institutions I have created become self-supporting. This will, of course, take some time and meanwhile I shall have to find money for them. The institutions are All-India Spinners' Association, Village Industries Association, Nayee Talim, Hindustani Prachar and the Ashram. The second, third, fourth and fifth need the money now. So far as the fifth, the Ashram, is concerned it will never be self-supporting. I am doing my best of course. The Ashram also includes the hospital. The monetary provision for the hospital is separate. Efforts are being made to secure funds for it from various sources. Still the annual expenses of the Ashram alone are in the neighbourhood of Rs. 100,000. I am quotingthe figure from memory. The Ashram is not in need of funds at present. Rameshwardas[1] sends the needed money. As for the second, third and fourth, they need the money. I believe Rameshwardas has sent some money. Money is needed for the propagation of Hindi and for Nayee Talim. Probably I shall want Rs. 200,000. Are you disposed to take this burden on your shoulders? As for the "Sufferers' Fund"[2], Rameshwardas's letter mentions it. I have also given my opinion.

3. Now for my relationship with women and my experiment. I have suspended the experiment for the sake of co-workers. I did not see anything improper in it. I am the same who took a vow of *brahmacharya* in 1906 and have been observing *brahmacharya* since 1901. Today I am a better *brahmachari* than I was in 1901. What my experiment has done is to make me more firm in my *brahmacharya*. The experiment was designed to make of myself a perfect *brahmachari*? and if God so wills it will lead to perfection. You wanted to talk to me and question me on the subject. You may do both. Please do not hesitate. It will be unbearable if there is any hesitation in one with whom I have such intimate relations and whose money I have been so freely spending.

It is good that two of your brothers are together. This letter is certainly for both but you may take it that it is indeed for all the brothers and the entire family.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] Addressee's brother

[2] Gandhiji uses the English words.

[PS.]

I had thought of writing a short letter, but it has become somewhat lengthy. After all it covers three points.

I forgot to mention one thing. You have given Rs. 50,000 for the Ashram land which has been transferred to the goshala. Now the list that Chimanlal has sent mentions the Ashram field and some land with a well in it. If that is so, then all the houses go too. This cannot be so. It must have been an oversight. Though letters were sent to Janakidevi and others there was no result. Now, if you think that the entire land with the well has been given to the goshala, then a certain amount will have to be deducted from your Rs. 50,000. Do what you think proper.

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 8069. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

297. LETTER TO HOMI TALEYARKHAN

"BIRLA HOUSE",
MALABAR HILL, BOMBAY,
April 10, 1945

MY DEAR HOMI,

I am washed out and there is plenty of 'planned' work in front of me. Hence is it not the duty of friends like you to save every minute of mine? Really I should not have to write even this note. Karanjia has written to me too. Both of you should have patience and it may be rewarded.

Yours,
BAPU

SHRI HOMI TALEYARKHAN
AHMED MANZIL
WARDEN ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

298. LETTER TO R. K. KARANJIA

BOMBAY,
April 10, 1945

BHAI KARANJIA,

I am now tired of meeting people. Even now I have to meet them in the interest of work but I try to avoid it as far as possible. Women meet me at the prayer time. I would request Mrs. Karanjia to do that. You certainly have a heart in the Kamala Nehru Hospital. Why should you need my blessings? Let me do whatever I can.

Blessings from
BAPU

BHAI RUSTOM KARANJIA
APOLLO STREET
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

299. LETTER TO ANUPAMA

BOMBAY,
April 10, 1945

CHI. ANUPAMA,

You are true to your word. As you had said you Sent the money. I have received the bank draft for RS. 501.

I see that many girls have the deplorable habit of writing in pencil. How is that? Keep your word.

Blessings from
BAPU

ANUPAMABEHN
KARACHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

300. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR SAKHALKAR

BOMBAY,
April 10, 1945

BHAI PRABHAKAR,

You cannot resort to satyagraha for everything. A thing that rests on truth will succeed on its own. In any case therefore blessings are unnecessary. Harijans should have the permission.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI PRABHAKAR SAKHALKAR
SAKHALKARWADI
RAJAPUR
DISTT. RATNAGIRI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

301. INTERVIEW TO K. R. NARAYANAN[1]

April 10, 1945

Q. Do you still hold that the Harijan problem is only religious and social and that it has no great political significance?

A. It has political significance but indirectly.

Q. The Congress as an organization has not taken up the Harijan work. Will it not be better if that work is taken up by the Congress and not by the Harijan Sevak Sangh?

A. It is wrong to say that the Congress has not taken it up.

Q. But it seems that leaders like Jawaharlal and the Rashtrapati are not keenly aware of the Harijan question?

A. Those two are immersed in that work.

Q. The Harijan Sevak Sangh after years of work had not yet produced even a dozen leaders from among the Harijans themselves.

A. That charge is only partly true.

Q. All great men have a passion for simplification. You have simplified the

[1] K. R. Narayanan was on the staff of *The Times of India.* Gandhiji gave his answers in writing.

nature of human conflict as between violence and non-violence, truth and untruth, right and wrong. But in life, is not the conflict between one right and another right or between one truth and another truth? How can non-violence deal with such a situation?

A. That is a matter of application.

Q. In the Hindu-Muslim question where the conflict is between the rights of the Hindus and the rights of the Muslims, what technique of non-violence can be employed to solve the problem, especially when these rights seem to be irreconcilable?

A. That awful situation can only be dealt with properly through satyagraha.

Your questions show that you have not studied it. If I am right, P[yarelal] will give you a list of the books. My advice to *you is* that you should seriously study the literature on the subject.

Q. How can a Harijan who goes abroad[1] best serve his country and community from abroad?

A. He cannot serve the one without serving the other. Abroad you will say it is a domestic question which you are determined to solve for yourselves.

From a copy: C.W. 10547. Courtesy: K. R. Narayanan

302. LETTER TO MAHMUD YASIN

[After *April 10, 1945*][2]

BHAI MAHMUD YASIN,

When have I ever taken interest in elections? Please excuse me.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

MAHMUD YASIN

LUDHIANA

From a copy of the Urdu: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The interviewer later joined the Indian Foreign Service.

[2] This was in reply to the addressee's letter dated 10-4-1945.

303. SPEECH AT BORIVLI CAMP[1]

April 11, 1945

Gandhiji began his remarks by requesting them[2] to give him a little respite. There was a time and place for everything in life, he told them. He had trained himself to listen to the inner voice irrespective of his surroundings. But in that he had succeeded only partially. He could not keep himself absolutely unaffected by his surroundings. Therefore he requested the photographers to spare him while he was trying to express his deepest feelings. Photography out of time and place was not art but vulgarity.

Dealing with the question of prayer" he said that he had learnt that common prayers had been excluded from their routine lest anyone should feel that religion was being imposed upon her or him. Speaking for himself" he could say that he could do and had often done without food for days on end, but he could not do without prayer even for a single day. Individual prayer was there but no one should fight shy of collective prayer. Man is a social being. If men and women could eat together, play together and work together why should they not pray together? Why should anyone feel the need to pray away from everybody's gaze? Was there anything sinful orshameful in prayer that it should not be said in public? For close on fifty years he had been a believer in public prayer. From his earliest days in South Africa he had among his associates and co-workers men and women of every religion. Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Parsis, all used to join him in prayer. In India men and women in crowds attended his prayers wherever he went. He had been told that they did not come to attend the prayers. They came just to have his *darshan.* Even if it was so, they came because they wanted to join him-— a man of prayer. He was aware that he had not come as near to God as he wanted to. His realization of truth and ahimsa was still far from perfect, otherwise there would be no need for him to use speech. His very being would radiate truth and ahimsa so that they would be able to see it on his face and feel its presence. He had often said that the perfect ahimsa of one individual was quite enough for the whole world. Whatever measure of success he had attained in the realization of truth and non-violence was the result of prayer.

Prayer should be a spontaneous welling up of the heart. One should not pray if one felt that prayer was a burden. God was not hungry for man's prayer or praise. He tolerated all because He was all Love. If they felt that they owed a debt to Him who is the Giver of all things" they should remember Him and pray to Him out of sheer

[1] The camp was organized by Mridula Sarabhai under the auspices of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Fund.

[2] The cameramen who had been clicking continuously

gratitude. The fear of incurring anybody's ridicule or displeasure should never deter one from performing one's elementary duty towards the Maker. To illustrate his remark he told them the story of Prophet Daniel.

Answering next Shrimati Mridulabehn's question as to what were the good and bad points of Indians as a nation, he observed that he was convinced that in the sum the former far outweighed the latter. Indians had many defects. India was a slave country and her slavery dated much farther back than the British conquest of India. Slavery of evil customs and superstitions" he knew, was the worst form of slavery. Yet the solace that he could find in India he could find nowhere else. He had lived in England and he had spent the best part of his life in South Africa. Yet he could not adopt those countries as his home. In reply to a friend's query years ago" he had said that he wanted to die in the lap of his mother. His own mother, who was a frail little woman, had died years ago. But Mother India with her 80 crores of hands 80 crores of feet and 40 crores of mouths had beckoned to him from across the seas and he could not resist that call.

What did it matter if that venerable mother appeared sick and paralysed today? It was not for him to proclaim India's virtues. As for her shortcomings he had been proclaiming them from the house-tops ever since his return to India. But if he were pressed to name only one shortcoming of Indians he would say that the worst was cowardice.

Another friend asked how women could go into the villages and work under the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Fund scheme handicapped as they wereby so many restrictions. Gandhiji's reply was that he had expected that their first lesson in the camp was to learn to break all social restrictions that cramped or degraded them. He, however, warned them that this did not mean throwing off of all moral restraints. There was at present a woeful deterioration of moral standards in society among men. Even those who talked loudly about enforcing monogamy through law did not practise it themselves. The same tendency was beginning to manifest itself among women. He had known educated girls who thought nothing of marrying men having a living wife. He called this degradation of womanhood. Such views could not be defended under the pretence of banishing social superstitions or vice. Did the emancipation of women mean that they should imitate men in that respect? Certainly not. India could never win swaraj, certainly not the swaraj of his conception, by following that path.

Uttermost moral purity was the first requisite for establishing social freedom. No one who lacked moral purity was qualified to lead a crusade against evil social restrictions.

The next question was how they were to deal with the question of untouchability in the villages. He agreed that the problem of untouchability in the

villages was very acute. But those who went there should go with the grim determination to destroy it root and branch or perish in the attempt. They should begin with the scavengers. Unfortunately, there was untouchability even among the so-called untouchables. They should mix with them and eat and drink with them, provided they observed the rules of cleanliness and sanitation. They could inculcate these habits upon them by cooking for them and cleaning up their homes for them.

Another question expressed the fear that since capitalists had contributed the bulk of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Fund and since they were taken on committees their influence would dominate the organization and vitiate it.

Gandhiji dismissed the apprehension as groundless. He maintained that in endorsing the acceptance of donations of the rich he had not in any way accepted their dictation nor did they seek or expect any such thing from him. Moneyed men were in a majority only in the Board of Trustees, but that did not mean that they dominated or wanted to dominate the organization. In fact they had offered voluntarily to retire from the Board after the fund had been collected and would have gladly done so had he expressed such a desire. But he wanted not only their donations but their talent" goodwill and services for the cause and so they continued to be on the Board.

He refused to believe that the capitalists were necessarily a bad lot or worse than members of any other class. In this world everyone was imperfect. He was too well aware of his own imperfections to presume to judge others. His ahimsa required him to be rigorous in viewing his own shortcomings but to be charitable in judging others. It was enough if he could eradicate his own. If, therefore, instead of cavillingat the faults of others we turned the searchlight inward and concentrated on self-purification, the world would become a better place to live in and the general social purification would be reflected in the capitalist class too. He could not therefore say to the capitalists that unless they renounced all their riches he would have nothing to do with them. Complete renunciation of one's possessions was a thing which very few even among the ordinary folk were capable of. All that one could legitimately expect of the wealthy class was to hold their riches in trust and use them for the service of society. To insist upon more would be to kill the goose that laid the golden eggs.

The Bombay Chronicle, 13-4-1945

304. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

BORIVLI,
April 11, 1945

Gandhiji said he was reminded by Balasaheb Kher that he had visited Borivli after twenty years. He did not think it was such a long time. He was glad to be able to renew their acquaintance after such a long period. On them rested a great responsibility owing to Shrimati Mridulabehn's *shibir* in their midst. They should interest themselves in it. He then turned to Khan Saheb and said, if he was to be friends with Khan Saheb was he to expect him to learn Sanskritized Hindi or was he, the speaker, bound to speak and write to him in Urdu? But Khan Saheb was everyone's friend. Therefore it was the duty of the audience to learn the national language in both the forms and both scripts. Thus and thus alone could the All-India language permeate the whole of India. In this at least there should be no Pakistan and he who wished to make common cause with Hindus and Muslims was bound to learn the two scripts and two forms. A time would then come when the two forms of speech would become one. If they felt it a burden to learn the scripts, he could only say swaraj was not to be had easily and without toil. Where there was love toil was no trouble but pleasure.

The speaker then alluded to the evening *bhajan* sung at the prayer. Its burden was that the way to God was for the valiant, not for the timid. But God was not to be reached by slaves. Therefore the *bhajan* was also for those who wanted to throw off their slavery.

The speaker then concluded that slavery must be the lot of those who hugged untouchability and that too in the name of religion. He wanted therefore to repeat what he had said so often, namely, that Hinduism must perish if untouchability lived.[1]

The Bombay Chronicle, 13-4-1945

[1] At the end of the meeting a collection was made for the Harijan cause.

305. LETTER TO M. S. KELKAR

BOMBAY,
April 12, 1945

MY DEAR ICE,

You are right. It is perhaps shameful on my part to exile myself for three months for coolness' sake. My consolation is that they have all driven me out. But very little temptation will hurl me back to Sevagram. You should convert the people there to your view. I did try. . .[1] not for me but for Ba and others. You try his remedy and treat him and others. I won't desert you.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

306. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

BOMBAY,
April 12, 1945

MY DEAR BULBUL,

Your letter. Here is a note for Maina[2]. You must sing in the midst of personal sorrow. Why should it be all joy? My love to you and the whole family.

I for one shall not trouble you while you are undergoing this purifying bath. I had many temptations to send the Singer to the frontier, to Sind, to the States, etc. My answer was an emphatic 'no'.

Love.

SPINNER

SAROJINI NAIDU
HYDERABAD DN.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] Randheer; *vide* the following item.

307. LETTER TO RANDHEER NAIDU

BOMBAY,
April 12, 1945

MY DEAR MAINA,

I see Mother was able to give you my message.[1] I do wish you would recover but if you must leave before us all, I know you will be brave and be full of faith in God.

Love.

BAPU

C/O SAROJINI NAIDU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

308. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

BOMBAY,
April 12, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have your letter. I have a little leisure today. If I were you I would be considerate enough to keep Sarojini with me and strict enough to recover every pie from her and make her eat in the kitchen regularly.[2] If that should make her want to leave I would let here leave. But do whatever seems proper to you. From this distance I can only give you advice. It is Ramprasad's duty to go to Mirabehn. The work there is light, the air is good and he will be there only for two months. If he does not go let him do whatever he likes.

The problem of the Ashram land has been solved. Ghanshyamdas does not want the money back. Jajuji has decided that since the land which you did not want to give would not be given, Ghanshyamdas could deduct something if he so desired. He does not want to deduct anything. So that work is over.

I enclose Dr. Ice's letter. We should build a house for him as he asks. Consider all the changes he wants to make for us. I feel that if we can have some relief from heat by building a suitable house, we should do that.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Chimanlal N. Shah", 4-4-1945.

309. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

BOMBAY,
April 12, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I am always thinking about you all. Today I had a letter from Dr. Ice. He is keen on treating you. Do not run away from there if you can put up with the heat and undergo Dr. Ice's treatment. I hope Gomati is well. She should also consult Dr. Ice about her treatment. He is a nice man.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

310. NOTE TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

April 12, 1945

I have no difficulty in agreeing with the scientific views of Madame Montessori. However, if they are propagated in their Western garb in Indian villages they are more likely to prove useless and might even prove harmful, because in that garb they will be too expensive for Indian villages and ill-adapted to the village atmosphere. It is possible the cities may not feel the expense so much and women influenced by Western ways may be receptive to the ideas presented in Western garb; but even so it will be of no use because India lives not in cities but in its seven lakh villages. Besides, scientific education with Western trappings might prove poisonous to the city-dwellers because here education begins the moment the child is conceived and ends no one knows when. These days the cities are created by the foreigners toserve their ends and so they do not represent the villages. They do not protect the interests of the villagers but are becoming their exploiters.

SARALADEVI SARABHAI
THE RETREAT
SHAHIBAGH
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

311. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

April 12, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Twenty-five rupees for the distilled water, and that to be paid by the hospital! We certainly can't take that from Hari-ichchha. There appears to be some misunderstanding. Please explain. I hope you are well. Yes, Sushilabehn was injured,[1] but no bones were broken. There is no time to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

MUNNALAL

SEVAGRAM ASHRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

312. LETTER TO RAMPRASAD

BOMBAY,
April 12, 1945

CHI. RAMPRASAD,

I was surprised as well as grieved to read your letter to Mamasaheb[2]. I was even more surprised to read your letter to Pyarelalji. There is no mention in it of my suggestion. It could not be that you have not received it, because Chi. Chimanlal writes that you would not like to go to Mirabehn. How is that? It is work you like and the place is also cool. Can you get what you desire if you are notwilling to go? All this wants thinking over. Please correct me if I am wrong.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 3-4-1945.
[2] V. L. Phadke

313. LETTER TO KUSUM NAIR

BOMBAY,
April 12, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I find your Hindi very sweet. The handwriting too is good. Read the reply I have given. I did not say I would give the article soon. However if you keep on reminding me you will get it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

314. LETTER TO DEVPRAKASH NAYYAR

BOMBAY,
April 12, 1945

CHI. DEV,

I saw one of your letters. The importance of Nayee Talim is that we become teachers of all. However one who does not also become a student is not fit to be a teacher. Being a student one daily learns something new. You should not be afraid of anyone.

You will win over everyone by ahimsa. The heat there is stifling. You have to overcome that also. Everyone cannot go to a cool place. You must make that place itself as cool as you can. Take Dr. Kelkar's help. He is a nice man and he has written to me about this. Make one house cool with his help.

Take ghee if it is necessary for your health and keep well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

315. TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Express BOMBAY,
April 13, 1945

DEVDAS GANDHI
CARE TIMES
NEW DELHI

KHANSAHEB DETAINED MEDICALLY. REACHING MONDAY EVENING. INFORM PURI. HOPE LAKSHMI WELL.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

316. LETTER TO KAMUBEHN

BOMBAY,
April 13, 1945

CHI. KAMU,

I have your letter. Beyond meeting face to face what more do you desire? It is more than enough if there is a meeting of hearts. It is good that there is no customary lamentation over your sister-in-law's death. It is wrong to grieve over a death. Everyone has to go that way—the only difference is some go early, some late. Mourning over it is futile.

I hope all of you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

KAMUBEHN
VORA HARIDAS'S BUNGALOW
BEHIND HIGH SCHOOL
RAJKOT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

317. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

BOMBAY,
April 13, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I have understood about 1:12. I have made the change deliberately. There is no time to write a letter. Swami will write to you. What you say about interest I have been accepting as an ideal for many years now. However it seems to me that it is not practicable.

You have done well in prolonging your stay for some more time.

You must have received my letter of yesterday.

You should let Dr. Ice examine Gomati's tooth. I expect he will suggest something. Otherwise Dr. Manubhai is there. It is good that Durga will be leaving with you.

I am quite well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

318. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

BOMBAY,
April 13, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have read this letter[1]. Speak to him about his habits and irregularities and warn him. If he does not listen, then it is only right that he goes. Nevertheless tell him frankly if you all feel that he is incorrigible and relieve him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Sushila Nayyar's letter to the addressee about Majidbhai

319. LETTER TO JANAKIBEHN SOMAN

BOMBAY,
April 13, 1945

DEAR JANAKIBEHN,

I was happy to have your letter. I have sent it on to Brajkishorebhai. Your letter reminds me of the old times. May you all keep well. Please tell Totaramji to write to me a few words occasionally.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI JANAKIBEHN SOMAN
GUJARAT VIDYAPITH
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

320. LETTER TO VIMALA C. MEHTA

BOMBAY,
April 14, 1945

CHI. VIMALA,

I read your interesting story. My blessings to you both. Both of you are rising. I hope it is not to fall again. Falling does not mean losing your job; it means leading a life of luxury and licence. I knew the late Kikabhai. He was close to my father. But I knew him more as the author of the dictionary, which was considered very good at that time. I shall most likely be in Mahabaleshwar after the 20th. Come and see me some time after I go up there.

Blessings from
BAPU

BEHN VIMALA C. MEHTA
HARIPURA
BHAWANI VAD, SURAT

From a copy of the Gujarat: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

321. LETTER TO G. B. PANT

BOMBAY,
April 14, 1945

BHAI GOVIND BALLABH PANT,

I. received your letter today. Dr. Jivraj told me only today The doctors are right. The body has to be made fit to undergo the operation. I intend to leave Bombay on the 20th. Write to me at Mahabaleshwar.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI GOVIND BALLABH PANT
EX-PRIME MINISTER
NAINITAL

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

322. LETTER TO SATYAVATI

BOMBAY,
April 14, 1945

CHI. SATYAVATI,

I have your letter. Serving you is serving the people because you do not live and do not wish to live for your own sake. Each breath you take is for the people. I won't remove Chand from the Camp. I saw her on the 11th. However, I will talk to her after the Cawp is over and try to send her to you. May God keep you well in the meantime. Khurshedbehn is somewhat indisposed. She wants to see you. You should not be so foolhardy as to come here.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SATYAVATI DEVI
J. B. HOSPITAL
KINGSWAY
DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

323. A NOTE

April 15, 1945

I am sorry to say that what appears to have been meant as a supplement to the constructive programme is its flat contradiction. And it is unworkable. If put in action, it will [not only] frustrate itself but will largely hamper the constructive programme. But this is merely a caution. Those who believe in this programme must prosecute it till they are convinced to the contrary. That is the best argument.

Hence I do not want to reason even if I had the time which I have not just now.

BAPU

From a copy: Jawaharlal Nehru Papers, Part:" Vol. IV. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

324. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

April 15, 1945

CHI. CHI[MANLAL],

I have your letter. Pass on the accompanying letters. You give fairly detailed news. Let us see if we can use a part of Durga's house during her absence. We have, of course, K.'s[1] house in the last resort.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10621

[1] Kishorelal Mashruwala

325. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

April 15, 1945

CHI. JIVANJI,

I send you with this for your perusal Anand's letter regazding the books. I am sending also the English material which he has sent. Perhaps you will have that with you. Read both and return them with your comments. I have not yet written anything to Anand.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9954. Also C.W. 6928. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

326. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR PAREKH

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
April 15, 1945

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

I have your letter. It is good. Shripat Baba should go to Bhimavaram. It may be possible to get coconuts here but the other thing also is needed.

Shastriji[1] should not set his heart on dying in the Ashram. Manahar's institution is the only proper place and Shastriji should have the discernment to see it.[2]

Set apart two minutes before नं म्यो. I was under the impression that we recite the शान्ति prayer after नं म्यो. Let it be halted for two minutes. But you should do only what you have suggested.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9023. Also C.W. 9147. Courtesy: Prabhakar Parekh

[1] Parachure Shastri
[2] *Vide* also the following item.

327. LETTER TO PARACHURE SHASTRI

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
April 15,[1] *1945*

SHASTRIJI,

You have fallen ill! It is not good if it is from worry. But if it is death calling, there is no harm. "You must go with a smile on your lips." And that too from a Lepers' House[2]. Whatever it may be, remain calm and sing Tukaram's *abhangas* or Vedic *mantras.*

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10668. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

328. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO SHARAYU DHOTRE[3]

April 15, 1945

In my view the question is not difficult. I shall define the ideal. It is for each individual to decide how far it is proper to depart from it. Consider also that my own conduct is not in keeping with the ideal I lay down. My coming here and then going to Mahabaleshwar is a breach of the ideal. Even so, that is what I am doing. You are similarly free to act as you wish. If the heart is inclined in a certain way the ideal is secondary.

Let us do without what everyone cannot have. I have told you that in practice we do not do it. Now you have to decide without hesitation whether or not you should take help from Saroj or Raihana or Kamalnayan. Neither I nor anybody else should take that decision.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 841. Courtesy: Sharayu Dhotre

[1] The copy from Pyarelal Papers, however" has 16.
[2] The addressee was in Dattapur Lepers' House near Wardha.
[3] Only the second sheet of the letter is available.

329. LETTER TO E. W. ARYANAYAKUM

April 15, 1945

CHI. ARYANAYAKUM,

What is the harm if I arrange to get another room for Ramachandran in Rustom Bhavan itself? After all he is here for six months. Isn't he? Pyarelal needs all the rooms. He has a lot of papers and books.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

330. LETTER TO UMA AGRAWAL

BOMBAY,
April 15, 1945

CHI. OM[1],

If you keep your clothes in the room on getting up, does it mean the room is yours? The ideal thing would be that we consider it more than enough if we have a corner to keep our things in. Do you throw your clothes about anyhow or do you fold them and keep them neatly arranged? Do you wash your mouth and face before going to the morning prayer? You have described the schedule from lunch to 3.15 p.m. as cleaning and ginning of cotton, newspaper-reading and writing. You ought to mention specifically the time each activity takes. Working eight hours is compulsory. In an institution given to non-violence, taking work from others is coercion. Why should we exact work? Everything we do is work. We should not keep our diaries secret. It is our ideal not to keep anything secret. It is better to get the diary signed by the manager.

Any work given to us is our study, or should be. Prof. Shriman Narayan's school should not have English. It will be discontinued. I do not know the price. You must find out. Do not send the diary to me. Show it to me when I come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Jamnalal Bajaj's daughter

331. LETTER TO P. B. CHANDWANI

BOMBAY,
April 15, 1945

CHI. CHANDWANI,

I was very happy to have your Hindi letter. Learn Hindi thoroughly. I will try to go to Mahabaleshwar on the 20th.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI P. B. CHANDWANI
OLD SUKKUR
SUKKUR
SIND

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

332. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHASTRI

BOMBAY,
April 15, 1945

BHAI HIRALAL SHASTRI,

I have your letter. Keep on doing your work unperturbed. Do not involve me. Da what your heart bids you—those are the true blessings.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI HIRALAL SHASTRI
PRAJAMANDAL
KHEJADA KA RASTA
JAIPUR CITY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

333. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

BOMBAY,
April 15, 1945

Gandhiji wanted to refer to a conversation he had with a friend. He was asked to define who was a Gandhi-ite as there was confusion in the public mind. He could safely say there was no Gandhi-ite in India. He was himself not one. He had founded no cult. He claimed to be a satyagrahi and" therefore, he was also non-violent, or was trying to be and he invited everyone in the audience to do likewise.

When the odds were heavy against them in South Africa, where they were in a hopeless minority, he had discovered satyagraha in 1906 in the place of parliamentary programme. He had never been a member of any parliament or even a local board. He saw that non-violent non-co-operation was the most powerful thing instead. The constructive part was his 15- point programme which they had seen. There was swaraj in it and much more.

Satyagraha was not a mere policy with him, it was his creed. He hoped to see God face to face through it. If that was the power of satyagraha surely political swaraj was a simple matter if all took to it.

But his satyagraha told him that he was to bear with those who did not see eye to eye with him but sought to go through the parliamentary programme. They had known him closeted with Dr. Khan Saheb and his friends as also with Advocate Bhulabhai Desai. He told them to follow their belief. He owned no enemy—certainly not Englishmen and not even English officials. But that did not mean that he should follow them. He went his own way. The official way was to rule India, his was to serve India. The official was all for power, he was all for service and that in the name of God. Therefore he could afford to face the whole world's opposition, for God, he believed, was with him and He was a never-failing, all-sufficing companion and infallible Guide.

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-4-1945

334. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

[*April 16, 1945*][2]

Instead of undertaking the thankless task of going through the jumble of my writings to find out what I have said or have not said about caste, you have done well in sending me the following questions.

1. Do you still adhere to the views you have expressed on the caste system in your writings?

2. Do you still believe that the caste system is the best social order and that the world should adopt it?

3. Do you still believe that the thousands *of* existing sub-castes will disappear and merge so that in the end only the four varnas will remain? In the last twenty-five years how many sub-castes have thus disappeared and merged into bigger castes?

4. Whatever castes we find in history are all based on birth and the inequalities arising therefrom. Do you think that the equality and brotherhood you preach is consistent with that kind of social order? If the Bhangis go on doing the work of scavenging from one generation to the next, what will be their future?

5. Isn't Shri Sanjana's severe criticism of the "Politics of the Cow"' entirely true?

6. Will you give your consent to the bill introduced in the Central Legislature for retaining caste differences in the Hindu Law?

7. "The Congress is an orthodox Hindu organization and under the fostering care of Gandhiji it has become a missionary organization for the renewal and well-being of the orthodox Hindu religion with its caste system." What reply would you give to such allegations of Shri Sanjana? And if what Shri Sanjana says is correct, does it not repudiate the Congress claim of being a truly national organization?

8. Is the caste system consistent with democracy and democratic organizations?

I do not need to refer to my past writings to say what I believe

[1] The questions had been submitted to Gandhiji by a correspondent and included quotations from Gandhiji's writings. Gandhiji, in answering, summarized these. Later the questions and the answers were published by Navajivan as a preface to *Varnavyavastha.* These were also published in *The Bombay Chronicle* and *The Hindu.*

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 17-4-1945

today, because only what I believe today counts. I wish to say that the caste system as it exists to day in Hinduism is an anachronism. It is one of those ugly things which will certainly hinder the growth of true religion. It must go if both Hinduism and India are to live and grow from day today. The way to do it is for all Hindus to become their own scavengers and treat the so-called hereditary Bhangis as their own brothers.

I say the Bhangis because they are at the lowest rung of the ladder. This answers all the questions and I need say nothing more. It is evident that the questioner has not taken the trouble to read my writings. . . .[1] Everybody knows that the Congress from its inception has not been and is not even now an orthodox Hindu organization. It is a democratic organization comprising people holding different views and is daily becoming more and more so under my fostering care.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Varnavyavastha, pp. 13-4

335. CABLE TO ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

6 p.m., April 16, 1945

MRS. ROOSEVELT

HYDE PARK

NEW YORK (U. S. A.)

MY HUMBLE CONDOLENCE AND CONGRATULATIONS.[2] LATTER BECAUSE YOUR ILLUSTRIOUS HUSBAND DIED IN HARNESS AND AFTER WAR HAD REACHED A POINT WHERE ALLIED VICTORY HAD BECOME CERTAIN.[3] HE WAS SPARED HUMILIATING SPECTACLE OF BEING PARTY TO PEACE WHICH THREATENS TO BE PRELUDE TO WAR BLOODIER STILL IF POSSIBLE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *The Hindu*, 10-5-1945

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] President F. D. Roosevelt died on April 12, 1945

[3] Germany surrendered to the Allies on May 7 and Japan on August 14.

336. LETTER TO BISWANATH DAS

BOMBAY,
April, 15/17, 1945

MY DEAR DAS,

I like your letter. I agree that those who are so inclined should follow the parliamentary activity. But the decision has to be taken by the W. C.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI B. DAS, M.L.A. (CENTRAL)
CHANDNI CHOWK
CUTTACK, ORISSA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

337. LETTER TO SOURINDRA NATH BASU

BOMBAY,
April 17, 1945

DEAR SOURINDRA,

I hear from Bhupen that you have lost your brother. All my sympathy with you.

Yours,
BAPU

SHYT. SOURINDRA NATH BASU
20A SANKERPARA RD.
BHOWANIPARA
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Congress Working Committee

338. LETTER TO BHUPENDRA NARAYAN SENGUPTA

BOMBAY,
April 17, 1945

MY DEAR BHUPEN,

I have sent the condolence message.[1]

Do send me details about Dhirenda's activities. And let Dr. Indra see Profulla about medical work.

Yours,
BAPU

SJT. BHUPENDRA NARAYAN SENGUPTA
99/2 BALLYGUNJ PLACE
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 10065

339. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

BOMBAY,
April 17, 1945

CHI. PREMA,

I forgot whether or not I have replied to your previous letter. I got the second letter today. I leave on the 20th for Mahabalshwar and will be spending one month there. This depends on nothing unforeseen happening in the meanwhile. We can meet only if you come there. One may go anywhere if necessary. Otherwise why should I go to Mahabaleshwar?

I have not yet received the book mentioned by you. I will get it. It will be very fine if Acharya Bhagwat joins[2]. I seem to feel better.

I have received the book.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10434, Also C.W. 6873. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The training activities organized by the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Fund

340. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

April 17, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your letter. Ramprasad is to be sent to Mirabehn. You already have work in hand. One person at a time should look after the kitchen by turns. Do not go on discussing things. The President after listening to everything should decide either through consensus or a majority vote or at his own discretion. Everything is imperfect as long as the arrangement does not function smoothly.

What you say about the sum of Rs. 25 is correct. It is not for you to see under which head it is accounted. Keeping it in the Hospital account seems all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5944. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

341. LETTER TO RAMPRASAD

April 17, 1945

CHI. RAMPRASAD,

I have your letter. Let Mama also write. Please go to Mirabehn. All the information is given in the enclosed letter. Say to Mirabehn: "Give my wages to Bapu. He will pay me. I have come to assist you for two months."

You can easily do this. Write to me when you arrive there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

342. LETTER TO MANGANBHAI P. DESAI

BOMBAY,
April 17, 1945

CHI. MAGANBHAI,

Narahari has sent his opinion regarding your scheme. Have a look at it. Discuss it with him and write to me about it.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MAGANBHAI DESAI
RASHTRIYA GUJARAT VIDYAPITH
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

343. LETTER TO P. C. PADHYE

BOMBAY,
April 17, 1945

BHAI PADHYE,

I have received your letter on behalf of the Buddha Society. I am helpless. I do not go anywhere I can possibly avoid going. Even as it is I am leaving Bombay. I have not received the book you mention. Maybe it will come.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

ADVOCATE P. C. PADHYE
THE BUDDHA SOCIETY
NAIR BUILDING
LAMINGTON ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

344. LETTER TO MOHAMMAD YUNUS

April 17, 1945

BHAI YUNUS,

I have your letter. May your marriage prove good for both of you and for the country. May both live in harmony and render service to the country. You may come whenever you feel like it.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAI YUNUS

KHADI GATE

PESHAWAR

From a copy of the Urdu: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

345. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

BOMBAY,

April 17, 1945

Though I know that silence is better than the spoken or written word, there are well-defined limitations to the application of the maxim. The San Francisco Conference is announced to meet shortly.[1] I do not know its agenda. Probably no outsider knows it. Whatever it may be, the Conference will have much to do with the world-to-be after the so-called end of the war. I very much fear that behind the structure of world security sought to be raised lurk mistrust and fear which breed war. Therefore as a lifelong believer in peace as against war, it seems well for me to record my convictions in the matter.

I reiterate my conviction that there will be no peace for the Allies or the world unless they shed their belief in the efficacy of war and its accompanying terrible deception and fraud and are determined to hammer out real peace based on freedom and equality of all races and nations. Exploitation and domination of one nationover another can have no place in a world striving to put an end

[1] The Conference was convened on April 25 and concluded on June 26 when the Charter of the United Nations was finally adopted.

to all wars. It is only in such a world that the militarily weaker nations will be free from the fear of intimidation or exploitation.

(1) An indispensable preliminary to peace is the complete freedom of India from all foreign control, not merely because it is a classic example of imperialist domination but specially because it is a big, ancient and cultured country which has fought for its freedom since 1920 deliberately with Truth and Nonviolence as its only weapon.

Though the Indian soldier has fought not for India's freedom, he has shown during this war as never before that he is at least an equal of the best in his fighting qualities. I cite this to answer the charge that India's peaceful struggle is due to its lack of soldierly quality. The inevitable deduction that is drawn from this is that non-violence of the strong is infinitely braver than their violence. That India may not yet have evolved such non-violence is another matter. If it is the case, it does not detract from the statement that it has battled non-violently for freedom and that not without considerable success.

(2) Freedom of India will demonstrate to all the exploited races of the earth that their freedom is very near and that in no case will they henceforth be exploited.

(3) Peace must be just. In order to be that, it must neither be punitive nor vindictive. Germany and Japan should not be humiliated. The strong are never vindictive. Therefore, fruits of peace must be equally shared. The effort then will be to turn them into friends. The Allies can prove their democracy by no other means.

(4) It follows from the foregoing that there will be no armed peace imposed upon the forcibly disarmed. All will be disarmed. There will be an international police force to enforce the lightest terms of peace. Even this retention of an international police will be a concession to human weakness, not by any means an emblem of peace If these foregoing essentials of peace are accepted, it follows that the camouflage of Indian representation through Indians nominated by British imperialism should be dropped.[1] Such representation will be worse than no representation. Either India at SanFrancisco is represented by an elected representative or represented not at all.

[1] The British Government had nominated A. Ramaswamy Mudaliar, Firoz Khan Noon and V. T. Krishnamachari to represent India at the Conference.

The following from the Congress resolution of August 8, 1942, shows clearly what free India stands for:

> While the A.I.C.C. must primarily be concerned with the independence and defence of India in this hour of danger, the Committee is of opinion that the future peace, security and ordered progress of the world demand a world federation of free nations, and on no other basis can the problems of the modern world be solved. Such a world federation would ensure the freedom of its constituent nations, the prevention of aggression and exploitation by one nation over another, the protection of national minorities, the advancement of all backward areas and peoples, and the pooling of the world's resources for the common good of all. On the establishment of such a world federation, disarmament would be practicable in all countries, national armies, navies and air forces would no longer be necessary, and a world federal defence force would keep the world peace and prevent aggression. An independent India would gladly join such a world federation and co-operate on an equal basis with other countries in the solution of international problems.

Thus the demand for Indian independence is in no way selfish. Its nationalism spells internationalism.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-4-1945

346. MESSAGE TO INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA[1]

BOMBAY,
April 18, 1945

As India holds the key to the freedom of all the exploited races and nations of the earth so do Indians in South Africa hold the key to the protection and freedom of the exploited people in the overseas. For it was in South Africa that satyagraha was fairly tried and became largely successful. Will the Indians there unite and sacrifice themselves for the common cause?

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2334

[1] The message was conveyed through J. R. Bhala, Joint Secretary of the Overseas Indian Students' Association, who had met Gandhiji and acquainted him with the difficulties facing the overseas students. The message was also published in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 1-5-1945, and *The Hindu*, 2-5-1945.

347. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

BOMBAY,
April 18, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Sushilabehn tells me that there is an understanding with Jajuji and the others that, apart from diagnosis and general treatment, the expenses on patent medicines should be borne by the patients themselves. They should not be purchased by the Hospital but should be procured by the patients as per the prescription. According to this arrangement, the cost of the distilled water should be recovered from those patients to whom it is given or the Ashram should pay if it wants. This is a matter of keeping accounts. Sushilabehn intends to make the Hospital self-reliant. It seems that the water is being distilled for Hari-ichchha, Kishorelalbhai and others. We cannot take money from them, so it seems to me that the expenses should be put in the Ashram account. Write to me if you have something different to say.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10622

348. LETTER TO R. K. SIDHWA

BOMBAY,
April 18, 1945

BHAI SIDHWA,

I have your letter.

I shall let you know beforehand if I write something of the kind that you fear.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI R. K. SIDHWA, M.L.A.
VICTORIA ROAD
KARACHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

349. LETTER TO PRANSHANKAR JOSHI

BOMBAY,
April 18, 1945

BHAI PRANSHANKAR,

I have your letter. I shall be glad even if I get a single book. I do not have time to spare for you. Still you may write to me after ten days, when I have reached Mahabaleshwar.

M. K. GANDHI

PRANSHANKAR JOSHI
PHOOLWADI
JETPUR, KATHIAWAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

350. LETTER TO SHEELA

BOMBAY,
April 18, 1945

CHI. SHEELA,

Your letters are prolix and thoughtless. The briefer a letter, the sweeter it is. That I would be writing to you did not mean that I would be writing to you daily. If I write once in a year it may be said I keep writing. There was no question of writing promptly.

A friend is one who never expects a letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHEELABEHN
SIKHSHASADAN
MEERUT

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

351. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR PAREKH

BOMBAY,
April 18, 1945

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

I forgot to answer two points. Chi. Ramdas has lost weight but it should cause no worry if he recovers and retains vitality. It is best to do your massage yourself. I used to have my own daily massage at your age. I can do it even now. Those whose limbs have gone weak must necessarily have massage. This is my view. Consider it well and do whatever seems proper to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9024. Also C.W. 9148. Courtesy: Prabhakar Parekh

352. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

BOMBAY,
April 18, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I was able to read your letter fully only today. It is well that Balkrishna has come. If in spite of the heat he can stay in the fields let him do so. It is not difficult to have water fetched from there. You should not be having the discharge. Stop taking onions and garlic. Take hip-baths with an empty stomach. It will benefit you. Having taken the right treatment do not worry. Keep an repeating Ramanama. Remember the monkey teacher.[1] I have it in front of me. If you want it and can derive any benefit from it I shall send it to you. Heat could be the cause of your ailment but the chief factor is the mind. You must drink five pounds of water to stop the burning in urination. It would be good if you took distilled water. Or at least the water should be boiled. Your bed should be of planks and hard. It isgood that you have decided about it, even if only after coming to the Ashram. Do whatever you can cope with easily. What Om Prakash says is wrong. If he cannot know the Ashram what can he know about

[1] The reference is to the figure of the three monkeys.

me?

I shall send letters to others if I can manage it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You have taken good vows. My indulgence you have. I have another letter from you—of the 19th. If the children want to learn English, let it be along with our own language. But not Ramen under any circumstances. Discretion in everything.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4509

353. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

April 19, 1945

I have read this. It is good. I didn't read it as a critic. If I did, I might make some suggestions, but I will not attempt that. If you make copies, give one to Pyarelal and one each to others whom M. bhai knows. Send one to Kakasaheb. He will send his comments and make suggestions. Show it to Nadavi[1] also The interval between every two examinations should be indicated. There is some reference to acquaintance with all scripts. It may mean that they also should be taught. Illiterates are in large number—they are in millions. They can be taught the Nagari script because it is a perfect one. That means that there will be one script for the languages descended from Sanskrit. Everybody would write his mother tongue also in that script. Let there be mother tongue—the mother script is unnecessary. The national language should be written in two scripts as long as the dispute is not settled. In words of non-Arabic and non-Persian origin, only one and some other letters may be used. I shall not write more. I have already written more than I intended.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10807

[1] Najib Ashraf Nadavi, a professor in the Ismail Yusuf College, Andheri

354. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

BIRLA HOUSE,
BOMBAY,
April 19, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I am writing this about the meticulous way you do things. Your small note, the thorn pin and the daily news!!! About the snake, I have heard from many. We are surrounded by them. We are also tested an such occasions.

Please tell Dev that I am not writing to him this time.

I want this to reach you before you leave. Manilal has not gone to Akola.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

355. LETTER TO MAYASHANKAR V. DESAI

BOMBAY,
April 19, 1945

BHAI MAYASHANKAR,

I have your letter. Now I cannot spare any time here. Write to me at Mahabaleshwar after eight days. I will give you time when my health permits. I will at least understand what you have to say. I want to do a great deal. The question is how much my health will permit me to do.

Blessings from
BAPU

MAYASHANKAR V. DESAI
MAHENDRA BHOGILAL'S FIRM
DIAMOND MERCHANT
DIWANCHAND BUILDING
ZAVERI BAZAAR, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

356. LETTER TO KESHAV DEVDHAR

BOMBAY,
April 19, 1945

CHI. DEVDHAR,

Your letter is very good. It is God's grace that Chi. Devendranath has survived. Prabhakar is industrious and intelligent. Narayan has come to this world only to help others. May God give him a long life. I do not know the other brothers. Please convey my thanks to all of them. The civil surgeon is of course very kind to us. I hope Devendra has fully recovered now.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI KESHAV DEVDHAR
KHADI VIDYALAYA
SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

357. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON

BOMBAY,
April 19, 1945

BHAI TANDONJI,

I am a little unhappy over yesterday's discussion. I wonder if I have wasted your time. Then again I could not explain to you a very simple thing. I had made it clear at Indore that Hindi did not mean exclusion of Urdu. You yourself do not want to give up Urdu. Then it becomes your duty and mine—and of other patriots also—to know both the scripts and their styles. We include Urdu-knowing people in taking account of the supporters of the national language. Therefore the national language is=Hindi + Urdu. Hindi will be an incomplete national language if we take it in its narrow sense. Those imbued with nationalism will easily learn two more languages. Those who do not will lag behind. Such being my views, I will popularize Hindustani whether others support me or not. I am very keen to have yourwhole-hearted support because you are you and I have a great respect for you.

The poison cannot spread if supporters of Hindi put up with and take kindly to the popularization of Hindustani.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

358. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

BOMBAY,
April 19, 1945

CHI. CHAND,

I have received your nice letter. You have to complete your course there. In the meantime I will get some more news of Satyavati. Keep on writing to me at Mahabaleshwar. I will decide. Convey my blessings to all the girls there.

Manu[1] has again got fever with blood [in the sputum]. She feels weak but has not lost much weight.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI CHANDRANI
KASTURBA NIDHI SHIBIR
SURESH KUTIR
MANDA PESHAWAR ROAD
BORIVLI

From a photostat of the Hindi: Chandrani Papers. Courtesy: National Gandhi Museum and Library

[1] Jaisukhlal Gandhi's daughter

359. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

BOMBAY,
April 19, 1945

CHI. HOSHIARI,

Your letter is good. You have done right in writing a strong letter about the boy. Now I will not ask you to let the children go out during my absence. It is true that you are not a child now. Your curriculum is good. I see that there is a fall in the temperature there but it will rise again. Our country is hot. Isn't it? Yourhandwriting has improved a little. Improve it still further and also your language.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

360. LETTER TO SARASWATI GANDHI

BOMBAY,
April 19, 1945

CHI. SURU,

I was very happy to receive your letter. God will grant you success. The victory over Harilal, which was denied me, has come to you two. You are correct in saying that if he can get rid of the two vices he can be the best of all brothers. Let us see what you people can do. Kanti is very confident. Faith is a great thing. I am going to Mahabaleshwar tomorrow. I shall be there for a month and then one more month at Panchgani. Madhavdas[1] had taken poison but has survived. Manilal, Sushila and the children have arrived.

Blessings from;

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6185. Also C.W. 3459. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] Madhavdas Gopaldas Kapadia, brother of Kasturba Gandhi

361. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

BOMBAY,
April 19, 1945

Gandhiji spoke of the value of prayer and asked the audience to continue the habit even after he was gone. In particular he asked them to pray that the taint of untouchability might be removed root and branch and find no place in their hearts.

But he reminded them also that it was not enough if they prayed. While everything ultimately depended on the will of God they must do their duty. In the 15-point constructive programme which he had set out before them was hidden the key to swaraj. If a large majority of them pursued this programme sincerely he was confident that their efforts would be crowned with success.

The Bombay Chronicle, 20-4-1945

362. TELEGRAM TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

BOMBAY,
[On or before] *April* [*20*][1], *1945*

JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
HYDERABAD (SIND)

GLAD ALL RELEASED. LOVE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Gandhi left Bombay on this date.

363. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON

BOMBAY,
[On or before *April 20, 1945*][1]

I have read the papers you have sent me about the Jaunpur prisoners.[2] I feel that they should be saved from the gallows. What I have written about the Ashti and Chimur prisoners[3] applies very well to this case. You must have seen that I have tried to sate all such prisoners. My hope is that such prisoners will not be hanged.

The Hindustan Times, 21-4-1945

364. LETTER TO MIAN IFTIKHAR-UD-DIN

April 20, 1945

DEAR MIAN SAHEB,

I had your letter of 14th inst. I showed it to Gandhiji.

He is of opinion that under the circumstances you describe you should behave and act as if no restriction notice had ever been served on you.

With kind regards.

Yours sincerely,
PYARELAL

MIAN IFTIKHAR-UD-DIN
21 AIKMAN ROAD
LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The report carrying the item is dated April 20.

[2] Seven persons had been tried and sentenced to be hanged by the Jaunpur Sessions Court. On appeal, the Allahabad High Court acquitted one of the accused, reduced the sentence of a second to three years' imprisonment, and confirmed the sentences of the remaining five. An appeal for mercy had been sent to the Governor of U. P.

[3] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 31-3-1945.

365. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

BOMBAY,
April 20, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have been thinking of you ever since I came here. Do not do anything against your will. Work done whole-heartedly gives contentment and peace. Sharda may stay or leave. It will be enough if we do our duty. Take care of your health, bodily and mental.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10639

366. LETTER TO SWAMI ANAND

BOMBAY,
April 20, 1945

CHI. SWAMI,

I have your letter. I am not unaware either of Chhotubhai's work or of his sacrifice. You write that now his twenty-three-year old daughter is getting married in a simple and austere ceremony. My blessings are of course with them. May the bride and bridegroom live long and together render great service to the country.

I could not have a talk with Bapa. Now I am writing to him.

May the change of air prove fruitful to Chi. Kishorelal and Gomati. What shall I write about Durga? Will she ever be healthy? She certainly can be.

Blessings from
BAPU

SWAMI ANAND
C/O JUGAL KISHORE
P. O. KARAMBEL R.L.
B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

367. LETTER TO BHOGILAL

BOMBAY,
April 20, 1945

CHI. BHOGILAL,

Shevate gave me your letter. Your handwriting is neat. I like your views also. I am glad that you are conscious of whose son you are.

I shall not write more as I am getting ready to leave.

I wish the well-being of the entire family.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

368. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
April 20, 1945

CHI. MRIDULA,

I did write the preface for Tandon. Later there was a complaint about his behaviour at Swaraj Bhavan, and that dampened me somewhat. But I have not abandoned the thing. Now you will throw more light on the matter.

You will certainly come to Mahabaleshwar.Look after your health. It would be good if you do not work beyond your capacity.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11237. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

369. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

April 20, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Here is Grimm's Law[1]. It is a very good guide. You can frame a law for the languages of India with its help. Ask me if you cannot. It is a very interesting study. You will see from it that learning scripts is child's play. I have received a chart which makes it very easy. There is hardly any original script. At the moment I am very busy. I can't write more than this. In a few hours I have to go to the station.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KRISHNACHANDRA

ASHRAM

SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

370. LETTER TO BALVANT SINHA

BIRLA HOUSE,

April 20, 1945

CHI. BALVANT SINHA,

Learn veterinary science. There is no harm in walking, but do not walk in the sun. Go in the morning. Stay in the city and leave after 6 o'clock. Do the reading and writing in the city. Hoshiari is getting along satisfactorily. You must live in amity with all. Talk little and work a lot. Now the time for departure is drawing near.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1959

[1] So called after Jacob Grimm (1785-1863), a German grammarian, this postulates correspondence of consonants in the Germanic and other Indo-European languages.

371. LETTER TO GANESH RAM

BOMBAY,
April 20, 1945

BHAI GANESH RAM,

I have your letter. I advise you to follow the instructions of the secretary of the Ashram. I am not sure when I shall return.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4510

372. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 21, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

We arrived here today. Manu is here. The other girls are in the Camp. Manu is better today, though she is very weak. I hope she will get well here. Premlilabehn and Shantikumar have made all thearrangements. One may say it is fairly cool here at present, though the sun is very hot. But that is so even in Simla.

Ramprasad must have gone to Mirabehn.[1] Someone must go there immediately. Her need is urgent.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10623

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Ramprasad", 17-4-1945.

373. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 21, 1945

CHI. JAISUKHLAL[1],

I am able to write to you only after coming here. Manu suffered quite a lot. Her nose bled all day long. She had fever also. Now it seems that her nose will not bleed and she will get no fever either. I have brought Manu here. Treatment and care were provided by Sushilabehn. Sometimes I took courage in both hands and tried nature-cure remedies. And for two days a homoeopath came who also tried his hand. There is no cause for worry. Let me see what improvement she shows in this cool weather. Liquid paraffin helps her bowel movement. I may stay in this part of the country for two months.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./24

374. LETTER TO AMBALAL SARABHAI

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 21, 1945

SUJNYA BHAISHREE,

This is just to acknowledge your letter. I shall write out whatever is necessary on the basis of that. I have reached here today.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHETH AMBALAL SARABHAI
THE CALICO MILLS
P. O. BOX 12, AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Gandhiji's nephew

375. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 21, 1945

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter of April 14. I hope Ramprasad has arrived there or will be arriving soon. He is very intelligent. Do not detain him for more than two months. Give him as much rest as you can. If he needs more I will see to it. I have arrived here today. Can you read my Hindi? I am a guest of Premlilabehn and Shantikumar. I have with me Pyarelal, Sushila, Dinshaw and Pyarelal's two assistants. Manu is ill, so I have Kanu. He will go to Rajkot for a few days.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MIRABEHN
KISAN ASHRAM, MULDASPUR
P. O. BAHADARABAD *via* JWALAPUR
NEAR HARDWAR, U. P.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers, Courtesy: Pyarelal

376. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 21, 1945

BHAI AMRITALAL,

I could not write to you before coming to Mahabaleshwar. I got your letter only yesterday. I have written to Pushpa's[1] father.

I shall write about the women[2] if I have some satisfactory evidence.

I have talked to Profulla Babu regarding the Kasturba Memorial Trust.[3] It has not been finally decided whether the representatives should be province-wise or community-wise.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10400. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[1] A Gujarati girl who wanted to join Sevagram Ashram

[2] The addressee had complained to Gandhiji that members of British armed forces had been committing outrages against women.

[3] The addressee had drawn Gandhiji's attention to the criticism that there was no Bengali representative on the Kasturba Memorial Trust.

377. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

MAHABALESESWAR,
April 21, 1945

CHI. ANAND,

I have your letter. It is good you wrote to Jivanji. About your health I still feel it would have been better if you had stayed at Bhimavaram. Gokhale is there, and keeping well. Babaji is not there. He should have also stayed at Bhimavaram. Go there if you can. If there is peace in Karachi and your health is all right, then I have nothing to say.

I came here today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

378. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 21, 1945

Mahatma Gandhi, addressing the gathering at the end of prayers, asked them to leave him alone to have peace. He said:

I have not come here for the sake of pleasure but to gain strength and improve my health so that I may work harder.

He wanted them to contribute towards the Harijan Fund if they wanted removal of untouchability. Announcing that henceforth prayers would be held earlier in the day for the benefit of those who came from a distance, he said that those who attended prayers should come with a desire to participate in the prayers and not merely to have a look at him.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-4-1945

379. TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Express MAHABALESHWAR,
April 22, 1945

DEVDAS GANDHI

CARE "TIMES"

NEW DELHI

ASK KRISHNADAS ABOUT MESSAGE ATTENDING MORNING POST WHEN LAXMI[1] EXPECTED.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

380. TELEGRAM TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[2]

Express MAHABALESHWAR,
April 22, 1945

ASSOCIATED

BOMBAY

NEVER WROTE BHULABHAI DESAI AS REPORTED BY MORNING STANDARD ACCORDING TO YOU NOR THOUGHT EXCEPT AS PER MY SPEECH OF FIFTEENTH APRIL. PLEASE ADVERTISE DENIAL.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

381. MESSAGE TO K. RAMKRISHNA PILLAI[3]

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 22, 1945

You are the best judges of what to do under the circumstances. You know also what I have done in similar situation. Beyond this I am unable to say anything.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-4-1945

[1] Wife of the addressee.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 15-4-1945.

[3] The addressee had apprised Gandhiji of the latest political situation in Travancore and of the arrest of the President and two Secretaries of the State Congress.

382. LETTER TO CHHOTUBHAI SUTHAR

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 22, 1945

BHAI CHHOTUBHAI,

I have gone through what you had sent. It was Kakasaheb who made me interested in Tarak Mandal. My interest continues and so I have welcomed your activity. Abide by the pledge you have published in the journal. May the activities of your Mandal go on increasing. Keep on sending me your literature. I would have sent the subscription if I were not a beggar.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI CHHOTUBHAI SUTHAR
TARAK MANDAL
THAKKAR BUILDING
ANAND

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

383. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 22, 1945

CHI. SUMI,

I have your letter. You say you get the griping pain only once in a day, as if it was something you had to get and that not once but many times. The thing is that you should never get gripes. That you get them suggests indigestion. You should never get gripes. Drink plenty of water during the day. Drink large quantity of water immediately an getting up. Eat slowly and masticate the food well. You must have green vegetables and fruit. Keep on writing to me regularly. Do not be obstinate about studies.

Blessings from

BAPU

KUMARI SUMITRA GANDHI
BIRLA HIGH SCHOOL
PILANI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

384. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 22, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

The two things mentioned in today's letter which I have not scratched out deserve attention. Have you done anything about them?

It shows that all of us, new members and old, men, women and children, should learn Hindustani. The necessary literature for that purpose should be collected.

There is no truth as regards the bullocks. I think it is perfectly right about the dogs. Torturing is worse than killing.

In my absence, the administration must be improved.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10625

385. LETTER TO SHAKARIBEHN C. SHAH

April 22, 1945

CHI. SHAKARIBEHN

You have the capacity to progress. You have the time. You should learn Gujarati and Hindustani in both the scripts. Marathi can also be learnt easily.

You must have first-rate health.

I have told Chimanlal the remedy. The more I think about it the more I realize its value and necessity. The only condition is that both of you should resolve to observe *brahmacharya*.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10624

386. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 22, 1945

CHI. MANI,

It is good you wrote. I am sure Father[1] will see about getting milk and other necessaries. There is therefore no cause at all for worry.

Your health should be fully restored. I have doubts as regards the wisdom of the fasts—total or partial—that you undertake every now and then. I have not discussed this point with you but that is how I feel. My purpose in writing this letter is to remind you that you are to come here as soon as you have done your work in Ahmedabad.

My blessings to everyone there. I trust the Doctor[2] is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. MANIBEHN PATEL
C/O. DR. KANUGA
ELLIS BRIDGE
AHMEDABAD, B. B. & C. I. RLY.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 132

387. LETTER TO GOPE GURBUXANI

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 22, 1945

CHI. GURBUXANI,

I have your letter. Keep in touch with Rajkumariji and do as she says. Vimala must have fully recovered by now. Let her write to me. Let her attend to the household work but in such a way that she continues to do public service. I consider it important that both of you

[1] Vallabhbhai Patel, imprisoned in Ahmednagar Fort at the time, had not been keeping good health.

[2] Dr. Kanuga

should be well acquainted with the science of khadi and learn all the processes. We arrived here yesterday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1314

388 LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 22, 1945

BHAI AMRITA LAL,

I forgot to mention one thing in my letter yesterday. I am aware of most of the complaints in Manu Bhimani's letter. There is no substance in them. There are other things too. If she can send me some convincing proof I am willing to investigate.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10401. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

389. NOTE TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

[After *April 22, 1945*][1]

Appasaheb is able.[2] Induce him to accept the post if he comes. I have suggested only a general rule. Cancel your visit to Mahabaleshwar on the 17th. Write to Bapa.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The note was in reply to the addressee's letter of April 22.

[2] The addressee had sought Gandhiji's opinion whether Appasaheb Patwardhan would be the right man for the post of Acharya in the Khadi Yidyalaya, Ratnagiri.

390. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 23, 1945

RAJAJI
CARE "TIMES"
NEW DELHI

THANK GOD. LAXMI AND BABY HAVE MY BLESSINGS.[1] YOU CAN NOW COME. WEATHER NICE. LOVE ALL.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 10555. Courtesy: Lakshmi Gandhi. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

391. LETTER TO RAMANLAL ENGINEER

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 23, 1945

BHAI RAMANLAL,

I have gone through your letter. Please let me know what harm is caused by the eating of lemons and tomatoes. I have taken these in large quantities and made others do so. I have noticed no harm.

I take plenty of fruit. I have observed no ill effects from it. Let me know why one should not take fruit. I would like to take less fruit and more vegetables because the latter are cheaper.

Have you tried pumpkin seeds? If that remedy should work, I would consider it very good and it is also cheap.

What can you say from your experience?

The impression Dr. Mehta has formed of you is that you have read a great deal but seem to have no experience.

I understand that you are busy translating Lindbar's book. It would be better if you gained some experience either under Dr. Dinshaw or, if you can put up with the heat, at Sevagram, where you

[1] Lakshmi Gandhi had given birth to her youngest son, Gopalkrishna.

can stay even in my absence. If you have an extra copy of Lindbar, lend it to me to read.

Blessings from

BAPU

RAMANLAL ENGINEER

RAMNIVAS BHARADAVADI

VARSOVA ROAD

ANDHERI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

392. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

MAHABALESHWAR,

April 23, 1945

CHI. LILI,

I have your letter. What can I do when you refuse to understand ? When a person is superfluous he is certainly noticed. I cannot have you along as a patient. Why then should I have you at Mahabaleshwar ? There was a reason for sending you to hospital. You say I am everything to you, yet you are unable to understand me. One would surely understand the person one regarded both as mother and father. One would not argue with him. Whatever he said would go straight to one's heart. But what can I do when you remain untouched even after persuasion ? What kind of a person are you that you hesitate to go to Shantikumar's[1] place ? How much he does for you !

Wake up from your slumber !

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Shantikumar N. Morarjee

393. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 23, 1945

CHI. TULSI,

How is it that you again got fever? You had my blessings, you had *khakhra* from me. Will all this go in vain? You will never fall ill if you follow the rules of health. The most important rule is to utter Ramanama from the heart. The other rules are comparatively easier.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

394. LETTER TO ANANTRAM

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 23, 1945

CHI. ANANTRAM,

I hear that you have recovered and render considerable service to others. I am very happy to know this. May your life remain devoted to the service of others. Learn Urdu also and make progress in it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

395. LETTER TO BARBARA

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 23, 1945

CHI. BARBARA, ALIAS VASANTI,

Everyone is afraid for you. The reason is that having been born in a cool place, you may not be able to bear the heat. You will perhaps be able to put up with the heat if you lead a life in keeping with the climate. You are getting on well with your work.

Can you read and understand Hindustani?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

396. LETTER TO DEVENDRANATH DEVDHAR

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 23, 1945

CHI. DEVENDRA,

I am very happy to know that you have escaped death.[1] The truth is that God has saved you. He wanted to save you and therefore the conditions became favourable. From your letters I find that yours is a life of service. And now since God has given you a new life be more service-minded and learn more for the sake of service and lead a simple life.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Keshav Devdhar", 19-4-1945.

397. LETTER TO GOPINATH BARDOLOI

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 23, 1945

BHAI BARDOLOI,

I find your Hindustani very sweet. I do not find any difficulty in reading your handwriting. You must improve your Hindustani. You handwriting should also be better than Mahavir's. Make an effort.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI GOPINATH BARDOLOI
GAUHATI, ASSAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

398. LETTER TO TARACHAND

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 23, 1945

BHAI TARACHANDJI,

I received your letter yesterday. I am forwarding it to Professor Shriman Narayan. I will write to you on hearing from him.

Tandonji saw me. I cannot say what support he will give us. He will certainly not become a member.

You must have read Dr. Haq's criticism. He does not have faith in me. Tandonji of course does not want it.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. TARACHAND
11 CHATHAM LINES
ALLAHABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

399. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 23, 1945

CHI. SHRIMAN NARAYAN,

Enclosed is a letter[1] from Dr. Tara Chand. Read it and send me your opinion.

I feel that the expenditure is too much on the Western style.

If it is to be done in Wardha we have provision for everything. The printing can be done by the Navajivan Press itself.

I have no authority to do anything on my own. Don't we have to place the matter before our executive?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 305

400. LETTER TO DEV PRAKASH NAYYAR

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 23, 1945

CHI. DEV,

Prabhakar writes that you are losing weight and you get headaches. You must take more ghee. Have a mud-pack on the abdomen at night and sit in a tub filled with cold water for an hour as I used to do. Fill the water yourself. It will be very good if you find a solitary place near the well. You must keep a wet cloth on the head.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. National Archives of India

[1] This is not available.

401. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 23, 1945

CHI. RAMESHWARI,

I have some respite here at any rate. So I am attending to the letters lying unanswered. One of the letters is from the Kauls. They have sent Rs. 1000 for the work Raja Saheb had mentioned in his letter to Dr. Mahmud. I do not now wish to issue an appeal about it. I do approve of such memorials, but the beginning should be made with the Punjab. I do not share Raja Saheb's view that it is possible to collect one crore for the Hindu-Muslim work. Even so, a decent amount can be collected if an appeal is issued. You say that a large number of Muslims had attended the funeral. Will they do some work? Can you give your view? You are not the one to desist because Raja Saheb was your father. You are objective enough to consider the matter and give your opinion.

I shall be here for a month. Then Panchgani.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8007. Also C.W. 3106. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

402. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR PAREKH

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 23, 1945

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

Consult Aryanayakumji or Ashabehn about the hair of the Chimur children. Lice in the hair cannot be tolerated. Cut the hair of girls and even grown-up women if they are agreeable. It will save a lot of time. It does not spoil the face at all. After a while, if one wants, hair can be grown again.

You have acted with great alertness with regard to Devendra. Your health should improve if you do your own massage.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9025. Also C.W. 9149. Courtesy: Prabhakar Parekh

403. LETTER TO MADALASA

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 23, 1945

CHI. MADALASA,

How are you? Do you take sufficient care of your health?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 325

404. A NOTE

April 24, 1945

Write to this gentleman[1] that my reply was in response to a question from a Parsi gentleman.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

405. LETTER TO DR. ANAND KUMARI BAMLE

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 24, 1945

CHI. ANAND KUMARI,

Your letter has not impressed me much. Is the handwriting yours? Shall I send the letter to Shastriji?

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

ANAND KUMARI BAMLE
C/O. D. D. SUD
PURANI BASTI
JAIPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] D. Raghavachandrayya Sathsastri who had asked Gandhiji what had prompted him to write the article "Caste System—An Anachronism". *Vide* "Answers to Questions", 16-4-1945.

406. LETTER TO DEVENDRA SINGH

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 24, 1945

BHAI DEVENDRA SINGH,

I have your letter. Write to me who the manager of the goshala is and also other details. I shall then write to him.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

VAIDRAJ DEVENDRA SINGH
AYURVEDIC AUSHADHALAYA
GAJADHAR GANJ
BUXER, E. I. RLY.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

407. LETTER TO A. VIRESHWAR RAO

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 24, 1945

BHAI VIRESHWAR RAO,

I have your letter. What Mridulabehn has written is correct. There may be a difference of opinion about emphasizing sentences and words. Have patience. Why do you write to me in English?

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI A. VIRESHWAR RAO
C/O METAPHYSICIAN SEVASADAN
PODUR'S BUILDING
TANUKU, M. & S. M. RLY.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

408. LETTER TO GHANSHYAM MIRCHANDANI

MAHABALESHWAR,

[Before *April 25, 1945*][1]

In your place I would not submit even if I were to die.[2] But there is no one law for everyone. You should act solely according to your capacity. In any event seeing that you did not accept the notice, you should inform the authorities that you would not accept restrictions save of your own conscience and that you fully believed in non-violence and truth.

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-4-1945

409. INTERVIEW TO RALPH CONISTON[3]

[Before *April 25, 1945*][4]

RALPH CONISTON: Why do you feel so sceptical about the possibility of a lasting peace emerging from the defeat of the Axis Powers?

GANDHIJI: The reason is patent. Violence is bound sooner or later to exhaust itself but peace cannot issue out of such exhaustion. I am uttering God's truth when I say that unless there is a return to sanity, violent people will be swept off the face of the earth . . . Those who have their hands dyed deep in blood cannot build a non-violent order for the world.

R. C. While the representatives of the big powers who would be meeting at San Francisco were what they were, the people at large, after the experience of the horrors of war, would force the hands of their respective Governments.

G. I know the European mind well enough to know that when it has to choose between abstract justice and self-interest, it will plump for the latter. The man in the street even in America does not think much for himself. He will put faith in what Roosevelt says. Rooseveltgives him market, credit and all that. Similarly Churchill can say to the English working class that he has kept the Empire intact and

[1] The news item carrying the letter is dated Karachi, April 25.

[2] The addressee had sought Gandhiji's advice in regard to the restraint order served upon him by the Sind Government.

[3] Of the Colliers Weekly

[4] From the contents it is obvious that this discussion took place before the San Francisco Conference which opened on April 25, 1945.

preserved for them the foreign markets. The people will, as they do, follow him.

R. C. So, you don't think that the average man in Europe or America cares much for the high ideals for which the war is professed to be fought?

G. I am afraid, I do not. If you hold the contrary view, I shall honour you for your belief but I cannot share it.

R. C. Then, you don't think the Big Five or the Big Three can guarantee peace?

G. I am positive. If they are so arrogant as to think that they can have lasting peace while the exploitation of the coloured and the so-called backward races goes on, they are living in a fool's paradise.

R. C. You think they will fall out among themselves before long?

G. There you are stealing my language. The quarrel with Russia has already started. It is only a question when the other two—England and America—will start quarreling with each other. Maybe, pure self-interest will dictate a wiser course and those who will be meeting at San Francisco will say: 'Let us not fall out over a fallen carcass.' The man in the street will gain nothing by it. Freedom of India along non-violent lines, on the other hand, will mean the biggest thing for the exploited races of the earth. I am, therefore, trying to concentrate on it. If India acts on the square when her turn comes, it will not dictate terms at the Peace Conference but peace and freedom will descend upon it, not as a terrifying torrent, but as 'gentle rain from heaven'. Liberty won non-violently will belong to the least. That is why I swear by non-violence. Only when the least can say, 'I have got my liberty' have I got mine.

The conversation then turned on the issue of the treatment of the aggressor nations after the war.

G. As a non-violent man, I do not believe in the punishment of individuals, much less can I stomach the punishment of a whole nation.

R. C. What about the war criminals?

G. What is a war criminal? Was not war itself a crime against God and humanity and, therefore, were not all those who sanctioned, engineered, and conducted wars, war criminals? War criminals are notconfined to the Axis Powers alone. Roosevelt and Churchill are no less war criminals than Hitler and Mussolini.

Hitler was "Great Britain's sin". Hitler is only an answer to British imperialism, and this I say in spite of the fact that I hate

Hitlerism and its anti-Semitism. England, America and Russia have all of them got their hands dyed more or less red—not merely Germany and Japan. The Japanese have only proved themselves to be apt pupils of the West. They have learnt at the feet of the West and beaten it at its own game.

R. C. What would you see accomplished at San Francisco?

G. Parity among all nations—the strongest and the weakest —the strong should be the servants of the weak not their masters or exploiters.

R. C. Is not this too idealistic?

Maybe. But you asked me what I would like to see accomplished. It is my belief that human nature is ever working upward. I can, therefore, never take a pessimistic view of the future of human nature. If the Big Five say, 'We shall hold on to what we have', the result will be a terrible catastrophe and then Heaven help the world and the Big Five. There will be another and bloodier war and another San Francisco.

R. C. Would the results of the second San Francisco be any better than that of the first?

G. I hope so. They will be saner then. They will have gained their balance somewhat after their third experience.

R. C. Would you not go to the West to teach them the art of peace?

G. In the second World War some British pacifists, including Dick Sheppard and Maude Royden had written to me asking me to point the way. My reply in substance was: Even if one of you can become true in the right sense of the word, that one man will be able to inculcate non-violence among the European folk. I cannot today save Europe, however much I may like to. I know Europe and America. If I go there I shall be like a stranger. Probably I shall be lionized but that is all. I shall not be able to present to them the science of peace in language they can understand. But they will understand if I can make good my non-violence in India. I shall then speak through India. I, therefore, declined to accept the invitations from America and Europe. My answer would be the same today.

R. C. If you were at San Francisco, what would you be advocat-ing there?

G. If I knew I would tell you but I am made differently. When I face a situation, the solution comes to me. I am not a man who sits down and thinks out problems syllogistically. I am a man of action. I

react to a situation intuitively. Logic comes afterwards, it does not precede the event. The moment I am at the Peace Conference, I know the right word will come. But not beforehand. This much, however, I can say that whatever I say there will be in terms of peace, not war.

R. C. What kind of world organization would promote an enduring peace or preserve it?

G. Only an organization based predominantly on truth and non-violence.

R. C. With the present imperfect condition of the world and human nature, what means would in your opinion promote peace?

G. Nearest approach to the condition laid down in my answer to the previous question.

R. C. Would you have a world government?

G. Yes. I claim to be a practical idealist. I believe in compromise so long as it does not involve the sacrifice of principles. I may not get a world government that I want just now but if it is a government that would just touch my ideal, I would accept it as a compromise. Therefore, although I am not enamoured of a world federation, I shall be prepared to accept it if it is built on an essentially non-violent basis.

R. C. If the nations of the world were to consider world government as a means for preserving peace and promoting the welfare of all peoples, would you advocate the abandonment of India's aspiration for independence ill order to join in the general plan?

G. If you will carefully go through the much abused Congress resolution of August 1942, you will discover that independence is necessary for India becoming an efficient partner in any scheme for the preservation of lasting peace in the world.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, pp. 113-6

410. A THOUGHT FOR THE DAY[1]

January 1, 1945

Thus, though we find the young and the old, the rich and the poor, all passing away before our very eyes, we do not want to sit in peace; rather for the sake of living a few days more, we try everything except Rama.

January 2, 1945

How nice it would be if having realized this truth, we relied on Rama, put up with whatever ailments came our way and made our lives peaceful.

January 3, 1945

We saw the corporeal Mahadev[2] in his physical body and in his writings—which was one and the same thing. The Mahadev, who transcends the body is, however, all-pervading. He can be recognized by his virtues which we can all share alike. No one can have a greater or smaller share.

January 4, 1945

Are not birth and death perhaps the two sides of the same coin? You find death on the one side and birth on the other. Why should this give rise to sorrow or joy?

January 5, 1945

If this be true of birth and death as it certainly is, then why should we fear death even in the slightest degree or sorrow over it and rejoice in a birth? Every man should ask himself this question.

January 6, 1945

The world is full of opposites. There is sorrow behind happiness, and happiness behind sorrow. Where there is sunshine,there is also shadow; where there is light, there is also darkness; where there is birth, there is also death. Non-attachment lies in remaining unaffected

[1] Gandhiji started writing "A Thought for the Day" for Anand T. Hingorani at the latter's request on November 20, 1944, and continued the practice for about two years. The thoughts for the period covered by this volume are reproduced as a single item under the last date, April 24, 1945. The thoughts were originally written in Hindi. The translation by Anand T. Hingorani is reproduced here with slight alteration.

[2] Mahadev Desai

by these opposites. The way to triumph over them is not to efface then, but to rise above them and be completely free from attachment.

January 7, 1945

The foregoing shows that the key to happiness lies in the worship of Truth, which is the giver of all things.

January 8, 1945

How, then, shall we worship truth? Who knows the truth? The reference here is to relative truth, that which appears to us as truth. Experience will show that truth, even in this limited sense, is very hard indeed to observe.

January 9, 1945

Why does a person, knowing what is truth, hesitate to utter it? Is he ashamed? Ashamed of whom? Whether high or low, what matters it? The fact is that habit consumes us all. Let us reflect over this and rid ourselves of the bad habit.

January 10, 1945

Unless we are freed from this habit, we cannot tread the path of truth. Indeed, we must sacrifice all at the altar of truth. We wish to appear not as we are but as very much better. How nice it would be for us, if we are lowly, to appear lowly—but if we wish to rise, to act nobly and think nobly. If that be not possible, then let us appear lowly. Then some day we shall attain the desired height.

January 11, 1945

The more experience I gather, the more I realize that man himself is the cause of his happiness as well as his misery.

January 12, 1945

That being so, why is man happy or miserable?

January 13, 1945

The fact is that man does not like to give any thought to such things; so he persuades himself to believe that he has no time to spare for such reflection. On.

January 14, 1945

If we wish to live a true life, we must give up our mental laziness and do some basic thinking. Our life will thereby become very simple.

January 15, 1945

A seer has called us wayfarers. And it is true. We are here for only a few days. Thereafter we do not die, but only go home. What a

beautiful and true thought!

January 16, 1945

Hundreds of tons of earth and stone have to be excavated by means of hard labour before even one diamond is discovered. Do we give even a fraction of this labour to the removal of the rubble of untruth and the search for the diamond of Truth?

January 17, 1945

Nothing is ever achieved without toil, that is without *tapa*[1]. How, then, can self-purification be possible without it?

January 18, 1945

If all our time belongs to God, how can we afford to waste even a single moment? Likewise, if we belong to God, why should we devote even a part of our being to the pursuit of the vain pleasures of life?

January 19, 1945

Selfless action is a source of strength, for such action means the worship of God.

January 20, 1945

Jamshed Mehta has sent me one of the prayers of St. Francis of Assissi, a part of which reads: "O Divine Master! It is in giving that we receive, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life."

January 21, 1945

Verily, the land belongs to him who labours on it.

January 22, 1945

He who is truly clean within, cannot remain unclean without.

January 23, 1945

A right cause never fails; A true word never hurts in the end.

January 24, 1945

A word uttered from a pure heart goes never vain.

January 25, 1945

If idleness gives us pain, we will not remain idle. Similarly, if impurity causes us unhappiness, we will not be or stay impure.

Independence Day, January 26, 1945

Work must come first, and then, if possible, wages

[1] Penance

commensurate with the amount of work done. To work in this spirit is to serve God. But if the wages are demanded first, that would be service to Satan.

January 27, 1945

It is well not to yield to desire. Once we give in restraint becomes difficult if not impossible.

January 28, 1945

He who is unable to rule over himself can never really succeed in ruling over others.

January 29, 1945

In order to know himself, man must come out of his shell and view himself dispassionately.

January 30, 1945

No man is worthless who lightens anyone's burden even the least bit.

January 31, 1945

Our happiness and peace of mind lie in our doing what we regard as right and proper, not in doing what others say or do.

February 1, 1945

Moral strength does accrue from the reading of scriptures; but real freedom cannot be attained without enlightenment.

February 2, 1945

To seek a favour is to barter away one's freedom.

February 3, 1945

The greatness of a person lies in his heart, not in his head, that is, intellect.

February 4, 1945

Religion is that which comprehends all. In other words, religion permeates life in all its aspects and at all times.

February 5, 1945

Religion is not something apart from life. Life itself should be regarded as religion. Life divorced from religion is not human life, it is animal life.

February 6, 1945

Those who have the greatest measure of self-control or are most absorbed in work, speak the least. Speech and action go ill together.

Look at Nature. She is continuously in action, never resting for a single moment, and is yet silent.

February 7, 1945

He who thinks of the suffering humanity, will not think of himself. Where has he the time?

February 8, 1945

A man will see and hear only that which he wishes to see and hear. A gardener will see only the flowers in a garden, whilst a philosopher will be oblivious of them. Perhaps he will not even notice whether he is inside the garden or outside!

February 9, 1945

We can see and even rectify our shortcomings through those we live with. If we maintain the highest standard of purity in our everyday life, we can hope to render real service.

February 10, 1945

Those who take the vow of Truth should practise silence. Nevertheless, we find that many a seeker after Truth is given to much talking, the obvious reason being force of habit. Let us give up this habit.

February 11, 1945

How shall we remember the dear departed? It is my firm belief that they do not die; it is only their bodies that perish. Their memory has to be kept alive by imbibing their virtues as far as we can, by taking up their good work and promoting it to the best of our ability. Flowers are placed on their samadhis to strengthen such remembrance. But to remain content with mere flower-offering would be idol-worship.

February 12, 1945

How wrong it is to ask others to be clean when we ourselves remain unclean!

February 13, 1945

The only difference between man and man all the world over is one of degree, and not of kind, even as there is between trees of the same species. Why then anger, envy or discrimination?

February 14, 1945

Let a man not make a good resolution at all; but if he makes one after due deliberation, let him never abandon it.

February 15, 1945

Man's capacity for self-deception is immeasurably greater than that for deceiving others. Every sensible person will testify to this.

February 16, 1945

Credit lies in restraining one's anger against one's own kith and kin. In the case of strangers, one is compelled to keep one's temper under control. What merit can there be in that?

February 17, 1945

Life means not revelry—eating, drinking and making merry but praising God, i. e., rendering true service to humanity.

February 18, 1945

What distinguishes man from animals? Comprehensive thinking on this question will solve a lot of our problems.

February 19, 1945

When man oversteps his limits, works or even thinks beyond his capacity, he is likely to be assailed by illness and anger. Such haste is waste and can be harmful too.

February 20, 1945

In this morning's *bhajan* it was said: "God never forgets us; it is we who forget Him. And that is our misery."

February 21, 1945

When God does not wish it, neither wealth nor parents, nor the best of physicians, will save us. What, then, should we do?

February 22, 1945

Have we any right to pray so long as we have not purged ourselves of our impurities?

February 23, 1945

A man may use a rosary because it is blessed by a saint or made of sacred *tulsi*[1], sandalwood or *rudraksha* beads. But if the user looks upon the rosary as all, he had better throw it away. If, however, the rosary draws him nearer to God and makes him alive to the performance of his duties, he may certainly use it regularly.

February 24, 1945

We exist, because God is. This shows that man, or any living being, is part of the Divine.

[1] Basil

February 25, 1945

There is a sentence in the New Testment: Let there be no care in they heart, nor fear of aught.[1] This is for those who have faith in God.

February 26, 1945

The same New Testment tells us that if God leads us into temptation, He also delivers us from evil.[2] This is applicable only to those who do not, of their own accord, succumb to temptation.

February 27, 1945

It is not as if Tulsidas was the only one who had sung the glory of the Lord's name. I find the same in the Bible as well. In *Romans*, X. 13, it is said: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

February 28, 1945

Sin stays not hid. It is writ large on the face of man. We do not fully know that book but the thing is plain.

March 1, 1945

These days I have been reading verses from the Bible. Today I find the following: "And all things, whatever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."[3]

March 2, 1945

"God is the Help of the helpless." The same idea is also expressed in *Psalms*, XXXIV. 18, which says: "The Lord is nigh untothem that are of a broken heart; and seventh such as be of a contrite spirit."

March 3, 1945

Isaiah, XLI. 10 has: "Fear thou not; for I am with thee."

March 4, 1945

"Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." Isaiah, XXVI. 4.

March 5, 1945

Just as it is in the nature of water to flow downward, so also does vice drags man downward and is, therefore, undoubtedly the easy way. Virtue takes a man upward and so appears to be rather difficult.

[1] *Philippians*, iv. 6
[2] *St. Matthew*, vi. 13
[3] *St. Matthew*, xxi. 22

March 6, 1945

"My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." II *Corinthians*, XII. 9.

March 7, 1945

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." *Psalms*, XLVI. 1.

March 8, 1945

God's word is: "I am, was and ever shall be, I am everywhere and in everything." Knowing this, we turn away from God, seek refuge in that which is perishable and imperfect, and thus make ourselves miserable. Can there be anything more amazing?

March 9, 1945

We must not draw distinctions between the East and the West. Everything must be judged on its merits. Thus alone can we do proper justice to things.

March 10, 1945

Why is there good and evil, happiness and misery? God is and yet He is not an individual. He is the Law as well as the Law-giver. Therefore it follows that man is what his actions make of him. He rises by good actions, and falls by evil ones.

March 11, 1945

True service of society is that whereby society, that is, all its members, are uplifted. Only by studying a particular society will it be possible to say how it can be raised.

March 12, 1945

Man knows very well that when death is near, there is no solace but God, yet hesitates to utter His name! Why?

March 13, 1945

There is only one way of achieving independence through non-violence: by dying we live, by killing never.

March 14, 1945

How shall we die? By committing suicide? Never. To hold ourselves in readiness to die, when there is occasion for it, is to die only to live for ever.

March 15, 1945

There is nothing that cannot be attained by patience and equanimity. The truth of this can be verified in one's daily

experience.

March 16, 1945

Between destiny and human endeavour there is an incessant struggle. Let us continue to endeavour and leave the result to God.

March 17, 1945

Let us not leave everything to destiny, nor be vain about our endeavour. Destiny will take its own course. We should only see where we can intervene or where it is our duty to do so, whatever be the result.

March 18, 1945

The pity is that even while knowing what our duty is, we fail to perform it! For this, let every man answer to himself.

March 19, 1945

Every moment of my life I realize that silence is the best speech. If you must speak, speak as little as possible. Avoid using two words if one suffices.

March 20, 1945

When little things upset us, let us understand that there is attachment lurking somewhere. We should find it and banish it. It is a delusion to think that we remain upright in big things, for there we are under compulsion. Surely, that cannot pass for uprightness.

March 21, 1945

On such occasions the verse to remember is: "Contacts of the senses with their objects come and go. Endure them. . . .[1]

March 22, 1945

Whatever one does, one must do well or not at all. The truth of this one observes every day. Today it was especially borne in upon me. It was Ba's death anniversary, and so there was the usual Gita recitation. But there was no life in it.

March 23, 1945

A wrong ceases to be a wrong only when it is righted. If suppressed, it erupts like a boil and assumes a dangerous form.

March 24, 1945

Man rises by realizing the true nature of the Self, by meditating

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 14

thereon and by following its virtues. A contrary course of action leads to his downfall.

March 25, 1945

What is patience? Shankaracharya says: "Sit by the seashore and take one drop of water on a blade of grass. If you have enough patience, and there is a place near by wherein that drop can be stored, you may in time empty the ocean of all its water." This is an illustration of almost perfect patience.

March 26, 1945

He who has not in him infinite patience cannot observe non-violence.

March 27, 1945

What is the difference between a snake and a human being? Apparently a snake crawls on its belly, while man walks erect on his feet. Things are, however, not what they seem to be. For what about the man who mentally crawls on his belly?

March 28, 1945

Every day I see the importance of silence. It is good for all, but for him who is deeply absorbed in work, silence is indeed golden.

March 29, 1945

"The hasty are ruffled; the slow and steady have composure." One sees the truth of this every moment.

March 30, 1945

How dangerous it is to fall out of routine? Since coming to Bombay, I have failed to write daily. (Written on 3-4-1945.)

March 31, 1945

Nothing can work without rules. The entire solar system would go to pieces if there were even a momentary breach of the rules governing it. (Written on 3-4-1945.)

April 1, 1945

This lesson is for all alike, big and small. We must learn it and act accordingly, or else die a living death.

(Written on 3-4-1945.)

April 2, 1945

It is sinful to multiply wants unnecessarily.

(Written on 3-4-1945.)

April 3, 1945

Hartal (general strike) is being observed today for saving the lives of those who have been condemned to the gallows. If the day's programme is carried out with understanding, we shall have taken a big stride forward on the path of non-violence.

April 4, 1945

Man knows what his duty is, yet does not do what he knows he ought to. Why is that so?

April 5, 1945

We shall be undone if we succumb to the psychological environment around us. The situation regarding the Chimur prisoners keeps changing from day to day. Let us do our duty and remain detached.

April 6, 1945

What a high degree of non-violence is needed to bear patiently with a person who is bent on misunderstanding even the simplest thing!

April 7, 1945

I strive hard to preserve my physical body. Do I take the same pains to know my soul?

April 8, 1945

When there is misunderstanding I become angry, I weep, I laugh, I feel pity. But instead of this, is it not my duty to keep calm and try to remove the misunderstanding.

April 9, 1945

What shall we believe? Praise of us or censure of us? Both may be undeserved. Then, shall we be our own judges? Here too there is room enough for error. God alone knows what we are, but He does not tell us. It is, therefore, best neither to seek to know nor believe anything about ourselves. We are what we are. Nothing is to be gained by knowing or believing what we are. Performance of duty is the only thing that really matters.

April 10, 1945

Blind is not he who has lost his eyes, but he who hides his shortcomings.

April 11, 1945

Man's serenity of mind can be tested only in the world of men,

not on the solitary heights of the Himalayas.

April 12, 1945

An ideal is one thing; living up to it is quite another.

(Written on 15-4-1945.)

April 13, 1945

A man without an ideal is like a ship without a rudder.

(Written on 15-4-1945.)

April 14, 1945

I may be said to have an ideal only when I put forth an effort to realize it.

(Written on 15-4-1945.)

April 15, 1945

We may rest content with trying, provided we make the right effort and to the best of our ability. The result does not depend on the effort alone. There are other factors over which we have no control.

April 16, 1945

What shall be called the right effort? One test is that very often it yields the desired result. So the rightness is judged by the result. But experience shows that this is not always the case. Right effort is that in which there is deep conviction about the correctness of the means employed, so much so that, even in the face of contrary results, the means do not change, nor does the effort vary or slacken.

April 17, 1945

What shall be called "the best of our ability"? That effort in which we spend all our energy without stint. Success generally attends such pure effort.

April 18, 1945

Man reaches decisions on the strength of insignificant evidence and shapes his course of action accordingly. Where such is the case, it is better not to reach a decision as far as possible and to be indifferent as regards the results. But should it become a duty to take a decision, it should be taken with the greatest possible care and should be fearlessly implemented.

April 19, 1945

An important matter loses importance if irrelevant. A relevant thing, though small, is of the highest importance.

April 20, 1945

Man's avarice reaches up to the highest heavens and down to the lowest regions of the earth. Hence, it should be controlled.

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 21, 1945

Man's joy knows no bounds when he obtains something beyond his hopes.

April 22, 1945

There is surely something wrong with a person who is supposed to be highly spiritual and yet is always physically ailing.

April 23, 1945

If we think how enormous is the amount of work we have to do, we shall panic and accomplish nothing. Whereas, if we coolly get to grips with it, we shall find that even a mountain of work becomes easier day by day and is ultimately completed.

April 24, 1945

We do not wish to see our own faults, but take delight in perceiving the faults of others. Much unhappiness arises from this habit.

A Thought for the Day, pp. 43-156

411. TELEGRAM TO N. G. RANGA

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 25, 1945

PROF. RANGA[1]
PONNUR

YOUR WORK BEST MESSAGE.[2]

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] An economist; President, All-India Kisan Sabha and Andhra Provincial Congress Committee; Member, Congress Parliamentary Party at the Centre; Founder-President, Swatantra Party

[2] The addressee had asked for a message on the occasion of inauguration of training for rural work in peasants' institute which was opened by Gandhiji in 1933.

412. TELEGRAM TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 25, 1945

JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
HYDERABAD (SIND)

EXPECT YOU HERE. SYMPATHY CHIMANDAS. LOVE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

413. TELEGRAM TO SINANA KRIPALANI

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 25, 1945

SINANA KRIPALANI
CARE INDIA CLUB
PORT OF SPAIN
(TRINIDAS, WEST INDIES)

HOPE DOMICILED INDIANS PROVE WORTHY OF MOTHERLAND.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

414. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

MAHABALESHWAR,

April 25, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your postcard of the 14th only today. I think Ram-prasad must have left by now.[1] You need not, therefore, go. Take charge of the kitchen yourself. Put up cheerfully with everybody's temperament. In that lies your victory. Servants are not servants but our brothers and sisters. It is a virtue, not a sin, to run the kitchen with their help. But one should know how to do that. The servants should be treated as one's brothers and sisters.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8457. Also C.W. 5574. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] To help Mirabehn; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 7-5-1945.

415. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 25, 1945

CHI . CHI MANLA L,

I felt sad after reading your letter. I am returning it to you. Remind me about it when I return there. I cannot do anything by writing. You are weak, but if you have gained sufficient strength, write to Shri Ramprasad. See what reply he gives. Improve your health. I am writing to Munnalal. If he cannot have peace of mind there, let him come here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10626

416. LETTER TO AKBAR CHAWDA

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 25, 1945

CHI . AKB AR,

I got your letter.

I entirely agree with you about liquor. Your job there is a difficult one, but you have undertaken it knowingly. How can you give it up now, especially when you are confronted with obstacles?

I intend to stay here up to the end of May and after that one month in Panchgani. Whether or not I will be able to do so, rests with God. I feel better.

I should be happy if Vasumati[1] stayed on there. It will be good if she settles down somewhere.

What Badshah Khan[2] says is partially true. You went to Samau of your own accord, though it is true that I approved of your decision.

I would also approve of your going to the Frontier Province—probably, even more—but only on condition that you desired to go there. Now I would not even induce you. You yourself, therefore,

[1] Vasumati Pandit
[2] Abdul Ghaffar Khan

should write to Badshah Khan and tell him that you would be betraying your dharma, if you were to leave Samau. If you had not settled down to work there, you would have gone to the Frontier Province. If you could train somebody for the Samau work, I should certainly like you to go to the Frontier Province. Just now, as you know, I am trying to persuade Zohra[1] to Join you.

Write another letter to Badshah Khan. One to Vasumati and one to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3237

417. LETTER TO SITARAM P. PATWARDHAN

MAHABALESHWAR,

April 25, 1945

BHA I APP A,

It is good you have sent an account of the satyagraha. Harijan brethren seem to have displayed considerable forbearance and courage. I see the conditions were favourable. That the people's support too was forthcoming is a good sign. Much remains to be done to make this success an enduring one. In order to retain public support Harijan men and women will have to go a long way in purity and cleanliness. It is not right to argue that others are not pure and clean. Harijan brethren have to go against the current and should therefore develop the necessary strength.

Make use of this in whatever way you like, so that I need not write again.

Blessings from

BAPU

SADHAKASHRAM
KANAKAVALI P. O.
RATNAGIRI DISTRICT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's wife

418. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 25, 1945

CHI . MAG ANBHA I,

I have your letter. You place reliance on me which, at the present moment, is not right. One does not even know whether or not I shall recover. I hope to live for 125 years but there are many obstacles in the way. Even supposing I survived, it seems to me I shall only be an adviser. It is true that if the Congress comes into power, I will suggest changes in the field of education. However, your duty is clear. Your work is to persuade your colleagues and go ahead. That iswhy I sent Narahari's[1] letter to you. You will have to be cautious, if he holds a different view. The essence of democracy is that one must move taking along one's colleagues. My help will be limited to using my infIuence. I can render that help only if I am in Ahmedabad and listen to all the discussions. Sitting here I can only write letters such as this.

Do you realize my limitations? Keep on writing to me as long as you do not.

Blessings from
BAPU

MAGANBHAI DESAI
GUJARAT VIDYAPITH, AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

419. LETTER TO SAROJINI

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 25, 1945

SISTER SAROJINI[2],

I have your letter. I advise you to do what Chimanlalji says. It will not be proper for me to say anything from here. Keep fit, keep calm and mix with others as sugar mixes with milk.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Narahari D. Parikh's
[2] She had come from Orissa to stay for a few months in the Sevagram Ashram.

420. LETTER TO DEV

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 25, 1945

CHI. DEV,

It is good that you wrote the essay for Aryanayakamji.

You must have received my previous letter.

The couple[1] want to send you to Punjab. Go, if you have confidence, but on condition that you will go there only for a shorttime and all the expenses will be borne by Punjab. I am of the opinion that it will not be proper for you to go, if the central office has to bear the expenses.

You may show this letter to Aryanayakamji and Ashadevi.

You must keep good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

421. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 25, 1945

CHI. HOSHIARI[2],

Why do you say that I did not write to you? I have written to you not one but two letters. I do not do so always.

Your handwriting is very good. Never mind if the letters are large.

You are trying to keep Father happy. You are sending for the children. Now calm down. Do your work. The children should be arriving any day.

Balvantsinha will bring them.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] E. W. Aryanayakam, Secretary, Hindustani Talimi Sangh, and Ashadevi Aryanayakam

[2] Balvantsinha's niece

422. LETTER TO VAMANRAO JOSHI

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 25, 1945

BHA I VAM ANRAO JOS HI,

I have your very neat and cheerful letter. I am very happy that you are keeping good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

For the time being I am here.

VIR VAMANRAO JOSHI
AMRAOTI, BERAI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

423. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 25, 1945

MY DEA R RAI HANA,

I was very happy to receive your letter. You are right. You yourself say in your letter that I cannot remove you from the position of a trustee[1]. You know our duty, don't you? Whatever we may have to say about anyone, we should let them know first. Hence even if you yourself do not say anything to Mridulabehn[2], you should let me show your letter to her. That will make your work and mine easier. Most of your grievances have been redressed. The rest, too, will be set right. You are right that we should not act in haste.

You believe in Homoeopathy and have also found a good doctor. Why do you still continue to be unwell?

Give my regards to Mother.[3] Is she well?

Blessings to you and Saroj[4] *from*
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 9678

[1] Of Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust

[2] Mridula Sarabhai, Organizing Secretary of Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust; *vide* "Letter to Mridula Sarabhai", 29-4-1945.

[3] Amina Tyabji

[4] Saroj Nanavati

424. A NOTE

[After *April 25, 1945*][1]

Write to the non-spinners that they must spin at least as much as one anna in a rupee. Only those who wear khadi to oblige others may not do so. One should wear khadi realizing that it is one's dharma to do so.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

425. LETTER TO M. S. KELKAR

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 26, 1945

DEA R DR. ICE[2],

I have your letter. Please let me know how much food and distilled water . . . would cost per leper. Why not remove the cases to be treated to Dattapur? That would be the least costly. And you and I would know what success would attend your effort. Whatever you do should be done with the Manager's consent and approval. Shastriji[3] himself will perhaps be the most willing patient if you will experiment upon him.

As to Balkrishna[4], Dr. Sushila[5] says, his heart is not weak and he has no T. B. now. All he needs is proper digestion and good food. The latter he has. He has gained much weight through the vaid's treatment. Nevertheless you may talk to him and he can write to me what he would like to do.[6] What about Chimanlal himself?

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The note is written on an envelope bearing the postmark "April 25, 1945".

[2] Gandhiji gave this name on account of the addressee's faith in ice treatment.

[3] Parachure Shastri, a leprosy patient. He came to Ashram in 1939 and stayed there till his death on September 5, 1945.

[4] Balkrishna Bhave

[5] Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[6] *Vide* also p. 9.

426. LETTER TO M. S. KELKAR

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 26, 1945

DEAR DR. ICE[1],

Why are you so stingy about your paper ? I like economy but dislike stinginess. You crowd in your words. You must leave some space at the top and on the sides.

Dr. Sushila Nayyar says Hiralakshmi had no pleurisy. Her disease is simply T.B.

It is a great pity if the distilling machine has gone bad. I hope it is capable of being repaired. What about your own ? What will be the cost of a new one ?

Dr. S. says it can be simply done by the mechanic in the Ashram.

Why must you continue to write to me in English ? If you cannot write in Hindustani, you may write in Marathi.

If you have leisure you should concentrate on the other patients. Balwant Singh has better use for his time than learning English. He can have all he needs about vet[2] from Marathi Literature.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

427. LETTER TO V. I. MUNISWAMY PILLAY

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 26, 1945

DEA R MUN ISWAM Y,

Your letter reached me too late to overtake the wedding date. May the couple have a long and happy life of service to the

[1] Gandhiji had given this name to the addressee on account of his enthusiasm for ice-treatment.

[2] *Sic*

motherland.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI V. I. MUNISWAMY PILLAY
SATH VILAS
OOTY
SOUTH INDIA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

428. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 26, 1945

CHI . BAL KRISH NA,

Now you have gone to Rustom Bhavan. How do you keep there? Dr. Kelkar writes to ask whether he may treat you? Do you want to be treated by him? If you do, you have to give up Chandiprasad's treatment. I would like you to decide about Dr. Kelkar's treatment.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

429. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 26, 1945

BAPA[2],

I hope you have returned after successfully accomplishing the work among the Bhils, and with eyes and body uninjured. Write, if there is anything worth reporting. I am enclosing Swami's[3] latest letter to me. I wanted to talk to you about his demands but somehow always it got left out. It seems I shall have to write something for him. But how can I do so without informing you?

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Balkrishna Bhave", 26-4-1945.
[2] Amritlal V. Thakkar, Secretary, Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust
[3] Swami Anand

The quarrel was a domestic one, the public did not come into it. Personally you had nothing against Swami or his work; then why could not you say that his work was irreproachable or some such thing? I would say that.

BAPU

AMRITLAL THAKKAR
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
BOMBAY 4

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

430. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 26 1945

CHI . MUN NALAL ,

I got your three letters together. I have observed that when you write so many letters at once, you are agitated. It is so this time, too. Why is that? You are agitated when I am in the Ashram and also when I am not. Maybe, the nature of your agitation is different in the two cases, but the effect on your health is the same. This shows that your unhappiness springs from within, and that its supposed externalcauses are nothing but imagination. How can it be that your old co-workers themselves harass you? The harassment is imagined. Differences of opinion do not constitute harassment. What is the use of my ordering you? After all it is with your co-workers that you have to work and you must, therefore, work in harmony with them. This is what is meant by public opinion, "democracy". Work of this nature can be done only by accepting the majority opinion or the decision of the person who has been selected as the leader. Why should one feel unhappy about this, or think that one's self-respect is being offended? This is the only way of serving other people—not in the manner we like, but in the manner that they desire. Only if you do this cheerfully you will gain wisdom, rise higher and do the utmost possible service. My advice, therefore, is that you should remain there and go on working patiently and cheerfully. I should, of course, like you to deal with the so-called servants as you would with your own brothers and sisters. That will bring credit to you, and if you succeed, the results will be excellent. Servants have always been with us in their capacity as

servants. The only difference is that now we wish to draw them nearer to us and give some time to them. If you do not show discretion in this, you will fail. But even if you fail, what does it matter? Success lies hidden in failure. He who fails will one day succeed. One who does nothing for fear of failing will achieve nothing. If you start re-counting from the point where you went wrong, you will get the figure right.

By losing yourself you will gain yourself. One becomes oneself only if one ceases to be oneself. Why, then, need you fear losing your individuality? Let it be lost.

I had a letter from Kanchan[1] today, which I am sending for your perusal. Let her stay where she is. She will get trained there. Amtussalaam also mentions her in her letter. I am, therefore, sending that too.

I tear up your letters. You should never preserve your letters. They contain your sarcasms on the impulse of the moment. There is no point in re-reading or recalling them.

All of you have been kept fully informed about ourselves. We shall be here up to the end of May, then June in Panchgani and then Sevagram. This is my intention. Only His will be done. Our hosts here are PremliIabehn[2] and Shantikumar[3], and in Panchgani it will beNanji Sheth[4]. In addition, Bachchharajbhai[5] is of course at both the places.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8456. Also C.W. 5575. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Addressee's wife
[2] Premlila Thackersey
[3] Shantikumar N. Morarjee
[4] Nanji Kalidas
[5] Bachchharaj Sheth who had adopted Jamnalal Bajaj

431. A LETTER

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 26, 1945

CHI . . .[1],

I got your letter. Chi.... likes what you have done. You need not, therefore, think about it any more. I examined your doings not as those of a near relation, but as an educated woman's. Though you were not guilty, even then I regard it as a great error on your part to have kept the knowledge of his marriage in childhood a secret. I did like, of course, your marrying outside the caste. That neither ... nor you treated the childhood marriage as marriage seems altogether improper. ... seems to be a very good man. However, according to me he has done no service to the lady. You certainly have not. How would you have felt, if you had been in that woman's place? There are numerous cases in Hindu society like. . .'s. If everybody did what he had done, what would be the condition of the girls married to them? . . .'s duty was to live with that girl and be her teacher. You were tempted by the thought of doing social service, and he was infatuated with you. You need not accept this analysis. Both of you believe that you have followed dharma in what you did. That is enough for you. One's dharma is what one believes to be so.

I am not writing separately to.... Treat this as meant for you both.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Ba Bapuni Shili Chhayaman, pp. 226-7

[1] Omissions as in the source

432. LETTER TO SAHEB MOHAMMED

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 26, 1945

BHA I KHW AJA SAH EB,

I have gone through your letter to Pyarelalji. I read your translation bit by bit. I do not get time but of what use is my opinion? It is Dr. Mahmud's[1] opinion that is important. I have only a working knowledge of Urdu. The only thing I can say is that according to me you have done well in doing the translation.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

KHWAJA SAHEB MOHAMMED
RETIRED PRINCIPAL, ISLAMIA COLLEGE
OUTSIDE DELHI GATE
LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

433. LETTER TO DIPTI DAS GUPTA

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 26, 1945

CHI . DIP TI DAS GUP TA,

May you live long and serve the country.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI DIPTI DAS GUPTA
C/O SHRI KHAGENDRANATH DAS GUPTA
JALPAIGURI, BENGAL

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Syed Mahmud, Education and Development Minister in Bihar, 1937-39

434. LETTER TO SUBHADRA KUMARI CHAUHAN

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 26, 1945

DEA R SIS TER,

Convey my blessings to the newly married couple. May they render great service to the country.

Blessings from
BAPU

SUBHADRA KUMARI CHAUHAN
569 RIGHT TOWN
JABALPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

435. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 26, 1945

CHI . HOS HIARI ,

I have received your second letter, Written in a neat hand. It is good that you have received a letter from Uncle. Your son[1] may also come with him. In Case he does not, Balvantsinha will certainly bring him. Your pure conduct and diligence will also have an effect [on him].

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Gajaraj

436. LETTER TO TOTARAM SANADHYA

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 26, 1945

BHA I TOT ARAM,

I was very happy to have your letter. Your *tapascharya* is great. You have done much service. Now it is time for you to take service. Rest yourself and pray. Sincere prayer in itself is service for an invalid person.

I have been having news of you regularly.

You have given the right suggestion about Chi. Hariprasad[1]. It is his duty to visit you. I shall be reaching Sevagram in July. It is no part of Hariprasad's duty to visit me. It is a difficult journey and also pretty expensive. I am writing to him.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2534

437. LETTER TO HARIPRASAD

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 26, 1945

CHI . HAR IPRAS AD,

Panditji[3] has given me a vivid description of you. It is better that you go to Sabarmati to meet him. You need not come to Sevagram. It is far off, and the fare is also more. I will spend two months away from Sevagram. That is my plan at the moment.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's adopted son
[2] *Vide* the following item.
[3] Totaram Sanadhya

438. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 26, 1945

DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. Do not work if you are not paid. Money will not be coming from Maganwadi. It will have to come from P. Babu[1] or Bhagirathji[2]. Do not strive for money. It is all right if it comes of itself. If there is any help available for the oil-press, you will be able to manage it. If not, abandon it. Your duty is to serve. If P. Babu relieves you, isn't there plenty of service to be done in the Ashram?

I shall be spending one month in Mahabaleshwar, the next month in Panchgani and then I shall be in the Ashram.

You must improve your health. Lavanyalata[3] must be well. You have done good sale of khadi.[4]

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Enclosed is the letter to Hayat's doctor. Read it and write what you want to me or to Hayatullah or to the doctor.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 474

439. LETTER TO OM PRAKASH GUPTA

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 26, 1945

CHI. OM PRAKASH,

Unless you scrupulously follow all the Ashram rules, you will gain nothing by merely staying in the Ashram. You will have to get a certificate from the inmates of the Ashram. If you are hot-tempered,

[1] Presumably, Prafulla Chandra Ghosh
[2] Bhagirath Kanodia
[3] Lavanyalata Chanda who was later appointed Agent, Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust, Bengal
[4] The addressee was working at Borkamta in Bengal.

cure yourself of it. The Ashram is the place to overcome temperamental shortcomings. Not everybody can do so. But you must. You have to provide an ideal. If you do not like the Ashram, it would be futile for you to stay there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 5896. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

440. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 26, 1945

CHI . BAL VANTS INHA,

There is no reason to feel unhappy over having brought Om Prakash with you. What can one do if such persons get in? You did not bring him deliberately. I have written to him.[1] Let us hope he will understand.

Hoshiari is getting along well.

Dr. Kelkar has written about teaching you English. I have dissuaded him. We can acquire all knowledge through our own language. But if you are particular, I shall not stop you, nor shall I encourage you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1959

441. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 26, 1945

CHI . KRI SHNAC HANDR A,

I was sorry to read about Ram Narayan's[2] illness. Keep me informed. Let us hope he will recover.

Balkrishna has lost a lot of weight. Are not dates available in the Ashram? Look in my room. If there are any, give them to him; if not,

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Ram Narayan Chaudhary's

let Chimanlal write to Rameshwar Das Birla. You will have the dates.

I understand about Om Prakash. Put up with him as long as you can.[1]

Speak again to Ashadevi. You should do what you can easily do. The discharge will stop. It is not anybody's duty to sleep on hot sand. You can use my wooden divan. If you sprinkle some water over the sand, the heat will disappear.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4511. Also C.W. 5897. Courtesy: Krishnachandra

442. LETTER TO GANGI A. HINGORANI

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 26, 1945

DAUGHTER GANGI,

Your letter is very good. It was good that Anand[2] wrote a letter. The doctor's treatment should continue. This is the meaning of the letter. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India, and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] *Vide* also the preceding item.
[2] Addressee's husband

443. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

April 26, 1945

CHI . ANA ND,

How can I forget? Do I not have to write for you daily?[1] I do not like your illness. There is danger in treating oneself. Do as I have written to Gangi. Now, when you go to Dr. Raju[2], take his treatment. Recover now with the doctor's treatment. What about Mahadev[3].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India, and Anand T. Hingorani

444. LETTER TO D. RAMASWAMI

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 27, 1945

MY DEA R RAMAS WAMI,

Your postcard. I don't think Ch. told me anything special about you.

I am glad you are doing well and spinning regularly on the *takli*.

What is your speed and count? Do you make your own slivers?

BAPU

SHRI D. RAMASWAMI
C/O THE EASTERN DRUG CO.
MASULIPATAM, KISTNA DISTRICT
ANDHRA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide "A Thought for the Day"*, 16-7-1945.
[2] Dr. Krishna Raju
[3] Addressee's son

445. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 27, 1945

CHI . NAR ANDAS ,

I have made the corrections which occurred to me. Observe them. I don't wish to think more. Bombay also is all right. Kaniya's[1] name is in connection with Bombay. It means that he will have to stay in Bombay for those months. I shall not object. Think over it, both of you. He will acquit himself well wherever he is.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8623. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

446. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 27, 1945

CHI . NAR ANDAS ,

I like the scheme[2]. There are two tests in it—of yarn contribution and pice contribution. In both what matters is the number of donors. Yarn is a source of strength, as is evident from the very saying: "Many threads mean strength." One thread of yarn may snap, but a rope made up of many threads would pull much heavier weight depending on the number of threads...[3] Therefore yarn, from a single individual, however much it may be, is of no consequence. There will be many who will be ready to give more than seventy-six pice... It is good that you have decided not to accept more. Similarly [even less than that][4] cannot be accepted. Otherwise the account will not be clear. Only a little .... There are millions in this poor country who can offer no more than a pie. There are also likely to be millions who

[1] Kanu Gandhi, addressee's son

[2] For celebrating Gandhiji's 76th birthday. It was that every one should present to Gandhiji at least one hank of yarn and 76 pice.

[3] Omissions as in the source

[4] From *The Hindu*, 15-7-1945

do not have even one pie. Those of them who are eager to contribute may offer 76 pice in the name of one of them as their representative. Similarly a family may contribute 76 pice for each member. Even after saying all this, I would say that my preference is for the yarn.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, Part 2, p. 304

447. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 27, 1945

CHI . MAN I,

I got your letter. Immediately after reading it, I tore it up. It had been kept aside by mistake, but it came to me as soon as it was discovered that it was personal.

But what is there so personal in what you have written? I myself opened it just to respect your wishes and to reassure you and will post this in the same way.

As for fasts, perhaps I must have undertaken more of them than anyone else in the group. In South Africa I used to fast on any pretext. I must have taken only one meal a day for more than a year. But I am of the opinion that moderation in eating is more difficult than fasting. Fasts have a place in our life but the death of a relative is certainly not an occasion for them. Why shouldn't they be undertaken on the occasion of birth? I have done that also but gave that up on further reflection. From this you can judge your fasts.[1] The human body is the temple of God, and should be taken care of as such.

It is not that I do not know of your regular habits. Motilalji[2] gave you first rank in that. But you should be charitable to co-workers. You fail in your duty to your neighbours because you are not so. Moreover you admit your shortcomings. People admit their shortcomings either because they wish to stick to them or wish to cure themselves of them. Don't you wish to get rid of your shortcomings? You should infect others with your regularity and at the same time must preserve yours. You should act as I do and keep your own

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Manibehn Patel", 22-4-1945.
[2] Motilal Nehru

surroundings clean. Didn't you learn this much even after being so many times in jail? What have you learnt from Mahadev[1]? Did you observe his generosity?

This should be more than enough for you. If all your questions have been answered, come over here. But do not come simply to please me. Come only if you feel that it is your dharma to do so, and with a charitable heart or with the aim of making it generous. If you are resentful, what will you gain by coming here? Let us magnify the molehills of our faults into mountains and see the mountains of others' faults as molehills. Only then can we live in harmony.

If you decide not to keep back anything from others, make a copy of this letter and send it to me. It is worth pondering over by many.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MANIBEHN VALLABHBHAI PATEL
C|O DR. KANUGA
AHMEDABAD, B. B. C. I. RLY.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 133-4

448. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 27, 1945

CHI . SUS HILA,

I have your postcard. You will only have bitter experiences here. The reason is that the country is poor. Ba was a lifelong companion and so, of course, I feel her absence. Then again she had merged her life in mine.

I had a letter from Manilal[2]. He will be going to Ahmedabad tomorrow. He will think of coming here after he gets back. I believe you and the children will accompany him. Mother will have recovered. Kishorelal wrote to me she had fever. Chi. Gomati[5]too will

[1] Mahadev Desai
[2] Addressee's husband, Manilal Gandhi

have recovered. I am well. Today it is pretty cold. Tell Sita[1] not to stop writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

SUSHILA GANDHI
NANABHAI'S BUNGALOW
AKOLA, BERAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

449. LETTER TO MOHANLAL BHATT

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 27, 1945

CHI. MOHANLAL,[2]

Your letter is good. It is candid. This is my opinion. Those who have not taken up Hindustani, or do not know it, learn only half the *rashtrabhasha*. That is why I am partial to Hindustani. When we speak of the national language we do include those whose script is Urdu. This definition, which I had given at the Sammelan[3], has been accepted. Hindi is a language which Hindus and Muslims speak and is written in the Nagari or Urdu script. If that is so, you and I have to know both the scripts and be familiar with the vocabulary of both. That being the case, you have to revive the Urdu script and always keep in touch with it. Besides, in order to remove the feeling of hostility you should join the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. If everyone does so, the hostility will be removed.

I do not yet fully see eye to eye with Tandonji[4]. However, we keep exchanging views. Indu[5] must have grown up beyond recognition.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

MOHANLAL BHATT
25 NUTAN SOCIETY
ELLISBRIDGE, AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's daughter

[2] Secretary, Hindi Prachar Samiti, Wardha; ex-Manager, Navajivan Press

[3] Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Indore, in 1935, *vide* "Two Good Resolutions", 4-5-1935.

[4] Purushottamdas Tandon, proponent of Hindi language and literature; Chairman, U. P. Legislative Assembly, 1937-46; President, Indian National Congress, 1950-51

[5] Addressee's daughter

450. LETTER TO KANTILAL

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 27, 1945

CHI . KAN TI,

I have your letter. I remember you had come to see me in Bombay. It is true that I was very busy. This is the only message: Everyone in South Africa should live In harmony and bring credit to India. Everyone should be dedicated to service.

Manilal and Sushila have not come so far. They may come.

Convey my blessings to all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

451. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 27, 1945

BHA I AMR ITA LAL ,

I have your letter. After the Borivli work is over, Chi. Abha[1] will go to Rajkot with Kanubhai[2]. The girls should not have lost weight. If it is necessary I shall send for Veena[3]. Give up worrying on account of the two girls. Do take Sailen[4] to Calcutta if he keeps well there. I feel that Sailen has been guilty of some lapse. He was completely cured with Sushilabehn's treatment. Anyway do what you feel is proper.

Send the paper with Shantikumar if you got my letter from Bengal.[5] I see no need for your coming.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10402. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's daughter and her husband Kanu Gandhi

[2] *ibid*

[3] Addressee's elder daughter who along with Abha Gandhi was undergoing training at B rivli training camp

[4] Addressee's son

[5] The reference is to a report the addressee was expecting about the military p rsonnels who forced young girls to lead immoral lives; *vide* "Amrita Lal Chatterjee", 29-3-1945.

452. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRA RAO

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 27, 1945

BHA I RAM ACHAN DRA RAO ,

Altogether I have received three letters from you all. If all of you have benefited from your stay in Sevagram, the credit goes to you all, even though only those who have the will have benefited. I have known people who have gained nothing. Keep writing to me.

Blessings to you all from
BAPU

PROF. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO
ATHEISTIC CENTRE
MUMUNUR P. O.
KISTNA DISTRICT
MADRAS PRESIDENCY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

453. LETTER TO RAMBHAU BHOGE

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 27, 1945

BHA I RAM BHAU,

I have your letter. Never mind whatever punishment has been given to you. I trust that your wife and child will be looked after. Keep well.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. RAMBHAU BHOGE
DISTRICT PRISON
DHULIA, KHANDESH

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

454. MESSAGE TO PEOPLE OF CEYLON[1]

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 27, 1945

Gandhiji said that India and Lanka were one, the latter being a pendant of a long chain which was India.

He said that he had felt that people in Lanka sought to be separated from India, although the culture and problems of both were similar. He was glad, however, to learn that there were people in Lanka who realized this unity. Such people, he added, needed no message from him. They have only to understand the message of the charkha, khadi and the constructive programme, including village uplift and fostering of a national language. He referred to his tour of Ceylon 15 years ago[2] and his embarrassment then to notice European and alien habits and customs of the people there, and wished that the Ceylonese had known more about India and the message of the charkha.

The Bombay Chronicle, 28-4-1945

455. LETTER TO DESAIBHAI PATEL

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 28, 1945

BHA I DES AIBHA I,

May the marriage of Chi. Sumanbehn and Chi. Satyakam be fruitful. May both of them become true servants.

Blessings from
BAPU

ACHARYA DESAIBHAI
VITHAL KANYA VIDYALAYA
NADIAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The message was given to N. A. F. Meemanage, a former President of the Ceylonese Union in Mysore.

[2] In November 1927.

456. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI V. PATEL

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 28, 1945

CHI . DAH YABHA I,

I have your letter. Father[1] will continue[2] to be like this. If what he says is literally true, we should not worry about him.

I am persuading Mani[3] to come here.

My health is good. The weather here is refreshing.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI DAHYABHAI VALLABHBHAI PATEL
68 MARINE DRIVE
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

457. LETTER TO INDU N. PAREKH

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 28, 1945

CHI . IND U,

I was glad to have your letter. Chi. Kanti had given me the news. Now stick on and be successful. What machinery are you using? Do you only cure the hides? Do you use only the hides of dead animals or whatever you can get? Do you make anything from the leather?

Blessings from
BAPU

INDU PAREKH
DEENABANDHU ENGINEERING
ITOLA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Vallabhbhai Patel and his daughter Manibehn Patel
[2] Addressee's brothe
[3] *ibid*

458. LETTER TO V. P. LIMAYE

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 28, 1945

BHA I LIM AYE,

I have your letter. My blessings are certainly with you in your work of Nayee Talim. The success of this venture is full of significance.

Blessings from
BAPU

PROF. V. P. LIMAYE
PIPANE
SASWAD P. O.
POONA DISTRICT

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

459. LETTER TO I. H. SONAVANE

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 28, 1945

BHA I SON AVANE ,

What you have written to me is correct. Give up the job if you are not satisfied with the work and if the salary is inadequate, and start some business. Seek Mathuradasji's[1] advice before giving up the job.

Let me know the development.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI I. B. SONAVANE
ROOM NO. 78, SECOND FLOOR
197-A LADY HARDINGE ROAD
BOMBAY 28

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Mathuradas Trikumji's

460. LETTER TO BHAGALPUR DISTRICT CONGRESS COMMITTEE

April 28, 1945

BROTHERS,

I have your letter. I feel that you should let the strike continue. If the prisoners are dying, let them die. How can we know the internal conditions? If we do not learn how to live, we must learn how to die. Or we must learn both. If it was within my power, I would have found out what all this was about.

Blessings from

BAPU

SECRETARY
DISTRICT CONGRESS CONSTRUCTIVE DEPARTMENT
ADARSH BHOJANALAYA, SUJAGANJ
BHAGALPUR, BIHAR

From a copy of the Hindi; Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

461. LETTER TO OM PARKASH GUPTA

April 28, 1945

CHI . OM PRA KASH,

I have gone through your letter and also the accompanying one. It is about the books. It seems to me all right. I have written quite a lot about how you should live in the Ashram.[1] Be friendly with all.

It is good that Kanu has arrived.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Omprakash Gupta", 26-4-1945.

462. LETTER TO GOVIND DAS

April 28, 1945

BHA I GOV IND DAS ,

I have your letter. You must get rid of the fits of giddiness. Think over naturecure treatment. There is someone in Allahabad. Otherwise there are doctors.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHETH GOVIND DAS
JABALPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

463. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDEVI

April 28, 1945

CHI . LAK SHMID EVI,

I had kept your letter to think over. I am of the opinion that in this connection what Vichitrabhai and Dhirenbhai say should be done.

Look after your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

LAKSHMIDEVI OF HARDOI
KASTURBA NIDHI CAMP
BORIVLI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

464. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 28, 1945

CHI . KRI SHNAC HANDR A

I have read all your letters. I have written enough and so will write no more. MY work too has increased.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You are right about the visitors. It will of course be a good thing if somehow or other the Ashram becomes a real Ashram and everybody follows the rules.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4512

465. LETTER TO TAN YUN-SHAN[1]

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 29, 1945

DERA FRIEND,

I long for the real friendship between China and India based not on economics or politics but on irresistible attraction. Then will follow real brotherhood of man.

This is the message in answer to yours of 5th inst.

You must learn Hindustani. You have been long enough in India. May I write to you henceforth in Hindustani, since I can't write in Chinese ?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

PROF. TAN YUN-SHAN
SANTINIKETAN

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The addressee had come to India at the invitation of Rabindranath Tagore and organised the Department of Sino-Indian Studies in the Vishwabharati University and later the Sino-Indian Cultural Society.

466. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

April 29, 1945

CHI . CHI MANLA L,

If Chi. Ramdas[1] wishes to go to Mysore for a few months, let him go. I have already dictated a letter regarding a storeroom for jaggery. It should belong to the Ashram. I assume that you will incur the expenditure only if Parnerkar[2] desires. You may also put up in the Ashram the building you speak of.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10627

467. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

MAHABALESHWAR,

April 29, 1945

CHI . MRI DU,

I have already said it and I say it again that your continuously getting fever and taking medicines is not good. That way you can't render service.

I am enclosing Raihanabehn's letter. I am sending it to you after obtaining her permission.[3] I understand that the situation has changed after the letter was written. Nevertheless the letter deserves to be read and pondered over by you. Write to Raihana if you feel like it and have the time. Do write to me whatever you want. Do not be in a hurry.

There is talk of shifting the whole office to Wardha. Bapa wants it. So do Shantikumar and Shyamlal and from what I understand, Ghanshyamdas[4] too. As for me, I was of that opinion from the very beginning. Now you must let me know your view. I could not help noticing that the scheme shown to me would not create the village atmosphere. The task is both difficult and easy. It is easy if we can

[1] Son of H. C. Dasappa

[2] Yashwant Mahadev Parnerkar

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Raihana Tyabji", 25-4-1945.

[4] G. D. Birla

understand it and lay the foundation accordingly; otherwise it is difficult and will become more so. In a large measure it depends on you. I do not wish to take any work from you without your first understanding the thing. That will be making wrong use of your services. Let me know your views when you have time.

Blessings from

BAPU

MRIDULABEHN SARABHAI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

468. LETTER TO CHHOTUBHAI SUTHAR

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 29, 1945

BHA I CHH OTUBH AI,

I have your letter and the map. I am going through your note. It will help me [in understanding your viewpoint]. You have to write something original. In Marathi, there is a very good book by Jerajar. I have heard that there is one in Bengali too. In the United Provinces, a gentleman is doing very good work. It appears from *The Hindu* that there is something of the kind in the South also. Now we have to see what you will do. You need not reply.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI CHHOTUBHAI SUTHAR
TARAK MANDAL, ANAND

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

469. LETTER TO DAULATRAI DAVE

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 29, 1945

BHA I DAU LATRA I,

Who are my attendants? Without knowing my plight you get angry with those who look after me. It is because of them that I am able to do some work. If you want to be angry, let it be with me because I am not able to cope with the work and am not able to satisfy

everyone. I have done whatever I could for you but there is no limit to your needs that I could never meet them. That is no doubt my fault; but I am helpless.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI DAULATRAI DAVE
MADHUKUNJ, CHITTARANJAN ROAD
EAST VILE PARLE

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

470. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 29, 1945

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

I have gone through your letter. I agree with everything you say but I have already given my blessings to Omkarnath[1]. He introduced himself as a pupil of Vishnu Digambar[2]. He got the blessings of Malaviyaji[3] and Radhakrishnanji[4]. He made the changes I suggested. He did not even mention his differences with you. He also told me that he had met you and took from me a letter of blessings. His is an all-inclusive Vidyapith and so is yours. How can this be possible? Think over this, leaving aside my blessings. How can you involve yourself in this quarrel?

Why should your institution be called Vishnu Digambar University of Music?' What is wrong with Vishnu Digambar Sangeet Vidyapith? Do you find the English name more attractive? I had raised this point with Omkarnath also. I suggested to him to use Hindustani for all their work. He agreed. I do not know what has happened now.

For the birthday: Make great progress.

I had replied to the original letter of Narandas on that same day.[5] So there is nothing to write this time.

PURUSHOTTAM NARANDAS GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Omkarnath Thakur.
[2] Vishnu Digambar Paluskar
[3] Madan Mohan Malaviya
[4] S. Radhakrishnan
[5] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 27-4-1945.

471. LETTER TO GAJANAN NAIK

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 29, 1945

My views on palm *gur* are firm. People should have permission to make palm *gur* or toddy wherever there are palm trees. Our requirement can be met with this *gur* and sugarcane *gur*. I am of the opinion that palm *gur* is better than sugar cane *gur*.[1]

CHI. GAJANAN[2],

This is for you. I did forget about palm *gur*. I had to write in a hurry. That was the last day. You could have added that and wired me. I had written "etc.". That includes *gur*. *Gur* has lost nothing. When was it bitter?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI GAJANAN
MAGANVADI
WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi and Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

472. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 29, 1945

CHI . AMR ITLAL ,

I have your letter. Pyarelal is going through the original letter. Even if Tandonji sends a reply, it is not going to come very soon. We must go on doing our work. What has to be will be. I have sent you a copy of Dr. Tarachand's letter. I am awaiting your reply.

Take Chi. Ramdas with you. How can I keep Yashodharabehn[3] or Ramdas against their will? On my part I have looked after him as one does after a flower. I am firmly of the opinion that if he makes

[1] What follows is in Gujarati.
[2] Of the Gur Department, A. I. V. I. A.
[3] Yashodhara Dasappa

anything of himself, he will be able to do so only in the Ashram. But if he does not like to stay there, it will not be possible to train him. If he returns, he should do so of his own free will and not because of any coercion. You should get well and come.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI
GUJARAT VIDYAPITH
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

473. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 29, 1945

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

If Chi. Ramdas wants to accompany Yashodhara Devi and Nanavati to Mysore, let him. We shall take care of him when he returns. How are you getting on with doing your own massage.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9026. Also C.W. 9150. Courtesy: Prabhakar

474. LETTER TO YASHODHARA DASAPPA

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 29, 1945

CHI. YASHODHARA,

Chi. Nanavati has written to me about Chi. Ramdas. Since Ramdas wants to go to Mysore and since he is not keeping well, lethim go with you and if he feels well, he can come back later. I am writing to Sevagram. Hope you are calm.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI YASHODHARA DASAPPA
C/O SHRI N. S. GULABI
SUNNYSIDE, GYMKHANA ROAD
MATUNGA, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

475. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 29, 1945

CHI . KAM ALNAY AN[1],

I have your letter. I remember Mother[2] had given me Varma's letter. Now I can't find it. Perhaps I left it behind in Sevagram. Do you remember what it was about?

Come whenever you and Satyanarayan want to. I am getting along well. The treatment has not begun yet.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ
51 MAHATMA GANDHI ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

476. LETTER TO M. S. KELKAR

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 29, 1945

DR. ICE,

I have your letter. One can stay for a month in the Birla Dharmashala. I can't say anything about Wardha. In Sevagram a hut can be built. I will be more than happy, if Hari-ichchha[3] is cured.Arrangements for ice can be made. The leper has to be kept somewhere in the village. It is difficult to keep him in the Ashram. My advice is that in this connection you should do whatever Manoharji[4] says. He has devoted his whole life to this work and therefore we must have his permission.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Son of Jamnalal Bajaj
[2] Janakidevi Bajaj
[3] Hari-ichchha Kamdar
[4] Manohar Divan, who founded the Maharogi Seva Mandal for the service of lepers at Dttapur in 1936, while doing village work with Gram Seva Mandal under Vinoba Bhve's scheme of rural reconstruction

477. LETTER TO SHANTA

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 29, 1945

CHI. SHANTA,

I have your letter.

I have written to Chimanlalbhai about the store for Jaggery. I want your path to be clear. The thing is that it will be cleared by your own work. Isn't that true adult education? The work can be accomplished by calmness and introspection. Keep on asking yourself: 'Why can't I get this work done?' You will get the reply. I am not with you all. It hurts me, and does not hurt me. In a way it is good that I am away from you. See what you can do about the grain bank. What I could suggest would not be from experience. So from your own experience try to find a way out. I have shown you the royal road; never leave it. Give education to people, not money. There is no harm if educating people takes some time. Once the work is started, it will go on.

I am returning Chimanlalbhai's letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SHANTABEHN
HINDUSTANI TALIMI SANGH
SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

478. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 29, 1945

CHI. SATISBABU[1],

I have your letter. My blessings you already have. Is not everything you do done for me? Your compilation[2] about the cow and

[1] Founder-President of Bengal Khadi Pratishthan
[2] *Cow in India* to which Gandhiji wrote the Foreword on May 20, 1945.

your original writing show the same thing. Now that you are coming here in a few days, we shall talk about the medicines then.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1942

479. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 29, 1945

CHI . ANA ND,

I have your letter. You will have received mine. Now I shall not so much as mention Bhimavaram. You got fever, the doctor came; now there is nothing to say. Do as the doctor advises and get well. I am in correspondence with Jivanji[1]. I am not free [to do what I like]. Whatever is done will be done with deliberation.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI ANAND HINGORANI
UPPER SIND COLONY
KARACHI
SIND

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India, and Anand T. Hingorani

480. MESSAGE FOR "JAWAHAR JAIN JYOTI"[2]

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 30, 1945

The Jain sadhus in the country should understand *yuga dharma*, that is, the religion of the age, and their duty towards it; otherwise their preachings and teachings would be useless.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-5-1945

[1] Jivanji D. Desai of Navajivan Press. It was about publishing *Thought for the Day; vide* also "Letter to Anand T. Hingorani", 26-4-1945.

[2] The report said that the message was given to Bachharaj Doshi of Panchgani for the book on the "Life and Teachings of the Late Acharya Jawaharlalji". The Jain sadhu followed Gandhiji's teachings.

481. TESTIMONIAL TO JAISHANKAR P. TRIVEDI

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 30, 1945

I can claim to have known Prof. Jaishankar Trivedi personally for a good many years. During all these years, I knew him to be ever ready to help people without any thought of gaining name or fame. He was a silent worker and his home had become a dharmashala.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 47

482. TELEGRAM TO SAROJINI NAIDU

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 30, 1945

SAROJINI DEVI NAIDU
HYDERABAD DECCAN

TELEGRAM WORTHY OF YOU. DEATH[1] IS DELIVERANCE. LOVE.

SPINNER[2]

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

483. LETTER TO MUHAMMAD AHMAD SAID KHAN

Personal

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 30, 1945

DEA R NAW AB SAH EB[3],

I cannot do better than send the accompanying[4] to you. If the facts are correctly set forth, they are terrible.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

THE NAWAB SAHEB OF CHHATARI
HYDERABAD DECCAN

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The reference is to the death of the addressee's younger son Ranadheera.
[2] The addressee had given to Gandhiji the epithet 'Spinner of Destiny'.
[3] President, Executive Council of the Nizam of Hyderabad
[4] A cutting under the caption "Police High-handedness at Gulbarga" from *Bharat Jyoti*, 29-4-1945

484. LETTER TO AMIYA NATH BOSE

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 30, 1945

DEA R AMI YO,

Have you worked out the problem of electricity for every home? What is the cost? My remark quoted by you is a poser for the time being. It will cease to be one, if it is a possibility. It has not penetrated every home in the villages even of Mysore. Since you believe in it, I want you to work it out and demonstrate the physical and economic possibility of electrifying every home of the seven hundred thousand villages of India.

It is a torture to suffer from fever for years. Has the medical profession declared bankruptcy?

Love to all.

BAPU

SHRI AMIYA NATH BOSE
1 WOODBURN PARK
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

485. LETTER TO G. V. NARAYANA MURTI

April 30, 1945

Your information is incomplete. How did you get the piles? Do you eat hot foods such as chillies and do the piles bleed? Meanwhile drink plenty of boiled water, take orange-juice and juice of raw vegetable such as carrots, *palak* and snake-gourd. You can drink not more than three pounds of milk and take three ounces of fresh coconut well chewed. Drink the water of the coconut. If the piles bleed, take rest, omit one meal and apply oil to the affected part.

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

486. LETTER TO GULZARILAL NANDA

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 30, 1945

CHI . GUL ZARIL AL[1],

Read the enclosed and return it to me. If what it contains is all right, I intend to write in Gujarati. It will be proper if I write only for your journal. If there are any factual mistakes, point them out in such a way that I can explain them to Ambalalbhai[2].

I hope you are well.

There is no news from Dr. Chugh. I shall have to start on a drug (allopathic) tomorrow. Dr. Chugh can also treat us, if he wants to.[3]

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI GULZARILAL NANDA
MAJOOR MAHAJAN
MIRZAPUR ROAD
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

487. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 30, 1945

CHI . CHI MANLA L,

I have sent a wire to the Santiniketan friend asking him not to go there while I am away.[4] It is certainly a sorry state of affairs that when I am there we cannot welcome people for fear of overcrowding and, in my absence, because of internal quarrels. Doesn't this indicate

[1] Ahmedabad labour leader who helped to organize the labour movement on Gandhian lines; acted as Prime Minister after Jawaharlal Nehru's death in May 1964 and also after Lalbahadur Shastri's death in January 1966

[2] Ambalal Sarabhai, an industrialist of Ahmedabad; *vide* also pp. "Letter to Gulzarilal Nanda", 12-5-1945.

[3] *Vide* also "Letter to Chugh", 9-5-1945.

[4] The telegram, however, appears to have been sent on the following day; *vide* "Telegram to Basudeo Narain", 1-5-1945.

what I had initially suggested, viz., that we should close the Ashram and everyone should settle down in different departments. This is worth seriously thinking over. Those who stay separately may continue to do so and go on doing their work, and I would pass the rest of my life touring. This seems to me to be the best thing to do. Do not discuss this with too many people. First you yourself should think, and do what seems best to you. You need not even show this letter to anybody. You are the Chairman. You should, therefore, think independently for yourself.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10628

488. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 30, 1945

CHI . MUN NALAL ,

Chairman means Chimanlal. Inability to come to a decision immediately is no shortcoming, if he is otherwise able to come to a correct decision and express his view in time. Chimanlal is the Chairman because he is the most qualified of all. But the inmates of the Ashram have a right to appoint another person as Chairman. Decide first on who are Ashram inmates.

If you think it beyond your capacity, the question of majority vote, or for that matter even of one vote, does not arise. If all the inmates regard themselves as incapable of running the kitchen, thejoint kitchen should be closed. In that case everybody will have to run his own kitchen. I do believe, of course, that the Ashram cannot be run in that way. It would then be something different.

I had accepted the suggestion that you should be requested to leave. Now I withdraw it fully. Remain where you are and prosper.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8455. Also C.W. 5576. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

489. LETTER TO T. N. SHARMA

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 30, 1945

BHA I SHA RMA,

I have your letter. I do not like it. The circumstances keep changing. If Chakrayya wants to do nature-cure work, why does he insist on that particular place? Why not Bhimavaram? Anand Niketan should be given up. I do not like to spend money on the building. The money should be returned.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI T. N. SHARMA
C/O CHEMICALS LTD.
NIDADAVOLU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

490. LETTER TO GHANSHYAMSINH GUPTA

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 30, 1945

BHA I GHA NSHYA MSINH ,

I have your letter. It is sad as well as surprising. I have done what I could.

Blessings from
BAPU

GHANSHYAMSINH GUPTA
DRUG

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

491. LETTER TO LAKSHMI GANDHI

MAHABALESHWAR,
April 30, 1945

CHI . LAK SHMI,

You must have received my telegram.[1] You and the child will be well. It is quite some time now. Will Rajaji and Devdas[2] be coming together or will Rajaji come a little earlier? Is Papa[3] also there?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2000

492. LETTER TO SAROJINI

April 30, 1945

CHI . SAR OJINI BEHN,

I keep receiving many complaints against you. You do not even pay for your expenses to the Secretary. Pay for your expenses and leave the Ashram. You are not likely to benefit from staying in the Ashram.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 5870

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to C. Rajagopalachari", 23-4-1945.
[2] Addressee's husband
[3] Addressee's elder sister, Namagiri

493. LETTER TO SAILENDRANATH CHATTERJEE

MAHABALESHWAR,
[*April-May 1945*][1]

CHI. SAILEN,

It pains me to know that your health has deteriorated. I suggest that you go and stay at the Ashram to improve your health and afterwards engage yourself in work. Take Manubhai's[2] treatment. You should not have any difficulty in getting sick leave.

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 10335. Courtesy: Amrit Lal Chatterjee

494. FOREWORD TO "RASHTRABHASHA VISHE VICHAR"

Bhai Jivanji has brought out at the right moment a collection of my writings and speeches on the subject of our national language. I have not found it possible to go through all the writings collected here but I have read the first twenty pages. I made the first speech[3] on this subject in 1917. And I hold the same views today as those expressed in the speech or thereafter from time to time. The only difference is that they are now stronger, clearer and more definite than before. Hindi and Urdu have always been inseparable to me. I have also quite freely used the word Hindustani. I am saying the same thing today that I did in the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan session at Indore in 1918. Hindustani is not Urdu but a happy amalgam of Hindi and Urdu which people in Northern India may easily understand and which may be written either in the Nagari or Urdu script. That alone is the perfect national language; all others are imperfect. For the present those who desire to learn the national language fully and not partially must learn both the scripts and know both the forms. It is a duty demanded of us by our love for the nation. Those who learn it will gain, those who do not will lose.

MAHABALESHWAR, May 1, 1945

[From Gujarati]

Rashtrabhasha Vishe Vichar. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Gandhiji was at Mahabaleshwar from April 21 to May 31, 1945.
[2] Dr. Manshankar J. Trivedi
[3] At Broach; "Speech at Second Gujarat Educational Conference", 20-10-1917.

495. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

May 1, 1945

CHI . JIV ANJI,

I received the collection only today and this very day I am writing the "Foreword"[1] at the back of this. This should suffice.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

496. TELEGRAM TO BASUDEO NARAIN

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 1, 1945

BASUDEO NARAIN
COLLEGE
SANTINIKETAN

ABSENT TILL END JUNE. USELESS YOUR GOING SEVAGRAM DURING [MY] ABSENCE.[2]

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

497. LETTER TO L. N. GOPALASWAMI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 1, 1945

DEA R GOP ALASW AMI[3],

You have been so good and so wise that I am tempted to write to you regarding your letter to Bapa of 24th ultimo. If you cannot endorse what I write below, you may carry out your proposal set forth in the above letter.

Why should you feel so poor about the Harijan fund there? You

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Chimanlal N. Shah", 30-4-1945.
[3] Secretary, Tamil Nadu Harijan Sevak Sangh

are able, your work is sound and your Harijan treasury should always be adequate. A labourer is worthy of his hire. You are that labourer. So far as I am concerned, I would like you to draw the whole amount from the Kasturba Fund. But the objection is to the male secretary being anything but honorary so long as a woman is available as in the Tamil Nadu case. I would like you to be an example to the others in having the whole of your Kasturba staff consisting of paid women workers and males being honorary and guiding hands to the necessary extent only. Men's merit will consist in being displaced by equally efficient women workers, if not better. God has given us agreat chance when we are about to have a footing in the villages on a wide scale. Therefore do what you can, I ask no more.

Yours,

BAPU

SHRI GOPALASWAMI
KASTURBA TRUST
S. I. S. BUILDINGS, ROYAPETTAH
MADRAS

From a photostat: C.W. 10548. Courtesy: Government of Tamil Nadu. Also from a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

498. LETTER TO GOPAL GURUBAXANI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 1, 1945

DEA R GOP AL GUR UBAXA NI,

Your letter makes strange reading. I do not suppose you or your father has ever met me. Are you in any way related to Gope Gurubaxani[1] who with his wife was the other day in the Ashram and is now in Sind? In any case, both of you have my blessings for a happy

[1] In *Reminiscences of Gandhi*, p. 109, Gope Gurubaxani explains that he and his wife Vimala Rani came to Sevagram on February 8, 1945, after he had relinquished his post of "Honorary War Propaganda Officer attached to the National War Front at Simla" as he was "disgusted with that work, having seen how our own people were made to suffer". Gandhiji received him, saying: "I know that a change of ideas could take place in your case, as it did in mine, for I too helped the Government in the first World War."

life of service to the country in the place of a life given to pleasure and self-gratification. I have your cheque of Rs. 200 for any public service of my choice.

Yours,

BAPU

[C/O] PRINCIPAL N. D. GURUBAXANI
DHARAMDAS BHOJ RAJ LANE
SANTINIKETAN
JACOB ROAD
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

499. LETTER TO BARBARA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 1, 1945

MY DEAR BARBARA,

I like your cheery letter. I hope you will be better still by the change and return hale and hearty.

You know Hindustani. Try to write to me and to those who understand it in Hindustani.

Yes, the climate here seems to suit me.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

500. LETTER TO KANAM GANDHI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 1, 1945

CHI. KANAM[1],

I was happy to read your letter. I had already got the news of your arrival. Secure the same marks there also as you did in your examination at Nagpur. In Sevagram, marks are given for goodness—

[1] Ramdas Gandhi's son

isn't that so? One must get mixed in society as sugar does with milk.

You seem to have done very well in the examination. One day you will come first. Do you know that Valjibhai's Nanu[1] stood first out of thousands of students? He is as good as he is intelligent. Your handwriting cannot be said to be good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 5874

501. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 1, 1945

CHI. SHRIMAN NARAYAN,

The March issue of Humayun Kabir's *India* carries a review of your book[2] by Sikander Chaudhary. Read it.

I hope Madalasa[3] is well.

The pen moved in Gujarati and I let it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 305

502. LETTER TO JAYANT S. TILAK

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 1, 1945

CHI. JAYANT,

How strange that Lokamanya's[4] grandson should write to me in English. If you cannot write in Hindi you can at least write in Marathi. I never go anywhere to attend weddings. However, it is good you

[1] Vimalchandra V. Desai
[2] *Gandhian Plan of Economic Development for Free India*, published in 1944
[3] Addressee's wife
[4] Bal Gangadhar Tilak

remembered me. May you both be happy and serve the country as Lokamanya did.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI JAYANT SHRIDHAR TILAK
LOKAMANYA TILAK MANDIR
GAEKWAR WADA
528 NARAYAN PETH
POONA CITY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

503. LETTER TO DR. B. R. CHUGH[1]

May 2, 1945

G[andhiji] says he started the course only yesterday. It will last at least for 10 days. After that it will be better to let the climate do its work. It seems to agree with him so far. The present course deals only with amoebic-hookworm. The tremor of the hands and general weakness will still require attention unless the climate does all these things. The best time to test your treatment will be after G.'s descent to the plains.

From the original: Pyarelal Papers, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] This was in reply to Dr. B. R. Chugh's letter of April 30, 1945.

504. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 2, 1945

CHI. MAGANBHAI[1],

I saw the cutting sent by you. Tandonji will say the same thing. You must realize that ahimsa moves at a snail's pace. It is ever moving but its pace is slow. We should go on doing our work. Can't Nadvi write a book? We have to bring out new books. The examination can't be stopped. I had written to Purushottam telling him to work for both. He did conduct examinations. However, if the Hindi [Sahitya] Sammelan claims that it is otherwise, I will have to leave it. I do not want to do it in a hurry. But at the same time I do not want to give up what is correct. Write to Purushottam. Take Kosambi[2] for the work.

Blessings from
BAPU

MAGANBHAI DESAI
GUJARAT VIDYAPITH
ELLISBRIDGE, AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

505. LETTER TO TARACHAND

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 2, 1945

BHAI TARACHANDJI[3],

My three colleagues here strongly object to your estimate of expenditure. The Navajivan Press is a large establishment. Wecan get them to do all the printing work.[4] I think even the committee of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha will be startled. We shall place this issue

[1] Chancellor, Gujarat Vidyapith

[2] Dharmanand P. Kosambi (1876-1947); a scholar of Buddhism from Goa; taught Pali in National College, Bombay, and Fergusson College, Poona; joined civil disobedience movement in 1930 and was jailed.

[3] Member, Literature Board of the All-India Hindustani Prachar Sabha.

[4] The reference is to the "Hindustani Kosh" about which the addressee had been writing to Gandhiji.

before the committee after I reach Wardha. It will be good if in the mean time you can send manuscripts of a few text books. That Dr. Abdul Haq will not be able to come is also a matter of concern.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. TARACHAND
HINDUSTANI ACADEMY
ALLAHABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

506. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 2, 1945

CHI. MAGANBHAI,

I have your letter. Mohanlal's letter is good. I have of course written to him. As suggested by you, I am making the clarification regarding the Hindustani Sahitya Sammelan. There is bound to be some delay.

I have already written[1] to Dr. Tarachand. We certainly cannot incur such a huge expenditure. What you and Amritlal say is right.

I am enclosing Mohanlal's letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

MAGANBHAI P. DESAI
GUJARAT VIDYAPITH
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

507. LETTER TO KUSUM NAIR

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 2, 1945

CHI. KUSUM,

I like your frankness. You did well in writing to me.

I started on the medicine only yesterday. It is a new medicine for me and while I am taking it I have to take as much rest as possible. It has to be taken for ten days. During this time I will not send for you. Then there is a meeting[1] of the committee of Kasturba Nidhi. After that you can come.

In the mean time you may send me questions and I will reply to them. This time the replies will be only for you. I want you to understand me. Then you will have your own answer to the day-to-day questions and you will consult me only if you want my approval for something. That is what Mahadev used to do. That is what Pyarelal does. And, you will be surprised to know, that is, what the late Saunders of *Englishman* used to do with me. Parameshwaran Pillay and Subrahmanyam did the same. It will not be too much for you to find time to understand my views fully. Accepting them after having understood them is a different question. You can differ, and in that case you can bravely oppose me. I like genuine opposition.

About the phone call. When you were informed that I was in the bathroom or busy otherwise it was really so. There was no thought of deceiving you. You must know that from 7.30 to 11.30 I am busy with my routine. The work I do during that time is all the work I am able to do. After that I have a nap. As a result I am ready to see visitors only at 2.30 p. m. This is my normal routine. Those who are with me while I am taking my food ask me a few things there and then. Bear in mind that the telephone in the house where I live is almost wholly for my use. You can ask me further in this connection.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI KUSUMBEHN NAIR
74 LAKSHMI BUILDING
SIR PHEROZESHAH MEHTA ROAD, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] From May 17; *vide* "Letter to P. C. Joshi", 3-5-1945.

508. LETTER TO M. S. KELKAR

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 2, 1945

DEAR ICE,

I love your Hindustani. You should go on writing like this. Leave space at the top and enough margin.

Choose the leprosy patients [for your treatment] and keep them somewhere in Sevagram. I shall manage the expense for both milk and ice needed for that. A big thing would be accomplished if Hari-ichchha gets well after some time. Try to learn the art of making ice in Sevagram. When will your [equipment] for making distilled water come? Balkrishna's . . . [1] to the Vaidya . . .[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 5875

509. LETTER TO RAGHUVIR SAHAY

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 2, 1945

BHAI RAGHUVIR SAHAY,

Why do you write to me in English? Your daughter is getting married in your own community, isn't she? Why do you seek my blessings for such a marriage? You know—don't you?—that I am a votary of inter-caste marriages. I like this marriage but please spare me.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI RAGHUVIR SAHAY
ADVOCATE
BADAUN

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] A few words here are illegible.
[2] *ibid*

510. LETTER TO CHAKRAYYA

MAHABALESAWAR,
May 2, 1945

CHI. CHAKRAYYA,

I have your letter. Your staying at Anand Niketan seems pointless to me. So tell Sharmaji. Return the money which has been sent to you.[1] Repairs of Anand Niketan cannot be carried out with that money.

I think you should acquire a thorough knowledge of nature-cure during your stay at Bhimavaram. I hope there is no trace of untouchability in Bhimavaram. If there is, you can be of help to Dr. Raju even there. I expect you to keep spinning and weaving while you are there. Improve your health. Then we shall see what to do. Read books on nature cure also. You will have to spend at least a year in Bhimavaram.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Chi. Chimanlal should read this and pass on.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9116. Also C.W. 9185

511. LETTER TO ANJANA CHAUDHARY

MAHABALESEHWAR,
May 2, 1945

DEAR ANJANA,

I have your letter. I do not worry about Ram Narayan[2]. He is brave and will recover. It is good that you have written to me, and I am happy to know that the children are well. They must have grown up. Let me know of their progress in their studies. You have notgiven your address in your letter. How are you? I am well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapu Maine Kya Dekha, Kya Samjha?, p. 185

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to T. N. Sharma", 30-4-1945.
[2] Addressee's husband? who had heart attack in jail

512. NOTE TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 2, 1945

Why should Rameshwaribehn write in English?

To the extent possible all business should be transacted in the national language. Rameshwaribehn should write about father only in the national language. The entire biography should be written in the national language—it may well be translated into English later.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

513. TELEGRAM TO AMRITLAL

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 3, 1945

AMRITLAL
CARE M. L. UDESHI
BOMBAY

UNNECESSARY COME VISITING.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

514. TELEGRAM TO HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 3, 1945

HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB[1]
CUTTACK

HOPE WELL. COME ANY DAY AFTER TWENTY-FIRST.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Congress leader of Orissa

515. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 3, 1945

CHI. MANI,

I got your letter. It is clear.

As regards your fasts, I suggest that you should undertake them only for reasons of health. You will then come to know about yourself, profit from it spiritually too and be emancipated from superstition or insincerity. It is quite absurd to think that we should at least fast in memory of Ba or Mahadev if we cannot do anything more. They would surely be distressed at this if they could know about it. When we lose a dear one, we should do something difficult and at the same time dear to them. We might cultivate a sweetness of temper like Mahadev's or faith like Ba's. I have cited these as two illustrations which readily come to my mind. We can think of more. If only we realize that the body is the temple of God, or rather the instrument of God-realization, all will be well with us. Then the fraud which now passes for religion will cease. I take all this trouble to explain things to you because you are simple in habits and have resisted many temptations. I know that you would be able to achieve much more if you could rise higher in all respects.

And that is why I wish to draw you here or to the Ashram. Father too feels that way, and that makes me all the more eager to attract you. If Father was out of prison neither you nor I would desire that even for a single moment you should be anywhere else but by his side. If you are near me, you will grow in tolerance, for this is a place where one has to cultivate detachment in spite of having to adjust oneself to different temperaments. This means that we should always be ready to learn from others. We should observe people, emulate their virtues and bear with their weaknesses for that is the best way of curing them. And, therefore, come soon.

You did well to give me news of Nandubehn, Diwan Master[1] and [Dr.] Kanuga.

[1] Jiwanlal Diwan

It is nearly morning now and I am about to put out the light. I will, therefore, stop here.

Blessings to everybody there.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MANIBEHN PATEL
C/O SHRI DAHYABHAI PATEL
MARINE LINES, BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 134-5

516. LETTER TO P. C. JOSHI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 3, 1945

DEAR JOSHI,

I have your kind note[1].

You need not await the *finale* of our correspondence for answering untrue reports that may appear in the papers. That, however, apart Mohan[2] may come on the 24th instant, if Thursday is the only day he can spare. I am taking medical treatment at least till 10th, and on 17th I have a meeting[3] which may last three days.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Correspondence between Mahatma Gandhi and P. C. Joshi, p. 41

[1] Dated May 1, it *inter alia* read: "As you must know, a number of untrue statements concerning our correspondence have appeared in newspapers hostile to my Party. I have not answered these as we are still exchanging letters, but . . . we should come to some understanding as soon as possible. I would therefore like to send Mohan to discuss this matter . . . on the afternoon of either Thursday May 10 or Thursday May 17."

[2] Mohan Kumaramangalam, son of Dr. P. Subbaroyan

[3] Of Kasturba Memorial Trust Committee; *vide* also "Letter to Kusum Nair", 2-5-1945.

517. LETTER TO RANGACHARY

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 3, 1945

DEAR RANGACHARY,

I have gone through your letter. Your wife can remain in the Ashram to do hospital work, provided you and she do not live as husband and wife [and] live at least for a fixed number of years. Otherwise your present mood would be counted as one of fleeting emotion worthless for any lasting good.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 9107

518. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 3, 1945

CHI. MRIDU,

I am sending herewith the original as revised and a copy of it for your convenience. If it is too late, you can discard it. I hope you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

KASTURBA GANDHI NATIONAL MEMORIAL FUND
SCINDIA HOUSE
BALLARD ESTATE
FORT, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

519. LETTER TO GAJANAN NAIK

May 3, 1945

CHI. GAJANAN,

Kumarappa and others will be glad if Dhiren Mazmudar goes there. But how can he go? Everyone is busy in his own work. Do

bring him if you are sure that he will come. I am of the opinion that only a new person should be brought in.

What does Jhaverbhai say? He has managed to bring in two persons. Will not one of them do?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

520. LETTER TO AMIN

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 3, 1945

CHI. AMIN,

You do have compassion and devotion in you. In fact the two words designate the same attribute. But since you lack firmness, the two virtues become mere feelings. You lack firmness because although you know the *atman*, you do not have *paramatma* standing before you. And how can there be *atman* where *paramatma* is not? And how can we exist if there is no *atman*? In the end, however, it is a matter of faith. Have that and everything will be all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

521. LETTER TO ANANT RAM

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 3, 1945

CHI. ANANT RAM,

Your Urdu writing is very good. Continue to write like this. If Ramanama can do so much how much more can you? If things will continue like this, I shall be very happy indeed. I do not desire any change in your time-table.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.G. 131

522. LETTER TO SARASWATI GANDHI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 3, 1945

CHI. SURU,

Your letter is good.

I would consider it a great triumph if you can win over Harilal. Do not leave him and do not bring him this side. He is so stubborn by nature that he relapses into his old ways again and again. Maybe, the love of you two or, you may say, the innocent love of the kid Shanti[1] will hold him. I shall be happy.

I am glad to hear that, though Prithuraj[2] is earning so much, Vali[3] continues to be as simple and innocent as she was. Has Vali improved in health? My blessings to both of them. Now even Velanbehn[4] and Anandi[5] will have arrived there.

What can I say about Ramachandran[6]? It would please me to have him with me but I would not like to take him from Travancore to have him here. I think his work in Travancore is over now. He isat present in the Madras Presidency. You will probably meet him. We shall know more from him.

Blessings to all of you from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6187. Also C.W. 3461. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] Addressee's son
[2] Prithuraj Asar and his wife
[3] *ibid*
[4] Wife and daughter of Lakshmidas Asar
[5] *ibid*
[6] G. Ramachandran, addressee's maternal uncle

523. LETTER TO GOVIND REDDY

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 3, 1945

CHI. GOVIND,

I have heard that you have become very naughty. It is shameful, if true. You have been kept for a special purpose. You have to be an ideal child. You will become one, won't you?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 5873. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

524. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 3, 1945

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

You have fallen ill again. This is sin. You overworked and did not care about food and sleep. Why? The body is meant for service. How can we render service, if we do not keep it fit?

You did not exert yourself too much in giving yourself the massage, did you? Take rest and recover. Take quinine if it is necessary. Eat well. Take fruit. Sleep well. Use a mosquito-net. I have written[1] to Govind. Read the letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9027. Also C.W. 9151. Courtesy: Prabhakar

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

525. TALK WITH D. N. BALAVENKATARAM

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 3, 1945

Mr. D. N. Balavenkataram, former President of the Salem Taluka Congress Committee, asked Gandhiji whether the Press reports that he would not think of entering the temple of Mahabaleshwar as long as they were not open to the Harijans were correct. Mahatma Gandhi remarked:

Yes, the Press reports are true. As long as the doors of the temples are not open to the Harijans, I shall never enter them.

Replying to a question whether a visitor should go on a fast unto death to see that the temples were open to the Harijans, Gandhiji said:

No. That would be an act of violence.

Asked when a fast was violent and when it could be construed as non- violent, Gandhiji replied that it would depend on the circumstances of each case.

The Bombay Chronicle, 4-5-1945

526. LETTER TO HARJIVAN KOTAK

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 4, 1945

CHI. HARJIVAN,

You believe that I have more influence than I actually have. That is not right. Everything is done at its appointed time and depends also on one's inner urge. Come to the Ashram in July. Write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI HARJIVAN KOTAK
C/O MESSRS VRAJLAL & CO.
JEWELLERS
66/3 BEADON STREET
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

527. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 4, 1945

These are the remarks attributed to Sir Firoz Khan Noon[1] as having been made by him at San Francisco.

Sir Firoz Khan Noon claimed that while the Japanese were overrunning Burma and heading towards India, the agents of Mahatma Gandhi's party severely damaged or destroyed 332 railway stations and 945 post offices. He also alleged that Gandhiji himself encouraged disobedience because "he was convinced that Britain had been defeated and he did not want to displease the Japanese. Gandhiji is in the hands of the reactionary and orthodox Hindus. He would be doing a great service to the country if, at this moment, he were to retire in favour of a younger man. I feel Nehru would be an excellent successor to Gandhi. He has quite a large support among the Muslims and is not so bigoted as Gandhi, who is at a dead-end. The only solution is for Nehru to come to the forefront. But Nehru respects Gandhi so much that he would not come forward."

Assuming their authenticity, I beg to offer the following remarks:

Time was when I was considered by the British rulers as pro-Japanese, but they quietly withdrew the remark. There was not the slightest foundation for it. It comes somewhat as a surprise that Sir Firoz should make such a statement at this juncture. It may interest him to know that even when the British had suffered severe reverses, I told the masses that the British were fighters who were never dismayed by defeats, delighted in bungling and never learned except by making and even repeating mistakes.

I commend my writings before the August of 1942 to Sir Firoz. He will find in them my answer[2] to the *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942-43*. I stood for unadulterated Indianindependence and, therefore, could not afford to be lukewarm about Japanese or any other Power's success against the British. My purpose was to end British or any other foreign rule in India as a whole through non-violent non-co-operation and civil resistance.

[1] Defence Member in the Viceroy's Executive Council from October 1943; he was one of the three members of the Indian delegation to the San Francisco Peace Conference; the other two were A. Ramaswami Mudaliar and V. T. Krishnamachari. Noon was answering questions in an interview to Indian journalists attending the Conference.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943

I had never any party of mine in the Congress. I ceased to be its member from December 1934. Whenever my services were needed by the Congress, it had every right to call me in for my special training in non-violent resistance. Neither the Congress nor I had anything to do with civil or other resistance in and after August 1942. I alone was armed with authority to start it when in my opinion the time for it came. But I was arrested before I could take any action or even issue any instructions. Therefore neither the Congress nor I could be saddled with any responsibility for the disturbances of 1942. Apart from that fact, the figures quoted by Sir Firoz are utterly unproved, the Government, though often challenged, never having taken the trouble to prove before a competent court of law the charges made by them with surprising lavishness.

Next, I come to Sir Firoz's statement about Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and me. He should know that I have called the Pandit my successor. He does not need to come to the front. He is in the front. The Government of India would not let him work as he would. He and I are friends. But we are no rivals. We are both servants of the people and the platform of service is as big as the world. It is never overcrowded. On it, there is always room for more, and as on the point of independence we have no differences, we are always brothers in arms. He has undoubtedly the advantage of youth over me.

Let Sir Firoz ask his Government, on pain of resignation, to release Pandit Nehru and his fellow-prisoners, and he will see his wish fulfilled. I shall give him my hearty co-operation in its fulfilment.

Let him make no capital out of my supposed bigotry or orthodoxy. He may not know that I have never been a bigot or known as such since my youth. And orthodoxy would not have me for my uncompromising and radical attitude on untouchability and general social reform. Sir Firoz is on safer ground when he accuses me of being out of date. For no one knows what or who is out of date. I confess my ignorance on the point.[1]

[1] In *Mahatma*, Vol. 7, p. 5, D. G. Tendulkar says: "George Bernard shaw stepped in to defend Gandhi: 'Gandhi's politics is half a century out of date. His tactics like all tactics are subject to error and readjustment, but his strategy is sound, as it was fifty or five millon years ago.' As for Gandhi's retiring, he added: 'Retire from what? His position is natural, not official. The Mahatma cannot hand over anything. Leadership is not a plug of tobacco that can be passed from one man to another.' "

I notice too a remark made that "the Cripps Mission would have had a greater chance of success, if Mr. Gandhi had not interfered at the last stage". It is astonishing how a lie, once it gets a start, persists. I left Delhi long before the Mission had commenced its talks with the Working Committee. I then ceased to interest myself in the Mission, having more important work on hand.

The Hindu, 6-5-1945

528. TELEGRAM TO GOPAL DEO

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 5, 1945

GOPAL DEO
UNDER SECRETARY
ARYAN CONFERENCE
GULBURGA

NEEDLESS COMING. WRITE FULLY.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

529. NOTE TO MURIEL LESTER[1]

MAHABALESHWAR,
[*May*][2] *5, 1945*

I have time only to send my love to you and our friends.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This was a postscript to Pyarelal's letter to the addressee. She was Gandhiji's hostess during his stay in London in 1931 at Kingsley Hall, founded by her for the service of the poorer people of the East End in London.

[2] The source, however, has "April", which is obviously a slip of the pen.

530. LETTER TO APA PANT

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 5, 1945

MY DEAR APA,

I do not want to write to you in English. You must pick up enough Hindustani. Of course you will come when you like after 20th instant. Don't bring the charkha friend with you. Let him show me the charkha when I descend to Poona.

Love.

BAPU

KUMAR SHRI APA PANT
264 NARAYAN [PETH]
POONA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

531. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 5, 1945

CHI. LILI,

Your letter is both good and bad. It is good, you do not wish as a point of honour to go anywhere without work. But it is bad that you are not engrossed in your studies and still feel hurt that I have not taken you with me. You should know that I know you better than you do yourself. I also know better in what lies your good. Therefore, after you have argued the matter with me, you should quietly and gladly agree to do what I say and act accordingly. You have to get through at the first attempt.

Blessings from
BAPU

LILAVATI UDESHI
S. G. S. MEDICAL COLLEGE
LADY STUDENTS' HOSTEL
PAREL, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

532. LETTER TO KANAIYALAL N. DESAI[1]

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 5, 1945

BHAI KANJIBHAI,

You are drowned in a sea of miseries. After all it is Manibehn who gives me the news! A man is tempered through adversity, in adversity. So do not consider your miseries as miseries. Forgetting God is the real unhappiness. So keep Him in your heart and remain cheerful.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MANIBEHN PATEL
C/O DHAYABHAI PATEL
68 MARINE DRIVE, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

533. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 5, 1945

CHI. MANI,

You did well to write. No one could have given the news which you gave. Go and deliver the enclosed letter[2] to Kanjibhai. I will not say anything more as you are coming here. Narahari, Manilal, Kamalnayan and Satyanarayan[3] arrived yesterday. Munshi is coming today. Kamalnayan and Munshi are here only on a flying visit.

Blessings to you all from
BAPU

SHRI MANIBEHN PATEL
C/O SHRI DAHYABHAI PATEL
68 MARINE DRIVE, BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 136

[1] This was an enclosure to "Letter to Manibehn Patel", the following item.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] M. Satyanarayana, Secretary, Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha

534. LETTER TO PARMANAND DESAI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 5, 1945

CHI. PARMANAND,

I have your letter. Come whenever you want to. The place will be full when there is a meeting of the Kasturba Smarak Nidhi from the 15th. You are not concerned with that.

Blessings from
BAPU

PARMANAND DESAI
C/O RAMAN BHATIA
170 BARA IMAM ROAD
NULL BAZAAR, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

535. LETTER TO KRISHNAVARMA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 5, 1945

BHAI KRISHNAVARMA,

I have your postcard. I have faith in your treatment and that is why I suggested that Madhavdas[1] should be sent there. Give him whatever treatment you find necessary without any hesitation. I want him to be cured. While that will make me happy, what is more important is that Ba's spirit will have peace. Chi. Manilal will bear all the necessary expenses. You are not to do this work free. Your agreeing to take this case is itself a great thing.

Tell Chi. Madhavdas on my behalf that he should resolve to be there and get cured and that he should do whatever you tell him to do. Let me know what the approximate expenditure will be.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. KRISHNAVARMA
NATURE CURE HOSPITAL
MALAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Madhavdas Kapadia, brother of Kasturba Gandhi

536. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 5, 1945

CHI. VALJI,

I have preserved your letter. You can't expect anything else from Beverley Nichols[1]. If you feel like, you may write on it in a newspaper. Please read what has been written about village industries in the pamphlet that is published from Maganwadi. Count how many years we have been working to make Sevagram a model village and, if you can predict the future, say how many more will pass. But the attempt itself is a worthy and sincere one, and, therefore, why need we hope for any fruit? Or let us say, rather, that it is a universal law without exception that the fruit of anything good is always good and, therefore, we need neither worry nor hope. Keep on repeating Ramanama, for that is the *kalpavriksha*[2]. "The two syllables will take the whole family across; all the other gods are only after cash."

Blessings from
BAPU

PROF. VALJI G. DESAI
GANESH VADI
FERGUSSON COLLEGE ROAD
POONA 4

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10226. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1] Chief contributor of *The Sunday Chronicle*. He was sent to India in 1942-43 to write articles on Britain's attitude to India and to publish a book on India. According to *The History of the Indian National Congress*, Vol. II, Nichols was doing anti-India propaganda and made derogatory remarks about Gandhiji, Hinduism and the Indian Press in *Verdict on India*.

[2] Mythical wish-yielding tree

537. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 5,1945

CHI. KAKUBHAI,

Read the encolsed postcard[1]. What does it mean?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI KAKUBHAI
ALL INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION
KHADI BHANDAR
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

538. LETTER TO LAKSHMI DEVI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 5,1945

CHI. LAKSHMI DEVI,

I am not in my own house. Please do not come here. Be satisfied with letters. You can go over to Sevagram when I go there.

Blessings from
BAPU

LAKSHMI DEVI (OF HARDOI)
KASTURBA SHIBIR
BORIVLI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] From S. S. Ayyar who had complained that in the Dadar Khadi Bhandar cotton was being carded by two electrically operated machines

539. LETTER TO M. SATYANARAYAN

May 5, 1945

SATYANARAYANJI,

If you understand individual self-reliance, you should understand the self-reliance of a society or an institution. If an individual believes that he will get his bread if he puts in earnest labour, then the same is true of an institution. That is to say, if it renders service, it will get bread without asking, meaning thereby that it will get the money to meet its expenses. In fact, it should get the money from its neighbours. If it does not get it, then it should realize that no one cares for its services. Such a thing can happen while dispelling ignorance in a land of blind faith. Then the expenses will be borne by the reformers. The same rule will apply here too. The reformers in the beginning will starve, a few of them will even die. We must have faith that God will sustain them in some way or other. If you don't fully understand this, we shall discuss it. We won't go further than that. I will discuss it only if you want it. However, I would love it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

540. LETTER TO ROMEN CHATTERJEE

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 5, 1945

CHI. ROMEN[1] (OF ASHRAM),

Your letter is good. You have got to appear for the examination. Attend to the Ashram work properly. Learn both the Hindi and Urdu scripts. Exercise is necessary. Do it when it is cooler. The body should be as steel. The mind should be firm and work should be done in the spirit of service. Attend prayers both morningand evening. Read the *shlokas* and *bhajans*, etc., with commentary.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10396. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[1] Son of Amrita Lal Chatterjee

541. LETTER TO SAROJINI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 5, 1945

CHI. SAROJINI DEVI,

I have your letter. Your handwriting is worse than mine. I can hardly read it. If you want to learn Hindustani and improve your handwriting, you have got all the time at your disposal.

You must meet all your expenses and follow Chimanlalbhai's instructions or leave the Ashram. I cannot build quarters for you. Live in a rented house.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 5878. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

542. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 5, 1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

The meeting is on the 17th. I have gone through the agenda. I want that at least the four of us should be of one opinion and finish the work soon. So, if possible, let me have the opinions of the three of you on all the topics or of those available.

Why is the agenda in English? When shall we arrive at Hindi?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHYAMLAL
KASTURBA NIDHI OFFICE
SCINDIA HOUSE
BALLARD ESTATE
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

543. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 5, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter. Yes, health and everything else depend on the mind. The saying "If the mind is pure, the Ganga is in the house" is always true. Whatever the kind of work one gets, if it is done willingly, one shall surely succeed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

544. LETTER TO HARIRAM

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 5, 1945

BHAI HARIRAM,

Why do you write to me in English? In *Bharat Tek* only Bharat's language should be used. Write in Nagari or Urdu. On paper your work seems good. I will not call anyone here. Continue sending me your journal. If anyone goes over to Segaon after I return there, I might allow him to come. Write to me then. Meanwhile I will continue perusal of your journal.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

HARIRAM ADVOCATE
"BHARAT TEK" PRESS
ROHTAK (PUNJAB)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

545. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 6, 1945

CHI. SITA[1],

I suppose this time I should excuse you for writing in pencil. Don't say cleaning duty—say cleaning work or dharma to clean up. Duty means dharma. It is not '*bheen*' but '*bhinna*'. It is '*sunvu*' and not '*shunvun*'. It is '*bauddhik*' and not '*baudheek*'. It is '*farvun*' and not 'trip'.

We are all well here. Manu is still weak. She is not completely free from fever. Kanu left on Sunday. He will take Abha to Rajkot. Manilal has arrived. The weather here is good. It is a pleasant thought that by now you are feeling quite at home there. It will help you a lot, if you preserve your health.

Convey my blessings to all.

Blessings from
BAPU

SITA GANDHI
RASHTRIYA SEVIKA CLASS
OMARI, AKOLA (BERAR)

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

546. LETTER TO SITARAM P. PATWARDHAN

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 6, 1945

CHI. APPA,

I have gone through your whole letter to Chi. Hemantkumar[2] twice. Consider my opinion as useless. When you act upon something that you honestly regard as truth, it is as good as satyagraha. It does not cease to be satyagraha because of my criticism. There will be no progress if we do not act in such a manner. I have not criticizedanything. It will be all right if what I write is taken as a guide

[1] Daughter of Manilal Gandhi
[2] Joint Secretary of the Gujarat Harijan Sevak Sangh

for the future. I smell untruth in what your co-worker has done. The impression he had made on Gangaputra did not last. It is worse than the equivocation: "It could be a man, it could be an elephant"[1] was in itself falsehood.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI APPASAHEB PATWARDHAN
KANAKVALI P. O.
RATNAGIRI DISTRICT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

547. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 6, 1945

CHI. MRIDU,

You gave me a prompt and full reply. It is well and good if you have not done it at the cost of your sleep. You must have met Raihanabehn. She should be satisfied by your reply.

I will not write more as you will be seeing me in a few days.

Blessings from

BAPU

MRIDULABEHN
C/O SHETH AMBALAL SARABHAI
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The equivocation from the *Mahabharata* was by Yudhishthira who was asked to confirm that Ashwatthama had been killed.

548. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

May 6, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Instead of tearing this up, I am sending it for all of you to read.

I hope you yourself are well. Prabhakar should take all the necessary, treatment and get well. If he wishes to go to Bhimavaram he may do so. But I am quite sure that he can get well there if he is regular in food and other habits.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9108. Also C.W. 9179. Courtesy: Chimanlal N. Shah

549. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

Not revised *May 6, 1945*

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have gone through your book *Kanyane Patro*. The letters seem to have been written with great care but you have not been bold enough.

Your views about mixed marriages are not expressed clearly. Since I believe that we cannot have too many of such marriages, I do not at all approve of marriages within the same caste. I do not find you advocating mixed marriages on an extensive scale even within the same province. You accept inter-provincial marriages only as exceptions. I would encourage them and they ought to be encouraged. Reformists, being indifferent to religion, may do that, but their example will have no effect. We, however, who keep religion in the forefront should make up our minds how far we are prepared to go. If Hindustani becomes the national language and castes and sub-castes as we know them disappear—as they should—we should unhesitatingly accord the highest importance to marriages between Ati-Sudras and caste-Hindus. The question of provincial boundaries will not even arise then. Where parents are wise, there should be no difficulty even about marriages between persons of different religions.

Do we not look upon all religions as equal? It is with some purpose that we have accorded a place to other faiths in our prayer. The offspring may choose either religion. The couple of our conception will give the children liberal education in that regard. In my view this should be quite easy. In 'letters addressed to a girl', such things should be stated firmly and clearly.

Mahadev's article is a little out of focus. Vanamala's doubt is correct. What do our Jain nuns do? And what about Swaminarayan nuns? It will produce indigestion in the children if we give them so much from English literature. Comparisons should be made only between equals. Our culture is free from the extremes of Western culture. We may know that culture after we have grown up and compare it with ours. Growing children should first understand and assimilate their own heritage. But I will not make this too long.

I was forgetting one point. You have written with people of our category in view, i. e., the upper three castes, and even among them Brahmins and Banias. What about Rajputs? And Sudras? Also Ati-Sudras? They permit divorce and remarriage. There are also communities among whom there is no such thing as marriage ceremony. Even then purity is observed. This thing must be mentioned.

Accept from this only what you can assimilate. This will give you a glimpse of my latest thinking. This is an important letter. Make a copy for record in the office or ask Hemantkumar to make one.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9131

550. LETTER TO GIRIRAJ KISHORE BHATNAGAR

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 6, 1945

CHI. GIRIRAJ,

It is good I got your postcard. It is not a matter for worry that you are not able to meet me. It is enough for me that you are doing the work which is dear to me. Advance your knowledge of Hindi and

Urdu so that they become one. It does not matter if it takes time. You did well to send me news of Hari[1] and Vimala[2].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8773

551. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 6, 1945

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

I hear that you have decided to go on the 12th.[3]

Bhai Dinshaw is here. He is agreeable to all other conditions; but wants an undertaking that the Trust village will continue to be available for nature cure for at least five years after the document is signed. Later, if the attempt fails, the movable or immovable property of the Trust may be used for educational purposes.

I feel we should agree to this.

You will be in good health.

Is it right about the 12th?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Reply by wire.

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8070. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Addressee's son and daughter

[2] *ibid*

[3] The addressee was planning to visit England and America; *vide* also "Telegram to G. D. Birla", 8-5-1945.

552. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 6, 1945

What do you think of the future plans now being made by the Government to dispose of Indian industries under high-sounding phrases, through the nationalist-minded Sir Ardeshir Dalal[1] and through the visit of capitalists reported to be presently despatched unofficially to America and England, under the auspices of the Government of India?

This question has been put to me.

Nothing said by those outside the Government ring seems to matter. They have come to know that the best of us will speak loud and give it the lie by our action. Big merchants, capitalists, industrialists and others speak and write against the Government, but in action do its will and even profit—through it—though the profit may amount to, say, five per cent against the Government's 95. Circumstances alone may be to blame for the condition in which the country has been weltering since the advent of British commerce backed by British guns.

The bright spot in the situation, however, is that all the big interests proclaim with one voice that India wants nothing less than her own elected national government to shape her own destiny free of all control, British or other. This independence will not come for the asking. It will come only when the interests, big or small, are prepared to forgo the crumbs that fall to them from partnership with the British in the loot which British rule takes from India. Verbal protests will count for nothing so long as the partnership continues unchecked.

The so-called unofficial deputation, which the protestants fear, will go to England and America, dare not proceed, whether for inspection or for entering into a shameful deal, so long as the moving spirits of the Working Committee are being detained without any trial for the sole crime of sincerely striving for India's independence without shedding a drop of blood save their own.

The Bombay Chronicle 7-5-1945

[1] Managing Director, Tata Iron and Steel Company, Bombay; Member, Planning and Development, Viceroy's Executive Council

553. ADVICE TO BRAHMACHARI MAHAVIR[1]

MAHABALESHWAR,
[On or before *May 7, 1945*][2]

My only advice to you is to go to your own neighbouring villages and serve the villagers there. My fifteen-point programme is before you. Choose any of them and work on it. Learn Hindustani, either in the Devanagari or in Urdu script and teach the same to them. Learn to clean cotton, spin and weave and teach the same to others. No speeches are required but there is the necessity for actual service through work.

The Hindu, 9-5-1945

554. TELEGRAM TO AMRITLAL

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 7, 1945

AMRITLAL
CARE M. L. UDESHI
BOMBAY

WRITING. INTERVIEW NEEDLESS.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

555. TELEGRAM TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 7, 1945

MRIDULABEHN SARABHAI
KASHMIR HOUSE, NEPEAN SEA ROAD
MALABAR HILL
(BOMBAY)

COME WITH TARABEHN.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The advice was reported by United Press of India under the date-line "Mahabaleshwar, May 7" as "sought" by Brahmachari Mahavir of the Ramakrishna Ashram, Madras, who saw in Gandhiji a greater Vivekananda as Vivekananda used to say fifty years ago, "India required great Vivekanandas to serve the poor and the downtrodden and bring about their liberation, both political and spiritual."

[2] *ibid*

556. TELEGRAM TO "VIRBHARAT"

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 7, 1945

DAILY "VIRBHARAT"
LAHORE

THEY MUST DECIDE LOCALLY.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

557. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 7, 1945

DEAR AGATHA,

This[1] is a full letter. I simply add my love and say I am flourishing as well as circumstances permit.

BAPU

MISS AGATHA HARRISON
2 CRANBOURNE COURT
ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD
LONDON S. W. 11

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

558. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 7, 1945

CHI. MIRA,

I got yours last night. I am sorry you are or were ill again when you wrote. The weather here is superb. If Ramprasad can look after your work for some time I would like you to come here and be with me till the end of June.

Do not worry about Ramprasad's returning quickly. He can be easily spared till I return to Wardha. Indeed if the weather there agrees

[1] The reference is to Pyarelal's letter to the addressee.

with him and he likes the work, he can stay even beyond June. He is a very capable man:. He has done hard work. But he had illness and has been pulled down. Teach him to take care of cattle if he will learn it. He is quite able to learn new things. The question is whether he is strong enough.

Parmeshwariprasad is the likeliest man to send you a man for animals. I shall ask Kamalnayan to write to him. He is in Gaziabad.

I wish Balvantsinha could come. But he can't leave his niece unless I am in Sevagram. She won't let him go during my absence.[1]

Pyarelal has a staff of his own—shorthand typist and another assistant. Narahari is also here to assist him. Dinshaw of course attends to me. Manilal of Phoenix is also here and so is Dr. Sushila. Shanti Kumar of course.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6506. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9901

559. NOTES FOR NARAHARI D. PARIKH

May 7, 1945

1. There can be one Inspector.

2. One kind of food.

3. Uniform pattern of moral education, e.g., teaching of non-violence and truth. Prayer according to religious persuasion.

4. Basic principles of fifteen-point programme.

5. General information about the institutions.

6. Students should spend at least Sheen days in such institutions.

7. The leading workers should have the ability (in general) to run such institutions so that they can render help in any joint institution when the need arises.

8. [The institutions] should keep with them the surplus money if they can.

9. All the workers should learn Hindustani (Hindi-Urdu).

10. Such notes should be circulated among the members asking them which points mentioned therein they like and which they do not They should add new points. Suggest the date of meeting after June.

11. This note should be sent to others also.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Balvantsinha", 12-5-1945.

560. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 7, 1945

CHI. VASUMATI,

What I said, did not mean what you have understood it mean. All I meant was that you should not lose balance of mind. But now I should also like to mean what you have inferred. Free yourself from outside involvements and dig yourself in at Samau whether you live or die. The hope I have cherished of you will flower if you can do so. Have a frank talk with Chandubhai. Clarify things about Surat. But if you lack the necessary strength and do it only for my sake, then it willnot be becoming and it will not endure. Whatever dreams I may cherish, how are you concerned?

Do whatever you do, only after measuring your own strength.

I want to see your body glow as copper. I have sent a letter[1] to Akbar. It will have reached him.

Blessings from
BAPU

VASUMATI PANDIT
VILLAGE SAMAU, *via* OLD DISA
NORTH GUJARAT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

561. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 7, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have your two letters. It is not good that you strain yourself and write at twelve o'clock. You should go to bed by ten and get up at four. During day-time you should have one hour's nap.

Democracy need not be dismissed wholesale. It is based on ahimsa. There is profound truth in the saying "The voice of the *Panch* is the voice of God". But the *Panch* should be worshipper of God.

For you and me and everybody else, the way to peace is silent

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Akbar Chawda", 25-4-1945.

service and generosity of heart.

I understand about Kanchan. Let her move towards self-perfection in the way she wants. If she is discontented, nobody will be able to stop her, neither you nor I. How, then, can Amtussalaam?

If we wait till the hearts of all become one, we shall have to go waiting for ever. We should follow the dictum "The whole world is good if we ourselves are good" and try our utmost to live in harmony with everybody.

I know Hiramani very well. I should certainly like it if she were to come and stay in the Ashram and get experience. When she wants to marry, she will find the man. But why need she think aboutthat at all? She is a girl who wants to be useful and can be useful in many ways. She may write to me if she wishes.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8454. Also C.W. 5577. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

562. LETTER TO KRISHNAVARMA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 7, 1945

BHAI KRISHNAVARMA,

I have your letter and I am answering it at once. You are perfectly right in sending a man to be with Madhavdas, to keep watch over him and make him eat regularly. Do not worry at all that he may say something or disobey you. He has lost grip over himself. That is why I have entrusted him to your care. Make him read this letter so that he knows what I think about him. Let him feel that this letter is addressed to him also. You must accept money for expenses.[1]

Let me know about it.

Please keep on writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. KRISHNAVARMA
NATURE CURE HOSPITAL
MALAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Krishnavarma", 5-5-1945.

563. LETTER TO BHAGWANLAL R. SHAH

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 7, 1945

CHI. BHAGWANLAL,

I have received your draft for Rs. 303 from Chi. Jaisukhlal. I hope you are getting on well.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHAH BHAGWANLAL RANCHHODDAS
MEHTA MILL STORES, KARACHI
C/O JAISUKHLAL GANDHI
SIND MARKET, MAHATMA GANDHI ROAD
KARACHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

564. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 7, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I am enclosing a draft for Rs. 303 drawn on Vachhraj Co., Wardha. Please credit the money in my account. The details are at the back of Chi. Jaisukhlal's letter. I have sent an acknowledgment to Bhagwanlal. So you need not write to him.

You must do what Dr. Ice suggests for you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

He says that you will cetainly regain your strength if you take rest and the treatment as he suggests. Do take rest. You need not walk much. Eat what he permits you to. Tell Chi. Shakaribehn[1] to write to me. It is your duty to get well. I stick to my advice that you should doall this if you do not want to leave the Ashram.

[1] Addressee's wife

We shall not be able to clean the Birla well by manual efforts. We must blast[1] it out. I had told Rameshwardas about it. I do not know what we can do for the time being.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHIMANLAL
SEVAGRAM ASHRAM
WARDHA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

565. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

May 7, 1945

I remember having replied to one of these letters in Sevagram. I am familiar with the case. I am of the opinion that since Vashi[2] has obeyed the order for so long, he should wait for some time more. However, if he is truly inspired with zeal, he should sacrifice everything, give a clear notice and resort to civil disobedience. He should not be guided by my opinion but by his own inner zeal.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

566. LETTER TO RAMPRASAD

May 7, 1945

CHI. RAMPRASAD,

I have your letter. It will be very nice if your health remains good. Mirabehn has fallen ill. If you can look after the cattle and manage the other activities and if Mirabehn agrees to take rest, then send her here.[3]

There was a letter from Chi. Kanta. She did not look after her health and so she suffers. For a woman carrying a child it is doublysinful to be careless about her health. Does she not know that there is neither virtue nor greatness in such carelessness—but only foolishness? How can one make her understand this?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This word is in English.

[2] Bapubhai Naranji Vashi who, after his release from jail on grounds of health, was prohibited from leaving his village

[3] *Vide* also "Letter to Mirabehn", 7-5-1945.

567. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

May 7, 1945

CHI. NARAHARI,

Consult me before writing anything in this matter.

BAPU

[P.S.]

Is this Mastram's son? I do not know him at all. Mastram is Nanabhai's friend. He has betrayed Nanabhai. Nanabhai told me that. Now Mastram also must be involved in this. In that case it seems to me that nothing should be written to him.

From a copy of the Gajarati: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

568. LETTER TO SATYAVATI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 7, 1945

CHI. SATYAVATI[1],

I have received your postcard and that of Chimanlal also. It will be a great thing if you are cured even with penicillin. Chand's[2] coming there to you, I have left to Chand herself. If she comes she will stay in Harijan Nivas. She has done good work in Borivli and she is interested in getting training as a nurse. She is a dutiful girl.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SATYAVATI DEVI
T. B. HOSPITAL
KINGSWAY [CAMP], DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Grand-daughter of Swami Shraddhanand, she was a social worker who became Gandhiji's close associate from 1930. She was interned during the "Quit India" movement, developed tuberculosis in jail and was released on grounds of health.

[2] Chandrani's

569. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 7, 1945

CHI. VIYOGI HARI[1],

Chandrani might go there to help Satyavati Devi. If she does, please put her up somewhere in Harijan Nivas. She is a good andsimple girl. She is learning nursing at the Ashram. She is from the Punjab. I am well. Convey my blessings to all the Harijan children.

Blessings from
BAPU

VIYOGI HARI
HARIJAN COLONY
KINGSWAY [CAMP], DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

570. LETTER TO M. S. KELKAR

May 7, 1945

BHAI ICE,

I have your letter. It is good. Everyone says, one must take leafy vegetables and fruit. You say, no. Please let me have your reasons. Don't you take those things? Is milk alone sufficient diet?

You can certainly cook separately. I on my part want to give you two rooms for your patients. As I am away you may take those from the Secretary. If you can cure any patients I refer to you, I shall be very happy and can then fix your monthly salary.

Make use of whatever utensil is necessary for distilled water. Such water will be of use to us.

Do treat Balkrishna if he himself consults you. His condition has remained unchanged by Dr. Sushila's treatment.

I am constantly worrying about Hari-ichchha. My faith in you will greatly increase if you can cure her.

[1] Hariprasad Dwivedi

I have answered all the questions, haven't I? Write to me if anything has been left out.

BAPU

[PS.]

Leave space at the top and enough margin.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

571. LETTER TO P. C. JOSHI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 7, 1945

BHAI JOSHI,

It will be all right if Mohan comes on the 24th.[1] If he comes any time between 2 and 4, I will see him.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI P. C. JOSHI
COMMUNIST PARTY
RAJ BHAVAN, SANDHURST ROAD
BOMBAY 4

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

572. LETTER TO VIDYA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 7, 1945

CHI. VIDYA,

Your husband went and then your son too. But what does it matter? All of us are destined to go the same way. Everyone pays his debt and is gone. Some go early, some late. Let the rest of your life be a life of service. Then happiness or sorrow is all the same. May God prosper you.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VIDYABEHN
RAMJAS BUILDING
4 PARK ROAD
LUCKNOW

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to P. C. Joshi", 3-5-1945.

573. LETTER TO PARACHURE SHASTRI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 7, 1945

BHAI PARACHURE SHASTRI,

I have your beautiful letter in Sanskrit. You have risen from the death-bed. Recover fully. Achieve complete victory over the mind. I am well.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI PARACHURE SHASTRI
MAHAROGI SEVA MANDAL
DATTAPUR
NALVADI P. O., WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

574. LETTER TO SAILENDRA NATH CHATTERJEE

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 7, 1945

CHI. SAILEN,

Father asked me if he might take you to Calcutta for treatment.[1] What could I do except to say, 'Yes'? If you could be treated here I would send for you. But it is not possible. I would advise you to go to the Malad Nature Cure Hospital. If you are agreeable I can send you to Dr. Krishnavarma. But you will have to pay the charges there. It would be good if Rishabhdas could give his consent. The climate of Malad is good. It is a suburb of Bombay.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Learn to write in Hindustani.

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10391. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[1] The addressee had been suffering from gastritis.

575. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

May 7, 1945

CHI. AMRITA LAL,

Let them write what they want. I do not wish to send for them here. I have not the time either.

I have advised Sailen to go to the Malad Sanatorium.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10403. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

576. TELEGRAM TO G. V. GURJALE

MAHABALESHWAR
May 8, 1945

NIRMALANANDA
CARE APPLIANCE
BOMBAY

COME SEVAGRAM WHEN I REACH THERE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

577. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 8, 1945

SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
15 COLLEGE SQUARE
CALCUTTA

SORRY ABOUT EYES. DO NOT STRAIN. IF YOU COME YOU WILL STAY JUHU WITH SHANTIKUMARJI[1]. SOMEONE WILL MEET YOU DADAR STATION ON RECEIPT YOUR WIRE SHANTIKUMARJI CARE JALANATH BOMBAY

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Shantikumar N. Morarjee

578. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 8, 1945

SHETH GHANSHYAMDAS
8 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLACE
CALCUTTA

YOUR WIRE.[1] MY STATEMENT[2] WAS NECESSARY. IT DEALS WITH HYPOTHETICAL CASE. NO HASTY OPINION. STATEMENT EXPRESSES VIEW WHICH I HAVE ALWAYS HELD. YOU HAVE NOTHING TO REGRET SINCE YOU TATA KASTURBHAI PROCEEDING WHOLLY UNOFFICIALLY. YOU HAVE MY BLESSINGS AND PRAYER IN TERMS OF FAMISHING AND NAKED INDIA.[3] HANDING PRESS BOTH WIRES.[4]

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 7871. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] The addressee in his telegram of May 7 had, *inter alia*, said: "I am very much pained . . . that you could have given a public expression of distrust in the *bona fides* of myself, Tata and Kasturbhai whom you have so well known, and thought that we were going for entering into a deal on behalf of India, shameful or otherwise. . . . we know that we have no authority to enter even into a good deal to say nothing of shameful. The industrial delegation is going purely as a non-official body at its own expense with its own secretariat to England and America with a view to meet people and study the latest methods of production and scientific achievement. . . . Your statement is sure to be construed as a strong denunciation of our motives. . . . I am leaving Karachi on May 14 and count on your blessings and prayer. . . ."

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 6-5-1945.

[3] In *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. I, Book One, p. 107, Pyarelal explains that Gandhiji defended himself, when objected to by a friend for "giving his conditional blessing to the industrialists", saying "that is the only way in which ahimsa can act. . . . My blessings will haunt like a ghost anyone who contravenes the condition attaching to it." According to Pyarelal, "Gandhiji explained, he had put all concerned, including the British Government, on their honour and made it easier for the industrialist friends to put up a fight against any reaction whether within their ranks or without and resist any plan detrimental to Indian interests. . . ."

[4] In a telegraphic reply dated May 10, the addressee expressed his sense of relief and said he would go "with a happy heart".

579. TELEGRAM TO NIRMALANANDA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 8, 1945

NIRMALANANDA
CARE APPLIANCE
BOMBAY

COME SEVAGRAM WHEN I REACH THERE.

GANDHI

From a copy of: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

580. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

May 8, 1945

BAPA,

I have your letter. My work is going on according to my ways. The Government's reply has come today from Hyderabad. I shall see what can be done. Go through it when you come here. Take rest.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

581. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 8, 1945

CHI. SHRIMAN,

Your suggestion is good. How we can get away[1] has to be considered. I will send for you if necessary.

Madalasa was not right in giving up hip-bath. She can fill the tub with river water and use it.

Blessings to all of you. A sweet kiss for Rasagulla[2].

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 305-6

[1] From the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan
[2] Pet name of Bharat, the addressee's son

582. TRIBUTE TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE[1]

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 8, 1945

Tagore is not only unquestionably the Poet of India or of Asia, but of the whole world. It has become the custom among us topay homage to the memory of the great dead not by observing the day of the death anniversary but by observing their birthday. The simple reason, perhaps, is that they never die with the dissolution of their bodies. Their memory becomes immortal in their works. Rama and Krishna were avatars. We celebrate their birthdays. Similarly, though Gurudev is no longer in flesh among us he will continue to live through his immortal poetry. The memory of the Poet will grow richer as years roll by.

The Hindu, 13-5-1945

583. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 9, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

I have read your letter to Pyarelal.

Gurbuxani's wife has sunk herself in him. Therefore she would do what he says. But never spoil them by giving them more than their worth in our cause and according to our scale. Again no more than your public work can cope with. All I want you to do is to extend your sympathy and advice to them.

Yes, Agatha's letter that M. brought was duly received by me. He wanted no acknowledgment and I spared myself.

You must keep yourself fit. I am glad Shummy[2] is better. Love to you all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4155. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7790.

[1] Gandhiji was speaking at the evening prayer on the occasion of the 85th birth anniversary of the Poet.

[2] Shumshere Singh, addressee's brother

584. LETTER TO SYED MAHMUD

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 9, 1945

BHAI MAHMUD,

I had been awaiting your letter. It came today. I was very happy. I notice that you are having a good deal of Success.

Yes, do go to Ceylon.

Come over any time you feel like it. I hope to be here or at Panchgani (which is the same thing) till the end of June. It is cool here, but not very.

Take what treatment you can for your eyes. Do not try just any remedy suggested by anyone. But do take treatment from a person you can trust. Rajaji is with me. The rest when we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 5095

585. LETTER TO KANAM GANDHI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 9, 1945

CHI. KANAM,

I have your letter. I will say, your handwriting is all right this time. Still there is room for improvement. You will form a good hand if, whenever you write to anyone, you do so in a neat handwriting. You are learning well there too. Show this to Krishnachandraji so that he will teach you if he has time.

Come to me whenever you want to. You will be accommodated here. Up to the 20th I shall be a little short of time. After that I hope to have some leisure.

Dr. Mahmud will have gone to Ceylon. Address his letter to Delhi, C/o Dr. Shaukat Ali Ansari.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

586. LETTER TO KRISHNAVARMA

May 9, 1945

BHAI KRISHNAVARMA,

I have your letter. I take it that Madhavdas is getting on well. I do wish that you should at least accept the amount you actually spend on him. You may not take anything when I send someone who really can't pay. I did not pay for Ba's treatment, did I? If you do notaccept anything I shall have hesitation in sending you other cases.

If you cannot write yourself, you should not hesitate to ask others to write to me. The only thing is that all sections of the Nature Cure Clinic should be functioning well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

587. LETTER TO GAJANAN NAIK

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 9, 1945

CHI. GAJANAN,

I have your letter. Even if you go to Dhiren, you can go only with their permission and with money taken from there. You are not going there on your own. After all you are working, are you not, for the Gramodyog [Sangh]?

It is your duty to write to me the things which you now hesitate to write. You should not care whether it will make me happy or unhappy. If a person dedicated to public work has not acquired the capacity to hear unhappy things it may be said he has not achieved anything. Therefore write to me without any hesitation.

Blessings from

BAPU

C/O SEVAGRAM ASHRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

588. LETTER TO CHUGH

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 9, 1945

BHAI CHUGH,

I have your wire. I have written to you that you should treat me when I come down, haven't I? The main treatment will be for shivering, blood-pressure and hook-worm. The climate here is congenial. So if there is an improvement it will be difficult to say whether itwas due to the climate or the treatment. If the climate here does not do any good I shall see what your treatment does. Besides, in Sevagram you will also treat other patients.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. CHUGH
RAVAL BUILDING
LAMINGTON ROAD (SOUTH)
BOMBAY 4

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

589. LETTER TO KAMALA LELE

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 9, 1945

CHI. KAMALA[1],

I have your postcard. I am glad that you have fully recovered. It didn't matter that you could not meet me. So you have named him Jyotirmaya[2]. Why this craze for such Sanskritized names? It is a futile trend. Remember this for the future. If the marriage[3] is in the same community do not ask for my blessings, however deserving the girl may be. I send my blessings if she is from another community.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6111. Also C.W. 3425. Courtesy: Kamala Lele

[1] A social worker; she was teaching in Mahila Ashram, Wardha.
[2] Addressee's new-born son
[3] Of the addressee's brother-in-law

590. LETTER TO MUSHTAQ AHMED

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 9, 1945

BHAI MUSHTAQ AHMED,

I have your letter of the 2nd instant. The replies to your questions are given below:

1. Communal representation is in itself bad.

2. No one today has the right to enrol members for the Congress.

The committees you mention have not been formed constitutionally. They just set themselves up. Everyone can therefore refuse to recognize them.

4. So far as I am aware there are no restrictions in this regard laid down in the Congress Constitution. Even a hooligan can enter the Congress.

5. Yes, provided, they sincerely work for the Congress.

The above answers should be considered tentative. They represent my personal view. From a legal angle my view could be wrong and, even if it was not, it could be rejected for the simple reason that I do not possess any authority. You may therefore assume that it is not to be taken into account.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

MUSHTAQ ALI
34 PREM HOUSE
CONNAUGHT PLACE, NEW DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

591. LETTER TO J. R. D. TATA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 10, 1945

BHAI JEHANGIR,

I have your angry note, if you can ever write anything angry.

If you have all gone not to commit yourselves to anything, my

note[1] protects you. My answer is to the hypothetical question. If the hypothesis is wrong, naturally the answer is wrong and is therefore protective of you all. There was no question of my referring to any of you, as I was dealing with an assumption. I hope I am clear.[2]

Yours,[3]

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

592. LETTER TO S. K. PATIL

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 10, 1945

BHAI PATIL[4],

I am not satisfied with the report you have sent to Pyarelal. I wanted the published public programme of the Party. Still it is something. I hope all the efforts being made will bear fruit and the constructive activity will progress.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI S. K. PATIL, M.L.A. (BOMBAY)
HIRA HOUSE
381 SANDHURST ROAD
BOMBAY 4

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

593. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHASTRI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 10, 1945

BHAI HIRALAL SHASTRI,

Enclosed are two letters from Ku. Bagale. You must have seen the newspaper. If you wish you may send a reply. Her letters have not made a favourable impression on me. But why was Ratandevi a party

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 6-5-1945 and "Telegram to G. D. Birla", 8-5-1945.

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to G. D. Birla", 10-5-1945.

[3] The source has this in Gujarati: "*Tamaro*".

[4] General Secretary of Bombay Provincial Congress Committee for 17 years, he became its President in 1946; Minister, Government of India, 1957-63 and 1964-67

to it? I was under the impression that she did not know English and I always respected her. I was taken aback when I read her letter in the Press. It is immaterial whether she herself wrote it or had someone else to write it. If women themselves kiss these fetters instead of breaking them, what is the good of an institution such as yours? All the girls will write in English and raise a controversy in the Press. This complaint is my own. It has nothing todo with Ku. Bagale and others. She is steeped in English.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Hiralal Shastri Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

594. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 10, 1945

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. I have read it twice.

I like your enthusiasm. I am doubtful about the benefit. However, there is no harm if you merely observe and do not commit yourselves. You have sent a telegram. Tata writes that you are going only to have some experience and not to bind yourselves to anything. It is just as well.

It was absolutely necessary to answer[1] Noon.

I have published your telegram and also my reply.[2] The sharp replies provoked by my statement[3] show how thoughtless we generally are. My statement is in defence of those who are going, provided they are not proceeding in order to work for the Government. The Government of course want it and are ready to help. They also know its intention. What is the point in going if you will not serve their interests? I told them clearly that so long as they do not expect any orders and till the political prisoners are released, there is no harm in going. Even if there is some gain it has to be given up so long as there is no popular authority or popular rule.

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 4-5-1945.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 8-5-1945.
[3] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 6-5-1945.

Convince your colleagues that my statement was quite proper if they prove themselves staunch.

Preserve your health and improve it during the journey.

You must have received my letter[1] regarding Dinshaw. I am enclosing a copy of the letter I had sent at Delhi. There is no harm incoming out of the Trust if there is even the slightest hesitation. Dinshaw's mind is still set on it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

If you find my statement harmless, pacify Tata[2] and others.

[Enclosure:] Copy of the letter about Dinshaw.

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8071. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

595. LETTER TO SOPHIA WADIA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 11, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I have your usual gift for the White Lotus Day to be used for any of my various constructive public activities.

Love to you both.

BAPU

SHRI SOPHIA WADIA
ARYA SANGHA
22 NARAYAN DABHOLKAR ROAD
MALABAR HILL, BOMBAY 6

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 6-5-1945.
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to J. R. D. Tata", 10-5-1945.

596. LETTER TO TARACHAND

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 11, 1945

BHAI TARACHAND,

Pandit Sunderlal is here. It is good he came. I have had talk with him. AS a consequence we all feel that there is a danger of being misled if the committee functions at Allahabad. Panditji said that those working on the Board[1] will be afraid of going to Wardha and may refuse to go there. The implications of this are obnoxious. The Sabha was born in Wardha. It functioned in Wardha. The work on thedictionary should be carried on in Wardha and, if I am to do this work and supervise the dictionary, the office of the Board should be in Wardha. There will be nothing to worry about if, for the sake of convenience, some work is done in Allahabad. A building was constructed in Wardha for this work. Kakasaheb's place is in Wardha. I am, therefore, of the firm opinion that the headquarters of the Dictionary Board should be in Wardha. If Akhtar works for us he should stay in Wardha. It will be all right if your own share of work is for the most part sent on to you in Allahabad. From this point of view, consideration of expenditure becomes secondary. We should now make public the names of the members of the Board we have decided to form, shouldn't we? Panditji is writing to the persons concerned. We have to have someone take the final decision about the work and then get it approved by the executive committee. Isn't that so? According to the rules it should be like that. Let me know your opinion. I am here and in Panchgani till the end of June.

Panditji is of the opinion that I should be the constitutional head of the Board. But I don't think it is necessary.[2]

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The Literature Board of the All-India Hindi Prachar Sabha; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 26-6-1945.

[2] *Vide* also the following item.

597. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

May 11, 1945

CHI. MAGANBHAI,

I have your letter. What you write about Purushottam is right. A man belonging to the Urdu Anjuman can also belong to our organization, can't he? Therefore those working for the Hindi Sammelan can also work for us. I should maintain that policy as long as I am associated with the Sammelan work. However, if that is against the policy of the Sammelan then I must leave. I am considering this.

Please welcome Kosambi on my behalf.

I am in correspondence with Dr. Tarachand.[1] We have formed a special committee at Wardha, haven't we? We shall do everything after consulting it and the General Body, shall we not?

My views on the future activities of the Vidyapith are as follows. We must start implementing the ideas I have expressed on Nayee Talim. That covers everything. So there will be a revolutionary change in the existing schemes of the Vidyapiths. The entire structure will change. However, these changes won't be effected artificially. Whatever you wish to take from my speeches or discussions should be acted upon. Can you understand from this what I have in mind? Come to Panchgani if you want to know more.

It is your duty to persuade Narahari and take him with you. You will have to take many in this way. That is what is called institution ethics. If that is not done only individual work will be done. Now I have replied to all your questions.

Blessings from
BAPU

MAGANBHAI DESAI
GUJARAT VIDYAPITH
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

598. LETTER TO RAMJI GOPALJI BADHIA

May 11, 1945

BHAI RAMJI,

I have your letter. The day of the hearing is over, so we may say that the purpose has been achieved. Do not seek my advice in this

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

thing. Parikshitlal[1] is there. Do whatever is needful after consulting him. You should keep me free from personal affairs. I am no longer in a position to cope with such work.

Blessings from

BAPU

RAMJI GOPALJI

HARIJAN ASHRAM

SABARMATI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

599. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

May 11, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Give Chandrani whatever amount she needs for the journey to Delhi. See that she reaches safely. Tell her, I have already written[2] to Viyogi Hari and that she should go straight by tonga to Kingsway [Camp]. Let her stay at the Harijan Colony. Tell her to write to me. Tell her to take care of her health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10629

600. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 11, 1945

CHI. BABUDI,

You seem to be very dear to God. Something or the other always befalls you. So a heavy weight fell on Anand[3]? He was lucky to survive. Was the accident caused through any of his pranks? Learn to train him. God is testing you; see that you pass.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10057. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

[1] Parikshitlal Majmudar
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Viyogi Hari", 7-5-1945.
[3] Addressee's son

601. LETTER TO UMADEVI AGRAWAL

May 11, 1945

CHI. OM,

I like your Urdu very much. The handwriting is also neat. If my letter gives you peace, happiness and food for the mind, then it is something to be thought over. You should have such strength that once having understood me, you should not need a letter from me, nor should it be necessary to consult me. That is to say, you should be able to digest my views.

I am happy to know that Kanam is getting on well.

What do Chimanlal and others say about exercise? Saman is there, isn't he?

You have the equipment, don't you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

602. LETTER TO VIRBALA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 11, 1945

CHI. VIRBALA,

You mention my old letter. But the assurance I gave you then I cannot give you today. I have a place for you because my desire is the same as before. But I do not have the strength. Write to me if you want to, after I return to Sevagram. At the moment it is almost impossible to call you.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. VIRBALA
C/O LALA RADHAMOHANJI
227 WEST STAND ROAD
KEDAR KUTIR, MEERUT

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

603. LETTER TO M. S. KELKAR

May 11, 1945

BHAI ICE,

I have your letter. How nice it will be if Hari-ichchha recovers completely. The entire credit will go to you. More than that, flowers will be showered on you from above.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Do something to make the heat there bearable.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

604. DISCUSSION WITH C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[1]

MAHABALESHWAR,

May [*11/*][2] *12, 1945*

RAJAGOPALACHARI: The people, who are now saying they are doing your constructive work, are really parliamentarians but only one branch of it and they seek power through your unofficial influence, whereas other parliamentarians are seeking it through constitutional channels. On the other hand, the only man who understands and can do your constructive work is myself.

GANDHIJI: Yes.

Are you thinking of dividing Congress work into functions?

I am not thinking of division of functions. But there is a natural division. But I have not thought (of)[3] compartments lower and higher.

It is like *varna vyavastha*.

Horizontal, never vertical. But my conception certainly is that we can come to our own if all take up constructive work.

Parliamentary work will help constructive work. But (constructive) work need

[1] The discussion is extracted from "Rajaji: Gandhiji's Alter Ego" by Pyarelal, who says that the talks continued for two days. However, only the last paragraph, under the date-line May 12, 1945, is available in the G.N. source. According to Pyarelal, Gandhiji wrote out his answers on slips of paper as he was "observing silence for a greater part of the day, under medical advice".

[2] *ibid*

[3] This and other parentheses are as in the source.

not necessarily be our whole care.

It replaces armed activity. But we can never come to our own through parliamentary activity (alone).

If, on the one hand, no one outside can act on behalf of the Congress and, on the other, the British Government will not release the Working Committee members unless a basis of reconciliation has been authoritatively agreed to, there is an insoluble tangle. Someone must some time or other act on behalf of the Congress and accept a scheme of settlement and, as a part of that scheme, the prisoners must be released. You must, therefore, act on behalf of the Congress. You know you are competent to do it. You say that every Congressman may act on his own authority as if he were president. But this is chaos. Suppose now, there are a number of president-candidates, the best man must win. That is you. The man who is in fact the best man to take up authority should take up responsibility at some time. There is no use asking others to negotiate without committing the Congress. There is no force behind Bhulabhai's[1] efforts because you have not given[2] open and unreserved approval to his proposals. It is only if you take up the authority like a dictator, can reasonable scheme of settlement have success. You must take up authority on behalf of the Congress some time.

That point may be reached some time, but not now.

It may be that parliamentary activity will advance constructive work and that will help.

Then you hold my view or I yours.[3]

As Churchill (was it Pritt[4]?) has said, the courts are not beyond political influence. This he said some years ago about Judge Granville over a heated political case involving judicial points. In my case (in South Africa) it was a franchise question. I lost because it was political. I had engaged Asquith.[5]

If Colville[6] (the Governor of Bombay) means it, he can say,

[1] Leader of the Congress Party in the Central Assembly, he was trying to end the political deadlock in the matter of Congress-League coalition for the formation of a national government through talks with Liaquat Ali Khan, Deputy Leader of the Muslim League in the Central Assembly; the talks, however, failed.

[2] *Vide* "Note to Bhulabhai J. Desai", 5-1-1945.

[3] Pyarelal explains, rest of the discussion took place on May 12 and it was about he Asthi-Chimur prisoners, which Gandhiji "made the acid test of Britis sincerity". *Vide* also "Silence day Note to Bhulabhai Desai", 11-6-1945.

[4] D. N. Pritt, Q. C., a noted English lawyer

[5] Then Rajaji asked him to suggest a *modus vivendi*.

[6] Sir John Colville

'withdraw legal proceedings and exercise clemency.' I have done all these things in South Africa once through Hertzog[1]. Clemancy has now a greater chance of success. Let us hope that Bhulabhai is on the *qui vive*. I don't mind if the examination is started. . . .[2] I simply feel that we shall have to go through these things, if the rulers are bent on crushing us. The difference between you and me is not great, but (it is) vital though (it seems) small. You want, if you do, power at any price. I have put a limit to the price to be paid. You think if you do that nothing will come if we don't take power. I say, I can afford to wait till it comes at my price, for I am making progress however slight it may be. . . .[3]

If you feel like talking about any other thing, I am prepared and will gladly set apart the time. I simply do not worry you for I have nothing to ask. Your presence gives me solace and strength. What more do I want? I understand you and you me.

Swarajya, 11-12-1971; also from a photostat: G.N. 2105

605. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

May 12, 1945

CHI. SHYAMLAL,

Now I understand why you wrote in English. We cannot remove the ignorance of years unless we persist.

It is 6.45 in the morning, so I am working under a light. I am reading the papers sent by you. As the Hindi typing is not clear, I have difficulty in reading it. But switching over to English is not the remedy. What you want is a Hindi copyist. The copyist should do thewriting in a neat hand and copies when required can be chromographed or Roneoed.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHYAMLAL
KASTURBA HOUSE
SCINDIA HOUSE
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] James B. M. Hertzog, Prime Minister of South Africa, 1924-39
[2] Omissions as in the source
[3] *ibid*

606. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

May 12, 1945

CHI. SITA,

Your handwriting is good. The letters are clear but too small. Cultivate the habit of writing a bigger hand. You will then get into the habit of writing uniformly either in small or big handwriting. I am glad that you are now fully engrossed in work.

I desire the very same thing that you do. This is a very good opportunity indeed for Arun[1] and Ila[2]. They will not find it easy to bear the heat of that place. But they have not learned to stay without Mother[3]. Her first duty is to stay with her ailing mother. If and when Tari[4] takes Mother's[5] place for a while, she may come here with the children.

You should learn to preserve excellent health in any climate. It is possible to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4979

607. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

May 12, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Can you keep the accounts? This will not imply any responsibility for running the Ashram. The expenditure will be the responsibility of the Secretary. You should look after the accounts. You may take it easy the rest of the time.

"Who would practise the difficult vows of *yama*, *niyama*, *shama* and *dama* which even the minds of seers cannot grasp?" This is easy

[1] Brother and sister of the addressee

[2] *ibid*

[3] The source has 'behn' meaning sister. In Gujarati, mother is sometimes addressed 'behn' by the children

[4] Sushila Gandhi's sister

[5] The source has 'behn' meaning sister. In Gujarati, mother is sometimes addressed 'behn' by the children

to sing but difficult to practise, as the poet says. Doesn't *agama*[1] in the line stand for *agamya*[2]? Self-discipline embraces the whole life. How can a man who has achieved freedom from desire or control of desire suffer from any disease or any laxity? Think over this. The responsibility of running the Ashram should be borne by Munnalal and Krishnachandra by turns. Make a list of the jobs to be attended to by them. Other things should be looked after by Jajuji[3] The Ashram should not be closed, nor should its name be changed. If you don't want to leave the Ashram, I shall not make you do so. One can work according to one's ability, but ability may either increase or decrease. You should see to it that yours increases.

I understand about ice [doctor].

You will find the rest in the other letter, which please read.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10631

608. LETTER TO RAMANLAL ENGINEER

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 12, 1945

BHAI RAMANLAL,

I have your frank letter. Your handwriting is so good that I excuse you for writing in pencil. Otherwise writing in pencil is uncivilized. It is violence.

There is frankness in your letter and it should be so. It is not impolite at all. It should be like that.

I do not agree with some of your suggestions but I do not have the time to go into them. I wish I were proved wrong and what you write should turn out to be true.

I note your inclination. What you like would be best. The book arrived yesterday. It has still to reach my hands.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI RAMANLAL ENGINEER
BHARATIYA SAHITYA SANGH
SECOND FLOOR, BHIMRAJ BUILDING
KALBADEVI ROAD, BOMBAY 2

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Beyond comprehension
[2] Beyond comprehension
[3] Srikrishnadas Jaju

609. LETTER TO GULZARILAL NANDA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 12, 1945

CHI. GULZARILAL,

I have your letter. We should understand what Ambalal Sheth says. He says, "You do make efforts. But the labourers listen to you as long as it serves their purpose and when it comes to their doing their duty, they do not listen to you so that our scheme must fall flat." It is beside the point whether the Sheth himself fulfils his part of the bargain. What he does is of secondary importance to us. Even so what you wrote to me about his shortcomings, you should write to himalso very frankly. I am certainly with you.

I find immediate relief through allopathic medicine. I have written to Dr. Chugh[1] that I shall watch what the climate here can do, and when I descend from here I shall see what his treatment can do. Tell me if you have to say anything in this.

Blessings from
BAPU

GULZARILAL NANDA
MAJOOR MAHAJAN
MIRZAPUR ROAD
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

610. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

May 12, 1945

SHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I have gone through your long letter to Bapa. He suggests that I should see you. I have written to you that I am always ready to see you. So come and see me whenever and wherever you want. Remember that whatever difficulties we imagine are created by us.

Convey my blessings to everyone there.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI CHHAGANLAL JOSHI
ANAND BHAVAN
RAJKOT
KATHIAWAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chugh", 9-5-1945.

611. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

May 12, 1945

BAPA,

That we should be having such a beautiful Hindustani translation brought out by the Servants of India Society and not using it! You are a member in name (officially) and in fact. I am not one in name but am certainly one in fact. I wanted to do it just for fun. The main reason for writing this is to reply to your letter. I am certainly prepared to meet the gentleman from Dharwar. Where should I meet him? After getting down from here or somewhere here itself? I have given time to Chhaganlal.[1] I know about his unhappiness. I will see him again as you advise. I am writing to him. . . .[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI THAKKAR BAPA
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
POONA 4

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

612. LETTER TO RAMALAKSHMI AND PRAVINBALA

May 12, 1945

CHI. RAMALAKSHMI AND PRAVINBALA,

I have the letter signed by both you sisters and a money order for Rs. 49. One can say that all the girls have done very well. I am depositing the money in the fund for Harijans.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RAMALAKSHMI ASAR
C/O SHRI VALLABHDAS RAMDAS
VIYOG SADAN, HABIB ROAD
KANDIVALI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] A sentence is unintelligible here.

613. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 12, 1945

CHI. SUMI,

I received your letter only today. You do not get the time I do. Your handwriting is good. Continue to write with the same care. You should consider it a crime to be hasty because you are too taken up with your examination.

Tell Lakshmi to get well soon. Tell Papa that if Lakshmi cannot write, then she should. I hope Narasimhan[1] is well. Manilal is here. Sushila, Arun and Ila have not come.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. SUMITRA GANDHI
"HINDUSTAN TIMES" BUILDING
NEW DELHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

614. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

May 12, 1945

CHI. RAMDAS,

Are both of you too lazy or only showing pity on me? This is for you to read. I am well. Manilal is here. Sushila and the children have not come. How are you? How is Nimu[2]? I receive letters from Kanam. He may come here.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

How is Usha[3]?

SHRI RAMDAS GANDHI
TOMCO SALES DEPARTMENT
KHALASI LINES, NAGPUR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Son of C. Rajagopalachari
[2] Nirmala (wife), and daughter of the addressee
[3] *ibid*

615. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 12, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Balkrishna has done the correct thing. Does it not mean that the vaidya's medicine did not give permanent relief? If he is inclined that way, why must he wait for my also being so inclined? Dr. Kelkar's treatment after all will do no harm. Keep me informed about the effect of the treatment.

You have done well about Sanskrit. Learn the grammar properly. Let Balkrishna also study Grimm's law[1]. It will help considerably. Learning of the script will also become easy if it is kept in mind.

It is good to study the science of khadi. Do not do any reading while walking. Only think. Do not strain your eyes. Vinoba's discourses are good. Since you have learnt the art of reading newspapers, 45 minutes is not too much. Understand where this art lies.

Do as much carding as is necessary for making slivers.

I forgot about weaving. See both the spinning and the weaving in the Nagpur Mill. Observe both these processes at Savli where too they are carried on.

It is all right to meet at night, but not for discussion. Work in silence. Or everyone may read what they like in silence. The thing is that in spite of diversity of opinions all are working on the same thing. It is your duty to give your whole-hearted co-operation in that work.

The lines in the hand are not without significance. But do not get caught in palmistry.

Urdu diction is used by Muslims in writing. Hindi diction is used by Sanskrit pundits. Hindustani is the sweet mingling of the two.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4570. Also C.W. 5877. Courtesy: Krishnachandra

[1] Formulated by the German grammarian Jacob Grimm (1785-1863), it is on the regularity in the correspondences of consonants in the Germanic and other Indo-European languages.

616. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

May 12, 1945

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

Don't torment Hoshiari now. Wait till I come. Write to Mirabehn. I can understand Hoshiari's sorrow. I have already written[1] to Mirabehn about her.

The experiment which Munnalal is conducting in regard to the 'servants' is good. That is what should be done. If it fails, it will show that our ahimsa is as yet very incomplete. The error is one of understanding. Let us not treat servants as servants but as brothers. Even if they spoil things or steal or the expenses go up, it will not be in vain if we can consider them as members of the family. Think it over.

I have instructed Chimanlal about the question of management. Give thought to it and, if possible, appoint a new manager every month.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1960. Also C.W. 5876. Courtesy: Balvantsinha

617. LETTER TO SWAMI RAMANAND TIRTH

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 12, 1945

SWAMIJI,

I have your letter and also that of Vinayakrao. It is a sad chapter.[2] I am doing what I can. The ultimate remedy is in the hands of people like you.

Blessings from

BAPU

SWAMI RAMANAND TIRTH
NANDED, HYDERABAD DISTRICT

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 7-5-1945.

[2] The reference is, presumably, to police atrocities in Gulburga; *vide* also the following two items.

618. LETTER TO VINAYAKRAO KORATKAR

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 12, 1945

BHAI VINAYAKRAOJI,

I have your letter. I am pained to hear about all that has happened. I am proceeding after my own style. Two activities cannot be carried on at one and the same time.[1]

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI VINAYAK K. KORATKAR, BAR-AT-LAW
HYDERABAD (DECCAN)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

619. LETTER TO DAMODARDAS MUNDRA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 12, 1945

CHI. DAMODAR,

It seems you have maintained your health. I have seen your programme. I had of course immediately started work about Gulburga. Let us see what happens. It is very sad.

Blessings to both of you from
BAPU

SHRI DAMODAR
MAHILA ASHRAM
WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Muhammad Ahmad Said Khan, 15-5-1945.

620. LETTER TO VINA CHATTERJEE

May 12, 1945

CHI. VINA,

have your letter. It is good you wrote to me. Keep your body and mind healthy. Write to me in Hindi, whatever its quality. Tell me all your experiences of Borivli. How much progress have you made in Urdu?

Zohra has not written. Tell her also to write: what she has learnt, how she is, and so forth. Each one should set down her experiences separately.

Manu has gone to Bombay. Her health has not improved.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

621. LETTER TO KAMALA AND VASANTI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 12, 1945

CHI. KAMALA[1] AND VASANTI[2],

I have letters from both of you. They are good. You are doing good work. There is no need to feel unhappy. Donald Greene will get well.

Keep fit and render lots of service.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KAMALABEHN
FRIENDS' SETTLEMENT, RASANIA
HOSHANGABAD DISTRICT

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Margaret Jones, a friend of Mary Barr; she was working in Khedi during the latter's absence in South Africa. She was also undergoing training in midwifery to help villagers.

[2] Barbara

622. LETTER TO SRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 12, 1945

BHAI JAJUJI,

I have your letter. I approve of Dr. Rajan and Gopalaswami (of Harijan Sevak Sangh). Let me know if there are any others.

Blessings from
BAPU

SRIKRISHNADAS JAJU
AKHIL BHARATIYA CHARKHA SANGH
SEVAGRAM P. O., *via*, WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

623. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 12, 1945

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

I received Chandrani's letter yesterday. She is going there tomorrow for Satyavati Devi's sake. Put her up in Harijan Nivas. Give her this[1].

Blessings From
BAPU

SHRI VIYOGI HARI
HARIJAN NIVAS
KINGSWAY [CAMP], DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the following item.

624. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 12, 1945

CHI. CHAND,

I have your letter. Your decision is good. I had written to Viyogiji before I received your letter. Do what Satyavati says. She should get well. If Satyavati agrees, you can come back earlier. Show this letter to her. I had received her postcard. Satyavati is always in my thoughts. If she is a soldier, she is a great one. Khurshedbehn[1] is in Panchgani.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

625. LETTER TO M. S. KELKAR

May 12, 1945

BHAI ICE,

I see from your letter that you think it would be good if I took only milk. I tried that too but lost weight immediately. I consider it a crime to take fruit, or leafy vegetables or anything just for the taste. However, if one finds taste in what one ought to eat, I won't reject it. For the present things are being discussed purely from the medical point of view. I have seen no book recommending giving up of leafy vegetables and fruit. It will be a great gain if what you say is true.

It will be a great thing if Hari-ichchha is cured.

I hear that you have started Balkrishna's treatment. May you be successful.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Khurshedbehn Naoroji, grand-daughter of Dadabhai Naoroji

626. LETTER TO IFTIKHARUDDIN[1]

MAHABALESHWAR,
[Before *May 13, 1945*][2]

DEAR IFTIKHAR[3],

Give up the habit of writing and speaking in English, if you want to be free.

I have read your letter. It is my view that no one has the right to speak in the name of the Congress, not even members of the All-India Working Committee who are out of jail. They can do so only when the whole Committee is out. Neither you nor anyone else has the right to work in the name of the Congress. This does not mean that you should sit idle and not exercise your influence. Nobody can deprive you of your individual position. The same applies to members of the Congress Workers' Assembly. Everyone is his own leader. Everyone is free to lead those who follow him. This to my mind is the constitutional posi-tion. Let no one therefore use my name. I have not issued any circular.[4] What was attributed to me must have been taken from an opinion expressed in a letter I wrote to someone in Ahmedabad. All that it meant was that no one can issue orders in the name of the Congress.

Now as regards your restrictions. So long as you do not regard yourself under control of the Government, whatever you wrote (in reply to the restriction order) was correct. We must never yield.

Blessings to you both[5] *from*
BAPU

The Hindu, 15-5-1945

[1] & [2] The letter was reported under the date-line "May 13, 1945" as "sequel to a dispute between two groups of Congressmen in the Punjab who nominated two rival candidates to contest the bye-election in the Lahore City Constituency of the Punjab Assembly"

[2] *ibid*

[3] President of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee

[4] The reference is to a telegram from Raghunandan Saran of Delhi to C. Rajagopalachari seeking clarification on an alleged circular by Gandhiji which appeared in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 2-5-1945. Gandhiji's denial of the circular was reported by Pyarelal in a statement published in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 11-5-1945; *vide* Appendix "Pyarelal's Statement", 11-5-1945.

[5] The addressee and his nominee, Virendra, who, according to the source, withdrew his candidature "in view of Gandhiji's letter", letting Kedarnath Sehgal of the Punjab Congress Workers' Assembly to contest against the Hindu Mahasabha candidate.

627. TELEGRAM TO MANUBHAI K. BHIMANI[1]

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 13, 1945

BHIMANI
CARE VAHLOVALAN
CALCUTTA

YOU HAVE MISUNDERSTOOD MY WIRE[2] BIRLA. REREAD.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy Pyarelal

628. LETTER TO SONJA SCHLESIN

May 13, 1945

DEAR MISS SCHLESIN[3],

Your letter. I value it for its contents.

You did well to send me the ticket. There is no Khalifa family in Kathiawar requiring relief as far as I know.

Matriculation here is not simpler than yours. But for Sita it would be somewhat easier here. She is getting on well and gaining the experience she would never have got there. She wants to fit herself for service. There is no restraint upon her freedom.

Manilal will shape himself at will. Of course he has come for a year only and that to serve me. There is not much for him to choose from.

I agree about Thambi Naidoo[4]. Anything can be named after him here. It will mean nothing. Something worthy should be done

[1] This appears along with a note in Gujarati, presumably Gandhiji's instructions to Pyarelal, which reads: "Today being Sunday we have to pay more. Therefore send it tomorrow. If tomorrow is a holiday with regard to telegrams also, send it day after tomorrow."

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to G. D. Birla", 8-5-1945.

[3] A jewish girl who was Gandhiji's secretary in South Africa; she was ardently interested in the Indian cause.

[4] A Tamil cartage contractor from Mauritius whom Gandhiji described as "lion-like". He was one of the most eminent satyagrahis of the Transvaal.

there. You must shape things there. Thambi must have many admirers besides you and me. I am glad about Mrs. Naidoo. What is she doing? What about his children? Could you send me a photo of the family with Thambi in it?

So you see, San Fransisco was managed without you and me.[1] But you are dropping in here one of these days. Yes, Kallenbach's[2] niece did give me a long letter after K's death. A truly good man has left us.

I hope to write the story of 125 years.[3] Hold yourself in patience till I write.

Love.

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I am at a hill station. My address must be Sevagram, Wardha.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

629. LETTER TO O. M. THOMAS

"MORARJI CASTLE",
MAHABALESHWAR,
May 13, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

Your registered letter of the 8th inst, to Gandhiji has been received today. Your previous letter also was received. Here are answers to your questions.

1. Gandhiji has no recollection of having read the book[1] referred to by you.

2. Impossible to say anything at this distance of time.

[1] In *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. I, Book One, pp. 101-2, Pyarelal explains that the addressee had written to Gandhiji that she was expecting to meet him at San Francisco Peace Conference, and thence to accompany him to India. She had also suggested: "If you are short of secretaries to accompany you to the Peace Conference, call here on your way and I shall come along."

[2] Herman Kallenbach's. A German Jew who was with Gandhiji in South Africa, he died on March 25, 1945, in Johannesburg. *Vide* also "Message on Death of Hermann Kallenbach", 25-5-1945.

[3] Alluding to the reports on Gandhiji's illness, the addressee had said: "I was not greatly perturbed when you were ill (I regret your suffering, of course) because I felt confident that you would not depart hence until India was free . . . I have not the slightest doubt that you will live until you are 125, if only you desire it."

[4] *After Mother India* by Harry H. Field.

3. The reply is in the negative so far as my recollection goes, but you can look up the files of *Young India*.

4. Please send an authentic copy of Mrs. Annette Helen Doharty's affidavit referred to by you. On the face of it, it seems to be a malicious invention.

Yours sincerely

PYARELAL

SHRI O. M. THOMAS
20 ELGIN ROAD
ALLAHABAD

From a copy of: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

630. LETTER TO AMRITLAL DOSHI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 13, 1945

BHAI AMRITLAL,

I got your letter. Though you have given up khadi work as your means of livelihood, you still take interest in it and that is a good thing. I am taking all the measures I can think of. Meet Kakubhai[1] and give him such useful help as he asks for and you can give. As far asI know, people working in the insurance line get plenty of spare time.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI AMRITLAL DOSHI
INDIAN GLOBE INSURANCE CO.
315-321 HORNBY ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6316

[1] Purushottam K. Jerajani; *vide* "Letter to Purushottam K. Jerajani", 13-5-1945.

631. LETTER TO SHAMALDAS GANDHI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 13, 1945

CHI. SHAMALDAS[1],

The enclosed is from your paper. I feel that an advertisement which is immoral or is against the recognized or declared policy of the management should never be accepted. No registered bhandar can sell khadi without yarn being tendered. It should not escape your notice. Therefore you should not accept this advertisement. You should outright refuse this person. For doing so you must impose restrictions on advertisements. That involves some sacrifice and some scrutiny. However, in the long run, you won't lose anything but if you do it, it will be nothing more than the dirt on your palms[2]. Do lose it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Enclosed is a cutting of the advertisement by a shop which announced sale of khadi without yarn being tendered.

CHI. SHAMALDAS GANDHI
EDITOR "VANDEMATARAM"
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

632. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 13, 1945

CHI KAKUBHAI,

I got your prompt reply to my previous letter. I am sending other things herewith. I have sent[3] a cutting of the advertisement to

[1] Gandhiji's nephew
[2] A Gujarati phrase meaning money
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

Shamaldas and have written[1] to Amritlal Doshi to see you. That man is clever, no doubt. He has done quite a lot of khadi work. I have written to him that he should give you such occasional help as you feel he can give.

Make the bhandar an institution for learning. Some should go there to learn the work and to spin also. Others should pay for the lesson. The poor should pay in the form of labour. The entire material should be good. There is no need of telling you all this but my attachment impels me to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10854. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

633. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 13, 1945

CHI LILI,

I read your letter just now. They handed it to me without opening it. But I am going to give it to Narahari, Pyarelal, Munnalal and Hemantkumar to read. That letter is a mirror of your soul.

You have always been, and still are, silly. Remember the verse: "Dwelling in thought on *vishayas*."[2] Here *vishaya* does not mean merely what it does in Gujarati, namely, immoral sex-pleasure. All objects of desire are *vishayas*, as for example, desiring what appeals to the eye, hearing with the ear, smelling with the nose, andother similar objects of sense. Your object of desire is to come to the hills. If it didn't materialize you should forget about it. But you would not be Lili if you could forget anything. And that is why you suffer. Otherwise there are few other women as fortunate as you. Though married in the prime of your youth, you have remained a virgin all these years so that all the desire in you for that momentary pleasure has been burnt away. You like service and get opportunities for it. The best service you rendered was to Bhansali, then to Ramprasad and then to Krishnachandra. I will not consider your services to Ba, Mahadev

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amritlal Doshi", 13-5-1945.
[2] *Bhagavad Gita*.

and myself as there was attachment in that.

You are educating yourself to be a doctor entirely with the aim of dedicating yourself to public service. What purer happiness than this could one have? If you are still discontented, does it not mean that you are silly?

Hoshiari wishes to come to me, and so does Vina. And there is no limit to the number of men who wish to come. If they cannot come, does it mean that they are unfortunate? You should completely burn up this desire of yours. Hence, though from one point of view your letter is good, from another point of view it is one that you should withdraw, and that too, cheerfully. You must pass, and do so with credit. Afterwards you will be serving to your heart's content. And you do get opportunities from time to time, such as serving uncle. Sushila is there. Pyarelal is leaving tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9601. Also C.W. 6573. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

634. LETTER TO SAVITRI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 13, 1945

CHI. SAVITRI,

You are a coward. You let the engagement take place. Then you ran away from the house and are now staying with your paternal aunt's son. That is not right. You have done a virtuous thing. Haven't you? What is there to run away from?

I shall go to the Ashram only in July. Write to me, it you want, when I go there. I can't say for certain that I shall be able to keep you even then. The management of the Ashram is not in my hands. I can do something only after consulting them.

Do you spin? Do you wear khadi? You don't observe untouchability, do you? Are you studying?

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. SAVITRIBEHN
C/O PURUSHOTTAM BIJLANI
MANAGER, ANJAR SPINNING-WEAVING MILLS
ANJAR, CUTCH

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

635. LETTER TO R. K. NANDKEOLYAR

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 13, 1945

BHAI NANDKEOLYAR,

I know you refrained from coming so as to save me trouble. I will lovingly use the tumblers when they arrive. You and Priyamvada have asked for my blessings for Mohandas and his bride. My fear is, theirs may not be an inter-caste marriage. Has the bride given up *purdah*? Will both of them give themselves up to service? Will Priyamvada keep the bride engaged in household work or give her time to do work of service? I hope the bride's parents do not keep her like a slave. If you can give satisfactory replies to all these questions, then here are heaps of blessings for the bride and birdegroom.

Blessings from
BAPU

BARRISTER NANDKEOLYAR
NAND VILAS
GAYA (BIHAR)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

636. LETTER TO HARIBHAU JOSHI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 13, 1945

BHAI JOSHI,

I have your letter and also the book. I shall read it and do what is necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI HARIBHAU JOSHI
"LOKSHAKTI"
291 SHANIVAR PETH
POONA 2

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

637. LETTER TO S. V. VENKATARAMAN

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 13, 1945

BHAI VENKATARAMAN,

I have your letter. I hope you will understand my Hindi.

On paper your work seems good. I hope in fact it is so. Assuming that it is, I give you my blessings. Is ginning done differently? The spinners themselves separate the seeds, card the cotton and make the slivers, don't they?

How is the cotton grown? In how many acres?

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI S. V. VENKATARAMAN
A. I. S. A. KHADI VASTRALAYA
MAYAVARAM—SOUTH INDIA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

638. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 13, 1945

BHAI GOPICHAND[1],

You did a good job in the matter of the Dukhaidi Harijans. They should have full relief. You must persuade the Rajputs. The courts alone cannot do the thing. A sad thing has happened. I was under the impression that the Dunichand who died was the Dunichand[2] we know. How is the deceased related to him? I couldn't have written to him. Please find out. If there is anything I have to do, I will do it.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA
LAJPAT BHAVAN
LAHORE
(PUNJAB)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Congress worker of the Punjab since 1919; elected to Punjab Assembly in 1937 and again in 1946; Chief Minister of Punjab, 1947-51

[2] Leading Congressman of Ambala; Member, Punjab Legislative Assembly; *vide* also the following item.

639. LETTER TO DUNICHAND

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 13, 1945

BHAI DUNICNAND,

I learnt from what you did about the Harijans of Dukhaidi that you are still alive. How wonderful! I even wrote a letter of condolence to your wife. The poor woman must have laughed. What could she have written in reply? Is it my fault or yours if Dunichand continues to live? I think the fault is mine. As a punishment I must die before you. I want to live up to 125 years. Since you are older than I youmust live even after 125 years. My apologies to Deviji.

Look after the Harijans.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5587

640. LETTER TO K. N. KATJU

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 13, 1945

BHAI KATJU,

I read your letter addressed to Pyarelal. About *Dehati Pragati* you will be happy to know that I started reading it long ago. I have kept it along with my papers. It is taking time because I have to read other things also. I will read the whole of it and then write to you.

My blessings to Prakashnarayan and the bride. Normally I do not bless marriages contracted within the caste unless there is a special reason. My fear is, this marriage will be one such. Anyway, there is a special reason for my sending blessings for this marriage. I have met Purnima. She made a good impression on me.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. K. N. KATJU
ADVOCATE
9 EDMONSTONE
ALLAHABAD (U. P.)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

641. LETTER TO KUSUM NAIR

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 13, 1945

CHI. KUSUM,

I have received your letter written in beautiful Hindustani. I shall be a little free after the 20th. You may come then. I will try to answer your questions. Do not go about shouting that you are coming to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI KUSUMBEHN NAIR
N. I. P. & I. BUREAU
74 LAKSHMI BUILDING
SIR PHEROZESHAH MEHTA ROAD
BOMBAY 1

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

642. LETTER TO JIVAJI RAO SCINDIA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 13, 1945

MAHARAJA SAHEB,

I congratulate you on what you have done for the Harijans. I am confident that you will be taking the necessary steps to see that your decision is implemented. It is in your hands to educate the people to get rid of their superstitions. Otherwise your decision will remain confined to the *Gazette* only. As you may know I have said that Hinduism will perish if any kind of untouchability persists.

May God grant a long life to the son on whose birth you have done such a good deed, and keep him healthy physically and mentally.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

MAHARAJA OF GWALIOR
GWALIOR STATE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

643. LETTER TO N. G. RANGA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 13, 1945

BHAI RANGA,

I have read what you have written about the tribes in the Nilgiris. I wanted to write to you about it but in the mean time your letter came.

The article about the Nilgiris is good. I congratulate you. There should have been a glossary of the Indian words. There should have been figures concerning their numbers. You should have said something about their language. You should have described their habits and customs in greater detail.

Do not drag me into the quarrel with the communists. It concerns you people. Before I say anything, it is necessary that I talk to them. Going as far as that will be a waste of my time. My place is to advise in more important matters.

Now I write in Hindustani even to South Indians. But this is not without exceptions. I hope you do not find it difficult to read letters such as this. Do write to me in English, if you can't write in Hindustani. However, you should cultivate the habit of writing in Hindustani.

Blessings from
BAPU

PROF. N. G. RANGA
NIDUBROLU
ANDHRA DESH

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

644. LETTER TO TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 14, 1945

DEAR SIR TEJ,

I was going to write to you in Hindustani but for this letter at least I restrain myself. For the future I shall do as you will bid.

I had thought that Dr. Jayakar and Kumar Saheb had come to

me on your behalf and at your instance. Rajaji told me otherwise. Hence this note, though belated.

I considered the whole of your report as sketched to me to be an able document. But I did not interest myself in the whole of it. My interest was naturally confined to the communal question and it was wholly satisfactory. I hope you do not want me to express any opinion on the rest.

You have, and that at your age, laboured at the report and laboured with your colleagues as few men would have done. Rajaji has told me much about this part of your valuable work. And in Santanam you have an able and painstaking secretary.

Hope you are keeping well and that your ailing son has recovered completely.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

THE RT. HON. SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

645. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 14, 1945

CHI. SUSHILA,

Your expected letter has come. I abide by what I wrote about Manu in the morning. She and the sisters should do what they think fit.

It hurts me that Shyamlal's affairs are disorganized. You would not have told him about it and I do not want to say that he should use your name. I am watching the developments. Enough if you take care of your first division. That would be the best education you could give to others.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

646. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 14, 1945

CHI. SUSHILA,

I hope all your work is going on well and bringing you credit. It would be only proper that the sisters hear everything and do whatever they want after due consideration. Every place has advantages as well as disadvantages. It is possible that Manu will not be able to get rid of her fear just by being told to do so. It seems to be an ingrained trait. If she recovers fully it will be a great achievement for us. I take it that you will be coming back on the 16th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

647. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

May 14, 1945

CHI. MANUDI,

I can see no difference between your handwriting and Yukti's[1]. Instead of myself telling you not to go to Karachi, I told Sushilabehn to tell you lest you think I was ordering you. If you wishto go either to Karachi or to Porbandar, by all means go. What I am concerned with is that you should become strong in body and mind. If you can do it there, I shall be pleased. Because of your negligent habits, I thought that, if you could overcome your fear, you would be able to benefit fully and for long from the mountain-air. However I am not enamoured of hill-stations either. Wherever you stay with a free mind, you are bound to benefit. You may, therefore, do what your sisters desire. I give my consent for it.[2]

Why should we observe anybody's face? We may even make a mistake in judging a person from his face. We are not God. We might even do him injustice. And moreover, when one has made up one's mind not to fear anybody, why need one know the other person's mind? The rest from Pyarelal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./24

[1] Addressee's elder sister Sanyuka's

[2] *Vide* also the following item.

648. LETTER TO VINODINI GANDHI

May 14, 1945

CHI. VINODG[1],

It is good that you wrote. Take Manu off to wherever you can, whether Karachi or Porbandar.[2] The only conditions are that you must not allow her to work; and see that she sleeps properly and teach her to masticate thoroughly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

649. LETTER TO DR. DINSHAW K. MEHTA

May 14, 1945

CHI. DINSHAW,

Following is the reply to your letter sent to Ghanshyamdas at Calcutta:

Your letter about Dinshaw's trust. I think his demand quite reasonable, but leave matter to you.[3]

Therefore, after getting the necessary changes made about the aims as suggested by you, I intend to write to Pakvasa[4] to have the Trust Deed drawn up.

Mavalankar, who was your patient, has written to me about your administrative abilities. His complaint is quite justified.[5]

Blessings to all the three of you from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Manu Gandhi's elder sister

[2] *Vide* also the preceding item.

[3] This paragraph is in English; *vide* also letters to G. D. Birla, "Letter to G. D. Birla", 6-5-1945 and "Letter to G. D. Birla", 10-5-1945.

[4] Mangaldas Pakvasa, Solicitor from Bombay, President, Bombay Legislative Council, 1937-47; was appointed Governor of Central Provinces and Berar in 1947

[5] *Vide* also the following two items.

650. LETTER TO DR. DINSHAW K. MEHTA

May 14, 1945

CHI. DINSHAW,

Read this letter carefully. You should live most of the time in Poona. I would not like it at all if you remained out of it for my sake. Attend to dirt, carelessness, massage, etc. Patients should not find you severe. There is always an answer to every kind of charge. Our duty is to take the essence and throw away the rest which is waste matter. Send the papers back.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

651. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA MAVALANKAR

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 14, 1945

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

I am glad that you wrote. I have read everything. I have sent the papers to Dr. Dinshaw. That is the only way I can bring about change, if any change is necessary. There is no discourtesy in yourletter. You may write more if you wish to. I will let you know the result.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of tile Gujarati: G.N. 1253

652. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

May 14, 1945

BAPA,

I have your letter. The registered post will arrive in due course. You are coming here on the 16th, but as you want me to write I am writing this.

BAPU

SHRI BAPA
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
POONA 4

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

653. LETTER TO SAILENDRA NATH CHATTERJEE

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 14, 1945

CHI. SAILEN,

I have your letter. I hope you have a place to stay in Bombay. Go to Bombay. There is a Nature Cure Clinic ill Malad. It is owned by Dr. Krishnavarma. He will admit you. I am writing to him. Follow his instruction. You will be cured. You must also learn everything. Give whatever help you can, if your health permits. Keep me informed. Leave Wardha only with Rishabhdas's permission. Show this postcard to Dr. Krishnavarma.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. SAILEN CHATTERJEE
INSURANCE COMPANY
BAJAJWADI
WARDHA

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10391a. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

654. LETTER TO KRISHNAVARMA

May 14, 1945

BHAI KRISHNAVARMA,

What I wrote to you has happened. Sailen Chatterjee is an employee of an insurance company. He lives on whatever he earns. I have advised him to go to your clinic. The doctors say he keeps getting well and falling ill again. He has agreed to go to you. The matter of expenses has to be considered. Madhavdas's case is entirely different. In any case, Sailen must give something. If you run a free hospital, it will get filled up and no one will be benefited. That can be discussed when we have the time. I have written to Sailen to go to you and show my postcard. He lives in Wardha.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. KRISHNAVARMA
NATURE CURE CLINIC
MALAD, *via* BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

655. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS BIRLA

May 14, 1945

CHI. RAMESHWARDAS,

Read this and then reply if there is anything you want to say. I have replied saying that I shall pursue the matter if he sends me something to support such allegations.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RAMESHWARDAS BIRLA
BIRLA HOUSE
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

656. LETTER TO OMKARSINGH SENGAR

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 14, 1945

BHAI OMKARSINGHJI,

Your daughter Premlata is distressed. She has chosen a husband belonging to a different caste and you are preventing her from marrying him. He is a deserving man. This talk about castes has become outmoded. Ability alone should count today. Premlata wants to go on a fast. Show her this postcard and stop her from undertaking the fast. Write to me if there is anything else.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

THAKUR OMKARSINGH SENGAR
MADAN KHADI KUTIR
KAROLI STATE, RAJPUTANA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

657. LETTER TO L. N. GOPALASWAMI[1]

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 15, 1945

MY DEAR GOPALASWAMI,

I have your generous letter. You will do as Bapa bids you. I must not abuse your good nature. Push forward good women for all you are worth.

Yours,
BAPU

SHRI L. N. GOPALASWAMI
KASTURBA GANDHI NATIONAL MEMORIAL FUND
S. 13 BUILDINGS
ROYAPETTAH
MADRAS

From a photostat: C.W. 10549. Courtesy: Government of Tamil Nadu

658. LETTER TO MUHAMMAD AHMAD SAID KHAN

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 15, 1945

DEAR NAWAB SAHEB,

I thank you for your kind note of 5th instant. I have been besieged with letters and cuttings of newspapers from Hyderabad. Some of these make sad reading.[2] I have heard from Shri Vinayak Rao too.[3] Their fear is that justice will be defeated. Whatever may have happened in the past, I feel sure that you will allow no such thing to happen.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. H. NAWAB SAHEB OF CHHATARI
HYDERABAD

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The letter was redirected to: 3 Gopapuram, Tennore, Trichinopoly.

[2] The reference is to the police excesses; *vide* "Letter to Muhammad Ahmad Said Khan", 30-4-1945.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Vinayakrao Koratkar", 12-5-1945.

659. LETTER TO K. NATARAJAN

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 15, 1945

DEAR MR. NATARAJAN,

It was good of you to have written to me on my remarks about the industrialists and to have sent me a copy of the *Indian Social Reformer*[1] containing your note on them.

How I should love to write to you in Hindustani of which your long residence in Bombay should have made you a scholar.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI K. NATARAJAN
KAMAKSHI HOUSE
BANDRA, BOMBAY 20

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy Pyarelal

660. LETTER TO FARID ANSARI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 15, 1945

MY DEAR FARID,

I was glad to see your beautiful handwriting after a long time. It at once reminded me of the late Dr. Ansari[2].

You were bound to think of Ba and Mahadev. They have won. We have to plod. I am delighted that you are keeping well. My love to all.

Yours,
BAPU

FARID ANSARI SAHEB
PRISONER
FEROZEPUR JAIL
PUNJAB

From a copy of: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The addressee was its editor from 1892 to 1940.
[2] Dr. M. A. Ansari

661. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

May 15, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have not fully answered[1] one of your letters. It does not seem proper to me to send for the Santiniketan gentleman now. We have said "No" to him, and we should stick, to it.[2] Jajuji is a king. He may relent in response to a request. How can we take advantage of that?

Do not mind if Sarojini has gone.[3] She is bound to return. We cannot control her mind.

I have already suggested one remedy for Shakaribehn. Another is to take the treatment of Dr. Ice. He can easily deal with such a complaint.

There is no harm in your having detained Saroj. You may detain anyone whom you wish to and can. Do not detain anybody just to please me and that too in my absence.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10632

662. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 15, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Your letter to Manilal was read out to me.

You stayed for a very short time at the place Swami had chosen for you. I hope the improvement in your health will continue. Gomati's[4] health may go on as it is.

Examine the views I have at various times expressed on *varnavyavastha*. If there have been changes, do let me know. I am nottaking the trouble myself because I must let people know where I stand today and be satisfied with that. If there is anything

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chimanlal N. Shah", 12-5-1945.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Chimanlal N. Shah", 30-4-1945.
[3] *Vide* also "Letter to Sarojini", 5-5-1945
[4] Addressee's wife

contradictory in the views I expressed earlier, they should not be taken into consideration. Some of what has been written is meant only to malign me. Some show a lack of understanding, some ignorance. Then again some of it is written with a view to publication and largely for money. It is immaterial whether people are convinced by my reply or not. Those, with whose criticism I have dealt, have certainly been convinced. Some would like it more if I dispensed with the distinction I have laid down in my article. But how could I do that? *Varnavyavastha* will not cease to be beneficial by our not being aware of its benefits. That the meaning of varna needs to be properly understood is another question. The difference pointed out by you seems correct.

It would certainly be good if my articles on varna, etc., are published. No omissions and additions should be made before getting them published. Even if I had the time I would make no changes. However, I would explain[1] my present stand in detail. Study them if you have the time and the will. I shall be ready to go through your work. But do not at all think that it is your duty to do this work. Ask me whatever you want.

Blessings from

BAPU

KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA
VASANT NIVAS
BABULNATH ROAD
BOMBAY 7

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

663. LETTER TO SHAMALDAS GANDHI

May 15, 1945

CHI. SHAMALDAS,

I have your letter. You have done well. I shall go on keeping a watch if you allow me to do so. and if I have the strength.[2]

Blessings from

SHRI SHAMALDAS GANDHI
"VANDEMATARAM"
FORT, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Foreword to *Varnavyavastha*", 31-5-1945.
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Shamaldas Gandhi", 13-5-1945.

664. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL TRIVEDI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 15, 1945

BHAI CHIMANLAL,

I have your letter. Sir Radhakrishnan's letter is clear. You should arrange a suitable programme. You have already received my blessings, haven't you?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI CHIMANLAL TRIVEDI
MEHERVILLA
OPP. SUPER TALKIES
GRANT ROAD, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

665. LETTER TO KEDARNATH SANDILYA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 15, 1945

BHAI KEDARNATH,

You alone should decide the matter about which you write. I have explained the general rules. You should follow them as much as you can.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI KEDARNATH SANDILYA
C/O SUB-POST MASTER
JEHANABAD
GAYA (BIHAR)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

666. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 15, 1945

CHI. AMRITA LAL,

Dhiren has arrived today with Satis Babu. It appears from your letter of the 8th that Bhai Bhimani wanted to send information about the women. If so, let me say that I do not regard him as a reliable person to give such information. He can send me written evidence even from there. I have not forgotten what you said. But of what use can it be if it is not fully supported?

I have arranged to send Sailen to Malad.[1] I hope he will do as Romen has written.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10404. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

667. LETTER TO SITA CHAUDHARY

May 15, 1945

CHI. SITA[2],

Your letter is good. Subhadra[3] will now recite the *Ramayana* to me. You also seem to have made good progress. Pratap[4] has done very well indeed! Where did Jugalkishoreji study? What treatment is to be given to your mother? Whether I reply or not, you should write to me. As far as I remember, Parnerkarji has not given me anything. Convey my blessings to your father. I trust he will recover[5] and be quite fit once again.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapu: Maine Kya Dehha Kya Samjha, p. 185

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sailendra Nath Chatterjee", 14-5-1945.
[2] Daughters of Ramnarayan Chaudhary
[3] *ibid*
[4] Addressee's brother
[5] Of Kashmir Khadi Bhandar

668. TELEGRAM TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 17, 1945

JAJUJI
CHARKHA SANGH
SEVAGRAM, WARDHA

KRISHNADAS WIRES YOU FOLLOWING: "BRANCHES REFUSE SENDING MORE ADVANCE. KASHMIR'S CAPITAL POSITION BELOW SANCTIONED AMOUNT. KINDLY ARRANGE REMITTANCE AT LEAST FIFTY THOUSAND TELEGRAPHICALLY. WORK COMPLETELY STRANDED." MY OPINION IS I SHALL ENDORSE YOURS.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

669. TELEGRAM TO KRISHNADAS

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 17, 1945

KRISHNADAS
KHADI BHANDAR
SRINAGAR (KASHMIR)

HAVE REPEATED YOUR WIRE TO JAJUJ1 WARDHA ADDING I SHALL ENDORSE HIS DECISION.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

670. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. DESAI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 17, 1945

CHI. BABLO[1],

I have your letter. You are learning a lot whilst teaching. That knowledge is part of Nayee Talim. It has become your profession and your mission to transform the art of spinning into a science and make it interesting. May that remain so. When spinning comes to be recognized as true knowledge, it will become the centre of many other branches of learning. Knowledge has infinite forms, but only he who knows that at the bottom all knowledge is one really knows.

According to the present programme, I shall be spending the whole of June in Panchgani at 'Dilkhush'[2]. Go over there. Shantabehn will arrive there on the 20th. Vanamala and Manibehn are here. Describe your experiences.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. NARAYAN M. DESAI
C/O DINKAR SANKARIA
KHALSA COLLEGE
MATUNGA, *via* BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9192

671. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 17, 1945

CHI. CHAND,

I have your postcard. I had at once answered[3] your letter. What can one do if there is delay in the post? You have achieved your purpose. You will have got the accommodation in Harijan Nivas. I had written[4] to Viyogi Hari. There has been no change in my health.

[1] Son of Mahadev Desai
[2] Of Nanji Kalidas
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Chandrani", 12-5-1945.
[4] *Vide* "Letter to Viyogi Hari", 12-5-1945.

However, the climate is very good. You will come here only when Satyavati relieves you. You will not be going directly to Nagpur in June, will you? . . .[1]

You and Satyavati have to think over all this. You do not want to see your parents, do you? Convey my blessings to everyone in Harijan Nivas.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI CHANDRANI
HARIJAN NIVAS
KINGSWAY CAMP
DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

672. LETTER TO GOPE GURUBAXANI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 17, 1945

CHI. GURUBAXANI,

One of two things has happened; either it was my impression that I had written to you or you had written saying that it was not necessary for me to reply. I sent your letter on to Sevagram because I thought it was good. Now it appears that I did not write at all. But now it is to be understood that you are to write, whether I write or not.Vimala must be well. It is not right that she does not write. I must know if it is because of illness. But if it is because of laziness, she is guilty.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1316

[1] A sentence is illegible here.

673. TELEGRAM TO B. SHIVA RAO

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 18, 1945

B. SHIVA RAO[1]
ASSOCIATED PRESS
SANFRANCISCO (U. S. A.)

RAMAN[2] NEVER PERSONALLY ASSOCIATED WITH ME ON STAFF OR ENTOURAGE. STATEMENTS THIS EFFECT ON JACKET RAMAN'S BOOK[3] WHOLLY WRONG. YOU HAVE AUTHORITY CONTRADICT ALL HIS MANY MIS-STATEMENTS.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

674. TELEGRAM TO KUSUM NAIR

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 18, 1945

KUSUM NAIR,
CARE "LOUDTALK"
BOMBAY

COME AS ADVISED.[4] STAY CASTLE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Labour leader, journalist; correspondent in Delhi of *The Hindu* and of *The Manchester Guardian* since 1935

[2] T. A. Raman of the Indian Information Office in Washington. He was speaking and writing in America against the Congress and its political demands.

[3] *Report on India*

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Kusum Nair", 13-5-1945.

675. DRAFT AMENDMENT TO RULE 72 OF KASTURBA GANDHI NATIONAL MEMORIAL TRUST

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 19, 1945

The travelling expenses shall be third-class fare provided that it will be open to the local chairman to sanction second class fare owing to sickness or other valid reason which he shall record in the minute-book.

This is my suggestion.[1]

From a photostat: G.N. 1258

676. FOREWORD TO "COW IN INDIA"

One of the first and best pupils of the late lamented Dr. P. C. Ray, Shri Satis Chandra Das Gupta is a fit person to bring under one cover all the available literature on the cow rightly called the 'Mother of Prosperity'. By convincing arguments based on copious reading of which he has reproduced the relevant parts in the volume, the author has dispelled the belief held even by learned men that India's cattle are a burden upon the land and divide its production with the people to the latter's detriment. He shows the usefulness of the cow as the giver of milk, the producer of draught-bullocks, the manurer of our fields and after death the giver of her hide and bone. He proves the superiority of cattle over the engine for ploughing the fields of India. He establishes the inevitable connection and interdependence between the cattle and other animal life, the earth and man. Lastly, he proves the superiority of the cow over the buffalo, not so that the latter should be killed off or starved out but so that the buffalo should not be favoured at the expense of the cow as is done at the present moment. I commend the volume to the lover of the cow as also to everyone who would learn that the slaughter of cattle for food is a pure economic waste and know how he can turn the cow into a giver of plenty instead of being the giver of scanty which, owing to criminal negligence, she has become today.

It will interest the reader to know that the author wrote the whole

[1] This sentence is in Gujarati.

volume during his recent imprisonment.

M. K. GANDHI

MAHABALESHWAR, May 20, 1945

Cow in India

677. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

May 20, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have a letter from Amtul Salaam. She has sent a message for you to the effect that you should go and bring back Kanchan. She has become very weak. In these circumstances, you must either go yourself or send someone. If A. S. herself accompanies her from Borkamata, nothing like it. But I cannot decide about all this from here. You yourself should decide. Kanchan also is tired of the place. She must, therefore, return. A. S.'s letter is enclosed. I am writing to her as above as also to Kanchan. If she has already left, you need not worry.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8453. Also C.W. 5578. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

678. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

May 20, 1945

CHI. KANCHAN,

I do not like it at all that you have really fallen ill. You have become restless too. So run away from there without delay. I have written to Munnalal. He should go there and fetch you or send somebody. Or ask somebody there to accompany you. Write to me after you reach the Ashram. It will be better still if you write before leaving.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8265. Also C.W. 7188. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

679. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 20, 1945

CHI . AMT UL SAL AAM,[1]

I have your letter. In the circumstances, Kanchan must go. You may accompany her or send somebody or let Munnalal come or send somebody. Is this not the only way?[2]

How can I decide about Akbar and Zohra? Akbar is doing good work in Samau. He would go if I were to order him. But I have left it to him. Zohra is still studying. You should consider this also if possible. It is a very difficult situation.

You cannot go anywhere leaving the things in the middle there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 495

680. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 20, 1945

CHI . SAT IS BAB U,

Since all your activities are devoted to furthering my policies, they always have my blessings. I very much hope that you won't be careless about your health. Being careless about one's health is also against my policy and there is a subtle pride in it. Write to me on reaching Calcutta.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This is in Gujarati.
[2] *Vide* also the preceding two items.

681. HOW TO IMPROVE VILLAGE INDUSTRIES

May 21, 1945

I have distinguished other village industries from khadi and called them planets and the charkha or the spinning-wheel the sun. As a matter of fact there is no real reason for such a distinction, for khadi is also a village industry. But it has acquired a special position, and it is because of this special position which it has acquired that we can now talk about the other village industries.

Today we are not required to demonstrate the special position acquired by khadi but we are required to discover ways and means of putting it and other village industries on a firm footing.

One of the ways is to resort to centralized production of necessities through machinery worked by power and requiring the minimum of human labour. This results in increasing the number of the rich few and making it a dharma to multiply the people's wants. Even if all such centralized industries were to be State-owned, it would make no difference to me. For the obligation to increase wants will not only not decrease, but may be strengthened where such industries are owned by the State. Only the task of increasing wants will pass from the hands of small capitalists to the bigger capitalists, or the State, whose action will secure the seal of public support. This is how things are going in England and America. I am purposely leaving out Russia; because their work is still continuing, I shall not at this stage dare to assess the result. I hope that Russia will produce something unique. But I must confess that I have my doubts whether it will truly succeed. I shall consider it a great success if, through it, all the wealth really goes into the hands of the poor, and intellectual and personal freedom is at the same time secured. In that case I will have to revise my present concept of ahimsa.

Now I come to the main point. In England and America, machinery rules supreme. On the contrary, in India we have village industries, symbolizing the resurgence of human labour. In the West, a handful of persons with the aid of mechanical power rule over others. In India, on the other hand, the great task of bringing out whatis best in every individual is being attempted by the A. I. S. A., A. I. V. I. A. and other allied institutions. From this point of view the growth of Western civilization seems to be an easy thing, but to develop a

organize the latent capacities of individuals through village industries appears to be a very difficult task.

Looking at it from another point of view, it may be said that, for a handful of men to rule over other men with the aid of steam and other power will be harmful in the end, as it is bound to multiply injustice. By using the human power available to us by the million, injustice is reduced. And there is no room for failure. For here, along with human power, we rely on divine Power. In the other method, no value is attached to divine Power. In short, if in the case of village industries we do not truly obtain God's help, we are bound to fail. The Western method only appears to be successful, but in truth there is nothing but failure in it. For it destroys the will to work.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *Gram Udyog Patrika*, June, 1945, Part-I, pp. 344-5

682. TELEGRAM TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 21, 1945

JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
HYDERABAD (SIND)

HOPE REACHING PANCHGANI END MONTH. STAYING THERE JUNE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

683. LETTER TO BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 21, 1945

MY DEAR BHARATAN,

I am sending you my article[1] written after some thought, but in the midst of much other work.

Your letter just to hand. You should give the names of those who have accepted. Consult Jajuji for the other names. I shall think about them. You can certainly ask [A.] Vaidyanatha Iyer of Madura. If he

[1] *Vide* "How to Improve Village Industries", 21-5-1945.

refuses he will suggest some other name.

So you have been travelling much. I am glad.

So send me the typed copy of your forthcoming book[1]. Of course I have to give you a word for it.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

684. LETTER TO DR. P. SUBBAROYAN

MAHABALESHWAR ,
May 21, 1945

MY DEAR SUBBAROYAN,

I was glad to have your letter. Regard me as partner in your joint joy on the restoration of your son to liberty. May he soon join you! Mohan ought to see me this week. I like him. The para about Rajaji was redundant as you say. He left on 19th.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

You will come when I return to Wardha.[2]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

685. NOTE ON LETTER FROM SEVAKRAM KARAMCHAND[3]

May 21, 1945

Write a postcard congratulating him. If the reform stays, there is no need to publicize it. They are no doubt Hindus but it is necessary to use the appellation to identify them. (What about the previous letter?)

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Capitalism, Socialism or Villagism*.

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Dr. P. Subbaroyan", 31-5-1945 and "Fragment of Letter to Mohan Kumaramangalam", 2-6-1945.

[3] Sevakram Karamchand had informed Gandhiji of the opening of Sadhubela temples at Sakkur to Harijans, and also suggested that henceforth they should be known as Hindus only.

686. LETTER TO SANYUKTA GANDHI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 21, 1945

CHI . YUK TI,

I have your letter.

I am sorry that though I had thought that Manu had gone there after having recovered, she still gets fever. All the same Sushilabehn is going there today—just to meet the sisters. She will stay there as long as she wishes. Is not Umiya[1] also going? So all the four sisters will get together. If Manu wishes, she may go to Karachi also. And after spending her holiday as she pleases, she will return to me. See that she gets well soon. She is a brave worker but she gets frightened as soon as anything happens to her. I try to reassure her, why should she be afraid when I am with her? I have not succeeded, may you the elder sisters succeed.

Blessings to all of you from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./24

687. LETTER TO ANNAPOORNA C. MEHTA

May 21, 1945

CHI . ANN APOOR NA,

I got your postcard yesterday. How can I believe that you are 25? I saw you as a mere child. You have yet to live for many years and do much work.

I will wear the khadi dhoti when I get it. There is no hurry. Is the word *prandai* or *prandayi*?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9437

[1] Addressee's elder sister, Umiya S. Agrawal.

688. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 21, 1945

CHI . KIS HOREL AL,

We cannot answer the question by merely quoting Sanjana's name. Do so only if the questions arising call for a reply. We shall lose nothing if for the time being you leave things alone.

I have an impression that I have written to Surendraji. If he does not want to wait till I reach Wardha, he can come to Panchgani. However I should prefer Wardha. But I leave it to him to decide. Guide him. He is not going to lose anything if he spends some time in Wardha. Khadi Vidyalaya, Goshala, Village Industries and other such activities can take up considerable time.

I should like it very much if Gomati could take some treatment. It will be better to take Chugh's advice. Raihana writes highly about him.

I would like you not to go to Sevagram before June.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

689. LETTER TO SARAYU DHOTRE

May 21, 1945

I got your letter yesterday after 5 o'clock. I could not have got the reply posted then. I have written to Rameshwardasji today. Let us see what happens. Never forget that we are poor. We have no right to behave like the rich. Our right comes from our duty. Do you understand that we must "renounce and enjoy"[1] the things we easily get?

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. SARAYU (DHOTRE)
KHADI VIDYALAYA

From Hindi: C.W. 839. Courtesy: Sarayu Dhotre

[1] The reference is to the first verse of the *Ishopanishad.*

690. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

May 21[1]*, 1945*

CHI . CHI MANLA L,

I have no idea why in particular I should write to you today. But since there is an envelope with your address on it, I am writing this. Sarayu Tai has given her address c/o Khadi Vidyalaya. So there is a letter[2] enclosed which has to be passed on to her.

You are always in my thoughts. You should force yourself to take rest, whether there or elsewhere. I should like you to do it there. You know that is what I have always done. Now I may be said to have risen high, or, maybe, descended lower. So I have learnt to go to hill stations like Panchgani, Mahabaleshwar, Nandi, etc. This is just for your guidance.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also G.N. 10633

691. LETTER TO V. N. APTE

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 21, 1945

BHAI APTE,

In Poona too there is Godbole. He has been to America. He gives nature cure treatment. However, what you are doing is all right. My faith was the main thing in the treatment I gave. Everyone would say that such a major case should have been taken to a doctor. May your son get well. How can I give three or four hours to your father-in-law? I do not have even a moment's time. He can ask me if there is anything. I shall reply when I have the time.

Blessings to all of you from

BAPU

V. N. APTE
SHRI GAJANAN MILLS
SANGLI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The G.N. source, however, has "25".
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

692. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

May 21, 1945

CHI . AMR ITLAL ,

I have gone through your two lines. You will certainly find work wherever you go.

Blessings from

BAPU

[C/O] SHRIMATI YASHODHARA DASAPPA
VONTICOPPAL
MYSORE

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy a Pyarelal

693. LETTER TO YASHODHARA DASAPPA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 21, 1945

CHI . YAS HODHA RA,

Tell Dasappa[1] that the climate here is in no way inferior to that of Nandi. We are certainly being looked after.

I hope you are getting on well.

Is Dasappa calm now? If not, he should write to me or you should. The work of Kasturba Smarak Nidhi is difficult. Do it and have it done very carefully.

You will of course work for Hindustani [Prachar Sabha].

Let Ramdas stay as long as he likes.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's husband H. C. Dasappa, President, Mysore Congress Committee
[2] *Vide* also the following item.

694. LETTER TO RAMDAS DASAPPA

May 21, 1945

CHI . RAM DAS,

It is good that you wrote. Though there are slips, do not worry about it. Improve your Hindustani as well as your health. Do not hide anything. If you have the slightest pain, let me know immediately.

Come back whenever you want. You have written about your birthday. May you live long and render plenty of service.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

695. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May 21, 1945

CHI . KRI SHNAC HANDR A,

1. You are right about Balkoba[1]. Along with milk let him take vegetables and fruit. Let him regularly take hip-baths during the day. He should talk as little as possible. If he feels like it and walks a little in the morning, his weight will become stabilized. It can even increase.

I am not writing separately to him.

2. If you study Grimm's law you can discover the laws of variations of script. The study of one science makes the study of another science easier. The same applies in this case. The chart of the scripts is being used here. Wait till I come.

3. If you have a clear idea with regard to newspapers, you will be able to read everything in a short time.

4-5. I have noted what you say about carding.

6. I have fixed periods of one month for the management of the Ashram. Make it two or three months in the light of experience or even right away. Balvantsinha's name has been kept out because he will have to go to Mirabehn for the next two or three months. We will have to take more trouble if we regard servants as brothers.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4571. Also C.W. 5879. Courtesy: Krishnachandra

[1] Balkrishna Bhave

696. LETTER TO ABDUL GHANI DAR

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 21, 1945

BHAI ABDUL GHANI,

If you sent me a wire about the Lahore riots, it is possible I did not reply to it. I did not want to interfere. My silence did not mean I was displeased. On the other hand, it was good that precious lives were laid down for the sake of the country.

Blessings from

BAPU

ABDUL GHANI DAR
LUDHIANA (PUNJAB)

From a copy of the Urdu: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

697. LETTER TO KANAM GANDHI

May 22, 1945

CHI . KAN AM,

I got your postcard today. Manilal and Devdas left for Bombay this morning. You may come whenever you wish to. I will leave Mahabaleshwar for Panchgani on the 31st of this month. It will, therefore, be better if you come on the 1st of June to Panchgani. Nevertheless, if you wish to come to Mahabaleshwar, do so. I hope you are keeping good health. It is cool here, but it cannot be described as chilly. One feels pleasant in the sun. The difference in altitude between this place and Panchgani is 500 ft. But here it rains so heavily that one cannot stay on after the rains start in June.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9517. Courtesy: Kanam Gandhi

698. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 22, 1945

CHI . JAI SUKHL AL,

So Manu has returned there at last, not restored in health but broken both in body and mind. The two react on each other. She is of course responsible for the weakening of both. The atmosphere also may be responsible, but man's strength lies in overcoming his surroundings. I could not teach this to her fully. She is consumed by fear. She herself is the cause of that fear. It has become an occupation with her to listen to others, then get upset and jumpy and start crying, and she studies only when she gets some free time from this. She is filled with the highest spirit of service, is interested in learning and is of loving nature. Like me, she also suffers from amoebiasis and hookworm. I keep the infection under control, but she does not. Do now whatever suggests itself to you as best. She can always come back to me. I will never leave her. But she is free. I trust you are all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./24

699. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

May 22, 1945

CHI . MAN UDI,

I have your letter. I had got your previous one also. I did not get the time to answer it. I am answering this at once. It is all right that you have gone to Karachi. But you must get rid of the amoeba and hook-worm. But how can you manage to do so, if you are returning on the 4th? In any case, do not take that vaid's treatment. If you decide to stay on there, do so with a firm resolution to get rid of your illness. Do not be anxious to appear for the examination. If you can easily manage to read a little, it will be all right.

I can see from your letter that you are consumed by the fear of the surrounding atmosphere. The world will always frighten those who let themselves be frightened. You would, therefore, do well to cast all fear into the sea. The best medicine for that is Ramanama. Why need

he who worships Rama, fear anything else? But this is only a suggestion from me. You did not regain peace of mind even after meeting your sisters. You may come whenever you wish. You need have no fear on that score.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./24

700. LETTER TO SUMATI S. MORARJEE

May 22, 1945

CHI. JAMNA ALIAS SUMATI,

Why should a woman be given a different name when she goes to live with her husband and why not a man? This custom irks me very much. I think I came to know only here that your real name is Jamna.

The reason for writing this letter is the accompanying letter. Give it to the two women if they are there or, if they have left, post it to them. Read it yourself. There is nothing private in it. You made the girls very happy. Were they of any help to you or did they merely treat themselves to the tasty food you offered them? Is it true that you pamper your guests' palate?

How can you now leave Mother? I can, therefore, see you only in Bombay. I like your being so very devoted to service, but I don't like your being delicate in body.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 846

701. LETTER TO KAILAS D. MASTER

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 22, 1945

CHI . KAI LAS,

I have your letter. I will go to Sevagram either by the end of June or the beginning of July. Write again to ask me. If possible I shall arrange for your stay there. In the mean time have Prabhubhai explain to you everything you must do to prepare yourself for the

Ashram life. Learn all the processes of cotton right from separating the cotton from the pods. Spin the finest yarn possible. Observe cleanliness in everything you do. Learn Hindustani, that is to say both the Urdu and Nagari scripts. Learn as much Hindustani as can be understood by everyone.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KAILAS DAHYABHAI
C/O DAHYABHAI V. MASTER
MANDLESHWAR ROAD
BORIVLI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

702. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 22, 1945

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I saw your note at the bottom of the letter from Kailas. Mridulabehn is still here. A few days back I received your letter to Bapa and also that of Chimanlal. Both the letters are good. There is a different version also. I have already received it. If I have the time, I shall find out more. I have noted your programme. You have made the right decision. Amba[1] will like it there and only there will she beable to look after her health. You will shine wherever you go and you will be in demand. So your place is wherever there is work. However, you should think about your family also.

Read the letter[2] I have written to Kailas.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's wife
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

703. LETTER TO BHULABHAI DESAI

MAHABALESHWAR ,
May 22, 1945

BHAI BHULABHAI,

Keep in mind the Chimur prisoners.[1] They must live. It will spoil everything if they are hanged.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

704. SPEECH AT HINDUSTAN SCOUT ASSOCIATION TRAINING CAMP[2]

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 22, 1945

Mahatma Gandhi said that the national song which they had sung to welcome him praised 'Bharatmata' and struck a victorious note but the present time was not the one in which one could indulge in joyous celebrations. India was now in the same plight as Draupadi was at one time and it was a matter to be seriously considered whether that should be an occasion to celebrate. In the song they had sung,there occurred the motto "Do or Die". That should encourage them to carry on the fight for the liberation of the motherland without rest. It was the natural duty of the young to carry on the fight for freedom but at the same time they should not allow the old to take rest.

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-5-1945

[1] In the Central Provinces, a number of persons had been sentenced to death in a case of rioting in which some policemen were killed in the villages of Ashti and Chimur during the Quit India movement. The King had rejected their mercy petition; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 31-3-1945. But a lacuna in the order was discovered by the defence counsel, and the executions were stayed. Later, owing to Gandhiji's efforts, on August 16, 1945, the Viceroy commuted the sentences to life imprisonment.

[2] The camp, organized by Shivaji Troop Boy Scouts of Poona, was addressed by Gandhiji in the evening.

705. LETTER TO LAKSHMI GANDHI

May 22/23, 1945

CHI. LAKSHMI,

I have your letter. I was very glad. Let the new grandson be named Govind and also Mahadev. If you want to keep only one name, let it be the one suggested by Anna[1]. Ba has gone, her love remains. The body has got to perish, but even if it does so the love of Him who dwells in the body cannot die.

Anna left on the 19th. Papa and Narasimhan have got to reach Madras. They are Anna's hands and feet in Madras. Devdas left yesterday.

What will happen to your studies now? Let one of the boys at least occasionally write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2002

706. LETTER TO GULBAI D. MEHTA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 23, 1945

CHI . GUL BEHN[2],

I received your letter too late yesterday to write a reply to catch yesterday's mail. So I am writing this now in the morning after the prayer. You can come here with Ardeshar. However, it is getting quite cold here. If you don't mind that, do come. I will have to go to Panchgani latest by May 31. Do what you think proper.

If Dinshaw has not come knowingly he has done well. I am well. I will certainly call him if there is need and he will have to come. Otherwise Dinshaw's place is there. He should certainly come whenever he feels like it. In view of Ghanshyamdas's telegram, we have to consider what we must do.

Blessings to all the three of you from

BAPU

SHRI GULBAI DINSHAW MEHTA
NATURE CURE CLINIC
POONA CITY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] C. Rajagopalachari
[2] Wife of Dr. Dinshaw Mehta

707. LETTER TO S. SALEMNA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 23, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

The case you relate is very sad. You should do all you can locally. My capacity is too limited to cope with things I used to.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI S. SALEMNA
DEPRESSED CLASSES LEAGUE
VANIVILAS
MANGALORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

708. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

May 23, 1945

CHI . AMA LA[1],

What sort of a person are you? How did you manage to return so soon? You can no doubt get a teaching job.

Khurshedbehn is not with me at present. She is in Panchgani.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. M. SPIEGEL
3 WODEHOUSE ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Worked in Sabarmati Ashram for two years from May 1933, after having been dismissed from Government College, Berlin, being a Jewess; teacher at Santiniketan; Lecturer in German, Elphinstone College, Bombay; Principal, Maharani High School, Baroda

709. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

May 23, 1945

CHI . SUM I,

I have your letter. One should not work too hard for examinations. One can study well only if one does not have such infatuation. A student sometimes forgets the things in which he is to be examined if he studies only for the examination. Are you studying for the examination or for knowledge? An examination is only yardstick, but knowledge is the end [the reality]. Many sit for examinations only to make money— that is a very mean thing to do. Knowledge develops intellect. Your letters sometimes suggest that you learn things by heart only for the sake of an examination and then later on forget them. For the development of intellect you should think over what you have read.

Manilal left yesterday with Devdas. After thinking for a long time he has realized that there would be ore guest less if he kept himself away when there were others to look after me while I was out of Sevagram. Many persons can't stay with me if this argument is correct. He is coming here with Kanam. I have given him the permission. . . . [1]

From the Gujarati original: Sumitra Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

710. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 23, 1945

CHI . NIM U,

I have received your long letter just now. I will not say that you have been lazy and so have saved yourself from writing to me. Today you had no escape from writing. That is as it should be. I love to have letters from all of you but I will not expect them from anyone.

I have a letter from Sumi which I am sending you. I have lovingly rebuked her about the examination.[2] Ask her to send you the

[1] Incomplete in the source, *vide* also the following item.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

letter. Do not send for her there. Her eyes will be harmed. Everything can be done in Delhi. If you want to go and take Usha with you, you may go. Kanam will look after himself. However, I want you not to leave Ramdas. My advice is that you should entrust Sumi to Devdas and Lakshmi. If Sumi can manage without you, let her do so. If you people go, Devdas will certainly have to bear some burden. Lakshmi is very good-natured and affectionate. But her health is delicate. She has just left childbed. It will be a different thing if you go there and take charge of cooking, etc. You will not be able to do that; so your place is in Nagpur with Ramdas. It will be enough if you can make Sumi give up her infatuation for reading. It is not through reading that one can think. What is the advantage of mere cramming? Devdas will manage. Lakshmi can also manage. The doctors in Delhi are good. It is a consolation that Sumi likes being there.

You have to persuade Ramdas. He should continue with Mehta for a long period. That was what he decided when he was here with me. If you wish, you can win him over and make him do what you want. No one else has that power. I had it once. But not now, because I am not able to pay much attention to him. My attention has been divided these days.

Kanam will come and see me either here or at Panchgani. I have a letter from him. I have given him the permission.

Manilal and Devdas left yesterday. Most probably Sushila will not come to the hill station. She will come only to Sevagram.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI NIRMALABEHN GANDHI
[C/O] RAMDAS GANDHI
TOMCO SALES DEPOT
KHALASI LINES, NAGPUR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

711. LETTER TO USHA GANDHI

May 23, 1945

CHI . USH I,

What you wrote to me is all right. The handwriting is also fairly good. Keep on writing to me. No more now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

712. LETTER TO RANJIT ASHER

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 23, 1945

CHI . RAN JIT,

You must know Gujarati. However, you have written good English. What you write, I did not know. My advice is the same as I have already given. You should humbly try to persuade your father. I have not the least doubt that your true happiness lies in accepting my advice. The times are to be thanked for what has happened. There is no need at all for you to lose your head over what has happened or is happening. Do what is proper and that will certainly give you peace.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI R. K. ASHER
ASHER ESTATE
NASIK ROAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

713. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

MAHABALAESHWAR,
May 23, 1945

BAPA,

What you decided was right. I am not waiting to consult Mridula.[1] How can I remember what I told her and why should I? This I know I said: "I will not give my decision without knowing Bapa's opinion." I certainly will not be a party to keeping a large number of persons as paid employees. Therefore I shall comply with your decision.

The doctor has left today.

I would like it if Amba and Prabhudas stayed there. Only yesterday I received a letter from him. His preference appears to be for staying at Hapur. If you can draw him into your work, do so. He is a very useful man. But he has become weak. So for the two together you may have to pay as much as Rs. 200, because Prabhudas will need plenty of milk, fruit, ghee and green vegetables. He has gone through a pretty hard time. In view of his state of health you will have to permit him to go somewhere else in extreme summer. It is possible that Prabhudas will agree to accept a little less. But I would not consider it proper. His daughters too are sensible and, in my view, quite capable. So between all of them I would not consider that salary too high. It is necessary that he should be free of anxiety about the money.

Do not neglect your eyes. Do not spoil your health. I know that you are more careless than I. You have so far got along. You may even be tempted to do more. But you will not benefit by that. "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."[2] Jesus had said this on a different occasion. I do not recollect at the moment its Hindustani or Sanskrit equivalent.

I have filled one sheet of paper.

BAPU

SHRI BAPA
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY, POONA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mridula Sarabhai", 29-4-1945.
[2] *St. Matthew*, IV. 7

714. NOTE TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

May 23, 1945

I had not read the last portion carefully. But I think I have grasped the purport of the whole thing. I do not propose to answer your points. This is what I advise : We must not spend so much time in preparing questions. We must take whatever work we can with ease and be patient with regard to the rest. You do not have to move only with me. I have provided you a great institution. Now it is for you to prove your worth. You must play the main part in winning over Bapa. I might be of help to you, but if you do not like what I do, or my method of doing it, it is difficult for me to say what you should do. Some words of yours have given me that impression. You do not like the Ashram and I have been constantly wondering how anyone who does not like the Ashram can like me. I blame myself for that. It is a case of my being liked but not my work. You alone must sit down at leisure and find a solution. But what is to be done when leisure is something you cannot afford ? How long must I go on writing like this ? A word to the wise should suffice.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11234. Courtesy : Sarabhai Foundation.

715. LETTER TO K. G. GOKHALE

May 23, 1945

I had your letter. Gandhiji says that you should do what Kher says. G. would not be able to collect the money. G. would not be able also to say whether Mr. Polak should or should not be detained. The whole matter should be left to Kher.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

716. LETTER TO AMIYA NATH BOSE

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 23, 1945

BHAI AMIYA,

Your letter suggests that the power scheme according to my calculations is useless.[1] How can I therefore form a committee?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI AMIYA
1 WOODBURN PARK
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

717. LETTER TO HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 23, 1945

Your letter of the 17th. Bapuji has seen it. He says that if you are not in a hurry, you may come after he has settled down in Panchgani. We have to leave Mahabaleshwar on the 31st at the latest. We shall have to leave earlier if it rains. So you may take it that your coming to Mahabaleshwar will be useless.

Yours,

PYARELAL

SHRI HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB
CUTTACK, ORISSA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Amiya Nath Bose", 30-4-1945.

718. LETTER TO GHANSHYAMSINH GUPTA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 23, 1945

BHAI GHANSHYAMSINH,

What should we write to Sidhwa[1]? We should wait a little.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI GANSHYAMSINH GUPTA
SPEAKER
DRUG

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

719. LETTER TO TEJWANTI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 23, 1945

CHI . TEJ WANTI,

Do not ask me hypothetical questions. You may ask me if there is something concrete.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI TEJWANTI
CHARKHA SANGH (PUNJAB BRANCH)
ADAMPUR DOAB
PUNJAB

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] R. K. Sidhwa, leader of the Congress Party in Sind Assembly

720. LETTER TO KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 24, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I have been looking forward to your coming. I have now your note deferring coming for I come there on 31st. So I am sending you letters I kept for you.

On getting the news you have given me I said to myself: "Beware of the Greeks especially when they bring gifts. This may be all unjustified; the relief may be genuine." Let us hope so.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

721. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MOHAN KUMARAMANGALAM[1]

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 24, 1945

I was glad to meet you any time and so I said 'Yes' to Joshi. But these two questions could have been answered in two lines. My correspondence with Joshi was never confidential. In any event it can be published at once. I think I have said as much in one of my letters. I can't hasten Bhulabhai. I have sent him the papers I could. He could give his opinion any day he chose.[2] My fear is that it won't be an award. It would be the opinion of a distinguished lawyer on the papersin my possession. But my own opinion is not formed. I want to pass no hasty judgment. Many honest Congressmen come to me or

[1] This was in reply to a request from Mohan Kumaramangalam on P. C. Joshi's behalf to publish the correspondence that had passed between Gandhiji and P. C. Joshi.

[2] Bhulabhai Desai, who was preoccupied and also not keeping well, was one of the members of a tribunal suggested by the communists to have the charges against them examined. Giving his opinion on August 20, 1945, Desai said that P. C. Joshi had admitted that the war which has ended was a 'people's war' and that since August 9, 1942, the Communist Party was propagating views contrary to that of the Congress.

write to me from the various provinces that communists have no principles save of keeping their party alive and beating their opponents with any stick that came to their hands. I am not going to base my opinion on this evidence either. I dare not condemn you, Batliwala, Joshi or Habib of Lucknow. He was with me for over a month I think. He came for his father[1]. I like him very much, On the whole I agree with Rajaji that you should refuse to put yourself in the dock. I do not want to pass judgment against a political party. I tell friends to be guided by their own knowledge and not by my judgment which may be erring for want of complete evidence.

Correspondence between Mahatma Gandhi and P. C. Joshi, pp. 41-2

722. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

May 24, 1945

CHI . CHI MANLA L,

All the letters received today suggest that you wish to continue as secretary. Well then, do so. But divide the responsibility and do only such work as you can wihtout having to move about. Look after the accounts and such supervisory work as you can. If anyone wishes to be the Manager, let him, and help him. A day has to come when it will be necessary for someone to be the Manager, for I must some day die and so must you. After that someone will have to become the Manager. Your wisdom and, if you wish, mine, also lies in training a person for it while we are still alive. Manage things somehow during our lifetime. . .[2]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10634

723. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

May 24, 1945

CHI . MUN NALAL ,

I got your two letters together. If the position is as you describe it to be, it is your duty to cling to Chimanlal,[3] and to go on doing your work silently without entering into argument with anybody. Silence has been described as possessing nine merits. I go further and say it

[1] Syed Mahmud
[2] Incomplete in the source
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

has nine hundred and ninetynine. You should not get angry, or if at all you want to, you should be angry with yourself. I will arrive there in July. If you need to write to me, send me a slip.

There is another letter from Amtul Salaam regarding Kanchan. Read it. I am, therefore, of the view that if Kanchan has not already arrived there and is keen on staying on where she is, she may certainly do so.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8452. Also C.W. 5579. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

724. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM AND KANCHAN M. SHAH

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 24, 1945

DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. How wonderful Kanchan was so ill all of a sudden, and is now recovered and does not want to leave the place. I am happy that she is well and wants to stay there. You want to know when I shall be going there. Your wish and mine are the same in this matter. But I cannot go over on my own. If God wills it, I shall certainly do so.[2]

CHI . KAN CHAN,

Amtussalaam's second letter is very good. Be firm. I wish that both of you sisters should return only after finishing your work. How nice it would be if you were fully restored to health.

Blessings to both of you from

BAPU

BIBI AMTUSSALAAM
KASTURBA SEVA MANDIR
BORKAMATA, BENGAL

From a copy of the Hindi and Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also the following item.
[2] What follows is in Gujarati.

725. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 24, 1945

CHI . KIS HOREL AL,

I have your letter. I understand about Surendraji. I should like it if he pays me a brief visit. But in a religious or spiritual sense, what is there in such a visit? Why should we spend even one cowrie or one minute on the journey?

How nice it would be if some treatment could do a little good to Gomati. No one has worked for twenty hours at a meeting of the trustees or elsewhere, then why should I do so? Do all the legends spread in this way? No doubt, I did plenty of work. I sat at a stretch for four hours at a meeting of the trustees. But that was enough for me. There is such a difference between four hours and twenty hours. Doctors or no doctors, I should find it impossible toe sit that long. Those days are gone.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

726. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

"MORARJI CASTLE",

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 25, 1945

DEAR AMMAJAN,

I am herewith enclosing copy of an extract from Harry H. Field's book *After Mother India* which a correspondent[1] has sent to Bapu. On the face of it the whole thing seems to be a malicious invention. Bapu knows nothing about it. All the same, since you are mentioned in the extract he has asked me to refer the same to you.

Hoping you are well.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

SMT. SAROJINI NAIDU
HYDERABAD (DN.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] O. M. Thomas; *vide* "Letter to Sarojini Naidu", 25-5-1945.

727. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

May 25, 1945

CHI . LIL I,

Your letter lacks spirit and is worthless. It is only a timetable of your work. I am sending it after signing. You must get rid of your pride. There was nothing to feel shy about in your letter. You explained to me your condition in a simple manner and that is why I used my prerogative. Whatever I think worth keeping confidential, I keep confidential. But a person who has faith in God should never keep his personal matters confidential. Confidential means most personal. "Renounce and enjoy" includes "confidential" also. We may enjoy [a thing] only after renouncing it. If you can't understand this, then I can say that your education has been in vain and without any thinking.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

728. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 25, 1945

BAPA,

I have your letter. You did not strike out "Bombay". This escaped going to Bombay, as I saw "Poona" in the corner. There is no need to write in Hindi if you write in Gujarati. My advice is that you should get the things read out to you and dictate whatever you want to write. For the time being you should not read or write.

Now about Hariji. Your opinion is correct. Even if he has acquired complete mastery, we should let Rameshwaribehn[1] come in. You can write even now. Prabhudas's address: Dahyabhai V. Master, Mandaleshwar Road, Borivli. He had written to me from there about Dahyabhai's daughter[2]. His address was also the same.

BAPU

THAKKAR BAPA
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY, POONA 4

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Rameshwari Nehru, Joint Secretary, Harijan Sevak Sangh
[2] Kailas; "Letter to Prabhudas Gandhi", 22-5-1945.

729. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

May 25, 1945

CHI . MAN ILAL,

It is good that you wrote a postcard. Naraharibhai will see about your luggage. Dinshaw is very gentle, sensitive and quick to take offence. In the course of time that weakness will disappear. At present, there is no need for you to remain absent for my sake. Just now Pyarelal does the massage and bathes me. When he is busy, there is Sushila[1]. I am well. You need not worry about me. Go and see Sushila[2] and do whatever you think proper. I see no harm in your coming to Panchgani. We may assume that, by the time you come, Kanu and Abha also will have come. But you are not a person who would be a burden to anyone. Sushila and the children can certainly come. But do what you think right. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MANILAL GANDHI
C/O MESSRS BACHHARAJ & CO. LTD.
5 MAHATMA GANDHI ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4950

730. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

May 25, 1945

CHI . BAL VANTS INHA,

I have your letter. Let Hoshiari live in peace now and let her busy herself with her work and studies.

What Munnalal is doing about the servants is my idea. Though the cause is good, if we do not act accordingly, we are to blame. The purity of the cause remains unblemished. Munnalal has a number of faults, but he never spares himself. The task is difficult. I want that we should all help him. Let us show the servants by our conduct that they are but our brothers and sisters. Let us do our work. Let us not shirk

[1] Dr. Sushila Nayyar
[2] Addressee's wife

work through laziness. There has been no change in this teaching. Try patiently to understand it. Write to me again and yet again if you do not understand.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1961. Also C.W. 5880. Courtesy: Balvantsinha

731. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

May 25, 1945

CHI, HOSHIARI,

I have your letter. You will do the child good by not going to him. The duration of my absence is very short. In any case I shall reach there in July. Learn much and regard everyone as a member of your family.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

732. LETTER TO PURSHOTTAMDAS TANDON

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 25, 1945

BHAI TANDONJI,

I keep receiving letters in Urdu, Hindi and Gujarati all asking me how I can be both in the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan and the Hindustani [Prachar] Sabha at the same time. They say that according to the Sammelan Hindi alone can be our national language and the Nagari script alone can be given national status, whereas I concede national status both to the Nagari and Urdu scripts and to a language that is neither too Persianized nor too Sanskritized. When I do not accord exclusive national status to the language propagated by the Sammelan and the Nagari script, I ought to get out of the Sammelan. It seems to me a valid argument. Does it not then become my duty to leave the Sammelan? By my doing so people will not be in a dilemma and I shall know where I stand.

Kindly reply early. It being my silence day I myself have

written this letter. But since people find it difficult to read my hand I have had it copied to be sent to you.

I trust you are well.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Rashtrabhashake Prashnapar Gandhiji aur Tandonjika Mahatvapurna Patravyavahar, p. 1

733. LETTER TO CHOITHRAM GIDWANI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 25, 1945

BHAI CHOITHRAM,

I am doing what I can on the basis of your letter. I hope your health is good.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. CHOITHRAM GIDWANI
P. B. 26, KARACHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

734. LETTER TO TULSI

MAHABALESEWAR,
May 25, 1945

CHI . TUL SI,

Your Hindi is not good. The handwriting too is not good. Improve both. Be regular in your food habits and improve your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

735. LETTER TO SHEIKH FARID

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 25, 1945

BHAI FARID,

I have gone through your letters. How can I write? Dr. Patel whom you mention is dead. Now there is one Dr. Jesudasan at the hospital. He is a good man. There is no need of a letter of introduction to him. You may go there. My son Manilal is in India these days. May you get well.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Urdu: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

736. LETTER TO DR. DINSHAW K. MEHTA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 25, 1945

CHI . DIN SHAW,

I received your letter just now in the evening. I understand about Mavalankar. Our duty is to pick up a gem even if it is lying in garbage heap and to cherish it. I have seen with my own eyes how thousands of maunds of rubble is dug up from the bowels of the earthin order to extract a few ounces of diamond. The question of money is different. Mavalankar joined us because his father is very generous and also very particular.

You have given a correct reply to Shah. You will have kept the money from him as fees. I have of course written to him that he should send you the money. I was glad you did not come. If I fall ill, I will call you; but if I am all right I can do with any sort of massage I get. Rather than have massage from you I should prefer your staying there to look after the patients and perfect the institution. I do not want to eat up the plant to its root because it tastes sweet.

I had right away written[1] to Gulbehn that she could come. Now the weather here has also improved. It is always so at the end of May.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Gulbai D. Mehta", 23-5-1945.

However, she may come either here or to Panchgani.

Would it not be better if I dealt with the matter of Ghanshyamdas after you came?

Blessings to all the three of you from

BAPU

DINSHAW MEHTA

NATURE CURE CLINIC, POONA CITY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

737. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

Unrevised *May 26, 1945*

CHI. AMRIT,

So the restrictions are removed! I am for making speeches! Nothing much and the sting is still there. However, you are free to come to me when you are disengaged from the tasks there of which I learn from your letters to Pyarelal and Sushila. Of course you could not have Manu in the circumstances you mention. Anyway she has gone to her father in Karachi. I do not know how she is faring there. You need not worry.

Why must you break the diet rule you know? Beware! ! !

Am well.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Letters from Pyarelal and Sushila are enclosed herewith.[1]

From the original: C.W. 4156. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7791

738. LETTER TO MANIBEHN NANAVATI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 26, 1945

CHI. MANIBEHN,

I have your letter. It is good that Aruna came and saw you. Both of them are grown up now. You must lovingly give them your advice and then be content with whatever they do. Charity begins at home. Our generosity outside is bound to be deficient if we are miserly with our own children. This is only by way of advice. Bring both of them

[1] The postscript is in Gujarati

to Panchgani when you return. We shall meet. Do not worry if I am observing silence then. We shall see when you come.

I understand about Swami.

I have known Mridula ever since she was a child. She is hard-working. She is full of the spirit of service. But she has no regard at all for her health. I consider that wrong.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MANIBEHN
NANAVATI
PAHALGAM, KASHMIR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

739. LETTER TO MANJULA M. MEHTA

May 26, 1945

CHI. MANJULA,

You have fallen ill and . . .[1] it is this that makes me unhappy. Why should you fall ill here? I don't like it either that you are going away. But I know that I cannot keep you with me. That hurts me.

You plead Magan's[2] case before me. He has got education, but learnt no wisdom. He will learn by and by. Why need I be displeased? But his lack of understanding pains me. It will gradually disappear. You should help in that. He is the only one among the brothers who can bring credit to the Doctor[3].

All of you should soon get well and stay well.

I read your poems. The thoughts are good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1033. Courtesy: Manjula M. Mehta

[1] A word is indecipherable.
[2] Maganlal P. Mehta, addressee's husband
[3] Dr. Pranjivandas Jagjivandas Mehta, addressee's father-in-law

740. LETTER TO GULBAI TATA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 26, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I was very sorry to learn that you had a fall. Get moving about soon. I too do not go out for walks. I take a walk in the plain stretch in the courtyard. I may go out today. I thank you for your gift. I cannot read either English or any other musical notation. You have not sent the words.

Dr. Sushilabehn will give you this letter.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

SISTER GULBAI TATA
FOUNTAIN HOTEL
MAHABALESHWAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

741. DISCUSSION WITH G. J. M. LONGDEN[1]

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 26, 1945

It is understood that Maj. Longden, among other things, raised the questions of Dominion Status v. Independence, the Hindu-Muslim question, responsibility for the August 1942 disturbances and possibility of Congress co-operation in the war effort.

Mahatma Gandhi is said to have replied that the question of Dominion Status v. Independence could be decided after the principle of independence for India had been accepted by the British Government.

On the Hindu-Muslim question, Mahatma Gandhi is understood to have said that Hindus who had been converted to Islam could not claim separate nationhood by virtue of a change of religion.

[1] Conservative Party candidate for the Parliamentary Division of Morpeth (Northumberland) in the British general elections. According to the A. P. I. report, Longden "was told by Gandhiji that his vow of silence prevented a discussion but that written answers could be given to written questions".

As regards the August 1942 disturbances, Mahatma Gandhi is said to have declared that the Government themselves have absolved him of charge of "treachery" and of trying to assist the Japanese.

Mahatma Gandhi had informed Maj. Longden that though he had no objection to the publication of the questions and answers he thought it would be inadvisable to publish them at this stage and Maj. Longden agreed.

The Bombay Chronicle, 28-5-1945

742. FOREWORD TO "GITAGITMANJARI"

I have discovered no easy way of enjoying the music of songs. I cannot, therefore, easily drink in the joy that they are capable of giving. It has happened sometimes that when a song was sung in a manner I found sweet, I fully enjoyed it and also understood its meaning. Sometimes I myself have been able to hum the tune of a song, and then I have both fully enjoyed the music and understood the meaning.

Jugatram[1] has requested such a person—with much hesitation—to say a few words by way of blessings. "With much hesitation" because he knows the value of my time, as also my limitations.

If, in spite of that, he has requested my blessings, the reason is that I look upon the Gita as a lexicon of the soul. I have not been able to read the *Manjari* from beginning to end. But I have carefully glanced through it. I liked the work. The author's labour is evident. Jugatram has, in his own manner, put into song what he has liked in the different chapters of the *Gita*. The glossary following the Preface in the *Manjari*, the selected passages from *Gitabodh*[2] and *Anasaktiyog*, which are relevant to the context, and the relevant verses from the *Gita* are likely to prove useful to a serious student of the work. Jugatram has not come to the end of his journey. He has come as far as Chapter 12. Let us hope that he will be able to complete the journey. He has done well also to include, after the 60th *manjari*, the songs written for Kakasaheb's *Be Keri*[3].

[1] Jugatram Dave

[2] *Vide* "Letters on Gita", 11-11-1930.

[3] Literally, "Two Mangoes"; a Gujarati play written by D. B. Kalelkar; the follow ing item.

The student should also know that Jugatram practises the teaching of the *Gita* as he has understood it, and is one of the few who draw from the fountain of milk unceasingly flowing from it. Hence anybody who wishes to enjoy the fragrance of this *Manjari* should touch it only if he wishes to practise the teaching of the *Gita* and work in the spirit of non-attachment, or derive strength for such work.

MAHABALESHWAR, May 27, 1945

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 19336. Also *Gitagitmanjari*

743. LETTER TO JUGATRAM DAVE

May 27, 1945

CHI . JUG ATRAM ,

You have given me a good job indeed. Here is the Foreword[1], or whatever you care to call it. It took more than four hours of my time to write it. For me that is too much. But I had no choice. I like such jobs, but I am no longer fit for them. The work which I have planned to do here takes most of my time, or rather all the time that I get. My purpose in writing this is not to reproach you for giving me a job like this but, through you, to stop others from doing the same. How can I reproach you? And then you have written *Manjari* only to help me in my work. Isn't that so? This is no mere rhetoric. You have called the ninth *manjari* "Samata Yoga" and the 40th "Samata". You will observe that the word 'samata' bears two different meanings in the two places. I would call the ninth "Samata", dropping "Yoga", and the 40th "Samatva" or "Samabhava". The reason is plain. The discussion of Chapter 12 ends at the 60th *manjari*. I see from the contents that you have included something from *Be Keri.* There should be some mention of it, on p. 152[2]. Think over it. If something can be done about it, do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 19336

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The first song from *Be Keri* occurs on, this page of *Gitagitmanjari*.

744. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

"MORARJI CASTLE", MAHABALESHWAR,
May 27, 1945

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY
HOME DEPARTMENT
BOMBAY

DEAR SIR,

I refer you to my letter[1] of 6th May, 1944, written from the Detention Camp.

Up till recently there has been no hitch about friends and relatives going to the *samadhis* of the two departed ones, my wife and Shri Mahadev Desai. But a hitch occurred recently. Tactful handling made devotion fairly possible during fixed hours. Now comes the rumour that H. H. the Aga Khan's Palace is about to be occupied by the Military and in that event, devotion may not be permitted at all. I can only hope that the fear is wholly unjustified.

In my letter of 6th May, 1944, to the Government I reduced my contention to writing to the effect that

> by reason of the cremation of the corpses of Shri Mahadev Desai and then my wife, the place of cremation which has been fenced off becomes consecrated ground. The party has daily visited the ground twice and offered floral tributes to the departed spirits and said prayers. I trust that the plot will be acquired by the Government with the right of way to it through H. H. the Aga Khan's grounds so as to enable those relatives and friends who wish to visit the cremation ground whenever they like.

To this the following reply was received:

> I am to inform you that it is legally impossible for Government to acquire the site compulsorily under the Land Acquisition Act. Government considers that the matter is one for private negotiations between you and His Highness the Aga Khan. I am to add, however, that your request has been communicated to His Highness the Aga Khan and is now understood to be
>
> under his consideration. Government understands that he has no objection, in the mean while, to the relatives of Mrs. Gandhi and Mr. Mahadev Desai and any other persons suggested by you going through the Palace

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of Bombay", 6-5-1944.

grounds to the place of cremation on the understanding that this is by his leave and licence.

I do hope that, no matter who occupies or owns the palace, the consecrated ground on which the two *samadhis* stand will be protected and reserved for devotion by the friends and relatives of the families.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3940

745. LETTER TO HARSHADA DIWANJI

May 27, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. It is a very good practice to give money for Harijan work or some such cause on occasions such as a birth or an engagement or a dear one's death. I have received your cheque. I will go to Poona at the end of June or around that time. If you come then you will be able to keep your vow. If possible we shall go to the *samadhi* together.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI HARSHADABEHN DIWANJI
KHAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10224. Courtesy: Harshada Diwanji

746. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 27, 1945

CHI . PRA BHA,

You were released and the restrictions on Rajkumari were lifted. I got news of both together. But that did not make me happy. The reason is exactly what you write. I received your wire yesterday and the letter today. How can you be blamed if you wrote in pencil because there was no other help? Even so your handwriting is very good and well-formed. It was your duty to go to Father. It was good you went there. Come here after you are able to leave the place. If you get permission to see Jayaprakash only during that time—it is

your duty to go there. Your next duty is to come to me. You will stay here only as long as it is necessary. So come soon. I will reach Panchgani on the 31st. Mahabaleshwar is only a little higher up. Why do you feel shy of spectacles? Khurshedbehn is at Panchgani. More when we meet. Is Father all right? Convey my blessings to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PRABHAVATIBEHN
[C/O] VISHWANATH PRASAD, BIHAR BANK
LAHERIA SARAI P. O.
DARBHANGA, BIHAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

747. LETTER TO GIRIRAJ KISHORE BHATNAGAR

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 27, 1945

CHI . GIR IRAJ,

I had given you a prompt reply.[1] This is the second letter. What you are doing is good. I was happy to hear about the children. I had made a few more inquiries. I hope your health is perfectly good. I shall go to Panchgani on the 31st. Nanavati has reached Mysore.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI GIRIRAJ
HINDUSTANI PRACHAR CLASS
ENGLISH SCHOOL
NAPAD, *via* ANAND

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Giriraj Kishore Bhatnagar", 6-5-1945.

748. LETTER TO BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

May 28, 1945

MY DEAR BHARATAN,

Your letter and the book.[1] Appasamy came, left the book and went away. I have not met him. I wonder if he will seek me out and meet me though I am silent the whole day till evening prayer!

You need not apologize for sending me the book. I must read it. I glanced at it, as it came into my hands. How does it differ from your description of socialism which you say centres round society and its needs and villagism which you say centres round the village and its wants? Do you mark any difference? Is not village and its welfare the same as society and its needs? Is not the difference this: socialism includes violence as a measure to achieve it, villagism excludes it?

My English is not perfect. It may be relatively better than Hindustani. I must try to make it equal to my English, if it is not. I reach the masses only through Hindustani however imperfect it may be, never through English, however perfect it may be. If you admit this, the *Patrika* would be only in Hindustani and the provinces will render it in the provincial languages, the people thereof will understand. You may have an English translation of necessary extracts for the foreign reader. This can happen only when both of you see the point and resolve to write in Hindustani however imperfect it may be. I migrate to Panchgani on 31st May.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Bharatan Kumarappa", 21-5-1945.

749. LETTER TO NARGIS CAPTAIN

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 28, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

Your letter came on yesterday.

Both Pyarelal and Narahari had been to the place. They do not think much of it. The work done is make believe. It is a poor house giving charity. And from what I understand Mahabaleshwar owing to its heavy rainfall is not the place to hold such an institution. Able-bodied poor may live in the place and even thrive. More when we meet.

There was no letter from Bul yesterday. Of course, she will be with me, if and when she likes.

Love to you all.

BAPU

[PS.]

Tell B. I have just had a letter from her. It does not require an immediate reply.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

750. LETTER TO RAMANLAL SHAH

May 28, 1945

CHI . RAM ANLAL ,

I got your letter only today. The description you have given is good. I like your taking charge of the kitchen work. Be steady. Gradually learn everything about the prayers, etc. I have known you as a silent worker. You can shine wherever you live. I am of the view, however, that for making one into a true servant in spite of one's shortcomings there is no institution which can equal the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Ramanlal Shah Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also C.W. 5882

751. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

May 28, 1945

CHI . MUN NALAL ,

I got your letter. You may do what you like regarding Kanchan. I have done all I could, and have written and explained everything. You seem to have given up your 'charge'[1]. Do what you can now. I hope the management of the ashram will not completely break up. I shall not be able to give any more guidance from here. The work has become very heavy. I must, therefore, select only what is absolutely necessary and attend to it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8451. Also C.W. 5580. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

752. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

May 28, 1945

CHI . AMA LA,

Your letter is very good. Never again be so foolish. You are quite a grown-up person. Be calm and collected. About farming and cattle, write to Satis Babu, Sodepur Khadi Pratishthan, via Calcutta. He knows much more than I do.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. MARGARETE SPIEGEL
3 WODEHOUSE ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Gandhiji uses the English word.

753. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

MAHABALESHWAR ,
May 28, 1945

CHI . CHI MANLA L,

I have received a complaint that the wood from which cupboards and other things for the hospital were made was of inferior quality as well as costly. Is there any truth in it?

I was sorry to read about Munnalal. He is a very good worker but is not able to control his temper. Do what you can. I sometimes feel that it would be good if I returned there soon. But then I persuade myself otherwise.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

754. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS ASAR

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 28, 1945

CHI . LAK SHMID AS,

I was pained to read your letter dated May 19, 1945, to Jajuji. How did your health get so bad? You must never take too much work upon yourself. Get well. You can. It will be good if you suggest more than one name for the post of secretary Write to me at Panchgani. I shall be there on the 31st.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI LAKSHMIDAS ASAR
GRAMODYOG KHADI HAAT
BHADRA, AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

755. DRAFT LETTER FOR CHAMPA R. MEHTA

May 28, 1945

Write to her as follows :

Maganbhai and others went yesterday. If they are willing to have an arbitrator, it does not mean that Gandhi will be the arbitrator. It is beyond his strength. He is willing to entrust the matter to a suitable arbitrator. Gandhiji advises that a case should be prepared for arbitration. It will be be no use your coming to Panchgani.

Yours sincerely

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

756. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 28, 1945

CHI . CHA ND,

I have your letter. What can I say about your getting married? I can only indicate the path. I have not the right, nor has anyone else, to do anything more. This is a matter of the heart. Even you yourself cannot go against it. No woman can at one and the same time both bear children and be of service. Of course bearing children can also become a kind of service. I am returning Father's letter, You will certainly go to him. Hear what everyone says and then obey the dictates of your heart.

It will be all right if you reach Sevagram on the 9th June. Sushilabehn will write more. You are not a small girl at all. So, in everything, you do whatever seems proper to you.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

CHANDRANI
[C/O] VIYOGI HARI
HARIJAN NIVAS
KINGSWAY [CAMP], DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the following item.

757. LETTER TO SATYAVATI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 28, 1945

CHI. SATYAVATI,

I have your letter. I feel happy even if I hear that you are just a little better. Chand can stay there as long as she wishes. You can detain her. See the letter[1] I have written to Chand about her marriage. I need not repeat it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am leaving for Panchgani on the 31st. In fact the two places are much the same.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

758. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 28, 1945

CHI. JAIRAMDAS,

I have your letter. The house in Panchgani is too small for my large family. I am therefore happy when members of my family make their own arrangements. This does not mean that you, Devi[2] or Premi[3] are not to come. What I mean is that if you can accommodate yourselves with someone in Panchgani, you should do so. I hope all are well.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
JNANGHAR
15TH STREET, KHAR
BOMBAY-21

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Addressee's wife and daughter
[3] *ibid*

759. LETTER TO M. S. KELKAR

MAHABALESHWAR ,
May 28, 1945

BHAI ICE,

I have your letters. Balkrishna is not satisfied. Dev has borrowed a little from you. For the rest he is carrying on on his own. Hoshiaribehn too is not wholly satisfied. I merely caution you. A doctor who finds fault with his patient is not a doctor at all. . . .[1] I shall be very happy if Hari-ichchha gets well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

760. LETTER TO GHANSHYAMSINH GUPTA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 28, 1945

BHAI GHANSHYAMSINH,

I like your letter. I am also going on with the work. The important thing is whether the local people can hold out or not.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI GHANSHYAMSINH GUPTA
SPEAKER
DRUG

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] A sentence here is obscure.

761. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 28, 1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I have your letter. What you have sent to Lala Ramswarup by way of donation is all right. Send it to the Trustees.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SHYAMLALJI
KASTURBA SMARAK
SCINDIA HOUSE
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

762. LETTER TO SHANTA

May 28, 1945

CHI . SHA NTA,

Your beautiful letter is lying before me. It may not be so in appearance but the account it contains is indicative of your success. One can say that true adult education is being imparted if the wells are kept in good order, houses are fitted with windows and there is light in the rooms.

The new economics you have indicated is quite good. If we succeed in labour banks, then the success of grain banks, etc., is within our reach.

You must maintain your health. You will be able to do that if you do your work with detachment. It is your primary duty to act in this manner. You can never give to the people what you do not have.

May God give you strength and success.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

763. LETTER TO SAILENDRA NATH CHATTERJEE

May 28, 1945

CHI . SAI LEN,

Write to Dr. Krishnavarma intimating the date. Vina is not needed at Malad or anywhere else. She must go to Sevagram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10392. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

764. LETTER TO SARAYU DHOTRE

May 28, 1945

CHI . SAR AYU,

I have your letter. It was proper that I should have written to Rameshwardasji.

I told you your duty. It is a matter of the heart for everyone. It did not mean that I would abandon you and not do what I can and I, though a pauper, would live like a rich man. The path of duty is a razor's edge.

It is just as well that Vatsala[1] is with you.

Keep writing to me. It will be good if Mohan[2] recovers.

I suppose for the present you will be staying on there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 838. Courtesy: Sarayu Dhotre

[1] Addressee's sister and son

[2] *ibid*

765. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May 28, 1945

CHI . KRI SHNAC HANDR A,

Do not worry about Balkoba's discharge. It is an old disease. Do what you can to cure it. Keep writing to me.

I have suggested[1] the use of Grimm's Law with regard to the script.

The letter from Ramdas (May 14, 1945) is nice. He can only argue thus. He will never give up khadi. But he cannot easily forget his experience. Shriman has taken his argument to the extreme. It is impossible today. Ramdas does not know the whole of India directly or indirectly. It is not his fault. One must be acquainted with the situation in India in order to make a scientific study. The situation about which he is talking is due to the invasion from the West. There can only be violence at the root of Ramdas's statement. If non-violence has to prevail, many things will have to be carried on without steam power, etc.

That there should be big factories run by the people for big industries is a matter of regret, not of joy. In brief, Ramdas will have to think very deeply. I know that ultimately Ramdas will be able to give up his attachment.

You have got to go to Nagpur. Go there and get lots of experience.

Send this letter or a copy of it to Ramdas.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Send the letters of Raman and Shantabehn to them.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4572

[1] Addressee's sister and son

766. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHASTRI

May 28, 1945

BHAI HIRALAL SHASTRI,

I have your letter.

I am not at all satisfied about Ratan Devi. She has only been exploited. You yourself should have given the reply. Ratan Devi must surely be regretting that she does not know English. What does it matter if the editor brings out an English paper ?[1]

Do not involve me in the politics there. I wish to remain aloof.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Hiralal Shastri", 10-5-1945.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

PYARELAL'S STATEMENT[1]

Gandhiji, having seen it, says that he never sent any such or other circular to Congress workers or committees in any or all the Provinces. The statement that has appeared in the Press to that effect is, therefore, wrong. He holds the view, and has shared it with correspondents, that as long as the Congress President and his colleagues are in prison, Congressmen must act on their own initiative and judgment and no individual or group or assembly, whatever name they give to themselves, will have the authority to act in the name or on behalf of the Congress organization. They are entitled to and bound to act as they deem it best in the interests of the cause for which the Congress stands, but they do so on their own authority and responsibility and cannot use the name of the Congress to enforce their decision. Gandhiji adds that such is his individual opinion.

The Bombay Chronicle, *11-5-1945*

[1] *Vide* p. 123.

1. TELEGRAM TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 29, 1945

RAMESHWARI NEHRU
WARRIS ROAD
LAHORE

IF THEY WENT FOR VACATION YOU NEED NOT GO BUT USE YOUR JUDGMENT.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

2. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

May 29, 1945

MY DEAR C. R.,

Yours written on the train.

I am overwhelmed with work. Hence the delay, if delay it may be called.

I agree with you about the existence of the evil. My diffculty is as to the way to deal with it. I want you to depend upon me to do so as soon as I see the way. Nothing will then stop me. Nor am I unvigilant.

I am glad you liked your stay in Mahabaleshwar.

I hope Papa and Narasimhan came to you at once and that you are doing well.

I am on your latest pamphlet[1].

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2106

[1] Presumably *Reconciliation*

3. LETTER TO POTTI SRIRAMULU

May 29, 1945

DEAR SRIRAMULU[1],

It is more honest to sell your yarn for the required quantity of khadi and take your food from your beggings and devote the rest to the Harijan cause. Let the people know your worth.

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

Temple entry is not the only way to remove untouchability; it is one of the many ways all of which have to be taken.

From a photostat: G.N. 106

4. NOTE TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

May 29, 1945

BAPA,

This telegram has been received. I have given the reply[2] as above.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

5. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

May 29, 1945

CHI. SITA,

Your handwriting is good. write to everybody in the same way. Equally good handwriting for everyone. *Shivir agni*[3] seems all right.

[1] A Congressman of Nellore who worked for the cause of untouchability; he fasted unto death for the formation of a separate Andhra State in 1953

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Rameshwari Nehru", 29-5-1945; also "Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar".

[3] Camp fire

You can say that on that day we had lighted *shivir agni* all over the place.

Blessings to all from

BAPU

CHI. SITA GANDHI
NANABHAI MASHRUWALA'S BUNGALOW
AKOLA, BERAR

From a photostat' of the Gujarati: G.N. 4951

6. LETTER TO JAYAKUNVAR V. DESAI

May 29, 1945

CHI. JAYA[1],

I have your letter.

You may, by all means, marry away Chi. Chandu[2]. Both seem to be worthy of each other. I cannot, however, welcome this marriage. I feel for that abandoned lady. How will she take it? Manilal is in Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./23

7. LETTER TO KRISHNAVARMA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 29, 1945

BHAI KRISHNAVARMA,

I have your letter of the 20th. You can certainly let uncle read my letters. We all wish that he should get well. For that he should live under your care till he recovers completely and should do whatever you ask him to do. I hope his health is fast improving.

Sailen should come to you in a few days. He will write directly to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. KRISHNAVARMA
NATURE CURE CLINIC
MALAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Gandhiji's niece, sister of Jaisukhlal A. Gandhi
[2] Chandrakala, addressee's daughter

8. LETTER TO NANJI KALIDAS

May 29, 1945

BHAI NANJI,

I have your letter. Shantabehn had been here. Now she has gone to Panchgani to make preparations. Neither you nor anyone from your family need come here for my sake. Shantabehn is quite capable of managing everything all by herself. Then, too, I have a big party with me. I leave here on the 31st. Do not worry about me. Look after your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHETH NANJI KALIDAS
MAHARANA MILLS
PORBUNDAR, KATHIAWAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

9. LETTER TO RANCHHODDAS

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 29, 1945

BHAI RANCHHODDAS,

I have gone through your English letter. I do not want to get involved with the questions raised therein. Had you met me I would have spent some time in talking to you. How can I prevent you from sending to the Press the questions you have raised? What is the significance of those questions without my replies? Hope you are well.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the. Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

10. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 29, 1945

BAPA,

1. I have your letter. I cannot fall in line with Sir Purushottamdas's opinion. The office should never be in Bombay. However, I do not insist on anything. It is you who have to think over it.

2. It will be very good if some concrete work is taken up. I have welcomed Devdas's suggestion. I have also said that he should demonstrate it in practice. I have already expressed my opinion that "impatience dose not make a mango tree bear fruit''[1]. The work is new. It is like injecting life into a corpse.

3. The farther the money is kept from the shadow of the Government, the better. I have no objection if you keep it with some good firm.

4. I do not want to interfere in small things and also in the schemes. In fact I should have bothered myself only with the principles.

5. What you write about Kamle is correct.

BAPU

SHRI THAKKAR BAPA
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY POONA CITY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

11. LETTER TO SHAMALDAS GANDHI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 29, 1945

CHI. SHAMALDAS,

I have received both of your letters. It is all right that you wrote to me a long letter. If the hopes you entertain are fulfilled, then mine also will be fulfilled. Your father[2] in his last letter had entrusted all of you to me. He had especially high hopes of Ranchhod[3] but he wrote

[1] A Gujarati saying
[2] Lakshmidas Gandhi, Gandhiji's brother
[3] Ranchhoddas, addressee's brothers

quite a lot about you and Shanti[1]. I never met Ranchhod. Let us see how Shanti ultimately fares. For the present I have pinned my hopes on you.

B1essings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

12. LETTER TO B. JAGANNATHDAS

May 29, 1945

BHAI JAGANNATHDAS,

I have your letter. Come over to Panchgani any time you want. It will give me even greater pleasure if Diwan Bahadur also comes. You should understand of course that I shall be staying in somebody's house at Panchgani. The house is not big. You will therefore have to make arrangements for your lodging somewhere else. Continue the practice of writing in Hindustani.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9760. Courtesy: B. Jagannathdas

13. LETTER TO PIR ILAHIBUKSH

May 29, 1945

BHAI PIR SAHEB,

I have your letter[2]. Perhaps you know that I know the Urdu script. There is very little difference between Sindhi and Urdu scripts. You must also be knowing that I call Hindustani that language which rural Hindus and Muslims of North India speak and which they write in the Nagari or Urdu scripts. So, if I may advise you, I would suggest that you teach Hindustani to Hindu and Muslim boys in all the schools in both the scripts. It is an old thing but did not make much progress. Now an association has come into being which propagates this scheme.[3]

Yours,

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Santtilal, addressee's brother.

[2] Asking what language should be taught in Sind and how

[3] At the end there is the following instruction in Gujarati: "Give a reply on these lines and get my signature."

14. LETTER TO SUSHILA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 29, 1945

CHI. SUSHILA,

You must firmly refuse to marry the person whom your parents want you to marry.

Marry the man with whom you are so much in love after informing your parents. Do not seek my blessings. My advice and hope would be that both of you should devote yourselves to service and forget each other. I know it is difficult.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

[C/O] SHRI GURUPRASAD SRIVASTAVA
R. M. S. OFFICE
CHARBAGH JUNCTION
LUCKNOW

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

15. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 29, 1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I have received your letter about the office. I agree. I understand Wardha to mean Wardha proper or places around it. The reason is clear.

M. K. GANDHI

SHYAMLAL
KASTURBA TRUST OFFICE
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

16. LETTER TO MOHAMMED HAMID-UD-DIN

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 29, 1945

BHAI MOHAMMED HAMID-UD-DIN,

I have your letter. I am very sorry to know that out of your eight children only one, Masud, now four years old, is alive. May Cod give him a long life. May your wish that your son Masud should render service to the country and devote his life to furthering Hindu-Muslim unity bear fruit. Why do you write to one like me in English? And why does your printed address on the letter-paper have to be in English?

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI HAMID-UD-DIN KHAN
MAHARAJA'S COLLEGE
JAIPUR

From a copy of the Urdu: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

17. INTERVIEW TO DENTON J. BROOKS JR.[1]

MAHABALESHWAR,
[On or before *May 30, 1945*][2]

QUESTION: Gandhiji, is there any special message you would care to send to the Negro people of America?

ANSWER: My life is its own message. If it is not, then nothing I can now write will fulfil the purpose.

When asked to comment on the probable trend of the race relations, Mr. Gandhi said:

My faith burns brighter today, even brighter than it has in the

[1] According to the source, the interviewer, a Negro journalist, was Far Eastern correspondent of *Chicago Defender*, in which the interview appeared on June 10, 1945. Brooks reported: " . . . in the exclusive interview given to me last week . . . at . . . Morarjee Castle, Mahabaleshwar . . . Gandhiji was observing silence, with the exception of an hour after evening prayers. . . . I asked questions and he hurriedly jotted down his answers."

[2] Brooks reported that "later in the evening" he had attended the "prayers". Gandhiji reached Panchgani on May 31, 1945, in the evening.

past; we are fast approaching a solution to roublesome race problems.

This he feels will be accomplished in spite of present-day discouraging symptoms. And he still feels that the best weapon for use by underprivileged peoples is non-violence.

Pointing to his recent statement[1] made at the beginning of the San Francisco Conference, he indicated that India's freedom was closely identified with the welfare of all other under-privileged peoples. At that time he had said:

The freedom of India will demonstrate to all exploited races of the earth that their freedom is very near and that in no case will they be exploited.

The Hindu, 15-6-1945

18. DRAFT FOREWORD TO "GITA ANI GITAI"

I have quite a few co-workers who are more or less exclusively engaged in doing my work and who, therefore, have a claim on me. However, such a claim should not be made in so many words; otherwise I would not be able to do the work which I ought to do. Kundarji asked me to write a Foreword for *Gitai ani Gitai* and *Gitadhyayasangati*. How could I say 'No' to him? I agreed and so it became my duty to read *Gitadhyayasangati* and Kundarji's Preface. This took away one hour of my time. The work will suffer if I let my hours go thus and the *Gita* will cease to be my spiritual dictionary.[2]

The beauty of *Gitai* is that its meaning and music are rendered[3] in Marathi in such a way that those who do not know the original *Gita* can enjoy reading it as they would the original.

M. K. GANDHI

MAHABALESHWAR, May 30, 1945

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Staement to the Press",17-4-1945.

[2] Between this and the next paragraph, in the source, appears the Foreword to *Gitadhyayasangati*; the following item.

[3] By Vinoba Bhave

19. FOREWORD TO "GITADHYAYASANGATI"

Vinoba has been my co-worker ever since the Ashram at Kochrab[1] was set up. He has done plenty of work that I wanted him to do or that which was dear to me. Take for instance *Gitadhyay-asangati*. I had asked for a little, Vinoba gave me much. The readers should know that the idea of reciting the *Gita* in fourteen days and then in seven days first occurred to me in Yeravda Prison. I told Vinoba of what I had in mind and asked for his approval and also his suggestions. In reply he sent me *Gitadhyayasangati*. By having this before him the reader who wants to concentrate on the *Gita* and put its teaching into practice will[2] be benefited.

MAHABALESHWAR, May 30, 1945

[From Hindi]

Gitadhyayasangati

20. TELEGRAM TO ASAF ALI

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 30, 1945

BARRISTER ASAF ALI
KUCHA CHELLAN
DELHI

WIRE EXACT CONDITION. SORRY YOU ARE ILL.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Near Ahmedabad, in May 1915
[2] The draft Foreword here adds: "I am convinced"

21. LETTER TO SUDHIR GHOSH

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 30, 1945

MY DEAR SUDHIR,

I have your interesting letter. I am in Panchgani till the end of June. Dr. John Everton will certainly be able to see me in Panchgani during June, any afternoon. Of course I am silent but that should not matter. Of course he will give me previous information.

Love to you both.

BAPU

SHRI SUDHIR GHOSH
I UPPER WOOD STREET
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

22. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 30, 1945

CHI. MIRA,

This is just to ask you not to worry about help. Bapa says he won't find the man to suit you. Balvantsinha can come only after I reach Sevagram. Ramprasad won't leave you till B. can join you. Meanwhile do as you sing "Rock of ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee"[1].

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABEHN
KISAN ASHRAM
BAHADARABAD P. O.
JWALAPUR
NEAR HARDWAR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] A hymn by A. M. Toplady (1740-78) included in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*

23. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

May 30, 1945

CHI. VALJI,

Bapa is very busy. He is not like me. If I don't get a man, I can beg for services. His eyes are weak. He would need someone to write in Gujarati and Hindi. If you or some boys or anybody else can help him, go and meet him and tell him so. At present he is in the Servants of India Society of Poona. The help is to be given there. It would be better if someone who is known was available.

Please let me know if there is any book in Marathi or Gujarati on veterinary science.

Tomorrow [we leave for] Panchgani.

Blessings from

BAPU

PROF. VALJI G. DESAI
GANESH VADI
FERGUSSON COLLEGE ROAD
POONA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10227. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

24. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

May 30, 1945

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I saw what you wrote at the bottom of Vinodini's letter. How did you get dysentery? The ideal diet is that which improves one's health day by day. Do you think there is some defect in your diet somewhere? You yourself should discover it. I am glad indeed that Manu has gone there. She will continue to cause me worry till she gets completely well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI JAISUKHLAL GANDHI
SIND MARKET NO. 35
MAHATMA GANDHI ROAD
KARACHI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./24

25. LETTER TO NANDLAL PATEL

May 30, 1945

CHI. NANDLAL,

Your letter of the 30th April reached me on the 5th May. I am able to reply to it only today. I get news about Hari-ichchha[1] practically every alternate day. She is always in my thoughts. How nice it would be if she survives. God's will shall prevail. The remedy also will be found in the same way. Just now I can think of no one except Dr. Kelkar. He is a fine man.

I shall be reaching there only in July. Write to me again. How does Hari-ichchha herself feel?

Look after the houses there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9253. Also C.W. 2716. Courtesy: Nandlal Patel

26. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

May 30, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have not been able to reply to one of your letters. You did well in sending the money to Ramaswami for his parents for the months of April and May. I think nothing is left now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10635

[1] Addressee's daughter

27. LETTER TO BURJORJI F. BHARUCHA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 30, 1945

BHAI BHARUCHA,

I have your postcard. Please understand that it is improper to drag me into such activities.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

BURJORJI FARAMJI BHARUCHA
BOMBAY-1

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

28. LETTER TO AMIN

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 30, 1945

CHI. AMIN,

That you make efforts is itself proof of the presence of both the virtues in you. Man's duty is but to endeavour. Success depends on the grace of God. We should seek solitude among the multitudes—inaction in activity—but such activity should be without desire for fruits. That is what you are doing. Remember Ramakrishna Paramahansa was not inactive. After all you do not indulge in worldly behaviour.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

29. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 30, 1945

CHI. VASUMATI,

I could take up your letter only today. What you write is correct. Everyone works according to his ability. You and I cannot be exceptions. Take care of your health and keep on doing whatever you have to do. We should never lose faith that God looks after everyone. Ask Akbar.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VASUMATIBEHN
C/O DAULATRAM KASHIRAM
KARELWADI
THAKURDWAR ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

30. LETTER TO RAMPRASAD VYAS

May 30, 1945

CHI. RAMPRASAD,

I hope you are well. Do not move from there until I send Balvantsinha or someone else.[1] It is all right even if you have to stay there for two months. It would be a different thing if you wished to do no more than what I had asked.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Mirabehn", 30-5-1945.

31. LETTER TO SITARAM P. PATWARDHAN

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 30, 1945

CHI. APPA,

I could take up your letter only today. I cannot arrive at any clear decision. I know Jajuji's difficulties. I know the value of your work there. Balasaheb and others will only do what I tell them. Knowing all this increases my responsibility. Under the circumstances, if you also are not able to decide, then draw lots and act according to the result. Doing so is not the way of ignorance. I believe it to be perfectly a way of knowledge. It certainly has its advantages.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

32. LETTER TO SARASWATI GANDHI

May 30, 1945

CHI. SURU,

I am able to answer your letter only today. You and Vali can come here any time you want. But I would not like you to incur so much expense just for the sake of meeting me. You are doing good work there. You are meeting me through letters. If you two can reform Harilal, I shall feel that you have accomplished a great thing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6186. Also C.W. 3460. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

33. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR

May 30, 1945

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

The main reason for my not answering your letter was the meetings. I am now disposing of the letters. Ask again if something is left out in my reply.

I am not sorry that you fasted. I hope you will regain the weight you may have lost. It will increase only gradually. It will be good if Madho improves. It is difficult when it is kleptomania. The person then does not even know that he is stealing. He deserves pity. On such occasions do not show mercy by resorting to a fast. Every time he behaves like that he should be warned, gently not harshly.

Tell Balvantsinha that I am on the lookout for books on veterinary science.[1] I have now gone through the whole letter. I do not see you have any particular question.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9028. Also C.W. 5883 and 9152. Courtesy: Prabhakar

34. LETTER TO KUNDAR DIWAN

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 30, 1945

BHAI KUNDAR,

Herewith my Foreword[2]. I am no longer fit for such work. If I wish to live, it is in order that I can take part in the *yajna* of freedom by doing something original. Writing such prefaces is not that work. You will be writing so many things. Please do not ask for anything from me.

I find the discourses on the *Gita* interesting. But I cannot say

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Valji G. Desai", 30-5-1945.
[2] *Vide* "Draft forwarded to *Gita Ani Gitai*", 30-5-1945.

what you can. Where do I have that knowledge? You may reject my Foreword if you find it of no use.

Blessings from

BAPU

KUNDAR DIWAN
M. S. MANDAL,
DATTAPUR
NALWADI, WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

35. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

May 30, 1945

CHI. RAMESHWARIBEHN,

Your letter about Father is lying with me.

I will not issue an appeal about a memorial for him.[1] It should come from the Punjab and in Punjabi. If someone issues an appeal and does not take any responsibility, then he should let things follow their own course. After all Father's services need no memorial to make them lasting. One lives on in service. Kaul's name and address will be given below.

I have received your letter regarding the Balika Ashram. I have sent a telegram.[2] It is enough. Your letter explains your telegram.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Shrimati Kaul's address:

Lady C. Kaul
Camp, *via* Sangrur
(Zind State-Punjab)

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8008. Also C.W. 3108. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Rameshwari Nehru", 30-5-1945.
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Rameshwari Nehru", 29-5-1945.

36. LETTER TO DEVPRAKASH NAYYAR

May 30, 1945

CHI. DEV,

I have not replied to all your letters. I am taking out the old ones today. There is one question in that. Singing certainly has a place in *Nayee Talim*. Singing implies a knowledge of notes and this one must have.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi original. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

37. LETTER TO OM PRAKASH GUPTA

May 30, 1945

CHI. OM PRAKASH,

Your beautiful letter is before me. I am disposing of all the pending letters today. You must be getting on well. Let me know what I have to do after I return.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

38. LETTER TO LAKSHMINARAYAN

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 30, 1945

CHI. LAKSHMI BABU,

You wrote to me about Shashi's marriage on the 13th May. I received the letter on the 17th. The wedding was on the 21st. You might have received the letter in time if I had written to you the same day. But I could read the letter only today. There is so much work. However, please do not feel bad. The marriage has been solemnized. Convey my blessings to the couple. I hope that they will lead a life of service and devotion.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Write to Panchgani.

SHRI LAKSHMINARAYAN
KHADI BHANDAR, NAYA BAZAAR
MUZAFFARPUR (BIHAR)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

39. LETTER TO SRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 30, 1945

BHAI JAJUJI,

I could reach your letter of the 15th only today.

I do not like to borrow money for Kashmir. The condition seems to me very strict. They refuse to give it for five years. I do not see any harm in having a look at the old yarn. However, it would be better if we could manage without a loan. This is my personal view. You can take a loan if the conditions are acceptable to you, if our workers from Kashmir are also willing and if we cannot give them the money in any other way. If it becomes necessary to take the loan, I will give my signature when it is required.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I return the papers.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

40. LETTER TO RAMASWAMI

May 30, 1945

CHI. RAMASWAMI,

I have not replied to two of your letters. The reason is work.

The postcard does not call for any reply. You must have received money for the months of April and May. I am sorry that there was some irregularity in sending the money. I am responsible for that. When your continuing became uncertain probably I was not able to make up my mind as to what should be the duty of the Ashram towards you. I do not remember it well. I am sorry that your parents were a little hurt.

Only the poor have true and pure ambition. That certainly lifts them high and throws them into the hands of the demon. This is the translation of "between the devil and the deep sea". What you say is not true. When you feel that you are going to fall into the hands of Satan, you should give up that work. I don't think it proper to say more to you in this connection. You must yourself realize your duty.

Do not blame the zemindar if you want the fame which you can acquire with your money. Just as among the poor, there are also good and bad among them. All poor people are not good and all rich people are not bad. Ponder over the basic things while you are entering a new life.

I hope there won't be any difficulty in understanding my language. You should learn to speak and write in Hindi. Keep on writing to me. Write to me at Panchgani.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

41. FOREWORD TO "VARNAVYAVASTHA"[1]

I do not have the time to read this book again. I do not even wish to. I have many other things to do.

In my opinion a man daily moves either forward or backward. He never stands still. The whole world is moving. There is no exception to it. I will be making a wrong statement if I say that I am today what I was yesterday and will remain the same in future. In fact I should not even have such a desire.

It is right however that my writings and utterances should not be such as to confuse others. I should not write things which can bear two interpretations. That is to say I should always have an eye to truth and non-violence while writing, speaking or doing anything. I can say that

I have been doing that ever since I gave my word to my mother. In fact I became a devotee of truth ever since I reached the age of understanding.

This does not mean that I have had or even today have a full vision of truth and ahimsa. But I do believe that my vision of truth and ahimsa is becoming clearer every day. Therefore it would not be correct to say that my views on Varnashrama are the same as they were in the past. I have said that the varnas and the ashramas are the gifts of Hinduism to the world, and I still adhere to that view. But today neither the varnas nor the ashramas of my conception are in existence anywhere. They should form a part of our religion. But it can be said that these days the ashramas have disappeared altogether and varnas are found in the form of privileges. The claim of being a Brahmin, a Kshatriya, a Vaishya connotes pride. How can there be pride where there is religion? And the Shudras are not taken into consideration at all! Shudras are low and the Ati-Shudras are the lowest of the low. This is not religion but a negation of it.

Where are the four varnas of the *Gita* today? Varna is entirely different from caste. There are numerous castes. I know of no authority for caste in the *Gita* or any other scripture. The *Gita* has prescribed four varnas and they are based on one's aptitudes and karma. I am saying four just to give you an example. There can be more or less varnas than that. But there prevails only one varna today,

[1] Gandhiji wrote this under the title "Key to My Writings".

that is, of Shudras', or, you may call it, Ati-Shudras', or Harijans' or untouchables. I have no doubt about the truth of what I say. If I can bring round the Hindu society to my view, all our internal quarrels will come to an end. That will also put an end to communal riots between Hindus and Muslims, and the people of India will occupy a place of honour in the world. Just as it is not dharma but *adharma* to believe in the distinctions of high and low, so also colour prejudice is *adharma*. If a scripture is found to sanction distinctions of high and low, or distinctions of colour, it does not deserve the name of scripture. One should approach the scriptures with the assumption that they would not say anything which is contrary to dharma.

Caste distinctions have taken such deep roots that they have infected the Muslims, Christians and others. It is true that there are class destinations in more or less degree in all the religions, from which one has to conclude that that failing is inherent in every human being. We can cleanse ourselves of that failing only by pure dharma. I have not found sanction for such distinctions between high and low in any scriptures. In the eyes of religion all men are equal. An educated, intelligent and affluent man is no better than an ignorant, stupid and poor man. If he is cultured, that is to say, if he has been purified by dharma, he will utilise his education, intelligence and money in the service of his illiterate, stupid and poor brethren. And he will strive to give them, that is to say, the whole world, what he has got. If that is true of religion, then in our present condition, devoid of religion our dharma lies in becoming Ati-Shudras voluntarily. A man should consider himself not the owner of his property but its trustee or custodian. He will use it for the service of society. He will accept only that much for himself as he has earned with his labour. If that happens, no one will be poor and no one rich. In such a system all religions will naturally be held equal. Therefore all quarrels arising out of religions, caste and economic differences will be ended.

At this stage it is also necessary to ponder over one further point. It is the foremost dharma of a subject nation to free itself of the bondage at the very first opportunity. A subject is compulsorily an Ati-Shudra. It is immaterial whether he has been given titles, or whether he is made a judge or a peon of a judge or whether he is a king or a pauper. The more titles one has the more abject is one's condition under alien rule. Thus by correlating freedom with dharma and making the latter widespread, we shall in the natural course of

things arrive at the state described in the previous paragraph.

A man who wants to follow his dharma will not bother about the time when this may be realized. If many people do so, it will not only end our subjection but there will not be any anarchy or confusion in our freedom. This is the swaraj of my dreams. I yearn for that. I want to live for the attainment of it. I am devoting every breath of my life to that effort.

The reader is therefore requested to discard anything in this book which may appear to him incompatible with my views given above.

In order to save me labour, a friend who has digested my views and has done so with great effort, has sent me a brief note of my present views. Shri Kishorelal thought that I could save time if I could affix my signature to it. I was free to make any corrections I liked. But while going through it I found that Shri Kishorelal has, as is his wont, read through the whole book, has pondered over it and then has drafted a note as a testimony of my present views. Even if I cannot sign it, it should be published along with this. There is no incompatibility between his key and mine. Shri Kishorelal's note is based on the study of this book and therefore it would be more helpful to the readers.

May Truth alone triumph.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

MAHABALESHWAR, May 31, 1945

[From Gujarati]

Varnavyavastha, pp. 5-8

42. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

May 31, 1945

CHI. MANILAL,

I got your postcard. You did not say where I should address this reply. When one is constantly moving about, one should indicate the address either at the top or at the bottom.

Since Sushila has come after so many years, she is naturally very anxious to meet relations. Maybe, she does not, therefore, bother about the heat. I feel concerned about the children. I hope they are not over-strained. I leave for Panchgani this evening. There is bound to be crowding there. But I have provided for you two, together with the children. I am planning in my mind to secure one more bungalow. However, since the breeze has started in Bombay it must be cooler now. All of you can spend a month in Bombay; the place will be cool enough.

If possible call on Jairamdas once again.

I didn't read [the article] about Rajaji carefully. You should forget it. I don't feel hurt by anything he does. He is acting according to his own lights. Everything that appears in newspapers is not true. You know my views. After all, what matters is one's actions.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4952

43. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 31, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

You work wonders. I have gone through your Preface[1] or whatever you call it. It is all right. However, I do not intend to write in that way. I will not involve myself and my readers in the controversy. I will try to give the key for reading my writings. You have written on the basis of my writings, so it would perhaps be better if it is published as it is, under your name. I would, however, know about it

[1] To *Varnavyavastha*

only after I finish writing.

I understand about *paricharya*. It is like this. I have already written—haven't I?—that words like men need growth. As knowledge grows, the meaning of a word becomes wider, which it should. Why should we stick to the meanings of the critics? Even then, what you say seems correct from the point of view of language. The pity is that I am not a linguist and therefore whatever occurred to me on the spur of the moment, I wrote down. Enough, as it is time to go for a walk.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I venture to send the accompanying[1] as Manilal has not given his address.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

44. LETTER TO MANGALDAS

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 31, 1945

BHAI MANGALDAS,

This is my acknowledgment. I have received your draft and it will be officially credited to the account.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

SHAH MANGALDAS'S FIRM
PUBLISHER AND DISTRIBUTOR
BHAGATALAV
SURAT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

45. LETTER TO R. V. PANDIT

MAHABALESHWAR,
May 31, 1945

BHAI PANDIT,

Your letters are not good. Why one in Hindustani and the other in English? I have never taken any interest in the allegations made against you nor have I heard much in that regard. An artist should

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

dedicate his art to Mother India. He should not make money out of it. From the 15-point programme one should take those that are suited to the place. You should daily spin for an hour, make slivers and card cotton with the carding-bow.

Blessings from

BAPU

R. V. PANDIT
C/O DR. P. J. GHARSE
MAHABALESHWAR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarclal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

46. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

[MAHABALESHWAR][1],
May 31, 1945

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I received your letter just now. Tell me everything when you meet me. I have written[2] to Tandonji about my intention to leave the Sammelan. I have already written to Ramdas. He should get well now. I note what you say about Mr. Sen. I know he can render very good service and he is service-minded. Have as much experience as you can have there. We shall go to Panchgani today.

Blessings to all of you from

BAPU

SHRI AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI
C/O SMT. YASHODHARA DASAPPA
VONTICOPPAL, MYSORE

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The source, however, has "Panchgani".
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Purushottamdas Tandon", 25-5-1945.

47. LETTER TO DR. P. SUBBAROYAN

PANCHGANI,
May 31, 1945

MY DEAR SUBBAROYAN,

I have your letter. I understand and appreciate all you say. I thought I had told you that Mohan had come and gone, again leaving a good impression about himself. I have not even attempted to convert him to my way. I simply let him perceive the affection I have for him.

Love.

BAPU

DR. SUBBAROYAN
WHILE'S GARDEN
ROYAPETTAH
MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

48. LETTER TO RAMDEV

PANCHGANI,
May 31, 1945

BHAI RAMDEV,

I have received Pandit Vinayak Rao's reply and other papers. I am going through them carefully. I am doing what I can.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI RAMDEV
C/O PANDIT VINAYAK RAO, BARRISTER
JAMBAG
HYDERABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

49. LETTER TO DHARMADEV SHASTRI

PANCHGANI,
May 31, 1945

BHAI DHARMADEV SHASTRI,

I have your letter. Something will be done as soon as possible. The address has to come from the U. P. Committee and I remember Bapa had asked a few questions. Yes, your work[1] is difficult. May God give you success. Money is a servant to one who has dharma on his side.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI DHARMADEV SHASTRI
ASHOK ASHRAM
KALSI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

50. NOTE FOR "GRAM UDYOG PATRIKA"

May 1945

A correspondent asks me to speak about other village industries as I do about khadi.

Khadi is the only handicraft which is widespread. Besides, I have likened it to the sun, and the other industries to the planets.[2] The sun is only one, while the planets are many and new ones are being discovered.

For the present, it will be enough if you concentrate on hand-made paper, hand-ground flour, hand-pounded rice, *ghani*-pressed oil, honey from live bees, hide from dead cattle and articles made from it in villages, village walking-sticks, village-buttons, palm gur, etc.

As a matter of fact agriculture is a village industry, hence grains,

[1] The addressee who was working among the tribes of Jaunsar and Bawer at Nagthat, near Mussoorie, built the Ashok Ashram and started a school and dispensary in memory of Kasturba Gandhi. He opened the Ashram in July 1942, but was arrested a month after. Having been released, he was developing it into a training centre for village industries.

[2] *Vide* "How to improve village industries", 21-5-1945 .

fruit and articles made from them can be village products. In short, when villages are self-contained, cities will be dependent on them.

As you can see, the tooth-brush belongs to the cities, while *datun* belongs to the villages and is better; tooth-powder is of the city while charcoal powder, chalk or salt are of the village. When you become village-minded in this way you will find numerous village articles useful to you.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *Gram Udyog Patrika*, Part I, p. 343

51. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

May 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Your slip. I gave Sushilabehn the letter regarding Chand. I am writing this after she has left. Keep Dr. Ice. Do not be obstinate. Listen to what he says. . . .

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10630

52. TELEGRAM TO NANJI KALIDAS

Express PANCHGANI,
June 1, 1945

SHETH NANJI KALIDAS
PORBANDAR

PLEASE DO NOT SACRIFICE HEALTH FOR COMING HERE. SHANTABEHN[1] LOOKING AFTER PARTY.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Gandhiji's hostess at Dilkhusha', Panchgani

53. TELEGRAM TO N. G. RANGA

PANCHGANI,
June 1, 1945

PROFESSOR RANGA
CARE S . K. PATIL
381 SANDHURST ROAD
BOMBAY

WORK OVERPOWERING. PLACE CROWDED. BETTER WRITE OR COME AFTER FIFTEENTH.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

54. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

June 1, 1945

CHI. KANCHAN,

I have your letter. By all means go to Sevagram. There is nothing at all wrong in it. But henceforth weigh everything you say. And having said a thing one must cling to it even at the cost of one's life. A wire has been sent to you, to the effect that you should go to Khadi Pratishthan. If you keep good health there, stay on and learn. There is much to learn there. If you do not like the place, go to Wardha by yourself and take up some work after careful thinking and engross yourself in it.

Write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 618

55. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

June 1, 1945

BAPA,

I have your long letter. It does not reveal your anger but your practical sense. However, the practical sense suggests that you should not relinquish the post you have accepted. I had often read in South Africa the letter Gokhale wrote on his return from England expressing his deep apology.[1] One of the sentences in that letter was: "How can I give up the office under duress when I have not accepted it under duress?" You are in a similar situation. The only difference is that there is no pressure at all on you. So it will be sheer cowardice to give up the post and with that the freely available opportunity of rendering service. The tongue that calls you a coward only condemns itself. Moreover, to give up doing service means putting a burden on Mridula, that is, on the women. Why should you do that? Give it up when I tell you and if what I tell you appeals to you. The fact is Mridula does not want to give up anything. I feel that we should leave only when she has become competent enough to enable us to give up.

In the mean time, we should retain her and encourage her. The words of mine you quote are the only true words. She should not consider anything as passed by me unless it has received your independent approval. However, if she does not do that, you should ignore it but should do what you want to. About Rs. 2,000 I clearly remember having told her that she should not consider anything passed as long as Bapa had not considered and approved it independently. If she has employed two or three women, I would certainly be in favour of retaining them. But if you disapprove of it, I will do the same.

I do not feel that you are giving me trouble. Whatever the trouble may be, it will end. I will see to it.

What remains now is the question about the office. It is in a large measure in your own hands.

[1] In 1897, before the Welby Commission in England, Gokhale made certain statements, based on letters he received from Poona on the plague operations in that city, relating to the conduct of British soldiers who were employed to evacuate compulsorily the infected houses. But when the persons who supplied him with the information refused to substantiate the allegations, Gokhale had to withdraw and apologize for the statements which caused indignation in England and in India.

I will see what I can do about Bhavnagar and Kathiawar. It is good that Anantrai[1] is here. Come here only if you want change of air and not to know my mind or to explain to me. Moreover, at the moment you want to work for Servants of India Society. You may gladly do that. I might, if I wanted, come to your help. But I do not want to do that. I have to curb many such good intentions. Enough for now.

BAPU

SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
POONA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

56. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

PANCHGANI,
June 1, 1945

CHI. KANTI,

I received your letter of April 28 today. The reason is that Kanu came today after visiting Rajkot and other places. From Saraswati's letter I presume that you would all be in Travancore at present. Nevertheless I address this C/o Prithuraj. If Harilal improves, the credit will go to the love both of you have for him. May it so happen.

''That interpretation would be most correct which is given by the writer provided that *it is consistent with the grammar and syntax of the writing."* I have added what I have underlined. The other meaning is useless.[2]

It is true that I do not encourage idol-worship but it is equally true that I am neutral in the matter.

Kanam has also arrived today. He has grown a lot.

Blessings to all of you from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Anantrai Pattani, Dewan of Bhavnagar
[2] This paragraph is in English.

57. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

PANCHGANI,
June 1,1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I have gone through your article. You will find a reference[1] to it in my "Key". If you approve of it then let your article be published under your name. I have changed pronouns and have deleted some portion of it—you will easily be able to find it.

I am sending my "Key" for your approval. I have been at it since yesterday and completed it just now. If you have changes to suggest I have to examine them. If I have to, then send it back to me. If there is no time, then I don't see any harm if the book is published without my "Key". I shall consider it more than enough if your summary goes. Do whatever you think proper.

Blessings from

BAPU

KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA
BHARAT BHUVAN
10TH ROAD, KHAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

58. LETTER TO MERCHANT

PANCHGANI,
June 1, 1945

BHAI MERCHANT,

Do come if you really must see me. I cannot even so much as lift up my head from work. Please do not tell me to go anywhere with you. One who is supposed to be ill can go even for prayer and the like only with great difficulty.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Foreword to *Varnavyavastha*, 31-5-1945.

59. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKVASA

PANCHGANI,
June 1, 1945

BHAI MANGALDAS,

I hope your health is perfectly all right. I am enclosing herewith the Trust-deed of the Nature Cure Clinic. The necessary changes are already included in it. But I am having them typed separately and enclosed herewith. Incorporate them in the Trust-deed and get it signed by the Trustees who are present. Ghanshyamdas will sign it when he comes here. The changes in the aims were not covered by the talk I had with Ghanshyamdas. So I have taken his permission. If you want to see it, I shall send it.

I would like to get this Trust-deed translated into Hindi and feel that it would be better if it is registered in Hindi. If you cannot get it translated there, then send it to me after finalizing it. I shall get it translated. I would appreciate it if you did not take so long over it as I did.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MANGALDAS PAKVASA
DUNGARSINH ROAD
MALABAR HILL, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy Pyarelal

60. LETTER TO NRISINHAPRASAD K. BHATT

PANCHGANI,
June 1, 1945

CHI. NANABHAI,

What did you write to Bapa? As a member of the committee do whatever you want to. It is about Bhavnagar that there is a difficulty, isn't it? I expect to decide about it here. Pattani the junior is here. I am sending Narahari to him. If it is necessary, he will see me. The money collected in the State should be spent in its villages according to their share. The money will be unspent if the State does not allow us to do that. At the most the State committee will ask us to return the money. So our course is straight but the work is a little

confusing. If it takes some time, we can put up with the delay. There is bound to be delay where there is democracy. I do not see any harm in it. I hope all of you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI NANABHAI BHATT
GRAM DAKSHINAMURTI
AMBLA P. O., *via* SONGADH

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

61. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

PANCHGANI,
June 1, 1945

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. Manilal has been keeping me posted with news. Sita, too, of course. It is good that she is perfectly at home there. It is also good that the other children have so far been quite patient. Come whenever you feel like it. Let Manilal make his own arrangement about the book.

Blessings to all of you from

BAPU

SUSHILA GANDHI
NANABHAI MASHRUWALA
AKOLA, BERAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

62. LETTER TO TARA N. MASHRUWALA

June 1, 1945

CHI. TARI,

After writing on the reverse, I read your letter. It made me laugh to read that of the four workers you were the hardiest. I will believe it only when you show me. How cunning Sushila is—she does not write about her fever. Sita did not want to improve. Did she take pains over it?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

63. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR[1]

PANCHGANI ,
June 1, 1945

BAPA,

I have already written[2] to you that leaving out the Government agencies you can put the amount of more than ten lakhs that we have in any bank or firm for six months or more.

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I have gone through Shyamlal's letter about the office. I know that Bapa wants the office in Wardha, but what are we to do if we get a building in Nalwadi? Bearing all this in mind I had widened the choice to areas around Wardha. However, I do not have any objection if Bapa does not want such a wide choice.[3]

SHYAMLALJI
KASTURBA TRUST OFFICE
SCINDIA HOUSE, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

64. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[4]

PANCHGANI,
June 1, 1945

Addressing the gathering in Hindustani after the prayer, Mahatma Gandhi appealed for contributions to the Harijan Fund.

Referring to his second visit to Panchgani, he said that his stay at Mahabaleshwar for more than a month had done him some good and he hoped to stay at Panchgani for a month. But, he added, he could do so only if he was allowed to work undisturbed. Those who wanted to see him should realize that he did not have enough time even to carry on his day-to-day work which was of all-India importance. He had been doing this work for 50 years.

[1] The letter though written to Amritlal V. Thakkar was sent at Shyamlal's address presumably with a view to drawing his attention to the postscript.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar", 29-5-1945.

[3] *Vide* also "Letter to Shyamlal", 29-5-1945.

[4] The meeting was held in the compound of Wadilal Arogya Bhavan.

This afternoon some young boys had come to see Gandhiji when he could not oblige them. They asked what was wrong with him. His reply was that he was 76 years old and was not young like them. That did not mean that he was an invalid. He had strength and that was why he was there for prayers and for Harijan work.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-6-1945

65. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MOHAN KUMARAMANGALAM

June 2, 1945

Every Congress leader who comes to me tells the same tale (in regard to the Indian communists). I won't build judgments on what they say but the story produces on me an unconscious effect I would fain avoid. This is thinking aloud, if you please. I agree with L. in so far as he is concerned (in regard to co-operation with the communists). I disagree so far as I am concerned. For I have no difficulty in working side by side with communists. One must depend upon one's own experiences.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. 1, Book One, p. 110

66. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

PANCHGANI,
June 2, 1945

CHI. MIRA,

Your postcard of 27th ultimo. I hope your visit to Delhi was successful. Thank God, you are keeping well again. Hope the *vyayam*[1] teacher will give satisfaction.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABEHN
KISAN ASHRAM
BAHADARABAD P.O.
JWALAPUR
NEAR HARDWAR, U.P.

From the original: C.W. 6507. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9902

[1] Phyical exercise

67. LETTER TO LADY ABBAS ALI BAIG

'DILKHUSHA',
June 2, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

Many thanks for your greetings and mangoes to which I hope to do justice. I shall see to the correction of the name of the place.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

LADY ABBAS ALI BAIG

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

68. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

PANCHGANI,
June 2, 1945

BAPA,

I have gone through the letters. At the moment I do not have anything to say. I have already written that Rameshwaribehn may make a small list of rules and regulations and send it to me.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

69. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

PANCHGANI,
June 2, 1945

BAPA,

I followed your criticism of the expenditure on four months' training. As far as I remember, only one person is paid a salary of Rs. 175. Let it be 110 rather than 72. If you can find a girl, you can have one. It takes into account all our departments. It seems that you have not discussed the expenditure with Mridula. I had raised an objection as regards the training instructor. It is, however, considered that one instructor will not be able to deal with such a large number. The idea behind estimating the expenditure liberally is that if the expenses grow, we shall not have to ask for more. It will perhaps not

be appropriate to compare this with your experience of twenty-five years. My experience, not being of a Government department, is different. But let us not worry about it. Whatever goes to the trustees should be final from our side. It is better if you send your note to Mridula.

BAPU

THAKKAR BAPA
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
POONA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

70. LETTER TO OMKARNATH THAKUR

PANCHGANI,
June 2, 1945

BHAI OMKARNATH,

I have a letter from Chi. Purushottam Gandhi. He writes that the students of the late Vishnu Digambarji have expressed a desire to set up a music college at Prayag. They want my blessings for that. I have written to them that you are also his student and I have already given my blessings to your scheme. Why then should I bless another? He writes to say that an attempt was made during the lifetime of Pandit Khare to draw you into their circle but they were unsuccessful.

Chi. Purushottam was a favourite disciple of Pandit Khare. He is a true devotee of his guru. I have known some of the persons of that group for a long time but I came in close contact with you only recently. Please throw some light on this confusion.

Blessings from

BAPU

PANDIT OMKARNATH
SANGEET MARTAND
BABULNATH ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

71. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 2, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

What Kanu says about you is true. I have told him that he should improve his handwriting. I do hope that in the matter of handwriting he will reach the ideal of Ramdas Swami.

It has started raining here today. It is raining right now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4513

72. LETTER TO R. K. NANDKEOLYAR

PANCHGANI,

June 2, 1945

BHAI NANDKEOLYAR,

I have your letter. In my opinion, you should clearly write to the United Provinces Government that you cannot comply with their order. You have not committed any crime. You have faith only in ahimsa. You do not want to enter the State unnecessarily but if it becomes necessary, you will enter it without giving any notice. Write to this effect and be quiet. Go to U. P. when you find it necessary. When you reply to them, send a copy to the Press also.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

SHRI RAMKISHORE NANDKEOLYAR
NANDA VILAS, GAYA (BIHAR)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

73. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

PANCHGANI,
June 2, 1945

BHAI JAIRAMDAS,

I was just beginning to write to you when I received your letter. I started looking for a house for you yesterday itself. I have been successful. The help came from Dinshaw Mehta. Now that you will not be a burden, you may come. You will stay with me. You may stay outside also. We shall see about it when you come. Let Devibehn and Premi also come. It will not be necessary for them to run away. I understand that there is no room at Pandit's. Even if there is, it will not be needed. I heard that you were ill only after I reached here. You will recover here.

Blessings to all the three of you from

BAPU

SHRI JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
JNANGHAR
15TH STREET, KHAR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

74. LETTER TO SHANTABAI KALE

PANCHGANI,
June 2, 1945

CHI. SHANTABAI,

I was happy to receive your detailed letter. Gopalrao will get well. He has faith and courage and he is simple-hearted. Keep on writing to me. Convey my blessings to Gopalrao.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SHANTABAI KALE
VICTORIA HOSPITAL
JABALPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

75. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

PANCHGANI,
June 2, 1945

BHAI JAJUJI,

I feel that till the arrival of Sardar or for the time being you should do as Lakshmidas suggests.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

76. DISCUSSION WITH SHRIMAN NARAYAN[1]

PANCHGANI,
June 2, 1945

QUESTION: To my mind one of the greatest problems confronting us at the present moment is that of combating the systematic plan of economic exploitation by flooding the market with foreign consumer goods. This is bound to spell disaster to Indian industrialization whether small-scale or large-scale. And the pity of it is that our own businessmen and industrialists seem to be vying with one another in becoming glorified agents of foreign manufacturers. Do you not think that an urgent need of the hour is the rousing of public conscience against the matter of foreign goods? I think constructive workers should take up this programme immediately. A countrywide propaganda for the use of village-manufactured and swadeshi goods can also prove to be a very elective and economic sanction against foreign domination. What is your opinion and advice?

ANSWER: The difficulty cannot be met by carrying on propaganda, however wide and intensive. The first thing is to demonstrate its economic fallacy. Let us recognize that the industrialists are not conscious traitors. They honestly believe that their plan will bring prosperity to the masses. They are wrong. But how to show that they are wrong save by patient study and publication thereof and by working so as to show that the masses respond to the work and actually prosper?

This demands hard thinking, hard study and harder constructive work among the masses. They have to manufacture for their own use.

[1] Principal, Govindram Saxeria College, Wardha

Just picture to yourself every village producing and manufacturing everything for its own use. This must mean some surplus for the cities of India going from the villages. This means also automatic stoppage of all exploitation and prosperity without having to exploit the outer world.

The Bombay Chronicle, 4-6-1945

77. MESSAGE FOR BHARATI MEMORIAL[1]

PANCHGANI,
[*Before June 3, 1945*][2]

My blessings to efforts to perpetuate Bharati's memory.

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 13-6-1945

78. DISCUSSION WITH HAREKRUSHNA MEHTAB[3]

PANCHGANI,
June 1/3, 1945

QUESTION: Do you think there has been any change in the country to warrant any change in the Congressmen's attitude towards the war which they adopted in 1939? If you think there is no change, then has it not come to this that, in your opinion, Congressmen should not go back to ministries in the present circumstances?

ANSWER: You ask for my personal opinion. I give it for what it is worth. Mine can in no sense be an authoritative opinion. You should examine the Congress attitude not of 1939 but of 1942. So far as I am aware the Congress offered help in 1942 provided that certain conditions were fulfilled. It is for the Congress to lay down the conditions for the present acceptance of office. These must always be in terms of independence.

[1] *The Bombay Chronicle*, 4-6-1945, reported that on June 3, C. Rajagopalachari laid the foundation-stone for the memorial building to house a library of the works of the Tamil poet, Subrahmanya Bharati, at his birth-place, Ettayapuram, in Tamil Nadu. Gandhiji wrote the message in Tamil.

[2] *ibid*

[3] According to A. P. I. report, Harekrushna Mehtab released "written questions and answers" to the Press after "full discussion with Gandhiji for three days".

There is no civil disobedience now and you have placed your manifold constructive programme before the country. Do you approve of the following definition of the constructive programme—to tackle the immediate problems of the masses and to try to solve them on non-violent lines as enunciated by you? This definition includes the work of trying to check black-marketing, profiteering and also the inflow of foreign consumer goods by insisting upon the use of swadeshi goods.

You have only a partial grasp of the constructive programme of my conception. It is comprehensive and all-pervading. Stoppage of black-marketing, profiteering and foreign consumer goods must precede construction. They are not part of the programme, but the programme to be effective and universal has to do that weeding process. The whole programme is swadeshi.

Would you ask Congressmen to seek co-operation from other parties and even from Government agencies in the prosecution of the constructive work? How can the constructive programme be prevented from being used for the purpose of consolidating the party position for elections and for other purposes?

I have been crying myself hoarse to persuade Congressmen to adopt whole-heartedly the constructive programme without party motive or any other. It is its own motive. I seek the co-operation of the whole nation and also of the Government in carrying out the programme, naturally, on our own terms.

If the latter give honest co-operation, it must mean independence without violence and without fuss. If the constructive programme is worked for electioneering purposes it will carry with it the seeds of its own disease. Men can prevent vicious people from using the best things for the worst of purposes.

What should be the attitude of Congressmen towards all those who are now building up an organization which may come in clash with Congress at some stage or other in future?

The Congress position should be of complete non-violent non-co-operation with those who will stab the country in the back.

The Bombay Chronicle, 4-6-1945

79. LETTER TO T. I. KEDAR

PANCHGANI,
June 3, 1945

DEAR MR. KEDAR,

I have kept your letter of 12th ultimo with me for answer. Much has happened since then. I need say nothing now. I wish you every success in your great enterprise about Ashti-Chimur.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.][1]

This mistake is out of old habit. I should have written in Hindustani—that too in Nagari script. But what has happened has happened. Forgive.

DR. T. I. KEDAR, ADVOCATE
CIVIL STATION
NAGPUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

80. LETTER TO A PUBLISHER

PANCHGANI,
June 3, 1945

DEAR SIR,

Gandhiji has read your letter of 28th ult. received only yesterday. He would like to know before deciding, what profits you make out of the publication mentioned by you and what you pay Prof. A. D. Yates.

Yours faithfully,
NARAHARI PARIKH

THE MANAGING DIRECTOR
KAPOOR BROS. LTD.
PUBLISHERS & BOOKSELLERS
52 ANARKALI, LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The postscript is in Hindi.

81. LETTER TO NAWAB OF CHHATARI

"DILKHUSH", PANCHGANI,
June 3, 1945

DEAR NAWAB SAHEB,

I thank you for your letter of 27th ult. and the communique dated 17th ultimo. I have again heard from Pandit Vinayak Rao. He sends me a copy of his reply to the communique. I take it that you have seen that letter. I cannot help agreeing with the Pandit that mere dismissal of the "ring-leaders" does not meet the needs of the situation so far as the wanton action of the police is concerned. And why prosecution of certain volunteers instead of an inquiry suggested by him ? I would like you to give this matter your earnest and independent consideration, and adopt such action as would avoid a repetition of the incident complained of and give general satisfaction.

I would thank you to send me the cuttings of the British Indian press referred to by you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. H. NAWAB SAHEB OF CHHATARI
HYDERABAD (DN.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

82. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI[1]

PANCHGANI,
June 3, 1945

Take courage in both hands and do this. You know Dr. Gilder well. Go to him and, if he permits you, go to Nagpur[2]. Here you can come whenever you want. I would not advise you to go to Wardha.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./24

83. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

June 3, 1945

CHI. MANUDI,

You have fallen ill again. Now at least take care. If you have patience, you will become a very good nurse. You cannot leave as soon as the fever subsides. Sushilabehn is of the view that you should stay in Dr. Dinshawji's clinic. Most probably Vanamala also will go there. I do not at all like your getting fever every now and then. If you learn to guard your health and become as strong as steel, everything will be all right. "Impatience does not make a mango tree bear fruit." Come over, if you wish.

Give up your desire to go to Nagpur.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

[1] This was appended to a letter from Dr. Sushila Nayyar to the addressee.
[2] For joining a training course in nursing; *vide* also the following item.

84. LETTER TO GHANSHYAM JETHANAND

PANCHGANI
June 3, 1945

BHAI GHANSHYAM,

I have your letter. I would not take any money while in jail and not more than Rs. 75 when out of jail. However, others will act according to their lights. No one can borrow dharma from others.

My health I should say is good.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI GHANSHYAM JETHANAND
29 AMIL COLONY NO. 1
KARACHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

85. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

PANCHGANI,
June 3, 1945

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your letter. Satis Babu will have fully recovered by now. Do give khadi to the poor without yarn. Do you take money from them and, if you do, do you charge the market rate or less? After I know this, I shall write to you if I have anything to say. I have the book[1] about the cow read out to me when I spin each day.

Blessings from

BAPU

HEMPRABHADEVI
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
SODEPUR, *via* CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *The Cow in India* by Satis Chandra Das Gupta, addressee's husband; for Gandhiji's Foreword, *vide* "Foreword to *Cow in India*", 20-5-1945.

86. LETTER TO TEJWANTI

PANCHGANI,
June 3, 1945

CHI. TEJWANTI,

I did receive a letter as from you but it has neither your language, nor your handwriting, nor your signature at the end. This makes me suspect that the letter may not be from you at all. So, besides acknowledging it, I do not want to say anything in reply.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI TEJWANTI
CHARKHA SANGH KARYALAYA
ADAMPUR DOAB
JULLUNDUR DISTRICT

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

87. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

PANCHGANI,
June 3, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

It is now 5.50 p.m. I have just finished your "Appeal to the Christians of India". It is eloquent but not substantial. I do not propose to give you detailed criticism. As soon as you are free from your engagements there and are fit enough to come to me, I know you will make a dash. Therefore when you are with me, we shall together read the Appeal and decide what to do with it.

Khurshed is here. She is with Nargis. She will migrate to 'Dilkhusha' as soon as N. is gone.

Mehtab and Shriman were with me.[1] The latter went today. The former goes tomorrow. Love to all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4157. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7792

[1] For Gandhiji's discussion with Harekrushna Mehtab and Shriman Narayan; *vide* "Discussion with Shriman Narayan", 2-6-1945; "Discussion with Harekrushna Mahtab", 1/3-6-1945.

88. STATEMENT ON SYRIAN-LEBANESE QUESTION[1]

PANCHGANI,
[On or after *June 3, 1945*][2]

I have purposely refrained from saying anything on the Syrian and Lebanese question, not because I have felt less than others but because I have felt more. The injustice is so obvious and glaring.

It pains me to think that our Muslim fellow-countrymen feel that they can effectively ask for justice to the Syrians and Lebanese as fellow-Muslims. Syrians and the Lebanese are a mixed population.[3] Their liberty is at stake not as Muslims but as a separate nation. The struggle of Syria and Lebanon for independence should evoke the sympathy of the whole of India, and it must be made a national issue, instead of one of a particular section or community.[4] Muslims should speak as Indians and should invite the cooperation of all India including members of all religions. For instance the voice of Indian Christians speaking as Christians as apart from other Indians in international affairs must fall flat. This is the lesson of history everywhere, but in India, to my mind, the Khilafat issue emphasizes the lesson which we seem to have forgotten.

The Muslims headed by the late Hakim Saheb sought the co-operation of all India and the Khilafat question became a plank in the National Congress. And it drew world attention. Had the history of victorious Turkey been written differently, India would have taken an effective part in the settlement of the Khilafat question. India divided against itself will have no effect on the council of the nations of the world.

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-6-1945; also *The Hindu*, 8-6-1945

[1] The nationalist movement in Syria and Lebanon had come into violent conflict with France which had been ruling the area under a mandate since 1923. France had called for negotiations and at the same time despatched two contingents of troops. There were widespread clashes culminating in the French bombardment of Damascus on May 29 and 30. The statement was made in an "exclusive interview to the special representative of the Orient Press" of India.

[2] From the expression "our Muslim fellow-countrymen feel", presumably a reference to M. A. Jinnah's statement of June 3, which assured Syrians and Lebanese of the support of "the hundred million Muslims of India". Jinnah had also warned that "not only the Middle East and Muslim India but also the whole of the Muslim world will flare up" if freedom was not granted.

[3] Being predominantly Christian

[4] This paragraph is reproduced from *The Hindu*, 8-6-1945, in which it was reported independently under the date-line "Panchgani, June 6".

89. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

June 4, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

After the letter of yesterday was handed for the post your letter was received. I opened it and detained the letter.

It is strange that no intimation has been received by you. You are right to ignore the newspaper notice[1], unless it is confirmed. Also of course there is no joy in the removal in the manner it is being brought about. As to speech, we must see what has to be done.

Of course you are not leaving Simla so long as you are required there.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4158. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7793

90. LETTER TO RAJARAM BHOLE

June 4, 1945

DEAR BHOLE,

Your P. C. Do come on 6th inst. at 4.00 p.m. I am silent during the day always. But it does not matter. You will speak and I shall answer in writing.

Yours,

BAPU

SHRI R. R. BHOLE
PALLAZZO HOTEL
PANCHGANI

From the original: R. R. Bhole Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] About lifting of the restriction imposed on the addressee; *vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 26-5-1945; "Letter to Prabhavati", 8-6-1945.

91. LETTER TO HOWARD GOLDSTEIN

CAMP : "DILKHUSH",
PANCHGANI, INDIA,
June 4, 1945

DEAR FRIENDS,

Gandhiji has your cable.

He appreciates your desire to have him in America.[1] But you have seen how he could not come. He could not force himself on the Committee. He has not much faith in the value of more verbal talks. He is trying to forge the message of non-violence through his work in India. If he shows visible success here the world will get the message it needs. Therefore the conscientious objectors who are going to meet near Glendora would do well to closely study what he has been saying and doing in India. Particularly, they should study his writings preceding and after the 8th August, 1942—Resolution of the Congress. They reflect the working of a non-violent mind in the face of the greatest crisis in the world's history.

Yours sincerely,

PYARELAL

MESSRS. HOWARD GOLDSTEIN
JOE GOODMAN AND OTTO GRIMM
CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS' CAMP
NEAR GLENDORA
CALIFORNIA (USA)

From a copy of : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

92. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

June 4, 1945

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I got your letter yesterday. I have not yet received the one regarding your work.

Your health seems to have gone down considerably. Be careful.

[1] The addressee had invited Gandhiji on behalf of the American Friends Service Committee to attend the San Francisco Conference which was to be held in Glendora in the suburbs of Los Angeles.

Chi. Manu's mind is wavering whether to go to Nagpur directly or come here for a day on her way there. If Dr. Gilder doesnot permit her, there will be no question for the present of her going to Nagpur. Manu is very impatient. Now she is obsessed with the desire to become a nurse. Let me see what happens.

As regards money, it is all right for you to keep it with you as Manu's trustee. I see no need for two names. You may insert any condition you want in the Trust. If you wish, you may show the draft to me. I have no objection to your including my name in the event of your dying earlier. If you wish to select someone else, by all means do so. If you can get six per cent locally, you need not try to make any other arrangement.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./24

93. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

[PANCHGANI][1],
June 4, 1945

CHI. MANUDI,

I have not seen anyone so foolish as you. You are to come here in response to this letter. Bablo[2] must accompany you, so that you may not have any difficulty on the way.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Ba Bapuni Shili Chhayaman, p. 231

[1] The source, however, has "Mahabaleshwar".
[2] Narayan Desai

94. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

PANCHGANI,
June 4, 1945

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I got your letter yesterday. I signed the photograph. May you live long and continue to serve. Why do you say that you have "lived for many years and have few more left"? Surely, 125 years are not for me alone. That should be everybody's life-span and it should be the ideal for all to attain it through a pure life.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 4740. Courtesy: Shantikumar N. Morarjee

95. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI AND SAROJ NANAVATI

June 4, 1945

CHI. RAIHANA AND CHI. SAROJ,

I got today the postcard written by you two. I am glad that grandmother has passed away. She has settled her accounts, but suffered much while doing so. The fact that she exacted service from you both earned you merit. But wasn't that at her cost? One should not wish to earn such merit. I, therefore, regard grandmother's passing away a very good thing indeed from every point of view.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9684

96. LETTER TO JAMNADAS DWARKADAS

PANCHGANI,
June 4, 1945

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I received your letter at 5 o'clock. You should get this tomorrow. I will be able to see Panditji if he comes at 3 o'clock on the 6th. Of course I shall be observing silence. If afterwards you want to talk to me it will be all right. Or I shall find some other time if you want. At 4 o'clock Bhole, a Harijan, is coming.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI JAMNADAS DWARKADAS
GLENDALE
MAHABALESHWAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

97. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM PATEL

PANCHGANI,
June 4, 1945

BHAI PURUSHOTTAM PATEL,

I received your letter today. Why is it in English? You should not involve me in your candidature[1]. Do whatever you can on your own. After all you are staying there.

Blessings from,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also "A Letter", 9-6-1945.

98. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 4, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Those who create the political system have not come from outside; it is we ourselves. The meaning of your difficulty is that the political power should pass into our hands. But a non-violent political system can come about only through non-violent means. Hence whether we are one or many we should engage ourselves only in non-violent activities. One can become many, zero cannot.

My impression about the discharge was correct. I may have written[1] the opposite in my hurry. Anyway do not worry. It applies equally to both.

Do go to Nagpur after the bale of cotton cloth is ready. Mohan Singh should come only if he can be spared from work.

It is only from you that I have heard about the use of a pannier.

I am eager to meet Vinoba.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4514

99. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR

June 4, 1945

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

Your reply to Majid was good. What else could you have said? Your body should be strong as steel. It can be made so only with effort. Let Zohra and Vina write to me. How is your health? What has Vina been doing?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9029. Also C.W. 9153. Courtesy: Prabhakar

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Krishnachandra", 28-5-1945.

100. LETTER TO ASAF ALI

PANCHGANI,
June 4, 1945

BHAI ASAF ALL,

As far as possible these days I write letters in Hindustani, either in Urdu or Devanagari script. The language is wholly mine. However, as my handwriting is difficult to decipher, I dictate the letters.

I received your telegram yesterday after 5 p. m. I do not like your being ill. But you are brave and you have still to serve the country. You will leave the sick-bed. Keep on sending me news through someone. May God make you well soon. I hope to remain here till the end of the month.

Blessings from

BAPU

ASAF ALI
WILLINGDON HOSPITAL
DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

101. LETTER TO M. S. KELKAR

June 4, 1945

BHAI ICE,

I have your letter. You are taking great pains over Hari-ichchha. But I am not satisfied. She is not improving. In the end what is destined will happen.

I cannot bring myself to have faith in astrology. Millions of people who do not believe in it lose nothing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

102. LETTER TO P. C. GHOSH

PANCHGANI,
June 4, 1945

BHAI PROFULLA,

The Working Committee of the Kasturba Memorial Trust met at Mahabaleshwar. Your objection to keeping the entire fund with the Head Office was put up to it. I had told you that I would write to you and clarify the whole thing. You know that the fund raised in Bombay is kept in the Head Office. I feel that the same should be done with the money raised in Calcutta. The committee which is formed now is to consider how the money will be spent in the villages. Why should we argue over where the money should be kept? Your duty is to submit a scheme and if it is accepted, to get it implemented. You must be knowing that the committee for collecting the money and the committee for spending it are not the same. It is true that the same three persons are on most of the committees. But that is our misfortune. There are very few workers and those who give the money claim the right to have a control over the spending of it. When they are deserving, it may become our duty to have the donors on the committees. What more can I write? I would suggest that you explainmy view to the committee and write a satisfactory letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Hope you are well now.

SHRI PROFULLA CHANDRA GHOSH
14/8 GARIHA ROAD
BALLYGUNGE
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

103. LETTER TO MIR MUSHTAQ AHMED

PANCHGANI,
June 5, 1945

BHAI MUSHTAQ AHMED,

It is good that as far as possible you do not write or speak in English.

The answer to your question is covered by the opinion I have given.[1] I feel that it is not proper to enrol new members as long as the Congress is an illegal organization. The Congress Assembly is a different thing. In this matter each province can act as it likes.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

JANAB MIR MUSHTAQ AHMED
34 PREM HOUSE
CONNAUGHT PLACE
NEW DELHI

From a copy of the Urdu: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

104. TELEGRAM TO GOVIND DAS

Express

June 6, 1945

SETH GOVINDDAS
JUBBULPORE

PREFER MEETING SEVAGRAM.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

105. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

June 6, 1945

CHI. KANCHAN,

I have written to you, but if the letter does not reach you what can I do? How are you? If you do not like the place[2] you may certainly go to Sevagram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 496

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mushtaq Ahmed", 9-5-1945.
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Kanchan M. Shah", 1-6-1945.

106. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

June 6, 1945

CHI. PREMLILABEHN,

I got your letter.

Is it I who should thank you for looking after me and my large family or is it you who should thank me? You have always showered love on me, but this time you surpassed yourself. You stayed all these days in Mahabaleshwar along with your own people and let us suffer no inconvenience, and on top of that gave us money when bidding us farewell. I think it would be improper for me to offer you thanks forso much love. Silence is the best course.

We are all right here. Shantabehn has put me in a prison, I have left one jail and got into another.

My blessings to Vashi and the girls, which includes Damayanti.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 80. Also C.W. 4835. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

107. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

June 6, 1945

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your postcard. You are strange. Must you complain if you do not receive the reply I have sent? I have answered your letters. In your last letter you had given news of Kanchan's illness. Now you are saying something else. Do send Kanchan to Sevagram or take her there. If she has difficulty in going alone she can go with somebody. If she is feeling strong enough she can go alone at her leisure. Do whatever may be proper. I am all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

BIBI AMTUL SALAAM
KASTURBA SEVA MANDIR
BORKAMATA
TRIPURA DISTRICT

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 496

108. LETTER TO GOPE GURUBUXANI

PANCHGANI,
June 6, 1945

CHI. GURBUXANI,

I have your postcard. You have yourself said that you do not want a reply to every letter. Even so, I have written quite a few letters. You should not have published what I have written to you and youshould have had the English version passed by me. I have noted that you are working for an insurance company.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1315

109. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN CHOWDHARY

PANCHGANI,
June 6, 1945

CHI. RAMNARAYAN,

I have your postcard. I won't call you here. Your idea of going to Sevagram is good. I shall try to go through the book when I get it. I did not know that Jugalkishore was your brother. Hope you are keeping well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RAMNARAYAN CHOWDRARY
ADARSH PRESS
AJMER

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

110. TELEGRAM TO MANAGER, SEVAGRAM ASHRAM

PANCHGANI,
June 7, 1945

MANAGER
ASHRAM SEVAGRAM
WARDHA

RECEIVED BALVANTSINHA'S LETTER. I URGE HOSHIARI'S FATHER NOT TAKE HER BEFORE MY ARRIVAL. WRITING.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

111. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

PANCHGANI,
June 7, 1945][1]

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have your letter. I approve in every way your decision to resign as Secretary. But my approval rests on the condition that you will have fully understood my advice and acted in strict accordance with it. Man is not a lifeless machine, though he should work like a machine; he is a conscious being and while working as a machine he should work with faith and intelligence, that is to say, with his heart and his mind. Only then will he shine and succeed in hs effort. I have read your statement. Now ease your mind of the burden. Do what you can and give what help and guidance you can while resting. If you do only that much, though you have ceased to be Secretary, the management will remain in your hands, for your experience and patience are your own and cannot be transferred to anybody. Those who wish may take them from you. Even if they do there will be no diminution of your possession. This is the meaning of the verse

[1] The source has 1942. *Vide* however "Letter to Chimanlal N. Shah", 24-5-1945 which deals with the same subject, Gandhiji did not visit Panchgani in that year.

purnamidam[1].

I learnt the reason for your fast from your letter to Kanam. I see that you fasted for 36 hours as atonement. If that was so, I do not approve of the fast. At the same time I cannot say that it was wrong to fast. Therefore my. . . .[2]

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10636

112. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

June 7, 1945

CHI. LILI,

Should I pity your brother and sister-in-law or be angry with them ? What else can be the result when they cannot control their lust? It is up to you to consider your duty in the matter. Any religion taught by others is mere tautology. As for me, I am not a learned person in any sense. May God help you, your brother and sister-in-law. May it be well with the boy.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. LILAVATI UDESHI
G. S. MEDICAL COLLEGE
LADIES HOSTEL
PAREL
BOMBAY 12

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Ishopanished*, Invocation

[2] The text is incomplete.

113. LETTER TO ATMARAM RAMCHANDANI

PANCHGANI,
June 8, 1945

BHAI ATMARAM,

Jairamdas has given me a cheque for Rs. 500/-. I shall use the amount for public work of some kind.

I hope that you will devote your time to constructive work as suggested by me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original : Atmaram Ramchandani Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

114. LETTER TO CHOITHRAM GIDWANI

PANCHGANI,
June 7, 1945

BHAI CHOITHRAM,

I have already written to you that I have been working on your letter. I am sending you a copy of the letter Bhulabhai has written. The argument he has given is the one supported by all the eminent lawyers the world over. I can testify to it. I can understand why Bhulabhai has accepted this case. He has plenty of money. We may be sure he has not accepted the case for the sake of the money. He has accepted the case as a lawyer and has kept politics out of it. We should be proud of it and we should pray that truth alone may triumph and if Khuhro[1] is guilty he may be proved so. This does not happen in the courts of today. We often find the guilty being acquitted. But we should not give up hope on that account.[2]

I hope your health is good. Write to me what new activity Kripalani is starting. Jairamdas along with Devibehn and Premi should be coming here today

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] M. A. Khuhro, Muslim League member; he was charged with murder of Allah Bux, Premier of Sind, on May 14, 1943, but was acquitted on final appeal.

[2] *Vide* also the following item.

115. LETTER TO BHULABHAI DESAI

June 7, 1945

BHAI BHULABHAI,

I have sat down to write this letter after the morning prayer, i. e., at about 6 o'clock. I saw your letter last evening.

I am writing this with the sole desire that you should retain the eminent position you occupy. I hesitate to write because I write without any official authority. There is a very big difference between yourlegal style and my own old-fashioned one or rather between your legal knowledge and mine. I am saying this deliberately and not through false modesty. I learnt while studying law and practising it—and I have always acted upon the understanding—that a lawyer, having accepted the brief of an untruthful case should give it up as soon as he realizes its untruthfulness, that is, ask for a verdict against his client. I know that there is a section of the bar which holds the opposite view. They ask what the function of the judge would be if an advocate himself were to sit in judgment on his case. I have always held, and hold even today, that that section is mistaken. This is my own view. I find the whole of your argument unconvincing. It should be of no concern either to you or to me whether it is the question of League or the non-League Muslims. If the case of those who hold opposite views from ours is just, I would come forward to support it notwithstanding opposition from everybody else, but if a case is unjust I would not support it even if it were my own son's. I also believe that Bhai Khuhro's brief should not be rejected merely on the ground that he is believed to be inciting the Hurs. But, if after having accepted his brief and studied it, I felt that he was guilty, my moral sense would teach me that, if permitted by the client, I should plead guilty and take the punishment. But if he should not permit me, I would request him to release me and engage another lawyer. I remember having done that for two Muslim clients. In one case I asked for a verdict against the client and in another admitted the client's guilts and got his punishment much reduced and ultimately had him released after he had undergone some years of imprisonment. I therefore do not hesitate to request you that if, after examining the papers of Khuhro's case, you feel that he is innocent, you should fight for him, but if you feel that he is guilty, you should advise him to plead guilty or ask him to relieve you. This is but a suggestion from me. If, after weighing it carefully you do not approve of it, reject it. Do not look to the person

who has given advice; only think over the advice.

As desired by you, I am sending your letter to Choithram. I feel that he should have written to you. I also believe that he should not have formed prejudiced views. But that is a characteristic not only of our life but of that of the whole world. We have observed that even the most balanced men have not been able to shed this weakness. Hence, do not pay attention to Choithram's shortcomings. If you find any substance in his otherwise faulty reasoning, accept it. I have not explained to Choithram the argument I have put before you. I amenclosing a copy of the letter I have written[1] to him.

I understand what you say regarding Chimur-Ashti. Please see to it that those prisoners are not hanged.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Bhulabhai Desai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

116. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

June 7, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

It is good you sent a wire to Amtul Salaam. I hope you have sent one to Satis Babu also or written to him. Kanchan will get well there and be happy. Let her get some experience there. If, however, she is keen on returning to Sevagram, let her do so.[2]

You have assumed a fairly heavy burden. Learn to keep your eyes closed, while remaining awake, and efface yourself completely. If fortunate, you may even have a vision of God. In any case you will have guidance in the performance of your daily duties. Remember that a mango tree does not start bearing fruit in a day. Fix the tenure of office of the Manager, after which he can be changed. For the present let it be as brief as possible. Keep the accounts department separate and independent. The Ministers keep changing but the Bank of England has been going on for centuries. Its history is worth pondering over. Its Annual General Meeting lasts just thirteen and a

[1] *Vide* the preceding item,

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Kanchan M. Shah", 6-6-1945.

half minutes and a few seconds. That institution subscribes to the ideal of few words and more action.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Ramnarayan Chowdhary is for all practical purposes an inmate of the Ashram. We ought to find accommodation for him, whatever the inconvenience.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8450. Also C.W. 5581. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

117. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

June 7, 1945

BHAI MUNSHI,

I got your letter. You are suffering from fever and tonsillitis. Do you think you will get well there? In your condition I would advise Bombay. You will not get elesewhere the help you can in Bombay, and in June the climate is not bad. However, treat this as no more than advice.[1]

I have noted what you say regarding Kasturba Memorial Office. It was Bapa's suggestion. It is a good one.

What shall one say about the climate in England!

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am hoping to reach Sevagram in the beginning of July.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 7687. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

118. LETTER TO JEHANGIR PATEL

PANCHGANI,
June 7, 1945

CHI. JEHANGIR,

I have your letter. You are needlessly unhappy. Dinshaw's duty is to stay in Poona as long as he can. He gave me a massage. He left only yesterday. He will come again either on the 15th or 16th.

There are only three experts who can massage me—Sushila-

[1] The Gujarati saying is, "One remembers the advice of the master only till one reaches the gate".

behn, Pyarelal and Kanu. These days mostly Kanu massages me. Generally I go to sleep while taking the massage.

Mother should either recover or get relief from suffering. Please tell her that I think of her often.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI JEHANGIR PATEL
10 CHURCHGATE STREET
FORT, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

119. LETTER TO RASIKLAL PARIKH

June 7, 1945

CHI. RASIKLAL,

I have gone through everything you have sent me. My views are radically different from yours. The small States should straightaway and openly hand over power to the people. They should willingly meet the people. This is the only path by taking which they can survive. The steps you have taken will be in vain. You yourself will not be able to swallow this draught and, even if you do, you will not be able to persuade the princely States to swallow it. So it is better if you do not involve me in this business. Seek Khersaheb's advice and do whatever he says. I see the point of Dr. Jayakar's advice. He has given sincere advice as a lawyer. But I do not see my place in any of this. I have drawn a line. It is enough if I do not deviate from it.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RASIKLAL PARIKH
KATHIAWAR POLITICAL CONFERENCE
JORAVARNAGAR
KATHIAWAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

120. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

PANCHGANI,
June 7, 1945

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I had a telegram from Chi. Hoshiari and then, yesterday, your letter came. My advice to Hoshiari's father is that he should not try to take her away till I come and since he has arrived in the Ashram he should await my return and share the work in the Ashram, so that he will learn something, gain some experience and at the same time not be a burden on the Ashram. Hoshiari is as dear to me as she is to her father. If Hoshiari had felt dissatisfied I would not have said anything.But she is quite happy there, is getting education and making progress. The Ashram is not perfect, but it is not a bad place. It has not done any harm to anyone. Many have risen by living in the Ashram. Those who are good have never felt inconvenienced in the Ashram. Hoshiari's father should therefore rest assured that Hoshiari will not be harmed by living in the Ashram. The rest when I come. Today I can but request Hoshiari's father that if he cannot stay on there for a month, he should not take away Hoshiari with him. If even in spite of my letters it is decided that Hoshiari should go she should not go with her father but you should accompany her. I hope the affairs at the Ashram are going on well. We shall talk about the servants when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1962

121. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

PANCHGANI,
June 7, 1945

CHI. HOSHIARI,

I have your telegram. As soon as I received Balvantsinha's letter, I sent[1] a wire and also wrote to him. I have decided that you should stay on till I return. Convey this humbly but firmly to Father. Your

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Manager, Sevagram Ashram", 7-6-1945.

humility will set everything right. True humility is filled with ahimsa. Learn everything thoroughly. You must have known from Balvantsinha's letter what advice I have given to Father.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

122. LETTER TO HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB

June 7, 1945

BHAI MAHTAB,

I do not like what you have told the Press. If we must criticize Rajaji, it should be done in a straightforward manner. Do you want to serve or to appear in newspapers? You cannot do both simultaneously. In any case I want you to realize that I do not like your behaviour. This is only my opinion. You will do what you think is proper. As you have some regard for me, I thought it was my duty to write this much.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB
C/O DAHYABHAI PATEL
68 MARINE DRIVE
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

123. LETTER TO RADHA

PANCHGANI,
June 7, 1945

CHI. RADHABEHN,

Read this. I intend to write to you only in the national language. Dr. Mahmud gave me your English letter. It is beautiful. But we want to see beauty in the national language. Your Son will have come by now. Convey my blessings to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

124. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

PANCHGANI,
June 7, 1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I have your letter. You have my approval for appointing Manohar Dhotre to look after the accounts, etc., for 1_ months.

If possible copy letters in ink so that the original does not have to be written in pencil.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SHYAMLALJI
KASTURBA TRUST OFFICE
SCINDIA HOUSE
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

125. LETTER TO TARACHAND

PANCHGANI,
June 7, 1945

BHAI TARACHAND,

I have your letter. It is very clear. It will help me. I will not be slack. I am sending the letter to Sriman Narayan. I shall take a decision after consulting him and shall write to you again.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. TARACHAND
11 CHATHAM LINES

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

126. TELEGRAM TO BALVANTSINHA

PANCHGANI,
June 8, 1945

BALVANTSINHA
ASHRAM SEVAGRAM
WARDHA

REPLIED EARLIER WIRE[1] AND LETTER[2]. HOSHIARI'S FATHER SHOULD REMAIN TILL MY RETURN.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

127. LETTER TO LORD SAMUEL[3]

PANCHGANI,
June 8, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your letter of 25th July, 1944. Perhaps you are right that after this lapse of time it would not be very profitable to enter into a detailed discussion of the various points raised by your speech in the House of Lords.

There is one point in your letter however which challenges a reply. You have adduced two passages from my writings in support of your remarks in the House of Lords that "When Mr. Gandhi called upon the British Government to quit India, he said it would be for the Congress to take delivery." This, you have argued, connotes totalitarian spirit in the Congress.

I have seen the full text of the *Harijan* articles referred to in your letter. Copies of these are enclosed for easy reference.

The passages cited by you are from the *Harijan* of June 15, 1940, and December 3, 1938, respectively. You will not fail to observe that they have no relevancy to the point at issue. The Congress decision in connection with its "Quit India" demand inAugust 1942

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Manager, Sevagram Ashram", 7-6-1945 and "Letter to Balvantsinha", 7-6-1945.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Herbert Louis Samuel, Liberal leader

is embodied in the official declaration of its President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to which I have referred in my last letter[1] to you. To that decision the Congress still stands committed and one fails to see what bearing my writings in *Harijan* have upon it.

The fact however is that the quotations given by you are incapable of bearing the totalitarian interpretation you have put upon them. The British Government have often declared that they would gladly part with power if there was a body in India ready and fit to take charge. What is wrong in the Congress trying to qualify itself for that onerous duty? That it does not want power for itself but for the whole people of India is made absolutely clear by me in the course of the same article from which you have quoted. Here is the relevant extract:

> Its non-violence forbids the Congress from standing aloof and riding the high horse as the opponents say. On the contrary it has to woo all parties, disarm suspicion and create trust in its *bona fides*.

Is it not the normal goal of every party in a democratic State to aspire to convert the whole country to its view and to become its mouthpiece? Does not the party in power in the House of Commons take delivery of the machinery of administration from the outgoing party—its predecessor? And is not the formation of coalition cabinets under the party system of government an exception rather than the rule? Then how can the refusal of the Congress to sacrifice or water down its ideal for the sake of securing unanimity with other parties be called totalitarian?

With regard to the second passage from the article on the Princes it is only necessary to point out that it was the British Government itself that called upon the Congress to secure an agreement with the States, at the Second Round Table Conference. There could therefore be nothing wrong in its inviting the Princes to treat with it.

The essential fact to remember in this connection is that the Congress has no other sanction except that of persuasion and self-suffering, any other being precluded by its creed. On the other hand, is not violence, euphemistically called physical force, the basis and backbone of the totalitarian spirit? If it is, and if you believe in

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Samuel", 15-5-1943.

my *bona fides* about non-violence and also of the Congress, youcannot accuse either Of the totalitarian spirit.[1]

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Enclosures: 2

RT. HON. VISCOUNT SAMUEL, G.C.B.,&C.
32 PORCHESTER TERRACE
LONDON W. 2 (ENGLAND)

Enclosures: "Two Parties" *(Harijan,* June 15, 1940)
"States and the People" (*Harijan*, December 3, 1938)

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, pp. 84-6

128. LETTER TO BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

PANCHGANI,
June 8, 1945

MY DEAR BHARATAN,

Of course I am going through your book, but I am crawling like a snail, which I hope you do not mind.

I edited *Harijan* in English as a matter of cruel necessity. I should even repeat the performance. But I know that my imperfect Hindustani would be much better understood, and would reach larger number of readers. There is force however in what you say. But I must not devote time to arguing.

Love.

BAPU

SJT. BHARATAN KUMARAPPA
THE A. I. V. I. A.
MAGANWADI, WARDHA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee's reply dated July 2, *inter alia,* read : "I am still not convinced . . . . C ngress, you said, would 'take delivery'; and you urge that that is to be regarded as justifiable because Congress sincerely wishes to embrace all parties and is trying to do so. Yes, but while the taking of delivery is to be immediate and certain the other is still in the future and, it cannot be denied, is problematical."

129. LETTER TO MAURICE FRYDMAN

PANCHGANI,
June 8, 1945

MY DEAR BHARATANAND,

You are under promise to behave yourself and be well. No thoughtless experiments allowed.

As to the 16 Poles, send me the draft you would like me to sign. Is my signature of any value in such a case? But I do not wish to anticipate my judgment. I shall know when the draft is before me.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI BHARATANANDJI
JASSAWALA NATURE CURE CLINIC
CUMBALLA HILL
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

130. LETTER TO MOHAN KUMARAMANGALAM

PANCHGANI,
June 8, 1945

MY DEAR MOHAN,

I have your cuttings. They are interesting and ably written. I am doing what I can in the matter.

Please make no public use of this correspondence.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MOHAN KUMARAMANGALAM
RAJ BHAWAN
SANDHURST ROAD
BOMBAY-4

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

131. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS G. KAPADIA

PANCHGANI,
June 8, 1945

CHI. MADHAVDAS,

I was happy to read your letter. Dr. Krishnavarma is an obliging gentleman. He has kept you there at my request. I could not send you anywhere else. So far as I know, he is there not to fleece the patients. He loves giving this kind of treatment. In any case he doesn't wish to charge anything in your case. I have pressed him to accept the expenditure he will be incurring on your account. I am glad that Manilal showed interest in your case. I am glad also that Manilal has taken the key from you and you have given it. I have told him that he has to pay all the expenses that may be incurred whether from your account or some other account. You need not worry at all. Do what Dr. Krishnavarma says. He is competent and I have full faith in him as regards your treatment. Remember that you had tried to commit suicide. God saved you. Now make up your mind that you will stay there and get well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N. 2721

132. LETTER TO RAMASWAMI

PANCHGANI,
June 8, 1945

CHI. RAMASWAMI,

Let me at any rate reply in Hindi to your English letter. I did not even know that Lady Tata was still alive. Where does she figure in this? Where does she live? Please write to me
You can come to the Ashram in July.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

133. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

PANCHGANI,
June 8, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have read the accompanying letter[1]. If what he writes is true, tell him this:

"Do not go to Khadi Vidyalaya for training. Stay here, do physical labour, have your daily meals and learn what you can." If he can put m sufficient physical labour and if you feel inclined, keep him. Do not give him a separate room. He will rest wherever free space is available. If we can discontinue the practice of assigning a room to each person, we shall be able to accommodate more people. Do not keep him if he does not observe all the rules. In this way we can even test whether such persons are sincere or not.

Ramaswami's letter is enclosed. Read it and show it to others and then file it.

I have dropped him an ordinary postcard.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8449. Also C.W. 5582. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

134. LETTER TO GOVIND REDDY

June 8, 1945

BHAI GOVIND REDDY,

I have forwarded your letter to the manager of the Ashram and have asked him to do what he thinks proper.[3] Please see him.

Blessings from,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] From Govind Reddy
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] *ibid*

135. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

June 8, 1945

CHI. MITHUBEHN,

I was glad to get a letter from you after a long time. All of us will eat the mangoes as *prasadi.* The description you give of your work is very good. However, I do not like your keeping indifferent health. Where is one to lay the blame for your illness in spite of the means at your disposal—on the means or on you or on the doctors or on all? I understand about Kalyanji. He is also quite busy with his work. Is he all right?

Blessings to all of you from

BAPU

SHRI MITHUBEHN PETIT
KASTURBA SEVASHRAM
MAROLI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. courtesy: Pyarelal

136. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

PANCHGANI,
June 8, 1945

CHI. NIMU,

I have your letter. I am sure you have done the wise thing in not going to Delhi [to look after Sumi]. As it is; neither you nor Usha were keen on going to Simla. Sumi is being looked after quite well. Therefore there is no meaning in your going there. Devdas's invitation [to go to Delhi] shows his love for you. True love lies in not submitting at all to such love. This increases mutual love. From time to time keep advising [Sumi] not to keep awake at the cost of her eyes. Usha may write whenever she feels like it. It is yours and Ramdas's duty to improve in health. Kanam is well. He does not givetrouble to anyone. He talks a lot. I have shown him the [three] monkey gurus.

Blessings from

BAPU

NIRMALA GANDHI
C/O RAMDAS GANDHI
KHALASI LANE
NAGPUR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

137. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

PANCHGANI,
June 8, 1945

CHI. SATIS BABU,

May I send a copy of your letter to the Madhukosh[1] people if you have not sent one already? Please let me know. What you write has certainly startled me. I have received both the samples of honey.

I hope you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1643

138. LETTER TO DEVRAJ SETHI

PANCHGANI,
June 8, 1945

BHAI DEVRAJ,

I would certainly like to have Vidyavati[2] for the Nayee Talim work. However, I am afraid that that work demands hard labour and perhaps Vidyavati will not be up to it. I would advise her to write to Ashadevi.

How can I meet the Acharya[3] in Panchgani, now that I shall be getting down from here by the end of the month?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI DEVRAJ SETHI, M.A., LL.B.
JHANG CITY (PUNJAB)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Apiaries near Mahabaleshwar where work was done scientifically with everything swadeshi. Gandhiji had visited the apiaries on May 2.

[2] Principal, Kanya Gurukul, Dehradun

[3] Vidyavati

139. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI

PANCHGANI,
June 8, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I cannot do anything from here. I do not have that much power and authority. I have sent your letter to Purushottamdas Tandon. He will do whatever he can. See him.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI JANAKIDEVI
MIRA GOVINDPUR
RAE BARELI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

140. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON

June 8, 1945

BHAI PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDONJI,

Please see the enclosed. Do what you think proper. I have written[1] to the lady advising her to see you. I am awaiting your reply to my letter about Hindustani.

BAPU

PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDONJI
10 CROSSWATH ROAD
ALLAHABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

141. LETTER TO KIKIBEHN LALVANI

PANCHGANI,
June 8, 1945

DEAR KIKIBEHN[1],

Pyarelalji has received your letter. Your English statements raise a big question in my mind. When you cannot yourself write in English, what is the point of getting them written and then signing them? At the most do as Ba did. She narrated her anguish over Harilal's behaviour to Devdas who translated it into English and gave it to the newspapers saying that it was almost a literal translation of what Ba had narrated to him. You must have seen it. Such writings will carry greater weight and with that the mother tongue will also gain in importance. I will go to the extent of saying that whatever ideas occur to you, express them as they are either in Sindhi or Hindi. Ultimately whatever is translated into English is as useless as fruit ripened artificially.

I am all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KIKIBEHN LALVANI
BHARAT KHADI BHANDAR
BURUS ROAD, KARACHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

142. LETTER TO DUNICHAND

PANCHGANI,
June 8, 1945

BHAI DUNICHAND,

I have your letter. You are doing very good work. What I wrote about 'imperialism'[2] is being proved now.

Come to Sevagram whenever you want to. I will go down from here by the end of the month.

[1] Sister of J. B. Kripalani
[2] Gandhiji has used the English expression.

It was all to the good that my message[1] did not reach your wife.

This shows that whether I live for 125 years or not, you certainly are going to live long and will very soon remove the sufferings of the Harijans of Dukhaidi.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

LALA DUNICHAND, ADVOCATE
KRIPANANDAS COTTAGE
AMBALA CITY (PUNJAB)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

143. LETTER TO MOHANLAL

PANCHGANI,
June 8, 1945

BHAI MOHANLAL,

I was glad to have your letter. You have done good work for the Harijans of Dukhaidi. You must work hard and remove all their difficulties.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MOHANLAL
LAJPATRAI BHAWAN
LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

144. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

PANCHGANI,
June 8, 1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I have your letter of the 2nd. I would keep the girls not only at a place near the Ashram but in the Ashram itself. But there is no room there. I still believe that we should have a permanent building of our own for such purposes. However, it is good that you have written

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dunichand", 13-5-1945.

to Jajuji. The problem will be resolved some way or the other.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SHYAMLALJI
KASTURBA TRUST OFFICE
SCINDIA HOUSE
BALLARD ESTATE, FORT, BOMBAY

From the Hindi original: Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

145. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

PANCHGANI,
June 8, 1945

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your second letter. You are needlessly unhappy over being released. You have to work out of jail and even in jail. The truth is that for one like you there is more work outside. But what of it? You are capable of doing it. Do not worry at all. Come here, if getting permission to meet Jayaprakash is going to take time. Go from here when you have the permission.

About Father, I fervently hope that he may be relieved from the present crippled state.

My health is of course good. I will go down from here by the end of the month. If the spectacles suit you, then never give them up. I keep on receiving letters saying "Prabhavati and Rajkumari must have reached there". But neither of you is here. Rajkumari has not received the order from the Government. She saw from the newspapers that the restriction imposed on her had been lifted. Even on receiving the intimation from the Government, she will not be able to come here soon as she must stay in Simla to help her brother and sister-in-law with their work. It seems she will be able to come only in July.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

PRABHAVATI DEVI
C/O SHRI VISHWANATH PRASAD
BIHAR BANK
LAHERI SARAI P. O., DARBHANGA (BIHAR)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 4-6-1945.

146. LETTER TO SUMATIBAI RAI

PANCHGANI,
June 8, 1945

KUMARI SUMATIBAI,

I have your letter. If you have the strength, the knowledge and the will for it, do work for the Kasturba Trust.

Please tell Ramkrishna Jaju that I am not replying to him separately. May he get well soon.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SUMATIBAI RAI
JAIN SEVIKASHRAM
SHOLAPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

147. LETTER TO UMA AGRAWAL

June 8, 1945

CHI. OM,

I have your letter. If I have to take a decision about you, I can do that when I reach there in July.

I follow what you say about Hindustani. There should of course be a dictionary of the words spoken in the villages. No language can survive without a dictionary. Dr. Tarachand and Sunderlalji alone will not complete the dictionary. We shall have a little discussion when we meet. The committee formed for this purpose has to evolve a composite language.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

148. TELEGRAM TO SUKHDEV PRASAD

PANCHGANI,
June 9, 1945

SUKHDEV PRASAD
LALGANJ

ASK LOCAL LEADERS.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

149. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

PANCHGANI,
June 9, 1945

MY DEAR SINGER,

I have kept yours of 13th ultimo just to give you a few lines of love for your great motherly affection. Your wire was good as from a philosopher, who could put her philosophy to practice at the right moment.[1] Your letter brings out a mother's affection at its best. I do not know whether to love you best as a poetess, philosopher or mother? Tell me.

Love.

SHRIMATI SAROJINI NAIDU SPINNER
HYDERABAD, DECCAN

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. I, Book One, p. 111

[1] The addressee had lost her son; *vide* "Telegram to Sarojini Naidu", 30-4-1945.

150. LETTER TO BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

PANCHGANI,
June 9, 1945

MY DEAR BHARATAN,

So far as possible, I want to give you something for every issue of the *Patrika*[1]. You do well therefore to remind me in time and to give me a hint as to the subject on which you will like me to write.

Love.

[PS.]

Of course J. C. [Kumarappa] will be quite well.

SHRI BHARATAN KUMARAPPA
A. I. V. I. A.
MAGANWADI, WARDHA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

151. LETTER TO MOHAN KUMARAMANGALAM

PANCHGANI,
June 9, 1945

MY DEAR MOHAN,

Of course I know Palme Dutt[2] both by name and fame. I do wish him success in his campaign.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MOHAN KUMARAMANGALAM
RAJ BHAVAN
SANDHURST ROAD, BOMBAY-4

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Khadi Gramodyog Patrika*

[2] Rajani Palme-Dutt, communist leader, who was a contestant for the Sparkbrook constituency of Birmingham against L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India. The letter appeared in *The Bombay Chronicle,* 13-6-1945, as Gandhiji's reply to "a request for a message" to the addressee " in his election campaign".

152. A LETTER

[*June 9, 1945*][1]

I did have that in my mind. Palme-Dutt is a well-known figure. He will be able to give a fight to Amery. Patel[2], I do not know. Nor do I wish that too many Indians should stand for election. This is going to be an important election. It does not matter if he is defeated. If, moreover, I give in this case the same opinion that I did in Patel's, it might be interpreted to mean that I am refusing to support him because he is a communist. I have no such thought in my mind. The distinction is worth understanding. If you do not follow it, ask me again.

If you don't wish to post the letter today, it may be posted tomorrow. It is more important that you should understand my idea.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9130

153. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

PANCHGANI,
June 9, 1945

CHI. MRIDULA,

I received your letter through Bapa. Bapa has noted on it "Mridu had not given anything in writing before. She has now. It will be discussed at the next meeting". Let that be so. Your office at present is in Bombay. Let it be there for the time being. Write to me if Shantikumar has any difficulty. I take it that the assistants who are there will continue.

I hope your health is good. We are going to have a quarrel if it does not improve.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MRIDULA SARABHAI
KASTURBA SMARAK NIDHI
SCINDIA HOUSE, BALLARD ESTATE
BOMBAY-1

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] From the reference to Palme-Dutt; *vide* the preceding item.
[2] Purushottam Patel; *vide* "Letter to Purushottam Patel", 4-6-1945.

154. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

June 9, 1945

CHI. A. S.,

I have your letter. I left Mahabaleshwar long ago. I shall leave Panchgani too by the end of this month. I may leave even earlier. I shall reach Sevagram in July. Do not think about the six months.

Think about your work. Finish it and come back.

Send Kanchan to Sodepur.

Sushilabehn has written. You do not remember and then become impatient.

What should I do about Khan Saheb?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 497

155. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

PANCHGANI,
June 9, 1945

BHAI JAJUJI,

You must have seen Chi. Narandas's appeal. If I can find a copy here I shall enclose it with this. In my view it would be a great thing. Labour is the basis of the bank here. It can be a great thing if it can be done. In my opinion we should fully take part in it. And our part will consist only in accepting contributions. We shall not give anything. That is to say that we shall take the yarn from persons offering at least one hank of it for Narandas's *sutrayajna* and give a receipt for it. Then we have to send an account of it to Narandas every week or every month. This does not involve much work on our part and it can bring in quite a lot. This would enhance the importance of this *yajna*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 8624. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

156. LETTER TO VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA

PANCHGANI,
June 9, 1945

CHI. VICHITRA[1],

I have your letter. It is a difficult problem. You should fearlessly write to Gadodiaji and ask him what he wants. Let him go out if he wants. Ask Jajuji also. Find out whom Dr. Sharma wants to be appointed. I am managing with one letter to save time. Otherwise I would have had to write three.

Blessings from

BAPU

Copy to Dr. Sharma

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, p. 330

157. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR

June 9, 1945

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

I have your letter. Bring Babaji down to simple diet. He must get well somehow.

Money has been sent to Bhai Ramaswamy. That was meant for his parents. I do not know if he has asked for anything else.

Should I take it that your health is perfect?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9030. Also C.W. 9154. Courtesy: Prabhakar

[1] Manager, Gandhi Ashram, Meerut

158. LETTER TO SHANTA

PANCHGANI,
June 9, 1945

CHI. SHANTA,

Your letter is good. It is bad to use the expression "two or four". The shifting of the latrine will cost either Rs. 2 or Rs. 4. Truly speaking, we should calculate to the last anna. Only then will your account be complete. Your description is interesting and informative.

Yes, the task is one of transformation of life. We should not lose heart or give it up even if it continues for ages. You have very aptly defined the meaning of adult education.[1]

Non-attachment is the right thing. Determination to strive to achieve it is enough.

The true bank is a labour bank and its currency is yarn. This does not mean that your grain banks and money banks should not function.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 5899. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

159. LETTER TO KASHINATH VAIDYA

PANCHGANI,
June 9, 1945

BHAI KASHINATH VAIDYA,

I have your letter of June 6. I am doing all that I can. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KASHINATH VAIDYA
1307 SULTAN BAZAAR
HYDERABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] What follows is from Pyarelal Papers.

160. LETTER TO PARVATI DINDWANIA

PANCHGANI,
June 9, 1945

CHI. PARVATIBEHN,

I have your letter. About membership do what you think proper. I myself do not know much about it. I was sorry to know about your illness. Such being the case how can I advise you to disobey the order? This, too, you must decide on your own. You will have to measure your own strength. I can say this much, that if you obey the order because of your physical condition, no one can blame you. I hope you will regain your health. I cannot advise you to come here for a talk. Write to me whatever you want to say. I encourage very few people to come and see me. Your ill-health is also a reason for my refusing to let you come.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI PARVATI DINDWANIA
[C/O] C. DINDWANIA
KASHMIRI GATE, DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

161. LETTER TO SUDHA KULKARNI

PANCHGANI,
June 9, 1945

CHI. LAMBUS[1] ALIAS SUDHA,

You ride while I walk. How can I make it? You wrote a letter on the 28th of May which I received on the 1st of June. You two started your Ashram on that very day. How could my blessings reach you? If this is how you calculate your timing, you will fall off the horse and will also drag down your husband with you. With this much advice, I bless you both that you may succeed. Remember that a noble person like Balasaheb Kher is the President.

Blessings from
BAPU

A. S. SUDHA KULKARNI
ADI SEVA ASHRAM
MOKHADA P.O.
THANA DISTRICT

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Literally, tall

162. LETTER TO RAMNATH 'SUMAN'

PANCHGANI,
June 9, 1945

BHAI RAMNATH 'SUMAN'[1],

It is good that you wrote to me. I was under the impression that you were in Berar. Now you have joined the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. It is good. You must be knowing my views. I am trying to run away from the Sammelan. From my own point of view I have broadened the definition of the national language. I had sown the seed when I presided[2] at the Sammelan for the first time. Under the circumstances it is best for me to keep silent because you are one ofthe office-bearers of the Sammelan. It will not be proper for me to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

163. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

PANCHGANI,
June 9, 1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I had forgotten, if I had ever known, that you are Ramnath's younger brother. Now when I recollect the two faces I can see that there is much resemblance between the two of you.

I enclose herewith a letter[3] I have written to Ramnath. Send it to him. It is good that you had been to Wardha to look for a place for the office. It will be good if you get accommodation in the buildings of Rashtrabhasha Prachar Sabha or Bajajwadi or Maganwadi. According to Bapa, Bajajwadi or Maganwadi will perhaps be the most suitable. However, see it for yourself. I am only making a suggestion.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SHYAMLALJI
SHRI KASTURBA SMARAK NIDHI
SCINDIA HOUSE, BALLARD ESTATE
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] A Hindi poet
[2] At Indore, on April 30, 1935
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

164. LETTER TO VINA CHATTERJEE

PANCHGANI,
June 9, 1945

CHI. VINA,

I have your letter. Your handwriting is good but there is room for improvement in it. Learn both the scripts well. Of course yourwork always gives satisfaction. Keep yourself fit. Tell Zohra to write to me. Mridulabehn had asked for her. What reply did she give her?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

165. NEED FOR KHADI EDUCATION

PANCHGANI,
June 10, 1945

Soon after the khadi activity was started, the need began to be felt for the workers to have a scientific knowledge of all the processes of khadi production. Therefore, as early as 1927-'28 a school was opened in the Sabarmati Ashram to teach spinning and weaving. As the khadi activity grew and it became necessary to pay attention to other aspects such as making khadi attractive to look at and low-priced, the lack of scientific knowledge of the subject began to be felt more and more every day. A few workers were able, through their own individual efforts and experience, to gather many useful bits of knowledge. The tools were experimented on and improved. All the lovers of khadi know that the late Shri Maganlal Gandhi worked very hard in this connection. It then became clear that it was very necessary for every khadi worker to learn the science of khadi. I have from the very beginning emphasized this. I prepared a questionnaire about the various things khadi workers ought to know. In 1937, I also wrote three articles for the *Harijan*. In an article dated February 13, 1937, I wrote :[1]

> In my opinion it should be made obligatory on every khadi worker engaged in any of the production centres of the A. I. S. A. to know the elements of this science.

Following this policy, khadi schools were later opened. A khadi

[1] *Vide* "What Khadi workers should know", 13-2-1937.

school was opened by the Central Office [of the A. I. S. A.]. The syllabi for the "spinning workers", "weaving workers" and "Khadi Prathama" were prepared and arrangements were made to impart instruction according to them. It was also hoped then that all the workers of the Charkha Sangh would join these schools by turns,and complete their training. In order to save workers from any kind of difficulties, it was arranged to pay them, over and above their regular salaries, travelling allowance and other allowances since it was thought that the workers would have to spend more on food in an unfamiliar place. One regrets however that the workers have not shown any increased enthusiasm for learning the khadi science.

Now that the Charkha Sangh has taken up the new work it becomes obligatory on the part of khadi workers to train themselves in khadi science. Without that it will be impossible to carry on the new khadi programme.

According to the new programme, the sales depots too will almost be like production centres. Not only that; after some time we intend to convert all khadi production centres and sales depots into khadi education centres. It will then be unnecessary to send workers to the schools for khadi training. We have to train in the science of khadi all the workers, new as well as old.

Those in charge of the branches are therefore requested to scrutinize the list of workers to assess what training a particular worker needs and to make arrangements for such training to be given. Lists of workers should in this way be made and forwarded to the Central Office. In order to make the training obligatory, we should make the rise in salary dependent on the degree of khadi education possessed by the worker. We should also accept the principle that the khadi worker has to pass an examination. Those who fail should not be considered qualified. So long as we do not seriously take up the question of khadi education, how can we hope to succeed?

I have said that if we are true khadi workers, we should have as much awareness, as much knowledge and as much alertness as is considered necessary for a member of the I. C. S.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

166. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

June 10, 1945

CHI. ANAND,

I have your letter. Now Jairamdas is with me. I have asked him to write to you.[1] It is only to console you. Do get well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

167. LETTER TO HAMID KHAN

PANCHGANI,
June 10, 1945

BHAI HAMID KHAN,

I have your letter. I knew Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi[2] well. I had great regard for him. I have already given my view on the question of a memorial. You must know it. Go through it if you have not already done so. You can't raise a memorial by constructing a building or spending money. A man thinks that having given the money he has done his duty. Therefore, in my opinion, it will be a true memorial to Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi if, at least in Kanpur, and as far as possible throughout India, Hindus and Muslims should unite and instead of cutting each other's throats be prepared to lay down their lives for each other. If this comes about, let me know and then ask for my blessings. What is there in merely collecting money? Let me also know who are on the Committee? And what are the grounds for believing that what has not been achieved so far will be achieved now?

I have seen the aim of the Memorial Committee. That will not make the memory of the deceased immortal, only bring ridicule to it. Two or three rich men can jointly put up such buildings, give jobs to a few persons and thus deceive themselves and others that they haveraised a memorial to Vidyarthiji. But I will regard it as a mockery.

[1] For Jairamdas Doulatram's letter to the addressee, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Jairamdas Doulatram to Anand T. Hingorani", 10-6-1945.

[2] He was killed while pacifying rioters during Hindu-Muslim riots on March 25, 1931.

This letter is meant for you and your Committee and not for the Press. This does not mean that I do not want to give my views to the Press. If you want, you can give it. My aim in writing this is to awaken you and make you do real work.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

JANAB HAMID KHAN
SECRETARY
GANESH SHANKAR SMARAK COMMITTEE
TIL-KAHAL, KANPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

168. LETTER TO N. G. RANGA

PANCHGANI,
June 10, 1945

BHAI RANGA,

I have your letter. You will be able to follow if I write in Hindi, won't you? I like your correspondence with Prof. Humayun Kabir. We shall talk about it when we meet. In the mean time learn a little Hindustani.

Blessings from

BAPU

PROF. N. G. RANGA
PRINCIPAL, PEASANTS' INSTITUTE
NIDUBROLU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

169. SPEECH TO RASHTRA SEVA DAL MEMBERS, PANCHGANI[1]

June 10, 1945

Gandhiji congratulated the volunteers for having walked down to Panchgani from Wai in spite of the rain. He was sorry he could not invite them all to theprayer hall. The hall belonged to a school. That they allowed him, a rebel, to hold a prayer meeting in their hall was the essence of the prayer. He knew that the volunteers did

[1] According to the A. P. I. report, this is "the authorized version" of Gandhiji's speech to about 300 volunteers at a function organized by Dr. B. D. Savant in Parsi Girls High School. Gandhiji spoke in Hindustani which was rendered into Marathi.

not all pray. He had been in close touch with volunteer organizations in India ever since 1919. Yet he had not been able to make them prayer-minded. He had failed to create in them an enthusiasm for prayer.

Again he had explained to them right from the beginning that a volunteer must always serve the people and serve them only through truth and non-violence. Yet there were very few men and women amongst them who had accepted truth and non-violence as their creed. He was convinced that real swaraj, that is, swaraj for the rich and the poor alike, could not be won except through truth and non-violence.

They had just seen the end of a terrible war. It had made people doubt if truth really counted in this world. The Allies had won, but their victory had been the result of superior arms and superior man-power. He could not enthuse over it as a victory of truth over falsehood. At the same time he wanted to make it clear to them that a victory for the Axis would have been far worse. The Axis had accepted violence as their creed. The Allies had not done so. They at least paid lip service to peace and freedom, and truth and non-violence. It was true that their actions belied their profession. A major part of humanity today consisted of oppressed and enslaved nations. It was his conviction that, if India could win swaraj through truth and non-violence, she would be able to bring deliverance to all the other oppressed nations.

Many of the volunteers were not clad in khadi. He had called the spinning-wheel the symbol of truth and non-violence and therefore also of swaraj. That was why it had found a place in the national flag. Therefore he exhorted them all to spin and produce khadi for their own clothes. Thus they would help to combat the cloth shortage in the country and help the naked poor.

Lastly he asked them all to learn Hindustani. Hindustani was the language that Hindus and Mussalmans of North India spoke and which was written in Nagari and Urdu scripts. All those who spoke Hindustani did not know both the scripts. But those who wished to serve all should make it a point of honour to learn both the scripts.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-6-1945

170. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO BHULABHAI DESAI[1]

June 11, 1945

Considering all that is happening around us, I see danger in this partnership with the League.

One thing is definite, namely, that until the members of the Working Committee are freed and can express their opinion, nothing can be done in the name of the Congress.

It is also definite that if the Chimur-Ashti prisoners and other such prisoners are hanged, the situation will become impossible. Unless the League's attitude shows a change without any expectation of gain I will have no deal with it even if the Congress Working Committee consents. This is for you yourself to think over and decide. You are in a better position to understand the truth than anybody else.

The distinction that is being made between the League Muslims and the others seems to me dangerous from every point of view. I don't think it safe to countenance any such position. Think carefully over what you said last night regarding this.

Will the 40 per cent Congress quota include any representatives of the Hindu Mahasabha or of Harijans? What about the Sikhs, Parsis, Christians, etc.? Whether you have discussed this with the League or not is irrelevant here. When the time for final decision comes, the Congress will have to consider all these points. The Congress will not be in the same position as the League. It will have to take into account all the interests in the country, whereas the League is concerned with the interests only of the Muslims supporting it. You will have to be ready to face all these complications. You will definitely not be able to bring the ship to port by disregarding the parties other than the League.

Please understand my limitations fully before you proceed further. As I have explained, my temper is progressively becomingmore uncompromising. I use the word "uncompromising"

[1] "In *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. I, Book One, p. 120, Pyarelal explains: "The rejection of the appeal for mercy on behalf of the Ashti-Chimur prisoners at this stage hardened Gandhiji's attitude. Extremely sensitive to the slightest variation in the moral atmosphere around him, he became more and more insistent on the 'present tense'. This was very much in evidence when Bhulabhai met him at Mahabaleshwar."

in a good sense, so take it in that spirit. Against my indifference to the Parliamentary scheme and my increasing faith in non-violent non-co-operation, you can safely place my loyalty to you. It will not let myself go beyond the limits of what I have given you in writing. But it is difficult even for me to say where my uncompromising spirit will take me, for I am coming to put ever increasing faith in the Unseen Power and, therefore, I think very little about tomorrow.

I started writing this before 6 and it is 6.30 now. I will write more if anything occurs to me. Otherwise take this as fully representing my views.

From the Gujarati original: Bhulabhai Desai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

171. LETTER TO DR. DINSHAW K. MEHTA

PANCHGANI,
June 11, 1945

CHI. DINSHAW,

Can Vanamala, Manu and Abha be accommodated with you? It is not yet clear which of them will be willing to go.

Why were you burdened with Rs. 1,000? Is the position there still delicate?

Is your mind at peace? You consider experiments on living animals and taking of glands, liver and so on as part of nature cure. That seems to me going too far. This needs to be considered. It will not matter if you do not reply to this. Only you must think over it. I am all right. Mangaldas Pakvasa is doing everything. He may come here. I went and saw the land yesterday. I have not been to see the land recommended by Pandit, and I don't intend to go. Gulbehn gives me a bath daily.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. DINSHAW MEHTA
AROGYA BHAWAN
NEAR STATION
POONA CITY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

172. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

PANCHGANI,
June 11, 1945

CHI. PRABHA,

I have just received your postcard of the 6th. Your coming here goes on being delayed. Towards the end of the month I shall be going down. Then on to Sevagram. Before coming find out where I am. I do not also like your falling ill. You are sensible. So I console myself that you will not delay your coming without reason. Khurshedbehn was here. She is awaiting your arrival. I do not write anything about Father[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

173. LETTER TO ZAFAR HASAN

PANCHGANI,
June 11, 1945

BHAI ZAFAR HASAN,

Benarsidas has sent me the essay which you read at the meeting of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. He says that I must read it. I received it on May 6. I could finish reading it yesterday. I read it with interest and liked it. I can see that you can render much help to the Sabha. I also find that our work is as important as it is difficult.

Please send me if you have written anything about making both the scripts easier.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. ZAFAR HASAN
READER, OSMANIA UNIVERSITY
HYDERABAD, DECCAN

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Brajkishore Babu

174. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

PANCHGANI,
June 11, 1945

BHAI BENARSIDAS,

I could read Dr. Zafar Saheb's essay only yesterday. I am so busy that I could write to him only today. The essay is interesting and good. Let me have a few copies if it has been published in pamphlet form. I hope you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2519

175. LETTER TO KARKHANIS

PANCHGANI,
June 11, 1945

BHAI KARKHANIS,

I received your wire last evening. So Hanumantharao[1] has paid off whatever debt he owed to this world and has left. Please convey my condolences to his relatives. What family has he left behind? Who will look after his work?

Blessings from

BAPU

KAKA KARKHANIS
HARIJAN ASHRAM
BIJAPUR (KARNATAKA)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Hanumantharao Kaujalgi, Congressman of Karnataka and member of Gandhi Seva Sangh; for Gandhiji's message of condolence, *vide* "Message on Hanumantharao Kaujalgi's death", 12-6-1945.

176. TWO POSERS

[On or before *June 12, 1945*][1]

Shri Sailendra Nath Chattopadhyaya of the United Press puts the following posers before me: "Why do you wish to live for 125 years, and what is Ram Rajya?"

The questions are so apt and reasonable that, contrary to my wont these days, I want to answer them. Many visitors and correspondents put the same questions. I take this opportunity therefore and once for all, I hope, of answering them to the best of my ability.

The idea of 125 years' life flashed across my mind, while I was speaking on the 8th August, 1942, to the meeting of the A.I.C.C. in Bombay. I might have mentioned the same thing before in private conversation. If I did, I have no recollection. I am a constant student of the *Ishopanishad* which contains only eighteen *mantras.* The first half of the second *mantra* means: "Only doing works of service on this earth, you should wish to live 120 or 125 years." The word in the original denoting the number is translated by the word 'hundred', but I had seen just then a com-mentary which took the number to mean 120 or 125. I purposely used the highest figure at the meeting, as signifying the intense wish to live the longest in order to fulfil my allotted work. In expressing the wish I only followed my old habit of wishing to act according to the best of my belief.

Moreover, as a naturopath, I believe in the feasibility of living the full span of life. I know that, medically speaking, the chances are against me for I have not always followed nature's way. I began to adopt it fairly strictly in South Africa in 1903 or there about. Want of *brahmacharya* in early married life must also weigh against the full span.

My conception of nature cure, like everything else, has undergone progressive evolution. And for years I have believed that, if a person is filled with the presence of God and has thus attained the state of dispassion, he can surmount handicaps against long life. I have come to the conclusion, based on observation and scriptural reading, that when a man comes to that complete living faith in the Unseen Power and has become free from passion, the body undergoesinternal transformation. This does not come about by mere wish. It needs constant vigilance and practice. In spite of both, unless God's grace descends upon one, human effort comes to naught.

[1] The article appeared under the date-line "Panchgani, June 12".

Conquest of passion—passion here does not signify animal appetite; of course, it presupposes full control over such appetite—is more difficult to attain. If it were otherwise, complete non-violence would be easy of achievement. With all my knowledge of, and effort at, non-violence, I have conquered my passion only to the stage of suppression. This involves great strain on both body and mind. Subjugation is the real need. It does not involve absence of feeling. He who identifies himself with every living creature must feel for every kind of woe and yet remain unaffected by it. Action proceeding from such equableness is far-reaching, pervasive and quickest in its effect. Naturally, it is wholly non-violent.

Difficulty of attainment need cause no worry. For, being on the right track leads one nearer to the goal.

Thus, though I wish and even hope to live up to 125 years, what does it matter, if I die tomorrow? There is no sense of regret or frustration in me. And there will be no anguish in me over an early death.

Nor does the wish imply slackness of effort, in view of the prospect of a longer life. The wish, to be capable of being fulfilled, implies readiness to leave this body without a moment's notice. It connotes an easy fulfilment, from day to day, of the daily duty. All strain is an anticipation of death.

Death does not mean an end of all effort. The Eternal Law which we term God will be a mockery, if death were the end of such an effort. 'Hereafter' is a mystery into which we may not peep. We should have enough faith to know that death, after life truly lived, is but a prelude to a better and richer life.

Now for Ram Rajya. It can be religiously translated as Kingdom of God on Earth; politically translated, it is perfect democracy in which, inequalities based on possession and non-possession, colour, race or creed or sex vanish; in it, land and State belong to the people, justice is prompt, perfect and cheap and, therefore, there is freedom of worship, speech and the Press—all this because of the reign of the self-imposed law of moral restraint.

Such a State must be based on truth and non-violence and must consist of prosperous, happy and self-contained villages and village communities. It is a dream that may never be realized. I find happiness in living in that dreamland, ever trying to realize it in the quickest way.

The Hindu, 12-6-1945

177. MESSAGE ON HANUMANTHARAO KAUJALGI'S DEATH[1]

PANCHGANI,
June 12, 1945

Hanumantharao Kaujalgi has gone. His debt is discharged. My condolences to the bereaved family. I hope his place will be worthily filled.

The Hindu, 15-6-1945

178. LETTER TO M. VISVESVARAYA

'DILKHUSHA', PANCHGANI,
June 12, 1945

DEAR SIR VISVESVARAYA[2],

I got your kind letter of 6th instant with enclosures yesterday. I read the summary at once. The following questions occur to me:

1. Have you or your collaborators enforced the ideas given in your brochure in a village or a group of villages? If you have, I would like full details with names, status and emoluments of workers, etc.

2. I seem to read a conflict in some clauses of the summary. Has not the present war shaken one's confidence in the stability of the economic prosperity of the leading nations, and is not that prosperity co-existent with the deep and distressing poverty of large units of the same nations?

3. The tendency, according to the summary, should be to wean the villagers from their present practice and to teach them to displace their tools with "machine tools", and handicrafts production with "mass production by the use of modern machinery".

4. If I have read the summary aright and if it reflects the nature of the brochure, is it not an invitation to me to stop my "numerous activities" whose one object is to secure the maximum benefit of the villages in the minimum of time with the minimum of expense?

I have always marvelled at your zeal for and devotion to the cause you have made your own. But unfortunately our ways seem to

[1] Gandhiji gave the message to R. K. Joshi of *Samyukta Karnataka*, a Kannada daily published from Hubli.

[2] Mokshagundam Visvesvaraya (1861-1962), Engineer and Statesman, ex-Dewan of Mysore

be so different.

As I am dictating this letter I am glancing at the brochure itself and I see that you mention in Appendix I, "hand-made sugar", "hand-made paper", "hand-spinning", etc. There is some confusion somewhere surely or am I thoughtlessly and superficially generalizing?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR M. VISVESVARAYA, K. C. I. E.
UPLANDS HIGH GROUND
BANGALORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

179. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 12, 1945

CHI. MIRA,

Your welcome letter. Tell me if it is the same thing whether I put the address in English or Hindustani, that is, for receiving the post.

I note that Ramprasad was to leave you on 11th. He must have gone.

The papers are making a lot of fuss over nothing. Let us see. You seem to have done well in Delhi. It is a hard and even bad thing that a cow should have such preferences as you describe. Is that a general rule?

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABEHN
KISAN ASHRAM
MULDASPUR
BAHADARABAD P. O., *via* JWALAPUR
NEAR HARDWAR (U. P.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

180. LETTER TO J. H. COUSINS

PANCHGANI,
June 12, 1945

DEAR DR. COUSINS,

I have your letter. Though we differed so, there was not an occasion which I missed of seeing Dr. Annie Besant whenever I was nearby. But to send you something is a different matter. What is your time-limit? I am so glad Mrs. Cousins is so well.

Love to you both.

BAPU

DR. J. H. COUSINS
SEVASHRAMA
ADYAR, MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

181. LETTER TO SAVITA

June 12, 1945

CHI. SAVITA,

I received your letter yesterday. The invitation still stands. I intend to reach Sevagram in July. Write to me then and come when you have my reply. There are some changes in the Ashram. If I did not tell you about them when we last met, I am telling you now, that at the Ashram the work is principally physical labour of every kind including the cleaning of lavatories. If you do not like such work, Sevagram will not suit you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

182. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 12, 1945

CHI. NARANDAS,

I had your letter of the 6th. Since I had acted upon it, I did not reply to it assuming that Kanaiyo[1] would certainly write. I am also constantly thinking about him. As long as necessary, he will go on doing that work. Isn't that my work as well?

I liked your becoming President of the Khadi Board. I am sure you will bring credit to that office. I am enclosing a letter[2] for Savita. Give it to her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8625. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

183. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

PANCHGANI,
June 12, 1945

CHI. PREMA,

I have your long letter. I have explained the ideal to you. You yourself can, by keeping it before you, answer all the questions in the same way as every student of geometry can draw a line by keeping Euclid's ideal line in his mind. Now try to understand.

I know the ideal, and I will, therefore, utilize the services of educated women only for the realization of the ideal. If necessary, I will pay them enough for their livelihood. But they will give more than what they take. If they do not, they will be of no use. If it becomes necessary to run a camp to train them as teachers, I will do so. Whether I give six months or twelve months or even more to the backward class women will depend on experience. Won't it? I shall not bother about that, for, since they will be learning through thecrafts, they will be paying their expenses, or will be fit to do so in the shortest possible period.

What if people believe that I have failed? My failure is not the

[1] Addressee's son, Kanu Gandhi

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

ideal. And how can a man who is progressing towards the ideal be regarded to have failed? Does the fact that you yourself, though you have lived in the Ashram, are not able to live up to the ideal prove that the ideal is impossible to attain or that you are unworthy?

If the admission of uneducated women to the camp makes it impossible to run it, then it will be impossible to effect progress in villages. Even if it is proved that Acharya Bhagwat has failed or even if he shares your view, I will not be deterred. Our mettle will be proved by our making possible what seems impossible today.

Sushila Pai is here. I will give her this letter. She will write further.

And now the next point. I stick to what I told you concerning Bhulabhai. He is here just now. It is 6.40 in the morning. He will leave at 10. I don't know that those who are in prison will be released. It will of course be good if they are. If people are angry with Bhulabhai, they should be angry with me, too. For he will not pursue his plan, which I know, if I disapprove of it. I do not believe what the members of the Working Committee are supposed to have said. And if they have in fact said that, they have done so without authority. What do prisoners know about conditions outside? According to my principle, they have no right even to try and know. And even if they differ from me, what does it matter? They will be free to do what they like after they are released. I have no right at all to vote. Am I not only an adviser? Don't ever believe what the newspapers say. Of what good is it anyway? If I knew that I should die tomorrow, such knowledge of the future could only do harm. The same is true in this case. Yes, I will say this much: Bhulabhai does not know what the newspapers know. If so, how am I likely to know?

How can I or anyone else say what I would do in certain circumstances? If you can guess about the future from what I am doing today, you may do so. I cannot do even that, for I am daily coming to realize more clearly that we ruin our lives by forming views about hypothetical matters. There is meaning only in what we do concerning what is actual. All else is meaningless.[1]

Don't you still know my limitations and my approach? Didn't Kumarappa resign only after consulting me? Wasn't I a party to the offer of military help in the resolution of August 1942? What does it

[1] What follows is in Gujarati.

matter if, while I do one thing, the others do the opposite and I let them? And what else could I do? I would tell you only this: that after having been with me for so long, and later staying away from me, you now behave as if you were still with me. Even then I would advise you to observe my actions and the views I express, think over them and then do what seems to you best, feeling certain that you will have my support in what you do. For I do not wish to make everybody like me. My teaching is that everybody should be true to himself. Anybody who has digested my teaching will never fall into doubt but will ever go forward.

Manibehn also is here. I have left the rest to Sushila Pai.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Read the letter carefully. Ask me again if you do not understand any point.

From a photostat of the Hindi and Gujarati: G.N. 10435. Also C.W. 6874. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

184. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

June 12, 1945

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. You have given fairly detailed news. I am all right. I have here Jairamdas and his family, Dr. Mahmud and his son. About the others you know. If you people come, I shall manage to accommodate you. If, however, the children are happy there and making good progress, I will not press you. A good many days have already passed. Bhulabhai left today.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

CHI. MANILAL MOHANDAS GANDHI
C/O NATWARLAL BHUKHANDAS GANDHI
P. O. KADOD (BARDOLI TALUKA)

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4953

185. LETTER TO DR. DINSHAW K. MEHTA

PANCHGANI,
June 12, 1945

CHI. DINSHAW,

Strictly speaking it should not be necessary to send you the enclosed.[1] But since there is time I am sending it so that later on you or I do not have to think about it.

I have written that the third clause, which I have marked with a cross may be retained as it is because the clause about the Managing Trustee is not to be left vague.

The rest is according to the instructions. Return Pakvasa's letter and the Trust-deed along with your letter. I have also written that Hindustani may be ignored as far as the Trust-deed is concerned if the Hindustani translation takes time.

Ardeshir[2] accompanies me on my walk every evening. Gulbehn has stopped holding him in her arms while going for a walk. This is as it should be.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. DINSHAW MEHTA
AROGYA BHAVAN
NEAR THE STATION
POONA CITY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy.: Pyarelal

186. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKVASA

June 12, 1945

BHAI MANGALDAS PAKVASA,

You have sent the draft quite promptly and I have sent it to Dr. Dinshaw Mehta for his perusal. As regards the Managing Trustee, I think it would be better to adhere to the original draft which I havealready sent. For the intention in that regard is that as long as he is alive and in a fit condition, he himself should remain the Managing Trustee. It is for this purpose that we are taking all this trouble.

[1] The reference is to the Trust-deed of Nature Cure Clinic, *vide* also the following item.

[2] Addressee's son

The third clause should remain as revised by you.

It would be bothersome to send it to Allahabad for having it translated into Hindustani. Supposing we had it translated into Gujarati?[1]

For the present I will not put you to the trouble of coming here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat Or the Gujarati: C.W. 4691. Courtesy: Mangaldas Pakvasa

187. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

PANCHGANI,
June 12, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

It is good you gave all the details about Kamle. Bapa is not deceived but it seems to me that Kamle is deceived. He will be. In his condition we too would be deceived. We have arrived at only one conclusion. I believe that as long as he keeps indifferent health he can only be accommodated in the Ashram. He will be a burden if he keeps on falling ill. You were right in advising him to take meat. He can't give up meat under compulsion. I will write to him in a day or two even if I do not hear from him.

It is good that both of you have returned to Sevagram. I shall be very happy if both of you can keep well. I was about to write "then we have overcome the world", but it would not be fitting. Why should we put so much value on the physical body?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA
SEVAGRAM, WARDHA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also the preceding item.

188. LETTER TO PREMLATA SANGER

PANCHGANI,
June 12, 1945

CHI. PREMLATA,

I have your letter. Your path is straight. Why worry about what Father writes? Whatever happens you must patiently tell Father not to compel you to marry anyone else. And how can he compel you to do so? For the rest you have to wait.

I have not received Father's letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

KUMARI PREMLATA SANGER
C/O SHRI OMKARSINGHJI SANGER
KAROLI, KAROLI STATE (RAJASTHAN)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Payers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

189. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

PANCHGANI,
June 12, 1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL ,

I received your letter about Sailen. It is all right about the monthly payment. But Sailen remains ill and therefore the expenditure incurred is more; he sends money to his father also. So it will be better to give him Rs. 200. At present he does not get that much. He will have to be sent for treatment to Malad for a short time. That will not be our responsibility. He can take leave for a year and go. If this does not seem right we can relieve him also. On these terms I have no objection to taking him for the book-keeping work.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SHYAMLALJI
KASTURBA SMARAK NIDHI
SCINDIA HOUSE, BALLARD ESTATE
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

190. LETTER TO GHANSHYAM SINGH GUPTA

PANCHGANI,
June 12, 1945

BHAI GHANSHYAMSINGH,

I have your letter. I am of the opinion that now is the time to resort to pure satyagraha. You have to make a public announcement of it. But if your enthusiasm is not true and you lack the strength to sacrifice your life non-violently, you may forget it. If you want to resort to satyagraha you have to consider all this beforehand.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI GHANSHYAM SINGH GUPTA
SPEAKER
DRUG

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

191. A MESSAGE

PANCHGANI,
June 12, 1945

The students from Sind who seek my blessings should become *Atishudras.* Will they marry among them? Do they spin? Do they wear khadi? Do they speak the truth and practise ahimsa? If they answer 'Yes', my blessings are with them.

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

192. CABLE TO FENNER BROCKWAY[1]

PANCHGANI,
[On or before *June 13, 1945*][2]

INDIAN FREEDOM CAMPAIGN IS FOR THE WORLD'S ASIATIC, NEGRO AND OTHER EXPLOITED RACES' FREEDOM. VICTORY ON THE WEST FRONT AND IMPENDING VICTORY IN THE EAST WILL BE EMPTY WITHOUT THE CENTRAL FACT OF INDIA'S FREEDOM. I CAN HOPE ONLY FOR THE VICTORY OF THAT PARTY WHICH WORKS SINCERELY AND WHOLLY FOR THAT END .

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 15-6-1945

193. TELEGRAM TO UMASHANKAR DIKSHIT

PANCHGANI,
June 13, 1945

UMASHANKAR DIKSHIT
232 KALBADEVI ROAD
BOMBAY

INDIAN FREEDOM CAMPAIGN ONE FOR WORLDS ASIATIC NEGRO AND OTHER EXPLOITED RACES FREEDOM, VICTORY WEST FRONT AND IMPENDING VICTORY EAST EMPTY WITHOUT CENTRAL FACT INDIA'S FREEDOM. I CAN HOPE ONLY FOR VICTORY FOR THAT PARTY WHICH WORKS SINCERELY AND WHOLLY FOR THAT END.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The cable appeared under the date-line "Panchgani, June 13", as from Pyarelal who reported that it was sent in response to a cabled request from the addressee, on behalf of the Indian Freedom Campaign, for a message "for a pre-election meeting in Churchill's constituency". Fenner Brockway was Political Secretary, Independent Labour Party, and Chairman, India Freedom Campaign Committee.

[2] *ibid*

194. TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Express PANCHGANI,
June 13, 1945

DEVDAS GANDHI
CARE "THE HINDUSTAN TIMES"
NEW DELHI

CONSULTATION BHULABHAI FINISHED. NONE ELSE IN VIEW. NEVERTHELESS COME FOR EVENTUALITIES IF FREE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

195. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

PANCHGANI,
June 13 1945

BAPA,

I have received a pile of papers from Mridulabehn. One of those is of course about her office. I am writing in that connection just now in the morning. I had forwarded your remarks about the office to her. She has raised an objection. It is justified. She says that if the minutes cannot be amended, then her office should really be shifted to Wardha for the time being. I have already expressed the opinion that it is not necessary to do so. She can keep her office wherever she wants. If this attitude is correct, and according to me it is, then it should be included in the minutes. If it is not included, then her office should be shifted to Wardha till the next meeting of the Executive Committee. It is clear to me that that can't be done. And it should also be clear to you, because I have said that Mridulabehn can keep her office wherever she likes. We must accept that her demand to get that change or addition incorporated in the minutes is justified. If she raises her objection constitutionally, I as President cannot deny what I said in the Executive Committee meeting. I want to get the work done somehow[1] because the main thing is that the work should be done. For the sake of truth it is better to incorporate the change, if Shyamlal has not already done so, and amend the minutes. Otherwise we should incorporate it at my instance when the minutes come up for signing. By doing so we can wriggle out of the constitutional requirement.

[1] Literally, "I would have the rice boiled in any water that is available."

Otherwise I, as President, must say that it is not obligatory on the part of Mridulabehn to take her office to Wardha along with Bapa's. If we do so, we shall not then need any more money for the time being because as long as another resolution is not passed, the office can be retained in the Scindia House without making any payment and she should manage with as many paid workers as there are today. We shall do as you want. The first proposal accords more with truth, while the second is more in conformity with the requirements of the situation.

In order to enable you to understand the whole thing better I am sending you Mridulabehn's letter even though it is marked personal. In this connection I have to raise yet another question. Do you in your inmost heart feel that it would be better if Mridulabehn gave up the office? If you say that she should not leave, then we should have some clear-cut decision in writing so that this confusion is cleared once and for all. Draw up a draft in accordance with what you have in mind or leave it to me and I shall make it and send it to you for modification.[1]

BAPU

SHRI THAKKAR BAPA
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
POONA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

196. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

PANCHGANI,
June 13, 1945

MY DEAR C. R.,

Your reaction to D's wire is right. Prayer is the only and sovereign remedy. I had a very full chat with Bhulabhai and I feel I gave him satisfaction. I do not worry. I literally follow the injunction "Be careful for nothing."[2] Everything will be right, if we are right. Are you still alone?

I did not like Mahtab's indirect hit. I have written[3] to him as much. Thank God, you possess the hide of a rhinoceros.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2107

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Mridula Sarabhai", 13-6-1945.
[2] *Phillippians*, IV. 6
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Harekrushna Mahtab", 7-6-1945.

197. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

June 13, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I got your letter. You did well in giving the land to the Sangh. In my view it is their duty to pay the Ashram for it. How much, theSangh itself should determine. Or it should pay a nominal rent. That should be left to its own discretion. The land should be carefully measured.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10637

198. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

PANCHGANI,
June 13, 1945

CHI. MRIDU,

I have your two letters. Give notice as you have suggested about your office. I do not see anything wrong in it. I have written[1] clearly to Bapa. I won't stop his office being shifted to Wardha, but there is no need to take yours there. The women you have employed or had employed when I came there will certainly remain. The office is also there. Let it be there for the present.

Remember your resolve that you would work with men as a woman and bring credit to the work. Have patience, do work with men and bring credit to yourself and to your work.

You certainly did well in going to Mahabaleshwar. One should look after one's health. It is surprising you do not know this simple thing. There is hidden pride in such an attitude. These are the immortal words of Narasinha Mehta: "I have done this just as a dog under a cart fancies himself shouldering the weight of the cart."[2] My head spins going through your programme.

You should not feel bad that you have to write to me. You have no choice since I have become the president. The source of unhappiness is in the situation in which such differences of opinion arise. I hope that too will disappear.

Advertising provision of non-vegetarian food means inviting

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar", 13-2-1945.
[2] *Vide* "Ashram Bhajanavali" sub-title:213, 20-12-1930.

indulgence in such food and getting involved in the controversy. It is our duty to make such provision but it is not our duty to advertise it. Even if you cannot understand this, implement it as an order. Perhaps I shall be able to explain it to you when the occasion arises. Or you will explain to me your view.

I fear I may miss the post if I write to you about the other things on which you want my guidance.

It will be good if you can go to Kashmir.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

199. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

June 13, 1945

KANCHAN,

It is good that you have come. Now get well completely.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

200. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

PANCHGANI,
June 13, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have your letter. It is good that Kanchan has arrived. Let us hope that she will soon be well.

It is a pity the trees dried up. I shall not go into that story here. We shall see when I come. I keep on writing to you regularly. I shall give you what peace of mind I can, but real peace comes from within.

So there has been an influx again. What will happen when I come? There would be no room at all!

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

201. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

June 13, 1945

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

Your express telegram was unnecessary. I was not late in replying. Anyway, what has happened has happened.

I am sorry that the trees are dead.

Serve Kishorelalbhai and Gomatibehn. They must recover.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1963

202. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR

June 13, 1945

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

Ten or twelve persons sleeping in a small room can be wrong from the point of view of *brahmacharya*, it can also be proper. But it is bad from the point of view of health and other things and it would be desirable to find a way out. Vina must recover.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9031. Also C.W. 9155. Courtesy: Prabhakar

203. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON

PANCHGANI,
June 13, 1945

BHAI PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDONJI,

I received your letter[1] yesterday. If I understand correctly what you write, you and other lovers of Hindi should welcome my new viewpoint and help me. But this is not happening. People in Gujarat are in a dilemma and are asking me what they should do. A son of my

[1] In his letter of June 8, the addressee had said that he saw no contradiction between the work of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan and Hindustani Prachar Sabha and requested Gandhiji to reconsider his decision to withdraw from the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. *Vide* also "Letter to Purushottam Das Tandon", 25-7-1945.

own nephew and many others like him are doing both Hindi Prachar work and Hindustani Prachar work. This creates difficulties. You know Perinbehn. She wants to work for both. But the time has now come for one of the two to be given up. If what you say is right, then the need for this should never arise. In my view, it should be possible for a person to be the President or Secretary of both the Hindustani Prachar Sabha and the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. That he may not be able to do so because the work would be too heavy is a different matter. And if your letter means, as it should mean what I also say, then there can be no reason for any difference of opinion and I shall be greatly delighted. I have gone through your statement that you sent me. In my view the Hindustani Prachar Sabha is doing only your work and therefore deserves your thanks. And you at least should become a member of it. I had requested you to be its member but you refused saying that you would keep out so long as Dr. Abdul Haq did not come in. Now my request is that if what I write is correct and if we both are of the same view, then this should be clarified by the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. If this is not necessary I shall not insist on it. But at least it should be made clear that there is no difference of opinion about it between you and me. It is no light matter for me to get out of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. But just as I withdrew from the Congress in order to serve it the better, in the same way if I leavethe Sammelan it will be to serve the Sammelan, that is, Hindi, the better.

What you call my new ideas are not really new. It would be more correct to say that I am now only putting into practice what I had said when I first became the President of the Sammelan and what I clarified further when I became its President for the second time. I shall decide finally after receiving your reply.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Rashtrabhashake Prashnapar Gandhiji aur Tandonjika Mahatvapurna Patra Vyavahar, pp. 4-5; also *Rajarshi Abhinandan Granth,* p. 91

204. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

June 13, 1945

CHI. CHAND,

It is good you have come. I postpone answering your question till I arrive there. Immerse yourself in your work. Look after your health. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

205. LETTER TO LALMANSINGH

PANCHGANI,
June 13, 1945

BHAI LALMANSINGH,

Immediately on receiving Balvantsinha's letter, I sent you a telegram[1]. Hoshiari had said in her telegram that I should reply to you after going through Balvantsinha's letter. I could not have received that letter along with the wire. Therefore I replied[2] to Hoshiari immediately on receiving the letter and wrote[3] to Balvantsinha meaning it for you. Now I learn from your letter that you have gonehome disappointed. My advice was different. It is the same today, namely, that you should stay on till I arrive there and then decide about Hoshiari. She is not a little girl; she can realize her responsibility. She is also a mother. Whatever you want to do you can do only after persuading her. She is as dear to me as a daughter. She loves the Ashram. But I do not want to make you unhappy. I want to under-stand your view and then tell Hoshiari what her duty is. I hope that you received my tele-gram and my letter while you were still at Sevagram and that you have stayed on. If that is not so this letter will be sent to you at Khurja.

[1] Presumably, the reference is to "Telegram to Manager, Sevagram Ashram", p. 260.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Hoshiari", 7-6-1945.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Balvantsinha", 7-6-1945.

I would advise you to remain patient and not to try to command the girls and boys when they have grown up. Our duty loudly proclaims this.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have your postcard.

SHRI LALMANSINGHJI
VILLAGE SAMARPUR
P. O. KHURJA, BULANDSHAHR DISTRICT

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

206. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

June 13, 1945

CHI. HOSHIARI,

I did not at all delay replying to you. It is good that you have been firm and have stayed on. I have written[1] to Father at the Khurja address. More you will tell me when I come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

207. LETTER TO M. S. KELKAR

June 13, 1945

BHAI ICE,

Chi. Hari-ichchha has taken *malati*. Where do you get it from? I will pay the expenses if her father does not pay. Life anddeath are not in anyone's hands. How can I therefore complain against you? I do realize the value of your services. I want to be sure of your knowledge. Do what you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

208. TELEGRAM TO CHOUNDE MAHARAJ

Express PANCHGANI,
June 14, 1945

CHOUNDE MAHARAJ
POONA CITY

SATURDAY FOURO' CLOCK.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

209. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

June 14, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter. You must not write when you have run down to the extent you have. I can never misunderstand absence of letters from you.

The restrictions are bad. But nothing to be done till you are with me.

Hope all things will go well regarding family affairs.

I hope to go to Sevagram in the beginning of July. The weather there may be too trying for you then.

I am well.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

You must not allow Gope[1] or his wife to be a load on you.

From the original: C.W. 4159 Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7794

[1] Gope Gurbuxani

210. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

June 14, 1945

CHI. A. SALAAM,

I got your letter. There was a letter from Kanchan from Sevagram. You may come only when you can do so in a relaxed frame of mind. Why should you ask for a message[1] from me? You yourself are there. What more do you need? You should, on the contrary, teach others not to ask for messages from me. I am writing this reply at once. Hamid[2] (Amina's) has come here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 498

211. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

June 14, 1945

CHI. HARILAL,

I got your letter. I do get news of you from time to time. I would not at all like your going away from there. Kanti and Saraswati serve you so well, keep you with them so lovingly. It is, therefore, your duty to stay with them. How can you be a burden on them? Moreover, you are able to keep yourself in control there. You should not, therefore, think just now of going away anywhere else. The climate of the place also is good. And certainly there are facilities. You may even help them while you are lounging about. Your health is not good enough to permit you to run about. The rains have started here. Do not trust any rumours that may appear in the newspapers.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7372. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] For Kasturba Seva Mandir

[2] Hamid Qureshi

212. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

June 14, 1945

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter. I am glad that you have settled down as a family man and while performing your family duties are also studying. Not many people can do that.

What is surprising is that Harilal has not contracted tuberculosis so far. He had an excellent constitution and so he did not break down completely. That you two could persuade him to stay on for such a long time is a wonder. If he leaves you, he will go back to his old habits, and be ruined. I kept back this reply for two days, but on second thoughts felt that I should not delay any more. Pass on to Harilal the letter[1] addressed to him.

Blessings to all of you from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7373. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

213. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

PANCHGANI,
June 14, 1945

BAPA,

I write this while reading other papers from Mridulabehn. I consider the question she has raised in her letter of the 9th justified. She is the organizing secretary, so she must see the letters which concern her work. If she sees them she can hold them back to discuss them with you. Because, after all, she has to implement the policies. Isn't that so? Her argument that it will be difficult for her to function as long as there is no clarification [about the division of work] and that, if the provincial workers receive two directives, they won't know what to do and will get nervous, also seems correct to me. We must decide after taking into consideration all these things.

BAPU

SHRI THAKKAR BAPA
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
POONA-4

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

214. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

PANCHGANI,
June 14, 1945

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your telegram. You must have got my reply[1]. Come whenever you can. I wish you would do some exercise.

Blessings from

BAPU

DEVDAS GANDHI
"THE HINDUSTAN TIMES"
DELHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

215. LETTER TO J. M. JUSSAWALA

PANCHGANI,
June 14, 1945

BHAI JUSSAWALA,

It is good you wrote to me about Frydman. I shall see about it. He is no doubt obstinate. So far he has sent no word about his coming here.

Now Chi. Jamnadas Gandhi has also gone there to take your treatment.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. J. M. JUSSAWALA
NATURE THERAPY CLINIC
SUNAMA HOUSE, THIRD FLOOR
140 CUMBALA HILL, BOMBAY 26

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Devdas Gandhi", 13-6-1945.

216. LETTER TO JORAWAR SINGH

PANCHGANI,
June 14, 1945

BHAI JORAWAR SINGH,

I was very happy to see your handwriting after so many years. Where is the question of bargain before anything has materialized? If something does, I will have nothing to say. However, I will tell you one thing: whether you are in the assembly or outside you will be able freely to place your knowledge before the people or the ministry. I am telling you this from my personal experience. The field of service is so vast that it can never be overcrowded.

Blessings from

BAPU

COL. SHRI JORAWAR SINGH
19 NEW CANTONMENT ROAD
DEHRA DUN

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

217. LETTER TO RAMPRASAD B. VYAS

PANCHGANI,
June 14, 1945

CHI. RAMPRASAD,

The meaning of "It would be a different thing if you wished to do no more than what I had asked"[1] is this: I had asked you to go there for two months. That was what I wanted. If you stick to that I cannot very well ask you to prolong the period, can I? Who will trust me if I go on increasing my demands in this manner? I, therefore, wrote to you that you must leave after the expiry of two months if you stick to my demand. Mirabehn on her own will not detain you, so the question won't arise. Did I suggest to you that you yourself should draw her attention about the expenses there? If you want I will do that.Your decision about the child's tumour is correct. Show him to a doctor in Bombay. Send me the report. Ultimately an operation is the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Ramprasad Vyas", 30-5-1945.

only remedy. According to Kuhne it can be cured by water treatment. In the case of a child, maybe, he will get well without any treatment.

Blessings to all of you from

BAPU

SHRI RAMPRASAD
C/O SHRI SHANTILAL PANDYA
RAILWAY FARM
DAHOD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

218. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

PANCHGANI,
June 14, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your long letter from Nagpur. As for Balkoba, all that can be said is that there has been no steady gain from *parpati*. Now we have to see how he can regain his strength. It will be good if he does not find it too hot to be taken back into the room.

I still abide by whatever I wrote about railways, etc., in *Hind Swaraj*. But that applies to an ideal state. It is possible that we may never reach that state. Let us not worry about it. It is for this reason that I have said that if we do not have railways and other such facilities, we should not feel unhappy. We should never make it our duty to multiply such facilities. At the same time we should also not make a duty of giving up these things. We should have a free and easy attitude in such matters. We must use these facilities as little as possible. There will be all types of people in our society. There certainly are today. We have to live with them. Non-attachment is the only proper dharma under these circumstances. The only thing we must be careful about is that we do not deceive ourselves. Your statement that trains, etc., should be shunned even as theft, adultery and falsehood is not correct. The important reason for this is that even society considers theft, etc., to be immoral. Trains, etc., have not been, nor need they be so considered. All that we may say is that we shouldnot consider trains, etc., as means of enjoyment. I have repeatedly pointed out in my articles where to draw the line. Read them and if you give a little thought you will easily be able to draw the line.

Some small books have been written as an aid to the study of *Das Kapital*. Reading them would help.

Do not worry about the discharge. You can stop worrying by intelligently observing the rules [of *brahmacharya*].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4515

219. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

PANCHGANI,
June 14, 1945

CHI. RAMESHWARIBEHN,

I received your letter of the 6th yesterday. Whatever you have done is right. There was no need for you to go to Delhi.

I completely agree with you that even in case of a family there have to be certain rules to be followed. I had written[1] to Bapa when I received your suggestion earlier.

Bapa has been in correspondence with Prabhudas and Amba. It would be very good if both of them could come. It would mean so much burden off your shoulders. I am very happy that your sister is out of the wood.

I am sending your letter to Bapa. He will like it.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RAMESHWARI NEHRU
SRINAGAR, KASHMIR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar", 2-6-1945.

220. LETTER TO PURNIMA BANERJEE

PANCHGANI,
June 14, 1945

CHI. PURNIMA,

What you say is entirely correct. But in the present circumstances, how can Aruna stay back to nurse Asaf Ali? It is very difficult to reconcile service to the country and service to an individual. Very often the two are contradictory. They have both dedicated their lives to the country. I therefore hope that they will be able to bear the present separation cheerfully. I am keeping in touch with Asaf Ali. I hope that he will get well.

Hope your work is getting on well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. PURNIMA BANERJEE
41 GEORGE TOWN
ALLAHABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

221. LETTER TO LAKSHMI GANDHI

June 14, 1945

CHI. LAKSHMI,

You have been to Simla. I hope both of you have benefited by the visit. It would have been better if you could have stayed there longer. This much only because I must write.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

222. LETTER TO RAMCHANDRA AND RAJMOHAN GANDHI

June 14, 1945

CHI. RAMU[1] AND MOHAN[2],

I shall say I have letters from you both. In fact a letter written in pencil should be considered as not having been written at all.

You have now looked at the Himalayas and seen the golden snow on the mountains. Did you get any gold out of that? Tara[3] is quite grown up now. Does she not get time to write?

Have all of you become very strong?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

223. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY[4]

Express PANCHGANI,
June 14, 1945

PRIVATE SECRETARY[5] TO THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

HAVE READ IN VICEREGAL BROADCAST[6] MY NAME MENTIONED AS AN INVITEE. I HAVE REPEATEDLY MADE CLEAR THAT I REPRESENT NO INSTITUTION. THEREFORE I MUST NOT ATTEND AS REPRESENTING CONGRESS. THAT FUNCTION BELONGS TO THE CONGRESS PRESIDENT OR WHOMSOEVER HE NOMINATES.[7] I SEND EARLIEST INTIMATION IN ORDER AVOID MISUNDERSTANDING OR MISCONCEPTION.[8]

GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 17

[1] & [2] Sons of Devdas Gandhi

[3] Addressee's sister

[4] This was sent in the night; *vide* the following item.

[5] Sir Edward Jenkins

[6] *Vide* Appendix "Speech Broadcast by the Viceroy", 14-6-1945.

[7] *Vide* also the following item and "Statement to the Press".

[8] The Viceroy's telegram dated June 15, in reply to this read: "Thank for your telegram of the 14th. Whatever the technical position may be, I shall value your help and hope you will accept invitation which was telegraphed to you last night. As regards representation of Congress, perhaps you will kindly let me have your final

224. TELEGRAM TO LORD WAVELL

Express PANCHGANI,
June 15, 1945

H. E. VICEROY
NEW DELHI

RECEIVED KIND WIRE[1] OF INVITATION. FOR REASONS GIVEN IN MY WIRE[2] SENT YOU LAST NIGHT I HAVE NO PLACE IN YOUR CONFERENCE. AS AN INDIVIDUAL I CAN ONLY TENDER ADVICE. MAY I THEN SAY THAT THERE ARE NO CASTE AND CASTELESS HINDUS WHO ARE AT ALL POLITICALLY MINDED. THEREFORE THE WORD RINGS UNTRUE AND OFFENSIVE. WHO WILL REPRESENT THEM AT YOUR TABLE? NOT CONGRESS WHICH SEEKS TO REPRESENT WITHOUT DISTINCTION ALL INDIANS WHO DESIRE AND WORK FOR INDEPENDENCE. HENCE THE EXISTENCE OF HINDU MAHASABHA CLAWING TO REPRESENT HINDUS AS SUCH. I APPREHEND THAT EVEN THAT BODY WILL DISCLAIM REPRESENTING CASTE HINDUS. MOREOVER BROADCAST[3] SEEMS RIGOROUSLY TO EXCLUDE USE OF WORD INDEPENDENCE. ACCORDINGLY IT SEEMS TO ME TO DEMAND REVISION TO BRING IT IN LINE WITH MODERN INDIAN THOUGHT. I SUGGEST PUBLICATION OF OUR WIRES.[4]

GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 18

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views after further consideration and any consultation you think necessary. I know you will appreciate the importance and difficulty of the task I have undertaken and do all you can to help."

[1] After the broadcast speech, the Viceroy had, in a telegram dated June 14 to Gandhiji, repeated the offer for discussion and also suggested a preliminary talk between them on June 24 at 3 p. m. at Viceregal Lodge. He concluded the telegram saying, he had "arranged to make a bungalow called 'Amsbell' available" to Gandhiji, hoping that he would accept the invitation.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] *Vide* Appendix "Speech broadcast by the Viceroy", 14-6-1945.

[4] For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix "Telegram from Lord Wavell", 16-6-1945.

225. LETTER TO JAGANNATHDAS[1]

PANCHGANI,
June 15, 1945

All handicraft or arts which can be worked in village homes can be and should be taught even though the products of such crafts and arts may be and can only be profitably used for city people.

Thus carpentry, joinery, drawing, painting, sculpture, brick-laying, scientific washing etc., have their proper place in the institute. These should not be taught merely mechanically. But the why and the wherefore should be explained to the pupils, so that their intellect is fully drawn out and disciplined in the act of learning and working the respective crafts and arts. Thus they should be educated morally and intellectually through these.

Secondly, if the first is carried out to the letter and in the spirit, the whole institution must be self-supporting through the sales of work turned out. For, in it there would be little or no overhead charge, the idea being to man the insitution from top to bottom through its erstwhile pupils, now turned experts in their respective departments.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

226. NOTE TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL[2]

PANCHGANI,
June 15, 1945

I have thought about your diet. I am of the view that you should not eat anything fibrous. Hence, among vegetables you should eat gourd and similar other things in which there would be very little of indigestible matter. The main diet should consist of milk, glucose,honey and, if you can digest it, butter. I think even vegetables with seeds such as brinjals, tomatoes, should be avoided. They have sent me from Coimbatore yeast made from *bajra*, which may be good. The point is that you should eat only such food as will not impose a burden on your intestines, and only a small quantity at a

[1] Of Harijan Industrial School

[2] In the source, Manibehn Patel explains: "Vallabhbhai was released from Yeravda Jail on June 15, 1945, in the morning. He left by car and reached Panchgani to see Gandhiji at about 11.30 a.m. Gandhiji was observing silence.

time. It does not matter if you eat four times a day. You should have hip-baths, both warm and cold. Stretching your whole body in the tub may also help. This does not of course mean that the doctors should not exa-mine you or make suggestions. They give no thought to the problem of diet.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 279-80

227. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

PANCHGANI,
June 15, 1945

On the purely political aspect of the Viceregal statement[1] I prefer to say nothing, now that the members of the Working Committee of the Congress are free. I can only give them my advice and it is they who have to shape the policy of the Congress and speak and act with authority.

As soon as I read the broadcast I sent a wire[2] to His Excellency the Viceroy drawing his attention to the fact that I have no *locus standi* as the "recognized representative of the Congress". That function belongs to the President of the Congress or whoever may be appointed to represent the Congress on a particular occasion.

For several years I have acted unofficially as an adviser to the Congress whenever required. The public will remember that I went with the same unrepresentative character for my talks[3] with Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah; and I can take up no other position with the British Government, in this instance represented by the Viceroy.

There is one expression in the Viceregal broadcast which certainly offends my ear and, I hope, will offend that of every politically minded Hindu. I refer to the expression "caste Hindus". I claim that there is no such person, speaking politically, as a "caste Hindu",let alone the Congress which seeks to represent the whole of India which is yearning after political independence.[4]

Does Veer Savarkar or Dr. Shyama Prasad or Dr. Moonje of the Hindu Mahasabha represent caste Hindus?

Do they not represent all Hindus without distinction of caste?

[1] *Vide* Appendix " Speech broadcast by the Viceroy", 14-6-1945.

[2] This was sent to Private Secretary to the Viceroy, *vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to the Viceroy", 14-6-1945.

[3] In September 1944.

[4] *Vide* also "Telegram to Lord Wavell", 15-6-1945.

Do they not include the so-called untouchables? Do they themselves claim to be caste Hindus? I hope not.

Of all politically minded Hindus, I know that even the revered Pandit Malaviyaji, though he observes caste distinctions, will refuse to be called a caste Hindu, as distinguished from the other Hindus.

The modern tendency in Hinduism is to abolish all caste distinctions and this I maintain in spite of my knowledge of reactionary elements in Hindu society.

I can only hope, therefore, that H. E. the Viceroy has alloowed himself to make use of the expression in utter ignorance. I want to acquit him of knowingly wounding the susceptibilities of Hindu society or dividing it.

I would not have dwelt on this matter but for the fact that it touches the political mind of Hindus in its sensitive spot and carries with it political repercussions.

The proposed conference can do much useful work if it is put in its proper political setting and is at the very outset rendered immune from any fissiparous tendency.

Undoubtedly all invitees might appear as Indians conjointly bent on achieving India's natural goal and not as persons representing several sections of Indian society.

That is how I have viewed Bhulabhai-Liaqat Ali understanding[1] which I suppose laid the foundation for the forthcoming Viceregal conference.

Shri Bhulabhai Desai's proposal has no such colouring as the Viceregal broadcast would seem to have. I am not ashamed of the part I have played in advising[2] Shri Bhulabhai Desai when he consulted me about his proposal.

Shri Bhulabhai Desai's proposal, as I understood it, attracted me as one interested in solving the communal tangle, and I assured him that I would use my influence with the members of the Working Committee and give my reasons for acceptance of his proposal and

I have no doubt that if both parties to the proposal correctly represent their constituents and have independence of India as their common goal, things must shape well. At this point I must stop and the Working Committee has to take up the thread. It is for its members to declare the Congress mind on the impending questions.

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-6-1945

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Desai-Liaqat pact".

[2] *Vide* "Silence-day note to Bhulabhai Desai", 11-6-1945.

228. TELEGRAM TO LORD WAVELL

Express PANCHGANI,
June 16, 1945

H. E. VICEROY
NEW DELHI

IN REPLY YOUR KIND WIRE OF YESTERDAY[1] AM POSTING LETTER[2].

GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 19

229. TELEGRAM TO J. B. KRIPALANI

Express PANCHGANI,
June 16, 1945

ACHARYA KRIPALANI
CARE "HINDU"
KARACHI

SARDAR[3] DEO[4] HERE. HOPE YOU WELL AND COMING.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

230. TELEGRAM TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

Express PANCHGANI,
June 16, 1945

MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD
BALLYGUNGE

HOPE YOU WELL. SUGGEST EARLY MEETING WORKING COMMITTEE BOMBAY. ADVERTISE DATE. SARDAR DEO AGREE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* 5th footnote of "Telegram to Private Secretary to Viceroy", 14-6-1945.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Wavell", 16-6-1945.
[3] Vallabhbhai Patel and Shankarrao Deo, who were discharged on June 15 from Yeravda Prison
[4] *ibid*

231. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Express PANCHGANI,
June 16, 1945

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
KHALI (NAINITAL)

YOUR WIRE[1]. EARLY MEETING WORKING COMMITTEE NECESSARY. SUGGEST FIX BOMBAY ANNOUNCE DATE. SARDAR DEO AGREE. HOPE YOU MAULANA SAHEB NARENDRADEV WELL.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

232. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

'DILKHUSHA', PANCHGANI,
June 16, 1945

BABU RAJENDRA PRASAD
SADAQAT ASHRAM
PATNA

WHEN COMING? SARDAR DEO JAIRAMDAS MEHMUD HERE. HOPE YOU ARE WELL.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

233. TELEGRAM TO PASHABHAI PATEL

June 16, 1945

PASHABHAI PATEL
CARE POWERFARM
BARODA

CAN NOW PAY SARDAR AGREES. BLESSINGS.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Dated June 15, it read: "Going Khali. Tomorrow Nainital. Reaching Allah bad Monday evening."

234. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

'DILKHUSHA', PANCHGANI,
June 16, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your telegram[1] of yesterday received at 3.45 p.m. My second telegram[2], acknowledging your kind telegraphic invitation, evidently crossed yours. I am sending you this letter in reply, instead of wiring, because I am anxious that you should understand my position thoroughly. However, I am sending you a wire[3] intimating the despatch of this letter. For ready reference, I am enclosing herewith a copy of my Press message[4] which was issued yesterday in the morning. I would like you to go through it.

While it is true that my position is technical, the reality of it is truer. My official and legal connection with the Congress was deliberately, and with the consent of the All-India Congress Committee, severed[5] in order to enable me all the better to serve the common cause. This position therefore cannot be changed at will. In the forthcoming official conference, I can have no official position. My presence in it will change the official colour, unless I become an official representative of the Congress. But if you think that my helpis desirable and that without being a member of the conference I am likely to be useful, I shall make it a point to be at your service before and even during the conference proceedings, assuming, of course, that the Working Committee wishes likewise.

I want to cite an analogy. You may have known the late Deenabandhu, as C. F. Andrews was affectionately called by us. He severed his official connection with the Cambridge Mission and the Church in order to serve religion, India and humanity better. The position he occupied as a valuable link between India and England, whether official or non-official and, between all classes and parties, grew as days went. If I can, I would love to occupy such a position. It may never come to me. Man can but try.

[1] *Vide* 5th footnote, "Telegram to Privte Secretary to Viceroy", 14-6-1945.
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Lord Wavell", 15-6-1945.
[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Lord Wavell", 16-6-1945.
[4] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 15-6-1945.
[5] In October 1934.

You have suggested further consideration and consultation, both of which I have done. I am within an easy distance of Yeravda Central prison, where Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Shri Shankarrao Dev were recently transferred from Ahmednagar Fort. Almost immediately after their discharge from the jail yesterday they motored to Panchgani and are still with me. I have shown them all the necessary papers and they concur with me in what I am writing.

In the task you have undertaken, of which I fully appreciate the difficulty and delicacy, you certainly need the assistance and goodwill of all the parties. The Congress help you naturally cannot have without the Congress being officially represented at your table. The first and also perhaps the main purpose of the discharge of the remaining members of the Working Committee will be frustrated unless you secure the presence at your table of the President of the Congress or whomsoever he and his Committee may appoint for the purpose. If my supposition is correct, my immediate advice is that you should invite the President of the Congress. I expect that the ban on the Congress had been or will be lifted to the extent it still exists.[1]

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure: 1

H. E. THE VICEROY
THE VICEROY'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 19-20

235. LETTER TO LILAMANI

PANCHGANI,
June 16, 1945

MY DEAR LILAMANI,

You remember sitting on my lap years ago when I was with you in the Golden Threshold? Now you are too big to sit on my lap. But if I was by your side, I would lift your head and put it in my lap and

[1] Acknowledging this telegraphically on June 17, the Viceroy said: "I understand your position. I am looking forward to seeing you on 24th and hope means may be found for you to take part in proceedings of the conference. I shall be

never leave it till you promised that you would literally obey all medical instructions. Your pupils would want you but your recently bereaved mother wants you most. Say 'Yes' for her sake and live on.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. I, Book One, p. 111

236. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

PANCHGANI,
June 16, 1945

MY DEAR SINGER,

I am not the nicest kind of or any mahatma. But I know I am a nice father and hence my heart goes out to the nice mother that you are.

Here is a note[1] for Lilamani. I hope she will live for you, if not for others. Do keep me informed of L's progress.

I take very little interest in the passing show you refer to. Love to yourself.

SPINNER

SHRI SAROJINI DEVI NAIDU
HYDERABAD (DECCAN)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. I, Book One, p. 111

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grateful if you will communicate the following message to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad from me: 'I invite you to attend or nominate duly authorized representative to attend conference at Viceregal Lodge, Simla, at 10.30 a.m. on Monday, 25th June. Accommodation will be arranged for representative if required.' I have not released your letter or this telegram to the Press, but have no objection to their being published."

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

237. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

PANCHGANI,
June 16, 1945

This is a good letter. But how simple Maude Royden Shaw is! When one is under the influence of morphia, one has such dreams? But are they worth any thought? Yet it sustains this good soul! Such is the power of imagination.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

238. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

PANCHGANI,
June 16, 1945

BHAI MUNSHI,

Your letter of the 11th was received today. I have carefully gone through everything you say. Sardar, Deo, Jairamdas and Dr. Mahmud are here. I showed your letter to them also. The letter is clear. Think over what I have done and watch what I am doing. If you wish to caution me any time, you may unhesitatingly do so. I would even go further and say that there would be no harm even if you wrote to newspapers. It would be better, of course, to observe silence if you were not definite in your views.

I am glad that all of you are taking complete rest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: G. W. 7688. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

239. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

June 16, 1945

CHI. ANAND,

Why the question when you will meet Vidya? Were you attached to Vidya's body? It had got to perish. If it was to the *atman,* then the *atman* is immortal. Shake off your sleep, wake up and you will see that Vidya is already with you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

240. LETTER TO KULSUM SAYANI

PANCHGANI,
June 16, 1945

BETI KULSUM,

To whom should I write? Where is the time? And yet how can I say 'No' to you? This is my message:

I like the mission of *Rahbar* to unite Hindi and Urdu. May it succeed. —M. K. Gandhi

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KULSUM SAYANI
RUPA VILA
CUMBALLA HILL, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

241. LETTER TO PARMANAND

PANCHGANI,
June 16, 1945

BHAI PARMANAND,

I have your letter. It is good that you have developed such great faith in truth and ahimsa. Remain fit, do lots of spinning and do it well, and make slivers yourself.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI PARMANAND
C/O JAILOR, DISTRICT JAIL
SULTANPUR, OUDH

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

242. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

PANCHGANI,
June 16, 1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I approve of your demand for money up to Rs. 1,000 for three months. However, you must have Bapa's and Mridulabehn's concurrence.

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SHYAMLAL
KASTURBA SMARAK NIDHI
SCINDIA HOUSE
BALLARD ESTATE, BOMBAY- 1

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

243. TELEGRAM TO LORD WAVELL

Express PANCHGANI,
June 17, 1945

H. E. VICEROY
NEW DELHI

DEEPLY APPRECIATE YOUR WIRE[1] RECEIVED YESTERDAY EVENING. IN ORDER REGULARIZE PROCEDURE AND FACILITATE DESPATCH OF WORK WITHOUT DISTURBING NUMBER OF MEMBERS CONFERENCE I SUGGEST IMMEDIATE INVITATION TO CONGRESS PRESIDENT ATTEND CONFERENCE OR DEPUTE CONGRESS NOMINEE. IF FIXITY OF PARITY BETWEEN CASTE HINDUS AND MUSLIMS UNCHANGEABLE RELIGIOUS DIVISION WILL BECOME OFFICIALLY STEREOTYPED ON EVE OF INDEPENDENCE. PERSONALLY I CAN NEVER SUBSCRIBE TO IT NOR CONGRESS IF I KNOW ITS MIND. IN SPITE OF HAVING OVERWHELMINGLY HINDU MEMBERSHIP CONGRESS HAS STRIVEN TO BE PURELY POLITICAL. I AM QUITE CAPABLE ADVISING CONGRESS TO NOMINATE ALL NON-HINDUS AND MOST DECIDEDLY NON-CASTE HINDUS. YOU WILL QUITE UNCONSCIOUSLY BUT EQUALLY SURELY DEFEAT PURPOSE OF CONFERENCE IF PARITY BETWEEN CASTE HINDUS AND MUSLIMS IS UNALTERABLE. PARITY BETWEEN CONGRESS AND LEAGUE UNDERSTANDABLE. I AM EAGER TO HELP YOU AND BRITISH PEOPLE BUT NOT AT SACRIFICE OF FUNDAMENTAL AND UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLES. FOR IT WILL BE NO HELP. IF YOU DESIRE TEXT YESTERDAY'S LETTER EARLIER I CAN TELEGRAPH CONTENTS.[2]

GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 22

[1] *Vide* 5th footnote, "Telegram to private secretary to Viceroy", 14-6-1945.
[2] *Vide* also the following item.

244. TELEGRAM TO LORD WAVELL

PANCHGANI,
June 17, 1945

H. E. VICEROY
NEW DELHI

MANY THANKS YOUR PROMPT REPLY[1] TO MY LETTER[2] OF 16TH. BUT IN ABSENCE OF REPLY TO MY WIRE[3] EVEN DATE YOU WILL ADMIT CONGRESS POSITION AND MINE REMAINS UNCERTAIN. HENCE I MUST NOT EVEN ON YOUR BEHALF INVITE PRESIDENT WITHOUT ACCEPTANCE OF MY NECESSARY AMENDMENT. YOU WILL NOT AND CANNOT ACCORDING TO YOUR WIRE OF 16TH LET CONFERENCE DISCUSS THE QUESTION. THEREFORE TO MY GREAT REGRET HAVE TAKEN NO ACTION ON YOUR WIRE UNDER REPLY. WORKING COMMITTEE HAS NOT STILL BEEN CALLED. PRIVATE TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION TARDY. TIME APPEARS TO BE AGAINST DATE FIXED BY YOU. WITH ALL MY WILLINGNESS TO HELP I HOPE YOU WILL APPRECIATE UNAVOIDABLE DELAY. I SUGGEST YOUR ALTERING DATE AND CLARIFYING ISSUE RAISED BY ME AND IF CLARIFICATION SATISFACTORY SENDING YOUR INVITATION DIRECTLY FOR AVOIDING DELAY. I SHOULD INFORM YOU CONGRESS PREMIERS ARE HELD UP PENDING WORKING COMMITTEE DECISION. I AM NOT RELEASING THESE COMMUNICATIONS PENDING FINAL DECISION. BUT IN THIS YOU SHALL JUDGE.[4]

GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 23

[1] *Vide* 6th footnote, "Letter to Lord Wavell", 16-6-1945.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Wavell", 16-6-1945.
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.
[4] For the Viceroy's reply, *vide* Appendix "Telegram from Lord Wavell", 18-6-1945.

245. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

Express PANCHGANI,
June 17, 1945

C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR
BAZLULLAH ROAD
TYAGARAYANAGAR
MADRAS

MY ADVICE WATCH DEVELOPMENTS BUT FOLLOW VOICE WITHIN.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

246. TELEGRAM TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

Express PANCHGANI,
June 17, 1945

MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD
BALLYGUNGE

WHAT IS NATURE TOOTH TROUBLE? MY PROGRAMME DEPENDS ON YOU MOSTLY AND PARTLY VICEROY. ADVISE CALLING URGENT MEETING WORKING COMMITTEE CONSIDER WHOLE SITUATION.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

247. TELEGRAM TO DR. B. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

Express PANCHGANI,
June 17, 1945

DOCTOR PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA[1]
MASULIPATAM
HOPE YOU WELL. WIRE WHEN COMING.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

248. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

June 17, 1945

MY DEAR C. R.,

This is more certain than wire. Come as soon as you can here or Bombay wherever I may be. Sardar and others associate with me. Long correspondences with the Viceroy going on.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2108

249. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[2]

Express PANCHGANI,
June 17, 1945

C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR
BAZLULLAH ROAD
TYAGARAYANAGAR
MADRAS

COME HERE I SHALL DECIDE IN TIME. SARDAR AGREES.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Congress leader of Andhra,, Member, A. I. C. C. and Congress Working Committee

[2] This was given to Rangaswami, representative of *The Hindu,* for transmission on teleprinter.

250. LETTER TO BHULABHAI DESAI

PANCHGANI,
June 17, 1945

BHAI BHULABHAI,

I hope you read my articles. Keep in mind whatever I am writing these days. If the Congress is obliged to appoint only Hindus, then we are all Hindus, but not in that sense. We should have perfectfreedom to appoint anyone we like. I do not have the time to write more.

Blessings from
BAPU

BHULABHAI DESAI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

251. TELEGRAM TO LORD WAVELL

Express
PANCHGANI,
June 18, 1945

H. E. VICEROY
NEW DELHI

GRATEFUL FOR YOUR PROMPT FRANK AND FULL REPLY[1] ALSO FOR DIRECTLY INVITING MAULANA SAHEB. MEMBERS BEING FREE AT CONFERENCE TO ACCEPT OR REJECT PROPOSALS CLEARS GROUNDS FOR INVITEES TO ATTEND CONFERENCE. THIS LEAVES THEM FREE DISCUSS PROS AND CONS AT CONFERENCE. MY. OBJECTION TO INEVITABILITY OF PARITY BETWEEN MUSLIMS AND CASTE HINDUS STANDS. IF THAT VIEW INCAPABLE OF BEING ALTERED BY BRITISH GOVERNMENT MY ADVICE CONGRESS WILL BE NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN FORMATION EXECUTIVE COUNCIL. CONGRESS HAS NEVER IDENTIFIED ITSELF WITH CASTE OR NON-CASTE HINDUS AND NEVER CAN EVEN TO GAIN INDEPENDENCE WHICH WILL BE ONE-SIDED UNTRUE AND SUICIDAL. CONGRESS TO JUSTIFY ITS EXISTENCE FOR WINNING INDEPENDENCE OF INDIA

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Telegram from Lord Wavell", 18-6-1945.

MUST REMAIN FOR EVER FREE TO CHOOSE BEST MEN AND WOMEN FROM ALL CLASSES AND I HOPE ALWAYS WILL. THAT IT HAS FOR SAKE OF CONCILIATING MINORITIES CHOSEN MEN TO REPRESENT THEM THOUGH THEY HAVE BEEN LESS THAN BEST REDOUNDS TO ITS CREDIT BUT THAT CAN NEVER BE PLEADED TO JUSTIFY OR PERPETUATE DISTINCTION BASED ON CASTE OR CREED. HINDU MAHASABHA IS THE BODY CLAIMING TO REPRESENT SOLELY HINDU INTERESTS. SUBJECT TO WORKING COMMITTE'S WISHES I SHALL HOPE PRESENT MYSELF SIMLA ON 24TH INSTANT BUT OWING TO MY STRONG VIEWS YOU CAN CANCEL THE ENGAGEMENT WITHOUT LEAST OFFENCE. I EXPECT THIS WIRE AND REPLY IF ANY WILL BE PUBLISHED. LEAVING FOR POONA TUESDAY TWO P. M.[1]

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 24-5

252. TELEGRAM TO HARSHADA DIWANJI

PANCHGANI,
June 18, 1945

HARSHADABEHN DIWANJI
FIFTEENTH ROAD
KHAR, BOMBAY

TRY REACH POONA NINETEENTH TWO AFTERNOON DINSHAH MEHTA NATURE CURE CLINIC.

GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10550. Also from a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In his telegram dated June 19, the Viceroy replied that he expected to hear from Gandhiji "immediately after the meeting on June 21".

253. LETTER TO PARIMAL SHOME

PANCHGANI,
June 18, 1945

MY DEAR PARIMAL,

I am sorry to hear from you that Sarat Babu[1] is so ill. But as you rightly say I have not much confidence in my ability to do good in such matters. Yet you may depend upon my doing the best I am capable of in securing relief.[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

PARIMAL SHOME, B. COM.
12-3 HINDUSTAN ROAD
BALLYGUNGE, CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

254. LETTER TO USHA GANDHI

PANCHGANI,
June 18, 1945

CHI. USHA,

I have your postcard. Your demand is crazy. My going to Simla is uncertain and even if I go it will only be for work. It is therefore not proper to take children along. It is a different thing if there is some occasion. One can say that you nave considerably improved your handwriting. My handwriting will improve on its own if all the children write a pearl-like hand. You should therefore stand first in that.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy *of* the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Sarat Chandra Bose, addressee's maternal uncle
[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 21-6-1945.

255. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

June 18, 1945

CHI. NIMU,

Kanam will shortly be arriving there. He was happy here and made us happy. You did a wise thing in not going to Simla and Delhi.

Blessings from

BAPU

C/O RAMDAS GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

256. LETTER TO SARASWATI GANDHI

June 18, 1945

CHI. SURU,

So you did not come. I received your letter. I do keep on writing to you. Both of you have served Harilal well. I do hope that hewill stay on there. I have written[1] to him. You should not be the least bit unhappy that you failed in the examination. Your reading will now be all the more thorough. What is really remarkable is that you are studying while looking after your house. Lakshmi and Nimu did the same. Grow very healthy and be good in studies.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6188. Also C.W. 3462. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Harilal Gandhi", 14-6-1945..

257. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

PANCHGANI,
June 18, 1945

This is perhaps an opportune moment to release the text of a letter[1] I wrote to the British Prime Minister during my stay at Panchgani last year. The letter was written in the small hours of the night on July 17 at the same time that I wrote my Gujarati note[2] to Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah and duly posted to be sent through H. E. the Viceroy.

Unfortunately the letter miscarried. Having waited for a long time, on September 10, 1944, during my visit to Bombay for the meeting with Qaid-e-Azam, I sent a letter[3] of enquiry out of curiosity, for the psychological moment had passed. To my surprise, the Private Secretary to the Viceroy wrote in return on September 13 that the letter in question was not received by him. As I attached importance to that letter, I sent[4] him a copy of the missing letter on September 17, 1944, repeating the request that it might be sent to the Prime Minister.

My letter of July 17 to Mr. Churchill, in my estimation, was of a sacred character not meant for the public eye, but I could contemplate an occasion or time when it might call for publication without losing the sacred character.

I, therefore, requested the Viceroy on December 3, 1944,[5] to enquire from the Prime Minister whether I had his permission to publish it in case of need. He replied through his Secretary that thePrime Minister agreed to the publication of my letter subject to the fact that it was duly acknowledged.

The following is the text of the letter:

'DILKHUSHA', PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1944

DEAR PRIME MINISTER,

You are reported to have a desire to crush the simple "Naked Fakir" as you are said to have described me. I have been long trying to be a "Fakir"

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Winston Churchill", 17-7-1944 and "Letter to M.A. Jinnah", 17-7-1944.

[2] *ibid*

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 10-9-1944. and "Letter to Sir Evan M. Jenkins", 17-9-1944.

[4] *ibid*

[5] *ibid*

and that naked—a more difficult task. I, therefore, regard the expression as a compliment though unintended. I approach you then as such and ask you to trust and use me for the sake of your people and mine and through them those of the world.

Your sincere friend,

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-6-1948

258. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

PANCHGANI,
June 18, 1945

QUESTION: What did you mean when you said that the Desai Formula[1] had no such colouring as the Viceroy's would seem to have, and how do you think that the Desai Formula would help to solve the communal tangle?

ANSWER: Bhulabhai's proposals have no colouring of caste. There is the 50 per cent basis as between two political bodies. If Bhulabhai's proposals are the same as the Viceroy's, then I am greatly mistaken. I did not read the proposals in that light. According to that Formula, if the Congress chose, it could appoint 50 per cent of any community, non-Hindus, caste Hindus and non-caste Hindus. If the Congress is obliged to choose only caste Hindus or even casteless Hindus then it ceases to be Indian National Congress.

Asked if he was satisfied with the clarification offered by the Viceroy[2] and the Secretary of State[3] about the question of independence, he said that it was a question for the Working Committee to answer. He had his own opinion but he did not wish to anticipate or influence the Working Committee by speaking to the public.

Q. What is your opinion about Lord Wavell's personal efforts in solving the political deadlock?

A. No one will know unless Lord Wavell chooses to write himself as to what part he has played in this connection.

Q. What do you think about the omission of the Hindu Mahasabha?

A. I have not thought over it, but as you prompt me I begin to think. I do not know whether it is the method of putting the Congress

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Desai-Liaqat pact".

[2] *Vide* Appendices "Telegram from Lord Wavell", 16-6-1945 and "Telegram from Lord Wavell", 18-6-1945.

[3] *Vide* Appendix VII.

in the place of the Hindu Mahasabha and treating it as a sectional or a Hindu body and if it is that, which I hope it is not, the Congress will be one to avoid the whole show. But there is another construction also to be put upon that omission, namely, that the British Government wants to avoid the conference being based on religious distinction and, therefore, for examining the proposal they have invited political representatives only. Against this favourable assumption has undoubtedly to be put the parity between Muslims and caste Hindus. But I have publicly announced[1] that I believed that this mistake, however grave, is one of ignorance. If my assumption is right, the mistake would be corrected. Thinking along the same lines I account for the omission of the Muslim Majlis or the Jamiat-ul-Ulema and similar bodies.

I must not also omit to mention that the composition of the conference is a very great advance upon all similar bodies, for, in all previous conferences convened by the British Government, members have been nominated by the Government principally. This time the members of the conference are under no obligation to the Government for their nomination and they need not vote or speak merely to placate the Government. The Congress Premiers, for instance, are under obligation only to the Congress as those belonging to the Muslim League are answerable only to the League. So far as I can recall there has been no such conference before.

Q. Why do you think the Maulana was omitted in the first instance?

A. Because the Viceroy thought that I represented the Congress and the people had given him cause to think so. But I must say the moment I pointed[2] out the mistake he saw it at once and rectified it.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-6-1945

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 15-6-1945.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Privte Secretary to Viceroy", 14-6-1945 and "Telegram to Lord Wavell", 15-6-1945.

259. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, PANCHGANI

June 18, 1945

Mahatma Gandhi addressing a prayer gathering on the eve of his departure from here said he had planned to stay at Panchgani till the end of the month but man proposes and God disposes.

He thanked Principal Batha of the Parsi Girls' High School for allowing the use of the school hall for holding prayer meetings and the girl students who sweetly chanted prayers from the scriptures in the evenings.

To him the hall had become a prayer house where he found peace every evening and got over the mental fatigue of the day's work. He had nothing to give them in return except his blessings.

They should know, he continued, that he was going away for the same purpose for which he had come up to the hills. That purpose was the winning of India's independence. If he wanted to live for 125 years, or if he died that very moment, or if he went to the hills for recouping his health, it was the same thing to him so long as his very breath was dedicated to that aim.

His conception of swaraj was not mere political independence, He wanted to see dharmaraj—establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth—the reign of truth and non-violence in every walk of life. That alone was independence to the starved masses of this vast country.

He hoped that those who attended his prayers did not come there for the sake of fun. They came to call the name of God so as to be able to do His work. To work for the independence of his hope was God's work.

To remain in slavery was beneath the dignity of man. A slave who was conscious of his state and yet did not strive to break his chains was lower than the beast. He who prayed from his heart could never accept slavery as his lot.

Everyone said that this time at last the chance had come for bringing India's independence nearer. He was a trusting man by temperament and he took statements at their face value. Nevertheless, they should repose their faith in prayer more than in a man's work. Let them also know that we were all slaves of our passions. If we conquered them, we could easily overcome the slavery under foreigners or our own conquerors.

The Bombay Chronicle, 20-6-1945

260. INTERVIEW TO P. RAMCHANDRA RAO

PANCHGANI,
[Before *June 19, 1945*][1]

QUESTION: Is there a "Gandhian Plan", as Prof. Agrawal[2] will have it, apart from the Gandhian programme? A plan necessarily involves a time schedule within which to attain definite objectives. You have yourself formulated no such plan?

ANSWER: For me there is neither a Gandhian plan nor Gandhian programme. But it would be too pedantic for me to object to a friend's use of the word "Gandhian". Your objection to the word "plan" is technically valid. But I am inclined to say there is no substance in the objection.

The basis of the Gandhian programme is decentralization. But the core of planning is centralization. Can planning and Gandhism go together?

I must dissent from the view that the core of planning is centralization. Why should not decentralization lend itself to planning as well as centralization?

Economic planning, says Prof. Agrawal, necessitates the least amount of State control. Yet the plan he unfolds by no means envisages a Government which will govern least because the emphasis throughout is on State action—"the responsibility of the State is very great". Necessarily, communications, public health, education, trade and commerce, banking and currency, etc., must be State-controlled. And the plan clearly supports the nationalization of key and basic large-scale industries. How do these incompatible ideas fit in?

I detect no incompatibility in the idea of decentralizing, to the greatest extent possible, all industries and crafts, economically profitable in the villages of India, and centralizing or nationalizing the key and vital large industries required for India considered as a whole. Prof. Agrawal has taken illustrations from the present. When we have independence cum predominance of village industries in the place of city industries as at present, those who live to see that, as I hope youand I will, will face another and much healthier atmosphere and we shall see clearly what Prof. Agrawal and we see today only darkly. Today everything is controlled by a foreign State. Tomorrow the State will be controlled by the people (a very vital change in itself,) and if

[1] Gandhiji left Panchgani on June 19; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] Shriman Narayan; his "Gandhian Plan of economic Development for Free India" was published in 1944.

Prof. Agrawal's plan (pardon the word) fructifies, then it is obvious that the State-control, though it appears to be big, will in reality be least. Just project in your mind's eye 700,000 villages of India dominating the centre with its few towns required in the interests of the villages.

The Gandhian programme is essentially a resuscitation of village communities, ensuring the maximum utilization of human power. It is an evolutionary process. Is it not opposed to a definitive State planning, unless, of course, cottage industrialization is content to be complementary to nationalization of industries which the problems of a post-war India may make imperative ?

You have correctly described the programme standing in my name. You have lifted the term nationalization from its present setting and then put a perplexing question. I suggest your correcting yourself and examining the contents of the term in its new village setting. The ideal is too comprehensive for our modernized mind. Mine may be all a day-dream never destined to be realized. But that would be merely begging the question. We see that in a single generation we have the so-called impossible of yesterday become the possible of today.

You have recently declaimed[1] against the big interests who speak loud against the Government and give the lie by their support of it for the crumbs that fall to them. It is answered that Congress itself has not been averse to befriend these big interests who exploit the Congress for their ends. Can you not stop such exploitation?

The Congress has never been, and I hope never will be, averse to the big interests so long as it hopes to convert them to national use instead of being itself converted by them in the process. My very declamation referred to by you shows that the big interests have to be on the right line, if they are to subserve the interests of the masses in the end. Today they are relatively serving the foreign ruler whilst they themselves merely get the crumbs from his table. It is unfortunate. But all will never think and be alike. In non-violence, there is mutual conversion instead of coercion.

The Hindu, 23-6-1945

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 6-5-1945.

261. LETTER TO KHWAJA

BOMBAY,
June 20, 1945

MY DEAR KHWAJA,

In the midst of work I send you a line to acknowledge yours. You will see. Hope all yours in Hyderabad are well including yourself.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

262. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

BOMBAY,
June 20, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have an impression that I have not replied to one of your letters. I hope Kanchan is well and you are calm. I did come here earlier than I had planned, but I do not hope to arrive there also earlier. I may perhaps have to go to Simla. If that does not become necessary I may arrive there earlier. Probably I shall know tomorrow. Let me see what happens. I hope Chimanlal is keeping good health.

It is raining heavily here. It is cool. Let us hope the streets will not be flooded with water. The rain is not so heavy as yet.

A letter for Chi. A. D. is enclosed, which also contains the reply to the postcard written by Prabhakar.

I am not writing to K. today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8447. Also C.W. 5583. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

263. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

BOMBAY,
June 20, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter. Kishorelalbhai is right; you can occupy that position if your conscience permits. By so doing, your relations with me and the Ashram will not only continue, but become further strengthened.

I understand about the mill. The rest you will see by and by.

I am somewhat worried about Balkrishna.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4516

264. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

BOMBAY,
June 20, 1945

CHI. CHAND,

It is not good that you have not as yet left. If you had something to ask somebody you should have gone and asked Sushilabehn. She says everything is there on the paper you had signed. However, no one can at all compel you to go. What can anyone do if you have left the white sari at home? The right thing would be to go to Nagpur if you really want to go there, and see what can be done. In the end you yourself have to find your way. The date you were to reach there has passed. Now decide what you want to do and start working accordingly. My coming there has become somewhat uncertain.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

265. LETTER TO S. RADHAKRISHNAN

BOMBAY,
June 21, 1945

BHAI RADHAKRISHNAN,

I have your letter. Though I have no time, I am writing you these few lines. I like your letter. Have faith that I will do whatever I can. I intend to show this letter to Jawaharlal. Hope you are well.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR RADHAKRISHNAN
30 EDWARD ELIOT ROAD
MYLAPUR, MADRAS

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

266. LETTER TO DHARMANAND KOSAMBI

BOMBAY,
June 21, 1945

BHAI KOSAMBI,

I have your letter. I liked it. The thing you have at heart is the thing that I also have at heart. If there is such a power as God in this world we have no cause for worry. You have joined the Gujarat Vidyapith. Remain there and render service.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI DHRMANAND KOSAMBI
GUJARAT VIDYAPITH
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

267. LETTER TO KULKARNI AND SUDHA KULKARNI

June 21, 1945

CHI. LAMBU AND KULKARNI,

I got your second letter. I have given it to Khersaheb to read.

Blessings from

BAPU

[C/O] ADIVASI SEVA MANDAL
KANYA CHHATRALAYA
MOKHADA, THANA DISTRICT

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

268. LETTER TO VILAS KATJU

BOMBAY,
June 21, 1945

CHI. VILAS,

I have your letter. I cannot congratulate you on your Devanagari writing. You do not write English in such a bad hand, do you? It is our mother tongue that is to blame, I suppose. I am returning your letter in order to teach you and show you how untidy and how clumsy it is. I have marked it at two places. Copy this letter out in a neat handwrtiing and send it to me. Seeing your letter how can I believe that you are Dr. Kailas Nath's daughter?

Blessings from

BAPU

C/O KAILAS NATH KATJU
EDMINSTON ROAD
ALLAHABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

269. LETTER TO S. A. BRELVI

BOMBAY,
June 21, 1945

BHAI BRELVI[1],

Your letter is good and also bad. And why again in English to me?

Your health will be good. It was not through carelessness that I used the expression to which you have drawn my attention. I had used it advisedly. It is another matter that I may change it out of consideration for somebody, but then it will not express what I feel.

In the first place, the term 'minorities' includes, along with the Muslims, all the accepted minorities. This has been my own preoccupation from childhood. And if you are concerned solely about Muslims, I would like to say that sometimes when a Muslim was wanted he was chosen not because he was the best Congressman among Indians but because he was the best Congressman among Muslims and represented Muslims. I should be grieved if you did not know this, because you are a highly experienced man and a journalist. If you are interested in having the names of such minorities, I can send you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 2298

270. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

BOMBAY,
June 21, 1945

As I was about to leave Panchgani, I received a pathetic letter[2] from which I take the following:

> The immediate object of my writing this letter is to inform you about the very serious condition of Sri Sarat Chandra Bose, who is my maternal uncle. He is very unwell and his condition is causing grave anxiety to us all. If he is not at

[1] Editor, *The Bombay Chronicle*

[2] From Parimal Shome; *vide* "Letter to Parimal Shome", 18-6-1945.

least removed, if not released, immediately to a healthy place his days are numbered.

As Sri Sarat Babu has never been tried and found guilty evidently he has been detained all these years and that too away from Bengal, on suspicion. For the sake of simple justice Sri Sarat Bahu ought to be removed to a health resort in Bengal with facilities for him to see his relatives.

The Hindu, 22-6-1945

271. TELEGRAM TO LORD WAVELL

Express BOMBAY,
June 22, 1945

H. E. VICEROY
VICEROY'S CAMP
INDIA

IN REPLY YOUR WIRE[1] OF 19TH YOU MUST HAVE SEEN FROM PAPERS WORKING COMMITTEE IS STILL SITTING. AM LEAVING TODAY BY FRONTIER MAIL FOR SIMLA. TRAIN PERMITTING HOPE WAIT ON YOUR EXCELLENCY APPOINTED TIME. THANKING YOU FOR RESERVING ACCOMMODATION FOR ME. I PROPOSE TO STAY WITH RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR.

GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 26

272. LETTER TO LADY EMILY KINNAIRD

ON THE TRAIN,
June 22, 1945

MOTHER DEAR,

It was good to hear from you after such a lapse of time. I expect to see Amrit Kaur on Sunday.

Love.

M. K. GANDHI

DAME EMILY KINNAIRD

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* 2nd footnote, "Telegram to Lord Wavell", 18-6-1945.

273. LETTER TO MANEKLAL GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN,
June 22, 1945

CHI. MANEKLAL,

You have entered into competition with me. Anybody who devotes himself to service in a spirit of non-attachment is entitled to aspire to live up to 125. May you be so entitled.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MANEKLAL
THANA DEVLI
KATHIAWAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 892. Courtesy: Maneklal Gandhi

274. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

June 22, 1945

It hurts me that I am going away without seeing you, but I am helpless.[1] Your dharma is not to interest yourself in these negotiations but to be engrossed in Ramanama and get well for public service.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 206

275. LETTER TO HILDA PETIT

ON THE TRAIN,
June 22, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I personally feel that it is good that Mother has gone. I had seen her suffering. Of course we do feel unhappy because of our selfishness. I hope all of you will be calm.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI HILDA PETIT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Gandhiji was going to Simla to meet the Viceroy.

276. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

ON THE TRAIN,
June 22, 1945

CHI. SATIS CHANDRA,

I read your postcard of June 16 only today. I should be sorry if your heart is still weak. But if that be the case, do not insist on working. [You] have not said about the letter to the apiaries. Now you have got to write to them.[1] I am going to Simla. God alone knows what He will make me do.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
SODEPUR, *via* CALCIJTTA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1644

277. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

NEW DELHI,
June 23, 1945

I have had no rest during the journey to Simla, which is still going on. A note has just been handed to me after leaving Bharatpur. I am observing silence to save myself' as much as possible. I was unable to receive the deputation that wanted to see me. But a note has been handed to me which describes the woes of persons who represent the Bharatpur people's cause. I must not go into the details, for I have not the opportunity of knowing the other side. May I hope that the Bharatpur Raj authorities will do the needful and publish their side of the case ?

The Hindu, 25-6-1945

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 8-6-1945.

278. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

AS AT SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
ON THE TRAIN,
June 23, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I am writing this whilst I am silent. This is being written on the train taking me to Simla. In answer to your affectionate letter of 23rd April I can only say I am pouring my whole soul into the attempt to express truth and non-violence in fighting the battle for the independence of India's vast, dumb and starved masses.

This will be typed for your easy reading.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

REV. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES[1]
10 PARR AVENUE
NEW YORK 16, N.Y.

From a photostat: C.W. 10966. Courtesy: S. P. K. Gupta. Also from a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

279. NOTE TO PRESTON GROVER

ON THE TRAIN,
June 23, 1945

MY DEAR GROVER,

Many thanks for your considerate note[2]. But let me melt myself in this natural heat. As sure as fate, this heat will be followed by

[1] American clergyman, author of *My Gandhi*; Chairman, American Civil Liberties Union; Rabindranath Tagore Memorial Visiting Professor in India from October 1947 to January 1948

[2] In *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. I, Book One, p. 125, Pyarelal explains that the addressee, a correspondent of the United Press of America travelling with Gandhiji, said in a note: "Would not it be wise for you to go into the cooler Congress car for the afternoon, so you could stretch yourself a while? You have not had any sleep for 24 hours. It is not going to help much if you arrive at Simla tired out from the interruptions in your sleep at wayside stations. As we would say in America, 'Give yourself a break'."

refreshing coolness which I shall enjoy. Let me feel just a touch of real India.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *The Hindu,* 1-7-1945

280. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

ON A MOVING TRAIN,
June 23, 1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I have before me your letter of June 11, 1945. Your interpretation of the rules, a copy of which you have sent, seems correct to me. The office should shift to Wardha or somewhere around it.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi original: Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

281. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

ON A MOVING TRAIN,
June 23, 1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

Your letter of June 12, 1945 is before me. I approve of the proposal to appoint Kalyanasundaram to help Thakkar Bapa on a salary of Rs. 75 per month. It should be implemented if no other formalities are necessary for this appointment.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi original: Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

282. MEMORANDA FOR TALKS WITH THE VICEROY

[Before *June 24, 1945*][1]

1. The fact that Congress and some of its organizations are still in jail acts as a piece of coercion to compel co-operation on part of Congress.
2. Principle of Communalism being an evil cannot be extended beyond the life of the interim temporary Govt. [and] cannot be used as a precedent for the future and has no application in considering the services. Congress represents all parties and the people without distinction of class, caste or creed.
3. Number of non-Scheduled Hindus should not exceed that of Muslims drawn from all parties including Shias.
4. Implication of Provincial Coalitions
5. Recruitment of services and commitments
6. Method of appointment
7. Financial implications of defence
8. Indian army - its freedom
9. Indian States - Princes and people
10. External Affairs Department
11. Commercial Safeguards.

From a copy of: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Gandhiji met the Viceroy on June 24, 1945; for the Viceroy's note on his interview with Gandhiji, *vide* Appendix "Lord Wavell's note on his interview", 24-6-1945.

283. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

[After *June 24, 1945*][1]

DEAR MAULANA SAHEB,

It was by mere chance that Pyarelal happened to see you. But what you told him, if his report of the talk is accurate, is startling. The Working Committee has not given you the right or the permission to form a cabinet. You yourself told me that you could not do it without the Working Committee. That is my view too. That was why I had said that you should form a small committee with the assistance of the Working Committee, which could be given that right and then act through that committee or the Working Committee itself. Since you did not react favourably to either of the proposals, I can only conclude that I do not understand or do not know the stand of the Working Committee in the matter.[2] I understand from what Jamnalalji says that you are going to summon the Working Committee anyhow. I consider it improper. I would not wish you to be guilty of such a grave error at this juncture.

I do not know what you have done and how you could persuade the Viceroy. Even if you have committed yourself it is, in my view, your duty to inform him that a mistake has been committed. So much for the matter between you and the Working Committee.

Another thing I would like to tell you is that in anything you do, you should take with you the Congress who are present and you should put everything in writing.

The third is a personal matter. Ever since I first heard the Viceroy's proclamation[3], that is, while I was still at Panchgani, I have been shouting that the Congress cannot accept the principle of parity between Muslims and non-Harijan Hindus, an organization of Hindus alone. Even if I am the only one among crores to do so, I shall refuse to be a party to it. I do not care if the negotiations break down on this, for I know and believe that the moment you try to form a national government at the centre in this way you will be laying a wrong

[1] From the contents it is evident that this was written during Gandhiji's stay at Simla where he had talks with the Viceroy, Lord Wavell, regarding constitutional negotiations. Gandhiji reached Simla to attend the Conference on June 24.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Abul Kalam Azad", 17-6-1945.

[3] *ibid*.

foundation.[1] In this repect I am neither a Hindu, nor belong to any other religion. I belong to all faiths or to none. I only walk in the wayshown by God. I shall be very happy if you can lend me your co-operation in this matter. But if you cannot do it wholeheartedly then I would rather do without it. I shall keep you informed.

I trust you are well and the climate here has not disagreed with you.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

284. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

'MANOR VILLE', SIMLA,
June 25, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I was too tired to acknowledge your note[2] there and then. Nor was there any hurry. I shall remain in Simla during the conference.

Yours very sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 26

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Abul Kalam Azad", 17-6-1945.

[2] Dated June 24, it read: "I have thought over what you told me about your plans when we had our talks this afternoon and I shall be grateful if you will remain in Simla during the conference." For Lord Wavell's note on the interview, *vide* Appendix "Lord Wavell's note on his interview", 24-6-1945.

285. NOTE TO MAURICE FRYDMAN[1]

'MANOR VILLE', SIMLA W.,
June 25, 1945

Is your word of no value? You made me a definite promise, do you remember ?

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Do as you are ad[vised] below.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 43

286. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

'MANOR VILLE', SIMLA WEST,
June 25, 1945

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I am sending herewith the draft I have prepared of the Trust-deed. Since Gujarati is permitted there, I have drawn it up in that language. If documents in Gujarati are not registered, get a Sindhi or Hindi translation made. There is no need at all for an English translation. You can change the terms. I have tried to embody your own ideas as I have understood them.[2]

I will go on worrying till Manu is cured of her illness. She must have gone now to Dinshaw's clinic. Let us hope she will recover there.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I do not expect to stay here for long. It will perhaps be decided today how long I shall have to stay. Recall what I told you

[1] Gandhiji scribbled this on Dr. Sushila Nayyar's letter to the addressee. *Vide* also "Telegram to Soundaram Ramachandran", 30-6-1945.

[2] *Vide* also the following item.

regardingyour health.[1] Roasting groundnut will not make all that difference. I understand about the work.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./24

287. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKVASA

SIMLA,
June 25, 1945

BHAI MANGALDAS PAKVASA,

I am sending herewith the Dinshah Trust-deed. After examining it, translate it only into English. I will not burden you just now with making a Hindi translation. If you approve of the contents, make other documents in the mother tongue or in the national language.[2] I have been giving you a good deal of trouble. I cannot help it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4692. Courtesy: Mangaldas Pakvasa

288. LETTER TO KANAM GANDHI

June 25, 1945

CHI. KANAM,

This is for you. Do not forget the three gurus[3]. Improve your Urdu and learn to use the Gujarati script correctly. Whatever you write should be like a pearl. Sumi is growing daily.

Blessings to all of you from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9518. Courtesy: Kanam Gandhi

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jaisukhlal Gandhi", 30-5-1945.
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Mangaldas Pakvasa", 12-6-1945 and the preceding item.
[3] Presumably, a reference to the three proverbial monkeys

289. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

'MANOR VILLE', SIMLA,
June 25, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

We arrived here yesterday having many difficulties on the way. There were crowds at every station, delirious and deaf with love or joy. Manilal has practically lost his voice. I met the Viceroy yesterday. I will know today or tomorrow when I shall be free. Either I or someone else will write. I hope everything is going on well there. I intend to go there after I am free from here, but I cannot say where I may have to halt on the way. I hope Kanchan is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8446. Also C.W. 5584. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

290. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

''MANOR VILLE', SIMLA,
June 25, 1945

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

There are several names in the Kasturba Memorial Trust. When the Trust was formed, I had expressed a desire that your name and Sardar's should be included. All the Trustees were agreeable that the names of you two should be included when you were released. I had forgotten to consult you. It occurred to me this morning. Will you agree to be on the Trust? It means working for women and children in the villages and that too in my way. If you can take interest in this, I can send you the papers for your perusal. I have said the same thing to Sardar. He is considering it. I have told him that this is no matter for honour. It is a matter for work.

The same is true about the propagation of Hindustani. I am very keen on having your name for it if you are agreeable. I shall send you the papers if you like, for your persual about this too. I am scared of

placing any more burden on your head as you are already overburdened. But what can I do?

Everyone misses you here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Gandhi-Nehru Correspondence. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

291. DRAFT LETTER OF ATTORNEY FOR MANU GANDHI

[After *June 25, 1945*][1]

The sum of ten thousand rupees that I have deposited with you at 5-anna interest will be accountable to my grandfather Gandhiji while he is alive and afterwards to my father Jaisukhlal Gandhi. The interest also will be payable to Gandhiji and after him to my father. I hereby transfer all my rights in this regasd to them.

From a microfilm of the Hindi: M.M.U./24

292. TELEGRAM TO PARIMAL SHOME

'MANOR VILLE', SIMLA WEST,
June 26, 1945

PARIMAL SHOME
12-3 HINDUSTAN ROAD
BALLYGUNGE (CALCUTTA)

YOURS WIRE. YOU CAN PUBLISH LETTER[2].

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In the source, the letter is placed after the items of June 25, 1945; *vide* also "Letter to Jaisukhlal Gandhi", 4-6-1945.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Parimal Shome", 18-6-1945.

293. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SIMLA,
June 26, 1945

BAPA,

Your letter to Narahari is before me. Send the invitations for the Executive Committee meeting of the Kasturba Nidhi for any day in August convenient to you. If it becomes necessary to change it on my account, we shall do so.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

294. LETTER TO SUDHIR GHOSH

June 26, 1945

BHAI SUDHIR,

Only today I am able to reply your letter of June 11. You know what I am doing.

I am very keen to go to Bengal. But I wish to go to all the [nearby] places.[1]

Blessings to Shanti[2] *and to you from*

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Sudhir Ghosh Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] In *Gandhi's Emissary*, p. 50, the addressee explains: "With this brief letter in hand I went to see Governor Casey. He said, I could . . . assure him [Gandhiji] that the Governor would do everything in his power to secure for Mr. Gandhi the freedom to go wherever he liked and meet anybody he liked."

[2] Addressee's wife

295. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

SIMLA,
June 26, 1945

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your letter of the 12th. Whatever you are doing, you are doing with deliberation. I shall read the circular when it comes. I hope Satis Babu is well—he should be.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

296. LETTER TO K. N. KATJU

SIMLA,
June 26, 1945

BHAI KAILASHNATH KATJU,

I have your first Hindustani letter. I liked it very much. The handwriting is good, as is of course the language. The letter from Vilas disappointed me.[1] If you can help her to improve, do so.

I finished reading your booklet[2] yesterday. I read it from beginning to end without leaving out anything. I liked it but I think it has shortcomings. In this connection I would advise you to read a big book[3] Satish Babu has written on the cow. The first part of it is already published, the second is about to come out. His full address is . . .[4] Calcutta. He is a first-class chemist. But he gave up everything long back and took up khadi work. He is very industrious. He wrote this book in jail. Those who want to work in the villages should read this book. It does not contain only Satis Babu's views. He has taken everything from British and American reports. There is much scope forimprovement and addition in what you say in your book about cattle, cattle diseases and land. If the villagers have to depend on

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Vilas Katju", 21-6-1945.

[2] *Dehati Pragati; vide* also "Letter to K.N. Katju", 13-5-1945.

[3] *Cow in India*; for Gandhiji's Foreword, *vide* "Foreword to *Cow in India*", 20-5-1945.

[4] Omission as in the source

Government veterinary doctors for treatment of their cattle, it is not going to work. This does not mean that the villagers are not to take their help but their knowledge should be adapted to village conditions. I have plenty of material on the subject but I do not want to give it here. Perhaps you know Dhiren Mazumdar. He is working in U.P. with Vichitra Narayan. He is Acharya Kripalani's man and is very industrious. He knows his work well. If you have not already met him, do so. If possible go and see the Khadi Pratishthan of Satis Babu and then bring out a second edition. It will not be of much use as it is. Now that people have become interested in the subject they will buy your book and probably read it, too. However, they will not be able to derive much benefit from it, for, though they will know from the book what they have to do, it will not tell them how they are to do it. This I will expect in the second edition. I have seen from your book that you are interested in the subject and so I have offered the suggestions.

One thing more. Take up at least one village, as I have taken up Sevagram. Then put into practice the things you have said in the book. In this way you will gain experience. This suggestion of mine has another consequence: You will have to do very little legal practice. You must be knowing that Brijkishore Babu, Rajendra Babu, Vallabhbhai and others had to totally give up their practice when they took up such work. I do not suggest that you go so far. You have a vast knowledge of law and have gained so much experience. So with slight modifications do as Motilal had done. While staying in a village take up two or three good cases. Take the cases of the poor free of charge. Devote the rest of your time to village reform. This is all I can say after going through your book.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. KAILASNATH KUTJU
ALLAETABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

297. LETTER TO SUSHILA SHARMA

SIMLA,
June 26, 1945

CHI. SUSHILA,

How can I advice you? These are my views: These days educated men take advantage of the blind faith of women. Truthful women will give up their immoral and unfaithful husbands. Even educated women do not have self-respect and do not keep away from licentiousness. A woman indulging in lechery is certainly lecherous but the one who puts up with lechery is also lecherous. If you can take anything from this you are welcome.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SUSHILA SHARMA
BENARES

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

298. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

SIMLA,
June 26, 1945

The following are names of the Literature Board which was proposed by the All-India Hindustani Prachar Conference held at Wardha on the 26th and 27th February last:

Maulana Syed Sulaiman Nadvi, Azamgarh.

Dr. Tarachand, Allahabad.

Dr. Abid Hussain, Jamia Millia, Delhi.

Pandit Benarsidas Chaturvedi, Tikamgarh.

Dr. Zafar Hasan, Hyderabad (subject to University's permission).

Sjt. Jinendra Kumar, Delhi.

Dr. Akhtar Hussain, Raipur.

Pandit Sudarshan, Bombay.

Prof. Najib Ashraf Nadvi, Bombay (Subject to Government's permission) .

Sjt. Chandragupta Vidyalankar, Lahore.

Sjt. Satyanarayan, Madras

Pandit Haribhau Upadhyaya, Ajmer.

Pandit Sundarlal, Allahabad.

Acharya Shriman Narayan Agrawal, Wardha.

It is proposed to hold the first meeting of the Board as early as possible at Wardha. The date will be announced after consultation with the members by Acharya Shriman Narayan Agrawal. The names originally proposed at the Conference have undergone some change. All the persons whose names were proposed were not at the Conference and substitutes had to be found for those of the absentees who did not find it possible to serve on the Board. I had hesitated to give my name for the Board, but as a result of correspondence with Dr. Tarachand and others, I have agreed to be on the Board as its Chairman. I may also add that the list is likely to be increased by a few names.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

299. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

[After *June 26, 1945*][1]

I am taking out the clipping bearing my note added as a postscript in Sushila's letter to. . .[2] to save the postage. Take it from me when we reach there. Keep well. Give up crying either silently or openly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In the source, the letter is placed after the items of June 26, 1945.

[2] The name is illegible.

300. CABLE TO AGA KHAN

Express 'MANOR VILLE', SIMLA WEST,
June 27, 1945

H. H. AGA KHAN
TANGA (EAST AFRICA)

THANKS FOR KIND CABLE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

301. TELEGRAM TO SHAMALDAS GANDHI

SIMLA
June 27, 1945

SHAMALDAS GANDHI
"VANDEMATARAM"
BOMBAY

CONGRATULATE AND BLESS BHOGILAL FOR FAIR SETTLEMENT. YOU DID GOOD WORK.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

302. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SIMLA,
June 27, 1945

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter. Beware of overworking yourself or acting against the weather for which you are not made. Do come to Simla whether I am here or not. I may leave any day. I am glad you have twos helpers.

I wish Balvantsinha can come but I doubt.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABAI
KISAN ASHRAM
BAHADRABAD P. O., *via* JWALAPUR
(NEAR HARDWAR)

From the original: C.W. 6508. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9903

303. LETTER TO GLADYS OWEN

SIMLA WEST,
June 27, 1945

MY DEAR GLADYS[1],

I am glad you are there and hope you will get rid of your weakness. Expect no more from me. We are all in God's hands whether we will or no.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6199

304. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

June 27, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Since the post is about to be dispatched, here are a few words. If Hoshiaribehn willingly permits Balvantsinha, he would go to Mirabehn. I am now hoping to go there in a few days.

Blessings to all from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8448. Also C.W. 5585. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

305. LETTER TO NANDLAL PATEL

SIMLA,
June 27, 1945

CHI. NANDLAL,

Prabhakar has sent a wire saying that Hari-ichchha is dying a slow death. I hope that Hari-ichha is keeping up her spirit. Of course you two will be showing great courage too. If we fear death it shows our faith in God is shaken or we lack it. Life and death are in His hands. We should live in full realization of this.

I have not taken it for granted that Hari-ichchha is going to die. The saying "As long as there is breath, there is hope" has so often

[1] Quaker educationist; in 1936, she joined Theosophical School, Varanasi, to make a study of education in India.

come true.[1]

I cannot say when I shall be able to come there. But I hope it will be soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

306. LETTER TO DEO

SIMLA WEST,
June 27, 1945

CHI. DEO,

Sushila has gone out for tea. It is possible her letter will not go in the envelope today. I hope you are better. If you regularly sit in cold water and take mud treatment, you will get well. Of course you have to be particular about the diet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

307. LETTER TO LALCHAND

'MANOR VILLE', SIMLA,
June 27, 1945

BHAI LALCHAND,

I have your letter and the cheque. I had received your wire also. That did not call for a reply. If sometimes I pray for someone I do not charge for it. No one should. A prayer can never be a thing for sale. A prayer has to come only from the heart. If the renewal of your licence was delayed what prayer could I have offered and how could I have offered it? Neither I nor anyone else has the power to change the laws of nature. God knows best what is good for everyone and ordainsaccordingly. I am therefore returning your cheque. I want to remove the misapprehension in your mind that you succeeded in your design because I prayed for you. You must know that I did not pray f

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Munnalal G. Shah", 28-6-1945.

or your licence nor could it have anything to do with payer. After understanding all this if you want to send the cheque for the Harijans you may.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

308. LETTER TO MOHAMMED YASIN

'MANOR VILLE', SIMLA,
June 27, 1945

BHAI MOHAMMED YASIN,

I have gone through your letter. If Pyarelal cannot give you satisfaction, then I can't do anything more because I do not have the time. I have heard everything you have to say, so please give up the desire for a personal discussion with me. The real thing is work, and work alone, and the most important work is plying the charkha oneself and persuading others to ply it. This means that one has to learn and use in practice all the processes from growing cotton to spinning the yarn.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

309. LETTER TO MUNSHI

SIMLA WEST,
June 27, 1945

BHAI MUNSHIJI,

I am no doubt keeping in mind the name you have sent. I do not know what will be feasible. Let us see what happens. I hope the Ashram is going on well.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

310. DRAFT OF SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, SIMLA[1]

[*June 27, 1945*][2]

Addressing the prayer meeting Mahatma Gandhi said that the object of attending prayers was to commune with God and turn the searchlight inwards so that with the help of God they could overcome their weaknesses. He believed that one imbibed pure thoughts in the company of the pure. Even if there was one pure man in that gathering, the rest would be affected by that one man's purity. The condition was that they came with that intention. Otherwise, their coming to the prayers was meaningless.

He went further and maintained that even if all had their weaknesses but came to the meeting with the intention of removing them, their co-operative effort made day to day would quicken the progress of reform. For even as co-operation was necessary, in the economic or the political field so was co-operation much more necessary on the moral plane. That was the meaning of the prayer meetings he had been holding since his return to India.

Therefore, he appealed to them to sit absolutely quiet, with closed eyes, so as to shut themselves off from outward thoughts for a few minutes at least. This co-operative prayer needed no fuss, no advertisement. They must be free from hypocrisy.

From the original: C.W. 4208. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7844

311. TELEGRAM TO PRABHAVATI DEVI

SIMLA,
June 28, 1945

PRABHAVATI DEVI
HARIJAN ASHRAM, KINGSWAY [CAMP]
DELHI

MY STAY UNCERTAIN. FOLLOW NEWSPAPERS AND DECIDE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The draft which bears corrections by Gandhiji has the second paragraph written by him.

[2] From *The Hindustan Times*, 28-6-1945

312. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

''MANOR VILLE', SIMLA WEST,
June 28, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

Some hangings—an aftermath of the disturbances of 1942—are impending. I have some cases given to me by Dr. Rajendra Prasad of the Working Committee. The Chimur cases you perhaps know. I do not quite know how the last stages of the conference are shaping. Be that as it may, I suggest that all such hangings be commuted to life sentences without further public appeal or agitation and whether judicial proceedings are going on or not. If you think that this is beyond you, may I suggest that these be postponed so as to be dealt with by the national government that is coming into being?[1]

Yours very sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
SIMLA

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 35-6

313. POSTSCRIPT TO "DRAFT INSTRUCTIONS FOR CIVIL RESISTERS"[2]

SEVAGRAM[3],
June 28, 1945

These would have been issued, if they had been passed by the Working Committee. Now they are a part of historical record only.

M. K. G.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, p. 288

[1] The Viceroy's reply, dated June 29, *inter alia*, read: "I have already given instructions to the Provincial Governments not to execute the sentences in any of these cases until the Privy Council has passed orders on the petition for special leave to appeal. . . . I will bear your letter in mind when I consider the whole question after the decision of the Privy Council is known."

[2] The instructions, drafted by Gandhiji on August 4, 1942, (*vide* "Draft instructions for Civil Resisters", 4-8-1945.) were discussed by the Congress Working Committee on August *8.* The Committee was to meet again on August 9, but early that morning the leaders were arrested.

[3] Permanent address

314. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

June 28, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your wire. Hari-ichchha had been a daughter to me. But why need we grieve over her death? Her soul is certainly living. Let nobody, therefore, grieve.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8445. Also C.W. 5586. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

315. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

June 28, 1945

CHI. CHAND,

You seem to be extremely sensitive. No one has accused you of telling a lie. You may understand a thing in one way, another person in another way, while the truth may be a third thing. But this matter is now over. Now the pleurisy has flared up again. How can you study in this condition? How did you come to get pleurisy? This needs to be considered. However, there should be [no] hurry. Sushilabehn will be writing to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Chandrani Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

316. LETTER TO JUGAL KISHORE BIRLA

June 28, 1945

BHAI JUGAL KISHORE,

I hope you have received the telegram I sent last night in reply to yours. Just now I received Chi. Basant's letter and also the note. I only hope and I pray to God that He may grant you long life and good health to shoulder the cares of the world.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHETH JUGAL KISHORE BIRLA
NEW DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

317. LETTER TO G. B. PANT

'MANOR VILLE',
June 29, 1945

BHAI GOVIND BALLABH PANT[1],

Yesterday I came to know that you had gone to Rajaji's house and there all of a sudden felt giddy. I was given to understand that in any case you were not feeling too fit and that partly I was responsible for it. That should not be so. I am very firm in my view and I should be so. There may be occasions when you do not agree with my views. So what? All of us, if we want to serve the country, should have our own opinions. Only then can the country forge ahead and a way be shown to the people. I firmly believe that you should not work at the cost of your health. Stop worrying and do not feel unhappy that you do not agree with my views.

The more I think the more convinced I become that if the Working Committee tries to select as many Hindus as there areMuslims then the communal poison will spread throughout the country and we will never be able to win freedom. What is the harm if the Congress is reduced from a majority to a minority? Must we do a wrong thing to maintain our majority? Will not the Congress become a communal organization by selecting as many Hindus as there are Muslims?

If the Congress takes the fewest of Hindus, and as many as possible from the other communities, the communal poison will be removed and it will succeed in bringing freedom nearer. I quite see that now the first step towards freedom has to be taken through the Government. The course should be straight so far as we are concerned.

If people do not accept this, then let the reins of Government be passed to those whom the people approve. Everything will be all right even if there are only a few straightforward persons. This is my opinion and I can never give it up.

[1] (1887-1961); Advocate, Allahabad High Court; in 1928, during demonstration against Simon Commission at Lucknow, suffered lathi blows from which he never fully recovered; was leader of Swaraj Party in United Provinces Legislative Council, 1923-30, and U. P. Premier, 1937-39; Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, 1946-55; Home Minister, Government of India, 1955-61.

You have taken for granted that the Working Committee at Bombay has accepted the principle of parity. I have rejected it.

Please get well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

318. INTERVIEW TO PRESTON GROVER

SIMLA,
June 29, 1945

In reply to my questions, Gandhiji said be was feeling well and that the 7,000-foot altitude of Simla had not affected him so far, although he was watchful that he did not overstrain his heart.

Answering an initial request that he should give a report on the negotiations as they stood at the moment, Mahatma Gandhi said:

I wish I could, but I am here only as an adviser. I have, for many years, been advising the Congress. But now, I have constituted myself as an adviser both to the Congress and to the Viceroy, too, and through him of the British people. You see, that makes my position exceptionally delicate. The only information I have is what my colleagues bring when they come to me. Frankly speaking, I do not know in what position the conference exactly is today. It has never been my habit to cry out of curiosity.

It was suggested that the Congress representatives should keep him advised almost hourly, to which he replied:

They do, and they do not. Unless the Viceroy wants my advice, I would know nothing as to what is happening at that end. But, if things go on smoothly, he does not need my advice. On our side too, while they do come to me, it need not be from day to day or hour to hour. While, therefore, I cannot tell you what exactly the situation in the conference is, I can only share with you my hope and prayer that things will come right both for India and Great Britain. I say for both, because I do not know that, even if a settlement is pulled through, it will be on right lines.

But I give you a tip. I was not joking when I made a statement[1] some time back in answer to Sir Feroz Khan Noon at San Francisco,

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the press", 4-5-1945.

that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is my heir. He has got ability, knowledge and close touch with the public here and can interpret India's mind. I have already, as I wrote[1] to Lord Linlithgow, taken him as my guide in international affairs. He can interpret India's mind to the outside world as no one else can.

This much I can say, that Congress can never become sectional organization. Not that there are not communal-minded people in it, but the Congress can never work communally. Therefore, normally speaking, the parity principle should be distasteful to everybody.

Turning to the composition of the current conference, Gandhiji declared it was "political in its complexion" and not communal. This was in direct contradiction to the Muslim League argument that the whole conference was chosen on communal basis.

If they wanted various groups to be represented communally, they should have invited the Hindu Mahasabha and not the Congress, which has always been, and is now, a purely political body trying to think and act in terms of the whole nation. It cannot belie its entire history at this critical moment.

Asked if an acceptance of invitation to work for an interim government was in the belief that it was a step towards independence, Gandhiji replied:

The acceptance of the invitation was a recognition of the fact that it was a step towards independence. But this was subjectto explanation and clarification of what was in the Viceroy's mind. It was like sitting on the top of a volcano which might erupt. I took that risk.

Toward the end of the interview, it was suggested that Mr. Jinnah, President of the Muslim League, was reported to be somewhat resentful that Gandhiji had withdrawn from the conference.

If Mr. Jinnah wants me there, he can take me there. We shall both go arm in arm. He can help me up the hill and save strain on my heart. Such a gesture on Mr. Jinnah's part would mean that he wants a settlement even in the teeth of the differences and obstacles that face the conference. You can tell him that I am quite willing to be taken to the conference by him.

I suggested that not only Mr. Jinnah, but Lord Wavell, most of India and all observers at the conference looked upon Gandhiji as head of the Congress regardless of the technicality that he was not a member, and that no settlement would be reached

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 14-8-1942.

without his consent. Gandhiji replied:

That is both right and wrong. That impression has been created because generally my advice is accepted. But technically and substantially it is wrong. The conference is legally representative and, therefore, I can have no place in it.

To my insistence that his was the controlling voice in the Congress, Gandhiji replied:

Not even that. They can shunt me out at any time, brush aside my advice. If I tried to override them, I might succeed for once. But the moment I try to cling to power, I fall, never to rise again. That is, not in my temperament.

The Hindu, 1-7-1945

319. LETTER TO KRISHNAVARMA

[PANCHGANI/][1] SIMLA WEST,
[On or before *June* 19/] *June 30, 1945*

BHAI KRISHNAVARMA,

I have your letter of the 3rd. It is good that you gave me the detailed information about uncle.[2][3] I on my part have put uncle in your hands in the hope that he will get well. For the sake of his treatment certainly be firm with him. I wrote this letter long back in Panchgani. I did not post it as I left the place. Now I wish to inquire about uncle and Sailen.[3] Give whatever treatment you think fit to Sailen. Both of them should get well. I will have to think about your expenses. Sailen should write to me. Please show this to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Inferred from the contents; Gandhiji left Panchgani on June 19.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Krishnavarma", 5-5-1945 and "Letter to Krishnavarma", 14-5-1945.

[3] *ibid*

320. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

SIMLA,
June 30, 1945

MIRABEHN
CARE POSTMASTER BAHADRABAD
JWALAPUR

COME IF YOU WISH. I SEE BALVANTSINHA WONT TILL I REACH ASHRAM.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

321. TELEGRAM TO PRABHAVATI

SIMLA,
June 30, 1945

PRABHAVATIDEVI
HARIJAN ASHRAM KINGSWAY [CAMP]
DELHI

COME. HOPE SATYAVATI WELL.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

322. TELEGRAM TO DHARMADEV SHASTRI

SIMLA,
June 30, 1945

SASTRIJI
ASHRAM
KALSI (DEHRA DUN)

COME PROVIDED YOU HAVE FRIENDS TO STAY WITH. HAVE NO ROOM.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

323. TELEGRAM TO SOUNDARAM RAMACHANDRAN

Express SIMLA,
June 30, 1945

SOUNDARAM RAMACHANDRAN
KASTURBA GANDHI MATERNITY HOME
ADYAR (MADRAS)

FRYDMAN BHARATANAND STAYING ADYAR. HIS CONDITION REPORTED SERIOUS. PLEASE SEE HIM. DO NEEDFUL. ENGAGE NURSE IF NECESSARY.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

324. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

SIMLA,
June 30, 1945

CHI. NARAHARI,

You will have to be content with whatever news from here Chi. P. or S. or M. may give you. You have given in your postcard as much as you could include in it. I am writing this after the prayer, since I do not feel like returning to bed. My work here has been prolonged. But I do hope that it will end well. I had a letter from Manu[1] from Poona. She expresses confidence that she will be fully restored. There is [however] no letter from Vanu[2].

I set great store by the purification of the atmosphere there. Purification includes cultivation of knowledge and devotion, diligence, perseverance in the path of dharma, etc. Both of you should ponder over this. Write to me and ask me. I had wanted to return there in the first week of July, but that will not be possible now. That is why I am writing this letter. I am glad you could see Hari-ichchha before she passed away. It is a deliverance for her.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9133. Also C.W. 5884. Courtesy: Narahari D. Parikh

[1] Manu Gandhi
[2] Vanamala, addressee's daughter

325. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

'MANOR VILLE', SIMLA WEST,
June 30, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

Many thanks for your two letters—one of yesterday's date about the condemned prisoners[1] and the other[2] of today about my presence in Simla till the conference finally disperses.

About the first letter I need say nothing beyond thanking you for your prompt and hopeful reply.

As to the second, I will not leave Simla without knowing that you no longer want me. Whenever you need me, you have only to send me a message.

I hope you have noticed that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is reaching Simla tomorrow and that you will invite him to meet you and Lady Wavell.

Yours very sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
SIMLA

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 27

326. LETTER TO SHAMALDAS GANDHI

SIMLA,
June 30, 1945

CHI. SHAMALDAS,

I have your letter. My congratulations to Bhogilal are contained in the telegram[3] I sent you. Now it is your responsibility to see that Mahendra does not squander money. I had the same relationswith Kevalrambhai as I had with your father. Then both of them left. Now bring credit to what I have done. Convey my thanks to Bhogilal for

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, "Letter to Lord Wavell", 28-6-1945.

[2] Which read: "Your friends have no doubt told you that the conference adjourned yesterday until 14th July to enable the parties to send me lists of names so that I may see whether I can, on paper, form an Executive Council acceptable to all concerned. . . . I hope you may be able to stay in Simla until the conference ends.... I should like to see you again before you leave."

[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Shamaldas Gandhi", 27-6-1945.

bringing credit to the late Kevalram. May he bring him more. I do not have time to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

327. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

SIMLA,
June 30, 1945

GANDHIJI*:*

I have registered your claim but have nothing to say. I generally don't speak during day but for your sake I am speaking to you as a special case. You have to prompt me.[1]

CORRESPONDENT: What will be the composition of the interim government if you have your way?

G. (Laughing) The interim government will consist of top men, irrespective of caste, creed or colour. If I became the Viceroy of India, I would startle the world with my list and yet make it acceptable.

I asked Mahatmaji to explain what he meant by top men, and he amplified his remark by saying that he meant men and women who are fittest to do the work the country needs. . . . The Mahatma said:

Of course, nobody will take the trouble of appointing me the Viceroy of India nor of electing me as President of the Congress—for I am not even a four-anna member of the Congress to be eligible for election—with full authority to appoint the new government.

Mahatma Gandhi said that he would not hesitate to leave out anyone at present in the Congress, if he felt that better men were available outside who would work in their respective spheres so as to bring full independence at the earliest time possible. I next asked:

In the course of your correspondence with the Viceroy on his proposals, you objected to the term "caste Hindus" in the matter of parity of representation for Hindus and Muslims, adding that if this parity between caste Hindus and Muslims was

[1] According to the source, Gandhiji jokingly said this when A. S. Bharatan, Special Correspondent of the Associated Press of India, greeted him. "Mahatma Gandhi . . . seated on a simple mattress on a raised platform in a room overlooking ... the snow-capped Himalayan. . . ranges. . . was actually enjoying the magnificent scenery in front of him."

unalterable, then the Congress would have no place in the new Government.[1] According to the reports, the Congress delegates to the Conference have accepted parity between Hindus other than Scheduled Classes and Muslims. Have you any comment to make on this?

If Congressmen have accepted parity, it cannot be in the sense you imagine. I interpret the Viceregal pronouncement[2] to mean that neither community can ask for more representation than the other in the national cabinet. Thus Hindus other than the Scheduled Classes can, if they wish, be less but not more than the Muslims.[3]

Do you approve of the procedure suggested by Lord Wavell yesterday at the leaders' conference for the selection of the new Executive Council, namely, that all parties should submit separate panels of names to the Viceroy first and that thereafter he would consult Party leaders before making his final selection and place the personnel finally selected by him before the conference for approval?

The procedure suggested by Lord Wavell is, in my opinion, good inasmuch as the Viceroy does not seek to impose his will on the conference. The Viceroy has said in his opening remarks to the delegates that the various elements represented in the conference should regard him, the Viceroy, as their leader. It is a good and dignified expression that Lord Wavell has used. He thus acts at the conference as its leader and not as the agent of Whitehall.

The Hindustan Times, 1-7-1945

328. TELEGRAM TO KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI

Express SIMLA,
July 1, 1945

KHURSHEDBEHN
HARIJAN COLONY, KINGSWAY [CAMP]
DELHI

COME WITH PRABHA.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the press", 15-6-1945.
[2] *Vide* Appendix "Speech broadcast by the Viceroy", 14-6-1945.
[3] The correspondent explains here that on being informed by Gandhiji's Secretary that "time was up", he sought permission "to ask a last question".

329. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

''MANOR VILLE', SIMLA WEST,
July 1, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your letter. Now my return there may be delayed. Maybe, I shall not be able to leave till the 15th. Let us see what happens. I understand about Balvantsinha. I hope everything goes on well there. If Dr. Ice insists on buffalo's milk, let him procure it for himself and drink it. I don't think it is in any way our duty to supply him with it. He should make do with what we supply in the ordinary course. Is Kanchan able to help you in any way or does she still continue to be ill? I expect a letter from her with details of her work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8444. Also C.W. 5587. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

330. LETTER TO LALMANSINGH

SIMLA,
July 1, 1945

BHAI LALMANSINGH,

Balvantsinha has written to me about you. I would like to meet you if I make a halt at Delhi. However, it seems I shall not be stopping in Delhi. How, then, can we meet? I have already written[1] to you to persuade Hoshiari and take her with you. Hoshiari's children should be allowed to stay with her. One of our bad practices is that we suppress women while men have their freedom. What would you have done if she had been a boy? But I do not wish to try and convince you more fully through a letter. You can do this: come along with me when I leave Delhi. I will write to you when something is decided about my departure.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lalmansingh", 13-6-1945.

331. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

SIMLA,
July 1, 1945

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter. I can understand Mirabehn's impatience. She is anxious to get some help for her farming and her cow. But I shall not force you to go when Mirabehn herself will be arriving in a day or two. I shall explain to her the whole thing. You may then do whatever you think proper.

I do not know how I am going to meet Hoshiari's father, because now I may not be required to stop in Delhi. I am writing[1] to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1964

332. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SIMLA,
Ju1y 1, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have received two postcards from you. It would be better to put all the letters in one envelope; that way you can save money. I note what you say about Balkrishna. I do not like it. There is some mistake somewhere. But my duty is not to give too much thought to it from here. I shall probably be reaching there after the 15th. But it can also be earlier.

I understand about you. My going to Sevagram has been postponed a little. Does it make any difference?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4575

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

333. LETTER TO MAHESH DUTT MISHRA

SIMLA,
July 1, 1945

CHI. MAHESH,

I have your letter. Now I am stuck here. Maybe, I shall not be able to leave before the 15th of July. Hope you are well. Meet me somewhere on the way if you can, otherwise at Sevagram.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MAHESH DUTT
HARDA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

334. DRAFT OF REVISED PHOENIX TRUST-DEED

SIMLA,
July 2, 1945

In or about the year 1902, I, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, then of Johannesburg, Attorney, bought a piece of property about 100 acres in two lots, popularly known as the Phoenix Settlement, for benevolent purposes. Not wishing to have anything in my name as sole owner, I converted it into a trust and had it duly registered at Pietermaritzburg, Natal.[1]

All the trustees, except Lewis Walter Ritch of Johannesburg, Attorney, and I as settlers' trustee, have died.

The settlers under the Trust have all retired from the Phoenix Settlement. My son, Manilal Gandhi, together with his wife, Sushilabehn Gandhi, and their children have lived on the Settlement and managed the property and the weekly newspaper *Indian Opinion,* founded by me.

Now it is my intention to broaden the Trust and appoint new trustees. Therefore the conditions of the present Trust shall be:

1. As long as possible to conduct the newspaper, *Indian Opinion,* in English and Gujarati and other Indian and even African

[1] *Vide* "Letter to A.E. Chotabhai", 4-5-1911 and "The Phoenix Trust Deed", 14-9-1912.

languages according to felt necessity and convenience including resources but never at a loss. Any profits made from the newspaper after the deduction of running expenses shall be returned to the Settlement.

2. The Press Department may undertake job work and the sale of literature approved by the Trust in the interest of and healthy instructions of the public.

3. The Trust may found a public library and school, subject to rules made by the trustees and built from donations given by the public. These shall be named after my deceased wife, Kasturba.

4. The trustees may also found nature cure establishments and undertake all activities that may educate Indians morally, socially, economically and hygienically.

5. All decisions of the trustees shall be by majority.

For the purposes aforesaid I appoint the following trustees during life or at my discretion:

(i) The said Lewis Walter Ritch,

(ii) Manilal Mohandas Gandhi,

(iii) Parsi Jalbhai Rustomji,

(iv) Surendrarai Medh, [and a]

(v) [A] Muslim.

The said Manilal Gandhi shall be the Managing Trustee and, while he is manager of the Trust and editor of *Indian Opinion,* shall draw not more than one hundred pounds per month with free lodging on the Settlement for himself, his wife and children. The said Manilal Gandhi shall maintain proper books of account for the management of the Trust property and the newspaper, *Indian Opinion.* Separate accounts shall be maintained in respect of *Indian Opinion* and the management of the Trust property. The said accounts shall be audited every six months.

In the event of any of the trustees being dead, resigning or being displaced by me, the remaining trustees may appoint another instead, my consent being considered necessary during my life.

WITNESS :

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

335. TELEGRAM TO N. B. PARULEKAR

Express SIMLA,
July 2, 1945

PARULEKAR
EDITOR, "SAKAL"
POONA

PLEASE TELL RAMBHAU FASTING UNNECESSARY. TIME HEALTH PERMITTING WOULD LIKE STUDY CASE AND GUIDE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

336. LETTER TO REV. FOSS WESTCOTT[1]

''MANOR VILLE', SIMLA WEST,
July 2, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

Early this morning after prayer I think of you and your impending retirement and your reported determination to pass the rest of your days in India. Does it not mean an extended scope of service unconditioned by cares and limitations of office? May you live long for the sake of the higher task.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[P.S.]

I hope your successor will prove worthy of you. My love to him.

M. K. GANDHI

METROPOLITAN
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Bishop of Calcutta and Metropolitan of India, Burma and Ceylon

337. LETTER TO NARENDRA DEV

'MANOR VILLE', SIMLA (WEST),
July 2, 1945

BHAI NARENDRA DEV,

I am able to write to you only today after the morning prayer while I observe silence. Is your health better now If you need rest, Sevagram is at your disposal. When you have the leisure, write to me your views.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

338. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

''MANOR VILLE', SIMLA WEST,
July 2, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I have sat down to write love letters immediately after the prayer today. The first I wrote to Bishop Westcott, the second to the ailing Narendra Dev and this third I am writing to you. Doesn't the ˜æè look like Öè ? Can a pot have its neck reshaped after it is baked? But I wonder whether this saying can be applied to a living pot. It must of course have been first used by a wiseacre for an old man. So much for joking, though not quite without meaning.

Though I am engaged here in an important work, all the same the mind is filled with supreme peace. My window opens on the Himalayas. As soon as it was known that I would have to stay here for fifteen days, the mind turned to this spectacle. Since the house was built for men accustomed to sitting in chairs, one can see nothing if one squats on the floor. I, therefore, became shameless and seated myself on a bench. Now the eyes are stuck on the scene, so is the mind. Even while lying on the bench I can see something of the spectacle. On a clear day, the hills are covered with snow. For a spectacle better than this, one must go to Shivji's Kailas!

My Kailas, however, is Sevagram. The life-giving waters of my Ganga flow from there. Narahari and you, therefore, should devote

your spare time to removing the deficiencies of the place. I have said as much as I could in my letter to Narahari. I hope he has filled in the rest.

Are Gomati and you as you were before? Do you have faith in the *Ishopanishad*, and aspire to live up to 125 for the sake of service? And if you do, are you ready to fulfil the conditions for that?

As for the developments here, newspapers have given fairly detailed reports.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5885. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

339. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

[*July 2, 1945*][1]

The Working Committee is to meet here tomorrow. If Shummy is disturbed, I could easily transfer it elsewhere. It is to meet here for my sake. I do not need it here. Don't be weak and have it here. This is not your sole house and Shummy is ill. Think well and clearly before replying. The meeting means a lot as you know.

Sardar cannot eat at night. Nothing need be kept for him except hot milk and hot water. Probably Devdas will get into telephonic touch with him. He has undertaken to look after the three women and Sardar's movement till his arrival here.

From the original: C.W. 4160. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7795

[1] From the reference to the Working Committee which met on July 3. The note is writ en on the reverse side of a telegram received by Gandhiji on July 1, 1945, at Simla.

340. LETTER TO SATYAVATI

'MANOR VILLE', SIMLA,
July 2, 1945

CHI. SATYAVATI,

Is your health improving? Or was the improvement only momentary? Now Khurshed is with you, Prabha is with you. If human love can keep you alive you are bound to live. God knows best. We are getting on. The 'Jewel of India'[1] arrived yesterday. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

341. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, SIMLA

July 2, 1945

Mahatma Gandhi drew the attention of the people to the new rule of the A. I. S. A. according to which payment for khadi had to be made partly in yarn. This rule had come into force from the first of July in Simla. People had said to him that Simla Khadi Bhandar sold khadi to all sorts of people who came up for short or long visits. Most of them could not spin and the sales of the Bhandar would go down if part payment of the price of khadi in yarn was insisted upon. He did not mind such a result, untoward though it would be.

There was a time, Gandhiji said, when they aimed at promoting the sale of khadi to help the poor to supplement their income. But deep thought, especially during his recent incarceration, had convinced him that if khadi was to serve as a means of bringing swaraj, its scope and meaning had to be extended. He could not keep a mighty organization like the A. I. S. A. merely for producing and selling khadi for the sake of providing economic relief. Any other occupation could be utilized for that purpose. If khadi was to bring swaraj through non-violence, millions had to spin with the full consciousness of its implication in terms of ahimsa and independence. The A. I. S. A. had started by asking for yarn worth only two pice for every rupee worth of khadi sold. If he could carry conviction, he would insist upon the full payment being made in yarn. If they loved freedom, they should not find it burdensome to do that much—those who did not wish to be free had no business to

[1] The reference is to Jawaharlal Nehru; *'jawahar'*, literally, means jewel.

come to the prayers. A man of prayer could never accept slavery as his lot.

If all had taken to spinning in the way he wanted it, Gandhiji said, they would have had swaraj without any further effort. He would not have had to come up to Simla. But society was made of all kinds of people. Therefore he had to come in common with others for the conference to see whether it was possible through the conference [to find a] way to further the progress towards independence.

As for the yarn to be given in exchange for khadi it should be either spun by the individual concerned or by members of his family. The farthest the A. I. S. A. could go was to let them take yarn spun by their servants whom they should treat as members of the family. Yarn bought from the black market could not serve the purpose in view. Also, if Bhandars began to sell yarn to prospective purchasers of khadi, that would defeat the very purpose for which the new rule was being enforced.

The Hindu, 4-7-1945

342. LETTER TO LORD SAMUEL

[After *July 2, 1945*][1]

DEAR LORD SAMUEL[2],

I have your letter of 2nd July. I am sorry that you are still unconvinced. The ground of your objections seems to be that whilst the Congress may sincerely wish to embrace all parties and is trying to do so, it has not yet been able to achieve it and that its ultimate achievement is problematical, while the taking of the delivery is to be immediate and certain. This objection again overlooks the very relevant fact to which I have twice drawn your attention, namely, that the Congress through its president has invited the Government to transfer full power to the League and ask it to form a truly national government, in which it would have the loyal co-operation of the Congress. This offer was reiterated at Simla. But I am sorry to have to say it was again turned down.

I still adhere to my statement that "there cannot be Swaraj without an understanding with the Muslims." My contention is and has been that the presence of the third party is the greatest stumbling-block in the way of this understanding. So long as one community in the country enjoys the power of vetoing all political progress there can be no reasonable settlement. In India this anomalous power is

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter dated July 2, 1945.

[2] Herbert Louis Samuel, Liberal leader

assured to the League by the British Government which supererogates to itself the right of arbitrating and holding the balance of power between the various communities. In the absence of an agreed solution, a just solution through impartial arbitration is held to be the only feasible alternative in civilized society, but in India the absence of an agreed solution is strangely held to be a justification for retention of power by an alien Government over a nation of 400 millions ! 'Quit India' can be the only reply to such a claim. It seemsstrange that you should see in this cry a manifestation of totalitarian spirit instead of the anguished despair of an enslaved people to be free from totalitarian foreign rule which has in the past demonstrably sabotaged all their efforts to achieve unity in order to be free and spurned their united and unanimous demands for political advance.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

343. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SIMLA
July 3, 1945

BAPA,

I have your two letters before me—that of 28th and 29th.

You may call meetings of Harijan Sevak Sangh and the Executive Committee of the Kasturba Trust in August as you suggest. Leave out Mondays.

I approve the sum of Rs.975 to meet the expenses of Mridulabehn's office for three months,

Yours,
BAPU

SECRETARY,
KASTURBA SMARAK NIDHI
BAJAJWADI, WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

344. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SIMLA,
July 3, 1945

BAPA,

I got up at three today. The reply[1] in Hindi to your two Hindi letters I am sending to Wardha. I have gone through your latest about Sailen. You may gladly give him Rs. 175 per month. I had considered everything. However, I consider your calculations right. If he recovers at Malad[2], there will be no difficulty. I do not like two boys having been ill there. Is Sheth Jugalkishore any better now? And what about the social worker, Satyavati?

You must not fall ill.

BAPU

SHRI THAKKAR BAPA
HARIJAN NIVAS
KINGSWAY [CAMP], DELHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

345. LETTER TO GOKULCHAND NARANG

SIMLA,
July 3, 1945

BHAI GOKULCHANDJI[3],

I have your letter of June 29,1945. It is so full of rage that you could have written it only in English. If Rajkumari wrote in English, she made a great mistake. But what could the poor woman do? Her education began with English. The ideas were mine.

You and I have different views regarding victory and defeat, justice and injustice. But what is the harm? A tree is known from its fruit. Let us see what happens.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI GOKULCHAND NARANG
SAVOY HOTEL
MUSSOORIE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] At the Nature Cure Clinic of Krishnavarma

[3] Leading barrister of Lahore; Minister, Local Self-Government, Punjab; President, Hindu Mahasabha; pioneered industrial development in the Punjab

346. LETTER TO RAGHUVIR

SIMLA,
July 3, 1945

BHAI RAGHUVIR,

I have your letter. Thanks. It is not Hindi Prachar; it is Hindustani Bhasha Prachar Sangh. Are not Dr. Tarachand, Dr. Hasan and others philologists? But if you can help me, in any way, I want your help. I am taking your dictionary with me. I like it.

Please let me know in what way you will be able to help.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. RAGHUVIR
SARASWATI VIHAR, LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi Pyarelal Papers C courtesy: Pyarelal

347. LETTER TO SHANTA

SIMLA
July 3, 1945

CHI. SHANTA,

I got the couple of words you wrote. Keep on moving forward. Let us see when we can meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

348. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM,[1]
July 4, 1945

CHI. LILI,

You are wicked. Why should I write to you when I am busy? Does it mean that I think of you only when I write to you?

I am glad that the boy has recovered.

It would be surprising if Lakshmidas fixed the marriage to suit your convenience. You should go to Nagpur, though it would be

[1] Permanent address

better if you could avoid it. See that you pass[1]. Take care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9602. Also C.W. 6574. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

349. LETTER TO CHUNILAL V. MEHTA

SIMLA
July 4, 1945

BHAI CHUNILAL,

You have lost a brother who was a true brother. I had no idea that Sir Mangaldas was your brother. He was a great help to me as a member of the vaidyas' advisory committee. What shall I do now? Whose loss is greater? Yours or mine? Or of neither?

Blessings from

BAPU

SIR CHUNILAL V. MEHTA
RIDGE ROAD
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

350. LETTER TO KANAIYALAL N. DESAI

SIMLA
July 4, 1945

BHAI KANJIBHAI,

So you lost your long-ailing daughter-in-law. She was bound to go. In my view it is good that she herself has been freed from the suffering and has relieved those who looked after her.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KANAIYALAL NANUBHAI DESAI
GOPIPURA
SURAT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee was studying medicine.

351. NOTE TO KAMALADEVI CHATTOPADHYAYA

[After *July 4, 1945*][1]

If I went to a village as a worker I would expect the villagers to fund my expenses and I would make it worth their while to do so. I began life thus.

From the original: Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

352. NOTE TO KAMALADEVI CHATTOPADHYAYA

[After *July 4, 1945*]

If the trustees are worthy of their trust that should be the basis. In fact it is. As Chairman I am conducting the trust in that fashion.

From the original: Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

353. LETTER TO CARL HEATH

AS AT SEVAGRAM,
CAMP: "MANOR VILLE",
SIMLA WEST,
July 5, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

Gandhiji has your letter of 21st June.

He is too busy with the Conference work to be able to write to you himself. He desires me to thank you for your kind message.[1] He appreciates and fully reciprocates the spirit behind it. He is bending all his energy to end the deadlock and you may rest assured that if the offer is cent per cent sincere it will be all well in the end.

Thanking you once again.

Yours sincerely,
PYARELAL

CARL HEATH, ESQ.
57 MANOR WAY
GUILDFORD, SURREY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.
Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] This note and the one following are scribbled on used envelopes postmarked July 4, 1945.

[1] The addressee had, on behalf of the India Conciliation Group, expressed the hope "that you will all seek . . . a just co-operation in this new effort at Simla."

354. A NOTE

[After *July 5, 1945*][1]

Though herself a vegetarian, she[2] did not insist on it for others. Prayers she lived in and for. Therefore if I was a woman worker I would conduct[3] prayers for all religious-minded people and for all religions. Neither Christians nor Muslims nor others would be excluded.

From the original: Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

355. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO KAMALADEVI CHATTOPADHYAYA

[After *July 5, 1945*][4]

Different values undoubtedly. The way of life which Ba stood for is the way workers would live and thus present it to village women. I have imposed silence on myself today. I hope you do not mind it. But ask questions and I would answer.

From the original: Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The first part of this is scribbled on a used envelope postmarked July 5, 1945.

[2] Presumably, Kasturba Gandhi

[3] What follows is continued on a separate bit of a used envelope.

[4] Scribbled on a used envelope postmarked July 5, 1945.

356. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

July 6, 1945

CHI. VANU (OR VANUDI ?),

Whatever you please. As you are there I will expect you to make Manudi as cheerful and witty as you are. See that both of you return[1] completely cured of all your complaints. You are not to be idle there. A worker learns wherever she is. And there are lots of things to be learnt at that place. You should not, therefore, feel unhappy at having to stay there. This letter is meant for both of you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5793. Also C.W. 3016. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

357. TELEGRAM TO KRISHNAVARMA

Express SIMLA

July 7, 1945

DR. KRISHNAVARMA
NATURE CURE HOSPITAL
MALAD (BOMBAY)

SAILEN SHOULD ASK FOR EXTENSION LEAVE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] From the Nature Cure Clinic of Dinshaw Mehta

358. LETTER TO KARLIN CAPPER-JOHNSON

CAMP: "MANOR VILLE",
SIMLA WEST,
July 7, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

Gandhiji desires me to thank you for your letter of 18th June and the cable sent by you recently on the eve of the Wavell Conference.

Yours sincerely,
PYARELAL

KARLIN CAPPER-JOHNSON, ESQ.
FRIENDS PEACE COMMITTEE
FRIENDS HOUSE
EUSTON ROAD
LONDON, N. W. I

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

359. LETTER TO A. R. TIJARAYE

SEVAGRAM,
July 7, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter of 22nd inst. to Gandhiji.

He notes what you say with regard to the Forward Bloc political prisoners in C. P. The question of the release of all the political prisoners is fully in his mind and he is tackling it in the way he knows.

Yours sincerely,
PYARELAL

SHRI A. R. TIJARAYE
TILAK VIDYALAYA
VILLAGE UPLIFT CENTRE
KOLAPARDI, POST MADAMENDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

360. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SIMLA
July 7, 1945

CHI. KANTI,

You have my blessings for the spinning programme under the auspices of the Gandhi Seva Sangh. And why not? This is pure work for India's independence. Let the Sangh be associated with the great programrne of Chi. Narandas. It will be good if everyone who spins also prepares his own slivers.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 7375. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

361. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

'MANOR VILLE', SIMLA,
July 7, 1945

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter last evening. It is extremely difficult for anybody to get a letter from me in the expected time. I could read your letter only this morning after the prayer. You should know that I have lost the strength to work day and night.

What you are doing is excellent. You are running a household while studying, and are fulfilling your social obligations. It makes me happy that both of you show so much devotion to your father and you engage yourself in pure service of the country. But see that you do not become impatient and harm your health. Do not overtax yourself. Cultivate non-attachment.

Even if you cannot write, Saraswati should.

It is a great thing that Harilal has stayed on. If he stays there, he will be saved. Does he keep good health?

The Hindi letter[1] which you had asked for is enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7374. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

362. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

SIMLA
July 7, 1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I have your letter of the 2nd. Dharmadev Shastri is here. If Bapa approves of his scheme, I too shall.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SHYAMLALJI
KASTURBA SMARAK NIDHI
CENTRAL OFFICE, BAJAJWADI, WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

363. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

''MANOR VILLE', SIMLA WEST,
July 8, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

The Congress list for the proposed Executive was sent to you yesterday by the President.

1. In spite of my earnest protest, the parity was preserved. I was sorry. This does not mean any change on my part. I am more than ever convinced that the non-Schedule Hindu members should have been less than the Muslims.

2. You will observe in the list the nomination of the President of the Hindu Mahasabha. I think this was necessary and graceful. If you accept the Congress list, may I suggest your inviting Dr. Shyamaprasad Mukerji before the meeting of the 14th instant ?

3. Dr. Rajendra Prasad tells me that the hanging of Shri Mahendra Chowdhury is about to take place on or any day after 12th instant. He is an inmate of Bhagalpur Central Jail, Bihar.

I take it that you will order commutation of sentence or stay till the proposed Executive is able to deal with it.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI,

H. E. THE VICEROY
SIMLA

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47 p. 28

[1] The Viceroy, replying on July 9, said that the execution had been postponed so that Mahendra Chowdhury's appeal might be considered. The appeal was, however, rejected by the Privy Council. *Vide* also "Letter to Lord Wavell", 15-7-1945.

364. LETTER TO DHARMADEV SHASTRI

SIMLA
July 8, 1945

BHAI DHARMADEV SHASTRI

You enter your fourth year[1] on the 10th. You are serving the hill tribes among whom very few workers work. I like that. May your work progress steadily.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI DHARMADEV SHASTRI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

365. NOTE TO CHANDRANI[2]

[*July 8, 1945*][3]

Blessing from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi. Chandrani Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

366. NOTE TO MAURICE FRYDMAN[4]

SIMLA WEST,
July 9, 1945

You can stay at Adyar as long as you like.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI BHARATANANDJI (MAURICE FRYDMAN)
THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
ADYAR
MADRAS

From a photostat: G.N. 44

[1] The reference is to the Ashok Ashram founded by the addressee in July 1942; *vide* footnote 1, "Letter to Dharmadev Shastri", 31-5-1945.

[2] The note was appended to a letter dated July 8, 1945, from Dr. Sushila Nayyar to the addressee. *Vide* also "Letter to Chandrani", 28-6-1945.

[3] *ibid*

[4] The note was appended to a letter from Dr. Sushila Nayyar to the addressee.

367. LETTER TO SURESH CHANDRA DAS

SIMLA,
July 9, 1945

DEAR SURESH,

You should not believe Press reports. There was no question of anger; it was one of necessity. But I have been angry and made myself an ass. So you see on what a broken reed you rely!

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SURESH CHANDRA DAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

368. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

'MANOR VILLE', SIMLA WEST,
July 9, 1945

CHI. NARAHARI,

It is not impossible for you to be able to manage the Ashram. Only, you should feel interested in the work and have confidence in yourself. There are plenty of other things I can write about, but where is the time? Today is a silence day and the Committee[1] is not meeting where I am staying.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9134

369. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

July 9, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your letter.

It is quite all right that Kanchan has gone to Vyara. She may go wherever she likes, we only wish that she should get perfectly well.

I am writing this just by the way. Remain calm. I do hope that I

[1] Congress Working Committee

will reach there soon. You and everybody else should speak only when absolutely necessary for work. Never enter into an argument.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8441. Also C.W. 5588. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

370. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

'MANOR VILLE', SIMLA WEST,
July 9, 1945[1]

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter. You should never give up weaving. Master all the activities relating to cotton. I note what you say about the Khadi Vidyalaya. You have to be prepared to accept whatever services you can easily get. Balkrishna must get well. Is he now anxious to go to Poona[2] not because I say so, but of his own free will?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4517

371. LETTER TO DR. B. S. MOONJE

SIMLA WEST,
July 9, 1945

DEAR DOCTOR SAHEB,

I had your telegram. And now I have your letter. I have seen in my experience of sixty years that those who have listened to me have never committed suicide.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. B. S. MOONJE.
BHONSLE MILITARY SCHOOL
NASIK

From the Hindi original: C.W. 9762. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The date-line is in Gujarati.
[2] To the Nature Cure Clinic of Dinshaw Mehta

372. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA AND HOSHIARI

SIMLA,
July 9, 1945

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter. I had a talk with Mirabehn. She is still here. If you are still in the Ashram, then do not leave before I come. We shall see after I arrive there.

CHI. HOSHIARI,

I am so much engrossed in work that I hardly get any time. Now I hope to reach the Ashram soon. Everything is in God's hands.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

373. LETTER TO A. KALESHWARA RAO

July 9,1945

BHAI KALESHWARA RAO[1],

I am of the view that the exhibition of village industries you are organizing is a work of true swaraj.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI KALESHWARA RAO
BEZWADA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

374. LETTER TO PRABHU DUTT SHASTRI

July 9,1945

BHAI PRABHUDUTT SHASTRI,

I have your letter. If you want to take the trouble of coming here, then do come. I shall spare a few minutes for you. I get very little time from work. I can spare no time at all till 1.30 p. m.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI PRABHUDUTT SHASTRI
LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Member, Madras Legislative Assembly

375. LETTER TO RAMESHCHANDRA

SIMLA,
July 9, 1945

BHAI RAMESHCHANDRA,

I have your letter on behalf of the students. Those who take up work of service do not need other people's blessings. However, my blessings are with you in your efforts.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

376. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

SIMLA,
July 9, 1945

CHI. RADHAKISAN[1],

am not enthused by your or anyone else's release. How is Ramakrishna[2]? Write to me in detail. I know your release has made some people happy.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

377. LETTER TO OM PRAKASH GUPTA

SIMLA,
July 9, 1945

CHI. OM PRAKASH,

I hear that you are again depressed. Only he is a man who adjusts himself to changing situations and remains uninvolved and detached. I do not know when God will take me to the Ashram. I hope of course that I shall be coming soon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Nephew and younger son of Jamnalal Bajaj
[2] *ibid*

378. TELEGRAM TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

SIMLA,
July 10, 1945

KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ
CARE SHREE
BOMBAY

GLAD ABOUT RAMAKRISHNA.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 294

379. LETTER TO JANAKI DEVI BAJAJ

SIMLA,
July 10, 1945

CHI. JANAKI MAIYA,

Now Ramakrishna has been released, and Radhakrishna too. Are you and grandmother happy now? I will see now how you attend to the *go-seva* work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3034

380. LETTER TO RAMAKRISHNA BAJAJ

SIMLA,
July 10, 1945

CHI. RAMAKRISHNA,

I do not rejoice when anybody is released. But I did on your release. For you it has been nothing but a gain. Jail has benefited you the most. Outside you could hardly have done the reading that you did in jail.[1] My joy is on account of Janakibehn and your grandmother who were pining for you and Radhakrishna. Write to me and give me all details in a clear hand.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3066

[1] The addressee was learning Sanskrit from Vinoba Bhave who was also detained in Nagpur jail.

381. LETTER TO BHULABHAI DESAI

"MANOR VILLE",
SIMLA,
July 10, 1945

BHAI BHULABHAI,

You had said you would be seeing Dr. Khan Saheb and you would then tell me how wrong he was in what he had said about your drinking. According to the Doctor you had not seen him till the day before yesterday. He himself tried to meet you but he could not find you.

A lady who heard about this said: "I am a witness to the fact that Bhulabhai drinks and associates with undesirable women. His drinking and going around in the company of undersirable women is known all over Simla."

Even if this is true, you can still stand on the Congress ticket. I was further told that at the meeting held at Maulana Saheb's residence you had crossed the limit of decency while presenting your case.

Even with regard to money, what you told me does not appear to be correct. Even in writing this, my intention is to do good to you and the Congress. If you cannot cleanse yourself, you must consider all your talents as of no account.

Blessing from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

382. LETTER TO MADALSA AGRAWAL

SIMLA WEST,
July 10, 1945

CHI. MADALSA,

How are you? Why don't you write to me? No matter how I was occupied otherwise, I would certainly read a letter from you. Has Om[1] gone to Mussoorie?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchaven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 325

383. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI[2]

July 10, 1945

Blessings from Bapu.

I hope you are all right. You will have gained strength.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

384. TELEGRAM TO D. B. KALELKAR

SIMLA,
July 11, 1945

KAKA KALELKAR
'BHARATI BHAWAN'
WARDHA

RECEIVED WIRE. HOPE BOTH WELL.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Uma Agrawal, addressee's younger sister

[2] The note was appended to a letter from Dr. Sushila Nayyar to the addressee.

385. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SIMLA,
July 11, 1945

CHI. KAKA,

It was good you sent the wire.

I hope you are keeping good health. You have with you the work about Hindustani. I attended to it as best I could, with the utmost difficulty. But you are the expert.

Take care of your health in everything you do.

Bal[1] is expected now.

Sardar is with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10963

386. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

SIMLA,
July 11, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

As is your habit you have made your reply long. I accept your interpretation. It seems to me you have to aspire after life rather than duty. However, I do believe that there is a limit to it. But we shall discuss it at leisure.

I believe that the two of you are not living a useless life.

I understand about your letter. I shall see what I can do. Now the time is up and I want to write a little more. Kaka must have met Vinoba.

I like your Kailas.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's son

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Kishorelal G. Mashruwala", 2-7-1945.

387. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SIMLA,
July 11, 1945

CHI. MRIDU,

I have your letter. We shall discuss everything when we meet at Sevagram, and get things cleared. You, Bapa and I shall sit together.

A person's originality or creative faculties should never die. However, my experience is that one who has the zeal can cultivate them in whatever situation he or she may be.

What shall we do if you get tired? But, if you really do, you must take some rest.

I wish to leave here on the 15th and go straight to Sevagram. However, you, me and everyone else are in the hands of the Almighty. We are relieved of all burdens if we surrender even our wishes to Him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

388. LETTER TO VINOBA BHAVE

SIMLA,
July 11, 1945

CHI. VINOBA,

Kaka sent me a telegram about your release. Hope you are well. The work for you is ready. Baba[1] and Gokhale are also in it. Do what you feel is right.

May leave here on the 15th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Mahadeo Moghe

389. LETTER TO RAGHUVIR

SIMLA,
July 11, 1945

BHAI RAGHUVIR,

I have your letter. It will be good if you can come to Simla right away. It is likely that I shall leave Simla on the 15th. So, if you have to come, come soon. In Case you come I take it that you will make your own arrangements for stay.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI RAGHUVIR
THE INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF INDIAN CULTURE
SARASWATI VIHAR
LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

390. LETTER TO S. K. PATIL

SIMLA,
July 11, 1945

BHAI PATIL,

I have your letter. What message can I send about Sir Pherozeshah Mehta[1] that can be published? Where is the time? Bharucha wrote to me in this connection. I gave him a similar reply. You should forget me for such things. For the rest, I know the virtues of Sir Pherozeshah Mehta and the services he had rendered, and I am his ardent admirer.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI S . K. PATIL
HEERA HOUSE
381 SANDHURST ROAD
BOMBAY-4

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] 1845-1915; one of the founders of Indian National Congress. The message was, presumably, for his birth centenary.

391. LETTER TO SATYAVATI

SIMLA,
July 11, 1945

CHI. SATYAVATI,

I have your letter. Neither the country nor the body are saved by taking the name of the country. Uttering the name of Rama—not mechanically, but from the heart—saves both the country and the body, if indeed this kind of work has use for the body. Khurshedbehn and Prabhavati are here.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SATYAVATIDEVI
TUBERCULOSIS HOSPITAL
KINGSWAY [CAMP], DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

392. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

SIMLA,
July 11, 1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I have your letter of the 6th. I have already sent my consent for Dharmadev Shastri's scheme.[1] I have more information about Prof. Jagadisan[2] than Bapa has. Much depends on a person's goodness, experience and skill. Therefore, if Bapa approves and if I have the power, I agree to the doctor being retained on Rs. 125 or Rs. 150, and to the selection of the members of the committee.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SHYAMLALJI
KASTURBA SMARAK NIDHI
BAJAJWADI, WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dharmadev Shastri", 8-7-1945.

[2] T. N. Jagadisan, who was supervising the leprosy work of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust

393. TELEGRAM TO MOHAMMAD HAMIDULLAH KHAN

Express SIMLA,
July 12, 1945

H. H. OF BHOPAL
BHOPAL

DETAINING SHWAIB.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

394. TELEGRAM TO T. PRAKASAM

Express SIMLA,
July 12, 1945

T. PRAKASAM[1]
MADRAS

HOPE YOU WELL. MEET ME SEVAGRAM IF YOU MUST. HOPE LEAVE HERE SUNDAY.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

395. LETTER TO ANANTRAI P. PATTANI

SIMLA,
July 12, 1945

BHAI ANANTRAI,

I have received your letter along with that of Narahari. I am doing the needful.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI ANANTRAI PATTANI
DIWAN SAHEB
BHAVNAGAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Congress leader known as "Lion of Andhra"; Chief Minister of composite Madras State; first Chief Minister of Andhra State

396. LETTER TO NRISINHAPRASAD K. BHATT

SIMLA,
July 12, 1945

CHI. NANABHAI,

I am sending herewith a copy of a letter addressed to Narahari. Now, if you can send me the names, I shall consider them inconsultation with Bapa and then send them on to you. Write to me at Sevagram. I hope to leave on the 15th.

More later.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

SHRI NANABHAI BHATT
DAKSHINAMURTI
AMBLA (BHAVNAGAR STATE)

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

397. LETTER TO ANANTRAM

SIMLA,
July 12, 1945

CHI. ANANTRAM,

I have your letter. I assume that you are getting on well. If you keep your word, you will get on still better.

I hope we shall meet soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

398. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, SIMLA[1]

July 12, 1945

Mahatma Gandhi referred to the serious inconvenience experienced by his host due to unruly crowds. Some of them had invaded the house opposite to 'Manor Ville', which belonged to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur's brother and had smashed flower-pots and damaged the railing of the verandah. When checked by the Rani Saheba they had been rude to her. All this hurt him deeply. He would have liked to run away. But after all, wherever he went the crowds would go with him. He could not run away from them. He was their servant and he lived to serve them.

Some came to the prayers, Gandhiji said, simply to have his *darshan.* He had told them often enough that he was not a mahatma. He was just one of them, an ordinary human being. He must, however, confess that he called the name of God with every breath of his life and in everything that he did he proceeded with God as hiswitness. But that should not make him a mahatma. Every human being should act as he claimed he did. That was what distinguished man from beast. Those who came to the prayers should at least have decent manners. Even the soldiers in arms observed discipline and behaved in an orderly fashion. These who came to pray should have better manners, not worse. The object of coming to prayers was to praise God and for doing that, purity of thought was a necessary pre-requisite. If they could not control their minds, they should pray to God that he should enable them to have pure thoughts at least during prayers. Gradually and with practice they would be able to control them at all times.

The Hindu, 14-7-1945

399. TELEGRAM TO BALVANTSINHA

Express SIMLA,
July 13, 1945

BALVANTSINHA
SAMARPUR
KHURJA (BULANDSHAHR)

CHILDREN SHOULD JOIN DELHI SEVENTEENTH.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Gandhiji spoke in Hindustani.

400. TELEGRAM TO SATYAN

SIMLA,
July 14, 1945

SATYANJI
PRAKRITI ASHRAM
BHIMAVARAM

SORRY ABOUT GOKHALEJI. WRITE ME SEVAGRAM FULL PARTICULARS BY DOCTOR RAJU[1].

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

401. TELEGRAM TO SHAUKATULLAH ANSARI

SIMLA,
July 14, 1945

DOCTOR SHAUKATULLAH ANSARI
RAJPUR ROAD
DELHI

GOD GIVE YOU ZOHRA[2] COURAGE BEAR LOSS.[3] LOVE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Krishna Raju
[2] Addressee's wife
[3] The reference is to the death of the addressee's son.

402. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SIMLA,
July 14, 1945

CHI. BAPA,

I have your letter. I hope to meet you on the 17th. I shall be able to stay in Delhi only for a few hours. I have not met Bhulabhai about the register. I will tell you the reason when we meet. I do not have the time to write more.

BAPU

SHRI BAPA
'HARIJAN NIVAS'
KINGSWAY [CAMP]
DELHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1195

403. LETTER TO SAMPURNANAND

SIMLA,
July 14, 1945

BHAI SAMPURNANAND,

I have your letter. You have not given enough thought to the matter. If khadi workers are pure, khadi work will not become static. Today we have very little khadi. Make a thorough study of the theory and practice of khadi.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SAMPURNANAND
JALPADEVI
KASHI
BANARAS

From the Hindi original: Sampurnanand Collection. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

404. INTERVIEW TO SAILENDRA NATH CHATTOPADHYAYA[1]

[On or before *July 15, 1945*][2]

Prayer is even more essential for the well-being of the soul than is food for the maintenance of the body. It becomes necessary to give up food on occasions in order to benefit the body. But prayer may never be abandoned. If we provide food for the body which is perishable, then, surely, it is our primary duty to provide food for the soul which is imperishable and such sustenance is found in prayer. The real meaning of prayer is devoted worship.

S. N. CHATTOPADHYAYA: Why do you never look at your face in a looking-glass ?

GANDHIJI: Since everyone who meets me sees my face, what need is there for me to employ a mirror?

Why do you not use a thick mattress?

I do all I can to merge myself into the poor millions of India.

Why do you always travel third class on the railway?

The answer to this is embodied in the above.

Why not take salt and spices with your food?

Why should I take anything which is not essential for my bodily needs?

The Hindu, 17-7-1945

405. TELEGRAM TO BALVANTSINHA

SIMLA,
July 15, 1945

BALVANTSINHA
SAMARPUR
KHURJA

JOIN AT NIZAMUDDIN OUR SPECIAL STARTING TWELVE NOON SEVENTEENTH.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Of the United Press of India who had asked Gandhiji "as to what he gained from his regular prayers and why he laid such stress on prayer".

[2] The report appeared under the date-line Simla, July 15".

406. TELEGRAM TO A. G. TENDULKAR

SIMLA,
July 15, 1945

A. G. TENDULKAR
BELGAUM

GLAD FOR INDU'S SAKE YOU CAN MEET ME SEVAGRAM AFTER TWENTIETH.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

407. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

'MANOR VILLE', SIMLA WEST,
July 15, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your note of the 14th instant. It gladdens me to think that you have appreciated my effort to advance the common cause. As you perhaps know, I have arranged to leave here tomorrow. A special from Kalka will carry me to Wardha by the kind courtesy of the authorities concerned. . .

It grieves me to think that the conference which began so happily and so hopefully should have ended in apparent failure—due exactly, as it would seem, to the same cause as before. This time you have taken the blame on your own shoulders.[1] But the world will think otherwise. India certainly does.

I must not hide from you the suspicion that the deeper cause is perhaps the reluctance of the official world to part with power, which the passing of the virtual control into the hands of their erstwhile prisoners would have meant.

Be that as it may, what a pity that the moral height which the British, if not even the Allied Powers, would have occupied by the success of the conference cannot be theirs, at any rate, for the time being.

I must not close this without a reminder about the Bihar case. Your passing remark that it was one of ordinary dacoity, calling for the heavy hand of law, disturbed me. This was not such

[1] The Viceroy had announced the failure of the conference at its final sitting on July 14.

dacoity. The young man who is under sentence of death is no professional dacoit. He is a misled Congressman under twenty-five years (I think.) with a young wife of twenty years. I do hope that all such death sentences will be commuted to life sentences. It seems tobe the least demand of humanity, if not also of high politics.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
SIMLA

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47 pp. 29-30

408. SPEECH READ OUT AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

SIMLA
July 15, 1945

Today is my last day here. Tomorrow I shall be leaving Simla. If you all patiently one after another want to give something for Harijans, I am here. Those who want my autograph will have it. It will be a test, how quiet you can be. I know that you have been kind to me. Now those who want to give may do so.

From a microfilm of the Hindi: M.M.U./24

[1] Replying on July 18, the Viceroy said: ''The case is a serious one of dacoity with murder in which Mahendra Chowdhury was found guilty by the Additional Sessions Judge of Monghyr on evidence which appears to me conclusive. The sentence of death . . . was confirmed by the High Court . . . Privy Council has rejected an application for special appeal. I cannot find anything. . . to suggest that Mahendra Chowdhury is a political offender . . . I have decided that the law must take its course."

[2] Gandhiji was observing silence.

409. LETTER TO SHANTA PATEL

July 16, 1945

CHI. SHANTA,

I got your letter yesterday. I am writing this after the morning prayer. Address your reply at Sevagram.

You have remained as crazy after becoming a communist and a mother as you were as a child.

Which Ashram has boycotted you? Where is the Ashram? Who has boycotted you? Many communists have stayed with me. In the same way you also can stay. You know that Jayanti[1] had stayed with me.

You should know that I have received many complaints, but I have not acted on any of them. I am in correspondence with the Secretary[2]. He had asked me for my permission to publish the letters and I have granted it. Whether he has published them or not I do not know.

The Working Committee[3] has taken no step. There has been no time to consider the matter.

If Jawaharlalji goes against them, all the communists will have to sit up and think. For he has a soft corner for the Party but he will not tolerate anything unworthy. I myself have not been able to come to a final decision. I have received quite a few complaints. I have sent them to the Head office.

You have written your letter without thinking. If you calm down and think before writing, you can help the communist cause.

You must learn to distinguish between communism and communists. Besides, Marx stands for one thing, Lenin for another and Stalin for a third. The followers of the last are again divided into two groups. Gandhi is one thing, Gandhism is another and Gandhi-ites are a third thing. There are always, and will remain, such differences. Immature people may identify themselves with one or the other group.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6639. Also C.W. 4287. Courtesy: Shanta Patel

[1] Jayanti Parekh

[2] P. C. Joshi *vide* "Letter to P.C. Joshi", 3-5-1945.

[3] The Congress Working Committee. It, however, at its meeting in September, appointed a sub-committee, consisting of Jawaharlal Nehru, G. B. Pant and Vallabhbhai Patel to go into the charges against the Congress members of the Communist Party.

410. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

SIMLA,
July 16, 1945

CHI. KANAIYO,

After the prayer I am writing a few letters. This is one of them. I do not want to do anything at this end for the present. We are getting ready to leave.

I have read all your letters. The last was that of yesterday. I notice that you wanted to join me on my tours. That was my wish too. But I had to forbear. As my stay was to be a prolonged one I did not call you. That would not have been proper. I had engaged you for a particular work. It seems you have not been very successful at it. You will tell me about it when we meet. If you have to go to Rajkot again, do go. But finish Narandas's work first. If there is anything you wish to say, it will be only after that and then I would like you to accompany me on my tour. Is it possible that the king[1] of the monkeys is not wanted? Convey my blessings to the sage and his wife.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KANU GANDHI
C/O SHANTI KUMAR
SCINDIA HOUSE
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

411. LETTER TO GOPE GURBUXANI

July 16, 1945

CHI. GURBUXANI,

I have had a talk with Rajkumari about you two. You should now speak to her. I do not like Vimala being so dumb. She neither says nor writes anything. I wonder if you are exercising any pressure on her. It should not be so. The path of truth should be followed not mecha-nically but with understanding. Only then can man make progress.

You must consciously try to limit your expenses.

Write to me at Sevagram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1317

[1] The allusion is to the legendary Hanuman known for his loyalty to Rama.

412. "A THOUGHT THE DAY"[1]

April 25, 1945

A man does not become a satyagrahi by styling himself as such. The observance of pure truth alone makes him a satyagrahi.

April 26, 1945

Is only that unclean which appears to the eye as unclean? If there is even a little dirt on what is white, we feel annoyed; but the black may have any amount of dirt on it and we care not at all!

April 27, 1945

We consider the black impure and the white pure. But black, in its natural setting, is as much a virtue; as white, out of place, is a vice.

April 28, 1945

How strange that one who claims not to fear death fears it the most, and seeks every means to avoid it!

April 29, 1945

A son's obeisance to his parents is undoubtedly a form of prayer. What homage, then, must we pay to Him who is the Eternal Father of us all? Prayer may not be interpreted here in a narrow sense.

April 30, 1945

"A Thought for Today,', published in today's *The Times of India,* appealed to me. Its purport is: "Believe in Truth, think Truth and live Truth. Howsoever triumphant untruth may seem to be, it can never prevail against Truth."

[1] Originally written in Hindi, these 'thoughts, were translated and published under this title by Anand T. Hingorani, who explains in the Preface that after the death of his wife, Vidya, on July 20, 1943, during his eight week stay in Sevagram from September 30, 1944, Gandhiji would greet him "every morning, after the prayer . . . speak words of sympathy and solace, and . . . write down something . . . to meditate upon. . . . From October 13, 1944, onwards he wrote continuously for a fortnight, and then off and on. . . ." Before leaving Sevagram for nature cure treatment at Bhimavaram, Hingorani had requested Gandhiji to write something for him daily, which Gandhiji began to do from November 20, 1944, *vide* In June 1946, when Hingorani sought Gandhiji's permission to publish the 'thoughts, in a book form, Gandhiji remarked: "What is there about them that you are so keen on publishing them? If, however, you wish to publish them, do so after my death. Such writings are generally never published during the lifetime of their authors. Who knows, I may not be able to live up to what I have written ! But if I live up to it till the last breath of my life, then alone will it be worthwhile to publish these thoughts." Gandhiji, however, discontinued the practice by the end of 1946, as he put it, "for the sake of my Noakhali mission, I renounced practically everything . . . gave up the Ashram, all my companions and even writing for the *Harijan. . . .*"

May 1, 1945

Where there is hypocrisy, even if there is something good along with it, do not go there even for the sake of picking up that good only. If you do, it could be co-operation with evil which must not be offered:

May 2, 1945

Just as we throw away milk if there is poison in it, so must we reject any good which has got the poison of hypocrisy mixed with it.

May 3, 1945

Says Confucius: "In a well-ordered State, progress is not measured in terms of wealth. The purity of the People and their leaders alone constitutes the true wealth of the nation."

May 4, 1945

Minds are of two kinds: one kind elevates, the other debases. Let us constantly reflect over this and learn to distinguish one from the other.

May 5, 1945

Just as only others can see a man's back while he himself cannot, we too cannot see our own errors.

May 6, 1945

Is not death, in every case, a release from too much suffering? If so, why lament when it comes?

May 7, 1945

Life is likened to a rose; because life, too, is full of thorns.

May 8, 1945

Verily, there should be only one fear—the fear of doing something mean or untrue.

May 9, 1945

Slipshod work is like half-baked bread, fit only to be thrown away.

May 10, 1945

Why is it that man is afraid of speaking and practising truth, not untruth?

May 11, 1945

There is an English saying, which is true, that "cowards die many times before their death". As I have often said, death really means deliverance from pain and suffering. Fear serves only to accentuate suffering and makes one's condition pitiable.

May 12, 1945

By whatever name God be called, if there be godly attributes, we must surely bow to Him.

May 13, 1945

Then, what should God be like? Passionless and Formless, He should be a repository of all attributes and yet be wholly without attributes. Why should God then be of masculine gender? This is purely a question of grammar. The God of our conception, being formless, is neither male nor female.

May 14, 1945

The breach of one rule inevitably leads to the breach of other rules.

May 15, 1945

To rejoice in happiness is to invite misery. Real happiness springs from sorrow and suffering.

May 16, 1945

Not contrived but genuine laughter is true eloquence, and more effective than speech.

May 17, 1945

The contentment that accrues to man as a result of leading a regular life, promotes his health and longevity.

May 18, 1945

Pride devours man completely. The truth of this can be realized by everyone every moment.

May 19, 1945

On the other hand, modesty and humility nourish man and make for his growth.

May 20, 1945

Every minute that runs to waste is irrecoverable. Yet, knowing this, how much time we waste!

May 21, 1945

A needless word is also a violation of truth. That is why the practice of truth becomes easier by observing silence.

May 22, 1945

Like a ship without direction or destination, labour without an ideal is fruitless.

May 23, 1945

The power by which a railway train moves, an aeroplane flies and man lives, is Divine Power, by whatsoever name one may call it.

The train is not moved by the steam engine; the aeroplane is not flown by the motor; nor does man live by the mere mechanical functioning of his heart.

May 24, 1945

"Sweet are the fruits of equanimity"—the truth of this is experienced every moment.

May 25, 1945

There is a vast difference between obstinacy and steadfastness. To seek to foist one's view on others is obstinacy; whereas steadfastness is that whereby we voluntarily impose something on ourselves and which results in bringing others round to the acceptance of our view of their own free will.

May 26, 1945

What should a man do when there is much work and little time to do it in? He should have patience, do what he believes is most useful and leave the rest to God. If God grants life, the arrear can be taken up some other day.

May 27, 1945

I took off my spectacles to wash my face. I had intended to pick them up later, but forgot to do so. Why? Because something else engrossed my attention and so I became negligent. This is called disorganization which is a dangerous thing.

May 28, 1945

A man is ashamed when he does something wrong. But when he does something good, he wishes to let it be known. Why?

May 29, 1945

Envy devours him who harbours it. He who is the object of envy remains unaffected, perhaps even unaware of it.

May 30, 1945

The opposite of envy is generosity. Generosity does not allow us to be envious of anyone. On the contrary, if we find virtue in anyone, we appreciate it and even profit by it.

May 31, 1945

Every moment I observe how man deceives himself.

June 1, 1945

He who wants to please all, will please none.

June 2, 1945

It is God that we have to please. If we praise, we should praise Him only. Then shall we become free of all worry and botheration.

June 3, 1945

How shall we please God, how praise Him? By serving His creature—man.

June 4, 1945

When, as a matter of habit, a man knows not what he speaks, it is high time that he got rid of that habit either by muffling his mouth or even by sealing his lips.

Jane 5, 1945

Desire is of various kinds—good, bad and feasible. The mind should harbour only that which is good and possible of realization.

June 6, 1945

Different people interpret the Shastras (religious scriptures) differently. The right course is to follow in practice that interpretation which appeals to us as basically sound even if it can be proved to be grammatically unsound, provided, however, that our interpretation is not opposed to morality and that it makes for self-restraint.

June 7, 1945

An untruthful person leaves many a loophole for himself. And when he escapes through one or the other, he thinks he is very clever! In fact, by doing so, he only digs pitfalls for himself.

June 8, 1945

A man of Truth, on the other hand, plugs all loopholes; or rather for him, it may be said, there is neither a wall nor any holes. He can walk even blindfold on the right path and never does he fall into a pit.

June 9, 1945

Non-attachment is difficult of attainment, as some say. So it is. But are not the things we need always difficult to obtain? It is only when we put in a sustained and determined effort that what is difficult becomes easy.

June 10, 1945

Drops make the ocean, the reason being that there is complete cohesion and co-operation among the drops. The same law applies to human beings.

June 11, 1945

To conceal ignorance is to increase it. An honest confession of it, however, gives ground for the hope that it will diminish.

June 12, 1945

What is learnt by rote is of as little value as the parrot's recitation of Ramanama.

June 13, 1945

If the foregoing is correct and borne out by experience, it follows that knowledge that sinks deep, and becomes part of one's being, is capable of transforming man, provided, however, that such knowledge is self-knowledge.

June 14, 1945

If a man does anything, and regrets it afterwards, it shows that he has not done it with due deliberation but under compulsion.

June 15, 1945

Non-attachment is put to real test only when there is full scope for our attachment to something.

June 16, 1945

It is man's habit to forget his own faults and see those of others. This naturally brings him disappointment in the end.

June 17, 1945

To have faith in God should be the easiest thing in the world, yet it appears to be the most difficult.

June 18, 1945

The root cause of most of our misunderstandings lies in distrust, and the root cause of this distrust lies most in fear.

June 19, 1945

The common saying goes that there can be no love without fear. But that is wrong. The fact is that where there is fear, there can be no true love.

June 20, 1945

Experience is daily growing upon me that everything is attainable through silence.

June 21, 1945

If we stopped talking about useless things and talked of things that matter in as few words as possible, much of our time as well as that of others could be saved.

June 22, 1945

It follows from the foregoing that we would be thereby adding that much time to our span of life.

June 23, 1945

The same thing when looked at from one angle makes us lose our temper, and when viewed from another makes us laugh. Will it not be better if we neither become angry nor laugh?

June 24, 1945

Daily we have testimony of the influence exercised by one who speaks the truth and lives up to it. Even so, we never think of following his example in word and deed.

June 25, 1945

Sacrifice which causes pain is no sacrifice at all. True sacrifice is joy-giving and uplifting.

June 26, 1945

True help can come only from God. But God helps only through some agency. Let no one, therefore, knowingly seek the help of a broken reed.

June 27, 1945

Guru Teg Bahadur says: "The life which causes the least possible injury is simple life. That which causes no pain at all is pure life." Therefore, he alone practises true religion who does nothing evil.

June 28, 1945

If someone says, "Go straight along this road", and if a man follows the given direction, he is sure to reach his destination. Such a road is truth. Going along that road, a man reaches his goal in the shortest possible time.

June 29, 1945

Every minute of my life I am conscious of the presence of God. Why, then, need I fear anyone?

June 30, 1945

A man came to me today and said: "I lose all interest in living if I do not render true service".

July 1, 1945

Do not lose your temper if someone calls you a liar or opposes you. If you want to say something, say it calmly. Or, perhaps, silence would be best. If you are really truthful, you do not become a liar simply because someone calls you so.

July 2, 1945

Untruth corrodes the soul, truth nourishes it.

July 3, 1945

There is greater pleasure in not eating than in eating. Who has not experienced the truth of it?

July 4, 1945

Do not listen to rumour; but, if you do, do not believe it.

July 5, 1945

We must always listen to criticism of our faults and failings, never to our praises.

July 6, 1945

When 'I' and when 'God'? In determining this lies the test of wisdom.

July 7, 1945

God is one. He is ever Changeless and Formless. We are his mirrors. If we are straight and pure, God is also reflected in us as such. But if we are crooked and vile, His image suffers the same distortion. It behoves us, therefore, always to remain clean and pure in every respect.

July 8, 1945

To find fault is one thing; to prove it is another.

July 9, 1945

He alone knows the charm of solitude who has deliberately taken to it.

July 10, 1945

He who is the dust of everybody's feet is near to God.

July 11, 1945

Do not think, speak or write without reflecting. Consider how much time could thereby be saved.

July 12, 1945

Just as the universe is contained in the self, so is India contained in the villages.

July 13, 1945

If India lives in the villages, then let there be but one ideal village and it can serve as a model for the whole country.

July 14, 1945

If we think of India from the point of view of the villages, most of the things that we do will appear to be useless.

July 15, 1945

Life is not for making merry. Rather it is for the realization of the Creator and for the service of the creation.

July 16, 1945

If life is intended only for the service of humanity and for the realization of God, then it becomes our duty to keep it pure and abstemious.

A Thought for the Day, pp. 151-239

413. MESSAGE TO STUDENTS[1]

AGRA,
July 17, 1945

[GANDHIJI:] Study and work for the country's freedom. This is my message to the students of India.

Gandhiji said that he realized the despondency of the student community on the failure of the Simla Conference[2] and the danger of ill-feeling that might creep in between Hindu and Muslim students. Hopes must not be lost.

Gandhiji stressed the need of unity among students and said it was deplorable that a number of parties existed and things had reached such a stage that the police were sometimes required to intervene. He wished that students of every creed, colour and caste worked as a united body for the common cause. He advised the people [to refrain] from indulging in mutual recriminations.

Asked if the Simla Conference failed on the issue of one seat given to a non-Leaguer, Mahatma Gandhi refuted the contention. He said that he would publicize his views regarding this problem at the earliest opportunity.

The Hindustan Times, 19-7-1945

[1] On his way to Wardha after the Simla Conference, Gandhiji addressed the crowd assembled at the Agra Cantt. station where the special carrying him arrived at 3.40 p. m. About a dozen local Communists, who had collected on the platform, were initially disallowed by the authorities but they were allowed on the assurance from them to remain peaceful.

[2] The Simla Conference was convened by the Viceroy, Lord Wavell, and was attended by leaders of the various parties, prominent among whom were Abul Kalam Azad, Bhulabhai Desai, M. A. Jinnah, Dr. Khan Saheb, Liaquat Ali Khan, Sir Henry Richardson, Rao Bahadur Shiv Raj and Master Tara Singh. Gandhiji did not attend the Conference but he remained in Simla so as to be available for consultation. The Conference, started on June 25, was adjourned on June 29 to enable the parties to send the lists of the names for the proposed Executive Council. However, when it met again on July 14 Lord Wavell announced its failure.

414. INTERVIEW TO "PEOPLE'S WAR"[1]

[*July 17, 1945*][2]

M. N. TANDON: Failure at Simla has disappointed the people who looked to a change in the regime.

GANDHIJI: They should not be disappointed. The Congress took a correct attitude and has vindicated its national character.

M. N. T. Mutual apportionment of blame has begun between the Congress and the League leaders and the papers. Would this not embitter relations and dash hopes of any future settlement, thus drifting to a position of civil war and riots?

G. Mutual recriminations should not be indulged in though truth will have to be spoken. There is a danger of the situation drifting into a civil war. The clash at Delhi station before Maulana Azad's compart-ment is a pointer. But the police should not be allowed to maintain order amongst us. But if riots take place what can we do? Riots have always been taking place. Even in the reign of . . .[3] riots and disturb-ances took place. This country is inhabited by a very large population of various conflicting ideas.

M. N. T. Civil disturbances of the older days were no comparison to those of today with their political and economic implications. Patriots of the Congress and the League would fight instead of uniting for people's service, with the result that the people would lose faith in the honesty and patriotism of both. Their miseries would increase tenfold and the national movement would go to pieces.

G. Yes. We should make efforts not to let such a situation develop.

M. N. T. Do you hope that the Congress and the League will be able to settle in the near future?

G. We should all hope so.

M. N. T. The belief of the common man is that the Conference broke over the question of a single seat due to dissensions among the leaders.

G. It is wrong to say that the Conference broke over the question

[1] Gandhiji gave the interview to M. N. Tandon, the Agra correspondent of the Communist weekly, at the Agra Cantt. station on July

[2] *ibid*

[3] The correspondent here explains that Gandhiji had "mentioned the name of some benevolent old Indian king, which I could not catch because of the noise on the platform".

of one seat. The Congress fought for a principle.

M. N. T. Even if the Congress had to nominate only Hindu Congressmen, they could very well have represented the Nationalist Muslims and safeguarded their interests. There is no difference between Congressman and Congressman.

G. But we were seeking able men of all parties and communities. We did not bother which party got what number of seats.

M. N. T. You had accepted the Bhulabhai Formula[1] of Congress-League parity and gave a public statement[2] to that effect. But the Congress Working Committee agreed to Hindu-Muslim parity, proposed by Wavell,[3] thus raising the rock of breakdown, since Congress and League could not agree to the nomination of one by the other. Is it a fact that the Working Committee disagreed with you and rejected the Congress-League parity formula?

G. Now you are dragging me into deep water. Yes. The truth is something like this. I shall write about it in the near future.

M. N. T. You perhaps know that the Communists' main slogan all through the Conference has been "transform Hindu-Muslim parity into Congress-League parity" and they are making efforts in the direction.

G. They should continue their efforts.

M. N. T. On what grounds did your correspondence with P. C. Joshi[4] break?

G. Who says it has broken down?

M. N. T. Has the Working Committee taken any decision regarding the Communists?

G. No. It has not taken any decision.

M. N. T. You know the ban of the U. P. Government continues on the three Communist weeklies[5] in U. P.

G. Have they not yet lifted the ban? It is very wrong for the Government to do so.

M. N. T. Sjt. J. C. Gupta[6] and others met you at Simla in connection with the release of pre-reform political prisoners who have already served 14 to 20 years of

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Desai-Liaqat pact".

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the press", 15-6-1945.

[3] For the Viceroy's broadcast of June 14, *vide* Appendix "Speech broadcast by the Viceroy", 14-6-1945.

[4] General Secretary, Communist Party of India. For Gandhiji's correspondence with P. C. Joshi, *vide* "Letter to P.C. Joshi", 30-7-1944; "Letter to P.C. Joshi", 15-9-1944 and "Letter to P.C. Joshi", 5-2-1945.

[5] *Lok Yuddha, People's War* and *Quomi Jung*

[6] Chairman, All Parties Political Prisoners' Release Campaign Committee

imprisonment. You have the power to get them released.

G. Efforts should certainly be made to secure their release.[1] It is wrong to say that I alone have the power to get them out.

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-8-1945

415. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

SEVAGRAM,
July 18, 1945

The public will not like to know, as I have not liked, the fact that I had to travel from Kalka to Wardha like a thief. I could do so only by the courtesy of the authorities. Why should I have to escape the embarrassing affection of the public? When I travelled by the Frontier Mail from Bombay to Kalka[2], at every stopping station it was a wild demonstration. Accidents, even fatal, were escaped by miracle. Those who were with me in the compartment had a rough time and two wakeful nights.

Singly I might not have been able to cope with the din, noise and hustle of the crowd. Of course this was not the first time that I had to face such wild demonstrations, nor am I unaware that other leaders have to go through such ordeals, but the fact is that each year makes me less fit for them. My ears cannot stand the noise. I can do no work among demonstrators and cannot make Harijan collections in such circumstances. What is most painful is the fact that this wildness is no prelude to swaraj, it is no sign of non-violence.

Crowds there should be to greet the leaders, but they should be peaceful, dignified and completely disciplined. I have seen ordinary soldiers in thousands observing perfect silence whether on the march or at rest. Our crowds, if they are non-violent soldiers of swaraj, should be more disciplined than ordinary soldiers. Will leaders of volunteers learn a lesson from my train journey from Kalka to Wardha and ensure perfectly peaceful demonstrations at stations and elsewhere in all circumstances and not only or especially for me?

The Hindu, 20-7-1945

[1] For the Congress President's letter to the Viceroy regarding this, *vide* Appendix "Abul Kalam Azad's letter to Lord Wavell", 15-7-1945.

[2] On June 22 and 23

416. LETTER TO RAFI AHMED KIDWAI

July 18, 1945

BHAI RAFI[1],

I learnt of your release at Kalka. I arrived in Sevagram this evening. It is good you were freed. Do you get fever? Do you have weakness? Write to me fully.

Blessings from

BAPU

RAFI AHMED KIDWAI
ANAND BHAWAN
ALLAHABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

417. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
July 19, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,[2]

We reached yesterday at 2.30 Wardha and 4 p. m. Sevagram. We walked most of the way. This I am writing before the morning prayer.

You—all—surrounded us with lavish affection. May God bless you for it. I hope there is no more grief over Tofa's[3] departure from you. There should be none.

Though there is rain there is no cold. I dread your having to come to this level from cool Simla. But you will see when it is time for you to come.

I shall think of your things.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3696. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6505

[1] Rafi Ahmed Kidwai (1894-1954); chief whip of the Swaraj Party in the Central Assembly after the 1926 election; Minister for Revenue, Home and Jails in U. P. in 1937-39 and 1946-47; Central Minister for Communication and Food from 1947 till his death

[2] The superscription in this and the other letters to the addressee is in the Devanagari script.

[3] Addressee's pet dog which died during Gandhiji's stay at Simla.

418. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS G. KAPADIA

July 19, 1945

CHI. MADHAVDAS[1],

It is not good that you still don't feel comfortable there. You should resolve that you are to get well and not to budge from the place. Follow Dr. Krishnavarma's instructions scrupulously and cheer-fully. I am writing this before the morning prayer, soon after rising. It is now time for prayer. I had got up at 4 o'clock. I arrived here yesterday at 4.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2724

419. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

July 19, 1945

CHI. PREMA,

I read your letter of the 11th today. With it is Rajkumari's too. The post seems to have been received at Kalka. It is 4.30 just now. I am writing this after brushing my teeth. I am sitting inside a mosquito-net and the light is outside. The prayer bell is about to ring.

Today is your birthday. You will get this after two days. You have to live many more years still. Spend them happily and in service. Serving is in our own hands, and happiness, too, if we but learn to be equiminded in happiness and sorrow. Isn't forgetting Vishnu the only real suffering? Why should we forget Him?

I do not remember to have been annoyed with you. If I did get annoyed, there must have been a reason. But is my annoyance really annoyance? Shouldn't you understand this?

If you start your camp independently of us and ask for no money, where would be the difficulty? Others will learn from you, including myself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10436. Also C.W. 6875. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

[1] Kasturba Gandhi's brother

420. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

July 19, 1945

CHI. DINSHAW,

You have two girls[1] already under your care. May you completely succeed with them. I am now thinking of sending Balkrishna[2] to you. If he can go he will go in August. I gave him suvarnaparpati3, he gained weight but now he has lost whatever he had gained. I am therefore inclined to send him to you. I wrote to him from Simla. His reply is enclosed.

Sardar Patel might also go there. I have of course suggested it. Maybe, if he goes I too may have to go. Do you wish him to come?

There is a third girl in addition to the two. I am thinking of sending her also. She too is learning nursing. She keeps indifferent health. She gets fever frequently. Can she come? I hope that all the three will get well and learn nursing there. I expect you to train them in that way.

Have you sent Gulbehn[4] to Panchgani?

Blessings to all three of you from

BAPU

CLINIC
POONA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

421. LETTER TO KRISHNAVARMA

July 19, 1945

BHAI KRISHNAVARMA,

I have your letters. You are doing everything you can for Mama[5] and Sailen[6] and it seems with Sailen you are getting results. But it is not so in the case of Mama. It seems it is the most difficult case you have ever taken up. Do whatever you can. If in the end he

[1] Manu Gandhi, daughter of Jaisukhlal Gandhi, and Vanamala Parikh, daughter of Narahari Parikh; *vide* "Letter to Manu Gandhi", 20-7-1945.

[2] Balkrishna Bhave, younger brother of Vinoba Bhave

[3] An Ayurvedic Medicine

[4] Addressee's wife

[5] Madhavdas G. Kapadia

[6] Sailendra, son of Amrita Lal Chatterjee

must go, what can you do? I consider this as the last effort. The journal you used to bring out will have been discontinued. Now do not bring out a new one. If you do well whatever you are doing you will have done a lot.

Blessings from

BAPU

NATURE CURE HOSPITAL
MALAD (BOMBAY)

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

422. NOTE TO PARACHURE SHASTRI

July 19, 1945

I reject taboos associated with menstruation deliberately. But that does not mean that a lustful person may touch a woman in menses to gratify his desire. It is the superstition that I strongly oppose.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

423. ADDRESS TO ASHRAM WORKERS

July 19, 1945

There is no cause for frustration or disappointment as a result of the failure of the Simla Conference. We should carry on more vigorously our constructive work and other national activities for strengthening our position and serving the masses.

The Hindu, 21-7-1945

424. MESSAGE TO STUDENT CONGRESS WORKERS[1]

WARDHAGANJ,
July 20, 1945

Do and do as much as you can. Collect each one pice.[2]

The Hindu, 22-7-1945

[1] Who met Gandhiji in connection with raising Begum Azad pice fund
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Abul Kalam Azad", 2-8-1945.

425. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

July 20, 1945

MY DEAR KU.,

Keep well.

Fix the date some time during the first week in September. I have Bharatan[1] on the brain.

I have distributed two copies of your book[2] on Jesus to non-Indian Xians. Supply me with more copies.

Love.

BAPU

MAGANWADI, WARDHA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

426. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

July 20, 1945

CHI. MANUDI,

You are suffering a good deal. I have great faith in Dr. Dinshaw, and therefore I am not worrying about you. You could not be in a better place. I can see from your letters themselves that both of yougirls will learn something there. You must return only after you have built up radiant health. Trust the doctor implicitly and do whatever he tells you to do. Do not feel shy to write about anything that happens. If you feel shy, I shall worry more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

[1] Addressee's brother, Assistant Secretary of the All-India Village Industries Association and Editor of its organ *Gram Udyog Patrika*

[2] *Practice and Precepts of Jesus*

427. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

July 20, 1945

CHI. VANU,

If you become Vanu-di[1], wouldn't that be your undoing? Are you going to remain silly all your life? Then remain Vanudi. If you have any silliness in you, leave it there. As for the extra fat, you have gone there to shed it, and also to improve the ear. Isn't that so? You have planned the prayers, etc., fairly well there. I have built high hopes on the result of your stay there. My two notes are for both you sisters.

The rest from the other letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5794. Also C.W. 3017. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

428. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 20, 1945

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have not written to you for a long time. I felt inclined to write today after hearing the account given by Kanaiyo[2]. I had left him in Bombay with high hopes. But they have not been fulfilled. Maybe, that also is to the good. On top of that, he got boils on the hand. How he got them one cannot tell. It is hoped they will subside in about eight days' time. After that he intends to go there. It is necessary to think now how he should be fixed up. He has considerable ability. We have to consider which of his gifts to employ and on what tasks. Personally I feel that it would be the most natural thing for him to remain with me and get trained. But I would attach more importance to your view, for at present my mind is occupied with the work lying before me and, therefore, I am not able to concentrate it on problems of individuals. If something occurs to me on the spur of the moment,

[1] 'Di' is suffixed to Gujarati names to form diminutives or to express endearment.

[2] Kanu, addressee's son

well and good. After that, the attention wanders off to the original problem. I will, therefore, do what you desire. In any case Kanaiyo himself can decide.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8626. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

429. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

July 20, 1945

BHAI AMRITLAL,

I have your letter in Hindi. It is good that you wrote it in Hindi. It will not be proper for you to come here right now. The Ashram is very unsteady. If you have blood-pressure go to the Khadi Pratishthan[1]. There is work to be done there. Maybe, Ranu[2] and Shanti[3] can also stay there. Consult Dhiren[4].

Sailen has recovered.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10405. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

430. LETTER TO ROMEN CHATTERJEE

July 20, 1945

CHI. ROMEN,

I am sure you acted after careful thought.[5] College education has no value for me. Almost all the boys that come out take up jobs—and jobs that bring no benefit to the country, only cause it harm. What can you do? You are a child. All the elders want you to go to college. How can you disobey them?

Be good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10397. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[1] At Sodepur, run by Satis Chandra Das Gupta
[2] Romen, addressee's son
[3] Addressee's daughter
[4] Dhirendra, addressee's son
[5] The addressee had joined the Intermediate course of the Calcutta University.

431. LETTER TO ABDUL HUQ

July 20, 1945

BHAI SAHEB,

Zohra[1] has come to me about Shaukatullah Ansari's[2] house which is in your possession and which you refuse to give up. I should like to hear what you have to say in the matter. You were a friend of the late Dr. Ansari[3]. How can there be any litigation with you? I shall hope to hear from you.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. ABDUL HUQ
DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

432. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
July 21, 1945

CHI. MANUDI,

I have torn up your letter. It was silly. If there was any thing private in it, it was your silliness. You had promised to stay there for a year if required. And now you wish to go back on your word! Who will trust you then? There is no harm in accepting money from Bhai. He is your father. If you ask me, I would say that you should stop all other thought and get well there. If the doctor is put to any expense, it is for him and me to worry about. You may ask him for whatever money you need. Your whole letter was silly. I was pained to read it. Try and see if you can become firm in your mind. Ultimately you are your own sovereign.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

[1] Zohra Ansari, wife of Shaukatullah Shah Ansari

[2] Honorary General Secretary, All-India Muslim Majlis, 1944-47; Counseller, Indian Embassy in Turkey, 1947-48

[3] M. A. Ansari (1880-1936); leading physician of Delhi; President, Indian National Congress, 1927

433. LETTER TO SARALA MEHTA

July 21, 1945

CHI. SARALA[1],

I have your long letter. What can I do in the family affairs[2]? Time will do its own work. But bear in mind that the one who has truth on his side will not be harmed. Bhai Nanalal[3] is there—all of you should see him. I am very busy these days.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHANDRAKUNJ
JAGANATH PLOT, RAJKOT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also C.W. 1627. Courtesy: Champa Mehta

434. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

July 21, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

(1) There is some confusion. What is and what is not my responsibility and to what extent is a matter of argument. In faith there is no room for argument.

(2) One can try to be dustlike. Understand the suffix 'like'.

(3) How can a person make his full contribution if he has not become dustlike to the extent required by the Ashram?

(4) One can make oneself fit for the Ashram even while one is away from it. People have done so and are doing so. This needs to be understood. And those who have qualified themselves for the Ashram will always regard themselves as being in the Ashram, no matter where they go.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4518

[1] Daughter of Champa and Ratilal Mehta, eldest son of Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta
[2] Of Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta
[3] Nanalal K. Jasani

435. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

SEVAGRAM,
July 22, 1945

DEAR DR. JAYAKAR,

I thank you for your letter[1] which I am forwarding to the Maulana. I know he will appreciate it.

You may depend upon my doing whatever is possible for me to do.

I hope you are keeping well and fit.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. M. R. JAYAKAR
WINTER ROAD
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY[2]

Gandhi-Jayakar Papers, File No. 826. Courtesy: National Archives of India

436. LETTER TO BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

July 22, 1945

MY DEAR BHARATAN,

I could not send you the enclosed earlier. If you did not want some such answer you should revise it yourself or rewrite it and let me see it. We do not want to fill the columns of the *Gram Udyog Patrika*. Whilst I was away, what was done was inevitable. Now that I am here we must publish something final.

You and your informants are late in the day. Have you read my writings?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10174

[1] Dated July 19, it read: " . . . it does not suit Mr. Jinnah, to accept any arrangement, however shortlived, which brings Hindus and Muslims together . . . he called the Wavell arrangement a snare . . . if he accepted the interim arrangement (suggested at the Simla Conference in June '45) Pakistan would be shelved. . . . May I congratulate you and the other Congress leaders, especially the President Maulana Abul Kalam Azad on the straight, dignified and urbane manner in which he conducted himself?"

[2] The address is from Pyarelal Papers.

437. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

July 22, 1945

CHI. MANUDI,

Do you believe that Jaisukhlal refused to send you money because he distrusts you? If you think so, you are doing a great injustice to your father. I have told Jaisukhlal that he should not send money directly to you, and that is why he mentioned my name. If youwant money, write to me. But where is the need? I can write to Dr. Mehta. If you do not stay there in peace and keep on saying that you wish to run away, it will pain me. How do you know that Rs. 10,000 are to be set [apart] for you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

438. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

July 22, 1945

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Chi. Sushila (Nayyar) is leaving today. If an operation becomes absolutely necessary, get it done. If it is decided to keep you under observation for two or three months, I am in favour of your staying at Dinshaw's. If you decide to go, I also will be ready to go there. You may write, or dictate, whatever else you wish to.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
68 MARINE DRIVE
BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 280

439. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

July 22, 1945

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

I have received all your letters. They have all been duly answered. Bear in mind that anyone who spins will have to see to all the previous processes connected with cotton. Without it the work will be incomplete. Among these the process of carding works wonders. Let them ply the *takli* instead of the spinning-wheel.

I have not quite understood what took place with Kanu Gandhi. Narandas's suggestion appears to be quite acceptable.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10855. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

440. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,
July 22, 1945

CHI. SUSHILA,

I did let you go but afterwards I kept thinking about your health.[1] I have therefore asked[2] Sardar to inform me about it by wire. Get well completely. Have yourself examined by Dr. Gilder[3], if you want to. Write to me in detail. Was there a crowd? If Dr. Gilder is not using Prabhavati's[4] spinning-wheel, bring it back. Buy him a new one if he is using it, or we can send one from here. Prabhavati's spinning-wheel is specially meant for me and so I want it back if possible. I am sure you will see Mathuradas[5].

Today I span for one hour and seven minutes. Recitation of the *Gita* was over by that time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee had an attack of dysentery.

[2] This letter is not available.

[3] Dr. M. D. D. Gilder, Minister in the first Congress Ministry of Bombay, 1937-39

[4] Wife of Jayaprakash Narayan

[5] Mathuradas Trikumji, ex-Mayor of Bombay, who was suffering from tuberculosis

441. TELEGRAM TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

Express SEVAGRAM,
July 23, 1945

MRIDULA[1]
CARE SARALA
BOMBAY

I WANT WHOEVER ENTERTAINS CAMP TO PROVIDE BUILDINGS UTENSILS FREE. ONE PLACE WAS REJECTED TRYING OTHER TWO. YOU CAN GO AND RETURN AS SUGGESTED.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

442. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

Express SEVAGRAM,
July 23, 1945

DOCTOR RAJENDRAPRASAD
BIRLA HOUSE
NEW DELHI

SORRY MAHENDRA[2] TO DIE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

443. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

SEVAGRAM,
July 23, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[3] of 18th instant about Mahendra Chowdhury for which I thank you.

Apart from the merits about which I should have much to say if

[1] Daughter of Ambalal Sarabhai, Trustee and Joint Secretary of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust

[2] Mahendra Chowdhury; *vide* the following item.

[3] In which the Viceroy had informed Gandhiji that the case was one of dacoity and murder, that the Privy Council had rejected the application and that the law must take its course. *Vide* "Letter to Lord Wavell", 15-7-1945.

there was room for argument, I question the prudence of one person, however eminent, deciding to take the life of a person even proved guilty, without having an impartial tribunal to advise him. Moreover, this case had, rightly or wrongly, assumed a political character. How I wish you had been wisely guided!

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
THE VICEROY'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 39

444. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

July 23, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,[1]

I have your two letters received by the same post.

The cuttings you have sent are interesting. I have read them all.

I hope you no longer grieve over Tofa's death. Don't have another pet animal if you can restrain yourself.

Though you must miss us all, I am glad you have a little leisure now. You were overworking yourself.

I look forward to your account of the visit you have referred to in your letter.

Sushila had an attack of dysentery. She had lost 4 lb. up to yesterday. She went to Bombay yesterday for the Sardar. There was a phone that she was still suffering. I do feel strongly that medical people should [not] suffer from avoidable complaints. Something wrong in a system that tolerates such evils.

Well, I hear today from the Viceroy that the Bihar young man[2] is to hang. It is a bad augury. I had forebodings as you know but had hoped otherwise. Let us see.

My love to you all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3697. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6506

[1] The superscription and the subscription in this letter are in Hindi.
[2] Mahendra Chowdhury

445. LETTER TO MADALASA

July 23, 1945

CHI. MADALASA,

The name "Jivan Kutir"[1] will be justified only if you, who were half dead when going to live there, regain sweet life there. I was very pleased to know that you were well. And now you have Vinoba[2] and Ram[3]. What more can you wish for? See that you never sink into the slough of despair again.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 325

446. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA C. MEHTA

July 23, 1945

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

I got your loving gift of the loin-cloth. But if all the girls should send things like this, wouldn't that spoil me? I would get into the habit of wearing new and nice loin-cloths. The really good and proper thing to do would be to give the best thing you make or get made to your best student. That would be truly as good as giving the thing to me.

Now you should learn hand-weaving also.

I hope your health is good and your work is going on well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9438

447. LETTER TO MANCHERSHA AVARI

July 23, 1945

BHAI MANCHERSHA AVARI,

I have your letter. I am very happy to know that you are immersed in constructive work and your wife is also with you. It is

[1] The name of the addressee's house; literally, 'cottage of life'

[2] Vinoba Bhave

[3] Ramakrishna, addressee's younger brother

difficult to attend to everyone—and then there are so many things to see to. It will be so much the better if you could carry further what has since been accomplished. Let us see what happens about the death-sentence convicts[1]. I am doing all that I can.

Blessings to both of you from

BAPU

GENERAL MANCHERSHA AVARI
SIRAS PETH
NAGPUR CITY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

448. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 23, 1945

CHI. DAUGHTER,

Your letter, redirected from Simla, was received here yesterday.

You deliberately spoil your health and then complain. Come whenever you can make yourself free. You went of your own accord. Was it I who sent you? Anyway come when Prafulla Babu[2] permits you to do so. Shanti[3] told me at Simla that she needed you for a lot of work. She does not want to let you leave Bengal. But I want to leave everything to you.

See Niamat's letter. I argued with her a great deal, telling her it would be no use calling Islam[4] just for a few days. But would she ever listen to me?

Prabhavati will write the rest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 499

[1] Several freedom fighters who had retaliated against British repression in Chimur and Ashti had been sentenced to death. *Vide* also "Statement to the press", 31-3-1945.

[2] Prafulla Chandra Ghosh, Chief Minister of West Bengal, 1947-48 Member, State Assembly, 1947-62, 1967-68

[3] Wife of Humayun Kabir

[4] A Muslim woman from Sevagram who was later accommodated in Kasturba Vidyalaya, Madhan

449. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

July 23, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your catching malaria is a matter of concern. Maybe, you would have been spared if you had properly used the mosquito-net. In my opinion the principle of not taking any treatment cannot hold good for everybody.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4519

450. LETTER TO A. KALESWARA RAO

July 23, 1945

BHAI KALESWARRAO,

I have your telegram. I showed it to Vinoba. He is so much involved in the work here that he needs some free time. He will therefore not be able to do any work for the exhibition[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

451. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

July 23, 1945

BHAI RAJENDRA BABU,

I have sent a telegram[2] about Mahendra. I am enclosing herewith the Viceroy's letter and my reply[3] to him. Mahendra will have gone, but what now? The full details of the case should come out.[4]

I hope the fever has gone.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Village Industries Exhibition

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Rajendra Prasad", 23-7-1945 and "Letter to Lord Wavell", 23-7-1945.

[3] *ibid*

[4] *Vide* also "Telegram to Rajendra Prasad", 30-7-1945, and "Letter to Rajendra Prasad", 15-8-1945.

452. LETTER TO MAHESH CHARAN

July 23, 1945

BHAI MAHESH CHARAN,

Sjt. Jajuji[1] has talked to me about the matter you mention in your letter. I am satisfied with what is being done.

Blessings from

BAPU

GANDHI ASHRAM
KHADI BHANDAR
32 LATOUCHE ROAD
LUCKNOW

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

453. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

July 23, 1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL[2],

There are two ways of serving the Harijans. First, by raising them through education, etc., and secondly by rooting out untouchability from among the caste Hindus. The first course always bears fruit and it is desirable to pursue it however little one can. Simple 'Eradication of Untouchability' does not serve our purpose. Therefore, 'Harijan Sevak Sangh' is a more appropriate expression. It is true that so far very little work has been done among the *savarnas*. The reasons are obvious. We lack self-sacrifice. Everyone, to some extent, can do the work of spreading education. But everyone cannot work among the *savarnas* for the removal of Untouchability. Untouchability cannot be removed by delivering speeches. It will be removed only by the power of our self-sacrifice. In such self-sacrifice, fasting has an important place. The fasts should be backed by discretion. Something could be done if competent Shastris issue public statements. What Barveji[3] says is not right. There can be no separate village for Harijans because they are an integral part of society and yet outside it.

They need wells, schools, etc., and if they are properly built and

[1] Shrikrishnadas Jaju, Secretary, All-India Spinners' Association
[2] Secretary, Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust
[3] V. N. Barve, President, Harijan Sevak Sangh, Dhulia

if *savarnas* are allowed access to them, it would be one step towards eradication of untouchability. Abolition of untouchability has political implications but it must be pursued with a purely religious motive. It is a need of Hinduism. The answers to your more important questions are as follows:

1. Castes must go if we want to root out untouchability. Read my preface to *Varnavyavastha*[1].

2. I feel that if it becomes necessary we should continue special schools, wells, and so on.

3. Propaganda among the *savarna* Hindus is necessary. I have mentioned its limitations above.

4. If there is a conflict with the *savarnas* for securing the rights of Harijans, we must put up with it but secure them the rights.

5. The suggestion is good, but discretion will be necessary in [implementing] it.

6. I consider the movement for temple-entry as necessary.

7. I do not know how far it is possible to have a meeting of Hindu leaders. But there should be such a meeting.

8. The question of separate wells has already been dealt with.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

454. LETTER TO ISHKUMAR

July 23, 1945

BHAI ISHKUMAR,

What will you do by coming to me? It is difficult to be with me. It is also uncertain where I shall be when you come. it is only physical labour the whole day. I advise you to resist the temptation of coming here for the present. The weather too is not good.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM
PONDICHERRY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Introduction to *Varnavyavastha*", 23-9-1934.

455. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

July 23, 1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

Prof. Jagadisan[1] may employ a male doctor for the time being. I have no objection.

Blessings from

BAPU

SECRETARY, K. G. N. M. TRUST
BAJAJWADI
WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

456. LETTER TO BENDRE

SEVAGRAM,
July 24, 1945

BHAI BENDRE,

I have your letter. How shall I console you? Your bond was with your Bachi's[2] soul. What does it matter whether the body is buried or cremated? You of course know that the soul does not perish. Why, then, should you grieve? But this is mere philosophy. Experience of the world tells us that no one goes mad over the death of his children. You should, therefore, feel ashamed of yourself over your excessive grieving and shower love on Nalini. Please calm yourself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10246

[1] T. N. Jagadisan was supervising the leprosy relief work of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust since May 1945.

[2] Addressee's daughter

457. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

July 24, 1945

CHI. RAMDAS,

You may consider this first for Usha[1]. If you are still ill, then why don't you go to Dr. Dinshaw and get cured? Why should you be lethargic in this matter? Kanam[2] had also become weak.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

458. LETTER TO S. A. BRELVI[3]

July 24, 1945

BHAISHRI BRELVI[4],

The whole of India knows that as far as politics goes I have the greatest esteem for Sir Pherozeshah[5].

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Mahatma*, Vol. VII, between pp. 16 and 17

459. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

July 24, 1945

CHI. SHRIMAN,

It seems you have sent the letter already. I had thought you would show me the draft. Anyway in my view you should have given only one reason for resigning[6]. Use of the term 'Hindustani' is ofsecondary importance. Implications of the term 'Rashtrabhasha'

[1] Addressee's daughter

[2] Kanu, addressee's son

[3] The letter has been reproduced in the Urdu script as well.

[4] (1891-1949); Leading Congressman of Bombay; Chairman of the Bombay branch of the All-India Nationalist Muslim Party formed in 1929, Editor of *The Bombay Chronicle*

[5] Pherozeshah Mehta (1845-1915); one of the founders of the Indian National Congress and its President in 1890 and 1909

[6] From the Secretaryship of the Rashtrabhasha Prachar Samiti, Wardha

are far-reaching. It would be better also to send the resignation after revising it. If you want to do this you should show me the draft before sending it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 307

460. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

July 24,1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I congratulate you on your accepting a cut of Rs. 100 voluntarily. If you can conveniently give up something more please do so. Only good can come of it but nothing should be done on my bidding. All sacrifice must be voluntary.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

461. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
July 25, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

Don't apologize for writing to me daily. You should continue without straining yourself and without expecting a reply daily.

You are silent about your visit.

You did well in writing to J. The criticism is unfriendly. But restraint is always good.

I hope you are well. Ask Beryl to write to me. Is Shummy[1] better?

Sushila still with Sardar.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4161. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7797

[1] Shumshere Singh, addressee's brother

462. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 25, 1945

CHI. MIRA,

If I am to write I must be brief. If you do not feel well you must run up to a cool place. I took the journey well. Balvantsinha must be with you when this reaches you. Keep him if you want him. Tell him on his letter I sent Hoshiari[1] to her father. She will return with or without her boy. It is fair here. It rains off and on. But the insects are more numerous than before. Sushila got dysentery and lost 4 lb. She is now in Bombay with Sardar.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABEHN
KISAN ASHRAM
P. O. BAHADRABAD, *via* JWALAPUR
NEAR HARDWAR, U. P.

From the original: C.W. 6509. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9904

463. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

July 25, 1945

CHI. SITA,

I read your letter. Your curriculum is good. You are working hard. Do not worry about whether you will pass or not. Don't do anything at the cost of your health. Do not write in a small hand. Examine carefully what is written in this postcard.

Blessings from

BAPU

KUMARI SITA GANDHI
MASHRUWALA BUNGALOW
AKOLA, BERAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4954

[1] Niece of Balvantsinha

464. LETTER TO PUSHPA S. DESAI

July 25, 1945

CHI. PUSHPA[1],

I have your letter. If you have really realized God, you will see Him everywhere, even in your father. Still, if you must come here you may. But you will have to find solitude in multitude. You will have to do everything right from cleaning the latrines and you will have to find God in that. One cannot serve God by singing *bhajans*. You may therefore be escaping from one difficulty to land into another. I advise you to see Manibehn[2] and then arrive at a decision. Consider it a sin to write in pencil.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. PUSHPABEHN

C/O SHRI MANILAL POPATLAL DOSHI

SHARDA'S CHAWL

SECOND FLOOR, ROOM NO. 12

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

465. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

July 25, 1945

CHI. MANI,

Why need you write to me now? And I should not hope that you will.

I write this in connection with Pushpa. She is suffering very much. She has written to me that she wants to see me. But it will be better if you go and visit her. You will certainly find her at her place. The address is C/o Manilal Popatlal Doshi, New Hanuman Lane,Sharda's

[1] Daughter of Kanji Jethabhai Desai of Bombay
[2] Daughter of Vallabhbhai Patel

Chawl, Second Floor, Room No. 12.

I hope you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MANIBEHN PATEL

C/O SHRI DAHYABHAI PATEL

68 MARINE DRIVE

BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 136-7

466. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

July 25, 1945

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. If you have to take treatment now, I would strongly advise you to go to Dinshaw at Poona for it. I will be ready to go there, and so you will have the benefit of my quackery, too. In any case you cannot get worse than you are and it is likely Dinshaw will win glory.

I had a talk with Pardiwala[1]. I will write[2] today itself. That mail goes by the morning post. A copy cannot be sent with this. Such things will go on happening. You are not the man to worry about them.

I have no time to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 281

467. LETTER TO APTE

July 25, 1945

BHAI APTE,

He who had given you Shambhu has taken him back. We must also meet the same fate. Why should you then grieve? Why should

[1] An advocate of Bombay

[2] To Lord Wavell; *vide* "Letter to Lord Wavell",

Sharaja lament? All the children belong to you both. All this is implied in the khadi spirit. Cultivate that spirit and go on doing your duty. Everything will be all right if you exercise self-control. Moreover, you have already rendered whatever service you could.

Blessings from

BAPU

APTE
279-2 SADASHIV PETH
POONA CITY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

468. LETTER TO JAMSHEDJI N. MEHTA

July 25, 1945

BHAI JAMSHED,

I got your letter along with the typed matter. It is surprising that the *Gita* is full of those things and yet you could find no consolation from it. Because you were used to English that appealed to you immediately. Be that as it may, it is good that the depression has left you. For the rest take it that whatever happened at Simla was for the best.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHETH NUSSERVANJI
KARACHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

469. LETTER TO KRISHNAVARMA

July 25, 1945

BHAI (DR.) KRISHNAVARMA,

I have your letter. Chi. Sailen has come here. He is well. More about him later. Do whatever you can for Mama. The result is in God's hands. Please tell Mama that it will be good if he observes the rules of the place where he stays.

Blessings from

BAPU

MALAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

470. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON

SEVAGRAM,
July 25, 1945

BHAI TANDONJI[1],

I have your letter of July 11. I read it twice. I then gave it to Kishorelalbhai. You probably know that he is an independent thinker. I also send you what he has written. I would only say that I have always been as far as possible a slave of your love. The time has now come when the same love will separate me from you. I have not been able to explain myself. Kindly place this letter before the Standing Committee of the Sammelan[2]. I feel that the Sammelan has not accepted my definition of Hindi. And now my ideas are moving further still in that direction. My definition of *Rashtrabhasha* includes a knowledge of Hindi and Urdu and both the Nagari and Persian scripts. Only thus can a fusion of Hindi and Urdu come about, if it will. I am afraid this suggestion of mine may not be welcome to the Sammelan. I therefore request that my resignation be accepted. Bypursuing the difficult task of propagating Hindustani I shall be serving both Hindi and Urdu.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Rashtrabhashake Prashnapar Gandhiji aur Tandonjika Mahattvapurna Patravyavahar, p. 10

471. LETTER TO SUKHDEV

July 25, 1945

BHAI SUKHDEVJI,

What is the use of my sending for you? Send me all the papers. Send also a brief statement along with them. I will do what I can after studying everything. Stay on there till you have my reply.

SJT. SUKHDEV
DAILY "TEJ"
DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] (1882-1962); Speaker, U. P. Legislative Assembly, 1937-39 and 1946-50; elected President of Indian National Congress, 1950, but resigned soon after; Vice-President, Akhil Bharatiya Hindi Sahitya Sammelan

[2] Akhil Bharatiya Hindi Sahitya Sammelan

472. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

SEVAGRAM,
July 25, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I have just heard from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel that several thousand Indian soldiers who had joined Subhas Babu[1] in Burma or elsewhere and who were captured during the recent anti-Japanese operations have been locked up in the Delhi Fort and the ring leaders (so called) have been shot under the decree of a court martial. I am inclined to think that this is a bazaar rumour. Nevertheless, I suggest that the public may be taken into confidence as to the true situationand that, if there is any truth about the lock-up and trial, legal assistance of their choice may be given to those who may be tried.

This is being posted after post office hours. Hence a copy under a certificate of posting will follow when the post office opens tomorrow.[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
VICEROY'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 39-40

473. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

SEVAGRAM,
July 26, 1945

MY DEAR KU.,

This is to introduce Shri Shyamlal to you. He is the Secretary of the K. G. Memorial Trust. He will plead with you for accommodating the prospective women's camp for four months from after the rains

[1] Subhas Chandra Bose (1897-1945); General Secretary of the Congress, 1927; President of the Congress, 1938 and 1939; resigned Presidentship and founded the All-India Forward Bloc; placed under house arrest but escaped to Germany in 1941, one of the organizers of Indian Independence League in South East Asia, organized and led the Indian National Army

[2] Acknowledging this on July 29, the Viceroy's Private Secretary E. M. Jenkins replied that it was receiving the Viceroy's consideration.

are over, i. e., not later than 2nd October. I support the pleading, if it is feasible. More from the bearer.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10175

474. LETTER TO PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

July 26, 1945

DEAR PATTABHI[1],

Pyarelal has asked you about the accuracy of your reported speech[2]. Now comes the enclosed from the angry worker who takesme to task about palmyra trees. Did I ever say about palmyra trees [anything] of the kind reported to have been said by me? I have much to say about the other parts. But I forbear pending your reply. Hope you are well.

Yours,

BAPU

MACHHALIPATTAM

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

475. NOTE TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

July 26, 1945

When I fixed the amount of milk, there were no other institutions in the neighbourhood. Now that there are, it becomes our duty to sink or swim with them. We here cannot have the freedom that they enjoy. But we must apply the controls that they do. The doctors are engaged in formulating a standard. It will be published shortly. Just now you should reduce the quantity of milk as much as you conveniently can. The final decision should be postponed till after Sushilabehn's arrival. I should like to do without ghee altogether, but that does not seem desirable for vegetarians. Experience will be a better guide in this matter. Pulses cannot replace milk, but doctors believe that they are necessary in themselves. I am the only one to assert

[1] (1880-1959); Member, Congress Working Committee, President, All-India States People's Conference, 1936; President of the Congress, 1948; Governor of Madhya Pradesh, 1952-57

[2] *Vide* "Interview to *The Hindu*", 28-7-1945.

emphatically that they are not necessary. We may, however, introduce them. The same about spices. Those who are under the Ashram vows cannot consume them for the pleasure of the palate, but if they are necessary for aiding digestion they may be used. It should be remembered that there are very few in the Ashram who have taken the vows. I see no great trouble in having two separate cuisines—one with spices, the other without. We cannot compel anybody to observe the vow of controlling the palate, or any vow.

While considering this matter, we should remember that though milk, ghee and fruit are consumed in greater quantity in the Ashram, illness persists. We must investigate the cause of this.

If this does not give you the guidance that you need, ask me again. The problem of those who are ill is a different one.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5908. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

476. LETTER TO KRISHNAVARMA

July 26, 1945

BHAI KRISHNAVARMA,

I enclose herewith Sailen's letter. He has also given me a leaflet. It contains something shocking. I send you the relevant portion along with Sailen's letter. If what is said in it is true we must correct it. It is our duty not to get angry with the critic but to accept the substance of what he says. In many things nature cure should be superior to the methods of ordinary doctors and ordinary men. More after I hear from you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

477. LETTER TO GOSIBEHN CAPTAIN

July 27, 1945

CHI. GOSIBEHN[1],

I am so glad you can upset inkstands and that in the wrong place.

You may not give up the ghost so easily. See Balasaheb Kher[2] and put all the facts before him. We must do things correctly even if they take a little time. Time given won't be time wasted. That would be part of teaching new work. See the others also. Take my help whenever necessary. P.[3] can attend to her teeth. She need not wait for the meeting. I am doing all I can. You must be well.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

478. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

SEVAGRAM,
July 27, 1945

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letters. It will be good if your presence can help to settle the dispute there.

Hoshiari is brave. She will succeed. It is good that you are also there.

I am keeping well. Mirabehn is anxiously awaiting you.

It will be good if you have a look at Dr. Sharma's handi-work[4]. See what he is doing.

Things are going on well here. By the route which you have taken you cannot go to Balkrishna.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1965

[1] Grand-daughter of Dadabhai Naoroji

[2] B. G. Kher, ex-Premier of Bombay

[3] Perin, addressee's sister

[4] The addressee in his book *Bapuki Chhayamen* explains that the reference is to the nature-cure clinic opened by H. L. Sharma at Khurja.

479. LETTER TO GHANSHYAM SINGH GUPTA

July 27, 1945

BHAI GHANSHYAM SINGH,

There is no discourtesy in publishing the letter from the Governor of Sind. I have made emendations in both the drafts. You will understand them.

I finished it today but it could not be registered in the post today. It will go tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

480. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

July 27, 1945

CHI. HOSHIARI,

I have your letter. You will not cease to be respectful towards your father, at the same time you will remain firm. It does not matter if it takes a few days to persuade Father. If your firmness makes Father angry, there is nothing you can do about it. Look after your health. If possible go and see Dr. Sharma.

Blessings from

BAPU

C/O LACHHMAN SINGHJI
SAMASPUR
KHURJA, U. P.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

481. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

SEVAGRAM,
July 27, 1945

BHAI RAJENDRA BABU,

I have already written to you about Mahendra.[1] Probably by now he will have been hanged. It seems our effort has been in vain. If there is any further news we shall get it. Write to me fully about what

[1] *Vide* "Letter to *Rajendra Prasad*", 23-7-1945.

you think. It is surprising that you fell ill in Delhi. It will be better to go to Pilani only after you get well.

I shall see about the other Mahendra[1] after I receive the papers. It would be good if I get papers concerning the first Mahendra also.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

482. LETTER TO SUCHETA KRIPALANI

July 27, 1945

CHI. SUCHETA[2],

I have gone through your Urdu letter. I like it; you should not understand it to mean that you are to give up writing in Hindi. You should write in both according to the occasion. Why did you fall ill? It will be good if you go to Gulmarg first and get well. The only condition is that you should go while Jawaharlal is there and should see that his privacy is protected. I do not write to the Professor[3]. This for him: He should write to me in Hindi or Urdu or Sindhi. Why does he write in English? Is it because he is a 'professor'?

Blessings from

BAPU

SWARAJ BHAVAN
ALLAHABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Raja Mahendra Pratap (1886-1979); President, Provisional Government of Hind in Kabul, 1915. He was in the Yokohama prison and Government's assistance was required for his return to India.

[2] (1908-74); In-charge, Women's Department, A.I.C.C.; member, Congress Working Committee, 1950-52; member, Lok Sabha, 1952-62; Chief Minister, U. P., October 1963 to March 1967

[3] Addressee's husband J. B. Kripalani, (b. 1888); General Secretary of the Indian National Congress, 1934-46; its President in 1946. One of the founders of the Congress Democratic Front and later of the Praja Socialist Party

483. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

WARDHAGANJ,
July 28, 1945

QUESTION: According to Dr. Pattabhi, the Desai-Liaqat Formula contemplated formation of a new government first, to be followed by the release of the members of the Congress Working Committee. This aspect of the Formula had been interpreted by some people as "bypassing the Congress" and by some others as "stabbing the Congress in the back".

You have stated in your statement issued from Panchgani that you blessed the Formula as you thought it provided a basis for communal settlement. It is generally believed that you were consulted at every stage of the agreement. Is theinterpretation put on the agreement that it bypassed the Congress correct?

ANSWER: I consider the question has been addressed to a wrong person. Parties to the Formula are the best persons to say what it meant. Then what you put into Dr. Pattabhi's mouth, he may repudiate. I, therefore, suggest to all reporters at all times, but most specially at this time, to be precise and accurate in what they say. There never was the slightest intention on the part of Advocate Bhulabhai Desai, on whose behalf alone I can speak, "of stabbing the Congress in the back" or making an attempt to "bypass" the Congress. He, himself made politically by the Congress, could never be guilty of any such intention, and, for me, I should be committing suicide if I could be a party to any such attempt. I can say this much for Advocate Bhulabhai Desai that the only intention he had was that of honourably resolving the deadlock and thereby serving the Congress. It would be wrong to say that I was consulted "at every stage" but it would be strictly correct to say that Advocate Bhulabhai Desai saw me more than once about the 'Pact'.

Asked whether the release of the members of the Working Committee formed part of the agreement, whether it was agreed between the parties that the Muslim League alone should nominate the Muslim members of the new government and whether in view of so many statements and counter-statements on the subject it would not be desirable to release the Formula for publication, Gandhiji said:

I think, in the foregoing, I have said as much as I could, consistently with the fact that the 'Pact' has not seen the light of day. I wish that the parties had agreed to release it for publication.

The Hindu, 30-7-1945

484. LETTER TO SUDHIR GHOSH

July 28, 1945

MY DEAR SUDHIR,

I have your good letter.

A man is sincere in the sense that he is not knowingly dishonest. But if he makes up his mind hastily and will not deign to take the trouble to study accurately facts of each case, he is in fact untruthful without knowing that he is so. Such is the case with perhaps millions of Hindus. They sincerely believe that untouchability is a part of the divine plan. But they hug a provable untruth.

Of course I will see Mr. Casey1 first, if I succeed in coming to Bengal which I want to do as early as the rains permit. I have the pamphlets.

My blessings to you both[2].

BAPU

Sudhir Ghosh Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

485. LETTER TO B. S. MURTHY

July 28, 1945

DEAR MURTHY[3],

Your letter. Can you conveniently see me on 7th August at 3.30 p. m. for half an hour?

Yours,

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] R. G. Casey, Governor of Bengal
[2] The addressee and his wife Shanti
[3] Member of the Madras Legislative Assembly

486. LETTER TO C. C. GANGULI

SEVAGRAM,
July 28, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I was much touched by your letter. My congratulations to your wife on her bravery and presence of mind. But such acts do not need advertisement. They produce their silent effect and lose by being advertised. In any case why should the news be suppressed pending the finish of the war? You and your wife have certainly my blessings. May your spiritual progress grow from day to day.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI C. C. GANGULI
ASST. SESSIONS JUDGE
KHULNA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

487. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

July 28, 1945

CHI. DINSHAW,

I have your letter. We shall think about the treatment I should have after I come there. I will send Balkrishna when he is ready. I had only to see the land pertaining to the Muslim school and to Tata. As I understood it there was nothing for me to do in that connection. And what can I do? I believe that the land is not of any use to the village. The sanatorium can be built there; that is to say we can use that land instead of the one at Simhagad. But that apart, write to me your views. Preston might perhaps prove expensive. We are going ahead with the village trust. I have suggested that it should be translated into Gujarati.When is Gulbai's confinement due? Take whatever work you can from Vanu and Manu.

Blessings from
BAPU

NATURE CURE CLINIC
TODDYWALA ROAD
OPPOSITE STATION, POONA CITY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

488. LETTER TO PYARELAL

July 28, 1945

CHI. PYARELAL,

Chi. K.'s point deserves consideration. I cannot swallow his explanation of the word विशिष्यते.

All I want to say is that the 12th Chapter (of the *Gita*) is not as easy to understand and to practise as you say. We can make anything simple and easy by distortion. Here it seems to say the opposite of what is said elsewhere. Here it seems to be getting increasingly simpler. Moreover, we cannot assign to words any meaning we like. However, if Vinoba accepts what you are saying, there is no harm in following it. I have accepted the gist suited to myself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

489. LETTER TO SAMPURNANAND

July 28, 1945

BHAI SAMPURNANAND[1],

I know Bhai Maithili Sharan[2] very well. But I shall not be able to participate in the jubilee celebrations.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 10409. Courtesy: Bharat Kala Bhavan

[1] (1889-1969); Member, A. I. C. C.; Chief Minister of U. P., 1955-60; Governor of Rajasthan, 1962-67

[2] Maithilisharan Gupta; Hindi poet of renown; author of *Bharat-Bharati, Saket, Yashodhara, Jayadrath Vadh, Siddharaj* and other works

490. LETTER TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

July 28, 1945

BHAI BADSHAH KHAN[1],

I read about the drama that was enacted in your case. Write to me what really happened. I hope you are well. The Doctor will have given you my message.

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

491. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

July 28, 1945

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. Vichitra[2] had written to me. I cannot open a clinic for you. I have explained everything to you. I know your ability. I know your shortcomings too. Do whatever you can on your own strength. I did what I could. I shall be happy if your work gets going, that is to say, if the poor are served. I do not feel like writing more.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. HIRALAL SHARMA
NAGLA NAWABAD
KHURJA, U. P.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] (b. 1890); Popularly known as Frontier Gandhi; founded the Red Shirt (Khudai Khidmatgar) organization in 1929; a close associate of Gandhiji; detained by the Pakistan Government for demanding Pakhtoonistan, 1947-55

[2] Vichitra Narayan Sharma, Manager, Gandhi Ashram, Meerut, and one of the trustees of the addressee's nature-cure clinic

492. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

July 28, 1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I have your letter concerning Dharmadev Shastri. It is all right. For the eight committees of C. P. and Berar you have asked for the sanction of Rs. 200 at the rate of Rs. 25 for each committee. Earlier you had asked for Rs. 50 for each committee. For the present you may send Rs. 200. Later we shall see what to do.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

493. LETTER TO SARALA DEVI

July 29, 1945

DEAR SARALA[1],

I was delighted to have your letter. Of course you will write whenever you like and come to me as soon as you are able to. Meanwhile, love

BAPU

(M. K. GANDHI)

SHRI SARALA DEVI
POLITICAL PRISONER
DISTRICT JAIL
ALMORA

From a photostat: G.N. 9089

[1] Catherine Heileman; came to India in 1932; moved to Wardha in 1936; worked in Hindustani Talimi Sangh and later for the uplift of hill people in Almora; established an ashram for girls at Kausani.

494. LETTER TO NAWAB OF CHHATARI

SEVAGRAM,
July 29, 1945

DEAR NAWAB SAHEB[1],

Your kind letter of 24th June was received at Bombay just after I had left for Simla. It was kept back with other correspondence in order not to overload me with work at Simla. It was given to me after my return.

I have read and re-read your letter. I am sorry to say it gives me little satisfaction. I used to have long correspondence with the late Sir Akbar Hydari on similar matters. He used to struggle to give satisfaction but in my opinion failed. Though fresh in the field, I am afraid, you would do likewise, unless you deal with the situation in a detached manner. I do not wish to argue the matter. I have notsufficient material with me.But I give you, as a friend, my opinion for what it may be worth.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. H. NAWAB SAHEB OF CHHATARI
HYDERABAD (Dn.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

495. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 29, 1945

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

If you have decided against the operation, go to Dinshaw's clinic. I will accompany you. I have already consulted him. He is hopeful, and so am I. In any case going to his clinic cannot do you harm. If you must go to Ahmedabad, stay there as planned and only for a few days.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 282

[1] Capt. Mohammed Ahmed Said Khan, President of the Executive Council of the Nizam of Hyderabad from 1941

496. LETTER TO NAIDU

July 29, 1945

BHAI NAIDU,

Who can stop it if conversion takes place in the manner you describe? Read what I have written on the subject. If we want purification every Hindu will have to become an *Atishudra*. I hope you will be able to read my Hindustani.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 94

497. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

[After *July 29, 1945*][1]

I have written to Wavell and his reply has been received. I have also raised the question of defence and have said that all should be allowed to engage defence counsel. I had read Pt. Jawaharlal's statement and today Sardar read out yours[2]. It is sufficient.

From a copy: Police Commissioner's Office, Bombay: File No. 3001/ H/P. 341

498. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

Express

SEVAGRAM,
July 30, 1945

DR. RAJENDRAPRASAD
BIRLAHOUSE
NEW DELHI

YOUR WIRE. BETTER SEE VICEREGAL SECRETARY ABOUT MAHENDRA.[3]

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] From the reference to reply to the letter to Lord Wavell regarding the defence of I. N. A. prisoners; *vide* footnote 1, "Letter to Lord Wavell", 25-7-1945.

[2] The addressee had suggested that the Congress should undertake the defence of the I. N. A. officers.

[3] *Vide* also "Letter to Rajendra Prasad" 15-8-1945.

499. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 30, 1945

BROTHER RAJEN BABU,

I had given a wire about Mahendra: "Your wire. Better see Viceregal Secretary about Mahendra." The new Government[1] cannot interfere with the Viceroy's decision all of a sudden but there is some hope from Jenkins. Did our people not send any appeal to London? Is the person not yet hanged? If he is alive whatever you have to do in that respect do it here. To send deputation to London is futile.

You must be feeling better.

From a copy: C.W. 10591

500. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

July 30, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

I have just got your letter.

I am glad you saw the Vicereine. I shall send you by book post what I can lay hands upon Sardar is none too well. Probably he will have first to have nature cure and then, if necessary, operation. If he goes to Poona, I shall have to go there. This may be the first week of August.

Harijans have every right to curse us and abuse us. How can they isolate the few penitents from the die-hards? Only we must go on.

Sushila is with Sardar. She has lost all she gained there, I think.

You have to keep well. The secret is with you. No nibbling between meals. No fruit-chewing or anything else while walking. Take what you must at stated meals as so much for sustenance.

Sushila is likely to return by the middle of the week.

I am keeping well. I walk longer than usual. Today it was exactly two miles. Usually it is 1_ miles.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4162. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7798

[1] The Labour Government which assumed office on July 27, 1945, with Clement Attlee as Prime Minister

501. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

July 30, 1945

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have your letter. Here one might say things are going on well. You have done good work in Poona. One could only wish that you would not fall ill. I understand what you say about Vanu and Manu. If both of them make further progress, they can certainly make some contribution to the Arogyabhavan. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9135

502. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM,
July 30, 1945

CHI. MRIDULA,

I received your letter just now. You are so hardworking that to tell you to improve your handwriting is like telling me to do so. Only if I improve my handwriting will I have the right to tell you to do so. Isn't that so? Even so I must say that I am writing this without reading your letter word by word as deciphering every single word will take time. About Ahmedabad it seems all right. I will write to Kanjibhai[1]. The rule that people should work only in their own locality is very harsh. Does it show our poverty? We shall think about the draft when you have to resign. I believe that we shall not have to decide about Anasuyabai before your return.

It would be better if you do not ask for any official letter to be sent there. We shall see when you return. Get well. I shall see about the syllabus.

Blessings from

BAPU

MRIDULABEHN SARABHAI
HUT NO. 46
GULMARG, KASHMIR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Kanaiyalal Desai

503. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

July 30, 1945

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I have gone through your report. I found that the prices of books were very high. Anyone seeking admission will find it very difficult and expensive. It can be done that way if we do not have the necessary provision. Discuss this with Kakasaheb.

Blessings from

BAPU

AMRITLAL NANAVATI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

504. LETTER TO DHARMDEV SHASTRI

July 30, 1945

BHAI DHARMDEV SHASTRI,

I have your letter. I have told Shyamlalji[1] that RS. 200 may be sent to you. That is the amount he had asked for. Your letter mentions a larger amount. The rest will depend on Bapa's letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI DHARMDEV SHASTRI

ASHOK ASHRAM

KALSI, DEHRADUN

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

505. LETTER TO DEVRAJ

July 30, 1945

BHAI DEVRAJ,

I can do something for your brother only after he puts in an application. To do anything before that is impossible. My stay here is uncertain. Write to me about your coming after I settle down.

Blessings from

BAPU

LAJPAT BHAVAN

LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Shyamlal", 28-7-1945.

506. LETTER TO DEVRAJ VORA

July 30, 1945

BHAI DEVRAJJI,

I have your letter. Why is it in English? I can understand Hindustani. The experience I had of you was bitter. I did not find in you devotion to truth, but I did find vanity in a large measure. You will therefore gain nothing here nor will the people here gain anything from you. I therefore feel that your coming here is not proper.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI DEVRAJ VORA
C/O SETH N. L. SEHGAL
INDIAN TIMBER WORKS
P. O. GULZAR BAG
PATNA, BIHAR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

507. LETTER TO GHALIB

July 30, 1945

BHAI SAHEB,

I got your letter by return post. I am obliged. Zohra will be coming in a day or two. I will then show her the letter and write to you if it is necessary.

GHALIB SAHEB

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

508. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN CHOWDHARY

July 30, 1945

BHAI RAMNARAYAN,

Doing only writing work and neglecting the cow does not appeal to me. But whether it appeals to me or not is irrelevant.

Your staying here is a difficult problem. There are people living here who cook their food separately and so on. I do not want to increase their number. If you cannot lead an ashram life then what is the use of living in the Ashram? You may stay in the Khadi Vidyalaya

if Jajuji will have you. If you want to do the work of propagating Hindustani you should speak to Kaka, or to Shyamlal if you want to work in the Kasturba Memorial Trust. You have a great deal of ability. You can earn Rs. 150 from anywhere. I can think of engaging you for only one work. Nor will Jamnalalji's spirit allow me to think of any other. Think of what you want to do. Talk to me or write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

509. LETTER TO JYOTILAL MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
July 31, 1945

CHI. JYOTI,

I understood your letter. Champa has written a long letter but has not given her address. I do not know whether she is there or somewhere else. You yourself can convey the message that she may come here any time she likes. She should not waste my time and should not set up a separate kitchen. Everything has changed here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

510. LETTER TO CHANDRAKALA AND KRISHNAKUMAR

July 31, 1945

CHI. CHANDRAKALA AND CHI. KRISHNAKUMAR,

It is only natural that you both, brother and sister, should grieve over the passing of Mother. When I was as young as you are, I too used to grieve when a relative died. But now I realize that it is vain to grieve over a death. Death goes with birth. Some die today, others will die tomorrow. What is there to grieve about it? You must become wise.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Give my blessings to Father.

SHRI SITARAMJI KHEMKA

J. C. MILLS

GWALIOR

From a copy of the Hindi Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

511. WHY KHADI FOR YARN AND NOT FOR MONEY?

July 1945

Sjt. Bharatan Kumarappa writes to me from his tours:

People are asking what has Gandhiji done. He will kill khadi by insisting on yarn being given in exchange for it. What are we, who because of his teachings have vowed to put on only khadi, to do? We do not know how to spin neither do we want to learn it. Are we to go without khadi? This rule regarding yarn only shows Gandhiji's obduracy.

Sjt. Bharatan Kumarappa's letter is in English. I have given its substance here.

People will not find any obduracy in my demand if only they understood that non-violent swaraj depends on every drawing out of the yarn. On the contrary they will then find absorbing interest in it. Those who see only obduracy in it do not know how non-violence works. Since my return to India I have been crying myself hoarse that if we want to attain independence through non-violence spinning should be an essential part of our activity. The late Maulana Mohamed Ali used to say that the charkha was our rifle and the spindles of yarn our bullets; we shall attain swaraj only through. these bullets. This is as true today as when it was said.

My experience tells me that if khadi is to become universal, both in cities and in villages, it should be made available only in exchange of yarn. Today one anna's worth of yarn in the rupee is demanded. But this is only the beginning. When people have understood and learnt how to spin, then khadi will be given only in full exchange for yarn spun. I hope that as days go by everyone will himself insist on buying khadi only in exchange of yarn. If this does not happen and if they give yarn grudgingly swaraj through non-violence is impossible. Surely some effort has to be made for swaraj. It cannot be had by mere begging. A certain kind of freedom can of course be obtained on the strength of the rifle, but it will not be real swaraj and I for one am not interested in it.

The very idea of obtaining swaraj through the rifle makes my head reel and a mountain of difficulties appears before my eyes. Thisarticle is not meant for those who would obtain swaraj through the rifle. Why should they wear khadi at all? From their point of view khadi can be proved to be quite a useless thing. Readers of this article

should realize that if khadi is to be produced by villagers, not for their own use but for sale in cities, and if crores of villagers themselves are to use only mill cloth, then khadi will be of very little avail. How can we rest content if khadi merely puts a few coppers into the pockets of the poor?

A doubt is raised that this new rule will kill the khadi which is now being produced by the poor and will make the wearing of khadi spun by themselves a matter of fashion only for a few select city-dwellers. This idea, however, displays ignorance.

The masses do not eat for fashion but in order that they may live. Similarly they do not wear clothes for fashion, but for protection. Therefore the charkha, like the oven, should find a place in every house and every able-bodied person should spin. Then all can wear khadi and obtain swaraj. Able-bodied persons should spin also for the crippled and the weak. If games clubs demanding both energy and money can be run, as they are, why cannot swaraj clubs or charkha clubs be run where people can make slivers, spin and get khadi in exchange of yarn? The truth is that where there is no will, unfavourable arguments present themselves and where there is a will, the will itself discovers favourable arguments. If the will is strong nobody will give up the charkha even as nobody leaves games. If the will can be found for games, can it not be found also for swaraj?

A powerful argument advanced against the system of exchanging khadi for yarn is that if city people produce their own yarn the khadi produced by the poor will vanish and the little relief that has till now been given to them through khadi will stop, and the hope of seeing villagers clad in khadi produced by themselves will remain only a dream. Supposing city people give up wearing khadi out of laziness or anger and villagers give up spinning and weaving for want of demand, what great loss is it to the country? The poor people will take to other occupations in the place of khadi and will somehow make their living. Such people will not be found in crores but only in lakhs as at present. Those who are engaged in *bidi*-making earn four times what is possible through spinning, or even more. Many of the mill labourers have become rich. This means that those who are starving today will starve still further till they die, and the few of them who can earn well will ride roughshod over the rest. If more mills are increased and the number of cities is increased it will not make Indiaprosperous. On the other hand it will make crores die of starvation and of the many diseases produced by starvation. If city people are pleased with such a spectacle I have nothing to say. Then it

will be the reign of violence, not of non-violence and truth, and I will admit that in that case khadi will have no place, it can have no place. Then military training will be compulsory whether we like it or not. But what I am talking about relates to the crores of the starving people. If they are to live, and live well, the charkha will have to be central and spinning undertaken voluntarily also by those who do not need to spin. The weapons of non-violence must not be adopted by people because they have no other alternative. Therefore to my mind the rule of yarn for khadi which has been introduced has to exist and increase in its application. Exactly for the same reason, if all the khadi bhandars have to be closed down and khadi-wearers give up khadi I will regard it as a triumph of truth, because then I shall understand that people had no belief in non-violence and that if they wore khadi they did it out of ignorance and thereby merely deceived themselves into thinking that by wearing khadi they would somehow get swaraj. Why should I thus allow people to deceive themselves when I know that such khadi will not bring swaraj and that it will be discarded after swaraj is obtained? In that case the prophecy of the late Chintamani[1] will come true that on Gandhi's death people will laugh at khadi and also at him and will burn his body with the charkhas they may have in their houses. If hand-spun yarn cannot represent non-violence, why should I not retrieve my error while I am still alive and save the wood used in the charkhas? But I do not regard that prophecy as true. People have understood that the crores of India cannot obtain freedom through violence. India occupies or will soon occupy a great place in the world. That will be possible only through non-violence. If the crores of our people want to demonstrate the workability of non-violence they can do it only by making the charkha central. As the desire for freedom is strong amongst city-folks it is their duty to understand this and to take to spinning and khadi-wearing in order to obtain non-violent swaraj.

Gram Udyog Patrika, Vol. I, pp. 352-4

[1] C. Y. Chintamani; President of the National Liberal Federation, 1920 and 1931; Editor of *The Leader*, 1909-20 and Chief Editor, 1926-41; Minister of Education in U. P., 1921-23

512. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
August 1, 1945

CHI. DINSHAW,

There are still [two] other girls whom I would like to send there. Is there room for them? Neither of the two is an invalid but both need treatment. One of them is Manilal's[1] wife Sushila. She has two children. She would not like to leave them anywhere else. Do not hesitate to say no if there is no room or if you feel that the case is not worth taking.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

513. LETTER TO KRISHNAVARMA

August 1, 1945

BHAI KRISHNAVARMA,

I shall reply to your letter fully later. Show this to Mama. For the time being he must stay on there. Manilal is thinking over the matter. I am clear that it is Mama's duty to do whatever you tell him to do.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. KRI[SHNA]VARMA
NATURE CURE HOME
MALAD, B.B. & C.I.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Manilal Gandhi 58

514. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

SEVAGRAM,
August 1, 1945

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

I have your letter. Chi. Kanu has given me the details in writing, but I shall not go into them. All this misunderstanding arose because I could not explain myself fully.

"God has tied me with a cotton thread. Whichever way he pulls me I am His. I am pierced by the dagger of love." This is from a famous *bhajan* of Mirabai. Swaraj hangs by that thread; it does not snap because the weight is that of love. The languages of India are full of allegories featuring yarn. Narandas has conceived of a yarn bank. If such a bank is organized well, it will ultimately beat the money banks. Narandas is a supreme devotee of khadi. None among us can beat him in his *tapascharya*. He has no other work. I am a witness to the work he has done for the charkha. I am a lover of his work. He has added immensely to the importance of *Rentia Baras*[1]. It is not a work of Kathiawaris alone and this time Kathiawaris alone are not to do it. In this scheme the Charkha Sangh was to play a major role and its benefit would have been also quite large. Chi. Kanu after finishing his work in Bombay was to proceed further. Collection of funds was Of secondary importance. Yarn was the main thing. The Charkha Sangh had to collect only the yarn delivered at its door and send the acknowledgement to Narandas's bank. The ownership of the yarn would have certainly remained with the Charkha Sangh. Suppose yarn worth crores of rupees was produced, the Charkha Sangh would have got it without striving. Chi. Kanu is a child, an errand boy. He is not a leader. He could not explain what he wanted to say. From what he says he did not absent himself so as to humiliate you. This thing was such that there was no need for explanation. Goddess Lakshmi was to come to your door to bless you. However, what has happened has happened. I do not think it can be rectified. Do whatever you can. I had reckoned that Kanu would go from house to house, revivespinning, repair charkhas, enrol volunteers, collect yarn, and that well-tied bales of yarn would be heaped at your place.

[1] *Bhadrapad Vad* 12, Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram calendar, was observed as spinning day.

If I have succeeded in explaining to you the scheme, then I can say that I have compensated for the long letter you wrote to me.

I understand about the processes of cotton. Dawn is when one wakes up.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10856. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

515. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

August 1, 1945

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. It will be better if you do not come at present. You can ask me when I go to Poona. There are so many people eager to serve me that I do not think you will get a chance. I cannot write more now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2490

516. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

SEVAGRAM,
August 2, 1945

CHI. JAIRAMDAS,

I never write to you. Where is the time? Your having to go to Lucknow startled me and I am writing this in the morning after the prayer. May Premi[1] get well. Inscrutable are the ways of God. Let ustrust in Him and find happiness amidst sorrow, Let us do our duty with detachment.

Blessings to you three from

BAPU

[PS.]

Give this[2] to Premi if you think it proper to do so.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's daughter
[2] *Vide* the following item.

517. LETTER TO PREMI JAIRAMDAS

August 2, 1945

CHI. PREMI,

Get well. See God in any work of service and regard Ramanama as the panacea for all ills. Sushila has gone to Bombay for the Sardar. She may be returning now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

518. LETTER TO GOVERNOR OF BENGAL

SEVAGRAM,
August 2, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

Shri Sudhir Ghosh kindly gave me copies of your two speeches, one of which I finished yesterday during moments snatched from my daily work.

I write this to draw attention to two things for the moment. Cloth shortage you can deal with without delay by following the policy laid down by the All-India Spinners' Association which is represented in Bengal too. In one sentence the scheme is to ask every home practically to spin its cotton and every village to weave its own cloth. It is the largest co-operative effort that can be conceived in the world.

The second is the cattle question. For that you should meet Shri Satis Chandra Das Gupta of Khadi Pratishthan. He is ailing andmay not be available just now. He has just published a monumental work[1] on the question.

Shri Sudhir Ghosh has given me your message about my visiting Bengal. I thank you for it. I am anxious to come as early as the rains of Bengal will permit. When I come my first business will be to give myself the privilege of meeting you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR OF BENGAL

CALCUTTA

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 103

[1] *The Cow in India*

519. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

August 2, 1945

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have sent you a wire. You should stay there till the child has been operated upon. Your health has been completely ruined. Would a strong drug rid you of the hook-worms? Would even that not be effective? So many questions arise in my mind. I understand about Zohra. Pyarelal has gone there. He will listen to everything. Stay there till I come. Take possession of the bungalow that Sardar suggests. We shall then do whatever has to be done. If you reach there on the 7th, you should go to Poona on the 10th. Shall I start out on the 8th?

Blessings from

BAPU

C/O DAHYABHAI PATEL
MARINE DRIVE
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

520. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

August 2, 1945

I have your letter. I had asked Dr. Pattabhi.[1] I did not feel it was right to say anything when I had only seen the newspaper. Now that I have received the letter I shall be writing something. I have seen the telegram Rajaji has sent you. I agree with it. I [saw] something in the Press by way of a directive from you about providing for the relatives of those who died [during the struggle] in 1942 and afterwards. The financial help we are at present giving to such relatives for their maintenance and education is something different. In my opinion if we go by truth and non-violence we cannot give such assistance. How can we say that all of them died for the country, that they sacrificed themselves for the cause of swaraj? I feel that under no circumstances can you do that. If I may advise you, I would ask you to withdraw the statement. I do not know whether there is still time for that. I am sending you a wire today.

The other thing concerns Begum Azad. Dr. Khan Saheb mentioned the matter to me at Lahore. It pricked me. I am not aware

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Pattabhi Sitaramayya", 26-7-1945.

of any public service rendered by Begum Azad. If what I believe is true, there should not be any public memorial in her name. Some persons came to me. I told them to do whatever they wanted.[1] I did not have the courage to say anything more to them. But I can speak to you. I would advise you to issue a nice Press statement saying that since Begum Azad had not rendered any public service you would not like any public memorial in her name. If my advice does not appeal to you, you will please reject it. The love we hold for each other demands no less.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

521. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

SEVAGRAM,
August 2, 1945

CHI. ANAND,

I have your letters. Since Jairamdas is out I see no need to write to you. Abha[2] has kept one skein of yarn for you.

Vidya[3] was good but cannot take the place of God. I am an iconoclast. So I wanted you to forget Vidya. But we see God in numerous images. You have chosen to see God in the image of Vidya. So long as the delusion persists who can make you understand? If you can forget her easily do so. Then Vidya will rise and also you.

Nowadays my movements are very uncertain. So please do not come. Stay there and recover and do what service you can.

Jairamdas has gone to Lucknow taking Premi with him.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Gokhaleji died at Bhimavaram.

From a microfilm of the Hindi: Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] *Vide* "Message to Student Congress Workers", 20-7-1945.
[2] Wife of Kanu Gandhi
[3] Addressee's deceased wife

522. LETTER TO ABDUL HUQ

August 2, 1945

MAULANA (ABDUL HUQ) SAHEB,

Ghalib Saheb returned from Hyderabad yesterday. I showed him your letter. He said: "The fact is that both mentioned that Zohrabehn's heart was not there. We now want Zohrabehn to go to Darussalaam. Ever since her son was gone she has been unhappy and she finds the house on Rajpur Road dreary. We appreciate the difficulties of Abdul Huq Saheb. He may therefore occupy the houseon Rajpur Road. The rent is not much. It is a little less commodious and therefore till he can make some other arrangement he can keep the store of Urdu Anjuman[1] on the ground floor of Darussalaam. Abdul Huq Saheb himself may fix the rent." In my opinion the proposal is fair. You are all like a family. Everything will be all right if you can agree to this. Ghalib Saheb is leaving tomorrow. Zohra is still in Hyderabad. I shall await your reply.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

523. LETTER TO PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

SEVAGRAM,

August 2, 1945

MY DEAR PATTABHI,

Your performance[2] was ill thought. You are a most responsible man. Whatever the goading by Gopal Reddy you should have been silent or said just one word. And what an occasion! Gopal Reddy was out of order, though Chairman, in using Khadi Exhibition for the

[1] Anjuman-e-Taraqqi-e-Urdu

[2] The addressee was reported to have said on July 20, 1945 that "he was the sole author" of the Andhra Circular issued in 1942 and that "he got the instructions contained in the Circular from Mahatma Gandhi after full discussion with him". However, on July 22, 1945, in the light of Gandhiji's reply dated July 15, 1943 (*vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943.), to the Government on the Andhra Circular, he modified his earlier statement and said that Gandhiji "had no knowledge of any such Circular. The Circular was not prepared with his knowledge or at his instance".

purpose. And [about]the warning at the W. C.[1] the Maulana has written a strong letter to me. Now I am issuing a brief statement[2] which you will see. Now don't grieve but do your work without speaking.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

524. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,
August 3, 1945

I have now read the report of Dr. Pattabhi's Telugu speech at Masulipatam and the correct version given by him later.[3] I have also corresponded with him and am now able to answer the reporters who taxed me about it the other day.

I have re-read the relevant portion[4] of my reply to the Government publication called *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942-43*. I have nothing to amend or correct in my references to the Andhra Circular. Dr. Pattabhi and others as friends and fellow-workers did have conversations with me on the topic of the day. I have naturally no record of those talks nor did I authorize publication of the talks. I have however contemporaneous evidence of what I had in mind on 7th of August, 1942.

My draft instructions[5] were circulated among Members of the Working Committee on 8th August. They were to be considered on 9th August, but before they could be considered, Members of the Working Committee and I were arrested. Hence no authorized instructions were or could be issued.

I had no opportunity to function in terms of the A. I. G. C.

[1] Congress Working Committee

[2] *Vide* the following item.

[3] *Vide* footnote 2, "Letter to Pattabhi Sitaramayya", 2-8-1945.

[4] Which read: "Then comes the Andhra Circular. I must regard it as forbidden ground for me inasmuch as I knew nothing about it before my arrest. Therefore I can only comment on it with reserve. Subject to that caution I consider the document to be harmless on the whole." *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943.

[5] *Vide* " Draft instructions for Civil Resisters", 4-8-1942.

Resolution of 8th August[1]. The Andhra Circular was therefore neither authorized by the Congress nor by me.

The Hindu, 5-8-1945

525. LETTER TO E. M. JENKINS

SEVAGRAM,
August 3, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN,

I have to acknowledge with thanks your letter of 29th July acknowledging my letter to His Excellency of the 25th July and I shall await your further letter in the matter.

Mrs. Anasuyabai Kale of the C. P. Assembly has been to me to tell me [that] the Privy Council has dismissed the petition of the Ashti and Chimur prisoners to be heard in appeal against the judgement of the Nagpur High Court. Unless, therefore, His Excellency uses his prerogative of mercy the prisoners will be sent to the gallows. His Excellency was good enough to tell me that he would consider these cases and the like when the time came. Now is the time. May I hope that the death sentences will be commuted?[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR E. M. JENKINS
P. S. TO H. E. THE VICEROY
VICEROY'S CAMP

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 36-7

526. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

August 3, 1945

CHI. NARANDAS,

I could read your letter only today. What you say has a point if I adopt the prevailing view but none from the right point of view. Your argument is about khadi for the sake of the poor, mine is for khadi for the sake of swaraj. The khadi work in Kathiawar is

[1] *Vide* "Resolution passed by All-India Congress Committee", 8-8-1942.

[2] The death sentences of the Ashti and Chimur prisoners were commuted to life imprisonment on August 16.

impressive, but it is an obstacle to swaraj and will come to a stop sooner or later. Those who wear khadi do so not from the khadi spirit but from political necessity. Why need you spend your indefatigableand boundless energy for that? If you can sell khadi on the Charkha Sangh's condition[1], you may do so. Give it to those who observe it. Do not mind if, in that case, the khadi has to be sent outside. If you do not have such implicit faith, you may go on doing khadi work from outside the Charkha Sangh. Those who are willing will learn from it. But do strive to understand my point of view. Improve your health.

I have had a talk with Kanaiyo. He will tell you everything when he arrives there. You may then guide him and me as to what we should do.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8627. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

527. MESSAGE TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA[2]

August 3, 1945

I cannot guide you about your work from here. Do whatever you think proper.

From Gujarati: C.W. 401. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

528. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

August 3, 1945

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. I had been thinking of leaving here on the 8th and taking you to Poona on the 10th. But I see now that I am tied up with meetings up to the 19th. I can, therefore, start on the 19th at the earliest. I am not happy about it. I had intended to start as soon as you were free. Please wait for another ten days now. You may, if you wish, stay on in Ahmedabad for some time longer. The best thing would be for you to come and stay at the Ashram for the remaining

[1] In exchange for hand-spun yarn

[2] This was conveyed in a letter by Chhaganlal Gandhi in reply to the addressee's letter of July 31, 1945.

days and we could then go to Poona together. Arrange for a house inPoona. We ourselves will stay at the clinic, and put the others up in the bungalow, if necessary.

And now about Mahadev[1]. It does not seem proper for me to issue any public appeal. I could write to a few individulas. It does not matter if Bombay does not give its share. See my plan which I have outlined. More in the next letter or when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Mani is not doing right in neglecting her health. I have sent a wire to . . .'s[2] father.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 282-3

529. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,
August 3, 1945

CHI. SUSHILA,

What sort of doctors do you have that you are so sick? What medicines do they give ? And what is the result ? But what should I tell you ?

I made a mistake yesterday. I forgot about the two meetings of the Harijan Sevak Sangh and the Kasturba Nidhi. Hence I can leave here by the 19th at the earliest. I do not think it will be right to detain you there till then. It would be another matter if you had to remain there on account of your health. You will see the invitation to Simla along with this. Do you feel like going ? Whatever it is, you must get well. I have written to Sardar at Ahmedabad.

Pushpa is here.

Pyarelal's letter is enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] For the Mahadev Memorial Fund
[2] Omission as in the source

530. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEVAGRAM,
August 3, 1945

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have your note.

Kishorelal and Rajaji are writing to you. What then shall I write ? Not writing to you is as good as writing.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

531. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

SEVAGRAM,
August 4, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

May I send you my congratulations on your appointment[1]? If the India Office is to receive a decent burial and a nobler monument is to rise from its ashes, who can be a fitter person than you for the work?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

THE RT. HON'BLE LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

Gandhi'jis Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 173

[1] As Secretary of State for India in the new Labour Government

532. LETTER TO EVAN JENKINS

SEVAGRAM,
August 4, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN,

I wonder if it is possible to send this[1] in the Viceregal bag ?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR EVAN JENKINS
P. S. TO H. E.
VICEROY'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

533. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

August 4, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter was answered yesterday. You need not bring your bedding. Bring only such things as you consider necessary. Regard mosquito-net among them. My rubbing-stone among them please. It was left there by mistake! Where did you get the powder for cleaning the septic tank commode?

Love to you all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4163. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7799

[1] Presumably the letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence of even date congratulating him on his appointment as Secretary of State for India; *vide* "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 4-8-1945.

534. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

August 4, 1945

CHI. BABUDI,

How naughty of you! You keep falling ill and causing worry to everybody.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10058. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

535. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS G. KAPADIA

August 4, 1945

CHI. MADHAVDAS,

Dr. Krishnavarma has sent all the reports about you. Kunvarji[1] has also written a postcard. Dr. Krishnavarma has no interest in keeping you. He has kept you only for my sake. He kept Sailen also in the same way. Your good lies in remaining underDr. Krishnavarma's treatment and following his instructions. I think I know Dr. Krishnavarma's virtues and failings. For his failings he will be answerable to God. I see and cling to his virtues. Many allegations are made against him. Who is immune to them? I do not care for such allegations. I have seen with my own eyes how he looked after Ba. I think he had seen Ba's virtues and became a great admirer of hers. The knowledge that you are Ba's brother prompts him to keep you and look after you. You need not worry about how much you will have to pay him. The doctor has told me that he does not want a single pie, but I have decided that, if you agree, I shall pay him what I think proper from out of your own possessions. I have discussed this with Manilal too. But if you are not willing to pay a single pie, well, a lot of money has already been spent over you and this will be some more. It will be to the good if you get well and can live a normal life. However, Ba's last words to me about you were: "You have done what you could for Madhavdas, I did what I could as his sister, and made you do what you could for him. Now you need not do anything for

[1] Kunvarji Parekh, son-in-law of Harilal Gandhi

him." This is what she said about you and Harilal. I know that these words proceeded from her anger, but also from her love. I have not, therefore, obeyed those words literally. Now do what you wish, with God, whom you believe you worship every day, as witness. Of one thing you may be sure, that I will not be able to keep you in the Ashram, nor can I cure you. And remember also that no relation will be able to accommodate you. Society is so constituted that even though a person may wish to do something he is not able to do it, cannot do it. Ultimately, everyone has to turn to God, and only what He does or permits is possible. If you can think, then after reading this letter stay where you are. If you cannot think, then also, do not do anything in a hurry but stay there. May God bless you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2727

536. LETTER TO KRISHNAVARMA

August 4, 1945

BHAI KRISHNAVARMA,

Please read the enclosed letter and then pass it on to Mama. I read your whole letter yesterday, till then I was not able fully to go through it. I agree with what you say. I have given Mama some idea of you in my letter to him. I had observed even when you were here that you had no control over your tongue. You do not observe the rules of cleanliness—maybe, you do not even know them. I had noticed that also when you were here. I presume you are doing the same there. Kanti Mashruwala is an admirer of yours. Manilal had been there. He is not an admirer of you but he is wise. He has seen something of the world. He recognizes your qualities. He believes that you are no doubt good at heart but he also believes that you do not observe the rules of cleanliness nor make others do so. I only know your goodness and therefore wish that your shortcomings may disappear. I know that I have served my own interest in sending Mama to you and I still want to keep him there. He will be in a very bad plight if he goes away from there. I cannot keep him in the Ashram, as it will be against the spirit of the Ashram. I do not think he can stay anywhere else. Whatever has to be done, you alone can do. As you have started a hospital it certainly is your duty. Follow nature-cure

methods at the hospital. You must know the rules of cleanliness and observe them meticulously. There are too many mosquitoes there. Just because you are taking work from the poor women you should not put up with their indifferent performance. As a doctor and a householder it is your duty to teach them cleanliness. It should be your job to eradicate mosquitoes from the neighbourhood. You should know how to do that. How can you call yourself a nature-cure doctor if you do not do all these things? I can write much along these lines but I am sure you are one of those to whom a word is enough. For this reason and also because I do not have the time I am not prolonging the letter.

I understand about Sailen. Encash the cheque he has sent to you. I won't think it is your fee by any means. I know you did notkeep Sailen for the sake of fee. But I thought he should on his own put into the charity box whatever he could afford and therefore asked him to send the cheque. Get the cheque cashed and utilize the money for charity. I do not advise you to come here. The main reason of course is that I do not have the time. Otherwise I would be happy if I could keep you here and give you training in cleanliness. But that is not possible at the moment. I shall call you when such an occasion arises. However, if you want to come on your own, want to be reassured and if you do come, it will be a different matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

537. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

August 4, 1945

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I have your postcard. You write that Mama should be allowed to go where he wants. I do not understand this, nor does Manilal. Where will he go? Where will he stay? Are you going to keep him? If you think he can stay in the Ashram, that is not possible. Have you considered what would happen if he were to go and stay in his own house? Mama has gone to Malad of his own free will. When he asked me to send him to Malad I was not willing to do so. I requested Dr. Krishnavarma when Manilal pleaded on his behalf. It requires but one moment to remove him from there, but I believe that it would harm

him. However, I will do whatever all of you tell me. But remember that afterwards I shall not be able to do anything. I am convinced that in doing so I am acting in an objective spirit and in accordance with dharma. At present Manilal is at Akola. He writes to say that he will be coming here on Monday with his wife and children. I will discuss the matter with him, too.

I hope all of you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9753

538. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,
August 4, 1945

Several Congressmen have asked me questions relating to the Congress programme. Cablegrams too have been received from London and other places. I am sorry I have not been able to acknowledge them. The reason, however, is and should be obvious. In the absence of the Maulana Saheb and other members of the Working Committee, it is true I took upon myself the responsibility to give such advice as I was capable of giving in regard to Congress matters.

Now that the Working Committee is out, I can only give advice through the Maulana Saheb and the Working Committee. My advice, independently given, may be in conflict with their opinion and it may embarrass them and even put them or me in a wrong position and, what is more, may confuse the public mind. Therefore, I should warn all here and outside India against making any reference to me on such questions as are properly for the President and the Working Committee to advise upon.

The Hindu, 6-8-1945

539. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

August 4, 1945

I said then and I repeat now that my offer to Mr. Jinnah was not in the nature of a bargain.[1] It was my settled conviction though originally derived from Rajaji[2]. I am not in the habit of deriving anything from anybody, however great he is, unless I can appropriate and assimilate it for myself. Therefore even if Rajaji went back on that Formula, I shall stick to it so long as I retain my sanity. I hold it to be substantial and also directly derivable from the Congress Resolutions and immediately from the Resolution of August 8, 1942. Only I have given it concrete shape.

The Hindu, 6-8-1945

540. LETTER TO MAURICE FRYDMAN

August 5, 1945

MY DEAR BHARATANAND,

Your good letter. I am glad you have dropped vegetarianism. It must be natural, if it ever comes back. Do take what your system needs and be well. The assumed name may be dropped. You will be just as lovable as Frydman.

Be well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 45

[1] The correspondent had asked whether Gandhiji's offer to M. A. Jinnah made in September 1944 still stood; for details, *vide* "Letter to M.A. Jinnah", 24-9-1944.

[2] For the Rajaji Formula, *vide* "C. Rajagopalachari's Formula".

541. LETTER TO GOSIBEHN CAPTAIN

SEVAGRAM,
August 5, 1945

VAHALA BEHN,

Your hurried note. Are you well? Peppery sister came, saw, conquered and went. I have discussed your scheme with Shyamlal. But you must do your part. *Dordi*[1] never leaves its rigid shape even when it is burnt.

Love.

BAPU

GOSIBEHN CAPTAIN
GANDHI SEVA SANGH
CHOWPATTY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

542. LETTER TO HASUMATI D. DESAI

August 5, 1945

CHI. HASUMATI,

I could see your collection of poems only today. I got it only two days ago. I advise you not to get it published. It will be wrong to make money out of it. Poetry cannot be appreciated by associating names of two persons with it. I have always been against such a risk. Your handwriting should be as beautiful as pearls. I know that my handwriting is bad. That I cannot improve it at this age should be a warning to people such as you.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

SHRIMATI HASUMATI DHIRAJLAL DESAI
BALVAIDYA KHANCHO
SANDHADIAWAD
GOPIPURA
SURAT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Gujarati word meaning rope

543. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

August 5, 1945

CHI. KANTI[1],

Both of you should learn non-attachment from the service of Harilal. Through non-attachment devotion to someone can be transformed into devotion to God. If such devotion is not linked with devotion to God, it becomes infatuation and assumes a dangerous form. You two have spared no effort in the service of Harilal. I had felt all along that Harilal would ultimately act as he had always done. But let not this worry you in the least. You should be thankful if even the last rites fell to your lot to perform. You have shown devotion in many ways. All that devotion will have achieved fulfilment if now you turn it into devotion to God. And true devotion to God as I see itnow is devotion to *Sutranarayana*[2]. The word *Daridranarayana*[3] was first used by Vivekananda (if my memory serves me right, for I am not quite sure whether it was he or some other holy man who used it first). The word *Satyanarayana*[4] is well known. But as God of action it is *Sutranarayana* who reveals Himself to me. You have started worship of that God. Understand His nature properly. Rise above the intrigues there or anywhere else. If you do not show the slightest softness to Harilal, he will leave Mysore. Try to find out, if you can, how he managed to obtain Rs. 200 from the Maharaja of Mysore.

You may tell me, when we meet, the other things which you have on your mind. But do not worry if you cannot. If you wish to write about them, have no hesitation in doing so. See that Saraswati[5] and you devote yourselves to your studies and complete them.

Blessings to both of you from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7376. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] Son of Harilal Gandhi
[2] God in the form of yarn
[3] God in the form of the poor
[4] God in the form of Truth
[5] Addressee's wife

544. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

August 5, 1945

CHI. RAMDAS,

You have used reasoning in your letter which, however, does not appeal to me. You have a right to go to Dinshaw's because he has made you his own. Dinshaw is imbued with the spirit of altruism, even towards the poorest. His is not an organization for the poor. Similarly it is not for the rich. However, both can go there as also those belonging to the middle class; that is possible because of Dinshaw's good nature. Moreover, you had no right to use reasoning the way you have, for you had given me to understand that you were about to take long leave, or had taken it, and would be devoting a year to improving your health. Of course you will have yourself treated there and think of going to Dinshaw only after you have completely ruined your health. As you will yourself admit you could not perceive Dinshaw's love for you. I therefore even now advise you to take oneyear's leave and go to Dinshaw's. As I have already told you, I shall manage to find your one year's expenses from somewhere. I shall not pay from the Ashram funds but seek money for you from somewhere. I have forgotten what arrangement was made about the expenditure. However, explain that to me again and I will act accordingly. You have something that attracts older persons to you. I myself do not know what it is but I have firsthand knowledge of it. Dinshaw knows many of my people but he is not drawn to them. But he is attracted to you. Most probably you yourself do not know why that is so. This is one of the instances. I have many others in my mind. It would therefore be better if you did not argue over the matter and went to Dinshaw's. If you both want to go you may. It will be enough for you to wind up the establishment from there for one year. There are numerous teaching institutions in Poona. Kanam and Usha won't have any difficulty in learning Marathi if they have to.

Manilal and Sushila will be arriving tomorrow. Sita will stay on in Akola. She is engrossed in her studies.

I am still of the opinion that Nimu[1] did well in not going either to Delhi or to Simla. There is no point in making Sumi[2] dependent on

[1] Nirmala, addressee's wife

[2] Sumitra, addressee's daughter

you. I can understand parents' attachment. However, this time I have seen that neither Nimu nor you could have done anything more for Sumi than what Devdas and Lakshmi did for her. I noticed that they looked after Sumi in the same way as they look after their own children. Sumi gave me the impression that she also held the same view. She is quite at home with the children there. Ultimately, isn't God the Protector of all? Gopaldas's and Nalini's son was gone in a moment while they helplessly looked on.[1] Nalini could not save him. There are so many such instances.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RAMDAS GANDHI
KHALASI LINES
KINGSWAY, NAGPUR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

545. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
August 5, 1945

CHI. SUMI,

I notice that even now you do not worship pure truth. You do not even fulfil the promises you gave me. What is the meaning of your pining for Nimu when you have accepted Devdas and Lakshmi as your parents? They of course treat you accordingly. We should be content with the situation in which we place ourselves or are placed. For the sake of the love Devdas and Lakshmi cherish for you, you must protect your health, your eyes. Why should you put yourself through the strain of an examination? Why should you force yourself to finish a specified course within a specified time? You have to preserve your eyes, your intellect and your body in order to continue with your studies. This is such an obvious truth that it does not need any explanation. It is self-evident. Hence the Gujarati saying: the health of the body is the first happiness. So allay Ramdas's and Nimu's fears by studying without becoming restless and improving your health. Bring credit to the love Devdas and Lakskmi have for you and be worthy of it. I absolve you from your pledge of writing to

[1] Gopalrao Kulkarni's son had died of scorpion bite.

me. Write to me only when you feel enthused and when it is convenient. Do not write to me by straining your eyes and neglecting your studies. I only desire that you should become ever more pure in body and mind. It is for this reason alone that I expect letters from you.

Blessings from

BAPU

SUMITRA R. GANDHI

BIRLA GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL

PILANI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

546. LETTER TO C. C. GANGULI

August 5, 1945

BHAI GANGULI,

I have your letter. My blessings to Chi. Malavika and Chi. Ruplekha. I have no zest for writing the preface.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

C. C. GANGULI

ASST. SESSIONS JUDGE

KHULNA (BENGAL)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

547. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

August 5, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

It is the same to an inmate of the Ashram whether he works as a manager or as a sweeper. Being a sweeper probably entails a greater responsibility. In being a manager there is no authority, only service. One should be prepared for both. If one finds being a sweeper pleasant and being a manager unpleasant, it is a sign of ignorance. And, if being a manager smacks of authority it means one is conceited. Keep yourself ready for managership. Do not bother about whether or not you get it. I myself do not know when you may get it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 5901. Courtesy: Krishnachandra

548. LETTER TO M. S. KELKAR

August 5, 1945

BHAI KELKAR,

I was under the impression that I had answered you. Stop taking the bicycle from here.

By all means stay in Nalwadi. Go to Dattapur from there on foot. You will have to come here only occasionally.

How much per month should I give you?! Ask for as little as possible.

I am certainly here till the 19th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

549. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS BIRLA

SEVAGRAM,
August 5, 1945

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

I have your letter. Chi. Vasant has suffered much. I hope his fever is now complete]y gone. In the case of typhoid one has to be even more careful during convalescence because the disease weakens the stomach. The diet therefore has to be watched. If the doctors permit hip-bath can be of much help.

I hope Chi. Asha is perfectly well and so also is Jugal Kishore. . . .[1] Will Rajendra Babu be able to put up with the dust of Pilani? . . .[2] I understand about Ghanshyamdas.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Omissions as in the source
[2] *ibid*

550. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

August 6, 1945

CHI. KAKA,

What I require is this. I want the rites[1] to be the simplest and in Hindustani, omitting Sanskrit *slokas* and *mantras*. For conducting it anybody will do. What we do in this case will apply to all future occasions. I think this covers all points.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10964

551. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

August 6, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

1. Write in brief. Number the paragraphs on the different subjects, so that no point may be left out in the reply.

I am sure you will have realized by now that one has to reply to points which strike one's eye.

2. Since you are the Manager, you should treat nothing as private.

3. This reply is meant for all. If you wish, you may treat your letter as private.

4. Instead of compelling the women to attend the prayer, you should explain to them their dharma and then leave the matter to them. You cannot claim greater right or control over Kanchan than over the other women. If you look upon Kanchan as your wife and wish to have children by her or gratify physical or mental craving through her, you should resign as Manager, notwithstanding your many other virtues and endowments. That is to say, you should treat Kanchan as completely independent.

5. Utilize Pushpa's services to the full. She must learn to recite the *Gita* with correct pronunciation. She can sing too. In thatcase let her sing *bhajans* at prayer time. She knows cooking and can do all

[1] For the marriage of Indumati Gunaji and A. G. Tendulkar; *vide* Appendix "Marriage Rites", 18-8-1945.

domestic chores. She will do whatever work she can. If you take her help, she will find salvation. She will become a devotee.

6. Hoshiari is illiterate, but she is firm, brave and does not shirk work.

7. Kambale may have faults, but he certainly has some virtues. He is a Harijan. It is our duty to serve him. This does not mean that we should spoil him. It will be a great thing if you are able to understand the secret that we can raise him without spoiling him.

8. Omprakash is capable of great progress. He seems to be a good man. It is necessary to understand him. I have been training him. If you do not think he may be a lustful man, you may let him teach the women, not where he would be alone with them but in a big room, or on my verandah or, if Sushila Gandhi permits, in Ba's room. Even if a man is a perfect *brahmachari*, he should never be alone with a woman.

9. Ramnarayan[1] will have to pay all the expenses. Since the girls are to be given modern education outside, he will not be considered an Ashram inmate. If he himself, however, wishes to stay here till he gets a house outside, he may pay nominal rent and stay. But he should not have a separate kitchen. Lanterns too should be shared as far as possible. Even if he is ready to pay for them, we cannot give any just now. It is desirable that we should make some arrangement for light on the paths. Discuss this with Kanaiyo and Mohansinh. All those who wish to read should do so silently round one or two lamps. And the same for writing. We must economize on kerosene. Issue a ticket for Ramnarayan. He should not be made to carry too heavy a financial burden. All the expenses must be managed within Rs. 150. Everyone should be given local fruit and Bombay fruit should be reserved for the sick. I intend to make some arrangements. Estimate the cost of fruit from Bombay. You should exercise discretion, moderation and gentleness in this matter.

10. In order to know a man's nature we must learn to tolerate his weaknesses as we expect the world to tolerate ours. If the world did not tolerate our weaknesses it would kill us. This applies to all, but it applies especially to the Manager who has embraced ahimsa.

11. After you have finalized the set-up to your satisfaction, hand it over to somebody else to administer according to plan. Let the

[1] Ramnarayan Chowdhary

person you have in view get trained from now on, not for exercising authority but for service. I believe that such an administrator can be, ought to be, a woman. Any upright and hard-working man or woman can run a well-planned organization. Take it that those who cannot do so have some shortcomings.

12. About the trees Parnerkar[1] says that there has been no negligence. There has been some miscalculation, of course. That is, the heat has harmed four or five trees more than was expected. The rest are coming up. Exposing the trees to heat was deliberate, so that they might bear finer and sweeter fruit. You should patiently understand this point from him. He says he has consulted someone. Learn more about manure. If I get time, I will try to learn something.

13. I am trying to arrange about Dr. Kelkar. About the others, as time may permit.

Write if anything is left out. I have not revised the letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5910. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

552. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

August 6, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

1. If proper arrangements have been made, only then effect the change. Discuss the matter with both of them and do what has to be done.

2. Ascertain Kanchan's wishes. Does she crave for physical pleasure?

3. Discuss and decide with S.behn the arrangements about milk, jaggery, etc.

4. Do by and by what is possible about a common room.

5. Introduce weaving.

6. I am quite clear in my mind regarding English. I think it may be taught to those women who desire to learn it. But they should first have knowledge of the mother tongue and Hindi and Urdu.Menfolk should certainly not be encouraged. As regards Harijans, English may be taught to those who have learnt the other languages and then wish

[1] Yashwant M. Parnerkar, a dairy expert

to learn it. Of course there can be no question of persuading anybody to learn English. Is this enough?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5912. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

553. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 6, 1945

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter. It was good that you went to Dr. Sharma's centre. My relations (financial) with him are terminated. Chi. Hoshiari arrived here last night along with the child. Both are well. Go to Mirabehn.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1966

554. LETTER TO ALFRED FRENSCH

SEVAGRAM,
August 7, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am no master. I am unable to take charge of your children. My place is designed otherwise than you seem to think. You should keep your children in France.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MON. ALFRED FRENSCH
CRENSPRE. LIEPVRE (HANT RHIN) FRANCE
C. P. POSTAL STRASBURG 191-31
FRANCE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

555. LETTER TO ATULANAND CHAKRAVARTY

August 7, 1945

MY DEAR ATULANAND,

R[aj] K[umari] has sent me your letter to her. You are right about me. Your way is different from mine. But I have countenanced you as you have appealed to me as an earnest man. In spite of the testimonials you have quoted often, you have not made progress not because Congressmen have not appreciated your labours but because your unity plan has made no appeal to the general mind. But this is a long story. I suggest to you to look inward for your failure and not outward. Why not do some concrete work, be it ever so little? And then there will be no failure. For concrete work is its own success. I have not written this for argument but, if possible, to enable you to see the light.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 1484. Courtesy: Atulanand Chakravarty

556. LETTER TO DALJIT SINGH

August 7, 1945

BHAI DALJIT SINGHJI,

I have read both your books. I thank you for sending them. Rajkumari passed them on to me.

In both you have talked of miracles. I give no importance to miracles. Our religious literature is full of miracles. I think it is necessary that you should give the Hindi or Gurmukhi original which you have translated into English. How can one study them without their originals?

M. K. GANDHI

STRAWBERRY HILLS
SIMLA[1]

From a copy of the Hindi: G.N. 7905. Also C.W. 4273. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur

[1] The address is from Pyarelal Papers.

557. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

August 7, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Do go to Vinoba if you can be free from here. You must get his permission too. The letter is returned herewith.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4521

558. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

[On or after *August 7, 1945*][1]

CHI. A.

You must get well quick and if you can get well more quickly living with me, you should follow me to Poona. I do not know how long I shall be there. I have written to Atulanand and that at length. Probably you will have a copy of my letter to him.

Love.

BAPU

SHRIMATI RAJKUMARI
SIMLA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

559. THE MISSING LINK

[Before *August 8, 1945*][2]

This is what the Editor of the *Gram Udyog Patrika* tells me:

> I am afraid your last article[3] in regard to why people should give yarn for khadi is not convincing. Your whole argument rests on the view, which is repeated several times in the course of your article, that non-violent swaraj is impossible unless everybody spins. This crucial point, however, is never explained, but taken for granted and asserted repeatedly. Unless you can show

[1] From the reference to the letter to Atulanand Chakravarty dated August 7, 1945; *vide* "Letter to Atulanand Chakravarty", 7-8-1945.

[2] The article appeared in *The Hindu*, 11-8-1945, under the date-line "Bombay, August 8".

[3] *Vide* "Why Khadi for yarn and not for money?", july 1945.

> what connection there is between non-violent swaraj and the people of all kinds—even those who have more profitable occupation—taking to the charkha for their cloth requirements, your argument cannot convince those who honestly feel that your asking them to spin, if they want to use khadi, even when their time can be spent more profitably, is to expect a little too much from them. So can you perhaps provide this missing link in your argument for the next issue, and show how through spinning we can obtain non-violent swaraj?

The better course this time is to answer in English. Few, if any, readers who do not know English would ask for the "missing link", for the very simple reason that, they know my argument showing the connection between hand-spinning and swaraj obtained through non-violence. Swaraj can only be obtained by work, either violent or non-violent. Violent work we know. It necessarily includes training in the use of the most modern weapons of destruction and all it means. By common consent this has been ruled out. Mere constitutional means, though non-violent, went out of date long ago. It is a superstition to think that liberty can be gained by such means in the teeth of armed opposition. Non-violent work is then the only means for winning freedom. What is the training or work that Indians should undertake for adapting themselves for non-violent efforts? It has been shown that Indian freedom was lost when India's chief trade in cotton fabric, which was prepared in her cottages, was destroyed and together with it many other occupations which Indians carried on to sustain that trade. It is obvious that that trade and the allied occupations should be revived or some others consistent with non-violence should be taken up. Revival was the only thing thought of. It was being attempted by way of copying the English or, say, the modern method of replacing human labour by means of power-driven machinery. Instinctively I rejected it [as] being a way of violence and sought to replace it by human labour [as] being a way of non-violence. The struggle between the two is going on. In my opinion, the war that is ending has demonstrated the bankruptcy of violence. Solvency of non-violence remains to be proved. Revival of the central trade of India by means of power-driven machinery is possible only by a superior exhibition of the resourcefulness of the West. And, if it becomes possible, it will find the masses of India no better off than now. I advance no argument in proof of this proposition. For, it can be studied through a perusal of my writings already published in

book form[1].

Then the only form of non-violent work to be done by the largest number of men, women and children of the land, in order to regain the lost trade with its attendant activities, is the spinning-wheel. Thus conceived, it easily becomes the symbol *par excellence* of non-violence. To be an instrument of swaraj, naturally it must not flourish under Government or any other patronage. It must flourish, if need be, even in spite of the resistance from Government or the capitalist who is interested in his spinning and weaving mills. The spinning-wheel represents the millions in the villages as against the classes represented by the mill-owners and the like.

"Assuming," the Editor asks, "that the wheel is designed to bring in swaraj non-violently, why should a person who is more usefully occupied or even disinclined spin?" The reason is more psychological than utilitarian. The villagers have become used to imitating the city-dwellers so much so that the movement is towards migration to the city slums instead of remaining in and improving their own lot in the villages. If every person sets apart, for the sake of winning swaraj non-violently, a certain time for hand-spinning, an atmosphere for spinning will be created and if khadi became an article for personal use instead of being an article of commerce, which it now largely is, the question of competition with mill-cloth or any other cloth will disappear and the poorest as well as the richest will be able to wear and use khadi without the slightest difficulty. No wonder Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has called it "the livery of our freedom".[2]

Gram Udyog Patrika, Vol. I

[1] *Economics of Khadi*, a collection of Gandhiji's articles, published in 1942

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 30-7-1937 and Appendix "Livery of Freedom", 31-7-1937.

560. TELEGRAM TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI[1]

WARDHAGANJ,
August 8, 1945

RIGHT HON'BLE SHASTRIAR
SWAGATAM
MADRAS

HOPE YOUR ILLNESS TEMPORARY AND YOU ARE NOT NEEDLESSLY WORRYING OVER COUNTRY'S SITUATION.[2]

GANDHI

From the original: V. S. Srinivasa Sastri Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

561. TELEGRAM TO PURUSHOTTAM DAS TANDON

WARDHA,
August 8, 1945

BABU PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON
CROSTHWAITE ROAD
ALLAHABAD

I THINK OUR CORRESPONDENCE SHOULD BE RELEASED. PLEASE WIRE CONSENT.

BAPU

From the original: P. D. Tandon Collection. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Expressing his misgivings about the Rajaji Formula the addressee, in his letter dated August 4, 1945, had written: "You may, by one chance out of ten, bring it off. The country may acclaim the result. I shall not. The price is too big, the purchase will be a bogus article."

[2] The addressee's reply read: "Thanks. Am improving. Wise heads planning country's welfare. My worry really useless but best part one's life."

562. TRIBUTE TO ZAGHLUL PASHA[1]

WARDHA,
August 8, 1945

I never had the pleasure of meeting Zaghlul Pasha, but I have always entertained high regard for his patriotism and bravery.

The Hindu, 9-8-1945

563. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
August 8, 1945

CHI. RAJKUMARI,

Your letter. Your illness does disturb me. But what is the use of my disturbing myself over the inevitable, whatever the reason may be?

There was nothing wrong in your sending the wires and mentioning the proposed hanging[2].

I am glad Shummy is better.

The cutting is no doubt vicious and untrue. But you are right. It should be ignored. It cannot be answered even by producing facts. It can only be answered by right action.

I wrote to Raja Daljit Singh yesterday.[3] A copy will go with this.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4274. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7906

[1] A well-known Egyptian leader (1860-1927). This was sent on his death anniversary.

[2] Of Mahendra Chowdhary, who was hanged on August 7. *Vide* "Statement to the press", 11-8-1945.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Atulanand Chakravarty", 7-8-1945.

564. LETTER TO RICHARD SYMONDS

[*August 8, 1945*][1]

DEAR SYMONDS,

You are unnecessarily agitated. I did not know that you had anything to do with the thing. I understand the whole thing from Sudhir. I think I told you that we were living in artificial and unnatural atmosphere and therefore we had to have thick skins if we were to do our duty.

I expect to see you in Bengal, if I succeed in coming there.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

RICHARD SYMONDS, ESQ.
FRIENDS AMBULANCE UNIT
1 UPPER WOOD ST.
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

565. LETTER TO V. K. KRISHNA MENON

SEVAGRAM *via* WARDHA (C. P.),
INDIA,
August 8, 1945

DEAR MENON[2],

Panditji[3] has sent me your letter to him.

I am not frightened of the word 'machine'. Therefore, if a life-giving machine can be made in India and will do the work of the spinning-wheel more quickly and better, I would have it and pay a tempting prize to the inventor.

You should be informed that a fat prize was issued to the inventor of such a machine.4 The terms were advertised here and in foreign countries. There was only one Indian inventor. I sat at hismachine and found it wanting, but I let the board of judges who

[1] This letter is placed among those of August 8, 1945.
[2] Secretary, India League, London
[3] Jawaharlal Nehru
[4] *Vide* "To Correspondents", 22-6-1921.

were previously appointed give their judgment which, I was sorry, was hostile to the - his humane machine. I would like to welcome another such Singer, only not for one woman but for the starving millions of India.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI V. K. KRISHNA MENON
165 THE STRAND
LONDON, W. C. 2

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

566. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEVAGRAM,
August 8, 1945

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

Your letter is beautiful. -Indu has done a bold thing. I have written to Menon[1]. I enclose a copy. That is all the time I can spare.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

567. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

August 8, 1945

CHI. KAKA,

I have your letter. I am in two minds about whether you should or should not go to the Tilak Vidyapith. And therefore it is best that I should express no definite opinion. -We do not wish to enter into controversy over the Vedas. The compositions that are today accepted as the Vedas are full of unresolved doubts. Not all the writings have come down to us. Even from among those which have, no one knows what is genuine and what is not. As regards their interpretation, sheerconfusion prevails. Hence the judgment about goodness or badness can come only from a purified conscience. I have, therefore, taken as my guide the *sloka* cited by Anandshankarbhai[2] in his book:

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Anandshankar Bapubhai Dhruva

विद्वद्भिः सेवितः सद्भिर्नित्यमद्वेषरागिभिः।

हृदयेनाभ्यनुज्ञातो यो धर्मस्तं निबोधते॥[२]

I do not even know from where he has quoted the *sloka*. It appealed to me instantly and sank into my heart, and I, therefore, got it included in the women's prayer. Also please remember that we got the marriage of the Harijan girl Lakskmi and Harijan Velayudhan performed according to the rite that we had accepted. I do not remember the names of other Harijans. But all this I consider irrelevant. If I am right in my statement that the regeneration of Hinduism lies in our becoming Harijans, then it is very clear that a change must be made in the marriage rite in all weddings taking place in the Ashram or the ones with my blessings. Since I have already agreed, Indu and Tendulkar should be married in the Ashram. I am not bound as regards the rite, and, therefore, the new rite should be introduced from this wedding. I am giving all this additional information here simply by way of background. You may, if you wish, discuss this matter with him. You may discuss it with Vinobaji also, and then prepare as short a text of the ceremony as possible. Remember that this must be finalized before I leave. I assume that you also will be accompanying me. I saw the other photograph of Bal[1], and recognized him. Now let us see where we land.

I gave your letter to Ki. to read. I am told that he is strongly opposed to it. If you wish, you may discuss the matter with him also.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10965

568. LETTER TO GOPE GURBUXANI

August 8, 1945

CHI. GURBUXANI,

You are mistaken. It is not right that the world has an eye only for the wealth of people. It looks more for the heart than for wealth.

You must have received the money. Your intention to give all the money is commendable.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1318

[1] Addressee's son

569. LETTER TO KUSUM NAIR

August 8, 1945

CHI. KUSUM,

I have your letter. Asking questions also requires an art, which you do not have. Now that you have risen high, why should you care for my answers? As it is I have hardly any desire and less time. You should find my answers from my life.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KUSUM NAIR
2 REVIERA
MARINE DRIVE, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

570. STATEMENT ON APPEAL FOR FUNDS[1]

August 8, 1945

I have gone through the appeal[2] of the trustees. I like it. I hope that the entire amount they have asked for in it will be available through contributions. I feel that much has been done for the propagation of Hindustani in the southern provinces and hope that even more will be done in the future. People should contribute on the understanding that the money thus raised will be used for furthering the cause of the national language as I have defined it. The national language as explained in the appeal is a language written in the Urdu or Hindi style and in the Nagari or Urdu script. This means that the Hindi written solely in the Devanagari script cannot be called national language, nor can the language written solely in the Persian script. The true Hindustani will be evolved only when we, who know the national language, are able to write it in both the scripts and speak in both the dictions. There can be no doubt that even today millions of Hindus and Muslims in the North speak such a language, such Hindustani. However, we cannot say that educated people of the North speak such Hindustani. If it has to be our misfortune that such a state of affairs should continue, then it will continue, but it should be our

[1] This was communicated to M. Satyanarayana, General Secretary, Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha.

[2] Of the Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha, for a fund of Rs. 5 lakhs

hope that it will come to an end soon. This can be the only meaning of propagating Hindustani. Therefore the work of propagating Hindustani which is going on in South India will emphasize both the styles. And that is the meaning of the resolution which the Congress passed in 1925[1]. The resolution was:

> This Congress resolves that the proceedings of the Congress, A.I.C.C. and the Congress Working Committee shall ordinarily be conducted in Hindustani. The English language or any other provincial language may be used if the speaker is unable to speak in Hindustani or whenever necessary. Proceedings of the Provincial Congress Committeeshall ordinarily be conducted in the language of the province concerned. Hindustani may also be used.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

571. LETTER TO M. S. KELKAR

August 8, 1945

BHAI KELKAR,

I have your letter. Would not your having to take quinine indicate that there was something lacking in your treatment?

Do take Rs. 25 per month and improve your health. My only point is that if you spend the entire sum of Rs. 25 on food and improve your health, but then have a relapse and are again obliged to take quinine, what would one have to say of your treatment? I do not doubt your goodness but I have the gravest doubts concerning your treatment. That I may be wrong is a different thing.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KELKAR (NALWADI)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In December at Kanpur

572. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN CHOWDHARY

SEVAGRAM,
August 8, 1945

CHI. RAMNARAYAN,

I have your letter. What would be the good of my sending for all three of you here? It is unnecessary. I must admit I have not understood your point. I had understood that Anjana Devi was keen on providing modern education to Sita[1] and Subhadra[2]. I do not consider it improper in any way. While going in for Nayee Talim, she is free to send the girls elsewhere whenever she feels like it. If they want to be educated there at present, you must stay somewhere nearby. You will go to the Goshala when the building is ready in four to six months' time. Since no other accommodation is available itwould be better if it can be found in the Ashram as was done in the case of Prabhakar. I have written to Munnalal to that effect.[3] Prabhakar used to cook his own food. I did not make this applicable to you because I thought that except for the education of Sita and Subhadra you and Anjana Devi had a preference for the Ashram life. Therefore I felt you would not need to cook separately. But now I understand from your letter that you do not like the system at the Ashram. If that is so the Ashram life must be something different. But I don't think it is so. Understand that if the life and routine in the Ashram cause you discomfort you both, or at least Anjana Devi, will not be able to stay here in peace. Your cooking separately will hurt me and irritate the managers. It should not be necessary to convince you on this point. Hence, consider the matter well and do whatever you think best. It is your duty to understand the limitations of those running the Ashram.

Blessings From

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 5902. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Addressee's wife and daughters
[2] *ibid*
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Munnalal G. Shah", 6-8-1945.

573. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

Express SEVAGRAM,
August 9, 1945

P.S.V.
VICEROY'S CAMP

POSTED LETTER[1] ABOUT CHIMUR PRISONERS ON 4TH. RECEIPT WAS DUE YESTERDAY. ANXIOUS KNOW WHETHER IT WAS DULY RECEIVED.

GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 37

574. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

August 9, 1945

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

Do you also hanker after blessings? Of what avail are they, if you do your work well? If you do not, they will never make up for the deficiency. You should know that.

Blessings to all from
BAPU

SHIVABHAI PATEL
VALLABH VIDYALAYA
BOCHASAN, KHEDA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9520. Also C.W. 439. Courtesy: Shivabhai G. Patel

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E.M.Jenkins", 3-8-1945.

575. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
August 9, 1945

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

It is a pity that you cannot sleep while travelling. We shall be reaching Poona in time, and shall see what happens there. I leave on the 19th and arrive there[1] on the 20th. I shall spend the day there and then we shall leave for Poona on the 21st by the first train, assuming that, as before, they will offer us a third-class compartment. Meanwhile take some rest if you can. If you rest, Mani also will get some rest. I feel that she will not be able to endure the present strain for long. Even now she is sustained only by her inexhaustible devotion to you. But even devotion proves helpless in the face of what is but natural. There was a vivid account in the newspapers of the Ahmedabad events.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 283

[1] At Bombay

576. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

August 9, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter.

I should certainly like to stay with you. But you know I am not going there for a change. I want to take Sardar to Dinshaw's clinic for treatment. You should, however, assume that I am staying with you. I will assume so myself. I hope to start from here on the 19th. I am waiting for Sardar's letter.

You got a fine *samadhi*[1] constructed. That was good. Arrangements have also been made for people to visit it.

I hope all of you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4836. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

577. LETTER TO SAILENDRA NATH CHATTERJEE

August 9, 1945

BHAI SAILEN,

I have your letter. I do not think it is any good answering your question. For the moment the less I say the better. Asking a question calls for art, for thought. So if a question is not of a kind deserving a reply I will not reply to it. I would like to give you something, but what can be done? You yourself should make the effort.

Blessings from

BAPU

UNITED PRESS
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Kasturba Gandhi's *samadhi* in the Aga Khan Palace in Poona

578. LETTER TO VENKATAKRISHNAIYYA

SEVAGRAM,
August 9, 1945

BHAI VENKATAKRISHNAIYYA,

I have gone through your letter. The argument given in it does not appeal to me. Your thoughts are confused. Maybe, I am too old to appreciate your point. I personally feel that my mind is able to grasp new things. However, you may go ahead according to your ideas.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI U. VENKATAKRISHNAIYYA
KHADDAR SANSTHANAM
BEZWADA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9244. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

579. LETTER TO Y. M. PARNERKAR

August 9, 1945

CHI. PARNERKAR,

I found your letter irrelevant. I enclose Munnalal's reply. I did not know that manure was improved by being kept for so many months. The complaint about the trees is still there. Please consider both these matters if you think they call for consideration.

I have not fully understood what Bhai Patil wants to know. If you can explain to me I will let you know.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

580. LETTER TO INDUMATI GUNAJI

August 10, 1945

CHI. INDU,

This letter is for both of you.

I propose to solemnize your wedding on the 19th. The ceremony is likely to be performed by Prabhakar. He is from a Harijan family. His parents had become Christians.

The rite is being drafted by Kakasaheb.[1]

I assume that you approve of all this. I think you ought to write to your elders and seek their permission.

I assume also that this marriage will not be for indulgence but for service. I assume further that until real independence is achieved you will not consummate your marriage. And of course I take it for granted that you will not take to contraceptive methods.

I need not say that if you find all this hard you should not feel obliged to have the marriage solemnized here.

If you approve of a marriage of this type, do regular spinning, study the 12th Chapter of the *Gita* with interest and understanding, and think only of public good while working in the Ashram.

Remember that in drafting this rite I have not taken the law into consideration.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10946. Courtesy: Indumati G. Tendul-kar

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Marriage Rites", 18-8-1945.

581. LETTER TO K. N. KATJU

SEVAGRAM,
August 10, 1945

BHAI KAILASHNATH[1],

Read this letter[2] and write to me what it is about. Return the letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

582. LETTER TO MAHESH DUTTA MISHRA

August 10, 1945

CHI. MAHESH,

So you have got to go to Prayag. When will you go? It is temporary no doubt. But how long will you be required to stay there? Will it be a regular job?

Do come here for the holidays. Do not eat everything even though you may be well. Whatever you take should be taken as medicine. You have to eat to live, not live to eat.

Write to me all your experiences in brief.

I hope you are properly fixed up in regard to your food and accommodation here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6712. Also C.W. 4456. Courtesy: Mahesh Dutta Mishra

[1] (1887-1968) Minister in U. P., 1937-39 and 1946-47; Governor of Orissa, 1947; Governor of West Bengal, 1948-51; Minister for Home Affairs and Law, Government of India; retired as Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh

[2] From Bholanath of Alwar Rajya Prajamandal

583. NOTE TO INDUMATI GUNAJI

[After August *10, 1945*][1]

If both of you want to have protection of the law you may have [the marriage] registered. Devdas has done it. So has Kanu. I never wanted it, but the girls' fathers were keen on it.

I have only expressed an opinion. I never pay any attention to the law in whatever I do. We may regard Prabhakar as more than a Brahmin, but what can we do if society and the law would not recognize him?

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10951. Courtesy: Indumati G. Tendulkar

584. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

SEVAGRAM,
August 11, 1945

Those like me, who were interested in saving Mahendra Chowdhary from the gallows, are, I know, shocked that he was hanged at the Central Jail in Bhagalpur on August 7. Those who remain behind will have to know that many more such tragedies will take place. Only, we must learn the lesson of each. Let us, then, now dispassionately learn the lesson of this accomplished death sentence.

First, the Government. They do not call it a political dacoity. Every dacoity is not a political act. Many professionals used the political ferment for their own ends. Government, whether truly national or foreign, would not let such crimes go unpunished. The authorities, in this case, held Mahendra Chowdhary to be implicated in such a dacoity and, therefore, they allowed the sentence to take the extreme course. Now, for the popular side. They say that Mahendra Chowdhary was a young man of twenty-five. He had no idea of taking part in a dacoity whether professional or political, so-called. He was in hiding. He was tried after the event and sentenced on doubtful evidence.Acceptance of the evidence and the verdict depended on the whim of the judge or judges and at the time judges were, as often as not, biased.

[1] The contents of the letter indicate that this was written after the letter to the addressee dated August 10, 1945; *vide* "Letter to Indumati Gunaji", 10-8-1945.

If the popular belief is founded on fact, the death was a murder, worse, reprehensible because judicial. Who can find the truth, except a body of utterly impartial lawyers? They have to do so from the recorded evidence and the judgements of the original and appellate courts. Let us neither be carried away by sentiment nor lazily forget the incident, now that Mahendra Chowdhary is no more. If Government at all care for public opinion and would not rest on the overwhelming force they have at their disposal, they will be equally interested, and will associate themselves with the public.

The Hindu, 13-8-1945

585. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

August 11, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

I expected your answer to K. and asked her to do something herself.

I wanted the name. Do not bring *Saf Karo* with you. Yes, you can join me in Poona, if I am not here by the time you come. No grumbling about your pains. *Nanak* is a good book but for the miracles.[1] I wish you could induce the Raja to give a better thing in Hindustani, i. e., in Nagari and Urdu characters. He has taken much pains over it.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4275. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7907

586. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

August 11, 1945

MY DEAR KU.,

You can come tomorrow at 11 a. m. and dine here at 12. You will talk while I am eating.

I am running away to Poona on [the] 19th. I do not know whether I shall return on the appointed date. Can the meeting take place in Poona? If not, I must return for the meeting and go back. But that tomorrow.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Daljit Singh", 7-8-1945.

I have not finished the manuscript[1] yet but may by tomorrow.

About the article also when we meet.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10176

587. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

August 11, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Read the accompanying letter. I like it. Kanchan writes what she feels. I think it is necessary that she should be satisfied. How can she be forced against her will? But I doubt very much if you two can stay together in the Ashram. It seems to me impossible that you may stay in a house of your own in the Ashram and still refrain from sexual gratification. Kanchan at any rate will not be able to do so. And, knowing you as I do, I can say that you also will not be able to do so. Ramprasad is not an Ashram inmate. He is a paid worker and runs a separate kitchen of his own. Even so, I am not reconciled to their gratification of physical desire. But having engaged him I am helpless. His case, like Niyamat's, should not be cited as a precedent. Think calmly over all this and write to me. I understand about Hiramani.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8443. Also C.W. 5589. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

588. MESSAGE TO ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION, LAHORE

[On or Before *August 12, 1945*][2]

I say 'spin'. Swaraj lies in every thread of yarn. If all Indians spin and come to me I will give them swaraj. Forty crores of people live in India. Leaving children aside, if all the rest spin it will be a great achievement. I have been, therefore, laying stress on spinning. Spinning is not a small thing. This is my message for "Liberty

[1] Of *The Economy of Permanence*, written by the addressee

[2] The report is date-lined "Lahore, August 12".

Week". I am not joking. Great power lies latent in spinning.

The Bombay Chronicle, 13-8-1945

589. LETTER TO ARUNA ASAF ALI

SEVAGRAM,
August 12, 1945

DEAR ARUNA[1],

The distress is of your own imagination.[2] I fear that the Maulana's letter was of my doing. There was no question of isolating you from the rest or of expecting you to suppress anything. You were represented as being very ill and so there was a mention of your illness and special urgency of your release. Asaf[3] had no hand in it. So far as I know he came to know of the letter after it was dispatched. Will you not give him and to everyone else the liberty of free thought that you claim for yourself? I hope you are well.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: Aruna Asaf Ali Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

590. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI[4]

August 12, 1945

CHI. PRABHA,

I do not remember whether or not I have dictated a letter to you. If I have not, then four days have gone by [since I received your letter].

You have to come to me when you are free from there. I think that if your services are urgently required just now, you should offer them. Personally I appove of your voluntarily confining your sphere of service to villages.

[1]Member, All-India Congress Socialist Party; was imprisoned during the Quit India movement.

[2] The addressee, in her letter dated August 8, had expressed her deep distress over the special representation made by Abul Kalam Azad to the Viceroy for her release.

[3] Asaf Ali, addressee's husband

[4] The letter is in the Devanagari script.

Even while you are there, you should pick up carding and ginning. Practise them regularly. Read whatever you can get.

I am writing this without your letter in front of me. If, therefore, I have left out any point, let me know.

I will leave here on the 19th, spend a day in Bombay and then take Sardar to Poona on the 21st.

Take care of your health.

I am all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3578

591. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
August 12, 1945

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter. If God enables us to meet, we shall discuss the matter further in Poona.

I have even written to Maulana Saheb, though not in your fashion. It is a difficult job. There can be no two opinions that before taking any particular step he should consult you all.

What I had written to Jinnah Saheb was final, and, therefore, I cannot do anything different. But you and others have a right todisagree with what I wrote. If you cannot endorse it from your heart, you should declare that openly. I did not speak on anybody's behalf, but merely expressed my own opinion. If I see any error in what I did, I would immediately admit it. You know well enough that he likes nothing that I suggest. But don't worry about it.

New elections must be held. But it is not certain that they will be. If they are held, we shall see. More in Poona.

I can fully understand your inability to come here. Railway travelling is no longer possible for you. Will it be less painful if you fly from Bombay to Poona?

Your last speech[1] was liked by everybody. But I feel that you went too far. But don't mind about that. You just cannot suppress

[1]At Bombay on August 9. The addressee had been earlier released from the Ahmednagar Fort on June 15, 1945.

what is on your mind.

I hope Mani will not exert herself too much and fall ill.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 284-5

592. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

August 12, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Plan a programme of study for Gajraj[1] and let me know. His studies should be properly attended to. If you wish to ask me anything about this matter, you may do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8439. Also C.W. 5590. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

593. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

August 12, 1945

BHAI JAJUJI,

Give a reply after going through this.[2] Send me a copy of it and also the letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Son of Hoshiari

[2] From Harekrushna Mahtab; *vide* the following item; also "Letter to Harekrushna Mahtab", 14-8-1945.

594. LETTER TO HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB

August 12, 1945

BHAI MAHTAB[1],

How are you? You did not even mention in your letter where you were writing from. It is not that the khadi produced in Orissa cannot go out of the province. However, it is true that only a small quantity will be sent out. Be assured that true well-being of Orissa lies only in that. It should not be necessary to write down everything that I have written to you. Understand the new scheme and carry it out.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI H. MAHTAB, M.L.A.
CUTTACK (ORISSA)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

595. LETTER TO NISHITH NATH

August 12, 1945

BHAI NISHITH NATH,

I have your letter. I do not know what I shall be able to do. I shall certainly keep your letter in mind.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8022

[1]President, Utkal P. C. C., 1930 and 1937; member, Congress Working Committee, 1938-46; Chief Minister of Orissa, 1946-50 and 1957-60; Minister, Central Government, 1950-52

596. LETTER TO PARACHURE SHASTRI

August 12, 1945

BHAI PRACHURE SHASTRI,

I have your letter. Give the song to Prabhakar. It is a well known fact that the word *chakra* is to be found in the Vedas and other texts; also that the word charkha is derived from *chakra*. I have understood the second point.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

597. LETTER TO RATNAMAYI DEVI

August 12, 1945

CHI. RATNAMAYI,

When I received your letter, a doubt arose in my mind. I had believed that you were self-sacrificing and brave and were not scared of living in villages. You should not have waited for my orders. That does not mean that I have ceased to be your well-wisher. But now that you have settled down there, of what help can I be?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RATNAMAYI DEVI

MAHILA ASHRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

598. LETTER TO SECRETARY, SUMMERFORD ORCHARD

August 12, 1945

THE MANAGER,

I have received the apples you have sent on behalf of Shri Padampatji. They are good. Thanks.

M. K. GANDHI

SECRETARY, SUMMERFORD ORCHARD

RAMGARH P. O.

DIST. NAINITAL, U. P.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

599. LETTER TO ACHYUT PATWARDHAN

SEVAGRAM,
August 12, 1945

BHAI ACHYUT,

All your papers are being sent. If something has been left out, do ask. It will be sent.

I trust you are in good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

600. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

August 13, 1945

MY DEAR SUNDARAM[1],

You have sent me a beautiful extract. You did mention your Visit to Assisi's place. Don't come to me in Poona. Come to Sevagram when I am here.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3191

601. LETTER TO V. LAKSHMI

August 13, 1945

DEAR LAKSHMI,

The sample of yarn is good. I hope you will continue your good work.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI V. LAKSHMI
43 KARNESWARKOIL
SANTHOME, MYLAPORE, MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1]Secretary to Madan Mohan Malaviya. The superscription is in Tamil.

602. LETTER TO HARJIVAN KOTAK

August 13, 1945

CHI. HARJIVAN,

I have your letter. You have the zeal, so you will certainly get the work. My mind is working in a different way these days; so I shall not be able to suggest anything. It is very difficult to accommodate you in Poona. So meet me only when I return to Sevagram.

Blessings from

BAPU

HARJIVAN KOTAK
GRAMODYOG GANDHI HAT
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

603. LETTER TO RAMPRASAD

SEVAGRAM,
August 13, 1945

CHI. RAMPRASAD,

I have not given thought to what you should do in my absence. You are not to come to Poona. I wish the child to get well. I understand about Pushpa.

Blessings from

BAPU

C/O SULOCHANA BHATT
145 A, VIGAS SHERI
KALBA DEVI ROAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

604. LETTER TO INDUMATI GUNAJI

August 13, 1945

CHI. INDU,

Doctor[1] says you want to say something to me. If it is something confidential you can come at 4 today, if it is not confidential then come at 11.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You will not invite any outsiders except your brother.

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10947. Courtesy: Indumati G. Tendulkar

605. LETTER TO JASWANT SINGH

August 13, 1945

SARDARJI,

I have your letter. Your article is interesting.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SARDAR JASWANT SINGH
VASANT PRESS
DEHRADUN, U. P.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

606. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

August 13, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

What is there so confidential about your letter? You have not understood my point. It is as well. I suggest that you show your letter to Munnalal. If that is the case he should withdraw himself. Anything done just for my sake is to be regarded as futile. Anything that is done has to be right. Only then can it do good.

That was my view about the management. Since I am not aware of everything, the final decision should be taken by those who know

[1]A. G. Tendulkar

all the facts.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4522

607. LETTER TO Y. M. PARNERKAR

August 13, 1945

CHI. PARNERKAR,

If the manure was lying there because of paucity of labour you should have taken help from the Ashram inmates. You will remember you have asked for such help before. There was no point in shifting itfrom one place to another. It can be used for vegetables; but the question is whether it is more useful for the fruit trees or for the vegetables. I felt that your reply was not straight. If we have been negligent it is our duty to own it.

(2) I will myself see about the trees.

(3) I shall be pleased if Shri Patil and his sister-in-law live in the Ashram and work in the Goshala. But have a talk with Munnalalji and write to Patil what he says.

(4) I will certainly like it if Ramnarayan can stay in the Goshala. Ask him whether he wishes to stay or not. I was under the impression that at the moment it is not possible to accommodate him under any circumstances.

(5) Does the Hindustani Talimi Sangh want developed land? I thought it was otherwise. We must give the land. Put down everything in Writing and let me know. Let them have it on a nominal rent, for a specific period. Give them the right to return the land.

I think I have replied to all your questions.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PARNERKAR
GOSHALA
SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

608. NOTE TO INDUMATI GUNAJI

[After *August 13, 1945*][1]

Now you can talk. I shall talk if I have to reply. The question is not about. . .[2] at Wardha. The question is what is proper for you. I have not laid down any condition. If you Say it is something new, then you may leave it.

You are not a little girl, nor are you an ordinary woman. You are a worker of some standing. Tendulkar is an experienced man. I might join you two in wedlock only to see you lost in family life. Read my letter[3] again; you will not find in it any condition, only a keendesire on my part. If you have already decided to lead family life, what is the use of going through an Ashram wedding? You do not know the amount of pains I am taking and how much I am thinking about it. In my opinion this is no small matter. Know that I had expressed the same desire in the case of every other wedding. But they were all young girls with the exception of Saundaram. You on the other hand ought to raise more important questions. How will it look if you desired progeny before the coming of independence?

I shall not forbid you from inviting those people if you wish. Will they have to be served a meal here? Tell me after thinking over it.

Show me my letter. Does my language imply a condition?

* * *

This is a different matter. When you say that I laid down a condition which was not there earlier, I maintain that I have stipulated no such condition. This is why I made the inquiry. I can do something only on the assumption that neither of you will be a hypocrite. In the event of hypocrisy I shall not be losing anything; only you two will stand to lose. This has been my experience to date. Those who betrayed me have ultimately fallen.

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10950. Courtesy: Indumati G. Tendulkar

[1] From the contents it is evident that this note was written after the letter to the addressee dated August 13, 1945. *Vide* "Letter to Indumati Gunaji", 13-8-1945.

[2] One word is illegible here.

[3] Dated August 10; *vide* "Letter to Indumati Gunaji", 10-8-1945.

609. LETTER TO HAMIDULLAH

August 13/14, 1945

HAMIDULLAH SAHEB,

I have your letter. I do not answer every letter. I have understood what you say.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

HAMIDULLAH
59 NAYAGAON
LUCKNOW

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

610. DISCUSSION WITH B. S. MURTHY[1]

[Before *August 14, 1945*][2]

I can give you advice only as from one individual to another. I am not giving any advice to the Harijan Sevak Sangh which is an institution. After all the Harijan Sevak Sangh is only as good as the best men in it and I know how few they are. The Sangh has done substantial work, though not in the estimation of the Harijans or in the estimation of the orthodox Hindus. The Harijans may want to smash the caste Hindus and the caste Hindus may want to cling to the old way. The Sangh has to face both these.

You have asked me how the Sangh can be revitalized. I know the royal way is a fast by me. I might fast again and that more readily for Harijans than for anything else. But I must wait till God asks me to do it. There is no such thing as a forced fast. It has to come and I cannot say now when it will come. I must also tell you that there are others who want to fast for the Harijans. But I have told them that they are not to fast while I am alive. I have also the idea of a chain of fasts. In such a chain I will fast first and then when my body has perished, the next fast will begin and it will go on till untouchability is no more. Such a fast is conceived, but it cannot be taken up at once as I said it has to come. But before even such a thing happens a lot of spade work has to be done. That is why Harijan Sevak Sangh workers are

[1]Who had sought Gandhiji's advice on the various problems of Harijans

[2]From the reference to the Harijan Sevak Sangh workers' meeting which was held on August 14, 1945. *Vide* also "Letter to Sudhir Ghosh", 28-8-1945.

meeting here soon. They are meeting for the very purpose of revitalizing the Sangh's work.

The present feeling among the Harijan Sevak Sangh workers is that practically nothing has been done among caste Hindus. Education of Harijans is one thing; education of *Savarnas* is another and as I know more difficult. You can educate Harijans by giving them scholarships, hostels, etc., but no such way is possible among the caste Hindus. The task, therefore, is to educate the *savarnas*. But this can be done only by those who are fired by a living faith in the Hinduism which I understand. Only those who fully know the meaningof Hinduism as I know it can perform the miracle. Let us not forget that untouchability is a most difficult thing to remove and that our task is a heavy one. But I have no doubt that God will remove untou-chability or remove Hinduism.

Now in regard to your question on the political future of Harijans, I certainly see that those Harijans who have become politically conscious should straightaway have a full opportunity to figure in politics. You have asked me what I mean by saying that I want such Harijans to be more than a match for all other political competitors. Many people weigh the Harijans in some special Harijan balance. But I want to weigh the Harijans in the same balance in which I weigh the best. You have to outweigh others because you have to cover so much lost distance. That is why I expect from the Harijans greater effort than from others.

You have asked me whether Dr. Ambedkar has in my opinion thus proved himself to be more than a match. My answer is 'Yes' and 'No'. Dr. Ambedkar is a fierce and fearless man. He does not scruple to beat the Hindu dog with any stick he can get. He wants to destroy Hinduism. It is open to him to do it. If the Harijans want to do it they can do it. Then the Harijans must become the destroyers of Hinduism. I want Harijans to become as able and earnest as Dr. Ambedkar but in a different way. I want you to do even better. I want you to produce sterling men who will reshape the whole of our society. It is not enough to be educated. It is necessary to be cultured and fearless. Such men who will reshape society will have to work among the people and not cut themselves away from the people. They will have to be stern, incorruptible and self-reliant. There is nothing to prevent such people from taking any assistance from clean quarters. But my point is the more you lean on such assistance, the more difficult becomes the task of uplifting the Harijans.

The Hindu, 21-8-1945 and 31-8-1945

611. TELEGRAM TO HANUMAN PRASAD PODDAR

SEVAGRAM,
August 14, 1945

HANUMANPRASAD PODDAR
"KALYAN"
GORAKHPUR

INDIANS' PROSPERITY BOUND WITH THAT OF COW AND HER PROGENY.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

612. LETTER TO GOVERNOR OF BENGAL

SEVAGRAM,
August 14, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

Many thanks for your letter of 8th instant received yesterday afternoon.

I shall gladly avail myself of your kind offer of assistance, if I need it. Of course I know Mr. Symonds[1] very well.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR OF BENGAL
CALCUTTA

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 104

[1] Of the Friends Ambulance Unit

613. LETTER TO LALLA MEGHRAJ

SEVAGRAM,
August 14, 1945

DEAR LALLA MEGHRAJ,

Your letter. You should refer the matter to the Maulana Saheb.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

LALLA MEGHRAJ, M.L.A.
ROHRI, SINDH

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

614. LETTER TO J. POPPLETON

August 14, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You can see me in Poona after 22nd instant.

Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

J. POPPLETON, ESQ.
C/O S.S. "RANCHI"
P. & O. STEAM NAVIGATION COY.
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

615. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

[*August 14, 1945*][1]

CHI. KANAM,

I have your letter. Why do you fall ill? Should not the art of not falling ill and, having fallen ill, of getting well again be a part of everybody's study?

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. KANU GANDHI

C/O SHRI RAMDAS GANDHI

KHALASI LINE, NAGPUR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9519. Courtesy: Kanu Gandhi

616. LETTER TO KRISHNAVARMA

August 14, 1945

BHAI KRISHNAVARMA,

I have your letter. You (and Mama, if you think he is fit and can be brought) should come to Bombay on Monday. I will be observing silence but do not worry about it. I shall spare a few minutes somehow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

617. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

August 14, 1945

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. I shall be leaving on the 19th. After that my programme will be uncertain. As Sardar desires I could spend three months with him and then go to Bengal, then to the Frontier Province

[1]From the postal cancellation mark

and then to Madras. That means I shall have to be away till December.Under these circumstances you can stay with me if you come at the end of December. But that is the time when you are required to stay there.

My blessings to Akbar[1]. I am all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

618. LETTER TO DEVRAJ

August 14, 1945

BHAI DEVRAJ,

I have your letter. I am sorry you felt hurt. But I am sorrier that you cannot see what is so obvious.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI DEVRAJJI
YOGIC PHYSICAL CULTURE INSTITUTE
PLEADER STREET
LYALLPUR, PUNJAB

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

619. LETTER TO HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB

SEVAGRAM,
August 14, 1945

BHAI MAHTAB,

I had sent your letter to Shri Jajuji. He has written to you. From it you will see that the new [scheme][2] is good from all points of view.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB
CONGRESS HOUSE
CUTTACK, ORISSA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1]Akbar Chavda
[2] Illegible in the source

620. LETTER TO SHARAD KUMARI

August 14, 1945

CHI. SHARAD KUMARI,

I have your letter. Why should you feel nervous now that you have gone there? Whatever the other girls do, you must maintain simplicity. Spin and learn other crafts. Do not indulge in luxuries but at the same time do not be jealous of others. Love everyone. In the end you will make an impression.

Blessings from

BAPU

C/O THE HEADMISTRESS
CENTRAL HINDU GIRLS SCHOOL
KASHI, U.P.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

621. LETTER TO V. BHASHYAM AYYANGAR[1]

August 14, 1945

BHAISHRI,

I have your letter. I will try to lay the foundation[2]; but no decision can be taken before I come.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9761. Courtesy: B. Jagannath Das

[1] Ex-Judge of Madras High Court
[2] Of the Harijan Industrial School, Kodambakkam, Madras

622. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

August 14, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

Your two covers. Of course you will come to Poona when you are easily free from all work there.

Can Vaidya Nanak Chand work in Sevagram? What will he need? Has he a family? There may be very little Ayurvedic work for him unless he is really well up in his work.

Sushila is in Nagpur.

Harijan meeting[1] just on. Rameshwari[2] is here.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4164. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7800

623. SPEECH AT CENTRAL BOARD, HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH

WARDHA,
August 14, 1945

Gandhiji said that only caste Hindus and no Harijan should be taken on the Executive of the Sangh, as it was the caste Hindus who had to atone for their sin of prolonging untouchability. Harijans could be members of the supervision committee that might be set up for carrying on the work properly.

Replying to a question, Gandhiji said that he would appreciate the principle of satyagraha for enforcing the civic rights of Harijans in public places like tanks, wells, temples, etc. He, however, emphasized that the Harijan Sevak Sangh as an organization should not be involved in such a satyagraha. Individual Harijan workers might try that remedy with the help of others.

Gandhiji explained to the members how Harijan work was to be carried on. Persistent propaganda for changing the hearts of the orthodox and caste Hindus, hesaid, would greatly help to solve the problem of untouchability which was a stigma on Hinduism.

To create confidence among Harijans, Mahatma Gandhi went on, Harijan workers had to live amidst Harijans, mix with them, study their local and other

[1] Of the Central Board of Harijan Sevak Sangh; *vide* the following item.
[2] Rameshwari Nehru, President, Central Board of the Harijan Sevak Sangh

problems and try to solve them to their satisfaction. The workers should live like the Harijans "so that they can feel that you are one of them".

Gandhiji emphasized the need for more intensive work for the uplift of Harijans and called for more workers. It was a very vast work and needed great patience, energy, time and money, he said.

The Hindu, 16-8-1945

624. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 15, 1945[1]

On receipt of your letter today, I sent you the following wire: "Your letter. I tlnink it should not be published. Writing fully."

I do not infer from your letter that you are writing about my 'Hindus'. Whatever you have in your heart has not come in your writing. But do not worry about it. When we meet next we will talk over it if you so desire. Whatever you want to say about the communal problem should not be said without consulting the Working Committee. I am also of the opinion that it would be better to be quiet. The party can give its opinion after consultation with you. They have a right to do so. Besides it is their duty. I differ from your opinion. I can not say if I attach importance to the words 'Hindu' and 'Mussalman'. Whatever the Congress does is a different thing. At one time I do not like 'Hindu' and at another time I do not like 'Mussalman'. It means there cannot be either. All this needs pondering over. I do not feel the urge for doing anything early[2]

From a copy: C.W. 10551. Courtesy: Government of Madhya Pradesh

[1]This appears in *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VI, under the date August 16, 1945 with some verbal variations.

[2]*The Trunsfer of Power* has: "I cannot say if I attach any importance to the Hindu and Muslim (convention). What the Congress may do is another matter. I don't like the idea of a Hindu and a Muslim alternately acting as Head of the State). It means that members of other communities will be barred. All this needs careful pondering over. I do not feel the urge to do anything hastily". The letter was intercepted by the Government.

625. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

August 15, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got both your letters. I had sent you Ramnarayan's letter for your information and to know what you might have to say in the matter. What you say is perfectly correct. I certainly do not like to leave the newly arrived girls and go away, but I am helpless. You should know how to make them work. I will try to discuss the matter with Deo.

Ramnarayan will leave on the 18th. You should ponder over Krishnachandra's letter. Why does he and others form such an impression? One should hear what one's co-workers say. One may even sacrifice much for their sake.

It is not that you do not know this.

In hurry,

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8438. Also C.W. 5591. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

626. LETTER TO VINOBA BHAVE

August 15, 1945

CHI. VINOBA,

I do not believe that agriculture alone will bring self-reliance. We should become self-reliant through the handicrafts we take up. I grant that in the very first year we cannot become self-reliant. However, when we complete the entire process the expenditure and the income should balance. I would not call agriculture a handicraft. But it is an occupation of crores of people. It does not encourage skill but it does give a lot of physical exercise. It has been accorded its rightful place after seven years. It is a sad thing that we have been divided into two groups but that is inevitable. We regard constructive work as a symbol of ahimsa while others look upon it as a means of furthering their work. And that only to the extent that if they can do without itthey will do so. Even if the intention is good I find lack of wisdom in such an attitude.

Your health causes me worry. You must get rid of your leg trouble. Steam treatment is one of the treatments. Massage is worth trying. I believe that one who neglects the body betrays the soul. Is not the body an abode of the *atman*? And therefore it requires the utmost care.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Vinoba Bhave Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

627. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

WARDHA,
August 15, 1945

BHAI RAJENDRA BABU,

I have your letter. I am sending your letters to Agatha Harrison and Krishna Menon, by air mail. I see from these that all those sentenced to death are classed as political prisoners. Can this view sustain? During the upheaval a few criminals indulged in foul deeds. Can they be described as political? Then what the Huns did in Sind should similarly be described as political. All these things are weighing on my mind. Even so I do not hold back your letter, because I have not been given any choice and it is addressed to Agatha Harrison. The second letter you have forgotten to sign. However, I am forwarding it to Krishna Menon. The truth is that capital punishment is bad in itself and it should be abolished.

I have no hope of anything good coming out of it. We must understand the system. The Viceroy wields supreme power. So if we are not able to achieve anything here we might as well wash our hands of the whole thing. They cannot run the administration in any other way. We should therefore do whatever is possible only here. Our last resort is public opinion. Public opinion, in this matter, is evidently not able to do much and when it does achieve something it is not as effective as it should be. I have stated what can be done about Mahendra Chowdhary after the execution.[1] I hope you have gonethrough my statement and will have it implemented in whatever way you can. Something will come of it if competent lawyers take the

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the press", 11-8-1945.

matter up. Maybe, we shall not be able to save those whom we want to, but we shall have the benefit of it in time to come.

I am very happy to know that your health is good. Do not be in a hurry to get back from there. Do whatever you can from there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

628. LETTER TO MOHAMMED SALIM

August 15/16, 1945

MOHAMMED SALIM SAHEB,

I have your letter. I had seen what was written to you before. You must know that I have no private money of my own. Therefore please excuse me.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

MOHAMMED SALIM, SHOPKEEPER
BELBAGH, JABALPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

629. ADVICE TO ENGINEERS[1]

[On or before *August 16, 1945*][2]

How useful it would be if the engineers in India were to apply their ability to the perfecting of village tools and machines. This must not be beneath their dignity.

The Hindu, 25-8-1945

[1] This was given during a talk with Labanya Kumar Chowdhary, an engineer from Sylhet, when he visited Sevagram. He had resigned from the Government service during the 1942 movement. Gandhiji refers to his visit in the letter to P. C. Ghosh dated August 16, 1945; *vide* "Letter to P. C. Ghosh", 16-8-1945.

[2] *ibid*

630. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

SEVAGRAM,
August 16, 1945

MY DEAR KU.,

Your two letters.

The damage to the still is a sorry affair, but I must be held wholly responsible. The still was brought for the sake of Dr. 'Ice'[1]. But it became nobody's business, though the distilled water was produced for Dr. 'Ice's' patients. I was away and the still was mishandled. The slight reparation I can make is to pay in full Rs. 100 or such sum as you may have to pay for a new still, if it is available. You have to make the choice.

For the talk you can come on Saturday at 8.30 p. m. after the prayer or tonight if you get this in time.

Love.

BAPU

PROF. J. C. KUMARAPPA
MAGANWADI
WARDHA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

631. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

August 16, 1945

CHI. NARANDAS,

I sent you today a wire as follows: "All agree cotton condition beneficial end. Writing—Bapu."[2] If I could have written to you on the very day that I received your letter, this letter would have reached you at the same time as the wire. But I did not wish to reply to your letter without showing it to others. For, though I had written a long letter to you, you remained convinced in your mind regarding your demand. I did not, therefore, think it proper to write to you on my own. Yourletter has now been read by Jajuji, Chhaganlal[3], Krishnadas[4] and

[1] M. S. Kelkar
[2] The wire is quoted in English.
[3] Chhaganlal Joshi
[4] Krishnadas Gandhi, son of Chhaganlal Gandhi

Kan-aiyo. They all agree with me. Jajuji has even written down his view. I send it with this. He has described his own experience. I am confident that a person like you is bound to have the same experience. "Swaraj will be gained through yarn," I said, relying on intuition. But I realize now that intuition is one thing and its confirmation by experience another. And what I have been putting forward now is something different still. Others are having more convincing experience of the same. It is not going to impress me at all even if in Kathiawar khadi worth Rs. 4 lakhs instead of Rs. 2 lakhs is produced and sold. For it could be proved that such production and sale of khadi would only promote the welfare of the poor, and an all-India institution like the Charkha Sangh need not be established merely for that purpose. A co-operative of the poor for producing khadi could be established and more khadi at still lower cost could be produced. But even then that khadi would be of value only as khadi for the poor. It would, one may say, make no contribution to the cause of swaraj. I, therefore, desire that you should have perfect self-confidence and adopt this new method—policy—for khadi and discover from experience that it is khadi for swaraj. It is quite possible that Kathiawar may not accept such khadi. If so, don't mind if no khadi work is done there, for you must be aware that no such work is done in many Indian States. In the same way if no work is done in Kathiawar, either, the cause of khadi for swaraj would not suffer. I go even further and say that in carrying on khadi activity for swaraj, if it ceases to be khadi for the poor, the latter are not going to lose anything for they will be able to earn their bread in some other way. But if khadi supports the poor even while remaining khadi for the swaraj, it would be a credit both to the poor and the cause of swaraj. The poor thereby would have contributed to the winning of swaraj. If I have left any point unexplained, Kanaiyo will explain it when he arrives there.

I hope your health is perfect. If you can leave that place, it might be better for you to come and see me once.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8628. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

632. LETTER TO LAKSHMI NARAYAN AGRAWAL

August 16, 1945

BHAI LAKSHMI BABU,

We cannot accept even one of the three conditions.[1] Even though we believe that it is an inflammatory speech, constructive activity has no relation at all with movements such as that of 1942. Even if we denounce the violent activities of Shri Jayaprakash Narayan, we cannot accept any of these three conditions, that is to say, we cannot compel the workers to respect them. If the independence of India is common cause between us and the Government then what is the meaning of all these differences?

The truth is that the Bihar Government has made a mistake in making the arrests but instead of acknowledging the mistake it wants to put the responsibility on us. We will not accept the responsibility even if they should wipe us out. Let them stop our peaceful activities. We shall still go forward.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

633. LETTER TO P. C. GHOSH

August 16, 1945

BHAI PROFULLA BABU,

I have your two letters: one about Labanya Kumar and the other about my going there.

I have met Labanya Kumar and have written about the engineers. He has also seen things here.

Now about my visit. I have said I will go. I have also been told by the Governor that the way is open for my visit. The question now is when I should go. I cannot go before October under any circumstances and as regards October you frighten me. I personally am not frightened but if I am not to go in October it will be very late.

[1] The addressee had written that the Governor of Bihar in his talk with Anugraha Narayan Sinha had said that:

(i) The Government would not allow the constructive workers to make any inflammatory speeches. (ii) The Government would not give any opportunity to the Constructive workers to launch a mass movement as that of 1942. (iii) The Government would keep a close watch on the activities of the Congress as none of its members, including Gandhiji, denounced the violent activities of Jayaprakash Narayan.

So write to me after considering everything. As you must be aware, I have stayed in Calcutta in October and have moved about. Besides, I ask myself why I cannot stay in a place where you all can. I will advise you to see Satis Babu also in this connection. I know it is a tricky matter, but we should be able to do something.

In Calcutta I shall stay in Sodepur. I know Sarat Babu[1] would insist that I should stay with him. You should jointly decide and let me know. I am not going there for a fixed period. I want to lose myself in the misery of Bengal. I want to go to Midnapore and also to Chittagong. I do not know how far the body will carry. Also I shall not be able to put up with undisciplined crowds and constant noise.

Do not go on saying 'yes' to everybody. Meet the persons whom you have to meet and let me know. Meet Sudhir Ghosh also. I have come to know him quite well and he has something to do with my going there. He works with the Tatas.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

634. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

[Before *August 18, 1945*][2]

It certainly is.[3] But I learnt the fact only today. I did know about his marriage in Germany. But, though married, he had become as good as one not married. That he is going to marry for the third time, I learnt only now and from you. You told Abha and she told me. Nevertheless I attach great value to a promise and, therefore, for the sake of the promise, this knowledge notwithstanding, I will get them married. However, I do realize from this case that one should make no promises. But this is like inquiring about a man's caste after drinking water at his place. But do we not have the other saying, too, that it is morning whenever one wakes up?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4955

[1] Sarat Chandra Bose

[2] From the contents it is evident that this letter was written before the letter to Dr. A. G. Tendulkar dated August 18, 1945; *vide* the following item.

[3] The addressee had asked Gandhiji whether it was not against his ideal to contemplate giving Indumati in marriage to a person who had been married twice before.

635. LETTER TO DR. A. G. TENDULKAR

August 18, 1945

DEAR TENDULKAR,

Many are protesting to me that I am officiating at your marriage tomorrow. Among them are Manilal and now his wife. She tells me that this will be your third marriage, though I believe in one man one wife and *vice versa* for all time. I know about your new German wife but nothing about your previous wife. My son says none of my ideals will be realized in this union and that neither you nor Indu will carry out my wish that you may not procreate during the country's dependence. I have told them that I cannot go back on my promise which is not in itself immoral or not for a manifestly immoralpurpose. Therefore the promise shall be fulfilled (D. V.,). But you will please give me such answer as you can.

Now for your preparation for tomorrow:

(1) Both should fast till the marriage tie is formed, fruits may be taken.

(2) You will both read 12th Chapter of *Gita* and contemplate its meaning.

(3) Each will clean up separate plots of ground with measure.

(4) Each will tend cows in the Goshala.

(5) Each will clean up the well side.

(6) Each will clean a closet well.

(7) Each will spin daily and do all these with the intention so far as possible of carrying out these *yajnas* daily.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10954. Courtesy: Indumati N. Tendulkar

636. YARN DONATION

We all know that Shri Narandas Gandhi is a dedicated votary of khadi. He has such great faith in khadi that he sees *Daridranarayana* in it. He therefore spins for many hours a day. He has also given a prominent place to spinning in the national school conducted by him at Rajkot. For the last many years he has been collecting both yarn and money for the "Charkha Dwadashi''[1]. This time he has carried

[1]Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram calendar

the *sutra yajna* a long way and he has expressed his wish to the country that not only spinning but donating of yarn should catch on. Everyone can participate in it. It should be borne in mind that he does not insist that the yarn should be donated to him only. It can be given to All-India Spinners' Association as well. What he wants is that people should now give yarn donations freely and that he should be supplied with figures as to the quantity of yarn spun all over India and the quantity of yarn donated. To provide information to the public it is enough if these figures are sent to the All-India Spinners' Association office. However, the activity will gain impetus if figures are sent to the person who has conceived the idea, has struggled for it and has fostered the activity. If the figures are sent to him, he will have a clear picture of the work done and his planning and knowledge will prove very useful to all for further progress of work.

Every year he seeks my consent for whatever work he does. This year I thought it proper to accept only yarn donations and suggested it to him accordingly. I have visualized yarn currency and have called Chi. Narandas its banker. I believe that he has the right ability and purity for that kind of work. It is possible that at present the yarn will not fulfil all the requirements of the currency. But our aim today is to increase the number of spinners from the standpoint of non-violent swaraj.

An experiment to make yarn a currency was made locally at Nalwadi. Another experiment is going on in Bezwada. However the ideas behind the two experiments were different. The experiment can be extended to cover the whole of India. Only one year will be required for such currency to come into force. Every home will then become a mint. But it is only an idea today. For the time being all the spinners will produce currency in the form of yarn and will give that away in donation. Every branch of the All-India Spinners' Association will collect such donations. The yarn will belong to the All-India Spinners' Association. Only the account will be sent to Chi. Narandas. The ownership will be that of the All-India Spinners' Association. Narandas will be the custodian of the yarn sent to him directly or collected by himself. It will be utilized and distributed with my permission. The money and the yarn collected by Chi. Narandas every year is distributed with my permission. It will be the same this year also.

This year the idea of cash collection has been given up. However, cash will be received from those who want to give it but the

All-India Spinner's Association will not make any arrangement for its collection. The same rule applies to Chi. Narandas. The aim will be to collect only yarn donations.

Whatever yarn the All-India Spinners' Association collects will be its capital. From now on it will not collect cash for carrying on its activities but will manage with yarn only.

The yarn thus collected will not be sold. But the khadi made from it will be sold. Yarn will be taken but not given. Only the things made from it will be given and sold.

The rule already exists of taking a certain amount of yarn when selling khadi but at some places the practice has been started of giving khadi in exchange for the full quantity of yarn. In spite of that the effort will be to have only yarn donations on the occasion ofCharkha Jayanti. However, I want that besides khadi other articles of village industries should be made available in exchange for yarn. But that can be realized only when we take the final step. At the moment I have presented the idea of yarn currency only in its initial form. It is easy for accounting and the capital of yarn increases not by interest but by the labour of the spinner. If the people understand this scheme then yarn will become an instrument for the production of goods worth crores of rupees. Physical labour will become the capital and will easily be able to compete with capitalists.

SEVAGRAM, August 1 8, 1 945

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, September 1945

637. LETTER TO VINOBA BHAVE[1]

SEVAGRAM,
August 18, 1945

CHI. VINOBA,

. . . I shall look into the Nayee Talim matter. Ashadevi is not here at present.

I have not a full copy of the *Ramayana* as abridged by me but I send you a marked copy of the *Ramayana* from which you will be able to know the principles on which I had worked. As far as possible I have tried to retain the historical or narrative portion unbroken. Some of the interpolations are useful by themselves, but still I have dropped them altogether. I have also dropped any matter which had been over-lengthened as also such portions as appeared to me unnecessary for the narrative. I have also generally removed portions where woman is referred to in derogatory terms. But I have kept some portions of it just to indicate the mind of Tulsidas. So far as I can remember at the moment, these are the principles I worked upon. But you are intelligent enough to discover any other principle not mentioned here from the marks in the book.

Failure has compelled me to do what I was not prepared to do by persuasion. I mean that I have commenced from yesterday therecitation of *Gitai*[2] in place of the Sanskrit *Gita*. I realized that nobody learnt Sanskrit. The same old members are there, but even they do not or are unable to study Sanskrit even to the extent of understanding the *Gita*. Moreover, they were unable to recite it in chorus, and what pained me more was the fact that though the recitation of the whole of the *Gita* was confined to the morning prayer, still some members walked out as soon as the recitation began. On making an enquiry into the cause of this, I found that it was very trivial. I did not know it before. I found it out only the day before yesterday, and I immediately came to the conclusion that perhaps interest in the *Gita* might be created more quickly if it was recited in Hindi, Marathi or Gujarati since the people would understand its

[1] K. G. Mashruwala, while publishing the letter in *Harijan*, withheld the first portion of it as not being "absolutely relevant to the present discussion". The original letter in Gujarati is not available.

[2] Metrical rendering of the *Gita* in Marathi by the addressee, literally, '*Gita* the Mother'.

meaning more easily. I have commenced with *Gitai* because Marathi holds the place of prominence in this part. So far as the members attending the morning prayer are concerned, they are so few that it would not matter much which language I chose. But the music of Gitai has been felt by me to be very sweet. Maybe, the reason for this is that I have heard it several times recited by Shivaji[1] and I have liked it. Kishorelal's (Gujarati) translation is there but I have not yet been able to assimilate its music. I have not heard anyone reciting it in a sweet tone. I got an opportunity of hearing it at Bardoli but it was insufficient, and my ear could not adapt itself to it. Haribhau[2] has published the Hindi *Gita* recently. But I have not yet been able even to examine it and so did not like to touch it. Therefore, I have commenced with *Gitai*.

The immediate cause for writing this is that I happened to see Shivaji yesterday. If he is going to stay here for some time, it would please me if he can be induced to give at least a week to the Ashram just now during the period of the commencement of this recitation. He can train those who desire in reciting it in the same manner as he does, and pick up his music.

Blessings from

BAPU

Harijan, 16-5-1948

638. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

August 18, 1945

CHI. SHRIMAN,

I did take up your book[3] to read but could not complete it. You are leaving tomorrow morning. I shall not be able to send it before that. I shall send it from either Poona or Bombay. It will be good if you can come to Poona at an early date.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 307

[1]Addressee's younger brother
[2] Haribhau Upadhyaya
[3]*Gandhian Constitution*

639. NOTE TO KRISHNANATH SHARMA

August 19, 1945

You need not come with me or to me anywhere else. I have understood your position[1]. It must be placed before the Working Committee.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 8235

640. LETTER TO SARALA DEVI CHOWDHARANI

August 19, 1945

MY DEAR SARLA,

Dipak[2] gives me a sorrowful account of you. Disease like birth and death is part of us. May you have the strength to suffer what comes as your lot.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

641. LETTER TO KANJI J. DESAI

August 19, 1945

BHAI KANJI,

I liked your letter to Pushpa. She is getting on well. I have been telling her that if at all she is inclined she should go ahead and marry Vrajlal, and bring you peace. But she is firm. She certainly has respect for you. I am sure she will not tarnish your name. She will bring credit to you if she remains firm in her resolve and at the same time merges herself in God. I would advise you to encourage her to stick to her decision. I want you not to be unhappy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Concerning the situation in Assam about which the addressee had sought Gandhiji's advice

[2] Dipak Dutt, addressee's son. *Vide* also "Letter to Dipak Dutt Chowdhary", 19-8-1945.

642. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

August 19, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

1. Kanchan does desire sexual pleasure. You also have the desire. It would not be anything strange if you lived together and satisfied your desire. Self-suppression is not going to help. Hence do what you feel is natural for you. Thwarting Kanchan's desire will harm her. She is good and has the spirit of service. She will lose both these things in the end.

2. Let Hiramani go on as she is doing till Ashadevi arrives.

3. Read Parnerkar's letter and have a talk with him. About the farm, too, do what is necessary. Take Kishorelal's help.

4. About Krishnachandra you will have to think. Talk with him frankly and with love regarding his habit of eating and about other matters, too. You should think about your temperamental differences.

5. Let the yarn spun by me be handed over to the Ashram. Get that much quantity spun by me when I arrive there. If the other people spin from the Ashram cotton, the yarn should be credited to the Ashram. What we spin is of course for the Ashram.

6. Whenever you wish to ask me anything about the women, you may do so.

7. You will be able to improve your singing with effort. If you have no time for that, you need not join in the singing at all.

8. Run classes for the *Gitai* and nothing else.

9. About the expenses here, it is all right that you have bought the ticket. I will not be able to judge better in this matter.

10. Sankaranji may, if he wishes, cook his own meals if he cannot keep good health otherwise.

11. Ramachandran is there only for a short period.

12. The library books can be kept together. Those who want books may ask for them and afterwards return them in good condition.

13. About Ramanbhai, as Krishorelalbhai advises.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5914. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

643. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

August 19, 1945

CHI. MU [NNALAL],

I do not insist that you should conduct classes for the *Gitai* if you do not wish, but I think you are making a mistake.

[2.] I send with this . . .'s[1] letter. The problem about manure in the garden remains.

3. If what I have been saying regarding Kanchan is not correct, do what you think is right, but don't put off the decision.

4. About Ramanbhai as you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5916. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

644. LETTER TO DIPAK DUTT CHOWDHARY

August 19, 1945

CHI. DIPAK,

I have your letter. It is good you let me know. You will have arranged whatever treatment was possible. What else can we do? Tke result is in God's hands, is it not? What are you doing?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

645. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ON WAY TO BOMBAY,
August 19, 1945

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

I have received your letter. I know a little bit about the Kashmir branch of the Charkha Sangh. I do not know why the dispensary has been closed down. It is just as well that you wrote to me. I have sent a copy of the letter to Jaju. I am on my way to Bombay. From there I shall go to Poona taking Sardar with me. I cannot say how long I shall

[1] Omission as in the source

be staying there. I shall write again when I hear from Jajuji.

The Kashmir trip was bound to do you good.

What was the attack on Maulana Saheb?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

646. HOW TO DO IT?

The A. I. V. I. A. has not shown the results it might have. I have often asked myself that question. I try now and here to think aloud and confer with the workers to see what can be done.

We lazily copy the Congress and set up committees and think that we shall thereby popularize and advance the craft of the villages.

We forget that the Congress, being a democratic body, must work democratically and through committees set up by the people from [among] themselves. On the other hand, the A.I.V.I.A. and like bodies are self-formed to work out particular purposes often requiring high technical skill. They collect money from those who appreciate the particular purpose and become trustees for the money to be used therefor. We collect and study the literature on the subject. We look about for and employ experts and if there are none become experts ourselves. The work will make progress in exact proportion to our knowledge, earnestness and industry. The work itself may be unpopular or unknown. We have then to make it popular or known. Such associations all over the world must work whether in countries democratically or autocratically governed. In either case they must work under patronage or in the teeth of opposition. The system of work will be identical under either autocracy or democracy. With us the A. I. S. A., the A. I. V. I. A., the Hindustani Talimi Sangh, etc., though autonomous, are creations of the Congress and, therefore requiring enthusiastic support of all Congressmen and, to the extent that Congressmen represent all India, of Indians throughout the land. But before this can happen we must dot India with experts of the type wanted. Therefore, the first thing is to have a central body of honest experts. There is no other royal road to success. Committees or even agents can show no results unless they are experts who know their

work. Can an M.A., however brilliant he may be, introduce, say, the charkha among the villagers, or *gur*-making from palm trees or manure-making from village refuse including human excreta and cattle dung? We must have experts in these and such other branches. If we had our own government, however inefficient, we would have technical institutes where every one of the useful activities now going on or which were going on even yesterday in the 7,00,000 villages could be studied. Unfortunately, we have not. Hence our associations have also to be such institutes in addition to becoming propagandists. But before we can become the latter, we have to become the former. If I have drawn a correct picture, let us mend even though the mending may be difficult and even hurtful to our pride.

ON THE TRAIN TO BOMBAY, August 20, 1945

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *Gram Udyog* Patrika, Vol. I, pp. 368-9

647. FOREWORD TO "THE ECONOMY OF PERMANENCE"

Like his brochure on the *Practice and Precepts of Jesus*, Dr. Kumarappa's on *The Economy of Permanence* is a jail production. It is not as easy to understand as the first. It needs careful reading twice or thrice if it is to be fully appreciated. When I took up the manuscript I was curious to know what it could contain. The opening chapter satisfied my curiosity and led me on to the end without fatigue and yet with profit. This doctor of our village industries shows that only through them we shall arrive at the economy of permanence in the place of that of the fleeting nature we see around us at present. He tackles the question—shall the body triumph over and stifle the soul or shall the latter triumph over and express itself through a perishable body which, with its few wants healthily satisfied, will be free to subserve the end of the imperishable soul? This is "Plain living and high thinking".

M. K. GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN TO BOMBAY, August 20, 1945

The Economy of Permanence

648. TELEGRAM TO DIPAK DUTT CAHOWDHARY

BOMBAY,
August 20, 1945

DIPAK CHOWDHARY
8/1 NEW ROAD
ALIPORE, CALCUTTA

GLAD MOTHER PASSED AWAY FROM PAIN TO PEACE LEAVING YOU FREE TO SHOULDER RESPONSIBILITY TO COUNTRY. WROTE YOU YESTERDAY.[1] LOVE .

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

649. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

BIRLA HOUSE,
BOMBAY,
August 20, 1945

MY DEAR KU.,

Here is your manuscript, my foreword[2] and my article[3]. If possible all will go by registered post. The article and the foreword have been carefully written. You may go without anything from me if you disapprove of the article. You have to master at least one craft and acquire a workable knowledge of Hindustani. You can easily make time for both; have your letter-head in Nagari and Urdu scripts adding the Roman if you like. On the existing ones have rubber stamps for Urdu and Nagari.

Love.

In haste,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10178

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dipak Dutt Chowdhary", 19-8-1945.
[2] *Vide* "Foreword to *The Economy of Permanence*", 20-8-1945.
[3] *Vide* "How to do it?", 20-8-1945.

650. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

BOMBAY,
August 20, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

You were in my thoughts on the journey. Do not force yourself to do anything. Work done willingly gives satisfaction and peace. It is enough if we perform our dharma whether Sharda[1] stays or leaves. Remain cheerful and look after your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

651. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

August 20, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I slept for a long time, and liked it. There were no crowds to pester us on the way. Everyone managed to have some sleep.

It is of course drizzling here. It was good you did not come. If the Poona weather is dry I will send you word to come over. For the present render what help you can there. There are so many problems, small but very delicate. There is the question of the Ashram farm. Munnalal believes that Parnerkar is not able to manage it. Please look into it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Sharda G. Chokhawala, addressee's daughter, married to Gordhandas Chokhawala

652. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

August 20, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

We arrived here safely. You should not worry. Have a heart-to-heart talk with Krishnachandra. See Parnerkar about the Ashram farm. Have a talk with Kishorelalbhai. Who is to look after the orchard? It must be kept in good condition. Settle the question of manure. If Parnerkar is short of labour, the Ashram inmates should fill the gap as they did once before. Take care of Hoshiari's son and also Hoshiari. Both of them should bloom there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8432. Also C.W. 5592. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

653. LETTER TO PUSHPA K. DESAI

August 20, 1945

CHI. PUSHPA,

Get fully engrossed in your work there. Take care of your body. If you look upon it as God's abode, you will see Him in the true sense.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9261

654. LETTER TO SHARDA AND GORDHANDAS CHOKHAWALA

August 20, 1945

CHI. BABUDI,

You fall ill and cause everyone anxiety. Keep on repeating Ramanama, get well and sing in praise of Ramanama. Chimanlal longs to go to you, but his duty to the Ashram prevents him. You can dictate a letter for him if you can sincerely tell him that you are calm and do

not wish for his presence. Shakaribehn's[1] presence there should be enough for you. I hope she is well and happy.

CHI. GORDHANDAS,

Write to me at Poona.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10059. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

655. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

August 20, 1945

CHI. HOSHIARI,

You will have recovered by now. Both of you should drink plenty of pure water. Read a lot. Write neatly in ink every day. Show it to me when I come. Preserve all that you write. The boy should also write. He should also work and spin.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

656. LETTER TO Y. M. PARNERKAR

August 20, 1945

CHI. PARNERKAR,

Have a talk with Kishorelalbhai about the Ashram farm. I do not understand why the inmates of the Ashram now refuse to work for you. You must consider the Goshala as your own. Is there any difficulty in your looking after the Ashram farm? Is there a wolf at large? A search should be made for it. Someone should be on the watch. Now I consider it our dharma to destroy such animals. It will be a different thing if we discover an alternative.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Sharda Chokhawala's mother

657. TELEGRAM TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

BOMBAY,
August 21, 1945

CHAMPABEHN RATILAL
CARE KANTILAL SOLANKI PLEADER
SARANGPUR CHAKLA
AHMEDABAD

MY APPROVAL SUPERFLUOUS, DOCTOR MEHTA[1] HAD BUILT BUNGALOW FOR ASHRAM WITH RIGHT TO HIMSELF TO OCCUPY DURING HIS LIFETIME. THE INTENTION DEED WITH HIM.[2] IF YOU ALL AGREE I CAN PERHAPS PERSUADE PROSPECTIVE BUYER CANCEL CONTRACT FOR ASHRAM SAKE. HOPE WELL.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

658. LETTER TO P. C. JOSHI

BIRLA HOUSE,
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD,
BOMBAY ,
August 21, 1945

DEAR JOSHI,

Advocate Bhulabhai Desai handed me the enclosed opinion yesterday. It is, as you will see, based on the papers I gave him at your instance some time ago.[3]

Having had the opinion, you have the right to publish it for what it may be worth. The news, almost daily poured into my ears by Congressmen to the effect that the Party is unscrupulous in its methods and that it even resorts to violence, makes it difficult for me to accept the opinion which is after all based on the papers that were in my possession on the date they were handed to the Advocate. But I cannot judge the Party on one-sided evidence. Nor have I the leisure

[1] Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta, addressee's father-in-law.
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Mangaldas Pakvasa", 12-6-1945.
[3] *Vide* footnote 4, "Interview to *People's War*", 17-7-1945.

to slhoulder the burden of studying the evidence in a manner that would enable me to form an opinion.

The bitterness between the Party and Congressmen, so far as I am aware, is growing. The best course perhaps is for you to consider the position in the light of Congressmen's opinion about the Party and then do what may appear best to you.

If you propose to publish the enclosed you will please publish this too together with it.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

ENCL. 1
SHRI P. C. JOSHI
RAJ BHUWAN
SANDHURST ROAD, BOMBAY 4

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

659. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

August 21, 1945

CHI. CHAND,

I have your letter. How can I go on writing to you? I do want to write but there is so much work.

Keep yourself fit; only then will you be able to do everything.

Only Sushilabehn or your own heart can tell whether you should do the full course of nursing. The main thing is your own inclination. Do not take the decision in a hurry, but once you take a decision you must stick to it.

We are going to Poona today.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHAND
NAGPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

660. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA RAO

August 21, 1945

BHAI RAMACHANDRA RAO,

I have your letter. It is not proper to order a charkha from outside. You must get one made there. In the mean time use a *takli*. Understand the full meaning of spinning.

Blessings from

BAPU

RAMACHANDRA RAO
MADURA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

661. LETTER TO PRAYAG DUTT SHUKLA

August 21, 1945

BHAI PRAYAG DUTT,

Pandit Hrishikeshji did not come or see me. His wife saw me. Please write to me. I am going to Poona today. I shall be staying in Dr. Dinshaw Mehta's Arogya Bhavan.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

PRAYAG DUTT SHUKLA
SITABURDI
NAGPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

662. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

August 21/22, 1945

BAPA,

It seems your letter has got lost in my papers. All of a sudden I remembered what it contained, though I cannot recall the whole letter. You are not to work as a clerk at all. That is why I sent the message that I would send Valjibhai's son. However, that is an old story. Do employ a clerk of your choice and devote the time you save to more important work. I very much like the idea of introducing Hindustani in the office and in the books. Let those who want English go on

demanding it. If we cannot or do not introduce such reforms, we shall be betraying the country as well as the Harijans.

There was one thing in my mind which I forgot. Shyamlal on his own has reduced his salary by Rs. 100. I like the decision but what is surprising about it? I have thanked him for it.[1] But I wanted to inform the general body and thank him at the meeting. However, I could not do that, but you may, as Secretary of the organization, inform the members and add that the President had thanked him as soon as he got the news; that he wanted to announce it at the meetingbut forgot; and that he had therefore written to you to inform everyone. Write something on these lines.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

663. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

MEHTA AROGYA BHAVAN, POONA,
August 22, 1945

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Chi. Abha is going to appear for the examination. If she has to go to Bombay she can appear for it there. However, if you appoint Dr. Sushila Nayyar as the examiner she can appear from here and expense can be avoided. You will have to send the question paper, as also the necessary instructions. I hope you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI AMRITLAL NANAVATI
GUJARAT VIDYAPITH
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Shyamlal", 24-7-1945.

664. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

POONA,
August 22, 1945

CHI. NARAHARI,

I read that article in Bombay itself. I did not wish to suggest any changes and so I did not write.

Vanamala is quite cheerful. Manu also, I would say, is all right. The news has reached her. Let us see how it affects her. I met Mathuradas. He was happy.

I hope you are getting good help from Manibhai.

Write to me about Vina.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9136

665. LETTER TO TRIBHUVANDAS SHAH

August 22, 1945

BHAI TRIBHUVANDAS[1],

I have received your books. I have gone through your instructions. The big question is when I shall be able to read those books. I very much wish to but a man can never fulfill all his wishes. Isn't it baffling?

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. TRIBHUVANDAS SHAH
BARODA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1]Author of *Prachin Hindustan*

666. LETTER TO Y. M. PARNERKAR

August 22, 1945

CHI. PARNERKAR,

I believe that you understand Gujarati and can read it with ease. Let me know if it is not so. Have this read out to you. Do something about the wolf. The manure heap should go. The Goshala should become an ideal goshala. Keep the place perfectly clean. Our water should be drinkable. Mosquitoes and flies should easily go. The roads should be in good condition. The hill is in our possession. Those who go for walks there should bring stones from there. Do you know that in this way I had made a mountain of stones in the Mahila Ashram? All of it came in useful there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

667. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

August 22, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

It was really good that I did not bring you along or you did not come. It was drizzling when we arrived here. It is cold and also humid here. The weather is cloudy. The place is crowded too. Sardar has of course taken rooms for you in the mill area nearly. But of what use are they? I will write to you if the weather becomes dry. Do not worry about my work. Sushila, Manilal, Narayan and others help me. They will to some extent make up for your absence.

A letter to Ramnarayan is enclosed. Please send it to his address. He must have given it to someone in the Ashram.

Hope you and Gomati[1] are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1]Addressee's wife

668. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN CHOWDHARY

August 22, 1945

CHI. RAMNARAYAN,

I have gone through the English part of what you have sent. Why did you have to write in English? Hindustani would have been sufficient. The English needs improvement. You must leave that to others. I shall try to read the Hindustani also. I shall read the scheme of Goseva Sangh also before getting it published. Show it to Parnerkar and Satis Babu and, if possible, to a veterinarian. I had a few pages read out to me by Sushilabehn. She has pointed out some technical mistakes. The treatment of the subject matter is good. You have said in brief all that you could say. If I want to return it shall I send it to Ahmedabad? I understand that you have not kept a copy.

You suggest boycotting the buffalo. This you will not have got from my writings. My view is that our preference should be for the Cow.Doing this will save both. At present there is shortage of milk, so We need both. Preferring the cow saves both, preferring the buffalo destroys both.

I hope all of you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RAMNARAYANJI
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

669. LETTER TO VINA CHATTERJEE

August 22, 1945

CHI. VINA,

I often think of you. I hope you are well there. Now it is obligatory for you to get well and remain well. I hope you are cheerful. Sailen will be well. Abha is with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

670. TELEGRAM TO DIPAK DUTT CHOWDHARY

August 23, 1945

DIPAK CHOWDHARY
8/1 NEW ROAD
ALIPORE, CALCUTTA

MY PRESENCE IMPOSSIBLE. DO BEST YOU CAN.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

671. LETTER TO ANNE MARIE PETERSEN

POONA,
August 23, 1945

MY DEAR MARIA[1],

Your half angry and half loving letter. Why are you so foolish as to take in what a third party says? Kasturba[2] is a wholly non-sectarian organization. Who was the third party who gave you to understand that only Hindus could apply? The thing has to come before me. It has not yet. If you have applied send me a copy of the application too. You know that Aryanayakum is a Christian? Raihana Tyabji is a trustee. So much for the Trust.

When there is independence, why should you fear the majority? If you have God with you and the majority have not, should you still fear? And if both have God between them who should fear whom? Is there then any question of majority and minority?

Let us pray.

Love.

BAPU

MISS MARIA PETERSEN
SEVA MANDIR
PORTO NOVO (S. I.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee, a former member of the Danish Mission, had founded an ashram—a school for girls—at Porto Novo.

[2] Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust

672. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

August 23, 1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

Herewith the correspondence with Miss Petersen. Let me know if you have some papers of hers.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SHYAMLAL

BAJAJWADI

WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Gourtesy: Pyarelal

673. LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI

August 23, 1945

CHI. RADHIKA[1],

I have your letter. It is all right that you sent a telegram. I am sorry to know that Santok[2] is not well. I was expecting you all.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RADHA GANDHI

PLOT 601 E, VINCENT ROAD

MATUNGA, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Gourtesy: Pyarelal

674. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

August 23, 1945

CHI. ANAND,

I have your letter. You have to go inward to the heart and find peace there. What is the use of the peace you may find with me and which may then be lost? Stay on there, doing what you can and be at peace.

Sushilabehn is in Bombay at present. She will be coming today or tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi: Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] Daughter of Maganlal Gandhi, who was married to Dipak Dutt Chowdhary

[2] Addressee's mother

675. LETTER TO GHANSHYAM SINGH GUPTA

August 23, 1945

BHAI GHANSHYAM SINGH,

I received your letter here. I have gone through it. How long can I go on pointing out the mistakes? I am of the opinion that you should do whatever you can. Now Deshbandhu and Brijlal have gone there. Let us see what they do. After that you can come to me if you want to. I would advise you to do on your own what you feel is proper.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

After writing the above I got your letter. I have made some corrections. You may make them if you think they are proper and send it.

BAPU

SHRI GHANSHYAM SINGH GUPTA
SPEARER, DRUG (C.P.)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

676. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

August 23, 1945

BHAI GOPICHAND,

Read this and tell me what is the truth.

I have not given any reply to Lalchandji.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA
LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

677. LETTER TO MADHAVI KUTTI AMMA NAYANAR

August 23, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

Nanavati spoke to me about you. If you must come, do so after I return to Sevagram but please write to me first.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

SMT. MADHAVI KUTTI AMMA NAYANAR
MEENAKSHI VILAS
OTTAPALAM, MALABAR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy. Pyarelal

678. LETTER TO SUSHILA PURI

August 23, 1945

CHI SUSHILA PURI,

I have your letter. Study well, serve the people and do whatever Mother tells you to do.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SUSHILA PURI
DEEP NIVAS
40 NISBAT ROAD
LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

679. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

POONA,
August 24, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

Your two letters at the same time.

What a tragedy you have related !!!

Subhas Bose has died well.[1] He was undoubtedly a patriot

[1] Subhas Chandra Bose had been reported dead in an air crash on August 23, 1945.

though misguided.

Your gum has caused much trouble. I blame the dentist. Do let me know the train you will come by.

P[yarelal] is in Bombay. S[ushila] will tell you all about him.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3698. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6507

680. LETTER TO C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR

August 24, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. The "Selection" has not yet been received. I suppose, it will be in due course.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR C. P. RAMASWAI AIYAR
DIWAN SAHEB
SHAKHIVILAS
TRIVANDRUM

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

681. LETTER TO LAWRENCE MCKENNER

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA (INDIA),
August 24, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

"The Kingdom of God is within you" is all-sufficient. Follow it out in action and you need nothing else. But if you will read anything of Hinduism, read Swami Vivekanand's works to be had there.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

LAWRENCE MCKENNER JR.
2132 HIGH ST.
OAKLAND 1, CALIFORNIA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

682. LETTER TO GROVER

August 24, 1945

DEAR GROVER,

You will pardon me for keeping your wire unanswered so long. You should blame my hesitation and preoccupation for the delay.

I know the answer but I cannot give it just now at least. The world is not in a hurry to know my views. I therefore return your prepaid slip to enable you to collect the unused deposit.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

683. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 24, 1945

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I received your letter yesterday. I showed it to Kaka and he will write to you. Vanamala is here and she says she is also an examiner. This time there are a good number of candidates.

My going to Bengal is uncertain. My stay here will be for about three months. I have written to the widow of Nayar that she can come to Sevagram when I go there. I shall have to go to Madras in December.

Blessings to you and Maganlal from

BAPU

SHRI AMRITLAL NANAVATI
GUJARAT VIDYAPITH
AHMEDABAD
B.B.& C.I. RLY.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

684. LETTER TO MESSRS BACHHARAJ & CO., LTD.

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD,
POONA,
August 24, 1945

DEAR SIRS,

Please find enclosed herein the following two cheques:

(1) No. KC 72666 for Rs. 500 (Rs. five hundred) on the Bank of India, Ltd., Kalbadevi Branch.

(2) No HO 783627 on the Central Bank of India, Ltd., for Rs. 101 (Rs. one hundred one).

The above two cheques are to be credited to Sevagram account. Please acknowledge receipt of same.

Yours truly,

Encls. 2 cheques

MESSRS BACHHRAJ & CO., LTD.
51 MAHATMA GANDHI ROAD, BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

685. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

August 24, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Sharda is in the hands of God, and He will do what He pleases. It seems she has both typhoid and malaria. If she is destined to live, she will survive.

Kelkar's[1] letter is enclosed. Provide for the expenses on account of the two patients, as he says, in excess of the amount already sanctioned for him. Can pay...[2] is for three months.

The doctor may go to Akola.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10640

[1] M. S. Kelkar
[2] Some words are illegible here.

686. LETTER TO M. S. KELKAR

August 24, 1945

BHAI KELKAR,

Yours of the 22nd arrived today. About the bicycle it is difficult. If some friend sends you one you may take it. You can charge to the Ashram the expense you have mentioned on the two patients. The decision you have taken to go to Akola now is right.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. KELKAR
C/O SHRI VINOBA
NALWADI, WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

687. LETTER TO KRISHNAVARMA

August 24, 1945

BHAI KRISHNAVARMA,

I have your letter. Give Mama full liberty. Tell him: "Bapu will worry about you but will not restrain you. You may leave at your own risk. Do not expect to come back. May God help you." You did much for Mama. Now I do not want you to carry that burden.

I have not seen the prohibitory order concerning Kamrej but if it is what you say, I would certainly not like it.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. KRISHNAVARMA
NATURE CURE HOSPITAL
MALAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

688. LETTER TO LAKSHMI

August 24, 1945

CHI. LAKSHMI[1],

Balasundarambehn writes to say that you have given birth to a son. May you both live long and serve the country. Only yesterday you were a little girl who used to cheat me. Now you have become a mother. What a miracle!

Blessings from

BAPU

MRS. SATYAMURTHI
CAMP HARIPAD MATOM
KOTTAYAM (S.I.,)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

689. LETTER TO RANGANAYAKI DEVI

August 24, 1945

CHI. RANGANAYAKI,

I have your letter. God willing I shall be going to Madras in December. We shall meet then.

Amtul Salaam is doing work of service in Bengal. I am at present here with the Sardar.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RANGANAYAKI DEVI
FIRST HOUSE
SHRIRANGAM (DIST. TRICHI)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Daughter of S. Satyamurthi

690. LETTER TO NAWAB SAHEB

POONA,
August 25, 1945

DEAR NAWAB SAHEB,

I am sorry we could not meet early. How nice it would have been if we could have discussed things of common interest! Let me hope it would be still possible.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

(BY HAND) SHUAIB QURESHI
POONA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

691. LETTER TO DR. B. N. SARDESAI

August 25, 1945

BHAI SARDESAI,

I thank you for the books you have sent.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. B. N. SARDESAI
ORIENTAL BOOK AGENCY
POONA - 2

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

692. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN CHOWDHARY

August 25, 1945

CHI. RAMNARAYAN,

I hope you have received my letter. I sent it to the Ashram as we did not have your address here. I am sending this with Kakasaheb's son Chi. Bal. He is also-bringing your essay.

I have gone through everything. The scheme about Goseva Sangh did not appeal to me. Even if we do something on those lines, itwill remain only on paper. We want to have a perfect Goshala. The tannery should function with it. Today we do not have a single worker

of calibre. There is a very big Goshala near Ahmedabad. At one time it was to be handed over to us. There is one in the city. It is known as *Pinjrapole*. Go and see it. Learn tanning also when you are well. There are lots of *neem* trees there. I have sent an article[1] for the *Gram Udyog Patrika*. Read it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

693. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

August 25, 1945

BHAI MAHMUD,

I have received your letter. You are doing good work. Mahboob is rendering service silently. Why is Syed not improving? Habib can work only for his party. He is an honest man. Hence, wherever he is, he will always do good work.

Ramzan[2] is not for you. As I understand it, fasting is forbidden during illness. I do not know what Kripalani has written. I guess it may be something about resignation. Send in the resignation, or, after seeing the letter, do what you think proper.

Begum Saheba must be well. Your Nagari handwriting is very good.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SYED MAHMUD
CHHAPRA (BIHAR)[3]

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 5094. Also Pyarelal Papers

[1] *Vide* "How to do it?", 20-8-1945.

[2] The ninth month of the Hijri year in which Muslims observe fast during daytime

[3] The address is from Pyarelal Papers.

694. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

POONA,
August 26, 1945

MY DEAR C. R.,

There is no other person as well-informed and able as you are to answer Dr. Ambedkar's indictment of the Congress on the question.[1] Please therefore make time and send your answer to Bapa as early as you can. Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2109

695. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

August 26, 1945

MY DEAR KU.,

Your letter. Of course you can have 'D. D. D. V. I.' And you have proved your title to the two degrees far more than those who receive university equivalents. Why should they have the monopoly?

You are getting on. My article should considerably lighten your administrative work which sends up b.p. The other will put it in its place.

Yours,

BAPU

DR. J. C. KUMARAPPA
"D.D.D.V.I"
MAGANWADI
WARDHA

From a photostat: G.N. 10179

[1] In his book *What Congress and Gandhi Have Done to the Untouchables*, B. R. Ambedkar had refuted the Congress claim to represent the untouchables and asserted that the Harijan Sevak Sangh was a political charity which planned "to kill the untouchables by kindness".

696. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

August 26, 1945

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your letter. I am happy to know that you are well.

Write to me in Hindustani and learn the Nagari and the Urdu scripts equally well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

697. TELEGRAM TO AMIYANATH BOSE[1]

August 27, 1945

I HAVE APPROACHED REPORT[2] WITH SUSPICION. IF YOU SHARE SUSPICION ANNOUNCE AND AVOID CEREMONY.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

698. LETTER TO BHATNAGAR

POONA,
August 27, 1945

DEAR BHATNAGAR,

As you see I am in Poona and shall be for some time. You can go to Sevagram and meet Shri Ramachandran of Talimi Sangh and show him this. If the work there pleases you and if you suit him, he will take you. Show him this.

You must not hate the world.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI BHATNAGAR

C/O POST MASTER, LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram dated August 26 which read: "Kindly advise us about uncle's *shraddha* ceremony and observance of period of mourning."

[2] Presumably about the death of Sabhas Chandra Bose. *Vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 24-8-1945.

699. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

August 27, 1945

BHAI BHAGWANJI,

I went through your 20 points today. You have apologized thrice. But you were pardoned even without your asking. Remember the lawyer's maxim: Do not give judgment till you have examined all the evidence. Your words have no effect on me as you have formed a habit of jumping to conclusions without examining things. The same is true of your last letter. This postcard needs no reply.

I am sure, God is.

Remembrance of God from

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI BHAGWANJI ANUPCHAND, VAKIL
RAJKOT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

700. LETTER TO ADAM ALI

August 27, 1945

BHAI ADAM ALI,

I have your letter as also the pictures. Thanks. The picture of the charkha is an advertisement, but that of the Buddha is good.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

HASAN ALI DAUDBHAI
21 PERIYA MISTRI STREET
MADRAS, G.T.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

701. LETTER TO KANJI J. DESAI

August 27, 1945

BHAI KANJI,

I have your letter. Come on any day except Monday. I will find some time. If it is not very inconvenient you may come alone first and see me and if it is necessary bring Pushpa later.

M. K. GANDHI

KANJI JETHABHAI,
RAJDA'S CHAWL, SECOND FLOOR
OLD HANUMAN GALI
CROSS LANE ROAD 2
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

702. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

August 27, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I have your letter. The weather is still moist. The house is near the mill and it is possible to find something there. But I do not have the courage to call you here till the weather completely clears. We do not want to fall out of the frying pan into the fire. Still I will call you when it completely stops raining here and that too in the hope that the change of air will do good to both of you. I do not want to take work from you here. Valji comes daily. His competent son is also prepared to render some service but I have not entrusted him with any work. There is no work which can be given to him.

I understand about Parnerkar.

You have done what you could. It seems that your recommendations cannot be implemented now. Everyone has land and a house, how can they be removed? Moreover, can those who are true workers stay at a distance? Why should they be servants? It is a matter of shame and sorrow that they are retained as servants. Thenumber of those who are retained as servants will not be reduced by their staying in different places. Only the attitude of everyone should be changed. If that happens the question of staying separately or in different places should not arise. Yes, one thing is certain. It will

be a long time before people's nature changes. In the mean time there will be a scramble for servants and that will do good to no one. However, if I have understood your recommendations they may be applied in future but not to the organizations which are functioning today. There was and is a purpose in merging all the organizations, although whatever has happened was only a drifting of the current. Do let me know if there is a flaw in the argument. If the present situation cannot be changed I want to understand the whole position.

I hope both of you are keeping good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Sushila has arrived. Manu has run away. She is with her sister in Bombay. Let us see what happens. There is no change in Sardar's condition.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

703. LETTER TO BRIJ BIHARI AVASTHI

August 27, 1945

BHAI AVASTHI,

Forget me so far as giving of messages, etc., is concerned.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

BRIJBIHARI AVASTHI
GANDHI SEVA SAMITI
GENERAL GANJ
KANPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

704. NOTE TO DEVPRAKASH NAYYAR

August 27, 1945

I have read the entire report[1]. As a report it is excellent. It is impossible to correct it as I do not know what took place. If we must give the report it ought to contain nothing but the truth. What I said during my talk does not apply to the report.

[1] Of the Adult Education Committee

You should have given the report in Hindustani and in the Urdu script if not in the Nagari script. You should use English only where it is necessary. It was unnecessary to have the report in English. We have to do this if all the members are to learn Hindustani.

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Hindi: Documents relating to Gandhiji. Courtesy: National Archives of India

705. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

August 27, 1945

CHI. HOSHIARI,

I am happy to know that you and Gajraj are keeping good health. You will certainly get rid of constipation if you drink plenty of water.

Everything is all right here.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

706. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

August 27, 1945

BHAI JAJUJI,

What you have written about the Punjab branch is correct. Appoint Sohanlalji.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

707. LETTER TO LAVANYAPRABHA DUTT

August 27, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter about my visit to Bengal. I am considering what I should do.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI LAVANYAPRABHA DUTT
B. P. C. C.
10 SUBURBAN SCHOOL ROAD
BHAWANIPUR POST
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

708. LETTER TO P. C. GHOSH

August 27, 1945

BHAI PROFULLA,

(1) Read this. Is it all right? What has to be done?

(2) Should I visit Calcutta only in November and not before?

(3) How is your health?

(4) What about Amtul Salaam?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have your letter. I must go to Madras on December 11. So if I am to go to Calcutta only after November 15, then it can be only in January. Let us see what happens. I will not go in October.

BAPU

DR. PROFULLA CHANDRA GHOSH
14/8 GARIAHAT ROAD
BALLYGUNJE, CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

709. LETTER TO PARASRAM TAHILRAMANI

August 27, 1945

BHAI PARASRAM,

I have your letter[1]. I will try to do all that I can. Hope your health is good.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PARASRAM TAHILRAMANI
S. P. C. C.
KARACHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

710. LETTER TO GHANSHYAM SINGH GUPTA

August 27, 1945

BHAI GHANSHYAM SINGH.

Read this.[2] If it is to be removed in six months, then it would be better to postpone the satyagraha.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI GHANSHYAM SINGH GUPTA
SPEAKER
DRUG

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Seeking Gandhiji's help in getting the satyagraha in connection with the ban on *Satyartha Prakash* postponed during the period of elections; *vide* the following item.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

711. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

August 27, 1945

BHAI PRAKASAM,

I have your letter. The students performed a good play. Let us hope that they will display in real life what they have depicted in the play. Let us see how much Sardar benefits.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

19 RAJABAHADUR MUDALIAR STREET
T. NAGAR, MADRAS

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

712. LETTER TO VINAYAK RAO

August 27, 1945

BHAI VINAYAK RAO,

I have your letter. Whatever I do or have done has been impelled by a feeling of dharma. There is no room for gratitude in it. Please let me know whatever may be the outcome.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI VINAYAK RAOJI
BAR-AT-LAW
JAMBAGH, HYDERABAD (DN.)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

713. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH.

August 28, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have given you quite a lot of work. Take care of your health in whatever you do. See that Shakaribehn also does not lose her health through overwork. See about Anna[1] and Kamala[2]. If the two work sincerely, they can do very good work.

Tell Govinda Reddi that I had no time for talk with him. I cannot tell you definitely when I shall return.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10641

714. LETTER TO A. PARTHASARATHY

POONA,
August 28, 1945

BHAI PARTHASARATHY,

I have your letter. Now you should put all your questions before the Working Committee.

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI A. PARTHASARATHY
KODURU, (CUDAPPAH DIST.)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Harihar Sharma and his wife
[2] *ibid*

715. LETTER TO GORDHANDAS CHOKHAWALA

August 28/29, 1945

CHI. GORDHANDAS,

I have your letter. It made me very happy. NOW Babudi has to be very careful about her diet. She will gain strength speedily if she does not make a mistake. Since the poison has passed out of the body all the other diseases should go. Shakaribehn's joy will be limitless.

Blessings from

BAPU

GORDHANDAS CHOKHAWALA
SURAT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

716. MESSAGE TO AMERICA[1]

[On or before *August 29, 1945*][2]

In spite of my disinclination to answer the question like the one put to me by Mr. Emanuel Celler, I feel that I shall be wanting in courtesy, if I do not meet Mr. Celler's wishes. The best way for America to assist India's struggle for independence is to study the question, so as not to be misled by the untruth that is being spread by British Agency at a great cost about India. Americans have to get out of the way of her struggle. For the rest, India has to fight her own battle of independence which she is trying to secure by a non-violent technique.

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-8-1945

[1] This was conveyed to Emanuel Celler, member of the United States House of Representatives, through D. F. Karaka, special correspondent of *The Bombay Chronicle* in New York. Emanuel Celler had asked how "we in the United States can aid in hastening the attainment of India's independence".

[2] The report appeared under the date-line "Wednesday" which was August 29.

717. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

POONA,
August 29, 1945

DEAR KUMARAPPA,

I have signed both and passed on as suggested by you.

Love.

BAPU

DR. J. C. KUMARAPPA
MAGANWADI
WARDHA, C. P.

From a photostat: G.N. 10180

718. LETTER TO MAURICE FRYDMAN[1]

CAMP POONA,
[*August 29, 1945*][2]

What is to be said to you! You are a law unto yourself, ever changing. Promises are as easily made as broken. This is all bad.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 46

[1] This is a postscript to Sushila Nayyar's letter to the addressee dated August 29.

[2] *ibid*

719. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANT KOTAI

August 29, 1945

BHAI CHANDRAKANT,

I have your letter. Science is certainly necessary. The Congress is giving support to all its branches. The Charkha Sangh is making much use of it. Science is a wide term. What is one to do if scientists ignore the science of the charkha?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KOTAI
TULSI BHUWAN
ROOM 43, 3RD FLOOR
CHITTARANJAN AVENUE
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

720. LETTER TO JAYANT SANGHAVI

August 29, 1945

BHAI JAYANT SANGHAVI,

I have the letter signed by you and others. I would suggest you all read my writings and you will easily get the reply.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI HIRALAL M. PARIKH
C/O BHARAT LIGHT HOUSE
PAYDHUNI
BOMBAY-3

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

721. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

August 29, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your letter. Yes, let Krishnachandra be the manager. Everybody, however, should know that the set-up remains unchanged. Viceroys and other officers change but the set-up remains the same.

One can understand it. Though they have demoniacal characteristics they can still remain united. What would be our characteristics?

I hope Kanchan is well.

Think over and decide these points before the taking over of the farm.

From which place will you buy the bullocks?

Who will be the farm-supervisor?

Do we pay the labourers more than the market-rate?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8440. Also C.W. 5593. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

722. LETTER TO V. L. MEHTA

POONA,
August 29, 1945

BHAI VAIKUNTH,

Is Bharat Bank good? I am scared of a new bank. However, if you have trust in it you should obtain other signatures. I am signing this because of my faith in you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

723. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

August 29, 1945

CHI. KANCHAN,

How are you getting along? Do not lose heart. Make your body strong.

Your work is different from that of the other women and, therefore, requires a different approach.

Do you give any time to study?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8264. Also C.W. 6988. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

724. LETTER TO GANGARAM

August 29, 1945

BHAI GANGARAM,

I have your letter.

You have written at great length. Find out everything from my articles.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi; G.N. 231

725. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

August 29, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You are going to be the manager from the 1st. It is good. Remember that whether the manager lives or dies, changes or continues, the management remains the same.

Is your manner of eating different in any way? If it is, think over it. Even the manner of eating affects one's digestion and also culture. One man swallows food like birds, another gobbles like animals. We are neither animals nor birds. Human beings chew and eat. In fact, it looks bad if one eats in a careless manner or makes a sound while others are eating. Think about it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4523

726. LETTER TO GHALIB

August 29, 1945

BHAI GHALIB,

I am sorry to know about Zohra. Please give her the enclosed letter. I had received Dr. Abdul Huq's reply immediately. I had kept it with me thinking that Zohra would come here. I saw Shuaib Qureshi the day before yesterday and talked to him. He said it might be possible to persuade Dr. Huq if all of you could accommodate yourselves in the women's wing of Dar-us-salaam. Can this be done? A copy of Dr. Huq's letter is enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

JANAB GHALIB SAHEB
14 RAJPUR ROAD, DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

727. LETTER TO ZOHRA ANSARI

August 29, 1945

DAUGHTER ZOHRA,

You fell ill and went away without seeing me. Did you receive my letter? You did not inform me about it. Why are you so scared? You must be brave.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

728. LETTER TO KISHANDAS BEGRAJ

August 29, 1945

BHAI KISHANDAS,

I have your letter. You do not understand a joke. I have often said that the journalists deserve to be shot. The beauty of it is that no one was shot nor did anyone imagine he would be shot. They took my remarks in good humour. The cameraman handed [the camera] to an old man like me and then took it back. I took it from him deliberately. I did well in doing so. Both gestures were non-violent.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KISHANDAS BEGRAJ
C/O NEW ASIATIC INSURANCE
18 HENAM MANSION
MAHATMA GANDHI ROAD
KARACHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

729. LETTER TO PARACHURE SHASTRI

August 29, 1945

SHASTRIJI,

I have your letter. Do not go anywhere. Stay in Dattapur and end your life there. You are rendering service there.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PARACHURE SHASTRI
DATTAPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

730. LETTER TO S. NIJALINGAPPA

August 29, 1945

BHAI NIJALINGAPPA,

I have your letter. Now the Working Committee and the States People's Conference are functioning. Do you think I should say something? This question deserves consideration. Write to both.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

731. LETTER TO Y. M. PARNERKAR

August 29, 1945

CHI. PARNERKAR,

I do not think that your letter is long. The subject matter required that much.

What can be done if you can't sit together and make up your minds? What will you do if I die? Will you all be separated from each other? The Goshala, the Talimi Sangh, the Charkha Sangh and the Ashram are together because they were all conceived by one man—other two exist separately merely by chance. They could both havebeen located at one place. As far as the site is concerned the Ashram and the Goshala should coexist. This has to be thought over. I have liked your letter and so sent it to the Ashram. Do think over the matter if you can. But if it is not possible leave it. It can't be solved by devoting more time to it. We must know the subject is beyond our ken if we have to devote too much time to it. We have first hand experience of this in arithmetic.

Blessings from

BAPU

SEVAGRAM ASHRAM
WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

732. LETTER TO PUSHPA K. DESAI

August 29, 1945

CHI. PUSHPA,

I have your letter. You should definitely not write to Rajani just now. Your father and his relatives have just left me, and I am now writing to you. It is nine o'clock at night. If you wish, I will write to Rajani. If you want me to write, send me his address. I showed your letter to your father. He does not trust Rajani. He would like you to marry Vrajlal. He says the latter is ready to observe *brahmacharya* till you desire otherwise. He will not act against your will. Nor will he interfere with your prayers and worship. Manibehn has also seen a letter from Vrajlal to this effect. If this is true, such a marriage will not prove an obstacle to you in your striving for a vision of Krishna. Vrajlal will be happy and so will be your parents and other well-wishers. I tell you on the basis of my own experience that there will be no harm in agreeing to the proposed marriage. Only, you should have genuine *bhakti*[1]. Reply to me immediately.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9262

733. NOTE TO SHRIKRISHNA NATH SHARMA[2]

[On or after *August 29, 1945*][3]

I know the situation in Assam. I am extremely busy these days. How can I give you any time? Discuss everything with Kakasaheb.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8236

[1] Devotion

[2] The addressee, in order to acquaint Gandhiji with the situation in Assam, had requested him to spare fifteen to twenty minutes of his time.

[3] This note is written on the addressee's letter dated August 29, 1945.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM JAIRAMDAS DAULATRAM TO ANAND T. HINGORANI[1]

PANCHGANI,
June 10, 1945

DEAR BROTHER,

You must have received my letter sent from here. Your letter of the 3rd June addressed to Bapu was received by him today. There is a great pressure of work on him, so he has asked me to reply to it.

Bapu said that he had also received your earlier letter, but owing to rush of work he could not send a reply. After coming here I am better able to realize what a tremendous burden of work rests on him and how he can deal with it only bit by bit on account of his reduced capacity. There is no quick disposal of work as before. Besides, the present happenings in the country also take up much of his time.

About the "Daily Thoughts", Bapu inquired whether they would be published in Hindi only or there would also be English rendering simultaneously.If there is to be an English translation, then he will like to see it himself and this task he will not be able to shoulder at present. I do not exactly remember what we had decided about the English translation. *So please write to me by return of post.* If it is only the Hindi edition, then there will be no difficulty in Bapu's writing a preface to it. Perhaps it would be easier for him to find time for it.

As regards the questions you had sent to Bapu in respect of your book "To the Statesmen of the World", Bapu says that he would have gladly answered them, but that at the present moment his mind is not disposed to undertake that burden either. You will, therefore, have to do without his answer to your questions.

I had spoken to Bapu regarding the Navajivan and the "Gandhi Series". He advised me that since Naraharibhai was here, I should personally hear what he has to say. I had, therefore, a brief talk with him last evening and will have further discussion with him again today. Then we shall see where the matter stands.

Have you got enough supply of paper for bringing out your new book "To the Statesmen"? I learn that the Government is increasing the paper quota. How far is it

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Anand T. Hingorani", 10-6-1945.

true? Do write all the news about yourself. How about Hassa?

I am enclosing herewith a few lines from Bapu.

Many loves.

Yours,

JAIRAM

From a microfilm of the Sindhi: Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

APPENDIX II

SPEECH BROADCAST BY THE VICEROY[1]

June 14, 1945

I have been authorized by His Majesty's Government to place before Indian political leaders proposals designed to ease the present political situation and to advance India towards her goal of full self-government. These proposals are at the present moment being explained to Parliament by the Secretary of State for India. My intention in this broadcast is to explain to you the proposals, the ideas underlying them, and the method by which I hope to put them into effect.

This is not an attempt to obtain or impose a constitutional settlement. His Majesty's Government had hoped that the leaders of the Indian parties would agree amongst themselves on a settlement of the communal issue, which is the main stumbling-block; but this hope has not been fulfilled.

In the mean time, India has great opportunities to be taken and great problems to be solved, which require a common effort by the leading men of all parties. I, therefore, propose, with the full support of His Majesty's Government, to invite Indian leaders, both of Central and Provincial politics, to take counsel with me with a view to the formation of a new Executive Council more representative of organized political opinion. The proposed new Council would represent the main communities and would include equal proportions of caste Hindus and Muslims. It would work, if formed, under the existing Constitution. But it would be an entirely Indian Council, except for the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief, who would retain his position as War Member. It is also proposed that the portfolio of External Affairs, which has hitherto been held by the Viceroy, should be placed in charge of an Indian Member of Council, so far as the interests of British India are concerned.

A further step proposed by His Majesty's Government is the appointment of a

[1]*Vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to Viceroy", 14-6-1945; "Telegram to Lord Wavell", 15-6-1945; "Statement to the press", 15-6-1945 and "Interview to associated Press of India", 30-6-1945.

British High Commissioner in India, as in the Dominions, to represent Great Britains' commercial and other such interests in India.

Such a new Executive Council will, you realize, represent a definite advance on the road to self-government. It will be almost entirely Indian, and the Finance and Home Members will for the first time be Indians, while an Indian will also be charged with the management of India's Foreign Affairs. Moreover, Members will now be selected by the Governor-General after consultations with political leaders; though their appointment will of course be subject to the approval of His Majesty the King-Emperor.

The council will work within the framework of the present constitution and there can be no question of the Governor-General agreeing not to exercise his constitutional power of control; but it will of course not be exercised unreasonably.

I should make it clear that the formation of this interim Government will in no way prejudice the final constitutional settlement.

The main task for this new Executive Council would be:

First, to prosecute the war against Japan with the utmost energy till Japan is utterly defeated.

Secondly, to carry on the Government of British India, with all the manifold tasks of post-war development in front of it, until a new permanent constitution can be agreed upon and come into force.

Thirdly, to consider, when the Members of the Government think it possible, the means by which such agreement can be achieved. The third task is most important. I want to make it quite clear that neither I nor His Majesty's Government have lost sight of the need for a long-term solution, and that the present proposals are intended to make a long-term solution easier.

I have considered the best means of forming such a Council; and have decided to invite the following to Viceregal Lodge to advise me:

Those now holding office as Premier in a Provincial Government; or, for provinces now under Section 93 Government, those who last held the office of the Premier.

The Leader of the Congress Party and the Deputy Leader of the Muslim League in the Central Assembly; the leader of the Congress Party and the Muslim League in the Council of State; also the leader of the Nationalist Party and the European Group in the Assembly.

Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Jinnah as the recognized leaders of the two main political parties.

Rao Bahadur N. Siva Raj to represent the Scheduled Classes.

Master Tara Singh to represent the Sikhs.

Invitations to these gentlemen are being handed to them today and it is proposed to assemble the conference on 25th June at Simla where we shall be cooler than at Delhi.

I trust that all those invited will attend the conference and give me their help. On me and on them will lie a heavy responsibility in this fresh attempt to make progress towards a final settlement of India's future.

If the meeting is successful, I hope that we shall be able to agree on the formation of the new Executive Council at the Centre. I also hope that it will be possible for Ministries to re-assume office and again undertake the tasks of Government in the provinces now administered under Section 93 of the Constitution Act and that these Ministries will be coalitions.

If the meeting should unfortunately fail, we must carry on as at present until the parties are ready to come together. The existing Executive Council, which has done such valuable work for India will continue it if other arrangements cannot be agreed.

But I have every hope that the meeting will succeed, if the party leaders will approach the problem with the sincere intention of working with me and with each other. I can assure them that there is behind this proposal a most genuine desire on the part of all responsible leaders in the United Kingdom and of the British people as a whole to help India towards her goal. I believe that this is more than a step towards that goal, it is a considerable stride forward, and a stride on the right path.

I should make it clear that these proposals affect British India only and do not make any alteration in the relations of the Princes with the Crown Representative.

With the approval of His Majesty's Government, and after consultation with my Council, orders have been given for the immediate release of the members of the Working Committee of Congress who are still in detention. I propose to leave the final decision about the others still under detention as the result of the 1942 disturbances to the new Central Government, if formed, and to the Provincial governments.

The appropriate time for fresh elections for the Central and Provincial legislatures will be discussed at the conference.

Finally, I would ask you all to help in creating the atmosphere of goodwill and mutual confidence that is essential if we are to make progress. The destiny of this great country and of the many millions who live in it depends on the wisdom and good understanding of the leaders, both of action and of thought, British and Indian, at this critical moment of India's history.

India's military reputation never stood higher in the world than it does at present; thanks to the exploits of her sons drawn from all parts of the country. Her representatives at international conference have won high regard for their

statesmanlike attitude. Sympathy for India's aspirations and progress towards prosperity was never greater or more widespread. We have thus great assets if we can use them wisely. But it will not be easy, it will not be quick; there is very much to do, there are many pitfalls and dangers. There is on all sides something to forgive and forget.

I believe in the future of India, *and as far as in me lies will further her greatness.* I ask you all for your co-operation and goodwill.

From a copy: A. I. C. C. File No. 1439, 1945. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX III

TELEGRAM FROM LORD WAVELL[1]

Immediate NEW DELHI,

June 16, 1945

M. K. GANDHI ESQ.
PANCHGANI

Many thanks for your telegram of 15th June. I have also seen your statement in today's newspapers. As regards your attendance at the conference I will await your letter referred to in your telegram of 16th June which I have just received. I assure you, term "caste Hindus" was not used with offensiveintention. Meaning is that there should be equality between Muslims and Hindus other than members of scheduled castes. Subject to this, exact composition of council would of course have to be decided after discussion at conference. On question of independence I invite your attention to Secretary of State's speech in Parliament on 14th June as published in Indian Press. Following is the relevant passage:

The offer of March 1942 stands in its entirety. That offer is based on two main principles. First, no limit is set to India's freedom to decide her own destiny whether as a free partner in the Commonwealth or even without it. Second, that this can only be achieved under a constitution or constitutions framed by Indians to which the main elements are consenting parties.

It would not be practicable to modify the terms of my broadcast. It is only a simple statement of the proposals approved by His Majesty's Government and my intention is to deal at the conference itself with any points requiring clarification. I do not think it advisable to enter into detailed discussions before the conference which I hope, as you do yourself, will be held in a friendly atmosphere and without party bitterness. As you suggest I am releasing our telegrams to the Press.

VICEROY

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 21

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Lord Wavell", 15-6-1945 and "Interview to The Press", 18-6-1945.

APPENDIX IV

DESAI-LIAQAT PACT[1]

The Congress and the League agree that they will join in forming an interim government in the Centre. The composition of such Government will be on the following lines:

(a) An equal number of persons nominated by the Congress and the League in the Central Executive (the persons nominated need not be members of the Central Legislature),

(b) representatives of minorities (in particular the Scheduled Castes and the Sikhs),

(c) the Commander-in-Chief.

The Government will be formed and will function within the framework of the existing Government of India Act. It is, however, understood that, if the Cabinet cannot get a particular measure passed by the Legislative Assembly, they will not enforce the same by resort to any of the reserve powers of the Governor-General or the Viceroy. This will make them sufficiently independent of the Governor-General.

It is agreed between the Congress and the League that, if such interim government is formed, their first step would be to release the Working Committee members of the Congress.

The steps by which efforts would be made to achieve this end are at present indicated to take the following course:

On the basis of the above understanding some way should he found to get the Governor-General to make a proposal or a suggestion that he desires an interim Government to be formed in the Centre on the agreement between the Congress and the League and when the Governor-General invites Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Desai either jointly or separately, the above proposal would be made declaring that they are prepared to join in forming the government.

The next step would be to get the withdrawal of Section 93 in the Provinces and to form as soon as possible Provincial Governments on the lines of a coalition.

From a Copy: A. I. C. C. File No. 1814, 1945. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the press", 15-6-1945 and "Interview to The Press", 18-6-1945.

APPENDIX V

TELEGRAM FROM LORD WAVELL[1]

June 18, 1945

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TWO TELEGRAMS OF YESTERDAY. I THINK MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD SHOULD HAVE MY INVITATION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, AND HAVE ACCORDINGLY TELEGRAPHED IT TO HIM AT CALCUTTA. 2. MR. AMERY'S STATEMENT IN PARLIAMENT AND MY BROADCAST CONSTITUTE TERMS OF REFERENCE TO THE CONFERENCE WHICH I STILL HOPE WILL ASSEMBLE AT SIMLA ON 25TH. I CLEARLY CANNOT CHANGE MY BROADCAST AND I HAVE ALREADY TOLD YOU I DO NOT THINK IT DESIRABLE TO DISCUSS ITS DETAILS BEFORE THE CONFERENCE. NONE OF THE PERSONS OR PARTIES CONCERNED IS EXPECTED OR REQUIRED TO ACCEPT OR REJECT THE PROPOSALS NOW. THE ONLY IMMEDIATE QUESTION IS WHETHER THE PROPOSALS ARE WORTH DISCUSSING AT THE CONFERENCE AND IT IS TO THAT QUESTION THAT AN ANSWER WILL BE MOST HELPFUL. 3. I STILL THINK THE CONFERENCE SHOULD ASSEMBLE ON THE 25TH. IT MAY LAST SOME TIME, AND DELAY BEFORE IT BEGINS WILL NOT IMPROVE ITS PROSPECTS OF SUCCESS. 4. I AM RELEASING YOUR LETTER OF 16TH JUNE, MY TELEGRAM OF 17TH JUNE, YOUR TWO TELEGRAMS OF 17TH JUNE AND THIS TELEGRAM TO THE PRESS.

The Hindu, 20-6-1945

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Lord Wavell", 17-6-1945

APPENDIX VI

STATEMENT MADE IN PARLIAMENT BY SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA[1]

June 14, 1945

During the recent visit of Field-Marshal Viscount Wavell to this country, His Majesty's Government reviewed with him a number of problems and discussed particularly the present political situation in India.

Members will be aware that since the offer by His Majesty's Government to India of March 1942, there has been no further progress towards the solution of the Indian constitutional problem.

As was then stated, the working out of India's new constitutional system is a task which can only be carried through by the Indian people themselves.

While His Majesty's Government are at all times most anxious to do their utmost to assist the Indians in the working out of a new constitutional settlement, it would be a contradiction in terms to speak of the imposition by this country of self-governing institutions upon an unwilling India. Such a thing is not possible, nor could we accept the responsibility for enforcing such institutions at the very time when we were, by its purpose, withdrawing from all control of British Indian affairs.

The main constitutional position remains therefore as it was. The offer of March 1942 stands in its entirety without change or qualification. His Majesty's Government still hope that the political leaders in India may be able to come to an agreement as to the procedure whereby India's permanent future form of government can be determined.

His Majesty's Government are, however, most anxious to make any contribution that is practicable to the breaking of the political deadlock in India. While that deadlock lasts not only political but social and economic progress is being hampered.

The Indian administration, over-burdened with the great tasks laid upon it by the war against Japan and by the planning for the post-war period, is further strained by the political tension that exists.

All that is so urgently required to be done for agricultural development and for the peasants and workers of India cannot be carried through unless whole-hearted co-operation of every community and section of the Indian people is forthcoming.

His Majesty's Government have therefore considered whether there is

[1] *Vide* "Interview to The Press", 18-6-1945.

something which they could suggest in this interim period, under the existing constitution, pending the formulation by Indians of their future constitutional arrangements which would enable the main communities and parties to co-operate more closely together and with the British to the benefit of the people of India as a whole.

It is not the intention of His Majesty's Government to introduce any change contrary to the wishes of the major Indian communities. But they are willing to make possible some steps forward during the interim period if the leaders of the principal Indian parties are prepared to agree to their suggestion and to co-operate in the successful conclusion of the war against Japan as well as in the reconstruction in India which must follow the final victory.

To this end they would be prepared to see an important change in the composition of the Viceroy's Executive. This is possible without making any change in the existing statute law except for one amendment to the Ninth Schedule to the Act of 1935. That Schedule contains a provision that not less than three members of the Executive must have had at least 10 years' service under the Crown in India. If the proposals I am about to lay before the House meet with acceptance in India, that clause would have to be amended to dispense with that requirement.

It is proposed that the Executive Council should be reconstituted and that the Viceroy should in future make his selection to the Crown for appointment to his Executive from amongst leaders of Indian political life at the Centre and in the Provinces, in proportions which would give a balanced representation of the main communities, including equal proportions of Muslims and caste Hindus.

In order to pursue this object, the Viceroy will call into conference a number of leading Indian politicians who are the heads of the most important parties or who have had recent experience as Prime Ministers of Provinces, together with a few others of special experience and authority. The Viceroy intends to put before this conference the proposal that the Executive Council should be reconstituted as above stated and to invite from the members of the conference a list of names. Out of these he would hope to be able to choose the future members whom he would recommend for appointment by his Majesty to the Viceroy's council, although the responsibility for the recommendations must of course continue to rest with him, and his freedom of choice therefore remains unrestricted.

The members of his Council who are chosen as a result of this arrangement would of course accept the position on the basis that they would whole-heartedly co-operate in supporting and carrying through the war against Japan to its victorious conclusion.

The members of the Executive would be Indians with the exception of the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief, who would retain his position as War

Member. This is essential so long as the defence of India remains a British responsibility.

Nothing contained in any of these proposals will affect the relations of the Crown with the Indian States through the Viceroy as Crown Representative.

The Viceroy has been authorized by His Majesty's Government to place this proposal before the Indian leaders. His Majesty's Government trust that the leaders of the Indian communities will respond. For the success of such a plan must depend on its acceptance in India and the degree to which responsible Indian politicians are prepared to co-operate with the object of making it a workable interim arrange-ment. In the absence of such general acceptance existing arrangements must neces-sarily continue.

If such co-operation can be achieved at the Centre it will no doubt be reflected in the provinces and so enable responsible governments to be set up once again in those provinces where, owing to the withdrawal of the majority party from participation, it became necessary to put into force the powers of the Governors under Section 93 of the Act of 1935. It is to be hoped that in all the Provinces these governments would be based on the participation of the main parties, thus smoothing out communal differences and allowing Ministers to concentrate upon their very heavy administrative tasks.

There is one further change which, if these proposals are accepted, His Majesty's Government suggest should follow.

That is, that External Affairs (other than those tribal and frontier matters which fall to be dealt with as part of the defence of India) should be placed in the charge of an Indian Member of the Viceroy's Executive so far as British India is concerned, and that fully accredited representatives shall be appointed for the representation of India abroad.

By their acceptance of and co-operation in this scheme the Indian leaders will not only be able to make their immediate contribution to the direction of Indian affairs, but it is also to be hoped that their experience of co-operation in government will expedite agreement between them as to the method of working out the new constitutional arrangements.

His Majesty's Government consider, after the most careful study of the question, that the plan now suggested gives the utmost progress practicable within the present constitution. None of the changes suggested will in any way prejudice or prejudge the essential form of the future permanent constitution or constitutions for India.

His Majesty's Government feel certain that given goodwill and a genuine desire to co-operate on all sides, both British and Indian, these proposals can mark a

genuine step forward in the collaboration of the British and Indian peoples towards Indian self-government and can assert the rightful position, and strengthen the influence, of India in the counsels of the *nations*.

The Indian Annual Register, *1945*, Vol. I, pp. 248-50

APPENDIX VII

LORD WAVELL'S NOTE ON HIS INTERVIEW[1]

June 24, 1945

I began by making a short statement on the objects of the proposals of H. M. G., the spirit in which they were conceived and the spirit in which I hoped they would be accepted and worked. I emphasized the necessity for full support of the war, and that it was essential that the political parties should put in their very best men, determined to concentrate on the economic and other problems of India, and not merely to enter the Government in a party spirit.

Mr. Gandhi then made a long, tortuous and prolix statement, which dealt with the history of the Congress, British rule in India, British character, the qualities of a good soldier, and many other more or less relevant subjects. It lasted over half an hour, and ended with a sort of general blessing on the proposals, which he said he had recommended to the Working Committee.

He then went on, referring to some notes, to deal with certain other points. I think this was a list prepared for him as a result of the discussions by Congress Working Committee. The main points were as follows:

(a) That it would have been much better if I had ordered the release of all the political prisoners and not merely the Working Committee.

(b) That the term 'Caste Hindus' should not have been used, as his great aim was that there should be no question of caste inside Congress; he would have preferred the term 'Non-Scheduled Hindus'.

(c) He then went on to the question of coalitions in Provinces, obviously with the idea of trying to establish that the minorities should be represented by members of their body belonging to Congress.

(d) He referred to the matter of parity, and said he had been under very severe pressure as regards this, but that he was prepared to accept it. He indicated that it would be open to Congress to put forward the names of Muslims or Scheduled Castes, and I agreed but said that the principle of parity between non-Scheduled Hindus and Muslims must be maintained.

(e) He then digressed into a long story about members of the Indian Army who

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Wavell", 25-6-1945.

had wished to see him but had been compelled, like Nicodemus, to come to him by night and in mufti. I said that the one thing which was disastrous for any government was if the army became political; that the Indian Army had a Commander-in-Chief in whom they had full trust; that their reputation never stood higher and that I could assure him that the Indian Army was on the whole a thoroughly contented body. He agreed to all these statements.

(f) He then started on the question of the Indian States. I said that the conference dealt entirely with British India, and that I was not prepared at this stage to enter into a discussion of the Indian States. He agreed that it had nothing to do with the conference and was not appropriate for discussion at the moment.

I asked Mr. Gandhi at the end, whether he proposed to attend the conference in person. He said that he represented nobody except himself, and that though he would be prepared to attend the conference if I wished, and sit in a corner, he strongly advised me that his presence at the conference was undesirable. He said that he would hold himself at my disposal for as long as I wished, but that if I had nothing on which I had to consult him he would propose to leave Simla tomorrow. I said that I would let him know.

The interview was mainly a discursive monologue by Mr. Gandhi, interspersed by numerous digressions, such as a most graphic description of the death of his Private Secretary and the relation of his carrying down the wounded General Woodgate from Spion Kop in 1899. My general impression of him was that he was friendly for the time being, but perfectly prepared to go back at any time on anything he had said.

Wavell: The Viceroy's Journal, pp. 144-6

APPENDIX VIII

ABUL KALAM AZAD'S LETTER TO LORD WAVELL[1]

ARMSDELL, SIMLA,
July 15, 1945

DEAR LORD WAVELL,

After announcing the failure of the Conference, you were good enough to ask for the support of all parties in ensuring a calm atmosphere. I do not propose to reiterate the Congress view about the failure. I expressed it sufficiently at the Conference. But in fairness to you and to ourselves I must point out that co-operation inevitably depends on the removal of obstacles to it. Some of these obstacles are of a psychological nature with roots in the past relations between India and England. These can only gradually disappear with a change in those relations. But there are others of a more tangible kind which serve as constant irritants to our people and which affect our day-to-day activity. They are continually before us. In spite of this preoccupation, however, we did not think it desirable to raise this matter, except perhaps rather vaguely in the course of conversations with you, as we were anxious not to place any difficulties in your path when you were dealing with a delicate situation.

2. But now that one chapter has ended and our minds, as well as yours, are turned to future possibilities of finding a way out, honourable to all concerned and leading to the objective of Indian freedom, these obstacles to co-operation cannot be ignored. I am taking the liberty, therefore, of pointing them out to you in the hope that you will have early steps taken to have them removed.

3. The steps that I consider necessary and earnestly urge upon you are:

(a) The bans on all Congress and allied organizations should be removed at once. It has not been possible to convene the A. I. C. C. because of its being an illegal organization.

(b) All detenus should be released without any condition being imposed upon them, whether the detention was imposed by the Central Government or the Provincial Governments.

(c) All restrictions on the movements of released detenus or prisoners should be removed.

(d) Cases of all prisoners convicted for political or like offences should be examined by a popular judicial tribunal, its verdict should be regarded as final by the

[1] *Vide* The letter bears corrections in Gandhiji's hand.

Government.

(e) Extra-legal restrictions on the freedom of the Press or on the movement or association of people should be removed so as to make the people feel that they are free to follow normal activities under democratic conditions.

(f) All pending sentences of hanging arising out of the disturbances of August 1942 should be commuted to life sentences.

(g) All pending arrests of 'absconders' should be cancelled.

(h) All prisoners who have served full fourteen years should be unconditionally discharged.

(i) What has been said above about prisoners applies equally, and with even greater force, to properties, movable and immovable, and frozen or confiscated.

4. I have not endeavoured to argue out the justness of the foregoing requirements as I have no doubt that you will yourself appreciate the need for action along the lines indicated. If India is on the eve of having a *bona-fide* national representative Executive, leading to independence after the defeat of Japan, then the necessity for this approach is self-proved and inevitable.

5. There is another matter to which I should like to refer. I need hardly say on behalf of the Congress that whatever the result of your promised effort the Congress is and has always been against the Japanese aggression. Therefore, there will always be on the part of the Congress a desire for the defeat of Japan in her designs upon China or any other aggression on her part. But the thought expressed in this paragraph will be incomplete if I did not inform you that, in the Congress estimation, the effort now being made on Indian soil will continue to be looked upon as a British and Allied effort, so long as there is not at the Centre a popular government assisted by provincial popular governments.

Yours sincerely,

HIS EXCELLENCY VISCOUNT WAVELL
VICEREGAL LODGE
SIMLA

A.I.C.C. File No. 1451-A, 1945-46. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX IX

MARRIAGE RITES[1]

The marriage between Ganapat Narayan Mahadev Tendulkar and Indumati Nagesh Vasudev Gunaji is being solemnized and I perform the ceremony with God as witness. Both of you should also do the same. Those who are witness to this ceremony should keep their minds pure and thus help in the realization of the sacred wish of the couple getting married.

Now I shall recite a *bhajan* thanking God. All of you should listen to it carefully. *(Bhajan "Aaj milkar geet gao")*

Q. Are both of you composed?

A. (Both to say :) Yes.

Q. Have you performed the seven *yajnas*[2] as described to you yesterday?

A. Yes.

Q. I hope that you know that this relationship is not for sexual gratification or enjoyment.

A. Yes.

Q. Are you entering the *Grihastha Ashram* in a spirit of duty, dedication and sacrifice?

A. Yes.

Q. And therefore you will not obstruct each other in his or her work of service, but assist each other?

A. Yes.

Q. Will you be always loyal to each other in thought, word and deed?

A. Yes.

Q. Will you try your best not to have children till India wins independence?

A. Yes.

Q. You do approve the idea of inter-dining and inter-marrying with the so-called untouchables, don't you?

A. Yes.

Q. You do believe that men and women have equal rights?

A. Yes.

Q. Both of you are friends and neither is a slave to the other. Isn't that correct also?

[1] *Vide* "Letter to D.B. Kalelkar", 6-8-1945.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. A. G. Tendulkar", 18-8-1945.

A. Yes.

Q. You understand, don't you, that the seven *yajnas* mentioned in the second question are in place of the *saptapadi?*

A. Yes.

Now by this yarn spun by me I bind you in union. You should preserve the yarn-garland carefully and should resolve that you will never break this union. Bear in mind the religious ceremony and pray to omnipotent God to help you in the fulfilment of the vows you have just taken. Now we shall all together sing the *Ramdhun.*

August 18, 1945

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Kalamse, pp. 445-6

1. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

POONA,
August 30, 1945

CHI. LILI,

I do not remember having answered your letter. Just now, after the prayer, I have taken out the old letters. This is just to tell you that I think of you. Continue your studies and pass. Do not lose courage. Do not spoil your health. There is no time to write more. Sardar's treatment is going on. I am well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10206. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

2. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI[1]

POONA,
August 30, 1945

CHI. PRABHA,

I do not at all remember whether I have written to you. Your letter of the 1st is lying in front of me. I am writing this after the morning prayer. I hope you keep good health. You may come when you can. Just now I shall have to stay with Sardar in Poona. I may have to be here for three months. After that I shall be touring. You should stay in the Ashram. If there is suitable work for you there and you enjoy peace of mind and keep good health, settle down there. Do as you please. How is Father?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3579

[1] The letters are in the Devanagari script.S

3. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

August 30, 1945

CHI. PRABHA,

A letter from Priyamvada is enclosed. I think you should join it[2] Get yourself enrolled. About the work, we shall see after you have rested in the Ashram.

I discovered after writing the postcard this morning that I had in fact dictated a letter to you. However, I write the postcard lest I should forget it.

I hope you are keeping good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3580

4. LETTER TO PRIYAMVADA NANDKEOLYAR

August 30, 1945

CHI. PRIYAMVADA[3],

I have your letter. I have written to Prabha that she should be on your Committee but she should not work till she gets well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PRIYAMVADABEHN
NAND VILAS
GAYA (BIHAR,)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The letter are in the Devanagari seript
[2] Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Committee
[3] Agent in Bihar for the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust

5. LETTER TO LAKSHMI GANDHI

August 30, 1945

CHI. LAKSHMI,

Give the enclosed letters[1] to the children. Hope you and the child[2] are well. You are continuing your studies, aren't you? Is the house crowded?

Blessings from

BAPU

Enclosures: 5

MRS. DEVDAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

6. LETTER TO TARA GANDHI

POONA,
August 30, 1945

CHI. TARA[3],

I have your letter. The letter cannot be considered good. You could have written in a beautiful hand. When will you be playing about again?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the following five letters.
[2] Gopalkrishna
[3] Daughter of Devdas Gandhi

7. LETTER TO RAJMOHAN GANDHI

POONA,
August 30, 1945

CHI. MOHAN[1],

I have your letter. It is good. Keep writing in the same way. Grow strong and sturdy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

8. LETTER TO RAMCHANDRA GANDHI

August 30, 1945

CHI. RAMU[2],

You have written in pencil. That is not good. Always write in ink. Your friend[3] too has written in pencil.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

9. LETTER TO ARUN Y. PANDYA

August 30, 1945

CHI. ARUN,

Now I have two Aruns. If both of you are together, how will I know who has written? Can you solve the problem?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Son of Devdas Gandhi
[2] Son of Devdas Gandhi
[3] Arun Y. Pandya; *vide* the following item.

10. LETTER TO PRAVINA Y. PANDYA

August 30, 1945

CHI. PRAVINA,

I have your letter. Keep on spinning and wear khadi. Study well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

11. LETTER TO P. H. GADRE

POONA ,
August 31, 1945

DEAR GADRE,

Why should you feel sore if you have done your duty? Duty is its own reward! If the Committee do not want your services, you will serve where you are wanted. The field of service is as wide as the earth. The donors should not mind the removal of the [status][1]. The question is whether you have become yourself a Harijan? If you have, all is well.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI P. H. GADRE
PLEADER
HINDU COLONY, NASIK[2]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The word is illegible.
[2] The address is in Hindi.

12. LETTER TO D. PARIMALA

POONA,
August 31, 194[5][1]

DEAR SISTER,

The *Gita* does answer your doubts, if you will search diligently. If you do not doubt the fleeting present, how can you doubt the future? Let the old lady suffer. We may not judge what is good for her.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SMT. D. PARIMALA
2681 V. V. MINALLA
MYSORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

13. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

August 31, 1945

CHI. BHANSALI,

I have your letter. Accept the invitation and go there for three to four days if it is necessary.

Hope you remember about your diet.

Blessings from
BAPU

SEVAGRAM ASHRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

14. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

August 31, 1945

CHI. KANTI,

I have your letter. It is interesting. If I tried to write in reply a letter which would be interesting to read, it would be delayed.

All of you are doing fine work. May you succeed in it and may

[1] The source has "1941", but the letter is placed among those of the year 1945; besides, on August 31, 1941, Gandhiji was in Sevagram.

the work progress. Everyone should learn the processes which precede spinning. Keep both the yarn and the money there. An account of the yarn spun should be sent to Narandas.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope both of you and the child are well. I have received two silly letters from Harilal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati and Hindi: C.W. 7377. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

15. LETTER TO A. K. CHANDA

August 31, 1945

BHAI CHANDA,

For the time being please do not take any decision about my visit to Silchar. Let us see what God bids me do, and where He takes me.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI A. K. CHANDA
SILCHAR (ASSAM)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

16. LETTER TO A. RAHIM

August 31, 1945

BHAI SAHEB,

If the true remain true, others will also do so.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

A. RAHIM SAHEB
C/O POST MASTER
MADRAS

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This paragraph is in Hindi.

17. LETTER TO DHIRENDRANATH MUKHERJEE

August 31, 1945

BHAI DHIRENDRANATHJI,

I have your letter. there are some things men achieve by talking, some by observing silence and some by working.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI DHIRENDRA N. MUKHERJEE
SENHATI P. O ., KHULNA DIST.
BENGAL

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

18. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH AZAD

August 31, 1945

BHAI PRITHVI SINGH,

I have your letter. About your quoting me I have often told you to have me put down in writing what I say. Be it as it may, I know this much that caste Hindus do not abide by their dharma. In this connection please read the discussion I had with Murthy[1] as also about what Harijans should do.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PRITHVI SINGH AZAD
HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH
LAJPATRAI BHAVAN, LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

19. LETTER TO PANNALAL

August 31, 1945

BHAI PANNALALJI,

I have gone through your letter carefully. I will see the pamphlets when they arrive. Keep up your interest in the propagation

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with B. S. Murthy", 14-8-1945

of Hindustani.

The pamphlets have come.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. PANNALAL
19 THORNHILL ROAD
ALLAHABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

20. LETTER TO RAMBHAI MAMTANI

August 31, 1945

BHAI RAMBHAI MAMTANI,

I have your letter. Now you can see me only when I return to Sevagram. You should ask for the answer to your first question only there.

For the rest, have patience and see what happens.

Blessings from
BAPU

TALIMI SANGH

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

21. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

POONA,
August 31, 1945

BHAI RAJENDRA BABU,

Time is running out and nothing is being done about Mahendra Chowdhary. I do not like it. There are some very good lawyers in Patna. It is easy to cite case-law. You have to base it on the papers you have. Alladi[1], Venkataraman Sastri, Motilal Setalvad and others may see it and give their opinion. How long will it take? If the record[2] is sent here, Sardar can do the rest. I do not feel that there is any need for you to go to Bihar.

I am happy to know that you are keeping good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Aiyar
[2] This is in English.

22. LETTER TO VAMAN KRISHNA PARANJPE

August 31, 1945

BHAI VAMAN KRISHNA PARANJPE,

I have your letter. I very well remember your grandfather[1]. He was a great orator and a man of courage.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI VAMAN KRISHNA PARANJPE
VAKIL, SHUKRAVAR PETH
POONA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

23. LETTER TO VINA CHATTERJEE

August 31, 1945

CHI. VINA,

I have your letter after a long time. I think you should notify the court. I have written to Naraharibhai. It is better to get married soon. Be satisfied with the registration in the court. Show this also to Naraharibhai.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Be very good and render plenty of service.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

24. LETTER TO S. N. CHATTERJEE

August 31, 1945

CHI. SAILEN,

I have your letter. It is good you decided to have a separate kitchen. Naraharibhai has written to Father. That is sufficient.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10393. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[1] Shivaram Mahadev Paranjpe

25. LETTER TO DHANNO GIDWANI

POONA,
September 1, 1945

MY DEAR DHANNO[1],

I wonder whether you know Gujarati, Hindustani or Sindhi, seeing that you write to me in bad English? Your mother knows Hindustani and Sindhi. Your father knew all the above three well. But this I write in the language you evidently know best.

You see now is the time for every patriot to be tested. You wear khadi not for family tradition which may or may not be good, not for my sake (that would be of no use), not for the poor (there are other ways of serving them perhaps), but for swaraj to be gained non-violently. Then you have to wear and use khadi at all cost. Then to strengthen your conviction you may add all the other causes. Use of khadi is the least you should do and brave the little difficulty you mention. Supposing you slave for a showy maintenance for 10 hours, why won't you lighten your slavery by doing recreative spinning for half an hour daily? While you are doing it, you will have the glow of spinning swaraj daily for half an hour. Very little if you were the only one. But one can multiply oneself into forty crores and then there is swaraj without perhaps more. But if you can say to yourself honestly that you have no time for non-violent swaraj, you must leave khadi alone and use the cloth you like best and forget family traditions, the poor and me.

What are you earning? Are you married?

Love.

BAPU

CHI. DHANNO GIDWANI
C/O AMBICA MILL NO. 1
AHMEDABAD

From a photostat: G.N. 6759. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Son of A. T. Gidwani

26. LETTER TO UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM

September 1, 1945

DEA R UTT IMCHA ND,

Yours with cheque with thanks. It will be used as you have directed, i. e,, to pay for defect in interest and for a purpose in khadi that would have pleased Mahadev if he was in our midst in his body. If I do not remember rightly please correct me.

I have your magic square and puzzle. I must tax myself and friends.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

It is yet too early to say anything definite about Sardar.

SHRI UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM
BOMBAY BAKERY
HYDERABAD (SINDH)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

27. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

September 1, 1945

CHI. NARAHARI,

Khimji[1] had brought your letter. I replied at once. You must have got the reply by now.

I would not know if there was any defect in Khimji's eye. Generally I do not observe people too closely. And if the parties choose each other despite one of them having an obvious defect, why need a third person object? What right does even a father have ? I have seen the blind and the crippled also getting married. I would be very much surprised if Munnalal has raised any objection. When you all who are quite independent have made a selection, what objection can be raised?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9137

[1] Khimjibhai Patel

28. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

September 1, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Naraharibhai writes to tell me that as Khimji has a defect in his eye you have raised an objection to his marrying Vina and are even ready to write to her father. This surprises me. I, therefore, used an "if" in my reply[1] to Narahari.

When K. and N. have made the selection, what objection can we have? Besides, how can you write to Vina's father? Vina is not marrying the man in defiance of anybody's advice. I personally do not see what right a father can have to interfere if the two have selected each other despite an obvious defect in one of them. And do all the blind remain unmarried?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8437. Also C.W. 5594. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

29. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

September 1, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

It is a sad matter about Shastriji[2]. If he does go mad, there will be no option but to put him in the mental hospital as suggested by Manahar[3]. I suggest that Vinoba should go and see him and make an attempt. I wrote a letter[4] to him two days ago.

It is all right that you wrote to Sharma[5].

I know about the cholera. Our people seem to be doing very good work.

I hope you are well.

I get news about Sharda.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10642

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Parachure Shastri
[3] Manahar Diwan; *vide* also "Letter to Manahar Diwan", 7-9-1945
[4] *Vide* "Letter to Parachure Shastri", 29-8-1945
[5] Hiralal Sharma

30. LETTER TO LILAVATI MUNSHI

September 1, 1945

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. I think that in schools and institutions where there is no objection to the teaching of religion, arrangements should be made for teaching it if the parents so wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI LILAVATIBEHN MUNSHI
26 RIDGE ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

31. LETTER TO MANGALDAS HARKISHANDAS

September 1, 1945

BHAI MANGALDAS,

As usual I have your cheque for Rs. 100.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MANGALDAS HARKISHANDAS
MANGALDAS & SONS
PUBLISHERS AND BOOKSELLERS
BHAGATALAO
SURAT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

32. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

September 1, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Manilal is impetuous and does not think twice before writing. According to me, as yet the weather is not suitable for you. It is cloudy all the time. It rains intermittently and is not yet dry. So I dare not send for you. If we go over to Bombay on the 22nd and if the weather there is good you may come over there. I understand what you say about the institutions. I have sent your letter to Chimanlal. The two of you may discuss the matter with others. I find obstacles

everywhere but you have thought over this and I have not. So it is possible that I do not see certain things that you do.

You must have fully recovered by now. One cannot say the same about Sardar.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

33. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

September 1, 1945

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter. Menon's[1] information is correct. Sardar has read that letter. Let us see what happens. You have done a lot of work in the Frontier and other places.

Sardar cannot leave Poona on the 12th. He cannot leave Poona for another four weeks if he is to give a fair trial to Dinshaw and his treatment. The climate here also suits him but he has not shown much improvement. His court is always full.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

34. LETTER TO SANTRAM AGRAWAL

September 1, 1945

BHAI SANTRAM,

You have mixed up the two things. In working out the marriage rite[2] in Prakrit[3] I have only followed Tulsidas, Surdas and others. Sanskrit has survived because Prakrit developed. What I have done has only promoted dharma. The Hindu-Muslim question does not arise here. It is a different question altogether. I do not wish to go into it.

[1] V. K. Krishna Menon
[2] *Vide* "Marriage Rites"
[3] By this term Gandhiji means the spoken language.

You are running a divine life institution. Think a little.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SANTRAM AGRAWAL
DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY
JARAULI, AMRITSAR

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 775

35. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

September 1, 1945

CHI. ANAND,

You cannot get peace from my letters or my presence. If you get any it will be transient. Peace cannot come from without. Peace is that which comes from within. Neither Vidya nor I can give that peace; God alone can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi: Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

36. LETTER TO VIDYA DEVI

September 1, 1945

CHI. VIDYA,

You are doing good work. Try to know well the women who have accepted spinning. Explain to them why they should spin. Learn well the processes preceding and following spinning and teach them these. Make your whole life worthy of swaraj;—Ramarajya. Now I have told you everything. If *rakhi*[1] is a sign of purity, it is a proper use of yarn; otherwise it should be considered a waste.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRIMATI VIDYA DEVI
SHANTI NIVAS
SIALKOT (PUNJAB)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] A thread tied on *Shravana Shukla* 15 by a sister to the wrist of her brother, or a person regarded as such, as a symbol of her good wishes and his promise of protection

37. LETTER TO UPENDRA CHOWDHARY

September 1, 1945

BHAI UPENDRA[1],

I have your letter. What I have suggested should be implemented. Of course your sister-in-law has my blessings. Let her render much service. That alone is real mourning and *shraddha*.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI UPENDRA CHOWDHARY
PIPRA
P. O. KESHAVNAGAR
MONGHYR (BIHAR)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

38. LETTER TO MRS. GEORGE JOSEPH

September 1, 1945

DEAR SISTER[2],

I saw Chi. Babu's wedding card. May Babu and her husband live long and serve the country.

Why is the invitation card in English? Why not in Malayalam or Hindustani? Why so much infatuation for English?

Blessings from

BAPU

MRS. GEORGE JOSEPH
KALLOZHAM
CHENGANNUR
(TRAVANCORE)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Brother of Mahendra Chowdhary; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 11-8-1945

[2] Widow of George Joseph who took a leading part in the Vykom Satyagraha in 1924

39. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

September 1, 1945

BHAI JAJUJI,

I have your letter. Whether or no I beg for money, the question is altogether different. It is our duty to eradicate malaria around all our institutions. It is irrelevant who is able to do how much. The question is, would it or would it not be worth while to try and eradicate malaria from nearby places. I can understand that all the institutions will keep a check over the expenses incurred on it. But I feel that the contribution should be the same from all. It is the duty of all of us to convince the Goseva Sangh. What does Narahari, who is the Joint Secretary, say? I should like to understand the other viewpoint.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am writing[1] to Amritlal Batra that it is his duty to make a trust or work under us.

SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU
SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

40. LETTER TO SANKARAN

September 1, 1945

CHI. SANKARAN,

Why did you write to Prabhakar in English? You can't express yourself well in English and why shouldn't Prabhakar write to Sushilabehn? They have not made you the supervisor. Your ignorance and vanity is eating you up. Remember that the only true right is what is acquired by doing one's duty. And now that all of you are fighting against cholera, where is the question of possessing any right ? Never mind if people do not want to get inoculated. Let them die, if they are prepared to. They will have to be kept isolated if they contract cholera. There are bound to be such people in the Ashram.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amritlal Batra", 2-9-1945

While expanding bhangi work, remember that the Bhangi though regarded the lowest of all, by dint of doing the noblest work (of cleaning), has the highest place in the eyes of God.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SANKARAN
SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

41. LETTER TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

September 1, 1945

BHAI SAHEB,

You must attend the Working Committee meeting.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

BADSHAH KHAN
CHARSADDA POST
FRONTIER PROVINCE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

42. DISCUSSION WITH NARENDRA DEV[2] AND SURAJ PRASAD AWASTHI

POONA,
[Before *September 2, 1945*][3]

In the course of their interview, the two leaders asked Mahatma Gandhi as to whether the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh like the Indian National Congress and the All-India Trade Union Congress could adopt the words "peaceful and legitimate" instead of "truth and non-violence" in its constitution. Mahatma Gandhi is understood to have replied that he disagreed with those who held that "truth and

[1] Which was to be held in Poona from September 12 to 18

[2] (1889-1956); President, All-India Kisan Sabha, 1939 and 1942; member, All-India Congress Socialist Party and later Praja Socialist Party; Vice Chancellor, Lucknow University and later Banaras Hindu University

[3] This report appeared under the date-line "Cawnpore, September 5" with an introductory note that "Acharya Narendra Dev and Suraj Prasad Awasthi, M.L.As., met Mahatma Gandhi at Poona last week". The discussion, therefore, must have taken place before Sunday, September 2.

non-violence" were not political terms. In the political context, the words "peaceful and legitimate" were considered to be more appropriate. Even this expression, Mahatma Gandhi said, had been introduced by him in the Congress constitution[1]. Since they had to deal with the working class, the objection on grounds of political terminology did not matter. The workers must be told in a straight and direct way as to what they should or should not do.

On the question of trusteeship, which was absent from the constitution of the Sangh, Mahatma Gandhi is said to have pointed out that since the theory of trusteeship was stressed by him and had a permanent association with his name, it was legitimate to make it a matter of dispute. He said that he did not want to accentuate class-struggle. The owners should become trustees. They might insist that they should become trustees and yet they might choose to remain owners.

We shall then have to oppose and fight them. Satyagraha will then be our weapon. Even if we want a classless society we should not engage in a civil war. Non-violence should be depended upon to bring a classless society.

The Hindu, 7-9-1945

43. TELEGRAM TO JATINDAS M. AMIN

Express POONA,
September 2, 1945

AMINBHAI
ASHRAM SEVAGRAM
WARDHA

FAST MUST BE ABANDONED ANY CASE. LETTER[2] FOLLOWS. FASTING IN THE MIDST OF CHOLERA WORK IS CRIMINAL.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Speech on New Congress Creed, Nagpur", 28-12-1920
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Jatindas M. Amin", 2-9-1945

44. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
September 2, 1945

DEAR AGATHA,

I have your two letters. Pyarelal is not here.

Yes, times are such as to require breadth of vision and statesmanship of the truest type, if the victory so called is not to lead to a third war worse than the last. I expect to see you in India soon.

I am not writing separately to Dorothy in reply to her long letter. Please send her my love and tell her we are on our trial. Let God be our "Rock of Ages"[1].

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1526

45. LETTER TO ANASUYA SARABHAI

September 2, 1945

CHI. ANASUYA[2],

I like your letter and notes. Copies of the latter are being sent to the Central Office, Bapa and Lakshmi Babu[3].

I appreciate your down-heartedness and devotion to Mridula[4]. No one can help being devoted to her. Such is her work, sacrifice and bravery. But you are mistaken if you feel that she will be lost to the cause. The result should be quite the contrary.

I shall hold you to your promise to write to me in good Hindustani in two months' time. You will also tell me what you have

[1] From a hymn by A. M. Toplady
[2] Sister of Ambalal Sarabhai
[3] Lakshminarayan Gadodia
[4] Mridula Sarabhai had resigned from the post of Joint Secretary, Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust, owing to differences with Amritlal V. Thakkar; *vide* "Letter to Mridula Sarabhai", 15-10-1945.

ultimately decided to do.

Love.

CHI. ANASUYA DEVI
C/O SHRI MRIDULA SARABHAI
KASHMIR HOUSE, NAPEAN SEA ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

46. LETTER TO JATINDAS M. AMIN

September 2, 1945

CHI. AMIN,

Today I am sending a wire[1] regarding your fast. There is a rule that no one should go on a fast without my permission. It is possible that you are not aware of it but Prabhakar knows this.

Both of you are at fault in going on a fast. When all of you should render service in treating [cholera] patients, why enfeeble yourselves by fasting?

I would say that those who are not willing to be inoculated against cholera should not be persuaded to do so by fasting. Those who cannot abide by the rules of an institution should leave it. We do not have such rules [in our Ashram]. I am primarily responsible for this because I do not believe in inoculation, etc. Right from South Africa I have been holding these views. We should make arrangements for those who wish to be inoculated but we should not force those who are unwilling by resorting to a fast. If you want to know when one can go on a fast, come to me when I have some leisure.

Who were the persons involved in beating Kotwal? What happened to him? Give me the details when you have time. Show this letter to Prabhakar and others after translating it into Hindi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jatindas M. Amin", 2-9-1945

47. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 2, 1945

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. What should I say? I am stuck here in Poona. I have no idea when I shall be able to leave. I have no idea whether I shall have to go to Bombay or not. The date for Bengal is not fixed either. I only know that I shall not be going before October. I have written to Profulla Babu.[1] Sudhir Babu says one thing, Satis Babu another, and Profulla Babu a third. I should like to go over to Borkamta[2]. I do not know for how long. It cannot be for a month as you suggest. That can happen only if I settle down in Bengal. I cannot possibly settle down there.

I shall only say that you should stay on there till I arrive. Render whatever service you can. Have faith in God. He will do what pleases Him. I realize more and more every day that save God all else is naught. I like nothing but work. Why should you seek a message from me?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 500

48. LETTER TO AMRITLAL BATRA

September 2, 1945

BHAI AMRITLAL,

I have your letter. Either make a trust, or have the approval of the Charkha Sangh or leave khadi work. Leave it if you do not wish to work even under the Punjab branch. Forget about making money out of khadi. Khadi is not meant for that. What will you gain by coming to me? You can come over only after I go to Sevagram. I do not know when that will be. I have hardly any time for talking. So if you wish to ask anything, you had better write to me. It would be better that you write about everything to Jajuji. He will consult me if he wants to.

Blessings from
BAPU

AMRITLAL BATRA
SHUDDH KHADI VIDYALAYA
JHANG MAGHIANA (PUNJAB)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* pp. 134 and "Letter to Parasram Tahilramani", 27-8-1945
[2] Where the addressee *was* doing khadi work

49. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

September 2, 1945

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I have your letter. I am sorry to learn that you are not keeping well. Come over any time after you are all right. Let me add that my staying anywhere has become a little indefinite. It is very crowded here and I can't say where I will be. There is some talk about my going to Bengal. Keep writing to me at Poona how you are and when you want to come.

I hope Mother is all right. It is sad about Padma. It is as God wills.

Blessings from

BAPU

S. AMBUJAMMAL
96 MOWBRAYS ROAD
TEYNAMPET, MADRAS

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

50. LETTER TO SATYAVATI

September 2, 1945

CHI. SATYAVATI[1],

Rajkumari has given me your letter. Whether the body perishes or not, your noble resolve will forever remain. Resolve does not die even after the body perishes. I know that physical pain cannot cause you distress. Do not worry about me. All my activities are for independence and will continue to be so.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. SATYAVATIJI
TUBERCULOSIS HOSPITAL
KINGSWAY, DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Grand-daughter of Swami Shraddhanand; member of National Executive of All-India Congress Socialist Party. She was interned during the Quit India movement but was released on grounds of health as she had developed tuberculosis.

51. LETTER TO PREMKANT BHARGAVA

September 2, 1945

BHAI PREMKANT,

I have your letter. I am unable to advise you. Consult Pandit Sunderlalji. I can say this much that you should not forsake Mother; forget about the Talimi Sangh. Do whatever you can while keeping Mother with you.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PREMKANT
242 CHAK
ALLAHABAD[1]

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10412. Courtesy: Premkant Bhargava. Also Pyarelal Papers

52. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

POONA,
September 2/3, 1945

CHI. MITHUBEHN,

I was glad to have your letter. Today Kalyanji[2], Kunvarji[3] and others came and saw me. I have the bottle of oil that you have sent. I shall use it if I can.

I have had a talk about Mama. I shall be happy if he goes there. I very much wish that he gets well while he is with you. Keep well. You must have expanded your work a lot.

Blessings from

BAPU

MITHUBEHN PETIT
KASTURBA SEVASHRAM
MAROLI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The address is from Pyarelal Papers.
[2] Kalyanji Mehta
[3] Kunvarji Parekh

53. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

POONA,
September 3, 1945

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter and postcard. Since you are coming to Bombay we shall meet either there or here. My going is uncertain. Sardar will have to go. I am glad Balvantsinha is of real use and that K. is sending you a man. Cholera is raging near Sevagram. Please tell Balvantsinha I wrote to him some time ago. Hoshiari and her child Seem to be doing well. She writes to me and I to her.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6510. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9905

54. LETTER TO MOHAN KUMARAMANGALAM

September 3, 1945

DEAR MOHAN[1],

Your letter. I shall See you on the 6th at 6 p. m.

Yours,

BAPU

SHRI M. KUMARAMANGALAM
RAJ BHAWAN, SANDHURST ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Son of P. Subbaroyan; Minister for Steel and Mines, Government of India

55. LETTER TO A. VARADARAJULU NAIDU

September 3, 1945

DEAR DOCTOR,

I have your letter. It is for your province to insist on Rajaji rejoining the Congress.[1]

Yours,

BAPU

DR. A. VARADARAJULU
756 ATTUMANDAI STREET
KEELAVASAL
(SOUTH INDIA)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

56. LETTER TO S. B. SARDESAI

September 3, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter. I purposely write to you in English.

I mentioned not 14 letters in the Urdu script but 14 scripts collected on the chart shown to you.

I see that you can listen to hearsay even though it is contrary to the evidence of your senses. You should know that Kakasaheb is himself a Maharashtrian and so are my many associates.

I was referring to a well-known verse of the *Gita*[2]. It asks us not to leave what may appear to be a lesser duty for what may happen to be a higher. And I paid a compliment to Maharashtrians who stick to their jobs no matter how difficult they are.

Urdu is not so difficult as your friend has made it out. I know many who have learnt the Urdu script in less than a week. My offer to teach you Urdu script within a week still stands. I shall put before you a deputy to teach you, if you care.

The connection between learning Hindustani and exhibiting

[1] C . Rajagopalachari had resigned from the Congress on July 15, 1942.
[2] *Bhagavad Gita,* III. 35

your skill in massage is obvious. I see such exhibitions against a fee, the fee in your case being that you should learn Hindustani against an exhibition of your skill.

You won't now give me a long letter to answer?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI S. B. SARDESAI
304 SADASHIV PETH
POONA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

57. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

September 3, 1945

BAPA,

Can Bombay not collect 15 lakhs for a memorial for Mahadev? If it is very difficult, we should not try it. It would not matter if we failed. I would suggest that the amount raised in Bombay should be added to the collection from Gujarat. The Bombay committee should be incorporated with the Gujarat committee and the whole amount should be spent for the Memorial. This would be befitting and would bring credit to Mahadev's name. I think the permanent place for the Memorial should be in Ahmedabad. If a branch is necessary a place can be rented in Bombay. Let me know if there is any defect in my reasoning.

BAPU

[C/O] SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE
SCINDIA HOUSE
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

58. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

September 3, 1945

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

The letter[1] to Bapa could not be written earlier. I wrote it this morning and enclose it herewith. You will pass it on to him, if you

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

approve of the contents. I showed it to Sardar. He has approved of it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4805. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarjee

59. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

September 3, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your letter. I am not sending Sushilabehn just now. She has a meeting[1] on the 9th. I will see after that. I hope the kitchen there is running smoothly. Durgabehn[2] must be helping and Pushpa must be giving her full co-operation. I think Mohansingh can make bread, etc., with great speed. Show this letter to Krishnachandra and the others, too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8436. Also C.W. 5595. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

60. LETTER TO PUSHPA K. DESAI

September 3, 1945

CHI. PUSHPA,

I have your letter. I see your firmness in the letter. Keep it up. I will not write to Rajanibhai just now. If you cannot please your parents in the first matter, at least do so in the other matter. I am sending your letter to your father. And if he is willing, that is, if he approves of my writing, I will do so. You need not write to your friend, either, just now. If you must write, send the letter through your father. If you write to anyone besides me, do so through your father. Who can make you change your mind? But don't you think you would be practising *bhakti* by following the path of action? Not only is disinterested action not an obstacle to *bhakti* but on the contrary I think it alone is true *bhakti*.

[1] Of the Medical Board

[2] Widow of Mahadev Desai

Nobody has paid me the Rs. 25. It will be paid to me if they let it be paid.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9263

61. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

September 3, 1945

CHI. SITA,

I wanted to reply to you immediately but so many days have gone by.

Student life is a kind of strenuous and perhaps a difficult sannyasa. During that time one should not think of one's parents or be unhappy or cry because of separation from anyone. At the moment concentrate solely on your studies. Taking care of yourself is included in it. You must be carrying on well. Do not get disheartened if there are difficulties in the way. To learn to overcome difficulties is an integral part of education.

Blessings from

BAPU

MASHRUWALA'S BUNGALOW
AKOLA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

62. LETTER TO MANEKLAL GANDHI

September 3, 1945

CHI. MANEKLAL,

I have your letter as well as the papers about Darbarshri[1]. I have shown them to Dr. Dinshaw. His opinion is enclosed herewith. Just now how can I say what will be Dr. Dinshaw's charges ? But I am elnclosing his typed rates so that you can have some idea. It is full here at present. So even if Darbarshri wants to come, no room will be

[1] Darbarshri Amrabapa

vacant before October. Just now the Doctor cannot go there at all. He cannot leave his work.

Blessings from

BAPU

MANEKLAL AMRITLAL GANDHI
THANA DEVLI
KATHIAWAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

63. LETTER TO V. L. MEHTA

September 3, 1945

BHAI VAIKUNTH,

I have your letter. I am happy about your joining the subcommittee. You are bound to be useful in some ways.

I think it is good that you left Bharat Bank.[1] Why should you join a new concern?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI V. L. MEHTA
91 BACK HOUSE LANE, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

64. LETTER TO DR. JIVRAJ MEHTA

September 3, 1945

BHAI JIXVRAJ,

Nowadays the villages around Sevagram are in the grip of cholera. The hospital doctors are working very hard. They are giving the medicine prescribed by the Civil Hospital. Is giving enema the only remedy ? How to cope with thousands of patients? Isn't there anything in Homoeopathy or Ayurveda?

What funeral rites can be performed for thousands of villagers? How to find wood for burning so many ? Who can burn a hundred or two hundred daily and how much time will it take? If they are buried,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to V. L. Mehta", 29-8-1945

how much space will be required? How to cope with the situation? Think over this when you all meet on September 9 and also discuss Kasturba Memorial.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. JIVRAJ MEHTA
16 ALTAMONT ROAD
BOMBAY 26

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

65. LETTER TO HARISHCHANDRA B. BHATT

September 3, 1945

BHAI HARISHCHANDRA,

I got your letter yesterday and the book today. It is to be seen when I can find time to read it. I very much wish to but how can I spare that much time?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI HARISHCHANDRA B. BHATT
ABOVE KIKABHAI TYPE FOUNDRY
PRINCESS STREET
BOMBAY 2

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

66. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

September 3, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA

You have taken charge[1]. Let us see what happens. Everything will be clear if you have patience. Read what I have written[2] in my letter to Munnalal.

I hope Hoshiari is well and also others.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4524

[1] As manager of the Ashram
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Munnalal G. Shah", 3-9-1945

67. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR PAREKH

September 3, 1945

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

You will read what I have written to Aminbhai.[1] I can understand your refusing to be inoculated. You should not have resorted to a fast even against Aminbhai. Your duty was and is to continue doing service. You could have told Aminbhai to consult me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9032. Also C.W. 9156. Courtesy: Prabhakar Parekh

68. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

September 3, 1945

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. I shall decide when we meet. Come whenever you can. I shall be here after 20th of September. Even if I have to go to Bombay it will be for a couple of days for the meeting. I do not really wish to go.

I had a letter from Priyamvada. I have written to you about it.[2] Give your name. You do not have to do any work right now.

As for Father[3], I wish he would be freed from it. If I had my way I would stop all medicines. Don't you even get lemons there? Mix water and honey in lime juice. It is enough to mix two tea-spoonfuls of honey in 16 ounces of water. Let him sip as much of it as he can.

Rajkumari came yesterday.[4]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3581

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jatindas M. Amin", 2-9-1945
[2] *Vide*"Letter to Prabhavati", 30-8-1945
[3] Brajkishore Prasad
[4] Amrit Kaur, however, reached Poona on September 1.

69. LETTER TO GANESHSHASTRI JOSHI

To be delivered by hand *September 3, 1945*

BHAI GANESH SHASTRI,

There is too much of cholera around Sevagram. What does Ayurveda have to say? People are succumbing to the disease every day; how can we then promptly cremate the bodies ? Where to find all the firewood ? How quickly and in what manner should the body be removed? If they are to be buried, how should it be done and by whom? Please think over the problem. Send a reply or meet Dr. Sushila and discuss the matter with her. Be prompt.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C:.W. 933. Courtesy: Ganeshshastri Joshi

70. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

September 3, 1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL ,

I have your two letters. One regarding resolution No 209 and the other about Krishna District. Both suggestions are accepted.

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SHYAMLALJI
KASTURBA SMARAK
BAJAJWADI, WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

71. LETTER TO POONAMCHAND RANKA

September 3, 1945

BHAI POONAMCHAND,

Your letter is interesting. Get well. Engross yourself in constructive work. Learn and also teach all the processes of [making] yarn.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHETH POONAMCHAND RANKA
RANKA KUTI
SHANKER COLONY, NAGPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

72. LETTER TO ALI REZA DABEER

September 3, 1945

BHAI SAHEB,

I have your letter. There are hundreds of thousands of Muslims who do not speak or write Urdu. It is wrong to say that Urdu is the language of Muslims. There are Hindus in the Punjab, Kashmir and the U. P., etc., who speak Urdu. The Muslim prayer is recited not for anybody's sake but because of my personal wish. It is a different thing if you refuse to overlook the mistakes that may occur while writing Urdu or reciting the prayer. God does not notice slips of the tongue. He sees only the purity of heart.

Yours,

BAPU

JANAB ALI REZA DABEER
2405 EAST STREET
CAMP, POONA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

73. LETTER TO SANKARAN

September 3, 1945

CHI. SANKARAN,

I am glad that the cholera has subsided to some extent. Try to find its root. Do you cremate or bury the dead? From what I hear, it seems people are running away.

All of you should be engaged in serving the patients. Do you get any help from the Ashram? Have you asked for it or have no need for it?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

74. LETTER TO GOKULCHAND NARANG

September 3, 1945

BHAI GOKULCHAND NARANG[1],

I have read your letter. I am helpless. I reply only when I am asked. Hardly ever about elections. I have very little interest in them.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. GOKULCHAND NARANG
SAVOY HOTEL
MUSSOORIE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

75. LETTER TO PRABODH RANJAN GHOSH

September 3, 1945

BHAI PRABODH RANJAN,

I feel sorry for you. If you don't have money, ask Dr. Roy. Only he can help.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI PRABODH RANJAN GHOSH
P. O. MADANIPUR
DISTRICT FARIDPUR (BENGAL)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

76. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

POONA,
September 4, 1945

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your postcard. Do come over. Rajkumari had a talk with me. She wrote to you only yesterday. I hope you are all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI DEVDAS GANDHI
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Barrister from Lahore; Minister, Local Self-Government in the Punjab

77. LETTER TO G. N. KANITKAR

September 4, 1945

BHAI BALUKAKA,

How can anyone feel insulted if I do not see him? How can you feel insulted?

I know my duty with regard to Satara[1]. I am following it. What I am doing is not for the satisfaction of anyone.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

BHAI BALUKAKA KANITKAR
341 SADASHIV
POONA

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 974. Courtesy: Gajanan Kanitkar

78. TELEGRAM TO BASANTI DEVI DAS

POONA,
September 5, 1945

BASANTIDEVI DAS[2]
RUSSAROAD
CALCUTTA

ATTENDING HARIDAS[3] CASE. HOPE YOU WELL.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Where, as in several other places, British administration had been put out of action during the Quit India movement and a parallel administration known as Patri Sarkar had been set up. According to Bombay Secret Abstracts, instances of gangster activity by underground agitators had been reported in a Government Press note and Gandhiji had discussions with Maharashtra Congress leaders on September I on the situation in Satara.

[2] Widow of C. R. Das

[3] Haridas Mitra, who was under a sentence of death; *vide* "Letter to Lord Wavell", 14-9-1945

79. LETTER TO BHUPENDRA NATH SENGUPTA

POONA,
September 5, 1945

MY DEAR BHUPEN,

I have your letter. I must not tax myself to give you a detailed answer. You must revert to it when we meet or remind me later, if time fails to solve the puzzles. When I go to Bengal I won't have a large party with me. Who will be there, I do not know.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI B. N. SENGUPTA
99/2 BALLYGUNGE PLACE
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 10066

80. LETTER TO ANNE MARIE PETERSEN

September 5, 1945

MY DEAR MARIA,

I have got all your papers now. I see that it is nobody's fault at the Centre. Anyway I am on the track now.

Love.

SMT. MISS MARIA PETERSEN
SEVA MANDIR, PORTO NOVO
SOUTH INDIA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

81. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

September 5, 1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I have your letter about Assam. Pass the budget for Rs. 810. As for the rest, wait tilI you get the Committee's report.[1]

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amalprabha Das", 10-9-1945

See if Gopalaswami has replied about Miss Petersen.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SHYAMLALJI
SECRETARY, KASTURBA MEMORIAL
BAJAJWADI
WARDHA

From the Hindi original: Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

82. CABLE TO PULINSEAL

POONA,
September 6, 1945

PULINSEAL
93 REGENT STREET
LONDON

REFERRING YOUR CABLE NEHRU.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

83. LETTER TO INAYATULLAH KHAN[1]

POONA,
September 6, 1945

I am exceedingly sorry that I misplaced your letter and have been the cause of troubling you to send me a copy. I have now read the same and I had your telegram also about it. My personal opinion is that there should be no distribution of seats but that elections should be on a basis of adult suffrage and only one electorate. But mine is a voice in the wilderness. Therefore, I am afraid, it will not count among divided counsellors. You claim to represent 300 million. Congress is also a representative organization; so is the Muslim League and many other organizations. You have, therefore, to secure their co-operation.

I have been much misunderstood when I have asserted that I claim no representative capacity. That I have influesnce over some

[1] The Khaksar leader popularly known as Allama Mashriqui. An Urdu translation of the letter was sent to the addressee.

persons does not make me a representative. I would therefore urge you to secure the co-operation, if you can, of the Congress and the Muslim League.

I am sending this, as desired by you, to Dastagir Sahib[1] and posting you a copy.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

84. LETTER TO AHMED DASTAGIR

September 6, 1945

AHMED DASTAGIR SAHEB,

As promised I am sending a letter to you for Allama Saheb.[2] I had your letter. You can come over whenever you wish to.[3] Today I have Allama Saheb's letter and a copy of his earlier letter. As desired by him, I have written to him also.

MOHAN K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Urdu: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

85. LETTER TO HEMENDRA K. SHAH

September 6, 1945

BHAI HEMENDRA SHAH,

I have gone through your letter. I am no longer interested in that subject. I have expressed my views in the introduction *to Varnavyavastha*[4]. Only those who are well versed in the subject can give their opinion.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI HEMENDRA KISHOREDAS SHAH
ACHRATBAI SANATORIUM
OPPOSITE STATION
KANDIVALI, B.B. & C.I.RLY.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Ahmed Dastagir; *vide* the following item.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] According to the Bombay Secret Abstracts the addressee, deputed by Allama Mashriqui, discussed with Gandhiji in the week beginning September 8 the draft constitution framed by the former.

[4] *Vide* "Introduction to "Varnavyastha" "

86. LETTER TO G. N. KANITKAR

September 6, 1945

BHAI BALUKAKA,

I have your letter. What can I do? You possess a long pen. I have nothing.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 975

87. TELEGRAM TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

Express POONA,
September 7, 1945

MASHRUWALA
ASHRAM SEVAGRAM
WARDHA

YOUR LETTER.SORRY. TELL SANKARAN AMIN SHOULD WILLINGLY OBEY YOUR INSTRUCTIONS.[1] THEY OUGHT TO WORK WHOLEHEARTEDLY DURING CHOLERA. SUSHILA WILL GO THERE AFTER SUNDAY MEDICAL BOARD MEETING WHICH SHE MUST ATTEND.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

88. LETTER TO R. C. HAUFFMANN

POONA,
September 7, 1945

DEAR MR. HAUFFMANN,

Your letter. My further substantiation for my position comes from my own life and that of others, Hindus and non-Hindus who have tried to live the truth that is in us. I wholly accept your statement that just as faith without work is dead so is work without faith and you admit that you have begun to doubt yourself, i. e., your work. Doubt and you are lost. Is it possible to go further and doubt the sacrifice behind your work? My extensive experience tells me that work speaks

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Sankaran", 7-9-1945

more effectively than speech which is often deceptive.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

R. C. HAUFFMANN, ESQ.
SECRETARY & TREASURER
BENGAL CHRISTIAN COUNCIL RELIEF FUND
13 WELLINGTON SQUARE
C/O LEE MEMORIAL MISSION
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

89. LETTER TO SANKARAN

September 7, 1945

CHI. SANKARAN,

I am pained as well as surprised by what I hear about you. If you have to be told at every step, there is no point in telling you anything. Scolding Prabhakar, not listening to Kishorelalbhai and lastly refusing to work when cholera is widespread, all this is unworthy of you. I have sent a telegram[1] today. If you can quietly serve at the Ashram, do so, otherwise leave it and go wherever you wish to. Realize that everyone is our master and we are servants.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SANKARAN
SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

90. LETTER TO MANAHAR DIWAN

September 7, 1945

BHAI MANAHAR,

I have your telegram regarding Shastriji's [death]. I am very happy that he has been released. My faith grows stronger that it cannot be dharma to live or to keep someone alive some how or other.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide*"Telegram to Kishorelal G. Mashruwala", 7-9-1945

91. LETTER TO P. C. JOSHI

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD,
POONA,
September 8, 1945

DEAR JOSHI,

Your letter of 5th instant. And I had a chat with Kumaramangalam.

I do not wish to prolong our correspondence. Your letter seems to me like an invitation to say, 'I am sorry I took as much interest as I did in your party's doings.' The invitation notwithstanding, I must go my way under the self-imposed limitations.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI P. C. JOSHI
COMMUNIST PARTY
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

92. LETTER TO BIBHAWATI BOSE

September 8, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I have your warm invitation. But my work this time would take me to Sodepur. Of course I shall hope to come to your house some time during my stay. Hope you are well.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

MRS. BIBHAWATI BOSE
1 WOODBURN PARK
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

93. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

September 8, 1945

CHI. KANU,

I got a letter from you after many days. I will merely say that

Ramdas must get well soon. You cannot afford to fall ill.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

SHRI KANU GANDHI
C/O RAMDAS GANDHI
KHALASI LINE
NAGPUR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9520. Courtesy: Kanu Gandhi

94. LETTER TO KAILAS D. MASTER

September 8, 1945

CHI. KAILAS,

I have not been able to write to you. Since you have settled down I am no longer worried. As I have a lot of work, I write only to those to whom I must. Why are you still so restless? Do good service and earn merit. Teach others such as Hoshiaribehn. Keep writing to me

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Gourtesy: Pyarelal

95. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

September 8, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your letter. There is no need for you to write anything to Ramnarayanji.

I advise you to go on serving silently, speaking only when you must.

Kanchan's problem is a difficult one. It can be made easy if you come to a firm decision and act upon it.

I understand about Hiramani. You should write nothing-to Ambegaonkar. Let him go to court. If he comes to me, I will see.

Forget about Vina.

Sushilabehn is going there and will do what is necessary about the hospital.

I am very hard pressed for time and, therefore, content myself with this short letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8435. Also C.W. 5596. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

96. LETTER TO SANKARAN

September 8, 1945

CHI. SANKARAN,

I have read your letter. From the very beginning you have not been behaving well. I have also told you about it, but I have not been able to understand you. You had better do some independent work if you can[not] live there and work peacefully in a spirit of service. I shall not be satisfied simply because at present everything is going on smoothly. Now Sushilabehn is going over there. She will tell you more.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Your duty is to do what Prabhakar tells you. You may be more knowledgeable, but he is richer in human qualities.

SHRI SANKARAN

SEVAGRAM ASHRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

97. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

September 8, 1945

CHI. HOSHIARI,

You are doing a lot of work. If Krishnachandra cannot teach you, take lessons from anyone else, man or woman. May you and Gajraj make progress.

Blessings from

BAPU

HOSHIARI

ASHRAM, SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

98. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR PAREKH

September 8, 1945

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

Aminbhai may go to Karachi or do hospital work at Sevagram itself. I think it is worth giving him the necessary help for our work.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PRABHAKAR
ASHRAM, SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

99. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

POONA,
September 9, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I have your letter and also the telegram. Sushila left in the morning and I think she will leave for [Sevagram] today itself. I can't stop her from going even if I want to. Moreover, I want her to go and look you up. Your letter suggests that quarrels are still going on there. Your blood-pressure is lower than it should be. I should not worry but I am not happy about it. That is why it is good that Sushila is going there. I have faith in her competence.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

100. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

POONA,
September 10, 1945

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
CARE LUCKY
CALCUTTA

WILL KNOW WHEN GHOSH[1] COMES HERE. HOPE YOU WELL[2].

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 7872. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

101. LETTER TO CHIEF SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF C. P.

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
September 10, 1945

THE CHIEF SECRETARY
CENTRAL PROVINCES AND BERAR GOVERNMENT
NAGPUR

DEAR SIR,

I enclose herewith a statement of the claim[3] by the Gram Seva Mandal, Nalwadi, Wardha. You will notice that it has been very carefully prepared and contains only an account of what with ordinary care could have been avoided by Government men. In my opinion, such losses Cannot be covered by any extraordinary measure.

Yours truly,

Enclosure: 1

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Sudhir Ghosh
[2] The source has "will", obviously a slip.
[3] The reference is to the property of the Nalwadi and Paunar Ashrams which had heen confiscated by the Government and presumably returned in response to Gandhiji's letters to the addressee. *Vide* "Letter to Chief Secretary, Government of C. P.", 20-11-1944

102. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

POONA,
September 10, 1945

CHI. SUNDARAM,[1]

The thought for Monday is good. Love to you all.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3196

103. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

September 10, 1945

Did you sleep well? Have your food as well here as in Manorville[2]. Therefore, if you had fruit there in the morning or whatever it was, you should have here.

From a photostat: C.W. 4207. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7843

104. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

September 10, 1945

I have gone through it in a hurry. You should read it carefully, suggest corrections, and when I have seen them, dispatch.

From the original: C.W. 4206. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7842

105. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

September 10, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Your admission of your mistake[3] is quite frank. Forget about it now. There is no point in dwelling upon it. Tell the persons concerned. That is, write to Vina and Khimji. I will show the letter to Abha. The main thing with regard to Babla[4] is that our stand should be clarified. I will not harass you about the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8434. Also C.W. 5597. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] The superscription is in Tamil.
[2] Addressee's house in Simla
[3] *Vide*"Letter to Munnalal G. Shah", 1-9-1945
[4] Narayan Desai, son of Mahadev Desai

106. LETTER TO RAMANLAL SHAH

September 10, 1945

BHAI RAMANLAL,

I have your letter. Do as Gomatibehn tells you. Stay where she decides for you to. I believe that it is for your own good. There is a lot of truth in the saying that faith can move mountains. Faith cannot be induced. It is real only if it comes from within.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Ramanlal Shah Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

107. LETTER TO KANTA

September 10, 1945

CHI. KANTA,

I have your letter. I am very happy that the child has fully recovered. It is good that you did not come. What could you have gained by meeting me? If you are there, we shall meet when I come over. I shall be happy if you are engrossed in service but that as your dharma, not in order to please me or anyone else.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

108. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 10, 1945

CHI. SUSHILA,

I hope you reached there comfortably. Just now there is a telegram from Kishorelal saying that you need not go. But it is good that you are there. Enclosed is a letter from Krishnavarma. It is about cholera. Go through it. He has sent some medicine. I am not forwarding the newspaper [cutting] he has sent.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also the following item.

109. LETTER TO KRISHNAVARMA

September 10, 1945

BHAI KRISHNAVARMA,

I am returning your cutting. It is good. You did well in sending the medicine to the Ashram. Sushila has gone to Sevagram for the same reason. I am sending your letter there. Come after the 15th after confirming it. Mama has gone to Panchgani.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

What do you suggest as regards cremating the dead in the villages?

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

110. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

September 10, 1945

This is just to tell you that I hope you are well and that you are not worrying about anything.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 206

111. LETTER TO SURENDRA

September 10, 1945

SURENDRA,

Repeat Ramanama when faith wavers. That will show you the right path. And if you wish to understand all this go to Kishorelal. He is at Sevagram. Just now I shall not send for you. Nothing is certain. I may have to go to Bombay on the 21st. I am trying to avoid it. In October I may have to go to Calcutta. While on my way I will certainly go to the Ashram. You can come then. Nevertheless, if you must, come over here. Faith is not a question of reason. It comes from within. Reason refuses to believe that there is Shankar in every *kankar*.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] "There is God in every pebble."

112. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

September 10, 1945

BAPA,

I have two letters before me. Do get Rajkumari's pamphlet[1] published In other languages. The Santiniketan people are doing it in Bengali. Most probably Sucheta will not go there. I am thinking about it. We shall get someone. More when we meet.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

113. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL M. TRIVEDI

September 10, 1945

BHAI CHIMANLAL,

Your letter. I will not have any time till the 22nd. After that God alone knows.

I know nothing about insurance. You can see Acharya Kumarappa at Maganwadi, Wardha [about this].

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI CHIMANLAL MANKLAL TRIVEDI
ANAND BHUVAN
AMRAVATI ROAD
NAGPUR, C. P.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

114. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

September 10, 1945

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

There is nothing strange in what you have said. I would like to take you somewhere if I have to travel any time. It will be only a question of convenience. Write to me when the time comes.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

CHI. CHHAGANLAL JOSHI
HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH
RAJEKOT
KATHIAWAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *To Women*

115. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

September 10, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter. I do not wish to write anything now that Sushilabehn is going there.

If you can trust Parnerkar and he is willing, let him take care of the work on the farm. I can say nothing definite from such a distance. Do as Kishorelalbhai says.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4525

116. LETTER TO AMALPRABHA DAS

September 10, 1945

CHI. AMALPRABHA[1],

I have your letter. I have passed the budget for Rs. 810. I shall pass the other one also but I have had a committee set up for the camp[2]. I want to pass it after making any changes that may be necessary after the committee submits its report. The committee has given me the authority about Assam, so if there is any delay I shall be to blame. But I shall not let that happen.

The purchase of *muga*[3] should be taken in hand. With regard to the method it will be enough if the following things are kept in mind:

1. Let the work of the camp be based on the principle of self-sufficiency. This means that the camp should become self sufficient by the time it is wound up. There would thus be no harm if the camp is kept going for a longer period. Maybe, prolonging it will lead to knowledge becoming richer and deeper.

2. Spinning and the entire processing of cotton should be done with full knowledge.

3. Some good craft should also be taught. That too should be done with full knowledge. There should be perfect cleanliness in the camp as also among individuals.

[1] Daughter of Dr. Das of Gauhati

[2] Which was subsequently set up at Saraina near Gauhati for Gandhiji's proposed visit in January 1946

[3] A variety of silk yarn

4. The basis of self-sufficiency should be silk.

5. The work of the camp should be done so far as possible by the inmates. Let there be as few servants as possible.

6. The workers, as far as possible, should be women.

7. The camp should be located in or near a village and the life in the camp should resemble the life of the villagers.

I have written this much by way of giving guidelines. The rules that may be received from the central authority must be followed.

What I have written should be sufficient. If not, let me know.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI AMALPRABHA
TALIMI SANGH, SEVAGRAM

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10389

117. LETTER TO INDUMATI TENDULKAR

September 10, 1945

CHI. INDU,

I got your letter. It is good. I saw the reports of your marriage in the newspapers. I also get some letters. You are right when you say that you and your husband do not wish to answer them. That responsibility lies with me and when the opportunity comes I shall even reply publicly.

You will recover. Don't take too many drugs. Gunaji is acquainted with nature cure and also believes in it.

I understand about Doctor. It will be good if he devotes himself to work of service. You will both prove that marriage can also further the cause of service.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI INDUMATI TENDULKAR
THALAKWADI, BELGAUM[1]

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10948. Courtesy: Indumati Tendulkar. Also Pyarelal Papers

[1] The address is from a copy in Pyarelal Papers:

118. LETTER TO MANAHAR DIWAN

September 10, 1945

BHAI MANAHAR,

I have your second letter. All has ended well with Shastriji. I sent a telegram and also a letter.[1] God alone can reward you for your services. But you don't Want any, do you?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MANAHAR DIWAN
DUTTAPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

119. LETTER TO YASHODHARA DASAPPA

September 10, 1945

CHI. YASHODHARA,

I have your letter. Of course you have my blessings for your work. Let us see if your work draws me to Mysore or not. Now Ramdas moves around with Nanavati. I hope you are all right. Are both of you learning the Nagari and the Urdu scripts?

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

SHRI YASHODHARA DASAPPA
KASTURBA TRUST
V. V. MOHALLA, MYSORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

120. LETTER TO JATINDAS M. AMIN

September 10/11, 1945

CHI. AMIN,

Only today I got your letter.

Sushila has been in the Ashram for a day already because she had left Bombay [for Sevagram] yesterday. She did not stop even for a minute after the meeting.

I have no doubt that you are doing solid work. You have

[1] *Vide*"Letter to Manahar Diwan", 7-9-1945

yourself admitted that you get excited too soon. Those who get excited in this way cannot render much service. You had better get rid of anger. Of course Bhansali appreciates your work but your work should be its own reward. Don't let there be any shortcoming for want of appreciation from others. I know that you have a great capacity for work. Rest assured that it will increase a lot if you give up your vanity. You belong to the Ashram and I wish that you should not leave it. The Ashram should be like a mother to you. How long, therefore, can you stay away from it?

Keep writing to me. Show this letter to Sushilabehn, for I am not writing at length to her.

Tell Sankaran that I have his letter. It does not call for a reply.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

121. LETTER TO M. VISVESVARAYYA

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
September 11, 1945

DEAR SIR VISVESVARAYYA[1],

I have your letter of the 7th July. I know I am very late in replying to it but it was inevitable. As it is I am sending even this late line under pressure. I appreciate your zeal in the cause you have at heart and marvel at the fact that at your time of life you throw into your work so much energy and thought. There, however, my appreciation, I fear, stands.

Of course, verbally our objectives appear the same but when I look at our means, the difference seems to me to be unbridgeable. It may be that both of us being old and hardened are unable to see eye to eye. If you regard South Africa as an elongated part of the West, I have passed the best part of my life in the West. I have seen people, high and low, working with amazing speed and with the most modern machinery, the income of the commonest European labourer being higher than that of the American. Yet it was there that I learnt to recoil from their method and manner. They preyed upon the misery of the

[1] Mokshagundam Visvesvarayya(1861-1962); engineer and statesman; ex-Dewan of Mysore

Negro, holding him and his wife as beasts of burden. Things, therefore, that attract you do not attract me but rather repel me. Much as I would love to work as a humble co-worker side by side with you, I cannot.

Your detailed, patient replies[1] carefully prepared, fail to convince me. What is the use of taxing you further with my questions? Let me tell you that I claim to have been working schemes fairly successfully among the village population with well-knit organizations. Nearly four crores (as I can recall) have been distributed among the villagers, not as doles, but for solid work done—and this in the face of heavy odds. Had it not been for the opposition of the Government and their unreasoned wrath after the August of 1942, the said organizations would have shown greater results. But I cannot expect you with your Krishnasagar marvels to your credit even to look at my scheme. I can, therefore, only conclude by expressing my eagerness to follow not your scheme but your solid work and learn from it, if I see anything to learn.

I hope you are keeping perfectly well and fit.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR M. VISVESVARAYYA, K.C.I.E.
UPLANDS, HIGH GROUND
BANGALORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

122. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

September 11, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I got your letter. Sushila must have arrived there. If Jajuji engages Ramprasad in place of Motilal Rathi and Ramprasad takes up the work, I will welcome it. I do not understand Ramprasad asking for still higher pay, but if Jajuji decides to increase it I will not object. I myself will not be able to decide in the matter. If Ramprasad undertakes to look after the construction of the building, will the couple stay there or continue to stay in the Ashram? This also will have to be decided by you.

[1] For Gandhiji's questions, *vide* "Letter to M. Visvesvaraya", 12-6-1945

I don't need further particulars about the sum of Rs. 5,000 received through Rasiklal. Permit it to be used for the Harijan work planned by Bapa. I have an impression that he suggested its being used in Kathiawar.

Now about Sharma. I have gone through the correspondence sent by you. Continue the correspondence and let me know the result. Chi. Kanaiyo has arrived. He broke his journey at Surat to see Sharda. He says that again she is having low temperature.

I think I have answered all the Points.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10643

123. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

POONA,
September 11, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter. Now that Sushilabehn is there, nothing is left for me to write.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4526

124. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

POONA,
September 12, 1945

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter and the statement. You will see that I have made many changes in the statement. I do hope that you will understand the reasons behind them. They do not violate the existing rules of the Charkha Sangh. Just now my advice to you is that you may follow the practice of offering 1_ per cent discount to any member buying khadi worth Rs. 100 from the store which you are running or the stores which are being run under your supervision in Kathiawar. If the Charkha Sangh accepts this rule, it should decide to buy khadi only from the stores under the control of the respective branches. If,

instead, a member from Kanyakumari wants to buy khadi from a store under the Punjab branch, there will be a danger of extensive malpractices.

Your scheme does have my blessings, of course. I will, moreover, definitely send something with anybody from here going there.

Balasaheb Kher is engaged on the 2nd and the 3rd. He, therefore, cannot come. He has suggested the following names in his place. Narahari Parikh, Morarji Desai, Kaka Kalelkar, Dada Mavalankar. From among them Kaka Kalelkar is here. I met him. I think he will be able to give the maximum work. Narahari cannot be spared at all just now. He has taken upon himself a lot of work. Kaka can arrive there on the 1st and must return on the 4th. He will not, therefore, be able to undertake a long tour there. He has agreed to attend an important meeting in Bombay on the 6th.

You are entering your 60th year today, but according to me you should aspire to live for another 60 years still. You may, therefore, be said to have completed half the journey. Only today I read in a book that a man should aspire to live 150 years. Even if the millions could entertain such an aspiration, it would be meaningless, for the condition affixed is that the person concerned should spend all these years in service in the spirit of *yajna*, that is, without attachment. It is an extremely dfficult job to practise non-attachment. But anybody who can cultivate it is sure to live up to 125, and you have the ability to cultivate it.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8629. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

125. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

September 12, 1945

BHAI JAJUJI,

I am sending Narandas's statement and his letter along with this. Go through it and if you think that what he has stated is right, we should try to have such members from all over the country. I think it is almost impossible to implement what he has suggested regarding the Congress as we do not have the required atmosphere. If we

[1] *Vide* also the following item.

succeed in getting [enough] members we may be able to create the atmosphere. That is to say the Charkha Sangh has to impress the Congress by its own work. We have to devise the ways of gaining the strength to do so.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

126. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
September 14, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry that I have to worry you almost immediately on your return from London. My only excuse is that my mission is purely humanitarian.

Shri Haridas Mitra, an M.A. of the Calcutta University and the husband of Shri Subhas Chandra Bose's young niece[1], aged 22 years, is under sentence of death over what appears to be an untenable ground. I have perused the petition for mercy by the uncle of the condemned as also of Advocate Carden Noad. I suggest that they furnish cogent grounds for the exercise of mercy. In any event the case for mercy becomes irresistible in that the war with Japan is over. It will be a political error of the first magnitude if this sentence of death is carried into effect. I rejoiced to learn that you had ordered postponement of execution till after consideration of the case by you on your return.

My attention was drawn to the case by the prisoner's wife as she has often sung at my prayer meetings when I had the honour of being a guest of Advocate Sarat Chandra Bose whom I am happy to learn the Government of India has ordered to be released.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
THE VICEROY'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 46-7

[1] Bela Mitra

[2] Replying to this on September 18, E. M. Jenkins, Private Secretary to the Viceroy, said that the case was "still being considered" by the Governor of Bengal and would "shortly" be submitted to the Viceroy.

127. LETTER TO RANJITSINH HARBHAMJI

POONA,
September 14, 1945

BHAI RANJITSINHJI,

I have your letter. It is rather strange that often one cannot distinguish between a friend and a foe. Another strange thing is that you make yourself a foreigner by not writing in your mother tongue. Why are you deliberately ruining yourself ?

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI RANJITSINHJI HARBHAMJI
RAVA VILAS
RAJKOT
KATHIAWAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

128. LETTER TO SARASWATI GADODIA

POONA,
September 14, 1945

CHI. SARASWATI,

I have your long letter. Bhai Hiralal has written to me fully and so I know what he has to say. But he is extremely hot-tempered and I run away from hot-tempered people. That is why I do not interfere in his affairs. Lakshminarayanji[1] has sent the copies of the letters he has written to him. Why should I get involved? And so I shall only say that if you two follow what seems to you pure truth I shall be satisfied.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5629

[1] Lakshminarayan Gadodia, addressee's husband, was the Trustee and Treasurer of the nature-cure clinic run by Hiralal Sharma at Khurja.

129. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

POONA,
September 14, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter. It is well that Munnalal and Prabhakar have gone 12 miles away. I hope they have not gone walking!

It is good that you are giving lessons to Hoshiaribehn. Babaji must be well. It is too bad about Mahars. If the condition worsens let me know.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

We have to meet Pushpa's expenses. Whatever money is spent by her on that account should be paid back into her account.

We shall see about Kamle. Balkrishna had fever. He is better now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4527

130. LETTER TO LAKSHMAN SINGH GELAKOTI

POONA,
September 14, 1945

BHAI LAKSHMAN SINGHJI,

The cloth you sent has reached Sevagram. It will come here later. It is good you have started spinning and weaving activity. You have my blessings.

Blessings from

BAPU

LAKSHMAN SINGH GELAKOTI
TEACHER, MIDDLE SCHOOL
WADEDDINA
ALMORA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

131. LETTER TO DR. B. S. MOONJE

POONA,
September 14, 1945

BHAI MOONJE,

I have your long letter. What is the point of my replying to it? Your views and mine are oceans apart. It is well that we can continue to be friends in spite of the differences. Why is your letter in English? Why not in Marathi or Hindustani?

Yours,
M . K . GANDHI

DR. MOONJE
BHONSLE MILITARY SCHOOL
NASIK
G. I. P. RAILWAY

From the Hindi original: C.W. 9763. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

132. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

POONA,
September 14, 1945

This is a place for prayers and not for public meetings. By their foolish and improper behaviour, those who disturbed me and other occupants in the clinic have demonstrated that they did not come for prayer.[1] I know there are people who do not believe in the existence of God. I met them in England and there may be some here. They ask, 'Where is God ?' and 'If there is God, why is there so much distress in this world ?' But those who believe in God and prayers cannot show God. We expect that these prayers will have some effect on the minds of those who join us in the prayers.

I know you love your leaders and want to see and hear them. But it is wrong to force them to come out here after the hard work they have been doing or when they have left this place. You will have opportunity to see and hear them at other public meetings. I,

[1] Some people had created a scene the previous night for seeing Jawaharlal Nehru.

therefore, request you to observe discipline during and after prayers. How could we train ourselves for swaraj if we do not keep peace and behave in a disciplined manner?

The Hindu, 16-9-1945

133. LETTER TO NAWAB OF BHOPAL

(*By hand through Chandu Shah*) POONA,
September 16, 1945

DEAR NAWAB SAHEB,

Chandu has just given me your kind note. My sympathies with you in your loss.

I shall expect to hear from you whenever you think the time is opportune.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. H. NAWAB OF BHOPAL

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

134. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

September 16, 1945

MY DEAR JAIRAMDASBHAI,

Bapu got your letter today. The telegram of course reached here the day before yesterday. He understands your inability to come here. Bapu says things will go well in regard to the marriage. About the election you may write to Sardar and decide.

You must have received my letter requesting you to compile a selection of Bapu's articles on the Hindu-Muslim [question]. It would please Bapu too if you could undertake this task. He says that Anand Hingorani will surely be willing to give you every possible help in this work.

Yours,
AMRIT KAUR

From the Hindi original: C.W. 11059. Courtesy: Arjun Jairamdas

135. LETTER TO HARSHADA DIWANJI

September 16, 1945

CHI. HARSHADA,

You have not mentioned how many years you have completed. Whatever the number don't you have now so many years less to live ? From this point of view, we should mourn on our birthday. And if one gives blessings, one should do so to express the hope that, if the person has not fully known God in the years that have passed, he will spend the rest of his life in an endeavour to know Him.

Have you started learning the Urdu script? If not, why? I do not remember at all to have ever suffered, let alone suffered much.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI HARSHADABEHN DIWANJI
15TH ROAD
KHAR, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10225. Courtesy: Harshada Diwanji

136. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

September 16, 1945

I got your note. I remember the *bhajan* about 'Jadabharat'[1] because I used to hum it to myself in South Africa. But I cannot say whether it means the same thing to me as it does to you. Please, therefore, write and let me know.

According to the theory of nature cure, all diseases have one single original cause. If that is true, the statement that "my health is good in other ways" is meaningless. This letter is just to amuse you and myself and also to show you that I think of you every day.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 207

[1] A yogi, described in the *Bhagavata,* feigning stupidity so as to escape involvement in mundane matters

137. LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

September 16, 1945

CHI. CHAMPA,

I have your letter. I understand what you say about the Red Bungalow[1]. It does not create a good impression on me. Doctor[2] had it built at his own expense, but since he has not left a deed, all of you are entitled to claim it as your property. What shall I say about Maganlalbhai[3]? I hope Sarala will fully recover.

CHANDRAKUNJ

JAGNATH PLOT

RAJKOT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

138. LETTER TO KRISHNAVARMA

September 16, 1945

BHAI KRISHNAVARMA,

I am sending your letter[4] to Sushilabehn. You have rightly understood the problem of cremating the dead but yours is an old method. Somebody has to devise a new method. This should not be beyond the sphere of nature cure. How to dispose of dead bodies at a place where water comes up after a little digging and wood is not available? We have to go deep into the matter. Come after the A.I.C.C. meeting.

KRISHNAVARMA

NATURE CURE HOSPITAL MALAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

139. LETTER TO JAMSHEDJI N. MEHTA

September 16, 1945

BHAI JAMSHEDJI,

I have your wire. What you say is right but the question is not so easy as you think.

JAMSHEDJI NASSERWANJI MEHTA

KARACHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Near Sabarmati Ashram

[2] Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta and his youngest son

[3] *ibid*

[4] This was presumably in reply to Gandhiji's letter dated September 10 to the addressee; *vide* "Letter to Krishnavarma", 10-9-1945

140. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

September 16, 1945

CHI. KANAM,

I have your letter. I am glad to know that you are going to Vinoba. Learn Sanskrit well and of course Urdu also. Don't spoil your health by trying to go too fast.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KANU GANDHI
C/O SHRI RAMDAS GANDHI
KHALASI LINES
NAGPUR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

141. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

September 16, 1945

BHAI BENARSIDAS[1],

Your letter has pained me. But it is not proper to resign on that account. Merely giving up sugar, etc., will not do. Acquiring control over the mind is quite another matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2517

142. LETTER TO KHWAJA SAHEB

POONA,
September 16, 1945

JANAB KHWAJA SAHEB,

I have your letter of the 7th instant. Maulana Saheb told me that you had written a similar one to him also. Maulana Saheb will do the needful in the matter but all the same I am thankful to you for writing to me in such detail.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI[2]

From the Urdu original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Editor of *Vishal Bharat* and writer; worked with Totaram Sanadhya and C. F. Andrews for the welfare of Indians settled abroad

[2] The subscription is from a copy in Hindi available in Pyarelal Papers.

143. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

September 17, 1945

How are you today? Your obstinacy is harmful. This is the place where it is likely that your throat trouble might go. Any way Dinshaw should be tried. He won't do any injury. No medicine will have to be swallowed. "Pride goeth before destruction and haughtiness before a fall", whatever that may mean.

From the original: C.W. 4165. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7801

144. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

POONA,
September 17, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your letter. You raise ridiculous objections. You yourself have admitted that you write long letters. I drew your attention to it merely to correct you.

There is no question of my being offended. I had read the portion regarding Parnerkar, I had no comment to make on it. Something can be done only after I return there. I have in any case written to Parnerkar.[1] I myself feel confused.

You yourself told me that you speak too much. You lose patience and get angry. If you forget this fact, how will you be able to reform yourself ? You work hard enough, but spoil everything by speaking too much. Won't you admit this ? What matters in the prayer is the tune. It is a matter of common sense as to what should be done when your voice is not in tune with that of others or the voices of others are not in tune with yours. Praying therefore is not the remedy. The question is of knowing the tune.

Go on serving. I learnt much from the cholera. Let others also do the same.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8433. Also C.W. 5598. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Y. M. Parnerkar", 29-8-1945

145. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN CHOWDHARY

September 17, 1945

CHI. RAMNARAYAN,

I have your letter and also the one to Rajkumari. I see that from all quarters and in every way you got only injustice. Have you ever paused to think that when we seem to suffer injustice from all quarters, the weakness may really be our own, viz., of seeing wrong in others? Did you take up *goseva* only because of Jamnalalji or me and not for your own sake? Your faith seems superficial. May you all stay well. It is good that you are yourself teaching the girls.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RAMNARAYAN CHOWDHARY
SHRI ANAND COTTON MILL
NEAR SARASPUR DARWAJA
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

146. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

September 17, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter. Rajkumari and Shantabehn have come.

Let the committee decide about chillies. It seems right to give chillies to those who stay in the Ashram without being its members or to those for whom the doctor may recommend it. Chi. Kailas[1] has come to observe all the rules of the Ashram. She should not desire to break them. It is another matter if the doctor recommends it on grounds of health.

There should be no compulsion at all.

There is no letter from Parnerkarji so far.

Balkrishna cannot be said to be out of the wood yet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4528

[1] Kailas D. Master

147. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH AZAD

September 17, 1945

BHAI PRITHVI SINGH,

I have read your letter[1] from beginning to end. Even though the signature is yours the language is not yours. Nor is the handwriting yours. I have already written to Joshiji[2]. I cannot go into the facts. I shall-do as God prompts me.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

You say you have showed the letter to Nathji[3]. Let him write to Kishorelalbhai if he can testify to the facts. He would probably investigate and if Nathji wants it, I feel he would certainly do it.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5655. Also C.W. 2966. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh Azad

148. LETTER TO VINA CHATTERJEE

September 17, 1945

CHI. VINA,

I have your letter. You will have to wait for your mother's sake. I remember to have already written to you. If not, it may be due to oversight. I feel your going to Calcutta is a waste but your heart is there and, if Sailen bears the expense, you can go. Maybe, it would be better if you went after your marriage. I won't be able to help you in this. I hope you are all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Defending the policy of the Communist Party of india
[2] P. C. Joshi; *vide* "Letter to P. C. Joshi". 8-9-1945
[3] Kedarnath Kulkarni

149. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

September 17, 1945

CHI. HOSHIARI,

I hope you and Gajraj are well. I am glad you are doing good work. Does Gajraj know how to write? He should do every day some writing, reading and spinning. And whatever he does, he should do well.

Blessings from

BAPU

ASHRAM SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

150. LETTER TO ANUGRAH NARAYAN SINGH

September 17, 1945

BHAI ANUGRAHBABU,

I have your letter. I will use the medicine when it comes. If the medicine is so effective you must say how it is made. It is dharma not to make a business out of it.

Blessings from

BAPU

ANUGRAH NARAYAN SINGH
KADAM KUAN
PATNA, BIHAR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

151. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

September 17, 1945

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter. I have time only to acknowledge it. I continue to get letters from Hoshiari. She is fine. You must be well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI BALVANTSINHA
KISAN ASHRAM
P. O. BAHADARABAD, *via* JWALAPUR
U. P.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1967

152. LETTER TO MIRABEHN[1]

September 17, 1945

CHI. MIRA,

Just to say I have your letter,

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1967. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

153. LETTER TO P. RAMAMOORTHY

September 19, 1945

DEAR RAMAMOOURTHY,

I have your letter. I must not argue with you. If the Congress exploits Harijans instead of serving them, the Congress will have to pay dearly for it. I believe in the universal law that the exploiter digs his own grave.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI PAMU RAMAMOORTHY

CHEDILAPORE

RAMARAOPETA, COCANADA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

154. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 19, 1945

CHI. NARANDAS,

I like the above statement. I feel that swaraj lies in its complete observance.

This is in reply to your postcard, for publication with the statement or below it.

I will of course send something[2] with Kakasaheb.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Kanaiyo is in Bombay. I hope you have recovered.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8630. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] This is a postscript to the letter to Balvantsinha, *vide* the preceding item.

[2] For the Charkha Jayanti

155. LETTER TO GAJANAN NAIK

September 19, 1945

CHI. GAJANAN,

I have your letter.

I cannot take Kamath with me. I will not be able to help him.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI GAJANAN
MAGANWADI
WARDHA, C. P.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

156. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI[1]

September 19, 1945

CHI. PRABHA,

You are silly. What was so private in your letter? My plans are a little uncertain. For the present stay on there and read what you can. Let me know what you read. I intend to go to Bengal in October. Meet me then. In the mean time I am sure you will continue to write to me. See that you keep in good health. You must serve on the Kasturba Committee.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3582

157. A NOTE

September 19, 1945

Following the saying that "Where there are no trees the castor-oil-plant is held supreme", I welcome this scheme.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4089

[1] The letter is in the Devanagari script.

158. A NOTE[1]

September 19, 1945

I hope people will respond to this appeal.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

159. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

POONA,
September 19, 1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I got your letter of the 7th instant a few days ago. In one of the circulars I see that people have been asked to send their replies by the 21st or 22nd September at the time of the Committee's meeting. If the pamphlet was to be sent only after you got my reply, then the time is over. Till today I have not been able to read the pamphlet. And ever if I had sent my reply, I think it would have been impossible to send the circulars to all the Provinces and get their replies in time. How can we work in such haste? And it is almost impossible for me to send my reply by return of post. At times I could reply to brief letters but not always. What shall we do in such a situation? It would be better not to wait for my permission for what is to be done urgently and in case it is imperative to have my permission I should be informed telegraphically. Then perhaps it would be possible for me to keep the reply ready.

I have gone through all the circulars. I think there is no need for any amendment. If the circulars are not sent as yet, change the dates and send them out and they should be placed before the Committee's next meeting or a copy should be sent to all after getting the reply.

Yesterday I got Suchetabehn's letter. I am enclosing it. It should be kept in the office and a copy should be sent to Bapa. It would be better that she gives us a trial and we give her a trial for three months. And later on she can stay permanently if she is prepared to. She can keep travelling between Allahabad and Wardha. I don't find any

[1] Gandhiji wrote this under an appeal for the Harijan Industrial School fund after revising it.

objection to that. Just now there is no need to fix any salary for her. She has gone to Bombay today. She will meet Bapa there.

I am sending back all the circulars. They may be of some use there.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SHYAMLAL
KASTURBA SMARAK
WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal1 Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

160. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 19, 1945

CHI. SUSHILA,

It is 9 p.m. just now. But let me write a few lines. I am busy the whole day, except for massage and so on. I am going to Bombay tomorrow night. Shall be back here after staying there for three days.

Your letter is good. The description is vivid. Never mind if we get no help from the Government. Hire a car if it is necessary. We shall see later about buying a car or a lorry.

Pyarelal is the same. What can I add to what you already know?

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
WARDHA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

161. CABLE TO "THE TIMES"[1]

September 21, 1945

NEVER MADE ANY PUBLIC STATEMENT ABOUT ATOMIC BOMB.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In a cable dated September 19, 1945, from London The Times had sought confirmation of the following report: "Mahatma Gandhi gave message endorsing use of atomic bomb in view fiendish attitude Japanese towards helpless Chinese, Indian prisoners."

162. LETTER TO AMRABAPA[1]

BIRLA HOUSE BOMBAY,
September 21, 1945

DARBARSHRI,

I got your letter. I also received the sum of Rs. 51 (Rupees fifty-one only). I will give it to Dr. Dinshaw to use it for a charitable purpose.

I have a faint recollection of having met yours father. I wish you complete recovery.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10228. Courtesy: Gajanan Joshi

163. LETTER TO KAILAS D. MASTER

BIRLA HOUSE,
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD
BOMBAY,
September 21, 1945

CHI. KAILAS,

I got your letter just as I reached Bombay. Your handwriting is good but not clear enough to be read easily. If you write slightly bigger letters and do not mix them up, it will be easier to decipher.

You cannot ride on two horses. A family cannot run properly if all the children stay with the parents all the time. When children grow older, they have to go out for earning, studying or serving. And when they go out, they have to forget their old and ailing parents. So why do you feel unhappy for what is inevitable? When your parents sent you out, they and you yourself must have thought not only that your duty was to serve your parents, but that it was time that you started earning and lessened their burden. That is exactly what you are doing. It is good that you are doing all your work and slowly learning everything. You will bring credit to yourself, your parents and the Ashram if you settle down there, stop worrying and take care of your health.

I am very happy to know that you wanted to have chillies but gave them up on your own. I know that some people are so much

[1] Ruler of Thana Devli, a State in Kathiawar

used to chillies that they would rather die than give them up. This shows that taking chillies is not a good habit. In India it so happens that the poor cannot afford anything else and they add a few chillies and salt to the *rotla*[1] to somehow make it digestible. To conclude from this that all must take chillies is sheer ignorance. When a person takes all kinds of food including *rotlas* as well, the latter cannot be regarded as part of his diet. On the contrary they may be superfluous and might even prove to be harmful.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

164. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

September 21, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I arrived here at 4 o'clock today. I have your letter.

When a person takes beer with two per cent alcohol content and is forbidden to take whisky with 75 per cent alcohol content, can I ask why beer and why not whisky? You must see also that when we drink lemonade or eat things with some alcohol content in them nobody says that we are taking alcohol. Equate chillies with whisky and then consider if chillies can go with turmeric or coriander. Taking spices does not mean consuming all kinds of spices. There is said to be a lot of difference between green chillies and red chillies. It is surprising that all these simple things have escaped your attention. Whatever spices we give, like turmeric, black pepper, coriander, etc., are given on doctor's recommendation and on grounds of health. Even so, who can prevent anyone from eating for taste, and how can it be done? Have you not heard that a Vaghari[2] woman used to relish greatly a two-day stale *bajra* chapati without ghee, but when she was given *kheer*[3] and wheat *halwa*[4][3] to eat every day she started shrinking and fell ill in the end. Shall we then say that this Vaghari woman had conquered her palate and subsisted on dry bread, chillies and salt? What else should I write?

[1] Chapati made from *baejra* or *jowar* flour
[2] Name of a backward community
[3] Sweet preparations
[4] *ibid*

Why did you not ask me till today about taking chillies on grounds of health? Of course we do let Shakaribehn have chillies willingly. But how can we give it to others? The reason is not that chillies have no good qualities at all. They certainly have some medicinal value. But chillies have no place in a hospital except as a "pain-killer" which is an extract of chillies. In the Ashram we neither take nor give anything merely for taste. But we do not ask everybody whether they relish what they eat and if they do so they should leave the Ashram. If we take this view, none but animals and birds will be left in the Ashram.

Kamle should somehow calm down and improve his health.

I have already written about Purnachandraji. While living in the Ashram everyone has to observe *brahmacharya.* I did not know about Ramprasadji. But I was under the impression that Ramprasad's house was a little away from the other houses of the Ashram. Niamat's room was also there but she was never asked whether she wanted to observe *brahmacharya.* But I had thought that Ramprasad had not come to live in the Ashram like Niamat. However, when I came to know that the manner in which they lived they could even produce children I was perturbed. Besides others this is the strorgest reason for one to leave the Ashram. His having a separate kitchen also used to irk me. But since this had been allowed in the case of others I could not be too insistent in dissuading him.

It is not enough to assume that Purnachandraji must be observing *brahmacharya* while staying in the Ashram. It is necessary to ask him clearly.

I hope to go to Poona from here on the 24th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4529

165. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

BOMBAY,
September 21, 1945

Addressing a few words to the gathering which had waited patiently for prayer time, Gandhiji said that he had taken permission from his doctors to offer prayer under a shelter.[1]

[1] Gandhiji had been advised complete rest on account of a mild attack of influenza. He had not been able to attend the A.I.C.C. meeting.

Asking for contributions to the Harijan Fund, Gandhiji said that it would please him more if people came forward with hand-spun yarn instead of cash. He would prepare cloth out of this yarn and sell it to them as that would bring more money. He said Bombay was the first city to contribute yarn. He hoped the citizens would continue this practice.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-9-1945

166. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
September 23, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

I have been worrying myself the whole day long over your illness, all the more because I cannot come to you. And now I see that you cannot come to Poona tomorrow. Tell me unreservedly what you will have me to do.

Your obstinacy is remarkable and it is responsible for your suffering. But of that nothing just now. I dare mention this just now so that you might remember this when you are well enough and shed it without ado as you have done in everything else. If you cannot write just pass your answer.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4166. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7802

167. LETTER TO SANATKUMAR K. JOSHI

[Before *September 24, 1945*][1]

BHAI SANATKUMAR,

I have your letter. What you say is like a bad workman quarrelling with his tools. If it is true that we can attain swaraj through khadi you should, by taking some trouble, prepare fine slivers. But if you find it difficult to do even that much, we cannot achieve swaraj through ahimsa. It would be no loss either to the country or to the cause of khadi if those who lacked this zeal left khadi alone. As

[1] According to the source this was written after September 19 and before September 24.

regards your education, you should do what your elder brother says.

SANATKUMAR K. JOSHI
JAMIATRAMNI KHADKI
BROACH

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

168. FOREWORD[1]

Dr. Bharatan Kumarappa has, in his pages on "Villagism", a new word coined by him, furnished the lay reader and the village worker, not conversant with books on economics, a comparative and historical study of the modern movements known as Capitalism and Socialism, not excluding Marxism and Communism, and has earnestly, and I think convincingly, shown, amongst other reasons advanced by him, that the past two wars of our generation have proved the utter bankruptcy of such economic orders. Incidentally, the wars seem to me to have proved the bankruptcy of war, meaning in forcible and naked language violence, which is not less because it is organized by States reputed to be civilized. Whether non-violence will effectively replace violence for keeping the peace of the world remains to be seen. Certain it is that mankind, if it continues along its mad career of exploitation of the weak by the strong, must rush to annihilation fore-told in all religions. Dr. Bharatan Kumarappa shows that "Villagism" as it is being attempted in India, based as it is on truth and non-violence, is well calculated to avert the doom. If the reader is interested in the life-saving process, he must turn to the instructive pages written by Dr. Bharatan Kumarappa during his recent imprisonment.[2]

M. K. GANDHI

POONA, September 24, 1945

Capitalism, Socialism or Villagism?

[1] To *Capitalism, Socialism or Villagism* ?
[2] He Was arrested in 1942 and released in January 1945.

169. LETTER TO E. M. JENKINS

BIRLA HOUSE,
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, BOMBAY,
September 24, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN,

I have to thank you for your letter of 18th instant in reply to my letter[1] about the prisoner Shri Haridas Mitra. I shall await further reply about the case.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR EVAN M. JENKINS, K.C.S.I.
THE VICEROY'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 48

170. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

September 24, 1945

CHI. KANCHAN,

You seem to have again fallen seriously ill. Get well fully. It is good that Dr. Lilavati is there.

If you feel better, write to me. Get well soon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8263. Also C.W. 6987. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

171. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

September 24, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

What you have reported is a very serious matter. We cannot steal an idol, nor can we hide the fact. Chi. Barin must understand this. We should humbly admit the fact before the village people. This is my

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Wavell", 14-9-1945

[opinion. . . . Do][1] as Chi. Kishorelal advises. From here I can only express my opinion.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8429. Also C.W. 5599. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

172. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

September 24, 1945

It hurts me that I shall be leaving this time without seeing you. But in my present weak condition it is best not to go anywhere. I was very happy to learn that your health is better now. I think I will soon regain strength.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 207

173. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

BOMBAY,
September 24, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter. You should act in the case of Shastriji along the lines you have indicated regarding Vinoba.

It is sad about Kanchanbehn. Also about Dr. Mahodaya. I am getting ready to catch the train.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4530

174. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM[2]

ON WAY TO POONA,
September 24, 1945

CHI. A. SALAAM,

I got your letter, as also the khadi. What will it matter if you are

[1] A portion is illegible in the source.
[2] The letter is in the Devanagari script.

not with me on the 2nd October. All those who do my work are with me even though they are physically away. Aren't you doing my work there? You will, moreover, be awaiting my return. Isn't that enough? Get well soon.

I am fully recovered now. Do not worry about me. Rajkumari has fallen ill. Just now she is better. She is with me in the train. Zohra is in Poona.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 501

175. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

ON WAY TO POONA,
September 24, 1945

CHI. SATIS BABU,

I hope you are all right. I have had talks with Prafulla. I may reach there on 2nd November. I shall be having a talk with Sarat Babu. He is coming to Poona. I hope all of you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

176. LETTER TO DHIRENDRA N. CHATTERJEE

ON WAY TO POONA,
September 24, 1945

CHI. DHIREN,

Yesterday I got your letter. I only wish that everything is all right with you. Give up your forgetfulness. Sodepur[1] is a big educational centre for you. I hope to reach there around November 2. Abha, Kanu and others will be with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Khadi Pratishthan at Sodepur, founded by Satis Chandra Das Gupta

177. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

POONA,
September 25, 1945

CHI. BABUDI,

On reading about the rains there, my thoughts flew to you as if I did not care for the others. Despite every effort to cultivate non-attachment, such things do happen sometimes. I hope you are well. You need not write. It will suffice if Chi. Gordhandas drops a postcard. The poor must have been rendered homeless.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: 10060. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

178. LETTER TO SITARAM PURUSHOTTAM PATWARDHAN

September 25, 1945

BHAI APPA,

I have your letter. I read the description of the Ganga flowing near Rajapur. Keep me informed about what is going on. If the *pandas*[1] can be influenced by public opinion the case would not go to the court. But if public opinion is of no avail, you must put up a proper defence. If our case is weak, we should not defend it just for the sake of defence. It often happens that morally we are right and if by defending our case our position becomes clearer, in spite of realizing that we will lose in the end, it becomes our dharma to defend it. I have done this quite often and succeeded also. That is why I am putting this before you. I hope Dadasaheb[2] will reach there in time. I do agree with you about the defects you have pointed out, but it is possible that the leaders don't. At least not all of them. But you have every right to include all those things as defects. I would do so. Now first of all, send all the questions in brief, in Urdu script to Maulana. I think he will send a reply. Let him know your position. After waiting

[1] Priests who officiate at religious ceremonies

[2] G. V. Mavalankar (1888-1956); Speaker, Legislative Assembly, Bombay (1937-45); Speaker, Lok Sabha (1947-56)

for sufficient time for a reply, place the questions in public. Do ask Deo's[1] opinion. The whole thing has to be clarified.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

179. LETTER TO MRS. SHUKLA

September 25, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

Chi. Nirmala had come to see me. She told me that you had had a fall and were bed-ridden. I was sorry to learn this. You must be older than I. Get someone to write to me about your health.

Pranams from

MOHANDAS

MRS. SHUKLA
BARRISTER SHUKLA'S BUNGALOW
RAJKOT
KATHIAWAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

180. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 25, 1945

CHI. SUSHILA,

As I feel stronger after dinner, I am writing this. I hope you will return soon after completing your work there. Except for weakness, there is nothing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

181. LETTER TO RANI RAJWADE

September 25, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I just cannot imagine you in widowhood. Raja Saheb passed

[1] Shankarrao Deo; member, A.I.C.C. and Congress Working Committee

away so suddenly. I have faith in your composure. God will give you forbearance. You should emulate Ramabai Ranade[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

RANI RAJWADE
POONA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

182. LETTER TO ANAND SUNDARAM

POONA,
September 26, 1945

CHI. ANAND,

I have your letter. It would not be right to argue that just because I went to England all others should. Should others repeat all mistakes that I have committed? I don't believe that you can serve India better by studying abroad. To think this is sheer ignorance. To feel that education abroad is the best betrays ignorance.

I do not give my blessings to those who wish to study abroad.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI ANAND SUNDARAM
KRISHNAKUTIR
BENARES HINDU UNIVERSITY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] (1862-1924), wife of Mahadev Govind Ranade; President of Seva Sadan at Bombay and Poona; worked in Central Relief Committee in 1921; led the movement demanding women's franchise

183. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

POONA,
September 27, 1945

CHI. SUNDARAM,[1]

What a good thing your sister has passed away painlessly! We must all join her, some soon, some late.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI SUNDARAM
KRISHNAKUTIR
P. O. BENARES HINDU UNIVERSITY

From the original: C.W. 10523. Courtesy: S. R. Venkataraman

184. LETTER TO S. RAMANATHAN

September 27, 1945

DEAR RAMANATHAN,

I have read your letter. You do not want me to argue with you.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

SHRI S. RAMANATHAN
9 BROADWAY,
MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

185. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

September 27, 1945

MY DEAR BIG BROTHER,

I shall treasure your gift. I have read the Preface[2]. What is there to offend me? Jagadisan is right in what he writes. But why could he

[1] The superscription is in Tamil.

[2] To *My Master Gokhale*, a collection of the addressee's writings and speeches on Gopal Krishna Gokhale, compiled by T. N. Jagadisan

not avoid errata even in a book of 147 pages?

Hoping you are well and with love,

LITTLE BROTHER

THE RT. HON. V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI
SWAGATAM
MYLAPORE, MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

186. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

September 27, 1945

CHI. SITA,

You write in bold and distinct characters and therefore they look beautiful. Never mind if writing thus takes more time. Ultimately that won't take much time.

You must not fail. Do come to me after your examination is over. You must not let the examination weigh on your mind. Why should it when you have worked hard?

Arun[1] and Ila[2][3] are quite cheerful. Arun is still quiet but Ila makes up for it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4956

187. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

September 27, 1945

BHAI DAHYABHAI,

I have your letter. My advice to you is that you should save the money you would spend on coming here and use it for service.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI DAHYABHAI PATEL
C/O SHETH JAMNADAS ADKIA
211-13 KALBADEVI
BOMBAY-2

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2714. Courtesy: Dahyabhai H. Patel

[1] Brother and sister of the addressee
[2] *ibid*

188. LETTER TO KRISHNAVARMA

September 27, 1945

SHRI KRISHNAVARMA,

We waited a long time for you in Bombay. Now come over whenever you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. KRISHNAVARMA
NATURE CURE HOSPITAL
P. O. MALAD
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

189. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

September 27, 1945

CHI. MAGANBHAI,

Your letter. As I feared it might rain, I had told Chi. Amritlal what to do. So I am doing nothing more. Go even now if you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MAGANBHAI DESAI
GUJARAT VIDYAPITH
AHMEDABAD
B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

190. LETTER TO N. VYASTIRTH

September 27, 1945

BHAI VYASTIRTH,

I have your letter. Your spinning activity is laudable. Go on increasing it, learn all the processes preceding spinning.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI N. VYASTIRTH
840 SULTAN BAZAAR
HYDERABAD, DECCAN

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

191. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 28, 1945

CHI. NARANDAS,

As Kakasaheb is going there, he himself may be regarded as my message. Still I shall say this: The *yajna* this time is of a different character. Yarn is taking the place of gold and silver coins. In other words, labour takes the place of currency and claims equality with it. If this new practice is kept up and spreads, it will have effects too far-reaching to be estimated. In this there should be no place for fraud or untruth. Even the best of plans are ruined if they are mixed with fraud or untruth.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8631. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

192. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

September 28, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I enclose herewith Chi. Parnerkar's letter and also that of Chi. Kishorelal. Both are worth thinking over. The subject matter in each is different and yet the same. Everyone, that is to say, all the institutions there should ponder over K's letter. How did a saintly person like Kishorelal, working under Parnerkar, accept defeat? Do not get muddled. Leave the letter aside if you are unable to make head or tail of it. Everyone will not benefit by reading it. Only you three should read it. Write to me if you can think of something after some consultations; otherwise forget about it. Give it up if too much time is consumed in discussion. Naraharibhai is the secretary of the Committee, so he should think over both the letters: 1. Should the institutions be kept separate ? Will that be possible now ? (The subject matter of K.'s letter.,) 2. Can't two neighbours live in amity? They may cultivate the land separately and have their cattle, fruit trees, and water supply separate. (The subject matter of Parnerkar's letter.)

Yesterday there was a letter from Gordhandas. It seems Sharda is cured of the fever. She had both typhoid and malaria. I have written about the need for being careful in the matter of diet.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10645

193. LETTER TO KANJI J. DESAI

September 28, 1945

BHAI KANJI,

I have your letter. I am doing what I can from here. I can very well understand your feelings as a father. But God alone is the true Protector of you, me and Pushpa, so let us take refuge in Him. There is no doubt that you will be able to find a suitable husband for your younger daughter.

KANJI JETHABHAI DESAI
OLD HANUMAN LANE, SECOND CROSS LANE
ROOM 4, SECOND FLOOR
RAJDAS CHAWL
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

194. LETTER TO SHASHIKANT R. MEHTA

September 28, 1945

CHI. SHASHI[1],

I have your letter. I read Doctor's unsigned will also. There is no need for my permission at all. Under the law neither myself nor the Ashram has any right.[2] So you are free to do what you like.

I have already told Maganbhai enough. Now the ball is in your court. I am glad to know that these days Chi. Ratilal is at home. I hope he is all right.

SHASHIKANT MEHTA
CHANDRAKUNJ
JAGNATH PLOT
RAJKOT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Son of Ratilal Mehta

[2] Presumably the reference is to the Red Bungalow; *vide* "Letter to Champa R. Mehta", 16-9-1945

195. LETTER TO DUNCAN GREENLEES

POONA,
September 29, 1945

MY DEAR DUNCAN,

I was delighted to have your letter through Dr. Raju. Of course I will see him. There is a ring of despair running through your note. I do not like it. After all, you are a man of God and there can be no such thing as a note of despair for such.

Do come to me as soon as you find me finally settled down. Just now I am in a sanatorium, as you see. Then, if all goes well, I go to Madras in December and from there probably to the Frontier province. After that I shall settle down in Sevagram.

Send me your manuscript. I shall see it and if it appeals to me, I shall get it published.

Love.

BAPU

PROF. DUNCAN GREENLEES
BHIMLIPATAM, VIZAG DISTRICT

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

196. LETTER TO BASSIC

[*September 29, 1945*][1]

DEAR BASSIC,

Many thanks for your letter and draft. You have correctly guessed my age. I did not know your good father-in-law was dead. So shall we all one day. I hope you are all keeping well. Amtul Salaam is working for khadi in Bengal. What work of service are you doing? You have not given me your full name. Nevertheless I hope this will reach you.

P. O. DEHENNU *via* KHANNA
LUDHIANA DISTRICT

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The letter is found among those of September 29, 1945.

197. LETTER TO PUSHPA K. DESAI

POONA,
September 29, 1945

CHI. PUSHPA,

I have had no letter from you recently. I am sending with this a letter from your father. Just now he is not likely to trust you. But that should not hurt you. When you have proved your freedom from worldly desires his present unhappiness will turn into happiness and you will be a credit to everyone.

I like your going for a couple of days to Vinobaji. Please remember that that alone is a true vision of Lord Krishna which is attained through pure service. Take care of your health. Take every step calmly and after careful thought. Use your intelligence in whatever public work you undertake. Write to your father from time to time. If you write to anybody else, do so either through him or through me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9265

198. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

September 29, 1945

CHI. SUMI,

I have your letter. I am not happy at your falling ill so often. Is it not an essential part of education to learn not to fall ill ?

SUMITRA GANDHI
BIRLA HIGH SCHOOL
PILANI, RAJPUTANA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

199. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

September 29, 1945

CHI. RAMDAS,

I am sending this—Sumitra's letter[1]—because you must see it. I

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

would say that you should let Sumi gain experience by staying at Pilani and Delhi. I am all right.

RAMDAS GANDHI
KHALASI LINES
NAGPUR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

200. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

September 29, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter. Whatever you do, do after proper thought. Do talk to Kanchanbehn. There must be sweetness in your speech. I am glad to hear about Anantram. When faced with frightful disease our task lies in humbly doing the work of service.

Kanchanbehn must have recovered.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4531

201. LETTER TO SUNDARI

September 29, 1945

CHI. SUNDARI,

I have your money. You should write in Devanagari or Urdu. Why do you write in English?

C/O SHETH PRATAP DAYALDAS
CHOWPATI BUILDING
FIRST FLOOR
BABULNATH, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

202. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

September 29, 1945

CHI. HOSHIARI,

Krishnachandra writes and says that you have become somewhat weak. I hope you are better now and that you and Gajraj are carrying on well. I am all right. There is a little weakness which will go.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

203. LETTER TO LALCHAND

September 29, 1945

BHAI LALCHAND,

I had your letter and I had made inquiries. I am sorry to learn about Pandit Ramarakhamal. Console his family members on my behalf. I feel that the respect that was shown to the late Atma Singh was misplaced.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI LALCHAND, CLERK
LOCO WHEELSHOP, N. W. R., MOGHULPURA
LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

204. FOREWORD TO "NEHRU YOUR NEIGHBOUR"

POONA,
[*September 30, 1945*][1]

This is an effective collection made by Shri P. D. Tandon[2] out of numerous writings of numerous admirers of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. It gives at a glance a good picture of the patriot as seen by various eyes. He shines easily as father, brother, writer, traveller, patriot or internationalist. Nevertheless it is as an ardent devotee of his country and its freedom on whose altar he would sacrifice all his other loves that the leader will specially single him out from the essays. Be it said to his credit, however, that he will consider it beneath his dignity to purchase that freedom at the price of any other country. His nationalism is equal to internationalism.

M. K. GANDHI

Nehru Your Neighbour. Also C.W. 10541. Courtesy: P. D. Tandon

[1] This was enclosed with the letter dated September 30 to P. D. Tandon; *vide* the following item.

[2] A journalist from Allahabad

205. LETTER TO P. D. TANDON

POONA,
September 30, 1945

BHAI TANDON,

I am sorry that I could not send anything for your book earlier. For one thing I was too busy, for another I just did not feel like writing anything. But how could I refuse to write anything on Jawaharlal? Now I only hope that my foreword[1] will not reach you too late.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 10542. Courtesy: P. D. Tandon

206. LETTER TO UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM

September 30, 1945

DEAR UTTIMCHAND,

Thanks for your cheque of Rs. 500. It will be utilized like the previous ones[2].

Your puzzle remains a puzzle[3]. I submitted it here to a learned man as I did in Sevagram. Nothing could be done by either. I suppose a puzzle will cease to be one if it yields to an easy solution.

The Hindi translation though in defective Hindi is quite good and instructive. I have no difficulty in following it.

BOMBAY BAKERY
HYDERABAD SIND

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

207. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

September 30, 1945

CHI. BHANSALI,

How much money will be required for the boys you refer to?

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Uttimchand Gangaram", 1-9-1945
[3] *ibid*

Will the Talimi Sangh admit them? How old are they? I do not think there will be any difficulty in meeting their expenses.

You must have inquired at the Mahila Ashram about the girl.

I hope you eat regularly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8358. Also C.W. 7190. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

208. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

September 30, 1945

CHI. SUSHILA,

It cannot be said that your treatment is over. It will be over only when you believe that it is so.

Your wish to serve me is equivalent to your serving me. You may act on it when your help is really required. Just now there are many who are serving me or are eager to do so. If a time comes when no one is willing to serve then a person like you [should be prepared to serve. At the moment][1] be happy to let those who are already here serve me. This is what I [feel][2][2].

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati; G.N. 4957

209. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

September 30, 1945

CHI. PREMA,

I read your letter. I will tear it up after I finish this reply.

You are indeed sentimental. Where was the need for offering prayer just because I got a slight fever? And why need you feel miserable at my absence from the pandal[3]? If at such a large gathering

[1] Illegible
[2] *ibid*
[3] The reference is to Gandhiji's absence in the A. I. C. C. meeting held at Bombay on September 21, 22 and 23. *Vide* also footnote on "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 21-9-1945

somebody is not present, what effect can his absence have, and why need it have any? All this seems improper to me. If you have sent anything to *Nava Kal*[1] similar to what you wrote to me, you have made a mistake.

I have written to Bapa regarding your camp. It is quite a few days since I did that. You must get the permission row. It would of course be excellent if a hospital could be run at the same time.

Why do you even have the suspicion that I am displeased with Shankarraoji these days? I don't tkink about that matter at all. I have not read his article regarding Satara. I chance to read very few of such writings.

The members of the Committee ought not to be concerned whether I remain silent or rot.

It is probable that Narandas may come here after *Rentia Baras.* What does it matter if you do not come to see me though you are so near? So long as you are going on with the work, where is the need for you to come and see me? When you have no work, you are of course free to come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10437. Also C.W. 6876. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

210. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

September 30, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

In your postcard you say that your illness is negligible. But the letters from the Ashram say that you have lost quite a bit.

Whatever you decide about Ramanlal[2] is right. It will be good if somehow he settles down.

It is surprising that there was no excitement on account of the idols. Also it is surprising that the caste Hindus listen to Kamle's *bhajans* even after knowing about him.

I have shown to Zohra the portion about her.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] A Marathi daily published from Bombay

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Ramanlal Shah", 10-9-1945

211. LETTER TO GAJANAN NAIK

September 30, 1945

CHI. GAJANAN,

I have read your letter. If what you say is true, it is worth considering. You must show your letter to Kumarappa. If you permit me, I shall do so. You cannot suppress the complaint you have mentioned. I also wonder how you can stay in such an institution? Is' nt there exaggeration in what you say? Meanwhile, I am preserving your letter.

MAGANWADI
WARDHA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

212. YARN QUOTA FOR KHADI PURCHASE[1]

[*September 1945*]

It is true that the Congress adopted khadi, the Spinners' Association imposed the condition of the yarn quota and khadi which is not certified by the Association is taboo for Congressmen. A certain quantity of yarn has to be given as part of the price of khadi. All this is true. But I do not find anything wrong in this. That action alone can be compulsion where there is penalty for refusing to do a particular thing. What the form of punishment should be is a different matter. There is no compulsion if I demand the price of khadi and refuse to give it free. Similarly there is some condition or other attached to membership in any institution. It is also no compulsion if subsequently any change is made in such conditions. The case of uncertified kkadi is also similar. If we go in for uncertified khadi, where is the guarantee of its purity and that a proper wage has been paid to the spinner ?

With the advance of time and experience, changes have to be made in the rules and regulations. The only questions to be considered are whether the change fulfils the object, is in keeping with the principle of truth and non-violence, and is actuated by selfish or

[1] This was in reply to a correspondent who had asked: "You persuaded the Congress to adopt khadi-wear for its members and introduced the rule of yarn quota for the A. I. S. A. khadi. Congressmen are prohibited from using khadi other than that certified by the A. I. S. A., and now khadi cannot be had from the Association without paying the yarn quota. Is this not compulsion?"

benevolent motives. The answer to all these questions will show that the change was to fulfil the original object and the question of compulsion does not arise.

I should be thanked if, against my goods, I ask for yarn or some other commodity in place of money.

Let us go a little deeper. We believe that khadi is only for those who believe that non-violent swaraj can be established by making khadi universal. Spinning, even for a little time, by the greatest number of people will be helpful in obtaining swaraj. We do not therefore spin under compulsion but of our own accord. An additional gain is that through spinning we come in direct contact with the poor.

Therefore, I am quite clear that there is absolutely no compulsion in demanding part of the price of khadi in the form of yarn.

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, October 1945

213. TELEGRAM TO BINA DAS

Express POONA,
October 1, 1945

BINADAS
CARE COMILA BANK
BOMBAY

THURSDAY FOUR CLOCK EVENING.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

214. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

POONA,
October 1, 1945

MY DEAR C. R.,

I have read your letter[1] to the Sardar. I detect in it your worry.

[1] Dated September 28, 1945, which *inter alia* read: "The enclosed is a milder version of the central story in the *Andhra Patrika* for which Dr. P. [Subbaroyan]'s friends are responsible. The impression sought to be created is that Dr. P. has been pitched upon by you as a leader, and that it is an integral part of the big plan!"

But why worry? The Sardar has said nothing to anybody. He, however, does feel that among Congress circles you have lost your popularity.[1] That, however, should be matter of no moment to you. You will serve if your services are required. My own opinion is that you will be wanted in due time. But I do not want you to feel over the thing.

You do not imagine that the Sardar has a magic ward. He can go only to a certain extent and no farther. If he overstepped his limits he would lose what infIuence he has. What I suggest is that you should come here whilst we are both here and let us amuse ourselves. Let the elections[2] take care of themselves. I would like your name among the candidates but that too without an effort. But all these things can be discussed here. You should give yourself ample time with me. You will come to a friend, not as a Congressman to another, not on business. The weather is quite good. You will not stay at Parnakuti[3] this time. You will come to the clinic. I shall see to your being suited. Hope you are not too weak or too bad. Well or ill, you should be here.

Love.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

215. LETTER TO KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI

October 1, 1945

VAHALAN BEHN[4],

I understand your letter. Of course you must go where your inner voice takes you. You will give a good account of your self wherever you are. But I would like you to settle down some day to some definite work. That is a characteristic of *dordi*[5].

Nargisbehn saw your letter. She comes often.

Love.

SHRI KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI
ORIENT CLUB, CHOWPATI
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers, Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee had been excluded from the Madras Provincial Congress Committee.

[2] To the Central Legislative Assembly, scheduled to take place in November

[3] Residence of Premlila Thackersey at Poona

[4] The superscription is in Gujarati, meaning “dear sister”.

[5] Rope

216. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

October l, 1945

CHI. RAIHANA,

Today I got your letter. I also read Salehbhai's article. Some of the things he says are true but neither Burma nor India has any power. Nobody would listen to a true Indian or Burmese and he cannot do much. The true dharma of India is to achieve independence and help Burma and other countries to attain it. All this enmity would disappear after both are free. At present no one will pay heed to what Salehbhai says. He would be regarded as merely an official. My advice is that he should silently serve [the cause] as much as he can. An official's dharma is not to speak but act.

Pass this on to Salehbhai.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

RAIHANA TYABJI
40 A RIDGE ROAD
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

217. TELEGRAM TO TAN YUN-SHAN

Express POONA,
October 2, 1945

PROFESSOR TAN YUN-SHAN[1]

MY GOOD WISHES TO ALL CHINA. LOVE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee had come to India at the invitation of Rabindranath Tagore and organized the Department of Sino-Indian Studies in the Visvabharati University and later the Sino-Indian Cultural Society.

218. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

POONA,
October 2, 1945

MY DEAR DESHABHAKTA[1],

Is it not time I wrote to you in Hindustani? We are both old. If the younger ones will not spare us, let us spare each other. Do not drag me here, there and everywhere. Hope you are well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3229

219. LETTER TO ANNE MARIE PETERSEN

October 2, 1945

MY DEAR MARIA,

Your letter.

You are foolish, so are we all, some more, some less. Therefore why worry? You must be well and live long enough to see your work flourish.

Your application is under way.[2] The Board meets some time this month when I hope the application will be finally considered. The ideal will be to find your expenses from the surroundings. We must strive to reach it.

Of course you will see me in Madras when I come there. Have you fixed your date for the departure overseas?

Send my love to Esther[3] when you write to her and accept it for yourself.

BAPU

MISS MARIE PETERSEN
SEVA MANDIR
PORTO NOVO (S. INDIA)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Konda Venkatappayya, Member of the Congress Working Committee and A. I. C. C. and later of the Madras Legislative Assembly

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Anne Marie Petersen", 23-8-1945

[3] Esther Menon

220. LETTER TO K. RAMA RAO,

October 2, 1945

DEAR RAMA RAO,

I am glad you have been called to your original post[1]. You have my blessings in your work.

"NATIONAL HERALD
LUCKNOW

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

221. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

October 2, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I hope Kanchan and Hiramani are well now.

After you are free from the cholera work, you should take up whatever work nobody else is doing. When you have no other work to do, you should spin.

I am of the opinion that chillies should not be served except when advised by a doctor. You may state your opinion and then remain unconcerned.

I advised[2] you not to join in singing the prayer, but did not forbid you. Whenever you find my advice painful, you certainly need not follow it. When you feel that you can join in, you may do so. You should then go and stand at a distance and sing alone, constantly changing the tune. You will thus learn the right tunes. There is a music teacher in the Nayee Talim. Learn the *sa-re-ga-ma*[3] from him. Hiramani seems to have settled down in the Mahila Ashram. She probably knows music; learn from her.

As regards the plants, Kishorelal's decision may be carried out. Explain to me further when I return.

I think I have now replied to all the questions.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8431. Also C.W. 5600. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] As Editor, *National Herald*, which had been banned in August 1942
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Munnalal G. Shah", 17-9-1945
[3] Notes in Indian music, *sa, re, ga, ma, pa, dha, ni*

222. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

October 2, 1945

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. I am well. I intend to reach Calcutta on November 2. I shall be staying in Sodepur with Satis Babu. Reach there a little earlier or on the same day. We shall think about what you should read.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3583

223. LETTER TO ANAND G. CHOKHAWALA

October 2, 1945

CHI. ANAND[1],

It is good that you wrote.

You are doing well in joining the *Prabhatpheri*[2]. Don't be too mischievous. You don't harass Sharda, do you? Now you should help her.

Blessings from

SARDAR AND BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10088. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

224. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

October 2, 1945

CHI. BABUDI,

I was very pleased to see your letter. I had received one from Gordhandas earlier. All of you seem to have stood the heavy rains well enough. Keep Shakaribehn there till you have fully recovered.

Come to Sevagram after I return and settle down there for some time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10061. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

[1] Son of Gordhandas and Sharda Chokhawala
[2] Morning procession

225. LETTER TO T.P. JOSHI

October 2, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter as well as the cheque. I would like to come over to Mahabaleshwar just to hear your poems. But it will be, won't it, as God wills.

T. P. JOSHI
40A RIDGE ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

226. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

October 2, 1945

CHI. LILI,

I have your letter. Don't worry about me. The swelling has subsided and I am all right.

I am sorry to learn that you were down with fever. I hope you are all right now. Work as much as you can. You have to appear for the examination in time. You will get through, but let us remember that it is just the same whether you get through or not. This much you must learn from the *Gita.* Your effort will not go waste. The knowledge you have assimilated will fully pay. Think over what you study. Memorize little. Try to remember by carefully thinking over what you have studied.

G. S. MEDICAL COLLEGE
LADIES HOSTEL
PAREL
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

227. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

October 2, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter. The letter to Ramprasad is enclosed.[1] 1 wonder why he refused to talk about *brahmacharya.*

[1] The enclosure is not available.

I hope Manojna[1] and Durgabehn have recovered.

Does not Niamat stay in the Ashram?

I expect to reach there on the 22nd and leave for Calcutta on the 1st of November. Perhaps reaching there will take all of one day. The date for leaving Sevagram may be considered fixed. The rest depends on God.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4533

228. LETTER TO RAMANLAL AGRAWAL

October 2, 1945

BHAI RAMANLAL,

Why do you write in English? You are fickle-minded; so what will you do if you once again get fed up with khadi? What do you do for a living? Your services will certainly be accepted if you area good worker. Write about yourself in detail.

RAMANLAL AGRAWAL
33D NATH TERRACE
LADY JAMSHEDJI ROAD
BOMBAY 16

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

229. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

October 2, 1945

CHI. CHAND,

I have your letter after a long interval. I don't like your not being well. You don't have to study at the cost Of your health. Satyavati is just the same.

DAGA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
NAGPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Wife of Krishnadas Gandhi

230.. LETTER TO GOPI BIRLA

October 2, 1945

CHI. GOPI,

I have your letter. You have borne your illness quite well. I hope you will quickly regain strength. I am all right.

GOPIBEHN
BIRLA HOUSE
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

231. TELEGRAM TO K. SRINIVASAN

POONA,
October 3, 1945

KASTURI SRINIVASAN[1]
"HINDU"
INDUSTRIAL ASSURANCE BUILDING
CHURCHGATE
BOMBAY

SUNDAY SEVENTH[2] FOUR EVENING,

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Editor, *The Hindu*

[2] The meeting however took place on October *6; vide* "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", "Letter to Prema Kantak", 30-9-1945

232. CABLE TO CHAIRMAN, INDO-BRITISH FRIENDSHIP GROUP

POONA,
October 3, 1945

CHAIRMAN
INDO-BRITISH FRIENDSHIP GROUP
BRAUNTON

THANKS. MY BLESSINGS ALWAYS IN EVERY NON-VIOLENT ACTIVITY. REAL TEST OF NON-VIOLENCE AND TRUTH FOR BRITAIN CONSISTS IN RECOGNITION FULL INDEPENDENCE INDIA.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

233. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

POONA
October 3, 1945

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. The yarn figures this time must be interesting. Let me also know how much the yarn would fetch if sold.

You must have finished the work there. Come as soon as you have done so.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8632. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

234. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

October 3, 1945

CHI. PREMA,

I have given a long reply[1] to your letter. You must have received it by now. You have acted up to what you wrote. Send me a copy of

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Prema Kantak", 30-9-1945

the article[1] you have written in *Nava Kal*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10438. Also C.W. 6877. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

235. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL SETALVAD

October 3, 1945

SIR CHIMANLAL,

Thanks for your good wishes.

For years I have not been taking any part in elections. Hence I am entrusting your letter to Sardar. I seldom talk with him about this.

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

236. LETTER TO YUSUF MEHERALLY

October 3, 1945

BHAI MEHERALLY[2],

Acknowledgement of your good wishes is just an excuse for writing to you. I hope you are all right. I have found an occasion for expressing my wish.

YUSUF MEHERALLY
WADIA LODGE
IGATPURI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

237. LETTER TO KARSANDAS CHITALIA

October 3, 1945

BHAI KARSANDAS,

I am inquiring after Gokhale's legacy. Sushilabehn is at Sevagram for treating cholera patients.

[1] Entitled *Amhi Kothen Ahont?* meaning "Where are me?" The addressee had severely, criticized the proceedings of the A.I.C.C. meeting which failed to provide any guidelines for the workers and for making no reference to Gandhiji's absence.

[2] (1903-1950); member, A. I. C. C.; Joint Secretary, All-India Congress Socialist Party; Ex-Mayor of Bombay

Bapa is asking everyone about Kasturba Nidhi [work].

He will be looking after the affairs of Bhagini Seva Mandir also, won't he?

Why have you slackened? And if you have, why grieve over the inevitable?

KARSANDAS CHITALIA
BHARAT SEVAK SAMAJ
SANDHURST ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

238. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

October 3, 1945

CHI. JAMNA,

Why have you gone so weak? If you try a change of air here, it may help.

Kanaiyo has come back after finishing his work in Bombay. At present Santok, Radha, Keshu[1] and his wife have come. I am not writing a separate letter to Purushottam.[2]

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

239. NOTE TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

October 3, 1945

CHI. DINSHAW,

1. The dirt which is there in the clinic all the time should be completely removed. There should not be any leakage. Cleanliness should have the first place in nature-cure. If the expenses go up on that account, let them.

2. I have taken deep thought about the clinic and am daily thinking about it. I am convinced that you should run it. It is better that we have a trust but that is a small thing. If a university is to come up it will be only from the clinic. There won't be any university if this is entrusted to someone else. To leave this will mean giving up your vocation. In order to raise a university, you must go and see all

[1] Son of Maganlal Gandhi
[2] Addressee's son

naturopaths, befriend them and try to get their co-operation. So long as this is not achieved, all is in vain. All things have come up in the world in this way. Money does not make universities.

3. Working for villages is altogether a different thing. I can see that at present you cannot work only in villages. You can't handle both the things single-handed. I don't mind if village work is postponed for the time being. It is good that a trust has been made. I feel this should be well-founded and thoughtfully done. It will not be desirable to back out after once starting it.

We shall sit together at 8.30 p. m. tomorrow and discuss all the three issues. If we are unable to finish the discussion, we shall have another session.

Sardar wants a Rumanian doctor to give him a check-up. I have told him that he can consult anyone he likes but the line of treatment should be yours.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

240. LETTER TO JAMSHEDJI N. MEHTA

October 3, 1945

BHAI JAMSHEDJI,

I have your letter. My blessings are always there for any useful activity. No one should ask for anything more from me. But neither have you asked for more.

SHETH JAMSHEDJI NASSERWANJI MEHTA
SHRI SHARDA MANDIR
KARACHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

241. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

October 3, 1945

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. I shall look forward to your coming on the 11th.

Blessings from
BAPU

SETH GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
BIRLA PARK, BANARAS

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8072. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

242. LETTER TO RADHAKANT MALAVIYA

October 3, 1945

BHAI RADHAKANT[1],

Do I ever take part in elections? I wish Babuji also would give up his interest in them.

RADHAKANT MALAVIYA
18 HAMILTON ROAD
ALLAHABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

243. LETTER TO GOKULBHAI BHATT

POONA,
October 4, 1945

BHAI GOKULBHAI,

Is it possible that *I* would drive you out just in a few minutes? But such is my plight if *I* wish to preserve my health.

Why are you making the mistake of writing in pencil? Can't you see violence in doing that?

What will Manibehn gain by making me a trustee? Will you respect me more than at present for calling me a trustee?

I approve of all other suggestions. Have you sent a Copy *of* the letter to everyone?

GOKULBHAI BHATT
BHAGINI SEVA MANDIR TRUST
VILE PARLE

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

244. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

October 4, 1945

CHI. MRIDULA,

This time you are not coming for nothing. I shall be as I am at present when you come over. Strength goes away at a horse's pace

[1] Son of Madan Mohan Malaviya

and comes back at an ant's.[1] Come on Tuesday the 9th. I am keeping 3 p.m. free. I hope you are all right.

MRIDULABEHN SARABHAI
KASHMIR HOUSE
NAPEAN SEA ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

245. LETTER TO MANILAL SHUKLA

October 4, 1945

CHI. MANILAL,

I am glad to have your letter. I am happy to know that you have improved considerably though I did not know that you were still not all right.

Thank God for Mother being somewhat better.[2] It is remarkable if a bone joins at the age of 80.

Normally it does not happen that I am not shown a letter which has something important to say. But your letter seems to have come when no letter was to be passed on to me.

It is a new thing for me that you are interested in horoscopes and know something about them. I am sorry I cannot satisfy your curiosity. I know that my horoscope was always kept perfect and up to date but that practice died away with my father. He used to take interest in it and got the yearly forecast from it. My elder brother's[3] eldest son Shamaldas has kept all the records, so he is likely to have mine. I am writing to him. Perhaps you yourself know him. So write to him. He is running *Vandemataram*, a daily.

One may say that these days I am quite all right. Get well and write to me from time to time.

MANILAL SHUKLA
BARRISTER
RAJKOT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] A Gujarati saying
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Mrs. Shukla", 25-9-1945
[3] Lakshmidas Gandhi

246. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

October 4, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have your letter, also Kanchan's. One way for you is to become completely passionless, like Shiva—and win over Kanchan to your view but not with an effort. But this is beyond your capacity. You have, therefore, no other option but to start a separate establishment. You must satisfy Kanchan. This is your dharma. I regard it as your first duty. Doing it will answer all your questions. You must have read the letter that Kanchan wrote to me. If not, ask her. I tore it up.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8362 and 8430

247. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

October 4, 1945

CHI. KANCHAN,

I like your letter. My sympathy also is with you. Munnalal has not conquered passion. If he had, yours also would have disappeared. No more today, for it is time to go to bed.

Get well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8262. Also C.W. 6984. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

248. LETTER TO SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

POONA,
October 5, 1945

MY DEAR SARAT BABU,

Your letter. My instinct is to wait for the final reply. But do as yours tells. After all the stake is very great.

The purpose of this, however, is to know from you why you

have launched a public attack on Jawaharlal.[1] Did you not first discuss the pros and cons with him? A public discussion seems ugly. Do please enlighten me if you can.

I hope you are well and will give yourself some rest.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

249. LETTER TO KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI

October 5, 1945

VAHALAN BEHN,[2]

Your letter requires no argument. It needs prayer. You must go your own way. Your sisters are all chips of the old block. It is therefore well with you. Just as there is acceptance so is there rejection of a thing. Similarly there can be neither rejection nor acceptance. Truth-seeker must have that position also. I neither accept nor reject the statement that there is life on the planet Mars.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI
ORIENT CLUB, BOMBAY 7

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In his letter dated October 1, 1945, to Vallabhbhai Patel, Jawaharlal Nehru said: ". . . You would have noticed in the Press a totally unnecessary controversy between Sarat Chandra Bose and me . . . . He is making a dead set against Chiang Kai-Shek, which seems to me bad and harmful and likely to create unnecessary trouble all round. None of us admires all that Chiang Kai-Shek has done. But it does seem to be wrong for us to attack him in this way. He happens to be the head of the Chinese State and so far as India is concerned his attitude has always been friendly. For my part I have kept up friendly relations not only with Chiang Kai-Shek and the Chinese Government but with many of his critics in China. I do not want this controversy with Sarat, but to remain silent became impossible for me. . . ."

[2] The superscription is in Gujarati.

250. LETTER TO N. K. BOSE

October 5, 1945

Khurshedbehn has sent your letter to her to Gandhiji. He wishes me to write and tell you that you must certainly come and see him on his arrival in Calcutta which will be, D. V., in the first week in November.

[AMRIT KAUR]

My Days with Gandhi, p. 20

251. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

October 5, 1945

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I have your letter. In order to make my reply brief, I am only writing a postcard. I am not writing separately to Madhavdas. Since you have all accepted him as one of you, I do not worry about him. Now do whatever seems proper to you. Madhavdas must learn to be brave and firm in mind. Let him give up his love for home. If possible, Manilal will go there. I am hoping that Chi. Vasantlal's problem will be resolved without any difficulty.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./22

252. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

October 5, 1945

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. I have written a long letter to you, Which contains answers to all your questions. I intend to reach Calcutta on November 2. I want you to meet me there, so that you may not have to wander about. I will write again only if I hear from you. I will inform you, however, if there is any change in my programme.

Pyarelal has given me your *Arabian Nights. I* am not sending it to you. I will bring it with me. If you desire, however, I will send it earlier.

You must procure milk from somewhere. In any case we are

going to meet in a few days now. I am sure you are reading something or other, and also writing. Do master Urdu. Learn all the processes which precede spinning. Father seems to be better these days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3584

253. LETTER TO GUNOTTAM HUTHEESING

October 5, 1945

CHI. RAJA,

Why do you write in English? In any case I am of no use so far as elections are concerned. I just do not know anything about them. Why should I be angry? Of course, I do expect that "one may give up one's life, not one's word''[1]. Effort will help to make this a habit.

RAJA HUTHEESING
20 CARMICHAEL ROAD, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

254. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

POONA,
October 5, 1945

CHI. NIMU,

I received your letter. Manilal and Sushila also read it. Delhi will begin to have fine weather from this month. At such a time, I do not like it that she should be brought to Nagpur. Of course, ultimately, she will have to go there. Ramdas also does not wish to bring her over to Nagpur. Manilal and Sushila, too, are of the same view. My suggestion, with which Manilal and Sushila agree, is that you should go to Delhi. In your absence, Sushila will look after your home and take care of Ramdas and Kanam. And so, you will be ab1e to remain in Delhi without worrying about anything. Usha, too, may remain in Nagpur. Both of you may think over the matter and then write or wire to me so that Sushila can start from here. Neither of you should entertain the doubt that Sushila will not be willing to go there. I hope

[1] This quotation from *Ramacharitamanas is* in Hindi.

Ramdas is all right. I am also well enough. There will be no need for Sushila to give up her treatment to go there. The treatment is such that she can give it up whenever she wishes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

255. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

October 5, 1945

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

I have long been intending to write to you but can do so only today. I have also been wondering whether I should write in English or Hindustani. In the end I have decided to write in Hindustani.

I take first the sharp difference of opinion that has arisen between us. If such a difference really exists people should also know about it, for the work of swaraj will suffer if they are kept in the dark. I have said that I fully stand by the kind of governance which I have described in *Hind Swaraj*[1]. It is not just a way of speaking. My experience has confirmed the truth of what I wrote in 1909[2]. If I were the only one left who believed in it, I would not be sorry. For I can only testify to the truth as I see it. I have not *Hind Swaraj* in front of me. It is better that I redraw the picture today in my own language. Then it would not matter to me whether or no the picture tallies with that of 1909[3], nor should it to you. I do not have to establish what I had said before. What is worth knowing is only what I have to say today. I believe that if India, and through India the world, is to achieve real freedom, then sooner or later we shall have to go and live in the villages—in huts, not in palaces. Millions of people can never live in cities and palaces in comfort and peace. Nor can they do so by killing one another, that is, by resorting to violence and untruth. I have not the slightest doubt that, but for the pair, truth and non-violence, mankind will be doomed. We can have the vision of that truth and non-violence only in the simplicity of the villages. That simplicity

[1] *Vide* "Hind Swaraj"
[2] The source however has "1908".
[3] *ibid*

resides in the spinning-wheel and what is implied by the spinning-wheel. It does not frighten me at all that the world seems to be going in the opposite direction. For the matter of that, when the moth approaches its doom it whirls round faster and faster till it is burnt up. It is possible that India will not be able to escape this moth-like circling. It is my duty to try, till my last breath, to save India and through it the world from such a fate. The sum and substance of what I want to say is that the individual person should have control over the things that are necessary for the sustenance of life. If he cannot have such control the individual cannot survive. Ultimately, the world is made up only of individuals. If there were no drops there would be no ocean. This is only a rough and ready statement. There is nothing new in this.

But even in *Hind Swaraj* I have not said all this. While I appreciate modern thought, I find that an ancient thing, considered in the light of this thought looks so sweet. You will not be able to understand me if you think that I am talking about the villages of today. My ideal village still exists only in my imagination. After all every human being lives in the world of his own imagination. In this village of my dreams the villager will not be dull—he will be all awareness. He will not live like an animal in filth and darkness. Men and women will live in freedom, prepared to face the whole world. There will be no plague, no cholera and no smallpox. Nobody will be allowed to be idle or to wallow in luxury. Everyone will have to do body labour. Granting all this, I can still envisage a number of things that will have to be organized on a large scale. Perhaps there will even be railways and also post and telegraph offices. I do not know what things there will be or will not be. Nor am I bothered about it. If I can make sure of the essential thing, other things will follow in due course. But if I give up the essential thing, I give up everything.

The other day, at the final day's meeting of the Working Committee, we had taken a decision to the effect that the Working Committee would meet for two or three days to work out this very thing. I shall be happy if it meets. But even if it does not meet, I want that we two should understand each other fully. And this for two reasons. Our bond is not merely political. It is much deeper. I have no measure to fathom that depth. This bond can never be broken. I therefore want that we should understand each other thoroughly in politics as well. The second reason is that neither of us considers

himself as worthless. We both live only for India's freedom, and will be happy to die too for that freedom. We do not care for praise from any quarter. Praise or abuse are the same to us. They have no place in the mission of service. Though I aspire to live up to 125 years rendering service, I am nevertheless an old man, while you are comparatively young. That is why I have said that you are my heir.[1] It is only proper that I should at least understand my heir and my heir in turn should understand me. I shall then be at peace.

One thing more. I had written to you[2] about Kasturba Trust and Hindustani. You had said you would write after thinking things over. I find that your name is already figuring in the Hindustani Sabha. Nanavati reminded me that he had approached you and Maulana Saheb and that you had appended your signature. That was in 1942. That was long ago. You know where Hindustani stands today. If you still stand by that signature, I wish to get some work out of you in this regard. It will not involve much running about, but some work will be called for.

The work of Kasturba Memorial Trust is rather complicated. I realize that if what I have said above is going to irk you or is irking you, you will not feel comfortable even in the Kasturba Trust.

The last point concerns the sparks that are flying about in the conflict with Sarat Babu.[3] I have been pained by the episode. I have been unable to trace it to its root. If what you have told me is all there is to it and nothing more remains to be said, then I do not have to inquire further. But if an explanation seems necessary, I very much want to hear it.

If we have to meet to thrash out all these matters, then we should find time for a meeting.

You are working very hard. I trust you are in good health and Indu[4] is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* also "Speech at A. I. I. C. Meeting", 15-1-1942
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 25-6-1945
[3] *Vide* footnote 1, "Letter to Sarat Chandra Bose", 5-10-1945
[4] Indira, addressee's daughter

256. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

October 5[1]*, 1945*

CHI. A.S.,

I have your letter. Despair has become the refrain of your letters. But there is hope behind your despair. You could work a lot if you gave up this refrain. What would you gain by staying with me? You have had the maximum advantage of staying with me. That is what I feel. You alone can do the work that you have to do. No one else can do that for you. So stay on there till I come. I shall see after coming there whether it would be better for you to go round with me or stay in your place. Leave everything till my coming there. I have got to go to Borkamta. Improve your health in the mean time.

I have replied to all your points in this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 537

257. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

October 5, 1945

CHI. ANAND,

I have your letter. My blessings are always with you. You will do much work after you recover. Think only of God. You will then have found Vidya and served her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

258. LETTER TO IFTIKHAR-UD-DIN AND ISMAT

October 5, 1945

BHAI IFTIKHAR[2] AND ISMAT,

I have your wire. May you both fare well and serve the

[1] This could also be read as 2.

[2] Ex-President, Punjab Provincial Congress Committee

community. It is all right that you have joined the League. There too work as a friend. Never have enmity against anyone.

21 ROOK MAIN ROAD
LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

259. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

October 5, 1945

CHI. SATIS BABU,

I am sorry about Prafulla Babu. Anyway I shall be staying at Sodepur. Sudhir Ghosh will have a major share in my tour. I will not be happy if all the parties do not unite. Only this much today.

SATIS BABU
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
SODEPUR (24 PARAGANAS)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

260. SPEECH AT GOVARDHAN SANSTHA[1]

POONA,
October 5, 1945

Mahatma Gandhi said that the cow was a great wealth both when living and also after death. A large part of the population in India is rural and it has to depend much on this animal for its living. He appreciated the efforts of Chaunde Maharaj and the Govardhan Society in preserving and developing this great wealth, and added that more concerted efforts would have to be made all over the country to achieve the desired object of giving the cow her proper place in the national economy of rural India.

The Bombay Chronicle, 6-10-1945

[1] Gandhiji was laying the foundation-stone of the Kasturba Goshala.

261. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

POONA,
October 6, 1945

MY DEAR C. R.,

Our friend Srinivasan was with me for some time about you. It distressed me to find that you were ill and morose. Why should you be ill? And I could not believe that you with your fund of humour at your disposal could ever be morose even if the world went down. They must need you, if they would have your services. I must repeat what I have said already.[1] Come here and be with me as long as you can.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR
MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

262. LETTER TO ANNE MARIE PETERSEN

POONA,
October 6, 1945

DEAR MISS PETERSEN,

The enclosed [2] is self-explanatory. Bapu wishes me to send it to you and would like a reply by return of post as the matter of giving your institution help is coming up for consideration when the Trust Committee meets here on 16th, 17th and 18th inst.

I imagine there will be no difficulty in your giving an undertaking that if the K. M. Fund helps you with money you will consent to have at least one or two of its representatives on your governing body and that there will be nothing done in the

[1] *Vide*"Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 1-10-1945

[2] Letter from L. N. Gopalaswamy, Secretary, Tamil Nadu Provincial Committee of the Kasturba Trust, in which he had expressed the inability of the Trust to give financial help to Anne Marie Petersen's ashram at Porto Novo.

way of conversions in the institution.

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

MISS MARIE PETERSEN
SEVA MANDIR
PORTO NOVO

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

263. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

October 6, 1945

CHI. PREMA,

I read your letter and tore it up. I am returning with Sushila[1] the cutting[2] sent by you.

I asked Sushila to read out your article, so that I might not make any mistake in understanding it. It will be no good getting it published in English. Its publication in Marathi is more than enough. Your language is not faulty. But everything is not to be said on every occasion. We shall discuss the matter when we meet some time. If you wish to come specially to discuss it, take an appointment and come. Bapa has sent the statement about your camp to the Trustees[3]. We have fixed a meeting of the Committee here on the 16th. I will see then.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10439. Also C.W. 6878. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

264. LETTER TO POONAMCHAND RANKA

October 6, 1945

BHAI POONAMCHAND,

I have your letter. Do come to Sevagram after I settle down. Whether anyone co-operates or not you have to go on with your

[1] Sushila Pai

[2] Of the addressee's article published in *Nava Kal; vide* footnote 2, "Letter to Prema Kantak", 3-10-1945

[3] Of Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust

work. Dhanvatiji[1] had come to see me.

SHANKER KUTIR
RANKA COLONY
NAGPUR

From a copy *of* the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

265. LETTER TO M. S. ANEY

October 6, 1945

BHAI BAPUJI ANEY,

I have your gift. I also got the wire. I have read the sloka with interest. I like the Hindi translation.

I trust you are well.

BAPU

HON'BLE SHRI ANEY
AGENT TO THE GOVT. OF INDIA
11 STANMORE, COLOMBO (CEYLON)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

266. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

October 6, 1945

CHI. RAIHANA,

I have your letter. You are mad. There was no need to write so much. I had heard the news about Ratnamayibehn. I did not pay much attention to it. Now you have reminded me of it. She was to go to a village but somehow could not go. Truly speaking, what is there to complain about? It is my attachment that has been reduced.

RAIHANA TYABJI
40A RIDGE ROAD
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's wife

267. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

POONA,
October 7, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your letter. You will never find any suggestion for self -suppression in my letters. I would approve of only such non-attachment as involves no self-suppression.

I am putting off the other questions for my next letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8630

268. LETTER TO SURENDRA

October 7, 1945

CHI. SURENDRA,

I have already written to you.

I shall be in Sevagram on or about the 21st. Do come then. Most probably I shall go to Bengal from there.

SADHU SURENDRAJI
BORIVLI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

269. LETTER TO JATINDAS M. AMIN

October 7, 1945

CHI. AMIN,

I have already written[1] to you. It is everyone's duty to destroy sin. But that is for one's own sin. With regard to another's sin our attitude should be one of non-interference, i. e., in that case nothing but non-violence is our duty. My mother used to go to temples. I did not. I did not take away or destroy the idols she used to worship. Let us not sit in judgment on others. Of course I admire your spirit of

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jatindas M. Amin", 10/11-9-1945

service. But you are rash and hot-tempered. Get rid of these two shortcomings and you will double your capacity for service.

AMINBHAI
ANTI-CHOLERA CAMP
SINDI KHANDALA
WARDHA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

270. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

October 7, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter.

I am happy that you keep consulting Vinoba.

Follow Vinoba's instructions regarding *Gitai*. It is undoubtedly not right that while living in a Marathi-speaking region we do not understand Marathi. We should have the zest.

I am happy that you have accommodated the wife of a leprosy patient.

With regard to Munnalal I shall merely say that both of you have to win over each other. It will test your non-violence the least. But it will be an auspicious beginning.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4534

271. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

October 7, 1945

I am not happy to read in the newspapers about your ill health. It is not good that you should get temperature so often. Now the weather in the Punjab should be good. Perhaps the weather in the Frontier Province would be better than in Lahore. I think you need some rest.

You seem to have done good work in the Punjab.

MAULANA SAHEB ABUL KALAM AZAD
FALETTI'S HOTEL
LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal papers, Courtesy: Pyarelal

272. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

POONA,
October 8, 1945

I have received birthday greetings from all parts of the world, from individuals and associations. They will excuse me for my not sending them personal acknowledgements. Instead I hope they will accept this message of gratefulness.

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-10-1945

273. LETTER TO MERCANTILE BANK OF INDIA, LTD.

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD,
POONA,
October 8, 1945

MESSRS, THE MERCANTILE BANK
OF INDIA, LTD.
P. O. BOX 128, BOMBAY

Ref: Your letter No. Acctt, Mis. M/158 dt. 13-10-45

DEAR SIRS,

With reference to your above-mentioned letter enclosing a receipt in duplicate for Rs. 5305-11-2, I have to inform you that I have authorised Messrs. Bachhraj & Co. Ltd., Bombay, to collect the amount from you.

Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

274. LETTER TO MADALASA

October 8, 1945

CHI. MADALASA,

How can I do without writing to you? Banish despair from your mind. Despair is only a product of our imagination.

I had fever only for two days. I am better now. Rasgulla[1] can be relished only when I come there. He must have grown very big now.

Blessings to all three of you from

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope to arrive there in the last week of this month.

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 326

275. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

October 8, 1945

BHAI MAVALANKAR,

I approve of your draft[2]. On page 5 (e), I feel you should add "or its equivalent"[3] after "Vernacular IV Standard"[4]. But do what seems best to you. The Committee is not meeting here, but in Sevagram on the 25th, 26th and 27th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1254

276. LETTER TO GAJANAN NAIK

October 8, 1945

CHI. GAJANAN (NAIK),

I have your letter. Just think what my loyalty demands. Either I should pay no attention to your complaints or place them before Kumarappa and hear his side also and then ask for an explanation from you and then give the decision. Your own loyalty also demands the same.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's son Bharat, whose pet-name was "Rasgulla" which is the name of a Bengali sweet

[2] These words are *in* English.

[3] *ibid*

[4] *ibid*

277. LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

October 8, 1945

CHI. CHAMPA,

I had sent a reply to Shashi.[1] If Keshavlal does not pay the rent, you can certainly take the necessary steps. Do I have to tell you that you are not a simple woman? Chi. Sarala should get well soon.

CHAMPABEHN MEHTA
CHANDRAKUNJ
JAGNATH PLOT
RAJKOT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

278. LETTER TO VIRBHANU

October 8, 1945

BHAI VIRBHANU,

I have your letter. Congratulations to those who have taken a vow of making cotton hanks. It is good indeed that hanks are not sent by post. Spinners should learn to save every pie because it is not theirs but belongs to the poor. It is only proper that the hanks are handed over to the bhandar. And it will be all the better if khadi also is sold when it is woven.

DEPUTY SADAN
ATHAVA LINES
SURAT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

279. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON

October 8, 1945

BHAI TANDONJI,

I have your letter dated October 1, 1945. How can I ride two horses? Who will understand me when I say *rashtrabhasha*=Hindi and *rashtrabhasha*=Hindi+Urdu=Hindustani? I shall certainly serve the

[1] *Vide* “”Letter to Kanji J. Desai”, 28-9-1945

cause of Hindi, but by remaining out[1]. The Standing Committee should excuse me.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

PURUSHOTTAM DAS TANDON
HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN
ALLAHABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

280. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

October 8, 1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I approve of Dada Mavalankar's draft. On page 5 (e,), I feel it is necessary to add "or its equivalent"[2]; after "Vernacular Standard IV"[3]

I have written to Dada also.[4]

KASTURBA NIDHI
BAJAJWADI
WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

281. TELEGRAM TO P. C. GHOSH

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
October 9, 1945

DR. P. C. GHOSH
14/8 GARIAHAT ROAD
BALLYGUNGE
CALCUTTA

NO PROGRAMME TO BE PUBLISHED BEFORE MY ARRIVAL CALCUTTA.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan
[2] These words are in English.
[3] *ibid*
[4] *Vide* "Letter to G. V. Mavalankar", 8-10-1945

282. LETTER TO E. M. JENKINS

POONA,
October 9, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN,

May I remind H. E. that the decision in the matter of Shri Haridas Mitra is now overdue.[1] I may mention that I have prevented all public appeals and demonstrations in favour of the prisoner in the hope that the death sentence will be commuted. His young wife was with me the other day and was anxious that a move should be made publicly here and also in Great Britain. But she listened to me and has waited.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR EVAN JENKINS
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO H. E. THE VICEROY
VICEROY'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 48

283. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

October 9, 1945

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter. I am not going to omit you when I come to that side which as at present arranged I do not do before January. But nothing is fixed unless I move from Sevagram. I hope you are keeping well. Tell Balvantsinha I am not writing to him for want of time.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6511. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9906

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. M. Jenkins", 24-9-1945

284. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

October 9, 1945

CHI. KANTI,

I have your letter. I think it is a good thing that both the Desais[1] have gone there.

Valjibhai has told me all that you omitted from your letter. He gave me a description, too, of all the people he had met.

I did not tell you, but now I do, that Valjibhai readily agreed when I suggested it to him that he should go there. He did not even ask for any time.

If Sardar permits, I hope to reach Sevagram on the 21st.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7378. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

285. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

October 9, 1945

CHI. KAKA,

I got your very carefully written letter full of news. I intend to show it to others.

This is all for the present.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KAKASAHEB KALELKAR
SWARAJYA ASHRAM
BARDOLI, T. V. RAILWAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10966

[1] Valji G. Desai and Maganbhai P. Desai

286. LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

October 9, 1945

CHI. CHAMPA,

I have your pathetic letter[1]. What advice can I give you? And how may I guide you? I cling to your remark in yesterday's letter and derive confidence from it and hope that you will be able to face your difficulties.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRIMATI CHAMPABEHN R. MEHTA
CHNDRAKUNJ
JAGNATH PLOT
RAJKOT

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8758. Also C.W. 1044. Courtesy: Champa R. Mehta

287. LETTER TO PUSHPA K. DESAI

October 9, 1945

CHI. PUSHPA,

I have your letter. Remain in contact with Vinoba and learn what you can from him.

I am not sending to Rajani your letter to him. If at all, I can send it only through Father. He will certainly not like it. I, therefore, suggest that you should not write to Rajani for the present. If you permit me, I will write to Rajani and tell him that you do not wish to write to him or any other old friends for the sake of your father. In order to prove that it is proper for you not to yield to his original wish and also in order to give him peace, you must observe this self-restraint.

You made a mistake in writing to your friend. A mistake is all right once. But don't repeat it. If you write, you should do so either to me or to Father. That is in your own interest.

Blessings from

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9266

[1] About her husband Ratilal Mehta who had lost his balance; *vide* "Letter to Maganlal P. Mehta", "Letter to Maganlal P. Mehta", 18-10-1945

288. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

POONA,
October 9, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I have your letter.

Just now I do not know what I can do about Tryambaklal's letter. I cannot break my journey and, even if I do I don't think I can do much.

I understand about Kailas. If the Ashram has to bear her expenses to this extent, we would be going beyond our limits. Because I think we shall have to give a little in Nagpur, if not more. And I doubt very much whether she will learn anything there. But I don't worry because you are there.

.From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

289. LETTER TO GOKULBHAI BHATT

October 9, 1945

BHAI GOKULBHAI,

I have your letter. I have preserved your letter written in pencil. I shall read it at leisure in order to satisfy my curiosity whether I interpreted it that way because I read it in a hurry or whether it does warrant the interpretation.[1]

Even a co-worker like you, I could meet only for a few minutes. Of course I did not like it, but one has to swallow such [bitter] pills.

I think the draft you have sent is quite right. Obtain the approval of others and begin the work. I think the names mentioned by you will be useful. They will both be quite helpful to you in your work.

GOKULBHAI BHATT
BHAGINI SEVA MANDIR TRUST
VILE PARLE

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Gokulabhai Bhatt", 4-10-1945

290. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

October 9, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA

I have your letter. I am returning Gulati's[1] letter. It is good. What he says is correct. But we cannot sit back till we can find an expert. Work progresses by doing it, provided we do not do it mechanically. Inform Jajuji about Gulati.

I have not quite understood about Kailas.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4532

291. A LETTER

[On or before *October 10, 1945*][2]

DEAR,

I had read Field Marshal Smuts's[3] speech of which you have sent me a copy.

You write glowingly about the prospects of Phoenix. But can Manilal do what you expect of him?

Yes, we have all to wish to live 125 years on condition that our lives are dedicated wholly to service without expectation of result or reward.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

292. LETTER TO E. M. JENKINS

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
October 10, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN,

Ienclose herewith an account of a case which the correspondent[4]

[1] Ramdas Gulati, an architect

[2] In the source the letter is placed between those of October 9 and 10, 1945.

[3] Prime Minister of South Africa

[4] Sheelbhadra Yajee, a Forward Bloc member, who was arrested during Quit India movement, had narrated the ill-treatment and torture suffered in jail.

has described with some wealth of detail. Can it be true? If it is, I wonder if His Excellency proposes to take any action by way of mending matters. I am told that this is not a solitary case but is typical.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR EVAN JENKINS
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO H. E. THE VICEROY
THE VICEROY'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI

Candhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, PP. 58-9

293. LETTER TO E. M. JENKINS

October 10, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN,

I am the Chairman of the All-India Spinners' Association, a wholly philanthropic body of about 25 years' standing, run solely in the interest of the millions of the poorest unemployed or partly unemployed women of India. In order further to popularize hand-spinning a rule was recently introduced at my instance to demand from the buyers of khadi a certain quantity of yarn in lieu of money. Since the inception of the Association, some time known as Khadi Board,over four crores have been distributed among spinners all over India. These include all Communities from among the poor village women. Now, I understand, licensing rules are being issued by Provincial Administrations requiring khadi shops to take out licences as if they were dealers in millmade cloth. Objection has also been taken to the price being partly demanded in hand-spun yarn. I am sure the Government do not intend to penalize khadi and thus the poor people. As this is an all-India matter, I venture to approach His Excellency in the hope of the impending wrong being redressed. I may add that the matter has been taken up by the Honorary Secretary

[1] The addressee on October 13 replied that he was forwarding the letter and enclosure to the Viceroy who was "away on tour". *Vide* also "Letter to Sir E. M. Jenkins", 7-11-1945.

of the Association with the Provincial Administrations concerned.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 67-8

294. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

POONA,
October 10, 1945

MY DEAR JAIRAMDASBHAI,

... I read out the whole of your letter to Bapu. He says that the ban on sending yarn in large quantities to him was imposed because of the new rules preventing posting of yarn or cloth from one province to another and also in order to save postage. He says if you can get over the rules and expense and send the yarn— if everyone insists on this—to him through someone who happens to be coming his way you may do so. But he would prefer you to have the yarn woven into cloth and your proposals which are sound should be adopted. You may send the dhotis, etc., to him for his personal use when anyone can bring them. In regard to the signatures they cannot be had for less than Rs. 5 each. Signature money can only go to the Harijan cause. Khadi auctioned or yarn or cloth donated at the Jayanti, all goes to the A. I. S. A. I hope I have made Bapu's wishes clear....

I am not keen on going[2] but Bapu feels I should go and take advantage of doing work by the way so to speak. Bapu is all right again, I am glad to say. Of course he gets tired easily. But this place admits of good massage and treatment for him as also more protection from visitors than most others and the climate is better than [that of] Sevagram in August, September and October. According to present plans he leaves for Sevagram on the 19th and after 9 days there leaves for Bengal, arriving in Calcutta on November 2nd. But this depends on what progress Sardar makes this week. Up till now there is no real improvement in his case but Bapu is hopeful that he will improve if he stays on....

Yours,

AMRIT KAUR

From the original: C.W. 11060. Courtesy: Arjun Jairamdas

[1] The addressee wrote on October 19 to say that the Industries and Civil Supplies Department, which had not "undertaken or suggested control over the price or distribution of khadi", was "asking the Provincial Governments to look into the matter".

[2] Amrit Kaur was going along with Zakir Husain to attend the preliminary session of the United Nations Cultural and Educational Conference as Member of the Indian Delegation.

295. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

October 10, 1945

BHAI MAVALANKAR,

I have your letter. There was no need to take the trouble to write it. I would not misunderstand your not coming. I know you quite well. But now you must have noted that the Committee is meeting in Sevagram itself on the 25th, 26th and 27th. If you can come at that time, do so. But if the direct railway service has not been resumed, it is not necessary to take all that trouble for coming. Please do nothing at the cost of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1255

296. LETTER TO K. T. SHAH

October 10, 1945

BHAI SHAH,

Only today I read a copy of the article Chi. Kishorelal had sent to [*The Bombay*] *Chronicle* around June 15. It is a short one which I am enclosing herewith. It will not take you long to glance through it.

If you find his suggestions worth while, you yourself can do further research. If what he says is right and if decimal coinage is going to be forced on the people, you can play an important part in opposing it.

K. T. SHAH
8 LABURNUM ROAD
GAMDEVI, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

297. LETTER TO V. L. MEHTA

October 10, 1945

BHAI VAIKUNTH

Only today I read a copy of the article Chi. Kishorelal had sent to [*The Bombay*] *Chronicle* around June 15. It is a short one which I am enclosing herewith. It will not take you long to glance through it.

Write to me if you find his suggestions useful and take further

steps if you can. I am writing a letter to Gaganvihari[1] and Shah. Perhaps the cloud (if it is a cloud) that is hovering over the people will easily be averted if something is done in time.

VAIKUNTH MEHTA
BOMBAY PROV. CO-OPERATIVE BANE
BACK HOUSE LANE, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

298. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

October 10, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Today just after the prayers I read with care your article on decimal coinage. I liked it. Why did you take so long in sending it? Or did you send it and did I miss it by oversight? I was in Panchgani then[2] and hardly looked at newspapers. At present also the situation is just the same. To say that I have carefully gone through the article does not mean that I have also checked up the calculations or that they are clear to me. Since you are so good at calculations I take it that the figures are correct. Suppose your figures are correct and your suggestions are very useful to the public, you cannot sit quiet after merely writing an article. If your health permits, pursue the matter yourself or discuss it with Narahari, Jajuji and Kumarappa. Vinoba also is an expert at figures. If he agrees, Jajuji or Narahari can go deep into the matter and correspond with Kodanda Rao. I am myself writing to him. I have written to K. T. Shah[3], Vaikunth[4] and Gaganvihari and sent them copies of the article.

Now about Jajuji. I don't think we shall gain anything by sending him to the Assembly. He would become weak. Ours is a queer way of working and the people working there are even more queer. People ask for Jajuju and others but will not listen to them after placing them on the throne. Jajuji will be much more useful by remaining out of the Assembly.

Dada's name is worth considering and perhaps he will be

[1] Gaganviharil L. Mehta, addressee's younger brother
[2] From May 31 to June 19, 1945
[3] *Vide* the preceding two items.
[4] *ibid*

relieved of his family responsibilities when the time comes.

Sardar told me that you had written to him.

I am not convinced by what you say about your health. And I am helpless because you are insisting exclusively on one thing. I cannot understand your insistence. But since it is backed by your peculiar line of thinking how can I counter it? If you were temperamentally like Sardar I would have sent for you for treatment here or done some such thing. I just do not believe that your constitution is collapsing from within and that it cannot be helped. I believe it can be set right by nature cure. I have said all this as I could not help it. If any of this appeals to you, please let me know so that I may think about the next step.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

299. LETTER TO SATYADEVI

October 10, 1945

CHI, SATYADEVI[1],

I am glad to have your letter. The letters are quite well formed. I am glad to learn that none of you have given up the spinning-wheel. Ply it and also master all the attendant processes.

I hope Durga[2] and Maitreyi[3] are all right. So also Krishna-maiya[4]. What is Mahavir[5] doing these days? You have not given any news of Dharmakumar[6]. Do you all stay together[7]?

SATYADEVI
BORIVLI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Daughters of Dalbahadur Giri of Nepal
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*
[4] Addressee's brothers
[5] *Vide* "Letter to G. V. Mavalankar", 8-10-1945
[6] *ibid*
[7] *Vide* "Speech at Govardhan Sanstha", 5-10-1945

300. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

POONA ,
October 10, 1945

CHI. NIMU,

I got your letter. Now Ramdas also believes that Sumi should go there. I did fear that both of you are of such a temperament that you may not like the idea of Dr. Sushila[1] going there. Sushila had very willingly agreed to go. Now send for Sumi and get her there. May be her good lies in that and it is possible she will study with greater interest there. I hope Ramdas is really well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

301. LETTER TO CHAUNDE MAHARAJ

October 10, 1945

CHAUNDE MAHARAJ,

I have your letter. I have expressed my opinion but that does not mean that a new institution is to be formed for the whole country. The Goseva Sangh is already there and the work is going on. But the task is a difficult one. There should be a considerable number of people who know the science of *goseva* and can put it into practice.

Your ideas are noble but the work will not progress on mere ideas. I did not like the scene I witnessed the day I went there. Everyone was sentimental but they had no knowledge and no will for work. Try to expand the scope of the goshala. Till now there is no tannery there. I do not know if there is a good bull.

Do you have a dairy expert? If there is one and if the existing institution itself becomes an ideal dairy, I shall be too glad and hope to have great results from it. A similar experiment is going on in Wardha under my supervision. I cannot of course cite any significant results. I realize that it is very difficult to attain perfection. I know of

[1] Dr. Sushila Nayyar

no easy way of overcoming difficulties and perhaps I may never come across one. I hope you have understood the meaning of what I say.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

GOVARDHAN SANSTHA
POONA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

302. A LETTER

October 10, 1945

BHAI . . .[1],

Your letter makes sad reading. Your sin is grave. You cannot expiate it by fasting. Fasting has its own limits. The real penance is a change of heart on your part. You will have to confess your fall to the bride. And if she still wishes to marry you, you may do so. You must give up the bride's mother. Is she of loose character? I have seen such mothers. The whole thing is very delicate. I can't understand it fully nor do I have the time to do so.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

303. LETTER TO MAHAJANI

October 10, 1945

BHAI MAHAJANI,

Only today I got your letter dated September 18.

I am just repeating the message I sent to you in 1935, wishing that both the institutions may live long.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Omission as in the source

304. A LETTER

[On or before *October 11, 1945*][1]

DEAR . . .[2],

Yours is a simple case. If your wife has gone astray, you owe no obligation to her. She should leave you and marry or live with the person of her choice.

If you are firm in your vow, you should carry it out. If you are not, there should be no pretension.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

305. LETTERS TO RAMPRASAD

POONA,
October 11, 1945

CHI. RAMPRASAD,

I have your letter. I don't understand why you feel hesitant about writing to me. But now I am about to come there. Speak to me then.

I have suggested Jivanram as the boy's name. Jivanram was a great scholar. At present I am reading his translation of *Bhartriharishatakam*[3]. Meanwhile, Chi. Kanta asked a name for the child and this occurred to me. Moreover, he has just come out of the jaws of death. That is another reason for suggesting this name.

SEVAGRAM
WARDHA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In the source the letter is placed between those of October 10 and 11, 1945.

[2] The name has been omitted.

[3] A compendium of three sets of 100 verses each, on erotic love, moral wisdom and turning away from worldly pleasures, written by Bhartrihari

306. LETTER TO DINESH SINGH

October 11, 1945

CHI. DINESH,

I was happy to receive your letter. It is good that all are together. Complete your studies and render public service to your heart's content.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI DINESH KUMAR
KALAKANKAR KOTHI
LUCKNOW (U.P.)

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8676

307. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

October 11, 1945

BHAI JAJUJI,

I am sending a copy of my letter[1] to the Viceroy's Secretary. I wanted to make it as brief as possible. Tell me if you think that some important point has been left out so that I may write again.

I am thinking over the legal aspect. I wish to take Dr. Kedar's help for that. And if you think that this cannot be arranged through you I am prepared to write to him myself. If you send a brief[2] I shall send the same or shall draw up one. If you are still not satisfied, I shall write to a lawyer in Bombay.

After going through all [the papers] I feel there is no need for us to decide in a hurry. Isn't it mentioned in the new rule that the date for implementing it will be announced later? I understand that we have no difficulty with the old rule. Is this correct?

I am planning to reach Sevagram on the 21st. If I do I shall be there till the 31st.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Dated October 10, 1945; *vide* "Letter to E. M. Jenkins", 10-10-1945
[2] This word is in English.

308. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

October 11/12, 1945

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have read your committee's amended report. If I have not told you earlier, let me tell you that as long as we do not get a woman to head the organization[1], it will be like building on sand. Our effort will bear fruit only if we can find a responsible woman organizer. She would also keep some kind of record, like your report. Now for taking any further step, for example choosing the site, I feel the same thing as I have already indicated should apply. I hope you are all right.

"THE HINDUSTAN TIMES"
NEW DELHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

309. LETTER TO UMA AGRAWAL

POONA,
October 12, 1945

CHI. OM[2],

I have your letter. After writing such a slovenly hand, how can you ask for pardon? One must never write a bad hand.

I received the baby's silent message. Whom do you mean by "his"? Is it not the limit of helplessness that you feel embarrassed in taking your [husband's] name? If you send me some names, I would select one.

Sushilabehn has returned. She did excellent work.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 345

[1] For Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust work
[2] Daughter of Jamnalal Bajaj, married to Rajnarayan Agrawal

310. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

October 12, 1945

CHI. PREMA,

Join me in my walk on the 17th at 7.30. I have no other time to give.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10440. Also C.W. 6879. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

311. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

October 12, 1945

CHI. RAMDAS,

Sumi's letter is at the back of this. So now there is no question whether she should go or not. Yesterday Manilal and Sushila left for Akola. Arun has stayed back. Valjibhai teaches him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

312. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

October 12, 1945

. . .[1] does not want the money back. Jajuji has decided that since the land which you did not wish to part with has not been given. Ghanshyamdas may, if he wishes, deduct something. But as he does not wish to do so, that is the end of the matter.

A letter from Dr. Ice is enclosed. We should put up for him the kind of structure he wants. Also think over the changes which he might consider desirable for us. I think if we can ensure coolness in the building by suitable means we should do so.

From a photostat of Gujarati: G. N. 10646

[1] The first two sheets of the letter are not traceable.

313. LETTER TO PYARELAL

October 12, 1945

CHI. PYARELAL,

I must have a letter from Manu. When I see the situation you are in, I hate myself. And yet, who am I to interfere ? Do as your heart prompts you. Take a decision.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

314. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

October 12/13, 1945

CHI. LILI,

One may say you have done well. Now stick to it and get through and start working.

The date for going to Sevagram is not yet fixed. If I remember I shall write to you; in any case you will come to know of it. Don't spoil your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. LILAVATI UDESHI
G. S. MEDICAL COLLEGE, PAREL

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

315. LETTER TO F. M. PINTO

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD,
POONA,
October 13, 1945

MY DEAR PINTO,

I have your letter. I take little or no interest in the elections. Sometimes, however, I have to tender advice. Your letter I like and also

dislike. I like its frankness but the argument is bad.[1] I want every minority to be robust and independent in the full sense of the term. A Christian remains a full Indian because he cannot be otherwise and expects or wants no reward for remaining an Indian. Then the word 'minority' loses all its significance. I have put myself in the minorities' position. I can, therefore, speak with frankness and even some authority. What does it matter, if older Christians cling to the Government and look up to it for crumbs? That will be the testing time for the younger ones. For time runs against the former and in favour of the latter.

If you have understood and appreciated my argument, in your private talks too you will bear down the opposition of the older ones by being and remaining true to yourselves and the nation to which you belong.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI F. M. PINTO
NATIONALIST CHRISTIAN PARTY
C/O ANGLO LUSITANO
15 BANK STREET
FORT, BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

316. LETTER TO K. ISWARA DUTT

October 13, 1945

MY DEAR ISWARA DUTT[2],

Having been the victim of such a volume myself I wonder whether you will appreciate my objection to any such volume. Does it do any good? Does the victim stand in need of encomium even from the tallest? If he does, it should be withheld. If he does not, it is superfluous. Holding such views and holding them strongly, I must

[1] The addressee had argued that since Christians, whose number was very small on the electoral roll, had little chance of getting elected independently to the Central Assembly they should be "put up on the Congress ticket".

[2] A journalist who had proposed to bring out a felicitation volume for Tej Bahadur Sapru

pour cold water on your suggestion. Sir Tej Bahadur is much too good a man to require any outside prop.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI K. ISWARA DUTT
28 STATION ROAD
JAIPUR (RAJPUTANA)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

317. LETTER TO P. C. GHOSH[1]

October 13, 1945

BHAI PRAFULLO,

Why did you send a special messenger? Why did you write such a lengthy note? Rajkumari had shown me what she had written [to you]. I still find nothing wrong in it. Mahadev would have written a similar letter. The estrangement between you and Satis Babu hurts me very much. Perhaps I may not reach there on November 2 because it might be difficult to leave [ailing] Sardar. In that case I will be delayed. The second reason is the election excitement over there. In view of this I will fix the date after I hear from you. It will be better to draw up the programme there itself. Of course it will mean some inconvenience but it would be better to put up with it.

I hope you are keeping well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

318. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

POONA,
October 14, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I [had written][2] to Chi. Babu about my reaching [Sevagram]. She will not, however, go there in my absence, and it is only proper that she should not. She is eager indeed to come when I am there. But my own programme is uncertain. I cannot say definitely when I shall be able to settle down in the Ashram. I might be able to do so after I

[1] This was sent through Kantilal of Calcutta.
[2] A word is illegible here; *vide* "Letter to Sharda G. Chokhawala", 2-10-1945

have finished Bengal, Madras and the Frontier Province. And now I am planning something new. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I will certainly not be able to reach there on the 21st. I will give the exact date later.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10647

319. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

October 14, 1945

BAPA,

I am enclosing Mridula's letters. The draft of what I wish to say is also there.[1] If you approve of it, I intend sending it to Mridula. And if she too approves of it, we can send it to the Press.

Also see the letter about Lila Jog. I think it is better to send Rs. 250. But as you know the facts, please guide me in this also. I understand that it will be inconvenient for you to come here and I do not want you to run around in your present condition. So let us do as much as we can by correspondence.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

320. LETTER TO RATILAL B. MEHTA

POONA,
October 14, 1945

BHAI RATILAL BECHARDAS,

I have your cheque for Rs. 1635-6-0. I should like to use it for constructive work.

Blessings from

BAPU

RATILAL BECHARDAS MEHTA
GHATKOPAR CONGRESS COMMITTEE
NAOROJI LANE
GHATKOPAR, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] For the letter to Mridula Sarabhai, *vide "Letter to Mridula Sarabhai"*

321. LETTER TO DHARMAKUMAR GIRI

October 14, 1945

CHI. DHARMAKUMAR,

I am glad to have your letter. Let me know as soon as Satyadevi is operated upon. Appear for the examinations again since you have failed. It is always better to complete what one has undertaken. I have got the yarn.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI DHARMAKUMAR GIRI
BHIMJI KARA'S BUNGALOW
BORIVLI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

322. LETTER TO K. T. SHAH

October 14, 1945

BHAI SHAH,

I have your letter. You have replied promptly. I approve of all your arguments. If you start an agitation on those lines, perhaps the changes recently introduced can be withdrawn.

Blessings from

BAPU

PROF. K. T. SHAH
GAMDEVI
BOMBAY-7

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

323. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

October 14, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Are you determined to die? Convince me if there is any logic in your thinking so that I too may follow you. Now it is high time [you listened to me]. Whoever writes, writes only about your getting weaker and weaker. How can I make you understand? What can I do if my going there is getting postponed?

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

324. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

POONA,

October 14, 1945

CHI. MRIDU,

I have your letter. It is not as if I have known you from today. You must act with the assumption that you are working under me and with me. It is a different matter that your other pre-occupations keep you in infrequent touch with me. You will of course be knowing everything as the supervisor. You will no doubt remain in touch with women. If you find any shortcoming anywhere, you will draw my attention to them. Then you will be able to tell me what needs to be told without any conflict and without the feeling that you are taking my time. And yet, you will not feel burdened.

I have prepared the draft regarding your resignation[1] and sent it to Bapa. I shall send it to you when it is returned and will release it to the press only after you pass it. I shall prepare and send the English version also from here. That, of course, you will not be able to see (before it is sent).

[1] From the post of Joint Secretary, Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust, owing to differences with Amritlal Thakkar; *vide* "Letter to Mridula Sarabhai", 15-10-1945. *Vide* also the following item.

I have written to Bapa about the salary of that lady[1] too. I shall settle it soon.

I have understood about Tendulkar. It is your duty to look after your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11246. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

325. LETTER TO ABHYANKAR

October 14, 1945

BHAI ABHYANKAR,

I have your letter. I am sorry to say that I do not read newspapers and heard about Chimur Ashti only from you. If what you state is all true, it is a matter of great sorrow and all the more so for me that such an incident should take place over my name. Moreover, I am totally ignorant about what is going on there at present. I cannot personally go anywhere but I am enquiring about both the matters. If the second incident also was as you describe, it is really sad.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

326. LETTER TO GOPE GURBUXANI

October 14, 1945

BHAI GURBUXANI,

I have your letter written in English. There was no need for you to write in English. It is good that you are earning something on your own. I am glad you sent money to your father and repaid the loan to the Ashram also. Do silent service while remaining out of the Congress. When I become a four-anna member, ask me whether you also should become one.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI GOPE GURBUXANI
17 HASAN BUILDING
NICHOLSON ROAD, DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Lila Jog

327. LETTER TO VIMLARANI GURBUXANI

October 14, 1945

CHI. VIMLA[1],

Gurbuxani writes to say that you have gone to your parents and your confinement is drawing near. I hope you will have an easy delivery. Let me know when it is over.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VIMLARANI GURBUXANI, M.A.
2A CONVENT ROAD
DEHRA DUN

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

328. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 15, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

I hope you reached Manorville safely and found all well. I hope you will have no difficulty on your way to London and back. You must keep well during your absence which I hope will be as short as possible.

Pyarelal is still in bed. Though fever was below normal for some time during last night, it went up to over 103° during the day. But he looks better otherwise.

Sardar must go to Bombay for a week. I shall stay here. This means I do not go to Sevagram before 2nd November.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4167. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7803

329. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

POONA,
October 15, 1945

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I had your letter. Somebody told me only yesterday that you could not get the tickets immediately. Arun is happy. He wears

[1] Wife of Gope Gurbuxani

nothing but underwear and is always in high spirits. He studies a little and plays a lot. He does spin, of course. He does not show, at any rate, that he misses you. Valjibhai teaches him. Kanaiyo went with my permission. I was in a position to let him go. Pyarelal has come, but with high fever. The fever has not been diagnosed. Do not worry about me.

Blessings to all of you from

BAPU

SHRI MANILAL GANDHI
MASHRUWALA BUNGALOW
AKOLA (C. P. BERAR,)

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4958

330. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

October 15, 1945

CHI. KAKA,

I got your letters. I have already sent a brief message through Bal. As regards his exploits, he himself will tell you. I, therefore, don't write about them here.

I had a discussion with Deo regarding Hindustani. His views are firm. He adheres to every word of the Poddar-Deo statement. I showed him the whole of your letter. He finds some factual errors in it, the chief being that he has never opposed your propagation of Hindustani. He is not opposed to it even in thought. He has, in fact, restrained others who were opposed to you. He says that you or others may offer whatever opposition you wish and in whatever manner you wish. My path, therefore, is clear. You, I and others who regard knowledge of the two languages as essentiaI should vigorously, but in our own manner, carry on our work.

Atulanand's[1] leaflet and other literature have been passed on to you. Probably his letter also was there. I should like you to read them and return them to Sevagram with your opinion. My reason for writing this is that Atulanand has written a letter cautioning me.

Blsssings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10967

[1] Atulanand Chakravarty

331. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

October 15, 1945

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Why did you fall ill? You must not exert yourself to do anything. It is one's duty to keep the body radiant as copper. Eat only what suits you. Do only what you are able to. A *sevak*[1] who falls ill requires others' services and is not able to do his work. It should not be difficult to see that others taking up his work cannot fill the gap.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3764

332. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

October 15, 1945

CHI. MRIDULA,

I have your resignation. I think you have acted wisely in tendering it. I know and I believe that in accepting the post of Joint Secretary your intention was to render wider service to the cause of women. Equally good is your motive in resigning because you realized and I also saw that by continuing in that post you would not be able to realize your ideal. There is temperamental incompatibility between Bapa and you. You tried to adjust but who can remove inherent differences? You saw that your method of working did not satisfy Bapa. He, on his part, also tried to adjust but with little success. I could see that the difference was enormous. In my opinion neither of you is at fault. Very often such differences are unbridgeable. In these circumstances, the best thing is to work apart. Bapa was, and is still, ready to quit. But this is Bapa's creation and Bapa is a seasoned hand in this kind of work. It would be difficult for me, I think, to carry this burden without him. It is Bapa's wish and mine that all men should ultimately withdraw from the Samiti and the entire administration should be handed over to the sisters. That will bring it real credit. This effort will continue and none of us will rest on our oars till it succeeds. Success will not come early by Bapa's leaving it or allowing us to quit. Hence I am allowing you to quit the Joint Secretaryship and am accepting your resignation. I know that I am not losing your services thereby. You are and will continue to be a

[1] One who serves

trustee. I am sure you will continue to work for the local Kasturba Nidhi committee of Gujarat; and you will also assist the Central Committee whenever it needs your help. Thus I am confident that you will not lag behind in serving the Committee even when you relinquish its Joint Secretaryship. Moreover, you should not forget that you have resigned from Secretaryship, not from trusteeship.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Your decision to publish the resignation letter is well conceived. That will scotch all rumours and speculation either in private or in public. You are already on leave. Does it [resignation] take effect from now itself?

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

333. LETTER TO VAJUBHAI SHUKLA

October 15, 1945

BHAI VAJUBHAI,

Just now I heard about your wife's demise. What can I say by way of consolation? Everyone born has to die. Some die sooner, some later.

Blessings from

BAPU

VAJUBHAI SHUKLA
RAJKOT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

334. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

October 15, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Just now Prabhakar rang up Sushila to say that you have fever. I am not at all happy about it. I shall be satisfied only when the fever completely subsides.

Rameshwardas has asked me to suggest a name out of the four for the Mahadev Memorial at Dhulia. I have selected Gomati's. It will be good if she agrees.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

335. LETTER TO R. ACHUTHAN

October 15, 1945

BHAI ACHUTHAN[1],

I have written a great deal about constructive work. Read it all, over and over again. Do not listen to criticism by others. If you hear criticism, you must have the strength to answer it. How long can I go on replying to people? Students should develop the ability to understand and reply to such things.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10853

336. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

October 15, 1945

DEAR SUNDARAM,[2]

I have your gift for Monday. You have done well to revive old memories.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3187

337. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

October 15, 1945

CHI. CHAND,

I have no difficulty in giving a decision. You cannot leave Nagpur on any account; not even if your parents are ill. Student life is a kind of sannyasa. I do not think that Satyavati would like you to give up your studies, And what will you gain even if you go there[3]?

Sushila will write the rest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Chandrani Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

[1] Secretary, Benares Hindu University Rachanatmak Mandal for students
[2] The superscription and the subscription are in Tamil.
[3] To the Tuberculosis Hospital, Delhi, where Satyavati had been admitted

338. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

October 15, 1945

BHAI SAHEB,

Maulana . . .[1] writes to say that you need prolonged rest.

I also agree with him. You must take rest for the sake of the country.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD SAHEB
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi. Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

339. LETTER TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

October 15, 1945

BHAI BADSHAH KHAN,

There must be plenty of bustle because of the elections. Will it be proper for me to go there at that time? Or shall I come later? I don't know when I will be able to make it.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

BADSHAH KHAN
CHARSADDA
FRONTIER PROVINCE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

340. LETTER TO VAMANRAO JOSHI

October 15, 1945

BHAI VAMANRAO,

Sardar informed me that you survived the accident but the injuries were quite serious. I hope they are not too serious and your life of service will go on for a long time.

Blessings from

BAPU

VEER VAMANRAO
AMRAVATI, BERAR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Omission as in the source

341. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

October 15, 1945

CHI. RAMESHWARI[1],

I have your letter. Your sister has passed away leaving behind a large family. Your mother must be feeling it the most. These days I read *Bhartriharishatak* for a few minutes daily. What it says on moral wisdom and detachment are worth pondering over at such times. Why grieve over the inevitable? It is good indeed that the fast over the Garhwal [issue] was withdrawn.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RAMESHWARIBEHN NEHRU
SRINAGAR
KASHMIR

From a copy of the Harijan Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

342. LETTER TO J. B. KRIPALANI

October 15, 1945

BHAI KRIPALANI,

I got your letter and the wire later. My wire was already drafted in accordance with your decision, so I withheld it. I hope your fever has completely subsided. Sucheta too must have recovered. Sardar's decision was also the same [as yours].

Blessings from

BAPU

ACHARYA KRIPALANI
SWARAJYA BHAVAN, ALLAHABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

343. LETTER TO ANNE MARIE PETERSEN

POONA,
October 16, 1945

DEAR MARIA,

I have read your letter to Rajkumari. I must say your letter is unsatisfactory. That you are going to Denmark and that during your

[1] *V*ice-President, Harijan Sevak Sangh

absence the institution will remain closed should have been sufficient for the withdrawal of the application. Was it good or necessary to bring in the matter of conversion? When you and Esther came to me, it was, I think, common between us that conversion from one faith to another was needless and created heart-burning. One's faith expands by removing the bad in it and absorbing the good and new from the others. You have every right to hold the opposite view. My point is simple. You had a decisive cause for withdrawing your application without raising an irrelevant issue.

I hope you will have a good time in Denmark and will return hale and hearty.

Love.

BAPU

MISS A. M. PETERSEN
SEVA MANDIR, PORTO NOVO

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

344. LETTER TO CHHOTUBHAI K. MEHTA

October 16, 1945

CHI. NAPOLEON[1],

I got your letter written in a beautiful hand. I was glad to read about Mama. Why do you want blessings for your Association? You should assume that you have everybody's blessings for good work and go on with it silently.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. NAPOLEON
ADARSH DUGDHALAYA
MALAD, *via* BOMBAY

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII

345. LETTER TO TARABEHN MODAK

October 16, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

If you had written your article in ink, I myself would have read it earlier. But as it was in pencil, I could not read the whole article

[1] Son of Kunverji Mehta, a Congressman of Bardoli taluk

though there is plenty of light in my room. Ultimately I made someone read it out. I know from personal experience that there is a lot of difference between reading something and hearing it read. Daily I make someone read out cuttings from newspapers and if and when I have time, I read them myself. Sometimes when a thing is re-read there is a striking change in my understanding. I feel this must be a common experience. Of course you have to realize yourself. I have mentioned this important, though irrelevant, thing because I thought it worth mentioning. I would be pleased if you accept that there is violence in writing in pencil things sent by post. The letters written in pencil fade away in course of time.

I am sending back your article. Please note the changes I have made in what I could read myself. The changes are just from the point of view of language. The rest I find is quite all right. I am giving a gist of my experiences so as to make what I have said more clear.

I saw the work done by teachers trained under Madame Montessori, and carefully observed the working of the Nursery School. Of course the things were foreign and the poor teacher had not digested what she had been taught. What to speak of the children? They could not even observe normal discipline. I am not criticising anyone. I have given the gist of my experience just for your information. Imbibe whatever you find useful and discard the rest. The conclusion I have drawn from this experience is that we shall be able to propagate scientific knowledge of child education only when our teachers are competent. They should have the will to become one with children. I am afraid I am not saying anything new in this. These things are certainly not beyond your range of experience but since I have come to know you and also love you I hope you will not find fault with me for saying the things you already know.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

346. LETTER TO HARIKISANDAS CHAWDA

October 16, 1945

BHAI HARIKISANDAS,

I have 77 paise coins from your institution.[1] I am putting them into the Harijan Sevak Sangh account. I hope everyone is spinning

[1] To symbolize Gandhiji's entering 77th year on October 2, 1945

regularly.

HARIJAN VYAYAM MANDAL
20 COCHIN STREET
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

347. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

POONA,
October 16, 1945

CHI. MRIDU,

I showed it to Bapa. He returned my draft unchanged. He said: "I cannot think of making any changes in this. Do what you think proper. I have learnt about the resignation only today. But do what you think is correct." So I am sending my draft as it is with my signature. But if you wish to make any changes, send it back to me with the changes. I shall look into the changes and incorporate them if I find them in order and then send it to the press.

Now about Jog. Bapa says: "I stick to what I said. No one had sanctioned it. But if you can give the sanction for two months, you may as well make it for three months so that the matter is settled." I would do as you wish. I shall make the sanction for three months if you so desire. It appears to me that Jog has written under your persuasion. So I take that what will fully satisfy you will also satisfy her. I understand that what you suggest is two months' wages. So I shall arrange for sanction for only two months. I shall do about the matter as you want.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11247. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

348. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

October 16, 1945

CHI. ANAND,

It is very good that your faith has increased and also your peace. I am writing the daily thought[1]. I hope to complete what is left. After that I want to be quiet.

Chi. Mahadev will be well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Arehives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

349. LETTER TO KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI

[*October 17, 1945*][2]

VAHALAN BEHN,

Your letter. I note what you say. We serve according to our lights.

The Bengal tour will be postponed by a few days. The date is not yet fixed.

What you say about Satyavati is disquieting. But nothing better was to be expected. Let us hope she will witness the wedding[3].

Rajkumari may go to London for a month. . . .[4] I shall do my best about Nirmal Kumar whom I know and whose work I value.[5]

My love to Satyavati.

KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI
THE I. N. A. DEFENCE COMMITTEE
82 DARYAGANJ, DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] For the thoughts written during the period covered by this volume, *vide* "A Thought for the Day" at the end of this volume.

[2] The letter is found among those of this date.

[3] Of Satyavati's son; *vide* "Letter to Brijkrishna Chandiwala", 25-10-1945.

[4] Omission as in the source

[5] The addressee had asked Gandhiji to utilize the services of Nirmal Kumar Bose.

350. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

POONA,
October 17, 1945

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I remember to have written to you that I would let you accompany me during some part of my tour.[1] My view is that it would be convenient if you accompanied me in the Madras Presidency, for I am familiar with the work there. The work in Bengal and Assam is rather difficult. I don't have a clear picture of it in my mind. I, therefore, don't wish to take with me there anybody who is not specially needed. The date of my tour also has not been fixed. Perhaps I may go to Bengal only after November 21. Everything depends on Sardar's health.

I think your accepting money from the Rulers requires some consideration. It was your letter which made me think about this. Shouldn't we ponder whether or not we can accept money from Rulers who pay no attention at all to the welfare of their subjects? When the amount of Rs. 1,000 is received, I will credit it to the account of the Harijan Sevak Sangh.

So far I have no knowledge of its being received this time. I do not know if it has been received at the Sevagram Ashram.

Do you think the States would give any protection to the Harijans wherever they are oppressed? Concerning joint fruitparties for Harijans and caste Hindus, do you mean any caste Hindus or only reformers like you and me?

Remind me again when you read about the date of my tour. Rajkumari has gone to Simla. From there she may perhaps have to go to England for a month. Sushilabehn and Manilal have gone to Akola.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5549

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 10-9-1945

351. LETTER TO SHANTILAL J. MEHTA

October 17, 1945

CHI. SHANTI,

I have no messsage to give to Natal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII

352. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

October 17, 1945

CHI. PRABHA,

Why do you mark your letters "private"? What is there private for a public worker? And what was private in your letter? I have not kept a copy of my letter. What can I, therefore, write? Probably it was about your study, Jayaprakash and your coming. There may have been something concerning what you wrote regarding Banaras. For more details ask me when I arrive there. Learn to keep patience till then. I am enquiring from Rajkumari and Sushilabehn about the letter to you.

My departure for Bengal will be delayed by a few days. You will read about it in the newspapers. Most probably I will write.

We shall call your friend later.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3585

353. LETTER TO GAJANAN NAIK

October 17, 1945

CHI. GAJANAN,

I have your letter. I regret that I cannot make you understand such a simple thing. If the person who writes is himself not frank, what can be done about what he writes? I tell you it is your dharma to be frank; only then can an inquiry be held. If you wish to write to me

secretly I don't want to listen to anything and don't want to be influenced.[1]

AKHIL BHARATIYA UDYOG SANGH
WARDHA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

354. LETTER TO MAYASHANKER

October 17, 1945

BHAI MAYASHANKER,

I have your letter. I am helpless. Do write whatever you wish to say.

MAYASHANKER
C/O MAHENDRA BHOGILAL & CO.
DIVANCHAND BUILDING
75 JHAVERI BAZAAR, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

355. LETTER TO L. KRISHNASWAMI BHARATI

October 17, 1945

BHAI KRISHNASWAMI,

At the moment I don't feel like writing to Nadar[2]. Virtue is its own reward. So where is the need for appreciation?

I feel happy to hear about your family.

L. KRISHNASWAMI BHARATI
165 WEST MASI STREET
MADURA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Gajanan Naik", 8-10-1945

[2] Kamaraj Nadar; President of Tamil Nadu Provincial Congress Committee, 1940-54; Member, Constituent Assembly; Chief Minister of Madras, 1954-63; President of Indian National Congress, 1964-67

356. LETTER TO RATNADEVI

October 17, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

Now don't ask for a message from me. As far as possible I want to do silent service. If you want to see me, come over when I have settled down.

RATNADEVI
VANASTHALI VIDYAPITH
JAIPUR STATE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

357. LETTER TO BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

[On or before *October 18, 1945*][1]

MY DEAR BHARATAN,

I have time only to say I accept all your amendments.

L. KOTWAL, GORDON HALL HOUSE
NEW NAGPADA ROAD, BYCULLA
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

358. TELEGRAM TO P. C. GHOSH[2]

[*October 18, 1945*][3]

SORRY I HAVE BEEN OBLIGED TO POSTPONE VISIT TO BENGAL BY A FEW DAYS. AM UNABLE GIVE EXACT DATE COMING. AM ANXIOUS VISIT AS MANY PLACES AS POSSIBLE BUT REGARD BEING HAD TO MY HEALTH IT MAY TURN OUT TO BE AS FEW AS POSSIBLE. MAIN THING IS TO STUDY CONDITION AND SHARE DISTRESS BEST OF MY ABILITY. WOULD LIKE FINAL FIXING PROGRAMME AFTER REACHING CALCUTTA .

Gandhi's Emissary, p. 55. Also Sudhir Ghosh Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The letter is placed between those of October 17 and 18, 1945.

[2] A similar telegram was sent to Satis Chandra Das Gupta.

[3] In the source Sudhir Ghosh explains that Gandhiji drafted this telegram before he dictated the letter to P. C. Ghosh; *vide* the following item.

359. LETTER TO P. C. GHOSH[1]

POONA,
October 18, 1945

BHAI PROFULLA,

I have your letter and telegram about Jawaharlalji.[2] I have understood the matter.

Sudhir came yesterday. I have had long talks with Sudhir yesterday and today. I could not send a telegram about my decision. It would have been too long. So I am sending this letter. Sudhir must have sent you a brief telegram.[3]

Taking everything into consideration I feel that at this stage you may announce this much: 'Owing to unavoidable circums-tances Gandhiji cannot come to Calcutta on the 2nd November. As soon as the date is decided it will be announced. It is likely that he will come in the last week of November or thereabouts. His tour programme which has been published in the newspapers is also cancelled. But wherever he is likely to go, the organizers will be informed so that they can make some arrangements. No expen-diture of any kind should be incurred at this stage. Wherever he goes, his transport will have to be paid for, but that can be seen at that time only. Gandhiji has made it clear that, health permitting, he will try his best to go to all the places he wanted to visit. But consi-dering his age and health, it is obvious that in spite of his desire to visit as many places as possible he will be able to visit only a few of them.'

You may publish this much. Now I shall tell you what I want to do. If possible I want to visit Midnapore, Chittagong, Dacca, Borkamta, Santiniketan and Assam. If any other place is left out, like Feni, I would like to visit that also. You can inform the local organizers about my programme which all of you there may decide for me. Transport also would have to be arranged. Do not give anything to the Press yet. That can be done on my arrival. It takes a little time to make the preliminary arrangements. That is why I have suggested this. It is for you to work out what places I can easily visit.

I don't feel that it is necessary for me to let you know just now

[1] This was sent through Sudhir Ghosh.

[2] The addressee wanted Jawaharlal Nehru to postpone his visit to Calcutta for a longer visit later.

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

who will be with me. If you want to suggest anything about this, you may do so.

I would certainly like to meet the people who have already been to see me. If you want any more persons to meet me you may send for them. Maulana Saheb is there in Calcutta at present. You should not trouble him; but if he wants to suggest anything you should go to him and ask him about it.

I do not want to get involved in addresses of welcome. Gift of any amount of self-spun yarn, or yarn spun by friends, will not be too much. My aim will be to convert it into khadi and distribute it there at the cheapest possible price. Any gift of money will be welcome, but no special effort should be made for it. It should be voluntary. The money will be used for some constructive work in Bengal. But please remember that this tour is not for the collection of either yarn or money.

I would of course like to meet Mr. Casey and try to secure from him whatever assistance can be had for the people. It has been my experience so far that wherever I go and settle down, my presence gives the poor and destitute a sense of comfort. If I can do even this much, I shall be satisfied.

I do not want to get involved in the politics of Bengal. I have neither the desire nor the knowledge.

Whatever you decide in this matter should be decided unanimously by all of you, rather than by majority opinion. This is not the kind of thing which should be settled by the majority. If anyone interested in my proposed visit does not like a particular thing, I do not want to do that. There must be no quarrel over my visit. My dharma is to settle quarrels. Please give this letter or a copy of it to Satis Babu. My earnest wish is that even though you are two separate bodies, you should become of one mind before my arrival. You are both eminent disciples of the same guru, a great guru like P. C. Ray[1]. What I want is to see you both truly united in heart. Both of you are doing my work. Then why should there be any difference between the two of you? But in all this God's grace is the main thing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Sudhir Ghosh Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memo-rial Museum and Library

[1] Eminent chemist and patriot who died on June 16, 1944

360. TELEGRAM TO ZAKIR HUSAIN

Express POONA,
October 18, 1945

ZAKIR HUSAIN
CARE JAMIA
DELHI

"DAWN" OF THIRTEENTH CONTAINS REPORTED CONVERSATION WITH YOU.[1] I HAVE DENIED TRUTH STATEMENT BEFORE FRIENDS. I WOULD LIKE YOU TO GIVE YOUR VERSION BEFORE YOU LEAVE[2]. HOPE YOU ARE WELL.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

361. LETTER TO ZAKIR HUSAIN

October 18, 1945

BHAI ZAKIR,

I have sent a wire[3] today. I can't believe you could have said such a thing. Whatever it is, you had better make a statement about what you had said.

I hope you are all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. ZAKIR HUSAIN
JAMIA MILLIA
DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The report read: "Dr. Zakir Husain . . . expressed the view that though . . . the demand for Pakistan was first made as 'bargaining counter' it has now become a real demand. The only course for Congress is to agree to Pakistan and forge a united front with the Mussalmans to fight for the freedom of India. Dr. Zakir Husain said that the only man who could deliver the goods on behalf of the Hindus was Mr. Gandhi, but if he accepts the demand . . . the majority of Hindus will not approve it. . . ." The addressee however contradicted the report.

[2] For London to attend the preliminary session of the United Nations Cultural and Educational Conference as a member of the Indian Delegation

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

362. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 18, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

I had your wire from Simla and I was glad. I hope you have found everything as we had hoped.

Here is a cutting from *Dawn.* I have wired to Zakir about it and written, too. I cannot believe that he has said anything like what the report says. Anyway we should know authoritatively what Dr. Z. said. If you feel any delicacy about mentioning the subject to him, you need not.

I am well.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4168. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7804

363. LETTER TO K. SANTHANAM

October 18, 1945

DEAR SANTHANAM[1],

You know Dr. Ambedkar's indictment of the Congress during the short period of the Congress ministries. Bapa thinks and I agree that there should be an impartial statement in reply exposing the many mis-statements in the book. Bapa has prepared a reply on behalf of the Harijan Sevak Sangh which you should and will see. Rajaji was to prepare the Congress reply but he cannot under the altered circumstances.[2] You are the next best man and I would like you to take up the matter. Bapa will write to you more fully.

Yours,

BAPU

SJT. K. SANTHANAM
"HINDUSTAN [TIMES]"
NEW DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Editor, *Indian Express*, 1933-40; Joint Editor, *The Hindustan Times*, 1943-48; Member, Legislative Assembly, 1937-42; Member, Constituent Assembly; Minister of State for Railways and Transport, 1948-52; Lt.-Governor, Vindhya Pradesh, 1952-56

[2] C. Rajagopalachari however did prepare the Congress reply which was published under the title *Ambedkar Refuted; vide* also "Letter to C. Rajagopalchari", 26-8-1945

364. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

October 18, 1945

BAPA,

I see that you have left for Wardha. I can't as yet decide the date of my journey. It seems I shall be able to do so immediately after November 2.

I write this letter just to let you have a copy of my letter to Santhanam[1] and to ask you to write more about it to him. Send a draft of the answer you have prepared so that he can make the necessary changes and make a case for the Congress on the basis of it. I think he will have Dr. Ambedkar's book. If not, write to him that you will send a copy to him. Look after your health.

Jehangir Patel told me that he would be taking Elwin[2] to meet you. After that I have not heard from him. Write if there is anything.

KASTURBA GANDHI SMARAK NIDHI
WARDHA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

365. LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

October 18, 1945

CHI. MAGAN,

I was pained to read your letter. I am still in correspondence with Champa. She tells a different tale altogether. Consider what your dharma in the present situation is. You should go and take charge. The case is a very difficult one. Champa reports that Shashi took him[3] to his place, where he behaved sensibly for some time but lost his balance again. You yourself should ascertain the facts and do what is necessary. Narandas did all he could. But matters have gone beyond anybody's control. There are only two who can exercise some restraint on him—you or I. I do not belong to any single human being now. You alone, therefore, can do something.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1034. Courtesy: Manjula Mehta

[1] *Vide* the preceding item,
[2] Verrier Elwin, an English missionary who had been working in tribal areas
[3] Ratilal Mehta, addressee's eldest brother

366. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKVASA

October 18, 1945

BHAI MANGALDAS PAKVASA,

Many Provincial governments permit the sale of cloth under licences. They have now amended the terms. A copy of the amendment introduced by the C. P. Government is enclosed. In my view a product like khadi cannot be, ought not to be, licensed. A leading counsel in South Africa with a flourishing practice had told me that one must proceed on the assumption that every tangible wrong had a remedy in law and seareh for it, assured that it would be found. This had appealed to me very much, and I had always relied on it in my work in South Africa and succeeded in finding the remedies. I believe the principle is true in India, too. I have not read all the laws, but I feel that a law which applies to a mill-owner worth millions cannot apply to khadi.

If you see the definition of a 'dealer', you will observe that it must include 'business'. There is no trace of 'business' in khadi, for all processes relating to it merely ensure a livelihood to those who make a living through khadi.

I have alluded to this argument merely as a suggestion to you. You will also see that the Government is empowered to grant exemption to anybody. This is not a matter of law, as yet. I draw your attention to it. You may write to Jajuji for any further information which you cannot get locally. What I want you to do is this. Consult anybody whom you wish to and then write to the Government yourself, or request the counsel whom you consult to do so. If, however, you feel that whatever representation is to be made should be addressed by Jajuji as Secretary, we shall do that. Send copies to Jajuji and me of any correspondence that you have. And if you decide to write to the Government directly from there, send the letter after showing the draft to me. I still cherish the belief that I may be able to suggest some improvements.

We should write immediately to the Provincial Government or to the Central Government, whichever you decide. I have already addressed[1] a communication to the Central Government as President of the Charkha Sangh. A copy is enclosed. I have even received an acknowledgement of the letter. The copy is only for your information for the present. We do not wish to give publicity to this matter in

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. M. Jenkins", 10-10-1945

newspapers just now or let everybody know about it. Probably you know that by adopting such a procedure I had been able to save the Charkha Sangh during Linlithgow's tenure. Let us see what happens this time.

I am entrusting this important task to you relying on the assurance you have given to me, that you intend to use your ability and prestige as a lawyer, not for money but entirely for public service. And that is what you have been doing for some time. Isn't that the best way for everybody to use their talents? If you want any further information, please write to me. The matter is urgent, since they have already started issuing licences.

I forgot about one thing. Khadi is facing a special danger, namely, the U. P. Government's objection to our practice of demanding yarn worth some pice from the buyers for khadi worth every rupee. The objection seems to me ridiculous and harmful from every point of view. However, please consider along with the other issue whether such an objection can be sustained in law. In my view this is a secondary matter and can be easily dealt with. The chief thing is that khadi must not be considered as falling within the scope of the licensing law. We have even stores which sell less than 1,000 rupees worth of khadi every month. To require a licence for sale of khadi is to put a restraint over the production of khadi, i. e., over the poor.

Blessings from

BAPU

Enclosures:

1. Letter to P. S.
2. Jajuji's letters

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4783. Courtesy: Mangaldas Pakvasa

367. LETTER TO VALLABHDAS JOSHI

October 18, 1945

BHAI VALLABHDAS,

I have your letter. Real punishment or penance is not to repeat the same mistake even mentally.

VALLABHDAS JOSHI
NELSON MOTOR MARTS
27 QUEEN'S ROAD
BOMBAY-4

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

368. LETTER TO GULZAR SINGH

October 18, 1945

SARDAR GULZAR SINGH,

I have your letter. I don't know which places I shall be able to visit during my Bengal tour. My request is that all *sevaks* should spare me. Only then shall I be able to do what I want to.

SARDAR GULZAR SINGHJI
SHRI GURU SINGH SABHA
31 RASBEHARI AVENUE, KALIGHAT
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

369. LETTER TO MOHANLAL VERMA

October 18, 1945

BHAI MOHANLAL VERMA,

Just now I came to know about Kumar Chintaman Vinayak's death. If it is true that Congressmen were responsible for it and that too for unworthy reasons, it is a matter of shame, more so for Congressmen. Ever since I heard about this death, I have been trying to find out the truth.

K. MOHANLAL VERMA
GENERAL SECRETARY
ANTI-PAKISTAN FRONT
GIRGAUM, OPP. MANGALWADI
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

370. LETTER TO AGRAWAL

October 18, 1945

BHAI AGRAWAL,

If your intention is to run the clinic just for philanthropy and to use only such medicines as anyone can prepare with some effort, I believe it is bound to succeed.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY
THE HINDUSTAN MERCANTILE ASSOCIATION
641 CHANDNI CHOWK
DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

371. LETTER TO S. K. GUPTA

October 18, 1945

BHAI GUPTA,

I am glad you have a high opinion of the Sevagram [Ashram]. Holding that opinion, make as much headway as you can. Otherwise there is nothing in Sevagram and you may give up the idea of going there.

S. K. GUPTA
EXCISE INSPECTOR
6 RLY. ROAD
FARUKHABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

372. LETTER TO A. S. SAHAJANANDA

[On or before *October 19, 1945*][1]

DEAR SWAMIJI,

I have your letter. Of course during my visit to Madras, I would like to visit many places. But I am afraid I shall have to deny myself that pleasure. At the present time, the idea is to confine the visit to Madras, stay there for some time, and do the work that I can. Therefore, for the sake of the cause itself, all friends must spare me as far as possible. The forthcoming Bengal visit will tell me what my body is now capable of standing.

A. S. SAHAJANANDA
NANDANAR MUTT
GHIDAMBARAM

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

373. LETTER TO E. M. JENKINS

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
October 19, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN,

Shri Jyotish Bose is a condemned prisoner with Shri Haridas Mitra and others. The condemned prisoner's father came to me two

[1] The letter is placed between those of October 18 and 19, 1945.

days ago and showed me his petition for mercy. If Shri Haridas Mitra's sentence is commuted, as I hope it will, this one deserves commutation *ipso facto*. Shri Jyotish Bose is the son of an uninfluential poor father. But I am sure that poverty will be considered no bar to commutation.

I see from the legal papers that there are others of the batch awaiting execution. The times when the sentences were pronounced were those of war when calmness was at a discount. Now they are changed. The war is over. The condemned men have, no matter what the cause of delay was, survived the war. Will it be too much if I suggest a reconsideration of all such cases in the shape of commutation of death sentences? In my opinion, justice to be real justice requires extension of mercy to temper it.

May I ask you please to put this letter before His Excellency for consideration?[1]

Yours sincerely,

M.K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, PP. 49-50

374. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

October 19, 1945

MY DEAR KU.,

I have hurriedly gone through the cutting returned herewith. There is nothing new in it. The reference to Hitler is out of place. It does not seem to misrepresent my views.

I note what you say about Kishorelal. So your hawk-like eye has detected an error ! ! !

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10181

[1] In his letter dated November 1, the addressee wrote: "His Excellency has considered these petitions together with petitions from two others who were sentenced to death at the same time and has commuted all from death sentences to transportation for life." *Vide* also "Letter to E. M. Jenkins", 7-11-1945.

375. LETTER TO G. L. CROSS

[*October 19, 1945*][1]

DEAR FRIEND CROSS,

It gave me joy to have your letter through Sudhir who will tell you all about my movement.

Of course you and your wife must see me when I come to Bengal. About attending Friends' meeting, you have proposed a difficult task. They will have to excuse me. But if they could come to Sodepur, I shall be delighted to meet them.

FRIEND G. L. CROSS
INDIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY
D-3 CLIVE BUILDINGS, CLIVE STREET
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

376. LETTER TO SAILES CHANDRA BOSE

October 19, 1945

DEAR SAILES[2],

It gave me delight to have your Vijaya letter[3]. I wish you all well and above all to Bela. I may tell you that I am in constant correspondence with the Government in the matter. When I go to Bengal Bela should go there. I am Sorry I am not reaching there on 2nd November. It will be after the middle of November, so far as it is possible to say today.

S. C. BOSE
59 FORBES STREET
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The letter is placed among those of this date.
[2] Brother of Subhas Chandra Bose
[3] Apparently a letter conveying Vijayadashami greetings

377. A LETTER[1]

October 19, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter. If you have firmness of mind, nothing is difficult.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

P O. THENKURISSI *via* PALGHAT

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

378. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

October 19, 1945

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I had your postcard. I agree with you regarding khadi. I have already expressed my views. I am considering what more I should do.

I was happy to know that your work was going on well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI BHAGWANJI
HARIJAN ASHRAM
WADHWAN

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 402. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

379. LETTER TO KANJI J. DESAI

October 19, 1945

BHAI KANJI,

I have your letter and Chi. Bhanu's. Chi. Pushpa is not going to change her mind even if you go to Sevagram. My going there has been postponed. When I can go, I shall know on November 2. Come then if you wish to.

KANJI JETHABHAI
OLD HANUMAN GALI
SECOND CROSS LANE
RAJDA'S CHAWL
SECOND FLOOR, ROOM NO. 4, BOMBAY-2

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The name has been omitted.

380. LETTER TO PUSHPA K. DESAI

October 19, 1945

CHI. PUSHPA,

Read the accompanying letters. Reply to both of them. If possible, try to dispel their doubts. I have only dropped a postcard to acknowledge the letters and have suggested that, if they wish, they might come to Sevagram when I return there.

I hope you are all right. Never forget that you will have to become an ideal woman.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9275

381. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

October 19, 1945

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. My going there has been put off by a few days. It will now be in the middle of November or towards the end. It depends on Sardar's health.[1]

What shall I say regarding you? It is true that you have learnt nothing from me, and also true that nobody has learnt more than you have. But that is neither here nor there. Talk things over with me when I arrive there. Pyarelal is ill. He will recover.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

It has not been decided who will accompany me. It was fortunate that you survived. This is how your life will pass. You will have fully recovered by now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu and Gujarati: G.N. 490

[1] This paragraph is in Urdu.

382. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

POONA,
October 19, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I have your letter. We cannot have Premabehn on the Dhulia Trust[1]. Nor can we have Sushila. I would like to suggest Tara's[2] name. Have you written to Rameshwardas? If not, do so. I do not see the need to suggest a woman's name just for the sake of having one. Is what Kumarappa says true? He points out an error and then raises an issue.

I hope you are all right.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

383. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

October 19, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Despite your illness, you are following up my suggestions regarding decimal coinage.[3] You will see from Vaikunth's letter that though the Government is collecting all literature about it, it will not start implementing it and meanwhile if suggestions are accepted, it will at any rate stop for the time being. Of course I am pursuing it.

I have sent to Dr. Zakir a cutting from *Dawn.*[4] Just like you I also believe that he would not have said what has appeared in the report. However, we shall await his reply. Sardar also received a cutting. I have taken that and passed it on to Rajkumari.

The argument about your health will take us nowhere. I think my heart-ache is also useless but one's nature does not readily obey reason. So I stick to my suggestion[5]. . . .[6] It is good you took enema . . . .[7] My going there has been postponed. I shall be here till November 2. The date will be fixed after that.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] For the Mahadev Memorial
[2] Tara Mashruwala
[3] *Vide*"Letter to Kishorelal G. Mashruwala", 10-10-1945
[4] *Vide* "Letter to Zakir Husain", 18-10-1945
[5] To try nature-cure treatment at Poona, *vide* p. 342.
[6] Omissions as in the source
[7] *ibid*

384. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

October 19, 1945

BAPA,

I hope the climate of Wardha suits you. See the enclosed letter[1].

Do what you think proper after reading it. She had come to me earlier about it and I remember having given some opinion.

KASTURBA SMARAK NIDHI
BAJAJWADI
WARDHA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

385. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

October 19, 1945

BHAI JAJUJI,

I agree with what (Bhagwanjibhai) has said in the enclosed postcard. So far as I recollect, I have said something about it. If you and other co-workers also agree with it, we can do something more. I have only ideas to give, you have the experience. Only if it agrees with my ideas we should go ahead.

KHADI VIDYALAYA
SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

386. LETTER TO DR. S. M. KULKARNI

October 19, 1945

BHAI KULKARNI,

I have your letter. Come on the 27th at 5.30 p. m.

DR. S. M.KULKARNI
BHADKAMKAR HOSPITAL
KARAD
DIST. SATARA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] From Satyabhama devi of tungi, who had asdedfor some work

387. LETTER TO BHAVANIDAYAL SANNYASI

October 19, 1945

BHAI BHAVANIDAYAL,

I have your letter. I am sorry to learn that you are not well. Get well soon. This is my hope as well as my wish.

It is surprising that you who know me from childhood should still fail to understand fully or to make others understand what I am doing. Truly speaking, good work does not need anyone's blessings because it is in itself a blessing. That is to say, its success lies in the work itself. Secondly, for what shall I send my blessings? There is no reason to doubt that your aunt may be greater than all the mahatmas in her field and perhaps she is. Moreover, she is certainly of an advanced age but it is my misfortune that I don't know her. In such a situation how can a man like me send blessings to her? And where do I count among so many titled men and other bigwigs, and, pray, why should I? When the rich take my blessings on some occasions you should take it that I know them and take service from them. Otherwise none of the rich come to me or can get anything from me. And what to say of the poor? They are mine and I am theirs. I am myself poor but if they get my blessings it is not going to appear in the newspapers. So looking from all points of view, I cannot be a participant in your aunt's memorial. Those who are in it do not know me; so they can only criticize me. What else can they do? If people like you can convince them with love, you may do so.

What will you gain by writing to me except that I should waste my time in writing such long letters and give you the trouble of reading them even when you are not well? I shall have done my job if I have been able to make you see the point and if I have not, I am helpless.

BHAVANIDAYAL SANNYASI
PRAVASI BHAVAN
ADARSH NAGAR, AJMER

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

388. LETTER TO RAM MANOHAR LOHIA

October 19, 1945

BHAI RAMMANOHAR[1],

It is good that you got the wire regarding Mauritius. I am glad that I could get your letter under that excuse. Let me know about your health if you can, else let the jailor do so.

RAM MANOHAR LOHIA
CENTRAL JAIL, AGRA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Gourtesy: Pyarelal

389. LETTER TO DEVPRAKASH NAYYAR

October 19, 1945

CHI. DEV,

I have your frank letter. I understand what you say. If you don't need a change of air, I have nothing to say. But I consider it necessary for a person who is either bodily or mentally sick. It is necessary to have a fine sense of perception to understand everything.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi: Documents relating to Gandhiji. Courtesy: National Archives of India

390. LETTER TO HUMAYUN KABIR

October 19, 1945

BHAI HUMAYUN[2],

I had your book *Men and Rivers* with me. Khurshedbehn took it for reading. She especially recommended it to me. I read it with great interest. I recognize your ability to write novels.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] (1910-67); one of the founders of the All-India Congress Socialist Party; Secretary of the Foreign Department, A. I. C. C., 1936-38; resigned from Congress in 1948; General Secretary, Praja Socialist Party, 1953-54; Member, Lok Sabha, 1963-67

[2] (1906-1969); Minister of Education in the Central Government, 1957-65; Chairman, University Grants Commission. Later resigned from the Congress and founded the Bangla Congress.

391. LETTER TO VAMANRAO JOSHI

October 19, 1945

BHAI VAMANRAO,

I was very happy to have your letter and learn that you were not at all injured.

Do write a long letter.

VEER VAMANRAO JOSHI
AMRAVATI (BERAR)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

392. LETTER TO SATYABHAMA DEVI

October 19, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I am sending your letter to the Secretary.[1] We shall do all we can.

SATYABHAMA DEVI
VILLAGE MALVA, P. O. TUNGI
DIST. GAYA (BIHAR)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

393. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

[On or after *October 19, 1945*][2]

. . .[3] But let my time be divided between the nursing home and Sevagram.

I am surprised at your wanting to stand for the Assembly on the Congress ticket. I am also pained a little. You cannot have my blessings in this matter. Only the person who is sociable and can easily adjust with everyone, who possesses other abilities and is not fit for anything except legislative work can go to the Assembly. There is no question of high or low. It is a question only of fitness. A khadi

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amritlal V, Thakkar", p. 386,

[2] According to the source this was written before the letter to the addressee dated October 27, 1945. However, Gandhiji's decision to stay on in Poona till November 2 was taken around October 19. This letter, therefore, appears to have been written some time after that.

[3] The first three sheets of the letter are damaged.

worker is fit for khadi work. One cannot say that therefore he is also fit for the Assembly work.

Sardar cannot be said to have recovered yet. He has constipation. He used to spend one and a half to two hours in the toilet. It may be due to spasm[1] in the intestines, or the trouble may be due to some adhesions[2] inside. The pelvic loop[3] (of the colon) is much enlarged. He also feels cramps in the stomach. Dinshawji believes that the greater part of the complaint he has today will disappear after three months' treatment here. He will complete three months on November 22. He is not accompanying me to Sevagram. According to the present programme I shall myself go to Sevagram only for three or four days and then proceed to Bengal. The programme may be modified. Do write if you have any suggestions about Sardar's treatment. I am here at least till November 2nd. I shall stay on till the 21st, if necessary.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 340 and 341

394. LETTER TO S. A. WAIZ

October 20, 1945

DEAR WAIZ,

I was glad to have your letter no matter what the excuse was. I hope you are doing well.

S. A. WAIZ, I.I.C.A.
SOHRAB HOUSE, 235 HORNBY ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] These expressions are is English.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*

395. LETTER TO T. S. ABDUR RAHMAN

[*October 20, 1945*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 15th September last.

Two wrongs do not make one right. I do not remember the circumstances of the first ban mentioned by you. The second, I do know. In my opinion it is bad.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

JANAB T. S. ABDUR RAHMAN
C/O C. A. ABDUL WAHAB & CO.
NEAR IRON BRIDGE, ALLEPPEY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

396. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

POONA,
October 20, 1945

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your and Manilal's letter.

Arun is very playful. He does not like to study. I see that neither Abha nor Zohra has any influence on him. Kanu looks after him a little. Valjibhai teaches him. He has also engaged a man to teach him tables. I feel now that it would have been better if I had insisted on your taking him with you. I am no good now for this kind of work. It might be better to make some arrangement for Arun there.

My plan is hanging fire. It seems that I shall be able to go to Sevagram after the 15th. I think it will be difficult to leave while Sardar's treatment is going on.

It seems Pyarelal has typhoid. He will recover. I am all right. My visit to Bengal is likely to materialize towards the end of November.

I hope all of you there are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4959

[1] The letter is placed among those of this date.

397. LETTER TO NARENDRA A. TRIVEDI

October 20, 1945

BHAI NARENDRA,

There is room for disappointment in expectation. Moreover, it is a sin to entertain false hopes. What Manibehn says is clear. If you think that she is a *sevika*, that too of her ailing father, his secretary and aide, you may perhaps make changes in your article. If you find fault with her way of answering or her voice, one can only point out that you are much older. I don't remember anything.

NARENDRA A. TRIVEDI
SINDHI GALI
SETWALA BUILDING, 1ST FLOOR
BOMBAY 14

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

398. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

October 20, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

The argument that you have put forward has also been shared by Shah and Kumarappa. It is clear that only independent India can make such changes. The best of reforms can be implemented only if approved by the people. I am also sending Gagan Mehta's letter to you. Why should you do typing work? I believe the Talimi Sangh should do it.

Regarding your health I would like you to come here for treatment while I am here. But that requires enthusiasm on your part or detachment like Sardar's. He has no faith in this system but still he is giving it a trial.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

399. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

October 20, 1945

CHI. LILI,

I have your letter. You are very vain. Dr. Mehta would not have asked for anything. You must take what one says in the right spirit. If

that is not possible, forgive him, viewing it as a shortcoming. That is why I advise you to come here. I will have to stay here for quite some time. You will feel relieved and will gain some experience since Sushilabehn is here. Still if you don't feel like coming, go and spend some time with Durga and serve her as she needs looking after. I think your going to Nagpur is futile. Perhaps you will not get peace of mind there, even if you study there and are with your brother and sister-in-law. Think over all this and do what you like. What is there to order you in this? This is a trifling matter.

Perhaps I may go to the Ashram about the 15th, and then to Bengal, after staying there for 7 days.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

400. LETTER TO NAVNIT SHAH

October 20, 1945

BHAI NAVNIT,

I have your letter. You do not need a message from me. It has become a mania to ask for messages. Where is the need for messages while one does good work? Good work itself is the message. If young people understand this much they would be free of many worldly problems.

I have read your description. The money collected by you will be used for Harijan work.

NAVNIT SHAH
SHREE YUVAK SANGH
P. B. 726 KAMPALA (UGANDA)

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

401. LETTER TO P. N. MATHEW

October 20, 1945

BHAI MATHEW,

I have your postcard. The date for my going to Sevagram has not been fixed. I will stay there for a short time. Come over when I have settled down there. Do write and inquire.

P. N. MATHEW
DEVASKAR BUNGALOW
DHANTOLI, NAGPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

402. LETTER TO VINA CHATTERJEE

October 20, 1945

CHI. VINA,

I have your letter and also Sailen's. My views are firm. I don't believe in this sort of family attachments. Do what both of you deem fit. You won't gain anything by coming with me. My going has also been postponed. Go if you think it is your dharma to do so. Isn't your marriage fixed for November?. . .[1] I hope both of you are all right.

VINABEHN
BAJAJWADI, WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

403. LETTER TO PRINCIPAL, KANYA GURUKUL

October 20, 1945

PRINCIPAL,

I have your letter of 4th September.

I cannot involve myself in the activities you have mentioned because I don't have the time.

PRINCIPAL
RAMDEV SMARAK NIDHI KANYA GURUKUL
60 RAJPUR ROAD
DEHRA DUN

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

404. LETTER TO DR. KRISHNABAI NIMBKAR

October 20, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter of the 10th instant. I have read all your papers. Jajuji also must have gone through them.

I have already formed my opinion that everyone should spin as a part of *yajna*. Its real impact will be known only when people are convinced that *yajna is* much more than money. Why should we

[1] Omission as in the source

worry whether the work is difficult or easy? Now you also are coming to Poona leaving Madras. Let us see what happens now.

DR. (MRS.) KRISHNABAI NIMBKAR
192 POONAMALLE HIGH ROAD
VEPERY P. O.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

405. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

October 20, 1945

CHI. SATIS BABU,

I have your letter dated 10th October.

Sudhir Ghosh has come here. I have had long talks with him. He will tell you all about it. You should get the long letter I have written to Prafulla Babu[1] as I have told him to show it to you. You will come to know everything from it.

Let me repeat this much. I shall be deeply hurt if any ill feeling is created because of my going there. The reason why I wish to come is that I can personally see the condition of Bengal and give whatever help I can.

You are doing a lot of work. You should not fall ill. If you happen to fall ill I shall feel very bad.

The date of my arrival there cannot be fixed yet. The last date for leaving this place is 21st November. So I hope to reach there by the end of November.

I hope everyone is all right.

Today Rajkumari will return to Delhi from Simla and she may have to go to London for a month.

KHADI PRATISHTHAN
SODEPUR (24 PARAGANAS)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide*"Leter to P. C. Ghosh", 18-10-1945

406. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

October 20, 1945

CHI. SATIS BABU,

I have the copy of the letter you have written to Rajkumari. Today she must have reached Delhi from Simla and will fly to London tomorrow or the day after. You did well in writing to her. Why keep it in your heart? Since you have written so frankly, I also have an opportunity of saying something. Your sense of detachment should be sufficiently strong. Explain your doubts to Prafulla Babu and listen to what he says and if he disagrees, accept his advice. Haven't I made it clear in the letter that I have sent through Sudhir that so long as you all do not decide unanimously and not by majority, it should not be considered as finally decided? Still, I shall go there and decide which places I shall visit and which I may not. I have stopped anything being sent to the newspapers. I think this solves all the problems. How many people can be accommodated in Sodepur?

KHADI PRATISHTHAN
SODEPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

407. NOTE TO CHANDRANI

[Before *October 21, 1945*][1]

The meaning of the middle path is this. If you suddenly take a liking for someone, you will not act on an impulse. If you are used [to male company] you will not be affected by the sight of a young man. All men are like a brother or a father to you. If yours is an ideal mother she will also be a preceptor and guru. She will care for you and will find a husband for you. If your mother is not an ideal one any other person whom you have accepted as your mentor will take full care of you. It is possible you may yourself come across a person of your liking but that will be due to your previous birth and not because of a sudden infatuation. Even then you would like to consult your mother or your mentor and in that case it will not be a secret matter at all. By "you" here I do not mean "Chand" but . . . .[2] This

[1] Satyavati Devi referred to in this letter died on October 21, 1945.
[2] Illegible

is the middle path. What Satyavati writes about is a latterday notion and hardly acceptable.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You did well in coming.

From a photostat of the Hindi: Chandrani Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

408. DRAFT TELEGRAM TO SATYVATI DEVI[1]

October 21, 1945

SATYAVATI
TUBERCULOSIS HOSPITAL
KINGSWAY, DELHI

KNOW YOU ARE AT PEACE. LET THIS BE ITS WITNESS.

BAPU

From a copy: Brijkrishna Chandiwala Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also C.W. 10543. Courtesy: Brijkrishna Chandiwala

409. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

By air to Delhi POONA,
October 21, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter of 18th by air mail came in only today (9 a. m.). Your letter will be destroyed after Sushila has read it. She is just now (9.10) away at Talegaon to see a hospital. She will be back at 11.

Your time will pass quickly and you will be with me. Only keep well. "Be careful for nothing."

You will see Zakir's contradiction[2].

I am attending to all the matters referred to by you.

[1] Though drafted in the morning, this was not dispatched because the news of the addressee's death had reached Gandhiji. A copy of the *draft was,* however, sent to Brijkrishna Chandiwala by Sushila Nayyar on October 25.

[2] Of the report in *Dawn,* 13-10-1945; *vide* footnote 1, "Letter to Zakir Husain", 18-10-1945

Pyarelal is slowly recovering I hope. He is deathly pale. But this illness may be a blessing in disguise. Let us hope.

God keep you.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4169. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7805

410. LETTER TO KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI

POONA,
October 21, 1945

VAHALAN BEHN,

Your letter in front of me.

I have sent a wire[1] to Satyavati. Please tell her that she is constantly in my mind. Her great courage and devotion to the country are an inspiration to all who know her or have known of her.

Your account of the I. N. A. pleases me but does not enthuse me.[2] It is most natural you wish I had such material. Do you know that it is not possible even if I wish it?

What material could I send you to assist you in your work there?

Love.

BAPU

SHRI KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI
82 DARYAGANJ, DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

411. LETTER TO FRANK W. MOFFETT

AS AT SEVAGRAM,
CAMP: NATURE CURE CLINIC,
POONA,
October 21, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I have no title such as 'Honourable' or any other. I thank you for the peanut formulae.

[1] *Vide* "Draft Telegram to Satyavati Devi", 21-10-1945

[2] The addressee was on the Indian National Army Defence Committee appointed by the All-India Congress Committee.

Regarding the publication of *My Experiments with Truth* you can charge more than 5% rising up to 10% if it becomes necessary. I hope, however, that the proposed publication will not cause any loss.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

FRANK W. MOFFETT, ESQ.
707, BROWDER STREET
DALLAS
(TEXAS, U.S.A.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

412. LETTER TO BHULABHAI J. DESAI

POONA,

October 21, 1945

BHAI BHULABHAI[1],

As it is difficult to decipher my handwriting, I am dictating this letter so that it can be written in a clear hand.

Sardar and I keep receiving telegrams suggesting that you should be put up as a candidate for the Central Legislative Assembly. I myself have no interest in the elections. A durbar daily assembles round the Sardar, but I know nothing about it. Ordinarily he does not talk to me not do I ask him anything. I attend to my work and he attends to his. The only reason for our being together this time is his nature-care treatment. He does not have much faith in nature care while I have. An operation would be a very risky affair. No doctor except Dr. Deshmukh advises it. That is why he has put faith in me and is undergoing nature-cure treatment. I have, accordingly, brought him to Dr. Mehta for I have faith in him. My own knowledge of nature cure is superficial. I have given this introduction because I thought it necessary.

If Sardar receives any suggestion regarding you, he puts it before me. Since you have accepted my advice, I assume that you yourself are not at all keen o getting into the Central Assembly, and that, therefore, those who send the telegrams do not do so at your

[1] (1877-1946); Leader of the Congress Party in the Central Assembly; President, Bombay Provincial Congress Committee; member of Congress Working Committee

instance. Some big people naturally desire your presence in the Assembly. If I were not there, perhaps Sardar would have yielded to the pressure. But I am firm, for I am acting as your well-wisher. I want a big service from you, if you can give it. I wish to see you as a people's man. I don't consider you an old man. Why shouldn't you also live up to 125? If you do not aspire to live that long, as I do, please remember that I try to persuade everybody to have such as piration for the sake of service. And it is not that there is no strength or effort behind my aspiration. If there is non and my aspiration proves fruitless, I will accept that. I am not, therefore, afraid of death if it should come today. But I will cherish my aspiration till my last breath, for I have to serve —I have not yet finished with service. There is a spirit of competition to serve which all of us should share.

From this standpoint I suggest to you that you yourself should issue a graceful statement, thanking all those who are trying on your behalf, explaining that you do not wish to be a member of the Assembly at the moment and that you have been doing, and will continue to do, whatever service you can from outside, that if you live long enough and feel later that you should also enter the Legislature, you yourself will come forward and seek people's votes.

I like the work you are doing just now of defending the prisoners.[1] It will bring you credit. I also wish that like Jawaharlal and Sardar, and to a great extent Maulana Azad, you too should come into contact with the masses. Perhaps I should cite Rajendra Babu's case as offering the best example. Rajendra Babu is sought after by Bihar, he himself does not go seeking the support of Bihar. I can cite other similar instances, too. But where is the need to do so for you? Even what I have written above seems to me too long, but I cannot restrain my *Moha*[2]. If desire also could be described as *sattvika*[3], I am sure this desire of mine is that and, therefore, I need not hide it. I trust you are well and succeeding in your efforts.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Bhulabhai Desai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] In accordance with the A. I. C. C. resolution of September 1945, a committee consisting of T. B. Sapru and the addressee had been formed to defend Shah Nawaz Khan, Sehgal and G. S. Dhillon of the Indian National Army, who were to be tried for treason in November 1945. Later Jawaharlal Nehru, Asaf Ali and K. N. Katju were also included in the committee.

[2] Infatuation

[3] Pure

413. A NOTE

POONA,
October 21, 1945

I have gone through this. I liked it. I would like to go a little further. Khadi is a symbol of truth and ahimsa. It should not subsist on the mercy of the Government. It will be a different thing altogether if khadi is adopted deliberately after its real strength is realized. The shortage of cloth will then be easily removed. We can even have swaraj by non-violent means and thereby bring credit to ourselves and to our Government. Sooner or later that will come but how soon it will come, depends on the public acceptance of the new plan. I do know that a time may come when we may even have to suspend the sale of khadi in our shops. Self-reliance is the only remedy.

From that point of view Jajuji's article is a preliminary and an essential move.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]
Sarvodaya, 1945

414. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

October 21, 1945

BHAI JAJUJI,

I am enclosing your article after making corrections and adding a note[1]. If you do not approve of my note, you may get the article published without it.

Chi. Narandas is coming tomorrow. I have kept a copy of the article. I shall discuss it with him.

I hope you are all right.

AKHIL BHARTIYA CHARKHA SANGH
SEVAGRAM
WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

415. LETTER TO ANANT RAM

October 21, 1945

CHI. ANANT RAM,

Only today I could finish reading your letter of September 2. It is good.

Ramanama includes everything. The order is: *dharma, artha, kama* and *moksha*[1]. *Artha* cannot be opposed to *kama, dharma* and *moksha.* Hence, *artha is* food, clothing and other necessities of life; *kama is* noble desire. Ramanama transcends time and circumstance—it has to. And it must issue from the heart, not from the mouth. It requires persistent effort. Get Asha Devi to write down the *Gitanjali*[2] songs in Bengali and send them to me.

Become good and do lot of service.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.G. 133

416. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

October 21, 1945

CHI. SHRIMAN,

I completed your article[3] yesterday. I am sending it by registered post. Read what I have written at different places. Make the changes that appeal to you. We can merely throw hints regarding Pakistan. I don't find any depth in the last few chapters. Nor is there any supporting evidence. There is according to me need for more hard work and careful thinking. If you think it fit and if Kishorelal and Vinoba can spare time, discuss this with them. I am postponing writing the foreword.[4][2] Come here if you want to. If you can put it off wait till I come over. Do what you think proper.

I hope Madalasa is all right.

SHRIMAN NARAYAN AGRAWAL
COMMERCE COLLEGE
WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The four ends of human endeavour

[2] By Rabindranath Tagore

[3] *Gandhian Constitution for Free India.* For Gandhiji's foreword to it dated November 30, 1945

[4] *ibid*

417. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

October 21, 1945

CHI. MANILAL,

I got your joint letter.

Everyone is concentrating on Arun. Let me see what happens. I am writing this at night. I have asked him also to write. We have had rains here recently.

I have told you that my work would always go on. Sushila is a very good worker. She has taken over all Rajkumari's work. Kanaiyo is still here. He quickly disposes of all the lengthy Gujarati letters and the other special work which I entrust to him. No work here, therefore, has stopped or presents any difficulty. I take proper sleep and rest. Do not, therefore, worry about me.

Pyarelal's fever has come down today. Perhaps it will touch normal now. Sushila looks after him, but he is being given nature-cure treatment,

Arun is giving no trouble to anyone. He remains happy. Sumi has reached Nagpur.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4961

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

418. TELEGRAM TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

POONA,
October 22,[1] *1945*

BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA
1 NARENDRA PLACE
DELHI

HOPE RELATIVES AND FRIENDS WILL NOT MOURN OVER THE DEATH OF ONE OF THE BRAVEST SERVANTS[2] OF INDIA. LET HER LIVE BY OUR DEDICATING OURSELVES SOLELY FOR THE FREEDOM OF INDIA.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 10544. Courtesy: Brijkrishna Chandiwala. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The C.W. source, however, has "23"
[2] Satyavati Devi

419. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

October 22, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

How is it that Babudi has again fallen ill there? Does she take hip-baths? Does she exert herself? What does she eat? Does she use a mosquito-net? The money was to be given according to the usual rule. My impression is that it has been given to Jajuji.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.G. 128

Blessings from

BAPU

420. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

[*October 22*, 1945][1]

CHI. BABUDI,

Why do you fall ill? If your food habits and ventilation are taken care of nothing should happen to you. Do you drink boiled water? Do you know how to repeat Ramanama?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.G. 128

421. LETTER TO JATINDAS M. AMIN

POONA,
October 22, 1945

CHI. AMIN,

I have your letter. Now have you declared me not guilty? A man cannot become an inmate of the Ashram just because he appreciates the elevenfold vow[2] or knows all the Shastras and is acquainted with the constructive programme. But one certainly becomes such by observing the vows. It seems you have not been able to see that constructive programme is included in the observance of the vows.

[1] This was written on the same sheet as the preceding item.

[2] Viz., non-violence, truth, non-stealing, *brahmacharya*, non-possession, body-labour, control of the palate, fearlessness on all occasions, equal respect for all religions, swadeshi and *sparshabhavana*, that is, refusal to treat anybody as untouchable

Now go through it again. A person who finds fault with most people, or with some of them, cannot see his own shortcomings. Don't make this mistake.

One becomes a leader not by making mistakes but by getting rid of one's shortcomings and imbibing a leader's qualities.

SEVAGRAM ASHRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

422. LETTER TO CHANDRANI.

October 22, 1945

CHI. CHAND,

Satyavati has departed. She has been released from suffering. She is of course immortal. Our duty is not to grieve over it but to do our duty to the utmost, dedicating ourselves to the cause of India's freedom.

Blessings from

BAPU

DAGA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
NAGPUR

From a photostat of the Hindi: Chandrani Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

423. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI

October 23, 1945

CHI. KASHI,

I am writing this letter for the sake of writing. Just to tell you that I have not forgotten any one of you while I am away.

Krishnachandra writes and says that you do not keep well and intend going to Nagpur for a change of air. I have my doubts if going there will be beneficial. Would not Madalasa's house be better than that? Madalasa would like it, too. This is merely a suggestion. Do as you think fit.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

424. LETTER TO DURGA M. DESAI

October 23, 1945

CHI. DURGA,

From the letters that I get I find that you are both far from well. Why is it so? Bablo must be fine.

After the operation Sushi must have got rid of her ailment. Sushilabehn is at work here as I am dictating this letter. She informs me that Sushi has completely recovered.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

425. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

POONA,
October 23, 1945

BAPA,

I have your letter.

I have not felt that we[1] have been needlessly lax. I do not therefore believe that our laxity causes confusion or indiscipline. There should indeed be no indiscipline. And from where can they get money, etc., if they want to have a maternity centre and other things without permission? We cannot say anything if they themselves collect the amount for it. Moreover, haven't I said that wherever people are willing to work, we allow them to do so by issuing a circular to that effect?

THAKKAR BAPA
BAJAJWADI
WARDHA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

426. LETTER TO JETHALAL GANDHI

October 23, 1945

CHI. KAKU,

I am glad that Auntie[2] went and stayed with you. But I don't approve of her giving speeches and going round in Travancore. That is not her field. She is older than I. How then can she do justice to this

[1] The management of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust
[2] Gandhiji's sister, Raliatbehn Vrindavandas

new activity in her old age? It is a sad thing if she is after fame. I have no doubt that this sort of work is not at all proper for her, whatever the temptation. I don't know who is with her or who encouraged her in this. Find out about this and give my message to her if possible. Let me know what you have been able to do.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

427. LETTER TO KAMAAL KHAN

October 23, 1945

BHAI SAHEB,

I have your letter,

If you have anything to ask me on the ocassion of your restoration to the rulership, do write.

I hope you are all right.

THAKORESAHEB KAMAALKHANJI
MARKS FARM
PARDI
DISTRICT SURAT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

428. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

October 23, 1945

BHAI BENARSIDAS,

I have your postcard. I am sending it on to Shrimanji.

Who are we to stop the spread of pure Hindi or pure Urdu? Even if we try, the attempt is bound to fail. Our duty is to bring together the two styles of Hindi and Urdu. And this can only happen when there is a large class of people knowing both the scripts and both the styles.

It is not very clear what you mean by *rashtrabhasha*. My definition is clear enough: only that person who knows both the scripts and can write in both the styles can be said to be proficient in *rashtrabhasha*.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI
TIKAMGARH
BUNDELKHAND

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2518

429. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

October 23, 1945

CHI. SHRIMAN,

The registered letter[1] will be sent only today. I forgot to write one thing. My suggestion is that you should write in Hindustani whatever you wish to say and then repeat it in English if you think it is necessary to do so. Your present article is in English but I suggest that simultaneously there should be a Hindustani rendering also. It would be good indeed if it is both in Devanagari and Urdu scripts and is published simultaneously. Sooner or later we have to give up our fascination and attachment for English. And if you and I do not make the beginning who else will?

I am enclosing Benarsidas's postcard. I am also enclosing a copy of my reply[2].

SHRIMAN NARAYAN AGRAWAL
.JIVAN KUTIR
WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

430. LETTER TO NAYARBUL BHOWALI

October 23, 1945

BHAI BHOWALI,

I have the book *Bandhustan* sent by you. My knowledge of Bengali is too poor for me to read and understand your book.

NAYARBUL BHOWALI
85F WELLESLEY STREET
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

431. LETTER TO DR. H. K. LAL

October 23, 1945

BHAI LALJI,

I had received your letter of 8th September and also the earlier ones. Your letter shows that though you are a doctor you get excited

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Shriman Narayan", 21-10-1945
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

very soon. I can only say that I started making inquiries as soon as I got your letter even though I was very busy. Now after making inquiries my son has written to me on 18th October.

Let me tell you that leprosy work is being done through Kasturba Smarak Nidhi; some other institutions are also doing it. If need be your help will be sought. At the moment I don't require any. I must also admit that your letter of 8th September has made me feel alarmed.

You seem to belong to the Punjab; so you must be knowing Hindustani well. English is not your mother tongue. Then why do you write to me in English which you cannot write as well as your mother tongue?

DR. H. K. LAL, M.B.B.S.
1 PUSA ROAD
NEW DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

432. LETTER TO MAHADEVSHASTRI DIVEKAR

October 23, 1945

PANDITJI,

I have your letter and three copies of your book on Hindu-Muslim [relations]. When you know Gujarati and Hindi, why did you write to me in English?

I was glad to know that you visited Porbandar and gave lectures in Gujarati.

I cannot say when I shall get time to read your book.

PANDIT MAHADEVSHASTRI DIVEKAR
MIRAJ

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

433. LETTER TO V. V. DASTANE

October 23, 1945

BHAI DASTANE,

I have your postcard. It is not that I have not replied to your letter owing to lack of time, but since I have something new to say, there is no need to reply to your other questions. The new thing is that

till today you have considered public service as primary and have devoted to the family only whatever time was available after that. Now having heard everything from Akka[1], I feel that you are no longer in a position to do so. Naturally you have to take care of Akka and also look after your other daughters and manage their affairs. You have to support your wife. If you do not, who else will? So it is the duty of people like you to give primary importance to the family responsibilities and devote to public service only as much time as you can after that. One who shoulders the burden of the family as dharma also renders service. One must clearly distinguish between family responsibility and family enjoyment. You have long since given up indulgence. Why should I discuss these things at length? You should be able to understand them from what I have already said. It should be clear enough that if you do not abide by what I have said the result will be quite to the contrary of what it should be.

I cannot say what I had in mind when I wrote "I cannot give" [answers to your other questions]. And what will you gain by thinking over it again and again? If I was short of time, I should have said that I would reply to the other questions some other time. At any rate, I was quite clear in my mind when I sent a letter[2] through Akka that I should tell you what according to me your dharma was without bothering you about other things. Now the question arises only if you are not able to understand and approve of my stand. You can discuss this letter with Vinoba and Kishorelal. Of course also with Dhotre[3] and other relatives there.

VASUDEV DASTANE
BHUSAWAL

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

434. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR[4]

October 23, 1945

BAPA,

I have no objection to the Gujarat training scheme being conducted in Sabarmati provided the sisters who come for training are

[1] Addressee's daughter, Sarayu Dhotre
[2] Not available
[3] Raghunath Shridhar Dhotre, addressee's son-in-law
[4] This is written in the Gujarati script.

qualified, whether they come from villages or not. In any case they should be working in villages or at least should be interested in village work.

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

435. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

October 23, 1945

MAULANA SAHEB,

I have your letter. I really wish I had enough time to write Urdu in a beautiful hand.

It will be good indeed if you can go somewhere for rest in the beginning of November. Of course work is always there but sometimes rest is essential for work and for doing more of it.

Rajkumari will be reaching there today on her way to London with Dr. Sargent[1] and Dr. Zakir Husain Saheb. Educationists from all over the world will be meeting in London. Dr. Sargent has convened this conference, and Rajkumari and Dr. Zakir Husain were invited by him. She was not at all keen on giving her name for the conference[2]. She had discussed the matter with me. She will be able to meet others also in London.

Sardar's treatment is going on. I shall have to go to Bombay for five days.

From the Urdu original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

436. TELEGRAM TO RADHABAI SUBBAROYAN

October 24, 1945

RADHABAI SUBBAROYAN[3]
TIRUCHENGODU

NEVER DISCUSSED WITH DELEGATES FROM SOUTH ANY ELECTION MATTER. HAVE TAKEN NO INTEREST. SARDAR RARELY TALKS

[1] John Sargent
[2] The source has 'Assembly'.
[3] Wife of Dr. P. Subbaroyan

ABOUT ELECTIONS. BUT WHY FRET ABOUT ELECTION?[1] FOR PATRIOTS SERVICE ONLY AMBITION.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

437. LETTER TO K. SANTHANAM

October 24, 1945

DEAR SANTHANAM,

Many thanks for your letter. I have read your article. That is no bar to your proceeding with your work.

K. SANTHANAM
"HINDUSTAN TIMES"
P. B. 40, NEW DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

438. LETTER TO NILKANTH MASHRUWALA

October 24, 1945

CHI. NILKANTH[2],

I have your postcard. Everyone asked Chi. Arun and so did I. But he wants to leave this place only along with me. I don't want to send him away forcibly. Please go yourself on the date fixed.

MASHRUWALA
SOUTH AVENUE ROAD
SANTACRUZ

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

439. LETTER TO DR. M. D. D. GILDER

October 24, 1945

BHAI GILDER,

Do go and examine Sardar whether he sends for you or not. And let me know how much he has improved in your view or if he has

[1] The addressee's candidature for the Central Assembly had been rejected.
[2] Son of Nanabhai Mashruwala, brother of Sushila Gandhi

changed for the worse, or if you are not able to say anything.

DR. M. D. D. GILDER
ZENITH BUILDING
SIR PHIROZESHAH MEHTA ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

440. LETTER TO JEHANGIR PATEL

October 24, 1945

BHAI JEHANGIR,

I have your letter. Gradually form the habit of speaking and writing in Gujarati. Read and write a little of Gujarati every day.

Your letter is clear and I have understood it. I feel that just now we should go to the sanatorium and shift to Tryambak Road after we get electricity and water. But I don't want to do this if Dinshaw does not like it.

I understand about Verrier. More when you come over.

I hope Mother is all right and you did not get fever again.

JEHANGIR PATEL
PATEL BROTHERS
10 CHURCHGATE STREET
BOMBAY 1

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

441. LETTER TO VENUBAI GODBOLE

October 24, 1945

SISTER VENUBAI,

Bhai Haribhau[1] informed me that Prof. Godbole passed away today. I knew him very well. He had taken part in the non-co-operation movement for the sake of the country. True mourning is for you too to have the same capacity for sacrifice that he had.

VENUBAI GODBOLE
'VINAYAK GHAR'
PRABHAT ROAD
DECCAN GYMKHANA
POONA-4

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Hari Ganesh Phatak

442. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

October 25, 1945

CHI. SUSHILA,

I had a postcard from Chi. Nilkanth yesterday saying that you wanted Arun to come to you with him. I told Arun about it. Kanu has the greatest influence over him. He and others also told him. But he remained stubborn. He says he will come with me. That means all of you will have to spend the Diwali without him. Put up with his absence. I am sure you do not wish that I should send him against his will. With great difficulty he wrote the letter on the back of this last night. He has no interest at all in study, but has plenty in playing and cycling. Whatever is possible will have to be done only here. Arun himself is quite happy. He studies a little, but very little. For all this backwardness I hold you, his mother, most responsible, since I have always believed you to be wise. If Arun remains a dullard, I will surely regard you as stupid.

May you all spend a happy Diwali. Reserve a share for us all in your happiness. "Us all" includes all of us here and the dumb, poor millions of India. Those who do not remember them even on the Diwali day, their Diwali, according to me, is worse than Holi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4962

443. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[*October 25*, 1945][1]

CHI. MANILAL,

I got your postcard. Please do not be eager to come here for my sake. Stay there as long as the relatives want. Join me when I start from here. Pyarelal's fever has come down. Arun has read what you had written on the back.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4962

[1] This letter is written on the back of the letter to Sushila Gandhi dated October 25, 1945.

444. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

October 25, 1945

CHI. KAKA,

I got your letter today. You have given a good deal of information. Take care of your health. It will of course be very good if you go to Wardha. Shriman has gone to Mainpuri for a few days. I think you should go to Kashi. I am afraid our dates will clash. I intend to reach Wardha on November 21, and then proceed to Bengal from there on the 30th. This is the intention just now. I will leave this place on November 19. I shall spend a day in Bombay.

I understand about Amritlal. About the examination, I suppose you will decide in consultation with Shriman. I am agreeable. My blessings to both the sisters. You may come here whenever you wish to.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10968

445. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

October 25, 1945

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. You have given a very moving account. Satyavati was exactly as you have described. I do not recall the name of anyone, but convey to all the members of the family the message I had sent you in my telegram[1]. How nice that Satyavati's desire in regard to marriage[2] was fulfilled!

If I think of any rites in connection with the death I shall write to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2489

[1] *V*ide "Telegram to Brijkrishna Chandiwala", 22-10-1945

[2] Of her son

446. LETTER TO VITHALDAS V. JERAJANI

October 25, 1945

BHAI VITHALDAS,

I have read all your papers. I believe the A. I. S. A. Committee will meet immediately after the 21st. We shall discuss this then. So I am saving your time and mine by not discussing it here.

VITHALDAS JERAJANI
KHADI BHANDAR
393 KALBADEVI
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

447. LETTER TO ICHCHHANAND

October 25, 1945

SWAMIJI,

I have your letter in English. If you did not know the national language Hindustani, you could have written to me in the language of your province. Why this infatuation for English?

I don't know when I shall be able to reach your book and make time to read it.

ICHCHHANAND
SOUTH GOVINDPUR
P. O. KATRASGARH

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

448. LETTER TO ABHYANKAR

October 25, 1945

BHAI ABHYANKAR,

I have your letter dated the 22nd instant. Your Hindi is not bad but it may be inadequate to express your thoughts. Mine is also imperfect but the very idea of writing to Indians in English pains me. Moreover, I will not agree that you can truly express your thoughts or feelings in English. Maybe, you think otherwise. But I know that I would have understood your thoughts better if you had written in Marathi.

I shall not enter into an argument with you. What I have written to you is right.[1] The inquiry is still going on. And I have all [the papers] as far as the matter has progressed. The day before yesterday I got the copy of the statement by the father of the child who met with an untimely death. Now I shall write to you after the inquiry is over. Only this much today.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

449. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

October 25, 1945

BAPA,

I had the circular you wanted to issue about the women village workers I don't remember now why I did not give then the approval asked for. I am sorry there has been this delay. I have carefully gone through it. Do circulate it.

Satyabhama Devi's donation should be accepted if the Provincial Committee can make use of it and no burden falls on us. I take it that the correspondence, etc., will be put in order.

The idea of training midwives through the Kamala Nehru Hospital[2] is good. It is commendable that facilities are made available by the Hospital. But I have my doubts about the utility of such midwives as they will not be able to serve in villages. Since our committee is going to meet now the matter will be decided withoutany delay. It had, therefore, better be postponed till then. I hope to reach Wardha on the 21st. Fix a date between that and the 30th, after consulting Jajuji, and issue a notice[3].

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Abhyankar", 14-10-1945
[2] At Allahabad
[3] This word is in English.

450. LETTER TO PESTON GROVER

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
October 26, 1945

MY DEAR GROVER,

I kept your letter with me thinking what I should do. The more I think the more I feel that I must not speak on the atomic bomb.[1] I must act if I can. Therefore, if you are a journalist of the right type, you will help me to observe silence on such matters.

Thank you for your enquiry about my health which is as good as it can be.

Yours sincerely,

PESTON GROVER, ESQ.
ASSOCIATED PRESS OF AMERICA
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

451. LETTER TO FLORENCE WEDGWOOD

POONA,
October 26, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

Your letter of 27th February last year was received in the jail. It was given to me some time after my release[2]. I came to read it only a few days ago and I kept it for answering when I got a moment for such writing.

Many thanks for your sympathy. Your late husband[3] and I were good friends. I miss him.

I have written on life after death. But sorry I cannot lay hands on it at the moment. It is buried among my writings on a variety of subjects. But there is much on the subject in the English literature.

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Kailas D. Master", 21-9-1945

[2] On May 6, 1944

[3] Josiah Clement Wedgwood (1872-1943); British Labour leader and Member of Parliament, 1919-42. He had attended the Nagpur session of the Congress in 1920.

And why peep into the life beyond? It should be enough if you have faith that the future is as certain as the present.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MRS. FLORENCE WEDGWOOD
902 HOWARD HOUSE
DOLPHIN SQUARE
LONDON, S.W. 1

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

452. LETTER TO E. SOMAN APPASAMY

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD
POONA,
October 26, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

Gandhiji has received your letter of 24th inst. He is surprised to hear from you that Shri Kamaraj and Shri Bhaktavatsalam used his name to persuade you to stand for election. He had said nothing of the kind to them. In the company of others they came to see him and enquire about his health as he was under the same roof as Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Dr. Pattabhi who led them pointedly remarked that they had only come on a friendly visit as they knew he took no interest in elections, and as a matter of fact during the few minutes that they were with him there was no talk about the elections.

Yours sincerely,

S. N.

SHRI E. SOMAN APPASAMY
"PRITHI SADAN"
25 TIRUMALAI PILLAI RD.
THYAGARAJANAGAR, MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

453. LETTER TO MAHENDRA G. DESAI

October 26, 1945

CHI. MAHENDRA,

I have a letter from you after a long interval. I really can't make out what you wish to do. It is good you have consulted Maganbhai. But my advice is that instead of attempting a new venture, do what you can in the normal course.

MAHENDRA GOPALDAS DESAI
P. B. 32, GIRIDIH
DIST. HAZARIBAG

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

454. LETTER TO P. N. KAUL

October 26, 1945

BHAI KAUL,

Do barristers forget their mother tongue?

Maulana Saheb is doing something about Caveeshar[1]. I shall certainly take necessary action when required. There is no question of forgetting. He will certainly be released.

P. N. KAUL, ADVOCATE
83 EXPRESS ROAD
LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Sardul Singh Caveeshar (b. 1886); President, Punjab Congress Committee, 1920; Member, Congress Working Committee, 1928; joined All-India Forward Bloc and became its Acting President in 1940. He was arrested under the Defence of India Rules.

455. LETTER TO DR. SURESH BANNERJI

October 26, 1945

BHAI SURESH,

I feel happy whenever I get a letter from you. The news that you are fine is enough for me. I shall hear the rest from you when you are released. Keep well.

DR. SURESH BANNERJI
C/O SUPERINTENDENT, CENTRAL JAIL
RAJSHAHU, BENGAL

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

456. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

October 26, 1945

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have had Jehangir Patel's[1] letter. He also writes that only the school building would be suitable. There should be some more facilities there. There should also be provision for electricity and water. Dinshaw suggests going straight into the school building when everything is ready. In that case it will take nine months. I favour moving at once into the sanatorium building and starting work there, and later shifting to the school building when it is ready. Whether this is possible or not has to be decided by you people. In the sanatorium building also more pipes will be required for water. Maybe, something will have to be done about electricity too. Water treatment requires plenty of water. I see some difficulty in taking the school building. If the school is to be housed there, it will be difficult to run two institutions in the same building. If my idea takes shape, even the present building may not be enough. For, my idea is that the poor also have to be admitted and I shall be interested in running nature-cure clinics for them, too. It seems to me that from the school building it would also be possible to serve the village people as I have planned to do. Think over all this and let me know what you feel would be best to do.

Let me also give you Sardar's view. He believes that I should not

[1] A Trustee of the Nature Cure Clinic

interest myself in this work to this extent. If Dinshaw requires financial help I should have it provided to him and then stop at it. In going further at the moment there is a risk of Dinshaw breaking down or my being disappointed and the great affection which Dinshaw is showing for me today coming to an end. I have no such fear. In my opinion Dinshaw can break down, but his affection for me cannot wane. I know that he had the same affection for me even when no question of money was involved and when I did not even know him. But Sardar understands human nature and he has too much consideration for me; so I think it is as well to place his view before you so that you may decide the question objectively.

Please do not think that just because I have been given assurance about Nasik no other alternative should be considered. Nature-cure work is of great importance. If carried on well it can have far-reaching results the scope of which can hardly be envisaged today. It must also be considered to what extent Dinshaw can fit into this set-up. If you think it necessary to see me before taking any decision in the matter and if you can find some time, come and talk it over. But if the matter can be settled through correspondence, you need not come. In spite of my great interest in this work you should take it that I am acting in a detached way. If I am to live for 125 years, there is also this condition that my sense of objectivity, that is, non-attachment should increase day by day and approximate as much to perfection as is humanly possible. I do not know how this can happen or whether it will happen at all. Why should I even wish to know? Let me keep that ideal in view and do what I consider to be my duty. I know this much that it is difficult to reach that ideal. But my life has been spent in tackling difficult tasks.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8073. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

457. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

October 26, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Do what you think proper with regard to *Gitai.* After all, it is just for the morning, is it not? Consult the people who come every day and do what seems proper to all.

I note what you say about Kailas. It is good about Baburamji and Reddy.

My heart is there. I shall go there as soon as I can leave this place. I have decided on the 21st as the last day. Then Godwilling, I shall be there. I am not happy about Gomatibehan illness.

How did Kantabehn fall ill?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4535

458. LETTER TO L. N. GOPALASWAMI[1]

POONA,
October 27, 1945

MY DEAR GOPALASWAMI[2],

Yours about Rajaji. In so far as the people caused any disturbance neither the Congress nor I had anything to do with them. There is no doubt that the people resented and rose against the hasty and wholesale arrests[3]. The civil disobedience movement could only be started by me. I never started it. In some cases people lost self-control. But the Government[’s] senseless violence eclipsed all popular violence.

To accuse Rajaji of betrayal is not to know him. He is too good to do anything mean. Of course I have accepted his Formula because I believe in it.

Yours,

BAPU

SHRI L. N. GOPALASWAMI
C/O SHRI A. VAIDYANATH IYER
SANTHAIPET
MADURA, SOUTH INDIA

From a photostat: C.W. 10552. Courtesy: Government of Tamil Nadu

[1] A photostat of the letter was displayed at the Tamil Nadu Pavilion at the Gandhi-Darshan held in New Delhi in 1969-70.

[2] Secretary, Tamil Nadu Harijan Sevak Sangh. The addressee had accused Rajagopalachari on two counts, viz., non-participation in the Quit India movement and his stand regarding Pakistan.

[3] In August, 1942

459. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRA RAO

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
October 27, 1945

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRA RAO,

Yours of the 13th to hand.

1. Booklet[1] on health is still undergoing revision. It was suspended after my premature discharge from jail and I never had the time for finishing it. When it is finished you will know of this new publication. You can certainly publish a translation. It will not be called a new edition. It will be, if it is ever published, a new thing altogether.

2. There are many claimants for service of labour. Unfortunately, Congress monopoly tacitly recognized by all is broken. But if the Congress is challenged I suppose the Congress will say we are the only real servants of labour. Who will establish the claim finally is in the womb of time. My participation in the affairs of the Working Committee is very slight and, I fancy, growing slighter. Therefore, don't expect me to do anything in the matter of the flag designed by you.

3. SWEEPERS. You and a few others may recognize my claim to be the first sweeper, but I will cut a sorry figure in a sweepers' conference. The so-called sweepers will themselves repudiate my claim as many do. My sympathy will be with them in such repudiation. The fortunate position of a self-styled man, however, is that he does not require any outside recognition of a style adopted by himself. Therefore, I must not bear the burden of having the conference even when the choice of the venue is left to me. What is more, I have neither the time nor the wish to carry more burdens than I have. You should therefore go on without counting on my service even in the way of a message. Cultivate the belief that every *bonafide* service carries with it its own recognition.

[1] Gandhiji had started writing the *Key to Health* on August 27, 1942, during his incarceration in the Aga Khan Palace and completed it on December 18, 1942. The Gujarati original was translated into Hindustani and English by Sushila Nayyar under Gandhiji's guidance. For *Key to Health, vide* For Gandhiji's earlier writings on the subject written in South Africa, . These were later published in the form of a booklet under the title A *Guide to Health.*

4. MATERNITY HOME. Are you not principally dependent upon Government grant and recognition? The record you mention is certainly very good but it loses in public dignity and value. No Government or Government-aided institution suffers for want of funds. All are crowded, some even to suffocation. Whether they really serve the needy poor is a separate question. This criticism is independent of the fact that I have to ask you to be merciful and excuse me from the obligation you seek to impose on me. If I do succeed in visiting Madras for the Hindustani Prachar Sabha, I must ask friends who know me to extend to me their co-operation by imposing upon themselves restraint in the way of saving me from further burdens.

5. "UP FROM SLAVERY": I would love to write a line on this. But seeing that you have waited all these years I would ask you to wait a little longer and remind me when I have settled down after the tours I have in mind.

Yours,

BAPU

SHRI G. RAMACHANDRA RAO
SEVAGRAM
GUDIVADA (KISTNA DISTRICT)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

460 LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

October 27, 1945

CHI. MANILAL,

Read the accompanying cable[1] and reply to Nagin. Send him a cable, saying, 'Bapu unable send message.' The pre-paid form also is enclosed, so that you may use it. Send the reply immediately.

Arun is quite happy. The rest is going on well. Sardar has left on business, accompanied by Dinshaw. Both will return on the 1st. My work is going on very well. Do not worry at all.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4963

[1] From Nagin P. Desai of Durban seeking a message from Gandhiji for the foundation-stone-laying ceremony of the Gujarati school and hall of Kathiawari Hindu Seva Samaj which was to be held on October 31

461. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

October 27, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

It would be very good indeed if Gomati completely recovers. She is as strong as you. She has the strength to bear any amount [of pain]. But ["those who are in it enjoy rare happiness] the spectators are scorched".[1]

Whenever I am consulted about an *abhinandan granth*[2], *I* always oppose the suggestion. So I will oppose it regarding Kakasaheb also. You too should do the same.

I am going to say the same thing about Nathuram Premi. I think this is a sort of mania.

I don't feel like writing to Ranka[3]. From your suggestion I take it that Sardar will write to him.

Don't trust what the newspapers say. I am not going to stay in Poona. It will be a different thing if I have to come here to help Dinshaw. More later.

KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA
SEVAGRAM
WARDHA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

462. LETTER TO JATINDAS M. AMIN

October 27, 1945

CHI. AMIN,

You don't know how much anxiety you are causing to all of us. Your dharma is to admit that you yourself are suffering from illusion instead of saying that others have turned against you. You should not go to any shop or ask for money and spend it. If you lose your temper all the time, you had better leave the Ashram. Come here if you feel like it. You are not in a position to go to the Himalayas. Your place is either near your father or near me. Do what you think fit after thinking over all this. At any rate, leave the Ashram.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Ashram Bhajanavali"
[2] Felicitation volume
[3] Poonamchand Ranka

463. LETTER TO HARJIVAN KOTAK

October 27, 1945

CHI. HARJIVAN KOTAK,

I have your letter. I understand about the expenses. I don't remember the decision I had taken but I think if they agree to give you more, a way can be found.

I can say more if I know who is the hakim and what his opinion is. I want you to settle down.

HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

464. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

October 27, 1945

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter written at 12 o'clock at night. Your brother is gone. From the empirical view it is only natural that you should grieve, but if you take the transcendental view, the integral view, what is there to grieve over in death? What is there to rejoice over in birth? These two go together, one must follow the other and the two are inseparably linked. Hence at least to you death should cause no sorrow. You have an added reason for devoting yourself to your duty.

It is all the more regrettable that you thought of going into the Assembly at the suggestion of your deceased brother.

About Gadodiaji, if you stick to everything [you have said] write to me point by point as 1, 2, 3. I am willing to send them to him. I shall also suggest that they should be placed before an arbitrator.

These should cover all the complaints you had made to me. The decision about other things may well depend on it, though now I must confess I have my suspicions.

I cannot write anything about Sardar because he and Dinshawji are in Bombay. They will return on the 1st. With the elder brother gone, who is shouldering the responsibility of the household? How many brothers are you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 342 and 343

465. LETTER TO ABID ALI

October 27, 1945

BHAI ABID ALI,

I have your postcard. Come whenever you wish to. I hope everyone is all right.

JANAB ABID ALI SAHEB
GREEN HOTEL
MATHERAN

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy Pyarelal

466. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

POONA,
October 28, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

Your Karachi letter just received. Thank God you were all right up to Karachi and hope you will continue so till you return to me. Pyarelal is out of fever, has been for the past four days, and is slowly gaining strength. Sardar is in Bombay and will return on 1st. Dinshaw is with him. Our party will leave Poona, *Deo volente,* on 19th reaching Sevagram on 21st, necessary persons leaving for Calcutta on 30th November. Narandas, his wife and Kusum are here, will leave on Tuesday. My sister is here with her daughter[1]. I hope I shall get some news about Beryl during your absence. Remember me to all the friends who may think of me and whom you may meet.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4170. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7806

467. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

October 28, 1945

MY DEAR KU.,

You have a good certificate about the sculpture[2]. As soon as it is on view in Maganwadi I shall set about collecting. I am glad Mrs.

[1] Phoolkunvar

[2] A statue of Jesus Christ measuring 6 ft. by 4 ft., made by Mrs. Clara Hopman, a Dutch artist, and priced Rs. 10,000, was to be donated to the All-India Village Industries Association at Maganwadi.

Hopman is herself coming to pay your commission.

The b. p. is good.

You must not gloat over your brother's[1] exploits. Wait and watch.

Love.

BAPU

DR. KUMARAPPA
A.I.V.I.A.
MAGANWADI, WARDHA

From a photostat: G.N. 10182

468. LETTER TO DILIP KUMAR ROY

October 28, 1945

MY DEAR DILIP,

Your letter is tempting. The recollection of your voice tempts me and so do several other things. But I must resist all temptation and keep on to the straight and narrow path as conceived by me. Therefore excuse me. If I can go further, I would say drop the project. If not, you may approach the others you mention.

I would have written to you in Hindi as I do generally but I forbore for obvious reasons.

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope to leave Poona on 19th November on my way to Bengal, stopping at Sevagram for a few days.

SHRI DILIPKUMAR ROY
AUROBINDO ASHRAM
PONDICHERRY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Bharatan Kumarappa's

469. LETTER TO MRS. M. H. MORRISON[1]

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
5 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
October 28, 1945

DEAR MADAM,

I have just received your letter of 20th September, and I have devoured almost every line of the enclosure to your letter. Miss Slade whom we know here as Mirabai only, as she desires to be known, is in a basin of the Himalayas which she adores and loves. It is near Hardwar, a celebrated place of pilgrimage, through which the mighty Ganges flows down.

Your Green Cross scheme appeals to me forcibly, not that there is anything new in it for me. Your resolution is also brief and to the point, and therefore is a temptation and invitation for me to sign. But I must resist the temptation. The Green Cross Society will, I hope, forgive me for the resistance. It will do so readily if it appreciates the fact that some, among whom I count myself, render greater help by refraining from signing anything like your resolution but working silently and probably effectively.

Though I refrain from sending you my signature I will ask you, if you at all can, to keep me in touch with your activities from time to time. It may interest and even please you to know that I have enforced in my own life now for years your 'ten don'ts'[2] andinvited my neighbours to do likewise for I have long believed that there is a 'spirit in the wood', using the word 'wood' in a double sense.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. M. H. MORRISON
HON. SECRETARY
THE GREEN CROSS SOCIETY
41 ASMUNS PLACE, LONDON N.W. 11

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] An extract from this appeared in *The Hindu,* 31-l0-1945, which reported that the addressee had requested Gandhiji to sign a resolution which was "a non-controversial, conciliatory plea to protect helpless wild life and unspoilt nature everywhere".

[2] *The Hindu* reported: "The Society has put forward ten "don'ts" to prevent desecration of wild life and nature. It requests the people not to disfigure landscapes or the general appearance of the village, country road or approach to town by throwing litter or by displaying advertisements in wrong places or cutting trees and plucking wild flowers or in any other way. Nor should they disturb the peace of nature which others are enjoying by shouting, loud singing or playing gramophone records or by tuning wireless sets."

470. LETTER TO ANNIE MASCARENE

Not for publication

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD,
POONA,
October 28, 1945

DEAR MASCARENE,

In continuation of the receipt of your resolution, you will not expect me to express any opinion because just now I have, so far as it is possible, steeled my heart against any expression of opinion. I have not studied the question of primary education in Travancore so as to satisfy myself, and I observe that many persons of note have expressed emphatic views one way or the other. I do not feel called upon to say anything.

Why did you drag my sister and her daughter ? My sister is wholly illiterate. Her daughter can with difficulty read or write something. But neither takes any interest in public matters. It is fraud upon the public to put such ignorant persons on the platform and make them repeat things parrot-like, leading the public to believe that some good work has been done.

I felt sorry when I first heard that my sister had been dragged out of her merited obscurity in which she was happy and contented. She has now come to me being on her way back to Rajkot. She tells me that she had not the slightest intention of going to a meeting or sending her daughter. She allowed herself to be tempted to go to Rameshwaram as a point of pilgrimage. She had intended also to remain obscure and not let the people know that she was my sister. If she had asked me I would have dissuaded her even from going to Rameshwaram, for I have no faith in these pilgrimages except under certain conditions. But what is done cannot be undone. I would however like you to give me your version of the story, so that I can have full facts enabling me to come to a right judgment, for I do not want to do yo any injustice by making up my mind on insufficient data. Please therefore enlighten me. And who was the party who wrote out the speech that my sister's daughter read without understanding it?

Yours,
BAPU

MISS A. MASCARENE
STATE CONGRESS OFFICE
TRIVANDRUM

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

471. LETTER TO DAHYALAL H. JANI.

October 28, 1945

BHAI DAHYALAL,

Don't be angry with me but have a hearty laugh. I don't know who told me or where I read it or what happened but somehow I had the illusion that you had died. Later one day when I saw Kishorelal revising your translation of the *Gita,* I came to know that you were alive and I was happy about it. But I forgot about this and thought you were dead. Meanwhile yesterday your letter came and now this won't leave my mind. So now you have to live long. But l know that you may live beyond me, that is, you may live for more than 125 years, and yet will remain what you are now. Isn't that as good as being dead even when alive? This is the impression I have got after reading your letter.

There is nothing new in what you have said about the five things. Of course, there is some truth in it but according to me it is so full of ignorance that I have not found any one of them useful. Your last sentence is: "If there is any service that I can do, do order me." How incorrect this sentence is! I did order you to do a lot of service and what did I get from it? What could the country achieve or what benefit did you get? Think over the other four things in the same way. There is no need for a reply and this should not be published on anyaccount. I have written this just to humour you in the hope that it may open your eyes one day. If any time you are able to understand the hidden meaning behind it I would think it is better than getting your reply and would consider your living meaningful.

SHRI DAHYABHAI H. JANI
939 WILSON GARDENS
BANGALORE CITY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

472. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

October 28, 1945

BAPA,

I am enclosing Sushila Pai's letter. Go through it. I wonder if I have told you about her. If she goes and stays there, most of our problems can be solved. As I write these lines I recollect that I had introduced her to you.

I think she can be accommodated in Bajajwadi, where your office is situated. I do not know what facilities are available there. Of course, we don't want any overcrowding.

The question of her salary does not arise at the moment. The thing is we have to see whether we can have her as Joint Secretary with Sucheta, and whether she can stay in Bajajwadi. We have also to find out whether Sucheta will agree to have a Joint Secretary. If you approve of these suggestions, then we shall have to consult Sucheta. If you concur, I shall refer the matter to her. Please let me have your reply.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

473. LETTER TO GIRIRAJKISHORE

October 28, 1945

CHI. GIRIRAJ,

I have your letter. Both the sisters were happy. Your work is progressing well. Take care of your health. I have received part of the dictionary[1]. I just glanced at it for two minutes. I hope to go through it a little more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8775

474. LETTER TO SWAMI SATYADEV

October 28, 1945

SWAMIJI,

I was glad to have your letter and I noticed that you have signed it with some effort. You talk of settling down in Delhi but it is hot there too. For you the places are Almora, Abu or Girnar. Perhaps you don't require a library but wish to write on what you already know. If that is so I shall try. It is quite pleasant near the sea coast but considering your health I would not advise the sea coast. I understand you want my advice regarding only the place and you have the means to manage other things yourself.

SWAMI SATYADEV
SATYAJNANA NIKETAN
JWALAPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The Hindi-Gujarati dictionary which the addressee was preparing

475. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

October 28, 1945

CHI. CHAND,

I have your postcard. Rest assured about your welfare. Your spirit of service will ever grow. Make your body as strong as steel and complete your studies. I hope to reach Sevagram on 21st November.

Blessings from

BAPU

KUMARI CHANDBEHN
DAGA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
NAGPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

476. LETTER TO VICHITRANARAYAN SHARMA

October 28, 1945

CHI. VICHITRA,

I have gone through all your papers carefully. I wrote to the Central Government[1] as soon as I heard from Jajuji. I am making some alternative arrangement also.[2] Let us wait and watch. Keep me informed of the developments there. I hope to reach Wardha on the 21st.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VICHITRANARAYAN
GANDHI ASHRAM
MEERUT

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

477. LETTER TO M. DUTT

October 28, 1945

SECRETARY SAHEB,

Meet me when I am in Calcutta. Meet Prafulla Babu and fix an appointment.

M. DUTT
617 CLIVE STREET
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. M. Jenkins", 10-10-1945
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Shrikrishnadas Jaju", 11-10-1945

478. PREFACE TO "GITA PRAVESHIKA"[1]

Let me add this much to the above[2]. The verses originally included in this primer were those I had selected for Ramdas.[3] Friends have added so much to it that it would be a departure from truth to call it "Rama-Gita" or to attribute its compilation to me.

In this edition the meanings have been omitted. For this the reader may refer to the original book *Anasaktiyoga*.

M. K. GANDHI

October 29, 1945

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9955. Also C.W. 6929. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

479. LETTER TO E. M. JENKINS

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
October 29, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN,

This I write in fear and trembling, lest I may be overstepping my limit.

I am watching the progress of the trial of the members of the corps raised by or under Shri Subhas Babu. Though I can have nothing in common with any defence by force of arms, I am never blind to the valour and patriotism often displayed by persons in arms, as seems to be the case here. And can the Government afford to ignore the almost, if not the wholly, unanimous opinion of Indians of all shades of opinion? India adores these men who are on their trial. No doubt theGovernment have overwhelming might on their side. But it will be misuse of that power if it is used in the teeth of universal Indian opposition. It is not for me to say what should be done except that what is being done is not the way. Let His Excellency decide what is best in the circumstances.[4]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, PP. 40-1

[1] Second edition

[2] The reference is to the preface to the first edition; *vide* Vol. LVI, p. 73.

[3] *Vide* Vol. LI, pp. 372-5.

[4] Replying to this on November 6, G. E. B. Abell, Deputy Private Secretary to the Viceroy, said: "His Excellency ... asks me to say that he notes your views and presumes that they are based on articles appearing in the newspapers, in, which the facts are not always correctly stated. His Excellency naturally cannot express an opinion on the merits of cases which are *sub judice.*"

480. LETTER TO E. M. JENKINS

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
October 29, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN,

In continuation of my letter[1] of October 10, 1945, about khadi being licensed, may I add that the Privy Council had to consider the question of exempting the A.I.S.A. from the income tax. The case is reported in A. I. R. 1944 Privy Council at p. 88. His Excellency's predecessor had at my request ordered that the collection of the tax be suspended, pending decision of the Privy Council.[2] It reversed the decision of the Bombay High Court and expressed the opinion that the primary object of the Association is the relief of the poor, that its objects include the advancement of other purposes of general public utility and that the making of a commercial or private profit is not the purpose of the Association. On these grounds they came to the conclusion that the Association is a charitable and philanthropic body and entitled to exemption from tax. Can khadi manufactured and sold on behalf of the manufacturers—the profits, if any, going to the hand-spinners and handloom-weavers—be classed with mill-cloth under the Anti-Profiteering and Hoarding Regulations? In my humbleopinion, it should be wholly exempt from such control, if the meagre earnings of the poor concerned are not to be taxed.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47 p. 69

481. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

POONA,
October 29, 1945

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter just now and I reply before going for massage.

I am not leaving Sevagram, must not, having founded home for

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. M. Jenkins", 10-10-1945

[2] *Vide* "Ashram Note", 8-2-1942 and "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 20-2-1942

so many institutions. I must now contradict and correct the report[1]. I could not desert Sardar. I must come to you after doing the Frontier or [before] going there. Everything is postponed by a month.

Let us trust to God guiding us. He may so compass that ultimately I may have to live with you. Wish nothing except to do His will.

Sorry about Balvantsinha. No more time.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6512. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9907

482. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

[*October 29, 1945*][2]

MY DEAR C. R.,

I have just received your letter. I do not attach any importance to unscrupulous propaganda. However, what statement do you think I should issue? Today trees can only be tapped for *gur*[3] not for making intoxicants.

How are you? What is the atmosphere there?

As I cannot yet leave Sardar, my tour has been put off by one month.

Love.

[PS.]

Madhavan's letter returned.

SHRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR
MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, the addressee explains: "A rumour had been started that Bapu was leaving Sevagram."

[2] In the source this letter is placed among those of this date.

[3] Jaggery

483. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

POONA,
October 29, 1945

CHI. JIVANJI,

I am sending a new preface[1] also for the *Gita Praveshika.* As I have suggested, omit the meanings. I have suggested in the new preface that those who wish to know the meanings should consult the *Anasaktiyoga.* Those who are not ready to take that much trouble need not buy this. I have not, tberefore, made any correction on page 6. Nor need we give all that just now for one pice. The verses which I had originally selected will be found somewhere. If they can be given, the "Rama-Gita" will be complete. I have them somewhere. Ramdas also will have them. I cannot permit you to fall ill. Remember how much depends on you and see that you do not fall ill. The remedy is given in *Arogyani Chavi*[2].

If I can manage about the *Constructive Programme*[3], *I* will send that too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:G.N. 9956. Also C.W. 6930. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

484. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

October 29, 1945

BHAI MUNSI,

I got your letter and a copy of the speech just now. I had read somewhere about your having written Gujarati-Hindi. I was very pleased. It is good, moreover, that everything went off well, I hope you are in good health. I have always written *samun sutharun*[4] *without*

[1] *V*ide "Letter to E. M. Jenkins", 29-10-1945

[2] *Key to Health; vide*

[3] Gandhiji was revising *Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place,* written earlier in December 1941. *Vide* "Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place", 13-12-1941.

[4] Literally, 'neat and tidy'

knowing the origin of the phrase. You have now taught me that it is *same sutare*[1]. Why need this origin displease me?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7689. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

485. LETTER TO GOMATI K. MASHRUWALA

October 29, 1945

CHI. GOMATI,

Ramprasad told me everything about you. Sitting here, I can only wish that you get well soon. Medicine does little, rest works wonders. So you should not insist on getting up, doing things yourself and going out for toilet.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

486. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

October 29, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Ramprasad and Amin have arrived. Amin seems to have behaved himself.

I am writing about the constitution of the Congress. I intend sending a copy to you after I complete it. It is entirely different from your conception. Let me know what you have to say about it after you have seen it. I feel that the Congress will ultimately be the loser if it fails to do something of this sort.

Lakshmishanker Vaid, who is devoted to you, says that if you take one tablespoon of caster oil and two tablespoons of honey, you will get rid of your asthma.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

487. LETTER TO S. K. GUPTA

October 29, 1945

BHAI SHRIKANT,

I have your two postcards. I shall start touring after finishing the work here. I shall probably reach the Ashram by February. Write to

[1] Literally, ‘when the yarn is even’

me then. In the mean time carry on the constructive work as I have suggested.

Do not trust the newspaper reports. I am not going to leave Sevagram.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI S. K. GUPTA
EXCISE INSPECTOR
6 RAILWAY ROAD
FARUKHABAD, U. P.

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9696. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

488. LETTER TO J. BARUA

October 29, 1945

SIR,

What you say is quite right. The word "easily" was used by me through ignorance. It was not deleted from the later edition through oversight. I have now written to the Press. Forgive me for this lapse. You can publish this letter.

J. BARUA
C/O G. N. TAGORE
BAJAJ BHAVAN
TILAK NAGAR, KANPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

489. LETTER TO DEVPRAKASH NAYYAR

October 29, 1945

CHI. DEV,

I have your letter. You will be able to render a lot of service if you remain healthy. I know that though the Ashram is far from perfect there is something in it which is not found elsewhere. We have deliberately given up certain things which are seen at other places.

SEVAGRAM ASHRAM
SEVAGRAM

From a microfilm of the Hindi: Documents relating to Gandhiji. Courtesy: National Archives of India

490. DRAFT FOR CONGRESS CONSTITUTION

[On or after *October 29, 1945*][1]

1. Constructive programme is the chief plank for winning Swaraj by truthful and non-violent means. Its full execution means complete independence. But so long as the millions of India do not take to it, Parliamentary programme will remain as a supplement.

2. The method of enrolment of Congress membership has been useful and Congress has been able to do a lot of good work. But many defects have crept in. Therefore, in future the Congress will consist of workers or servants of the nation only. Any man or woman above the age of sixteen can become a Congress worker, provided he or she is a habitual wearer of khadi certified by the A.I.S.A. and pays a monthly fee of 1,920 rounds of handspun yarn to the Congress. The spinners should be conversant with all the processes from picking cotton pods from the field to the point of making slivers and producing yarn. They should also know how to put a spinning-wheel in order.

3. The Congress shall make it a point of duty to penetrate the 7,00,000 villages of India. At least one Congress worker shall stay in each village and do the following:

(a) He shall come in personal contact with every villager and keep a list of their names along with those of the other members of their families.

(b) He will enrol and train Congress workers from amongst the villagers themselves and keep a register of all those who come on the roll. These shall form the Village Congress Committee.

(c) He shall keep a record of his work from day to day.

(d) It is possible that obstacles might be placed in his way by the Government or by the villagers themselves. He shall fight all difficulties by truthful and non-violent action even though he might perish in the attempt.

(e) He shall organize the villages so as to make them self-contained and self-supporting through their agriculture and handicrafts, treating the manufacture of Khadi as the centre, in accordance with the lines laid down by the A.I.S.A., A.I.V.I.A. and the Goseva Sangh.

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's drafting the Constitution of the Congress; *vide* "Letter to Kishorelal G. Mashruwala", 29-10-1945

(f) He shall organize sanitation and hygiene among the villagers and take all measures for prevention of disease among them.

(g) He shall organize the education of the villagers from birth to death along the lines of Nayee Talim, in accordance with the policy laid down by the Hindustani Talimi Sangh.

(h) For the above purposes and others to be added from time to time by the Congress, he shall train and fit himself for the due performance of duty, in accordance with the rules laid down by the Congress for time to time.

4. The Congress shall take part in the elections in all Goverment managed or controlled institutions, beginning with the Village Panchayat to the Central Legislative Assembly and Council.

5. The Congress shall contact all those who are on the Government's voters' list, and

(a) will give them an idea of their duties and their rights,

(b) shall produce the necessary literature for their education,

(c) shall make arrangements to impart literacy to the illiterate amongst them.

(d) shall see that those whose names are missing on the Government registers are duly entered therein.

(e) shall encourage those who are legally unqualified for the franchise to acquire the necessary qualifications for getting the right.

(f) shall carry on agitation for adult franchise for all inhabitants of India who are not proved lunatics or otherwise unfit workers.

6. Out of the existing workers the Congress shall maintain a Central Board of volunteers whose sole and special duty will be to reach help to and protect, in accordance with Truth and Non-violence, the people in cases of rioting, stealing, robbery and like emergencies. To this end the Congress shall conduct a teaching institution.

7. The Congress shall run a Languages School so as to enable Congressmen and women to learn the national language (i.e., Hindustani spoken by the villagers–Hindus, Muslims and others-in the villages of the North and written in the Nagari or Urdu script) and other Indian languages. This work is to be done along the lines of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha and Bharatiya Bhawan.

8. Representative Village Congress Sabhas being one per not less than 1000 voters and of workers being one per 1000 workers shall form the A.I.C.C.

9. The Indian National Congress will comprise:

(1) Village Congress Committee

(2) A.I.C.C.

(3) Working Committee of the Congress

(4) A.I.S.A.

(5) A.I.V.I.A.

(6) Hindustani Talimi Sangh

(7) Institution for Removal of Untouchability

(8) Anti-Intoxicant Association

(9) Labour Union

(10) Kisan Union

10. The A.I.C.C. shall frame rules for smooth working of the constitution and for matter left unprovided for herein.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

491. REFLECTIONS ON CONGRESS CONSTITUTION

[On or after October 29, 1945][1]

I am becoming more and more convinced that the four-anna membership should go. The membership of the Congress should be forty crores, the whole of the population, no matter to what sect, religion or province or state or the so-called independent possessions a particular individual belongs. The members have an equal right with all to service by the Congress organization. These forty crore members will exercise no privilege by reason of their recognition as such by the Congress.

The organization will be worked by those who are habitual wearers of khaddar one year before the date of commencement, who have renounced untouchability in all its forms and who are not dealers in foreign cloth or intoxicants, who have full belief in the constructive programme of the Congress and who are prepared and willing to do work referred to in Schedule A hereto and who have passed a probation period of six months in doing that work.

All Committees and sub-committees shall be formed from the workers above named.

The Schedules to be prepared by P.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the contents this appears to have been written about the same time as the preceding item.

492. TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT, FYZABAD DISTRICT CONGRESS COMMITTEE

POONA,
October 30, 1945

PRESIDENT
DISTRICT CONGRESS COMMITTEE
FYZABAD (U. P.)

SEND DOCTOR KATJU'S[1] OPINION ON BASUDA SINGH[2] CASE.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

493. TELEGRAM TO D. G. TENDULKAR

October 30, 1945

TENDULKAR
CARE CONGRESS
BOMBAY
REGRET RECONSIDERATION IMPOSSIBLE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

494. TELEGRAM TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

POONA,
October 30, 1945

PROFESSOR AGRAWAL
COMMERCE COLLEGE
WARDHA

YOU CAN HOLD MEETING[3] 8TH NOVEMBER.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Kailash Nath Katju
[2] Who was sentenced to death because of his part in the 1942 movement
[3] Of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha

495. LETTER TO DR. KRISHNABAI NIMBKAR

October 30, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. Now that the members of the Working Committee are released write to them in detail. Meet me, if I am here, when you reach Poona.

DR. KRISHNABAI NIMBKAR
192 POONAMALLE HIGH ROAD
P. O. VEPERY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

496. LETTER TO SARVAJITLAL VERMA

October 30, 1945

BHAI SARVAJIT SINGHJI,

I got your letter today. Your wire too had come. I have sent a wire asking for Dr. Katju's opinion on this case.[1] If you have any papers besides this, send them along. Send the application on behalf of the prisoner or in the lawyer's name to the Viceroy and send a copy to me. Also do as the Vakilsaheb advises. I shall do what I can from here.

SARVAJITLAL VERMA
PRESIDENT, DISTRICT CONGRESS COMMITTEE
FYZABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

497. ANSWER TO A CORRESPONDENT[2]

[On or before *October 31, 1945*][3]

Sardar is as dear as a son to me. Our relation is as good as that of a father and a son. What message can a father give to a son? There is no scope for a message from me.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-11-1945

[1] *Vide*" Telegram to President, Fyzabad District Congress Committee", 30-10-1945

[2] Gandhiji was asked for a message for Vallabhbhai Patel's birthday which fell on October 31.

[3] *ibid*

498. LETTER TO KANCHAN SHAH

POONA
October 31, 1945

CHI. KANCHAN,

I do not like your recent letters. Ask me about Madras when I arrive there. I hope to reach there on November 21. I have written a short letter[1] to Munnalal and am daily awaiting his reply. Ask him why he has not sent it till now.

When will you improve your health?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8261. Also C.W. 6986. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

499. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

October 31, 1945

CHI. BHANSALI,

It is all the same whether you sleep in water or on the ground, sit in the sun or in the shade. My opinion is that if now you lead a normal life the people around will be much more benefited. If you have any doubt about this, ask me, as I hope to reach there at the latest on the 21st [November].

Blessings from
BAPU

ASHRAM
SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

500. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

October 31, 1945

BAPA,

Yesterday I got Mridula's letter. What you said was right.

Send three months' money to Lila Jog without any comment. If you wish you can send it to me. I shall handle it in my language and

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Munnalal G. Shah", 7-10-1945

in my own way. We shall thus close the chapter.

Fix any days between November 22 and 28.

BAPU

KASTURBA GANDHI SMARAK NIDHI
WARDHA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

501. LETTER TO VASANJI HANSJI

October 31, 1945

BHAI VASANJI HANSJI,

I have the *hundi* for Rs. 4,205 sent by you as well as the list of donors and the report of the agreement sent by Pranshanker Joshi. I shall use the money as desired. Convey my thanks to all the donors.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

VASANJI HANS
GANDHI YUVAK BHAJAN MANDALI
67/B STREET, JOHANNESBURG

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

502. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

October 31, 1945

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. While I was talking to Narandas about the money from the States, he promptly said, "Certainly stop it if you wish to." Now we shall think over it when we meet. I have received the money from Wankaner. I shall send it to you as I received it—in two instalments and under insured cover.

I understand about Tryambaklal Choksi's donation. Just now I am not writing a letter of thanks. I don't approve of the condition laid down by him. How can we have a trust for such a small amount? Why does he not have faith in an institution like the Harijan Sevak Sangh? And why all this fuss about making a trust? He can give the shares to Harijan Sevak Sangh on condition that the money received from the shares will be utilized as decided by the Sangh for the Harijans of Sorath. I also believe that if we can get more money by selling the

shares, the Sangh should have the right to do so. Think over this and discuss this with Tryambaklal if you wish to. You can convey to Bapa my opinion about this. Come to Madras when I reach there.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHHAGANLAL JOSHI
HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH
RAJKOT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

503. LETTER TO SATYADEVI GIRI

October 31, 1945

CHI. SATYADEVI,

I have your letter. I am glad you gave news about the entire family. If the doctor so advises, get yourself operated upon. There is no risk at all in an operation. If the complaint is diagnosed as appendicitis, I do not know of any other treatment.

It is good you have not totally given up the spinning-wheel. All the same, understand the science of it also. Personally I think that Dharmakumar should complete his studies.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

504. LETTER TO JETHALAL GANDHI

October 31, 1945

CHI. KAKU,

I have your letter. What you say is right. Yesterday I read it out to your father's sister also. I appreciate your writing so frankly about service-mindedness but I wish to caution you. By following tradition you will feel the burden of the family all the more and you must know that sometimes one gets entangled in it. So you will have to cultivate the spirit of service.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI JETHALAL K. GANDHI
C/O JEEVANLAL (1929) LTD.
127 MINT STREET
G. T. MADRAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

505. LETTER TO K. T. SHAH

October 31, 1945

BHAI KHUSHAL SHAH,

I have your English book on the foundation of peace. As usual I turned a few pages and tried to look up the index but found none. How can one do without an index in a book on a serious subject? You must find a helper who would prepare the index. I know you have written novels, too, and may still be writing more. I can understand not having an index there. But how can one do without one in a book on a serioussubject? I hope you are all right. I just saw your letter. I had written this earlier. How nice it would be if you started writing in Gujarati or *Rashtrabhasha* which millions can understand!

Blessings from

BAPU

PROF. K. T. SHAH
8 LABURNUM ROAD
GAMDEVI, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

506. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL SHAH

October 31, 1945

BHAI CHHAGANLAL,

Go home from there and live where and as God ordains. I can't say anything more than this.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

GHHAGANLAL SHAH
DEVJI LADHA
DAFTARI ROAD
MALAD EAST

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

507. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

POONA,
October 31, 1945

CHI MRIDULA,

I have your letter. You have laboured very hard. What for ? With me you could have been brief because I do not any more have to try

and understand you. Or do I have to understand you further ? I hope I can understand from your slightest hint.

There is one thing you must do. What can there be personal with people like us ? Are you any more an individual ? If you continue to be an individual, it is not for writing personal things, but to preserve your individuality, which is done only when you reduce yourself to a zero and remain a zero. If you do not know this, then follow my exeprience if you can. Where there is 'I', there is individuality. It is only when 'I' is eliminated, that individuality ceases to exist. Take the letter 'I' of the English alphabet. So long as it is straight, it appears like a scare-crow. If it wants to efface itself and realize its individuality it must turn itself into a cipher. This is philosophy. But you will see what I mean.

I can understand your views about Bapa. Our experiences with him have been different. Only time will show whose experience is right. I am under no misconception that my experience being longer is right and your experience being shorter is worng. I know that even a long experience can be wrong. We shall weigh our experiences on the scales of time.

Kanu agrees that what I have written to the Kasturba Nidhi about Bapa is correct, because Thakkar Bapa was instrumental in this. Had he not involved himself, the matter would not have gone any further. And Narandas is always clinging to him. He would like to continue to work through him as before and be satisfied. His idea assumed the gigantic size it did only after Thakkar Bapa joined in. Afterwards others too played a major role. That in my opinion is a remarkable thing about Bapa. He starts something and lets someone else take the credit. He has shortcomings, no doubt. Who does not have them ? But in my view, his faults have become insignificant in the face of his good qualities. I wish you too would recognize this some day.

I am writing to Bapa to pay Lila Jog for three months. Now I shall be able to find some time to send my letter to the newspapers.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11248. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation.

508. LETTER TO DR. PRAKASH

October 31, 1945

CHI. PRAKASH,

I hope to reach Khadi Pratishthan, Sodepur, Calcutta on 1st December. I shall be pleased if you stay with me in Calcutta.

Pyarelal's fever has subsided.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. PRAKASH
DUFFERIN HOSPITAL
BETTIAH, DIST. CHAMPARAN

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

509. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

October 31, 1945

BHAI RAJAJI,

Have you made a study of the Christian agitation that is going on in Travancore regarding education? If so, give me your opinion. Shastriar has given a definite opinion on it. Discuss it with him if you wish to. What and where is the truth? Since I could not form a definite opinion, I am asking you.

You should not find it difficult to read this much Hindi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

510. LETTER TO E. W. ARYANAYAKUM

October 31, 1945

CHI. ARYANAYAKUM,

If you have read about the confusion prevailing in Travancore regarding education, let me have your opinion. Many people are writing to me that I must say something about it. I had not read anything till now, nor had I any [other] material. Now Shri Cherian

Kopen has sent a letter and also a lot of literature with it. I have read it and if you have not and wish to read it, I can send it. I have sent a similar letter to Kumarappa.

Blessings from

BAPU

ASHRAM
SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

511. LETTER TO KALICHARAN GHOSH

October 31, 1945

BHAI KALICHARAN GHOSH,

I have your letter. I have the book about famine in Bengal but I have not read it. Send *Economic Resources of India.* Carefully go through what I have said about prayers. Go and see Satis Babu of Khadi Pratishthan and also Babu Nirmal Kumar[1]. If even then you are not satisfied, write to me again.

It is good that you care for work and are not after name. If you do care for name it should be only for Ramanama, for that includes all work.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI KALICHARAN GHOSH
6 RAJA BASANTRAI ROAD
KALIGHAT, CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

512. LETTER TO CHERIAN KOPEN

[*October 1945*][2]

BHAI CHERIAN KOPEN,

You are the only one who has sent me some literature about the agitation that is going on in Travancore over education. I have read your letter though not the whole material you have sent. But I went

[1] Nirmal Kumar Bose

[2] From the reference to the addressee in the letter to E. W. Aryanaykum dated October 31, 1945, it appears this letter was also written about the same time; Vide "Letter to E. W. Aryanayakum", 31-10-1945

through what was relevant to my purpose. Still I am not in a position to give a definite opinion. In such a situation I can only say this much by way of consolation that I am asking my Christian friends and friends of other religions who take interest in such things what this is all about.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

513. A THOUGHT FOR THE DAY[1]

July 17, 1945

A man of the world can as little comprehend the universe as a fish living in the ocean can fathom its depths.

July 18, 1945

Not to do evil is the only true law of life, says Guru Teg

July 19, 1945

Life is unreal, death is real and certain. —Nanak

July 20, 1945

Truth can be found by searching within, never through argument or disputation. It is just the same if for 'Truth' one reads 'God'.

July 21, 1945

Nanak says: "God dwells in every human heart, and so every heart is a temple of God."

July 22, 1945

If God resides in every heart, then who dare hate whom?

July 23, 1945

Nanak says: "If we obey the law of God, we then need no man-made laws."

July 24, 1945

Nanak says: "God has ordained that all of us in this world itself are one family and each of us has to live for others,"

July 25, 1945

The darkness of egoism is more impenetrable than darkness itself.

[1] At the request of Anand T. Hingorani and to comfort him Gandhiji had started the practice of writing a thought daily from November 20, 1944

July 26, 1945

How shall we dispel this darkness of egoism? By the light of uttermost humility.

July 27, 1945

Sorrow is but another aspect of joy. Hence the one invariably follows the other.

July 28, 1945

Just as joy and sorrow are a pair that follow each other, in succession, so is the case with all things in life. Consequently, to have real peace of mind, we must rise above such pairs of opposites.

July 29, 1945

How can he who realizes not the true value of the Self, nor is able to protect it, protect anything else in life?

July 30, 1945

Even one word, if true, is enough. Untrue words, however many, are worth nothing.

July 31, 1945

The power of a true word is such that it leads one from selfishness to selflessness.

August 1, 1945

He alone lives in whose heart dwells Rama (God) and who is ever aware of such presence.

August 2, 1945

Real knowledge cannot be acquired by mere reading of the scriptures. Indeed, it is difficult of attainment without the practice of virtue.

August 3, 1945

One can never find Truth if one is not wide awake every moment of one's life.

August 4, 1945

There can be no such thing as rights for a satyagrahi. For him there is only one right—the right to serve.

August 5, 1945

Therefore, a satyagrahi will never seek rights; these will come to him unsought.

August 6, 1945

Even one drop of the poison of untruth will poison the entire milk-ocean of Truth.

August 7, 1945

Nanak says: “Man is born of woman as woman is born of man.” Then, why is it that we find sexual immorality in the world?

August 8, 1945

Nanak lay in the open under the sky. A kind-hearted householder suggested to him, “There is a beautiful dharmsala nearby. Why not go there?” Nanak replied: “The whole earth is my dharmsala and the sky is its roof.”

August 9, 1945

Nanak says: “The craving for happiness is a veritable disease. Sorrow or suffering is its remedy.”

August 10, 1945

Says Nanak again: “Whatever you give away is yours; whatever you keep is not yours.”

August 11, 1945

Whatever we take, we are snatching from the mouths of others. Therefore, whenever we acquire anything, let us see that it is really needed and that our wants are as few as possible.

August 12, 1945

Nanak says: “He who earns his bread by the sweat of his brow and shares with others what he so earns, can be called truly honest.”

August 13, 1945

Nanak says: “The more one indulges oneself, the more unhappy one becomes.”

August 14, 1945

St. Catherine of Italy had no money with her. She had only a cloak which she was wearing. A destitute asked for it and she gave it away. Someone, thereupon, asked her: “How will you go about now?” She replied: “The raiment of love will cover me far more securely than the cloak.”

August 15, 1945

Money alone can keep memory green—how much harm this false notion has done! This thought occurs to me today on the anniversary of Mahadev [Desai].

August 16, 1945

Nanak says: “Dreams are evidence of the fact that the *atma* (soul) uses the senses as its instruments. But it is only when the *atma*

keeps the senses under control that they become its instruments, and the *atma* then becomes ripe for union with the *Paramatma.”*

August 17, 1945

The pangs of hunger are not relieved by filling the stomach. They can be overcome by taking a limited quantity of food, like medicine, and remaining content with it.

August 18, 1945

Fear vanishes only with the annihilation of the ego.

August 19, 1945

It is an ordeal nowadays to read the newspapers. They do not give correct news. Nothing would be lost by not reading them.

August 20, 1945

It is as difficult to make the impossible possible, as it is easy to make the possible impossible.

August 21, 1945

What seems impossible is not always really so.

August 22, 1945

One person has God on his side; millions have Satan on theirs. Must, therefore, one fear the millions?

August 23, 1945

Supposing God is on the side of both, then who should fear whom?

August 24, 1945

He who remembers God can afford to forget everything else.

August 25, 1945

He who remembers everything else but forgets God, really remembers nothing.

August 26, 1945

He who forgets God, forgets himself.

August 27, 1945

If there is a soul, then surely the Supreme Soul (God), too, exists.

August 28, 1945

Because of our physical limitations, we cannot have a conception of the existence of God.

August 29, 1945

How can one believe in Truth if one has no belief in nonviolence? If non-violence is not put into practice, Truth, too, cannot be.

August 30, 1945

Why would one who is capable of violence for gaining his ends, hesitate to resort to untruth in both speech and action?

August 31, 1945

There are some things which a man does by word of mouth, some by observing silence, and yet others by action. If all that he does is informed with knowledge, it is action indeed.

September 1, 1945

Never should we make the mistake of imagining that a wrong can be classified as 'big' or 'small'.

September 2, 1945

One man commits a theft, another aids and abets it, while the third only harbours the intention to commit it. All the three are thieves.

September 3, 1945

'What I do is a minor lapse; what others do are major lapses'—one who thinks like this lives in abysmal ignorance.

September 4, 1945

He who does something wrong out of a false sense of shame is guilty of a twofold wrong and will not be able to stand up before God.

September 5, 1945

He who thinks, speaks and acts with God as his witness, will never feel ashamed of doing the right thing.

September 6, 1945

A man who believes whole-heartedly in something, even if it be absolutely improper, for him it shall be right and proper.

September 7, 1945

He who doubts the existence of God perishes.

September 8, 1945

He who denies the existence of God denies his own.

September 9, 1945

A man who behaves like a beast is worse than the beast; bestiality is natural for the beast, not so for the man.

September 10, 1945

Woman is not helpless. She must never regard herself as weaker than man. She should not, therefore, beg for any man's mercy, nor depend on him.

September 11, 1945

Everyone, prince or pauper, is the guardian of his own dharma. What is there to grieve or rejoice in this?

September 12, 1945

How strange that a man very often does not know who is a friend and who is a foe!

September 13, 1945

Belittling one's mother tongue is like disparaging one's own mother.

September 14, 1945

Who can make him take a lower seat who has chosen to sit on the ground? Likewise, who can make him a servant who has himself become the servant of all?

September 15, 1945

When a man gives way to anger, he only harms himself. The truth of this is borne out by daily experience.

September 16, 1945

Life becomes perpetually renewed every day. This knowledge should be helpful in uplifting us.

September 17, 1945

Happiness eludes us if we run after it. In fact happiness comes only from within. It is not a commodity to be bought from outside.

September 18, 1945

It is a moot point as to how far a man should go with his comrades when he knows that they really no longer walk with him in spirit.

September 19, 1945

He alone can be said to have conquered anger who is not angry even when there is a cause for anger.

September 20, 1945

Conquest of anger does not mean that anger is not outwardly manifest while the heart is full of it. Deliberately casting out anger root and branch, constitutes real conquest.

September 21, 1945

Indigestion, etc., are not the only causes of fever. Anger, too, can bring it on.

September 22, 1945

It is far easier to conquer others than to conquer oneself because the former can be attained by recourse to outside means while the latter can be achieved only with one's own mind.

September 23, 1945

Religion is no religion if it becomes mechanical.

September 24, 1945

Only when religion becomes an integral part of one's life can it be called religion. It is not like a garment.

September 25, 1945

'Money is God'—it is wrong to say so, and it has been proved to be wrong.

September 26, 1945

Flout one rule and all rules are flouted, for they all have one basis—breach of any rule is a breach of self-control.

September 27, 1945

All human activity is or should be directed towards the realization of the self. And in this self-realization lies hidden God-realization.

September 28, 1945

Man cannot worship God and at the same time despise his fellow-beings. The two are irreconcilable.

September 29, 1945

Man is truly known by the humility of his spirit.

September 30, 1945

A poet has said that a man without knowledge is like an animal. What is that knowledge?

October 1, 1945

Knowledge is that alone which enables a man to know himself. In other words, knowledge means self-realization.

October 2, 1945

"Kind and generous though [the man of God] is to the sorrow-stricken, his mind is not touched with pride." If it is God who inspires all our actions, then what place has self-pride?

October 3, 1945

In faith there is no room for despair.

October 4, 1945

How can that be religion which cannot be put to use in one's daily life?

October 5, 1945

By donning the garb of religion, vice does not become virtue nor does a wrong cease to be wrong.

October 6, 1945

"Rather perish than break the pledged word." —Tulsidas

October 7, 1945

"There is no sin like untruth, even as a million berries heaped together cannot equal a mountain". —Tulsidas

October 8, 1945

A guru should be perfect. God alone is that.

October 9, 1945

It is easy to instruct an uneducated person, but who can carry understanding to a man of little learning?

October 10, 1945

He who knows no rules and follows none just cannot be a servant of the people.

October 11, 1945

One test of non-attachment is that a man, on retiring to bed with Ramanama on his lips, falls asleep in a moment.

October 12, 1945

Narasinha Mehta says: "To say 'I do this' and 'I do that' is the height of ignorance." The key to non-attachment lies in the contemplation of this truth.

October 13, 1945

It is possible to endure a diseased body, but not a diseased mind.

October 14, 1945

What greater meanness can there be than to seek out our good points and praise them to others?

October 15, 1945

To see nothing but faults of others is even meaner than praising one's own virtues.

October 16, 1945

The objects of the senses come and go. The point to remember is that when they leave us, we feel miserable; but when we ourselves renounce them, we feel happy and joyful.

October 17, 1945

To mistake selfishness for selflessness is like mistaking a jackal for a lion.

October 18, 1945

The saying that "distance lends enchantment to the view" is apt not only in the case of hills, but also in that of most other things in life.

October 19, 1945

Purity is tested only when it is pitted against impurity.

October 20, 1945

What is true of purity is true of all other virtues. Nonviolence is tested when it faces violence.

October 21, 1945

Vice flourishes in darkness. It vanishes in the light of day.

October 22, 1945

Non-violence, truth, etc., are self-luminous. They cannot be genuine otherwise.

October 23, 1945

Justice needs to be tempered with generosity as much as generosity needs to be tempered with justice.

October 24, 1945

Only he is worthy to mete out punishment whose judgment is infallible. Who but God can be such?

October 25, 1945

To speak or not to speak—when that is the question, silence should take the place of speech.

October 26, 1945

Religion does not consist in eating this food or eschewing that but only in the realization of God within oneself.

October 27, 1945

Religion is not religion if it expects others to follow it. For example, the religion of ahimsa (non-violence) can manifest itself only in the face of *himsa* (violence).

October 28, 1945

A Tamil poet says that man's life is as transient as words inscribed on water. This needs to be pondered over repeatedly,

October 29, 1945

Alcohol maddens a man for the moment, but pride devours him completely and he is not even conscious of it!

October 30, 1945

Merit lies in fighting alone, be the opponent one or many.

October 31, 1945

How can he who does not know the art of living know the art of dying?

[From Hindi]

Bapuke Ashirvad: Rozke Vichar, pp. 240-346

514. TELEGRAM TO PRABHU DAYAL VIDYARTHI

POONA,
November 1, 1945

PRABHUDAYAL
C/O KAKA KALELKAR
OPPOSITE MAHILASHRAM
WARDHA
YOU CAN COME,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 11672

515. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

November 1, 1945

CHI. MANILAL,

I send you without correcting the letter that Chi. Arun[1] has written. I talked to him and so did Kanu[2] and Abha[3], but he refuses to budge. I showed him your letter despite your wish to the contrary, for I did not wish to stop him if he showed the slightest desire. The fact is that he likes it here very much. The discipline here is strict but it does

[1] Addressee's son
[2] Kanu Gandhi, son of Narandas Gandhi
[3] Wife of Kanu Gandhi

not irk him. Please, therefore, console everybody there and tell them they must celebrate the Diwali without Arun. On my part I take as much care as I can of his studies. Aminbhai teaches him drawing with great affection. He plays and eats and is in high spirits all the time. He is deeply attached to Kanu.

Manu[1] gives me the massage and Sushila[2] sprays me. All my requirements are looked after well and you need not therefore come here for my sake. There is nothing to worry about.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4964

516. LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

November 1, 1945

CHI. MAGAN[3],

Herewith a letter from Chi. Champa[4]. On reading it I feel that you ought to go to Rajkot immediately and render her whatever help you can. If you feel you must have advice from someone you trust, you may seek it in Rajkot. If you wish to take an adviser along from Bombay, you may do so. I have already written[5] to Champa that I could give no help from here. Return Champa's letter after reading it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Manu Gandhi
[2] Sushila Nayyar
[3] Son of Dr. Pranjivandas J. Mehta for long a close associate of Gandhiji
[4] Wife of Ratilal Mehta, the addressee's elder brother
[5] *Vide* "Letter to Champa R. Mehta" , 9-10-1945

517. LETTER TO SHAMALDAS GANDHI

November 1, 1945

CHI. SHAMALDAS,

The character sketch you have given of Sardar is good but how is it that I don't find Mahadev in it? If you can think of Sardar without Manibehn, only then can you think of him without Mahadev. Is it merely due to oversight? Or is there art in leaving out Mahadev?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

518. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

November 1, 1945

BHAI SAHEB,

I have your letter. What more shall I say about your health? The sooner you go somewhere for rest the better it will be for the country.

You have sent three names for the Working Committee. It will be better if in this matter you consult the present members and then announce the names. I have an impression that the Congress will have to meet some time soon. In that case will it not be better if the vacancies are filled by fresh elections? But if they have to be filled now, I think the three names that you have sent are all right. However, the members will be the best judges.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD

19-A, BALLYGUNJE CIRCULAR ROAD

CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

519. LETTER TO DESHPANDE

November, 1 1945

BHAI DESHPANDE,

I have been told that those who take part in *prabhatpheri* speak ill of Shri Bhopatkar[1]. Find out about this. If they speak ill of any leader try to stop them. What is the good of doing this? I see the harm clearly. So long as they are in the Congress no one should speak ill of others.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

520. LETTER TO MAHADEVSHASTRI DIVEKAR

November 1, 1945

PANDITJI,

I have had your book[2] read out to me from beginning to end. These days while I spin I have a friend read out to me some book which I think is worth reading. I am disappointed with your book. From what you had said I had expected that I would learn something new from it and at the same time some light would be thrown on the Hindu-Muslim question. Right from my childhood I have lived with Muslims and when I went to London Providence placed me in close association with Christians, Muslims and Parsis. Hindus of course were there. I came into contact with the intellectuals among them and that is how I read the holy books of all the four religions. I came to the conclusion that we could know the true facts about any religion only after reading its sacred books. I also read quite a few criticisms of them. I can say that I have also read the Muslim critics you mention in your letter. I had a talk with Muslims in South Africa about those books and also with an Englishman who had become Muslim. After coming here I read the works of Maulana Shibli. As a result I have realized that every religion contains both truth and untruth. The root

[1] L. B. Bhopatkar, General Secretary, All-India Hindu Mahasabha

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Mahadevshastri Divekar", 23-10-1945

of all religions is one and it is pure and all of them have sprung from the same source, hence all are equal. This equality of all religions has been included by Vinoba among the eleven vows in a Marathi *sloka*, which is daily recited in the prayers.

Non-violence, truth, non-stealing, *brahmacharya*, non-possession, body-labour, control of the palate, fearlessness on all occasions, equal respect for all religions, swadeshi and *sparshabhavana*[1] these eleven vows should be observed in a spirit of humility.[2]

I am trying to live in accordance with this and so are my associates.

As it is, the letter has become quite long but since you have taken so much trouble and have also sent to me extra copies of your book, I felt I should atleast let you know my stand.

I do not wish to argue with you. I have an answer to what you have suggested but I see no need to give it here. I therefore think that what I have said is enough.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

521. LETTER TO INAYATULLA KHAN

November 1, 1945

ALLAMA SAHEB[3],

I have your English letter. Why did you write in English?

I have received the printed constitution you have sent. I have gone through it. Though great pains have been taken in drafting it, I have doubts about its usefulness. I feel that if we all become one at heart, it will be easy to frame a constitution. In my view it is well-nigh

[1] Refusal to treat anybody as untsouchable
[2] अहिंसा, सत्य, अस्तेय, ब्रह्मचर्य, असंग्रह।
शरीरश्रम, अस्वाद, सर्वत्र भय वर्जन।
सर्वधर्म समानत्व, स्वदेशी स्पर्शभावना।
ही एकादश सेवावी नम्रत्वे व्रत निश्चये।
Vide also "Letter to S. Ambujammal", 5-5-1935
[3] Leader of the Khaksars, a communal para-military organization

impossible to achieve unity through a constitution. This is what I think.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

NAWAB ALLAMA MASHRIKI SAHEB
ICHHRA, LAHORE

From a copy of the Urdu: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

522. LETTER TO SHAMALDAS GANDHI

[After *November 1, 1945*][1]

CHI. SHAMALDAS,

I have your letter. I have already written that it[2] might have been due to oversight. Now I understand. But such haste is unpardonable. Always remember rashness is madness. You did know about his birthday[3]. If you did not, it is a grave offence.

I had thought you were a skilled journalist but you don't seem to be one. In a well-organized office, blocks of photographs are always kept ready. And so also most of the write-ups. Have a look at the special issue of *Janmabhoomi*. It is very good.

"VANDEMATARAM" KARYALAYA
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

523. LETTER TO SIR EVAN M. JENKINS

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
November 2, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN[4],

I wonder whether you have seen the enclosed[5] which I saw yesterday. His Excellency should know that this garbled version of

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's earlier letter to the addressee; *vide* "Interview to "People's War", 17-7-1945

[2] Absence of reference to Mahadev

[3] Vallabhbhai Patel's birthday on October 31

[4] Private Secretary to the Viceroy

[5] Press clippings containing reports that Gandhiji had approached the Viceroy about the INA prisoners awaiting trial before a Court Martial.

my letter[1] in question is not of my doing. I believe that the few workers in my office are too faithful to give out anything without my permission, which could not be given for the simple reason that whatever influence I exercise is purely moral, whether with the people or with the Government. And that influence loses in effect by premature publication. I know that there is nothing confidential in what I have written to His Excellency. But it is not meant for the public until the several results contemplated by the correspondence take place or His Excellency desires otherwise.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure: 2

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 42

524. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

POONA,
November 2, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

Of course you can't forget me. Your post has been coming regularly. And it gives me all the information I want.

Good Shummy[2] gives me news about you and the family, forbidding me to write in reply. I have taken him at his word.

Pyarelal is quite well and has also commenced some work. I entertain the hope that he will settle down to work.

Sardar returns tomorrow from Bombay.

My programme, D.V., is: Leave here 19, Bombay 20, Sevagram 21 to 29, entrain for Calcutta 30 morning, reaching Calcutta 1st December.

Gomati[3] has been suffering from fever of long duration, now Chhaganlal Gandhi is laid up. Poor Kashi[4] !

I am well. No worry on my account.

You must keep well. Love to your party and the friends there.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4171. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7807

[1] Presumably the reference is to Gandhiji's letter to the Viceroy dated October 19, 1945.

[2] Lt.-Col. Shumshere Singh, addressee's brother

[3] Kishorelal Mashruwala's wife

[4] Chhaganlal Gandhi's wife

525. LETTER TO BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
POONA,
November 2, 1945

MY DEAR BHARATAN,

I had your letter yesterday.

You have given a cautious and judicious opinion on Bhailal's[1] project. That is not what I wanted exactly from you. Did I tell you that I lent him your book[2] in typescript, which you gave me to read for my foreword, and he cock-suredly told me that his scheme was exactly in conformity with your thesis? I said to him, and I repeat it now, that if I have understood your thesis correctly, his project is quite contrary to the letter and the spirit of your thesis. The rule of thumb that I applied was to know whether his scheme would succeed if it was multiplied to the extent of covering 700,000 villages. And my answer was it could not succeed within a measurable distance of time. This fundamental objection is apart from the fact that he, a tried engineer and therefore an accurate man, has dared to build his scheme largely on his calculation that people will do this and that and the other thing will come true. If what I have said is true and really flows from your book, as it does from my instinctive belief, you have to say so in black and white. If my argument is sound, the way to amend your opinion is to supplement what you have given already by adding that, according to your book as interpreted by you, the project is bound to fail in terms of the millions, and is likely to fail even within the limited compass, because he has built largely upon speculations, a thing which a tried engineer should never do. Did you also notice that his project contemplates a mill[3] split up into fragments, owned by the villagers or one intelligent villager? Just think what it means. It must resolve itself into one gigantic State-owned mill or mills centrally situated. In other words, 700,000 villages must be converted into 700 or 70 cities. In still other words, a large portion of the population must die of starvation, famine and the like or be cut to pieces by the sword or

[1] Bhailalbhai Patel, an enthusiast of rural development through application of modern technology; he later became leader of the Swatantra Party in Gujarat. *Vide* also "Letter to Bhailalbhai Patel", 26-12-1945.

[2] *Capitalism, Socialism or Villagism* ?

[3] Flour mill

blown up by gunpowder.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI BHARATAN KUMARAPPA
C/O SETH SHOORJI VALLABHDAS
CUTCH CASTLE, OPP. SANDHURST BRIDGE
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

526. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

November 2, 1945

BHAI MUNSHI,

I think I have told you that I observe silence while spinning. I do listen, though not to what people say. Valjibhai therefore reads things to me. In this manner I heard the whole of your speech at the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan[1]. I liked what you said regarding my resignation.[2] I was glad, too, that you had firmly expressed your views regarding the national language. But I feel that what you have said about writers is not correct. I would let the thing pass if the views expressed were not harmful. If I have not heard right, please correct me. I have understood your view to be this: that if a writer can make his art interesting he has fulfilled himself. It has always seemed to me a terrible thought that the end of art is for it to be made interesting. Leaving aside debauchery, even hypocrisy, violence and untruth can easily be made interesting. Would such writing be called art? On your recommendation I read *Prithivivallabh*[3]. According to me it owes its popularity not to the interest it sustains but to the meaning it contains. Besides, you have beautifully blended the beautiful languages descended from Sanskrit. But, as you have not been able to forget that history[4], can you, as a historian, forget the whole of Muslim history? Even if you can do so, can you make the whole of India forget it? Can you reverse the flow of water and make it go upward? After the British

[1] Held at Udaipur which was presided over by the addressee

[2] Gandhiji resigned from the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan on July 25, 1945, as the Sammelan could not commit itself to Gandhiji's policy that the national language should neither be Persianized nor Sanskritized but should be harmonized under the name Hindustani and should be written in both Devanagari and Persian scripts.

[3] A historical novel by the addressee

[4] Of Gujarat

have left, will it be possible to wipe all the consequences of the British connection off history?

I have placed these two ideas before you with some hesitation, for I do not regard myself either as an expert on art or as a student of history. I, however, felt it was my duty to place before you the experience I have gained as, with my eyes open, I have wandered around the world. I realize, of course, that the principle which I have followed in this very letter in welcoming your views regarding the national language might equally well apply to your ideas on these two subjects.

I liked your Press statement correcting the article which appeared in The *Chronicle*. I had been considering asking you about it, when I read your reply. What is this confusion regarding Jawaharlal's letter? Or is it just a concoction?

From Gujarati: C.W. 7690. Courtesy: K.M. Munshi

527. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

November 2, 1945

CHI. NARAHARI,

Your questions are very good. This much is clear to me: whether public institutions have members of different religious persuasions or not, members belonging to the majority communities cannot celebrate their festivals in a manner which would hurt the religious sentiments of others. The Ganapati festival, and such others, are entirely of a political character and have nothing to do with religion. We cannot, therefore, celebrate them. But celebrations which are part of religious practice must be observed. For instance, in the Ashram Imam Saheb used to give, at my instance and request, the call to the faithful and we used to pray. The call is an essential practice in Islam. It is believed to be superior to the Church bell of the Christians. I think I have now answered your question regarding public institutions. If I have left out any point, please ask again.

It is not easy to answer the question what should be done now regarding Hindu practices. It is very easy for me to describe what I myself do. And I am also quite clear in my mind about the correctness of what I do. But I am not so clear how far the Hindu community should go or which reforms to advocate even in the face

of opposition from it. Probably Kishorelal remembers—as I do, if I am not imagining it—that he had once suggested the omission from our prayers of the verses referring to Ganapati, Saraswati and the Earth. I could not accept this. I know that the form of Saraswati described in the verse is purely imaginary. The Ganapati also is an imaginary figure and stands merely for *"Aum"*. But the popular beliefs about both take the descriptions literally; hence we have the images of Saraswati and Ganapati. If, therefore, we were to eliminate all these practices, Hinduism would be transformed into something quite different; it would, you might say, take the form of the Arya Samaj. There is much in the Arya Samaj that I love, but I just cannot accept *Satyarthaprakash* as scripture. Dayananda Saraswati was a great man and he believed in what he preached. He did, therefore, make an impact. Hinduism, it seems to me, is already assimilating all that is good in the Arya Samaj, and this is the distinctive feature of Hinduism. I do not wish to go, or take you, into still deeper waters just now. If I am destined to live up to 125 years or for many more years still and if my non-attachment becomes as deep as I wish it to become, my views will become clearer and firmer and I will also find a language that appeals to the heart. Till that time arrives, be content with this prosaic explanation that I have given. I have of course always expressed, and will continue to express, random views from time to time as occasion demands. And this will some day lead—if it is so destined—to perfect clearness. At present my attitude is, *neti, neti*[1]. You may derive what comfort you can from this. I am unhappy that I am not able to answer your questions as clearly as you have put them.

I have stated my view regarding the Ganapati festival. I will add this:

1. Wherever there is a Ganapati temple, the *arati*, etc., should continue to be performed for the present. There is room for reform in the *arati* and the ceremonial. *The arati* as it is performed at present is crude. There is no music in it. It can easily be made musical and sweet to the ear. The ceremonial also can be made more solemn by employing a better priest.

2. There is no religion at all in the Dussehra celebration. Its only sanction is custom. I have always been opposed to it since my childhood. Even if we wish to equip the people with arms, the Dussehra celebration has no meaning. Instead of worship of arms, the people, including even children, should be taught the use of arms, as is

[1] "Not this, not this".

done in the West.

3. Plying the charkha on the Charkha Jayanti Day amounts to ceremonial worship of it. To introduce into it a ritual is to bring the charkha into disrepute. If you ask me why, when they spin, I permit them to have a lamp with ghee during broad daylight, my answer will be that in a large measure it is due to my sense of tolerance, also to my weakness. I have always opposed the ceremonial worship of the *Gita* or the manner in which Gita Jayanti is celebrated at present. I have also forbidden the composing of a hymn in praise of the *Gita* to be recited on the Gita Jayanti Day.

4. I do not approve of any leader's photograph being worshipped or of *arati* being performed in front of it, but I have not always opposed these things publicly though I did oppose them in my mind. Since such worship of human beings runs in the blood of Hindus, I have remained indifferent to them. In this matter I am the greatest culprit, as it is the worship of my image that has become most widespread. Since it cannot be prevented, do what I will, I derived a kind of false consolation when the worship of other leaders also started. This, of course, does not mitigate my guilt. It is very difficult to say where this thing will take us. There is some basis of truth in this practice, namely, that man himself being, in a sense, an image, he will always remain an image-worshipper. The forms of such worship will vary for different faiths, but in essence the thing remains image-worship.

5. You may be sure I am opposed to the practice of inviting Brahmins and breaking a coconut at a foundation-stone-laying. And yet I have tolerated this. But since the time I learnt to regard all of us as belonging to one class, namely, the *Atishudras,* all these rituals have taken a different form in my mind. The new form[1] was first put to use on the occasion of the marriage of Tendulkar and Indu. It is a long time since then, but I have seen no defect in the practice. On the day itself the new form seemed very impressive indeed. Vanu[2] is getting along very well. If the clinic[3] continues in existence, she will complete one full year here. She will lose nothing. On the contrary, I believe she will gain something. I do feel sorry that I am not able to give her as much attention as I should like to but my preoccupations have become so serious even here and I have to husband my time so

[1] Marriage according to the Ashram rites
[2] Vanamala, addressee's daughter
[3] Nature Cure Clinic, Poona

carefully that I have no leisure left for anything else.

Sardar will return tomorrow. Dinshaw is with him. He is returning today.

It is some days since Pyarelal's fever subsided. The weakness too, is gradually going. My heart is there all the time and urges me to hurry back. But my sense of dharma keeps me here. I will know more after Sardar's return.

How is Babla[1] getting on? Is Mani[2] with you or at the Ashram? Is she all right? Has Durgabehn[3] recovered?

How will Kishorelal[4] be able to stand the Sevagram winter? But where else can he go in Gomati's[5] present condition? Think over this. In any event you can keep the room warm with a brazier.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9138b

528. LETTER TO SURENDRA B. MASHRUWALA

November 2, 1945

CHI. SURENDRA,

I have your letter. I felt relieved reading it. Since you will be there till I come I shall be less worried about Gomatibehn. Sushilabehn[6] expressed her readiness to go over for her sake but I did not think it necessary to relieve her from her work here till I had more information. I knew before I got your letter that medicines had been discontinued and I was happy. The final date for my arrival there is 21st.

Blessings from

BAPU

ASHRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Narayan Desai, son of Mahadev Desai
[2] Addressee's wife
[3] Durga Desai, widow of Mahadev Desai
[4] Kishorelal G. Mashruwala and his wife
[5] *ibid*
[6] Dr. Sushila Nayyar

529. LETTER TO RAMCHANDRA KILLAWALA

November 2, 1945

BHAI RAMCHANDRA,

I have your letter. Only those who knew the two men should engage in any agitation on their behalf. Then alone will it be seemly. Maulana Saheb and the Congress are doing their utmost for the release of all detenus. You should be satisfied with that.

If you send a brief but full statement of the facts about the two, I will not hesitate to do what I can. That either you yourself or someone who knows them should send the facts to the Press is certainly one way.

Blessings from

BAPU

RAMCHANDRA KILLAWALA
22 RAM MANDIR ROAD
VILE PARLE

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

530. LETTER TO KAILAS D. MASTER

November 2, 1945

CHI. KAILAS,

I have your letter. I must admit that I am disappointed in you. Prabhudas praised you sky-high. I literally believed him and strongly recommended to the secretary of the Ashram that you be admitted, but you did not prove worthy of that praise. You caused anxiety. It will be good if you have settled down even now. Prabhudas's mother is almost an invalid, though she has her wits about her. His father is bed-ridden. If you had remained there as his daughter how much less I should have had to worry? As long as you do not cultivate true devotion to service, as long as you have not controlled your palate and have not learnt to treat all children as your own, I do not see how you can do justice to the kindergarten. It is more difficult to run a kindergarten than to run a school for grown-up children. Very few realize this. Kindergartens are the vogue these days. 'What is there in teaching the children?' There are many who nurture such ignorance. I hope you are not a victim of it. This letter is not to dissuade you from gaining some kindergarten experience but I feel it would be desirable if you served Kashibehn to supplement your experience.

Show this letter to Shantabehn. Do what you think right.

Think of the number of mistakes you have made in writing down a small *sloka*. Your Devanagari writing is not at all well formed. What did you expect to gain by citing a *sloka* like that? How nice it would have been if you had given the Gujarati meaning of the *sloka* provided you had understood it. Your Gujarati handwriting also invites comment. Even your own signature is not well formed. And you drag it right to the edge of the paper. The letters are so badly formed that I am returning the letter for you to see.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

531. LETTER TO ATULANAND CHAKRAVARTY

POONA,
November 2, 1945

BHAI ATULANAND,

I have your letter and also the book. I am reading it. I shall soon write to you again. Have you finished *Call it Politics*[1]? You do follow Hindi, don't you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 1485. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

532. LETTER TO SRIKRISHANDAS JAJU

November 2, 1945

BHAI JAJUJI,

I got your letter only yesterday. It could have arrived only yesterday. By the time this reaches you, you will have left for Bengal. Fix the meeting of the Charkha Sangh for the 27th or 28th.

About the letter from Sialkot I shall send an article. So I do not write separately.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The title is given in English in the source.

533. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN DUBE

November 2, 1945

BHAI RAMNARAYAN DUBE,

I have your letter. It is all right that you are sending your book but please give up the thought of dedicating it to me. If the book has power, that itself will be true dedication. I cannot say that I shall be able to read your book carefully. May be it will arouse my interest when I glance through it.

As for meeting me, you can think of it when I have settled down at Sevagram.

RAMNARAYAN DUBE

C/O PANDIT RAMNARAYAN MISHRA

KAL BHAIRON, BANARAS

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

534. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

[Before *November 3, 1945*][1]

Mahuva is said to be a health resort. The harbour therefore should suit you.

I have an impression that there are facilities for education in Mahuva. At one time Dudhabhai was running a school for Harijans there and the attendance too was pretty good. Find out and tell me whether it still continues.

You have gone to a place where there is much scope for service. The people there are bigoted. Hence very few wear khadi. You may find an odd person here and there wearing it. It is as good as a virgin field. Besides, being an important part of the State, we can see its influence.

Do as much as you can and keep writing to me. I have an impression that Raichandbhai's son also stays there. It is not that he has followed Raichandbhai's profession. He used to write to me and

[1] From the reference to Vallabhbhai Patel who returned from Bombay on November 3, 1945.

his ideas are good. Do not go looking for him. It may be you will hear about him.

Sardar has gone to Bombay for five days. One misses him when he is away. He is so full of humour and so sociable.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Ba Bapuni Shili Chhayaman, p. 234

535. THE CHARKHA SANGH AND POLITICS

A khadi worker has sent the above letter[1] to Jajuji, Secretary of the Charkha Sangh. He has forwarded it to me to discuss it in *Khadi Jagat* and to give my opinion on it. The Charkha Sangh is not a small organization. Even today the workers or the servants—whatever you call them—of the Sangh are to be found all over India. Their number is about 3,000. I consider this a small number. Their number should increase considerably when khadi spreads in the country. Even if we have one worker for every village, the number of workers on the rolls of the Charkha Sangh should be 700,000. This requires a lot of money. But from this one should not conclude that it is impossible to have so many workers. I have never believed that. When the cause is good and there is a spirit of service among the workers the money is always found. I have founded and conducted insitutions all my life. In my experience there has not been a single institution which was closed down or which could not make progress for want of money. On the contrary I have found that some institutions ceased functioning or could not make progress for want of workers. You should not ask how, if not on the strength of money, big factories function and recruitment to the Government offices is made. Those who do not understand fully what I have said above, raise such doubts. I never said that money could serve no purpose. If money served no purpose how could we have become its slaves? I would go to the extent of saying that without money we cannot go ahead. But what I want to say is that if we want to become slaves of money we should give up the

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had suggested that workers of the Charkha Sangh might be permitted to take part in the election activities in their spare time.

idea of serving the people. And it is the lot of slaves to be suppressed. If however we consider money as our slave and use it as a means and that too for rendering service, then we are making good use of it. For the work of service, our first and indispensable need is workers and when we have such workers money will come chasing them. They will not have to go in search of money. That is why I say if we get seven lakh or even more workers we may take it as though we had the money in the safe. It may be said that we do not pay enough to tempt or attract workers. I admit it. But it is only the spirit that matters. Those who join such philanthropic institutions as the Charkha Sangh do so for the sake of service and not for salaries. They do take monthly salaries because like the rich the poor too have to feed themselves, but they do so only to keep themselves alive and fit for service. Such workers do not eat or drink or dress merely for pleasure.

If we assume that such are the workers of the Charkha Sangh then they do not have any time to take part in politics. The Charkha Sangh cannot function at all if the workers devote eight hours to office work and spend the rest of thetime in pleasure or otherwise. Because they are the people who will make or mar the Sangh. Therefore they should devote their spare time to making themselves more competent for improving its activities, such as learning all the processes of khadi-making, studying its science, and doing well all that they do.

This does not mean that the workers of the Charkha Sangh have no interest in politics or other activities. They are and should be interested in such activities. However, they should keep that interest in check and give expression to it through their work in the Charkha Sangh. Then only can they understand true politics. A Charkha Sangh worker will remain a true voter and will vote for the candidate put up by the Congress but he will not bother to canvass for him. He will not deliver speeches supporting him. He will not devote his time to such work. Congress work is peoples' work. The Congress belongs to the people. The Charkha Sangh has been created by the Congress and the Charkha Sangh also belongs to the people. Just as political work is Congress work the Sangh work is also Congress work. How can a man ride two horses at the same time? One who joins the Charkha Sangh should devote himself wholly to its activities and one who joins politics should devote his entire time to politics. In this way both supplement each other's work. What I said above is at the back of the

rule that the workers of Charkha Sangh should not take active part in politics.

POONA, *November 3, 1945*

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, December, 1945

536. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

POONA,
November 3, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

It is not right that you have not written to me at all recently. I was to reply to your other questions only after I had received your reply to my suggestion, and that is still so.

Kanchan is on fire. Who else but you can quench that fire? Even if you released her, she would not marry anybody else. And she is not one to satisfy her passion through illicit relations with somebody. And yet passion is burning her up. She does not know the value of *brahmacharya*. She has married to gratify her passion. You did not tell her about the condition of *brahmacharya* when marrying her. Is it not your dharma, now, to satisfy her? If you were completely free from passion, I would have had nothing to tell you. After giving Kanchan the gift of children you may observe *brahmacharya*, or you should calm her not with anger but with pure love. You should look after Kishorelal, Gomati, Chhaganlal and Borde, and so also should Kanchan. Write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8428. Also C.W. 5601. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

537. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

November 3, 1945

CHI. KANCHAN,

I have your letter. I feel sorry for you, and equally sorry for Munnalal. I have written to him and told him in so many words that he should set up house with you and that, if the two of you cannot

voluntarily observe self-control, you may have children. However, if he cannot bring himself to agree to this I cannot force him against his will. You should, therefore, remain calm. Show this to Munnalal. If he refuses to change his mind you should leave the matter to God and engross yourself in work. For the present I should like you, if your health permits, to look after Gomatibehn, as also the others who are ill. We shall discuss the question of your accompanying me when I come. You had wanted to accompany me to Madras. Now you suggest both Madras and Bengal. That will have to be thought over. We shall do so when I arrive there. Meanwhile you should remain calm, get well and serve as much as you can. You are a fine worker. Let service be your husband, your hobby, your all. But if that cannot be, it does not matter. In any case do not think one thing and speak another.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8260. Also C.W. 6985. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

538. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

November 3, 1945

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

You too have fallen ill. What is to be done when even a warrior falls ill? Get well soon. Ask without the slightest hesitation for whatever services you need.

I hope Kashi[1] is well.

If you are not able to write, let Kashi write.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9224. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] Wife of the addressee

539. TELEGRAM TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

POONA,
November 4, 1945

JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ
BAJAJWADI
WARDHA

YOUR TWO WIRES ANNOUNCING BIRTH OF SON TO MADALASA. HOPE MOTHER BABY PROGRESSING WELL.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 264

540. LETTER TO PRESTON GROVER

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD,
POONA,
November 4, 1945

DEAR GROVER,

The Press man in you speaks again. I entirely agree with you that my statement, whether it grips or not, has undoubtedly a world of meaning in it. You shall have it some time for yourself, even if not for the Press. I am quite clear in my mind that neither the public nor the Press are eagerly waiting for my speech or my action. Therefore, let me take my time, untrammelled by outside considerations.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

PRESTON GROVER, ESQ.
ASSOCIATED PRESS OF AMERICA
TIMES OF INDIA BLDG.
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

541. LETTER TO MADALASA

POONA,
November 4, 1945

CHI. MADALASA,

You are now the mother of two sons. Janakibehn is so delighted that she sent me two telegrams. Were it not for her wire, I would not have known. I sent a wire[1] in reply, which she must have received.

I got your letter and was pleased to read it. When I return from the tour, you may take me to your place.

It is very good indeed that your mother-in-law is with you. I hope both of you are well.

Blessings to you all from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 326

542. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

POONA,
November 4, 1945

CHI. SUSHILA,

I wonder whether you know it, but Kishorelal and Gomati- behn are getting weaker and weaker. The cold of Sevagram does not suit them. They shrink from asking for anybody's services. Gomatibehn is actually ill. She is suffering from some kind of typhoid. The constant fever has now come down a little. We trust and hope that it will come down to normal. But it will take some time for her to leave the sick-bed, and it will be quite a while before she is able to look after herself. She would not accept the services of anyone who may offer them, and if they can help it, neither of them would accept anybody's services. I would like it if someone were to stay with them now and look after them. There is no question as to whether they will like it, for I have not heard of their having ever complained to anyone about not getting any service. But wouldn't my heart complain? If, therefore, you can get away from there and go to Sevagram, and if your health permits you to look after them, I think it would be the best

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Jankidevi Bajaj", 4-11-1945

arrangement. In that case you will also have to cancel your plan of accompanying me to Calcutta. I believe it will be February by the time I finish touring and return to the Ashram. By that time, winter will be over and we may hope that both of them will have got well. I hope to reach Sevagram on the 21st. I should like both of you to go to Sevagram before then. I think it necessary for Manilal to accompany me on my tour, not to look after me but to gain experience which might help him in his work and to get to know people. He, therefore, will not be there all the time. Arun will certainly accompany me to Sevagram. One cannot say what progress he will make in studies, but I think he is showing himself to be a good servant. He has taken to Kanu and, therefore, he is bound to learn to serve. Hence he also will help. Besides, if both of you agree of your own accord, not for my sake, to let Arun stay and grow up in the Ashram, as he now says he would like to do, he will study and also acquire practical wisdom. Moreover, he has now become friends with Aminbhai, who is a learned man, and stays in the Ashram. Probably you do not know him. Manilal is certain to know him. He is an artist like you, but a much better one. Arun has already started learning from him. And Aminbhai says that if he were given two years' time Arun would learn much more here than he would by joining even the best of schools. This may perhaps be too optimistic a view. But what difference does it make to us? It is a fact that his company is bene- ficial. My purpose in writing all this about Arun is to tell you that he has the spirit of service in him and that, since he will be with you in the Ashram, you will not get bored there. Kishorelal and Gomati-behn will thus have the benefit of your service without any hardship to you. If they feel that you are likely to suffer in any way by staying there to look after them, they are not the type who will put up with it. Let me add too that Kashi also is tired out. She cannot work much now. And Chhaganlal is on sickbed. He has continuous fever. If it turns out to be as prolonged as Gomatibehn's, he also will require to be looked after. I believe, therefore, that it will be good if you are in the Ashram for his sake at any rate. I have thus put before you what I believe to be your duty. Both of you may think over this and do what you consider right. If your presence there is not essential, both of you should at once leave for the Ashram. You may write to me from there and tell me what you intend to do. Ila[1] will be with you, of course. But my impression about

[1] Addressee's youngest daughter

her is that she is not likely to be burden on anybody. And, moreover, she cannot stay without you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4965

543. LETTER TO ANASUYA SARABHAI

POONA,
November 4, 1945

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I have your letter. Is there any Divali? Who will celebrate it? Are you all right? How is Shankerlal[1]? I am well. There is so far no visible improvement in Sardar's health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 11564

544. LETTER TO GAJANAN NAIK

POONA,
November 4, 1945

CHI. GAJANAN,

I have your letter. I am glad to read it. You will be able to do real service only if you assimilate the lesson I imparted to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

GAJANAN NAIK
AKHIL BHARATIYA GRAMODYOG SANGH
MAGANWADI, WARDHA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Shankerlal Banker

545. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

POONA,
November 4, 1945

CHI. JANAKI MAIYA,

Your joy must have added a cubit to your stature. You will have had my telegram[1]. Now you must give up all attachments and look after Jamnalal's work of cow-protection. You must become an expert in that.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5852

546. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

POONA,
November 4, 1945

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

Dinshaw has had a talk with your brothers. As a result he is not keen any more about going to Nasik.[2] So you may proceed on the assumption that the Nasik idea has been given up. About the building we may continue along the present lines. If I find that Dinshaw still wishes to go to Nasik, I shall have a talk with him. We shall see if any building or land is available then.

We shall all reach Bombay on the 19th. I shall leave Bombay for Wardha on the 20th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8074. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

547. LETTER TO MANRANJAN CHOWDHARY

November 4, 1945

CHI. MANRANJAN CHOWDHARY,

I have your telegram. I am not taking any interest in the elections.[3] As I know very little about the matter, I have not sent a

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Jankidevi Bajaj", 4-11-1945
[2] *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 21-11-1945.
[3] Elections to the Provincial Assemblies were scheduled to be held in the winter of 1945-46 and to the Central Assembly before the new budget.

telegram. But why are you standing against a Congress candidate? In a way you also belong to the Congress. Congress is not an enemy of the Hindus. It is a different thing if the Congress candidate is bad. In that case I should like you to tell me. From the newspapers I find that the Hindu Mahasabha has made it their dharma to oppose Congress candidates everywhere. If that is so, this action of yours too will be dharma and not the opposite of it. Sir Radhakrishnan in his speech at Karachi has given an account of what the members of the Hindu Mahasabha are doing in Sind. Everyone, and especially you, should see it. If all that he has said and all that I have been hearing is true, it will save neither the Hindu dharma nor India. For persons like you it is very necessary to think over all this. I showed your telegram to Sardar also. He returned from Bombay last night. He was also pained to see the telegram.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MANRANJAN CHOWDHARY
143/3 NO. UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

548. LETTER TO SIR EVAN M. JENKINS

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
November 5, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN,

I thank you for your letter[1] of 1st instant informing me of the action taken on my letter of 29th ultimo on khadi.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 70

[1] It read : "I have shown His Excellency your letter of 29th October about the exemption of khadi shops from the Provincial controls against hoarding and profiteering. The letter is being passed on to the Industries and Civil Supplies Department, who will inform the Provincial Authorities of your views."

549. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

POONA,
November 5, 1945

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I have your postcard. My congratulations to the spinners. If you have not sent the figures of yarn to Narandas, at Rajkot, please do so. Instead of incurring expense in sending the money, use it there itself for Harijan work.

Blessings to all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9521. Also C.W. 440. Courtesy: Shivabhai G. Patel

550. LETTER TO SIR EVAN M. JENKINS

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
November 6, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN,

A copy of the petition sent to His Excellency on behalf of Shri Basuda Singh of Fyzabad District has been sent to me for seeking Government sympathy. From the petition, I gather that it is a case of political hue, belonging to the 1942 disturbances period. It easily falls under the principle that guided His Excellency's decision in the Ashti-Chimur[1] cases. May I therefore ask for the usual commutation of the death sentence[2]?

May I also ask for an early consideration of the case by reason of the fact that the period for execution has been fixed for 19th instant?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 56

[1] Thirty persons were sentenced to death for violence during the Quit India Movement at Chimur and Ashti in C. P. Later on the sentences were commuted to life imprisonment. *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 31-3-1945

[2] The sentence was commuted to life imprisonment; *vide* "Letter to Sir Evan M. Jenkins, 25-11-1945.

551. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

POONA,
November 6, 1945

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. Why do you lose heart? I will reach Sevagram on the 21st. If you come then it will be fine. I shall make whatever arrangements I find necessary. Do not run away even if it gets too cold. As for illness, it is the lot of the human body. We have to learn to bear it cheerfully. That itself brings half the relief. You are a sensible and wise woman. You must not yield to despair.

I hope Anand[1] is in good health.

And so also Shakaribehn[2].

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10062. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

552. LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

POONA,
November 6, 1945

CHI. CHAMPA,

Your arrival there was unexpected. But never mind. It will be enough if Ratilal[3] does not follow you. Become one with the Ashram people as sugar does with milk. It is impossible to live in the Ashram at present in any other way. Be satisfied with whatever comforts are available. Live carefully so that you or the children may not fall ill. I hope to return there on the 21st.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1095. Courtesy: Champa R. Mehta

[1] Addressee's son
[2] Addressee's mother
[3] Addressee's husband

553. LETTER TO TARA MODAK

November 6, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. Keep on sending *Shikshan Patrika*. If you have anything to ask, by all means do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

TARABEHN MODAK
996 HINDU COLONY
DADAR, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

554. LETTER TO LILAVATI PARIKH

November 6, 1945

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. You must tell your father everything and then take his advice. If you do not have that much courage, I am afraid you will not be able to do anything.

Blessings from

BAPU

LILAVATI PARIKH
[C/O] OCHCHHAVLAL NATHABHAI SHETH
KALYAN MOTI'S CHAWL
ROOM NO. 30/31
BOMBAY 4

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

555. LETTER TO VASUMATI D. PANDIT

November 6, 1945

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter of October 31. I see from it that you have not received my previous letter. There is nothing wrong with my health. I am quite well.

I shall leave here for Bombay on the 19th, reaching Sevagram on the 21st. I shall leave for Calcutta on December 30 and be there for a month and three weeks. Then maybe 15 days in Madras. Then

again back to Sevagram for 5 or 7 days and thence perhaps to the Frontier Province. Only on returning from there can I settle down in Sevagram. This means that right now my stay in Sevagram cannot be permanent. If therefore you want to spend a little time in the Ashram you can do so only in my absence. But do as you feel inclined.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

556. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

November 6, 1945

BAPA,

I have your letter as also the cheque for Lila Jog. I shall of course forward your letter to Mridulabehn. Still it is certainly right to send the cheque.[1]

What you say about Sushila Pai is right. It was never my intention to make one of the two permanent. But as long as Sucheta stays there, whether as a candidate or for examinations, she will be considered a candidate for the post of organizing secretary. Won't she? So the same should hold good in the case of Sushila Pai also. She also wanted it that way. But I saw that Sucheta did not like it. So if Sushila Pai goes there it will be just to observe the work and to see if she can adjust herself in the office. Sucheta is going to let me know her decision only after seeing you.

BAPU

THAKKAR BAPA

BAJAJ WADI, WARDHA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

557. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

POONA,
November 6, 1945

CHI. DINSHAW,

I could not write to you yesterday but I kept mulling over things. You can have anything you like under the Trust, but I would

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mridula Sarabhai", 7-1-1945

say that we cannot start anything at Singhgadh right now. It is another matter if I think of something to start there. The Bombay centre will have to be closed down. I would advise you to keep it for your own diversion and as a source of income. I cannot afford to have it under the Trust. I have still not received the figures about your personal expenses. If you are provided board and lodging and Rs. 500/- per month from here, in my view, you should not think of making extra money from nature cure. But here you must ask your own conscience. If this is a bitter pill, then you must live in Bombay and carry on your practice. If you put it in the Trust, it may be closed down soon after. You do not have to worry at all about the expense here. I shall manage. I am anticipating that there will not be a single rich patient left here by the end of December. The facilities here will solely be for those whom I send.

The person I send to manage things here will stay here. Meat will be cooked in the kitchen for only Maji and any members of your family who may be visiting but not for any patient. My dharma tells me that non-vegetarian food, such as mutton, liver, etc., have no place in nature cure. I do not suggest that those things have not benefited or cannot benefit anyone. All I say is that in my view they cannot be included in nature cure. The entire portion I am occupying at present will be reserved for you and Gulbai and it should not be necessary at any time to vacate it even for me. Whenever I come, I can live anywhere on the upper floor. It will not be difficult for me even to stay in the room which Saralabehn is at present occupying. If it rains I can settle in the bathroom. But it is not the least bit fair for me to occupy the portion especially built for Gulbai.

A ‘stock list’ should be prepared for the Trust. Perhaps it cannot be done till Bhimnag comes, though of course I have with me so many people here that I can easily get the stock list and such other things prepared. But your method of getting work done is altogether different. I do not like it. That way there are many things that I do not like, but I put up with them. If you take up the responsibility, most of the things here can be settled while I am here. I consider it wrong that you do not get patients to work. Vanamala is capable of doing a lot of work. All the patients would not be bed-ridden. From now on, only the poor must be admitted. If there is any rich patient, he will be brought only by me and he will serve some purpose. I may even take money from him and he will stay at my pleasure. It irks me that you have not trained even Gulbai properly. No one here seems to be

getting any training. I do not even see the three-year training being given here which you thought was necessary. That is not correct. But in this matter, I have got to be content with whatever you can easily provide. If you think that thereby the whole thing would completely change and if it is not proper for me to interfere to such an extent, you can remove me. If I were to involve myself in the matter, I would let things continue as they are. I receive letters from people from all over. They are willing to help in this or even join in. Some of them I must admit are very good. But till such time as I see you as a votary of nature cure and know who will be the right people to work with you, I would not like to admit any nature cure expert. If I run this workshop I would like to pass on its benefits to the thousands of people outside. For that, I would naturally need to have a large number of workers. Only when that happens, can we at last have something like a university.

Give some thought to this. I have not kept a copy of this letter. Return it to me after reading. I shall have it copied and then give it back to you. I have written down my thoughts as they came while I was still in bed in the morning.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

558. LETTER TO JOSH

November 6, 1945

BHAI JOSH,

I have your letter. I knew that your *josh*[1] would come down. Now I see that you wish to have a heart-to-heart talk with me. Please come on the 13th. I will keep myself free at 3 in the afternoon.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

JOSH SAHEB
TAHIR PLACE
SHANKER SETH ROAD, POONA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Anger

559. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

POONA,
November 6, 1945

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your postcard. Sushilabehn has explained my view in her long letter. You must have received it by now. A short note has been written to Khurshedbehn today. See that too. I shall be in Bombay on the 19th and 20th, in Sevagram on the 21st and on the 1st December in Calcutta.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2488

560. LETTER TO M. S. KELKAR

November 6, 1945

BHAI KELKAR,

I have your letter. To say nothing of deciding to open a nature-cure clinic, I have not even considered it. I have been wishing to open one for years but it has merely been a wish. Your views are such that you cannot work in any institution. It is a different thing that a man like me may get work from you. There should be a separate institution for you. But I know that it is never going to come. So let things go on as they are and let us all do what work of service we can. I see no other way.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

M. S. KELKAR
C/O G. B. SAHASRABUDDHE
WEAVING MASTER, MOHATA MILLS
AKOLA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

561. LETTER TO SAILEN BOSE

POONA,
November 6, 1945

CHI. SAILEN,

I have your letter. God is merciful. Blessings to Bela.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI S. C. BOSE
59 FORBES STREET
FORT, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

562. LETTER TO NORALMAL PHULOMAL

November 6, 1945

BHAI NORALMAL,

I have your letter. I was distressed to hear about your health. May God keep you. Get well soon. Write to me either in Urdu or Devanagari. Sindhi and Urdu scripts are almost the same. Only the languages are a little different. Learn Hindustani after you get well. I have the Rs. 20 sent by you.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI NORALMAL PHULOMAL
SUB-DIVISIONAL CLERK, P. W. D.
NARA SICHAI, SUKKUR
SINDH

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

563. LETTER TO M. R. BONDRE

November 6, 1945

BHAI BONDRE,

Come whenever you wish before the 11th. I will spare a few

minutes for you at 5·30 p.m. when you come. I hope Nalini is all right.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

M. R. BONDRE, B.A., B.T.
11-C HARI NIVAS, SHIVAJI PARK
LADY JAMSHEDJI ROAD
BOMBAY 28

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

564. LETTER TO VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA

November 6, 1945

CHI. VICHITRA,

I have your letter. It is good you were saved from the calamity this time.

I have talked fully with Saralabehn. I still talk to her whenever I have time and I shall continue doing so. I hope to reach Sevagram on the 21st.

Blessings from

BAPU

VICHITRA NARAYAN
GANDHI ASHRAM
MEERUT
UNITED PROVINCES

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

565. LETTER TO R. R. DIWAKAR

November 6, 1945

BHAI DIWAKAR,

You did come but you did not ask for time to see me. I had thought you would come and have a talk with me. That is why I did not write anything on what you had sent.

What you say about income tax will not work. The rest seems to be all right. I am sending a copy of what I have drafted.[1] It will give

[1] This is not traceable.

you some idea of what I think. If you wish to say something about it, do so. I shall leave here on the 19th morning.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

566. LETTER TO SIR EVAN M. JENKINS

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
November 7, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN,

I have to thank you for your letter of 1st instant regarding Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee.[1] I anxiously await the result of further examination ordered by His Excellency of certain points arising out of the statement.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 60

567. LETTER TO SIR EVAN M. JENKINS

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
November 7, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN,

I have to thank you for your letter of 1st instant regarding the mercy petition of Shri Haridas Mitra and three others.[2] Will you please convey my thanks to His Excellency for the commutation of the death sentences?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 51

[1] Sheel Bhadra Yajee had complained that he and some others had been ill-treated while in detention; *vide*. "Letter to E. M. Jenkins", 10-10-1945. Jenkins on behalf of the Viceroy denied the allegation but promised further examination.

[2] Mitra and Jyotish Chandra Bose were sentenced to death under the Enemy Agents Ordinance for aiding Indian spies landed by a Japanese submarine. One of the spies committed suicide. The other two were tried and sentenced to death along with their helpers. All the four of them had petitioned the Viceroy for mercy who commuted all the four death sentences to transportation for life.

568. LETTER TO PRAVIN GANDHI

November 7, 1945

CHI. PRAVIN,

It is good that you wrote and introduced yourself. I do remember you but if you had not written I would not have remembered the details.

I am glad that you wish to be forgiven for writing the letter. That shows also that you should have procured a postcard beforehand. You have messed up your signature. Correct it.

Show this letter to Tara[1], Mohan[2], Ramu,[3] Gopalkrishna[4] and others and give them my blessings.

Blessings from

BAPU

PRAVIN
[C/O] DEVDAS GANDHI
NEW DELHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

569. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

November 7, 1945

CHI. MRIDULA,

I am enclosing a cheque for Rs. 375—Lila Jog's three months' salary. I am also enclosing the letter Bapa has sent along with the cheque. This is just for your information. Deliver the cheque to Lila Jog and send me a receipt. Your work is then over. The purpose of sending you a copy of Bapa's letter is that you may know that Bapa is firm in his views. My reading is that there is some mutual misunderstanding. It is not that anyone is deliberately lying. What it means is that there is some purpose in what in English is called "red-tape"; that is, to get everything in writing so that there can be no scope for saying something different. Red tape has and does not have a place among family members. It means that none of them are bound to one another and that everything is going on smoothly

[1] Daughter of Devdas Gandhi
[2] Sons of Devdas Gandhi
[3] *ibid*
[4] *ibid*

without friction. Writing down everything begins as soon as friction begins.

Our correspondence in Gujarati must have been published.[1] At the end I inadvertently wrote that you were not resigning as a trustee [of the Kasturba Trust]. I have deleted it in the English translation. It was there in the copy sent to you. Lest any reader should misunderstand, I had written out the sentence at the beginning. But having forgotten about it, finally, I made the thing clear.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

570. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

November 7, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I understand about Kailas. I do not have your magnanimity. From where shall I get it? Or you may say there is a difference between yours and mine. Whichever way we look at it the result is the same. Let things take their own course. If Kailas is really so timid, then I feel she should stay with her parents. Let her learn what she can while serving them. This is just my opinion. Of course I shall be happy if she studies at the Talimi Sangh and becomes proficient. I would not like her to serve at the cost of her education. I on my part believe that pure service is in itself education. This is the basic idea behind Nayee Talim.[2]

I hope Gomati is recovering.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Gandhiji's letter to the addressee dated October 15, 1945, was published in *The Hindu* and *The Bombay Chronicle* dated November 8, 1945, along with the addressee's letter of resignation.

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Kailas D. Master", 2-11-1945

571. LETTER TO K. RAMARAO

November 7, 1945

BHAI RAMARAO,

Even if Panditji has suggested it, why should you ask for a message[1]? Even after having been so close to me, don't you know that asking for messages really brings harm? I know it is difficult to understand this, but it should not be difficult for a person like you. Do men and institutions advance because of praise by others or because of their own qualities and strength and by adding to these day by day? Will you not admit that those who depend on others' praise progressively become enfeebled?

The sacrifice made by the *Herald* is genuine, but does sacrifice need anybody's praise? And what sacrifice can be made by one who expects praise?

I hope you will be able to follow my *rashtrabhasha*. At least your daughter will be able to explain.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

572. LETTER TO NARENDRA DEV

November 7, 1945

BHAI NARENDRA DEV,

I have your letter. There are occasions when one has to write about those with whom one is very close. The rule to follow is that people closely associated should not eulogize each other. I can write much in support of this but what shall I write to a person like you? Better to spare me from all such things. I am sorry I have not even seen the daily called *Samsar*. Even if it comes here, it is not shown to me because so many editors are kind enough to send me their dailies. I can say that these days I do not read newspapers at all. Clippings from newspapers believed to be useful to me are placed before me. If I send a message to one, why not to the others? Others also do write and ask for messages.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] For *The National Herald*

573. LETTER TO VAMANRAO JOSHI

November 7, 1945

BHAI VAMANRAO,

I have your beautiful letter. It is interesting too.

I write the truth as I personally see it. Absolute truth alone is God. It is beyond reach. At the most we can say it is *neti*, *neti*[1]. The truth that we see is relative, many-sided, plural and is the whole truth for a given time. There is no scope for vanity in it and the only way of reaching it is through ahimsa. Pure and absolute truth should be our ideal. We can reach the ideal only by constantly meditating on it, and reaching it is attaining *moksha*. For the last sixty years I have been experiencing what I have said above. I am still experiencing it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

574. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

November 7, 1945

CHI. HOSHIARI,

Nowadays you are so calm and so absorbed in various activities that there should be no need for a letter from me. Hence I have not worried.

Why do you not make Gajaraj[2] write for you? It is good that Uncle[3] will be coming in a few days. If God wills it, we shall all reach there on the 21st.

It is good indeed that you went and saw Vinobaji.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Not this, not this
[2] Addressee's son
[3] Balvantsinha

575. LETTER TO KHURSHED NAOROJI

POONA,
November 8, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

The same post that brought your letter brings a card from him saying I should do nothing till he says I should. In any case I must not be involved in an appeal for memorial sub [scriptions]. Let Satyavati live in us by each one of us weaving in our lives the virtue we prize most. Let the rich pay money for some such work as appealed to S. and appeals to them.

I am not shifting to Poona. It was a canard. To leave Sevagram would be desertion of which I must not be guilty.

Jagannath must not take up any Government job. What he should do I cannot say.

I am asking Pyarelal to let you have the list you want.

So you have at last got the work that attracts you and the atmosphere you can like.

Love.

BAPU

SMT. KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI
82 DARYAGANJ
DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

576. LETTER TO BACHU

November 8, 1945

CHI. BACHU,

Your handwriting is particularly bad. It is not worthy of you. In my view each character of the alphabet is a drawing, and no drawing is made by scrawling. Whether it is of a mere learner or that of a great painter the broad outline must look the same to the eye. The drawings of a parrot made by a learner and an expert artist will look alike in their general form, but the quality of art in each will reveal who is the learner and who the expert. Similarly, the shape of "व्य" drawn by a

learner and that of one drawn by an expert artist must appear alike. The difference would be seen only in the quality of art in each. But in the drawings of your letters there is no resemblance at all. I would blame your teacher more than you for this. If you have understood what I have said above and still continue to draw shapeless lines instead of fine letters, I will blame you. Your body must have now become as strong as an athlete's.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5904

577. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

POONA,
November 8, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have your letter. It is difficult to reply to it. But one thing is clear, namely, that you should tell Kanchan in plain words that you do not look upon her as your wife and that she also should not look upon you as her husband. You should accept no service from her. Indeed, you two should not live in the same place. I am prepared to arrange for your stay in different places. This would be a painful duty. But your letter makes it incumbent upon me to take such a step.

As for serving people, you can only tend those of the sick who require tending.

Since I hope that we shall now be meeting on the 21st, I do not write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8427. Also C.W. 5602. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

578. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS G. KAPADIA

POONA,
November 8, 1945

CHI. MADHAVDAS[1],

I have your long letter. I cannot say I have read the whole of it, but Chi. Kanu has told me in substance all that I should know. If indeed you have settled down as you say you have, I am happy and Ba's soul will rejoice wherever it is. I see nothing but her holy merit in all this love which Kunvarjibhai and others shower on you. They have become closer to you than your relations by blood. It would, therefore, be excellent if you so lived as to be of help to one another, and I would believe that you had had a new birth.

I will write to Kunvarji and Manilal. Please do not feel bad on account of Manilal and other relations. All of them would be ready to do their utmost to look after you. If Manilal feels any hesitation in sending you your keys, please believe me to be the cause behind his hesitation. I do not possess a pie which I can call my own, and I do not feel that I have the right to spend any money on your account. I hold that the brothers should reimburse me whatever expense I have incurred on you. Manilal is a poor man. I should be a sinner if I let him earn more from Phoenix than would enable him to live decently. He, therefore, cannot give you or spend on you much from his earnings. He probably does not know how close a bond has come to be formed between Kunvarjibhai and you. Be that as it may, I am writing to him about the keys.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2725

579. LETTER TO KUNVARJI V. MEHTA

POONA,
November 8, 1945

CHI. KUNVARJI,

Chi. Kanu has given me a complete summary of your letter. I see your generosity and Ba's holy merit in the great care you are

[1] Brother of Kasturba Gandhi

taking of Uncle and in the fact that you are treating him as a respected elder. If Uncle recovers fully, all the credit will go to you, though personally I would give part of it to Bhai Krishnavarma. He has, so far, not asked me even for the expense he has incurred on Uncle and has nursed him as well as he could for the sake of Ba. Had he not come forward to help, I would have been at a loss to know where to put Uncle.

Your idea of helping Uncle run a small store in your neighbourhood is no doubt good, but please do not put it into effect immediately. After his establishment has been wound up, as you have suggested, and he has completely forgotten about it and become perfectly composed, I see no harm in your letting him start a store in partnership with any member of your family. Let not greed make him or anyone of you go in for speculation.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2723

580. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

POONA,
November 8, 1945

CHI. MANILAL,

I got your letter and postcard. Arun has taken away your letter and has not returned it. He is always in high spirits these days. He soon makes friends with everybody who comes here. So I do not now worry about him. Though he makes no effort, he does learn a little. There is, therefore, no need for any of you to worry about him just now.

Please go to Bombay for the books. Maybe you have already gone there. If you wish, you may certainly pay a flying visit here before returning. But do not come here for my sake at all, for all my needs are being properly looked after. So far as I can judge, you need not come even for the sake of Arun. If, therefore, you come it must be only for the pleasure of the trip. We will leave for Bombay on the morning of the 19th. I should advise you to wait for me in Bombay or, as I have already written, at Sevagram. It is the duty of you two to serve Kishorelalbhai, Gomatibehn, Chhaganlalbhai and Kashibehn as much as you can.

Tell Ila I have no reason to remember her. She does not keep a single promise. She had said she would not leave me, but she went away. And she does not make haste to learn to write so that she can at least write to me. I hope she will now lose no time to learn to write letters to me in a beautiful hand.

I think that it would now be better to send Uncle's keys[1] to Kunvarji Mehta, at Adarsh Dugdhalaya, Malad. He has asked for them. He has written a long letter. He wishes to sell off his things. He seems to be well composed in mind at present.

I forgot to ask you to send Uncle's keys to Kunvarjibhai. Kanu says I have already written about it above. I have not read it over.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4966

581. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

POONA,
November 8, 1945

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your postcard. It is certainly a pity that though you went there early you did not gain the benefit you expected from going early. But one must not hope for any reward for acting upon one's resolutions. If one cherished such a desire, one would have to go on changing one's decisions. A man without firm resolu-0tion would be unsteady like a pitcher without a support. Actually the word is डिसेक्षन[2] and not डिसेक्सन.

I do have a slightly high blood-pressure, but it is under control.

I hope your study is progressing. Do not forget to do the *asanas* and other things I suggested for exercise.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10207. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Madhavdas G. Kapadia", 8-11-1945
[2] Dissection

582. LETTER TO KANAM AND NIRMALA GANDHI

November 8, 1945

CHI. KANAM,

I have your postcard. You have not yet improved your handwriting as much as one would wish. It is very good that you spent a part of your holidays with Vinobaji. And you took Sanskrit instruction from him which no doubt was also religious.

I hope Usha[1] is all right. Why do you use Arabic numerals while writing in Devanagari?

CHI. NIMU,

Today I have Sumi's[2] letter. She writes to say that a sum of Rs. 125 was stolen from her. This is a case of feeble cattle having too many ticks. The lesson we have to learn is that children should be given as little money as possible. You could have written to Devdas to give her that amount or could have sent it through money order.

Blessings from

BAPU

KANAM RAMDAS GANDHI
KHALASI LINES
NAGPUR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

583. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

November 8, 1945

BHAI MUNSHI,

In the letter I wrote to you I am afraid I was not able to express myself fully.[3] In the meantime Ramnarayan[4] has sent me the following, which is worth considering. I agree with what he has to say. I am a widely travelled person and I find an echo of my own experience in the paragraph that follows. If you do not find anything in it you may discuss it.[5]

[1] Addressee's younger sister
[2] Sumitra, addressee's daughter
[3] *Vide* "Letter to K. M. Munshi", 2-11-1945
[4] Ramnarayan Chaudhary
[5] What follows is in Hindi

Tell Bapu that I have always held the view, which has become all the clearer to me while translating some books, that if we wish to make Hindustani the language of the common people, its vocabulary should mostly consist, except for words which have religious associations, of Arabic and Persian words or their derivatives instead of Sanskrit. The seven or eight hundred years of Hindu-Muslim contact has made Urdu a more common language than Hindi. This must be the view of everyone who is not biased and is honest and straightforward. The good of the country lies in our acknowledging this truth.

RAMNARAYAN

Blessings from

BAPU

KANAIYALAL MUNSHI
26 RIDGE ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

584. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI

POONA,
November 8, 1945

CHI. KASHI,

I was glad to read your few words. I keep thinking of you all and Kishorelalbhai and Gomatibehn. The latest news is that what Chhaganlal is suffering from is malaria; so I expect the fever will have come down and he will have regained his strength.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

585. LETTER TO RAMANLAL SHAH

POONA,
November 8, 1945

CHI. RAMANLAL,

I am glad to have the few lines you wrote to me. You are full of the spirit of service. Devote that to the service of Kishorelalbhai and Gomatibehn. If you remain engrossed in service, you will be saved

from the thoughts that assail you. And your service will spread like scent.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Ramanlal Shah Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

586. LETTER TO RAMPRASAD

November 8, 1945

CHI. RAMPRASAD,

I have already written to Rameshwardasji about the bicycle. I shall get the reply in a day or two. You did well in sending the newspaper cutting.

Why is digging being done around where you are building the house? The Government's method of digging for gravel on both sides while making roads is wrong. I have no doubt about it. In my travels in South Africa and England and other parts of Europe I have seen roads but no-where have I seen pits where rain water can collect and breed mosquitoes.

I hope you, Kanta and the baby are keeping well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

587. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN CHAUDHARY

November 8, 1945

CHI. RAMNARAYAN,

I have your postcard. I liked it. Keep on sending your views even if unsolicited. In the course of my tours I found confirmation of what you wrote[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapu—Maine Kya Dekha, Kya Samaja?, p. 164

[1] About the demoralizing effect of war on the people

588. LETTER TO KUSUM

November 8, 1945

CHI. KUSUM,

Kusum is written in quotes: that means it is not your real name. Why are you so distressed over your widowhood? A true widow does not believe that because the body of her husband has perished, the soul has also perished. A woman is married not to a human frame but to the soul which resides in it. That is precisely the reason why widow remarriage is taboo. That is why your lamenting, thinking of committing suicide and so on are contrary to dharma and justice. Your duty is to serve, giving the first place to spinning. Learn the processes preceding and following spinning. Also study the science of the charkha so that you can understand properly the significance of spinning. You have not stated your age and your education.

Blessings from

BAPU

KUSUMBEHN
C/O SHRI RAJENDRA KUMAR AGRAWAL
PANNALAL ROAD
ALLAHABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

589. LETTER TO K. N. KATJU

November 8, 1945

BHAI KATJU,

I have your letter. I liked it very much. But I had written to the Viceroy as soon as I got your telegram. In your letter I have all that I wanted. I will use it and also your name if necessary. But I hope the thing will be done without this being necessary. These days you are under great pressure of work. I hope you are well. How long do you have to stay there?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

590. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

POONA,
November 9, 1945

MY DEAR C. R.

Your descriptive letter written in detached manner soothes me and removes whatever anxiety I felt.

Of course I never thought you were in any way responsible for the Maulana's statement or Gopalaswamy's publication of my personal letter[1]. I do not resent its publication in the manner it was done. He could not help it. Whether it produced good effect or bad is not of much moment.

You are silent about your health.

Let us hope things will pass off well. . . .[2] has seen your letter.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2111

591. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

POONA,
November 9, 1945

BHAI DAHYABHAI,

I have your letter. It was, and is indeed good that you did not come. To cling to service is more important than seeing me. You must not start talking about having already grown old. Service when done for the love of God is not burdensome.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI DAHYABHAI MANORDAS PATEL
DHOLKA
PRANTIJ RAILWAY

From Gujarati: C.W. 2715. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

[1] The letter, dated October 27, 1945, was published in *The Hindu*, 31-10-1945; *vide* "Letter to L. N. Gopalaswami", 27-10-1945

[2] A word is illegible in the source.

592. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

November 9, 1945

CHI. MRIDULA,

I have your letter. The correspondence has been published.[1] It is rather interesting how this came about. On the one hand Bapa writes to say that I was hasty in getting it published because I had agreed that we should publish it only after the meeting of the Managing Committee. How nice it would have been if he had had me put it down in writing. I myself have no such recollection. Kanu says that he was present at the time and that I had told Bapa that if something had happened and if the matter was to be published, the sooner this was done the better. Well, that is as it may be. Your own recollection is that I was to give a short statement of my own in the end. I remember having said something like that but I had not decided on it. Having considered the whole thing I felt that since my letter[2] to you gave the entire background it was better published. Now if this step was mistaken how can it be rectified? I don't see anything wrong in publishing the facts. I have not seen what has come out in the newspapers. If you are talking about the English translation, I had certainly approved it but I do not know if the same has appeared in the newspapers. Anyway, for the present I am treating this chapter as closed. It is good you are coming on the 12th. This of course will be posted.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

593. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

November 9, 1945

BAPA,

I have your letter of November 6. By all means have a separate kitchen. We should not put too much burden on Shamlal, that is to say on his wife.

Nothing has been decided about Sushila Pai. She wishes to come as a joint organizer. It is possible Sucheta will not like it. She will have

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Mridula Sarabhai", 7-11-1945

[2] *ibid*

a talk with you and then write to me. Sushila Pai is a very good worker. She is a learned woman. She was for many years the Head Mistress of Vanita Vishram, Rajkot. She gave up the job on her own. She is a woman of great promise. It is possible that she will not like to join as a clerk. In whatever capacity she comes, it will be only provisionally. I have not written to her again as I am waiting for Sucheta's letter. Please see how the work is to be divided. Spend on the building only as much as is necessary for providing the conveniences. I take it that you will not have to get permission for this from the Managing Committee. I am not going through the rules and regulations. I have passed on that responsibility to Shamlal. In fact we should know it by heart. There was a time when I could do that but of late I have forgotten all about it. I have had to.

I got your letter of today after writing this. Sushila will answer it.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

594. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

November 9, 1945

CHI. SUMI,

I like your letter. You have improved your handwriting a lot. But your vowel strokes are not always that same. That is a defect. You make your strokes look like pearl pendants. Nowadays girls have made this a fashion, but it is a mistake. Strokes should always be slanting. At the most you can put a dot on top.

I am not at all happy that Rs. 125 was stolen from your pocket and I am very angry with Nimu. She could have sent the money by money order. You can always have such dealings with Devdas and you should.[1]

Just because I have appreciated your handwriting, don't think that there is no room for improvement. You should yourself see and try to improve it. Take care of your health, physical and mental. Let me know what you have gained from Nagpur.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Kanam and Nirmala Gandhi", 8-11-1945

595. LETTER TO KRISHNALAL T. MANIAR

November 9, 1945

CHI. BACHU,

I am glad you wrote a postcard to me. I saw Kanu's handwriting also. May the New Year[1] bring happiness to all of you and may all of you start rendering some service to the country. At the present day that is the dharma for all in India. I am glad you have settled down at the Bank of Jaipur. Become an expert at your job and stick to the bank so that in the field of your work you can earn a name for yourself. I know of two persons who, just like you, began even lower than clerks and yet reached the top and became famous. Both of them are no more. They were Gujaratis but it is immaterial whether they were Gujaratis or not. One is bound to make progress if one sincerely sticks to something and wishes to acquire mastery in it. May you make progress in your work and serve the country through it.

Blessings from

BAPU

KRISHNALAL TULSIDAS MANIAR

C/O BANK OF JAIPUR LTD.

RITCHIE ROAD

AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

596. LETTER TO MAHADEVSHASTRI DIVEKAR

November 9, 1945

SHRIMAN PANDITJI,

I have your letter. Thanks. I understand your point but I do not want to enter into discussion with you.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

MAHADEVSHASTRI DIVEKAR

MIRAJ

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] According to the Gujarati calendar

597. LETTER TO V. S. MODAK

November 9, 1945

BHAI MODAK,

I have your letter. I have given up going to the theatre for the last fifty years and I take no interest in it. Please excuse me.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

V. S. MODAK
NATYA SAMMELAN
RAJURKAR BUILDING, MAIDAN ROAD
AHMEDNAGAR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

598. LETTER TO N. G. ABHYANKAR

November 9, 1945

BHAI ABHYANKAR,

I have your Marathi letter written in a beautiful hand. I had no difficulty in understanding it. About Ashtekar I am doing what I consider it my dharma to do. What more shall I

say? I have expressed my grief. I try to understand as much as I can. I have the lines that have appeared in *Lokshakti*.[1]

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

N. G. ABHYANKAR
130 BUDHWAR
OPPOSITE JOGESHWAR
POONA 2

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The official Congress daily published from Poona under the editorship of N. V. Limaye

599. LETTER TO SUBROTO ROY CHOWDHARY

November 10, 1945

BAHI SUBRATA ROY[1],

I received your letter of October 24 yesterday. I hope you will forgive me for replying in the national language. Yours is a big programme. It is good. What can be added to it if I say something? May you succeed and may all of you serve India in the right way.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

600. LETTER TO S. A. BRELVI

November 10/11, 1945

BHAI BRELVI,

Your journal carried the report of Hindi Sahitya Sammelan held at Udaipur. It contains things that Bhai Munshi refutes. The report says that Pandit Jawaharlal had sent a nice message but that it was suppressed and was not read out. Bhai Munshi says that he never received any such message, let alone suppress it. If this is true and someone gave a false report, he should have signed it.[2] Jawaharlal is there. You could have had a talk with him. I want that there should be at least one newspaper in India which has only truth from beginning to end, has no malice and is respected by one and all. Why should not the *Chronicle* which has for its editor, Brelvi, the President of the Editor's Conference be such a newspaper?

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] President, Cambridge University Majlis, an organization of Indian students

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to K. M. Munshi", 2-11-1945

601. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

Express POONA,
November 11, 1945

DOCTOR RAJENDRA PRASAD
BETTIAH

YOUR WIRE. PAPERS SAY GOPE HANGED YESTERDAY.[1] WHY SO LATE[2]?

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

602. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

POONA,
November 11, 1945

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I have your letter of the 5th instant. May I make use of the information you have given me when I write to the Diwan Saheb? The situation, it is feared, is very grave. Something should be done about it. Meet the people there and do what you can. The volunteers can get together and do a lot of sani- tation work. I had mentioned Raychandbhai's name by mistake.

I am glad you corrected me. Do you have your living quarters and your office in the same premises or are they separate? How does Manu[3] pass her time?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

[1] Mahendra Gope was sentenced to death in connection with the 1942 disturbances and hanged in the Bhagalpur Central Jail on November 10.

[2] The addressee had made a last minute appeal to the Viceroy and the Governor of Bihar on November 9, for commutation of the death sentence.

[3] Addressee's daughter

603. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

POONA,
November 11, 1945

CHI. KANCHAN,

I got your letter. I wrote to you on the basis of what you had told me. Nobody has been able to achieve what you aspire for. If you can, I would consider that you have made great progress.

My blessings to Raihana and Sarojbehn. More when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. KANCHANBEHN
C/O RAIHANABEHN
RASTRABHASHA PRACHAR SAMITI
WARDHA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8259. Also C.W. 6983. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

604. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

November 11, 1945

CHI. MRIDULA,

I am replying to three of your letters together. I liked your personal letter but one sentence in it pained me. Why do you think I did not approve of what you call your "stand"?—you will yourself explain the meaning. If I seem to be changing, it is only an impression. Those who know me will not say this. I consider you as one of them, but why should I discuss all this with you? You are just a child to me while I am an old man. You will leave me if and when you are fed up with me.

Come whenever you wish and have me clarify whatever you want clarified.

What you say about *Surveyor* is right. Ask me about Ratnaprabhabehn when we meet. I am sending your letter about the President to Shyamlal and tearing up your personal letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

605. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

November 11, 1945

BAPA,

I have your letter. I had no recollection at all of what you say in your letter. Now that I think of it I seem to remember we did have a talk about the matter. There does not seem to be even a hint of it in our letters. Chi. Kanu says he was present at our talk and that as far as he can remember you had made the suggestion but I had not accepted it because postponing publication of the resignation[1] would have served no purpose. If however the President has no right at all to accept a resignation, then the thing assumes an entirely different aspect. But the case only supports what I have been saying all along, namely, that word of mouth should be considered as having no weight. Only what is written down is true, more so for a person like me whose memory is dim. So if things are put down in writing it will be a safeguard for both. You close your letter with *"khair"*[2]. Do not go by it. Take to heart the lesson you learn from this episode. I consider the episode in itself trivial but it carries significance. It was I who sent a copy of the resignation to the Press.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

606. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

POONA,
November 11, 1945

BAPA,

I got the copy of your letter to Dharmdevji.[3] I was pained and also surprised. We shall discuss this further when we meet. If I said anything about the money for his ashram I do not recollect it. This again shows that mere word of mouth has no value.[4]

I can't trace Suchetabehn's letter. Let us see what happens. We shall discuss that matter[5] also.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Mridula Sarabhai", 9-11-1945

[2] The English equivalent of the expression would be "anyway" or "however".

[3] *Vide* also"Letter to Dharmadev Shastri", 14-11-1945

[4] *Vide* also the preceding item.

[5] *Vide* "Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar", 6-11-1945 and "Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar", 9-11-1945

607. LETTER TO RATILAL TANNA

November 11, 1945

BHAI RATILAL,

I have your letter. My messages have dried up. And even if they have not, you should not ask for a message regarding Dhebarbhai[1] If you cannot understand what this means, ask Dhebarbhai himself.

Blessings from

BAPU

RATILAL TANNA
JANI BUILDING
RAJKOT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

608. LETTER TO MOHANLAL GADHADAWALA

November 11, 1945

BHAI MOHANLAL,

I read your letter to Kanu and we also met after that.

I remember Jaisangbhai well; the pleasant memory of my meetings which him is still fresh in my mind. We met quite often when late Punjabhai was alive. I shall gladly accept whatever money he has intended to give for my public welfare activities. He can allocate it for any work of my liking. He can keep it with himself for the time and I shall ask for it when I need it. The activities include Arogya Bhavan and the Dharmsala at Panchgani which is being built for the poor without any distinction of caste or creed.

Blessings from

BAPU

MOHANLAL GADHADAWALA
C/O DURLABHDAS MOTICHAND SHAH
269 MASJID BUNDER ROAD
NEAR IMPERIAL BANK, MANDAVI BRANCH
BOMBAY 3

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] U. N. Dhebar

609. LETTER TO N. V. BAVDEKAR

POONA,
November 11, 1945

BHAI BAVDEKARJI,

I have your long letter. I can do nothing in this matter. Now the members of the State [Praja] Mandals has been released. Consult them.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI N. V. BAVDEKAR
PHALTON SANSTHAN PRAJA PARISHAD
PHALTON STATE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal Papers.

610. LETTER TO LALITA BOSE

POONA,
November 11, 1945

CHI. LALITA,

If you can't read Hindi, someone will read this out to you. Why should I write in English?

Did you type the letter? What are you doing?

I am glad you sent the Netaji photographs. They are beautiful.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI LALITA BOSE
38-2 ELGIN ROAD
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

611. LETTER TO SHRIPATICHARAN SAHU

POONA,
November 11, 1945

BHAI SHRIPATI BABU,

I have your letter. I don't know how much I shall be able to do

in Bengal. Please keep all the literature ready. I don't believe that there is any grief that cannot be overcome.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SHRIPATICHARAN SAHU
C/O CALCUTTA INS. LTD.
15 CLIVE STREET
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

612. LETTER TO BHAGWATICHARAN SHUKLA

POONA,
November 11, 1945

CHI. BHAGWATI,

Now marriages cannot be performed in the Ashram. I can arrange at some other place in Wardha outside the Ashram. I shall not be able to attend the function. The ceremony will be performed by a Harijan, as was done in the case of Tendulkarji.[1] It will be better if it is done according to the Civil Marriage Act.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAGWATICHARAN SHUKLA
"NAGPUR TIMES" OFFICE
NAGPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

613. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

November 11[2]*, 1945*

BHAI RAJEN BABU,

I have your telegram. But how long it took ! Mahendra Gope was hanged yesterday and your telegram has come today. How did

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Narahari D. Parikh", 2-11-1945. Tendulkar and Indu were married on August 18, 1945.

[2] The source has "10" obviously a slip since Mahendra Gope was hanged on November10, 1945; *vide* "Telegram to Rajendra Prasad", 11-11-1945

this happen? Did I not give my opinion in the case? It will be good if in this case also you find out the facts as I had asked you to do in the case of Mahendra Chowdhary[1]. Was the case really political?

I want proof.

I hope you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

614. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
November 12, 1945

DEAR MR. ABELL,

I have to acknowledge with thanks your letter[2] of 6th instant in reply to mine[3] about certain I. N. A. prisoners. My business was to bring to His Excellency's notice the feeling of the country in the matter, not merely as I read in the public Press.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

G.E.B. ABELL, ESQ.
DEPUTY PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 41-2

[1] A political prisoner who was sentenced to death on the charge of dacoity with murder and was hanged in Bhagalpur Jail on August 7, 1945; *vide* "Letter to Lord Wavell", 15-7-1945 and "Letter to Lord Wavell", 23-7-1945

[2] It read : "His Excellency has seen your letter to Sir Evan Jenkins of 29th October about the trial of certain members of the I. N. A. He asks me to say that he notes your views, and presumes that they are based on articles appearing in the newspapers, in which the facts are not always correctly stated. His Excellency naturally cannot express an opinion on the merits of cases which are *sub judice*."

[3] *Vide* "Letter to E. M. Jenkins", 29-10-1945

615. LETTER TO G. E. B ABELL

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
November 12, 1945

DEAR MR. ABELL,

I have to thank you for your letter of 6th instant in reply to mine[1] of 2nd instant regarding certain Press cuttings to which I had drawn His Excellency's attention.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 43

616. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

POONA,
November 12, 1945

DEAR LORD LAWRENCE[2],

How nice that your wedding day should coincide with my birthday? Thanks for your congratulations.[3] May I reciprocate them? Is not wedding a new birth?

Did I not know you first through Lady Lawrence during those suffragette days?[4] I was then a novice in the art of civil resistance and had friendly differences with the late Mrs. Pankhurst and her daughter but not with your wife and the late Mrs. Despard.[5]

With kind regards to both of you.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

THE RT. HON'BLE LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE
11 OLD SQUARE
LINCOLN'S INN, LONDON W. G. 2

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 174

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Evan M. Jenkins", 2-11-1945

[2] Secretary of State for India

[3] In his letter dated October 4, the addressee had said : "I have only just learnt that your birthday coincides with my wedding day ! I hasten to send, rather belatedly, the best wishes of my wife and myself and the hope that in this troubled world we may all contribute to a happier future."

[4] Gandhiji had met Lady Pethick-Lawrence at a suffragette meeting during his visit to England in 1906.

[5] Mrs. Emmeline Pankhurst and her daughter had shown resentment when Gandhiji criticized some of the militant suffragettes. Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence had stood by Gandhiji on that occasion.

617. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

POONA,
November 12, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

You are incapable of hurting me. That is the difference between you and me. I seem to have made it my occupation to hurt others. Even that does not pain me. I have placed before you the facts. I am glad that you do not find any disparity in your suggestion and mine. I have had a talk with the Professor also. Do help and remain on the committee on your own condition.

It is not proper that Gomati wants to look after everything even though she has not yet fully recovered.

Blessings from
BAPU

ASHRAM
SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

618. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

POONA,
November 12, 1945

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Manilal complains that you keep on working even though you are weak. Why are you doing this?

Blessings from
BAPU

SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

619. LETTER TO HARIGANESH PHATAK

POONA,
November 12, 1945

BHAI HARIBABU,

Come today after the prayers at 7.30 if you can. Suggest some other time if this does not suit you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6104

620. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

POONA,
November 12, 1945

BAPA,

I have asked Haribhau to come today. I shall settle the matter here. Do not worry. I shall return both the letters after they have been dealt with.

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

621. FOREWORD TO "CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME—ITS MEANING AND PLACE"

This is a thoroughly revised edition of the *Constructive Programme* which I first wrote in 1941.[1] The items included in it have not been arranged in any order, certainly not in the order of their importance. When the reader discovers that a particular subject though important in itself in terms of independence does not find place in the programme, he should know that the omission is not intentional. He should unhesitatingly add to my list and let me know. My list does not pretend to be exhaustive; it is merely illustrative. The reader will see several new and important additions.

[1] *Vide* "Constructive Programe" Its Meaning and Place",13-12-1941

Readers, whether workers and volunteers or not, should definitely realize that the constructive programme is the truthful and non-volent way of winning *poorna* swaraj. Its wholesale fulfilment is complete independence. Imagine all the forty crores of people busying themselves with the whole of the constructive programme which is designed to build up the nation from the very bottom upward. Can anybody dispute the proposition that it must mean complete independence in every sense of the expression, including the ousting of foreign domination? When the critics laugh at the proposition, what they mean is that forty crores of people will never co-operate in the effort to fulfil the programme. No doubt, there is considerable truth in the scoff. My answer is, it is still worth the attempt. Given an indomitable will on the part of a band of earnest workers, the programme is as workable as any other and more so than most. Anyway, I have no substitute for it, if it is to be based on non-violence.

Civil disobedience, mass or individual, is an aid to constructive effort and is a full substitute for armed revolt. Training is necessary as well for civil disobedience as for armed revolt. Only the ways are different. Action in either case takes place only when occasion demands. Training for military revolt means learning the use of arms ending perhaps in the atomic bomb. For civil disobedience it means the constructive programme.

Therefore, workers will never be on the look-out for civil resistance. They will hold themselves in readiness, if the constructive effort is sought to be defeated. From one or two illustrations it will be seen where it can be and where it cannot be offered. Political pacts we know have been and can be, but personal friendship with individuals cannot be, prevented. Such friendships, selfless and genuine, must be the basis for political pacts. Similarly, centralized khadi can be defeated by the Government, but no power can defeat individual manufacture and use of khadi. The manufacture and use of khadi must not be imposed upon the people, but it must be intelligently and willingly accepted by them as one of the items of the freedom movement. This can be done only from the villages as units. Pioneers even in such programmes can be obstructed. They have had to go through the fire of suffering throughout the world. There is no swaraj without suffering. In violence, truth is the first and greatest sufferer; in non-violence it is ever triumphant. Moreover, men composing the Government are not to be regarded as enemies. To regard them as such will be contrary to the non-violent spirit. Part we must, but as friends.

If this preliminary observation has gone home to the reader, he will find the constructive programme to be full of deep interest. It

should prove as absorbing as politics so called and platform oratory, and certainly more important and useful.

POONA, November 13, 1945

Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place

622. LETTER TO SIR EVAN M. JENKINS

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
November 13, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN,

I have just seen Reuter's message from London about the threatened arrest of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.[1]

I admit that Pandit Nehru's speeches are hot, if the British rulers do not want to part with power and hand over to the people what is theirs. They are not, if the British professions are real. It will be wrong to attribute hatred or malice to him. He undoubtedly speaks strongly against the I. C. S. men. But there he speaks the people's mind. And he is right. The fine doctrine propounded by His Excellency of "Forget and Forgive" can only apply to the excesses of a soldiery in action but surely not to inexusable butchery, inhumanity, bribery, corruption and the like. If his statements are wrong, they should be tested through an open and impartial tribunal. If the Government's hands are clean they have nothing to fear from publicity.

I will not waste His Excellency's time by arguing about the obvious.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 57

[1] According to a report Sir Maurice Hallett, Governor of U. P., had sought the Viceroy's permission to arrest Jawaharlal Nehru. The Viceroy declining, he had approached the Secretary of State. The Viceroy's House on April 12 issued a Press Note saying the report was a fabrication. *The Transfer of Power,* Vol. VI, p. 481. It is now known, however, that Wavell considered the speeches being made by Nehru, Patel, Pant and other Congress leaders as incitement to violence and was contemplating "before long ……another violent suppression of Congress". *Wavell—The Viceroy's Journal, passim*.

[2] Writing to Secretary of State Wavell said considering Gandhiji's "present state of health…… it is possible that the letter was written by Patel or Nehru and .merely signed by Gandhi" ! *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VI, p. 48. In his *Journal,* p. 185, he describes the letter as malevolent.

623. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

POONA,

November 13, 1945

CHI. BABU,

I have your letter. You have not said what your "one last"[1] attempt was. See that it does not become too late for improvement.

I know that Chokhawala is busy. I do not expect from him the courtesy of a latter, because it is wrong to cherish any hope at all.

Why does Shakaribehn get migraine?

Blessings to all of you from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10063. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokha- wala

624. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

POONA,

November 13, 1945

CHI. JIVANJI,

I have your letter.

I have been working since the last eight days on the booklet regarding constructive work. That is to say, I have been giving it every minute that I can spare from time to time. I finished it two days ago, but I made so many revisions that I intend to get some portions rewritten. So that has taken another two days and is likely to take two more days still. To that extent the pamphlet will become new and perfect. I could have polished it still further. But is not greed a hill that lives and grows? It is not inert. Do not believe all that has appeared in the newspapers regarding Sardar's biography. I have not seen the report. When I heard about the plan for presenting a book of tributes to Sardar, as promised, I put an end to it and suggested that an authentic biography be written instead. There would be no question of presenting it to him. I therefore refused to give a message when they approached me and thus stopped the plan for tributes. It was Munshi[2]

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sharda G. Chokhawala", 6-11-1945

[2] K. M. Munshi

who took the lead and I, therefore, suggested that if he took up the work he would be able to do full justice to it. I have not inquired what happened or is happening after that. I do not know whether you are writing the biography or getting it written. You may ask Munshiji direct. The work is entrusted to Patil and Tendulkar. The letter is to work as Munshi's assistant. If, therefore, Munshi has agreed, you should put together all the material you get and send it to Munshiji. If he is not going to do the work, ask me again. I had also suggested that the date for publication of the book should be announced right now and we should adhere to it.

You may take it that as regards the journals[1] I am ready. I do not now, though, how far I shall be able to cope with the work. But I think I must do it if the publication can be resumed without difficulty. You need not flatter anybody. Mavalankar or you may meet the Magistrate officially and ask him. If he agrees, take out a licence. We should give no binding, orally or in writing. Only if the Government also wants the publication of the journals to be resumed may we bring them out. It would be intolerable if they were to demand a security as soon as an article appeared. If they are interested in the publications being resumed, they will have to give us the required paper. After all, how much would we need? There is no question of advertisements. We shall have to print a large number of copies. We must print at many as there is a demand for. I expect that we shall have to print at least as many as we used to do. Give me full detials. And give me reasonable time for the first issue. You may, thus, assume that I shall be ready even if I am touring at the time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9957. Also C.W. 6931. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

[1] *Harijan* and allied publications

625. LETTER TO JUGATRAM DAVE

November 13, 1945

CHI. JUGATRAM,

I have your letter. Of course you have my blessings, but blessings are creepers that can climb only on hedges and tree-trunks. This means that they are only a kind of indication. So if your trunk is strong my blessings would climb up like a creeper. Here trunk means wisdom or keenness of thought.

It is good you have sent for Vaikunthbhai.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

JUGATRAM DAVE
SWARAJ ASHRAM
VEDCHHI, P. O. VALOD
DISTRICT SURAT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

626. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

POONA,
November 13, 1945

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

I was very happy with our talks yesterday. We would not have discussed more yesterday and it is my view that we shall not be able to finish our work at a single sitting. We must meet from time to time. I am so made that if I had the strength to travel about, I would seek you out, stay with you for a day or two, have some talk and then leave. Though I am not in a position to do that now, you may know I have done such things before. I want that people should know us as we know each other. If in the end we find that our paths are diferent, then so be it. Our hearts will still remain one, for they are one. The talks we had yesterday have given me the impression that there is not much difference in our outlook or the way we understand things. I went to

[1] Vaikunthlal L. Mehta

tell you how I have understood you. If there is any difference you will let me know.

(1) The crucial question according to you, is how to ensure man's mental, economic, political and moral development. That is my position too.

(2) And in doing so every inividual should have equal right and opportunity.

(3) From this point of view there should be equality between villages and cities. And therefore their food and drink, their way of life, their dress and their habits should be the same. If such a condition is to be brought about people should produce their own cloth and food and build their on houses. So also they should produce their own water and electricity.

(4) Man is not born to live in the jungle; he is born to live in society. If we are to make sure that one person does not ride on an other's back, the unit should be an ideal village or a social group which will be self-sufficient, but the members of which will be interdependent. This conception will bring about a change in human relationship all over the world.

If I have undertood you correctly up to here, I shall take up the second part. I have had Rajkumari translate the letter which I wrote to you earlier. I am getting this also translated and will send the translation along with this.[1] I serve two purposes be getting the letters translated. First I can explain to you more clearly in English what I want to say and secondly I shall be able to know better whether I have understood you fully or not.

Blessings to Indu.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

627. LETTER TO R. V. GOGATE

November 13, 1945

BHAI GOGATE

You have frankly expressed your views. I like that. I told you I

[1] Amrit Kaur's translation of this is published in *A Bunch of Old Letters.*

would answer your two questions. First, I am not impressed by the American system. I have regard for their enthusiasm and courage but at present we cannot proceed on those lines, nor do I wish to do so. That is why I do not like your new village scheme. My advice is that if you have the time, go and see our villages and do what you can. Go and see what my associates, the Kumarappa brothers and the other three are doing.

I have always liked to keep good relations with America but I have never liked having an agency there, nor do I like it now. This is more or less a matter of self-satisfaction if not self-deception. If we build up strength in India itself, it is bound to have its impact. The British Government spends lakhs of rupees on spreading falsehood. Must we imitate their ways to spread truth? I know the clergy in America do such things. I also know that there is, as there should be, a lot of difference between propagating truth and propagating untruth. What more shall I say?

PROF. R. V. GOGATE

U. N. R. R. A.

IMPERIAL HOTEL, NEW DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

628. LETTER TO BHULABHAI J. DESAI

November 14, 1945

BHAI BHULABHAI,

Jawaharlal told me that he had had a talk with Bakshi Tekchand regarding Jallianwala Bagh. He thinks it would be good if the two of you could get together and complete the work of the Trust Deed.[1] Bakshi Tekchand is prepared to look after everything in the Punjab. Discuss this with him and do what is necessary.

I had your wire but your letter has not yet come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Bakshi Tekchand", 14-11-1945

629. LETTER TO KRISHNAVARMA

November 14, 1945

BHAI KRISHNAVARMA,

Naturopathy or any other work is never stalled for lack of funds. But it certainly is stalled if it lacks purity and sincere workers. The figures you have quoted must remain on paper only. If the thing had been all that easy in practice, we would have progressed a great deal by now. We have to sweat to increase 4 to 20; increasing 20 to 100 or 100 to 500 is just a dream. But it does not matter. Man can only make an effort. There is no need for you to come here. I am fully booked. I shall be in Bombay on the 20th. You can drop in there. I shall leave for Wardha the same day.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. KRISHNAVARMA

NATURE CURE CLINIC

MALAD

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

630. LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI

November 14, 1945

CHI. RADHA,

I have your postcard. You are quite modest. Can we say that now you have settled down in Rajkot?

Manilal and Sushila are at Akola. Their son Arun is with me. I shall send your postcard to Manilal.

I hope all of you are all right. You must do some work of service.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

631. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

POONA,
November 14, 1945

CHI. DINSHAW,

My cogitations go on. The institution should close down on December 31. From January 1, it should become an institution for the poor and cease to be one for the rich. You have so far insisted that the poor should be taken only after the rich have been accommodated but those who are really poor can hardly reach you and if anyone reaches you, they will have to pay the rates the rich pay, which will completely ruin them. From the 1st January let the rich come after the poor are accommodated but only if they can live as the poor. The institution should have more cleanliness than it has today. Money is not necessary for maintaining cleanliness, but it requires care, love, truth and knowledge. So it is better that cleaning work is started from today, but I am afraid it is not possible because no one listens to the others and everyone is his own master. If anyone takes interest in work, it is only to please you. Therefore there can be improvement only if someone from among the people I mentioned above starts working from today. If this thing does not appeal to you, both of us will have to repent ultimately because I believe that cleanliness is a part of God. I would amend the saying "cleanliness is next to godliness" and say "cleanliness is godliness". But only if cleanliness is both internal and external can we call it an attribute of God.

A sign-board should be hung here from January 1. It should be written in Marathi, Devanagari, Urdu and English. I have not in my mind formed a precise idea but it would be somewhat as follows. "The poor are given nature-cure treatment here".The name Healthotorium should be removed. There is no need for any name. It does not befit a poor institution. In fact it does not befit any. The English would consider it "vulgar".

We should not use foreign things whether they are patent or not. The poor cannot afford a bottle of *Isapgol* pakced in England, Robinson Barley, Quaker Oats, Sanatogen, Horlicks, malted milk or Merck's Glucose. We, from here, cannot teach the people to take these things—it is immaterial who is here—whether Sardar, some Raja or I.

We must make Sanatogen here. Things similar to Horlicks and malted milk should be made here and also something like glucose should be available.

The kitchen can no longer function on the lines it has been doing so far. Today you have the means to feed even a king. But those means must be given up tomorrow. The liberality with which fruit and other things are used here hurts me much. It ought to be changed. Can't we manage with jaggery and lemon?

You must develop the habit of writing. Let your Gujarati be faulty, it can be expressed in good language. Little booklets should be brought out from here. You will have to pay a lot of attention to all these things. I do not know how you will be able to do that while earning 4-5 thousand rupees a month. But bear in mind that if you cannot do it the University will remain merely a dream. I have a capacity for boundless work and also for planning. But I do not have a magic wand by waving which I can create a university. Further, I do not have the knowledge reuqired for that. Therefore I am helpless. If I was not helpless I would have started a nature cure clinic of my own, and would have carried on all my activities from there. But God did not grant me that. Although I was, and still am, very enthusiastic, which is why I am clinging on to you, you are a big man and you have allowed your knowledge to stagnate. That is a big stumbling-block in your way. Your dream will be realized only if you can get over it. If your heart bids you that it is not possible, then leave me even now. I shall not feel bad. Sardar is worried how I am going to cope with the work. His worry is meaningless because no one compels me. God impels me to do the work. If He wants to stop the work He will do so. But you seem to have faith in me, so I must warn you about my helplessness. And I must let you know the limitations and faults I find in you. More when something strikes me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

632. LETTER TO BAKSHI TEKCHAND

November 14, 1945

BHAI BAKSHI TEKCHAND,

Pandit Jawaharlal was here for a day. He told me that you were prepared to make a Trust Deed about Jallianwala Bagh and also look after it. Before 1942 Bhulabhai was assigned the task of the Trust Deed but some obstacles kept delaying it. Then war broke out and the work of the Trust Deed was left in the air. I shall be glad if you discuss this with Bhulabhai and complete the work of the Trust Deed.[1]

Mukerji, who has been the secretary of the Jallianwala Bagh committee for years, will see you. It will be some time before he reaches there.

I am happy that you have once again taken up public work.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR BAKSHI TEKCHAND

LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

633. LETTER TO DHARMADEV SHASTRI

November 14, 1945

BHAI DHARMADEV SHASTRI,

I have your letter. Bapa has also written about you. Did I tell you that I would get you some monetary help from Bapa? I don't remember anything about it. My memory has become hopeless. If I say something and it is of some use you must get it in writing from me.[2] Moreover, Bapa further writes and says that owing to the cold weather the hospital may have to be shifted to some other place or the whole work may have to be stopped. Is it advisable to do anything in these circumstances? What is to be done if you cannot get local people

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Bhulabhai J. Desai", 14-11-1945

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar", 11-11-1945

to do and continue the work? All this seems difficult. Write everything in brief.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

634. TELEGRAM TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

POONA,
November 15, 1945

BADSHA [H] KHAN
CHARSADDA

DID YOU RECEIVE LETTER SAYING LADY DOCTOR READY? WIRE IF YOU WANT HER NOW.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

635. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKVASA

November 15, 1945

BHAI MANGALDAS,

I have your letter. I see you are working at great speed. I on my part am doing what I can from here.

I have gone through Motilal's and your opinion. I agree with it. But there is one thing neither of you appear to have considered. The words are: "one should not refuse to sell [khadi] which is worth buying". Now the question is which khadi should be considered "worth buying". One might say that the khadi which had been produced according to the conditions laid down by me was "worth buying". Isn't that so? Why can't I say that I will sell my khadi only to the person who pays me the highest price for it? This gives rise to many more questions but I do not wish to discuss them. They are irrelevant at the moment. But I have been forced to write this becuase it is not irrelevant to point out the snag which I notice and which prevents me from publishing your views. So if it can be put right, I would of course like to get it done, so that it can be published. But if there is something wrong in my way of thinking, I should not proceed with it for the moment.

I hope to reach there by the morning train on the 19th. Sardar and others will be with me. I shall leave for Wardha on the 20th evening.

Now about Munshi. I did not like the article[1] you showed me which appeared in the *Chronicle*. I found malice in it. Munshi had come here on business of his own. I asked him about it. He showed me the mistakes in the article and there were other defects also. Even if Jawaharlal had sent a message[2], Munshi did not get it. Afterwards Jawaharlal also came and when I asked him he said that he did not have the slightest recollection of having sent a message. He might have told somebody to send one but it was of no value. The gist of this is that there is very little truth in newspapers and they are full of falsehood. If a man acts believing in their veracity he must lose. I certainly do not wish to see you lose.

Blessings from

BAPU

MANGALDAS PAKVASA
29 DOONGERSI ROAD
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

636. A LETTER

November 15, 1945

BHAI,

I have carefully gone through your letter. I like it because you have taken pains to clear your mind. I have come to the conclusion that under the circumstances you should not start work in my absence. Since you have ordered goods to the value of a thousand rupees, you should first dispose of them and then wash your hands of the ointment business. Then when I come that way again I shall, if you are ready, have you start your work under my supervision. If at the time you are not prepared for it I shall not hold you responsible.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to K. M. Munshi", 2-11-1945

[2] For the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan

637. LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

November 15, 1945

BHAI SAHEB,

Mukerji will tell you what I have done here. I have noted down all that has happened. Hear him if you have the time and are well enough, otherwise just sign the cheque[1] and send him away.

What is there to write to you. You are always in my mind.

Your younger brother

M. K. GANDHI

PANDIT MALAVIYAJI

BANARAS UNIVERSITY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

638. LETTER TO AMMU SWAMINATHAN

November 15, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I take no interest and no part in elections. Please, therefore, keep me out of it.

Write to me in the national language or in your mother tongue Tamil.[2] Keep English for English people. At least make a beginning.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI AMMU SWAMINATHAN

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] For the Trust Deed of Jallianwala Bagh

[2] The addressee's mother tongue was, however, Malayalam; her husband's was Tamil.

639. LETTER TO V. V. DASTANE

November 15, 1945

BHAI DASTANE,

What can poor Akka[1] or Vatsala[2][2] tell you? All your daughters are good and wish to give you the minimum trouble. At the same time they want to take the minimum obligation from others. But I know the way they depend on you unknowingly. Of course I don't blame anyone. Our circumstances often are such that we cannot get out of them. That is why I advise you that you should take up *grihasthashrama*[3] and the more you purify it and remain pure yourself the better will you serve the country. Today we are all intoxicated. Intoxication is not always due to liquor, *ganja* or opium. I have seen that being intoxicated with vanity or the craze for swaraj is at times worse than the intoxication of liquor. To know our *swadharma* and to be engrossed in it is our supreme dharma. That is why, let me add, I can only discuss things with you but I cannot think as you do. Do take as much as you can digest from what I say and go ahead.

I would suggest you have a talk with the members of the Working Committee. I cannot go very far. My position is like that of a 'tenant at will'[4]. The difference is great. I am what I am without any conscious effort on my part, and the poor tenant at will desires to stay for ever. I came across a *sloka* by Bhartrihari, "In fact one who is attached to sense-objects and one who is free from them are both in the same position. The latter voluntarily gives up sense-objects and enjoys bliss, while the self-indulgent one too has to give up his sensual pleasures every now and then and earns only misery." Bhartrihari has crammed a great deal of wisdom into this. Let us all drink that nectar and attain bliss.

I have communicated to Kripalaniji some of my ideas about the

[1] Addressee's daughters

[2] *ibid*

[3] Householder's estate

[4] Gandhiji uses the English expression.

elections. I am discussing things with Shankarraoji. Now it is time for me to go for my walk. I shall take a stroll with him and shall tell him what I think about the elections.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VASUDEV DASTANE

VAKIL SAHEB

BHUSAWAL

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

640. SPEECH AT KHADAKVASALA[1]

November 15, 1945

In a short speech Gandhiji stated that he had nothing new to say. He was getting old and had decided to conserve his energy by observing silence. He appreciated the effort of serving villagers through the health centre and of spreading knowledge of child nursing. He remarked that there was ample scope for such work in the seven lakhs of villages of India.[2] Gandhiji said:

To provide facilities for a safe delivery to a few women is a poor consolation. Your success will be measured by the education you can give to the people around in maternity.

The Hindustan Times, 16-11-1945; and *Mahatma*, Vol. 7, p. 19

641. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

POONA,

November 16, 1945

CHI. KANTI,

I have your letter. You have well described your difficulties. You are gaining plenty of experience also. Learn to cultivate sweetness even from it. Many people get embittered by bitter

[1] Gandhiji, accompanied by Vallabhbhai Patel and Shankarrao Deo, visited the village at the foot of Sinhgad Fort and opened a road prepared by the villagers. He also visited the Health and Maternity Department conducted by the Poona Rotary Club.

[2] What follows is reproduced from *Mahatma*.

experiences and feel frustrated because of repeated disappointments. If you do so, then your study of the *Gita* will have been in vain. We have to make our path through the Brahmin-non-Brahmin, Hindu-Muslim, and inter-provincial differences and march ahead with our work.

Shanti[1] will have recovered by now. Bal[2] has obtained the highest degree in engineering and has become a Ph. D. He was here for four or five days. he has gone with Kakasaheb to Kashi. He does not seem to have given up everything that he had learnt in the Ashram. He is still unaffected in his speech. He participated fully in the prayers here. He sang *bhajans* for our benefit with great enthusiasm. More when I have the time.

I hope Suru[3] is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7379. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

642. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

November 16, 1945

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your postcard. You must give up the craving for letters in my handwriting. I am dictating this lying down in the evening after the prayers. Sometimes two line suffice, but at times I have to write at length. You had better leave it to me when I should write myself or when and to whom I should dictate.

Now that you have started the exercise[4] do not give it up. You can go up to 108 *namaskars*. Many *asanas* can be performed while doing *suryanamaskar*. It is largely for you to see which ones will suit you best. Consider also whether you should go up to 108 *namaskars*. There is no point in losing weight by starving. One has to reduce weight if one has put on any because of some disease, but that too not by starving oneself. If even with regular exercise and balanced diet

[1] Addressee's son

[2] Bal Kalelkar

[3] Addressee's wife Saraswati

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Lilavati Asar", 8-11-1945

you put on weight, let it be so. You need not worry about it in the least.

You have used the word 'stunt' in a wrong context. You can translate it as *dhating* in Gujarati. The changes in diet or other methods adopted for reducing weight cannot be called stunt. Those who digest what they have studied keep on pursuing the study in order to acquire more knowledge without even thinking about the examination results. While studying they build up their bodies as best they can because keeping the body healthy, strong and lustrous is also a part of learning. I give you full encouragement to study what you have undertaken not for the sake of getting a degree but for the knowledge that you will acquire while studying for it. Since you have already studied Gray[1] once, it should be a mere child's play to go through it a second time. The oftener you read it, the more knowledge you will gain.

It will be good if you give up the habit of walking about as you read. It spoils the eyesight and sometimes the thoughts also wander. While walking one can think over and digest what one has read or think of the work one has done during the day, and so on. But the eyes have to look around and take note of the surroundings and watch out for any obstruction in one's way. One cannot walk with eyes closed but a person like me who walks with the support of others enjoys the pleasure of doing so. But that is not for you.

Stick to your decision not to attend Lakshmidas's wedding.

I have signed at two places. That shows how bad my memory is.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Henry Gray's *Anatomy of the Human Body*

643. LETTER TO ATULANAND CHAKRAVARTY

POONA,
November 16, 1945

BHAI ATULANAND,

I have your postcard. I have sent the thing on to a historian who has also made a serious study of the Hindu-Muslim question. I am awaiting his reply. A leading Congressman told me that it would not do any good to write anything like this in the name of the Congress because the atmosphere was such that people had shut their ears to objectively expressed views of others and such being the case anything said was bound to be misunderstood. Therefore, I am not keen to have this published. Seeing the atmosphere that prevails I myself hold a similar view. But lest I do injustice to your endeavour I have sent it to a historian for his opinion. This much I can say that it will not be possible to have it published as quickly as you want. Let us see what comes of it and what I finally decide.

My visit to Bengal will not be long in coming now. I hope to reach there on December 1st. Do meet me there. Let me, however, tell you that the final decision lies not with those with an English education but with the millions of people who know their mother tongue or the national language. Therefore, write the original in your mother tongue, Bengali; and for other provinces in the national language in both the scripts. If you agree with what I say, start reading and writing the national language in both the scripts. Would Rabi Babu's writings and poetry have had any impact on Bengali if he had written in English?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: 1486. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

644. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

POONA,
November 16, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Let us assimilate *Gitai*[1]. Only after everybody is able to sing *Gitai* in harmony, understanding its meaning, can we think of *Auz Billa*[2] and other things. In that case we shall have to do the same about Zend [Avesta]. It is better to master in one thing before taking up another.

It seems proper to keep the same time for prayer everywhere.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4536

645. LETTER TO LILA JOG

November 16, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

Thanks for acknowledging receipt of the cheque for Rs. 375.

Don't you have the slightest knowledge of the national language? If you don't, at least you must be knowing your mother tongue. Women who volunteer to work among village women can scarcely expect to do their work through English. I am of course a villager. Why do you write to me in English?

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI LILA JOG
30 SHIVAJI PARK
DADAR, BOMBAY 28

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Translation of the *Bhagavad Gita* in Marathi by Vinoba Bhave

[2] The verse from the Koran included in the Ashram prayer

646. LETTER TO N. VYASATIRTH

November 16, 1945

BHAI VYASATIRTH,

I have your letter. You must be aware that ordinary marriages no longer have any interest for me. I am interested, if at all, in a caste Hindu marrying a Harijan. For, if we wish to observe *Varnashrama* dharma, we should all belong to one caste, i.e., of Harijans. And how else can we prove that we have really become Harijans? But what if marriage between a Bhangi and a Brahmin is not for observing dharma but for indulgence? All the same you have my blessings if your marriage is for the service of the poeple and if both of you live a life of self-restraint.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

647. LETTER TO AVANTIKABAI GOKHALE

November 17, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I can see your love in everything you do, but you must temper your love with reason. Yesterday I could not go where I intended to go, could not do what I intended to do. I only watched the *tamasha*[1]. Such things give me a fright. I am also past the age when they could interest me. I had intended to inspect all the living quarters and latrines in the sanatorium and to offer suggestions. I had intended to talk to the doctors and joke with the patients. I have to say none of this was done. I had especially brought along Nargisbehn. She could not see anything. I would not take her to watch a *tamasha* at any time. Impelled by your love I spared three hours out of a busy schedule. These days it is not an easy thing for me to spare three hours. They are not mine, they belong to the people. And you should not be instrumental in my wasting even a minute. Now do this much. I want

[1] Traditional musical folk-play of Maharashtra

the estimate of expense incurred on a single hut and also how much out of it was spent on the septic tank. If you can easily procure a plan of the hut and the septic tank, I would like to have it. The septic tank is a good device. There was some rank grass around and it seems valuable water, containing manure, flowing from the tank is going waste. Something had better be done about it. What things do they make at the glass factory?

Blessings from

BAPU

AVANTIKABAI GOKHALE

TALEGAON

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

648. LETTER TO HARBAHI TRIVEDI

November 17, 1945

BHAI HARBHAI,

What are you doing these days? I have no idea at all of your mental state but Chi. Chandu has woken up. She also has written after a long time and that too about you. I am sending a copy of her letter. I want you to send the reply to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

649. LEETER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

November 17, 1945

CHI. SUMI,

I have your letter. The less you adorn the letters, the better they look. I realize more and more each day that handwriting can be made into an art. What sort of animal is this "study"[1]? I hope the water shortage is over.

[1] Gandhiji uses the English word.

We shall all leave here on the 19th and reach Sevagram on the 21st.

Blessings from
BAPU

SUMITRA GANDHI
PILANI

From a copy of the Gujrarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

650. LETTER TO V. L. MEHTA

November 17, 1945

BHAI VAIKUNTH,

Your letter contains what one would expect it to contain. My advice is that you should write to Bhai Kumarappa and Satis Babu to send their views. Also mention that this is on my suggestion. I shall form my opinion after that. There is plenty of time, so there is nothing to worry about. Since you will be following my suggestion, I shall have very little to do or to remember and shall be able to give my opinion immediately.

I hope you are all right. Do drop in if you feel like it on the 20th. I, however, see no need for it.

Blessings from
BAPU

VAIKUNTH L. MEHTA
P. O. BOX 472
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

651. LETTER TO T. S. AVINASHLINGAM

November 17, 1945

BHAI AVINASHLINGAM,

If the chairman of a committee sends blessings for some work of his own committee, does it not amount to his blessing himself? Is it proper? At any rate you should spare me.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI T.S. AVINASHLINGAM
KASTURBA GANDHI NATIONAL MEMORIAL FUND COMMITTEE
P. O. SHRI RAMAKRISHNA VIDYALAYAM
COIMBATORE DISTRICT

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

652. LETTERS TO INAYATULLA KHAN

November 17, 1945

ALLAMA SAHEB,

I got your letter and two Khaksar officials also came and saw me. I was very happy. I shall reach Bombay on the 19th but that will be my silence day. The silence will end at about 7.30 p.m. At that time I have a meeting with a few Hindustani teachers. On the 20th we have to catch a train for Wardha but still I have the Khaksar officials that you may come at 3 p.m. I shall wait for you then. If you want any change in the time, please send a message to me at the Birla House.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

653. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

POONA,
November 18, 1945

MY DEAR C. R.,

Your good letter. Subbaroyan talked to me for a few minutes. He is anxious about you. In a democratic organization and especially one in which violence is eschewed, things will happen as they do. But they must come right in the end. Nobody going there is likely to help. "Experience teaches." There is much that is going astray. But I don't worry and work away in faith.

We are off tomorrow morning. I leave Bombay on 20th, leaving Sevagram on 30th November.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2113

654. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

POONA,
November 18, 1945

CHI. JIVANJI,

Please read the enclosed letter and return it to me with your opinion on what should be done. They have sent the money as royalty on the sales of the translation, but since we are not entitled to it I feel tempted to utilize it for the many other activities under my charge instead of crediting it to the Navajivan account. But then I also feel that I had better send it to you. I am, therefore, sending the cheque herewith. If, now, you yourself feel that the money should not be credited to the Navajivan account, then, and only then, return it to me. At present I am spending money as it comes from different accounts. I do not see any of these to be specially in need of this money. Hence both of us can consider the matter objectively.

I sent you yesterday the pamphlet on constructive programme after revising it with great labour. Inadvertently, it was posted as unregistered packet. I shall, therefore, feel worried till I get an acknowledgment from you. For I have kept no copy of it. But I derive what comfort I can from the story of Newton who, after being slightly upset when the manuscript on which he had been working for many years was destroyed in a fire by somebody, proceeded to write it all over again. And with this thought I keep patience. I hope it will not be lost on the way. But if it is, I will revise another copy. It will mean loss of some time, of course. If, therefore, you receive it safely, spend money on a wire, but if you don't get it send another copy with your suggestions so that I may start work on it immediately.

Enclosures:

1 cheque and 1 letter

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9958. Also C.W. 6932. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

655. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS G. KAPADIA

POONA,
November 18, 1945

CHI. MADHAVDAS,

I have read the whole of your letter, I also understand what you say. Is it necessary to enter into any discussion about it? "As ye sow, so shall ye reap" is a law without exception. Nobody can alter it. So we must think only about ourselves. "All relations of a man are selfish in their love." You have found in Kunvarji a true relation.[1] Blossom under the shade of that *Kalpataru*[2] and do what you said in your letter to me. I shall then be perfectly happy.

I shall reach Bombay on the 19th noon. I shall be observing silence the whole day. Till two o'clock I shall be busy with the needs of the body. Any time after that you and Kunvarji or others may come if you wish and tell me whatever you wish to in two or three minutes. Otherwise there is no need for you or anybody else to come.

Pretend that I had not come at all.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MADHAVDAS
C/O SHRI KUNVARJI MEHTA
GANGA SADAN, MARWA ROAD
MALAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2728

656. LETTER TO JATINDRA DAS

POONA,
November 18, 1945

CHI. PARAM OR JATINDRA DAS,

I wanted to write to you yesterday, but could not find the time.

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Brijkrishna Chandiwala", 6-11-1945

[2] Mythical tree that yields all one's wishes

And today I have your letter. Even now I cannot write at length. You are doing good work. If you try to come over in a hurry, all your efforts will be wasted.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

657. LETTER TO PYARELAL

POONA,

November 18, 1945

CHI. PYARELAL,

I thought I did not have to give you any reply. But that is all right. I am replying now.

1. I regard Prakash as my daughter. There was no idea of pleasing anybody in allowing her to touch me. I decided that she should remain with me while I stayed in Calcutta and then should accompany me to Santiniketan, nowhere else. I still think the same today. Let her come to Calcutta. Then we shall see what happens.

2. I shall arrange Rs. 25/- a month to be sent to you if you so wish.

3. I do not see any need for Sushila to write to Manu. However, if Sushila herself feels that she should send the letter, or another letter, she is free to do so. I am firmly of opinion that it is in her interest and in the interest of everyone that among the three of us only I should correspond with her. I do not think it is necessary to send either of the books to Manu now. But I shall let her know that you have given me the books to be sent to her. I shall do as she desires. That would be best. I feel that it would be somewhat rude to send her the books just like that.

Now that I am writing, let me state that I had understood your wish that I should not use for you terms like ‘poet’ and so on. You did not know the full context. Still, I shall be as cautious as I can be. But habits die hard !

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

658. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

POONA,
November, 18, 1945

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have no doubt that you have done everything possible with regard to the land at Nasik. Dinshaw is an eccentric man but he is very good, generous and simple-hearted. In the matter of nature cure he is the only man on whom my eyes are fixed. I shall go on encouraging him in his virtues and, if I can do so, it will be of much help to the patients. Therefore, when I saw that he was himself not keen on going to Nasik, I dropped the matter. With that I also decided to begin the new term of the institution from here and run it for the poor. So far only the rich have come and the poor have remained behind. But now the rich who wish to be admitted here will have to come after the poor. The rich will get the same facilities as the poor. At the same time it is certain that an attempt will be made to observe the rules of cleanliness as meticulously as possible. No doubt it is a difficult task. I should not cultivate such an interest in my declining years. But what lay dormant for years has awakened without any effort on my part. How can I resist it? God's will alone will prevail. For the time being the institution of which you too are a trustee has been closed. If it is to come into existence out of the activities here, it will. Whatever happens will be proper from all points of view. I shall write to you if I have to go to Nasik or need money to carry on this institution. At present I am just watching. There is some money lying with me. I shall manage with it. Since it is the condition of this trust that the management will not be left in Dinshaw's hands, you may as well say that the responsibility will mine.

I have read Shivnath Singh's letter you sent me. It did not make a favourable impression on me. He has written at great length[1]. I am writing a brief note to him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8075. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1]The letter dealt with nature cure treatment. The addressee had suggested that Gandhiji might call the writer if he liked the letter.

659. LEETER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

POONA,
November 19, 1945

CHI. VANUDI,

Avarice is the roof of all evil. Why are you so stingy? Even at the cost of your life, introduce here and get others to adopt Mani's cleanliness and neatness. But all this with love. I shall then be assured that you will make the man you marry happy, you yourself will be happy and will serve the country.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5795. Also C.W. 3018. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

660. LETTER TO G. N. KANITKAR

POONA,
November 19, 1945

BHAI BALUKAKA,

I have received your offering. Observe silence and carry on your work with a sense of detachment.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 976. Courtesy: G. N. Kanitkar

661. LETTER TO DUNCAN GREENLEES

ON THE WAY TO SEVAGRAM,
November 19, 1945

MY DEAR DUNCAN,

Your letter. I do hope that I shall be in Madras and that we shall meet. No time for more.

Love.

BAPU

PROF. DUNCAN GREENLEES
BHIMILIPATAM
ANDHRA

From a copy: Pyarelal pepers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

662. LETTER TO KHURSHED NAOROJI

ON THE WAY TO SEVAGRAM,
November 19, 1945

DEAR SISTER[1],

Those who make mistakes with individuals cannot make much success with causes; for the latter are never apart from individuals. What you want to say is that individuals are not to be thought of apart from the causes they may represent or may be induced to represent. But this is all nonsense. Let the God of Truth alone guide us.

BAPU

[PS.]

I have no merchant princes. You are at the Conference; send details to Kasturba Fund Secretary[2].

SHRI KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI
82 DARYAGANJ, DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

663. LETTER TO ANNE MASCARENE

ON THE WAY TO SEVAGRAM,
November 19, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. What I want to say is that Marybehn should not have come out in public. Now it is done. I have to go to Bengal and Madras. I do not know when I shall settle down at Sevagram.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MASCARENE
THE STATE CONGRESS
TRIVANDRUM
TRAVANCORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The superscription is in Gujarati.
[2] Amritlal V. Thakkar

664. LETTER TO N. G. RANGA

ON THE WAY TO SEVAGRAM,
November 19, 1945

BHAI RANGA,

I have your letter. Follow the dictates of your heart. No matter what I say, if you have doubts you must pause. I know that your first duty is to strengthen the peasant organization in Andhra so that it becomes a model for the whole world. It is difficult for me to go there.

Blessings from

BAPU

PROF. RANGA
NIDUBROLU
ANDHRA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

665. LETTER TO R. ACHUTHAN

ON THE WAY TO SEVAGRAM,
November 19, 1945

BHAI ACHUTHAN,

I have your letter. But why is it in English? Why not in the national language? Your arguments are correct. Remember that only he who helps himself achieves anything.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI R. ACHUTHAN
CONSTRUCTIVE SECTION
P. O. BANARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

666. LETTER TO KHANDUBHAI K. DESAI

November 19, 1945

BHAI KHANDUBHAI,

What message can a labourer give to a labour union? I have not heard of anyone sending a message to himself.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KHANDUBHAI DESAI

MAJOOR MAHAJAN SANGH

LAL DARWAJA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

667. LETTER TO INAYATULLA KHAN

BIRLA HOUSE,

November 19, 1945

ALLAMA SAHEB,

I have your letter. I just cannot do as you desire. At 11 a. m. I have a massage. Even otherwise I am busy the whole day. I have not even a minute free. The meeting can be arranged with some difficulty for 3 p. m. It is true that I told those who had come to see me that if the meeting was to be private, I would go to any place. But no private meeting is possible at the place you suggest. The biggest problem is the condition you have laid down. I cannot speak on behalf of the Congress. I can speak for myself and I think I have already conveyed[1] my view to you that though you have taken great pains in drafting the constitution, it is not workable and it cannot appeal to others. I still think as I have said earlier, that only if all the communities are first united at heart and wish to sit together and decide the issue will it be possible to frame a constitution. So what the Congress will do is beside the point. Personally, too, I cannot agree with you on your constitution. As I have said, though there are some good features in it and I appreciate the trouble you have taken, I am afraid we shall not

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Inayatulla Khan", 1-11-1945

be able to agree at the forthcoming meeting. I had thought and I still think, that whatever the outcome of our meeting might be, we should meet and at least try to understand each other's point of view.

Your letter gives me no such hope.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Urdu: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

668. DISCUSSION WITH HINDUSTANI PRACHAR SABHA WORKERS

BOMBAY,
[*Novemeber 19, 1945*][1]

To a questions why the Urdu script should be imposed on a person who did not like it and wished to learn the national language only through the Devanagari script, Mahatma Gandhi replied:

It is not a question of liking or disliking. If you do not like the Urdu script, then I conclude that you do not like Hindustani. The Urdu script must be learnt. Without effort and sacrifice we cannot dream of winning freedom. So far as the provinces of Bombay, Gujarat and Maharashtra are concerned, the question of learning the Nagari script does not arise at all as everybody knows it already. Then, where does Hindustani Prachar come in? In learning the other script, do not think you are conferring a favour on anyone. It should be considered as your duty. It is a national work and everyone should do it. By learning both the scripts you can better understand both the Hindi and the Urdu developments of the language. I can understand Sanskritized Hindi, but what about the masses? It is our duty to learn both the scripts. Then alone can we hoenstly serve the country in a humble way. According to me one who does not have a liking for the Urdu script has no liking for swaraj also. The masses do not understand pure Hindi or pure Urdu, so Hindustani should be evolved in such a way that even the illiterate masses can understand it.

Mere slogans would not help in achieving the goal of freedom. Taking as little trouble as possible and looking to your worldly advancement will leave your swaraj just a dream. Nagari and Urdu are

[1] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 25-11-1945

both equally dear to me. So when I say learn the Urdu script I have no enmity towards the other script. Our swaraj cannot be given to us as a gift, but we shall have to win it through our untiring efforts.

To understand our people and win swaraj for our country, do not be deterred from this small effort of learning the two important scripts of our land. To keep faith, one must be cent per cent faithful. It is not a bit of bread which you can break up in pieces. The language of a people cannot be divided, it is one and indivisible like Truth. Therefore, whether you like it or not you will have to learn and love Urdu.

Asked whether script should be given as much importance as language, Gandhiji replied:

Language and script are both necessary in practice. How are we, after all, to solve the question of writing to our own Muslim brethren who know only the other script? If we argue, 'What have we to do with them?', then I say why bother about swaraj? I want to learn all the thirteen scripts and want to know them equally well. Had you given one-seventh of the time to the learning of these scripts which you have given to English, you would have learnt all the thirteen scripts by now. It is not difficult to learn the Urdu script. It can be done with great ease and facility.

A *pracharak* asked why the Urdu script should not be taught to the student after the Nagari is learnt. Mahatma said:

If I had been a teacher, I would have taught four or five scripts at the same time. I did not take even eight days to learn the Urdu script. There should at least be four or five such teachers who may know the two script perfectly and may be able to teach them. It could be left to the option of the teacher whether he taught the two scripts together or one after the other. But he should examine them in both before giving them a certificate.

Regarding the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan and Babu Purushottam Das Tandon's attitude to the script issue, Mahatma Gandhi said:

Tandonji is my friend. I love him. We have lived together for a long time. But now, on this question, we are taking two different paths; but we do not stand in each other's way. Personally, for myself, I want to see Saraswati after the union of Ganga and Jamuna.

The Hindu, 26-11-1945

669. LETTER TO INAYATULLA KHAN

BIRLA HOUSE,
November 20, 1945

ALLAMA SAHEB,

I have your letter, which has hurt me deeply. You have totally misunderstood what I said out of great love. I am helpless. What I had told you was never meant for the Press and so far as I am concerned I would like to say that whatever we have been writing to each other should not be sent to the Press. Still, you can send it if you think it fit. Excuse me for not replying in English. You think that if we write in Urdu orany other Indian language it can be misinterpreted, and if we write in English it can mean one thing only. But I hold exactly the opposite view.

From a copy of the Urdu: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

670. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,
November 21, 1945

I had purposely refrained from correcting or contradicting reports about my shifting to Poona and establishing a nature cure hospital on an extensive plot of ground in Poona or even Nasik. All this was wrong, as most unauthentic reports in the Press are. These have always cost me dear, perhaps the public more than me. There was, however, a grain of truth in the ounce of rumour. Dr. Dinshaw Mehta knew me before I knew him and, ever since I have known him, I have liked him. I have been myself a nature cure man before all known to me. Of them, Dr. Dinshaw has made the greatest impression on me and he is a dreamer like me. He wants a nature cure university; so do I. He has made over to a Trust his concerns at Poona and Sinhgad. Their nominal cost, according to the schedules to the Trust, is, in round figures, Rs. 50,000. I have allowed myself to be one of the Trustees. The other two are Dr. Mehta himself and Mr. Jehangir Patel who is interested in nature cure. Hitherto Dr. Mehta's institution has been meant for monied men and then for as many poor people as he could safely take. Patients have all been residential.

From the 1st of January next, this institution will be devoted to

the service of the poor. The rich will be taken only if they can accommodate themselves to remain with the poor, and expect no more space or comforts than the poor will get at this institution. The guarantee will be that the standard of cleanliness, shorn of luxury, will be the highest attainable in any institution of the kind. Treatment will be both indoor and outdoor. Outdoor will naturally be more than indoor.

The Birlas have interested themselves in me for years. And they were prepared to give me in Nasik as much land with buildings as were required for the institution. But Dr. Dinshaw was not whole-heartedly inclined to favour the Nasik idea, unless I consented to include in the Trust the going concerns at Poona too. I could not shoulder the burden. Hence the Nasik project had to be dropped, for the time being at any rate.[1] Dr. Dinshaw will still remain the sole Director so far as the technical part is concerned. This institution, if it is to grow at all, will require the silent blessings of the poor, the financial support of the rich, active co-operation of genuine naturopaths of India and sympathy of the medical fraternity. Its present site is too small for the requirements of the poor. Moreover, it will largely depend upon the leaseholder whether the institution can in any case remain located on the present site.

The Hitavada, 22-11-1945

671. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHAGANJ,
November 21 [*1945*][2]

AMTULSALAAM
CARE HUMAYUN KABIR
26 AMRALI AVENUE
CALCUTTA

YOUR LETTER. SORRY ABOUT ILLNESS. DON'T WORRY. JOIN ME CALCUTTA WHEN QUITE RESTORED.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 488

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to G. D. Birla", 4-11-1945 and "Letter to G. D. Birla", 18-11-1945

[2] The year is illegible in the source. However it is inferred from the reference to the addressee's illness, *vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 23-11-1945 and Gandhiji's visit to Calcutta where he reached on December 1, 1945.

672. TELEGRAM TO H. L. SHARMA

WARDHAGANJ,
November 21, 1945

DR. SHARMA
KHURJA
RECEIVED BOTH LETTERS.

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 343

673. LETTER TO CHANDRASHANKAR SHUKLA

November 21, 1945

CHI. CHANDRASHANKAR,

Just now as I start writing, your letter is placed before me. Of course I do get news of you. And when the Sardar is there what more can one want? I have secured the books you recommended. I do want to glance through them but what am I to do? Please send Joad's book when you come across it. Also Hodge's[1] . I understand about your health but I am glad that you are able somehow to carry on your work. Reading your letter for a moment I wondered if it was Mahadev's. You and a few others have been copying his handwriting but you beat all the rest.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHANDRASHANKAR SHUKLA
KRISHNA BHAVAN
BANGDI MATA'S ROAD
RAOPURA, BARODA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

674. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

SEVAGRAM,
November 22, 1945

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

Since you will certainly not be back before I leave Sevagram, I am writing you this letter. You should know that the Nagpur Bank was Jamanalal's, which he had started for the service of the people. The

[1] Charles Hodge

idea was, and ought to be even now, that it should serve as a savings bank for the poor. The bank, therefore, must never crash. In other words, the Nagpur Bank should crash only when the Bank of England or the Imperial Bank do or when there is some great natural calamity. That is, it must have the reputation that it will be the last not the first to crash. That you are Jamnalal's heir really means that you are heir to that reputation, and it was because of this belief of mine that I advised the Jallianwala Trust to let its funds remain in the Nagpur Bank and to try to transfer still more deposits to it. I have given the same advice to Kumarappa, nemely, that he should deposit the Village Industries Association's funds in that Bank. That confidence must not prove to have been misplaced. But the moment I alighted at the railway station yesterday Bharatan told me quite the opposite. He of course spoke gently and since I am the President of the Association, asked for my opinion. Kumarappa had written to me and asked me whether he should deposit the Village Industries funds in the . . . .[1] Bank. Vaikunthbhai had advised in favour of it and, therefore, Kumarappa had assumed that I also would agree. But I expressed doubt and did not give my consent. Kumarappa, however, had already deposited the money. But now we must withdraw it. In that case we shall lose the interest. And what if, despite our readiness to lose the interest, we cannot withdraw it. So Bharatan asked my advice. Kumarappa, is not here just now. But I told Bharatan that if the Bank people objected, we must put up a fight and insist on withdrawing the money, for otherwise I felt the money was insecure and it would be like killing a buffalo for a leather thong. I do not know even today what kind of an establishment the . . . Bank is. I do have some vague idea about it, of course. But I generally dislike and distrust new banks. I would not, therefore, readily agree to deposit money in them. Then the question arose: if not in the . . . Bank, why should we keep the money in the Nagpur Bank? Is it also not a comparatively new bank? Comparatively yes. Bharatan then added that it was being rumoured that the Nagpur Bank would close down in a month or two because it had incurred losses and it was feared that the deposits were not safe. He suggested, therefore, that it would be wise to withdraw the money in time. I did not believe the rumour and remained undisturbed in my mind, but I wanted to know what was at the back of the rumour. Radhakrishna was with me at the time. I asked him. He explained the position. I felt reassured and told Bharatan that we must deposit the money in the Nagpur Bank and nowhere else. However, I felt that I must inform you. Hence this letter. Think over this and be on your guard. It is no

[1] Addressee's cousin, Radhakrishna Bajaj

ordinary matter to be Jamnalal's heir. You are his heir because you are his son. I am his heir because I am his adopted father. My interest is to see that his name remains untarnished. You and I shall have proved ourselves his true heirs only if the ventures he started are not merely kept up but become models of their kind.

It may be that you will earn a lot of money and be reckoned a millionaire. But what is to happen to the philanthropic ventures and the Bank he started in the last years of his life? What is to happen to the cause of the poor cow, of khadi, of the Village Industries Association? Did I not settle at Wardha at his behest, ignoring Sardar's anger born out of his love? He could have easily secured for me ten orchards against one here, but he could not find for me a Jamnalal there and, therefore, I let go the ten orchards. And now, I do not wish even to feel that I have lost Jamnalal. This rests entirely in your hands, in Radhakrishna's and Janakidevi's. Janakidevi, however, is uneducated and the hope of her shaping up which I had cherished has dried up after Jamnalal's passing away. I therefore cannot explain to her the position about the Bank and have not even tried. Radhakrishna is very clever. He has practical sense but cannot be said to be educated. You have been to England and have, besides, made some mark as a business man. As for self-confidence, you have more of it than is good for you. Be that as it may, as heir to Jamnalal and head of the family it is to you that I have to look up. I, therefore, advise you to do the best you can to bring glory to your father's name as a philanthropist. If you think it beyond your capacity, be humble and caution me in time. Not all sons can or do follow in the footsteps of their benevolent fathers. If, therefore, you also fail to do so, nobody can point a finger at you. And in any case who am I to do so? But as a grandfather I should at least advise you and caution you. Having done so, I would quietly accept what you do. I think I have said enough. Ponder over it carefully and let me know, at any rate, whether the advice I have given to Bharatan is correct or not.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3058

675. TALK TO STUDENTS OF SAMAGRA GRAMSEVA VIDYALAYA [1]

SEVAGRAM,
November 22, 1945

I expect much from the students who have come here for study. Not only I but also those who take interest in this work, expect much from you. There are many educated people in India who criticize and run down our programme. Some of them oppose it on principle. At present I do not want to say anything about them, though I have a ready answer for them. But we should listen to those who have some interest in this work and wish to take some part in it. Such people hope for much from khadi work, village industries, *goseva* and work of Harijan uplift. We should therefore make strenuous efforts to fulfil their expectations. If you have come here in order merely to earn your livelihood, then that hope will not be realized.

Many people study in Government colleges. They get degrees there. They think that with that education they will earn money and fame and at least become clerks in some Government office, or if not, they can certainly get jobs as peons. And they become peons not for the sake of work, but in the hope of getting promotions in future and making some money on the side. This means that they believe that once they enter Government service, their life is secure. This is a matter which needs careful thinking. The Government has provided several facilities in their colleges. They have provided spacious buildings, offered large scholarships and given travelling facilities. How can we compete with all this?

I have already shown several ways of solving this problem. You have not come here for comforts or for the sake of salary. If you want to succeed in your aim bear in mind that you have not come here merely to learn crafts. Of course you have to learn crafts but you should not rest content with that. Artisans are already there in villages. They have been doing the same work from generation to generation. How can you compete with them? Do learn the process, but along with that you must acquire scientific knowledge. We should think again and again why we are doing this work, how we should proceed about it, how we can link it with swaraj. Swaraj has to be attained through non-violence. There are crores of people living in the villages of

[1] The institution started functioning from October 2, 1945.

India. We have to emancipate them, serve them and make them understand the value of this work. If you believe that the mill-owners can feed the people and if you are satisfied with it then you should not study here. But the mill-owners can provide for only a handful. Mill-owners never think at all of the crores of people. I have not come across any mill-owner so far who has told me that mills can provide work for the millions.

You have come here to accomplish a Herculean task. You have to serve crores of people. It is immaterial that you are only sixty-one in number. But you will have accomplished something if you leave after gaining scientific knowledge. All the sixty-one of you have to become guardians or trustees for the millions of people. If your example is followed, the number will increase. This Vidyalaya is like the Gangotri[1]. Its flow will swell like that of the Ganga. This has been my dream for the last 25 years. The hope that I have cherished has not yet been fulfilled. Still I am not disappointed at all because I never lose heart. A great enterprise does not move quickly. Non-violence marches forward slowly but steadily. Its way is straight. It will overtake those who move with the speed of an aeroplane. This is my firm belief.

The knowledge that you gain here is to be imparted to the villagers. You have to create interest in them for such knowledge. But this is not an easy task. I have been here in Sevagram for the last so many years. The headquarters of the Charkha Sangh, Gramodyog Sangh, Goseva Sangh and so on are situated here. There are very good workers also. The facilities that are not available anywhere else are available here. In spite of all this, I have not been able to do what I wanted to do. But you should not lose heart because of that. You should ask yourselves why we have not been able to do it. The teachers should have an answer for this. Those who are sitting here are neither hypocrites nor cheats. They are sitting here with a firm belief that sooner or later the key to this problem will come into their hands. We have to multiply Sevagrams. We have to think not of a single village but the whole of India. I sometimes think of the whole world as well. If we had to take care of Sevagram only or had to work without concern for non-violence and truth, then we could have accomplished the work but that would not have removed the sufferings of this world. India is a tiny spot in the world and in it Sevagram is but a speck. Whatever is possible in Sevagram can also be possible in the world. I am prepared to spend 100 years for it.

I shall teach you whatever I know if you are prepared to learn it

[1] The source of the Ganga in the Himalayas

with patience. But it will not help you to earn money. I can easily earn a thousand or two thousand rupees. I stayed for 20 years in South Africa, I can speak some broken English also. Moreover, these days I am considered a mahatma too ! So anybody will give me two thousand rupees. But I don't want all this. On the strength of it I can collect crores of rupees, but not for myself. So far as I am concerned I want nothing more than plain bread. In the same way you should also be content with plain bread. The work here is not easy. If you are not satisfied with the work here you should leave. You can earn enough money elsewhere but if you wish to stay here, you should stay with a contented mind. If you have this feeling that you are one with the millions, then you will succeed.

You have come here from different Provinces. You eat together and live together. Your heart should be clean and you should feel that we are all one. I have started saying that we are all Harijans—indeed Bhangis. Only when you imbibe such an attitude, will our work succeed. You will have to be alert every moment and carry on the work. You will be examined and you will be given a certificate. But that will not prove your worth. The certificate will not be for showing to others. It will enable you to know that you have reached a certain standard and that you have to proceed further. Today certificates do carry weight but we have to change our values, change our way of life and also our attitude towards these things.

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, December 1945

676. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM,
November 23, 1945

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I am dictating this in Gujarati in order to save time. I got your letter. I had expected to see you here, instead of which I saw your letter full of real distress. It was not the lamentation usual in your letters. I felt in it, instead, your sorrow at having fallen ill at the wrong moment. I too, therefore, felt unhappy. Maganbhai[1], too, gave me a vivid description. And then I heard from Jajuji[2] such a beautiful account of your spirit of service and courage that my heart overflowed with joy. We shall now be meeting in a few days. Do not

[1] Maganbhai P. Desai

[2] Shrikrishnadas Jaju

be carried away by your joy and run up to Sodepur. Get well first and then come.

I am glad that you have found shelter in Humayun's house. I am in good health. Those who were ill here are gradually recovering.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 502

677. LETTER TO MADALASA

November 23, 1945

CHI. CRAZY MADALASA,

I have your letter. Now that Shrimanji is there, do as he advises. You have too many advisers. That is bad. You should listen only to one person whom you respect and follow his advice. Do not listen to anybody else, and if someone comes to talk to you just close your ears. You will then quickly recover. And don't worry in any case. Since you have given birth to a child, you must bring him up well. It will be enough if, for his sake at least, you can forget your craziness and become, if not a *jnani*, at least a sensible woman.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 326-7

678. LETTER TO LAKSHMI NARAYAN GADODIA

SEVAGRAM,
November 23, 1945

BHAI GADODIAJI,

I got all your letters and Dr. Sharma's and quite a number of them, I may say, but I did not think it proper to get involved in all these things. Now I see that I shall have to devote some time to the matter. You emphatically proclaim your honesty and I have as yet no reason to doubt it. You have already given me the reason for believing that your conscience is clear and I have accepted it despite opposition from others. But the attacks of Dr. Sharma and others on your attitude towards khadi have shaken my opinion. I wrote one or two strong

letters to Dr. Sharma. I am sending you the letter I got in reply. He insists that it should be sent to you. You can give whatever reply you want to and send it along with his letter.

I am writing this letter with a heavy heart. Dr. Sharma's complaint is not a new one. He had the same complaint when he had come to see me a few months after my release from jail. But I did not pay much attention to it. Let Chi. Saraswati also read this letter. She may also say what she has to.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

679. LETTER TO SHARAYU DHOTRE

November 24, 1945

CHI. SARAYU,

I am glad to have your letter. But I continue to have doubts about the propriety of what you are doing. Anyway it will be enough if you work for the well-being of the person whom you consider your husband and do not have the slightest lustful desire for anyone else. I shall be happy if you write to me sometimes.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

680. LETTER TO BABUBHAI

SEVAGRAM,
November 24, 1945

BHAI BABUBHAI,

I have your letter. I am not in the least satisfied. I may be mistaken, but how can I say I am satisfied when I am not? I can see no place for what you say in the dharma that I have known and observed. Dharma Sanghs are not formed that way. Your support for English is very lame. If you could only bring credit to Gujarat ! If you could do so even now I would consider it enough. Its fragrance will spread on

its own. Give the enclosed letter[1] to Sharayu.

Blessings from

BAPU

AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

681. LETTER TO NAVIN GANDHI

November 24, 1945

CHI. NAVIN,

I have your letter. It is not very clear but it will do for my purpose. I am sending it to Dr. Krishnavarma. I wish you would learn to describe things clearly as they are.

Blessings from

BAPU

NAVIN GANDHI
45 NEHRU ROAD
VILE PARLE

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

682. TELEGRAM TO DAUD GHAZNAVI

[On or after *November 24, 1945*] [2]

MAULANA DAUD GHAZNAVI[3]

DR. GOPICHAND FREE DO HIS WILL.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram dated November 24, seeking Gandhiji's permission for Dr. Gopichand Bhargava to contest the election to the Punjab Legislative Assembly.

[3] President, Punjab Provincial Congress Committee

683. TELEGRAM TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

WARDHA,
[On or after *November 24, 1945*] [1]

ACT AS YOU WISH.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

684. LETTER TO SIR EVAN M. JENKINS

SEVAGRAM,
November 25, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN,

Under pressure of work and preparations for shifting from Poona to Sevagram I had overlooked acknowledging your letter[2] of 9th instant regarding Shri Basuda Singh. Meanwhile, I saw in the papers and from private telegrams received from Bihar that His Excellency had commuted the death sentence. Will you please therefore convey my thanks to His Excellency for the commutation?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 56-7

685. LETTER TO SIR EVAN M. JENKINS

SEVAGRAM,
November 25, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN,

I thank you for your letter of 16th instant acknowledging mine of 13th instant[3] regarding Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 58

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] It informed Gandhiji that execution of Basuda Singh had been stayed as his mercy petition was under consideration of the U. P. Governor.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Evan M. Jenkins", 13-11-1945

686. LETTER TO SIR EVAN M. JENKINS

SEVAGRAM,
November 25, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN,

I write this in continuation of my letter[1] of 10th October. Since then I have seen other such accounts in the papers and now I have with me a young man (Shri Prabhu Dayal Vidyarthi) who came to me while he was yet in his teens, without being recommended by anybody, as a poor youngster. This was in the year 1935. Ever since then he has never been out of my observation. He was arrested in connection with the 1942 disturbances, and has lately been discharged. He came to Wardha in a dilapidated condition. I was then at Poona. He reported his arrival and I telegraphed to him to come there so that I could look after him better and, if necessary, get Dr. Mehta's assistance at his sanatorium where I was staying. He narrates tales of terrible torture, into the details of which I do not wish to go at this stage.[2]

On top of this I have received a communication from Dr. Lohia's friends and they tell me that Dr. Lohia has gone through torture himself. He is an able, cultured man who sacrificed a position of ease and luxury for the sake of the cause of India's independence. I know him well and, through him, also his father.

It is difficult to disbelieve all the accounts that have appeared in the Press and the two incidents mentioned above. I suggest that His Excellency goes deeper into the matter and not reject the statements as an exag-geration undeserving of any attention. I take comfort from the fact that in your letter of 1st November in reply to mine of 10th October, you tell[3] me that though His Excellency believes the story to be exaggerated, he is making further investigations. I plead for investigation into all other such statements and, if he proposes to do so, I am prepared to send you such details as I possess about the two

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. M. Jenkins", 10-10-1945

[2] Writing to the Secretary of State on March 5, 1946, the Viceroy said : "It has now been established that Vidyarthi was never brought to Delhi and that his allegations are a complete fabrication. Devdas Gandhi has admitted this . . . ." *The Transfer of Power*, "Memorial to Lord Elgin", 8-11-1906

[3] *Vide* footnote 1, "Letter to Sir Evan M. Jenkins", 7-11-1945

cases mentioned here and others about which I may be able to speak with some confidence.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 63

687. NOTE TO G. V. MAVALANKAR[1]

Silence Day, Monday, November 26, 1945

You should wish to live up to 125 years for the sake of service and go on doing more and more service. If I am the only one to cherish such a wish, I would dry up like a lone tree.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1256; also *Sansmarano*

688. LETTER TO RAMANAND TEERTH

SEVAGRAM,
November 26, 1945

BHAI RAMANAND SWAMI,

I have your letter. As I have said earlier, you should not approach me for advice. Pandit Jawaharlalji is the President. You should ask him and do as he advises.

I hope you have recovered by now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

689. LETTER TO BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

SEVAGRAM,
November 26, 1945

CHI. BHARATAN,

Read at least this much Hindi. I am not taking you for *Harijan*. This is just one of the possibilities. You are not bound in any way.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee had gone to Sevagram to seek Gandhiji's blessings on his birthday. As it was a silence day Gandhiji wrote this for him.

690. TALK WITH MEMBERS OF HYDERABAD STATE CONGRESS

8 p. m., November 26, 1945

I have said this after careful consideration. Earlier I said nothing as everything was in a mess. Now it is a different thing. I have read it. I am myself quite unhappy that I am not able to guide you properly. This much I can say. Do send a reply that the ban should be lifted and the State Congress should be recognized. For the rest Jawaharlalji should be consulted.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

691. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

[SEVAGRAM] [1],
November 27, 1945

CHI. MANI,

I got your two letters. I am sending you the letter meant for Kanjibhai[2]. Post it along with your letter.

Ask them to consider one thing about the Yeravda Pact. It has a provision regarding ten years' limit. But it is not there in the 1935 Act. Can it, then, be legally enforced? Let Pakvasa[3] think about it. He may, if necessary, consult counsel. My own view is clear. The law will not help. But there can be no two opinions that politically we can fight. It will have to be considered, of course, whether it would be advisable to raise the issue just now. But we shall discuss this after you arrive here.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 137

[1] The source however has Poona.

[2] Kanaiyalal Nanabhai Desai, President, Gujarat pradesh Congress Committee, from 1946 to 1956

[3] Mangaldas Pakvasa, President of the Bombay Legislative Council

692. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

SEVAGRAM,
November 27, 1945

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. I shall be very happy if you get well soon. I am leaving on the 30th. I hope to hear about you even during my tour. Chimanlal[1] is accompanying me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10064. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

693. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS G. KAPADIA

SEVAGRAM,
November 27, 1945

CHI. MADHAVDAS,

I have your long letter. I read your plan of work. I wish that you will go on serving according to it. Take Dr. Kesani's treatment and get well. I understand about Dr. Krishnavarma. You should have a frank talk with him. I am of course going to do that. Others also who criticize him must write plainly. I know of no case where mincing of words has cured anyone. My impression is that it makes people worse. To make indirect suggestions and then expect good results means that for the sake of improving something, one may do wrong and speak untruth.

I received Kunvarji's letter. I am not writing to him today. I am saving time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2726

[1] Chimanlal N. Shah, addressee's father

694. LETTER TO JEHANGIR P. PATEL

November 27, 1945

BHAI JEHANGIR,

It is good you have reached there. I am considering sending someone from here for keeping the accounts and so I have been doing a lot of thinking. We would like to have all possible help from you.

I hope Mother is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

JEHANGIR PATEL
PATEL BROTHERS
10 CHURCHGATE STREET
FORT, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

695. LETTER TO ZOHRA CHAWDA

November 27, 1945

CHI. ZOHRA,

I have your letter. I did not know you had such a sense of humour. I was very happy to learn that you had made one of the rooms shine like a mirror. Do the same with the other rooms and all of you then use them as mirrors. This will save the expense on a mirror.

You slept a lot. If you keep sleeping like that, you will recover quickly. A sick person should sleep as much as he can.

I have Vanu's letter but I am not writing to her today. I am very busy.

Blessings from

BAPU

ZOHRABEHN

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

696. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
November 27, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Champabehn[1] is going to stay here in the same way as the others do. About Sarala's education I have made it clear to her that while she stays here, she can neither have tuition from outside nor expect any other special facilities. She can receive only the education available here and she has to do as much work for the Ashram as her body will permit. She will have to be content with the food provided here and she will have to bear all expenses. She already knows spinning and other activities.

1. Efforts should be made gently to make Kanjibhai abide by the rules or else he must be suffered with love. Only love can understand the language of love. It would be a crime to make a mechanical approach.

2. I have already had a talk with Kailasbehn. She will stay in the Ashram. This is a similar problem. Here too the key lies in love. The same applies to Om Prakash.

3. I would love to keep Govind in the Talimi Sangh but only if Sankaran is convinced.

4. I do not know anything about Mavjibhai. I have just met him and his wife. With regard to them do what Kishorelalbhai and Naraharibhai say.

5. There is nothing to be said about Govind Reddy.

6. I should be happy to make the acquaintance of Mohan Singhji[2] but I have no time. I would like to utilize his services as a blacksmith and carpenter.

7. While looking after the management, it will be good if you can take classes in the spare time. But I too have looked after the management, haven't I? For me management itself had become a [training] class. I was a teacher as well as a pupil. The manager keeps an eye on everyone and sees how he sits, how he eats and what he

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Champa R. Mehta", 6-11-1945

[2] Mohan Singh Thakur; *vide* "Letter to Mohan Singh Thakur", 30-11-1945

reads. If within this framework, you can have a class, it will be all right. For instance, at Kocharab, all education was given in the Ashram. I had made a list of all those who were qualified to teach. Probably only one or two hours were reserved for teaching. I had assigned some work to myself too and I used to do my share.

8. Workers have got to learn all the processes concerning cotton. Let this instruction be imparted at Khadi Vidyalaya. The three R's must be taught. I shall not be able to go into the details of how it is to be done.

9. Even if Vinoba takes selections from *Al Fateha*[1] and *Mazda*[2] it will have to be in Arabic and Pehlavi. They can be accompanied by Vinoba's translation to bring out the meaning. In my view there is some value in reciting them in the original. I do not take the position that everything should be in the mother tongue or the national language.

10. You are right.

11. What you say is correct. I am used to one room only and I have not had two separate rooms. It is the same thought with a slight difference at the Christ Seva Sangh.

12. I have written at length about clothing. Go through it.

13. Now I myself take spices. But I hope I do that only by way of medicine. I take them at the instance of Dr. Mehta but I am not even aware of their existence in my food. The significant change is that we have now realized they have as much place in medicine as they have in taste. Wheat is cooked in so many different ways for taste and we also make *roti* out of it to fill the stomach.

14. The quantity of milk is all right. Maybe, even one lb. is enough.

15. Gajraj has started going to the Talimi Sangh. I think we should keep him there full time.

16. Think things over and write to me further if you wish. There are two sides to it.

17. Write to Purushottam Gandhi[3] in this regard.

18. Consider in this matter the person concerned and the

[1] From the Koran and the Zend Avesta for inclusion in the Ashram Prayer

[2] *ibid*

[3] Elder son of Narandas Gandhi

convenience of the Ashram. I may agree to allow a deserving person [to stay in the Ashram] even for eight days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4537

697. LETTER TO MAHESH DUTT MISHRA

November 27, 1945

CHI. MAHESH,

I have your postcard. I never thought that you were good for nothing. Do write to me when you are on leave. I can send for you if it is convenient.

My address: Khadi Pratishthan, Sodepur, 24 Parganas.

Blessings from

BAPU

MAHESH DUTT
9 HAMILTON ROAD
ALLAHABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

698. LETTER TO URMILA DEVI

SEVAGRAM,
November 27, 1945

CHI. URMILA,

I hope you will understand my Hindi. I shall certainly talk to Jawaharlal.

Arrangements will be made for you here. You will get a room with a lavatory near by. You will be able to cook for yourself.

I shall be busy with my work in Sodepur but you can come whenever you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

699. LETTER TO INAYATULLA KHAN

SEVAGRAM,
November 27, 1945

ALLAMA SAHEB[1],

I have your letter of the 21st instant. I am sorry and surprised that you have again misinterpreted my letter. I had not suggested that because the correspondence between us was still going on you should not have your letter published. I had only expressed my view that this correspondence should not be released to the press. However, if you think it proper, you may have it published. You are right in saying that Dastagir[2] can come here if he so desires. I had not said I would comment on each separate clause of the constitution you have drafted. I had only said that if broad questions are prepared in regard to it, I could try to reply to them. But from your letter I have begun to fear that you may misunderstand anything I may say. Be that as it may, if you formulate a few questions for me, I shall give you written replies to them. It is unnecessary for Dastagir to come just to collect my replies. Besides there is not even enough time for that. But whatever you send at this address will reach me wherever I may be.

I have got one more complaint, namely, why do you write to me in English?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The Khaksar Leader popularly known as Allama Mashriqui

[2] Ahmed Dastagir

700. WHY THE INSISTENCE ON THE YARN CLAUSE [1]

November 27/28, 1945

This is an old argument.[2] One wants to do many good things but is too lazy. However, when a rule is made the work becomes easy. Then one finds that one has gained the strength to do the work one could not do before. By making the yarn clause compulsory, we do not coerce people. We only make it easy for those who want to spin. How long can they spin who have no heart in it? It will be hypocritical if they spin as a demonstration. Hyprocrites only do harm to themselves. They cannot harm khadi in any way. I would in fact go so far as to say that he who takes up spinning out of a desire for praise will gradually develop an interest in the activity and then continue to spin willingly. If even after long practice he cannot find interest in spinning, if he still finds it a tedium he will give up khadi. That will not harm us in any way.

If the khadi bhandars close down because of the yarn clause they well may. And I do not care whether anyone buys khadi or not. I do not wish to run a shop. I want people to learn spinning. In Bombay 300 or 350 charkhas are plied. But this number means nothing. What I want is that there should be as many charkhas plying there as there are homes. If the cities are to imbibe non-violence there is no other way. The Government have the force that destroys; I have the charkha. The charkha alone can save us from destructive force. All other methods are useless.

If the enforcement of the yarn clause results in reduced sales of khadi and if the consequent loss forces us to close down the khadi bhandars, we may close them down. We cannot maintain khadi bhandars to sell khadi. You will say that if khadi bhandars in the city close down we shall have to sell khadi in the villages and that khadi cannot sell in the villages as it can in the cities. I agree that khadi cannot sell in the villages and it should not. Khadi is not to be sold in the villages, it is to be worn there. It is to be spun and worn. Rather than that we should have to get licences from the Government for khadi bhandars it is better that khadi dies, it is better that the khadi

[1] According to the source this is a summary of what Gandhiji had said at discussions with the Charkha Sangh workers on November 27 and 28.

[2] It had been suggested that those who could not tender yarn for the purchase of khadi should be allowed to buy it for cash, and that making the tendering of yarn compulsory would amount to coercion.

shops close down. Khadi cannot survive if it has to depend on others for its survival. Then it will be its lot to disappear. Once you understand the idea behind khadi you will not be nervous. You will not wonder how khadi bhandars and khadi centres will carry on. Since we have taken that step, since we have dared, we must be prepared to face difficulties. If we have to suffer set-backs we must be prepared for it.

You ask about woollens and silks. Who wears them? Can the poor do so? Why should we take all the trouble for a few rich people? These things cannot become universal. We may certainly keep stocks of woollens and silks in khadi bhandars as we keep other things there but we must understand that that is no part of our work. We may not apply the yarn clause to woollens and silks. We may not ask for yarn when selling these. Do we ask for yarn when selling other village handicrafts? Woollens and silks come in that category. If we remain steadfast, the importance of khadi will not diminish. If we think of meeting the expenditure of khadi bhandars out of the proceeds from the sale of woollens and silks, it will not help khadi, it will only harm it. If we carry on the khadi activity with the help of woollens and silks we shall become crippled. We shall not be able to carry on with the khadi work. Khadi work can sustain itself. It does not require dependence on anyone.

No one can kill khadi. How can mills do so? Mills may themselves be destroyed. We do not worry on that account. All the activities concerned with khadi, right from the picking of cotton to the weaving of khadi, should be carried on by the khadi bhandars. Selling of khadi is only a minor activity. Kakubhai is the secretary of the Bombay khadi bhandar. I want to see how skilled he is. I want to see in his hand not a pen but a charkha. He should be an expert in all the processes employed in khadi. If I were in a bhandar I would spin, I would card. We have to teach people spinning and weaving through the bhandars. Today we do try to teach people how to ply the charkha. But if khadi is to reach every home we must teach people ginning, carding and all the other processes. I do not much care for buying slivers. One should make slivers oneself. Today machine-made slivers are used. The practice must stop. Everyone should card his own cotton, make his own slivers and then spin. Only then can we say that we have adopted khadi. I have become a lover of hand-carding. Even inferior cotton such as *mathia*, hand-carded, can yield yarn of the fineness of 20 counts. The mills cannot produce yarn of a count higher than six or seven from this cotton. I prefer hand-carding to carding with a bow. It does not expose one to the risk either of consumption or asthma. Even a queen in her palace can easily take

this up. Even children and old men can card and make slivers. It is a simple and easy activity.

Today we must not think of spreading khadi by carrying it about on our backs and hawking it. We have not to give anyone ready-made khadi. We shall say, 'take this charkha, take this cotton, card it, make slivers and spin. Get the weaver in your village to weave it and then wear it.' I would in fact say that the khadi bhandars not only should not have khadi, they should not even have slivers and cotton. If people demand them we may give them cotton and the necessary tools and arrange for spinning to be taught. You will then see that the country will have no dearth of khadi or cloth as such. Cloth is frequently rationed and still cloth famine persists. I can remove it. If I was made responsible for it, I could provide cloth to everyone. I am going to Bengal. If they do as I desire, I shall see that there will be no cloth famine there.

You ask if you should provide khadi for hospitals. For where will the patients find yarn, how will they be able to spin? Similarly there are the Congress committees, the district boards, the banks. Then there are exhibitions, Congress meetings and so on, which require khadi worth thousands of rupees. Where can they all find the yarn? Would it not be right to give them khadi without insisting on yarn being tendered? I say that if these institutions cannot tender yarn they should give up the idea of khadi. They can borrow the yarn, they can make their members spin or they can obtain it from friends. I want to allow no exceptions to the rule. I have taken in hand the nature cure clinic of Dinshaw Mehta at Poona. Do you think I can use mill cloth there? I said to Dinshaw, 'I shall give you my yarn and you can buy khadi in exchange.' Everyone will have to give yarn, be he a raja or a maharaja.

The yarn clause allows for buying yarn from the neighbours, but this is against my intention. I do not want this. What I have said is that people may take yarn from their neighbour but they may not pay for it. We do not take things from our friends by paying for them. That would be commerce. If we do not have something we take it from the neighbours and later when we get it ourselves, we return it. As a good neighbour he may not take it back but in any case no payment is involved.

There is in the resolution also the provision for one's servant doing the spinning. It is the same as the members of one's family spinning and one tendering the yarn in one's name. But it would not be right if someone were to employ a servant specifically for spinning because that is the same as buying the yarn. If a servant employed for

household work spends a little time on spinning for his employer we can have no objection. At the Times of India office, Bombay, they wanted some khadi. They came to me and asked, 'Where shall we find the yarn?' I said, 'You have so many peons and workers in your office who do nothing but paste addresses. Allow them an hour or two every day for spinning. Teach them the art. And use the yarn so produced to buy khadi.'

I suggested spinning clubs being organized in cities. But I see a different meaning has been put upon what I had said. The Club at Bombay became an agency for the sale of yarn. Workers are employed who spin for wages and then people buy the yarn to procure their khadi from the bhandars. This is to murder truth. What I had said was that since large cities are too cramped and people have to live in very small rooms where there is no space for spinning or keeping the charkha or carding, clubs should be organized in various localities and in the precincts of khadi bhandars where people could go to card, make slivers and spin.

This could remedy the lack of space for spinning. Also it would be easier to arrange for instruction in spinning. But the clubs that have been started are of a totally different kind and they should be discontinued. We should not leave hold of truth. We must not deceive ourselves. We must give up the lure of selling khadi. We should now develop an interest in teaching khadi. If this results in the sale of khadi stopping we should not mind it. But the khadi of my conception can only prosper by this means.

You ask what should be the character of the Bombay khadi bhandar now. I myself am anxious to make my idea clear. In the first place we must shift the bhandar from a central market like Kalabadevi. We should take it to a suburb such as Dadar or Vile [Parle], where we can find enough space. The work of the bhandar also should undergo change. The manager will not try and persuade people to buy khadi. He will sit in the bhandar and spin on the *takli*. His co-workers will do the same. He will talk to the customers and try to explain to them the new khadi policy. If someone is willing to learn spinning he will teach him. He will not use ready-made slivers. He will teach all the processes. beginning with hand-carding. He will also gather at the bhandar some artisans. He will have looms operated where the yarn spun can be woven. He will have charkhas and other implements manufactured. He will repair the implements of the customers. The surroundings of the bhandar will be clean and the air

will be pure. There will be cleanliness. The charkhas will be in proper order and the atmosphere will be congenial for spinning. It will also have facilities for selling khadi. The Bombay bhandar up to now has been a clearing-house. It will still be that though in a different way. So long we only worried about what the Bombay customers wanted. If a handkerchief of a particular design was in vogue we told the production centres to make such handkerchiefs. If it was a sari with a particular border we told the Andhra people to make such saris. We even used to send representatives of the bhandars to those far away places to explain what exactly was wanted. We took up printing saris at Masulipatnam. It revived a dying craft. But if we do not now change our method of work the same thing will be the undoing of khadi. Now the centres will have to meet the needs of the areas around them. They have to produce things with that end in view. In the matter of designs they do not have to follow the directives of the Bombay bhandar. Bombay will have to accept whatever varieties and designs are left and be content with that. It is no part of our duty to provide to the cities the designs they want. Our duty is only to teach how people can produce things that they want.

That is the reason why I want the bhandars to be shifted from a central bazaar. Take some place on the outskirts of the city which is attractive. Create beauty in wilderness. It is said that the English once had their factory on the banks of the Tapti on the outskirts of Surat, from where they started running the country. They wanted to suppress the khadi and other village industries of India. Our mission will be to revive them. If some stray artisan happens to come to you, put him at a loom. Start the work of carding, spinning and such other activities. Let a model village grow up there. Make the khadi bhandar an attractive centre. Those who seek peace from the noise of Bombay will go there on Saturdays if not every day. They will buy their khadi and learn carding. If you make things you need in the village way the city folk may also find an interest in such activity.

If you talk about our responsibility to the people of Bombay I shall ask: ‘What responsibility?’ If the people of Bombay continue their old interest, what shall we do? Will you be able to interest yourselves in horse-racing, gambling, cinema, theatre, dancing? What can you do about people who want to pursue these? Yes, if they want the facility to live in the style of a village we may invite them. That will be doing our duty. You say that in a city like Bombay where people are politically conscious we can make khadi a success only if

we are able to persuade them that the success of our political work depends on our pursuing this new khadi policy. I shall only answer that khadi has value to me only if it is a symbol of ahimsa. An American once said that it was not words that grew but it was the work. Your success will depend on what kind of khadi bhandars and what kind of surroundings for them you can create with your faith and *tapascharya*.

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, January 1946

701. KASTURBA NIDHI'S POLICY REGARDING EDUCATION

November 28, 1945

Whatever work regarding education is carried on under the Kasturba Nidhi, whether it is for children or adults, should be given only through manual labour and handicrafts.

Trained teachers will be required to carry on this work properly. Arrangements should be made to give training to these teachers in registered training schools.

So long as such teachers are not ready, education can be imparted through manual labour and handicrafts but instruction in handicrafts should also be given in a proper way.

The teachers should study the literature of Nayee Talim and carry on their work on those lines as far as possible till they get properly trained.

From a copy of the Hindi: Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

702. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

SEVAGRAM,
November 28, 1945

CHI. VANUDI,

I got your letter. I have no doubt about your purity, nor about your firmness of mind. But if you yourself have some doubt, however faint, regarding the propriety of what you do, you should carefully think over it and change your habits suitably. Suppose, for instance, you tell somebody in jest that you are married and have a few children, and add that your mother-in-law is dead. Such jokes are

permissible, but the dangers in them are easy to see. That is why even in the highest circles we still hear criticism of certain things that take place in theatres. If a married man acts the part of Rama in a play and a woman married to another man that of Sita, how far is that desirable for both? It also requires to be seriously considered what kind of effect such Rama and Sita produce on the spectators. That carried away by the modern trend we may do or like improper things or see others doing that is altogether a different matter. I do not wish to dwell at length on this, nor have I the time for that. But you are a thoughtful girl and I have, therefore, put before you in a few words an important question for you to think over.

I hope you keep good health, and trust that all of you devote yourselves to keeping the Arogya Bhavan clean in every possible manner. You have with you many visitors now. Use the services of them all in cleaning up the place. I am trying to send Munnalal there. I expect he will arrive there in about a week.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I had Zohra's letter and I tore it up.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5796. Also C.W. 3019. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

703. LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA P. KAMDAR

SEVAGRAM,
November 28, 1945

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA,

Though you have become the mother of so many children, you are still as foolish as ever. If I cannot write to you owing to pressure of work and ask somebody else to do so, what is wrong in that? You did a good thing in giving me all the news of the family. Do come when I settle down again in the Ashram and stay there as long as you wish. Bring your son with you. Perhaps you do not know that in Poona Valji[1] used to come every day to read books to me. I would quietly spin while he read to me for half an hour or three quarters of an hour.

[1] Valji Govindji Desai

I hope your health is good. Now I am going on a tour of Bengal and Madras and am not likely to return before February.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI HARI-ICHCHHABEHN P. KAMDAR

KHADIA POLE

RAJMAHAL ROAD

BARODA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7475. Also C.W. 4921. Courtesy: Hari-ichchha P. Kamdar

704. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,

November 28, 1945

CHI. KANTI,

I got your postcard, as also the report sent by you. The latter seems to have been drafted by you. If so, your English is weak. Ordinarily this should not count as a deficiency in one, but in India it is; for we take pride, though we ought not to, in being able to speak and write a foreign language correctly. I am a lover of all languages and take scrupulous care to write correctly, but I am more eager to convey my meaning and am not scared of making mistakes. Were it not so, I would never have been able to speak in Hindi and other languages. Having said this, my criticism of the report is that its English is not correct. I have no time to revise it and return it. The report itself is good and, therefore, I show it to everybody who is interested in it. I am now sending it to Jajuji to read.

I shall not feel sorry that you will be breaking up an organization which you have brought into being. Your leaving it will amount to breaking it. I only hope that your action will not be an expression of the rashness and anger which I have observed in your nature. Sometimes it becomes one's dharma to humbly cling to the organization one has set up, despite the co-workers' coolness towards oneself. I have been doing this from a much earlier age than you are at present and it has certainly benefited me. Endurance is a virtue worth cultivating. You are a student of the *Gita*. Ponder the profound truths contained in it. After cautioning you thus, I unreservedly accept your decision. If you teach the students who come to you and take

more intimate interest in their lives, you may perhaps be able to create another organization with their help. In future lay stress from the very beginning on all the processes relating to cotton. I have come to realize from daily experience that this is of the utmost importance.

My good wishes for the result of your examination.

The tour starts on the 30th. Manilal arrived last evening and Devdas left for Delhi yesterday morning. He had come in connection with Kasturba Fund work.

Blessings to Chi. Saru and Shanti.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7380. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

705. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
November 28, 1945

CHI. DINSHAW,

I have your letter as also Jehangir's.

I do wish to offer you some suggestions but that will be when I can spare the time. For the present I shall say only this much. Give full encouragement to those who are engaged in the cleaning activity. You must also pay as much attention to it as you can while doing your own work. You will have already decided to dispose of all the furniture. You can take it to Bombay and sell it there to recover the price or if you want me to dispose of it you will let me know, so that I may make arrangements from wherever I am. We shall not sell it at a throw-away price.

Bhai Munnalal will be going there in six or seven days. He will take part in the cleaning activity. I think he can keep the accounts and do for you whatever shopping there is to be done. He is well versed in all the three things and has done them all before. I understand that Mr. Mange is looking after the accounts and shopping. I wish to keep him entirely out of all this. I have no doubt that he should train himself for something else. He should become a naturopath. He should also educate himself. If you wish that Munnalal should not go there in my absence or if you have any other plans, you can send a

wire to the Ashram. It is necessary that what we wish to start[1] from January 1 should be started at home as early as possible.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

706. LETTER TO SATYADEV

SEVAGRAM,
November 28, 1945

CHI. SATYADEV,

I was glad to have your letter. I would like to have a copy of the order you have mentioned. I just cannot agree to what you say. I think there is some misunderstanding. You had better ask Jawaharlal also and write to me at Calcutta. There I shall be staying with Satis Babu at Khadi Pratishthan, Sodepur.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

707. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Q. The object of the constructive programme is stated to be the preparation of the people for a non-violent political order. Is this definition correct? Or will it be better to define such a social and political order as one in which no one would be able to exploit the labour of another?

A. Your definition is correct but it is incomplete. In what way it is incomplete will be explained in the answer to your next question.

Q. If my definition is correct I feel such a social and political order can be achieved theoretically even by our making the largest use of machinery. In that case is it necessary to have the maximum number of village industries for the non-violent political order? If so why?

A. Non-violence cannot be divided into compartments. Non-violence is an inherent attribute of man or, at any rate, it should be an attribute of man during his waking hours. Devotion to non-violence is the highest expression of his conscious state. If we thus conceive ahimsa we should satisfy all our necessities by the labour of our

[1] Nature Cure Clinic at Uruli Kanchan

hands. If we do not do this we shall have to depend upon other powers and as long as such condition persists we shall be unable to realize a state of fearless-ness. Another danger in making more and more use of machinery is that we have to make great efforts for the protection of it, that is to say,

we shall have to keep an army as is being done today elsewhere in the world. The fact is that even if there is no danger of aggression from outside we shall be slaves to those who will be in control of the big machinery. Take the case of the atom bomb. Those nations who have atom bombs are feared even by their friends. If we take a wise view, we shall be saved from the working of machinery.

Q. One of the reasons given in favour of hand-spinning is that it makes one self-sufficient. Can one who is self-sufficient serve society better than one who is dependent on others? Do you mean to say that there is such a connection between self-sufficiency and social service that the more one is self-sufficient the more is one's capacity for social service?

A. In order to satisfy this doubt also we will have to keep in mind the non-violent outlook because truth and non-violence form the foundation of the order of my conception. Our first duty is that we should not be a burden on society, i.e., we should be self-sufficient. That means self-sufficiency by itself is a kind of service. After becoming self-sufficient we shall use our spare time for the service of others. If all become self-sufficient no one will have any difficulty. In that case no one will be required to undertake service of others. But we have not yet reached that stage and therefore we have to think of social service. Even if we succeed in realizing complete self-sufficiency, man being a social animal we shall have to accept service in some form or other. That is, man is as much dependent on others as he is dependent on himself. When dependence becomes necessary in order to keep society in good order it is no longer dependence but becomes co-operation. There is a fragrance in co-operation and there is no one weak or strong among the co-operators. Everyone is equal. There is a feeling of helplessness in dependency. Members of a family are as much self-dependent as interdependent, but there is no feeling of mine or thine. That is why they are called co-operators. Similarly when we take a society, a nation or the entire mankind as a family all men become co-operators. If we can conceive a picture of such co-operation we shall find that there is no need of depending upon lifeless machines. Or we shall have to use them the least, not the most, and therein lies the real security and self-protection of society.

Q. You lay more emphasis on spinning than on agriculture. Is there any political reason behind it? Or is it because people cannot take to farming as easily as they can to spinning?

A. I do not make such divisions as social, economic and political. What is political is also social and economic. One includes the others. It is true that we make and have to make such divisions for clarity of understanding. One of the reasons why I have not laid stress on agriculture is that even my knowledge of it is almost nil. How will I be able to enlighten you if I put emphasis on it? It is not so in the case of the charkha. I have acquired enough knowledge of it. Secondly under foreign rule the charkha had died out; it had been destroyed. Agriculture can never be destroyed but its form has been so changed that it has increased the slavery of the people. The third reason for putting emphasis on the charkha is that skill of hand has a very small place in agriculture. There is hardly any other industry in which the hands and the fingers are so much used as they are in the various processes that go to make khadi. The fourth reason is that foreign power first takes hold of the land and through it controls the other things. Therefore Government help is very necessary for improvement in agriculture. For these and other similar reasons I have laid more emphasis on hand-spinning.

Q. One of the features of the material development of human society appears to be that man is tending to move more and more from self-sufficiency to dependency. Don't you think this tendency is not right and that there will be revival of the opposite tendency?

A. I take this question to mean that society is advancing towards machinery. If I have understood the question right, my answer is that society must get rid of its slavery to the machine. By being slaves to the machine our slavery to our senses and their activity also increases immensely.

Q. Are you confident that the constructive programme will be able to achieve its object during your lifetime by mere propaganda? Don't you think taking into consideration human frailties (lust, anger, greed, infatuation, pride and jealousy) that there will be need for "legislative aid"[1] to make the people take to the constructive programme on any wide scale especially in this machine age? Will there be any violation of the principle of non-violence in taking such help from the elected representatives of the people? If so how?

A. I have said many a time that we will have to take help from the Government on our own terms. Not only that, we will have to take help from the whole world There was a time when I felt that we could have only the barest minimum of help from the legislators in the matter of constructive programme. But now I have come to realize

that if the representatives of the people go into the legislatures we can secure their help. Along with this we must bear in mind that we cannot appreciate the value of the constructive programme properly if we cannot carry it on in adverse circumstances. Other people of course can't. I can say dispassionately but from experience that the strength of the people has increased in proportion to the progress of the constructive programme. If we can make the constructive programme universal and get it implemented through the people, then swaraj is in our hands.

SEVAGRAM, November 29, 1945

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, December 1945

708. LETTER TO J. S. HOYLAND

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

November 29, 1945

MY DEAR HOYLAND[1],

It gladdened me to see your letter after such a long time and made me happy to find that Prof. Privat[2] and his wife[3] were with you. Of course I remember the communion wehad at Woodbrooke, now as you remind me, fourteen years ago. I suppose Woodbrooke has grown during this what may be called fairly long lapse of time, and I wonder how the 'School for the Imbeciles' we all visited[4] is faring.

My love to all. I am looking forward to the visit of Horace and Agatha.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

JOHN S. HOYLAND, ESQ.
WOODBROOKE SETTLEMENT
BIRMINGHAM 29

From a photostat: C.W. 4512. Courtesy: Woodbrooke College and Mrs. Jessie Hoyland

[1] A Quaker and member of the India Conciliation Group along with Horace Alexander and Agatha Harrison; was in India for sixteen years teaching at Hislop College, Nagpur; afterwards taught at Quaker College Woodbrooke.

[2] Edmond and Yvonne Privat

[3] *ibid*

[4] At Woodbrooke on October 18, 1931; vide "Speech at Birmingham Meeting", 18-10-1931

709. LETTER TO UTTAMCHAND SHAH

November 29, 1945

CHI. UTTAMCHAND,

I have such deep faith in you that I am sure that you will succeed in your new undertaking, too, and that the work of the Charkha Sangh under its new policy will progress in Gujarat at least. Remember that it is your duty to take care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9443

710. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI[1]

[Before *November 30, 1945*][2]

Arun is a good boy but he is not up to the mark. He does not even know additions, though he talks of additions, subtractions, multiplications and divisions. It was only when I tested him yesterday that I could understand the report given to me by Valji. But it is not his fault. It is the parents' fault and now that of us all who are here. I am the first among them. Am I not?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4960

711. FOREWORD TO "GANDHIAN CONSTITUTION FOR FREE INDIA"

Perhaps the expression "Gandhian Constitution" is not a fitting title for Principal Agrawal's[3] pages. It may be acceptable as a convenient and compact title. The framework is really Principal Agrawal's, based on his study of my writings. He has been interpreting them for a number of years. And as he is anxious not to

[1] This was written at the back of Arun's letter to his parents, i. e., the addressees.

[2] From the reference to Arun, who was with Gandhiji in Sevagram till he left for Sodepur on November 30, 1945

[3] Shriman Narayan Agrawal

misinterpret them in any way he would publish nothing without my seeing it. This is both an advantage and a disadvantage. The advantage is obvious. The disadvantage lies in the reader mistaking the particular writing being my view in every detail. Let me then warn him against making any such mistake. If I were to commit myself to every word appearing in these pages, I might as well write the thing myself. Though I have endeavoured to read the constitution twice, with as much attention as I was able to bestow on it during my other engagements, I could not undertake to check every thought and every word of it. Nor would my sense of propriety and individual freedom permit me to commit any such atrocity. All, therefore, I am able to say is that the brochure contains ample evidence of the care bestowed upon it by the author to make it as accurate as he could. There is nothing in it which has jarred on me as inconsistent with what I would like to stand for.

The author was good enough to make such alterations as I thought were necessary.

The word "constitution" must not mislead the reader into thinking that the author has made any profession to give him a complete constitution. He has made it perfectly clear in the beginning pages that he has only laid down broad lines to indicate what a constitution of my conception would be. I regard Principal Agrawal's to be a thoughtful contribution to the many attempts at presenting India with constitutions. The merit of his attempt consists in the fact that he has done what for want of time I have failed to do.

M. K. GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA, November 30, 1945

Gandhian Constitution for Free India

712. LETTER TO MANAGING COMMITTEE OF THE TALIMI SANGH

November 30, 1945

Yesterday I went to see the Talimi Sangh hostel. You know Hoshiaribehn[1] who stays in the Ashram. I have sent her son Gajraj to your school. He insisted that I should see his school. Even yesterday morning he came and said: "You will come, won't you?" I said: "What shall I do at your school? I would rather see the place where you sleep." I had intended to send his mother too. Anyway, I went there after my morning walk to keep my promise. I was pained by what I saw there. I noticed filth and mismanagement which should not have been there. I had not wanted to spend much time there, but I could not bear what I saw there and spent half an hour or threequarters of an hour explaining things to Pandey.

I found there were puddles of water in front of the verandah of the children's hospital. It offended the eye. The children wash themselves right there. This breeds mosquitoes and so much of water is wasted. We should collect the water in a tub. Or we may wash beside the trees near by. If there were a thousand boys it would be a disaster. Going through the room I found the same thing in front of the verandah on the other side.

Then I went to the children's dormitory. Even at the entrance there was a lot of dirt. I went in. Mats were not properly kept. I had the bedding of a boy unrolled. It was very dirty. The bed-sheet was torn. It was stitched in a couple of places, but very crudely. The other tears had not been attended to. They should have been patched. If the sheet was too badly torn it could have been doubled and stitched. Many times in jail I had got mattresses made that way. They are warm and strong. The cotton of the mattress had collected into big lumps. It was not warm. That cotton should have been taken out and carded again. Several pieces of cloth were discovered from under the mattress. They were very dirty. I would have kept those pieces clean and used them for patching. The mat was very dirty. It should have been washed.

[1] Niece of Balvantsinha. According to Balvantsinha Gajraj had complained to Gandhiji that Talimi Sangh was a very dirty place.

I examined the floor. It is used for sleeping but is in a very bad state. Pandey said cow-dung was not available. It is better if cow-dung is available. But one can do without it. Where was there cow-dung in South Africa? We managed with earth. There was a wooden shelf fixed to the wall for keeping things. When I touched it my hand was covered with dust. I wiped my hand on Pandey's hand. It also got covered with dust. One boy had put his ink-pot on the mat. Where else was the poor boy to put it? But there was no method about it. I examined each and every pen and nib. I saw also the ink-pots. That is my way. That should also be the way of Nayee Talim. Everything was wrong from my point of view. These are small things. But small things make up big things. It does not required money. It requires a keen vision, it requires art. It is our duty to teach these. It is the purpose of Nayee Talim. It is the teacher's fault if it is not done. It is your fault. I would say that it is my fault. After all, the responsibility lies with me. What is the point in starting a thing and then giving it up? If someone says that in this way he can look after only one boy, I would say admit only one boy. Do not admit more. An element of untruth enters if we admit more boys and cannot look after them.

As I came out, I noticed the sacking you have hung up along the verandah. For this I must quarrel with you. A verandah is designed to admit air and sunlight. By fixing sacking around it you shut out both. And the room at the rear becomes absolutely useless. If you say it can't be helped because the boys are too many, I would say that we should take only as many boys as we can accommodate. We should not take more.

Pandey's mother Kodamba was in very dirty clothes. She looked like a maid servant. She did not even know Hindustani. And she has been with us for two months. Even Pandey's own clothes were not quite all right. The neck was open and so also the cuffs. We are labourers. Our shirts must have half sleeves. Brass or glass buttons are useless for us.

I had a brief discussion with Asha Devi[1]. But I am writing in detail because these matters, though small, are very important. And failing in these points, we depart too far from our objective.

I have read this again. It seems to be all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 5888. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Ashadevi Aryanayakum

713. LETTER TO MOHAN SINGH THAKUR

SEVAGRAM,
November 30, 1945

CHI. MOHAN SINGH,

I wanted to have a long talk with you. But I am sorry that I could not.[1] While I am dictating this, Sushilabehn informs me that you have repaired the pump. I knew that you would do it. I knew your great ability for mechanical things. Develop it fully and if any such work comes up in the Ashram continue doing it. Go on observing the power of the spinning-wheel.

I had noticed that your help had become inevitable in the camp run by Kanubhai. I realized that you had culinary talent as well when I saw the bread and the biscuits you made with tomato juice in an ordinary oven. I wish you would develop this talent too and give its full benefit to the Ashram.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 10430. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

714. SPEECH AT MAHILA ASHRAM[2]

WARDHA,
November 30, 1945

I am not going to Bengal to serve four or five persons, but I am going to Bengal to serve crores of persons.

Referring to garba dance which the girls executed, Gandhiji said:

No doubt garba dance is famous in the world but this is no time for such dance.

He said that he was going to Bengal to serve humanity and wished that the girls would shower blessings on him and pray for his successful programme.

Referring to the sari spun by the inmates of the Mahila Ashram from the yarn produced in non-stop spinning during last Gandhi Jayanti, Gandhiji said that he would not like to take the sari with him.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 1-12-1945

[1] *V*ide"Letter to Krishnachandra", 27-11-1945

[2] According to the source the inmates of the Ashram entertained Gandhiji with songs and folk-dances and also presented a khadi sari, dhotis and a beautiful garland made out of khadi.

715. RATIONAL APPROACH TO NON-VIOLENCE [1]

According to me what the All-India Congress Committee meant is clear. If constructive work is not carried on keeping non-violence in mind and accepting it rationally, India will not achieve swaraj as a result of it. A lot of work always went on in our villages but it was not informed by the knowledge and the vision of non- violence. So all we achieved was that we did not become as bankrupt financially as we are today. And when foreign invasion started, we abandoned the village industries one after another. Work for eradication of untouchability, uplift of Adivasis, equal rights for women, imparting training and bridging the gulf between the poor and the rich and so on had never been taken up. When we realized that to achieve real freedom the only royal way was that of non-violence and truth, our range of vision extended to the whole of India and beyond it to the whole world, and despite India being a slave country its fame spread in the world. I am firmly of opinion that if, as stated in the question, we forget all other aspects of non-violence except non-killing of human beings, non-violence will not remain non-violence, it will become bereft of truth, its universality will be lost and we shall never achieve swaraj. If ahimsa includes destruction of others' property, boycotting Government servants, going underground and so on, then, we can neither awaken the crores of people nor give them the correct training in fearlessness. If we want to work non-violently, then it is necessary to accept the restrictions laid down by me. But if we do away with these restrictions then there will be no other alternative for us but to abandon non-violence and to train the people for violence. That this way is totally futile for us has been proved by this barbarous war. At any rate by openly accepting the way of violence we save ourselves from deceiving our own people and the world at large.

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, November 1945

[1] This was in reply to the question : "How far is the inference correct that in trying to make non-violence practical and progressive, people could arrest others or run away, go underground and destroy property but not kill or hurt anyone ?" It was to make this point clear that the All-India Congress Committee deliberately added the words "accepting non-violence rationally".

716. SPEECH ON NAYEE TALIM[1]

November 1945

Nayee Talim means teaching through craft. That basic craft has to be selected in the light of the conditions and produce of the region. For instance, it would not be proper to have khadi as a means of teaching in a region where cotton does not grow, but has to be imported for the purpose.

If Nayee Talim can be proved to be self-supporting through khadi, then the same thing can be applied to other industries too. What I mean by making education self-sustaining is this. Just as the expense on food and clothing for the children studying in Government schools is borne by their parents, similarly, in Nayee Talim schools, parents will have to bear the expenses on food and clothing of their children. But the expenses incurred in the schools of today on books and fees will be saved.

There should be no place for books in Nayee Talim. Initially some expenses may have to be incurred on cotton, carding-bow, and takli and so on. Afterwards the only expenses will be on the teachers' salaries, stationery, and the salaries of peons, etc., if they have to be engaged.

Suppose, there are thirty boys in one school. They will handle all the processes right from collecting cotton from the field to spinning and weaving the yarn into cloth. Through every process the teacher will educate them so that their intellect sharpens day by day. This will result in students' making ever new discoveries in the methods employed in the khadi industry which will make it more productive and profitable.

The cloth produced by students will be purchased by their parents at any price. It will be the teacher's duty to see that through his students he creates an awareness in their parents that they may not even touch foreign and mill-made cloth. We should also see that an atmosphere of self-sufficiency in cloth and khadi is created. We shall have to create an atmosphere of our own. For bringing khadi to the stage it has reached today, we had to make efforts and create the climate. As a result no one now can root out khadi. The same thing can be said of Nayee Talim also. If the teacher is unable to create the necessary atmosphere, Nayee Talim cannot become self-reliant and cannot make headway. If he succeeds in creating the atmosphere and sharpening the intellect of the students, then the entire expenditure from beginning to end on Nayee Talim can be met from the sale of

[1] This appeared under the title : "Self-reliance in Nayee Talim".

cloth produced by students.

Students will be equipped for earning when they leave our schools. We do not promise them jobs. The Government also does not promise employment to students who are trained at enormous expense in Government schools. But our students will be brighter than the students of Government schools and will easily find occupations for themselves.

We must remember that when atmosphere had to be created for Government schools, they had to put in considerable effort in spite of the way being clear. The atmosphere we have to create is for revival. That which has been destroyed has to be revived in a new way and we look upon it as a peaceful way of attaining swaraj. It should be easy to do this. We do not find it easy as we have not gone to the villages with the correct attitude and have made no real attempts at all. Now we have Nayee Talim. If it does not work a miracle and develop power, then what is it good for?

We do not realize the full significance of boys and girls being entrusted to our care from their childhood and undergoing craft-based education in our schools for seven years or more. And the modern education which is being imparted to us teaches us that schooling can never become self-supporting. This creates some confusion in our minds. It is my firm belief that if Nayee Talim cannot become self-supporting, then the teachers do not understand what it is. In my view, amongst other characteristics self-reliance is the most important characteristic of Nayee Talim.

If this is so for the education of boys and girls, then adult education must also be self-supporting. If we believe that it is difficult to convince adults about the value of education, then I have to say that this is nothing but an old illusion. And the teaching of the three R's in adult education is no part of our Nayee Talim. The meaning of adult education is that we will give them, through their own language, all-round education of a pure and socially useful life. And if they do not easily become self-supporting, in my view there is some serious defect in that education. We should not also forget that complete co-operation should be the basis from the very beginning. Those who know the full meaning of co-operation will raise no doubts about self-reliance.

QUESTION: Today only those students go to Government schools whose parents can pay for their food and clothing. We expect that under Nayee Talim, all the children of a village will go to school. There may be many among them who do not have the necessary food and clothing in their homes. What is the responsibility of Nayee Talim in such cases?

A. I have just stated the ideal that parents will provide for food and clothes. Even now boys do eat and wear clothes. The parents will pay to school whatever they spend on their children's food and clothing. The diet we give will have a scientific basis. The expense will be a little more because of the milk. That expense will be met by the school. But when we persuade the parents to bear the expense on food, then they will pay for milk too. Those who are very poor will be very few; but if they are really poor then we can certainly bear the entire expense.

I shall not worry about what clothes the girls and boys should wear because my ideal for them is a loin-cloth or clothes that a baby wears. It may be a brief kuchchha. We can easily make it. When girls develop breasts something will have to be done to cover them. The answer is a piece of cloth of the kind that is in vogue in the South. It is a different matter what provision is to be made in winters. You may not provide them any wraps but you must give them enough to wear. All this will be our property—the boys and girls of the same age group will wear them. One thing should be kept in mind, that these boys and girls will stay with us most of the time. We can easily bear all this expense. According to us the clothes for the poor and the rich will be the same. If the clothes are clean and of the right size, they will look as neat and tidy as naked children look.

Q. (a) Will there be an increase in the demand for cloth if an atmosphere of self-reliance in cloth is generated?

(b) Even if parents want to purchase cloth produced by their children, do they have the means to pay the price that we may ask for it?

A. Any price must of course mean reasonable price. This merely means that those who do not even touch khadi today, will certainly buy the cloth made by their children if we sell it at a reasonable price. There will be no question of making a large profit on it. The price of every item will be different but by and large the difference between the cost price and the selling price will be almost the same. Even if the price of fancy goods is higher, still comparatively it will be much cheaper. Those who buy them will pay the price willingly. When self-reliance in cloth is achieved, everyone will accept khadi and will do so willingly. Then Nayee Talim will have reached its peak. Not one will even care for me if this happens during my lifetime.

All my answers apply to the present time, the present conditions.

Q. Training of teachers is a vast field that we have before us. In what way are we to practise self-reliance in this training.

A. Your question is, how can those who have come here to be teachers become self-reliant? If young students can become self-reliant, the teachers must become self-reliant. The question is only one of bearing the expense of one's own food, clothing and education. My point is that if teachers themselves cannot become self-reliant, how can they make the students self-reliant? In fact well-to-do persons who have come here not for salary but for service, will not need any supervision. They will learn all occupations attentively and carefully. They will not waste anything because of carelessness. Such people will be able to meet their entire expenses from whatever occupation they undertake. Your curriculum ought to be such that teachers and students can earn enough for their expenses while they learn. You too will be put to the test in preparing such a curriculum. I like this question very much because it is a good sign that you have raised this question in the very beginning. Aryanayakum has written: "I have understood and agree with it." This means that I also should have the same thing in mind that he has.

If your syllabus is not based on the above lines, let me know. Perhaps I may be able to make it with your help. I go so far as to say that even wood should not be available free of charge. Bear in mind that we want to work in co-operation. We also want to learn true co-operation. Hence the fruits of everyone's intelligence and skill should go into one pool. As I go on writing the subject becomes more and more interesting to me. I become more and more confirmed in my belief that self-reliance is the key to our success. This is proved by long experience.

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, November 1945

717. LETTER TO KALIDAS DEV SHARMA

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA,

December 1, 1945

BHAI KALIDAS,

The reply to your letter is given below.

The International Brotherhood League[1] should be preserved in its essence. Those who sincerely believe that helping the Congress is as good as helping the Brotherhood League should help the Congress.

[1] This was founded by Krishna Nath Sarma.

Look at the fate of the Communist Party.[1] There cannot possibly be any opposition if your League works for the Congress according to the views of the Congress. That Asia is for Asians is a cardinal truth. To tell the foreigners to quit Asia is the clear cry of an anguished heart.

This is not meant for publication.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8232

718. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA,
December 1, 1945

BHAI SHRIMAN,

I am sending today your booklet[2] and my Foreword[3]. I finished everything at 9.30 last night. In between I only took time off for eating and spinning. Let me know if any changes are necessary in the Foreword.

Let me know if you do not agree with the changes I have made in your booklet.

You will see that I have left the place of the Panchayats at the taluka and district level rather vague. They are only advisory bodies. Why should they be given a place in the legal framework? Even the necessity for their existence is a matter of doubt. When the villages really come to life, the need for advisory bodies should be less. The Provincial Panchayat would attend to everything and would get things done through talukas and districts. If you think there is any snag in this line of thinking let me know. I have put in as much hurried reading as I could.

It is worth I considering if Pakistan and the Princes can have any place in my conception [of India]. Remember that the Gandhian plan can be successful only if it can be achieved through non-violent means.

Blessings from
BAPU

[1] Communist members of the A. I. C. C. were at the time facing an inquiry for indiscipline.

[2] Gandhian Constitution for Free India

[3] *V*ide ”Forword to “Gandhian Constitution for Free India”

[PS.]

I have sent the booklet and the Foreword by separate registered book-post.

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 308

719. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA,
December 1, 1945

BHAI JAJUJI,

I have gone through circular 12 and Dhwaja Babu's letter. I am of the opinion that the fund that we have will be enough for the training in handicrafts and adult education. If both the activities go on together the expenses will be lessened. These funds should not be made to cover the other five activities. This does not mean that we are not to pursue those five activities or that they are of secondary importance. We shall conduct them with a separate fund. If we think of all the seven activities we may not be able to deal with any one. I am therefore of the opinion that this fund should be earmarked only for the two activities. Even when the fund grows later on, it should be limited to only the two activities. Of course all this requires hard work and intelligence.

If necessary you may use this letter. I am returning the circular and Dhwaja Babu's letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

720. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS [1]

December 1, 1945

I know America and America knows me.[2] People in America who want messages do not really know me. You are prompting me to say something, but why do you not pay for my Harijan Fund?

[1] While he was on his way to Calcutta, a number of journalists had entered Gandhiji's compartment at Kharagpur and travelled with him till the train reached Mourigram.

[2] One of the Journalists had asked for "a message for America and American people"

Another journalist asked Mahatmaji: "Can we send what you said for publication?" Mahatmaji laughed and said:

Cook it, digest it and assimilate it. Use your journalistic sense and you will see what I have given you is something other than a stunt.

Questioned regarding his reactions to major questions of the day, Gandhiji said:

Great problems lie before us and as and when they arise, my views will be there.

He declined to commit himself further.

When one of the newspapermen queried him about his travel from Wardha, Gandhiji, with his proverbial fund of wit, retorted jokingly:

You have been travelling with me and if your journalistic instinct does not prompt you to answer that question, resign your post and take to something more useful in life.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 2-12-1945

721. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,

December 1, 1945

He began by referring to his attempts made since 1914, when he was in England to learn Bengali. He made some progress in it, though he could not keep up his Bengali studies. It was his ambition to be able to speak to the people of Bengal in Bengali so that he might be able to penetrate into their hearts. He was sorry he could not do so on the present occasion. He was also of the opinion that no Indian could call himself a full-fledged citizen of India unless he could speak to the people of the various provinces in their own tongues. Failing this proficiency in the different languages it was the duty of every Indian to learn at least Hindustani which alone could be the rashtrabhasha[1] of India.

He then proceeded to give the etiology of his present visit to Bengal. Ever since his release from prison, he had been anxious to visit Bengal but he could not do so owing to ill-health. Moreover, he did not want to visit Bengal unless he was sure that the authorities would welcome his visit and that there would be no restrictions on his movements. He was not prepared to submit to any restrictive orders on the one hand or on the other to offer civil disobedience against such orders under conditions now prevailing in the country. Even after the way for his visit to Bengal was clear it had to be postponed for several months on account of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel who

[1] National language

was in need of nature cure treatment and needed his (Gandhiji's) presence by his side. He was glad, however, that after all he had been able to come to Bengal.

Explaining next the object of his visit, Gandhiji said that it was purely to offer whatever consolation his presence in their midst could give to the victims of Bengal famine and to do whatever he could to relieve their distress. He had not come to take part in the politics of the province or in the forthcoming elections. In fact, as they all knew, he took very little interest in these things. Where his chief interest lay was too well known to need reiteration.

Mahatmaji then concluded after appealing to the people assembled to contribute their mite to the Harijan Fund as a token of their sympathy with the cause of the abolition of untouchability as also to ameliorate the condition of Harijans. Incidentally he mentioned that in this way he had collected 2 lakhs of rupees for the Harijans since his release. The proceeds of the autograph fees that he charged were earmarked for the Harijan Fund. Anyone by paying a fee of Rs. 5 could have his autograph. There could be no exemption on the ground of poverty because according to him the autograph-hunting was essentially a rich-man's hobby. Anyway, there was none poorer than the Harijans and consequently none had a right to cheat the Harijans out of the autograph fees which had been premortgaged to them.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 2-12-1945

722. DISCUSSION WITH IAN STEPHENS [1]

SODEPUR,

[On or after *December 1, 1945*][2]

GANDHIJI: Arguing on those lines, you will be able to understand the prejudice in South Africa too. The root cause—a false notion of preservation of the race and economic status—is common to both. The difference is only one of degree. If you apply concrete facts to individual cases it is half a dozen of one and six of the other. It is on a par with the racial prejudice here.

IAN STEPHENS: Oh, no. Here it is much less.

G. Yes, owing to the vast disparity in numbers. But take the case of the individual who actually suffers. His experience does not differ from that of the coloured men in South Africa or America.

[1] This report by Pyarelal appeared under the title "With an English Friend". Ian Stephens, a correspondent of The Statesman, Calcutta, was of the opinion that colour bar and racial segregation was at its worst in South Africa, and did not agree with Gandhiji that it was equally bad in America.

[2] Gandhiji reached Sodepur on December 1, 1945.

I. S. We, Englishmen are apt to forget that side of the question.

G. Habit becomes second nature. There may be no deliberate intention either.

I. S. In the Punjab and Delhi races mix much more freely than elsewhere. Was that due to the fact that the disparity in numbers was comparatively less there?

Gandhiji was of opinion that the contrast presented by Bengal in this respect was perhaps due to the violent spirit having manifested itself there on a much larger scale than in Delhi or in the Punjab. The Punjab did show the violent spirit in some measure. But it was not a patch upon Bengal. The daring of the Chittagong Armoury Raid was neither attempted nor duplicated anywhere else.

I. S. I have often thought over it, and it has always baffled me how these Bengali young men, so gentle by nature, have drifted into violence.

G. I have solved it for myself. They feel they have been unjustly libelled in the past. Lord Curzon harped on their softness. It soured them. So they say, 'We may not be wealthy, but surely we are not effeminate.' So they adopted this devious method and surpassed every other province in daring. They defied death, defied poverty and even public opinion. I have discussed this question of violence threadbare with so many terrorists and anarchists. It is terrible whether the Arab does it or the Jew. It is a bad outlook for the world if this spirit of violence takes hold of the mass mind. Ultimately in destroying itself it destroys the race.

I. S. And it has spread all over the world for the last two or three years.

G. Look at the latest ukase of Gen. MacArthur[1]. He has divided the entire Japanese nation into two categories, those whom he calls war criminals and those who do not come under that label. As I read it, it struck me that this was not the best way to introduce democracy among the Japanese—a race so proud, so sensitive, so highly organized along Western lines. They will do what the Italians did in Garibaldi's time on a much larger scale. You cannot deal with the human race on these lines. Whatever happens in one part of the world will affect the other parts. The world has so shrunk.

This evoked from the friend the observation that he did not think that the world had deteriorated so much theoretically as it might have during the last three years. Gandhiji agreed with him though his grounds, he remarked, were different.

I. S. My reason for that belief is that in spite of the fact that suffering, for

[1] Douglas MacArthur, U. S. Army General; Commander of the occupation forces in Japan after the War.

instance in Indonesia and elsewhere, has been appalling during the last three years, the human mind has not been equally warped.

G. My hope is based on a detached view of the situation. Whilst in detention in the Aga Khan Palace I had leisure to read and think. What struck me was that whilst practice showed deterioration, the mind of man had very much progressed. Practice has not been able to keep pace with the mind. Man has begun to say, 'This is wrong, that is wrong.' Whereas previously he justified his conduct, he now no longer justifies his own or his neighbour's. He wants to set right the wrong but does not know that his own practice fails him. The contradiction between his thought and conduct fetters him. His conduct is not governed by logic. Then, of course, there is my standing prediction in favour of non-violence that it will prevail—whatever man may or may not do. That keeps my optimism alive. Extensive personal experience too confirms my belief that non-violence is self-acting. It will have its way and overcome all obstacles irrespective of the shortcomings of the instruments. It makes no difference how we arrive at our conclusion, but it keeps us fresh and green.

The conversation next turned upon Gandhiji's pet theme of living up to 125 years. Gandhiji's visitor wanted to know how he managed to keep physically fit. Gandhiji replied that outwardly he owed his physical fitness to strict adherence to regular habits in eating, drinking and sleeping and to his partiality for nature cure principles which he had adopted strictly in life since 1901. Reminiscently he described how up till 1901 he used the medicine bottle but had almost thrown it away and for forty-five years he had lived more or less according to nature cure principles.

G. But, in a still greater measure, it is due to the practice of detachment of mind. By detachment I mean that you must not worry whether the desired result follows from your action or not, so long as your motive is pure, your means correct. Really, it means that things will come right in the end if you take care of the means and leave the rest to Him.

He based his belief on the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita which he had called his "dictionary of action".

The friend remarked on the close analogy between the teaching of the Bhagavad Gita and the thesis presented in Aldous Huxley's[1] Ends and Means. The mention of Aldous Huxley's name revived in Gandhiji's mind memories of old days

[1] British novelist and critic; in later life became increasingly drawn to Hindu philosophy.

about Aldous Huxley's father[1] whose writings he used to read during his student days in London in 1889.

I. S. But there is a physical side all the same?

G. Yes, only I attach greater importance to the mental. What you think you become. Thought is never complete unless it finds expression in action and action limits your thought. It is only when there is a perfect accord between the two that there is full, natural life.

I. S. But what about the legacy of one's past life? It cannot be written off the balance-sheet.

G. I have my answer for that. If my past conduct does not warrant the full span of life, no matter however correct my present life may be, I can still counteract the effect of past mistakes by attaining complete detachment between the mind and the body. Detachment enables one to overcome the effects of past faulty practice as well as handicaps of heredity and environment. Normally speaking, every deviation from the rule of nature, whether ignorant or wilful, e. g., anger, ill-temper, impatience, errors in conjugal life, exacts its toll. But there is this promise that if you have arrived at complete detachment you can rub out all these. "Except ye be born again, ye cannot have everlasting life." Conversely, you can have everlasting life if you are "born again". There is no hurdle placed before death. You can turn over a new leaf and begin life anew here and now; the past will not disturb its tenor provided you have completely severed yourself from it and its legacy by the axe of detachment.

On the previous occasion when this friend had visited Gandhiji, Gandhiji had done all the talking and the friend had listened. This time Gandhiji had intended that he would only speak in answer to questions and let the friend do the talking but the friend again had the better of his resolve. Gandhiji remarked, discomfited, at the end of their talk:

I admit defeat. After all you are a practised journalist.

I. S. I am only human.

Harijan, 7-4-1946

[1] Gandhiji presumably has in mind T. H. Huxley, biologist and writer, who was, however, the grandfather of Aldous.

723. DISCUSSION WITH MEMBER OF FRIENDS AMBULANCE UNIT

CALCUTTA,

[On or after *December 1, 1945*] [1]

F. A. U. MEMBER: However much we may want to be friendly the past tradition clings round your necks and drives you to desperation. It seems to me, that there is hardly any hope of giving to a young Bengali student an idea of the better side of Englishmen unless perhaps he is transferred to England. The atmosphere in India is so poisoned that I wonder if it would not be better for Englishmen not to attempt to come to work in India just now but to wait for better times.

GANDHIJI: Any friend, who is a real friend, and who comes in a spirit of service, not as a superior, is bound to be welcome. India, when she has come into her own will need all such assistance. The distrust of Englishmen, as you say, is there. It won't disappear even by transporting Indian students to England. You have got to understand it and live it down. It has its roots in history. The late Charlie Andrews and I were bed-fellows. There were scarcely a thought in our mind which we did not share. He even adopted Indian dress though sometimes with grotesque results. But even he could not escape suspicion. He was even dubbed "a spy". His was a very sensitive spirit. He suffered unspeakable anguish under these unmerited attacks and I was hard put to it to dispel the baseless distrust. 'If he is a spy, I am a spy,' I said to these critics. In the end C. F. A.'s spirit triumphed.

Pearson[2] was C. F. Andrews' disciple and friend. He too came in for his share of distrust. Then there is Stocks[3]. "If I am to serve India I must become an Indian," he said to himself and married a Christian Rajput. He was boycotted by the Rajputs. The Government distrusted him too in the beginning. But he has lived down the distrust of both

[1] Gandhiji reached Calcutta on December 1.

[2] W. W. Pearson, a British missionary worker in Bengal and for some time a teacher in Santiniketan

[3] Samuel Stokes, a British missionary and an associate of C. F. Andrews. He was a member of the Congress and courted arrest in 1920; became a Hindu to deliver the message of Jesus to the Hindus; changed his name to Satyanand, and took up work for the uplift of the Hill tribes at Kotgarh.

the Government and Indians.

If then, even a C. F. Andrews and a Stokes and others had to labour under distrust, for you to be distrusted may not be wondered at. So far Indians have known Englishmen only as members of the ruling race—supercilious when they were not patronizing. The man in the street makes no distinction between such an Englishman and a good, humble European, between the Empire-builder Englishman of the old type that he has known and the new type that is now coming into being, burning to make reparation for what his forefathers did. Therefore, if one has not got the fire of sacrifice in him I would say to him: 'Do not come to India just now.' But if you are cast in a heroic mould there will be no difficulty. You will in the end be taken at your worth if you persevere. Anyway those of you who are here have no reason for going back.

The same friend was able to elicit from Gandhiji what he considered to be the weak spots in the Indusco Plan of Chinese co-operatives. Firstly, the Indusco was a product of abnormal times. Its production was war-time and war-purposes production stimulated by the Japanese blockade. Secondly, it was organized by foreign missionary enterprise and their work was tainted by the proselytization motive.

G. If you try to merely copy the Chinese co-operatives in India you will end in miserable failure. Here you have to work among Indian Christians. The temperament is different, the character is different, and the circumstances are different. Co-operation which is rooted in the soil always works. You have therefore to find out for yourself what type of co-operative is best suited to the Indian temperament and soil. Even those who have become converts to orthodox Christianity are today veering round.

M. By "veering round" you mean going back?

G. Yes, I mean going back to real Christianity, to Christ, not Western Christianity. They are beginning to realize that Jesus was an Asiatic. Having seen this they are reading their Bible through Indian eyes. You should study the meaning of Indian Christianity through J. C. Kumarappa's book Practice and Precepts of Jesus.

Harijan, 31-3-1946

724. MESSAGE ON RAJENDRA PRASAD'S BIRTHDAY[1]

[*December 2, 1945*]

Rajendra Prasad is a true patriot. Long live Rajendra Prasad.

The Hindu, 4-12-1945

725. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
December 2, 1945

Addressing the congregation after the prayer Gandhiji said he would like to thank them and congratulate them because they had maintained silence and were peaceful during the prayer. The gathering of this evening was very big indeed. On Saturday the prayer meeting was less crowded. On both the days they had shown remarkable discipline. So he would thank them and hope they would continue to behave calmly in future also.

The prayer song which was sung this evening had a special significance. Gandhiji said it was very appropriate in the conditions obtaining at present. The song was also sung in a very melodious tune.

In the song there was an appeal to God to lead humanity from darkness to light. It said the humanity was engulfed in thickening darkness and had lost vision. So they were praying to God to give them strength and lead them to light.

The import of the song was that they must be freed from all bondage and attain enlightenment. The freedom from bondage also included the winning of swaraj. India wanted release from the bondage.

We are all engulfed in darkness today. Not only India but the world also is engulfed in darkness. India wants peace. So also does the entire world. We are all travellers groping in that thickening darkness. We are all blind and cannot feel the absence of light.

The prayer we have offered is the most important thing of this evening. I was in South Africa when I used to pray privately. When I returned to India I saw the necessity of holding mass prayers. I have

[1] The news report which carried the item was dated December 2, and was exclusively published in Advance on the occasion of Rajendra Prasad's 61th birthday.

been holding mass prayers since then. There is of course the necessity of individual praying in his own way.

Our prayer today to God is to lead us from darkness to light, from untruth to truth, and let us have peace—peace not only for India but for the entire world.

Gandhiji said he did not like the shouting of slogans. The shouting of slogans disturbed the peaceful atmosphere which was the condition prerequisite to holding prayer. So he would request them not to distrub the peaceful atmosphere of the place by shouting slogans.

In conclusion, Gandhiji asked the gathering to remove untouchability from their midst. Untouchability was a slur on humanity.

Gandhiji then requested those who had assembled to contribute their mite to the Harijan Fund.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 3-12-1945

726. SPEECH AFTER PRAYER MEETING[1]

SODEPUR,
December 2, 1945

I know your love for me. I also want to love you. I also want to win your heart. But that I want to achieve through work. Do not ask for my darshan or want to touch my feet. I am not God; I am a human being. I am an old man and my capacity to stand the strain is limited. If I am to appear before you again and again my strength will be exhausted. And I will not be able to do work.

So my request to you is that you should not ask for my darshan or request me to stand before you so that you may touch my feet. If you come at prayer time you will have my darshan. But I want to impress upon you that I like peace. I do not like shouting of slogans or claps. They irritate me. If you love me you will not do so.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 3-12-1945

[1] The source had reported that this was in response to requests from a large number of people who arrived at the Ashram after the prayer was over. Gandhiji returned to the lawn and spoke to them for a few minutes.

727. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SODEPUR,
December 3, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

Just got yours (at 11.45). The mail closes at noon. You may take all the time you need, whether at Delhi or Simla. Come when you can. I am in Calcutta till 10th at the least. Then is all uncertain.

Pyarelal is well and working. Sushila is in Sevagram looking after Madalasa. She is due here on 5th.

All well.

LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4172. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7808

728. LETTER TO NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE

SODEPUR,
December 3, 1945

DEAR NIRMAL BABU[1],

Your sweet letter. You will do exactly as you please.

In order to interpret my writings, you should be for some time in Wardha when it is fairly cool.

Your amoebiasis may not be removed but can certainly be brought under control by nature cure methods. I suggest your coming to the clinic in Poona when I am there. From 1st January it will be for the poor.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10511

[1] Professor of geography and anthropology, Calcutta University. He first met Gandhiji in 1934 at Wardha and thereafter devoted himself to study and propagation of his ideas.

729. SILENCE DAY NOTE TO R. G. CASEY

[*December 3, 1945*][1]

Do you want me to come tomorrow? 7.30 is better for me, but I could easily come at 7 p. m. if that is better for you.

I have brought a lot of literature for you that I promised yesterday—of this more tomorrow.

From a photostat: G.N. 809; also G.N. 810

730. LETTER TO ARUNA ASAF ALI

SODEPUR,
December 3, 1945

CHI. ARUNA[2],

I have read your letter carefully. How I wish I could meet you openly and have you with me for a few days. I love you too dearly to talk to you through letter-writing. Know that I have been silent not through indifference but by design. I am trying to reach the truth. You are helping me. Go on doing it. You can help me much more by appreciating than following my advice.

For the present no more.

Hope you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The source carries the following note by Casey, then Governor of Bengal : "Notes passed to me by M. K. Gandhi during our 'talk' on December 3, 1945—one of his silence days—during which I talked to him for $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours; he said nothing."

[2] Wife of Asaf Ali, a Congress leader. She was a member of the Congress Socialist Party and had played a prominent part in the Quit India movement in 1942, ever since when she had continued to work underground.

731. LETTER TO NARGIS CAPTAIN

SODEPUR, CALCUTTA,
December 3, 1945

DEAR SISTER,[1]

Just a line to thank you for your note. Of course you will point out the things you mention, when we meet. I have to work double speed. But I am so far well. I did read Jh's words. Love to you two.

BAPU

SMT. NARGISBEHN CAPTAIN
DUNLAVIN LODGE
POONA 5

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

732. LETTER TO SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

SODEPUR,
December 3, 1945

MY DEAR SARAT,

Whilst writing this I am on my back with mud-pack on the abdomen.

Nathalal saw me too. I like your reply to him. But we must talk more when you are free.

Please don't ask me to come to your place for Gita's[2] wedding. She saw me yesterday. She has grown. You know how my views have grown about marriages. Whether I am present or not Gita and her husband (to be) have my blessings. (Here I went off to sleep.)

Of course I have to come to your house, the old house, to Mona[3] and the rest of the Deshabandhu[4] family. You must tell me how and

[1] The superscription is in Gujarati.
[2] Addressee's daughter
[3] Daughter of C. R. Das; vide also "Letter to Mona", 6-12-1945
[4] C. R. Das

when. It must be after the Working Committee meeting[1].

Love.

BAPU

SHRI SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

1 WOODBURN PARK

CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

733. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

December 3, 1945

DAUGHTER AMTULSSALAAM,

You have fallen ill. It should not have happened. What you say is correct. Do what you think is proper. It will be all right if you go to different villages.

Do not worry about me. God will keep me fit as long as He will. You may come whenever you get an opportunity. You had better not come if there is no particular business.

There is nothing more to write. I am writing this at night.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 540

734. LETTER TO KRISHNAVARMA

SODEPUR,

December 4, 1945

BHAI KRISHNAVARMA,

I have your letter. The charge against you is that you are hypocritical and given to falsehood. My own experience with you is the opposite, but nevertheless you are thoughtless and impatient and your thinking is not consistent. That is why your work does not shine. I have already told you that if you cannot accommodate more people in a hygienic way have only one. If I send someone from here, my fear is you will not be able to put up with him. So I feel you should

[1] To be held in Calcutta from 7th to 11th December

do what I say. If you insist I may think of sending someone but if you do you may have to repent it later.

DR. KRISHNAVARMA
NATURE CURE HOSPITAL
MALAD, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

735. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

SODEPUR,
December 4, 1945

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

I have your letter. After I return to Sevagram and settle down there you may certainly come if you wish.

May be you are not acquainted with my views as they have progressed. They were of course implicit in all my writings but of late they have become more explicit. I have no longer any interest in marriages, whether within the caste, inter-caste or even interprovincial. Therefore, so far as possible, I do not say anything anywhere on the subject of marriages. As it is I hardly ever attended any and now I have firmly stopped attending them altogether. What I believe is that if we want to preserve whatever is good in varnashrama every Hindu has to become not only a Shudra but an atishudra[1], and regard himself as such. And as a true indication of it marriages should really take place only between atishudras and the so-called other varnas. These marriages also should be not for the sake of indulgence but so as to observe restraint and keeping in mind the restrictions it implies.

Now I can send my blessings to Chi. Ramakant and Chi. Tara. May they be happy, live in restraint and may their alliance be doubly devoted to service. Often after a marriage instead of one sevak multiplying into two both the parties drop out of service. This is my experience. There are exceptions, and may this union be one such. To that end pure restraint on your part will prove helpful to them in every field.

The Medical Board has not been lax; it has to do work that is vast in scope. Besides, they are contemplating a co-ordination of the various systems of medicine; so the matter it seems will take some time. Let me also add that although I have a great regard for

[1] The lowest among the shudras

Ayurveda my experience with those practising it has not been very good. But, at the moment this is beside the point. We shall discuss this further when you can find time to come over.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

736. LETTER TO SAILEN CHATTERJEE

SODEPUR,
December 4, 1945

BHAI SAILEN

It is thought, and it has been my experience, that through the power of prayer, heart-felt prayer, one can achieve what cannot be achieved by any other power. Swaraj is a very small thing. But prayer should not be recited mechanically. True prayer transforms the life of a man.

Your second question displays sheer ignorance on your part. When did I say that I would live up to 125 years? If I can be so arrogant I shall be God as the questioner says. On the contrary I do not know whether I shall be able to take the next breath. What I have said is that I want to live for 125 years while rendering service. And I have also said that all should aspire to that end. We can only wish. I am an humble devotee of God.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

737. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING [1]

SODEPUR,
December 4, 1945

Gandhiji explained that the real purpose of the prayer could not be fulfilled unless the congregation became calm and quiet.

I have just seen that a crowd of people have entered the prayer ground after we have finished the prayer. I must remind you all that the prayer begins punctually at 5 p. m. (Bengal Time). Those who want to join the prayer must reach the place earlier.

Proceeding, Gandhiji said that he was happy that such a big gathering attended his prayer. He was also happy that those who had unfortunately came late had imbibed the mass feeling and stood at the edge of the congregation and listened to what he had

[1] According to the source the gathering included British, American and Chinese nationals as also a large number of women students.

to say very calmly and quietly. Even though they could not take part in the prayer they were very silent. That attitude, said Gandhiji, was what the prayer intended to teach the average man. It was called self-control and was a great factor of human life. For the last sixteen years he had practised it. Whenever he was late in attending any meeting or function he decided better not to go at all as otherwise he was sure to disturb others. When placed in such a position he requested friends to excuse his inability to comply with their requests for attending the meeting. He would strongly urge upon those who came to attend the prayer to learn the virtue of self-control and develop it in their lives.

During his stay in Calcutta, concluded Gandhiji, he would try to explain the social and other important aspects of self-control and prayer.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 15-12-1945

738. LETTER TO BHAGAWATICHARAN SHUKLA

[After *December 4, 1945*][1]

CHI. BHAGAWATI,

I have your letter. How will the marriage be performed at Gondia? Will there be some rites or will it take place before the magistrate? You have not made it clear. I, of course, wish you both well. I can never have any objection to such marriages if they are not for mindless indulgence but for exercising restraint, for expanding the field of service and enhancing the spirit of service. Actually, I can even encourage such marriages. That is why I wish to have a reply to the above question.

What is the girl's brother doing? Why does the girl not write to me? I am certainly eager to know what she has been doing since she first visited the Ashram.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

739. LETTER TO SHANTILAL DESAI

December 5, 1945

CHI. SHANTILAL,

I have your letter. One of your notes is kept in my files so that whenever I get the time I can go through it and return it to you. The other one I have already read but I don't know where it is now. It is not lost. But I agree it should reach you at the earliest. I am sorry

[1] This is in reply to the addressee's letter dated December 4, 1945.

there has been some laxity about it but I do not know how it happened.

It is good that you gave me the information about Manibhai. I have had a talk with him. I now have my eye on him. I am very keen on engaging him in Dinshaw's clinic. I believe that the experience he will gain there will prove very useful for village work. Moreover, since he has to spend some time with me he will certainly be under my supervision from time to time and so I shall myself get better acquainted with him.

I hope you are getting on well at your end.

SHRI SHANTILAL DESAI
ANAVIL VIDYARTHI ASHRAM
NANPURA, SURAT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

740. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

SODEPUR,
December 5, 1945

CHI. JIVANJI,

I got your letter and the cheque. It has to be considered whether we should go as far as you suggest regarding the copy- right. Anybody writing to us for permission and our giving it will mean that we have read the work or got it read by someone and approve. In this connection Anand Hingorani had suggested different Boards, so that the Tamil Board would decide about the Tamil translation and the Malayalam Board would advise about the translation in that language. There would, thus, be a separate Board for each language. We have to consider how far it would be advisable and becoming for us to bother ourselves to that extent.

There are several translations of Tolstoy's books in the same language. All of them are not up to the mark, and the titles of the books also have been translated differently. All of them sell, but the translation which is most faithful to the original, most painstaking and beautiful sells more than the other translations. The same has happened in the case of the Bible. The authorized version is there but there are many others in the field and their publication is not prohibited. Every translation has its own circle of readers.

You have raised the question of the Autobiography. A translation has been brought out by one Tamil publisher and now this

is the second. How would we know which of the two is really good? Or would it be advisable to stop other translations from being published? I do not see much benefit in that. Even when we decided to claim copyright, I did not go as far as that. This matter cannot be looked at from a purely legal point of view, nor from a purely financial one. We should look at it wholly from a moral and practical point of view. And looking at it thus I feel that we should permit the person who has written to us to publish the translation. I have not replied to him, however. Consult all the others and discuss the matter with them and suggest whatever reply you think should be given. I will think over it and then send a reply to the man.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9959. Also C.W. 6933. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

741. LETTER TO SONAVANE

SODEPUR,
December 5, 1945

BHAI SONAVANE,

I have your letter. It is good that you wrote. I hope that your legal practice will flourish. I very much like your idea of not going into the Assembly.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

742. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
December 5, 1945

Gandhiji spoke about the technique and purpose of prayer which was to commune with the inner self by the individual. To the extent this communion was achieved the individual man got a fresh lease of spiritual enlightenment to sustain one for the next 24 hours.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 6-12-1945

743. LETTER TO R. G. CASEY

SODEPUR,
December 6, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

As you were eager to have a copy of the Constructive

Programme[1], I had procured a copy. But today's post brought me a proof copy of the revised edition. I send it for your perusal. You will read what you like. The copy need not be returned to me.[2]

The other things I am trying to collect as fast as possible in the midst of the overwhelming work before me.

May I repeat the pleasure it gave me to meet you and Mrs. Casey.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE GOVERNOR OF BENGAL

CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 811; also Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government 1944-47, p. 105

744. LETTER TO MONA

SODEPUR,

December 6, 1945

MY DEAR BABY,

Your sweet letter. I was pleased to see your big family. Only I was too busy to play with them to my heart's content.

If you have not come up to your promise, try again.

You need not trouble to come, I shall not misunderstand your absence.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *V*ide "Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place", 13-12-1941

[2] The addressee in his letter of December 9, 1945, said that he entirely agreed with Gandhiji's views on home-spinning and weaving but he was against each cultivator growing his own cotton as that would reduce the already very small areas for the growing of his main crop—paddy. Further, his scheme would not free cultivators from the thraldom of monsoon or other disabilities arising out of lack of irrigation.

745. LETTER TO A. K. M. ZAKARIAH

SODEPUR,
December 6, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I was glad to see yours of 3rd inst. to Shri Pyarelal. You can come any day just before 5.15 p. m. You will forgive me if I am called away for work at the time.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

JANAB A. K. M. ZAKARIAH
68 SYED AMEER ALI AVENUE
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

746. LETTER TO THE AGA KHAN

KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR (NR. CALCUTTA),
December 6, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I write this about the little crematorium on your ground. You know perhaps that when I was a prisoner in the Aga Khan Palace in Yeravda the ashes of Mahadev Desai first and then of my wife were buried in your compound. The remains were cremated there at the Government's instance. They would not let me cremate them outside at the usual crematorium. Through Government's good grace and your people's forbearance, friends have been able to have access to the above crematorium. I have been pleading with the Government that they acquire the little plot and some right of way for devotees. Now that you are in India, may I look to you to facilitate my request in the manner you think proper?

I hope you are keeping well and that we shall meet before you leave India again.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. H. THE AGA KHAN

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

747. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

SODEPUR,
December 6, 1945

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have just been able to reach your letter. A letter to the Aga Khan is enclosed.[1] Read it. If you approve of it, send it on to him. If you wish, you may show it to Sir Purushottamdas[2].

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4806. Courtesy: Shantikumar N. Morarjee

748. LETTER TO MADALSA

SODEPUR,
December 6, 1945

CHI. MADALASA,

You want no reply, but I do wish to reply. You have had fever again. I do not like it at all. Make a practice of lying in the sun. You may, if you like, increase the duration gradually. Cover up the body to start with and, as you feel warmer, remove the cov ring gradually till finally you are stripped of all clothing. This will not only cure the chest complaint but I am sure make the whole body perfectly healthy.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 327

[1] *V*ide the preceding item.
[2] Purushottamdas Thakurdas

749. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SODEPUR,
December 6, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your two letters. If other people's advice differs from mine, follow mine. I assume that you have gone to Poona and am accordingly addressing this letter there.

Why should you feel concerned over anything that you may hear? Remain engrossed in your work and don't speak except when absolutely necessary. You should attend to only three duties there and discharge them to the best of your ability: writing the accounts, doing the marketing and maintaining cleanliness. In doing the last you may occasionally have to express your opinion, but in doing the other two things you need speak nothing. If you keep up courage and faith, your work is bound to win appreciation. But even if it does not, what does it matter?

Kanchan seems to be keeping good health. I get very little time to talk to her. She works and remains cheerful.

I have torn up your letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8615. Also C.W. 7197. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

750. LETTER TO BALBHADRA

SODEPUR,
December 6, 1945

BHAI BALBHADRA,

I have your letter. Since Satyawati[1] has passed away, I should certainly like to be better acquainted with you.

SHRI BALBHADRAJI
6 PYARELAL BUILDING
KASHMERE GATE, DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Grand-daughter of Swami Shraddhanand

751. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SODEPUR,
December 6, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

1. With regard to Om Prakashji I think there is no need for an M. A. degree. Of course he must improve his knowledge of Urdu and achieve proficiency in it. But how will a degree help in that? If he wishes to go home when his brother sends for him, he can certainly go.

2. I had entrusted the sadhu to Aryanayakum's charge because I felt I should not burden you with the responsibility of a case which needs careful [medical] attention. Let him go if he wishes to. If he stays he has to abide by all the rules. Cleaning of lavatories is the first duty. He should not be a burden in any way. From what Kanu tells me he seems to be a totally useless man.

As for new Sevagram only what is deemed proper should be done. In this connection, only what Jajuji says should be done.

Read the letter to Sankaran which is enclosed herewith. That includes my reply regarding his sister and his son.

Any girl who wishes to learn only Hindi can easily learn it on her own. But we cannot provide facilities for teaching only Hindi. Provision can be made for both the scripts. This point is perfectly intelligible. Try to convince them by appealing to their reason. We may not compel anyone to learn both the scripts, but let us provide facilities for those who wish to learn both the scripts.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4835

752. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

SODEPUR,
December 6, 1945

CHI. SUNDARAM,

I have your letter. I do not take the least interest in the Assembly elections. I am forwarding your letter to Pantji[1]. I remember Suresh very

[1] Govind Ballabh Pant

well. I am surprised that even a man like Suresh wants to enter the Assembly.

Blessings from

BAPU[1]

SHRI V. SUNDARAM
KRISHNA KUTIR
BANARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY
BANARAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 2895. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

753. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

SODEPUR,
December 6, 1945

In his introductory speech Gandhiji referred to the incident which took place at Sodepur Railway Station when one person either in attempting

to board a running train which was not scheduled to stop at Sodepur or for some such reason was run over and killed.

They might think that when there were crores of Indians what did it matter if one met with death in such circumstances. But that was a totally wrong view. And if they allowed themselves to think in that way they would not be able to build up a brotherhood in India and secure her salvation. They must instead think that the person who met his death the other day was one of them and must feel sorry for his tragic end.

Perhaps, said Gandhiji, he himself was partly responsible for his death for the deceased went there either to see him or to attend the prayer. The congregation too was partly responsible because after the prayer was over they rushed to the Station, vied with each other to catch the train and thereby created a situation which caused this death. They, therefore, should henceforth take the vow with him not to create any such situation in future which might cause the death of a fellow-brother.

All this happened because they were not disciplined. The prayer was intended to confer upon man that discipline which he required so urgently. If they were mentally disciplined through the practice of prayer they would no more commit the mistake they committed the other day.

If by prayer they could be mentally disciplined, stated Gandhiji, they would

[1] The subscription is in Tamil.
[2] The meeting was also attended by Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Jawaharlal Nehru.

attain a state which was nobler and higher than even the salvation of India.

Perhaps, freedom of India could be maintained with the help of pistols or swords. But were those weapons of any value if their votaries were not disciplined? Therefore whether a country was wedded to violence or non-violence discipline was of paramount importance to all men.

Without discipline it was difficult to attain swaraj as he had stated two days ago.

If they practised prayer with all concentration they would find that all their difficulties would smoothen.

Concluding, Gandhiji referred to an incident in South Africa when a ship came upon a rock and was about to sink. Its Captain was a strong-willed and disciplined man. He preserved the calm of his mind and realized that he could not save all lives. He, therefore, secured the safety of as many men as he could and then went down with a hymn to God on his lips alone with the sinking ship. If he was not a disciplined man, said Gandhiji, he could not have saved the lives of the many passengers of the ship whom he brought to safety. What was, therefore, urgently required of all was discipline and this all men could aquire by actively participating in prayer.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 7-12-1945

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LORD WAVELL'S VERSION OF HIS TALK WITH GANDHIJI[1]

I deplored the recent speeches of Congress leaders and said that the preaching of violence could only lead to violence, especially with the inflammable material in India, of young students and goondas (the Indian equivalent of hooligans); and that fomentation of racial and communal hatred would not produce the atmosphere in which a solution could be produced in next year's discussions. He admitted the violence of Congress speeches and indicated that he was trying to get the tone lowered. I said that an agreement of some kind between Hindu and Muslim was necessary, even if it was an agreement to part. He said he had always tried for a settlement but was frustrated by the British policy of divide and rule. I said this was nonsense, we tried our best to bring them together; that the increase in communal feeling was mainly due to the action of Congress Ministries in 1937-39 which had made Muslims feel they would not get a square deal from Congress and had caused the rise of the Muslim League and the idea of Pakistan. He defended the Congress Ministries at some length, and said all Governors had admitted their fairness. I said there was no doubt about the psychological effect on the Muslims, whatever the facts may have been; and he admitted this. I then said that the British were accustomed to abuse and misrepresentation from Indian Nationalists, but that there was a limit, and that it seemed hardly wise to antagonize us at this moment when we were trying our best to bring about a settlement, and that India after getting her freedom would want Britain's co-operation in defence and in commercial development. I added that if any disorder resulted from the hatred now being stirred up, it would of course be my duty to suppress it, and I should do so by all means in my power. He assented to this; and then said that India needed no help from Britian in trade or defence. She would develop her trade in her own way, and her defence would be the moral force of non-violence, which would eventually conquer the world and bring about universal peace. I said I did not think either of us would live to see this desirable issue, and that the immediate point was to prevent violence in India during the next year or so. We left it at that. He was quite friendly though woolly, and seemed in good health.

The Viceroy's Journal, pp. 192-3

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, "Speech At Calcutta", 10-12-1945

1. TELEGRAM TO THE AGA KHAN

SODEPUR,
December 7, 1945

H. H. AGAKHAN
BOMBAY

MANY THANKS YOUR WIRE. WOULD LOVE TO MEET YOU AND LEARN FROM YOU WAY TO SOLUTION COMMUNAL PROBLEM. MAULANA IS ILL BUT AT WORK. EXPECTING TO REACH WARDHA FEBRUARY. WRITING.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

2. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

SODEPUR,
December 7, 1945

CHI. JIVANJI,

I got your proof-copy of the pamphlet on constructive work yesterday. I wanted to use that copy here and did so. But I had already gone through the proof earlier. As there is no letter accompanying it, I don't quite understand why you have sent it. You have given a heading to my preface but there is no heading on the page on which the pamphlet itself begins. I infer from this that final touches still remain to be given to the printing. I have of course asked Pyarelalji to write to you about this, but I think it is better to dictate this just now in the morning.

I have the impression that I have already written to you about the cover. My suggestion is that the eighteen headings which you have given in the pamphlet should be reproduced on the cover in their proper order, with the page number given against each. This will help the reader and we shall be able to show what topics have been covered. The topics can also be shown on the cover in the form of a circle. We can have a drawing of the spinning-wheel in the centre and the headings can be printed round it like the planets round the sun. There is one difficulty in this, of course. How can communal unity be repre-

sented as a planet? If it is so represented, my original conception would be vitiated, for the basic conception is that khadi is the chief handicraft and that the other industries take their place and revolve round khadi like planets round the sun. If now we can find a place in this scheme for Adivasis, *kisans*, students and communal unity, then the conception will have been worked out. It might be better, therefore, to give up the idea of the circle, or to form the circle only with khadi and cottage industries. But we need not waste any time over this, for it is essential that the pamphlet should be published as soon as possible. It is also necessary that the translations should be published simultaneously. It would, also, be good if at the end a supplementary list of other books to be read with the pamphlet are given. For example, Rajendra Babu's book, Gulzarilal's essay, etc. You may drop this also, if you cannot recollect the names of the books immediately. Pyarelal will most probably send you a wire today saying, "Send another copy proof." The idea behind this is that if I have to correct the proof, the time which would be taken by an ordinary letter may be saved, for the copy which I have passed on is not likely to come back to me now.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9960. Also C.W. 6934. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

3. LETTER TO JATINDAS AMIN

SODEPUR,

December 7, 1945

CHI. AMIN,

I got your letter sent with Sushila. She arrived the day before yesterday. You do not seem to have calmed down yet. You can render great service if you calm down. Take up only a little work there. If you bring credit to it, it will be greatly appreciated.

What you write is absolutely correct. Greatness lies in becoming small and smallness in assuming greatness. We should therfore only serve by becoming as small as dust particles.

[1] This was given to R. G. Casey, the Governor or Bengal, *vide* "Letter to R. G. Casey",6-12-1945

Your camera is to be sent only with somebody going there, is that not so? I am sure you are not in a hurry.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

4. LETTER TO MANORANJAN CHATTERJEE

SODEPUR,
December 7, 1945

BHAI MANORANJANBABU,

I have your wire. I am writing to Dr. Shyamaprasadji[1] and I shall send either Dr. Sushila Nayyar or Pyarelalji there.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI MANORANJAN CHATTERJEE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

5. LETTER TO SHYAMAPRASAD MOOKHERJEE

SODEPUR,
December 7, 1945

BHAI SHYAMAPRASADJI,

Why did you fall ill? Dr. Bidhan tells me that you do not take care of your health and that once you take up some work you never let go. This is a virtue as well as a vice. It is good when you persevere in it within a certain limit. It is bad when you go beyond the limit. I hope that, as reported in the newspapers, you will resume work after taking complete rest.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the following item.

6. LETTER TO SURENDRANATH VISHWAS

SODEPUR,
December 7, 1945

BHAI SUREN BABU,

I have your informative letter. It will be useful to me.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SURENDRANATH VISHWAS
1/23 PRINCE GULAM MOHAMMED ROAD
KALIGHAT
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

7. LETTER TO CHARUPRABHA SENGUPTA

SODEPUR,
December 7,[1] *1945*

CHI. CHARUPRABHA,

These days I try to write to all Indians in the national language. How long shall we go on writing to each other in English ?

I am occupied with many things up to the 10th. I don' know how long I shall be here after that. Even then I am writing to Aruna.[2]

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8710. Also C.W. 1496. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

8. LETTER TO ARUNA SENGUPTA

SODEPUR,
December 7, 1945

CHI. ARUNA,

Mother writes to me that I should write to you to come here. I am busy till the 10th. I don't know where I shall be after that. Look up the newspapers and if I am in Sodepur come any day at 5 o'clock

[1] A copy of the letter available in Pyarelal Papers bears the date December 8.
[2] Addressee's daughter; *vide* the following item.

for the prayer. I shall have a talk with you for two minutes after the prayer.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIMATI ARUNA SENGUPTA
93/3/2 HARI GHOSH STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8711. Also C.W. 1497. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

9. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

December 7, 1945

Asked whether he would like to say anything about the Congress Working Committee meeting[1], Gandhiji replied.

No, I am tired.

In reply to another query Gandhiji remarked :

What can I give you? The Maulana is here. You can take whatever you like from him. They have called me here, but they have not given me any food to eat, or water to drink. And after my work has been finished they are sending me back to my place.Your food is being cooked at Maulana's hands and he will give it to you when it is ready.

While waiting for the car Gandhiji turned to Maulana Azad and remarked :

Maulana Saheb, these press reporters and photographers are having a good time and detaining our car.

A hearty laughter followed. A Press correspondent drew Gandhiji's attention to the announcement from New Delhi that the Viceroy had agreed to see Mahatma Gandhi. The correspondent inquired whether it suggested that Gandhiji had sought the interview.

Gandhiji replied the news had appeared in the newspapers and he declined to make any further comment.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 8-12-1945

[1] Held at the residence of Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President. According to the source "Gandhiji spoke for over an hour and touched upon the political situation, the Indian National Army, changes in the Congress constitution, Congress prospects in the Central and Provincial elections and other matters. He also reported on his talks with R. G. Casey."

10. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
December 7, 1945

Gandhiji said that he noticed that the people became quiet only after he arrived at the place. That was not ideal. The place where a prayer was conducted, he said, should be considered as a temple and only in prayerful mind should they present themselves there. They should come silently and maintain calm and should leave the place in the same mood.

If, however, those who joined in the prayer would remain quiet and peaceful he would be only too glad to see the whole of Calcutta assembled there.

Proceeding, Gandhiji said that there were incorporated in the service Bengali songs as the majority of those present were Bengalees; but for the benefit of others he wished to get a booklet including all songs and other prayers printed in both Devanagari and Urdu scripts. This proposed booklet which might be priced two pice would be of permanent benefit to the readers who could then be acquainted with the texts whenever they so wished.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 9-12-1945

11. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

CAMP: KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR (NEAR CALCUTTA),
December 8, 1945

DEAR MR. ABELL,

I have your letter of 26th November about Shri Yajee.[1] I am thankful for the considered reply. I am now trying to put myself in touch with the gentleman and see what he has to say.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ.
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE VICEROY

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 61

[1] The addressee had written that the allegations of Sheel Bhadra Yajee about food and inhuman living conditions given to him in the jail were all exaggerated. *Vide* also "Letter to Sir Evan M. Jenkins", 7-11-1945

12. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

CAMP: KHADI PRATISHTHAN
SODEPUR (NEAR CALCUTTA),
December 8, 1945

DEAR MR. ABELL,

I thank you for yours of 1st instant.[1] I shall send you in due course fuller details about Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia and have written to Shri Prabhu Dayal Vidyarthi to proceed to New Dehli and report himself.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 63-4

13. LETTER TO R. G. CASEY

Immediate

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I write this with the greatest hesitation. The more I see and hear, the greater is the grief over the happenings in Bengal. Here is a sample demanding immediate attention.

Satish Babu brings me the story that potato-growers cannot get seed potatoes and the planting season will be over in a week's time. Seed potatoes are there in the market under Government control. But the grower cannot get them.

There is evidently something radically wrong if the news brought by Satish Babu is true. I wonder if you can do anything. You were telling me about the clever Mr. Dey whose services you have enlisted for such matters. Can you make him over to me or some other officer who can attend to this immediate affair?

I am having this letter delivered at once. The question is small

[1] The addressee had asked Gandhiji to send directly to the Home Member the details about Vidyarthi and Lohia.

[2] A telegram was however sent on December 9.*Vide* also "Letter to Sir Even M. Jenkins", 25-11-1945

enough on the large Bengal canvas but is all in all to the poor growers whose livelihood is at stake.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 813; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47*, p. 113

14. LETTER TO R. G. CASEY

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I have just finished reading your broadcast to be delivered today. It makes interesting and informative reading. If the waters of the rivers can be captured and utilized by the people of Bengal, instead of being wasted in the Bay, it would be a great gain. But it is a long-term proposition. The millions, meanwhile, must be taught to utilize every minute of the working hours for their own benefit. If they learn this art they will make good use of the captured waters. You have well said :

> The tens of millions of farmers of Bengal are idle more than half the time. They constitute the biggest problem of unemployment in the world and the biggest waste of potential human effort.

I have provided you with a complete answer which can be worked out today with a very little outlay on the part of the Government. Regard human labour more even than money and you have an untapped and inexhaustible source of income which ever increases with use. If I had been your adviser, before the speech was printed I would have suggested the insertion immediately after, "Let us examine the problem", of a paragraph or two, showing the way of immediate utilization of human effort. You could then have followed it up with your entrancing scheme as a long-range proposition.

Is your peroration right? You say :

> The answer to my mind lies not in our politics, our religion or our individual ambition, but in the abiding factors of our environment, i.e., the land and water of Bengal.

[1] In *Gandhi's Emissary*. Sudhir Ghosh writes that the Government, using emergency powers, seized whatever stocks there were with the profiteers and 250 mounds were distributed among the growers that same day.

This is a gross error or thought and consequent action, handed down from generation to generation by the British official element. Your gigantic project will come to nothing until the whole mass of the people of Bengal is interested in the Government of the province. Therefore, religion and even individual ambition are intermixed. They are as much abiding factors of our environment as the land and water of Bengal, and they are equally shifting.

You asked me for my reaction to your thoughtful speech and I have given it as it has come to me.

Very many thanks for your prompt action[1] on my letter of this morning on seed potatoes.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 812; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47,* pp. 107-8

15. LETTER TO THE AGA KHAN

CAMP: KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR (NR. CALCUTTA)
December 8, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your long wire to which I have replied[2] as follows :

Of course, I shall be glad to receive your suggestions. It does not matter to me in the least that in this matter you will be representing nobody but yourself. The only question is how we shall meet, when and where. I have a fixed programme for Bengal, Assam and Madras, which is calculated to take me up to almost the middle of February before I return to Sevagram. If, therefore, I know your movements about February, I shall try to see what I can do.

Maulana Saheb has interrupted his rest for the sake of the Working Committee. He is none too well, but I have no doubt he will be in communication with you himself.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. H. THE AGA KHAN

BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* footnote on "Letter to R. G. Casey", 8-12-1945
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to the Aga Khan", 7-12-1945

16. LETTER TO SATYANAND

SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

DEAR SATYANAND BABU,

It was a delight to receive your postcard. I am doing all I am capable of for the alleviation of distress. I do not know what God will do through the effort.

I hope you are keeping well.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

17. LETTER TO NOEL BARWELL

SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

DEAR MR. BARWELL,

I thank you for your cordial note. I am so much fixed up and so embarrassingly besieged wherever I go that I dare not promise myself the pleasure of visiting the society you mention. But I shall certainly be pleased to see you for a few minutes at this place if you and Mrs. Barwell can conveniently come. There is not a moment left open till Monday, but I shall know more fully on Monday where I stand.

Could you please phone on Tuesday next or send a messenger?

Yours sincerely,

NOEL BARWELL ESQ.
6 MIDDLETON ST.
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

18. LETTER TO BALWANTBHAI D. DESAI

SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

CHI. BALWANTBHAI,

I got your postcard. I am really very glad. Get rid of alldoubts.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. BALWANTBHAI DADUBHAI DESAI
DAKOR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

19. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I have your letter. I am certainly going to …[1] Tara. Her letter reflects her character. The work which she is doing now will not clash with the work of K. G. N. M. Trust. She will also have some help from Sushilabai.[2] If she would rather not stay at the Mahila Ashram, she can live in Akola and there can be no hitch even if she has to be paid a salary. I am passing on Chi. Tara's letter to Bapa. I strongly feel that you two should go and stay at Bombay for a time.

How strange that I myself never knew that my car had met with an accident. Still it made a story. People might be escaping hundreds of such accidents daily. It the papers were to take note of them we would have to stop travelling by cars, etc. If Prabhu Dayal is there please ask him to stay on.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA
SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] Sushilabai Mukundrao Joshi, a teacher at the Mahila Ashram, Wardha

20. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have your letter. I think the kind of questions asked by Vishnudatta's friend ought not to be encouraged. Had I been conducting *Harijan* I might occasionally answer such questions. Generally those who ask such questions are idlers.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

21. LETTER TO SHANTILAL TRIVEDI

SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

CHI. SHANTILAL,

I have your letter. Saralabehn spoke at great length of your courage and service. I am glad.

I am pleased with what you write about wool. It may be useful if you have your experiences during the journey published. You should be concise and to the point.

SJT. SHANTILAL TRIVEDI
GOVIND NIWAS
ALMORA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

22. LETTER TO TARA N. MASHRUWALA

SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

CHI. TARI,

I read your letter to Kishorelal. How will you continue to be so diffident? Your name will be announced as an Agent. Thakkar Bapa will write to you the details. You will no doubt take all the help you can from Sushilabai. It would certainly be better if she could be spared from the Mahila Ashram and stay with you in Akola. I think her salary can be paid from the K. G. N. M. Trust. Write to me at

length, or write to Bapa.

I take it you are all well. Sushilabehn and the children are not with me; Manilal is.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

23. LETTER TO ATMARAM

SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

BHAI ATMARAM,

It is certainly a bad thing that during prayer undesirable thoughts come. But you should not worry. Take any *sloka* of the prayer and concentrate on it. If even this is not possible repeat Ramanama from the depths of your heart with such concentration that there is no room for any other thought. It is no doubt difficult but it can be done. Such has been my experience and the experience of other people as well. That is why Ramanama is said to be the panacea for all ills.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

24. LETTER TO KHUSHIRAM

SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

BHAI KHUSHIRAM,

Bhai Jairamdas has told me how generous you are. It is good to give whatever you want to give without laying down unnecessary conditions. And the trust is being made. All this makes me very happy.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

25. LETTER TO MRS. S. R. DAS

SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I was happy to see you, but it also made me unhappy. I was not prepared to see you in such broken health. Urmiladevi has given me

a cheque for Rs. 500. I will spend that money on the Adivasis. You know who the Adivasis are, don't you? Thakkar Bapa and Khersaheb are working among the Adivasis.

Blessings from
BAPU

MRS. S. R. DAS
1 AUCKLAND PLACE
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

26. LETTER TO UDDHAV

SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

BHAI UDDHAV,

On the death of your brother you performed only the yarn sacrifice and no religious rites. I liked it very much. It will bring great benefit if all do so.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

27. LETTER TO V. V. SAXENA

SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

BHAI SAXENA,

Kishorelalji has forwarded here your letter addressed to him. I shall not be able to reach Sevagram before February in any case. It will be best if you write to me what you want to discuss with me. In this way both of us will save time—and money of course.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

PROF. V. V. SAXENA
VANASTHALI VIDYAPITH
VANASTHALI (JAIPUR)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

28. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

Congratulating the congregation on its maintaining an ideal condition for proceeding with the prayer straight away as soon as he reached the place, Gandhiji explained the significance and gradual development of the system of mass-prayer at Sodepur Ashram.

In 1936 about a dozen Japanese monks paid him a visit when he was staying at Maganwadi, Wardha. The leading monk suggested to him that he intended to send one or two of his disciples to the Ashram, a proposal which he approved. First came one and later on another. Of the two, one was staying with him till the war with Japan broke out and as a result he was taken into custody. This Buddhist monk used to do all the tasks he was given very punctually and methodically. In between his work he used to spend the time at his disposal in singing religious songs in the Japanese language all the time beating a little drum. This he did while taking his rounds. This was a Buddhist religious song in praise of the Infinite. Gandhiji said that he incorporated the song in his prayer. This was the first item of the prayer.

The second item of the prayer was a Sanskrit *sloka* and was, according to him, universal in its appeal. This was an invocation to Mother Earth, sustainer of man. If there was any objection to it on any score he would plead that he was helpless. To him all faiths were welcome. He believed in all faiths but he saw no reason to give up his own faith. Possibly, said Gandhiji, this Sanskrit *sloka* was symbolic, but, according to him, many noble thoughts and ideas were couched in symbolic language.

Thirdly, there was the prayer quoted from the Koran. It was incorporated at the instance of daughter[1] of Abbas Tyabji, the well-known Congress leader. She possessed a gifted voice. When on a visit to the Ashram she expressed the desire to propagate the teachings of the Koran to the Ashramites, he readily agreed. She suggested a verse from the Koran for inclusion in the prayer and it was done.

The fourth item of the prayer was taken from the Zend-Avesta written in the Pahlavi language. When he was fasting in the Aga Khan's Palace, Dr. Gilder was there as were also Dr. Bidhan Roy and some other medical men. Dr. Gilder was a Parsi and from him the verse from the Zend-Avesta was taken and included.

So far as *bhajan* songs were concerned, said Gandhiji, there was no hard and fast rule. It all depended upon the time and place of the prayer. As the prayer was for the moment being held in Bengal and Bengalees in larger numbers were present, Bengali songs had to be included in the prayer daily.

It was Gandhiji's desire to get all the prayers included in a booklet with their meanings given in Hindustani. He wished it to be printed both in Devanagari and

[1] Raihana Tyabji

Urdu scripts and, if possible, in Bengali too.

He asked the assembled people to follow the prayer in a proper spirit and to live up to the lofty ideals it inculcated.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 9-12-1945

29. TELEGRAM TO PRABHU DAYAL VIDYARTHI

CALCUTTA,
December 9, 1945

PRABHU DAYAL
ASHRAM
SEVAGRAM, WARDHA

PROCEED NEW DELHI AND SEE DEVDAS WHO HAS INSTRUCTIONS.

BAPU

From a photostat G.N. 11673

30. LETTER TO SAMARENDRANATH ROY

SODEPUR,
December 9, 1945

DEAR SAMARENDRA

It grieved me to learn from Satis Babu that your great father[1] was no more. You may know that your father and I were friends. We often met and exchanged views. My condolences to you all.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SAMARENDRANATH ROY
33/2 BEADEN ST.
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Kalinath Roy, editor in charge of *The Tribune*, who died on 9th December, 1945

31. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

SODEPUR,
December 9, 1945

CHI. SUSHILA,

I got your letter. It is enough that your aspiration is pure. I don't think there is anything special in staying with me. When you serve people wherever you are, I shall take it that you are with me. I do not feel that you are losing anything by not being with me. The air is humid and it is cold, too.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4967

32. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

SODEPUR,
December 9, 1945

CHI. SITA,

You seem to be demanding too much. How can you expect a letter from me unless you write to me? I know that you are keeping well and are working hard. Pass the examination. Come to me when you can. I am glad to know that you do rowing. It is a good exercise. Row the boat of India, too.

Take care of your health while studying.

Blessings to all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4968

33. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

SODEPUR,
December 9, 1945

CHI. SHRIMAN,

I got your letter today. I made very few changes. I am sending it back.

I am happy to hear that Madalasa is all right. Tell her that I think of her every day.

Do not give any importance to my cold. I did have a touch of it but am I not a "mahatma" after all ?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 307-8

34. LETTER TO BHAGWATI PRASAD

SODEPUR,
December 9, 1945

CHI. BHAGWATI,

How will the marriage be performed in Gondia? You have not said whether there will be any rites or it will be a civil marriage before a magistrate. I wish both of you well. I cannot have any objection to marriages which are intended not for indulgence but for observance of self-control, for enhancing the spirit of service and widening its sphere. On the contrary I encourage such marriages. And therefore I would like to have your reply to the above question.

What is the girl's brother doing? Why doesn't the girl write to me? What has she been doing these years since she visited the Ashram? I am keen to know all these things.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI BHAGWATI PRASAD
C/O DEVIPRASAD DAMOHE
RANGE OFFICER, GENTRAL EXCISE
GONDIA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

35. LETTER TO LAKSHMI NARAYAN GADODIA

SODEPUR,
December 9, 1945

BHAI LAKSHMI NARAYAN,

I have your letter. Personally I liked it very much. I intend to show it to Sharmaji. You have not asked me not to do so. Similarly, if it becomes necessary I shall also want to show it to Jajuji and Vichi-tra Narayan. The whole episode seems strange to me.

I will find out more about khadi because I have received complaints from other people also it this regard.

SHRI LAKSHMI NARAYAN GADODIA
P. O. BOX NO. 17
DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

36. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SODEPUR,
December 9, 1945

CHI. SHARMA,

I had sent a copy of your letter to Gadodiaji. I have a long reply from him, saying that whatever you have said is all fabrication and where it has any truth it has never been hidden nor is it a matter of shame. I only hope that you have not done anything improper and if you have you must frankly confess it. I enclose a copy[1] of Gadodiaji's letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI H. L. SHARMA
KHURJA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

37. LETTER TO SARASWATI GADODIA

SODEPUR,
December 9, 1945

CHI. SARASWATI,

What is there in your letter that makes it confidential? Still, since you want it, I shall treat it as such. Of course I shall not take it to mean that it is to remain confidential from those who work for me. For instance, I did not read the letter, but Kanu read it out to me while I ate.

You would want me to show it to Sharmaji, wouldn't you? If I don't do that, the letter, which I like and which I find clean and pure will become useless. Even then I shall wait for your reply. My advice

[1] This is not traceable.

is that not only the above-mentioned letter but anything we do or write should not be kept secret. We should do nothing which has to be kept secret or hidden. That is the main thing.

Blessings from

BAPU

C/O SHRI LAKSHMI NARAYAN GADODIA

P. B. NO. 17, DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

38. LETTER TO RADHAKANT MALAVIYA

SODEPUR,

December 9, 1945

BHAI RADHAKANT,

I have gone through your letter. I do not take any interest in the elections. I know that the Congress must win.

Babuji has formed a separate association. I did not like it. But who was I to prevent him from doing so? I think it is improper for you to run it. It is a different thing if Babuji does so. Have a talk with the Working Committee about the role of the Hindu Mahasabha. I personally do not like it. I am returning the two letters.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

39. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

SODEPUR,

December 9, 1945

CHI. SHYAMLAL[1],

You are going ahead very fast. If it is in keeping with your strength, it is good. The work of Kasturba Memorial can progress only with such self-sacrifice. We cannot always measure the strength of self-sacrifice.What does it matter? May God preserve your strength.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Secretary of the Kasturba Memorial Trust

40. LETTER TO VASUDEV

SODEPUR,
December 9, 1945

BHAISHRI,

Your letter is written in a very bad hand. And that too in English. Can't you express your views in Hindustani?

I have gone through the printed statement. I did not like it. Its is pompous and lacking in humility. There is also exaggeration in it. Read what I have written about students. Writing will not help. Only work will. Constructive work is easy as well as difficult. Meet Rajendra Babu. Do what he says.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

VASUDEV
YOUTH LEAGUE
PATNA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

41. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

SODEPUR,
December 9, 1945

BHAI MOTI BABU,

How long should I go on writing to you in English? These days, as far as possible, I write to everybody in the national language or the mother tongue. Perhaps you may not be having anyone who can read the national language, so I am enclosing a Bengali translation of the letter also. Amtul Salaam will deliver this letter to you and also have a talk with you. She has complained a lot to me about the khadi policy of the Pravartak Sangh. Amtul Salaam has stayed with me for years as a daughter. She is very industrious and very knowledgeable. Hence, she has been doing the khadi work at Borkamta for the last few years. Now the Pravartak Sangh is also functioning there. Amtul Salaam's work is purely altruistic and for service of the people.[1] Amtul Salaam says that the [Pravartak Sangh][2] is not for selfless service but . . .[3]

[1] A few words are indistinct here in the source.
[2] *ibid*
[3] A few words are indistinct here in the source.

ends. She also says that its work is against the policy of the Charkha Sangh and may cause harm to it. I refuse to believe that you are aware of these things and allow them to continue. And so I am sending Amtul Salaam to understand the situation. She will ex-plain things in greater detail.

It is a matter of regret that the money advanced by the Charkha Sangh has not been returned so far. They should get it back now. It belongs to the Trust. And how can the Trust write it off ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 11058

42. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

SODEPUR,

December 10, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

The newly-opened account in the United Commercial Bank, as per papers herewith, is to be operated by you or by me. I am thinking of two more signatures, though I have not decided who the persons should be. If you can think of any names, let me know. Perhaps two names may suffice for the present. The question will arise when one of us dies.

Send your specimen signature on the accompanying form. I have given mine in Hindustani and intend to sign in that language in future. You also can do the same. Think over this and do as you like. Preserve the other papers relating to the account sent with this. Send the specimen signature to me.

I shall be here for some time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10648

43. LETTER TO SHITIKANTH JHA

SODEPUR,
December 10, 1945

BHAI SHITIKANTH,

I have your letter. If you want to sit by my side, come over some day. But what is so special in sitting near me? Doing the work suggested by me amounts to sitting near me.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SHITIKANTH JHA
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
GRAM SEVA KENDRA
THAKURDANDI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7477. Also C.W. 4923

44. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
December 10, 1945

When we are making a supreme effort for the realization of our goal let nobody have any opportunity of pointing it against us that we are not disciplined and therefore not fit for swaraj. Either today or tomorrow the power must come to our hands. But how are we going to exercise that power unless we are disciplined ?

The British Government, he reminded the people, was not the last hurdle to be got over. If the people were not disciplined then even if power came to their hands they would not be able to retain it and someone else would be there to snatch it away from their hands.

It was only wild animals which were not disciplined and took recourse to unreasonable and meaningless climbing. But if men also took recourse to such tactics how could drivers and guards of trains manage their affairs.[1] It was also often found that small boats which had only limited capacity often gave way and sank because of overcrowding. They were crores and perhaps for that reason they did not notice the loss they sustained in such catastrophes. If they could not board a train they should just wait for the next to travel instead of overcrowding the first and thus make it impossible for the driver and the guard to run it.

[1] The reference is to the conduct of passengers who boarded engines and guards' compartments on the previous day to travel to and from Sodepur.

Proceeding, Gandhiji said that they must learn discipline. There were two ways of learning it. The soldiers learnt it by having drill exercises. But there was the prayer to teach them the other way. Prayer not only secures for them their salvation for the next world but also in this world. If they failed to secure their salvation in this world, could there be any possibility of securing the salvation for the next? In the circumstances, concluded Gandhiji, they should conduct themselves as thinking men.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 11-12-1945

45. SPEECH AT CALCUTTA[1]

December 10, 1945

Addressing the gathering outside Government House, Gandhiji said that when he entered Government House in the evening he found a crowd of people around his car. Hence he had come this time walking to them.

He asked them to be calm and peaceful. He was an old man and could not bear the strain of demonstrations. If they did not allow him to go by car, he would have to walk on foot to Sodepur.

Gandhiji added that he had come there to serve them and the country. He urged on them the need for discipline. India had attained a great position in the past because of her great message of *shanti*. They could attain freedom only by peace and discipline.

Referring to the prayer meeting at Sodepur Ashram, Gandhiji said that thousands and thousands of people came there to join the prayer, but perfect silence was maintained.

Gandhiji then asked the gathering whether they would allow him to go by car. The crowd respectfully replied in the affirmative and Gandhiji got into his car while a corridor was made for him to pass through. Sitting with his hands folded in salutation, Gandhiji then moved out in the car to his Ashram at Sodepur.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 11-12-1945

[1] At 8·40 p.m., after his talk with the Viceroy. For the Viceroy's version of the talk *vide* "Lord Wavel's Version of His Talk With Gandhiji"

46. CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION [1]

[On or before *December 11, 1945*][2]

After the arrest of the principal Congressmen in the August of 1942, the unguided masses took the reins in their own hands and acted almost spontaneously. If many acts of herosim and sacrifice are to their credit, there were acts done which could not be included in non-violence. It is, therefore, necessary for the Working Committee to affirm, for the guidance of all concerned, that the policy of non-violence adopted in 1920 by the Congress continues unabated, and that such non-violence does not include burning of public property, cutting of telegraph wires, derailing of trains and intimidation.

The Working Committee is of opinion that the policy of non-violence as detailed in the Congress resolution of 1920, since expanded and explained from time to time, and action in accordance with it, has raised India to a height never attained before.

The Working Committee is further of opinion that the constructive activities of the Congress, beginning with the spinning-wheel and khadi as the centre, are emblematic of the policy of non-violence and that every other Congress activity including what is known as the parliamentary programme, is subservient to and desi-gned to promote the constructive activities as explained by Mahatma Gandhi.

The Working Committee is of opinion that civil disobedience, mass or any other, meant for the attainment of freedom, is inconceivable without the adoption of the constructive programme on the widest scale possible by the masses of India.

The Hindu, 12-12-1945

[1] The resolution, drafted by Gandhiji, was passed by the Congress Working Committee on December 11, the concluding day of its five-day session held in Calcutta.

[2] *ibid*

47. LETTER TO R. G. CASEY

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 12, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 10th instant, for which I thank you.

I have not discounted[1] your irrigation scheme. I have only suggested an addition to it so as to bring almost immediate individual relief to the crores of villagers by occupying their admitted leisure hours. In your written note you seem to be in entire accord with my proposition. Where then is the difficulty in the Government of Bengal sponsoring the scheme and at once creating a hopeful situation so far as the shortage of cloth is concerned? I have never suggested that attainment of happiness is possible without the control of physical surroundings. But I have no desire to enter into any argument. If you have immediate regard for home-spinning and weaving and other village crafts, I have suggested a way out. That each cultivator should grow his own cotton is not a *sine qua non* of my scheme and certainly no cultivator should be compelled or even advised to grow cotton to the detriment of any staple crop. The question is one of utilizing waste labour, as under your scheme it is one of utilizing waste water.

If you favour the idea as practical and capable of immediate application, I could furnish you with a detailed scheme which, as I have told you, can be worked with the help of the various khadi organizations controlled by the All-India Spinners' Association.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 110

[1] *Vide* "Letter to R. G. Casey", 8-12-1945

48. LETTER TO R. G. CASEY

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 12, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your kind letter of 10th instant regarding the Gope Palace.[1] This is a matter of such a delicate nature that I do not think I can usefully interfere. And why should there be any hurry if a popular government is shortly to replace the present regime?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p.112

49. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

SODEPUR,
December 12, 1945

CHI. PREMA,

Chi. Sushila[2] has addressed the following letter[3] to Shyamlal:

I had assumed that Sushila would readily take up this work and had, therefore, welcomed Shyamlal's suggestion that he himself should write to her. But Sushila suggests your name and has declined to join while you are there. So I ask your advice as to what should be done. Shouldn't we do what would help the work and bring credit to it? If you want to give your reply after consulting Sushila, do that. You may make any suggestion you like. If you address your reply as above, I shall get it wherever I am at the time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10441. Also C.W. 6880. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

[1] The palace, which was on the outskirts of Midnapore, housed a British Military Hospital and the Health Department of the Bengal Government was anxious to acquire it permanently for a T. B. sanatorium. The addressee had suggested to Gandhiji to use his influence with the owner who was a Congressman.

[2] Sushila Pai

[3] Not translated here. She had declined to be the Agent of Kasturba Memorial Fund Committee for Maharashtra and suggested the addressee's name instead.

50. LETTER TO DR. N. B. KHARE [1]

SODEPUR,
December 12, 1945

BHAI KHARE,

I think that you are anxious to meet me.[2] It will be all right if you can come tomorrow evening at 8 o'clock.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 4869. Courtesy: N. B. Khare

51. LETTER TO RADHAKANT MALAVIYA

SODEPUR,
December 12, 1945

BHAI RADHAKANT,

I received your letter last night. The meeting of the Working Committee is over. Please understand my limitations and also my unwillingness concerning what you write.

SHRI RADHAKANT MALAVIYA
16 TARACHAND DUTT STREET
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

52. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
December 12, 1945

Gandhiji said that an individual, even if a snake might be lying on his way, would pass by it, assuming that it was not a snake but a piece of rope. He would not be frightened then. But if his companion then drew his attention to the fact that it was not a piece of rope but a living snake that he passed by, he would at once be frightened. Was it not curious, asked Gandhiji, that although the same conditions prevailed, at one time the individual had no trace of fright in him and at another he would be awfully frightened and would thank God for his miraculous escape.

Drawing the moral from the illustration, Gandhiji concluded that the source of

[1] (1884-1967); Congress Premier of C. P., 1937-38, and member of Viceroy's Executive Council, 1943-46

[2] Some of Khare's supporters wanted him to explore possibilities of rejoining the Congress and to see Gandhiji in this connection.

happiness and woe, therefore, did not lie elsewhere but in one's own mind. In his reply to Arjuna as to who had attained illumination, Krishna explained the nature of such a man by stating that he only was self-illumined (*sthitaprajna*) who was not affected either by a feeling of happiness or woe.[1] This was possible only on the part of that individual who was self-controlled. To a self-controlled man life becomes simple and salvation easy.

Amrita Bazar Patrika 13-12-1945

53. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

SODEPUR,
December 13, 1945

No knowledge conducive to the real good of the world could be attained without purification of heart, said Mahatma Gandhi. Those who attended these meetings should derive some benefits from them; otherwise, it would be useless for them to attend prayer meetings. They must concentrate their minds and only then would they realize the existence of God in their hearts. But if they kept quiet because he (Gandhiji) had asked them to do so, they would derive no benefit from the prayer. By concentration, their hearts would be purified and their inner knowledge would grow. Everybody should think that they were going to the prayer metting for self-purification. Only then would their intellectual progress be uninterrupted and they would get real peace by controlling their passions.

The Hindu, 14-12-1945

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II, 54 and 56

[2] According to the source a large number of women and over a hundred Harijan boys attended the meeting.

54. LETTER TO THE AGA KHAN

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 14, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your kind telegram. I do not return from Madras *via* Poona. The probability is that I shall return *via* Bezwada to Wardha in February, when a date mutually convenient can be agreed upon either in Bombay or Poona, wherever it is convenient for you at the time.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. H. THE AGA KHAN
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

55. LETTER TO BISHOP FOSS WESTCOTT[1]

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 14, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

Your kind letter (undated) from Ranchi has been received.

I thank you for the book Sudhir has given me. I shall try to make time to read it.

I entirely agree with you that the spirit of hatred can never solve India's problem, for I believe in the general proposition that the spirit of hatred has never solved and never will solve any problem in the world. But I also believe that the causes for such hatred have to be discovered and removed. The removal of these, in India's case, lies first in the superior, i.e., the ruling party, undoing the wrong it is doing. My method, by which I swear, is calculated to do it in the quicket manner possible.

I am glad you will bear in mind the thought of passing some time with me in the quiet of Sevagram.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

THE RT. REV. BISHOP FOSS WESTCOTT
C/O THE BISHOP'S HOUSE
RANCHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Bishop of Calcutta and Metropolitan Bishop of India

56. LETTER TO KAMALADEVI CHATTOPADHYAYA

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 14, 1945

DEAR KAMALADEVI,

Your letter of 2nd instant came into my hand only this morning. When, after the conference[1], you find that you have to go to Mysore for Kasturba work, after due notice of yourproposed entrance and that you will proceed to Mysore for that definite purpose, you should enter the State and take the consequences. If the State presumes to interfere with your activities, it might be worth while to test the legality of such action. But of that nothing need or can be said at the present moment.

About those who will be thrown out of work,[2] is not Jawaharlal developing some central scheme or, it may be, the Congress? I have only a hazy notion. But I know this much clearly that it is a big problem not to be tackled by any single individual. The Talimi Sangh can only take in the smallest number possible, and then they are to be specialists having love for the work. The A. I. S. A. can absorb some more but such have to appreciate the dignity of village life and village simplicity. Can those whom you have in view take to it ?

Of your future activity I understand what you say and I would much like to see you settle down in a village and put your hand not to the plough which may be too hard for you but to the wheel which is hard for nobody.

Love

Yours,

BAPU

SHRIMATI KAMALADEVI
C/O WOMEN'S CONFERENCE OFFICE
LAMINGTON ROAD, BOMBAY ?

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] All-India Women's Conference to be held in 1946 over which the addressee was to preside

[2] The reference is to the demobilization of army personnel and labour engaged in war service. The. A. I. C. C. which met at Bombay from September 21 to 24 passed a resolution expressing its concern.

57. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SODEPUR,
December 14, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your long letter. I was taken aback a little. I was not unaware that meat, and even beef, is cooked in the kitchen there. This is a problem which can be solved only with patience You need not get alarmed and run away. It should be enough that you yourself do not eat either meat or beef. But you cannot prevent others from doing so. It would be good if they thought about it and stopped on their own. I would, therefore, advise you to have patience and go on doing the work I have suggested.

I do not want to keep you too long. But I shall be satisfied if you start writing up the accounts and set them in order and bring the sanitation work within manageable limits. The other changes can be introduced only after my return. Jehangirji must have arrived there by now.

Kanchan remains engrossed in work. She has not recovered complete strength, but I am hopeful that she will. Has Durlabhbhai left for good or only temporarily? If you know anything about this, write to me.

Blessing to all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 810. Also C.W. 7193. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

58. LETTER TO ATUL CHANDRA GHOSH

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 14, 1945

BHAI ATUL BABU,

What can I do? I cannot be young for ever. Therefore be content with whatever service I can render from one place. Please tell the people of Manbhum that we can achieve everything through ahimsa and the symbol of ahimsa is the charkha.

Blessings from
BAPU

BABU ATULCHAND GHOSH
NIVARAN ASHRAM
PURULIA (MANBHUM),

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

59. LETTER TO V. G. GAVANDE

SODEPUR,
December 14, 1945

BHAI GAVANDE,

Ramkrishna has given me your statement. When you send something to someone, whether it is long or short, it should always be legible. What you have sent is illegible. Unless one gives it concentrated attention one can't read it. Where do I have so much time? I am sorry to say I have not been able to read it. In writing this my intention is to tell you that anything, any statement you send, should be in a clear and legible hand.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI V.G. GAVANDE
MAHAL, NAGPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

60. TELEGRAM TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

December 15, 1945

YOUR LETTER. DO ALL WORK YOU CAN SECURING NECESSARY ASSISTANCE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 8614. Also C.W. 7194. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

61. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

CAMP: KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR (NEAR CALCUTTA),
December 15, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

A correspondent writes from the United Provinces to the effect that manufacture of *gur*[1] is prohibited there. *Gur*-making is a village industry. It is manufactured on their fields by cane-growers from juice extracted by means of village *kolhus*[2] and boiled in village pans. I, therefore, thought that my correspondent must be mistaken and asked him to send me a copy of the order on which his observations were made. He has sent me a copy of the enclosed startling order.[3] Cane-growers have since passed resolutions protesting against the order and threatened to disobey it if it was not withdrawn. As a result the authorities relaxed the order. A copy of the relaxation order is also herewith enclosed. I doubt not that you realize what this means to the poor people. The original order could not have been issued for the protection of sugar mills but must have been meant to secure judicious use and distribution of sugar as *gur* or refined. If so, it defeats the purpose. The modified order, though less bad than the first, does not really serve the purpose, considered in the light of the villagers. There should be no licence for *gur* made in village.

As this is not a mere provincial matter but applies to all India

[1] Jaggery

[2] Cane-crushers

[3] The notification was to the effect that in certain specified areas no person should "manufacture *gur*, introduce or set up any *kolhus* for crushing cane" or "move sugar-cane……to any place outside such areas except to sugar-cane factories listed".

wherever cane is grown, I venture to approach H. E. the Viceroy for relief.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ., I.C.S.
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO H. E. THE VICEROY
THE VICEROY'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 70-1

62. LETTER TO C. K. NARAYANASWAMI

KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR (NR. CALCUTTA),
[*December*][2] *15, 1945*

DEAR NARAYANASWAMI,

I am afraid that, owing to my movements after leaving Poona, I have not been able to be up to date with my correspondence. I hope that Menon is making good progress with his work.

As to the constructive programme I can say this much that it is doing better than before. But have you any workable suggestions to make? What you have said in your letter is good enough for city mentality. What you and I have to do is to think out suggestions in terms of village mentality unless, of course, you have reached the conclusion that the village and village mentality are to go if they have not already gone. My conclusion emphatically is that if the world is not to end, the village and village mentality alone will save it. In spite of their glamour the city and city mentality are going before our eyes. Therefore, I have left for me no other alternative but to think of ways and means for sustaining the village life.

What is your concrete suggestion about Muslim unrest?

Yours,
BAPU

SHRI C. K. NARAYANASWAMI
5 HIDAYAT HOUSE
BOMBAY 19

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee in his letter of January 4,1946, said that *gur*-making was not prohibited except in a small area of the United Provinces and that too in order to plan production and distribution of sugar and *gur* in the Province.

[2] The source has October but Gandhiji was then in Poona.

63. LETTER TO J. C. GUPTA

SODEPUR,
December 15, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

Many thanks for your letter.[1]

I am doing all I can about the prisoners.[2] I do not think I need trouble you to see me about them.

It was a pleasure to see your blind son and his wife.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI J. C. GUPTA
23 CIRCUS AVENUE, CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

64. LETTER TO UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM

SODEPUR, CALCUTTA,
December 15, 1945

DEAR UTTIMCHAND,

Though the receipt for the 4th instalment has, I presume been sent you, I have not been able to acknowledge your p. c. of 22nd ultimo. I have been travelling.

Your puzzles baffle me and my clever friends. I must therefore give up hope of getting prizes from you for Harijans. I must rely solely on your love of Harijans and Khadi, perhaps also Adivasis.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM
BOMBAY BAKERY
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers: Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] According to *The Hindu*, 26-12-1945, the addressee who was chairman of the All-Parties Political Prisoners' Release Campaign Committee had said in his letter that "43 pre-Reform political prisoners between themselves had undergone imprisonment for no less than 600 years……"

[2] *Vide* "Letter to R. G. Casey", 16-12-1945

65. LETTER TO HARJIVAN KOTAK

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 15, 1945

CHI. HARJIVAN,

I got your letter of the 10th yesterday. You seem to be very impatient. You ask my blessings by wire. We are after all poor people and trustees of those much poorer than we. And how can we so much as wish for blessings? Even if we have such a desire, how can we have it met telegraphically? So thinking I refrained from sending a wire. Why should you need any blessings? Here is the secret of blessings. When we are engaged in a work which is worthy of blessings, then the work itself is a blessing; it does not wait for blessings from others. Seeking blessings from other people is, there-fore, meaningless; it is nothing but self-deception. It no doubt has a meaning in that blessings act as a stimulant from which a weak person derives momentary encouragement. But this kind of encouragement is not of much help. If you understand this and still really need my blessings, you certainly have them for your work of producing the tools necessary for making khadi provided it is done intelligently. When I say intelligently I mean that we should not manufacture spinning-wheels, winding frames, *taklis*, etc., just to sell; we should make only as many as are needed and see that they are so perfect that no one may find fault with them. Our aim should be—and is—that all the things are produced locally. Only then will the villages prosper. What I am now saying is covered by the new line of thought on khadi that I am propounding. Whatever I have not elaborated may be deduced from the aforesaid.

Yesterday Sardar was here. He wanted to know why he was not informed about your leaving the khadi shop. I could not give him a satisfactory answer. I take it that you must have gone through all the formalities since you are so alert. However, if you have anything to say in this regard, write to Sharda. I see from your letter that Sharda is with you. Is she doing anything ?

Blessings from

BAPU

HARJIVAN KOTAK

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

66. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 15, 1945

BHAI RAJENDRA PRASAD

I have your letter. I shall start working on Mahendra Chaudhary's case after receiving other opinions on it.

You should be perfectly fit.

I am going to Santiniketan on the 18th. I shall return on the 20th.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. RAJENDRA PRASAD
SADAQUAT ASHRAM
DIGHAGHAT
PATNA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

67. LETTER TO KHWAJA NAZIMUDDIN

KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR, CALCUTTA,
December 15, 1945

BHAI SAHEB,

Amtussalaam has given me your letter inviting me to your place on the 4th. How nice it would have been if I could come to your plac place. But circumstances do not permit me to do so. Does it mean that we shall not be able to meet? If that happens I shall be very sorry.

SIR NAZIMUDDIN
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Urdu: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

68. LETTER TO R. G. CASEY

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 16, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I have insistent complaints about goondaism and favouritism at the elections.[1] We had a talk about these. But they seem to persist. I know you do not want these things. Can something be done in the matter ?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 113-4

69. LETTER TO R. G. CASEY

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 16, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

Literature about your prisoners is pouring in on me.[2] According to the papers in my possession, you have over twenty-five pre-Reform prisoners, all of them having undergone sentences above ten and most of them above fifteen years.

Then you have untried detenus, detained only on one-sided secret evidence which they have not seen, and some convicts, all of them political.

Among these prisoners are two women cooped up in a small cell.

I am told that there is no terrorism to be feared. The prisoners are all likely to be public-spirited. But that can be no reason for keeping them behind prison bars.

I submit that they should all be discharged without the slightest ado.

I plead for a little grace before, as you and I hope, the transference of power comes.

I have offered, and still do, to see these prisoners, if it is thought

[1] It was Fazlul Haq, ex-Premier of Bengal, who had brought the matter to Gandhiji's notice. The goondaism was resorted to by supporters of the Muslim League.

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to J. C. Gupta", 15-12-1945

desirable.

I leave for Santiniketan on 8th instant, returning here on the 20th evening.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 132-3

70. LETTER TO DHUNDIRAJ

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 16, 1945

BHAI DHUNDIRAJ,

I have been receiving the figures sent by you. I glance through them as they arrive. According to the new policy, you are also required to indicate the number of people who go there to learn or to spin, how many of them know all the processes, whether those at the shop have learnt them and so on. All these particulars should be shown in figures.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. DHUNDIRAJ
KHADI BHANDAR
395 KALBADEVI
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

71. LETTER TO SARALADEVI A. SARABHAI

December 16, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I came to know of your brother's passing away from a letter of Chi. Mridula. I also learnt that you had been to Rajkot in this connection. Such things are part of life. All of us have to go—some sooner, some later. That being so expression of condolence would only be folly. Why should I then indulge in it? And why should you expect me to? So the purpose of writing this letter is only to let you know that you are not out of my thoughts.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

72. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SODEPUR,
December 16, 1945

CHI. MRIDULA,

Sushilabehn gave me news of the death of your maternal uncle and told me how calm and unperturbed you were in your bereavement.

Badshah Khan left yesterday. He was telling me that in the event of Akbar[1] being prepared to go to him, you would take up his work at Samau or make some arrangement. If this is correct, talk it over with Akbar and finalize the arrangement. If Akbar is still not satisfied then let me know who is willing to take up the work at Samau and how it can be done, so that I can write to Akbar. If some depen-dable worker is not available, do tell me so frankly.

I have not yet written to Saraladevi regarding her appointment as Agent because I had a letter from Mavalankar that he would be seeing her. Write to me if you know anything more. I hope you are well. I shall go to Santiniketan on the 18th, and return on the 20th. 24th Midnapore. It is correct to regard Sodepur as my camp for the present.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

73. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SODEPUR,
December 16, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Your second letter written on the 12th arrived here on the 15th. You must have received the following wire which I sent you yester-day :[2]

The description you have given is quite good. I am sure that as the problem about beef was solved so will the other also be solved through patience and love.[3] I entrusted certain jobs to you

[1] Akbarbhai Chawda
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Munnalal G. Shah", 15-12-1945
[3] *Vide*"Letter to Munnalal G. Shah", 14-12-1945

as being the most important, but since I have already accepted responsibility for all other arrangements except medical attention I should certainly like you to take up that work also. So do take up whatever work you can without coming into conflict with anybody.

Though I shall not be there on January 1, from that day the institution[1] will be run only for the poor and on behalf of the poor. From that day the management of all departments except the medical will be considered to have become my responsibility. I trust you will take up the responsibility on my behalf. But you must assume the responsibility for only as much work as you can easily attend to. Let me know what jobs you are not able to take up.

After January 1, there will be no wealthy patients there. If there are any, they will not be treated as wealthy men.

Dr. Dinshaw had said that he would himself see about the furniture. He wanted it for his clinic in Bombay. There will be very few poor indoor patients for the present. Maybe there will be none. Hence, though we shall keep facilities ready for a large number, the hospital is not likely to get filled in the immediate future. We shall have to use our judgement in the matter of furniture. Ascertain Gulbai's[2] wishes. Don't insist on ordering things which the two do not want.

From among the patients there, those who wish to leave may be permitted to do so. From January 1, really speaking, the only patients will be Balkrishna[3], Vanu[4] and Zohra. You will have no difficulty in looking after them. You must have realized by now that it is no easy job to shoulder the responsibility of that institution. The task would easily test the capacity of any man.

I wish you not to worry about Kanchan.

Blessings to everybody there

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8614. Also C.W. 7194. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Nature Cure Clinic
[2] Wife of Dinshaw Mehta
[3] Balkrishna Bhave
[4] Vanamala Parikh

74. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRAN

SODEPUR,
December 16, 1945

CHI. RAMACHANDRAN,

Why should I now write to you in English? If you have to write in English, you may do so. However, I should like you to make an attempt to write in Hindustani.

How can I explain to you how much harm we are causing to India by being unable to write except in English.

I have seen to the matter of the Rs. 100. You do not have to worry.

I hope your work is going on well. Write to me whatever you want to. I shall be going to Santiniketan on the 18th for two days. After that I shall return here.

I hope Saundram is well.

SHRI RAMACHANDRAN
GANDHI ASHRAM
SALEM DISTT.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

75. LETTER TO JASWANTRAI CHURANI

SODEPUR,
December 16, 1945

BHAI JASWANTRAI,

I had your letter dated the 20th. Ever since I have been touring. You have done well in sending the receipts of the deposits. If there is anything more, Mukherjee will write to you.

SHRI JASWANTRAI CHURANI
15 LAKE RAOD
LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

76. LETTER TO KUMAR BABU

SODEPUR,
December 16, 1945

BHAI KUMAR BABU,

You have spared me from having to visit Vasudevpur. Thanks. I am indeed sorry that I cannot go there.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

77. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
December 16, 1945

The tendency of learning English rather than one's own language was deprecated by Mahatma Gandhi. "If we could stop this tendency we would be free from one of our slaveries," said Mahatma Gandhi, adding that he could not express how this tendency of some people talking and writing in English damaged them and the country. But in England, whenever a good book was published anywhere in the world, within a few days it would be translated and would reach the hands of the English-speaking public. Mahatma Gandhi asked :

Should we not do the same thing in India? Although it would take time for all people to understand the *rashtrabhasha*, there were languages of the locality and any good book could be translated and presented to the public in their mother tongue.

The Hindu, 18-12-1945

78. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

December 17, 1945

I see that I have overstayed my time in Calcutta. I found I had more work in Calcutta than I had expected. And then events compelled me to work more strenuously than I had counted upon. The result is that, much to my and my fellow-workers' disappointment, I have been compelled to cut off the places I had originally conceived and tentatively discussed with friends who were arranging

the tour. But let no one think that the curtailment will affect my study of the Bengal situation. The visit to Santiniketan is more by way of a friendly visit than study. I do not expect to see or meet visitors. They will oblige me by abstaining from wishing to see me during my very short stay there.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-12-1945

79. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SODEPUR,
December 17, 1945

CHI. MIRA,[1]

This is merely a love letter written on the silence day. I have read your descriptive letter with much interest. But I do not know when I shall reach the Kisan Ashram. Is your account to the English Press quite accurate ?

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABAI
KISAN ASHRAM, MULDASPUR
BAHADRABAD POST, *via* JWALAPUR
SAHARANPUR DT.

From the original: C.W. 6513. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Aslo G.N. 9908

80. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SODEPUR,
December 17, 1945

MY DEAR C. R.,

Your letter. You have not much to do for deserving what I said about you to the friends. For my observation was based on the past performance, not on the promise of the future.

Let my thought work, if it is true and well thought. The spoken word may spoil matters. Wait, watch and pray. Let us see.

You should write regularly or, if you are too busy, ask someone to write. How are you? The account given to me was none too good.

Things here are as bad as could be imagined. I am trying. I go

[1] The superscription in this and other letters to Mirabehn is in Devanagari.

on 18th to Santiniketan, return on 20th and go to Midnapore on 24th for a week. Your letters should be addressed to Sodepur.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2114

81. LETTERS TO MAKHANLAL ROY-CHOWDHURY

SODEPUR,
December 17, 1945

DEAR RPOFESSOR,

If you can come at 5.45 p. m., i. e., just after public prayer on 22nd instant you can talk to me while I am having my walk.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

PROF. SHRI MAKHANLAL ROY-CHOWDHURY
12 SITARAM GHOSH ST.
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

82. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

SODEPUR,
December 17, [1] *1945*

JANAKIMAIYA,

It was good that I got your telegram.

I was a bit worried. You must have got Sushila's wire and letter. I hope you remember about the cow. You are coming to Madras, aren't you ?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5851. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In Pyarelal Papers the date is 18.

83. LETTER TO MADALASA

SODEPUR,
December 17,[1] *1945*

CHI. MADALASA,

It is good that you have undergone the second operation. I hope you are well. You are learning your lesson all right. Write to me when you are fit enough to do so. Ramakrishna[2] is fine. He does some work of service. Kamalnayan[3] has come today. I hope the child is well. Is he growing normally ?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 37. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal.

84. LETTER TO ARUN GANDHI

SODEPUR,
December 17,[4] *1945*

CHI. ARUN[5],

I think of you every day, but especially today during silence. Do you spin carefully at least 160 rounds daily? Is the yarn even? Do you yourself fix the spinning-wheel? Do you keep a daily account? If you keep this one promise, you will learn a lot.

Are you all right ? How is Ila[6]? Has she become a little wiser?

Blessings to all of you from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4969. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In Pyarelal Papers the date is 18.
[2] Addressee's brothers
[3] *ibid*
[4] In Pyarelal Papers the date is 18.
[5] Son of Manilal Gandhi
[6] Addressee's sister

85. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

SODEPUR,
December 17,[1] *1945*

BHAI KUMARAPPA,

Your work has come to my notice. Look after your health and do not tempt God. If you have understood what I have said, then you need not move about a lot. It is a question of your being ready. What is required is mastery over one vocation and working knowledge of the others. It is very necessary to have good knowledge of Hindustani.

Blessings from
BAPU

KUMARAPPA
WARDHA

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10406. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

86. LETTER TO RAM MANOHAR LOHIA

SODEPUR,
KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
December 17, 1945

BHAI RAM MANOHAR,

I am sorry that your father passed away suddenly yesterday. We used to meet often. I had sent Pyarelalji and Prabhavatibehn to see his charkha activity. In my view he died in the manner he wanted. He had been engrossed in his work.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. RAM MANOHAR LOHIA
AGRA

From the Hindi original: C.W. 11065. Courtesy: Hardev Sharma. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In Pyarelal Papers the date is 18.

87. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

SODEPUR,
December 17, 1945

BHAI JAJUJI,

I have your letter about the appointment of Ramdhanbhai in Kashmir in place of Vichitrabhai. I agree.

I have sent my signatures on the authority letter for opening accounts in banks.

I have sent the letter after signing it to the Bihar Charkha Sangh.

The reply sent to Badshah Khan is all right.

Do whatever you can about……[1] khadi.

Blessings from
BAPU

JAJUJI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

88. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

SODEPUR,
December 17,[2] 1945

BHAI MAHMUD,

How was it that you came and went away? I kept on waiting? It was much easier for you to come to Sodepur. How can any arrangement be made now ?

Blessing from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5092. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] A word is illegible here.
[2] In Pyarelal Papers the date is 18.

89. LETTER TO VEENA PATEL

SODEPUR,
December 17,[1] *1945*

CHI. VEENA,

I have your beautiful letter. Let me know to what extent you had been suppressing yourself. Khimji is no doubt a good man and you will be happy there. Keep on writing to me. I am going to Santiniketan tomorrow. Father meets me quite often. He will go to Wardha. He will take Swadhina with him. Dhiren is well.

Blessings to you and Khimji from
BAPU

VEENA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

90. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

SODEPUR,
December 17, 1945

We have come so close together and you have been observing such exemplary silence that it will give me a wrench to be away from you. God willing I shall be leaving for Santiniketan on Tuesday. I hope to return and again join you in the prayer on the 21st.

The hymn that has been sung on Monday is particularly appropriate. It says that he who gives his all gets all without asking. As against this he who grabs what he has no right to, loses all.

I have been told that some of you travel without ticket on trains and even stop trains by pulling the alarm chain at will. The report has pained me. Both these things are illegal. But I do not want to dwell upon the legal aspect. These practices are contary to the spirit of the prayer. All I can say is those who indulge in these practices have not grasped the meaning of prayer. If they will reflect on the hymn that has just been sung they will realize that they may not travel

[1] Although the date in the source is 18, it would appear from the contents that the letter was written on the 17th, for Gandhiji left for Santiniketan on the 18th.

[2] The speech, written in Hindi, was read out by Kanu Gandhi, it being Gandhiji's silence day.

without ticket or pull the alarm chain without legitimate cause. I hope that such things will not occur again. If we continue to indulge in this kind of behaviour it will neither bring us independence nor enable us to retain it after it has been won. May God guide us aright.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-12-1945

91. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

CAMP: KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR (NEAR CALCUTTA),
December 18, 1945

DEAR MR. ABELL,

In continuation of the correspondence[1] about the alleged ill-treatment of Dr. Rammanohar Lohia, I am now able to send as requested a copy of the statement made by Dr. Lohia to his legal adviser.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 66

92. LETTER TO G. L. CROSS

CAMP: KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR (NEAR CALCUTTA),
December 18, 1945

DEAR MR. CROSS,

I have very carefully read your letter of the 15th and the note you left with me when we last met. Dr. Sushila Nayyar added that after best thought you had come to the conclusion that it would not be proper to worry me in the matter, at least for the time being. If this last news is accurate, I need not say anything more. However, I want to say that in popular estimation anything which the Government either directly or indirectly supports is considered to be anti-Independence and there is, at some stage or other, a clash between the people and the power that keeps the former from their cherished goal. This has happened often enough within my own experience. Therefore, 'non-

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Evan M. Jenkins", 25-12-1945

[2] Acknowledging this in his letter dated December 20, the addressee said that the statement had been forwarded to the Home Member.

political' has come to mean non-Indian, i.e., anti-Independence. Hence the unpopularity of movements connected with the Government. This is the crux. Association with war has a meaning with me but not with the average man. Everything British is certainly not bad if it is not synonymous with the Government; as C.F. Andrews, from top to toe British, was not bad. There are many organizations under Democracy which are not themselves run democratically but are not anti-democratic. Thus, a bank or a hospital would require experts to run it even though they may be run by democrats in the interest of democracy.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

G. L. CROSS, ESQ.
C/O FRIENDS' AMBULANCE UNIT
1 UPPER WOOD STREET
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

93. LETTER TO PUSHPA K. DESAI

SODEPUR,
December 18, 1945

CHI. PUSHPA,

Owing to my many preoccupations, I have not been able to write to you of late. I hope you are getting on well. You must be learning Hindustani.

Enclosed is a letter from Vrajlal. Read it and preserve it. Give it to me when I return. I have replied to Vrajlal and told him that if he finds it convenient he may go to Sevagram even in my absence. If he can persuade you to marry him, he may by all means do so. As I understand you, you do not even countenance the idea of marrying. But my judgment of you may be wrong. Can any man or woman really know his or her heart? Does not God alone know it? If, therefore, you change your mind after meeting Vrajlal, believe yourself to be absolutely free to do what you like. Don't be obdurate through a false sense of shame. Obey the promptings of a pure heart. I shall welcome your writing to Vrajlal, and if you do write, send the letter to

me. I will forward it to him. If you are not very eager to write, I shall not press you to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9267

94. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

SODEPUR,
December 18, 1945

CHI. DINSHAW,

Though I am here I keep thinking of matters there. Please train Munnalal well. He is hard-working, honest and accomplished.

What did you do about the furniture? We will not take in any new patient from the new year. We might admit some who are poor. I hope you are calm. I am enclosing the wire from Met Manage. Let him come when he can. Those who stay on should do so after careful consideration. Those who want to leave may go. Write to me at the address given above.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

95. LETTER TO GULBAI D. MEHTA

SODEPUR,
December 18, 1945

CHI. GULBAI,

You must now be due for confinement. How are you? You are calm, aren't you? Write to me whatever you like. You are not going to fight shy of me. How is Mother ?

How is Ardeshir[1] ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's son

96. LETTER TO ANASUYABAI KALE

SODEPUR,
December 18, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I was happy to read your letter. Your Hindi is not in any way inferior to mine.

Everyone should do some constructive work over and above parliamentary work. And the aim of parliamentary work should also be to advance constructive work.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI ANASUYABAI KALE
ANAND BHAVAN
DHANTOLI
NAGPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

97. LETTER TO B. P. SINHA

SODEPUR,
December 18, 1945

BHAI SINHA,

I have received the statement[1] of Dr. Rammanohar which you have sent. Thanks.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI B. P. SINHA
KASHI VIDYAPITH
BENARAS CANTT.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 18-12-1945

98. LETTER TO N. G. RANGA

SODEPUR,
December 18, 1945

BHAI RANGA,

I have gone through your letter. I will read your pamphlet. You are doing a lot of work.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

PROF. RANGA
NIDULBROLU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

99. LETTER TO H. C. DASAPPA

SODEPUR,
December 18, 1945

BHAI DASAPPA,

I have your letter. Meet me in Madras when I go there. I doubt whether I shall be able to go to Mysore. Be in Madras, both of you. Blessings to Yashodhara.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA
SHRI KASTURBA SHIBIR
PADURAVALLY
V. V. MOHALLA POST
MYSORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

100. LETTER TO SANKARAN

SODEPUR,
December 18, 1945

CHI. SHANKARAN,

I have your letter. I understand. I have already written for the expenses of [your] son and sister being paid.

Come here after improving your health. Write to me about everything there. Let me know how many patients there are and what treatment they are being given and so on.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SANKARAN
BALESHAWAR SINGHJI
JIVAN SAKHA, LUKERGANJ
ALLAHABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

101. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

SODEPUR,
December 18, 1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I have your letter about Durgabai. You may accept her services. I am not however fully satisfied. How will she be able to do the work of Kasturba Memorial Trust while practising law? Let us see whether she learns Hindustani. I have your letter about Shri Panajikar, but I have not received his letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHYAMLAL
SECRETARY, KASTURBA GANDHI SMARAK NIDHI
WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

102. LETTER TO PURNIMA BANNERJEE

SODEPUR,
ON THE TRAIN,
December 18, 1945

CHI. PURNIMA[1],

You must be knowing that from January onwards the Kasturba Smarak Nidhi will function through its Agents instead of the commi-

[1] Purnima Bannerjee of Allahabad, sister of Aruna Asaf Ali

ttees. I am enclosing herewith a copy of the resolution passed in this connection. Will you become an Agent? It will be easy for you to fulfil the conditons laid down. I had a talk with Jawaharlalji. He says neither he nor Pantji has any objection to your taking up this work. That is to say, they will relieve you from other activities. Someone told me—I cannot remember his name—that you might try to get into the Assembly. One going into the Assembly will not be able to do the work of Kasturba Memorial Trust well because an Agent will have to give a lot of time to the work if she wants to bring credit to it.

Now write to me at the Sodepur address. I wanted to write to you a few days back but forgot about it.

Blessings from

BAPU

PURNIMA BANNERJEE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

103. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKVASA

[CAMP] SODEPUR,
ON THE TRAIN [TO SANTINIKETAN],
December 18, 1945

BHAI MANGALDAS PAKVASA

I have your letter and the opinions. It was good that you sent copies of the opinions to Jajuji. I shall now see what can be done.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4784. Courtesy: Mangaldas Pakvasa

104. LETTER TO OM PRAKASH

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
ON THE TRAIN,
December 18, 1945

CHI. OM PRAKASH,

I have your letter. If you have to go to your brother and do the work there, you should spare some time and come back after finishing the work. Take care that you do not devote too much time to it.

It is necessary to have a good knowledge of Urdu but why should you crave for a degree ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

105. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SODEPUR,
ON THE TRAIN TO SANTINIKETAN,
December 18, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have received all your letters. The letter written on rough paper is also lying with me. Today I shall answer whatever I possible can.

I am doing quite a bit of work here.

As for hand-carding I believe that this makes the cotton very clean. It is not so well cleaned either by machine or by any other means. By all these other means the fibre does become somewhat weak. In my view land-carding is a grand process. Combing should be given a place in it. Hand-carding teaches us cleanliness and patience. Adding the time spent in hand-carding [to that of the whole process] the speed of spinning the yarn seems slow. But that does not matter. Hand-carding of course cannot provide a livelihood. But it has a very significant part in self-reliance. As the process of hand-carding has not been very much in vogue, we have not had a real estimate of its power. We shall have an idea of its power if large numbers of people take to hand-carding. Show this letter to Vinoba also Hand-carding is his discovery. He has also had a wide experience. I would like to know if I am mistaken in this.

Because the sadhu had gone away, it was quite proper that he was asked to leave the Ashram. In my view this does not mean that it was quite wrong to have kept him in the Ashram. This will enable you to understand my argument.

I have no doubt that there should be separate classes for women. As for Om Prakash I shall be content with whatever you think right. It would not be proper for me to write anything about this.

I think the proper thing would be for me not to lay down limits as to the expenses of the people who are staying in the Ashram and

who come as visitors. For my experience these days should be regarded as limited. In my view you have all gone too far ahead. And when one has left a thing behind, one's view of it becomes less acceptable. The same applies to me. A doctor, however great a specialist he may be, does not regard himself as a specialist when he has given up practice. Others, who have acquired degrees later would be considered more competent. Hence, if it is decided to limit the expenses, let me first know the amount now being spent. Then I shall provide whatever light I can.

As for quarters for workers in the Ashram, I have discussed the matter at length with Shantabehn. But I am neutral. Shantabehn must be well now.

I shall not write anything from here about the work of Kamle and Om Prakashji. It would be improper for me to write. But I shall be ready to write to them when you write to me that I can place your views before them.

I understand what you say about Kailasbehn. It would have been better if I had asked you to be present when I spoke to her. I admit that what happened was improper. But I was dealing with things under such pressure that, much as I should have wished it, I could not have kept you with me all the time. This does not imply that I should not be warned again. Even a cautions person is likely to commit mistakes. Hence, it is a good policy to give a discreet warning.

It seems to me that however much we may get to know Vinoba, there is still more to learn. Do take the girls and the boys with you. Let there be one rule in this matter, that is, there should be no undue pressure on Vinoba. We should value his time.

Do you want a wall clock or a timepiece ?

As a general rule, the new entrants should bear their own expenses. If it is decided to keep anyone free of charge, it should be done after recording the reason for doing so. I hope you have kept some such book there.

What decision did you want from me with regard to Chakrayya? What do you want now ?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

On the train. Have not revised.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4536

106. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SANTINIKETAN,
December 18, 1945

Gurudev (Rabindranath Tagore) was like a great bird, wide and swift of wings, under which he gave protection to many.[1]

Under the warmth of his wings Santiniketan has been nurtured to its present size. Bengal is full of his songs. He has glorified the name of India throughout the world not by his songs only but also by his pen and brush. We all miss the warmth of his protecting wings. But we must not grieve. The remedy lies in our own hands.

True monuments to the great are not statues of marble, bronze or gold. The best monument is to adorn and enlarge their legacy. A son who buries underground his father's legacy or wastes it will be adjudged unworthy of his inheritance.

Whilst on Rathi Babu[2] and his colleagues must primarily rest the sacred duty of making Santiniketan truely worthy of Gurudev's great tradition, that duty rests no less upon all those who, though they may not be directly connected with Santiniketan, received the warmth of Gurudev's wings.

All mortals must quit this world one day. Gurudev has gone, having achieved all that a human being can expect to in life. His soul now rests in peace. It is for you now, the workers and inmates of Santiniketan—as indeed all those who are imbued with Gurudev's spirit—collectively to represent his ideal.

Santiniketan has been the abode of peace to me and since my family was given shelter on arrival from South Africa it is a pilgrimage to me and whenever I got the opportunity I came here to seek peace and tranquility.

It is indeed sad that we no longer have his protective wings on us. But I find solace in the fact taht he has left own memorial in the form of many gifts that he has bequeathed to the nation.

It is our duty to receive those gifts with humility and gratitude and to see that they go on increasing. If we can continue his work and prove ourselves true to the task he has left us, I do not see why we should mourn his passing away. I feel in my heart that his soul is

[1] The following four paragraphs are reproduced from *Visva-Bharati News*.
[2] Rathindranath Tagore, son of Rabindranath Tagore

somewhere in this Ashram and in perfect peace.

His songs that you have sung to me, although their meanings are not accessible to me just now, were full of sweetness and inspiration. I very much wish I could prolong my stay here in your midst, but I am afraid it is not possible this time, because I have other urgent duties to attend to.

Druing the last few years, India has passed through a great ordeal and none has suffered so greatly as this province of Bengal. The news of Bengal's agonies reached me when I was in jail—powerless to do anything. I all along prayed to God to send me to serve Bengal and to help the distressed people. My visit this time, therefore, was undertaken with a view to serve and to work for Bengal. That is why I am very sorry that I shall not be able to prolong my stay. I shall take my sustenance of peace and inspiration from this place and then go away. I hope you will understand and forgive me.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 19-12-45, and *Visva-Bharati News,* Vol. XIV, No. 7

107. TELEGRAM TO AGA KHAN[1]

SANTINIKETAN,
December 19, 1945

AGA KHAN

THANKS YOUR WIRE. PLEASE ADDRESS SODEPUR.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] In reply to the addressee's telegram of December 17, 1945, which read: "I would like to write fully about Yeravda.Where can I address letters ?"

108. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SANTINIKETAN,
December 19, 1945

Santiniketan is no new place to me. This Mandir too is familiar to me by old association. On more than one occasion I have come here and addressed the inmates. Santiniketan is like a home of my own. The world is in need of the ideal of peace which is the ideal of Santiniketan. That is why I expect a great deal from this place.

Gurudev lives on in his own creation. He has fulfilled his mission. It is we who have certain duties which we owe to him. If we fail to fulfil them we shall be failing in our duties.

The message of Santiniketan is urgently needed for the world in travail. Gurudev travelled from one quarter of the earth to another to bring about peace and conciliation. In a way he has designed Santiniketan for bringing peace to the whole world. His father founded the Ashram and it was left to the son to bring its benediction to the whole world.

When we come to a place of worship of our minds should be calm so that our hearts can be receptive. That is why we close our eyes during prayers. But today I would rather keep my eyes open to see the vision how the students of this place are getting ready to carry the message of peace as couriers of goodwill and brotherhood of the world.

Students of Oxford, Cambridge and other well-known seats of learning carry their own hallmark. I would like to see the students of this Ashram invested with that hallmark of peace and fellowship. I would like to see, moreover, how alert they are to receive the world and how unperturbed and calm they are in the face of difficulties.[2]

[1] The meeting was one of the weekly ones held every Wednesday morning. Gandhiji spoke at the request of Kshitimohan Sen.

[2] According to Pyarelal "Gandhiji had noticed that during the prayer some of the boys did not sit erect. Some were fidgety, others listless. He pulled them up for this as he had done before on the previous evening."

The world has now grown a small place. England is no longer seven seas away. It takes hardly three days to reach the heart of England. We have come so near that we can share our joys and grief with all. The War has ceased. The Allies have won, but turmoil is still there, the pain and sufferings are on a very large scale. Winter is coming. We who belong to the tropics cannot even imagine what hardships will have to be endured by the people of the West in the face of dire winter there. Thousands have died and there is death staring in the face of many other thousands. They die of the severe cold and we of famine. What further suffering is in store for humanity nobody knows.

In the midst of this world-wide turmoil this Ashram should carry out its ideal of peace. All of you should carry the message of peace and brotherhood and dedicate yourselves to the cause of removing pain and suffering of the poor. You should prepare yourselves for that task from now on. You should be resolute and at the same time unperturbed. It is for you to fulfil the hope and trust that Gurudev left upon you.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 20-12-145

109. SPEECH AT FOUNDATION-LAYING CEREMONY [1]

SANTINIKETAN,

December 19, 1945

Birth and death are the obverse and reverse of the same coin. They are not distinct. They are different aspects of the same thing. But out of our ignorance we welcome the one and shrink from the other. This is wrong. Mourning over the death of dear ones, especially those like Charlie Andrews and Gurudev who have done their part so nobly and well has its root in our selfishness. Deenabandhu is blessed in death as he was in life. Death of people like him cannot be an occasion for sorrow. Speaking for myself, I may say that I have almost forgotten to mourn the death of friends and dear ones and I want you to learn to do likewise.[2]

Between Deenabandhu and me there existed love like that between two brothers. I remember how Deenabandhu came out to South Africa at the instance of Mr. Gokhale and with the blessings of Gurudev, and how he repeated from place to place with deep feeling the *mantras* Gurudev had given him. Today I have laid the foundation of the hospital in memory of Deenabandhu Andrews—a title which has been bestowed on him by the grateful poor who need hospitals.

Being situated midway between Sriniketan and Santiniketan, it will serve not only these two places but also the villages round about. I have been very much touched by the cordial welcome given me by the representatives[3] of the villagers. It is symbolical of their blessings with which are joined the blessings of you all.

Gandhiji referred to the high prices of building materials and said that it might take some time before the hospital could be erected.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 20-12-1945, and *Visva-Bharati News*, Vol. XIV, No. 9

[1]Of Deenabandhu C. F. Andrews Memorial Hospital. The function which was held in the evening was attended by the staff and students of Sriniketan and Santiniketan as also a good number of local peasantry.

[2] This paragraph is reproduced from *Visva-Bharati News.*

[3] On his arrival Gandhiji was welcomed by a Santhali headman, who applied sandal paste on his forehead, while a Santhali girl garlanded him.

110. DISCUSSION WITH HEADS OF DEPARTMENT, SANTINIKETAN[1]

December 19, 1945

Regard me as a blank slate. So far I have had only hearsay and hearsay has very little place in my life. Solid facts are what I want. Without a full knowledge of facts I shall be able to do little to help you.

It is not that you have nothing to say. That would mean that the institution is perfect. But nothing in this world is perfect. Speak to me freely about the shortcomings. Good things speak for themselves, not the bad things, at any rate, not to me.

I have followed every word of what you have said with the keenest interest and I have learned a lot from it. I do not propose to make detailed observations on what has been said or to give expression to all that is welling up in me just now but shall confine myself to one or two remarks of a general character.

As I listened while Nanda Babu[2] and Kshiti mohan Babu were speaking, I said to myself: 'Here is a real difficulty; but it is a difficulty of our own making.' If a person conducts a big department he is expected to transmit what he stands for to someone who can be termed as his successor. Yet it is the dominant cry of the two stalwarts that they are unable to find a suitable successor for their respective departments. True, these are departments of a special character. I know these departments and I know too Gurudev's views about them. Speaking generally, may I venture to suggest that there is no difficulty but can be overcome by *tapascharya?* It is almost an untranslatable word, the nearest approach to its true meaning being perhaps 'single-minded devotion'. But it means much more than that. When-ever, in the course of my multifarious activities, I have been con-fronted with a difficulty of this character, this single-minded devotion has solved my difficulty in a manner which I had never expected. During my twenty long years in God-forsaken South Africa, where under cir-

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's article "The Santiniketan Pilgrimage". The heads of the various departments had met Gandhiji in the evening informally to place before him their difficulties.

[2] Nandalal Bose, who was in charge of Kala Bhawan, Santiniketan.

cumstances of the worst kind conceivable I found my God, it was my invariable experience that the right helper appeared at the right moment.

It is my conviction, which I arrived at after a long and laborious struggle, that Gurudev as a person was much superior to his works or even this institution where he soared and sang. He poured his whole soul into it and nurtured it with his life's blood and yet I dare say that his greatness was not fully expressed by it or through it. That is perhaps true of all great and good men—they are better and greater than their works. If, then, you are to represent that goodness or greatness for which Gurudev stands but which he could not express fully even through this institution, you can do it only through *tapascharya*.

There is a remarkable string of verses in the Tulsi *Ramayana* to the effect that what is not possible through other means becomes possible through *tapascharya*. This is said with reference to Parvati. Narada had prophesied that she would have for her companion-in-life one who answered to the description of Siva. If instead of Siva those characteristics were met in the person of a rogue, her life would be ruined. How to avert such a calamity was the problem and it is in that context that the verses to which I have referred come. I commend these verses to you for your careful perusal. Only you will have to strip them of their orthodoxy.

Finances were mentioned by you in the course of discussion. I will plead with you to dismiss from your thoughts the word 'finance' altogether. I am convinced that lack of finances never represented a real difficulty to a sincere worker. Finances follow—they dog your footsteps if you represent a real cause. Here, let me utter a warning. A worker may be real and yet the cause he represents may not be real. His handicap in that case will continue. There are, of course, seeming exceptions. The world is full of fools and successful rogues. But speaking of sincere men and women, it is my faith that if their cause is as worthy as their means, the handicap of finance need never deter them or damp their ardour. It is a big thing you have undertaken and in future you may have to undertake still bigger things and the question will be raised, 'What about the finances ?' and you will find that the difficulty lies somewhere else rather than in the lack of finances. Set it right and the finances will take care of themselves.

Yours[1] is a common difficulty. You cannot ride two horses at the same time. If you mix day-scholars with full-time students, the former will overshadow and spoil the training of the latter. Your institution was not designed for the mixture.

Then it was said by Krishna Kripalani that they did not know what they were aiming at or stood for, what the sum total of the energies of Santiniketan and Sriniketan signified. My answer is that the ideal before you is not to represent Bengal or even India; you have to represent the whole world. Gurudev's claim was not smaller than that. He stood for humanity as a whole. He could not do that unless he represented India with its destitute, dumb millions. That should be your aspiration as well. Unless you represent that mass mind of India you will not represent Gurudev as a man. You may represent him as a singer, as a painter, or as a great poet but you won't represent him, and history will say of Gurudev that his institution was a failure. I do not want history to give that verdict.

I agree that if my claim that I am one of you is to be fully vindicated I ought to be here in your midst for a longer time.[2] I would love to do so. But my future dispositions are in the hands of God.

Vishva-Bharati News, Vol. XIV, No. 9

111. DISCUSSION WITH WORKERS AND STAFF MEMBERS[3]

SANTINIKETAN,
December 20, 1945

I want to hear from your lips what inspires you to be here and what are the difficulties that confront you.

Q. Should Santiniketan allow itself to be drawn into politcal work ?

A. I have no difficulty in saying that Santiniketan and Visva-Bharati ought not to be mixed up with politics. Every institution has its limitations.This institution should set limitations upon itself

[1] Bibhutibhushan Gupta's; he had mentioned the complication arising from the admission of day scholars.

[2] This was in reply to Rathindranath Tagore's request that Gandhiji should give more time every year to Santiniketan.

[3] Extracted from Pyarelal's "The Santiniketan Pilgrimage". As some members did not know Hindi, Gandhiji replied in English with the warning that they would have to speak in Hindi when they met next, at least he would not speak in any other language but Hindi.

unless it is to be cheap. When I say that Santiniketan should not get mixed up with politics, I do not mean that it should have no political ideal. Complete independence must be its ideal, as it is that of the country. But that very ideal would require it to keep out of the present-day political turmoil. I was asked this question when I was here thirty years ago and the reply I then gave was the same as I have given today. In fact it applies with even greater force today.

Q. In order to make Visva-Bharati really an international university, should we not try to increase the material resources of the university and provide greater facilities and ordinary comforts of life to attract scholars and research workers of outstanding merit from all over the country ?

A. By material resources I suppose you mean finance. Let me then say that your question is addressed to person who does not swear by material resources.'Material resources' is after all a comparative term. For instance, I do not go without food and clothing. In my own way I have tried—more than perhaps any other man—to increase the level of material resources of the average man in India. But it is my firm conviction that Visva-Bharati will fail to attract the right type of talent and scholarship if it relies on the strength of the material resources or material attractions that it can offer. Its attraction must be moral or ethical, or else it will become just one out of the many educational institutions in India. That was not what Gurudev lived and died for. I do not mean that creature comforts should not be provided to the staff and workers who work here. There are ample material comforts in evidence here already. If I stayed here longer and had my way they might be considerably reduced. As Visva-Bharati progresses and more and more gifts and donations begin to pour in, in due course it will be able to provide more attractions to scholars and research workers, if it wants to. But if I were asked for advice I would say: 'Do not yield to this temptation.' Visva-Bharati must take its stand on the advancement or moral worth. If it does not stand for that, it is worth nothing.

Q. What must be done so that the institution might not lose its high moral appeal? What remedy do you suggest for it ?

A. Every one of you should understand the significance of moral worth. Moral worth is easily distinguished from material worth.The one leads to devotion to moral value, the other to Mammon-worship. What distinguishes man from the four-footed beast is merely the recognition of moral worth, i. e., the greater the moral

worth of a person the greater his distinction. If you believe in this ideal, you should ask yourselves why you are here and what you are doing.

Every worker must have, of course, food, clothing, etc., for himself and his dependants. But you do not belong to Visva-Bharati merely because Visva-Bharati feeds, clothes and finds creature comforts for you. You belong to it because you cannot do otherwise, because your moral worth increases day by day by working for its ideals. Therefore, every defect that crops up, every difficulty that obstructs its working, will be found to be ultimately traceable to some defect in your outlook in regard to moral worth. I have been connected with many institutions for over sixty years and I have come to the conclusion that every difficulty in their working was traceable to a defect in the understanding of moral values.

Q. We are trying to serve villagers. We find that at every step our activity is blocked by the social environment in the villages. The joyless routine of life there, the stagnation and the incubus of evil social customs obstruct our efforts. Should we not work for the eradication of these before we can hope for success in our other activities, and if so how can it be done ?

A. Ever since I came to India I have felt that social revolution is a much more difficult thing to achieve than the political revolution, by which I mean ending our present slavery under the British rule. There are some critics who say that India cannot attain her political and economic emancipation till we get social emancipation. I regard it as a snag and a conundrum set to puzzle us, because I have found that the absence of political emancipation retards even our efforts for bringing about social and economic emancipation. At the same time it is also true that without a social revolution we will not be able to leave India happier than when we were born. I can however indicate no royal road for bringing about a social revolution except that we should represent it in every detail of our own lives.

Force has been used to alter the structure of society in some countries. But I have purposely eliminated it from our consideration. So my advice to you is: Try again and again and never say that you are defeated. Do not get impatient and say, 'the people are no good.' Rather say, 'I am no good.' If the people do not respond within the time limit prescribed by you the failure is yours, not theirs. It is thankless and laborious work. But you do not expect thanks for your work. Work that is undertaken for love is no burden—it is pure joy.

Q. In an ashram, does the introduction of salary system raise or degrade the ideal of the institution ?

A. I have no difficulty in saying that it makes no difference whether you pay a fixed salary or your expenses are paid for you. Both methods can be tried. The danger to be guarded against is this: if you pay a man his bazaar price you do not carry out the spirit of the Ashram. We should rather do without talent and ability, be it of the highest order, if it demands its bazaar value. In other words, we should wait till talent is attracted to the institution, not for money but for something else for which the institution stands. Nor should you let the principle of "according to want" take you even beyond bazaar values. The salary system in Visva-Bharati is not a thing to complain of. The difficulties to which you have referred cannot be removed by mere tinkering. You must find out and remove the causes which are at the root of the defects you have in mind.

Q. How can we make headway against cynicism or lack of faith that we find among the youngsters ?

A. I heave a sigh of despair when you ask me that question. When you find that your pupils are without faith you should say to yourself: 'I am without faith.' I have found that again and again in my own experience. And each time the discovery has been like an invigorating bath for me. The Biblical saying 'remove the beam from thine own eye before ye point out the mote in thy neighbour's'[1] is even more appropriate in the case of pupil and teacher. The pupil comes to you to find in you something infinitely better than himself. Rather than complain, 'Oh! he has no faith. How can I implant faith in him,' it would be far better that you resigned from your job.

Q. The intellectual tradition of Gurudev is being fairly well maintained here but I am afraid that the idealism for which he stood does not find full scope. There must be something wrong in an organization that leads to such a result. What is the remedy? Secondly, should our institution only to make culture available to the man in the street? This is your ideal. At the same time should not there be a place where higher culture can be preserved for the initiated? This was Gurudev's ideal. Such an institution will necessarily be exclusive and for the select only. I am a follower both of yours and Gurudev's ideals and I am torn by the conflict between the two.

A. To take the second question first, it is a reflection both on Gurudev and myself. I have found no real conflict between us. I

[1] *St. Matthew*, VII. 5

started with a disposition to detect a conflict between Gurudev and myself but ended with the glorious discovery that there was none.

Regarding your question, all I can say is that the feeling, 'I am all right but there is something wrong with the institution,' betrays self-righteousness. It is a killing thing. When you feel within yourself that you are all right but everything around is wrong, the conclusion which you should draw for yourself is that everything is all right but there is something wrong within you.[1]

Visva-Bharati News, Vol. XIV, No. 9

112. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

ON THE TRAIN FROM SANTINIKETAN,
December 20, 1945

I daily write the diary.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi: Courtesy: National Archives of India

113. SPEECH TO CONGRESS WORKERS [3]

RAMPURHAT,
December 20, 1945

Hindu-Muslim unity can come only by selfless service of Muslims untainted by political motives.

They (Muslims) are just like us and we must be friends with them. The same applies to Harijans. We cannot survive if we are unjust to them. By all means let all those go who want to go to the

[1] When Gandhiji was about to leave, Indira Devi, Rabindranath Tagore's niece, asked him: "Is there not too much music and dance here? Is there not the danger of the music of the voice drowning the music of life ?" As Gandhiji had no time then, he replied to the above and some other questions from Culcutta; *vide* "Letter to Rathindranath Tagore", 22-12-1945

[2] The reference is to "A Thought for the Day"; *vide* the last item. This was a postscript to Sushila Nayyar's letter to the addressee.

[3] Gandhiji addressed "about 60 Congress workers of Birbhum and adjoining districts in the local town hall. . . . Welcoming Gandhiji, Satyen Chatterjee, Secretary of the Birbhum District Congress Committee, said that Gandhiji's advice would have great effect on all of them and every worker would try to work his constructive programme."

Assemblies but even there they must make it their business to work the constructive programme. In any case, the bulk of the work of Congressmen will be outside legislatures and they must devote themselves whole-heartedly to the new, enlarged programme of constructive work.

In reply to his enquiries Mahatmaji was informed that the population of the district was about eleven lakhs including two lakh Mohammedans and about 73,000 Santhals. He asked the workers to include the Santhals also in their programme of service . . . .

In regard to the shortage of cloth the workers informed Gandhiji that there were 500 spinners in the district before 1942. But cotton yarn had always come from outside, as Bengal had never grown enough cotton for her needs. Gandhiji said that the lack of cloth in any province could not be looked upon as an insurmmountable difficulty and cited the example of England, which though it grew no cotton, was the biggest exporter of cloth.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 21-12-1945

114. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING [1]

RAMPURHAT,
December 20, 1945

Mahatma Gandhi emphasized the need for removing untouchability from the Hindu society. It was a terrible blot on Hinduism, he added. They must feel that every Indian was their brother—their own flesh. They must banish from their hearts all distinctions between Hindus and Muslims, Harijans and Bhils and Santhals. If they could learn these lessons they could banish a good many of the evils that beset society.

Mahatma Gandhi regretted that all of them could not understand Hindustani. They must, of course, know the language of their province. But, he pointed out, if they wanted to travel all over India and wanted others to come to them, they must have a common language and that language had to be Hindustani.

Explaining the language, Gandhiji said that Urdu was one form of Hindustani and the other form was Hindi. The difference was that Urdu contained more words of Arabic and Persian origin and was written in Persian script, whereas Hindi contained words of Sanskrit origin and was written in Devanagari script. It was not so always but he would not at this moment enter into the history or the causes of the present division. Gandhiji emphasized that those who wished to serve India must learn both

[1] *The Hindu*, 22-12-1945, reported that Gandhiji spoke in Hindustani and the "speech was explained to the audience in Bengali by Dr. Profulla Chandra Ghosh".

the scripts and forms of the language. If they loved their country and its people they would not mind the trouble and it was not a hard task either.

Urging the people to wear khaddar, Gandhiji observed that after 30 years' experience he could say that if they had the will to produce their own cloth they could overcome the scarcity of cloth in no time. It was strange, he remarked, that they could not or did not produce cloth in their country where cotton grew in abundance and did not spin and weave their own cloth.

Gandhiji referred to the prevalence of malaria in the district and said that one reason for this was their terrible poverty. But if they used their leisure hours rightly, Gandhiji thought, they could lessen their poverty also. They must give up their insanitary habits and it was the duty of all their workers to know how to preserve their own health and teach people the way to do so.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 22-12-1945

115. SPEECH AT RAILWAY STATION, BURDWAN

December 20, 1945

Gandhiji asked them to be peaceful as, he said, freedom could not be achieved by shouting slogans. Peace was their only weapon for non-violence which alone could bring independence. He advised them also not to think in terms of Hindus and Muslims.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 21-12-1945

116. LETTER TO ABANINDRANATH TAGORE

SODEPUR,
December 21, 1945

DEAR ABANI BABU[1],

I hope you received my telegram sent to you yesterday from Santiniketan. How I wish it were possible for me, being in Calcutta, to come to you and meet you face to face ! But I know that I must deny myself that pleasure !

I went yesterday morning to see Nand Babu's museum and in it in a glass case he showed me some rare specimens of your producing beautiful art out of almost nothing, even straws !

You must live to give India and the world more of such things.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI ABANINDRANATH TAGORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Nephew of Rabindranath Tagore

117. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
December 21, 1945

We are all travellers. I had been to Santiniketan for two days. I have returned and will stay here for two or three days and again I will go to Midnapore.

We are all travellers. Sooner or later we will have to undertake a long journey. This is the preparation for the long one. We must not be sorry for any travelling, short or long. But we do feel sorry for the long journey because we do not understand the significance of life and death, which are equal.

Today's song conveys the idea appropriately ("*Ai Korechho Bhalo Nithur, Ai Korechho Bhalo*"). This is a prayer to God to burn our passion. And only when we have succeeded in that, shall we have no sorrow for the long journey.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 22-12-1945

118. LETTER TO RATHINDRANATH TAGORE

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 22, 1945

CHI. RATHI,

It was a matter of pure delight for me to be in Santiniketan and to study all I could during my very brief stay. I told you that I would put down in writing some of the things I was unable to say there either to you personally or during the conversation[1] with the heads of departments.

1. Just as I do not like day-scholars, I do not like preparing boys and girls for university examinations. Visva-Bharati is its own university. I ought not to be in need of a charter from any Government. As it is you are giving Visva-Bharati degrees side by side with preparing students for the chartered university. You have a high ideal to live for and live up to. University degrees are a lure to which you cannot afford to fall a prey. Concessions that Gurudev

[1] *Vide* "Discussion With Heads of Department, Santiniketan", 19-12-1945

made to weakness with impunity, Visva-Bharati without him cannot make. Concessions to weakness began with the introduction of the orthodox matriculation examination. I was unable even then to reconcile myself to it and I do not know that we have gained anything by it. I am not now thinking at all in terms of non-co-operation. I am just now anxious for Santiniketan to represent the highest that Gurudev stood for.

2. Music in Santiniketan is charming, but has the professor there come to the conclusion that Bengali music is the last word in that direction? Has Hindustani music, i. e., music before and after Muslim period, anything to give to the world of music? If it has, it should have its due place at Santiniketan. Indeed, I would go so far as to say that Western music which has made immense strides should also blend with the Indian. Visva-Bharati is conceived as a world university. This is merely a passing thought of a layman to be transmitted to the music master there.

One question[1] about music. I have a suspicion that perhaps there is more of music than warranted by life, or I will put the thought in another way. The music of life is in danger of being lost in the music of the voice. Why not the music of the walk, of the march, of every movement of ours and of every activity? It was not an idle remark[2] which I made at the Mandir service about the way in which boys and girls should know how to walk, how to march, how to sit, how to eat, in short how to perform every function of life. That is my ideaa of music. So far as I know, Gurudev stood for all this in his own person.

3. You will not have real rural reconstruction unless you begin with the basic craft, which is hand-spinning. Weaver's art without hand-spinning is a dead art. You know that I pleaded for it with Gurudev; at first in vain, later on he had begun to see what I was driving at. If you think that I have interpreted Gurudev aright in the matter of spinning, you will not hesitate to make Santiniketan hum with the music of the wheel.

The spinning-wheel and all it means lends itself to the exhibition of all your skill. Do you know that the spinning-wheel is considered to be solace of the poor widow? And it is the *Annapurna*[3] of the

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, "Letter to Anand T. Hingorani", 20-12-1945
[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 19-12-1945
[3] Goddess of plenty Teerth", 26-11-1945

hungry. When you adopt spinning by way of a sacrificial rite you are immediately in tune with the dumb masses.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RATHINDRANATH TAGORE

SANTINIKETAN

From a copy: C.W. 10553. Courtesy: Visva-Bharati

119. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SODEPUR,

December 22, 1945

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter. It is quite amusing. You are working hard to pass three examinations at a time. I wish you success in all the three. Be a good doctor. Set a fine example of success in inter-caste marriage and be an expert at spinning and constructive work.Truly speaking, all the three examinations are a test of ahimsa.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7382. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

120. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SODEPUR,

December 22, 1945

CHL. MRIDULA,

I hope you received my letter. The following is my itinerary: I am leaving here on the 24th for Midnapore. I expect to return on the 4th January. After staying on for four or five days I shall go to Assam. I shall be there for a week. After I return from there I shall go to Madras. The latest date for Madras is [January] 23rd.

You are moving about quite a lot and gaining experience. Sometimes I wonder whether it would not be better for you after gaining so much experience to settle down at some place and put it to good use. And I wonder whether looking after his health does not have a place among the many duties of a man.

In my case these questions do not arise any more, because I have all along assumed the answer in my practice. But is there any absolute rule that what applies to one can apply to all?

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

121. LETTER TO SHARAYU DHOTRE

SODEPUR,
December 22, 1945

CHI. SARAYU,

I have your letter. I never thought you would come to Calcutta.

I shall leave here on the 24th on a tour of Midnapore. I hope to return on January 4th, after which I shall be staying on for four or five days. I shall be pleased to see you during that time.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. SHARAYUBEHN
DHARMASANGHA, KISHORE BUNGALOW
25 BALRAM STREET
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

122. LETTER TO TARA N. MASHRUWALA

SODEPUR,
December 22, 1945

CHI. TARA,

I have your letter.

You will succeed in your work with the K. G. N. M. Trust. Help Sushila rid herself quickly of the gall-stone. She will be all right. Sometimes diagnosis of stone, etc., turns out to be wrong. It has been observed that doctors also commit errors.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. TARABEHN MASHRUWALA
AKOLA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

123. LETTER TO RAMANAND TEERTH

SODEPUR,
December 22, 1945

SWAMIJI,

I have your letter. I have read everything. You have done well in not accepting any conditions. I had a talk with Panditji. Keep on writing to him everything.[1] I am happy to know that your health is improving.

SWAMI RAMANAND TEERTH
HYDERABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

124. LETTER TO SARASWATI GANDHI

SODEPUR,
December 22, 1945

CHI. SARU,

I have your letter. Kanti has described to me the sweet quarrel between you two. When both of you testify to each other's conduct or when I come to know that either has won over the other, I shall withdraw the adjective 'mad' and substitute it with a similar, nice adjective. There are innumerable couples in the world who carry on their life smoothly through the drive of passion. But real greatness lies in creating unity and spontaneity through knowledge.

Shanti[2], I trust, is well.

You must learn one thing. As a rule, the wife spends most of her time in the kitchen. But if you can master the art of eating just to keep alive, you will have to give the minimum time in the kitchen. For this you must learn the rules of proper diet. If you are really keen to learn, I shall teach you some day.

You have asked my permission to come to Madras. If you want to meet me for the sake of meeting I would advise you to save both

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Ramanad
[2] Addressee's son

the money and the time. Saving time is also saving money. But if you feel that you must, then do come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 7383. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

125. LETTER TO PALTU JHA

SODEPUR,
December 22, 1945

DEAR PANDITJI,

I have your letter.

I have already given you my reply with regard to Sanskrit. I have written at length about Varnashrama. A collection of my articles[1] has also been published. I have expressed my present views in the foreword.[2] The gist of it is that it is the duty of every Hindu to regard himself as a Harijan, that is, the lowest among the Shudras. Thus alone can Hinduism be purified and saved. This includes my reply to your questions.

I cannot say when I shall be able to read your two books. I should like to read them.

You have the name and address on your card printed in English ! Why and for whom?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5682

126. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
December 22, 1945

We do not want to live on the mercy of anybody except God. *Gita* teaches us to be fearless. If you could learn that, nobody would

[1] *Varnavyavastha*
[2] *Vide* "Foreword to "Varnavyavastha"

be able to keep you down. If anybody asks me to bow down my head—I am an old man and anybody can push me or knock me down—but if I say, 'I won't,' the utmost he can do is to kill me. This fearlessness is swaraj. If everybody acts in the same way or feels in the same spirit, swaraj is there. It, however, does not mean that Government will go away today but it means that no power can make us bow down our head. We would not achieve independence by simply repeating the word like a parrot. Our deeds must be on the same line.

Explaining the evening song, Gandhiji said that it was not an easy task to select an appropriate song out of the many composed by Gurudev. In this particular song, the Poet asked them not to be cowards. They were in a small boat and God was their helmsman. When God was their helmsman they should not be afraid of anything. His hands were not shaky and He would safely escort them to their destination.

Gandhiji asked his audience to have faith in God. They would have to swim across the ocean of life. After all, what was fear? The word itself frightened them. He, therefore, advised them that they must take the essence of the song to their heart. Gandhiji asked them not to leave him, nor would he leave them, so long as he was in Calcutta. He also advised them to take part in the prayer by singing in chorus with them.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 23-12-1945

127. LETTER TO RANGANAYAKI DEVI

SODEPUR,
December 23, 1945

CHI. RANGANAYAKI,

I have your letter. I have shown your letter and cutting to Dr. Sushila Nayyar. She says that surgically the thing is substantial. But I would not advise you to pay for your doctor friend for going to America. If you feel like it you may go to America. But that is a matter solely for you to decide.

Personally I think that you should turn your deafness into a blessing and listen to the voice from within. What is worth hearing will be written down for you. But this can be done only if you feel like it, not otherwise.

Blessings from[1]

BAPU

SHRI RANGANAYAKIDEVI
FIRST HOUSE
SRIRANGAM
S. INDIA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

128. LETTER TO MANIBEHN

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
24 PARGANAS,
December 23, 1945

CHI. MANIBEHN,

Kakubhai[2] has suggested that the post of Secretary of the Bombay branch of the A.I.S.A. should be offered to you. He informs me that you have seen the letter to that effect. I shall indeed be glad if you could honour the post. I know about your capabilities but I was not aware that you were also competent to cope with accounts. However, if that be so I shall be very pleased. Please,

[1] The subscription is in Hindi.
[2] Purushottam Kanji Jerajani

therefore, let me have your reply, after careful consi-deration. Once you accept the secretaryship I don't want to be obliged to admit that you are not as good an accountant as anyone else. I don't wish to be a champion of women's talents nor do I want to cover up for them. I have, all along since my South African days, wished that women would acquire the ability to struggle indepen-dently and not lag behind behind any man, in their own field. And I believe I have fairly succeeded in my endeavour.

And is it correct for you to become an agent of the artificial silk mill instead of following in the footsteps of your husband? Or don't you yourself experience any contradiction in becoming a director of the mill? I shall expect your reply to this before I arrive at any decision. Write to me frankly. Send your reply to the address mentioned above. I shall be in Bengal and Assam till the 20th of January, but my headquarters will continue to be Sodepur.

I got your letter after I wrote this, which all the same covers all the points.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

129. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SODEPUR,
December 23, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your letter of the 16th and postcard of the 19th.[1]

No fee is to be charged from the poor who may be admitted as indoor patients, but we shall accept what they can offer. In other words, we shall follow the practice obtaining in Sevagram. At present even our expenses on food are so heavy that no person of ordinary means can meet them. We shall have to consider what diet we can devise for those people which will cure them and help them to keep fit.

2. Along with the poor we shall admit only such wealthy patients who agree to live as the poor do. I can see no place for them in this

[1] The addressee's letters are not available.

sanatorium if they have to be provided special facilities. I shall not permit even providing a special room for a rich patient simply because he is rich. The plan of constructing new rooms, etc., does not appeal to me just now. For we shall know only from experience how many poor patients will seek admission or how many of them we shall admit. We shall see what to do when we run short of accomodation. My view, therefore, is that we should incur no expenditure just now except what is absolutely essential.

3. The chairs, etc., will of course have to be removed. The Doctor himself wished to buy up some of the furniture. I do not know whether he still wishes to do so. If he does not, I am afraid I shall have to arrange for their disposal. I can only hope that I shall be able to do so. We shall have to make do with the number of beds we have at present. I see that there will be no occasion in the immediate future to admit a large number of patients.

4. The reply to this is contained in what has been stated above.

5. If the boiler for heating water has become useless, it should be replaced by a new one. I did have some talk with the Doctor about it, but I forget what decision we took. If it is necessary to seek the help of the mill-owner in the neighbourhood or of Birlaji, I shall be ready to do so. Do what the Doctor suggests in this matter.

6. There is no reason to believe that we shall start getting patients right from January 1. We shall need to make arrangements only for those who are already there. And they can even sit on the floor and eat off porcelain plates.

7. I have made arrangements to buy the required quantity of khadi. If, therefore, you let me know the requirements, I shall be able to supply it. You yourself suggested five to seven rolls for three dozen bed-sheets. Will that number suffice?

8. Please consider whether those among the workers there who have their own arrangements for meals can continue the practice. I think it is our duty willingly to have meat served to those who are used to it and whose need we ought to supply. I see no harm or pollution—no one should—in the two kinds of food being cooked in the same kitchen. The idea of pollution is a mere excrescence [on our religion]. Those who are vegetarians should follow their dharma. It is self- evident to me that utensils used for cooking meat should not be used for cooking vegetables. In this matter I think we ought to res-

pect the wishes of the Doctor and Gulbai. There should not be even the slightest suspicion that we are indirectly trying to introduce vegetarian food. But we welcome anybody accepting vegetarianism on his own as being good for him.

I think it will be our duty to supply meat or eggs to those patients for whom the Doctor may consider them necessary.

9. The selection of medical assistants will rest with the Doctor.

10. Calls for no reply.

11. Just now I would regard Balkoba[1] as representing the standard for poor patients.

12. I agree with the Doctor that ultimately we shall have to shift to some large place. I have the fullest faith that God will make our path clear.

13. There is no need just now to call anybody from Sevagram. I have already written to you about Manibhai. He will come whenever we send for him.

14. The expenditure will have to be met by me. Is there no balance in the bank account there? I think I asked this question in a previous letter too. Probably it was in a letter addressed to the Doctor.

15. I have always held the view which you have expressed.

I think I have now replied to all your questions. If, however, there is anything you do not follow, do write to me. Address the letter to Sodepur.

I got you postcard today. The reply to the question you have asked in it is contained in what I have said above.

I have not revised the letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8622. Also C.W. 7195. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Balkrishna Bhave

130. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

SODEPUR,
December 23, 1945

CHI. PREMA,

Your letter of Decemebr 17 is strange, and so is its language. This is the first such letter I have had from you. You are very busy. How surprising and sad that, though you claim to be a public worker, you feel embarrassed to have to ask for money from time to time? Why need one feel embarrassed to ask for money for public work? You have, I am sure, seen me putting out my head through windows of railway carriages and begging a pice each from the people. You have even helped me in this. And still the letter to which I am replying seems to have been written by a millionaire. I can understand your feeling embarrassed if you were asking for money for yourself. But how can it be too much to ask for money even a hundred times for a public cause? You have asked for an additional sum, but have not sent me a copy of the letter. If you have addressed the letter to me in my capacity as Chairman, you should have addressed a formal letter to the Secretary too. I can immediately reply to a letter received through the Secretary. If you have written to me as to an elder, you should give me enough details to enable me to send the money to you without delay.

I sought your advice as from a daughter, co-worker and one who was more than a sister to Sushila. Instead of giving the advice I asked for, you have written as if we were utter strangers. I do not undertand what all this is. Address your reply to Sodepur. I shall be touring in Bengal, and they will redirect the letter from here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10442. Also C.W. 6881. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

131. LETTER TO DR. N. B. KHARE

SODEPUR,
December 23, 1945

BHAI KHARE,

I have your letter.[1] Thanks for the same. I have read it through. Let us see what happens now.

I am enclosing a newspaper cutting[1] which seems to me quite wrong. Is not what happened quite the opposite ?[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 4870. Courtesy: N. B. Khare

132. LETTER TO T. J. KEDAR

SODEPUR,
December 23, 1945

BHAI KEDAR[3],

Such things have appeared in the Press. I am really puzzled. I have sent the original cutting to Dr. Khare.[4] I am sending you a copy. Is not the case quite the opposite of this? Who, I wonder, is getting things published in this manner? How can such a wrong thing be set right? If Dr. Khare also holds the views that have appeared in the papers, the situation cannot be remedied. Think about it and write to me. It may be taken that my address will be Sodepur till January 20. Though I shall be touring in Bengal and Assam, I am having letters addressed to Sodepur.

[1] The addressee along with his letter had sent for Gandhiji's perusal the Government of India's scheme for helping the Indians in Malaya.

[1]Which carried a report of Gandhiji having been eager to meet the addressee

[2] The addressee in his letter of January 12, 1946, denied that he had given any interview to the Press and was surprised to see the report of their meeting in the newspapers.

[3] A Congress worker of C. P. He acted as a mediator between Khare and Gandhiji, *vide* footnote 4, "Letter to Dr. N. B. Khare", 12-12-1945

[4] *Vide* the preceding item.

I got your letter after writing this. Nobody has ever mentioned such a thing to me. I know that you did not charge any fee in the Ashti-Chimur case.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 4874. Courtesy: N. B. Khare

133. LETTER TO HARIGANESH PHATAK

SODEPUR,
December 23, 1945

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I have your letter written in English. Why did you not write to me in Marathi if you could not write in Hindustani ?

There was nothing wrong in sending Savitribai's name. It was your duty to do so. It is good that you wrote to Thakkar Bapa. I have been corresponding with Premabehn. I shall keep Savitribai's name in mind. What is her husband doing ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6103

134. LETTER TO CHARUCHANDRA BHANDARI

December 23, 1945

BHAI CHARU BABU,

Your letter is very painful. What can I do? You should have some consideration for my capacity. I shall not be able to move about after 4 o'clock. If I had the strength, I would have gone to all the places. I can finish all your work in half an hour. Do kindly forgive me. This is my only request.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8699. Also C.W. 1470. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sharda G. Chokhawala", 6-11-1945, also "Statement to the Press", 31-3-1945

135. LETTER TO ANNASAHEB SAHASRABUDDHE

SODEPUR,
December 23, 1945

BHAI SAHASRABUDDHE,

I have your letter. I have gone through everything. I feel that at the moment nothing needs to be done in this connection.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SAHASRABUDDHE
KHADI KARYALAYA
MAHAL, NAGPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

136. LETTER TO TRIPATHI

SODEPUR,
December 23, 1945

BHAI TRIPATHI,

Why did you write to me in English? I have a feeling that you are either a Maharashtrian or a Gujarati. In which case you could have written in one of the three Indian languages. You could have written in the national language or in your mother tongue. You could have written in Bengali if you are a Bengali. What do you do?

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal.

137. DISCUSSION WITH POLITICAL WORKERS1

SODEPUR,
December 23, 1945

The first [question] was from a lady who wanted to know when the remaining prisoners would be released. Gandhiji was reported to have talked with H. E. the Governor about them. Some of the prisoners were important workers without whom the great organization could not be said to be in full working order.

Gandhiji said he had naturally discussed with His excellency many questions, but he could not allow himself to be cross-examined. He could only hope with those present that if they were on the eve of liberty these prisoners must be set free sooner rather than later. But he warned the lady questioner not to worry about them if she believed with him that prisons for patriots were gateways to liberty. Was not India in bondage one vast prison ?

To a student who wanted to know what part students were to play Gandhiji said that he could not understand student organizations antagonistic to one another. Students should all be lovers of freedom and therefore all Congressmen in thought. But their first work was study. They were all servants of the nation. They should have no communal taint nor could they harbour untouchability. They were bound to follow the constructive programme and, through the charkha and all it meant, ally themselves with the millions of poor villagers of India. For the rest they should hear everything and everyone respectfully, weigh everything and follow what they thought was right. But they must keep out of party politics.

To the question whether *"Vandemataram"* should be replaced by the new song *"Qadam, Qadam"*, Gandhiji said that a song that carried such glorious associations of sacrifice as *"Vandemataram"* could never be given up. It would be like discarding one's mother. But they could certainly add a new song or songs like the one mentioned to their repertoire of national songs after due thought and discrimination.

Q. Was there violence by the people in 1942 ?

Gandhiji referred the questioner to his reply[2] to the Tottenham pamphlet and added that had the people as a whole not remained non-violent, India would have gone back. He also thought the Government had senselessly put the principal Congress-

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's Weekly Letter issued to the Press. Those present included members of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, students and trade union workers. The meeting took place in the afternoon between 3 and 5 p. m. before Gandhiji left for Santiniketan.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943

men in prison and thus provoked the people who were not yet restrained enough for complete non-violence. He had seen nothing to alter his conviction that the Government excesses far outweighed what the people had done in the way of violence.

Q. What could Congressmen do to draw Muslims to the Congress?

Gandhiji said that in the presence of the prevailing distrust there should be no attempt to enlist Muslims or any other group or individuals. What however every Hindu could do was mutely to serve his Muslim or for that matter every non-Hindu neighbour as his blood brother. Such selfless service was bound to tell in the end. That was the way of non-violence, otherwise called love.

Asked as to what the position of the Congress in relation of class struggle between the capitalists and the labouring class was, Gandhiji replied that he could speak only in his individual capacity as he was not even a four-anna member of the Congress. His own relations with his capitalist friends, he remarked, typified the attitude of the Congress towards the capitalist class. He freely accepted the hospitality of capitalists like the Birlas and made use of their money to serve the cause of the poor, but the latter did not expect anything in return from him. On the contrary, they were glad to be exploited by him in the interests of the poor. His relationship with them was ethical. He could never give up his associations with the capitalists because of fear of anybody. To do so would, in his opinion, amount to a betrayal of the cause of the poor.

Similarly, whilst the Congress accepted the financial help and cooperation of the capitalists in its fight for independence, it never was and never could be a capitalist organization. The Congress was pledged to defend the rights of labour against anyone who might attempt to encroach upon them. From its very inception it had stood for the poor, and consciously or unconsciously striven to become an organization of the masses. In this connection he referred to Dadabhai Naoroji's monumental work *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India*, which showed the deep concern of the Grand Old Man of the Congress for Indian masses.

They could now understand why he asked them to rally round the Congress. They should all identify themselves and serve the Congress, irrespective of whether they were on its membership register or not. The Congress tricolour symbolized truth and non-violence. It was the only flag worthy of being adopted by them. There was no power in the universe greater than truth. Bereft of truth man was no better than the four-footed beast. If they made truth their staff and ahimsa their shield they would be irresistible.

Continuing, he told them that he considered himself to be a labourer just like themselves. He did not think that there was any essential antagonism between capital and labour. In fact he held that labour alone was true capital. All the gold of

the capitalists could not provide them with one morsel of bread. Collaboration of labour was necessary before capital could bear fruit. Again the gold and silver of the capitalists had only a limited currency but labour was universal currency. The capitalists could be robbed of their wealth but no one could rob the labourer of his wealth, namely, industry.

Moreover, capitalists were after all few in number. The workers were many. But capital was well organized and had learnt to combine. If labour realized its inherent strength and the secret of combination it would rule capital instead of being ruled by it.

He commended to them the Ahmedabad Labour Union as a model organization to copy. It was perhaps the best organized labour union in the world. It ran its own free hospital, schools for children and cheap grain shops out of the union funds. It had conducted several successful strikes. The essential condition of a successful strike was that the strikers should not be dependent on public charity for their sustenance during the strike. They must have an alternative occupation to fall back upon in a crisis. He recalled how during the 23 days' strike[1] of Ahmedabad labour workers, he had offered them work but had refused to give them doles. The latter would have demoralized them. Spinning was an occupation *par excellence* for their purpose. He therefore asked them to learn and practise it in their homes. Concluding, he observed that a strike should be organized not out of hostility towards the employers but for the restitution of the just rights of labour. Rights and duties were reciprocal in their nature, the former accrued only from a due performance of the latter.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 25-12-1945

138. LETTER TO BHAGAWATICHARAN SHUKLA

[After *December 23, 1945*][2]

I was very happy to have your letter. I do not have time any more to write much to anyone. Your account is very good. I also understand the reason for choosing Gondia.

I am leaving on the 17th.

[1] In 1918

[2] The letter appears to have been written after the addressee's marriage which took place on December 23, 1945. *Vide* also "Letter to Krishnachandra", 18-12-1945

You did well to write. You must now be restored to health. I shall be truly happy when both of you live an ideal life.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

139. LETTER TO R. G. CASEY

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 24, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I promised on 22nd, when we met, that I would send you for your kind acceptance a copy of my reply[1] to the Tottenham pamphlet. This I do now with great pleasure and hope that you will find time to read it and, if possible, to share it with Mrs. Casey.

I forgot, when we met, to ask you about the salt tax. I trust you have not forgotten this humanitarian matter.

The first question that was put to me yesterday at the meeting[2] with some friends was about prisoners. It was addressed by a woman. I do feel that your Government will be wholly wrong if they persist now in keeping in jail these prisoners, some of whom have broken down in health.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 133

140. LETTER TO SANTOSH KUMAR BASU

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 24, 1945

DEAR SANTOSH BABU,

Many thanks for your letter and the papers. I have read your statement[3] with painful interest. I propose to make full use of the facts

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943

[2] *Vide* "Discussion with Political Workers", 23-12-1945

[3] This related to incidents in January 1943, within Mahishadal Thana in Tamluk Sub-division. The addressee, who was then a minister in the Government of Bengal, had visited Mahishadal and Tamluk during the disturbances.

vouchsafed by you. I return the papers as suggested by you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR BASU

65 DIAMOND HARBOUR ROAD, KIDDERPORE

From a photostat: C.W. 10554

141. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,

December 24, 1945

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I got your letter only today. I am leaving for Midnapore. Write to me at the address given above. I have got a telegram from the Aga Khan acknowledging [receipt of my letter[1]]. If a letter follows, I will send you a copy of it. In the telegram he has suggested an interview. What you say in your letter is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4807. Courtesy: Shantikumar N. Morarjee

142. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

SODEPUR,

December 24, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I received your letter today. I was happy. I know that you do not accept any position for the sake of honour.[2] You will only be doing service and I shall be free from worry. Do accept the position. God will make you do only good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11152. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 13-12-1945

[2] The addressee had been appointed agent of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust for Gujarat.

143. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SODEPUR,
December 24, 1945

CHI. SHARMA,

I got your letter today. I am merely acknowledging it as I am going to Midnapore right now. The work is becoming difficult. Let me see what can be done.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, facing p. 344

144. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SODEPUR,
December 24, 1945

Monday the 24th December was a great day for the Christians. The day following would be Christmas Day and that was the reason why they had heard in the *bhajan* a translation of one of the best English songs from the "Book of Psalms". They should understand the meaning of the song. It depicted one who had lost his way and was penitent for going on a wrong track. Now after a period he had been able to realize his mistake and he implored God to guide and show him the right way. He appealed to God to illumine his way in order that he might not fall into numerous pits which covered all his way. Wistful as he was to realize God, he fervently appealed to Him to take to the other world. He knew that it was God alone who was able to take him from darkness to the kingdom of light.

This was the essence of the song, said Gandhiji. What they said in their daily prayer was not different from this. Gandhiji asked all to remember this and respect all religions of the world like their own.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 25-12-1945

[1]As it was Gandhiji's silence day, the speech was read out by Kanu Gandhi.

145. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

December 25, 1945

BAPA,

I am going to accommodate all the topics in one letter. I am writing this on the steamer taking me to Midnapore.

You have written to me about Kuttimalu Amma[1] of Malabar but I am afraid she may not be able to complete our job if she becomes a member of the Assembly.

I have written to Purnima telling her that I very much doubt if she can be an Agent if she wishes to enter the Assembly.[2] I dis--cussed the same point with Jawaharlal also. If, however, you think that this will not present any difficulty I might revise my opinion.

I think anyone wishing to take up work among women, especially village women, will have no time for and no interest in the Assembly. For my part, I would suggest that you write to Kuttimalu Amma to give up her longing for the Assembly; only then will she be able to work whole-heartedly for the K. G. N. M. Trust.

Now your second letter—regarding Ram Swarup Khanna. I do not remember if the words "as far as possible" were dictated by me or by some other trustee. But they were added during the meeting itself. If you are inclined to delete the words I shall not say no. But if the words are to be removed we ought to obtain a formal consent of all the trustees.

I do not yet have Shyamlal's letter in this connection.

I have gone through Hariji's report on Midnapore and I am proceeding there.

Sucheta has sent a very good and exhaustive account of the camp at Sahibnagar. The girls of the camp also came and saw me. We are likely to gain some worth-while experience from it. You should however write to me only at the Sodepur address. Midnapore district will take eight days. On the 3rd I shall return to Sodepur. After having spent there a few days I shall go to Assam, where I

[1] A. V. Kuttimalu Amma, wife of K. Madhava Menon, for some time minister and later President of the Kerala Congress.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Purnima Bannerjee", 18-12-1945

expect to spend seven days at the most. After that to Madras *via* Sodepur. The date fixed for Madras is 23rd January. Let us see what happens there. Will you be going to Madras ?

I ask this because we had some talk about the K. G. N. M. Trust. Spending a day in Orissa does not appear possible.

THAKKAR BAPA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

146. LETTER TO JATINDAS

December 25, 1945

CHI. JATINDAS,

If you say that I must write my own letters they are bound to be delayed, or I may not even be able to write them. Hence, for the time being you had better give up the desire to receive letters written in my own hand. That occasionally I may write myself is a different matter. This is in reply to your letter of the 18th which reached me yesterday at Sodepur. I am dictating this on board the steamer taking me to Midnapore. It is good you have gone there in time, for the silver jubilee celebration of the girls' school. You will certainly take a leading part in the athletic events. And I hardly need say anything about the Art section. Don't act in haste. I am not going to issue an immediate summons for you to rush to me ! After all you are doing work there and I also believe it will bear fruit. Besides, it will immensely please me if you satisfy Father. A selfless worker always gets an opportunity to serve wherever he goes. Therefore, the question of searching for a field of service does not arise.

I shall write whatever is right regarding the Vithal Kanya Vidyalaya[1] affair after you write to me.

I hope you are fine. Send the reply to the Sodepur address.

It appears I shall be leaving Bengal on January 21st.

JATIN

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] A girls' school at Nadiad in Gujarat

147. LETTER TO SAUDAMINI G. MEHTA

December 25, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. Did you have the purse you had brought specially for the Bengal Harijan Sevak Sangh? Anyway it does not matter whether or not you have it. For my part, I have collected a fairly large amount. How much would you require? Please let me know. If you say that no sum will be too much I am going to look upon you as a lazy person. Workers who only know how to spend and cannot produce what they spend cannot do any work. This has been my experience over the past sixty years. It began with myself. In England we formed the Vegetarian Society in the Way's Hotel, but did not collect funds from amongst the members, with the result that we achieved nothing. I occasionally exposed myself to laughter but I don't remember anyone having been converted to vegetarianism because of my activity. My later experience gradually proved sweeter because I then decided that funds would be collected from those amongst whom we proposed to work. That balanced the two sides. The result was I became a "Mahatma". I am pointing out the golden way in case you want to become one. This by way of jest. I am dictating this on board the steamer taking me to Midnapore. That is how I could get some time. About meeting Harijan workers you may decide after I return.

SAUDAMINI MEHTA
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

148. LETTER TO SUCHETA KRIPALANI

ON THE STEAMER,
December 25, 1945

CHI. SUCHETA,

I have your report. It is very good. You have given all the information. I got your report the day before yesterday after the women of the camp met me. I have written to Purnima.[1] Hope P [rofessor][2] is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI SUCHETA DEVI
SWARAJ BHAVAN
ALLAHABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

149. LETTER TO DHOLKE

ON THE STEAMER; MIDNAPORE,
December 25, 1945

BHAI DHOLKE,

I have your letter and also the newspaper cutting. I personally do not like all these things. Even a well-meaning report can do harm. I had never thought that any part of the report can do harm. I had never thought that any part of the report was going to be published. In parts it is not even true. What can I say about the comment appearing in *Navabharat* and *The Nagpur Times*?

NAGPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Purnima Bannerjee", 18-12-1945
[2] J. B. Kripalani

150. LETTER TO H. C. DASAPPA

December 25, 1945

BHAI DASAPPA,

I saw your letter addressed to Rajkumari. When will you write in Hindi? Make an effort, or is it that you cannot even make an effort in this life ?

There is no need to tempt me as far as Mysore is concerned. I should at least like it for the camp of the Kasturba Memorial Trust, but I am afraid it is necessary for you and me to develop the spirit of renunciation.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA

GURUKUL ASHRAM

KENGRI POST, *via* BANGALORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

151. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

December 25, 1945

BHAI JAJUJI,

I have your postcard. If the Congress wants us to organize an exhibition during the Congress session and is willing to pay for it, we should do it. Did the Professor write to you? Will you write to him or shall I ask him? Who will look after the work? Will you leave things in the hands of Vichitra ?

I am sending a copy of what I have written about Manibehn. I have a letter from her. I send a copy of it. There is no need to write more. You will know my mind from my letter.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

152. LETTER TO VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA

December 25, 1945

CHI. VICHITRA,

Are you aware of the quarrel between Gadodiaji and Dr. Sharma? What do you know about it and what is your opinion? Gadodiaji does khadi work. He says that he is doing it sincerely. Let me know how far that is so.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

153. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING[1]

DIAMOND HARBOUR,

December 25, 1945

Gandhiji had already had one blessing from them. They had gathered there in thousands but there was no noise and they were sitting there quietly and peacefully under the scorching sum. If he left them after two hours, he would be going to serve them elsewhere. If they realized that in their heart he would be really happy.

So many of them, men and women, were spinning there. That was a sight very pleasing to him. He also desired to thank them for the purse of Rs. 25,250 which they had given him for work in this sub-division. It was still more pleasing to him that this money had been collected from 3,900 persons. He was giving it to Charu Babu[2] and was sure that it would be spent wise with maximum benefit. He hoped that the work would be taken up with this sum as capital.

He had read and heard of the calamities suffered by the people of this sub-division due to flood, famine and pesstilence. He also knew that unless they bore such calamities with fortitude, they would not be able to survive in this would. Calamities occurred at every moment in some place or other and humanity all over the world had to pass through such sufferings. Today humanity was suffering in one form or other all over the world. But if people thought of them as misfortunes falling on them and broke under them, they would not be able to reap good out of evil.

The songs sung at Khadi Pratishthan at prayer-time every day had one central message and that was that even those who suffer get the blessings of God hidden in those sufferings.

[1] Gandhiji's Hindi speech was simultaneouly rendered into Bengali by Satis Chandra Das Gupta.

[2] Charuchandra Bhandari

It pained him to find that thousands of villagers were still coming there from distant places. It had been decided that he should come there at half past three and remain with them for two hours. If he had done so his progamme of work would have been disturbed and he would not have been able to serve them as he desired.

He had a faith and it was still with him after he had come there. That was about the charkha. He had been saying from the very beginning that if we did not have faith in the charkha and realized its inner meaning, we would not be able to live peacefully in Hindustan. He had been saying this for 60 years, and this was true not noly for Hindustan but for the whole world, wherever humanity lived, whether it was a small or big community or country. Humanity could not live peacefully unless it accepted the creed of truth and non-violence. It needed to be said that hooliganism or rowdyism would not enable us to bring swaraj or do anythiny good for humanity. He was convinced that if the 40 crores of people in India were truly imbued with this spirit of truth and non-violence then sawraj would be in our hands.

He would also tell them briefly the significance of the charkha. They would see that the poorest of the poor could have a charkha and spin. He had not seen any other machine which could be as useful as the charkha. Spinning was a form of labour. If a person did not work for his bread, he would be like a thief stealing the property of others. The charkha gave them scope for honest labour.

In our country persons who knew English and who were said to be educated told us that our people, who had no work to do for six months, could have nothing in store for them but begging. He would tell them that they would have to use intelligence in spinning too. A few minutes earlier he was spinning. The charkha was good but there was something wrong in it. He had to mend it before he could spin. In this way, if there was anything wrong in the machinery used by the people of India, then we would not be able to reap the maximum benefit out of it. Here one charkha went wrong. What would be the fate of Hindustan if 40 crores of charkhas went wrong? Those who believed that swaraj could be won by the charkha, would necessarily have the blessings of God. So long as we did not believe in God we would not be able to banish fear from our mind. A person or people who was not fearless could not be free. That was a simple truth.

He desired to thank them again for they had listened to him quietly. He hoped they had listened and realized what he had said. If, however, they had not been able to follow him, he hoped what he had said would be translated into Bengali and circulated among them. When he heard that they would be glad if he held his prayer there he was greatly delighted. He would hold his prayer for a few minutes and then would take leave of them. That did not mean that his work there was finished. He would go to the launch and hold discussions with their representatives. If he could work according to his plan, he would know his duties towards them. Concluding Mahatma Gandhi said :

I would request you to be quiet at the time of prayer. You should be wholly given to meditation of God while praying. Prayer is not parrot-like repetition of words. It is meaningless without singleness of heart.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 26-12-1945

154. DISCUSSION WITH CONGRESS WORKERS[1]

MAHISHADAL,
[*On or after December 25, 1945*][2]

I cannot say that all that has been done has been well done or ought to have been done. On the contrary, much of it ought not to have been done. That the people did not remain inert is a matter of satisfaction, but the fact that after all these years they should not have known what the Congress stood for is a matter for sorrow. What they did was thoughtless. By its very nature it could not be sustained.

You have graphically put in your reports how you blew up a railway track, put roads out of use, burnt a *kutchery*, seized a *thana*, set up a parallel government and so on. This is not the technique of non-violent action. People committed the mistake of thinking that all that did not involve killing was non-violence. Sometimes killing is the cleanest part of violence. If you kill the mischief-maker outright, there is an end to it as far as he is concerned, but harassment is worse. It did not put out mischief. On the contrary, it brought the mischief on our own heads. The authorities became vindictive. Perhaps, you will say that they would have been vindictive anyhow, but that is not what we should desire or aim at. It does not pay us to let them go into panic.

In August 1942, the authorities became panicky. We gave them that excuse. But they are a people who do not know what defeat is; their cowardice is not fundamental. So, they let such things as *thanas, kutcheries*, panchayat courts, etc., remain in your hands for a short while as toys but as soon as they had completed their dispositions they turned the full blast of their machinery of retaliation against us. It is not in this way that India will attain her independence. We cannot afford to repeat it.

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Non-violent Technique and Parallel Government"

[2] Gandhiji was in Mahishadal from December 25 to 30.

Today you have to reckon not with Britain alone but the Big Three. You cannot successfully fight them with their own weapons. After all, you cannot go beyond the atom bomb. Unless we can have a new way of figting imperialism of all brands in the place of the out-worn one of a violent rising, there is no hope for the oppressed races of the earth.

Let nobody be misled by the Russian parallel. Our tradition is wholly different from Russia's. The historical setting too is defferent. In Russia the whole population was under arms; Indian masses will not take to arms even if they could be given the necessary training. But it is useless to think that our rulers will let us give them that training when they have at a stroke disarmed a first-rate military State like Japan. Today Japan lies prostrate at the conqueror's feet. But non-violence knows no defeat. It must however be true non-violence, not a make-believe. I would not shed a single tear if I alone were left to represent such non-violence.

Q. After all that we have done and suffered, we have begun to doubt whether our energies have flowed in the right channel, whether the mass awakening was not misdirected. But is not non-violent rebellion a programme of seizure of power ?

A. Therein lies the fallacy. A non-violent revolution is not a programme of 'seizure of power'. It is a programme of transformation of relationships ending in a peaceful transfer of power. If the people had fully carried out the five steps outlined by me in my 8th of August speech[1] in the A.I.C.C. in Bombay, and had there been a perfect atmosphere of non-violence, the Government's power and repression would have been sterilized and it would have been compelled to yield to the national demand.

If under the impact of foreign invasion or some such. cause the ruling power abdicates and a vacuum is created, the people's organization will naturally take over its functions but such *jatiya sarkar* would have no other sanction except that of non-violence and service of the people to enforce its fiats. It will never use coercion. Even those who might hold contrary views will receive a full measure of security under it.

As an instance of the infinitely greater efficacy of the non-violent technique as compared to the technique of coercion, he mentioned the case of Bardoli. In Midnapore whilst they succeeded in capturing a few symbols of power in the initial

[1]*Vide* "Speech at A.I.C.C Meeting", 8-8-1942 and "Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting", 8-8-1942

stages, they could not retain the fruits of their success. But in Bardoli the satyagrahis were able fully to retain the gains of their struggle.

Moreover, you have seen that all your bravery could not prevent the violation of women. Now that is intolerable. No one should be able to cast an evil eye upon them. This requires inculcation of a higher form of bravery, i. e., that of non-violence which can hurl defiance at death and against which the power of the aggressor cannot prevail. This is what I am trying to do. It may take time. It takes a long time to infuse this kind of higher courage among the millions. Whether this kind of non violene will ever come into play or not I do not know. But you who have had training in non-violence for all these years ought to realize that in your hands non-violence should show all the brilliance that is inherent in it.

They next wanted to know as to how they could start on the right lines. Gandhiji in reply prescribed to them the spinning-wheel as "the symbol and central sun of the 8-fold constructive programme". It was the best way of achieving social solidarity and non-violent organization. The technique of non-violent action consisted in isolating and sterilizing the instruments of evil. *Jatiya sarkar* based on non-violence would not put Government servants under duress but would effectively isolate them so that they would either have to align themselves with the people or be reduced to the necessity of carrying out the foreign Government's writ through undiluted barbarism of which they would soon sicken and tire. Even their relations and dear ones would desert them.

This presupposes that no section among the people is labouring under a sense of injustice and wrong at the hands of the others. Untouchability, exploitation and communal rancour can have no place under a *jatiya sarkar*, or it will be like a house divided against itself which must fall.

Harijan, 17-2-1946

155. LETTER TO HOMI

MAHISHADAL,
December 26, 1945

BHAI HOMI,

I would advise you not to get involved in the Assembly business. How does it matter if the people ask you to? Moreover, of what use can my testimonial be? For a noble person his own noble acts or humanity are the testimonials.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

156. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

MAHISHADAL,
December 26, 1945

BAPA,

Herewith the letter from the Kanya Gurukul. I think you had better write to the Gurukul lady yourself.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

157. LETTER TO BHAILALBHAI PATEL

MAHISHADAL,
CAMP: SODEPUR,
December 26, 1945

BHAILALBHAI,

I have your long letter. As on reading it I got a clearer idea of your enthusiasm, I felt that I might not by myself be able to do justice to that enthusiasm and, therefore, showed the letter to the experienced co-workers who are in my party. I was accompanied yesterday by Shri Satis Babu and Shri Annanda Babu[1] in the boat which brought me to Midnapore. Both of them are learned men and thinkers and are taking the utmost interest in constructive work. They are not men who would obstinately cling to their own ideas; they would go wherever the quest of truth leads them. Neither of them has

[1] Annanda Chowdhury, a veteran constructive worker or Bengal

been impressed by tractors, nor very much by electrically operated flour mills. Since I myself am temperamentally cast in adifferent mould, I leave out myself. I asked Satis Babu to reduce his opinion to writing and am sending his note in the original. Annanda Babu has definite proofs in support of his view and he will collect them and prepare a note after the present tour is over. I will send it to you. I think that ultimately the gulf between the two opposite views will remain unbridged, and everything will depend on experience alone. Meanwhile, you should cling to the view which you hold so firmly and act on it. I have always acted on what I believe to be true and it seems but right that I should continue to do so. Keep on writing to me if there is anything which you feel might change my views.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile of the Gujarati: *Shri Bhailalbhai Patel, Sitermi Janmagranth Abhinandangranth, 1958,* p. 254

158. LETTER TO SADHU CHARANDAS

MAHISHADAL,
December 26, 1945

BHAI SADHU CHARANDAS,

I have your letter. I have written quite a lot on students. You should read it and do whatever you feel is right. What can be there in it which makes you sleepless ?

SADHU CHARANDAS
HEAD MASTER
BOARD HIGH SCHOOL
SURADA (GANJAM)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

159. LETTER TO DHARMA DEV SHASTRI

MAHISHADAL,
December 26, 1945

SHRI DHARMA DEV SHASTRI,

Is it true that you have fallen ill? Get well soon. Why did you fall ill ?

SHRI DHARMA DEV SHASTRI
DARSHAN KESARI
ASHOK ASHRAM
KALSI, DISTT. DEHRA DUN

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

160. LETTER TO HARIPRASAD SHASTRI

MAHISHADAL,
December 26, 1945

BHAI HARIPRASAD SHASTRI,

I have your letter. Why did you write in English? What I am doing is also for the sake of Truth. Who knows what consummation will serve Truth. It is better to keep on doing what we consider our duty irrespective of the result.

SHRI HARIPRASAD SHASTRI
SHANTI SADAN
30 LANSDOWN CRESCENT
LONDON–W II

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

161. LETTER TO HARIRAM

MAHISHADAL,
December 26, 1945

BHAI HARIRAM,

I have your letter, I cannot do anything in this matter.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

162. LETTER TO MUKHERJEE

MAHISHADAL,
December 26, 1945

BHAI MUKHERJEE,

I have your letter dated 23rd December. I have had a talk with your son. I hope your wife is now well. I have gone through all the papers from Nepal that you have sent. I do not see what help they can be. This work perhaps can be done only by people like you who are familiar with it. It cannot be done with the help of a certificate from the Government of Nepal or anyone else.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

163. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

MAHISHADAL,
December 26, 1945

I have come here to know what you have done so long, and also to know about your sufferings, and after that to try to help ameliorate some of them.

I have not come here to deliver speeches. I have delivered many speeches in my life. Now I am old in age and there has been a change in my mind, and I think by delivering speeches I will not be able to do any good to you.

Referring to the sufferings of the people of Midnapore during the past years Gandhiji said that he was anxious to visit the district for some time, and he was glad that he got the opportunity today. During his stay in their midst, he would study their conditions–political and economic.

Mahatma Gandhi advised the gathering to join in singing God's name as by doing so they would pick up the habit of doing things unitedly. Swaraj could not be given by anybody. The people must possess unity of strength for achieving it. It also meant non-violence or peace.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 27-12-1945

[1] The meeting was held in the open space adjoining Gandhiji's hut. It was attended by more than one lakh people.

164. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

MAHISHADAL,
December 27, 1945

If we can conduct ourselves unitedly as we have done in maintaining the rhythm of the *bhajan* sung, then whatever injury is inflicted on us and however wronged we may be as the result of the visitation of Nature or policy of the State, we will be the master of the situation and keep our head unbent. History provides many such instances.

Proceeding, Gandhiji referred to the *bhajan* sung at the meeting and stated that it would not distort the meaning of the song if in the place of ”temple” the word “liberation” was used.

But, asked Gandhiji, what was exactly that liberation which the Poet in the song and they as well wanted to attain? Was it the liberation or salvation that came to man after his death or was it the liberation from all vestiges of bondage that a human being suffered under in this world ?

The congregation, Gandhiji hoped, would agree with him that they all wanted the liberation from bondage in this world. If that was the hankering then they must appreciate the significance of a unitedly given rhythm.

They were suffering under a bondage of foreign yoke and consequently they were anxious to be liberated therefrom. There might be, if not equally, strong powers or influences in their country which also were anxious to keep them down in bondage. They were anxious to get rid of all these bondages but, added Gandhiji, the worst type of bondage was that which enabled one to submit himself to any form of slavery.

Man was a slave to may things— his property, his desires, They should seek deliverance from all these things. If they could press forward their claim for liberation from all these bondages in the same way as they did in maintaining the rhythm of the chorus of the *bhajan*, they would, he hoped, realize his message.

When they kept rhythm by a movement of the hands, the feeling of such a movement came from within. In other words their hearts were attuned to the outside movements. That was exactly the thing prerequisite to the attainment of salvation.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 28-12-1945

[1] The meeting was attended by over one lakh people.

165. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

MAHISHADAL,
December 28, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

The papers report your safe arrival. This is earlier than anything you could have sent. I hope all will go well there.

Here I am in the midst of peaceful surroundings on the canal bank. This is saved children's home. No mosquitos. Is it not 'es'? Fancy meetings absolutely silent though attended by perhaps one lakh of people.

No more.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

166. LETTER TO T. H. BAIRD

MAHISHADAL,
December 28, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 18th November. I am forwarding your letter and pamphlet to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Your pretension appears to me to be too great.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

T. H. BAIRD, ESQ.
33 PARK AVENUE
PORTOBELLO, EDINBURGH

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

167. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

MAHISHADAL,
SODEPUR (24 PARGANAS),
December 28, 1945

CHI. KAKA,

I can only dictate the reply to your letter. Just now I have to be content with what I can dictate or write after the morning prayer. I therefore do not think it necessary to stretch out the hand from under the quilt to write to you.

I can think of only one thing regarding you, and that is, you should go on doing what I tell you—though you may make any suggestion you like. This is exactly what you say in your letter too. Even if your interpretation is the only correct one, I would say that it would be safer not to exercise the right which has been granted to you but to consult the committee. At any rate you will lose nothing thereby, nor is such procedure likely to result in any delay, especially when you can consult them by correspondence.

Let us forget the affair of the Vidyapith library, for I never think about it. And, in any case, what is the use of recalling it ?

I see no need for you to resign from activities in Gujarat. The whole thing seems to be your imagination. Moreover, Amritlal takes interest in them. It was you who made him what he is. Without your support his interest would dry up. He is a straightforward and hard-working man. From among your discoveries, I consider him as the one who has proved his worth. So you can leave only after convincing him fully. You have as good as left, since Amritlal will never do anything against your wishes.

Thirdly, though you had intended Prof. Banhatti for B. B. Mandir and told him so, there will be no harm if you take him away for the Adhyapan Mandir. The latter needs his services for work which is already in progress, whereas nothing is definite yet about B. B. Mandir's work.

I did not like your falling ill. I see no need to work at such speed and expense of energy. Do what you can without overtaxing yourself. I can understand your desire that nothing should be overlooked through lethargy, but I am not at all ready to grant the necessity of working with speed. I remember in this connection the couplet: "To be impatient is to be confused and to be patient is to be self-possessed." It is for you to know who the author is.

I experience supreme peace here even in the midst of meetings attended by thousands. This is a new sight altogether. I even believe that this is the result of the work we have been able to do in Sodepur. Moreover, the people no longer ask for speeches from me, but want prayer meetings. On one side we have this, on the other, I read in newspapers the reports of the goondaism that is going on. Who can say what the outcome of all this will be, or what God will do? Is it not enough that we should cheerfully shoulder the burden of the small tasks that fall to our lot ?

Let this suffice for today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10987

168. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

MAHISHADAL,
December 28, 1945

BAPA,

Herewith Mridula's wire. You will be able to see Devdas also. What shall we do about Delhi? If these two names cannot be approved we should look for some other lady. I also hold the view that until we come across a woman worker we should carry on the work through the Wardha office as best as we can, since the main thing is for us to work in the countryside.

Have you written to them that Tai Rajwade has declined the offer? Rajkumari has agreed to find [workers] for both the places (Delhi and Central India). Yet Devdas's scheme still remains to be considered. I am doubtful if Ramachandran and Saundaram can adjust themselves to this task. Ramachandran has adjusted himself to the Nayee Talim work, so how can we withdraw him from it? Saundaram alone surely cannot cope with the responsibility. This is what I think, so discuss this thing also with Devdas.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

169. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

MAHISHADAL,
December 28, 1945

CHI. DINSHAW,

Today is the 28th. I am dictating this from a village in Midnapore. I have sent a full reply to Munnalal's letter. He had informed me that it was written on behalf of all of you. I don't know when this will reach you.

I only hope that everything will change from January 1st. My heart is there. When I shall be there is in God's hands. He will take me there whenever He wills.

A sign-board in Hindustani, Urdu and Marathi was to be put up there. Have you done it? Or have you put it off till I come ?

Do you still have the 'big' monied patients or have they left? If they have stayed on, will they agree to be in the same line with the poor ?

What did you do about the hospital fruniture? Did you get the pieces you wanted for your Bombay unit? Or shall I have to see to the matter myself? I know I shall have to put up with the monthly expenditure there. A number of questions have been raised in this connection; I shall remit the appropriate amount after I get a reply.

I do not expect a large number of indoor patients moving in soon. I take it that those who have already applied to you will be the rich ones. There is no question of our admitting them at the moment. It will be a different matter if we admit them after the new norms are established and the rich agree to stay with the poor.

Of course, I strongly feel that you should adapt yourself to the new pattern in full knowledge and faith.

I hope Gulbai is fine. I expect it is now nearing time for her confinement.

Write to me at the Sodepur address.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. DINSHAW MEHTA
POONA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal. Courtesy: Pyarelal

170. LETTER TO THE PRINCIPAL, KANYA GURUKUL, DEHRA DUN

MAHISHADAL,
December 28, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I was a little surprised. I had always regarded the Gurukul as Dharma Devji's institution.

I have forwarded your letter to Thakkar Bapa and have written to him to write to you.

THE PRINCIPAL
KANYA GURUKUL
DEHRA DUN

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

171. LETTER TO C. N. MUTURANG MUDALIAR

P.O. SODEPUR,
December 28, 1945

BHAI MUTURANG MUDALIAR,

I have your letter, I do have partiality for Rajaji. I feel that he alone is able to hold the reigns of the Government in Madras. But do whatever you people think is best. I do not involve myself at all in the affairs of the Working Committee. I give my opinion on whatever is referred to me. Therefore it will be no use coming to see me. Dr. Rajan and other friends had been here. I told them the same thing. I know nothing about what Asaf Ali did. I have read only what has appeared in the newspapers.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

C. N. MUTURANG MUDALIAR
4 MAULVI ROAD
THYAGARAYA NAGAR
MADRAS

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

172. LETTER TO DADA DHARMADHIKARI

MAHISHADAL,
December 28, 1945

BHAI DADA,

I have gone through your letter, also that of Gopalrao. After taking into consideration everything. I have arrived at the following decision: Because all your friends want it, you may seek election to the Assemby if it can be done without any exertion on your part and on the clear understanding that it will be a bed of thorns and not of velvet. If something good comes of it the credit will go to the electorate or to God. If nothing comes of it we lose nothing because, if you remain outside it will be to serve truth and if you go in, it will be also to serve truth. I understand what Vinoba says. I am giving this opinion knowing very well his views. Refrain from all arguments and discussions, observe silence, and if even then people elect you go to the Assembly, You should not make any effort on your part to get elected.

I am not writting a separate letter to Gopalrao. This is meant for him also.

DADA DHARMADHIKARI
BAJAJWADI
WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

173. LETTER TO GOPINATH BARDOLOI

MAHISHADAL,
December 28, 1945

BHAI BARDOLOI,

I have your letter. I have gone through it and also discussed it. I shudder at the thought of your programme. You seem to have taken it for granted that I can keep running about if I live for another 49 years. But it is not so. I can live perhaps for 125 years if I stick to one place and work within my limits. I had agreed to give seven days to Assam, inclusive of the time taken by the journey to and fro. You have arranged for seven day's programme in Assam itself. And two days will be spent in going and coming, which makes it nine days. How can I spare so many days? You will listen to everything and then

decide whether my stay at two place will serve the purpose or not. If does not then forget about it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

174. LETTER TO HASTMAL PATWA

MAHISHADAL,
December 28, 1945

BHAI HASTMAL PATWA,

I received your telegram at Mahishadal. I do not know what can be done about it. Write or teleraph to Jawaharlalji.

SHRI HASTMAL PATWA
13 NARMAL LOHIA LANE
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

175. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

CAMP: MAHISHADAL,
POST SODEPUR,
December 28, 1945

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

I am enclosing a letter, this as desired by the writer. He might have met me in South Africa, but I do not remember. I have written to him that he has made a tall claim in his address. He seems to be a crazy man.

I could find time only now to read what you said before the students in Bihar. I liked it very much.

You need a littel rest. It would indeed be good if you could snatch it.

I had told Rajkumari to write to you about the Communists. Today I find a totally different thing in the newspapers. A clipping is attached herewith. What is this? Can you throw some light?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

176. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

MAHISHADAL,
December 28, 1945

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

I have written to the Ashram about the money.

KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

177. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

MAHISHADAL,
December 28, 1945

BHAI JAJUJI,

It is my firm view that we should demand yarn for the khadi required by the Congress. It calls for tact and efficiency. Those who wear a uniform must learn to spin. The question implies that those wearing uniforms did not wear khadi and did not spin. Will they do so now? The presidents of the Congress committees will have to be patiently persuaded. It is they who want to destroy khadi, and they may if they can. By efficiency I mean we may provide yarn in cases where spinning cannot be started right now. I always have quite a large stock of yarn and I am willing to spare some.The only provision is that I will give yarn only to those who are willing to give it but are not able to do so immediately as they do not know spinning. But they should accept the condition that they will spin and do as required. And they should collect yarn for the khadi required in future. If we observe these rules faithfully we shall know whether khadi will bring us swaraj or will only remain a provider to the poor. You may send this letter to Vichitra if you want.

SHRI JAJUJI
SECRETARY, A. I. S. A.
SEVAGRAM, WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

178. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

MAHISHADAL,
December 28, 1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I have your letter.

Haven't I written about Lala Ramswarup that even if we want to delete a word we have to invite the opinion of the members as far as possible? Consult Pakvasa and Dada Mavalankar. They are there. We must have the opinion of the persons who have moved for the amendment of the resolution. There is no doubt that it can be secured. Only it will take some time but you have to put up with that.

The second question you have raised is good. I would not like to be bound down to any particular use of the building. I would like that Lala Ramswarup should either donate the building on the understanding that we may make what use we make of it or he should not donate it at all. The donor should make the donation on our condition and not his.

BHAI SHYAMLAL
WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

179. LETTER TO PRABODH CHANDRA SEN

KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR,
[*December 28, 1945*][1]

BHAI PRABODH CHANDRA SEN[2],

I have your letter. I have written[3] to Rathi Babu about it. All the inmates of Vishva Bharati must know Bengali and Hindustani. English should not be compulsory for everybody. Arrangements should be made for the foreigners to learn Hindustani first. It should be compulsory for those who come from provinces other than

[1] From the postmark
[2] Professor and Head of Bengali Department, Visva Bharati
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Rathindranath Tagore", 22-12-1945

Bengal to learn Bengali; similarly Hindustani should be made compulsory for Bengalis. Then only can Vishva Bharati be worthy of its name and also the name of Gurudev. If I had my way, I would carry on everything in Hindustani. If that is not possible now, I would do it in Bengali, but certainly not in English.

I do not wish to express any opinion regarding the fourth question as I do not have full information.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 10408

180. SPEECH AT SHISHU SADAN

MAHISHADAL,

December 28, 1945

I have come here to study facts. I have known and studied and understood. What I have got to say to you I tell you through the prayer. Practise it in your everyday life.[1]

Gandhiji smilingly asked the boys whether they would like to play with him. On being asked by a boy to give him his blessings Gandhiji said that he could not do that because the boy had dirty dress. He thereupon turned to the teacher of the boys and said that he would have a quarrel with him. He explained to the teacher that the aims of Wardha scheme of education was not merely to teach the boys arithmetic and a few other things. The Wardha scheme of education, Gandhiji emphasized, moulded the life of man to a new form. Why should they sit with their face bent down? They should be taught to sit erect.

Remember if they are properly reared up they will be the best soldiers of Hindustan. Why should the boys put on dirty dress after having undergone Wardha training for six months ?

He urged that in imparting Wardha training they should be more concerned with its essence rather than the routine courses of study. Gandhiji also enquired about their progress in spinning.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 29-12-1945

[1] Gandhiji was answering a woman worker who had complained of hardships and Government oppression.

181. ANSWER TO QUESTION[1]

December 28, 1945

Mahatma Gandhi said that if it was necessary to use the plain red flag of the A. I. T. U. C. in order to be better able to serve the labour of all faiths and denominations he saw no harm in doing so provided the red flag was not used as a rival to the tri-colour flag.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 29-12-1945

182. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

MAHISHADAL,
December 28, 1945

Gandhiji stated that he had noticed that ordinary rules of business of an assembly were not observed. If one was to attend a meeting it was expected of him, whether he liked the proceedings or not, that he should remain till the end. If this procedure was not followed and if he left abruptly while the meeting was going on he would only disturb others. He had been told by many women attending such meetings that they had only a limited time at their disposal for attending such functions because they had to attend to other household duties. Undoubtedly it was a strong argument in their favour but his reply to them would be that in such cases they should consider beforehand whether they had the time or not at their disposal to sit till the end of the meeting.

If they at all decided to attend the meeting they should be there till the meeting was dissolved. There are many who arrived at the meeting after it had commenced. In such a case the attendant should stay outside the assembly.

All these rules of conduct were applicable in respect of an ordinary assembly. But they are obligatory in case of prayer meetings. Because at the prayer they wanted to be in meditation. During such a time anything disturbing from outside was unwelcome. He would particularly draw the attention of the organizers of such meetings to the observance of these general rules of conduct. They should circulate amongst the people before- hand these rules for their observance. If they could train up people in this respect they would be rendering a public service and will be able to organize themselves better, advance the cause of public decorum and give new inspiration.

[1] Dr. Maitreyi Bose, Secretary of the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh, Bengal Branch, had asked Gandhiji about the advisability of Congressmen engaged in the labour movement using the Red Flag.

Referring to the charkha demonstration participated in by about 500 spinners, men and women, Gandhiji said that he noticed that there were two types of charkhas in use. The older one was the wheeled one and the latter was called the box-charkha. The latter was introduced by him and the reason for its introduction was that for the convenience of men like him who were regular spinners and had to travel, this type of box-charkha was suitable. But let them not forget, he said, the golden rule for charkha that its price should be cheap and be made from materials available in the particular locality. Crores of persons could not be expected to use one uniform type of charkha. Nor should its manufacture be limited to one central place. If they developed a central supply store of charkha how would it be possible for them to supply it to the 40 crores of people ?

So far as the strength of the charkha was concerned he could assert that there was no other machine which was more powerful than it. To him the charkha was the symbol of swaraj, ahimsa and *annapurna.*

Referring to the *bhajan* sung Gandhiji said that its composer maintained that it was through sufferings that a man could realize God. What was the method prescribed for the realization of God was also true for the attainment of swaraj.

There was no instance in the world to show that swaraj could be had without undergoing sufferings. Not only swaraj, they could not acquire even knowledge without undergoing hardships. If there was anything which was available to a man without undergoing hardships he could not fully prize or appreciate the same. Therefore, if they had followed the *bhajan* of the day they should remember that for the sake of God they had to put up with all sufferings. As it was true that without suffering they could not realize God so was it equally true that without suffering they could not attain freedom. They should also remember that for the sake of swaraj whatever they had suffered had not been in vain. They had all paved the path towards their attaining swaraj.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 30-12-1945

183. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

MAHISHADAL,
December 29, 1945

CHI. KANTI,

It is 6 a. m. just now. It is pitch dark all around. The prayer was over at 5. After the prayer, instead of returning to bed I read or heard letters and started writing. I thus reach your letter at 6 a. m.

Chi. Shanti will get well. Every householder passes through such experiences, bitter, sweet, sweet and bitter.

I would like your doing whatever work relating to spinning comes to you unsought at home. If you have skill, proficiency, firmness of mind, purity of character, devotion to God and humility, then the work you do at home will be like the Ganga flowing by your door-step. I will regard such work done during student life as more than enough.

If by fulfilling your family obligations and doing service to others while studying you have to take two years instead of one to complete your studies you need not feel unhappy at all. It would certainly be a matter of shame if studies were neglected from lethargy or love of pleasures. Those who believe that it is impossible to do public service during student life are mistaken. The student's stage of life is also meant for increasing one's capacity for service. If, therefore, the immediate opportunity for service is neglected, the student's life becomes as it generally is today, a selfish one instead of one dedicated to service. Moreover, present day education by and large is antagonistic to the spirit of service or patriotism. Add to this the burden of learning through English. And the subjects of study also include some which are unnece-ssary and exclude some which are essential, such as spinning. According to me, spinning, which means both its science and craft, should be introduced as the principal subject right from the earliest stage. But that is not done anywhere. Our boys, therefore, who study in Government institutions must determinedly make good this deficiency, as you have been doing. If that is not done, one would be guilty of the vanity of claiming perfection. You should not, therefore, in any circumstances abandon spinning and its science. Show and explain the whole of this letter to Saraswati. It will help her to understand and realize how much service, and nothing but service, is contained in spinning. If she is still not able to understand, let me know. I will try again to explain the point to her. Besides, you will also have received my previous letter written from Sodepur.

I followed what you wrote about the politics there. You should remain detached and go on doing what you can.

I could perhaps have revised the English of your report and sent it to you, but the news you had given in it was so good that I felt I must convey it to Jajuji and so sent on the report to him. I do not very much care if your English is not of the highest class. I am more interested in your being in the highest class as a human being and

acquiring wide knowledge of Indian languages. I would, however, like it if at the same time you could also write grammatically correct and chaste English. That is why I dropped the hint in my letter.

Here I have been enjoying the highest peace. Tomorrow I will go to Contai. The programme there, too, is for four days. I expect to return to Sodepur on January 3. From there I will leave for Assam on the 8th and return to Sodepur again on the 16th. We are a large party but we experience no difficulty on that account.

Address your reply to Sodepur. I shall probably reach Madras on the 23rd.

Blessings the to three of you from

BAPU

[PS.]

Harilal is in Bangalore with Nanjapa.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7381. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

184. LETTER TO MADALASA

MAHISHADAL,
December 29, 1945

CHI. MADALASA,

I have your letter. Sushila will of course write to you. You may be considered to be out of danger and pain now.

The operation on the breasts is a long one but is not considered a difficult one.

It seems you are still in Bajajwadi. If, after you are able to leave the bed, you eat only what your health requires but eat it regularly and in adequate quantity, you will soon get well. I was glad that Vinobaji paid a visit. It was good that the train was late, for he could give more time to you because of that.

The baby's weight is rather low. If you learn through all these experiences and become more careful in your habits, everything will be well.

Ramakrishna is gaining plenty of experience. The entire tour is full of happy experiences. How strange it is that people do not want speeches but want prayer-meetings !

If both you and the baby lie in sunshine for as long as you can stand, you will sleep longer. Just now I am having firsthand exper-

ience of this. And the longer you sleep the healthier you will become. If the sleep is not a sign of lethargy, it will refresh the mind, too. "Rasgulla"[1] is daily becoming more of a *rasgulla*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5855

185. LETTER TO MATHURABHAI

MAHISHADAL,
December 29, 1945

BHAI MATHURABHAI,

I have your letter. What you say is absolutely right. Since you are in Bombay you should personally collect all the information. I am under the impression that pickers [*sic*] are made from dead animals. But now that I have your letter I shall make further enquiries.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. MATHURABHAI
PICKERS FACTORY
DHARAVI ROAD
BOMBAY 17

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

186. LETTER TO SHRIPAD JOSHI

KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR,
December 29, 1945

CHI. SHRIPAD,

I have your letter. Congratulations on your inter-communal/ inter provincial marriage. I hope that this marriage will not be for indulgence but for sacrifice and that your capacity to serve will at least be doubled.

I am not writing a separate letter to Bhai Joshi[2].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5616

[1] Gandhiji's nickname for the addressee's son
[2] S. M. Joshi, socialist leader

187. A LETTER

MAHISHADAL,
December 29, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. It is good that Harilal has reached there at last. Both you husband and wife should now redeem him. If he is saved I will consider him as your property.

If you are not able to understand Hindi properly, Harilal will explain to you. Does he write to Kanti and Saraswati? I had one or two letters from him. Blessings.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

188. TALK WITH PEOPLE[1]

MAHISHADAI,
December 29, 1945

Gandhiji replied that he had been asked the same question[2] in 1920 and 1921 and he could only repeat the reply which he gave then. The question betrayed ignorance of non-violence and also of swaraj of his conception. He did not want swaraj at the cost of women's honour. If what passed as non-violence did not enable them to protect the honour of women or if it did not enable the women to protect their own honour, it was not non-violence.

Believe me, it is something quite different.

And he described what he had written in *Hind Swaraj*in 1909. Gandhiji observed that experience had added force to the argument.

After all who protected Sita from Ravana? The poet tells us that her purity was such that Ravana dared not compass his end without her consent.

[1] Extracted from Sushila Nayyar's "Non-violence and Molestation of Women". On the night of the 29th Gandhiji met about 200 men and women of Mahishadal and neighbouring villages including local workers and victims of police and military atrocities during the 1942 movement.

[2] The question was whether they were expected to remain non-violent even when their womenfolk were molested.

He warned them in the end that if anybody came to him with the plea that they could not protect the honor of their womenfolk because they had taken the vow of non-violence, he would give them no quarter. Non-violence should never be used as a shield for cowardice. It was a weapon of the brave. He would rather they died fighting violently than became helpless witnesses to such atrocities. A truly non-violent man would never live to tell the tale of such atrocities. He would have laid down his life on the spot in non-violent resistance.

Harijan, 10-2-1946

189. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

MAHISHADAL,
December 29, 1945

Gandhiji paid a glowing tribute to the affection and painstaking care that the men and women volunteers who were in charge of the camp, had shown is looking after him and his party. Gandhiji congratulated the gathering on the exemplary silence and order which prevailed during the public prayers at Mahishadal. It had given him the deepest satisfaction. The peace of mind which he experienced there exceeded even what he had experienced in Sevagram or Sodepur.

Referring to the events in connection with the 1942 struggle, he said that as a result of all that he had heard and learnt during the last few days, he had come to the conclusion that whilst people had shown singular courage and endurance, they had also committed some mistakes, especially in their understanding of the principle of ahimsa. He added :

Besides, there were some acts of high-handedness amongst ourselves. There must be some difference between a national organization and alien rule. In our national organization there should not be any differences amongst ourselves. I should go further today and say that those outsiders who lived near us should be made to realize that our organization was superior to the alien organization because we did not want violence. We wanted to carry on our work through non-vilence.[1]

Under a national government, even the opponents or those who held contrary views ought not to experience a feeling that the ideal had not been attained in Midnapore or, for that matter, in any part of India. It might even be said that it was a tall order. But if he did not point out their faults or place the undiluted ideal before them, they could never hope to reach their ideal. Gandhiji continued :

[1] These two paragraphs are reproduced from *The Hindu* of 30-12-1945.

If you do not do it, I won't be able to do anything, even if I carry our claim throughout the world. I won't succeed if I do not make these things clear to you. During my work for the last 60 years it has been the practice with me that I do not praise those who work with me. I make their mistakes known to others and I think, by doing so, our mistakes would be rectified.[2]

Gandhiji reiterated his conviction that India had lost nothing, but on the contrary had gained in every way as a result of the adoption and practice of truth and non-violence during all these years. If they had not attained the goal which they had set before themselves, the fault lay not in truth and ahimsa, but in themselves.

For instance, if they had fully imbibed the principle of ahimsa, they would be completely free from the feeling of discrimination against the votaries of religions other than their own and regard them and serve them all with equal love. It had pained him to learn that, in the Mahishadal area, Harijans were still not being admitted in the temples. He hoped they would completely rid themselves of the taint of untouchability. It would be a big advance in ahimsa.

Referring to the song that had been sung, he pointed out that, in it, the devotee prays to God to purge him of the cowardice which springs from doubt, as well as the cowardice that results from fear of misfortunes. To harbour doubt is to insult God. To shrink from misfortune, is to run away from Him. He, therefore, prays for spiritual as well as physical courage, so that he might be completely rid of all fear.

The Hindu, 30-12-1945 and 31-12-1945

190. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

December 30, 1945

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. About me you must be getting all the news from the papers. I hope there was no dejection underlying the statement that Prabhudas had had yet another daughter. If we really see no difference between a boy and a girl and if we do not, out of a false sense of attachment, consider a girl a liability there will be no cause either for dejection or for a feeling of being burdened with responsibility. It will be sufficient, if we bring her up, train her to think independently and become self-reliant an teach her, in case she wants to marry, the art of finding herself a mate and also help her, if she wants, in her search for one. Moreover, we shall, in addition, master the art of bringing up daughters and set an example for others

to emulate.

Pass this on to Prabhudas for his perusal. If possible Prabhudas and Amba should now practise continence. If they fail to practise it their capacity for service is going to be greatly limited.

I am not surprised at Kashi's lack of strength. Her weakness will persist because she continues to be ever so restless. Otherwise I know she can partly get over the cold weather by keeping herself warm. My suggestion to her to go to Bombay for the cold season did have flaws. All the same I did make the suggestion which she rejected. I hope the cold has abated now.

Rajkumari is in Hyderabad (Sind). She will be relieved from there on the 2nd.

I hope you yourself are well.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

191. A NOTE

December 30, 1945

Children should spin well. They must learn the processes preceding and following spinning. Children should know and observe the rules of cleanliness. It is essential to keep the posture when sitting or standing. Truth and non-violence should come to them easily and naturally.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7179

192. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. DESAI

ON THE STEAMER,
December 30, 1945

CHI. BABLO,

You have now really grown big. You too must aspire to live 125 years in the service of others, and strive towards that end.

If Durga's health is as good as you describe I shall say you have truly grown up. Sushi, I am sure, will be quite well.

As for the wedding, in my opinion the longer it is put off the better it will be.

I keep on hearing that you are grown in body as well as in

mind. May you fill Mahadev's place and excel him.

Blessings from

BAPU

NARAYAN DESAI

SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

193. LETTER TO PUSHPA K. DESAI

MAIN CAMP: SODEPUR,
ON THE STEAMER FROM MAHISHADAL TO CONTAL,
December 30, 1945

CHI. PUSHPA,

I have your letter. How can you afford to be cowardly? You should endure your fate. I can bear, even understand, your refusal to look upon Vajubhai as your husband. But he is a brother to you, is he not? And why need one fear one's brother? How can you refuse to discuss the subject with him? He has committed no fault. If anyone is at fault, it is you. You do not want to abide by custom. I see no harm even in that. One who wishes to disregard custom must generally display great firmness of mind, purity of character and gentlness. Moreover, you aspire to rise even higher. You are resolved to have as husband no ordinary man but only God. Your stiffness does not become your noble resolve.You should, therefore welcome Vajubhai. Then alone can you uplift both him and yourself. I am glad, that you believe yourself to be still weak. You should, therefore, carefully observe the restraints which a weak person should. These restraints are only not to be alone with Vajubhai and not to touch him. It is no part of a sister's duty to a brother to touch him freely. If she chances to touch him, she does not run away nor does the experience any passion because of it. But when a girl is weak, even touching one's blood brother may sometimes have to be avoided. You will learn to look upon God as husband and be accepted in His large court only if you understand all these subtle distinctions. Otherwise you are bound to fall by the wayside like a mere pebble.

Go to Vinoba when you can. There you will get affection and knowledge and your determination will grow firm.

If you do not want, I will not send you the letters from Father or Vajubhai. But I would like you to remain unperturbed even after reading those letters. Yesterday we had a Bengali *bhajan*.

Daily in the evenings a Bengali *bhajan* is sung here and that is only proper.The first line of the *bhajan* was: "Lord, save me from weakness even when I am assailed by doubts." That destroy is, destroy every doubt in my mind. Your vow is a hard one. You have taken it of your own free will. You will not be able to deep it without God's grace. I am dictating this letter with great care in the early morning in a boat, hoping that it may remove your igno-rance and strengthen you. There can be no peace except through absorption in service. You can show this letter to Vinoba. He will be able to explain my ideas better and if there is anything lacking he will make up for it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9268

194. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

December 30, 1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I have your letter of the 26th. I feel it is necessary to consult the scheme before sanctioning expenditure for opening a basic training (school) in the village of Tirumalai. Shall we have the ownership of the site of the building? Have you received the Rs. 500? What is the population of Tirumalai? If it is necessary to sanction the expenditure soon, then decide about the ownership, etc., and you may take my approval for granted. As I want to reply quickly I am writing this on a boat. Sodepur should be taken as my address.

SHRI SHYAMLAL

KASTURBA SMARAK NIDHI, WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

195. LETTER TO SATYANARAYAN

ON THE STEAMER,
December 30, 1945

BHAI SATYANARAYAN,

Two of your letters came more or less at the same time—one of the 24th addressed to me and the other of the 26th addressed to Sushilabehn. I am planning to reach there on January 23, 1946. Whether I can do so is in God's hands.

You should stop touring for the present and get to work in Madras. If the ground is well prepared there our work will shine.

I do not remember having talked to Sitaramji. I did have some talk with Kamalnayanji. I shall try to talk to Sitaramji when I return to Sodepur. Much depends on the success of the programme in Madras. I believe that it is easy to get money if we are perfectly honest and industrious. You will remember what I mean by honest. I think I explained to you.

Sardar told me that the meeting of the Central Parliamentary Board would be held somewhere there. He had no objection but thought Maulana Saheb might not be able to travel so far. There is no need for you to do anything in this connection. I personally do nothing and indeed I should not. Whatever has to happen will happen.

I have gone through the programme. It is for both morning and evening. It will be very difficult for me if I have to attend it at 9 in the morning. Monday is obviously a silence day and on Thursday, Saturday, Sunday and Tuesday I observe silence at 9. That is the time for massage, etc. So bearing in mind that it will be possible to take work from me only from 2 to 5, do whatever you want to.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

196. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

ON THE STEAMER FROM MAHISHADAL TO CONTAI,
MAIN CAMP: SODEPR,
December 30, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter.

It is good that you have started hand-carding. Vinobaji's new attempt is actually a very old thing. It can be perfected by practice. Somebody gave a demonstration at a public meeting. He separated the cotton from the seeds and pulled the cotton on all sides with his hands, made slivers from the same and started spinning. He did the spinning on the *takli*. His yarn was very neat. One woman had started spinning without separating the seeds from the cotton. But I do not value all these things much. I value Vinobaji's experiment very much becase he says that he is doing it scientifically and from the point of view of social benefit. Hence, I would always be eager to know the results of the new experiment.

I understand about *Gitai*[1] and other things. Just as Vinobaji has written about sleep to Balkobaji and made it into a beautiful article, he should also write about observing silence while walking and follow it in practice. I understand its significance, but even so I am not practising it in this tour. I am caught by desire and temptation. But I know that if one wants to live up to 125 years, desire, etc., should necessarily be given up. I shall not write anything more about it today.

I am glad that Kanam[2] has gone to Paunar. But it is rather disconcerting that Vinoba should spare one hour for him.

It is good that Balvantsinha has gone to Kharangana. Let him continue the same way. It will do him good. I also infer from this that Hoshiaribehn is doing well and she has completely regained her balance.

I understand about Om Prakash. He must be provided sufficient money for travel.

Vasumatibehn must be in good health.

Shantabehn will be all right. It would be nice if Hoshiari, Kailas, Shanta and others wrote to me.

[1] Marathi verse rendering of *Bhagavad Gita* by Vinoba Bhave
[2] Kanam Gandhi, son of Ramdas Gandhi

Let Chakrayya get himself trained there. Let him learn there. Everything is bound to be well if his mind and body are in good shape.

We had elaborat recitations from *Gita* on Ba's death date[1]. And we did spinning. Some outsiders also did spinning with us for an hour.

I am not in the least interested in keeping that sadhu any more. I have realized too that my suggestion to keep him arose from unworthy attachment and temptation.

I shall see about the clock[2]. Remind me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4540

197. LETTER TO MARJORIE SYKES

AS AT KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR (24 PARGANAS),
CAMP: CONTAI,
December 31, 1945

DEAR MARJORIE,

I must not attempt to write this myself in the boat that carries me along the canal going towards Contai. I must dictate the letter.

My best wishes for the season, if you think that a vocal effort in the direction is at all needed. Any such effort becomes formal if the heart wish is there.

About Charlie Andrews[3] I fear nothing can be sent to you before I reach Sevagram, for the papers have to be searched. They have been distributed in the various subject files. Some may be in the file named after Andrews himself. This can be only searched by Pyarelal who is with me. The writing[4] I shall do and it will be a pleasure.

[1] 22nd of every month

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Krishnachandra", 18-12-1945

[3] The addressee was preparing a biography of C. F. Andrews and during the eighteen months of its preparation she had held an "Andrews Memorial Chair" at Santiniketan.

[4] The reference is to the foreword which Gandhiji actually wrote on January 12, 1947.

For this you will be in no hurry, for your own manuscript will take some time.

What I said and did in Santiniketan[1] was a duty performed. Of course, much is expected of you and I have no doubt that you will try your best to come up to the standard. More no one can do.

I have read fully Agatha's letter. I had anticipated her. I am doing all I can to ensure helpfulness to the deputation[2] on behalf of the Congress. If, as the papers about report, the expenses of the deputation are to be found by India, it is a bad job. The deputation will lack the required grace. You can forward a copy of this letter or the relevant extract to Agatha. My letter may not reach her in time even if I succeed in dictating one.

Love.

Yours,

BAPU

MISS MARJORIE SYKES

SANTINIKETAN

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

198. LETTER TO BAL D. KALELKAR

CONTAI,
December 31, 1945

CHI. BAL,

I have your letter. It is worthy of you that you wish to serve Kaka or me; however, at present your dharma is to keep up what you are doing. If you do credit to what you have learnt you will have rendered service to both of us. We might have to consider what your dharma would be if there had been no one else to serve us; but all that is irrelevant in the present context. For the time being your knowledge is to be utilized for Birlaji's work. In the end you have to let the masses utilize your knowledge without any thought of fame or

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Foundation-Laying Ceremony", 19-12-1945

[2] Of the members of the British Parliament; *vide* footnote on "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 3-1-1946

fortune. I shall certainly like you to come and stay with me for some time at your own leisure.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. BAL KALELKAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

199. LETTER TO VAIKUNTHLAL L. MEHTA

CONTAI,
December 31, 1945

BHAI VAIKUNTHBHAI,

I got your postcard. You may gladly inform Khushal Shah[1] of your disinclination to join the sub-cmmittee, adding at the same time that, since Satis Babu has not tendered his resignation, the question of your joining does not arise.

VAIKUNTHBHAI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

200. LETTER TO GOPINATH BARDOLOI

CONTAI,
December 31, 1945

BHAI BARDOLOI,

With great difficulty I can spare five days for Assam. You can have me freed for Assam but do not be tempted to keep me there too many days or take me to too many places. I had explained this to the man who had come from there. He too was convinced. The truth is that I am no longer fit for travelling. I had to visit Bengal, so I included Assam also. What else can I do? It does not look nice to go on refusing. I am receiving wires. Please save me.

Blessings from

BAPU

BARDOLOI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] K. T. Shah

201. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

CONTAI,
December 31, 1945

Gandhiji congratulated the people of Contai on successfully rivalling other places in Bengal, where he had been of late, in maintaining exemplary discipline. He hoped that they would show the same spirit of discipline in the event of any other leader coming in their midst.

Gandhiji recalled how in 1934, when he was touring in Orissa in connection with the Harijan programme, a German Nazi, Herr Buto, had requested to be allowed to accompany him on his tour. He professed himself to be an ardent admirer of Hitler. Having heard how Gandhiji's method was exactly contrary to Hitler's and how in South Africa he had led a successful struggle against General Smuts with only a handful of Indians and no other weapons than that of non-violence, he was curious to meet the author of that movement and study his method at close quarters. Gandhiji had granted him his request in the hope of converting him to non-violence, but when Herr Buto saw the undisciplined behaviour of Orissa crowds, he told Gandhiji that he could now understand how a handful of Britishers in India could keep a nation of 400 millions in bondage. As a result of his experience, he had become sceptical of India ever winning freedom through non-violence. What India needed, he thought, was a Hitler. Gandhiji, however, had drawn a different moral from the same events. What India needed was discipline, no doubt, but not of the Hitlerite variety. It had to be of the non-violent type and, therefore, voluntary. His experience in Bengal during his present tour had confirmed him in his faith that the latter was infinitely superior to the former. If six and a quarter crores of Bengalis could show the same discipline which the present gathering had shown that evening, not even a thousand Hitlers would be able to deprive them of their freedom.

Commenting next on Gurudev's song that had been sung, he observed that, in that song, a devotee pledges his soul to Truth and prays that Truth may always triumph. He prays further that Truth may give him strength so that neither misfortune nor fear of direct punishment may force him into untruth in thought, speech or action. For fulfilment of that pledge, he longs to lay down his life and all. If the song that had been sung came really from their heart and not merely from their lips, it ought to transmute their entire life and they should see the sovereignty of Truth in their lifetime.

Referring next to repression, followed by the havoc caused by cyclone and floods through which the people of Midnapore had recently passed, he told them that all that had filled his soul with anguish. The song which they had just sung was surely a message for them in their present misfortunes too.

As regards the triple problem facing them, namely, shortage of food, shortage of clothing and lack of drinking water, he told them that it would be easily solved if they could throw off their inertia. It was no use waiting idly for Government help. They must show capacity to help themselves. He was afraid that, so far, they had not done all that they might have. If all the people of Contai and the neighbouring areas took to spinning in right earnest, they could solve the problem of cloth shortage. He observed that their success in that would be followed by amelioration in other respects too.

Concluding, Gandhiji remarked that if the Government had recognized in their behaviour in 1942 the legitimate longing to be free and co-operated with them instead of trying to thwart them, the history of India would have been written differently. That was not to be. He, however, refused to shed a single tear over the past and wanted them to do likewise. The present was enough to claim their energy and attention, and that evening's song indicated the spirit in which to approach the problem.

The Hindu, 3-1-1946

202. NOTE TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

1945

You must flatly refuse to give any secret help. It would be altogether wrong. The fact will never remain secret. No one would or should accept such help openly. This whole thing needs to be carefully considered. Such important decisions should not be taken in haste or through hope of gain. Never mind if we are defeated. Let the British give them Pakistan if they wish.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 285

203. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

MAIN CAMP: SODEPUR,
December 30, 1945/January 1, 1946

BAPA,

I got your letter addressed to Haribhau Phatak.I agree with your view. I wish to add this by way of clarification. It is desirable that non-Harijan boys may stay with Harijan boys but we cannot admit such boys as free boarders. They must pay their full expenses. If the

building is ours then we must get the rent, and if the building is rented they must pay their share of the rent.

BAPU

[PS.]

CONTAI,
January 1, 1946

I shall see about Sucheta. It is in February, I believe.

I have been able to send the matter regarding Brijkrishna Chandiwala. It will depend on the reply to Mridula's wire.

We may as well let Santhanam complete [the writing] about Ambedkar. If, after reading Rajaji's booklet[1], he himself believes that he will be able to shed no new light, it will be a different story. If I get Rajaji's booklet I shall go through it.

I understand about your tour. About mine it is what you read in the newspapers. I have been drinking cupfuls of delight.

Regarding the Harijan Fund, Kanaiyo will write to you.

The above is in reply to your letter of December 26. I have already sent one letter to you regarding Dharma Dev. I did not like the thing. I have left it to you to look into the matter. And now I have this second, alarming letter. I cannot say whether there is any substance in it. I can form no opinion on the basis of it, but all the same I must admit that I fear it may be true. Inquire into the matter and return Mirabehn's letter.

BAPU

Enclosure: Mirabehn's letter[2]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1196

204. LETTER TO MANUEL S. FERNANDES

CONTAI,
January 1, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

In a case like yours no one will be able to advise you by post, and if you cannot leave your bed you must do the best you can in the

[1] *Ambedkar Refuted*, written on Gandhiji's advice to refute Ambedkar's indictment of the Congress

[2] This is not traceable.

circumstances. The only general advice I can give is that you should live for some time on fruit juices such as orange, grape or pineapple, and have regular enema if your bowels do not move regularly and fully without causing any strain. This will do no harm and is likely to give you much benefit.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI MANUEL S. FERNANDES

ETHEL VILLA MOIRA

BARDEZ, GOA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

205. LETTER TO S. P. MISRA

CONTAI,

January 1, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 26th instant. So far as I can see, you must abide by your original promise.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI S. P. MISRA

KUTCHERY ROAD

LUCKNOW

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

206. LETTER TO M. J. SUNDARAM

CONTAI,

January 1, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and the pamphlet slandering Rajaji.[1] I can only say that it is a disgraceful attempt packed with untruth and half truth which is worse than the first. He never did any harm and he

[1] Reference is to the accusations of betrayal against him on two counts, viz., non-participation in the August movement and his stand regarding Pakistan; *vide* "Letter to L. N. Gopalswami", 27-10-1945

remains today the same dear friend which he became in 1918, when I had the privilege of being his guest.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI M. J. SUNDARAM

43 ROYAPETTAH HIGH ROAD

MYLAPORE, MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

207. LETTER TO PRAMILA

AS AT KHADI PRATISHTHAN,

SODEPUR (24 PARGANAS),

CAMP: CONTAI,

January 1, 1946

Your letter of 22.12.1945 is before me. I do not want any witnesses. I do not see how there can be any. I do know how I can help you. If you are pure in heart and have not responded even in thought, the man himself must be purified by your own purity. This is a universal law admitting of no exceptions. Therefore, you need no further directions from me, except that you should firmly realize that purity is its own shield against the vilest attack of the most vicious man.

If the Karnataka men are what you describe them to be, you can really become guardian of their virtues by means of your own.

You must quickly learn Hindustani. If you are industrious, you can pick up enough in one month's time and make yourself perfect by practice.

SHRIMATI PRAMILA

GATE NO. 66

NR. POST OFFICE

FORT BELLARY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

208. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SODEPUR,
January 1, 1946

I did send you a longish letter. I have asked S. to send you a copy. I have before me two letters from you. The one about Dharmadev Shastri has been sent to Bapa. It would be a sad thing if he proves untrue. But you know what havoc rumour works. Your long letter covers many points. I do not wonder at the bitter experience about *Vaidyas.* Many of them are impostors. You should write to Chandiprasad about the person sent by him. I do hope you will come upon a good man. I would have none but a proved man. That that man has proved a failure is bad and that the cow he brought has proved a burden is also bad.

Then you do not get a good worker. How will you pull on? I do not know that all this does not point to retracing your steps or at least so ordering your life as to enable you to live there without anxiety or worry. I would advise you to have a servant or two to carry out your instructions and look after your pony and a cow if you must have one for giving you pure milk. I would even go without either and be content with the good milk you may buy there. You should move away to a cooler place in summer. This should be easy. Do not think of having a summer haunt for yourself. You must not use up the last penny and then feel compelled to come to Sevagram or go elsewhere as a failure which you will be if you have to give up your place after using the last pice. Do not regard this as a doleful picture. If it is unwarranted by facts as you see them, throw it away.

About P. I must not say anything. I am prejudiced. I only hope that God will be your guide in this as in everything else. Only in the latter case I might offer helpful criticism.

Of the atmosphere what you say is about right. But the things will shape themselves right. Anyway I am trying my best. Here I am daily witnessing a mighty change. I had this evening a meeting attended by probably a lac of prople. I was able to have prayer in perfect silence. It would have done your soul good to witness such a scene. This commenced at Sodepur. My first meeting was somewhat boisterous. As days went on things were changed. And yet I build nothing on this. Only this experience is a balancing factor.

I do hope Punditji and his wife will come to you. My love to them.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABEHN
KISAN ASHRAM
MULDASPUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

209. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

MAIN CAMP: SODEPUR,
CONTAI,
January 1, 1946

BHAI VALLBHBHAI,

I got your letter, as also the wire. Wherever Satis Babu and Hemprabhadevi are in charge, there can be nothing wanting in perfection of arrangements. Therefore wherever I am, I regularly receive the post redirected to me from Sodepur. Just like you, Satis Babu officiates as wherever I go and so has he done here."Here" means Contai (in Midnapore). Though we are in unfamiliar surroundings everything is so well arranged that I get the maximum possible free time. So why should my health suffer? I daily see the miracle wrought by prayer Thousands attend, the number sometimes reaching even a hundred thousand, but the prayers are peaceful. There is no noise and no jostling. This is an altogether new experience.

I have gone through the papers[1] regarding Rajaji. I hope the matter has been settled. I say this because doubts persist in my mind. I get letters of that type. I reply to them only when I must.

What shall I say regarding your health? Dinshaw's suggestion appeals to me. But if you use up the strength that you daily regain, believing that you are thereby doing service, what can be done ?

About the *samadhi*[2] the Aga Khan had sent a wire saying "Will Meet." There has been no other communication. I understand his

[1] A. P. I. report about the formation of the Madras Election Board which carried Sardar Patel's telegram to Kamraj Nadar, a letter to P. C. Subramaniam and a statement by T. Prakasam.

[2] The reference is to a proposal to acquire the land on which samadhis of Kasturba and Mahadev were built.

discussing the matter with you. The reply you gave regarding Jinnah was excellent. I am not attracted by the Aga Khan's proposals. I am wholly opposed to such partition. More when we meet.

I am reaching Sodepur on the 3rd. On the 9th I leave for Assam, and shall be back to Sodepur most probably on the 18th. After that I shall be leaving for Madras on the 23rd. I have spared a maximum of two weeks for Madras. After spending a few days in Sevagram if you permit me I shall go to Poona. Otherwise I shall first go to Bardoli and then to Poona.

I had a letter from Bhai Vaikunth[1] saying that Balasaheb[2] and you and also Deo[3] are pressing him. Do get him in as member[4]. The rest after I return.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 285-8

210. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

CONTAI,

January 1, 1946

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I have your letter. Ramdas[5] has left. It is as well. But I now realize my mistake. Even though you yourself were willing I ought not to have put his burden on you. In the event of his not being taken care of or his not submitting to being taken care of the way he was, I should have had him taken back to Mysore or allowed him to stay in whatever position he was. Wouldn't I have done the same to my own son? I should also have considered your unsuspecting nature. This I did not do and entrusted him to your care. Dasappa[6] was certainly at fault but it was my responsibility to rectify the mistake. Dasappa had pledged that he would leave Ramdas to my keeping. There is no

[1] Vaikunthlal L. Mehta

[2] B. G. Kher

[3] Shankerrao Deo

[4] Of the Bombay Legislative Assembly; *vide* also "Leter to Vaikunthlal L. Mehta", 1-1-1946

[5] Ramdas Dasappa

[6] H. C. Dasappa

dearth of people making pledges, but those who keep them are rare. Well whatever was destined has happened; I am not going to entertain Ramdas any more.

May your tour—and Kakasaheb's—be a success, and may he keep up his health.

I think you can manage the examination work in Wardha in addition to your work in Gujarat. Again, if Kakasaheb's responsibility comes to be entrusted to you his blessings will give you the strength to cope with it too. All the same let me warn you that you must not do anything at the cost of your work in Gujarat, because if the work in Gujarat suffers I am certainly going to take you to task and Kakasaheb, too, will take you to task because you took up the Gujarat work in the nick of time and you have no right to let it break up.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. AMRITLAL NANAVATI

C/O SJT. MAGANBHAI DESAI

GUJARAT VIDYAPITH, AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

211. LETTER TO VAIKUNTHLAL L. MEHTA

MAIN CAMP: SODEPUR,

CONTAI,

December 1, 1946

BHAI VAIKUNTH,

I have your letter. I accept most of your arguments. Aren't you a dweller of *Vaikunth*[1]? Or are you its king? But whether you are a simple dweller in *Vaikunth* or its king or its gift, there is no doubt that you are a saviour at need. If, therefore, it is found nece-ssary that you should go in order to help them out of their difficulties, we shall think over the matter.

My tour of Bengal and Assam will end on the 20th at the latest. After that I leave for Madras on the 23rs. There I will spend 15 days at the most. After that I will go to Sevagram. We shall have, therefore, enough time to think over the matter. Offer your name as a candidate

[1] Vishnu's abode

for the Assembly, on the condition, however, that you will not have to spend a single pie and will not have to go begging for votes. It may not perhaps be possible to apply this rule in all cases, but it should be applied in yours.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 97. Also V. L. Mehta Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

212. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

CONTAI,
January 1, 1946

CHI. DINSHAW,

I have your letter of December 28, 1945. I hope you got my letter of December 28 sent by airmail. Your letter demands immediate reply and so I am sending this right away.

It will not be becoming for you to admit some patients privately in your Poona clinic. It does not at all look right that the same person should run a charitable department and a profit-making one. You may if you wish retain the Bombay clinic; I have agreed to put up with it.The expenditure at Poona is my responsibility from January and I have made an arrangement for that. In the end the monthly expenditure at Poona ought not to be as much as Rs. 3,500 but if it is, so be it. If we render service worth that amount it will not irk me. At the moment the main question is whether you may open a separate profit-making clinic in Poona. I have expressed my opinion in this regard.

What you write about Gulbai is somewhat strange. She is at present with child, so we must patiently put up with her whims. I shall certainly write to her not to meddle with the affairs of the hospital.

DR. DINSHAW MEHTA
NATURE CURE CLINIC
6 TODDYWALA ROAD
POONA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

213. LETTER TO PURNIMA BANNERJEE

January 1, 1946

CHI. PURNIMA,

I have your letter. It is straightforward. I do not want to dampen your interest. You have the aptitude for it. Nor would I consider your going into the Assembly a bad thing. After all someone has to go there. What I mean is that neither you nor anyone else can ride two horses at the same time. A similar case from Malabar has come to me. In that also I have given the same opinion. The lady[1] in question is competent—perhaps as much as you are. Bapa is favourably inclined. But I have advised her that if she goes into the Assembly our work will certainly suffer because working for rural women is not a small thing at all. We have to respect the feelings of those women. It is a drawback if they cannot go and live in villages but all of us suffer from that drawback. I am confi-dent that you are rural at heart. If that is true, in my view your place is at Wardha. It is surprising that you do not have anything more to give me. I have a vague impression that it has appeared in the news-papers. Even then I enclose a copy and should like you to send in your acceptance. If you cannot, then suggest the name of some other woman.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PURNIMA BANNERJEE

41 GEORGE TOWN

ALLAHABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

214. LETTER TO R. K. PATIL

CONTAI,
January 1, 1946

BHAI PAITL,

I have your letter. What you have written is correct. I can say that I had forgotten about the change of air and with that all the things associated with it.

[1] Kuttimalu Amma; *vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 24-12-1945

You can give your name for the Provincial election on the condition that you would neither beg for votes from the electorate nor spend any money. If you can get elected on this condition you may enter the Assembly. We shall see about the rest. We shall think over it when I come. I expect to reach there in the second week of February.

SHRI R. K. PATIL

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

215. LETTER TO SHANKERRAO DEO

CONTAI,
January 1, 1946

BHAI SHANKERRAO DEO,

I received your letter, and also Vaikunthbhai's at the same time. I have written to him to seek nomination for the election. Accepting presidentship is a different thing. I believe that that can be easily decided by February. There is a good deal of substance in Vaikunthbhai's opposition and for that reason the decision about the presidentship has been postponed. He has my approval for seeking election. Only I have written to him that he should see that he does not have to spend money or beg for votes from the electorate. If people want him it will be enough to give his name. We see quite a number of such instances in British elections. We of course have such instances here, too.

SHRI SHANKERRAO DEO
LAKSHMI NRISHINH BHAVAN
SHIVAJI NAGAR
POONA 5

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

216. LETTER TO RAMAMURTI

CONTAI,
January 1, 1946

BHAISHRI RAMAMURTI,

I have your letter. Do what Prof. Kumarappa wants you to do. I cannot address a meeting on my way to Madras.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI RAMAMURTI

From a copy of the Hindi Pyarelal Paperes. Courtesy: Pyarelal

217. LETTER TO CHINNARAM THAPAR

CONTAI,
January 1, 1946

BHAI CHINNARAM,

I have your letter. I neither take any interest in the Assembly elections nor keep track of them.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI CHINNARAM THAPAR
VICE PRESIDENT DISTRICT CONGRESS COMMITTEE
LYALLPUR (PUNJAB)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

218. LETTER TO GOVINDDAS

CONTAI,
January 1, 1946

BHAI GOVINDDAS,

I have your letter. These days I do not give any messages to newspapers and I have begun to believe that a noble venture needs no message. The purity of the endeavour is in itself a true message.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI GOVINDDASJI
RAJA GOKULDAS PALACE
JABALPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

219. LETTER TO INAYATULLAH KHAN

CONTAI
January 1, 1946

BHAI SAHEB,

It is good you wrote in Urdu. I received the letter only today in Contai. I have written to you that I am not a member of the Congress. I cannot write anything on behalf of the Cognress. Only Maulana Saheb can do so. I have already expressed my opinion that no one is going to accept your constitution. I personally do not accept it.

Write to me at the Sodepur address.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Urdu: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

220. DISCUSSION WITH CONGRESS WORKERS

January 1, 1946

Gandhiji's advice to ladies was that they could serve the country even by doing household duties. Generally, they hankered after making their daughters fit for marriage and sons for earning. Such families could not be said to be serving the country. Married men and women could give much time for the service of the country even after looking after their children and doing household duties. Instead, they passed their days in enjoyment of life and thus ended the span of life. There were some who were so addicted to pleasure that they used contraceptives.

Asked how women whose husbands were imprisoned could serve the country, Gandhiji said that they should no doubt spin. But this might not be sufficient for their living. They should take to some means of earning money. They could still work for the country. Under no circumstances, Gandhiji emphasized, should women earn their livelihood by sacrificing their honesty and purity. Mahatmaji was faced with the problem of spending annually one crore and 25 lakhs of rupees of the Kasturba Fund. Althouh he was trying hard to utilize the money in the best possible way still enough women workers could not be found.

Gandhiji advised women living in towns to serve the villages. He appealed to them to search their hearts whether they were really ready and then begin work when they found response in their hearts.

Addressing the students, he said that the question which was put to him was not new. How the students could serve Harijans should not have been asked so late. If

they were ready to serve the Harijan they could easily do it. They could go to villages, mix with the Harijan and educate them.

As regards inter-dining and intercaste marriage, Gandhiji said that so far as he understood the mind of the Congress he knew there was no difference of opinion about inter-dining but he thought that so long as one could not think himself one of the Harijans the poison of untouchability could not be removed. If anybody was not prepared to marry a Harijan he found no occasion of giving his blessings to that marriage. The question of marrying a Harijan was not so difficult but the difficulty was only mental.

Replying to the question whether girl students should have a separate organization, Gandhiji said although the life of men and women was not quite different so long a woman remained a woman there might be necessity for a separate organization for their work. In his Ashram men and women lived together and worked together, still there might be such necessity.

Discussing the constructive programme, Gandhiji said that besides the charkha there were several other items in his fifteenfold programme and women could take to any of them as they liked. Women could take a large share in the freedom movement of the country as they always had done specially in Midnapore and other places of India during the Salt Satyagraha. So he thought that it was needless to question what share the women could take in national movement.

As regards reorganization and rehabilitation scheme[1] Mahatmaji said that the people and workers should depend more on their own strength an endeavour than on the Government. Regarding the drainage problem he had talks with the Governor Mr. R. G. Casey and was trying to do whatever was possible in that respect.[2] If they could take up any item of work themselves and could fulfil it other things would follow.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 3-1-1946

221. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

CONTAI,
January 1, 1946

Thousands of Hitlers would neither be able to win their hearts nor take away their freedom if six and a half crores of Bengalis lived peacefully, as they were beha-

[1]A scheme for the reorganization of the Congress and the rehabiliation of cyclone victims entailing an expenditure of about Rs. 11,13,000 was placed before Gandhiji by the members of the Executive Committee of the Contai Sub-Divisional Congress Committee, members of the Keleghal Drainage Committee, women workers, students and Harijan.

[2] *Vide* Letter to R. G. Casey", 8-12-1945

ving at the prayer meeting, and carried out all instructions given to them.

He was very happy during his present visit, because the people made no noise and remained quiet. He recalled his visit to Orissa some time ago when people gathered in large numbers and shouted and stopped his car. He was accompanied then by a Nazi[1] who had arrived at Wardha from South Africa. This Nazi noticed the incidents and told Gandhiji that he did not like Gandhiji's way of non-violence. Hitler's method, he said, was the best, and if Gandhiji wanted peaceful swaraj he would not succeed.

Referring to Midnapore's sufferings, Gandhiji said that the area was still suffering. They had no cloth to wear, no food to eat and no water to drink. There were two ways of removing these sufferings, one by Government relief and the other through their own exertion. If they were to be fit for swaraj or wanted to get swaraj, it was their duty to solve these difficulties by their own exertion.

Success in one effort brought them further strength and this strength would help them to succeed in other things. The Government of the country would come in their hands. He had no doubt about it.

If troubles like those of the flood and famine days came, they should all stand together and face the danger.

Gandhiji suggested that teachers, both in schools and colleges, should understand the real significance of mass prayer and teach it to students. There should be no compulsion in any case, and those students who wanted to join prayers willingly, might do so. There was a magnetic power in prayer. As magnet attracted iron, so would prayer attract all, especially students.[2]

Gandhiji said that he was told that they came to hear his voice and not to join the prayer. If it was so then he would be very sorry. He wished that they understood the real significance of prayer and felt that through prayer one could get one's desired things.

The Hindu, 3-1-1946, and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 3-1-1946

[1] Herr Buto; *vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 31-12-1945

[2] This paragraph is taken from *The Hindu.* What follows is reproduced from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*.

222. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

AS AT SEVAGRAM,
January 1, [*1946*][1]

DEAR ANGAD[2],

I have your letter received by me early morning on New Year's day. I am penning these lines in the evening before retiring.

I fancy that I wrote to you some time ago. Your letter just represents you as I have known you. Of course it is good you have returned to your old love. We should all be glad to greet you back, even if it be for a short time, if you do succeed in coming this side.

Agatha[3] is in India. I hope to see her soon.

With love and all good wishes.

BAPU[4]

From a photostat: C.W. 4546. Courtesy: Swarthmore College Peace Collection

223. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

SODEPUR, CONTAI,
January 2, 1946

CHI. NARAHARI,

You have aksed a question in the letter addressed to Sushilabehn. The original draft did contain a reference to underground activities, too. Though it was dropped, the general view was that they should have no place in non-violence. I think what you have read in Jawaharlal's statement is different from what I have. My impression is that he had described underground activities as incompatible with non-violence. I may be mistaken, for I am a hurried reader. Whatever the likely consequences, we should cling to our view if we are convinced about its correctness beyond the shadow of a doubt.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9139

[1] The source has "1945", evidently a slip.

[2] Character in the *Ramayana* who acted as Rama's messenger to Ravana. Gandhiji had given this name to the addressee when he carried his letter to Lord Irwin in 1930; *vide* "Letter to Lord Irwin", 2-3-1930

[3] Agatha Harrison; *vide* "Letter to Horace Alexander", 31-1-1945.

[4] The letter bears the following postscript by Amrit Kaur: "I gave your news to Bapu and he was so glad to have it. I do hope your passport will soon be forthcoming."

224. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

MAIN CAMP: SODEPUR,
CONTAI,
January 2, 1946

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

Your letter is good. Instead of replying 'Yes' or 'No' to your questions, I think I shall be able to explain my point of view more clearly if I state my own ideas. If any institution has not become self-supporting on the lines suggested by me, the fact can be interpreted in two ways; either that the workers were not efficient enough, or that my calculations were erroneous. If any institution has not succeeded so far, I will begin to doubt only my calculations. But Probably you will be able to see that both these inferences are irrelevant. I have advocated self-reliance in three matters: (1) for the workers in villages, (2) for basic education and (3) for institutions. In regard to the first, my view is that any individual or family who settles in a village must earn their subsistence by working in the village itself. For instance, the person may start some industry—that is, without entering into competition with anybody else engaged in a similar industry—or may join an existing industry. If the person becomes popular with the local population, the people themselves will meet his needs. In either case I will describe the worker as self-supporting. (2) As regards basic education, I am of the view that the rent of the school building, the teacher's salary and the running expenses of the school should be met from the pupils' labour during the seven years of their stay in school. I am doubtful about including the expense incurred on the pupils' food in the scheme of self-reliance. Third, any institution will be considered to be self-supporting if the people for whose benefit it is run provide its expenses. For instance, if the money for Indian Christian institutions comes from America, then the Indian Christians will have proved their incapacity. Those institutions must be supported by the local Christians. I think this should answer all your doubts. But the three rules. I have suggested should not be interpreted to mean that any activities which do not conform to them should be treated as useless and be wound up. I have thought deeply and long about our institutions and formulated a code on the basis of experience. We shall be able to render better service to the extent we are able to live up to it, and will not become a burden on others. I think it would be dangerous to take the prevailing prices as the basis for any calculations. That

is, if you produce cotton, foodgrains, vegetables, fruits and milk on your own land and consume them, need you concern yourself with their market price? I would exclude for the pre-sent the expenditure on cows, seed and bullocks. I think on the basis of this you will yourself be able to answer the questions you have raised. If you have any more questions yet to ask, you may do so.

Can Maharaj[1] be said to be completely cured? I hope Gangabehn[2] is doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9522. Also C. W. 441. Courtesy: Shivabhai G. Patel

225. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

CONTAI,
JANUARY 2, 1946

CHI. BHANSALI,

If you resort to fasting to cut down your weight or have to go on a fast for any other reason it is a matter which you and I need to consider. The ideal position, according to me, is that one taking a balanced diet should not find it necessary to resort to fasting nor make any changes in diet. This would be the ideal position. My ambition for you is that you should reach that stage. You certainly have the required strength. Your diet should be so adjusted that your body works like a machine. After all, is not our body only a machine given us?

I hope to reach there by the middle of February.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. BHANSALIBHAI
SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Ravishankar Vyas
[2] Gangabehn Vaidya

226. LETTER TO CHARUCHANDRA BHANDARI

SODEPUR, CONTAI,
January 2, 1946

BHAI CHARUBABU,

I have just been able to reach your cheque. There was some confusion also. The only satisfaction is that nobody has suffered any loss. When all the money is to be spent there, why should I keep this cheque with me? So I am returning it. You must be having some committee. And would it not be for the committee to spend the amount? Please let me know who are on the committee. Also send me the budget of the expenditure so that I may pass it after checking it. However, if you want that the money should remain with me and that I should remit it as and when required, please return the cheque to me. And as and when you write and send me the budget I shall send the money. Do as you like.

Tomorrow I will go to Sodepur and from there to Assam on 8th. Please write to me at Sodepur.

Blessings from
BAPU

Enclosurc: Two cheques

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 8700

227. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

CONTAI,
January 2, 1946

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I have your letter. You can belong to any category. I have nothing to say if the money is given up after due deliberation. Public criticism about such things should not be given any importance. What do they know about our condition and about our means ?

I enclose herewith what you have sent for my approval duly signed.

SHRI SHYAMLAL
KASTURBA GANDHI RASHTRIYA SMARAK NIDHI
BAJAJWADI, WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

228. SPEECH AT VOLUNTEERS RALLY

January 2, 1946

Gandhiji, while taking the salute of the volunteers, asked whether they belonged to any permanent corps or were recruited temporarily. On being told that they were recruited on the occasion of his visit there, Gandhiji said that they should have a permanent volunteer corps for their own good and for the service of the people. The volunteers, he said, should be wedded to the cult of non-violence and should serve the people and not harass them.

They should spin charkha regularly and know the rules of cleanliness. That means, Gandhiji emphasized, that if they found dirt anywhere they should try themselves to clean it. They should look at every human being with an eye of love and should do their best to alleviate the sufferings of the people. Their whole life should be dedicated to prayer and they should realize that prayer would instill a power in them which would enable them to face anything.

Gandhiji put a number of questions to Sj. Sudhir Chandra Das, G.O.C. of volunteers and asked them why they did not have uniform dress. Knowing that their volunteer group was temporary and due to shortage of time they could not have uniform dress, Gandhiji told them that volunteers must get such instructions so that wherever and whenever they were required they all must be in the same uniform.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 3-1-1946

229. DISCUSSION WITH MIDNAPORE POLITICAL WORKERS[1]

CONTAI,

January 2, 1946

GANDHI: How long would you take to learn it then ?[2]

A WORKER: One year.

G. Since Hindustani is one out of the 18 items included in the constructive programme and since the carrying out of all these items in their fulness is swaraj, how long at this rate would you take to attain swaraj?

In independent India, continued Gandhiji, they would need to have a lingua franca which could be understood by everybody. He was an admirer of the English

[1] A report of this discussion, which was attended by 500 workers of Midnapore District, was sent to the Press by Pyarelal.

[2] There were many among the audience who did not know Hindustani.

language, but it could never take the place of the national language. There was a saying in English to the effect that matter out of place was dirt. English had its place in international affairs. But he could not tolerate the introduction of English in our day-to-day business, in our domestic life. The lingua franca of India could only be Hindustani, i. e., the language written in Urdu and Devanagari scripts and so simple that it could be understood without any difficulty.

The workers promised that they would all learn it within six months. After that Gandhiji took up the questions which had been submitted to him before the meeting.

The first question invited suggestion as to how they could make a success of the constructive programme and how they could overcome the obstacle in their way.

Replying, Gandhiji enumerated the various items of the constructive programme. The spinning-wheel, though he gave it the central place, must not be on the brain. There were 17 other items. Communal unity was one of them. Did they regard all communities as one? Then they had to get rid of untouchability root and branch. Similarly, they must realize the importance and place of the mother tongue. Their mother tongue alone could be the language for the domestic affairs and day-to-day business. He was in his 77th year and yet he had set his heart on learning Bengali. He hoped to learn to read Bengali before he left Midnapore. Nothing would give him greater pleasure than to be able to talk to them in Bengali. He could hope to touch their hearts through Bengali, never through English.

Then there were the Adivasis (called Aboriginals). The 1935 Act had separated them from the rest of the inhabitants of India and had placed the "excluded areas" under the Governor's direct administration. It was a shame that they had allowed them to be treated like that. It was up to them to make the Adivasis feel one with them. The other items were prohibition, village industries, basic education, adult education, women's education in health and hygiene, economic equality, *kisans*, labour, students, and village sanitation. The last was most important and at the same time most difficult. He almost despaired of our people ever observing the rules of sanitation voluntarily when he saw the riverside fouled without hesitation even by those who should know better. He continued :

The execution of the constructive programme in its entirety means more than swaraj. It means *Ramarajya*, *Khudai Sultanat* or the divine kingdom. I am thirsting after such *Ramarajya*. My God does not reside up above. He has to be realized on earth. He is here, within you, within me. He is omnipotent and omnipresent. You need not think of the world beyond. If we can do our duty here, the 'beyond' will take care of itself. This necessarily includes political independence.

Such independence could only be achieved through non-violence and truth exemplified in constructive work. The Working Committee had realized the

importance of constructive work. Even Subhas Babu would admit his (the speaker's) thesis. He did not believe that Subhas Babu was dead[1]. His feeling was that he was hiding somewhere and would appear at the right moment. He admired his courage and patriotism. But he differed from him with regard to the means. He was convinced that real freedom, freedom for the man in the street, could never be achieved through armed revolt.

For him, the parliamentary programme was only a means of promoting constructive work. The Congress had adopted it because they did not want self-seekers and enemies of India's freedom to go to the lgislatures and hinder the struggle for freedom. He would feel happy if they sent patriotic scaveners to the legislatures. Their real job would be to keep the undesirables out.

If India won its freedom through truth and non-violence she would not only point the way to all the exploited Asiatic nations, she would become a torch-bearer for the Negro races that inhabit the vast continent of Africa, and even to Europe. The smaller nationalities lived in fear of losing their freedom. In fact they had no freedom. India's independence through any other means could never have that result.

He had heard harrowing tales of what the women of Midnapore had suffered. The shame was not theirs but the menfolk's. God would take them to task for having been helpless witnesses to those atrocities. The only atonement they could make was whole-hearted execution of the constructive programme.

Another friend asked him what he thought of the class struggle which was ineitable in labour work.

Gandhiji's reply was that class struggle there had been always. It could be ended if the capitalists voluntarily renounced their role and became all labourers. The other way was to realize that labour was real capital, in fact the maker of capital. What the two hands of the labourer could achieve the capitalist would never get with all his gold and silver. Could anyone live on gold? But labour had to be made conscious of its strength. It had to have in one hand truth and in the other non-violence, and it would be invincible. Labour and capital, classes and masses, are as old as the hills. The whole trouble arises from the fact that neither labour nor those who are guiding the labour movement realize the dignity and strength of labour. It is like the lame leading the blind.

Gandhiji was asked about Karl Marx. He got the opportunity and privilege of reading *Capital*, he told them, whilst he was in detention. He entertained high regard for his great industry and acumen. But he could not believe in his conclusions. He had no faith in violence being able to usher in non-violence. World thought was moving and was outdating Karl Marx. That, however, did not detract from the merit of the

[1] Subhas Chandra Bose was reported to have died in an aeroplane accident while on his way to Tokyo on August 18, 1945.

great man's labours.

Gandhiji concluded by saying that non-co-operation and civil disobedience in terms of swaraj were not to be thought of without substantial constructive effort. Either without the latter will be body without soul, as good as dead.

Amrita Bazar Patrika 5-1-1946

230. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

CONTAI,
January 2, 1946

Summing up his experience of prayer gathering in Contai and elsewhere in Bengal, Gandhiji said that he had been noticing phenomenal changes in behaviour of crowds taking place before his very eyes. He was not surprised at it. Bengal had given birth to that prince of devotees, Chaitanya, and a host of other God-intoxicated saints. He longed for the day when the example of the crowds would be taken up by the whole of India.

He had felt overwhelmed by the consideration that had been shown to him, by ensuring him as much peace and quiet as was humanly possible, and the way in which he had resolved to repay his debt of gratitude was by devoting every moment of leisure accruing therefrom to learning Bengali. He had been doing that ever since he came to Bengal most systematically. In Contai he hoped that the love for all Indian languages which that resolve symbolized, would fill them too.

Before coming to the meeting he had been told that carcasses of about 700 cattle and 300 human beings, out of many more which had perished in a cyclone, lay buried indiscriminately together where the prayer gathering was held. Dust had returned to dust, and there was no mark to tell the tale, as Gurudev had observed in one of his songs. God mercifully hides man's tragedy on earth under a mantle of greenery. Nevertheless, it betrayed lack of human feeling on the part of those who were responsible for it. The common practice was to give to each dead body a separate burial and the ground in which the burial took place became consecrated ground. This was where cremation was not in vogue. While, therefore, he respected sentiment, he did not make a fetish of it and he even derived satisfaction from the fact that common calamity had united men and cattle in death, thereby symbolizing the essential unity of all life. Thought of it ought to humble man's pride and bring home to him the insignificance of human existence with its illusions, which[1] held him a prisoner in

[1] In *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, "Petition to Lord Ripon", 14-7-1894, the rest of the paragraph reads: ". . . hold him prisoner. If man learned to break through this net of illusions and made the fulfilment of his dharma the Pole Star of his life's pilgrimage, it would considerably lessen the burden under which the world is groaning."

their net till man had learned to break through this net of illusions and make the fulfilment of one's dharma the pole star in life's pilgrimage.

Explaining the significance of prayer Gandhiji told them that it ought to result in self-purification and it ought to transmute their entire conduct. If anybody thought that it gave him licence to do as he liked during the rest of the day, he deceived himself and others. That was a travesty of the true meaning of prayer.

Commenting on the song that had been sung at prayer, Gandhiji said that in it the devotee prayed to God that he might be able to see Him face to face. Through single obeisance it betokened an indefinable strength of faith in man. With such faith nothing in the world would be impossible of attainment. Faith in God to be real, however, had to find expression in work. In his opinion the eighteenfold constructive programme which he had placed before the country was prayer through work since it was based on the principles of truth and ahimsa. If they fulfilled that programme in its fulness not only would they be free, but their example would serve as a beacon light to all the oppressed and exploited people of the earth.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 4-1-1946

231. LETTER TO MADALASA

ON THE STEAMER TO SODEPUR,
January 3, 1946

CHI. MADALASA,

I have your letter. My previous letter seems to have gone astray.

You have no reason at all to feel depressed. I have no time today to write more. I have to deal with the rest of the mail.

Get well soon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5856

232. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

ON THE STEAMER TO SODEPUR,
January 3, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your note. I have telegraphed as follows :

"Leaving Bengal 20th and Madras about February 8. Very anxious to go Poona before Bardoli. Will middle March be suitable Bardoli ?"

The Bengal programme is not exceeding the limits I had set. According to me much work has been done here. The result is in the hands of God. I am dictating this letter in a boat. I shall reach Sodepur this evening. This letter will be posted from there tomorrow morning. I have to go to Assam on the 8th after four days in Sodepur. The Assam tour, including travelling, will take eight days. I shall then to go Sodepur and thence to Madras on the 23rd. I must reach Madras on that date at the latest. We must, therefore, leave Sodepur on the 21st. In the wire I have mentioned 20th.

I suppose I shall meet the people[1] from Britain in Bombay, Poona or Wardha. It would be unseemly to speak disparagingly of them. There would be no harm whatever if we use kind words. There are some good men among them also. I do not see much point in condemning them in advance.

You will have received my previous letter. After I take charge of the work in Poona, I must give some time there. I have therefore suggested the middle of March for my Bardoli visit. But I shall be guided by your wishes in the matter. I presume that you will definitely not keep me in Bardoli for more than 15 days. You may even release me from the promise to go there. There is also the possibility that you yourself will be engrossed in the Congress affairs. I take it that you will call me to Bardoli only if my presence there is necessary. This is just to let you know how my mind is working. The final decision must be yours. After all you are the Sardar. Are you not? That too of Bardoli. And now of India.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 289-91.

[1] British Parliamentary delegation headed by Robert Richards. It arrived in India on January 5, 1946, ostensibly to make personal contacts with the political conditions and leaders of India but actually to "reduce" Krishna Menon's influence. It left on February 10, 1946. (*Vide Transfer of Power,* Vol. VI, p. 300)

233. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

ON THE STEAMER TO SODEPUR,
January 3, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your letter of December 30, 1945, on January 3, 1946, at Contai. I read it in the boat and am dictating this reply, too, in the boat. I understand what you say regarding khadi. If I can know how much will be available there, I can think and decide immediately. I am going to supply as much as is needed.[1]

I can understand the Doctor [Dinshaw] not being satisfied with my reply. But I am helpless.

I will try to return as early as I can. I will arrange about the Bank account. I will arrange for the transfer of the money, too, as soon as I reach Calcutta.

We should certainly admit all patients who will mix with the poor. Nobody can be given a special room merely because he is rich. Will the patients who wish to be admitted be paying ones? If there are any, apart from our own people, who can mix with the others and observe the rules, I will not object to their being admitted.

The equipment at Sinhagadh has been covered by the Trust and I, therefore, believe that we can use it for our purpose and transfer any item from there.

If the Doctor thinks otherwise, I should like to know his point of view.

We have no intention of starting any other centre outside Poona in the immediate future. I will write to Vanamala.

Kanchan is with me in this very boat. She has got a slight cold but is in fine spirits.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8611. Also C.W. 7200. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Munnalal G, Shah". 23-12-1945

234. LETTER TO RAGHUNATH S. DHOTRE

ON THE STEAMER TO SODEPUR,
January 3, 1946

CHI. DHOTRE,

I think I told you to resume the remittances to Ramachandran. If not, please understand from this letter that the money is to be paid from October 1945. That makes three months to date. Send a sum to cover this period and later send a hundred rupees every month. The address is: Shri G. Ramachandran, c/o Gandhi Ashram, Tiruchengodu.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

235. LETTER TO SACHINDRA NARAYAN ROY

ON THE STEAMER TO SODEPUR,
January 3, 1946

BHAI SACHINDRA NARAYAN,

I have your letter. We can achieve everything by love. Love can never be impatient nor can it ever be angry. If you behave with Muslim brethren in this spirit their anger will go.

PROF. SACHINDRA NARAYAN ROY
31 SHAH SAHIB'S LANE
DACCA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

236. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

ON THE STEAMER TO SODEPUR,
January 3, 1946

CHI. SHRIMAN,

I have your letter. I returned your letter on the very day I received it after making corrections.[1] Today I am replying to the letter of December 30, 1945. I am on the steamer, going to Sodepur.

It is difficult to fix the date of my return. I am considering whether I should go first to Poona or Wardha. Even so I shall try my level best to reach Wardha on February 8.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Shrimab Narayan", 9-12-1945

If the 12th is not Monday, fix it[1] for that date, otherwise fix it for the 11th at 2 o'clock. Let the venue be Sevagram.

As regards the Provincial Assembly you may take it that I am not interested. But if you are inclined that way and have the ability for it, and if all others agree, please do go.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 309

237. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

SODEPUR
January 4, 1946

DEAR BROTHER,

Jagadisan tells me you are again unwell, so much so that you have given yourself only two months more on this earth.[2] Why will you not say with the millions that you are like them in the hands of God and refuse to *feel* that you are about to leave your friends. I do not know if I have clearly expressed myself. Slowly though surely I am going through the doubly interesting collection made by good Jagadisan.[3]

Love.

Yours,

LITTLE BROTHER

From a photostat: C.W. 10524. Courtesy: S. R. Venkataraman. Also G.N. 8825

[1] The meeting of Hindustani Prachar Sabha

[2] He died on April 17.

[3] The reference is to the collection of Sastri's speeches and writings on Gokhale published under the title *My Master Gokhale*, to which Gandhiji, wrote the Foreword; *vide*"Foreword to *My Master Gokhale*", 20-1-1946.

238. LETTER TO L. F. PHILLIPS

SODEPUR,
January 4, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

You must rely upon your merits, not upon certificates or recommendations.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI L. F. PHILLIPS
99 STEPHEN HOUSE
DALHOUSIE SQUARE
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

239. LETTER TO THE AGA KHAN

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
24, PARGANAS,
January 4, 1946

BHAI SAHEB,

I got your affectionate letter of December 30, 1945, yesterday at Contai. Then I took a steamer and reached Sodepur this morning from where I am dictating this. To you at least I should write in Gujarati, shouldn't I? Indeed it should be a matter of shame for us to write in English.

I hope to reach Wardha around the 8th of February. Then ten days later I shall leave for Poona. Then I shall do as you desire. If you are in Bombay we shall meet there or I shall suit myself to your convenience in Poona. Maulana Saheb of course will not be present. We shall think over it when we meet.

I understand about the samadhi. The facilities you suggest will suffice for me. It is not my desire that people should be able to visit the palace any time of the day. Those who go there out of devotion or respect should go by the prescribed route and at the appointed hour. I shall then take it that its sanctity is respected.

I shall certainly appreciate it if you will have the samadhi built and it will become you. I have never considered marble. I shall be

content if something lasting is built. Mahadev and Kasturba had become villagers; they lived in huts. Shouldn't their samadhi be simple? I shall draw a plan but let us discuss it when we meet.

May your Diamond Jubilee be smooth and auspicious.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

HIS HIGHNESS THE AGA KHAN

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

240. LETTER TO K. F. NARIMAN

SODEPUR,

January 4, 1946

BHAI NARIMAN,

I have your wire. I am very happy. But do not lay down any conditions. Remain a true soldier of the Congress.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI KAIKHUSHRU NARIMAN

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

241. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SODEPUR,

January 4, 1946

CHI. MRIDULA,[1]

I have your letter. You have done well in giving me all the news. I am dictating this reply in a hurry because I have sat down to the task just now soon after arriving here by the steamer. It is morning.

The matter regarding Saraladevi has now been resolved. She will continue to be an Agent[2]. You will then be able to do more work yourself as well as give all help to Saraladevi.

Devdas is what he was. Please don't worry. I can understand

[1] This is in Devanagari script.

[2] Of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust for Gujarat

his feelings. After all his method of work is also different.

The rest later.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. MRIDULABEHN SARABHAI
RETREAT
P. O. SHAHIBAG
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

242. LETTER TO VIRENDRA KUMAR ROY

SODEPUR,
January 4, 1946

BHAI VIRENDRA KUMAR,

I have your touching letter. May God grant you peace.

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI VIRENDRA ROY
CONTAI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

243. LETTER TO FATEHCHAND NAHATA

SODEPUR,
January 4, 1946

BHAI FATEHCHAND,

Consider what will be my fate if everyone asks me for 10 minutes of my time as you do. You are not going to gain anything by meeting me. You will unnecessarily waste your time. Read whatever I have written and devote yourself to service.

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI FATEHCHAND NAHATA
PRESIDENT KUSHTIA MAHAKMA CONGRESS COMMITTEE
KUSHTIA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

244. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

SODEPUR,
January 4, 1946

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I have your letter of the 31st. Write to Nanabhai Bhatt that he may select any woman who is competent. I should consider Manubhai's Vijaya eligible if only she could reduce her preoccupation with the children—it ought to become less as the days pass. She can do the job. She does not have to work in the cities; it is the villages that have to be awakened, and, in my opinion, Vijayabehn is the right person for the job. But if some other woman worker of Vijayabehn's calibre can be found, Nanabhai may become to her what Lord Melbourne[1] was to Queen Victoria and thus encourage her progress.

SHRI SHYAMLALJI
K. G. [N.] M. FUND
BAJAJWADI
WARDHA (C. P.)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

245. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
January 4, 1946

Gandhiji said that he had come back in their midst after some time. He would again go out to Assam on the 8th. The prayer would be held here till January 7. He did not know if he would be able to hold prayer here again on his return from Assam.

He had been on a pilgrimage to Midnapore. The tour was so peaceful, the orderliness was so impressive, that they were unique. He had been to three or four places: Diamond Harbour, Mahishadal, Kakra and Contai. In each of these places the orderliness of the people was praiseworthy. At prayer-time the gathering went up to about a lakh of people. Many people came from long distances. Every one of them was quite peaceful and none disturbed the orderliness. From Diamond Harbour he witnessed this orderliness.

Gandhiji said that Ramanama was so attractive that it could absorb man's whole thought and self into it. That was why he had asked them to clap their hands

[1] Lord Melbourne (1779-1848) was the first Prime Minister of Queen Victoria. He was responsible for many important liberal measures of her reign.

rhythmically when taking Ramanama. As they went on clapping their hands they got absorbed in the prayer. They knew soldiers were so trained that they were disciplined and learnt to work together. Discipline being the most essential thing, there was an English saying—'disciplined soldier'.

They were also soldiers of freedom. Soldiers of a State received salary and they maintained discipline. Soldiers of freedom did not get such payment; but they acquired strength by maintaining discipline. In the words of Badshah Khan[1], they were all *Khudai Khidmatgars* or servants of God. They were to maintain discipline and that was why he had introduced the practice of clapping hands while praying.

Explaining the *bhajan* sung at the prayer Gandhiji said it was very sweet. The Poet—Rabindranath—said that if nobody responded to their call they must not despair but continue to work for their ideal. Even if failures met them they must not be broken. They should go on working irrespective of whether their hopes and aspirations were realized or not. One who was devoted to God did not feel despair; he went on knocking at heaven's door for entrance to the kingdom of God.

Swaraj had not yet come, but he had not given up hope. They must keep on knocking and one day swaraj was bound to come.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 5-1-1946

246. LETTER TO R. G. CASEY

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
January 5, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I have to thank you for the arrangements made by the officials for my travel to and stay in the Midnapore District.

The Superintendent of the Presidency Jail writes to me to say that Shri S. Bakshi would like to see me. I am therefore bound to see him. This will be only after my return from Assam. I wonder whether I could see at the same time the other prisoners who are there.

Shri Sudhir Ghosh tells me you would like to see me on Monday next. I shall give myself the pleasure of doing so at 7.30 p.m. that day.

I must thank you too for the relief to the E.C. employees.[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 134

[1] Khan Abdul Gahaffar Khan

[2] The reference is to the reinstatement of some dismissed workers of Calcutta Electric Supply Company.

247. LETTER TO M. E. C. MATHEW

CAMP, SODEPUR,
January 5, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I do not know where I shall be at the time you reach India. However, I reciprocate your wish that we should meet. You will have no difficulty in finding my whereabouts at the time come to India.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

M. E. C. MATHEW, ESQ.
182 SEA BOURNE ROAD
SOUTH BOURNE WEST
BOURNEMOUTH, HANTS, ENGLAND

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

248. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SODEPUR,
January 5, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I sent Rs. 10,000 to Dinshawji yesterday. You will be able to meet from it all expenditure from this month up to the time I return.

Kanchan had an attack of cold and fever. But there is nothing to worry about. She is being treated by Sushilabehn.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8612. Also C.W. 7201. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

249. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

SODEPUR,
January 5, 1946

CHI. JIVANJI,

The booklet on the constructive programme[1] was received only yesterday. It has taken a rather long time. Why this delay? It took me some time to find the price. What was the intention in giving it on the back-page? Or is there merit in novelty as such? Generally the reader's habit is to see the cover page and look for the price, etc. There is no signature at the end of the preface. I wonder whether you thought that, since the preface was by the author himself, there was no need for his signature. But that does not seem likely as Chi. Kanaiya also reminds me. Moreover, I had drawn your attention specifically to this point in my letter[2] of December 7, 1945. The copies are very few. A lot of them could have been sold here. What happened about Hindi, Gujarati, Urdu, etc.?

Blessings from
BAPU

JIVANJI DESAI
P. B. 105
AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9961. Also C.W. 6935. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

250. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

SODEPUE,
January 5, 1946

CHI. DINSHAW,

I have remitted Rs. 10,000 to you yesterday. With this amount open an account in the name of the Trust in any bank you like and issue the cheques yourself, because I have remitted the amount to you as Trustee and Director. I hastened with the money because I understood you had no funds left with you. I am sorry I was under the im-

[1]By Gandhiji.*Vide* "Constrictivr Programme: Its Meaning and Place", 13-12-1941 Here the reference is to the second revised and enlarged edition recently published; *vide* "Forewatd to "Constrictive Programme- its Meaning and Place"

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Jivanji D. Desail".7-12-1945

pression that you usually had a large balance lying with you and, indeed, an important account such as yours ought to have such a balance. Had I known that the account hardly ever had a balance I would have arranged for an amount before leaving Poona—but let it be.

I have a letter from Gulbai, which has alarmed me. She is unhappy. Do not cause her unhappiness. It seems she is hesitant about getting Ardeshir vaccinated whereas you seem to be insisting on it. I don't have any faith in vaccination. I am writing to Gulbai accordingly. If I were in your place I would respect Gulbai's wishes. After all a mother has a stronger claim over the children. Once the seed is planted the man's job is over. It is the mother who carries the child for nine months and then suckles it while it grows. But that is not what pains Gulbai; it is your behaviour that pains her. We had already had a little talk on the subject. Please talk to her patiently and explain things to her.

You appear to be squeamish. I would still suggest that you draw a salary from the Trust. I am aware that the Deed does not provide for this, but the three Trustees can agree to make the necessary change. You may take up some other occupation if you like. A man's first duty is to be honest with himself and to be truthful. One who does not do this is no good for anything. He turns into a hypocrite or cheat. You made up your mind to go by my advice. Understand the significance of this. Anyone who decides to defer to another either sees the point of what he is told or accepts the advice on faith. Such faith, again, proves more productive than understanding. And when it does not, the person is ill at ease. May you never come to such a pass. I don't want you to lose your fire. I shall be satisfied only if you rise higher and higher as a result of my contact.

On further reflection I think I had better send you Gulbai's letter so that you can understand her feelings and know what pains her. Be calm and patient with her.

I shall reach there by the evening of 21st February, or on the 23rd, because 22nd is Ba's anniversary and I should observe it at a fixed place. This cannot be done on a train where it would be difficult to read the whole of the *Gita*.

It appears Chi. Sushila Gandhi has written to you. Have you not replied to her? If not, please write to her. She is now in Delhi at Devdas's. She does not seem to have benefited [by your treatment].

What could be the trouble with her? Was she administered thyroid extract? I have forgotten all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

251. LETTER TO GULBAI D. MEHTA

SODEPUR,

January 5, 1946

CHI. GULBAI,

I have your letter. I was thinking of writing a third letter when yesterday I got your letter. I certainly have no faith in vaccination. My views have not changed. They are firm. Therefore if I had my way I would not have Chi. Ardeshir vaccinated. I would risk an attack of smallpox. But I know Dinshaw believes in vaccination. His views on nature cure differ considerably from mine. I cling to him in spite of this knowledge for I regard him as a man of truth. In the case of a man of truth either I accomodate him or he accommo- dates me. There is no trace of obstinacy in me. Firmness I certainly have, as I should have. A man devoid of this quality can never cling to truth. He does not worry about the risks that confront him because a satyagrahi has faith only in God. Therefore do what you think right about vaccination after mutual consultation.

I have sent your letter to Dinshaw because it is a nice letter worthy of you. Dinshaw however should know that it expresses your pain. I hope I did not do wrong in passing on the letter to him.

When is your confinement due ?

Please don't worry about the nursing-home. It is for me to think about the expenses. Only yesterday I sent a sum for the expenses. According to my reckoning, it will not be necessary for us to keep the account we maintain for the poor going for long.

I see no need for Maji to move into the house which Balkrishna used to occupy. She may continue to live where she is or wherever she wants to till my return. I would suggest that Maji should live in the quarters that I used to occupy. When I return you may put me up there if you like. Since the party accompanying me will camp in tents the arrangement will cause you no inconvenience. In this way the

room that you allot to me, with attached bath-room and the adjacent room will suffice for me. Let us see when Dinshaw comes by any new income. It is desirable that he does not go in for any fresh expenditure. I would be far from pleased if he accepted defeat for one reason or another.

I hope you and Ardeshir are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

252. LETTER TO HIRABEHN [1]

SODEPUR,

January 5, 1946

CHI. HIRABEHN,

I got your letter. May your wished be fulfilled.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

253. LETTER TO HASMUKH[2]

SODEPUR,

January 5, 1946

BHAI HASMUKHBHAI,

I have your long letter. What is there for me to bless in what you write? I have not even understood the dispute fully. Besides, if the work is noble it does not need blessings from any man, however great. The work is its own blessings.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The letters are in Devanagari script.

[2] *ibid*

254. LETTER TO NAGINBHAI T. MASTER

SODEPUR,
January 5, 1946

BHAI NAGINBHAI,

I have your letter. May your efforts for the sake of Vijayabehn and Valji bear fruit. I can see that you will be able to cope with the task, and I am pleased.

SJT. NAGINBHAI MASTER
BOMBAY CONGRESS COMMITTEE
CONGRESS HOUSE
VITHALBHAI PATEL ROAD, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

255. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

SODEPUR,
January 5, 1946

CHI. AMALA[1],

I was happy to read your letter. It was creditable on your part to have refused the offer of private tuition to a pupil in your own class and you deserve to be complimented. Now you will be able to teach other things. That is good. But why do you look upon Principal Seal as your enemy? How can a person who looks upon dogs and cats as her friends regard a human being as her enemy ?

Ahimsa can have no enemies.

If you go on increasing the number of your feline friends, you will not be able to shoulder the burden.

I keep good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Spiegal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1]German Jewess who joined Gandhiji's Ashram in 1933

256. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

SODEPUR,
January 5, 1946

CHI. VANAMALA,

I am not going to write a long letter either to you or to Zohra. I am leaving for Assam on the 8th and shall be back here on the 14th. After that as soon as possible I wish to go to Madras. I hope that I shall reach there on January 22, at the latest, and from there I shall return to Sevagram on February 8 at the earliest. Then to Poona on the 21st or the 23rd. How is Zohra? Both of you, or Zohra, or, if she is too weak, you alone, should help Munnalalbhai. But you must do nothing beyond your strength.

I shall be pleased if you both write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5797

257. LETTER TO SAVAL L. IDLANI

SODEPUR,
January 5, 1946

BHAI IDLANI,

How is it that your letter to me is neither in Urdu nor in Hindi?

You should refer to the Congress President the question you ask me.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SAVAL L. IDLANI, JOURNALIST
LALCHAND NANMAL BUILDING
JAMSHED ROAD
KARACHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

258. LETTER TO SUBODHLAL SARKAR

SODEPUR,
January 5, 1946

BHAI SUBODHLAL SARKAR,

I got your postcard. Why in English? I shall not be going to Dhanbad.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

259. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKERS' CONFERENCE—I[1]

January 5, 1946

After enumerating the various items of the 18-fold constructive programme as mentioned in the revised and enlarged edition of his brochure[2] *Constructive Programme, Its Meaning and Place*, a copy of which had come into his hands only on the day before, he asked them to take note of the fact that the charkha and khaddar was only one—though by no means the least important—out of the 18 items in that programme.

Civil disobedience had been mentioned at the end of the 18 items. It had a place there since the theme of the brochure was the constructive programme not merely as an economic activity but as a means of the attainment of swaraj.

Civil disobedience was of two types, individual and mass. Individual civil disobedience was everybody's inherent right like the right of self- defence in normal life. No special sanction was needed for the practice of this kind of civil disobendience. Just as a man in normal life would use his dagger, revolver or even

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". About 750 to 800 workers from all the districts of Bengal, including several women, met Gandhiji on January 5 and 6 to seek his guidance regarding the Congress reorganization work in Bengal, particularly the constructive activity. A long list of questions were handed to Gandhiji just before he came to the meeting. Before answering the questions, Gandhiji addressed them briefly in Hindustani.

[2] *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 7-1-1946, had reported that, "incidentally in the course of his remarks, Gandhiji congratulated two Calcutta papers—*Amrita Bazar Patrika* and *The Hindustan Standard* for publishing the brochure in their columns and hoped that people would take up the programme and give effect to it in right earnest."

fisticuffs to foil a sudden attack, even so civil disobedience would be resorted to by the constructive worker as a non-violent equivalent to the use of fisticuffs or arms. It did not need sanction or permission from anybody. As an illustration of how civil disobedience could be used to overcome Government's opposition to constructive work he took up the hypothetical case of a worker engaged in the service of the Adivasis. If the Government prevented him from going among them he would simply disobey the order. The Government might put him in prison, he would welcome it. It would be a most auspicious beginning for his work. The very fact that he had gone to prison in order to serve the Adivasis would enshrine him in their hearts.

Mass civil disobedience was for the attainment of independence. For if the fulfilment of the constructive programme almost in its entirety was an indispensable preliminary condition. The 'Quit India' resolution of August 1942 might be cited as an exception to this dictum, he remarked. His reply was that it was justified by exceptional circumstances into which, however, he did not propose to take them at present. Moreover, the movement had never been started.

Gandhiji then took up the first two items from the constructive programme and showed how they helped the struggle for independence. The first was communal unity. If they could achieve true heart unity among all the communities, not as a political expedient to be cast aside when its purpose was served or as a token of their common dislike of the third party, no power on earth would be able to sow division amongst them as at present. And even a child would understand that an India united would be an India free. The same held true in regard to the removal of untouchability.[1]

In the course of his remarks Gandhiji referred to the report of Sarat Babu's recent speech[2] which was to the effect that since with Gandhiji he believed in non-violence of the strong—not of the weak, he felt that military training was necessary to inculcate the spirit of discipline, without which true non-violence could not be practised. Commenting upon it, Gandhiji said that he did not know whether Sarat Baba had been correctly reported or not. He himself had often suffered from bad reporting. But the statement as it appeared lent itself to an ambiguous interpretation.

It was only a half truth to say that military training was an aid to the practice of non-violence. The statement was true if by military training was meant inculcation of perfect discipline, but if by military training was meant training also in the use of arms and the art of killing it could have no place in his (Gandhiji's) programme of non-violence.

[1] The following four paragraphs have been taken from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 6-1-1946

[2] In the Bengal Legislative Assembly

He Himself had been advocating the necessity of non-violent discipline in his prayer meetings and had even been trying to impart it to the people wherever he went. He considered this kind of discipline to be superior to what was known as military discipline inasmuch as the latter was enforced by penalties while the discipline of non-violence was absolutely voluntary and called for the strength to face death without killing.

If he found that his views were opposed to Sarat Babu's views and he people of Bengal asked him as to which of the two sets of views they should follow, he would unhesitatingly tell them to follow Sarat Babu's views and discard his, since Sarat Babu was the leader of Bengal and not he. But in the present case he felt sure that there was no difference between their views as Sarat Babu had himself told him in the course of his recent talks with him that in the matter of non-violence he wantd to go the whole hog with him. Therefore, he was of opinion that Sarat Babu's advocacy of military training held good only in the context of non-violence. In no other sense was it compatible with the Congress faith much less with non-violence as he (Gandhiji) understood it.

Gandhiji then proceeded to answer questions :

Q. You have asked the charkha workers to keep themselves detached from the political work of the Congress. From experience the questioner finds that such centres fail to make the people conscious fighters for swaraj. On the other hand, other centres, where workers have been working in double functions—both as charkha as well as Congress workers—give a better account of themselves during civil disobedience. So please make your directions in this respect clear.

GANDHIJI: It is a good question but it betrays want of clear thinking. All I have said is that a khadi worker will not be able to do full justice to his work if he has too many irons in the fire. Khadi work demands one's undivided attention. But that does not mean that it should be done mechanically. No khadi worker can afford to be indifferent to other things with which khadi is interrelated or lose sight of its correlation to the struggle for independence. Experience has shown that wherever intensive charkha work had been done the people had shown greater grit, unity and capacity for organization in the struggle for independence.

Q. You have often repeated that charkha without its full implications means nothing. Supposing we do not associate the charkha with political work, then, how will people understand its full implications ?

G. 'Full implications'does include political work, but it includes many more things. The charkha has an undoubted value as a means for providing economic relief to the masses but as I have so

often reiterated, khadi activity, stripped of its significance in terms of India's independence means nothing to me today. At the same time if you take up charkha work merely for gaining political ends, it will defeat its purpose and you will make a mess of it in the political as in the economic sense.

To say that unless we associate charkha work with Political work it will have no political value, betrays a thorough ignorance of the non-violent technique. Let me take 'service of the lepers' which is another item in the 18-fold constructive programme. Surely, it cannot be associated with any kind of political work in the accepted sense. Yet it would be absurd to say that it has no value in terms of swaraj. Under the non-violent technique every real service renderd, every right act performed does bring the country nearer to the goal of political indepedence though in itself it may not have any direct political significance.

If you were to tell me that you have lost faith in non-violence as a means for the attainment of swaraj, I would agree that the charkha or constructive work have no use for you. Nor would you have any use for me in that event. But since you have discarded faith neither in ahimsa nor in me, your indifference to charkha and constructive work is a sign only of your laziness and inertia. It is my conviction that the phennome-nal awakening that has taken place in India during the last 25 years is entirely due to the adoption of non-violence and the charkha as its symbol.

To the extent to which we have neglected the charkha and constructive work we have failed in the attainment of our goal.

Q. On December 23, you have advised[1] Hindu workers to offer selfless service to the Muslim masses, for it will tell in the end. That might be termed a long-term policy. Should we then do nothing political among the Muslim masses? Apart from its effect on the Muslims, is not the policy of non-interference and political aloofness likely to engender in the non-Muslims a new attitude of exclusiveness towards the Muslims and thus serve the ver purpose of those who are trying to divide the nation ?

G. With due deference to the framer of the question let me say that I fail to understand it. If millions of Hindus regarded non-Hindus as their blood-brothers and sisters and treated them as such without the slightest tinge of a political motive, it must result in the complete political unity of India. Is it a 'long-term' effect? The

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with Political Workers", 23-12-1945

framer of the question does not seem to know how ahimsa works. What I have deprecated in the present poisoned state of our communal relations is the attempt on the part of Congressmen to draw non-Hindus into the Congress fold, as it would only accentuate the existing mistrust. But supposing I make friends with Badshah Khan how does it widen the gulf between the communities? On the contrary, it immediately eases communal tension to that extent. Multiply this picture a millionfold and it will be seen that the difficulty posed in the question is altogether chimerical.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 6-1-1946 and 13-1-1946

260. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

SODEPUR,
January 6, 1946

CHI. ANASUYA,

I got your letter. It is not possible for me to offer any suggestions or guidance from here. Sir Radhakrishnan is going that way and it would be better for you to see him. I think no one can do from here anything that would prove useful to you.

Why do you write 'people'[1]? 'Peoples' means 'nations'. Are we 'nations'? And if we are, how many nations are we? And where? Great Britain had one people, but Europe has many peoples with their own different countries. Is such the case with India ?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

261. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

SODEPUR,
January 6, 1946

CHI. ANASUYABHEN,

Chi. Mridula writes to say that you are now growing old and are often bed-ridden !!! What is this? And why? If you grow old, what

[1] The words in single quotes are in English ?

about me? 125 years is still far away for you as well as for me. And then 125 years is not for me alone. It is for all of us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

262. LETTER TO SORABJI P. KAPADIA[1]

SODEPUR,

January 6, 1946

BHAI KAPADIA,

I have the letter from Joshi Behn which you sent me. I have sent her an appropriate reply.

Blessings from

BAPU

SORABJI P. KAPADIA
" MUMBAI SAMACHAR"
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

263. LETTER TO SARVANBEHN

January 6, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

I got the khaddar. According to me no one is an *abala*[2]. A woman who does even a little can never be called an *abala*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7931

[1] The letter is in the Devanagari script.
[2] A weak woman

264. LETTER TO K. T. BHASHYAM

SODEPUR,
January 6, 1946

BHAI BHASHYAM,

I have your long letter. I may not be regarded as a guide in any way any more. The days are gone when I could act as one. My advice is that you may take up whatever appeals to you from among the activities I have already indicated. Hence you should come together and do whatever you can regardless of whether the outcome is good or bad. I am now of no use whatever for such matters.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI K. T. BHASHYAM
COTTONPET
BANGALORE CITY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

265. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKERS' CONFERENCE—II

January 6, 1946

Meeting Gandhiji on the second day of the conference[1] the Bengal workers found in him a hard customer. Instead of waiting fot them to put question he anticipated them by asking them whether they knew Hindustani. As only about half the number raised their hands in reply, he inquired as to how long they would require to learn Hindustani. Some replied: "One Year." Gandhiji commented :

No good, Contai people did not require more than six months[2].

"All right then, six months," shouted a few voices. But Gandhiji twitted them for doing no better than the countryfolk of Contai in the matter of learning the national language. Calcutta should do better. Someone from the gathering objected that they were not all Calcutta folk. But the objector's voice was drowned in a chorus from the rest who shouted "three months". [Gandhiji said :]

That is good, but say "six months" all in chorus and endorse the same by raising your right hand in affirmation.

[1] For the previous day's report, *vide* "Speech at Congress Workers Conference-I, 5-1-1946

[2] *Vide* "Discussion with Midnapore Political Workers", 2-1-1946

A forest of hands rose in reply. But Gandhiji's keen eye detected a lacuna.

I notice that the women workers are hesitating. Is *Azad*[1] Hindustan then going to be for men only and are women for ever to be in Zenanistan? If not, you should all shout out, "*sub*" ("all") in one voice.

There was a deafening chorus of "*sub, sub*" in reply. Gandhiji was pleased . . . he told them it was up to them to see that they kept it. There were ample facilities in Calcutta for learning Hindustani and they should avail themselves of it.

Another friend asked whether by learning Hindustani was meant ability to understand Hindustani or whether it included the ability to read and write Hindustani as well. This gave Gandhiji the opportunity to emphssize the importance of learning to read and write both the Nagari and the Urdu scripts, if they wanted to maintain direct touch with all the sections of the people in the country. Even Hindus in north, let along Muslims, did not know the Nagari script. In support of his argument he mentioned the instances of the late Lala Lajpat Rai, the Lion of the Punjab, Pandit Ajodhyanath, who was one of the founders of the Congress and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, none of whom knew the Nagari script. The Urdu script was not difficult to learn. Anyway he was not prepared to hear objections on the score of difficulty from intellectual Bengal.

Gandhiji's attention was next drawn to a Press cutting purporting to give a restatement of his views on the utility of the parliamentary programme in relation to constructive work. The reference was to a recent writing of his in Hindustani in *Khadi Jagat*. "What attitude should a wholetime constructive worker maintain towards the parliamentary programme? Can the will of the people be really represented by a legislature under present conditions in India? If the conditions are adverse, i. e., if the Government is hostile, should Congressmen continue to function in the legislatures and what help can they advance under the circumstances to the cause of constructive work ?"

Gandhiji, replying, said that he had advocated the boycott of the legislatures as a part of the fourfold non-co-operation programme. He still held the view that if that programme had been given effect to in full, India would have got swaraj. But the country as a whole was not prepared fot it. There was a considerable section in the country that wanted to use parliamentary talent in the service of the country. No one should prevent them from serving the country in their own way. As a practial idealist he had therefore reconciled himself to Congressmen capturing the legislatures and other elective bodies, if only to prevent self-seekers and enemies of India's freedom from getting there.

[1] Independent

He repeated what he had said at Contai, that nothing would please him better than that ideal scavengers should be returned to legislatures to represent the Congress there. He himself claimed to be scavenger No. 1 of India. His ideal scavenger would not be an ignorant puppet but a man with sturdy common sense and capacity to think and decide upon the problems of the day. He would be an educated person though he might not know English. He could not see why such a one should not be President of the Congress. The positive function of those who went to the legislatures would be to promote constructive work. He, however, warned them that mere parliamentary work would not bring them swaraj. That would come only as a result of their work outside among the masses. A wholetime constructive worker would not be able to take up parliamentary activity without detriment to his own work. But those who were not giving all their time to constructive work might enter the legislature if people wanted it, provided however that it did not lead to rivalries among workers and they had not to enter into any expenditure in order to be elected.

Q. In many portions of Bengal, the cultivators are Muslims and the proprietors Hindus. Recently in some places the Muslim tillers have refused to till the land under Hindu owners. What should the Hindu owners do under the circumstances ?

Gandhiji, replying, said that the views he was going to express were strictly his own. As they all knew, he was not even a four-anna Congress member and therefore he could not speak as a Congressman. He spoke only in his personal capacity as a satyagrahi.

Although the question had been posed in a communal setting the real cleavage as he saw it was not communal but economic. In Bengal the cultivators might be Muslim and the properietors Hindu. But in Andhra both the cultivators and proprietors were Hindus and yet the same conflict was in evidence in some parts.

His views, continued Gandhiji, on the ownership of land were well known. The only rightful owner of the land was he who tilled it. The present properietors were morally entitled to hold land only if they became trustees for it. If the cultivators of the fields of a proprietor, who had become a trustee, refused to till the land for him, he would not sue them or seek otherwise to coerce them. He would leave them alone and try to earn his livelihood independently by his honest industry. If he has been discharging his function as a trustee honestly, they would come to him before long in contrition and seek his guidance and help. For, he would use his privilege not to fill his pockets by the exploitation of the labourers but teach the letter co-operation and organization so as to increase their produce and generally ameliorate their conditons. This would mean that the proprietor must himself become a cultivator *par excellence*. A propeietor who regarded his property merely as a means of satisfying his lusts was not its owner but its slave. The proprietors of land in

Bengal had therefore only to adopt his ideal of trusteeship and their troubles would end.

Q. Would the trustee's property be passed on to his children by inheritance ?

G. A proprietor who holds his property as a trust will not pass it on to his children in inheritance unless the letter in their turn become trustees and make good their claim as such. If they are not prepared for it, he should create a trust of his property. It is demoralizing for an able-bodies young man to live like a parasite on unearned income. A father should inculcate in his children the appreciation of the dignity of labour and teach them to earn their bread by their honest industry. As regards the monied people all I can say from my close personal association with a large number of them, is that if a general atmosphere in favour of trusteeship, devoid of ill-will and class hatred, is created in the country they will fall in line with it.

Q. Many Congress workers who have recently come out of jail have to earn a living for themselves or their families. Under present economic conditions they have been forced to crowd into towns for this purpose with the result that the villages have begun to lose their services. Could not a paid service be established for them by the provincial or the district Congress organizations? If so, how would you advise them to find the money for this prupose ?

G. The question reflects the present deplorable condition of the country. The cities are not only draining the villages of their wealth but talent also. The only way to check the process is for Congress workers to refuse to make their lives their God but to dedicate themselves to the service of their ideal only. God will then take care of them. A labourer is always worthy of his hire but I know that I have no magic wand to revolutionize people's outlook up to the ideal of voluntary poverty. There-fore I consider it desirable that a fund should be created either by the Provincial Congress Committee or by local agencies to provide maintenance for such workers as may want to dedicate themselves to the service of the villages. Do not expect me however to provide you with funds. My begging days are over. It is my firm belief that no worthy cause has ever suffered for want of finances if there are sincere workers to work fot it. Calcutta has got enough 'money bags', and if a practical scheme of work in the villages is produced and there are sincere and earnest workers forthcoming to take it up, I am sure the money will come forth.

Q. You have advised spinning for swaraj. If, in trying to execute that programme in its full implications, spinning for wages has to be restricted, should we do so? That will mean hardship for the very poor who find some relief through their spinning wages. Then, again, if we keep up spinning for wages, the new rules of purchasing khadi against yarn will make it more difficult for us to dispose of the khadi produced for offering relief to the poor.

Gandhiji said that what he had recommended was that all people should spin not for self but for swaraj. Such conscious and altruistic spinning on the part of forty millions would constitute a veritable *yajna* or sacrifice out of which swaraj would emerge. It would knit the classes and masses, the brain workers and the manual labourers, in a living bond of unity. What had however happened was that although their efforts had resulted in providing thousands of men and women with a supplementary source of income, the spinners themselves did not wear khaddar. They did not realize the implications of khadi in terms of swaraj. He had therefore come to the concluclon tha if khadi was truly to become the "livery of freedom"[1], to use Pandit Jawaharlal's expression, all those who spin should consciously adopt khadi and all those who wanted to wear khadi should spin. There was thus no conflict between spinning for wages and spinning for sacrifice. The two were supplementary, one of the other.[2]

Q. Violence is bad . . . . The only substitute for it is constructive activity as symbolized by the charkha. But the dynamic quality seems to have gone out of it. What should be done to bring out its revolutionary significance ?

G. Dr. Radha Kumud Mukherji in one of his books has quoted Colebrooke as saying that in India, the home of chronic poverty, the spining-wheel is the provider of butter and bread for the poor. The late R. C. Dutt has shown how the prosperity of the East India Company was founded on their trade in Indian textiles. No part of the world, neither China nor Japan could produce fabrics to equal them. In the early phase the East India Company battened on the exploitation of its monopoly in Indian textiles. Not only did it bring them immense trade profits, it also gave an impetus to British shipping. Later, Lancashire developed its own textile industry following upon a series of mechanical inventions. This brought it into competition with the Indian textile manutactures. The policy of exploitation of the Indian artisans then gave way to that of destruction of their craft.

[1] *Vide* "Livery of Freedom"

[2] What follows is extracted from *Harijan*, 31-3-1946. It appeared under the title "How to Make It Dyamamic ?" by Pyarelal, who had explained that the question was "put to Gandhiji at Calcutta by the khadi workers of Borkamata".

An English writer has observed that the history of cotton is the history of civilization. Politics is the handmaid of commerce. Indian history provides an apt illustration of it. In the heyday of our cotton manufactures we used to grow all the cotton for our needs. The cotton seed was fed to the cattle which provided health-giving milk to the people. Agriculture flourished. The lint was turned into beautiful fabrics of which the *jamdanis* of Dacca were a specimen. As an offshoot we had the worldfamed dyeing and printing art of Masulipatam. Connoisseurs say that our old indigenous dyes could not be matched by any in the world for their permanence as well as brightness and beauty. All that is gone now. India is today naked. We have to cover her nakedness. If anybody could suggest a better substitute than the spinning-wheel for the prupose I would discard the spinningwheel today. But none has been found so far and I dare say none is likely to be found.

The question may however be asked: 'How can the charkha bring India freedom when it could not prevent its loss ?' The reply is that in the past charkha was not linked with the idea of freedom. Nor did it then symbolize the power of non-violence. In olden days it symbolized our slavery. We had not realized that our progress, prosperity and even freedom depended on the charkha or else we should have put up a fight and resorted to satyagraha to save it from destruction. What was lost through our ignorance and apathy has now to be won back through intelligence and knowledge. We have today ceased to think for ourselves. The Government says that Bengal is a pauper province and we mechanically accept the statement. To call a province which boasts $6\frac{1}{2}$ crores of population as pauper is only to proclaim our own intellectual bankruptcy. Did not the Governor of Bengal observe in a broadcast talk[1] the other day that the cultivator in Bengal remains unemployed for six months in the year? Can any population in the world subsist while remaining idle for half the year? Even if all the water that the rains bring were captured and harnessed to irrigaion it would not keep the masses alive if their enforced unemployment for the better part of the year were not removed. Our real malady is not destitution but laziness, apathy and inertia. You may achieve marvels of irrigational engineering. But wellfilled granaries alone cannot and will not end our slavery. To end slavery you must over-come the mental and physical inertia of the masses and

[1] On December 8, 1945; *vide* also "Letter to R. G. Casey", 8-12-1945

quicken their intelligence and creative faculty. It is my claim that the universa- lization of hand-spinning with a full knowledge of all that it stands for alone can bring that about in a sub-continent so vast and varied as India. I have compared spinning to the central sun and the other village crafts to the various planets in the solar system. The former gives light and warmth to the latter and sustains them. Without it they would not be able to exist.

Q. If swaraj hangs on the thread of hand-spun yarn, as you say, why have we failed to attain it up till now after a quarter of a century of khadi work ?

G. Because our labour was not quickened by knowledge. The peace of the grave makes the latter the house of death. But the peace in the soul makes it the seat of divine intelligence. Similarly, soulless labour symbolizes serfdom Labour illumined with knowledge smybolizes the will to freedom. There is a world of difference between the two. Khadi workers should understand that khadi work without the mastery of the science of khadi will be love's labour lost in terms of swaraj.

Q. What do you mean by the science of spinning? What things are included in it ?

G. I have often said that I can do without food but not without sacrificial spinning. I have also claimed that no one in India has perhaps done his spinning with such unfailing regularity and conscientious diligence as I. And yet I will say that all that by itself cannot take the place of scientific knowledge. Scientific knowledge requires constant probing into the why and wherefore of every little process that you perform. Mere affirmation that in charkha there is swaraj and peace is not enough. A scientific mind will not be satisfied with having things scientific just on faith. He will insist on finding a basis in reason. Faith becomes lame when it ventures into matters pertaining to reason Its field begins where reason's ends. Conclusions based on faith are unshakable whereas those based on reason are liable to be unstable and vulnerable to superior logic. To state the limitation of science is not to belittle it. We cannot do without either—each in its own place.

When I first discovered the spinning-wheel it was purely through intuition. It was not backed by knowledge so much so that I confused charkha with *kargha*, i. e., handloom. Later on, however, I tried to work out its possibilities with the help of the late Maganlal Gandhi. For instance, the question arose: Why should the spindle be made of

iron, not brass? Should it be thin or thick? What would be the proper thickness? We began with the mill spindles. Then, spindle-holders used to be bamboo and wood. Later we came to leather and gut bearings. It was found that spindles got easily bent and were difficult to straighten. So we tried to make them out of knitting needles and ultimately of umbrellawires. All this called for the exer-cise of the inventive faculty and scientific research.

A khadi worker with a scientific mind will not stop there. 'Why the charkha, why not the spinning mill?' he will ask himself. The reply will be that everybody cannot own a spinning mill. If people depend on spinning mills for their clothing, whoever controls the spinning mills will control them and thus there will be an end to individual liberty. Today anyone can reduce the whole of London and New York to submission within 24 hours by cutting off their electric and water supply. Individual liberty and interdependence are both essential for life in society. Only a Robinson Crusoe can afford to be all self-sufficient. When a man has done all he can for the satisfaction of his essential requirements he will seek the co-operation of neighbours for the rest. That will be true co-operation. Thus a scientific study of the spinning-wheel will lead on to sociology. The spinning-wheel will not become a power for the liberation of India in our hands unless we have made a deep study of the various sciences related to it. It will then not only make India free but point the way to the whole world.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has very aptly remaked that at one time India was not lacking in the inventive spirit but today it has become dormant. Once one gets the scientific outlook it will be reflected in every act of his, in his eating, drinking, rest, sleep. Everything will be scientifically regulated and with a full appreciation of its why and wherefore. Finally, a scientific mind must have detachment or else it willl and itself into the lunatic asylum. The Upanishad says that whatever there is in this universe is from Him. It belongs to Him and must be surrendered to Him and then enjoyed. Enjoyment and sorrow, success and failure will then be the same to you.

One thing more. Supposing the tyrant wants to destroy the spinning-wheel itself. What then? My reply is that in that event we should ourselves perish with the spinning-wheel and not live to witness its destruction. For every khadi worker who thus sacrifices himself thousands will arise to take his place. The act of his will set the final seal of victory on the cause he represents.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 13-1-1946, and *Harijan*, 31-3-1946

266. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

January 6, 1946

Gandhiji emphasized what he had said[1] at Mahishadal about the observance of the general rule for attending a meeting. He said that it was the common rule that nobody should enter the meeting place after it had begun and nobody should leave the meeting place during the continuance of the meeting. Those who would violate this rule, Gandhiji emphasized, would disturb others. Even if anybody did not find any interest in the meeting he should think of others who are in the meeting and not leave the meeting before it was concluded. This was the common rule for every meeting and in the case of prayer meeting they should be more careful, because at the prayer they had to train their minds and concentrate on God.

Referring to the song that was sung at the prayer Gandhiji said that they should take the significance of the song to their hearts. In the song Poet Rabindranath said that he would not be frightened to see God coming to him in the form of misery. In this connection Gandhiji would remind them of an English poem entitled "The Hound of Heaven"[2] in which God had been described as a huntsman pursuing the disciple continually. God, Gandhiji explained, could not leave His devotee alone because He, who had created the world, was concerned about the world going in order. So real misery came when they forgot God and happiness came when they kept God in them.

This[3] is also a kind of misery, but you should not feel like that. At the Sabarmati Ashram which was at a short distance from the Station there was a person who took the vow of silence. One day he told Gandhiji that he was greatly disturbed by the whistling train at the time of worship. Gandhiji suggested to him to shut his ears with cotton or rubber to prevent the whistle disturbing him. After a short time the man again came to Gandhiji and told him that he was no more in need of cotton or rubber because he had been trained to such a concentration of mind that no sound or whistle could enter his ears. What Gandhiji would tell them was that they should not be perturbed when misery—in whatever shape or form—came to them.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 7-1-1946

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 28-12-1945

[2] By Francis Thompson

[3] The reference is to the whistling of a train, which interrupted Gandhiji's speech.

267. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

Express SODEPUR,
January 7, 1946

SARDAR
CARE POWERFARM
BOMBAY

GOD WILLING SHALL BE AT BARDOLI THIRD MARCH.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

268. TELEGRAM TO K. SRINIVASAN

Express SODEPUR,
January 7, 1946

KASTURI SRINIVASAN
" HINDU"
MADRAS

YOUR TELEGRAM. APPROVED.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

269. TELEGRAM TO M. SATYANARAYAN

SODEPUR,
January 7, 1946

SATYANARAYANJI[1]
CARE DAKSHIN [BHARAT HINDI PRACHAR SABHA]
THYAGARAYANAGAR (MADRAS)

RAJKUMARI WRITTEN ZAKIRSAHEB OR SAIYIDAIN[2]. FAILING EITHER RAJKUMARI WILL.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Secretary, Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha, Madras
[2] Khwaja Ghulam Saiyidain, Principal, Teachers' Training College, Aligarh; later Adviser and Secretary to the Ministry of Education, Government of India

270. LETTER TO ARUNA ASAF ALI[1]

SODEPUR,
January 7, 1946

CHI. ARUNA[2]

I read your little note immediately it was received. But your joint letter to Maualana Sahib I read early morning today (silence-day) immediately after the 4.30 prayer. You will let me say that it is eloquent but not cogent. It does injustice to yourselves, the Maulana and the cause. But I must not argue whilst you are under detention of your own making and yet falsely believing yourselves to be free.

Of course you must do as your comprehension of truth bids and not as anybody else however high says. And I honour you for such action.

It is for your sake that I resort to a foreign tongue and a thing I will not do even for you, if you were free.

Blessings to both from[3]
BAPU

From a copy: C. W. 11339. Courtesy: Aruna Asaf Ali

271. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

SODEPUR,
January 7, 1946

CHI. BABUDI,

Today is silence day. This is the first letter I am writing after the morning prayer. How are you? How is Anand? I am still touring on this side. I shall leave for Madras on the 19th or the 20th instant.

Blessings to you all from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10065. Courtesy: Sharada G. Chokhawala

[1] Wife of Asaf Ali, a Congress leader. She was a member of the Congress Socialist Party and had played a prominent part in the Quit India movement in 1942.

[2] The superscription and subscription are in Devanagari.

[3] *ibid*

272. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR (NEAR CALCUTTA),
January 7, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

Shrimati Saroj Basini Goho, the wife of Shri S. C. Goho, 'until a few days ago' said to be the Agent of the Government of India in Malaya, has just seen me and asked me to approach His Excellency about her husband, who is reported to have been arrested in Singapore. She has given me a copy of her memorial submitted to His Excellency. I have taken the liberty of telling her that if what is set forth in the papers shown to me and which are in the possession of the Government are true, her husband is quite safe. Could you please enlighten me in the matter ?[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 75-6

273. LETTER TO SAROJ BASINI GOHO

SODEPUR,
January 7, 194[*6*][2]

DEAR SISTER,

I have gone through the papers you gave me and have started work in that connection. Please do not worry.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

SHRIMATI SAROJ BASINI GOHO
6/1 KANTAPUKUR LANE
BAGH BAZAR P. O.
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] S. C. Goho had been charged with collaborating with the enemy. He was released in March 1946.

[2] The source has 1945, which is obviously a slip. *Vide* the preceding item.

274. LETTER TO A. B. M. ENAYAT HUSSAIN

SODEPUR,
January 7, 1946

BHAI SAHEB,

I got your letter last evening. Today is my silence day. Tomorrow I leave for Assam. You and your friends may come on the 16th at 2.30 p. m. I shall manage to give you half an hour.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

JANAB A. B. M. ENAYAT HUSSAIN
GENERAL SECRETARY
MUSLIM UNEMPLOYED RELIEF ASSOCIATION
18 MIRZAPUR STREET
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Urdu: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

275. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
January 7, 1946

Gandhiji stressed the need for observance of the rules of cleanliness by every citizen. He asked them to remember that cleanliness was next to Godliness and that if they could observe the rules of cleaniness they would be pure in their hearts also.

Gandhiji said that although he did not travel much during these days he had heard from his friends how the city streets were made dirty with the kernel of fruits, paper pieces and other useless things strewn over them. It was also said that Calcutta had been dirty. But he could tell them that if every citizen did his part and observed the rules of cleanliness then the face of Calcutta would be changed.

Gandhiji also exhorted them to apply the rules of cleanliness in other spheres of their lives as well.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 8-1-1946

276. INTERVIEW TO STUDENTS DEPUTATION[1]

CALCUTTA,
[On or after *January 7, 1946*][2]

The answer is already in what you have told me just now. You should get into the habit of speking in Hindustani. Just knowing it is not enough. One should be ashamed of speaking in English.

2. Students should assemble for this particular work and hold meeting. Vinoba, Dada, Aryanayakum, Ashadevi, Ramachandran, Mahesh and others are all there to guide you. Acharya Kripalani and Sucheta are of course there. For that matter Dhiren Majmudar and Vichitra Narayan are also there. Consult them also. There are many more whom I have not named. The thing is that there should be steadfastness and truth in you. Then everything could be done. But not today. Consult all these people. Aryanayakum is here and also Kripalani and Sucheta. Do this after careful thinking. There should be no repentance afterwards. Discuss with Radhakrishna. It is quite easy [to do this] in Kashi Vidyapith. What is the use of asking me? Think yourselves and do what you think proper. Have a talk with Pyarelal. He was also a student like you when he came to me.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10854

277. TELEGRAM TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

CALCUTTA,
January 8, 1946

MUNNALAL
NATURECURE CLINIC
POONA

KANCHAN'S ILLNESS CAUSING ANXIETY. YOU CAN COME IF YOU FEEL YOU MUST. AM LEAVING FOR ASSAM. SUSHILABEHN REMAINGING WITH KANCHAN. DOCTOR BIDHAN ROY SUPERINTENDING TREATMENT. ASKING NAR HARI[3] SEND MANIBHA REPLACE YOU IF YOU LEFT

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 8627

[1] R. Achutan, Secretary, Benares Hindu University Rachanatmak Mandal for students and spokesmen of the deputation, says: "In January 1946, a group of students from Benares Hindu University met Gandhiji at Sodepur Ashram in Calcutta and discussed with him about the question of revival of Gandhi Seva Sangh to take up the constructive task of non-violent revolution.....Since Bapu was observing silence.....[he] wrote [down] his reply. . . ." (S.N. 10854)

[2] Gandhiji's first silence day was on the 7th in January 1946.

[3] *Vide* the following item.

278. TELEGRAM TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

SODEPUR,

Express *January 8, 1946*

NARHARIBHAI PARIKH

SEVARAM

WARDHA

KANCHAN'S ILLNESS SERIOUS. MUNNALAL MIGHT COME IF HE IS ANXIOUS. HENCE SEND MANIBHAI POONA IF FEASIBLE. GOING ASSAM FIVE DAYS STAY. ADDRESS GAUHATI.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

279. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SODEPUR,

January 8, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI

Yesterday I sent you a telegram as follows :

"God willing reach Bardoli 3rd March." I very much wanted to come on the 1st but I see that that is not possible, for February has only 28 days and I must look in at Poona, for a few days at least, before going to Bardoli. I have, therefore counted two days more so that I may arrange the programme as if the month had 30 days. Having started the thing I must see it through. I cannot in any circumstances tolerate misuse of money. And if I take no interest Dinshaw cannot manage the new venture. I will, therefore, quickly finish the work at Wardha, pay a brief visit to Poona, and then come to Bardoli and after that go back to Poona again. This is what I have in mind at the moment.

I have already written something about the Parliamentary Delegation.[1] We should not spurn it; on the other hand we should welcome it whole-heartedly. It is not necessary to get excited over it as people used to when such people arrived in the past. We should not insult our guests in any manner whatesoever. There is no need for Congressmen to decline the invitation if they are invited to

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 3-1-1946

parties that may be held to honour the members of the delegation. I myself will certainly meet them somewhere. As it, I was to see the Governor on returning from Midnapore. I saw him only last evening and he himself asked me when I could meet them. I gave him my dates. They will most probably meet me in Madras, no other dates scemed suitable. Dr. Mahmud has come over to see me. He met me the day before yesterday, and since I am soon leaving for Assam he intends to go to Patna after seeing me off. So he will go today. In the meanwhile, the Governor heard about his arrival and suggested a meeting. They were together for about an hour. Nothing important seems to have been discussed, but they were glad to have met. I have not as yet been able to sit and talk with Dr. Mahmud for even a quarter of an hour. Just as he came my silence began. It lasted throughout yesterday. Dr. Mahmud came in the evening, but I went to see the Governor. When I returned it was already a quater to ten; and so naturally we could not sit and talk.

I am all right. Kanchan has been taken very ill but I hope she will recover. She has severe anaemia. She has had it for some time but she did not pay attention to it. I leave for Assam today. I do not like to leave her but you know how often I have had to go like this. Most probably Sushila will stay on for her sake. I am dictaing this early in the morning after the prayers. How she fares today we shall know only in the course of the day. Just now she is sleeping. So is Sushila, She was with Kanchan for most of the night.

If I fill this letter with an account of my experience here, it would become much longer. I have not the time for it. Besides, why should you want to read all that?

Rajkumari is of course here. She had to go to Hyderabad (Sindh) for some time. She will accompany me to Assam. After that she will have to go to Mysore.

Blessing from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

68 MARINE DRIVE, BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 291-3

280. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR (NEAR CALCUTTA),
January 8, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

I enclose herewith a cutting[1] for you to read. Can the information therein be true ?[2] probably you could let me know without troubling His Excellency.

Enclosure: 1

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 44

281. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR (NEAR CALCUTTA),
January 8, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

His Excellency knows Dr. B. C. Ray. He is one of foremost physicians of India. He is responsible for the efficient management of several hospitals in Calcutta. His services have bww been enlisted by the Government of India. He was on the Bhore Committee[3] too. The Congress has organized a mission of relief for the people of Burma and Malaya. I see from the papers which Dr. Roy has handed to me that the Government of India are hesitating about giving facilities to the mission, the reason being that the Government are doing all they

[1] From *The Hindustan Standard,* 6-1-1946, which had reported that twenty-five-INA prisoners were bayonetted to death for singing the INA national anthem in Bahadurgarh camp and many were punished for shouting the slogan "Jai Hind"

[2] The addressee in reply enclosed a Press Note which said that 42 men had received bruises on their buttocks from the tip of the bayonets as a result of their resistance. No one was killed and no one was punished for using the slogan "Jai Hind".

[3] The Health survey and Development Committee appointed by the Government of India

can. But in a service of this kind all that even a powerful Government can do is not enough. Lest for want of offered help people in distress might suffer, I want to dismiss from my mind the suggestion that because it is a Congress mission there is hesitation about its acceptance. I only hope that the very able assistance offered by Dr. B. C. Roy will not be rejected.[1]

Yours sincerely

M. K.GANDHI

282. LETTER TO STEPHEN LEE

SODEPUR,

January 8, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your prompt and clear reply. I propose to make the fullest possible use of it.

Yours sincerely,

M. K.G.

STEPHEN LEE, ESQ.
FRIENDS' SERVECE UNIT
1 UPPER WOOD ST.
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

283. LETTER TO R. G. CASEY

KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR,

January 8, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

Herewith the note I promised last night to send to you.

1. Mahishadal—Tamluk sub-division, Midnapore District.

On the application of one Shridhar Chandra Goswami on 27th June, 1944, the presiding officer ordered the return of articles seized.

[1] In his reply of January 30, the addressee said the offer "must be declined because the Government of Burma were themselves trying to provide medical relief and could not provide facilities to the mission.

These articles have not yet been returned nor compensation offered, if the articles are missing (according to my information).[1] Original papers sent herewith. (Enclosure1) [2]

2. Contai sub-division.

Water that has become saline there and probably in the other sub-divisions also should be drained out and renovated so as to be drinkable.

I enclose herewith the original letter from the Friends' Service Unit showing how urgent this work is. (Enclosure 2)

3. Abhoy Ashram, Comilla.

I attach hereto a paper marked 'Enclosure 3'. It discloses a curious state of affairs, as I understand if. I know personally that the Ashram activities were wholly beneficial and constructive. Schools based on social reform were run, catering for mostly Muslim children of spinning families who span yarn for wages; a depot was established for the storing of yarn, cotton and khadi; a hospital was conducted under the able supervision of Shri Suresh Bannerji.[3] (Enclosure 3)

4. Other Khadi Centres.

Other khadi centres affected are shortly referred to in enclosure No. 4.[4]

5. Sales Tax Act.

As to Sales Tax Act, I observe that the Act was passed on Ist July 1941. Handloom cloth was excluded from the operation of the Act, but it was amended on March 30th 1944, and the tax was raised from one to two pice per rupee. On 25th June 1945, it was raised to three pice per rupee by the Governor's Ordinance. Handloom cloth was made taxable though originally omitted, but it is not clear when. Dhoti

[1] The addressee said in reply that the applicant had filed a claim petition after the articles were auctioned and therfore he was asked to withdraw the sales proceeds which he declined. It was not possible to return the articles but the payment of compensation would be considered if he submitted an application to the District Magistrate to that effect.

[2] This and the other enclosures mentioned in the letter are not traceable.

[3] The addressee said in reply that the question of removing the ban on these institutions would be examined and the payment of compensation for the damage done to the property would be considered.

[4] The addressee said in reply that in most of the khadi centres either the immovable property had been returned or compensation in lieu of it had been paid. The cases of the remaining centres were under consideration. In cases where premises were forfeited orders were being issued either to retun the premises or to provide an alternative accommodation.

sari and *lungi* worth Rs. 10, Rs. 15, and Rs. 18 respectively are excluded from the operation of the Act.

My point is that khadi, i.e., hand-spun and hand-woven, or hand-spun yarn should be excluded from all taxes. Logically, hand-woven cloth also, though woven from mill yarn, should be excluded for the tax hits the handloom weaver. Therefore, the exclusion of dhoti, sari and *lungi* is of no help. The revenue derived from khadi is altogether negligible. The revenue derived from hand-woven cloth is fair because hand-woven cloth is large enough in quantity to yield some income to the treasury, but at the poor weaver's expenese. In taxing khadi, however, thousands of poor hand-spinners are so hard hit that the tax becomes so deterrent as to be punitive. I am quite certain that such was never the intention of the farmers of the Act. The oversight has only to be brought to the notice of the Government to be remedied. I may also mention that all the khadi depots of the All-India Spinners' Association are benevolent concerns. The conductors are servants of the A. I. S. A. which according to the recent judgment of the Privy Council, has been held to be a benevolent institution, not liable to income tax.[1]

Incidentally, I may mention that whilst fresh milk is excluded from the operation of the Act, all other forms of milk such as boiled milk, pasteurized milk, *dahi*, etc., are taxable under the Act. The clause baffles me. The original Act is called Bengal Act of 1941.

6. Feni.

Feni is within the Japanese bombed area. Therefore, 98 villages were evacuated by the Government. Assurance is said to have been given that six months after the cessation of hostilities the villages would be returned to the villagers. Nevertheless, 28 villages appear to be still in Government possession. At the time of evacuation, removal of merchandise was strictly prohibited. This is a case demanding close inquiry.

I enlose herewith an account furnished to me, marked 'Enclosure 5'.[2]

[1] The addressee assured Gandhiji that he would have the sales tax examined immediately.

[2] The addressee said that eight villages would be permanently acquired as they had been converted into airfields. The other 14 which were requisitioned for making bricks were being released. The accusation that people in the requisitioned areas were prevented from removing their movables was wrong. On the contrary help was given to them to do so.

I have hurriedly drawn up this letter. The chief aim is to involve as little reading as possible for you. If, however, any further papers are required I shall be prepared to furnish them on my return from Assam, I hope on the 14th. As I told you last evening I cannot myself vouch for the accuracy of the facts given. They have been to me by co-workers as being accurate. But if that is not so I stand open to correction. If, however, they are found to be accurate I suggest that they call for immediate inquiry. I have taken care to refer only to those things which can be remedied without much difficulty or expense and yet they are the things which will give relief to the neediest.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANCHI

Enclosure: 5

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 116-8

284. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

SODEPUR,

January 8, 1946

CHI. DEVDAS,

I got your letter about Prabhu Dayal[1] on 3-1-1946. I am very busy myself. Prabhua Dyal seems to be getting along fairly well. I expect you have detained him, let me know the developments.

Kanchan has fallen ill. I have to go to Assam today.

I hope you are all well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. DEVDAS GANDHI

"HINDUSTAN TIMES"

NEW DELHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1]Prabhu Dayal Vidyarthi

285. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SODEPUR,
January 8, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have sent the following wire :[1]

As it is Kanchan was ill. She was suffering from anaemia. Dr. Bidhan sent his own pathologist, who took her blood sample and examined it. She has been found to be suffering from severe anaemia. It is because of this that her cough does not leave her. I have not known even a millionaire receive better treatment than she is receiving. Dr. Bidhan calls regularly and guides Sushilabehn. The latter had treated her once through a serious illness and hence Kanchan had complete faith in her. I do not therefore believe that you will be able to do anything more by coming here. But if you feel you must, I will not dissuade you. It might not be proper also in view of the seriousness of the illness. I have, therefore, sent the above wire. If you have already left this letter will be superfluous. But I am dictating this assuming that you have not left. If you do come the question will arise as to who will take charge there. I have therefore sent a wire to Manibhai at Sevagram saying that, if he can, he should leave immediately for Poona. If you have not already left, he will help you. Take whatever help he can give. If you have already left, Manibhai will do as he thinks best.

I had got your postcard yesterday. All the questions in it had been answered in my previous letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8613. Also C.W. 7202. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

286. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

January 9, 1946

Last night (Tuesday) was a terrible night for me. The crowds at every station were unmanageable. The shouts, although well meant, could not please me in my old age, if they ever pleased me before.

[1] For the text, *vide* "Telegram to Munnalal G. Shah", 8-1-1946

For I know that swaraj is made of truer and sterner stuff. They serve no uselful purpose. In the beginning stages, when people out of fear were afraid to hear their own voice, shouts and slogans had a place, not today when we seem likely to achieve independence, maybe within a few months. I was allowed last night no sleep except for what I could snatch in between stations. I cannot repeat this performance for many days and hope to live to the age of one hundred and twenty-five years. Friends will now appreciate why I have hardened my heart against even a brief tour through East Bengal. I would love to travel throughout Bengal but I know that for the sake of the common cause I must restrain myself and invite friends and co-workers to do likewise. Let them and people at large satisfy themselves with what service I can render without traveling as I used to before. Let the leaders in the various places try to conciliate the populace surrounding them and advise them to restrain from shouts and slogans and from jostling one another.

One vulgar and uncivilized practice must be given up. There is the chain on every train to be used strictly in times of danger or accidents. Any other use of it and the consequent stoppage of the train is not merely a punishable offence but it is a vulgar, thoughtless and even dangerous misues of an instrument devised for great emergancies. Any such misuse is a social abuse which, if it becomes a custom, must result in a great public nuisance. It is up to every lover of his country to issue a stern warning against such wanton abuse of a humanitarian device intended for public safety.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 10-1-1946 and 11-1-1946

287. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING [1]

SAULKUCHI,
January 9, 1946

Gandhiji said that he had noticed during the *bhajan* that some of the people had failed to keep time with the song, but that was pardonable. He would like that this form of congregational prayer be adopted all over Hindustan. He was told that women in Assam sang sweetly during their work, for example when they were spinning or weaving. Gandhiji had noticed that women had not joined in today's *bhajan*. It might be that they were ashamed to sing in chorus, but Gandhiji told them that swaraj would not come until they gave up this feeling of shyness.

He was thankful to them for maintaining peace in the prayer meeting. In a few months they might have swaraj and they wanted to have swaraj within a few months in a peaceful way. But could they achieve swaraj if they went on shouting in season and out of season? This would go to show that they did not possess the necessary discipline.

Mahatma Gandhi referred to the experience of his journey and the indisciplined behaviour of the people at some places. He said this showed that the people had not yet fully imbibed the principle of non-violence. Indiscipline, he added, was only a variety of violence. If 40 crores of people or even a major part of them had assimilated the message of truth and non-violence which the Congress had been preaching for the last 25 years, India would have been free. But that was no reason for despair or despondency. To inculcate perfect discipline and non-violence among forty crores of people was no joke. It needed time. Twenty-five years were insufficient for such a tremendous task. That was why he desired to live 125 years so that he might, with his own eyes, see the consummation of his own ideas. But he could not hope to live up to that span of life unless the conditions attaching to it were fulfilled. If these conditions were fulfilled not only he, but anybody even in a country like India where the average expectation of life was the lowest in the world could live up to that period. It was clear, however, that if he exposed himself to experiences like that of last night his candle would be burnt out within a month.

Britishers, continued Gandhiji, might realize, as they were bound to one day, that they could not hold down an awakened people for all time with force of bayonets and therefore, decide to transfer power to them. They (the people) would find themselves in a quandary in that event, if they had no discipline and organization. He hoped that they would not allow themselves to be caught

[1] Held on the northen bank of the Brahmaputra. The first two paragraphs are reproduced here from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 11-1-1946

napping like that.

There was no greater spell-binder of peace than the name of God, said Gandhiji. He had, therefore, commenced the practice of holding mass prayers and inviting people to join in singing *Ramdhun* to the beating of time with the hands, to inculcate in the masses the spirit of non-violence and discipline. He would love to see that the whole of India was covered with prayer gatherings like that.

The Hindu, 11-1-1946, and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 11-1-1946

288. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

GAUHATI,
January 10, 1946

I have seen a report[1] in the Press wholly baseless, to the effect that I propose to give two days to Orissa before reaching Madras. I would love, if I at all could, to give some days to Orissa and some days to Andhra. But I know the limitations of My body. It gives the work that it does from day to day to the utmost limit. Therefore, I cannot break my journey either for Orissa or Andhra and I invite all friends and co-workers in these two provinces to give their fullest co-operation by telling people not to expect from me what seems to me to be impossible. I do not know who is responsible for the report in question.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 11-1-1946

[1] The report appeared in *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 8-1-1946

289. TELEGRAM TO JAMINI BOSE

EXPRESS GAUHATI,
January 10, 1946

JAMINI BOSE[1]
CONGRESS OFFICE
CHITTAGONG

YOUR WIRE. DOING NEEDFUL. WIRE OR POST FULL PARTICULARS GIVING OSTENSIBLE CAUSE OUTRAGE.[2]

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

290. LETTER TO R. G. CASEY

CAMP: SARANIA ASHRAM,
GAUHATI,
January 10, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I enclose herewith copy of a wire[3] received today. The story seems to be unbelievable. I know you will inquire and take the necessary steps, if there is any foundation for the truth of the story.[4]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE GOVERNOR OF BENGAL
CALCUTTA

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 114

[1] President, Chittagong District Congress Committee

[2] Four men of Ganjam Pioneer Corps and tried to molest a village woman near Chittagong. On their attempt being foiled by the villagers they came back in great strength and set fire to houses, assaulted men, molested women and plundered property.

[3] *Vide* the preceding item; also "Telegram to Private Secretary to the Governor of Bengal", 12-1-1946

[4] Casey informed Gandhiji that the culprits would be tried by a civil (criminal) court.

291. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SARANIA ASHRAM,
January 10, 1946

CHI. MIRA,

This is just to tell you that I succeeded only yesterday in studying your drawings of the Himalayan scenes. They need greater study than I was able to give them. But I had little difficulty in understanding and appreciating the love you have put into your work. Your instructions at the back are most careful.

I hope you had my previous letter[1] in answer to your long letter. I do so wish you had less trouble with men and animals. Others must write to you about the wonderful experience I am having here.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6514. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Aslo G.N. 9909

292. LETTER TO TAYYEBULLA

SARANIA ASHRAM,
January 10, 1946

DEAR TAYYEBULLA,

Some mutual friend had told me of your loss before your letter was given to me on my arrival here last night at about 10 p.m. Why grieve over the inevitable? And death is the common treasure of all that lives. Imagine the torture that birth would be if there was no death ! Loss therefore is a conventional word. Then true friendship is tested finally by the death of the loved one. And the verse you quote from the Holy Koran puts the finishing touch on all I say. Let Him take what He has given. Let us then praise His great name. My prayer with you.

You have done well in not coming to me.

Love.

BAPU

M.TAYYEBULLAH
NOWGONG

From a photostat: G.N. 3765. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 17-12-1945

293. LETTER TO ARTHUR HENDERSON

AS AT SEVAGRAM,
"VIA" WARDHA, C.P., INDIA,
CAMP: SARANIA ASHRAM,
GAUHATI,
January 10, 1946

Thank you for your letter received some days ago. I have been busy with the annual session of the Women's Conference and hence unable to acknowledge it earlier. I am grateful to you for enquiring about the matters mentioned to you by me when we last met. I do so wish all political prisoners could be released. It would have a good effect. What is more, it would be an act of justice though tardy.

I enclose a list of several prisoners who have done ten to fifteen years in jail. This refers to Bengal only and then too the list is probably not exhaustive. Some are in bad health. Do you not agree that these should be released without delay ?

ARTHUR HENDERSON, ESQ.
UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA
WHITE HALL
LONDON

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

294. LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

SARANIA ASHRAM,
January 10, 1946

CHI. CHAMPA,

I got your letter here last evening. You seem to have succeeded very well. Kanta of course is a very obliging lady. She knows the art of looking after children. I am, therefore, not surprised by what you say. I am only pleased. How is Sarala? How is Kanta's own health? Ask her to write to me.

You have said nothing about Shanti. I trust the children are all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8759. Also C.W. 1046. Courtesy: Champa R. Mehta

295. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

GAUHATI,
January 10, 1946

CHI. AMTULSALAAM,

Since you have been following my suggestions without arguing about them, you are bound to get well. I should be very happy if both of you sisters[1] recover enough to be able to come to Madras. But it will be as God wills. I may not write to anybody else today. Blessings to all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 503

296. LETTER TO PUSHPA K. DESAI

SARANIA ASHRAM,
January 10, 1946

CHI. PUSHPA,

I got your letter. Keep meeting Vinobaji from time to time.

You should regard it as your dharma to write regularly courteous letters to Father. If you want to tread the path of truth, you should lovingly and in a spirit of humility do whatever work of service is entrusted to you. If you understand only this much, all your problems will be sloved. To say that God may lead you to this path of truth would be tautologous. Truth itself is God. Hence dedication to truth is itself discovery of the path of truth. Reflect on all the implications of the path of *bhakti* from this point of view.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9269

[1] The addressee and Kanchan M. Shah

297. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SARANIA ASHRAM,
January 10, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your two letters before me, which I am enclosing. I am sorry to learn that Parnerkar's sister's son has passed away. I understand what you say about Anantramji. It will be good if he grows leafy vegetables. See how much land Aryanayakumji wants and where he would like to have it. In my opinion, we should give him whatever he wants. Maybe I have left out something but today only this much.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

298. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

GAUHATI,
January 10, 1946

Gandhiji congratulated the gathering on the beautiful way in which they had followed *Ramdhun*. Particularly he was pleased that women had whole- heartedly joined in it without any feeling of false shame. In taking the name of God, hesitation and fear as well as false shame were equally out of place. The man who had the realization of God Who dwelt in the hearts of all beings should know no fear.

"Jai Hind" should not replace *"Vandemataram"*.[1] The words which Subhas Bose uttered were very pleasant to hear. But by this poeple should not forget *Vandemataram* which was being uttered since the inception of the Congress. First, they should say *"Vandemataram"* and then "Jai Hind". He would whole-heartedly return that greeting but it should not be to the exclusion of *"Vandemataram"*. If they could discard *"Vandemataram"* which had such a tradition of sacrifice behind it, he was afraid they would one day discard *"Jai Hind"* also.

[1] The source had reported that Gandhiji was greeted by some girl volunteers with 'Jai Hind' as he arrived at the prayer ground.

Gandhiji reiterated his belief that Subhas Babu was not dead, but was hiding somewhere[1] and said that if he could communicate with Subhas Babu, he was sure the latter would endorse him in his view about *"Vandemataram"*.

The Hindu, 12-1-1946

299. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

GAUHATI,
January 11, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your wire. Your decision not to come over is perfectly correct. It was my dharma to send you the wire that I did. I had explained to you what your dharma was at the time of your father's death. You have adhered to that. May you be blessed. I daily get news about Kanchan's progress I am dictating this in the early hours of the morning. I had a wire from Sushila yesterday, saying that Kanchan was improving. She gives the credit to penicillin. I believe that Sushila has nursed her very well indeed. She has stayed behind entirely for the sake of Kanchan. Let us see now what happens. Perhaps this serious illness may bring about a complete transformation in Kanchan. She is simple-hearted but is very much of a child also. As she grows in age, she does not correspondingly grow in understanding. Can it be that you are the cause of that? The people around us believe so, and hold me also jointly responsible with you. I do not admit the charge. But that is another matter. I have mentioned the thing in case you would like to think over it.

Manibhai must have arrived there by now. We had in any case decided to summon him there, and becuase of the development regarding Kanchan I felt it my dharma to send him there and asked him to proceed immediately if he was free. I have had very little experience of him. But Shantilal,who has lived at Sevagram for some time, and Ishvarlal Desai, husband of Nirmala, Mahadev's sister, have given me the impression that he is a man of uncommon ability. Narahari has had experience of him and seen his worth. You will, therefore, find Manibhai of the greatest help. He is a capable man at any rate.

I have been insisting on the account books being kept in English entirely for the sake of Jehangirji[2]. If he is not keen on that,

[1] *Vide* also "Discussion with Midnapore Political Workers", 2-1-1946
[2] Jehangir Patel

you may by all means have them kept in Hindi or Marathi. Can it be so arranged that the months and the dates are entered according to the Gregorian calendar, so that Jehangirji can check them ?

You can show this letter to Dinshaw. You may show him any letter of mine.

Give the accompanying letter to Manibhai. Give Doctor the letter I am writing for him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8618. Also C.W. 7204. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

300. LETTER TO SITA CHARAN DIKSHIT

GAUHATI,
January 11, 1946

BHAI DIKSHITJI,

I have your clear letter. It is good that you have written frankly. I am dictating this also at a Mahila Ashram. It is in Gauhati. A camp of the Kasturba Fund is being held here. On one side there is a village and on the other Gauhati city. It is utterly peaceful.

It gave me satisfaction to know that the cereals which were used for the camp would be cooked as kedgeree. It is quite true that I like *garba* and this I mentioned there. In one way I liked the scene, but from another point of view I did not like it and felt sorry.[1] I could not then express myself in words as I was deeply moved. My heart has already in Bengal. I can never say that there was anything wrong in what you did. There was nothing wrong. The whole scene was one of love and it was performed with my consent. Even so I had some talk with Shriman Narayan. But its purport was quite different. I do not remember whether I was able to convey it or not. But if I could not speak out then I am telling you now. The Mahila Ashram is an institution of the poor. It is born of a noble sentiment. It is filled with Jamnalalji's feelings and Vinobaji's *tapascharya*. It is regarded as a good means of rendering service to poor women. And its management is in the hands of Shantabehn. And yet what a difference between what does on in such an institution and the almost naked

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Mahila Ashram", 30-11-1945

condition of the millions of poor women of India and Bengal. And I being a witness to all this. It wrung my heart then. Even as I recall the scene, my heart weeps. Even if I could not convey my meaning, Shriman understood it and conveyed it. I dictate this early in the morning. If it calls for further explanation, or if you want to know more, ask me when I come there. You may share this letter with all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 10421. Courtesy: Sita Charan Dikshit

301. LETTER TO MANIBHAI

SARANIA ASHRAM, ASSAM,
January 11, 1946

CHI. MANIBAHI,

Naraharibhai replied to my wire and what I had expected has come about. Give all help to Munnalal. Do as much as you can without harming your health. I expect to see in all you do firmness, sweetness, cleanliness and skill. That is the impression Chi. Shantilal has given me of you and, as far as my experience goes, you have lived up to this reputation. I had intended to take you to Poona with me but circumstances have conspired otherwise; and I think it is all for the better. Please write to me. Munnalal will give you my itinerary.

I hope your leaving Sevagram has not inconvenienced Narahari.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

302. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

SARANIA ASHRAM,
January 11, 1946

CHI. DINSHAW,

Chi. Munnalal's wife Kanchanbehn has been very ill, so I sent a wire saying that he should be relieved if he wanted to come away. I assumed that someone would have to replace him there and so telegraphed to Sevagram also asking them to send M[anibhai], whom I regard as very competent. He has promptly left for Poona. I am glad I have been told that Manibhai is a very good worker. I believe it. I have hardly any personal experience of him. You will have some.

I hope you received the Rs. 10,000 I sent you, so the new account will not suffer from paucity of funds.

The patients who were already there should adapt themselves to the new pattern. They should mix with the poor. Everyone should be punctual to the minute. Over and above this, you should accommodate them only if they pay or else let them leave. This alone will be true comradeship. We cannot any more allot separate rooms to the patients according to their wishes. In fact for the present we cannot accommodate patients who need separate rooms. I have already written to you to allow as much privacy as the patients may need. I hope you remember it. If you haven't had such instructions from me so far, please make a note now.

Munnalal suggests that the English method of book-keeping is more expensive. I believe it is true. How would it matter if we maintained accounts in the Indian style? The Indian method can also ensure accurate account-keeping. Indian firms maintain accounts in the Indian way and carry on business in millions involving dealings with English banks. And since our little affair is going to be and should be worthy of an Indian we ought to infuse into it the swadeshi atmosphere as far as possible right from the beginning. Please show this letter to Jehangirji. It was at his instance that we had agreed to maintain accounts in the English way. But I believe, if opting for the English method is likely to cause an expenditure of Rs. 40 to 50 per month, Jehangirji would be in favour of saving the amount. The money that I shall contribute must be regarded as belonging to the poor. I may be getting it from the rich, but once it comes into my hands it becomes the poor man's pie, to be spent solely for the poor. All my dealings are carried on in the same old way and it pains me that now because of my old age I cannot fully follow that way, and I also put up with the situation because I cannot get on otherwise. But I must not burden others with my foibles.

I hope you got my earlier letters, and have replied to them.

For the present save all avoidable expenditure. I shall try my best to reach there on the 20th or the 21st of February. It is in God's hands whether I shall succeed.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

303. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

SARANIA ASHRAM, GAUHATI,
[*January 11, 1946*][1]

CHI. SUSHILA (GANDHI),

I saw what you wrote at the bottom of Arun's[2] letter. You will know from my letter to him how my mind is working. You should not be soft. There is a famous line in Kalidasa and, I think also in the *Bhagavata*. It says that love is more tender than a flower and harder than steel.[3] That alone is love which can soften or harden with the occasion, all else is infatuation. Those who are worldly-wise should also note that such famous sayings are often misconstrued.

There are many occasions when I remember all of you. There are also occasions when there is a feeling of relief that you did not come. The experience which you are gaining there and what Arun and Ila are witnessing is of course worth while. Maybe, comparatively speaking that is better than anything else. Ila for one was not likely to have imbibed anything in this place. Hence, for her at least I regard this at- mosphere as positively bad. You needed peace. You cannot expect to find peace in my company, especially while I am touring. Arun's can be considered a different case, yet on the whole he is likely to be safest while he is before your eyes. He is a fine boy. I am of the view that he will have achieved all if he grows finer and finer. As for the other development everything happens in its own course. And in the absence of nobility of character even the Kingdom of Heaven is meaningless.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The letter is found among letters of this date.

[2] The addressee's son

[3] वज्रादपि कठोराणि मृदूनि कुसुमादपि, *Uttararamcharita*, II. 7

304. LETTER TO KAILAS D. MASTER[1]

GAUHATI,
January 11, 1946

CHI. KAILAS,

I have your letter. I shall say you have grown very wise if you get good testimonials from everyone there. And then I shall have nothing more to say to you. I shall be glad and the expectations that Prabhudas himself has entertained and has encouraged me to entertain of you will bear fruit. Besides, you already have my blessing that you may grow to be a very fine girl. There is much scope there to learn for anyone who wants.

I have your brother's letter to which I am enclosing a reply. Pass it on to him after you have read it. Don't encourage him to come till you are yourself perfectly settled and don't let him come until he grows into a very hard-working, firm and obedient boy. The question of his earning anything does not arise. See that in your zeal you do not encourage him only to repent later and cause embarrassment to others. You must watch out. You must draw your letters still bigger and you must form them well. You have learnt Urdu, haven't you ?

Blessings from
BAPU

KAILASBEHN

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

305. LETTER TO JITU MASTER

GAUHATI,
January 11, 1946

CHI. JITU[2],

I have your letter. You must improve your handwritting. I am glad you want to live in the Ashram. But it is a difficult life. You can lead Ashram life in your home and pursue the crafts

[1] The letter is in the Devanagari script.
[2] Brother of Kailash D. Master; *vide* the preceding item.

that are pursued in the Ashram. If you don't have the strength to do it the Ashram cannot endow you with it. Wanting to live in the Ashram merely for this is, I am afraid, mere infatuation.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

306. LETTER TO ARUN GANDHI

GAUHATI,
January 11, 1946

CHI. ARUN,

I have your letter. I find it better than your earlier one, although it has scope for improvement, which you must bring about. I would always advise you and it is my wish that wherever you be you will always fully observe your vow.

I can very well understand that there are difficulties while one is travelling. It is also quite understandable that sometimes one just cannot spin however much one wants to. I shouldn't mind if you are not lazy but fail to spin owning to some unavoidable circumstances. Thorough observance of one vow straightens out all other matters. This is invariably found to be the case.

Why is Ila growing insolent. As her elder brother, you are, I think, to blame for it. She is a nice girl. You can therefore help her make good progress.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

ARUN GANDHI

DELHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The letters are in the Devanagari script.
[2] *ibid*

307. LETTER TO PRABHU DAYAL VIDYARTHI

GAUHATI,
January 11, 1946

CHI. PRABHU DAYAL,

I was glad to have your letter. I had seen your letter to Sushilabehn and I think she had sent a reply also.

It is right for you to remain there as long as they do not relieve you.

I shall pay your expenses, including your return fare. Draw the amount from Devdas and that, too, from my account. As long as Devdas is there, there should be no need to send it from the Ashram. The Government have of course offered to pay for your journeys. All this is only for your information.

The Delhi weather is considered to be the best during this season. Normally, [good] climate and pure food are adequate for maintaining good health.

I understand about the Jamia. It would indeed be good if they let you stay there. Maybe they cannot for want of accommodation but if the reason is paucity of funds you can tell them that your expenses will be borne by the Ashram.

I am writing to Bhai Shriram. It is good that you informed me.

From here, I shall reach Sodepur on the 14th and on the 19th. I may leave there for Madras. That means that a letter written to reach me by the 19th, should be sent to the Sodepur address.

C/O DEVDAS GANDHI
"HINDUSTAN TIMES"
NEW DELHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 11696. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

308. LETTER TO SHRIRAM SHARMA

[*January 11, 1946*][1]

BHAI SHRIRAMJI SHARMA,

Prabhu Dayal writes that you lost a son while you were in jail and another after your release. What can I write to you? How can I console you? But where is any call for consolation on a death? Why fear death? Is death painful? And is birth joyful? Why is it that great epics such as the *Ramayana* teach the same thing? Because, on reflection, we find that birth and death are but two sides of the same thing. What is there good or bad about it? A world without death would be a frightful thing. Maybe the world would then have perished. All this is not philosophizing but an utterance of the thoughts that come to my mind.

Prabhu Dayal also writes that after meditation in the jail, your faith in truth and non-violence has grown much stronger and that you and your whole family spin beautiful yarn. All this makes me very happy.

My Assam tour will end tomorrow. I intend to leave Calcutta for Madras on the 19th and February 8 is the date when I reach Sevagram.

My address in Madras: Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha, Thyagarayanagar. At Calcutta, it will of course be Khadi Pratishthan, Sodepur. I shall expect your reply at either Place.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRIRAM SHARMA
BALKA BASTI
NAGPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In the source this is placed among the letters of this date.

309. LETTER TO ADVAITKUMAR GOSWAMI

[*January 11, 1946*][1]

BHAI ADVAITKUMAR,

I have your letter. I am trying to find out. Let us see what happens.

I have the Raja Saheb's[2] letter. I have not yet read it.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI ADVAITKUMAR GOSWAMI

C/O MUNICIPAL COMMISSIONER

BRINDABAN

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

310. LETTER TO SHANTA NERULKAR

SARANIA ASHRAM,

[*January 11, 1946*][3]

CHI. SHANTA,

I have your letter. You write with too much hesitation. There is no reason for it. It does not matter that I may not reply. I must still have letters from you.

Your illness pains me. One who would serve the villages should have a body strong as steel.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRIMATI SHANTA NERULKAR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In the source this is placed among the letters of this date.

[2] Presumably Raja Mahendra Pratap; *vide* "Letter to G.E.B. Abell", 12-1-1946

[3] In the source this is placed among the letters of this date.

311. SPEECH AT KASTURBA MEMORIAL COMMITTEE MEETING[1]

GAUHATI,
January 11, 1946

Addressing the gathering, Gandhiji explained the aims and objects of Kasturba Memorial Trust which had been started[2] during the period when he was in jail. Later on he lent a hand in framing the Trust of the Fund.[3] The idea behind the whole scheme of Kasturba Trust had been to make women self-reliant and self-sufficient. This did not mean that men would go down, but if womenfolk improved and raised themselves up, men would automatically be raised higher. It is good that in India there were no quarrels between the menfolk and the womenfolk as existed in other countries. But that did not mean that the condition of Indian women was better than those of European countries. If the resources of Assam could be utilized, then the face of Assam could be changed. So much time was wasted in useless and idle talk. If they kept a diary of their work for the 24 hours, then they would know it. If they could utilize only a portion of the time they wasted for constructive work, there would be a wonderful improvement in their condition. In Assam *muga* industry was one through which people could change their conditions considerably and thus could do immense service to the cause of their country.

He knew that quite a number of ladies had come merely to see him. But he could tell them that if they could devote all their strength to the execution of his constructive programme they would be immensely benefited.[4]

Gandhiji emphasized that beauty lay not in ornaments or fine clothes but in doing something good and in applying oneself to doing some service to others.

Replying to certain questions, Gandhiji said that the relation between the Congress and the Kasturba Memorial Trust was nothing but at the same time everything. If Congressmen took interest, the relation was there. If not, there was no relation.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 13-1-1946, and *The Hindu*, 13-1-1946

[1] This was held at Sarania Ashram to seek Gandhiji's advice on uplift of women.

[2] On March 18, 1944

[3] In 1944

[4] What follows is reproduced from The Hindu, 13-1-1946.

312. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

GAUHATI,
January 11, 1946

Gandhiji said that prayer was his life. He felt that the man who did not pray was a dry person, devoid of everything. He did not know whether salvation could come in the other world. He wanted salvation in this world, and did not bother about the other world. As he was a social being he could not have salvation for himself alone. That was why he wanted to share prayer with all of them.

Gandhiji was sorry that there was some misunderstanding about his going to the women's ashram (a centre of constructive work in a tribal area about 20 miles from here). He did not promise to go there, but a number of persons collected there and they were grieved as he did not go. He wanted to tell them through the people here and to the whole of India as well, that he had not the capacity now to go from place to place in view of his old age. He therefore wanted to work staying at one place.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 12-1-1946

313. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

[After *January 11, 1946*][1]

CHI. HOSHIARI,

I have your letter. Why is your mind perturbed at times? If you have grown wise enough there can be no cause for disturbance. Isn't it our duty to be completely engrossed in our own work of service? At the Ashram especially, every minute of one's time has to be devoted to service. What more can you ask for? It is equally important that you maintain good health. For that hip-bath, friction-bath, mud-packs on the abdomen and regular walks are essential. For strength of character and concentration *Ramanama*.

Does Gajaraj attend school regularly? Ask him to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In the source the letter is placed after those of January 11.

314. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNOR OF BENGAL

GAUHATI,
January 12, 1946

PRIVATE SECRETARY

H. E. GOVERNOR

CALCUTTA

PRESIDENT CONGRESS COMMITTEE CHITTAGONG SENDS WIRE ACCUSING CERTAIN PIONEER FORCE PERSONS MOLESTING FEMALES AND WHEN RESISTED RETURNING IN VENGEANCE WITH COMPANIONS ATTACKING VILLAGERS BURNING HOUSES LOOTING PROPERTY. TRUST FULL INQUIRY WILL BE MADE AND PROPER JUSTICE RENDERED.[1]

GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 114-5

315. TELEGRAM TO NAWAB OF BHOPAL

EXPRESS

GAUHATI,
January 12, 1946

H. H. BHOPAL

BARODA HOUSE

NEW DELHI

YOUR KIND WIRE. BHOPAL SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE. NOT SURE ABOUT DELHI. WRITING.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Jamini Bose", 10-1-1946

316. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

AS AT SEVAGRAM, *VIA* WARDHA (INDIA),
CAMP: GAUHATI,
January 12, 1946

DEAR SIR STAFFORD,

I was delighted to receive your letter[1] of 19th December, 1945. As I am touring in Bengal and Assam, your kind greetings were received only yesterday. The Rajkumari had described her talks with you and told me how affectionate you were towards me. I am hoping that this time[2] there is determination to do the right thing in terms of Indian thought. I well remember what King Edward had said about right dealing. I was then in South Africa. The question was of interpreting the treaty between the British and the Boers and the King had gently insisted on the Boer interpretation being accepted in preference to the British. How I wish that the admirable canon be repeated this time.

I hope with you that this New Year will bring to the thirsting earth the much-needed shower of peace and goodwill for which the "Prince of Peace" lived and died.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR R. STAFFORD CRIPPS
BOARD OF TRADE
MILLBANK
LONDON, S.W. 1

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 175-6

[1] This said: "I most profoundly hope that in these coming months we shall be able by mutual understanding, respect and trust, to work out between us a happier and brighter future for India. I know you have laboured for this throughout your life and I pray that it may be given to you to see the climax of your hopes in the realization of your desires. I shall, as always, try and play my part towards that happy solution of the great problems which confront our two countries."

[2] The reference is to the Cabinet Mission, consisting of three members including the addressee, which was to arrive in India with a view to finding a solution for the Indian Problem.

317. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

AS FROM KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
CAMP: GAUHATI,
January 12, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

I am writing to you on behalf of Gandhiji. A couple of days ago he received a letter from Raja Mahendra Pratap dated October 19th, 1945, from Yokohama Prison. The letter came through the American Red Cross. He has also received a letter from a friend of Raja Mahendra Pratap to say that rumour has it that he is now in prison somewhere in India. Is this true? If so, could you let Gandhiji have any particulars about him ?[1]

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 78

318. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

CAMP: GAUHATI,
January 12, 1946

DEAR DR. JAYAKAR,

Your kind letter and copy of the Sapru Committee[2] Report was received during my Assam tour. I was wondering why I had not received a copy and had to content myself with Press notices. I had come to the conclusion that my copy must have been sent to Sevagram and was awaiting my return there. I was, therefore, doubly pleased to find your letter and a copy of the report during my stay in Gauhati.

I wonder if you have seen the enclosed cutting.

I propose to read the report if I can find sufficient time for it. In any case I know enough of the report from my discussions

[1] The addressee informed Gandhiji that Raja Mahendra Pratap was in Tokyo and he no longer possessed British Indian nationality.

[2] Appointed by the Standing Committee of the Non-Party Conference in November 1944. Its report, which was compiled by T. B. Sapru, M. R. Jayakar, N. Gopalaswami Iyengar and Kunwar Jagadish Prasad, was published on December 27, 1945. For a summary of the proposals, *vide* "The Sapru Committee Proposals", 27-12-1945

with you and Dr. Radhakrishnan to feel that it is bound to be of value to constitution-makers.

Whilst I send this letter in English for fear of your resentment, I must inform you that nowadays to most Indian friends I have been studiedly writing in Hindustani or, when I find it is cruel to write to a countryman in the South in Hindustani, I take speical care to get someone near me who knows one of the Southern languages to write in it. So I hope you will not mind receiving my letter one fine morning written in *rashtrabhasha*.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure: cutting from *The Statesman*, 28-12-1945, entitled "Out of date".

DR. M. R. JAYAKAR

WINTER ROAD

MALABAR HILL, BOMBAY

Gandhi-Jayakar Papers. File No. 326. p. 37. Courtesy: National Archives of India

319. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

[AS AT] SODEPUR,

January 12, 1946

BHAI NATESAN,

Your two letters. Jagadisan wrote to me about the state of Sastriar's[1] health. I shall certainly see him.

As for visiting your house, I am at present unable to decide. Apart from the question whether I shall have the time for the purpose, the trouble of the journey to and fro may be too much for me to bear.

What can I—who have not read many books—say about books[2]? Again, do I have Sastriar's power of writing? It is said that few are as well read as he and that the books he has not read are not worth reading. But I for my part have not read most of the books that ought to be read. What then could I write? And where is the time ?

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI[3]

From a photostat of the Tamil: G.N. 2239. Also C.W. 10525

[1] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, *vide* also "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri"

[2] The addressee was publishing in *Indian Review*, of which he was the editor, a symposium on "Books that have influenced me".

[3] The letter was originally written in Hindi but the translation of it in Tamil bears Gandhiji's signature in Tamil.

320. LETTER TO MARGARET BARR[1]

January 12, 1946

DEAR MARGARET,

You will pardon me when I tell you that I had forgotten—which I should not have done—that you were in Shillong. I am going to Dhubri today and from there tomorrow I say goodbye to Assam. Therefore, for the folly of my forgetfulness—and shall I also say your folly in not descending to Gauhati to meet me—I shall have to go away without seeing you even though you are within such a short distance of me. However, it is good that you have reminded me of your presence in Shillong and told me how well you are doing there.

I am sure you have gained by following my instructions about not taking part in the political turmoil.

Yes. I have been hearing fairly regularly from Mary[2]. I agree with you that she will return to India when your father does not need her services. So far as I gather from her letters, however, she does not expect to come back to India in the near future. It does appear as if there ever will be a time when your father will not need her services. According to my calculation if the old Mr. Barr's life is being spent in accordance with the teaching of *Ishopanishad*, he must complete the full span of life i.e., 125 years. Have you read that little Upanishad? If not you should get a copy from some library there or at least in Dr. B. C. Roy's collection. I suppose you know he has a bungalow there.

I shall be in Khadi Pratishthan, Sodepur, near Calcutta, for 4 or 5 days and then proceed to Madras.

Love.

BAPU

MISS MARGARET BARR

MALKI, SHILLONG

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This was delivered by hand on January 12.

[2] Addressee's sister

321. LETTER TO RAJA MAHENDRA PRATAP

January 12, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1] after a long lapse of time. It appears to be a manifesto and you have invited publication of it. I, however, refrain from sending it to the Press at the moment. I would like to know from you whether you are allowed to receive visitors. Goswami[2] has enquired about you to find out your whereabouts and suddenly within two days of this enquiry I got your letter. Are you permitted to tell me whether you are to be tried or how long you are to be detained? From your letter I gather that you are keeping well and are being well treated. Are you kept in company with others or are you by yourself? Your friends and advisers would certainly like to know all about you.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

322. LETTER TO SECRETARY, AMERICAN RED CROSS, CALCUTTA

AS FROM KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR,
January 12, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I am enclosing herewith a letter from Gandhiji addressed to Raja Mahendra Pratap, who was arrested some five months ago in Tokyo by Gen. MacArthur for trial as a war criminal by the British. Gandhiji's letter is in reply to a letter just received from Raja Mahendra Pratap dated 19th October, 1945. The letter is written in the letter head of the American Red Cross and the address given is :

XI CORPS STOKADE NO. 1
YOKOHAMA PRISON
APO 503, JAPAN.

A long time has elapsed since this letter was written and it has even been reported that Raja Mahendra Pratap has been handed over to the British by

[1] The addressee who had been imprisoned by the U. S. Occupation Authorities in Japan had requested Gandhiji to do everything humanly possible to have him freed so that he could work for world peace.

[2] Advaitkumar Goswami

Gen. MacArthur and is now somewhere in India. Since the letter is written in the letterhead of the American Red Cross I presume you will be able to forward this letter to him. Gandhiji will be grateful if you can furnish him the address of Raja Mahendra Pratap.

A line in reply to the effect that Gandhiji's letter has been forwarded to Raja Mahendra Pratap will be appreciated.[1]

Yours sincerely,

AMRIT KAUR

SECRETARY

AMERICAN RED CROSS

CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy. Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

323. LETTER TO SITA VIJAYARAGHAVACHARI

CAMP: GAUHATI,

January 12, 1946

CHI. SITA,

I am delighted to have your letter. I see that you do know some Hindustani. Why then should you write in English? I well remember how devotedly you looked after your father and how you meant everything to him. But why are you grieved over his passing ?[2]

It is difficult for me to go to Salem. I would be glad if you could come and see me some day after I reach Madras.

I very well remember the affection your father had for me. I expect to reach Madras after the 21st of this month.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRIMATI SITA VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

SALEM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] C. Vijayaraghavachari; he was President of the Nagpur session of the Congress in 1920.

[2] He died on April 19, 1944, at Salem.

324. LETTER TO SARALABEHN

SODEPUR,
January 12, 1946

CHI. SARALA[1],

I have your letter. It gives all the news. Do whatever your health permits.

It is good that you informed me about the Nainital friend. When it is turned into a hospital the house, I am sure, will prove a great help to the poor.

I hope you have not forgotten your Urdu lessons. Ten minutes devoted to a thing daily produce far better results than hours spent on it irregularly; this is an unwritten law.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIMATI SARALABEHN
LAKSHMI ASHRAM
[KAUSANI]

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

325. LETTER TO N. G. RANGA

GAUHATI, ASSAM,
January 12, 1946

BHAI RANGA,

I have your letter. Do as you like about your forthcoming book[2].

Your latest book[3] has not yet been received. I shall go through it when I get it.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Catherine Heilman, an Egnlish Jewess. She first came to India in 1932 as a teacher in an experimental school at Udaipur.

[2] Presumably *Mahatma Gandhi's Message to Oppressed Races*

[3] Presumably *Outlines of National revolutionary Path*, which was published in December 1945

326. TALK TO HARIJANS [1]

GAUHATI,
January 12, 1946

He enquired about their wages, their accommodation and their food supply. When his attention was drawn to the next engagement, which was a meeting with sufferers of the August movement, Gandhiji was heard to say that he would also meet[2] them now. They were martyrs and many people would feel for them, but nobody would feel for these Harijans.

Referring to the condition of the Harijans he said that he knew how they lived and what they ate. Their condition was almost similar to what it was in other parts of India. Gandhiji asked two headmen of the Harijans to wait and see Mrs. Jayaprakash Narayan and give her a detailed account of their condition. He would try to do what he could for them.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 13-1-1946

327. TALK TO SUFFERERS OF AUGUST DISTURBANCES

GAUHATI,
January 12, 1946

Giving his blessings to these sufferers, Mahatmaji said that the victims had done what duty they had to do for the country. There was nothing for which they or the members of their families should be sorry. At yesterday's prayer meeting he had asked people to be fearless. They (family members) also should be fearless.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 13-1-1946

328. SPEECH AT POLITICAL WORKERS' CONFERENCE[3]

GAUHATI,
January 12, 1946

Explaining the scope of the constructive programme to them Gandhiji by way of an illustration described how a capital expenditure of about twenty five lakhs of rupees had been able to put into the pockets of the poor a sum amounting to not less

[1] Gandhiji met about four hundred Harijans at Sarania Ashram.
[2] *Vide* the following item.
[3] About seven hundred workers were present at the meeting.

than five crores of rupees. Indian cloth consumption, he said, amounted to about one hundred crores of rupees according to the present price level. All that money can be prevented from going out of the pockets of the people by fulfilling one item of the constructive programme, namely, khadi.

With regard to parliamentary programme Gandhiji reiterated what he had previously said[1] at Sodepur. He was fully convinced that if all the people boycotted the legislatures, the country or the nation would not be losers by that. On the contrary, Gandhiji stressed that it would mean a great addition to their strength. But he realized that was not practical politics at present and as a realist he realized the necessity of preventing self-seekers and enemies of the freedom of India from entering the legislatures. The main function of the legislatures should be the advancement of constructive work. Any programme that hindered constructive work was not worth taking up. As an illustration of constructive work Gandhiji mentioned the services to Adivasis. Today, he said, they had been divided into water-tight compartments by the ruling power and that was why Adivasis had been classified as tribal races. It was a shame that they should be isolated from the nation of which they were an inalienable part. Here was a vast field of constructive work which Gandhiji exhorted all to take up. Nobody could prevent them from undertaking this kind of constructive work. And if for undertaking constructive work they were put in jail, they should not be afraid of jail-going. In this connection Gandhiji referred to his own stand in the Champaran Satyagraha.

In the course of his long and convincing speech Gandhiji made references to the names of Abbas Tyabji, Badshah Khan and Pandit Jawaharlal in order to illustrate his points by concrete examples.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 14-1-1946

329. MESSAGE TO ASSAM STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

SARANIA ASHRAM,
January 12, 1946

I thank all volunteers of Assam Students' Union for the services they rendered and wish them all success. My blessings are with them.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 14-1-1946

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Congress Workers Conference-II", 6-1-1946

330. LETTER TO VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA

ON THE STEAMER,
January 13, 1946

CHI. VICHITRA,

I have your letter of 26-12-1945. Come and see me by all means. Consult Dada if you want. I see that you and Jajuji do not get on well. I am unable to make up my mind whether I should try to persuade you to keep together or let you work independently in your different ways. Either course can be justified. What harm could there be if you were to work independently of the Charkha Sangh? You are both devoted to khadi. It is possible that under Jajuji's control, the Meerut Gandhi Ashram's progress is arrested and they cannot work to their full capacity. If it is so and if Jawaharlalji and Pantji are also of the same opinion, why not have a separate organization for khadi in the U. P.? Assuming that it is done for the love of khadi and if, as a result, khadi is more successful in the U. P., such a step would only do good instead of harm. There have been many instances in my life when I gave such encouragement and it always resulted in good. The latest instance is that of the Hindi Sahitya sammelan. I quit it. How could I oppose Tandonji? He had the main part in building up the organization. I do not approve of his present policies and feel that I would be able to serve Hindi well, perhaps even better, by keeping out of it. In case it does not turn out so, I shall admit my mistake and follow Tandonji. But if I have not made a mistake, I shall only further the cause of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan from outside. The important point is that our actions should not be inspired by selfish motives and our ultimate aim should be one and the same. Maybe I should be able to make a definite statement if I could meet all the people.

Think well over this letter, consult the others and write to me what you think is the proper course of action. I shall reach Madras probably on the 21st and shall stay there for 15 days. You may come there if you like. Jajuji will of course be there. You need not go there immediately I arrive. We can manage even if you come in the beginning of February. My sole intention is that all khadi devotees should make all-round progress and khadi should get its rightful place. Of course, if you do not sincerely believe in non-violence, do

not consider khadi its symbol and have no faith in my present policy with regard to khadi, then it is a different matter. When our views differ to such an extent, the question assumes a wholly different form. And if, while maintaining different views with regard to the above three points you still want to serve khadi, you must dissociate yourself from the Sangh. Then the question is not one of differences with Jajuji but of differences over principle, and if that be the case they ought to be cleared up.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

331. LETTER TO DR. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

ON TOUR IN ASSAM,
January 13, 1946

BHAI PATTABHI,

I enclose herewith a cutting[1] from *The Nationalist* of Calcutta. Is the report correct? If so, we have no right to offend anyone like this. Whatever the case we have to be civil in the face of incivility. This is the secret of non-violence. There is nothing indecorous if your association is represented by ten delegates.

Think over it and do as you think right.

Blessings from

BAPU

PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

332. LETTER TO NAWAB OF BHOPAL

P. S. *Persian,*
January 13, 1946

NAWAB SAHEB,

I had your wire. I hope you got my reply[2] sent from Gauhati. My position is not at all comfortable. The pressure of work is so

[1] Not traceable
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Nawab of Bhopal", 12-1-1946

heavy that if I take one hour off, one hour's work piles up. Under the circumstances how can I go to Bhopal? I have to keep some margin of time for Delhi because in the event of my presence being indispensable I have to go there. In that case, I shall inform you accordingly.

I hope you will understand my helplessness. What more can I say ?

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

BY HAND

From a copy of the Urdu. Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

333. INTERVIEW TO UNITED PRESS OF INDIA[1]

[*January 13, 1946*]

Asked whether the cry of *Jai Hind* could be appropriately adopted in a non-violent action since originally it was devised by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose as a war cry, Mahatma Gandhi said :

It does not follow that because *Jai Hind* was devised by Subhas Babu as a war cry in armed warfare, it must be eschewed in a non-violent action. On that basis even *Vandemataram* may have to be given up because there are instances of people committing violence with this cry on their lips. If a thing is essentially an evil it becomes a positive duty to abjure it In my opinion *Jai Hind* and *Vandemataram* have almost the same meaning. In one we make obeisance to Mother India and thereby wish her victory; the other merely wishes her victory. There is no question of singing the two together. As I have said[2] before *Jai Hind* cannot replace *Vandemataram*.

Asked whether Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose enjoyed the same place in his esteem and affection and whether he heard what Netaji and written about him in his reported book *Father of All Nations*, as was believed in some sections of the people of Assam, Gandhiji replied :

I have not read what Subhas Babu is reported to have said about me. But I am not surprised at what you tell me. My relations with him were always of the purest and best. I always knew his capacity for

[1] Gandhiji was interviewed by a special correspondent of U. P. I. aboard the steamer *Persian* which he boarded at Gauhati in the evening of January 12 for going to Dhubri where he arrived on January 13, 1946.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 10-1-1946

sacrifice. But a full knowledge of his resourcefulness, soldiership and organizing ability came to me only after his escape from India. The difference of outlook between him and me as to the means is too well known for comment.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 15-1-1946

334. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

GOALPARA,
January 13, 1946

Gandhiji reiterated that there could be no non-violent swaraj which was but another name for *Ramarajya* except through the charkha. His definition of *Ramarajya* was that under it even the weakest must enjoy the same freedom and same rights as the strongest. For that it was necessary that even the physically weakest person shold be able to take due share in the struggle for independence. In other words, women and children should be able to play an equal part with men. It was clear that this was not possible in armed warfare.

Gandhiji's reading of India's history was that every time the people made use of armed forces for their protection it only resulted in tightening their bondage. The so-called protectors in their turn, Gandhiji added, became oppressors. But under non-violence as symbolizesd by the spinning-wheel, men and women enjoyed absolute parity in the fight for freedom. The condition was that every thread of yarn that they spun should be a conscientious sacrifice or *yajna* for swaraj and it should be backed by the determination to resist with their lives any assault that might be directed against charkha. By charkha, he meant not hand-spinning alone but all those things which hand-spinning symbolized. These included the revival of all other village industries, of course, but it included all the various other items of his 18-point constructive programme as well. By way of illustration Gandhiji mentioned communal harmony and total abolition of untouchability, both of which were natural corollaries of ahimsa.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 15-1-1946

335. SPEECH AT DHUBRI

January 13, 1946

Addressing the gathering, Gandhiji said that he was sorry for keeping them waiting for such a long time. The steamer could not move due to fog. He had heard and seen the miseries of Bengal. He came to Assam because the miseries of the people of Assam were no less than that of the people of Bengal. He could not stay

longer in Assam due to urgent work at Calcutta. He emphasized that swaraj would not come from the heavens and would not be given to them by anyone. Eveything depended on their self-help and swaraj would be achieved through charkha.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 15-1-1946

336. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

ON THE TRAIN,
January 14, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your letter. I do not feel happy about Dr. Dinshaw's indifference. It is good that Jehangirji helps you. You should go on doing patiently and calmly whatever you can. Let those who wish to leave do so. I hope Manibhai is giving you all possible help. Do not admit new patients. Even the old ones who pay their own expenses must abide by the new rules. We do not want to run the show with their money. We wish to do that with the blessings of the poor. The Doctor may recommend to new patients such treatment as they can take at home. If any patients come for baths, etc., these may be given. But nobody should be allowed to stay in the clinic. I hope that we shall be able to systematize everything after I return. If necessary, you may show this to Jehangirji. The doctor of course will read it.

We shall arrange about khadi after I return there. I will get the required quantity.

I believe Kanchan is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8623. Also C.W. 7205. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

337. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

ON THE TRAIN,
Silence Day, January 14, 1946

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. What reply shall I give? If the thing you assume does not exist at all, what reply can I give? What are we to say

to a person who asserts that there is a flower in the sky?"As silver is perceived in the mother-of-pearl and sunlight in water though non-existent at all times are yet perceived. So is this illusion which none can dispel." Remember this verse of Tulsidas and laugh if you can.

I had never thought that you were so sensitive. And what epithets you use for Haribhau? When you write with a calm mind, I will write more. I have received Sushila's letter. I have advised Bapa not to fill the place till a suitable woman Agent is available.

As desired by you, I have torn up your letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10448. Also C.W. 6882. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

338. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[1]

ON THE TRAIN,
January 14, 1946

CHI. MATHURADAS,

You will never cease to be the Modh bania that you are !!! Whose fault is it, yours or Taramati's? Now have a prompt betrothal, so all of you will have peace of mind. It seems life is a series of betrothals and marriages; am I right? I don't see I come anywhere into it. What is there to consult me about? This does not mean that what you are going to do is wrong. Why should you follow me wherever I go? I have taken a different path. Why should anyone join me along it without under-standing? If…[2] has told nothing but the truth it will never prove false. You go your own way without any fear.

Take care of your health. Follow what others write about my health. It is also fairly adequately reported on in the newspapers.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The letter is in the Devanagari script.
[2] A word here is not clear in the source.

339. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR[1]

ON THE TRAIN,
January 14, 1946

BAPA,

It is silence day, hence I must write myself. I got your condensed letter, precise and concise.

Jawaharlal thinks of nothing but the country's freedom. He spends all his energy for it. Then why shouldn't the people be mad about him ?

I understand what you say about Sucheta. Deal with Sushila Pai's case as best as you can. I am firm in my opinion. Where a woman Agent is not readily available we should wait for one. Our work will go on. I shall, however, be prepared to do anything else that you propose.

In Assam I heard about the swami and about the women's college also. Both the cases need consideration. The swami seems to have reached the limit. I have his reply.

Amalprova is proceeding well though with great caution. Her father is on her side. The place is in the countryside, but near Gauhati. I visited the village. In fact I went there for my daily walks. I see our mangoes will not ripen in a hurry.

A good amount of money has been collected for Harijan work. A sum has also been earmarked for the tribal people. I welcome your refraining from going to Madras. I might use your presence for my own selfish ends but that would be wrong. You must take some rest somehow. You will then be able to do twice as much work as you now do. Even the man-made machine needs rest. Even a pair of shoes lasts longer if it has some rest, what then to say of man ?

BAPU

SHRI THAKKAR BAPA
HARIJAN COLONY
DELHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The letter is in the Devanagari script.

340. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

[SODEPUR,
January 14, 1946][1]

CHI. SUMI,

I will not reply separately. How can I spare the time?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SUMITRA GANDHI
BIRLA GIRLS' SCHOOL
PILANI, JAIPUR STATE[2]

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

341. LETTER TO SANKARAN

ON THE TRAIN,
January 14, 1946

CHI. SANKARAN,

I got your letter. Today is my silence day and therefore I cannot dictate the letter.

Your reply is perfect. I am glad to know that you are improving your health and learning nature cure.

Jeevansakha[3] might probably be in Sodepur. I could not find it in Assam. I am going to Sodepur by this very train.

It seems that like Dr. Dinshaw's [clinic] Baleshwarji's is also not meant for the poor. We must remedy this. We shall think over the matter after your treatment is over. I expect to reach Madras on the 21st and Wardha on 8th February. I am not keen to send any message

[1] The two sentences are written by Gandhiji below the reply to Sumitra by Sushila, presumably Sushila Nayyar, which bears the date December 14, 1946 which is evidently a slip, since on that date Gandhiji was in Shrirampur in Noakhali. Sushila in her reply refers to Gandhiji having returned from Assam to Calcutta just that day, that is, the 14th. Gandhiji had left Calcutta for Guwahati on January 9, 1946 and had returned to Calcutta on the 14th of the same month.

[2] The address as in Sushila's postcard

[3] A journal on nature cure

for the speical issue of *Jeevansakha*. All good things carry their own blessings.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

342. LETTER TO H. C. DASAPPA

ON THE TRAIN,
January 14, 194[*6*][1]

CHI. DASAPPA[2],

I got your letter. The news about your brother is distressing, and on top of it your father is ill. But, if we reflect, we shall realize that death and diseases of various kinds are with us from the birth. It is therefore futile to grieve.

I have grave doubts about being able to go to Mysore. Let us see how I get along in Madras.

My blessing to Yashodhara.[3] Tell her to write to me. I hope Ramdas[4] is well. How is he doing? It will be good if he now settles down there. He should learn Hindi as well as Urdu as also all the processes connected with spinning.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI DASAPPA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

343. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[5]

SODEPUR,
January 14, 1946

I am sorry that today I cannot talk to you as I started silence at Dhubri at midnight. I am glad to say that on my way back people

[1] The source has 1945, but the letter is placed among those of 1946.

[2] An advocate whose name was struck off the rolls in July 1940, for political reasons

[3] Addressee's wife

[4] Addressee's son

[5] The speech was read out by Kanu Gandhi.

maintained perfect peace at the stations. I would like such peace to be maintained always. The villages of Chittagong have been reduced to such a state that it must have given you the same pain as it has given me.[1] The Government will have to do its duty. But I am thinking of ours. If true satyagraha were alive in all of us, men and women, such a happening could never have taken place. At the same time what happened in Diamond Harbour is also a tragic chapter.[2] Today's prayer song is helpful in pointing to a right decision in these matters. This I shall try to explain tomorrow.[3]

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8027

344. LETTER TO BEGG, DUNLOP & CO., LTD.

SODEPUR,
January 15, 194[6][4]

GENTLEMEN,

Shrimati Profullabala Sarkar, widow of Shri Rajkumar Sarkar, writes to me about her distress. She says that her husband left a provident fund of Rs. 1,650 with you, which cannot be withdrawn on account of certain other claims submitted to you. She says that she is in a helpless conditon with several children to maintian.

If her condition is as she describes it, will you please let me know if you can render her the help she needs. Her address is: Shrimati Profullabala Sarkar, Tarapada Kumar's House, Vill. Anthpur, P.O. Shyamnagar, (24 Parganas).

Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

MESSRS BEGG, DUNLOP & CO., LTD.
(MANAGING AGENTS, JAGATLAL ALLIANCE
NORTH JUTE MILLS)
2 HARE STREET, CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The reference is to the looting of villagers' properties by Ganjam Pioneer Corps; *vide* "Telegram to Jamini Bose", 10-1-1945 and "Telegram to Nawab of bhopal", 12-1-1946

[2] On the occasion of the Gangasagar Mela some temporarily constructed jetties to enable pilgrims to board steamers bound for Sangam island at the mouth of the Ganga collapsed. As a result 147 people were killed and 80 injured.

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 15-1-1946

[4] The source has 1945, obviously a slip.

345. LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

SODEPUR,
January 15, 1946

CHI. CHAMPA,

Today I have replied to Bhai Gatubhai's letters as follows.[1] I can think of nothing else and nothing more.

SMT. CHAMPABEHN MEHTA
SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

346. LETTER TO GATULAL J. DAVE

January 15, 1946

BHAI GATUBHAI,

I got your letter yesterday.

I don't know at all what in the first place I can do in Maganbhai's case. I shall not be able to give him as much time as he wants. Besides, it is very difficult for me to be involved in this matter. I am therefore of the opinion that you should seek the advice of some good lawyer and act strictly as he directs.

GATULAL JATASHANKAR DAVE
KARANPARA, SHERI NO. 23
RAJKOT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

347. LETTER TO HATIM A. ALVI[2]

SODEPUR,
January 15, 1946

BHAI HATIM,

I had your letter but how could I give it thought being constantly on the move. Your belief that the titles Deshabandhu, Deena-bandhu, Sardar, etc., are my inventions is not correct. I cannot

[1] *Vide* the following item.
[2] The letter is written in the Devanagari script.

therefore take credit for the inventions. I accepted the names. I don't even know if it is the invention of a single individual whom we could indentify. The name 'Harijan' is also said to be my invention, but the assumption is unfounded. It was an untouchable friend from Kathiawar who found the name. I don't know if he is still alive. It is therefore not correct to attribute to me the inventive talent you do.

I should like to find some nice descriptive title for Bhai Jamshed[1] but I could think of one only if I were such an inventor ! Think of something yourself. January 7 has passed; how does it matter? We should start using the title when we find one.

HATIM ALVI

KARACHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

348. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

SODEPUR,
January 15, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

Yesterday I got your letter of 20th ultimo. I have no objection to your going to the Assembly. Some of us should, but personally I attach very little value to it. I very much doubt whether those who can utilize their time in other work, or are already doing so, will gain by going to the Assembly; especially those women who represent Kasturba Nidhi. I am corresponding with Bapa regarding this. In my view, it will not be good for these women to go to the Assembly. Is not the work of Kasturba Nidhi a novel scheme? Only experience will teach that work. Let us not fall into an error through our attachment. Only from this point of view your going to the Assembly will not please me. Give your objective opinion regarding this.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI RAMESHWARI NEHRU
WARIS ROAD
LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Jamshed Nusserwanji Mehta, "builder of Modern Karachi" who was presented an address by the poeple of Karachi on his 61st birthday describing him as "the greatest architect of Karachi".

349. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SODEPUR,
January 15, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter.

The removal of Gajraj's tonsils must have done good.

I understand about Mavjibhai.

The right place for Chakrayya seems to be with Raju. By staying with him, he too may get trained.

I think there are several copies of the Hindi Koran lying with us. Any one of them may be given to them. It is likely that all those books have been given to the Talimi Sangh. From there also it can be got for them. Do what is necessary.

People do joke about boys and girls. It can be innocent as well as harmful. There cannot be one rule for this. Life is full of risks and will continue to be so. Ours can only be the middle path. Among our prayer songs there is one by Raichandbhai: "Innocent joy may be derived from anywhere." This song is probably there in the [*Ashram*] *Bhajanavali*. One who wants to do evil may do no evil at all by action but will do so by his thought. The golden rule is that always and in all circumstances we should remain pure. That purity does by itself influence the atmosphere. If you want to ask anything about this, ask me when I come there.

Let us be quite impersonal towards that sadhu and tell him bluntly that there cannot be any place for him in the Ashram.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4544

350. LETTER TO HARI GANESH PHATAK

SODEPUR,
January 15, 1946

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I have your postcard. Write to Bapa about Savitribai. Will she do better than Premabehn ?

I hope to leave here on the 19th for Madras and I shall have to spend a few days there. I expect to reach Sevagram on the 8th February.

BHAI HARIBHAU PHATAK
625 SADASHIV
POONA CITY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

351. LETTER TO G. ANNASAMY

SODEPUR,
January 15, 1946

BHAI ANNASAMY,

I got your English letter. I am afraid that much as I would wish it, I shall not be able to visit Pondicherry. I hope you will all be able to understand this much Hindi.

G. ANNASAMY
PONDICHERRY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

352. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
January 15, 1946

Gandhiji said that the victims of the Diamond Harbour accident were no more but what would happen to their relatives? Many lives had not been lost in Chittagong, however.

These two incidents had overwhelmed him but it should not be so. Men should be calm and steady even if thousands, lakhs or even crores die. If we can bear it

peacefully, we can hear the inner voice then.[1]

Government must be alive to their duties regarding these two incidents but at the same time the people should not forget theirs. The *bhajan* sung at the prayer on Monday (*Antar mama vikasita karo*) indicated the way. It was a prayer to open our hearts. The world would become a vast fraternity if that was done.

Gandhiji said that if he were there at Diamond Harbour, he would have advised the men and women not to go there. He had witnessed a similar instance at Kumbha Mela at Hardwar in 1915, when in the jostle for a dip in the Ganges, 17 men were drowned. At Diamond Harbour the pilgrims had to get on the jetty and the Government should have made proper shipping arrangements. However, even if the Government did not do their duty an accusation on that score would not help us. The people on their side should follow the right course. The Government could not be blamed for the incident at Hardwar. Here of course it could be found on enquiry that proper arrangement for shipping facilities had not been made.

At Chittagong, it was worse. People had read the Government account and it was an admission of the story as sent out by Jaminibabu. But the people, Gandhiji said, did not play their part as preached in the *bhajan*. The *bhajan* wanted to make us firm, active and fearless. Gandhiji felt sure that if the people could rely on these qualities, the Chittagong incident could not have taken place. If people could sing the *bhajan* as they did in the prayer, why could they not act according to its message, he asked. Gurudev's words were not meant for Bengal only. Everywhere saints had preached the same message.

An Englishman had sardonically asked Gandhiji if the Indians could get independence by harping on the theme of their slavery. Gandhiji thought that the remark was true. No good could come out of repeating the fact of dependence. Slave people lived in eternal misery and only by working for eradicating this misery could they get swaraj. Only criticism could not make foreigners quit. If people realized the message of satyagraha, if they practised it in life, they could get rid of this misery. What was satyagraha? It was only the craving for truth inherent in man and there lay its strength.

Two women were attacked at Chittagong and for that two men were counter-attacked. As a result a hundred came, attacked the villagers and burnt the hamlet. If the people could rest firm on truth such an incident could never happen. He had subsequently learnt, Gandhiji said, that the rowdy elements were his countrymen and therefore brothers. If that was so he also had some responsibility for their action and it was his duty as well to strive for the eradication of their vile instincts. On the

[1]*Vide* also "Telegram to Jamini Bose", 10-1-1946 and "Telegram to Nawab of Bhopal

other side many pilgrims died at Diamond Harbour. This latter accident occurred because the Indian people had not been successful in explaining the true significance of pilgrimage. Pilgrimage entails pain. It was not pilgrimage to travel by rail or steamer. Travelling from Cape Comorin to Hardwar by a train was no pilgrimage.

He had been preaching this idea for a long time, and he would be doing so in the future whatever the result. He would continue with his message even if five men only responded to the call.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 16-1-1946

353. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

SODEPUR,
January 16, 1946

CHI. JIVANJI,

I have with me three letters of yours dated December 13, 1945, January 7, 1946, and January 11, 1946.

I will not argue at length about another Tamil translation of *An Autobiography*. Nor have I the time for that. I am dictating this reply in the early hours of the morning, and that also while racing against time. I have seen in English more translations than one of a good book. I don't find anything wrong in it. Our only aim in retaining the copyright can be to guard against possible misuse of the privilege. But if we have authorized one person, and then another public-spirited person who can do a better translation comes forward, why should we not give him the permission? This is my line of reasoning. More when we meet and can talk at leisure. But meanwhile I will accept your decision as final and correct. For I may decide something in haste and you may have to bear the burden, which would not be proper.

I have decided for the present to refuse permission for a Finnish translation, for the person's intention seems to be to make profit.

About *Harijan* we shall decide after I hear more from you. For, as long as the Government does not share our desire that its publication should be resumed, I think it will be a great risk to embark on the venture. I think I have discussed this matter with you earlier.[1] The lifting of the ban will not be enough for resuming publication. Discuss the matter with Mavalankar and Sardar, if he is there, and then write to me. We wish to do nothing in haste.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jivanji D. Desai",13-11-1945

I have received the new edition of *The Constructive Programme*. You are right when you say that you can afford to send, and should send, a large number of copies only if a proper account of the copies is kept and the money is regularly remitted to you. Do not send more copies just now. Two of the newspapers here published the whole test. You may publish the booklet in the other languages you intend to.

You have given a full explanation about the preface, as also about the price.

Chi. Kanu will write to you separately regarding the *Bhajanavali*. Do not publish the new edition till you get all the material from him.

I should like you to publish the translation sent by Rajendra Babu. Discuss the matter with Kishorelal and Narahari also.

The *Rashtrabhasha* dictionary follows me wherever I go. I have not forgotten, either, about the foreword to the book on *Gita According to Gandhi* written by Mahadevbhai. I will be happy if I can finish it before leaving for Madras. But all that is in God's hands. I rest content with the work I can do from day to day. I cannot, of course, attend to all the things. I see in this my inefficiency. If I cannot overcome it, I cannot hope to live up to 125 years. But be it as it may. If you think it fit, you may reprint *Nation's Voice*.

Your suggestion for adding something more to the paragraphs on cow-protection in *The Constructive Programme* seems a good one. I would describe it as "improvement of livestock". I agree that it should not have been left out. We will remember the point at the time of the next edition. If the current edition is exhausted soon and any suggestions for improvements occur to you, let me have them, too.

I am leaving here on the 19th and reaching Madras on the 21st. The address will be c/o Dakshina [Bharat] Hindi Prachar Sabha, Thyagarayanagar, Madras. I will be in Madras for 15 days at the most. If I can finish earlier, I will try. Then on the 8th to Sevagram. After spending a day in Bombay, to Poona on the 21st.

Blessings from

BAPU

Not revised.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9962. Also C.W. 6936. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

354. TELEGRAM TO M. SATYANARAYANA

Express SODEPUR,
January 16, 1946

SATYANARAYANJI
DAKSHINA BHARAT HINDI PRACHAR SABHA
THYAGARAYANAGAR (MADRAS)

SORRY MUST REACH TWENTYFIRST. MAKE NO APPOINTMENTS BEFORE TWENTYTHIRD. CONTINUE YOUR USUAL WORK. ASSUME NO SPECIAL TRAIN FOR ME.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

355. LETTER TO R. G. CASEY

SODEPUR,
January 16, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your two kind letters[1]. I shall have great pleasure in calling on you, perhaps for the last time (though I shall hope not) on the 18th at 7·30 p. m.

I am glad you have taken proper and energetic action on the two terrible tragedies.[2]

On the question of salt I see that I have failed to make my point clear. But I must not inflict written argument on you. According to the exigencies of the time I shall discuss the matter with you on Friday.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 131

[1] Dated January 15 and 20

[2] Of Chittagong and Diamond Harbour; *vide* "Telegram to Nawab of Bhopal and "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 14-1-1946

356. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SODEPUR,
January 16, 1946

MY DEAR C. R.,

I leave here on 19th and reach there with a large party on 21st. I must not be in a train the 22nd day of a month, if I can at all help it. Ba died that day and we have *Gita Parayan*[1] that day. I must devote 21st and 2nd to private, necessary visits. Just now I have only Sastri[2] in mind. Natesan wants me to go to my old home—his place.[3] You will see what should be done. The rest when we meet. Do hope there will be no boisterous demonstration. Noises and undisciplined crowds get on my nerves.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I expect to meet the Parliamentary Delegation on 23rd.

From a photostat: G.N. 2115

357. LETTER TO JEHANGIR P. PATEL

SODEPUR,
January 16, 1946

BHAI JEHANGIR,

I have your letter dictated in chaste Gujarati. I am delighted. However, since we want to work for Dinshawji I shall certainly write in English if that helps us better.

I shall try to reach Poona before 21st February.

I am sure you know that I have already sent the money. All I am worried about, if at all, is that the clinic should benefit the masses. Till now it has catered solely to the rich. But we shall further discuss

[1] Recitation

[2] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri who was ill; *vide* "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 4-1-1946

[3] *Vide* "Letter to G. A. Natesan", 12-1-1946

all this when we meet. For the time being whatever you can do and get done is enough.

SJT. JEHANGIR P. PATEL
PATEL BROTHERS, PATEL HOUSE
10 CHURCHGATE STREET
FORT, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

358. LETTER TO DR. N. B. KHARE

SODEPUR,
January 16, 1946

BHAI KHARE,

I have your letter. I was delighted to see that you wrote in Hindustani and signed in Urdu.

I am carefully watching what you are doing and what you can do in Malaya-Burma. And I wish that everything is for the good of the people there. What is the harm in Dr. Bidhan's Medical Mission going to Malaya-Burma ?[1]

I understand what you have written about the congress. I do not want to write anything more about it.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 4871. Courtesy: Dr. N. B. Khare

359. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRA RAO

SODEPUR,
January 16, 1946

BHAI RAMACHANDRA RAO,

I have your letter. I like it. I am also glad that you have decided to give Manorama in marriage to a Harijan. But your inference in favour of atheism is not correct; or as I believe, your *nastikta*[2] is only a form of *astikta*[3].

I am prepared to get the marriage performed in the Sevagram Ashram and have the same rites followed as in the case of Tendulkar.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 8-1-1946
[2] Atheism
[3] Faith

The priest, who will perform the ceremony under my supervision, will be a Harijan. You are welcome to make any suggestion in this regard. One thing more. Manorama is 17 years old; I think I remember her. My advice is that she should wait at least for two years. If your idea is that the ceremony may be performed now and the girl might go to stay with her husband on attaining the age of 19, I would suggest postponing the marriage till she can live with her husband. In the meantime they may learn whatever more they want to learn. Let them learn at least Hindustani in both the scripts and all the processes of the charkha right from beginning to end.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 9194

360. LETTER TO SECRETARY, MADRAS LABOUR UNION FOR TEXTILE WORKERS

SODEPUR,
January 16, 1946

DEAR MR. SECRETARY,

I propose to address no meetings. I have neither the desire nor the strength to undertake more work than I have already accepted. You must realize that the days are gone when I could go anywhere and address any number of meetings. Therefore, please excuse me. You may consult Shri Satyanarayana about an appointment with me.

M. K. GANDHI

SECRETARY
MADRAS LABOUR UNION FOR TEXTILE WORKERS

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

361. LETTER TO AVADHNANDAN

SODEPUR,
January 16, 1946

BHAI AVADHNANDAN,

I got your letter. None of us could make out the first signature; the second and third are all right. I think when one's signature is illegible, one should spell it out clearly beside or below. The English deliberately make their signatures illegible. Why should we imitate

them? And if we do, we should also follow their signature practice of spelling out the name clearly below.

If your complaint is just it deserves to be considered. But then I should have your permission to show your letter to Satyanarayana. I will try to find some time for a talk with you.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

362. LETTER TO T. J. KEDAR

SODEPUR,
January 16, 1946

BHAI KEDAR,

I got your letter of January 12. I was very happy. Let us see what happens.

I hope to reach Sevagram on the 8th. I shall stay there for ten days and then proceed to Poona.

SHRI T. J. KEDAR
ADVOCATE
NAGPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

363. LETTER TO SATYANARAYANA

SODEPUR,
January 16/17, 1946

BHAI SATYANARAYANA,

A wire was sent to you yesterday. Did I tell you that I would try to reach there about the 23rd? Well, I had forgotten at the time that the 22nd was Ba's death anniversary. Chi. Kanu reminded me of it and therefore I have now decided to reach there on the 21st. Besides, the M.P.s would be there on the 23rd and in order to meet them also, I must reach there a day earlier. I hope you will not be put to inconvenience if I come a couple of days ealier. You will have understood what Rajkumari explained on the telephone. I have no letter of yours regarding the special train. It would be wrong to incur expenditure on a speial train. If it is the others who are to be brought by the special train, why bring them two days in advance? In any case if that be the intention you may do as you think best. That means that if everyone pays his own fare there will be no harm in requisitioning a

special train.

I shall be accompanied by 22 persons. The number may even increase by two or three. A list[1] of their names is enclosed. Bapa will go there. You may put him up with me. He also wants it. See to it yourself. If the number of people increases, arrangements can be made to put some of them up elsewhere although I would prefer all my companions being put up in one place.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

January 17, 1946

The letter which called for the wire has arrived today but what I have written above is sufficient.

SHRI SATYANARAYANAJI
C/O HINDI PRACHAR SABHA
THYAGARAYANAGAR, MADRAS

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

364. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
January 17, 1946

Gandhiji said that Friday[2] would be his last day at Sodepur on this occasion. He had always cherished a desire to stay in this place and join them in prayer. Indeed he had not been able to stay there continuously owing to his tours. His tours had produced good results. He hoped that they would stick to the system of congregational prayer.

Exhorting them to sing the name of God in chorus and to keep tune with all heart, Gandhiji said that he had told them before and wanted to tell them now that soldiers were compelled to move together and to keep step in marching. At first there was an element of compulsion in making them do so but gradually as they became habituated the element of compulsion passed and their movements became easier and smoother. In their case the soldiers were made disciplined on pain of dismissal, but in prayer although they were the devotees of God yet there was no question of compelling them to keep or sing in chorus. But it was for the sake of their own good that they joined in prayer and if they uttered the name of God in one tune their hearts

[1] This, however, is not traceable.
[2] January 18

would be purified and they would get new strength in their hearts. This would be their remuneration for becoming the devotees of God.

Referring to the day's *bhajan*, Gandhiji said that in this song the devotee was making the submission that he would offer his salutation to God in all his worldly duties. God was their real friend, He was their father and mother and in fact everything. Their earthly friends and relations suffered death but God was immortal. He never left them at any time. The *bhajan* therefore very aptly taught them to remember God who was their eternal friend in every sphere of their life's activities. The song also told them to keep their inward eye open because it was through this inward eye that they were able to perceive God.

Concluding, Gandhiji said that in the prayer song of the day they had found such things which would be of great value in their everyday life. They should take the teachings of the song to heart. After they had attended the prayer if they returned home with their hearts unchanged they would be deprived of a great thing.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-1-1946

365. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SODEPUR,
January 18, 1946

CHI. AMRITA LAL,

Do you know that falling ill is a crime? And after falling ill taking no treatment is doubly so.[1] Hence get well soon. Your palce is in Wardha. From that also you have been cut off. Now you can go there only after getting well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 10413. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

366. DISCUSSION WITH CHITTAGONG CONGRESSMEN

January 18, 1946

A number of Congress leaders of Chittagong met Mahatma Gandhi at Sodepur Ashram and had nearly an hour's discussion with him about conditions in the district since 1942, with particular reference to war-time economy and the problem of resettlement of the evacuees.

The Congress leaders also discussed with Gandhiji the recent incident at Kasai-para. Gandhiji told them that the question of resettlement of the evacuees had been

[1] The addressee had dysentery and had refused medical treatment.

engaging his attention for a long time. He asked them to correspond with him on this matter. The problem could be solved if the 18-point constructive programme was fulfilled.

The Hindustan Times, 21-1-1946

367. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
January 18, 1946

Gandhiji regretted that he was addressing the congregation for the last time on the present occasion and God only knew when he would be in position to repeat his visit to Bengal. He had a mind to go to Chittagong and also to visit Munshigunj but he could not realize his wish. Mahatma Gandhi observed :

Although during my stay I could not visit the different parts of Bengal as I wished, still I will say that I am satisfied with what little I could do in Bengal. My code teaches me to be satisfied even if I succeed in one front out of ten I try.

Referring to the Chittagong incident, Gandhiji said that there was no point in finding fault with others over this issue. They had to analyse themselves. They should remember that in always finding fault with others they themselves were likely to be at fault. If the habit of fault-finding became a permanent feature with them they would never be able to serve anybody. Tulsidas in his inimitable way made it quite clear that there were no animate or inanimate objects which were either totally evil or totally good. Those two qualities more or less were to be noticed in everything and just like the proverbial swan they had to discard the evil of a thing and adopt the good of it for their own welfare. He asked the people to remember this moral sermon of the poet and conduct themselves accordingly. If they concentrated only on black spots they would themselves be spotted. Therefore, for one's own welfare it was desirable that the habit of fault-finding be given up. In China there was a pillar on which three monkeys were carved in stone: one of them was blindfolded, the second ear-logged and the third close-mouthed. The moral of this illustration was 'see no evil, hear no evil and speak no evil'. He urged upon the congregation to take to heart what this Chinese symbol taught them.

Dwelling upon the necessity of congregational prayer, Gandhiji hoped that people on return to their homes would conduct such prayer in the company of the members of the family and children. Theatres or cinemas they often visited, but those agencies could scarcely benefit the people to the extent the congregational prayer could do. He himself had been to a famous theatre in London and could speak from his personal experience that it hardly benefited him. Comparing the benefit

of congregational prayer with what little historical knowledge a dramatic performance could offer, Gandhiji said that the former was many thousand times more beneficial. What could the stage teach, he asked. Was it of any consequence when compared with the realistic drama that the world presented? He had seen the role of a hero being played on the stage. Could Rama of his conception be played on the stage? Could the tragedy on any stage be so realistic and effective as the tragedies they witnessed on the world stage? Mothers were ministering angels of homes and they nursed children to life and to them he especially appealed to introduce God and divinity to their children and to introduce *bhajan* song which was full of eternal bliss.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 19-1-1946

368. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SODEPUR,
[On or before] *January* [*19*][1] *1946*

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

The enclosed letter has been received from Kanya Gurukul. I think I had better send it to you. I do not know what exactly is to be done.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8076. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

369. TELEGRAM TO SUCHETA KRIPALANI

January 19, 1946

NO TELEGRAM RECEIVED. PERSONALLY AGAINST YOU ENTERING LEGISLATURE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The numeral is faded in the source. Gandhiji left Sodepur on this date.

370. LETTER TO SUCHETA KRIPALANI

SODEPUR,
January 19, 1946

CHI. SUCHETA,

Your letter written from Allahabad is before me. I am dictating this after the morning prayer. At 2·30 p.m. today, I leave for Madras.

Your report is good. I have written to Bapa regarding the Delhi case as well as the question of representation. I am inclined to think that if we just wait till we find a suitable Agent for a place, meanwhile getting the work done through the centre, no problem should arise in the appointment of women Agents. Therefore, I am of the opinion that we may take any kind of work from Brijkrishna. We should not formally appoint him an Agent. If the idea does not appeal to either or both of you I shall be ready to do as you suggest. This has been my policy regarding any activity that I am not conducting myself and I am convinced that it is right. Therefore, send me your own opinion.

About the U.P., I am carrying on correspondence with Purnima. No decision has yet been reached. Concerning the appointments another question had now arisen, viz., whether anyone contesting election to the Assembly can continue to be an Agent. We have three or four such cases—those of Durgabai, the sister from Calicut (I forget her name), Rameshwaridevi and probably Purnima too. I feel that it would indeed be difficult, if not impossible, for those going into the Assembly, to do full justice to their work as Agents. Besides, the mere knowledge that their Agents are members of the Assembly is likely to perturb the village women. Do send me your views in the matter. Are you coming to Madras? Bapa is coming. You may also come. If you come I shall arrange for your accommodation.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIMATI SUCHETA KRIPALANI
SWARAJ BHAVAN
ALLAHABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

371. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SODEPUR,
January 19, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

These days I am kept extremely busy. I, therefore, have not been able to reply to one or two letters of yours. They contained nothing special. I am glad that things have improved somewhat. However, I have realized your difficulty. We shall be able to solve it only through patience. I cannot do more from here. It will be enough if you do not incur any new expenditure. I will see about the khadi after I return.

I read your long telegram to Kanchan. I would say that you should not have sent it. I do not understand how Balkrishna encouraged you to send it. It can be described as a wire from a *vevalo*[1]. You will understand what I mean if you know the meaning of the word *vevalo*. I do not know the English equivalent for *vevalo*. Every language has some words which are untranslatable. *Vevala* is such a word. I am not reprimanding you at all. This is only a joke. I actually gave you an opportunity to come, if you wished to. Kanchan is better now. And if she gives up her obstinacy, this illness will do her much good. I am leaving today for Madras. It is not certain whether or not I shall take Kanchan with me. Dr. Bidhan has had an X-ray taken. If the report is good, Sushilabehn says I can take her. She has not yet been permitted to walk.

My reason for sending Manibhai was that if such an occasion should arise again, you should be able to leave the place immediately. Manibhai, therefore, was to get trained by you even if you had not left. But what has happened has happened.

One thing is certain, namely, that Kanchan was looked after with as much care as would be bestowed on an Emperor. And she got a doctor, too, such as only an Emperor could get.

I had a letter from Jehangirji. He says he will do his best.

Kanchan is accompanying me.

Not revised.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8616. Also C.W. 7202. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Mawkishly sentimental

372. A NOTE

SODEPUR,
January 19, 1946

I think the construction of the bunds at Hooghly, which has benefited the people greatly is actually a part of the Constructive Programme.[1] Such creative power should be there in all the sevaks.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8028. Also C.W. 10517 and 10526. Courtesy: Ratnamoni Chatterjee

373. SPEECH AT BALASORE[2]

January 19, 1946

He said that he had already spoken enough in Bengal and Assam and they must have read the speeches in the papers. He asked them to follow those instructions. Gandhiji laid stress on the need for Harijan uplift. He wanted caste Hindus and Harijans to live as brothers. He also complimented them on the discipline they had shown and said that the people at Balrampur had also behaved in similar manner.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 21-1-1946

374. A THOUGHT FOR THE DAY[3]

November 1, 1945

The joy of life lies in divesting oneself of life's cares.

November 2, 1945

The past belongs to us but we do not belong to the past. We belong to the present. We are makers of the future, but we do not belong to the future.

[1] The reference is to the construction of a cross bund in Arambagh for irrigation purposes across the river Mundeswari by the villagers, the cost of which was met by voluntary cess.

[2] Gandhiji was sleeping when his train arrived at Balasore. However, when he was informed that a disciplined crowd was waiting on the platform to see him, he came to the doorway and addressed them.

[3] Gandhiji started writing "A Thought for the Day" for Anand Hingorani, at the latter's request, on November 20, 1944, and continued the practice for about two years. The thoughts for the period covered by this volume are reproduced as a single item under the last date, 19-1-1946. The thought's were originally written in Hindi. The translation by Anand T. Hingorani is reproduced here with slight alterations.

November 3, 1945

He alone who truly serves is a good householder. He goes on giving without expectation of return.

November 4, 1945

A fault as small as a mustard seed becomes as big as a mountain when sought to be concealed. It can, however, be eradicated if an open confession is made.

Pratipada, November 5, 1945

Faith transcends reason; it is not opposed to it.

November 6, 1945

It is easier to cross the ocean between countries than to span the gulf between individuals or people.

November 7, 1945

It is not man that enjoys pleasures; it is pleasures that enjoy man, which is to say they consume him.

November 8, 1945

Everyone grows old with the passage of time; desire alone remains ever youthful.

November 9, 1945

Irregularity never goes well with non-attachment.

November 10, 1945

He who is shamed into acting correctly is not acting correctly at all.

November 11, 1945

The avaricious, the lustful, the wrathful and the drunkard are among the ten types of persons reckoned by Vidura as having no regard for religion.

November 12, 1945

That which should be renounced must be declined as a matter of duty even if offered free.

November 13, 1945

None can put him to shame who, of his own free will, and even though others know nothing about it, makes a clean breast of his sin and is ashamed of it.

November 14, 1945

Innocent and dreamless sleep is *samadhi* (meditation), *yoga* (concentration of mind) and selfless action. (Adapted from Vinoba's letter).

November 15, 1945

Nothing is impossible for a true devotee.

November 16, 1945

A devotee is ever absorbed in God.

November 17, 1945

He who is absorbed in God cannot become absorbed in anybody or anything besides Him.

November 18, 1945

It is said that a pilgrimage is not undertaken at the cost of one's hearth and home. The truth, however, is that a pilgrimage is possible only after a complete renunciation of hearth and home.

November 19, 1945

The fear of the gun disappears when it has been fired. The bond of love grows ever tighter, yet is never felt as bondage.

November 20, 1945

Man's real enemies are six—lust, anger, attachment, drunkenness, pride and grief. Victory over them makes it easier to conquer the rest.

November 21, 1945

Everyone agrees it is folly to do evil. But to consider evil means justified for gaining a worthy end must be regarded as even greater folly.

November 22, 1945

If a man were not to undertake work which is beyond his capacity, there would be no scope left for anxiety.

November 23, 1945

It is more than severe punishment to compel a man to do something which he does not understand.

November 24, 1945

I see a man whom I consider my brother and love him as such. Later, I find that he is not my brother. He is what he is and I give him up. Who is to blame in this ?

November 25, 1945

What is it, if not futile, to argue about something which is beyond thought ?

November 26, 1945

What should be done if a mad man appears before us and takes possession of our house and stores? What is the non-

violent remedy? The simple answer is lovingly to let him have his way.

November 27/December 3, 1945

He who does not labour and yet eats, eats stolen food.

November 28/December 3, 1945

Who can eat with an easy mind so long as even a single person starves for want of work ?

November 29/December 3, 1945

Trace the course of every pice that finds its way into your pocket and you will learn much from such reflection.

November 30/December 3, 1945

To a starving person, God will appear in the form of bread alone.

December 1/December 3, 1945

Why insult the naked by giving them clothes? Give them work so that they may earn the money for clothes by their own labour.

December 2/December 3, 1945

It is a sin to open free kitchens for those who are capable of physical labour. To provide work for them is meritorious.

December 3, 1945

Faith that does not wane but ever waxes higher and turns into realization.

December 4, 1945

Beauty lies not in the complexion but in Truth alone.

December 5, 1945

When a man lives in submission to authority, it means he is paying the price of personal freedom.

December 6, 1945

When the administration becomes so evil as to be intolerable, a man sacrifices even personal freedom to offer non-violent resistance to it.

December 7, 1945

Truly, there are as many religions as there are men. But when one goes to the root of one's religion, one finds that in reality is one.

December 8, 1945

If we are careful about the means, the end will take care of itself. In other words there is no difference between means and ends.

December 9, 1945

Confession of error works like a broom. The broom sweeps away filth; confession does no less.

December 10, 1945

One perfect man can dispel untruth even though the untruthful be legion.

December 11, 1945

There is a limit to violent action and it can fail. Non-violence knows no limit and it never fails.

December 12, 1945

Faith is put to the test when the situation is most difficult.

December 13, 1945

Violence is the weapon of the weak; non-violence that of the strong.

December 14, 1945

He who wishes to preserve his integrity must be prepared to lose all material possessions.

December 15, 1945

A religion which takes no note of this world and only harps on the one beyond, does not deserve the name.

December 16, 1945

He who is poor by force of circumstances, cannot become poor by choice.

December 17, 1945

Chastity needs no purdah. It needs only God's protection.

December 18, 1945

The right that accrues from the performance of duty endures.

December 19, 1945

So long as gold and diamonds lie buried in the bowels of the earth they are of no use to anyone. Man's labour digs them out and gives them their value. Seen thus, it is the labourer who produces them.

December 20, 1945

Just as I have the right to eat and drink, so also have I the right to do my work in my own way. This is swaraj.

December 21, 1945

Do not seek to know the views of others, nor base your opinion thereon. To think independently for oneself is a sign of fearlessness.

December 22, 1945

If God be our protector and companion, why or whom shall we fear, however fierce be the storm, however deep the darkness.

December 23, 1945

In complete non-violence, there is complete absense of hatred.

December 24, 1945

Non-violence works for the good of all, not only of the greatest number. The votary of non-violence must be prepared if necessary to lay down his life in order to secure the good of all.

December 25, 1945

Prayer needs a heart, not a tongue. Without the heart, words have no meaning.

December 26, 1945

Purity asks for no external protection.

December 27, 1945

Our greatest enemy is not the foreigner, nor anyone else. We ourselves, that is, our desires, are our enemies,

December 28, 1945

He who does not want to be a slave of anyone, must become the slave of God.

December 29, 1945

Violence must be abjured, for the good that it may seem to achieve is in appearance only, while the harm that it does is everlasting.

December 30, 1945

Man is the image of his thoughts.

December 31, 1945

True religion knows no territorial limits.

January 1, 1946

Looking at a blank sheet of paper, one cannot say which is the obverse and which is the reverse side. So it is with non-violence and truth. The one cannot exist without the other.

KASHI,
January 2, 1946

It would be considered deplorable if a dead man's body were to be buried in the same pit as the carcass of an animal. But on

reflection it would appear that out of this action arises a happy state—the unity of all life is established.

ON WAY TO SODEPUR,
January 3, 1946

Physical weakness is not the real weakness. Weakness of the mind alone is the real weakness.

SODEPUR,
January 4, 1946

The common people are a devoted worker's real bank, and this bank never fails.

SODEPUR,
January 5, 1946

Renunciation which does not spring from the heart cannot be abiding.

SODEPUR,
January 6, 1946

He who in his distress turns to God is not troubled by any fear.

SODEPUR,
January 7, 1946

Education which does not mould character is wholly worthless.

ON THE ASSAM MAIL,
January 8, 1946

When there is both inner and outer cleanliness, it approaches godliness.

ON THE ASSAM MAIL,
January 9, 1946

O man ! If thou art really free from attachment, thou hast to put up patiently with insult, abuse and even assault.

SARANI OR GAUHATI,
January 10, 1946

What matters to you the world's praise or censure? Do what you think is your duty.

SARANI OR GAUHATI,
January 11, 1946

Only the brave can be forgiving. The weak are unable to punish; so, in their case, the question of forgiveness does not arise.

SARANI OR GAUHATI,
January 12, 1946

Economics which departs from or is opposed to ethics is no good and should be renounced.

ON THE STEAMER TO DHUBRI,
January 13, 1946

Man is where his mind is, not where his body is.

SODEPUR,
January 14, 1946

That which looks for mercy from an opponent is not non-violence.

SODEPUR,
January 15, 1946

One mark of non-attachment is that the work of a person free from attachment is never in arrears at the end of the day.

SODEPUR,
January 16, 1946

A person without attachment should have an inexhaustible fund of patience.

SODEPUR,
January 17, 1946

A person without attachment should under no circumstances give way to anger.

SODEPUR,
January 18, 1946

One who thinks in terms of 'mine' and 'thine' cannot be free from attachment.

ON THE TRAIN TO MADRAS,
January 19, 1946

The non-attached person cannot own anything.

A Thought for the Day, pp. 347-426

375. FOREWORD TO "MY MASTER GOKHALE"

ON THE TRAIN TO MADRAS,[1]

January 20, 1946

Whilst I appreciate Shri Jagadisan's[2] invitation to contribute a few words by way of Preface or Foreword to his admirable collection of Rt. Hon'ble Sastriar's[3] writings and speeches on Gokhale[4] the Good, as I would call him, it embarrasses me. However strange my claim may appear to the reader, I have called Gokhale my political *guru*. Therefore Sastriar is a fellow-disciple. And what a disciple and yet an amiable usurper! I was to have the honour of being Gokhale's successor but I found in Sastriar a worthy usurper to whom I made a willing surrender. I could have given no satisfaction to the few well-chosen members of the society.[5] I had, and have, no gifts which Gokhale had and Sastriar has in luxurious abundance.

I confess that however great may be my attempt at impar-tiality,I must fail to satisfy the critical reader. Fellow-admirers need no passport from me. And of whom was I to write? As I began to read Jagadisan's selection, I did not know whether Gok-hale absorbed my attention or Sastriar.

Therefore I would close these hasty and rambling remarks by warning the critical reader against his or her trying the ques-tionable task of discovering in these pages an echo of his or her own views. It should be enough to find in them the transparent sincerity and patriotism of the writer or, shall I say, the biographer and the master.

M. K. GANDHI

My Master Gokhale

[1] Gandhiji was going to Madras to inaugurate the Silver Jubilee celebrations of the Dakshina Bharat Hindu Prachar Sabha.

[2] T. N. Jagadisan's

[3] V. S. Srinivas Sastri's

[4] Gopal Krishna Gokhale

[5] The reference, presumably, is to Gandhiji's joining the Servants of India Society founded by Gokhale in 1905; Gokhale was keen on it. But there was difference of opinion among some `members: vide "An Autobiography", sub-title "With Gokhale in Poona" and "An Autobiography", sub- title "Kumbha Mela"

376. FOREWORD TO "THE GOSPEL OF SELFLESS ACTION OR THE 'GITA' ACCORDING TO GANDHI"

The following pages by Mahadev Desai are an ambitious project. It represents his unremitting labours during his prison life in 1933-'34. Every page is evidence of his scholarship and exhaustive study of all he could lay hands upon regarding the *Bhagavad Gita*, poetically called *The Song Celestial* by the late Sir Edwin Arnold. The immediate cause of this labour of love was my translation[1] in Gujarati of the divine book as I understood it. In trying to give a translation of my meaning of the *Gita*, he found himself writing an original commentary on the *Gita.*

The book might have been published during his lifetime,[2] if I could have made time to go through the manuscripit. I read some portions with him, but exigencies of my work had to interrupt the reading. Then followed the imprisonment of August 1942, and his sudden death within six days of our imprisonment. All of his immediate friends decided to give his reverent study of the *Gita* to the public. He had copies typed for his English friends who were impatient to see the commentary in print. And Pyarelal, who was collaborator with Mahadev Desai for many years, went through the whole manscript and undertook to perform the difficult task of proof-reading. Hence this publication.

Frankly I do not pretend to any scholarship. I have, therefore, contented myself with showing the genesis of Mahadev Desai's effort. In so far as the translation part of the volume is concerened, I can vouch for its accuracy. He has carried out the meaning of the original translation. I may add, too, that Pyarelal has interfered with the original only and in rare cases where it was considered to be essential, an interference which Mahadev Desai would, in my opinion, have gladly accepted, had he been alive.

M. K. GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN TO MADRAS, January 20, 1946

The Gospel of Selfless Action or The Gita According to Gandhi

[1] *Vide* "Anasaktiyoga", sub-title "The Message of the Gita"

[2] Mahadev Desai passed away on August 15, 1942.

377. WHAT EXHIBITION SHOULD BE

The Congress session is likely to be held within two or three months. The question, therefore, arises as to what sort of an exhibition should be put up from the villagers' point of view. It is only the rural view-point which can be valid for India, if we desire and believe that the villagers have not only to survive but also to become strong and rich. If this is true, there can be no place for city articles and pomp and show. There should be no need for the entertainments that are prevalent in cities. Under no circumstances, should the exhibition degenerate into cheap entertainment or a means for earning and never into an instrument of advertisment for business men. Nothing should be sold there, not even *khadi* and the products of village industries. The exhibition should be educative, and it should be intersting too. It should be so organized that a villager after returning home, would begin to feel the necessity of learning some sort of industry or craft. There should be somebody who can point out the shortcomings in all the villages of India and someone who can explain the ways and means for getting rid of them. There should be someone who can show how far we have progressed since the beginning of the movement for village uplift. There should be somebody who can explain how this exhibition helps in making village life aesthetically satisfying.

Now let us consider what should be the form of the exhibition which can fulfil these conditions:

1. There should be two models of the village—one showing the village as it is today and the other, the improved one.

The improved village will be clean. The cleanliness will be seen in the houses, the roads, the surroundings and the fields. The condition of the cattle will also be better. Maps, pictures and books should show how particular occupations can help in increasing the villagers' income.

2. Complete details should be displayed about how the various village industries should work, where the tools for them are available and how they are manufactured. All the crafts should be demonstrated. At the same time the following items should be shown:

(a) Ideal diet for the villagers;

(b) the competition between machine industry and handicrafts;

(c) a practical demonstration of animal husbandry;

(d) a model for latrines;

(e) art section;

(f) organic manure *v*. chemical fertilizers;

(g) use of hides and bones of animals;

(h) village music, musical instruments and village dramas;

(i) village games, gymnasium and exercises;

(j) Nayee Talim;

(k) village medicines;

Bearing in mind the policy stated at the outset, whatever additional items can be exhibited should be there.

What I have stated is only illustrative. I have deliberately omitted all those village industries which are connected with the spinning-wheel. Without these industries the exhibition should be considered worthless.

M. K. GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN TO MADRAS, January 20, 1946

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, February 1946

378. SPEECH AT CUTTACK

January 20, 1946

Gandhiji said that independence was not an easy thing to win or was it a drama. Discipline was essential in the national life of the country and, if they got *swaraj,* he asked, how could they maintain it without discipline. He was very much impressed at the discipline of people in place like Balasore[1] and Bhadrak and was expecting discipline of higher order in Cuttack, this being the capital of the Province. [2] Thankkar Bapa had asked him to break journey in Orrisa. He regretted very much that he could not break journey. But he had Orissa always in his heart.[3]

It has cut him to the quick, he said, that Orissa, which he had loved so fondly and through which he had made his Harijan pilgrimage on foot,[4] should belie his expectations. Was this their non-violence or did they imagine that freedom would be

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Balasore", 19-1-1946

[2] Accoding to report in Amrita Bazar Patrika, when the train slowed down at Cuttack around midnight, some people climbed the footboards, and Gandhiji asked them to sit down in an orderly manner: *vide* also the following item.

[3] What follows is extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.*

[4] In May 1934

won or kept through indiscipline and hooliganism? They were living in a fool's paradise, if they did. Was it not ridiculous to pit indiscipline and hooliganism against the atom bomb which was the ultimate of brute force? It was time that they made up their mind as to their choice between the two paths. They were at liberty to scrap non-violence, if they felt that it was a played-out force. But, if they were thinking of violence while they professed non-violence, they would be guilty of deception and fraud upon themselves and the world. He remarked:

I do not want your cheers of welcome, nor money during these stoppages. But I want you to purge yourselves of the lie in the soul. That will please me more than your gifts; the noises never will, and never have.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 21-1-1946; also *Harijan*, 24-2-1946

379. SPEECH AT BERHAMPUR[1]

Junuary 20, 1946

In these early hours I meet you, and I am glad. I am sorry, I could not stay with you even for a day in Orrisa. You will excuse me. My health is not like before. After fifty years of age one's health weakens. That is God's will. At Bhadrak and Balasore the crowds were very disciplined. So I thought it was better that I stop at Cuttack. In the original programme, no stoppage at Cuttack of the special train was arranged. In Cuttack[2] the mob was unruly. It was about 1.30 a. m. At such a time one should not be disturbed in his sleep and that too an old man like myself. They afterwards became orderly.

You are sitting calmly. My prayer is, not only at your place but at all places, that it should be so. Through unruliness we cannot win *swaraj*. You all know me and I know you. I am not new to you. You should carry on constructive work. You should take to *khadi* work and removal of untouchability earnestly. You have not yet completely solved the Harijan problem The problems are the same in all parts of India. I agreed to come to you so early in the morning because I hope that Orissa will show the lead in these matters. I know the British will

[1] The report said: "At a reception organized by the Utkal Congress Committee at the Berhampur railway station . . . at 4 a. m. . . . Gandhiji was received . . . by Harekrushna Mahtab and Viswanath Das and conducted to a dais in the open ground close to the platform." Gandhiji's speech was rendered into Oriya by Herekrushna Mahtab.

[2] *Vide* the preceding the item.

leave India tomorrow. If they go, not out of your strength, of what use is it to us? If you think you can make the British leave the country by empty shows, you are not correct. I have no doubt that through non-violence and truth alone we can achieve *swaraj*.

Mahatma Gandhi thanked the people for the purse presented for the Harijan fund and said :

If I have time enough, I would have collected from each one of you money for the fund.

Concluding, Gandhiji said, what had happened at Cuttack (the people behaving in an unruly manner) distressed him, but the orderly manner in which people behaved in Berhampur amply consoled him.[1]

The Hindu, 22-1-1946

380. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, VISAKHAPATNAM[2]

January 20, 1946

Gandhiji asked whether (1) they had removed untouchability, (2) they had achieved communal unity, and (3) they had realized that Adivasis (hill tribes) should also share *swaraj.*

Mahatma Gandhi said, they were all of Hindustan, drinking the same water and breathing the same air. So *swaraj* must be of the Hindus, the Muslims, the Christians and others of India.

Referring to the necessity of keeping themselves disciplined and peaceful at meetings, Mahatma Gandhi said that even if one crore people congregated at one place, there should be no disturbance. Then only could they claim to be organized and disciplined; If even the few people that gathered at a public meeting, compared to the forty crores of India, could not keep themselves in order, he asked, how they could get *swaraj.* Even supposing they got *swaraj,* they would lose it, if they were not diciplined and orderly in their behaviour. Gandhiji said that without doubt *swaraj* would come but their preparedness must be shown my proper discipline. He had not come to collect funds but to test at first hand how far people were ready for *swaraj* by self-discipline.

[1] According to report in Amrita Bazar Patrika, 21-1-1946, "Gandhiji's address was followed by Ramdhun led by Kanu Gandhi and joined in chorus by the entire audience."

[2] Then called Vizagapatam. The meeting was held at the Indian Institute. The report said: "Mahatma Gandhiji's special train arrived at Waltair at 11.05 a. m. Led by Mr. Viswanatham, Mahatmaji walked briskly the distance of two furlongs to the meeting place. Purses were presented there for the Harijan and Hindi *prachar* funds."

Gandhiji next touched upon the lingua franca of India and said, everyone knew that he was at present on his way to Madras to preside over the Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha celebrations. Two or three Andhra ladies were travelling with him, and when he spoke in Hindustani, they could not understand. They should all know Hindustani. Gandhiji asked:

Do you want to know the language that is common to all Provinces of India or English?

Gandhiji said that he was devoting his services to all in India. When that was so, he asked, which would be preferable—whether his (Gaandhiji's) learning all the languages of India or a small proportion still not knowing Hindustani learning the language for following his advice. Hindustani was a sweet language, easy to learn, which had been adopted as the mother tongue of 33 crores of people. So he belived that they should all take up the subject and learn Hindustani.

Continuing, Mahatma Gandhi said, *swaraj* cannot be retained if it came as if by magic. They all proclaimed, they would get their *swaraj* through non-violence and truth. That being so, they should not behave otherwise and cheat the world. Since 25 years they had been proclaiming that they would win indepedence by truth and non-violence. On that account, the whole world had placed India on a high place. Supposing in 1920 they had announced that they would win *swaraj* by violent means and later had won it, they would have lost it by now. Gandhiji wanted them to take a pledge to win swaraj by means of truth and non-violence.

Concluding, Gandhijj said that he was glad to have noticed that the crowd had remained peaceful.

The Hindu, 22-1-1946

381. ADVICE TO CONGRESSMEN[1]

Junuary 20, 1946

It is necessary that you should give up English and learn Hindustani. If you want to tell me anything, tell it in Hindustani or in Telugu. You may know English but it is not necessary you should use it.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 21-1-1946

[1] The report said that at Dusi Station, Gandhiji spoke to "Congressmen who wanted to read out an address in English".

382. MESSAGE TO ANDHRAS [1]

ELLORE,
January 20, 1926

I am sorry for observing silence as tomorrow is Monday. I am glad to visit Andhra. I am sorry, I could not spend longer time in Andhra. I request you to excuse me as I am old. If only you work my constructive programme, that is more than seeing me.

From a copy: C.W. 10583. Courtesy: Government of Andhra Pradesh

383. FOREWORD TO "HINDUSTANI-GUJARATI KOSHA"[2]

ON THE TRAIN TO MADRAS,
January 21, 1926

This is the second edition of the Hindustani-Gujarati dictionary. I have not seen any other dictionary of this type in Gujarati. A dictionary giving the words both in Devanagari and Urdu scripts seems to be a new venture. If the necessity of knowing both the scripts and speaking both Hindi and Urdu is accepted, a dictionary like this is a great necessity.

This dictionary is not to be used in the same way as other dictionaries are used. If the student of Hindustani consults it frequently, his knowledge of both the scripts and of words from both the branches of the language is bound to increase. Another way of using the dictionary properly is that, if any mistakes are found in it, the reader should note them, as also words which he does not find in it, and send the lists to the Editor from time to time. The Editor may make appropriate use of the suggestions when preparing a new edition; or the addition's if supplied as addenda, may enable the owner of the dictionary to use it at nominal cost, as if it was a revised edition. The addenda can also be sent as a supplement to everyone having the

[1] According to Andhra Pradesh Government Papers, "the special train . . . arrived at Ellore Station at 10.30 p. m., and stopped for fifteen minutes. About ten thousand persons including many ladies had assembled on the platform. Gandhiji . . . did not speak . . . but gave *darshan* by stepping out on a table placed on the platform. His message to Andhras was transmitted through loud-speaker . . ." A similar message was given to people the next morning at Vijayawada, when Gandhiji received contributions.

[2] By Maganbhai Prabhudas Desai

original edition.

I hope the people of Gujarat will welcome this venture.

[From Gujarati]

Hindustani-Gujarati Kosha

384. SPEECH AT MADRAS [1]

January 21, 1926

Gandhiji asked them to maintain silence and preserve order. He said that unless every one of them kept perfectly quiet, the vast crowd may not hear him, and he wanted every one of them to hear him.

But again the crowd shouted "*Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai*". Gandhiji. . . said :

I do not expect that you, citizens of Madras, would be so undisciplined. How can I come in your midst again, if you do not conduct yourself in a disciplined manner?

Then Gandhiji called for the singing of *Ramdhun*. . . . the whole gathering took up the refrain. . . . He followed the singing of the crowd with eyes closed . . . keeping tune with the song. *Ramdhun* terminated after five minutes. . . . Gandhiji said:

Now you have seen me. I want every one of you to go home quietly and leave me to my work.

The crowd, however, was not satisfied . . . They kept shouting, "Lights, lights; we want to see him." The electrical staff . . . projected a lamp . . . on the dais and . . . Gandhiji stood in the full blaze of the light . . . for a full minute and then pleaded with the crowd . . .

I have come travelling a long distance. I have not even washed or taken food. There is any amount of work waiting for me. Do you want me to stay here all night to be with you?

The crowd in a chorus shouted, "No, no; we won't detain you." Gandhiji said :

Then let me go. But you must first of all go home quietly. That is my request to you. Are you prepared to do so?

"Yes", came the unanimous answer followed by a shout in Tamil "*pogirom*"[2] .

[1] The report said that Gandhiji, who had alighted at Ambattur at 4.15 p.m., was taken in a car to the bungalow adjacent to the Hindi Prachar Sabha, where several thousands of people had collected but refused to disperse without seeing Gandhiji. When he came out at about 7 p. m., they shouted "*Gandhijiki Jai*". When Gandhiji raised a warning finger, they became quiet. The Hindustani speech was rendered into Tamil by Bhashyam.

[2] Meaning "We shall go."

Gandhiji said :

Good, go, all of you. Do you now give me leave to go?

The crowd shouted "Yes", and Gandhiji then slowly descended . . . and walked back to his residence. . . .

The Hindu, 22-1-1926

385. TALK WITH INDONESIAN SAILORS [1]

MADRAS,
[After *January 21, 1946*][2]

Gandhiji told them that Indian sympathy[3] they had already, as was shown by the resolution of the Working Committee[4] on Indonesia and the far East. As for the use of Indian troops against them, it was as much India's and Britain's shame as their misfortune. It could be ended only by India gaining her independence, which would be the forerunner of the emancipation of all the suppressed and exploited races of the earth.

Harijan, 24-2-1946

386. DISCUSSION WITH NEGRO SOLDIERS [5]

MADRAS,
[After *January 21, 1946*][6]

QUESTION: There are several religions in the world. They were all orginated in foreign countries. Which one of these should Africa follow? Or should she discover her own religion? If so, how ?

GANDHIJI: It is wrong to say that all religions were originated in foreign countries. I had fairly extensive contact with Zulus and Bantus and I found that the Africans have a religion of their own, though they may not have reasoned it out for themselves. I am not referring

[1] This and the following item are extracted from Pyarelal's "Lighter Interludes".

[2] Gandhiji reached Madras on January 21; *vide* the preceding item.

[3] Pyarelal reported that the Indonesian sailors had "refused to man their posts when their ship was ordered to proceed to Batavia with personnel and cargo ostensibly meant to be used against the nationalist struggle there, and had, in consequence, been discharged. They wanted India's sympathy in their cause and complained about the use of Indian troops to suppress the Indonesians."

[4] Which met in Calcutta from December 7 to 11, 1945. For the resolution, *vide* "Lord Wavell's Version of His Talk with Gandhiji"

[5] *Vide* footnotes 2 and 3, p. 10. Pyarelal explains that the Negro soldiers from West Africa came "with a long list of questions indicative of the deep stirring in their consciousness".

[6] *ibid*

to the rites, ceremonies and fetishes that are prevalent among African tribes but the religion of one Supreme God. You pray to that God. There are many religions, but religion is only one. You should follow that one religion. Foreigners might bring you Christianity. Christianity as exemplified in Europe and America today is a travesty of the teaching of Jesus. Then there are Hinduism, Islam, Zoroastrianism and so on. You should absorb the best that is in each without fettering your choice and form your own religion.

Q. How can a continent like Africa fight down the fetters of slavery when it is so hopelessly divided?[1]

G. I know your difficulty. If you think of the vast size of Africa, the distance and natural obstacles separating its various parts, the scattered condition of its people and the terrible divisions among them, the task might well appear to be hopeless. But there is a charm which can overcome all these handicaps. The moment the slave resolves that he will no longer be a slave, his fetters fall. He frees himself and shows the way to others. Freedom and slavery are mental states. Therefore the first thing is to say to yourself: 'I shall no longer accept the role of a slave. I shall not obey orders as such but shall disobey them when they are in conflict with my conscience.' The so-called master may lash you and try to force you to serve him. You will say: 'No, I will not serve you for your money or under a threat.' This may mean suffering. Your readiness to suffer will light the torch of freedom which can never be put out.

Q. Africa and India both drink of the cup of slavery. What necessary steps can be taken to unite the two nations so as to present a common front?

G. You are right. India is not yet free and yet Indians have begun to realize that their freedom is coming, not because the white man says so but because they have developed the power within. In as much as India's struggle is non-violent, it is a struggle for the emancipation of all oppressed races against superior might. I do not propose mechanical joint action between them. 'Each one has to find his own salvation' is true of this as well as of the other world. It is enough that there is a real moral bond between Asiatics and Africans. It will grow as time passes.

Q. Everything immoral and deadly is attributed to Africa. What steps should

[1] According to Pyarelal, the Negroes "quoted Gandhiji's observation that to remain in slavery is beneath the dignity of man; a slave who is conscious of his state and yet does not strive to break his chains is lower than the beast."

be taken to eradicate the epidemic of foreign prejudice against us?

G. In so far as there is a modicum of truth in this criticism, it is no special prerogative of Africa. Immorality and wrong are common in all countries. But you must not allow yourselves to take refuge in self-complacency either, by saying to yourself: 'Well, others are no better than we.' Many, perhaps most of the evils that are at the back of the prejudice against Negroes are the result of nominal Christianity imported from America. They have learnt to drink, dance immoral dances and so on. Then there are evil African customs. You must eradicate these and thus disarm foreign prejudice. It is a laborious task but a joyous one. The epidemic of foreign prejudice will then die a natural death.

They wanted to know as to how they could set up depots of useful Indian books, and what India could give them and how they could achieve "co-operative industrialization" in order to be saved from the terrible exploitation under which they were suffering. Gandhiji replied :

India can give you good ideas. It can give you books of universal worth. The commerce between India and Africa will be of ideas and services, not of manufactured goods against raw materials after the fashion of Western exploiters. Then India can offer you the spinning-wheel. If I had discovered it when I was in South Africa, I would have introduced it among the Africans who were my neighbours in Phoenix. You can grow cotton, you have ample leisure and plenty of manual skill. You should study and adopt the lesson of the village crafts we are trying to revive. Therein lies the key to your salvation.

Harijan, 24-2-1946

387. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS [1]

[Before *January 22, 1946*][2]

QUESTION: In the *Bhagavad Gita* comes a *sloka*[3]: . . . If everything goes according to fixed law, then if you pray to God, can He intervene and set aside the law for your sake?

ANSWER: But the meaning at the bottom is: "Thy will be done, not mine." God's law is never interrupted, but that very law says that every act has its result. In the prayer for the child, father surrenders his will to God. The law works as if it were a person, and since every action tells, this prayer has an unforseeable result. You should work out what I have written. The sum total of every act is a resultant. Draw a parallelogram of forces.

Jnana, karama and *bhakti*—should not they all go together? Unless you know God, how can you have *bhakti*? You cannot even offer him your *karma*.

You must not reason like this. If you have no work and so-called *bhakti*, the result will be lop-sided. Do you know God to whom you pray? I don't. He is unknown to you and me.

To whom shall we then pray?

To God, whom you do not know. We always do not know the person to whom we are praying.

But the *Shastras* say that He is knowable.

Since He is knowable we search. It may take a billion years. Even if you do not believe, you must continue to pray."Help thou mine[4] unbelief"[5] is a verse from the Bible. But it is improper for you to ask such questions. For you, there must be infinite patience and inward longing. Inward longing obviates all such questions. "Have faith and you will be whole"[6] is another chip from the Bible. *Gita* has many such parallel passages.

[1] This was an enclosure to a letter (G.N. 3230) dated "Thyagarayanagar, Madras, January 22, 1946", for R. P. Parasuram to Konda Venkatappayya, which read: "As instructed by Pyarelalji, I am enclosing herewith Gandhiji's scribbled answers to your questions. I am also enclosing herewith a typed copy for your convenience."

[2] *ibid*

[3] The verse is not given in the source.

[4] The source, however, has "my".

[5] *St. Mark*, ix, 24

[6] *St. Mathew*, ix. 22, and *St Mark* x. 52, which read: "They faith hath made Thee whole."

Q. When I look at nature around me, I say to myself there must be one Creator, one God and to Him I should pray.

A. That is reasoning. God is beyond reason. But I have nothing to say, if your reason is enough to sustain you.

From a photostat of a copy: G.N. 3230

388. TELEGRAM TO GOVIND BALLABH PANT [1]

MADRAS,
January 22, 1946

SUCHETA FREE DECIDE WHETHER TAKE KASTURBA OR PARLIAMENTARY WORK.[2]

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

389. TALK WITH V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI [3]

MADRAS,
January 22, 1946

GANDHIJI: You must not hug me and excite yourself.

SASTRI: I have wanted to say one thing to you. Another opportunity for peace has been lost. They are sitting there at the Peace Conference Table. But who is there who can speak for humanity except you? I am afraid, India has failed to do her duty. Even if they do not ask you, you must go as the apostle of truth and non-violence and be on the spot. Your mere presence will have a tremendous effect. You must not stand on ceremony.[4]

[1] 1887-1961; Leader of Congress Party in the United Provinces Legislative Assembly, and its Premier, 1937-39; Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, 1946-55; Home Minister, Government of India, 1955-61

[2] The addressee had sought Gandhiji's permission to sponsor Sucheta Kripalani for membership of U. P. Legislative Assembly. She, however, Joined Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust.

[3] This is extracted from Dr. Sushila Nayyar's "Meeting Sastriar". Sushila Nayyar who explains: "Gandhiji had heard that Sastriar was so ill that probably he alone would be allowed to go in for a few minutes. Shri Jagadisan had advised my brother [Pyarelal] and me to accompany him. . . . So Gandhiji took both of us and Shri Manilal Gandhi with him. . . . The doctor, however, gave us more cheerful news. . . . Sastriar sat bolt upright . . . as Gandhiji entered . . . and moved to the edge of the bed. 'I want to come near enough to hug you, little brother,' he muttered. . . . Gandhiji took his hand and soothed him."

[4] According to Sushila Nayyar, "ever since Gandhiji's release from prison, Sastriar had been writing to him imploring him to go to the Peace Conference at San

Then, referring to the Parlimentary Delegation[1], he remarked, "we know nothing can come out of it. Labour or Conservative, so far as India is concerned, they are all one and the same.

G. But we must trust. Burrows[2], the new pitboy Governor of Bengal, has a sense of humour. When the Pressmen worried him and asked him what policy he was going to initiate, he replied, "Gentlemen, I am not going to initiate. I am going. to carry out." That is true of all of them. The labour Government cannot afford to do otherwise.

S. What next?

G. Who knows? The British Government itself does not know, I think. But I did not come here to discuss politics with you.

S. I see, you think I am not good for it.

G. No, but you are certainly no good for it in the present state of your health.[3]

Harijan, 28-4-1946

Francisco [*vide* "Letter From V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 2-6-1944] . . . Gandhiji's view was that his non-violence should have its effect from wherever he was. His going to the Peace Conference, unless the great powers themselves want it, could serve no useful purpose."

[1] Which reached Bombay on January 5; it consisted of Prof. Richards (Leader), R. Serenson, (Mrs.) Mureiel E. Nichol A. G. Bottomeley, Maj. Woodrow Wyatt, Godfrey Nicholson, Brig. A. R. W. Low, R. Hopkin Morris, the Earl of Munster and Lord Chorley of Kendal. According to *The Transfer of Power, 1942-47*, Vol. VI, p. 522, in a memorandum dated November 14, 1945, to the British Cabinet, the Secretary of State for India, Pethick-Lawrence, had said that the Parliamentary Delegation "would serve to demonstrate the sympathy of Parliament with Indian aspirations and the sincerity of British intentions in the matter of India's constitutional advance. The Delegation. . . . would be free in their movements and their contacts with Indians, from any control by the Viceroy or Governors."

[2] Sir Frederick Burrows

[3] The report concluded: "They touched upon the topic of the communal problem. They cracked a few more jokes and then Sastriar called us near and bade good-bye saying a few kind words to each one of us. He talked a little about South Africa and Gen. Smuts with Shri Manilal Gandhi, and Gandhiji left him with a promise to visit him again if the doctor reported that the visit had had no deleterious effect upon his health."

390. LETTER TO DR. B. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

MADRAS,
January 22, 1946

BHAI PATTABHI,

I got your letter just now. Bhai Venkatrao[1] also showed me his letter. Get well soon. I have said all that I wanted to say. You may now explain things to me when the need arises. Your duty at present is to get well.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA
MASULIPATTAM

From a copy a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

391. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, MADRAS [2]

January 22, 1946

Gandhiji explained how *Ramdhun* was sung and how those willing to join might clap their hands in time. He explained :

This custom was started in Bengal, and, I believe, with very good results. I wish as many of you as are willing should join this *dhun*.

Gandhiji first enquired how many of them could understand Hindustani. About a tenth of the crowd raised their hands. To the question how many were unable to understand Hindustani, there was no answer until it was translated into Tamil and then the overwhelming majority raised their hands. Gandhiji said, they need not be shy or ashamed, but he would want them all to learn Hindustani.

At the outset, Gandhiji said that it gave him great pleasure to be in their midst once again after so many years. He then recalled how years ago it was in the city of Madras that *satyagraha* againt the Rolatt Act[3] was first launched. He had come to Madras on that occasion[4] at the invitation of Mr. Kasturiranga Iyengar who had put

[1] K. Venkatrao, Secretary, Andhra Provincial Congress Committee

[2] The report said: "Precisely at 5.30 p. m., Gandhiji, accompanied by his party including Miss Agatha Harrison, proceeded to the grounds to the south of Hindi Prachar Sabha for prayer. . . . Gandhiji . . . addressed them . . . in Hindustani. Mr. A. Subramanyam, Hindi Pracharak from Trichinopoly, rendered the speech into Tamil."

[3] Bill No. 29 of 1919

[4] In March 1919

him up with Mr. C. Rajagopalachari. Rajaji had then recently come over to Madras from Salem. There he was a leading practising lawyer and was doing useful work as Chairman of the Salem Municipality. Gandhiji confessed that he had at first felt a bit put out at Mr. Kasturiranga Iyengar putting him up with one who was a preactising laywer and a stranger to him at that time. But the late Mr. Mahadev Desai who was then with him told him the next day that Rajaji was a precious friend of Mr. Kasturiranga Iyengar and far from playing him a trick; therefore the latter had selected an ideal host for him. Although Rajaji had never met Gandhiji before, Mr. Desai had told Gandhiji before, Mr. Desai had told Gandhiji, he had been following his work in South Africa with close attention and admiration. Mr. Mahadev Desai had further told him that Rajaji would be prepared to throw away his practice in a trice at a word from Gandhiji.

I could hardly believe at that time that a leading lawyer could give up his practice like that. I, however, accepted Mr. Desai's testimony of faith. The subsequent events have, however, amply borne out Mr. Mahadev Desai's estimate. Rajaji as I see him today is just what he was on the day when we first met.

It was on that occasion, too, said Gandhiji, that he had made his first acquaintance with the late Mr. C. Vijayaraghavachariar.

Continuing, Gandhiji described how it was at Mr. Rajagopalachari's place that the observance of the 6th of April[1] which had become a sacred day to all of them was commenced. It was a great day for him and for them. It marked the birth of *satyagraha* in this country. The way in which it galvanized the whole nation into a new consciousness was nothing less than a miracle. It gave him particular pleasure, therefore, to recall those glorious associations and to re-visit the place that had given them birth.

Referring to his present visit, Gandhiji stated that he was disinclined to come to Madras on the present occasion. He was reluctant to come out of Sevagram in the first instance and later he would have liked to return straight to the Ashram from Bengal. He believed that it was providence that had brought him to Madras. Surely it would not be for nothing. He hoped that the present visit would prove as fruitful as the previous one. He added :

Yesterday I was rather disappointed with you. I tried in my broken Hindustani, to make myself understood but could not. When I spoke in Hindustani, Rajaji himself did not fully understand it. He is the defaulter No. 1 in this respect. He addresses you in Tamil but

[1] In commemoration of the total hartal observed on April 6, 1919, in protest against the Rowlatt Act and the Jallianwala Bagh massacre which followed on April 13. The week had since been observed as "National Week" every year.

when he goes outside the Province, he talks in English. Well, if the sea water should lose its salt, wherewith shall it be flavoured? All over the country he is reputed to be one of the finest speakers in the English language, but he has not learnt to speak in Hindustani. I want a pledge from you here and now—and you should not only give the pledge but pledge yourself to implement it too—that you will all learn Hindustani. Should you not do even that little for the country's independence? Do you expect all the two crores of people of Tamil Nadu to learn English? Or do you expect India to learn one of the four South Indian languages to be able to communicate with you? I say it is your *dharma* to learn Hindustani, which will link the South with the North.

I want you further to contribute to the Harijan fund. You must do so as a token of your determination to eradicate the blot of untouchability from the fair name of Hinduism. Another thing I want to tell you is that whatever your religion, prayer should form part of your daily life. It should mean more to you than food and drink. I thank you for maintaining perfect discipline during prayer. I will hold prayer here, every evening. The text of the prayer with the translation of the same in the four South Indian languages is obtainable from Satyanarayanaji[1]. You should learn it and its meanings. Further all those who come to the prayer should fully take part in it and join in the singing of the *Ramdhun* to the accompainment of *tala*.[2].

The Hindu, 24-1-1946

[1] M. Satyanarayana, Secretary, Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha, Madras
[2] Rhythmic beats

392. ADVICE TO INDIAN NATIONAL ARMY MEN[1]

MADRAS,
[After *January 22, 1946*][2]

Gandhiji told them that they could only follow the lead of the Congress and commended to their attention Capt. Shah Nawaz's statement in which he had said that, whilst they had fought with arms for their country's freedom when they were outside India, they would now serve India through non-violence.

Lastly you should remember that it is unbecoming the dignity of a soldier to depend on anybody's charity. As soldiers of freedom, you should earn your bread by your honest industry and disdain to look to others for support, even though you may have to suffer hardships and privations in consequence.

Harijan, 24-2-1946

393. FRAGMENT OF TALK WITH V. V. GIRI [3]

MADRAS,
January 23, 1946

Gandhiji's individual opinion was that no Trade Union which respected the National Congress could do without the tricolour flag with the *charkha* in the middle.

He added that he saw no objection to the simple red flag with the particular Union's name on it, provided that it went side by side with the supreme tricolour.

The Hindu, 26-1-1946

[1] Extracted from "Lighter Interludes". Pyarelal explains: "At Madras . . . there was a group of discharged I.N.A. men. Gandhiji saw them for a couple of minutes as he was going to his residence. They were returning to their respective homes. They had received their training in the Military Academy at Tokyo. They asked: 'We worked under Netaji's guidance. Whose lead should we now follow?' "

[2] From the reference to Shah Nawaz Khan's statement which was made on January 22, on the eve of Subhas Chandra Bose's 50th birthday

[3] 1894-1980; twice President of All-India Trade Union Congress and its representative at I.L.O., Geneva, 1927; represented Labour at Round Table Conference, London, 1930-47; India's High Commissioner in Sri Lanka, 1947-51; Minister of Labour in Union Cabinet, 1952-54; successively held Governorship of Uttar Pradesh, Kerala and Karnataka from 1958 to 1964; Vice-President of India, 1967-69 and President of India, 1969-74

394. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, MADRAS[1]

[*January 23, 1946*][2]

Gandhiji said that the very best of food served to a sick person who could not digest it would act as poison. Similarly freedom or *swaraj* would prove a questionable boon to them, if they lacked discipline.

The Hindu, 24-1-1946

395. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

ON THE TRAIN TO MADRAS,
January 21/24, 146

CHI. JIVANJI,

I sent herewith a Foreword[3] for Maganbhai's dictionary. I suggest the addition of one page to explain the Urdu script. The method of forming words, too, should be explained so that the buyer, if he does not know Urdu, may learn it. Pyarelal has an impression that there are also mistakes in a few places. If you think it necessary, get the dictionary examined again from that point of view.

I am sending a Foreword[4] for Mahadev's *Gita*, too. I suppose I have nothing more to write now. Am I right?

I forced myself to find time and write all this yesterday under great pressure of other work. I put aside other reading and writing.

If Maganbhai or you wish to suggest any changes, you may do so. Never mind if that delays the publication by a few days.

Enclosure: Foreword

January 24, 1946

This is a painful thing. This is being posted on the 24th instead of on the 21st. But is it not better that it should go today at any rate rather than not at all?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9963. Also C.W. 6937. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

[1] The report said: "The meeting was very noisy. Contrary to his usual practice, Gandhiji kept standing throughout the prayer."

[2] From the reference to the noise at this meeting in "Speech at Constructive Workers' Conference, Madras", *vide* "Key to Health", 28-8-1942

[3] *Vide*"Key to Health", 28-8-1942

[4] *Vide* "Key to Health", 28-8-1942

396. A TELEGRAM

January 24, 1946

YOU AND PROMILABEHN DECIDE ON INSCRIPTION. MUST BE IN NAGARI AND URDU RETAINING OM AND HE RAM NO GAUDINESS.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

397. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

MADRAS,
January 24, 1946

CHI. JIVANJI,

I came to learn in the course of a discussion with Kakasaheb[1] that you cannot carry out the changes he has introduced in the Nagari script because you do not have such types or give up printing in Devanagari script. We cannot cling to the old forms of the letters. The improved forms have been made current by Kakasaheb and, so far as I know, our [Hindustani Prachar] Sabha has accepted them. How, then, can we ourselves admit anarchy? If I am mistaken in this, please correct me. Kaka and Nanavati[2] have seen this letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9964. Also C. W. 6938. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

398. LETTER TO MUNNANLAL G. SHAH

MADRAS,
January 24, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Two of your letters are lying with me. I am writing this during a few moments of free time. Do not worry in the least about the

[1] D. B. Kalelkar
[2] Amritlal T. Nanavati

samadhi[1]. Go on doing only the task in hand. Nothing is done there (in the Spinners' Association) without my permission.

Do what is possible regarding the clinic [2]. Now I will be there in a few days.

Kanchan[3] is with me. Her cough has not disappeared. But otherwise she is all right. She is quite cheerful. According to me she is being looked after better than a queen. I have not asked her whether she would agree.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8609. Also C. W. 7209. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

399. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI [4]

MADRAS,
January 24, 1946

CHI. MRIDU,

I have your letter of January 11, 1946. I have been very busy and it is nearly six in the morning. What is being done for women seems to be good.[5] Jawaharlal has done a very good job.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. MRIDULA SARABHAI
SHAHIBAG
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The reference is to the proposal to acquire the land in the Aga Khan Palace, Poona, having the *samadhis* of Kasturba Gandhi and Mahadev Desai. *Vide* also "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 1-1-1946

[2] Nature Cure Clinic, Poona

[3] Addressee's wife

[4] The letter is in Devanagari.

[5] The addressee, a trustee of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust, had organized women's welfare activities.

400. LETTER TO JETHALAL L. GANDHI

MADRAS,
January 24, 194[6][1]

CHI. KAKU,

I have your very long letter. We should be charitable. We would go crazy looking for other people's faults, and we would never see our own. Hence remain silent and render such service as you can.

I should consider it a matter of shame that you should rush about in the car to do my work. All the same I am trying to be vigilant.

I shall not be able to look up Hemchanbhai and the labourers. Sorry.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

401. SPEECH AT CONSTRUCTIVE WORKERS' CONFERENCE, MADRAS [2]

January 24, 1946

Gandhiji had hardly spoken a few sentences when the drone of planes overhead dropped his voice, and Gandhiji stopped speaking for a while till he could be heard better.

Gandhiji took the organizers to task because the printed programme that had been put into his hands was in English. It shold have been, he said, in the local language or in the *rashtrabhasha*, Hindustani.[3]

Gandhiji sharply rebuked those workers who did not understand Hindustani for not knowing that language. He told them that the time was past when he used to

[1] The source, however, has "1945", a slip of the pen.

[2] The report said, about 200 workers including a "good number" of women had gathered at the Conference, which was presided over by SShri Krishnadas Jaju of All-India Spinners' Association. Gandhiji, supported by Abha Gandhi and Kantilal, arrived at 8.20 a. m. He spoke in Hindustani.

[3] According to the report, "Some persons in the gathering did not understand what Gandhiji was saying and one of them stood up and, speaking in Telugu, said he could not follow Gandhiji's speech. Gandhiji asked him in Tamil to sit down. The gentleman, not understanding Tamil continued standing, and some of his friends made him sit."

address them in English, if only to please them. He had now decided to reserve his English, if only to please them. He had now decided to reserve his English for Englishmen and foreigners only. So far as they (the gathering) were concerned, he would prefer to speak to them in his broken Hindustani, even if he could make himself better understood by speaking in English.

Referring to the prayer gathering of the previous evening,[1] he said, he knew there were only a few at the far end who were creating the noise; but in an orchestra if even one instrument was out of tune, the harmony of the whole was spoilt. Discipline and its inculcation in the people was an essential part of constructive work.

If he had time, he continued, he would have gone to their latrines, their kitchen, their dining hall, ect., so that he might see for himself how they ate, sat and so on. Maintenance or proper living conditions in the camp was another illustration of fresh items that could be added to the 18-fold constructive programme.

Parliamentary programme and constructive programme were both before the country, he observed. It was not a question of one being inferior to the other, but he wanted to make it clear to them that for India to win her independence through truth and non-violence, constructive work was absolutely essential. Those who went to the legislatures should go there primarily to promote constructive work. But in any case he was of opinion that lovers of freedom should go to the legislatures, if only to prevent those who did not want freedom from getting in and posing as the country's representatives.

Referring to the Parliamentary Delegation, he said that he had given a couple of hours to them on the previous evening and another hour to some of them this morning.[2] He did not think he had wasted his time, but he did not depend on anybody for giving them *swaraj.* Gandhiji concluded :

Swaraj has to come through our own strength. We might get help from other quarters. It would be wlecome. But we should understand that freedom could never come as a gift from outside. We bore no enmity towards the British. We want the British rulers to quit in a friendly spirit. If they do that, it will augur well for them, for India and the world.

Gandhiji declared the Conference open and wished them a fruitful discussion[3].

The Hindu, 25-1-1946

[1] *Vide* "Key to Health", 28-8-1942
[2] For a discussion, *vide*"Key to Health", 28-8-1942
[3] At its afternoon session; *vide* the following item.

402. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS AT CONSTRUCTIVE WORKERS' CONFERENCE, MADRAS

January 24, 1946

The first question related to the place of khadi in the national economy and how far it would help to solve the poverty problem.

Gandhiji said that khadi was the very foundation of Indian *swaraj* and economic uplift of the poor. He had always linked *khadi* with *swaraj* from the beginning. The more khadi we produced, the nearer we would be to *swaraj.* Manual labour was an essential factor in his programme, and it was as necessary for the rich also to do manual work. Spinning was manual labour *par excellence*. It enabled even poor people to lead independent lives. Explaining the symbolism of the *charkha*, Gandhiji said that it stood for *ahimsa*. Let them not get lost in minor controversies but concentrate on the work of spinning and production of *khadi*, the most important part of the constructive programme.

Another question asked was how khadi production could be of help to the poor man when one considered that in the budget more than 80 per cent was spent on food and only 12 per cent on cloth.

Gandhiji answered that if through *khaddar* they could add to the income of the people even a few annas, it would be worth while. He was looking forward to the day when *khadi* would become a universal gospel, though today it was confined to India. The first step he envisaged was that *khadi* should touch all the 40 crores of Indian people.

A question written in English and in pencil on an odd slip of paper was next put aside by Gandhiji with the remark that it was illegible and the questioner was doing violence to an old man to send the question in that way.[1]

QUESTION: What exactly do you mean by economic equality? What is statutory trusteeship as conceived by you?

Gandhiji's reply was that economic equality of his conception did not mean that everyone would literally have the same amount. It simply meant that everybody should have enough for his or her needs. For instance, he required two shawls in winter whereas his grand-nephew Kanu Gandhi who stayed with him and was like his own son did not require any warm clothing whatsoever. Gandhiji required goat's milk, oranges and other fruit. Kanu could do with ordinary food. He envied Kanu but there was no point in it. Kanu was a young man whereas he was an old man of 76. The monthly expense of his food was far more than that of Kanu but that did not mean that there was economic inequality between them. The elephant needs a thousand times

[1] What follows is extracted form "Gandhiji's Communism" by Pyarelal in *Harijan.*

more food than the ant, but that is not an indication of inequality. So the real meaning of economic equality was: "To each according to his need." That was the definition of Marx. If a single man demanded as much as a man with wife and four children that would be a violation of economic equality. Gandhiji continued :

Let no one try to justify the glaring difference between the classes and the masses, the prince and the pauper, by saying that the former need more. That will be idle sophistry and a travesty of my argument. The contrast between the rich and the poor today is a painful sight. The poor villagers are exploited by the foreign Government and also by their own countrymen—the city-dwellers. they produce the food and go hungry. They produce milk and their children have to go without it. It is disgraceful. Everyone must have a balanced diet, a decent house to live in, facilities for the education of one's children and adequate medical relief.

That constituted his picture of economic equality. He did not want to taboo everything above and beyond the bare necessaries but they must come after the essential needs of the poor are satisfied. First things must come first.

As for the present owners of wealth, they would have to make their choice between class-war and voluntarily converting themselves into trustees of their wealth. They would be allowed to retain the stewardship of their possessions and to use their talent to increase the wealth, not for their own sakes, but for the sake of the nation and therefore without exploitation. The State would regulate the rate of commission which they would get commensurate with the service rendered and its value to society. Their children would inherit the stewardship only if they proved their fitness for it. He concluded :

Supposing India becomes a free country tomorrow, all the capitalists will have an opportunity of becoming statutory trustees. But such a statute will not be imposed from above. It will have to come from below. When the people understand the implications of trusteeship and the atmosphere is ripe for it, the people themselves, beginning with *gram panchayats*, will begin to introduce such statutes. Such a thing coming from below is easy to swallow. Coming from above, it is liable to prove a dead weight.

Q. What is the difference between your technique and that of the communists or socialists for realizing the goal of economic equality?

A. The socialists and communists say, they can do nothing to bring about economic equality today. They will just carry on propaganda in its favour and to that end they believe in generating and accentuating hatred. They say, when they get control over and

accentuating hatred. They say, when they get control over the State, they will enforce equality. Under my plan, the State will be there to carry out the will of the people, not to dictate to them or force them to do its will. I shall bring about economic equality through non-violence, by converting the people to my point of view by harnessing the forces of love as against hatred. I will not wait till I have converted the whole society to my view but will straightaway make a beginning with myself. It goes without saying that I cannot hope to bring about economic equality of my conception, if I am the owner of fifty motor-cars or even of ten *bighas* of land. For that I have to reduce myself to the level of the poorest of the poor. That is what I have been trying to do for the last fifty years or more, and so I claim to be a foremost communist although I make use of cars and other facilities offered to me by the rich. They have no hold on me and I can shed them at a moment's notice, if the interests of the masses demand it.

Q. What is the place of *satyagraha* in making the rich realize their duty towards the poor?

The same as against the foreign power. *Satyagraha* is a law of universal application. Beginning with the family, its use can be extended to every other circle. Supposing a land-owner exploits his tenants and mulcts them of the fruit of their toil by appropriating it to his own use. When they expostulate with him, he does not listen and raises objections that he requires so much for his wife, so much for his children and so on. The tenants or those who have espoused their cause and have influence, will make an appeal to his wife to expostulate with her husband. She would probably say that for herself she does not need his exploited money. The children will say likewise that they would earn for themselves what they need.

Supposing further that he listens to nobody or that his wife and children combine against the tenants, they will not submit. They will quit, if asked to do so, but they will make it clear that the land belongs to him who tills it. The owner cannot till all the land himself, and he will have to give in to their just demands. It may, however, be that the tenants are replaced by others. Agitation short of violence will then continue till the replaced tenants see their error and make common cause with the evicted tenants. Thus *satyagraha* is a process of educating public opinion such that it covers all the elements of society and in the end makes itself irresistible. Violence interrupts the process and prolongs the real revolution of the whole social structure.

The Hindu, 26-1-1946; also *Harijan*, 31-3-1946

403. FRAGMENT OF AN INTERVIEW[1]

MADRAS,
January 24, 1946

If the report about the damage to communist persons and properties is true, I consider it disgraceful. Whatever may be the difference between communists and others, they must be respected, as others will wish theirs to be respected. Every act of popular violence is detrimental to the people's progress.

The Hindu, 26-1-946

404. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, MADRAS

January 24, 1946

Speaking of the Tyagaraja *keertana* that had been sung during prayer, Gandhiji said, he knew what a high place Sri Tyagaraja occupied in South India. Wherever he had been, whether in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Desha, Karnataka or Kerala, he had heard Tyagaraja's songs sung with a sweet melody which seemed to spring from the very heart of the singer. Tyagaraja's songs and Tyagaraja's name comported ill with the spirit of provincialism and secularism that he had witnessed among them. There was rivalry of languages today which might grow into something worse tomorrow. Some wanted Tamil, some Telugu and so on. Then there was the feeling of separateness and rivalry betwen South Indians and North Indians. He was utterly unable to understand how this parochialism could be compatible with the growing desire for freedom for the whole of India. Supposing a Bengali achieved distinction in a particular field, would the glory belong to Bengal alone? No, it belonged to every Province and every one of the forty crores of India. That should be their first lesson, if they wanted to be a free nation. Tyagaraja had sung that if all the attributes of Rama are put on one side and the glory of Ramanama on the other, the latter would far outweigh the former. Thinking of the historical Rama of Valmiki or Tulsiddas, one was liable to have many doubts as, for instance, why Rama banished Sita, and so on. But when one thought of Ramanama in the abstract, forgetting who Rama was and what he did, Rama at once

[1] This was reported as stated by Gandhiji "in the course of an interview" with reference to "reports of outbreak of violence in Bombay [on January 23] in connection with the observance of Subhas Chandra Bose Day, and the attack on the headquarters of the Communist Party of India". According to *The Transfer of Power, 1942-47*, Vol. VI, pp. 86-9, although "the authorities in Bombay altered the permitted route of a Subhas Bose procession to avoid Muslim areas in the city", the "organizers of the procession refused to follow the altered route and in ensuing disturbances 11 persons were killed and several hundreds were injured".

become the omnipresent and omnipotent God, above doubt and criticism. Similarly he asked them to forget and put behind them the confusing label of Tamil Nadu *v*. Andhra, Gujarat *v*. Maharashtra or Punjab, and so on, and just remember Hindustan and its glory. There was a potency in the two letters composing the syllable *Ram* which nothing could match or rival. Similarly there was a magic in the syllable *Hind* all its own. After all, the world knew India, not its Provinces—India which had resolved to win her independence through truth and non-violence. He exhorted them to throw their parochialism and petty quarrels and rivalries into the Indian Ocean and, in Tyagraja's name, take a pledge that they would be Indians first and Indians last, live for India and die for India.

When Tamil translation of Gandhiji's exhortation was given, some people shouted for Telugu translation also. Gandhiji said :

All right, say it in Telugu also.

Accordingly a Telugu translation was given. Gandhiji then remarked with a laugh :

Is there no Malayalee and no Canarese here?

The Hindu, 26-1-1946

405. DISCUSSION WITH MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION[1]

MADRAS,
January 24, 1946

Gandhiji gave a very clear picture of what his views were on the present political situation and the future. Gandhiji's view outlined broadly was, it is understood, that India wanted her freedom. She wanted the freedom to be given to her not as though by a superior to an inferior, but given and taken as among equals. He hoped that the British Government would soon make a declaration to that effect, for any delay would complicate the situation and harden the feelings betwen the different sections of opinion in India, and between India and Britain.

Once that declaration was made and Constituent Assembly was set up, an act which would prove that Britain was acting in good faith, India would begin to believe that Britain was in earnest. Of course, he realized that it would take time before the full Indian Constitution would function properly. But they would be prepared to work out these details in patience or, he is stated to have pointed out, they would have been

[1] According to the report, Prof. Richards, Lord Chorley and Reginald Sorensen called on Gandhiji. "The talks commenced at 7.30 p. m., as on the previous day, and lasted 90 minutes. . . . Lord Munster was not present."

satisfied about Britain's good faith.

Gandhiji, it is reported, also touched on the position of political prisoners and urged the need for their release.

The Hindu, 26-1-1946

406. MESSAGE TO STUDENTS[1]

MADRAS,
January 25, 1946

Gandhiji's advice was that the students must observe perfect discipline and non-violence. Not only there should be no coercion of any kind, but there should be no show of force either. To take a large mass of students to another College in order to bring out the students of that College, in Gandhiji's opinion, would not be strictly non-violent. More than that he could not say. Gandhiji would like the students to act under the guidance and advice of someone in the city in whom they have faith.

The Hindu, 26-1-1946

407. SPEECH AT DAKSHINA BHARAT HINDI PRACHAR SABHA, MADRAS[2]

January 25, 1946

Congratulating the *Sabha* on its work during the last 25 years, Gandhiji said that what had been achieved so far was certainly praiseworthy. One of the previous speakers, Mr. T. Krishnaswami, had used a type of English-mixed Hindus-tani, though he could talk good Hindustani, in order to emphasize how far they had succumbed to the influence of a foreign language. He did not want to make any invidious comparisons, but it seemed that the influence of English was so great, particularly in South India, that even Indian names assumed an English form in many places. This was a kind of slavery. Why should they continue to hug the chains, albeit golden, which enslaved them? Should they not break these asunder and try to regain their freedom? It was not difficult at all. Let them at least replace English with Hindustani. He wanted Hindustani to spread so as to unite the different parts of India and not so as to displace the local Indian languages. He was sorry to note that so many in that gathering could not understand him. He desired to serve them, enslaved as they were. It was here in Madras that he first started on his service of slaves. Many

[1] The message was signed by Pyarelal, and it was read out to the students of Pachaiyappa's College who were stopped by police from going in a procession.

[2] Gandhiji was inaugurating the Silver Jubilee celebrations.

prominent citizens of Madras, highly educated persons, welcomed him and extended to him their hospitality at that time. They all fell in with the idea of promoting Hindustani as the lingua franca of India. It was soon after that the movement was set on foot here. He was glad to read the reports presented to him of the progress of work so far, and he congratulated them on it; but taking into consideration what yet remained to achieve, one should admit that it was but a drop in the ocean. So it was that he appealed to everyone in the gathering and outside to learn Hindustani as early as he or she could. If only they devoted to the study of Hindustani a sixteenth of the time they devoted to English, they would attain a higher degree of proficiency in that language. They should learn to read and write both the scripts related to that language—Nagari and Urdu—for the sake of India's independence.

Suggesting that the nomenclature for the work done by the Sabha should be changed from "Hindi Prachar" to "Hindustani Prachar", Gandhiji said that he was not quite such a fanatic about the nomenclature as some were. What was meant by *rashtrabhasha* was that common medium which was easily understood by some 23 crores of the people of India, irrespective or religion or class. That was Hindustani. It was their *dharma* to learn this language and in both the scripts, too. He also would like Hindi workers to learn the language of the area in which they carried on their work so that they would be able to serve the country and the *rashtrabhasha* all the more.

Referring to the difficulties over translation, Gandhiji said that he had decided that there should be no translation of his speech that day. It would save time, for one thing. Furhter, they could read what he said in the newspapers later on or gather the substance from friends.

It was good that they had all contributed to the Silver Jubilee Fund and come there in such large numbers. But he had seen how they had also committed a serious breach of discipline in rushing pell-mell and sitting here, there and everywhere, instead of occupying the seats allotted to them If they did not learn to observe discipline in their everyday life, how would they be able to manage the affairs of a free India, he asked. It should be their *sankalpa*[1] that swaraj should be run on the basis of discipline. Everyone should learn to obey laws and regulations in order to promote constructive national work. Disobedience to be non-violent had to be civil; it did not mean breaking of any and every law. That would lead to chaos and mob rule. He did not wish to live to see mob rule in India. His desire to live for 125 years was in order to serve the cause of truth and non-violence. That presupposed the observance of strict discipline on their part.

[1] Determination or resolve

Gandhiji said that he did not want to take more time. He thanked them for the silence they had maintained and bade them good-bye.

The Hindu, 27-1-1946

408. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, MADRAS

January 25, 1946

Gandhiji said that he did not put through a comprehensive prayer programme as the meeting was not observing perfect silence. He was, however, glad that the position improved during *Ramdhun*.

Gandhiji declared that henceforth there would be no translation of his speech in Tamil or Telugu.[1] Those who did not care to know Hindustani should afterwards gather from newspaper reports or from friends what he had said. If they did not wish to hear him in Hindustani, he was prepared to go away without saying anything. The incident had pained him greatly, he said. His appeal[2] of the previous seemed to have fallen on deaf ears.

They should at least observe elementary rules of courtesy. The rule was that even if a child was entrusted with authority, everyone should implicitly obey his or her instructions. He had heard that on the previous evening one child was crushed in the crowd. It had given him much pain. Their joining in the prayer was a meaningless thing, if it did not teach them to show consideration to women and children and give them precedence. They should let women and children go first. Why should there be such unseemly hurry to depart after the meeting?

Finally Gandhiji exhorted them to observe perfect discipline in the independence Day[3] meeting. He was the author of the independence Pledge[4]. He wanted to live and die for India's independence. Any indiscipline on their part would hurt him deeply. It would delay the coming of *swaraj.* The Independence Pledge laid it down that independence had to be won through truth and non-violence. This required on their part adherence to strict discipline. Violence did not merely mean causing physical injury. It means also giving provocation or causing inconvenience to others. To

[1] Gandhiji spoke in Hindustani which was translated into Tamil. After a few sentences were translated, an Ardhra gentleman among the audience asked for a Telugu translation also.

[2] *Vide* "Key to Health", 28-8-1942

[3] January 26

[4] Originally drafted by Gandhiji in January 1930, the pledge was amended in December 1939 and to which a paragraph was added in 1941; *vide* "Draft Declaration for January", 10-1-1930, "Resolution on Independence Day Pledge", and "Instructions for Independence Day", 11-1-1941

indulge in abuse or to goad others into acts of violence was worse than direct physical violence.[1]

The Hindu, 27-1-194

409. A TELEGRAM

January 26, 1946

THAT HIGHNESS HAS BUILT SHOULD BE STATED. NO FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS NECESSARY.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

410. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS AT CONSTRUCTIVE WORKERS' CONFERENCE, MADRAS[2]

January 26, 1946

Gandhiji singled out for his first answer his favourite topic, Harijan uplift. He categorically called on the constructive workers to make Harijan uplift a major programme. While he agreed that a large majority of the people had advanced views on this question, the action taken in this regard, he regretted, was like a speck in an ocean. Their question was what step should be taken for the complete amelioration of the condition of the Harijans. He had again and again answered such questions. He would repeat that steps such as inter-dining of caste Hindus with Harijans, voluntary admission of Harijans into temples—he considered this as a vital programme—and accessibility of Harijans to roads and water sources would alone give the Harijans

[1] The report concluded: "Gandhiji then . . . walked back quickly to his residence. . . . As he approached . . . his residence, Mr. A. Subrahmanyam . . . Tamil translator . . . expressed regret that his translation should have caused Gandhiji the distrubance. Gandhiji said, he was not at all to blame. The Andhra gentleman . . . had by now come up . . . to explain himself . . . Gandhiji rebuked him saying that he should first have made his request to him either in a note or in person instead of disturbing the prayer and trying to dictate what should be done. By so doing, he had only forced him to come to a decision not to have translations at all and thus prevented his coming into contact with the people in the manner he wanted. The offender persisted in his attempts to further press his case, while expressing his regret for what had happened. Dr. Sushila Nayyar interrupted at this stage, and asked him not to cause Gandhiji unnecessary strain. The gentleman then withdrew."

[2] In the afternoon session to the third day, V. Bhashyam Iyengar presided. After his speech, Gandhiji called for questions from the delegates in Hindustani.

equal status with the caste Hindus. To depend on the Government for throwing open the temples to Harijans was to expect too much of them. People alone could voluntarily take the Harijans into temples and give them real temple-entry based on a change of heart.

Through another answer, Gandhiji announced that non-violence was also a principal item in the constructive programme. He averred that violent acts such as arson and causing injury to others would not bring them *Ramarajya*, their birthright. Non-violence alone would lead them to freedom. But what happened? They had freedom almost in their hands and, through violent acts, they were, as it were, throwing it away into the sea.

Concluding, Gandhiji stressed the importance of co-operating with the Harijans and helping them to keep their places and persons clean.

As a few minutes of the allotted time still remained, Gandhiji invited more questions and answered them. The answers only reinforced what he had already said.

The Hindu, 28-1-1946

411. SPEECH AT CONVENTION OF HARIJANS, MADRAS[1]

January 26, 1946

At the outset, Mahatma Gandhi expressed his great pleasure in seeing before him such a large gathering of Harijans. He was also glad to notice the great awakening among them.

Englishmen often put the question, what the caste Hindus were going to do for the solution of the problem of untouchability, if the country achieved freedom? They further asked what had the people done for Harijans? Mahatmaji admitted that the question was pertinent; but at the same time he wished to make it clear that untouchability did not exist in such a horrible form, as their European friends wanted to make out.

In this connection, Mahatma Gandhi referred to his South African experience and said that there all Indians were regarded by the European people as untouchables. An Indian might be a merchant or a barrister. Still he was a 'coolie', so far as the Europeans there were concerned. Separate places were allotted for the residence of Indians. There were also other disabilities. Therefore it could not be said that Europeans did not observe untouchability. There might not be untouchability amongst themselves; but they treated Indians in South Africa as untouchables. He did all he could to remove that kind of untouchability while he was in South Africa. After

[1] Organized as part of Silver Jubilee celebrations of Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha

returning to India he had devoted himself to the removal of untouchability in this country.

"Would the conditions of Harijans be the same, or would it imprive when India attained freedom?" was another question asked. He visualized that there would not be any question of untouchability in free India. Their Hindu brethren would see to it that untouchability was put to an end and that all Harijans were acknowledged equals. Crores of Congressmen would devote themselves towards that end. They would work for the removal of untouchability and die for it. In his address[1] to the constructive workers, he had stated clearly the nature of work [and asked] the workers to strive sincerely for the removal of untouchability. It was not enough, if a few Harijans rose to high positions in life such as barristers or High Court judges. For the uplift of the community as a whole, all of them must strive. They must educate themselves. They must fight and win their own freedom, not by violent means, but through truth and non-violence. Untouchability should disappear by winning the hearts of the caste Hindus through peaceful means.

Mahatma Gandhi then went on to explain what was meant by real freedom. It did not mean freedom to do as they pleased. It meant freedom to do their duty, freedom to abstain from drink, and freedom to work for their own uplift. In this connection Gandhiji explained the significance of the term 'Harijan' by which he preferred to call them. The term signified people of God. He who nurtured hatred or ill-feeling towards another could not be a man of God. The Harijans had borne their sufferings patiently for ages without retaliating. Therefore they deserved to be called Harijans. True to that expression, they must believe in God and repeat His name. They must be true devotees of God, and history furnished them with classic examples of true devotees like Nandanar. On this occasion he did not wish to refer to the rights of Harijans, but only to say a few words on their duties or dharma. The so-called higher castes had their duties; so had Harijans. If they considered that inter-dining or inter-marriage was the purpose of their freedom, they would be mistaken. All these things would not bring about real happiness. By acquiring clean and healthy habits, by adhering to truth and non-violence, and by doing their work in life honestly and sincerely and with love of God, they would be promoting not only individual happiness but also the happiness of the community as a whole. Only through truth and non-violence could they establish *swaraj* or *Ramarajya* in this land.

The Hindu, 28-1-1946

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

412. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, MADRAS[1]

January 26, 1946

Gandhiji said that festivals varied in character with the times. The Independence Day was a sacred day to them all, as on that day crores of people would be repeating their pledge for the attainment of the independence of India. He hoped that everybody had taken the pledge. If not, everybody should take it. The special feature of that pledge, he reminded them, was that the means to be adopted for the attainment of independence were unadulterated truth and non-violence.[2] Crores of people had been repeating that pledge for the last 25 years and offering prayers for the fulfilment of that pledge to the Most High, who, though far, was yet nearer to us than our hands and feet. It was the self-same Power, though known by various designations, Allah, Rama, Rahman, Rahim, God, and so on. There was no limit to His names. They were as countless as His attributes. It was to this Unseen Power which permeated and sustained the universe that their prayers where made. It would be heard only if their means where as pure and spotless as their end.

Could they expect God to crown their resolve with success, if their means included falsehood, deceit, violence and deception? Such a prayer would not ascend to heaven. It would only bring ridicule on those who offered it. True prayer must transform their conduct. How could they indulge in unseemly behaviour like yesterday's, while they professed to be votaries of truth and *ahimsa*? Prayer meant nothing, if it did not result in self-purification and humility. Prayer ought to purge the soul of all impurity, pride and egotism. Whilst the incident had caused him deep pain, it was not without a redeeming feature. The redeeming feature was that although one person had run amok, those around him had refused to be thrown off their legs and had not joined him in the clamour. That was as it should be in a well-behaved gathering.

In conformity with yesterday's announcement, he had discontinued giving any translations either in Telugu or Tamil of his remarks at the end of the prayer. Even the song was in Hindustani because he did not want to make the language of the song a bone of ocntention. He strongly deprecated the rivarly and recrimination between the Tamilians and the the Andhras which he had noticed during his visit to the South. The Tamilians and the Andhras, the Kanarese and the Malayalees were distinct, but not antagonistic to one another. They were like branches of the same tree. They should realize the fundamental unity underlying their diversity. Then alone they would be

[1] The report said: "The prayer was held without the recitation of the usual *slokas* from the Upanishads and the *Gita*. *Ramdhum* was sung, and it was followed by a song in Hindustani."

[2] *Vide* also "Speech at Prayer Meeting, Madras", 23-1-1946

worthy of independence.

Referring to the disturbances that continued through the prayer from the distant fringe of the gathering, he said, he realized that it was due to insufficiency of accommodation. The clamour came from those who could not find accommodation. The right thing for those who failed to get accommodation would have been to quietly sit back or wait in silence outside. Similarly, if they had assimilated the spirit of non-violence, he would not have been forced to confine himself to the precincts of his residence as he was doing at present. It was because he was afraid of the unthinking adoration of the crowds that he did not go out in the open even for his evening walk. Genuine love should be more discerning.

Concluding, Gandhiji asked them all to pray to God to either give them freedom or the strength to die for it. He said :

Let us hope we shall not have to repeat this pledge next year but shall have attained our freedom before that. It is given to man but to try. The result is in the hands of God. But, if our weapons are unadulterated truth and non-violence, our prayer will not go unheard.

The Hindu, 28-1-1946

413. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS AT CONSTRUCTIVE WORKERS' CONFERENCE, MADRAS

January 27, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi said that many women enquired of him about the nature of work they might do. He had been telling repeatedly, and he would say again that women should go to villages and work there. They must attend to the health and sanitation of the villages and to the education and culture of the womenfolk. All these should be done in a spirit of love and service and not as a mere formality.

Replying to a question relating to parliamentary programme, Mahatma Gandhi said that the question of entering legislatures was a small matter. Only a limited number of women could engage themselves in this work, whereas the constructive programme provided scope for all of them. Mahatma Gandhi added that he had no objection to women standing for election to legislatures; but they must enter the legislatures with the idea of serving the people, always keeping in mind the principle of truth and non-violence. But how many of them would be able to enter the legislatures in a spirit of service? They must also have a clear idea beforehand as to what they would do inside the legislatures. The parliamentary programme was like building from the top. Their aim must be to build from below so that the foundation would be strong and the structure good. If any mistake occurred while building from the bottom, it could be rectified immediately, and the harm done would not be much.

On the other hand, if a mistake was committed in the other programme, the entire structure might collapse and the whole country stood to lose thereby.

The next question related to receiving assistance from Christian Missionaries in a free India. Gandhiji declared that they could certainly accept help not only from Christian Misssionaries but from others also, if such help was offered sincerely and in a spirit of service to the country. There was before them the example of the late Deenabandhu Andrews. He was a Christian. He served India and gave his life for India. India required the help of all men of goodwill who were prepared to offer that help in a spirit of love and service.

In reply to another question, Mahatmaa Gandhi said that the wife or dependent of a Government servant could do national work, provided she was ready to do so without fear of her property being consfiscated or the education of her children suffering. If any woman thought that by doing constructive national work her children stood to lose privilege they might otherwise get from the Government, she should not undertake the work.

He said that this sphere of work was large and all were welcome. It was the constructive programme that was responsible for creating an awakening in the country. It was only through constructive programme that they would be able to retain their freedom when it was won. The important part of the constructive programme was to develop purity of body and mind and to educate their children according to the Nayee Talim or New Education. Thereby their girls and boys would grow into self-supporting and independent citizens. They wanted many workers to go out into the villages and work among the people. Educated women should make it a point to get into villages and teach the children to read and write and to lead clean lives. If these things were done, the constructive programme would have achieved its purpose.

If they had a capital of one crore of rupees, they should be able to multiply it and not allow themselves to squander away what they had. All of them were aware that he would not allow even a pie being spent unnecessarily. The construrctive programme, if correctly followed, would not only pay its way but also add to the capital. Therein lay its greatness.

The Hindu, 29-1-1946

414. SPEECH AT DAKSHINA BHARAT HINDI PRACHAR SABHA, MADRAS[1]

January 27, 1946

The business they had all met to transact was a solemn one, and he was glad to be able to take part in that function. If the aspirations of the people of India for freedom were to be fulfilled, they should learn the lessons of true discipline and right conduct, particularly in such large congregations. No doubt there was a president on such occasions to regulate proceedings and maintain order. But the order he wanted was that which was born of a due sense of discipline in each individual. The discipline should be so strong that even where it was a child of five that sought to enforce regulations and law, people should willingly abide by it. That he thought was real *vinaya*[2]. They should also concentrate on the main purpose for which they were assembled there and do nothing to mar the solemnity of that purpose and its fulfilment.

He had again and again said that he preferred the nomenclature 'Hindustani' to 'Hindi' in this connection. The language the Sabha sought to spread was really the language of the common folk of North India, understood by an overwhelming majority. He had also stated again and again that students of Hindustani should learn both Urdu and Nagari scripts. Some people deliberately mixed more Sanskrit words and some others Arabic and Persian words, with the result that today two distinctive streams were noticeable in the language which was one. His own view was that Hindustani was the one common language containing Sanskrit words as well as Arabic and Persian words and understood by the common people. He wanted them to do their bit for spreading that languaage.

The Hindu, 29-1-1946

415. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, MADRAS

January 27, 1946

Addressing the gathering in Hindustani, Gandhiji said that in that song[3] there was a prayer by the devotee that God might save his honour. He then alluded to the episode in the *Mahabharata* describing how, when Draupadi was sought to be shamed in the court of Duryodhana in th presence of thousands of persons, Lord Krishna came to the rescue and saved her from being dishonoured. The secret of the miracle was her undying faith in God which nothing could shake. The legend says that the Lord himself reached out his arm to protect her. The poet, of course, is here referring to the

[1] At its twenty-third convocation
[2] Humility
[3] From *Ashram Bhajanavali*; *vide* "Ashram Bhajanavali"

omnipotence of God, who, however, becomes a living force to those who have faith.

Gandhiji said that as Draupadi was depicted as being sought to be made naked, India was already naked and was praying for protection from shame—the shame of slavery and serfdom under alien exploitation—and restoration of her independence.

Yesterday they had pledged themselves that they would either win independence through truth and ahimsa or perish in the attempt, and yet today, in spite of the spacious grounds, they were behaving like an undisciplined mob in one quarter of the prayer ground.[1] If they could not behave well even during *bhajan*, how would they behave when India got freedom? Theirs was by no means an extraordinarily big gathering, but for a people who aspired to be free and remain free through no other means than *ahimsa*, it should be possible to act and obey orders as one man even if they were 400 million. If 400 million could but shout with one voice, the effect would be overwhelming. But there was a proper time for shouting as for silence. Each must come in its proper place.

Gandhiji concluded by expressing the hope that if God again brought him in their midst, they would all be able to understand Hindustani, and there would be no clamour for Tamil and Telugu translations of his speech. He prayed to God to guide them all aright so that they might deport themselves in a manner worthy of the people who aspired to be free.

The Hindu, 29-1-1946

416. SPEECH TO WAITING PEOPLE, MADRAS[2]

January 27, 1946

I realize you are all here gathered to see me, out of abundant love for me; therefore I have come to you, giving up my usual walk at this time.

He then advised them to return home quickly and attend the prayer meeting the next evening. Gandhiji informed them that the prayers were now taking place on an extensive site which could accommodate many thousands conveniently. [He said :]

Therefore come there tomorrow and bring your friends.

Finally Gandhiji stressed the importance of maintaining perfect silence during prayer and said that even if a crore of people gathered, peace and serenity should be observed. Otherwise the object of a prayer meeting would be lost.

The Hindu, 29-1-1946

[1] The meeting was being held in a new venue; *vide* the following item.

[2] According to the report, Gandhiji spoke in Hindustani; he instructed A. Subbiah to translate the speech into Tamil.

417. A MESSAGE

January 28, 1946

I hope Kamala Nehru Basic School will bring credit to the name of the departed.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1304

418. LETTER TO ANDHRA PRADESH CONGRESS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

MADRAS,
January 28, 1946

BROTHERS,

I got your letter yesterday. Bhai Venkatarao had a talk with me. I had told him that Doctor Saheb[1] could enter [the Assembly] when it becomes imperative. What can be the urgency now?

Although Doctor Saheb takes my advice and also abides by it, I cannot order him, nor have I done so. Who am I to stop him, if he wishes to enter the Assembly? My advice, however, is against it. He can render greater service from outside.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SIGNATORIES [*sic*]
EXECUTIVE ANDHRA PRADESH CONGRESS COMMITTEE
C/O T. N. VENKATARAO
PRESIDENT, DISTRICT CONGRESS COMMITTEE
TENALI, GUNTUR

From the Hindi original: C. W. 4230. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Dr. Bhogaraju Pattabhi Sitaramayya (November 24, 1880 to December 17, 1959); son of village Karnam, he took M. B. & C. M. degree in 1906; gave up practice to join Indian National Congress; was member of A. I. C. C. and Working Committee; he headed Andhra Provincial Congress for many years; edited *Janma Bhoomi* an English weekly, from 1919 to 1930; author of *The History of The Indian National Congress*

419. A LETTER[1]

MADRAS,
January 28, 1946

BROTHERS,

I have your letter. All of you are earning. God has given you wealth. You may, therefore, make no payments to the clinic by way of fees but should donate to it as much as you can, to your heart's content. This is just my wish. Anyhow, I will be there in a few weeks' time.

Tell me everything then, and I shall do what I can.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

420. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

MADRAS,
January 28, 1946

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

What a coincidence! I got your letter today, a silence-day. There is so much work here that I do not write or get letters written except on a silence-day. God sustains me.

I would have been completely ignorant about your health. This I write just to satisfy myself.

Come over to Bardoli only if you have completely recovered. There is still the whole of February.

It is as well that I had better written to both of you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G. N. 11566

[1] The letter is in Devanagari.

421. NOTE TO NAGESHWAR PRASAD VAKIL

January 28, 1946

Write to him and also to Priyamvada. Who is the person desiring to marry ?[1] What does he do ? Does he have any children ? How much money does he have ? What is his occupation ?

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

422. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

MADRAS,
January 28, 1946

BHAI PRAKASAM[2],

While passing through Andhra I heard that the purses presented to you were used by you for your own personal expense. I said that that could not have been so. I was told that that exactly was the case, but that there was nothing wrong in your spending the money given to you for personal use. Write to me or tell me the real facts in this matter. I wanted to talk it over with you but I have no free time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushilal Nayyar

423. SPEECH READ OUT AT PRAYER MEETING, MADRAS[3]

January 28, 1946

Today is my day of silence. Therefore I am not able to speak to you. You must please excuse me. What a good thing is silence! I have personal experience of it. The joy one derives from silence is unique. How good it will be, if everyone observed silence for some time every day! Silence is not for some great men; I know that whatever one

[1] The addressee had written that a widower friend of his was eager to marry a Harijan girl of Gandhiji's choice.

[2] 1872-1957); editor, *Swarajya;* was called "Andhra Kesari"— the lion of Andhra; Premier (Chief Minister) of composite Madras state 1946-47, and later the first Chief Minister of Andhra, 1953-54.

[3] Written in Hindustani by Gandhiji was read out by Kanu Gandhi

person is able to do can be done by everyone, given the effort. There is a saying[1] amongst us that through silence everything can be achieved. There is much truth in this saying.

The Hindu, 30-1-1946

424. MESSAGE TO COMMEMORATION MEETING ON ROMAIN ROLLAND'S 80TH BIRTHDAY[2]

[Before *January 29, 1946*][3]

The few days I passed with Romain Rolland and his sister at Villeneuve[4] were among the happiest days of my life. He has been truly described by some of us as a Maharishi. He bore on his benign face the marks of a great sage. He lived and died[5] for humanity, leaving it richer for having lived.

The Hindu, 31-1-1946

425. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS AT CONSTRUCTIVE WORKERS' CONFERENCE, MADRAS [6]

January 29, 1946

Q. Can a worker who has taken up one item of constructive work dabble in others? Is it right for him to do so? If so, how?

A. Constructive programme as it stands today is comprised of 18 items. The spinning-wheel as the symbol of non-violence occupies the central place. So every worker must spin and know all about spinning. Supposing a worker takes paper-making as his main occupation and has to find his livelihood also throught it, he won't have

[1] मौनं सर्वार्थसाधनम्।

[2] The meeting was held on January 29 at Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta. The message was read out by Kalidas Nag.

[3] *Ibid*

[4] In 1931

[5] He died in Switzerland on December 30, 1944.

[6] The report in *The Hindu*, said: "Gandhiji addressed the concluding session of the Constructive Workers' Conference for about twenty minutes in the morning and answered a few questions handed over to him. Gandhiji, at the outset, asked how many of those present knew Hindustani and a large majority signified they knew the language. "The first two questions and answers are reproduced here from *Harijan* which published them under the title "Constructive Workers' Samagra Gramseva" as translated "from *Harijan Sevak*", 17-3-1946.

much time left for other things. But he will be able to render some other service to the villagers besides that which he renders through the spinning-wheel and paper-making. For instance, he can work for improving the sanitation of the place and render advice about the care of the sick when he cannot take up full responsibility for nursing them.

Supposing another worker decides to concentrate on the spinning wheel only and to find his livelihood also through that, he can do so. I have no doubt in my mind that the wheel can serve as the instrument of earning one's livelihood and at the same time enable the worker to render useful service to his neighbours. The thing is that every worker should decide for himself what will be his main activity besides the spinning-wheel, and what will be his subsidiary activities. Whatever he does, he should do intelligently and with knowledge. Thus, in order to ply the wheel intelligently, he should know all the processes that precede and succeed spinning. He should have full knowledge of the activities that he wishes to concentrate upon and have a general working knowledge about other items of the constructive programme. A student of astronomy cannot know astronomy without some knowledge of science in general. Similarly a worker cannot afford to be utterly ignorant about other items of constructive work.

Q. Please explain the meaning of *samagra gramseva* of your conception. How can we fit ourselves for that?

A. The 18-fold constructive programme includes *samagra gram- seva*. A *samagra gramsevak* must know everybody living in the village and render them such service as he can. That does not mean that the worker will be able to do everything single-handed. He will show them the way of helping themselves and procure for them such help and mate-rials as they require. He will train up his own helpers. He will so win over the villagers that they will seek and follow his advice. Supposing I go and settle down in a village with a *ghani* (village oil-press), I won't be an ordinary *ghanchi* (oil-presser) earning 15-20 rupees a month. I will be a Mahatma *ghanchi*. I have used the word Mahatma in fun but what I mean to say is that as *ghanchi* I will become a model for the villagers to follow. I will be a *ghanchi* who knows the *Gita* and the Koran. I will be learned enough to teach their children. I may not be able to do so for lack of time. The villagers will come to me and ask me: 'Please make arran-gements for our children's education.' I will tell them: 'I can find you a teacher but you will have to bear the expenses.' And they will be prepared to

do so most willingly. I will teach them spinning and when they come and ask me for the services of a weaver, I will find them a weaver on the same terms as I found them a teacher. And the weaver will teach them how to weave their own cloth. I will inculcate in them the importance of hygiene and sanitation, and when they come and ask me for a sweeper, I will tell them: 'I will be your sweeper[1] and I will train you all in the job.' This is my conception of *samagra gramseva*. You may tell me that I will never find a *ghanchi* of this description in this age. Then I will say that we cannot help to improve our villages in this age. Take the exam-ple of a *ghanchi* in Russia. After all the man who runs an oil-mill is a *ghanchi*. He has money but his strength does not lie in his money. Real strength lies in knowledge. True knowledge gives a moral standing and moral standing and moral strength. Everyone seeks the advice of such a man. Take the instance of Vinoba. He is a good *ghanchi*. You all know what he does, and you can all follow his example according to your capacity.[2]

Q. Khadi work has been carried on for the last 20 years for the purpose of solving the problem of unemployment. Now if priority is to be given for an all-round uplift of the villages, then (1) arrangements should be there for the tiller of the soil so that he gets full remuneration for his labour; (2) efforts should be made to improve agriculture; (3) if there is some spare time, spinning and such other industries should be introduced in the villages. According to my scheme, khadi and gramodyog get a third place. How far am I right in this?

A. When khadi was first introduced, we used to say that it was meant for helping the poor. But at the same time I had told the country that *swaraj* rested upon cotton yarn. Both the things went on simultaneously. But you paid attention only to one of them. This was our ill-luck. I had brought the idea of khadi from South Africa. From there I could visualize that till we chose an occupation in which millions of men and women of India could take part, *swaraj* could not be achieved even through truth and non-violence. Those who have to work for their livelihood may do so. But they can spin voluntarily for their country or they can work at some occupation for their survival. I hope you understand the difference between the two.

When I came to India, then also women were carding. I placed

[1] *Harijan Sevak* has: "I am myself a Bhangi . . ."

[2] The following three questions and their answers are translated from *Khadi Jagat*, April 1946, which published them under the title "Farming or Spinning-wheel".

before them the idea of *swaraj* as I understood it. Whether the poor earned their livelihood through khadi or adopted it as a means of swaraj, both the things could go hand in hand. I realized that real freedom could be attained only in this way. Therefore I placed before the Congress the idea of khadi. The Congress accepted khadi in 1920. You should know that till that day the Congress had no flag. When people realized the importance of khadi, the tricolour flag came into being.

In the Aga Khan Palace I used to think constantly about the place of khadi. It is a matter of shame that I was released[1] on grounds of ill-health. The Government did not want that, like Ba and Mahadev, I too should die there.[2] Therefore they released me. After my release I placed before you the same idea. Was khadi only a means of economically helping the poor or was it a means of attaining *swaraj* also? If we wish to make khadi a means of achieving freedom, then we shall have to change our method of work. Many people were disappointed with spinning only for economic reasons. To spin for the whole day and get just an anna was not enough. We raised the status of women by raising the wages of the women spinners. But at the time we emphasized the point that the spinners should also wear khadi. This was the second step.

Now the third step is that all those who wear khadi should spin. How splendid it would be, if all the people of Madras should spin and also weave the yarn spun by them. Otherwise they can get their yarn woven at a nearby place. This is the way of the village to get all things done at minimum cost and labour. The urban way is just the opposite. When I visited Lancashire, I observed that the workers never wore the cloth that they themselves produced. For them the cloth was imported from Ireland. Some embroidered cloth from Madras was also used. Now, if the villagers or the cultivators are able to spin and produce yarn for their own use, we can save them a lot of trouble. And, if they do so with knowledge, they would be bringing *swaraj* nearer. This is the new policy of khadi.

If you have understood my point, then the place of khadi is not third, but it remains first. I have made khadi or the spinning-wheel the symbol of *ahimsa*. *Ahimsa* is a unique thing. You can make anything

[1] On May 6, 1944, having been detained from August 8, 1942

[2] Mahadev Desai died on August 15, 1942. Kasturba Gandhi died on February 22, 1944.

its symbol. I made the *charkha* its symbol and not the rosary after due thought. If we spin just one length all the time taking the name of God, then the spinning-wheel itself becomes our rosary. Spinning itself becomes sacrificial work.

One who having eyes does not see the light of the sun and having a skin does not feel its warmth is dead, though living. The spinning-wheel is the life of constructive work. If you take away that, all the other seventeen items will become a lifeless corpse. If we wish to achieve *swaraj* for the poorest of the poor and the weakest of the weak, for the crores of women, whose only guardian is God, and not only for some educated women, it can be done only through the spinning-wheel. And, without the spinning-wheel, the constructive programme becomes a mere cipher. It becomes ten if the zero is placed after one. Zero alone has no value.

Q. Ninety-five per cent of agriculture in India depends on rains. For the improvement of farming more than 50 per cent of it should be done through irrigation. It is the experience of the experts that in this way alone farming can be improved. Under all circumstances this sort of improvement will have a prominent place in the economic planning of India. In case such an improvement in farming is introduced, it becomes a complete industry which goes on throughout the year. In that case the spinning-wheel do not occupy the place of a supplementary industry. If we want to ply it in the villages, we will have to think of a place for it as for the hand-loom. Please throw light on this matter.

A. Khadi and all the activities connected with it have a direct relation with *satyagraha*. Whatever credit I have earned, I have earned it through *satyagraha*. I am not a learned man. I consider myself and feel somewhat stupid before scholars in Tamil, English, Hindustani and even Gujarati. But I have placed before you *satyagraha* knowingly and after careful thinking. I have not acquired it from books, but from experience. I could see that khadi industry could serve as a means of achieving [*swaraj*]. Farming cannot take that place. Millions of men, women and children cannot take part in it [as they can in spinning]. I live for the freedom of the country and work continuously for it. After I am worn out, I do not wish to live; not even for enjoyment. For that matter I am always happy and never sad. If I were born in free India, perhaps I would not have insisted on khadi. But, even when I was in South Africa, I knew that India was a slave country and to remove that slavery I thought of the spinning-wheel as the means.

First of all do not possess full knowledge about agriculture. But

the simple thing is that we cannot progress much without the help of the Government. Canals will have to be constructed, some trees will have to be cut down. We will have to use the new engineering devices. At every step, the Government's help will be required.

Q. An Indian villager spends about 80 per cent on foodgrains and 12 per cent on cloth. Does it not follow that agriculture holds the most important place in our village uplift scheme? Would it not be proper to give to agriculture instead of to khadi the place of the sun in the solar system [of the constructive programme]?

A. Even if all that is correct, farming cannot take the place of the spinning-wheel. It is a great thing to become industrious through the spinning-wheel and give up lethargy. The key to our *swaraj* lies in it. When we keep the spinning-wheel in the centre and try to remove its defects, we learn many things by the way. You must know that I talk about the *charkha* [only] as regards India. I would not ply *charkha* in the North Pole. If India understands the value of the sspinning-wheel, *swaraj* can be certainly attained through it. To some extent there is propaganda of the spinning-wheel in the cities. It is welcome. But the villagers have to adopt the spinning-wheel. In order to link it with agriculture, the villgers had better adopt it.[1]

Q. Is it possible to achieve nationalization of land in a non-violent manner?

"Yes" came the answer from Gandhiji. He made it perfectly clear that *kisans*, the tillers of the land, should educate *kisans* on their rights and duties, and tell them how they should develop self-confidence and courage to assert their just rights. *Satyagraha* might have to be resorted to in the process of claiming ownership of the land, and the zamindars were not *rakshasas* to oppress them, for it would not be to their benefit to do so.

Q. What should be done when an unsympathetic Indian State placed obstacles in the way of the constructive programme?

Gandhiji said that the result depended entirely on the workers themselves and the extent to which they were prepared to suffer for the cause. Gandhiji, replying to another question, approved of Kaka Kalelkar's suggestion to bring in words belonging to other languages to make themselves intelligible in their addresses to gatherings. If any *pandit* objected to this procedure, he would be only ignoring realities. He, however, pointed out the absurdity of using bombastic words like *chathushpada peetham* for chair and *lakhini nilaya* for an ink-stand.

Gandhiji was asked as to what extent students could engage themselves in political work. Mahatmaji said that there was quite enough work for students to do

[1] The following two questions and their answers are from *The Hindu*, 30-1-1946.

alongside of their studies. They could, for instance, do a great deal in connection with removal of illiteracy. But he was not in favour of students associating themselves with party politics or controversies as they could not do justice to such work, remaining as students. If some of them felt like leaving schools and colleges with a view to engaging themselves in national work, they were free to do so.[1]

To a question whether constructive workers can go to jails, Mahatma Gandhi said :

> As far as possible, constructive workers should wholly devote their time to the 18-point programme. This should be the case at almost all times. But when the situation in the country is extraordinary and the constructive worker feels impelled to go to jail, then, of course, he can go to jail. This is, however, only in extraordinary circumstances.[2]

Harijan, 17-3-1946, and *Khadi Jagat*, April 1946; also *The Hindu*, 30-1-1946, and *The Hindustan Times*, 30-1-1946

426. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, MADRAS [3]

January 29, 1946

Addressing the gathering, Gandhiji called for silence, observing that unless they kept silent, they would not be able to hear him. As there was no appreciable reduction in the noise coming from the fringes of the vast gathering, Mahatmaji called for *bhajan*.[4]

He said that he had received a purse containing about Rs. 10,000 from the Maharani of Vizianagaram, on behalf of the ladies of Madras, for which he was thankful. The Rani Saheba had told him that on account of the the shortage of time, more could not be collected, but had promised to raise the amount to Rs. one lakh within three months. The vast gathering before him was witness to that promise. If the Maharani was not able to collect the entire balance within that period, Mahatmaji

[1] What follows is from *The Hindustan Times*, 30-1-1946.

[2] The report in *The Hindustan Times* concluded: "Gandhiji declined to bless the foundation-stone for a new building to be constructed for the Kasturba Free Reading-room and Library of the Andhra Young Men's Association, Madras, as the inscription on the stone was in English. A fresh stone was thereupon prepared with the inscription in Telugu, the mother tongue of the people in that area, and Gandhiji blessed the stone and wished the institution all success."

[3] The report said: "Mahatma Gandhi and party arrived at the *pandal* at 4.35 p. m. He was conducted to the dais by the Maharani of Vizianagaram, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Mrs. Ambujammal and others. He was presented with khadi garlands by a number of children."

[4] According to the report, "Two women sang *Raghupati Raghva Rajaram* and the audience joined in the chorus, making time with hands."

was certain she would make good the deticit form her own pocket. But that would not please him. It was his desire that his sisters residing in all the four linguistic parts of this Province should contribute and see to it that the fund reached the figure of Rs. one lakh.

Explaining what he proposed to do with the money, Gandhiji said that he was not going to devote the entire sum for work among women.He proposed to give a portion of it to the Hindi Prachar Sabha for the spread of Hindustani among women, a portion to Harijan work and balance for important work for the uplift of women. He had seen many girls taking their degrees at the Hindustani Convocation. He was not satisfied with their number. He would like to see crores of women studying Hindustani in South India. All of them were aware what a "greedy" person he was in the matter of collecting funds for specific purposes. He was never satisfied with small purses. He wanted crores so that he could spend the money on deserving causes. The sum of Rs. one lakh was not a big thing for the women of Madras Presidency to contribute. Women liked to decorate themselves with so many unnecessary things. They could avoid so much waste and contribute to good causes.

Gandhiji remarked that the Maharani had taken pity on him as sun-light was falling severely on him.[1] Resuming his speech, Mahatma Gandhi said that he saw women wearing a number of ornaments. He would prefer to see them dressed in khaddar rather than bedecked with ornaments. After all, character was the most important thing for women. It was ignorance that led them to wear ornaments. The simplicity of Sita was an example before them. In spite of carrying her away to Lanka, Ravana dared not lay his hands on her. Why was it? It was because of the character of Sita. India was a glorious country, full of such great examples. The glory of Hindustan was in the hands of Indian womanhood. Dusshasana was unable to put Draupadi to shame, though the Pandavas were unable to come to her rescue. It was her character that made the Lord come to her rescue. Swaraj or Ramarajya was after all a small thing. It was the *tejas*[2] of Hindustan that mattered. If the womanhood of India attained her complete *tejas*, the foreigner would not be here. Therefore he would impress upon them that their real asset and ornament was character and not dresses and jewels.

Finally Gandhiji spoke about untouchability and said that some of them could not drink even water given by a Harijan. Not only that, they would not give water to a Harijan in a pot. They would pour water only into his hand. This attitude should go. Other differences like Hindu, Muslim, Christian and Parsi should also go. They should strive for unity and that unity could be achieved early by all of them speaking a common language, Hindustani.

Glancing at his watch, Mahtamaji said that it was time for him to leave. He would, therefore, request them to excuse him, if he could not speak more.

The Hindu, 31-1-1946

[1] Here the speech was interrupted, while Gandhiji shifted his seat.

[2] Literally, "brightness"; here it refers to brightness of purity of character.

427. SPEECH AT NAYEE TALIM CONVOCATION, MADRAS[1]

January 29, 1926

Gandhiji addressed an exhortation to the teachers to carry on their work in their respective areas in a spirit of loyalty and earnestness to the cause. He wanted them all to remember the several items of work mentioned in their certificates[2] and to strive their utmost to carry out their duties in that connection. It was true that there were certain very wide subjects like agriculture included there, but he was sure they would do their best to instil in those coming under their care the proper attitude in this matter. The one important matter which he wanted them to bear in mind was that they should all learn Hindustani. He added that they should in no circumstance neglect their mother tongue. In each linguistic area, the mother tongue should have the first claim. But Hindustani would not only serve as a common medium for the different language areas of their own Province but also as a means of communication between the South and the rest of India.

Another important thing he would urge them to bear in mind was that they should learn all about their immediate surroundings and gradually extend their knowledge in a widening circle to things outside. Mere memorizing would not carry them far. He remembered how as a young boy he was made to memorize "London is on the Thames' as part of his geography lesson. That kind of knowledge was not much good.

Knowledge directly derived from anything was much better than knowledge derived through a written lesson or through symbols. A child would have a much better idea of a charkha when it saw one and how it worked than by reading or hearing about it. That was an essential basis of Nayee Talim.

These were some of the ideas which he thought he might place before them, and he wanted that they should adopt whatever seemed good to them therein.

The Hindu, 31-1-1926

[1] The Convocation was held in the evening in the Hindi Prachar Sabha premises; Narahari Parikh presided. The report said: "Gandhiji . . . distributed certificates to 26 teachers trained in Wardha Basic Education course. . . . He first perused the certificates which were printed in Tamil, the caption alone being in Hindustani. Whenever he came upon a difficult word or a technical expression. . . he asked a teacher nearby to explain it to him.

[2] The Certificates, signed by Gandhiji, mentioned about training in, agriculture, spinning, village sanitation, basic education, child psychology and Hindustani.

428. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, MADRAS

January 29, 1946

I hear many of you did not understand the *bhajan*[1] of Guru Nanak which was just sung. He had written the *bhajan* for men and women who are ignorant. He says, some people go to the forest to realize God. God is for the many crores of people on earth and not for those who go to the forest alone. In the forest live tigers, lions and bears. Therefore ordinary people cannot be expected to go to the forest. 'Why do you go to the forest?' he asked. When God is inside you, be in this world and do the work of this world. Gambling and operating on the sharemarkets are not among the works of the world. God is everywhere. He is in the scorpion. He is in the dog. The dog may bite us, God is good. God is not far away in the forest, but He is within us.[2]

The Hindu, 31-1-1946

429. TALK WITH SINDHI MERCHANTS[3]

MADRAS,
January 29, 1946

GANDHIJI (laughingly): That is all? It is much too small! Wherever I go, I see so many of you doing good business. It should be much more.

A MERCHANT: But we have paid Rs. 50,000 already to Pandit Nehru in Sind.

The more reason why you should pay me also as much.

We will do so when you come to Sind.

The Hindu, 30-1-1946

[1] *Vide* "Ashram Bhajanavali"

[2] According to the report, "at this stage Gandhiji had to stop his speech as a section of the audience continued to make noise".

[3] About 25 merchants led by Kewalram Chellaram met Gandhiji soon after the evening prayer, and presented to him a purse containing Rs. 10,000.

430. TELEGRAM TO ARUNA ASAF ALI

[After *January 29, 1946*][1]

SO YOU HAD YOUR WAY. EXPECT LETTER.

BAPU

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-2-1946

431. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS OF HINDI PRACHAR SABHA STAFF AND WORKERS[2]

Jaunary 30, 1946

Gandhiji, who made many kind enquiries about them, cracked many jokes and, saying that he considered them as members of his own family, urged that not only Hindi workers but the members of their families should also learn Hindustani. He compared the Hindi *pracharak* to the Gantotri, the place from where the Ganges flows. He said, the *pracharak* should be the fountain-head of learning, and through him the knowledge of Hindustani should spread throughout the country.

Gandhiji then invited questions. Pandit Sivarama Sharma of Guntur asked whether *pracharaks* could take up work in public educational institutions, such as schools and colleges in connection with the teaching of Hindustani to the students there.

Gandhiji replied that there was no antagonism regarding any place of work for Hindi *pracharaks*. It was their aim to spread Hindustani all over the country and they should deem it part of their duty to teach Hindustani to everyone who desired to learn it.

If Lord Wavell wants to learn the language, I will send him my best Hindustani *pracharak* or myself take up the duties of teaching that language to him.

Answering another question, Gandhiji said that the Hindustani workers should try also to contribute their bit to the assimilation in Hindustani of whatever was best in the local languages and even in other languages. Works like those of Valmiki,

[1] According to the report, the telegram was sent after receipt of news of cancellation of warrant against Aruna Asaf Ali. The warrant was cancelled on January 29.

[2] The report said: "The members of the staff . . . and workers of the sabha's Press with the members of their families met Gandhiji at 'Mangala Bhavanam'. . . . Gandhiji guessed their unexpressed desire to meet him . . . and he had fixed 7.30 a.m. . . ."

Kamban and Shakespeare would enrich any language. Further they should continue their studies side by side with their work as *pracharak* and, if possible, organize extension lectures and postgraduate courses in this connection. Another thing *pracharaks* should do was to try to bring about a synthesis, and exchange with other Indian languages so that the benefit would be mutual as between Hindustani and those languages.

The Hindu, 31-1-1946

432. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS AT MEETING OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

January 30, 1946

Gandhiji first expressed pleasure at the very large gathering that had assembled. He said that though of late he had not participated in students' meeting, yet his affection for them remained the same as before. He believed that one could do more service by silent work, and this was borne out by his experience not only in South Africa, where he had moved with Madrasis, but also in this city during his short stay. People here, to whom he had not spoken, had clearly understood what he stood for and what shape their service to the country should take.

The rest of the address was in the nature of replies to questions that were placed in his hands earlier. Gandhiji had walked into the meeting bringing the questions with him. First he remarked in a humorous vein that while he would answer the questions, he would not like to leave the palce before receiving their promised purse. Before he commenced his answers, he put his usual question as to how many of them could understand him in Hindustani. The response was not good. On this he remarked that it was a matter for regret that, in spite of the fact that the Sabha had been working amongst them for twenty-seven years, they had not learnt Hindustani in large numbers. He expected that students, at least all of them, would learn Hindustani and said that learning Hindustani was not as costly as college education. It was much easier also to learn the language.

Next the subject of utilization of collections made for the presentation of a purse to Gandhiji was touched upon by him. Gandhiji said that since they had made the collections with a view to giving him the amount towards the Hindi Prachar Sabha Fund, law and propriety required that they should not lay any condition on the utilization of the amount. He did not wish to say anything more on this point.

Gandhiji's opinion was sought on the practice prevalent amongst students of conversing in English. Gandhiji condemned such a practice and said that this ought not to be. Though the English language could be compared to a gold chain, yet it

bound their hands and feet in slavery. The mother tongue could be compared to their mother, and to drop it in favour of English was like letting down their mother. Every student should know two languages, his mother tongue and Hindustani.

Q. Could girl students use cosmetics and boy students ape it?

Gandhiji's reply was that only inanimate things like stone-images required frequent polishing, and that human beings' natural beauty required no cosmetics. He added that in this country, where poverty and starvation was rampant, it was foolish to waste money on such luxuries.

Q. Do you approve of smoking which was at present very common amongst students?

Gandhiji said that he did smoke once or twice when he was young and, reflecting on it, he was really ashamed. But, while he did it stealthily, students were doing it at present openly (laughter). Smoking was as had as drinking, whether it was indigenous stuff or foreign, and should be avoided.

Replying to another question solicited Gandhiji's view on the poor percentage of students using khadi, Mahatmaji observed that khadi had its birth for freedom. He reiterated that if they wanted freedom quickly, students must not only wear khadi, but also make it out of their own spun yarn.

Gandhiji referred the students to his latest book[1] on constructive work, when he was told that many students did not believe in the constructive programme. He added :

How could work amongst Harijans and aboriginal prove uninteresting? To say that constructive programme was uninteresting was a vote in favour of slavery.

When asked for his advice to students who were intolerant, Gandhiji said that tolerance was the first virtue that a student should develop. He added :

If anyone says that India can gain independence through the sword, I would patiently hear him, even though I have been preaching truth and non-violence for the last twenty years for winning swaraj.

Gandhiji, full of emotion, referred to violence such as causing destruction with the atom bomb and the victory won thereby, and said that he had applied his mind to this point. He felt that truth and non-violence were really more powerful than the atom bomb.

"I am not afraid of the atom bomb," he remarked. While they could cause physical injury, they could not kill their soul. Once they had the determination that they could not be conquerred by violence, victory was theirs; for a moral protest

[1] *Vide* "Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place", 13-12-1941 and "Foreword to "Constructive Programme its Meaning and Place"

against evil was itself a victory.

Finally Gandhiji exhorted the students to think on the various problems; for students who could not think for themselves could not learn anything.

The Hindu, 1-2-1946

433. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, MADRAS

January 30, 1946

Taking for his theme the text of the *bhajan* song—"With the grace of the Lord, everything can be achieved"—Gandhiji said, the persistence of the noise from one section of the crowd was such that it seemed that only God's grace could bring about perfect silence in that gathering. For his part, he thought, it would be impossible for him also to speak when so many were "making speeches" at the other end of the gathering. Were a similar meeting held under the auspices of the Government, there would surely be silence enforced with a lathi. But here there was only the appeal of the volunteers, which they in their sense of freedom did not care to obey. He knew they did so because of their love for him, and in their desire to see him closer. They would not be denied. But they should learn to discipline themselves in such matters and even to deny themselves what they wanted, if it was harmful to discipline and general good. How could they do it unless they became filled with Rama for, as the *bhajan* song went, when they became saturated with Rama all else would be eliminated.

In Madras, he knew, thousands were addicted to liquor. The consequent evil was enough to break one's heart. When the Congress was running the Ministry, drink was abolished in different areas. Liquor revenue fell, but the people were happy and their wives and children had a square meal and a happy home. Had the reform come from within and not as a result of something from without, then it would have been far more good. When could such a phenomenon happen? Only when people were saturated with Rama and *Gurukripa*—God's grace—as the song went.

Should a rich man offer them gold or silver from his safe room, people would crowd to his gates. But of what use would gold and silver be to a man, really? *Gurukripa* was the greatest and most valuable help one could have. God is known by different names but God is One. When His grace filled one's being, nothing was impossible for one to achieve.

The Hindu, 1-2-1946

434. SPEECH TO CONGRESS WORKERS, MADRAS[1]

January 30, 1946

Gandhiji asked, how many of them could follow his speech. About fifty people raised their hands. Noticing that Mr. Kamaraj[2] was not among the number, Gandhiji laughingly remarked: "You too?" Gandhiji said that he had hoped that Congress workers at least would all have learnt Hindustani by now, but he was disappointed. The Congress resolution about lingua franca and conducting all business in Hindustani should, he took it, be binding on them all. It was a misfortune, indeed, that after so many years of emphasis on the importance of Hindustani, Congressmen were yet unacquainted with the language. He knew the hold of English on the people of this country. He had seen sign-boards before business premises showing Indian names in Roman characters. That indicated the extent of the slavery of the people of this country to the foreign language.

Gandhiji paid a tribute to the late Mr. S. Satyamurti, and said :

He was a fine man, but I used to quarrel with him, asking him whether he would speak in English in Northern India.

Pointing to the writing on the mike before him (giving the name of the radio company concerned in Roman script) Gandhiji said that provided another illustration of his statement. But how did English or other Western people and firms go about the work? They tried to reach the people by boosting their own ware in the language of the people.

It was the duty of the people to throw off this slavery to a foreign language. A common language spoken by the bulk of the people of the country could alone be the medium linking all parts of India, and such a language was Hindustani. Local provincial affairs should be transacted in the local provincial language; for all-India

[1] The rport said: "Gandhiji addressed about 1,500 Congress workers for about half an hour from 7.30 p.m. in the Constructive Workers' Conference pandaal. On his arrival, he was greeted with deafening cheers. An illuminated charkha electrically operated was revolving at one end of the hall and Gandhiji watched its movement with interest for some time."

[2] Kumaraswami Kamaraja Nadar (1903-76); active Congress worker from boyhood; in 1930, joined Salt Satyagraha Movement at Vedaranyam, and was sentenced to two years' imprisonment; was Member, Tamil Nadu State Legislative Assembly for several terms, and its Chief Minister, 1954-67; Member, Congress Working Committee, 1947-69; elected President, Indian National Congress, 1963; evolved 'Kamaraj Plan' to dispel lure for power from the minds of leading Congressmen, and to persuade them to prefer organizational activities to ministerial posts

purposes and inter-provincial communication Hindustani should be the medium.

Gandhiji then invited those present to ask him questions. If they had no questions to ask, he would like to talk to them about the charkha for some time.

The first questioner, speaking in English, requested Gandhiji to tell them something about the future.

GANDHIJI (humoursly): What is 'future'? Is it a horse? Say it in Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam or Kannada. Only God can say what is in the future. I am an ordinary man. I have not read as much as some of you. If I wrote 'B.A.' behind my name, people will laugh at me. Much less can I write 'M.A.' I cannot call myself Barrister-at-Law either. I have been removed from the rolls by the Inns of Court because I went to jail.

The gentleman repeated his question in Tamil. Gandhiji, replying in Hindustani, told him that he could not foresee the future; the future rested with the Almighty.

QUESTION: What is the easy method of learning Hindustani?

GANDHIJI: Devote to it one-sixteenth of the time you have spent in learning Engish. That is, if you have spent sixteen years learning English, spend one year for Hindustani. . . .[1]

Tell me beforehand when you want to take my picture. Then I will close my eyes so that they may not become blind (laughter).

Continuing, Gandhiji said that he could not tell them anything about the future. They might ask him about the present, if they chose, since talking about the past was not much good.[2]

Gandhiji said that he would answer such questions[3], as he could, within the few minutes still available to him. Referring to the complaint of the Harijan sweeper, Gandhiji said that it was a matter over which they should ponder deeply. If it was true, it was a matter very much to be regretted. He wanted that all Congressmen should place God in their hearts and act as their conscience dictated. Then everything would go all right. If they should observe distinctions such as Hindu, Muslim, Parsi, untouchable and so on, the nation would go to ruin.

Answering another question, Gandhiji said that it was part of the law of his life

[1] At this stage, a cameraman, took a flashlight snap. Gandhiji turned towards him as if to say something but stopped without saying anything. Just then another cameraman flashed a shot, and Gandhiji burst into laughter.

[2] Here the report added: "One of those in the audience, speaking first in English and then in Telugu, said that he was a Harijan employed as a sweeper in the Khadi Nilayam, George Town, and complained that those in charge of the Nilayam treated him as worse than a dog and refused to allow him to approach them."

[3] Gandhiji received three slips.

that he should pray to God, be it Krishna, Rama, Allah or Christ. They were all one to him. All religions to him appeared to be like branches of one and the same three. In his view, there was no conflict between different religions. He did not pray in the manner he did with any ulterior motive of preaching Hinduism or any particular religion. He merely prayed to God. If people misunderstood that, he was not to blame. People were welcome to join in the prayer, if it pleased them; otherwise they might keep away and leave him alone.

Another member asked a question in regard to the elections to the legislatures, Congress committees and Congress executive bodies. Gandhiji said :

How can I answer this question? I am not even a four-anna Congressman. Much less can I give you advice in such matters. The advice I may give you, you may not find of much use. These are questions which you should ask to the President [1] of the Congress, who is a great and good man. You should ask these questions of a man like Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel or other members of the Working Committee. And, whatever Congress decides, it is open to you to abide by it.

It is true, Gandhiji added, that he had been connected with the Congress for many years and had also fought the Government on behalf of the Congress. To some extent he had also been responsible for shaping its Constitution. But his advice was given to the Congress Working committee, if and when it sought his advice. So far as they were concerned, such questions should be put to the Working Committee or the Congress President. His own particular department was constructive work. They were welcome to ask him questions on that subject.

Gandhiji stated that he met them because, having come all the way to Madras, he did not want to omit meeting Congress workers. But he did not want to enter into complicated political matters which were not within his province.

One member observed that constructive work was also related to politics. Gandhiji agreed that it was in a way related to politics, but to him it was pure constructive work.

One gentleman asked whether the the spread of Hindustani would not prejudicially affect the local languages.[2]

QUESTION: What place should the Congress assign to people who had carried on black-marketing activities during the last War and what punishment should be given to them?

[1] Abul Kalam Azad

[2] Here, according to the report, C. Rajagopalachari remarked that it was like asking about the relationship of Rama and Sita after listening to the entire *Ramayana*.

Gandhiji said that if he was a Congressman, he would say, they should be horse-whipped non-violently. But as a man of out-and-out non-violence, he preferred to keep mum. Gandhiji added that he had exceeded the time which had been allotted for the function, and he asked leave of them to go.

One member asked him a question as to whether the rulers should not learn the language of the people rather than the people learn the language of the rulers. Gandhiji said that this was the proper thing to do. The rulers should learn the language of the people. But as it was, the people had allowed themselves to be suppressed and their language to be dominated by the language of the ruler.

The Hindu, 31-1-1946

435. TALK WITH V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI [1]

MADRAS,
January 30, 1946

SASTRI: You have been a blessing to me in a hundred ways.

GANDHIJI: What nonsense, Sastri.

S. Ah, don't I know, Gandhi, you are the greatest fellow alive in the world today? Let your *kataksha* fall on them.[2]

He who does not see Rama and whom Rama does not see is despised by everyone in this world.[3]

Then Sastriar told Gandhiji how, on the previous day after his mid-day meal, he had dozed off and as if in a trance written a most beautiful essay on the *Ramayana* in about 15 minutes. The theme was that after Ravana's death, Hanuman goes to Sita in Ashoka Vatika and asks her :

Mother, give me your permission and I shall severely punish all the *rakshasis* who have been torturing you.

The Divine Lady turns round and replies :

No, what wrong have these poor things done? They are merely slaves of their master, and they did his bidding for the sake of their livelihood. Leave them

[1] Extracted from "Meeting Sastriar" by Sushila Nayyar, who explains: "Dr. Srinivasan, an Honorary Physician of the General Hospital, Madras, who was in charge of Sastriar's case came to Gandhiji's residence and escorted him to the hospital as on the previous occasion"; *vide* "Talk with V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 22-1-1946 C. Rajagopalachari, Thakkar Bapa, amrit Kaur, Agatha Harrison, T. N. Jagadisan, Pyarelal and Sushila Nayyar accompanied Gandhiji.

[2] Sastriar was introducing his grandchildren to Gandhiji "and in good humour" quoted the *Ramayana*, Ayodhya Kanda. 8

[3] यश्र रामं न पश्येत्तु यं च रामो न पश्यति।
निन्दितः स भवेल्लोके स्वात्माप्येनं विगर्हते॥

alone. It is forgiveness that makes life worth living. Forgiveness is divine. It is the noblest of virtues, so I pardon them. There is no one who is wholly free of error. And who does not need to be forgiven?[1]

S. As soon as I go home I shall dictate it to Jagadisan, if he can come to me and send it to you. Will you let Pyarelal read it out to you?

G. You dictate it to Jagadisan tomorrow and send it to me. I shall read it before I go to Madura.

S. No, it will take me at least two or three days. I have to do it in bits. Marvellous as my doctor is, he has not made me well enough to do it tomorrow.

Sastriar was full of the *Ramayana*. He regretted that the great epic was not read more generally and that its ideal did not animate the people as of old. [He added]

S. The *Ramayana* has no parallel. When Sita had repulsed the evil-intentioned Ravana with the *tejas* of the purity the *rakshasis* came to her and said:

You do not know the world. Else you would not have refused what is being offered to you.

The Divine Lady's reply was :

Your city is beautiful, the buildings are grand, and there is every mark of civilization, but are there not two or three people who feel the wrong and can say the truth to Ravana?

That is the duty we owe to friends and that we fail to discharge. I have done that for you once or twice and, as for you, do it, and sometimes publicly, much to the consternation of everybody.[2] But it is the noblest office of friendship.

Tell me, Rajagopalachari, out of hundred people that go wrong, is not there one whom a timely warning could have saved? Please do not thin that I am preaching at the Mahatma. I am making a confession. I have also failed in that duty sometimes.

S. (turning to Bapu): You are a seeker after truth. You and I are poles asunder in many things. I have differed from you, and you have said so without reserve. But I am also a follower of truth, though at a great distance from you. The eternal truths propounded by Valmiki in the *Ramayana* have been the greatest source of inspiration to me. I feel, I have failed to do my duty by not giving to the people what I have found for myself in that great epic.

Gandhiji reminded him of the lectures on the *Ramayana* that he had delivered, and suggested that they should be printed. But that was not enough for him.

[1] *Ibid*.
समयो रक्षितव्यस्तु सन्तश्चारित्र भूषणाः
पापानां वाशुभानां वा वधार्हाणामथापि वा
कार्यं कारुण्यमागेण न कश्चिन्नापराध्यति

[2] The reference is to Gandhiji's attitude to World War; *vide* "Conundrums", 30-9-1939.

S. If I live for some time more and good Jagadisan can spare time, I might still be able to make some atonement.

G. Jagadisan is your admirer and a devoted follower. He will be always at your disposal, unless, of course, the doctor thinks that you should not be disturbed. Then he will just not be at home.

S. (with a hearty laugh): So, like Rama, you teach falsehood. When Sumantra was driving Rama, Lakshmana and Sita to the jungle, Rama asked him to drive fast: "Man, why prolong the agony? Go fast and, if my father is angry, tell him you did not hear him."

S. (to the doctor[1]): Yes, you are right. A good conversationalist hears more than he talks. But they say 'once a schoolmaster, always a school-master.' So I have gone on.

G. And we shall bear witness to that.

S. Well, this might be my last meeting with you. I am not in a position to say, 'I will come to see you when you return from Madura.' So I wanted to talk, and have talked. Now it is your turn.

G. Nonsense, this is not the last meeting. I will try to come and see you on my return from Madura.[2] And I have very little to say except this, that you must get well soon and return the visit at Sevagram.

S. You are the prince of optimists.

G. Oh yes, an irrepressible one!

Harijan, 28-4-1946

436. LETTER TO HORACE ALEXANDER

MADRAS,
January 31, 1946

MY DEAR HORACE,

Welcome. You will meet me when and where you can. Agatha knows my movement.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1441

[1] Who was getting worried as the patient was talking too much and said something in Tamil

[2] *Vide* "Talk with V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", pp. 87-8. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri died on April 17, 1946.

437. SPEECH AT VOLUNTEERS' RALLY, MADRAS[1]

January 31, 1946

Gandhiji said that he was under the impression that the entire programme was over with the previous evening. But he was told in the night that there was this rally and that he must be present. He was glad, he was able to attend the function and he was really pleased to meet them all.

Referring to the service rendered by the several departments in making the celebration a success, Gandhiji profoundly thanked them for their help and co-operation. Without the aid of volunteers, he could not believe that they could have got through such an important celebration. He considered volunteers as those sworn to non-violence, as against the police and the military who were pledged to violence and who dominated over the people. It was only with this impression that he had appealed as early as 1920 that they should organize volunteer corps all over the country so that service rendered sincerely and non-violently could get them freedom quickly.

They must learn thoroughly how to control large gatherings with tact, politeness and calmness, without distinction of rich and poor, civilized and uncivilized. He knew that people would keep order, if a policeman appeared on the scene because he posed himself as their master and paraded his lathi. But this was not what he wanted. They must make people understand by persuasion what they should do through truth and non-violence and show that these forces of law and order were only for serving the people. He had attended many parades and rallies in foreign countries where the police took an oath that they would serve the public. In London, which was considered to be very advanced in policing, policemen took an oath that they would render service to the people through their work. Why not the Commissioner of Police here take a similar oath? If the servants of Hindustan understood this particular view-point, then freedom could easily be obtained.

Referring to the frequent noisy behaviour of the large concourse at prayer meetings in spite of the efforts of volunteers to keep silence, Maahatmaji said that the volunteers should bear in mind what he had said about their duties and make a practical demonstraton that they were following them by keeping perfect order and silence in that evening's prayer meeting.

The Hindu, 1-2-1946

[1] Held in the morning

438. SPEECH TO MEMBERS OF MESS COMMITTEE, MADRAS[1]

January 31, 1946

Addressing the gathering, Gandhiji said that the Mess Committee had fed about 50,000 people, and he heartily thanked them for it. Proper feeding had kept people in good spirits to get through the important business at the conferences and meetings. They had done this job well and taken away a heavy burden off the shoulders of the Reception Committee. What he was particularly pleased with here was that the entire show was conducted in clean surroundings. He had toured all over the country, and he felt that they had really set an example to others in cleanliness. What should be observed on these occasions by cooks was cleanliness in body and mind. By cleanliness he did not mean that their clothes should be nicely ironed. It was enough if their simple clothes were free from dirt.

Gandhiji said that he had no time to auction the articles individually nor had he the required energy for it. He suggested that the entire lot might be purchased by a group of persons for a lakh of rupees, out of which Rs. 10,000 would go to the Harjan Fund and the balance to the Hindi Prachar Sabha. After all, they should realize that a bulk of it would be given to the Sabha as they had not reached their target.

Closely following this appeal, Gandhiji, like a true Bania, began to canvass support for his suggestion. He singled out of the several articles a silver *vigraha*[2] of Gajalakshmi and said that that had been presented by a lady who stated that it was done as Gandhiji was a worshipper of God. But the pity was a worshipper of *Avinashi* and *Avyakta* (Eternal and Unseen) God. Therefore, he said, he was not keeping it with him and wanted to part with it.

Taking out a silver idol of Muralidhara from the collection, Mahatmaji said that this was presented because he was a Krishna *bhakta*. But his Krishna was He 'Who sees me but Whom I do not see'.[3]

The Hindu, 1-2-1946

[1] The report said: "Articles collected for presentation to Gandhiji were exhibited. . . . Referring to three walking-sticks presented, Gandhiji remarked: 'I have become old and these sticks are to aid me during walks. But I would rather like to give them away in auction.' A printed list of the articles presented was then handed to Gandhiji. It was in English. Gandhiji remarked humorously: 'I think this is in English to avoid the Tamil-Telugu controversy (laughter). But I do not approve of this. You must print it in Hindustani'".

[2] An idol

[3] The report concluded: "After some consultation about Gandhiji's suggestion, the merchants promised to let Gandhiji know their view in the evening. Mahatmaji then returned to his bungalow."

439. SPEECH TO ANDHRA WORKERS OF KASTURBA FUND, MADRAS [1]

January 31, 1946

Gandhiji said that on his way to Madras he passed through Andhra Desha and had opportunities to learn about the work that was being done there. He had heard the report just presented and was also aware of the efforts made by Sambamurthi for the collection of funds. On an occaion like this, the memory of the late Dr. B. Subrahmanyam of the Sitanagaram Ashram occurred to him. He was a good worker in Andhra Desha.

All of them were aware of the part played by women in the cause of India's freedom. The work connected with the Kasturba Fund was a different one. Here they received training for working in and among the villagers. He was looking forward to the day when it would be possible to say that women were working in the villages in large numbers. They must remove illiteracy and also improve the condition of village women. Then only would they have real swaraj and the ability and strength to retain political freedom when it was won.

The Hindu, 2-2-1946

440. SPEECH GIVING BLESSINGS TO ANDHRA MAHILA SABHA, MADRAS [2]

January 31, 1946

Gandhiji said that the proper way to perform the ceremony was for him to go to the site of the buildings and lay the stone himself. That was a task physically impossible for him to do. But the women connected with the Sabha had so much regard for him that they wanted him to at least touch the stone and give his blessings. He did so with great pleasure.The Sabha should become a training-ground for workers. Mahatmaji hoped that the institution would keep up that ideal, and wished it every success.

The Hindu, 2-2-1946

[1] The workers met Gandhiji, in the afternoon, in Hindi Prachar Sabha premises.

[2] The ceremony was held, in the afternoon, in Hindi Prachar Sabha premises; when, according to the report, "Gandhiji blessed three inscribed tablets which were to be laid for three new buildings of the Andhra Mahila Sabha under construction in Luz Church Road".

441. SPEECH AT WORKERS' RALLY, MADRAS [1]

January 31, 1946

Gandhiji said that he had been delayed by another engagement[2] and he was sorry for having come later than the scheduled time to the meeting.

The truest capital was, in his opinion, one's capacity for work. Money alone could never produce goods; only through labour could goods be created. Labourers then were possessed of real wealth, but they were not rich in worthy goods and had no property. He wanted that they should all become *maliks* (men of property), but not through any process of coercion. Property got through coercion would not remain with them; a stronger man might snatch it from them. If they were to become *maliks*, therefore, they should first learn to be non-violent, truthful and peaceful. He was a worker like them and he felt like a worker. He wanted to tell them of the joy of non-violence, truth and peacefulness. He was a servant of the poorest Harijan. He wanted them to bear in mind the exapmple of the Ahmedabad Labour Union and take a leaf from its work. There was nothing extraordinary in a labourer becoming the President of the Congress. It was not necessary that one should know English to be the President. He said :

Maulana Azad, the present Congress President, does not speak in English with anybody, although he knows the language. When Maulana Azad goes to the Viceroy, he does not speak in English, but takes a translator with him, and he speaks through him. It is not as if he does not know English. He is a very learned man. He is so wise that there is hardly anybody who equals him. But he wants that he should speak in the language of the country.

The whole country, said Gandhiji, was one. The workers were all one entity. One of them could certainly become President of the Congress. The difference between the *mazdoor* and the *kisan* was that the *kisan* stayed to work on the land, while the *mazdoor* went wherever there was work. The workers were taken there by the proprietors. Mahatma Gandhi recalled that he had always said that the real proprietor was not the person who owned the mill, but the person who worked. He himself was speaking as a worker. He said :

I have given up my ownership of property some time back. The lakhs I have with me are not my money. It is intended for carrying out the work for which contributions have been given. If anybody gives money for the Harijans, it will be spent for the Harijans.

Ever since his return to India from South Africa he had been serving the

[1] Gandhiji addressed them in Hindustani.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

workers. The Ahmedabad Workers' Union, which was started by himself, was a model for others. He did not suggest that even there the workers had become the owners. He felt that the workers would come to own the mills and factories in which they worked, if they became more disciplined and wiser.

Appealing to them to learn Hindustani, Gandhiji said that all India was one and they should learn the Hindustani language which would enable them to be one with the rest of India. Industrial workers and *kisans* were both badly off; they were suffering alike. If all of them pulled together and worked for their common good, he was sure they could achieve a great deal through non-violence and truth. He knew he was not understood by a good number of them, but he was thankful to them for the consideration they showed him and the perfect silence they were maintaining, though he spoke in a language which all of them did not understand. He wished he knew enough Tamil to address the gathering in that language.

In conclusion, he prayed for God's blessings for them and all their kith and kin.

The Hindu, 1-2-1946

442. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, MADRAS

January 31, 1946

Gandhiji asked to be pardoned for coming late to the meeting. He said that it was due entirely to the heavy programme that had been arranged.

Gandhiji then referred to the Workers' Convention[1] held that evening and complimented the workers on the *shanti* (silence) that prevailed at that meeing. That was not to be found here. That labourers who had not acquired education, and who did not understand Hindustani, had behaved so well was marvellous, he said.

"Were these workers responsible for not knowing Hindustani?" asked Gandhiji. "No," was his answer. While the Hindi Prachar Sabha should share to some extent the responsibility for this, he felt that practically the entire responsibility for such state of affairs should be owned by the educated people of this country. The educated people had neglected the education of these poor labourers. If educated people took a decision to teach them Hindustani, he was sure that before he next visited Madras—he hoped that this would happen by God's will—all of them would have learnt the language.

Speaking on the import of the day's special song, Gandhiji said that right from his youth, he was impressed by it. Dr. Bharatan Kumarappa had told him a few days ago that his sister was conducting an institution here and that the girls of that

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

school would like to learn and sing the song, *vaishnava Jana To*[1]. The girls today had sung the song in the best possible manner. So impressed was he that its tune and sentiments were still ringing in his ears. While the girls who sang it did their best, he had to confess that it was not rendered in the way it ought to have been done. It should be sung with a full under-standing of its meaning and import. The song was by Narasinha Mehta a *bhakta kavi*, and was intended entirely for the use of the villagers. It was in a tune which could be sung by the ordinary villagers and, being sweet, was full of meaning. The *bhakta*, a worshipper of Lord Vishnu, through this song was trying to take upon himself the miseries of others and felt a supreme pleasure in doing so. This was its secret.[2]

The Hindu, 2-2-1946

443. SPEECH AT FOUNDATION-STONE LAYING CEREMONY, MADRAS[3]

February 1, 1946

Gandhiji said that many of them might not perhaps be aware that the function he was taking part in that morning had been pending ever since he came out of the jail. After he was released, Mr. B. Jagannath Das and Mr. V. Bhashyam Iyengar approached him on the subject. Besides his (Gandhiji's) being able to be present and perform the function, there were certain other obstacles in the way which had to be got over. Certain negotiations had to be carried on with the Madras Corporation and certain difficulties to be overcome in that connection. After putting forth some efforts, everything was settled satisfactorily, and they were able to secure this land for the Harijan Industial School. It was not as if they were able to secure the land free; but they were able to secure it at the minimum price. All of them were thankful to the corporation of Madras for that.

Proceeding, Gandhiji said that at this juncture, it was up to them to think deeply over the work ahead. Dr. Alagappa Chettiar, the great philanthropist he was, had given them very great help. Gandhiji felt confident that Dr. Alagappa Chettiar considered his wealth as but a means of rendering service. But all the wealth Dr. Alagappa Chettiar possessed would not suffice for the cause of Harijan service. The Hindu community had committed a great sin by the Harijans by observing untouchability. It was the duty of every Hindu to rid himself of this sin. How else could he

[1] *Vide* "Ashram Bhajanavali"

[2] According to the source, at this stage "some persons, mostly ladies, began to leave, as it was getting late for them", and Gandhiji concluded the speech.

[3] At the newly acquired site for Harijan Industrial School; Gandhiji spoke in Hindustani.

do the purificatory ceremony than by serving the Harijan?

There was another aspect to this harsh treatment of Harijans. All men were equals and by treating a fellowman as untouchable, a person degraded himself. The real un-touchable was the person who treated a fellowman as untouchable. Such a treatment was not only a great wrong but also a great sin. Men fortunately placed in this world, who gave for the cause, were but discharging their duty by the less fortunate, because wealth after all was a thing held in trust by the rich on behalf of the poor. Gandhiji, from this point of view, regarded that there was no need for offering special thanks to Dr. Alagappa Chettiar. All the same, he was thankful to Dr. Alagappa Chettiar for the munificent offer of help and for showing the way as to how men ought to discharge their obligation towards their less fortunate brethren. On this occasion, Gandhiji emphasized, he desired to draw the attention of everyone to the urgent need for serving the cause of Harijans through a change of heart, for, he added, a change of heart was far more important than gifts of money or other similar help.

Referring to the desire expressed by Mr. Thakkar with regard to the future development of the institution, Gandhiji said that it was very good that they were making provision for training as many as 300 persons in the institution. Gandhiji desired that the course of training should be devised on proper lines so that the institution might become a model one, serving not only this Province but also enabling people from other parts of India to come here and receive training. He also hoped that the pupils trained in this institution would be among the best workers in the cause of Harijans.

Good work carried on sincerely and truthfully would never suffer for want of financial help. God in his mercy would somehow take care of all good causes. Had he not, on this occasion, sent them help through Dr. Alagappa Chettiar? Nothing would please him more than to see that his coming to Madras had been of some help to this institution.

Gandhiji next stressed the importance of imparting instruction and training in the school in the mother tongue. Hindustani should also be taught. He was glad to note that the entire proceedings of the meeting were conducted in Tamil, though it was unfortunate that the programme of the meeting should have been printed in English. How much better would it have been, if even the programme had been printed in Tamil or Hindustani? In this connection, Gandhiji referred to an incident of the previous day when he met some merchants for the purpose of raising funds for the Silver Jubille Fund of the Hindi Prachar Sabha. Invitation to the merchants had been sent in English. He mentioned this in order to emphasize the need for getting rid of this slavery to English. Those in charge of teaching work in the Harijan Industrial School should not forget the mother tongue just as they ought not to forget their

mother. He would, at the same time, appeal to them not to forget the motherland either. They should try to learn as many languages as possible; but they must all learn Hindustani which would help unify the whole of India.

Gandhiji next suggested that the new school should be named after Mr. A. V. Thakkar. He said that Thakkar Bapa had dedicated himself to the cause of Harijans and *Adivasis* to the exclusion of everything else. All the 24 hours of his day, he devoted to this work. It was, therefore, but fitting that the Harijan Industrial School should be named after such a good servant of the cause. They might call it the "Thakkar Bapa Vidyalaya" or for brevity's sake, only "Bapa Vidyalaya", for who was a greater Bapa (father) of the Harijans than Thakkar Bapa?

In conclusion, Gandhiji wished the institution a great future and useful service to Harijans. He also hoped that the institution would help to bring about a real change of heart among the people towards Harijans and enable them to live as equals with the rest of the society. Gandhiji further hoped that this Vidyalaya would maintain steady progress and that the pupils trained at this centre would, by their life and example, be real Harijans, sons of God, pledged to serve the country truthfully.

The Hindu, 2-2-1946

444. TALK TO VILLAGERS, KODAMBAKKAM[1]

February 1, 1946

Gandhiji expressed his pleasure at meeting them and told them that on the previous day, he had addressed[2] a gathering of workers like them. He would ask them one simple question to which they should answer without any fear by raising their hands. Gandhiji asked :

How many of you here are addicted to drink?

Finding that a good number in the crowd had lifted their hands, Gandhiji remarked that he did not understand what benefit they derived by drinking, which was a sinful act. They all earned their livelihood by labour, and they should not spend their hard-earned money in evil habits like drink and gambling. He would advise them to spend it wisely for their own good. Gandhiji then asked them to disperse peacefully and go home.

The Hindu, 3-2-1946

[1] The report said: "Gandhiji visited the Harijan Industrial School in the afternoon and remained there for nearly an hour and a half. A large gathering of men and women were present on the occasion in the shcool premises under a pandal. While returning to his seat in the pandal, Gandhiji noticed a crowd of villagers outside the western gate clamouring to see him. At once he proceeded to the spot and after asking them to keep silent, addressed a few words in Hindustani which were translated into Tamil by L. N. Gopalaswami."

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Workers Rally, Madras", 31-1-1946

445. SPEECH AT HARIJAN INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL, KODAMBAKKAM[1]

February 1, 1946

Gandhiji recalled his visit to the School a few years ago[2], and expressed his pleasure to be present there again and see their work. He hoped that though there were practical difficulties, the trained boys would do their best to settle in villages and see that the work they had learnt was also taught to the villagers. Urging the removal of untouchability completely, he said that the workers connected with Harijan uplift should banish from their minds any notion that the people for whom they worked were un-touchables, and establish closer contact with them.

Referring to the School, Gandhiji said that at present there were 50 boys under-going training. This was not enough. They should see that hundreds of boys were benefited by the school. The public on their part should extend financial help to such institutions freely and fully. Gandhiji also made a fervent appeal to Harijans and others to learn Hindustani along with the study of their mother tongue. He reminded them of the visit of Swami Vivekananda to Madras a few years back and the advice he had given them to study Sanskrit. Gandhiji hoped that some of the Harijans would aspire to become Sanskrit pundits.

The work which the Harijans were taught in the school, Gandhiji said, was not merely intended to eke out their livelihood; it should also enable them by their conduct to make the higher castes feel that they were equal to them in all respects, and not un-touchables. If they went out doing good work, speaking good things and leading a good life, nobody would call them Harijans. Gandhiji hoped that God would guide them and the institution along the right path.

The Hindu, 3-2-1946

446. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, MADRAS

February 1, 1946

Gandhiji began his speech with a reference to the orderliness of the gathering, by pointing out that the noise that usually came from his left was absent that day, and that he had hoped to thank them for the calm and peaceful manner in which they had conducted themselves. But, he added, at the end of the prayer there was a slight

[1] The report said: "An address of welcome was handed over to Gandhiji on behalf of several organizations working for Harijan welfare. Pupils of various institutions were asked to stand in their places, and were introduced to Gandhiji."

[2] On January 22, 1937; *vide* "Letter to Gangabehn Jhaveri", 15-11-1930

distrubance in front of him. Gandhiji, however, appreciated the patience of the gathering and remarked that the prayer meetings appeared to have had some effect on them as they had learnt how to maintain silence and order.

This big maidan was really the best temple of God. They had the fine blue sky for their roof, under which there was no difference between the rich and the poor, the master and the servant, the millionaire and the worker, or the Hindu, the Muslim, the Christian and the Parsi. With sky as canopy and with mother earth, which could accommodate thousands of them, as floor, they had before them a temple of art, *kala mandir*, the like of which he had not seen in any part of the world. This was a special feature of India. He had travelled in Europe and had seen many places of worship. He had been to many mosques. He had also visited a number of temples. Before he took up the question of Harijans, he used to be taken to the temples. People believed that they would be rid of their sins by making offerings and worshipping at the temples. Though such a belief would have its own effect, Gandhiji felt that the acts of worshipping and making offerings by themselves would not make one pure. Purity was a matter of the heart, and it was this indestructible quality that they should aim at.

Gandhiji then went on to say that a person who worshipped in a Siva temple would not go to a Vishnu temple because he felt that his salvation could be secured only by worshipping Siva. This sort of bigotry was wrong. It was a mere illusion. It used to be said that once Tulsidas went to a Krishna temple and fervently wished to see there his Rama with his bow and arrows. It was also said Tulsidas was able to see his Rama in the image of Krishna. This showed that faith and belief were matter of the heart and that one realized what one ardently desired and prayed for.

In this open-air temple, Gandhiji said, they had been assembling for the past few days. they had understood the need for orderliness, he was glad to note. But he aso wanted that this orderliness and devotion should not be a mere outward show. There was no use if they appeared pious, but indulged in drink, gambling and deceit. The lessons of discipline and orderliness which they learnt at these gatherings should not be forgotten. The peace and calmness that prevailed at the meeting was very dear to him. He was perfectly satisfied. This was probably the last meeting he would be addressing in Madras this time. But on his return from Madura, if he found time, he might address them once again in the same maidan.

Gandhiji said that he had a special attachment to South India, and whenever he came to the South, the people demonstrated their affection for him. Whatever work he had been able to do, and that too without rest, would not have been possible but for their affection and sincerity. He was old and weak and he also got easily tired. His mind was overworked, but with God's grace, which manifested through their affection for him, he had been able to do his work properly. Gandhiji said :

After all what is my work? I have nothing to give you except

my services. If you continue to show the same love to me, I am confident, God will give me strength to serve you further in the future. It is your devotion that enables you to sit calmly for such a long time. It is your calmness that gives me more and more strength.

Referring next to his visit[1] to the Harijan Industrial School at Kodambakkam, Gandhiji said that it was a small place where students were taught many useful handicrafts. One should not go away with the feeling that the institution after all helped only a few students. It was such kind of work that would go for the unification of India. In South India they spoke four languages. It could not be said that there was unity among them. That was a sad thing. It must be possible for him to hear that no feeling of difference existed between the four linguistic areas of South India or between South India and North India. Untouchability had not completely disappeared from their midst. All human beings are the children of God, and how could there be any difference amongst them? If educated people created a feeling of brotherhood among all communities and ceased to think that brain-worker was superior to a barber or an oil-monger or a Harijan and thereby helped their Harijan neighbour to feel that he was equal to them, the unity of India would be promoted and realized.

Referring to the theme of the song sung earlier, Gandhiji said that in order to realize Rama, the poet felt that he should become a saint. The poet said that one should give up outward show and keep one's heart pure so that Rama might come and reside within. That showed that God would make his abode in the hearts of only who got rid of thier sins and passions and became pure.

Concluding, Gandhiji wished the gathering happiness and the grace of God.

The Hindu, 3-2-1946

447. "HARIJAN" REVIVED[2]

Why is *Harijan* revived? This question may have occurred to many as it has to me. I may tell the reader that no special effort was made for its revival[3]. An application for the removal of the ban was made on December 3, 1945, and the ban was removed on January 10, 1946. Many readers, including English and American, had all along felt a void, and they began to feel it more after the defeat of the Fascist Powers. The reason for the feeling was obvious. They wanted my reaction, in terms of truth and non-violence, to the various events happening in India, if not in the world. I wished to satisfy this desire.

[1] *Vide* the proceding item.
[2] This appeared under "Notes".
[3] After suspension in August 1942;

There have been cataclysmic changes in the world. Do I still adhere to my faith in truth and non-violence? Has not the atom bomb exploded that faith? Not only has it not done so but it has clearly demonstrated to me that the twins constitute the mightiest force in the world. Before it the bomb is of no effect. The two opposing forces are wholly different in kind, the one moral and spiritual, the other physical and material. The one is infinitely superior to the other which by its very nature has an end. The force of the spirit is ever progressive and endless. Its full expression makes it unconquerable in the world. In saying this, I know that I have said nothing new. I merely bear witness to the fact. What is more, that force resides in everybody, man, woman and child, irrespective of the colour of the skin. Only in many it lies dormant, but it is capable of being awakened by judicious training.

It is further to be observed that without the recognition of this truth and due effort to realize it, there is no escape from self-destruction. The remedy lies in every individual training himself for self-expression in every walk of life, irrespective of response by the neighbours. *Harijan* will attempt from week to week to stand up for this truth and illustrate it.[1]

ON WAY TO MADURA, February 2, 1946

Harijan, 10-2-1946

448. SPEECH AT ACHARAPAKKAM STATION[2]

February 2, 1946

Gandhiji said that if the same *shanti* prevailed all along the route to the Sri Meenakshi Temple at Madura, he would be delighted. He said :

I have a pet idea, perhaps foolish, that I should always travel third, but I am actually travelling double first class. I have not the joy of having fellow-travellers in the train with me in the carriage. I know such travel is not for a pilgrim that I am now. I am a pilgrim today for an important reason. I have passed through Madura before but I have never turned to the Sri Meenakshi Temple because Harijans did not then have access to it. But God fulfills Himself in many ways. I

[1] *Vide* also "To the Reader"

[2] The report said: "Leaving Kattupakkam at five in the morning, the special train halted . . . at Acharapakkam. . . . people . . . gathered in the station yard . . . maintained perfect silence as Gandhiji came out. . ."

am an opponent of untouchability and so is Rajaji. It was God's will that Government came into the hands of Congressmen for some time. Through your support Rajaji had the legislation made, and the Sri Meenakshi Temple is now open to all Hindus including Harijans.[1] I am no worshipper of idols. But I know the great place idol-worship has amongst Hindus. There is a place in every man's heart for such worship in that spirit. I go as a pilgrim to Madura. You are sitting here like true pilgrims and listening to me with prayerful hearts. I know, I carry your prayers with me.

The Hindu, 3-2-1946

449. SPEECH AT ARIYALUR STATION [2]

February 2, 1946

You know I am on my way to Madura. I am a Harijan, and this pilgrimage of mine is a Harijan *yatra*. I want you to follow me to Madura in your thoughts and cast aside untouchability. You must also contribute to the Harijan Fund. But mere money contributions will not do. There must be a genuine change of heart. So long as there is no change of heart towards the Harijans on the part of the *savarnas*, we will not get freedom, and Hinduism will be ruined. I know, you do not want Hinduism to be ruined. So you must rid yourselves and Hinduism of the sin. Good-bye, good-bye.

The Hindu, 3-2-1946

450. SPEECH AT LALGUDI STATION

February 2, 1946

Referring to his visit to Madura as a *teertha yatra*, Gandhiji, who spoke a few words to those gathered at Lalgudi Station, said that in olden days pilgrims from one end of the land to the other, sometimes, used to walk the whole distance. Since the Madura Temple was thrown open to Harijans, he had been longing to visit it and worship Sri Meenakshi. He was himself a Harijan who wanted to worship there. He wanted their blessings for the success of his pilgrimage.

The Hindu, 3-2-1946

[1] The temple was thrown open to Harijans on July 8, 1939.

[2] The report said: Seven thousand men, women and children . . . sat in the sun patiently and . . . when the special drew up at 11.15 a.m., they lifted their folded hands in silent obeisance. Gandhiji was so impressed by the orderliness of the crowd that he called for *Ramdhun* in which the assemblage participated. . ."

451. SPEECH AT GOLDEN ROCK[1]

[*February 2, 1946*][2]

The workers, Gandhiji said, were possessed of real wealth, for wealth really was not money but the capacity to produce goods. Money alone could produce no goods, only labour could. He wanted the workers to realize their strength and work for progress on the lines of truth, ahimsa and unity. He was confident that he carried with him their good wishes and sympathy in his pilgrimage to Madura. Addressing the women in the gathering, Gandhiji said that during the days of the Salt Satyagraha Campaign, women gave proof of their patriotism and showed themselves as not a whit behind men. They should represent in themselves the essence of truth and ahimsa.[3]

The Hindu, 4-2-1946

452. SPEECH AT MANAPPARAI[4]

February 2, 1946

Gandhiji said that he was very happy to see so many charkhas plying. He saw a similar demonstration in Bengal, but there it was mostly the men who were the spinners. The women who were spinning at the present gathering seemed to be poor people. Everyone must spin and wear khadi. The charkha should be in evidence everywhere. Gandhiji asked :

Have you all rid yourselves of the observance of untouchability?

If they had not already done so, they must at once, he added. Swaraj was close at hand, but they must realize that the charkha was the basis and the means of that swaraj.

The Hindu, 4-2-1946

[1] According to the report, "some ten thousand men and women mostly of the working classes sat in absolute silence and order."

[2] Form *The Hindu*, 3-2-1946, which reported that Gandhiji's Special reached Trichinopoly at 1.30 p.m. on this date, "after reception at Srirangam and Golden Rock".

[3] *Vide* also "Some Labour Questions"

[4] According to the report, "entire maidan near Manapparai railway station was filled to capacity by . . . men and women, many of whom were spinning".

453. SPEECH AT MADURAI[1]

February 2, 1946

I am sorry there is so much noise in this vast assembly. I came here wanting to tell you many things, but I am afraid, on account of the noise, I will not be able to say anything. People in front of the dais are very quiet and if others are not equally quiet, it will be difficult for me to stay on here. My health does not permit me to stay on here and stand noise. But when I see so many of you sitting so quiet in front, I still want to tell you how I appreciate the silence of this section of the gathering. It is a matter for regret that after so many years we have not yet learnt how to behave when we gather in such large numbers. Madura is a famous city. It is a holy city. You have opened the Temple here to Harijans. Since then I wanted to visit the shrine.

I know all this noise and commotion is explained by your love and affection for me. You are all eager to see me. But I tell you such intemperate and undisciplined affection is not love. You have only made it impossible for me to tell you what I wanted to. Prayer, to me, is no mere routine. It is dear to me and is part of my life.

His only request to them would be that when he went next morning to the Meenakshi Temple for worship, only those who had been invited should come there. Others should not go there or cause inconveniene to the invitees.[2]

The Hindu, 4-2-1946

454. SPEECH AT ODDANCHATRAM

February 3, 1946

Gandhiji said that it was one of the very few perfect gatherings he had addressed since leaving Madras. Such discipline was good for them and would be

[1] Then called Madura; the report said that "Gandhiji walked round on the dais, appealing for *shanti*, but in vain".

[2] The report concluded: "Gandhiji then appealed to the crowed to be orderly, and was preparing to leave for his temporary residence when the crowd made a rush forward. Seeing the utter indiscipline prevailing, he quietly stretched himself on the matress and refused to budge until the crowd dispersed quietly. . . . The stalemate continued for over two hours. In the mean time the crowd, finding the hour getting late, began to melt away." *Vide* also "The Lesson of Madurai"

invaluable for the country especially when swaraj came, as he was hoping it would, in a few months. He wanted them to remove untouchability from their midst and use local made khadi cloth. Gandhiji then bade good-bye, and the crowd silently joined hands in *pranam* to him.

The Hindu, 5-2-1946

455. SPEECH AT PALNI

February 3, 1946

Addressing the crowd in Hindustani, Gandhiji said, he had been ordered by his doctor that he should not go up the hill with its 640 steps.[1] His experience in Madura[2] showed how, out of love for him, the crowds could become uncontrollable. He would ask them not to follow him up the hill if he went.

He would much rather not ascend the hill than that they should be disappointed at not being able to accompany him. Obeisance offered with a pure heart, from whichever spot it might be, would receive God's blessings. When he saw the crowd's *shanti*, his own soul had *shanti*, too.

Urging them always to conduct themselves in a disciplined manner, Gandhiji said that through discipline alone could they retain swaraj and get the best service out of their own leaders. Speaking in the presence of Palaniandava[3], he would exhort them to cast off untouchabilty from their hearts. Removal of untouchability meant not merely willingness to suffer the touch of anyone, but readiness to treat the brother Hindu as an equal. No sense of inferiority or superiority should subsist between one section and another of the community or between Hindu, Muslim, Parsi or Christian.

Speaking of temple worship, Gandhiji said that worship of God's image would serve no good unless people cleaned their hearts of hardness against fellow-beings. God should be enshrined not in images, but in human hearts. He had just worshipped Sri Meenakshi at the Madura Temple because that Temple was now open to Harijans. While in the Temple he had realized a new spiritual significance. Worship in the temples must mean change of heart towards Harijans. Otherwise it was fruitless. Their silence and *shanti* made him feel confident that his pilgrimage had borne fruit[4]

The Hindu, 5-2-1946

[1] He was, however, carried in a palanquin; *vide* the following item.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Madurai", 2-2-1946

[3] The presiding deity at Palni

[4] The report concluded: "Gandhiji then conducted his evening prayer at the meeting. It was a complete prayer with the usual recitals from the Upanishads, the *Gita* and the Koran followed by *Ramdhun*. He then left for the Hill Temple."

456. ENTRY IN PALNI TEMPLE VISTIORS' BOOK[1]

February 3, 1946

I was happy to be here and be able today to have *darshan* in this Temple.

The Hindu, 5-1-1946

457. ARE WE GOING DOWN?

> Personal likes and dislikes, ambitions and jealousies should have no place in our organization. What, therefore, distresses me greatly is that dislike, hatred and vindictiveness in private life and even in public speeches are becoming common among Congressmen; and consequenty indiscipline and hooliganism are increasing.

This extract is taken from a long letter from a friend. She even quotes instances and elaborates her thesis. But I have reproduced sufficient for my purpose. I whole-heartedly endorse every word of what she says. Though I do not read newspapers diligently, I feel that there is truth in her experience. Now that it seems that we are coming into our own, the evils complained of ought to go and calmness, rigid discipline, co-operation and goodwill must take the place of passion, indiscipline and jealousies, public and private. Or else swaraj machinery will crack and go to pieces and our future state may very well become worse than the present, bad and insufferabe as it is. As I said in Mahishadal,[2] the glow of swaraj in action must be felt by the illiterate millions of India. They must feel the vital difference between the present autocratic and ordinance regime and the orderly, democratic, non-violent regime under swaraj. I hug the hope that when real responsibiity comes to the people and the dead weight of a foreign army of occupation is removed, we shall be natural, dignified and restrained. We are living just now in a state that is highly artificial and unnatural. The sooner we get out of it the better for us, the ruling power and the world. I can, therefore, only suggest to my friend and

[1] The report said: "Sitting in a special palanquin, Gandhiji reached the Temple at 9 p. m. Some 200 worshippers who were present . . . sat down in perfect order and silence leaving . . . Gandhiji . . . to offer worship in comfort. . . ." *Vide* also "Its Implications"

[2] *Vide* "Speech At Prayer Meeting", 29-12-1945

those who think like her, that they should rigidly carry out in practice what they think, even though they be a handful.

ON THE TRAIN TO MADRAS, February 4, 1946

Harijan, 10-2-1946

458. ITS IMPLICATIONS

The vast meeting at Palni[1] under the shadow of the Temple was perfectly silent; there were no noises. I seized the occasion to give the audience the implications of removal of untouchability. It began with touch but it would be a wooden thing, if it merely ended there. A Brahmin may be a depraved man in spite of his learning. It would be preposterous to call him one. A Brahmin is he who knows Brahma. It is character, not occupation, that determines the man. The Bhangi is, or should be, on a par with the Brahmin in all social relations. There is no reason why he shoud not, other things being equal, occupy the chair which Maulana Abul Kalam Azad occupies with distinction. I would be happy to see the day when a Bhangi, working as such, is in the Presidential chair.

The ulcer of untouchability has gone so deep down that it seems to pervade our life. Hence the unreal differences; Brahmin and non-Brahmin, provinces and provinces, religion and religion. Why shoud there be all this poison smelling of untouchabiity? Why should we not all be children of one Indian family and, further, of one human family? Are we not like branches of the same tree?

When untouchability is rooted out, these distinctions will vanish and no one will consider himself superior to any other Naturally exploitation too will cease and co-operation will be the order of the day.

Having dealt with untouchability, I turned to the pilgrimage. There was fear of my being unable to negotiate the flight of over six hundred steps on a chair, if crowds of people insisted on accompanying me up the hill which was too small to accommodate them. I would be satisfied with doing *darshan* at the foot of the hill. Let not the people, however, think that I was guided by any belief in the potency of images of clay or precious metal. Idols became what the devotees made of or imputed to them. For me they had no potency whist Harijans were prohibited from entering temples. I had passed

[1] *Vide* "Speech At Palni", 3-2-1946

by the famous Meenakshi Temple in Madura more than once before and never cared to go inside it whilst the prohibition against the Harijans lasted. How could I, who claim to be a Bhangi, care to enter such temples? Then I was sure that the God of India was God living in the plains where the millions lived. How many could reach the Himalayas? Many more have gone and more many could reach the Himalayas? Many more have gone and more could certainly go to Palni, but the crores could not. I would be, as I am, one of them.

I was sure, too, that my prayer at the foot of the hill would be heard more than that of some devotees in the Temple itself. God knew and cared for the hearts of men. Outward appearance was nothing to Him, if it was not an experssion of the inner. It was enough for me that the Harijans of the inner. It was enough for me that the Harijans were as free as any other Hindu to enter the Palni Temple for the purpose of worship.

Nevertheless the millions who were assured that I would have *darshan* of the image itself would not understand this message and might feel that some calamity would descend upon the country, if I could not go up the hill. Their silence at the meeting encouraged the hope that I might be able to go through the advertised programme.

The speech was delivered at nearly 6 p. m. But at 8 p. m. I found that I was able to negotiate the hill and, though there was a large crowd at the entrance, none insisted on joining while Rajaji and I were being taken up the hill in chairs. Thus happily did the pilgrimage came to a successful end.

One swallow does not make summer. No legitimate inference can be drawn from this incident. However I cannot help cherishing the fond hope that it augurs well for India under swaraj, home rule or indepen-dence, by whatever name one may choose to call the thing.

Perhaps this article is the proper place for recording my thanks to the South Indian Railway and the staff for their considering no trouble too great for making the journey as little tiresome as it was possible for it to be under the circumstances.

ON THE TRAIN TO MADRAS FROM PALNI, February 4, 1946

Harijan, 10-2-1946

459. SPEECH AT ULUNDURPET STATION

[*Februarty 4, 1946*][1]

Gandhiji thanked the giver[2] but added that he was no longer able to digest groundnut and had, therefore, given it up. He said :

Day by day, I am growing older but I am at the same time desirous of living 125 years. Not that I want to live in pleasure, but I want to do more service. I want to serve you and your freedom's cause. True freedom is in developing freedom-consciousness. That cannot be deveoped in one year or two. Twnty-five years' work among 400 millions is but a drop in the ocean. My prayer to God is that He should spare me 125 years to render more service. Harijan *seva* is an important item in that service. If you do not wash your-selves of the sin of observing untouchability, we cannot become free, nor can our religions survive long. From the time the Madura Temple was thrown open to the Harijans when Rajaji was Premier, I have thought of visiting it. Rajaji is a servant of you all. But even ten Rajajis could not have achieved such great work unless there was public support and public opinion behind it. I want you, therefore, to elimi-nate untouchability from your hearts.

The Hindu, 4-2-1946

460. SPEECH READ OUT AT PRAYER MEETING, MADRAS[3]

February 4, 1946

I am very glad that I have been able to make the two pilgrimages to Madura and Palni. The people of the Province behaved with great consideration to me all along the route. The vast gathering kept sitting in their places, observing complete silence. The best exhibition of such silence and such discipine was at Palni. It was entirely on account of the discipline of the people there that it was possible to carry me up the hill in a chair.

You, people of Madras, have given me your company at prayers

[1] On his return jouney from Palni to Madras, Gandhiji reached Ulundurpet on this date.

[2] Gandhiji was given a bag full of groundnuts by one of the villagers.

[3] The report said that this "message in Hindustani written on an envelope" was read out by Kanu Gandhi as Gandhiji had not broken his silence.

for the last ten days. May I expect that through you the people of this Province will imbibe the lesson of silence and orderliness? Swaraj is on the way—that is the belief of all. But swaraj will be incomplete without *shanti*. There cannot be *shanti* without the grace of God, and there cannot be grace of God without prayer, *prarthana*. That is why I ask you to cultivate the habit of prayer. Prayer should proceed from the heart.

The Hindu, 6-2-1946

461. TALK WITH V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI[1]

MADRAS,
February 4, 1946

In reply to Sastriar's enqiury about the tour, Gandhiji wrote that it had been very nice but very taxing. Sastriar was surprised to hear that five to six lakhs had gathered at the prayer meeting at Madura, more than half of which number had come from the surrounding villages. They had sat on the roadside without food and shelter just to have a *darshan* as they felt that this might be their last chance.

Gandhiji enquired about Sastriar's health and advised him to obey the doctor. Sastriar said, he felt almost normal. He was moved beyond words. He remarked :

Brother, you have done me an exceptional honour, especially by paying this visit when you were in a great hurry. You are dearer and nearer to me than my own brothers and sons and members of the family.

His voice had become almost inaudible :

We have come together by some inner affinity. No external reason can explain this friendship. Gokhale was but the occasion of it.

And he drew nearer to Gandhiji and whispered :

I won't waste words. You know what I want to say.

Gandhiji waved to him to be quiet as he was becoming breathless with emotion and got up to say good-bye.

As Gandhiji got up, Sastriar caught sight of his dangling watch. He said :

Ah! your constant companion. Somebody said, you had lost your watch and

[1] Extracted from Sushila Nayyar's "Meeting Sastriar". Sushila Nayyar explains: "On his return from Madura, Gandhiji had only three hours at his disposal during which he . . . saw several people, collected funds for Harijans and Hindustani *prachar* and paid hurried visit to Sastriar, on his way to the Station. It was a Monday and Sastriar was disappointed to find that Gandhiji was observing silence. . . .Sastriar talked and Gandhiji replied by writing on slips of paper."

would use it no longer.

Shri T. R. Venkatarama[1] corrected him by saying that the remark related to his fountain pen. Sastriar said :

Oh! I see. But if someone steals your watch, will you give up using a watch also?

Gandhiji laughed and shook his head to say that he could not do without his watch.

Harijan, 28-4-1946

462. CURIOUS

On my return journey from Palni, someone gave me at one of the halts a letter reviling Shri Rajaji and Shri Gopalaswami[2], and informing me that they would not allow anyone against them to come near me. Now I know to the contrary. No one who wanted to say anything worth-while could be prevented from seeing me or writing to me. The delivery of the very letter disproves the allegation. Shri Kamaraja Nadar was with me on the same special. He was with me in the Temple on the Palni Hill. But there is no doubt that both Rajaji and Gopalaswami were closest to me during the journey. They had arranged it. Rajaji is one of my oldest friends and was known to be the best exponent in word and deed of all I stand for. That, in 1942, he differed[3] from me, I know. All honour for the boldness with which he publicly avowed the difference. He is a great social reformer, never afraid to act according to his belief. His political wisdom and integrity are beyond question. I was, therefore, pained to find a clique against him. It is a clique that evidently counts in the official Congress in Madras. But the masses are devoted to Rajaji. I am neither vain nor foolish enough to feel that I could have had the huge public demonstratations all along the route of the pilgri-mage, if he had no influence with the masses in Tamil Nadu. Congressmen in the South will act as they think best. But I would be less than loyal to the organization, if I did not warn them against losing the valuable services

[1] T. R. Venkatarama Sastri, one of the students of Srinivasa Sastri, who later became his intimate friend

[2] N. Gopalaswami Iyengar, Chairman, Jubilee Celebration Committee of the Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha, Madras

[3] On the issue of demand for Pakistan, Rajagopalachari, resigned from the Congress Party on July 15, 1942; *vide* "Letter to C. Gopalachari", 5-7-1942

which no one can shoulder as Rajaji can at the present moment.[1]

En route TO WARDHA, February 5, 1946

Harijan, 10-2-1946

463. SPEECH AT VIJAYAWADA [2]

February 5, 1946

Addressing the audience in Hindustani, Mahatma Gandhi first referred to a letter[3], handed over to him by Mr. A. Subrahmanyam, a local Congressman, saying that there was a feeling among the Andhras that he (Gandhiji) had come to Madras to set up Mr. C. Rajagopalachari as the Premier. He said that he was very sorry that there was such a misunderstanding even among Congressmen about the purpose of his trip to Madras. Even the Telugu papers, he added, were writing that he had come to set up C. R. as Premier, and that he had made his journey specially for Mr. Rajagopalachari's sake. In fact he had not even dreamt of this. Ever since his release from jail he had been thinking of visiting Madras for Hindustani propaganda. He made it clear that he had gone there as the President of the Dakshina Bharat Hindi Sabha *Rajat Jayant* (Siver Jubilee) celebrations and not in any other capacity or for any other purpose. He was asked to speak about Mr. C. Rajagopalachari but he refused to do so. He did not answer any letter received by him in this connection. This was beause he was not even a four-anna member of the Congress.

Mr. Rajagopalachari was his old friend, and he had great respect for his conduct and convictions. Mr. C. Rajagopalachri was quite competent to wield the reins of Premier-ship, he would do it, but to make him the Premier or to become Premier himself was not in his hands. It was the business of the pvovincial Congress Committee and the All-India Congress Cmmittee, which were the only bodies competent to do the job.

He was not interested in the elections and the Parliamentary programme. Until today he had not done anything secretly nor did he intend to do so in the future. He came to know of their misunderstanding only after his arrival in Bezwada. He had no occasion to think of it before. If it was his intention to interest himself in setting up Mr. C. Rajagopalachari for the post of Premiership, he need not have come all the way to Madras but could have done it from where he was. Therefore he wanted to keep silent over this matter and did not want to interfere.[4]

He wanted them not to forget what he had said about Hindustani propaganda.

[1] Gandhiji continued the article after he left Vajayawada; *vide* "Curious"

[2] Then called 'Bezwada'

[3] For a gist, *vide* the following item.

[4] *Vide* also the preceding item.

Although the Hindustani Pracharak Sangh had been functioning in Andhra Desha for the last many years, he was really sorry to find that a vast number of them did not know Hindustani. Today he had blessed [1] the foundation-stone of the Hindustani Bhavan to be constructed in Bezwada. He hoped that very soon all of them would take advantage of it and learn Hindustani. He would only be satisfied when he heard that there was no one who did not understand Hindustani. By this he did not mean they should neglect their mother tongue, Telugu. But Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, etc., could never become the all-India language and, therefore, people of all languages should learn Hindustani.

Gandhiji also referred to the controversy whether Hindi or English should be the common language in India. All Indian languages were being eclipsed by the popular use of English. It was just for this reason that he was strongly emphasizing the need for Hindustani propaganda.

In conclusion, he appealed to them not to waste their time with Tamil-Talugu or Canarese-Malayalam differences and said, "God bless you all."

The Hindu, 6-2-1946

464. CURIOUS [CONTINUED]

The foregoing[2] was written before Bezwada was reached at 5.30 in the morning. At Bezwada a note in Hindustani from Shri A. Subrahmanyam was delivered, the gist of which is given below :

> There is a belief spread in Andhra Desha that you have come to Madras with a view to make Rajaji Premier. Several Congressmen have been carrying on such propaganda. Taking up the theme, some Telugu newspapers have been writing even against Hindustani. Pease give your opinion on this.

I felt bound, therfore, to give my reply. I said[3] that my journey was purely for the purpose of celebrating the Silver Jubilee of the Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha, now Hindustani Prachar Sabha, and incidentally for Madura and Palni Temples. The visit was conceived soon after my premature discharge and before the Congress resumption of parliamentary work was even conceived. My visit has nothing to do with Rajaji being the Premier. My life had no secrecy about it. If I wanted to give an opinion, I was in the habit of giving it openly. But I had rejected the advances of friends to guide

[1] Soon after his arrival there in the morning

[2] *Vide* "Curious"

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

them, for I was not interested in elections and offices. But since I was challenged, I had no hesitation in saying that Rajaji was by far the best man for the purpose in the Southern Presidency and, if I had the disposal in my hands, I would call Rajaji to office; if I did not give it to myself. But the disposal was with the Provincial Congress Committee and finally with the Working Committee. My opinion was only that of an individual, to be taken for what it was worth.

AFTER BEZWADA, *en route* TO WARDHA, February 5, 1946

Harijan, 10-2-1946

465. HINDUSTANI

How can any Indian really be averse to Hindustani? Lovers of Sanskritized Hindi are, however, afraid that Hindustani will hurt Hindi and likewise lovers of Persianized Urdu fear hurt to Urdu. These fears are futile. No language can spread through mere propaganda. If it had been so, Esperanto would have found a place amongst the populace in the West. They failed because in such a matter the enthu-siasm of only a few cannot succeed. The language of a people who produce hard workers, literary experts, business men and enter-prising persons spreads and is enriched. It is ours to make the effort in that direction.

Only that language which the people of a country will themselves adopt can become national. However virile the English language may be, it can never become the language of the masses of India. If the British regime were to be permanent, it would continue to be the official language of their Indian officials and, because education woud be in their hands, provincial languages would suffer. The late Lokamanya[1] once said that the British had done a service to the provincial languages. This is true to some extent. But it was not their business to encourage them nor could they in reality do so. That work belongs to the people and their leaders. If the Engish-educated neglect, as they have done and even now continue, as some do, to be ignorant of their mother tongue, linguistic starvation will abide.

We are today certain that the British Raj cannot remain for ever. They say, and we believe, that it will go even this year. Then there can be no national language for us other than Hindustani. Today there are two forms of this language, Hindi and Urdu, the former written in Nagari and the latter in Urdu script. One is fed by Sanskrit, the other

[1] Bal Gangadhar Tilak

by Persian and Arabic. Today, therefore, both must remain. But Hindustani will be a mixture of these. What shape it will take in the future none can say nor need we know. Twenty-three crores out of thirty speak Hindustani. This number must have increased *pari passu* with the population. Obviously in this lies the national language.

There ought to be no quarrel between the two sisters Hindi and Urdu. The rivalry is with English. This struggle itself means much labour. The rise of Hindustani will also give an impetus to the provincial languages because it is the language of the masses, not of a handful of officials.

It was for the propaganda of the national language that I went recently to the South. The name Hindi used there up till now has been changed to Hindustani. During the last few months several persons have been learning both the scripts and have obtained certificates. In the South, too, the difficulty is not about the two scripts but in regard to English. We may not blame the official world for this. The fault lies in us. It is we who are infatuated with English. I found this disease even in Hindustani Nagar. But I hope that the illusion will now disappear. A good deal has been done in the South but much still remains, if we have to reach the desired goal.

February 5, 1946

Harijan, 10-2-1946

466. THE LESSON OF MADURAI

The crowd in Madura[1] could not have been less than five lacs and may have been even six. Human faces were to be seen as far as the horizon. It was a veritabe sea of human faces. The long route to the race course was lined by people who were all to swell the crowd in the prayer ground. They must push on as much as they could. I doubt if the people on the fringe could even see me, much less hear me or anyone else, though loudspeaker arrangements were good and the rostrum high enough. The volunteers were not used to manage such vast crowds. People had come from distant villages where the Congressmen had not worked habitually, if at all. Such being the case, the din and noise and jostle were unavoidable. And then the crowd had to deal with a satyagrahi in me. But my satyagraha for the first time failed. The people's was bound to fail. They showed

[1] *Vide* Speech At Madurai", 2-21-1946

the greatest forbearance whilst I was passive. The vast multitude in front of me and on either side sat noiseless and motionless, in spite of the pressure from behind. But the jostling and noise from behind the rostrum continued unabated. I, therefore, cleared the dais and asked the women members of my party to go. Only Rajaji, Kanu Gandhi and Ramakrishna Bajaj remained. The latter said, the way was clear; but, as I appeared, the people became restive. I addressed the people in front and at the sides and pleaded with them to go away as I did not propose to speak. They remained silent but would not leave. So I thought I would rest where I was for the night till the crowd had either dispersed or made a way for me. Kanu Gandhi, the tempter, came again and said, the poeple would make a passage and let me go. The car would wait for me at a distance from the crowd. In a weak moment I yielded. I went down the few steps of the improvised strong ladder only to meet the same pressing and noisy crowd as before, though considerably thinned. It was not a safe passage through a noiseless, disciplined crowd for which I was pleading and waiting. It was neither a mischievous crowd. Making noise and pressing forward towards the idol was the only way of expressing their love towards it. Here was a living idol made of the same clay as they. And this idol could not and would not appreciate their demonstration. But I proved an impatient and inefficient teacher. Had I waited, I believe, this particular crowd would have learnt the value of silence and, knowing love, probably of discipline requisite for swaraj. I shall know much better next time, if such ever comes. Anyway it is legitimate to ask whether the exemplary behaviour at Palni was a result of the imperfect lesson of the previous night at Madura. In any case, no blame attaches to anybody in the drama and nobody has any cause for shame.

Enroute TO WARDHA, February 5, 1946

Harijan, 10-2-1946

467. NATURE CURE CLINIC[1]

Readers are aware[2] that I have become co-trustee with Shree Jehangir Patel and with Dr. Dinshaw Mehta in his clinic at Poona. A condition of the trust is that from January 1 this year the clinic should

[1] This appeared under "Notes", as "translated from Hindustani" in *Harijan sevak* published simultaneously with the source.

[2] *Vide* "Statementb to the Press", 21-11-1945

become a clinic for the poor instead of for the rich. The conception was mine but owing to my absence on tour the condition has not been wholly fulfilled. I am hoping to go to Poona this month, however, and trust I shall be able to do some work in this connection. My fervent hope is that rich patients will, if they came, pay to their fullest capacity and yet live in the same wards as the poor. I believe that by doing so they will derive more benefit from henceforth. Those unwilling to abide by this condition need not trouble to go to the clinic. This rule is necessary.

In addition to treatment for their ailments, poor patients will also be taught how to live healthy lives. It is a common belief today that nature cure is expensive, more so than Ayurvedic or allopathic. If this is proved to be true, I shall have to admit failure. But I believe that the opposite is ture, and my experience also bears out the belief. It is the duty of a nature cure doctor not only to look after the body but also pay attention to and prescribe for the soul of a patient. The best prescription for the soul is, of course, Ramanama (God's name). I cannot today go into the meaning of and method of applying Ramanama. I will only say that the poor do not stand in need of much medicine. They die uncared for as it is. Their ignorance makes them blind to what nature teaches us. If the Poona experiment succeeds, Dr. Dinshaw Mehta's dream of a nature cure university will come true.

Help of India's true nature cure doctors is needed in this great work for the country. There can be no question of making money in it. The need is for those who are filled with the spirit of service to the poor and only with a sufficient number of such doctors can the work progress. The mere title of a doctor is no criterion; a real doctor is he who is a true servant. Those who have experience and knowledge and are anxious to serve may write with a list of their qualifications. No replies will be given to those whose qualifications are not up to the standard.

Readers will please note that work has increased with the revival of *Harijan*. There will, therefore, be very little scope for replying to individual letters.

ON TRAIN TO WARDHA, February 5, 1946

Harijan, 10-2-1946

468. THE LURE OF LEGISLATURES[1]

I believe that some Congressmen ought to seek election in the legislatures or other elected bodies. In the past I did not hold this view.[2] I had hoped that the boycott of legislatures would be complete. That was not to be. Moreover times have changed. Swaraj seems to be near. Under the circumstances it is necessary that Congress should contest every seat in the legislatures. The attraction should never be the honour that a seat in a legislature is said to give. The desire and opportunity for service can be the only incentive for a Congressman. Congress should have, and has, such prestige that a Congress candidate is irresistible even where a particular seat is contested. Moreover those that are not selected by the Board should not feel hurt. On the contrary, they shoud feel happy that they are left there to render more useful service. But the painful fact is that those who are not selected by the Board do feel hurt.

The Congress should not have to spend money on the elections. Nominees of a popular organization should be elected without any effort in the latter's part. Conveyance arrangements for the poor voters should be made by their well-to-do neighbours. For instance, if the voters from X have to go to Y, the railway fare from X to Y for the poor voters should be paid by the well-to-do people of X. That is the distinguishing feature of a well-organized, non-violent, popular organization. An organization which looks to money for everything can never serve the masses. If money could bring success in a popular contest, the British Government which can, and does, spend most lavishly should be the most popular body in India. The facts are that even Government servants drawing fat salaries do not, in their heart of hearts, want the British Government.

Let us examine the utility value of legislatures. The legislatures can expose the Government, but that is the least service. He who can tell the people why they become victims of the Government in spite of knowing its faults, and can teach them how to stand up against Government wrongs renders a real service. The members cannot do this essential service, for their business is to make people look to them

[1] This appeared as "translated from the Gujarati" in *Harijanbandhu* published simultaneously with the source.

[2] *Vide* "Resolution on Council-Entry", 19-5-1934

for the redress of wrongs.[1]

The other use of legislatures is to prevent undesirable legislation and bring in laws which are useful for the public, so that as much help as possible can be given to the constructive programme.

Legislatures are supposed to carry out the popular will. For the moment eloquence may be of some use in these bodies. Ultimately that will not be the need. Experts with practical knowledge and those who can give to these few their support will be required. In an organization which exists for the sake of service and which has boycotted titles and other such paltry things, the sentiment, that to be selected as candidates for the legislatures is a mark of honour, is harmful. If such a sentiment takes root, it will bring down the name of the Congress and finally prove its ruin.

If Congressmen are to be reduced to such degradation, who will put flesh and blood into India's millions of skeletones? On whom will India and the world rely?

ON WAY TO SEVAGRAM, February 5, 1946

Harijan, 17-2-1946

469. MESSAGE TO ANDHRA DESHA[2]

February 5, 1946

I expect much from Andhra Desha, and I hope the Andhras will fulfil my expectations. This is my wish: Remove untouchability altogether, throw open the doors of all temples for Harijans, strive for communal unity, wear khadi and work for its spread; learn your mother tongue and learn your mother tongue and learn Hindustani as well both in Urdu and Devanagari scripts.

The Hindu, 7-2-1946

[1] Instead of this sentence, *Harijanbandhu* has: "Councils are, have been and will be, an obstruction in this work."

[2] According to the report, this was sent through Unnava Rajagopalakrishnayya, Secretary, Andhra Hindi Prachara Sangham, Bezwada, who accompanied Gandhiji from Bezwada to Kazipet.

470. SPEECH AT BALHARSHAH STATION

February 5, 1946

If people do not keep discipline, then swaraj, which is near at hand and which they are sure to get, would be swaraj only in name and will not be of any use. The British will quit India. They have to quit. Therefore you will have to change your hearts and be worthy of swaraj.

Concluding, Gandhiji urged the people to give up corrupt practices like black-marketing, etc.

The Hindu, 8-2-1946

471. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, WARDHA

February 6, 1946

I had proposed to come here on the ninth instant, but I came earlier. On the 19th evening, I am leaving for Poona for staying in the Nature Cure Clinic. After staying about ten days there, I desire to be in Bardoli Ashram on March 2 or latest on March 3, for observing Ba's death anniversary on Shivaratri Day. It may be that on February 22 the anniversary may also be observed according to the Gregorian calendar. After about a month's stay there, I will be in Poona.

The Hindu, 8-2-1946

472. STATEMENT TO THE UNITED PRESS OF INDIA[1]

February 7, 1946

I never made such an admission. What I did say, and what I believe, is that the Bengal famine of 1943, which is claimed in certain quarters to be man-made, was cerainly due to hopeless mismanagement passed current like other things under the military necessity. It was certainly not an act of God.[2]

The Hindustan Times, 9-2-1946

[1] The report said that this was in reply to a question put by an U. P. I. representative "whether Mahatma Gandhi had admitted to the Governor of Bengal that the Bengal famine of 1943 was not 'man-made'".

[2] The report added that "in an interview which Dr. B. C. Roy had with members of the British Parliamentary Delegation during their recent visit to Calcutta . . . one member asserted that the Governor of Bengal succeeded in convincing Mahatma Gandhi that the famine of 1943 was not man-made and that Gandhiji had accepted that position."

473. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

SEVAGRAM,
Februarty 7, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

I thank you for yours of 30th ultimo received by me in Madras on the 4th instant about the proposed Medical Mission to Burma and Malaya.[1]

The attitude of the Government of Burma is somewhat strange. I had the pleasure of meeting H. E. the Governor of Burma last June in Simla. I should have thought that they would welcome any medical assistance especially when it is under the very able guidance of one of the most celebrated physicians of India, who is well-known not only for his exceptional medical talent but for his equally great organizing ability.

I am glad that the part of the offer that relates to Malaya has been accepted, for which I am thankful to His Excellency.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 75

[1] Replying to Gandhiji's letter of January 8, *vide* "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 8-1-1946, the addressee, Private Secretary to the Viceroy, had said that while offer of medical assistance was "declined" by the Government of Burma, the British Military Administration of Malaya, however, "accepted" it.

474. LETTER TO JATINDAS M. AMIN

SEVAGRAM,
February 7, 1946

CHI. AMIN JATIN,

I would only say this much that you should stay where you are and render such service as you can. "Action alone is thy province, never the fruits thereof."[1]

The best way of undoing injustice is to persuade ourselves that no one can [really] do an injustice.

Blessings from
BAPU

JATINDAS M. AMIN
VITHTHAL KANYA VIDYALAYA
NADIAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

475. LETTER TO SUCHETA KRIPALANI

SEVAGRAM,
February 7, 1946

CHI. SUCHETA,

I got your letter of January 30, 1946, written from Allahabad. As for me, I am quite certain about two things: one, that a member of the Assembly cannot be an Agent[2], and two, that no man should be appointed Agent. I think that Thakkar Bapa also agrees with this and, therefore, as long as he is unable to find a woman worker in Delhi, he will carry on the work through the Central Office. The committee has ceased to be since January 1.

Poornima has already sent name [as candidate] for the Assembly. Now wouldn't you, therefore, agree to be the Agent? Rameshwaribehn[3] writes to the effect that she will quit the Assembly.

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 47
[2] Of Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust
[3] Rameshwari Nehru

What you say about Priyamvada[1] is right and so too about Devdoot[2].

Blessings from

BAPU

SUCHETA KRIPALANI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

476. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI[3]

SEVAGRAM,
February 7, 1946

What shall I write? I have your letter. Meet Jairamdas[4] and learn *shantipath*[5].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India, and Anand T. Hingorani

477. SOME LABOUR QUESTIONS

During the pilgrimage to Madras and Palni the following document signed by 259 persons was handed to me at tremendously large meeting[6] of labourers at Golden Rock :

> We the workers of the South Indian Railway beg to place before you some of our major problems with a view to get your support.
>
> Nearly 2,64,000 workers are going to be retrenched all over the railways. In South Indian Railway alone, 10,000 will be retrenched and till now more than 2,000 have been discharged. The Government

[1] Priyamvada Nandkeolyar who was subsequently appointed Agent of Kasturba National Memorial Trust for the Province of Bihar

[2] Devdoot Vidyarthi, worker of Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust, Madhubani

[3] This was a postscript to Sushila Nayyar's letter to the addressee which read: "Bapuji will most probably continue to write his daily thoughts. The thoughts of the last two months I am sending through a separate bookpost. Please write which dates have been left out. Till now Bapuji was not able to correct the original. Therefore I did not send them. He may be able to get them in Poona. Then I shall send them."

[4] Jairamdas Doulatram

[5] Lesson of peace

[6] *Vide* Speech at Manapparai", 2-2-1946

contemplate absorption of ex-service men in place of railwaymen, thus putting us against the ex-soldiers.

We have been demanding a minimum living wage of Rs. 30 per mensem. At present the lowest wage is Rs. 8 to Rs. 15, and a majority of us receive less than Rs. 18 per mensem.

Out of 42,000 railway employees, only 8,000 are provided with quarters, of which the majority are infested with insanitary conditions, and are without proper ventilation.

You may be aware of the decision of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation demanding adjudication or a court of enquiry, if they refuse to redress our grievances and accept the suggestions. The suggestions were intended for improvements in the railway system and the condition of the employees. For your reference we are giving below the sixteen suggestions forwarded to the Railways Board and the Government by the Federation:

1. Reduction of work to 40 hours per week as a first step and further to 40 hours per week for all the staff including running staff without fall in wages.

2. Introduction of weekly calendar days off for all the railwaymen.

3. Leave reserve to be increased to 25%.

4. Reduction of rail length for engineering gangmen.

5. Extension of leave facilities to dailyrated and inferior service staff on par with subordinates.

6. All the work now done through contract labour should be taken over departmentally.

7. Reduction of mileage for overhaul of locomotives, wagons and carriages.

8. Expansion of workshop production, namely, construction of boilers, engine parts, etc.

9. Manufacture of locomotives, carriages and wagons in the Indian Railways workshop.

10. Rebuilding of third-class carriages so as to provide better facilities for passengers such as bath-rooms, fans and sleeping accommodation for long distance travel, etc.

11. Reopening all the lines that were closed and the restoration of all the trains stopped during the period of war and further expansion of services to meet the needs of the public.

12. A programme of house building with a view to provide decent houses for all railwaymen.

13. Construction of new lines to suit the needs of the country.

14. Laying down of double tracks wherever necessary.

15. Introduction of rail-motor transport to the distant towns and villages where railways cannot reach.

16. R. A. F. workshops now controlled by railways to be maintained and extended to serve the need of aviation.

In the demand of ours for full work, living wages, proper housing facilities, etc., we request you to support us and give a lead in the matter to the country and force the Railway Board to accept the same and save thousands of railwaymen and others from unemployment, misery and poverty.

If the workers are to be retrenched in order to make room, as alleged in the letter, for ex-soldiers, it is, in my opinion, doubly wrong. Wrong for the ex-soldier in that they will be favoured, and a solider who accepts favoured treatment is no solider. The second wrong will be to the men to be retrenched who, for no fault of their own, will be thrown out of employment. It will not do to say they were temporary hands The State has to find work for all unemployed persons. Coming to the railwaymen's demands, items Nos. 1-9 and No. 12 fall, in my opinion, within the sphere of labour, but whether they are reasonnable or not cannot be said without hearing the railway authorities' side. They should be referred to arbitration. They cannot be made a subject of strike, before the process of arbitration has been gone through. Any lightning strike is a form of dictation which is dangerous.

Items Nos. 10, 11 and 13-16, cannot legitimately be demanded by labourers. They are passengers' grievances and passengers, i.e., the public, can take them up.

Item No. 10 I would consider quite extravagant. By far the largest number of passengers belong to the third class, and I have no doubt they deserve progressively better treatment, not the first and second class. Raiway-cars of the not distant future will have no classes. Classes society is the idea , not merely to be aimed at but to be worked for and, in such society there is no room for classes or communties. Until that time is arrived at, first and second-class comforts be standardized and lowered where necessary and all attention bestowed upon third-class passengers. But I cannot visualize a time when third-class carriages, no matter how distant of the journey may be, can carry bathing accommodation for tens of thousands of travellers. What is required is proper bathing arrangement for third-class passengers at railway stations. Third-class passengers are the most neglected in

India. Railway-cars and railway stations should be utilized for proper education of the public in sanitation and cleanliness. This is not the case today. And the quicker Hindu and Mohammedan tea or water distinctions disappear the better[1] . Why should the State recognize these unnatural and irreligious distinctions? Those who consider themselves defiled by service rendered by person not belonging to their own persuasion may well be left to their own resources.

The association for railway passengers' relief should certainly ventilate grievances before the authorities. Their main work should be to conduct sustained education among the passengers as to their own duty toward one another and about observing laws of cleanliness and hygiene.

SEVAGRAM, February 8, 1946

Harijan, 17-2-1946

478. TELEGRAM TO JATINDAS M. AMIN

SEVAGRAM,
February 8, 1946

JATINDAS AMIN
VITHTHAL KANYA VIDYALAYA
NADIAD

NO FAST. PERFORM YOUR OWN DUTY QUIETLY.[2]

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Pepers. Courtesy: Pyerelal

479. LETTER TO R. G. CASEY

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
February 8, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I have to acknowledge receipt of your three letters of January 20, 1946, January 30, 1946, and February 1, 1946.

Now that you are about to leave your office and also India, I will not trouble you any further with reference to the several matters on which I see there are differences of view-point. I can-

[1] *Vide* also "Hindu and Mussalman Tea, Etc.", 7-3-1946.
[2] *Vide* also "Its Implications"

not help mentioning my regret that I have failed to carry conviction in the matter of salt and khadi.[1] The position regarding milk is certainly extraordinary. There is no question here of even carrying conviction. It is typical.The answer you have been Instructed to give reveals to me the official mind in India which refuses to admit even obvious mistakes. Hence we have called the Civil Service 'heaven-born' and the late Mr. Montagu called it 'wooden'. Some day, if you and Mrs. [Casey] and I meet without you being trammelled by cares of office, we shall laugh heartily over the many tragedies of Bengal which, let us hope, will have been things of the past and the ludicrous mistakes lying at the bottom of these tragedies.

I understand what you have said[2] about the release of prisoners.

I hope that the Red Cross work will share itself for the benefit of the millions.

I enclose for your information the statement[3] I have made with reference to "man-made famine". I hope that I have correctly recalled our conversation.

I thank you for the Australian wool you have been good enough to send to the Rajkumari[4] for turning into blankets. I hope to report to you how the blankets look when they come from the weavers and tell you whether Australian wool makes better blankets than the Tibetan.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE GOVERNOR OF BENGAL

CALCUTTA

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 122-3

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to R. G. Casey", 8-1-1946 and "Letter to R. G. Casey", 16-1-1946

[2] In his letter dated February 1, the addressee, *inter alia*, had said: "The process of release of all those that it is anyway safe to release will be continued hereafter.

[3] *Vide* "Statement to the United Press of India", 7-2-1946

[4] Amrit Kaur

480. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

GRAMSVA ASHRAM, SEVAGRAM,
February 8, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You may not know X but he is staunch Congressmen. He has suffered, too. I send you the letter which he has left with me. You will see from it that Y has broken faith with the Congress. The Doctor left the letter with me in order to guard against his candida-ture being approved through mistake. Now do what seems right to you.

I hope you keep good health. The tour was quite strenuous, but God granted me the necessary strength, and it was finished without a hitch. As arranged, I hope to reach Bardoli on the 3rd. I leave here on the 17th and reach Poona on the 19th.

From the newspaper reports, you seem to have done fairly well in the Sind elections.

Blessings from
BAPU

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhaine, p. 293

481. LETTER TO VEENA

SEVAGRAM,
February 8, 1946

CHI. VEENA[1],

I got your letter as also the previous one. How can I find time to write while I am constantly on the move? It is good news that you are keeping well.

Your parents arrived here yesterday. Everyone is fine. Why are your envelopes marked 'Private'?

It would be good, if you could come to Bardoli. I shall try to leave here on the 17th and reach Poona on the 19th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Daughter of Amrita Lal Chatterjee

482. LETTER TO SANKARAN

SEVAGRAM,
February 8, 1946

CHI. SANKARAN,

I got your letter. I reached the Ashram on the 6th morning. The issue of"Jivansakha"has not yet been found. Why are your envelopes marked 'Cofidential'? Such letters are handed over to me unopened, and I can see them only when I find time. For instance, though your letter had reached us in Madras, I opened it only yesterday. There was no scope for it to be opened during the journey. You do not write to Sushilabehn at all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

483. PRESERVATION OF CATTLE[1]

The Goseva Sangh which has its headquarters in Wardha was the late Shri Jamnalalji's last creation. He served the public cause in a variety of ways. For years money-making had ceased to be his main occupation. If he cared for money, it was only with the object of financing public activities. Eleventh day of February was the fifth anniversary of his death,and his followers and comrades decided to celebrate this anniversary by holding a meeting of friends and workers of the Goseva Sangh.

An hour before he died, he was working for this cause. Gopuri, where the meeting took place, is his creation. His ashes rest there, and the first meeting of the Sangh was also held there. The name Goseva was chosen after careful thought. The sense of patronage contained in *goraksha* was eliminated by the substitution of the word seva. The Hindu believes in the cow as mother and indeed she is so. An American has described her as the "Mother of Prosperity" and the description is correct. It is another matter that they eat beef in the West. They believe, at the same time, that the cow occupies highest place amongst those animals which contribute to man's comfort and

[1] This appeared as "from the Hindustani" in Harijan Sevak published simultaneously with the source.

happiness. It is difficult, if not impossible, for an Indian to think of man as being able to live without cow's milk.

Preservation of cattle is a vital part of *goseva*. It is a vital question for India. And it is a tragedy that the country which worships the cow pays scant attention to her and her progeny. While we may not kill the cow, we definitely torture her. Matters have reached such a sorry pass that today cattle seem to have become a burden and people talk of killing them off in order to lighten this load. What could one Jamnalalji do to battle against such odds? And now even he is not among us.

Speeches are not going to solve the problem. There is urgent need for deep study and the spirit of sacrifice. To amass money and dole out charity does not co109nnote real business capacity. To know how to preserve cattle, to impart this knowledge to the millions, to live up to the ideal oneself, and to spend money on this endeavour is real business. Today the opposite obtains. The rich amass wealth somehow and salve their consciences by giving a paltry sum out of it towards the upkeep of *goshalas* by untrained persons and fancy that they have acquired merit. Jamnalalji was well aware of these short-comings and was working out a scheme to overcome them. In the meanwhile. death claimed him. Perhaps even greater capacity is needed to solve this immensely difficult problem than to obtain swaraj.

SEVAGRAM, February 9, 1946

Harijan, 17-2-1946

484. QUESTION BOX[1]

Q. While in conversation or doing brain work or when one is suddenly worried, can one recite Ramanama (the name of God) in one's heart? Do people do so at such times and, if so, how?

A. Experience shows that man can do so at any time, even in sleep, provided Ramanama is enshrined in his heart. If the taking of the name has become a habit, its racitation through the ear becomes as natural as the heartbeat. Otherwise Ramanama is a mere mechanical performance or at best has touched the heart only on the surface. When Ramanama has established its dominion over the heart, the question of vocal recitation does not arise. Because then it transcends

[1] This appeared as "from the Hindustani" in *Harijan Sevak* published simultaneously with the source.

speech. But it may well be held that person who have attained this state are few and far between.

There is no doubt whatsoever that Ramanama contains all the power that it attributed to it. No one can, by mere wishing, enshrine Ramanama in his heart. Untiring effort is required as also patience. What an amount of labour and patience have been lavished by men to acquire the non-existent philosopher's stone? Surely God's name is of infinitely richer value and always existent.

Q. Is it necessary for the mind to go through different stage of progress (including collapse) before it attains absolute calm? Why is it that even when one is awake and quite calm, one's mind is often disturbed as in a dream? Why do such things as one has neither felt or seen in real life intrude into one's conscious or sub-conscious mind?

A. Before attaining perfect calm, it is essential for almost everyone to go through stages of progress. I use the word 'almost' advisedly. It exclude those who have made consistent effort in a previous existence, but without complete success, and who will not, therefore, have to pass through purgatory in this life. When the apparently calm mind is disturbed as if by dreams, it means that the calm is outward and not inward. What does not appear to have any relation to one's life's experience and yet disturbs shows, in my opinion, that there are many things which have associations but of which one has no recollection.

Q. Is it harmful if, owing to stress or exigencies of work, one is unable to carry out daily devotions in the prescribed manner? Which of the two should be given preference, service or the rosary?

A. Whatever the exigencies of service or adverse circumstances may be, Ramanama must not cease. The outward form will vary according to the occasion. The absence of the rosary does not interrupt Ramanama which has found an abiding place in the heart.

SEVAGRAM, February 9, 1946

Harijan, 17-2-1946

485. CRIMINAL IF TRUE[1]

A letter from Karnataka contains the following information:

> On February 1, 1946, at about 10 a.m. when the Karnataka Provincial Congress Parliamentary Board was conducting its business in its office in Hubli, 20 to 25 persons effected an entrance into the meeting hall without first obtaining permission of the President.
>
> The Board had met to discuss some improtant matters. Some of the persons above mentioned asked for time to make certain representations. The President told them that sufficient time for the purpose had been given to them on the previous day. The Board was now engaged in serious deliberations but would see them again during the afternoon. In reply, they said, they had further important matter to represent and insisted on doing so then and there. The president opined that their attitude was quite inconsistent with due decorum and discipline, but they continued to insist, whereupon the President said that he would be obliged to leave the hall. As he stood up in order to go away,one member of the party tried forcibly to hold him down. Another snatched the office files from his hands and was going to take them away. Yet another hit Shri Diwaker on the head with his umbrella. Persons in the hall finally came to the rescue and restored order.

If such be the case, the Congress organization will go to pieces. Indeed no organization can successfully work under a system of terror. I do not go into the merits. That work will be done by the Congress Working Committee. What is reported to have taken place is not against decency and all the rules of the game, but is manifestly against non-violence. Moreover there seems to be an indecent longing for getting into the legislatures.This indecency shows that the deciding reason for contesting elections is being lost sight of.

SEVAGRAM, February 9, 1946

Harijan, 17-2-1946

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

486. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
February 9, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Today I am dictating this letter in Gujarati.

1. Those who feel themselves poor without the knowledge of English may be taught the language. The general policy should be understood that nobody should be taught English, and that, when it is found necessary to teach anybody, my permission should be obtained.

2. The reason for stressing the importance of carding is that, if we learn it, we shall be spared the necessity of all other processes. If, in addition to carding by hand, they also think it necessary, they may use the carding-bow, but I don' regard that as essential. I see no difficulty at all in stopping the practice of procuring the gutstring of the carding-bow from outside. Good cotton can be carded with a string made of *mooj*[1] or yarn. But I don't insist on this.

3. General supervision work leaves no time for teaching things to others. It is another matter if, in order to improve one's efficiency in supervision work or relax one's mind, one finds it necessary to take up some other work. It is difficult to lay down any rule in this matter. The supervisor himself must decide. It is a sign of ignorant attachment to go on working till the breaking point.

4. I regard a weekly tour by Vinoba as essential. There would be no harm in his taking someone who can be spared from his work and who is eager to learn. The rule that one person should always accompany him seems laudable.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4545

487. FAMINE OF GRAIN AND CLOTH

During my wanderings in Bengal, Assam and Madras, I heard tales of distress due to shortage of food and cloth. Reports come to

[1] A kind of hay

me from other parts of India. They support the same tale. Dr. Rajendra Prasad tells me that the Government report expressing fear of shortage of food immediately doubled the market price. This is a bad sign. Such speculation should be a thing of the past. The mer-cantile community should be competent to curb such greed. Let them not add to the distress caused by the Government mistakes or incompetence. There are mercantile association and chambers. If they act patriotically, they can help most to prevent panic and speculation.

It is the fashion to blame nature for famine. Scarcity of rain is by no means a monopoly of India.In other countries, though people welcome rains, they have made themselves fairly independent of rainfall during a season or two. Here Government have used themselves and the public to the idea that famines come when there is shortage of rainfall[1]. Had the mind been framed otherwise, they would have made adequate provision for shortfalls. They only tinkered with the porblem and naturally so. For the official world was taught to think no better. Originality there could be none in a close monopoly organization like the Government of India. It is the largest autocracy the world has known. Democracy has been reserved only for Great Britain. And when it rules and exploits millions belonging to other races, it becomes an unmitigated evil. It corrupts the whole island with the idea that such exploitation is the best thing for an enlightened democracy to do. It would be well to remember this fundmental fact, if I have correctly estimated it. If we recognize this while dealing with the immediate problem, we shall be patient with the present actors. There is no call here for patience with the evil. The distinction will enable us the better to deal with the evil.

We must then first put our own house in order as far as may be, and at the same time demand from the foreign Government that since they mean what they say, let them at once replace the irresponsible executive with elected and responsible members from the Central Legislature, however arcahic and based only on a limited franchise it may be. There is nothing to prevent the Viceory from doing this today. I do not propose to answer the difficulties in anticipation. “Where there’s will, there’s a way”. This one act will restore confidence and allay panic.

“Grow more food” was not a bad cry during the war. It is a greater necessity now. This can be best done only by a national

[1] The source has “waterfall”.

executive. Even its mistakes will not loom so large as those of a nominated executive, however able the latter may be. As it is, even their ability and integrity are in question—rightly so or wrongly is beside the point in this connection. Everything possible should be done to draw water from the bowels of the earth.There is talent enough in this country for the purpose. Provincial selfshness should give place to the national want. In addition to, not in the place of , these measures, grain should be imported from wherever it can be had.

Cloth famine can and ought to be averted by telling the millions to spin and weave in their own villages, the State supplying them with cotton where it is not grown or available, and with the simple instruments of production on hire or long-term purchase. The A. I. S. A. with its seasoned workers should be summoned to render assistance and guidance. This will take a few months, if the work is taken up in earnest. Indigenous mills will be called upon to assist this national process by a wise distribution of their cloth in citites and villages while the transition process is going on. Argumentation on the capacity of mills to supply all the cloth required should cease in face of the calamity which is existent and daily growing in intensity. Mills cannot find employment for the millions of unemployed villagers. The educative value of the charkha is not be surpassed. But for the spell of hypnotism which rules our minds today, we shall all realize this obvious truth, set ourselves working out the concrete proposition and thereby restore confidence to the millions and, maybe, even to the world which has neither enough food nor cloth[1] .

SEVAGRAM, February 10, 1946

Harijan, 17-2-1946

488. TO THE READER

Harijan is being revived. For all these years I used its columns to place before people my views on several matters. The stream that had dried up in 1942 will now flow again. In fact the Harijan

[1] In his "Weekly Letter" in Harijan, 3-3-1946, Pyarelal says: "The grim spectre of the impending famine filled Gandhiji's mind. . . .He took the opportunity to discuss the question with the Governor of Madras. . . but did not come away from the talk reassured. . . Mr. Abell was agreeably surprised to find, when he flew to Sevagram on February 11, that Gandhiji had anticipated his propasals in an article. . . " Vide also "Statement to the Press", 11-2-1946 and "What ought to be done"

editions—the Hindustani, the Gujarati and the English—are my weekly letter to readers. But I would not be wrong, if I described the Gujarati edition as specially so. Gujarati being my mother tongue, a large number of correspondents write letters to me in that language than in the others, and I reply to them more easily and freely. If, therefore, I wrote only in Gujarati and the material for the other editions was supplied as translations, I would have to take less pains, and I would be able to enrich the Gujarati *Harijan*[1]

But one cannot easily give up a practice already adopted. And ignorant attachment also, consciously or unconsciously, would do its work. I know English. I have realized that my English writing has an appeal, though I do not know what exactly is the attraction. The same is true of Hindustani but to a lesser extent. Shri Brajkishore Babu[2] made me realize this years ago. I was then made President of the Provincial Hindu Sammelan. At that time my Hindi was much weaker than it is today. I gave him my Presidental address and asked him to revise it. But he refused to do so and it was delivered as it was. The reader puts up with my imperfect and ungramatical Hindi. Thus unlike the proverbial recluse who, hankering after both this and the other world, ruined his prospect in both, I stand to lose three! For the present, however, I wish to let things continue as they are. I cannot say at the moment where the ship will anchor in view of this, I hope, the Gujarati reader will excuse me, if he finds in the Gujarati *Harijan* more translations of my English articles than original Gujarati articles. I can, however, give him the assurance that whatever translation appear in it will have been by me also, so that there will generally be no misinterpretation. I have to say "generally " because sometimes I may have no time to see the translations and, morever, if a translation is done at Ahmedabad. I will not be able to see it at all. Be that as it may, I trust the reader will put up with this as he had been doing so far.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhhu, 10-2-1946

[1] That is, *Harijanbandhu*

[2] Father-in-law of Jayaprakash Narayan

489. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
February 10, 1946

Express

SARDAR PATEL

68 MARINE DRIVE

BOMBAY

SORRY CANNOT EARLIER.[1]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

490. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

SEVAGRAM,
February 10, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

Shri Sudhir Ghosh has handed me your kind note of 9th instant. You will believe me when I say that I would have responded to your invitation at once, if I could have. But I have explained to our mutual friend physical and moral reasons for my inablity. He will explain them fully to you and will also put before you my proposition. Of course I shall be glad to meet any representative you may send.[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY

Gandhi's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 139-40

[1] The reference is to Gandhiji' arrival in Bardoli; *vide* also "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 10-2-1946

[2] In *Gandhiji's Emissary,* "Talk to Villagers, Kodambakkam", 1-2-1946, Sudhir Ghosh explains: "Abell asked me, if I would . . . take a letter from Lord Wavell to Gandhiji. . . and do my best to persuade Gandhiji to come and see the Viceroy in New Delhi to discuss with him how best to handle the food situation. . . I was rather confident that Gandhiji would respond to the Viceroy's appeal.. . But. . . , Gandhiji refused to come. He firmly told me that I was not to try to persuade him to go to Delhi. . . He took me to task for having acceded to Lord Wavell's request. . . I conveyed to George Abell on the telephone Gandhiji's reaction . . . Abell flew down. . . on the 11th February . . .the idea was that the appeal should be signed by Gandhiji, Mr. Jinnah and the Viceroy. . .But it was the same old game of parity between Hindus and Muslims. . . To this sort of treatment Gandhiji's objection was as he said in his letter to Lord Wavell, 'moral'". For an extract from Abell's note on the meeting, vide Appendix II. For Gandhiji's view on the famine situation, *vide* pp. 110-2 and 120-1.

491. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
February 10, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Rajendra Babu is with me. I have your wire. It is impossible to reach Bardoli before the 3rd.

The Viceroy has sent for me[1]. But I cannot go in the near future.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapana patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 294

492. LETTER TO DAMAYANTI

SEVAGRAM,
February 10, 1946

CHI. DAMAYANTI,

I have your letter. I did not read in the papers that Bhogibhai had passed away. And I don't read newspapers. I learnt about it only through your letter. You had written to me acknowledging receipt of the money; Mahendra also wrote. Was it not God's miracle that Bhogibhai passed away only after paying up the amount? Death, of course, ought not to be grieved over.

Blessings from
BAPU

DAMAYANTIBEHN
GANDHI NIWAS
GHODBUNDER ROAD
SANTA CRUZ

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

493. LETTER TO AGA KHAN

February 10, 1946

BHAI SAHEB,

I got your letter today. You certainly know my plight, and why I am unable to be present. I expect the Diamond Jubilee to be celebrated in a fitting manner, and may you live for many more years.[1]

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

H. M. THE AGA KHAN
LAND'S END
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujaratt: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

494. LETTER TO PRITILATA

SEVAGRAM,
February 10, 1946

CHI. PRITILATA,

It is good you wrote. Your health must now improve. I shall feel happy only when you both make your lives ideal. If you lead an indulgent life, it would set a bad example.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

495. LETTER TO BHAGAVATICHARAN SHUKLA

SEVAGRAM,
February 10, 1946

CHI. BHAGAVATI,

I was delighted to have your letter. I am no longer able to wrtie many letters. The resumption of *Harijan* has added to the work.

[1] The addressee, Sultan Mahomed Shah Aga Khan, was weighed against 243.5 lb. diamonds on Sunday, March 10, 1946, on the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee of the Sultanette. Vide "Message to Aga Khan", 10-3-1946.

You have given a good account. I understand why the marriage had to be solemnized at Gondia. I shall leave this place for Poona on the 17th. You can come over here or to Poona whenever you wish to. But my programme is uncertain.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAGAVATICHARAN SHUKLA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

496. FLAGS AND SCHOOLS[1]

I have two typical letters about flags in schools and colleges. Some boys hoist the Congress flag, therefore others hoist the League flag. Both are wrong. My correspondents report that the mischief commenced by the hoisting of the Congress flag. Probably nothing would have tolerated. The right thing was, and is, that boys must not take the initative in such cases. The buildings belong to the authorities and they must decide whether or not to fly, which, if any, flag over their buildings. If boys take the law into their own hands, the result must be chaos and confusion plus breaking of heads. This would be sheer vulgarity and doing no good to anybody. Schools and colleges should be institution for healing communal breaches, not for promoting differences. If boys and girls do not learn discipline in their school-days, money and time spent on their education is so much national loss. The one bright thing that emerges from the Lahore episode is that Maulana Saheb Abul Kalam Azad promptly intervened and ruled that the boys who had hoisted the Congress flag were in the wrong.

SEVAGRAM, February 11, 1946
Harijan, 17-2-1946

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

497. LIVING UP TO 125[1]

I have not talked about wishing to live up to the age of 125 years without thought. It has a deep significance. The basis for my wish is the third *mantra* from *Ishopanishad* which, literally rendered, means that a man should desire to live for 100 years while serving with detachment. One commentary says that 100 really means 125. Even today in Madras the word 'hundred' is used to mean described as Rs. 100, but was, on scrutiny, found to be Rs. 116. 100=99+1 is not an invariable formula in our country.

Be that as it may, the meaning of 'hundred' is not necessary for my argument. My sole purpose is to indicate the condition necessary for the realization of the desire. It is service in a spirit of detachment, which means complete independenc of the fruit of action. Without it one should not desire to live for 125 years. That is how I interpret the text. I have not the slightest doubt that without attaining that state of detachment, it is impossible to live to be 125 years old. Living to that age must never mean a mere life unto death, like that of an animated corpse, a burden on one's relations and society. In such circumstance one's supreme duty would be to pray to God for early release, not for prolongation of life anyhow.

The human body is meant solely for service, never for indulgence. The secret of happy life lies in renunciation. Renunciation is life. Indulgence spells death. Therefore everyone has a right and should desire to live 125 year *while performing service without on eye on result*. Such life must be wholly and solely dedicated to service. Renunciation made for the same of such service is an ineffablye joy of which none can deprive one, because that nectar springs from within and sustains life. In this there can be no room for worry or impatience. Without this joy long life is impossible and would not be worth while even if possible.

Examination of the possibility of prolonging life to 125 years by outward means is outside the scope of this argument.

SEVAGRAM, February 11, 1946

Harijan, 24-2-1946

[1] Originaly published in Gujarati, this appeared as "from *Harijanbandhu*", 17-2-1946.

498. TELEGRAM TO URMILA DEVI

SEVAGRAM,
February 11, 1946

URMILADEVI[1]
2/1-B HINDUSTAN PARK
RASHBEHARI AVENUE
CALCUTTA

LEAVING SEVENTEENTH BUT YOU CAN COME.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

499. TELEGRAM TO AGA KHAN

SEVAGRAM,
February 11, 1946

Express

H. H. THE AGA KHAN
MALABAR HILL

THANKS YOUR LETTER. TWENTY-FOURTH POONA FOUR O'CLOCK AFTERNOON WILL SUIT ME.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papars. Courtesy: Pyarelal

500. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,
February 11, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have your letter. Now we shall see about it only after I come. You may not fix up a woman cook for the time being. The matter about Dr. Dinshaw will also be settled after my arrival.

I propose to reach there on the 18th. From there I proceed to Bardoli on the 28th or on the 1st of March. I shall bring with me as small a party as I can. You need not obtain anything for their sake.

[1] Sister of Chittaranjan Das

You should lodge me where Doctor says. I am even prepared to put up in a tent. I shall be having a mosquito-net.

I shall see what I can do about *Harijan*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

501. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

[On or after *February* 11, 1946][1]

The food situation brought the Private Secretary to H. E. the Viceroy to me. I had many meetings and appointments up to a fairly long time. These I could not disregard, and I do not know how to fly, and hope I may never have to do so. Therefore in reply to an imperative invitation from His Excellency, I asked[2] that he should send me someone who could speak for him, and so the P. S. V. came yesterday[3]. The food situation alone brought him to me. Could I say something in order to lift the question out of the political arena and out of the general distrust of Government intentions and policy? As the matter brooks no delay, I give here the purport of what I said. So far as the Congress policy is concerned, His Excellency should invite Maulana Saheb and, if he cannot come, ask him to name his deputy. I personally feel that the present irresponsible Executive should be immediately replaced by a responsible one chosen from the elected members of the Central Legislature. I also personally feel that this responsibility should be shouldered by the elected members of the Central Legislature irrespective of parties, for famine of cloth and food is common to the millions of India. Whether the Government can accept the suggestion and whether the different political parties that compose the Central Legislature consider it practicable or not, is more than I can say. But this much I can say without fear of contradiction: I have little doubt that if the mercantile community and

[1] From the reference to the visit of Abell, Private Secretary to the Viceroy; *vide* footnote 11, "To the Reader" Abell met Gandhiji in the evening on February 11; *vide* "Speech at Second Goseva Samgh Confernce Wardha", 12-2-1946

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Wavell",10-2-1946

[3] It being his Silence-Day, Gandhiji wrote down his part of the dialogue; for an an extract from Abell's note, *vide* "G. E. B. Abell's Note on Interview With Gandhiji", 11-2-1946

the official would become honest, if only in face of the impending calamity, we are such a vast country that we can just tide over the difficulty even if no help comes from the outside world, which is itself groaning. Grain and cloth dealers must not hoard, must not speculate. Food should be grown on all cultivable areas wherever water is, or is made available. Flower gardens should be used for growing food crops. This has been done during the period of war. The present is, in some respects, worse than the war period. Before we have eaten up the grain we have in stock, we must economize like misers. All ceremonial functions should be stopped. Women can play the highest part in the alleviation of the present distress by economizing in their households. In nine-tenths of our activity we can manage our daily affairs without the aid of the Government, whatever its colour may be, if only it will refrain from interfering with the people. Panic must be avoided at all costs. We must refuse to die before death actually takes toll, and think of the skeletons of India and the least little things we may do to help, and all will be well with India. Let us not hypnotize into the belief that because we can indulge ourselves, our next-door neighbour can do likewise. Cloth famine, I know, is a mockery, for if only the Government and mill-owners will act honestly and intelligently, no one need go naked for want of cloth. We have cotton enough and idle hands enough and skill enough to make in our villages all the cloth we need.

Harijan, 17-2-1946

502. TELEGRAM TO WANDA DYNOWSKA

SEVAGRAM,
February 12, 1946

UMADEVI
7 PEDDAR ROAD
MOMBAY

LEAVING HERE SEVENTEENTH FOR POONA. NO USE COMING HERE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

503. TELEGRAM TO HARIHAR SHARMA

SEVAGRAM,
February 12, 1946

Express

HARIHAR SHARMA[1]

195 HIGH ROAD

TRIPLICATE

MADRAS

THANKS OMIT MEETING. CONTINUE REPAIRS.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papars. Courtesy: Pyarelal

504. TELEGRAM TO PRESTON GROVER

SEVAGRAM,
February 12, 1946

PRESTON GROVER

["THE] TIMES OF INDIA" BUILDING

BOMBAY

DAYS HERE FILLED WITH MEETINGS. LEAVING FOR BOMBAY SEVENTEENTH EN ROUTE POONA.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papars. Courtesy: Pyarelal

505. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

SEVAGRAM,
February 12, 1946

CHI. BAL,

You do not seem to have fully recovered yet.

I met Vinoba[2] yesterday. But I got a report from him only about carding and making slivers.

[1] Of the Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha; he was also called "Anna".
[2] Addressee's brother

Regarding sleep, when we meet. I hope to arrive there on the 18th.

Paper which resembles mill-made paper in appearance cannot be hundred per cent hand-made paper. Explain this to me further when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 814. Courtesy: Balkrishna Bhave

506. LETTER TO AGA KHAN

SEVAGRAM,
February 12, 1946

AGA KHAN,

I have your letter from Bhopal. You will have received the telegram[1] I sent you in reply. I have suggested 4.00 o'clock on the 24th. Please let me know if that time is not suitable. It will be nice if Nawab Saheb can come. I do not think Maulana Saheb and others will be able to come.

May the Diamond Jubilee be a success ! I trust you are well.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

507. SPEECH AT SECOND GOSEVA SANGH CONFERENCE WARDHA

February 12, 1946

The principle of succession to propety should be based on new fundamental, i. e., that those who act up to the wishes of the departed soul or carry on his work should be the real heirs and not those born in his family.

So, if Janaki Devi[2] or Kamalnaya[3] or Ramakrishna[3] do not devote themselves to Jamnalal Bajaj's incomplete work whose anniversary we are observing, they have no right to be Janmnalal's heirs, but persons like us who carry on his work[4] .

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Munnalal G. Shah", 11-2-1946
[2] *Wide and sons of Jamnalal Bajaj*
[3] *Ibid*
[4] *Vide* also "Oh! For Our English!"

Mahatma Gandhi then referred to the impending famine and the visit of the Viceroy's Private Secretary to Sevagram last evening.

I have visited Bengal and Assam and met workers from Orissa. I have seen people who have expressed their views about the famine which is staring them in the face unless proper steps are taken. If things or food can be imported from outside, it is well and good. But this year there is little prospert for that for transferring food from one province to another. So my advice to you would be to minimize food requirements, avoid wastage and serve both men and cattle to your utmost capacity. We must produce better milk and increase our wealth and improve our health. If you devote to cow-keeping, it will be a fiting tribute to Jamnalal's revered memory.[1] If you don't know how to serve your own people, how can you serve animals and especially cows?

Gandhiji referred to his talk with Mrs. Aruna Asaf Ali when the latter told him that people served cows and other animals but there are many other animals in India, namely, 40 crores of Indians whom they should not forget.

The Hindustan Times, 14-2-1946; also *The Hitavada*, 14-2-11946

508. LETTER TO LABHSHANKER VYAS

[On or before *February 13, 1946*][2]

BHAI LABHSHANKER,

I got and read your letter today. May all the girls become good and bring credit to the institution.[3]

Blessings from

BAPU

LABHSHANKER VYAS, PRINCIPAL

H. K. VIDYALAYA

SABARMATI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U./ XXII

[1] What follows is reproduced from The *Hitavada*, 14-2-1946.

[2] From the postmark

[3] Harijan Kanya Vidyalaya

509. LETTER TO AGNES M. PHILLIPS[1]

SEVAGRAM,
February 13, 1946

MY DEAR AGNES,

It was a good thing to have a letter from you after such a long time. The friend to whom you gave your note has not yet turned up. He has been informed that he can come and see me.

My doings you should follow from the paper. This is merely a line to tell you that my love does not suffer because I do not hear from you, or because you are so far away from me.

Love.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

MISS AGNES PHILLIPS
ST. ANDREWS'S HOSPITAL
THORPE, NORWICH

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *Reminiscences of Gandhiji,* p. 195

510. LETTER TO J. C. SMUTS

SEVAGRAM, "VIA" WARDHA,
February 13, 1946

DEAR FIELD MARSHAL,

This is just to introduce Miss Majorie Sykes who is proceeding to South Africa and other parts of the earth in search of material and facts for writing the life of the late Deenabandhu C. F. Andrews. I

[1] Reproducing this letter in her article "Recollections" in Reminiscences of Gandhiji, the addressee explains: "During the 1939 war a soldier who was going out to India told me that he would much like to meet Mr. Gandhi. I gave him a letter of introduction. Owing to illness he was not able to meet him, but sent on my letter. Later I received a letter from Mr. Gandhi, which bore my name and his signature in his own handwriting. I still have that letter and regard it as one of my cherished possessions." The addressee came to know Gandhiji in South Africa while staying with her uncle, the Rev. Charles Philips, who was deeply interested in the Asiatic question. She did nursing work in the two World Wars and met Gandhiji during his visit to England.

hope you will give her such help as it is possible for you to give and facilitate her passage from South Africa to England.

I see that you are keeping fit and well even though fairly advanced in years.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy. Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

511. LETTER TO VERRIER ELWIN

SEVAGRAM, "VIA" WARDHA (C.P.),
February 13, 1946

MY DEAR VERRIER,

Your letter of 1st November was given to me by our mutual friend Jehangir Patel after the 14th January through Thakkar Bapa.

Your language cannot hurt me. I love you so well and so much that language has no effect on me, even as my son Harilal's has not. What has hurt me is that distrust of you has crept into me. Bapa, who loves you, if it were possible to do so more than I do, deepens that distrust. I do not know whether I have succeeded in conveying to you my full meaning. Your learning which I know is very great, is worth nothing to me if you do not or cannot represent truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Of course you know this fine oath that is administered to every witness before a law court. That it has become a mere mechanical thing and debasing as that does not matter. We utter God's name in vain. He does not suffer. We do. Is it possible that untruth has crept into you ? Bapa swears, I feel.

Bapa will see this letter before I send it and so will Jehangir Patel through whom it will go, if it does.

I have dictated this letter because *Harijan* takes almost every ounce of my energy.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

512. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
February 13, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You will have seen my statement[1] in the newspapers. I did not like what Jawaharlal is reported to have said. I have also written to him about it. We cannot incite peope in that way. We cannot deprive the millions of poor people of what little they get. If food is available only in a limited stock, it should be made to last until the next season. I hold that we should offer our co-operation to this end. However I am reaching there on Monday. But I shall be observing silence when I arrive.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 294

513. LETTER TO ARUN GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
February 13, 1946

CHI. ARUN

Have I not told you not to expect letters from me? Besides, now that Harijanbandhu comes out every week, is it not a letter for you too? And what a long letter ! It is good that you spin. I got Chi. Manilal's[2] postcard.I have been very busy. So much the better. Pyarelalji has fallen ill.

Blessings to you all from
BAPU

C/O MANILAL GANDHI
DELHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 11-2-1946
[2] Addressee's father

514. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
February 13, 1946

BHAI SAHEB,

I have your long letter[1] . It is good, you have given [the details]. I already knew some of the things, but some are news to me. I am cautious and will remain so. To keep me on my guard please do write to me as much as you can with ease.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI M. R. JAYAKAR

[From Hindi]

Jayakar Papers: File No. 826, p. 38. Courtesy: National Archives of India

515. WHAT OUGHT TO BE DONE

Food crisis should be regarded as a certainty. In the circumstances, the following things should be attended to at once:

1. Every person should confine his daily wants regarding food to the minimum, consistent with his or her health requirements; and where, as in cities, milk, vegetables, oil and fruit are available, grains and pulses should be reduced as they easily can be. Starch can be derived from starchy roots such as carrots, parsnips, potatoes, yam, banana; the idea being to exclude from present diet and conserve those grains and pulses which can be kept and stored. Vegetables too should not be eaten as an indulgence or for pleasure when millions are denied the use of these things altogether and are now threatned with starvation due to shortage of cereals and pulses.

2. Everyone who has access to any water should try himself or herself to grow some edibles for personal or general use. The easiest way to do so is to collect clean earth, mix it with organic manure where possible—even a little bit of dried cowdung is good organic manure—and put it in any earthen or tin pot and throw some seeds of vegetable such as mustard and cress, etc., and daily water the pots.

[1] Dated February 8, 1946; for the text, *vide* "Letter From M. R. Jayakar", 8-2-1946

They will be surprised how quickly the seeds sprout and give edible leaves which need not even be cooked but can be eaten in the form of salad.

3. All flower gardens should be utiized for growing edibles. And in this connection I would suggest to the Viceroy, Governors and high officials to take the lead. I would ask the heads of agricultural departments at the Centre and Provinces to flood the country with leaflets in the provincial language tellling laymen how and what to grow easily.

4. Reduction should be taken up not merely by the civilian population but equally, if not predominantly, by the military. I say "predominantly" for the military ranks, being under rigid military discipline, can easily carry out measures of economy.

5. All exports of seeds, such as oil-seeds, oils, oil-cakes, nuts, etc., should be stopped, if they have not been already. Oil-cakes, if the seeds are sifted of earth and foreign matter, are good human food with rich protein content.

6. Deep wells should be sunk by the Government wherever possible and required, whether for irrigation or for drinking purposes.

7. Given hearty co-operation by Government servants and the general public, I have not the slightest doubt that the country can tide over the difficulty. Just as panic is the surest way to defeat, so also will be the case when there is widespread distress impending and prompt action is not taken. Let us not think of the cause of the distress. Whatever the cause, the fact is that if the Government and the public do not approach the crisis patiently and courageously, disaster is a certainty. We must fight this foreign Government on all other fronts except this one, and even on this we shall fight them, if they betray callousness or contempt for reasoned public opinion. In this connection I invite the public to share my opinion that we should accept Government professions at their face value, and believe that swaraj is within sight inside of a few months.

8. Above all, black marketing and dishonesty should disappear altogether, and willing co-operation between all parties should be the order of the day in so far as this crisis is concerned.[1]

SEVGARAM, February 14, 1946

Harijan, 24-2-1946

[1] *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 11-2-1946

516. TELEGRAM TO AGA KHAN

Express SEVAGRAM,
February 14, 1946

H. H. THE AGA KHAN
KAPURTHALA

TWENTY-FIFTH WILL SUIT. THREE P. M. DOCTOR DINSHAW'S POONA.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papars. Courtesy: Pyarelal

517. TELEGRAM TO BHOLANATH MASTER

SEVAGRAM,
February 14, 1946

BHOLANATH MASTER
PRAJAMANDAL
ALWAR

DELIGHTED.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papars. Courtesy: Pyarelal

518. TELEGRAM TO SURENDRA MOHAN GHOSH

Express SEVAGRAM,
February 14, 1946

SURENDRA MOHAN GHOSH[1]
10 SUBURBAN SCHOOL ROAD
CALCUTTA

PLEASE WIRE TRUTH ABOUT CALCUTTA DISTURBANCES AND BURNING OF MILITARY LORRIES.[2]

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papars. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *The Hindu* 18-2-1946.

519. TELEGRAM TO JEHANGIR PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
February 14, 1946

JEHANGIR PATEL
10 CHURCHGATE STREET
BOMBAY

PROPOSAL ACCEPTED.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papars. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] President of Bengal Provincial Congress Committee

[2] Disturbance broke out in protest against sentence for life passed on Capt. Abdul Rashid of Indian National Army; the sentence was, however, reduced to seven years' rigorous imprisonment by Commandar-in-Chief. The addressee telegraphically informed Gandhiji that "reaction against police firing on peaceful processionists excited people and led to mob violence including burning of military lorries. In all 53 persons were killed and over 500 were injured. Congress Peace Bridgades were patrolling the city but the military were interfering with their work, and the city was under military control."

520. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
February 14, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter, as also the cheque.

I am writing to. . .[1] What he says is strange. To me he talks sensibly. Your work has increased very much indeed.

I think you are mistaken about the food situation. Some foodgrains may be imported from abroad but I think depending on others always ends in disappointment. If the people show some enterprise, they can certainly grow more food. It may be that there would be insufficient cotton for the mills; if so, the balance may be imported. There is enough for the spinning-wheels.

More when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 295

521. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
February 14, 1946

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. You have given plenty of news"The lure of Legislatures"[2] , though written in Gujarati, is really, meant for the whole country. I am returning the Press cutting.

I will implement whatever suggestions of yours can be implemented.

Take care of your health. I will not write more as we shall meet soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 138

[1] The name is omitted in the source.
[2] *Vide* "The Lure of Legislatures"

522. LETTER TO DR. DINSHAW K. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
February 14, 1946

CHI. DINSHAW,

I shall reach there on the 19th. I shall write later by what train. We shall be about 11 or 12 people. This time I am not coming as your guest, but for the sake of the work that we want to do there. This time my party as well as I will meet our food expenses only from the funds reserved for the poor. You need not, therefore, incur any expenditur on that account. I will reimburse then and there whatever you spend [on our account]. That too would not be from my own account but from the money that is earmarked for the poor out of the hospital fund. The other that lies with me has not been earmarked for any particular purpose. And this amount belongs to my rich friends Whatever amont now remians with you is what you have earned yourself and for your personal expenses. And I have no right to take a single piece out of it, for after having become a trustee I should not regard it as my right to draw anything from that amount.

As regards accommodating me, I shall put up wherever you ask me to, i. e., in the room you have reserved for me or in any part of the hospital or in a tent. I don't at all regard it as inconvenient for me to put up in a tent in this season. And I shall not find it inconvenient to stay throughout the year in a place with a tiled floor. You had such a place made for the Working Committee.

You are not to incur any expenditure on my account. If I don't proceed with a hardened heart as I do, I will not be worthy of the trust, nor will I be able to serve the poor through the trust.

I hope you, Gulbai[1] and Ardeshir[2] are fine, and I expect Maji[3] is enjoying peace and happiness. From there I shall return on the 1st of March. I expect to go to Poona again on the 19th or 20th of March.

The rest when we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. DINSHAW MEHTA
POONA

From a copy of Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Wife, son, and mother of the addressee
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*

523. ABOUT RAJAJI

I have read Shri Kamaraja Nadar's Press message[1] . I am sorry. I can easily be silent, but the cause may suffer. He says he is my follower. In that case he should have referred to me before rushing to the Press and certainly before resigning[2] . I have intentionally described myself as a Bhangi. In the man-made social ladder I want to be at the bottom. I would like Shri Kamraj to cease to be a Nadar and to become a Bhangi with me and then in all humility withdraw his resignation. Whatever it is legally or not, the Provincial and Working Committees alone can decide. Morally it is perfectly possible, if he himself feels he has hurt himself and the cause by resigning. Then he will rejoin the difficult post (if it is legally possible) as a strong man. He was weak in resigning. He says he prevented four others from following him. It was well that they did not resign.

Why worry about the use of the word 'clique'?[3] In spite of all my love for the English lenguage, it is a foreign tongue for me and I am as likely as not to make mistakes in using it. Of course, I have used the word 'clique' deliberately. I must not withdraw it. This is its dictionary meaning:"small exclusive party". I know that there is such a clique in Tamil Nadu against Rajaji. I am unable definitely to name one single person in it.[4] No one need wear the cap unless it fits him. There are many cliques in the Congress organization as even in the best managed organizations in the world. The fewer their number the better the organization.

Were I not challenged at the time that I was touring in the South, I would have been silent.

I must admit that I did not talk to those who were with me in that special train. I was buried in my work which was divided between meetings at frequetnt stoppages and writing whilst the train was in motion. And let the public know that those who are physically nearest to me have to be so forbearing that they would not come near me and interfere with my work. Such has been the usage during my stormy life. My own children thus get the least of me. Aruna Asaf Ali came

[1] *Vide* "Statement of K. Kamaraja and T. Prakasam"
[2] From the Congress Parliament Board
[3] *Vide* "Curious"
[4] *Vide* also "Interview to "The Hindu", 16-2-1946

for two days to see me fresh from her hiding place and was so forbearing that she had of me only as much as she could during my walks.

SEVAGRAM, February 15, 1946

Harijan, 24-2-1946

524. HOW TO CANALIZE HATRED

Hatred is in the air, and impatient lovers of the country will gladly take advantage of it, if they can, through violence, to further the cause of independence. I suggest that it is wrong at any time and everywhere. But it is more wrong and unbecoming in a country where fighters for freedom have declared to the world that their policy is truth and non-violence.Hatred, they argue, cannot be turned into love. Those who believe in violence will naturally use it by saying, 'Kill your enemy, injure him and his property wherever you can, whether openly or secretly as necessity requires.' The result will be deeper hatred and counterhatred, and vengeance let lose on both sides. The recent war, whose embers have yet hardly died, loudly proclaims the bankruptcy of this use of hatred. And it remains to be seen whether they so-called victors have really won or whether they have not depressed themselves in seeking and trying to depress their enemies. It is a bad game at its best. Some philosophers of action in this country improve upon the mode and say, 'We shall never kill our enemy but we shall destroy his property', for the remarkable thing is that the so-called enemy has brought no property of his own and what little he has brought he makes us pay for. Therefore what we destroy is really our own. The bulk of it, whether in men or things, he produces here. So what he really has is the custody of it. For the destruction too we have to pay through the nose and it is the innocent who are made to pay. That is the implication of punitive tax and all it carries with it. Non-violence in the sense of mere non-killing does not appear to me, therefore, to be any improvement on the technique of violence. It means slow torture and when slowness becomes ineffective we shall immediately revert to killing and to atom bomb, which is the last word in violence today. Therefore I suggested in 1920 the use of non-violence and its inevitable twin companion truth for canalizing hatred into the proper channel. The hater hates not for the sake of hatred but because he

wants to drive away from his country the hated being or beings. He will, therefore, as readily achieve his end by non-violent means. For the past twenty-five years, willingly or unwil-lingly, the Congress has spoken to the masses in favour of non-violence as against violence for regaining our lost liberty. We have also dis- covered through our progress that in the application of non-violence we have been able to reach the mass mind far more quickly and far more extensively than ever before. And yet, if truth is told as it must be, our non-violent action has been half-hearted. Many have preached non-violence through the lips while harbouring violence in the breast. But the unsophisticated mass mind has read the secret meaning hidden in our breasts, and the unconscious reaction has not been altogether as it might have been. Hypocrisy has acted as an ode to virtue, but it could never take its place. And so I plead for non-violence. and yet more non-violence. I do so not without knowledge but with sixty years experience behind me. This is the critical moment, for the dumb masses are today starving. There are many ways that will suggest themselves to the wise reader as to how to apply the canons of non-violence to the present needs of the country. The hypnotism of the Indian National Army has cast its spell upon us. Netaji's name is one to conjure with us. His patriotism is second to none. (I use the present tense intentionally). His bravery shines through all his actions. He aimed high but failed. Who has not failed? Ours is to aim high and to aim well. It is given to everyone to command success. My praise and admiration can go no further. For I knew that his action was doomed to failure, and that I would have said so even if he had brought his I. N. A. victorious to India, because the masses would not have come into their own in this manner. The lesson that Netaji and his army brings to us is one of self-sacrifice, unity irres-pective of class and community, and discipline. If our adoration will be wise and discriminating, we will rigidly copy this trinity of virtues, but we will as rigidly abjure violence. I would not have the I. N. A. man think, or say, that he and his can ever deliver the masses of India from bondage by force of arm. But, if he is true to Netaji and still more so to the country, he will spend himself in teaching the masses, men, women and children to be brave, self-sacrificing and united. Then we will be able to stand erect before the world. If he will merely act the armed soldier, he will only lord it over the masses and the fact that he will be a volunteer will not count for much. I, therefore, welcome the declaration made by Capt. Shah Nawaz that, to be worthy

of Netaji, on having come to Indian soil, he will act as a humble soldier of non-violence in Congress ranks.

SEVAGRAM, February 15, 1946

Harijan, 24-2-1946

525. PLEASE NOTE

I have taken up *Harijan* at such a critical moment in our country's history that, having undertaken to write, I cannot wait in certain matters for publishing my thoughts till the next number of *Harijan* is out Then too it is published not at the place where I reside but away from me. Thus exacting readers will forgive me, if they find things in the columns of *Harijan* which have already printed in the daily Press The reason for publication is obvious. *Harijan* goes to many readers who do not read the papers in which my statements may be published and in which accurate publicity can never be guaranteed. *Harijan* is not a commercial concern in any meaning of the experission. It is published purely in the interest of the cause of India's independence.

SEVAGRAM, February 15, 1946

Harijan, 24-2-1946

526. TELEGRAM TO SAROJINI NAIDU

SEVAGRAM,
February 15, 1946

SAROJINI NAIDU

SUKHNIVAS

HYDERABAD, DECCAN

LOVE. MANY HAPPY RETURNS[1]. HOPE YOU FAMILY WELL.

SPINNER[2]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee's birthday was on February 13.

[2] The addressee had given to Gandhiji the epither "Spinner of Destiny".

527. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
February 15, 1946

BHAISHRI,

In reply to your letter I should say that your ideal can be reached through a knowledge of nature cure. I am of the opinion that nature cure is at present in a very imperfect state.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

PURUSHOTTAMBHAI PATEL
69 BARODA COLLEGE HOSTEL
BARODA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

528. LETTER TO DAHYALAL

SEVAGRAM,
February 15, 1946

CHI. DAHYALAL,

I have your letter. You might be knowing that I don't hold any office in the Goseva Sangh. Please write to the Goseva Sangh direct.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

529. LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA KAMDAR

SEVAGRAM,
February 15, 1946

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA,

I have your letter of the 12th; I am very glad. I am not going to stay in Bardoli for one month, I shall stay for fifteen days only. You should ask Manibehn[1] about your staying there.

I accept your claim to my company when I am in the Ashram.

[1] Wife of Narahari Parikh

But when I am away doesn't the right to stay with me generally belong to whosoever I am putting up with?

I hope you are keeping well.

Blessings from

BAPU

HARI-ICHCHHA KAMDAR
KHADIA POLE
RAJMAHAL ROAD
VADODARA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

530. LETTER TO POONAMCHAND RANKA

[*February 15, 1946*][1]

BHAI POONAMCHAND[2],

I hear that you have deliberately formed a sort of group, excluding from it those who can be regarded as fully eligible, whereas you have sent in the names of those who don't deserve to be returned to the Assembly. I am pained to hear all this. Why such fascination for the Assembly. Why the lure, and that too for a man like you? Adopt the path of humility, justice and truthfulness.

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

531. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

[On or before *February 16, 1946*][3]

I have seen both statements[4] and I confess that I do not like them. I have not singled out any person for reference. My observation was general and took stock of the situation as I observed it. I must repudiate the charge that in making my observation I committed a

[1] In the source, letter is placed between the letters of February 14 and 15.

[2] President of the Central Provinces Provincial Congress Committee

[3] The interview was reported under the date-line "Wardhaganj, February 16".

[4] Of K. Kamaraja Nadar, and T. Prakasam, President, Andhra Pradesh Congress Committe. They were in connection with the observation made by Gandhiji in his article "Curious", *vid*"Curious"and "Curious". For the statements, *vide* "Statement of K. Lkamaraja and T. Prakasam"

serious blunder. But, if I have, my advice as an indivi-dual may be summarily rejected. My sole anxiety is that the right thing should be done irrespective of individual likes and dislikes.[1]

The Hindu, 19-2-1946

532. QUESTION BOX[2]

Q. It is necessary to import as many foodstuffs as possible. As it is, people do not get enough to eat. Any further reduction in rations is fraught with risk. It will mean further undernourishment, making the people an easy prey to disease. It may even lead to food riots. As for increasing production, it is most difficult, if not utterly impossible, at the present juncture.

A. I am aware that many people hold the views given above. But the argument does not impress me. People will find it unbearable to have their rations further reduced when they are already not getting enough to eat. But, if we accept, as I do, that the Government figures are correct, foresight demands, and it is our duty, to swallow the bitter pill and ask the people to do like wise; that is, we should all eat less so that we can hold out till the next harvest. Today, because of the corrupt administration, the masses do not get even their just dues under the rationing system. It will be a great thing if this can be rectified so that everyone can get his or her share easily and truly. If, however, we believe the Government figure to be wrong and continue the agitation for increased rations, and if the Government concedes that demand, a time will come before the next harvest is in when we shall be let without any food whatsover and the poor will have to die an untimely death.We should take every care to avoid such a calamity. It will, therefore, be wisdom on our part to put up with a reduction in the present rations.

Then I do not think it is impossible to grow more foodstuffs, though I agree that it is difficult. The difficulty is due to our lack of knowledge and the requisite skill If we are all optimistic and courageous and employ ourselves forthwith to produce whatever food we can by our individual effort, we shall probably be able before long to give the people a balanced diet and shorten the period of reduced rations.

[1] *Vide* also "About Rajaji"

[2] Originally published in Gujarati, this appeared as "form *Harijanbandhu*", 17-2-1946.

My optimism is irrepressible, but I admit that nothing will be possible without whole-hearted co-operation on the part of both the Government and the public. Without it, even the imported foodstuffs may be squandered and maldistributed. Besides we are not yet independent. Relying on outside help will make us still more dependent. If, however, without relying on them, we do get imports of foodstuffs, we shall gratefully accept and make the best use of them. While it is the duty of the Government to try to get food from outside, I do not think it is good for us to look either to them or to other countries. What is more, disappointment from that direction will be positively harmful for the morale of our people in these hard times. But, if the peo-ple become united and determined to look to none save God for help and do not oppose such Governmental measures as they find useful, there will be no cause for disappointment. Such action will enable the people to emerge stronger from the ordeal, and foreign countries will think of their duty to send us food of their own accord wherever they can spare it 'God helps those who help themslves.' How can others withhold help from the self-reliant? The British Government, during their hour of need, took away all that India had, and today we have to put up with the consequ-ences of their action. Need we then tell them and those whom they helped by depleting India's resources that their duty today is towards India?

Q. India does not produce enough cotton. This has to be imported from Africa and America. Peasants are not allowed to grow cotton, the reason given being that they should grow more food.

A. This cannot apply to those who grow cotton for their own use. It can only be applicable in the case of those who grow cotton as a money crop. The Government has committed the crime of making cotton a commercial commodity. This sin cannot be wiped out by importing cotton. That can only aggravate the wrong. The export of the cotton was made solely for the benefit of Lancashire. It thus became a commerical commodity in an artificial manner. I can understand the prohibition against growing large quantities of cotton during war in certain areas in the interests of food production. To prohibit the growing of cotton altogether and depend on imports for our needs is no remedy for food scarcity. Wherever possible people should grow cotton for their own use. I might understand, and even tolerate, the policy of importing cotton for the use of Indian cloth mills. But, if this policy prohibits the growing of cotton for the individual's own use, it becomes wholly untenable and must, there-

fore, be strongly resisted. This is a matter for the consideration of both the Government and the public.

SEVAGRAM, February 16, 1946

Harijan, 24-2-1946

533. MEANING OF GOD[1]

A correspondent writes :

> I am reading your *Gita Bodh* these days and, trying to understand it, I am puzzled by what Lord Krishna says in the tenth discourse[2].
>
> "In dicer's play I am the conquering double eight. Nothing, either good or evil, can take place in this world without my will." Does God then permit evil? If so, how can He punish the evil-doer? Has God created the world for this purpose? Is it impossible then for mankind to live in peace?

To say that God permits evil in this world may not be pleasing to the ear. But if He is held responsible for the good, it follows that He has to be responsible for the evil too. Did not God permit Ravana to exhibit unparalleled strength? Perhaps the root cause of the perplexity arises from a lack of the real understanding of what God is. God is not a person. He transcends description. He is the Law-maker, the Law and the Executor. No human being can well arrogate these powers to himself. If he did, he would be looked upon as an unadulterated dictator.[3] This does not befit a man. They become only Him whom we worship as God. This is the reality, a clear understanding of which will answer the question raised by the correspondent.

The question whether it is impossible for mankind ever to be at peace with one another does not arise from the verse quoted. The world will live in peace only when the individuals composing it make up their minds to do so. No one can deny the possibility nor say when that will come to pass. Such questions are idle waste of time. To a good man the whole world is good. By following this golden rule the correspondent can live in peace under all circumstances,

[1] Originally written in Gujarati, this appeared as "from *HarijanBandhu*" published simultaneouly with the source.

[2] Verse 36

[3] In place of this sentence, *Harijanbandhu* has: "If he did, we see him as Emperor Nero (devil), as the Viceroy here, the Law-maker, the Law and the Executor."

believing that what is possible for him to be is also possible for others. To believe the contrary connotes pride and arrogance.

SEVAGRAM, February 16, 1946

Harijan, 24-2-1946

534. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
February 16, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You cannot detain me there till April 3. I have already written[1] to you that you may keep me there for 15 days at the most. I must see through what I have started. I have even accepted enagagements outside Bardoli after the 19th. You can take all the work you want from me during my fifteen days in Bardoli. I have discussed everything with Bhai Kher[2] . Of that more when we meet. I am quite busy at present.

I am sorry to hear about Bhulabhai's[3] illness. I should like to go and see him before you take me home from the railway station. My silence will not come in the way. I think Mathuradas[4] will be able to come and see me at Birla Bhavan.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 295-6

535. TALK WITH MEMBERS OF TALIMI SANGH[5]

SEVAGRAM,
Febraury 16, 1946

It would not, therefore, do for you to say in the present crisis that you are occupied with your educational activity whilst the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 13-2-1946
[2] B. G. Kher
[3] Bhulabhai Desai's
[4] Mathuradas Trikumji also was ill at the time.
[5] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"; Zakir Husain and some members of the Sangh came in the afternoon.

people are threatened with death due to starvation. Nayee Talim must react to the present situation by converting itself into an instrument for increasing our food supply and teaching people how to meet the danger of food shortage. If the students under Nayee Talim can produce even a part of their food requirement, they will to that extent release food for others, besides teaching them self-help by their personal example.

You do not know the kind of land we had to begin with in South Africa. Who would give good land to 'coolies', as we were called there? But by dint of application we were able to convert it into a fruit orchard.[1]

If I were in your place, I would not use the plough to begin with. I would arm our children with the hoe, and teach them to use it effectively. it is an art. Bullock power can come later. Similarly I would not like you to be deterred by the power quality of the soil. A thin top layer of loam or compost can enable us to grow many a useful vegetable and pot herb. A beginning can be made at once by converting night-soil into manure by the shallow trenching system. The coversion does not need more than a fortnight. Every pint of water whether from bathing and ablutions or from the kitchen should be turned into the backyard vegetable beds. Not a drop of water should be allowed to be wasted. Greens can be grown in earthen pots and even discarded old tins. No opportunity should be neglected, however trifling. The cumulative result, then, if the practise is on a nation-wide scale, will be colossal.

Harijan, 3-3-1946

536. PROCEEDINGS OF THE HINDUSTANI PRACHAR SABHA MEETING, WARDHA[2]

[On or after *February 16, 1946*][3]

A meeting of this Sabha was held on February 15 and 16. Important extracts of the proceedings are given below:

A committee comprising Shri Kaka Kaleker, Shri M. Satyanarayan, Dr. Tarachand, Shri Manganbhai Desai and Shri Shriman

[1] According to Pyarelal, "someone had complained that the land at the disposal of the Sevagram Tamil Sangh was of a poor quality".

[2] This appeared under the title "Hindustani Prchar Sabha, Wardha".

[3] Inferred from the contents.

Narayan Agrawal (Secretary) be appointed to suggest necessary amendments to the Sabha's Constitution.

The following Associate Members can be appointed Members of the Sabha under Rule 5 of the Education Circular:

Dr. Jaffar Hassan, Dr. Syed Mahmud, Shri A. M. Khwaja, Shri Jugatram Dave, Shri Shrinath Singh, Shri Haribhau Upadhyaya, Shri Pyarelal, Dr. Sushila Nayyar, Smt. Yashodhara Dasappa. Smt. Prema Kantak, Shri Devprakash Nayyar, Shri Shripad Joshi.

The first three examinations in Hindustani should not be conducted from Wardha but as far as possible the responsibility of them should be placed on the Provinces. The fourth, or the final examination, should be conducted from Wardha.

The responsibility for conducting the final examination and supervising the other three examinations will rest with a committee consisting of the following members.

Shri Kaka Kalelkar, Shri Shriman Narayan Agrawal and Shri Amritlal T. Nanavati (Secretary).

The syllabus for the fourth examination will be along these lines:

Paper 1: Hindustani Prose

Paper 2: Hindustani Poetry

Paper 3: Language and Grammar

Paper 4: Essay and Translation

Paper 5: Oral Examination

The work of selecting text-books for this examination will be taken up by Shri Kaka Kalelkar and Shri Shriman Narayan Agrawal, who will be assisted by the following members:

Dr. Tarachand, Shri Surdarshan, Shri Satyanarayan and Smt. Raihana Tyabji.

The final decision about the text-books will be taken by the Working Committee.

An institution named "Hindustani Pracharak Madrasa" should be opened in Wardha. It will work from July to April.

Selected students from the all-India body will be recruited in this school.

The following committee is being appointed for running this school:

Shri Kaka Kalelkar, Chairman

Shri Shriman Narayan Agrawal, Secretary

Shri Amritlal T. Nanavati, Member

Shri Rainath Banhatti, Member

Smt. Raihnana Tyabji, Member

The following subjects will be taught in this school:

Paper 1: Histoy of the Hindustani Language and an advanced study of Hindustani.

Paper 2: Hindustani Language and the origin and development of the language Hindustani, its structure and grammar.

Paper 3: Knowledge of Hindi and Urdu—language and literature.

Paper 4: Methods of teaching.

Paper 5: History of Indian civilization.

Paper 6: India's communal problem.

Paper 7: Art of translation.

Paper 8: Indian languages, and an elementary knowledge of their literatures.

The work of selecting text-books for the study of these subjects will be done by Shri Kaka Kalekar and Shri Shriman Narayan Agrawal. In this work they will be assisted by the following members:

Shri Satyanarayan, Dr. Tarachand, Shri Sudarshan and Smt. Raihana Tyabji.

The final decision regarding the text-books will be taken by the Working Committee.

On finishing the course at this school, candidate passing the examination will be awarded the 'Hindustani Pracharak' diploma.

Perinbehn Captain, Secretary, Hindustani Prachar Sabha, Bombay, has proposed that the area of operation of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha, Bombay, should not be restricted to Bombay city only and that it should be permitted to work in the suburbs of Bombay, up to Kalyan on the G. I. P. Railway line and up to Vihar on the B. B. & C. I. Railway line.

It was agreed to accept provisionally the proposal of Perinbehn Captain.

[From Hindu]

Harijan Sevak, 3-3-1946

537. IGNORANT WASTE[1]

Shri Jhaverbhai Patel of A. I. V. I. A.[2] , who knows his subject, writes:[3]

> Since the cutting off the supply of rice from Burma, there has been an acute shortage of rice in India. To meet this quantitative deficiency, Government prohibited the polishing of rice beyond a certain degree. If polishing has been banned altogether, the deficiency. . . would have been more than met. . . Government could not introduce that measure. . . but. . .even the halting step taken by the Government has been put to naught without the intelligent co-operation of the people. Since the Government has begun supplying undermilled rice, consumers have begun getting the rationed rice polished.. . . The most effective way to get whole rice find its permanent way into our dietary is to teach our womenfolk the science of dietetics.

It is very true that this peremptory reform can be brought about quickly by educating our women in the art of conservative cookery. How this education can be imparted is a serious question. Schools and colleges are perhaps the most ready-made media, let alone the Press and platform. If the people are to save themselves and the starving millions during this critical period, the Press and the platform have to respond to the urgent need.

SEVAGRAM, February 17, 1946

Harijan, 24-2-1946

538. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEVAGRAM,
February 17, 1946

CHI. KAKA,

I have your letter. I should certainly like it, if Anna lives in the Ashram but the question is whether he will be able to adjust himself to the Ashram atmosphere. Hence write to him all that you should about this point. Pass on this letter to him. He had a talk with me and his response had the same tone. That is why he had said that had he

[1] This appeared under "Notes".
[2] All-India Village Industries' Association
[3] Only extracts are reproduced here.

would be able to pull on for two or three months. It was proposed that he would work with Jagannath Dass and at the same time help in the working of *Bharati*. I cannot make out what has happened about all that. His letter is not clear whether he will come alone or with his family. A lot of work can be found in the Ashram itself, and later he can be accommodated under you as it suits all. This is all I can think of at the moment. It will be all right even if you pass on this letter itself adding to it whatever you think fit.

Blessing from

BAPU

[PS.]

I do have Ranade's book but have not read it. Maybe, I shall bring it myself or send it on.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

539. SPEECH TO TEACHERS, SEVAGRAM[1]

February 17, 1946

We should try to draw all the children towards us. We should admit that it is our fault if some do not come to us. They should all want to come to us.

We should treat those children who come to us as our own children. If their body and mind become sound and they acquire normal discipline, we should be satisfied that our purpose has been served.

I have taught many boys. I never allowed them to indulge in mischief. If they were under my care, I would educate them in such a way that they would learn from their very childhood that the desire to destroy was a very bad thing. Whatever they do, they should create something, produce something. There is an art in making anything and whatever they make should be artistic.

I do not believe that children are either good or bad from their very birth. Some tendency is there, but we have to mould them. This means that an infant starts learning right from the time of conception. At that time I would teach the mother. That would be a part of adult education. The training of the infant begins from that stage. We have

[1] This appeared under the title "Pre-Basic Education", as summarized by Sushila Nayyar.

to train the future generation on these lines. Till the child is separated from the mother, I would teach the mother. The infant is ever moving its hands and feet and is able to do something. If we are able to take under our care children of two or two and a half years of age and if they learn to move their hands and feet according to our method, I cannot set any limits to their progress.

If the child is put under our care, he will not destroy anything. He will feel hurt in doing so.

Whatever education we give to the children, it should be constructive and creative but never destructive.

When the child starts speaking, he starts learning a language. First you should teach him to distinguish different colours. Begin teaching him the letters of the alphabet only with the help of the pictures. Don't you have charts showing 1-2, A-B and so on? Reading, writing and arithmetic will come in due course of time and the child will not be overstrained. His education should be a form of play.

Whatever thing he makes should be useful. In this way his mind and hands and feet develop in co-ordination.

There are no distinctions between work and play in basic education. For a child everything is play. I would go so far as to say that thus his whole life becomes a kind of game. I have been doing this for many years now. I never feel that it is time for play and I should go and play. For me even writing is a game. Under basic education of my conception children will learn while playing.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 17-3-1946

540. NEW POLICY AND BOMBAY KHADI BHANDAR

The following figures[1] have been received from the All-India Spin-ners' Association Bhandar. They deserve to be studied. The progress of khadi under the new policy will in some matters, have to be measured in the inverse ratio. No doubt the more spinning-wheels the city-dwellers buy, the better; it means that more of them learn spinning. But the soon-er slivers stop selling the better. The only conditions is that the number of persons desirous of learning carding

[1] Not reproduced here

and spinning should increase. If the people are really enthusiatic, Vinobaji's experiments should bear some fruit. Whatever it may be, this much is clear that one who spins should himself card his cotton and make slivers out of it. For this the pro-cess of carding should be made easy. The answer to this is hand-carding.

Khadi may be kept in a bhandar, but the bhandar should present the appearance of a school. The persons woking in a bhandar, if I may call them employees, should necessarily be volunteers. They do not cease to be volunteer, if they accept less than their market value and do the work because of love of khadi. All of them should be proficient in ginning, carding, spinning and in teaching all the these. The greater the number of those who can weave, the better. We have done very few experiments regarding weaving. The real bhandar of my conception is an extensive plot near a suburb of Bombay where all those processes go on and are taught.

Difficulties should not overwhelm us; we should overcome them, that is, get rid of them. If it is true that swaraj lies in khadi, there are bound to be difficulties. Here, in the path of non-violence, they will be the least.

IN THE TRAIN TO BOMBAY, February 18, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 17-3-1946

541. LETTER TO RAMESHWAR

ON THE TRAIN,
February 18, 1946

CHI. RAMESHWAR,

I have no faith in this plan. Nothing can be achieved by having the building alone. I have told them that so many trustees are not required. Even if one intelligent, honest and hard-working man is available, the work can go on. I tried to get one sister but was unsuccessful. What is the use of getting a sister from a far off place? What would be gained by asking her to meet me in Bardoli? I shall be immersed in work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 10417

542. OH! FOR OUR ENGLISH!

How nice it would be, if we had newspapers only in our own languages. We should not then be blind persons, one mistaking the tail for the elephant, another the tusks, a third the trunk, for the noble animal—all wise in their own conceit, yet all wrong in essence. Thus I in my conceit said[1] , and still say, that the opposition to Rajaji was, and is, confined to a clique. An esteemed friend and others maintain that I have made a serious blunder[2] in calling the opposition by this name. My appellation can-not be, and was not meant to be applied to the Congress organization, whether provincial, central or any other, which, like the king, can do no wrong. A clique generally does the wrong thing. But surely both my critics and I are right, each other in our own way, and both are wrong. All this bother over the use of a foreign word! If I had written in the national [language] or my mother tongue, we would not have quarrelled over a word. Only let me close the Rajaji episode by saying that if I am wrong in the use of the word or in my estimate of Rajaji, no one need follow me. I have no official authority. The loss will be purely mine in that, for a wrong estimate, I shall have lost much or some of the moral weight I possess.

My purpose, however, just now is to quarrel with the reporter who, in trying to translate my Hindustani speech[3] at the Goseva Sangh meeting into English, has made me say the opposite of what I had said and meant. A handsome and delicate compliment has been turned into an indelicate reflection. There was no 'if' about my saying that Janakibai, the widow or the late Jamnalalji, was the rightful first successor of her late husband, even as the late Ramabai was of her later husband Justice Ranade. Next to her were his children. They might fail, but those of us who had gathered together to honour the memory of the deceased were also heirs, only if we were true.We were heirs by choice unlike the heirs through relationship. I am sure that the delicate compliment I paid in my indifferent Hindustani was not lost upon the widow, the children who are all working for the cause, or the numbers of freinds who filled the pandal which was specially constructed for the purpose. All were heirs in a common and noble

[1] *Vide* "Curious" and "About Rajaji"
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Poonamchand Ranka", 15-2-1946
[3] *Vide* "Speech at Second Goseva Sangh Conference, Wardha", 12-2-1946

service which constituted a limitless inheritance. I prided myself on the message which was altogether lost in transmission through a foreign medium. Could it have been reported and transmitted in Hindustani, it would have gone home to the readers.

I have not been able to read the whole report. Let me, therefore, complete it by briefly stating the other two thoughts I placed before the meeting. Cattle preservation was one of the major problems of India. It was not to be solved by speeches or money. It could only be solved by the Goseva Sangh possessing many cattle experts who understood and gave themselves to the problem, and by the mercantile community doing its work in the spirit of service rather than in the spirit of self-aggrandizement and exploitation. If they applied their undoubted talent to cattle-preservation, they could render great service to India. They need not be overwhelmed by the vastness of the problem. Each one was to think what he could do and do it thoroughly, irrespective of his neighbor or others. Therefore the central body was to concentrate on producing milk and bringing milk cheaply to every inhabitant of Wardha. In the end they would discover that they had solved the cattle problem for India.

Lastly I asked them to bear in mind Aruna Asaf Ali's wellmeant taunt that in thinking of their benefactor, the four-footed animal, they might not forget their elder freind, the biped of India, who made up the forty crore and without whom cattle could not exist for one day. Therefore every honest man owed it to himself, and the country, only to eat what he must for living healthily and not a morsel for indulgence. Every man, woman and child of understanding should try to grow for the use of India two blades of grass where today only one was growing. If they worked intelligently, honestly and co-operatively in hope, they would find that they could tide over the impending calamity without fuss, without anxiety and with dignified bearing.

BOMBAY, February 18, 1946

Harijan, 24-2-1946

543. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

February 18, 1946

There is a time for laughing and shouting and a time for observing silence and being serious. I have often said that a people who want to be free should learn to mount to the gallows with a smile upon the face. But laughter becomes an offence against decorum, if it is out of season. Similarly shouting out of season is an exhibition of bad manners. It becomes a man to remember his Maker all the twenty-four hours. If that cannot be done, we should at least congregate at prayer time to renew our covenant with God. Whether we are Hindus or Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians or Sikhs, we all worship the same God. Congregational prayer is a means for establishing the essential human unity through common worship. Mass singing of *Ramdhun* and the beating of *tala* are its outward expression. If they are not mechanical performance but are an echo of the inner unison, as they should be, they generate a power and an atmosphere of sweetness and fragrance which has only to be seen to be realized.

In the police and the army, physical drill and training in the use of arms regarded as an essential part of discipline. Military training includes marching in step and executing of movements to order in the mass noiselessly and harmoniously too.The mass singing of *Ramdhun* and the accompaniment of *tala* are as much a part of discipline in non-violence as physical drill and training in the use of arms are that of military discipline.

Gandhiji, however warned them that his advice must appeal to their hearts, not merely to their heads, if it was to bear fruit. Dry intellect would not take them far.

Turning next to the food crisis, he said, it presented a grim prospect. They could criticize the Government as much as they liked for its share in it. He himself had not been sparing in his criticism of the Government in the past and he would do so again when the occasion demanded it even though he stood alone. He stood by what he had said in 1942. If the British had stayed in India as the servants of the people, not their masters, and purely to defeat the Axis powers, he would have had nothing to say. Instead they had in their arrogance cast to the winds the warnings and

[1] The speech is extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". Gandhiji, taking advantage of a day's halt in Bombay on his way to Poona, addressed in Hindustani a prayer gathering at Rungta House in the evening.

protests of the people's respresentatives and denuded India of her vital resource, though perhaps not deliberately, with the result that they all knew. Nevertheless he could understand the food shortage. But cloth shortage he could not understand at all. India could grow any amount of cotton. He said:

In this land of ours, fabulously rich in natural resources, there is the lofty Himalayas with its everlasting snows where, they say, dwells the Lord of the Universe. It has mighty rivers like the Ganges. but owing to our neglect and folly, the year's rains are allowed to run down into the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea. If all this water was trapped and harnessed to irrigational purposes by the construction of dams and tanks, there should be no famine or food shortage in India Similarly cloth shortage can immediately be remedied by planting a miniature mill in every home in the form of a spinning-wheel or a *takli*. That would give us all the cloth that we need almost for nothing. I have cried myself hoarse in pressing this solution on the Government. It is immediately feasible, and it is my claim that not a single person need go naked, if necessary steps are taken to put it into operation. The only obstacles in the way are the inertia and prejudice in high places.

In regard to the food shortage, I admit that Government alone has adequate resources to cope with it. But even so we need not apathetically resign ourselves to fate, fixing our gaze at the skies for the rains to come. There is an inexhastible reservoir of water in the bowels of the earth. It should be tapped, even though we may have to dig two thousand feet deep for it, and used for growing food. We may not blame fate before we have exhausted all available means for combating a threatening calamity.

Today there is a lot of wastage in food going on in big cities like Bombay in the form of feasts and ceremonies. It is the sacred duty of every man, woman and child to conserve every grain of food and every drop of oil and ghee in this crisis. One should eat no more than necessary to keep the body in health and fitness when millions are faced with the prospect of death through starvation The foodstuffs thus saved can be distributed among the needy poor—not as alms but as remuneration for honest labour.

The *Harijan* which resumed publication recently, had a part to play in the present crisis. He advised them to read it as it would be for their good.[1]

[1] These two sentences are from The Hindu, 20-2-1946.

Proceeding, Gandhiji diagnosed the present helplessness of the country to the double slavery—slavery under the foreign yoke and slavery to our own inertia and sloth. As an instance of the latter he mentioned the fitful and inadequate response to the officer under the new khadi plan of the Bombay Kalbadevi Khadi Bhandar to provide instruments of, and instruction in, spinning and carding and the allied processes to all those who care. If we were not under the hypnotic spell of inertia and laziness, the people of Bombay should flock to the Khadi Bhandar in an unending stream day and night and make in no time the shortage of cloth a thing of the past.

The political slavery, they all hoped and he shared that hope, would soon end. But the removal of the foreign yoke won't necessarily bring freedom to the people in the real sense of the term. The Congress President had only the other day denounced[1] the recent happenings in Calcutta as being unworthly of a people who aspired to be free. He hoped that they would never disgrace themselves again like that. They were greatly deceiving themselves, if they thought that by indulging in hooliganism they would be able to make the British quit India. They would belie their creed and demean themselves in the eyes of the world if, after pledging themselves to truth and non-violence as the only means for the attainment of swaraj, they exhibited their impotent wrath by indulging in looting, stone-throwing, arson and abuse. He repeated what he had previously said that if 40 crores of Indians resolved unanimously and whole-heartedly that they would have swaraj through and non-violence alone, it would be theirs for the asking. But, if they lacked that faith, it was open to them to repudiate non-violence openly and after due deliberation. People like him might question their wisdom but nobody would charge them with falsehood and cowardice. He was afraid, they could not escape that charges today. He reminded them of Capt. Shah Nawaz's declaration[2] that Netaji Bose had told them that on their return to India they would be expected to serve their country not by means of the sword but through non-violence.

Granted that India produced sufficient arms and ammunition and men who knew the art of war, what part or lot will those who cannot bear arms have in the attainment of swaraj? I want swaraj in the winning of which even women and children would contrubute an eqal share with physically the strongest. That can be under ahimsa only. I would, therefore, stand for ahimsa as the only means for obtaining India's freedom even if I were alone.

Harijan, 3-3-1946

[1] On February 12, in his statement to the Associated Press of India

[2] *Vide* "Advice to Indian National Army Men", 22-1-1946

544. PURSES FOR PUBLIC MEN[1]

An interesting case of the use of purses presented to a public person has recently come under my obeservation. I received many purses from the public. Thus, during my recent tour, donations covering over two lakhs were given to me between Calcutta and Madura. Some of them were anonymous, some earmaked, and some donors said, when asked, that I was to use the money in any manner I liked. I have kept no property which I can call my own. Am I entitled to use those donations or a part of them for personal needs? During the whole of my career I have never made any such use and have always advised friends to do likewise. I hold that there is no other course open to persons who enjoy public confidence and to whom the public give donations, fully believing that the money will be used more judiciously and carefully than by themselves for some public purpose. It would be a terrible thing, if the trust reposed in one were abused for personal purposes. Ruinous consequences of such use can be better imagined than described. Public service must be, like Ceasar's wife, above suspicion.

BOMBAY, February 19, 1946

Harijan, 24-2-1946

545. A LETTER

BOMBAY,
February 19, 1946

Your letter had been forwarded to me by Bhai Sadiq Ali. I am sorry I could not send a reply sooner. I do not consider what you write a justification for Pakistan. The two-nation theory does not impress me. Economic inequality must go. It is not a Hindu-Muslim question; it is a question of hunger, affecting millions. It is the same both for the Hindus and the Muslims. It is the question of the workers and employers. I am convinced that when this question is solved, the problem of high and low will also be solved. Both parties will have to co-operate in solving this problem. Let us see what God wills.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

546. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, C. P. PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE

POONA,
February 20, 1946

SECRETARY
PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE
NAGPUR

GENERAL AWARI'S FAST[1] ENTIRELY MISPLACED. HE SHOULD DESIST.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

547. TELEGRAM TO AGA KHAN

Express POONA,
February 20, 1946

THE AGA KHAN
MALABAR HILL

THANKS WIRE. DATE DEATH[2] TWENTY-SECOND. WOULD LIKE TO VISIT CREMATION GROUND THEN. IF YOU ARE THERE THEN I WOULD GLADLY COMBINE PILGRIM-AGE WITH OUR MEETING. WOULD NOT CARE SPARE FURTHER TIME OUT OF LIMITED TIME MY DISPOSAL.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Manchershaw Rustomji Awari, popularly known as 'Gen.' Awari' after his 'movement of civil disobedience with regard to the Arms Act and the Explosive Substance Act designed for the release of Bengal detenus" in 1927, vide Vol. XXXIII, pp. 337-8, was Treasurer of Central Provinces Congress Committee, and also an office-bearer of Nagpur Parliamentary Board. He went on hunger-strike from February 18 in protest against what he called acts of injustice by the Central Parliament Board of the Congress of which Vallabhbhai Patel was Chairman, in rejecting the nominations, including his, proposed by the Nagpur Pradesh Congress Committee for a seat in Nagpur General Urban constituency. Vide also "Letter to Damodar Das Mundada", 24-2-1946 and "Letter to Manchershaw R. Awari", 24-2-1946 also "Letter to Puratan Buch", 28-2-1946

[2] Of Kasturba Gandhi

548. TELEGRAM TO PIROJA WADIA

POONA,
February 20, 1946

PIROJA WARDIA
PANORAMA
WALKESHWAR ROAD, BOMBAY
COME ANY DAY.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

549. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
February 20, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I refer to the letter[1] I wrote on November 25, 1945, when Sir Evan Jenkins was P. S. V. He asked me to send Shri Prabhu Dayal Vidyarthi to New Delhi which I did. Since then my son has been in correspondence with me as he was seen by Sir John Thorne[2] in this connection. But I have had no official intimation of the result of the examination or what is produced to be done.[3]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Governement, 1944-47, p. 64

[1] It was about torte and bad treatment in prison of Prabhu Dayal Vidyarthi and Rammandhar Lohiaa; vide "Letter to Sir Evan M. Jenkins", 25-11-1945

[2] Home Member

[3] The addressee's reply dated March 12, read: "I am sorry for the delay over answering your letter of 20th February about Mr. Vidyarthi's case. The Home Member had discussed the whole matter with your son Mr. Devdas Gandhi; he had also promised to let him know the result of certain investigations which are still proceeding at Nagpur."

550. LETTER TO PUSHPA K. DESAI

POONA,
February 20, 1946

CHI. PUSHPA,

It is all right, if you refrain from writing in order to save my time. Otherwise you must write.

I hope you are in high spirits.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9270

551. NOTE TO DR. DINSHAW K. MEHTA

February 20, 1946

Here is my idea :

At present do not admit any patient unless I send him or for whom I cannot arrange the expenses from the fund that is earmarked for the poor. This way the poor, but not the destitute, will be accommodated.

2. Examine any poor patient, whether male or female.Give him a bath, if necessary; also the syringe, if necessary. Prescribe the diet in writing. He should himself procure it. If he asks for it, we may give it but he should pay for it. They need not be made to lie down in a large tub; should be seated to have a hip-bath and bathed with a shower. There should be provinsion to clean all parts of the body. [The patient] should be given nude sun-bath. He may put on a *langoti*[1]. There should be separate arrangement for women but no separate arrangement for individual patients.

3. Let him take as much clean drinking-water as he can. Those who cannot afford oranges, etc., should be given honey, lime and water.

4. Only those for whom such treatment is enough should be attended to This includes indigestion, fever, smallpox, constipa-

[1] Cod-piece or long strip of cloth to cover frontal nudity

tion, headache, eczema, eruption, measles, chicken-pox, itch, dysentery and such other ailments common among the villagers.

For carrying on this work we should take on workers, in proportion to the number of patients, and train them. We should take only those who are prepared to work at least for two years. Generally such workers should stay at their own place. Some of them should give a few hours' free service while some should be paid a regular salary. But all these things will settle down gradually. As our needs grow, a way will suggest itself and we shall know how to implement it.

5. We shall never use foreign medicines nor any organic drugs. Medicines made from plant stalks and as simple as can be procured in the village may be used to some extent. Castor oil may be used, if found necessary.

6. We would need a large number of volunteers for this work. None of them, however, should be highly paid.

7. If this work is broad-based, it can certainly develop into a seat of learning, say, a university.

8. It is my firm belief that if the project works, we shall certainly get as much land and funds as we need.

9. If you cannot appreciate this project but if you can have faith in it, you may go ahead with your work at Bombay until this is put on the rails. Examine other places. I am not inclined to invest in land or a building right now. I wish to carry on with the existing means. If you have the faith, you will of course, peep in now and then.

10. You must keep your promise to those patients who pay. It is for you to see how it can be done. Whatever amount you get should belong to you. These people may not stay on this site but I think they can stay anywhere in Poona.

If anything is left unanswered, please ask me. I shall reply in writing.

Show this to Jehangirji. After that all three of us can discuss.

You are not to accept defeat and certainly there is no question of despairing. It is the duty of all three of us to fulfil what we have undertaken.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

552. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

POONA,
February 20, 1946

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

I have your interesting letter. May the dance-and-music function that you have organized bring good results. We must not understand by music mere singing or playing on an instrument, or by dance mere rhythmic movements. I would say that one understands music only if one's whole life became full of music. Therefore a student of music ought to know how to make himself comfortable, how to communicate with others, etc., whether alone or in society. There should be sweetness in [whatever he does], in his movements, in his eating, drinking. A person who is full of music will be courteous and thoughtful in all his acts.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

553. LETTER TO PYARELAL

February 20, 1946

CHI. PYARELAL,

Though I took work from Manibhai there, I had brought him so that he would work here. I thought you knew that much. But I shall send Munnalal as substitute. He is also capable of working. Someone else had asked for him but I let the matter pass. There is no need at all to panic.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

554. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI [1]

POONA,
February 20, 1946

GURUBANDHU,

I have your letter[2]. Venkatrama Sastriji's handwriting is as neat as yours. I have torn up your letter. Do not worry. My support cannot be had for dividing Hindustan into two parts. I do not think Rajaji's opinion is different. If it is, it will not be acceptable to me. The Aga Khan has not offered the Palace to me, nor have I asked for it, nor do I wish to.

May you get well and have a long life.[3] What did you do about Valmiki[4] ?

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 8819

[1] Forwarding this letter to the addressee on February 21, Amrit Kaur said: "Bapu wrote the enclosed for you and asked me to copy it out in clear Hindi which I did. I feel you would treasure the original rough draft, and am, therefore, giving it to Jagadisanji to make over to you . . . ."

[2] In *Letters of Srinivasa Sastri*, p. 366, Jagadisan explains: "At Sastriar's bidding this letter, written from his death-bed, was delivered by me personally to Gandhiji. . ." Dated February 18, the letter read: "The Aga Khan's offer of the palace to you is genuine and need not be doubted. He is the most acute and wily diplomat in modern India. He began the separatist game and would end it by taking it out of Jinnah's hands and making it

[3] *Vide* "Talk with V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 30-1-1946

[4] *Vide* "Talk with V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 30-1-1946

555. LETTER TO MAHARAJA OF REWA

DINSHAW MEHTA CLINIC, POONA,
February 20, 1946

MAHARAJA SAHEB[1],

Yesterday you presented me a cheque for Rs. 1,001. I considered whether or not I should accept it. My heart says that I should not; I am, therefore, returning it. Please excuse me.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

MAHARAJA
REWA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

556. QUESTION BOX[2]

Q. You say that one of the contracting parties in a marriage should be a Harijan. I hope you do not call other marriages taboo.

A. This is a good question. I do not believe that all other marriages are taboo. I have pointed to the ideal, the practical attainment of which it is our duty to strive for as speedily as possible.

POONA, February 21, 1946

Harijan, 3-3-1946

[1] Martand Singh, the Yuvaraj who presumably ascended the throne on the dramatic deposition of the Ruler, Gulab Singh Ju Deo, while out on camp near the border, by the Resident Lt. Col. Campbell. The dismissal was condemned by Jawaharlal Nehru, for it implied British displeasure at the ex-maharaja's desire to give self-government to his subjects.

[2] Originally written in Hindi, this appeared as "from *Harijan Sevak*", 24-2-1946.

557. MESSAGE TO BRITISH PEOPLE[1]

POONA,
February 21, 1946

My life itself is a message for the English people.

The Hindi, 24-2-1946

558. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6, TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
February 21, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

Here are a few more suggestions to meet the food situation which have been sent to me by friends.

The Indian Army should be given this unique opportunity of doing constructive work. They can be moved about easily. They could, therefore, be sent to all such places where wells need to be dug most urgently.

Regarding additional foods, fish has been mentioned. Fish abounds in the seas around the coasts of India. The war is over; there are innumerable small and medium-sized vessels which were used for doing patrol and guard duties along our shores for the last five years. The Royal Indian Navy could arrange about staffing these with the Department of Fisheries giving all assistance. If everything and anything can be done during a war, why not a peace-time war effort? Dry fish does even now form part of the normal diet of a great number of people who are very poor—that is when it is available and they can afford to buy it.

All public gardens should immediately by law made to start growing vegetables. Squads of army personnel should be put to work here too People requiring extra labour to transform their ground or garden should also be able to obtain free help through this channel.

[1] The report said that the message was given to an officer of the British Army in India whose service had been terminated. He told Gandhiji that he would go back to England and propagate India's cause for freedom as he knew how Indians were "exploited under the British rule".

The distribution of food should be through co-operative societies or similar organizations.

All food parcels to friends or relatives in Britain or elsewhere abroad should be stopped as also the export of groundnuts, oils, oil-cakes, etc.

All stocks of foodstuffs in the hands of the military should be released forthwith and no distinction should be made between military and civil ranks. In this connection I draw His Excellency's attantion to the following A. P. I. message published in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* of February 11, 1946.

> It is learnt that huge quantities of composed *atta* are being destroyed for the last few days by throwing them into the river Shitalaksha at Narayanganj.

The campaign against despondency and for growing more food will avail nothing, unless bribery which is going on as never before is stopped and honesty and straight dealing begin to pervade the Government ranks and the public.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 141-2; also *Harijan*, 17-3-1946

559. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

February 21, 1946

MY DEAR PRAKASAM,

I am enclosing herewith copy of a letter which I have received from Bezwada dated 15th inst. Ordinarily I would have ignored such a letter but there is a specific allegation in this letter which I believe requires immediate contradiction. It is about your having collected Rs. 50,000/-.[2] I do not know whether there is any truth in this matter but if you have collected such an amount, it must have been credited to the Congress account in your province. This kind of scandal should not be allowed to be spread and therefore I would suggest that you may take such steps either by public contradiction or by such other

[1] For the addressee's reply, *vide* "Letter from G. E. B. Abell",26-2-1946. The two letters appeared in *Harijan*, 17-3-1946, as "released to the Press by Gandhiji with the consent of His Excellency the Viceroy". *Vide* also"Famine of Grain and Cloth" and "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 22-2-1946

[2] *Vide* also "Speech at Prayer Meeting, Bombay", 11-3-1946

method as you may deem appropriate to prevent the spread of such scandals.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

560. LETTER TO ANNIE MASCARENE

POONA
February 21, 1946

CHI. ANNIE[1],

A report of the speech you made at Bombay has appeared in the newspapers. If it is correct, what you said is not right. Even otherwise, I know that you have no control over your tongue and when you stand up to speak, you blab anything that comes to your mind. This speech also is quite a specimen, if the newspaper report is correct. I have sent the report to Bhai Thanu Pillai. You can read it. Such indiscreet talk can do good neither to you nor to the poor people of Travancore. Besides, by your act you put the whole fair sex to shame. Why all this?

Send me a prompt reply. If you address your letter to Sevagram, it will reach me wherever I may be.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

561. LETTER TO PATTOM THANU PILLAI

POONA,
February 21, 1946

BHAI THANU PILLAI,

I hope you are well. I send you a report of Annie Mascarene's speech that has appeared in the newspapers. I am also enclosing a copy of the rejoinder that the Sachivottama[3] has sent me. If the speech

[1]Advocate and political worker; Minister for Health and Electricity, Travancore-Cochin State; Member, Constituent Assembly of India

[2] *Vide* also the following two items.

[3] The Maharaja of Travancore had conferred this title, meaning Prime Minister, on C P. Ramaswami Aiyar, the Dewan.

was as reported, I feel that Annie Mascarene does not deserve to be a co-minister. The Sachivottama writes that it is our duty to admit as much as is true, but to expose what is vile also becomes our duty. With this thing in view, please send me a full reply. If you do not understand the Hindustani, take the help of Bhai Satyanarayana or any other Hindi Pracharak and reply in the *rashtrabhasha* only. If this is not possible, then write in English.

Read my letter[1] to Annie and forward it to her wherever she is.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PATTOM THANU PILLAI]

TRIVANDRUM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

562. LETTER TO C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR

POONA

February 21, 1946

BHAI RAMASWAMI,

I have your letter regarding Mrs. Annie Mascarene's speech. It is good you drew my attention to it. I had not read it before your letter came. I hardly look at any papers, and leave out many things. Though I am not making your letter public, I have written[2] to Annie and also to Bhai Pattom Thanu Pillai. Let me see what the outcome is.

My advice is that in case you do not already have one, you should engage an additional secretary knowing Hindi and Urdu and should correspond, as far as possible, with other Indians in the *rashtrabhasha* and with the Travancore people in their mother tongue. I know a simple thing like this is not beyond you.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR C. P. RAMASWAMI

TRAVANCORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceeding item.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Annie Mascarene", 21-2-1946

563. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

POONA,
February 21, 1946

CHI. CHAND,

I have your letter. That you keep longing to meet me is as good as meeting me. Get well and be ready [for service]. That is much more important than meeting me. I also like it that you consider Satyavati your ideal. God will take care of the rest.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Chandrani Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

564. COERCIVE FAST

Telegrams and letters condemning my remarks[1] about Rajaji have been received. Some of them say that all the praise bestowed on Rajaji is well-deserved. They admit his integrity, self-sacrifice, great ability and administrative capacity. But they hold his so-called apostasy in 1942 to be unforgivable and add that his scheming to be Premier of Madras is insufferable. For me there is no offence or apostasy in resigning from the Congress and maintaining one's views. If he is scheming to get the Premiership, it is undoubtedly worthy of condemnation and would be a sad discovery for me.

But my purpose in reverting to the subject is not for the sake of defending him. My opinion carries no authority save moral which can be rejected at will. What I want to reprehend the threat of fasting, or the fast itself, if I do not withdraw the epithet 'clique' in respect of those who are opposing him. I have given my meaning of the word. And I adhered to its use according to that meaning. Nobody should be coerced into changing his belief. There would be an end to all decency and reason, if such fasting became effective. As the author of fasting as a weapon in satyagraha, I must state that I cannot give up an opinion honestly held even if the whole world fasts against me. I

[1] *Vide* "Curious", "About Rajaji", "Interview to "The Hindu", 16-2-1946 and the following item.

might as well give up my belief in God because a body of atheists fasted against such belief. The rule of conduct stated by me is of universal applicability. Incidentally I may mention that the fasts reported of prisoners in some U. P. jails and now of persons[1] aggrieved by the decision of the Parliamentary Board elsewhere fall under the same category though for different and sound reasons.

POONA, February 22, 1946

Harijan, 3-3-1946

565. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

POONA,
February 22, 1946

Among messages and letters condemning my remarks about Rajaji are some from persons threatening to fast, if I do not withdraw the word 'clique'. As the author of fasting as a weapon in the armoury of statyagraha, I must reprehend such use of fasts. No one should give up opinion honestly held even if the whole world were against him. I, therefore, advise against such fasts.[2]

Harijan, 3-3-1946

566. MINUTES OF MEETING OF ALL-INDIA NATURE CURE FOUNDATION TRUSTEES

The first meeting of the trustees of All-India Nature Cure Foundation was held on February 21, 1946, at 10.30 p. m. at . . .[3] where Gandhiji stayed. Gandhiji presided over the meeting. Both the other trustees, Shri Jehangir Patel and Shri Dinshaw Mehta, were present.

I. Regarding the accounts, the following subjects were discussed at length :

1. The weekly expenditure during seven weeks.
2. The details of income.
3. Daily expenses incurred over the indoor and outdoor

[1] The reference is to Manchershaw Awari's fast against the decision of Congress Parliamentary Board; *vide* footnote 1, "Telegram to Secretary, C. P. Provincial Congress Committee", 20-2-1946

[2] *Vide* also the preceding item.

[3] Omission as in the source

patients.

4. Expenses incurred on the boarding and lodging of the resident workers and servants.

5. Expenses incurred on construction works and repairs, and also on gardening and the income from garden produce.

6. Account of the bills pertaining to expenses of December 1945 or an earlier period paid in January, so that necessary adjustment can be made with the personal account of Dr. Dinshawji.

7. The statement showing the outstanding amounts, if any, to be recovered from the patients or from any other source.

II. How this institution functioned till today, i.e., January 1, 1946, to February 21, 1946, was discussed in detail. Gandhiji desired that the institution should function according to his views.

III. Elaborate discussion took place amongst the trustees as to how this institution should function in future. Gandhiji expressed his views not only regarding the management but also how treatment should be given so that poor people could derive benefit. Dr. Mehta stated that this method of treatment was only experimental and had very limited scope. But even in its limied form, if it was made available to the people of India and if a Nature Cure University came into being, he was prepared to run the treatment according to Gandhiji's views. And during that period either its success would have been proved or Gandhiji would give up the idea. According to Gandhiji, the creation of a Nature Cure University was the last mission of his life.

The meeting then adjourned to February 22, to meet at 2.15 p. m.

M. K. GANDHI

Ferbruary 22, 1946

From a facsimile of the Gujarati in *Mahatma*, Vol. 7, between pp. 96 and 97

567. TELEGRAM TO H. L. SHARMA

POONA,
February 22, 1946

DR. H. L. SHARMA[1]
KHURJA

COME HERE TWENTY-SIXTH.

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 348

568. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

POONA,
February 22, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

In continuation of his letter[2] to you of yesterday's date, Gandhiji wishes me to bring to your notice the following information which has been given to him :

(a) The Managing Director of the New Dholera Steamships Ltd., Bombay, says that one of their boats went out last week with 2951 sacks of pulses called *moong*.

(b) The steamers *Begam* and *Jalajyoti* last month carried to Colombo 35,000 bags of pulses; *moong*, *tur* and *lang* dals on the *Begam* were 1,612, 3,011 and 26,053 bags respectively. The writer says, this is done monthly.

(c) The attached cutting[3] refers to the very large quantities of rice exported as late as September last.

[1] Mangaging Trustee of Surya Chikitsalaya and Dadeech Seva Sangh, Nawabad, Khurja

[2] *Vide* "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 21-2-1946

[3] Pyarelal explains: "The report was to the effect that during the month of July, August, September 1945, 22,504 tons of rice valued at over Rs. 94 lakhs was exported from Calcutta port by one single firm."

Thanks for yours[1] of the 15th instant. Gandhiji quite understood about the Government communique to the Press.[2]

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,

AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 145

569. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

February 22, 1946

I got your letter. There was nothing improper in what you said. From a philosophical point of view nobody has any right. But we were not discussing philosophy. I see nothing improper in somebody saying to his elder, 'I have a right over you'. I can understand your having such thoughts at present because of your illness. Banish them. I hope your fever has quite gone.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 209

[1] Which, *inter alia*, read: "What had been out to the Press was an official communique from New Delhi. . . My telephone message to say nothing except that I had gone to Wardha to apprise Mr. Gandhi of the situation . . . had not been appreciated. . . . We managed to get something into the morning's papers simultaneously with the communique to show that Mr. Gandhi's health was satisfactory . . ." Pyarelal explains: "The official communique was to the effect that Gandhiji was 'unfortunately not well enough to travel' and so the Private Secretary . . went to see him. . . . But . . . in the communique . . . Mr. Abell was . . . reported to have said . . . that Gandhiji 'is in good health but is a bit tired due to strain of his recent long tour of the country.' " *Vide* also "Letter to Lord Wavell", 10-2-1946

[2] In his reply dated February 25, the addressee said that as he was not aware of the facts, he was "sending on to the Food Department the cutting about the alleged export if rice in July, August and September 1946. He added that they "have been exporting 3,000 tons of pulses per month to Ceylon", which "has now been stopped though the result will be a very serious situation for Ceylon".

570. LETTER TO VIKRAM SINGH

February 22, 1946

CHI. VIKRAM,

I got your letter. I approve. I am doing all that should be done in that connection.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VIKRAM SINGH

C/O SHOORJI VALLABHDAS

BOMBAY MUTUAL BUILDING

POST BOX NO. 34

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

571. LETTER TO ANASUYA KALE

POONA,
February 22, 1946

SISTER,

I got your letter. How can it be a matter of right to get elected to the Assmbly? It should never be a question of right. The picture of the Congress has room only for service, none for rights. You should be satisfied with what we get while rendering service. Have you forgotten that at Faizpur I had them raised their hands only at your instance and you saw, didn't you, that a very large number did not have their names on the Congress rolls? Yet they rendered service and that too gladly. Of course there were many among them who didn't. For once, even if I accept that the field of service has scope for rights too, you must understand that I neither participated nor have any interest in elections. And I am pained at the rivalry that is rampant in elections.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

SOW. ANASUYA KALE

DHANTOLI

NAGPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

572. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

POONA,
February 23, 1946

I have followed the events now happening in India with painful interest. This mutiny[1] in the navy and what is following is not, in any sense of the term, non-violent action. Inasmuch as a single person is compelled to shout "Jai Hind" or any popular slogan, a nail is driven into the coffin of swaraj in terms of the dumb millions of India. Destruction of churches and the like is not the way to swaraj as defined by the Congress. Burning of tram-cars and other property, insulting and injuring Europeans is not non-violence of the Congress type, much less mine, if and in so far as it may be different from the Congress. Let the known and unknown leaders of this thoughtless orgy of violence know what they are doing and then follow their bend. Let it not be said that India of the Congress spoke to the world of winning swaraj through non-violent action and belied her word in action and that too at the critical period in her life. I have deliberately used the adjective"thoughtless". For, there is such a thing as thoughtful violent action. What I see happening now is not thoughtful. If the Indian members of the Navy know and appreciate non-violence, the way of non-violent resistance can be dignified, manly and wholly effective, if it is corporate. For the individual it always is. Why should they continue to serve, if service is humiliating for them or India? Action like this I have called non-violent non-co-operation. As it is, they are setting a bad and unbecoming example for India.

A combination between Hindus and Muslims and others for the purpose of violent action is unholy and will lead to and probably is a preparation for mutual violence—bad for India and the world.

The rulers have declared their intention to "quit" in favour of Indian rule. Let the action be not delayed by a moment because of the exhibition of distressul unrest which has been lying hidden in the

[1] According to *The Indian Annual Register, 1946*, "The Indian Franchise", 16-12-1895, the mutiny "against the quality of food supplied. . . and ill-treatment" was started "by the men of H. M. I. S. *Talwar* . . . who secured the sympathy and support of nearly 20,000 men representing the entire Royal Indian Navy personel". On February 19, "strikers . . . in the Bombay Harbour demonstrated widely and sometimes violently for two hours . . . causing utter confusion and complete hold-up of traffic . . ."

breast theirs might is unquestioned. Its use beyond the bare requirement will be unworthy and even wicked, if it is made to suppress the people or a portion of them. The people have been far too long under the foreign heel.

Harijan, 3-3-1946

573. TELEGRAM TO SARALA DEVI

POONA,
February 23, 1946

SARALADEVI
CARE SARALA
BOMBAY

IMPOSSIBLE TOMORROW. CAN SEE YOU TWENTY-SEVENTH.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

574. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

POONA,
February 23, 1946

MIRABEHN
CARE POSTMASTER
BAHADRABAD
JWALAPUR

NO CHANCE DELHI. YOU MAY COME TO POONA ANY DATE AFTER MARCH TWENTIETH.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6516. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9911

575. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
February 23, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I can understand the ordeal you are going through. To what a pass have things come!

Do you want to take me to Bardoli in this situation[1]? I cannot

[1] The reference is to riots in Bombay in connection with naval mutiny.

stay there longer than 15 days in any circumstances. Why need I be taken in a special train? Is it in order to save me from the crowds that the night will have to be spent in the train? I send this with Sushila in the hope that it will reach you earlier. She will give you the details.

I hope you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 296-8

576. LETTER TO POTTI SRIRAMULU

POONA,
February 23, 1946

BHAI SRIRAMULU[1],

I got your wire today. Of course you have my blessings.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 114

577. LETTER TO T. J. KEDAR

POONA,[2]
February 23, 1946

BHAI KEDAR[3],

I got your letter of the 20th today. I also had the previous one. I deliberately omitted to acknowledge it as it did not call for a reply. There was nothing in it to pain me.

Although I had hoped that you would come and show me your face at Sevagram, I appreciate the reason you give for not coming.

Blessings from
BAPU

[T. J. KEDAR]
NAGPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] A Congressman of Nellore who had asked for Gandhiji's approval to undertake a fast in order to awaken public conscience in favour of opening a temple to Harijans in Nellore. *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 16-3-1946, and "Letter to Potti Sriramulu", 17-3-1946.

[2] This is in Marathi.

[3] Advocate; Vice-Chancellor of Nagpur University

578. LETTER TO RAGHAVDAS

POONA,
February 23, 1946

BABA RAGHAVDAS,

I got your letter and was pleased to get it. I shall surely do all I can. Do you get *Harijan Sevak*? What newspapers are you allowed? I hope you are keeping good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

[RAGHAVDAS]
FAIZABAD JAIL

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

579. NOT LONELY

A friend[1] wrote to me the other day how lonely he felt in the midst of company. This remark was prompted by my telling him that I distrusted the word of the official world. He did not and had thought that I might share his trust. Behold his disappointment when he found me wanting. It may be that was not what he meant by his cryptic letter. Anyway that was my interpretation and I replied[2] that as a man of God, he must never feel lonely. For God was ever with him.

[1] The reference is to Sudhir Ghosh, who, in *Gandhi's Emissary*, p. 77, explains: "It was the evening of 10th February . . . Gandhiji and Dr. Rajendra Prasad reviewed the whole Indian political scene, and I listened quietly to all that they said to me. What bothered me was Gandhiji's repeated statement . . . that he distrusted the word of British officialdom in India and advised me to do likewise . . . He told me that I was not to be 'thrilled' by the attention that was being paid to me by men in high authority like the Viceroy. This hurt, though there was no lack of fatherly love in what he said. . . . I brooded over what Gandhiji had told me about the need to distrust British officials. I was seized with an unusual sense of loneliness. . . . On 16th February I wrote a letter to Gandhiji to unburden myself." For an extract from Sudhir Ghosh's letter, *vide* "Letter from Sudhir Ghosh"

[2] Sudhir Ghosh, who seems to have lost the letter from Gandhiji, says that Gandhiji narrated, "in his own inimitable language, the story of the Prophet Mohammed and his disciple Ali, both of whom were hiding from their persecutors in a dark cave. Ali was afraid and said to his master, 'We are alone.' The master said: 'We cannot be alone. For God is with us.' "

Why should he care even if the whole world deserted him? Let him trust in spite of me, as long as the trust came from his heart and not his head.

I feel differently. Mutual trust and mutual love are no trust and no love. The real love is to love them that hate you, to love your neighbour even though you distrust him. I have sound reasons for distrusting the English official world. If my love is sincere, I must love the Englishman in spite of my distrust. Of what avail is my love, if it be only so long as I trust my friend? Even thieves do that. They become enemies immediately the trust is gone.

See what is happening in Bombay[1]—the Bombay where I have passed so much time, which has given the public causes so much money, and which I had thought had fairly imbibed something of ahimsa. Will it prove the burial ground of ahimsa?

I am unable to think that the incendiarism, the looting and the insults heaped upon Englishmen are, or were, acts of hooligans. Who are hooligans? Will there be none when English rule is no more? The fashion of blaming the hooligan ought to be given up. We are the makers of the brand. They respond to the air about them.

Imagine the senselessness of looting grain shops. The looters did not help themselves. Even if they did, they were not starving. The grain was meant for the starving. If it was being misused, looting could not prevent that misuse. Usurpers will always replace the looted grain while there is any to usurp. Between the two sets of looters the starving will be more starved than before.

They who incited the mutineers did not know what they were doing. The latter were bound to submit ultimately. Or was it meant as a lesson in violence? That is not the way to understand history.

I ask myself, and perhaps others are asking, why I am not repeating what I did after Chauri Chaura.[2] I have no call in that direc-tion. When or if it comes, nothing in the world will prevent me, ill or well. Let me reaffirm the truth that I love the Englishman as well as the Indian. Both are humans. Yet I want the rule of and for the masses of India. Loka-manya has taught us that Home Rule or swaraj is our birthright. That swaraj is not to be obtained by what is going on now

[1] The reference is to the naval mutiny.

[2] The reference is to the suspension of civil disobedience Resolutions at Bardoli", 12-2-1922 after the inhuman conduct of the mob in February 1922.*Vide* "Working Committee's

in Bombay, Calcutta and Karachi.

Let every Congressman, whether four-anna member or not, think for himself where Congress should stand. Let us not deceive ourselves and the world.

POONA, February 24, 1946

Harijan, 3-3-1946

580. NATURE CURE TREATMENT[1]

Nature cure treatment means that treatment which befits man. By 'man' is meant not merely man as animal but as a creature possessing, in addition to his body, both mind and soul. For such a being, Ramanama is the truest nature cure treatment. It is an unfailing remedy. The expression *ramban*, or infallible cure, is derived from it. Nature too indicates that for man it is the worthy remedy. No matter what the ailment from which a man may be suffering, recitation of Ramanama from the heart is the sure cure. God has many names. Each person can choose the name that appeals most to him. Iswar, Allah, Khuda, God mean the same. But the recitation must not be parrot-like, it must be born of faith of which endeavour will be some evidence. What should the endeavour consist of? Man should seek out and be content to confine the means of cure to the five elements of which the body is composed, i. e., earth, water, *akash*, sun and air. Of course Ramanama must be the invariable accompaniment. If, in spite of this, death supervenes, we may not mind. On the contrary, it should be welcomed. Science has not so far discovered any recipe for making the body immortal. Immorality is an attribute of the soul. That is certainly imperishable but it is man's duty to try to express its purity.

If we accept the above reasoning, it will automatically limit the means permissible under nature cure. And man is thereby saved from all the paraphernalia of big hospitals and eminent doctors, etc. The large majority of persons in the world can never afford these. Why then should the few desire what the many cannot have?

POONA, February 24, 1946

Harijan, 3-3-1946

[1] Originally written in Hindi, this appeared under "Notes" as "from *Harijan Sevak*", published simultaneously with the source.

581. LETTER TO DAMODAR DAS MUNDADA

POONA,
February 24, 1946

CHI. DAMODAR,

I have read the statement[1] of Gen Awari. My opinion stands that nothing can be done under the pressure of fast. Public life will become worthless, if things could be achieved in this manner through coercion. Fast has several limitations. Fasts which transgress those limitations, I consider as disastrous to public life. Gen. Awari ought to see this simple thing and give up his fast. After that it is open to him to say what he wants to. It is not also correct to say, as Gen. Awari does, that there is no appeal against Sardar's decision. There is the Working Committee and the All-India Congress Committee.

You can show this letter to anybody.

The Hitavada, 27-2-1946

582. LETTER TO MANCHERSHAW R. AWARI

POONA,
February 24, 1946

BHAI AWARI,

Your hunger-strike is not right. I hope you got my wire.[2] Can such self-torture prove anything, or turn a falsehood into truth? This kind of obduracy is not worthy of you or anyone else. I think no one would stop a person who sets out to commit suicide in this way. Does Bhai Pooranchand approve of this obduracy? I do hope, you will not

[1] According to the report, this was shown to Gandhiji by the addressee, "who was deputed by Acharya Dharmadhikari to secure Gandhiji's help to persuade Gen. Awari to give up his fast". Awari had stated: "It was a farce to appoint a Parliamentary Board while Sardar Saheb had decided to sweep off the whole list selected by the Nagpur Parliamentary Board. . . . Ours was the only Province where the President of the Parliamentary Board was not a candidate for the Assembly. . . . I will go on with this fast, a death warrant and . . . no persuasion . . . shall budge me from my determination except the removal of the grievances before or even after this election."

[2] Presumbably, "Telegram to Secretary, C. P. Provincial Congress Committee", *vide* "Telegram to Secretary, C. P. Provincial Congress Committee", 20-2-1946

exhibit your ignorance by claiming your action to be God's prompting. You may, if you like, file an appeal. Give up your fast.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

AWARI
NAGPUR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

583. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

POONA,
February 24, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Write and ask Awari to give up the fast and to send a statement to the Working Committee or to the All-India Congress Committee presenting his ease. And of course he may appeal to the public.[2]

You must have received the earlier letter[3] sent with Sushila. Personally I feel that you should now give up the idea of taking me to Bardoli. I will of course do as you say but you must not leave Bombay. If there is anything about which you want to see me, do come here. I shall come, if you want me there. My work here will be over in a few days.

The differences of opinion in the Working Committee are very harmful at present. Think over this. Frankness is essential. Please do not drive yourself too hard.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 299-300

[1] The addressee's reply, reported under date line "Nagpur, February 27" in *The Hindu*, 1-3-1946, read: "I had expected you to tell me where I am wrong. You say that under pressure of fast nothing can be done. This argument was advanced by the British Government whenever you launched upon a fast. I had not expected you to adopt the slogan of the British Government. Fasts against humiliation and injustice are not suicide." *Vide* also the preceding and the following items.

[2] *Vide* also the preceding item, and "Statement to the Press", 27-2-1946

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 23-2-1946

584. LETTER TO DR. DINSHAW K. MEHTA

POONA,
February 24, 1946

CHI. DINSHAW,

I continue to think about you. I also had a talk with Jehangirji. The poor will never be treated properly unless a sanitary[1] sense[2]awakens in you. The servants' chawl is a shame. Filth reigns. I think you should remove them from there. This is your task and nobody else's. It cannot be done by others. Something can possibly be done only if you hand over vacant possession of the premises. You may transfer absolute custody on a date which you would yourself appoint. You can relieve Munnalal with immediate effect [if not also a few others]. What else can I say?

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. DINSHAW MEHTA
POONA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] These two words are in English.
[2] *Ibid*

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

THE SAPRU COMMITTEE PROPOSALS[1]

BOMBAY,
December 27, 1945

"The Committee stands for a single Union of India, including the whole of British India and all the Indian States, the claim for secession or non-accession, by which individual Provinces or States can keep out of the Union is not accepted," says the Sapru Committee in its final report on constitutional proposals. This report, which was compiled by the Rt. Hon. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, the Rt. Hon. Mr. M. R. Jayakar, the Hon. Sir N. Gopalaswami Iyengar and Kunwar Sir Jagadish Prasad, was released to the Press on December 27, 1945.

Embodying this principle in its proposals, the Committee recommends that the constitution-making body to be appointed after the elections should proceed on the basis of framing a constitution for a single State, and urges that the right of secession or non-accession given to individual States or Provinces in the Cripps proposals should be withdrawn.

The Committee maintains that throughout it has endeavoured to make a constructive approach to the many knotty problems that confront the country, to investigate them from every angle, to appraise as dispassionately as they could every fact, circumstance or conceivable argument and to reach conclusions which in their estimation were calculated to promote the lasting interests of India and were likely to elicit the approbation of thinking Indians.

The report says : "It is the Committee's firm conviction that the future of India lies in adopting a democratic constitution. The ultimate sovereign in a democracy is the electorate, which chooses those who are to represent it in the Legislature and Executive. Adult franchise is therefore recommended. Under existing conditions, it is excusable to give religious communities the right to a fair and adequate share of opportunities for service in the Legislature and Executive, but the aspirants for these opportunities should realize that they hold them in trust for the nation as a whole and should for that reason seek the support of all communities."

JOINT GENERAL ELECTORATES

The Committee has recommended that separate communal electorates should disappear and should be replaced by joint general elctorates with reservations

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M.R. Jayankar", 12-1-1946

of seats. In the opinion of the Committee, Parliamentary Government is not unsuited to India and can be worked even with communally composed Legislature and Executive. One of the cardinal features of the constitutional proposals made by the Committee is the provision of ample and effective safeguards for the minorities.

Emphasizing the importance of joint electorates, the Committee says : "No Government, which is not merely in power but accepts active responsibility for its decisions, can legitimately flinch from the task of righting a manifestly wrong decision (taken forty years ago, accepting separate electorate for Muslims), which has been so mischievous in its effects. We hope the present Labour Government in Britain, with its high democratic ideals and the enormous voting strength behind it, will not lack the courage to get this decision reversed with the support of Parliament. We have no doubt that such reversal would be to the lasting benefit of the Muslims themselves."

Parity at the Centre

It is because the Committee attaches great importance to the abolition of separate electorates that it considers parity of representation in the Central Legislative Assembly between Muslims and Hindus, other than Scheduled Castes, not too great a price to pay. Hindu objections to this proposal are strong, because it means on a population basis one Muslim will be regarded as equal to two Hindus, other than Scheduled Castes, also the fear that the British Government may accept the parity concession without implementing the important provision that joint electorates must be introduced, is not unfounded in the light of past history. Each special concession has, in the past, been made the starting-point for fresh demands. But in the interests of communal harmony, which abolition of separate electorates will bring about, the Committee has ventured on this proposal, but it insists that in its recommendation on parity, the conditions and limitations it has laid down are equally important. Parity, however, is confined to the Lower House of the Union Legislature and Union Executive, which are the final organs for determining all-India policy; and it is important that such policy should have the substantial backing of the bulk of Hindus and Muslims. The same considerations do not apply to the Provincial Legislatures or Executives, or to the Services, or to other fields of administration.

Joint electorates, with reservation of seats, are admittedly a far cry from democracy, but they are a necessary halfway house between separate electorates and general electorates without any limitation even as to candidature.

Concession Should Not Extend to the Services

The Committee considers that it will be unjust and improper to extend the concession of parity to the Services, civil or military. Government Services, like any other service, must be based upon individual merit and fitness. Neither does the

Committee think that the Muslims are educationally backward, as they were thirty or forty years back. As regards other communities, the present proportions are considered fair, but they may be revised by future Governments, so as to provide adequate representation for backward communities. The Committee also expresses the view that it will be dangerous to extend the principle of parity to the Defence Services.

Maintaining that the Muslims are not a separate nation, the Committee in the chapter on Pakistan or partition of India says that the separate nationhood of Muslims cannot be established on grounds of race, language or culture. If religion alone will have to be the basis of division, then many other communities can also claim separate nationhood.

Declaring that self-determination is not an absolute right and can only be applied with due regard to circumstances, the Committee examines the practicabilities of Pakistan in the context of Indian conditions and in the light of Indian opinion. It says : "The position is that the scheme of Pakistan put forward by Mr. Jinnah is not acceptable either to the Hinuds of the Punjab and Bengal or to the Sikhs or to the Congress or to the Hindu Mahasabha. The C. R. Formula has been totally rejected by Mr. Jinnah and has been opposed by the Hindus and Sikhs of the Punjab and Hindus of Bengal.

PAKISTAN NOT A PRACTICABLE PROPOSITION

"It is thus clear that Pakistan, whether whole, according to Mr. Jinnah's ideals, or truncated, according to the C. R. Formula, cannot be established without the consent of parties and will meet with the strongest opposition. Arbitration has been ruled out and is out of place when the fate of the entire country is to be decided. The only alternatives for enforcing Pakistan are either British enforcement of it or civil war."

After considering the problems of Defence of the sub-Continent and the position of minorities after division, the report states the Committee's conclusion that Pakistan "solves no communal problems and only raises fresh ones : that on grounds of Defence, leaving apart other major considerations, the division of the country into two independent States will endanger the safety of both, and that there is no justification for the British Government to support such a revolutionary scheme if they have genuine faith in the unity of India which they themselves have built up and fostered."

The report characterizes Prof. Coupland's regional scheme as "fantastic, unreal and academic."

Rejecting all schemes of partition and division, the Committee concludes : "We are convinced that the partition of India would be an outrage justified neither by history nor by political expediency. It is incompatible with the greatness, safety and economic development of the country and will lead either to constant internecine war

or perpetual foreign domination. It multiplies and complicates the problem of minorities without solving it and threatens to plunge India back into the dark and dismal days of the 18th centruy."

The Committee feels certain that political unity can be maintained and Hindus and Muslims can live together amicably as they have done for a thousand years."

The report proceeds to consider the arrangements to be made by which India will remain united and at the same time, afford the communities sufficient scope for self-development. One of the Committee's fundamental recommendations in this regard is the provision by which in the Union Assembly, excluding the seats given to special interests, Muslim representation from British India will be on a par with the representation given to Hindus excluding the Scheduled Castes. The offer of parity is subject to the condition that joint electorates with reservation of seats are introduced throughout, i. e., for all elective bodies in the country and the Committee adds that, should the Muslims not agree to this condition and insist on separate electorates, not only should the offer stand withdrawn, but the Hindus should be free to ask for a revision of the Communal Award.

Provision for Adult Franchise

Another important recommendation is the provision for adult franchise. If political power is to be transferred to an Indian Democracy, so as to prevent its concentration in the hands of a few, the risk of enfranchising the entire adult population should be taken. Political consciousness among the masses has awakened to a great extent and the last elections in 1937 were in themselves a great educative force. The average man thinks more and more in terms of politics and, if his judgment is faulty, he is no better or no worse than the average voter in Europe, where franchise has been in existence for some time.

Before Pakistan came to occupy the field, Muslim opinion generally seemed to demand that the residuary powers should be lodged with the Provinces, in order that the latter might have the fullest freedom to legislate in matters which were not covered expressly by the provisions enumerating the distribution of powers. Though the case for a strong Centre is strong, the Committee, as a matter of compromise and for the sake of peace and amity, recommended the vesting of the residuary powers in the Provinces, in accordance with the Muslim view. Mr. P. R. Das and some other members disagree with this recommendation.

While the subjects allotted to the Centre are reduced to a minimum, it is provided that the Centre shall have powers to co-ordinate legislation and administration of different units when necessary as well as to ensure the maintenance of the political integrity and economic unity of India as a whole.

Representation for Communities

The Committee recommends that the constitution should provide for representation of different communities in the Central Executive on the basis of their strength in the Legislature. The Cabinet will be a composite one only in the sense that communities will be represented on it, but in the interests of harmonious working "the Prime Minister's choice of his colleagues is not to be fettered". The Committee looks forward to the choice of members to whatever community they may belong on the basis of their political affiliations. The substitution of joint for separate electorate should, by compelling candidates to seek support from all communities, help the emergence of political parties each of which will contain members of different communities. It is on these considerations that "composite" instead of "coalition" Governments have been envisaged. It is also provided that there should be collective responsibility to the Legislature. The Committee prefers the British model, namely that the Prime Minister should choose his colleagues though a suggestion had been made that the Swiss model, under which the Central Legislature in joint session by single transferable vote elects the Cabinet and the Ministers hold office for the duration of the life of the Legislature, was made.

Indian States and Federation

Dealing with the Indian States, the Committee says that provision should be made in the constitution for the accession from time to time of Indian States as units of a Federation on such terms as may be agreed upon but the establishment of the Indian Union should not be contingent on the accession to the Federation of any Indian State or of any minimum unmber of Indian States. The Committee, therefore, contemplates that the Union need not be identical with Federation and it may include States which have not formally federated.

The Committee say: "Our recommendation is that the new constitution should continue at least the unity that now binds the States and British India, though the bond may not be federal. Federation, we recognize, is a closer and a more intimate and efficient bond and we earnestly hope that in due course and after the fullest consultation and investigation, all th States—a few individually but the great majority organized in groups and sub-federations—will have acceded as federated units of the Union. The inherent difficulties of bringing about such a happy consummation and the experience of negotiations which Lord Linlithgow inaugurated and conducted between 1936 and 1939 do not encourage the hope that these consultations and investigations can be successfully concluded, except with the exercise of infinite patience and after lapse of several years. To hang up the Federal Union of such units as are willing to federate until some States, or a minimum number of States, or the last hesitant State has agreed to accede, would be a policy which is calculated to postpone indefinitely the elimination of foreign rule and the achievement of full self-government. The Committee, therefore, insists that the Union of

India should be established without any such waiting and that, while individual States might take their own time to make up their minds as to whether they would accede as federated units, all of them should, from the outset, be treated as in the Union, united with each other and with the rest of India through paramountcy at the Union Centre."

As regards paramountcy, the report says, "British suzerainty, which is the mainspring of paramountcy jurisdiction today, will have to cease to exist and the new Union Centre, that is, the Federal Cabinet will come to exercise that jurisdiction over the unfederated States." The Committee hopes that the Rulers of States will not object to this inevitable development.

The Committee is also of the view that the Crown Representative as a separate office should disappear and the paramountcy jurisdiction now exercised by him should be transferred to the Union Cabinet. It is suggested that the Minister of the Union Cabinet should be in charge of the States affairs, assisted by a reformed Political Department. The Minister should also have a body of Indian Advisers to help him in administering paramountcy jurisdiction over the unfederated States.

"Head of State"

On the question of "Head of the State", the Committee says : "All parties are agreed that the constitution should be based on Indian independence and, therefore, in law and in fact the indefeasible sovereignty of the people of India from whom alone all powers of legislation and administration should be derive, should be recognized. No foreign power should be allowed to exercise any jurisdiction over the Indian Union and therefore the existing practice by which all residuary powers are exercised by the United Kingdom Parliament on the theory of "the indestructible sovereignty of the King in Parliament over the land through-out the King's dominions" will not be acceptable to any school of Indian political opinion. The Head of the State under the new constitution should replace the present chief Executive with his dual role as Viceroy and Crown's Representative. He will have such powers as are given to him under the constitution as also such other powers as are now vested in his Majesty the King, including powers connected with the exercise of the functions of the Crown in relation to Indian States. The Head of the State cannot act arbitrarily but only on the advice of the Ministry. His term of office may be for five years and ordinarily one person may not hold if for more than one term.

Minority Rights

Dealing with the rights of the Scheduled Castes and other minorities, the Committee has provided that these communities will in future be accorded by statute a place on the Executive and will share in the responsibilities of administration. They will have adequate voice in framing the constitution with safeguards against hasty

changes. They will have likewise the benefit of the fundamental rights with power to have more important ones enforced by the highest tribunal in the country. The Minorities Commission will keep a jealous watch over their welfare and will obtain relief when they are injured. The Committee hopes that with their rights ensured and protected, the minorities will not lose sight of their obligations to the sub-sections which exist in their midst.

As regards the Scheduled Castes, the Committee recommends the continuation of the method of election prescribed in the Poona Pact.

INDIANIZATION OF ARMED FORCES

Dealing with the question of Indianization of armed forces the Committee says : "Under any system of real self-government, these must be in the charge of a member of a responsible ministry. The disciplinary head of the armed forces, the Commander-in-Chief, has to work under the orders of the Ministry and, on the Dominion analogy, the supreme command of the armed forces has to be vested in the Head of the State; Indian statute law will make provision for the government of the armed forces, the application of the British Army Act and any other enactment of a similar nature to the Indian Army being done away with."

The Committee lays great stress on the creation and rapid development of a National Army.

SECESSION

Dealing with the question of secession, the Committee takes strong exception to the provision contained in the Cripps offer in regard to secession. In the opinion of the Committee such a provision amounts to the recognition of revolt from and repudiates the constitution. It is, in essence, an extraconstitutional act and common sense is against the constitution recognizing it as a legal right to be unilaterally exercised at the option of the unit.

In the opinion of the Committee, the constitution-making body should proceed on the basis of framing the constitution for a single State as a safe- guard for minorities, it is provided that no decision of the constitution- making body will be valid unless it is supported by three-fourths of the members present and voting. Valid decisions of the Constituent Assembly must be binding on the British Government. The Committee says that a stage has been reached when the British Government can no longer evade responsibility. Therefore they should not allow things to drift and the situation to deteriorate.

INTERIM GOVERNMENT

In conclusion the Committee makes an earnest appeal to all communities and parties in the country to accept the principles underlying its recommendation. In the event of there being no agreement, the Committee calls upon His Majesty's

Government to set up an interim Government at the Centre and proceed to establish a suitable machinery for framing a new constitution, substantially on the principles enuciated by it and to have it put into operation at the earliest possible date by handing over all the power now vested in them to the authorities establised there-under.

The Indian Annual Register, 1945, Vol. II, pp. 176-8

APPENDIX II

CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION ON INDONESIA[1]

The Working Committee have watched with admiration and sympathy the valiant struggle in defence of their newly won republic and independence which the people of Indonesia have been carrying on with steadfast courage and determination against British and Dutch forces. This Commitee emphatically condemn the wanton invasion of Java and other parts of Indonesia in order to impose Dutch imperialist domination on their inhabitants against their unanimous demand for a free State. Any support from any quarter to imperialist designs in Indonesia, Indo-China and elsewhere is resented throughout Asia as culpable violation of the professed aims of the United Nations and the undeniable right of Asian nationals. This will destroy the chance of international understanding and the very basis of any future world organization. The Committee regret that the United States of America have by their passive attitude encouraged these imperialist aggressions. While expressing their heartfelt sympathy with the Indonesia and Indo-Chinese nationalists for the enormous loss and suffering inflicted upon them by the imperialist powers, this Committee are particularly distressed to find the units of the Indian army arrayed against the Indonesians and Indo-Chinese and view with deep indignation this mischievous misuse of the Indian forces by the British Government. This Committee note with resentment that the Government of India has not granted necessary facilities to enable Jawaharlal Nehru to proceed to Java in response to Dr. Soekarno's invitation to which the present intolerable state of humiliating helplessness is due.

The Indian Annual Register, 1945, Vol. II, p. 101

[1] *Vide* "Talk with Indonesian Sailors", After 21-1-1946

APPENDIX III

G. E. B. ABELL'S NOTE ON INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI[1]

SEVAGRAM,

February 11, 1946

At 1 p. m. exactly I was taken along to Mr. Gandhi and was given a chair beside him. He sat on a mattress on the floor. Mr. Pyarelal, Mr. Ghosh, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur and an anonymous young girl also sat on the floor.

It was Mr. Gandhi's day of silence. When I asked if I might speak first and deliver His Excellency's message, he nodded assent.

I said, His Excellency hoped he had recovered from the fatigue of his Madras tour. He wanted me to explain the grave food situation and ask for Mr. Gandhi's help and co-operation. I had come without any high hopes as Mr. Ghosh had told me over the telephone that Mr. Gandhi's attitude was thoroughly hostile—I said this in a joking way and Mr. Gandhi laughed heartily. His Excellency had toured in the scarcity areas of Bombay, Mysore and Madras. In these areas there were practically no crops. Food had to be found for the people of these areas for 8 to 10 months; otherwise there would be a disaster. There was a very heavy all-India dificiency and the world food situation was such that in spite of our best efforts we might get very little in the way of extra imports. Two different policies had been suggested. The first was to maintain the present basic ration of 1 lb. and rely on getting imports. The other was to cut down the rations every-where, impose equal sacrifices on all, and thus ensure that even if no extra imports were obtainable, the people in the villages of South India would not starve. The Government of India were quite clear that the second was the right alternative. Mr. Gandhi signified that he agreed.

I said that we had very slender reserves, and that hoarding was a grave danger. If political parties used the opportunity of the ration-cut to agitate against the Government and undermine confidence in the food administration, the result might be to make a large-scale disaster inevitable. We had no desire to shirk responsibility, but there was a clear humanitarian issue to which everyone must face up.

On the political side, the scarcity involved a grave risk to the success of the efforts that would be made shortly to form a National Government and to get ahead with deliberations on a new Constitution. It would also be a very serious obstacle in the way of the new Ministries in the Provinces. The present Government was prepared to incur the odium of cutting the ration now in order that every available ounce of foodgrains should be saved for the scarcity areas, and a fair field given to the new Executive Council and the new Provincial Ministries.

[1]*Vide* "Letter toLord Wavell", 10-2-1946 & "Statement to the Press", on or after 11-2-1946

Though the Government of India would have welcomed the nomination of a Congress representative on the delegation now going to London, His Excellency realized that Mr. Gandhi might find it difficult to help in this particular matter. Mr. Gandhi nodded emphatically, and I did not pursue the point.

It had also been suggested that Mr. Gandhi's support to an appeal for imports would be valuable. I did not think His Excellency would press this either. Again an emphatic nod from Mr. Gandhi.

His Excellency did, however, urge very strongly indeed that Mr. Gandhi should assist by not embarrassing the administration on the food issue—Party capital should not be made of it as the result of agitation would be panic, hoarding and the loss of many lives. Mr. Gandhi's influence would be invaluable and His Excellency hoped he would use it.

Mr. Gandhi was in a more friendly mood than I had expected. He wrote down that he had written at 5 a. m. that morning an article for the *Harijan* which met His Excellency's requirements. This he produced. I read the article and said that though it contained some very useful advice to the public, the emphasis, which was on the futility of the administration, was wrong, I thought he could do better than that.

Mr. Gandhi wrote that the emphasis was a matter of opinion. His article showed a way out, which was to put in a National Government at once. I said His Excellency wanted such a Government as soon as possible but the President of the Congress himself had deprecated the formation of a new Executive Council until after the elections were over in the Provinces. Mr. Gandhi said that he personally disagreed with this. An Executive Council could be formed in two days. I said, I did not agree. A serious attempt would have to be made to get the Muslim League into such a Government. This would be very difficult and at the best take time. If it were urged that the League should be by-passed, at once I would say that this could not possibly be done during the elections. Nor, at such a critical time, could we have two changes of Government in the space of two or three months. (Mr. Gandhi made it clear he thought only of a short-term Interim Government to give way to another Government in April or May.) Finally there was the obvious difficulty about the budget. Mr. Gandhi seemed to be impressed with the practical difficulties and did not pursue the idea further.

Mr. Gandhi then said, it would be helpful, if I would give him in writing suggestions as to what he should do. I said, if he wanted anything authoritative, I would ask His Excellency to send him a letter on my return, but I emphasized that we were short of time and wanted a lead from him in the next few days. He said it would help, if I wrote down my ideas "as a man". I wrote down a few suggestions in the following words and got Rajkumari Amrit Kaur to give me a copy before I left :

1. Put about the idea that sacrifices are necessary by all, rich and poor, in order that the poor may live.

2. Encourage thrift, especially by housewives.

3. Discourage hoarding as a criminally wicked act.

4. So far as possible give the lead to electioneering speakers either to speak helpfully on food or at least not to say anything that will tend to destroy confidence.

Other moves in the same direction will occur to you. May not the shortage be a blessing in disguise, if all parties and people work together both now and under a new government to mitigate the suffering of the poor?

Mr. Gandhi read this and indicated that he was fully prepared to help on these lines. I asked him whether he would give a lead at once to Congress and electioneering politicians all over India. He refused to commit himself firmly on this point, but sent a message after I had left him that he would consider making a Press statement. . . .

Mr. Gandhi advised that His Excellency should send for Maulana Azad and say to him what I had said to Mr. Gandhi. . . .

Before leaving I asked what I should say to the Press. I told him that I had suggested that the Press should only be told today that I had gone to see Mr. Gandhi on His Excellency's behalf to apprise him of the food situation in India as a whole. He said, he would like us to say no more than that, unless we added that His Excellency had asked Mr. Gandhi to see him in Delhi but I had gone to Sevagram instead, because Mr. Gandhi, owing to his engagements, could not make the journey at once. He wanted no mention made of fatigue of ill-health and indeed he seemed very fit and spry.

The Transfer of Power. 1942-47, Vol. VI, pp, 932-5

APPENDIX IV

LETTER FROM M. R. JAYAKAR[1]

BOMBAY,
February 8, 1946

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

You will kindly excuse this letter, which is consequent on the eventful news in today's Press that H.H. the Aga Khan is meeting you on the 20th at Poona. This is an astute move, which he foreshadowed during his interview on reaching India a few days ago. Why should he be bothering you with his attention instead of meeting Mr. Jinnah's, it is not difficult to understand. You have done your best to meet Mr.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M.R. Jayankar", 13-2-1946

Jinnah's point of view by offering a division of India, though on the basis of a friendly transaction between two brothers. Mr. Jinnah contemptuously spurned it wanting the division as between two separate nations. With this background, the Aga Khan should be busy in meeting Mr. Jinnah and not you. But he won't do this because he knows that Mr. Jinnah will show him the door, if he tried to interfere. So he turns in your direction.

As for the Aga Khan's credentials to be an intermediary in such a vital cause, you will no doubt remember that he was the sponsor of the deputation to Lord Minto in 1906, asking for separate electorates—a deputation which the late Maulana Mohammed Ali described as a command performance. Further if you were aware of the proceedings of that deputation and knew, as I do, the activities of the Aga Khan during the four years of the Round Table Conferences in London, you would have no difficulty in realizing that, under the cloak of an international diplomat, he is as vicious a communalist as any in India. You will also recall what is now well-known, though at one time a part of the secret history of that time, that, on the occurrence of a European crisis, the Aga Khan went to Turkey to carry on negotiations, but the Ata Turk Kamal Pasha, on becoming aware of his visit, summarily ordered him out of the country.

These are some of the Aga Khan's antecedents which I have been able to recall. So I am writing this letter, as I did during your talks with Mr. Jinnah, with the view of conveying a caution—perhaps unnecessary—about the subtle nature of this attempt.

As reported in this morning's papers, the Aga Khan talks of a Pakistan State as part of an 'Indian and South Asiatic Confederation'. The South Asiatic Confederation is not in his power to establish. It may or may not come. But, if you accede to his delusive scheme, the Pakistan in India will be established and the other ingredients of the scheme may evaporate into thin air. His clever device is to sink Pakistan in an attractive scheme of an Asiatic Confederation, but a little search into the matter will reveal that it is an astute method for obtaining for the Muslim League its cherished object of a divided India. I need not say anything more. I am aware, as you said in one of your replies to me that you will not be wanting in caution, remembering that, anything which you think of conceding, it will be difficult for the country later to avoid. Such is your great influence in the country.

Begging you to excuse once more, I am,

Yours sincerely,
M. R. J.

MAHATMA GANDHI
SEVAGRAM
WARDHA

Gandhi-Jayakar Papers. File No. 826, p. 36a. Courtesy : National Archives of India

APPENDIX V

STATEMENT OF K. KAMARAJA AND T. PRAKASAM[1]

KAMARAJA'S STATEMENT

After Gandhiji's recent article, I feel that I can do nothing else than resign from the Parliamentary Board because all this conflict has come about only on account of the parliamentary programme. Yesterday the Parliamentary Board met, as already arranged. But meanwhile Gandhiji's article appeared. That needed serious attention. So I adjourned the Board meeting, so that I may consider Gandhiji's statement. It came as a shock to me.

I am the official head of the Tamil Nadu Congress. According to the Constitution, I nominated the Working Committee. Therefore Gandhiji's reference can only be applicable to me. I have paid my respects to Gandhiji in person, and have been in his calling distance in Madras and during his Tamil Nadu tour. So have been many of the other members of our Working Committee. It pains me much that Gandhiji did not talk to us anything about the Tamil Nadu Congress affairs while here. His use of the word "clique" affects me deeply.

Neither I nor my colleagues believe in the parliamentary programme except as a means to further the country's struggle for freedom. I had made my position clear on dozens of platforms since my release. At any rate I am no aspirer to any kind of office under the parliamentary activities.

As for the public agitation against Rajaji, it is only the reaction among Congressmen and the public to Rajaji's action and his speeches since his Pakistan resolution and resignation from the Congress. But, after Gandhiji's recent article, I feel that I can do nothing else than resign from the Parliamentary Board, because all this conflict has come about only on account of the parliamentary programme.

My four colleagues, Messrs T. S. Avinashilingam, C. N. Muthuranga Mudaliar, O. P. Ramaswamy Reddiar and Mrs. Rukmani Lakshmipathy felt compelled to quit also. I have persuaded them to remain for the very simple reason that the short time available for the election work ahead could not admit of such wholesale resignations. I thank them for the spirit in which they have agreed to continue on the Board. They would certainly have been within their rights, if they had followed my example. But they and I do not want to disturb the election work.

For my part, I cannot but quit. For 20 years Gandhiji has been the leader whom I have unswervingly followed and my faith in him continues unabated. That I should occasion him pain drives me to take the action I have decided to take. I assure

[1] *Vide* "About Rajaji", 15-2-1946 & "Interview to *The Hindu*", on or before 16-2-1946

everybody concerned that every decision taken by the Board here or at the centre will command my whole-hearted acceptances.

PRAKASAM'S STATEMENT

February 13, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi, who had declared more than once that he had nothing to do with Parliamentary politics and that he was not interested in anyone particularly, was led into a serious error when he characterized the official Tamil Nadu Congress as a "clique".

I feel strongly that Gandhiji should make amends in this matter, and I have every hope he will.

Shri Kamaraja Nadar did well in resigning the presidentship of the Tamil Nadu Provincial Parliamentary Board. He fought well over a big constitutional issue until it became impossible for him to continue any further.

The Hindustan Times, 13-2-1946 and 14-2-1946

APPENDIX VI

LETTER FROM G. E. B. ABELL[1]

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI,

February 26, 1946

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Thank you for your letter of the 21st February making suggestions to meet the food situation. His Excellency, to whom I have shown your letter, is grateful to you for writing, and will have the various proposals examined where this has not been done already.

2. Only a day or two ago His Excellency suggested to the Commander-in-Chief that it might be possible for the R. I. N. to assist with fishing. Recent events may make this difficult, but meanwhile His Excellency has initiated enquiries about the possibility of importing dried fish from Canada and Newfoundland, and also about the securing of suitable vessels and equipment so as to make a start with developing on modern lines the fisheries industry. Already the Army is doing a good deal in the Grow More Food campaign and is releasing machinery for digging wells, levelling ground, etc.

3. In Delhi, a considerable part of the Central Vista is to be ploughed up and the gardens of bungalows are to be used for growing vegetables on a larger scale. The sending of food parcels to friends or relatives outside India has been ordered to be stopped and an urgent examination is being undertaken of the question of exporting groundnuts, oil-cakes, etc.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G.E.B. Abell", 21-2-1946 & 3-3-1946

4. Bribery and corruption is admitted to be one of the worst enemies of efficient food administration. This is also one of the most difficult to defeat. The detailed implementing of the controls is mainly in the hands of Provincial Governments, and perhaps the new Ministries may be able to achieve results in this direction.

Yours sincerely,

G. E. B. ABELL

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 143

APPENDIX VII

LETTER FROM SUDHIR GHOSH[1]

During the conversation I had with you at Sevagram you talked about 'distrusting' one's friend. I pondered over it after I left Sevagram. It made me feel that I ought to say something about what I am trying to do and why. It is difficult to talk about it. But I enclose a letter which a young Englishwoman wrote to me when I left Cambridge. I hope you will have a look at it in a spare moment. She was a Quaker and a deeply religious person. We worshipped together in the Friends' Meet-ing House during our three years at the University. You know how young people get drawn towards each other and become fond of each other. We were very fond of each other; but we succeeded in keeping this friendship free from any sentimental bonds. She says in this letter : "You have not chosen to do anything easy and I fear that, humanly, you will often be lonely. But you have a source of strength which will not fail you in the worst trials and desolation. If my friendship can help, I shall be more than glad and shall send you my love as I do now." She helped me to understand the good that is England, and Cambridge gave me the inspiration to work for peace betwen the British and the Indian peoples. When I left Cambridge in the summer of 1940, she sent me a copy of the *Oxford Book of Mystical Verses* along with this letter. I experienced when I left Sevagram this time something of the 'loneliness' which she talks about in the letter. I know you will understand what I am trying to say.

Gandhi's Emissary, p. 78

[1] *Vide* "Not Lonely", 24-2-1946

1. TWO REQUESTS[1]

A friend suggests that I should resume writing my autobiography[2] from the point where I left off and, further, that I should write a treatise on the science of ahimsa.

I never really wrote an autobiography. What I did write was a series of articles narrating my experiments with truth which were later published in book form. More than twenty[3] years have elapsed since then. What I have done or pondered during this interval has not been recorded in chronological order. I would love to do so but have I the leisure? I have resumed the publication of *Harijan* in the present trying times as a matter of duty. It is with difficulty that I can cope with this work. How can I find time to bring the remainder of my experiments with truth up to date? But if it is God's will that I should write them, He will surely make my way clear.

To write a treatise on the science of ahimsa is beyond my powers. I am not built for academic writings. Action is my domain, and what I understand, according to my lights, to be my duty, and what comes my way, I do. All my action is actuated by the spirit of service. Let anyone who can systematize ahimsa into a science do so, if indeed it lends itself to such treatment. In the event of my inability, the correspondent has suggested three names in order of preference for this task: Shri Vinoba, Shri Kishorelal Mashruwala, Shri Kaka Kalelkar. The first named could do it, but I know he will not. Every hour of his is scheduled for his work and he would regard it as sacrilege to take a single moment therefrom for writing a Shastra. I would agree with him. The world does not hunger for Shastras. What it craves, and will always crave, is sincere action. He who can appease this hunger will not occupy his time in elaborating a Shastra.

Shri Kishorelal has already written an independent treatise. If his health permits, I know he would like to write further. It may not be correct to call his work a Shastra, but it may be said to be very near to one. In his present state of health, however, I do not think he can shoulder the burden, and I would be the last person to lay it on him.

[1] Originally written in Gujarati, this appeard as "from Harijanbandhu" published simultaneously with the source.

[2] *Vide* "An Autobiography"

[3] *Harijanbandhu* has "twenty-five".

Like Shri Vinoba he too does not allow a moment of his time to be wasted. Much of it is given to help solve the personal problems of large circle of friends. The end of the day leaves him utterly exhausted.

Shri Kakasaheb, like Shri Thakkar, is an incorrigible nomad. Just now he has made the propagation and development of the national and provincial languages his special concern. Even if he wanted to divert a moment of his time to the writing of a Shastra, I would try to prevent him from doing so.

From the above it may be concluded that there is no need at present for the treatise in question. Any such during my lifetime would necessarily be incomplete. If at all, it could only be written after my death. And even so let me give the warning that is would fail to give a complete exposition of ahimsa. No man has ever been able to describe God fully. The same holds true of ahimsa. I can give no guarantee that I will do or believe tomorrow what I do or hold to be true today. God alone is omniscient. Man in the flesh is essentially imperfect. He may be described as being made in the image of God, but he is far from being God. God is invisible, beyond the reach of the human eye. All that we can do, therefore, is to try to understand the words and actions of those whom we regard as men of God. Let them soak into our being and let us endeavour to translate them into action, but only so far as they appeal to the heart. Could any scientific treatise do more for us?

POONA, February 25, 1946

Harijan, 3-3-1946

2. TELEGRAM TO S. SALIVATI

POONA,
February 25, 1946

SALIVATI

MADRAS "HINDU"

BOMBAY

PLEASE FORGIVE. TOO BUSY FOR INTERVIEWS.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

3. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

February 25, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have read your letter. I am returning it, in case you wish to preserve it. I will of course not keep you here against your wish. I have already told[1] Dinshaw. Let us see now what happens. I remember all the facts given by you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8424

4. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,[2]

February 25, 1946

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have started the treatment of Chi. Kishorelal[3] yesterday. Let us see what happens.

You have to do your duty by meditating over *navadha bhakti*[4]. Scavenging and kitchen work are the key to our life. If these two are done, the rest follow.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, p. 374

[1] *Vide* "Two Requests"
[2] Permanent address
[3] Kishorelal G. Mashruwala
[4] The nine-fold devotion

5. A NOTE

February 25, 1946

I am now tired. If the man is here tell him he may come. The car which was to come has been detained. Let it be sent if possible, otherwise he will manage somehow.

First of all decide about the post. Telephone to ask whether Aga Khan has come or not. Write that Gandhi says that he has no house at all; all are his. He will do what both of you say, that your convenience will be his convenience.

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

6. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

POONA,

February 26, 1946

I congratulate Shrimati Aruna Asaf Ali on her courageous refutation[1] of my statement[2] on the happenings in Bombay. Except for the fact that she represents not only herself but also a fairly large body of underground workers, I would not have noticed her refutation, if only because she is a daughter of mine not less so because not born to me or because she is a rebel. I had the pleasure of meeting her on several occasions while she was underground. I admired her bravery, resourcefulness and burning love of the country. But my admira- tion stopped there. I did not like her being underground. I do not appreciate any underground activity. I know that millions cannot go underground. Millions need not. A select few may fancy that they will bring swaraj to the millions by secretly directing their activity. Will this not be spoon-feeding? Only open challenge and open activity is for all to follow. Real swaraj *must* be felt by all—man, woman and child. To labour for that consummation is true revolution. India has beco-me a pattern for all exploited races of the earth, because India's has been an open, unarmed effort which demands sacrifice from all without inflict-ing injury on the usurper. The millions in India would not have been awakened but for the open,

[1] At Press Conference in Bombay on February 24, 1946
[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 23-2-1946

unarmed struggle. Every deviation from the straight path has meant a temporary arrest of the evolutionary revolution.

I do not read the 1942 events as does the brave lady. It was good that the people rose spontaneously. It was bad that some or many resorted to violence. It makes no difference that Shri Kishorelal Mashruwala, Kakasaheb and other workers, in their impatient zeal for the movement[1] , misinterpreted non-violence. That they did so only shows how delicate an instrument non-violence is. My analogy is not meant to cast any reflection on any person. Everyone acted as he or she thought best. Supineness in the face of overwhelming, organized violence would have meant cowardice. I would be weak and wrong, if I failed to give my estimate of the doing of 1942.

Aruna would "rather unite Hindus and Muslims at the barricade than on the constitution front". Even in terms of violence, this is a mis-leading proposition. The union at the barricade is honest, there must be union also at constitutional front. Fighters do not always live at the bar-ricade. They are too wise to commit suicide. The barricade life has always to be followed by the constitutional. That front is not taboo for ever.

Emphatically it betrays want of foresight to disbelieve British declarations and precipitate a quarrel in anticipation. Is the official deputation coming to deceive a great nation? It is neither manly nor womanly to think so. What would be lost by waiting? Let the official deputation prove for the last time that British declarations are unreliable. The nation will gain by trusting. The deceiver loses when there is correct response for the deceived

Let us force facts. The coming mission is claimed to be a friendly mission, entertaining the hope that they will discover a constitutional method of delivery. The problem is knotty, probably the knottiest that has ever confronted statemen It is possible that the mission will put forth an insoluble conundrum.So much the worse for them. If they are intent upon findingan honest way out of the difficulties of their own creation, I have no doubt, there is a way. But the nation too has to play the game. If it does, the barricade must be left aside , at least for the time being. I appeal to Aruna and her friends to make wise use of the power their bravery and sacrifice has given them.

[1] The source, however, has "moment".

It is a matter of great relief that the ratings have listened to Sardar Patel's advice to surrender. They have not surrendered their honour. So far as I can see, in resorting to mutiny they were badly advised. If it was for grievance, fancied, or real, they should have waited for the guidance and intervention of political leaders of their choice. If they mutinied for the freedom of India, they were doubly wrong. They could not do so without a 'call from a prepared revolutionary party. They were thoughtless and ignorant, if they believed that by their might they would deliver India from foreign domination.

Aruna is right when she says that the fighters this time showed grit as never before. But grit becomes foolhardiness when it is untimely and suicidal as this was.

She is entitled to say that the people "*are not* interested in the *ethics* of violence or non-violence", but the people *are* very much interested in knowing *the way* which will bring freedom to the masses—violence or non-violence. The people have, however imperfectly, hitherto gone the way of non-violence. Aruna and her comrades have to ask themselves every time whether the non-violent way has, or has not, raised India from her slumber of ages and created in them a yearning, very vague perhaps, for swaraj. There is, in my opinion, only one answer.

There are other passages in Shrimati Aruna's statement which, as it appears to me, betray confusion of thought. But their treatment can wait.

Needless to say that I have dealt with the message believing it to represent her opinion. If it does not, I apologize to her in advance. My argument, however, is not affected even if it is found that the reporter has not correctly interpreted her. For my argument is, after all, impersonal and directed only to the portions which are calculated to mislead the public, irrespective of their authorship.[1]

POONA, February 26, 1946

Harijan, 3-3-1946

[1] *Vide* also "Conflict of Ideas"

7. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, ALL-BENGAL ANTI-SALES TAX COMMITTEE

POONA,
February 26, 1946

SECRETARY
ALL-BENGAL ANTI-SALES TAX COMMITTEE
72 CANNING STREET
CALCUTTA

YOU HAVE EVERY RIGHT PROTEST SO LONG AS PROTEST REMAINS TRULY NON-VIOLENT AND IS JUSTIFIED BY FACTS. AM PREPARED DO WHAT I CAN IF YOU FURNISH ME WITH FACTS FIGURES.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

8. TELEGRAM TO DAMODAR M. MEHTA

POONA,
February 26, 1946

DAMODAR MULCHAND
BILKHA

REGRET IMPOSSIBLE JUST NOW.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

9. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

POONA,
February 26, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. What are you going to do about Rajaji? He wants to withdraw[1]; let him do so.

If you are keen on taking me to Bardoli, I am ready. I have already suggested[2] that in a difficult situation like this your place is in Bombay. But you know best. In making the suggestion I did not have my convenience in view, but only what the circumstances of the nation demanded of us.

[1] His candidature for the University seat in the elections; *vide* "Letter from C. Rajagopalchari", 21-2-1946

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 24-2-1946

You will see what I have again said[1] about Aruna.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 300-1

10. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

[On or before *February 27, 1946*][2]

I have been asked by several friends to save Gen. Awari's life by asking Sardar Patel to revise his decision.[3] I have refused, for I have neither the power nor the wish to do so. The judgment of the Congress parliamentary Board is, in my opinion, subject to review by the Working Committee as also the A. I. C. C. Gen. Awari says, he is not fighting for himself but for the President of the local Board. This position is altogether wrong. It is regrettable that he should persist in committing suicide by fasting. But his friends should dissuade him. If he refuses to listen, I fear, he must be allowed to die without evoking the slightest sympathy. I say this as the author of satyagraha including fasts. Neither can be capriciously offered. Public sympathy with capricious fasting can disrupt society.

The Hindu, 1-3-1946

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 26-2-1946

[2] The statement was reported under the date-line "Poona, February 27".

[3] *Vide* footnote 1, "Telegram to Secretary, C. P. Provincial Congress Committee", 20-2-1946 On February 20, 1946, the General Council of Nagpur Congress in an emergency meeting passed a resolution urging the Congress High Command to reconsider its decision having regard to Awari's which was condemned by many Congressmen. Awari, however, in response to an appeal from Vallabhbhai Patel broke his fast on March 10, and agreed to meet him in Bombay on March 13. *Vide* also "Telegram to Manchershaw R. Awari", 27-2-1946 and "Telegram to Manchereshaw R. Awari", 28-2-1946

11. TELEGRAM TO POONAMCHAND RANKA

Express POONA,

February 27, 1946

PUNAMCHAND RANKA
CONGRESS OFFICE
NAGPUR

YOUR IMPERATIVE DUTY DISSUADE GENERAL AWARI FROM CONTINUING SUICIDAL FAST.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

12. TELEGRAM TO MANCHERSHAW R. AWARI

Express POONA,

February 27, 1946

GEN. AWARI
NAGPUR

I WARN YOU ONCE MORE YOUR FAST WHOLLY WRONG. DO NOT COMMIT SUICIDE.[1]

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal. Also *The Hindu*, 1-3-1946

13. TELEGRAM TO DAMODAR M. MEHTA

POONA

February 27, 1946

DAMODAR MULCHAND MEHTA
PRAMUKH SHRICHITAL SARVAJANIK SEVA MANDAL
BILKHA

NO PREVIOUS INTIMATION RECEIVED WHO IS FASTING WHAT FOR. IF MY OPINION HAS VALUE FAST SHOULD BE SUSPENDED PENDING DECLARATION OPINION.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 27-2-1946 and "Letter to Manchershaw R. Awari", 28-2-1946

14. SPECIAL POWER OF ATTORNEY[1]

I, the undersigned, heir of Shah Karamchand Otamchand Gandhi, resident of Bharat Varsha hereby authorize R[ajaman] R[ajashri] Maneklal Amritlal Gandhi of Porbandar to execute and sign the sale deed on my behalf, produce it before the Registrar for registration, execute a bond relating to the said sale deed and to receive offer for our house situated in the rear side of Srinathaji's *Haveli*[2] at Porbandar, the deed (which of) stands in the name of our ancestor Harjivan Raidas Gandhi, and for which house an agreement of sale of all my rights, title, share and interest in the aforesaid property along with the construction, structure and building was made in favour of Rajya Ratna Sheth Nanjibhai Kalidas Mehta of Porbandar. I have hereby given him authority to transfer and change my right of ownership and to appear on my behalf to do all legal work which I would have myself done. The act of my aforesaid attorney in this behalf will be considered legal and binding from all points of view. For a proof of this I have set my signature hereunder.

M. K. GANDHI

POONA, February 27, 1946

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 7912

15. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

February 27, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

You must learn to exercise control over your language. Even when thinking about individuals one should not pay too much attention to their shortcomings. You yourself should decide whether or not you should remain here. If you cannot decide, it would mean you should not stay here; for the work is so difficult that, if you cannot take full interest in it, you would not be able to do it. This is

[1] Executed in Porbandar State under serial number 3779
[2] Temple

an important sphere of work for learning to acquire control over one's temper.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8420. Also C. W. 5606. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

16. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

February 27, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I understand all that you say. I do value your services. What other job would you like, if you are not kept here [in Poona]? Do you wish to return to the Ashram? What about Kanchan[2] and Hiramani? Whom should I post here in your place? Have a talk with me so that we can come to a final decision.[3]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8422. Also C. W. 5607. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

17. LETTER TO POONAMCHAND RANKA

POONA,

February 27, 1946

BHAI POONAMCHAND,

I got your letter. I did not see what was published in *Janmabhoomi*[4], I did not give them anything. I hope you have my earlier letter[5] by now.

I do not understand what you write about Sardar. It is not his wont. I don't understand this complication. That a man like you should be involved in it is all the more painful to me.

Awari is now fasting for you. What is this? Fasting has no place in a situation of this kind. Besides, injustice, if any at all, was done to

[1] *Vide* also the following item.
[2] Addressee's wife
[3] *Vide* also the preceding item.
[4] A Gujarati daily published from Bombay
[5] *Vide* "Letter to Poonamchand Ranka",15-2-1946

you, not to him. Explain to him what his prime duty is and, if he refuses to understand, it is your duty to condemn his fast unreservedly.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

POONAMCHAND RANKA
NAGPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

18. LETTER TO DHARMADEV SHASTRI

POONA,
February 27, 1946

BHAI DHARMADEV SHASTRI,

I read your letter to Bapa. It is good and yet not good. It is good because it refutes all the allegations against you and not good because the denial has a touch of resentment and betrays some lack of vigilance in the matter of duty. You took up the work[2] in a spirit of service and of your own free will, not at anyone else's instance, nor at my bidding. My only part in it was that when I was told of it, I approved of it. Why should you leave it for fear of criticism or even at my bidding? If it should be given up, it will happen when your own heart tells you to leave it. I see no such occasion. One who speaks ill of me should always be a hero for me.[3] It is flatterers that we should flee from. Bapa is looking after all the other things.

Though I have written about the money, I still say that any service that is good and is rendered honestly and intelligently finds funds for itself. Why be annoyed with Mirabehn? After all you are regarded as a respectable man and occasional criticism does affect you. But why should it bother us? My advice is that you should go to Mirabehn, listen to all that she says, tell her all that you wish and

[1] *Vide* also "Telegram to Poonamchand Ranka", 27-2-1946

[2] The addressee started Ashoka Ashram at Kalsi in July 1942, but was arrested in August. On his release after eighteen months, he resumed his work of developing village industries at the Ashram. He was also running a school and hospital in memory of Kasturba Gandhi at Nagthat, near Mussoorie.

[3] A saying of the saint Dadu; *vide* "Ashram Bhajanavali"

acquaint her with the facts; render service with a steadfast mind. To face the obstacles bravely, firmly, yet with detachment—is it not an integral part of service?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

19. LETTER TO CHARLES F. GRITZNER

[On or after *February 27, 1946*][1]

The enclosure to your letter of 27-2-1946 reads well, but so far as I can see, is utterly impracticable. My mind does not think in continents. It lays stress on the perfection of the individual conduct. They had been formed to . . . [2] to the greatest results.

From the original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

20. TELEGRAM TO MANCHERSHAW R. AWARI

POONA,
February 28, 1946

GEN. AWARI

NAGPUR

YOUR WIRE[3]. IF YOU HAVE GRIEVANCES YOU SHOULD STATE THEM CLEARLY FIRST. SUBSEQUENTLY YOU CAN REFER THEM TO WORKING COMMITTEE ALL-INDIA COMMITTEE. THEREFORE ADVISE ABANDON FAST.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] The letter is scribbled on the addressee's letter of February 27, 1946.

[2] Illegible in the source

[3] The reference is to a copy of the addressee's telegram to Abul Kalam Azad which read : "My fast on important issues. Central Parlimantary Board absolutely overridden and humiliated on undesirable candidates's interference and conspiracy. We branded as cracks and illiterate. Grievances real. Please regard Province's interests." *Vide* also "Telegram to Manchershaw R. Awari", 27-2-1946

21. LETTER TO PURATAN BUCH

POONA,
[*February 28, 1946*][1]

CHI. PURATAN,

You write to say that engine-driven flour mills are to be found in thousands of villages. Thousands would mean that their number could be greater than ten thousand. You cannot describe them as thousands, if they were a thousand and one. If you have the statistics, give me the exact figures. You must also have the names of the villages, only then you can arrive at the [right] figure. If the number of the villages runs into thousands, it is a very alarming situation. What would be the cost of the equipment and the engines? Calculate the cost, if you haven't already done so, and let me have the figures.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

22. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

POONA
February 28, 1946

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Today I am attending to a few letters among which your letter catches my eye. What you write about Gomati[2] is quite understandable. Some nature cure practitioners can diagnose a case which [allopathic] doctors cannot, but this cannot be applied in the case of Gomati, and I am of the opinion that Dr. Dinshaw cannot cope with the case. He has plenty [to recommend himself]. He is liberal but has fallen into a track which he is not likely to give up all at once. He is pulling on with what is not to his liking, thanks to his boundless faith in me. I have taken up the burden of running the clinic under these circumstances. He will guide us wherever we may ask him. Hence even if Dhirubhai comes, he cannot have the benefit of

[1] The source, however, has March 28, 1946, but Gandhiji was not in Poona on that date.
[2] Addressee's wife

Dinshawji's knowledge, his brilliance and experience. At present he can utilize my own limited knowledge. Dinshaw himself is physical culture personified but he does instruct others. He is possessed by nature cure, by his desire to establish university for it, and he entertains a hope that it will come to be through his association with me. If this department should wholly belong to the poor, we may bid on it some hope of establishing a university. Under the circumstances, I don't think we can give satisfaction to Dhirubhai. I have a feeling that something like Ashram life might come to be here, as though I could do nothing else! Or, maybe, I was not interested in anything else! Thus I am proceeding willingly as well as unwillingly. I am sending away from what may be called the menial staff; it remains to be seen how far I succeed. Therefore, if Dhirubhai and such others came, they will have to be content with my own knowledge of nature cure, such as it is. If, in the mean while, Dinshaw opens up and acquires the ability of transferring his knowledge to others, we can make some progress.

Bharatan Kumarappa will not be able to give such work as you expect. In fact he will be able to write independently. It[1] seems to be very well organized now. Pyarelal and Rajkumari have taken up the English work. Sushila of course very much wants to be useful but I don't take from her much work of this kind. If I did, her medical work would inevitably suffer. I am relieving Kanu for his primary job. At present I get much of his work done by Sushila Pai, and she is doing it well. She has always been in the line. I am taking from her the work of the Gujarati Department. For Hindustani I have brought Om Prakash. I trust he will be trained. He certainly wants to be. It is fairly cold here. I presume you have left Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

[KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA]

SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] The reference is to printing work of *Harijan, Harijanbandhu and Harijan Sevak*.

23. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

POONA,

February 28, 1946

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Abha[1] handed your letter[2] only today. I read it. Sailen's letter is also before me. It can be said that nowadays I do not always stay at the Ashram. And now it has come to this : that for six months I am at the Ashram and for six months in Poona and Mahabaleshwar. In such a situation it will not be proper at all to keep you [at the Ashram] on my responsibility. I would advise you to have a talk with Chimanlal[3] and Krishnachandra. Explain everything to them and, if they agree, stay at the Ashram. Serve the Ashram and earn your livelihood. Have a frank talk with Ashadevi[4]. It will be your responsibility to teach Bengali. How far mother can mentally adjust herself to the Ashram remains to be seen; also whether she can bear the heat during summer. Considering all these, I feel that all of you cannot stay at the Ashram permanently. Even so I am not giving any decision. Yes, this much I want to say : When Sailen says that he can decide for himself, a decision should be taken only about others. Go to Navadweep, stay there and render as much service as you can, and educate the children on the lines of Nayee Talim. It would be good to consider this also as service.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : C. W. 10414. Courtesy : Amrita Lal Chatterjee

24. NOTES

A USEFUL PAMPHLET

A friend sends me a copy of a leaflet published by the Department of Agriculture, Bombay Province. It contains hints on small-scale vege-table cultivation in compounds of bungalows, etc. This was published in 1942 during war time, in pursuance of a compaign for growing more food. What was then necessary is much

[1] Addressee's daughter, Abha Gandhi

[2] Dated February 20, it was about his and his son, Sailendra Nath's future programme.

[3] Chimanlal N. Shah, Manager, Sevagram Ashram

[4] Ashadevi Aryanayakam

more so now in view of the increasing shortage of food. It is a pity that the leaflet is printed in English. It may be, however, that only the English pamphlet has been sent to me, and that it has been translated into the provincial languages. Be that as it may, the leaflet is certainly instructive and useful and I would suggest to the readers who are interested, as they should be, in the matter that they send for and study it with a view to making use of the suggestions, if they have a plot of land available for the purpose. Among the hints contained are the following chosen by me at random :

(a) Plots selected should be well-drained and not overshadowed by trees or buildings.

(b) Beds in which flowers have been successfully grown are usually suitable but portions of lawns may also be dug up and used for vegetable gardening.

(c) Waste water from bath-rooms or kitchen can be utilized for the purpose.

(d) It stresses the the necessity of using organic manure such as cowdung, and tells the reader what vegetables can be easily grown.

(e) A table is given at the end showing the quantity of particular seeds required, the depth at which they should be sown, the size of the beds and the distance between the rows of plants.

HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS[1]

A correspondent writes :

> You are at present in Poona. I understand from the papers that H. H. the Aga Khan is your friend. He has plenty of land and water supply at his disposal in his palace in Poona. The same applies to the spacious grounds of Government House at Ganeshkhind. Could not both these places be utilized for growing food? Could you suggest it to him?
>
> You believe in fasts. You have said that fasts are not merely for attaining religious merit but are also beneficial for health. Cannot you then recommend to the well-fed abstention from food either one day or for even one meal or more during the week? A great deal of foodstuffs could thus be made available to the poor.
>
> They say that even small quantity of sprouted grain, if eaten

[1] Orginally written in Hindi, this appeared as "from *Harijan Sevak*" pubished simultaneously with the source.

raw, provides the requisits nourishment. Is this so?

The above is condensed from a letter. All the three suggestions are sound and could easily be put into practice. The first is obviously for those who possess both land and water; the second for the well-to-do; the third applies to all. In essence it means that whatever can be eaten raw would be so eaten. By intelligently following this rule, one can make a small quantity go a long way.[1] Not only that, it is also beneficial. I have little doubt that if people understood the laws of dietetics and acted accordingly, a tremendous economy in food could be effected.

UTILIZATION OF AVAILABLE POWER[2]

Q. Flour grinding machines are turned by engines in thousands of villages in Gujarat. By removing them to the source, these engines could easily be used for drawing water from rivers, tanks and wells for purposes of irrigation. Could not the Government be induced or the owners be persuaded to divert the engines for this useful work in addtion to working the grinders?

A. I regard the existence of power wheels for the grinding of corn in thousands of villages as the limit of our helplessness. I suppose India does not produce all the engines or grinding machines. I fondly hope that the correspondent is incorrect and that the number of wheels and engines does not run into thousands even for the whole of India,[3] and certainly not in the villages of Gujarat. But if true, it is indicative of the utter laziness into which our people have fallen. The planting of such machinery and engines on a larger scale in villages is also a sign of greed. Is it proper to fill one's pockets in this manner at the expense of the poor? Every such machinery puts thousands of hand *chakkis*[4] out of work and takes away employment from thousands of housewives and artisans who make these *chakkis*. Moreover the process is infective and will spread to every village industry. The decay of the latter spells too the decay of art. If it meant replacement of old crafts by new ones, one might not have much to say against it. But this is not what is happening. In the thousands of villages where power machinery exists, one misses the sweet music in the early

[1] The following sentence is translated from the Gujarati version.

[2] Originally written in Gujarati, this appeared as "from *Harijanbandhu*" published simultaneously with the source.

[3] The rest of the sentence is translated from the Gujarati version.

[4] Grinding stones

morning of the grinders at work.

But to come to the main point : Whilst I hold that these power engines are at present being put to wrong use, it would be some compensation if the engines, in addition to their present use, were also used to pump water out of rivers, tanks and wells for irrigation. My correspondent suggests Government aid for this. Must this be necessary? Will not the owners of their own free will turn their engines towards this useful and necessary work? Or have we been reduced to such a paralytic state that without Government compulsion we are unprepared to do anything? Be that as it may, it is my firm opinion that all necessary measures should be taken at once to utilize existing power in order to save the people from the terrible fate confronting them.

POONA, March 1, 1946

Harijan, 10-3-1946

25. WHOSE NEED?[1]

The institution of domestic servants is an old one. But the attitude of master towards servant has changed from time to time. Some regard servants as members of the family whereas others look upon them as slaves or chattels. Between these two extreme views may be summed up the attitude of society in general towards servants. Nowadays servants are in great demand everywhere. They have become conscious of their value and naturally demand their own conditions of pay and service. This would be proper, if it were invariably coupled with a proper understanding and performance of their duty. In that event they would cease to be servants and would earn for themselves the status of members of the family. The belief in the efficacy of violence is, however, in the air. How then can servants properly win the status of members of their masters' families? That is a question that may well be asked.

I hold that a man who desires the co-operation of, and wishes to co-operate with, others should not be dependent on servants. If anyone has to have one at a time of scarcity of servants, he will have to pay what is demanded and accept all other conditions with the result that he will, instead of being master, become the servant of his

[1] Orginally written in Gujarati, this appeared as "from *Harijanbandhu*" published simultaneously with the source.

employee. This is good for neither the master nor the so-called[1] servant. It has only one thought, that of pursuing his self-interest. But if what an individual seeks is not slavery but the co-operation of a fellow-being, he will not only serve himself but also him whose co-operation he needs. Through the extension of this principle, a man's family will become coterminous with the world and his attitude towards his fellow-beings will also undergo a corresponding change. There is no other way of reaching the desired consummation.

He who wants to act on this principle will be content to start with small beginning. In spite of a man's ability to command the co-operation of thousands, he must have sufficient self-restraint and self-respect in him to enable him to stand alone. Such a person will never dream of looking on any person as his menial and try to keep him under subjugation. In fact he will forget altogether that he is master of his servants and will try his best to bring them to his level. In other words he should be content to do without what others cannot have.

POONA, March 1, 1946

Harijan, 10-3-1946

26. TELEGRAM TO MANCHERSHAW R. AWARI

Express POONA,

March 1, 1946

GEN. AWARI

NAGPUR

YOUR WIRE. SARDAR HAS NO RIGHT REVIEW BOARD'S DECISION. WAY OF RELIEF IS THROUGH WORKING COMMITTEE. YESTERDAY'S WIRE[2] WAS SEEN BY SARDAR AND JAWAHARLALJI. ABANDON FAST AND AGITATE FOR REDRESS GRIEVANCE IF ANY

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] This word and the sentence which follows are translated from the Gujarati version.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Manchershaw R. Awari", 28-2-1946

27. TELEGRAM TO H. N. BRAILSFORD

POONA
March 1, 1946

H. N. BRAILSFORD[1]
FRIENDS SERVICE UNIT
1 UPPERWOOD STREET
CALCUTTA

THANKS. YOU AND MRS. BRAILSFORD CAN COME ANY DAY EXCEPT MONDAYS. PLEASE WIRE WHEN COMING.[2]

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

28. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
March 1, 1946

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY[3] TO THE
GOVERNOR[4] OF BOMBAY
BOMBAY

DEAR SIR,

A correspondent, writing to *Harijan*, suggests[5] among other things that I should approach the Government of Bombay to use the vast grounds of Ganeshkhind for growing edibles and use the latter for the needy. I cannot help thinking that this is a wise suggestion and,

[1] Henry Noel Brailsford, journalist and author; leader-writer for *Manchester Guardian* and *Daily News*; joined the Independent Labour Party in 1907
[2] *Vide* "Interview to H. N. Brailsford", 17-3-1946.
[3] J. S. Drewe
[4] Sir David John Colville
[5] *Vide* "Notes", sub-title A Useful Pamphlet"

if adopted whole-heartedly by His Excellency, it is likely to be fruitful of astonishing results.[1]

Yours truly,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 152

29. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

POONA,

March 1, 1946

BHAI RAJA,

I have your letters from time to time. Rajkumari replies to them. From my point of view what you did[2] is quite all right. The sphere of service has no bounds. I on my part wish that you should take rest. Come over, if you can. If nothing else, at least we can have a good laugh together.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 2116

30. LETTER TO MAHESHDUTT MISHRA

POONA,

March 1, 1946

CHI. MAHESH,

I have your two letters. How good it would have been, if you had remained a Bhangi? I hope you have heard of my experience. In Hardwar, somebody thought that I was a labourer and it was so much the better. Others recognized me as we moved on. I have many such experiences. But do not we learn only by making mistakes? He who does not make mistakes is either God or the greatest of fools who imagines that he never makes any mistake. It is good that whenever we

[1] Replying on March 9, the addressee, *inter alia*, said : "A considerable area . .. has been brought under cultivation . . . and a great deal of the remaining area grows grass for fodder. . . His Excellency has recently asked Agricultural Department to carry out a survey of the lands . . . to see to what area cultivation can advantageously be extended. His Excellency hopes . . . when he is in residence at Ganeshkhind to show you what has been done."

[2] Withdrawing from the elections; *vide* "Letter from C. Rajagopalachari", 21-2-1946

make a mistake we correct it and go ahead.

What you wrote about the election[1] is all right. It was unnecessary for me, but not for you, since you wanted to make a clean breast of everything. I have not shown your letter to anyone nor do I intend to. Many things happened in the election in which I took no interest, nor did I do anything about them. You already know about Rajaji. The outcome is that Rajaji has withdrawn from it.[2] He likes it and so do I. Keep well. Write to me from time to time. And come whenever you want to after finding out my whereabouts and with prior intimation.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 6713. Also C. W. 4457. Courtesy : Maheshdutt Mishra

31. LETTER TO JAGANNATH

POONA,
March 1, 1946

BHAI JAGANNATH,

I got yout letter. For you Ramanama alone is the unfailing remedy.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

32. LETTER TO SHANTI SWARUP BHATNAGAR

POONA
March 1, 1946

BHAI BHATNAGAR[3],

Though you forbid my writing, I should at least acknowledge receipt of your letter and should also tell you from my experience that, in what we suppose to be times of difficulty, we should resort to Ramanama, even if the mind is not steady. If we keep trying, success is

[1] To the Central Provinces Assembly; he was unhappy about the rejection of his father C. G. Mishra's nomination.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] Eminent scientist

bound to come.

I shall, of course, do what you want me to, but there is no point in it. No one can carry another's burden. Prayer is a mighty thing but also strange. May God grant you peace.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHANTI SWARUP BHATNAGAR

NEW DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

33. REGRET

My brethren-farmers from Bardoli are unhappy because my visit to Bardoli has been cancelled. Others too have written to me. I can understand their disappointment. I am also pained that I could not go to Bardoli. Although I am short of time, I had made all preparations for going to Bardoli. I had also written to those who wanted to see me. But after the riot which broke out in Bombay I changed my plan. I wrote[1] to the Sardar that he should be in Bombay for the present. He liked the suggestion, and the programme for Bardoli was cancelled.

I hope, all will forget their disappointment when they know these facts. I take it that I will have to go to Bardoli on some other occasion.

POONA, March 2, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 10-3-1946

34. LETTER TO AGA KHAN

POONA,

March 2, 1946

BHAI SAHEB,

A gentleman has written[2] to me saying that since I am a friend of yours and at present in Poona, I could perhaps persuade you to grow food-grains and such other things on the large stretch of land

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 24-2-1946 and 186.

[2] *Vide* "Notes" sub-title A Useful Pamphlet"

that you have, since you lack neither water resources nor money. He also wants to know if this cannot be done on the land at Ganeshkhind which the Governor occupies.

I like his suggestion. If it is feasible, I hope you will take the initiative and set an example to others. On my part I have already offered[1] my suggestion to the Governor regarding Ganeshkind.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

H. H. THE AGA KHAN

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

35. LETTER TO MANIBEHN NANAVATI

March 2, 1946

CHI. MANIBEHN[2],

Kishorelalbhai writes to tell me that I have not replied to your letter. If so, it is a matter of shame for me. It is, however, clear that I tend to forget. How can a forgetful person take up any responsibility? What should I do? Do become an Agent[3] and show your mettle.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. MANIBEHN NANAVATI

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

36. LETTER TO SARDUL SINGH CAVEESHAR

POONA,
March 2, 1946

BHAI CAVEESHAR[4],

So at long last you have been released! You have done a brave

[1] *Vide* "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 1-3-1946
[2] A khadi worker of Bombay
[3] Presumably, for Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust
[4] Member, All-India Forward Block; after detention as security prisoner from 1941, he was released form Dharmasala jail on February 22, 1946.

deed too. But is there any gain? And why make allegations?

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

SARDAR SARDUL SINGH CAVEESHAR
LAHORE, PUNJAB

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

37. EXTRACT FROM TALK WITH A FRIEND[1]

[Before *March 3, 1946*]

Look at Italy. Garibaldi[2] was a great man. He brought deliverance to Italy. And Mussolini[3] did make her look great. But where is she today? Look at Japan, look at Germany. The very violence which brought them to the pinnacle of power has razed them to the ground. And has not the atom bomb proved the futility of all violence? And yet we are crazy enough to think that we can win swaraj by breaking a few skulls and destroying property which, after all is said and done, is our own. I am sure, out of this orgy of violence, the people will learn the lesson of non-violence.

Harijan, 10-3-1946

38. EXTRACT FROM TALK WITH A SOLDIER[4]

[Before *March 3, 1946*][5]

No. But, as you know, I stand for unadulterated non-violent action and open means. I abhor secrecy. . . . I laid down a programme of non-violent action in my 7th of August, 1942 speech[6] in the A. I. C. C. for evoking[7] and organizing the highest non-violence and self-sacrifice that the country was capable of. I told in that speech what the Press should do, what the students **should do**,

[1] This and the following item are extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" dated "Poona, March 3, 1946". The friend pleaded for "independence at all costs".

[2] Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807-1882); Italian patriot and guerilla leader

[3] Benito Mussolini, 1883-1945

[4] *Vide* footnotes 1 and 2, above. Pyarelal explains : "Several army men have been to Gandhiji's camp during the week to seek advice. One of them . . . was deeply agitated. The men were getting desperate, he said. Would Gandhiji ask them to lie low and swallow all the humiliations and injustice?"

[5] *ibid*

[6] *Vide* "Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting", 7-8-1942

[7] The source has "looking", a misprint.

what the Princes should do, what the Government servants should do, and lastly what the Indian soldiers should do. If all of them had done their part as suggested by me, it would have had a staggering effect. That programme can still be acted upon. The soldiers should declare that they will do soldiering not for their bellies but to make India free and to keep her free. I do not want them to be disloyal to the Government in whose pay they are, for, if they are disloyal to the present Government today, by the same token they may be disloyal to the national Government tomorrow. But it is no disloyalty for a soldier to go and tell his superiors that he will be their man only so long as they stand for his country's freedom and that he would never bear arms to crush the liberty of his own people. If, as a result of their declaration, they were disbanded, cashiered or even court-martialled, they should not mind. Thereby they would light a spark which not all the armaments at the disposal of any power would be able to put out and before long the entire Indian army would be filled with the spirit of patriotism without having to shed blood. If, on the contrary, they resorted to indiscipline and violence or rowdyism, they would alienate all sympathy and provide the authorities an excuse to teach them a lesson.[1]

Harijan, 10-3-1946

39. CONFLICT OF IDEAS

She was unable to understand Gandhiji calling upon R. I. N. ratings to resign, if their condition was humiliating.[2] If they did that, they would have to give up their only means of livelihood. Moreover, they were fighting for principles. If they resigned now, there would be hundreds in these days of unemployment to take their places who would be subject to the same discrimination and treatment and the R. I. N. ratings would not have achieved anything. It simply does not lie in the mouth of Congressmen who are themselves going to the legislatures to ask the ratings to give up their jobs. It does not help the cause of the country at all.

Every one of the statements quoted above from Arunabehn's Press interview is contrary to the views generally held by or attributed

[1] Pyarelal concludes the talk with the following reply from the visitor: "My brain was muddled, when I came here. I now see things more clearly. You have saved us from a big mistake. We shall take no precipitate or thoughtless step."

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Balvantsinha", 25-2-1946

to Congressmen. Whather she really holds or does not hold, the views put into her mouth is irrelevant here. For the moment it is enough to examine them on their merits and to show that they are wholly inconsistent with Congress resolutions.

The first principle of non-violent action as propounded in the Congress resolution[1] of 1920 at its special session in Calcutta under the late Lal Lajpatrai is that of non-co-operation with everything humiliating. It must be remembered that the R.I.N. was founded not for the benefit of the ruled. The men went with their eyes open. Discrimination stares one in the face. It cannot be avoided, if one enters the service which is frankly organized to keep India under subjection. One may, one ought to, try to mend the conditions. That is possible only up to a point. That cannot be achieved through mutiny. Mutiny may conceivably succeed but the success can only avail the mutineers and their kin, not the whole of India. And the lesson would be a bad inheritance. Discipline will be at least as necessary under swaraj as it is now. India under successful mutineers would be cut up into warring factions exhausted by internecine strife.

India of the Congress has made little headway in the appreciation of the fight for swaraj, if it is true that hundreds would take their places if the present ratings resigned in pursuance of their campaign against humiliation. Can we have swaraj for the masses, if we are so degraded that hundreds of us are ready to swallow humiliation even to the extent of taking the place of humiliated fellowmen? The very thought is unworthy of Congressmen and that too at the moment when swaraj is believed to be within sight.

Those who hold that enlistment in the R.I.N. is their only means of livelihood must have a very poor opinion of them. A soldier's is a hard life. He is disciplined to work in co-operation and trained to wrok with the pickaxe and the spade. Such a one will disdain to think that apart from soldiering he has no means of livelihood. We have a poor opinion of soliders, if we think that they cannot earn their bread by the sweat of the brow. A labourer is any day worthy of his hire. What is, however, true is that a soldier out of his calling will lack the glamour and the amenities provided for him. We have wasted precious twenty-five years, if we have not yet stripped the profession of killing and destroying the thick coat of varnish that has covered it for so long.

[1] *Vide* "Congress Resolution on Non-Co-Operation"

Aruna Asaf Ali had been reported to have said that the ratings would have gained nothing by resigning. Well, they would have gained honour and dignity, if they had manfully given up their job, and taught the citizens of Bombay the way to save honour and dignity, and they could have spared Bombay the senseless destruction of life, property and very precious food-stuffs. Surely this would have been an achievement not quite beneath notice.

The last statement in the reported interview is surely a confusion of thought. Congressmen going to the legislatures for conserving the honour and liberty of the country is not the same as ratings serving for their livelihood with the possibility of being used against their own countrymen and their liberty. Congressmen who go to the legislatures are representatives elected by their voters and they go even if it is only to prevent those from going who will misrepresent the voters. Going to the legislatures may be altogether bad, but there can be no such comparison as has been just adverted to.

POONA, March 3, 1946

Harijan, 10-3-1946

40. WHAT, AFTER FINISHING STUDIES ?[1]

A student has seriously posed this question :

What am I to do after finishing my studies ?

We are today a subject race and our educational system has been devised to serve the interest of our rulers. But even as the most selfish person is obliged to hold out some lure to those whom he is out to exploit, so a number of temptations for studying in their institutions have been brought into being by the rulers. Moreover all members of Gvoernment are not alike. There are some liberal-minded among them who will consider the problem of education on merits. Therefore there is no doubt some good even in the present ;system. But the prevailing education is willy-nilly put to wrong use, i.e., it is looked upon as a means of earning money and position. It lends charm to slavery.[2]

The ancient aphorism, 'Education is that which liberates' is as true today as it was before. Education here does not mean mere spiritual knowledge nor does liberation signify only spiritual

[1] Originally written in Gujarati, this appeared as "from *Harijiabandhu*" published simultaneously with the source.

[2] This sentence is translated from the Gujarati version.

liberation after death. Knowledge includes all training that is useful for the service of mankind, and liberation means freedom from all manner of servitude even in the present life. Servitude is of two kind : slavery to domination from outside and to one's own artificial needs. The knowledge acquired in the pursuit of this ideal alone constitutes true study. Having had such study, one will not be confronted with the question : 'What, after finnishing studies ?[1]".

Realizing that a form of education devised by foreign rulers could only be calculated to subserve their interests, the Congress accepted, in 1920, among other things, the principle of the boycott of all Governmental educational institutions. But that era seems to be over. The demand for entrance to Government institutions and those imparting education on similar line is increasing faster than the number of such schools and colleges. The ranks of examinees are ever swelling. In spite of this hypnotic spell, however, I hold that true education is what I have defined.

A student who is superficially attracted by the educational ideal set forth by me and leaves his studies is liable to repent of his action later. I have, therefore, suggested a safer course. While continuing his studies in the institution which he has joined, he should ever keep before him the ideal of service set forth by me and use his studies with a view to serve that ideal, never for making money. Moreover he should try to make up the lack in the present education by application of his leisure hours to the ideal. He will, therefore, avail himself to the utmost of whatever opportunity offers for taking part in the constructive programme.

POONA, March 3[2], 1946

Harijan, 10-3-1946

[1] This sentence is translated from the Gujarati version.
[2] The source has "I", a misprint.

41. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

POONA,
March 3, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

I am desired by Gandhiji to thank you for your letter of the 25th ultimo and for the information contained therein regarding the export of pulses.[1]

May I also thank you for the enquiries regarding Miss Lester's[2] passage. I understand the difficulty and am writing to her.

Kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 146

42. TELEGRAM TO G. E. B. ABELL

POONA,
March 4, 1946

PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI
THANKS LETTER. MAY I PUBLISH MINE AND YOUR REPLY?[3]

GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 144

43. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

POONA,
March 4, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have gone through your letter. Write down the particulars which you think I should know, such as who are paid workers, including their names and addresses, and then leave by all means. It

[1] *Vide* "Letter from G. E. B. Abell", 26-1-1946

[2] The reference is to Muriel Lester of Kingsley Hall, East End, London, who was having some difficulty in securing a passage to visit India. She could, however, come later, when she visited Noakhali in East Bengal during the communal strife, and reported to Gandhiji about the condition there.

[3] The addressee in his telegram dated March 5 agreed for the publication of the letters; *vide* "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 21-2-1946; also "Letter from G. E. B. Abell", 26-2-1946

seems from your letter that Manibhai[1] has become familiar with everything.

Do send for Kanchan[2] and go to Vyara. Write to me after you have settled everything. If you are ready, keeping you with me might perhaps be the best way of using your services. Whatever your decision, if you communicate it to me at an early date, it will help me. But come to no decision before meeting Kanchan. Do not take any hasty step. Draw Hiramani's fare as you have suggested and debit the sum to the Ashram account. Yours can be accepted here, but perhaps it would be better to debit that, too, to the Ashram account.

If you have still any more questions to ask, you may ask again.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8459. Also C. W. 5571. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

44. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

POONA,
March 4, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I am returning the accompanying [letters]. Decide after most careful thinking.

Meet Dr. Mehta[3]. Decide something about the workers. Think about other things also which you feel should be taken into consideration. If you do not do that, I see nothing but obstacles in the way. Take the help of all those who are there.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

How is Pillay ? What do you do about Pirone, the leprosy patient?

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8418. Also C. W. 5610. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Manilal Patel
[2] Addressee's wife
[3] Dr. Dinshaw K. Mehta

45. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

POONA,
March 4, 1946

CHI. SITA [1],

Why need you write if I do not? Moreover I am busy in my fields of work, and you are busy in yours. Both of us being thus busy, there is nothing wrong in our not writing to each other in the absence of some special reason. See that you succeed in your examination.

I know that whenever I pass through Akola, you have to go back disappointed as I would be sleeping. But remember Manilalbhai's[2] *ghazal*[3] "Immortal hope lies hidden in countless disappointments" and keep on hoping.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4972

46. LETTER TO DR. DINSHAW K. MEHTA

[*March 4, 1946*][4]

CHI. DINSHAW,

I was upset in the morning. I felt as though I had erred or commited a blunder. Can we afford to hire such an expensive and well-appointed premises[5] for the poor ? By doing so am I not abusing the people's trust in me ? I want to serve the poor in my own way. I have a feeling, it will not need any of the paraphernelia you have arranged. My place is only in some village where I can start with a few huts and render service. Such thoughts pass through my mind and I cannot take a decision. Please do not [bother go] reply to this. Speak to me tomorrow. Ponder over it. The board of trustees ought to confer, if only to clear this confusion. I have, therefore, written to Jehangirji a letter, a copy of which I am enclosing. Please read it and think over it. I believe we ought not to persist, if we have made a mistake. Of course there is no reason to be alarmed; it is for us to find a way.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] Manilal Gandhi's eldest daughter
[2] Manibhai Nabhubhai Dwivedi
[3] A Persian verse form
[4] The letter is placed among letters of this date in the source.*Vide* also "My Confession and Cure"
[5] The reference is to the Nature Cure Clinic, Poona; *vide* "Nature Gure Clinic"

47. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

POONA,[1]
March 4, 1946

CHI. ANAND,

I did write to you. My blessings are always there. Do whatever you like, but remain cheerful. Sushila has gone to Quetta.

Bessings from
BAPU

SHRI ANAND HINGORANI
C/O R. C. TANDON
10 SOUTH ROAD
ALLAHABAD

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy : National Archives of India, and Anand T. Hingorani

48. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

POONA,
March 4, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Yesterday Rajkumari did reply to you. Today, however, I am observing silence. I believe we should consume only cow's ghee. Even Champabehn[2] may not keep buffalo's ghee. The Ashram does not exist for providing all facilities; we ought to put up with difficulties. Then cow's ghee can be made available. Vinoba shoud not be troubled for this. Yesterday Rajkumari must have written to you about visiting him there from time to time.

Bessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 4547

[1] This is in Gujarati.
[2] Wife of Ratilal P. Mehta

49. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

POONA,
March 4, 1946

CHI. SHARMA,

I write what I feel after listening to what you had to say yesterday. I find that you have a lot of family responsibility[1] which might entail a monthly expense of about Rs. 200. In the circumstances, you would not be able to serve the poor, and it is difficult for you to work here[2]. Therefore you may do whatever you can independently. You had better give up the trust land which is in your custody, though there is room for further consideration of the matter. The other things are going on as they are. If there is any misunderstanding on my part, clear it.

Bessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

50. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
March 5, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

I have been commissioned by Gandhiji to write and ask you whether it is possible to increase the quota of newsprint for *Harijan*. A good deal of matter is felt over every week in spite of the fact that the paper contains no advertisements and nothing but substanital reading matter. The demand from the public is immense. If you feel that *Harijan* is a need of the State as much as of the public, will you see if it can get extra quota of paper, whether for extra reading matter or for a larger number of copies to cope with the demand.

The Manager has made the usual application, but you know the way of red tape.

The present *Harijan* contains 16 columns only. The old often used to

[1] The addressee's elder brother died in October 1945.
[2] At Nature Cure clinic

be double. Then an Urdu number at the Navajivan Press is on the anvil. This, of course, is besides the application in the different provinces fox publication in the provincial languages.[1]

Yours sincerely,

AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji's correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 79-80

51. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

POONA,
March 5, 1946

MY DEAR C. R.,

I must write this in what has become as good as your mother tongue. I have written to you more than once in Hindustani and, when you wanted top lines, I gave you them. I have developed a dislike for writing to an Indian in any but the national language. So I write to Sastriar and Bidhan[2] in Hindustani.

So much for the preface.

Why do you worry about events? Do your duty, never think of results :

कर्मण्ये वाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन[3]

Let things take their course. It is enough, you and I have acted right.

Of course I was bound to write about you what I felt.[4] I would never have excused myself, if, when challenged, I had kept silent. It gave us all an insight into man's thoughtlessness. You must, therefore, cheer up and get well quickly. Tell me when you are coming.

[1] Replying on March 18, the addressee agreed "to allow 1,00,000 copies per week, which meant an increase in consumption from 5 to $7\frac{1}{2}$ tons per month". He also conveyed the Viceroy's appreciation of Gandhiji's "sound advice on the food situation". Writing again on March 22, Abell informed Amrit Kaur of the decision "to release 10 tons".

[2] Bidhan Chandra Roy

[3] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 47

[4] *Vide* "Curious", "Curious" and "About Rajaji"

While I was closing this, I got your love letter. Do write to me in Tamil. *Anbu*[1] I knew. What is *udan* [2]?

BAPU[3]

From a photostat : G. N. 2117

52. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

POONA,
March 5, 1946

CHI. SITA,

I got your postcard. I like your confidence that you will pass. It will bear fruit. Keep up your courage and peace of mind at the time of the examination, too. You may come whenever you wish to. Your place will be reserved.

I wrote[4] to you one letter yesterday.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4973

53. LETTER TO A. V. THAKKAR

March 5, 1946

BAPA,

I got your reminder. I have taken up Santhanam's [thesis][5]. The first chapter shows that we (i. e., the Harijan Sevak Sangh) cannot print it. All that is there about Muslims should go. It adversely affects the other chapters. It is an excellent work. He has really taken pains over it and it deserves to be published. It seems perfectly all right to me, if the Hindustan Times [Press] publishes it. It will sell without any effort. You may show this to Santhanam. The proofs should be corrected carefully. I shall send over the corrections in a

[1] Love
[2] With
[3] This and the two italicized words are in Tamil
[4] *Vide* "Letter to Sita Gandhi", 4-3-1946
[5] Titled "Ambedkar's Attack" this was published by Devi Prasad Sharma at the Hindustan Times Press, New Delhi. The "Author's Note" dated July 7, 1946, bore the sub-title "A Critical Examination of Dr. Ambedkar's Book : *What Congress and Gandhi Have Done to the Untouchables*." It was circulated by the addressee for favour of review.

few days. Of course I will not be able to examine them very carefully. You need not rush through the job.

BAPU

HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH
KINGSWAY
DELHI

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

54. MESSAGE TO FOREIGN PRESS[1]

POONA,
[On or after *March 5, 1946*][2]

I have seen Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's message, and I have nothing to add to what he has said.

The Hindu, 8-3-1946

55. MY CONFESSION AND CURE[3]

It is plain to me as it has become to some of my friends that I am incorrigible. I can learn only by my mistakes.[4] I do not know why I could not learn through objections or warnings from others.[5] I can learn only when I stumble and fall and feel the pain. As children we all used to learn this way. My condition is just like a child's even in my 76th year. I have just discovered myself making a mistake which I should never have made.

[1] The report said that "this was in reply to a cable asking for a message to the foreign Press". Gandhiji was requested to give a statement on the recent events in India and on the proposed visit of the British Cabinet Mission—Sir Pethick-Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps and A. V. Alexander—which reached India on March 24 to discuss with Indian leaders the framing of India's Constitution.

[2] From the reference to Vallabhbhai Patel's message, given in response to a similar request made in Bombay, which was published on March 5; *vide* "Vallabhbhai Patel's Message to Foreign Press", 4-3-1946

[3] A Gujarati version of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu* published simultaneously with the source.

[4] The Gujarati version has : "I can learn only by making mistakes and then acknowledging and correcting them."

[5] This and the following three sentences are translated from the Gujarati.

I have known Dr. Dinshaw Mehta for a long time. He has dedicated his life solely to nature cure of his conception. His one ambition is to see a full-fledged nature cure university established in India. A university worth the name must be predominantly for the prevention and cure of the diseases of the poor villagers of India. No such university exists in the world. The institutes in the West are designed more for the rich than for the poor.

I feel that I know the method of nature cure for the villagers of India. Therefore I should at once have known that nature cure for the villagers could not be attempted in Poona city. But a Trust was made. Very sober Jehangirji Patel permitted himself to be a co-trustee with Dr. Mehta and me, and I hastened to Poona to run for the poor Dr. Mehta's erstwhile Clinic which was designed for the rich. I suggested some drastic changes; but last Monday[1] the knowledge dawned upon me that I was a fool to think that I could ever hope to make an institute for the poor in town. I realized that if I cared for the ailing poor, I must go to them and not expect them to come to me. This is true of ordinary medicinal treatment. It is much more so of nature cure. How is a villager coming to Poona to understand and carry out my instructions to apply mud-poulties, take sun cure, hip and friction sitz-baths or certain foods cooked conservatively?[2] Will it not be impudence? The villager would go away nodding, but at the same time he would smile and think that the person who advised him to undergo nature cure was a fool. He would expect me to give him a powder or a potion to swallow and be done with it. Nature cure connotes a way of life which has to be learnt; it is not a drug cure as we understand it. The treatment to be efficatious can, therefore, only take place in or near a man's cottage or house. It demands from its physician sympathy and patience and knowledge of human nature. When he has successfully practised in this manner in a village, or villages, when enough men and women have understood the secret of nature cure, a nucleus for a nature cure university is founded. It should not have required eleven days' special stay in the institute to discover and all its attendant paraphernalia for my purpose. I do not know whether to laugh or weep over my folly. I laughed at it and made haste to undo the blunder. This confession completes the

[1] March 4, 1946; *vide* "Letter to Dr. Dinshaw K. Mehta", 4-3-1946

[2] The following two sentences are translated from the Gaujarati.

reparation.[1] I have not learnt to give up any work once begun and therefore there is only one alternative left for me. In which village should I start this work?

I should like the reader to draw the moral that he should never take anything for gospel truth even if it comes from a Mahatma unless it appeals to both his head and heart. In the present case my folly is so patent that even if it had continued for some time, very few, if any, would have succumbed to it. The real villagers would not have come for relief to this institute. But if the discovery had come too late, it would have blasted my reputation for I would have lost in my own estimation. Nothing hurts a man more than the loss of self-respect. I do not know that now I deserve the confidence of my fellowmen. If I lost it, I know that I shall have deserved the loss. To complete the story I must tell the reader that not a piece of the money earmarked for the poor ailing villagers has been spent on this abortive enterprise. What shape the present institution will now take and where and how poor man's nature cure will be tried is no part of this confession. The result of the initial mistake must not, however, be an abandonment of the new pursuit that I have taken up in the so-called evening of my life. It must, on the contrary, be a clearer and more vigorous pursuit of the ideal of nature cure for the millions, if such a thing is at all practicable. Possible it certainly is.[2] So far as I am concerned it is enough if this mistake makes me more cautious in realizing my ideals. Time alone can say whether or not poor villagers would welcome nature cure. There is no reason to doubt that it should be welcome.

POONA, March 6, 1946

Harijan, 17-3-1946

56. QUESTION BOX[3]

Q. How can a person in the military do constructive work?

A. A military man who has any grit in him can take up spinning together with the anterior and posterior processes. He can go in for paper making or any other village craft during his leisure hours. Army men have plenty of leisure when they are not

[1] The rest of the paragraph is translated from the Gujarati.

[2] What follows is from the Gujarati.

[3] Originally written in Gujarati, this appeared as "from *Harijanbandhu*" published simultaneously with the source.

fighting. Even when there is fighting, all are not [and should not be][1] engaged in it though they have to stand by ready. Thus they can learn all those activities which are being conducted for the freedom of India. They should learn the national language in the two scripts. All this study must be coupled with a burning love of freedom and the courage to stand true to one's conviction and to act accordingly even if one is left alone. In no way does this conflict with military discipline. I do not believe in indulging in indiscipline especially in military service. Nor is there any room in my scheme of things for secret activity. Adherence to these principles is the only correct course for an individual or a people.

Q. It is supposed to be a sign of ill-breeding not to leave some food on one's plate after finishing a meal. The contrary is supposed to be the correct thing to do.[2] Why is it so? And can it be tolerated when people are starved?

A. It passes my comprehension how such action can be tolerated, especially in the face of the threatened famine. I do not know the reason for this practice, and it would be waste of time to enquire into it. I consider it to be a sign of vulgarity and lack of perspective to have more on one's plate than one requires. In the present time no one is really entitled to full meals. Waste would be sign of callousness. On the other hand, I consider it good breeding and discrimination to leave one's plate clean of leavings. It saves too the time of those who wash up. It is thoughtful and correct before beginning a meal to remove what one con-siders excess from one's plate on to a clean plate. Hosts should be discri-minating and have enough delicate regard to find out what their guests require in way of food and then give them no more than what they want.

Q. Writing letters in blood and using blood for auspicious marks is becoming almost a fashion. Ought it not to be stopped?

A. To my mind this is a revolting practice. It causes no hurt to take a little blood from oneself. In these days, in particular, blood letting can be performed without the slightest pain or inconvenience. If too much is taken from him, the donor experiences weakness. But to write or sign letters in one's own blood is neither bravery nor does it connote any sacrifice or suffering. It is nothing more or less than criminal folly and ought to be abjured. Not only that, it is duty to

[1] From the Gujarati

[2] The rest of the question is translated from the Gujarati.

stop it. The easiest way is for all leaders not to countenance such a vulgar and uncivilized practice.

POONA, 6-3-1946

Harijan, 17-3-1946

57. SATYAGRAHA IN FACE OF HOOLIGANISM[1]

A friend has gently posed the question as to what a satyagrahi should do to prevent looting by *goondas*[2]. If he had understood the secret of satyagraha, he would not have put it.

To lay down one's life, even alone, for what one considers to be right, is the very core of satyagraha. More no man can do. If a man is armed with a sword, he might lop off a few heads but ultimately he must surrender to superior force or else die fighting. The sword of the satyagrahi is love and the unshakable firmness that comes from it. He will regard as brothers the hundreds of *goondas* that confront him and instead of trying to kill them he will choose to die at their hands and thereby live.

This is straight and simple. But how can a solitary satyagrahi succeed in the midst of a huge population? Hundreds of hooligans were let loose on the city of Bombay for arson and loot. A solitary satyagrahi will be like a drop in the ocean. Thus argues the correspondent.

My reply is that a satyagrahi may never run away from danger, irrespective of whether he is alone or in the company of many. He will have fully performed his duty, if he dies fighting. The same holds good in armed warfare. It applies with greater force in satyagraha. Moreover the sacrifice of one will evoke the sacrifice of many and may possibly produce big results. There is always this possibility. But one must scrupulously avoid the temptation of a desire for results.[3] Here I am indicating only a possibility. May no one regard results as a temptation.

I believe that every man and woman should learn the art of self-defence in this age [and in all ages][4]. This is done through arms

[1] Originally written in Gujarati, this appeared as "from *Harijanbandhu*" published simultaneously with the source.

[2] Rowdies

[3] The rest of the paragrpah is translated from the Gujarati version.

[4] From the Gujarati

in the West. Every adult man is conscripted for army training for a definite period. The training for satyagraha is meant for all, irrespective of age or sex. The more important part of the training here is mental, not physical. There can be no compulsion in mental training. The surrounding atmosphere no doubt acts on the mind but that cannot justify compulsion.

It follows that shopkeepers, traders, mill-hands, labourers, farmers, clerks, in short everyone ought to consider it his or her duty to get the necessary training in satyagraha.

Satyagraha is always superior to armed resistance. This can only be effectively proved by demonstration, not by argument. It is the weapon that adorns the strong. It can never adorn the weak. By weak is meant the weak in mind and spirit, not in body. That limitation is a quality to be prized and not a defect to be deplored.

One ought also to understand one of its other limitations. It can never be used to defend a wrong cause.

Satyagraha brigades can be organized in every village and in every block of buildings in the cities. Each brigade should be composed of those persons who are well-known to the organizers. In this respect satyagraha differs from armed defence. For the latter the State impresses the service of everybody. For a satyagraha brigade only those are eligible who believe in ahimsa and satya. Therefore an intimate knowledge of the persons enlisted is necessary for the organizers.

POONA, March 6, 1946

Harijan, 17-3-1946

58. PERSECUTION OF HARIJANS[1]

Sir Parikshitlal Majmudar[2] writes :

> There was high mortality due to some epidemic in a village in Wadhwan State, Kathiawar. The superstition of the villagers ascribed this misfortune to Harijans and they began to intimidate the Bhangi families. The latter fled from the village through fright. Harijan workers . . . approached the State authorities to take immediate steps to protect the Bhangis. . . . The State acted

[1] Originally written in Gujarati this appeared as "from *Harijanbandhu*" published simultaneously with the source.

[2] Secretary, Gujarat branch of Harijan Sevak Sangh; only an extract from his letter is reproduced here.

promptly and the families returned. . . .

The only remedy for this kind of superstition is the spread of correct knowledge. The reason for its existence in Kathiawar seems to be that the reform movement has not yet touched the villages there. Workers must make Herculean efforts to remedy this de-fect. But wherefrom are such workers to come? Even those already working in Kathiawar fight shy of going to the villages. And, even if they go, one can well imagine the immense difficulty of the task confronting them. Man's endeavour at its highest consists in continuing to perform one's duty undeterrred by difficulties.The Kathiawar incident must be taken to heart. Both the State and the people understood their duty and took prompt and firm measures in the instance quoted and the difficulty was surmounted for the time being. If this example were to be widely followed, it would cut at the very root of superstition. And that would be true education.

POONA, March 6, 1946

Harijan, 17-3-1946

59. TELEGRAM TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

POONA,
March 6, 1946

ABUL KALAM AZAD
CONGRESS PREISDENT
FAIRFIELD
LAHORE
HOPE TO BE WITH YOU ON TWELTH.[1]

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

60. LETTER TO JACK JAPHETH

POONA,
March 6, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am glad you have been in touch with Mme. Sophia Wadia.[2] She is any day a safe friend and guide. Therefore rather than have anything from me, I would ask you to come in frequent and closer contact with her and derive comfort.

Regarding your questions I believe in reincarnation. I believe it

[1] In Bombay to attend the Congress Working Committee meeting
[2] Of the Bombay Theosophical Society

is possible to recall one's previous states but it is a curiosity which should always be kept under full control. If the belief that your wife's soul like every other is eternal does not sustain you, no prying into the secrets of nature is going to help. I have known cases in which such prying has positively hindered progress.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

JACK JAPHETH
19 "GIRDHAR NIWAS"
COLABA CAUSEWAY
BOMBAY

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

61. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

POONA,
March 6, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. I will have to go there on the 11th. I, therefore, think it useless for you to come here just for two days. I shall be busy with *Harijan*. My health is good. I hope you got my message.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MANILAL GANDHI
C/O NILKANTH MASHRUWALA
SOUTH AVENUE, BOMBAY-25

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4974. Also C. W. 1387. Courtesy : Sushilabehn Gandhi

62. HINDU AND MUSSALMAN TEA, ETC.[1]

Hindu and Mussalman tea is sold at railway stations. Separate arrangements for meals for the two communities are sometimes made and none seems to be there for Harijans. All this is a sign of our pitiable condition and constitutes a blot on British administration. One can understand their not interfering in religious matters, but for them to allow separate arrangements for tea, water, etc., for the two communities is to set the seal of approval on separatism. Railways and railway travelling offer a golden opportunity which could be used for social reform and for educating the public in sanitation and hygiene, good manners and communal unity. Instead, however, an utter neglect of and indifference to these desiderata are shown. Railway travel serves to strengthen, rather than mitigate, evil customs and bad habits. First and second-class passengers are pampered, luxurious habits encouraged. Third-class passengers on whom the railway revenues largely depend are denied even elementary amenities and exposed to all kinds of hardship. In either case weakness is exploited. And when, in addition to this, separatism and un-touchability are recognized by the railway authorities, it is the very limit. If any passenger wishes to impose restrictions on himself, he is at liberty to do so at his own expense and suffer, maybe, even hunger and thirst. But let him not demand special facilities for himself from railway authorities.

That vegetarians and non-vegetarians should be catered for, is another matter. That is already being done.

POONA, March 7, 1946

Harijan, 17-3-1946

63. LETTER TO JAIKRISHNA P. BHANSALI

POONA,
March 7, 1946

CHI. BHANSALI,

Would it not be wholly improper, if you had undertaken the three days' fast because you are angry with either Pushpa or Kamala? Such a fast can never have a place in our ethics. And, if you had undertaken it with calm deliberation, shouldn't you have my

[1] Originally written in Hindi, this appeared as "from *Harijan Sevak*" published simultaneously with the source.

permission for it? Don't you remember my having suggested that no one was to undertake a fast without my permission? If you don't, henceforth please bear it in mind. Now that it is over, let us not bother about it. Surely you are not going to undertake any more [fasts]; so let bygones be bygones. This letter is for the future.

From a man like you I expect the perfection of human qualities. It would be wrong, if Pushpa or Kamala or any other worker, man or woman, was careless while working for you or for anyone else. The remedy, however, is that the person should be patiently taught to be more careful.

We should do without the services of persons who are careless about their duties. Such persons would then gradually become careful.

Blessings from

BAPU

[J. P. BHANSALI]

SEVAGRAM ASHRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

64. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

POONA,

March 7, 1946

CHI. RAMDAS,

Kanam writes and says that you have again fallen ill. You did not tell me so and I therefore did not believe him. He did well to inform me. You ought to get rid of the disease once for all. Write and tell me everything or ask Nimu to write. I am thinking of going to Bombay on the 12th. I will probably have to stay there for four or five days.

Bessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

65. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

POONA,
March 7, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I did write a few letters to you. And whenever I dictate letters or ask someone to write to you, these too should be looked upon as letters from me. A number of letters have now gone from here. It cannot be said that anything remains to be answered.

I do not consider Bhansalibhai's fast to be right, and nobody in the Ashram has any right to undertake a fast like this. I have always said that if one wanted to undetake a fast, one must take my permission. The rule still applies. It may be asked, what is to be done when I am away. The answer is that the Manager of the Ashram should be consulted and, if he is in doubt, then some senior member like Vinobaji or Kishorelalbhai and others should be consulted. If there is time to consult me, then it is, of course, better to do so. Observance of this rule would save one from any possible conflict of duties.

I think you should now give up your insistence on buying an ox. We may not be able to become the poorest among the poor, but let us try to be like the poor in every way we can. Crores of people cannot afford an ox, and there are very few people in India who have good oxen. Why should we not try to be like them? It would be a sign of perverted reason to cite the instance of the Goseva Sangh in this connection. Let us see how much we can achieve with mere manual labour without oxen and without Western machinery. You will see that a great deal can be done in this way.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 4548

66. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

POONA,
March 7, 1946

Letters and wires continue to come to me seeking my aid in saving Gen. Awari's life which seems now to be sinking. I know Gen. Awari. He is a lovable worker. But I know too that he is often

improperly obstinate. The present occasion is a case in point.[1] If a man, however popular and great he may be, takes up an improper cause and fasts in defence of the impropriety, if is the duty of his friends (among whom I count myself), fellow-workers and relatives to let him die rather than that an improper cause should triumph so that he may live. Fairest means cease to be fair when the end sought is unfair. Let me say once more where Gen. Awari's end is improper and unfair. He may be wholly right in his statement that a great wrong has been perpetrated by the Central Parliamentary Board of the Congress. But who can right the wrong? Not Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel as Gen. Awari tells me he can. He is but an individual Sardar[2] thought he has pronounced the decision of the Board. A judge cannot review his own judgment. The Sardar is out of the picture. The Central Board cannot, must not, review its own judgment. It has no authority. No institution can act capriciously in a well-managed democracy. Gen. Awari and his friends have the right of appeal or review by the Working Committee, then the A. I. C. C.; finally the Congress. This procedure may appear to him too long. It is not, unless he is fighting for an individual or individuals and not for a principle, as he assures me, he is doing. Time always runs in favour of the defence of a principle. If the general session of the Congress which is the highest tribunal for vindicating justice decides against Gen. Awari, he has to submit to its verdict. The Congress is the panchayat. Like the king it can do no wrong. This is merely a necessary and legitimate conception for guidance in the observance of an infallible duty. In truth, however, decisions of human organizations in all climes have been sometimes found to be wrong. So it may be in the case under discussion. Then, but not till then, will Gen. Awari have in theory the right, if he chooses to exercise it, to stir public conscience into action by a fast to the finish. In practice, it will be ludicrous. For the principle behind such action can only euphemistically be so-called. In democracy even pure men may unconsciously give wrong decisions. The remedy is more and purer education, greater awakening of the public and, in such quickened atmosphere, the rise of a number of public workers whose sole duty will be to speak, write and act so as to serve as bright examples for the public.

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Secretary, C. P. Provincial Congress Committee", 20-2-1946 and "Letter to Manchershaw R. Awari", 24-2-1946

[2] Literaly, 'chief'

Now I hope the friends of Gen. Awari will understand me when I say that those who wrongly support him and his fast and thus encourage him will hasten Gen. Awari's death, not those who will not swerve from well-recognized canons of justice even for the sake of saving the life of an erring friend. Let justice triumph though the heavens weep.

Harijan. 17-3-1946

67. SPEECH AT MEETING OF TRUSTEES OF ALL-INDIA NATURE CURE FOUNDATION, POONA[1]

March 7, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi explained that nature cure therapeutics as practised in the cities of India and in the West was not suitable for the masses in the villages of India and that they should be based on the material available in and around the villages as well as in keeping with rural economics. Principally the mass awakening was to be made from the point of view of prevention of diseases rather than from the point of view of cure of the same. From the latter view-point he emphasized the need for evolution of a system of nature cure therapeutics based upon Ramanama and the five elements of Nature : earth, water, air, sun, sky.

Mahatma Gandhi particularly emphasized the importance of Ramanama as the basis of his system, and its spiritual singnificance in nature cure science. He explained that once he started the practice of nature cure of his conception in one the villages around Poona, his idea would evolve a system of therapeutics which can be spread through out the rural population of India. . . .

Mahatma Gandhi then suggested that Dr. Dinshaw Mehta should undertake a trip to the different parts of India with the idea of studying various nature cure institutions existing in the country. . . .[2]

From a fascimile : *Mahatma*, Vol. 7, between pp. 96 and 97

[1] The speech is extracted from "Minutes" of the fifth meeting of trustees held under the chairmanship of Gandhiji in his room in Nature Cure Sanatorium. Dr. Dinshaw K. Mehta and Jehangir P. Patel were present. Gandhiji permitted Gulabanoo D. Mehta also to attend the meeting.

[2] Dr. Dinshaw Mehta accepted the suggestion which was supported by Jehangir Patel and Gulabanoo Mehta.

68. TELEGRAM TO HORMUZD

POONA,
March 8, 1946

HORMUZD
HEAD PRIEST PARSI 'AGIARY'
NAGPUR

REVISION ON MERITS ALWAYS POSSIBLE FROM INFERIOR TO SUPERIOR BODY. WISH YOU SUCCESS. PERSUADE AWARI ABANDON FALSE POSITION.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

69. TELEGRAM TO FEDERATION OF POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS EMPLOYEES' UNION

POONA,
March 8, 1946

SECRETARY
FEDERATION POSTS TELEGRAPHS
GAYA

WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE OF CASE[1] DIFFICULT GIVE OPINION.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

70. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

POONA,
March 8, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I think it would be better, if you joined the deputation[2]. If you cannot agree with the draft[3] of the memorandum to be presented to the Viceroy, that is, if you oppose it, then it would be another matter.

[1] The reference, presumably, is to the union's demands in regard to scales of pay and pensions; the Federation had threatened to go on strike from March 23, if their demands were not met by the authorities.

[2] Of South African Indians led by Aga Khan, who, according to *Gandhi : 1915-1948—A Detailed Chronology*, called on Gandhiji on March 3

[3] *Vide* the following item; for extracts from the memorandum submited to the Viceroy on March 12, *vide* "South African Indian Deputation's Memorandum to the Viceroy", 12-3-1946

It would have been good, if you could have got time to come and see me, but it does not matter. It I can put on paper the shape that the draft is taking in my mind, there will be no need to see me just now. If, after finishing the business in Delhi, all of you return soon, you will be able to see me in Bombay itself. But failing that you will certainly be able to see me here at any rate.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4975

71. DRAFT MEMORANDUM TO VICEROY[1]

[On or after *March 8, 1946*][2]

We the signatories hereto are deeply grateful to your Excellency for receiving us at short notice in spite of your multifarious preoccupations.

The present intention of the Government of the Union of South Africa will, if carried out, degrade us to a status of inferiority against which we have put up a fight more definitely since 1893, the year in which an attempt was made to disfranchise the Indian community as such in Natal. We then looked upon it as a slur not only on the Indians in Natal but also on the mother country. Then there was no Union of South Africa. The Cape [Town] had practically no Indian question worth the name. Orange Free State had banished the few Indian traders it had and prided itself on its thorough anti-Asiatic policy. The Transvaal had a sprinkling of Indian traders, hawkers and others. The location system later known as segregation had its rise there. The whites in Natal had deliberately and for their own sake invited the large number of indentured Indians for their sugar and tea plantations. This indentured population naturally drew the independent mercantile Indians.

One would have thought that the advent of Union would mean the union of all the races of South Africa, i. e., the African (the Negro), the European and the Asiatics (primarily and principally Indians). What a noble tradition such a union would have been for the world. But it was not to be. On the contrary, the Union became an anti-African and anti-Asiatic combine. Every year of the progress

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] *ibid*

of the Union has definitely marked the progress of this combine and the strenuous opposition to it by the Indian settlers and their descendants as will be clearly seen by reference to the appendix A[1] hereto attached.

We ask Your Excellency to approach the question from that standpoint and no other. The threatened legislation adumbrated by Field Marshal Smuts which has hastily brought the delegation from South Africa is a very large step, perhaps the largest yet made, in the process of consigning the Asiatics to permanent inferiority. Political inequality was their end. The wedge has now expanded into all round inequality and inferiority. Thus there are three segregations in which the whites are inviting segregations of themselves in order to compel the segregation of the other two. God has made man one great human family. The white races of South Africa would make of it three separate parts.

We have come all the way from South Africa not to seek protection of individual or property rights, dear as both are, but we have come definitely to ask Your Excellency and the people of the mother country to appreciate the fight for equality of status, which is theirs as much as ours, and to give us as much help as possible for you and them to give. What is attempted to be done in South Africa is a denial of the brave declarations made by the British and even the F. M. himself.

It has given us much pleasure to learn that the withdrawal of the British power in India in favour of elected Indian representatives is imminent. Then we submit that it is Your Excellency's double and special duty to enunciate and so far as possible enforce that policy in no uncertain terms in connection with the question being submitted to you.

We submit that the least Your Excellency's Government can do is to withdraw the High Commissioner from South Africa and to enforce economic and political sanctions. We are not unaware that they may mean very little material loss to South Africa. We know that counter-measures will cause no hardship. But our loss we count as nothing compared to the moral value of the enforcement.[2]

From the original : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 18-3-1946.

72. LETTER TO SORABJI RUSTOMJI

[After *March 8,*][1] *1946*

CHI. SORAB[2],

Chi. Manilal met me. He does not wish to join the deputation. According to him, the deputation is a farce. Many of the members were drafted here. A deputation so composed can have place on it only for dummies. If that is so, what purpose will Manilal's inclusion serve? You and he are like blood-brothers, but there are differences between you two even in the method of work. What can be done in these circum-stances? So much from Manilal's point of view. But you also need to think. Do not involve me at all in this business unless it is perfectly above board. If Manilal is making a mistake, point it out to him and to me also. But if you yourself are making a mistake, wake up. In the matter of public work, I want to see you to be that. You are, of course, a man of bright intellect. Use it always to strengthen your spirit of service. The draft[3] I have prepared deserves the most careful attention. Cling to it at all costs. Improve you health.

Blessing from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C. W. 1386—A Courtesy : Sushila Gandhi

73. FRAGMENT OF TALK WITH GOKULDAS D. RAICHURA[4]

[Before *Mrch 9, 1946*][5]

I want to live for 125 years and, if God fulfils my wish, I want to create a new world in India.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati Samachar, 10-3-1946

[1] The source has "March 5"; but from the contents this letter appears to have been written after "Letter to Manilal Gandhi", *vide* "Letter to Manilal Gandhi", 8-3-1946

[2] Son of Parsee Rustomji

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

[4] A Gujarati novelist

[5] The talk was reported under the date-line "Baroda, March 9, 1946".

74. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

POONA,
March 9, 1946

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Permit Chi. Pyarelal to draw up to Rs. 25 every month as long as he wishes.

Leave the decision about Babudi[1] to herself. She has great love for Gordhandas, and that is as it ought to be. I have told her, too, that she can come to me whenever she wants.

How are things getting on there?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10649

75. LETTER TO PYARELAL

March 9, 1946

CHI. PYARELAL,

What is the remedy if you burn even in the shade ?

1. I will give you whatever time you want. Tell me how much, when ?

2. I have not written to the Ashram about your expenses. I did not know I had to do that. I only gave my approval. I shall write now.

3. Leave everything about Sushila to God. It will be enough if you do not write anything sarcastic.

4. Who was writing the prayer discourses ? If they are in Gujarati, dictate them to Sushila. If they are in Hindi, dictate to C.P.

Blesssings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Addressee's daughter, Sharda Gordhandas Chokhawala

76. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

POONA,
March 9, 1946

CHI. MRIDU,

I have your letter. It seems you have become as old as I. I of course forget, and so do you. So we are both the same. Then who should remember for whom ?

I have written to Nimubehn.[1] Thank God you have become calm.

Where is the room in Jehangir Patel's house? Let us see. Improve your health. That is your first duty.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 11256. Courtesy : Sarabhai Foundation

77. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

POONA,
March 9, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have both your letters. Your mind is not stable. Has the Ashram now become worthless?[2] Is there not someone who is all right? If there is even a single person who is so, then know that it is good. Write to me frankly what is wrong there. I have told them to employ servants. But they are to be treated as brothers. This is one way to serve them. If this does not work, we ought to introduce some reform. If you permit, I shall send both the letters to Chimanlal and ask for an explanation.

Maganbhai must improve his health where he is. Krishnachandra can take work from those who want to work. They can refuse, and you can say no.

What should I do, if I send for you here? You can come over, if you very much want to. I do not know that Abha is going. My

[1] Nirmala Bakubhai

[2] The addressee had written to Gandhiji that in his absence she found the Sevagram Ashram empty.

staying here is not certain. I go to Bombay on the 29th. No patients are admitted here. Dr. Mehta is not on duty. He will be out of station. They have not yet started [the treatment] for the poor. You may go to your mother, if you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 504

78. MESSAGE TO AGA KHAN[1]

[On or before *March 10, 1946*][2]

May you live for many years.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 17-3-1946

79. RAMANAMA, THE INFALLIBLE REMEDY[3]

Shri Ganesh Shastri Joshi, *vaidya*, tells me after reading my article on nature cure[4] in Harijan of 3rd March, 1946, that in Ayurveda too there is ample testimony to the efficacy of Rama-nama as a cure for all diseases. Nature cure occupies the place of honour and in it Ramanama is the most important. When Charaka[5], Vagbhata[6] and other giants of medicine in ancient India wrote, the popular name for God was not Rama but Vishnu. I myself have been a devotee of Tulsidas from my childhood and have, therefore, always, worshipped God as Rama. But I know that if, beginning with *Omkara* one goes through the entire gamut of God's names current in all climes, all countries and all languages, the result is the same. He and His Laws are one. To observe His Law is, there-fore, the best form of worship. A man who becomes one with the Law does not stand in

[1] According to report in *The Hindu*, 12-3-1946, Aga Khan celebrated "his diamond jubilee" on March 10, 1946. Gandhiji had expressed his inability to be present on the occasion; *vide* "Letter to Aga Khan", 10-2-1946

[2] *ibid*

[3] Originally written in Gujarati, this appeared as "from *Harijanbandhu*" published simultaneously with the source.

[4] *Vide* "Nature Cure Treatment"

[5] Principal exponent of Ayurvedic system of medicine and author of *Charaka Samhita*

[6] An ancient professor of Ayurveda

need of vocal recitation of the name. In other words an individual with whom contemplation of God has become as natural as breathing, is so filled with God's spirit that knowledge of obser-vance of the Law becomes second nature as it were with him. Such a one needs no other treatment.

The question then arises as to why, in spite of having this prince of remedies at hand, we know so little about it, and why even those who know do not remember Him or remember Him only by lip-service, not from the heart. Parrot-like repetition of God's name signifies failure to recognize Him as the panacea for all ills.

How can they? This sovereign is not administered by doctors, *vaidyas*, hakims, or any other medical practitioners. These have no faith in it. If they were to admit that the spring of the Holy Ganges could be found in every home, their very occupation or means of livelihood would go. Therefore they must perforce rely on their powders and potions as infallible remedies. Not only do these provide bread for the doctor, but the patient too seems to feel immediate relief. If a medical practitioner can get a few persons to say 'So and so gave me a powder and I was cured', his business is estabished.

Nor, it must be borne in mind, would it really be of any use for doctors to prescribe God's name to patients unless they themselves were conscious of its miraculous powers. Ramanama is no copy-book maxim. It is something that has to be realized through experience. One who has had personal experience alone can prescribe it, not any other.

The *Vaidyaraj* has copied out for me four verses. Out of these Charaka's is the simplest and most apt. It means that if one were to obtain mastery over even one out of the thousand names of Vishnu, all ailments would vanish :

विष्णुं सहस्रमूर्धानं चराचरपतिं विभुम्।
स्तुवन्नामसहस्रेण ज्वरान् सर्वान् व्यपोहति॥[1]

POONA, March 10, 1946

Harijan, 24-3-1946

[1]*Charaka Chikitsa*, m, 311

80. LETTER TO SIR FREDERICK BURROWS

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
March 10, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

Your predecessor Mr. Casey purposely left for you a legacy and told me that you would have to deal yourself with the remaining political prisoners or detenus of Bengal.

I have no desire to worry you in the beginning stage of your career, but the letter[1] I have just received from important prisoners or detenus in Dum Dum jail encourages me to do so. The letter speaks for itself. I simply say by way of comment that it is a tragedy or, may I say, even a disgrace, to keep these people in jail without trial even on suspicion, however strong that may be. I plead for courageous wholesale release.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. SIR FREDERICK BURROWS
GOVERNOR OF BENGAL
CALCUTTA

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 136-7

81. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

POONA,
March 10, 1946

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. You must learn to remain calm and composed everywhere and in all conditions. You have to sit daily with Anand[3]

[1] For extracts from the letter, *vide* "Letter from Security Prisoners", 17-1-1946

[2] Replying on March 19, the addressee, *inter alia*, said : "I am pursuing the policy of my predecessor though I think I may fairly claim to have speeded things up especially when account is taken of the fact that the persons still detained are those who have been regarded as the most dangerous. In the first fortnight of March, sixty-one detenus were released, and the number still held in detention on the 15th March was 115. This figure will be substantially reduced by the end of the month."

[3] Addressee's son

regularly for one hour at least and help him with lessons without getting impatient. In this way at least at that time, at meal-times and during walks, he will regularly get you company.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 10066. Courtesy : Sharda G. Chokhawala

82. LETTER TO ANAND G. CHOKHAWALA

[*March 10, 1946*][1]

CHI. ANAND[2],

You must start writing to me now. I hope you will now learn to be a good boy. Have you started eating vegetables regularly?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 10066. Courtesy : Sharda G. Chokhawala

83. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

POONA,
March 10, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

I got your letter. I tore it up. If Maganbhai cannot bear the heat, he may go home. If he sits in the tub for long hours, he may be able to bear the heat. You have to go to your mother. You will get enough work in Kanu's camp. Anyway a silent and sincere worker will always have some work to do. Spinning should be regarded as no mean work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 505

84. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

POONA,
March 11, 1946

MY DEAR C. R.,

It is just 6.15 a. m. I am to be off to Bombay by 7.30 a. m.

[1] This and the preceding item appear on the same sheet.
[2] *ibid*

If we discover a mistake, must we continue it?[1] We began making love in English—a mistake. Must it express itself only by repeating the initial mistake? You have cake and eat it also.

Love is love under a variety of garbs—even when the lovers are dumb. Probably it is fullest when it is speechless. I had thought, under its gentle unfelt compulsion, you will easily glide into HIndustani and thus put the necessary finishing touch to your service of Hindustani. But let it be as you will, not I.[2]

I do not like your despondence. You have to be thoroughly well. Why not come to me? I hope to return in five or six days.

This *tamasha* will vanish leaving the water of life cleaner for the agitation. If it does not, what then?

Anbudan[3].

BAPU

From a photostat : G. N. 2118

85. LETTER TO SONJA SCHLESIN

POONA,
March 11, 1946

DEAR MISS SCHLESIN[4],

You never write for the sake of writing. But the letter before me is the first such.

A highly industrial system under capitalism and full employment are incompatible.

Your proposition about Manilal needs revision. But all such

[1] In *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, "Letter to Dadabhai Naoroji", 14-7-1894 Pyarelal explains that the addressee in his letter dated March 3 had said : "Your Nagari is so illegible that I have only with great difficulty gathered what you wished to tell me. . . . It won't do to discard what we both know well and adopt deliberately a difficult medium except occasionally as a joke! I shall begin replying in Tamil, if you write to me in illegible Nagari!"

[2] Replying on March 13, the addressee said : "Regarding Hindustani I plead guilty and ask for mitigation. Old age (not youth) being the excuse. But don't argue further. Your very sweetness makes me feel so guilty."

[3] These words are in Tamil. However, the source has *ambudan*, a slip for *anbudan* which means 'with love'. *Vide* also "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 5-3-1946

[4] Gandhiji's secretary in South Africa

things when we meet, if we do.

The rest from the papers and Manilal.

Love.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

86. SHOCKING IF TRUE[1]

The Joint Secretary of the Gujarat Harijan Sevak Singh, Shri Hemantkumar, writes that apart from Karadi nowhere are temples open to Harijans, and nowhere may they use public wells.

If this is true, I may say it is a good thing that I have been unable to go to Bardoli.[2] How can those Gujaratis, who do not look upon Harijans as part and parcel of themselves, who do not permit them to draw water from public wells nor enter temples for the worship of God, who even attribute epidemics to Harijans[3] and are prepared to beat them for practices which superstition attributes to them, how can they welcome me? Or what value can their welcome hold for me?

I have long since counted myself as Bhangi in my speech, in my actions and above all in mind and spirit. Anyone who looks upon them with contempt does the same to me. Indeed I hold it an honour to be among he despised Harijans and among the Bhangis. Any welcome to me under the circumstances would be tantamount to an insult.

Therefore I make this request to Gujaratis that they atone for the grievous wrong they continue to do to fellow human beings. I shall consider their repentance adequate when they admit Harijans into their fold, and only then will I consider them capable of maintaining swaraj. I do hope that the people of Bardoli Taluka will understand and respond to my message in a special manner.

BOMBAY, March 11, 1946

Harijan, 24-3-1946

[1] Originally written in Gujarati, this appeared under "Notes" as "from" *Harijanbandhu*" published simultaneously with the source.

[2] *Vide* "Regret"

[3] *Vide* "Persecution of Harijans"

87. QUESTION BOX[1]

Q. You ask people not to eat polished rice but I fear the disease is too far gone. Polished rice is washed again and again and the water thrown away. It is then boiled and that water too is emptied into the drain thus depriving the cereal of all its vitamin value. The rice thus served, with each grain separate, is pleasant for both the eye and the palate. The practice obtains even in students' hostels. How are we to get rid of it?

A. I am aware of the above-mentioned malpratice. We live in the poorest of poor countries and are yet unable or unwilling to give up such harmful habits. Each one thinks only of himself. We look upon our neighbours as strangers instead of as our kith and kin. What does it matter to us whether they live or die? If they die, it is their own fault. If they live, it is accredited to their merit. Life and death are not in our hands. Therefore let us eat, drink and be merry!

In such a distorted view of life, we have to follow what we consider to be our duty and believe that what is true will one day be followed. Until then, whenever occasion arises, we must proclaim from the house-tops what we consider to be right.

Q. You say that those who eat fish should be provided with the same. Does not this entail violence both for him who eats and him who provides the fish ?

A. Both commit violence. So do those who eat vegetabes. This kind of violence is inherent in all embodied life, therefore, in man too. It is in this condition, and in spite of it, that we have to practise non-violence as a duty. I have often indicated how we may do so. Then man who coerces another not to eat fish commits more violence than he who eats it. Fishermen, fish-vendors and fish-eaters are probably unaware of any violence in their action. Even if they were, they might look upon it as unavoidable. But the man who uses coercion is guilty of deliberate violence. Coercion is inhuman. Those who quarrel among themselves, those who will stoop to anything in order to amass wealth, those who exploit or indulge in forced human labour, those who overload or goad or otherwise torture animals, all these knowingly commit such violence as can easily be stopped. I do not consider

[1] Originally written in Gujarati, this apperared as "from *Harijanbandhu*" published simultaneously with the source.

it violence to permit the fish eater to eat fish. It is my duty to suffer it. Ahimsa is the highest duty. Even if we cannot practise it in full, we must try to understand its spirit and refrain, as far as is humanly possible, from violence.

BOMBAY, March 11, 1946

Harijan, 24-3-1946

88. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

March 11, 1946

The news of the recent events in Bombay has filled me with shame and humiliation as it must have you too. Let me hope that none of those who are here took part in these disgraceful happenings. but that would not entitle you to my congratulations. We have reached a stage when no-body can afford to sit on the fence or take refuge in the 'ambiguous mid-dle'. One has to speak out and stand up for one's convictions. Inaction at a time of conflagration is inexcusable. Is it too difficult an ideal to follow? Let me tell you, however, that this is the only course that will take us safely through the present difficult times.

It has become the fashion these days to ascribe all such ugly manifestations to the activities of hooligans. It hardly becomes us to take refuge in that moral alibi. Who are the hooligans after all? They are our own contrymen and, so long as any countryman of ours indulges in such acts, we cannot disown responsibility for them consistently with our claim that we are one people. It matters little whether those who were responsbile for the happenings are denounced as *goondas* or praised as patriots—praise and blame must equally belong to us all. The only manly and becoming course for those who are aspiring to be free is to accept either whilst doing our duty.

In eating, sleeping and in the performance of other physical functions, man is not different from the brute. What distinguishes him from the brute is his ceaseless striving to rise above the brute on the moral plane. Mankind is at the cross-roads. It has to make its choice between the law of the judgle and the law of humanity. We in India deliberately adopted the latter twenty-five years back but, I am afraid,

[1] This appeared under the title "For Shame!". The meeting was held at Rungta House.

that whilst we profess to follow the higher way, our practice has not always conformed to our profession. We have always proclaimed from the house-tops that non-violence is the way of the brave, but there are some amongst us who have brought ahimsa into disrepute by using it as a weapon of the weak. In my opinion, to remain a passive spectator of the kind of crimes that Bombay has witnessed of late is cowardice. Let me say in all humility that ahimsa belongs to the brave. Pritam[1] has sung : "The way of the Lord is for the brave, not for the coward." By the way of the Lord is here meant the way of non-violence and truth. I have said before that I do not envisage God other than truth and non-violence. If you have accepted the doctrine of ahimsa without a full realization of its implications, you are at liberty to repudiate it. I believe in confessing one's mistakes and correcting them. Such confession strengthens one and purifies the soul. Ahimsa calls for the strength and courage to suffer without retaliation, to receive blows without returning any. But that does not exhaust its meaning. Silence becomes cowardice when occasion demands speaking out the whole truth and acting accordingly. We have to cultivate that courage, if we are to win India's independence through truth and non-violence as proclaimed by the Congress. It is an ideal worth living for and dying for. Every one of you who has accepted that ideal should feel that inasmuch as a single English woman or child is assaulted, it is a challenge to your creed of non-violence, and you should protect the threatened victim even at the cost of your life. Then alone you will have the right to sing : "The way of the Lord is for the brave, not for the coward." To attack defenceless English women and children, because one has a grievance against the present Government, hardly becomes a human being.

The British Cabinet Ministers' Delegation will soon be in our midst. To suspect their *bona fides* in advance would also be a variety of weakness. As brave people it is our duty to take at its face value the declaration of the British Ministers that they are coming to restore to India what is her due. If a debtor came to your house in contrition to repay his debt, would it not be your duty to welcome him? On the other hand, would it not be unmanly to treat him with insult and humiliation in rememberance of past injustice? Let the British

[1] A Gujarati poet

Government prove for the final time that they do not mean to act according to their professions. It will be time to act, if they do so. Till then the only manly course is to maintain dignified silence.[1]

Harijan, 7-4-1946

89. TO PATIENTS

Letters are being received in large numbers from patients wanting to be admitted to the Nature Cure Clinic at Poona. Let me inform them that no such facility exists at present. The standard of cleanliness that was intended to be introduced into the institution has not been reached. Work for the village people has not yet been started. So long as the preliminary adaptations are not complete, nothing can be done. The patients have, therefore, to wait. Dr. Dinshaw Mehta's Nature Cure Clinic at Bombay is no doubt there. He may open branches at Poona and Sinhagarh also. But since he has undertaken heavy responsibility in connection with the Nature Cure Trust, all this may take time. For private patients the scale of his fees will continue as before.

BOMBAY, March 12, 1946

Harijan, 17-3-1946

90. QUESTION BOX

Q. You have declared that freedom seems to be near. But I cannot follow the point. The Pakistan problem is only one complication against you.

A. Hope knows no insurmountable complications. But why ask, when the answer will be known within a few months, if not weeks. And I am not the only optimist this time.

BOMBAY, March 12, 1946

Harijan, 24-3-1946

91. LETTER TO AGA KHAN

BOMBAY,
March 12, 1946

BHAISAHEB,

I have your letter dated March 4, 1946. Thank you. How can people like you be remiss in growing trees? When I was a prisoner in the Transvaal, my batch was made to dig up a patch of rocky soil. A

[1] According to a report in *The Hindu*, 13-3-1946, after prayer Gandhiji declined requests for his autograph; he, however, agreed to give it the next day.

beautiful garden now stands there. If only there is water, then food-grains, vegetables or fodder can be easily grown on any kind of soil. I wish you would be the first to start this venture. In the Birla's mansion here they have laid out a garden after covering the terrace with earth. Now they think of growing vegetabes, etc., there.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

H. H. THE AGA KHAN

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

92. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, BOMBAY

March 12, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi, speaking at the conclusion of the prayers this evening, made a reference to the collection of money and ornaments during his recent tour of Bengal[1] and Madras[2]. He said that he had recently been on a long tour of Bengal, Assam and Madras, and passed through Orissa when he came back to Wardha. A large number of sisters and brothers gave him ornaments and money for the Harijan Fund. He collected them every day. But today, he said, somebody had given him some presents which he wanted to auction. He demanded that they should have to pay double the price of those presents.[3]

Mahatma Gandhi announced that he would not sign autographs this evening and asked the seekers of his autographs to send their books with a sum of Rs. 5 per autographs to him later.

The Hindu, 14-3-1946

[1] From December 1, 1945 to January 19, 1946

[2] From January 21 to February 4, 1946

[3] At this stage the loud-speaker arrangement failed, and Gandhiji had to curtail his speech. Kanu Gandhi then auctioned a silver charkha and a silver flask, which fetched Rs. 250 and Rs. 200 respectively.

93. TALK WITH SHAH NAWAZ KHAN AND P.K. SEHGAL[1]

March 12/13, 1946[2]

Gandhiji repeated to them the advice[3] he had previously given to some discharged I.N.A. men who had met him in Madras. He had told them that it should be derogatory to the dignity and self-respect of a soldier to live upon charity. The ideal which they should set before themselves was to earn their bread by honest industry. The I. N. A. Relief-Fund was there but it would be wrong to use it for providing doles. He described to them how in South Africa he had provided relief to dependents of satyagrahi prisoners by settling them on Tolstoy Farm where they had to labour according to capacity. The merit of this method was that it could be multiplied to any degree without proving costly and burdensome. The real test of the I. N. A., he told them, was to come only now. In the fighting line there was the romance and incitement, not so in civil life. The country was today faced with the spectre of famine. Would they help the people to fight it with the same courage, cohesion, doggedness and resourcefulness which they had shown on the battlefield? Would they show the same diligence, mastery and skill in handling the spade, the pickaxe and the hoe as they did in shouldering the rifle? Digging of wells and breaking stony ground to grow food, and plying the wheel and the shuttle to clothe the naked was the nation's need today. Would they respend to the call? They had physical stamina, discipline and, what was more, a feeling of solidarity and oneness, untainted by narrow communalism. All that ought to put them in a singular position of vantage for introducing non-violent discipline and organization among the masses. Constructive activity could absorb every one of the I. N. A. men who was willing and worthy of his name. If they took up that work, not one of them need or would remain unemployed.[4]

Harijan, 31-3-1946

[1] The talk is extracted from Pyarelal's "Ideals for the I. N. A."; Pyarelal explains: "I. N. A. men . . . were anxious . . . to distinguish themselves in national service on the non-violent lines but unless they were suitably absorbed in civil activities and properly guided they might be exploited and led into devious ways by unscrupulous agencies. . . ."

[2] From a report under the date-line "Bombay, March 12" in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 13-3-1946, which read : "Maj. Shah Nawaz Khan and Capt. P. K. Sehgal . . . had about 90 minutes' talk with Gandhiji at Birla House tonight. The talk . . . will be continued tomorrow evening."

[3] *Vide* "Advice to Indian National Army Men", 22-1-1946

[4] According to a report in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 14-3-1946; P. K. Sehgal told the United Press of India that Gandhiji would "still believe" in his heart of hearts that Subhas Chandra Bose was alive.

94. HIGH-HANDEDNESS EXPOSED

The Bombay High Court has just delivered an illuminating judgment, allowing two habeas corpus applications of H. K. Shah and B. E. Sathe against detention orders extended from time to time. Chief Justice Stone and Justice Lokur have delivered a considered judgment setting at liberty the two applicants who were evidently illegally detained and might have remained under detention but for the fact that Advocate Purushottam Trikumdas assisted them to bring their cases before the Bombay High Court. I have just time to give below the few important extracts from the judgment.

After observing that the two affidavits filed by Mr. Simms, Home Secretary, Government of Bombay, in relation to the two accused cannot be distinguished from each other except for the numbers at the tops, the learned judges go on to say :

> In the case of Mr. Sathe, there is no suggestion in the reasons given that he assisted or supported any underground organization or organized anything underground, though it is suggested that he assisted the activities of an organization, the object of which was to commit acts of sabotage, and even if it is to be presumed that such an organization would work underground, the very fact that these two affidavits of Mr. Simms are in identical terms, though they deal with the circumstances of two different cases, demonstrates a very casual approach to the grave responsibilities and duties, which devolve on every Government servant charged with these wide powers of detention without trial.
>
> In Gokhale's case, a full bench of this High Court had occasion to comment upon detention orders being made on cyclostyled forms inappropriate to the facts of the particular case, and it now appears that, unless checked, the era of the cyclostyled affidavits is about to dawn. Even passing over such irregular features in Mr. Simms's affidavits as referring to an affidavit without stating whose affidavit it is he refers to, his affidavit does not even state that all the circumstances of the petitioner's case were fully considered before the extension orders of the 7th January, 1946, were made.

Commenting upon the further affidavit of Mr. Simms which he filed after declining to attend the court in order to submit himself to cross-examination, the judges observe :

> That is a very remarkable document for anyone to file who has been given an opportunity by the Court to attend the Court in order to give *viva voce*

evidence. It is even more remarkable by its omission than by what it says, for it leaves unchallenged the affidavits for the 22nd February of the two petitioners filed in answer to Mr. Simms's two affidavits which are in identical terms, and which the last affidavit seeks to amend.

Referring to the extension orders, the learned judges go on to observe :

> But once the original order has run its course, the legislature has provided certain safeguards for the protection of the persons detained. Before the six months expired, the person detained will have received the notice giving him the grounds for his detention, and he may have a representation under Section 7. The extension order itself has to be made within thirty days immediately preceding the expiry of the previous order and, lastly, there is added to subjective satisfaction an objective test that the detaining authority shall have further considered all the circumstances of the case. In our opinion emphasis is to be placed on the word "all", and the question at once arises what is the nature of "all the circumstanes" which have to be considered. That must be a question of law.

[Upholding][1] the defence plea that the detaining authority had not considered all the circumstances of the case, the judges observe :

> Mr. Purushottam Trikumdas advanced various heads of circumstances which he submits is obligatory for the detaining authority to consider. In our opinion it is clear that such circumstances must include :
>
> 1. A consideration of the matters and things which the detenu did, or was suspected of doing, when the original order was made.
>
> 2. These matters and things must be considered in conjunction with, and in the highlight of, the present state of affairs. That is to say, the state of affairs existing in India at the date when the proposed extension order is to be made.
>
> 3. A cosideration of any representation which the person detained may have made under Section 7 (4), and consideration of the person detained since his detention, and the present state of his health.
>
> Turning again to the circumstances of the two cases before us, having given the whole position our careful cosideration, we are not prepared to accept the affidavits of Mr. Simms filed on either of these petitions as affording any reliable answer to the assertion of the petitioners that all the circumstances of their cases have not been considered in the light of the state of the state of affairs current in India on the 7th January, 1946. On that date,

[1] The source has "Holding that".

> as the petitioners point out, there was no successful prosecution of a war for the mass movement to hinder, and the various committees of the Congress, previously unlawful, had been legalized, and the members of the Working Committee of the Congress Party and its leader had been released from dentention. These are all circumstances which already ought to have been considered before the renewal orders of the 7th January, 1946, were made.

The judges then draw attention to the fact that Mr. Simms did not state that H. E. the Governor had considered the papers and agreed to the extension orders of 7th January, 1946, being made. The judges say :

> It is extremely significant that His Excellency did not consider and agree to the making of these extension orders though he had considered and agreed to the making of all the orders in both the cases in 1944 and 1945. If he had done so when the orders of the 7th January, 1946 were made, it is inconceivable that Mr. Simms should not have stated that most important fact which is bound to inspire confidence that any order which has been so considered and agreed to has been made after due care, attention and consideration.

Therefore they hold that the two petitioners have

> successfully challenged the two extension orders of the 7th of January as not being validly made, because, having referred to the facts stated by the petitioners, it is impossible to come to the conclusion that the detaining authority complied with the objective test of having cosidered all the circumstances of the petitioners' cases. . . . That being so, it is our clear duty to order their immediate release.

In my opinion the released men are entitled to damages for illegal detention. This, however, may be debatable. But there can be no doubt that all persons similarly detained, no matter in which province, should immediately be discharged without a doubt. There is no danger of the Government being overturned by reason of the discharges.

BOMBAY, March 13, 1946

Harijan, 17-3-1946

95. LETTER TO J. S. DREWE

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,

March 13, 1946

DEAR MR. DREWE,

I am desired by Gandhiji to thank you for your letter[1] of the 9th instant, in reply to his of the 1st. He will look forward to the opportunity of seeing the grounds of Ganeshkhind one day with His Excellency.

Yours sincerely,

AMRIT KAUR

J. S. DREWE, ESQ. I.C.S.

PRIVATE SECRETARY TO H. E. THE GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY

GOVERNMENT HOUSE

BOMBAY

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 154

96. LETTER TO ANANTRAI P. PATTANI

BOMBAY,

March 13, 1946

BHAI ANANTRAI,

I have your letter of the 7th.

1. It will have to be ascertained whether the Peasant Relief Fund has any authority to donate the amount for such a purpose. There are likely to be some documents relating to it.

2. I think three members on the Trust will suffice. The chief thing will be to see that the majority should be representatives of the [All-India] Village Industries Association. It will be for Kumarappa[2] to consider whether the members should be three or five. The whole plan is his. I have given no thought to it at all.

3. I can understand the stipulation that if the Village Industries Association does not wish to run the project, everything should be returned to the State[3]. The Trustees of the Association will not say

[1] *Vide* footnote 4, "Letter to Private Secretary to Governor of Bombay", 1-3-1946

[2] J. C. Kumarappa, Secretary, A.I.V.I.A.

[3] Bhavnagar State, of which the addressee was Dewan

that they cannot run it. It will be for the others, that is, the State, to say that the former are not able to run it. I cannot welcome, and nobody should welcome, such a position in any circumstances.

The papers with me mention the annual grant to be of the order of Rs. 28,600, and that for a period between five and ten years. I think further clarification on this point can be given only by Bhai Kumarappa and Bahi Jhaverbhai[1]. Hence I can say nothing in this matter. I cannot go into the details, nor do I wish to do so just now.

I hope you keep good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 9559

97. LETTER TO JHAVERBHAI PATEL

BOMBAY,
March 13, 1946

CHI. JHAVERBHAI,

I got the papers sent by you. I have written[2] to Patttani Saheb and a copy of the letter is enclosed.

I doubt very much whether you will be able to carry out this project. If the people and Government of Bhavnagar State do not fully co-operate with you, the buildings will remain empty and be a burden on you. I know that this has happened before.

If Bhai Kumarappa and you have not taken care to enlist the support of the people and are banking on the State Government's help, think over the project again.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I cannot say much about Gujarat. But I would suggest that you should do nothing without Sardar's fullest consent.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 9558

[1] Jhaverbhai Patel
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

98. A LETTER

BOMBAY,
March 13, 1946

Even if Chi. Nalin wishes to embark on the venture by himself, I would not advise him to join in this project. Nanabhai[1] also should consider it from the same point of view. This is my view. However, I will not interfere with any decision you two may arrive at. As for myself, you will have to bear this in mind, namely, that I have made a rule in so far as Gujarat is concerned. I will take interest only in such work as has the fullest approval of Sardar Patel. I have been acting on this rule from the beginning, and I have advised others to do the same. Hence you should obtain Sardar's approval, if you have not already done so. I will not mention this matter to the Sardar even if he is here, for I have no time for that.

I have snatched some time with the utmost difficulty to write these few letters.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 9557

99. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

BOMBAY,
March 13, 1946

BHAI PRAKASAM,

I have your letter dated 2-3-1946 as well as the papers. The papers were not necessary.

I did not say I saw nothing wrong in your using the money for your own purpose. I do not have here the copy of my earlier letter. But as far as I remember I had said that Kala Venkatarao had expressed that opinion. Read the letter again. In my view, it is wrong to take money like that for personal expenses. Be that as it may, it is your duty to explain your position to the public. I am hearing bad reports.

Sardar has sent me copies of your letters and his reply. I think Sardar's reply is appropriate.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Nrisinhprasad K. Bhatt

100. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

March 13, 1946

Gandhiji explained a certain *bhajan*[2] —God's path is that of a brave man. He said that the words God and Truth were synonmous. Of the million names of God, the best and the choicest was Truth.

Truth itself is God, and non-violence is just a synonym for truth.[3]

People ought to be prepared to uphold truth and non-violence at all costs, even at the cost of death, just as they would be prepared to sacrifice their lives for God, as was stated in the *bhajan*.

Briefly referring to the recent disturbance in Bombay, he said that those who were responsible for looting did it in ignorance and under misguidance. They did not do it of their own free will. Gandhiji said, he would not call them hooligans.[4] In Bombay much violence was indulged in recently and many shops were looted. Nothing would be gained by such violence and looting. On the other hand, only truth and non-violence would achieve the freedom of India.

In the end, Gandhiji exhorted the audience to pray to God so that He may grant them strength and determination to die in the cause of the country.

Earlier Gandhiji asked for the approval of the audience, if he could speak in Hindustani at tomorrow evening's prayers and day after's. He offered the option of Gujarati. But the approval of the audience went in favour of Hindustani.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-3-1946; also *The Hindu*, 15-3-1946

101. CONVENIENCE v. NECESSITY

One whom many Congressmen know writes :[5]

As I was talking with you, I realized how greatly you were worried about the condition of the masses today. . . . I find that during the last five to six years, conflicting experiences have only strengthened my faith in non-violence. . . to

[1] Held at Rungta House
[2] A Gujarati Composition by Pritam
[3] This and the following paragraph are reproduced from *The Hindu.*
[4] The rest of the paragraph is reproduced from *The Hindu.*
[5] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.

thousands like me, non-violence has become the Life Force that alone is capable of creating democray and humanity. Our non-violene now is a matter of conviction and not a matter of convenience or cowardice.

But then there are others who. . . . are still thinking in terms of power and organization for power. I personally feel that that is a phase in their development. . .

There are also many that are confused with this game of politics and find it difficult to square it with the non-violent way or are rather confused by the spectacle of many attempting to square non-violence with the game of politics. . . .

I feel that we are fighting a war for humanity and. . . that only with rugged fearless experience, and perhaps a few stumblings, shall we be able to grow into non-violence.

Perhaps there are many who experience my difficulties.

BOMBAY, March 14, 1946

Harijan, 24-3-1946

102. COMMUNAL UNITY AND NON-UNTOUCHABILITY IN THE I. N. A.

The Azad Hind movement in East Asia solved many problems. And one of them was the major and intricate problem of communal unity. Although efforts towards this direction were made ever since the inception of the movement in 1942, it became a reality only after the arrival of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. There was another question and that was of untouchability, though on a minor scale. . . . Anyhow this ill too was remedied as a result of universal training of Indians in the I.N.A. camps and offices after Netaji‘s arrival. . . Netaji had asked for ‘total mobilization‘ for the coming armed struggle for India‘s freedom. To this call . . . all sections of the community. . . offered their service as . . . volunteers. Some of these volunteers were absorbed in the Azad Hind Sangh, the party behind the Azad Hind Fauj and the Azad Hind Government. Others– a majority of the volunteers–joined the ranks of the Fauj. The Sangh had a network of branches throughout East Asia. In every branch workers consisting of Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians. . . lived together ate, at the same table and worked together. Same was the case in the Indian National Army. . . .

Note : Except for repetitions, the foregoing[1] is published as it was received. The information is revealing. The natural question is: Now that these soldiers have returned, will the same comradeship persist? It ought to.

BOMBAY, March 14, 1946

Harijan, 31-3-1946

103. TELEGRAM TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

BOMBAY,
March 14, 1946

ANAND HINGORANI
CARE TANDON
10 SOUTH ROAD
ALLAHABAD

YOUR LETTERS RECEIVED. REPLY SENT.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy : National Archives of India, and Anand T. Hingorani

104. MEMORANDUM ON INTERVIEW TO G.E.B. ABELL[2]

March 14, 1946

I understand H. E.'s proposal to be this : "He, as President, and Qaid-e-Azam[3] Jinnah, possibly Nawabsaheb of Bhopal and I should control and regulate food situation." I told you that the situation created by the acceptance of the proposal would be unreal and, therefore, defeat the purpose in view. Then you asked whether I could see the possibility of Maulana A. K. Azad being invited to work with me assisting him. I said, there might be a possibility in it, I being regarded as an expert in such matters. But I added that everything else without an executive of elected representatives was tinkering with the serious situation involving the fate of

[1] Of which only extracts are reproduced here

[2] This was an enclosure to "Letter to G.E.B. Abell", March 14, 1946; *vide* the following item. Abell met Gandhiji on March 13.

[3] Meaning "supreme leader"

millions of hunger-stricken villagers.[1]

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 150

105. TELEGRAM TO JOINT SECRETARY, HINDU SANGHA SAMSKARANA SAMAJ, NELLORE[2]

BOMBAY,
March 14, 1946

NO LEGAL FORMALITY REQUIRED OPENING TEMPLE. YOU SHOULD SEE RAMULU.[3]

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

106. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

BOMBAY,
March 14, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

Although you said I need not put down anything in writing, and I gladly accepted the dispensation, I thought, when I had slept over the

[1] According to *The Transfer of Power, 1942-47,* "Letter to Mrs. Freeth", 8-11-1906 in his dispatch dated March 15 to the Secretary of State of India, the Viceroy, *inter alia*, said : "I sent Abell to Bombay to see Gandhi, and he saw him on the 13th evening. That day Working Committee had decided that an Advisory Committee on food would be useless without a popular Government at Centre and that Congress should not co-operate. Gandhi . . . reminded Abell of long dispute about representative capacity during his conversations at Bombay with Jinnah. He was determined not to be representative of Congress and he admitted that if Azad was put up by Congress, Jinnah would never accept. Abell suggested that willingness of Gandhi and Jinnah to . . . discuss . . . in the interest of India . . . would augur well for immediate future. Gandhi said, if he thought it right to do this, he would do it, but his instinct was strongly against it . . . . I see no use pursuing matter further and shall drop it with minimum publicity. . . . In incidental conversation, Gandhi said to Abell that Jinnah could certainly have for his Pakistan the genuine Moslem areas."

[2] In reply to the addressee's telegram of March 13, 1946, which read : "Trustees approached. Harijan Temple entry favoured. Legal formalities require time. Pray advise Sriramulu break fast."

[3] Potti Sriramulu, a Congressman from Nellore who fasted unto death in 1952 for a separate Andhra State.

conversation, that I ought not to be lazy, and should reduce to writing the propositions we discussed. Here is the memo[1] containing them which I hope I have correctly remembered.[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondene with the Government, 1944-47, p. 149

107. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

BOMBAY,

March 14, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

Many thanks for your kind note.[3] The reason for my putting in writing my impression of our talk was only to guard against any misunderstanding about the position. I would not like to put you or me in any false position and certainly not H. E. As it is you will agree with me that it was good I write out my own understanding of the message you had brought me. Of course I have no intention of publishing anything. I have to say something to the Working Committee in a general way, nothing to the Press.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 151

108. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, BOMBAY[4]

March 14, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi thanked the gathering for the atmosphere of silence and calm in which the prayers were conducted.[5]

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] In his reply of even date, the addressee said : " I have explained to Pyarelal that my own summary of what was said last night would differ a little from yours. . . H. E. would prefer that we should not commit ourselves to writing because of the danger of its leading at some stage or other to recriminations. . . . I will make clear to him the reasons you gave for being unable to accept the proposal."

[3] *Vide* footnote 3, "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 14-3-1946

[4] This appeared under Pyarelal's "Satyagraha—the Art of Living and Dying" as "gist" of Gandhiji's "important address in Hindustani" at Shivaji Park. The text has been collated with version of the speech published in *The Bombay Chronicle,* 15-3-1946, and in *The Hindu,* 16-3-1946.

[5] This paragraph is from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

The singing of *Ramdhun* is the most important part of congregational prayer. The millions may find it difficult to correctly recite and understand the *Gita* verses and the Arabic and Zend-Avesta prayers, but everybody can join in chanting Ramanama or God's name. It is as simple as it is effective. Only it must proceed from the heart. In its simplicity lies its greatness and the secret of its universality. Anything that millions can do together becomes charged with a unique power.

I congratulate you on your success in the mass singing of *Ramdhun* without any previous training. But it is capable of further improvement. You should practise it in your homes. I am here to testify that when it is sung in tune to the accompaniment of *tala*, the triple accord of the voice, the accompaniment and thought creates an atmosphere of ineffable sweetness and strength which no words can describe.

Gandhiji said that my prayer, will-power and mental concentration were developed. This lesson he had learnt during his experience over many years, from the time he first started satyagraha.[1]

I introduced the practice of having congregational prayer some time before the commencement of the South African satyagraha struggle.

He said that in India there were only a few foreigners, and the native population numbered millions. Yet the former dominated over the latter. In South Africa, on the other hand, Indians were few while Europeans and the natives there numbered several millions.[2]

The Indian community there was faced with a grave peril. We did all that was humanly possible. All methods of seeking redress, agitation through the Press and the platform, petitions and deputations were tried but proved of no avail. What was the Indian community consisting of a mere handful of illiterate indentured labourers mostly, with a sprinkling of free merchants, hawkers, etc., to do in the midst of an overwhelming majority of Negroes and whites? The whites were fully armed.

What could a handful of Indians . . . do against the armed might of the South African Government? The utmost that they could do was to plead with the Government in power. The richer sections might even send deputations to England.

[1] This paragraph is from *The Bombay Chronicle*.
[2] This paragraph is from *The Hindu*.

Beyond that they could not go. In these circumstances there was nothing that one could do. He could not give guns in the hands of this handful of men and say : "Fight". He could not drill them into an army and then parade them.[1]

It was clear that if the Indians were to come into their own, they must forge a weapon which would be different from, and infinitely superior to, the force which the white settlers commended in such ample measure. It was then that I introduced congregational prayer in Phoenix and Tolstoy Farm as a means for a training in the use of the weapon of satyagraha or soul-force.

As a practising satyagrahi and the author of satyagrahas, he could say that its seed lay in prayers. Satyagraha could be pitted against all earthly powers for it was a divine power.[2]

The root of satyagraha is in prayer. A satyagrahi relies upon God for protection against the tyranny of brute force. Why should you then be always afraid of the British or anybody playing you false? If someone deceives you, he will be the loser. The fight of satyagraha is for the strong in spirit, not the doubter or the timid. Satyagraha teaches us the art of living as well as dying. Birth and death are inevitable among mortals.

These higher attributes of how to live worthily and lay down one's life nobly, were what satyagraha could teach man. A person who did not understand these twin arts was no true satyagrahi.[3] In the vast world every creature had to live, work and die. It was a very common phenomenon. But these creatures could not realize the potent force that could be derived from God. That was because they did not know the art of sacrificing their lives, which satyagraha involved.

Gandhiji said that so far as purely animal functions like eating and breeding and living and dying were concerned, there was no difference between man and beast and birds. But man rose above them all, for he alone could recognize the good and the true, he alone could realize God.[4]

What distinguishes the man from the brute is his conscious striving to realize the spirit within. The last eighteen verses of the second chapter of the *Gita* which are recited at the prayer give in a nutshell the secret of the art of living. It is given there in the form of a description of a *sthitaprajna* or the man of steady wisdom, i. e., a satyagrahi, in reply to Arjuna's query to Lord Krishna.

The art of dying follows as a corollary from the art of living.

[1] This paragraph is from *The Bombay Chronicle.*

[2] This paragraph is from *The Bombay Chronicle.*

[3] These two sentences are from *The Bombay Chronicle*. The rest of the paragraph is from *The Hindu.*

[4] This paragraph is from *The Bombay Chronicle.*

Death must come to all. A man may die of a lightning stroke or as a result of a heart failure or failure of respiration. But that is not the death that a satygarahi can wish for or pray for himself. The art of dying for a satyagrahi consists in facing death cheerfully in the performance of one's duty. That is an art which the people of Bombay apparently have not yet learnt.

Referring to the mutiny of the ratings of the R. I. N. in Bombay and the distrubances that followed, Mahatma Gandhi said that everything that was done during these days was motivated by a desire for freedom. But those who took part in these did not know the art of satyagraha. Unfortunately many buildings were looted and burnt, many people were assaulted and many died.[1]

Judged from these standards, the men who died in the recent disturbances had thrown away their lives. It was a waste of many lives. There was nothing worthy or artistic in looting ships, and exercising violence on the foreigners who were going about their business. The men who did it were no satyagrahis. The men who looked on without helping were also no satyagrahis.

It is not enough not to want to hurt or take the life of your enemy. You are no satyagrahis, if you remain silent or passive spectators while your enemy is being done to death. You must protect him even at the cost of your life. If thousands in India learnt that art, the face of India would be changed and no one would be able to point his finger of scorn at her non-violence as being a cloak for weakness. We would not then try to shift blame for ugly happenings on the hooligan elements. We would convert and control the hooligan elements too.

We are passing through a crisis in our history. Danger besets us on all sides. But we shall convert it into our opportunity, if we realize the power of satyagraha than which there is nothing more potent on earth.[2]

In a brief reference to the impending Cabinet Mission to India, the Mahatma counselled patience. He would indicate the next step, if the mission failed to implement the pledges and promises made to India.

Harijan, 7-4-1946

[1] Ths paragraph is from *The Hindu*, and the one that follows is from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

[2] What follows is from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

109. THOUGHTLESSNESS[1]

[Q.] You are aware that *pari passu* with the growth of popular outbreaks, the lawlessness of the military is also becoming more and more brutal. You have condemned the hooliganism of the masses but you say nothing about the brutality of the military.

[A.] This is a specimen of thoughtlessness. People have no right to commit excesses whereas the military is the very embodiment of madness. Condemnation of military madness would be meaningless when the very institution of the army is condemned. But criticism of their conduct becomes necessary as a warning to the Government. There is a time and occasion for everything. It would be out of place when condemning popular excesses.

What is the duty of a satyagrahi general? Should he reform his own army or that of the opponent? If he reforms his own, the power of the opposing force is sterilized. If the process continues over a sufficiently long period, the opponent is *ipso facto* completely transformed. The critic's remark can only be meant for me. Others have already condemned military excesses. In my opinion, we have not as yet got sufficient material to judge them. I expect that this is being prepared. The duty of the people, however, is to turn the searchlight inwards. Too much brooding over the wrongs of others is apt to lead one imperceptibly to act likewise. It would then be a case of the pot calling the kettle black.

BOMBAY, March 15, 1946

Harijan, 24-3-1946

110. "A TEMPLE TO GANDHIJI"

Under this strange heading I read a newspaper cutting sent by a correspondent to the effect that a temple has been erected where my image is being worshipped. This I consider to be a gross form of idolatry. The person who erected the temple has wasted his resources by misusing them, the villagers who are drawn there are misled, and I am being insulted in that the whole of my life has been caricatured in that temple. The meaning that I have given to worship is distorted. Worship of the charkha lies in plying it for a living or as a sacrifice for ushering in swaraj. The *Gita* is worshipped not by parrot-like recitation but by following its teaching. Recitation is good and proper only as an aid to action according to its teaching. A man is worshipped only to the extent that he is followed, not in his weaknesses but

[1] Originally written in Gujarati, this appeared under "Notes" as "from *Harijanbandhu*" published simultaneously with the source.

in his strength. Hinduism is degraded when it is brought down to the level of the worship of the image of a living being. No man can be said to be good before his death. After death too he is good for the person who believes him to have possessed certain qualities attributed to him. As a matter of fact, God alone knows a man's heart. Hence the safest thing is not to worship any person, living or dead, but to worship perfection which resides only in God known as Truth. The question then certainly arises as to whether possession of photographs is not a form of worship carrying no merit with it. I have said as much before now in my writings. Nevertheless I have tolerated the practice as it has become an innocent though a costly fashion. But this toleration will become ludicrous and harmful, if I were to give directly or indirectly the slightest encouragement to the practice above described. It would be a welcome relief, if the owner of the temple removed the image and converted the building into a spinning centre where the poor will card and spin for wages and the others for sacrifice, and all will be wearers of khaddar. This will be the teaching of the *Gita* in action and true worship of it and me.

BOMBAY, March 15, 1946
Harijan, 24-3-1946

111. TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT, DISTRICT CONGRESS, NELLORE

BOMBAY,
March 15, 1946

PRESIDENT
DISTRICT CONGRESS
NELLORE

STATE LEGAL DIFFICULTY SRIRAMULU IS REASONABLE. HE WILL ACCEPT ANY CLEAR ASSURANCE FROM TRUSTEES.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

112. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

BOMBAY,
March 15, 1946

CHI. JIVANJI[1],

Pyarelal must have replied to your letter yesterday. This morning Lilavatibehn drew my attention to a Gujarati article, " *Vicharonun Gharshan*" [2] in *Harijanbandhu*. I would not call such Gujarati as lucid or simple. I have no time to suggest improvements. Here I will give only guidance. The translation should not be literal. The sense should be rendered in Gujarati. We may keep the English before us in order to preserve continuity of thought, but the translation should be free. The rendering "Praised *khichri*[3] sticks of the teeth",[4] is no translation at all. We should think and find an English equivalent for the Gujarati saying. One way of saying it would be, "Praise spoils"[5]. Complex sentences in English may be broken up for facility of translation. This is not by way of criticism, but a first lesson.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 9965. Also C. W. 6939. Courtesy : Jivanji D. Desai

113. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

BOMBAY,
March 15, 1946

CHI. RAMDAS,

I received your letter. I will be satisfied only when you cease to be old and become young. Your belief that your body cannot be built up again is groundless. I have not the strength today to prove that it is so. Just now, therefore, I leave it to you to think and discover

[1] Manager of Navajivan Press

[2] A translation of "Conflict of Ideas", *vide* "Conflict of Ideas"

[3] Kedgeree

[4] The reference is to a Gujarati saying meaning 'A much admired thingturning against one.' Gandhiji has used the expression in English.

[5] *ibid*

why it is so.

I will not write to Nimu and Kanam today. Kanam may come over to me whenever he wishes to. I will have to run away either to Poona or Mahabaleshwar[1]. You will know from the papers.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RAMDAS GANDHI

KHALASI LINES

NAGPUR, (C.P.)

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

114. LETTER TO ARUNA ASAF ALI

BOMBAY,
March 15, 1946

CHI. ARUNA,

I have your letter. Why have you written to me in English? Your Hindustani is much better than mine.

Will you be a rebel in all matters? I thought of publishing your letter in *Harijan*, but changed my mind. What is the use of getting into a controversy with you in public? What is the use of defeating you? I would prefer your defeating me. So I shall write in public only when I cannot help it. If I can build up poser from out of your letter, then I shall discuss it in *Harijan*. Now I have no time.

Whatever you do, do calmly. During your Assam tour, you observed ahimsa in its true sense. Congratulations.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 2200

[1]Gandhiji left for Poona on the 16th.

115. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

March 15, 1946

Announcing that this was his parting speech, Gandhiji said that he had been told that on the previous day many people did not understand what he said. He asked those present, if they could follow Hindustani. On their assenting, he congratulated them and said that it was the good fortune of India that there were so many languages in it. These languages were not barbarous or something to be discarded. They were great languages; but in places like Bombay it was necessary for the people to know more than one language. Bombay's women folk had some knowledge of both Gujarati and Marathi merely by living together. But he wanted that they must make some special effort. They must learn their mother tongue; otherwise it would amount to treachery. They must also know Hindustani. Every man in whose heart burnt the flame of Indian freedom must know Hindustani. In places like Bombay it would be necessary to know a third language also.[2]

Gandhiji said, he was leaving Bombay the next day. Therefore he wanted to give them a parting message. He wanted to tell them about nature cure. He had written about that subject but had not done much work. Nature cure was not like a doctor giving medicine in a bottle. It was really the natural way of keeping health and happiness. They might be surprised to hear him say so; all the same he would assert that Ramanama was an item in nature cure.

It is not claimed that nature cure can cure all diseases. No system of medicine can do that, or else we should all be immortals. But it enables one to face and bear down with unperturbed equanimity and peace of mind an illness which it cannot cure. If once we decide that what cannot be shared by the millions should be taboo for us, we are driven to nature as the only cure —all for the rich and the poor alike.

In the armoury of the nature curist, Ramanama is the most potent weapon. Let no one wonder at it. A noted Ayurvedic physician[3] told me the other day : 'All my life I have been administering drugs. But since you have prescribed Ramanama as a cure for physical ailments, it has occurred to me that what you say has too the authority of Vagbhata and Charakha. The recitation of Ramanama as a remedy for spiritual ailments is as old as the hills. But the greater

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter—I". The text has been collated with the report in the *The Bombay Chronicle*, 16-3-1946. The meeting was held at Rungta House.

[2] This and the following paragraph are from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

[3] The reference is to Ganesh Shastri Joshi; *vide* "Message to Aga Khan", 10-3-1946

includes the less. And my claim is that the recitation of Ramanama is a sovereign remedy for our physical ailments also. A nature cure man won't tell the patient : 'Invite me and I shall cure you of your ailment.' He will only tell about the all-healing principle that is in every being and how one can cure oneself by evoking it and making it an active force in his life. If India could realize the power of that principle, not only would be free but we would be a land of healthy individuals too—not the land of epidemics and ill-health that we are today.

For a long time he had been preaching that if all India learnt the doctrine of satyagraha, it would get freedom. He was so convinced of it that if the whole world opposed him, he would still assert it. He was equally convinced that Ramanama could help a man in ill-health.[1]

The potency of Ramanama is however subject to certain conditions and limitations. Ramanama is not like black magic. If someone suffers from surfeit and wants to be cured of its aftereffects so that he can again indulge himself at the table, Ramanama is not for him. Ramanama can be used only for a good, never for an evil end, or else thieves and robbers would be the greatest devotees. Ramanama is for the pure in heart and for those who want to attain purity and remain pure. It can never be a means for self-indulgence. The remedy for surfeit is fasting, not prayer. Prayer can come in only when fasting has done its work. It can make fasting easy and bearable. Similarly the taking of Ramanama will be a meaningless farce when at the same time you are drugging your system with medicines. A doctor who uses his talent to pander to the vices of his patient degrades himself and his patient. What worse degradation can there be for man than that, instead of regarding his body as an instrument for worshipping his Maker, he should make it the object of adoration and waste money like water to keep it going anyhow. Ramanama on the other hand purifies while it cures, and, therefore, it elevates. Therein lies its use as well as its limitation.[2]

Gandhiji explained that he had been practising nature cure even from the days when he was a barrister. But the realization had come to him late in life that he could use it for work in the villages, for the service of the hungry millions.

Harijan, 7-4-1946

[1] This paragraph is from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

[2] What follows is from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

116. TELEGRAM TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

[On or before *March 16, 1946*][1]

SRIRAMULU FASTING AT NELLORE UNDER MY ADVICE[3] FOR OPENING A TEMPLE TO HARIJANS. PLEASE GO IF PHYSICALLY ABLE OR SEND SOMEONE AND DO WHAT IS PROPER. I HAVE CONFLICTING WIRES. WIRE POONA.

The Hindu, 17-3-1946\

117. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER[2]

[On or before *March 16, 1946*]

If I find that I have a talent for the service[3] of the poor and do not make full use of it, I shall be set down as a fool.

Harijan, 7-4-1946

118. TALK WITH AGATHA HARRISON

[On or before *March 16, 1946*]

AGATHA HARRISON : Won't you ask people to grow flowers on a small piece of land? Colour and beauty is necessary to the soul as food is to the body.[4]

No, I won't. Why can't you see the beauty of colour in vegetables? And then there is beauty in the speckless sky. But no, you want the colours of the rainbow which is a mere optical illusion. We have been taught to believe that what is beautiful need not be useful, and what is useful cannot be beautiful. I want to show that what is useful can also be beautiful.

Harijan, 7-4-1946

[1] The telegram was reported under the date-line "Bombay, March 16".

[3] *Vide* "Letter to T. J. Kedar", 23-2-1946; also "Statement to the Press", 16-3-1946

[2] This and the following two items are extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter—I" in which they appeared under sub-title "Five Days in Bombay", that is, from March 11 to 16.

[3] The reference is to nature cure treatment. *Vide* also "My Confussion and Cure".

[4] According to Pyarelal, Agatha Harrison was twitting Gandhiji on his suggestion to Seth Rameshwardas Birla to dig up the flower beds in terrace garden in Birla House, Bombay, and grow vegetables instead.

119. TALK WITH A CASUAL VISITOR

[On or before *March 16, 1946*]

In the case of the ordinary method of treatment, the patient comes to the doctor to take drugs that would cure him. The doctors prescribe the drug. With the relief of abnormal symptoms in the patient, his function ends and with that his interest in the patient. The nature cure man does not 'sell a cure' to the patient. He teaches him the right way of living in his home which would not only cure him of his particular ailment but also save him from falling ill I future. The ordinary doctor or *vaidya* is interested mostly in the study of disease. The nature curist is interested more in the study of health. His real interest begins where that of the ordinary doctor ends; the eradication of the patient's ailment under nature cure marks only the beginning of a way of life in which there is no room for illness or disease. Nature cure is thus a way of life, not a course of 'treatment'.

Harijan, 7-4-1946

120. WHY FOR HARIJANS? [1]

Q. The Harijans are specially favoured by the Government. Special facilities are provided on an extensive scale for their education, employment and advancement. Why should you again seek our help on their behalf? There are equally poor and even poorer people among the *savarnas*. Why don't you work for their betterment?

A. This is a curious question. It is no wonder that Harijans are favoured by the Government. Whatever the reason, the fact is not to be deplored, if the favour really does them good. All Government favours do not. The motive behind seems to me to divide them from the so-called touchables. The reason lies with the latter. If touchables had not misbehaved themselves, there would have been no division possible. And even though the Congress has been championing them all these years, have the *savarna* Hindu masses improved their manners? The answer has to be 'No' even though there has been considerable improvement. The Congress influence is most powerful for ending foreign rule. It is weak on social matters. Therefore, without entering into an unholy competition with the foreign Government, it is necessary for the reformers to do their duty by the Harijans until the bar sinister is completely removed. As for the *savarna* poor, there are many to look after them. Some go to the

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

extent even of spoon-feeding them.

BOMBAY, March 16, 1946

Harijan, 24-3-1946

121. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

March 16, 1946

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

Bring the three friends[1] tomorrow at four. It will be necessary to think about the expenditure. The experiment, however, is to my liking. Vinoba has taken up the responsibility for Waroda[2]. However, write to me a short note about it at your convenience. I may use it for *Harijan*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 815. Courtesy : Balkrishna Bhave

122. INTERVIEW TO UNITED PRESS OF INDIA[3]

BOMBAY,

March 16, 1946

GANDHIJI : What news have you brought for me?

On the United Press representative drawing his attention to the morning papers, which contained Mr. Attlee's speech[4] in the House of Commons, and saying "Bapuji, swaraj is coming", Gandhiji gave a hearty laughter and said :

Is that so? But you have been telling me so often that swaraj is coming. I shall be glad when you will bring me the news that swaraj has already come.

On being requested to express his views on the implications of Mr. Attlee's speech, Gandhiji said that he had read that speech, but did not propose to say anything on it at present.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-3-1946

[1] The reference is to Motilal Kothari, an incense manufacturer of Poona, Bhansali, a village worker in Uruli, and Pannalal who had offered to meet the expenses of the addressee's project.

[2] A village near Wardha. Vinoba Bhave had taken up the project of its uplift.

[3] The special representative met Gandhiji during his morning walk in Birla House.

[4] The British Prime Minister Clement Richard Attlee's speech on March 15 in the House of Commons during a debate on India; *vide* "Clement Attlee's Speech", 15-3-1946

123. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

BOMBAY,
March 16, 1946

Shri Sriramulu is an unknown poor Congressman and servant of humanity working in Nellore. He has been labouring single-handed for the cause of the Harijans of that place. There was a time when high hope was entertained about removal of untouchability and other social work in Nellore. An ashram was built near Nellore but for a variety of causes the activity received a set-back. Deshabhakta Konda Venkatappayya was, and still is, though very old, the moving spirit in connection with these activities. It is in this place that Shri Sriramulu has been quietly and persistently working for the removal, root and branch, of untouchability. He has been trying to have a temple opened to Harijans. He asked me the other day whether, in order to awaken public conscience in favour of such opening, he could, if all other efforts failed, undertake a fast. I sent him my approval.[1] Now the place is astir. But some persons have asked me to advice Shri Sriramulu to suspend his fast for removing legal difficulties of which I have no knowledge. I have been unable to give such advice. As I am anxious that an unobtrusive servant of humanity may not die for want of public knowledge and support, I bespeak the interest of the journalists of the South, if not all India, to find out for themselves the truth of the matter and, if what I say is borne out by facts, shame by public exposure the opposing parties into doing the right and save a precious life.[2]

Harijan, 24-3-1946

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Potti Sriramulu" and "Telegram to Konda Venkatappayya" 16-3-1946

[2] In the source the statement was followed by a note dated March 17 by Gandhiji, written after receipt of Shri Sriramulu's telegram informing him that he had given up the fast, *vide* "Letter to Potti Sriramulu", 17-3-1946

124. TALK WITH HORACE G. ALEXANDER

[On or after *March 16, 1946*][1]

[ALEXANDER :] As outsiders we hope we can play a useful part by providing a link between the people and the Government. The Government is not suspicious of us, and they have the reassurance that we won't suspect their motives. What is more, we are not regarded with suspicion by the people as the Government is. If you think that we should go ahead, you might say something which would encourage and help us and also strengthen the hands of our agents in America in obtaining an adequate quota of food supplies.

Gandhiji in reply commended the example of Ruey Alley, the New Zealander and his companion George Hogg in connection with the organization of Indusco[2] in China. Although they were foreigners, they inspired the Chinese with self-confidence. There was, of course, the other side[3] of the picture too. As for F. A. U.'s[4] Plan of work for the prevention of famine, while generally approv- ing of it, Gandhiji did not like the idea of what he called "begging for food from outside".

If food comes, it would be welcome. But we should not depend on it. India is the granary of the East and now she has to go a-begging for food to America and other countries. I do not like this. Somehow or other, if we rely on self-help, strength comes, we do not know from where. Probably it comes from the original source, and people feel they need not die. Moreover arrival of food in the ports by itself would not solve the problem unless it is

[1] The talk appeared under the title "Constructive Non-violence", as reported by Pyarelal on March 23, 1946, from Uruli-Kanchan. According to Pyarelal, Horace Gundry Alexander, a Birmingham lecturer and member of Quakers' India Conciliation Group, "accompanied Gandhiji to Poona", presumbly, when Gandhiji returned from Bombay on March 16, after the Congress Working Committee meeting.

[2] A war-time plan of Chinese co-operative in India whose activities were carried on under abnormal circumstances with the backing of the Chinese National Government

[3] According to *Harijan*, the work of foreign missionary enterprise, which organized Indusco, "was tainted by the proselytization motive".

[4] Friends Ambulance Unit's; Horace Alexander was one of its members. Pyarelal explains that the Unit, formed as a war-time organization in 1914, was in action during Bihar earthquak (1934), Midnapore cyclone (1942) and Bengal famine (1943). Another like-minded body, American Friends Service Committee, joined the Unit in 1944, and "the two have been working as a single agency . . . operating food canteens and orphanages for children. . . providing medical relief . . . employment . .. and forming . . . co-operatives. . . . With the threat of India-wide famine . . . the Friends Ambulance Unit has again begun to organize for action."

made available where it is most needed. Distribution is the real problem. Unless it is tackled, there is danger that the food will rot in the ports while people are dying in the interior. At present it seems almost a hopeless task through the present corruption. A Government official sent a note the other day showing how it would be at least two months between the arrival of the food ships in the ports and the food actually reaching the affected areas. In the mean time what are the people to do? I have, therefore, suggested that they should utilize the sub-soil water to grow whatever they can by their own efforts. If crores take up the cue, they can do much to save themselves even before the food arrives from outside.

Horace next told Gandhiji that the F. A. U. are developing work of a more permanent nature for the upliftment of Bengal villages. For instance, they are trying to attack the problem of poverty from four or five different angles simultaneously. They had discussed the question with Pandit Jawaharlal Nahru who had approved of the idea for two reasons. With the coming of freedom, he felt, we might help in post-war economic rehabilitation so that the high expectations entertained by the people of the national government might not be belied. Besides a body of people from the West serving the people here would act as an antidote to racial feeling which might otherwise oversweep the country in the first flush of freedom. Gandhiji agreed entirely with Pandit Nahru.

Any person who does such work is worth his weight in gold. Pandit Nehru has done well to point to the danger signal.

But he felt that the danger was even deeper. The face of the picture as he viewed it seemed horrifying. The feeling towards Europeans was rising all though the East. There were so many complex forces working on the mass mind. If the maelstrom broke out, the F. A. U. might have to bear the brunt of it. They must be prepared for that sacrifice. But whilst they should be prepared for the worst, he wanted them to share with him the hope that all woould be well in the end.

To see the danger clearly and yet to remain unperturbed in the face of it, trusting to God's goodness, is true wisdom.

Harijan, 7-4-1946

125. DECIMAL COINAGE AND ITS COST

After due sanction required by Section 153 of the Government of India Act, 1935, a Bill further to amend the Indian Coingage Act, 1906, is said to have been introduced in the Legislative Assembly on the 18th February, 1946. If it becomes law, the rupee will be equivalant to 100 cents instead of 64 pice. The consequential changes

will naturally follow. The object[1] is stated to be :

> Modern trade and commerce demand speed and simplicity in the methods of computation, to achieve which there is nothing to compete with the decimal system which has gradually displaced all other systems in most of the advanced countries of the world. Public opinion has expressed itself largely in favour of the adoption of decimal coinage in India . . .

And a note[2] says :

> During the transition period when both the . . . coins will circulate side by side and prices might be quoted in terms of either . . . the Bill provides for conversions involving smaller fractions to be made in rupees of any one transaction. . .

Shri Kishorelal Mashruwala has studied the question carefully and has come to the conclusion that whilst in theory the introduction of the decimal coinage may be defensible, in practice, for some years to come, the poor will be sacrificed as usual in the interests of the modern trade, i. e., the rich merchants. It is unnecessary here to summarize his convincing argument in support. It is given in full in the columns of the *Harijanbandhu*. It is sufficient here to state that even in the country of the rulers, the decimal coinage has not been introduced. Public opinion there commands respect and affects the decisions of the House of Commons. In India, public opinion, such as it is, has very little force and, moreover, the opinion of the millions who will be the sufferers is inarticulate. Shri Mashruwala very aptly points out that the poor will be taxed without the odium of additional taxation. Wisdom would have suggested that if the power is to be transferred inside of a few months to the representatives of the people, it would be improper for the Government to embark upon an experiment even though claimed to be scientific and yet manifestly against the immediate interests of the poor. In a poor country like India, often the immediate is, as in this case, the decisive factor. It is to be hoped that the Central Legislative Assembly will throw out the Bill if, on re-considration, the Government do not withdraw it.[3]

POONA, March 17, 1946

Harijan, 24-3-1946

[1] Only extracts of these are reproduced here.

[2] *ibid*

[3] *Vide* also the following item.

126. CAN WE AFFORD THE DECIMAL SYSTEM?

Shri Kishorelal Mashruwala writes :[1]

This letter deserves to be studied. He has pointed out a few instances of the immediate impact of decimal system on ordinary people. Thoughtful readers can think of other instances which will go to prove that the loss to the poor on introducing the decimal system is likely to be very great. It is easy to support the system on scientific grounds. But popular dealings are not based [on science]. India is an unfortunate country where all manner of experiments are carried on in a high-handed manner, and at the cost of the public exchequer, and the people have had to suffer in the name of science. Would this be the last gift [of the British] to India on the eve of their leaving? Even though the purpose of this Bill may be good, it should be abandoned. When the people come to power, they may adopt the decimal system. They may put up with the losses, if any, in adjusting to it. But it is the duty of the Legislature to defeat this Bill.

POONA, March 17, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 24-3-1946

127. FOREWORD

I have gone through some of the chapters of Bhai Jugatram's *Ashrami Kelavani*[2]. The language is not only simple and interesting, but it is apt even for the villagers. The author has described in a very interesting way all the trivial as well as vital aspects of the Ashram life. He has shown that though the Ashram life is a simple one, real joy and art are to be found in it. Whether my assessment is right or wrong, the reader should judge after reading the entire book.

M. K. GANDHI

POONA, March 17, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Atmarachana Athava Ashrami Kelavni

[1] The letter is not translated here. *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Ashram Method of Education, by Jugatram Dave of the Ashram at Vedchhi

128. LETTER TO POTTI SRIRAMULU

POONA,
March 17, 1946

MY DEAR SRIRAMULU,

I write in English because others may understand what I have written.

Here is a letter from G. Ramachandra Rao. Your fast is good. I know you are suffering. I do not mind it. I am doing all I can to reach a proper solution on merits. Your fast is intended, or should be intended, only to quicken lazy conscience, if conscience can ever be lazy. If what Ramachandra Rao says can be sustained, you may postpone the fast as distinguished from abandoning it altogether. If approval by the Provincial Government is necessary, and if the trustees honestly work for it, there is no occasion of the fast. I hope you will survive the ordeal.

Yours,
BAPU

[PS.]

Since this was written, your wire was received. I hope this means that the opening is a certainty.[1]

BAPU

From a photostat : G. N. 113

129. A NOTE

The foregoing statement[2] was issued on the 16th instant. A wire was received today from Shri Sriramulu to the effect that he yielded to public pressure and broke his fast[3]. I can be glad only if the ending of the fast means that the public has taken over the responsibility of having the temple opened without delay. Prof. Ramachandra Rao's letter received by me shows that there is a real legal difficulty about the opening, and the principal trustee is pledged to have the formality gone through and the temple opened. It is to be hoped that the temple would be opened with the willing consent of the temple-going people.

[1] *Vide* also the following two items.
[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 16-3-1946
[3] On March 16; *vide* the following item.

That can be the only meaning put upon the universal sympathy evoked by the fast.

POONA, March 17, 1946

Harijan, 24-3-1946

130. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

POONA,

March 17, 1946

Shri Sriramulu has yielded to public pressure and has broken his fast on Saturday. A legal formality is necessary before opening the temple.[1]

The Hindu, 19-3-1946

131. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

NATURE CURE CLINIC,

6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,

March 17, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

I thank you for your letter[2] of 12th instant.

My son[3] tells me that the Home Member has come to the conclusion that Shri Vidyarthi's case is all false regarding Delhi. Is my son's interpretation of the Home Member's finding correct? You will please answer my question when you tell me of his finding after investigation in Nagpur are complete.[4]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 65

[1] *Vide* also the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* footnote 3, "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 20-2-1946

[3] Devdas Gandhi

[4] In his reply dated March 28, Abell concurred with Devdas Gandhi's interpretation of Home Member and said : "The Home Member, when he met Mr. Devdas Gandhi on March 2, understood that Mr. Devdas Gandhi also had come to the same conclusion. . . The Central Provincial Government have made enquiries into his allegations of maltreatment at Nagpur and state that he has totally failed to substantiate them. On this, the Home Member can offer no remark beyond saying . . . he was capable of inventing the story of ill-treatment at Nagpur also.

132. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

POONA,
March 17, 1946

MY DEAR C. R.,

Your dear letter. The Tamil lesson is good. I hope I shall not forget *anbu* and *ambu*[1]. Does not the latter also mean lotus? What is the meaning of *anbudan*? Or is the final letter '*m*'?

You are not old, and you must not feel old. You must correct the stomach. So you are so pessimistic as to think that 49 years won't be enough to see the wise people become foolish!

When are you coming to Poona?

Romba anbudan[2]

BAPU[3]

[PS.]

Can you use *romba* as I have?

From a photostat : G. N. 2119

133. INTERVIEW TO H. N. BRAILSFORD[4]

POONA
[*March 17, 1946*][5]

When last I was in Poona, Gandhi was a prisoner, and I was not allowed to meet him. Then the town, gloomy and angry, was involved in a general strike. Today it is celebrating the spring carnival in a mood of gaiety.

Gandhi in his turn was happy when I met him, for Mr. Attlee's speech in the Indian debate[6] had just opened the road to independence. He looked well and very much less than his age. . . . His manner was never solemn and often he relaxed in a

[1] Water; *vide* also "Letter to C. Rajagopalchari", 11-3-1946

[2] With much love

[3] This and the expressions in italics are written in Tamil.

[4] This appeared under the title "Gandhiji on New Spirit" by H. N. Brailsford, as "reproduced from *The Hindu*", 31-3-1946.

[5] From the reference to the "spring festival", presumbly, Holi, usually celebrated on the full-moon day of the Hindu calendar month *Phalguna*, falling to *Gandhi : 1915-1948—A Detailed Chrenology*, the interviewer called on Gandhiji between March 17 and 21.

[6] On March 15, in the House of Commons; *vide* "Clement Attlee's Speech", 15-3-1946

humorous chuckle. In a way, hard to define, one felt that this man was speaking for India . . . . He warned me, nonetheless, that he would be speaking only for himself and not for the Congress. Our talk took its start from the Prime Minister's recognition of India's right to choose independence. This, Gandhi welcomed, and not only this, but the whole tone of the speech. He went on :

But I can't forget that the story of Britain's connection with India is a tragedy of unfulfilled promises and disappointed hopes. We must keep an open mind. A seeker of truth will never begin by discounting his opponent's statement as unworthy of trust. So I am hopeful, and, indeed, no responsible Indian feels otherwise. This time I believe that the British mean business. But the offer has come suddenly. Will India be jerked into independence? I feel today like a passenger who has been hoisted in a basketchair on to a ship's deck in a stormy sea and has not yet found his feet. There should have been some psychological preparation, but even now it is not too late. The tide of bitterness had risen high and that is not good for the soul. The last two months should have been filled with generous gestures. This is a milestone not only in India's history and Britain's, but in the history of the whole world.

Gandhiji's meaning was clear. The British Government had done the right thing, but in its manner of doing it, he missed the big touch. When I asked him for concrete illustrations, he chose two. The release of the political prisoners had been gradual and was still incomplete. [He added :]

There was no danger to fear. If independence is coming, would these men have opposed it? A complete amnesty would have captured the people's imagination. When you are about to transfer power, you should do it boldly.

He went on to speak of the Salt Tax.

Its abolition would be a gesture the poorest peasant could understand. It would mean even more to him than independence itself. Salt in this climate is a necessity of life, like air and water. He needs it for himself, his cattle and his land. This monopoly will go, the instant we get independence. Then why not abolish it today? By such acts the Government could have created a feeling among the masses that the new era has already dawned. . . .

I . . . reminded Gandhi that many Englishmen find it hard to understand why Indians prefer independence to Dominion Status. His answer was startling.

There was a time when I used to swear by Dominion Status, and actually preferred it to independence. That was my attitude during the first World War. I even used, in writing[1] to Lord Chelmsford, the Viceroy of those days, an expression that has often been quoted

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 22-6-1920

against me. I wanted to evoke in the Indian breast the same loyalty to the British Crown that there is in the breast of an Englishman. It was an English footballer who converted me to independence.

With a laugh, Gandhi explained that he was referring to C. F. Andrews, who had been a notable athlete at Cambridge, as well as a don. Gandhi added :

Andrews made me understand the significance of the King-Emperor's title. The British king is king also in the Dominions, but he is the Emperor of India. India alone makes the Empire. The Dominions are peopled by your cousins. But we Indians, with our different culture and traditions, can never belong to the British family. We may belong to a world-wide family of nations, but first we must cease to be under-dogs. So I set myself to win independence. You may object that by so doing I am throwing away the protection of the British army and navy. India would not need them, if she were truly non-violent. If, in the glow of freedom, she could live up to that creed, no power on earth would ever cast an evil eye upon her. That would be India's crowning glory and her contribution to the world's progress.

If only Englishmen could follow this argument of mine, they would make their offer of independence in a different tone altogether. Today they insist that Dominion Staus is the best gift they can possibly bestow : 'For the world's sake and for ours as well as your own, you shall have independence today, even as we have it. . . .'

I asked Gandhi to face the anxieties of his English listeners and tell them whether whether Indian independence would make for Britain's security and the world's. He answered that the British need never fear an independent India. If they leave India as willing friends, she in her turn will always remain friendly. But Britain, I told him, might hope for some assurance of friendship. Would an independent India be willing to enter into an alliance with Britain? Gandhi's answer came promptly :

Supposing India said 'No', would you make the recognition of India's independence contingent upon her entering into an alliance with Britain? If you did that, it would immediately lower the value of your offer and rob it of all grace. The proper attitude is to meet India's claims as a matter of right, even if she wanted to be unfriendly and pay you back in your own coin. No calculations entered into the British mind, when they settled with the Boers at the end[1] of a bloody war, and the Boers have stayed friends ever since.

I replied that Britain has made up her mind to end the coercive connection with India. But living as she does in a perilous would it is inevitable that she should ask the question whether as an ally in a defensive war she would be entitled to use

[1] On May 31, 1902

India's strategic bases and ports against India give a reassuring reply? Gandhiji answered :

Englishmen must learn to be Brahmins, not Banias. The Bania, I should explain, is the trader, or as Napoleon put it, the shopkeeper. The Brahmin is the man who is intelligent enough to rank the moral above the material values of life.

A Gujarati novelist has said that Englishmen are soldiers and Brahmins, but not Banias. That was a generous verdict, but it was mistaken. Englishmen have still to evolve the Brahminical spirit. Even the British soldier still calculates and bargains like a Bania, and fails to reach the highest type of courage. I still cherish the hope that the British will respond to the non-violent spirit of India. As the author of that movement, I know what it has meant for the world. The non-violent spirit is the greatest thing in life. I feel it is my responsibility to help my brothers not to degrade themselves by bargaining. If you and we can rise to this moral height, no danger can alarm us. It is probable that many members of the Congress will not take this view and may be willing to discuss an alliance today. But independence would come free as air; don't let us bargain over it.

In reply to a further question, whether a defensive alliance might be discussed when independence is ratified by treaty, Gandhi replied :

If India feels the glow of independence, she probably would enter into such a treaty of her own free will. The spontaneous friendship bet-ween India and Britain would then be extended to other powers and among them, they would hold the balance, since they alone would possess moral force. To see that vision realized, I want to live for 125 years. . . .

He said that he hoped for a mutually helpful commercial treaty between a friendly Britain and an independent India. For goods that India needed to import, he was even ready to give Britain a preference.

While we talked of Pakistan, Gandhi said that if no other method of solution succeeded, he was prepared to submit the whole issue to international arbitration. Nor should we forget that expedient, if any insoluble question arose between Britain and India, for example, over debts. But he saw no blank wall of difficulty ahead. His last words were that difficulties make the man.[1]

Harijan, 14-4-1946

[1] Brailsford concluded : "I came away with the sense that I had been talking to a brave man who has the courage to believe that human society can be built only on moral principles. Amid our preoccupations over military perils, he stands aloof and repeats with unshaken faith his creed that safety is attainable, only when men learn to treat each other as brothers and equals. No lesser means will avail."

134. CABLE TO J. C. SMUTS

POONA,
March 18, 1946

FIELD MARSHAL SMUTS
UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA, CAPE TOWN

YOUR ASIATIC POLICY REQUIRES OVERHAULING. IT ILL BECOMES YOU. LEAST YOU SHOULD DO IS TO WITHDRAW THREATENED LAND AND FRANCHISE MEASURE AND CALL ADVISORY ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE AT LEAST OF UNION BRITISH AND INDIAN GOVERNMENTS AND IF POSSIBLE OF ALL ASSOCIATE POWERS TO CONSIDER ASIATIC AFRICAN AND GENERAL COLOUR POLICY ARISING FROM ASIATIC BILL. THIS IS NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNLESS YOU SO WISH.[1]

YOURS AND SOUTH AFRICA'S SINCERE FRIEND
GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 93

135. TELEGRAM TO LORD WAVELL

Express

POONA,
March 18, 1946

H. E. VICEROY
VICEROY'S CAMP

PLEASE ACCEPT MY SYMPATHY IN YOUR LOSS[2] WHICH MAY GOD ENABLE YOU AND LADY WAVELL AND YOUR DAUGHTER BEAR WITH FORTITUDE.

GANDHI

Gandhijis Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 176

[1] For the addressee's reply, *vide* "Cable from J. C. Smuts", 21-3-1946

[2] The reference is to the death of the addressee's son-in-law, Capt. Simon N. Astley, in an accident at Quetta.

136. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

POONA,
March 18, 1946

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. I thought you would like my letters in Hindi. Now I know.

I am glad you have relieved Kripa of pain.

Let it now be understood between us that we must wait till occasion brings me to Delhi. You must keep well.

Rajkumari is in Delhi for a few days. Sushila in Quetta. So you may not expect long love letters from me. And now you have *Harijan*.

Here is a cheque for you sent to me by Shri Kedar of Roorkee. He has met you.

Love.

BAPU

Enclosure :

Cheque No. 354863 on Bharat Bank Ltd., Roorkee, for Rs. 500

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

137. LETTER TO KASHIBEHN GANDHI

POONA,
March 18, 1946

CHI. KASHI[1],

How are you now? You should do whatever you can from where you are. Both of you can give lessons to Gajaraj[2]. It must be pretty hot there. It is boiling hot here. the nights and mornings are pleasant.

Blessings to both from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 9232. Courtesy : Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] Wife a Chhaganlal Gandhi
[2] Son of Hoshiari, niece of Balvantsinha

138. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

POONA,
March 18, 1946

CHI. NAJUKLAL,

Your article will be printed after some revisions. It is not likely to be published before the 30th. My being at a distance from the Press is a big handicap, and, secondly, the quota for paper is only eight pages.

A complete or partial fast, steam-bath, hip-bath and friction-bath are the best remedies for Chi. Moti's[1] arthritis.

Prabodh[2] seems to be getting on well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 12155

139. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

POONA,
March 18, 1946

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

You have to win over Gajaraj [with love]. Anger will consume you as well as him. If you give up anger, you will both rise high. Don't you know it is called *mahashana*[2] and *mahapapma*[3].

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 1969

140. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

POONA,
March 18, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter. I have left it to you to decide about teaching. The general rule is that a manager only manages. But he reserves to

[1] Addressee's wife and son
[2] Arch-devourer
[3] Arch-sinner; the source, however, has *mahapaka*.

himself the right to make exceptions. It is true that teaching also is a part of the management.

There is no need of more land for farming, is there?

It is good that you go into the village.

I am well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 4485

141. LETTER TO ANANTRAM PURI

POONA,
March 18, 1946

CHI. ANANTRAM,

I am glad that you have concentrated your attention on farming. Do you try any farming without the use of bullocks? I can tell you, in that too, there is something special. Keep well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

142. LETTER TO KEDAR

POONA,
March 18, 1946

BHAI KEDAR,

Shrimati Janakidevi[1] has sent me your letter dated February 22, 1946, to her and also your article. I listened to everything [being read out to me]. I do not agree with your view-point. True, we can accomplish more after achieving independence, but for neglect of cattle, we alone are responsible; the Government has no hand in it. I am afraid, you have not thought over it fully.

[1] Janakidevi Bajaj

Thanks for sending the cheque for Rs. 500. I am sending it to Mirabehn as indicated by you.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KEDAR

(INDIAN DAIRY CORPORATION, ROORKEE)

DEHRA DUN

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

143. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS [2]

Course of events has raised the question of South Africa whiteman's policy to the highest level. Unseen, it holds the seeds of a world war. The threatened Land and Franchise Bill which has brought the South African Indian delegation[3] to India, though superficially it affects the Indians of Natal and the Transvaal, is in effect a challenge to Asia and by implication to the Negro races. India in her present exalted mood can view it in no other way. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is Indian to the core but, being also an internationalist, he has made us used to looking at everything in the international light instead of the parochial. India, weak physically and materially but strong ethically and numerically, has proclaimed from the house-tops that her independence would be a threat to no one and no nation, but will be a help to noble effort throughout the world and promise of relief to all its exploited peoples. Therefore India regards the contemplated measure of the Union of South Africa as an insult and challenge to them.[4]

The Indian deputation see in the present measure not merely an assault on Indian property rights but also on their status as free men. They do not want merely to exsit in South Africa. They need not have sent the deputation all the way to India for that purpose. They want to be in South Africa as equals of the European settlers of South Africa.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 18-3-1946

[2] This appeared under the title "Indians in South Africa". According to *The Bombay Chronicle*, 20-3-1946, the statement was released on March 19.

[3] For their memorandum to the Viceroy, *vide* "Draft Memorandum to Viceroy", 8-3-1946. and "South African Indian Deputation's Memorandum to the Viceroy", 12-3-1946

[4] For resolution by the Congress Working Committee, *vide* "Congress Working Committee Resolution on South Africa"

They know that today they are not. But they must stop deterioration and hence move forward. In that forward march India will help, of course. Indeed all the moral forces will be at their call. The brunt, however, will have to be borne by them. They rediscovered the force of Truth (Satyagraha) and that will be their only and ultimate source of power. Time for it is not yet. Let us hope, it will never come. They have to try together on their side all the moral forces of the world. They will have to clear the ground of all the weeds, all sordidness, all personal ambition which always and everywhere creeps in, if sleepless vigilance is not kept on the watch-tower. Imagine the plight of a poor barque sailing when the beacon light in front has gone out.

They must be prepared for accidents and consequent suffering. If they are in earnest and hardy enough to brave the worst, they are bound to come out the best in the end.

What about the whites of South Africa? They invited the Indians in the first instance. If they had thought the invitees would always be like slaves or that they would not be followed by their free brethren, they (the whites) were soon undeceived.

Does real superiority require outside props in the shape of legislation? Will they see that every such wall of protection weakens them, ultimately rendering them effeminate ? The lesson of history ought to teach them that might is not right. Right only is might. Field Marshal Smuts is a great soldier-statesman. Will he not perceive that he will be taking the whitemen of South Africa down the precipice, if he persists in the policy underlying his measure? Let him take counsel with the Allies to whose victory on the battlefield he contributed not a little. He will surely throw away its fruits, if he persists in his plan of protecting the civilization of the West by artificial means.

POONA, March 18, 1946

Harijan, 24-3-1946

144. FAMINES AND BIRTH RATE

Maj. Gen. Sir John McGaw, President, India Office Medical Board, is reported by a correspondent to have said :

> Famines in India will recur; in fact India is today facing perpetual famine. Unless something is done to decrease the birth rate in India, the country will be heading straight for a calamity.

The correspondent asks what I have to say on this grave issue.

For me this and some other ways of explaining away famines in India is to divert the attention from the only cause of recurring famines in this benighted land. I have stated[1], and repeat here, that famines of India are not a calamity descended upon us from nature but is a calamity created by the rulers—whether through ignorant indifference or whether consciously or otherwise does not matter. Prevention against drought is not beyond human effort and ingenuity. Such effort has not proved ineffective in other countries. In India a sustained intelligent effort has never been made.

The bogey of increasing birth rate is not a new thing. It has been often trotted out. Increase in population is not, and ought not, to be regarded as a calamity to be avoided. Its regulation or restriction by artificial methods is a calamity of the first grade whether we know it or not. It is bound to degrade the race, if it becomes universal which, thank God, it is never likely to be. Pestilence, wars and famines are cursed antidotes against cursed lust which is responsible for unwanted children. If we would avoid this three-fold curse, we would avoid too the curse of unwanted children by the sovereign remedy of self-control. The evil consequences of artificial methods are being seen by discerning men even now. Without, however, encroaching upon the moral domain, let me say that propagation of the race rabbit-wise must undoubtedly be stopped; but not so as to bring greater evils in its train. It should be stopped by methods which in themselves ennoble the race. In other words, it is all a matter of proper education which would embrace every department of life; and dealing with one curse will take in its orbit all the others. A way is not to be avoided because it is upward and therefore uphill. Man's upward progress necessarily means ever-increasing difficulty, which is to be welcomed.

POONA, March 19, 1946

Harijan, 31-3-1946

145. TELEGRAM TO SHYAMLAL

POONA,
March 19, 1946

SHRI SHYAMLAL
BAJAJWADI
WARDHA

IT APPEARS I NEED MOVE BEFORE FIRST APRIL, THEREFORE IT SEEMS

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the United Press of India", 7-2-1946

MEETING AS ORIGINALLY FIXED POSSIBLE BUT I STILL THINK INADVISABLE BUT YOU CAN RECONSIDER IF YOU WISH.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

146. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR[1]

March 19, 1946

Your day dawns, they say, from the moment you wake up.[2] Having woken up, I cannot now rest. . . . You know, I used to stay in the East End even during the Round Table Conference[3]. East End might be described as the Harijan quarters of London. In the room I occupied there was hardly accommodation enough for two. A chest of drawers was the only furniture—no table, no chairs. One slept on the floor. All round were the slums. And yet Kingsley Hall itself would be called a model of cleanliness.[4]

Harijan, 7-4-1946

147. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

POONA,

March 19, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I did receive your message[5] to the Navy. I also got the same information from the Associated Press. I paid no attention to it. I did not think it worth attending to either. I feel that we should chart our course in faith, and wait and see whatever is to happen. Why should one who is already armed worry especially when the weapon in his

[1] The letter is extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter—II". Pyarelal explains that "Gandhiji has given the reasons for his deciding to stay in Harijan quarters during his forthcoming visits fo Bombay and Delhi"; *vide* also "Why Bhangi Quarters?", 25-3-1946.

[2] A Gujarati saying

[3] In 1931

[4] According to Pyarelal, the addressee replied that "he would himself hereafter stay with Gandhiji in the Harijan quarters".

[5] According to *The Indian Annual Register, 1946,*"The Foods of India", Vallabhbhai Patel had advised the striking R. I. N. ratings to "surrender unconditionally" and told them that the "Congress would do its best" to get "their legitimate demands accepted without victimization".

hands is *Ramabana*[1]. These lines of Pritam constantly reverberate in my ears : Those who are in the fire feel the highest happiness while the onlookers who remain outside are scorched by it.

I hope you will arrange for me to stay in the Bhangi colony. Please do so, if you have not already done it.

For the nature cure clinic I must select some village. I am looking around for it here. My plan is that the period form February to the end of July should be spent in a comparatively cool place, including April and May in the hills. This arrangement cannot be made in Gujarat. Abu is the only hill station, and it does not have a climate comparable to that of Panchgani or Mahabaleshvar. Nor have I found cool climate like that of Poona anywhere in Gujarat. I am telling you all this in order that you should have nothing to complain about later. However, do you think one could find a place in Gujarat where nature cure work could be done and also where the above conditions be satisfied? And would you really prefer it? Nature cure is no longer a hobby with me. I must try it out in detail.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
68 MARINE DRIVE, BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 302-3

148. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

POONA,
March 19, 1946

CHI. MANUDI[2],

I had your letter of the 8th. It is sheer diffidence to keep relying on fate. What can be done if Umiya does not do anything herself or does not have the spirit to fight back? I will explain this further when we meet at some leisure.

I would certainly arrange for your studies. But why set conditions for me? Laying down conditions betrays your distrust and your unhappiness. That is why I desire the presence of Jaisukhlal. Moreover I would not shift you from there as long as you are happy

[1] Literally, Rama's arrow, i. e., something unfailing like faith in God
[2] Jaisukhlal Gandhi's dauthers

and contented there. Don't think that the problem about Jaisukhlal is unimprtant. For the present I would insist on his being wherever you are. Moreover he also should be able to see clearly his way.

I received the copy sent by you.

Rajkumari has gone to Delhi for a few days. Sushila[1] has gone to Quetta to her sister, Satya[2]. It will be a month before she can return.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./XXIV

149. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

POONA,

March 19, 1946

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. I got the book, too. Did you learn anything useful from it? Did you take down notes?

Ask Anand to write to me. You should not put a one-sided interpretation on what I write. Remaining contented and cheerful in every condition does not mean that no reasonable effort should be made in a detached spirit to improve or change things. I hope you are gaining strength.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 10068. Courtesy : Sharda G. Chokhawala

150. LETTER TO RAI

POONA,

March 19, 1946

BHAI RAI BABU,

I got your letter of the 13th. I think your questions themselves contain the answers. Hence I have nothing to say.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] Dr. Sushila Nayyar and her cousin, Dr. Satyavati Malhotra, who was working in the Lady Dufferin Hospital, Quetta

[2] *ibid*

151. LETTER TO NAGADI

[*March 19, 1946*][1]

BHAI NAGADI,

I have your letter of February 26, 1946. I understand what you say. I take it that when the time comes you as well as the others will rise to the occasion. Your son is going to come and see me.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

152. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

POONA,
March 19, 1946

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Are these the new rules or are they current ones ?[2] If they are the current rules who has initiated the ones in the second column ? Who will decide that this is to be discarded and that to be accepted ? Or will the Hindustani Sangh have to decide it ?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

153. LETTER TO SARDUL SINGH CAVEESHAR

POONA,
March 19, 1946

BHAI CAVEESHAR,

I have your letter of March 3. It pains me that you start writing without thinking. I feel, it is not worth pointing out the mistakes in your letter as well as in the statement.

SARDUL SINGH CAVEESHAR
LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] The letter, written in Devangari, is found among the letters of this date.
[2] The question was pertaining to the Urdu script.

154. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

POONA,
March 20, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I am writing this letter at your demand. Since your movements were uncertain, I had thought of saving time by not writing to you. But now it is doubtful whether you will get this letter. Your letter of the 17th came into my hands just now (after the morning prayers).

I understand about Chi. Kanchan. Since my own plans are uncertain, I would advise you not to bring along Kanchan. Moreover Chi. Kanu has gone over there and is busy with the preparations for the camp. It will, therefore, be convenient, if Kanchan is there. Abha is here, for very few women are joining the camp, and Kanu has detained Abha here thinking that she will be able to go in the company of some lady from the Ashram.

What you say about Annapurna is quite true.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 10237. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

155. LETTER TO JAIKRISHNA P. BHANSALI[1]

POONA,
March 20, 1946

CHI. BHANSALI,

You must learn to strike a balance. Maybe, it is for you the last and sole remaining step. I see no sense in a man undertaking a fast to get rid of his excess fat resulting from overeating. It is my experience that a man who eats a balanced diet and the one who eats little fare better than one who undertakes fasts. The place that is then left for fasting is divine.

I agree that the manager of the Ashram should be of mature age and experience. I shall understand better, if you elaborate the point

[1] The letter is written in Devangari.

more specifically. It is not certain, however, that whomsoever we might find must be someone from amongst the Ashram inmates?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI BHANSALIBHAI

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelel Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

156. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

March 20, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have not been able to write to you, but I think of you every day. I wish you to be well and render good service. Every village is a place for service.

Maganbhai should take friction-baths and must take a little nap during day-time. He should pass stools regularly. He should go in reciting Ramanama.

You have your mother's wire; you should send her a sweet reply.

I am well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 506

157. LETTER TO ABDUL KARIM SHEIKH

POONA,
March 20, 1946

BHAI ABDUL KARIM,

I have your letter. I hear that you are getting help and that the Bombay [Provincial] Congress Committee has taken over the task.

The death of both your sons must indeed be a great blow to you. I too feel sorry. May God grant you peace.

ABDUL KARIM SHEIKH MAULANA

158. CONGRESSMEN APATHETIC

Q. I am glad that you have expressed yourself in the matter of opening a temple to Harijans in Nellore.[1] It should open the eyes of

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 16-3-1946

many Congressmen. The reason given for unwillingness to open the temple was that it might adversely affect the chances of Congress success in the elections.

A. If this represents the general sentiment, it augurs ill for Congress. Even a popular, democratic, India-wide organization like the Congress cannot afford to be untrue to its policy (if it may not be called creed) of removing untouchability, root and branch. Throughout my close contact with the Congress, ever since my return to India in 1915, I have found that the more the Congress has held to its main purpose, the more popular it had become. A democratic organization has to dare to do the right at all cost. He who panders to the weaknesses of a people degrades both himself and the people and leads them not to democratic but mob rule. The line of demarcation between democracy and mobocracy is often thin but rigid and stronger than steel, unbreakable. The one leads to life and progress, the other is death, pure and simple. In the ultimate analysis, the cause of our fall is to be sought from within and not from without. All the empires of the world could not have bent us, if as a people we had been above suspicion and temptation. This may not be regarded as a mere truism. If we recognize the fundamental facts, we would be true and patient and able to deal with whatever difficulty that may face us whether from within or without. Preparedness to lose all elections rather than sacrifice a principle, is the surest way to success at every election. The results prove that the policy laid down by the Congress in 1920 has led to success from stage to stage, but only to the extent that the Congress has been true to the fundamentals of the policy, it accepted during that eventful year. Untouchability is to go, if India is to live and thrive as a nation.

POONA, March 21, 1946

Harijan, 31-3-1946

159. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

POONA,
March 21, 1946

I find that the paper at the disposal of *Harijan* is not enough to accommodate all that I am able to send. Moreover I have to send matter sufficiently in advance in order that the Navajivan press might cope with the simultaneous issue of *Harijan* in English, Hindustani and Gujarati. I am, therefore, obliged from time to time to send

matter of immediate importance to the Press in advance of the publication of *Harijan*. It is likely, I fear, that this would be a regular feature.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-3-1946

160. LETTER TO CHANDRASHANKER P. SHUKLA

POONA
March 21, 1946

CHI. CHANDRASHANKER,

The above demand is reasonable. Send Jivanji a copy of this letter and of my reply. But that does not mean that I or any person authorized by me cannot use these letters as may seem proper to us.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 2332

161. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

POONA,
March 21, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I am leaving for Uruli tomorrow. I shall arrange to have a telephone there. Telegrams, of course, are delivered there. Success or failure rests with God.

The report I got from the Professor[1] about Khan Saheb, etc., was quite the opposite. These people's reply must be that they would do as the Congress decided. But will you tell them this or ask the Maulana to do it?

I seek what you mean about Gujarat. I do not want to go anywhere merely for a holiday.

I quite understand the difficulties about putting me up in the Bhangi quarters but do overcome them.[2]

There should be no hurry about the restitution of Durbar Gopaldas's[3] estate.

[1] J. B. Kripalani, General Secretary of the Congress

[2] The addressee had written : "It will be as you wish. But at present one cannot get enough room in Bombay to bury one's dead and you want fresh accommodation to be improvised for the living!"

[3] Ruler of the Dhasa, a principality in Saurashtra ough room in Bombay to bury one's dead and you want fresh accommodation to be improvised for the living!"

The future of Dinshaw's clinic is under consideration. Nothing is decided about the South Africa meeting.

Blessings to Mani[1].

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 303

162. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR [2]

POONA,
March 21, 1946

CHI. LILAVATI,

One should never rush in haste to a conclusion. An institution cannot transgress its framework of rules whether good or bad. What you write about the medical [technique] is not something which can be summarily dismissed. Vijaya should firmly stick to her studies. No one forbids her to study. In the meanwhile she will have an opportunity to take the examination. We can easily absorb her in the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust work when she is fully qualified even before her examination. Don't let her lose heart. Nor should you despair in her case. Let me know, if there is any hitch in her attending the classes. I shall be prepared to have her examined privately.

All of you have to learn the lesson from Vijaya's case that a degree [by itself] does not qualify one, although it will often be a sign of being qualified. One does come across such cases nowadays. If a person has the same name as a degree-holder's, or adopts it, then steals the certificate and puts up a sign-board, would people go to him for long? Have there been any such cases? I have very little knowledge of all this. Hence it would be more than having a degree,

[1] Addressee's daughter
[2] The letter is written in Devanagari.

if Vijaya acquires real proficiency. I can actually point out a number of such cases.

I understand what you say about your examination.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. LILAVATI ASAR

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

163. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, POONA

March 21, 1946

Gandhiji said that he had fought many battles in his life. There was one more battle to be fought which was quite different from others and that was of nature cure.

He had known Dr. Dinshaw Mehta for a long time and became a cotrustee with him of the Nature Cure Trust to turn Dr. Mehta's clinic into am institute for the poor. But he had found that he could not serve the poor remaining in Poona. The rich could afford to go to hospitals and clinics and get the services of doctors, but the poor could not move away from their homes and villages. If he was to teach them the method of nature cure and serve them, he had to go to them. He had studied nature cure and practised it. Now, in the evening of his life, he had undertaken as part of his life's work the bringing of nature cure within the reach of the poor millions. He was going to the village of Uruli[1] to work and try his experiment there.

The Hindu, 23-3-1946

164. YARN CURRENCY

This adventure[2] is still at the trial stage. It may gather momentum, if it works even in a single village. At the moment I reproduce it here as a conceptual model.

POONA, [On or before March 22, 1946][3]

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 31-3-1946

[1] A number of prominent persons from Uruli-Kanchan had requested Gandhiji to see if the place was suitable for starting a nature cure clinic for the villagers.

[2] The reference is to an article by Atmaram Sharma, not reproduced here, for replacing coins by yarn.

[3] Gandhiji left Poona for Uruli-Kanchan on March 22.

165. CABLE TO J. C. SMUTS

POONA,
March 22, 1946

FIELD MARSHAL SMUTS
CAPE TOWN
UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

THANKS FOR WIRE[1]. INDIA IS EXPECTED TO GET INDEPENDENCE THIS YEAR. IF YOU BELIEVE IT WAIT TILL THEN. CLOISTERED CIVILIZATION LIKE CLOISTERED VIRTUE. YOUR GOOD INTENTION UNDOUBTED. PREMISE APPEARS FAULTY. INDIA'S PROTEST AGAINST INFERIOR STATUS. PROPOSED FRANCHISE DOUBTFUL PRIVILEGE. LAND TENURE IS SEGREGATION. SHALL RESPECT YOUR WISH AVOID PUBLICITY CONTENTS OUR CABLES.

GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 95

166. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

POONA,
March 22, 1946

AMRIT KAUR
LADY IRWIN COLLEGE
SIKANDRA ROAD, NEW DELHI

YOUR WIRE. GLAD YOU HAVE SUCCEEDED.[2] GOING URULI VILLAGE TWENTY MILES. YOU MEET THERE. HOPE YOU WELL.

BAPU

From a original : C. W. 4173. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7809

[1] *Vide* footnote 3, "Letter to Sir Frederick Burrows", 10-3-1946

[2] Presumably, the reference is to increase in the newsprint quota for *Harijan*; *vide* "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 5-3-1946

167. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

POONA,
March 22, 1946

MIRABEHN
KISAN ASHRAM
BAHADRABAD, JWALAPUR

NO CHANGE. COME DELHI WHEN I GO THERE.

BAPU

From the original C. W. 6515. Courtesy : Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9910

168. LETTER TO SIR FREDERICK BURROWS

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
March 22, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter[1] through Shri Sudhir Ghosh. He takes this letter to you, and he will tell you all my thoughts about prisoners, salt, employees of Electric Corporation and khadi.[2]

With my regards to you and Lady Burrows.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 137

169. LETTER TO VIJAY KUMAR

POONA,
March 22, 1946

DEAR VIJAY,

I have your letter of 10th instant. Of course Andhra is entitled to separation. As to that I have no doubt. But since independence is

[1] *Vide* footnote 3, "Letter to Sir Frederick Burrows", 10-3-1946

[2] In *Gandhi's Emissary*, "Statement to the Press", 11-2-1946, Sudhir Ghosh explains : "Gandhiji followed up with Lord Pethick-Lawrence and Sir Stafford Cripps in Delhi, the question of the release of the rest of the political prisoners . . . in particular . . . Jayaprakash Narayan and Ram Manohar Lohia. I was instructed to go to the Secretary of State . . . It was no problem to persuade . . . Lord Pethick-Lawrence and Sir Stafford Cripps . . . The . . . problem . . . was . . . the Viceroy . . . . Lord Pethick-Lawrence said : '. . . Get Gandhiji to write to me . . . the substance of what you have told me. I will then take it up with the Viceroy.' Post-haste I went back to Gandhiji and made him write . . ." *Vide* "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 2-4-1946.

coming, why agitate and why threaten satyagraha? Is Indian opinion divided on this question?

I hope you are quite well. It distresses me to think that an athelete like you can suffer from any illness. There must be something wrong in athletics which results in illness or early death.

Yours,

BAPU

MAHARAJAKUMAR OF VIZIANAGRA

BENARES

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

170. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

POONA,

March 22, 1946

BHAI MUNSHI,

Will you please guide me regarding Kamlesh? What has been your experience of him? He wants me to take him up for Hindustani *Harijan*, but is he not engaged in propagation of Hindi under you?

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. KANHAIYALAL MUNHSI, ADVOCATE

MALABAR HILL

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati : C. W. 7693. Courtesy : K. M. Munshi

171. LETTER TO BAPUBHAI N. VASHI

POONA,

March 22, 1946

BHAI BAPUBHAI,

How does it happen that you have contracted tuberculosis? If you could repeat Ramanama from the depth of your heart, it could prove an unfailing remedy for tuberculosis. The others who do

not observe the rules of nature do not repeat Ramanama but rather bring a bad name to it.

Blessings from

BAPU

BAPUBHAI NARANJI VASHI
UMER MANZIL
GHODBUNDER ROAD
KHAR

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

172. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

URULI-KANCHAN,
March 22, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

A letter from the Viceroy asking me to see him on the third was received this afternoon. I have not yet replied but I shall have to go.[1]

The meeting about South Africa is to be held on the 31st evening. It will be convened by the Eastern Citizenship Association, and I am to preside. You will, of course, hear more about it there.

Here the beginning seems to be good enough. The final result we shall know by and by. I do not think your pessimism is justified.

More from Manilal Gandhi.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 304

173. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, URULI-KANCHAN

March 22, 1946

Gandhiji announced . . . that he would receive patients from the following day, examine them and prescribe treatment for their maladies. If he found the place suitable, and if he had to go elsewhere for some work, he would leave behind two competent men to continue his work.

Mahatma Gandhi said that *Ramdhun* was the most effective remedy for physical and mental ailments. He said that no doctor or *vaidya* could promise cure by medicine.

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 23-3-1946

But God would certainly relieve you of your pains and worries, if you pray to him. But for the prayer to be effective, one must participate in *Ramdhun* whole-heartedly and then only one would feel peace and happiness.

In the song that we have just sung the devotee says : "O Hari, you are the reliever of the people's distress." The promise here is universal. It is not qualified or restricted to any particular kind of ailment. . . . If you are subject to anger, eat and sleep for indulgence, not solely for sustenance, you do not know the meaning of Ramanama. Your recitation of it is mere lip-service. Ramanama to be efficatious must absorb your entire being during its recitation and express itself in your whole life.[1]

Gandhiji said that he had come to Uruli because he felt that if he was to serve the poor through nature cure, he must go to their cottages in villages. He had been practising nature cure for the last 50 years, but that was for the benefit of himself and a few friends. Until this time he had not felt the urge to extend his activities and now, in the evening of his life, he had taken this work of propagating nature cure to the poor. He believed that the poor would be benefited by nature cure as also the rich.

The Hindu, 24-3-1946; also *Harijan*, 7-3-1946

174. TALK WITH ARMY MEN [2]

URULI-KANCHAN,
[After *March 22, 1946*][3]

ARMY MEN : We are soldiers, but we are soldiers of Indian freedom.

GANDHIJI : I am glad to hear that. For, so far you have mostly been instrumental in the suppression of Indian freedom. Have you heard of Jallianwala Bagh?

Oh, yes. But those days are past. We were, in those days, like the proverbial frog-in-the-well. We have now seen the world, our eyes have been opened. We admit we are mercenaries. But our hearts are no longer so.

I am glad to hear that. But, let me tell you, my use of that

[1] This paragraph is extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter—I".

[2] This is extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter—II". Pyarelal explains : "In Uruli there is a big military camp. Hardly a day passed, after Gandhiji's arrival in Uruli, when a group of Indian military men did not contact him. They met him during his morning walks, they were at his evening prayer gatherings, but particularly interesting were the two batches who saw him at his residence."

[3] Gandhiji reached Uruli-Kanchan on March 22.

expression[1] was not intended to cast any reflection upon you. It was only descriptive of a soldiery that serves a foreign Government for a living. My use of that expression at the time brought a hornet's nest round my ears. But I could not withdraw it; I said, our present army system should go.

What would be our position when India is independent?

Why, you will fully share that independence and breathe the air of freedom with your countrymen. Independent India will have need of you. You have had military training. You will give India the benefit of that training. You have learnt the lesson of *comaraderie* under common danger. It would be a bad day, if the moment that peril is lifted, the lesson is lost. But in free India you won't be pampered as you are today. You won't have these lavish privileges with which a foreign Government bribes you at the expense of India's poor. India is destitute. You cannot serve her unless you are prepared to share her destitution. I told[2] Capt. Shah Nawaz that if the I. N. A. people succumb to the lionization of an India pining for freedom, and forget her destitution, they will earn not the blessings but the silent execration of their countrymen. The same applies to you. Unless you are prepared to forgo your privileges, you will feel sorry when independence comes, and sigh for the return of old times and old masters.

There was a time when we were not allowed to read any civil newspapers. And now we go and tell our officers that we are going to see our greatest leader, and no one dares to stop us.

I know, there is a new ferment and a new awakening among all the army ranks today. Not a little of the credit for this happy change belongs to Netaji Bose. I disapprove of his method, but he had rendered a signal service to India by giving the Indian soldier a new vision and a new ideal.

How anybody can think of dividing India into two, three or more parts, we army men are at a loss to understand. We know only one India for which we have fought and shed our blood.

Well, it requires all sorts to make the world.

May we shout slogans?

Well, you may.[3]

Harijan, 7-4-1946

[1] *Vide* "Notes" sub-title 'A Stab in the Back"

[2] *Vide* "Talk with Shah Nawaz Khan and P. K. Sehgal", 12/13-3-1946

[3] There was a deafening roar as they shouted "*Jai Hind*", "*Netajiki Jai*", and so on repeatedly.

175. TALK WITH AN ENGLISH FRIEND[1]

[Before *March 23, 1946*][2]

GNADHIJI : I could have understood it, if they had combined from top to bottom. That would, of curse, have meant delivering India over the rabble. I would not want to live up to 125 to witness that consummation. I would rather perish in the flames.

The Mission are coming fresh after a bloody victory. They have now an opportunity to add to it the laurels of a bloodless peace. It will be a glorious thing for them and the world, if they rise to the occasion and do justice to India even though it might mean reducing themselves (it won't be so in fact) to insignificance. That would be the height of non-violence. But miracles have happened in the world.

ENGLISH FRIEND : So you believe in miracles?

I do and I do not. God does not work through miracles. But the divine mind is revealed in a flash and it appears like a miracle to man. We do not know God, we know Him only through the working of His law. He and His law are one. There is nothing outside His law. Even earthquakes and tempests do not occur without His will—not a blade of grass grows but He wills it. Satan is here only on His sufferance, not independently of Him.

By justice do you mean that they should agree to withdraw the British army without stipulating any conditions?

I do. Freedom will be truly won only when the British army is withdrawn from the whole of India, not excluding Indian States.

Otherwise it would be sinister.

Harijan, 7-4-1946

[1] This is extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter—II." Pyarelal explains : "Gandhiji was discussing some time back with an English friend the difficult task ahead of the Cabinet Mission. There was an unprecedented upsurge for independence among the masses on the one hand and on the other, what he had called 'the unholy combination' at bottom among the Hindus and Mussalmans for a joint violent purpose."

[2] From the reference to the Cabinet Mission which reached India on March 23, 1946

176. QUESTION BOX

Q. What to do when the local Congress machinery refuses to act or work in a way which is effective?

A. A person who is a real Congressman will, in such circumstances, himself act singly or in co-operation with others purely in a spirit of service and give all the credit to the Congress organization. Supposing that many persons acted thus, Congress would rise from day to day. Ineffective workers would be shamed into becoming effective, the Congress machinery always remaining clean and intact. "In a spirit of service" is here the operative phrase. If the spirit is that of aggrandizement, although the work done may be effective, credit will probably go to the aggressor and the Congress will lose. That the aggressor will lose in the end need not be stressed.

Q. What should a Congress worker do when he faces a situation at a place which is outside his area of work?

A. Areas are prescribed for workers for their weakness, not for their strength. For a strong Congress worker all India is the area of his work, and he will be found every time in the area where he is wanted most. Naturally he will be never regarded as an intruder or as an officious man. Appreciation of the service will be uppermost in the minds of all. It would be ludicrous and a sign of impotence, if a Congressman passing through an area not his own and finding a battle royal between two factions does not interpose himself between them, even at the cost of his life, on the untenable plea that the trouble was outside his area.

Q. Can the same person take up parliamentary work, constructive work as distinguished from the parliamentary and the organization work of the Congress, in addition to working for his own livelihood?

A. He must be a modern Hercules who can effectively do these things at the same time. I can conceive the possibility of the same person managing all these departments with a staff of efficient secretaries and clerks working under him. The point of the question, however, is wholly different. Division of labour is a necessity. One-man-show is always undesirable and is a positive hindrance to a system of organization. An organization like the British kingship is not personal. "The King is dead. Long live the King." Hence the saying, "the King can do no wrong." A king as an individual may be

a rascal but personified as an organization he is perfect in the sense the word 'perfection' is understood in a given society. The moral is that however inefficient the persons in charge may be in the beginning stages, in a progressive organization, persons taking charg should be above board and should put the organization first, themselves last. If an attempt is made to organize work through rascals, the organization will always have rescals at its head.

Q. August 1942 has brought a psychological change in the public mind. They do not await orders from the Congress for observance of days, etc. Other parties often take advantage of this spontaneous effort and associate their programme with it, while official local Congress either keeps mum or inactive. It also often happens that programmes and policies as laid down by the Working Committee are not automatically adopted by the Provincial Congress Committees or are sometimes worked out half-heartedly. Some also refuse to create a machinary for it, till they are officially called upon to do so. In such circumstances, what is expected of Congressmen?

A. This is a good question. If Congressmen have really learnt to act for themselves since August 1942, it is a great thing. But I do not believe it. Those only act for themselves who think for themselves. It does not matter whether in doing so they make mistakes. A child often stumbles before it begins to walk. Therefore the effort ceases to be spontaneous or individual when one associates with any programme that comes his way. The secret of the August resolution was that when the Congress as an organization ceased to function every Congressman became his own master, which is wholy different from becoming a pawn in any other person's or group's or party's game.

The second part of the question shows also that 1942 did not teach Congressmen to think and act independently. If they had learnt that lesson truly and well, any programme laid down by the Working Committee would be followed by Congressmen whole-heartedly and the response from Provincial Committees and all constituent elements would be spon-taneous, such that the whole organization would move like one man. Such was my expectation in 1942. That it was not so fulfilled is a matter of history. That the people acted somehow, without being paralysed by the wholesale onslaught of the Government, stands to their credit. How much more creditable it would have been, if they had fully carried out the policy of non-violence explicitly laid down in that resolution! If my argument is correct, it

follows that Congressmen with understanding would follow implicitly laid down in the resolution! If my argument is correct, it follows that Congressmen with understanding would follow implicitly the Working Committee's resolutions without reference to the action of their neighbours. When organizational effort stops or is neutra-lized or becomes ineffective, every individual belonging to it holds him-self responsible for the activity of his organization and then gradually builds it up.

Q. When sporadic strikes are such as cannot be supported by the Congress, what should Congressmen and the public do to put an end to them?

A. In the first place, if the Congress organization were complete, there would be no sporadic strikes, and any other strike would be unjustified for the simple reason that a people's organization must shoulder the burden of every justifiable strike within the sphere of that organization. But today unhappily the Congress, powerful as it is, has not attained that supreme position. Hence every sporadic strike has to be judged on merits irrespective of the party that has made itself responsible for it. And, when a strike is indefensible on merits, the Congress and the public should unequivocally condemn it. The natural result would be that the men on strike would go back to work. If the strike is justified, the institution against which it has been declared would be likewise condemned, if it employs black-legs or other questionable means to force strikers into submission.

URULI [-KANCHAN], March 23, 1946

Harijan, 31-3-1946

177. CAPITALISM AND STRIKES

How should capital behave when labour strikes? This question is in the air and has great importance at the present moment. One way is that of suppression named, or nicknamed, 'American'. It consists in suppression of labour through organized *goondaism*. Everybody would consider this as wrong and destructive. The other way, right and honourable, consists in considering every strike on its merits and giving labour its due—not what capital considers as due but what labour itself would so consider and enlightened public opinion acclaim as just.

One preliminary question will justly arise : why should there be a strike at all in any well-regulated concern? Strikes ought to be

impossible when there is perfect understanding between capital and labour, mutual respect and recognition of equality. And since differences there would be sometimes between employers and employed even in the best-regulated concerns, why should there not be a system of arbitration between the parties so that they will always readily carry out in perfect good faith awards of arbitrators?

But we have to consider things not as they should be but as they are. As time progresses, the labour world is getting more insistent in its demands which are daily increasing, and it does not hesitate to resort to violence in its impatient enforcement of those demands. New methods of enforcing them are being employed. Workers do not hesitate to injure the property of the employers, dislocate machinery, harass old men and women who would not join the strike and forcibly keep out black-legs. In these circumstances, how are the employers to behave?

In my opinion, employers and employed are equal partners even if employees are not considered superior. But what we see today is the reverse. The reason is that the employers harness intelligance on their side. They have the superior advantage which concentration of capital bring with it, and they know how to make use of it. One individual rupee has very little potency, but when money combines as capital, the combine derives a power different from and far in excess of the mere sum total of the individual rupees. A million drops individually are negligible. But in combination they make the ocean carrying on its bosom a fleet of ocean hounds. Whilst capital in India is fairly organized, labour is still in a more or less disorganized condition in spite of unions and their federation. Therefore it lacks the power that true combination gives.

Moreover it lacks intelligence, so much so that individuals fight against individuals, unions against unions. Lack of intelligence leads to its exploitation by selfish and unscrupulous men even to the point of creating and promoting mischief. They know no better, being ignorant of the secret of non-violence. The net result is that the workers suffer. If labour were to understand the working of non-violence, the power generated by combination would any day exceed the power of dead metal in the hands of a few capitalists.

Hence my advice to the employers would be that they should willingly regard workers as the real owners of the concerns which they fancy they have created. They should further regard it as their duty to equip the employees with sound education that would draw out the

intelligence dormant in them and gladly promote and welcome the power that this combination of the workers gives them.

This noble work cannot be done in a day by the employers. Meanwhile what should those do who have to face the destruction wrought by strikers in their concerns? I would unhesitatingly advise such employers that they should at once offer the strikers full control of the concern which is as much the strikers' as theirs. They will vacate their premises not in a huff but because it is right, and, to show their goodwill, they would offer the employees the assistance of their engineers and other skilled staff. The employers will find in the end that they will lose nothing. Indeed their right action will disarm opposition, and they will earn the blessings of their men. They will have made proper use of their capital. I would not consider such action as benevolent. It would be an intelligent use by the capitalists of their resources and honest dealing in regard to the employees whom they would have converted into honourable partners.

URULI [-KANCHAN], March 1946

Harijan, 31-3-1946

178. TELEGRAM TO NAWAB OF BHOPAL[1]

March 23, 1946

NAWAB SAHEB
BHOPAL

INVITATION RECEIVED AFTER DESPATCH OF WIRE. AM ACCEPTING. REACHING DELHI 3RD.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

179 LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

URULI[-KANCHAN],
March 23, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

I had formal invitation to be present for an interview with H. E. the Viceroy and the Cabinet Delegation on the 3rd proximo at 4 p. m.

[1] In reply to the addressee's telegram of March 22, 1946, which read : "If you are accepting the invitation of the Viceroy to meet the Cabinet Mission please let me know. Also when you expect arrive Delhi. Kindest regards."

I hope to be present for the interview.[1]

The date of my arrival will be 3rd proximo.[2] What my address in New Delhi will be I do not know at present, but any inquiry at Birla House will be answered. I shall hope to let you know later when my New Delhi address is fixed up or if there is any change in my programme. Please note that I am just now living in a village, Uruli, 18 miles from Poona, on the Sholapur line.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 177

180. LETTER TO PURSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS[3]

URULI[-KANCHAN], (POONA)

March 23, 1946

BHAI PURUSHOTTAMDAS,

I have your letter. I am in a village where I propose to live till the 30th. I am here in connection with nature cure.

I have sent today a wire, a copy of which is enclosed.

I think, such a conference[4] comes off rarely. In your absence it will lack grace. Other things can wait but this cannot, I agree that the date should be convenient to you. What can we do about it ? When they enquired of me on the telephone, I did not know that the call was made in consultation with you. I, therefore, selected the earliest date that would suit me and conveyed it; hence the telegram.

So you have again invited cold, have you? I shall have no objection to your having somebody to read out your speech. I suggest it should be either in Gujarati or Hindustani. It is all right, if an English translation is prepared which you may issue to the papers.

[1] For the Viceroy's version of the interview, *vide* "Viceroy's Note on Interview to Gandhiji", 3-4-1946. For Gandhiji's account, *vide* "Letter of Lord Wavell", 6-4-1946.

[2] Gandhiji, however, arrived in Delhi on April 1, in response to a special message from Sir Stafford Cripps and Lord Pethick-Lawrence who wanted to meet him informally before the official proceedings started.

[3] This was sent by hand.

[4] Presumably, a reference to the meeting of Eastern Citizenship Association of which the addressee was Chairman. The conference, however, could not be held as the Muslim League planned a sparate one. *Vide* also "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 25-3-1946

This, however, is only a suggestion. Please do as it suits you.

Can the road along Chowpatty still accommodate large crowds? Hasn't all the space been built upon? Why not in Shivaji Park? It seems that is the only large maidan that remains. I would not know much about this.

A draft of the resolution is enclosed. You may revise the draft, if you wish. Your letter will reach me, if you address it to Poona. Telegrams are delivered here. This Uruli is on the G. I. P. railway. There is another place called Uruli. This one is called Uruli-Kanchan.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

NAVASARI CHAMBERS, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

181. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

March 23, 1946

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have decided firmly that wherever I go, I should stay where the Bhangis live. I shall reach Delhi on the 3rd because I have received the summons[1]. Even if it may be rather difficult to stay in the Bhangi quarters, you should arrange for my stay there. I am not writing about this separately to Viyogi Hariji. You may yourself talk to him as well as to Brijkisan[2].

I am well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : C. W. 8077. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

182. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, URULI-KANHAN [3]

March 23, 1946

It has truly been observed that all mental and physical ailments are due to one common cause. It is, therefore, but natural that there should be a common remedy for them too. There is a unity of cure as there is in disease. The Shastras say so. Therefore I presribed

[1] To meet the Viceroy; *vide* "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 23-3-1946

[2] Brijkrishna Chandiwala

[3] This is extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter—I"

Ramanama and almost the same treatment to all the patients who came to me this morning. But we have a knack of explaining away the Shastras in life when they do not suit our convenience. We have deluded ourselves into the belief that the Shastras are meant only for the benefit of the soul in the life to come, that the end of dharma is to acquire merit after death. I do not share that view. If dharma has no practical use in this life, it has none for me in the next.

There is hardly anyone in this world who is completely free from ailment whether bodily or mental. For some of these there is no earthly cure. For instance, Ramanama cannot perform the miracle of restoring to you a lost limb. But it can perform the still greater miracle of helping you to enjoy an ineffable peace in spite of the loss while you live and rob death of its sting and the grave its victory at the journey's end. Since death must come soon or late to everyone, why should one worry over the time.

Harijan, 7-4-1946

183. LETTER TO MOTILAL RAY

[After *March 23, 1946*][1]

BHAI MOTI BABU,

The Charkha Sangh people inform me that you are delaying to refund the sum due to them. It looks bad that a person like you can't make good even this amount. And it is not at all proper. Thus the Prabartaka Sangh has comparatively gone down in my estimation. So much so it is doing business in uncertified khadi. All this is regrettable.

A wire has been sent to you today; a copy of it is enclosed. I hope the Charkha Sangh would not have to file a suit against you.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MOTILAL RAY
PRABARTAKA SANGH
CHANDERNAGORE
BENGAL

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] The letter is found between letters of March 23 and 26.

184. WASTEFULNESS [1]

Correspondence continues to pour in saying that stored food material, being declared unfit for human consumption, is thrown away. Skimmed milk also is thrown away for want of custom and condensed milk is lying idle owing to ignorance. Accumulation of food material at the ports will not mitigate distress unless it is promptly taken to the places where it is immediately required. Worse than this, however, is the triple waste going on now side by side with ever growing famine conditions. All such waste takes place for lack of a living contact between the people and the rulers.

URULI [-KANCHAN], March 24, 1946

Harijan, 31-3-1946

185. HAND-WEAVING AND HAND-SPINNING [2]

Shri Jajuji writes to say that whilst on the one hand hand-spun yarn is piling up, on the other handloom weavers are day by day giving up hand-spun yarn in preference to mill yarn. An appeal to the weavers through the columns of *Harijan*, whether in English or in any of the Indian languages, will be good for nothing. Hardly any weaver reads *Harijan* and, if attempt is made to read it out to him, he will not take inte-rest in it. Hence the task of speaking to the weavers on the suicidal effect of abandoning hand-spun yarn devolves upon the devoted heads of Charkha Sangh workers. They have to reason out to the weavers how they will be ultimately responsible for killing their own occupation by excluding hand-spun yarn. As soon as the mill-owners can do so profitably, they will certainly stop selling mill yarn and will weave it themselves. They are not philanthropists. They have set up mills in order to make money. They will stop selling their yarn to handloom weavers, if they find weaving is more profitable. Therefore it is a question of time when handloom weavers will be starved. These are really fed by hand-spinners even as they in their

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

[2] Originally written in Gujarati, this appeared as "form *Harijanbandhu*" published simultaneously with the source.

turn are fed by handloom weavers. They are twins, complementary of each other. This fact should be brought home to the weavers by the Charkha Sangh. With loving patience and knowledge they should try to appreciate the difficulties of the weavers and learn how to remove them. Acharya Vinoba has pointed out one remedy, namely, to double and twist the yarn at the same time that the cones are unwound. If this practice becomes universal, there would be no untwisted hand-spun yarn available for weaving. It is found by experience that twisted hand-spun yarn is any day as weavable as mill-spun yarn, if indeed it is not more so. Since the time of my discharge from my last imprisonment, I have been proclaiming as vehemently as I can that the workers should master the art of weaving as well as they have mastered the art of spinning. Had they not taken to spinning themselves, they would not have solved the many difficulties of spinners. They have now to make up for past neglect, however unconscious it may have been, by learning the art of weaving and by practising it assiduously. Then and then only will they understand the difficulties that professional weavers experience in weaving hand-spun yarn and be able to solve them.

URULI[-KANCHAN], March 24, 1946

Harijan, 31-3-1946

186. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, URULI-KANCHAN[1]

March 24, 1946

This is good[2] , because it show that those who need nature cure treatment are coming forward to avail themselves of it.

If the work proceeded according to plan, Gandhiji explained, he intended to stay for at least four months in the year in their midst. During his absence his colleagues would continue to direct and guide them according to his instructions. [He said:]

The practice of nature cure does not require high academic quali-fications or much erudition. Simplicity is the essence of universality. Nothing that is meant for the benefit of the rich only. But India lives in her seven lakhs of villages—obscure, tiny, out-of-the-way villages—where the population in some cases hardly exceeds a few hundreds, very often not even a few scores. I would like to go and settle down in some such village. That is real India, my India, for which I live. You cannot take to these humble people the paraphernalia of highly qualified doctors and hospital equipment. In simple, natural remedies and Ramanama lies their only hope.

He had been told that there was hardly any disease in Uruli[-Kanchan]. Probably what was meant was that no epidemic was prevalent, that being the popular conception of disease. But, from the cases that had come to him during the last two days, it was clear that ill-health there was in plenty in Uruli. He told the villagers:

If you do as I ask you to, Uruli will become an ideal village, to see which people will come from far.

Man's physical body is composed of five natural elements, i. e., air, water, earth, fire or *tejas* (the energizing principle) and ether (space). The soul quickens it.

The most essential of these is air. Man can live without food for several weeks, without water for some time, but without air he cannot live for more than a few minutes. God has, therefore, made air universally available. Shortages of food or water there may be at times but of air never. In spite of it we foolishly deprive ourselves of God's

[1] This is extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter—I".

[2] The reference is to increase in number of patients from 30 to 43.

blessings of fresh and pure air by sleeping within doors with doors and windows shut. One may shut the doors and windows, if he is afraid of thieves at night. But why should one shut oneself up?

To get fresh air, one must sleep in the open. But it is no good sleeping in the open only to breathe dust and dirt-laden air. The place where you sleep must be free from both. Some people cover their faces as a protection against dust and cold. It is a remedy worse than the disease. Then there is the evil habit of breathing through the mouth. Mouth is the organ of ingestion. It is not the organ of breathing. The air passing through the nasal passages is filtered and purified and at the same time warmed up before it enters the lungs.

Anyone who fouls the air by spitting about carelessly, throwing refuse and rubbish or otherwise dirtying the ground, sins against man and nature. Man's body is the temple of God. Anyone who fouls the air that is to enter that temple desecrates it. He takes the name of Rama in vain.

In the end, he warned them that they should be prepared to find in him a hard task-master. If he stayed in their midst, he would neither spare himself nor them. He would visit their homes, inspect their streets, their drains, their kitchens, their latrines. He would tolerate neither dust nor dirt anywhere.

Harijan, 7-4-1946

187. WHY BHANGI QUARTERS? [1]

Friends are puzzled over my keen desire to reside in Bhangi quarters in the cities or towns I may visit. To ask why I have not entertained that desire all these years would be more pertinent. To answer why I did not have the desire long ago must be reserved for a future occasion. Just now I must answer why the desire has come upon me at all.

I have for some time been saying that we must all be Bhangis or untouchables. But it has worried me that I have not accorded the statement with corresponding action. It may not be possible to establish complete accordance with the wish. But it ought to be done so far as possible. Whilst this thought was agitating me, I got the news, which I have already shared with the readers, that in Gujarat

[1] Originally written in Hindi, this appeared as "from *Harijan Sevak*" Published simultaneously with the source.

only one well and one temple is shared with Harijans and this in Karadi.[1] Whether the news is true or not is immaterial here. The material thing is the reaction produced on my mind by the news. To be angry was madness. The news quickened the desire for residence in untouchables'quarters. I said to myself: 'If I lived apart from Harijans, what right had I to question the action of others who went further in their adherence to untouchability? But whether the others changed their mode or not was not for me to judge. If it was my duty to reside in Harijan quarters, I must perform it irrespective of the reaction of the step on the others.' This is the thought which is possessing me and goading me to the adumbrated action.

Consequently I have asked Sheth R. D. Birla to arrange, if at all possible, for my residence in untouchables' quarters when I happen to be in Bombay. I have also wired to Sheth G. D. Birla to arrange likewise for Delhi, and Shri Brijkishen Chandiwala has already asked for my approval of some arrangement he has made[2]. It goes without saying that I must not impose myself on Harijans anywhere. I must not wound their feelings, if they will not tolerate my presence in their midst. But I fear no such thing.

Incidentally I notice that some critics rejoice that I shall no longer reside in the Birla House. They do not know that I have been accepting their hospitality for years. I have accepted donations from them for my many constructive activities. The critics do not know of the changes they have imperceptibly made in their life; nor need they or the public in general know these. Such changes are never made for show. At the same time it is perfectly true that there were wide differences between them and me in outlook. This is no cause for sorrow or wonder. All true change comes from within. Any changes brought about by pressure is worthless. I am neither so vain nor so foolish as to hope that all would follow me. And who can say whether I am right or others in what we are doing ? It is enough, if all of us abide by what we consider to be right. We are all His creatures to do His will, not ours. Doing so, we should all be friends to one another.

URULI[-KANCHAN], Macrh 25, 1946

Harijan, 31-3-1946

[1] *Vide* also "Shocking if True", 24-3-1946

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 19-3-1946 and "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 21-3-1946

188. WHY ONE MORE BURDEN?[1]

Why have I got involved in nature cure in the evening of my life? This question is being asked of me by several people. Had I not enough work on my hands already? Was I not too old to take up new things? Could anyone expect me to add to my existing burdens? All these are pertinent questions demanding my careful consideration. But they did not evoke any echo within me. The still small voice within me whispers: Why bother about what others say? I have given you a colleague like Dr. Dinshaw who understand you, and whom you understand. You have confidence in your capacity, having followed nature cure as a hobby for over half a century. If you hide this talent and do not make use of it, you will be as a thief. It will ill become you. Remember the teaching of the first verse of *Ishopanishad* and surrender all you have to Me. There is nothing that really belongs to you. Only you fancied that something was yours. It is all Mine. Give it also to My creatures like the rest. It will not in any way jeopardize your other work provided only that you have cultivated perfect detachment. You have entertained the desire to live up to 125 years. Its fulfilment or otherwise should not be your concern. Yours is only to understand and do your duty and "be careful for nothing"[2].

These are the thoughts that haunt me. It is my third day in this village. The number of patients who come for help is daily increasing. They feel happy, and I feel happy in serving them. I am receiving the co-operation of the local people. I know that if I can enter the hearts of the people here, illness will be banished and this village will become a model of cleanliness and health. But if this does not happen, what is that to me? I have only to do the behest of the Master.

URULI [-KANCHAN], March 25, 1946

Harijan, 31-3-1946

[1] Originally written in Hindi, this appeared as "from Harijan Sevak" published simultaneously with the source.

[2] Phillippians, "Permits for the Transvaal"

189. TELEGRAM TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

URULI,
March 25, 1946

SHRI PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

NAVSARI CHAMBERS

FORT, BOMBAY

ONLY ONE MEETING CAN TAKE PLACE. LET LEAGUE CALL IF THEY WISH AND OMIT ME. PLEASE AVOID DIFFERENCE. SORABJI MUST RESTRAIN HIMSELF. COMING THIRTYFIRST ANY CASE. SHOW THIS SARDAR.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

190. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

URULI-KANCHAN,
March 25, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI

I have your letter. The League's ways are strange. We cannot have two meetings. Let the League arrange one. There is no harm, if they get the credit for it. Purushottamdas will show you the letter I have written[1] to him. If the meeting called by the League is to be held on Sunday, and if you think it would be inadvisable for me to go there on the same day, please send me a wire.

Telegrams were delivered here. We can even get a telephone connection if we want, but why go in for all that trouble for only six days?

My business in naturopathy is flourishing. I can lose nothing in it. And it helps to advance my other work. If I find I have some capital with me and do not use it, what a big fool should I be? One must hope to live and work for 125 years. For the rest, God alone is the master of life and death. I am positive that my duty is to stay in the Bhangi quarters. You must get over the difficulties.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhine, pp. 304-5

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Purshottamdas Thakurdas", 23-3-1946

191. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

URULI[-KANCHAN],
March 25, 1946

DAUGHTER,

I see no difference. You do not understand my point. You want me to agree to your wish. You can go Borkamata today at your own sweet will; I have already indicated what mine is. If you leave Sevagram, then dedicate your life to the service of your mother. If this cannot be done, do just as you please . You cannot come to Delhi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 619

192. NATURE CURE PRESCRIPTIONS-I

URULI [KANCHAN],
March 25, 1946

VITHABAI,

I would advise this. She should take sun-bath in the nude, followed by a hip-bath and a function-bath in cold water. The diet should consist of only fruit-juice and milk or butter-milk. She may possibly be cured,if she has faith in Rama. If she does this much regularly, she is sure to get better. Complete cure is rather difficult.

HIRA

She should chew fruit and throw away the residue; take milk or butter-milk; also hip-bath and friction-bath; mud-poultice on the abdomen. This will have to be demonstrated to her; also the type of earth and where to get it . She should also take sun-bath.

ARJUN

Urine will pass regularly, if he is seated in hot and cold water by turns. He should drink boiled water and take fruit-juices and butter-milk for nourishment.

SALU

Is it the same trouble? What is the use of removing cataracts from a poor person's eyes? One should live with it, recite Ramanama and, when the time is up, depart with Ramanama on one's lips. If this cannot be done, she may be taken to a hospital and have cataracts

removed. I do not remember any treatment for cataract.

Had she come yesterday? She should be given sun-bath even in this heat so that she perspires and the boils dry up. I feel that she might derive some benefit, if she lies down naked with a wet towel on her head. While doing so—lying down—she should constantly utter Ramanama. She should be given all this treatment here. We ought to clean the boils for her and bandage. She should be advised about her diet. If all this is done here, then only she can improve. . . .[1] VITHU

What does he eat? His diet should consist of milk, fruit, vegetable and chapatis. Sun-bath, hip-bath and friction-bath should be taken. His asthma can be brought under control, if he does regular *pranayama*[2] .

HIRUNANA

Fruit-juices for two days; then fruit-juice mixed with milk. Sun-bath, hip-bath and friction-bath. If the motion is not clear, he should try the syringe after two days. Mud-poultices. Tomato juice, if tomatoes are available.

RAJU

Sun-bath, hip-bath, friction-bath. Butter-milk and fruit-juices, absolutely no milk; if he cannot retain even butter-milk, then initially only fruit-juices and boiled water.

From a facsimile of the Gujarati: *Mahatma—Life of Mahandas Karamchand Gandhi*, Vol. 7, between pp. 96 and 97

193. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI[3]

URULI-KANCHAN,
March 26, 1946

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have started practising nature cure in this village. I shall leave this place on the 31st for Delhi. As regards Dr. Mehta, nothing is certain. His clinic is being vacated. Hence I don'tthink I can bring you here [for treatment]. The work at Uruli-Kanchan will continue in my absence. But you will not be satisfied. We wish to reach that stage

[1] The first name is illegible.
[2] Deep breathing exercise
[3] The letter is written in Devanagari.

[of giving satisfaction to all the patients], but that will take time. Do the following: Ramanama with faith, hip-bath, friction-bath, sun-bath, *pranayama* and mudpacks on an empty stomach.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

RAMDAS GANDHI

NAGPUR

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

194. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

URULI-KANCHAN,

March 26, 1946

CHI. KANAIYA

I got your letter. I like my new occupation which is going fairly well. I am keeping good health. Abha[1] has been a good girl these days; she remains cheerful. Rajkumari is expected to arrive today. Sushila Nayyar is in Quetta. She will come when I return from Delhi.

Abha will write you a long letter. I am writing this in the midst of a great rush of work. No one can take your place and to that extent I should miss you; but I refrain from entertaining such a feeling.

Blessings from

BAPU

KANU GANDHI

SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's wife

195. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

URULI-KANCHAN,
March 26, 1946

CHI. ANAND,

I have your letter. I regret that your weakness persists as much as before. What can you do about it? Live as God wills.

It will be good if the new lady[1] brings you some peace. Do not regret your lack of hearing. Look upon it as a blessing. Address your letters to Poona or Sevagram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindu: Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

196. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

URULI-KANCHAN,
March 26, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I shall leave for Bombay on 31st. From there I shall go to Delhi. I shall leave Bombay on Monday.

My advice about Aryanayakam[2] is: Give whatever he wants, but not Rustom Bhavan; land—as much as he wants—do not charge any price. Ownership may vest in Gram Seva Mandal. But the possession may remain with Nayee Talim as long as it pays *vighoti* [3] and an annual rent of one rupee. We should not hesitate to give as much land as he wants. After all, all work is one. Everything is ours. Still Gram Seva Mandal's opinion should be considered as final. Show this to him.

Do write about Kamble.

Here the new work is going on well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4546

[1] Addressee's wife, Gangi
[2] E. W. Aryanayakam, Secretary, Hindustani Talimi Sangh
[3] Revenue per acre

197. LETTER TO RANCHHODDAS PATWARI

URULI-KANCHAN,
March 27, 1946

RESPECTED BHAI RANCHHODDAS,

I have your letter. That your eyes are failing is as much a matter for rejoicing as for sorrow. You will not have to see thing which pain you. I had gathered from your previous letter that you did not expect a reply and, therefore, because of heavy pressure of other work I did not reply to it. Since you want a reply to the present letter, I am dictating this after the morning prayer. My eyes are still good enough, but the hand needs rest. I, therefore, spare it other exertion so as to be able to write for *Harijan*.

If your interpretation of ahimsa is correct,what could I achieve by living up to 125? For India would have to bear the load of my ignorance for about 50 years more still. However, so long as my ignorance seems to me to be knowledge, may I not hope to live up to 125 and go on serving up to the end? You say, moreover, that ahimsa will work in dealing with friends, but not in dealing with enemies who do not believe in it; and, in support of you argument, you cite the example of Rajputs and stories from the Puranas. Let us, for the moment, leave aside the examples. If ahimsa was limited to loving those who love us, how could it be described as the supreme dharma? Even dacoits and robbers do that. How great was the love of Alibaba's forty robbers for one another? Does not the aphorism[1] describing the distinguishing characteristics of ahimsa say that in the presence of ahimsa all ill-will subsides? If this is true, ahimsa can be tested only against an enemy. Does not the well-known couplet[2] of Shamaldas, "For a bowl of water give a goodly meal," [etc.], teach the same lesson in simple but sweet words? The bravery of the Rajputs cannot be denied. If nothing could ever be achieved through violence, would it have acquired the powerful spell that it has? Are the successes of falsehood, too, any the less impressive? We often see falsehood occupying seats of power and truth wandering in rags, but are you impressed by this fact? And what do the Puranas, etc., suggest, if not that God alone may do as He wills? He who creates may destroy, for even through destruction He creates. Prahlada and others displayed

[1] From Patanjali's Yogadarshanam, II. 35—•हिंसाप्रतिष्ठायां तत्सन्निधौ वैर त्याग:—

[2] *Vide* "An Autobiography"

pure ahimsa in their lives. He incurred the displeasure of his demon father, but did not give up Rama's name till the last.

What more need I write? I do not wish to drown myself in the well of the Shastras. They seem to me like the great oceans, full of countless alligators. But do they not contain pearls, too? Let us, therefore, churn them to find that nectar in the form of the pearls.

I hope you will not mind your younger brother indulging in such philosophizing. Won't you forgive him? Do dictate letters to me whenever you get time. Paramanand did call on me and also gave the book he has written.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

In reply to your three questions, which you must remember, Bapu says "yes":

1. Regarding recitation of the *Ramaraksha*.
2. This question pertained to the fact of Rama giving us the strength.
3. Whether Ramanama is an unfailing remedy, occurred for the first time at the prayers.

SUSHILA PAI

From the photostat of Gujarati: G. N. 4976

198. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

URULI [-KANCHAN],
March 27, 1946

MY DEAR C. R.,

You are giving me good lessons in Tamil and incidentally in Sanskrit. From which root is Lakshmi derived? I never knew that etymologically 'Lakshmi'[1] was (ocean-born). Why not *rombu* but *romba* for 'much'? I remember having learnt *rombu*.

The news you give me about the temple-entry case is interesting and disturbing. You will tell me what happens.

Yes, I am off to Delhi (D. V.) on 1st April. Heaven help them that a fool should go on All Fools Day!

So your son-in-law[2] is off to America with Goenka[3]. He has

[1] This is in Devanagari.
[2] Devdas Gandhi, who was Editor of *The Hindustan Times*
[3] Ramanath Goenka of *The Indian Express*

become a great man.

But nothing interests me so much as your stomach trouble. It may be beyond me but not nature cure. If it is beyond nature cure, it is beyond repair. Yours is not that. Rest and be thankful. I wanted to give you rest. But now I can't till after my return from Delhi.

Ramba anbudan

BAPU[1]

From a photostat : G. N. 2120

199. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

URULI[-KANCHAN],
March 27, 1946

DEAR GHANSYAMDASJI

You will excuse my dictating this in English. You will understand the reason why.

Bapu sent a wire yesterday to Brijkishan approving of the arrangments for his stay in Valmiki Mandir. I have sent you another wire today as follows:

Bapu wired approval and also sent detailed letter yesterday to Brijkishan.

As regards telephone and electricty, Bapu says that he does not mind if they can be installed without much difficulty; but their absence won't make any difference in regard to his plans. In case electricity is installed for lighting, he expects that the arragements will be permanent. If the wires are removed the moment he goes out of the Bhangi Nivas, the whole thing will become a force. There should be some permanent improvement in the Bhangi Nivas as a result of his stay there. In connection with this, Bapu is very particular about plentiful supply of clean water for bath and drinking. You are to make arrangements for a bath tub for him too. So much for the present. More when we meet.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

PYARELAL

From a copy: C. W. 7873. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] This and the four italicized words are in Tamil

200. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

URULI-KANCHAN,
March 27, 1946

CHI. SHARMA

I have your letter. I could not reply to it earlier. I do not like the letter. Your old impatience is still there.

You have not to fight for money, do you have to? You have to fight for truth[1]. I am in correspondence with Gadodiaji. He had suggested[2] Bhulabhai's name. When he was told about Bhulabhai's illness, he accepted M[unshi]'s name. I am now writing[3] to M. You have to send me your brief[4]. It should be to the point. I will ask Gadodiaji to reply to it. And you will have to send in your rejoinder. I shall send all this correspondence to M. Before that there should be signatures of both of you on the award.

I have today your letter of the 22nd.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pages 356 and 357

201. LETTER TO CORBETT

VILLAGE URULI KANCHAN (G.I.P.),
POONA DISTRICT,
March 28, 1946

DEAR MR. CORBETT,

I have your letter. In my opinion the incidents you describe were disgraceful enough if and where they happened. I say 'if' because whilst I have known of some, I have no knowledge of all that you have described. But to give them all-India publicity in the columns of *Harijan* is to exaggerate the evil out of all proportion. To advertise an evil is to give it a fresh lease of life. Wisdom, therefore,

[1] The addressee had claimed remuneration from Lakshminarayan Gadodia, Treasurer and Trustee of his Nature Cure Ashram, for the treatment given to the latter and his wife for the last three years.

[2] For an arbitrator

[3] *Vide* the following item.

[4] Gandhiji uses the English word.

dictates dignified silence and a determination to prepare to face manfully a repetition.

There are Anglo-Indians who are ashamed of their Indian parentage and will have nothing to do with Indians. These excite prejudice and when feelings run high come in for exhibition of such prejudice resulting even in disgraceful incidents you have described. Living in the midst of a population which numerically reaches nine figures, regrettable incidents will sometimes happen. Times of peace should be devoted [to] think[ing] out ways and means of avoiding the re-eruption. One that occurs to me is that Anglo-Indians should cease to think of themselves as separate people requiring special privileges. These they will not, and should not, enjoy in independent India. Indeed, nobody should have special privileges. All over the world theyhave been the bane of foreign rule which is evil itself. It must breed evil and exist on that breed.

There are Indians who have adopted European manners and customs and conduct themselves as superiors, much to the discomfort of their fellow-men. I know that before now even these have come in for the ill-treatment to which you have drawn my attention, How nice it would be if all these ugly features of society were removed even before independence becomes the order of the day in law and in fact !

This letter is not intended for publication.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

202. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

URULI-KANCHAN,
March 28, 1946

BHAI MUNSHI,

I have your letter about Kamlesh. I see that you have had the same experience that I had. In these circumstances I don't think I can give him the work of Hindustani *Harijan*.

Dr. Sharma is a naturopath. We have bought some land for him near Khurja Road and set up a Trust for the same . The trustees are Sheth Lakshminarayan Gadodia and Jajuji. A difference has arisen

between Gadodiaji and Sharma regarding the latter's fee[1] . In itself the dispute is about nothing very important. But it involves determination of the truth or otherwise of the facts. They have entrusted that task to me. But I cannot undertake it because I myself am deeply involved in the affair. Moreover, if I have to decide the dispute, I would have to go into the minutest details. I am not in a position to do so. I am busy with so many things that if I started giving my time to individual cases, I would not be able to do justice to the public tasks I have taken up. I am therefore, getting out of all such involvements, and so wish to put this burden on you.

Actually you should be offered a fee for this work. But I am not in a position to ensure that. Godadiaji can pay the fee, but he has agreed to be a trustee in this venture for love of public service and, since I myself am involved in the affair, I cannot ask him to pay you any fee. And Dr. Sharma is in no position to pay the fee. Hence I must entrust this task to you purely as a form of public service as I have entrusted to many others.

What I am thinking is that Sharma may give a statement setting out this case, then Gadodiaji may do the same, and Sharma may reply to his statement. You may then, if you wish, meet both or call either; otherwise you may decide on the basis of the statements themeselves. I think this will not involve much work.

If you express your inability to undertake the work in the condi-tions I have explained, I will not take it ill. Nobody should consider whether I would be pleased or displeased in any matter connected with my personal work, for I think I have, or rather God has, dulled all such feelings in me. If that were not so, I would be crushed under the weight that I bear, and would have to give up my aspiration to live up to 125.

If you feel that you can decide this matter, it will be necessary to draw up some kind of a rough agreement authorizing you to do so. I will get it drawn up and signed by the parties or will do as you wish.

I am arriving there on the 31st. I will be staying in some Harijan quarters. I had forgotten that Lilavati[2] was the President

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Addressee's wife

of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. As a responsible office-bearer, therefore, she will know where I shall be staying Rameshwardas, of course, will know positive, and Sardar, too. Please , therefore, find out. Come and give me your reply personally, but it will suffice, if you even send a message. I will be leaving for Delhi on Monday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati; C. W. 7694. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

203. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI[1]

March 28, 1946

CHI. MAGANBHAI,

You eat more uncooked vegetables than you should. A couple of *tolas* is more than enough. Increase the quantity of milk, curds, ghee. Vallabhram Vaidya is there to help you to get rid of the impurities in your blood; take *lohabhasma* [2] in consultation with him. Don't think there is harm in it. If the body is deficient in iron, you should take it from other sources as may be proper and regain your strength. Do get well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

204. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR

March 28, 1946

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

I have your letter. Kamble says that you consider him innocent. Is it true? If it is, you have not written so to me. From your letter I thought that you were inclined to agree with Viramma. Write to me something definite. What do you mean by saying that you are a great sinner? "Who is a greater sinner than I," wrote

[1] The letter is written in Devanagari.

[2] Iron oxide

Surdas[1] of himself. Do you mean the same that Surdas[2] meant, or is there something more to it? Write to me explicitly.

My blessings to Chi. Barbara.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9033. Also C. W. 9157. Courtesy : Prabhakar Parekh

205. IMPLICATIONS OF 'QUIT INDIA'

In terms of non-violence, 'Quit India' is a healthy, potent cry of the soul. It is not a slogan. It means the end, through means purely truthful and non-violent, of foreign rule and domination. It does not mean foreigner's destruction but his willing conversion to Indian life. In this scheme, there is no room for hatred of the foreigner. He is a man, even as we are. It is fear of him that gives rise to harted. Fear gone, there can be no hatred.

Thus his conversion implies our conversion too. If we cease to be inferiors, he cannot be our superior. His arsenals and his weapons, typified in their extreme in the atom bomb, should have no terror for us. It follows that we may not covet them. We often make the mistake of thinking that we must first have things before we cease to covet them. This tempting argument leads to the prolongation of the agony. Must I do all the evil I can, before I learn to shun it? Is it not enough to know the evil to shun it? If not, we should be sincere enough to admit that we love evil too well to give it up.

Let us assume that foreign rule is ended. What should the foreigner do? He could hardly be considered free when he was protected by British arms. As a free man he will discover that it was wrong to possess privileges which the millions of India could not enjoy. He will live doing his duty as behoves a son of India. He will no longer live at India's expense. On the contrary, he will give India all his talents and by his services render himself indispensable to the land of his adoption.

If this is true of the European, how much more true must it be for those Anglo-Indians and others who have adopted Europen manners and customs in order to be classed as Europeans demanding

[1] Gandhiji, however, says "Tulsidas".

[2] *ibid*

preferential treatment? All such people will find themselves ill at ease, if they expect continuation of the favoured treatment hitherto enjoyed by them.

They should rather feel thankful that they will be disburdened of preferential treatment to which they had no right by any known canon of reasoning, and which was derogatory to their dignity.

We have all—rulers and ruled—been living so long in a stifling,unnatural atmosphere that we might well feel in the beginning that we have lost the lungs for breathing the invigorating ozone of freedom. If the reality comes in an orderly, that is, a non-violent manner, because the parties feel that it is right, it will be a revealing lesson for the world.

URULI [-KANCHAN], March 29, 1946

Harijan, 7-4-1946

206. SPEECH AT KASTURBA GANDHI NATIONAL MEMORIAL TRUST WOMEN AGENTS' MEETING, URULI-KANCHAN[1]

[On or after *March 28, 1946*][2]

Tracing his line of thought, Gandhiji explained how it was women's work, and how he had felt he must make women shoulder the responsibility of it. In no other organization, not even in the Congress, had such a tremendous responsibility been thrown on women.

The Agent's post throws all the burden of work on her area. It is immense but given the industry and intelligence not only will the work grow but the Agent herself will grow in stature. She is there to serve and to give, not to possess. By this giving she will become the people's trusted servant. This is the royal road to democracy.

Gandhiji gave them a clear answer in respect to political work such as volunteering at polling booths. They were not there for that purpose. It was perfectly possible for them not to be in the Congress and yet be of it as he was himself. The work before them was to make women fit to take their

[1] This is extracted from Amrit Kaur's "Inspiring for Women". Amrit Kaur, explains: "Uruli village. . . was the meeting place of all the women Agents so far appointed by the Kasturba Trust to organize and supervise work in the different Provinces. . . When Thakkar Bapa suggested to Gandhiji that an Agents' meeting would be advisable, Gandhiji who talked of democracy should have been party to the appointment of single persons to run the work of Province instead of the originally formed committees."

[2] *Vide* "Kasturba Smark Trust", 7-4-1946

place in society. If they succeeded in teaching them the correct way of life, they would have taught them all they needed. Today they were steeped in the Stygian darkness of ignorance and superstition. With the removal of that, women would make freedom worth while.

He cited the good example of Kanu Gandhi who had said that in his camp, soon to be started, it would be his aim to teach the students how to battle against famine by tilling the ground, scavenging, cooking, bringing their own expenses with them, so that they need not be a liability on anyone. Women have to work in famine areas with this ideal. It is ours to mitigate, not to aggravate the burden.

Asked as to what work he would lay most emphasis on, so far as women were concerned, Gandhiji felt that sanitation and hygiene, owing to the lack of knowledge of which our people suffered so greatly, should take first place. Then there were evil customs which had to go, the useless expenditure on jewellary; and he made everyone laugh by his graphic description of a much bejewelled woman patient with a huge nose ring, earring-necklace, bracelets and anklets complete who had visited him as a patient that very morning! It was hard to know what should come first. "Really all work in its own place is of equal importance." There is the very great necessity of teaching women the care and upbringing of children, discipline in their own lives in every department including eating. He placed maternity almost last in comparison with the above mentioned. But nothing could be achieved without friendship with the women. That was the first and basic desideratum.

The pay of workers had caused much discussion. For Gandhiji it was the spirit of the worker that meant everything. Inasmuch as the labourer was worthy of his hire, a decent living wage must be paid; but it was the work and not the pay that should attract.

Were the women to be given the wheel as a revolutionary weapon as, he had said it was, in the hands of a Jawaharlal? The answer was 'No' How could it be such in the hands of an ignorant woman? But if every women in India span, then a silent revolution would certainly be created of which a Jawaharlal could make full use. Unless steam generated was put to proper use, the engine would not run and the person generating the steam might himself be scalded by it even unto death.

Amongst the members were some staunch femininists who were anxious for women alone to run the show. To them Gandhiji said that the men who were there were serving the memory of one who was instinctively a villlage woman. Long before he himself had taken to village life as being the ideal life for service, Kasturba has shown her preference for it. Her heart was in Phoenix even in the far off South African days when he himself worked in a town. The men who were honouring her memory were only serving until such time as women were ready to take their place.

I am the only one whom you may find it hard to get rid of, for I have always counted myself as a woman. I believe, I know your sex and your needs better than you do yourselves.

He said, the Kasturba Trust would have even a bigger place in national service when freedom was ours than it today. For all would go to the winds, if women were not properly trained. He hoped that every worker in the Trust would have a great deal to give to the new government.

But we have got to generate that strength within us. We may not be frightened of making mistakes. Man is born to make mistakes, but the great thing is to see our mistakes and learn from them. We should magnify our own errors so as to be deterred from falling into them again. Those who imagine that they never make mistakes are to be feared.

He agreed with one of the members when she said that it was a great tragedy that the uplift of women had to be an item on the constructive programme."Have we yet to find ourselves ?" she asked. The reply was: Yes, indeed, and to where better can you find yourselves than by being true to the highest traditions of Indian women by serving your unhappy sisters today?[1]

One worker asked that while he did not advocate their taking any part in politics, what would he advise them to do in case of violent oubreaks?

There is no question of any of you keeping aloof from the fiery furnance, should such ever come your way. I shall not shed a tear ; I shall rejoice to hear, if any or all of you are found to have laid down your lives in tying to quell the disturbance. To be killed but never to kill is the law that govern us, and women should surely excel in this field.

Harijan, 14-4-1946 and 28-4-1946

207. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

URULI VILLAGE (G.I.P.),
POONA DISTRICT,
March 29, 1946

DEAR DR. HOLMES,

Mr. and Mrs. Kodanda Rao are my friends of long standing. I have no doubt you have heard of the S. of I. Society founded by the late Shri G. K. Gokhale of whom you will learn everything from these friends.

[1] What follows is extracted from Amrit Kaur's "The Lesson of the Cross" published on April 28, 1946.

Will you please introduce them to American friends and otherwise help them to the best of your ability ?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES
10 PARK AVENUE
NEW YORK CITY

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

208. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKER

URULI-KANCHAN,
March 29, 1946

CHI. KAKA

. . . .[1] I do not know that a cheque for the Trust has been received. If Valji Lakhamsi has resigned, I see no harm in Mangaldas[2] taking his place. I should like to talk over this matter with Mangaldas and Sardar when I go to Bombay on the 31st . But it is possible that under heavy pressure of other work, I may not be able to do so. You should, therefore, settle the matter through correspondence. If I am able to settle it, I will write to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the photostat of the Gujarati: G. N.

209. LETTER TO SHIV NARAYAN TANDON

URULI,
March 29, 1946

BHAI SHIV NARAYAN,

I am firmly of the opinion that it will be more becoming on the

[1] Ommission as in the source.
[2] Mangaldas M. Pakvasa

part of you all to find the money for the building, etc. And it will be good for the Kasturba Memorial Trust too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

210. NATURE CURE PRESCRIPTIONS-II

URULI[-KANCHAN],

[On or before] *March [30,]* [1] *1946*

SUBHADRABAI (the female child's mother)

Does she pass stools? She should keep the girl in the sun after covering her head; mud-poultice on the stomach. The girl should be given *mosambi*-juice. She should seat the girl on a stool in lukewarm water. This will be enough to ensure a clear motion. If she does not have a clean motion in spite of all this, she should be treated with the syringe. But then all this is for you people to do.

PARU (girl)

Sun-bath, hip-bath, friction-bath. Only boiled water and butter-milk to drink. Mud-poultices.

MANU (girl)

Sun-bath, steam-bath, cold water bath, mud-pouitices. Milk and fruit-juice mixture for diet.

SADASHIV

May take tomato-juice besides that milk, and nothing else. Sun-bath, hip-bath and friction-bath.

Now the rest may come tomorrow so that we can give the patients the baths.

AJI (girl)

Fruit-juices, sun-bath, hip-bath and friction-bath. Her clothes are very dirty.

KONDIBA/DHONDIBA

The most effective treatment for rickets is sun-bath and taking milk mixed with fruit-juices.

SHRIPAD

He must get himself admitted to the hospital. If he is willing

[1] Gandhiji left Uruli-Kanchan on this date.

and wants to have a note, he may go with one. There is no other remedy for hernia. A strap-belt can also be worn. If he does not want to do all this, he should surrender to Rama and rest content.

PARVATI

Only mosambi-juice. Hip-bath and friction-bath; mud-pack on the abdomenn, regular sun-bath. If she does this much, she is bound to recover. In any case she should realize the greatness of Ramanama.

JAI (or) . . .[1]

Advised to take light sun-bath for some minute, then in the shade and then again in the sun. She should do this for an hour. She should be given fruit-juices mixed with water. The water should be boiled. She should be regularly bathed to keep her clean.

SADASHIV

Advised to take milk mixed with fruit-juices. Sun-bath only in the nude; the head must always be covered. Banana or papaya leave can also be put on the head.[2]

Should sit in the sun until he perspires. Does he take the baths? When he feels very hot after sitting in the sun, he should wipe his body with a clean piece of cloth soaked in cold water.

Today he should also be shown how to take a hip-bath.

Yes, we should keep him in the sun. He is to be given hip-bath.

He is also to be given hip-bath.

Can he see at the moment? If he takes a diet free from chillies, takes fruit, and hip-bath and friction-bath, he is likely to be all right.

Does he pass stools? What is he fed? How come, breast-feeding at this age? How old is he? How can a two year old child be allowed to suckle? He should be given only fruit-juice. He needs an enema, which can be done only here. Make the neccessary arrangements. Joshi should see to all this. And both of them should be given hip-bath. The girl is very dirty. She should take friction-bath and sit in the sun reciting Ramanama.

How many old patients are there? How many of them were asked yesterday to take the baths? They should be given the baths. The girls are as good as women. They must be treated by Prabhavati

[1] The name is illegible.

[2] What follows is 'Instructions for Various Patients'.

or Sushilabehn, and the men by Joshiji. What is the first woman's complaint? What has she tied to her abdomen? In the first place she should not gird up so tight. She should lie prostrate and naked in a solitary place. She should give up eating bread, and subsist on milk and fruit. Does she pass stools? What does she do? With whom has she come? Does she have anyone at home?

I hope we have a measure.

In that case you should examine closely. Send Dhirubhai for the message.

Send for Dhirubhai also.

All this should be recorded. Ask him what his name is and what his complaint is. What does he eat? Then ask him to lie down in the sun completly nude. He should take fruit-juice only; he should sit in hot water and then in cool water and should continue this practise till he feels better. If he does not pass stool regularly, he should be treated with the syringe. For this, we shall send somebody to his place. If he will do this much regularly, the disease would be cured and then he should practise repetition of Ramanama with faith.

From a facsimile of the Gujarati: *Mahatma—Life of Mohandas Karamchand Ghandi*, Vol. 7, between pp. 96 and 97

211. INSTRUCTIONS FOR NATURE CURE CLINIC, URULI-KANCHAN

[On or before] *March [30,]* [1] *1946*

1. All those who have come to stay should do so in a spirit of service. They should not be a burden on anybody.

2. Manibhai will be in charge of general administration. He will be the Manager.

3. Dr. Bhagwat will be in the Chief Medical Instructor. Other instructors will work under his direction.

4. The treatment is to be limited to sun-bath, hip-bath, friction-bath, Kuhne-bath, mud-poultice, massage, fomentation with hot water.

5. Ramanama is the king of all treatments. It should be proved by our conduct. The evening prayer should be held in public even if very few attend it.

6. All shoud rise at 4 a. m., and the prayer should be held at 4.30 a. m. All should learn the correct pronunciation and proper

[1] Gandhiji left Uruli-Kanchan on this date.

rhythm. All should learn Hindustani through both the scripts, and should acquire a working knowledge of Marathi.

7. All should maintain diary and give in it their hourly programme.

8. Manibhai should keep account of every pie.

9. Hip-baths should be readily available to all. The tub should be washed with water and hot ashes after use. A clean brush should be used for scrubbing with the ashes.

10. All kitchen work and cleaning should be done by the inmates themselves, and not with the help of the servants. The food should be the simplest possible. In this matter everyone should be guided by Bhagwat.

11. From tomorrow we have to bear all the expenses. Do not expect anything gratis from anyone.

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Mahatma—Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, Vol. 7, between pp. 96 and 97

212. QUESTION BOX

Q. Horse racing is going on in many important cities. It is alike a lure for high and low, rich and poor, and it leads to moral degradation and, in some cases, penury. Many Princes spend lakhs of their people's money on buying race horses. What steps should our new government take to check this evil?

A. There is no doubt whatsoever about the evil. The good it is supposed to do is extremely doubtful. And, at this time of growing distress in the country, it is criminal. The new national government can do a great deal to check the evil. But let us recognize their limitations. Being popular, i. e., people's governments, they will never be able to go far in advance of popular opinion. That is specially a function belonging to reformers. But these governments can certainly, by their own example, rob the evil of the stamp of fashion that the bureaucracy has set upon it even to the point of wasting public money on the luxury. The Princes will copy the example of good manners that the national governments may set.

Q. We find that the Congress is reluctant to select women representatives on a large scale for elective bodies. It is surely just and necessary that more women are taken into the various bodies. How would you deal with the question?

A. I am not enamoured of equality or any other proportion in

such matters. Merit should be the only test. Seeing, however, that it has been the custom to decry women, the contrary custom should be to prefer women, merit being equal, to men even if the preference should result in men being entirely displaced by women. It would be a dangerous thing to insist on membership on the ground merely of sex. Women and for that matter any group should disdain patronage. They should seek justice, never favour.Therefore the proper thing is for women as indeed for men to advance the spread not of English or Western education among them, but such education on general lines through their provincial languages as will fit them for the numerous duties of citizenship. For men to take a lead in this much-needed reform would be not a matter of favour but a simple act of belated justice due to women.

URULI[-KANCHAN], March 30, 1946

Harijan, 7-4-1946

213. HINDUSTANI[1]

I have no doubt in my mind that Hindustani, i. e., a correct mixture of Hindi and Urdu, is the national language. But I have not yet been able to prove this in my own writings or speech. Let not readers of *Harijan Sevak*, however, be irritated. Perhaps it is as well that the attempt to create a national language has come into the hands of an inadept. After all the general mass of people come in this category. It will be through the efforts of all such that linguistic pundits will be enabled to create the proper mixture, easily understood by all. If readers of *Harijan Sevak* will keep on pointing out mistakes in language, it will help the journal to create and maintain a proper style. It will be the aim of *Harijan Sevak* to make its language sweet to the ear and easily understandable to every Indian. A language which is not generally understood is useless. It is unreal, if it cannot serve its purpose. All attempts at having a forced language have proved futile.

URULI[-KANCHAN], March 30, 1946

Harijan, 7-4-1946

[1] Originally written in Hindi, this appeared as "from Harijan Sevak" published simultanously from the source.

214. IS NETAJI ALIVE?[1]

Some years ago it was announced[2] in the newspapers that Subhas Chandra Bose had died. I believed the report. Later the news was proved to have been incorrect. Since then I have had a feeling that Netaji could not leave us until his dream of swaraj had been fulfilled. To lend strength to this feeling was the knowledge of Netaaji's great ability to hoodwink his enemies and even the world for the sake of his cherished goal. These were the only reasons for my belief that he was alive.

I have not the ability for foretelling the future. I have no strength except what comes from insistence on truth. Non-violence too springs from the same insistence. God alone knows absolute truth. Therefore I have often said, Truth is God. It follows that man, a finite being, cannot know absolute truth. Therefore I had nothing but my instinct to tell me that Netaji was alive. No reliance can be placed on such unsupported feeling.

On the other hand, there is strong evidence to counteract the feeling. The British Government is party to that evidence. Capt. Habibur Rahman has said, he was present at the time of Netaji's death and has brought back his charred wrist watch. Another of his companions, Shri Iyer, met and told me that my instinct was wrong and I should abandon the feeling that Subhas Chandra was alive. In the face of these proofs I appeal to everyone to forget what I have said[3] and, believing in the evidence before them, reconcile themselves to the fact that Nataji has left us. All man's ingenuity is as nothing before the might of the One God. He alone is Truth and nothing else stands.

URULI[-KANCHAN], March 30, 1946

Harijan, 7-4-1946

[1] Originally written in Hindi, this appeared as "from *Harijan Sevak*" published simultaneously with the source.

[2] In March 1942

[3] *Vide* footnote on "Talk with shah Nawaz Khan and P. K. Sehgal", 12/13-3-1946

215. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

URULI[-KANCHAN],
March 30, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I got your letter.

The mistake is grave enough. How can such work be assigned to the poor labourers? If they pay the fine, understanding its implication, you should accept it. But then it ceases to be a fine. We will not be benefited, if they pay it per force. Tell them that, if they do it again, they will have to go. Take what I say as a suggestion from me, and do what you all think reasonable. Do not exert yourself beyond your strength.

You may, if you want, ask for money from home. I find nothing wrong in it. But you are not duty bound to do so. In this matter, too, do what you think your dharma is. We shall improve only by making mistakes.

Have you seen what Bhansali says? Ask him. See the enclosed letter.

I understand what you say about Hoshiari. It is good that Pushpa[1] has taken over the management.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4549

216. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, URULI-KANCHAN

May 30, 1946

Before his departure from Uruli, Mahatma Gandhi exhorted the villagers of Uruli to lead a clean, healthy life and turn the village into a model village. He also stressed the importance of spinning, and advised the villagers to take it.

He referred to his activities in the villlage during his nine days' stay there and hoped that the villagers would follow the instructions he had given them.[2]

The Bombay Chronicle, 31-3-1946

[1] Pushpa N. Naik

[2] The report concluded: "The public of Uruli promised Gandhiji a sum of Rs. 10,000 for opening a nature cure clinic in their village. . . . A complement of three doctors and assistants was stationed at Uruli under Gandhiji's instruction to carry on the work."

217. KASTURBA SMARAK TRUST

There were two meetings at Uruli-Kanchan: on the 28th, 29th and 30th March; one of the Agents[1] of this Trust and the other of the Executive. The meeting of the Agents was the first of its kind. The Agents had many interesting questions. Why could not the Agents be members of the legislatures? The obvious answer is that, if they are to do justice to their work, they should have no time for legislative duties. The decisive reason is that the villagers will have a wrong example set to them,if they have members of legislatures to look up to.

Whatever the sphere of work they choose, they should not be non-entities. It should be remembered that the Agents have displaced the committees that were appointed for the last year. If they cover the whole Province, they have their work cut out from them. If they cannot cope with it, they have to run model *shibirs* [2] in one or more places to prepare women workers for villages. These may be teachers, nurses, spinners, weavers, sanitarians, etc. Work by women among women in the villages of India is an unbeaten track. Men are hardly fit for it. But the women have so long remained without experiences of such work that it is difficult, especially in the initial stages. If the Agent attempt at intensity and confine their activity to certain centres, they will find the work to be simple and instructive.

Then they have their advisers. They are not meant to be ornamental. Their advice should always be at the disposal of the Agents. If they are well-chosen, they must prove towers of strength to the Agents in their difficult task.

The experiment of having women only as Agents is new. It can only succeed if they are wisely guided by the Centre and ably advised by the advisers. Much as it is to be wished that they too were women, the fear is that in the beginning they will be mostly men. The advisers should never aspire to be more than such and never be less. It should never aspire to be more than such and never be less. It shoud be their proud privilege to give the Agents their advice whenever it is sought. The members of the defunct committee, it is

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Kasturba Gandhi Nsational Memorial Trust Women Agents' Meeting, Uruli-Kanchan", 28-3-1946

[2] Camps

hoped, will never feel that they have been displaced for any other reason save the patent and potent one of manning the organization with women from top to bottom. The secret of success in this as in any other organization lies in the spirit of service actuating its every limb and self being subordinated to the organization.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, March 31, 1946

Harijan, 7-4-1946

218. TEN SUGGESTIONS WORTH CONSIDERING

A worker has made some suggestions for meeting the threatened calamity. I give them below with only some minor changes. Possibly some of the suggestions might have been made earlier in one form or the other. I have not taken that into consideration. The best of suggestion can be misused by a dishonest person. Let us hope that the scorching heat of the Holi fire will burn out the impurities in all of us.

1. There should be a strict and impartial machinery to prevent the removal of even a single grain or a blade of grass unless enough stock of foodgrains and fodder is reserved for the requirement of the entire rural population including the cattle and livestock for the whole year.

2. There should be no difference between the purchase and the sale prices of foodgrains. The sale prices should be kept on par with the purchase prices. The overhead charges should be borne by the Government alone.

3. Foodgrains should be made easily available in every locality at controlled prices. There should be no need for futile treks of five to seven miles and returning with empty hands as at present.

4. Arrangements should be made to provide work according to one's capacity and to pay remuneration in the form of foodgrains and or clothes as the case may be to those who do not have neccessary cash to purchase them.

5. The pay of all categories of low-paid employees should be raised to meet the cost of living without waiting for any demands or agitations, but payment may be made in the form of food-grains.

6. Items of current expenditure in the budget should be pruned to provide sustenance to the people. Cuts in the salaries of highly paid official should be introduced, if neccessary.

7. The post-war scheme or other such projects could be easily suspended till the crisis blows over.

8. It should be so planned that public donations flow into a central pool from where they are canalized for combating starvation and also for increasing food production.

9. It should be considered the sacred duty of a Government to strive sincerely to provide livelihood to the people in some form or the other.

10. Eating-houses or meal-counters should be introduced where a person without any discrimination of caste and creed can get a meal at the lowest cost or by offering some sort of labour instead.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 31-1-1946

219. LETTER TO ADRIENNE

ON THE TRAIN,
March 31, 1946

DEAR ADRIENNE,

I was glad to have your letter after such a long time. By the time this reaches you, you will be sporting your new name. I hope you will have a joint life of service.

When you return, even though for a short time, you will be a changed woman !

You will have learnt all about my activities from the papers.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

220. LETTER TO SEVAGRAM CAMP INMATES

ON THE TRAIN,
March 31, 1946

BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN SEVAGRAM CAMP,

Chi. Kanu Gandhi gives me all the news. I do hope that all inmates of the Camp will produce plenty of foodstuff in this period

of emergency.

And I hope they will all learn other things as well.

Blessings from

BAPU

THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN THE SEVAGRAM CAMP

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

221. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

ON THE TRAIN,
April 1, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have read your letter. I do not think you can do after a month what you are unable to do today. And what is that—whether you two can live together without seeking sexual pleasure? If you cannot, it means you do hanker after it in your mind, and doing that while refraining from physical gratification can do harm.

It is for your own sake that I have not given you specific work. Your letter itself shows that you are not ready for such work. But you know well enough that there is work you can do. Go through all [the language edition of] *Harijan* carefully and note the errors in the copies themselves. Also translate the English articles into Hindutani and show me; and the Gujarati into Hindustani. Master the Urdu script. Have you done any of these things? If not, why not? But never mind that; correct your error and start again. Do whichever of the things mentioned above you have failed to do.

Start working instead of thinking. From that you will learn the art of thinking.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8415. Also C. W. 5614. Courtesy. Munnalal G. Shah

[1] *Vide* also the following two items.

222. NOTE TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH[1]

[*Aprril 1, 1946*][2]

Read your letter again. I shall be happy to discover that I have misunderstood you. I have told you that I have permanent work for you. But what about poor Kanchan?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8426. Also C. W. 5616. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

223. NOTE TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

[*April 1, 1946*][3]

If you agree that your letter lends itself to the meaning I have read in it, that is enough. Do not think again now. The best thing to do is to start working.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8426. Also C. W. 5612. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

224. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR[4]

[ON THE TRAIN],
April 1, 1946

BAPA,

I went through Subbalakshmi's[5] letter. It is a nice letter, and I am returning it. Write to her that the appointment of another woman as Agent[6] should not stop her from doing her own work. Only one person could be Agent, whereas there could be thousands of workers. Since this is a new experiment, she should utilize her intelligence as well as her other qualities as much as she can. That will show her real zest. Let her train the girls as she pleases.

[1] The letter is written on a note dated April 1, 1946, by the addressee in which he protested that, contrary to Gandhiji's interpretation (*vide* the preceding item), an earlier letter from him did not suggest that his mind dwelt on sex and that he was not prepared to take up permanent work.

[2] *ibid*

[3] The letter is written below the addressee's note of April 1, 1946.Vide also the preceding two items.

[4] The letter is written in Devanagari.

[5] A well-known social worker; vide also "Letter to R. S. Subbalakshmi", 1-4-1946

[6] Of Kasturba National Memorial Trust

She should see Soundaram[1] and help her best as she can. I shall also write[2] to her, if I remember. I am writing this while I am approaching Delhi.

BAPU

SHRI THAKKAR BAPA

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

225. LETTER TO DR. SOUNDARAM G. RAMACHANDRAN

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI,
April 1, 1946

CHI. SOUNDARAM,

You have been appointed Agent. It will be your duty to meet Subbalakshmi. Take her help, and see Gopalaswami[3] too. It is not that your advisory committee should be composed of men only, you can take women as well. The committee should be competent to advice you. It is not necessary that there must be ten members; you can have a smaller number. To be in harmony with all is a sign of ahimsa.

Blessings from
BAPU

SOUNDARAM RAMACHANDRAN

MADRAS

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Dr. Soundaram, wife of G. Ramachandran
[2] *Vide* the following item.
[3] L. N. Gopalaswami

226. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI[1]

ON THE TRAIN,
April 1, 1946

CHI. KANAIYO,

I have your letter. I have already written[2] this Monday what you have asked for. I wrote it last evening.

Abha remains cheerful these days, She is keeping a diary and also doing her Urdu. And she is of course immersed in my service and finds pleasure in it. I have asked her to write, to you also, and she does. Don't hesitate to write, if you want anything to be conveyed to her.

May your work be worthy of you, and may you always have a sturdy physique, and may you deserve the title of Hanuman ever more.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. KANHAIYALAL GANDHI (KANUBHAI)
SEVAGRAM
WARDHA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

227. LETTER TO LAKSHMI NARAYAN[3]

ON THE TRAIN,
April 1, 194[*6*][4]

CHI. LAKSHMI BABU,

What is this about Devdoot? Suchetabehn's statement seems straightforward. And now he has to work under Priyamvadabehn. Bhai Devdoot must withdraw the language he has used, and he

[1] The letter is written in Devanagari.

[2] The addressee was conducting a camp for the Sevagram Ashram inmates, and Gandhiji used to write a few words for the campers every Monday; *vide* "Letter to Sevagram Camp Inmates", 31-3-1946

[3] The two items are found among the papers and diary for 1946; the year, however, "1945".

[4] *ibid*

should do what Priyamvadabehn says and in the manner she suggests. If he cannot, he should quit.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI LAKSHMI NARAYAN
SECRETARY, BIHAR CHARKHA SANGH
MADHUBANI (DARBHANGA), BIHAR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

228. LETTER TO DEVDOOT VIDYARTHI[3]

April 1, 194[*6*]

BHAI DEVDOOT,

There was considerable discussion in the Working Committee about you. Now Priyamvadabehn is in charge of the whole work. It is, therefore, your duty to co-operate with her loyally and sincerely. It is possible that you are more capable than her. But if we think along this line, women will never rise. Whatever it is, while under a single management it is not right for anyone to hold such an opinion about oneself.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI DEVDOOT VIDYARTHI
KASTURBA [GANDHI NATIONAL] MEMORIAL TRUST CAMP
MADHUBANI (DARBHANGA), BIHAR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Prarelal

229. LETTER TO S. GANESAN

ON THE TRAIN,
April 1, 1946

BHAI GANESAN,

I got your long letter. Somehow I cannot bring myself to believe [what you say about] your work. Only when you show me some results, would I be satisfied. May I hope you will not repeat your mistakes?

When will you write in Hindustani?

Have you learnt both the scripts?

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. S. GANESAN
8 PYCROFTS ROAD
TRIPLICANE, MADRAS

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

230. LETTER TO R. S. SUBBALAKSHMI

DELHI,
[*April*][1] *1, 1946*

DEAR SUBBALAKSHMI,

I have your letter to Shri Bapa. He will have told you about the appointment by the Committee of Dr. Mrs. G. Ramachandran as Agent. This should not upset your plan of service in the wider field. You should go on with your work in conjuction with and under instructions from her, since as many women workers as possible are needed for the work.

Yours sincerely
M. K. GANDHI

SISTER R. S. SUBBALAKHAMI, B. A., B. T.
SHRI VIDYA COLONY
33 EDWARD ELIOTS ROAD
MYLAPORE, MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

231. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, NEW DELHI[2]

April 1, 1946

Untouchability is the blackest spot on Hinduism, and the sooner it is wiped out the better. I have of late been saying that the Hindus have to become *Ati Shudras* not merely in name but in thought, word and deed. For that token scavenging is not enough. I have, therefore, decided that I must go and actually live among Harijans in Harijan quarters.

I, however, do not delude myself with the belief that by staying here I am sharing the actual life with the Harijans. I have seen some Harijan quarters, and squalor, the dirt and the filth in the midst of which the Harijans live. I know too that this place has been brightened

[1] The source, however, has "March".

[2] The speech is extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". According to a report in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 2-4-1946, from which the opening sentence is reproduced, the meeting was held in the Valmiki Temple compound adjoining Gandhiji's residence in Harijan Colony. Among those present was Sir Stafford Cripps, who occupied a chair on the dais, and he accompanied Gandhiji to his room at the end of the prayers.

up. Indeed I feel embarassed by the amenities that have been provided here by Seth Birla for me and my party. My coming to stay here, I hope, is my first step, not the last. It is my constant prayer, and I look forward to the day, when I would actually go and stay in a Harijan hut and partake of the food they may provide me there. In the mean time, it gives me some satisfaction to be able to live in this dharmashala surrounded by Harijan dwellings on all sides.

How can I feel angry with them?[1] I can quite understand their pent up resentment at the way in which they have been treated by the so-called *Savarnas*. They might even want to wreak vengeance.

There is such a glaring contradiction between our profession and practice. They have a right to feel impatient. I can only plead with them to bear with the Hindu society. An age-old evil cannot be eradicated in a day, I know; it has to go or Hinduism must perish. In the mean time the least expiation that we can make is to share with the Harijans their disabilities and to deny ourselves the privilege which the latter cannot share. The present conditions under which they live should be intolerable even for a day to a decent-minded person. I pray for the time when the condition of life, as regards sanitation, cleanliness, etc., in Harijan quarters will be such that even a person like myself might he able to go and stay there without any compunction.

Gandhiji appealed that no one should come to the prayer gatherings merely for the sake of *darshan*. Only those should come who were earnnest about prayer.[2]

Harijan, 14-4-1946; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 2-4-1946

232. NOTE TO MANIBEHN PATEL

VALMIKI MANDIR, NEW DELHI,
[After *April 1, 1946*][3]

The job of making copies was estrusted to Kanu. I had only asked you to get one made by him. Since you have made the copy, I shall approve it and forward it. But there is a defect in it. There must

[1] Pyarelal explains that Gandhiji was referring to "a hostile demonstration which a certain section of the Harijan had tried to stage on his arrival".

[2] According to Pyarelal, however, "the crowd continued to swell daily" and the venue of prayer meeting "had soon to be shifted to the spacious maidan outside Ajmeri Gate".

[3] The source has "After 1945", but Gandhiji was in Valmiki Mandir, New Delhi, from April 1, 1946.

always be a margin. If you observe the letters that we daily received, you will see that every well-written letter has a margin. You need not make another copy now. This is only for future guidance. I have merely drawn your attention to it.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 148

233. INTERVIEW TO SOUTH AFRICAN DELEGATION[1]

DELHI,
[After *April 1, 1946*][2]

Gandhiji remarked on the presence of divisions among them. They admitted divisions but argued that they were there even in Gandhiji's time.

GANDHIJI: The difference between then and now is this: that in those days the black-legs became isolated after a time, and it was possible to hold monster meetings everywhere. Parsi Rustomji went among the indentured labourers and, in the final struggle, they rose like one man. Repeat that history today, and you will win. Do not repeat it, and you will fail. Do you command the sympathy and support of all the interests? Will the mercantile community back you?

SORABJI: The mercantile community was not with us even then.

But we had Cachalia[3] . If you have one Cachalia amongst you, the whole of the merchantile community will be covered.

S. Suppose no merchant comes forward. Is not a struggle possible then?

G. It will then take a different turn and in the end the mercantile community will be swept out of existence.

A MEMBER: We are a difficult community at times.

ANOTHER MEMBER: And quarrelsome too.

G. I know, I know. The South Africa of today is not far different from the South Africa that I have known. In the first article

[1] This appeared under the title "With the South African Delegation". by Pyarelal, who explain that the deputationists headed by Sorabji Rustomji, son of Parsi Rustomji who was a leading merchant of Natal and close associate of Gandhiji, "sought Gandhiji's advice for the starting of successful satyagraha".

[2] Accroding to Pyarelal, the delegation met Gandhiji in Harijan Colony where he arrived on April 1, 1946.

[3] A. M. Cachalia

I wrote for the *Indian Opinion* I said that if after all there was one true man in South Africa, he will cover all. He will build up the whole structure from within. 'Amidst a whole heap of bad coins', I wrote, 'If there is one true sovereign, the heap will be worth that one sovereign and no more.' If you produce one civil resister of merit, he will pull things through. Do not start the struggle, therefore, unless you have that stuff. Manage to exist you will anyhow. But that should not satisfy you. You have to live as a self-respecting community with an equal status. Indians have to make good that position by showing the real stuff.

The discussion then turned on the strategy of the proposed satyagraha. Gandhiji was definitely opposed to sitting in prohibited seats in trains and railway carriages by way of satyaraha. Satyagraha should be on a clear, unequivocal and impersonal issue and capable of taking thousands in its fold. . . .

Gandhiji mentioned how he had refused to send a measage for a meeting of the West Africa Federation that was held some time back in London, because they conceived of a struggle after the way of Europe. He added:

Probably theirs is not the way of non-violence. One day the black races will rise like the avenging Attila against their white oppressors, unless someone presents to them the wepon of satyagraha.

A MEMBER: You have said, we should associate with Zulus and Bantus. Does it not mean joining them in a common anti-white front?

GANDHIJI: Yes, I have said that we should associate with Zulus, Bantus, etc. It means that you take them under your wing when you have developed that power of non-violence. It will be good, if you fire them with the spirit of non-violence. You will be their saviour. But if you allow yourselves to be overwhelmed and swept off your feet, it will be their and your ruin. Their slogan today is no longer merely 'Asia for the Asiatics' or 'Africa for the Africans' but the unity of all the exploited races of the earth. On India rests the burden of pointing the way to all the exploited races. She won't be able to bear that burden today, if non-vio-lence does not permeate us more than [what it is] today. I have been try-ing to fit ourselves for that mission by giving a wider bend to our strug-gle. India will become a torch-bearer to the oppressed and exploited races, only if she can vindicate the principle of non-violence in her own case, not jettison it as soon as independence of foreign control is achieved.

ANOTHER MEMBER: Race consciousness is arising all over South Afria. We

Indians take advantage of the Bantus. We send our children to Native colleges. But we are ashamed to call ourselves Natives. They feel we are arrogant and aloof. We do not do enough to make an adequate return for what we have got from them. They are getting resentful and the white man encourages and promotes that feeling to widen the gulf.

G. It will be an evil day for you, if he succeeds. The trouble is that you are all worshippers of the golden calf.

Christopher: Having never seen it, how can we worship it?

G Worshipping is different from seeing. Don't we worship God without seeing Him?

The delegation then asked, if a leader could be sent from India to organize and lead them.

Gandhiji, in reply, told them that a leader would have to arise from among them. He hoped that they would throw up one in due time. He described to them how he had been arguing with his son Manilal to train up his children for the task. After they had finished their education in India, he hoped, they would go back and settle down in South Africa and serve the Indian comminity. Apropos the training that would equip South Africa born Indian children for service, he mentioned how he had refused to send his own children to Loveday and Fort Hare.

Harijan, 19-5-1946

234. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

VALMIKI MANDIR, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
April 2, 1946

DEAR LORD LAWRENCE,

Our mutual friend Sudhir Ghosh tells me[1] that you would like me to reduce to writing the points I told him to discuss informally with you and Sir Stafford.

One is universal among all independence-minded people, as distinguished from the dumb millions, whether Congressmen or other. It is the immediate release of *political* prisoners irrespective of the charge of violence or non-violence. They cannot be a danger to the State *now* that the necessity for independence has become common cause. It seems to be ridiculous to keep, say Shri Jayaprakash Narayan and Dr. Lohia, both learned and cultured men of whom any

[1] *Vide* footnote 2, "Letter to Sir Frederick Burrows", 22-3-1946

society would be proud, nor is there any occasion for treating any person as an underground worker. To leave the question of discharge for disposal by the incoming national government would be a step no one will understand or appreciate. Independence will lose its grace.

The other affects the masses. I refer to the salt tax. As a means of raising revenue, it is insignificant. As a means of harassing the masses, it is a measure of which the mischief is indescribable. The masses will hardly appreciate independence, if the burden of the salt monopoly continues to affect them. I must not weary you with argument. I mention the two measures as a preparation of the Indian mind for independence. They will produce a psychological effect.

I may mention that I discussed both the measures in a different setting with Mr. Casey[1] , and I am now in correspondence with the present Governor of Bengal. I may add that I have today heard from Mr. Abell in regard to the salt tax that "the Government do not find themselves able to accept the suggestion."[2]

Yours sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

THE RT. HON'BLE LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

NEW DELHI

Gandhiji Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 156-7

235. SELF-SUFFICIENCY v. *COMMERCIAL KHADI*[3]

We are ourselves responsible for the creation of this problem. We did not know the science of khadi. We do not know it fully even now. Therefore, like children, we stumble again and again and thereby learn to walk. In order that we may not fall so as never to rise again, we made use of a go-cart and are still using it. Having realized this, the A. I. S. A. has to make a tremendous effort to vindicate its existence or else be wiped out. By A. I. S. A. is meant all its workers and includes even the spinners. It must be borne in mind that to make the spinners self-reliant and through their activity to

[1] *Vide* "Letter to R. G. Casey", 5-1-1946, "Letter to R. G. Casey", 8-1-1946, "Letter to R. G. Casey", 16-1-1946

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Lord Wavell", 6-4-1946

[3] Originally written in Gujarati, this appeared as "from Harijanbandhu" published simultaneously with the source.

achieve India's freedom is, and ought to be, the Association's goal. That we may not reach that goal should not cause undue worry. It is enough for us to know that it is the correct goal and, having started the activity, we have to correct our mistakes and go forward. That is the essence of the scientific method. No science has dropped from the skies in a perfect form. All sciences develop and are built up through experience. Perfection is not an attribute of science. Absolute perfection is not possible either for man or for the science that he creates. For example, astronomy is continually progressing. Many mistakes have been made and corrected. The process still continues. The same may be said of the science of khadi.

If this is intelligently understood and fearlessly acted upon, replies to the questions presented from time to time become easy. The spinners must have full knowledege of all the processes from the beginning to the end, right up to weaving. In this lies the way to swaraj. Up till now, knowingly or unkowingly, we have been producing khadi solely for pur-poses of commerce. But this too has always been linked with the ideal of swaraj. Had it not been so, even commercial khadi would have failed, and most probably khadi for swaraj would have remained a mere dream.

Commercial khadi has been, and still is, our go-cart, so to speak. To the spinner to have her cotton carded by other has been, and still is, an additional prop. Only as we progressively give up these props, will we bring into being khadi for swaraj. Those branches where commmercial khadi is being produced and carding carried on as an independent activity should, if possible, be closed down. Life is, however, made up of compromises. Therefore let it be said that the props should be given up as quickly as possible. Those who have faith and knowledge will be the first to do so. Where sincere and earnest efforts are made, the question of competition should not arise.

One aspect of the present situation needs attention. Those who spin for their livelihood will willingly learn the news processes because thereby their earning capacity will increase. Today this section is diminishing because other and easier sources of income are open to them. For them it is not a moral question. They take what is easiest as, for example, collection of leaves for making *bidis*. It is our duty to impart true knowledge to them and help them up the steep road to swaraj and make them healthy and hardy in the process of climbing. If we cannot do this, we shall deservedly lose our existence. Theref-

ore we can only have dealings with the man or woman who spins with understanding.

Another thing that has to be remembered is that spinning is now one of the recognized avocations and will, therefore, continue.

So we need not worry about the production of commercial khadi. Whatever difficulties may arise from the above have to be overcome by the workers. To ask whether this or that comes within this framework is a sign of mental laziness and ignorance. He who cannot draw deductions cannot be said to know geometry. The same is true of all sciences.

NEW DELHI, April 3, 1946

Harijan, 14-4-1946

236. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

"VALMIKI MANDIR",
READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
April 3, 1946

MY DEAR PRAKASAM,

I have your letter. Most reluctantly I resume English in the hope that I will not be able to convince you that you are in error.

The whole question arose out of my discussion with your secretary, Shri Kala Venkatrao. I began a talk with him about you. I think I enquired how you were able to carry on your practice and also public work at the same time. He said you were not carrying on any practice nor conducting a newspaper but that you were living on purses presented to you by the public and added that he could see nothing wrong in it. This news left a bad taste in my mouth. This was the genesis of our correspondence. I think that it is an extremely bad example. If it is multiplied, purity of public life will come to an end. I can understand a public fund for the maintenance of public servants such, or instance, as was raised by the late Jamnalalji for lawyers who had given up practice in the heyday of non-co-operation. The nucleus of this fund exists even now and some workers are being supported out of it. Mahilashram is being conducted in Wardha for the education of the families of the late Jamnalalji's friends who had become servants of the public, relying for their maintenance upon Jamnalalji. Some of them even go so far as to collect public funds

which they hand over to the public work for which they may have been collected. Of this they render a full account and keep nothing for themselves. But I have never heard of a single instance in which what you say has been done or can be defended. All the papers that you have sent to the Sardar and are now sending to me simply show how in my opinion you have been instrumental, however unwittingly, in, as I would put it, corrupting public life. I do not know that evidence you will put before me to convince me to the contrary. It does not require conviction of friends who doubt the wisdom of the course adopted by you. But it requires peremptory correction of your thought and practice and retracing, so far as possible, what has been done.

I advise your publication of all your doings from the very beginning. It will be good for you and good for the public and the cause you and I stand for. Finally, I would go so far as to suggest that you should, if you do not accept my reasoning, obtain a ruling from the Working Committee. The matter is too dangerous to be left undecided.

I am sending a copy of this to the Sardar.

Yours,

BAPU

SHRI T. PRAKASAM
MADRAS

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

237. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

NEW DELHI,
April 3, 1946

CHI. NARAHARI,

I return herewith Chunilal's letter and your draft reply. I have written an article[1] based on them. But I see no harm in your reply. You may, therefore, send it to Chunibhai. But I do not wish that you should publish it in *Khadi Jaga*. You should elaborate further my line of reasoning. If, however, you yourself feel that Chunibhai's letter and your reply ought to be published, by all means publish them. I do not like them because I smell in them an attitude of

[1] *Vide* the preceding items.

dependence* on others. Instead of silent workers seeking one another's guidence even in theoretical matters, it is better that they make mistakes and learn from them.

A copy of the article is enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

*By 'dependence' he here understand intellectual dependence.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9140

238. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

April 3, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Your letter is bad. You should not spend a sleepless night to write such a letter in the morning. What can you have to do with Qutub Minar or the Assembly Hall? What is there to be seen in them? What a change from Sevagram to Assembly Hall? You may, of course, visit any place you like. I am only stating my own view.

If you wish to stay with me, you should bear with me and accept me as I am. I have not kept you chained. I do not look upon you as a child, but you behave like one. Stop writing and stop discussing and go on silently doing work and nothing but work and that in a spirit of service or *yajna*. So many things are waiting to be done and you are tempted to go and see idle shows. Inspect the houses of Harijans, meet all residents of Harijan localities, do carding, *punai*[1] , *tunai*[2], spinning, weaving, go through the language editions of Harijan and correct the mistakes in them, improve your Urdu, teach Abha, Gita, Prabha, etc., improve your temper, learn the Gita and master Sanskrit. He who wants to serve will find no lack of jobs. Now do as the good Lord prompts you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8394. Also C.W. 7211. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Methods of carding without the help of a carding-bow

[2] *ibid.*

239. A NOTE

NEW DELHI,
April 3, 1946

I love all activities connected with village industries, but I have learnt from experience that the primary aim of such exhibitions should be educative, and at present it is necessary to draw special attention to such problems as to how the villagers may produce and consume their own khadi and what foodstuff they may produce in their villages for their own consumption.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy Pyarelal

240. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, NEW DELHI[1]

April 3, 1946

Gandhiji dwelt at length on the potency of mass prayers. He said, it gave him immense pleasure to see large multitudes of people joining mass prayers, which, he added, created strength among the people. He paid a tribute to the people of Assam, who, if their thousands, joined in the music at his daily prayers and responded to the rhythm of the *Ramdhun*. Gandhiji thought that the Assamese had a natural gift for understanding the meaning of the *Ramdhun*.

Giving his concept of Rama, Gandhiji said that the Rama to whom his prayers were addressed was not the Rama described in history as the son of Dasaratha. He emphasizd that Rama, Allah and God are the same. The word Rama attracted millions of Hindus, and Allah attracted the Muslims. He invited the people belonging to all faiths to join his prayers.

He congratulated the huge gathering on maintaining pin-drop silence throughout the prayers.

Referring to the talks[2] he and the other leader were having with the Cabinet Mission, Mahatmaji said:

If you are anxious to contribute towards the success of these talks, I have a suggestion for you.We have been under foreign domination for many years. You must all pray to God to deliver us from political bondage. God alone can help us. Nobody else can help, neither you nor Englishmen. Let us pray to God guide our talks

[1] Held on Ramalila Grounds

[2] For a note on the interview, *vide* "Note on Interview to Cabinet Mission", 3-4-1946

and grant wisdom to all those participating in them, including the members of the Mission for carrying the talks to a successful termination. It is essential at this stage to invoke the help of God. We want the attainment of freedom by peaceful means. God will be our guide and witness in our efforts towards that end.

It is unmanly to disbelieve the Cabinet Mission. We must believe that the Mission has come in good faith. They will not betray us. May God give them and us wisdom, and may He be with us in this important task.[1]

The Hindustan Times, 4-4-1946

241. ADVICE TO BHANGIS[2]

NEW DELHI,
April 3, 1946

Gandhiji said that it would be better, if the money they wanted to spend on entertaining him were spent on educating a Harijan child. He appealed to Harijans to eradicate the evils of wine, gambling and prostitution. He said that they should be Bhangis like him. Defining the term Bhangis he said, it meant a well-wisher of all.

I shall consider my stay among you amply rewarded, if you give up these vices. I have enjoyed your hospitality. You can offer me goat's milk. But I will pay for it. If you are keen that I should take food prepared by you, you can come here and cook for me. My real aim in staying here is to probe into your real needs.

The Hindustan Times, 5-4-1946

[1] The report concluded that, after the meeting, when people rushed to see Gandhiji, one of the volunteers was lightly injured. "I was with great difficulty that Gandhiji could get into his car." *Vide* also "Speech at Prayer Meeting, New Delhi", 4-3-1946 "Advice to People", 4-4-1946 and "What is in a Name", 14-4-1946

[2] According to the report, residents of Bhangi Colony met Gandhiji after evening prayers and "invited him to have a meal with them".

242. ADVICE TO PEOPLE[1]

NEW DELHI,
April 4, 1946

Gandhiji asked the people to maintain complete silence. He said:

The business which had brought me to Delhi is an important one, and people should allow me to work in peace. By collecting here in this manner you interfere with my work. If you want, you can see me at the evening prayers. I know that you do all this out of sheer love for me. But even love, if misplaced, does more harm than good. Consider the happenings of yesterday.[2] While I was going towards my car, after the evening prayers, people went out of control and a volunteer was injured. Such incidents should not recur.

In the end, I appeal to you to pray to God that India may win real freedom. Neither those who have come here nor anybody from among us can deceive Him.

[From Hindi]

Hindustani, 5-4-1946

243. QUESTION BOX[3]

Q. God is a creation of man's imagination. It is not God who has created man but man who has created God. Is this not true?

A. I have taken this from a correspondent's [long][4] letter. There is a semblance to truth in what he says. The writer has, however, unwittingly created the illusion by a play upon the two words 'creation' and 'God'.

God Himself is both the Law and the Law-giver. The question of anyone creating Him, thereofore, does not arise, least of all by an insignificant creature such as man. Man can build a dam, but he canntot create a river. He can manufacture a chair, but it is beyond

[1] According to the report, when Gandhiji returned after his morning walk at 7 a. m., he saw a noisy crowd waiting for him outside the Valmiki Temple.

[2] *Vide* footnote 1, "Speech at Prayer Meeting, New Delhi", 3-4-1946 also "Speech at Prayer Meeting, New Delhi", 4-4-1946

[3] Originally written in Gujarati, this appeared as "from Harijanbandhu" published simultaneously with the source.

[4] From the Gujarati version

him to make the wood. He can, however, picture God in his mind in many ways. But how can man who is unable to create even a river or wood create God? That God has created man is, therefore, the pure truth. The contrary is an illusion. However anyone may, if he likes, say that God is neither the doer nor the cause. Either is predicable of Him.

NEW DELHI, April 4, 1946

Harijan, 14-4-946

244. KASTURBA LEPROSY WORK

This work has been going on under Prof. T. N. Jagadisan's supervision since May 19, 1945. He has produced a short summary of the work done from to day. Dr. T. S. S. Rajan is the chairman of the committee specially formed for this work. Dr. V. P. Ramaswami has specially trained himself for the work under Dr. R. G. Conhrane. He is doing out-patient work as well as conducting surveys of villages.

The first survey in Kandachipuram schools of 655 children revealed that apart from leprosy there was a high incidence of scabies and guinea worm. Over 100 children have to be followed up and 30-40 treated for leprosy. In Madavilagam village, 18 definite case of leprosy have been discovered out of 539 inhabitants. Four of thes are infective, and fourteen neural. Infection is spread by indiscriminate contact of infective cases with children.

In Adukkam village, 15 cases have found out of a population of 323. Five of these are infective. Two other places have 29 and 15 definite cases respectively of which 9 are lepromatons.

Dr. Ramaswami has also surveyed five more villages and has so far detected 300 cases out of which 157 only, being women or children under seven years, can benefit from the Trust.

Prof. T. N. Jagadisan's summary points out that poor men patients though in need of attention cannot get the benefit of the funds. This defect cannot be removed by any departure from the terms of the Trust, but the professor can easily raise a small fund locally and bring them within the scope of his work.

NEW DELHI, April 4, 1946

Harijan, 14-4-1946

245. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

NEW DELHI,
April 4, 1946

Many foreign and local newspaper reporters have been good enough to come to me to ask questions on the topic of the day. A newspaper man myself, I can sympathize with their desire. But they should sympathize and co-operate with me in the delicate mission of adviser to the Cabinet Mission when I tell them that I cannot be advising and broadcasting to the world on the matters covered by my advice. Such a course is calculated to defeat the purpose in view. Anyway these friends will attribute my silence not to any discourtesy on my part but to my desire for successful termination of the labours of the Cabinate Mission.

The Hindustan Times, 5-4-1946

246. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, NEW DELHI[1]

April 4, 1946

Gandhiji said, though his prayers contained selected verses from different religions, their purport remains the same. He wanted people to come to the prayers with calm and peaceful mind and participate in *Ramdhun*. Thanking the people for maintaining silence, Gandhiji said that the Sanskrit solakas that were recited in the prayer had been culled from those chapters of the *Gita* [2] in which Lord Krishna lays down before Arjuna the characterstics of a *sthitaprajna*. [Gandhiji continued.]

If swaraj is to be won through the non-violent strength of the millions, they must in some measure develop in them the qualities of a *sthitapajna* or the man of steady wisdom.

The ideal is not meant for *jnanis* [3] only; it is for all, even ordinary lay people. Lord Krishna himself is depicted in the Mahabharata as a charioteer actually driving a team of white horses while his pupil Arjuna, to whom the *Gita* discourses are addressed is pictured as being plebian in his mental make-up and outlook. What

[1] The speech is extracted from Pyarelal's "Prayer Discourses" in Harijan. The opening paragraph is form *The Hindustan Times.*

[2] II. 58

[3] Men of knowledge

then are the characteristics of a *sthitaprajna?* He is one who withdraw his senses from the objects of the senses behind the shield of the spirit, as a tortoise does its limbs under its shell. A man whose wisdom is not steady is liable to be betrayed into anger, evil thoughts or abuse. On the contrary, the man with the steady wisdom will remain equally unaffected by adulation or abuse. He will realize that abuse fouls only the tongue that utters it, never the person against whom it is hurled. A man of steady wisdom will, therefore, never wish ill to anyone, but will pray even for his enemy with his last breath.

Is it too difficult an ideal to follow? No. On the contrary, the conduct laid down in it is the only conduct worthy of the dignity of human beings.

Today our minds are clouded by delusion. In our ignorance, we quarrel with one another and indulge in rowdyism against our own brethren. For such as these there is neither salvation nor swaraj. Self-discipline or rule over self is the first condition for self-rule or swaraj.

All might find it difficult to correctly recite the *Gita* verses which are in Sanskrit. But all can take part in the singing of *Ramdhun*. The mass singing of *Ramdhun* to the accompaniment of *tala* is prayer reduced to its simplest terms.

'But how can non-Hindus take part in it? The question was once raised.

I laugh within myself, when someone objects that Rama or the chanting of Ramanama is for the Hindus only, [and asks] how can Mussalmans, therefore, take part in it. Is there one God for the Mussalmans and another for the Hindus, Parsis or Christians? No, there is only one omnipotent and omnipresent God. He is named variously, and we remember Him by the name which is most familiar to us.

My Rama, the Rama of our prayers, is not the historical Rama, the son of Dasaratha, the King of Ayodhya. He is the eternal, the unborn, the one without a second. Him alone I worship, His aid alone I seek, and so should you. He belongs equally to all. I, therefore, see no reason why a Mussalman or anybody should object to taking His name. But he is in no way bound to recognize God as Ramanama. He may utter to himself Allah or Khuda so as not to mar the harmony of the sound.

Gandhiji strongly deprecated the wastage of food on marriages and other ceremonial occasions, and said that those who indulged in such extravagant habits

were the enemies of the people and unfit even to pray.[1]

Tracing the cause of famine and the other national calamities that occur in our day-to-day life as due to our past sins, Gandhiji added that if people did not commit sins, there would be no famine even if there were no rains. He emphasized the importance of morning prayer. Referring to day-before-yesterday's incident[2] Mahatmaji said:

There was orderliness until I came. But such arrangement ought to have continued till I left the place. All of a sudden people rushed towards us with the result I was also slightly injured. It was my own fault as the injury was caused by my *chappals*. But an innocent volunteer was badly injured. In future, nobody should get up till I leave this place. People should give up the habit of touching other's feet. They should not swarm towards us. After all we are not monkeys, we are human beings.

Harijan, 28-4-1946; also *Hindustan*, 5-4-1946, and *The Hindustan Times*, 5-4-1946

247. WHAT IS IN A NAME?

Q. From the psychological point of view, I think, the name 'Harijan' instills into the minds of the people to whom it is applied a feeling of inferiority, however sacred that name may be. This feeling is very difficult to wipe out from them—to whatever extent they are advanced—if they are always called 'Harijan'. Similarly if a man in the street is asked about a 'Harijan', the first thing he will speak of is 'untouchability and the Depressed Class'. Would it not be possible to save the 'Harijan' from involuntarily acquiring such an inferiority feeling, and other people from thinking about them without the 'qualification' usually ascribed to them? Would it not be preferable to choose a name which could also bring in its fold people from other sects?

A. This subject was years ago dealt with in the pages of *Young India*. The name 'Harijan' has sacred associations. It was suggested by a Harijan as a substitute for *Asprishya* (untouchable), *Dalita* (depressed), or for the different categories of 'untouchables' such as Bhangis, Mehtars, Chamars, Pariahs, etc.[3] The Government

[1] This paragraph is form *The Hindustan Times*, and that which follows is translated from *Hindustan*.

[2] *Vide* footnote 1, "Advice to Bhangls", 3-4-1946

[3] *Vide* "My Notes", Sub-title The Bengal Murder"

officers put them in a schedule and, therefore, called them the Scheduled Classes, thus making confusion worse confounded. Those who were not untouchables were classed among the Scheduled and the ones who could be so called were excluded. We have now arrived at a stage, thanks to the Government policy, when to be included among the Scheduled Classes is to be coveted. The Government have created a separate electorate agitating for seats in all elective institutions. I do not mind such ambition, if it carries honest merit with it. But it becomes positively mischievous, when seats are coveted irrespective of merit. The wish to be so educated as to be qualified for the highest post is to be appreciated and encouraged, the wish to be appointed to such a post on the basis of belonging to a caste or a class is essentially to be deprecated and discouraged.

The real remedy has been suggested by me. The feeling of inferiority must go. It is going, but too slowly. The process can be accelerated, if every Hindu would deliberately shed his superiority and in practice become a Harijan or, if you like, a master, the lowest class among Harijans. Then we all will become true children of God as the word 'Harijan' means. Until this is done, no matter which word signifies 'untouchables', it will smell of inferiority. The process has to be carried out thoroughly in every walk of life till the last trace of untouchability is removed. When that happy day arrives, every quarter will be a Harijan quarter and cleanliness of the heart and the home will be the order of the day.

NEW DELHI, April 5, 1946

Harijan, 14-4-1946

248. WHAT IS THE LAW?

'Confused' writes :

> I grant that Italy, Germany and Japan have lost their power; but is the loss due to their faith in violence, as you would say[1], or is it due to their exhaustion brought about by fortunes of war? Will you hold that Britain, Russia and America have been successful because of their non-violence?

Thus argues a correspondent whom I have paraphrased without diminishing the force of his argument. The questioner has failed to perceive that in the writing quoted by him, I have said nothing about

[1] *Vide* "Extract from Talk With A Friend", 3-3-1946

the so-called victorious Powers. But I have said elsewhere that their victory is an empty boast, if they do not learn the lesson while there is time and do not shape their life in accordance with the law of non-violence. I believe wholly in the truth that "those who take the sword will perish by the sword". There is no doubt that the victors employed the same means as the vanquished. There was only a question of degree. The victorious parties already seem to be on the verge of quarrelling among themselves. If another war has not already begun, it is because no one is ready to enter upon it. After all men are not machines. They cannot be continually fighting without being reduced to the state of beasts. One has to hope, for the sake of humanity, that they will do some hard thinking and discover the truth that the common man, of whom the world is composed, gains nothing by cutting his fellowman's throat and that the fruits of peace are infinitely superior to those of war. Ingenuity employed in devising methods of destruction lowers, whereas when employed in devising ways of building it befits mankind.

NEW DELHI, April 5, 1946

Harijan, 14-4-1946

249. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

CAMP, NEW DELHI,
April 5, 1946

DEAR LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE,

I have your kind and considerate letter.[1] I note what you say. As it has turned out, I am here till 16th instant at least. Maulana Saheb wants me till then.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 180

250. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPS

HARIJAN MANDIR,
April 5, 1946

DEAR SIR STAFFORD,

Many thanks for your affectionate letter[2]. Sudhir has given me

[1] Which, *inter alia*, read : "When you and I met at my bungalow on Monday last, and again at the office on Wednesday, you were. . . prepared to have a personal talk with Mr. Jinnah. . . . But . . . the position has not yet sufficiently clarified . . . that a meeting between you now would result in any substantial agreement. I feel that I should commuicate this view to you without delay as it may affect your plans, and I could not ask you to stay in Delhi idefinitely."

In *Gandhiji's Emissary*, "The Lesson of Mudurai", 10--1946, Sudhir Ghosh explains that on seeing the letter from the addressee, he "felt that the Secretary of State had not understood the value of keeping Gandhiji in Delhi". He, therefore, met Sir Stafford Cripps and "urged him to do everything in his power" to make Gandhiji stay in Delhi, which he at once did in letter of even date which read : "I hear that there is a chance of your extending your stay here and I very earnestly ask you to do so. We have still a number of interviews with separate interests and sections to carry out before we can come to the closer negotiations with the principal parties interested. This is, therefore, a time of formulation of possibilities, and I know how valuable your influence will be upon persons of all kinds who seek your advice. As soon as the closer negotiations start, I am sure we too shall want to seek that advice, and we should indeed most sadly miss your help, if you were to leave. It is not I, but India that needs you in New Delhi. Please stay."

[2] *Vide* footnote on "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 5-4-1946

your message too. I am here at least till 16th instant at Maulana Saheb's behest.[1]

Yours sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 181

251. NOTE TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

[*April 5, 1946*][2]

This[4] will not suit you. One must never pretend; but do come, if you feel like coming.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro 2— : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 305

252. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, NEW DELHI[3]

April 5, 1946

So far, Mahatma Gandhi said, he had refrained from saying anything regarding I. N. A. men, either from platform or in the Press. This did not mean that he had no regard or love for them. He was always conscious of their sacrifices and all that Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose did was for the freedom of India. Ever since his visit to the I. N. A. men in Delhi Cantonment yesterday, his love for them had increased all the more, he said, and added that they responded to his love with greater love and affection Mahatma Gandhi declared :

Let me share with you the thoughts that have been crowding in

[1] In *Gandhi's Emissary*, "Nature Cure Clinic", 10-2-1946, Sudhir Ghosh says: "I not only delivered this note of warm friendliness to Cripps but brought back another friendly little note from him to Gandhiji to say : 'I am so very glad to hear that you are staying on. The long list of your callers shows how much you are appreciated by us all!' "

[2] The note is written below the one of even date from Agatha Harrison to the addresssee inviting him for silent get-together. In *Gandhi's Emissary*, "Nature Cure Clinic", 10-2-1946 Sudhir Ghosh explains : "Good old Agatha, who was everybody's mother, organised a Sunday-morning Quaker Worship meeting in New Delhi, sometimes on a little hall of the Modern School of Barakhamba Road and sometimes in a ground-floor room in the Y. W. C. A. on Asoka Road where Agatha was staying." In *Harijan*, 28-4-1946, Pyarelal says in "Communion of Silence" that Gandhiji "has been attending the Sunday silent prayer meeting every Sunday since his arrival" in New Delhi. *Vide* also "Speech at Prayer Meeting, New Delhi", 7-4-1946

[3] In *Harijan*, the speech appeared under the title "Message of the I. N. A." by Pyarelal. The opeining paragraph is from *The Bombay Chronicle Weekly*.

my mind since yesterday. India has accorded to the released I. N. A. men a right royal welcome. They have been acclaimed as national heroes. Everybody seems to have been swept off his feel before the rising tide of popular sentiment. I must, however, frankly confess to you that I do not share this indiscriminate hero worship. I admire the ability, sacrifice and partriotism of the I. N. A. and Netaji Bose. But I cannot subscribe to the method which they adopted and which is incompatible with the one followed by the Congress for the last twenty-five years for the attainment of independence. Yesterday I spoke[1] to you of a *sthitaprajna*, i.e., "the man of steady wisdom", i. e., a satyagrahi. If we accept that ideal, we would not regard anybody as our enemy; we must shed all enmity and ill will. That ideal is not meant for the select few—the saint or the seer only—it is meant for all. I have descri-bed myself as a scavenger, having become one, not only in name but in fact, while I was in Phoenix. It was there that I took up the bucket and the broom, impelled by the inner urge to identify myself with the lowest of the low. As a humble fellow-toiler then let me bear witness that anyone, even a simple-minded villager who wants to, and tries, can attain the state of mental equipoise described in the *Gita* verses which are recited at the prayer. We all lose our sanity at times, though we in peace. It is a higher and more difficult work. We have to die performing our duty and without killing. For that we shall need to cultivate the attributes of a *sthitaprajna* as set forth in the *Gita*.

Far more potent than the strength of the sword is the strength of satyagraha. I said so to the I.N.A. men and they were happy to tell me, as I was to hear, that they had realized this and would hereafter strive to serve India as true soldiers of non-violence under the Congress flag.

NEW DELHI, April 8, 1946.

Harijan, 14-4-1946; also *The Bombay Chronicle Weekly*, 7-4-1946

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting, New Delhi", 4-4-1946

253. LET US PRAY

There is little doubt that India is about to reach her cherished goal of political independence. Let the entrance be prayerful. Prayer is not an old woman's idle amusement. Properly understood and applied, it is the most potent instrument of action.

Let us then pray and find out what we have meant by non-violence, and how we shall retain the freedom gained by its use. If our non-violence is of the weak, it follows that we shall never be able, by such non-violence,, to retain freedom. But it follows also that we shall not, for some length of time, at any rate, be able to defend ourselves by force of arms, if only because we have neither them nor the knowledge of their use. We have not even the requisite discipline. The result is that we shall have to rely upon another nation's help, not as equals but as pupils upon their teachers, if the word 'inferiors' jars upon our ears.

Hence there is nothing but non-violence to fall back upon for retaining our freedom even as we had to do for gaining it. This means exercise of non-violence against all those who call themselves our opponents. This should not mean much for a man who has used himself to non-violence for nearly three decades. It is summed up in "die for your honour and freedom" instead of "kill if necessary and be killed in the act". What does a brave soldier do ? He kills only if necessary and risks his life in the act. Non-violence demands greater courage and sacrifice. Why should it be comparatiely easy for a man to risk death in the act of a killing and almost super human for him to do so in the act of sparing life? It seems to be gross self-deception to think that we can risk death, if we learn and practice the art of killing, but cannot do so otherwise. But for the hypnotism induced by the repetition of an untruth we should not grossly deceive ourselves.

But the critic or the scoffer will ask, why bring in prayer if the matter is so simple as you put it. The answer is that prayer is the first and the last lesson in learning the noble and brave art of sacrificing self in the various walks of life culminating in the defence of one's nation's liberty and honour.

Undoubtedly prayer requires a living faith in God. Successful satyagraha is inconceivable without that faith. God may be called by

any other name so long as it connotes the living Law of Life—in other words, the Law and the Law-giver rolled into one.

NEW DELHI, April 6, 1946

Harijan, 14-4-1946

254. NOTES

EATING WITH HARIJANS[1]

Q. How can a vegetarian caste Hindu sit down to food in the home of a meat-eating Harijan ?

A. A vegetarian caste Hindu can eat vegetarian food in the home of a meat-eating Harijan. Inter-dining does not imply that one should eat everything that is put before one. All that is necessary is that the food, the plates on which it is served, and the hands that have cooked it should be clean. The same applies to water. Nor does inter-dining mean that people should eat out of the same plate or drink out of the same glass. There should be no breach of hygiene.

RAMANAMA

Q. Is it not enough to have Ramanama in one's heart, or is there something special in its recitation ?

A. I believe there is special merit in the recitation of Ramanama. If anyone knows that God is in truth residing in his heart, I admit that for him there is no need for recitation. But I have not known such a person. On the contrary, my personal experience tells me that there is something quite extraordinary in the recitation of Ramanama. Why or how is not necessary to know.

MINISTERIAL SALARIES

Ministers and members of the provincial assemblies are in their respective places as servants of the people in every sense of the term. The British scale of pay cannot be copied by them except at their cost. Nor need all draw payments because a certain scale is allowed. The scale fixes the limit up to which they may draw. It will be ludicrous for a monied man to draw the full or any payment. The payments are meant for those who cannot easily afford to render free

[1] Originally written in Hindi, this and the following note appeared as "from *Harijan Sevak*" published simultaneously with the source.

service. They are representatives of the poorest people in the world. What they draw is paid by the poor. Let them remember this salient fact, and act and live accordingly.

NEW DELHI, April 6, 1946

Harijan, 14-4-1946

255. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

VALMIKI MANDIR, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
April 6, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I write this about two things that I discussed before the Cabinet Delegation on the 3rd instant.

Sir Archibald Rowlands[1] was with me last night in order to have a talk with me about the salt tax. At the conclusion of our talk he was frank enough to tell me that, had he met me three months ago, the tax would have been abolished.[2] I omit the rest of our important conversation in order to make my letter as brief as possible. Regard being had to the admission, I sent to Sir Archibald Rowlands Shri Sudhir Ghosh, whom he knows well, to have further talks with him. He now contemplates abolition within three months or so. I know that nothing can be done by a single official, however strong or able he may be, unless he is supported by his superiors. And so I invoke your assistance in this humanitarian work. But more even than that is the consideration that I put before the Cabinet Delegation, viz., that independence should be ushered in with the greatest good grace which the poorest villager in the remotest village can at once realize. More of this you can glean from Sudhir Babu, if you feel inclined

[1] Finance Member, Viceroy's Executive Council

[2] Pyarelal explains : "In the course of their conversation, Sir Archibald Rowlands, while admitting to Gandhiji that he had been converted to the proposition for the abolition of the salt tax, seemed to favour the retention of the salt monopoly by the Government even after the salt tax was abolished. Gandhiji felt that this would largely defeat the end in view. In compliance with Sir Archibald's request, he sent him [on April 25] a draft of a proclamation announcing the termination of the levying of the salt tax and a note on the proposed proclamation."

and can spare the time. He is carrying this note.[1]

About prisoners, I will not say anything as I understand that their release is imminent.[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY

Gandhiji's Corresponence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 157-8

256. LETTER TO VAIKUNTHLAL L. MEHTA

HARIJAN MANDIR,
April 6, 1946

BHAI VAIKUNTH,

I have your note. Balasaheb[3] also saw me. Join the [Bombay] Ministry for the sake of service. If you can afford to forgo the salary, you may not accept it. Do what you think best.[4]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 1366

[1] In *Gandhiji's Emissary*, "Letter to M. R. Jayakar", 13-2-1946, describing the Viceroy's silence in response to his appeal, Sudhir Ghosh says: "It was a rather disconcerting experience. I did not know whether I had succeeded or failed to make an impression on the Viceroy's mind. Feeling somewhat uneasy, I went back to Gandhiji to report . . . whereupon Gandhiji decided that he himself had better go and see the Viceroy. . . " *Vide* "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 8-4-1946

[2] According to *The Transfer of Power*, "Letter to Private Secretary to General Smuts", 15-8-1907, the addressee who forwarded this letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence, said: ". . . I have acertained that it is correct that Rowlands saw him and, without any consultation with myself or his colleagues, agreed that the Salt Tax could be abolished. I think you will like to know this. I make no comment at the moment on the conduct of my Finance Member, but should like to discuss the matter with the Delegation tomorrrow morning, since this is one of the questions which Gandhiji raised with them."

[3] B. G. Kher, Premier, Bombay

[4] The addressee joined as Minister for Finance, Co-operation and Village Industries.

257. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, NEW DELHI[1]

April 6, 1946

Twenty-seven years ago when the late Swami Shraddhanandji[2] was alive, satyagraha against the Rowlatt Act was inaugurated on this day. History was made the following week. For the first time the entire masses of India from one end to the other rose like one man. It was an entirely spontaneous demonstration.[3] I had myself not imagined that its outcome could be so miraculous. I could feel God's hand in this miracle.

That was the time when Hindus and Muslims for the time forgot all their difference. The Ali Brothers[4] and I used to go all over the country together like blood-brothers. We spoke with one voice and delivered the message of Hindu-Muslim unity and swaraj to the masses. We resolved that thereafter we should address our prayers to God alone, instead of the British Government, and so satyagraha was born in India after it was first initiated in South Africa. On April 13, unarmed civilians were subjected to firing. The Ali brothers readily fell in with the programme of a national day of fasting and prayer. People fasted on the 6th and 13th of April. They realized that they were all children of the one God, destined to live together and die together in the land of their birth, which was India. They asemebled together in their thousands and offered prayers in temples, churches and mosques. The climax was reached when in Delhi a monster gathering, consisting of both Hindus and Mussalman, was held in the Juma Mosque and was addressed by the late Swami Shraddhanand. It was a glorious day in India's histroy, the memory of which we shall always treasure.

But the situation has changed today. We have gone wrong

[1] Gandhiji spoke in Hindustani. The *Harijan* report, which appeared under the title "The Sacred Week" by Pyarelal, has been collated with the Hindi version in *Harijan Sevak* published simultaneously with the source.

[2] Munshiram Manekchand (1856-1926), known as Mahatma Munshiram before he became a sannyasi; as member of Aryasamaj, he took active part in public activities in Delhi and the Punab; was assassinated on December 24, 1926.

[3] The following two sentences are translated from *Harijan Sevak*.

[4] Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali. The rest of this sentence and the one that follows are translated from *Harijan Sevak*.

somewhere. The hearts of Hindus and Muslims are sundered. The air is poisoned with communal bitternes and rancour. A section of the Muslims has begun to claim that they are a separate nation. This, however, is not the time to go into the reason for it. I confess that it baffles my understanding.

Since then we commence our proceedings as today,with prayer[1]. If we believe in prayer, we cannot fly at one another's throat, or regard anybody as our enemy. At Amritsar people lost their heads. But we promptly confessed our mistake and made expiation for it by fasting and praying to God for foregiveness. To err is human. By confessing we convert our mistakes into stepping stones for advance. On the contrary, a person who tries to hide his mistake becomes a living fraud and sinks down. Man is neither brute nor God but a creature of God striving to realize his divinity. Repentance and self-purification are the means. The moment we repent and ask God for forgiveness for our lapse, we purged of our sin and new life begins for us. True repentance is an essential prerequisite of prayer.

Prayer is not mere lip-service. It must express itself through action. How shall we then pray during the Sacred Week? We can pray by purging our hearts of any taint of communal hatred and ill will that might be lurking there and invoking God's aid for the same. Achievement of communal harmony would thus be one form of prayer. Then we can pray by doing sacrificial spinning for the attainment of non-violent swaraj. I have a vivid recollection of how in 1919 every home in the Punjab hummed with the music of the spinning-wheel. A mountain of yarn was presented to me on one occasion during my tour, which was never equalled before, nor has it been since, except recently at Madura during my Madras tour. What are the sisters of the Punjab doing today? That is the question which you must ask yourselves during this week of introspection. If the four hundred millions of India took spinning in earnest, and span for sacrifice, i. e., not for self, with the name of God in their hearts and with common purpose of winning India's freedom through non-violence, their united effort would not only bring us freedom assuredly, but also provide us the means for safeguarding it after it is won, and enable us to point the way out of darkness to the whole world.

[1] This sentence and the paragraph that precedes are translated from *Harijan Sevak*.

The other day I was talking[1] to the I. N. A. men in the Red Fort. We were discussing as to what they should do on their release. They assured me that they would, on their release, serve India as true soldiers of non-violence under the Congress flag. I told them that today a true soldier of India is he who spins to clothe the naked, and tills the soil to grow more food to meet the threatening food crisis. The Congress has declared that she would carry on the struggle for India's independence through the method of non-violence. But she has not yet decided whether she would adhere to that method for the protection of that freedom against possible foreign aggression. To me it is a self-evident truth that if freedom is to be shared equally by all—even physically the weakest, the lame and the halt—they must be able to contribute an equal share in its defence. How that can be possible when reliance is placed on armaments, my plebeian mind fails to understand. I therefore, swear and shall continue to swear by non-violence, i.e, by satyagraha or soul force. In it physical incapacity is no handicap and even a frail woman or a child can put herself or himself on equal terms against a giant, armed with the most powerful weapons.

The eighteen-fold constructive programme with the spinning-wheel as its centre is the concrete expression of that spirit in organized society. Let us realize that spirit by devoting ourselves prayerfully to the carrying out of the constructive programme during the National Week.

Harijan, 21-4-1946

258. A REMARK[2]

[*April 7, 1946*][3]

I have been praying to God to give me the right word, so that it will induce those to whom it is addressed to act with the courage and wisdom which the occasion demands.

Harijan, 14-4-1946

[1] Vide "Speech at Prayer Meeting, New Delhi", 5-4-1946

[2] The remark is extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". Pyarelal explains that Gandhiji was "describing to one of his companions" how he "kept awake for better part of the night on Saturday", April 6, 1946. Being aware of the people's "deep hatred of the British rule", Gandhiji was "concerned as to how they would behave" at the dawn of independence "after the long servitude. . . full of bitter memories", and apprehended "conflagration".

[3] *ibid*

259. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, NEW DELHI [1]

April 7, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi referred to his visit to the Quakers' silent prayer meeting this morning, and said that people at this meeting sat in absolute silence for half an hour. They were busy in worship of God and realized the sense of God's presence in their midst. Mahatma Gandhi said that he had himself felt the presence of God during silence. He asked the people to observe silence once a week as it played an important part in the individual's life.

Gandhiji described how his own experience tallied with that of the Quakers.

Emptying of the mind of all conscious process of thought, and filling it with the spirit of God unmanifest, brings one ineffable peace and attunes the soul with the infinite.

The question may, however be raised: Should not one's whole life be an unbroken hymn of praise and prayer to the Maker? Why then have a separate time for prayer at all? Brother Lawrence testified that "with him the set times of prayers were no different from other times, that he retired to pray according to the directions of his superior, but that he did not want such retirement, nor asked for it. because his greatest business did not divert him from God." Gandhiji does not question that view. He observed:

I agree that if a man could practise the presence of God all the twenty-four hours, there could be no need for a separate time for prayer.

When the mind is compeletely filled with His spirit one cannot harbour ill will or hatred towards anyone and reciprocally the enemy will shed his enemity and become a friend. It is not my claim that I have always succeded in converting enemies into friends, but in numerous cases it has been my experience that when the mind is filled with His peace all hatred ceases. An unbroken succession of world teachers since the beginning of time have borne testimory to the same. I claim no merit for it. I know it is the due entirely to God's grace. Let us then in the Sacred Week seek His grace through the communion of silence and, maybe, the experience will abide us ever afterwards.

Harijan, 28-4-1946; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 8-4-1946

[1] The speech is extracted from Pyarelal's "Communion of Silence". The opening paragraph is from *The Bombay Chronicle.*

260. VANASPATI AND GHEE

Sardar Sir Datar Singh has been putting up a fight on behalf of the cow in India. The cow includes the buffalo. In that case both can live. If the baffalo includes the cow then both die."The cow is the mother of prosperity." To understand how this is so, the reader should see Shri Satis Chandra Das Gupta's two instructive volumes[1] . Here I want to confine myself to ghee which is in danger of being swamped by *vanaspati*, as the so-called vegetable ghee is called. In reality ghee is pure animal product. One thoughtlessly uses the expression vegetable ghee or *vanaspati*, but it is a contradiction in terms. Sardar Datar Singh has shown in a considered note that the sale of *vanaspati* has risen from 26,000 tons in 1937 to 1, 37,000 tons in 11945, i.e., it has increased more than 400 percent during seven years. *Pari passu* the ghee industry has declined. Those who would study the whole note should procure a copy from Sardar Datar Singh or the Goseva Sangh in Wardha. I condense below the Sardar's conclusions:

1. Vanaspati as an article of diet is a very poor substitute for ghee. It not only lacks absorption by the hunan system, but has no vitamin potency.

2. Due to its similarity with ghee in texture and flavour, most of it is being used as an adulterant or is passed off as genuine ghee, and is, therefore, a great menace to ghee.

3. Due to great margin of profit in this industry, it has developed from 26 thousands tons per annum in 1937 to 105 thousands tons in 1943, and there are proposals afoot to at least double this production in the near future.

4. The ghee industry is India's greatest cottage industry involving production of 2,30, 00, 000 maunds of ghee per annum at a cost of one hundred crores of rupees.

5. The destruction of the ghee industry will not only adversely affect the welfare of the cultivators, but it will have a very delecterious effect on the cattle industry upon which the prosperiy of the whole nation directly depends.

In order to overcome the difficulties explained above, the following remedial measures are suggested:

[1] *The Cow in India*

1. If, due to some reasons, the Government cannot actually ban the manufacture altogether of *vanaspati*, it must at least be brought under strict control immediately.

2. All manufacturers and wholesale and retail dealers of *vanaspati* should be licensed. Such person should not be permitted to trade in or stock ghee on their premises.

3. It should be made compulsory to colour all *vanaspati* at the source of its manufacture in India, and to colour all such imported product immediately on its landing at an Indian port. Manufacturers must mix ten per cent of *til* oil with *vanaspati*. The advantage of this would be that, if pure ghee is adultereated with *vanaspati* containing 10% *til*[1] oil, the detection will become extremely simple. The presence of *til* oil can be most easily detected by well-known chemical reactions.

4. The addition of synthetic essences to give *vanaspati* a semblance of ghee should be prohibited.

5. Persons selling food products in the preparation of which they use *vanaspati* should be required, under marketing law, to display a sign to that effect. The presence of *vanaspati* on the premises not displaying the sign should be made an offence under law. This will eradicate the evil of *halwais* [2] and confectioners using *vanaspati* for their preparations and passing them off as made from genuine ghee.

6. *Vanaspati* should not be allowed to go in the market under names such as 'Vegetable Ghee' or '*Vanaspati* Ghee' or any other name which is apt to deceive the customers as to its real origin of composition.

7. *Vanaspati* should not be allowed to be marketed in packages of the same pattern as used for packing ghee and all pakages containing *vanaspati* should be distinctly labelled.

It is clear that the mischief arises principally from the greed of the very persons who worship the cow. Vanaspati is wholly superfluous. Oils may be refined of injurious property, but they do not need to be solidified nor need they be made to look like ghee. An honest manufacturer will not stoop to counterfeits. The market is flooded with them. Counterfeit coins are heavily punishable. Why not counterfeit ghee, since the genuine article is much more precious than coins? But the sovereign remedy lies in all round honesty

[1] Sesame

[2] Sweetmeat sellers

among dealers who are in a hurry to become rich even at the cost of the health of the nation.

NEW DELHI, April 8, 1946

Harijan, 14-4-1946

261. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

VALMIKI MANDIR,
April 8, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

I feel that I have not got across to H. E. my innermost thoughts on the matter covered by my letter[1] of day before yesterday's date. I would love to see him, if he can spare me a few minutes from his busy time. Will you please let me know, if H. E. can and, if yes, when?[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

G. E. B. ABELL ESQ.

Gandhiji' Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 58

262. LETTER TO MANIBHAI DESAI

[NEW DELHI,][3]
April 8, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

It is not right that I should have no letter from you. Are the rules[4] framed by me being followed? If no patients come, you may visit the sick in their homes, though not outside Uruli. Has the name been changed to Kanchan only? The doctor informs me that Pillay has left. Ask Joshi and Dhiru to write. How is the air of that place? I shall have to stay here up to the 16th. The exact date will be known

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Wavell", 6-4-1946

[2] In *Gandhi's Emissary,* ("What ought to be Done"), Sudhir Ghosh explains: "There was no response from the Victeroy who, evidently, was not prepared to talk any more about salt. The Viceroy was furious when he heard that Sir Archibald Rowlands had given Gandhiji to understand that he would, within three months, abolish the salt tax. . . But Gandhiji was not the man to give up his struggle for the abolition of the salt tax. He, therefore, discussed the matter with the Viceroy again the following day. For Viceroy's version of the interview, *vide* "Viceroy Note on Interview to Gandhiji", 9-4-1946

[3] The source has "Bombay".

[4] *Vide* "Instructions for Nature Cure Clinic, Uruli-Kanchan", 30-3-1946

by and by. Is it not very hot there?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 2753. Courtesy: Manibhai Desai

263. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

DELHI,
April 8, 1946

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. My advice is that you should continue to do there whatever you can. Grow new food crops, vegetables, etc. Stimulate the sympathy of the people.

I am glad that your activities are going on well.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. BHAGWANJI PURUSHOTTAM
HARIJAN ASHRAM
WADHWAN CITY
KATHIAWAR

From the photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 403. Courtesy: Bhagwanji p. Pandya

264. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI[1]

VALMIKI MANDIR,
April 8, 1946

CHI. KANAIYO,

Abha has slight fever today. Of course, Dinshaw who is available is treating her. She is not worried on her account, nor is there any cause for worry.[2]

My letter[3] of last Monday addressed to the campers has, I hope, reached you. All I can think about today is whether all of you are fully observing truth and non-violence. Are you enthusiastic about all that you do, and is it done with humility? I shall be encouraged to

[1] The letter is written in Devanagari.
[2] What follows is in Hindi.
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Sevagram Camp Inmates", 31-3-1946

write for the third Monday when I get your replies to my two earlier letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KANU GANDHI

SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

265. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR

DELHI,

April 8, 1946

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

I have your letter. Kamble has been proved to be a liar. Where he is, nobody knows.

Boiled milk is certainly better. Add some potassium permanganate in water. It is, no doubt, against nature. The same is true of quinine also. But when we are helpless, we have to violate nature.

I have already written about natural diet. Milk, fruit, leafy vegetables, potatoes, etc., are included in it.

It is good to throw some lime into the well. You may also throw some bleaching powder. If pure water is available, then there is no need of disinfectants.

It irks me that the grinding stone cannot be stopped even for two minutes for the sake of silence. Two minutes is nothing. Just the same, Babaji[1] may do what he thinks right.

You have explained well what you meant when you talked about being a great sinner.

I would not consider eggs and fish as opposed to natural diet. They cannot be included in a vegetarian diet, but then neither can milk.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9022. Also C. W. 9146. Courtesy:

[1] Mahadeo Moghe

266. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

April 8, 1946

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter. The idea that Krishnachandra should earn and pay up the money is not right. The decision I have taken is the only proper one.

Chi. Hoshiari comes now and then. Her father also paid a visit. She is not steady at home. My faith in her streadiness has somewhat weakened. She ought not to have brought along Gajaraj. The child is being spoiled.

Part of the Ashram ought to be reserved for farming. I think it would be a mistake to put up buildings all over the place.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1970

267. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

NEW DELHI,
April 8, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I think the hostel land, the well and the building should be handed over[1]. They may use it as they wish. You may retain Rustom Bhuvan as long as R. stays there. He may vacate it, if he can. It should not be given to any outsider. I understand this is what Ashadevi has said. You cannot devote one day in a week to prepare slivers for the other six days. Whatever the difficulty, one should do oneself all the processings up to spinning. Have I not written about it in *Harijan*?

I shall be here up to the 16th at any rate.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4550

[1] To E. W. Aryanakam for Nayee Talim

268. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[*April 8, 1946*][1]

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

Don't you go to the patients?[2] I have sent over whatever spinning equipment of yours I could find. Let me know what still remains so that I can send for it. Even these things I found only with difficulty.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 507

269. LETTER TO CHAKRAYYA

HARIJAN MANDIR, NEW DELHI,
April 8, 1946

CHI. CHAKRAYYA,

I have your letter. I am very busy. Stay on where you are. Learn a lot. Learn the art of being well at any place. It is good if Rajuji learns Hindi. He may come to Sevagram when ever he wishes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9117. Also C. W. 9186

270. LETTER TO ACHYUT PATWARDHAN

NEW DELHI,
April 8, 1946

BHAI ACHYUT,

Yesterday I wasted time wondering whether to write or send a wire to you and, owing to the burden of work, I could do neither. Today I received your letter. The release is hardly a cause for congratulations, but I am glad that you are well. Everything is uncertain about me. I would, of course, like to meet you soon, but let

[1] The letter was an enclosure to Amrit Kaur's letter of April 8 to the addressee.
[2] At Uruli-Kanchan, to give instruction in spinning

us see when God makes it possible. I am very glad that you are going to Vinoba. You might possibly meet kishorelalji and Kakasaheb too in Wardha Sevagram.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI ACHYUT PATWARDHAN

VINCENT SQUARE

TRAM TERMINUS

DADAR

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

271. SPEECH READ OUT AT PRAYER MEETING, NEW DELHI

April 8, 1946

I am both happy and sad as I could not speak today because of the silence I observe on Mondays. The fact that I am not able to speak before you makes me unhappy, and happiness lies in the very fact of my being able to complete my vow of observing silence.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 9-4-1946

272. LETTER TO MANIBHAI DESAI

[After *April 8, 1946*][1]

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your and Dhiru's beautiful letter. Keep me informed about the details. Admit only as many patients as you can easily look after. The chief thing is to teach the people the secret of not falling ill. If we succeed in that, I shall believe that our health-mission has succeeded to perfection. And, therefore, teach that to boys, girls, grown-ups and everybody else.

A person suffering from any infectious disease may have been bathed in the tub; but, if it has been cleaned afterwards with burning-hot ashes, you may take it to be as good as a new one and bathe me in

[1] The letter was, presumably , written afther the one of April 8, 1946; *vide* "Letter to Manibehai Desai", 8-4-1946

it. I will have no hesitation whatever.

For morning breakfast, I think, it might be better, instead of eating *ghensh*[1] , to eat home-made biscuits which require to be chewed, and some fruit. You may cap that with milk, or may have milk in the afternoon. This is only a suggestion. It is good that Joshi has gone there. Ask Gokhale to write. I shall be here up to the 24th at any rate. After that it is uncertain.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 2754. Courtesy: Manibhai Desai

273. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

DELHI,
April 9, 1946

BHAI MUNSHI,

I am scribbling these few lines early in the morning. Your letter is worthy of you. I will now get ready the papers[2] which will cost you the least labour.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI KANU MUNSHI, ADVOCATE
26 RIDGE ROAD
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 7695. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

274. DRAFT LETTER OF AUTHORITY[3]

[*April 9, 1946*]

We submit the dispute existing between us to Shri Kanhaiyalal Munshi, Advocate, Bombay, for his decision which we shall accept as final. We shall forward our submissions through Gandhiji and, if

[1] Porridge made from coarse grain

[2] Vide "Letter to K. M. Munshi", 28-3-1946

[3] Copies of the Draft letter were sent to H. L. Sharma and Lakshminarayan Gadodia, vide "Letter to H. L. Sharma", 9-4-1946. The draft bears the following note in Gujarati: "Two clean copies of the above to be prepared. This may be done today by Munnalal." Vide also the preceding item.

Munshiji wishes to have any clarification, we shall present ourselves and witnesses, if any, wherever required. Munshiji may kindly give his award within three months of the receipt of our submissions by him. The award when conveyed to Gandhiji will be deemed to have been conveyed to us.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

275. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRA RAO

HARIJAN MANDIR, NEW DELHI,
April 9, 1946

DEAR RAMACHANDRA RAO,

I have your letter[1] . Though there is a resemblance between your thought and practice and mine superficially, I must own that yours is far superior to mine. Having made that admission let me emphasise the fact that deep down there is a fundamental difference between you and me and, therefore, your thought and mine. For you consciously ignore God. Equally consciously, probably more progressively, I rely upon God. Therefore your complaint is hasty. You will be better able to judge, if you survive me and *vice versa.*

Do not think of passing any time with me whilst I am wandering. I may be said to be not wandering when I am in Sevagram. Therefore come to me whenever I am there.

yours[2]
BAPU

An Atheist with Gandhi, p. 48

[1] *Vide* "Letter From G. Ramachandra Rao" The addressee explains that the letter was written "some time in March 1946 or so" to congratulate Gandhiji on his decision to stay with Harijans, about which the addressee came to know from newspapers.

[2] The addressee says: "There was an episode associated with the above letter. It was written in another hand and Bapuji signed the letter. The letter was closed at first with 'Yours sincerely'; but when Bapuji signed it, he scored out 'sincerely' left 'Yours' stand. I did not underestand why 'sincerely' was scored out and so I wrote to Bapuji.. . . I got the following reply from. . . Amrit Kaur . . . .'"Yours sincerely" is too formal; therefore the word was struck out. What else could there be in it?'"

276. LETTER TO LAKSMINARAYAN GADODIA

DELHI,
April 9, 1946

BHAI LAKSHMINARAYAN,

Enclosed with this are the letter of authority[1] for Musnhiji, and Bhai Sharma's statement of complaint. Duly complete the letter of authority with the signatures, date, witness, etc., and return it to me; also a reply to the statement. I shall ask[2] Sharma for his rejoinder to the reply and draft that I shall send everything to Munshiji.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

277. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

DELHI,
April 9, 1946

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. How can one be called a naturopath, if one acts with so much impatience and forgets one's dharma?

Why don't you give up the land and house since you are resting at home?

Your statement of complaint is not as it ought to be, but I have sent it over to Gadodaji for his reply[3]. The letter of authority for Munhiji is enclosed. Put your signature on it and return it. Your signature should be accompanied by the date, place and the signature of a witness.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhaymen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, facing p. 358

[1] *Vide* "Draft Letter of Authority", 9-4-1946
[2] *Vide* the following item.
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

278. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, NEW DELHI[1]

April 9, 1946

Referring to the Quakers' Association of New Delhi, Gandhiji said that people from different religions observed silence there for long time. According to him, there is only one God or Allah in every religion. We should thus not hate followers of others religions. We should also learn the method of keeping peace by observing silence like the Quakers. Peace is a great strength. If we fail to understand the way of keeping peace, no doubt the country will get independence but the freedom thus achieved would serve no purpose. If plunder and pillage and murders were still there, you would soon lose interest in swaraj.

Gandhiji said that we should not kill or torture others. We should rather learn how to kill ourselves and never others. Those who know how to die, also know how to live. But those who torture and kill others remain as burden on earth.

In the end, Gandhiji appealed to women to maintain silence in the prayer meeting in future.

[From Hindi]

Harijan, 10-4-1946

279. LETTER TO A. KALESWAR RAO

NEW DELHI,
April 10, 1946

MY DEAR KALESWAR RAO,

I have your letter. If all that you say about the state of affairs in Andhra is correct it is terrible and only Andhra people themselves can put things right.

Your defence of Shri Prakasam is wholly unwarranted by facts. If every Congressman were to make use of money presented to him by the public for personal needs the Congress as an organization would cease to exist. I have not known such a thing during the long course of my public life.

I met and had a long talk last night with the Madras M.L.A.s of whom Shri Prakasam was one. His philosophy of the correctness of which he is convinced appals me. I have gone so far as to tell him that

[1] The report said: "Contrary to his practice of addressing only after the prayer, Gandhiji, who heard some noise from the side of women, spoke even before the prayer and particularly advised the women on the importance of maintaining silence.

he should take a back seat, i.e., not dream of taking ministership and not even retain his seat in the legislature. You and he may think differently and even the Congress Working Committee may not subscribe to my views. But I have suggested that he should seek the decision of the Working Committee in this matter.[1]

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

280. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

"VALMIKI MANDIR",
READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
April 10, 1946

MY DEAR PRAKASAM,

I have received your long exposition with which I heartily disagree. The worst form of receiving money you have considered to be the best. It is pity that you do not see the danger behind it. I tried to explain but I failed.

There were two things which I did not want to discuss in the midst of the company we had last night. You had from the Congress a sum of money which you never returned; similarly, from the Provincial Congress Committee, which also you did not return. This news has come to me without seeking. If the information is wrong, you will tell me. If it is not, you will see how wrong it was.

The *Swarajya*[2] affair also seems not to have been creditable.

All these things have come to me after our correspondence. I wish you would make a clean breast of all your affairs and produce an accurate account of all your doings. If they have been questionable, or if there is anything that cannot be defended by sane people, you should retire into private life and think out what your obvious duty is.

It grieves me to write this letter and yet I must if I am to be absolutely frank with you. I would have discussed these things with

[1] *Vide* also "Speech at Prayer Meeting, Bombay", 11-3-1946"Memorandum on Interview to G.E. B. Abell", 14-3-1946 and the following item.

[2] Of which the addressee was editor

you if we had met. But I cannot now after the attitude you took up last night. I have not the heart to do so.

Yours,

BAPU

SHRI T. PRAKASAM
NEW DELHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

281. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

DELHI,
April 10, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter. Why 'Yours' only?

The letter is not good. It stinks of pride. Bhansali is a noble soul. One should not mind, if he says anything. You should not feel hurt, if anyone says anything. These are he qualties of a *sthitaprajna*. I offer a word of advice even in a meeting of thousands. Let noble people be our watchmen. It does not mean that we should do all that they say, but we should be more alert when they say things to us. Where is the point in laying down a condition for me? When I lose faith in you I will tell you so, as I did in the case of Dahyalal.

Explain clearly to Appa the condition regarding *brahmacharya*. Tell him about all the rules.

Mulkraj has been removed. He is silly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4551

282. DRAFT FOR H. L. SHARMA AND L. N. GADODIA

[*April 10, 1946*][1]

We have mutual complaints. We entrust the responsibility of settling the dispute to Shri Kanhaiyalal Munshi, advocate, Bombay.

[1] This was signed by Gadodia on April 10, 1946, and by Sharma on April 11, 1946. The draft bears the instructions : "Two clean copies of this are needed. Let Munnalal do the copies today."

We shall accept his decision and take it as the final judgement. To this end we shall send our questions and answers to Munshiji through Gandhiji; and if Munshiji wants to ask us anything, we shall present ourselves wherever he says and shall produce the witnesses if they are there. We request Munshiji to be good enough to give his decision within three months of the receipt of our questions. If the decision is sent to Gandhiji it will be understood as having been sent to us.

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

283. TALK WITH SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

NEW DELHI,
April 10, 1946

After a few preliminaries I told Sir Stafford that I had come in response to the message he had sent and added "I am at your service now."

CRIPPS : I am glad you have been good enough to come for this chat. The whole thing is off the record and let us have a free and frank talk. Will you please let me have your appraisal of the situation ?

GANDHIJI : It is too soon for me to give any definite appraisal. Day to day developments are as much within your knowledge as mine. So far as I am able to say, you and the Mission have come out with two objectives —the setting up of a machinery for framing the new constitution and the formation of an Interim Government at the Centre. Are you hopeful of solving both the problems on this visit ?

C. I am quite hopeful. I can tell you that we do not mean to go back from this country without solving both of them.

G. Cutting across both those problems is the issue of Pakistan. If you are hopeful of solving both those problems it means that you have in the first instance to reach a decision on the issue of Pakistan.

C. Yes, you are right. I would only add that we propose to reach a decision on the preliminary issue by bringing about an agreement.

G. The prospects of an agreement do not seem to look bright. You have no doubt been reading the statements and interviews given recently by Jinnah and the speeches which have been made at the Muslim Legislators' Convention.

C. Of course, I have. They breathe fire and brimstone. But you can take it from me that they do not disturb us. I am quite accustomed to such things in my own

country.G. That may be so. But the effect of such statements and utterances may not be the same in this country as it is in your country with seasoned politics.

C. When I find a person getting louder and more violent in his denunciations of his opponents. I get the feeling, as with your experience you will get under the same circumstances, that he is beginning to recognise that the extreme case for which he stands is becoming desperate.

G. I am very glad that the Mission whose advent to and presence in this country are the immediate provocation for these intensified denunciations, is not taking them at their face value. But you were mentioning that you hoped to reach a solution on Pakistan by agreement. In the present tempers of the two main parties, particularly of the Muslim League, it is difficult to see how an agreement could be reached.

C. Has not the issue been reduced to a narrow one ? The question is about the machinery for the administration of common subjects like defence, foreign affairs, etc. Jinnah says that arrangements for their administration should be made by treaty between Pakistan and the rest of India. The Congress says you must have a federal centre for administering them. The gulf between these two points of view is by no means unbridgeable.

G. But are not the two points of view fundamentally different ? The one is thinking of two independent sovereign states having treaty relation with each other, while the other is thinking in terms of a single federal State in which these common subjects would be assigned for administration to a Centre.

C. That of course is so; but where differences of opinion of such a nature do crop up it is quite possible for the two parties to come to an agreement if only they will meet, sit down and try to arrive at a solution by a process of give and take. From my experience I could tell you that the issue is dispute and the difference to be reconciled cannot be considered too difficult for arriving at an agreed solution. In international affairs much bigger issues between Governments have been and are being settled by that process. It will be necessary for the Congress and the League each to come down a bit and meet.

G. Where are they to meet ? What is the half-way house that you want them to meet at ?

C. There is something like a confederation and a confederal Centre.

G. Would not a confederal Centre mean merely a gathering of representatives of Governments of Independent States ?

C. Yes.

G. And there would be no legislature of other auxiliary things which you find in a Centre of the usual type ?

C. No.

G. What about the sanction behind the decision which such a confederate machinery will take ?C. No doubt it will be a loose unit. But it is unnecessary for me to point out to you that the States of the American Union formed first a confederation which later on developed into a federation. There is no reason why a similar thing should not happen in India.

G. But you forget, however, some rather fundamental differences between the two cases. In the case of America the states were independent units which first formed a loose kind of union. They found that union did not satisfy their requirements and therefore developed the closer federal union that now exists. In India we have now a unitary state with a common Centre. You propose to scatter the units in this state.

C. Oh, no. No, I am not scattering them.

G. When I said you are now scattering them I did not intend to convey that you personally were doing or wanted to do so. I am only trying to put to you my understanding of the proposal that you apparently have under consideration, of forming a confederal union between the proposed Pakistan and the rest of India. To resume what I was saying, the units of the existing unitary Indian State will, if the Pakistan idea is accepted, be scattered and then given the option of grouping themselves as they like into two or more independent States and come together in a loose confederation in the hope that later on the deficiencies of such a confederal arrangement will compel them to convert the confederal into a closer federal union. In other words the ultimate development visualised is, so far as inter-relations between the units and the administration on common subjects are concerned, to bring them into more or less the condition in which they are today.

C. I see your point, but if agreement has to be arrived at, we cannot altogether justify an acceptable or accepted solution on the basis of argument alone. We have got to take psychological considerations into account. All the same I do not wish you to take away from this conversation the idea that I am finally committed to the solution being found in the shape of a confederation.

G. I understand, but what psychological consideration are you

thinking of ?

C. Rightly or wrongly the Muslims have now very widespread amongst them the fear of Hindu domination and if India is to get on peacefully in the future they have to be convinced that the political system that is to be set up will be one which will remove this fear.

G. I am all for doing everything that in reason is possible for removing this fear. But in the conditions of this country and taking into account the members of Muslims involved and the manner in which they are distributed it is difficult for anybody to agree that the removal of this fear can be accomplished only or even most successfully by setting up an independent State where, though the Muslims may be in a majority, there will be a very large population ofnon-Muslims to reckon with. What are the grounds for your hope that an agreement could be reached between the parties and how could the reaching of such an agreement be furthered ?

C. Between you and me, I may tell you that in spite of all the violent speeches that have been made within the last two days at the Muslim Convention, leading representatives of the Muslim community are, even as we are talking now furiously thinking as to how best they could moderate their published demands so as to arrive at a settlement with the other party and if a gentleman like you could go round Delhi and speak to your Muslim friends and bring them round to realise that if they did not show a spirit of accommodation they stood the risk of the decision of the Mission going against them on the issue of Pakistan, it would be of great assistance.

G. All advice which may come from people like me is suspect in Muslim circles. Emotionally worked up as Muslim sentiment is today, the more effective method of making them climb down from their extravagantly high perch is for you or other members of the Mission giving to Jinnah as early as you can a broad hint that there was no likelihood of Pakistan being agreed to by the Mission or His Majesty's Government.

C. No doubt that would be more effective, but the time is not yet for your making known even in an informal way what might be our ultimate decision even if we had reached one already.

G. I should have thought that there could be no hesitation in this matter. With all the background of your history in this country, your present position and the state system you have built up, it is impossible for a person like me to imagine that if you were put on your conscience and asked to give a fair decision on the merits your judgment would be in favour of dividing the country into two or more

independent States.

C. I quite appreciate your point of view, but where agreement has to be arrived at, it may be necessary for the party even with the strongest case agreeing to accept something less than what it may rightly be considered entitled to in order to avoid a possible decision against them. Often in my practice at the Bar, parties with a very strong case for whom I was appearing have come to me and said, "no doubt our case is very strong, but we do not know what the judge might finally decide. Meanwhile the other side is offering to compromise on terms which although less than what we are rightfully entitled to are still sure and certain. We have to place this against a possible adverse finding of the judge. Shall we accept those terms ?"

G. If the two main protagonists do come to a settlement, nothing could be more satisfactory. But the danger of a compromise is that the terms may be such, especially when they are dictated by pressure from a third party, as would not in the long run satisfy or be in the interests of the one party or the other or perhaps even both.

C. There is that point no doubt but has not it happened in Indian history already that the country has settled down to decisions which when given did not please any party, as the Communal Award for instance. G. The Communal Award has no doubt been aquiesced in though everybody not excluding the Muslims have been loudly complaining against it. But its successful enforcement is due primarily to the fact that the British have been in power and also strong enough to force down even an unpopular decision of that sort. The conditions will, however, be very different if on the issue of Pakistan you give a decision of a similar nature. India will be declared independent. You will not be here to face the risk that will inevitably follow such a decision. You will not be doing a service to the country by giving a decision which will intensify communal conflict and lead perhaps to a civil war, the responsibility for tackling which will not be yours. So any decision that you give has more chance of being implemented successfully after you leave if it is one which is justifiable on the merits. If on the other hand it is one which attempts merely to decide the dispute between two antagonists by denying to each a portion of his claim, whatever the merits may be, it will leave a trail of trouble behind.

C. I agree that there are risks but we are determined to see that a settlement is reached and if it is not reached by ageement between the parties, to give a decision ourselves.

G. I have always been a staunch supporter of the view that if the

parties in this country do not come to an agreement, the British Government which is in power today cannot escape the responsibility of giving a decision. There are suggestions for arbitration.

C. I know, but if the parties concerned agree to refer an issue like Pakistan for decision of a committee consisting of a Russain, a Turk and a Chinese, I cannot see why we should stand in the way. No doubt in view of all the connections that exist between us and India and the knowledge that we possess of conditions here there is justification for your view that the British should give a decision; but if the parties to the dispute themselves prefer to agree to abide by the decision of an outside committee of the sort I mentioned, I cannot see why I should stand in the way. The main thing is the reaching of a settlement which both parties will accept.

G. Sir Stafford, as regards the constitution-making machinery, I presume you will agree that you cannot have two constitution-making bodies or I understand the suggestion has been made of two compartments of a single constitution-making body unless the decision is first taken in favour of Pakistan. Such a decision necessarily implies that provinces will have to decide beforehand which constitution-making body or compartment of a single constitution-making body they will go into.

C. Yes.

G. Similarly, Indian States will have to choose in a similar way.

C. Yes, but we cannot rule out the possibility in that case of the Indian States wishing to have a constitution-making body of their own!

G. Are you contemplating seriously of these complications ?

C. There are complications but the whole thing will depend upon the agreement reached on the question of Pakistan. That hurdle has to be crossed before everything else.

G. How do you propose to set up the constitution-making body? What is the authority which will constitute it ? By Act of Parliament ?

C. (After some hesitation) I am afraid we have not thought this out. I should not think that an Act of Parliament is necessary for this purpose.

G. If not an Act of Parliament, there should be at least a proclamation of His Majesty. The matter is, you will agree, big enough not to be left to be provided for by a Press communique of the present Government of India or even by an announcement by the Viceroy.

C. We shall no doubt go into this question. The main thing is that we should reach an agreement first on the issue of substance. When such agreement is reached we shall take the best advice that is available and implement it in the form most suitable.

G. What about the Indian States ? Do you think they will come in without standing out for things which it might be difficult to agree to ?

C. I do not foresee any great difficulty from that quarter.

G. What about Paramountcy ? Where will it rest after you transfer power ?

C. Paramountcy when we go will have to disappear. When India gets independence not only British India but every one of the Indian States will become independent.

G. All the 562 or 601 of them ?

C. Yes, and when they so become independent it will be for each of them to negotiate fresh arrangement with the new Government of India.

G. This will be another additional complication which you will introduce as the result of your quitting power in India. It is difficult for me to think that you should expect 562 States each to negotiate seperately a new arrangement with the Government of India. Even now there are only about 40 States with treaties and they as well as the rest of the States are all really held together by the British power exercising paramountcy.

C. But it is difficult to expect a State like Hyderabad with permanent treaty relations with the British Crown to agree to any arrangement over its head. It might well say whatever you and the new Government may do we refuse to recognise it.

G. With such experience of Indian States as I possess, it is difficult for me to believe that an Indian State, even if it be Hydera-bad, could maintain the position that it will not acquiesce in the arrangements which are made by the paramount power. C. You are probably right in saying that even Hyderabad could not maintain such an attitude for long. But we cannot ignore our obligations. What is that you yourself would suggest ?

G. The natural thing. British power over Indian States is exercised through paramountcy. You are transferring power to Indian hands. The authority which takes your place in British India should exercise that paramountcy after you hand over power.

C. That is not the law.

G. I cannot follow you. Was not it law in 1858 and in 1935 ?

C. But surely if bad law was perpetrated in the past you would

not advise us to follow that example now.

G. You are not squarely facing the problem. That bad law has been in force and all States have settled down to it for nearly a century.

C. We have certain obligations to States under paramountcy-protection for instance. We were able to discharge this obligation because there was the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force at our disposal. But the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force will not be available after India becomes independent. It would not be right for us to tell the States that as we are quitting India we are handing over our obligations to a new Indian Government which [do not] have such forces at its disposal and which therefore will not be in a position to implement those obligations. It is for the States to look out for themselves and if they are so minded, to make fresh trials with the new Government of India.

G. What do you mean when you say that the new Indian Government will not be in a position to implement their obligations of protection of Indian States ?

C. It is obvious that the new Government will not have at its disposal a Navy and Air Force sufficient to defend even itself.

G. You are exaggerating the position. It is true that the Indian Navy and the Indian Air Force have to be greatly developed before they can be considered efficient parts of the armed forces of an independent India. But while they are being developed new India will certainly make other arrangements, for example by treaty with Britain, for having at its disposal their Naval and Air units to help her in defending the country. Defending the country will include defending the Indian States as well and it should not be impossible so to make arrangements with Britain that the New India Government will be in a position to implement the obligations of paramountcy which it will inherit from the British power. Again, you surely do not think that in protecting Indian States British power had to place any reliance worth mentioning on the Navy and Air Force. That protection was largely given by the Indian army and even from the commencement of the new regime, we shall have, according to the Commander-in-chief, an Indian Army which would be quite capable of providing fully for the internal defence requirements of the country.

C. There is the other point that the treaties were made by the British Crown and therefore except with their consent the obligations could not be transferred by the Crown to any other authority.

G. I have already said that you have effected these transfers twice in recent history. On the first occasion Rulers of States were not even consulted, I believe. That was in 1858 when the Crown took over the relations with Indian States from the East India Company and administered those relations through the Governor-General in Council, that is the Government of India. In 1935 this arrangement gave place to a new one under which the Crown withdrew the powers from the Governor-General in Council and vested them in a Crown Representative. Under independent India both the Governor-General in Council and the Crown Representative will presumably disappear. Their places will have to be taken by the new Government of what is now British India. If the transfer of paramountcy to this new Government could be effected with consent of Indian States and on terms, perhaps, which might be made more acceptable to them than those on which paramountcy is exercised today by the Crown Representative it will be to the good, but if all or some of the States should hesitate as regards this transfer it has to be made in spite of such hesitation, for otherwise not merely the defence and foreign policy of India, but even the efficient internal administration of common economic and other matters will become almost impossible.

C. Formerly it was the Governor-General that was controlling the Indian States.

G. You are mistaken. The authority that was in law responsible for the conduct of relations with Indian States was, from 1858 to 1935, the Governor-General in Council and not the Governor-General.

C. But then the Governor-General under that system was an autocrat and exercised all powers.

G. That may have been so but I thought you were placing insistence on the letter of the treaties and on the legal position as regards the obligations of paramountcy and you cannot deny that from those two points of view the authority concerned was the Governor-General in Council and not the Governor-General up to 1935.

C. Have nothing more to say on the subject of Indian States.

G. There is one point I would like to draw your attention to. The enormous proportions which communal tension has reached in the country are directly traceable to separate electorates. You cannot have healthy political life in any country where the electorates which

should exercise the sovereign controlling power are based upon religion, race, creed or caste. If in connection with the negotiations you are now engaged in, it is possible as part of the agreement which you propose to see arrived at between the parties you can put pressure on them for substituting joint electorates for separate electorates, it will be a service of incalculabe value to the future political development of India.

C. I am all with you as regards separate electorates. But don't you think that we should rather not touch that question but leave it to the Interim Government and the constitution-making body ?

G. The immediate matter for settlement no doubt is the issue of Pakistan, the formation of an Indian Government and the convening of a constitution-making body. But I thought it would be helpful to the Interim Government and the constitution-making body if while pressure is being applied on both parties for a settlement on the major issue of Pakistan this important problem of electorates is also tackled and that even if a final decision is not arrived at on it now the way could be paved for a fairly satisfactory solution at the proper time. Let me add that separate electorates are unhealthy not only to the Government of a united India; in fact if Jinnah has his way about Pakistan—which God forbid—separate electorates will prove a greater headache to Pakistan than to Hindustan. The Muslim minority in the Hindustan of Jinnah's conception will be 20 millions against a Hindu population in the same area of about 150 millions. On the other hand the non-Muslim minority in Pakistan will be 44 millions against a Muslim population therein of about 70 millions.

C. Oh ! That is Jinnah's Pakistan ! It is an impossible idea. To think of setting up a new State of Pakistan with so heavy a Hindu minority of 44 millions which will always be in opposition to the Government of Pakistan ! It is inconceivable. I think you will agree that this question of electorates is left over for decision by the constitution-making body.

After a few final words of courtesy we parted. At the door Sir Stafford said he hoped he would have an opportunity of meeting me again and added with a twinkle in his eye "before we leave this country at the end of July". I turned round to him and said, "July !" Sir Stafford then said, "I do hope we shall be able to leave earlier but I thought I would mention a safe limit !"

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

284. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, NEW DELHI[1]

April 10, 1946

In that hymn there is an assurance that whom God protects, no power on earth can injure. The message of that hymn has a particular relevancy in the present times when the whole world is plunged in strife. Although the war has ended, the causes that bought it about still continue. This is not peace; it is only silent preparation for another war.

Look at the mutual recrimination, abuse and threats of violence that poison the atmosphere in Delhi itself. But, if you have faith in God, you will remain unaffected by all these threats and abuse, and feel secure in the assurance that not a hair of your head will be injured so long as you are under God's protecting care. There is a saying to the effect that the outer is only the reflection of the inner. If you are good, the whole world will be good to you. On the contrary, if you feel tempted to regard anybody as evil, the odds are that the evil is within you.

The Choudhari Saheb[2] has had great regard for me. If, therefore, somebody comes and tells me that he has abused the Hindus and called them names, I must refuse to believe it or think ill of him. How can a person who till yesterday was like a blood-brother to me turn all of a sudden into a hater of Hindus? I would rather think that some Hindus has exasprated him by their behavior and made him lose his balance. Similarly I am quite sure that if the Choudhary Saheb were to meet me today and I were to ask him if he really believed that the whole mass of Hindus had turned bad overnight, he would laugh at the remarks attributed to him and dismiss them as absured. We must neither think evil about others nor suspect others of thinking evil about us. Proneness to lend ear to evil reports is a sign of lack of faith.

Harijan, 28-4-1946

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Prayer Discourses"

[2] The reference is to Khaliq-uz-Zaman. According to Pyarelal, "an outburst against the Hindus. . . attributed to Khaliq-uz-Zaman . . . had appeared in the Press".

285. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

April 11, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. Badshah Khan[1] has arrived here. He has not met me, but will do so today. You may, if you wish, go on the basis of the letter you have received. You need not wait for my permission. Forget Borkamata. You may go there after you are fully restored. You have to cultivate peace of mind to improve your health. You must also see that Zohra[2] improves. Do only as much as you can. Don' go out in the heat. Also do the work connected with spinning only as much as you can. It seems I shall be able to return only after the end of this month. Write to me regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 508

286. LETTER TO MANIBHAI DESAI[3]

April 11, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

There is no letter from you. I assumed, you did not write because Amtussalaam has written. All of you should work hard. Dhiru and Gokhale should also write.

Blessings from

BAPU

MANILAL DESAI

URULI

287. LETTER TO DR. BHAGWAT

April 11, 1946

BHAI BHAGWAT,

I have your letter. Stay where you are. Do not worry, if nobody comes up. We should visit people in their homes and instruct them about the rules of hygiene. We should go into the schools and undertake to teach there. For every moment there is some work to be

[1] Abdul Ghaffar Khan

[2] Zohra Chawda, wife of Akbar Chawda

[3] The letter is written in Devanagari

done. Write to me regularly. How is the heat there?

See Zohrabehn and also Amtul.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 2756. Courtesy: Manilal Patel

288. TALK WITH I. N. A. PRISONERS[1]

April 11,1946

What particularly delighted Gandhiji during both these visits[2] was to see so many officers and men representing so meny different religions and races of India drawn together in a common cause—the cause of India's freedom—and living together like members of one family. It was like a whiff of fresh invigorating air from the free India that is to be. The absence of the third party had enabled them to obliterate all communal distinctions and develop a perfect spirit of *comaraderie* in exile, but in detention, these distinctions were again being brought home to them.

"We never felt any distinction of creed or religion in the I. N. A." remarked one of them. "But here we are faced with 'Hindu tea' and 'Mussalman tea'. What are we to do?" Gandhiji asked:

Why do you suffer it?

"No, we do not," they replied. "We mix 'Hindu tea' and Musalman tea' exactly half and half, and then serve. The same with food. Gandhiji replied (laughing):

That is very good.[3]

Harijan, 21-4-1946

289. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, NEW DELHI

April 11, 1946

Summing up his reactions of his second visit[4], Gandhiji, in course of his remarks at the evening prayer, narrated how Col. Niranjan Singh Gill, speaking for the I.N.A. prisoners in the Red Fort, had told him that they were finally convinced that India could not win or retain her independence except through non-violence.

[1] This and the following items are extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". Pyarelal explains that Gandhiji met "some 35 I.N.A. prisoners. . . detained in the Red Fort". According to report in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 12-4-1946, Gandhiji, who was accompanied by Vallabhbhai Patel and Pyarelal, met the officers in the afternoon for about half an hour.

[2] The earlier visit was at Kabul lines on April 4, 1946; *vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting, New Delhi", 5-4-1946

[3] *Vide* also the following item.

[4] *Vide* the preceding item.

They had further assured him that after their release they would serve India as true soldiers of non-violence. "We shall disdain to depend on anybody's charity for our support," they had told him. "We would rather dig the ground and till the land than compromise our self-respect by living on subscriptions." Gandhiji said :

I told them that they would be sadly disillusioned, if they thought that a free India would be able to provide them all those emoluments, honours and perquisites which a foreign Government gave to the army men by the exploitation of the masses, while education, public health and the allied nation-building activities were starved. India was a poor country, her children were born in poverty and grew up in poverty into anaemic, stunted specimens of humanity. If they wanted to become true soldiers of India, they must be prepared to share her destitution and try to ameliorate it to the best of their capacity, not expect to be pampered at the cost of the poor. A true soldier would prefer death to charity. In reply, they assured me that Netaji had inculcated upon them the twin lessons of poverty and equality.

Among us, officers and men live together and dine together without any distinction. There is no high, no low.[1]

Continuing, Mahatma Gandhi mentioned how he had asked the military officer-in-charge of the camp whether the I.N.A. personnel were well-behaved. The officer had replied that he was very pleased with their behaviour. The I.N.A. people on their part had no complaint to make about the treatment they were receiving. He considered all that to be a very healthy sign. He interpreted it as indication of things to come. A free India would not want to harbour bitter memories against anyone and would like to make friends with all including the Britishers.

In conclusion, he referred to the labours of the Cabinet Mission and suggested that all should pray during the National Week so that God might guide them as well as the people into right at this critical juncture in India's history.

Harijan, 21-4-1946; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 12-4-1946

[1] What follows is from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

290. WHAT ABOUT WOMEN? [1]

> I am glad to read your reply[2] to the complaint that enough women have not been put up for elections or selected for official posts. . . . Neither in the ministries and legislatures nor in local bodies is merit given first cosideration in the matter of selection of candidates. Consideration in the matter of selection of candidates. Consideration of caste, community and province come into the picture and are the determinig factors. The argument proffered in favour of such action is that none of these interest can be ignored. If the argument holds, what about the interests of women ? . . .

The above is from the letter[3] of an esteemed sister. The sister's argument boils down to this, that where everything is on a wrong basis, another wrong will not matter. But, if we go on thus, the evil will grow and we shall be hopelessly caught in a vicious circle. My appeal to women, therefore, is that they should intelligently become the personification of renunciation and thereby not only adorn but also raise the status of their sex and the nation.

So long as considerations of caste and community continue to weigh with us and rule our choice, women will be well-advised to remain aloof and thereby build up their prestige. The question is as to how best this can be done. Today few women take part in politics and most of these do not do independent thinking. They are content to carry out their parents' or their husband's behests. Realizing their dependence, they cry out for women's rights. Instead of doing this, however, women workers should enrol womenas voters, impart or have imparted to them practical education, teach them to think independently, release them from the chains of caste that bind them so as to bring about a change in them which will compell men to realize women's strength and capacity for sacrifice and give her places of honour. If they will do this, they will purify the present unclean atmosphere. So much for women.

As to men, they should consider it their duty to come out of the impure atmosphere wherever it exists. They will not beguided by cosiderations of caste and community, if these are banished from their own minds. The best and easiest way to achieve this is for both men

[1] Originally written in Gujarati, this appeared as from "Harijanbandhu" published simultaneously with the source.

[2] *Vide* "Hindustani"

[3] Of which only extracts are reproduced here.

and women to stoop to conquer by becoming Harijans and that too of the last class., i.e., Bhangis or Mehtars.

Where capable women have been left out, men should make amends. It is their duty to give such encouragement to women as will enable them to outshine men. If both parties act as suggested, the atmosphere will soon become pure. Whether men do so or not, women's duty is, to my mind, clear.

NEW DELHI, April 12, 1946

Harijan, 21-4-1946

291. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

NEW DELHI,
April 12, 1946

DEAR SIR STAFFORD,

What I wanted to say and forgot last night was about the States of India. Pandit Nehru is the President of the States' People's Conference and Sheikh Abdullah of Kashmir its Vice-President. I met the committee of the Conference last Wednesday. Their complaint was that they were ignored by the Cabinet Delegation whereas the Princes were receiving more than their due attention. Of course this may be good policy. It may also be bad policy and morally indefensible. The ultimate result may be quite good, as it must be, if the whole of India becomes independent. It will then be bad to irrritate the people of the States by ignoring them. After all the people are everything and, the Princes apart from them nothing. They owe their artificial status to the Government of India but their existence to the people residing in the respective States. This may be shared with your colleagues or not as you wish. It is wholly unofficial as our talk last night was.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

THE RT. HON'BLE SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 182

292. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, NEW DELHI

April 12, 1946

When I look at you I find very few people wearing khaddar. It is a sign of our misfortune. It is estimated that we pay over seven

crores of rupees in purchasing foreign cloth. We used to supply cloth to the whole world, but today all of our trade in textiles is gone.

Since 1919 we have been trying to revive it. The Charkha Sangh has chalked out a programme for the revival of khadi. Some people sell away all the yarn they spin because they get money for it, and when asked if they have kept yarn for their own use, they say that they could get cheaper cloth made in Manchester or Japan. Khaddar should occupy a higher status, if we really want to attain swaraj through it. The yarn should be spun and woven into cloth in the villages.

People should go to Khadi Bhandars and get the cloth in return for handspun yarn.

The Hindustan Times, 13-4-1946

293. FASTING IN THE AIR[1]

Fasting has become a veritable epidemic. The blame lies at your door.

So writes a correspondent and adds :

> One can understand the efficacy of a fast for purpose of inward purification as also for the outward. But fasts are undertaken nowadays for an increment in one's own pay or in that of one's group, for being selected as a candidate for the Assembly or for various other causes. You encourage one man for fasting for the removal of untouchability and yet you are willing to let another die who is doing the same for a different cause. Is this not injustice ? Should you not lay down rules as to when to fast and when not to, what should be its duration, should fruit-juices be taken or only water ? You talk of the inner voice where you are concerned. Would it not really be best, if you were to stop undertaking fasts yourself and stop others too?

There is force in the above argument. It is, however, impossible to lay down rules. Experience alone can suggest rules. In particular cases it is open to a person to frame his own law or he can refer to me, if he believes me to be an authority. I have had the temerity to claim that fasting is an infallible weapon in the armoury of satyagraha. I have used it myself, being the author of satyagraha . Anyone whose fast is related to satyagraha should seek my permission and obtain it in writing before embarking on it. If this advice is followed, there is

[1] Originally written in Gujarati, this appeared as "from *Harijanbandhu*" published simultaneously with the source.

no need for framing rules, at any rate, in my lifetime.

One general principle, however, I would like to enunciate. A satyagrahi should fast only as a last resort when all other avenues of redress have been explored and have failed. There is no room for imitation in fasts. He who has no inner strength should not dream of it, and never with attachment to success. But, if a satyagrahi once undertakes a fast from conviction, he must stick to his resolve whether there is a chance of his action bearing fruit or not. This does not mean that fasting cannot bear fruit [or is fruitless][1]. He who fasts in the expectation of fruit generally fails. And even if he does not seemingly fail, he loses all the inner joy which a true fast holds.

Whether one should take fruit-juice or not depends on one's physical powers of endurance. But no more fruit-juice than is absolutely necessary for the body should be taken. He probably has the greatest inner strength who takes only water.

It is wrong to fast for selfish ends, e. g. for increase in one's own salary. Under certain circumstances it is permissible to fast for an increase in wages on behalf of one's group.

Ridiculous fasts spread like plague and are harmful. But when fasting becomes a duty, it cannot be given up. Therefore I do fast when I consider it to be necessary and cannot abstain from it on any score. What I do myself I cannot prevent others from doing under similar circumstances. It is common kowledge that the best of good things are often abused. We see this happening every day.

NEW DELHI, April 13, 1946

Harijan,, 21-4-1946

294. LETTER TO KALA VENKAT RAO

April 13, 1946

MY DEAR VENKAT RAO,

The inference is wholly unjustified. I have never wavered in my opinion that Shri Prakasam should not become minister, for his own sake and for that of the nation. I have even advised him to retire from

[1] Translated from *Harijanbandhu*; the source, however, has : "that fasting cannot or can bear fruit".

the Legislature.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

295. LETTER TO DR. DWARIKESH JOSHI

NEW DELHI,
April 13, 1946

BHAI JOSHI,

The arrangements you enquire about in 1, 2, 3 do not exist. The efforts suggested in question 4 are surely to be undertaken. It is difficult to say at present what the future will be. We shall think more about it, if you see me when I am near Poona. Please come only by appointment.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

DR. DWARIKESH JOSHI
367-8 KALBADEVI
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

296. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, NEW DELHI[2]

April 13, 1946

Today is the last day of the National Week which I have also called the Sacred Week. It was on this day that the tragedy of the Jallianwala Bagh was enacted. The 6th of April [1919] saw the birth of satyagraha in India. The awakening among the masses resulting from it was so phenomenal that the Government could suppress it only by having recourse to the method of frightfulness. It culminated in the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, when Gen. Dyer with a party of fifty sepoys opened fire on an unarmed people and the wounding of thrice that number. There was only one exit and it was held by the firing party so that the innocent men and women who were trapped there

[1] The addressee in his letter had objected to T. Prakasam's inclusion in the Cabinet.

[2] This was reported under the title "Signs of the Time" by Pyarelal.

had no alternative but to be shot down like rabbits in a hole. It is true some excesses were committed by the mob before the massacre. But they were nothing as compared to the savage reprisals taken by the Government. That is the way of all imperialisms. In no other way could a handful of foreigners maintain their rule over a nation of 400 millions.

Why have I recalled these incidents? Not to stir up bitter old memories or to keep alive the embers of hatred, but only to emphasize the distinction between the old order which they symbolized and the new that is in sight. I have not the slightest doubt as to the *bona fides* of the Cabinet Mission. I am convinced that they have finally made up their mind to withdraw *in toto*. The question which is exercising their mind is how to effect the withdrawal in an orderly manner and to that end their energies are bent. This is not the occasion to rake up old sores.[1] Gentlemanliness requires that if a person is sincerely trying to make amends, he should be thanked and congratulated for it, not that his past should be flung in his face.

You know Shri Jayaprakash Narayan and Dr. Lohia[2]. Both of them are daring men of action and scholars. They could easily have become rich. But they chose the way of renunciation and service. To break the chains of their country's slavery was their one passion. Naturally the alien Government regarded them as dangerous to its existence and put them into prison. We, however, have different scales to weigh merit, and we regard them as patriots who have sacrificed their all for the love of the country which has given them birth. That they would be found wanting in the scales of non-violence is irrelevant today. What is relevant is that independence of India is today common ground between the British and ourselves. Their freedom, therefore, is no longer considered dangerous by the Government. Viewed in that light, their release as also the release of the I.N.A. men yesterday, must be regarded as an earnest of the honesty of the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy. We must be thankful to them for this earnest, and prayer of thankfulness should ascend to heaven for the wisdom with which God seems to be endowing them.

The Satyagraha Week which is closing today is devoted always to communal unity and khaddar. Communal unity is not confined to Hindus and Muslims only, it extends to all including Englishmen. It

[1] This sentence is from *The Hidustan Times*.

[2] Ram Manohar Lohia

must not become a menace to anybody or group. That is the message of non-violence.

The National Week is a week of self-introspection and prayer. Prayer is not for the impure in heart.

Harijan, 21-4-1946, also *The Hindustan Times*, 14-4-1946

297. DISCUSSION WITH WOODROW WYATT[1]

[*April 13, 1946*][2]

WOODROW WYATT : Do you think we are getting off your backs at last ?

[GANDHIJI :] I have no doubt as to the sincerity of your intention. The question is whether you will have the strength and courage needed for it. It is so difficult to get out of conventional groves of thought and action.

We must not precipitate a solution. We must let India decide for herself. At the same time, one does not want to leave the country to chaos when an unprecedented famine threatens it.

Your difficulty will remain so long as you retain the belief that your rule that benefited India. None of us believes it.

One or two have testified to the contrary.

That is neither here nor there. I too believed it once. Such benefit as has really accrued to India is not part of foreign rule but is the result of contact with a robust people. The good is incidental, the evil of foreign rule is inherent and far outweighs the good. Commual division in India can be demonstrably proved to be a British creation. Even famine as we know it today is your creation.[3]

Mark the true meaning of my words. Famines may be said to be godsend. But a well-equipped country should be able to pull through a deficiency period and not helplessly succumb. Famines in India today are not due to rain or lack of it merely, but due to the fact that India is ill-equipped to tide over the dry periods. Nothing has been done to safeguard her population against the threat of recurring famines. Take south Africa. There they fight against the locusts, drought, etc., manfully and with infinite resourcefulness. Here famine

[1] The *Harijan* report, which appeared under the title "Heart Searching" by Pyarelal, has been collated with the version in *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase.*

[2] From *The Transfer of Power*

[3] Here Pyarelal adds : "The last remark startled the visitor; Gandhiji noted the effect his words had produced."

is simply blamed on the rain gods, and there is nothing to be done for it.

Would India have been better equipped, if Britain had not been here ?

Yes, there would have been no railways.[1] If there were no railways, etc., we would be living in a natural state as they used to in England and Europe in the Middle-Ages when every feudal baron had his castle with its stocks of grain and water. Before the advent of railways in India, every village had its granary. In that sense we were better equipped. Moreover we had our system of domestic crafts to fall backupon, if crops failed. Now railways have depleted the countryside of its stocks and killed the handicrafts. Whatever cash the cultivator gets in return for his produce runs through his fingers like water, thanks to the invasion of his economy by the revenue collector and the imported foreign goods without which he thinks he can no longer do. The British have told him : 'Do not stock grain, do not hoard silver.'There is no provision made for a deficit period. Railways have become a snare, cheap transport, a trap. The Princes practised tyranny in olden times too. But it could not go far. The natural means of redress, viz. insurrection, retreat or migration, were still open to the people. They were not then disarmed or emasculated. Odds were even. Today the odds are so heavy that a handful of British soldiers can terrorize millions. That is what British rule has done to us. It is most domoralizing. The British must realize this and leave us in an exemplary manner. If the virus has gone so deep that it cannot be cured without applying a strong blister, even then they must go. A few lakhs might be killed in internecine warfare but, real peace will come at last.

But it is a big responsibility to leave India with anarchy.

Not a bigger responsibility than you were prepared to face during the war out of strategic cosiderations.[2]

Supposing we imposed what we considered to be a just solution and went?

All would be upset.

So it must be left to India's decision ?

[1] Here Pyarelal remarks : "This was another shock to the visitor who . . . with most Westerners regarded railways as the proudest achievement of the British rule in India to combat famine. . . ."

[2] What follows is from *The Last Phase*. Pyarelal explains : "Mr. Wyatt mentioned the difficulty created by the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan."

Yes, leave it to the Congress and the League. Thanks to Jinnah's genius and British co-operation, he had built up a powerful organization comprehending not all but the major part of the Muslims. I will advise you to try him and, if you feel he cannot deliver the goods, take the Congress into your confidence. . . . But in any case the British occupation must end forth with.

And what happens after the British leave ?

Probably there will be arbitration. . . . But there might be a blood-bath. It will be settled in two days by non-violence, if I can persuade India to go my way, or the ordeal may last longer. Even so it would not be worse than what it is under the British rule. .. .

Suppose we set up an Interim Government and went ? . . . . If the Congress concedes Pakistan, it will then be their job.

That will be a good beginning. Even if the whole of India goes under the League in this way, it won't matter. It won't be the Pakistan of Jinnah's conception. India would then have something to live for and die for.

Whom shall we put in the place of the present Government?

You can ask the elected legislators to nominate their representatives. Supposing the Congress has an overwhelming majority, she will choose the names for the Interim Government. If the Congress can come to terms with the League, there will be no difficulty. But if Jinnah should ultimately choose not to come in, Congress and you must not be frightened. Or, as I have already said, you let Jinnah nominate out of the present legislators. Supposing the Muslim League starts destruction, will you jail them ?

I won't. But, maybe, the Congress will decide to fight. It will then be a clean fight, not the cowardly hit-and-run that you see today or taking of a hundred lives for one *a la* the British.[1]

Harijan, 19-5-1946; also *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. 1, Book 1, pp. 191-2

[1] For Woodrow Wyatt's note on the discussion, *vide* "Woodrow Wyatt's Note on Discussion with Gandhiji

298. A THOUGHT FOR THE DAY[1]

IN TRAIN ON WAY TO MADRAS,
January 20, 1946

Without the maximum possible non-attachment, it is inconceivable for anyone to live up to the age of 125 years.

ON NEARING MADRAS,
January 21, 1946

If there is any hope for a man, whose mind remains impure in spite of himself, it is Ramanama.

MADRAS,
January 22, 1946

Only that work which is done after anger has subsided can bear fruit.

MADRAS,
January 23, 1946

A foreigner deserves to be welcomed only when he mixes with the indigenous people as sugar does with milk.

MADRAS,
January 25, 1946

Mere confession of a wrong does not erase it. Whatever is

[1] Originally written in Hindi, these 'thoughts' were translated and published under this title by Anand T. Hingorani, who explains in Preface that, after the death of his wife Vidya on July 20, 1943, during his eight-week stay in Sevagram from September 30, 1944, Gandhiji would greet him "every morning, after the prayer . . . speak words of sympathy and solace, and . . . write down something to meditate upon . . . From October 13, 1944, onwards, he wrote continuously for a fortnight, and then off and on . . ." Before leaving Sevagram for nature cure treatment at Bhimavaram, Hingorani had requested Gandhiji to write something for him daily, which Gandhiji began to do from November 20, 1944. In June 1946, when Hingorani sought Gandhiji's permission to publish the 'thoughts' in a book form, Gandhiji remarked : "What is there about them that you are so keen on publishing them? If, however, you wish to publish them, do so after my death. Such writings are generally never published during the lifetime of their authors. Who knows I may not be able to live up to what I have written! But if I live up to it till the last breath of my life, then alone will it be worth while to publish these thoughts." Gandhiji, however, discontinued the practice by the end of 1946, which he explained : "For the sake of my Noakhali mission, I renounced practically everything . . . I gave up the Ashram, all my companions and even writing for the *Harijan*. So I said to myself, why not give up writing these daily thoughts as well. . . ."

possible must be done to undo the wrong.

MADRAS,
January 26, 1946

Truth should be accompanied by firmness of purpose.

MADRAS,
January 27, 1946

Superstition and truth cannot go together.

MADRAS,
January 28, 1946

There can be no perception without steadfastness of mind.

MADRAS,
January 29, 1946

It is sin to regard anyone as helpless who had God for his support.

MADRAS,
January 30, 1946

Renunciation is true enjoyment.

January 31, 1946

Real weakness is internal, not outward.

February 1, 1946

A sage has said that it is through silence that we become fit for self-realization, and our outer life keeps in tune with the inner.

MADURA,
February 2, 1946

The same sage observes that where there is peace of mind there is inner strength which is unfailing.

MADURA-PALANI,
February 3, 1946

Man is endowed with intellect and with an inner voice which trans-cends the intellect. Both are, however, necessary in their own spheres.

MADRAS (IN TRAIN),
February 4, 1946

The true mark of success in life is the growth of tenderness and maturity in a man.

February 5, 1946

Man spoils matters much more by speech than by silence.

SEVAGRAM,
February 6, 1946

Silence inspired by fear is no silence.

SEVAGRAM,
February 7, 1946

When the world rejects a man, God befriends him.

SEVAGRAM,
February 8, 1946

The world may call us weak but we must not weaken our ideals.

SEVAGRAM,
February 9, 1946

Outward peace is useless without inner peace.

SEVAGRAM,
February 10, 1946

He who harps on his woes, multiplies them manifold.

SEVAGRAM,
February 11, 1946

We can do nothing right, so long as we are not blessed with inner light.

SEVAGRAM,
February 12, 1946

Only he can be a leader who never loses hope.

SEVAGRAM,
February 13, 1946

Contemplation of an ideal does not broaden its scope, but it certainly increases its depth.

SEVAGRAM,
February 14, 1946

Knowledge of self is an invaluable asset; we want to acquire it without effort. Riches, fame, etc., are worthless; for them we are willing to give anything.

SEVAGRAM,
February 15, 1946

He who has neither peace nor determination, how can he have realization?

February 16, 1946

Without selflessness, how can there be fearlessness?

IN TRAIN,
February 17, 1946

We seek the company of the good, for that is the food for our soul.

BOMBAY,
February 18, 1946

Humility does not work, if it is a mere pretence; nor does simplicity.

BOMBAY,
February 19, 1946

Deeds, like seeds, take their own time to fructify.

POONA,
February 20, 1946

Slavery to the environment dulls a man's mind.

POONA,
February 21, 1946

He whose mind does not remain unruffled in all manner of circumstances is certainly not at peace, howsoever much he may appear outwardly to be so.

February 22, 1946

Music does not proceed from the throat alone. There is music of the mind, of the senses and of the heart.

February 23, 1946

In fact there should be harmony in life. The melody will pervade all activities and behaviour.

POONA,
February 24, 1946

God is omnipresent. Hence it is that He speaks to us through stones, trees, insects, birds, beasts, etc.

POONA,
February 25, 1946

Why seek outside that which is within you?

POONA,
February 26, 1946

We have no existence outside and apart from God.

POONA,
February 27, 1946

There can be no safety for us save in the lap of God.

POONA,
February 28, 1946

The humility of one who is humble by nature, as it is in the nature of water to flow downwards, becomes like water a blessing to the world.

March 1, 1946

We have made ourselves what we are.

POONA,
March 2, 1946

Our faith should be like an ever-burning lamp which not only gives us light but also illuminates the surroundings.

POONA,
March 3, 1946

Selfishness keeps us worrying for ever.

POONA,
March 4, 1946

When will the Ganga go dry? The moment it cuts itself off from its source. Likewise the soul will wither up, if it is cut off from the Eternal Source of Life, i. e., God.

POONA,
March 5, 1946

Whether we have to cover one mile or a thousand, the first step always remains the first, for the second step cannot be taken until the first has been taken.

March 6, 1946

What greater wonder can one wish for than the star-spangled sky

and the inner firmament of the human heart equally adorned with excellences?

March 7, 1946

Reflection shows that heaven is here on earth, not in the sky above.

March 8, 1946

He who talks in tune with the rhythm of life is never weary.

March 9, 1946

He who always treads only the path of Truth never stumbles.

POONA,
March 10, 1946

An egoistical utterance should always be regarded as false.

March 11, 1946

To be guilty of a lapse, small or big, is certainly bad; but to hide it is even worse.

March 12, 1946

He who follows Truth through and through must always hold himself in readiness to die for it and, when the time comes, must lay down his life.

March 13, 1946

Not to own our mistake is to repeat it and to commit the additional sin of concealing it.

BOMBAY,
March 14, 1946

He alone can be a true satyagrahi who knows the art of living as well as of dying.

BOMBAY,
March 15, 1946

There is a limit even to the potency of Ramanama. Can a thief, for instance, ever expect to gain his object by taking to Ramanama?

POONA,
March 16, 1946

True happiness does not come from obtaining what one likes. It comes from cultivating a liking for what one dislikes.

POONA,
March 17, 1946

He whose eye says one thing, his tongue another, and his heart yet another, is a worthless fellow.

POONA,
March 18, 1946

When we know that Death may snatch us away at any time, what right have we to put off till tomorrow what we can do today?

POONA,
March 19, 1946

Good deeds let us do right now; the bad ones let us always keep on postponing.

POONA,
March 20, 1946

He who has God for his companion, why need he be sorrowful or anxious or look for another companion?

POONA,
March 21, 1946

To remember God and forget others is to see God even in them.

URULI-KANCHAN,
March 22 1946

The more I think about it, the more I am convinced that Ramanama, recited from the heart and with realization, is the panacea for all our ills.

URULI,
March 23 1946

Attachment, aversion and so on, are also diseases, and worse than bodily ailments. How can they be banished except by Ramanama?

URULI,
March 24 1946

Uncleanliness of the mind is far more dangerous than that of the body. The latter, however, is an indication of the former.

URULI,
March 25 1946

Who can describe the joy that lies in finding refuge in God?

URULI,
March 26 1946

A good thought is like fragrance.

URULI,
March 27 1946

All activities that are born of one and the same seed merge into one another.

URULI,
March 29 1946

When the ego dies, the soul awakes.

URULI,
March 30 1946

When the soul awakes, all sorrow vanishes.

ON WAY TO DELHI,
March 31 1946

He who fears, fails.

DELHI,
April 1, 1946

Man can smile away his sorrows; by crying he only multiplies them.

DELHI,
April 2, 1946

When a man sleeps under the sky, who can rob him?

DELHI,
April 3, 1946

There is not a single moment in life when man cannot serve.

DELHI,
April 4, 1946

Opposition makes the man.

DELHI,
April 5, 1946

If the inside is clean, the outside is bound to be so.

DELHI,
April 6, 1946

This day deserves to be written in letters of gold for, on April 6, 1919, India discovered herself.

DELHI,
April 7, 1946

When a man empties his heart, God enters it.

DELHI,
April 8, 1946

Ramanama helps only those who fulfil the conditions for its recitation.

DELHI,
April 9, 1946

He who has God on his side, has all.

DELHI,
April 10, 1946

He who has everything but God on his side, has nothing.

DELHI,
April 11, 1946

Living with God there are no difficulties.

DELHI,
April 12, 1946

God is our help as well as the Helmsman.

DELHI,
April 13, 1946

If all become teachers, who will be the pupils? So let us all be pupils.

A Thought for the Day, pp. 427-508

299. A MINISTER'S WOE

Dr. Katju[1] sends the following note[2] :

> Owing to the comparative failure to winter crops. . . rationing has been introduced in many urban areas in the United Provinces. . . The Government of India has suggested to Provincial Governments that in order to ensure continuous supplies, it would be desirable to enforce compulsory levies on agricultural produce in surplus districts. . . This question of a compulsory levy is greatly agitating the public mind. It is said that the control price fixed by the Government is too low and should be raised. The answer to that is, that the price structure is an all-India affair and it is not possible to raise the price in any particular province without affecting the structure as a whole. . . There is bound to be a black market where selfish people can buy foodstuffs at higher prices to satisfy their individual needs. No compulsion would be necessary if cultivators realize that it us their social and patriotic duty to do their utmost to feed their brothers and sisters. . . I ask you to appeal to him at this critical juncture not to hoard, not to sell in the black market but to supply in the greatest measure possible to the Government stores. . . We are doing our very best to encouragee the 'Grow More Food' and 'Grow More Vegitables' campaigns in the United Provinces. The various suggestions[3] made by you have all been adopted. . . .

This note from Dr. Katju is worthy of close attention by the *kisan*[4] and his guides as also urban people. The impending calamity can be turned to good use. Then it will be a blessing in disguise. Otherwise, curse it is and curse it wil remain.

Dr. Katju writes as a responsible minister. Therefore, people can either make or mar him. They can remove him and replace him by a better. But so long as ministers of the people's choice are in

[1] Kaliash Nath Katju (1887-1968); Minister of Justice, Industries and Labour in U. P. in 1937-39 and 1946-47; Governor of Orissa, 1947; Governor of West Bengal, 1948-51; Minister for Home Affairs and Law, Government of India; retrired as Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh

[2] Of which only extracts are reproduced here

[3] *Vide* "Famine of Grain and Cloth", "What Ought to be Done" and "Notes", sub-title " A Useful Pamphlet"

[4] Farmer

office as their servants, the people have to carry out their instructions. Every breach of low or instructions is not satyagraha. It can easily be *duragraha*[1] rather than satyagraha.

NEW DELHI, April 14, 1946

Harijan, 214-1946

300. INDIAN PRESSMEN v. *EUROPEAN*

An Indian journalist complains that our great men have a weakness for foreign journalists to the extent of excluding Indians at their Press conferences, and wonders whether I am myself free from this weakness. For myself, I can say without fear of contradiction that I have never been guilty of such partiality. Having suffered to good deal for the crime of being an Asiatic, I am not likely to be guilty of such weakness. And I must say that I know of no such example as my friend adverts to, if only because pubic men can ill afford to face a boycott by Indian Pressmen. What has happened with me and, so far as I am aware, with others too is that they and I found it necessary at times to give special interviews to foreign journalists when it has been found necessary in the interest of the common cause to gate messages across the seas. It is impossible in the present circumstances to do otherwise. It would be as foolish to invite a boycott by foreign journalists as by Indian. Any industrious person will find out that Indian journalists have been more often than not preferred by Indian pubic men again for the sake of the common cause. As a fellow journalist I would urge journalists, whether Indian or foreign, to prefer their particular causes to their employers' pockets or to descending to recriminations or personalities.

NEW DELHI, April 14, 1946

Harijan, 21-4-1946

301. GUJARAT HINDUSTANI PRACHAR SAMITI

Shri Amritlal Nanavati, the devoted disciple of Kakasaheb Kalelkar[2] carried on the propagation of Hindustani in Gujarat even when almost everyone was in jail. His work brings credit not only to himself but to Gujarat also. The propagation of Hindustani is not

[1] Literally 'obstinacy'

[2] D. B. Kalelkar, President of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha

opposed to the spread of Hindi; on the contrary it supplements it. Pure Hindi laden with Sanskrit words and written in the Nagari script is not the national language; nor is it the language stuffed with Persian words and written in the Urdu script. I have written elaborately on this subject[1] and I will not therefore dwell further on it. Here I may only say that the student of Hindi shoud learn Urdu and *vice versa*. Then only shall we be able to create the real national language. Hence this note is intended only for recording the forward step taken by Gujarat. The following two letters[2] would make amply clear the nature of the step which I have referred to.

[From Gujarat]

Harijanbandhu, 14-4-1946

302. WHAT A KHADI-LOVER SHOULD KNOW

The foregoing article[3] is full of useful information. Khadilovers will not have read it in vain.

Every day I am getting more and more convinced that we should as soon as possible stop using machine-made slivers. They present us from making the villages self-supporting and they will surely let us down at the time of real need. Again, it is not in the least consistent with our way of thinking that these slivers should go to or be sold at Madras or Bombay. Neither the poor nor the rich are benefited thereby. The only purpose served is that somehow khadi is supplied to those who wear it. I do not think that this is the aim of the Charkha Sangh. The experiment being carried on by Shri Vinoba these days is signficant and is worth knowing. One of his experiments eliminates carding. In the cotton-growing areas the cotton pods are picked up directly from the fields, the shell is removed, the seeds are separated from the cotton with the help of a roller and the cotton is spun straightway. Shri Vinobaji has

[1] *Vide* "Hindustani", 1-2-1942, Hindi + Urdu= Hindustani", 8-2-1942 & "Question Box", 1-3-1942 and "Ten Questions Regarding the National Language"

[2] The two letters by D. B. Kalelkar explaining the harmonious blending of Hindi and Urdu, are not translated here.

[3] In his letter, not reproduced here, Jugatram Dave had described in detail the enthusiasm and self-sufficiency of the khadi workers in the Surat district as also the new experiment of Dilkhush Diwanji.

coined the expression *punai* [1] to denote this process. But hand-carding has to be there and wil remain. There also carding is eliminated, if desired. This process simplifies the work to a great extent. The results so far are encouraging. The yarn spun by this process has already been woven. If this thing works well, much time and labour will be saved. Whatever the count of yarn that is spun by this process, it is found to be strong to that extent. Wherever men like Shri Diwanji are making experiments we should, I think watch the results carefully. Every worker should decide for himself how speedily these improvements can be introduced in his area.

As a general rule, machine-carding should cease immediately and slivers should not be sold beyond the *taluka*.

The second experiment is to reel the yarn in double thread before weaving. This experiment has already proved a success. Shri Vinoba is examining what further improvements are possible in this direction. Double-thread reeling is an easy process and all should learn it. Vinobaji is of the opinion that weaving will become easier and less costly if people who exchange yarn for cloth will give double-reeled yarn. That means, the yarn reeled in this way can compare well with mill-yarn. Such yarn does not need any starching.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 14-4-1946

303. QUESTION BOX[2]

Q. On what principle is the question of the salaries of ministers in Congress majoriy provinces going to be settled this time? Does the Karachi resolutionin this regard still hold? If the question is to be settled on the basis of the present high prices, is it possible, within the limits of their revenues, for the provincial budgets to increase the pays of all their servants threefold? If not, will it be proper for the ministers to be paid Rs. 1,500 while a *chaprasi* or a teacher is told to make the two ends meet on Rs. 15 and 12 p. m. and not make a fuss about it because Congress has to run the administration?

[1] From *puni*, meaning a sliver

[2] The Hindi original appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 21-4-1946

A. The question is apt. Why should a minister draw Rs. 1,500 and a *chaprasi* or a teacher Rs. 15 p. m.? But the question cannot be solved by the mere raising of it. Such differences have existed for ages. Why shoud an elephant require an enormous quantity of food and a mere grain suffice for the ant? The question carries its own answer. God gives to each one according to his need. If we could as definitely know the variations in the needs of men as those of the elephant and the ant, no doubts would arise. Experience tells us that differences in requirements do exist in society[1] . But we do not know the law governing them. All therefore that is possible today is to try to reduce the differences as far as possible. The reduction can be brought about by peacefu agitation and by the creation of public opinion. It cannot be done by force or by *duragraha* in the name of satyagraha. The ministers are the people's men. Their wants even before they took office were not those of *chaprasis*. I would love to see a *chaprasi* become worthy of holding the office of a minister and yet not increase his needs. It should also be clearly understood that no minister need draw up to the maximum of the salary fixed.

It is worth while pondering over one thing that arise out of the questions. Is it possible for the *chaprasi* to support himself and his family on Rs. 15 p. m. without taking bribe? Should he not be given enough to keep him above temptation? The remedy for this is that as far as possible we should we our own *chaprasis*. But even so if we need them we must pay them enough for their requirements. In this way the big gulf that exists between a minister and a *chaprasi* will be bridged.

It is another matter as to why the pay of the ministers has been raised from Rs. 500 to 1,500 p.m. But this is nothing as compared with, and does not solve, the main problem. With the solution of the latter it will *ipso facto* be solved.

NEW DELHI, April 14, 1946

Harijan, 21-4-1946

[1] The Hindi here adds: "unlike among ants and elephants. The requirements of different peoples and different communities cannot be the same."

304. NOTE TO SHYAMLAL[1]

April 14, 1946

I have read out everything to Poojya Bapuji. He says that in the evening Sarojini Devi sholuld give in writing what she had told him verbally. You should enquire from her what Smt. Gyankumari is going to do and what her scheme is.

From the Hindi original: Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

305. "ROMAN URDU"

If there is Roman Urdu, why nat Roman Hindi? The next step will be to Romanize the alphabets of all the languages of India. They have done this for Zulu which had no alphabet of its own. The attempt in India would be on a par with the attempt to foist Esperanto on the world. It cannot succeed in the near future. Believers in the Roman script in the place of all the known Indian scripts will have a circle of adherents but the movement cannot permeate the masses. It should not. Crores of people need not become so lazy as not to learn their own respective scripts. A laudable attempt is being made not to replace the alphabets in vogue in India but to teach Nagari in addition in the hope that in course of time millions may learn to read the Indian languages in the Nagari character. And since Urdu characters cannot for well-known reasons be replaced by Nagari, it should be learnt by all the patriots who love their country too well to find the learning of the Urdu alphabet a burden. All these attempts seem to me to be worthy.

With all my readiness to grasp new ideas, I have failed to find a substantial reason for inducing the spread of the Roman alphabet for the purpose of replacing the Nagari or Urdu script. It is true that in the Indian Army, the Roman alphabet has been largely used. I should hope that the Indian soldier, if he is saturated with the national spirit , will not mind learning both Nagari and Urdu charachers. After all, amid the ocean of Indian humanity, the Indian soldier is a mere drop. He must shed the Eng-lish mode. Probably the reason for Romanizing Urdu will be found in the English officer being too lazy to learn to read Urdu or Nagari characters.

NEW DELHI, April 15, 1946

Harijan, 21-4-1946

[1] Extracted from Amrit Kaur's letter to the addressee

306. MY ADVICE[1]

NEW DELHI,
April 15, 1946

Shri Prakasam[2] I have known as a worker for many years. He has somehow developed a philosophy that a public worker is entitled to receive purses from the public for his expenses. In pursuance of that phiosophy he has received a considerable sum in the shape of purses. Those who collected them have wired or written to me that they saw nothing wrong in so doing or in Shri Prakasam receiving them. Some have gone so far as to say that Shri Prakasam should even became a member of the Madras ministry, if not the Prime Minister.

With the greatest reluctance I must dissent from the whole view. I know that Shri Prakasam says that he has changed his mind. Sudden conversions are not unknown. But they are cast in a different mould. A ministership cannot be the end of genuine repentance and conversion. My advice to Shri Prakasam is that he should retire even from the Legislative Assembly and brood over the bad example he has set. There is ample field open to everyone for silent service which is often much greater than service done in the limelight.

Sardar Patel's Correspondence, Vol. II, pp. 250-1

307. SWEEPERS' STRIKE[3]

There are certain matters in which strikes would be wrong. Sweepers' grievances come in this category. I do not want to go into others here. My opinion against sweepers' strikes dates back to about 1897 when I was[4] in Durban. A general strike was mooted there and the question arose as to whether scavengers should join in it. My vote was registered against the proposal. Just as man cannot live

[1] This was published as a statement.

[2] T. Prakasam (1872-1957); President, Andhra Provincial Congress Committee; Chief Minister of Madras, 1946-47; Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, 1953-54

[3] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 21-4-1946.

[4] The Gujarati here adds: "practising law".

without air so too he cannot exist for long if his home and surroundings are not clean. One or other epidemic is bound to break out especially when modern drainage is put out of action.

Therefore I was perturbed when I read about the sweepers' strike in Bombay. Fortunately it has come to an end. I understand, however, that the sweepers, both men and women, refused to submit their case to arbitration.[1]

In spite of my close attachment to sweepers, better because of it, I must denounce the coercive methods they are said to have employed. They will thereby be losers in the long run. City folk will not always be cowed down. If they were, it would mean the collapse of municipal administration. Coercion cannot but result in the end in chaos. An impartial tribunal for settling disputes should always be accepted. Refusal is a sign of weakness. A Bhangi may not give up his work even for a day. And there are many other ways open to him of securing justice.

Towns people should on the other hand, forget that there is such a thing as untouchability and learn the art of cleaning their own and the city's drains, so that if a similar occasion arises they are not nonplussed and can render the necessary temporary service. They may not be coerced. I go so far as to say that the military who know this work should be used for such emergency. If swaraj is round the bend, we can now look upon the military as ours and need have no hesitation in taking all the constructive work we can from them. Up till now they have only been employed in indiscriminate firing on us. Today they must plough the land, dig wells, clean latrines and do every other constructive work that they can, and thus turn the people's hatred of them into love.

Now that the *hartal* [2] is at an end, it is the duty of everyone, to stretch out the hand of fellowship to the Bhangis, educate them, see that they are properly housed, permit them, like anyone else, to live wherever they choose, look into the matter of an equitable wage for them and see that justice is meted out to them without their having to

[1] The Gujarati here adds: "And the strike came to an end only after they had their demand accepted without obtaining a decision as to its propriety or otherwise."

[2] Stirke

demand it. If this is done throughout India we shall definitely prove ourselves worthy of swaraj and be able also to maintain it.

NEW DELHI, April 15, 1946

Harijan, 21-4-1946

308. A NOTE

DELHI,
April 15, 1946

I endorse the above resolution.[1]

M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi original: Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

309. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

DELHI,
April 15, 1946

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have instructed Rajkumari to reply to your letters. I cannot even write letters, because there is no time.

I have been thinking about Dilip. I have talked over the matter. I had a long talk with Usha's father as well. I feel the girl is nice. I even had a talk with her. The father says that the boy and the girl may meet and marry if they feel so inclined. As I am writing this, Sushila gives me your letter. Seeing that your letter is in English, it occurs to me that the matter should be kept from Delhi. I find the talk of dark and fair irksome. And I would not be happy if the decision to marry was guided by consideration of external beauty. Now you may do whatever you think fit. We should not do anything by which the father and daughter may be left in the lurch. Hence write to me a prompt reply.

Are you still having allergy rashes or have they subsided ?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Which read: "It has been decided that as a special ase, this year the time-limit for convening the ordinary annual meeting of the Board of Trustees should be extended by three months and that the meeting should be held befoe June 30, 1946."

310. NOTE TO BABA RAGHAVDAS[1]

NEW DELHI,
April 15, 1946

The suggestion for not accepting office greatly appeals to me. Carry on silently whatever constructive work, you can. These are difficult times. If all want power who will render silent service?

[From Hindi]
Hindustan, 16-4-1946

311. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

April 15, 1946[3]

In a moment of introspection the poet asks himself:

> O man, why have you left off taking God's name? You have not given up anger or lust or greed, but you have forgotton truth. What a tragedy to save worthless pennies and to let go the priceless gem of God's love! Why would you not, O fool, renounce all vanities and throw yourself on the grace of God alone?

This does not mean that if one has wealth, it should be thrown away and wife and children should be turned out of doors. It simply means that one must give up attachment to these things and dedicate one's all to God and make use of His gifts to serve Him only. It also means that if we take His name with all our being we are automatically weaned from all lust, untruth and baser passions.

[1] Raghavendra Sheshappa Pachapurkar (1896-1958); popularly known as Baba Raghavadas; hailed from Konkan but settled down in Gorakhpur; joined Congress in 1920; established various institutions for social, moral uplift of the people; started Geeta Press at Gorakhpur.

The addressee, who had just been released from jail, met Gandhiji and apprised him of the scramble for power among Congressmen. It being his silence day Gandhiji replied in writing.

[2] Reproduced from Pyarelal's report "Prayer Discourses"

[3] From *The Hindustan Times*, 16-4-1946

In the first *shloka* [1] of *Ishopanishad* that is repeated every day at the beginning of the prayer, one is asked to dedicate everything to God and then use it to the required extent. The principal condition laid down is that one must not covet what belongs to another. These two maxims contain the quintessence of the Hindu religion.

In another *shloka* which is recited during the morning prayer it is said:

> I do not ask for temporal power, nor do I ask to go to heaven, nor even to attain *nirvana*[2] . What I ask for is that I may be able to relieve the pain of those who are in pain.

The pain might be physical, mental or spiritual. Spiritual pain due to slavery to one's passions is sometimes greater even than physical.

But God does not come down in person to relieve suffering. He works through human agency. Therefore, prayer to God to enable one to relieve the sufferings of others must mean a longing and readiness on one's part to labour for it.

The prayer, you will note, is not exclusive. It is not restricted to one's own caste or community. It is all-inclusive. It comprehends the whole of humanity. Its realization would thus mean the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

Harijan, 28-4-1946

312. MESSAGE FOR I. N. A.[3]

[Before *April 16, 1946*][4]

Gandhiji's reply covered not only the I. N. A. but all Indian army men. Although the I. N. A. men had declared open rebellion under Netaji's[5] lead the spirit of rebellion was not confined to them. It had permeated even the

[1] Stanza

[2] Salvation

[3] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" dated New Delhi, 16-4-1946. Accroding to the source, Sardar Ramsing Rawal met Gandhiji and asked for a message for the Indian National Army.

[4] *ibid*

[5] Subhas Chandra Bose (1897-1945); General Secretary of the Indian National Congress, 1927, its President, 1938 and 1939; resigned from Congress and founded the All-India Forward Bloc. He was placed under house arrest but escaped to Germany 1941; organized Indian Independence League in South East Asia and the Indian National Army.

Indian Army ranks. Some of the latter had seen him at Poona and sought his advice[1] . Gandhiji had told them that it was open to them to give notice to the authorities that though they were in their pay their loyalty was mortgaged to India, not to the King of England. Hitherto they had yielded obedience to military orders and been prepared even to shoot down their countrymen to order. But now that the spirit of independence had taken possession of them they would do so no more under a foreign Government's order.

For the I. N. A. men theref were two alternatives. They could serve free India as soldiers-in-arms or they could convert themselves into soldiers of non-violence if they were convinced that non-violence was the higher and the more efficacious way. They should make use of their training and discipline to introduce non-violent organization among the masses, learn spinning and become veteran constructive workers. If they did that, they would set a glorious example to the whole world.

The I. N. A. men have shown great strength, heroism and resourcefulnes. But I must confess that their achievements have not dazzled my eyes. To die without killing requires more heroism. There is nothing very wonderful in killing and being killed in the process. But the man who offers his neck to the enemy for execution but refuses to bend to his will shows courage of a far higher type.

Troublous times lie ahead of us. Our non-violence has broght us o the gate of independence. Shall we renounce it after we have entered that gate? I for one am firmly convinced that non-violence of the brave, such as I have envisaged, provides the surest and the most efficacious means to face foreign aggression and internal disorder just as it has done for winning independence.

The British were going to quit. What place would India have in the comity of nations? Would she be satisfied with being a fifth-rate power like China? China was independence only in name. India would have long to wait before she could become a first-class military power.

And for that she would have to go under the tutelage of some Western power. A trully non-violent India will have nothing to fear any foreign power nor will it look to British navy and air force for her defence. I know that we have not as yet the non-violence of the brave.

Harijan, 21-4-1946

[1] *Vide* "Extract From Talk With A Soliders"

313. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

April 16, 1946

Speaking after prayers on Tuesday evening Gandhiji explained the meaning of swadeshi. It hurt him deeply to see that after 25 years of repeeated exhortations the people had still not taken to swadeshi. Some people regarded Indian mill cloth as swadeshi. In his opinion, khadi alone was real swadeshi. The machinery in the mills was not made in India. Supposing in a free India they had their own engineers and were able to produce the machinery in India, he would still not call it swadeshi. He did not want anything that might ruin the villages. Honest servants of the people would devote themselves to the service of the villages and to that purpose become poor with the poorest.

Gandhiji expected all of them to take at least to khadi. What was the use of their attending the prayers, if they did not follow what they heard there? He had cried himself hoarse over khadi for the last 25 years. But his non-violence taught him that he was to go on proclaiming what he considered to be the truth. It was not for him to lose temper or feel disappointed if the people did not listen to him.

They might well ask him how they were to wear khadi when they could not get it in the khadi bhandars. Lack of khadi in the bhandars was of his doing. Just as foreign cloth even if it appeared to be cheap was not cheap in reality, similarly khadi produced at one place and sold at another could not serve the purpose that it was intended to serve. It was no use their wearing khadi without grasping the spirit behind it. Khadi had been called the livery of swaraj. It gave the wearer a certain respectable status.

But if khadi was to be the symbol of non-violence and the livery of swaraj it had to be produced and used locally. Therefore he had asked the bhandars not to import khadi from other provinces. He had also asked them to sell it in exchange for yarn and to see that those who span for wages also wore khadi themselves. They were not to accept the yarn from those spinners who span for wages but did not wear khadi themselves even though it might result in a temporary shortage of khadi. People were taking to the idea, but during the transition stage, some inconvenience might be experienced. The remedy was that they should spin for themselves and even engage handloom-weavers for weaving khaddar. There were many rich people in Delhi who could easily undertake this work.

The Hindustan Times, 17-4-1946

314. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

GANDHIJI'S CAMP, NEW DELHI,
April 17, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

I am writing to you on behalf of Shri Haridas Mitra.[1] You may remember that H. E. stayed the sentence of death on this young man a few months ago.[2]

I enclore a copy of a communique[3] which appeared recently in the newspapers. In view of this it would appear that Haridas Mitra should be eligible for pardon and release. I enclose a short note on Shri Harias Mitra's case which his yound wife has sent me.

I do hope he may come under the category indicated in the communique.[4]

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 51

315. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

GANDHIJI'S CAMP, NEW DELHI,
April 17, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

Thank you for yours of the 16th instant. To me it seemed clear that the

[1] Husband of Subhas Chandra Bose's niece Bela. He was sentenced to death in Bengal under the Enemy Agents Ordianance for helping or harbouring agents landed from enemy submarine. Consequent upon Gandhiji's intervention and appeals the death sentence was commuted to transportation for life. For Gandhiji's earlier correspondence.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Which said that the British Government had decided "as an act of clemency not to institute further criminal proceedings against persons alleged to be guilty of collborating with the enemy in the British territories of South East Asia where no astrocity or brutality is involved".

[4] The addressee, however, replied on April 22 that "the policy referred to in the communique. . . relates to cases which occurred in territories actually under Japanese occupation. It does not cover the case of Haridas Mitra who was convicted for assisting the enemy in India."

Havildar[1] had been executed but the poor widowed mother refuses to believe it. Hence my troubling you.

I now enclose a telegram[2] received last evening from Sialkot. This is the only intimation Gandhiji has and he knows nothing about the man sentenced to death. In case, however, a precious life should go which should have been reprieved, I send you the wire of immediate kind enquiry.[3]

Yours sincerely,

AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 82-3

316. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

DELHI,

April 17, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

I have your letter. I do not wish to criticize you. I accept what you have done. I plead guilty to your complaint that I stopped [you][4] from going. I also understand your accepting money from Brother. I want to tel you only one thing. Build up excellent health and live as you wish to.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 510

[1] Havildar N. M. Mukherjee was executed on September 27, 1943.

[2] From Deshraj, a condemned prisoner in Sialkot Jail, entreating Gandhiji to ask Lord Wavell to stay his execution so as to give him a chance to prove his innocence.

[3] The addressee's reply of the same dated read: "Deshraj was convicted by the Sessions Court for taking part in a series of five murders. The sentence was confirmed by the High Court, and a petition submitted to His Excellency was considered and rejected in February. I am afraid there is nothing further that can be done about it."

[4] The source has "her", obviously a slip. *Vide* also "Letter to Amtussalaam", 25-3-1946

317. LETTER TO MANIBHAI DESAI[1]

[*April 17, 1946*][2]

I got your and Chi. Dhiru's beautiful letter. Continue to write to me and give details. Admit only as many patients as you can easily look after. The most important thing is prevention of disease, and if we can teach people that art, I will regard our mission of nature cure to have fully succeeded. Please, therefore, teach it to all, boys and girls and grown-up people.

No matter from what infectious disease a patient may be suffering, if the tub has been cleaned with burning-hot ash after that patient has bathed in it, I would, if asked, unhesitatingly bathe in it. For breakfast, I think it will be better if you eat home-made crisp biscuits which require to be chewed, together with fruit, instead of eating *ghensh*[3]. This may be followed with milk. Or you may drink milk at noon. This is only by way of suggestion. I am glad that Joshi has arrived there. Ask Gokhale to write to me. I am here up to the 24th at any rate[4] . I do not know what will happen after that.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 2754. Courtesy: Manibhai Desai

318. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR

DELHI,

April 17, 1946

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

I have your letter. I have not deliberately omitted to answer any [question]. Tell Viramma to be cautious. I will write to her if I get the time.

[1] Manager in charge of general administartion at the nature cure clinic at Uruli Kanchan

[2] From Pyarelal Papers

[3] Porridge cooked in water or whey

[4] Gandhiji had arrived in New Delhi on April 1 in response to a invitation from Lord Pethick-Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps and A. V. Alexander—Members of the British Cabinet Mission—and the Viceroy. *Vide* "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 23-3-1946. He left for Simla on May 1.

You may engage a music teacher if it is right. Chimanlal[1] should decide it.

Do not undertake a three-day fast. You should observe silence,[2] talking when work demands.

It seems that Kambleji has stayed on with Dastanji[3]. Ask me if anything has been left out.

You can give this to Viramma to read. I had proposed to write more letters, but I find I cannot.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 91034. Also C. W. 9158. Courtesy: Prabhakar

319. LETTER TO RAMMANOHAR LOHIA

DELHI,
April 17, 1946

BHAI RAMMANOHAR[4],

Bhai Humayun[5] is bringing this letter. I had thought that you would proceed furthur after meeting me in Delhi. And when you went to Calcutta I thought that you did so because you regarded it your foremost duty to perform your father's *shraddha*. I am sure that we shall meet somewhere at some mutually convenient time. Does anyone attend to the social service programme of your father?

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. RAMMANOHAR LOHIA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Pepers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Chimanlal N. Shah, Manager, Sevagram Ashram

[2] The Hindi original of what follows can also be interpreted to read 'and stop talking'.

[3] V. V. Dastane

[4] (1910-67): one of the founders of the All-India Congress Socialist Party; Secretary of the Foreign Department of A.I . C. C. (1936-38); resigned from Congress in 1948; General Secretary, Praja Socialist Party (1953-54): Member, Lok Sabha (1963-67). He was released from jail along with Jayaprakash Narayan on April 12.

[5] Humayun Kabir (1906-69); Minister of education in the Government of India, 1957-65; Chairman, University Grants Commission; later resigned from Congress and founded the Bangla Congress

320. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

April 17, 1946[2]

It was the fault of the parents, Gandhiji remarked.[3] He had never seen children playing in a church or a mosque.

True culture requires that there should be perfect peace in the prayer ground at the time of the prayer.

There should be an atmosphere of solemnity as in a church, a mosque or a temple. He knew that many of the temples were full of clamour. It had hurt him deeply.

We go to the temple to worship not the stone or the metal image but God who resides in it. The image becomes what man makes of it. It has no power independently of the sancitity with which it is invested by the worshipper. Therefore everyone, including children, should observe perfect silence at the time of prayer.[4]

Harijan, 28-4-1946

321. HE LIVES

Death has removed not only from us but from the world one of India's best sons.[5] That he loved India passionately, everyone who knew him could see. When I saw him last in Madrass, he could talk of nothing but India and her culture for which he lived and died.[6] I am sure that he had no thought of himself even when he seemed to be on his death-bed. His Sanskrit learning was as great if no greater than his English. I must not permit myself to say more, save this that though we differed in politics, our hearts were one and I could never think that his patriotism was less than that of the tallet patriot. Sastri the man lives though his body is reduced to ashes.

NEW DELHI, April 18, 1946

Harijan, 21-4-1946

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's report "Prayer Discoures"

[2] From *The Hindustan Times*, 19-4-1946

[3] A couple of children who had been romping about had disturbed the prayer meeting, which upset Gandhiji.

[4] As a result of his criticism there was a marked improvement in the behaviour of children from the next day.

[5] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri had passed away on April 17, 1946, in Madras.

[6] *Vide* "Talk with V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 22-1-1946, "Talk with V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 30-1-1946 and "Talk with V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 4-2-1946

322. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

HARIJAN MANDIR,
NEW DELHI,
April 18, 1946

DEAR PRAKASAM,

I wrote the enclosed note[1] for *Harijan*. It absolutely represents my confirmed view which I told you personally. But the members of the Working Committee were here last night, among them Pandit Nehru and others. They had seen a copy of my note and they all thought that I should not publish it. I defended it strenuously but on turning it over in my mind last night I came to the conclusion that I would be taking perhaps an undue advantage of my public position to air my personal view. Instead, therefore, of allowing the note to be published in *Harijan*, I feel I should satisfy my conscience by sending a copy to you and letting you make what use you like of it. I would, however, like to emphasize the fact that if you allow yourself to be chosen as Prime Minister or hold any office or even be a member of Parliament, it will be bad for the country and of course for yourself.

As I have said in the note, it will be apparent to you that your reconsideration against your minstership of your philosophy will be perfectly valueless and ludicrous.

Yours,
BAPU

SHRI T. PRAKASAM
RAJAH STREET
THYAGARAYANAGAR
MADRAS

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* " My Advice", 15-4-1946

323. TELEGRAM TO V. S. SANKARAN[1]

April 18, 1946

REGARD ME EQUAL SHARER IN YOUR LOSS BUT CAN MAN LIKE SASTRI DIE. HE LIVES IN HIS WORK.[2]

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

324. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

DELHI,
April 18, 1946

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Why does Gomati[3] persistently fall ill? How is it that none of you can resist illness? It appears as though you had made illness a darling visitor! Why so? I am sending this to the Ashram as I learn from Krishnachandra's letter today that you are likely to have reached there.

I have carefully gone through your writing on the Roman script. I appreciate the pains you have taken over it and also the erudition that is behind it. But the thing does not seem to me to be opportune. We are not immediately seized of the subject. If it is being discussed the discus-sions are confined to pundits. I see no use of it for the people. Besides, I have already expressed a contrary opinion,[4] which has nothing to do with your pamphlet. It was with reference to a venture they had planned here, which, I beleive, never came off. Anyway, for the present, I have time to dictate not more than what I have done.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. KISHGRELALBHAI MASHRUWALA

SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In reply to the addressee's telegram of April 18, 1946 which read : "Regret inform you my father V. S. Srinivasa Sastry expired tonight ten forty five."

[2] For Gandhiji's tribute to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, *vide* "He Lives"

[3] Addressee's wife

[4] *Vide* "My Advice", 15-4-1946

325. TALK WITH MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA[1]

April 18, 1946

You would have covered me with shame if you had come to me instead of my going to you.

Why do you lend a ready ear to such gossip?[2] Why can't you take a leaf out of my book? If someone comes to me and talks to me about the Indian States, I send him off to Pandit Nehru. If it is about internal politics of the Congress, I give him Azad's address. In this way I have rigorously restricted my ambit of work. Even so, I have hardly a moment's respite. Unless I did that would have to give up the desire to live up to the age of 125 which I must not do, if any dream of non-violence as a world-conquering force is to be realized. You are a man of religion and purity of soul. It should need no argument on my part to convince you that if you completely empty your mind of outward things and fixing all your thoughts on Him inwardly pray, you will have more than contributed your share to the struggle for independence. You must complete your century. It is perfectly feasible if you will listen to my advice.

Malaviya followed Gandhiji's remarks with a. . . smile. . . "I must not engage you in talk any further," he remarked, "I know you are always busy."

Harijan, 28-4-1946

326. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[3]

April 18, 1946[4]

As a result of his remarks[5] children had ceased to play about in the prayer ground today and this quick response from parents and children evoked congratulations from Gandhiji and he emphasized the necessity of children coming to prayers in clean clothes and with clean bodies. Next he drew their attention to the growing number of newspapers and the undue importance that was being attached to

[1] Reporting this in his article "Young at Eighty-five " Pyarelal writes: "On reaching Delhi he wanted to come and see Gandhiji in Bhangi Nivas, but Gandhiji anticipated him by meeting him at 5, Canning Road."

[2] Gandhiji had heared that a lot of people came and disturbed Malaviyaji's peace by retailing all kinds of idle rumours.

[3] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

[4] From *The Hindustan Times*

[5] *Vide* "Speech At Prayer Meeting", 17-4-1946

them by the people.[1]

The newspaper man has become a walking plague. In the East as in the West newspapers are fast becoming the people's Bible, Koran, Zend Avesta and *Bhagavad Gita*, rolled into one. All that appear in the papers is looked upon as God's truth. For instance, a peper predicts that riots are coming, that all the stricks and knives in Delhi have been sold out and the news throws everybody into a panic. That is bed. Another newspaper reports the occurrence of riot here and there and blames the police of taking sides with the Hindus in one place and the Muslims in another. Again, the man in the street is upset. I want you all to shed this craven fear. It is not becoming of men and women, who believe in God and take part in the prayers, to be afraid of anyone.

What if riots do actually take place and some people get killed? Everyone must die one day. I will expect you to go in the midst of the fracas and tell the rowdies to be sensible. A friend remarked in the course of the conversation the other day that whilst it was poor rowdies that killed and got killed in the riots, the real responsibility lay not with them but with educatad people, real responsibility lay not with them but with educated people, some of them occupying respectable places in society. It is they who incite others to violence from behind the scenes. It is for these educated and cultured people to stop the riots by laying down their lives in the process if necessary. Even a little girl can go up to the hooligans and tell them to desist. Most probably they will. But supposing they do not and kill her, it will be well with her all the same. She will live through her pure sacrifice. It is always well with those who believe in God and try to do His will to the best of their ability.

Independence is coming. But our lungs appear to have lost the capacity to breathe the air freedom. But when freedom actually comes, you will find that the loss of the capacity was only apparent. Maybe, the first impact of freedom will give you a rude shock, and before you regain your equilibrium some undesirable things might take place. All that you need to do is to keep yourselves on the alert and undaunted and it will be well with you in the end.

The Hindustan Times, 19-4-1946, and *Harijan*, 28-4-1946

[1] This paragraph is from *The Hindustan Times*.

327. TALK WITH A FRIEND[1]

[Before *April 19, 1946*][2]

In talking to a friend the other day who was suggesting an expedient to solve the political tangle, contrary to his inner conviction of the wrong of it, Gandhiji told him that it was unworthy for a man of faith ever to believe that anything but evil could be born out of a poisonous germ. The friend replied, "The Cross was poisonous, full of hatred and ill will and yet redemption camed out of it."

That is not my interpretation of the Cross. There was no poison there, no hatred, no fear. It was the way of self-suffering and therefore of love and hence the story of redemption.

Harijan, 28-4-1946

328. SOVEREIGN REMEDY

. . . Your new note in nature cure—reciting of Ramanama as the sure remedy—leaves me completely bewildered. The modern youth refrains from challenging some of your views out of toleration. Their attitude may be summed up in the following : 'Well, Gandhiji has taught us a whole lot of things; he has elevated us to unimaginable heights; he has, above all, brought swaraj within our reach; why not 'suffer' his Ramanama 'fad'?

Inter alia you have said the following :

"No matter what the ailment from which a man may be suffering, recitation of Ramanama from the heart is the sure cure" (*Harijan,* 3-3-'46)[3]

"Man should seek out and be content to confine he means of cure to the five elements of which the body is composed, i. e., earth, water, *akasha*[4], sun and air" (*Harijan,* 3-3-'46).[5]

"And my claim is that the recitation of Ramanama is a sovereign remedy for our physical ailments also" (*Harijan,* 7-4-'46).[6]

At first, when you introduced this new note in the system of nature cure, I thought you were merely putting in other words a kind of psycho-therapy or Christian Science based on faith. . . . I interpreted my first quotation above in that light. The second sentence quoted above is difficult to grasp. After all, it

[1] Reproduced from Amrit Kaur's report entitled "The Lesson of the Cross", dated "New Delhi, Good Friday, 1946". Good Friday fell on April 19, 1946.

[2] *ibid*

[3] *Vide* "Nature Cure Treatment"

[4] Ether

[5] *Vide* "Nature Cure Treatement"

[6] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting, Bombay", 15-3-1946

is physically impossible for medicines to be composed of anything but the five elements to which you refer, and which you say must be the sole means of cure.

If faith is what you insist on I have no quarrel; it is necessary for the patient to co-operate in getting well also by faith. But it is difficult to accept that faith alone would cure "our physical ailment also". Two years ago, my little daughter was struck by infantile paralysis; it was the most modern treatment that saved the child from becoming a cripple for life. You would agree that it would not avail to ask a two-and-a-half-year-old child to recite Ramanama to be rid of infantile paralysis; and I would like to see you persuade any mother to do the recitation (and recitation alone) on her child's behalf.

The authority from Charka[1] that you have quoted in the issue of March 24,[2] leaves me cold; you have taught me not to accept anything, however ancient and however authoritative it may be, if it does not appeal to my heart.

Thus writes a teacher of youth.[3] While I am eager to be in the good graces of the student world, my eagerness has well-defined limitations. For one, I must please them with the rest of the world, which is admittedly much larger. In no case should a servant of the public pander to any person or class.

If those whom my correspondent represents really think that anything I have done has taken India to unimaginable heights, they should extend to my so-called fads slightly more than toleration. Toleration by itself will do them and me no good. It may easily promote lazineses in them, and false self-assurance in me. Let them think well before rejecting even a fad. Faddists are not always to be despised. Fads have before now made owners mount the gallows.

Ramanama has the flavour of faith-healing and Christian Science; yet, it is quite distinct from them. Recitation of Ramanama is a mere symbol of the reality for which it stands. If one of knowingly filled with the presence of God within, one is that moment free from all ailments, physical, mental or moral. That we do not see the type in life is not to disprove the truth of the statement. My argument is admittedly useless for those who have no faith in God.

Christian scientists, faith-healers and psychotherapists may, if they will, bear witness somewhat to the truth underlying Ramanama. I cannot take the reader a long way with me through reason. How is one to prove to a person who has never tasted sugar, that sugar is sweet, except by asking him to taste it?

I must not reiterate here the conditions attendant upon the heart

[1] One of the principal exponents of the Ayurvedic system of medicine

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Frederick Burrows", 10-3-1946

[3] Only excerpts from the letter are reproduced here.

recitation of the sacred syllable.

The authority of Charka is good for those who have some belief in Ramanama. Other may dismiss the authority from their consideration.

Children are irresponsible. Ramanama is undoubtedly not for them. They are helpless beings at the mercy of their parents. They show what tremendous responsibility parents bear to them and society. I have known parents who have trifled with their children's diseases even to the extent of trusting them to their (the parent's) recitation of Ramanama.

Lastly, the argument about everything, even medicines, being from *panch mahabhutas*[1] betrays a hasty confusion of thought. I have only to point it out to remove it.

NEW DELHI, April 19, 1946

Harijan, 28-4-1946

329. LETTER TO UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM

NEW DELHI,
April 19, 1946

MY DEAR UTTIMCHAND,

This I must write to you in English. You are wrong. When you say you are right and I do not understand you, I go to my betters and seek confirmation of your prop[osition]. If they do not confirm you, I pass their opinion on to you.

What you will have to do is to teach me your conundrums when I am free to take a few lessons from you. Heaven knows when that time will come.

Receipt of the money sent by you was acknowledged on 11-3-46. It is to be found in my register book.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Thanks for the interesting puzzle.

SHRI UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM

BOMBAY BAKERY, HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Pyarelal

[1] The five elements

330. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

DELHI,
April 19, 1946

CHI. JIVANJI[1] ,

I saw the sample slips printed with blocks for the Urdu edition of *Harijan Sevak.* They are all right. I shall have nothing to say regarding the different sizes, for you will be using them according to your requirements. It is true that you had shown them to me before proceeding further.

How bad it would be if we could not publish in book form the writing received from Ashadevi[2] ! I think we must if necessary, make arrangements with some other printer and publish them. If even that is not possible, let me know.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9966. Also C. W. 6940. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

331. LETTER TO SURENDRA B. MEDH

[*April 19, 1946*][3]

CHI. MEDH,

It would be unreasonable of you to except a letter from me. I can do service and live long only if all people spare me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4977

[1] Manager, Navajivan Press
[2] Wife of E. W. Aryanayakum
[3] The letter is written below another of this date.

332. LETTER TO JAYAKRISHNA P. BHANSALI

DELHI,
April 19, 1946

CHI. BHANSALI,

I have gone through your letter three times—twice word by word and the third time for dictating a reply. By clinging to the letter of the pledge we often come to observe it only in form. The spirit is the real thing which alone makes us aware of our understanding of it. Flawless observance is possible only after we achieve a harmonious blend of the letter and the spirit. It has always been painful to me because I have expressed such an opinion in the context of my vow to abjure milk. I see there is a subtle pride in being content with the observance of a vow in its spirit. I therefore do not deceive myself. Literally according to my vow I gave up animal milk for all time, but since by milk is generally meant buffalo's or cow's milk and also because at the time of taking the vow I was not at all aware of any other milk, I took advantage of my own ignorance and started taking goat's milk. Even then it did hurt my soul but some how I consoled my mind. Had I been able to stick to my resolve of abjuring all animal milk, possibly I might have been freed of this body. Nevertheless, my heart bears testimony to the fact that I have fulfilled my vow in letter as well as in spirit. If I were to apply the same rule to you, and I ought to, you should observe your pledge literally and stick to the Ashram. And by staying on you will also be observing it in spirit.

Whereas other people felt that the movement[1] had been in vain I never had any such feeling. Failure has no place in the vocabulary of satyagraha. Satyagraha has endless time [to operate]. It may not therefore care for [any outside] help. There is much more to it than I have said here. If I begin to expound it I will have to devote a lot of time to it, which you also would not want me to do. Let me therefore be quite having shown you what your dhrama is.

[1] The "Quit India" movement of 1942

I think you have raised a very good point. I am not shocked by it at all.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHANSALIBHAI

ASHRAM, SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

333. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,

April 19, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

I have your letter. My order is that you will do as you like. I am not Almighty. So you can go wherever you want. Zohra[1] is [like] your daughter. You can take her wherever you wish. Badshah Khan[2] is here. For the present he will stay here. Till now I have not been able to talk to him. I shall be glad if you keep good health. I find myself very busy. I shall be here up to the 25th.

Blessings to Zohra.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 511

334. LETTER TO A. K. BHAGWAT

NEW DELHI,

April 19, 1946

BHAI BHAGWAT[3],

I have your letter. Everything will be all right if you remain content with yourself. There is scope for change of point of view regarding whole cereal meal. About this later. As regards the tubs I shall try to obtain more. Till then do what you can. You must have been what I wrote about infection.[4] By all means go to help Appa if

[1] Wife of Akbar Chavda

[2] Abdul Ghaffar Khan

[3] Chief Medical instructor at the nature cure clinic at Uruli Kanchan

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. B. Pattabhai Sitaramayya", 22-1-1946

you can get away [from there]. See that work which has been started do not suffer. I look upon this work as too important to be interrupted.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 2752. Courtesy: Manibhai Desai

335. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

GANDHI CAMP, NEW DELHI,
April 19, 1946

DEAR BROTHER ANAND,

Pujya Bapu has your telegram. He wishes happiness to you both and hopes you will serve the country. He hopes that marriage[1] might improve your hearing. Bapu did not think it necessary to send a wire. Hope you are both well.

Yours,

AMRIT KAUR

From a microfilm of the Hindi: Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

336. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

April 19, 1946

Speaking after prayers on Friday, Gandhiji referred to his latest love—nature cure. He had believed in it for years. He felt that what he had shared with his freind and close associates so far should be shared with the masses poor villagers. He had been thinking of the villagers in particular in connection with the Kasturba[2] work.

Medical help had become an elaborate and costly affair nowadays. Those who could afford it called in a doctor who wrote out a prescription in a language unintelligible to the layman. The latter carried the prescription to the chemist, took the medicine and counted upon it to cure him. Apart from the utility of this method of treatment, it was beyond the reach of the masses.

During his recent tour of Bengal and Madras lots of people had joined the prayers and in the mass singing of *Ramdhun*. He had since introduced Ramanama in

[1] The addressee's second, to Gangi. His first wife, Vidya, had passed away in 1944.

[2] Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust

nature cure as a panacea for all ailments whether physical, mental or spiritual.

Physical ailments, Gandhiji continued, were not always the most serious. Those born of anger, lust, greed, infatuation, etc., were worse.

Bad as is the loss of a limb, the loss of reason would be worse. Ramanama when it is uttered not merely by the lips but proceeds from the heart is the sovereign remedy for the triple woes[1] to which man is subject. Reason follows the heart. It does not guide it. A pure heart is thus the most essential requisite not only for mental health but for physical too, and that could be had only through waiting on God—repeating Ramanama.

No remedy on earth, Mahatma Gandhi proceeded, could cure all physical ailments. But Ramanama enabled one to put up with suffering bravely and calmly when it could not cure. Ramanama also stood for the natural and right way of living. That was why he had taken to nature cure in the evening of his life and thereby added another to his numerous burdens.

The Hindutan Times, 20-4-1946

337. TALK WITH S. A. AYER[2]

[Before *April 20, 1946*][3]

Shri S. A. Ayer of the Azad Hind Government came to discuss with Gandhiji the other day the question of issuing a news bulletin in the Roman script for the I. N. A. as proposed by the central I. N. A. Relief Committee. . .. "The men had got used to the Roman script while they were in the Indian Army and so retained it when they were operating in South East Asia."

You forget that you are not working in South East Asia today, but in India. May I ask if these men ever write to their wives and children in the Roman script?

Never, they write one and all in Hindi, Urdu, Tamil or any of the other Indian scripts.

This means that they all know one or the other Indian script. I could understand your wanting to adopt the Roman script as a temporary makeshift if we had no script of our own. But to adopt the Roman script for Hindustani which has got two acknowledged scripts

[1] Viz., physical, mental and spiritual

[2] Reproduced from Pyarelal's report entitled "Cultural Conquest and Roman Script" dated "New Delhi, April 20, 1946"

[3] *ibid*

is only a sign of the psychological conquest that the English have made over us. In order to conquer the English who had conquered you, you adopted the English garb, i. e., Roman script, for your bulletins in South East Asia. You should have discarded this symbol of the cultural conquest and insisted on having your bulletin in the two Indian scripts rather than in Roman. The latter was primarilly adopted for the sake of the British officers and men who had to learn Hindustani in order to rule over us. They solved the difficulty presented by the permutations and combinations of the Urdu alphabet and tempted us by their typerwriters, telegraph and printing machines which use Roman script. We succumbed. We may not hark back to the symbol of our cultural conques when we are out to end India's slavery *in toto*. When you served in the British army it was with the prospect of getting rewards in the form of decorations, comfortable pay and pensions, grants of land, etc. But now you don't want such temptations. You serve only for the independence and honour of your country. You do not want the easy way.

India will soon have independence. Do not think that there will be one script for Hindustani all at once. It will come when you and I have honestly and diligently learnt both the scripts—not before. That is the least price we have to pay for independence.

In support of his argument he cited the parallel of South Africa where they have everything in two languages. The Government gazette is published in two languages and so are the textbooks for use in schools.

And it is not called partition, but Union of South Africa. To maintain this union they have four capitals one for each province. That is the way of a free and freedom-living people.

Shri Ayer agreed and said, "We shall have the Hindustani bulletin in Nagari and Urdu scripts, not in Roman.

Harijan, 5-5-1946

338. GOSHALAS AND PINJRAPOLES

The following condensation from a scheme propounded by Sardar Sir Datar Singh[1] will be of general interest:

> It is estimated that there are at present 3,000 *goshalas* in the country with a population of over six lakh head of cattle. These organizations, besides taking up the improvement of their institutions as envisaged by the Government of India, in the

[1] Agricultural expert and pioneer of animal husbandry in the Punjab

present threatened famine conditions can come to the country's help by production of more milk in the institutions. The number of well-organized *gashalas* and *pinjrapoles* can be taken as half, i. e., 1,500. The cattle may be classified as:

1.	Good dairy type 20%	1,20,000
2.	Fair type—good for breeding, though not highly productive 20%	1,20,000
3.	Old, infirm and unfit for further breeding 60%	3,60,000

It is the first and second class that could be exploited for milk production and breeding. Out of these 2,40,000 half will be milch and half dry.

Better feeding, management, organization, etc., would mean an increase in production of 1,20,000 seers or, say, 3,000 maunds of milk per day.

In order to achieve this end immediately, a skeleton plan is suggested below:

1. Productive animals should be separated from those that are aged, infirm or otherwise useless. The latter should be removed to rural areas, preferably to forest *rakhs* [1] in order to relieve congestion and allow better feeding of productive. Their care, as well as that of dry stock farms, may be in the hands of a committee.

2. For the achievement of this end, the stock should be divided in the following manner:

a. Milch animals about to calve should be kept at the *goshala* premises.

b. Dry animals fit for breeding should be kept on the lands, if any, belonging to the *goshala* in the neighbourhood or may provided for at a place from where they could be returned when about to calve, and the animals which go dry in the *goshala*, should be sent there.

3. The congestion relieved, *goshalas* and *pinjrapoles* will have enough space to house cattle properly, feed them scientifically and carry out other improvements.

4. To further help, encourage and stimulate these institutions in this direction, it is suggested to help them financially by giving them 50% reduction on concentrates and fodder on the condition that these institution will increase their

[1] Reserves

milk production immediately either by keeping milch cattle of the owners who not able to keep them during the famine days or bybuying cattle where their finances permit. The Government will have the option of purchasing one-third of their milk supply for the needy people of the locality and in the neighbourhood, if required.

5. Attempts should be made to feed cattle more on feeds which are not generally required for direct human consumption such as oil-cakes, cotton seeds, etc.

6. It may also be stated here that by feeding by-products of grains to the cattle, not only can the production of available food be increased the form of additional milk from these animals as compared to the food value of these by-products of food in case they are directly consumed, but it will also be more economical method of using the latter. Within limits, it will have double effect. It will help in the production of human food and will also protect the cattle from being underfed during the scarcity period.

7. All possible facilities should be provided for transport and supply of concentrates and other cattle-feeds to these institutions. Collection of data as to the requirements of the *goshalas* and the available stocks in these organizations should immediatey be taken in hand. Provision should be made well in advance for the supply of these essential requirements from surplus to deficit zones. All this must be done in advance through Goshala Development Officers, who will be responsible for the working of the whole scheme.

The Sardar suggests to every province the appointment of Goshala Development Officers, training of workers and the supply of bulls. He rightly says that for real success there must be genuine co-operation between Government and the public. He has no doubt that *goshalas*, humanitarian and cattle welfare and such other bodies will give the co-operation if approached.

Another friend of cattle writes as follows: [1]

> I want you to consider one or two suggestions for saving our cattle during the coming famine. . . .
>
> My concrete suggestion is that well-to-do people.. . should be generous enough to permit cattle belonging to less fortunate people to graze

[1] Only excerpts from the letter are reproduced here.

in their compounds.

Provincial government should establish a chain of *goshalas* where owners of cattle, who are unable to maintain them during the period of famine, may leave them to be fed and maintained at State expense unitl the crisis is over.

NEW DELHI, April 20, 1946

Harijan, 5-5-1946

339. SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND FOOD SHORTAGE[1]

The more I study the food crisis the more convinced I feel that people are being starved not for want of food, but for want of the co-operative effort of the experts and a national Government at the Centre bent upon meeting the crisis and inspiring the masses with confidence.

NEW DELHI, April 20, 1946

Harijan, 5-5-1946

340. NOTES[2]

'SILK KHADI'

If particle payment in yarn is necessary for buying cotton khadi why shoud the same not apply to 'silk khadi'?

There can be only one answer to this question. Silk khadi too is khadi and its purchase should, therefore, also be contingent on the requisite payment of yarn.

WHY ONLY YARN?

Since spinning is a part of the constructive programme, why should not all constructive workers be exempt from paying for khadi in yarn?

There is some confusion of thought in this question.The reason for part payment in yarn, instead of in money, is to give khadi its rightful place, and in time make yarn current coin. That yarn is a part of the constructive work has no bearing on the present argument. Let us leave aside for the moment the fact that the wheel is the central

[1] In the article, not reproduced here, Sushila Nayyar had suggested how the research institutions could help ward off the famine by "finding out alternative food", "efficient husbanding of the available food resources" and proper storge of grain and by working out austerity meals.

[2] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 28-4-1946.

sun of the solar system of our constructive programme. If we believe that swaraj hangs by the hand-spun thread, then it is clear that the value of yarn will be far greater than glad and silver currency. Constructive workers are not exempt from spinning. How can there be any such exemption from *yajna*? Spinning is the necessary *yajna* for everyone.

NEW DELHI, April 20, 1946

Harijan, 28-4-1946

341. WHY NOT?[1]

> You say that if Kasturba Agents are also members of the legislatures, it will be setting a bad example to the villagers[2]. I can understand this being applicable to the present Assembly, but when we have swaraj the position will be changed.[3] Will it, therefore, not be an advantage for us to be there? Will not such work as we want done be done in one session of the legislature, whereas ordinarily it would take years to do?

So writes a sister. But there seem to be three flaws in her line of argument.

Firstly, I have not made any distinction between the present and the future Assembly under swaraj. It is unnecessary for my argument.

Secondly, it is an illusion to think that M. L. A.s are the guides of the voters. Voters do not send representatives to the Assemblies in order to be guided by them. On the contrary, they are sent there loyally to carry out the people's wishes. The people are, therefore, the guides, not the M. L. A.s. The latter are servants, the former masters. The illusion is due to the present system of government. When the illusion disappears, the existing unseemly comptition to get into the legislature will also be much less. There will be a few whose duty it will be to go there, and they will go to do the people's will. Today they go to the Assembly in order to fight there for swaraj, but it has now dawned on most people that they cannot achieve much there even in this line.

The third mistake in the argument is that Assemblies are best fitted to guide the people. If we look around the world we shall find

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 28-4-1946.

[2] *Vide* "Kasturba Smarak Trust"

[3] The Hindi here adds: "The M. L. A.s will be the guides of the voters."

that the best guidance is given by those outside. If that were not so, a rot would set in all governments, because the field for guidance is vast and the Assembly is a very small thing. Parliaments are, after all, a mere drop in the ocean of national life.

NEW DELHI, April 20, 1946

Harijan, 28-4-1946

342. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

DELHI,

April 20, 1946[2]

With regard to a Press report in which Mahatma Gandhi was reported to have stated that the Madras Congress Legislature Party was free to electany leader it liked and he had no objection to Mr. Prakasam of anybody being elected leader, Gandhiji stated today that he said nothing of the kind to anybody but he had written a private letter to Mr. prakasam, which Mr. Prakasam was at liberty to publish and which should be read out to the persons concerned in case of doubt.[3]

The Hindu, 22-4-1946

343. LETTER TO H. M. HYAT

NEW DELHI,

April 20, 1946

MY DEAR HYAT,

I have your letter. I noticed your absence but how was I to know that your illness was the cause ? Now get well soon.

If the luck is hard, who can rectify it ? I am doing all I can. But who can understand God's ways ?

Young Shaukat[4] will never fight against his brothers.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] This appeared under the date-line, "Delhi, April 20, 1946".

[2] *ibid*

[3] T. Prakasam told the Associated Press of India on April 22 that he had not received Gandhiji's letter referred to in the news agency despatch from Delhi. *Vide*, however, "Speech at Public Meeting, Visakhapantam", 20-1-1946

T. Prakasam was elected leader of the Congress Legislature Party, Madras, on April 22.

[4] Addressee's son

344. LETTER TO RAJA SURYAPAL OF AWAGARH

NEW DELHI,
April 20, 1946

RAJA SAHEB,

Your letter is good but it is next to impossible for me to go anywhere for the present. Once the work here is finished I shall have to go directly to Poona. I am not in a condition any more to break journey anywhere on the way. The best course for you would be to read and ponder what I have written and then put into effect as much of it as you can digest in your own life and in the affairs of your state. The moment *Ramarajya* has been established in Awagarh, I am certain it will attract me like a magnet. You should also have that faith.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

345. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

HARIJAN MANDIR,
NEW DELHI,
April 20, 1946

MAULANA SAHEB,

Read the enclosed clippings. Whatever is written about me is without foundation. I have not expressed my opinion to anybody. When one or two members of the Committee asked me about it I told them that it is not proper to have the same president. In fact I feel unhappy that a Muslim should remain president at this juncture. If you agree with this view I would like you to read the enclosed clippings. You should issue a statement announcing that you do not wish to remain the president. It would be appropriate if some other person becomes the president. Badshah Khan's name had already been proposed but I strongly opposed it. I even had a discussion with Badshah Khan.

If my opinion were sought this time, I would prefer Jawaharlal. There are several reasons for it. I do not want to go into them.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Urdu : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

346. SPEECH AT KASTURBA BALIKA ASHRAM[1]

April 20, 1946

I attach far more importanc to the cultural aspect of education than to the literary[2]. Culture is the foundation, the primary thing which the girls ought to get from here. It should show in the smallest detail of your conduct and personal behaviour, how you sit, how you walk, how you dress, etc., so that anybody might be able to see at a glance that you are the products of this institution. Inner culture must be reflected in your speech, the way in which you treat visitor and guests, and behave towards one another and your teachers and elders.

I was pleased too that you walked all the distance to and from Bhangi Nivas, when you came to see me. But if you came only to please me, your trudging had no merit. It will do you no good. You must make it a rule to prefer walking to using a conveyance. Motor-car is not for the millions. You will therefore shun it. Million cannot afford even train journey. Their world is their village. It is a very small thing but if you faithfully adhere to this rule it will transform your entire life and fill it with a sweetness that natural simplicity carries with it.

Education here won't qualify you for luxurious living. I want the Harijan girls here to show such a degree of culture that everybody should feel ashamed to regard them as untouchables. That is the goal of the Harijan Sevak Sangh's activities. This institution should demonstrate to the whole world the heights to which Harijans can rise, if they are free from the incubus of untouchability and conversely the sacrilege and inhumanity of the institution of untouchability itself. I look forward to the day when this institution will fill the whole country with its fragrance and become a centre of attraction for girls from near and far.

Harijan, 5-5-1946

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's report entitled "A Light in Darkness". Gandhiji spoke in Hindustani. The Ashram was being run by the Harijan Sevak Sangh under the personal guidence of Rameshwari Nehru and Amritlal V. Thakkar.

[2] The training at the Ashram included house-keeping, crotchet work, cooking, kitchen-gardening, spinning and allied processes, *batik* work, embroidery, singing of *bhajans* and recitation of Sanskrit verses.

347. SPEECH AT JAMIA MILLIA[1]

[*April 20, 1946*][2]

I have proved my claim to being a member of the family by coming without previous notice,

Gandhiji remarked, touched by the spontaneous welcome. He then invited questions.

One student asked, "What can the students do to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity?"

The way is simple. Even if all the Hindus turn rowdies and abuse you, you may not cease to regard them as your blood-brothers and *vice versa*. Is it imposible? No, rather the contrary. And what is possible for the individual is possible for the mass.

Today the whole atmosphere is poisoned. All kinds of wild. rumours are circulated by the press and are indiscriminately swallowed by the people. Panic results and both Hindus and Muslmans forget their humanity and behave towards one another like wild brutes. It behoves men to act decently, irrespective of what the other party might or might not do. If one returns decency for decency, it is a bargain. Even thieves and dacoits do that. There is no merit in it. Humanity disdains to calculate profits and losses. It enjoins on one a unilateral obligation to put up decent behaviour. If all the Hindus listened to my advice, or in the alternative the Muslims listened to me, there would be peace in India which neither daggers nor lathis would be able to shatter. The mischief-maker will soon be weary of the sorry business of stabbing, when there is no retaliation or counter-pro-vocation. An Unseen Power will arrest his uplifted arm and it will refuse to obey his wicked will. You may throw dust at the sun, it won't dim his lustre. All it needs is to hold one's soul in faith and patience. God is good and does not allow wickness to proced beyond a certain length.

I had a hand in the bulding up of this institution.[1] It, therefore,

[1] Reporting this in his "Weekly Letter" Pyarelal writes: "Gandhiji had thought of returning to his residence from the Balika Ashram, but a number of students and some members of the staff from Jamia Millia came and requested him to pay a visit some time, to their institution too. "Some time must mean now", replied Gandhiji. "Having come so far I cannot go back without going to you."

[2] Gandhiji visited the Balika Ashram on this date.

[1] Jamila Millia was founded at the commencement of the non-co-operation movement in 1920 with th joint efforts of Hakim Ajmal Khan, M. A. Ansari and the Ali Brothers.

gives me much pleasure to be able to pour out my heart before you. I have said the same thing to the Hindus. May yours be a shining example to India and the world.

Harijan, 280-4-1946

348. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

April 20, 1946

Addressing the gathering after the prayers on Saturday evening Mahatma Gandhi emphasized the fact that Ramanama recited from the heart was the never-failing remedy for all the ills—physical, mental of spiritual. He watched them taking part in the *Ramdhun* but whether they did it from the heart God alone knew. They themselves might know. But self-deception was quite possible. It was so very easy. One thing was clear. If a man or a woman who claimed to recite Ramanama from the heart was always ailing or was given to outbursts of anger the claim was eventually unproved.

Tolstoy had said that if man dismissed God from his heart even for a single moment Satan occupied the vacancy. Ramanama would expel Satan. Honest men and women had said to him that with all their efforts they could not say tha Ramanama came to them from the heart. His reply to them was that they must go on and have infinite patience. A boy required at least 16 years' hard study in order to become a doctor. How mcuh more time must be necessary to establish Ramanama in the heart?

While he was endeavouring to enthrone God in the heart and believed in nature's way he would confine to the five elements as curative means. He would give first place to pure air. It was the prime necessity. That implied that their houses and social surroundings should be perfectly clean. They must not live in air-tight boxes miscalled houses. They should live as free practically as they were on the prayer ground.

The Hindustan Times, 21-4-1946

349. DEPLORABLE

Shri J. C. Kumarappa, writing in the *Gram Udyog Patrika*, says that to rely on or encourage imports from abroad is wholly wrong in principle. In the matter of the expected shortage of sugar owing to the failure of winter rains in the U. P. and Bihar and by frost in the Punjab and N. W. F. P., he suggests that the deficit in sugar should be made good by tapping palm trees in jungle areas for *nira*[1] and

[1] Unfermented palm juice

preparing *gur*[1] and sugar from it.

In regard to the import of a primary necessity like kerasne oil, he suggests further extraction of vegetable oils to meet our needs. Imports will entail export of some of our own production to pay for them, and will only cause further distress in the long run.

He also draws attention to the insidious scheme for the development of Virginia cigarette tobacco in Bihar sponsored by Sir Herbert Stewart (Vice-Chairman of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research). Under the scheme a nember of research stations on tobacco are to be opened in various places and the places and the Imperial Tobacco Company have given two studentships of £500 per annum for training in tobacco cultivation abroad. At such a time the obvious duty of a government should have been not to waste good money or time on tobacco research, but to devote both to reclaim all available land for food cultivation. But Imperial Councial can only think in terms of either tobacco, long staple cotton or thick rind sugar-cane for mills and ground-nut for export, and thus serve foreign business masquerading as "India, Ltd.".

NEW DELHI, April 21, 1946

Harijan, 28-4-1946

[1] Jaggery

350. "HARIJAN" IN URDU SCRIPT

Harijan is variously described as '*Harijan Sevak*' when it is the Hindustani and *Harijanbandhu* when it is the Gujarati edition. Hindustani was Hindi when it was Nagari type only. Now, for reasons already known, it is Hindustani in the two scripts—Nagari and Urdu. The Urdu edition would have been published simultaneously, if the arrangement could have been completed. But there were difficulties of official permission and type to be surmounted. Litho printing became well-nigh impossible, and expert advice favoured Urdu type. The type could not be had for the wanting. But it is now hoped definitely to bring out the Urdu edition on 5th May next.

Whilst the matter in the three editions is not as a rule mere translation, one of another, and to an extent differs in the three editions, the Nagari and Urdu will be the same, word for word. An endeavour will be made to produce Hindustani which will neither be Sanskritized Hindi nor Persianized Urdu. Whether the Hindustani will be popular or not will depend as much upon the writers for the Hindustani *Harijan* as upon its readers.

NEW DELHI, April 21, 1946

Harijan, 28-4-1946

351. IS IT GENUINE?

Q. In one of your post-prayer discourese last week you stressed the use of khadi to the exclusion of all other cloth.[1] I love the very touch of khadi as it links me, in my heart and thoughts, to my poor sisters and brothers, to whom it brings a well-earned morsel of food. I love it from every point of view—on hygienic, aesthetic, humanitarian, moral and spiritual grounds. But I have so far never been able to take to spinning, much as I like the soothing hum of the wheel, and thanks to our system of education, my hands are utterly untrained and unfit to learn spinning at this stage. I am, therefore, unable to comply in a straightforward manner with the condition now imposed on the sale of khadi, and it is galling to me to have to go in for mill cloth.

A. If the love for khadi is so genuine as to cover moral and spiritual values, surely the writer should be able to learn spinning easily at his age. The late Pandit Motilal Nehru learnt it, after he was

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 16-4-1946

fifty. The late Ali Brothers learnt it, though they did not practise it regularly. And all these three learnt it for its national and political value in the highest sense of the term. As a matter of fact most of the public workers learnet it late in life.

The writer should learn spinning without delay. There is nothing wrong with his fingers. All who can write can spin. And spinning for swaraj is any day more valuable than writing.

I agree that for one like the writer the only straight forward way to give his quota of yarn for buying khadi is self-spinning. If he was incapable for any cause, it would be perfectly right for him to get his many friends or relations to spin the required quota for him.

As an earnest student of affairs, he shold know, too, that while khadi is good for the poor as an honourable occupation for earning bread, it has an additional and far greater value as an instrument of winning swaraj through non-violent means. Let it not be said of men like him that they could write eloquently about moral values without realizing the implications of the statement.

NEW DELHI, April 21, 1946

Harijan, 28-4-1946

352. MERCY v. RUTHLESSNESS[1]

The virtues of mercy, non-violence, love and truth in any man can be truly tested only when they are pitted against ruthlessness, violence, hate and untruth.

If this is true, then it is incorrect to say that ahimsa is of no avail before a murderer. It can certainly be said that to experiment with ahimsa in the face of a murderer is to seek self-destruction. But this is the real test of ahimsa. He who gets himself killed out of sheer helplessness, however, can in nowise be said to have passed the test. He who when being killed bears no anger against his murderer and even ask God to forgive him is trulymnon-violent. History relates this of Jesus Christ. With his dying breath on the cross, he is reported to have said: "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." We can get similar instances from other religions but the quotation is given because it is world-famous.

It is another matter that our non-violence has not reached such heights. It would be wholly wrong for us to lower the standard of

[1] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 28-4-1946.

ahimsa by reason of our own frailty or lack of experience. Without true understanding of the ideal, we can never hope to reach it. It is necessary for us, therefore, to apply our reason to understand the power of non-violence.

NEW DELHI, April 21, 1946

Harijan, 28-4-1946

353. LETTER TO ALAGAPPA CHETTIAR

NEW DELHI,
April 21, 1946

BHAI ALAGAPPA CHETTIAR[1],

Bapa[2] tells me that you have been ailing for some time. Why is it so? Do you recite Ramanama? Ramanama will bring you peace if nothing more. Bapa is staying here. He had been rather unwell. He is all right now.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

354. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

April 21, 1946

Gandhiji had noticed that several men and women did not take part in beating time with *Ramdhun*. He pulled them up in his after-prayer discourses on Sunday. There was nothing to be ashamed of in repeating the name of God and in beating time with it. Modesty was an admirable virtue, but out of place it became a fault.

Reverting to the subject of the previous evening, i. e., nature cure, Gandhiji spoke about pure water, the second in importance among the five natural elements, the first one being air about which he had spoken on Saturday[3]. Large numbers of men and women in this country drank impure water and washed their clothes with and bathed in water which made the body and the clothes dirtier than before.

[1] Of Karaikudi

[2] Amritlal V. Thakkar (1869-1951); joined Servants of India Society in 1914; established Bhil Seva Mandal in 1923; President, Gujarat Antyaja Seva Mandal: Secretary, Harijan Sevak Sangh; General Secretary, Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust; established Bharatiya Adimjati Sevak Sangh

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 20-4-1946

Will any of you care to bathe or wash your clothes in the gutter water? Yet many of the small tanks where people bathe and wash and even drink from are no cleaner than the gutter. Nature is lenient. If often does not punish us for our sins immediately. Thus we can go on breathing impure air and drinking impure water over long periods without any dramatic ill effects. But there is not the slightest doubt that such a thing lowers the vitality and makes one fall an easy prey to disease.

Gandhiji told the audience what he had seen on the banks of the sacred Ganges at Hardwar. People went there to wast off their sins, but they made the place so dirty that it could not even wash their bodies clean. He used to find it difficult to bathe at Har-ki-Pauri if he was at all late. People evacuated on the banks and did not even care to cover it up with sand. They made the bathing-ghat filthy, strewing flowers were trampled under the feet and so on. It was a painful state of affairs, a thing of which Indains had real cause to be ashamed.

He had taken up the new job of advising people on nature cure. A doctor had to go through five years of hard studies before he could begin to treat patients. Not so the nature-cure man. Speaking about himself he said he had picked up the essentials of nature cure by reading a few books and talking to experts in the line. Experience and experimentation had made up the rest. They could all do the same and became their own doctors. People had a notion that what was simple was no good. A spinning-wheel was simple. It was, therefore, condemned as primitive and crude. A mill cost a lot and was elaborate. It was an indication of progress. If this was their view, he was afraid they would have no use for him as he was but a simple-minded villager and a believer in the philosophy of simplicity. But he knew that most of them were simple-minded men and women like him and though they lived in a city, they had not lost all contact with the villages. Therefore, he felt emboldened to place nature cure before them.

Pure air and pure water were the first essentials, and of course Ramanama was there all the time. A man who repeated Ramanama and thereby cleansed his inner being could not tolerate the filth outside. If millions took to Ramanama in real earnest there would be no riots, which were a social malady, and there would be no illnesses. The Kingdom of Heaven would come on earth.

The Hindustan Times, 22-4-1946

355. MINISTERS' DUTY

It is legitimate to ask what Congress ministers will do for khaddar and other village industries now that they are in office. I should broaden the question and apply it to all the Provincial Government of India. Poverty is common to all the provinces and so are means of alleviation in terms of the masses. Such is the experience of both the A. I. S. A. and the A. I. V. I. A. A suggestion has been made that there should be a separate minister for the work, as, for proper organization, it will occupy all the time of one minister.I dread to make the suggestion, for we have not yet outlived the English scale of expenditure. Whether a minister is separately appointed or not, a department for the work is surely necessary. In these times of scarcity of food and clothing, this department can render the greatest help. The ministers have experts at their disposal through the A. I. S. A. and the A. I. V. I. A. It is possible to clothe today the whole of India in khadi on the smallest outlay and in the shortest time possible. Each Provincial Government has to tell the villagers that they must manufacture their own khaddar for their own use. This there will undoubtedly be a surplus for the cities at least to a certain extent which, in its turn, will reduce the pressure on the local mills. The latter will then be able to take part in supplying the want of cloth in other parts of the world. How can this result be brought about?

The Governments should notify the villagers that they will be expected to manufacture khaddar for the needs of their villages within a fixed date after which no cloth will be supplied to them.The Governments in their turn will supply the villagers with cotton seed or cotton wherever required, at cost price and the tools of manufacture also at cost, to be recovered in easy instalments payable in, say five years or more. They will supply them with instructors wherever necessary and undertake to buy surplus stock of khaddar, provided that the villagers in question have their cloth requirement supplied from their own manufacture. This should do away with cloth shortage without fuss and with very little overhead charges.

The villages will be surveyed and a list prepared of things that can be manufactured locally with little or no help and which may be required for village use or for sale outside, such for instance, as *ghani*[1] pressed oil and cakes, burning oil prepared through *ghanis*, hand-

[1] Oil-press

pounded rice, *tad gud*[1], honey, toys, mats, hand-made paper, village soap, etc. If enough care is thus taken, the villages, most of them as good as dead or dying, will hum with life and exhibit the immense possibilities they have of supplying most of their wants themselves and of the cities and towns of India.

Then there is the limitless cattle wealth of India suffering from criminal neglect. Goseva Sangh, as yet not properly experienced, can still supply valuable aid.

Without the basic training the villagers are being starved for education. This desideretum can be supplied by the Hindustani Tamil Sangh. The experiment was already commenced by Congress Governments but it was interrupted by the resignations of the Congress ministries.[2] The thread can be easily resumed now.

NEW DELHI, April 22, 1946

Harijan, 28-4-1946

356. QUESTION BOX[3]

SUGAR AND SWEETMEATS

Q. The suggar ration in Bombay has just been reduced by 25 per cent. Would it not have been fairer to reduce sweetmeat shops' rations rather than cut down the individual's?

A. It is always well to cut down the ration of sweet vendors rather than that of individuals. In these hard times I would not mind if sweet-making were even prohibited. Sweetmeats are not a necessary part of a wholesome diet.

WHITE BREAD AND BROWN

Q. Up till January it was obligatory to mix ten per cent of bran with wheat flour. Later the rule was obolished. Should it not be reinforced?

A. I am a witness to the age-old rivalry between white and whole-meal brown bread. People are attracted by whiteness. I nurse the belief that Negro is not drawn by it. Be that as it may, it is a fact that special effort is made to make bread look white. Fortunately, only city-dwellers indulge in such fads. Doctors say that one chapati of whole-meal *flour* is more tasty and contains more nourishment than two to five *chapatis* made out of refined flour. And in these days it

[1] Palm jaggery

[2] The Congress Ministries which were formed in 1937 had resigned in October-November 1939.

[3] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 28-4-1946.

is our duty to use whole-meal, because all flour saved is flour gained. From one point of view it is even more than that. Wheat stored in villages is far more useful than sacks of it lying in ports. Therefore, it is desirable to make the mixing of bran with wheat flour compulsory. The war is over but post-war conditions are worse for us than during the war, and the situation is daily deteriorating. God alone knows when it will improve.

ROWDYISM IN ELECTIONS

Q. You are no doubt aware of the rowdyism resulting in severe damage during one of the recent elections in Bombay. Does it become the teacher of ahimsa to keep silent on such an occasion?

A. I do not want to enter into the question of whether silence becomes me or not. If the rowdyism is not a forerunner of what the future holds, it will be wrong to take note of it. Such sporadic clashes should not worry us. The education of the masses in ahimsa can make way gradually. It may be that it will develop from the lessons learnt from such happenings. But it may be that this rowdyism is symptomatic of an epidemic. Many people imagine that they alone are right and everyone else wrong, and they do not consider that there is anything unworthy in forcing their point of view down others' throats. This error has to be rectified. If we are in the right we must have infinite patience.

Just now we seem unable to see our own mistakes. Those who lack the faculty of reason, or who desire to live for the sake of enjoyment, can never see the error. If there are many such, then we must conclude that our non-violence has been a weapon of the weak, *himsa* masquerading in the guise of ahimsa. If this weakness conti-nue we shall have to go through rivers of blood once the British rule goes. We may even come under the sway of some other foreign power or it may be that with internecine warfare the weaker side will have to submit to the one that has the mightier weapons. If we are unfortunate enough to witness such streif, believers in non-violence will joyfully die in the effort to stop it and thereby live.

My hope is that the masses have sufficiently imbibed the spirit of ahimsa and that when the British go there may be a little fight here and there and then we shall settle down as brothers giving a lesson of peace to the world.

Only those who fought in Bombay know what good they achieved by fighting. I am ignorant of who fought and what the fight was about and what were the gains if any.

NEW DELHI, April 22, 1946

Harijan, 28-4-1946

357. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

[*April 22, 1946*][2]

You are right.[3] As it goes forward, it becomes progressively lifeless. I shall try to do what is possible.

From the original: C. W. 4210. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7846

358. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
April 22, 1946

Why not get your hair cut by Kanu? Do you remember my having cut your hair? I must not give the time now. But if you have patience, I would gladly cut it. I do not like your going to a hair-dresser. But if you feel like it, you should go.

From the original: C. W. 4224. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7860

359. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
April 22, 1946

If Matthai[4] had only agreed, he would have been finance minister. It is wrong always to think of ministership. It is wrong to seek to satisfy all interests. Why should not a Christian think that he is represented if a good man is a minister?

From the original: C. W. 4227. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7863

360. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

NEW DELHI,
April 22, 1946

CHI. PREMA,

Your silly letter in Marathi addressed to Sushila[5] was read out and translated to me. It is good to be clear about one's goal. Forget

[1] Apparently a silence-day note, this is written on a telegram dated April 20, 1946. The silence day, i. e., the following Monday, fell on April 22.

[2] *ibid*

[3] The addressee had written: "For *Gitaparayana* [recitation of *Gita*] can I suggest that those who are able to read should read, say, three chapters each in turn? They seldom keep together. The pace increases as the reading progresses. Sometimes, as today, the key changes. Words become a jumble after the first five chapters or so, partially because of the pace and partially because of fatigue. Someone or other drops out to take breath. It is jarring for the listener. I won't know if you have noticed the thing. If you have you will understand what I mean."

[4] John Matthai

[5] Sushila Pai

the person who has become the symbol of your goal. But the difficulty is that the person himself has become your goal. That happens to many and they suffer in consequence. When we make the person symbolizing our goal himself our goal, the result is that we feel happy when his actions and words are such as please us, but get offended when they are otherwise. One should, therefore, keep one's goal independent. Until you can do that, you will suffer, and so will your work. You have been educated, but learnt no wisdom!!! Learn it now. Learn it from me if you don't have it. In doing this there will be no conflict at all between your goal and the syambol of your goal, for learning wisdom means acquiring knowledge of practical affairs. But remember that practical affairs may be conducted either truthfully or untruthfully. Wake up.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10444. Also C. W. 6883. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

361. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

NEW DELHI,
April 22, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Bhansali[1] can do what he likes. It is not necessary to obtain my permission for giving up ginning.

Did the thunderstorm cause any damage? Or did it no any good?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 4552

362. TALK WITH A ZAMINDAR[2]

[Before *April 23, 1946*][3]

"Where shall we stand when India is independent?" asked a friend representing the landholders' interests, the other day during his visit to Gandhiji."

You wil be as free as any scavenger, but whether you will be able to retain all the privileges which you are enjoying under the British Government is a question you can answer for yourself.

[1] Jayakrishna P. Bhansali

[2] This and the following item are reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" dated "New Delhi, April 23, 1946".

[3] *ibid*

We realize that we shall secure our salvation at the hands of Indian leaders, not the British Government.

Everybody believes that today. Even the British Government feel that they cannot do otherwise than to leave India to settle her own affairs.

The landholders derived their charter of rights and privileges from the Permanent Settlement which was of the nature of a contract between the British and the zamindars, but they are quite willing to negotiate an agreement with the leaders of the country on the future of their rights.

Being a non-violent man by nature I cannot countenance the usurpation of anybody's just rights. But some of the extraordinary privileg that pass muster under the British rule are themselves in the nature of an usurpation. The history of British rule is a history of usurpation. Those who helped the British Government in this process got certain rights as a reward for their services. These cannot be insisted upon.

Many ancient *zamindaris*[1] existed long before the advent of the British and were exercising sovereign power, as a produce of indigenous social and economic system of long standing. Don't you think they have a title to continue their existence? They are trying their best to discharge a philanthropic function in the shape of founding educational and social institutions.

Anything that is ancient and consistent with moral values has a title to be retained. *Per contra* anything that does not conform to more values has to go. Wrong has no prescriptive right to exist merely because it is of long standing. If those who are on your *zamindaris* feel one with you and you with them, like members of a family, you have nothing to fear from anybody.

We want even-handed justice. We have no objection to an indepedent Indian Government abolishing all manner of vested interests. But let there be no discrimination against the zamindars especially. We only want a conciliatory gest-ure, an assurance that you won't wipe us out as a class, without giving us a sporting chance to vindicate our existence.

A just man need have no fear of any kind from an independent. India may, however, fall into unjust hands. Every Congressman is not an angel, nor is everyone who is not a Congressman a devil. Let us hope that, if Congress comes into power, it will try to be more than just. Otherwise all the good that it might have done would disappear in the twinkling of an eye.

I do not deny that there are bad boys amongst us. But you can cure us. We

[1] Absentee landlordism

only wish that nothing should be done without consulting us.

That goes without saying.[1]

Harijan, 28-4-1946

363. TALK WITH MISSIONARIES

[Before *April 23, 1946*]

Another group of friends presented Gandhiji with a poser: "Could he guaranteed that under independence the right of proselytization would be guaranteed by a statue?" This provoked the counter question, "Did they really believe in the ideal of independence or was their support to the independence ideal only for a consideration?" In the latter case, he would say, remarked Gandhiji, that they believed neither in independence nor in religion. Who could suppress the voice of truth if it filled one's being? And of what avail was a statutory gurantee if there was not the fire within to bear witness to truth?

"It is true, no one can suppress the voice of truth," interpolated one of them. "We want a guarantee from you that no attempt would be made to suppress it."

I cannot give you that guarantee because I have no authority.

It was the function of religion, he continued, to save the temporal power from losing its soul; religion did not depend upon it for protection. And he cited to them the illustraction of Daniel, the servant of God, who used to pray behind closed doors. But when Darius the King issued a decree prohibiting the worship of any God or man save himself under a penalty, he began to pray to God publicly, the windows of his chamber being open so that all could see him praying. He was thrown into the hungry lion's den but came out unscathed. The result was that the King rescinded his former decree which was 'unalterable' under the laws of Medes and Persians and made another decree to the effect that in every dominion of his kingdom, "men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel, for he is the living God and steadfast as ever." And "so Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus." That was the only true way of proselytization and it needed no guarantee, statutory or otherwise. It was its own seal and sanction.

To take a leaf from the history of our own times, remember the words of the late Lord Salisbury who, when in office, had told a missionary deputation about [*sic*] China that they were a poor specimen if for their mission they sought the protection of British guns.

Harijan, 28-4-1946

[1] Gandhiji concluded the interview, pointing in a mute petition of mercy, as it were, to the heap of papers in front of him awaiting disposal.

364. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

DELHI,
April 23, 1946

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have your letter. Yes, it will be possible to give my blessings to both couple[1], but won't that have to be after the wedding? I don't feel the slightest inclination now to give my blessings to marriages within the same caste, but I also see that I must give them.

Your letter regarding a peace brigade is excellent. I have discussed the matter with someone, but I don't remember with whom. I am keeping the letter with me. If possible I will discuss the suggestion.[2] I have finished writing the articles for the next Sunday's issue of *Harijan*. Whatever I write now will have to wait for the issue after that. This is an inconvenience which must be endured as long as I do not settle in Ahmedabad, and that does not seem possible during the present life.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI NARAHARI PARIKH
SABARMATI ASHRAM

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 9141

365. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

DELHI,
April 23, 1946

CHI. KAKA,

I have both your letters. What you say about textbooks is correct. It will be good if the Adhyapan Mandir can be opened in Mahila Ashram. It will be equally good if you wish to open it in Bhagalpur. But we shall have to consider whether we have the capacity.

[1] Mohan, Addressee's on, and Anasuya; Sushila and Navaneet Desai
[2] *Vide* "Non-Violent Volunteer Corps"

Bal[1] arrived here yesterday and I am giving him both your letters to see, so that he may ask me if any point has been left out and tell you if and when he meets you.

We can make the study of Hindustani compulsory in non-government institutions. I see danger in trying to make it compulsory through the Government. The latter's duty will be to reward, by way of encouragement, persons who know both the scripts. In this way study of both the scripts can be introduced. This whole question of Government policy requires careful consideration.

You must have seen what Kishorelal has written regarding the Roman script. I have given my opinion against his suggestions.[2] Go through his pamphlet if you have not done so and communicate your opinion to Kishorelal. Write to him regarding the *vidyut*[3] script also. How long I shall have to stay in Delhi will depend on acts of God and the King (King Cabinet Mission).

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10970

366. LETTER TO GAGANVIHARI L. MEHTA

DELHI,
April 23, 1946

BHAI GAGANVIHARI,

You did well in sending me the three cuttings. I have seen them. The news regarding Burma is startling. Have you or have you not written to Dr. Khare[4] about it?

I am sure you are interested in the Gujarati language. Is the word *katran*[5] neuter or feminine?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI GAGANVIHARI MEHTA
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's son
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Kishorelal G. Mashruwala", 18-4-1946
[3] Shorthand
[4] N. B. Khare, ex-Premier of C. P., 1937-38; Member-in-Charge of Commonwealth Relations in the Viceroy's Executive Council, 1943-46
[5] Cutting

367. LETTER TO MANJULA M. MEHTA

April 23, 1946

CHI. MANJULA[1],

I have your letter. I had no idea about an earlier letter. Before I can offer a categorical answer to the question you have asked I should know what the other party has to say. I have seen that it is dangerous to express an opinion on the strength of a statement made by one party. I write this to you so that you understand this matter correctly. I should certainly like to see you all when I go to Bombay but you rightly say that you will write to me if you have anything to ask, because I find that as the days pass I am growing increasingly unfit for personal discussions. I just cannot spare the time.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. MANJULABEHN MAGANLAL MEHTA

82 GHORBUNDER ROAD

ANDHERI

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

368. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

April 23, 1946

Speaking after the prayers, Gandhiji thanked the Maulvi Saheb for the recitation.[2] The selections[3] were not all made by him. For instance, the Koranic prayer had been introduced by Raihanabehn Tyabji[4]. She came and recited it herself in the beginning and then taught it to others. The prayer from *Zend Avesta* was introduced by Dr. Gilder[5]. May be there were mistakes in the recitation. But God cared for what was in men's hearts rather than what was produced from their mouths. It would be best if a Muslim recited the Koranic prayer and a Parsi recited the Parsi prayer and so on. But in the absence of such an arrangement one did the best one could.

[1] Wife of Maganlal, the late Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta's son

[2] Of the *al fateh*, from the Koran

[3] Which included a Buddhist prayer, some Sanskrit *shlokas* from the *Gita*, a Hindustani *bhajan* and *Ramdhun* and verses from the Koran and *Zend Avesta*

[4] Daughter of Abbas Tyabji

[5] M. D. D. Gilder, Minister of Health and Excise in the Government of Bombay, 1937-39

Next he drew the attention of the people to the need for discipline. Shri Kanu Gandhi had made it his profession to teach people *Ramdhun* and through it discipline in every walk of life. They should all sit in regular rows instead of in a disorderly and haphazard fashion.

He had come to know that Harijan collections at the prayer meetings were very meagre nowadays. That was bad. They should all contribute their bit according to their capacity.

Finally, he reverted to the question of nature cure. He had talked to them about air and water.[1] Today he wanted to talk about earth, the earth which the human body is made of and to which it must return.

Whether the dead are buried or cremated, dust returns to dust. Like air and water, earth is God's creation and we must not soil it.

People were in the habit of spitting anywhere, throwing orange skins and bits of paper here and there. All that was sin. To put anything out of place was equivalent to soiling the earth. A man of prayer could never do that.

Death might claim us at any moment. Let us then be on the alert and recite Ramanama all the time. We must cleanse if we can, never soil, His creation.

The Hindustan Times, 24-4-1946

369. NOTE TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

[Before *April 24, 1946*][2]

Write and tell him that my blessings are given only when one of the parties to the marriage is a Harijan. This is a marriage they need my blessings?

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8396

370. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

April 24, 1946

CHI. BALKRISHNA[3],

Take whatever steps may be necessary regarding your need for milk. If you can keep a cow for that purpose, that of course will be the best way.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 20-4-1946 and "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 21-4-1946

[2] From the postal cancellation stamp

[3] Also known as Balkoba, younger brother of Vinoba Bhave

How is your health? It seems you are experiencing difficulty in getting land there. Discuss the matter with Bhai Bhansali and others.

Other things seem to be going on well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 816. Courtesy : Balkrishna Bhave

371. LETTER TO PUSPHA N. NAIK

DELHI,
April 24, 1946

CHI. PUSHPA[1],

I have your letter. I did not wish that you should attend the wedding, but thought it desirable that you should pay a visit to Bombay.

You should not stop taking interest in the kitchen all at once. But it is of course desirable that you should train others to take your place. It is necessary to arrange frequent visits to villages. Slowly start doing some work in the hospital there. When you learn to see God in service, all doors of service will open to you. As regards the cooking of food, in addition to what you have mentioned you should learn what will constitute wholesome and balanced diet, and how it can be popularized.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 9271

372. LETTER TO MANIBHAI DESAI

DELHI,
April 24, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

You wish to be addressed as 'thou' and to have 'lal' dropped, but leave that to the future. Does not a man who rises very high run the risk of falling, too? Ultimately what difference does it make whether one is addressed as 'you' or as thou' ?

It will be better if the Panchayat spends the money on boards,

[1] Daughter of Shankarbhai Patel

etc. If a rich man offers either money or the boards, you may accept them. You can take, instead of boards, bamboo poles, two if they are thick, or more, depending on the size, tie the ends with strong ropes and make a support for the feet. This would be quite inexpensive. If you tie bamboo poles together, they make a sort of bridge. Without a support for the feet made of boards or bamboo poles, you may be sure that the pits will be useless. If you can get discarded railway sleepers, they also will do. I am sorry that you have not been able to secure the land. Discuss the matter with the *mahajan*[1] there.

You are getting a good number of patients now. We may accept from Dr. Bhagwat only such services as he willingly offers. The equipment belonging to the Trust, too, is intended for service. Do whatever you can gently.

If it is necessary, purchase a cow for Balkoba. See that he does not go without milk. That must not be allowed to happen. It is desirable in any case that you should have a good number of cows there.

I suppose Kanchanbehn also has come there.

Blessings to all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C. W. 2754. Courtesy : Manibhai Desai

373. LETTER TO JAYAKRISHNA P. BHANSALI

DELHI,
April 24, 1946

CHI. BHANSALI,

You will admit that it is alarming that you fell ill critically. Man ought not to strain his powers to the utmost. It is indeed desirable that your whole life should be disciplined. It is better if you yourself decide to live such a life, not because I say it. Ultimately we have to live as God wills.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] Community leader

374. LETTER TO BHAGWADACHARYA

DELHI,
April 24, 1946

BHAI BHAGWADACHARYA,

I have your letter after many days. I must admit that I don't like it. Firstly, why should you involve yourself in the ritual sacrifice which is more or less a fraud? I can understand those who are ignorant of the true nature of dharma or are downright hypocrites busying themselves with it, but why a man like you should concern himself with it is something beyond my comprehension, especially because I don't want to look upon you as a hypocrite and because I am not prepared to believe that you are so sunk in abysmal ignorance. And if there was a sacrifice, wherefore all the discrimination? Those who do not want to come may not; those who want may come. Hence, in no way can my heart accept either your act or your justification of it. I would wish you to devote yourself single-heartedly to what is straightforward and truthful, rather than indulge in mere casuistry.

I am strongly opposed to sacrifice as it is currently interpreted. I consider it a sin to throw ghee into the sacrificial [fire] in our age. Sacrifice really means an act of service. I had thefefore hoped that you would follow only that which is truthful even by giving up your position as a swami.

Blessings from
BAPU

SWAMI BHAGWADACHARYA
RAJKOT

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

375. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

DELHI,
April 24, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

I have your letter. Write to Jiten Babu what you think proper and do what you like.

I shall return Jiten Babu's letter after showing it to Pra[fulla] Babu.

It will be very good if your health improves.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 512

376. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

DELHI,
April 24, 1946

CHI. K. C.,

Rajkumari will write about the tents.

I do not like what you say about Bhansalibhai.

As for Anna[1] he may look after things.

It is good that Shakaribehn[2] and Champabehn[3] have taken up ginning.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 4553

377. LETTER TO AFTAB IQBAL

NEW DELHI,
April 24, 1946

KHAN SAHEB,

I have your letter. I do not wish to enter into a prolonged correspondence with you.

I possess no sword, nor do I wish to possess one. Those whom I can persuade will never use the sword.

As for the advocates of Pakistan, they say "we shall fight and have it." If that is the case, it is they who will draw the sword.

The despatch in the *Barq* supports my case.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Harihar Sharma
[2] Chimanlal N. Shah's wife
[3] Ratilal Pranjivandas Mehta's wife

378. A TALK[1]

NEW DELHI,
April 24, 1946

Ply charkha and spin as much as you can. There lies your highest duty.[2]

Lay down your lives for Hindu-Muslim unity.[3]

Gandhi's remedy is easy and inexpensive too; everyone knows it. His prescription, which hardly costs anything, is recitation of Ramanama.[4]

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 25-4-1946

379. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[5]

April 24, 1946

Speaking after the prayers on Wednesday evening Gandhiji reverted to the place of earth, which in nature cure was only next to air and water. One of the curative uses of earth was an earth-bath. Dry, finely powdered earth rubbed on the body cleansed the skin. Mud applied to the body and allowed to dry could cure many skin diseases. More than 40 years ago a little nephew of his had boils all over the body. They were slow to respond to any treatment. Finally he took the case in his hands, covered the boy's body with mud and made him run about naked. The boy was cured in eight to ten days.

Gandhiji said that earth was full of miraculous properties and it was as useful in man's life as any other thing could be.

We are born of earth and return to earth after life's journey. In the morning prayers there is a *shloka* in which the devotee invokes

[1] Yamunadutt Brahmachari, Purnachandra Azad, Basantsingh Bhring and Raghubir Singh Tyagi, four workers from Meerut, who had been released from prison after three and a half years, met Gandhiji and asked him three questions.

[2] The question was : "In the present age of party strife, what is the duty of the workers who have been released recently?'

[3] The second question was : "What is their duty in the panic-stricken areas where there are strong rumours about riots ?"

[4] The last question was : "What is the remedy in nature cure for dysentery, a common disease among those who have been released from prison ?"

[5] The Hindi report in *Hindustan* has been collated with the version in *The Hindustan Times.*

mother earth and asks her forgiveness for treading upon her. If we expect our prayer to be heard, we must show our reverence in practice. We must not soil the earth or dirty it as many of us do today. If somebody soils the earth through ignorance or oversight by spitting or in any other manner, we should cover up the filth with dry earth.

The Hindustan Times, 25-4-1946, and *Hindustan*, 25-4-1946

380. THE MONKEY NUISANCE[1]

People get weary of the trouble caused to them by monkeys. In their hearts they wish them dead. They are inwardly pleased if anyone kills them. At the same time they will oppose their slaughter. A friend who is well acquainted with the scriptures writes that monkeys ruin the crops, they even kidnap children, carry away articles, and eat up fruit, etc. Their number is daily increasing. I am asked as to what non-violence dictates in the matter.

My ahimsa is my own. I am not able to accept in its entirety the doctrine of non-killing of animals. I have no feeling in me to save the lives of animals which devour or cause hurt to man. I consider it wrong to help in the increase of their progeny. Therefore, I will not feed ants, monkeys or dogs. I will never sacrifice a man's life in order to save theirs.

Thinking along these lines I have come to the conclusion that to do away with monkeys where they have become a menace to the well-being of man is pardonable. Such killing becomes a duty. The question may arise as to why this rule should not also apply to human beings. It cannot because, however bad, they are as we are. Unlike the animal, man has been given the faculty of reason.

NEW DELHI, April 25, 1846

Harijan, 5-5-1946

[1] The Hindi original appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 5-5-1946 with the dateline, "New Delhi, 26-4-1946". The translation has been touched up.

381. DRAFT AND NOTE ON PROPOSED PROCLAMATION ON SALT[1]

(A) THE PROCLAMATION

In order that the poorest in the land may feel that independence is coming and as an earnest of their *bona fides*, the Government of India declare that the Salt Tax is abolished from today. To that end the inspectors of . . .[2] shall withdraw from their scenes of activity and the villagers will be notified by beat of drum and otherwise that they are at liberty to manufacture salt wherever they can for themselves or for sale. Other instructions about the State manufacture and sale of salt will be issued in due course.

(B) NOTE ON THE PROPOSED PROCLAMATION ON SALT

When the Salt Tax is abolished the monopoly goes likewise. Individuals should be free to manufacture salt for consumption or sale. Therefore, while there would be no monopoly in law, the Government will by their better organizing power and scientific skill be able to create a virtual monopoly. They will not allow private corporations to make manufacture and sale of salt a source of profiteering. It will be a legitimate paying business in the hands of the State. Consumption of the article is so universal that the profit of even a pie on every seer would bring in a natural income to the State. Every dealer in salt will be required to take out a licence for selling salt in his shop. [A] dealer is not to be confused with a hawker. A hawker who carried salt on his person will be free to sell without a licence. This will free the individual manufacturer and seller from interference.

Government will add to the revenue also by putting a heavy, though not a prohibitive, customs duty on foreign salt, whether British or otherwise.

Whilst anxiety has been shown in this note to show how salt may be made to yield legitimate revenue to the State, equal if not greater

[1] In response to Gandhiji's suggestion about the abolition of the Salt Tax Sir Archibald Rowlands, Finance Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, had met Gandhiji on April 5, 1946. The draft and the note were sent to Sir Archibald in compliance with his request. *The Transfer of Power*, however, places the proclamation just after Gandhiji's letter to the Viceroy dated April 6, 1946. For Gandhiji's correspondence in this connection *vide* "Letter to Lord Pethoick-Lawrence", 2-4-1946 and 374-5.

[2] Omission as in the source

care has been taken no make salt free like air and water for the individual who wants to labour for its manufacture and sale.

NEW DELHI, April 25, 1946

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 316

382. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

HARIJAN MANDIR, READING ROAD,

NEW DELHI,

April 25, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

I am writing on Gandhiji's behalf.

He was under the impression that all I. N. A. prisoners were going to be released in batches. Meanwhile he gets from Shri Raghunandan Saran a paper with reference to three trials.[1] A copy thereof is enclosed.

Before Gandhiji offers any further remarks he would like to know, if you do not mind, why these impending trials and consequent irritation, seeing that independence is imminent?[2]

Yours sincerely,

AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 45

383. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

April 25, 1946

MY DEAR LOTUS-BORN,

Your congratulations wanted for my exemplary patience in deciphering your indecipherable love-note. You robbed me of my precious 15 minutes. Have I done sufficient penance for my not

[1] The three I. N. A. men to be tried by Court Martial were Col. Kasliwal, Col. Inayat Hassan and Rasul Bux on a charge of "cruelty" to Maj. Durrani, "also of the I. N. A.", to extract a confession from him in an investigation instituted by the I. N. A. High Command.

[2] In reply the addressee wrote : "The I. N. A. policy is, as you know, to bring to trial only those against whom there is evidence of brutality. The new trials are, I understand, in this category.

I am, however, sending a copy of your letter with a copy of its enclosure, to War Department, and if there is any other point that ought to be made, they will write to you direct."

knowing in time that you were behind Indu last Sunday ?

Of course Lotus will have some time from me on 29th although it is my silence-day.

Love.

BAPU

LOTUS-BORN
NEW DELHI

From the original : Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

384. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

April 25, 1946

Speaking after the prayers, Gandhiji introduced Badshah Khan as a fakir and a man of God. He had come to Delhi in connection with the meeting of the Working Committee of which he was a member. But he was essentially a man of God. His company was *satsang*, hallowed company for them as it was for him.

Gandhiji told the audience of a letter he had received from a correspondent criticizing Mr. Kanu Gandhi and the way he led *Ramdhun*. *Ramdhun* should be in the heart; where was the need for all the external show, the correspondent had asked. There was no doubt, observed Gandhiji, that Ramanama should come from the heart. But the external things were an indication of what was within. Supposing everyone struck a different note while reciting prayers in the mosque or during the chanting of hymns in the church, it would utterly ruin the solemnity of the service. There was a right way of doing everything and prayers were no exception.

A gentleman, Gandhiji proceeded, had sent him a book describing how *namaz*[1] should be offered. While turning over the pages of that book he came across a sentence in it which was to the effect that prayer said in congregation was 27 times as effective as prayer said by oneself. If they all joined in the prayer whole-heartedly and methodically it would gather momentum in geometric progression and so transform the atmosphere that riots in Delhi would become an impossibility.

The Hindustan Times, 26-4-1946

[1] Prayer as offered by Muslims

385. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

NEW DELHI,
April 26, 1946

Mr. Hoover's[1] flying visit to India has excited considerable interest and possibly hope. Whilst all the help that America and other countries can send to India, struggling against starvation, must be welcome, my endeavour has been to find ways and means to make ourselves self-supporting. the moment people give way to panic, starvation is a certainty in spite of a continuous line of steamers off-loading grain from outside on India's wharves. Conversely, every grain from abroad sent as a matter of duty to self-reliant India, honestly and manfully braving the threatening danger, will be twice blessed. Let Mr. Hoover's visit serve as a reminder to Government servants, monied men and grain merchants that they must think all the time of their duty to the masses. Nature never fails those who will help themselves.

Harijan, 5-5-1946

386. NON-VIOLENT VOLUNTEER CORPS[2]

Some time ago an attempt was made, at my instance, to form *shanti dals*[3] but nothing came of it. This lesson, however, was learnt, that the membership, in its very nature, of such organizations could not be large. Ordinarily, the efficient running of a large volunteer corps based on force implies the possibility of the use of force in the event of breach of discipline. In such bodies little or no stress is laid on a man's character. Physique is the chief factor. The contrary must obtain in non-violent bodies in which character or soul force must mean everything and physique must take second place. It is difficult to find many such persons. That is why non-violent corps must be small, if they are to be efficient. Such brigades may be scattered all over; there may be one each for a village or a *mohalla*[4]. The members must know one another well. Each corps will select its own head. All the members will have the same status, but where

[1] Herbert Hoover, Chairman of the United States Famine Emergency Committee

[2] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 5-5-1946.

[3] Peace Corps

[4] Locality

everyone is doing the same work there must be one person under whose discipline all must come, or else the work will suffer. Where there are two or more brigades the leaders must consult among themselves and decide on a common line of action. In that way alone lies success.

If non-violent volunteer corps are formed on the above lines, they can easily stop trouble. These corps will not require all the physical training given in *akhadas*[1] but a certain part of it will be necessary.

One thing, however, should be common to members of all such organizations and that is implicit faith in God. He is the only Companion and Doer. Without faith in Him these peace brigades will be lifeless. By whatever name one calls God, one must realize that one can only work through His strength. Such a man will never take another's life. He will allow himself, if need be, to be killed and thereby live through his victory over death.

The mind of the man in whose life the realization of this law has become a living reality will not be bewildered in a crisis. He will instinctively know the right way to act.

In spite, however, of what I have said above I would like to give some rules culled from my own experience :

1. A volunteer may not carry any weapons.
2. The members of a corps must be easily recognizable.
3. Every volunteer must carry bandages, scissors, needle and thread, surgical knife, etc., for rendering first-aid.
4. He should know how to carry and remove the wounded.
5. He should know how to put out fires, how to enter a fire area without getting burnt, how to climb heights for rescue work and descend safely with or without his charge.
6. He should be well-acquainted with all the residents of his locality. This is a service in itself.
7. He should recite Ramanama ceaselessly in his heart and persuade others who believe in it to do likewise.

There are many who, whether from mental laziness or from having fallen into a bad habit believe that God is and will help us unasked. Why then is it necessary to recite His name? It is true that if

[1] Gymnasiums

God is, He is, irrespective of our belief. But realization of God is infinitely more than mere belief. That can come only by constant practice. This is true of all science. How much more true of the science of all sciences !

Man often repeats the name of God parrot-wise and expects fruit from so doing. The true seeker must have that living faith which will not only dispel the untruth of parrot-wise repetition from within him but also from the hearts of others.

NEW DELHI, April 26, 1946

Harijan, 5-5-1946

387. WHITED SEPULCHRES?[1]

I am a woman but feel I must write to you about this matter. About three months ago a man who said he was . . .'s servant came here. . . . One evening he brought a car and asked me if I had ever been in one and if not, would I not go with him for an outing? It never entered my head to suspect him and I acceded to his request. I was first taken to . . . where I was gagged and later we proceeded to a house in. . . . For some days every effort was made to commit an outrage on me. . . . Then one day a wealthy merchant and Congress leader of . . . came and asked me to go and enjoy life with him in . . . .

Later one day I was rescued by a friend of my father's with the help of the police.

I have received more than one such letter[2] accusing some Congressmen of immorality. It would not be wisdom to believe that they are all untrue and ignore the complaint. It has never been claimed that every Congressman is a model of virtue. But it is a matter of pride that the public expect a high standard of morality from Congressmen. All kinds of immorality are prevalent among us. It is a reformer's duty to try to wean from error those who are justly accused of misbehaviour. There are limits to immorality, if any can be claimed to pass muster. If what has been related is true, every man has to ask himself how far he is justified in seeking to satisfy his lust at the expense of innocent girls.

NEW DELHI, April 26, 1946

Harijan, 5-5-1946

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 5-5-1946.

[2] Of which only extracts are reproduced here

388. SWARAJ THROUGH SPINNING[1]

An A. I. S. A. worker writes thus :[2]

> You have said that we must make the spinners self-sufficient and that to obtain swaraj through their activity is the aim of the A. I. S. A. . . . This way lies swaraj, you say. I admit it is right for spinners to learn well all the processes. . . . The quality of yarn and cloth will also improve. But how can we win our freedom this way? How are we to bring home this lesson to the spinners?

Imagine, if all the spinners understood the inner meaning of the wheel and span willingly and not under pressure, what an India there would be! The awakening of crores of women spinners would *ipso facto* produce lakhs of khadi-weavers. Imagine too the numbers of men and women workers needed to bring about this awakening! If such a time comes, textile mills, even if any were working, would have to rely on foreign countries for the sale of their produce. They would not, as they do today, hold imperialistic sway over the villages and cities. There would be Hindu-Muslim unity, all would be truthful, there would be no need to tell anyone to wear khadi, for no cloth other than home-spun would be available. That swaraj is hidden in this revolutionary change should be self-evident to seeing eyes. The question may imply that such a consummation is impossible. If such is the question, it means that swaraj through non-violent means is impossible.[3]

Another question asked is how the spinners are to be given the requisite education. To seek out the right answer is the main work of the A. I. S. A. Enough research has not so far been done. It is the duty of every A. I. S. A. worker to try to solve the puzzle. Now that we have Congress ministries in several provinces the work should be easy. Let the workers throw themselves heart and soul into it. They will never succeed if they look all the time to the Central Office for help and guidance.

NEW DELHI, April 26, 1946

Harijan, 5-5-1946

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 5-5-1946.

[2] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.

[3] The Hindi here adds : "In other words the questioner betrays his lack of imagination."

389. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

DELHI,
April 26, 1946

CHI. PREMA,

I have gone through your long letter. there is nothing private in it. I have given it to Sushila Pai to read.

I was not pained by your letter. I see, however, that my vanity is disappearing. I thought I understood a large number of people. But I can now see my ignorance more clearly. I welcome this.

I do not know when I shall be able to see your activities with my own eyes.[1] But I do wish to see them some time.

It seems to me that you remain excited and tense. If so, that must cease.

I had written a letter[2] to you, but Sushila had held it back. Now that also will go with this.

I have put no pressure on you or anybody else, nor wish to. If I have made any mistake in regard to your work, I am ready to rectify it. Keep your promises[3]. I will discuss this subject with Bapa.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10445. Also C. W. 6884. Courtesy : Prema Kantak

390. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[4]

April 26, 1946

Nobody knew who the miscreant[5] was, said Gandhiji, nor would it be right to venture a guess.

It might be presumed at first flush, that because the victim in this case was a Hindu boy the assailant must be a Muslim and *vice versa*.

[1] The addressee had invited Gandhiji to visit a camp she had organized at Pimple, a village in Maharashtra.

[2] Presumably the reference is to the letter dated April 22, 1946; *vide* p. 49.

[3] To the trainees, *vide* "Letter to Prema Kantak", 27-4-1946

[4] The report in *The Hindustan Times* has been collaled with Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.*

[5] A Hindu boy had been stabbed in New Delhi on April 24, 1946. The injuries, however, were not fatal.

Such speculation, in my opinion, is not only idle but mischievous. We should rather ask ourselves as to how we would have or should have acted, if we were present on the scene.

To remain passive witnesses to the dastardly attack would cowardly. Should they, then, whip out a knife and pay back the miscreant in his own coin? Both these courses would be wrong, observed Gandhiji. The only becoming course, he told them, would be to plead with the miscreant not to stain his hands with innocent blood. If in doing so they themselves become victims of the miscreant's anger, they should not mind but should rather welcome it. Such an occasion should provide them with an opportunity to test the sincerity of their daily attendance at the prayer meetings.

When passions rise high and panic and mass hysteria lay hold on the people, it is up to the man of prayer to keep his head above the storm and refuse to sink to the level of the brute. We should pray to God to help us to keep down the hatred and anger in the heart. To be able to conquer anger and hatred and all other baser passions is the fruit of prayer. It is braver far to disarm the miscreant with cool determination devoid of anger than to counter him with a dagger, to prevent an angry word from escaping one's lips than to indulge in abuse.

He recalled another instance of assault on a harmless German during the Victory Day disturbances in Delhi that had been brought to his notice the day before. The madness at the time was directed against Englishmen and Europeans. In his opinion, it was not less cowardly.

We should pity the ruffian. A Maulana who saw me just before I started for the prayer was telling me how a number of newspapers were fanning the flames of communal hatred day after day and week after week. They are the real culprits. To incite murder is as bad if not worse than the murder itself. The actual murderer is very often an ignorant tool, victim of mischievous propaganda.

But even such propaganda could take effect only in a vitiated atmosphere. In a healthy atmosphere it would be sterilized.

Panic is the result of fear after all. But a man of prayer knows no fear. Your prayer is vain repetition if it does not clear the atmosphere of fear, panic and mass hysteria.

The Hindustan Times, 27-4-1946, and *Harijan*, 5-5-1946

391. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

DELHI,
April 27, 1946

CHI. PREMA,

You have raised three issues in your letter.

1. After completing their training in the camp the women are bound to give their services to the Kasturba Trust.

2. The Trust is bound to give them work and pay them.

3. In every district one mature and experienced woman and one comparatively younger woman should be posted.

Though these points are not included in the rules of the Trust, as I had promised you before the rules were framed, all the three demands have been accepted.

At the same time it is also recommended that :

1. Efforts should be made to collect as much money as possible from the place concerned and the district.

2. Where work can be done through one mature and experienced woman, only one should be posted, for, posting two women of the same age and experience at the same place is likely to result in conflict between them. There should be no objection, however, to posting two women if one of them is elderly and the other young. This should be treated as an exception. Care should be taken to see that the exception does not become the rule.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10446. Also C. W. 6885. Courtesy : Prema Kantak

392. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

April 27, 1946

Speaking after the prayers . . . Gandhiji dwelt on the danger of giving credence to panicky reports. Newspapers had reported that Bombay was full of panic, Hindus dared not go into Muslim quarters and *vice versa*, the shops were closed early in the evenings, the streets deserted and the people did not venture out at night for fear of riots breaking out. All that had proved to be a Press canard. Gandhiji said that these

[1] The report in *The Hindustan Times* had been collated with Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.*

false reports had reached him only today. There was neither any panic nor disturbance worth nothing in Bombay. Hindu women and children freely visited and went about in Muslim quarters and *vice versa*. The whole story was faked. In Delhi itself a Hindu woman was being driven by a Muslim *tonga*-driver only the day before. The driver had expressed amazement and horror at what taking place. "Why should there be any quarrel between Hindus and Muslims?" he had asked, and added, "God turns his back on those who quarrel amongst themselves." That showed, remarked Gandhiji, how dangerous it was to give credence to panicky rumours.

The lesson to be learnt from all this is, that we should not be afraid, because people will always frighten the timid, not the brave.

But it was no use making a show of bravery when there was fear in the heart. Probably they had all heard about a child playing with a snake without coming to harm. But if a grown-up person who was afraid of snakes tried to play with one, it would detect fear in the very touch and probably bite him. But supposing they were afraid and wanted to shed fear, the first condition was that they must not carry any arms. They should put faith in God and depend upon Him to protect them. The man who was afraid and carried arms repudiated God and made the arms his God.

Later, Gandhiji reverted to the theme of nature cure and talked about ether. Man was made of clay but even clay was prevaded by ether. The cavities in the human body, the pores in the human skin were all filled by ether. The stars, the sun and the moon were suspended in the void. The astronomers said there were many a heavenly body, like the sun and the stars which the human eye could not see. Gandhiji wanted them to stretch their mental vision so as to grasp the infinity of ethereal space. Ether was the most intangible thing known to man, but it was occupied by something still more intangible, namely, God.

In nature cure they had to establish contact with ether as with the earth. They could sleep under the sky and have as much empty space around them as possible. If they attuned themselves to ether they would realize what insignificant little creatures they were and how ill-becoming it was for them to quarrel amongst themselves.

Gandhiji referred to his visit to the Bhangi quarters on Saturday morning. He lived on the outskirts of the Bhangi quarters. But his was a clean and airy place, where he could live all his life. The Bhangi quarters were dirty and filthy. Their rooms were dark and ill-ventilated. There was just one little vantilator in the room, so that he felt suffocated as he entered it. It was a shame that their brethren should live in that state. Gandhiji told the gathering to visit the Bhangi quarters. The Harijans had a right to feel that his claim to be one of them was more than mere idle talk.

We are all made of earth, ether and the rest of the five elements.

God makes no distinction between man and man. By ourselves we are insignificant worms. We become great when we reflect His greatness. If we are attuned to Him, illness will not touch us. And if perchance we do fall ill, we shall be content to seek cure only through His grace by the application of the simplest means provided by nature and not run about hither and thither to find ways and means to prolong our lives.

The Hindustan Times, 28-4-1946, and *Harijan*, 5-5-1946

393. QUESTION BOX

CRIMINALS AND NON-VIOLENCE

Q. What whould be the treatment meted out to criminals in free India in the light of your non-violence?

A. In independent India of the non-violent type, there will be crime but no criminals. They will not be punished. Crime is a disease like any other malady and is a product of the prevalent social system. Therefore, all crime including murder will be treated as a disease. Whether such an India will ever come into being is another question.

NEW DELHI, April 28, 1946

Harijan, 5-5-1946

394. TELEGRAM TO DHIRUBHAI B. DESAI

April 28, 1946

JUST LEARNT FATHER[1] SINKING. HOPE PATIENT WILL RALLY. IF CONSCIOUS TELL HIM THINK OF GOD AND NOTHING ELSE.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Bhulabhai Desai who died on May 6, 1946; *vide* "Telegram to Dhirubhai B. Desai", 6-5-1946

395. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

NEW DELHI,
April 28, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

Your kind note of yesterday is characteristic of you.

I reciprocate the hope expressed in the last sentence of you note.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 184

396. LETTER TO M. K. SYED AHMED

HARIJAN MANDIR,
READING ROAD, NEW DELHI,
April 28, 1946

DEAR SYED AHMED SAHIB,

Your letter to Gandhiji has come. Export of cloth is not possible these days. We cannot meet our own requirements. But you should arrange for spinning and weaving in Ceylon itself. This should not be beyond your powers. I showed your letter to Shri Rajaji[2] also. His view too is the same.

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

JANAB M. K. SYED AHMED SAHIB
C/O M. & M. BUCHARI ESQ.
BAZAAR ST.
BATTICOLOA
CEYLON

From a photostat : G. N. 8961

[1] Thanking Gandhiji for his continued presence in Delhi, the addressee had written : "Critical days lie ahead but I venture to hope and believe that it will not be so very long now before the matter will be concluded and you and we will be able to leave Delhi with a sense of our labours satisfactorily ended."

[2] C. Rajagopalachari (1878-1972); member of Congress Working Committee, 1922-42, 1946-47 and 1951-54; Governor of West Bengal, 1947-48; Governor-General of India, 1948-50; one of the founders of Swatantra Party

397. ADDRESS TO CONGRESS SEVA DAL VOLUNTEERS[1]

NEW DELHI,
April 28, 1946

Gandhiji said that it would have been better if the report had been sent to the Congress leaders.

The volunteers had been in attendance in his camp. Mahtma Gandhi thanked them for the service they had rendered him and his party. He knew the volunteers had worked hard and had been doing night-and-day duty. He felt grateful for the love and diligence with which they had served him and his party. But what was the use of their serving him if they served not the lowest among the low who were his next-door neighbours. They kept his place spotlessly clean but the sweepers' quarters next door were extremely dirty. It was their shame as it was his. He would not be satisfied till they served the sweepers as they had served him. They should rather go and serve the Bhangis who lived next door to him in filth and squalor. Such service carried with it its own reward. He had come to live in the filth in which they lived. The fault was not theirs but of those who had reduced them to that state. The quarters provided for them were worse than the worst prison cell that he had seen in India or in South Africa.

Mahatma Gandhi recalled how he had written to Mr. Birla[2], Mr. Viyogi Hari and Mr. Brijkrishna Chandiwala to make arrangements for his stay in sweepers' quarters. They had done it. He was Mr. Birla's guest even here, as the management and the expenses were Mr. Birla's. The result was that he was neither in Birla House nor in the Bhangi quarters.

Gandhiji said he had identified himself with the Bhangis mentally, but he could not live like them. The Bhangis had a right to feel that his claim was an idle one. He would like them to go and work in the Bhangi quarters so that the place became as clean as where he was staying.

If they went to the Bhangi quarters, not as their patrons or teachers but as their true servants, they would be able to reach their hearts and transform the look of things in no time. The volunteers were not do this by ordering the Bhangis. They were to be their humble and silent servants. Today those who became volunteers had a lurking desire to be counted as leaders. This, he added, was bad. Their one ambition should be to serve those whom we have made the lowest of the low.

The Hindustan Times, 29-4-1946, *Hindustan*, 29-4-1946, and *Harijan*, 5-5-1946

[1] The *Harijan* version has been collated with *The Hindustan Times* report and the Hindi report in *Hindustan*. The volunteers had gathered to seek Gandhiji's blessings and advice. A report of their work was readout by Radharaman.

[2] G. D. Birla, President, Central Board of Harijan Sevak Sangh, 1932-59

398. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
April 28, 1946

Gandhiji reminded the gathering that that was the last Sunday of the month. It was customary to have flag salutation on that day and render more service than usual. Those who believed in spinning span more than usual on that day. He had been to see the volunteers in the morning. From the report that was read out he had gathered that they were doing a lot of good work. Volunteers who would really and truly be servants of the people were required in their millions.

There was hardly any merit in their serving him. To serve the so-called big people in order to gain importance or in order to earn their blessings should not be their ideal. Real selfless service carried with it its own reward. They should go and serve the Bhangis who lived next door to him in filth and squalor.

If sincere selfless workers came forth in their thousands, swaraj would be theirs for the having. The Cabinet Mission would find itself without any job. Britons would quit India or decide to stay on as her servants. Two hundred spinning-wheels were plied on the prayer grounds for one and a quarter hours. But Gandhiji said that this demonstration did not come up to his requirements. If swaraj was to come through the spinning-wheel, everyone of them, young and old, had to spin regularly. To those who easily lost their temper his prescription was to spin in silence.

The late Sir Prabhashanker Pattani[1] used to suffer from insomnia. Gandhiji advised him to spin before going to bed, avoiding all talk of politics. He did it for a year round and wrote to him saying the prescription worked wonderfully well.

The Hindustan Times, 19-4-1946

399. CASTE CORROSION

Soil corrosion eats up good soil. It is bad enough. Caste corrosion is worse, it eats up men and divides men from men. Letters continue to come from Christians, Parsis, naturally, from Scheduled Castes and women.They require representation in the ministry. Provincial competition is already there. The makers of ministries are not free from the taint and even when they do not favour it, they will lose caste if they dare to do the right thing and restrict their choice to merit only. Democracy can only represent the average, if not less than the average. Therefore, a democratic institution to be pure has to attend to the all-round education of the humblest and the lowliest. It

[1] Dewan of Bhavnagar State

must take in its sweep all superstition and social abuse. In such a society there will be no Christian and non-Christian, there will be no distinction of sex. If best persons are women all ministers will belong to that sex, if Parsis they will be all Parsis. That good day may be far off. What is to be done in the meanwhile? Those who feel that they are left out should have patience and rise by dint of service and merit. Those who happen to be ministers should mete out even justice which must include extra effort to raise the neglected and the downtrodden. They should make all feel at every step that they are servants, not masters, of the nation.

NEW DELHI, April 29, 1946

Harijan, 5-5-1946

400. MARCH OF CIVILIZATION

Q. On page 91 of *Harijan* 14-4-'46,[1] it has been argued that the bullock is a living machine and that contact with such harmless animals is a potent factor in the onward march of human civilization. The animals are however, made 'harmless' by making them 'impotent'. Is this the correct method of the onward march of civilization? If we have cows, we must have bulls. The bullock is a creation of human selfishness and cruelty. If not in thinking man, in the lower animals at any rate, all the force of their nature rages in the fury of the generative desire. Therefore, to turn the noble animal, the '*Vahana* of Mahadev'[2], into a beat of burden is sad.

A. The writer is logical. But such logic would prevent the domestication of the cow. For there is probably more cruelty in domesticating the cow than in castrating the bull. It is a question of degree. Further march of civilization seems to imply increasing domination of man over beast, together with a growingly humane method of using them.

There are three schools of humanitarians. One believes in replacing animal power by the use of any other. Another believes in treating animals as fellow-beings and making such use of them as a brotherly spirit will permit. The third will not make use of lower animals for man's selfish purpose but will employ instead one's power and that of fellow-beings to the extent that the latter give intelligent and willing use. I belong to the third school. It is possible

[1] In V. G. Desai's article "The Case for the Bullock"

[2] Mount of Lord Shiva

by human labour, judiciously and humanely employed, to do fruit culture to a large extent and even corn culture. Indeed, as prisoners we civil resisters in the Transvaal dug up stony ground for converting it into a municipal garden. No ploughing would have answered the purpose. The ground could yield only to the pickaxe.

The first I hold to be useless and even injurious in the end to mankind. A judicious combination of the other two seems to me to be the goal. I can see no escape from castration. The only thing to be done is to make it progressively humane.

A correspondent has brought forward in this connection the question of branding animals. Does the pain caused by branding compensate for the benefit it confers upon the owner and the animal? If it confers none on the animal, naturally, branding must be taboo.

NEW DELHI, April 29, 1946

Harijan, 5-5-1946

401. INDEPENDENCE

Friends have repeatedly challenged me to define independence. At the risk of repetition, I must say that the independence of my dream means *Ramarajya*, i.e., the Kingdom of God on Earth. I do not know what it will be like in Heaven. I have no desire to know the distant scene. If the present is attractive enough, the future cannot be very unlike.

In concrete terms, then, the independence should be political, economic and moral.

'Political' necessarily means the removal of the control of the British army in every shape and form.

'Economic' means entire freedom from British capitalists and capital, as also their Indian counterparts. In other words, the humblest must feel eqaul to the tallest. This can take place only by capital or capitalists sharing their skill and capital with the lowliest and the least.

'Moral' means freedom from armed defence forces. My conception of *Ramarajya* excludes replacement of the British army by a national army of occupation. A country that is governed by even its national army can never be morally free and, therefore, its so-called weakest member can never rise to his full moral height.

Though Mr. Churchill is claimed to have won the war for the British, he has in his Aberdeen speech uttereed words of wisdom from the standpoint of a radical non-violent reformer. He knows, if any panoplied warrior knows, what havoc the two wars of our generation have wrought. In another column I reproduce the summary of his speech as reported in the public Press.[1] Only I must warn the public against the pessimistic note underlying the speech. Nothing will be found to have gone wrong if mankind recoils from the horrors of war. The bloodletting that men have undergone to the point of whiteness will not have been in vain, if it has taught us that we must freely give our own blood in the place of taking other people's blood, be the cause ever so noble or ignoble.

If the Cabinet Mission 'delivers the goods', India will have to decide whether attempting to become a military power she would be content to become, at least for some years, a fifth-rate power in the world without a message in answer to the pessimism described above, or whether she will by further refining and continuing her non-violent policy prove herself worthy of being the first nation in the world using her hard-won freedom for the delivery of the earth from the burden which is crushing her in spite of the so-called victory.,

NEW DELHI, April 29, 1946

Harijan, 5-5-1946

402. KANU GANDHI'S CAMP[2]

This issue contains an abridged account of Kanu Gandhi's second camp[3]. How the candidates[4] were selected, how there was no financial loss, how beginning with cleaning latrines they carried out all the other work, what they ate, etc., are all matters worthy of attention. The smallest detail was not neglected. The running of this camp will serve as a guide to others who wish to organize or attend training camps.

The secret of Kanu Gandhi's camp lay, in my opinion, in the fact that the organizers knew their job and were there as workers rather than for issuing orders. Where the organizers are mere superintendents the work is often apt to be lifeless or slack.

[1] *Vide* "Winston Churchill's Speech"

[2] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 5-5-1946.

[3] Not reproduced here. The first camp was held in 1945.

[4] Twenty-two men and four women

It is sad that the camp had to be of short duration[1]. There were strong reasons for this being so. Let us hope that those who came for training will utilize in their own lives the lessons they learnt and thus make progress towards becoming perfect servants of the people.

NEW DELHI, April 29, 1946

Harijan, 5-5-1946

403. NOTE TO G. D. BIRLA[2]

[*April 29, 1946*][3]

I want to leave it to the Government, but only after I have come to a decision.[4] Has his letter been received ? I got a reply to yesterday's letter.

If a Bhangi also could not clean it, then? A Bhangi's work is the most important and also the most difficult. Let us see what happens. You may go there. Do not send me. The job has grown so dirty that I do not at all want to go there. If I go, is there any place where I can stay? I cannot stay at Rajkumar's. The party is large. I cannot reduce it.

From the Hindi original : C. W. 8078. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

404. NOTE TO SUDHIR GHOSH

[*April 29, 1946*][5]

Tell Cripps that my party will be large. All of us cannot stay at Manor Ville[6]. I do not want to go anywhere. I would be willing to go if a place can be found in Simla where we could comfortably stay. In my heart I feel I should not go.[7] I would rather that they left me out. Talk all this over with Blaker[8].

There is a moral aspect, too. They say one thing to the world

[1] Viz., three weeks

[2] Apparently a silence-day note, this is written on the reverse side of a letter dated April 28, 1946. The following Monday was April 29; *vide* also the following item.

[3] *ibid*

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Stafford Cripps", 29-4-1946

[5] According to the source this was written prior to Gandhiji's departure for Simla on a silence day, which was April 29.

[6] Amrit Kaur's house

[7] *Vide* footnote 1 to the following item.

[8] George Blaker, Private Secretary to Sir Stafford Cripps

and another thing to me. Why get mixed up in all this? I have faith in you. I believe that your faith in God is a living faith. Think over this and if you want to ask me anything further about it, do so.

From a facsimile of the Hindi : *Gandhi's Emissary*, facing p. 212

405. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

NEW DELHI,
April 29, 1946

DEAR SIR STAFFORD,

You do not understand how uneasy I feel. Something is wrong.[1] But I shall come to Simla.[2] I cannot take my necessarily big family to Rajkumari's house. I have to fall back upon the Government for quarters for about 15 people. Hardly any service will be wanted. But utensils and food stuffs will be necessary. Goat's milk and train accommodation and the lift from Kalka. All this is strange for me but it has become true.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 184-5

[1] According to the source "The reference is to the postponement of negotiations at Delhi and the decision to hold a meeting instead with the representatives of the Congress and the Muslim League at Simla. In the letter of invitation to the Conference to be held at Simla, the Congress and the Muslim League were asked to send representatives to enter into negotiation about a scheme based upon certain 'fundamental principles'. Acceptance of the invitation thus implied acceptance of the proposed basis. This basis, Gandhiji felt, contained in it 'the seeds of Pakistan'. When he expressed his apprehension about this, the members of the Cabinet Mission explained to him that by accepting the invitation the invitees committed themselves to nothing, but the Mission had to word the letter of invitation as they had done to bring in Jinnah. To Gandhiji this smacked of 'double talk'. He immediately alerted his Congress colleagues and insisted upon their obtaining a clarification in writing from the Cabinet Mision before they accepted the invitation. This was done by an exchange of letters between the Maulana Saheb and Lord Pethick-Lawrence on the 28th and 29th April, 1946."

[2] The addressee and Lord Pethick-Lawrence had met Gandhiji the previous day to persuade him to go to Simla.

406. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

[*April 29, 1946*][1]

If you don't eat here out of cussedness, you are wholly wrong, and you have not understood me. This is not the way of obedience and resignation. Think well and act as your inner voice dictates, not as I tell you. If you want to do as I tell you, then it should be willing and intelligent obedience.

From the original : C. W. 4214. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7850

407. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI[2]

NEW DELHI,
April 29, 1946

CHI. MRIDULA[3],

I got your letters. I am overburdened with work.

I showed your letter to Sucheta[4] . She will go to Jharia and work there. I see that at present your presence in Ahmedabad is necessary.

I hope you are taking care of your health. Do continue the hip-bath and the friction-bath. Have the mud-packs at night. I hope Saraladevi[5] is maintaining good health. What is the news about Nimubehn ?

Regarding me nothing is definite. I shall know in a day or two.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

408. LETTER TO A. K. BHAGWAT

NEW DELHI,
April 29, 1946

BROTHER BHAGWAT,

I have your letter. Amtulbehn[6] has come over. I have already

[1] Apparently a silence-day note, this is written on the reverse side of a letter dated April 25, 1946. The following Monday was April 29, 1946.

[2] The letter is in the Devanagari script.

[3] Daughter of Ambalal Sarabhai

[4] Wife of J.B. Kripalani; member, Constituent Assembly, 1946; member, Congress Working Committee, 1950-52; member, Lok Sabha, 1952-62; Chief Minister of U. P., 1963-67

[5] Addressee's mother

[6] Amtussalaam

written that you should go to Appa if you can. Yes, it is true, he may not be able to send for you often.

Your work there is going on well and it is very important. At present it is only a beginning. For making progress you will have to confine yourself to it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : C. W. 2750. Courtesy : Manibhai Desai

409. LETTER TO SRIRAMULU RAJU

NEW DELHI,
April 29, 1946

BROTHER SRIRAMULU,

I am not publishing your notice. Caste Hindus who associated themselves were not many. You must not try to gain publicity. Render silent service.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 108

410. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

NEW DELHI,
April 29, 1946

DEAR MAULANA SAHEB,

Lawrence told me last night that you had written to him suggesting some alterations in his letter and that he had sent you a reply.[1] What is all this ? I could not say much in the matter but I did not like it. I am perplexed. It looks like I shall have to go to Simla. The mind shrinks from the thought. I feel somewhere in some way we

[1] Pethick-Lawrence in his letter of April 27 to Abul Kalam Azad had invited Congress for discussions on the basis of a scheme which, *inter alia,* envisaged "two groups of Provinces, the one of the predominantly Hindu Provinces and the other of the predominantly Muslim Provinces" with residuary "sovereign rights". Azad had objected to the classification of the Provinces in terms of "predominantly Hindu and predominantly Muslim" and also to the term "sovereign" being applied to the residuary rights. Pethick-Lawrence in his reply of April 28 expressed his inability to make any "textual alterations" in the proposal as conveyed in his letter.

are committing a mistake.

You must also consider what you intend to do after the British army withdraws. I cannot quite see what you could do.

You have announced that the present Working Committee will continue till November and you will continue as president till then. If you must continue, it does not seem proper that you should do so by a ruling. Giving such a ruling seems to me dangerous thing to do. If it becomes a duty to continue this can be done only through fresh elections. This matter deserves consideration.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

411. TALK WITH MADAN MOHAN MALVIYA[1]

[*April 29, 1946*][2]

In reply to Gandhiji's question as to what he proposed to do since the venue of the Cabinet Mission talks was going to be shifted to Simla, Malaviyaji said he would be returning to Benares. That relieved Gandhiji as he was half afraid lest in his irrespressible enthusiasm this *enfant terrible* should decide to venture up the heights of Simla. That would be courting disaster at his age and in his present state of health. Gandhiji asked him, marvelling at his perennial freshness :

How long are you to continue to worry over the country's affairs ?

"So long as the country's affairs continue to cause worry," he replied, with a merry twinkle in his eyes.

Won't you leave something to a youth like myself ? It will make me even younger.

"This young man," replied Malaviyaji in an audible whisper, his eyes beaming at his visitor, "is going to remain young for many a day yet."

You can entrust any of your burdens to me. The only condition is that you must cease worrying and bless me with some of your strength.

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's report entitled "Seeking Blessings". Gandhiji paid a visit to Malaviyaji before his departure for Simla and communicated in writing as it was his silence day.

[2] *ibid*

The name of God is the strength of our strength.

That is true. The recitation of Ramanama is there all the time. But where from shall I bring your learning ? I am not flattering. I have neither your erudition nor your knowledge of the *Mahabharata* and the *Bhagavata* lore.

But you have God's name which is the quintessence of all knowledge. Is it not ?

That is true, but all the same I do feel jealous of your learning. But now you must get well and make use of all your learning to that end.

I will get well.[1]

It is a national menace, this spread of vegetable ghee, on the one hand, and the slaughter of the cows on the other. Between the two the vitality of the people is being sapped. I feel so happy over what you have done and are doing for the milk supply.

Gandhiji agreed with him as regards the menance of vegetable ghee and added :

My efforts to solve the milk problem, of course continue, but success is not possible without the full co-operation of our commercial and trading class. But I must now take leave of you.

Malaviyaji smiled leave and blessings in reply, making *namaskara* at the same time. As Gandhiji rose from his seat he (Malaviyaji) slowly recited the following verse :

Forget not yourself,

But continue to spread your fragrance wherever you are,

Even like the rose.

Harijan, 12-5-1946

412. A TALK[2]

May 1, 1946[3]

The Government had thoughtfully placed at Gandhiji's disposal a big bungalow at Simla and made transport arrangements for him and his party. Should he avail himself of these without stint? His faith in God and his detachment, he felt, were on trial. Further reduction in the staff seemed hardly feasible. But did he hope to

[1] Pyarelal mentions that "at this stage . . . Radhakant told Gandhiji that he had read out his article 'Vanaspati and Ghee' to his father and it had pleased him immensely."

[2] Reporduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". Gandhiji had this talk with the members of his party who were to accompany him to Simla.

[3] From "Statement to the Press", *vide* "Statement to the Press", 4-5-1946

cope with the situation through unaided human effort? And if he was to be merely an instrument for carrying out the Divine Will, were outward trappings necessary for his purpose ?

We are up against heavy odds. There is so much corruption, falsehood and deceit all round. How can I cut my way through it and come out of it unscathed, except by the use of the sharp axe of detachment. In this hour of trial I wish to put myself entirely in God's hands and proceed to Simla all alone. But I do not want to do so unless I can carry you with me. To force my will upon you would be the negation of detachment.

None or all, faith cannot be divided. You cannot trust me to God in part. As the poet says, "What of faith in aught is want of faith in all."[1]

Harijan, 12-5-1946

413. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
May 1, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi referred to the British Cabinet Mission and said that the Mission had come with good intentions, but that the extent of the Mission's success would depend on the people's own strength and purity. If they did not have these, they were bound to be disappointed.

Mahatma Gandhi expressed regret that he had to leave for Simla. Human nature was such that one became attached to the environment. The people of Delhi had been very good and had joined the prayers whole-heartedly. He said he was going to Simla out of a sense of duty. During summer his heart was at Mahabaleshwar. Doctors had advised him to spend two or three months in the hot weather at Mahabaleshwar or Panchagani. But he had to go to Simla instead, and he had to go by a special train which was a matter of shame for him and for them.

Gandhiji said people crowded at stations, and their noisy affection embarrassed him. He wished to live up to the age of 125 years, yet he was an old man and could not bear the din and the noise. What did it matter if the Government paid

[1] According to the source, the party members could not take upon themselves the tremendous responsibility of letting Gandhiji go altogether unattended. After a hurried deliberation they communicated their unanimous decision to Gandhiji that if he took with him three only, or Pyarelal along they would be satisfied. However, the whole party accompanied Gandhiji to Simla but was sent back ot Delhi soon after their arrival.

the fare for the special train? The money came from the pockets of the poor. Special trains were used for high officials or dangerous prisoners. He had to use them to escape the loud expressions of affection. It was their duty perhaps to go to stations to see their leaders, but their affection must be subdued and disciplined.

The Hindustan Time, 2-5-1946

414. CERTAIN QUESTIONS

A London friend has put seven questions on the working of non-violence. Though similar questions have been dealt with in *Young India* or *Harijan*, it is profitable to answer them in a single article, if perchance the answers may prove helpful.

Q. 1. Is it possible for a modern State (which is essentially based on force) to offer non-violent resistance for countering internal as well as external forces of disorder? Or is it necessary that people wanting to offer non-violent resistance should first of all divest themselves of State-authority and place themselves vis-a-vis the opponent entirely in a private capacity?

A. It is not possible for a modern State based on force, non-violently to resist forces of disorder, whether external or internal.A man cannot serve God and Mammon, nor be 'temperate and furious' at the same time. It is claimed that a State can be based on non-violence, i. e., it can offer non-violent resistance against a world combination based on armed force. Such a State was Ashoka's. The example can be repeated. But the case does not become weak even if it be shown that Ashoka's State was not based on non-violence. It has to be examined on its merits.

Q. 2. Do you think that it would be possible for a Congress government to deal with foreign aggression or internal riots in an entirely non-violent manner?

A. It is certainly possible for a Congress government to deal with "foreign aggression or internal riots" in a non-violent manner. That the Congress may not share my belief is quite possible. If the Congress changes its course, the change will prove nothing save that the non-violence hitherto offered was of the weak and that the Congress has no faith in State non-violence.

Q. 3. Does not the knowledge that the opponent is wedded to non-violence often encourage the bully?

A. The bully has his opportunity when he has to face non-violence of the weak. Non-violence of the strong is any day stronger

than that of the bravest soldier fully armed or a whole host.

Q. 4. What policy would you advocate if a section of the Indian people tries to enforce by sword a selfish measure which is not only repugnant to others but also basically unjust? While it is possible for an unofficial organization to offer non-violent resistance in such a case, is it also possible for the government of the day to do so?

A. The question assumes a case which can never exist. A non-violent State must be broad-based on the will of an intelligent people, well able to know its mind and act up to it. In such a State the assumed section can only be negligible. It can never stand against the deliberate will of the overwhelming majority represented by the State. The government of the day is not outside the people. It is the will of the overwhelming majority. It it is expressed non-violently, it cannot be majority of one but nearer 99 against one in a hundred.

Q. 5. Is not non-violent resistance by the militarily strong more effective than that by the militarily weak?

A. This is a contradiction in terms. There can be no non-violence offered by the militarily strong. Thus, Russia in order to express non-violence has to discard all her power of doing violence. What is true is that if those, who were at one time strong in armed might, change their mind, they will be better able to demonstrate their non-violence to the world and, therefore, also to their opponents. Those who are strong in non-violence will not mind whether they are opposed by the militarily weak people or the strongest.

Q. 6. What should be the training and discipline for a non-violent army? Should not certain aspects of conventional military training form a part of the syllabus?

A. A very small part of the preliminary training received by the military is common to the non-violent army. These are discipline, drill, singing in chorus, flag-hoisting, signalling and the like. Even this is not absolutely necessary and the basis is different. The positively necessary training for a non-violent army is an immovable faith in God, willing and perfect obedience to the chief of the non-violent army and perfect inward and outward co-operation between the units of the army.

Q. 7. Is it not better under the existing circumstances that countries like India and England should maintain full military efficiency while resolving to give non-violent resistance a reasonable trial before taking any military step?

A. The foregoing answers should make it clear that under no

circumstance can India and England give non-violent resistance a reasonable chance whilst they are both maintaining full military efficiency. At the same time it is perfectly true that all military powers carry on negotiations for peaceful adjustment of rival disputes. But here we are not discussing preliminary peace parleys before appealing to the arbitrament of war. We are discussing a final substitute for armed conflict called war, in naked terms, mass murder.

SIMLA, May 2, 1946

Harijan, 12-5-1946

415. A SURE AID

A correspondent suggests three aids to self-control, of which two are outward and one is inward. The inward help he describes as follows :[1]

There is no doubt that Ramanama is the surest aid. If recited from the heart it charms away every evil thought, and evil thought gone, no corresponding action is possible. The outward helps are all useless if the mind is weak. They are super-fluous if the mind is pure. This must not be taken to mean that a pure-minded man can take all the liberties and still keep safe. Such a man simply will not take any liberties with himself. His whole life will be an infallible testimony to the inward purity. The *Gita* truly says that the mind makes the man and unmakes him. Milton paraphrases the same thought when he says:

> The mind is its own place and in itself
>
> Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.[2]

SIMLA, May 2, 1946

Harijan, 12-5-1946

416. RAMANAVAMI CELEBRATIONS[3]

> They get the best talent from the South at enormous cost for the sake of amusement. The artists who preside are of questionable morals. All this at a religious festival.

This is a condensation of a correspondent's letter. When a man begins a downward career, it is difficult to say where the deterioration

[1] The extract from the letter is not reproduced here. The third aid suggested by the correspondent was Ramanama.

[2] *Paradise Lost*, "Letter to Amritlal V. Thakkar", 31-5-1946

[3] This appeared under "Notes".

will end. Intoxication of wealth is often as bad as that caused by liquor. The only way to stop this degradation of religious or for that matter any celebrations is for the public not to patronize them.

SIMLA, May 2, 1946

Harijan, 12-5-1946

417. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SIMLA,
May 2, 1946

I did not know that I would have to come to Simla this time. If we have faith in God we simply would not care to know beforehand how He may dispose of us. It is enough for us to hold ourselves perfectly in readiness for whatever happens. We are not allowed to know what tomorrow has in store for us and our best conceived plans have a knack very often of going awry. The highest wisdom therefore is never to worry about the future but to resign ourselves entirely to His Will.

I do not propose to say anything here about the Cabinet Mission. And I would like you, too, for your part, to repress your curiosity about it. Let us all mutely watch and pray. As I told the people, who attended the evening prayer gathering at Delhi yesterday, the Cabinet Mission will not be able to go beyond what is warranted by our strength. We shall be fools to think otherwise. Even if they tried to go beyond, it would only cause us surfeit and we would not be able to take advantage of it. Therefore, even if the Mission should prove infructuous I would not blame them for it. Rather I would blame ourselves for our weakness. It would enable us to measure our strength. By strength I mean non-violent strength. We are pledged to gain swaraj non-violently.

Many people today share the belief, and I am one of them, that this time the Cabinet Mission will do the right thing by India and that the British power would finally and completely be withdrawn. Time alone will show how far this belief is justified.

Now to take up the question I want to talk to you about. Last time also I had mentioned it. But truth is such a thing that one may repeat it from the house-tops any number of times without

[1] The version from Pyarelal's report, published under the title "Introspection", is reproduced with alterations to bring it in conformity with the Hindi original.

getting tired of it, just as one is not tired of repeating the name of God. Hypocrites too have the name of God on their lips but what we use is it if they carry a knife under their arms? If Ramanama comes out of the heart one would never feel tired of it. So never mind if I repeat endlessly whatever I want to say. It is bound to have its impact on you. The first *mantra* of the *Ishopanishad* says that God pervades the universe and it is man's duty to surrender his all to God in the first instance. There is nothing which he can call his own. Having made the surrender man is to take out of it what he may require for his legitimate needs but not a whit more. He must not covet what belongs to others. Take my instance. I have been housed here in a palatial building. For fear of your embarrassing affection I had to seek Government's hospitality and they put me up here. That however does not mean that since the Government have placed a big bungalow at my disposal I am free to make use of the whole of it. Tolstoy, in one of his inimitable parables, has answered the question, how much land a man requires. The Devil tempts a man by granting him a boon that all the land that he can circumscribe by running around shall be his. The man runs and runs, goades by his greed and in the end when the sun is just sinking below the horizon, he reaches back the starting point only to drop down dead. Six feet of the earth is all the land that he requires for his burial. If, therefore, I were to delude myself with the belief that I needed the whole of this bungalow and took possession of it, I would be set down as a fool. Only a perverse nature can interpret the verse to mean that after making a ceremony of offering everything to God one can indulge oneself in the good things of life to an unlimited extent. That would be a travesty of its true meaning. I would far rather like to see a man dressed in old, mended clothes than in gaudy new ones. To wear torn clothes is a sign of laziness and therefore a matter of shame, but to wear patched clothes proclaims your poverty or renunciation and industry. Similarly, if someone gives me Rs. 25,000 and I spend it on my person I am a robber and thief. I can use only enough for my bare needs. That would be the teaching of the *Ishopanishad*. If you understand this you will achieve great things.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 12-5-1946

418. LETTER TO SUSHILA PAI

[After *May* 2, *1946*][1]

CHI. SUSHILA,

Why do you fall ill ? Are you careless about the diet ? Do you take no vegetables other than potatoes ? Write to me in detail. Read this letter[2] and return it to me when I come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

419. IS KHADI TOTTERING?

To those who have no faith khadi is tottering. In reality it is gaining ground. From being the poor man's staff of life, it is trying to become the non-violent means of gaining independence. The difficulty is fairly clearly expressed in the following paragraphs[3] from a letter from Tamil Nadu.

> The A. I. S. A. is faced with two problems now. The one is to keep on the khadi production on the present methods. The other is to give re-orientation to our activity related to artisans and their villages where we seve.
>
> The commercial production as it is, is seriously affected in the last few months owing to competition of the uncertified merchants in khadi. The uncertified merchants buy the yarn from our spinners who spin with better cotton supplied by us. They buy khadi woven by the weavers... for by giving extra wages . . . . The khadi thus bought is sold . . . at higher prices.
>
> There are more than fifty uncertified khadi dealers in this area. Among these are Congressmen also, who occupy places in the Congress Executive.
>
> We are not able to influence the artisans against being exploited by the uncertified merchants. They simply say that they are not able to resist the temptation of higher wages for inferior labour and with no conditons that we impose with regard to quality and their wearing khadi, etc. . . . .
>
> This tendency among the artisans is a great impediment and obstacle in approaching them with our ideal of village reconstruction through the charkha.

The present method of khadi production has to be sacrificed if

[1] This is written on a letter from Premabehn Kantak dated May 2, 1946.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Of which only extracts are reproduced here

it hinders re-orientation. This requires faith and alertness which faith brings. Faith never accrues to the lazy.

Uncertified khadi dealers are a powerful menace to khadi whether from the standpoint of the poor man or of non-violence. For the dealer knows only his own pocket and nothing else matters to him. Of course, he goes to the weaver and the spinner and makes all kinds of promises, not knowing that if he killed the A. I. S. A. he would kill himself.

The pity of it all is that Congressmen become willing tools in the hands of these uncertified dealers. They have brought into being an association of specialists. Yet they do not know that they are willingly or unwillingly killing the goose that lays the golden egg. They have a right to do so in any case, more so if they do not believe in khadi as the non-violent insturment of swaraj.

It has been suggested to me that the policy of the A. I. S. A. can be changed only after consultation with Congressmen. This is wrong in the nature of things. The A. I. S. A. is composed of Congressmen. Though created by the Congress, it is an autonomous body. It can be disowned by the Congress at any time but while it is owned it must be trusted to do the right thing in terms of swaraj. Part payment in yarn is a potent cause of worry to Congressmen. This should not be so, if they believe that khadi is a symbol of non-violence and all that it implies. If such is not the belief the clause about compulsory wear of khadi should be given up.

Moreover, khadi furnishes the acid test of public honesty. It is a great effort to find the best way of inducing honesty in public dealings, for it means coming in close and selfless touch with the millions of men and women in the villages.

The upshot of it all is that workers like the writer have to carry on their work with full faith in their mission and leave the result in the hands of God.

SIMLA, May 3, 1946

Harijan, 12-5-1946

420. THE SO-CALLED DECIMAL COINAGE

The Central Legislative Assembly having decided to circulate the Cent Bill for eliciting public opinion, as one, perhaps, partly responsible for influencing this decision, I owe it to the public to explain more fully my views about this measure. . . .

Shri K. G. Mashruwala's[1] note[2] is a fairly conclusive argument

[1] Kishorelal G. Mashruwala

[2] Of which only an extract is reproduced here

to show that there should be no hurry over the proposed change. Let such things await a full-fledged national representative government.

SIMLA, May 3, 1946
Harijan, 12-5-1946

421. USEFUL HINTS

The following excerpts are taken from Prof. Kumarappa's[1] notes.[2]

SIMLA, May 3, 1946
Harijan, 12-5-1946

422. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

CHADWICK, SIMLA WEST,
May 3, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

Salt is not off my brain.[3] For the sake of English honour I say that there should not be a day's delay about the abolition of this monopoly.

It is to impress upon H. E. what the monopoly has meant that I enclose herewith an additional note[4] prepared by Shri Pyarelal.[5]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ.

SIMLA

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 158-9

[1] J. C. Kumarappa, Secretary of the All-India Village Industries Association

[2] The extracts, not reproduced here, contain suggestions regarding co-operative socieities, agriculture, irrigation, etc. The concluding part of the notes appeared in *Harijan*, 19-5-1946.

[3] *Vide* "Draft and Note on Proposed Proclamation on Salt", sub-title "The Proclamation.

[4] Which appeared in *Harijan*, 19-5-1946 under the title "An Exaction and Oppression"

[5] The reply from the addressee, dated May 6, 1946, read; "H. E. has personally studied the problem since you first mentioned it to him, but is not in a position to anticipate the results of the enquiry which is taking place. He realizes how deeply interested you are in the matter, but feels that he must make a full examination of the consequences which would follow any [reduction or] abolition of the tax, and might bear heavily on any new Government."

The same day, however, another letter followed, inviting Gandhiji for "a short talk" with the Viceroy at 7 p. m.

423. A TALK[1]

[*May 3, 1946*][2]

"Unless the Lord build the house, they build in vain who build it."[3] Why not let me take my chance with God?

It was not too late yet to perform that act of faith, he told us.

Now retire within yourself and seek the answer there. Do not consult others. And let me know the result.[4]

Harijan, 12-5-1946

424. TALK WITH AGATHA HARRISON[5]

[*May 3, 1946*][6]

The world will laugh at me and say, 'Here is a theatrical man.' I do not mind it. When one is used to human aids it is not easy to tear oneself away from them all of a sudden. I very conservative in my feelings. I have spent half a day in searching for a small bit of pencil which had been with me for a long time. I could not reconcile myself to its loss. And here I have to detach myself from my entire surroundings and send away a party whom I have trained and seasoned for my work for years—no easy job.

It should not be so. All should be same to one who has surrendered his all to God. My Ramanama will be vain repetition and I would be a wretched guide for the Congress, the Cabinet Mission and others, if I allowed that feeling of attachment to weigh with me. If they follow my advice it might be like a plunge in the dark. As seasoned politicians they cannot afford to take that risk. My guidance must, therefore, be unalloyed.

If you are surrounded by your family, they divide your attention in however small or subtle a measure. I wish in this crisis to

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". Gandhiji had this talk with the members of his party.

[2] From "Statement to the Press", *vide* "Statement to the Press", 4-5-1946

[3] *Psalms* 127, Bible (Old Testament)

[4] This was addressed to Pyarelal.

[5] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

[6] According to the source this and the talk reported in the preceding item took place on the same day.

give my undevided self to God.

"You feel you have to deal with an extraordinarily acute crisis?" asked Agatha Harrison.

Yes, there is a crisis within a crisis. Not only is there the outward crisis, which you see, but a crisis within myself.

It remains to be seen how I come out of the test. So far people around me had attended to every little thing for me. If anything went wrong they were responsible. From tomorrow I shall have to do all that myself and blame myself only, if anything goes wrong. With all that I must feel at ease with myself. I shall have to watch myself. It will be a great thing if I survive that detachment and feel the inner joy—not start running high blood-pressure. It is a big experiment in my life and a necessary stage in my spiritual growth.

Harijan, 12-5-1946

425. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SIMLA,
May 3, 1946

I am grieved to know about the immorality prevalent among the people of Simla and its surrounding hills. Simla is the summer capital of the British Government and immorality is a feature common to all capitals. But it does not absolve us from our responsibility. Those who follow immoral ways can be nowhere near God. As in other places, in Simla as well, there is a wide chasm separating man from man. Harijan huts are situated adjacent to the Viceregal mansion.

I do not believe in having spearate quarters for Bhangis. Those who make it possible for us to live (in sanitary conditons) should have the opportunity to live in open and in the best of localities to enable them to set an ideal in sanitation. But out of sheer callousness we treat them cruelly. Their condition will certainly improve provided every one of us treated them as our own kith and kin.

Mahatma Gandhi urged the people of Simla to eradicate corruption and to give up the desire to do evil things.

Gandhiji said they were probably wondering why he was living at "Chadwick". He had come to simla at the instance of the Cabinet Mission, who had arranged for his accommodation. He would, however, assure the people that he or any member of his party was using no more room in that big building than they did elsewhere. That was why he had asked Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and others to stay with him.

Mahatma Gandhi pleaded for amelioration of the living conditions of Harijans and said if everyone decided to take one Harijan to live with him the problem could be solved.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 4-5-1946 and 5-5-1946

426. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

SIMLA,

May 4, 1946

Pressmen are inquiring already why my large party is going back. This is a personal question. I would rather avoid answering it, but in these days of publicity and speculation the question can not be evaded. The reason is purely moral, if it may not be described as spiritual. My task as a self-appointed adviser to all the parties concerned is the most delicate at the present moment. The Simla venue was declared all of a sudden. It dawned on me that if I was to go to Simla, I must go without the usual party, even though *Harijan* work might suffer. Had I succeeded in carrying conviction to the members of my party, they would have remained behind in Delhi.[1] The time within which the decision was to be taken was only a few hours on the 1st instant. They were anxious for my well-being. The whole moral purpose would be defeated, if I did not carry their mind with me. They, therefore, came to Simla. But the matter was still agitating me. So I conferred with Pyarelal yesterday.[2] He felt convinced that I should be left free to put myself solely in God's keeping, if I was to work under as much detachment as was possible for me. The best part of the afternoon was devoted to prayerful discussion that the party should go back to the heat of Delhi and await me there to rejoin me when I descended. This is the sole reason without reservation.

The Hindustan Times, 5-5-1946, and *Harijan*, 12-5-1946

427. LETTER TO MAJOR SHORT

May 4, 1946

DEAR MAJOR SHORT,

I have your letter and the note on procedure.

[1] *Vide* "A Talk", 1-5-1946

[2] *Vide* "Talk With Agatha Harrison", 3-5-1946

The note is something quite different from what you said yesterday. For one thing it does not contemplate independence. It seems to take Pakistan for granted. As I said yesterday nothing can be done so long as the British Army of occupation remains. The people can't be natural so long as their territory is occupied. Therefore there is no meeting ground in the note.

You wanted my reaction to what you have sent me and I have given it in the briefest terms possible.

I am sorry to dissappoint you. But it is the best thing for both of us that you and I should speak frankly to each other.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

TO
MAJOR SHORT
SIMLA W.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

428. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SIMLA,
May 4, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

Rashid[1] has passed away. All of us have to go the same way. I hope, therefore, that you are not grieving. I have sent a wire to Amtul[2].

Wheter or not to go to Indore rests entirely with you. I have no courage at all to guide you. I cannot judge in what your good lies. You must not feel any hesitation in doing what you like.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 503

[1] Abdul Rashid Khan
[2] This is a slip. Brgum Rashid's name was Hosa.

429. LETTER TO DEVPRAKASH NAYYAR

SIMLA,
May 4, 1946

CHI. DEV,

Daily I think of you. Now all would be reaching there. They have realized that it is better to leave me alone at Simla. When I come down from Simla I shall be with you all. Pyarelal will give you all the news.

Hope Satya[1] is all right and her operations have been successful.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Prakash must be keeping fit.

From a microfilm of the Hindi : Documents relating to Gandhiji. Courtesy : National Archives of India

430. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

May 4, 1946

Gandhiji explained to the audience how his permanent staff had shortly before left Delhi with smiling faces and his blessings. His task was very hard. But all difficulties could be overcome by leaning on God. Ever since he had reached the years of discretion he had felt that God is always with those who wait on Him.

In reality He is everywhere but because He is formless and invisible, man cannot always sense His presence. But if we have listening ears, God speaks to us in our own language, whatever that language be.

Badshah Khan had just explained what prayer was. God was all-powerful. Man lives at His will. It was because Gandhiji wanted in these crucial days to rely solely on His help that he had asked his people who looked after his every need and helped him to edit the *Harijan* weeklies to leave him to God. Yet he was not quite without human help. He had the Fakir Badshah Khan with him, the Sardar and his daughter[3], who was as his own daughter, Dr. Dinshaw Mehta and Shri Brijkrishna and Shri Sudhir

[1] Addressee's sister

[2] Pyarelal's report in *Harijan* has been collated with the Hindi report in *Hindustan*.

[3] Manibehn Patel

Ghosh. Birlaji had sent some of his staff too.

The British have to end their rule and quit India. They have promised to do so. Yet we should recognize the fact that a handful of Englishmen have been ruling over us. It is shameful not only for us but also for Englishmen. It is because of this feeling of shame that they have resolved to quit and go. That is why I say that their task is the hardest.

I have come here to advise the Congress and I am well aware of the fact that the Congress has always respected and listened to my counsel. If the Muslim League seeks my advice I shall gladly give it to them. I have to guide the Cabinet Mission as well. I know my task is difficult and equally arduous is the task of the Congress and the Muslim League. But the task of the Cabinet Mission is even more difficult. There are a few persons who are suspicious of the Cabinet Mission and who are afraid that the Mission might betray us. In my opinion it is quite wrong to think so. I have faith in the sincerity of the Cabinet Mission and in their avowed intention of giving up power.

Gandhiji warned people against believing that Britain was crumbling.

It is a great power.

Hindustan, 5-5-1946, and *Harijan*, 19-5-1946

431. A HARIJAN'S LETTER[1]

A Harijan friend complains bitterly about my article on sweepers' strike[2].

His first complaint is that I have given up the sweet name 'Harijan' and used "Bhangi" instead. The criticism shows the sensitive nature of the correspondent. It was a Gujarati untouchable in the first instance, who suggested the name 'Harijan' to me and I willingly adopted it. This does not, however, mean that a current word for any sub-caste may never be used. I count myself a Harijan and it pleases me to call myself a Bhangi among them, because that is the lowest caste of Harijans. When I stayed recently in the sweepers' quarters in Delhi, the Harijans there too complained against the use of the word 'Bhangi'. They suggested 'Mehtar'. I tried to make them understand that it mattered little as to which of the current words was used for the same occupation. In spite of being considered the lowest occupation, it was in fact the highest inasmuch as it protected health and they should be indifferent to the name. Whatever the origin of the word may be, 'Bhangi' is, in my opinion, another name for 'Shivji'[3]. Whether you call a sweeper a Mehtar or a 'Bhangi', like 'Shivji' he

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 12-5-1946.

[2] *Vide* "Sweepers Strike"

[3] Lord Shiva

brings health to man. The one brings it by keeping the home clean, the other cleanses the mind of man.

The second criticism is more serious. Prejudice are responsible for misunderstandings. If we take by force even that to which we are entitled, the action is likely to lead to a quarrel. We may not even be able to digest what we get by force. The strikers got what they did by coercion. At least, that is my belief. If my occupation is to keep latrines clean and I refused to do the work, can it be termed anything other than coercion? Of course, I am not bound to take up the job of cleaning latrines and I may be said to have every right to lay down my conditions of service. But according to my way of thinking, the laying down of conditions is not an absolute right. Even if such an absolute right were to be permitted, it might not be proper to use it under certain circumstances. But I do not want to enter into the justification of this reasoning. I tried to show in my article the duties of Bhangis as well as of citizens. I have often said that every kind of injustice is meted out to Bhangis. I have no doubt that citizens do not fulfil their obligations to them.[1] Thus it is their duty to see that Harijan dwellings are built properly, the means employed for cleaning are decent, that they have a special working uniform given to them, that they and their children have facilities for education, etc. These and other problems should be solved without loss of time. The Bhangis may not go on strike for lack of these amenities but it is up to all citizens to raise their voice on behalf of them.

Yet another criticism is directed against my suggestion of the use of the military to do sweepers' work. I do not see any wrong in what I said. I have reread my article and am not willing to withdraw one single word of it. I do not regret having written as I did. I advise Harijan friends to read it in the proper spirit. If they do so, they will see that my feelings on their behalf have undergone no change.

SIMLA, May 5, 1946

Harijan, 12-5-1946

432. THE CHARITY OF THE RICH[2]

The following is the gist of what a friend writes :

> You accept many donations from the wealthy. There can be no doubt that the money is well spent. But the question is as to

[1] The Gujarati here adds : "Hence, whether the Bhangi brethren go on a strike or not, citizens ought to fulfil their duty independently. I have already explained what their duty is."

[2] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 12-5-1946.

whether these donations should be accepted for your work. The donors certainly get a name thereby and among them might even be black marketeers. Can such charity benefit the poor?

The question really boils down to whether donations are in themselves wrong. I have no doubt in my mind about their being so. But the world works differently. The author of the *Gita* has said that all undertakings are tainted.[1] Therefore, all action should be performed with complete detachment. The *Ishopanishad* begins by saying that all action must be preceded by a full surrender of everything to God. It must, however, be admitted that even if everyone ceased to receive charity, the rich would not cease to amass wealth. It is also a fact that some rich people are stingy enough never to give anything in charity. Some even give money for nefarious purposes. Therefore, all that one can say is that certain principles should be observed in the matter of receiving charity. Not one pie should be taken for selfish ends and all should be received with God as witness.

I do, however, hold that it would be wrong to receive money from any group or individual whom the recipient considers to be unworthy. The discussion is naturally relevant only for those who are troubled by concientious scruples.

SIMLA, May 5, 1946

Harijan, 12-5-1946

433. LETTER TO PUSHPA N. NAIK

SIMLA,
May 5, 1946

CHI. PUSHPA,

Your letter. With God's grace, everything is working out well. I personally liked your going to Chi. Mukta's wedding with the consent of all the elders there. You are on test. You will be pleasing your parents and other relations. Chi. Vrijlal also will be happy. Return to the Ashram after satisfying them all and then throw yourself heart and soul into service and see God therethrough. Remember that God has no form or shape.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 9272

[1] XVIII. 48

434. LETTER TO PRAMOD MEHTA

SIMLA,
May 5, 1946

CHI. PRAMOD[1],

I have your letter. I am not writing a separate letter to Chi. Champa. You did well in sending more money. It would be good if you find Ratilal in Ahmedabad. You must see that he does not starve for want of food.

I hope that all you brothers and sisters will keep good health, study well and devote yourselves to service. Champa has suffered so much that her only duty now is to shape you brothers and sisters into dedicated workers.

May you all be happy there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8763. Also C. W. 1047. Courtesy : Champa R. Mehta

435. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SIMLA,
May 5, 1946

CHI. MRIDULA,

I have your two letters. I am not in a position to take up any outside work. Let us see what happens there. Sucheta has undertaken the work at Zaria. Look after your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 11258. Courtesy : Sarabhai Foundation

436. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SIMLA,
May 5, 1946

Addressing the vast audience[2] assembled for prayers, Gandhiji said that he had to cut short the time of his evening prayers because he had to go to consult the

[1] Ratilal P. Mehta's son

[2] It being Sunday, people in thousands had assembled to attend the prayers.

Congress leaders on some urgent matters in connection with the present political deliberations.[1]

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 6-5-1946

437. TO CORRESPONDENTS[2]

My daily post may be said to have increased fourfold since the *Harijan* weeklies started. It is impossible to answer every letter. Every communication is read but not by me. If I attempted to do so I would be unable to render any service. My staff put before me only what I should see. Much of the post does not merit replies, but questions of public interest are answered in *Harijan*. Personal correspondence has to be rigidly restricted. I receive a large number of requests for blessings on the occasion of marriages which I am hesitant to send. I have already stated publicly that my blessings should be asked for only such marriages where one of the contracting parties is a Harijan. But in reality where is the need for blessings? Those marriages which are undertaken for the sake of joint service carry their own blessings. Those entered upon for self-satisfaction are wholly unworthy of any. In any event, in these days of famine, no money should be spent on feasts and enjoyment. Weddings will continue, but is it not possible for the event to take place quietly and without fuss?

SIMLA, May 6, 1946

Harijan, 19-5-1946

438. TELEGRAM TO DHIRUBHAI B. DESAI[3]

May 6, 1946

NO CALL FOR SORROW. BHULABHAI[4] HAS GONE FULL OF HONOUR. HE IS RELIEVED OF

[1] The meeting with the Congress leaders lasted an hour.

[2] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 19-5-1946. This appeared in *Harijan* under "Notes".

[3] Bhulabhai Desai's son

[4] Bhulabhai Desai (1877-1946); leading lawyer of Bombay; Leader, Congress Party in the Central Legislative Assembly for nine years; President, Bombay Provincial Congress Committee; member of Congress Working Committee

PAIN BY FRIENDLY DEATH[1]. YOU SHOULD BOTH FOLLOW THE BEST IN BHULABHAI.

The Hindu, 7-5-1946

439. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[2]

SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

It was the heroism and travail of Bardoli that brought to public life men like Shri Bhulabhai Desai. He might otherwise have remained a distinguished Government servant and ended his career as a judge of the Bombay High Court. He reached the heights of fame when his forensic talents resulted in the release of the I.N.A. prisoners. His son and daughter-in-law have in me, like many others, a co-sharer in their grief which it is to be hoped they will turn into joy by inheriting the deceased's love for the country's service, which alone makes life worth living.

The Hindu, 7-5-1946

440. DRAFT LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE[3]

Confidential

THE RETREAT,
SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

DEAR LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE,

My colleagues and I followed with care the proceedings of the Conference yesterday and tried to understand what our conversations were leading us to. I confess to feeling somewhat mystified and disturbed at the vagueness of our talks and some of the assumptions underlying them. While we would like to associate ourselves with every effort to explore ways and means of finding a basis for agreement, we must not deceive ourselves, the Cabinet Mission or the representatives of the Muslim League into the belief that the way the Conference has so far proceeded furnishes hope of success. Our general approach to the questions before us was stated briefly in my letter to you of April 28. We find that this approach has been largely ignored and a contrary method has been followed. We realize that some

[1]Which occurred on May 6

[2] This appeared in *Harijan* under "Notes", 12-5-1946.

[3] This was drafted for Abul Kalam Azad by Jawaharlal Nehru and was revised by Gandhiji.

assumtions have to be made in the early stages as otherwise there can be no progress. But assumptions which *ignore or run contrary to*[1] fundamental issues are likely to lead to misunderstandings during the later stages.

In my letter of April 28, I stated that the basic issue before us was that of Indian independence and the consequent withdrawal of the British army from India, for there can be no independence so long as there is foreign army on Indian soil. We stand for the independence of the whole of India now and not in the distant or near futre. Other matters are subsidiary to this and can be fully discussed and decided by the Constituent Assembly.

At the Conference yesterday I referred to this again and we were glad to find that you and your colleagues, as well as the other members of the Conference, accepted independence as the basis of our talks. It was stated by you that the Constituent Assembly would finally decide about the nexus or other relationship that might be established between a free India and England. While this is perfectly true, it does not affect the position now and that is, the acceptance of Indian independence now.

If that is so, then certain consequences inevitably follow. We felt yesterday that there was no appreciation of these consequences. The Constituent Assembly is not going to decide the question of independence; that question must be and, we take it, has been decided now. That Assembly will represent the will of the free Indian nation and give effect to it. It is not going to be bound by any previous arrangements. It has to be preceded by a Provisional Government, which must function, as far as possible, as a Government of free India, and which should undertake to make all arrangements for the transitional period.

In our discussions yesterday repeated references were made to 'groups' of provinces functioning together, and it was even suggested that such group would have an executive and legislative machinery. This method grouping has not so far been discussed by us but still our talks seemed to presume all this. I should like to make it very clear that we are entirely opposed to any executive or legislative machinery for a group of provinces or units of the Federation. That will mean a sub-federation, if not something more, and we have already told you that we do not accept this. It would result in creating three layers of executive and legislative bodies, an arrangement which will be cumbrous, static and disjointed, leading to continuous friction. We are not aware of any such arrangement in any country.

We are emphatically of the opinion that it is not open to the Conference to entertain any suggestions for a division of India. If that is to come, it should come through the Constituent Assembly free of any infuence of the present Paramount Power.[2]

Another point we wish to make clear is that we do not accept the proposal for

[1] The words in italics are in Gandhiji's hand.
[2] This paragraph is in Gandhiji's hand.

parity as between groups in regard to the executive or the legislature. We realize that everything possible should be done to remove fears and suspicions from the mind of every group and community. But the way to do this is not by unreal methods which go against the basic principles of democracy on which we hope to build up our constitution.

Yours sincerely,

From a facsimile : *Reminiscences of the Nehru Age*, p. 33

441. LETTER TO MANIBHAI DESAI

SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I got your letter, in fact, two letters. I see that your work is progressing well. No good work is accomplished in a day. A job that can be finished in one day cannot be of much value. We must, therefore, cultivate patience, and for that we should learn non-attachment. Non-attachment implies faith that only good results can follow from good actions. This firm faith should make us indifferent to the results. We are certain that the sun will rise tomorrow and do not worry. We should have still deeper faith about the results of good works. There is bound to come a day when the sun will not rise; but there can be no time when a good deed will not bear good fruit. Hence you should go on with your work in the faith that the people will one day see its merit. Sanitation comes first, because it covers most of the other things.

I do not have your letter before me while writing these lines. If, therefore, I have missed any point, ask me again.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati. C. W. 2749. Courtesy : Manibhai Desai

442. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

CHI. KANCHAN[1],

You are now left alone. I do not worry about that. You are brave. But I do worry about your health. If you can become mistress of your health in the atmosphere there, I would consider it a great achievement.

I have deliberately isolated myself. The others understood my need and have returned to Delhi. I need to be left alone at the present moment. Rajkumari, however, is here and so is Dr. Mehta[2]. Hence I am not having as much solitude as I should have. But is it not true that we can do only what God permits us to do? Munnalal also will remain in Delhi. I think I shall meet them within a fortnight.

It is not possible to say anything about the position here.

Please convey the contents of this letter to all.

Write to me a detailed letter. I left Amtussalaam and Sohra at Delhi but they were to go to Sevagram with Sushilabehn.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8258. Also C. W. 6982. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

443. LETTER TO MOHAN AND ANASUYA PARIKH

SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

CHI. MOHAN AND CHI. ANASUYA,

I knew the date of your wedding[3], but I wished to say nothing on that occasion. May you both lead shining lives, dedicate yourselves to service and live up to the age of 125, serving till the end.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 9191

[1] Wife of Munnalal G. Shah
[2] Dr. Dinshaw Mehta
[3] May 4, 1946

444. LETTER TO DHIRU

SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

CHI. DHIRU,

I got your letter. I am glad that you are doing a lot of work. If Dr. Bhagwat dispenses pills and so on, one cannot call it nature cure. It would be more polite if you settled the matter in consultation with Dr. Bhagwat himself. For my part I am prepared to write to him. But where work proceeds harmoniously it is better to have mutual discussions.

I shall be here for another few days. Then we shall see. Our entire party has left for Delhi. It was necessary for the work I have to do here.

Blessings from
BAPU

DHIRU
URULI KANCHAN

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

445. LETTER TO VINOD

SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

CHI. VINOD,

I read your letter to Pyarelal. The best course I can suggest for both of you is that you should both devote yourselves to my work of education or nature cure. If you can stand the heat, you may settle at Sevagram or in a village nearby. If you want a place less hot, you may settle in some village near Poona. Take it that fresh air and open atmosphere go with any activity of mine. You may take up the Nayee Talim work if you like it.

I should welcome it if you or both of you did some writing. I am sure it will be worth printing since both of you will write only after careful thought.

Ayurveda has not been making progress. No doubt, much of the therapy that it offers is sound, and it certainly is cheap.

The sovereign [therapy] is of course nature cure, since it includes Ramanama, the unfailing remedy.

Please write to me what both of you together will need, in case you join in my activities.

Blessings from
BAPU

Enclosed with letter to Pyarelal, Delhi

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

446. LETTER TO VISHWAMITRA N. VAIDYA

SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

BHAI VISHWAMITRA,

You rightly employ the term "culprit". If Ayurveda is in a poor state the fault lies with the vaidyas, and they alone can remedy it. Other help will follow as a matter of course.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

VAIDYASHRI VISHWAMITRA NANALAL
GHEEVATO
KHODANO PADO
PATAN

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

447. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[*May 6, 1946*][1]

CHI. SUSHILA,

I am enclosing this in the cover for Pyarelal who will pass it on to you. It will save a day's delay.

There has been no letter from you till now. There should be one. Of course I have not received today's mail.

I am now fairly free but that is welcome.

The Conference here is going on, but what will come of it one cannot tell. Take it that all I can do is to wish it will. Rajkumari, Mani and Brijkrishna are here to help me. So much for today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] In the source this letter is placed among those of this date.

448. LETTER TO U. N. DHEBAR[1]

SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

BHAI DHEBARBHAI[2],

I have your letter. I see no way of improvement for the small principalities of Kathiawar so long as they are concerned only with themselves. Their subjects have no strength. I shall congratulate you and Kathiawar if you can find a way.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. UCHHARANGARAI DHEBAR
RAJKOT

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Payarelal

449. LETTER TO CHIMANBHAI

SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

BHAI CHIMANBHAI,

I have your bank draft for Rs. 1,000. I shall credit it to the public funds account that stands in my name. Congratulations to all the friends.

Vandermataram from
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] This was sent for the Kathiawar Food Conference which was to be held under the Presidentship of Mangaldas Pakwasa, at Rajkot on May 11, 1946.

[2] (1905-77); actively associated with Kathiawar Political Conference; President of the Indian National Congress, 1955-59; Chairman of Scheduled Tribes Areas Commission; President of Bharatiya Adim Jati Sangh; 1962-64; Chairman of Khadi and Village Industries Commission, 1963; Chairman of Primary Education Commission

450. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

CHI. PYARELAL,

Brajkisan has written to you. I shall keep a regular diary. I started it the very day you left. I see now that it was for the best that all of you went.

You will have received the two items I sent yesterday—one Gujarati and the other Hindustani.

See that the family left there works together in harmony. Let no one be a burden on the Harijan colony. Let everyone be of help. Let all participate in all activities there—at least in such work as washing the vegetables or grinding the corn or cleaning.

Where will Sushila's engagement take place ?

Blessings from

BAPU

[P.S.]

I am sending Vinod's letter on to you. Post it. I think it is only right that you go through it before it is posted.

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

451. LETTER TO A. K. BHAGWAT

SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

BHAI BHAGWAT,

I got your detailed letter. There is nothing wrong in including milk and ghee in a balanced diet. It would be another thing if you can do without milk, and a great thing it would be. [But] I very much doubt [that you can].

How can tub-bath be arranged? If you arrive at something definite regarding the land your work will proceed faste.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : C. W. 2748. Courtesy : Manibhai Desai

452. LETTER TO GURUNATH JOSHI

SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

BHAI GURUNATH JOSHI,

I have your letter. I am glad. It appears that everything is going on well there. I hope that you will fully acquaint yourself with the method we have adopted in Uruli Kanchan and point out any defects that you may notice. I hear that Father is likely to fully recover. If this happens it will be fine. I am enclosing the letter received in this connection.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

453. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

Noise is not erased by making greater noise. It can only be stilled by people making mute signs and never pushing forward. Peace and order are necessary at all gatherings, but are especially so at prayer gatherings. People come together for prayers in order to obtain peace, to hear God's name and to recite it. Therefore, those who come should really attune themselves even as they start from their homes. Let them be silent and let their thoughts dwell as they walk, on prayer. Otherwise coming to prayers is useless.[2]

Mahatma Gandhi hoped that, in future, all would try to follow what he had said and thus derive full benefit from attending prayers.

The Hindu, 8-5-1946; and *Harijan*, 19-5-1946

454. TOTAL PROHIBITION

National Provincial Governments are now in full swing in India. Happily on the question of prohibition, there can be no differences of

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's report "A Simla Diary" in *Harijan.* As Gandhiji was observing silence this was read out at the meeting.

[2] The following paragraph is from *The Hindu.*

opinion between the Congress and the Muslim League. And if all followed a concrete policy and the States too joined in, India would be dry in no time and earn the blessings of lakhs of homes. To the discredit of the Governments under virtual martial law, Governors and their Advisers had the shamelessness to reverse the policy which had been already adopted in some provinces and misappropriate the revenue which was raised by the provinces in question. Let them now take up prohibition with prohibition legislation. They have to devise methods of educating the drinking public in the harm that drink does and privide them with innocent recreation and health-giving drinks. Every bar or, failing that, a place next door to it, should, so far as possible, be utilized as a refreshment and recreation room. If this constructive activity is taken up, it must prove a source of revenue for the State, besides prohibition, benefiting and reconstructing thousands of ruined homes.

Moreover, toddy-tapping should be replaced by *nira*-tapping for the purpose of converting *nira* into *gur*, much to the advantage of the nation which needs cheap sugar. These columns have shown how in some ways *tad-gur* is preferable to cane-*gur*.

These reflections are suggested by the following paragraph from a circular letter addressed by the Women's Christian Temperance Union (Fyzabad Road, Lucknow) to the Press. From it, I take the following items[1] addressed to the students under the heading "What Can Youth Do?"

> 1. Pledge themselves to total abstinence from all intoxicants and habit-forming drugs, which includes tobacoo. . . .
>
> 2. Demand a thorough alcohol and narcotic drugs education, to be a part of the school curriculum.
>
> 3. Demand while under training a part in social service, including temperance work, educating the public of the harm done to them through the use of the intoxicants.
>
> 4. Recommend that in the scheme for small savings campaign for rural population, total abstinence from all intoxicants be stressed.
>
> 5. Ally themselves against the awful waste of precious foodstuffs for liquor in breweries and distilleries.
>
> 6. Join up with a temperance society. . . .
>
> 7. Make use of temperance literature. . . .

[1] From which only extracts are reproduced here

8. Holidays, a good time for this service.

9. . . . to learn the lesson of how much they can give to the country . . .

SIMLA, May 7, 1946

Harijan, 19-5-1946

455. LETTER TO EMILY KINNAIRD

SIMLA,
May 7, 1946

DEAR MOTHER,

So you will be going back! Wish you well on the voyage. Let neither your will nor mine but His will be done.

Love.

Your son,
M. K. GANDHI

HON. EMILY KINNAIRD

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

456. LETTER TO HASAN ALI[1]

SIMLA,
May 7, 1946

BHAI HASAN ALI,

It is beyond me to answer your letter. Yours is a typical letter illustrating that even things done with the best of motives can be perversely interpreted.

M. K. GANDHI

KARACHI

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

457. LETTER TO BHAGAVADACHARYA

SIMLA,
May 7, 1946

BHAI BHAGAVANDAS,

I have your letter. You were right to point out my error, althought I do not quite see it as such.

[1] The letter is in the Devanagari script.

Ramanama is very dear to me. I can easily give it up if I feel that it is an infatuation.

What you write about *Harijan* is correct. The fault ought to be removed. I am sending on to Jivanji the relevant portion of your letter.

It should not be a subject for complaint that I cannot see the friends from Kathiawar. I am perpetually faced with the question whom I should see and whom need not.

Blessings from

BAPU

SWAMI BHAGAVADACHARYA

RAJNAGAR SOCIETY ROAD

AHMEDABAD 7

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

458. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

SIMLA,

May 7, 1946

BHAI JAJUJI[1],

Your letter. I am still under the impression that there is no [sales tax] on khadi. But whom shall we fight? Now the work is in the hands of the ministers. Whom should I write to? It would be better to ask Annada. He may do as he wishes. Can they not sell Borkamta khadi in Borkamta itself? Many questions arise. Ask Satis Babu[2] as well. And then leave it to them. I don't want to claim that I have pondered fully over it but I have helped others to think about it.

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

459. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SIMLA,

May 7, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi, in his speech at today's prayer meeting, commended the quiet which prevailed after his appeal to the audience on the two previous evenings.

[1] Secretary, A. I. S. A.

[2] Satis Chandra Das Gupta

He asked them all if they could sing in tune and keep proper time to join in the *Ramdhun*. It was a good habit to cultivate and if they did it from the heart and intelligently they would realize that God's blessings were in it. If they co-operated in a pure thing it would help them to co-operate with their neighbours in all that pertained to the common weal.[1]

Strange rumours had come to him, he said, in regard to his permanent staff having left. Some people were foolish enough to believe that there had been some domestic quarrel. Those who lived with him were not made of such stuff. Others imagined that because his staff had left, the negotiations had broken down. This too was wholly untrue. They left, as Gandhiji had said before[2], because they understood that he wanted to be alone with God as his only help. Even so he was not without help. It had been so throughtout his life. In South Africa, too, all kinds of people had helped him including Boers, Africans and Europeans.

The address . . . contained a scathing denunciation of the speculation fever which had seized Simla. He interpreted it as a sign of cowardice. He tried to impress upon them that it arose from fear. He himself was a coward in his early youth. He had learnt to shed his cowardice through the recitation of Ramanama.[3] It was cowards who died many times before their death. Fear of disease killed more men that disease itself. He appealed to newspapermen also not to spread false news. It was their duty to teach people to be brave and not instil fear into them. The Cabinet Mission had come with the blessings of the Prime Minister, who had said they were coming here to part with power whether Indians agreed among themselves or not. It was not right to distrust or disbelieve anyone so long as there was no cause to do so. Were those who had had the courage to put up a non-violent fight against a mighty empire for 25 years going to yield to frustration if the British Government failed to perform its duty today?[4]

That would be unworthy of those who had vowed their all to serve the country. They had said the country was theirs and they were going to make her free. If they had fear in them, freedom could never be theirs. The strength that withstands all fear is derived from God. When Gandhiji said he knew no fear, it was not because he was a *mahatma*. He was not different from any of them. The only difference that there

[1] This paragraph is from *The Hindu.* What follows is reproduced from Pyarelal's "A Simla Diary" in *Harijan.*

[2] *Vide* "Statment to the Press", 4-5-1946 and "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 4-5-1946

[3] *The Hindu* here has : "Gandhiji himself had never known what fear was."

[4] What follows is from *The Hindu.*

might be between him and them was that he had, perhaps, more faith, more spirit of service, of sacrifice and of renunciation. All those would come to those who believed sacrifice and fear nothing, relying solely on God.

The Hindu, 9-5-1946, and *Harijan*, 19-5-1946

460. NOTES

NON-VIOLENCE AND KHADI

The Congress Constitution is undergoing a radical change. The supreme change that is desirable for the sake of avoiding untruth and hypocrisy is to remove the words "legitimate and peaceful" from the first article of the Congress Constitution as also the clause about khadi.[1] Experience shows that the people who form the bulk of Congressmen are not wedded either to truth and non-violence or to khadi. As an ardent lover of truth and non-violence and khadi as their symbol, I make bold to suggest that these clauses should go. It will be open to anyone to be truthful and non-violent and to wear khadi if he or she chooses to. Only there will be no deception practised on India or the world. Paradoxical as it may appear we shall be more truthful[2], more non-violent and better khadi-lovers with the suggested amendment than without. It should be remembered that I myself had at one time moved the removal of these clauses. I was glad I was defeated. It was wrong to be glad. I shall be sorry if my suggestion is rejected even now. Let it not be said of us that we prize hypocrisy above truth.

COCKTAIL PARTIES

We seem to be on the eve of attaining independence! Should we ape bad European manner and customs and still prize independence? It would be a sad day for India and the world, if the price we are to pay for independence is cocktail parties and the like. What do the famishing millions know of such parties? Let it not be said of us that our monied men were gay whilst those from whom they made money were famishing for food.

HARIJAN COOKS

A correspondent suggests that at the next session of the Congress all the cooks should be Harijans and to that end a corps of

[1] *Vide* "Constitution of the Indian National Congress", 28-10-1934 and "Constitution of the Indian National Congress" sub-tile "Qualifications

[2] The source has "healthful".

Harijan cooks should be trained in the observance of cleanliness and the art of cooking scientifically and as behoves a poor country like ours. He would have this privilege and duty given to the Congressmen in the province in which the Congress session is to be held. After the session these cooks should be taken over by those Congressmen who can afford it and keep cooks. Any suggestion like this which shows in practice that untouchability is a thing of the past is to be welcomed. I would only add that Concressmen who endorse it need not wait for the session. They should from now take up Harijans not merely as their cooks but have them in all other capacities. What is more, let those who can afford it take Harijans in their families as their own children and give them proper training. All this can only happen if men and women are sincere in their professions and if the truth had gone home that under the garb of religion Hinduism is said to have consigned to untouchability their own kith and kin for no fault of theirs.

SIMLA, May 8, 1946

Harijan, 19-5-1946

461. QUESTION BOX[1]

Q. The Congress Constitution makes it incumbent on all its candidates standing for election to be habitual wearers of hand-spun and hand-woven khadi. Does this not imply that they can only use that khadi which is certified by the A. I. S. A?

A. In my opinion it cannot be otherwise.

Q. Is s dealer in uncertified khadi eligible to hold offer in a Congress committee?

A. It is beyond my conception as to how a dealer in uncertified khadi can be a Congressman, leave alone an aspirant, for holding office in any Congress Committee.

Q. You say that a dealer in uncertified khadi cannot even be a Congressman much less an office-holder. But what about those who are office-holders in the Congress and who deal in mill cloth and even sell foreign cloth?

A. My answer to the second question is equally applicable to the persons referred to in the third. It is for these very reasons that I have recommended the removal of the relevant clauses from the Congress Constitution.[2] Experience has taught us that we are unable

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak* 19-5-1946.

[2] *Vide* "Notes", sub-title "Non-Violence and Khadi"

to adhere to the rules in question.

SIMLA, May 8, 1946

Harijan, 19-5-1946

462. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

CHADWICK, SMILA WEST,
May 8, 1946

DEAR SIR STAFFORD,

The four Congress delegates[1] had a warm debate over the Cabinet Mission's suggestion[2]. The foremost was that if the delegates accepted it, it was binding on them and its terms were binding on them and therefore the Congress unless the latter repudiated them. The same would be the case with the League. On the strength of what you told me last night[3] I said they were binding on no one. The Constituent Assembly would be free to throw out any of the items and the members of the two delegations were equally free to add to or amend the suggestions before the Constituent Assembly. I added that theywere meant only as a scaffolding by means of which the two institutions could be brought to the Constituent Assembly adumbrated in the draft. If you are able to confirm the above and are free to make a public declaration to that effect, the main difficulty would be over.

As to merits, the difficulty about parity between six Hindu majority Provinces and the five Muslim majority Provinces is insurmountable. The Muslim majority Provinces represent over nine crores of the population as against over 19 crores of the Hindu majority Provinces. This is really worse than Pakistan. What is suggested in [its] place is that the Central Legislature should be framed on the population basis and so too the executive. If this is considered unfair, an impartial non-British tribunal should award on this as on many other matters of difference otherwise incapable of adjustment. If these two points are cleared my way would be clear.[4]

[1] Abul Kalam Azad, Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel and Abdul Ghaffar Khan

[2] *Vide* "Suggest Points for Agreement Between the Congress and the Muslim League"

[3] For the report of the talk, presumably by Agatha Harrison, *vide* "Talk with Horage G. Alexander and Agatha Harrison", 7-5-1946

[4] To this the addressee replied : "As to your first point the position as I see it is this : If the Congress and the Muslim League delegates agree to a certain basis for the new constitution they will be bound as honourable men to do their utmost to see

Instead of running down to you, I thought I should send this note, leaving you to decide whether we should meet before the Conference[1] or whether an exchange of letters should suffice. I am in your hands.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 187

463. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

SIMLA,
May 8, 1946

BHAI VITYOGI HARI[2],

I have your letter. I do not remember what I had said. Those who were with me then are with you now; ask them. I do not recollect having said anything about those who get Rs. 50 and dearness [allowance] but there were some who got very little, say, Rs. 15. About them I can say something. It is possible that I am confusing Bhangi Niwas with something else. My memory should not be trusted. Would not Ramdas have written something about himself even at that time?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

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that the form agreed upon is that adopted by the Constituent Assembly. To do less than that would be to go back upon their word.

As to the second point—equality at the Centre, I appreciate your difficulty though not that 'it would be worse than Pakistan'. If this can be overcome by some form of international arbitration by agreement with the League there is of course nothing whatever to prevent such an agreement."

[1] Which was being held from May 5 to May 12, 1946

[2] Editor, *Harijan Sevak*, 1933-40; Manager, Harijan Udyogshala, Delhi; President, Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Karachi, 1946; Secretary, Harijan Sevak Sangh, 1951-59

464. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SIMLA,
May 8, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi said at the outset that as it was Gurudev's[1] birthday he could speak on nothing but him.[2]

A picture of the poet had been put on the dais at the prayer gathering. Drawing the attention of the gathering to it, Gandhiji said that the inscription under it was the motto 'The light that never failed'. Gurudev's body was reduced to ashes but the radiance that had been within him was like the sun which would shine so long as life on this earth lasted. But the light he shed was for the soul as the sun's was for the body.

He was a poet and a literary star of the first magnitude. He wrote in his mother tongue and all Bengal is able to drink deep at the fountain of his poetry. Translations of his works exist in many languages. He was a great writer in English too, perhaps almost without knowing it. He had school education but he could boast of no university degree. He was just Gurudev. Our Viceroy had called him the Poet of Asia, a title that no one before him had had. He was also a world poet and, what is more, a *rishi*[3].

He has left up the *Gitanjali*, the poems which brought him world fame. The great Tulsidas left us his immortal *Ramayana*. The renowned Vedavyasa left us a history of mankind[4]. They were not mere poets; they were teachers. Gurudev too wrote not only as a poet but as a *rishi*. Writing, however, was not his only gift. He was an artist, a dancer, a singer, with all the sweetness and purity that art in its finest sense should contain. His creative genius has also given us Santiniketan, Sriniketan and Visvabharati. These breathe his spirit and are a legacy not only to Bengal but to India. Santiniketan has become, as it were, a place of pilgrimage to us all. He was not, in his lifetime, able to make of these institutions what he had dreamed for them. What man can? Fulfilment of man's purpose is in God's hands. But they are monuments to his endeavour and are a constant reminder to us of

[1] Rabindranath Tagore

[2] This paragraph is from *The Hindu.* What follows is redproduce from Pyarelal's report "A Simla Diary" in *Harijan.*

[3] Seer

[4] Viz., the *Mahabharata*

the passionate love he had for his country and the service he rendered to her.You have just heard the national song he wrote, a song which has found a place in our national life. How often is the inspiring refrain heard from thousands of voices! It is not only a song but is also like a devotional hymn.

Gandhiji ended by exhorting the people to learn the lessons of love of the country, love of the world and selfless service from the noble example which Gurudev had left.

The Hindu, 10-5-1946, and *Harijan*, 19-5-1946

465. AYURVEDA AND NATURE CURE[1]

Vaidya Vallabhram, Professor of Ayurveda and Vanaspati Shastra[2] writes :[3]

> Cure through Ayurveda is based on the five elements. . . . *Pathya* (diet cure) is a scientific term of the greatest importance in Ayurveda. Its real meaning is that freedom from disease depends on a proper observance of the laws of nature.

I have no doubt whatsoever that the repetition of Ramanama and pure living are the best and the cheapest preventives of disease. The tragedy is that doctors, hakims and vaidyas do not make use of Ramanama as the sovereign of cures. There is no place given to it in current Ayurvedic literature except in the shape of a charm which will drive people further into the well of superstition. Ramanama has in fact no connection with superstition. It is nature's supreme law. Whoever observes it is free from disease and *vice versa*. The same law which keeps one free from disease applies also to its cure. An apt question is as to why a man who recites Ramanama regularly and leads a pure life should ever fall ill. Man is by nature imperfect. A thoughtful man strives after perfection, but seldom attains it, for he stumbles on the way, though unwittingly. The whole of God's law is embodies in a pure life. The first thing is to realize one's limitations. It should be obvious that the moment one transgresses those limits one falls ill. Thus a balanced diet eaten in accordance with needs gives one freedom from disease. How is one to know what is the proper diet for one? Many such problems can be imagined. The purport of all this is that everyone should be his own doctor and find

[1]The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 19-5-1946.
[2] Botany
[3] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.

out his limitations. The man who does so will surely live up to the age of 125.

Vaidya Vallabhram asks whether well-known home drugs and condiments can be included in nature cure. Doctor friends claim that they do nothing more than investigate the laws and act accordingly and that therefore they are the best nature-cure men. Everything can be explained away in this manner. All I want to say is that anything more than Ramanama is really contrary to true nature cure. The more one recedes from this central principle the farther away one goes from nature cure. Following this line of thought I limit nature cure to the use of the five elements. But a vaidya who goes beyond this and uses such herbs as grow or can be grown in his neighbourhood purely for service of the sick and not for money may claim to be a nature-cure man. But where are such vaidyas to be found? Today most of them are engaged in making money. They do no research work and it is because of their greed and mental laziness that the science of Ayurveda is at a low ebb. Instead of admitting their own weakness they throw the blame on Government and public men. Government is powerless to help those who through their own fault become helpless and thereby drag the name of Ayurveda in the mud.

SIMLA, May 9, 1946

Harijan, 19-5-1946

466. HOW CAN VIOLENCE BE STOPPED?[1]

Q. Some time back a military officer in Poona, who is about to return to England, said to me that violence was on the increase in India and would further increase as people were gradually turning away from the path of non-violence. "We in the West", he said, "not only believe in violence but our society is based on it. Several subject races have won their independence through violence and are today living in peace. We have discovered the atom bomb for stopping violence. The last great war is a case in point."[2] Continuing, the military officer said, "Gandhiji has shown your people the way of non-violence. Has he discovered any such power as the atom bomb which will at once convert people to non-violence and bring about a rule of peace? Cannot Gandhiji's 'atom bomb' stop people from following the path of violence? Ask Gandhiji to exercise his power over the people and tell them to give up all

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 19-5-1946.

[2] The Hindi here adds : "The world has seen how with the help of the atom bomb we stopped the bloody war in no time."

thoughts of violence and adopt his creed. If he cannot wean his people today from the terrible violence that is spreading all over the country, I tell you that he will live a disappointed man and his life's work will be ruined."[1]

A. There is much confusion of thought in this question. The atom bomb has not stopped violence. People's hearts are full of it and preparations for a third world war may even be said to be going on. While it would be absurd to say that violence has ever brought peace to mankind it cannot either be said that violence never achieves anything.

That I shall have to repent if I cannot stop violence does not enter into the picture of non-violence. No man can stop violence, God alone can do so. Men are but instruments in His hands. Here material means cannot stop violence but this does not mean that material means should not be employed for the purpose. The deciding factor is God's grace.[2] He works according to His law and, therefore, violence will also be stopped in accordance with that law. Man does not and can never know God's law fully. Therefore we have to try as far as lies in our power. I hold that our experiment in non-violence has succeeded to a fair extent in India. There is, therefore, no room for the passimism shown in the question. Finally ahimsa is one of the world's great principles which no power on earth can wipe out. Thousands like myself may die in trying to vindicate the ideal but ahimsa will never die. And the gospel of ahimsa can be spread only through believers dying for the cause.

SIMLA, May 9, 1946

Harijan, 19-5-1946

467. KHADI SCIENCE SCHOOL IN BOMBAY[3]

Shri Viththaldas Jerajani is one of those who will do his utmost to put into practice what he is once convinced is the right thing to do. When I returned home in 1915 from South Africa after 20 years' exile, he was at that time running a large swadeshi store in Bombay. I explained to him that he was dealing in what was 'swadeshi' only in name. It was not difficult for him to understand that he had been

[1] The Hindi here adds : "I hope you will clear the British officer's doubt."

[2] The Hindi here adds : "Even when it stops while material means are employed it will have stopped by God's grace. Yes, I will concede that God's grace is a conventional phrase."

[3] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu,* 19-5-1946.

labouring under a delusion but it was not clear to him what he should do. Beyond pointing out the flaw I too was unable to give him practical guidance straightaway. But I could not remain content without making efforts to put into practice what I believed. As soon as possible I threw myself heart and soul into producing khadi and Shri Viththaldas started business in khadi sales. At that time all the khadi that was produced was sold in Bombay. Khadi weavers in the production areas could be counted on the fingers of one hand. The history of the gradual growth of khadi is very interesting but I may not dwell on it here.

Now that it has been realized that khadi merely as a commercial commodity has been a mistake, Shri Viththaldas has taken another step forward. I give below the gist of his account of his doings which he has described in a Gujarati letter to me :

> I have already informed you that two out of the original four Khadi Bhandars in Bombay have been converted into teaching centres. Instead of windows dressed with attractive khadi for purposes of sales, people are treated to look at all the implements of khadi production beginning from cotton right up to yarn. Those who are tempted to gain practical knowledge enter the showrooms and are given instruction should they so desire. Up till now there are 209 pupils and the attendance is fairly good for learning all the processes. Shri Kakubhai has taken up the work with zest and is devoting all his time to it.
>
> For weaving we could only get one place in Andheri where we have put up looms. Owing to the difficulty of procuring accommodation in Bombay, half the shop on Kalbadevi Road has been turned into a weaving centre also. The services of an expert have been obtained. It remains to be seen how far we can progress in this line.
>
> During the war khadi sales mounted high owing to cloth shortage. Today also cloth for everyday needs is hard to get and other cloth has gone into the black market and fetches fantastic prices. Khadi is, therefore, still considered cheap and if it weren't for the fact that yarn currency even to a limited extent is in vogue we simply could not have met the demand nor could have coped with the rush on our stores. The danger of khadi going into the black market might even have been there.
>
> Politcal awakening has always connoted a *pari passu*

increase in the demand for khadi and it is good that those who really believe in it and yet have been lazy about spinning will now have to take to the wheel. Conditions for teaching spinning are therefore favourable.

There is nothing striking about the figures given by Shri Jerajani. Those who think that the world is full of crazy people have every right to say that Bombay has its full quota of such folk. Men of faith believe that the world is the better for them. The man who strives for the impossible may be looked upon as a burden. But the crazy man who is possessed by some special idea is the crazy man who is prized by society. I place Shri Viththaldas in this category. To find even a few people in a pleasure-loving city like Bombay who realize the power of khadi is no small matter for satisfaction. Khadi will grow to its full height of course only when it is manufactured in every village and in every home and used there.

Just as Bombay is the foremost city where giving money in charity is concerned, so it can play a leading part in the difficult task of producing khadi. Who would not like Bombay to hold this coveted position? Shri Viththaldas and his colleagues are working hard for this goal. If they die in the attempt to bring their dreams to fruition their death will be worth while. They must, however, hasten slowly in order to avoid mistakes. They must, however, hasten slowly in order to avoid mistakes. If they are watchful and mend their errors at once all will surely be well with their work.

SIMLA, May 9, 1946

Harijan, 26-5-1946

468. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

SIMLA,
May 9, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. Parting is such a sweet sorrow. I did feel moved to tears when bidding good-bye to you all, but soon calmed myself. My step, however, was perfectly right. I am experiencing its sweet fruits. I have no time to write at length about it.

Personally I would prefer Sita[1] and you going to Bombay. You

[1] Addressee's daughter

should now start making preparations. Your dharma is to return to South Africa. If you can but have faith that I am in God's hands, you will not even think about the matter.

I hope you don't find the heat there unbearable. I may know more today about what is going to happen now and how long I shall have to stay here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4948

469. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

SIMLA,

May 9, 1946

CHI. SITA,

I have your letter. I did feel sad to send you back; I did not like it at all, but that was my duty. So what has happened is good. You are sure to pass the examination. Why should you worry about the division? Is not the day for your departure to Kashi drawing near?

How is your health? What is the condition of your foot? It must not get bad. You should see to that. And you can.

How are your studies progressing? Do you read anything? How else do you pass your time?

You ought to master Urdu.

How is Sushila[1] ? Where is she? What are Ila[2] and Arun busy with?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4978

[1] Addressee's mother, sister and brother
[2] *ibid*

470. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SIMLA,
May 9, 1946

CHI. PYARELAL,

I am caught up in a lot of work. Whatever has happened is for the best. You should not work at the cost of your health.

I have understood about Vinod. Let us see what she does now.

I remember all about Mahuva. You need not send the letters to me. You had seen the letter I wrote, hadn't you ? There is no reply to that letter. Vinod can do a lot if she gets to understand. But let us leave everything in the hands of God. Let us make the best possible efforts. You did well to send me the Gujarati weekly. I shall not be able to read it before this letter is posted.

Let me know how many copies of the Urdu issue have sold, if any figures have been received. How did you like the types ? How did Dev react ?

I am enclosing with this a letter to Sushila. Read it and send it to her.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

471. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SIMLA,
May 9, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

I got your letter. I have had a long talk with Badshah Khan also. If my ordering you about could do any good I would do it right now. I can do no more than offer you advice. If you like it act on it; if you don't do as you please.

You must go to see Amtul. Your brother has died and if you do not go [to her] it would not be right.

Now there is no need for you to go to the Frontier Province. Akbar should go when he is completely free from his work at Samau.

Khansaheb says that Akbar should go only when he wants to go. Khansaheb is of course convinced that Akbar can do better work in the Frontier Province. You will write to me when you go to Indore how things stand there. Then I can advise you further.

I have written to your about Borkamata, haven't I?

Akbar's letters to me and Zohra are enclosed herewith. The envelope was addressed to Zohra. Inadvertently, my assistant here opened it. I read both the letters and gave them to Khansaheb to read. Now pass them on to Zohra.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 514

472. INTERVIEW TO U. P. I.

SIMLA,

May 9, 1946

As Mahatma Gandhi returned to his camp . . . after his $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours' interview with Sir Stafford Cripps, the United Press of India representative accosted him and asked for news relating to the latest development in the political situation. Gandhiji smilingly pointed to the weather outside and said :

Don't you see there is no more rain? The sky is clear of clouds and the storm which was raging has stopped.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-5-1946

473. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SIMLA,

May 10, 1946[1]

Mahatma Gandhi congratulated the audience again on the perfect quiet they had maintained during the prayer hour. He hoped that they would be as disciplined wherever they went, whether for prayer or for any other gathering. If after leaving here they became disorderly, noisy, and quarrelled with each other, then their quiet, he said, was but a mockery.[2]

He told them that the spirit of prayer must abide with them all the twenty-four hours, if it was a heart prayer and came not merely from the lips. The real peace of prayer could come to their hearts only if God entered therein. Then they would be the

[1] From *The Hindu*

[2] This paragraph is from *The Hindu.* The extracts from *Harijan* are reproduced from Pyarelal's report "A Simla Diary".

same outwardly as they were within. They would be honest, they would harbour no enmity against anyone, they would be truthful, they would cheat no one if they were in business.[1]

Relating an incident of his youthful days, Mahatma Gandhi said how as a young man he had once gone into a small shop in Bombay and asked for a pen-knife. He was shown one priced at Re. 1-8. He thought Re. 1-8 was too much and bought the article at half that price. But on testing it, he found that it was not worth even a pice. He could not even sharpen his pencil with it.

If people are dishonest and chear others in this or in any other way, they do not understand the meaning of prayer.

Gandhiji said he would like more and more persons to come to the prayer gatherings but only if they came in the right spirit and with listening ears, so that they may live up to weather good they might take from the worship.

It may take time for recitation to come from the heart even as a seed sown has to be nurtured and bears fruit only in due season. If the desire to have God within us is there, progress, however slow, is bound to be. Man cannot be transformed from bad to good overnight. God does not exercise magic. He too is within His own law. His law, however, is different from the law of the State. There may be mistakes in the latter but God cannot err. If He were to go beyond the limits of His law, the world would be lost. He is changeless, unchanging, unequalled, the same yesterday, today and for ever. His law is written on the tablets of our hearts.

They could become changed men and women, only if they had the desire of reform and if they were prepared for ceaseless endeavour.

The Hindu, 12-5-1946, and *Harijan*, 19-5-1946.

474. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

CHADWICK, SIMLA WEST,
May 11, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 10th instant about salt.[2]

This is a fine instance of how the irresponsible mind works. You were good enough to tell me last Monday[3] when I was silent that the British did not care for credit. When my silence was broken, the Cabinet Mission had come and we plunged into high politics. The

[1] The following paragraph is from *The Hindu.*

[2] *Vide* "Letter from Lord Wavell", 10-5-1946

[3] On May 6. For an official version of the meeting *vide* "Letter with Lord Wavell and Cabinet Mission", 6-5-1946

corollary to your dictum seems to be that the British would not mind the discredit of any action.

In my opinion the notice[1] you have been good enough to send me is a discreditable affair. The only straight answer from my mind which thinks ever of the masses and is responsible and responsive to them would be to abolish the hateful monopoly and tax especially in these days of famine. But according to you this simple act of justice must be left to be done by your successor, the independent Government of India, whenever it comes into being.[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY

Gandhi's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 160-1

475. LETTER TO HAMPT

SIMLA,
May 11, 1946

DEAR MR. HAMPT,

I have your long letter. It is difficult to give precise advice through communications. All I can say is that you should have a judicious fast under some medical observance, living when you feel really hungry on glucose-water with an ounce of juice of fresh limes, as often as your system requires it. Dates are contra-indicated. If you are able to take sufficient glucose you will sustain your strength and go through your work. Nothing else should be taken. The fast can be continued for a fortnight or longer under medical advice.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* "Press Note"

[2] In response to this the addressee invited Gandhiji for a talk the same evening at 7 p. m.

476. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

SIMLA,
May 11, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

I have your letter after many days. Were you busy or just lazy?

You are again blaming me for your own lack of confidence. If you have grown wise and never cry, if you don't care for what others say, who could stop you from coming here alone? Have you not yourself put the condition, "Who will teach me, and what?" If you have confidence in yourself, why need you ask that question? I do wish, of course, that Jaisukhlal[1] should be with you. I understand your explanation. It is sad that Jaisukhlal should take this view. Why should a person dedicated to public service care for sweet or bitter experiences? It is enough if one's heart is clean.

You may now do what seems best to you. I got J.'s letter about rationing. I am thinking of forwarding it to Bhavangar.

First send your annual report and then talk about a message.

I am glad that both of you keep good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of Gujarati : M.M.U./XXIV

477. LETTER TO AKBAR CHAVDA

SIMLA,
May 11, 1946

CHI. AKBAR,

I got your letter. I am enclosing Badshah Khan's letter. If you can find nobody to take charge of the work at Samau, you cannot leave the place. If, however, you think you can do better service in the Frontier Province, and if you have the courage, you should get ready to go there and that as early as possible. Do whatever is proper after taking into account all factors. What has happened to Mridulabehn's idea of deputing somebody?

Zohra has gone to Sevagram.

[1] Addressee's father

Amtussalaam was in Delhi but is now likely to have gone to Indore. Her brother Rashid Khan has expired.

Badshah Khan is with me. He will stay for some days more. The work here is not yet over.

I hope you are keeping good health. Do you find any time to read?

I have sent our entire family back to Delhi. Only Rajkumari is here, for her home is here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 3239

478. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SIMLA,
May 11, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

I got your letter. Herewith a letter from Badshah Khan.

I had sent two telegrams to Begum Rashid. In my letters to you[1] I referred to her as Amtul. I had an impression that her name was Amtul. What is her name?

I have written to Akbar and advised him that he may go to the Frontier Province when he can free himself completely from Samau and if he really feels eager to go there. To start with, he should go alone. Afterwards, when he has settled down, he may send for Zohra.

You must have received my letter containing advice about [Begum] Rashid. I hope you are in good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 515

479. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SIMLA,
May 11, 1946

CHI. LILI,

Your postcard and letter are lying with me. I could not send you my blessings, for the card came too late. I have your letter of the

[1] Dated May 4 and May 9; *Vide* "Letter to Devprakash Nayyar", 4-5-1946 and 131.

6th today, the 11th. I am glad that you sat for the examination. Do not worry at all. Nothing is certain about me. Big people's affairs are always slow. I hope your health is good. All the people have left this place and gone back to Delhi and are awaiting me there.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. LILAVATIBEHN UDESHI
G. S. MEDICAL COLLEGE, LADIES' HOSTEL
PAREL, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 1024. Courtesy : Lilavati Asar

480. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SIMLA,
May 11, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have your letter. The fever seems to have left you completely. If you pass blood, you should take both hip-bath and friction-bath. Apply a mud-pack on the abdomen at night. As regards food, eat green leaves, cabbage, gourd, etc. Avoid *bajra*. Eat *rotlis* made from whole wheat flour and chew them thoroughly. Avoid salt. Eat whatever fruit is available. Avoid ghee and curds. You may have milk, but must avoid pulses. If you do this, you are bound to get well. Repetition of Ramanama must of course be kept up.

As regards Kanchan, I do believe her complaint to be justified. I clearly see that it is your dharma to settle down somewhere with her. If your self-control breaks, it will be you who will break it. She will neither resist nor tempt you. What more can you desire? What will it profit you to be afraid of yourself?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8393. Also C. W. 7212. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

481. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI[1]

SIMLA,
May 11, 1946

CHI. KANAM,

I have your letter. Your handwriting is bad. Can't you at all write your Gujarati characters?

It is not good that you have no interest in spinning. If you read some literature on the subject you will come to feel that you may not neglect his dharma.

God alone knows when I shall be able to get away from here. No one else does.

I hope you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarlal

482. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SIMLA,
May 11, 1946

CHI. PYARELAL,

I receive your letters regularly. I have received two articles today. I have slightly corrected one of them. See the changes. I am sending the matter about salt as it is. Print it in two instalments or all in one go. That will then take up all the space. There is a short article by Shriman. Print that also.

A note about salt was to be issued from here, but it was bad. I wrote a letter. As a result, I have to go and meet someone today. I send you a copy of the letter.

The conference is also meeting today. Something more will be known.

Sushila's address is of course c/o Pyarelal Gupta. But now

[1] The letter is in the Devanagari

letters will not reach her. She will be leaving Bombay on the 13th, won't she ? Give her the letter when she arrives.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

483. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SIMLA,
May 11, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter about the theft. If you suspect Gopalarao take him aside and speak to him. It is certainly good to be independent of all servants but you will not be able to achieve it. After all we cannot carry on like this. The life of an ascetic is not for us. We try to approximate to it. Yes, it was a lapse on your part that you did not carry the key with you. To keep a cash-box and not to carry the key with you is as good as not keeping a cash-box. Hasn't Bhartrihari written that the rich live in fear of being robbed? I do not like your idea of undertaking a fast. It is another thing if we undertake one for our own lapse. But a lapse can be counteracted not by undertaking a fast but by not repeating the lapse. Secondly, the one who undertakes a fast in order to purify another who has committed a theft ought to be absolutely pure. There was no doubt negligence at the root of this incident. Find out what Kishorelal thinks about this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 4554

484. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SIMLA,
May 11, 1946

Interpreting the *bhajan* sung by Sucheta Kripalani Gandhiji said :

It is good to sing devotional songs in tune. But if we come to the prayers with the attraction of listening to good music alone we may overlook the meaning underlying the prayer. The best *bhajan* is one that is sung from the heart even if the style of singing is not

perfect.

Today's *bhajan* tells us that we are all citizens of the land in which there is neither sorrow nor suffering. You should not imagine that the reference is to heaven. The poet himself says that he is singing of the land in which we are living. This does not mean we have to wait for attaining perfection. Every one of us can create such a land within oneself if only one enthrones the God within. The world is after all made up of individuals. True, there are people of different races and colours, speaking different languages. How to live in such a world is exactly what the *bhajan* tells us. I do not know the composer[1] of this *bhajan* but I would advise those who have been truly moved by it to make a copy of the *bhajan* not for singing but to translate its ideas into practice in their own lives.

Those who come to attend prayers ought to carry something with them from here. Yesterday I was hurt to hear the noise created after prayers. It only means that my advice goes unheard. Such noise leads to scuffles and riots. Afterwards I felt that either I should stop speaking after prayers or the prayers should be conducted silently.

Silent prayer is the best prayer. It is only through peace and calm that we can establish communion with God. It was only during my tours in Assam and Bengal that I started speaking after prayers. People ought to contribute generously for Harijans.

Gandhiji asked people not to follow him to his residence for it hampered the task for which he had come there.

What is there to see in places which are all bound to perish. An earthquake may raze a palace to the ground whereas a hut may stand intact. You should remain calm even if others are restless. A person who has the strength of truth and non-violence, need not fear anyone. Peace and discipline alone can suppress unrest.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 13-5-1946

[1] For the text of the *bhajan*, *vide* "Satement of Cabinet Delegation and Viceroy", 16-5-1946

485. A MESSAGE[1]

[Before *May 12, 1946*][2]

India and Ceylon should strive together for each other's mancipation.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 15-5-1946

486. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

CHADWICK, SIMLA,
May 12, 1946

Of course you join me when I leave Delhi. But I would not like you to boil in Delhi.

From the original : C. W. 4215. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7851

487. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

SIMLA,
May 12, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

I suppose I must count it a favour that you wrote to me after so many days. I understand about Durban. I don't think anything can be done about it.

About marriage my views are definite. A girl must be allowed to study till she attains the age of 20. She may then be married when she feels the desire. If she wants to marry earlier and has grown big enough for her age, we may help her. You many discuss the matter often with Sita and not marry her till she herself wishes to get married. The big mistake parents make is that they do not discuss this matter with their children. I think they should talk with them as with friends. It would be better if she draws no lesson from the experience

[1]Appearing under the date-line "Colombo, May 14", this message was read out by Somavir Chandrasiri "the day before yesterday" at the Indo-Ceylonese Cultural Conference organized under the Ceylonese Poets and Writers Congress.

[2] *ibid*

of your family. One must observe and think for oneself. Tari[1] is undoubtedly a devoted worker. It is good that she keeps herself engrossed in that work.

Manilal must have arrived there now. I got his letter as well as Sita's.

A letter from Nagadi [*sic*] is enclosed. Manilal should do the needful about him. I am quite well.

It is not certain when I shall leave this place.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4949

488. LETTER TO MANGALDAS[2]

SIMLA,
May 12, 1946

BHAI MANGALDAS,

I got your cheque for Rs. 100 which I am sending on to Sevagram.

M. K. GANDHI

MANGALDAS
SURAT, B. B. & C. I. [RLY.]

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

489. LETTER TO PIROJSHAH P. DUMRI

SIMLA,
May 12, 1946

BHAI PIROJSHAH,

I got all that you sent. You know that I have dismissed my family. You could say I am left alone here. Rajkumari is here and some other friends. I see no point in publishing the correspondence regarding prohibition. You may, if you want, write independently.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

BHAI PIROJSHAH PALLONJI DUMRI
BHAVANAGAR

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's younger sister
[2] The letter is in the Devangari script.

490. LETTER TO BABULAL SHANKARLAL[1]

SIMLA,
May 12, 1946

BHAI BABULAL,

You will find in *Harijan*[2] the reply to your letter. You must not accept defeat. When you go to collect slivers you can do spinning, carding and sliver-making and bring enough slivers to last a week. Find the rest in my article.

Blessings from
BAPU

BABULAL SHANKARLAL
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

491. LETTER TO DURGASHANKAR

SIMLA,
May 12, 1946

BHAI DURGASHANKAR,

Your letter is good. I am sorry that I cannot take your help from Jaora. I know the shortcomings. You will help me if you check the issues and continue to point out the errors to me.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

LALA DURGASHANKAR VAKIL
BAR ASSOCIATION
JEEVAN BASERA
JAORA, MADHAYA BHARAT

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] The letter is in the Devangari script.
[2] *Vide* "Slighting Swaraj"

492. LETTER TO M. S. ANEY

SIMLA,
May 12, 1946

BHAI BAPUJI ANEY[1],

I have read your pamphlet with great relish and am glad to note your keen love for Sanskrit. Things are getting along fairly well here.

BAPU

SHRI M. S. ANEY, AGENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
11 STANMORE CRESELEY
HAVELOCK TOWN
COLOMBO, CEYLON

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

493. LETTER TO P. N. BAJPAYEE

SIMLA,
May 12, 1946

BHAI BAJPAYEE,

I have your letter. How can the Boy Scouts work for the Shanti Sangh if they do not have complete faith in non-violence? If we can meet somewhere when I am a little free, we can have a further talk.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI P. N. BAJPAYEE
SCOUTS ASSOCIATION
WANLESS WADI
Via MIRAJ

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] (1880-1968); popularly known as Lokanayak; President, Barar Pradesh Congress Committee, 1921-30; Member, Viceroy's Executive Council, 1941-43; resigned over Gandhiji's fast and Government's refusal to release him; member, Constituent Assembly, 1947-48; Governor of Bihar, 1948-52; member of Lok Sahba, 1959-66

494. LETTER TO CARIAPPA

SIMLA,
May 12, 1946

BHAI CARIAPPA,

I have your letter. I am not definite where I shall be staying. You will tell me everything whenever you happen to meet me. I hope your health is all right. I hope Veeramma[1] too is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

495. LETTER TO OMKARNATH

SIMLA,
May 12, 1946

BHAI OMKARNATH,

I have your letter and also the cutting about. . . .[2] I shall find out about it.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

OMKARNATH
LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

496. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[3]

May 12, 1946

Referring to the spate of false rumours which filled the air, viz., that there had been a breakdown in the talks, that the Cabinet Mission were returning home without doing anything and Indian leaders would again return empty-handed as they did from the Simla Conference[4] last time, Gandhiji said that this was not a conference like the one they had last year. If he understood the English language aright, the Cabinet Mission was here to find out how best they could implement their decision to quit, i.

[1] Addressee's wife
[2] One word is illegible here.
[3] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "A Simla Diary"
[4] Held in June-July, 1945; *vide*

e., remove their power from India. It was their duty, if they could, to try to bring about agreement between the Congress and the Muslim League. The Conference was being held for that purpose. If people were united, no power on earth could have ruled over them but the tragedy was that they had their differences. But even if the Conference failed in its purpose, no one need be disappointed. Those who have faith in God must be patient and brave. Supposing they were going to be deceived, they must stand up and face the consequences bravely. Gandhiji said he had no reason to believe that the Cabinet Mission was here to deceive them. They were trying to leave in an orderly manner so that Indians may be able to live in peace. There was no need to worry. Man had to do his duty. God had given him strength and discernment to do so. But results were always in God's hands.

Last in their anxiety for their own future they might forget their duty towards those whom they had condemned as the lowest of the sweepers' quarters. The report which the latter brought him filled him (Gandhiji) with anger and grief. He would have loved to go there himself. Unfortunately he could not now negotiate hills and therefore could not walk so far to see them himself. He thought it a crime to sit in rickshaws especially for an able-bodied man. He disliked even a motor car. He wanted always to use his legs, the means of locomotion that God had given him. Last night he walked, but the hill seemed unending. It was impossible for him, much as he would have liked to do so, to live in the Harijan Nivas here. He had heard of it before and what Badshah Khan told him confirmed it, namely, that the quarters in which they were forced to live were not fit for animals, much less for human beings. Some of them had been to see him in the morning with a long tale of woe. It was the bounden duty of the residents of Simla to look into their grievances and have them redressed.

He had heard too that the Khadi Bhandar at Simla might have to be closed down, because the Simla public were too lazy and too ununderstanding to spin the requisite quota of yarn. He told them that he still maintained that swaraj hung on the thread of hand-spun yarn. Even if they got political swaraj, as they were going to, they would never be able to maintain it without khadi which was the truest symbol of non-violence. If they hoped to maintain swaraj through force, they were hopelessly mistaken. Someone stronger would come and wrest their freedom from them. It was in the hands of the public in Simla to keep the Bhandar going and he hoped they would do so. Punjabi women were the first to offer him yarn in the old days. Let them live up to their reputation. For himself, he would rather lose their money and close down every Bhandar, if need be, but swaraj never.

Harijan, 19-5-1946

497. A GOOD REMINDER

An anonymous friend has taken the trouble of collecting apposite extracts from the Book of Job and Psalms. As they are a perpetual reminder to all of us, I gladly give them below.[1] The moral I draw from the sheaf is that since man is only dust and at best grass, he had better pass the few moments he is on this earth in the service of his fellow creatures. I am hoping that the sender has not collected the Biblical verses to show the futility of all work, which is a doctrine of laziness and parasitism.

SIMLA, May 13, 1946

Harijan, 19-5-1946

498. SLIGHTING SWARAJ?[2]

> Since the decision that khadi could only be purchased by giving a certain quota of yarn came into being, it has become very hard for a man like myself . . . to find the requisite time for spinning. Nevertheless I have been spinning $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours daily in order to be true to my pledge. I had no slivers left the other day and, therefore, went to the khadi Bhandar to buy some. I was asked by the Manager either to come to the Bhandar in order to make my own slivers or do the carding there and make the slivers at home. Now it is impossible for me with my very limited living space to slivers at home nor has a man like me the time to go and make them at the Bhandar. I said, "Either give me slivers or else I shall have to give up spinning." I was told I was at liberty to do what I considered proper. . . .

The above letter[3] requires an answer. The plight of the writer is the same as that of the many who live in the slums of Bombay. If our people were not so easily satisfied, the landlords of Bombay would not relegate poor families to one small living room each. Lakhs live in this way and thus make it possible for the rich to have their Malabar Hill and Chowpatty.

The spinning-wheel shows us the way to remedy these conditions. If this were not so, it would have no place in my life. A few people may carve out their way by the sword, but the crores cannot. We must not imagine that slums do not exist in London, or

[1] The extracts are not reproduced here.

[2] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 19-5-1946.

[3] Of which only extracts are reproduced here. *Vide* also "Letter to Durgashankar", 12-5-1946

Paris, or even New York. They do.

What will be the condition in Russia it is too early yet to say.

What then about the writer's difficulty? He says he finds time to spin $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours daily. A man who spins that much every day can accumulate more yarn than necessary for his khadi needs. It was a mistake on his part to want to buy slivers from the Bhandar. The Manager gave him the correct reply. Where there is room for spinning there is also room for '*tunai*' (new carding method) or '*punai*' (simpler than '*tunai*'). If there is no room for the wheel there is always the *takli*. The *Dhanush takli* too takes up less space. Whatever difficulties apply to the individual apply to all. The way to swaraj lies in not going under but in overcoming them. Necessity is the mother of invention.

Again, why should not the facilities for carding, slivering and spinning offered by the Khadi Bhandar be utilized? The new method of making slivers does not require much space and is not difficult.

The main requisite is for the spinner to have the faith that swaraj hangs on a thread of hand-spun yarn. It will not hurt the country's cause if the man who lacks this faith gives up spinning. Khadi does enable many poor persons to earn their living by spinning and weaving. But this cannot do the work for the crores.

SIMLA, May 13, 1946

Harijan, 19-5-1946

499. VALMIKIS OF SIMLA[1]

Readers must know that Valmiki is another word for Bhangi. Their living quarters in Simla are deplorable. No one bothers about them. Rajkumari[2] has tried her best for them for years but how much can a single person do? I am unable to get as far and see things for myself, but I requested Badshah Khan who is staying with me to go there. He gives me a piteous account of their hovels. Some of the Valmikis have been to see me and have placed other woeful complaints before me. I feel that if in the first instance their living quarters were rebuilt many of their other complaints too would be put right. It is the bounden duty of the public and the Municipality of Simla to remove this evil as soon as they can from their midst. They

[1] This appeared under "Notes" in *Harijan.* The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 19-5-1946.

[2] Amrit Kaur

can be no cleaner than the least clean among them.

SIMLA, May 13, 1946

Harijan, 19-5-1946

500. TELEGRAM TO SETH GOVINDDAS[1]

SIMLA,
May 13, 1946

SETH GOVINDDAS

JABALPUR

MY CONDOLENCE. HE HAS GONE TO REST.

GANDHI

From a photostat : C. W. 10528

501. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SIMLA,
May 13, 1946

CHI. MIRA,

Your letters show that you are working away. May God crown your efforts with success.

Herewith is a letter for you to get read. You may send an acknowledgment. You will see also an interesting note about mango seed[2]. It seems to be valuable. You may try the thing at once. I have eaten the seed after roasting it. But I never knew that it had the food value attributed to it.

We may leave for Delhi tomorrow.

Love.

BAPU

2 Encls.[3]

From the original : C. W. 6517. Courtesy : Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9912

[1] This was sent on the death of the addressee's father, Seth Jeewan Das.

[2] *Vide* "Mango Seed Kernel"

[3] These are not available.

502. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SIMLA,
May 13. 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

Badshah Khan's letter is enclosed herewith. What does he write about Hanif[1]? Sohanlal[2] had met Badshah Khan.

I hope the Begum is all right. I have forgotten her name. Will she continue to live there? Convey my blessings to her.

I hope your health is all right. I may go to Delhi tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 516

503. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[3]

SIMLA,
May 13, 1946

Monday is the last day of my prayer gatherings in Simla because I will be leaving for Delhi tomorrow. Yesterday I had told you that even if the Congress and the Muslim League failed to come to an agreement, it would not necessarily mean that all was over. After all, Hindus and Muslims are brothers. Some day they are certainly going to unite.,The British Cabinet Mission has declared their intention to withdraw British rule from India. It is my firm conviction that it should and will be withdrawn. There is no cause at all for us to despair. Freedom is our life's breath and no other power can exercise that freedom on our behalf. We must, therefore, prepare ourselves for freedom. How we should do so, I have been telling you in the course of the talks here. So far we have been fighting for freedom with God as sustenance and support. Only with His help can we attain our freedom and preserve it.[4]

[1] A khadi worker from the Punjab

[2] A khadi worker associated with the Akhil Bharatiya Charkha Sangh

[3] It being Gandhiji's silence day, his written speech was read out after the prayers.

[4] What follows is from *The Hindu.*

Mahatma Gandhi added he knew no other way. Nor had he the desire to know any other. He hoped the people would remain as peaceful and quiet as they had been during these prayer gatherings.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 14-5-1946, and *The Hindu*, 15-5-1946

504. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

SIMLA,
May 14, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I have to thank you for your letter[1] of the 12th instant and for withholding the notice[2] about salt.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 162

505. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

SIMLA,
May 14, 1946

CHI. AMLA,

I got your letter. I am glad that you are happy at Dr. Khan Saheb's. Get fully restored in Srinagar now. I am leaving for Delhi today.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. MARGARETE SPIEGEL
PARK HOTEL, NAGIN BAGH
SRINAGAR, KASHMIR

From the Gujarati original : Spiegel Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Which read : "As a result of my talk with you I have arranged that the communique about the salt tax should be held up. The Finance Member will inform the trade organizations who have complained, that there is no prospect of the salt tax being immediately abolished, and that they will receive reasonable warning of any such action. He hopes that this may ensure that adequate stocks of salt will still be available."

[2] *Vide* "Press Note"

506. LETTER TO SHYAMJI MARWARI

SIMLA,
May 14, 1946

BHAI SHYAMJI MARWARI,

My good wishes on the occasion of the wedding. May the bride and the bridegroom be true servants.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 5211

507. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

SIMLA,
May 14, 1946

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have your letter. My blessings to Mohan-Anasuya and to Sushi and her husband. May all four live long and dedicate themselves to service. Bablo[1] must be making progress. I hope Vanamala[2] is keeping good health. Send directly to Dr. Dinshaw the money on her account and write him a nice letter. I hope you are well. I am leaving today for Delhi. I do not know how long I shall have to stay there. What shall I write about the goings on here?

My blessings to all people there.

Sardar is with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

The arrangement about the money from Jivram Kothari[3] may be made as suggested by you. That is, give half to the Vidyapith and half to the Harijan Ashram.

SHRI NARAHARI PARIKH
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI, B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 9142

[1] Narayan, Mahadev Desai's son
[2] Addressee's daughter
[3] Who died in June 1941. *Vide* "Telegram to Ishwarlal G. Vyas", 25-6-1941 and "Bhakta Jivram"

508. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SIMLA,
May 14, 1946

CHI. PRABHA,

At last I have a letter from you after many days. I am in God's hands. I have never been so alone before. The health is all right.

I want Jayaprakash to keep himself fit. It would be good if you could tell him that his speech as reported in the papers was not good. I don't want to involve you in this. I will myself write to him if I have the time.

I am leaving Simla today. I may have to be in Delhi for a week. Thence to Poona.

Newspapers have already reported why everybody went to Delhi.

I am well. How about you?

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. PRABHAVATIBEHN
C/O SHRI M. R. MASANI
ALTA MONT ROAD
CUMBALLA HILL
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

509. LETTER TO BALWANTRAI K. THAKORE

SIMLA,
May 14, 1946

BHAI BALWANTRAI,

After wandering from place to place *Panchoterme* reached me yesterday. I am glad you remembered me. Now that the book will travel with me I hope to look into it.

I expect you are well.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

ACHARYA BALWANTRAI THAKORE
34 CHOWPATTY ROAD
BOMBAY 7

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

510. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

SIMLA,
May 14, 1946

CHI. SHRIMAN,

Received your letter and some of the books of the Adabi Board[1]. I have glanced through the books but I can say nothing about them. You will not send copies to all members, will you? Can we not read them at the meeting? If the meeting is called in August I may be able to attend it. You are not likely to call it in Poona or Uruli, are you?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchaven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 309

511. LETTER TO MUNSHI ISHWARSARAN

SIMLA,
May 14, 1946

BHAI MUNSHIJI,

If a change of name can bring about change in work, you may change the name. Work comes first; and then why fuss about the name?

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

MUNSHI ISHWARSARAN
HARIJAN ASHRAM
ALLAHABAD, U. P.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

512. LETTER TO SUNDERLAL

SIMLA,
May 14, 1946

BHAI SUNDERLAL,

I have read what you sent me regarding the name 'Hindi'. I

[1] Literary Committee of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha

shall watch what you do.

I leave for Delhi today.

Blessings from

BAPU

PANDIT SUNDERLALJI

37 BAIKA BAGH

ALLAHABAD, U. P.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarela Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

513. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,

May 15, 1946

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Well, I am having a holiday practically. The weather is not very oppressive. We are in the Bhangi Colony. Of course I miss you and do not. Only you must keep well. P[yarelal] will give you what news there is to give. Sudhir had a long chat with me. He will write to you. Agatha too had.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From the original : C. W. 4174. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7810

514. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,

[*May 15, 1946*][2]

Echoing Badshah Khan's word at the end of the prayers, Gandhiji said it was a travesty of true religion to consider one's own religion as superior and others' as inferior. All religions enjoined worship of the one God who was all-prevasive. He was present even in a drople of water or in a tiny speak of dust.

Even those who worship idols, worship not the stone of which it is made; they try to see God who resides in it.

Similarly it was a libel to call the Paris fire-worshippers or sun-worshippers.

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

[2] From the reference to the Cabinet Delegation's announcement being made within "twenty-six hours'. The announcement was made on May 16, 1946.

The Parsi hymn which Dr. Dinshaw Mehta had recited corresponded to the *Gayatri*[1] of the Hindus. It was nothing but puree worship of God. The various religion were like the leaves on a tree. No two leaves were alike, yet there was no antagonis between the branches on which they grew. Even so, there is an underlying unity in the varity which we see in God's creation.

Speculation as to the contents of the impending announcement of the Cabinet Mission had reached a feverish height with the return from Simla of the Mission and other members of the Tripartite Conference. Friends had been asking, remarked Gandhiji, as to what the message was likely to contain. He did not know, nor did he speculate. It was no use giving thought as to what it would contain. A man of prayer could not do otherwise. Good or bad, they would know all in another twenty-six hours. It would then be open to them to accept or reject it. Instead of looking outwards let them inward and ask God what their duty was in either event. For him and them in the meanwhile, it should be enough to know that Cabinet Delegation had come all the way leaving their hearth and home to find out in what manner British rule was to end and when the last British soldier was to leave India, and not whether or not to leave India. It was necessary for them to find out whether the Congress and the Muslim League could be brought together. British rule had separate them and if they (the Cabinet Mission) failed it was small wonder. They were bound to come together soon after the British hold on India had demonstrably ceased. The Cabinet Delegation's concern was to quite India without a moment's delay.

But supposing the reverse happens they will be the losers, not we. We have chosen the path of self-suffering. We rise through our suffering. That is nature's law. He who clings to his sordid self or family interests loses. Man is sent into the world to perform his duty even at the cost of his life if necessary. We must therefore be braced for any suffering that may come in the performance of duty.

All of us, Hindus and Mussalmans, constitute an integral whole. If someone errs all must suffer for it. God has so ordered this world that no one can keep his goodness or badness exclusively to himself. The whole world is like the human body with its various members. Pain in one member is felt in the whole body. Rot in one part must inevitably poison the whole system. Let us, therefore, cease to think in terms of individual and think in terms of the whole country. We must put faith in God and be careful for nothing. We hold our destiny in our own hands and no one but ourselves can make or mar it.

Harijan, 26-5-1946

[1] A Vedia *mantra* invoking the creative energy of the Sun

515. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
May 16, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,

Wrote a letter yesterday.[1]

Sudhir is down with fever. Shanti[2] is in attendance. Horace[3] and Agatha are in and out. We shall all know tonight what the mountain in labour has brought forth.

Brailsford[4] and his wife were here at 6 p. m. yesterday and Stevens at 8 p. m. Nothing of any importance.

The weather is not too oppressive today. If you are keeping well, don't try to rush here unless I tell you to. They all need your presence there.

Dr. Dinshaw administered an enema. So after dinner, the remaining water involuntarily came out and spoiled my sheet and *dhoti* [5] and my sleep in the bargain.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 4175. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7811

516. MESSAGE FOR INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA[6]

[*May 16, 1946*][7]

It is my firm conviction that Indians in South Africa must not submit to the latest social legislation[8] of the Union. They have at their disposal the matchless weapon of satyagraha which was successfully used for the first time in South Africa.

The Pioneer, 4-6-1946

[1] This sentence is in Hindi.

[2] Sudhir Ghosh's wife

[3] Horace Alexander

[4] H. N. Brailsford

[5] The source has "dhotar".

[6] This was sent through Sorabjee Roustomjee Parsi who, according to *The Bombay Chronicle*, 17-5-1946, met Gandhiji on this date.

[7] *ibid*

[8] Land Tenure Legislation

517. NOTE TO SORABJEE R. PARSI

NEW DELHI,
May 16, 1946

CHI. SORAB,

I have no objection if the amount collected in South Africa for the Kasturba Memorial is utilized to set up a maternity hospital in Johannesburg, if the donors so desire.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

518. LETTER TO MANIBHAI DESAI

NEW DELHI,
May 16, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have already written and given instructions for sending you the money.

Even if Dhirubhai has to attend to his own affairs from time to time and Paramanand has not settled down to work, [as] his wife remains ill, I hope you will still cling to the place and have confidence that you will be able to manage somehow. Persuade Balkrishna also to consider this.

1. You may give the Trust any name you like. Follow Dinshaw's wishes in the matter.
2. The main activity will remain what it is just now.
3. You need not bother about the future at all.

The budget seems all right. I do not have time to go deeper into it. I have barely been able to find time to write even this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 2727. Courtesy: Manibhai Desai

519. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
[*May*][1] *16, 1946*

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I hope you are calm at Indore. Will the Begum stay on there? Will she receive any pension from the State?

I hope you are in good health.

I came here yesterday. I cannot say how long I shall have to stay here. It may be at least for a week. I am quite well.

Kanaiyo[2] and Abha[3] are with me. Today Munnalal returned from Harijan Nivas. He has no fever now. He had some quinine.

Dr. Sushila will come tonight. Rajkumari has stayed behind in Simla. She will reach here on Tuesday.

Herewith three letters from the Ashram and one from Zohra from Uruli Kanchan. Did you pass on Akbar's to Zohra?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 509

520. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
May 16, 1946

The after-prayer address on the following day, was devoted to preparing the people's mind for a just and dispassionate examination of the forthcoming announcement.[4] Gandhiji said he did not propose to say anything about the announcement. It would be in their hands in a couple of hours.[5] He asked the gathering

[1] The source has "April", obviously a slip. From the references to Gandhiji's arrival in Delhi and to Begum Rashid Khan it is evident that this letter was written in May.

[2] Kanu, son of Narandas Gandhi

[3] Amrita Lal Chatterjee's daughter, married to Kanu Gandhi

[4] For the Cabinet Delegation's announcement, vide "Statement of Cabinet Delegation and Viceroy", 16-5-1946

[5] This and the preceding sentence are from *The Bombay Chronicle*. What follows is reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter".

not to allow themselves to be led away by prejudice or hearsay, but to study the document itself carefully and then form their own opinion. He deprecated the habit of borrowing opinions from newspapers.

Newspapers should be for the study of facts. They should not be allowed to kill the habit of independent thinking.

The English language, he warned them, was a difficult medium to master. Even he, after his residence for nearly twenty years among English-speaking people, could not claim to have full mastery over it. They should therefore study the document in Hindustani to be able to grasp its full meaning.

Whether you like the Cabinet Delegation's announcement or not, it is going to be the most momentous one in the history of India and therefore requires careful study.[1]

As men of prayer it further behoved them to put themselves entirely in the hands of God and pray to Him to illumine and purify them so as to fit them for understanding the document aright.

The Bombay Chronicle. 17-5-1946, and *Harijan*, 26-5-1946

521. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
May 17, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,

The W[orking] C[ommittee] met today, meets again tomorrow.

Sudhir became very ill yesterday. Today he has been taken to Joshi's Cottage Hospital. Nothing serious as yet. Herewith cutting from *The Statesman*!!!

Hope you are well.

Sushila came in last night.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 4174. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7812

[1] This pararaph is from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

522. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

May 17, 1946[2]

Taking as his text the song[3] sung by Shrimati Sucheta Kripalani about "the land that was without sorrow and suffering," Gandhiji proceeded to examine the Cabinet Mission's pronouncement in the light of the ideal set forth in that song. How far was Cabinet Mission's pronouncement calculated to enable them to realize that ideal?

The poet says we are citizens of a country in which there is neither sorrow nor suffering. Where is such a country to be found in this world? I confess, throughout my wandering I have not come across such a country so far. The poet has latter described the condition for the attainment of that ideal state. It is easy to observe them individually. For one who really and truly is pure at heart, there is no sorrow or suffering. but it is a difficult state for the millions to attain. Nevertheless we want India to be such a country.

He had asked them on the previous day to examine independently of other people's opinions the statement of the Cabinet Delegation when they saw it. They should examine it from the point of view of a country which would be without sorrow or suffering. He would give them his own reactions. He, however, did not want to contradict himself by asking them to follow his ideas if they did not appeal to them. Everyone should think for himself and herself. They were to weigh opinions and adopt only those they had assimilated.

He had glanced at the document casually on the previous night as soon as it was received. He had read it carefully in the morning. It was not an award. The Mission and the Viceroy had tried to bring the parties together but they could not bring about an agreement. So they had recommended to the country what in their opinion was worthy of acceptance by the Constituent Assembly. It was open to that body to vary it, reject it or improve upon it. There was no 'take it or' business about their recommendations. If there were restrictions, the Constituent Assemby would not be a sovereign body, free to frame a constitution of independence for India. Thus the Mission has suggested for the Centre certain subjecs. It was open to the Assembly by the majority vote of Muslims and non-Muslims separately, to add to them or even reduce them. And it was open to the Assembly to abolish the distiction which the Mission had felt forced to recognize. Similarly about grouping. The provinces were free to reject the very idea of grouping. No province could be forced against its will

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"
[2] From *The Hindustan Times*, 18-5-1946
[3] *Vide* "The Hymn"

to belong to a group, even if the idea of grouping was accepted. He instanced only two things to illustrate this point. He had not exhausted the list of things which seemed to him to be open to objection or improvement.

Subject to the above interpretation, which he held was right, he told them that the Mission had brought forth something of which they had every reason to be proud.

There were some, he proceeded, who said the English were incapable of doing the right thing. He did not agree with them. The Mission and the Viceroy were godfearing as they themselves claimed to be. It was beneath their dignity as men to doubt a person before he was proved to be untrue to his work.

The late Charlie Andrews was very inch of him an Englishman who had died slaving for India. It would be grievously wrong to doubt in advance every one of his contrymen.

Whatever the wrong done to India by the British rule, if the statement of the Mission was geniune, as he believed it was, it was in discharge of an obligation which they had declared the British owed to India, namely, to get off India's back. It contained the seed to convert this land of sorrow into one without sorrow and suffering.

Harijan, 26-5-1946

523. INERVIEW TO U BA PE[1]

NEW DELHI,
May 18, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi is assuring him of help from India said:

India cannot breathe freely if her neighbouring countries like Burma or Ceylon are slave countries.

The Hindustan Times, 20-5-1946

[1] U Ba Pe, member, Burmese Legislative Council, told Gandhiji that at the time of the separation of Burma, the Burmese people were made to understand by the Britishf that Burma would get the same measure of freedom as India would, and the Burma would get it at the same time. He sough Gandhiji's help in Burma's struggle.

524. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
May 18, 1946

Pursuing the theme of the previous day's song[2] , Gandhiji asked. . . how they were to convert India, which was today the home of sorrow and suffering into the ideal country about which the poet had sung. The reply he said was furnished by the song about the sermon of the trees which had just been sung.

In tha song one is asked to take the lesson from the trees which themselves suffer the fierce rays of the sun and give shade to those who take shelter under them. To those who throw stones at them, they respond by dropping fruit. That is true philanthropy. To learn that philanthropy we are asked in that song to go to Harijan. Today society has condemned Harijans to a life of fifth and degradation. That is not their shame but our shame. Society has treated them as untouchables and condemned them to live in ghettos and yet they continue to render invaluable service to society for a mere pittance. It was open to them to take more lucrative avocations as some of them have done. The fact that vast majority of them have chosen not to, resounds to their credit.

If they could show that spirit of service in spite of their ignorance and backwardness, he asked, how much more spirit of selfless service and sacrifice ought the so-called *savarna* classes to show?

He had remarked in his previous day's address that he saw the germs of the realization of the ideal envisaged by the poet in the song that had been sung on that day, in the announcement of the Cabinet Mission. But it was subject to the condition that it meant what it said. He likened that announcement to a promissory note, whose worth depended entirely on its genuineness and validity.

If the promise inscribed on a promissory note is not honoured, the note is worth nothing and fit only to be torn to pieces and thrown away.

Truth meant everything to him. He had said that he would not purchase even swaraj at the cost of truth, because swaraj so purchased would be illusory. It was his hope and prayer, in which he invited the audience to join him, that the announcement of the Cabinet Mission would be finally hounoured in letter and in spirit, and that God

[1] Reproduced help in Burma's struggle.
[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 17-5-1946

would help the members of the Mission to discharge their promissory note even as He had done for His devotees in days of old.

Harijan, 26-5-1946

525. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
May 19, 1946

BETI A.S.,

I have your two letters. I am writing this at 6 o'clock in the morning in the midst of other work.

My advice is, do whatever you think is your duty. You are away from me, so how can I know what is right and what is not? Try and persuade your sister-in-law[1]. Your brother is dead; now do whatever you can about it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 517

526. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE[2]

May 19, 1946

DEAR LORD,

In order to enable me the better to advices such of those who seek my advice, I venture to put before you my difficult as follows:

You say in your answer to a question: "If they do come together on that basis, it will mean that they will have that basis, but they can still change it if by a majoriy of each pary they desire to do so."[3] You can omit the last portion of the sentence as being superfluous for my purpose.

Even the basis in para 15 of the State Paper[4] is a recommendation. Do you regard a recommendation as obligatory on any member of the contemplated Constituent Assembly? There is such a ring about the quotation. Can those who enthusiastically welcome the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 20-5-1946
[2] Along with his letter dated May 18, 1946, the addresse had enclosed "a transcript from the question and answers" at the Press Conference on May 17.
[3] *Vide* "Lord Pethick- Lawrence's Press Conference", 17-5-1946
[4] *Vide* "Statement of Cabinet Delegation and Viceroy", 16-5-1946

Paper but are discerning enough to repudiate, for instance, grouping, honourably seekto educate the country and the Constituent Assembly against the grouping clause? If your answer is 'yes' does it not follow that the Frontier and Assam province delegates would be free to abstain from joining the sections to which they are arbitrary assigned?

I know the legal position. My question has reference to the honourableness of opposition to grouping.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 190-1

527. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

VALMIKI MANDIR,

READING ROAD,

NEW DELHI,

May 19, 1946

DEAR SIR STAFFORD,

I promised to send you a copy of the summary of my speech to the prayer gathering last evening.[2] This I do now herewith. I enclose herewith a translation of the hymn of the previous evening[3] . Of course you will share it with Lord Pethick-Lawrence or whomsoever you like.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government 1944-47, p. 191

[1] For the addressee's reply, *vide* "Letter from Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 2-=5-1946, also "Letter from Abul Kalam Azad to Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 20-5-1946 and "Letter from Lord Pethick-Lawrence to Abul Kalam Azad", 22-5-1946

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 18-5-1946

[3] *Vide* "The Hymn"

528. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

VALMIKI MANDIR,
READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
May 19, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have been meaning to write to you for many days, but could not. Today I have decided to dectate a letter. I am dictating this while having warm water and honey. I had a long discussion with Sorabjee. He broke down and cried. He says he can never have, has never had and will never have any share in doing you harm. He looks upon you as a blood-brother. He will, or course, see you. Do what you think best. He wishes that Omar Sheth's son should be taken on the Trust.[1] If you agree, I have no objection at all. He is of the view that it will not look well if there is no Muslim on the Trust. His view does appeal to me. Show him the names which we had considered. I have an impression that you had suggested Medh's[2] name and that I had accepted it after some hesitation. Sorabjee says that it will produce a very good impression if his name is not included. He says that Medh's having the spirit of service in him does not mean that he is qualified to be a trustee. Think calmly over this suggestion. Sorab must have left by now. The pressure of work is daily increasing here. The heat is sometimes bearable and sometimes unbearable. The same is the condition of the mind.

I hope Sushila is in good health. Sita, Arun and IIa must be fine. Sita's [examination] result must be out. I am sure it is good.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4980

[1] Phoenix Trust
[2] Surendra Medh

529. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

NEW DELHI,
May 19, 1946

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Sushila told me all about you. She said that it was highly desirable that you should go to some hill station for the sake of your health. I should of course be glad. It woud be good if you could do some such thing. Go to Panchgani or Almora or Mussoorie or Nainital or Abu. I think you can easily get accommodation in Abu. The air and water there are said to be good. I have had no experience of the place myself. I tell you what I have heard.

I am very busy. I am dictating this. There you have to take up a new task.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

530. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
May 19, 1946

BETI AMTUL,

No doubt a misfortunate has befallen you. Forget it and do whatever service you can.

Blessings from
BAPU

BIBI AMTUL SALAAM
C/O BEGUM RASHID
RASHID MANZIL
INDORE

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 749

531. LETTER TO HOSA RASHID KHAN

NEW DELHI,
May 19, 1946

BETI HOSA,

I have sent you wires in reply to yours. Amtul Salaam says you

are brave. I think you cannot add glory to Rashid Khan's name by shutting yourself in but you can, by rendering service.

Do write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 748

532. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
May 19, 1946

Gandhiji said that if they had carefully followed and assimilated Badshah Khan's remarks[2] they would know that the object of prayer was not to please God, who does not want our prayers or praise, but to purify ourselves.

God is omnipresent. There is not an atom in the universe without His presence. The process of self-purificattion consists in a conscious realization of His presence within us. There is no strength greater than that which such realization gives.

It had pleased him to see so many of them coming to attend the prayers, he said. But it would hurt him if he found that they had come just for fun, or, what would be worse still, to hear his politicaal views. As a rule politics should not be permitted to intrude upon prayer. He, however, could not avoid referring to current political topics sometimes in the course of his after-prayer discourses because life could not be divided into water-tight compartments. Presence of God had to be felt in every walk of life. If they thought that as soon as they left the prayer ground they could live and behave anyhow, their attendance at the prayers was useless. If that interest in the prayers was genuine, the next day's prayers, he hoped, would be as numerously attended as on the day he spoke, although he would not be speaking on account of his Monday silence.

Harijan, 26-5-1946

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

[2] Badshah Khan's theme was that the object of prayer was to purge ourselves of all dross and baseness.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[1]

MADRAS,

February 21, 1946

MY DEAR BAPU,

What you said about me publicly has, like the churning of the ocean, brought up all the poison, and you have to swallow it like Rudra! I know you can. But it has made my old longing for peace too strong to resist. I haven't the strength to stand it any longer. I bore much all these days. I struggled hard to work without minding the calumniators but I give it up now. I have often asked myself the question : 'Is it worth while?' I feel it is not. I must yield to the longing of my heart not to be misunderstood. Why should I be thought to be seeking 'power' when it is not the case at all? I must prove it, although the proof is one that leaves no good behind but the mere proof.

Now that the urgent job of selections for the legislature is all over, let me leave the scene.

For my place (the University seat) there is Sambamurti available. He has not been given any seat nor did he apply. The position he has occupied in Andhra's public life for over a quarter of a century, the unrivalled manner in which he fulfilled his duties as Speaker and his drive and energy are well-known, and it would be wrong to leave him out. He can easily take my place in the nomination for the University.

I beg of you to approve of my action and pass it on at once to Sardar so that he may do the needful. Nominations must be officially filed before 1st March.

Love.

C. R.

[PS.]

I slept over this last night and am posting it this morning.

C. R.

Sardar Patel's Correspondence, 1945-50, Vol. 2, pp. 219-20

[1]*Vide* "Letter to Vallbhbhai Patel", 26-2-1946 and "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 1-3-1946

APPENDIX II

VALLABHBHAI PATEL'S MESSAGE TO FOREIGN PRESS[1]

BOMBAY,

March 4, 1946

Being a witness to the recent happenings in Bombay, I can say, nothing like it has happened within this generation. The destruction of property was wantonly thoughtless. There is no doubt that what happened was a direct outcome of the lessons of the war that has only officially closed, and an echo of what is happening in the West.

The inequality which still seems to reign supreme and which it was hoped would die out, was galling for the Indian Ratings and resentment of distincion between Europeans and Indians made them impatient to the point of hurling what was bound to be a futile defiance on the part of an ill-armed few against overwhelming odds fully armed.

The populace, whose sympathy has always been with the fighters against imperialism, readily joined hands and brushed aside the wise counsels of leaders who love liberty no less than they.

It was not without the greatest difficulty that I persuaded the Ratings to surrender unconditionally, giving them at the same time the assurance that whatever was just in their cause would be championed by the Congress, that so far as was humanly possible, full justice would be done and that there would be no victimization. I am only hoping that the authorities will not hark back to old, worn-out methods and senselessly insist on false prestige.

Those who seek to uphold imperialism and perpetuate inequalities can ill afford to talk of prestige, much less of vindicating it in the present awakening and consequent determined opposition of which the recent events were convincing evidence.

As a confirmed believer in the method of truth and non-violence adopted by the Congress for the past quarter of a century, I deplored the destruction of property, incendiarism, stopping of locomotives and insult and injury to whitemen, but they must not be used so as to postpone the declaration of independence even by a day.

The national Congress will, of course, insist on the observance of truth and non-violent ways by the people but insistence on these ways will lie in the mouths of those who have constantly denied both or either in their dealings especially with exploited peoples such as those of India.

We have been looking forward to the coming of the official Deputation and

[1] *Vide* "Message to Foreign Press", 5-3-1946

only hope that it is coming with the determined purpose of withdrawing British rule from all India and laying the foundations for a lasting friendship between Great Britain and India while there is yet a moment left. Let not history record that it was too late.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-3-1946

APPENDIX III

SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN DEPUTATION'S MEMORANDUM TO THE VICEROY[1]

NEW DELHI,
March 12, 1946

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

We, the undersigned, Sorabjee Rustomjee, Sooba Rama Naidoo, Azumshah Ahmed Mirza and Ahmed Sadek m. kajee, delegates of the South African Indian Congress, duly appointed at its seventeenth session of the Conference held in Cape Town from the 8th to 13th February, 1946, together with members co-opted, being South African Indians at present in India, under authority of the resolution of the Conference, respectfully beg to submit to you this statement on the proposed legislation, as announced by Field Marshal Smuts, in Union Parliament on 21st January, 1946, when he made known the intention of the Union Government to introduce legislation this session adversely affecting Indians in Natal and the Transvaal.

2. We are deeply grateful to Your Excellency for receiving us at short notice in spite of your multifarious pre-occupations.

3. The present intention of the Government of the Union of South Africa will, if carried out, degrade us to a status of inferiority against which we have put up a fight more definitely since 1893, the year in which an attempt was made to disfranchise the Indian community as such in Natal. We then looked upon it as a slur not only on the Indians in Natal but also on the Mother Country. Then there was no Union of South Africa. The Cape had practically no Indian question worth the name. Orange Free State had banished the few Indian traders it had, and prided itself on its thorough anti-Asiatic policy. The Transvaal had a sprinkling of Indian traders, hawkers and others. The "location" system, later known as segregation, had its rise there. The whites in Natal had deliberately, and for their own sake, invited the large number of indentured Indians for their sugar and tea plantations and other industries. In their wake followed the traders and others, and the Indian population today is therefore a composite one.

4. One would have thought that the advent of Union would mean the union of

[1] *Vide* "Draft Memorandum to Viceroy", 8-3-1946 and "Statement to the Press"

all the races of South Africa, i. e., the African (the Bantu), the European and the Asiatics (primarily and principally Indians). What a noble tradition such a union would have been for the world! But it was not to be. On the contrary, the Union became an anti-African and anti-Asiatic combine. Every year of the progress of the Union has definitely marked the progress of this combine, and the strenuous opposition to it by the Indian settlers and their descendants, as will be clearly seen by reference to the Appendix A hereto attached.

5. We ask Your Excellency to approach the question from that standpoint and no other. The threatened legislation adumbrated by Field Marshal Smuts, which has hastily brought the delegation from South Africa, is a very large step, perhaps the largest yet made, in the process of consigning the Asiatics to permanent inferiority. The wedge has now extended into all-round inequality and inferiority. Thus there are zones of segregation, one of which the whites are reserving for themselves in order to force by legal compulsion the segregation of the other races. God has made man "one great human family". The white races of South Africa would make of it three separate parts based on colour.

6. Bad enough as the threatened land legislation is, the prospective franchise legislation is worse. It is a mockery of franchise and a poignant reminder of the low status to be accorded to us—so low that we are not to be deemed even fit enough to choose one of our own as our representative.

7. We have come all the way from South Africa not to seek protection of individual or property rights, dear as both are, but we have come definitely to ask Your Excellency and the people of the Mother Country to appreciate the fight for equality of status, which is theirs as much as ours, and to give us as much help as possible for you and them to give. What is attempted to be done in South Africa is a denial of the brave declarations made by the British and even the Field Marshal himself.

8. It has given us much pleasure to learn that the withdrawal of the British power in India in favour of elected Indian representatives is imminent. Then may we ask whether it is not Your Excellency's double and special duty to enunciate your stand in favour of equality and, so far as possible, enforce it in no uncertain terms?

9. The announcement of the intention of the Union Government to introduce legislation so alarmed the Indian community that the South African Indian Congress at its Conference aforesaid resolved to send a deputation to Field Marshal Smuts. This deputation made representations to him not to proceed with the intended legislation, and to convene a Round Table Conference of the Union Government and the Government of India in fulfilment of the recommendation of the Natal Indian Judicial Commission made in March 1945. This request was refused by him, whereupon the Conference, after deliberating at great length, adopted the following resolution :

CAPE TOWN,

February 12, 1946

This Conference of the South African Indian Congress, after having heard the report of the deputation that waited on the Prime Minister, expresses its grievous disappointment at his refusal to abandon the proposed legislation and to convene a Round Table Conference between India and South Africa.

This conference interprets this refusal as the very negation of the principle of solving human problems by negotiations and mutual discussions and as indicating a legislative design of repressing the community and settling its fate at the altar of political expediency and sacrificing it to appease extreme white-reactionaries in this country. The legislation dealing with land tenure and communal representation to be introduced by the Prime Minister, which is totally unacceptable, is an insult to the national honour and dignity of the Indian nation.

This Conference of the South African Indian Congress, having regard to the Prime Minister's refusal, resolves to mobilize all the resources of the Indian people in this country in order to take every measure possible to secure the lapsing of the Pegging Act and to oppose the proposed legislation of the Government by :

1. Sending a deputation to India :

(a) to urge the Government of India for convening of a Round Table Conference between the Governments of India and South Africa;

(b) failing which to request the Government of India (i) to withdraw the office of its High Commissioner in South Africa, (ii) to apply economic sanctions against South Africa;

(c) to carry out a campaign of propaganda in India to secure the fullest support of India's millions;

(d) to invite Indian leaders to come to South Africa.

2. Sending deputations to America, Britain and other parts of the world.

3. Proceeding immediately to prepare the Indian people of South Africa for a concerted and prolonged resistance, the details of which this Conference instructs its Executive to prepare for submission and action to its constituent bodies.

10. We would, therefore, ask Your Excellency to use your influence to secure the holding of a Round Table Conference between the two Governments to settle, in the words of the Natal Indian Judicial Commission, "all matters affecting Indians in South Africa". But should your efforts in this connection unhappily fail, then we ask, in terms of our resolution herein before embodied, to withdraw the office of the High

Commissioner for India in the Union of South Africa and to enforce economic and political sanctions. We are not unaware that they may mean very little material loss to South Africa. We know that counter-measures will cause us hardship. But our loss we would count as nothing compared to the moral value of the enforcement of the sanctions.

We have the honour to be,
Your Excellency's obedient servants,
SORABJEE RUSTOMJEE (LEADER)
S. R. NAIDOO
A. S. M. KAJEE
A. A. MIRZA

The History of the Indian National Congress, Vol. II, Appendix III, pp. cxxxviii-cx1

APPENDIX IV

LETTER FROM SECURITY PRISONERS[1]

DUM DUM CENTRAL JAIL,
January 17, 1946

MAHATMAJI,

We offer you our allegiance—to you personally for your ideal and methods and to you as the leader of the nation. . . . We had liquidated the Jugantur Party and joined the Congress without any party reservation. . . .

We started working honestly and sincerely; and our doubts and differences melted away particularly in view of the ever-developing policy of the Congress during the War. But we were arrested in May 1941. . . . Just after our arrest we had some correspondence with you. You then wrote : "I have no difficulty in accepting your limitations of non-violence. If worked honestly, it will automatically expand." Now we can say, we have no difficulty in accepting your non-violence—not only as the best means for achieving Indian revolution but also for saving the common man of the world as against the rising world Fascism based on naked violence. . . .

We have been working in and with the Congress since 1921—of course retaining a second love sometimes dormant and sometimes dominant. In 1938 we outgrew that and made the Congress our only vehicle for serving the cause of Indian independence. Now we believe your method and programme is the only right way to be followed. . . .

[1]*Vide* "Letter to Sir Frederick Burrows", 10-3-1946. Only extracts are reproduced here.

We hope, the moment of the psychological break-away from the past world not be allowed to slip away and, under your inspiration and insistence, every effort would be directed to organizing the masses on the basis of your 18-point programme.

After our release we shall be working with the outlook stated above. We shall try to stay with you for some time before we start work here. In our future work we shall seek your guidance and help. . . .

Before concluding we must say a few words regarding our detention. The Government plea of terrorism is wholly false. Even before our arrest, Sir Nazimuddin, then Home Minister, personally told us his police reports had confirmed his personal information that we were doing nothing but Congress work. This was barely two months before our arrest. In 1943, as Premier, he made almost the same statement in the Assembly. This bogey of terrorism is simply a police trick—to serve a double purpose—to misrepresent us to the public and thus to create difficulties for work, and secondly to keep a broad hint that terrorist groups are still active so that guileless and sincere young men may be duped, and an atmosphere of terrorism kept up to serve imperialist purposes as against the Congress programme. . . There has been no case of terrorism in Bengal since 1934, and it is simply insulting our intelligence as well as our patriotism to say that we are thinking—or for that matter any other political group is thinking— of terrorism at this hour of the day.

Yours sincerely,
ARUN CHANDRA GUHA
BHUPENDRA KUMAR DATTA
AND FRIENDS

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 311-3

APPENDIX V

CLEMENT ATTLEE'S SPEECH[1]

March 15, 1946

I find from our friends in this House who had been out to India and returned, from letters received from Indians and from Englishmen in India of all points of view, complete agreement on the fact that India is today in a state of great tension and that this is indeed a critical moment. At the present moment the idea of nationalism is running very fast in India past to the present position. The temperature of 1946 is not the temperature of 1920, 1930 or even 1942. The slogans of earlier days are discarded. Sometimes words that seemed at that time to Indians to express the height

[1]*Vide* "Interview to United Press of India", 16-3-1946 and "Interview to H. N. Brailsford", 17-3-1946

of their aspirations are set on one side and other words and ideas thrust forward.

I would like today, therefore, not to stress so much the differences between the Indians, but let us all realize that . . . there is this underlying demand among all the Indian people . . . . It is worth remembering . . . a nation of 40,00,000 people that twice sent her sons to die for freedom . . . should herself have freedom to decide her own destiny (cheers).

My colleagues are going to India with the intention of using their utmost endeavours to help her to attain that freedom as speedily and fully as possible. What form of government is to replace the present regime is for India to decide, but our desire is to help her to set up forthwith a machinery for making that decision.

There you have met with the initial difficulty of getting that machinery set up but we are resolved that a machinery shall be set up, and we seek the utmost co-operation of all Indian leaders to do so.

India herself must choose as to what will be her future situation and her position in the world. Unity may come through the United Nations or through the Commonwealth but no great nation can stand alone by herself without sharing what is happening in the world. I hope that India may elect to remain within the British Commonwealth. I am certain that she will find great advantage in doing so, but if she does, she must do it of her own free will, for the British Commonwealth and Empire is not bound together by chains of external compulsion. It is a free association of free people.

If, on the other hand, she elects for independence—and, in our view, she has a right to do so—it will be for us to help to make the transition as smooth and easy as possible. . . .

We want to set up an Interim Government—one of the purposes of the Bill which has been discussed today—to give the Viceroy greater freedom in order that in the period which is to elapse while a Constitution is being worked out, you may have a government enjoying the greatest possible support in India. I would not like to fetter the Viceroy's decision in any way in regard to the choice of portfolios. . . .

I am hoping that statesmen of Britain and of princely India will be able to work out a solution of the problem of bringing together the various constitutent parts. . . . I do not believe for a moment that the Indian princes would lag behind in the forward march of India. . . .

I am very well aware of the minority problem in India. I think all Indian leaders are realizing more and more that need for getting a settlement. . . and I believe that due provision will be made for them in the Constitution.

With regard to the treaty, we are not going to hand out for anything for our own advantage which would be to the disavantage of India. . . .

In the mass of Asia, an Asia ravaged by war, we have here the one country that has been seeking to apply the principles of democracy. I have always felt myself that political India might be the light of Asia. It is most unfortunate at the time when we have to deal with these great political issue . . . we have very grave anxiety over India's food supply. . .

Whatever we can do to assist, we shall do. My colleagues are going out to India resolved to succeed, and I am sure everyone will wish them Godspeed.

The Indian Annual Register, 1946, Vol. 1, pp. 130-2

APPENDIX VI

CABLE FROM J. C. SMUTS[1]

CAPE TOWN,
March 21, 1946

MAHATMA GANDHI
POONA

I MUCH APPRECIATE YOUR INTEREST AND YOUR KIND MESSAGE OF FRIENDSHIP WHICH IS WARMLY RECIPROCATED. INDIAN DIFFICULTIES IN NATAL HAVE BECOME MUCH MORE ACUTE IN RECENT YEARS AND NOW HAVE TO BE URGENTLY DEALT WITH TO PREVENT DETERIORATION FROM WHICH INDIANS MAY BE GREATEST SUFFERERS. REPEATED LOCAL CONFERENCES WITH INDIAN ORGANIZATIONS HAVE PRODUCED NO SOLUTIONS AND ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE WITH OUTSIDE POWERS IS NOT POLITICALLY FEASIBLE. AS REGARDS PROPOSED LEGISLATION CONFEREMENT OF POLITICAL STATUS ON INDIANS HAS BECOME HIGHLY EXPEDIENT AND IS GREAT STEP FORWARD EVEN THOUGH REPRESENTATION IS BY EUROPEANS UNDER SOUTH AFRICA ACT. TO ALLAY FEARS OF FURTHER PENETRATION BILL PROPOSES DEMARCATION OF FREE AREAS IN NATAL WHERE INDIANS AND OTHERS CAN BUY AND OCCUPY LAND FREELY AND QUESTION OF INDIAN SEGRECATION DOES NOT ARISE. DEMARCATION TO BE MADE BY JOINT BAOARDS ON WHICH INDIANS ADEQUATELY REPRESENTED. ALTHOUGH BILL CURTAILS RIGHTS OF INDIANS TO BUY AND OCCUPY ANYWHERE IN NATAL IT IS ESSENTIALLY NOT UNFAIR IN

[1]*Vide* "Cable to J. C. Smuts", 18-3-1946 and "Cable to J. C. Smuts", 22-3-1946

INTENTION OR EFFORT AND WILL PROVIDE WORKABLE BASIS FOR INDIAN DEVELOPMENT AND RACIAL PEACE FOR MANY YEARS. AS SUCH I COMMEND IT TO YOU WHO KNOW HOW GREAT ARE THE DIFFICULTIES IN MAINTANING HARMONY AMONG SOUTH AFRICAN[S] OF ALL RACES. I ASSURE YOU OF THE FRIENDLY SPIRIT IN WHICH I AM ACTING IN A SITUATION WHICH MAY EASILY GET OUT OF CONTROL. THIS IS FOR YOUR ENFORMATION AND NOT FOR PUBLICATION. I SEE NO HARM HOWEVER IN STATEMENT THAT YOU AND I HAVE BEEN PERSONALLY IN COMMUNICATION OVER THIS MATTER IF YOU CONSIDER IT DESIRABLE.

SMUTS

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 94

APPENDIX VII

CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION ON SOUTH AFRICA[1]

The Working Committee of the Indian National Congress are of opinion that the disabilities of the Indian settlers in South Africa constitute a blot on humanity and a slur on the civilization of the West. As the submission to His Excellency the Viceroy of the Indian deputation from South Africa shows, the disabilities are an unbroken tale of progressive prejudice against Asiatics defined as "any Turk and any member or a race or tribe whose national home is in Asia but which does not include any member of the Jewish or the Syrian race or a person belonging to the race or class known as the Cape Malay", and of broken promises and declarations. A civilization that requires for its protection a series of legal enactments imposing political and economic restrictions on Coloured and Asiatic peoples must contain seeds of future wars and its own destruction.

The Committee are of opinion that the contemplated breach of trade relations between India and the Union of South Africa is the mildest step that the Government of India could have taken. The Committee would ask the Government of India forthwith to withdraw their High Commissioner, if the Union Government would not suspend the proposed legislation, pending the convening of a Round Table Conference between the two Governments to consider the whole policy of the Union Government against non-white peoples of the earth.

The Committee are painfully surprised to find Field Marshal Smuts, the

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press"

Premier of the Union, dismissing, on the untenable plea of regarding the proposed anti-Asiatic Bill as a domestic affair, the right of the Indian Government and, by parity of reasoning, of the other Allied Powers of friendly intervention. The Committee hold that at this time of the day it is not open to any State, however powerful it may be, to refuse to listen to the public opinion of the world as voiced through its different States with reference to any legislation regarded by them as of an inhuman character or as amounting to a slur on the self-respect of the races comprising such a State.

The Committee venture to advise the victorious Allies to take notice of the contemplated action of the Government of South Africa inasmuch as the late war would have been fought in vain, if now the persistence by the Union Government of South Africa in the bar sinister against Asiatic races and Coloured people inhabiting that sub-continent is maintained.

To the Indian Deputation from South Africa the Committee would say that whilst they (the Committee) and, indeed, the whole of India, irrespective of parties or communities, are with them in their just struggle and would lend them all the moral weight they can, they should realize that the brunt of the unequal struggle will have to be borne by them, and the Committee feel assured that the Indians in South Africa will worthily carry out the example set by them years ago of vindicating their self-respect and that of the Motherland by the noble rule of self-suffering.

The Committee would, however, fain hope, even at the eleventh hour, that in the place of the indefensible law of the jungle, which the policy as revealed by the contemplated legislation enunciates, the Government of the Union of South Africa and its white settlers would listen to reason and the appeal of the moral law by which mankind lives.

Harijan, 24-3-1946

APPENDIX VIII

VICEROY'S NOTE ON INTERVIEW TO GANDHIJI[1]

April 3, 1946

I thought the interview with Gandhi, naked except for a dhoti and looking remarkably healthy, was rather a deplorable affair. The Secretary of State began with his usual sloppy benevolence to this malevolent old politician, who for all his sanctimonious talks has, I am sure, very little softness in his composition. He began with the demand for the abolition of the salt tax, which he led up to by a lot of rather hypocritical sob-stuff. (In the five yeas I have been in the Government of India, I have never heard from anyone but Gandhi a suggestion that the salt tax was really oppressive, and it brings in nine crores; but Gandhi wants it be removed

[1]*Vide* "Letter to Purshottamdas Thakurdas", 23-3-1946

as a sop to his vanity, because he went to prison over it 15 years ago.)[1] He rambled on in his usual rather vague way, approaching the Pakistan issue, by the way of his drunken son who had become Muslim for a while in the hope that it would cure him of drink; spoke of his efforts to meet Jinnah by Rajagopalachari's formula, and his Bombay talks; and finished with the meant-to-be plausible proposal that Jinnah should be asked to form a Ministry—the catch being that he would be subject to the Hindu majority in the Central Assembly (I had heard this idea put forward before). As usual Gandhi refused to be pinned down to details. The interview closed by a little speech of Secretary of State expressing 'penitence' for Britain's misdeeds in the past !

Wavell—The Viceroy's Journal, p. 236

APPENDIX IX

NOTE ON INTERVIEW TO CABINET MISSION[2]

Secret *April 3, 1946, 4 p.m.*

The Secretary of State said that what the Delegation would like best would be to have Mr. Gandhi's advice as to what he would like to see happen, especially in regard to the position as regards the Muslim League. Mr. Gandhi said that he would rather such a question should be put to the authorized representatives of the Congress. He had come, in reply to the invitation sent to him, to help and not to hinder and what he was most anxious about was that there should be the right atmosphere. He had asked in writing for certain action which would let the people feel that independence was coming.

The Cabinet Delegation would have a much greater measure of difficulty to contend with than any other mission to India. If they meant business, he would advise them to take action which would produce a hearty friendship. This could not be done without the release of the prisoners now in British custody. The flowers of the Indian nation were in prison—whether they were violent or non-violent did not matter, but if the Delegation was sincere, it was bound to release them. Jayaprakash Narayan was one of India's most learned men. For the same reasons, the salt tax should be removed. Salt should be free for the poor man. The humanitarian clause introduced by Lord Halifax as a result of Mr. Gandhi's movement in

[1] In the source, Penderel Moon explains : "The tax on salt, which dated back to long before the advent of the British Raj, was so light that no individual was conscious of it as a burden. But its abolition was one of Gandhi's fads, and he had made defiance of the Salt Laws and illegal manufacture of salt—its manufacture was a Government monopoly and the tax was included in the price at which it was sold to the public—the main feature of his Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930."

[2] *Vide* " A Note", 3-4-1946

1930 had worked well in some places. But whatever the legal difficulties were, the tax could be removed, and a message of independence be brought to every village in India. He was very sorry, he had received a letter from Mr. Abell saying this could not be done. It had been written, if he might say so, unthinkingly. Much taxation had been introduced by the Viceroy for war purposes, and he could as easily remove this salt tax.

Mr. Gandhi said that he had passed 18 days with Mr. Jinnah. He claimed to be a sincere friend of the Muslims, but had never been able to appreciate the Pakistan which Mr. Jinnah says he means. Mr. Jinnah had never in concrete terms given a definition of Pakistan. His Pakistan was a sin which he (Mr. Gandhi) would not commit. The substance of Pakistan as he understood it was independence of culture and a legitimate ambition. In Rajagopalachari's Formula he (Mr. Gandhi) had given concrete shape to a proposal to meet this demand. He differed from Rajagopalachari, but when the latter produced his Formula, he was on his last legs and said that he accepted it.

If this was what Mr. Jinnah meant, he accepted it and did so in writing. Mr. Gandhi's conception of Pakistan is there in concrete form. If that were put into shape and all the snags removed, it was to form the basis for negotiations and, unless he was reasoned into it, he could not go further because beyond that Pakistan is an untruth.

The two-nation theory is far more dangerous. The Muslim population is a population of converts—only a microscopic minority are not. They are all descendants of India-born people. Jinnah is sincere but his logic is utterly at fault especially as a kind of mania possesses him. He himself was called a maniac and he, therefore, honoured Jinnah for his mania. In 18 days Mr. Gandhij failed to be convinced of this two-nation theory. He asked Jinnah whether his own son who had gone over to the Muslim religion changed his nationality by doing so. Mr. Gandhi's Formula did not solve the difficulty unless we could get agreement. But why should the Delegation worry ? They must lie on the bed they had prepared and this situation is a legacy of British rule. Wrong does not become right to give it another lease of life. If you have undone the past, you must write on a clean slate and cannot have two nations or two Constitution-making Bodies. The difficulty would not be solved if the Muslim League refused to join the Constitution-making Body. After having exhausted all friendly resources, if you feel a stage must arrive when you feel you must say that there shall only be one Constitution-making Body, you must take the risks of that. There must be a considerable interim period. What is to happen in the period and what is to happen to your promise? Let Mr. Jinnah form the first Government and choose its personnel from elected representatives in the country. The Viceroy would appoint them formally but, in fact, Mr. Jinnah would choose. If he does not do so,

then the offer to form a Government should be made to Congress. After all, it is no light responsibility. The food situation is most serious, and you will not be able to deal with this famine without producing a psychological effect on the people. The best administrative organization will not help without this.

Mr. Gandhi said, in reply to questions, that there were two formulae of his, one by Mr. Rajagolapalchari and the other in his correspondence with Mr. Jinnah which had been published. The Interim Government must be absolutely national. Mr. Jinnah could choose who he liked for his Government. They would be subject to the vote of the Assembly from which they were drawn. He would not mind the Council beign responsible to Lord Wavell, if there were honest conventions. The Secretary of State said that, of course, Mr. Jinnah in existing circumstances had not got a majority in most of the Legislatures. If he had to choose Ministers to be responsible to Provincial Legislatures, most of them would have to be drawn from parties other than his own. Mr. Gandhi said, it was inescapable that the Congress had a majority in most of the Legislatures. His idea was that the members chosen from the Provincial Legislatures would be transferred to the Central Legislature, places being made for them by arranged resignations. They would then be responsible to the Central Legislature. The secretary of State said that, even so, the Legislature would be, of course, very predominantly Hindu. If Mr. Jinnah were not prepared to form a Legislature on this basis, the Congress could be called upon to do so.

Mr. Gandhi said, he did not underrate the difficulties of the situation which the Delegation had to face. If he were not an irrepressible optimist, he would despair of any solution.

The Transfer of Power, Vol. VII, pp. 116-8

APPENDIX X

VICEROY'S NOTE ON INTERVIEW TO GANDHIJI[1]

Tuesday, April 9, 1946

In the afternoon, Gandhi came to see me about the salt tax. He professed to be coming purely as a friend of Britain, so that the British would get the credit of removing this unjust tax before the National Government came into power and did so. The old humbug, I wonder whether he suspects that a National Government would do nothing of the sort and that the British are easier to bounce. I refused, naturally, to commit myself in any way, and merely said, I would look into the matter. (He had sent Amrit Kaur to see Q. and try to influence her in helping bounce me.) He then asked for the release of Jayaprakash Narayan, whose wife is apparently one of his followers ('adopted daughter', he called her).

[1]*Vide* "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 8-4-1946

I did not commit myself, though I expect we shall have to release him shortly. Gandhi then started on the I.N..A. and I told him exactly what the I.N.A. were—the weaklings and cowards of those captured in Malaya—and what folly it had been for Congress to make heroes of such men and to neglect those who had remained true in spite of starvation, ill-treatment and torture. When we parted, I gave him a warning that the threat of mass movement by Congress was a dangerous weapon, there were still a great many thousand British soldiers in India who did not subscribe to his doctrine of non-violence, and might be very violent, if British lives or property suffered. He took this with a grin, and was very friendly throughout.

Wavell—The Viceroy's Journal, pp. 241-2

APPENDIX XI

LETTER FROM G. RAMACHANDRA RAO[1]

I and my co-workers have been trying this method of residing and eating with the Harijans for the last five or six years. Our experience proves that it is an efficient method to remove the social isolation of the untouchables. But our work is spreading slowly. If a man like Bapuji took it up, as he did at Bombay, it is bound to gain wide publicity and attract more workers to the method.

In this connection, another suggestion might be considered. Side by side with the mixing up, an attempt also might be made to discourage the use of labels of caste and creed which raise imaginary barriers between man and man. Not only should the practice of untouchability go, but the Harijan should not be allowed to continue a Harijan; he should be united with the general stream of humanity. Similarly the Hindu and Muslim differences might be solved by discarding the labels. Such an attempt will no longer keep the form of communal harmony, but it would lead to the growth of one humanity. Communal harmony presupposes the existence of communities. In one humanity no communities exist. Though a powerful personality like Gandhiji might harmonize communities for a while, when the personal influence weakened, the communities would clash again. So a permanent solution of communal differences is the growth of one-humanity outlook rather than communal harmony.

The growth of one-humanity requires the rejection of communal labels. Perhaps even the rejection of the labels of religion would involve a change of the belief in god, for every denominational label is associated with faith in a particular form of god. But, though every religion talked only of one god, in practice, however, belief in god always deteriorated into sectarianism and fanaticism because god is a falsehood. So atheism is the most suitable attitude for the establishment of one humanity.

[1]*Vide* "Letter to G. Ramchandra Rao", 9-4-1946

In order to set up happy human relations, communal harmony is the utmost limit to which the theistic mind can be stretched inasmuch as belief in god has to be somehow preserved. But communal harmony is beset with definite drawbacks; so the desirability of atheism as the best means to establish one humanity and thereby to lay strong foundations for permanent peace in human relations might be considered.

An Atheist with Gandhi, pp. 47-8

APPENDIX XII

WOODROW WYATT'S NOTE ON DISCUSSION WITH GANDHIJI[1]

1. He thinks that the Cabinet Mission has come with the intention of getting off India's back. Their function here is to devise a means of doing it gently. He agreed that it should also be their function to precipitate a situation in which Indians must decide the future structure of India themselves.

2. It would be wrong, if the three Cabinet Ministers were to imagine that they could arrive at a just and fair solution of India's problems. They cannot, and it is not their affair.

3. If the British were to make a decision, and impose it, it would be overturned as soon as they had gone.

4. Pakistan is a British creation. (Incidentally, so is the famine.) He agreed that it would be much better for Congress to concede Pakistan than for the British. If Congress conceded it, it would be something much more glorious.

5. He thinks there may well have to be a blood-bath in India before her problems are solved. He would urge non-violence on Congress but does not expect them to observe it. The only thing he expects from Congress in the event of civil war is that they will fight decently and take one tooth for one tooth, and not a hundred teeth for one tooth as the British do.

6. The Interim Government should be formed on the basis of the Central Legislature; members of the Central Legislature should nominate the members of the Executive Council. Nominated members of the official block must be left out of the picture. If the Central Legislature nominated people who were not members of the Central Legislature, then seats would have to be found for them in the Central Legislature.

7. He would urge on Congress that they should offer seats on the Executive Council to the Muslim League.,

8. If the British do not wish to accept the nominations of Congress, then they should accept the nominations of the Muslim League. He would then tell Congress that they must play fair with the Muslim League.

[1] *Vide* "Discussion With Woodrow Wyatt", 13-4-1946

9. He agrees that it might well be unfair for the British to form an Interim Government and not give it its support. They should certainly advise it in any case.

10. He thinks it would be reasonable to announce that after a certain date there will be no British support for the Interim Government so forcing the Interim Government to solve India's internal problems before that date.

The Transfer of Power, Vol. VII, pp. 261-2

APPENDIX XIII

WINSTON CHURCHILL'S SPEECH[1]

The world is very ill. This is the time when hatred is rife in the world and when many mighty branches of the human family, victors or vanquished, innocent or guilty, are plunged in bewilderment, distress or ruin. Two fearful wars in our lifetime have torn the heart out of its grace and culture.

Measureless injury has been done to much that the 19th century would have called 'Christian civilization', for all the leading nations have been racked by stresses which have blunted their sensibilities and have destroyed their agreeable modes of social intercourse.

Only science has rolled forward, whipped by the fierce winds of mortal war, and science has placed in the hands of men agencies of destruction far beyond any development of their commonsense or virtue.

In a world where over-production of food was formerly from time to time a problem, famine has laid its gaunt fingers upon the peoples of many lands and scarcity upon all.

The psychic energies of mankind have been exhausted by the tribulations through which they have passed and are still passing. It is not only bloodletting that has weakened and whitened us.

The vital springs of human inspiration are, for the moment, drained. There must be a period of recovery. Mankind cannot, in its present plight bear new shocks and quarrels without taking to altogether cruder and primordial forms.

Yet we do not know that the hatred and confusion which are found will not confront us with even harder trial than those we have so narrowly and painfully survived.

In many countries, where even united efforts would fall short of what is needed, party strife and faction is fomented or machine-made and skeleton fanatics rave at each other about their rival ideologies.

All the while, the ordinary folk of every country show themselves kindly and

[1] *Vide* "Independence"

brave and serviceable to their fellow men. Yet, they are driven against one another by forces and organizations and doctrines as wantonly and remorselessly as they ever were in the ages of absolute emperors and kings.

There never was a time when breathing space was more needed, a blessed convalescence, a truce of God and man.

Harijan, 5-5-1946

APPENDIX XIV

SUGGESTED POINTS FOR AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CONGRESS AND THE MUSLIM LEAGUE[1]

1. There shall be an All-India Union Government and Legislature dealing with Foreign Affairs, Defence, Communications, Fundamental Rights and having the necessary powers to obtain for itself the finances it requires for these subjects.

2. All the remaining powers shall vest in the provinces.

3. Groups of provinces may be formed and such Groups may determine the provincial subjects which they desire to take in common.

4. The Groups may set up their own Executives and Legislatures.

5. The Legislature of the Union shall be composed of equal proportions from the Muslim-majority provinces and from the Hindu-majority provinces whether or not these or any of them have formed themselves into Groups, together with representatives of the States.

6. The Government of the Union shall be constituted in the same proportion as the Legislature.

7. The constitutions of the Union and the Groups (if any) shall contain a provision whereby any province can by a majority vote of its Legislative Assembly call for a reconsideration of the terms of the constitution after an initial period of ten years and at ten yearly intervals thereafter.

For the purpose of such reconsideration a body shall be constituted on the same basis as the original Constituent Assembly and with the same provisions as to voting and shall have power to amend the constitution in any way decided upon.

8. The constitution-making machinery to arrive at a constitution on the above basis, shall be as follows :

A. Representatives shall be elected from each Provincial Assembly in proportion to the strength of the various parties in that Assembly on the basis of 1/10th of their numbers.

B. Representatives shall be invited from the States on the basis of their population in proportion to the representation from British India.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Stafford Cripps", 8-5-1946

C. The Constituent Assembly so formed shall meet at the earliest date possible in New Delhi.

D. After its preliminary meeting at which the general order of business will be settled, it will divide into three sections, one section representing the Hindu-majority provinces, one section representing the Muslim-majority provinces and one representing the States.

E. The first two sections will then meet separately to decide the provincial constitutions for their Groups and, if they wish, a Group constitution.

F. When these have settled it will be open to any province to decide to opt out of its original Group and go into the other Group or to remain outside any Group.

G. Thereafter the three bodies will meet together to settle the constitution for the union on the lines agreed in paragraphs 1-7 above.

H. No major point in the Union constitution which affects the communal issue shall be deemed to be passed by the Assembly unless a majority of both the two major communities vote in its favour.

9. The Viceroy shall forthwith call together the above constitution making machinery which shall be governed by the provisions stated in paragraph 8 above.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 452-3

APPENDIX XV

TALK WITH HORACE G. ALEXANDER AND AGATHA HARRISON[1]

Strictly confidential *May 7, 1946*

[G.] Two sides to talk—may be a favourable side but whole of talk left unfavourable impression on me.

Idea is at any cost to please Jinnah—struggled hard to show this not proper thing.

An attempt to prevent civil war—and civil war at any cost. "We want to prevent civil war coming"—but this can't be prevented if hearts are not together.

Just now something should be imposed is thought.

Hatred is rampant—I have done the utmost in inducing faith—even if one is not inclined to believe the evidence. Hold that nothing is lost by this belief—in spite of all that is said "I told you so", etc.

He recounted steps taken to bring conference—Pethick-Lawrence's 27th letter and the replies of Azad and Jinnah. The formula was only to "start discussion".

Asked by Horace Alexander, "What did you advice?" Gandhiji said, "Don't

[1] Notes of which, presumably were jotted down by Agatha Harrison. *Vide* "Letter to Sir Stafford Cripps", 8-5-1946

think of an award." Patel had reminded him that Attlee had definitely stated there would be no such thing. He had advised them to pick up one party in which they believed and persuade them whichever party had the greater justice and rightness on its side; then they should deliver the goods and say, 'We trust you with power.' This might be the Muslim League. If justice and right not on the Muslim League side then deliver the goods to the major party.

Here the Sardar said he did not know how they would prevent civil war by this method. "They seem to have come to an agreement with Jinnah to do anything to placate him. We took Attlee's speech [in good faith] otherwise we should not have come."

Gandhiji said that a better interpretation was they did not want to impose a formula—that they sincerely believed that Jinnah had come round. Patel said they were impressed with fact that Jinnah could create trouble. In effect they were saying, 'If you want to avoid civil war—you must agree'. This was an incitement.

Gandhiji said the Ministers admitted that they had sinned and that because of this they were here. Gandhiji said he felt this should be publicly stated.

Regarding what Horace and I should do Gandhiji said, "Watch and pray"; that it would be dangerous to build on his account of the talk last night that his conversations were based on a fear. Therefore for us to act on the account he had given would be wrong. He had challenged them and they were sending along [*sic*].

From a copy : Gandhi Nidhi Files. Courtesy : Gandhi National Museum and Library

APPENDIX XVI (A)

LETTER FROM LORD WAVELL[1]

VICEROY'S CAMP, INDIA, (SIMLA),

May 10, 1946

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

The Finance Member reports to me that rumours about a possible reduction or abolition of the salt duty are almost certain to cause a salt famine in certain areas unless immediate steps are taken to prevent it. Merchants and wholesale dealers are abstaining from placing orders with the salt manufacturers lest they be caught with large stocks on which they have paid duty, but which they may be able to sell only at a lower duty-free rate. Strong representations have been received from the Bombay salt merchants and Shilotries Association on the subject.

2. To prevent a salt famine, which would of course be a serious matter

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Wavell", 11-5-1946

for the poor, Government propose to put out a Press Note of which I enclose a copy.

3. I am sure you will appreciate that we cannot avoid taking this action.

Yours sincerely,

WAVELL

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47 pp. 159-60

APPENDIX XVII (B)

PRESS NOTE

Complaints have been received by Government that rumours to the effect that the salt duty may be reduced or abolished have sown doubt and uncertainty in the minds of traders and manufacturers to such an extent as to discourage the purchase of salt, thereby hampering trade and slowing down manufacture and, in view of the present chronic transport difficulties and of the further difficulty of transporting this commodity during the wet months, entailing serious risk of a salt famine in upcountry areas. To obiate these risks, Government desires to make clear that any change would only be made after a full and comprehensive investigation which would necessarily take considerable time, and that ample notice would be given in order to permit the disposal of duty-paid stocks.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 160

APPENDIX XVIII

INTERVIEW WITH LORD WAVELL AND CABINET MISSION[1]

May 6, 1946

We had decided early in the afternoon that it would be a good thing to see Gandhi at once and enlist his support for the proposed solution, as Cripps was confident he could do. For some reason the Delegation wished him to be asked merely to see the Viceroy, and they would drop in later, which is all rather in a line with their methods of indirect approach. It was Gandhi's day of silence which he could not break till 7.50 p. m. He came at 7.30 p. m. and I spoke a monologue for 15 minutes or so, telling him generally how things were going. Then the Delegation came in, just as his silence was up, and the Secretary of State and Cripps started their explanations and blandishments. The result was a shock to them. Gandhi, who had been living with Ghaffar Khan and Patel, the two malcontents, had adopted entirely their point of view, said the proposed solution was "worse than Pakistan", and he could not recommend it to Congress we must either adopt entirely the

[1] As recorded by Lord Wavell. *Vide* "Letter to Lord Wavell", 11-5-1946

Congress point of view, if we thought it just, or Jinnah's point of view if we thought it juster; but there was no half-way house. Gandhi seemed quite unmoved at the prospect of civil war, I think he had adopted Patel's thesis that if we are firm the Muslims will not fight. Though Cripps and Secretary of State kept at Gandhi for an hour, till 9 p. m., they quite failed to move him.

Wavell : The Viceroy's Journal, pp. 259-60

APPENDIX XIX

THE HYMN[1]

We are inhabitants of a country
where there is no sorrow and no suffering
Where there is no illusion no anguish,
no delusion nor desire,
Where flows the Ganges of love
and the whole creation is full of joy,
Where all minds flow in one direction
and where there is no occasion for sense of time.
All have their wants satisfied,
Here all barter is just,
Here all are cast in the same mould,
Here is no lack nor care,
No selfishness in shape or form,
No high no low, no master no slave,
All is light yet no burning heat,
That country is within you—
It is Swaraj—Swadeshi,
The home within you,
Victory ! Victory ! Victory !
He realizes it who longs for it.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 355

[1] *Vide*"Letter to Amrit Kaur", 17-5-1946

APPENDIX XX

STATEMENT OF CABINET DELEGATION AND VICEROY[1]

May 16, 1946

1. On march 15th last just before the despatch of the Cabinet Delegation to India, Mr. Attlee, the British Prime Minister, used these words :

"My colleagues are going to India with the intention of using their utmost endeavours to help her to attain her freedom as speedily and fully as possible. What form of Government is to replace the present regime is for India to decide; but our desire is to help her to set up forthwith the machinery for making that decision. . . . I hope that India and her people may elect to remain within the British Commonwealth. I am certain that they will find great advantages in doing so. . . . But if she does so elect, it must be by her own free will. The British Commonwealth and Empire is not bound together by chains of external compulsion. It is a free association of free peoples. If, on the other hand, she elects for independence, in our view she has a right to do so. It will be for us to make the transition as smooth and easy as possible."

2. Charged in these historic words we—the Cabinet Ministers and the Viceroy—have done our utmost to assist the two main political parties to reach agreement upon the fundamental issue of the unity or division of India. After prolonged discussions in New Delhi we succeeded in bringing the Congress and the Muslim League together in Conference at Simla. There was a full exchange of views and both parties were prepared to make considerable concessions in order to try and reach a settlement but it ultimately proved impossible to close the remainder of the gap between the parties and so no agreement could be concluded. Since no agreement has been reached we feel that it is our duty to put forward what we consider are the best arrangements possible to ensure a speedy setting up of the new Constitution. This statement is made with the full approval of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom.

3. We have accordingly decided that immediate arrangements should be made whereby Indians may decide the future Constitution of India and an Interim Government may be set up at once to carry on the administration of British India until such time as a new Constitution can be brought into being. We have endeavoured to be just to the smaller as well as to the larger sections of the people; and to recommend a solution which will lead to a practicable way of governing the India of the future, and will give a sound basis for defence and a good opportunity for progress in the social, political and economic field.

4. It is not intended in this Statement to review the voluminous evidence

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 16-5-1946

that has been submitted to the Mission; but it is right that we should state that it has shown an almost universal desire, outside the supporters of the Muslim League, for the unity of India.

5. This consideration did not, however, deter us from examining closely and impartially the possibility of a partition of India; since we were greatly impressed by the very genuine and acute anxiety of the Muslims lest they should find themselves subjected to a perpetual Hindu-majority rule.

This feeling has become so strong and widespread amongst the Muslims that it cannot be allayed by mere paper safeguards. If there is to be internal peace in India it must be secured by measures which will assure to the Muslims a control in all matters vital to their culture, religion, and economic or other interests.

6. We therefore examined in the first instance the question of a separate and fully independent sovereign State of Pakistan as claimed by the Muslim League. Such a Pakistan would comprise two areas; one in the north-west consisting of the Provinces of the Punjab, Sind, North-West Frontier, and British Baluchistan; the other in the north-east consisting of the Provinces of Bengal and Assam. The League were prepared to consider adjustment of boundaries at a later stage, but insisted that the principle of Pakistan should first be acknowledged. The argument for a separate State of Pakistan was based first, upon the right of the Muslim majority to decide their method of Government according to their wishes, and secondly, upon the necessity to include substantial areas in which Muslims are in a minority, in order to make Pakistan administratively and economically workable.

The size of the non-Muslim minorities in a Pakistan comprising the whole of the six Provinces enumerated above would be very considerable as the following figures[1] show :

NORTH-WESTERN AREA	Muslims	Non-Muslims
Punjab	16,217,242	12,201,577
North-West Frontier Proince	2,788,797	249,270
Sind	3,208,325	1,326,683
Br. Baluchistan	438,930	62,701
	22,653,294	13,840,231
	62.07%	37.93%

[1]The source carries the note : "All population figures in this Statement are from the most recent census taken in 1941."

NORTH-EASTERN AREA		
Bengal	33,005,434	27,301,091
Assam	3,442,479	6,762,254
	36,447,913	34,063,345
	51.69%	48.31%

The Muslim minorities in the remainder of British India number some 20 million dispersed amongst a total population of 188 million.

These figures show that the setting up of a separate sovereign State of Pakistan on the lines claimed by the Muslim League, would not solve the communal minority problem; nor can we see any justification for including within a sovereign Pakistan those districts of the Punjab and of Bengal and Assam in which the population is predominantly non-Muslim. Every argument that can be used in favour of Pakistan, can equally in our view be used in favour of the exclusion of the non-Muslim areas from Pakistan. This point would particularly affect the position of the Sikhs.

7. We therefore considered whether a smaller sovereign Pakistan confined to the Muslim majority areas alone might be a possible basis of compromise. Such a Pakistan is regarded by the Muslim League as quite impracticable because it would entail the exclusion from Pakistan of (a) the whole of the Ambala and Jullundur Division in the Punjab; (b) the whole of Assam except the District of Sylhet; and (c) a large part of Western Bengal, including Calcutta, in which city the Muslims form 23.6 per cent of the population. We ourselves are also convinced that any solution which involves a radical partition of the Punjab and Bengal, as this would do, would be contrary to the wishes interests of a very large proportion of the inhabitants of these Provinces. Bengal and the Punjab each has its own common language and a long history and tradition. Moreover, any division of the Punjab would of necessity divide the Sikhs leaving substantial bodies of Sikhs on both sides of the boundary. We have therefore been forced to the conclusion that neither a larger nor a smaller sovereign State of Pakistan would provide an acceptable solution for the communal problem.

8. Apart from the great force of the foregoing arguments there are weighty administrative, economic and military considerations. The whole of the transportation and postal and telegraph systems of India have been established on the basis of a united India. To disintegrate them would gravely injure both parts of India. The case for a united defence is even stronger. The Indian armed forces have been built up as a whole for the defence of India as a whole, and to break them in two would inflict a deadly blow on the long traditions and high degree of efficiency of the Indian

Army and would entail the gravest dangers. The Indian Navy and Indian Air Force would become much less effective. The two sections of the suggested Pakistan contain the two most vulnerable frontiers in India and for a successful defence in depth the area of Pakistan would be insufficient.

9. A further consideration of importance is the greater difficulty which the Indian States would find in associating themselves with divided British India.

10. Finally there is the geographical fact that the two halves of the proposed Pakistan State are separated by some seven hundred miles and the communications between them both in war and peace would be dependent on the goodwill of Hindustan.

11. We are therefore unable to advise the British Government that the power which at present resides in British hands should be handed over to two entirely separate sovereign States.

12. This decision does not however blind us to the very real Muslim apprehensions that their culture and political and social life might become submerged in a purely unitary India, in which the Hindus with their greatly superior numbers must be a dominating element. To meet this the Congress have put forward a scheme under which Provinces would have full autonomy subject only to a minimum of Central subjects, such as Foreign Affairs, Defence and Communications.

Under this scheme Provinces, if they wished to take part in economic and administrative planning on a large scale, could cede to the Centre optional subjects in addition to the compulsory ones mentioned above.

13. Such a scheme would, in our view, present considerable constitutional disadvantages and anomalies. It would be very difficult to work a Central Executive and Legislature in which some Ministers, who dealt with Compulsory subjects, were responsible to the whole of India while other Ministers, who dealt with optional subjects, would be responsible only to those Provinces which had elected to act together in respect of such subjects. This difficulty would be accentuated in the Central Legislature, where it would be necessary to exclude certain members from speaking and voting when subjects with which their Provinces were not concerned were under discussion.

Apart from the difficulty of working such a scheme, we do not consider that it would be fair to deny to other Provinces, which did not desire to take the optional subject at the Centre, the right to form themselves into a group for a similar purpose. This would indeed be no more than the exercise of their autonomous powers in a particular way.

14. Before putting forward our recommendations we turn to deal with the relationship of the Indian States to British India. It is quite clear that with the attainment of independence by British India, whether inside or outside the British Commonwealth, the relationship which has hitherto existed

between the Rulers of the States and the British Crown will no longer be possible. Paramountcy can neither be retained by the British Crown nor transferred to the new Government. This fact has been fully recognised by those whom we interviewed from the States. They have at the same time assured us that the States are ready and willing to co-operate in the new development of India. The precise form which their co-operation will take must be a matter for negotiation during the building up of the new constitutional structure, and it by no means follows that it will be indentical for all the States. We have not therefore dealt with the States in the same detail as the Provinces of the British India in the paragraphs which follow.

15. We now indicate the nature of a solution which in our view would be just to the essential claims of all parties, and would at the same time be most likely to bring about a stable and practicable form of constitution for all India.

We recommend that the constitution should take the following basic form :

(1) There should be a Union of India, embracing both British India and the States, which should deal with the following subjects : Foreign Affairs, Defence, and Communications; and which should have the powers necessary to raise the finances required for the above subjects.

(2) The Union should have an Executive and a Legislature constituted from British Indian and States' representatives. Any question raising a major communal issue in the Legislature should require for its decision a majority of the representatives present and voting of each of the two major communities as well as a majority of all the members present and voting.

(3) All subjects other than the Union subjects and all residuary powers should vest in the Provinces.

(4) The States will retain all subjects and powers other than those ceded to the Union.

(5) Provinces should be free to form Groups with executives and legislatures, and each Group could determine the Provincial subjects to be taken in common.

(6) The Constitution of the Union and of the Groups should contain a provision whereby any Province could, by a majority vote of its Legislative Assembly, call for a reconsideration of the terms of the constitution after an initial period of 10 years and at 10 yearly intervals thereafter.

16. It is not our object to lay out the details of a constitution on the above lines, but to set in motion the machinery whereby a constitution can be settled by Indians for Indians.

It has been necessary however for us to make this recommendation as to the

broad basis of the future constitution because it becomes clear to us in the course of our negotiations that not until that has been done was there any hope of getting the two major communities to join in the setting up of the constitution-making machinery.

17. We now indicate the constitution-making machinery which we propose should be brought into being forthwith in order to enable a new Constitution to be worked out.

18. In forming any Assembly to decide a new Constitutional structure the first problem is to obtain as broad-based and accurate a representation of the whole population as is possible. The most satisfactory method obviously would be by election based on adult franchise; but any attempt to introduce such a step now would lead to a wholly unacceptable delay in the formulation of the new Constitution. The only practicable alternative is to utilize the recently elected Provincial Legislative Assemblies as the electing bodies. There are, however, two factors in their composition which make this difficult. First, the numerical strength of the Provincial Legislative Assemblies do not bear the same proportion to the total population in each Province. Thus, Assam with a population of 10 millions has a Legislative Assembly of 108 members, while Bengal, with a population six times as large has an Assembly of only 250. Secondly, owing to the weightage given to minorities by the Communal Award, the strengths of the several communities in each Provincial Legislative Assembly are not in proportion to their numbers in the Province. Thus the number of the seats reserved for Muslims in the Bengal Legislative Assembly is only 48 per cent of the total, although they form 55 per cent of the Provincial population. After a most careful consideration of the various methods by which these inequalities might be corrected, we have come to the conclusion that the fairest and the most practicable plan would be—

(a) to allot to each Province a total number of seats proportional to its population, roughly in the ratio of one to a million, as the nearest substitute for representation by adult suffrage.

(b) to divide this provincial allocation of seats between the main communities in each Province in proportion to their population.

(c) to provide that the representatives allotted to each community in a Province shall be elected by the members of that community in its Legislative Assembly.

We think that for these purposes it is sufficient to recognize only three main communities in India; General, Muslim, and Sikh, the "General" community including all persons who are not Muslims or Sikhs. As the smaller minorities would, upon the population basis, have little or no representation, since they would lose the weightage which assures them seats in the Provincial Legislatures, we have made the arrangements set out in paragraph 20 below to give them a full

representation upon all matters of special interest to the minorities.

(19) (i) We therefore propose that there shall be elected by each Provincial Legislative Assembly the following numbers of representatives, each part of the Legislative (General, Muslim or Sikh) electing its own representatives by the method of proportional representation with the single transferable vote :—

TABLE OF REPRESENTATION

SECTION A

Province	General	Muslim	Total
Madras	45	4	49
Bombay	19	2	21
United Provinces	47	8	55
Bihar	31	5	36
Central Provinces	16	1	17
Orissa 9	0	9	
Total	167	20	187

SECTION B

Province	General	Muslim	Sikh	Total
Punjab 8	16	4	28	
North-West Frontier Province	0	3	0	3
Sind	1	3	0	4
Total	9	22	4	35

SECTION C

Province	General	Muslim	Total
Bengal		33	60
Assam	3	10	
Total	34	36	70

Total for British India	292
Maximum for Indian States	93
Total	385

Note : In order to represent the Chief Commissioner's Proinces there will be added to

Section A the Member representing Delhi in the Central Legislative Assembly, the Member representing Ajmer-Merwara in the Central Legislative Assembly, and a representative to be elected by the Coorg Legislative Council.

To Section B will be added a representative of British Baluchistan.

(ii) It is the intention that the States should be given in the final Constituent Assembly appropriate representation which would not, on the basis of the calculations adopted for British India, exceed 93, but the method of selection will have to be determined by consultation. The States would in the preliminary stage be represented by a Negotiating Committee.

(iii) The representatives thus chosen shall meet at New Delhi as soon as possible.

(iv) A preliminary meeting will be held at which the general order of business will be decided, a Chairman and other officers elected, and an Advisory Committee (see paragraph 20 below) on the rights of citizens, minorities, and tribal and excluded areas set up. Thereafter the provincial representatives will divide up into three sections shown A, B and C, in the Table of Representation in the sub-paragraph (i) of this paragraph.

(v) These sections shall proceed to settle the Provincial Constitutions for the Provinces included in each section, and shall also decide whether any Group Constitution shall be set up for those Provinces and, if so, with what provincial subjects the Group should deal. Provinces, shall have the power to opt out of the Groups in accordance with the provisions of sub-clause (viii) below.

(vi) The representatives of the Sections and the Indian States shall reassemble for the purpose of settling the Union Constitution.

(vii) In the Union Constituent Assembly resolutions varying the provisions of paragraph 15 above or raising any major communal issue shall require a majority of the representatives present and voting of each of the two major communities.

The Chairman of the Assembly shall decide which (if any) of the resolutions raise major communal issues and shall, if so requested by a majority of the representatives of either of the major communities, consult the Federal Court before giving his decision.

(viii) As soon as the new constitutional arrangements have come into operation, it shall be open to any Province to elect to come out of any Group in which it has been placed. Such a decision shall be taken by the new legislature of the Province after the first general election under the new constitution.

20. The Advisory Committee on the rights of citizens, minorities, and tribal and excluded areas should contain full representation of the interests affected, and their function will be to report to the Union Constituent Assembly upon the list of Fundamental Rights the clauses for the protection of minorities, and a scheme for the

administration of the tribal and excluded areas, and to advise whether these rights should be incorporated in the Provincial Group, or Union constitution.

21. His Excellency the Viceroy will forthwith request the Provincial Legislatures to proceed with the election of their representatives and the States to set up a Negotiating Committee. It is hoped that the process of constitution-making can proceed as rapidly as the complexities of the task permit so that the interim may be as short as possible.

22. It will be necessary to negotiate a Treaty between the Union Constituent Assembly and the United Kingdom to provide for certain matters arising out of the transfer of power.

23. While the constitution-making proceeds, the administration of India has to be carried on. We attach the greatest importance therefore to the setting up at once of an Interim Government having the support of the major political parties. It is essential during the interim period that there should be the maximum of co-operation in carrying through the difficult tasks that face the Government of india. Besides the heavy task of day-to-day administration, there is the grave danger of famine to be countered; there are decisions to be taken in many matters of post-war development which will have a far-reaching effect on India's future; and there are important international conferences in which India has to be represented. For all these purposes a Government having popular support is necessary. The Viceroy has already started discussions to this end, and hopes soon to form an Interim Government in which all the portfolios, including that of War Member, will be held by Indian leaders having the full confidence of the people. The British Government, recognising the significance of the changes in the Government of India, will give the fullest measure of co-operation to the Government so formed, in the accomplishment and in bringing about as rapid and smooth a transition as possible.

24. To the leaders and people of India who now have the opportunity of complete independence we would finally say this. We and our Government and countrymen hoped that it would be possible for the Indian people themselves to agree upon the method of framing the new constitution under which they will live. Despite the labours which we have shared with the Indian Parties, and the exercise of much patience and goodwill by all, this has not been possible. We therefore now lay before you proposals which, after listening to all sides and after much earnest thought, we trust will enable you to attain your independence in the shortest time and with the least danger of internal disturbance and conflict. These proposals may not, of course, completely satisfy all parties, but you will recognize with us that at this supreme moment in Indian history statesmanship demands mutual accommodation.

We ask you to consider the alternative to acceptance of these proposals. After all the efforts which we and the Indian Parties have made together for agreement, we

must state that in our view there in small hope of peaceful settlement by agreement of the Indian Parties alone. The alternative would therefore be a grave danger of violence, chaos, and even civil war. The result and duration of such a disturbance cannot be foreseen; but it is certain that it would be a terrible disaster for many millions of men, women and children. This is a possibility which must be regarded with equal abhorrence by the Indian people, our own countrymen, and the world as a whole.

We therefore lay these proposals before you in the profound hope that they will be accepted and operated by you in the spirit of accommodation and good will in which they are offered. We appeal to all who have the future good of India at heart to extend their vision beyond their own community or interest to the interests of the whole four hundred millions of the Indian people.

We hope that the new independent India may choose to be a member of the British Commonwealth. We hope in any event that you will remain in close and friendly association with our people. But these are matters for your own free choice. Whatever that choice may be we look forward with you to your ever increasing prosperity among the great nations of the world, and to a future even more glorious than your past.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 582-91

APPENDIX XXI

LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE'S PRESS CONFERENCE[1]

[*May 17, 1946*]

Q. Can the Constituent Assembly be regarded as sovereign in view of three points that are put forward, viz.,

1. Adult suffrage has been ruled out;
2. British troops would continue to remain on the soil;
3. The principle and the procedure of the constitution-making body have been laid down.

A. After dealing with the first two points the Secretary of State said :

The third question was whether, as we had laid down certain provisions, the constitution-making body or Constituent Assembly could be regarded in any sense as sovereign. Well, we only laid these conditions down because Indians did not come to an agreement among themselves. If it had been possible for the two Indian parties to come together to make a constitution, we should have made no stipulations of any kind. But when we got here, we found, what we suspected in advance, that a Constituent Assembly representing all parties could not be acceptable except on certain decisions taken in advance. We then asked the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 19-5-1946

Indian parties whether they themselves by agreement would lay down certain decisions which would enable the Constituent Assembly to meet together and to function, and we tried our very best to get that agreed to and we went a considerable distance towards getting agreement on that point, but we did not get all the way, and therefore only because of that we suggested this basis and we made these recommendations, because it is only on those that we felt that we could get representatives of all parties to sit together and try and draw up a constitution. But even so, I would point [out] to you that even that basis can be altered but it can only be altered by a separate majority of each party who desire to do so and the reason is this that these representatives of different parties have never agreed to meet together on that basis. That is what we believe is the basis on which they will come together. If they do come together on that basis, it will mean that they will have accepted that basis, but they can still change it if by a majority of each party they desire to do so.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 618-9

APPENDIX XXII

LETTER FROM LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE[1]

Confidential

OFFICE OF THE CABINET DELEGATION,
THE VICEROY'S HOUSE,
NEW DELHI,
May 20, 1946

MY DEAR GANDHIJI,

Since receiving your two letters of the 19th and 20th, we have had an official communication from the Congress raising the same points.[2]

As we intend shortly to reply to this letter I will not in this answer deal with the various matters you raise.[3]

As some of the paragraphs in your second letter do not accord with my recollection or that of Sir Stafford, I am enclosing a note setting out the matters on which we differ. We confirm as you imply in your paragraphs 6 and 7 that we told you quite definitely that we could not agree with the propositions you there set out. The Delegation wish me in particular to make it plain that independence must follow and not precede the coming into operation of the new Constitution.

All good wishes.

Sincerely yours,
PETHICK-LAWRENCE

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 19-5-1946 and "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 20-5-1946

[2] *Vide* "Letter from Abul Kalam Azad to Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 20-5-1946

[3] *Vide* "Letter from Lord Pethick-Lawrence to Abul Kalam Azad", 22-5-1946

ENCLOSURE

1. We gave no such assurance but stated that we were investigating the position on the lines stated.

2. On this matter we said there would have to be consultations as set out in paragraph 14 of the Statement which we read to you and that a part of them would no doubt be between the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes and the President of Congress.

3. This was your suggestion. We stated that it was proposed to appoint a person in the best way possible to ensure his representative character.

4. In the second paragraph you are misinterpreting what Sir Stafford said. He stated that he knew the view was held that in the past Paramountcy had been used in certain cases to support the Princes against their people but that in the interim period the Crown Representative would want to help forward the movement towards democracy in the States so as to make it easier for them to come into the Union. It was also stated by us that Paramountcy would be exercised by the Crown Representative and that it would not be in consultation with the Interim Government, though there might be consultation between the Interim Government and the States on matters of common economic interest.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 195-6. Also *The Transfer of Power 1942-47*, Vol. VII, pp. 642-3

APPENDIX XXIII

LETTER FROM ABUL KALAM AZAD TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE[1]

20 AKBAR ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
May 20, 1946

DEAR LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE,

My Committee have carefully considered the Statement issued by the Cabinet Delegation on May 16th, and they have seen Gandhiji after the interviews he has had with you and Sir Stafford Cripps. There are certain matters about which I have been asked to write to you.

As we understand the Statement, it contains certain recommendations and procedure for the election and functioning of the Constituent Assembly. The Assembly itself, when formed, will in my Committee's opinion, be a soverign body for the purpose of drafting the Constitution unhindered by any external authority, as well as for entering into a treaty. Further that it will be open to the Assembly to vary in any way it likes the recommendations and the procedure

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 19-5-1946

suggested by the Cabinet Delegation. The Constituent Assembly being a sovereign body for the purpose of the Constitution, its final decisions will automatically take effect.

As you are aware some recommendations have been made in your Statement which are contrary to the Congress stand as it was taken at the Simla Conference and elsewhere. Naturally we shall try to get the Assembly to remove what we consider defects in the recommendations. For this purpose we shall endeavour to educate the country and the Constituent Assembly.

There is one matter in which my Committee were pleased to hear Gandhiji say that you were trying to see that the European members in the various Prvincial Assemblies, particularly Bengal and Assam, would neither offer themselves as candidates nor vote for the election of delegates to the Constituent Assembly.

No provision has been made for the election of a representative from British Baluchistan. So far as we know, there is no elected Assembly or any other kind of chamber which might select such a representative. One individual may not make much of a difference in the Constituent Assembly. But it would make a difference if such an individual speaks for a whole province which he really does not represent in any way. It is far better not to have representation at all than to have this kind of representation which will mislead and which may decide the fate of Baluchistan contrary to the wishes of its inhabitants. If any kind of popular representation can be arranged, we would welcome it. My Committee were pleased, therefore, to hear Gandhiji say that you are likely to include Baluchistan within the scope of the Advisory Committee's work.

In your recommendations for the basic form of the Constitution (page 3 of the printed draft, No. 5) you state that provinces should be free to form groups with executives and legislatures and each group could determine the provincial subjects to be taken in common. Just previous to this you state that all subjects other than the union subjects and all residuary powers should vest in the provinces. Later on in the Statement, however, on page 5 you state that the provincial representatives to the Constituent Assembly will divide up into three sections and "these sections shall proceed to settle the Provincial Constitutions for the Provinces in each section and shall also decide whether any group constitution shall be set up for those Provinces". There apppears to us to be marked discrepancy in these two separate provisions. The basic provision gives full autonomy to a province to do what it likes and subsequently there appears to be a certain compulsion in the matter which clearly infringes that autonomy. It is true that at a later stage the Provinces can opt out of any group. In any event it is not clear how a Province or its representatives can be compelled to do something which they do not want to do. A Provincial Assembly may give a mandate to its

representatives not to enter any group or a particular group or section. As Sections B and C have been formed it is obvious that one Province will play a dominating role in the Section, the Punjab in Section B and Bengal in Section C. It is conceivable that this dominating Province may frame a Provincial Constitution entirely against the wishes of Sind or the North-West Frontier Province or Assam. It may even conceivably lay down rules, for elections and otherwise, thereby nullifying the Provision for a Province to opt out of a group. Such could never be the intention as it would be repugnant to the basic principles and policy of the Scheme itself.

The question of Indian States has been left vague and, therefore, I need not say much about it at this stage. But it is clear that State representatives who come into the Constituent Assembly must do so more or less in the same way as the representatives of the Provinces. The Constituent Assembly cannot be formed of entirely disparate elements.

I have dealt above with some points arising out of your Statement. Possibly some of them can be cleared up by you and the defects removed. The principal point, however, is, as stated above, that we look upon this Constituent Assembly as a sovereign body which can decide as it chooses in regard to any matter before it and can give effect to its decision. The only limitation we recognize is that in regard to certain major communal issues the decision should be by a majority of each of the two major communities. We shall try to approach the public and the members of the Constituent Assembly with our own proposals for removing any defects in the recommendations made by you.

Gandhiji has informed my Committee that you contemplate that British troops will remain in India till after the establishment of the Government in accordance with the instrument produced by the Constituent Assembly. My Committee feel that the presence of foreign troops in India will be a negation of India's independence. India should be considered to be independent in fact from the moment that the National Provisional Government is established.

I shall be grateful to have an early reply so that my Committee may come to a decision in regard to your Statement.

Yours sincerely,

A. K. AZAD

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 639-41

APPENDIX XIV

LETTER FROM LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE TO ABUL KALAM AZAD[1]

May 22, 1946

The Delegation have considered your letter of 20th May and feel that the best way to answer it is that they should make their general position quite clear to you. Since the Indian Leaders after prolonged discussion failed to arrive at an agreement, the Delegation have put forward their recommendations as the nearest approach to reconciling the views of the two main parties. The scheme therefore stands as a whole and can only succeed if it is accepted and worked in a spirit of compromise and co-operation.

You are aware of the reasons for the grouping of the Provinces, and this is an essential feature of the scheme, which can only be modified by agreement between the two parties.

There are two further points which we think we should mention. First, in your letter you describe the Constituent Assembly as a sovereign body, the final decisions of which will automatically take effect. We think the authority and the function of the Constituent Assembly and the procedure which it is intended to follow are clear from the Statement. Once the Constituent Assembly is formed and working on this basis, there is naturally no intention to interfere with its discretion or to question its decisions. When the Constituent Assembly has completed its labours, His Majesty's Government will recommend to Parliament such action as may be necessary for the cession of sovereignty to the Indian people, subject only to two provisos which are mentioned in the Statement and which are not, we believe controversial, namely, adequate provision for the protection of minorities and willingness to conclude a treaty to cover matters arising out of the transfer of power.

Secondly, while His Majesty's Government are most anxious to secure that the interim period should be as short as possible, you will, we are sure, appreciate that for the reasons stated above independence cannot precede the bringing into operation of a new Constitution.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 659-60

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 19-5-1946

1. AN ANALYSIS[1]

After four days of searching examination of the State Paper[2] issued by the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy on behalf of the British Government, my conviction abides that it is the best document the British Government could have produced in the circumstances. It reflects our weakness, if we would be good enough to see it. The Congress and the Muslim League did not, could not agree. We would grievously err if at this time we foolishly satisfy ourselves that the differences are a British creation. The Mission have note come all the way from England to exploit them. They have come to devise the easiest and quickest method of ending British rule. We must be brave enough to believe their declaration until the contrary is proved. Bravery thrives upon the deceit of the deceiver.

My compliment, however, does not mean that what is best from the British standpoint is also best or even good from the Indian. Their best may possibly be harmful. My meaning will, I hope, be clear from what follows.

The authors of the document have endeavoured to say fully what they mean. They have gathered from their talks the minimum they thought would bring the parties together for framing India's charter of freedom. Their one purpose is to end British rule as early as may be. They would do so, if they could, by their effort, leave united India not torn asunder by internecine quarrel bordering on civil war. They would leave in any case. Since in Simla the two parties, though the Mission suceeded in bringing them together at the Conference table (with what patience and skill they could do so, they alone could tell), could not come to an agreement, nothing daunted, they decended to the plains of India, and devised a worthy document for the purpose of setting up the Constituent Assembly which should frame India's charter of independence, free of any British control or influence. It is an appeal and an advice. It has no compulsion in it. Thus the Provincial Assemblies may or may not elect the delegates. The delegates, having been elected, may or may not join the Constituent Assembly. The Assembly having met, may lay down a procedure different from the one laid down in the Statement. Whatever is

[1] An advance copy of this was sent to Sir Stafford Cripps.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Statement of Cabinet Declaration and Viceroy", 16-5-1946.

binding on any person or party arises out of the necessity of the situation. The separate voting is binding on both the major parties, only because it is necessary for the existence of the Assembly and in no otherwise. At the time of writing. I took up the Statement, reread it clause by clause, and came to the conclusion that there was nothing in it binding in law. Honour and necessity alone are the two binding forces.

What is binding is that part of it which commits the British Government. Hence, I suppose, the four members of the British mission took the precaution of receiving full approval of the British Government and the two Houses of Parliament. The Mission are entitled to warm congratulations for the first step in the act of renunciation which the Statement is. Since other steps are necessary for full renunciation, I have called this one a promissory note.

Though the response to be made by India is to be voluntary the authors have naturally assumed that the Indian parties are well-organized and responsible bodies capable of doing voluntary acts as fully as, if not more fully than, compulsory acts. Therefore, when Lord Pethick-Lawrence said to a Press correspondent[1],"If they do come together on that basis, it will mean that they will have accepted that basis, but they can still change it, if a majortiy of each party they desire to do so, " he was right in the sense that those who became delegates, well knowing the contents of the Statement, were expected by the authors to abide by the basis, unless it was duly altered by the major parties. When two or more rival parties meet together, they do so under some understanding. A self-chosen umpire (in the absence of the one chosen by the parties, the authors constitute themselves one) fancies that the parties will come together only if he presents them with a proposal containing a certain minimum, and he makes his proposal, leaving them free to add to, subtract from or altogether change it by joint agreement.

This is perfect so far. But what about the units? Are the Sikhs, for whom the Punjab is the only home in India, to consider themselves against their will, as part of the section which takes in Sindh, Baluchistan and the Frontier Province? Or is the Frontier Province also against its will to belong to the Punjab, called "B" in the Statement, or Assam to"C" although it is a predominantly non-Muslim province? In my opinion, the voluntary character of the Statement

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 19-5-1946.

demands that the liberty of the individual unit should be unimpaired. Any member of the sections is free to join it. The freedom to opt out is an additional safeguard. It can never be a substitute for the freedom retained in paragraph 15(5) which reads:

> Provinces should be free to form groups with executives and legislatures and each group could determine the Provincial subject to be taken in common.

It is clear that this freedom was taken away by the authors by section 19 which"proposes" (does not order) what should be done. It presupposes that the Chairman of the Constituent Assembly at its first meeting will ask the delegates of the Provinces whether they would accept the group principle and if they do, whether they [would] accept the assignment given to their Province. This freedom inherent in every Province and that given by 15(5) will remain intact. There appears to me to be no other way of avoiding the apparent conflict between the two paragraphs as also charge of compulsion which would immediately alter the noble character of the document. I would, therefore, ask all those who are perturbed by the group proposal and the arbitrary assignment, that, if my interpretation is valid there is not the slightest cause for perturbation.

There are other things in the document which would puzzle any hasty reader who forgets that it is simply an appeal and an advice to the nation showing how to achieve independence in the shortest time possible. The reason is clear. In the new world that is to emerge out of the present chaos, India in bondage will cease to be 'the brightest jewel' in the British crown it will become the blackest spot in that crown, so black that it will be fit only for the dustbin. Let me ask the reader to hope and pray with me that the British crown has a better use for Britain and the world. The 'brightest jewel' is an arrogation. When the promissory note is fully honoured, the British crown will have a unique jewel as of right flowing from due performance of duty.

There are other matters outside the Statement which are required to back the promissory note. But I must defer that examination to the next issue of Harijan[1] .

NEW DELHI, May 20, 1946

Harijan, 26-5-1946

[1] *Vide* "Vital Defects", 2-6-1946.

2. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

VALMIKI MANDIR, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
May 20, 1946

DEAR LORD,

As the matters we discussed yesterday morning and the day before were very important and affected and still affect my attitude and corresponding action, I think it worth-while to reduce a summary to writing. You can correct me if there is a mis-understanding. This may even help you wherever necessary.

I may add that I have conveyed to the Working Committee of the Congress the purport, to the best of my ability, of our talks.

With this preface I proceed to give the summary.

1. You were good enough to assure me that you will see to it that European members of Provincial Assemblies, neither voted at the elections of delegates to the Consituent Assembly nor expected to be elected by the electors of non-Muslim delegates.

2. Election of the possible 93 delegates on behalf of the States would be determinded by the Nawab Sahib of Bhopal and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. In the absence of an agreed solution, there should be no election of delegates on behalf of the States, the function of looking after the interests of the Princes and their people devolving upon the Advisory Committee referred to in clause 20 of the State Paper.

3. In view of the fact that there is no machinery in British Baluchistan analogous to the Provincial Assemblies, it should be treated as the special concern of the Constituent Assembly and should be included in the function of the Advisory Committee. Meanwhile it should be the duty of the Interim National Government to set up machinery to bring Baluchistan on a par with the other Provinces.

4. I ventured to suggest that Paramountcy should cease even while independence is at work in fact, though not in law, till the Constituent Assembly has finished its labours and divised a constitution. Sir Stafford saw danger in acting upon my suggestion. I hold the opposite view. Acceptance of my proposal would vivify the people of the States as if by a stroke of the pen. And the Interim

Government would be a boon to the Princes who, though the creation of the Paramount Power and dependent on it for the continuance of their existance, still chafed under its heavy hand. The immediate end of Paramountcy would test the sincerity of the Princes and the Paramount Power.

But if this Indian feeling did not find an echo in your hearts, I personally would be satisfied with Sir Stafford's view that Paramountcy which had been admittedly use to protect the Princes against their people in the shape suppressing their liberty and progress, should for the time continue for the protection and progress of the people. If the people of the States are backward, it is not because they are different in kind from the people of the direct British parts of india but because they have been groaning under a double yoke. I endorsed also the suggestion that Paramountcy should be exercised in consultation with the National Government.

5. I have written to you on my difficulty on gouping.[1] I need say nothing more on the subject, pending reply to it.

6. Whilst I appreciate your and Sir Stafford's frankness, I would put on record my conviction that independence would in fact be a farce, if the British troops are in India even for peace and order within, or danger from without. The condition of India after the labours of the Constituent Assembly are over will in this respect be no better than now. If the position about the troops persists, "independence next month" is either insincere or a thoughtless cry. Acceptance of "Quit India" by the British is unconditional, whether the Constituent Assembly succeeds or fails in bringing out a constitution. A drastic revision of the attitude is a necessity in every case.

Finally it can in no way be contended that in the face of the troops, there would be natural behaviour in the Constiuent Assembly.

7. As to the Interim Government, the more I think and observe, the more certain is my feeling that a proper National Government resposible in fact, if not in law, to the elected members of the Central Legislative Assembly, should precede the summons of the election of members of the Constituent Assembly. Only then, and not before, can a true picture of coming events be presented. The food crisis demands immediate formation of a strong, capable and homogeneous National Government. Without it, deep and universal corruption cannot end

[1] *Vide* "Letter to lord Pethick-Lawrence", 19-5-1946.

without it the psychological effect will not be produced in spite of the landing on India shores of expected grain from outside. Every day's delay in forming such a Government is agony added to the agony of famished millions of India. There can therefore be no question of party whether the Government is allowed to be formed by the Congress or the Muslim League. The best and incorrouptible men or women from India are wanted for the purpose. I was therefore glad to find that the Viceroy was already moving in the matter as quickly as possible.[1]

Your sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp.193-5

3. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
May 20, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,

Your two notes.

I am glad you are having some well-deserved rest. I still say don't hurry, don't worry. I shall give you timeby notice. I do not know when I shall be able to leave; not this week, I fear. While there is opportunity, give ample time to your brothers. Of course you will serve wherever you are. I would like you to be by my side but not at the expense of your brothers or your health and not in this heat so long as it is avoidable. Now you stay with Dalip as long as he wants you. And of course you are free to come whenever you want to.

Sudhir is better. Pyarelal must give you news about the Mission.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

If D. does not return, shall I search for someone?

From the original: C. W. 4177. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7813

[1] For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 20-5-1946.

4. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

N[EW] D[ELHI],
May 20, 1946

BETI A. S.,

I have your letter. I asked Abha to read it to me while I was having my meal. Pyarelal read it. Now I am destroying it. What is there in it to hide? What harm is there if you take your sister-in-law with you to her village and train her? I would like it. Do what you want to do.

I understand what you say about Hanif.

I do not know how long I shall be here.

To you all,

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 518

5. SILENCE DAY NOTE[1]

May 20, 1946

When service to the family comes into conflict with public service know that there is something wrong. For true service to the family is never opposed to public service.

I have absolutely no doubt that they the sword can never give you the courage that ahimsa does. This is what we learn from experience.

This is what you both have to boldly say at tomorrow's meeting, provided you have faith in it.

I am firm on what I have said regarding the question of monkeys, etc.[2] The monkey has no rationality whereas man, however stupid, is a rational animal and, therefore, we may not kill him but may accept death at his hands. Or, say, I do not have the courage to be killed by a monkey or a snake.

The case of the Sikh brother is rather complicated. About the incident at Nankana Sahib I had expressed an opinion at the Shrine

[1] This was addressed to two women.
[2] *Vide* "The Monkey Nuisance", 5-5-1946.

itself that the true servant and soldier of Guru Govind Singh will be the Sikh who will wield the sword of non-violence.[1]

You may certainly come and stay in the Ashram.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

6. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

NEW DELHI,
May 20, 1946

It being my silence day, I only want to say to you that for India it is a day for deep and serious thinking. We should do nothing in haste. For, we are deeling with the destinies of dumb millions. It therefor becomes our bounden duty that, with God as witness, we should think only of the country with its 40 crores of people, not of our petty selves nor of our respective communities or groups. And whatever we decide we should act upon without fear or shame.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 21-5-946

7. MANGO SEED KERNEL

A friend has sent me an extract from Current Science showing how mango seed kernel is a fair substitute for cereals and fodder:[3]

I have known this use from my early youth. But no one seems to have thought of conserving this seed for food. The mango season is upon us and, though much time has been lost, it will be a good thing if every mango seed is saved and the kernel baked and eaten in the place of cereals or given to those who need it. Every ounce of food saved is so much gained.

DELHI, May 21, 1946

Harijan, 26-5-1946

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Nankana Saheb", 3-3-1921.

[2] It being Gandhiji's silence day his written message was read out after the prayers.

[3] The extract is not reproduced here. It showed how from chemical analysis mango seed kernels had been found to be rich in rich in carbohydrates and fats.

8. A FAIR HIT

A report from New Delhi dated 16th April, published in The Times of India of the 18th says that at a prayer meeting held on Tuesday evening[1] you said:

1. "The machinery and even engineers were all foreign. He had no enmity with machinery. Mills, he said, could not remove the poverty of India, but on the other hand had deprieved crores of villagers of their work and practically ruined them. Those Indians responsible for ruining the villages had become foreigners and as such they should live in foreign countries."

How can you reconcile this statement with the gentlemen who form the Board of Trustees of the Kasturba Memorial Fund, the primary aim of which is to improve conditions in villages? Majoriy of these gentlemen are industrialists and owners of mills. Can they, who are responsible for ruining the villages, and still continue to ruin them by their mills, be ever capable of sincere help in improving the condition of villagers?

2. You have so often talked and written against the curse of black market. How many of the trustees of the Kasturba Memorial Fund can lay their hands on their hearts and say they have not dealt in the black market either as buyers or sellers?

This is a fair hit. That mill-oweners and such others have joined the Kasturba Trust is a compliment to my ahimsa. Though I express my opinions strongly, there is no sting in them, nothing personal. I have no sense of shame in befriending millowners whose business, I hold, should be stopped, not forcibly but by reason. Education of the public could bring about results which no force can. I must say in favour of the capitalist class trustees that they never interfered with the decision of non-capitalist trutees. Indeed, they have always helped by their knowledge. The combination is good and beneficial to the Trust. Their sincerity cannot be questioned; for, they have faith in their capacity and the modern trend.

As to black market, I do not know that any of the trustees have black market dealings. But should I discover any, I should think twice before inviting them to leave the Trust. They have not imposed themselves on the Trust.

DELHI, May 21, 1946

Harijan, 26-5-1946

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 16-4-1946.

9. HYPNOTISM OF ENGLISH[1]

The foregoing letter[2] is from a fellow-worker in the cause. He knows what he is writing about. Nor are the facts referred to by him unknown to the Indian public. The question is how to break the spell that the English language exercise over us. It is an essential part of our struggle for swaraj or else we shall have to revise our definition of swaraj. In slavery, the slave has to ape the manners and ways of the master, e. g., dress, language, etc. Gradually he developes a liking for it to the exclusion of every thing else. When the British yoke is lifted and we are independent, this infatuation with the English language will automatically go. In the meantime, let those who have realized the harm that this infatuation has done to the country, make it a point to use Hindustani or their mother-tongue only.

It is a fact that the editors of English newspapers earn ten times as much as the editiors of newspapers in the Indian languages. The remedy for it also lies in our hands. The market value of English will find its natural level, once the British empire over India goes, for the simple reason that India cannot affod to pay on a lavish scale. India is a poor country, and so long as the lot of the poorest of the poor remains unameliorated, we have no right to draw fat salaries. The fact, however, is that it rests with the newspaper-reading public to raise or reduce the prestige and price of the Indian languages newspapers. If they will cease to regard English papers as their gospel and transfer their patronage to Indian language newspapers instead, the proprietors will be compelled soon to take note of the change and adjust their policies accordingly. Something like that is happening already. There was a time when Indian languages newspapers had a poor circulation compared to English. Now the scales are reversed. Indian languages newspapers are increasing both in number and circulation.

But those who are running newpapers in Indian languages also owe a duty in the matter even like the newspaper-reading public. The language of the newspapers in the Indian languages is often poor and the writing appearing in them lack originality. Newspapermen alone can remove these defects.

NEW DELHI, May 21, 1946

Harijan, 26-5-1946

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 26-5-1946.

[2] Which is not reproduced here

10. NATURE CURE IN KANCHANGAON[1]

I settled down and started work in Uruli Kanchan in response to the invitation of the inhabitants there in the hope of making it a model nature-cure centre for the villages of India. The people of the village had promised their co-operation. They were to have provided the land and erected buildings on it. But that has not yet materialized. They have given the money. But that is not enough for buying land and buildings on it. Their acitve interest in it is more important than mere monetary aid[2] .

According to the reports received from co-workers there, the inhabitants of Kanchangoan have begun to understand and appreciate nature cure. And the workers have developed such self-confidence that they won't mind if I do not return there before June. They say that the people are co-operating with them so whole-heartedy that they can well afford to wait till I descend from Mahabaleswar and Panchgani at the end of the warm season. All this has filled me with hope[3] .

Nature cure consists of two parts. Firstly, to cure diseases by the taking the name of God or Ramanama and secondlyy, to prevent illness by the inculcation of right and hygienic living. The report from the village says that the inhabitants are co-operating with them in keeping the village clean. I hold that where the rules of personal, domestic and public sanitation are strictly observed and due care is taken in the matter of diet and exercise, there should be no occasion for illness or disease. Where there is absolute purity, inner and outer, illness becomes impossible. If the village people could but understand this, they would not need doctors, hakims or vaidyas.

In Kanchangoan there are hardly any cows. That is unfortunate. There are some she-buffaloes. But all the evidence that has come to me so far shows that buffalo's milk is no match for cow's in the health-giving quality. The vaidyas specially recommend cow's milk for patients. I, therefore, hope that people of Uruli Kanchan will keep

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 26-5-1946.

[2] The Hindi here adds: "However, what I propose to write is a different thing."

[3] The Hindi here adds: "and I may conclude that the other villages too will appreciate nature cure."

a herd of cows to ensure a supply of fresh clean cow's milk to all. Milk is an absolutely necessity for health.

Then, the sooner the buildings are erected the better. In the first place, it is a question as to how long we ought to go on using Shri Datar's bungalow. Secondly, and that is more importatnt, so long as there is not adequate housing accommodation, proper treatment of patients is not possible. Accommodation for indoor patients is a neccesity. I shall always hope that Kanchangoan will become an ideal village. Nature cure implies an ideal mode of life and that in its turn presupposes ideal living conditions in towns and villages. The name of God is, of course, the hub round which the nature-cure system revolves.

NEW DELHI, May 21, 1946

Harijan, 26-5-1946

11. NATIONAL LANGUAGE OF INDIA

The above article[1] is not in praise of me. What is there to praise if a person performs some service deeming it his duty. Maulana Saheb is a scholar. He knows Persian and Arabic. He, therefore, knows Urdu very well. But he knows that neither Arabic-Persianized Urdu nor Sanskritized Hindi can be the language of the masses. Therefore, he wants a blend of Urdu and Hindi and speaks a mixture of both. I have requested him to contribute every week a brief aricle in Hindustani which can serve the readers of Harijan Sevak as a specimen of Hindustani. The article in question is the first specimen of this effort.[2]

NEW DELHI, May 21, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 26-5-1946

12. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

NEW DELHI,
May 21, 1946

DEAR SIR STAFFORD,

Enclosed you will find an advance copy of the aritcle[3] which I

[1] The article by Abul Kalam Azad is not reproduced here.

[2] The English version of this appeared in *Harijan*, 26-5-1946.

[3] The reference is to "An Analysis" which, however, appeared under the date May, 20, 1946.

wrote for Harijan today. If my analysis is wrong in any way you will oblige me by sending your correction. Please don't trouble to read it if you are tired or too busy. Of cource you can share it with Lord Pethick-Lawrence.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 192

13. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

NEW DELHI,
May 21, 1946

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have your letter. You did well in not coming here. Where is the need to meet a person when there is no work?

Aspire to live up to 125 years. Everybody who serves should have this aspiration. Its fulfilment rests with God.

Secceed in your undertaking there and return soon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 4808. Courtesy: Shantikumar N. Morarjee

14. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

NEW DELHI,
May 21, 1946

In the song[3] that had been sung at the prayer gathering Gandhiji stated it was said that since God was known as Redeemer he would redeem us some day.

The orthodox conception of redemption is redemption in the

[1] The addressee could not send a persnoal reply on account of indisposition. Pethick-Lawrence, however, wrote in reply: "I am indebeted to you for your friendly remarks about my colleagues and myself and our statement. But you will, of course, appreciate that there are other parts of it with regard to which my views are quite different from your own."

[2] *The Hindustan Times* report has been collated with Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.*

[3] Sung earlier by the Harijan girls of the Balika Ashram

life to come. What I want to tell you is that redemption in that song is promised us here and now, if we fulfil the necessary conditions. They are firstly, self-purification and, secondly, obedience to the Law. It is vain, it is demoralizing to except that in the life to come to God will vindicate His title as Redeemer by saving us while we continue to carry the load of sin on our heads in this life. A businessman who lies and cheats his simpleminded, ignorant customers cannot hope to be saved.

It has been said that to one who is good the whole world becomes good. That is true so far as the individual is concerned. But goodness becomes dynamic only when it is practised in the face of evil. If you return good for good only, it is a bargain and carries no merit, but if you return good for evil, it becomes a redeeming force. The evil ceases before it and it goes on gathering volume and momentum like a snowball till it becomes irresistible.

So much for the individuals. How could a slave country like India be redeemed? he next asked. His reply was that a slave country owes the continuation of its slavery to the vices which slavery engenders. The way of self-purification, therefore, is also the way of redemption for a slave country. It was no use putting off hopes for redemption to future state. If they failed to gain redemption here they would probably miss it in the life hereafter too.

Let us therefore turn the searchlight inward and purge ourselves of all dross. If we shed our petty quarrels and animosities and forget all communal differences and petty distinctions the foreign troops would find their ocupation gone and nobody would be able to keep us in servitude for a day.

The Hindustan Times, 23-5-1946, and Harijan, 2-6-19446

15. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

VALMIKI MANDIR, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
May 22, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

Whilst I thank you for your prompt reply[1] to my letters, you will let me say that it is unfortunate. It has the old official flavour. Has the cry "independence in fact" no foundation?

I adhere to all that I have said in my letter of the 20th. Your

[1]*Vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 20-5-1946.

letter is in the best imperialistic style which I thought had gone for ever.

This is from an old friend.

I was deeply grieved to learn about Sir Stafford's illness. Let me hope that he will soon be better.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

THE RT. HON'BLE LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 197

16. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

NEW DELHI,
May 22, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your letters are before me.

I follow what you say about Go. Ra.

It is good that Pushpa has come. She could engage herself in work immediately.

Chimanlal's question has been answered.

I have written about returning the money belonging Sir Ganga and others.

It had become unavoidable to admit Anna[1] and famiy. What you wrote is perfectly all right. I am writing to them.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4555

17. LETTER TO HARIHAR AND KAMALA SHARMA

NEW DELHI,
May 22, 1946

CHI. ANNA AND CHI. KAMALA,

I have the letters of you both. I was given to understand that you would do any work that Kakasaheb might give you and would even be

[1] Harihar Sharma, *vide* the following item.

prepared to go wherever you were required to go. Of course, if you cannot stay in Kakawadi, you may stay in the Ashram. I have not been able to fully graps what you now write about the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. If it means thet we ought to stay within the Sammelan, I too am guilty. In my opinion, I have only served the cause of Hindi and widened its field by quitting the organizition. Write to me again to tell me what you mean. Is my interpretation correct?

Discuss fully the whole issue with Kaka and tell me about the proper course of action. I want you somehow to be at ease.

Krishnachandra is indifferentt about you. Talk to him.You have the capacity to mix with people as sugar with milk.

I am not writing separately to Kamala. It seems it would be possible for me to reach Wardha only in August. I want Kamala and the children to keep well. I earnestly wish that you should both lead an ideal life and through it have a good influence on the lives of others. Service is limited by one‘s capacity.

What the outcome here would be, God alone knows. Are you both learning the Urdu script? Both of you should write to me. Even if I am unable to reply I would like to know your minds.

Blessings from

BAPU

SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

18. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHANDAS JAJU

NEW DELHI,
May 22, 1946

BHAI JAJUJI,

I have all your correspondence. I have read everything about Shri Srinivasan. I do not like it. I suggest that Viththaldas[1] and Lakshmidas[2] should be consulted. If they do not know Shri Srinivasan, they should be fully acquainted with his background and if they agree, you may accept the resignation of Bhai Shyamji and appoint Shri Srinivasan for the Bhandar.

In fact, under our new policy it is not imperative to have an

[1] Viththaldas Jerajani
[2] Lakshmidas Asar

agent. Still, if we find an efficient man who is also devoted to the charkha, we should accommodate him. It is possible that Harihar Sharma, who is now at Sevagram Ashram, knows Shri Srinivasan and we might inquire from him about the whole story. It may be necessary to inquire from Rajaji also. But all this should be regarded as no more than advice. I am agreeable to Shri Srinivasan's appointment. I think finally the matter will have to be referred to the Trustees.

From a copy of the Hindi:Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

19. ADDRESS TO I. N. A. OFFICERS[1]

May 22, 1946

Before he begun his speech, Mahatma Gandhiji asked them for an assurance that they would listen to his advice and the gathering gave a unfit reply in the affirmative.

Col. Habibur Rehman, who was in the same plane as Subhas Bose when it crashed, described to Mahatma Gandhi with tears in his eyes the last moment of Subhas Chandra Bose. Mahatma Gandhiji remarked:

You are a true soldier and you should not shed tears like this.

Gandhiji congratulated the I. N. A. officers on their valour and said that he had been greatly impressed by the courage shown by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and the I. N. A. For a long time he had been hoping that Netaji was alive and would be amdist them some day but after what Col. Habibur Rehman had said he felt that he was no more. He added:

But he is living among us in his message and the ideal he placed before the world.

Other friends have placed before me the dilemma which, I am told, faces many of you too. The Congress creed is, of course, that of winning swaraj through non-violent and peaceful means but there are many men outside, and even within the Congress, who have begun to doubt whether that policy of the Congress has not exhausted its purpose and now become effete for that tasks that lie ahead, especially in view of the changed and changing times.

[1] Pyarelal's report from Harijan has been collated with the *Bombay Chronicle* and *The Hindustan Times* reports. About 60 I. N. A. officers including several members of the Provincial Government of Azad Hind and the Indian Independence League called on Gandhiji in the morning.

You who have served under Subhas Babu, as veteran fighters have proved your mettle on the battlefield. Success and failure are, however, not in our hands, but in God's hands alone. Netaji told you when bidding good-bye to you that, on your return to India, you must put yourselves under the Congress discipline and act according to its policy. Your object, as I have been told, was only to free India, never to help the Japanese. You failed in your direct objective, i. e., to defeat the British. But you have the satisfaction that the whole country has been rousded and even the regular forces have been stirred into a new political consciousness and have begun to think in terms of independence. You have achieved a complete unity among the Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians, Anglo-Indians and Sikhs in your ranks. That is no mean achievement. What, howevr, you realized under conditions of freedom outside India, you have now to sustain and keep alive under Indian conditions. That will be your real test.

If you have imbitbed the spirit of non-violence, you will remain free men at heart even here. For instance, no government on earth can make men, who have realized freedom in their heart, salute against their will. If they threaten to kill them they will offer their necs to them, but refuse to submit. The odds are that a soldier's spirit will revolt against such coldblooded murder. Thus, whether they live or die it will be as free men. They will never be slaves. If you will become free men at heart, the whole of India will be free. They might imprison you. You will welcome it or you can tell them that you will be a corpse before they can put you in prison. Both alternatives are open to a non-violent soldier and both call for bravery of the highest order. Our task is no less than to reinfuse life into the 400 millions of India. We have to dispel fear from their hearts. On the day they shed all fear, India's fetters shall fall and she will be free.

Years ago I said at Nankan Sahib[1]: "Sikhs have given proof of their martial valour. But the consummation of Guru Govind Singh's idea will be reached only when they will substitute for their kirpans[2] the sword of the spirit or non-violence." So long as one wants to retain one's sword, one has not attained complete fearlessness. No power on earth can subjugate you when you are armed with the sword of ahimsa. It ennobles both the victor and the vanquished. Netaji has fired you with a new spirit. That spirit can now be kept alive only

[1] On March 3, 1921; "Speech at Nankana Saheb", 3-3-1921.

[2] Swords

through non-violence.

Above all, you must never beg or throw yourselves on anybody's charity. Because you have risked your lives for India's sake and fought for her on the Imphal plain, you must not expect to be pampered in return. If you do that, you will lose all worth like salt that has lost its savour. You should prefer to earn your bread by the sweat of your brow, but refuse to beg or accept charity. In short, you have to show the same degree of bravery and courage of the non-violent types as you have done in the use of arms hitherto.

India is a very poor country and we should all work for our living. There is plenty of land available for all. If you want land you will have it. You will clear it and turn it into model farms. You have to overcome the inertia of ages which weighs down our masses. That you will be able to do only by setting an example of industry and hand work. You must be able to weild the bucket and the broom with skill and diligence and not consider the cleaning of latrines as dirty or beneath your dignity. Graduation in this work is more heroic than winning the Victoria Cross.

Then followed questions and answers.

Q. How can one who has spent his whole life in fighting take to ahimsa with success? Are not the two incompatible/

A. I do not agree. Badshah Khan is a Pathan. But today he has become a soldier of non-violence. In his land the sword and the gun are considered essential even for settling private disputes. But he has fully imbibed the principle of non-violence. The whole thing depends upon your attitude of mind. Tolstoy too served in the army. Yet he became the high priest of non-violence in Europe. We have not yet realized fully the power that is non-violence. If the Government had not arrested me in 1942, I would have shown how to fight Japan by non-violence.

Even at the time of the threatned Japanes invasion, I preached resistance to the enemy through non-violence. The British did not believe me. They thought how could we fight the Japanses non-violently? But I am telling you I have got faith in my ability to fight non-violently.

Q. Surely, it is no breach of ahimsa to use the sword in self-defence?

A. No, it is not necessary to use force. You should be prepared even to lay down your lives.

Even Wavell, Auchinleck[1] or Hitler does not use the sword without necessity. But that does not make it ahimsa. It is himsa, whatever its justification.

Q. You cannot take the world along with you if you adopt ahimsa. You have to choose the one or the other.

A. There again I disagree. A reformer has to sail not with the current, very often he has to go against it, even though it may cost him his life. You must not be carried off your feet by unthinking, popular applause. The essential part of your message to the country is not how to weild the sword but how to cease to be afraid of it.

Q. What would you have done if Subhas Babu had returned to you victorious?

A. I would have asked him to make you put away your weapons and stack them before me.

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-5-1946, The Hindustan Times, 23-5-1946, and Harijan, 9-6-1946

20. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

NEW DELHI,
May 22, 1946

Gandhiji apologized for the delay in the printing and distribution of the leaflet[3] and twitted the Imperial City for its dilatoriness. He twitted too the printers of the leaflet for their 'greed' in charging for paper and printing. When he was told that nothing had been charged for printing, he twitted them still for charging the price of paper.[4]

Gandhiji had been told that he had been coming to the prayer meeting late. That was not so, he explained. Only his watch was slow and he kept time by it. Unpunctuality was not his weakness. Still less could he afford wilfully to be unpunctual at the prayer gathering where they assembled for the solemn purpose of renewing their covenant with God.

If we have to catch a train, we try to reach the station well in time because the train waits for nobody. That is even more true of God—

[1] Sir Claude Auchinleck, Commander-in-Chief in India

[2] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weeekly Letter"

[3] Containing the *bhajan* "Land without suffering and sorrow" sung at the prayer meeting on May 11, 1946; *vide* Appendix "The Hymn", before 16-5-1946.

[4] Gandhiji was then informed that the paper also would not be charged for.

the wheel of His Law never stops nor slows down.

Coming back to the text of the song that had been distributed, he once again explained in detail the inner meaning of the ideal set forth in it. The conception of a country where there were was no suffering and no sorrow, might at first sight strike one as Utopian. Nevertheless, they wanted their country to be such a country and he had even allowed himself to say the other day that the announcement of the Cabinet Mission contained in it the germs of that fulfilment[1] .

The poet in that song, had not only set forth the ideal but also mentioned the conditions for its realization. Those conditions were freedom from illusions and regrets, delusion and desire. Such a country, however, was nowhere to be found on this earth. The poet, therefore, in order to be logical and true, had said that it was within us— it was identifialble with the realm of the spirit within. It connoted swaraj, that is to say, self rule or rule over self. A person who had perfect mastery over self could realize in his person the ideal depicted in the song. As he had remarked on the previous day, to a person who is good, the whole world becomes good. If millions did that, the Kingdom of God would be realized on earth. But even if all did not, there was no need for the individual to despair. He could make a beginning with himself straight away in the faith that what he did today the rest would do tomorrow.

Harijan, 2-6-1946

21. LETTER TO MANIBHAI DESAI

NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. Don't mind Joshi having left. What led to his leaving was, of course, bad. One is bound to have such bitter as well as sweet experiences. The work there seems to be progressing very well. I hardly get any time to write or dictate letters. The work here and the work for Harijan is more than enough for me. But "Nobody can harm him whom Rama protects." A bhajan has been printed for distribution. I shall send you a copy of it.

The path of brahmacharya is as grand as it is difficult. The deeper one reflcts over it the more clearly one realizes its grandeur, holiness and purity. I realize that the more important thing is to know how to attain it. After deep thinking I have come to the conclusion that Ramanama is the best thing. But Ramanama must come from the heart and not be pronounced merely with the tongue. It must, of

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 17-5-1946.

coures, go hand in hand with incessant service. One must eat only to keep the body going. And the quantitiy of food must moderate. Ramanama is not a substitute for these and other essential conditions. They are, in fact, included in Ramanama. They are even a sign of Ramanama having penetrated one's heart. It is plain, moreover, that unless all attachment vanishes brahmacharya is impossible. Deduce the rest for this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 2747. Courtesy: Manibhai Desai

22. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

CHI. KANCHAN,

Munnalal is now prepared to have a separate establishment and live with you. What is your wish now? Would you like to start as soon as possible or are you content that you have the promise? If you keep good health there and the work is going on well you should not mind waiting a little longer. Don' think of what I would like but state your own independent view.

I am not writing separately to Zohra. I hope she is all right. Look after the women there carefully.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8257. Also C. W. 6981. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

23. LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

CHI. CHAMP,

I went through the letters you sent. Your reply seems to be correct. I am returning the letters. Who is Naginbhai? What is this you write about Shashikant[1]?

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's son

24. LETTER TO SURENDRA P. BHAGWAT

NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

BHAI SURENDRA,

I had your letter. I am unable to guide you. Please therefore excuse me.

SURENDRA PURUSHOTTAM BHAGWAT
C/O INAMDAR, MINERVA MANSION
373 SANDHURST ROAD
BOMBAY 4

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

25. LETTER TO BHOGILAL

VALMIKI MANDIR,
NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

BHAI BHOGILAL,

It pains me that I have not been able to do justice to you. But what can one who wants to be the servant of the people do? As yet I have absolutely no idea how long I shall have to be here. My heart is in Mahabaleshwar and Panchgani. These two months will fortify me for ten months[1]. Mahabaleshwar is now out of the question; so I shall not be able to have the benefit of your bungalow and your company. I am looking forwand to Panchgani, but we can be sure only when it comes off.

You will have got the telegram I sent you.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Gandhiji had been advised by his doctors to pass two months of the summer at some hill station.

26. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

How are you getting along? It would be good if the workers there could manage the land, the buildings and the cows. My feeling is that we cannot fully develop our activity in the absence of the land and buildings. From the point of view of the climate it would seem the place is undoubtedly good.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

27. LETTER TO DHIRU

NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

CHI. DHIRU,

The report about the two patients is encouraging. It would indeed be very good if they were fully recovered.

True, you had asked me something about natural living and truthful living, but I forgot about it. If we go deep into the subject it will be apparent that two are one. While you are treating others you are yourself being cured and this is the beauty of nature cure. It is not a pill you can administer to the patient and be satisfied.

URULI KANCHAN

VIA POONA

[PS.]

Enclosed please find four letters: for Manilal, Balkrishana, Bhagwat and Kanchanbehn.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

28. LETTER TO A. K. BHAGWAT

NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

BHAI BHAGWAT,

I have your letter. Things are going on well. It is not certain when I shall be leaving this place. I shall see what happens.

Why ˝प्रात्यक्षिक[1] Is not प्रत्यक्ष[2] enough?

Is ˝प्रात्यक्षिक a Sanskrit word? Or is it used in Marathi only?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C. W. 2746. Courtesy: Manibhai Desai

29. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

NEW DELHI,

May 23, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I forgot to write about Keshu. I do not know to whom I may write. What is wrong in Keshu going home? He may exert good influence there. It will not be wrong to write to him to that effect.

At present Aryanayakum[3] is not there. Who has been making a demand for money? This question arises from Chimanlal's letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4556

30. LETTER TO NANDALAL BOSE

NEW DELHI,

May 23, 1946

BHAI NANDA BABU,

You have not yet replied to the other letter that Rameshwaribehn[4] wrote to you. A married woman who worked at Kasturba Harijan Balika Ashram in Delhi has left the job on becoming pregnant. She was a very good teacher. Can you think of any such teacher who can instruct through Hindustani, has a knowledge of the crafts and can teach and also knows and can give lesson in dancing and music? Such an accomplished lady can only be available there. Do let me know if one is available.

[1] *Pratyakshika*, adjective derived from *pratyaksha*, used as a noun

[2] Literally 'Before one's eyes', generally used as an adverb

[3] E. W. Aryanayakum, Secretary, Hindustani Tamili Sangh

[4] Rameshwari Nehru, Vice-President, Central Board of Harijan Sevak Sangh

My grandson, Prabhudas, has written to Kshitis Babu[1] also.

SANTINIKETAN

From a copy of the Hindi Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

31. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING [2]

NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

Gandhiji. . . decided that it[3] should be sold at the fixed price of one pice each copy and on no account at a fancy price. Similarly, he said that he would hereafter insist on the printer receiving his due charge for printing and stationery. He did not want to be greedy. It was a subtle snare in which humanitarian workers sometimes fell. If he charged more for the copy of the bhajan than its fixed price, the money would became tainted and would hinder instead of helping the cause of the removal of untouchability. Untouchability could not be eradicated by the expenditure of crores rupees. But it could be eradicated in the twinkling of an eye without spending a penny if there was a true change of heart among the so-called caste Hindus. That would elevate both the Harijans and the Savarna..

Today the Savarnas ride on the backs of the so-called untouchables. That degrades them both. For it is nature's law that one cannot degrade another without degrading oneself.

They should not tempt him, said Gandhiji, by offering fancy prices. If anyone wanted to pay the price for more than one copy of the bhajan leaflet, he or she would have to produce a corresponding number of bona-fide purchasers. Just as the leaflet would not be distributed free so it would not be sold for more than its fixed price. The way to earn merit was to translate into their lives the teaching of that bhajan.

Commeting next on the bhajan [4] of the evening "Sabase unchi prem sagai" he said that in that song the poet had sung of the bondage of love or ahimsa. There was no bond higher or stronger than that of love. Under the power of Sudhama's love Lord Krishna had accepted the former's gift of broken rice taken out of a dirty rag and had preferred to partake of the simple greens and herbs of Vidura in preference to Duryodhana's rare and luscious fruit. Again, it was return for Arjuna's loving devotion that he had forgotten his royalty and had become Arjuna's charioteer. We are told that

[1] Kshitis Chandra Das Gupta, elder brother of Satis Chandra Das Gupta

[2] The report in *The Hindustan Tims* has been collated with Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.*

[3] The printed copy of the *bhajan*. All the copies having been sold out a fresh lot was printed.

[4] By Surdas

it was the mastery of his art that contributed more to Arjuna's victory than the might of the latter's bow. Service of love was the highest service one could render to another. Such service had to be spontaneous. It asked for no consideration or return.

Love becomes a sordid bargain when it asks for return or compensation; it degrades. Spontaneous service of love purifies and elevates.

The Hindustan Times, 26-5-1946, *and Harijan*, 2-6-1946

32. DR. MEHTA'S INSTITUTION[1]

I have received several questions about Dr. Dinshaw Mehta's institution. Two of them are worth noticing. They are given below:

> In order to make the institutions more scietific, more modern and more useful for the public, is it not desirable that some capable enthusiatic nature-cure man or men should be sent abroad for higher studies in nature cure? Would not such experts on their return evolve a system of nature cure suitable for our country and enable it to become popular and stand on its own feet?
>
> You want a simple and cheap method of nature cure for our village. Can the methods described by Kuhne, Just and Kneip, etc., serve that purpose? Can these methods be useful and suitable for village work?

The clinic at Poona could not serve the purpose of village nature cure in the opinion of the Trustees. Therefore, it was closed down and an experiment in village nature cure started at Uruli Kanchan. There the work is going on satisfactorily, though on a small scale. There is nothing there worth seeing as yet. Even the land has not been bought and no buildings have been built.

Now let us take the main question. The tendency of looking to the West in order to make progress in whatever we do, should be checked. If we have to go the West to learn nature cure, it cannot be of much use to India. Nature cure is a thing which anyone can practise in the home. The advice of nature-cure experts should not be necessary for all time. It is such a simple thing that everyone can learn it. If we have to go to Europe to learn to recite Ramanama, it simply will not do. Ramanama is the very foundation of nature cure of my conception. Nor should it be necessary to go across the seas in order to learn the use of earth, water, ether, sun and air. This is self-evident. Whatever other knowledge is required in this direction can be had in our

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 2-6-1946.

villages. For instance, if herbs are used, they must be village herbs. Ayurveda teachers know all about them. If some Ayurvedic physicians are scoundrels, they cannot become good men and servants of the people by going abroad. The knowledge of anatomy and physiology has come from the West. It is very useful and necessary for all physicians. But there are plenty of means of learning it in our own country. In short, whatever useful contribution to knowledge has been made by the West, it has reached everywhere and can be learnt everywhere. I might add here that the knowledge of anatomy and physiology is not essential for learning nature cure.

The writing of Kuhne, Just and Father Kneip are simple, popular and useful for all. It is our duty to read them. Practically every nature-cure physician knows something about them. Nature cure has not taken to the villages so far. We have not thought deeply and no one has thought of it in terms of the millions. This is just the beginning. No one can say where we shall stand in the end. As in all great and good enterprises, sacrifice and dedication are required to make this successful. Instead of looking up to the West, we should turn the searchlight inwards.

NEW DELHI, May 24, 1946

Harijan, 2-6-1946

33. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

NEW DELHI,
May 24, 1946

DEAR LORD,

The Working Committee passed its resolution[1] this evening. I call it a good resolution. So far as the Congress is concerned, I am free now to leave Delhi. What would you have me to do[2]?

Hoping you are not finding your labours too exacting.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 197

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Congress Working Committee's Resolution", 24-5-1946.

[2] For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 25-5-1946.

34. NOTE TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ [1]

[*May 24, 1946*][2]

The credit for Janakimai's[3] recovery goes to you. Tell her now that she should not spoil her health again by eating indiscri-minately.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3059

35. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING [4]

NEW DELHI,

May 24, 1946[5]

A correspondent had written to Gandhiji pointing out how some people superstitiously wrote Ramanama on their clothes so as to wear it "next to the hearts". Other wrote Ramanama millions of times minutely on a piece of paper which they afterwards cut up into small bits and swallowed so that they could claim that Ramanama had enered into them! Another correspondent had asked him whether he had prescribed Ramanama as the sovereign remedy for all ills because Rama was God's anointed and was a descedent of Dasharatha, the illustrious King of Ayodhya. There were people who thought that he was self-deluded and was trying to delude others by adding one more to the thousands of superstitions which filled this superstition-ridden land. He had no answer to such criticism. He only said to himself, what did it matter if truth was abused and fraud practised in its name by others? So long as he was sure of his truth he could not help proclaiming it fear of its being misunderstood or abused.

Nobody in this world possesses absolute truth. This is God's attribute alone. Relative truth is all we know. Therefore, we can only follow the truth as we see it. Such pursuit of truth cannot lead anyone astray.

He reitrated Rama whose name he prescribed as the infallible remedy for all ills was neither the historical Rama nor the Rama of those who used the name as a charm or black magic. Rama whose name he prescribed as a cure-all was God, by taking

[1]Eldest son of Jamnalal Bajaj
[2] The latter is written under another of this date.
[3] Addressee's mother
[4] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"
[5] From *The Hindustan Times*, 26-5-1946

whose name devotees attained purity and peace, and he claimed that it was the one infallible remedy for all ailments whether mental, spiritual or physical. It was, of course, possible to cure physical ailments by going to doctors and vaidyas. But Ramanama enabled one to become one's own doctor or vaidya and to find the elixir of healing within oneself. Even when the ailment could not be cured, because physically it was incurable, it enabled one to endure it with equanimity and peace of mind.

A person who has faith in Ramanama would not run from pillar to post and dance attendance at the doors of celebrated doctors and viadyas in order to prolong existence anyhow. Nor is Ramanama meant to be taken only when the doctors and vaidyas have failed. It is meant to enable one to do without them altogether. For a believer in Ramanama it is the first as well as the last remedy.

Harijan, 2-6-1946

36. LETTER TO AKBAR CHAVDA

[On or before *May 25, 1946*][1]

CHI. AKBAR,

I have your letter. I am forwarding your letter to Khan Saheb. He left the day before yesterday. You should do just as he says—that will be the right thing. I understand what you say about your not reading the newspapers. It woud be better if some time you sent me your full day's time-able so that I could see from it that you really cannot spare any time at all to read the newspapers.

Are you keeping well? I cannot say how long I shall be staying here. Zohra is in a village called [Uruli] Kanchan. Kanchan also is there. Munnalal is with me. If Vasumati is there who is in the Ashram to do the work? Don't you read even Harijan Sevak? Or is it that no one sends it to you?

Blessings from
BAPU

GRAMSEVAK
SAMAU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In the source the letter is placed between those of May 24 and 25.

37. SALARY OF M. L. A.S

Q. The monthly salary of an M.L. A. is Rs. 200. He is a mofussil member and, as such, is entitled to a daily allowance of Rs. 15 when the Assembly is in session. Besides that, he may draw conveyance [allowance] of Rs. 2/8 for any day on which he attends the meeting of the Assembly. Moreover, he is entitled to 'travelling allowance' for his journey from the usual place of residence to the city at the rate of one and a half time first-class fare but he cannot draw 'travelling allowance' and 'daily allowance' for the same day.

1. (a) Should such a person as a representative and servant of the poor draw the salary?

(b) Would he be absolved from the wrong if he gave the whole amount to the local Congress Committee or the institution under which he is working for constructive work?

(c) If so, would it not mean that the end justifies the means?

2. He will have to live in the city when the Assembly is in session and has to incur some other expenditure for discharging his duties and responsibilitie as an M. L. A.

(a) In the circumstances, may he, consistently with his ideal, draw the daily allowance to meet the expenses?

(b) If so, and if it be not permissible to draw a part of it, should he draw the whole of it and give the balance to the institution under which he is working.

(c) In that case, may he, consistently with his ideal, spend the balance or part thereof for his family, which will have otherwise to depend upon the charity of friends to make the two ends meet?

3. (a) Should he draw the conveyance allowance (meant for his conveyance inside the city for attending meeting) when the daily allowance will be more than sufficient to cover all his expenses including the conveyance?

(b) Should he avail of costly conveyance for attending meetings, if he usually travels in tram-cars and buses?

4. If suh a member travels third class on principle, what should he do regarding drawing 'mileage allowance' if it is not permissible to draw at lower rate than one and a half first-class fares?

A. In my opinion, the salary and allowances drawn by the gentlemen of the various Assemblies are out of all proportion to the

services they render to the country. The scales fixed are on the English pattern, not at all compatible with the income of this country—the poorest in the world. Therefore, the answer I suggest is that Ministers should, with the consent of the Assemblies, reduce the whole scale in accordance with requirements and, in the meantime, either the amount taken should be handed to the party to which the member belongs, drawing what the party has fixed or, if that be not possible, drawing what his conscience thinks just for himself and his family and devoting the balance to some items of the constructive programme or some such public activity. The money allowed has to be drawn but nobody is obliged to use it for [him] self except to the extent needed. No question here arises of the end justifying the means.

NEW DELHI, May 25, 1946

Harijan, 2-6-1946

38. RIDICULING RAMANAMA[1]

Q. The Ramanama bank in Benares and wearing clothes printed with Ramanama is, in my opinion a caricature of Ramanama. Don't you think that under these circumstances your telling the people to take to Ramanama as a sovereign remedy for all ailments is likely to encourage ignorance and hypocrisy?[2]

A. You are right. There is so much superstition and hypocrisy around that one is afraid even to do the right thing. But if one gives way to fear, even truth will have to be suppressed. The golden rule is to act fearlessly upon what one believes to be right. Hypocrisy and untruth will go on in the world. Our doing the right thing will result in their decrease, if anything, never in their increases. The dangr is that when we are surrounded by falsehood on all sides we might be caught in it and begin to deceive ourselves. We should be careful not to make a mistake out of our laziness and ignorance. Constant vigilance under all circumstances is essential. A votary of truth cannot act otherwise. Even an all powerful remedy like Ramanama can become useless for lack of wakefulness and care, and become one more addition to the numberous current superstitons.

NEW DELHI, May 25, 1946

Harijan, 2-6-1946

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in Harijan Sevak, 2-6-1946

[2] Only an extract is reproduced here.

39. NATURE CURE FOR THE POOR[1]

Q. Is it not a cruel joke to ask the poor villager to live on orange juice when he cannot afford even ordinary diet? He has to work throughout the day to feed his wife and children. His land and his children mean more to him than life itself. Nature cure is meant for the rich who have plenty of money and time at their disposal.

If you really wish to serve the villagers through nature cure, you should see that the right type of nature-cure homes are started every-where. At these homes the patients should get free food, clothing and bedding. And, if the patient happens to be a wage-earner, arrangements should be made to support his family.

You have said nature cure means reorientation of the way of living. Is it not necessary that education in that direction should form a necessary part of nature-cure treatment?

A. The question betrays the correspondent's ignorance. He has not taken the trouble to read carefully what I have written on the subject. Nature cure implies that the treatment should be the cheapest and the simplest possible. The ideal is that such treatment should be carried out in the villages. The villagers should be able to provide the necessary means and equipment. What cannot be had in the villages should be procured. Nature cure does mean a change for the better in one's outlook on the life itself. It means regulation of one's life in accordance with the laws of health. It is not a matter of taking medicine free from the hospital or for fees. A man who takes free treatment from the hospital accepts charity. The man who accepts nature cure never begs. Self-help enhances self-respect. He takes steps to cure himself by eliminating poison from the system and takes precautions against falling ill in the future.

The central feature of nature-cure treatment is Ramanama.[2] But it must come from the heart, if it is to be a remedy for all one's ailments[3] .

Orange juice is not an essential part of nature-cure treatment.

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 2-6-1946.

[2] The Hindi here adds: "A man feels secure with Ramanama."

[3] The Hindi adds: "And the observance of the laws becomes imperative for Ramanama to come from the heart. In such a situation man becomes free from all ailments. It involves neither any expenditure nor any discomfort."

Right diet and balanced diet are necessary. Today our villages are as bankrupt as were are ourselves. To produce enough vegetables, fruits and milk in the villages is an essential part of the nature-cure scheme. Time spent on this should not be considered a waste. It is bound to benefit all the villagers and ultimately the whole of India.

It is true and nature-cure homes of the right type should be opened in the villages and the cities. God willing, this will be done. The individual should rest content by doing his own duty leaving the rest to God.

NEW DELHI, May 25, 1946

Harijan, 2-6-1946

40. DRAFT LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE [1]

May 25, 1946

I have to answer your letter of 22nd instant which was read to my colleagues. They wanted me to refer at the time of acknowledging your letter to some of the points in it.

1. You yourself admit that your scheme is a recommendation. There-fore at no stage can there be any compulsion read into it. The Con-gress has never taken the power nor has it any desire to compel a single unit. And I know, as a matter of fact, that neither the Frontier Province nor Assam nor the Sikhs of the Punjab will submit to any compulsion. They have signified their intention of not joining any group whatsoever. All I wish to say is that the scheme cannot be used for the purpose of compelling acceptance by any unit or group. The whole beauty of it resides in its voluntary character which should not be impaired.[2] But, of course, it will be open to all persons and parties in the Constituent Assembly to reason with any units. Naturally the decision on major communal issues will be guided by the provision thereon of the Statement.

2. As to the last three lines of paragraph 3 of your letter, obviously, adequate provisions for the protection of minorities must be part of the instrument of the Constituent Assembly. But I assume that the Constituent Assembly will be the sole judge of adequacy.

[1] Gandhiji had prepared this draft for Abul Kalam Azad.

[2] The addressee in his letter had said that grouping was “an essential feature of the scheme which can only be modified by agreement between the two parties”.

3. Willingness to conclude a treaty will always be there. But the treaty must be a voluntary act on the part of Independent India. If it pre-supposes compulsion, there is no Independence.

4. As to the last paragraph of your letter, I can understand the post-ponement of the declaration of legal independence till after the publi-cation of the charter of independence framed by the Constituent Assembly. But I cannot understand the paragraph, if independence in fact does not take place immediately the contemplated interim government is established.

5. Have you any objection to the release to the Press of our corres-pondence. i.e., my letter of 20th May, your reply of 22nd May, my letter of even date and your reply thereto?

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

41. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1946

CHI. KANAM[1],

I have your postcard. I was pleased. You are learning a great deal from Bhansalibhai[2] and Vinoba. Keep up the progress.

I am very glad that you also take part in the Ashram work now and obeserve the rules.

It will soon be decided now when I shall be leaving Delhi. If I go to Panchgani come there.

When will you learn the Gujarati script? If you but make up your mind, you will be able to learn it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9521. Courtesy: Kanu Gandhi

[1] Son of Ramadas Gandhi
[2] J. P. Bhansali

42. LETTER TO BODHANPRASAD SHRIVASTAVA

NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1946

BHAI BODHANPRASAD,

I got your letter and the towel through Mathura Babu, as also all the news. I am gratified to know that you all love me so much.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9301

43. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1946

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I got your letter. You will see the reply in the Harijan issue of the 2nd.[1] To sum up, accept what you get from the Assembly and keeping aside whatever you need for yourself and your family give away the rest for public work.

Now I learn that you are taking Vina[2] and her husband to Bengal. I am not able to understand all these things. How do you happen to have all this money, and time too? How can one who volunteers to become a servant of India get involved in such activities? It only means that one follows one's own inclination. How can one of us become an exception to this rule?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C. W. 10415. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[1] *Vide* "Salary of M. L. A.s", 25-5-1946.
[2] Addressee's daughter

44. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM[1] ,

I have your letter. I have already written everything. Do everything you can for Roshan[2]. It will certainly be better if you go to settle in the countryside along with Hosa.

Again you are spoiling your health. This is not good. I have written to Hosa[3] ; I hope she got the letter.

Here the work is going on very slow. God alone knows what will happen in the end.

Whatever you do, take it as though it were a command from me.

To you all,

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi: G. N. 579

45. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1946

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter and the mangoes. Why did you send them? What is the point in sending eatables from Sevagram? The loss is obvious. It shows lack of thought to send a thing from a place where it is very useful to another where it is not needed. And we ought not to do anything without fully thinking over the matter. I ate the mangoes, they were good. But all the fruits that can be had anywhere in India are made available to me. In this situation why the mangoes from Sevagram? Now I hear you send leafy vegetables from there. If you have not sent any, don't do it. What an amount of time is taken up by this? The time we have really belongs to the people. And why should

[1] The superscription and the subscription are in Gujarati.
[2] Roshnara, Rashid Khan's daughter
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Hosa Rashid Khan", 19-5-1946.

we be obliged to the railways for such things? All this is not meant as a rebuke but should be taken only as a caution.

For the last six days Hoshiari[1] and Garaj[2] have been here. I had told them they ought not to have come here. It was a waste of time and Gajraj has suffered a loss also. She says she will return today.

The programme about my stay here is likely to be settled today.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Hoshiari has left.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1971

46. LETTER TO LABANYALATA CHANDA

NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1946

CHI. LABANYALATA,

I got your letter. I have talked to Satis Babu and Profulla Babu regarding the hospital at Abhaya Ashram.[3] Let us see what happens.

Blessings from
BAPU

CAMP BALRAMPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's niece and her son
[2] *Ibid*
[3] In Comilla

47. LETTER TO D. M. BURADE

NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1946

BHAI BURADE,

I have kept back your letter of 20-4-1946. I had thought of publishing it but later decided that it would serve no purpose. Continue silently to influence society through your pure life. The whole account has indeed given me pleasure. May you all live long and remain pure for the rest of your lives.

I expect the work at Gopuri is going on fairly well.

Blessings from
BAPU

D. M. BURADE
GOSEVA SANGH
NALWADI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

48. LETTER TO NARAYANAMURTI

[*May 25, 1946*][1]

BHAI NARAYANAMURTI,

I have talked to Dr. Pattabhi[2]. You should approach the Provincial Congress Committee. If the book is good, why should they not publish it?

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

ANAKAPALLE
VIZ[AGAPATTAM]

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In the source the letter is placed among those of this date.

[2] Pattabhi Sitaramayya (1880-1959); Member, Congress Working Committee; President, All-India States People's Conference, 1936; President of the Congress, 1948; Governor of Madhya Pradesh, 1952-57

49. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING [1]

NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1946[2]

Gandhiji explained the conditions under which alone Ramanama could become an effective remedy for the three-fold malady, to which man was subject. The first condition was that it should come from the heart. What did that mean? People did not mind going to the ends of the earth to find a cure for their physical ailments which were much less important than the mental or spiritual.

Man's physical being is after all perishable. It cannot, by its very nature, last for ever. And yet man makes a fetish of it while neglecting the immortal spirit within.

A man who believed in Ramanama would not make a fetish of the body but would regard it only as a means of serving God. And for making it a fit instrument for that purpose, Ramanama was the sovereign means.

To install Ramanama in the heart required infinite patience. It might even take ages. But the effort was worth-while. Even so success depended solely on the grace of God.

Ramanama could not come from the heart unless one had cultivated the virtues of truth, honesty and purity within and without. Every day at the evening prayers they repeated the *shlokas* describing the man with steadfast intellect. Every one of them, said Gandhiji, could become a *sthitaprajna*—the man with steadfast intellect—if he kept his senses under discipline, ate and drank and allowed himself enjoyment and recreation only to sustain life for service. If one had no control over one's thoughts, if one did not mind, for instance, sleeping in a hole of a room with all doors and windows shut, and breathing foul air or drinking dirty water, recitation of Ramanama was in vain.

That, however, did not mean that one should give up reciting Ramanama on the ground that one had not the requisite purity. For, recitation of Ramanama was also a means for acquiring purity.

In the case of a man who repeats Ramanama from the heart, discipline and self-control will come easy. Observance of the rules of health and hygiene will become his second nature. His life will run an even course. He will never want to hurt anyone. To suffer in order to relieve others' sufferings will become a part of his being and fill him with an ineffable and perennial joy.

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"
[2] From *The Hindustan Times*, 26-5-1946

Let them therefore, said Gandhiji, persevere and ceaselessly repeat Ramanama during all their waking hours. Ultimately, it would remain with them even during their sleep and God's grace would then fill them with perfect health of body, mind and spirit.

Harijan, 2-6-1946

50. VITAL DEFECTS

Intrinsically and as legally interpreted, the State Paper[1] seems to me to be a brave and frank document. Nevertheless, the official interpretation would appear to be different from the popular. If it is so and prevails it will be a bad omen. During the long course of the history of British rule in India, the official interpretation has held sway. And, it has been enforced. I have not hesitated before now to say that the office of the law-giver, judge and executioner is combined in one person in India. Is not the State Document a departure from the imperialistic tradition? I have answered 'yes'.

Be that as it may. Let us try to glance at the shorcomings. The Delegation, after a brief spell in Simla, returned to Delhi on the 14th instant, issued their Statement on the 16th, and yet we are far from the popular government at the Centre. One would have thought that they would have formed the Central Government before issuing the Statement. But they issued the Statement first and then set about the search for the formation of the Interim Government. It is taking a long time coming whilst the millions are starving for want of food and clothing. This is defect No. 1.

The question of paramountcy is unsolved. It is not enough to say that paramountcy will end with the end of British rule in India. If it persists without check during the interim period, it will leave behind a difficult legacy for the independent Government. If it cannot be ended with the establishment of the Interim Government, it should be exercised in co-operation with it and purely for the benefit of the people of the States. It is the people who want and are fighting for independence, not the Princes who are sustained by the alien power even when they claim not to be its creation for the suppression of the liberties of the people. The Princes, if they are true to their professions, should welcome this popular use of paramountcy so as to accommodate themselves to the sovereignty of the people envisaged

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Statement of Cabinet Delegation and Viceroy", 16-5-1946.

under the new scheme. This is defect No. 2.

Troops, it is declared, are to remain during the interim period for the preservation of internal peace and protection against external aggression. If they are kept for such use during the period of grace, their presence will act as a damper on the Constituent Assembly and is more likely than not to be wanted even after the establishment of independence so called. A nation that desires alien troops for its safety, internal or external, or has them imposed upon it, can never be described as independent in any sense of the term. It is an effete nation unfit for self-government. The acid test is that it should be able to stand alone, erect and un-bending. During the interim period we must learn to hop unaided, if we are to walk when we are free. We must cease from now to be spoon-fed.

That these things are not happening as we would wish is to be accounted as our weakness, be the causes whatever they be, not the cussedness of the British Government or their people. Whatever we get, will be our deserts, not a gift from across the seas. The three Ministers have come to do what they have declared. It will be time to blame them when they go back upon the British declarations and devise ways and means of perpetuating the British rule. Though there is ground for fear, there is no sign on the horizon that they have said one thing and meant another.

NEW DELHI, May 26, 1946

Harijan, 2-6-1946

51. FLAGS AND UNIFORMS

A correspondent writes:

During the recent election meetings I was astonished at the number of flags—not to speak of the special uniforms worn by the Congress volunteers for the occasion. In these days of cloth shortage, is not the use of cloth for flags and special uniforms a criminal waste?

Flags and uniforms are in order when they are in their time and place. They are easily an abomination when they take the place of bread. Satisfaction of hunger has precedence over everything. Similarly, flags and uniforms cannot replace cloth for wear. Hence, if the correspondent is right, Congressmen and others will have to be strictly

economical in the use of flags and uniforms for demonstrative purposes.

NEW DELHI, May 26, 1946

Harijan, 2-6-1946

52. QUESTION BOX

PEACEFUL STRIKES[1]

Q. How should a strike be conducted so that hooliganism and violence are avoided?

A. A strike should be spontaneous and not manipulated. If it is organized without any compulsion there would be no chance for goondaism and looting. Such a strike would be characterized by perfect co-operation amongst the strikers. It should be peaceful and there should be no show of force. The strikers should take up some work either singly or in co-operation with one another, in order to earn their bread. The nature of such work should have been thought out beforehand. It goes without saying that in a peaceful, effective and firm strike of this character, there will be no room for rowdyism or looting. I have known of such strikes. I have not presented a Utopian picture.

NEW DELHI, May 26, 1946

WHY DOCTORS?

Q. Why do you go to the doctors for examination and diagnosis and not to the vaidyas?

A. The vaidyas do not possess the knowledge of the human body as the doctors do. The basis of diagnosis in Ayurveda is the theory of *tridosh*[2]. They have not got to the bottom even of that. The doctors are ever carrying on research and making new discoveries. One either goes forward or backward. Nothing remains static in the world. Those who become static, become lifeless. God alone is static, but amazing as it may sound, He is described both as motionless and full of motion.

Moreover, doctors and vaidyas are my friends. The doctors have clung to me. One[3] of them has become more than my own daughter.

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 2-6-1946.

[2] The three disorders in the human system, viz., gas, bile and phlegm

[3] Sushila Nayyar

One's own daughter can leave her father; how can one who has chosen to become a daughter? The vaidyas themselves use, though indifferently, the methods of diagnosis used by the doctors or else they advise the patient to go to the doctors for it. The viadyas possess the knowledge of certain drugs which they use effectively.

But the doctors, vaidyas and hakims all slave for money. They do not take to the profession purely from a spirit of service. That some of them have that spirit does not contradict my statement. Nature cure is the only thing which has come into existence purely from the point of view of selfless service. Today even that has become a means of making money. Thus money has taken the place of God. The doctors examine me, but I depend on none but God. He is the Master of every breath I take. If He wills it, He will keep me up to 125 years. If not, He might carry me off any moment, leaving the medical friends staring as helpless spectators.

NEW DELHI, May 26[1] 1946

WHO IS RAMA?[2]

Q. You have often said that when you talk of "Rama" you refer to the Ruler of the universe and not to Rama, the son of Dasharatha. But we find that your *Ramdhun* calls on "Sita-Rama", "Raja-Rama", and it ends with "Victory to Rama the Lord of Sita". Who is this Rama if not the son of the king Dasharatha?

A. I have answered such questions before. But there is something new in this one. It demands a reply. In *Ramdhun* "Raja-Rama","Sita-Rama" are undoubtedly repeated. Is not this 'Rama' the same as the son of Dasharatha? Tulsidas has answered this question. But let me put down my own view. More potent than Rama is the Name. Hindu Dharma is like a boundless ocean teeming with priceless gems. The deeper you dive into it the more treasures you find. In Hindu religion God is known by various names. Thousands of people doubtless look upon Rama and Krishna as historical figures and literally believe that God came down in person on earth in the form of Rama the son of Dasharatha, and that by worshipping Him one can attain salvation. The same thing holds good about Krishna. History, imagination and truth have got so inextricably mixed up, it is next to impossible to disentangle them. I have accepted all the names and forms attributed to God as symbols denoting one formless omnipresent Rama. To me, therefore, Rama described as the Lord of Sita,

[1] As in *Harijanbandhu*; *Harijan*, however, has "27".

[2] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 2-6-1946.

name, inscribed in the heart, removes all suffering, mental, moral and physical.

NEW DELHI, May 26, 1946

Harijan, 2-6-1946

53. LETTER TO MARGARET BARR

NEW DELHI,
May 26, 1946

DEAR MARGARET,

Yours of 9-4-1946, I have kept long for use. I have read and reread it. So long as you give rewards you will be giving prizes. The line of distinction is thin. The whole system of examinations has to go before prizes do. The ancient system of saying which teacher taught you and how much was the only right thing. But in this age of competition, this reversion won't answer till people are tired of the thing. Let us silently pray, work and wait. I destroy your letter.

Love.

BAPU

MISS MARGARET BARR
MALKI, SHILLONG

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

54. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
Sunday, May 26, 1946

Gandhiji in his discourse after the prayers informed the gathering that he would be leaving for Mussoorie day after tomorrow (Tuesday). He had been advised by his doctors to spend two months of the hot weather at some hill station to enable him to build up sufficient reserve for the rest of the year. He could not do so this year for reasons they all knew. He had decided to go to Mussoorie in preference to Panchgani or Simla, as it was nearer. He would come back when the Congress President or the Cabinet Mission might require him.

Gandhiji said that they had been coming to the prayer gatherings daily in order to join him in reciting Ramanama or rather in learning how to do so. Ramanama could

[1] *The Hindustan Times* report has been collated with Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.*

not be taught by word of mouth. But more potent than the spoken word was the silent thought.

A single right thought can envelop the world. It is never wasted. The very attempt to clothe thought in word or action limits it. What man has ever succeeded in expressing fully thought in word or in action? Then, why not go into perpetual silence, one might ask. In theory that is possible. But it is very difficult to fulfil the conditions by which silent thought can wholly replace action.

He for one could not claim to have attained the requisite intensity or control over thought. He could not altogether keep out useless or irrelevant thoughts from his mind. It required infinite patience, vigilance and *tapashcharya*[1] to attain that state.

He was not indulging in a figure of speech, he continued, but had meant it literally when on the previous day he had told them that there was no limit to the potency of Ramanama. But in order to experience that, Ramanama had to come from a heart that was absolutely pure. He himself was striving to attain that state. He had envisaged it in the mind but had not fully realized it in practice. When that stage was reached, even the recitation of Ramanama would become unnecessary.

He hoped they would continue to recite Ramanama in their homes severally and in company during his absence. The secret of collective prayer was that the emanation of silent influence from one to the other could be of help in their spiritual striving.

The Hindustan Times, 27-5-1946, and *Harijan*, 2-6-1946

55. INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The Indian Deputation[2] from South Africa have made a great stir in India. They propose to approach the U. N. O. with a view to enlisting the latter's sympathy. But the legislation is going through. The Indian High Commissioner will be withdrawn as he should be. What little aid he can render is nothing compared to the indignity of representing a country whose inhabitants are to be treated as an inferior race. This new caste is worse than the ancient but dying institution of India which has some redeeming features, even while it is dying. But the new civilized edition has none. It shamelessly proclaims that white civilization requires the erection of legal barriers

[1] Penance

[2] Lead by Sorabjee Rustom; *vide* "Interview to South African Delegation", after 1-4-1946.

in order to protect itself against Asiatics and Africans. The Indians in South Africa are bearing a heavy burden which they are well able to discharge. Satyagraha, the mightiest weapon in the world, was born and bred there. If they make effective use of it, it will be well with the sacred cause they are handling. It is not one of making it easy for a handful, to be permitted to live and trade there if they wear the badge of inferiority called years ago by an Englishman of South Africa "dog's collar". The cause is the cause of the honour of India and through her of all the exploited coloured races of the earth, whether they be brown, yellow or black. It is worth all the suffering of which they are capable.

NEW DELHI, May 27, 1946

Harijan, 2-6-1946

56. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

NEW DELHI,
May 27, 1946

DEAR SIR STAFFORD,

I got your touching letter yesterday when I was busy writing for *Harijan*. Though I read it as soon as the visitors who had dropped in, had gone, I could not before now spare the time to write.

I am returning your letter, as it is marked "very confidential". However I see nothing in it which the world may not see, if it is curious.

I entirely agree with you [on] what the State Paper demands and commends[1] to is and yet it like everything coming from the British evokes nothing but distrust. And I am sorry to confess that what has happened since the publication of the document has somewhat shaken my trust which the document by itself commanded and still commands. The interpretations put upon it and the declarations since on independence, paramountcy, troops and the proposed disposal of the Baluchistan, election, the uncertainty about the European vote and above all, the waiting policy and the interminable delay about the Interim Government make me wonder whether a satisfactory Interim Government will ever be formed and whether the Constituent Assembly will ever meet. Has even the cry of independence *in action* vanished into thin air?

[1] The source has "commands'

But I shall hope against hope and work for the success of the Mission even in spite of itself, though not hiding from them or the public honest doubt. Trust put on is worse than useless. Trust felt is the thing that counts. Anyway, why worry about trust. Trustworthy action will dispel all mistrust or distrust as the sun dispels morning mist.

This is not to disturb your test. I would have refrained from writing to you, if your letter had not required a fairly full answer.

I am sending an advance copy of my article[1] for the next issue of *Harijan*.

Do be well quickly. 'Be careful for nothing.'

If you want me to do anything, do not hesitate to send a messenger to me. I leave for Mussoorie tomorrow morning. I had to finish writing for *Harijan*, before leaving. As I do not want to inflict my writing on you, I am asking Rajkumari to copy this for me. Of course you are at liberty to share this with your colleagues or whomsoever you like.

I am sending a copy of my article to Lord Pethick-Lawrence.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 199-200

57. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

NEW DELHI,
May 27, 1946

DEAR LORD,

I send you herewith an advance copy of my article for *Harijan*. I hope everything will go well with the Mission.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 198

[1] *Vide* "Vital Defects", 2-6-1946.

58. A NOTE

NEW DELHI,
May 27, 1946

All Sikhs should realize that the Congress cannot and will not desert those who have stuck to it. They are quite safe with it. But they are not bound to be with the Congress, if they do no wish to. To coquet with one party and then another is bad. They should learn to be staunch and true. Loyalty to the Congress is loyalty to independence. If they do not want it, it is another matter.

From the original: C. W. 4225. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7861

59. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

NEW DELHI,
May 27, 1946

CHI. BABUDI,

How are you? And how is the naughty boy? Does he let you have any peace of mind?

I am writing this only to let you know that I am sending a naturopath there to help you. Use his services. For some time I shall have to stay around here. Let us see what happens.

To you all,

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10067. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

60. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
May 27, 1946

CHI. JIVANJI,

How many Urdu copies do you sell? Do you have anybody there who can write the Urdu script? What facilities do you have for translating articles into Hindustani? Are English article correctly translated into Gujarati now? How much matter, at the minimum, do you want from here? And what do you want? Will it do if I send only English articles?

Does the office run smoothly? I do receive complaints which indicate that persons who ought to get copies do not receive them. We want our work to be perfect. If it is not perfect we should know [what the deficiencies are] and do our best to overcome them.

I am leaving for Mussoorie tomorrow morning. I shall get about twelve days there. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9967. Also C. W. 6941. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

61. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

NEW DELHI,
May 27, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I read your letter. It is painful. In my opinion Viramma was not raped. Whatever took place must have been with her consent. She might have gone over willingly. I do not find fault with her. How can a poor Harijan girl differentiate between morality and immorality? It seems she has been leading a loose life.

I believe there must be no privacy. It would be good to do away with the partitioning. But it cannot be. We cannot keep the passionate away from passion with the help of external rules. We should so conduct ourselves that contact with us affects their inner self. We are not like that. Accepting this we should not admit other women. Before admitting them, we should tell them what we are and yet what we expect of them. This does not mean that we should not have any rules.

Cariappa appears to be liberal-minded.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4557

62. NOTE TO G. D. BIRLA

May 27, 1946

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

It is interesting to know what Chi. Prabhudas says about the building at Okhla. If what he says is true, even if it is free it will prove

costly. But it seems Bapa, Rameshwaribehn[1] and you need to understand this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C. W. 8079. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

63. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

NEW DELHI,
May 27, 1946[3]

God willing I will be leaving for Mussoorie tomorrow morning. Riots have broken out in some places in India. What should a man of prayer who has faith in the supremacy of God and who recites Ramanama do under such circumstances? It is obvious that one cannot go to all the places where the riots may break out. But one can refuse to encourage them by word, deed or thought. If riots should break out before one's eyes, one should try to prevent them even at the risk of one's life, but never by taking the life of another. As I said yesterday[4]more potent than the spoken word is the pure thought. Do you believe it? And if so, will you act according to your belief?

From a microfilm of the Hindi: Documents relating to Gandhiji. Courtesy: National Archives of India

64. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN DUBE

MUSSOORIE,
May 28, 1946

BHAI RAMNARAYAN DUBE,

I have your postcard. I shall try to read the book. What do you do? Where did you learn nature cure? Is what you write in the book based on your own experience or culled from other books? Who runs the nature-cure clinic? Please tell me all about Paramahansa Pandit Bhavanishankar Maharaj. I mean that it would be better if I learnt a few things from you before I can safely recommend to anybody the treatment advocated in your book since the reading of it is likely to take some time. A number of books on sale are found to be

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Rameshwari Nehru", 28-5-1946.
[2] It being Gandhiji's silence day his written message was read out.
[3] From *The Bombay Chronicle*
[4] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 26-5-1946.

practically worthless. The price of the book is indeed very high, which arouses suspicion. Do not worry about my massage. It is being done regularly.

I shall read about the *shatavari*[1] oil.

C/O SHRI HOTILALDASJI

MOTOR PROPRIETOR, ETAH

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

65. LETTER TO M. S. ANEY

[*May 28, 1946*][2]

BAPUJI,

I have your letter. Since nothing has yet happened there is no need to hurry. Vallabhbhai will write. He said he would.

Vandemataram

BAPU

BAPUJI ANEY

11 STANMORE CRESELEY

HAVELOCK TOWN

COLOMBO, CEYLON

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

66. LETTER TO VASUDEV V. DASTANE

[*May 28, 1946*]

BHAI DASTANE,

Bapa writes that you have started Harijan work in your area in right earnest and are likely to make a success of it. I do hope you will.

I expect everything else is all right there.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VASUDEV DASTANE

BHUSAVAL

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Asparagus racemosus

[2] In the source this and the following letter are placed among those of this date.

67. LETTER TO JEHANGIR C. PATEL

[*May 28, 1946*][1]

BHAI JEHANGIRJI,

I have your letter. I welcome your suggestion. I am glad that you like the work at Uruli. We can induce others only after the tenements at Uruli Kanchan are ready.

I had to leave Bhai Dinshaw at Delhi. I came here today. All is well. I may stay here for about ten days.

SHETH JEHANGIRJI PATEL

PATEL COTTON COMPANY

10 CHURCHGATE COMPANY

FORT, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

68. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

MUSSOORIE,

May 28, 1946

CHI. RAMESHWARI,

I have your three letters which are all very good. You are doing the Agency work[2] efficiently. I like what you write about the building. What will it cost? Will it be all right if the Kasturba Gandhi Memorial Fund advances the whole amount on nominal interest? I see nothing wrong in offering money for the building but the parent body cannot make an exception, so I feel that problem can perhaps be solved by offering the money as a loan. Discuss the matter with the people there and let me know what they say. It should not be difficult to clear the debt in ten or fifteen years. The period of the loan may be extended so long as the interest is being paid and in default of interest-payment, the loan will have to be paid up or the custody of the building transferred to the Trust. I shall be able to decide further after I have your reply. In the meanwhile I am sending your letter and a copy of my reply to Bapa.

Now your second letter. What you write about the Assembly is correct, namely that in course of time my views will be appreciated.

[1] In the source the letter is placed between those of May 28 and 31. Gandhiji arrived at Mussoorie on May 28, 1946.

[2] Of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust

This is not an opinion I have recently come to; I have been holding it from the beginning. True workers will not enter the Assembly.[1] Keir Hardy was such a person. He commanded respect in the House of Commons. He said that an honest man could not remain a member of the House. And it is true. Morley[2] had to suffer a fall. The situation in South Africa was no different. It deserves to be noted that there was a great scramble for membership and the candidates spent huge sums. But I don't wish to discuss this matter. After all, what you write in the concluding part of your letter is true. It is good to exercise one's franchise to contact the mass of voters, to show them the right path and to give for this as much time as one can. For me it is enough that for some years the Agents should stay out and devote their time to their work. Until now you have not even touched the villages.

Now your third letter.The problem of Bhangis is a complex one. It is all right to say that they should go on a hunger-strike after having done their work or even while doing it but one cannot work on an empty stomach. What I have suggested[3] is that society or say, city-dwellers, should strike against the municipalities—they should go on a hunger-strike also. They can do whatever they want to do. The only condition is that they should do it non-violently. It will have its impact on the municipality as well as on the Bhangis and society will have done its duty. There is also another way. The Bhangis should not strike for accommodation or for wages but they may serve a notice of giving up the occupation. If the Bhangis strike for accommodation or for wages, it may be that in the end the townspeople may themselves take up the scavenging work. I admit that if nobody does anything and the Bhangis do no get justice, then they ought to have the right to strike work. I have explained what the Bhangis, as city-dwellers, should do.

While dictating this I get your fourth letter. It is 8.30 p. m. The wire can go only tomorrow. I think your not being on the Food Board is not going to have any adverse effect.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 8009

[1] *Vide* "Why Not", 20-4-1946

[2] Viscount John Morley, Secretary of State for India, 1905-10

[3] *Vide* "Sweepers' Strike", 15-4-1946.

69. LETTER TO NYALCHAND M. SHETH

[On or after *May 28, 1946*][1]

BHAI NYALCHAND,

I have your letter. Maybe I shall write something in *Harijan* about your question[2]. I very well remember the questions asked by Raichand-bhai, but since then I have certainly encouraged the killing of snakes and I have not stopped people from killing them. I am realizing every moment that it is not a simple matter to distinguish between what is dharma and what is not.

Blessings from

BAPU

NYALCHAND MOOLCHAND SHETH

HEMKUNJ

PALACE ROAD

AMRELI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

70. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

[On or after *May 28, 1946*]

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your postcard. It will not do for you to get tired. Impatience is certainly not going to pay. Sweet is the fruit of patience. It is not worth coming over here. No one knows when we may have to leave this place. I shall be in Mussoorie for afew days only, so by all means go to Sevagram if you wish to go there and join me when I set out for Poona. Anyway you have got to finish your studies. You must not take your mind off your studies. Many people have successfully completed their studies at your age. अजरामरवत् प्राज्ञो विद्यां अर्थं च चिन्तयेत् It means that a wise man should ever go on accumulating the wealth of knowledge.[3] I am getting along well. The heat in Delhi is no doubt severe but I could withstand it. The Mussoorie hills are certainly cool

[1] In the source this and the following letter are placed between those of May 28 and 31.

[2] *Vide* "Religion v. No Religion", 29-5-1946.

[3] Obviously Gandhiji is interpreting the *shloka* in his own way. The purport of the *shloka* is : In pursuing knowledge and wealth a wise man should think that he would never grow old and die; in pursuing dharma he should act as though death had him by the hair.

but the weather is absolutely unpredictable. After the 5th we shall come down any day.

Blessings from

BAPU

ASHRAM

SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

71. TALK WITH A FRIEND[1]

[After *May 28, 1946*][2]

An English friend posed to Gandhiji, during his stay at Mussoorie, the question whether the very frightfulness of the atom bomb would not force non-violence on the world. If all nations were armed with the atom bomb they would refrain from using it as it would mean absolute destruction for all concerned. Gandhiji was of the opinion that it would not.

The violent man's eyes would be lit up with the prospect of the much greater amount of destruction and death which he could now wreak.

Harijan, 23-6-1946

72. TALK WITH PRESS CORRESPONDENTS[3]

[After *May 28, 1946*][4]

Your khadi, handicrafts and rural economy programme will have a great appeal for an agricultural country, as for instance, the Balkans. . .But to many of us, as indeed to many of your countrymen, it appears as a brake on progress. Most people think planning and industrialization on a wide scale to be necessary.

How does my programme interfere with the progress of India? India is mainly rural, consisting of 700,000 villages.

The visitor . . . argued that this was unfair to the cities. "What about the big cities like Bombay and Calcutta?" he asked.

On the contrary, the boot is on the other leg. I regard the growth of cities as an evil thing, unfortunate for mankind and the world,

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "The Nightmare"

[2] From the reference to Mussoorie where Gandhiji reached on May 28, 1946.

[3] Reporting this in "Some Mussoorie Reminiscences", Pyarelal says that during his ten days' stay at Mussoorie a few foreign correspondents were able to have talks with Gandhiji during his morning walks.

[4] *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Talk with a Friend", after 28-5-1946.

unfortunate for England and certainly unfortunate for India. The British have exploited India through its cities. The latter have exploited the villages. The blood of the villages is the cement with which the edifice of the cities is built. I want the blood that is today inflating the arteries of the run once again in the blood-vessels of the villages.

The initial mistake having been made, you do not mean to suggest that all those steps should inexorably be retraced even though it might involve pulling down what has already been built.

Why not? Once we discover that a mistake has been made, the only course open to us is to recognize our error, retrace our steps and begin anew.

Somehow, the belief prevails in the modern world that retracing one's steps in this respect would be incompatible with progress.

What do you do when a ship loses her course on the sea? She does not continue to follow the wrong course. She at once retraces her course and then starts afresh. How often must Columbus have done that or else he would have remained a derelict all the time.

Does that mean that you would depopulate the cities and send all the city-folk back to the villages?

I would not do that. All I want is that they should readjust their lives so as to cease to sponge upon the poor village folk and make to the latter what reparation is possible even at this late hour by helping to resuscitate their ruined economy.

What would you do if you were made a dictator of India for one day?

I would not accept it in the first place, but if I did become a dictator for one day I would spend it in cleaning the stables of the Viceroy's House that the hovels of the Harijans in Delhi are. It is disgraceful that under the very nose of the Viceroy such poverty and squalor should exist as there is in the Harijan quarters. And why does the Viceroy need such a big house? If I had my way I would turn it into a hospital.

And he gave the instance of President Kruger whose residence was not even as good as Birlaji's 'Hermitage' in which he was staying.

"Well, sir, suppose they continue your dictatorship for the second day?" Gandhiji replied amidst laughter:

The second day would be a prolongation of the first.

They next talked of several other things—the national language of India, the

place of English, the administrative problems that would face an independent India, the future of Indo-British trade relations. They then came to non-violence.

"What will be the relations of India with Russia for instance? What if Russia were to attack India?"

Under my dictatorship Russia would find its occupation gone. It will not find it profitable to stay on, even if it came. But, of course, it is too rich a dream to be realized in a day.

The best men in the old generation had their education in England—you for instance. Would you have India, when she becomes independent, send her sons there for study as before?

No, not just now. I would advise her to send them there only after, say, 40 years.

It means depriving two generations of the benefits of contact with the West.

Why two generations? 40 years or even 60 is not too much even in an individual's life. If there is right living we need not grow old at 60 as unfortunately many do in this country. I repeat that they should go there only after they have reached maturity. Because, it is only when they have learnt to understand the good that is in their own culture that they will be able to truly appreciate and assimilate the best that England or America has to give them. Imagine a boy of seventeen, like myself, going to England—he will simply be submerged.

Then we may expect you in England some time, queried the friend.

Gandhiji replied amid general laughter:

Oh, yes, you may.

Harijan, 23-6-1946

73. TALK WITH A FRIEND [1]

[After *May 28, 1946*][2]

"You have brought us to the threshold of independence, Gandhiji," remarked another privileged friend who had a talk with him on an evening, "and we cannot feel too grateful for it. You will, of course, give entire credit for it to ahimsa—that being your pet child. But we feel that we have derived more strength from truth than from your ahimsa."

You are wrong in thinking that in my partiality for ahimsa I

[1]Reproduced from Pyarelal's report "Some Mussoorie Reminiscences". Gandhji reached Mussoorie on May 28, 1946.

[2] *Ibid*

have given to truth the second place. You are equally wrong in thinking that the country has derived more strength from truth than from ahimsa. On the contrary, I am firmly convinced that whatever progress the country has made, is due to its adoption of ahimsa as its method of struggle.

I mean the country has not understood your ahimsa but it has understood truth and that has filled it with strength.

It is just the contrary. There is so much of untruth in the country I feel suffocated sometimes. I am convinced, therefore, that it must be the practice of ahimsa alone, however faulty, that has brought us so far.

Moreover, I have not given truth the second place as you seem to think.

He continued and described how at a meeting at Geneva[1] he had flabbergasted everybody by remarking that whereas he used to say that God is Truth, he had since come to hold that Truth is God.

"Nevertheless, your emphasis is always on ahimsa. You have made propagation of non-violence the mission of your life," argued the friend.

There again you are wrong. Ahimsa is not the goal. Truth is the goal. But we have no means of realizing truth in human relationships except through the practice of ahimsa. A steadfast pursuit of ahimsa is inevitably bound to truth—not so violence. That is why I swear by ahimsa. Truth came naturally to me. Ahimsa I acquired after a struggle. But ahimsa being the means we are naturally more concerned with it in our everyday life. It is ahimsa, therefore, that our masses have to be educated in. Education in truth follows from it as a natural end.

Harijan, 23-4-1946

74. MORE SUGGESTIONS

It is a good sign that food shortage is taxing many minds. Suggestions for meeting it come in from all quarters. A friend, who knows what he writes about, sends the following:[2]

(1) A substantial saving in cereals should be possible by reducing the ration of cereals to non-vegetarians to the extent that it is possible to supplement equal nutrition value by non-vegetarian food.

[1] The meeting was held at Lausanne; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 8-9-1931.
[2] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.

(2) I expect that a large number of men do manual work find difficulty in satisfying hunger with the reduced rations. . . . It, therefore, follows that to the extent that cereals are reduced to non-vegetarians, animal food, having equal nutrition value, should be substituted and that also for the same cost as that of the cereal reduced.

(3) There is a large damage to crops by deer, rabbit, boar, pig and pigeon . . . . Non-vegetarians tell me that these can be used for food. . . . Incidentally, destruction on a large scale of these would be reflected in reduced destruction of field crops.

(4) To save food in order that it will be available for famine areas under the present system of ration appeals to very few. . . . There would be a good psychological appeal if the foodgrains saved are collected and guaranteed to be sent to the famine areas.

Whether the authorities act up to the first or not, it is one which those honest meat-eaters who draw full vegetarian rations can. They can easily part with a portion of their cereals for the benefit of those in need. Mutual aid is the swiftest way of reaching relief to the needy in such cases.

The second follows from the first.

The third is contentious. In a country where all life is largely held sacred and even when it is not, habit has made people reluctant to take any life, the suggestion may be difficult of adoption even by non-vegetarians. But a confirmed respecter of all life though I am, I have no difficulty in recommending for acceptance by meat-eaters the suggestion that the correspondent's wisdom has dictated. I hope to examine an argument in *Harijanbandhu* advanced against the taking of even noxious life without any connection with food.[1]

The fourth suggestion, though sound, is not likely to produce any tangible result because of the ruling corruption and the inefficiency and irresponsibility of the Government. The difficulty will only be met when there is a national government which is responsible to the people and to which the people may look forward with confidence. It has been long coming. Will it ever come?

MUSSOORIE, May 29, 1946

Harijan, 9-6-1946

[1] *Vide* the following item.

75. RELIGION V. NO RELIGION[1]

A correspondent writes:

> In the *Harijanbandhu* of the 5th May you have written that your non-violence contemplates destruction of animals dangerous to mankind, such as leopards, wolves, snakes, scorpions, etc.[2]
>
> You do not believe in giving food to dogs, etc. Several other people besides the Gujaratis look upon the feeding of dogs as a meritorious act. Such a belief may not be justifiable in times of food shortage like the present. Yet we must remember that these animals can be very useful to man. One can feed them and take work out of them.
>
> You had put 27 questions to Shri Raichandbhai from Durban. One of these quesions was: "What should a seeker do when a sanke attacks him?" His answer was: "He should not kill the snake and, if it bites, he should let it do so."[3] How is it that you speak differently now?

I have written a lot on this subject in the past. At that time the topic was the killing of rabid dogs. There was much discussion on the subject but all that seems to have been forgotten.

My non-violence is not merely kindness to all living creatures. The emphasis laid on the sacredness of subhuman life in Jainism is understandable. But that can never mean that one is to be kind to this life in preference to human life. While writing about the sacredness of such life, I take it that the sacredness of human life has been taken for granted. The former has been over-emphasized. And, while putting it into practice, the idea has undergone distortion. For instance, there are many who derive complete satisfaction in feeding ants. It would appear that the theory has become a wooden, lifeless dogma. Hypocrisy and distortion are passing current under the name of religion.

Ahimsa is the highest ideal. It is meant of the brave, never for the cowardly.To benefit by others' killing and delude oneself into the belief that one is being very religious and non-violent, is sheer self-deception.

A so-called votary of non-violence will not stay in a village, which is visited by a leopard every day, will run away and when someone has killed the leopard, will return to take charge of his hearth and home. This is not non-violence. This is a coward's violence. The

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 9-6-1946.

[2] *Vide* "The Monkey Nuisance", 25-4-1946.

[3] *Vide* "Questions on Religion", before June 1894.

man who has killed the leopard has at least given proof of some bravery. The man who takes advantage of the killing is a coward. He can never expect to know true non-violence.

In life it is impossible to eschew violence completely. The question arises, where is one to draw the line? The line cannot be the same for everyone. Although essentially the principle is the same, yet every-one applies it is his or her own way. What is one man's food can be another's poison. Meat-eating is a sin for me. Yet, for another person, who has always lived on meat and seen anything wrong in it, to give it up simply in order to copy me will be a sin.

If I wish to be an agriculturist and stay in the jungle, I will have to use the minimum unavoidable violence in order to protect my fields. I will have to kill monkey, birds and insects which eat up my crops. If I do not wish to do so myself, I will have to engage someone to do it for me. There is not much difference between the two. To allow crops to be eaten up by animals in the name of ahimsa while there is a famine in the land is certainly a sin. Evil and good are relative terms. What is good under certain conditions can become an evil or a sin under a different set of conditions.

Man is not to drown himself in the well of Shastras but he is to dive into their broad ocean and bring out pearls. At every step he has to use discrimination as to what is ahimsa and what is *himsa*. In this there is no room for shame or cowardice. The poet has said that the road leading up to God is for the brave, never for the cowardly.

Finally, Raichandbhai's advice to me was that if I had courage, if I wanted to see God face to face, I should let myself be bitten by a snake instead of killing it. I have never killed a snake before or after receiving that letter. That is no matter of credit for me. My ideal is to be able to play with snakes and scorpions fearlessly. But it is merely a wish so far. Whether and when it will be realized I do not know. Everywhere I have let my people kill both. I could have prevented them if I had wished. But how could I? I did not have the courage to take them up with my own hands and teach my companions a lesson in fearlessness. I am ashmed that I could not do so. But my shame could not benefit them or me.

If Ramanama favours me I might attain that courage some day. In the meantime. I consider it my duty to act as I have stated above. Religion is a thing to be lived. It is not mere sophistry.

MUSSOORIE, May 29, 1946

Harijan, 9-6-1946

76. HARIJAN WORK IN BHUSAWAL TALUKA [1]

Shri Thakkar Bapa writes:[2]

> It has been decided to carry on sound and extensive Harijan work in the Bhusawal Taluka. . . . The circumstances are favourable.

What Bapa says is true. By favourable circumstances. Shri Thakkar Bapa probably means the establishment of a Congress Ministry. That does not mean that henceforth reforms will be imposed upon the people. There is the least room for the use of force in such things. An evil like untouchability which ha found its way into the very marrow of the people's bones, and that too in the name of religion, cannot be removed forcibly. But an alien government uses its influence to further suppress the suppressed by force. And when it tries to help them from a motive, pure or selfish, that too is done by the exercise of force. The Congress has not estabilished its position through force. It is a purely demorcatic organization. Therefore, it is hoped that the Congress ministers will educate public measures. This should result in an impetus to reforms like Harijan work in thier provinces and the forces standing in the way of such reforms would automatically disappear. Moreover, intensive work in the limited area of the Bhusawal Taluka is likely to prove very fruitful. We cannot reach the whole of India at one and the same time. Wherever the workers have the requisite ability and influence, the work will proceed at a quicker pace. Sound work in a small area is therefore likely to be copied by others and thus lead to an early success. Let us hope that will be the result of the work which has been strarted in Bhusawal.

MUSSOORIE, May 29, 1946

Harijan, 9-6-1946

77. QUESTION BOX[3]

Q. What can one do if in spite of putting in a full day's labour, one cannot get enough to eat?

A. The labourr is worthy of his hire. This law is as old as the hills. All useful labour ought to bring in the same and adequate wages to the labourer. Till that time comes, the least that should be dome is

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu,* 9-6-1946.

[2] Only an extract of the letter is reproduced here.

[3] The Gujarati original of this appeard in *Harijanbandhu,* 9-6-1946

to see that every labourer gets enough to feed and clothe himelf and his family. A government that does not ensure this much is no government. It is anarchy. Such a state should be resisted peacefully. Looting of grainshops and rowdyism is not the remedy. It leads to needless loss and death. Even if the authorities give in out of fear it does not really help them or the people. It does not remove anarchy and things remain as they were. A look round the world will confirm what is here stated.

If, in spite of the collections of food grain in the depots, the hungry cannot get it, they can offer peaceful satyagraha.They should not take by force what has not been given to them. They can go on a fast unto death and thus secure relief for themseleves and for others. If they have patience, the method suggested by me is sure of success.

MUSSOORIE, May 29, 1946[1]

Harijan, 9-6-1946

78. DRAFT TELEGRAM TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE[2]

MUSSOORIE,
May 29, 1946

AM ANXIOUS NOT CAUSE YOU DELAY FROM CONGRESS. WOULD THEREFORE LIKE TO KNOW WHEN MISSION WILL BE IN POSITION PRESENT FULL PICTURE IN TERMS OF MY COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTION OF 24TH[3] AND MY LETTER OF 26TH INSTANT. I ASK THIS IN ORDER TO ENABLE ME TO CALL WORKING COMMITTEE IN TIME.

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Harijanbandhu, however, has "Mussoorie, 27-5-1946", evidently a slip.
[2] This was drafted by Gandhiji for Abul Kalam Azad.
[3] *Vide* Appendix "Congress Working Committee's Resolution", 24-5-1946.

79. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

MUSSOORIE,
May 29, 1946

When he saw some dirty looking boys sitting in front of him, Mahatma Gandhi remarked:

To wear torn and dirty clothes is a sure sign of laziness.

Turning towards the Harijans attending his meeting, Mahatma Gandhi remarked that he was a Harijan himself, and they had come to see him as he was one of them. Mahatma Gandhi further added that he became a Harijan of his own accord, and if more people became Harijans, there would be so many more of them and the blot on Hinduism would be removed. He had come to the conclusion that caste system was very harmful to Hinduism.

How could he feel at home amidst the endless saturnalia of fashions that is Mussoorie?

Gandhiji recalled his previous visit to Mussoorie[2] , which was in connection with the Congress work. This time he had come purely on his own.

As you know I am not even a four-anna member but only a humble servant of the Congress like the unnamed crores who are not on its rolls but serve it all the same humble and quietly to the best of their capacity without expectation of name or reward. And why? Because the thirst for freedom has taken possession of their souls. They do not know how it can be won. But they have heard the Congress is the one organization that has for the last years fighting the good fight that would bring freedom to all without distinction. That is why they are devoted to it. I have come to Mussoorie as one of them, a humble private individual.

He did not want anyone to be bothered with taking care of him.

God alone is my Protector. How can puny man, who is not sure even of his own tomorrow, presume to protect another? I am content to be under God's care. He may protect or destroy. I know He sometimes even destroys to protect.

He had been told before, and again since his arrival at Mussoorie, of the life of the fashionable rich in Mussoorie. Like other Himalayan hill stations, Mussoorie

[1] *The Bombay Chronicle* report has been collated with Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in Harijan wherein he writes: "A deep note of resignation, sadness and introspection ran through Gandhiji's first public utterance at the evening prayer gathering."

[2] In October 1929.

was no place for the poor.

The poor slave for you. They draw your rickshaws. It hurts me, and it ought to hurt you too, that a fellow human being should pull the rickshaw of a healthy and able-bodied person. I say this not to criticize you but to remind you of those whose very existance you are otherwise apt to forget, but who nevertheless are India. It is up to you to think of them and enter into their lives.

I long for the day when Ramanama would save me from the necessity of having to go to hill station during the summer. Crores cannot go to the hill stations. They are born to live and die on the plains.

I have not come here for pleasure but only under medical necessity so that I might be able to serve you the more. Give me your blessings and let me have little quiet so that I can attend to my work and commune with the Maker undisturbed.

Concluding, Mahatma Gandhi advised the local rich men to build dharmashalas for the benefit of the poor and the Harijans as was done in Panchgani hills.

The Bombay Chronicle, 31-5-1946, and *Harijan*, 9-6-1946

80. MESSAGE FOR N. R. MALKANI [1]

[Before *May 30, 1946*][2]

That sterilization of lepers is sinful as the disease is not a hereditary one, is the opinion of Mahatma Gandhi.

Gandhiji says

If the Congress Party[3] was in favour of sterilization of lepers it would be a wrong decision.

The Hindu, 1-6-1946

81. FAITH CURE V. RAMANAMA

Here is fine banter from a friend:[4]

> I have read your "Confession and Cure" in Harijan of 17-3-'46.[5] I wonder whether this nature cure has any close relation to what is being called faith-

[1] This was communicated through Amrit Kaur.
[2] The report appeared under the date-line "Karachi, May 30".
[3] In Sindh
[4] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.
[5] *Vide* "My Confession and Cure", 6-3-1946.

cure. . . . For smallpox. . . no treatment is given but it is considered Divine Play. We do pooja to Goddess Mariamma and it is almost miraculous to see most of the cases come out successful. For stomach pain, even chronic cases, many make vows before the deity at Thirupathi. . . my mother had the same pain and after her visit to Thirupathi she is now free from that disease.

Will you kindly enlighten me on this and may I ask why people should not have such faith in nature cure also. . .?

The examples that have been quoted are neither nature cure nor yet Ramanama which I have included in it. But they do show how nature cures without any treatment in may cases. They are undoubtedly cases which show the part superstition plays in Indian life. Ramanama which is the centre of nature cure is the enemy of superstition. Unscrupulous men will abuse Ramanama as they will any other thing or system. Mere lip recitation of Ramanama has nothing to do with cure. Faith-cure, if I know it correctly, is blind cure, such as the friend describes and thereby redicules the living name of the living God. The latter is not figment of one's imagination. It has to come from the heart. It is conscious belief in God and a knowledge of His Law that make perfect cure possible without any further aid. That law is that perfect mind is responsible for perfect health of the body. A perfect mind comes from a perfect heart not the heart known by a doctor's stethoscope but the heart which is the seat of God. It is claimed that realization of God in the heart makes it impossible for an impure or idle thought to cross the mind. Disease is impossible where there is purity of thought. Such a state may be difficult to attain. But the first step in the ascent to health is taken with its recognition. The next is taken when the corresponding attempt is made. This radical alteration in one's life is naturally accompanied by the observance of all other nature's laws hitherto discovered by man. One cannot play with them and claim to have a pure heart. It can be said with justice that possession of a pure heart should do equally well without Ramanama. Only, I know no other way of attaining purity. And it is the way trodden by the sages of old all over the world. They were men of God not superstitious men or charlatans.

If this is Christian Science, I have no quarrel with it. The way of Ramanama is not my discovery. It is probably much older than the Christian era.

A correspondent questions whether Ramanama avoids *banafide* surgical operations. Of course, it does not. It cannot restrore a leg that is cut off in an accident. In many cases surgical operations are

unnecessary. Where they are required they should be performed. But a man of God will not worry if a limb is lost. Recitation of Ramanama is neither an empirical method nor a makeshift.

MUSSOORIE, May 29, 1946

Harijan, 9-6-1946

82. EXCESSIVE PRAISE

Thus an army officer to a friends:[1]

It is not a matter for pity if it is true that in all democratic countries politicians are uninterested in the army. The pity of it is that they are wrongly interested in it. The democracies regard army men as their saviours. They bring wealth and subjugate other countries and sustain authority in times of civil disturbance. What is, therefore, to be wished is that democracy, to be true, should cease to rely upon the army for anything whatsoever.

What has the army done for India? It is for that army that the writer pleads. I fear that in no sense has it served India's interest. It has kept millions of inofensive and disarmed people under subjection. It has impoverished them. It is an army of which the sooner the British part is sent away and better employed, the better for both India and England, and the world. The sooner the Indian part is turned away from its destructive purpose and its talent employed for constructive purpose, the better it will be for democracy in India. It will be a poor democracy that depends for its existence on military assistance. Military force interferes with the free growth of the mind. It smothers the soul of man. Thanks to years of foreign domination brought about by the "highly efficient" army, India, in spite of the efforts of the Mission, might have to pull through a long or short civil war which, I shall hope, will bring to an end all infatuation for armed forces. They are a brutalizing process after you have isolated discipline which should be common for any social order. If free India has to sustain the present military expenditure, it will bring no relief to the famishing millions.

MUSSOORIE, May 30, 1946

Harijan, 9-6-1946

[1] The extract is not reproduced here.

83. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAM

MUSSOORIE,
May 30, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter written from Indore before you left for Bombay. As long as you rely on anybody except God, there will be nothing but darkness around you. We have not heard of the blind leading the blind. It is an error and ignorant attachment to say that a particular person guides one. That all of us let ourselves be guided, up to a point, by somebody is one thing and to rely upon one person in all matters is another. I see this every moment, and more clearly in your case. My test has no meaning at all. I do not test anybody, nor do I wish to do so. Really speaking I do not know how to test anybody. You can, therefore, stay in Bombay. Kafi Khan can guide you best and you can guide him. After all you are brother and sister and there would be nothing unusual in your guiding each other. Nor is there anything unusual in your trying to help Rashid Khan's widow. If your advice is not accepted in all matters, you should not feel offended. However, how can I fully know the position in your family and its affairs? I am sure, therefore, that you should do what seems best to you. What I have said above concerns the members of the same family. But you have looked upon the Ashram as your family. You may draw from it whatever consolation you can. You need not ask me even for that. You know all the members of that family. You may, therefore, take from each, whatever service you can easily get from him or her. You need not ask me to help you in that matter. You may go to the Ashram whenever you wish to and leave it whenever you feel inclined to do so. When you go to the Ashram, observe its rules during the time you ramain there. After leaving it you may follow whichever you can. The others do the same. There is no benefit in carrying with oneself wherever one goes what one finds a burden.

In Borkamata you have created your own family. I did not know about it. Whether to go there or not also rests with you. If I have forbidden you, I withdraw my prohibition. If anything happens there or somebody does not respect your wishes, do not seek my help. I do not even know everybody there.

You have by now written a good many letters. Since you had lost a dear brother, I felt that I should share your sorrow and,

therefore, wrote to you despite pressure of other work. You should not take improper advantage of that now. If you need to write to me on some special business, that would be a different matter. Make your way in life truthfully and with ease and do everything with God alone as witness. Give up your attachment to me. To rely on one human being in all one's affairs is nothing but attachment.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I got Hasa's letter just now. . . .[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 520

84. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRINKUMJI

MUSSOORIE,
May 30, 1946

I was pained to read about your health in Manilal's letter. Since I recommend this to everybody, why should I not you? You believe in God not merely with the intelect but with the heart. If this is quite true, instal Rama in your heart and know Him. He will cure you of your disease and, if He does not wish to do that, He will give you peace of mind and your restlessness will disappear. If He alone is to be one's true help, the condition, I believe, is that one may seek no other help except what one gets from pure and moderate food and the five elements. You are, of course, not bound to do a thing merely because I say so. I have writtten what my heart prompted me to write. Do only what your heart accepts. You need not reply to me. Nor need you take the trouble of dictating a letter. I shall ask Sushila, who is accompanying me, to write to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 211. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] A line following this is illegible.

85. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

MUSSOORIE,
May 30, 1946

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got the letters of both of you. I have written to Mathuradas. I am glad that Sita has passed.

I understand what you say regarding Sorabjee. Between your experience and my inference, experience is always the better guide. you may, therefore, do what you have decided.

You also say that it would be better if some Muslim gentlemen from South Africa could be included. But think over it for yourself.

Your plan that all of you go away leaving Sita at Banaras is also good. I feel somewhat concerned at your departure being repeatedly delayed. But in this matter, too, you should do what you two desire. One should attach no importance at all to separation one's family. It mattters little where one's body is. So long as the hearts are one, the body may be anywhere. In the absence of union of hearts, the bodies being even in the same houses means nothing.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Now that Sita has passed, why would she care to write?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4981

86. LETTER TO RADHABAI

BIRLA HOUSE, MUSSOORIE,
May 30, 1946

DEAR RADHABAI,

It is only today that I am able to take up your letter of 22nd March last.

Of course you are quite right in removing from your typed copies the names of the writers. Two extracts do not require any comment from me. A part of the third I felt deserved some notice. You will, therefore, see it in *Harijan.*

I am afraid that mine in such matters is a voice in the wilderness. It is also ill expressed. But I know that I am voicing the truth. Whilst I

appreciate personal bravery I intensely dislike masses of men turned into a huge mechanical machine for destruction.

Blessings from

BAPU[1]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

87. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[After *May 30, 1946*][2]

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I shall be happy if you get well compeletely. After that you may engage yourself in any service you like. My eagerness to press my advice on you has left me, but love remains the same as it ever was. I am trying to overcome my *moha*. You can deduce the rest from the above.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 599

88. WHOLESALE RELEASES[3]

Responsible Ministries in the provinces have naturally meant wholesale releases of political prisoners. These include convicts sentenced for murder, arson, robbery, etc. Correspondents ask how far these releases should be acclaimed by the public as of heroes and martyrs.

It is one thing to release, for a variety of reasons, persons who were convicted of such crimes. It is wholly another thing to praise the acts as of heroes to be received with every mark of honour. I have no doubt that it is thoughtless and wrong. If I am in need of money for a public purpose and commit robbery I do not cease to be a robber, because the robbery committed by me is for public use. This indiscriminate praise of every crime, so long as it is dignified by the

[1] In Devanagari

[2] I*n Bapuke Patra—8: Bibi Amtussalaamke Naam* this letter is placed after the letter dated May 30, 1946; *vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 30-5-1946.

[3] This appeared under "Notes".

name of patriotism, is a boomerang bound to return with redoubled force to the nation which will have to pay heavily for it. Independence though it includes the freedom even to commit a crime, may easily prove a curse, if it does not carry a voluntary rigid restraint. The public approbation referred to is wrong education of the people and a harmful preparation for the independence that is coming much sooner than many of us expect.

MUSSOORIE, May 31, 1946

Harijan, 9-6-1946

89. MINISTERIAL SALARIES

I have to pay heavily for the caution with which I wrote the other day the paragraph in *Harijan*[1] in regard to increase in ministerial salaries. I have to go through long letter bewailing my caution and arguing with me to revise my view. How can ministers make large increases in their own original fat salaries when the poor *chaprasis* and clerks get an increase which hardly meet the occasion? I have reread my note and I claim that the short note includes all that various correspondents desire. But, in order to avoid any misunderstanding, I expand my meaning.

I have been twitted for no referring to the Karachi Resolution. The lower scale of ministers' salaries rests on much higher ground than the authority of a resolution. In any event, so far as I am aware, the Congress has never varied that resolution. It is as binding today as it was when it was passed.

I do not know that the increases in the salaries is justified. But I must not offhand condemn the increase without knowing the case of the ministers. Critics should know that I have no authority over them or anyone else except myself. Nor am I present at all the meetings of the Working Committee. I attend only when required by the President. I can only give my opinion for what it is worth. And, if it to have any weight, it must be well-conceived and based on ascertained facts.

The question of the hideous inequality between the rich and the poor and the lower services and the higher is a separate subject requiring drastic and well-thought-out method and could not be merely incidental to the lowering of the salaries of the few ministers

[1] *Vide* "Question Box", 14-4-1946.

and their secretaries. Both subjects require to be dealt with on merits. The question of salaries could be and should be easily disposed of by the ministers concerned. The other is a much vaster subject requiring a thorough overhauling. I would any day agree that the ministers should tackle the subject in their provinces without delay and that the lower ranks should before everything else have their salaries fully considered and increased wherever necessary.

MUSSOORIE, May 31, 1946

Harijan, 9-6-1946

90. QUESTION BOX

IS LYING EVER JUSTIFLABLE?

Q. What do you say to the following from Bertrand Russell? "I once in the course of a country walk saw a tired fox at the last stages of exhaustion still forcing himself to run. A few minutes afterwards I saw the hunt. They asked me if I had seen the fox, and I said I had. They asked me which way he had gone, and I lied to them. I do not think I should have been a better man if I had told the truth."

A. Bertrand Russell is a great writer and philosopher. With all respect to him I must dissent from the view attributed to him. He made the initial mistake of admitting that he had seen the fox. He was not bound to answer the first question. He could even refused to answer the second question unless he deliberately wanted to put the hunt off the track. I have always maintained that nobody is bound always to answer quetions that may be put to him. Truth-telling admits of no exceptions.

ADDRESSES AND FLORAL TRIBUTES

A correspondent complains:

In many of the provinces there are Congress ministeries, and the public is proud of the fact. So when any minister visits any place, the local bodies or local institution show their respect by presenting addresses of value. In almost all the cases, these things become the property of the minister. This practice,in my opinion, is not good. Either this system of receiving addresses must be stopped or the things presented should go, say, to the local Congress Committee. There should be some definite policy regarding the garlanding of the ministers or the Congress leaders. I have seen several cases where these ministers have been honoured with flowers costing not less than 300 to 400 rupees. This is mere waste of money.

A. The complaint is valid. No public servant receive for his own use addresses of the value or costly floral truibutes. These things have become a nuisance, if they are not much worse. The argument is often trotted out that costly frames and flowers put money into the pockets

of artisans. The latter are well able to take care of themselves without the aid of ministers and the like. These gentlemen do not travel for pleasure. Theirs are business tours undertaken often for listening to what the poeple have to say. The addresses presented to them need not extol their virtues which are their own reward. They should express accurately local wants and grievances if any. In these times the ministers and their secretaries have a hard task before them. Public adulation instead of being a help will become a hindrance.

MUSSOORIE, May 31, 1946

Harijan, 9-6-1946

91. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

MUSSOORIE,
May 31, 1946

CHI. KANCHAN,

I have your postcard. It is a postcard and you write "private" on it, and that in an obscure corner! It is so private indeed that one realizes what is private only after reading it ! What is private in it? I have done all I could, and am still doing, to help you two to live together. Munnalal has even agreed.[1] I think the sooner you start living together, the better for your health. Mind is the chief cause of illnes in all cases. It is particularly so in your case. If Munnalal has to stay with Mirabehn, you also will stay with her. If he goes there merely to inquire after her health, there is no point in your accompanying him. If I can help, I will not let go a single opportunity. Keep your mind calm, therefore.

Can you get a house in Uruli Kanchan in which you two can live yourselves? Would you yourself like that? Or would you prefer to stay somewhere near Sevagram? If you write frankly to me I may be able to help you better. There is no cause for embarrassment at all. For the decision that you will live together has already been made and it will be implemented at the earliest opportunity. Have you realized the power of Ramanama? Do you get Harijanbandhu there? Do you get any other journal? Do you read any? How silly of you! How strange that, apart from writing about yourself, you give no other news! I shall be leaving this place in about eight days. I shall go to Delhi.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Kanchan M. Shah", 23-5-1946.

I am sending your letter to Munnalal. I have asked him to stay on there so that he may know whether or not he should go to Mirabehn.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8256. Also C. W. 6980. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

92. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

MUSSOORIE,
May 31, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Herewith Kanchan's postcard. I have sent her a reassuring reply. I have told her that you two will be living in a separete house of your own. You also should write to her and reassure her.

You ought not write bitter letters to her. All her illness comes from the mind. If she had faith in Ramanama she would not need consolation from anybody else. But the difficulty is that for Kanchan the only Ramanama is yourself. You have, therefore, no choice but to play that part. Even in doing that, however, you will need the support of Ramanama.

I expected a letter from you yesterday, but none arrived. Have you received no reply from Mirabehn as yet? I hope that your condition is good, and so also your health. I may stay here up to the 8th or 9th. There is a pleasant nip in the air.

Has Omprakash left for Sevagram?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8416. Also C. W. 5617. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

93. LETTER TO HOSA RASHID KHAN

MUSSOORIE,
May 31, 1946

CHI. HOSA,

I have your letter. I like it. I am not happy that Amtul Salaam has left. I know that she can be a great comfort to you. May God grant you peace.

Why did you write to me in English? Do you not know Hindustani? You could have written to me either in the Devanagari or in the Urdu script.

Blessings from

BAPU

BEGUM RASHID KHAN
RASHID NIVAS
INDORE, C. I.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

94. LETTER TO PRABHUDAYAL VIDYARTHI

MUSSOORIE,
May 31, 1946

CHI. PRABHUDAYAL,

Why does your health suffer so often? I have had a lot of correspondence in connection with your case and have also thought at length over it.[1] Devadas feels that something bordering on untruth has crept into your reply. It is not enough to say that they may proceed against you if they want. Is there any proof that you were in the Fort at Delhi?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee who was arrested during the Quit India Movement of 1942 had alleged that he was brought from Nagpur to Delhi "handed over to military custody at the Red Fort. . . and subjected to torture". G. E. B. Abell in his letter dated March 28/30, 1946 had informed Gandhiji that "after a very thorough examination" it was found that the whole story of Prabhudayal Vidyarthi was completely false. *Vide* "Letter to Prabhudayal Vidyarthi", 8-6-1946.

95. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

MUSSOORIE,
May 31, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA

I have your letter. It is good that you asked for money from your brother. Do whatever you think right regarding the servants.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4558

96. INTERVIEW TO NORMAN CLIFF[1]

May 31, 1946

In answer to the criticism that Gandhiji was even more tender towards capitalist exploiters than towards their victims, he told Norman Cliff that if his non-violence was made of that stuff it should be suppressed.

Of course capitalists are among my friends and I take pride in the fact that they accept me as a friend. But I fight them when I feel there is need and no one fights them harder. I fought the mill-owners as I suppose nobdoy had fought them and successfully.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Book I, Vol. I, p. 63

97. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

MUSSOORIE,
May 31, 1946

Speaking after prayers, Mahatma Gandhi expressed regret that yesterday due to inclement weather the audience had to be satisfied with *Ramdhun* only. He was also sorry that some had to sit or stand on wet grass. It would be good if there was a proper ground where everybody could go and pray in comfort.

He again suggested that Mussoorie should have a place where the poor could come and avail themeselves of the benefits of the hill climate whenever necessary.

I myself have become a Harijan by choice. I would love to be in a place where Harijan too can come and dwell. A Harijan by birth

[1] *Of News Chronicle*, London

[2] The report in *National Herald* has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.*

may repudiate his *varna* but how can I who have become a Harijan by choice? I have not hesitated to suggest to caste Hindus that today they have all to become *atishudras*, if the canker of caste feeling is to be eradicated from Hinduism and Hinduism is not to perish from the face of the earth.

If there were such a place in Mussoorie itself, where even Harijan would be welcome, he would rather stay there if ever he came to Mussoorie again. In answer to a similar suggestion at Panchani, the people there were planning to have a place of that type. He was glad to inform the gathering that there was some talk already of a committee of the citizens of Mussoorie being formed for that purpose.

What, however exercised his mind even more was the impending famine. He reminded his fashionable audience of the coffin at their feast. As a matter of fact the famine was already in the land. Crores were not getting enough to eat. Rich people were perhaps ready to give money, but no one could eat money. There was not enough food in the country. Whatever there was could not be transported quickly to the deficit areas. Such was the bankruptcy of the Government. Then again there were places where people went hungry in spite of the fact that the food was stored on the spot. Then reason was all-round corruption and the greed of our own people. He appealed to those who were well-off and could afford to get somehow whatever they wanted, to spare every grain of foodstuff that they could. If the people co-operated and there was no black marketing and corruption, possibly there was enough food in the land to enable them to tide over that crisis. There were some who did not agree with him and maintained that if we did not get food from other countries we could not avoid starvation and death. He was not of that opinion. When other contries sent them supplies it would take time for the supplies to reach India in the first instance and even after they were landed in the ports, would take about six weeks to transport them to the needed areas. The only real remedy was self-help and co-operation among all and disappearance of corruption. He appealed to the well-to-do men and women of Mussoorie to save every grain they could for the famishing people. If all voluntarily restricted themselves absolutely to what was needed for their health, they would be well able to tide over their difficulties.

National Herald, 2-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 9-6-1946

98. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

[On or after *May 31, 1946*][1]

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Only now am I reaching your letter of Feburary 26. Your suggestion that rations, etc., should not be allowed to people whose income exceeds a certain amount is, I am afraid, fraught with danger. Now that there are Congress Ministeries they can adopt whatever measures seem necessary. I think something can be done if they have the will and the competence.

I write this much with great effort. I hope both of you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

99. LETTER TO BHANUBHAI

[On or after *May 31, 1946*]

BHAI BHANUBHAI,

I have you letter. Is this your own handwriting? What do you do? How proficient are you? What is your income? Maybe, as you say, one drastic remedy might be to quit the place where you have to face insults. I can understand that those who can put up with insults and preserve their self-respect can stay on. I have passed through such an ordeal. In South Africa all Indians are regarded as untouchables. It is a different thing that people swallow all the bitter draughts when their sensibilittes are blunted and they pursue selfish ends. I shall write to you if anything particular suggests itself to me after I get the further details I have asked for.

BHANUBHAI

HARIJAN ASHRAM

WADHAWAN

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In the source this and the following six letters are placed after those of May 31, 1946.

100. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI

[On or after *May 31, 1946*]

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. It appears to me that your friend erred in undertaking the fast. There is no restriction to fasting undertaken to ward off an illnes. It accords with the need of the occasion. Then, you mention no reasons. Unless I know and fully comprehend the reason I don't see what remedy I can suggest. For nature-cure treatment there is not—nor should there be—any need to run around. In nature cure, as I conceive it, Ramanama enjoys the pride of place. It is the focal point. But it is something that needs to be grasped. It is useless for those to whom it does not appeal. Does your friend sleep in the open air? Does he breathe through the nose? Does he take an early morning sun-bath? Does he have hip-bath and friction-bath? You do know both these baths. Does he have abdominal mudpacks at night? Dr. Dinshaw has not yet been able to take up personally the work for the poor and the work he was conducting at Poona has since been suspended. He is himself contemplating reorganizing the activity. But I shall consult him only after I have further details about your friend's case.

Enclosed you will find a letter for Bhanubhai. How do you help him and others in similar circumstances? Since a man like you is available there, it ought to be within your power to dispose of individual cases like this one. Please pass on Bhanubhai's letter to him after going through it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

101. LETTER TO BACHRAJ T. DOSHI

[On or after *May 31, 1946*]

BHAI BACHHRAJ,

I have your letter. It does not seem likely that I shall be able to reach Panchgani before the 15th of June. Everything is in confusion. Mahabaleshwar is of course out. I am dictating this at Mussoorie. Mussoorie is at a higher altitude than Panchgani. The air is pretty cold. I have nothing to do in Delhi till the 9th or 10th June. So I am staying on here. I came here on the 28th.

If some house is available which can be used as a dharmashala I ought to take up residence there and sticu to the place. If no such house has been secured and if the arrangment is to be postponed till my arrival, I should like to stay at Preston because Gulbai[1] used to live there. But surely it is not for me to make the choice. I would put up at any place which would be convenient and where a party of ten or twelve people could be accommodated. You may take it that whatever is convenient to you will be convenient to me.

I would naturally want to go to Poona direct from Kalyan. I might be inclined to visit Uruli Kanchan for a day or two if it is convenient. It will be enough if you see me only at Poona. For the present you may regard all this as merely a wish. It is in God's hands whether or not it will materialize.

Since Pattanisaheb[2] is himself staying in the Panchgani Castle the thought of putting up there must be given up. Even otherwise there is always the possibility of members of his family or those of one Prince or another coming to stay. This is another reason why we should give up the idea of Panchgani Castle.

SJT. BACHHRAJ DOSHI
PANCHGANI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

102. LETTER TO M. B. GODBOLE

[On or after *May 31, 1946*]

BHAI GODBOLE,

Your letter is good. You will find the reply in *Harijan*.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

DR. M. B. GODBOLE
NATURE-CURE SPECIALIST
LAKSHMI ROAD, POONA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Wife of Dinshaw Mehta
[2] Anantrai Pattani, Dewan of Bhavnagar State

103. LETTER TO L. N. GOPALASWAMI AYYAR

[On or after *May 31, 1946*]

BHAI GOPALSWAMI,

Your letter to Bapa was passed on to me for perusal. You have advised him to refuse help to Soundaram.[1] I don't like it. You should have been more charitable. This is the first experiment of entrusting responsible jobs to women. You should give all assistance to the venture. I can say nothing if it is beyond your power; but why is it so? How can a devotee of Rajaji do such thing? Rajaji is well known for his charitable disposition; he makes friends of foes and does not forsake friends even when they turn enemies. I know of instancse of both the types. Devotion can never mean that we may not emulate the object of our devotion. Devotion bereft of any attempt at emulation is no devotion at all. Sometimes the views of our seniors do not agree with our own but we do not leave them for that reason. Why should you be unhappy if Kamalabehn has not been appointed an Agent? The office of an Agent is not for prestige but for service. Cannot one serve without being an Agent? Subbulakshmi was never promised anything. I do not like all that is going on. You also admit that Soundaram is a worthy worker and in addition is a doctor. Her husband also is a worker—enlightened and hard-working. On her appointment, as an Agent therefore, she deserves to be congratulated by you. let us see what happens now. Do whatever is possible independently. The field [of service] is wide enough to accommodate all.

Blessings from

BAPU

SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY

MADRAS

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Wife of G. Ramachandran

104. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

[On or after *May 31, 1946*]

BAPA,

Herewith a copy of my letter to Gopalaswami[1] which will acquaint you with my views. You will see that I have not asked him to do anything against his wishes. I have tried to point out to him what I thought was a flaw in his thinking. I expect that if Soundaram conducts herself in a mature way—and I trust she will—everything will end well. You may send a copy to her if you think it right.

SERVANTS OF [INDIA] SOCIETY

POONA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

105. INSTRUCTIVE CONVERSATION ON KHADI[2]

A khadi worker writes:

I give below a recent conversation between the manager of a Khadi Bhandar and some customers. Should khadi be sold to such persons?

Q. "is this yarn spun by you?"

A. "No I have bought eight hanks for Rs. 10."

Q. To a second customer: "Are you able to spin all this yarn?"

A. "No. This is spun by my daughter. We shell yarn too at the rate of 12 annas per hank."

Q. To a third: "You cannot buy khadi unless you produce the requisite quantity of yarn."

A. "It does not matter. So long as I cannot get the yarn, I will buy uncertified khadi."

Q. To a fourth: "Why do you buy khadi?"

A. "Because it is easy to procure."

Q. To a fifth: "You are not a regular wearer of khadi. What will you do with what you have bought?"

A. "Today khadi is looked upon as being in the fashion."

Q. To a sixth: "You do not spin yourself. From where then comes this yarn?"

[1] *Vide* the preceding item

[2] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 9-6-1946

A. "A good friend of mine provides me with yarn."

Q. To a seventh: "Why do you always wear either silk or wool khadi?"

A. "Because I do not have to give yarn for these."

Q. To an eighth: "You have bought a large quantity of khadi. What will you do with it all?"

A. "This will last me two or three years. After that it will be seen whether I can get any or not."

The above questions and answers are revealing. If the new policy in regard to khadi is correct and khadi customers are of the above nature, it proves the necessity for the abolition of the khadi clause from the Congress Constitution. It is worthy of note that the questions and answers concern eight persons. The Charkha Sangh need not cater for the needs of a single one of them. The Spinners' Association exists only for the poor. Those who wear khadi, do so either for the sake of the poor or for winning swaraj or both. The eight customers mentioned above are concerned with neither. If the Charkha Sangh is to prove the rightness of the ideal for which khadi stands, then its workers must be loyal enough to the new policy and not fear even the clossing down of the sales bhandars. They must have the strength to bear any consequences in order to set right the mistakes of the past.

The above conversation also holds a warning to the managers of the bhandars to be wide awake. They should become experts in the science of khadi and be prepared to teach customers the inner meaning of khadi with patience and humility. This may take time but it is worth while. If there is faith in the power of khadi I have no doubt that we shall remain steadfast and thereby inspire others the belief also. But if workers themeselves lack faith then the claim for khadi will fall to the ground.

I have taken for granted that the conversation has been truly reported.

MUSSOORIE, June 1, 1946

Harijan, 9-6-1946

106. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

BIRLA HOUSE, MUSSORIE,
June 1, 1946

DEAR LORD,

I had thought that your kind letter of the 27th ultimo did not require any answer. But I now see that I must write.

You "look forward" to my return and that of the Congress Working Committee to Delhi before the end of next week. Maulana Saheb was with me yesterday and he told me that it was very difficult to recall the members of the Working Committee before the 9th instant as many of them had appointments, he knew, which they could not very well cancel. He is, therefore, calling the meeting for the 9th instant. I wonder if I might also leave here on the morning of the 9th so as to reach Delhi about 10 a. m. This would not permit me to keep appointments before 2 p. m. that day. Will this do or will you want me before the 9th? If you do I would leave here on the 8th morning.

I hope that you are keeping well and that Sir Stafford is regaining his lost strength day by day.

The weather here is naturally very cool.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 200

107. LETTER TO KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI

MUSSORIE,
June 1, 1946

DEAR SISTER,[1]

Have just got yours of the 25th ultimo.

I do not know that I have kept any letter of yours unanswered except one which demanded no answer.

Your first para is irrelevant. I am neither saint nor sinner. I am just one among millions or milliards, no more, no less. And being

[1] The superscription is in Gujarati.

mere man, I do not distrust the men of the Mission. When and if they prove unworthy of trust, they will lose, not I. Those who never had any trust may lose nothing. Their gain will be to be able to say 'we-told-you-so'.

The constructive programme never stops. It is no makeshift.

I am writing this in Mussorrie, where I have an exceptionally quiet place.

Love.

BAPU

KHURSHED NAOROJI
BHUJ, CUTCH

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

108. LETTER TO BRIJLAL NEHRU

MUSSOORIE,
June 1, 1946

BHAI BRIJLAL,

I have gone through what you have written about the *asanas*, etc. I had not asked about the number of people that benefited by the treatment. What I want is a clean and concise account of the methods of treatment which you have yourself tried, so that anyone could try them himself. The practice of *Hathayaga*[1] is an ancient one. I have read a book on *Hathayog* in Gujarati. The man who practised it is no more. His later life was not worthy of emulation.[2] The description of *Hathayoga* exercises is fascinating. Your account of the *Khechari*[3] posture is exaggerated. I do not mean to say that *Hathayoga* exercises are something to be shunned but their usefulness is limited. It is essential to understand its true limits otherwise it will do nothing but harm. *Rajayoga*[4] is regarded as the opposite of *Hathayoga*. For my part, I do not regard the two as opposed to each other. All that is to be found in *Hathayoga* is already included in *Rajayoga*, besides a lot more which is its speciality. An aspirant to *Rajayoga* may have

[1] The superscription is in Gujarati.
[2] The source is not clear here.
[3] A yogic exercise which is supposed to enable one to fly in the air
[4] One of the various systems of yoga

recourse to *Hathayoga* in the initial stages I call *Rajayoga* by another name, viz., Ramanama.

From a copy the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

109. LETTER TO GURUNATH JOSHI

MUSSOORIE,
June 1, 1946

BHAI GURUNATH JOSHI,

I got your letter. It is good that you wrote, no matter what. In my opinion, you have been guilty of a serious lapse from the moral point of view. This is the one thing that has disgraced many a profession. In theory all professions are supposed to be altruistic, i. e., they are to be pursued with a religious attitude. Pecuniary consideration has no place in a religious attitude. If one pursues any calling in a religious spirit one is sure to earn enough for one's maintenance. But even that is not always necessary. Even if one cannot earn enough one has to keep up one's religious attitude. *Vritti* in this connection should be understood to mean *drishti*, i. e., point of view. You swerved from such an attitude an succumbed to the temptation of injections, etc. Ganeshshastri Joshi, your guru, who initiated you in the Ayurvedic system, has himself told me about the guiding principle of Ayurveda, viz., that Ramanama forms the basis of the system. And utilization of the five elements is symbolic of the permanence of Ramanama. You forgot this lesson. I had told you that in [Uruli] Kanchan village, you had to forget your knowledge of the Ayurvedic medicines, i. e., you were not to make use of them. Your first job was to teach Ramanama. Only those who have spontaneous faith in it and are inspired by it in all their actions can testify to the wonders of Ramanama. For, as I have said, Ramanama is the unfailing remedy for all the three kinds of afflictions. Like the arrow of Rama which is said to have never missed its target, the name of Rama too never fails. All our actions should be inspired by this principle. Lure of wealth is also a kind of affliction for which again Ramanama is the cure. Having yourself failed to imbibe this, how can you expect to treat others by naturopathy? Never mind what has happened; if you now want to come to Uruli Kanchan village, use the great rejuvenating herb that Ramanama is wherever you are. Give up the merest wish of earning wealth through it. Come and see me in Uruli Kanchan village

when I go there after you have completely rid yourself of your infatuation with wealth and have simplified your way of life. Read this letter again and again.Write to me if you don't follow any expression. You can show this letter to Ganeshshastri Joshi and do as he says.

May you always come to good. Forget Veergaon. It is enough to be inspired to . . . .[1]

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

110. LETTER TO Y. M. PARNERKAR

MUSSOORIE,
June 1, 1946

CHI. PA RNERKAR,

Bhai Burade has sent me an article[2] of yours. Datar Singhji has said the same thing that your article says. Our purpose will not be served by repeating that same thing in different words. Our work will make headway only when we produce results. Therefore, my comments on Rishabhdas's article apply here also. We ought to keep in some big city a sufficient number of daul purpose cows and prove that this is not only proper but also beneficial. The question of interest does not arise. Our success can be demonstrated by showing that it does not entail loss. If we fail to show even this much success our work is never going to make any real progress. We shall achieve nothing by contributing nice articles beautifully written in all the languages of India and by giving them wide publicity.This is universal experience. Today the cow is facing death.That cow's milk is not being appreciated only proves the helplessness of all those 'protectors'of the cow. For this let us not blame the British, nor the Muslims. You may still show me why your article deserves to be published. I shall then consider it again.I think Datar Singhji is doing our work as best as he can. It remains to be seen how far he will be able to go or how long his faith will stand firm.

Bhai Burade writes to tell me that two more articles were sent to Sushila Pai. Being unwell she is in Bombay. I have not looked up the *Harijan Sevak* files. I cannot lay my hands upon the articles. I am writing to Sushilabehn.

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] On *Sarvopayogi Gai*, the 'All-purpose cow'

I hope you are keeping good health. Your work also, I expect, is going on well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

111. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

MUSSOORIE,
June 1, 1946[2]

Addressing the meeting, Mahatma Gandhi said that it had given him much pleasure to come there for prayers. He had been told the poor and labouring classes to which he himself belonged lived round about the place and it was difficult for them to come to where he was staying. So he had agreed to hold the prayer meeting in the grounds of Silverton Hotel. He would have loved to walk up to the place of prayer but that was not possible and much against his wish he had to motor down to the place.

The benefit one derived from community prayers had to be experienced rather than described, added Mahatma Gandhi. He said that his experience of nearly 50 years had made him a confirmed advocate of community prayers. The work done by two mean together was more than the sum of the output of each separately. Similarly, the benefit derived from community prayers was incalculable.

Gandhiji reminded them about what he had said on the need for having a place for the poor people in Mussoorie. He did not expect them to build palatial buildings, but they should be clean and well planned, so that even a man like him could come and stay there. He could not stand dirty clothes, dirty houses and surroundings and dirty lavatories. There was no reason why the poor should have to put up with dirt.

Their lavatories should be as clean as a bedroom or a library. Defecation was not a dirty process. It was a necessary physiological action of the body as was eating and they should have proper and clean places for it.

There should not be a trace of dirt or foul smell in it. You might think that I am speaking with my tongue in my cheek. The fact is that a meticulous sense of cleanliness, not only personal but also in regard to one's surroundings is the alpha and omega of corporate life. We in India have made a ritual of cleanliness. But we have yet to make good our claim that we possess the sanitary instinct. I have seen how we foul the banks of our holy rivers. The Ganges water is regarded by us as

[1] *The Hindustan Times* report has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.*

[2] From *Hindustan*, 4-6-1946

holy, capable of washing off our sins. The idea is symbolical. Just as water washed the body clean, a devotee prays and hopes for the cleansing of the heart by the water of life. But if we contaminate our holy rivers as we do, how can their water effect inner cleansing?

He had heard that the living conditions of the labourers in Mussoorie were deplorable. They lived in small, overcrowded, dirty and evilsmelling rooms. No one could afford to overlook that. All life was one. If they cleaned their own homes and neglected their neighbours' they would have to pay the price in the form of epidemics and the like. In the West they had been able to rid their countries of plague. He himself had witnessed in South Africa how by prompt and energetic action the Johannesburg Municipality was able to arrest the outbreak of plague so effectively that it never came back. But in India it returned again and again —it had become almost endemic.

The remedy lies in our own hands We must not only observe the rules of health and hygiene in our own persons but we must see that our poor neighbours do so too To neglect to do so is a sin for which we cannot escape the penalty. I do not grudge the rich their riches provided that they do not forget the poor and share their riches with them and provided their riches are not gained at the expense of the impoverishment of others.

The Hindustan Times, 3-6-1946 and 4-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 16-6-1946

112.URULI KANCHAN[1]

My co-workers from Uruli Kanchan inform me that patients from far distances are coming there for treatment. I have already written in *Harijan Sevak*[2] that up till now there is nowhere any permanent arrangement for anyone to live and no room for in-patients. I have just heard that some land has been made available but the work of building huts on its remains. There is no house available in the village either where patients from outside could be taken in and, in any event, it has never been the intention to turn a village into a city. The real aim is for every village to have a nature-cure clinic to adorn it just as it should have a school.

Readers should bear in mind that my co-workers in Uruli Kanchan are unable to guide patients through correspondence.

[1] This appeared under "Notes". The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 9-6-1946.

[2] *Vide* "Nature Cure in Kanchangaon", 21-5-1946.

Persons who live far away can carry out their own nature-cure treatment. Who cannot recite Ramanama in his own home? It is also possible for everyone to have sitz baths, etc., wherever he is.

MUSSORIE, June 2, 1946

Harijan, 9-6-1946

113. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

AMTUSSALAAM

CARE CUROTRADE

BOMBAY

NO COMING DELHI. HOPING LEAVE DELHI ABOUT FIFTEENTH.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 521

114. LETTER TO MANIBHAI DESAI

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I am glad that you got the land at last. If all the land has been entered in my name, that is not right. There is no objection, however, if I have been described as a Trustee. I suppose you can easily see the difficulty that you will face if the land has been entered in my name and I suddenly die. In case, however, such a thing does happen, you may use this letter and end any dispute that may arise, telling the people concerned that the land was not my private property but was intended for schemes for helping the people of Uruli Kanchan to preserve good health and for purposes connected with such schemes. After me the Trustees will be Dinshaw Mehta and Jehangir Patel or Balkrishna.

I am returning by registered post the plans received from you. I accept the modifications suggested therein. I see no objection to all the lavatories being fitted with good septic tanks, if that is possible. I suppose you know that if such tanks have not been made carefully or if we do not use them properly, they can be a source of grave danger.

Let Dr. Bhagwat and Bhai Datar meet and discuss this matter further. Balkrishna also knows about both the dangers. I am not happy about the vagueness of my suggestion, but I have not been able myself to come to a definite dicision. I discussed the matter with some friends who have experience in this field, but they also could not help me to come to a decision, so [complicated][1] is the problem. For the present, therefore, abide by the decision of the three persons I have mentioned.

I shall positively have returned there in July. If you have not been able to make much progress by that time, I will take it up when I come there. I shall be in Delhi up to June 15 at any rate. I may [possibly][2] remain there even up to the 21st. I shall . . .[3] be going to Panchgani thereafter. I must return to Sevagram in August. I am, therefore, afraid that I [shall get][4] at the most the month of July [in Uruli Kanchan][5]. My only consolation [is that you people][6] are doing excellent work there, so much so that I sometimes fear whether my presence there might not hamper the modest but beautifully progressing work that you are doing. But I dismiss the fear from my mind with the thought that I will do as God prompts me.

By a fortunate accident both Kanchan and Zohra happen to be there. But they might leave that place any time. The best thing would be that some local woman or women should get trained and start working.

Carry out the modifications in the plan for the building which you have suggested. Personally I like the change in the doors from three feet to four feet, for narrow doors cannot afterwards be widened. I myself have experienced the advantage of wide doorways, namely, that patients' beds, etc., are easy to move in and out through them. But the best course would be to follow Dr. Bhagwat's advice. Everybody has a right to point out to him the advantages and disadvantages of all things but in case of a difference of opinion it is best, in my absence, that his view should be carried out. I cannot from this distance come to any more definite conclusions about the [suggested][7] modifications. I understand what you say about the cow.

[1] The source is damaged here.
[2] *Ibid*
[3] *Ibid*
[4] *Ibid*
[5] *Ibid*
[6] *Ibid*
[7] The source is damaged here.

I will reply to whatever questions you ask me about *brahmacharya*. But you should attach importance only to what your heart spontaneously suggests. Vinoba's articles are, of course, fine. But for the person who has unquestioning faith in the power of Ramanama there is no other support but that, for when one has faith in its power Ramanama there is no other support but that, for when one has faith in its power Ramanama ceases to be a matter of reason and becomes solely a matter of the heart. I feel every moment that for such a person Rama is the only King of his heart, and he who has Rama as his Lord cannot waste a single moment of his time. And violation of *brahmacharya* even in thought means for that moment at least the man's attention had wandered, and that, therefore, that moment was wasted.

I am not writing separately to Dhiru today. This is to save time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 2745. CCourtesy: Manibhai Desai

115. LETTER TO VINOD[1]

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

CHI. VINOD,

I have your letter. I take it that you folks don't mean to cheat me. Fulfil therefore all the promises that you have made. You may get away from there only if you can be relieved without difficulty. There is no place where one can find all the circumstances favourable to one.

What you write about staying in Uruli Kanchan is correct. The right thing will be for you to decide about staying at Uruli Kanchan only if you can conveniently get away from your present post and after you have had some experience there in my company. Perhaps the current season will have passed before you are ready. I am myself still held up near Delhi I shall be able to get away only by the end of this month. I must reach Sevagram August.

Please convey my blessings to Chi. Kaku.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This and the following two letters are in the Devangari script.

116. LETTER TO ASHABHAI

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

BHAI ASHABHAI,

It is good that you wrote. Discuss the matter also with Sardar. I have already written about it. I can think of nothing more that I should do. Datar Singhji once told me that the *roze*[1] could be domesticated. Even if it were true, I don't think one can keep whole herds of them. Give the matter some more thought.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

117. LETTER TO SATISH D. KALELKAR

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

CHI. SHANKAR,

I have your letter. If you could regularly write such letters *Harijan* [journals] would go on making the improvements you desire. I accept most of your criticism. I don't have the time to answer that part of it which I do not accept. I admit the Gujarati is not as good as it ought to be; and often it is of a very low standard. You may take it that it is the same about your other criticisms.

I do cherish the desire that the Gujarati should at least be of the standard that I have achieved. But we cannot cope with all matters. What we cannot very well cope with we ought to leave alone. I know this will be the first wise step. But since people want to know my views in however inadequate a language I rest content with doing or getting others to do what is possible.

I am glad that you are all well. I have an impression that Manubhai had come to pay me a visit.

Often time solves complicated problems, if only we have the patience. In what sense do you regard yourself as an ignoramus?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Bovine animals in wild state which move in herds and are a constant menace to crops

118. LETTER TO BHATE

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

BHAI BHATE,

I have your letter. I had drawn but a vague likeness of Bhai Datar; I cannot delineate it clearly.[1] I have approved of the amendments suggested and left the final decision to the Doctor, because from this distance I do not want to interfere. Besides, my knowledge is limited.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

119. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

June 2, 1946

CHI. NIMU,

I got your letter. I did send you a wire but you got it late. It was certainly good that you left. I did not like your going, though. However, on receipt of Ramdas's wire, it was indeed your duty to go. Now go over from there to Maganwadi at the earliest and take Sumitra with you.

See that Usha's health and yours does not deteriorate. In which hospital is Sarita? Who operated upon her? You, at any rate, should talk to her.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] This sentence is not clear in the source.

120. LETTER TO A. K. BHAGWAT

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

BHAI BHAGWAT,

I have your letter. The work is going on well. I think I have already mentioned in *Harijan* the suggestions which you have sent; if I have not I shall do so.[1]

I sent a telegram about the building. Your decision must be acted upon in my absence. Listen to everyone. But the final decision should be yours. I do not know enough—nor do I wish—to decide from this distance.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C. W. 2744. Courtesy: Manibhai Desai

121. LETTER TO NARDEV SHASTRI

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

BHAI NARDEV SHASTRI,

I was glad to have your letter. I am sorry to know that your health is poor. I am likely to be here for six days. Can you come so soon? Why take the trouble?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

122. LETTER TO RAMSHANKARLAL

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

BHAI RAMSHANKARLAL,

I have your letter. Faith that expects reward is no faith. Ramanama is its own reward. Those who have doubts about it have not realized it with their heart. The greatness of Ramanama lies in that it leaves a man content although he may not get what he desired. How

[1] *Vide* "Uruli Kanchan", 2-6-1946.

do we know that death did not come to your son as a release? Life and death are not in the hands of man.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

123. LETTER TO PUSHKAR

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

BHAI PUSHKAR,

I have your letter. I do not wish to write anything about Bharatput. Every good action is its own reward. Have this faith and go ahead.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

124. TALK WITH AZAD HIND DAL VOLUNTEERS

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

Seeing about 100 Azad Hind Dal volunteers in uniform who came to salute him . . . Mahatma Gandhi expressed pleasure and said they looked very smart.

When apprised of the working of the Dal in the district the Mahatma asked the volunteers:

Do you want to ask any questions?

A volunteer . . . said, "Sir, . . . please tell us when we are getting swaraj." Mahatma Gandhi laughed heartily and replied:

There is no doubt that we are getting swaraj but when, it is difficult to answer. Anyway it would not be much longer, hence we are eager to establish swaraj as early as possible and trying to do it.

Another volunteer . . . asked, "Do you still hold the same opinion which you expressed recently regarding the Cabinet Mission's declaration?"

Yes, because the Mission's object is good, its members' hearts are sincere and their is a sincere attempt to evolve a workable scheme of Indian independence out of the conflicting interestsand party aims. This I say in spite of what the Delegation said. I am primarily

concerned with their main plan. We fail to appreciate the plan because we do not recognize our own weaknesses and failings. We must be bold enough to confess our weaknesses and incompetences.

Another boy . . . said, "If you think that we are still incompetent for swaraj on account of our shortcomings, then the British people will never give it and we will never have it, they being very clever and diplomatic. What is the remedy in that case?"

I do not say we are quite incompetent for independence but whatever I say about our own shortcomings is based on the reading of the mental working and behaviour of a few of our own people.

There are vast numbers, in fact crores, of our people of whom we know nothing. We don't know what they may say or do at a particular moment. Freedom is not a matter of gift nor has the Delegation come here to give us freedom.

It would be too much to expect from them. We have to evolve freedom from amongst ourselves rather out of our own divergences and differences and this is the crux of the matter. They certainly have not come to deceive us this time. This is how I take it.

What is the meaning of your "Do or Die" slogan of 1942[1]?

It was taken out of the context. I had also said that we should work for swaraj and die in the attempt for it.

The last question was regarding non-violence.

Mahatma Gandhi said it was in 1920 that non-violence was deliberately adopted as a method of obtaining swaraj but we could not translate it into practice nor could we stick to it steadfastly. We only have the non-violence of the coward and not of the brave. We have not been non-violent all through. The discussion had finished when one of the volunteers fainted and fell down. . . .

Mahatma Gandhi remarked: "You have asked too much and let us finish for today", and left to see the boy.[2]

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-6-1946

[1] *Vide* "Speech at A. I. C. C. Meeting", 8-8-1942 and "Message to the Country", 9-8-1942.

[2] Ramprasad Gorkha, captain of the volunteers, requested Gandhiji to do something for the twelve Gorkhas who were court-martialled and sentenced for mutiny in the Gorkha lines.

125. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

Gandhiji congratulated the audience on the exemplary behaviour at prayer time and thanked workers for excellent loudspeaker arrangments. He reminded them of the debt the Hindu society owed to the Harijans. A sin committed in the name of religion was doubly bad, he added. The least that they could do for them was to subscribe money for their cause. He also asked them to contribute liberally for building better quarters for the labourers and a Harijan dharmashala. He, however, warned them against an enthusiastic beginning and a poor ending.

Ramanama is not for the few; it is for all. He who takes His name lays by a rich store for himself, and it is inexhautible. The more you draw upon it, the more it increases. It is infinite. As the Upanishad says, you take infinite out of infinite and infinite remains behind.[2] It is the unfailing panacea for all the ills, physical, mental and spiritual to which man is subject. Rama is only one of the numerous names of God. In fact there are as many names of God as there are human beings in the world. You may substitute Krishna for Rama or you can substitute for it any of His countless names and it will make no difference.

He himself had got the *mantra* of Ramanama, he said, from his nurse when he was a child.

I used to be frightened of ghosts and evil spirits in the dark. My nurse told me, "If you repeat Ramanama all the ghosts and evil spirits will vanish." I accepted her advice with all the unquestioning faith of a child. That cured me of my cowardice.

If that was the experience of a child, how much more would the grown-ups stand to gain by it if they repeated Ramanama with understanding and faith, he asked.

But the condition was that it must come from the heart.

Do evil thoughts possess you, or are you tormented by lust or

[1] *The Hindustan Times* report has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.*

[2] The invocatory *mantra* in *Svetasvataropanisad* reads :

"That (the Brahman) is whole.
This (the Universe) is whole.
From the Whole has come out the Whole.
When whole is taken away from the Whole.
What is left is Whole."

greed? Then there is no charm against it like Ramanama. Supposing you are tempted to amass a big fortune by some easy and dishonest means. If you have faith in Ramanama you will say to yourself, 'Why should I amass for my wife and children riches which they might squander away? Why not leave them a legacy in the shape of sound character and sound education and training that will enable them to earn their living by honest industry and body labour?' Ceaseless repetition of Ramanama will dispel your delusion and false attachment and the living realization will dawn on you that you were a fool to hanker after millions for the sake of your dear ones instead of offering them the priceless treasure of His name which frees one from all bondage and wanderings. Filled with the joy of that realization such a person will tell his wife and children, 'I have not brought for you the treasure I had set out for but something infinitely richer.''Where is it, show it to us?' they will say incredulously.'It is the Name which is richer than all treasures' he will reply, 'because it quenches the thirst for all riches. It is enshrined in my heart.'

The Hindustan Times, 5-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 16-6-1946

126. ITS LANGUAGE[1]

A correspondent writes:[2]

> It would be fitting if our constitution were to be drawn up in our national language. But one difficulty will be that few, if any, of the judges of our High and Federal Courts know Hindustani. They will, therefore, have to have an English translation for their use.
>
> The other question that will arise is whether the members of the Constituent Assembly will know enough Hindustani to grasp its essentials.

This letter appeals to me. Why should our constitution be in English? It should certainly be in an Indian language and, in my opinion, that language can only be Hindustani which crores can easily understand. In addition such an act will electrify the masses. As circumstances are, it is right that the Constituent Assembly should make an English translation of the document and, indeed, there should be translations also in every one of the provincial languages.

The second point raised by the writer is also apt. But since the

[1] This appeared under "Notes". The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 16-6-1946, under the date June 4, 1946.

[2] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.

members of the Constituent Assembly will be chosen by the present legislative bodies, it will be open to the latter to elect, so far as possible, only those persons who are conversant with Hindustani and thus act on the correspondent's letter.

MUSSOORIE, June 3, 1946
Harijan, 16-6-1946

127. URDU, THE LANGUAGE OF BOTH?[1]

1. You are making strenuous efforts to get every Indian, particularly Hindus with whom you naturally come most in daily contact, to learn Urdu. Similarly, is any Mohammedan striving to induce Muslims to learn Hindi? If not, will not the result of your labours be that Urdu will become the language of both and Hindi will remain the medium solely for Hindus? Will not this be a disservice to Hindi?

2. The Urdu equivalent of the Hindi word is invariably given in brackets in the Hindustani Prachar publications, but the converse is not done. Does that not signify a desire to teach Urdu by force to Hindus?

3. There are any number of Persian and Arabic words used in these publications. Do you think they are understood by the general run of people? For example *adab*[2], *adab*[3], *etakad*[4].

4. If Hindustani is in fact a language, why in your educational readers is there such a difference in terminology in the Urdu and Hindi editions?

5. My fear is that the lakhs of Southern Indians who have so far been trying to learn Hindi will be so scared of the Urdu script that they will learn neither and in the end the work hitherto done by the Hindustani Prachar Sabha will be completely wiped out.

1. Effort are being made that those who are unacquainted with the Urdu form should learn it and *vice versa* with those who do not know the Hindi form. It is true that my contacts are more with Hindi-knowing Hindus. But that does not worry me. Hindus are not likely to forget their Hindi. In fact I believe that their Hindi will be enriched by their knowledge of Urdu. The majority of Indians whether Hindus or Mussalmans, generally know best the languages of their provinces

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 16-6-1946.
[2] Politeness, literature
[3] Respectful greetings
[4] Faith

which contain a large number of Sanskrit words. I myself have neither the fear nor the desire that everyone will, as a result of my efforts, learn the Urdu form to the exclusion of Hindi. Desire or no desire, whatever is natural will happen. The attempt to have a wise blending of the two forms for a national tongue is, in my opinion, a good venture in every way.

2. I have not read all the publications of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. It is commendable if the Urdu equivalents of some Hindi words are given in brackets. This only means that in the opinion of the writers of the books these words are not commonly known. That the Hindi equivalents are not given signifies that those Urdu works have become current coin in Hindi. It is a pity that a learned person like the correspondent should have such suspicions. Suspicion is not an attribute of learning.

3. This does not seem to be a correct charge. And even if it were true, what harm can there be? The introduction of new words into any language enriches it. The words of Latin origin that came into the English language after the Norman conquest added to its virility. Whatever was not good or unnecessary or forced did not remain. The words given by way of example by the correspondent are known to all Hindi lovers in the North and have taken their rightful place in Hindi. It is true that they are new for Southern Indians and therefore their Sanskrit equivalents should be and are given. The truth is that the Hindustani Prachar Sabha has neither antagonism towards one nor partiality towards the other. Both forms are there and will remain and these should not present any difficulty. But, of course, if there is jealoousy and antagonnism between the two, Hindustani will never come into being. And such an eventuality will be a bad thing for India.

4. Hindustani existed at one time. The present effort is directed to revive it through a wise mixture of Hindi and Urdu and let it grow thereby. Neither Hindi[-lovers] nor Urdu-lovers should sorrow over this. Hindi and Urdu are sisters. What harm, therefore, if they mix with each other? It cannot be a matter of surprise that in this transition stage there should be a difference of terminology in Hindi and Urdu books.

5. My experience is quite contrary to that of the writer. I have not known anyone who has given up learning either script because of the insistence on the Urdu script. Nor do I fear that this will ever be

so.

My appeal to the writer is to divest himself of his prejudices.

MUSSOORIE, June 3[1], 1946

Harijan, 16-6-1946

128. LANGUAGE AND THOUGHT

I quote the following letter[2] for the benefit of colleagues working in *Harijanbandhu*, after omitting the author's name.

If I had the time, I would have given a detailed reply to this letter in *Harijanbandhu* itself. But I have no time for that. I am interested in language as such. What I mean is that whatever language one may speak or write one's pronunciation should be clear and the grammar perfect. I have not been able to reach this ideal in the case of any language. Gujarati being my mother tongue, naturally, I have love for it. But everyone knows how imperfect my Gujarati is. My grammar is weak, my spelling indifferent. What need I say about my Hindi, Urdu and Hindustani? Yet I have allowed myself to be the president of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. I spent years running after English and lived for many years in the country of Englishmen. The English language is glorious in its own place. It is an international language. I am also fond of it. But I am conscious that my knowledge of it is also imperfect.

What could be the reason for such lack of organization? It is obvious. Language too has its own place like everything else.

Language is an adornment in its proper place. It is a vehicle for thought; and not *vice versa*. It is the thought contained in it that adorns the language. Language does not have that power independently. Realizing this I run after ideas and drag the language behind. If the ideas are clear, grammar, spelling, etc., will come round automatically or may be the reader will generously put up with the looseness of language.

At present it is not possible for me to take up this dual responsibility. I can be responsible for my ideas. But if I wait. to adorn my language, *Harijan* would suffer. I manage with the existing

[1] From *Harijan Sevak*. *Harijan*, however, has "4".

[2] Not translated here. The correspondent had complained of indifferent translation, incorrect transliteration into Gujarati and incompete rendering of Sanskrit quotations in *Harijanbandhu.*

means. If I were to examine [my work] from the point of view of the language I would envy so many journals. Not one issue of *Harijan* would stand comparison with some other journals. I should be happy if the language of all the issues of *Harijan* was chaste. This is the reason why I have published the foregoing letter. Writers and translators of *Harijanbandhu* should read and ponder over it to polish their language with due perseverence and render their versions and translations as perfect as possible. The criticism made by the writer is friendly and the readers should take it in the same spirit and make whatever improvements they can.

A well-wisher like this correspondent should not rest content with criticizing the work but should from time to time offer suggestions from which others can learn. The late Sastriar had done it and I had published his article.[1]

In the end I should like to say that an incorrect translation of a Sanskrit quotation must not go. But sometimes though the original may be quoted the purpose is better served by including a Gujarati rendering at the same time. I could not find time to examine whether it was so in the present case[2].

The correspondent should be tolerant of the pronunciation of foreign languages. Where the spelling does not correspond to the pronunciation, the translator would follow the spelling and this should be the normal practice. If it were not so the translator would be overburdened. As regards proper names, utter chaos prevails. When they are transliterated either into Gujarati or into any other Indian language the safest way seems to be to conform the pronunciation to the spelling.

MUSSOORIE, June 3, 1946

Harijanbandhu, 16-6-1946

[1] *Vide* "The Schoolmaster Abroad", 13-2-1933.

[2] The correspondent had criticized the English rendering of the Saskrit quotations in Sushila Nayyar's article "Meeting Sastriar" published in *Harijan* 28-4-1946.

129. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

MUSSOORIE,
June 3, 1946

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. I am repeating what I have said. Make yourself fit in body and mind. Know that Ramanama is the supreme remedy for this.

Blessings from
BAPU

[C/O] SJT. SURESHWAR ACHARYA
SHRI NRISINHA ASHRAM
BHOOTADINO JHANPO
VADODARA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

130. LETTER TO MANKAR

MOSSOORIE,
June 3, 1946

BHAI MANKAR,

I got the news of Sheth Lallubhai's passing away from your letter. He did much work of compassion for animals. Sooner or later we shall all pass away. Let us hope God will send someone worthy to fill his place. In the meanwhile you for your part should go on pursuing your dharma and add lustre to the work.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

JIVADAYA MANDAL
148 SARAF BAZAR
BOMBAY 2

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

131. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

MUSSOORIE,
June 3, 1946

CHI. DINSHAW,

I got your letter only today. I had been waiting for it. It is good that Sir Stafford is all right. I think now there is no point in your coming here. We are to reach there on the 8th or the 9th. At the most you would get two days or three. Moreover, how can you leave Sir Stafford? Today I am observing silence and so am writing this myself. I assume you will be able to make out my handwriting.

Why does Golbehn have to wait for money? I do not like the idea of the Trust spending[money] on the land or the building at Simhagarh. I would like you to run your own affairs smoothly. But I shall be agreeable to whatever is agreed upon by you and Jehangirji. I would not regard it as wrong if you took what you needed for Gulbai. We will discuss this further when we meet.

I am returning the papers.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

132. LETTER TO BRIJMOHAN

MOSSOORIE,
June 3, 1946

BHAI BRIJMOHAN,

I could reach your letter only today. The letter and the rejoinder will appear in *Harijan Sevak*[1] without your name.

Why this fear?

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. BRIJMOHAN, PH. D.
P. O. BANARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Urdu, the Language of Both", 16-6-1946.

133. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

MOSSOORIE,
June 3, 1946

I am glad to learn that the question of improving the living conditions of labourer and building a dharmashala for the poor is engaging the active attention of some of the prominent residents of Mussoorie. But I am sorry to hear that even in a matter which should be common concern there is party feeling. If this news is true the work will never succeed. On one pretext or the other there will be increasing strife but I sincerely hope that the news is quite incorrect. In my opinion the work should be entrusted to a committee composed of influential persons who can command public confidence and are above party strife. Such persons are to be found everywhere and Mussoorie should be no exception to the rule. I hope such a committee will soon be appointed and it will bring the good work to fruition.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 5-6-1946

134. MINDFULNESS THE REMEDY

The realization that the mere desire for truth and non-violence is not sufficient to make people non-violent made me think that. . . a way must be taught, which would enable people to rebuild themselves fundmentally. . . .

External observance like prayers, handicrafts, etc., are not the efficient means for truth and kindness. . . . Only by inner and well directed effort can a man rebuild himself. . . I have in mind the way of mindfulness, recommended by Buddha. . .He has gone to the point of saying that this way can bring a man to prefection in seven days. . .

The way of mindfulness consists in being constantly observant, conscious, attentive, watchful, awake, uninterruptedly aware of the mental and emotional content of our consiousness and of its expressions through the body. . .

You can easily try it out on yourself. Within a week you will be convinced that Buddha has left with us a toll of unparalelled efficacy for rebuilding ourselves truly and permanently. . .

[1] It being Gandhiji's silence day his written message was read out after the prayers.

Thus writes Mr. Frydman[1], better known to the public as Bharatanand. I reproduce it for what it is worth. I have not fallen in love with it because this too has caught on. If it was a seven days' work, why is it that it has so few witnesses in the world today? In so far as it is an aid, it is in general vogue and takes its place among the other remedies, whether it is called mindfulness vigilance or meditation. It does not take the place of prayer or the *mala*,[2] or any other outward practice. It is in addition to these outward observances so long as the latter are not for show. Indeed, prayer is purely an inward act. Those who found in Ramanama the talisman knew mindfulness and found by experience that Ramanama was the best of all the remedies adopted for the practice of Truth and Non-violence.

MUSSOORIE, June 4, 1946

Harijan, 16-6-1946

135. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

BIRLA HOUSE, MOSSOORIE,
June 4, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

Mr. Herbert Fischer, a German of Friends' Settlement, Itarsi, is known to me. He was for some time in the Village Industries Association in Wardha. His wife is a lady of Jamaica but in India, also of Friends' Settlement. I understand that Mr. Fischer and his wife are due to be sent to Germany in virtue of some plan. Mr. Fischer is now in a concentration camp in Satara. I wonder if it is possible for him to meet me before being sent to Germany.[3]

I wonder, too, if this mattter falls within the Viceroy's department or whether I should write to some other [authority].

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 84

[1] Maurice Frydman. Only extracts from his letter are reprduced here

[2] Rosary

[3] Herbert Fischer and his wife were allowed to meet Gandhji before leaving for Germany.

136. LETTER TO ALLADI KRISHNASWAMI AIYER

MOSSOORIE,
June 4, 1946

DEAR SIR ALLADI,

Rajaji has sent me your opinion which I have read with the attention it demands.

Hope you are gaining by your stay in Bangalore.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR ALLADI KRISHNASWAMI
TATA SILK FARM AREA
NEAR SOUTH END ROAD
BASAVANGUDI, .BANGLORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

137. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALCHARI

MOSSOORIE,
June 4, 1946

MY DEAR C.R.,

Your letter with enclosure. I drink in all you say or send. There are obvious diffucilties. But I am hoping that they can be got over.

I have sent a short note to Sir Alladi.

How is your son? What is or was the matter with him?

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

138. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

MUSSORIE,
June 4, 1946

CHI. KANAM,

I have your letter. You are doing good work. Why do you not do spinning? You ask me to send you the list of books. When you read the books available on the khadi science you will learn many new words, you will learn Gujarati and Hindi technical terms and you will also learn how much meaning is contained in khadi.

Show this letter to Vinoba and Bhansali and listen to what they say about khadi and ponder over it. We should voluntarily and strictly follow the rules of an institution where we go, whether as guests or inmates. That is what discipline means. The term for displine in Gujarati and Hindi is *shista*, which however does not convey the full meaning of the English word. Work done without discipline even if it is on a massive scale, is washed away. The way the planets go round the sun is discipline. If any planet, out of mischief, were to start going faster or rush too near to the sun, it would not only burn up but would destroy the whole solar system. From this you may estimate the value of discipline.

It is certainly good that the Chimur people[1] have been released. They deserved to be released. But to command all that they did would amount to commending violence. It would mean that we accepted it. Now that they have all been released, uncle Bhansali should understand this and make our Chimur friends understand.

I believe I shall be going to Panchgani after the 15th of this month.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Kanu Gandhi Paper. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1]Who were convicted for the Ashti-Chimur disturbances during the 1942 movement and whose death sentences were commuted to transportation for life.

139. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

MUSSOORIE,
June 4, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

You must have returned from Samastipur. I got Mirabehn's letter yesterday in the evening. It is clear from it that it is no longer necessary for you to go to her Ashram. She says she does not need anybody now.

You must have received Kanchan's letter to me which I had sent to you. As I was dictating these lines, I was given your letter received yesterday. I am of the view that you should go to Uruli Kanchan. It should not be difficult for you to secure a house at Uruli separately. You will have *satsanga* [1] there. Balkrishna is already there. Kanchan has been rendering very good service there. If you go there and if you can exercise control over yourself, she may work with redoubled zeal. But I do not wish that you should go there purely with that aim. I am not very eager that she should go on with the work she is doing. My only desire is that you should start living together and lead a happy exemplary life. For this, you may stay where you like and do what work you like. I do wish, of course that both of you, living together, should associate yourselves with any one of my activities. I would certainly like that. But my wish and approval is a secondary consideration. I shall reach there by the 9th the latest. But you need not wait for me. I would rather that you went to Kanchan by the first train. I can fully realize Kanchan's agony. I am returning your letter.

I do not think it is your duty to visit Balvantsinha's village; but you should go there if you do not go to Kanchan immediately.

Blessings from
BAPU

Enclosure: 1 letter

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8397. Also C. W. 7215. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Association with good persons

140. LETTER TO RAMPRASAD VYAS

MUSSOORIE,
June 4, 1946

CHI. RAMPRASAD,

I have your letter. It was good you discharged your reponsibility in regard to the buildings. But I am constantly approached for help in building houses. Why should you find a job tedious if you know it? I don't want to assign the job to you if it hurts you. What other work would have yourself like to have?

I see that both of you have a great responsibility in the case of Jivaram[1]. It is quite all right that you make him sit in cold water. Do you keep his feet out [of water]? Do you give him friction-bath? If you can do it the benefit may be miraculous. It is described in Kuhne's book which we have there. It might perhaps be better to put a mud-pack on his head instead of applying a wet bandage.

I shall reach Delhi on the 9th or earlier.

SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

141. LETTER TO SARALABEHN A. SARABHAI

MUSSOORIE,
June 4, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. The case of the late Manibehn indeed evokes sympathy. As long as ignorance persists such cases are bound to happen in the world. Our duty is only to remove the ignorance. By this I don't mean mere knowledge of the letters, but improvement of the mind. I should welcome book knowledge to the extent it is incidental to such improvement.

I do not feel like writing anything in this regard in *Harijan*. All the same I have it in mind and if anything strikes me I shall write.

While staying in Gulmarg do whatever work you can.

Neither I nor anybody else had ever expected you to devote your whole time to the Kasturba Turst[2] , or stay on in Gujarat for that

[1] Addressee's son

[2] The addressee was Agent of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust in Gujarat.

purpose. For me it was—and is—enough that you do what you do thoughtfully, careful and effectively.

I hope you are getting full benefit of the air at Gulmarg, and that it is not affected by the commotion in Kashmir.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. SARALABEHN
HUT NO. 46, GULMAR
KASHMIR

For a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Paper. Courtesy: Pyarelal

142. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

MUSSOORIE,
June 4, 1946

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter. That you have realized your mistake regarding the mangoes is enough.[1] Vigilance alone will enable us to lead a good life.

Hoshiari wrote that after her brother's marriage she would go to the Ashram. I could have no further talk with her. At Delhi I did not get time even to lift up my head. I could hardly talk to her about Gajaraj. I asked her to shake off the tendency to run after me. As a result she went home. I feel she can make little progress in the Ashram. If she returns to the Ashram, it should be with the idea of not leaving it and of reforming Gajaraj. I have observed that Hoshiari has herself spoiled Gajaraj. The poor girl knows no better. What could she do? Gajaraj meanwhile is being spoiled more and more.

It is very good that you make your strings locally. And Anantramji writes that you are also improving the garden.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1972

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Balvantsinha", 25-5-1946.

143. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

MUSSOORIE,
June 4, 1946

CHI. HOSHIARI,

I have your postcard. You may certainly stay on for your brother's marriage. There is no absolutely duty to return to the Ashram. But if you want to go now, you must not return home. You will progress only if you go with the intention of inculcating in Gajaraj the habit of sleeping separately, so that he studies well. If you cannot do this, live in your village, serve your presents and learn what you can. Make a good farmer of Gajaraj.

Your brother may come only after I reach Delhi. I shall reach there in two or three days.

C/O SHRI BALVANTSINHA
KHURJA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

144. LETTER TO GOVINDLAL

MUSSOORIE,
June 4, 1946

BHAI GOVINDLAL,

I got your letter. It is good. It will be published in *Harijan Sevak* without your name.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SADAN
15 NARAYAN DABHOLKAR ROAD
MALABAR ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

145. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

MUSSOORIE,
[*June 4, 1946*][2]

Gandhiji spoke of the poor rickshaw-pullers and load-carriers there. They should be everyone's concern. They made life possible for the wealthy and yet the latter, while willing to take from them even the inhuman service of rickshaw-pulling, did not care to see where and how they lived, what they ate and what they earned. He had heard that these poor men lived in tiny rooms without adequate light and air; they did not want to reveal how many herded together into one room lest they should be evicted or fined. They were dirtily clad as could be seen from the little crowd of them that had come to attend the prayers that evening. But perhaps they had not the wherewithal to afford a change of clothes. They might be like the woman in Bihar, when he first went there, who, when asked to wash herself and her clothes, said to Ba: "How can I bathe when I have not another sari to put on?" It was the benden duty of those to whom God had given more than their needs to spend the extra money on those who were in want. He had been told that the Congress Goverment was now in power and would see to it that labour quarters everywhere were rebuilt. If they did so it would be a good thing. It would be no more than their bare duty. That would not, however, exonerate rickshaw-riders from their duty. Doctros had told him that these poor people pulled these vehicles for four years or so and the work was so hard they died soon after of lung and heart trouble. How could the users be so callous as not to see that rickshaw-pullers were properly housed and sufficiently paid and clothed and not overworked.

Harijan, 16-6-1946

146. HINDUSTANI CRITICIZED

Shri Jivaji Desai has sent me samples of some criticisms of the edition in Urdu script of *Harijan Sevak* from both Hindi and Urdu newspapers. They have made fun of its Hindustani. Hindi critics opine that the articles are deliberately filled with unneccesary Urdu words and Urdu critics complain of the use of Sanskrit words which Muslims cannot understand.

I am glad of these criticisms. Thus, why should the paper be called *Harijan Sevak* instead of *Harijan Khidmatgar?*Why *Sampadak* and not 'Editor' or *Mudir* and so on? Lovers of Urdu believe that

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"
[2] The source reports this after the speech of June 2 and before that of June 5.

Hindustani and Urdu are synonymous. Lovers of Hindi feel the same conversely even when it is written in the Urdu script. Presumably they hope that this criticism will go home and make me give up the Urdu script in sheer despair. But the hope is not likely to be fulfilled. In fact neither Urdu or Hindi is to be termed Hindustani. Though not in vogue today Hindustani is a wise mixture of the two. If newspaper and other critics will exercise a little forbearance they will presently see that it is not difficult to understand what is Hindustani as distiguished from Hindi and Urdu. I admit that those who write for *Harijan Sevak* are still struggling but they are determined to reach the desired goal. Readers must bear kindly with what may today seem a hotch-potch of the two forms. If God spares my life I hope to prove to the readers of *Harijan Sevak* that Hindustani can be as sweet as either Urdu or Hindustani can be a sweet as either Urdu or Hindi. The seeming quarrel of today will shortly disappear when it is realized that the two forms are sister and that through their joint effort will come into being a stately language which will serve the crores of India.

In the interim, I hope, critics will point out what to them may appear as mistakes. Taken in a friendly spirit such criticism will help to improve the languae of *Harijan Sevak.*

MUSSOORIE, June 5, 1946

Harijan, 16-6-1946

147. TRUE BUT NOT NEW[1]

Maulvi Hamidullah Sahib of Lucknow came to see me in Mussoorie and handed two of his pamphlets. They are an attempt to prove the necessity of making obligatory up to the high school standard a knowlede of both Hindi and Urdu and the Nagari and Persian scripts, whether for boys or girls. The idea appeals forcibly to me. My effort has always been directed to this end. Time was when Maulana Hasrat Mohani and Babu Purushottamdas Tandon were working for the same objective but alas! we did not meet with sucess. Nevertheless, I neither abandoned hope nor effort and the result was the creation of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. The Maulvi Sahib's request, therefore, is nothing new for me.

If the U. P. Government is able, with the general consent, to

[1] This appeared under "Notes". The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 16-6-1946, under the date June 6, 1946.

make the attempt, they will have rendered a great service. I am of the opinion that in all the provinces where Hindi or Urdu is the mother tongue, a knowledge of the other should be made compulsory. I have no doubt that the natural outcome of such a step will be the easy birth of Hindustani, in which the two will blend into one. The present controversy between the two sisters will then cease. Another advantage that will accrue is that tuition up to the high school will be in the national language instead of English.

MUSSOORIE, June 5, 1946

Harijan, 16-6-1946

148. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

BIRLA HOUSE, MUSSOORIE,
June 5, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 3rd instant.

In accordance with your advice I am staying in Mussoorie until the afternoon of the 8th, reaching Delhi about 11p.m. that night. This enables me to have the next morning's treatment without bustle and hurry so as to be ready for the Working Committee meeting the same afternoon.

This will be given to you by our mutual friend, Horace Alexander.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 201

149. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

MUSSOORIE,
June 5, 1946

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have received your telegram. I can see that you are not at all willing to leave Bombay. It would become a little cooler there during the monsoon but I do not think it can be of much benefit to one in your situation. There are hill-stations like Kasauli, Dharampur, etc., in the mountain ranges of Simla. If you spend two years there, even that

would help. And those hill-stations provide fairly good facilities. Of course there are many inconveniences and so one has to consider it carefully. But if you are calm and cheerful within, I have nothing to say.

I shall leave here on the 8th so that I can be ready for the 9th. Let us see what happens. As the reciting of Ramanama is for you, so it is for me and everybody else. That medicine is constantly working, but only those who know it can profit from it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

150. LETTER TO MOHANLAL M. SHAH

MUSSOORIE,
June 5, 1946

BHAI MOHANLAL,

I have your letter. It is good that you acquired the bungalow.[1] I take it that Sjt. Shantilal will pay for the repairs. How will you meet the expenditure on its upkeeps and repairs already undertaken? I would prefer also that you and Bachhraj[2] suggested who should be the trustee. I can, if you ask me, choose a name from amongst those you may suggest, otherwise I see nothing wrong in the two of you deciding upon someone and inplementing your decision. I don't want to add this one to my many tasks. It is a different thing that I may do it if I can without special effort. Now that the bungalow has been acquired, if I can spend part of the season at panchgani I ought to stay in the place, oughtn't I? The chief consideration, however, should be that really poor people, Harijans or others in similar condition, should be able to utilize it. Think of a policy which will make this possible and have the rules formulated. I should like to make use of the building whenever I come but the really needy should be constantly using it. I am of the opinion that middle-class people should have no place in it. Please send me a plan of the premises and description of its

[1] For the proposed dharmashala at Panchgani
[2] Bachhraj Tribhuvandas Doshi

surroundings.

I am enclosing a copy of this to Bhai Bachhraj.

MOHANLAS MOTICHAND SHAH

GADHADA

KATHIAWAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Pepers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

151. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

MUSSOORIE,
June 5, 1946

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

The representation by the workers of the firm of Mukund has just reached my hands. I am sending it to you. Is there any truth in it? They have also sent me a wire. I have paid no attention to it. How can I study all this? I don' have the time either. But is there any truth in what they say in the notice?

Janakibehn should now be perfectly all right. It seems this task has been well accomplished.

BACCHARAJ [&] CO.

MAHATMA GANDHI ROAD, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

152. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

MUSSOORIE,
June 5, 1946

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

I have your letter. I had Sir Datar Singhji's article[1] on dualpurpose cows revised. As it is now I do not find any cause for complaint. I have even sent the thing for printing. If in some places they have single-purpose cows I see no harm in it. Think over what I have written to Rishabhdas. I have written someting to this effect to Parnerkar[2] also; see that.

[1] The article was published in *Harijan*, 23-6-1946, under the title "Development of Dual-Purpose Cattle in India".

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Y. M. Parnerkar", 1-6-1946.

Dadaji is still going strong. Can Anasuya[1] help you in cow-protection work or is it that you cannot spare her from household work?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9129

153. LETTER TO ANANTRAM

MUSSOORIE,
June 5, 1946

CHI. ANANTRAM,

I have your letter. A farmer has to face Nature's vagaries. Even then he is the mainstay of the world. So I am glad that you both[2] are working together. Nobody can compete with Balvantsinha in hard work. I have often seen it.

For your peace of mind now I can think of no other remedy except Ramanama. It has been proved by experience. There are two conditions to it.

(1) It should proceed from the heart.

(2) The rules that I have enunciated for its repetition should be observed.

They are so simply that they can be observed easily. It is all given in a *Harijan* issue.[3]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 132

154. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

MUSSOORIE,
June 5, 1946

CHI. SHRIMAN,

I am enclosing a letter from Dr. Brijmohan about Hindustani. You will find my reply to it in *Harijan Sevak*[4] . But it will be better if you write to him because you are likely to have much information

[1] Addressee's wife
[2] The addressee had been assisting Balvantsinha in farm work at the Ashram.
[3] *Vide* "Faith Cure v. Ramanama", 30-5-1946.
[4] *Vide* "Urdu, the Language of Both?", 31-6-1946.

which I don't have.

I am sending herewith a copy of my article.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashivad, p. 310

155. SILENCE-DAY NOTE

June 5, 1946

Is he here to day?[1]

Is the machine there?

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 10522

156. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

MUSSOORIE,
June 5, 1946[3]

His remarks[4] were taken to heart by one of the workers who has in charge of the meeting. On Subsequent inquiry Gandhiji learnt that the information which he had received was of doubtful authenticity. As a satyagrahi he felt he had fallen from grace in accepting a statement made to him without full scrutiny and by basing his public remarks thereon. Making a public confession of his mistake in his address after the prayers on the following day, he stressed the importance of speaking only when necessary and uttering every word after the most careful thought.

A satyagrahi cannot afford to be credulous or to be careless in his speech. There is a Sanskrit verse saying that not to begin is the first sign of wisdom, but once you begin a thing you should do it well.

It would have been best not to have made use of the unsifted information. But having done so I should end it well by making the admission that on inquiry I found that the accusation could not be

[1] S. M. Iyengar had come, with a letter of recommendation from B. C, Roy to show Gandhiji "his new method of spinning and the wheel he had devised".

[2] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

[3] The source reports this before the speech of June 7, 1946.

[4] Made during the previous day's speech when it was reported to Gandhiji that some rickshaw-pullers were turned out of the prayer gathering because of their dirty clothes.

supported.

There is a great piece of sculpture in Japan depicting three monkeys. One of them is shutting his mouth with his hands, the second is shutting his ears and the third is shutting his eyes. The lesson of the first one is not to speak unless absolutely necessary and then too, to weigh every word before speaking. The message of the second is not hear evil things, of the third not to let one's eyes wander here, there and everywhere.

Therefore, when going along the road, one should either contemplate the beauty of nature or else fix [one's] gaze on the ground before one. He carried about the three gurus with him wherever he went and he advised them all to bear their instructions in mind.

Harijan, 16-6-1946

157. TELEGRAM TO LAKSHMIDAS ASAR

June 6, 1946

LAXMIDAS
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI

YOUR TWO WIRES. SORRY ABOUT MARUTI'S DEATH. HOPE LAXMI WILL LISTEN AND COME HARIJAN ASHRAM. WRITING YOU AND LAXMI.[1]

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Lakshmi M. Sharma", 6-6-1946.

158. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

BIRLA HOUSE, MUSSOORIE,
June 6, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

The enclosed has been sent to Gandhiji by the father of the interned writer[1].

Gandhiji wishes me to ask you if from your extact knowledge of the working of the administration you can say whether anything can be done to enable the young man to fulfil what appears to be his laudable wishes?[2]

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji'sCorrespondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 85

159. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

MUSSOORIE,
June 6, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

I shall be glad if Jaisukhlal and you come. If both of you can live happily away from me and you get educated and become wise there is nothing special to be gained by coming to me. If there has been any misunderstanding the fire of time will melt it away provided we let it do so. From your doings[3] there which you describe it seems that you are spending your time well. By goondas you seem to mean the bad boys you have to come across. Your way of dealing with them may be said to resemble partly of Draupadi. The method worth emulating is that of Sita. Though, of course, both have been counted among the [five] *satis.*[4] It is worth thinking over why Draupadi, though she had five husbands, was and is regarded as a *sati*. But I leave that question aside. If your answer to the goonda meant nothing more than what you did, if your heart was full of anger, then you may be said to have replied to the goonda with the violence on your part. If you think over the meaning of whipping out the sandal from your

[1] Dr. Suresh Chandra, who was interned in Germany

[2] In a letter dated July 27, 1946, C.W. B. Rankin replied that the internee, released in the middle of May, had been asked whether he wished to be repatriated to India and a reply from him was awaited.

[3] The addressee had punished a boy who was teasing girls.

[4] Ideal wives; the most well-known in tradition are Anasuya, Parvati, Savitri, Sita and Draupadi.

foot and throwing it at him or striking him a few times with the sandal in your hand and the goonda becoming cowed down, you will realize what you did. Since you resorted to physical force in a crowded square the other people also would take courage andthe goonda being a coward at heart, would be cowed down and run away. If taking off the sandal was a sign of compassion on your part then I would regard even your hitting the man with it as an act of ahimsa. Ahimsa has its roots in the heart. And its result should be that the other person submits, not to physical force, but to soul-force because he is overwhelmed by the power of compassion behind the physical punishment. I will give you an instance of this from my own life. Miss Schlesin[1] in her folly started smoking a cigarette in my presence. I slapped her and threw away the cigarette. For the first time she cried before me and apologized and wrote to me afterwards saying that she would never do such a thing again and that she had recognized my love I have narrated this incident in my autobiography.[2] There have been many other similar incidents in my life. Others also may have similar experience about which we do not know. Did the goonda recognize the love in your heart? Do not be decided whether your action was inspired by violence or non-violence. Ordinarily whipping out sandals is no sign of culture or ahimsa. It is a sign of impulsiveness, that is, of lack of culture. But in your case, the action may have been a sign of ahimsa. Still you alone can testify which is the truth; or, may be God. However, after analysing your action in such detail, I only wish to compliment you. For I do not mind even if your action was violent. It is enough for me that you were not cowed down. I assume that you wish to cultivate ahimsa, and therefore, even if it was an act of violence, you will try and learn ahimsa from it. I, therefore, gladly gave your letter to every-body to read. Akha Bhagat[3] has said: "Live as you like but realize Hari anyhow." Accordingly, if you learn to parctise pure truth and pure ahimsa even while living there I will believe that you have learnt more than what you would have by staying with me and learning them under my guidence.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U./XXIV

[1] Sonja Schlesin Gandhiji's assistant in South Africa

[2] The incident, however, is not reported in the *Autobiography*.

[3] Saint-poet of Gujarat

160. LETTER TO LAKSHMI M. SHARMA

MUSSOORIE,
June 6, 1946

CHI. LAKSHMI[1],

You are now a widow. If you have learnt anything from me, there is no difference between a wife and a widow, truly understood, for sooner or later everyone has to die. The soul does not die. Marriage is not of bodies, and if it is [regarded as such] it is wrong. If one could marry a body, why don't we marry a dead body or, say, a stone? A marriage takes place between two souls and the soul never dies.

Moreover, you have your children. You should bring them up with care and lead an absolutely chaste life. If you conduct your life with restraint you will not feel any loss. In fact you will have gained something through the loss.

Laksmidasdada[2] has asked you to go and live in the Harijan Ashram. Do as he says. In it lies your highest good. If you live in the Ashram it will be like being among your ow family. Sorrounded by them you will always be protected. You are a good girl, so if you will wisely devote yourself to the work of service that you have taken up you will shine and do good to many others. You yourself once wrote to me, didn't you, that with the Sardar's help you had acquired a house of your own. If so, make all arrangements about it as Lakshmidasdada advises, so that you will have nothing to worry about. What are your liabilities? What has Maruti[3] left you? Who are your friends, men as well as women? You did write something about your sister Mani, but I have forgotten it. Let me have all the information in detail.

I take it that you are calm. Don't give yourself up to grief. Be cheerful at heart.

Blessings from
BAPU

HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] A Harijan girl whom Gandhiji had adopted as his daughter when he was at the Sabarmati Ashram

[2] Lakshmidas Asar

[3] Maruti Sharma, addressee's husband

161. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS ASAR

MUSSOORIE,
June 6, 1946

CHI. LAKSHMIDAS,

I have your letter. It seems Maruti passed away suddenly. You did right in having asked Laksmi to come to the Ashram. It will be very good if she goes and lives there and then she should also participate in the training. I shall know more when your letter comes. I have written a letter to Lakshmi. I am enclosing it.

Blessings from
BAPU

HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

162. LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

MUSSOORIE,
June 6, 1946

CHI. CHAMPA,

I have your letter. The handwriting does not look like yours. If it is I will say you have improved it a lot.

I don't remember anything about any freedom I might have given you in regard to your mode of life there. If I did, you should have asked me to give it in writing. Human memory has ever been infirm. And [mine] has now become quite weak. I do remember, however, that whatever I might have said I qualified it with the condition that whatever you did should be with the consent of Chimanlal or Krishnachandra. That is because I do not have, nor do I want to have, any exclusive right. How could I then make any concession independently? Whatever I might have said earlier, make a note of what I am now writing and conduct yourself accordingly. I only wish your good. Now indeed you have realized that your upbringing had not been perfect. Whatever might have become aware of things. You cannot therefore behave irresponsibly on the strength of your wealth. Besides, the money that you have should be regarded as a sacred trust and spent accordingly. At the Ashram it would become you to live in poverty as the others do; only then can you be

accommodated. You cannot spend your money in such a way that it corrupts others. I cannot tolerate it, nor should the Ashram. You should therefore sit down with Chimanlal and Krishnachandra and organize your life as they advise and make yourself one with the Ashram as sugar dissolves in milk. Only then will you be happy, and make your children happy too. It would not befit you to behave in any other way. Although Ratilal is alive, I am sure you never let yourself forget that you are as good as a widow. If you cannot act in this way, if you are made of an altogether different stuff, you had better leave promptly; go and live where it suits you.

As I don't know when I shall be reaching there, I have written at length. I know yours is a difficult task.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

163. LETTER TO SAMBHAJI

MUSSOORIE,
June 6, 1946

BHAI SAMHAJI,[1]

Manjulabai and others whose land Government has acquired for the main road to the Ashram ought to be exempted from and land-tax pertaining to that portion and the amount inadvertently paid ought to be refunded. There can be no doubt about it. If you will see to it, I need not spend my time on it. If the job is beyond your power, do write to me and also tell me if what I believe is correct.

Blessings from

BAPU

SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

164. LETTER TO BALVANTISNHA

MUSSOORIE,
June 6, 1946

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter. What you say is quite correct.[2] We should not

[1] Jamnlal Bajaj's agent in Sevagram

[2] Sevagram was faced with scarcity of foodgrain.

underrate the gravity of the situation. He who abstains from doing a thing merely because it does not seem important enough eventually fails to accomplish anything at all. You have to fulfil the promise you have given.[1] I am herewith making a beginning to do what needs to be done. Enclosed you will find a letter to Sambhaji.[2] Read it and if you find it all right send it on to to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen p. 378

165. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS G. KAPADIA

MUSSOORIE,
June 7, 1946

CHI. MADHAVDAS,

I have your letter. I think you are now out of the wood. It is therefore my greatest desire that you should forget me. I shall be happy if you follow the example of Kunvarji[3] and others who do not come to me for comfort but who do come and see me when I am in the neighbourhood. You should also do the same thing.

Men do have ups and downs in their health and this will always be so. I was not therefore surprised that you fell ill. Everything will be well if you but see Rama in everyone. I am not writing separately to Kunvarji. It is he who has become your real relation.

Blessings to you all.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MADHAVDASBHAI
C/O SHRI KUNVARJIBHAI
ADARSH DUGDHALAYA
MALAD, BOMBAY, (B. B. & C. I. RLY.)

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 2722

[1] To obtain help from Jamnalal Bajaj's firm
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] Kunvarji Parekh, son-in-law of Harilal Gandhi

166. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

MUSSOORIE,
June 7, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. I will not reply at length. You may ask what you please when we meet. I assume that Sita's problem will be solved.

I think I shall leave Delhi before the end of this month. Everything may be over even before the 15th.

To you all,

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MANILA GANDHI
KHIMJI JIVA SANATORIUM, BLOCK NO.6
BANGANGA, WALESHWAR ROAD
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4982

167. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

MUSSOORIE,
June 7, 1946

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. It is quite interesting. It will save your time if you don't take so much pains over writing letters now. If you send to the newspapers a report with the kind of particulars you have given me, or if you send me a copy of any such report appearingg in a newspaper, I will know what is happening. Even your quarrelling pleases me. You may, therefore, quarrel but should go on doing your work and learn from me whatever I may have to teach.

Why did you get your letter-heads printed in English?[1] Why not in the Devanagari and Urdu scripts, or, if you do not like that, in Devanagari only. For whom did you get them printed in English?

I am surprised to learn that Manibehn Namavati[2] refused to give you the details. Shall I ask Manibehn about it?

[1] The addressee had a few letter-heads printed in English for addressing heads of some institutions which she wanted the camping girls to visit.

[2] Who ran a Khadi Bhandar in Bombay for a number of years with the help of women

After Delhi my programme is to go to Poona and, if possible, to Panchgani from there. Wherever I may be you are free to come and see me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10447. Also C. W. 6886. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

168. LETTER TO HUSSAIN

MUSSOORIE,
June 7, 1946

BHAI HUSSAINBHAI,

I have your letter of May 22, 1946.

You are needlessly worried. Why should such a large and educated community as the Shias feel helpless?

Your son had been to see me in Delhi. I appeased him by exchanging a few pleasantries. More when we meet some time.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

PRESIDENT

ALL-PARTIES SHILA CONFERENCE

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

169. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

MUSSOORIE,
June 7, 1946

BAPA,

I got your postcard dated 2-6-1946. Can I help agreeing with you? You have fixed for the 25th and at the Bharat Sevak Samaj—I shall be present there. You will not send for me before 2 o'clock, will you? I do have a hope that I shall be leaving Delhi towards the middle of this month. But it is all in God's hands.

"Bharat Sevak Samaj"sound quite appropriate. You should therefore have your letter-heads, etc., printed in India's sovereign language, Hindustani, i.e., in the Urdu and Devanagari scripts. You

may if you like have them in English for foreign countries. Have a rubber-stamp for the stationery that has already been printed in English. You cannot do this all by yourself. Do it if you can carry your co-workers with you. If not, whatever Gokhale's[1] fate decrees.

Blessings from

BAPU

SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY

POONA 4

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

170. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

MUSSOORIE,
June 7, 1946

CHI. RAMESHWARI,

I know Ratnamayidevi very well. I have no objection to your taking her in. I do not know myself who is a Gandhian. Gandhism is a meaningless word for me. An ism follows the propounder of a system. I am not one, hence I cannot be the cause for any ism. If an ism is built up it will not endure, and if it does it will not be Gandhism. This deserves to be properly understood.

I like your work, it is neat and clean. It is you who have built up the Balika Ashram you conduct it and I would be pleased if Ratnamayidevi gave you full satisfaction.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 8010. Also C. W. 3110. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

171. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

MUSSOORIE,
June 7, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter. All your questions are such that you should find the answer there itself. For example, the problem of Harihar

[1] Gopal Krishna Gokhale, (1866-1915); the most outstanding of the moderate leaders; President, Indian National Congress, 1905; founder of Servants of India Society; 1905; member of the Imperial Legislative Council, 1902-15

Sharma. What should I—or could I—do about it from here? I realize it was a mistake on my part to have invited him to the Ashram. Even then I have included in my letter[1] to him all that you wrote. If you approve of this letter, pass it on to him. It was all right that you gave him coffee. Continue to give him some. If, however, we are required to give to all whatever is given to one, it will lead to the breakdown of the Ashram. Why, I should myself disband it. It is our duty to offer things according to a man's needs. I have often said that the Ashram should be like a hotel. The difference is that the boarders in a hotel can ask for anything they like and on payment they get it. Whatever we would give a person taking into consideration his bodily needs should be in the nature of a medicine. If we give quinine to one man, can everone ask for it? We must not regard quinine and coffee from different angles. We have to offer rice to a South Indian, bread to a Punjabi, fish to a Bengali, beer and beef to an Englishman. It is another thing that we may not give meat and fish even as medicine, generally not even rice. But if we admit such persons then it becomes our dharma to let them have [what they need.] But we may offer all the four things to all four of them at the same time. Now meat and fish are out of the question, but how can we refuse to give wheat, rice, coffee, tea, etc., which we have once given? Think over all this and do as you deem proper.

As for prayers, everywhere I am sticking to the old order, but if you think it right to have some change at the Ashram you may not make it. For that consult the old collegues like Chimanlal, Balvantsinha, etc., or postpone it till I reach there.

I have written to Champabehn[2]. I understand what you say about mango seeds, and also about dogs and mice.

Do what is proper about wood.

I propose to reach there in the beginning of August.

If Lilavati is there tell her that if she wants to abide by my word she has my permission. If she wants to act within the limits imposed by time, she hasdn't much time, has she? She will have to think over all this herself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4559

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Harihar and Kamala Sharma", 22-5-1946.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Champa R. Mehta", 6-6-1946.

172. LETTER TO BRIJLAL NEHRU

MUSSOORIE,
June 7, 1946

BHAI BRIJLAL NEHRU,

I have your letter to Pyarelal. What I want to know is mentioned in the third paragraph, viz., what treatment, tried by you, do you suggest for the ailment? I shall be glad to have something on this so that I can understand things better.

Blessings from
BAPU

1 WARRIS ROAD
LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

173. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

MUSSOORIE,
June 7, 1946

Apologizing for the delay in his address at the end of the prayers, Gandhiji told the audience how pleased he was that Kanu Gandhi had started the prayers without waiting for him.

It should be the rule that prayers must not be delayed for anybody on earth. God's time never stops. From the very beginning wheel of His time has gone ceaselessly on. As a matter of fact there is no beginning for Him or His time.

God is not person. No one knows what His watch is like. No one can describe Him as no one has seen Him. He is the Law and the Law-giver combined into one. The author of the Vedas, after the profoundest search has described Him as *neti, neti* (not this, not this). He moves all and yet no one can move Him. Not a blade of grass moves without His will. For Him there is no begnning and no end.

Everything that has a beginning must end. The sun, the moon and the earth must all perish one day even though it might be aftter an incalculable number of years. God alone is immortal, imperishable. How can man find words to describe Him? How can anyone afford to miss the time of offering prayers to Him whose watch never stops?

[1] The report in *National Herald* has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.*

Kanu Gandhi knew all that and knew that any waiting for him would hurt. So he had started the prayers on time. Gandhiji had felt ashamed of disturbing the meeting by walking up to the dais when the prayer was going on. If others came late during the prayers he inwardly fretted: why did they not stand at the far end of the gathering instead of walking in and disturbing the meeting? He would have liked to wait outside but he knew that people were waiting for him. They might feel worried over his absence. Therefore, he had dared to walk to the dais and take his seat there though not without trembling. His car had not failed him. But he could not rudely tear himself away from his visitors.

He wanted them all to learn a lesson from the incident. If they kept the time for the prayers the habit would be reflected in all that they did.

A man who works regularly in a systematic fashion never feels overworked or tired. He knows his limits and is able to do in fair time, all that he undertakes. It is not hard work that kills a man, but irregularity or lack of system.

National Herald, 8-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 16-6-1946

174. DURING MUSSOORIE SOJOURN

During the prayer meeting in Mussoorie I suggested that the gay people of the place might well think of the poor among them, and make their living comfortable, clean and hygienic as also enable the poorest of all classes to find an abode where it would be possible for them to receive the benefit of the hill climate. Both the suggestions have been taken up with ethusiasm. An influential committee has been formed to carry out the idea of a dharmashala or *musafarkhana*. I write this note to suggest that much the most important things would be to have a committee of workers or even one worker who would make it his business to run the guest house in a becomig manner. Seeing that the place will be free of rent it will be no small task to choose the guests who may occupy the premises. Care will have to be taken to exclude those who are at all able to pay a reasonable rent. The visitors must be those who have nothing wherewith to pay. If the place is to be kept absolutely clean, there will have to be rules to be rigidly enforced in the interests of the visitors themselves. And yet the occupants will have to be treated with perfect courtesy. They must never be allowed to feel that poverty is a crime. Every third-class traveller knows that the poor receive rough treatment in the railway carriages and at railway stations. It is a sad commentary that in this

poor country where according to books poverty carries with it a certain dignity, in public places the poor are treated almost with contempt and they are made to pay for receiving it. It is in this unfortunate atmosphere that this guest house is to be built. Let the committee seek out from now an ideal caretaker who will answer the requirements of the office which are undoubtedly onerous. If such a person is found, the project is bound to be a pattern for all such places on hill stations.

MUSSOORIE, June 8, 1946

Harijan, 16-6-1946

175. TAKE CARE OF PENNIES

I have discovered honourable members of Assemblies using most expensive embossed note paper even for private use. So far as I know, office stationery cannot be used for private purposes such as writing to friends or relatives or for letters from members of Assemblies to constituents outside matters of public business. So far as I know, this a universal objection in every part of the world.

But for this poor country my objection goes deeper. The stationery I refer to is too expensive of us. Englishmen belonging to the most expensive country in the world and who had to flourish on the awe they could inspire in us introduced expensive and massive buildings for offices and bungalows requiring for their upkeep an army of servants and hangers-on. If we copy their style and habits we will be ruined ourselves and carry the country in this ruin. And what was tolerated in the case of the conquerors will not be tolerated in ours. There is, too, paper shortage. I am of opinion, therefore, that all these expensive habits sohuld be given up.Hand-made paper with ordinarily printed letter-heads in Nagari and Urdu should be used.The embossed stationery already printed can easily be cut up and put to better use, and should not be used up under cover of economy. Surely village products cannot be made to wait till the expensive and possible foreign stuff is used up. Popular Governments should signalize their advent by adopting popular measures and inexpensive habits.

MUSSOORIE, June 8, 1946

Harijan, 16-6-1946

176. LETTER TO PRABHUDAYAL VIDYARTHI

MUSSOORIE,
June 8, 1946

CHI. PRABHUDAYAL,

I have your letter. You must produce some proof of your having been in the Delhi fort.[1] It baffles me to see a poor man getting away after telling a big Government"to do as it likes". You are a votary of truth. Think over it again. If you have for some reason been guitly of untruth, there is no harm in admitting it. What more can I say?

You may certainly go to Basti if you must.

I do not consider it necessary for you to stay with me in connection with your case. I shall not send my final reply to the Government till I hear from you. I am thinking of writing only after having your reply.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

177. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

MUSSOORIE,
June 8, 1946[2]

Mahatma Gandhi held his last prayer meeting in Mussoorie this evening. He told the audience about the work that has been done in connection with two points raised by him, namely, erecting a dharmashala for the poor and building better quarter for the coolies.

As regards the latter, it had beeen decided that the project was too big for individual effort and that the U. P. Government should be approached. There were plenty of rich people lin Mussoorie; it was their duty to see that the coolies had better quarters.

As for the dharmashala, a committee had been formed and money collected. When the dharmashala would materialize rested with them, Gandhiji added. He had suggested that the dharmashala should be such that a person like him could stay there without any hesitation. All that was required was a clean well-ventilated building. He would much rather stay in a place built for the poor. Such a building would be an

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Prabhudayal Vidyarthi", 31-5-1946.
[2] From *The Hindustan Times*, 10-6-1946

inducement for him to come to Mussoorie again. Someone had taken exception to the word dharmashala. The critic said it meant a place for the Hindus only. That was not his conception. Hindus, Muslims Sikhs, Christians, Parsis, Jews—all should be able to come and stay there provided they were poor. They would have to cook thier own food. And so for Harijans, for him everybody was a Harijan. He had said that a religion which made distinctions of high and low was no religion. He had suggested that all of them should become Harijans voluntarily and among Harijans too, Bhangis. Lord Shiva was called *Bhangi*[1] because he had the intoxication of the good of the creation. Therefore by becoming Bhangis, they would become servants and lovers of humanity. The service rendered by the Bhangis was the most useful for humanity. So there could be no discrimination against Harijans in the dharmshala that was contemplated. Another friend had written to him that there were already several dharmashalas in Mussoorie, one for Arya Samajists, one for Sikhs and so on. Why add another when even those in existence lay vacant for most of the time because they were meant for one sect or another? The dharmashala of his conception would be open to all without any discrimination of caste, colour or creed. If they were not prepare for that he would advise them to dissolve the committee and return to their respective donors the money that had been collected .

Friends had warned him against coming to Mussoorie, the seat of fashion and frivolity, Gandhiji contined. He did not grudge the amusement provided it was innocent. If their enjoyment was tainted, they would never be able to build the kind of place that he had suggested and keep it up. As such, they would have no time to think of the poor. The management of such a dharmashala would be even more difficult than building it. They would have to be ever watchful so that it served the purpose for which it was built. Otherwise, he would feel sorry for the money wasted. They had attended the prayers for several days. If they had really come to hear Ramanama in their hearts, they could certainly do what he had asked in the name of Rama and His creation. He also expected them to offer prayers in their own homes regularly, morning and evening. There was no need for them to learn the Sanskrit *Shlokas* if they did not wish to; Ramdhun was enough. The essence of all prayers was to establish God in their hearts. If they succeeded in doing that, all would be well with them, with the society and the world.

The Hindu, 10-6-1946

[1] One who partakes of bhang, an intoxicant

178. NOTES

NO PUBLICITY REQUIRED[1]

A Brahmin correspondent asks me to publish the fact that he has become a Harijan and wants to eliminate his name as a caste Hindu from the census too. This is a sequence to my having asked all caste Hindus to look upon themselves as Harijans of the so-called lowest stratum. But what is the point in giving publicity to an inner change? The real proof is for the convert to practise the change in his daily life. He will, therefore, mix freely with Bhangis and take an active part in their life. If possible, he will live with them or get a Bhangi to live with him. He will give his children in marriage to Harijans and on being questioned he will say that he has become a Harijan of his own free will and will register his name either as a Harijan or Bhangi in the census when he has to classify himself. But having done so he will on no account arrogate to himself any of the rights of Harijans as, for example, he will not enter his name as a voter on their list. In other words, he will undertake to fulfil all the duties of a Harijan without seeking any of the rights that pertain to them. So long As separate voting lists are maintained he will cease to be a voter.

NEW DELHI, June 9, 1946

PETROL AND THE BLACK MARKET[2]

A correspondent writes as follows:

> Owing to lack of time it is not always possible to do all the necessary touring by rail. Workers have, therefore, to travel long dis tances by car. As petrol is rationed and the required quantity is not available recourse is had to the black market. It is either bought through someone or the taxi-driver is commissioned to obtain it from the black market and payment per mile is given to him according to the price paid for the petrol.
>
> Is it right for workers to use a car under these circumstances?
>
> It is possible that if they do not, they will have to cut down their touring which will seemingly be harmful to the work. Am I right in believing that there is no alternative?

I am of opinion that the worker who believes in truth should not use a car under these conditions. Even if he is not a believer but tries to render services thoughtfully he should not do so. If he does he

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 16-6-1946.
[2] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhhu*, 16-6-1946.

knowingly encourages black marketing and nothing but harm can come of such action. I go further and say that to use a car at all times for services is wrong in itself.

NEW DELHI, June 9[1] , 1946

DECIMAL COINAGE

It seems that I inadvertently allowed to be printed in the last paragraph of Shri K. Mashruwala's article[2] on this subject the statement that a second instalment would follow showing how, if at all, decimal coinage without loss to the poor could be promulgated. As a matter of fact I do not think the time has come for a serious consideration of the contemplated reform. I am quite clear that however attractive any scheme of decimal coinage may be, it should not be considered before there is an independent national government. Therefore the publication of any such scheme is wholly premature.There are many more pressing, urgent problems occupying the best minds of the country. Surely the country can easily wait for a more fortunate moment for a proper understanding of a scheme before legislation on the subject is undertaken. If England has waited for years and is still waiting, why should poor famishing India have a radical reform in courage sprung upon it without the man in the street being instructed in the pros and cons of the subject? It is not a matter which has nothing to be said against it. It will certainly not add one grain of corn to the existing stocks. Whether a rupee is to contain 100 cents or 64 pice is a problem that can await solution for a happier day. Democracy demands patient instruction on it before legislation. Hence I intended to erase the announcement of the second article in order to avoid raising a hope I had no desire to satisfy.

NEW DELHI, June 9, 1946

Harijan, 16-6-1946

[1] *Harijan*, however, has "10".

[2] For Gandhiji's comments on it, *vide* "The So-Called Decimal Coinage", 3-5-1946.

179. LETTER TO MANIBHAI DESAI

NEW DELHI,
June 9, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. Is it you and your people who have given the name "Nijadham"[1] or is it really the name of Shri Datar's bunglow?

Do you collect mango seeds and utilize the kernel or do you throw them away?

We do not have magic wand which will put a stop to drinking, gambling, prostitution and gangsterism. But I do believe that if we have the required strength of character, even these things will come to an end. You should keep a track of those who drink and then do whatever you can in the matter. You should also inquire carefully who comprise the drinking party, where the drinks come from, etc. I think something can be done if you examine the facts closely, for example, who are the gangsters, what do the gamblers bet upon, whether there are regular houses of ill fame or what other arrangement there is and all other things.

I understand what you say about the building. Do whatever is possible. The time for my return to that side is drawing near. Would it be all right if I pay only a flying visit to Uruli Kanchan? I think I should not at present interfere with the good work that all of you are doing. Think over this and other factors and let me know.

We arrived here from Mussoorie at 1 a. m. today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 2743. Courtesy: Manibhai Desai

180. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

DELHI,
June 9, 1946

CHI. KANCHAN,

I have your two letters. The first frightened me. The second is good. I presume that the latter is final. We are sweating in the heat here. You are breathing cool air there. We shall now shortly reach

[1] Literally, 'one' own abode', in the sense of the abode of God

Poona. So be patient and go on doing your work. I shall be happy only when you start living with Munnalal. I shall go there first if Manibhai so desires; otherwise I shall arrive via Panchgani. If this is not possible, you may come to Poona where we can talk. Others do not give the news which you have conveyed in your letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8255. Also C. W. 6979. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

181. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 9, 1946

I have been in your midst for several weeks with short breaks. It hurts me that you have not yet learnt to observe perfect silence without being requested. It is an indication that Ramanama has not gone to your hearts. There is no power greater than God in the world.

You would expect me to say something. I too wish to tell you something, but just as a cook never puts half-cooked dishes before guests, I too would not place before you things that are still half-cooked. This, however, I may tell you, that you must not give up hope till the last. We must realize that if we achieve nothing ultimately is because of our of own shortcomings. Nobody can prove himself right by pointing to others' faults. We can improve ourselves by acknowledging our own faults. If I realize that I am crooked, I shall become straight. It will only be false pride if I fency that I am straight and the entire world is crooked. That is why I say that, if we achieve nothing, it will be because we do not deserve it. We have been carrying on this fight through non-violent means, but we could not generate enough power to induce others to play straight with us.

We—Hindus and Muslims—I must say have been quarrelling amongst ourselves and if we look to the British to unite us it will be a great blot on our civilization. Who is a Hindu? Who is a Muslim? Why this distinction? Let us all pray to God that wisdom may dawn on us so that we may be united. If this happens we shall easily arrive at some settlement with the British. You must remember that this is being said

[1] The report in *Hindustan* has been collated with the version in *Harijan Sevak.*

today by the same man who had told you that, so long as the British remained, unity between the two of us would be difficult to achieve. But that was only a proclamation of ours weakness. I fail to see why we have become so mad, why we have become so uncivilized. But let us not despair. Leave it to God. Let destiny take its course. All will be well if God helps us.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 10-6-1946, and *Harijan Sevak*, 23-6-1946

182. THE UNKNOWN

Some learned men describe Him as Unknowable, some others as Unknown, yet others as 'Not This'. 'The Unknown' is good for the present purpose.

When yesterday (9th June) I said a few words to the prayer audience, I could say nothing more than that they should pray for and rely upon the strength and the guidance that this big X could give. There were difficulties to be overcome by all parties in the great Indian drama that was being enacted before them. They were all to rely upon the Unknown who had often confounded man's wisdom and in the twinkling of an eye upset his tin-pot plans. The British party claimed to believe in God, the Unknown. The Muslim League did likewise. They delighted is saying *Allah-o-Akbar*[1] . The Congress naturally had no single equivalent cry. Nevertheless, if it sought to represent the whole of India, it represented the millions of believers, no matter to what compartment in the House of God they belonged.

At the time of writing, in spite of my irrepressible optimism, I am unable to say decisively that at least in political parlance, the thing is safe. All I can say, therefore, is that if, with the best efforts of all the parties, the unsafe happens, I would invite them to join with me in saying that it was as well and that safety lay in unsafety. If we are all children of God, as we are, whether we know it or not, we will take in good part whatever happens and work with zest and confidence for the next step whatever it may be. The only condition for that zest is that each party does its honest best for the good of the whole of India. For that is the stake and no other.

NEW DELHI, June 10, 1946
Harijan, 16-6-1946

[1] God is great.

183. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

NEW DELHI,
Silence Day, June 10, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

This[1] for the ensuing *Harijan*. I thought you and Sir Stafford would like to see a copy.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 202

184. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

NEW DELHI,
June 10, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

I am desired by Gandhiji to send you the enclosed copy of a cable[3] just received from South Africa.

Gandhiji hopes that the information is wholly unfounded.[4]

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 89

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 10-6-1946.

[3] From Sorabjee Rustomjee. According to the source "The Government of India had . . . decided to apply economic sanctions against South Africa. In pursuance of it they had given notice terminating the trade agreement with South Africa after June 26, 1946. It was . . . reported . . . that in anticipation of the termination of the trade agreement South Africa was trying to obtain from India hessian and gunny bags in excess of the quota sanctioned under the trade agreement and that a special steamer was being chartered for this purpose."

[4] *Vide* "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 21-6-1946.

185. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
June 10, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I read your letter. I understand what you say regarding your sister-in-law's domestic problems. You are right when you say that I also am a human being and cannot know anybody's heart. Perhaps I do not know my own. God alone knows what is in anybody's heart. That is exactly why I told you to do what seemed best to you.[1] After all I don't know your sister-in-law. I don't know Amtul nor Kafikhan and others. You know them all. You may, therefore, go wherever you like. That you have spoiled your health again shows that you have not accepted God as your guide. What, then, can be done?

I am well. I am hoping to go to Poona in two or three days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 522

186. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

Silence Day, [*June 10, 1946*][2]

I have no news to give even today. As I had told you yesterday, so long as we believe that whatever happens is God's doing, we shall have no cause for worry. The only condition is that, whatever we do, we should do with God as our witness. It is He who runs the world and we reap the consequences of our actions. Therefore, ours is only to obey His law and then be indifferent as to the result.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 23-6-1946

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 30-5-1946.

[2] In his "Weekly Letter", from which this is translated, Pyarelal states that it being his silence day Gandhiji's written message was read out at the meeting. The silence day fell on June 10.

187. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING [1]

NEW DELHI,
June 11, 1946

Expressing his regret for the delay in attending the prayers Gandhiji said:

Unfortunately owing to Maulana Saheb's illness the Congress Working Committee meeting which was to be held here was held at his place. On momentous occasions like this it is necessary that as many members as possible should attend the meeting. Maulana Saheb's presence, he being the President of the Congress, was absolutely essential. In order that we may not be deprived of his advice the meet ing was held at his residence. I could not, in spite of all efforts, disengage myself in time and was ten minutes late. Since the Divine Clock stops for no one's sake, I am glad that the prayers were begun according to schedule without waiting for me.

I am sorry that even on the third day I cannot give you any definite news whether the talks[2] on the British proposals have broken down or not. All I can say is that the Congress Working Committee[3] is striving its utmost to prevent a breakdown.

As long as there is life there is hope too. It is easy to destroy but to build is a slow and labourious process. Besides, the prestige of the Cabinet Mission is at stake. They cannot afford a breakdown. If the aim of all the three parties, the Congress, the Muslim League and the Mission is the same, viz., the independence of India, the present dialogue should not end in failure. But we must be patient. The independence of 400 millions is no conjurer's trick. The fact that the Congress Working Committee even at this stage is giving it the most serious consideration shows how anxious it is to avoid a breakdown, if it is humanly possible without sacrificing honour or the interests of India's dumb millions. If, however, in spite of our efforts to avoid it the talks in the end do break down, we should not despair. Those who have faith in God will leave the result to Him. In the event of a breakdown I shall report it to you without reservation and in the plainest of words.

[From Hindi]
Hindustan, 12-6-1946

[1] The meeting was attended among others by Sir Stafford Cripps and Lady Cripps.

[2] For an official version of the interview as recorded by Lord Wavell, *vide* "Interview with Lord Wavell", 11-6-1946.

[3] *The Hindustan Times* report here has "the three parties concerned".

188. TELEGRAM TO LADY CRIPPS

[After *June 11, 1946*][1]

LADY CRIPPS
CARE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

REGRET NOT MEETING YOU AGAIN AND SEEING YOUR DAUGHTER. HAPPY YOU HAD SATISFACTORY TIME CHINA AND THAT BOTH ARE QUITE WELL. MY LOVE WHOLE FAMILY.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

189. TALK TO A FRIEND[2]

[Before *June 12, 1946*][3]

A nameless fear has seized me that all is not well. As a result, I feel paralysed. But I will not corrupt your mind by communciating my unsupported suspicions to you.

Harijan, 23-6-1946

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's meeting with Lady Cripps, which presumably took place on this date; *vide* 1st footnote of "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 11-6-1946.

[2] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in which this is reported before the speech of June 12, 1946.

[3] *Ibid*

190. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

VALMIKI MANDIR, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
June 12, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

From you, almost straight away, I went to the Working Committee which, owing to his illness, was held at Maulana Saheb's quarters. I gave them the gist of our conversation, told them that I gladly endorsed your suggestion about the parties meeting to fix up names subject to the provison that no party should talk of parity,[1] you should invite them simply to submit to you a joint list of the Cabinet of the Provisional Interim Government which you would approve or, if you did not, you would invite them to submit a revised list bearing in mind your amendments, that the list should represent a coalition Government composed of persons of proved ability and incorruptibility. I suggested too that in the place of parity there should be active enforcement of the long-term provision in your joint Statement[2] that in all major communal issues there should be communal voting to decide them. I suggested also that in the event of absence of agreement between the parties in spite of all effort, you should examine the merits of the respective lists of the two parties and accept either the one or the other (not an amalgam) and announce the names of the Interim Government but that before that final step was taken you should closet yourselves until a joint list was prepared. I told the Working Committee that you had seemed to endorse my suggestions.

I told them further that, so far as I knew, it was a point of

[1] In his letter to Lord Wavell dated June 8, M. A. Jinnah had claimed that the Viceroy had given him "the assurance that there will be only twelve portfolios, five on behalf of the League, five Congress, one Sikh and one Christian or Anglo-Indian". During the meeting with the Cabinet Delegation on June 8, the Viceroy said that "he had given no assurance to Mr. Jinnah" but he thought that "the 5 : 5 : 2 ratio as the most hopeful basis of settlement" and that he was working on that basis. He told them that M. A. Jinnah "had taken a very strong line about the Interim Government and had said that the Muslim League would not be prepared to come in except on the basis of 5 : 5 : 2 distribution of portfolios, between the Muslim League, the Congress, and the minorities". This parity between the Congress and the Muslim League was wholly unacceptable to the Congress.

[2] Of May 16, *vide* Appendix "Statement of Cabinet Delegation and Viceroy", 16-5-1946.

honour with Congressmen that there could be no joint consultation in which Maulana Saheb was not associated with the talks. You said it was a sore point with Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah and I replied that the soreness was wholly unwarranted and that the Congress could not be expected to sacrifice its faithful servant of twenty-five years' standing whose self-sacrifice and devotion to the national cause had never been in question. But I told you that your great experience and ability to handle delicate matters would show you the way out of the difficulty.

Finally, I told the Committee that I drew your attention to the fact that the European vote which was being talked of was unthinkable, in connection with the Constituent Assembly and nothing but a public declaration by the European residents of India or one by you on their behalf could make possible the formation of the Constituent Assembly. I gathered from you that the question was already engaging your attention and that it should be satisfactorily solved.

Probably you have already moved in the matter of the joint talk. Nevertheless, I thought that I owed it to you and the Working Committee to put on record what I had reported about our talks. If I have in any way misunderstood you, will you please correct me?

I may say that the Working Committee had its draft letter ready but at my suggestion it postponed consideration of it pending the final result of your effort adumbrated in this letter. The draft letter takes the same view that I placed before you yesterday on parity and the European vote and their election as members of the contemplated Constituent Assembly.

I close with the hope that your effort will bear the fruit to which all are looking forward.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 204-5. Also *The Transfer of Power, 1942-47,* Vol. VII, pp. 877-8

191. DRAFT LETTER TO LORD WAVELL[1]

18 HARDING AVENUE,

NEW DELHI,

June 12, 1946

DEAR LORD WAVELL,

I am sorry for the slight delay in answering your letter[2] of today's date. Your invitation to me to see you today at 5 p. m. in order to confer with you and Mr. Jinnah about the Interim Government placed me in a somewhat difficult position. I would gladly meet you at any time, but our official spokesman in regard to such matters in naturally our President, Maulana Azad. He can speak and confer authoritatively, which I cannot do. It is therefore proper that he should be in charge on our behalf of any authoritative[3] conversations that might take place. But since you have asked me to come I shall do so. I hope, however, that you will appreciate my position and that I can only talk[4] without authority, which vests in our President and the Working Committee.[5]

From a facsimile: *Reminiscences of the Nehru Age*, p. 35. Also *The Transfer of Power, 1942-47*, Vol. VII, p. 886

[1] The draft of the letter from Jawaharlal Nehru to Lord Wavell bears corrections in Gandhiji's hand.

[2] In which the addressee had written : "It is not my intention to discuss any question of principle such as "parity" or otherwise, but to concentrate upon what I know to be our common objective, that is, to get the best possible Interim Government drawn from the two major parties and some of the minorities. . . ."

[3] This word is added by Gandhiji.

[4] What follows is in Gandhiji's hand.

[5] During the interview Jawaharlal Nehru presented a list of 15 names with the following composition : 5 Congress, 4 Muslim League, one non-Indian Christian, one Sikh and one Congress woman.

M. A. Jinnah, in reponse to a similar invitation, had expressed the desire to see the Viceroy "alone".

192. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

[*June 12, 1946*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

I promised to send you a copy of Rev. J. J. M. Nichols-Roy's address[2]. I do so herewith.

I have not yet traced Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah's address referring to the way the Interim Government, if formed, would work.[3] But I have got the Muslim League Council's resolution[4]. I send a cutting of it herewith. It speaks volumes for me.

On top of this comes the interview given by the President of the European Association.[5] I spoke last evening at the prayer meeting without knowing anything of the latter which I hold to be a dangerous statement. It fills me with distrust of the future well-being through the proposed Constituent Assembly.

I suppose the *Statesman's* leading article today represents the general British attitude in India. The article is headed"Slow Motion". "Deliberation, wariness, sobriety in an approach to great decisions are proper; but not swither and loquacity or delays due to mere tactical manoeuvring." All this is a prelude to what I consider an unwarranted attack on the Congress. If you of the Mission and the Viceroy share the view, you should really have no dealings with the Congress, however powerful or representative it may be. Naturally you should be the sole judges of what the Congress has appeared to you to be like.

[1] From the contents this letter appears to have been written after Gandhiji's interview with the addressee in the evening on June 12, *vide* Appendix "Interview with Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 12-6-1946. This is also confirmed by the reference to this letter in the letter to the addressee dated June 13, 1946; *vide* Appendix "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 13-6-1946.

[2] Against grouping of Assam with Bengal in Group C under the Cabinet Mission's Statement of May 16, 1946

[3] Presumably the reference is to M. A. Jinnah's statement, viz., that he would use his position in the Interim Government to "water the seeds of Pakistan". Gandhiji had referred to it in his talk with the addressee, *vide* Appendix "Interview with Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 12-6-1946, also Appendix "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 13-6-1946.

[4] *Ibid*

[5] *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 12-6-1946.

For my part, as a detached observer, as I hold myself to be, I think that the Congress has not been procrastinating. It has been extraordinarily prompt in its dealings in connection with the work of the high mission which you are shouldering. But my purpose in writing this letter is to tell you that it will be wrong on my part if I advise the Congress to wait indefinitely until the Viceroy has formed the Interim Government or throws up the sponge in despair. Despair he must, if he expects to bring into being a coalition Government between two incompatibles. The safest, bravest and the straightest course is to invite that party to form a government which, in the Viceroy's estimation, inspires greater confidence. Then there is a possibility within 24 hours of forming a National Government. If, however, no party inspires confidence such a declaration should be made and the Viceroy should run the Government in the best way he knows. But the Congress Working Committee should not be delayed indefinitely. As for me, I would gladly stay behind if you want me to. But I feel that I shall be a useless adviser. I can only advise out of the fulness of trust. I become paralysed when distrust chokes me.

I am sorry to send you this letter. But I would be an unworthy friend if I disguised my feelings. You should know me as I am. Hence these tears.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 209-10

193. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

NEW DELHI,
June 12, 1946

Gandhiji began his after-prayer address by introducing Khwaja Abdul Majid to the audience as an old and dear friend of his. He recalled how during the Khilafat days he had once stayed at Khwaja Saheb's house. Swami Satyadevji was with him. He was an orthodox Hindu and would not eat or drink from a Mussalman's hands. Khwaja Saheb had employed a Brahmin to render all those services to him. It had affected Swamiji deeply. Khwaja Saheb was one of the earliest to join the nationalist

[1] Finally, however, on the advice of friends this letter was not sent; *vide* "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence" 13-6-1946.

[2] *The Hindustan Times* report has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.*

movement and take to khadi and he had stuck to it ever since. There were many such great men in the various communities. This treasure of goodness did not lessen by exercising goodness in all walks of life.

Referring to the political situation he said he was still not ready to say anything. There was, however, one thing to which he was free to draw their attention. He had called the Cabinet plan good and he still held to his opinion with the interpretation he put upon it.

The Constituent Assembly has to be formed by the elected members of the Provincial Legislatures. The Government of India Act of 1935 has given a number of seats in the Legislatures to the Europeans. For instance, in Bengal alone there is a solid block of 25 Europeans. In Assam there are 9. Quite a number of them are multi-millionaires or their representatives. They are foreigners, members of the ruling race. As such they can have no place in the Constituent Assembly as candidates, nor can they as voters return members. The Cabinet plan has said clearly that Indians are to form India's constitution.

Lawyer friends had told Gandhiji that if the matter were taken to a law-court the verdict would surely be against the Europeans. But from the papers he had gathered that they intended to exercise the right, which they thought they had.[1] Till now they had used their vote to uphold the British power and acted as a wedge between the Hindus and the Mussalmans. He appealed to them, therefore, apart from the question of legalities, to abstain from interference. No Congressman would wish to drag them to the law-court. They should recognize the signs of the time and make a voluntary declaration that the newspaper report was wrong and that they had no wish to interfere in the affairs of Indians which ought to be settled by Indians themselves and that they would not exercise their votes for the selection of candidates for the Constituent Assembly, nor would they stand as candidates. They should no longer impose themselves upon India. Whatever they might have done in the past, they should alleviate communal bitterness, not accentuate it. They should wish India to win her freedom as early as possible. Such a statement would be graceful for the Europeans.

It was up to the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy, concluded Gandhiji, to see that this foreign element was not used to affect the elections in any way whatsoever.

The Hindustan Times, 13-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 23-6-1946

[1] C. P. Lawson, M. L. A. (Central), President, European Association, was reported to have said : "Europeans are not intransigent . . . they would consider favourably any proposal accepted by both the major political parties to amend or alter the effect of the Cabinet Mission's plan in respect of the European voters.

194. MUCH IN LITTLE

In Mr. Mahadev Desai's book on the Travancore Temple Entry Proclamation, I find your speeches made in several places in Travancore. You have spoken of the *Ishopanishad* and said that if the first verse alone survived and all the rest of the Hindu scriptures were destroyed, it would alone save religion from extinction. Perhaps you know that that verse was a turning point in the life of Devendranath Tagore, the Poet's father. Young Devendranath was in a mood of great depression when his father died leaving the family estate highly encumbered. One day while in this mood a piece of printed paper was wafted by a passing breeze to where he was sitting, he picked it up. It was in Sanskrit which he had not learnt then. He took it to the family pundit who read it out. It was the first verse of the *Ishopanishad*. "Nectar poured into my soul," says the Maharshi in his autobiography.

The phrase about enjoying by renunciation puzzled me for long. One day (or night to be correct) it flashed on me that the phrase but expressed a daily experience. What greater enjoyment is there than renouncing something one values to one—person or cause—which one hods dear.

The above letter from Shri K. Natarajan was received by me about three months ago. I had hoped to deal with it in these columns much earlier but could not. Nothing, however, is lost, for the subject-matter of the letter is an evergreen. I try to the utmost of my ability to live the meaning that, in my ungrammatical way, I have ascribed to the *shloka*. Not being a reader of books, I never knew the instance that Shri Natarajan quotes from Maharshi Devendra's life. It fortifies my belief that the first *mantra* of *Ishopanishad* is all that undiluted Hinduism—in other words, for me, religion—can have to give. The recitation of the 18 chapters of the *Gita* is finished in one week at the morning prayer and so it has gone on now for some years from week to week. The *Gita* is a commentary on the first verse of the *Ishopanishad*. And I feel, not without diffidence, that the interpretation that flashed on Shri Natarajan's mind reveals but the partial truth. As I understand it, his interpretation is only the well-worn doctrine of self-sacrifice which is undoubtedly a common enough experience. Take only one instance. Many a mother sacrifices all for her children. But the *mantra* referred to here was not revealed to confirm the truth of that practice, well known even during the remote times when it is said to have been given. To live up to that verse means the new birth enunciated in the New Testament, or *Brahmasamarpana* (dedication to God) as taught in Hinduism. The verse, therefore, seems to me to mean only one thing. Recognize that everything you fancy

everything you fancy you have is God's and from God and take only what you really need for life. In other words, in the language of the *Gita* it teaches the doctrine of uttermost detachment. Then only is life worth living.

NEW DELHI, June 13, 1946

Harijan, 23-6-1946

195. QUESTION BOX

A correspondent writes:

> Supposing that in a Government or private godown foodgrains are being allowed to rot while people are starving because none are available in the market, what are workers to do? Would it be permissible to resort to something in the nature of your Dharasana salt raid in order to save the people? Otherwise, what alternative is there to either looting or dying like dumb cattle, of both of which you disapprove?

A. It should be common cause that looting in itself can never do any good. Wherever it is claimed to have done so, the good consisted only in drawing the attention of the authority to a crying want. The way of voluntary fasting that I have suggested[1] is the most efficient because it is good in itself and good also as an effective demonstration. It is good in itself because the people who voluntarily fast exhibit strength of will which saves them from the pangs of hunger and wakes up public conscience as also that of the authority, assuming that the latter can have any conscience at all.

So far as the Dharasana salt raid[2] is concerned, apart from the fact that there were, according to my conception of it, several mistakes made, it was a perfect thing of its kind and a heroic struggle in which the sufferings undergone were bravely borne. But the distinction between it and loot should be clearly borne in mind. The Dharasana Salt Works were conceived to be national property.The intention there was not to seize the property by force. The fight was to assert the right of the nation to the possession of all salt yielded by land or sea in India. If the raid had succeeded, that is to say, if the Government had yielded, they would have done so to the nation's sufferings which the raid and the like involved. And, as a matter of fact, the sum total of the sufferings undergone by the people on a nation-wide scale did result

[1] *Vide* "Question Box", 29-5-1946.

[2] The reference is to the Salt Satyagraha of 1930.

in what is known as the Irwin-Gandhi Pact[1]. Thus it will be seen that between the loot that the correspondent has in mind and the Dharasana raid there is no analogy whatsoever.

June 13, 1946

Harijan, 23-6-1946

196. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

BHANGI COLONY, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
June 13, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

Lord Lawrence conveyed your thanks to me last night when he invited me to see him.[2]

Please believe me when I say that I have never been guilty consciously of doing anything for thanks."Duty will be merit when debt becomes donation' and why thank at all when my advice is not followed out? You are a great soldier—a daring soldier. Dare to do the right. You must make your choice of one horse or the other. So far as I can see you will never succeed in riding two at the same time. Choose the names submitted either by the Congress or the League. For God's sake do not make an incompatible mixture and in trying to do so produce a fearful explosion. Anyway, fix your time limit and tell us all to leave when that limit is over.

I hope I have made my meaning clear.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 206. Also *The Transfer of Power, 1942-47*, Vol. VII, p. 910

[1] Of 1931; *vide* "Provisional Settlement", 12-3-1931.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Interview with Lord Pethick-Lawrence" 12-6-1946.

197. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

NEW DELHI,
June 13, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I wrote to you a long letter yesterday[1], partly in fulfilment of my promise to send you a copy of the Rev. Nichols-Roy's address and, if I could trace it, Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah's address. I have not been able yet to lay hands on the reference I told you I had heard read to me. But I got the Muslim League Council's resolution[2] which speaks volumes, at any rate, for me. Both these things, without my letter, I handed to Sudhir Ghosh to be given to you.

The letter I withheld at the instance of Agatha Harrison, Horace Alexander and Sudhir Ghosh who thought that it was likely to produce an effect contrary to what I had expected. I did not share their view because we have known each other for so many years. I lay no stress upon the fact that we have known each other for such a long time for we have had no contact for years after our meeting during the stirring days of the Suffragette Movement.[3] The bond that was then created could not, I felt, be easily snapped and so I presumed to write frankly to lay bare my mind to you. That I felt was due to you if I was to be a friendly adviser to the Mission which you are leading. Nevertheless I yielded to the advice of the three friends. I have told them that they are at liberty to describe to you the whole of the conversation between them and me.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 208-9

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence" 12-6-1946.

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Resolution of Muslim League Council", 6-6-1946.

[3] Gandhiji has come to know the addressee through Lady. Pethick-Lawrence whom he had met at a Suffragette meeting during his visit to England in 1906. *Vide* "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 12-11-1945.

198. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

NEW DELHI,
June 13, 1946

DEAR SIR STAFFORD,

Sudhir told me something of the storm that is brewing within you. I met your good wife the day before.

I would ask you not to worry. You are handling the most difficult task of your life. As I see it the Mission is playing with fire. If you have courage you will do what I suggested from the very beginning. Even when the Parliamentary Delegation came[1] before you I said then, "You will not be able to have your cake and eat it. You will have to choose between the two—the Muslim League and the Congress, both your creations." Every day you pass here coquetting now with the Congress, now with the League and again with the Congress, wearing yourself away. [This] will not do. Either you swear by what is right or by what the exigencies of British policy may dictate In either case bravery is required. Only stick to the programme. Stick to your dates even though the heavens may fall. Leave by the 16th whether you allow the Congress to form a coalition or the League. If you think that the accumulated British wisdom must know better than these two creations of yours I have nothing to add. But I have fancied that you are not cast in the mould. If so, keep to your passage for the 16th and take your poor wife with you to England and bury yourselves in private life unless the brave British announcement made is fulfilled to the Indian hope. A word to the wise.[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 207

[1] The British Praliamentary Delegation, consisting of Prof. Richards, Lord Charley and Reginald Sorenson had arrived in India on December 5, 1945 and met Gandhiji on January 23 and 24, 1946 at Madras. *Vide* "Discussion with Members of Parliamentary Delegation", 24-1-1946.

[2] In reply the addressee wrote the same day : "I am afraid you, like some others of us, are feeling somewhat impatient! But I always remember you advised me to show 'infinite patience' in dealing with these difficult matters. Certainly I shall never put my desire to return home and rest before my determination to leave nothing undone which may help a solution of the difficult problems here. I can assure you neither I nor my colleagues lack courage to act but we want to temper that courage with prudence. I still have great hopes that before we leave India, we may have helped towards a settlement of the problem."

199. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 13, 1946

Remarking on the size of the prayer gathering on Thursday evening, which was large than usual, Mahatma Gandhi in the course of his speech asked whether it was due to the fact that he had spoken on a political topic on Wednesday and they had come in the expectation of satisfying their curiosity as regards the political situation. If that was so, it was wrong. The only urge which should prompt people to come to the prayer gathering was the desire to know the Maker and attune themselves with Him.

On Wednesday, Gandhiji said, he had criticized the conduct of the European Group for wanting to exercise a right which did not legitimately belong to them, but today he proposed to say something in criticism of "our own conduct and behaviour". He had been telling his audiences what their duty was in this hour. As a firm believer in the utility of community prayer, he had been making them sing *Ramdhun* in the mass. But were they following it in their daily lives? To repeat Ramanama and to follow the way of Ravana in actual practice was worse than useless. It was sheer hypocrisy. One might deceive oneself or the world but one could not deceive the Almighty.

Today, in the West people talk of Christ, but it is really Anti Christ that rules their lives. Similarly, there are people who talk of Islam but they really follow the way of Satan. It is a deplorable state of affairs.

We are afraid of people professing religions other than our own. We think that they will crush us, forgetting that no one can crush us if we have made God our refuge. The hymn that has just been sung describes how God has redeemed sinners. How much more, then, would He do for His devotees? But they must be devotees of God in the true sense of the term.

If people followed the way of God, continued Gandhiji, there would not be the corruption and profiteering that were seen in the world today. As it was, the rich were becoming richer and the poor poorer. Hunger, nakedness and death stared one in the face. These were not the marks of the Kingdom of God but that of Satan, Ravana or Anti-Christ. They could not expect to bring the reign of God on earth by merely repeating His name with the lips. Their conduct must conform to His ways instead of Satan's.

The Hindustan Times, 14-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 23-6-1946

[1] *The Hindustan Times* report has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.*

200. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING [1]

NEW DELHI,
June 14, 1946

Mahatma Gandhiji said that he still could not tell them what was taking place behind the scenes. But he wanted to say that the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy were working away at it from morning till night. They were attempting what could well be considered impossible.

I have often written that true Hindu-Muslim unity cannot be expected while the third party is there. The slaves and their master are both in an unnatural state. They cannot act and think naturally.

But suppose a mother sees that her child is dying, still she does not give up hope. She keeps on trying the prescriptions of vaidyas or hakims till the last moment.

Similarly the Mission does not wish to give up striving. They are trying to bring the Congress and the League togetjer. They are striving with the Europeans to do the right thing. The Europeans have said they are going to exercise their right, which is not theirs at all. But if the Congress and the League appealed to them they might consider their request. There is no question of going to them with the beggar's bowl. They have no place in the Constituent Assembly according to the legal interpretation of the Cabinet Mission's paper.

To enslave another country is unnatural. Merely by making up a pious resolve they will not get off India's back. The British cannot succeed in doing so. Corresponding action is required. They are striving and there is no reason for India to doubt their *bona fides*. Their task is difficult. The Congress, the League and the British are all labouring under unnatural conditions.

The Hindustan Times, 15-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 23-6-1946

201. HALLUCINATION [2]

We are afflicted by many superstitions, obsessions and halucinations. They are entirely the creation of the mind, but so long as they are not exorcized they continue to afflict us. We may take for

[1] *The Hindustan Times* report has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.*

[2] The Gujarati original of this apeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 23-6-1946, under the date June 16, 1946.

a snake a piece of rope and dislocate our wrist in striking at it. Similarly, we may take a non-poisonous snake for a poisonous one and lose a friend by ignorantly destroying it. Who has not heard stores of people mistaking a respectable citizen for a thief and killing him in a paroxysm of fear? Instances of Harijans being foolishly held responsible for the outbreak of plague in villages and being lynched for it are unfortunately not uncommon. In the same way I would regard it as the height of superstitious ignorance for educated people or students to refuse admission in hostels to Harijans. In this connection I would particularly invite the attention of all students and superintendents of hostels to the leaflet issued over the signatures of Shris Parikshitlal Majmudar and Hemantkumar Nilkanth for their careful perusal, reflection and action. In that leaflet they seem to have made an exception in the case of hostels which are specially reserved for certain castes and sub-castes. In my opinion, even in these hostels Harijans ought to be freely admitted if only to prove that those castes or sub-castes have banished untouchability from their minds for good.

NEW DELHI, June 15, 1946

Harijan, 23-6-1946

202. WHAT HAS THE CONGRESS DONE?[1]

A Harijan from Gujarat writes:

> The elections have made it clear that only two parties count in India today, the Muslim League and the Congress. The elections have also shown that most of the Harijans are with the Congress. The Ambedkarites have won very few seats. What is the place of Congress Harijans in the Congress? Why are not Harijan candidates made to stand for election to the various committees of the Congress? When they do stand, why are caste Hindus allowed to oppose them? Is it right to keep Harijans out on the plea that the caste Hindus are more capable? The Congress has been working for the Harijans for a long time. Why has it not yet succeeded in educating them sufficiently and making them capable?

There is ignorance and sting in this letter. They are excusable. We should understand the spirit behind it. The very fact that the Congress has won so many Harijan seats shows that it must have

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu,* 23-6-1946.

served them to win their confidence. They form an indivisible part of Hindu religion and Hindu society. If this part breaks or leaves the Hindu religion or Hindu society, the latter would perish. What the writer wants to say is that the caste Hindus have not done their duty towards the Harijans to the extent that they should have. If the caste Hindus would become Bhangis of their own free will, the distinction between Harijans and caste Hindus would automatically disappear. There are various divisions amongst the Harijans too. They should all go. All should be of one caste, that is, the Bhangi. A Bhangi is the servant of the whole of humanity, not only of the Hindus. When we become Bhangis of this description all divisions would disappear. Who can be master where all are servants?

But today it is a mere dream, it is an objective. But no Society can exist on mere dreams or objectives. It must be solid work. The Congress makes no distinction of caste and creed. It must pull up those who are down in the dumps and those who are up in the air must come own. Thus the golden mean would be found. People cannot live in the bowels of the earth or in the sky. They all must live on the fair earth. Equality of all is the Congress pledge. Congress has not fulfilled it as yet. The columns of the *Harijan* show that so long as it is not fulfilled the Harijans would have every cause to complain.

To the correspondent I would say this. To whom does he owe the ability to write this letter in a good hand? Which organization has done more for the Harijans than the Congress? It is true that the Congress has not done all it should. Much remains. Equally true is the fact that none has done as much as the Congress. Therefore, the Harijans must be patient. There is no doubt that there is a limit to one's patience. But the limit has not been reached.

NEW DELHI, June 15, 1946

Harijan, 23-6-1946

203. ANIMAL SACRIFICE [1]

A correspondent writes:[2]

If what the writer says is true, it is indeed, in one sense, a matter of shame for every Hindu. But no sin can be wiped out by mere condemnation by word of mouth. Nor does the guilt of the whole body absolve the individual from his duty. Therefore, in my opinion, the responsibility of working for the reform rests, in the first instance, on the correspondent, secondly on the people of the place where the animal sacrifices are held, then on the Ruler of the State and his people and after them in turn on Karnataka, Madras Presidency and the whole of India. Only if all, in their respective places, take up the work systematically—and systematic work can only succeed if run on the basis of non-violence—can the evil that has been handed down through the ages be wiped out of existence.

Therefore, it is the correspondent who must make the beginning. I have written enough previously as to how the work of reform should be undertaken.

NEW DELHI, June 15, 1946
Harijan, 23-6-1946

204. QUESTION BOX

BHANGI STRIKES

The same writer, who has asked the question about the propriety of looting,[3] asks also what the poor sweeper is to do when everything else fails. He indignantly asks:

Is the Bhangi to continue his service on starvation wages, living in dirt and squalor?

A. The question is appropriate. I claim that in such cases the proper remedy is not a strike but a notice to the public in general and the employing corporation in particular that the Bhangis must give up the sweeping service which consigns those reserved for that service to

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 23-6-1946.

[2] The letter, not reproduced here, informed Gandhiji about the animal sacrifices in Mysore by Harijans as well as priests who also indulged in drinking and beef-eating on such occasions.

[3] *Vide* "Question Box", 13-6-1946.

a life of starvation and all it means. There is a wide distinction between a strike and an entire discontinuation (not suspension) of service. A strike is a temporary measure in expectation of relief. Discontinuance is giving up of a particular job because their is no expectation of relief. Proper discontinuance presupposes fair notice on the one hand and prospect of better wages and freedom from squalor and dirt on the other. This will wake up society from its disgraceful slumber resul ting in a proper scavenging of the over-growth that has smothered public conscience. At a stroke the Bhangis will raise scavenging to a fine art and give it the status it should have had long ago.

UNLAWFUL PEEP BEYOND

Q. "Ah, Christ that it were possible
For one short hour to see
The souls we loved, that they might tell us
What and where they be."
What would you say?

A. The poet expresses in the above the cry of many an anguished heart. Nevertheless the truly detached mind does not care to know the beyond. In other words, it is wrong to have the desire. Therefore, the following from the well-known hymn of Cardinal Newman represents the reality:

"I do not ask to see the distant scene,
One step enough for me."

NEW DELHI, June 15, 1946

Harijan, 23-6-1946

205. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

VALMIKI MANDIR, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
June 15, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

His Excellency I have no doubt has seen from the papers that the passive resistance movement on the part of the Indians there has commenced against the Anti-Asiatic Act recently passed by the South African Union Legislature. Is it too much to expect His Excellency to

support and express his approval of the movement, as did Lord Harding[1] on a similar occasion in South Africa during his Viceroyalty?[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ.
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO H. E. THE VICEROY
THE VICEROY'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 95

206. LETTER TO BRIJLAL NEHRU

BHANGI NIWAS, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
June 15, 1946

BHAI BRIJLAL,

I have your questions. I began to write down the answers but realized that I could answer them only light-heartedly. Writing for the sake of fun is beyond the scope of *Harijan*. Let us not therefore have the kind of fun for which neither of us cares. There can be no place for such questions in the kind of selfless work that you are doing. Anything that has intrinsic worth would not look up to the State.

You are slow in sending me what I asked from you.[3] This irks me.

It would be better if you presented *Hathayoga* based on your experience.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] On November 24, 1913.

[2] The addressee's reply dated June 18, 1946, *inter alia* read : "The Government of India have already given notice of the termination of the Trade Agreement with South Africa, and have called back their High Commissioner for consultation; they have also decided to refer the dispute to U. N. O. H. E. agreed with all these decisions.

H. E. has every sympathy for the Indian case and has done all he can to support and further it, but he thinks it would be a mistake for him to make any public declaration on the subject, and that it might do more harm than good to the cause of Indians in South Africa."

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Brijlal Nehru", 1-6-1946.

207. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 15, 1946

The Sikh Conference held at Amritsar has resolved to raise a united voice as also to support the Congress. The Sikhs have elected Niranjan Singh Gill as their leader. I learnt the lesson of unity while I was out of India and I believe that whatever religion we may profess we are all Indians. I want to repeat what I had told the Sikhs at the time of the Nankana Saheb tragedy that the greatest bravery lies in non-violent satyagraha. Experience has only confirmed this belief of mine.

The Bhangis in India are free legally to reside wherever they like. In South Africa all the Indians in the eye of the law are untouchables. Our compatriots in South Africa have begun their battle of satyagraha. What savarna Hindus are doing in India is being done through the laws in force in South Africa. That is why I say that although we have God's name on our lips in actual practice we ignore Him. This is true in the political field also. I, therefore, appeal to you to reform yourselves whatever others may do. If the Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis and Christians live peacefully as brothers in the Kingdom of God I would not mind whether the Constituent Assembly come into being or not. If we can only do so the rest will follow on its own.

[From Hindi]
Hindustan, 16-6-1946

208. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

DELHI,
June 16, 1946

CHI. LILI,

I have your postcard of the 11th. You did well in not coming just for a couple of days.

I am glad that you have passed your examination. I have no doubt that if you work with the same confidence you will succeed

[1] A deputation of Sikhs which had come to have talks with the Congress Working Committee attended the prayer meeting in the evening. Prof. Jodha Singh sang a *bhajan* of Guru Nanak.

right through your finals. You can then serve to your heart's content.

Blessings from

BAPU

PAREL

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

209. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 16, 1946

Gandhiji looked cheerful and in answer to a question by a correspondent said:

Go to the Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. He will be able to give you news.

The Hindustan Times, 17-6-1946

210. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 16, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi said that in the announcement[2] that he had sent invitations to 14 individuals by their names to help him to form his Cabinet, His Excellency the Viceroy had stated that his attempts to bring the two major parties together having failed he had to devise some way of removing the deadlock.[3] The failure was nothing to be surprised at.

What is surprising is that instead of following the democratic procedure of inviting the one or the other party to form a national government, the Viceroy and the Cabinet Mission have decided to impose a government of their choice on the country. The result may well be an incompatible and explosive mixture. There are, however, two ways of looking at a picture. You can look upon it from the

[1] Gandhiji had a 30-minute interview with Lord Pethick-Lawrence in the afternoon before attending the meeting of the Congress Working Committee. For an official report of the interview, *vide* Appendix "Interview with Lord Pethick-Lawrence" 16-6-1946.

[2] For the text of the Statement, *vide* Appendix "Lord Wavell's Statement", 16-6-1946.

[3] This sentence is from *The Bombay Chronicle*. What follows is reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.*

bright side or you can look upon it from the dark.

Gandhiji has declared that he believes in looking at the bright side and has invited others to do likewise.

Thus regarded, what appear to be blemishes in the Viceregal statement, would be seen to be really its beauty.

It might however be, that there was no bright side. Then the Mission would stand exposed. They would lose nothing by trusting. He had suggested to the Working Committee some[1] tests by which the Statement might be tested.[2] He held the view firmly that fulfilment of those conditions was essential for the Congress acceptance. But he could not say whether they would be agreeable to either party. It was, therefore, very difficult to say with certainty what the Congress Working Committee would decide. One thing, however, he could say without hesitation. At no stage had the Congress showed any dilatoriness. It was a democratic organization and could not carry things by an executive fiat like the Viceroy for instance. It could proceed only by consulting and satisfying even the weakest minority whom it claimed to represent.

You should bear with the Mission too. They have inherited the traditions of Imperialism which they cannot outgrow all at once. And poor India has to suffer. We must not blame them, however, for not throwing it overboard overnight. Let us trust their *bona fides* Let us not act upon mere suspicion. But let us all join in the prayer that God may bless all the parties with wisdom and cleanness of heart.[3]

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 23-6-1946

211. DRAFT LETTER TO LORD WAVELL[4]

[*June 17, 1946*][5]

The League being avowedly a Muslim organization could not include any non-Muslim representative in its list; (2) the Congress as a nationalist organization must have the right to include a Congress Muslim in its list; (3) the League could not have any say in the selec-

[1] *The Bombay Chronicle* here adds "internal".

[2] *Vide* "Note to Amrit Kaur", 17-6-1946.

[3] Gandhiji then introduced Khan Abdus Samad Khan, President of the Baluchistan Anjuman-e-Watan, as also the Chief of the Namdhari Sikhs.

[4] After reporting the prayer speech of June 16 Pyarelal introduces this as follows : "At night [Gandhiji] woke up at half past one and dictated for the Working Committee the draft of a letter to the Viceroy."

[5] *Ibid*

tion of any names outside those belonging to its quota of five Muslims. This would mean that, in the event of a vacancy occurring among the seats allotted to the minorities, the Congress alone would have the right to select names to fill up the vacancies as it claimed to represent all sections by right of service; and (4) in action, the Interim Government should be regarded as being responsible to the elected representatives in the Assembly.[1]

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, p. 219

212. THE EUROPEAN VOTE

No less a person than the President of the European Association has exhibited the lion's paw.[2] That seems to be the naked truth. That the Europeans will neither vote nor offer themselves for election should be a certainty, if a Constituent Assembly worthy of the name is at all to be formed. The British power in India has four arms—the official military, the official civil, the unofficial civil and the unofficial military. So when the ruling class speaks of the unofficial European as not being under their control, it is nonsense. The official exists for the unofficial. The former would have no work if the latter did not exist. The British gunboat came in the wake of British commerce. The whole of India is an occupied country. We have to examine in this light the exploits of the European President. In the intoxication of power he does not seem to have taken the trouble to ascertain whether the State Paper has provided for the legal power for his community to vote or be voted for in the proposed Constituent Assembly. For his and his constituents' edification I have secured the opinion from the leader of the Bar in Delhi. It will be found in these columns.[3]

Did the President condescend to inquire of the Mission what his moral and legal position was? Or, did he hold them cheap because he represented the real Imperialism which the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy representing British Labour were struggling to discard?

[1] The Congress Working Committee, however, in its afternoon session next day put Gandhiji's draft "practically into cold storage". On June 18 a tentative decision accepting the scheme of the Interim Government was taken by the Congress Working Committee but it was not communicated to the Viceroy.

[2] *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 12-6-1946.

[3] Appearing under the title "Legal Opinion on the European Vote" it stated : "that paras 18 and 19 are subject to the statements as to formation of Constituent Assembly made in paras 3 and 16 which give the right of making the constitution to Indians alone and not to those who are not Indians.

It is the straw which shows the way the wind is blowing.

This unseasonable performance of the European Association is to my mind the greatest disturbing factor to shake the faith in the reality of the Mission work. Has the Mission come before its time? Will the gun-protected Europeans of India silence their guns and stake their fortunes Andrews-like, purely on the goodwill of the masses of India? Or, do they expect in their generation to continue the imposition of foreign rule on India?

How can they say they"are not intransigent"? The statement reeks of intransigence. They have a loaded communal franchise, glaringly in Bengal and Assam. What right had they to be in the Assemblies at all? What part have they played in the two Assemblies save to embarrass the people of Bengal and Assam by dividing the communities? This 'load' was not imposed upon them. It would have redounded to their honour if they had repudiated it. Instead, they welcomed the 'white man's burden'. And even now, at the hour of the dawn, they would graciously contribute to constitution-making! ! ! Not everyone who says 'I am not intransigent' is really so; he only is who says nothing but lets his deeds eloquently speak for themselves.

They have been made to look so foolish in their latest statement[1] as to say that they would refrain from voting for themselves but would use their vote for electing their henchmen wearing the Indian skin! They would, if they could, repeat the trick which has enabled them, a handful, to strangle the dumb millions of India. How long will this agony last! Do the Mission propse to bolster up this unholy ambition and yet expect to put to sea the frail barque of their Constituent Assembly? Indians cannot perform the obvious duty of the Mission for them.

NEW DELHI, June 17, 1946

Harijan, 23-6-1946

[1] Presumably the reference is to the statement of June 16, 1946 which *inter alia* read : "The European party in the Bengal Legislative Assembly announce today that they will not nominate for election to the Constituent Assembly and will not vote for an European to sit in the Constituent Assembly. They will agree to use their votes in accordance with any agreement reached between the two major parties."

213. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

DELHI,
June 17, 1946[1]

You have to conceal nothing. Tell him he has surpassed himself (which I feel I did) in trusting against himself the Mission's word and looking at the bright side wherever it was not dark on the face of it. He put before the packed prayer audience the brightest side and asked them to trust till trust would be folly if not crime. And relate the three easy tests of which the first was for Badshah Khan for the moment to decide.[2] The two demanded immediate redress from them. They[3] would not tolerate removal of a non-League Muslim and even then a man like Zakir Hussain, nor could they allow Sarat Babu's name to be removed without the Congress being satisfied of the correctness of removal.[4] The Viceroy could not be allowed to act imperiously at the very threshold. Do this only if he opens the subject. If he talks only gossip you will talk a few minutes and come away. In no case will you talk without mastery of what you may talk. You can also say that they must hasten not slowly but quickly if they want to avoid the railway strike which evidently a truly national government can avoid if anybody at all can.

From the original: C. W. 4228. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7864

214. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[5]

NEW DELHI,
June 17, 1946

Gandhiji regretted that he could not as yet give any definite news to the people. He could not say whether the conditions[6], which according to him were

[1] From a note by the Addressee which read : "Delhi, 17-6-46. Before going to see Lord Pethick-Lawrence."

[2] Regarding the inclusion of Abdur Rab Nishtar's name in the Muslim League's list

[3] Congress Working Committee

[4] Sarat Chandra Bose's name in the list suggested by the Congress was rejected by the Viceroy on the ground that he had been in touch with the Japanese during the war, and was replaced by that of Hare Krushna Mahtab. On the insistence of the Congress, the Viceroy however agreed to accept it during an interview with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Jawaharlal Nehru on June 18.

[5] It being Gandhiji's silence day his written message was read out after the prayers.

[6] *Vide* the preceding item.

necessary for accepting the proposals of the Cabinet Mission, would be fulfilled or not. He was definitely of the opinion that the fulfilment of those conditions was essential for the acceptance of the proposals by the Congress. But he could not say whether the Congress would be in agreement with those conditions or not.

Whatever happens, I hope, ultimately it will be all for the good.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 18-6-1946

215. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 18, 1946

Congress is a national organization and it should not give up its national character. In view of that character it must have a right to put forward its claim to suggest names of six Congressmen in the list of fourteen. Amongst the Congressmen there must be one nationalist Muslim and one woman.

In my opinion no [healthy] precedent can be established so long as the communal ratio is insisted on in [forming] the Cabinet. If the Congress asks for representation for six of members it has every right to do so. Congressmen will not be joining the Cabinet in their individual capacity.

In conclusion I can only say that the Congress will lose prestige if it ceases to have a national character.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 19-6-1946

216. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 18, 1946

The expectant crowd that attended Mahatma Gandhi's evening prayer today was again sorely disappointed when he told them that he had nothing decisive to tell them as to the result of the talks Maulana Azad had with the Cabinet Mission.

A man of prayer must, however, know no disappointment because he knows that the times are in His hands who is the Arch-planner and does everything in His good time. A man of prayer,

therefore, waits in faith and patience always.

Making the theme of his after-prayer discourse the song that had been sung at the prayers, he explained how that song gave the allegorical story of the struggle between the elephant king (Gajendra) and the Graha (the alligator).

It is taken from the classical episode of "Gajendra Moksha" from the *Bhagavata*. The original is a piece of rare poetical merit, combining as it does the melodious music of verse with loftiness of the sentiment which it embodies. That is the test of all great pieces of art. I must combine beauty with use. Cattle might be satisfied with filling their bellies with fooder but man likes his food to please the eye as well as provide nourishment.

In the allegory of Gajendra and Graha the elephant king is seized unawares by the crocodile as he goes to have a drink of water in the river and is dragged down. The more he struggles the deeper he sinks. A stage is, however, reached when despairing of his physical prowess he throws himself on God's grace entirely and invokes his aid and the Lord of Dwarka comes in the twinkling of an eye and rescues him.

The moral of the story is that God never fails His devotees in the hour of trial. The condition is that there must be a living faith and the uttermost reliance on Him. The test of faith is that having done our duty we must be prepared to welcome whatever He may send—joy as well as sorrow, good luck as well as bad luck. We will be like King Janaka who, when informed that his capital was ablaze, only remarked that it was no concern of his.[1] The secret of his resignation and equa nimity was that he was ever awake, never remiss in the performance of his duty. Having done his duty, he could leave the rest to God.

And so a man of prayer will in the first place be spared mishaps by the ever merficul Providence, but if mishaps do come he will not bewail his fate nor lay the blame on God but bear it with an undistrubed peace of mind and joyous resignation to His will.

The Hindustan Times, 19-6-1946

[1] मथिलायां प्रदीप्तायां न मे दह्यति किंचन — *Mahabharata, Shantiparva*, Ch. 178, 2

217. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 19, 1946

Bapu gave a final notice to the Working Committee today that if they agreed to the non-inclusion of a nationalist Muslim and the inclusion of the name of N. P. Engineer, which the Viceroy had foisted upon them, he would have nothing to do with the whole business and leave Delhi.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, p. 222

218. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 19, 1946

If I were appointed dictator for a day in the place of the Viceroy, I would stop all newspapers.

He added with a smile and a wink:

With the exception of *Harijan* of course.

Incidentally he remarked that if he had to rename his weekly he would call it not *Harijan* but "Bhangi" i. e., sweeper, that being more in tune with his present temper and the need of the hour as he understood it.

Deprecating these reports[2] as irresponsible and mischievous, he reminded the fraternity of the Press of Cardinal Newman's hymn: "Lead Kindly Light", the Gujarati rendering of which was sung at the prayers. Contrary to the teaching of that hymn they always hankered after the "distant scene", letting their fertile imagination supply what was beyond their ken of knowledge. As an illustration of the infinite harm that might result from such irresponsible journalism, he remarked that, if the people were to believe what had been appearing in the Press about his part in the deliberations of the Working Committee, Hindus would be right to execrate him as the enemy of their interests. It was further being made to appear, he observed, that his was the only intransigent voice in the Working Committee. He wanted them to dismiss all that as pure imagination. He appealed to newspapermen to put a curb on their pen. Failing that it was up to the public to shed their craving for 'potted' news and to cease to patronize papers that purveyed it or at least cease to be misled by what might appear in them.

[1] *The Hindustan Times* report has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.*

[2] In the Press about what was supposed to be taking place in the Congress Working Committee

Gandhiji remarked that it was wholly untrue that the delay in arriving at a final decision was due to divisions in the Working Committee. Differences of opinion were inevitable in a living organization. He himself did not know what the final decision of the Working Committee was going to be. It was but natural that there should be more Hindus on the Congress register than Muslims, as the Hindu population preponderated in India. But the Congress could not by any stretch of imagination be called a Hindu organization. Its President Maulana Azad had occupied the Presidential chair for a longer period than any other in the Congress history. He was held in equal respect by all those who claim to be of the Congress. The Congress had constituted itself into a trustee, not of any particular community, but of India as a whole. In an organization like that it always became the duty of the majority to make sacrifices for the minorities and backward sections, not in a spirit of patronizing favour, but in a dignified manner and as a duty.

In the eyes of the Congress, Hindus and Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians and Sikhs are all Indians and therfore equally entitled to its care. The Congress has no sanction except that of non-violence. Unlike the Viceroy, who has the entire armed force of the British Empire at his back, the Congress President can rely only on the united and whole-hearted co-operation of all the communities and classes to give effect to India's will to independence. The Working Committee is, therefore, anxious that we should accept responsibility at the Centre only with the unanimous goodwill of all the communities. That is why they were giving such anxious thought to all the various interests which they claim to represent. They have to adjust conflicting claims and interests and that is a ticklish job. They do not want to make the Interim Government an arena of unseemly quarrels among themselves or with members of the Muslim League.

The Hindustan Times, 20-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 30-6-1946

219. MESSAGE TO AMERICAN PEOPLE[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 19, 1946

I have never been to America but give my love to the American people.

The Bombay Chronicle, 20-6-1946

[1] Dr. E. Stanley Jones and Dr. R. D. Bisbey, American Missionaries, called on Gandhiji after the evening prayer. Dr. E. Stanley Jones, who was leaving for America the next day, asked for a message for the American people.

220. INTERVIEW WITH SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 20, 1946

Bapu again urged upon him that the Cabinet Mission must choose between the one or the other party, not attempt an amalgam; the Cabinet Mission were pursuing a wrong course. Cripps was apologetic. It would be difficult to begin anew after having come so far; Jinnah would not listen, and so on. In the end Bapu told him that in that case the Cabinet Mission could go the way they liked; he would have nothing to do with it.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, p. 222

221. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
[*June 20, 1946*][2]

Much as he would have liked to share with them all that was taking place in the Working Committee and in the course of his talks with the Cabinet Mission, he was not free to do so, said Gandhiji. When there was anything worth knowing he would tell them. They should not run after 'potted' news served by the commercialized daily Press. There were two kinds of curiosity, he remarked—healthy and unhealthy. One should always be curious to know one's duty at every step. But the itch for news was a kind of mental dissipation debilitating to the mind and spirit, unless it was properly curbed.

Commenting upon Mira's song which was sung at the prayer he said that in that song the devotee asks the should to drink deep of the nectar of God's name. Physical food and drink result in satiety and if over-indulged in illness. But the ambrosia of God's name knows no such limit. The deeper one drinks of it the more the thirst for it grows.

But it must sink deep into the heart. When that happens all delusion and attachment, lust and envy, fall off from us. Only one must persevere and have patience. Success is the inevitable result of such effort.

The Hindustan Times, 21-6-1946

[1] For a note by Sir Stafford Cripps on this interview, *vide* Appendix "Interview with Sir Stafford Cripps", 20-6-1946.

[2] The source reports this under "Tuesday", i. e., June 18. Exhaustive reports of the speech of June 18, which appeared in the papers the next day, have the *bhajan* with Gajendra and Graha as its theme. The *bhajan* referred to in this spech is different and since there are no other reports of the discourse given on this date, it is likely this was delivered on June 20.

222. NOTES[1]

IMITATION

Q. You have averred that a person who gives up eating meat in mere imitation of you cannot be said to be doing the right thing. Are you not wrong in holding this view?

A. I see nothing wrong in what I said.[2] If a person may change his practice in imitation, it is equally possible for him to revert to the original practice in imitation.[3] The gist of what I said was that nothing should be done without being well weighed and thought out and without deep conviction. Thoughtless imitation is the sport of little minds and may lead a man into a ditch with disastrous results.

HARIJAN COLLECTIONS

Q. You collect funds for Harijans wherever you go. According to Press reports, you sometimes receive large sums for that purpose. What is the total amount that you have collected? How is it spent? Are the accounts inspected or audited by anyone? I do not mean to suggest that the funds are being misused, but it ill becomes you to keep the people in the dark about these things.

A. The question hardly calls for a reply. But there must be many uninformed people like the correspondent. By itself the question is legitimate. The answer is simple. All Harijan collections made by me are handed over to the Harijan Sevak Sangh. Shri Thakkar Bapa is the guardian of the fund. It is spent according to the direction and with the sanction of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. Some of it is spent according to my instructions, but it has to be for the service of the Harijans only. Similarly for other funds, donations are sent to be spent at my discretion. Strict account is kept of every pie and the income and expenditure accounts are duly audited and certified from time to time.[4]

WHY THIS ANTIPATHY?

Q. Simple-minded Jains take you for a Jain, and you are not ashamed to be regarded as such. And yet, you seem studiously to shun the very mention of Mahavira in the columns of

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 30-6-1946.

[2] *Vide* "Religion v. No Religion", 29-5-1946.

[3] The Gujarati here adds : "Such a person can be said to belong neither here nor there."

[4] The Gujarati here adds : "All this is published from time to time. I think no further clarification is possible."

Harijan. Is this becoming for a Mahatma like you?

A. The above is the gist, in my own words, of a correspondent's question. The reader can infer from it what the original must be like. I plead guilty to the charge of not being a Jain. But possibly I am a better informed devotee of Mahavira than many who claim to be Jains.[1] If, however, I am not a devotee of Mahavira Swami, he or his devotees stand to lose nothing thereby. I alone will be the loser.[2] I suggest that we merely betray our weakness when we resent the indifference of our neighbours about those whom we revere and idolize.

NEW DELHI, June 21[3]1946

Harijan, 30-6-1946

223. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

READING ROAD, NEW DELHI,
June 21, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

You will remember the case of Shri Haridas Mitra of Calcutta.[4] His death sentence was commuted by H. E. and notified to me in Sir Jenkins' letter of 1st November, 1945.

Many things have happened since. As would appear from Mr. Carden Noad's petition dated 4th June, 1946, his incarceration has now become an anachronism.[5]

Shri H. Mitra's wife, a niece of the late Shri Subhas Chandra Bose, writes to me about his incarceration. I wonder if his continued imprisonment can be justified when other similar imprisonments have been cancelled.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 52-3

[1] The Gujarati here adds, "and daily visit their places of worship".

[2] The Gujarati here adds : "Nothing more need be said in answer. In fact what I have said above is also only to open the eyes of the blind followers."

[3] From *Harijanbahdu*; *Harijan* however has "25".

[4] *Vide* "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 17-4-1946.

[5] *Vide* "Letter to C. W. B. Rankin", 26-6-1946.

224. LETTER TO R. N. BANERJEE

NEW DELHI,
June 21, 1946

DEAR SHRI BANERJEE,

Thank you for your D.O. No. 459-46/PA.[1] of the 18th June which I read out to Gandhiji. I shall be grateful if you will be kind enough to let me know what the monthly quota of hessian and gunny bags exported to South Africa is and when it is to be stopped. In spite of the economic sanctions adopted by the Indian Government do arrears have to be made good?

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 91

225. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

N. D.,
June 21, 1946

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. Brajkrishna spoke to me about the girl. I said that he should have direct dealings and not involve me in the matter. Then I forgot it altogether. Do not drag me into it. Dilip must make the choice, certainly not I.

I am interested in your recovery. I would rather consider how best you can recover fully. That is something on which my mind can work, not on matters like betrothal, etc.

Things here are becoming complicated.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Which *inter alia* stated : "The stocks of hessian and gunny bags, referred to in the telegram, are not in excess of the quota which can be exported to South Africa up to date. The stocks may contain some arrears of previous quotas, but do not contain any quantity in excess of such quotas.".

226. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 21, 1946

Bapu's draft[1] was again discussed in the Working Committee. Bapu warned the members that they would not gain anything by entering on their new venture on bended knees. He reiterated his opinion that if the Cabinet Mission did not accept their conditions, it would be better to let the Muslim League form a nationalist Government at the Centre during the interim period.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, p. 222

227. TALK WITH VALLABHBHAI PATEL

NEW DELHI,
June 21, 1946

Bapu told the Sardar that negotiations for the inclusion of a nationalist Muslim in the Cabinet should be conducted not by the Maulana Saheb but someone else as the Maulana Saheb being himself a nationalist Muslim might feel it embarrassing to carry the insistence to its logical end.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, p. 223

228. DRAFT REPLY TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU [2]

[*June 21, 1946*][3]

I and all are of opinion that your presence here is essential above everything else. Remember that you are under an organization

[1] *Vide* "Draft Letter to Lord Wavell", 17-6-1946.

[2] Jawaharlal Nehru along with Asaf Ali had proceeded to Kashmir to arrange for the defence of Sheikh Abdullah, President, Kashmir National Conference and his colleagues, who had been arrested by the State Government for demanding a democratic set-up. At Kohala, on the border of Kashmir State, an order was served on Jawaharlal Nehru prohibiting his entry into the State. On his refusal to obey the order he was arrested and detained in a dak-bungalow.

In response to Abul Kalam Azad's urgent summons to return to Delhi the addressee on June 21 replied : "In view of the grave discourtesy offered to me . . . I am . . . unable to return untill full liberty of movement . . . is accorded to me. I request the Working Committee to proceed without me."

In reply to it Gandhiji drafted this on behalf of Abul Kalam Azad.

Presumably this was the reply referred to by Gandhiji in his speech at the prayer meeting as having been sent telegraphically; *vide* the following item.

[3] *Ibid*

which you have adorned so long. Its needs must be paramount for you and me. Remember also that your honour is ours and your obedience to the Congress call automatically transfers to it the duty of guarding your honour. The Committee is also solicitious equally with you about Sheikh Abdullah's case and the welfare of the Kashmir people. Therefore I expect you to return in answer to this. You will tell Maharaja Saheb that as soon as you are freed by the Congress you will return to Kashmir to retrieve your honour and fulfil your mission.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 346

229. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
Friday, June 21, 1946

The rule should be that during the prayers everyone should sit with closed eyes and think of nothing but God. There should be an atmosphere of solemnity during the prayer time, but no moroseness or gloom. Prayer should make them forget their troubles and they should all feel cheeful.

I cannot tell you about the Working Committee's deliberations even today. You should forget about it. The only curiosity worth having is to know God and have real knowledge.

You must be all anxious to have news of India's Jawahar (jewel) and of the treatment meted out to him in Kashmir. Some say he has been injured, some say he has been insulted and so on. You should believe none of these reports A telegram has been received during the session of the Working Committee today saying that he is well and cheerful. I am not yet in a position to give my estimate of the situation arising out of the action taken by Pt. Jawaharlal or the Kashmir Government. For that I must meet and hear Pt. Jawaharlal first and know the story of the Kashmir Government's doings.

Though now a prisoner of the Kashmir Government Panditji is certainly under the Congress discipline. He is a member of the Congress Working Committee and the President-elect of the Congress. His name is on the list of the proposed cabinet to be formed by the Viceroy for the interim period. Therefore, his presence in Delhi is

[1] The Hindi report in *Hindustan* has been collated with *The Hindustan Times* report.

most essential at the present juncture. The Working Committee cannot take the momentous decisions on the problems with which it is faced in his absence, if his presence could be secured. The pillar of the Congress is held up in Kashmir. What can Maulana Azad do? He does not control the army or the reins of the government. He has no authority except being a prime servant of the Congress. The Congress President has, therefore, sent Pandit Nehru a wire through the Kashmir Government to return to Delhi. The Maulana Saheb has also sent a message to the Viceroy to put him in telephonic communication with Panditji and, if permitted by the Kashmir Government, also to make arrangements for his quickest return to Delhi.The Viceroy has already contacted the Resident in Kashmir with instructions to send Panditji to Delhi. His arrival is awaited for taking decisions of far reaching consequences.

The Working Committee is anxious to come to a decision on the formation of the Interim Cabinet as soon as possible after thoroughly considering all the pros and cons. If the Congress were to help the Viceroy form the proposed Government which is suicidal to its interests what would be the worth of its 60 years' standing? Short of committing suicide the Congress is offering every possible co-operation in the formation of the Interim Government.

News has come that the railway strike has been put off for the time being. It is wrong if the railwaymen think that the Congress has stood idly by during the crisis. The Congress has been active behind the scene.

Referring to the start of the passive resistance struggle of the Indian community in South Africa, Gandhiji described how some white people there had taken the law into their own hands and were harassing the passive resisters who were fighting for their self respect and the honour of India.

The Union Government seems to be just watching while the whites commit mischief. It is wrong. It is bad enough to pass an unjust law, but it is worse to let white people take the law into their own hands. They ought to realize that Indians are in no way inferior to them. The latter cannot submit to segregation. The only way open to them to obtain redress is through satyagraha. They are offering it against the offending law by setting up tents in the prohibited areas. Some white men have vowed vengeance against them. They have been daily raiding their tents, and terrorising them. Some women are also among the resisters. But they have bravely told the men that they will

stand by them and share their vicissitudes. It is no small thing in South Africa. The movement is being led, according to the papers, by Dr. Dadoo and Dr. Naicker. It was the duty of the Government to stop this hooliganism of the whites. They can take action against the passive resisters according to law. What is taking place there today is worse than martial law.

I do not say these things to incite you to anger against the whites of South Africa. If you do that you will be unworthy to take part in the prayers. I want you to go home and pray that God may give strength to our brethren and sisters in South Africa, who are fighting for the honour of India, to face all hardships bravely, secondly that He may show light to the whites so that they may cease to inflict inhuman atrocities and the eyes of the Government there may be opened so that they may treat Indians as fellow human beings. The whites of South Africa too are our brethren, being children of the same God.

When we have the control of India's affairs in our own hands such things will become impossible. A free India wedded to truth and non-violence will teach the lesson of peace to the inhabitants of South Africa. But it is for you and the Congress to decide whether a free India will follow the path of peace or the sword. It is bad enough that the small nations of the earth should denude humanity of its precious heritage. It would be awful if a subcontinent of some four hundred millions were to take to gunpower and live dangerously.

The Hindustan Times, 22-6-1946, and *Hindustan*, 22-6-1946

230. LETTER TO LAKSHMI M. SHRAMA

DELHI,
June 22, 1946

CHI. LAKSHMI,

I have your letter of the 17th. Your dharma has now become clear. What is destined cannot be averted. It remains for us to think what we must do now. I cannot see very clearly what it should be. And in any case for that I should have you with me, which at the moment I am not in a position to arrange. Lakshmidasdada is already there. The Sardar is also sure to go there. I should like you to place yourself in Lakshmidasdada's care. In my view you should now have no need for land. You should regard the Ashram as your place, your home. The responsibility for maintaining you and bringing up your children and

educating them should rest with the Ashram. You should serve by engaging yourself in the Ashram activities as much as you can. Then it will not be for you to bother about the expenses and other things. But for this to happen you ought to observe the Ashram rules. You should merge yourself in the Ashram as sugar dissolves in milk, you act according to Lakshmidasdada's advice.

Show this letter to Lakshmidasdada so that he can guide me.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. LAKSHMI MARUTI

SABARAMATI ASHRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

231. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 23, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi announced to the gathering that as a disciplined soldier of the Congress, Pandit Jawaharlal had decided to return from Kashmir immediately in obedience to the Congress President's instructions, reserving to himself the freedom to go back to Kashmir later.[1] His honour, said Mahatmaji was the honour of the Congress.

He was glad to tell them, Mahatmaji continued, that according to the latest reports received from South Africa, the police there had surrounded the camping ground of the satyagrahis, and had given notice to the white population that baiting of the passive resisters[2] would not be allowed. The passive resisters were not criminals but respectable citizens. They were fighting for the vindication of their rights. As self-respecting people they preferred imprisonment to segregation in ghettos. They would resist injustice and oppression with their last breath.

It was open to the South African Government to visit them with the penalty of law or to abrogate the Segregation Act that was contrary to the dictates of humanity. But it would be a dark blot on the history of the white civilization if lynch law was allowed to have its course in South Africa. He hoped that the South African Government and the civilized conscience of mankind would not allow that. The whites outside South Africa should not allow themselves to be carried away by any misleading propaganda, but should exercise a restraining influence on the South African whites.

[1] *Vide* "Draft Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 21-6-1946.
[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 21-6-1946.

Repeating the advice he had given yesterday about keeping the eyes closed during the prayers, Gandhiji recommended the practice of giving rest to the eyes by keeping shut at times. It would invigorate the eyesight and help them too to turn the gaze inward. He deprecated the craze for the outward scene which had made the modern man convert night into day.[1]

The Bombay Chronicle Weekly, 23-6-1946

232. YARN EXCHANGE [2]

Shrimati Annapurna Devi[3] sends me the following account[4] of work carried on by her in Madhi, near Bardoli:

> I should like to tell you about the hank shop which we started over a year ago with a view to popularizing the idea of yarn currency. . . . We have been selling articles of daily use such as soap, oil, salt, *gur*, chillies, ground-nut, etc., in exchange for yarn. The stock of hanks increased from 43 in May to 233 in September . . . .
>
> Children of 10 years of age who attend my school run this shop. . . .

NEW DELHI, June 23, 1946

Harijan, 30-6-1946

233. LETTER TO GORDHANDAS CHOKHAWALA

[*June 23, 1946*][5]

CHI. GORDHANDAS,

Chi. Chimanlal writes and tells me that you are having prolonged fever. If so, you should rest and go for a change of air. Sevagram may perhaps suit you. I hope to reach there on or before the 7th [August][6]. I will go to Poona on the 28th.

I hope Sharda and Anand are fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10085. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

[1] Gandhiji kept his eyes closed during the 15 minutes he spoke.

[2] This appeared under "Notes". The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 30-6-1946.

[3] Annapurnadevi Mehta

[4] From which only extracts are reproduced here

[5] From the postal cancellation mark

[6] *Vide* "Letter to Manibhai Desai", 2-6-1946.

234. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 23, 1946

In the Working Committee meeting in the afternoon Bapu put forth his emphatic view that the Congress should keep out of the Interim Government but go into the Constituent Assembly as it was purely an elective body whose representative character was admitted even by the British Government. The Viceroy could not interfere with its working—he could not even sit in it as a matter of right. If the worst came to the worst, it could be turned into a rebel body. . . . In the alternative, he saw no possiblity of giving a fight, as the requisite atmosphere of non-violence was not forth-coming. Personally, he could not even think of launching civil disobedience, etc.

While he was proceeding in this strain, Rajendra Babu read out a telegram which he had received from Assam[1].

. . . On reading the text Bapu exclaimed:

Even the Constituent Assembly plan now stinks. I am afraid we cannot touch it.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, pp. 223-4

235. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING [2]

NEW DELHI,
June 23, 1946

In his remarks after the prayers, Gandhiji told the gathering that they would all be happy to learn that Pandit Jawaharlal—thanks to the assistance of the Government—had returned from Kashmir last night and that the reports about his having received bayonet wounds and so on were unfounded.

He was also happy to inform them that 16 passive resisters in South Africa had been arrested by the South African Government. A satyagrahi breaks laws repugnant to his self-respect and invites the penalty, which he faces cheerfully. Prison-going is not a matter of sorrow to him but of joy. A satyagrahi does not expect preferential

[1] Drawing attention to the form which the Viceroy's Reform Office had issued to the Speakers of the various Provincial Assemblies for the election of members to the Constituent Assembly. Among other things it required the candidates to declare that they would be "willing to serve as representatives of the Provinces for purposes of paragraph 19 of the statement" of 16th May of the Cabinet Mission. A similar message was received from Bombay. *Vide* also the following item.

[2] It being a Sunday a big crowd attended the evening prayers.

treatment in prison, but he does expect humane treatment. At the same time he must be prepared to face the worst. He hoped that the passive resisters in South Africa would prove themselves to be ideal satyagrahis in every respect.

Referring to his previous statements about the State Paper of May 16, that it was the best document that the Cabinet Mission could produce under the circumstances, if it bore the interpretation he gave it, he said that he adhered to that view so far as that Paper was concerned.

But as an old maxim says, the corruption of the best is the worst. A single drop of poison can convert a pot of nectar into a fatal draught.

He had commended the State document because of its voluntary character. But he had only an hour ago made a discovery which had come to him and the members of the Working Committee as a rude shock. A telegram from Assam had drawn attention to the fact that under Rules of Procedure for the election of members to the Constituent Assembly that had been issued from the Viceroy's office to the Speakers of the various Provincial Assemblies, no one could stand as a candidate unless he signed a declaration that he would abide by clause 19 of the State Paper of May 16. As they all knew, clause 19 referred, among other things, to grouping.

It was true that there was no legal sanction behind the document and therefore if anyone signed that declaration and afterwards did not abide by it he did not incur the penalty of law. Nevertheless, the undertaking would be morally binding and its breach would amount to bad faith, and those who were prepared to sacrifice honesty would make sorry architects of India's future.

It grieved him to see that the Constituent Assembly was being killed by the underlings of the very people who had given it birth. He exculpated the authors of the State Paper unless he found that they had known that such instructions were issued.

No one, not even the framers, had any right to interpret the State Paper in their own way, said Gandhiji. It could only be interpreted by a properly constituted court of law. The document had to be interpreted and applied as a whole. He still clung to the hope that it was only an error, and would soon be rectified. Then and then alone would it be possible to decide whether the Constituent Assembly was worthy of the name. If they participated in it, it would be for the sake of gaining India's independence. If they decided against it, it would still be in the same cause.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-6-1946

236. NOTE TO SUDHIR GHOSH [1]

June 24, 1946

As you have been go-between I suggest that you too should be present if they don't mind. Ascertain from them.

From a facsimile: *Gandhi's Emissary*, between pp. 212 and 213

237. INTERVIEW WITH CABINET DELEGATION[2]

June 24, 1946

. . . Gandhiji was observing his silence. . . . I read out what he wrote. . . Cripps explained briefly what he had told me the previous day; on the first piece of paper Gandhiji said:

I understood from Sudhir something quite *different*. I understood that you proposed to scrap the whole plan of Interim Government as it has gone on up to now and consider the situation *de novo*.

. . . I had to intervene to explain that Sir Stafford was not really saying anything different. Sir Stafford himself explained at some length that what they meant was that if the Congress accepted the long-term plan of Constitution-making, even if it was unable to accept the short-term plan of an interim coalition Government, then what would remain was the acceptance by both the Congress and the Muslim League, of the Constitution-making plan and, in terms of the commitment made by them, a Government representative of both would be got together—at a suitable date; if the Congress rejected both then Mr. Jinnah could ask them to go ahead with a Government representing those who had accepted the 16th May (Constitution-making) proposal, i. e., only the Muslim League.

. . . Gandhiji wrote down. . . .

Then if you say that you will form a Government out of the acceptances it won't work, as far as I can see. If you are not in a desperate hurry and if you would discuss the thing with me, I would gladly do so after I have opened my lips, i. e., after 8 p. m.[3] Meanwhile you should have, if you do not mind, the (Congress) Working Committee['s] letter of rejection of the proposal contained in the

[1] This was written before Gandhiji went to see the members of the Cabinet Delegation along with Vallabhbhai Patel at 7 a. m.

[2] As recorded by Sudhir Ghosh, who accompanied Gandhiji.

[3] Gandhiji met the members of the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy again at 8 p. m. For an official report of the interview, *vide* Appendix "Interview with Cabinet Delegation", 24-6-1946.

Viceroy's letter[1] of 22nd instant. In my opinion that letter puts a new appearance on the Interim Government. The object of the Working Committee so far as I know is to help the Mission, not to hinder it except when its project results in the Working Committee committing suicide. Sudhir's talk led me to see light through the prevailing darkness. But is there really light?

As to the Constituent Assembly, I was quite clear up to yesterday afternoon that the Congress should work the Constituent Assembly to the best of its ability. But the rules I read yesterday have revolutionized my mentality.[2] There is a serious flaw. I accuse nobody. But a flaw is a flaw. The three parties must not work with three minds and hope for success.

Sir Stafford Cripps explained that it was the Mission's intention to rectify the "flaw" as Gandhiji called it. Thereafter Gandhiji wrote:

Then you should not isolate a particular section from the whole. Why not say 'under the State Paper as a whole'?

Sir Stafford Cripps said that clarification could certainly be made.[3] Gandhiji scribbled his last remark:

However, I would gladly discuss this question also with you in the evening. I am sorry to cause you all this trouble. I only hope that you perceive my object in all this effort.

Gandhi's Emissary, pp. 171-3, and from facsimiles, between pp. 212 and 213

238. TALK WITH VALLABHBHAI PATEL—I

June 24, 1946

After the meeting[4], . . . on the way the Sardar asked Bapu: "There is a meeting of the Working Committee; what am I to tell them?" Bapu answered that he was not satisfied with the talk with the Cabinet Mission. The Sardar was irritated. "You raised doubts as regards para 19. They have given a clear assurance on that. What more do you want?" Bapu scribbled in reply:

During our meeting when Cripps said to me that if we were apprehensive about the wording of the instructions issued by the Reforms Office they could delete the reference to para 19 and

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Wavell to Abul Kalam Azad", 22-6-1946.

[2] *Vide* 1st footnote of "Speech at Congress Working Committee Meeting", 23-6-1946.

[3] For the demi-official statement regarding this, *vide* Appendix "Grouping Clause Controversy", 25-6-1946.

[4] With the Cabinet Delegation; *vide* the preceding item.

substitute in its place the words "for the purpose of the declaration of the 16th May", Lord Pethick-Lawrence immediately intervened and said: "No, that presents difficulty."

The Sardar dissented. Bapu asked Sudhir. Sudhir confirmed Bapu's version but added that his own impression was that they were prepared to concede what Bapu had asked for.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, pp. 225-6

239. DISCUSSION AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING—I

June 24, 1946

The Sardar said that they were under a promise to give their decision to the Cabinet Mission that afternoon. Bapu dissented. In a series of scribbled slips he suggested that they should postpone their decision till he met the Cabinet Delegation in the evening and obtained further clarification from them. Finally he scribbled:

There is no question of my feelings being hurt. I am against deciding this issue today but you are free to decide as you like.[1]

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, p. 226

240. DRAFT LETTER TO LORD WAVELL [2]

June 24, 1946

I have just received the telephone message sent on your behalf asking me to communicate immediately the decision of the Congress Working Committe in regard to the proposals for the Provisional Government.[3] The decision was in fact taken yesterday but we felt that it would be better if we wrote to you fully on all aspects of the proposals made by you and the Cabinet Delegation. The Working Committee have been sitting almost continuously and will be meeting at 2 p. m. again today. After full consideration and deliberation they have been reluctantly obliged to decide against the acceptance of the

[1] At noon someone from the Viceroy's House rang up . . . to say that the Working Committee's reply should be sent at once. . . . Bapu on being informed of it drafted a short interim reply to be sent straight away and suggested that the Cabinet Delegation should be informed that a detailed letter would follow. For Gandhiji's draft, *vide* the following item.

[2] Gandhiji drafted this on behalf of the Congress President.

[3] Afterwards it was learnt that the overzealous official who had sent the telephone message, had acted without authority.

Interim Government proposals as framed by you. A detailed and reasoned reply will follow later.

The Indian Annual Register, 1946, Vol. I, p. 173

241. DISCUSSION AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING—II [1]

June 24, 1946

Their recommendation will remain in their mouths or on the printed paper. We shall have no authority even to order a constable if there is a row in the Constituent Assembly. This is a dangerous situation. There must be the imprimatur of the Parliament and real power in the Central Government before we can make anything of the Constituent Assembly. The imprimatur of the Parliament would clear the way for the Chairman of the Constituent Assembly (by making the issue adjudicable) in case he wants to refer a point of major importance to the Federal Court for decision.

In the course of the discussion that followed, the Sardar pressed with great vigour his view that the explanation given by the Cabinet Mission in regard to the form issued by the Reforms Office was quite adequate and the Congress could not postpone giving its decision forthwith without damaging its prestige. Bapu scribbled.

My mind is in a fog. . . . It centres round the insertion of reference to para 19 . . . and the meaning of "scrapping the whole plan" (of the Interim Government).[2]

I have asked Rajen Babu and Sarat Babu as lawyers whether the candidates, after acting according to the instructions given to Governors, can afterwards disregard them.[3]

If the answer is yes then my mouth will be shut although I find a

[1] The meeting of the Working Committee was held in the afternoon. Gandhiji asked Pyarelal to read out the note he had written for the Congress Working Committee.

[2] The following four paragraphs are from a facsimile of the Hindi which, it would appear, were scribbled by Gandhiji in the course of the discussion that followed.

[3] According to the source "the opinion of Sarat Bose was that reference to para 19 in the instructions did not take away from the members liberty of action since their acceptance of the State Paper was subject to the legal interpretation of the clauses in dispute. Rajendra Babu's opinion was that para 19 did not make grouping complusory. It only gave Provinces freedom to form groups as was clear from the language of the document itself."

great danger in joining [the Constituent Assembly].

You examine all the instructions. There are other things in it which irk me. Now I think the point will also be raised that the State Paper should bear the imprimatur of the Parliament.[1]

Whatever the Cabinet Mission may say or write it will remain in their mouths or on the printed paper. They have opened here a Reform Office. Whatever they do and the interpretation they put will be final. The Government office not being in your hands you cannot have control over it. You should consider all this. You should do nothing in haste. I shall be meeting them today or tomorrow after which I shall be able to enlighten you as I shall be better informed. Today's interview has not produced a good impression on my mind. Because of my silence I could not myself ask questions. So I do not blame these people. I am in a very delicate position. I see darkness where four days ago I saw light.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, pp. 226-7, and from a fascimile of the Hindi, between pp. 288 and 289

242. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING [2]

NEW DELHI,
June 24, 1946

News has been received from South Africa that hooligans have attacked the satyagrahis again. A reverend English clergyman tried to dissuade them but without success. No satyagrahi was seriously hurt. The police, according to *Reuter*, have not arrested any of the hooligans. Let us put up with these things patiently. It is also reported that the satyagrahis have not retaliated. This is pure satyagraha. If the satyagrahis remain firm till the end they are sure to come out victorious.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 25-6-1946

[1] Regarding this Jawaharlal Nehru "felt that it would be a 'limiting process' and restrict the scope of interpretation".

[2] It being Gandhiji's silence day his written message was read out after the prayers.

243. TALK WITH VALLABHBHAI PATEL—II [1]

June 24, 1946

On returning from there the Sardar again asked Bapu: "Were you satisfied?" Bapu replied:

On the contrary my suspicion has deepened. I suggest that hereafter you should guide the Working Committee.

The Sardar replied: "Nothing of the sort. I am not going to say a word. You yourself tell them whatever you want."

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I. Book I, p. 227

244. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS [2]

BHANGI COLONY, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
June 24, 1946

DEAR SIR STAFFORD,

My whole heart goes out to you Lady Cripps. I would far rather not write this note. But I must. In spite of the readiness, as it seems to me, of the Working Committee to go in for the Constituent Assembly I would not be able to advise the leap in the dark. The light that Sudhir enabled me to see through the prevailing darkness seems to have vanished. There is nothing but a vacuum after you throw all the commitments on the scrap heap, if you really do intend to do so. I could not very well press for fuller information at our talk.[3] The instructions to the Governors, innocuous as they have proved to be, have opened up a dreadful vista. I, therefore, propose to advise the Working Committee not to accept the long-term proposition without its being connected with the Interim Government. I must not act against my instinct and shall advise them to be guided solely by their own judgment. I shall simply say that [the] conversation gave me no light to dispel the darkness surrounding me. I shall say I had nothing tangible to prove that there were danger signals.

[1] Introducing this the source says : "At 8 p. m. when Bapu's silence ended, he and the Sardar met the Viceroy and the members of the Cabinet Delegation." For an official report of the meeting, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Wavell to Abul Kalam Azad", 22-6-1946.

[2] According to *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. I, Book I Gandhiji wrote this at 10 p. m.

[3] Earlier in the evening

I am sorry to send you this letter. But I just thought it was my duty to put before you my feeling before sharing it with the Working Committee which meets at Maulana Saheb's house tomorrow at 6.30 a. m.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 212

245. TRIBUTE TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN [2]

[Before *June 25, 1946*]

Jayaprakash is an outstanding general in India's fight for freedom. Any country will be proud of such jewels among men. Like Jawahar and Subhas, he too is impatient to a degree, but this is a virtue considering the prevailing circumstances. I adore Jayaprakash.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 25-6-1946

246. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 25, 1946

I admit defeat.[3] You are not bound to act upon my unsupported suspicion. You should follow my intuition only if it appeals to your reason. Otherwise you should take an independent course. I shall now leave with your permission. You should follow the dictates of your reason.[4]

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, pp. 227-8

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Congress Working Committee Meeting", 25-6-1946.

[2] This was sent to Rashtriya Vidyalaya, Panchmarhi, which was bringing out a Jayaprakash number of its handwritten journal.

[3] Earlier Gandhiji had asked Pyarelal to read out the note which he had written to Sir Stattord Cripps last night. *Vide* "Letter to Sir Stafford Cripps", 24-6-1946.

[4] According to the source a hush fell over the gathering. Nobody spoke for some time. Abul Kalam Azad then asked, "What do you desire? Is there any need to detain Bapu and further?" Gandhiji returned to his residence.

The Working Committee met again at noon and addressed a letter to the Cabinet Mission, rejecting the proposal for the formation of the Interim Government at the Centre and accepting the long-term plan with its own interpretation of the disputed clauses. On request from its members Gandhiji attended the afternoon session of the Working Committee. At noon the Cabinet Delegation invited the members of the Working Committee to meet them.

247. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
June 25, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

You could not come. Even if you had managed to come, you could only have had a glimpse of me from a distance. What would have been the virtue in that? I approve of your returning soon[1]. What seems to be happening is excellent. You should participate in it wholeheartedly. Do not worry about the children. I understand that Sushila is staying back for the present. You should plunge [in the struggle] with the faith that God is her real guardian.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. MANILAL GANDHI
C/O BACHHRAJ & CO.
MAHATMA GANDHI ROAD
BOMBAY (FORT)

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4983

248. LETTER TO DINANATH

NEW DELHI,
June 25, 1946

BHAI DINANATH,

I shall never forget the services you all rendered me and my companions with such single-minded devotion regardless of whether it was day or night. God will reward you all for it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] To South Africa

249. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING [1]

NEW DELHI,
June 25, 1946[2]

Gandhiji drew attention to the demi-official statement[3] that had appeared in the Press that the instructions issued for the election of candidates for the Constituent Assembly did not bind them to anything in clause 19 of the Statement. This was clear in the declaration quoted in the papers. He was sorry, said Gandhiji, that he had not seen it before he made his Sunday's speech.[4] He was glad to say that his fears on that score had proved groundless. He felt he owed it to the Delegation to own his mistake, however *bona fide* it was.

He referred to the report of the deliberations of the Working Committee that had appeared in the newspapers. It was true that the Working Committee had decided to reject the proposals put before them for the formation of a provisional government for the interim period. But they had decided to go into the proposed Constituent Assembly. There were several flaws in the proposal for the Constituent Assembly, he said, but the Working Committee had reasoned that after all, it would consist of the elected representatives of the people. So, after considering every aspect of the question, they had decided that it should not be rejected.

The papers had also reported, proceeded Gandhiji, that the Working Committee's decision had been taken in the teeth of his opposition. That was a misleading statement to make. The fact was that for the last four or five days his mind had been filled with a vague misgiving. He saw darkness where he had seen light before. He knew that darkness indicated lack of faith in God. One whose being is filled with God, should never experience darkness.

Be that as it may, said Gandhiji, the fact remained that he did not see the light just then. What was more, he could not explain or give re asons for his fear. He had, therefore, simply placed his misgiving before the Working Committee and told them that they should come to a decision independently of him. Those whose function was to give a lead to the country could not afford to be guided by another's unreasoned instinct. They could not guide the destiny of the country unless they had the capacity to think for themselves and convince others by reason. The members of the Working Committee, he concluded, were the servants of the nation. They had no other sanction except the willing consent of the people whom they tried to serve. The latter would remove them whenever they liked. His advice to the people, therefore, was to follow

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"
[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 26-6-1946
[3] *Vide* Appendix "Grouping Clause Controversy", 25-6-1946.
[4] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 23-6-1946.

the lead given by the Working Committee. He would tell them when he saw the light. But so long as darkness surrounded him in anything, nobody should follow him in it.

Harijan, 30-6-1946

250. WHITE MAN'S BURDEN

According to *Reuter* picked Indians, men and women, headed by Dr. Naicker, commenced satyagraha (in South Africa popularly known as passive resistance) on June 14th in respect of the Segregation Law of the Union Parliament of South Africa. The same agency further reports that neither the Government nor the Municipality had taken any action against the passive resisters but that some 'whites' of Durban had taken the execution of the law into their own hands by raiding the camp at night, cutting down tents swiftly and carrying them away."A band of 100 young white men broke through the cordon of 50 Indian passive resisters, pulled down the tents and dragged them away torn. Some camp stretchers were smashed and blankets and pillows removed. Two women resisters were involved in the melee. They are stated to have been kicked but not injured.

The papers report that after three days of hooliganism the Borough police had posted themselves near the scene of passive resistance and warned the hooligans against molesting the resisters and terrorizing them into submission. This is heartening news. Let us hope that it can be taken at its full value and that the protection means fullest protection against lawlessness, sporadic or organized. Organized popular lawlessness is known as lynching, so shamelessly frequent in America.

Before the Segregation Law was passed, white men, known to be respectable, had carried anti-Asiatic agitation to the point of frenzy. Not satisfied with their triumph in having legislation compelling segregation passed probably beyond expectation, the more advanced section among the agitators have become the executioners of their own laws. They do not know that they are thereby defaming the white man's name! ! !

My appeal to the white men and women who have regard for laws for which they have voted is that they should create public opinion against hooliganism and lynch law.

Passive resistance is aimed at removal in a most approved

manner of bad laws, customs or other evils and is designed to be a complete and effective substitute for forcible methods including hooliganism and lynch law. It is an appeal to the heart of man. Often reason fails. It is dwarfed by self. The theory is that an adequate appeal to the heart never fails. Seeming failure is not of the law of satyagraha but of incompetence of the satyagrahi by whatever cause induced. It may not be possible to give a complete historical instance. The name of Jesus at once comes to the lips. It is an instance of brilliant failure. And he has been acclaimed in the West as Prince of passive resisters. I showed years ago in South Africa that the adjective "passive" was a misnomer, at least as applied to Jesus. He was the most active resister known perhaps to history. His was non-violence *par excellence*. But I must no longer stray from my main subject. It is the resistance of the Jesus type that the white hooligans are seeking to thwart. Let us hope that our countrymen's heroic resistance will not only shame the hooligans into silence but prove the precursor of the repeal of the Law that disfigures the statute book of South Africa. In concrete form, what pure suffering, wholly one-sided, does is to stir public opinion against a wrong. Legislators are, after all, representatives of the public. In obedience to it they have enacted a wrong. They have to reverse the process when the same public, awakened to the wrong, demands its removal.

The real 'white man's burden' is not insolently to dominate coloured or black people under the guise of protection; it is to desist from the hypocrisy which is eating into them. It is time white men learnt to treat every human being as their equal. There is no mystery about whiteness of the skin. It has repeatedly been proved that given equal opportunity a man, be he of any colour or country, is fully equal to any other.

Therefore, white men throughout the world and especially of India should act upon their fellow men in South Africa and call upon them not to molest Indian resisters who are bravely struggling to preserve the self-respect of Indians in the Union and the honour of their motherland. "Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you." Or, do they take in vain the name of Him who said this? Have they bani-shed from their hearts the great coloured Asiatic who gave to the world the above message? Do they forget that the greatest of the teachers of mankind were all Asiatics and did not possess a white face? These, if they descended on earth and went to South Africa, would all have to live in the segregated areas and be classed as

Asiatics and coloured people unfit by law to be equals of whites.

Is a civilization worth the name which requires for its existence the very doubtful prop of racial legislation and lynch law? The silver lining to the cloud that hangs over the devoted heads of our countrymen lies in the plucky action of Rev. Scott[1], a white clergyman, and his equally white fellow-workers, who have undertaken to share the sufferings of the Indian resisters.[2]

NEW DELHI, June 26, 1946

Harijan, 30-6-1946

251. DR. LOHIA'S CHALLENGE

It would appear from newspaper reports that Dr. Lohia[3] went to Goa at the invitation of Goans and was served with an order to refrain from making speeches. According to Dr. Lohia's statement, for 188 years now, the people of Goa have been robbed of the right to hold meetings and form organizations. Naturally he defied the order. He has thereby rendered a service to the cause of civil liberty and especially to the Goans. The little Portuguese settlement which merely exists on the sufferance of the British Government can ill afford to ape its bad manners. In free India Goa cannot be allowed to exist as a separate entity in opposition to the laws of the free State. Without a shot being fired, the people of Goa will be able to claim and receive the rights of citizenship of the free State. The present Portuguese Government will no longer be able to rely upon the protection of British arms to isolate and keep under subjection the inhabitants of Goa against their will. I would venture to advise the Portuguese Government of Goa to recognize the signs of the times and come to honourable terms with its inhabitants rather than function on any treaty that might exist between them and the British Government.

To the inhabitants of Goa I will say that they should shed fear of the Portuguese Government as the people of other parts of India have shed fear of the mighty British Government and assert their fundamental right of civil liberty and all it means. The differences of religion among the inhabitants of Goa should be no bar to common civil life. Religion is for each individual, himself or herself, to live. It

[1] Rev. Michael Scott
[2] An advance copy of this was sent to Lord Wavell.
[3] Ram Manohar Lohia

should never become a bone of contention or quarrel between religious sects.

NEW DELHI, June 26, 1946

Harijan, 30-6-1946

252. LETTER TO C. W. B. RANKIN

BHANGI COLONY, READING ROAD,

NEW DELHI,

June 26, 1946

DEAR MAJOR RANKIN,

I got your letter last evening and am sending you a copy of the memorial in the case of Haridas Mitra.[1]

Mr. Carden Noad in his letter to Gandhiji of the 7th instant says:

"I enclose a signed copy of the new memorial. A signed copy has been sent to the Viceroy."

It must have been lost in the post. He has been wired today to send a copy direct to H. E. also. In the meantime please put the one I send you before the Viceroy.[2]

Yours sincerely,

AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 54

253. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

DELHI,

June 26, 1946

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. I understand your hesitation in writing it. It was justified. However, when it becomes absolutely necessary to write you need have no compassion [for me]. I will remember the two things you have mentioned and try to write about them in *Harijan*.[3] Send me if you have a list of the persons who wear khadi made from their own yarn or who have agreed to do so. Let me also know the result of the appeal to be issued this time.

[1] The addressee had stated that Carden Noad's petition had not been received "in this office nor in any of the Departments concerned". *Vide* "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 21-6-1946.

[2] G. E. B. Abell in his letter dated June 28, 1946, replied that "the memorial submitted by Mr. Carden Noad is under consideration".

[3] *Vide* "Khadi Mad", 29-6-1946.

You say in the statement that, with God's grace, the scheme will be fulfilled, but I have deliberately scored out these words. There are two reasons: one, that you have not indicated the criterion of its success. And when you make a positive statement without indicating such a criterion, who can know what you mean by success? And secondly, even if we are entitled to make such a positive statement we should forgo that right. If you have in your mind a criterion of success, you should indicate it in your statement and say as under:

'God willing, this resolve will be fulfilled.'

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C. W. 8633. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

254. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

DELHI,
June 26, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

I got your letter of the 15th three days ago. But I am able to reply to it only today. After discussing the courage that you had displayed you asked me whether I would call it violence or non-violence. I should advise you not to bother about that question.

If we go on reflecting over the meaning of ahimsa, we shall but act non-violently when the occasion arises. We should not mind whether other people regarded it as non-violent or not. The effect of such action depends not on what others think about it but on what is in our minds. We do not know our minds ourselves, but, assuming that we do, if the mind says that in abusing or slapping a person we acted non-violently, it would be for us a non-violent action. Whether in fact it was non-violent God alone can know. The other party and the spectators also can judge it from the effect of the action on the former.[1] But why need you go into all such subtleties? And why should I take you into them? You did right in not publishing my letter. It ought not to be published. There is no harm in your having shown it to the *Nagarsheth*[2] The important thing is to watch the effect

[1] The boy who was punished later turned up to apologize and promised to behave. *Vide* "Letter to Manu Gandhi", 6-6-1946.

[2] Leader of a town's business community

of the work that you are doing there. If you persevere in it I shall regard it as part of your education.

I am glad that Umiya's[1] suggestion has been accepted. I do not know who is the Principal of the Science College at the Banaras Hindu University. Even if I knew I would not write to him. The Birla brothers have played an important part in establishing the University and they know many persons there. If Shankarlal writes to him the work will be done. If you experience any difficulty regarding the expenses, write to me. I am returning the wire received by you.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

255. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

DELHI,
June 26, 1946

BROTHER MAHMUD[2],

I had a fairly long talk with Rajendra Babu about you. Some poisonous propaganda is going on in the newspapers. He told me it is particularly in the *Dawn*. All this troubles me. My advice is that you should issue a public statement. In that you should point out that all of you are like one family, that all are under the Congress discipline and the Chief Minister as well as the other ministers are also under the Congress, and that other ministers are responsible to the Chief Minister. As long as you are in the Ministry no Hindu-Muslim problem can come up in Bihar, much less in the Ministry. It does not mean that there is no difference of opinion but it does not take the form of Hindu-Muslim quarrel. You have to be in the Ministry come what may. The fact is that we should all be large-hearted. This letter is not written in the presence of Rajendra Babu. He is going today. I have only given my opinion. Only Rajendra Babu can do the right thing. In the end do as he says.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G. N. 5096

[1] Addressee's elder sister

[2] Minister, Development and Transport, in the Bihar Ministry

256. INTERVIEW TO LOUIS FISCHER

NEW DELHI,
June 26, 1946

Gandhiji asked about the rumours of war with Russia. I said there was a good deal of talk about war but perhaps it was only talk. "You should turn your attention to the West," I added. He replied:

I? I have not convinced India. There is violence all around us. I am a spent bullet.

Since the end of the Second World War, I suggested, many Europeans and Americans were conscious of a spiritual emptiness. He might fill a corner of it.

But I am an Asiatic. A mere Asiatic.

He laughed, then after a pause:

Jesus was an Asiatic.

The Life of Mahatma Gandhi, p. 454

257. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

[*June 26, 1946*][2]

The Working Committee have come to a decision after much deliberation. Their one concern is the good of India. I want you to deduce from it that you should have faith that whatever is done in good faith will ultimately result in good. The last sixty years' unbroken record of the Congress service warrants such faith on your part.

A man or woman who serves India with all his or her heart stands on a par with the tallest Congressman. In God's eyes the service of the humblest will rank equal with that of the highest in the Congress organization provided there is the uttermost dedication to the cause.

Harijan, 7-7-1946

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

[2] From the reference to Congress Working Committee's decision regarding the proposals of the Cabinet Delegation, which was taken on June 25, 1946.

258. DRAFT TELEGRAM TO MAHARAJA OF KASHMIR[1]

June 27, 1946

YOUR HIGHNESS KNOWS THAT AT THE REQUEST OF MY WORKING COMMITTEE PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU SUSPENDED WORK OF HIS MISSION IN KASHMIR AND GAVE US THE BENEFIT OF HIS PRESENCE. MY COMMITTEE STILL UNABLE SPARE HIM FOR SOME TIME. MEETING A.I.C.C. FIXED FOR SIXTH JULY BOMBAY. I WOULD THEREFORE ASK FOR FURTHER POSTPONEMENT OF TRIAL SHEIKH ABDULLA OTHERS PENDING PANDIT NEHRU ABSENCE. I HAD INTENDED TO COME KASHMIR IMMEDIATELY TO SEE WHETHER I COULD BE ASSISTANCE TO STATE BUT URGENT CONGRESS WORK PREVENTS ME FROM GOING KASHMIR IMMEDIATELY.

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar.

259. TELEGRAM TO DADOO AND NARANSWAMY

June 27, 1946

SORRY ABOUT VIRAMMA'S[2] DEATH. CONDOLENCES FAMILY.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

260. TELEGRAM TO CARDEN NOAD

June 27, 1946

CARDEN NOAD

ENQUIRY REVEALS HARIDAS MITRA'S MEMORIAL NOT REACHED VICEROY. SENDING MY COPY TODAY. PLEASE SEND ONE ALSO DIRECTLY.[3]

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Addressed to Hari Singh, this was drafted by Gandhiji for Abul Kalam Azad.
[2] A passive resister in South Africa, wife of C. K. Thambi Naidu.
[3] *Vide* also "Letter to C. W. B. Rankin", 26-6-1946.

261. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

READING ROAD, NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter of 5-6-46 arrived here on the 22nd. Gandhiji is so very over-burdened that he literally does not get time to look at his post. I read out your kind thoughts to him day before yesterday and he has asked me to acknowledge your letter with thanks. You will understand that he is too busy to write himself.

The three months since the British Cabinet Mission came out have been long and anxious. It is with sorrow that Gandhiji has had to admit— as you may have seen in the press—that his mind is clouded with doubt. Where there was light there is darkness at the moment. Things have not gone as we hoped they would. Circumstances have tipped the balance on, as we think, the wrong side. However, as Gandhiji says, if we have the requisite faith and our own actions are motivated by pure impulses, we must believe that whatever happens is for our ultimate good.

It was good to hear of Devdas's valuable work from you. He ought soon to be out here again. Gandhiji is amazingly well. Louis Fischer who sees him after four long and difficult years finds him better than in 1942.

With very kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
A. K.

THE REV. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES
10 PARK AVENUE
NEW YORK 16, N. Y.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

262. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

BHANGI COLONY, NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

Gandhiji has asked me to send you copies of two cables[1] received today from Durban. Please be kind enough to place them before His Excellency.

We leave for Panchgani tomorrow evening, I hope. It will, as you say, be nice to have a "breather".

Yours sincerely,

AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 97

263. LETTER TO JALBHAI RUSTOMJEE

NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1946

CHI. JALBHAI,

I have your letter of the 7th. I got the cheque and the letter from Mr. Doull both of which I am returning with my endorsement. I expect it will clear all of Sorabjee's[2] dues and I hope no further debt will be incurred. Both of you brothers should now lead a simple life and prove your worth and also be worthy of Sheth Rustomjee[3].

I have been daily saying something about what is happening there at present. And I am also doing whatever I can. Our brothers and sisters who are offering satyagraha will remain steadfast to the last and will bring credit to the Indians there as also to India.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. JALBHAI RUSTOMJEE

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Extracts from Cable from South Africa", after 25-6-1946.
[2] Addressee's brother
[3] Parsee Rustomjee, addressee's father

264. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

June 27, 1946

CHI. ANAND,

I got your letter. I intend to leave here tomorrow evening. I reach Poona some time on Saturday. A telegram will be sent to Dinshaw. Enquire at his place. I hope you are both happy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi: Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

265. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1946

The South African satyagraha was again the theme of Gandhiji's talk after the prayers today. The whites there were becoming more and more frenzied in their hooliganism and seemed to be determined to cow down the satyagrahis who were behaving in a calm and diginified manner. The Indians in South Africa were a little over two lakhs only. They were a mere handful in the midst of the overwhelming mojority of white men and Negroes.

Imagine what it must mean for men like Doctors Naicker and Dadoo to be required to live in special locations. I want you all to continue your prayers to God to enable our brethren to remain steadfast till the end and to vouchsafe wisdom to the whites. Let me repeat that prayer from the heart can achieve what nothing else can in the world.

Two months' mountain air[2] seems to be necessary to keep me going for the rest of the year. It is surprising, the difference it makes. But I am not altogether sure whether it is not Ramanama really that is responsible for the marvellous result.

The Bombay Chronicle, 28-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 7-7-1946

[1] The report in *The Bombay Chronicle* has been collected with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.*

[2] Gandhiji was to leave the following evening for Panchgani.

266. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 28, 1946

Gandhiji paid tribute to the courage and suffering of the passive resisters without retaliation in the midst of the hooliganism which was daily increasing. He was born in India but was made in South Africa of which he knew practically every province. He had passed there twenty years of his life at its meridian. He knew the white men of South Africa. He loved them as well as his countrymen. He felt ashmed, he said, of the hooliganism of some of them. He had the fear that this hooliganism had the sympathy of the mass of the white men of the Union. Hooliganism would not flourish without such silent sympathy. He fondly hoped that as the white men realized the deep strength and sincerity of satyagrahis, they would begin to respect them and transfer their sympathy to the suffering passive resisters. He asked the gathering to offer their heartfelt prayers for God's mercy on the hooligans. He did not want to send money to their contrymen. Money could not give them victory. They had money enough. But a time might come when it would be their duty in India to offer non-violent resistance of the purest type for the sake of their brethren. He could not tell how. India was fast becoming the storehouse of the honour and dignity of the human race. It would be in the fitness of things if it fell to their lot to help the struggle of gallant resisters of South Africa. But for that the way must be clear before them. He felt that he would know when it was clear. Meantime he invoked the sympathy of the Viceroy and the white men and women of India to do their portion of duty.

Taking stock of his nearly three months' communion with them (with only two breaks) he asked them to preserve and enlarge the most precious part of what he was leaving behind,viz., the practice of common prayer. He did not mind whether they recited the prayer verse or not. What was absolutely necessary was that all the members of their families should daily assemble at a convenient time and observe at the most five minutes silence with concentration on God within.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-6-1946, and *Harijan* 7-7-1946

267. KHADI MAD [1]

The Rajkot Rashtriyashala appeal about the Charkha Jayanti of this year is as follows[2]:

Narandas Gandhi is khadi-mad. There are two ideas governing my conception of a yarn bank. First, that all yarn in whatever quantity, of whatever quality and from wheresoever it comes should be colleced in one place. From there it should be sent to the weaver in such a condition as will enable him to weave it with the same speed as he weaves mill yarn. For this purpose all yarn has to be doubled and twisted. Yarn that has not been subjected to this process should not really be reckoned as yarn. There will thus be two kinds of yarn, one doubled and twisted and one single. The former will have a higher value. It will, of course, take time to achieve this desideratum. In the meantime, yarn will have to be separated and the single thread doubled and twisted and then woven into cloth at the yarn depot or wherever it may be suitable.

The second thing to remember is that just as gold and silver emerge as coins from a mint, so khadi alone should emerge from a yarn bank. Not until such time as this happens will the defects in hand-spun yarn be removed and the quality of khadi improved beyond expectation. This work cannot be accomplished by compulsion. Khadi must be selfless, true and of a scientific mind for the easy, quick and voluntary achievement of this noble end.

To acheive it is the real goal of the Charkha Sangh. It will not matter if, in working up to this end, all the sales bhandars have to be closed and khadi-wearers reduced to a handful. Even so, there will be no shame attaching to the endeavour. On the other hand, if khadi is sold as a symbol of hypocrisy and untruth it will drag the names of both the Charkha Sangh and the Congress in the mud and khadi will no longer be able either to deliver swaraj or be the mainstay of the poor. Unbelievers will ask: 'Then why take so much trouble over khadi? Why not let it remain as one of the many occupations of village India, instead of being fad of non-violence?' Those who are khadi-mad must learn the secret of the science of khadi and be

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 7-7-1946

[2] The appeal by Narandas Gandhiji is not reproduced here. It exhorted people to celebrate Gandhiji's birthday, Bhadrapad Vad 12 according to the Vikram calander, by contributing yarn.

prepared even to die for it and thereby prove that it is the true symbol of non-violent swaraj.

ON THE TRAIN TO POONA, June 29, 1946

Harijan, 7-7-1946

268. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

ON THE TRAIN TO POONA,
June 29, 1946

MY DEAR MALKANI,

In English for your sake. Sterilization is a dreadful process. I share Jagadisan's opinion[1] .Therefore the dropping is good for whatever cause induced. Study the subject well and follow your own opinion.

Love.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 946

269. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

June 29, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

Can I point out a mistake when I see one? I had ordered you to do what you wished. You acted on the advice and I observed what you did. I showed my dislike of your engaging in gossip.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 730

[1] T. N. Jagadisan, who had been supervising the Kasturba leprosy work since May, 1945, had strongly critized the proposed bill in the Sind Assembly for sterilization of lepers as "both unintelligent and harsh" and had suggested that the only way to control leprosy was to segregate infective cases of leprosy,

270. TALK WITH NORMAN CLIFF [1]

June, 29, 1946

CLIFF: Discussions are now over. Can you talk about them?

GANDHIJI: Off the record—yes. If you want at any time to give anything to the Press you will, of course, let me see it first.

CLIFF: Are you feeling happy about the result the developed so far?

GANDHIJI: I cannot say that I am either happy or unhappy. But I am not satisfied. It is an indifinable feeling and I therefore asked the Congress Working Committee not to be guided by my instinct. While I have no disrust of the four actors (three Cabinet Ministers and the Viceroy) I have a distrust of the way things have gone. It has all been artificial and unnatural. My feeling is not by way of underrating the greatness of their task. I have great regard for their industry in prosecution of the ideal they have set out for. And yet I see that what I said at the very threshold of their career has proved true. I told them they were unaware of the difficulties they would have to sur-mount. They do not even know them now. It is no fault of theirs. They have done a faithful job and yet a bad one. They themselves are not satisfied. They are still probing.They do not know how to handle things. They have been brought up in one school of thought. With the greatest stretch of honesty they cannot think otherwise.

CLIFF: Can any Englishman then understand?

GANDHIJI: Yes, for example Andrews who realized that though he had the greatest measure of success he could not quite reach there. His success lay in knowing his limitations. He copied everything Indian in order to become Indian. Curiously enough and yet not curiously he shared his innermost thoughts with me and not Gurudev. Such was his love and reverence for the poet that he remained Gurudev for Andrews throughout. I first met Charlie in South Africa. He was a scholar. I am none. My knowledge of English literature is nil. He was a philosopher—unlike me, a man of action—and yet I took to him as perhaps I have not taken to any Indian. One day he asked for a gift. It was that I should call him Charlie and that I should allow him to call me Mohan. I readily agreed but told him that it would be harder for

[1] Norman Cliff sent to Sir Stafford Cripps a report of this talk, which took place on the train. The latter wrote to Gandhiji on July 20, 1946, regarding certain points mentioned in this talk. For Gandhiji's reply, *vide* Vol. LXXXV, "Letter to Sir Stafford Cripps", 7-8-1946.

me to fulfil my part of the contract as I had always kept a respectable distance from friends! Andrews found in me not only a live Hindu but a live Christian. That was the secrect of his nearness to me. He shared with me his innermost thoughts on religion. And he said that he must at bottom remain a true Christain if he was to be a true Hindu and Muslim.

The mission, I have said and I repeat, have done their best. But the best falls far short of India's needs or India's best. Take the food problem. I claim to know more than anyone about it for I have sunk myself in the masses. But the English do not understand what they should do if the masses that are sinking may live. India is being robbed of millions of pounds by Britain. An economist has only today written that the Congress ministries want to do things for village India but cannot. India should never remain naked for want of cloth. She grows enough cotton for her requirements. But it is a money crop and therefore exported. And the same in other things too. All is taken from the villages for rich city people and Britain.

CLIFF: For this very reason, do you not see independence in taking over power at the Centre in the Interim Goverment?

GANDHIJI: It looks nice and sweet put like that. But where is the power in the Interim Government as proposed? The dice were so heavily loaded against the Congress that it was impossible for them to come in. If I could form a live Central Government and thereby serve the masses I would seize the opportunity. A pure Muslim League Government would have been better than the so-called coalition they tried to form. I do not know what happened. But things seemed to go from bad to worse. Was it that secret force of the I. C. S. as before working in order to torpedo everything? The Simla Conference broke down last year. The Viceroy ad-mitted that the Congress acted on the square. He took the blame on him-self then.All the minorities were in tune with the Congress. If the League were not willing to shoulder the burden I advised giving it to the Congress. I consider it was sound advice but it was not accepted and hence the mess that we now are in. You should know that the League is today what the Con-gress was at one time. All their leaders are titled men. It has not yet been through the pain and travail that the Congress has been through before it could call itself the people's representative.

But even I am still working to make things a success. I cannot today support my instinct with reason. I own my defeat. And yet I

must tell the truth. I may not hide my innermost feeling, if I am to be a friend and adviser to either or both sides.

CLIFF: Don't you feel it is natural that the members of the Mission might find your attitude a little difficult to understand?

GANDHIJI: I have accepted my defeat before them too. I said to them,"I struggle to lay bare my whole soul before you." I am still advising. But I am filled with misgivings. I have to walk with the utmost caution. For failure now will be a great human tragedy.

CLIFF: Success or failure of the Constituent Assembly will surely depend on the spirit of those who go into it. Will it not?

GANDHIJI: Yes. But it may be that one or [the] other party or none goes into it. I would have you remember that a Mussalman does not become a non-Indian by changing his relgion. It is [a] most fantastic claim. My son became a Muslim for a little time for purely sordid reasons[1]. Did he lose his nationality? I am perhaps a better Mussalman than many a Hindu convert to Islam. This whole idea is wrong *au fond*. The British, imagining that they can bring the League and [the] Congress together, are attempting the impossible.

CLIFF: I am surprised that you with your boundless faith in human nature believe that the above is an impossibility. All things are possible with God.

GANDHIJI: If you think deeply enough, you will see that I am quite consistent. My faith in human nature is quite consistence with my holding that men with diametrically opposite views cannot coalesce. I have called Pakistan a sin. Can I cooperate to make sin a success? God cannot belie Himself. Truth canot work for untruth. That all things are possible with God cannot be used to make God break His law.

I have said and I think rightly that the connotation of Independence of India as meant by the British, the Muslim League and Congress is different. The Muslim League independence means splitting India first and independence after. The Congress stands for immediate unconditional independence for the whole of India. If the Constituent Assembly is to be worthy of its name, it must be a sovereign body with the right thing as well as the wrong. It may not be hedged in with conditions.

CLIFF: But you do recognize and respect the British concern for minorites?

[1] In 1936; *vide* "Letter to Ramdas Gandhi", 30-5-1936 and "Statement to the Press", 2-6-1936.

GANDHI: I do not admit its claim to do so. It is an unconscious relic, if you like, of Imperialism. You had independence even when you heaped disabilities on Roman Catholics. Which outsider dared to interfere with your independence? What right have the English rulers who have deliberately sown the seeds of discord and brought about these interminable dissensions into our structure now to concern themselves with our difference so called? Not until and unless you discard this 'white man's burden' notion will you be able truly to assist India.

CLIFF: It is very difficut for us everywhere, e. g., in Egypt.

GANDHIJI: You will find greater and greater difficulty as time goes on. The British Labour Party has my full sympathy. Of course, if the mind of the English people in general has been changed as Laski[1] and others tell us and Britain will be content to be dubbed 'little England' and get off the backs of others, it may be different. Otherwise the Labour Party will throw itself into the arms of Churchill for whose courage and resourfulness I have the utmost admiration.

I do not want Britain to leave India because of her helplessness. I flatter myself that we have come thus far through even our limited non-violence. I do not look with equanimity to India coming into her own by brute force. If Britain would play her part nobly, the growing hatred may give place to friendship.

CLIFF: Can there be a furture step in London?

GANDHIJI: Of course. My only fear is that the imperialistic character of the Labour Government will prevent them from doing right at any cost. They want to please all parties. This is an impossible task. They have to dare to do the right even though they displease some. This cannot be done in the imperialistic way.

CLIFF: Surely then there is all the more reason for settling things in India for our own no less than for your sakes?

GANDHIJI: You are right. How to do it in the right way is the question. My fear is that may fail in spite of themselves.

CLIFF: Cannot a *via media* be found?

GANDHIJI: They are struggling. I am struggling. My helping hand is still there in spite of misreading by them of the situation here. But I confess I am just now at sea and darkness surrounds me.

CLIFF: Your misgivings are not due to a fundamental distrust of Britain doing

[1] Harold Joseph Laski

the right thing?

GANDHIJI: No. But I have a fundamental distrust of their doing it *at any cost*. I said that the statement they issued[1] was the best they were capable of but it was not intrinsically the best. Then at the outset it bore three interpretations. The Congress put one, the League another and the authors a third one.That makes it a dangerous document.

CLIFF: But why not interpret it only as they do? They are the best judges of what they meant.

GANDHIJI: The law rightly does not accept the intention of the farmer of a law outside what the text bears.

CLIFF: Could not the document be reworded in order to make the intention clear?

GANDHIJI: That is impossible. It would mean perpetual changing and chopping.

CLIFF: Would you submit to legal interpretation?

GANDHIJI: Yes, of course.

CLIFF: Would not interpretation in spirit be better than in letter?

GANDHIJI: All these are questions for the court to decide.

CLIFF: Am I right in thinking that the immediate problem is still the Interim Government and that the main obstacle there is the rejectrion of Congress' right to nominate a Nationalist Muslim?

GANDHIJI: Yes. But the question of a Nationalist Muslim is a side-issue now that a far more general right has been conceded to the Quaid-e-Azam.[2]

CLIFF: Would the issue not be sholved if the Congress' right to nominate anyone were conceded but they were asked not to exercise that right?

GANDHIJI: A right is negatived if it cannot be exercised at the cirucial moment. The Congress is reduced to a caste Hindu body according to Jinnah's wholly wrong appraisement of it. Such an admission belies all its past history.

CLIFF: Isn't self-denial one of your fundamental beliefs?

GANDHIJI: (Roaring with laughter) Satan also quotes the scripture!!!

[1] On May 16, 1946

[2] In his letter to M. A. Jinnah dated June 20 Lord Wavell had *inter* alia stated:

(1) Until I have received acceptance from those invited to take office in the Interim Government, the names in the statements cannot be regarded

All I want is that what I have said should go deep enough into your soul so that you may be able correctly to interpret me.

Gandiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 363-7.

271. MARRIAGES BETWEEN HARIJANS AND NON-HARIJANS[1]

A friend from Patidar Ashram, Surat, writes to Shri Narahari Parikh:[2]

> If Harijan girls are to marry caste Hindus it should be on condition that the couple will devote their lives to the service of the Harijans. . . If caste Hindus girls live amongst Harijans as Harijans, Harijan sisters will be able to learn a lot from them.

If an educated Harijan girl marries a caste Hindu, the couple ought to devote themselves to the service of Harijans. Self-indulgence can never be the object of such a marriage. That will be improper. I can never encourage it. It is possible that a marriage entered into with the best of intentions turns out to be a failure. No one can prevent such mishaps. Even if one Harijan girl marries a caste Hindu with a high character it will do good to both the Hari-jans and caste Hindus. They will set up a good precedent and if the Harijan girl is really worthy, she will spread her fragrance far and wide and encourage others to copy her example. Society will cease to be scared by such marriages. They will see for themselves that there is nothing wrong in them. If children born of such a union turn out to be good, they will further help to remove untouchability. Every reform moves at the proverbial snail's pace. To be dissatisfied with this slowness of progress betrays ignorance of the way in which reform works.

It is certainly desirable that caste Hindu girls should select Harijan husbands. I hesitate to say that it is better. That would imply that women are inferior to men. I know that such inferiority complex is there today. For this reason I would agree that at present the marriage of a caste Hindu girl to a Harijan is better than that of a Harijan girl to a caste Hindu. If I had my way I would persuade all caste Hindu girls coming under my influence to select Harijan husbands. That it is most difficult I know from experience. Old prejudices are difficult to shed. One cannot afford to laugh at such

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in Harijanbandhu, 7-7-1946.

[2] Only extracts of the letter are reproduced here.

prejudices either. They have to be overcome with patience. And if a girl imagines that her duty ends by marrying a Harijan and falls a prey to the temptation of self-indulgence after marriage, the last state would be worse than the first. The final test of every marriage is how far it develops the spirit of service in the parties. Every mixed marriage will tend in varying degrees to remove the stigma attached to such marriages. Finally there will be only one caste, known by the beautiful name Bhangi, that is to say, the reformer or remover of all dirt. Let us all pray that such a happy day will dawn soon.

The correspondent must realize that even the best of my wishes cannot come true on the mere expression. I have not succeeded in marrying off a single Harijan girl to a caste Hindu so far after my declaration. I have a caste Hindu girl who at her father's wish has offered to marry a Harijan lad of her father's selection. The lad is at present under training at Sevagram. God willing, the marriage will take place after a short time.

[ON THE TRAIN TO] POONA, June 30, 1946

Harijan, 7-7-1946

272. SELF-RESTRAINT IN MARRIAGE[1]

The same correspondent[2] from the Patidar Ashram, Surat, who put a question to Shri Narahari Parikh, has also asked the following:[3]

It is deplorable that the correspondent seems to take it for granted that the main thing in marriage is the satisfaction of the sexual urge. Rightly speaking, the true purpose of marriage should be and is intimate friendship and companionship between man and woman. There is in it no room for sexual satisfaction. That marriage is no marriage which takes place for the satisfaction of the sex desire. That satisfaction is a denial of true friendship. I know of English marriages undertaken for the sake of companionship and mutual service. If a reference to my own married life is not considered irrelevant, I may say that my wife and I tasted the real bliss of married life when we

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 7-7-1946.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] The question is not reproduced here. The correspondent had maintained that "one cannot expect anything other than hypocrisy in the guise of celibacy in marriage". Adverting to Indumati and A. G. Tendulkar who were married earlier he stated "it is good that the particular bridegroom made it clear later on that he could not deny to his wife the right of motherhood".

renounced sexual contact, and that in the heyday of youth. It was then that our companionship blossomed and both of us were enabled to render real service to India and humanity in general. I have written about this in my *Experiments with Truth*. Indeed this self-denial was born out of our great desire for service.

Of course, innumerable marriages take place in the natural course of events and such will continue. The physical side of married life is given pre-eminence in these. Innumerable persons eat in order to satisfy the palate but such indulgence does not therefore become one's duty. Very few eat to live but they are the ones who really know the law of eating. Similarly, those only really marry who marry in or order to experience the purity and sanctity of the marriage tie and thereby realize the divinity within.

The correspondent does not seem to be conversant with the full details of the Tendulkar-Indumati marriage. The vow of sexual restraint was an outcome of mature deliberation. The text was written in Hindustani.[1] The papers put in their own English translations of it. The original provided for sexual intercourse if the wife desired progeny. This much is certain that both desired to observe restraint even after marriage. The union was for promotion of joint service. They had known each other for many years. Shri Indumati's parents gave their consent to this marriage after much testing. Then jail life prolonged the agony. Both parties as well as their elders were keen that the ceremony should take place in Sevagram Ashram, where Shri Indumati had lived for some time and derived solace. I am unaware of their whereabouts today. I have no reason to suspect hypocrisy in the transaction. But even if it is discovered, it would not prove that the vow of *brahmacharya* in married life is at fault. The fault lies in hypocrisy. An English poet has well said, "Hypocrisy is an ode to virtue."[2] Wherever there are true coins, counterfeit ones will also be found. Where there is virtue there will be hypocrisy, i. e., vice masquerading as virtue. How tragic and surprising that a virtuous action should be sought to be stopped because of the fear of hypocrisy!

ON THE TRAIN TO POONA, June 30, 1946

Harijan, 7-7-1946

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Marriage Rites", 18-8-1945.

[2] Due de la Rochefoucauld : "Hypocrisy is the homage paid by vice to virtue."

273. WHY KILL? [1]

The following suggestion has been received from Aligarh:[2]

> You write: "We have to kill monkeys, birds and animals which ruin the crops, or else keep someone who will kill them for us." My uncle has been able to keep monkeys off his field by using strong electric light at night. Why cannot this method be given a wider trial?

At first sight the suggestion seems attractive but on deeper thought one finds that it won't work. I might be able to protect my own field in this manner, but what of those round about? It will not be right for me selfishly to save my crops at the cost of others. That will be violence in the name of non-violence. For instance, we will throw a snake or rubbish from our own yard into that of our neighbour without compunction. True ahimsa demands that if we must save the society as well as ourselves from the mischief of mon-keys and the like, we have to kill them. The general rule is that we must avoid violence to the utmost extent possible. Non-violence for the society is necessarily different from that for the individual. One living apart from society may defy all precaution, not so society as such.[3]

June 30, 1946

Harijan, 7-7-1946

274. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[4]

POONA,
June 30, 1946

Addressing the gathering which had come to attend the prayers today, Gandhiji told them it was wonderful how he had been able to maintain his health in spite of the extremely heavy work in the broiling heat of Delhi. He attributed it to the miraculous power of Ramanama.

Again, it is though the grace of God that I am with you today. An accident had taken place in the middle of the night, while I was fast asleep. Some persons had placed boulders on the rails between

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 7-7-1946.

[2] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.

[3] The report in *The Hindu* has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.*

[4] The report in *The Hindu* has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.*

Karjat and Neral and but for the presence of mind of the engine driver, the train would have been derailed and no one could say who would have survived to tell the tale.[1] But no one can kill you unless God wills it.

This is perhaps the seventh occasion when a merciful Providence has rescued me from the very jaws of death. I have injured no man, nor have I borne enmity to any. Why should anyone have wished to take my life is more than I can understand. But there it was. Such things happened in every country. Why not in India too? But the world is made like that. Man is born to live in the midst of dangers and alarms. The whole existence of man is a ceaseless duel between the forces of life and death. Even so, the latest accident strengthens my hope to live up to 125. Ramanama is my only strength and refuge. You should join me in reciting His name and install Him in your hearts if you want me to continue to serve you. God makes crooked straight for us and sets things right when they seem to go dead wrong.

The Hindu, 2-7-1946, and *Harijan*, 7-7-1946

275. A REMARK[2]

[On or after *June 30, 1946*][3]

I see now how splendid I shall look when I am dead. I have already known how I shall look before my death. Such is this lucky age!

From a facsimile of the Gujarati: *Mahatma*, Vol. VII, between pp. 176 and 178

276. ATOM BOMB AND AHIMSA

It has been suggested by American friends that the atom bomb will bring in ahimsa (non-violence) as nothing else can. It will, if it is meant that its destructive power will so disgust the world that it will turn it away from violence for the time being. This is very like a man

[1] On alighting from the train Gandhiji personally thanked the engine-driver, L. M. Pereira and the guard.

[2] On the night of the accident while the repairs were being carried out for over two hours, unaware of the mishap Gandhiji slept peacefully. He wrote this remark on his photograph taken while he was asleep. *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] *Ibid*

glutting himself with dainties to the point of nausea and turning away from them only to return with redoubled zeal after the effect of nausea is well over. Precisely in the same manner will the world return to violence with renewed zeal after the effect of disgust is worn out.

Often does good come out of evil. But that is God's, not man's plan. Man knows that only evil can come out of evil, as good out of good.

That atomic energy, though harnessed by American scien- tists and army men for destructive purposes, may be utilized by other scientists for humanitarian purposes is undoubtedly within the realm of possibility. But that is not what was meant by my American friends. They were not so simple as to put a question which connoted an obvious truth An incendiary uses fire for his destructive and nefarious purpose, a housewife makes daily use of it in preparing nourishing food for mankind.

So far as I can see, the atomic bomb has deadened the finest feeling that has sustained mankind for ages. There used to be the so-called laws of war which made it tolerable. Now we know the naked truth. War knows no law except that of might. The atom bomb brought an empty victory to the Allied arms but it resulted for the time being in destroying the soul of Japan. What has happened to the soul of the destroying nation is yet too early to see. Forces of nature act in a mysterious manner. We can but solve the mystery by deducing the unknown result from the known results of similar events. A slaveholder cannot hold a slave without putting himself or his deputy in the cage holding the slave. Let no one run away with the idea that I wish to put in a defence of Japanese misdeeds in pursuance of Japan's unworthy ambition. The difference was only one of degree. I assume that Japan's greed was more unworthy. But the greater unworthiness conferred no right on the less unworthy of destroying without mercy men, women and children of Japan in a particular area.

The moral to be legitimately drawn from the supreme tragedy of the bomb is that it will not be destroyed by counter-bombs even as violence cannot be by counter-violence. Mankind has to get out of violence only through non-violence. Hatred can be overcome only by love. Counter-hatred only increases the surface as well as the depth of hatred. I am aware that I am repeating what I have many times stated before and practised to the best of my ability and capacity. What I first stated was itself nothing new. It was old as the hills. Only I recited

no copy-book maxim but definitely announced what I believed in every fibre of my being. Sixty years of practice in various walks of life has only enriched the belief which experience of friends had fortified. It is however the central truth by which one can stand alone without flinching. I believe in what Max Muller said years ago, namely, that truth needed to be repeated as long as there were men who disbelieved it.

POONA, July 1, 1946
Harijan, 7-7-1946

277. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

POONA,
July 1, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I am engulfed in work. Yesterday I started silence at 9. I have seen the Ministers.

Jawaharlal is coming here on the 4th. He still insists on my attending the meeting[1] Aruna[2] had already been to tell me. I sent her on to Maulana. If I must come I should be put up only in the Bhangi quarter. It had better be the same locality where I was taken earlier. I hesitate to say 'the same house'. The people of the house must not be driven out. Please consider all this and do what is proper. You may also consider whether I must come and let me know.

I did not like what you said to me. I questioned Pyarelal and told him to write down what he said and send it to you. He did not read in anything I said the meaning that you do. He said what he said from his own observation. But what I said had—and still has—a more profound import. It was nobody's fault. The fault lay with the circumstances. What can you or I do about it? You have to go by your experience, I by mine. You know I have not been able to under-stand certain things you have done—for instance, the expenditure on the election. This is an old issue, but I feel things went too far this time. This I. N. A. business also I did not relish and I do not like the way

[1] Of the Congress Working Committee and A. I. C. C., scheduled to be held in Bombay from July 5

[2] Aruna Asaf Ali, member of All-India Congress Socialist Party

you lose your temper in the Working Committee. Then on top of it we had this affair of the Constituent Assembly. I am not complain-ing, but I can see that we are heading in different directions. Why should I grieve? I certainly shall not complain. But we must see things as they are.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

68 MARINE DRIVE, BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 306-7

278. LETTER TO MORARJI DESAI

POONA,

July 1, 1946

BHAI MORARJI[1],

I was somewhat alarmed on hearing about [the incidents at] Ahmedabad.[2] I was aware of the *Rath-yatra*[3] day. They must have anticipated a skirmish. Why did the police not take precautionary measures? Does not the police now belong to the people? Why did they not seek the people's co-operation before hand? Our real defence force ought to be the people. Why call the military for such tasks? The people ought to have been forewarned that they would not get the help of the military. The State too may not rule with the help of the military. This could not be. Now realize your mistake and start afresh. Withdraw the military if you can. If you find it risky to withdraw the military immediately let them do policing. They may not carry rifles, and if they carry bayonets these should be used sparingly. Don't mind if a few have to die. They have been trained to act like monkeys.Under your administration they should cease to be monkeys and become human beings. Think about all this. Don't do anything only because I am saying it. Do what you are convinced about. Remember one thing, viz., the [British] Government's rule will take

[1] Minister of Home and Revenue in the Government of Bombay

[2] Communal riots had broken out in Ahmedabad on July 1.

[3] *Ashad Sud 2,* on which day images of gods are taken out in a procession

deeper root the more use you make of the military. Till now it has only been shaken, it may soon entrench itself-securely. Well, "a word is enough for the wise.".

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MORARJI DESAI

POONA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

279. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

POONA,
July 1, 1946

CHI. SUMI,

Your letter shows lack of thought and reasoning. I cannot fulfil your desire. Bhulabhai was a brilliant man. He became a lawyer of eminence here itself. Bal went to the U. S. A. after completing his studies here. I have sent no one abroad as you suggest. Lilavati is a widow. On growing older she thought of becoming a doctor. Others helped her while I only gave my approval. Let us see when you prove your worth. So far you have only shown your ability for cramming. There is nothing to becoming a barrister. Do whatever you can here itself and assimilate it. How many like you are able to go to England? Your father cannot provide the money and it is not right that he should beg for it. From every point of view I am against your going to England, and I shall not ask anyone for money for your sake. I advise you to restrain this desire of yours. Make whatever progress you can while remaining here. What more shall I write?

Blessings from

BAPU

PS.

Show this to Ramdas and Nimu. I am returning your letter. Let them see that too.

From the Gujarati original: Sumitra Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

280. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

POONA,
July 1, 1946

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I do not like to preside over any meeting. I am now tired of these things. I have already explained this to you. Invite Bapa or somebody else. Please excuse me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

281. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

POONA,
July 1, 1946

Gandhiji said that it grieved him to tell them that the hooliganism of the white men of South Africa was daily growing worse. The relieving feature, however, was that the courage and renunciation of the satyagrahis was rising to the occasion. One of the sisters, Dr. Goonam, had been sentenced to six months' imprisonment with hard labour. The trying Magistrate had reduced the term to four months. Dr. Goonam had objected to it saying that she wanted no favour on the score of her sex. Her offence, if it could be so called, was exactly the same as that of the men satyagrahis. But the Magistrate would not listen to her objection. Satyagrahis were being recruited in large numbers. He hoped and prayed, said Gandhiji, that the satyagrahis would continue to be strong and firm and that their struggle would be crowned with success.

Concluding, he asked them never to forget that God was the sole rock and refuge of a satyagrahi.

The Hindu, 3-7-1946

282. NOTE TO PYARELAL

[After *July 1, 1946*][2]

I think I can go through it just as it is. If I cannot I shall return it. There is so much else going this time that it is better not to send this. I must give it adequate time. And tomorrow there is much else I

[1] It being Gandhiji's silence day, his written speech was read out after the prayers.

[2] This was in reply to the addressee's letter of July 1, 1946.

have to write. You must get into the habit of getting the matter ready early. You will have seen for yourself how I have revised it. It could be made much shorter, more interesting and more precise. That cannot be done now. If you keep it for next week and work on it early then it can be done. I shall also help.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

283. LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

POONA,
July 2, 1946

CHI. CHAMPA,

I have your letter of May 27, 1946. If I started writing private letters to everyone there would be no end to it. Besides, why the insistence on privacy? If you have any mental weakness some day it is bound to come out. Or you will become a hypocrite.

The Ashram is not intended for comfort. For that you should go to some other place. I personally do not run the Ashram. For the present, therefore, there is nothing for you but to do as Krishnachandra says or leave the place.

You need not become an ascetic but at least become like an ordinary human being who does not make a show of his wealth. Otherwise, forget your relationship with me.

I have been noticing for a long time that you yourself are the cause of your frequent illness. You ought to know that you have no business to eat rice and *mung*. The diet for you is milk, boiled vegetables, fruit and curd. About the rest you may speak to me if you are still at the Ashram when I come there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8760

284. LETTER TO BAKSHI TEK CHAND

POONA,
July 2, 1946

BHAI BAKSHI TEK CHAND,

Rajkumari showed me your letter. There is no need to consult any other lawyer in Bombay. It is enough that you are there. I remember Dr. Gopichand had written to me. But I have forgotten what the letter contained. When I go to Sevagram I can look for it. Whatever the case, draft a short deed and sent it.

Nothing much of importance can be done about the matter today because the communal harmony generated during 1919-20 does not prevail at present. Hence, our duty today is to protect the property and use it in a manner that does not lead to friction. It should also be kept clean. Anyhow you have been there from the very beginning and you have been the chief worker. Hence, write to me whatever thoughts occur to you. I shall no doubt be seeing Jawaharlal and others but they will be so busy with other things that it may not be possible to exchange views on this matter. If I am able to do anything I shall write to you again.

I appreciated very much your views on the issue that came up during the Cabinet Mission's visit. Similar views were expressed by others. I am making use of them all.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

285. LETTER TO AGNIBHOJ

POONA,
July 2, 1946

BHAI AGNIBHOJ,

I have your letter. You did well in writing to me. I think the C.W.C. is seized of the matter. I would say this much that either untouchability will be eradicated through a change of heart in the caste Hindus or the sin that is being perpetrated in the name of religion will destroy Hindu society.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

286. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

POONA,
July 2, 1946

God is not a person. He is the all-pervading, all-powerful spirit. Anyone who bears Him in his or her heart has access to a marvellous force or energy as effective in its results as, say, electricity, but much subtler.

In explaining the significance of Ramanama was he propagating a species of superstition, he asked. "No" was his reply. Mere repetition of Ramanama possessed no mysterious virtue as such. Ramanama was not like black magic. It had to be taken with all that it symbolized. Rather, it was like a mathematical formula which summed up in brief the result of endless research. Mere mechanical repetition of Ramanama could not give strength. For that one had to understand and live up to the conditions attaching to its recitation. To take God's name one had to live a godly life.

Mathatma Gandhi said that the outbreak of communal riots in Ahemedabad had pained him deeply and he had told Mr. Morarji Desai, Bombay's Home Minister, who had come to see him before his departure for Ahmedabad, that he (Mr. Desai) must go to meet the flames under the sole protection of God, not that of the police and military. If need be, he must perish in the flames in the attempt to quell them as the late Mr. Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi had done.[1]

[1] In March, 1931. *Vide* "Speech on Kanpur Riots, Subjects Committee Meeting, Karachi", 27-3-1931, "Telegram to Balkrishna Sharma", 1-4-1931 and "Notes", 9-4-1931.

The Following paragraph is translated from Pyarelal's Gujarati article "Three Pure Sacrifices" *Harijanbandhu.*

Two Hindu workers and a Muslim worker set out to quell the riots and died in the effort. I am not unhappy at their death. I do not weep for them. Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi laid down his life similarly in the Kanpur riots. Friends had warned him: "Do not go in to the riot-affected area. The people there have gone mad. They will kill you." But Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi was not to be daunted. He was confident that his going would stop the riots. He went there and died at the hands of those who had gone mad. I was happy at his death. I do not say all this to excite you. I want to make you understand that if you but learn how to die all will be well. If enough young men like Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, Vasantrao[1] and Rajab Ali[2] came out, riots could be banished for ever.

Gandhiji also stated that the Congress Ministry in the Province was there to serve all the communities, but the Ministers could not serve them unless they had the willing co-operation of the people.

In Ahmedabad, went on Gandhiji, the pride of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, where he had rendered yeoman's service to the Municipality, Hindus and Muslims had always lived together in peace. But of late, they seemed to be dehumanized.

Today Hindus and Muslims have gone mad and are stabbing each other. How shameful and tragic it is! If one of the communities gives up the madness the conflict will cease immediately.[3]

All the deaths in Ahmedabad were not the result of firing. Many were the results of stabbing and the like. It was a shame that they had to call for the help of the police and the military to prevent them from flying at each other's throats.[4]

But you must realize that by seeking the help of the police and the army we become their slaves If we want to have true independence, we should stop relying on them and relying solely on God should learn how to die. That is all we have to do. Many people know how to die after killing others but we have to die without killing anyone.

If one side ceased to retaliate, the riots could not go on. What did it matter if even a few lakhs were killed in the right manner out of the 40 crores of Indians? If they could learn the lesson of dying without killing, India which was celebrated in legend history as *Karmabhoomi*—the land of duty—would become a virtual Eden, the image of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

The Hindu, 4-7-1946, and *Harijanbandhu*, 14-7-1946

[1] Vasantrao Hegishte
[2] Rajab Ali Lakhani
[3] This paragraph is translated from the Gujarati in *Harijanbandhu.*
[4] The following paragraph is translated from the Gujarati in *Harijanbandhu.*

287. DISTINCTION BETWEEN HINDI AND URDU

Shri Ram Naresh Tripathi is well known to me. One day he came to see me at Mussoorie. I had feared that he would reproach me for my propagation of Hindustani. But when I talked to him I found the reverse. He told me that if I cherished the hope that Hindustani would emerge from a blending of Hindi and Urdu, Urdu would be of more help. Only I should become as fully aware of the attempts to distort Urdu by giving it a new look as I am of the attempts to distort Hindi. Hindustani would then come of itself. I asked him to give me illustrations to help me understand what he meant. When he tried to think he found some difficulty in doing so. I then asked him to explain in writing. The result was the following letter which he wrote to me:

> Pujya Bapu,
>
> You had asked me to explain to you the structural difference between Hindi and Urdu. But it seems to me a matter of experience. I cannot clearly define it. I can venture a suggestion though. Get a paragraph from *Harijan* translated into Hindi and Urdu by two competent writers. You will know the difference between the structure of the two languages.
>
> I had told you that da ythat Urdu was more refined than Hindi. I will give you an example. Here is a sentence from a well-known Hindi writer: समझमें न आने से घबराहट-सी होने लगती है।
>
> In Urdu लगती cannot be used. It is either होती है or पैदा होती है. No good Urdu writer will ever use an incorrect idiom. If he does so he had to be prepared to engage in a stiff battle. There is no movement for refining Hindi. But rather than such a movement being started it would do Hindi much more good if Urdu books and writings were published in the Devanagari script. In this way Hindi would be benefited by the struggles of the Urdu writers and poets over the last several centuries to improve and polish Urdu. This would automatically transform it into Hindustani.

This letter deserves consideration. I am a lover of languages but I am not a linguist. My knowledge of Hindi is barely satisfactory. I did not learn Hindi from any books. I did not have the time for that. My son Devdas who, with my encouragement and my blessings, went to Madras to learn Hindi, knows it far better than I do. There are many others also whom I can name. My knowledge of Urdu is even less than my knowledge of Hindi. I have known the Nagari script

from my childhood. I have learnt the Persian script with considerable effort. As I have not had the practice, I am able to read it only with some difficulty. I manage somehow to write it. Thus my knowledge of Urdu is very rudimentary. What I do have is love and an impartial attitude. Therefore, if God wills it and if I get help from scholars of the two languages, my venture will succeed. I published Tripathiji's letter only with the idea that he and other would help me in this effort.

Another lover of Hindi also tells me that hardly has there been such work done for Hindi as there has been for Urdu. If only people would not indulge in a tug of war but would realize that the two languages have a common root in the speech of the millions of our villagers and that it is for this that our scholars and poets have to work, we could quickly march forward.

POONA, July 3, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 14-7-1946

288. LETTER TO C. R. ATTLEE [1]

POONA,
July 3, 1946

DEAR PRIME MINISTER,

I wonder if you can remember an Indian being introduced to you by the late Mr. MacDonald[2]. That was the present writer. On the strength of that slight acquaintance, I make bold to introduce to you my young friend Shri Sudhir Ghosh. He makes a reliable and steady bridge between Great Britain and India. He loves both passionately. He has made wide British connections. And he made himself a willing instrument in the hands of your Mission. At their instance he goes to England. I have wished godspeed to his self-imposed mission. He thinks he will interpret India as he knows it. Incidentally he has to interpret me to the best of his ability. To interpret a person is much more difficult than to interpret organizations. God bless his effort and give his tongue the right word.

[1] The letter was forwarded by the India Office to the addressee on August 3.

[2] James Ramsay MacDonald, Prime Minister of Britain, 1924, 1929-31 and 1931-35

I hope the great weight you are carrying sits lightly on you.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

THE PRIME MINISTER
LONDON

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, p. 4. Also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47*, p. 220

289. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

POONA,
July 3, 1946

CHI. KANAM,

I have your letter. I was very glad that you wrote in the Gujarati script. Make it a regular habit. There is room for improvement in your hand-writing. It is, of course, better than your Devangari. But you must improve in this respect as you improve in knowledge. When the writing is heavy, it comes out on the other side and therefore you cannot write on both sides.

You have given me plenty of news in your letter. Continue to write thus.

I hope to reach Sevagram in the first week of August. My plan to go to Panchgani has been upset. I hope nevertheless to pay a flying visit there.

Rasik's ideas improved day by day and he rose very high. I have the same hopes of you. Rasik had almost reached the apex in thought when he passed away. May you reach the apex and may you live 125 years.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 9522. Courtesy: Kanu Gandhi

[1] Even though advised against it by the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy, the addressee met Sudhir Ghosh and replying to this on August 14 wrote : "Thank you for your letter introducing Mr. Ghosh. I much enjoyed a talk with him. I trust that a complete settlement between our two countries may be attained. I think that the last time we met was in the House of Commons with George Lansbury. I trust that you keep well."

290. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL K. MEHTA

POONA,
July 3, 1946

BHAI JAISUKHLAL,

The letter written in English and dated June 29 seems to be from you, although you never write to me in English. Which other J. K. Mehta could it be? Anyhow I take it you are a Gujarati. I would be shocked if Gujaratis started writing to me in English.

Why must you see me in Poona? Write whatever you like about the Constituent Assembly. I can have no leisure at all. Some new task or other always turns up demanding undivided attention. Hence I have not the heart to let anyone come from Bombay. If you are the same old Jaisukhlal, I may let you come so that I can see for myself that you are hale and hearty. Yet I am not sure and if you are not the same old Jaisukhlal, why should I trouble you to come?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI J. K. MEHTA
TAGORE ROAD
SANTA CRUZ

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

291. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

POONA,
July 3, 1946

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. How can I express to you all my views? Whatever I have done, I have done with proper consideration and with Dilip's interest in mind. I think I have come to understand Kusum. Had it been necessary to intervene, I would certainly have done so. I have also met him. Now let things take their own course. Ultimately God alone knows what is good and what is bad.

Improve your health.

You did well in not writing about politics.

We may meet. Indications are that I may be coming there. If so, I shall be coming on the 5th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Neru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

292. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON

POONA,
July 3, 1946

BHAI PURUSHOTTAM[1],

I have your affectionate letter. It is all to the good that I rarely read any newspapers. How can I find the time? If I happened to read them I wouldn't believe you could have said so. Now, I shall be more careful.

I understand what you say about the Assembly under swaraj.

Blessings from

BAPU

BABU PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON
SPEAKER BHAVAN
BANDARIA BAGH
LUCKNOW

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

293. LETTER TO THANMAL SOUCHETI

POONA,
July 3, 1946

CHI. THANMAL,

I got the sad news of Sheth Pratapmal's death. May everyone get a father like yours. He made such sacrifices and yet how silently

[1] (1882-1962); Speaker, Legislative Assembly, U. P., 1937-39 and 1946-50; President of the Congress, 1950, but resigned soon after; Vice-President, Akhil Bharatiya Hindi Sahitya Sammelan

he rendered service! May you grow as selfless as he was and continue his tradition.

Blessings from

BAPU

THANMAL SOUCHETI

C/O SJT. CHANGNIRAM PRATAPMAL

SOJAT RAOD, MARWAR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

294. INTERVIEW TO JOACHIM DIAS AND CHANDRAKANT KAKODKAR [1]

POONA,

July 3, 1946

Do not bow before the Portuguese Government. Remember that 40 crores of Indians are behind you.[2]

Q. Our fight against the Portuguese imperialism is for the present to obtain civil liberties. Hence, what is the type of satyagraha that we should offer?

A. You have to resist through civil disobedience every attack on civil liberties. But you should define beforehand what the civil liberties are for which you are fighting. You cannot ask for anything to which you have no moral right. Moreover, your movement should be strictly non-violent.

Q. The Colonial Administration of the Portuguese Government demands previous permission for meetings; but we want the right of calling meetings even without serving notice.

A. You should have every right to call meetings without notice. No self-respecting person can tolerate any hindrance to his doing what is morally just. We are free men and we want to hold meetings peacefully. For this we cannot give any previous notice. Hence you should hold meetings without giving any notice.

Q. In case we call a meeting and address the people and are arrested, and police allow us to go away saying we should come back on any fixed day, are we to agree to it? Or should we refuse to quit the police premises, or should we come out and defy their bans again?

A. The police who have the right to arrest you also have the

[1] President and Member of the Executive Committee of the Goan Youth League

[2] This Paragraph is from *The Hindu.*

right to let you go. Hence you should go out if you are allowed to do so. You should not insist on being kept under arrest. But once you go out you can defy the ban again. In case any day is fixed for your reappearance before the police, you are bound as gentlemen to do so.

Q. How should people act when a satyagrahi is arrested?

A. There should be no demonstration or disturbance of any kind if a satyagrahi is arrested. The people should be peaceful and offer themselves either individually or collectively to be arrested. I am not for hartal and such other things if anyone is arrested. After all you should know that a satyagrahi courts arrest of his own accord, and if the people wish to do anything at all, it should be to follow his example. As for demonstrations, etc., they will come at a later stage.

Q. How to defy the pre-censorship of Press?

A. This is really difficult but there are two solutions which I can offer. The first one is the one followed by me in South Africa. It is to issue handwritten bulletins which volunteers should sell openly. These bulletins should contain defiant news exposing the Government. It is better if the people who write out, sign their full names at the bottom of each bulletin. If many of you join together it won't be difficult to take out several copies. Let the Government arrest the people concerned, others can continue the work. The other way open to you is to get printed matter from outside and distribute it openly.

Q. How to defy the ban on organizations?

A. Start as many organizations as you like and begin working in their name.

Q. How should people react in case the Government takes recourse to shooting, etc.?

A. It is better to die bravely than exist under such repugnant conditions. Let the people say: 'All right, shoot us!'

Q. How should a satyagrahi keep up his morale when subjected to torture?

A. The satyagrahi must not wince. He should submit to every form of torture.

Q. What should be the attitude of a satyagrahi towards the Catholic Church in Goa when it becomes an active agency of oppression in the hands of the Portuguese rulers?

A. It is better to leave religion alone. But if it really plays into the hands of oppressors, then it is your duty to oppose it in the same way as you would oppose any oppressive regime. But be against it

only to the extent to which it hinders your cause.

Now I have answered all your questions, and I want that you should show your courage and should not allow the movement to fizzle out. Even if no one is prepared for sacrifice it is the duty of anyone who feels the wrong to oppose it without waiting for others to follow. [If] you rot in prison, the eyes of the others will be opened some time or other. As for myself I would not have remained for a moment in Goa without breaking such inhuman laws.

You have all my blessings and I promise you I will exert all my influence to see that the Indian National Congress is interested in Goa and that Goa comes on the map of India. Only show courage; I admire it.

The Hindu, 5-7-1946, and C. W. 11018. Courtesy: U. R. Rao

295. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING [1]

POONA,
July 3, 1946

Addressing the prayer gathering today, Gandhiji referred to the situation in Ahmedabad, and stated that the latest report was that the situation was well in hand. Shri Morarji Desai had invited the representatives of Muslims, Hindus and others to a joint conference at Ahmedabad and had told them that he was prepared to withdraw the police and military if they so desired. But the latter, he heard, had unanimously replied that they were not prepared to take the risk. The result was the police and military were there. The authorities had promulgated a curfew order for three days to be enforced day and night. Therefore although as a result, the disturbances had been arrested, the peace that was seen in Ahmedabad today was the peace of the grave.

It was something, he added, of which no one could be proud. How he wished that both the Hindus and Muslims would combine and dispense with the help of the police and military for purposes of keeping them from mutual fight. The State could not suddenly disband them, but they could certainly reserve them for purposes of regulating the traffic, municipal sanitation and growing more food to combat the famine. He reminded them that so long as they depended upon the help of the police and military for maintaining law and order, real independence must remain a mere idle talk. They daily joined him in prayers. The essence of prayer was reliance on God and utter fearlessness.

Gandhiji said that he would not say that the situation in South Africa was

[1] The source reports the speech in two parts under two different headings. These have been collated here.

deteriorating. But it was certainly becoming graver. The Government repression was becoming worse. That was, however, part of the bargain. A satyagrahi breaks the law and welcomes the penalty.

Referring to the arrest and conviction of Parsee Sorabjee to three months' rigorous imprisonment, he described how as a young lad of sixteen he had given proof of unusual courage in the course of the satyagraha movement which he conducted in South Africa. A mounted policeman threatened to overrun the passive resisters. Sorabjee held the reins of the horse and told the policeman that he could not frighten the satyagrahis into submission by such tactics.[1] He was a worthy son of a worthy father, the late Parsee Rustomjee, both for his bravery and munificence.

Gandhiji paid a glowing tribute to Rev. Scott of Johannesburg whose Christian conscience had revolted against the inequality of the segregation law and the ill-treatment to which the passive resisters were being subjected. As a protest against it, Rev. Scott had decided to cast in his lot with the satyagrahis and share with them the indignities to which they were being subjected. It was no small thing for a white man to identify himself with coloured people in South Africa. If the satyagrahis remained free and non-violent till the end, all would be well with them. He had already told the audience their duty in this connection, that is, a heart-felt prayer to God to give strength to the satyagrahis and light to the whites.

The Hindu, 5-7-1946

296. LETTER TO SUJATA

[After *July 3, 1946*][2]

CHI. SUJATA,

I received your letter of July 3. I could not write to you then. I did not recognize the girl at first. Later I recognized her. She gave me your second letter. I am glad that you are working in the villages. May you be successful. Talk to Lavanyalatabehn about the aid from the Kasturba Trust. The Kasturba Trust confines itself to poor village women and their sons and daughters. There is also an age bar.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] According to *Satyagraha in South Africa* General Lukin was about to order his soldiers to open fire on the striking labourers when Parsee Sorabjee seized the reins of the General's horse and appealed to him not to order firing and persuaded the labourers to go back to their work.

[2] Inferred from the reference to the addressee's letter of July 3, 1946.

297. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

POONA,
July 4, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

I am enclosing a copy of a cable[1] received this morning by Gandhiji from H. H. the Aga Khan.

Gandhiji would like to know if H. E. can do anything to help in the matter of the air passage for Ashwin Chawdhuri which the Aga Khan wants.[2]

I hope you are enjoying your respite from the heat.

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 98

298. LETTER TO KAMALA

POONA,
July 4, 1946

CHI. KAMALA (ANDHRA),

Your question is harmless. But we have to save ourselves from our sins. We spoil the dogs. If we do not kill them we ourselves will die. The society can never go that far. Therefore this kind of violence becomes inevitable. there are so many other acts of violence which we must eschew. Only then can a question such as yours arise.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 5905. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] The Aga Khan in his cable from Nairobi had said : "Sorabjee arrested. Most important Ashwin Chawdhuri proceed New York explain our case public opinion. Unless he gets proper air priority impossible. Am doing my best from here but position unsatisfactory. Kindly intervene. Get Ashwin Chawdhuri air priority arranged through Indian Government. Approach Bhopal, Jinnah. Please have united front.

[2] The addressee replied on July 9 saying : "I am . . . asking Common wealth Relations Department on His Excellency's behalf to ascertain the exact position from the High Commissioner's Office."

299. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

POONA,
July 4, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

There is no point in the questions which you have asked. A man who is wicked by nature will show his wickedness on any occasion. If such a rule is to be framed, it can have no room for exceptions.

I shall answer the rest of your questions when I go there in August.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4560

300. LETTER TO G. D. TAPASE

POONA,
July 4, 1946

BHAI TAPASE[1],

I have your English letter.Why in English? Write in Hindustani, Marathi or any other Indian language.

I have gone through the Bill. I see no difficulty about it and I think no Harijan worker will have any objection to it. But the painful thing is that custom transgresses the law. Untouchability has found refuge more in custom than in law.

In fact, as far as I know, there is absolutely no basis for untouchability in law but under the present judicial system, however evil it may be, custom acquires the strength of law. Take, for instance, the "age of consent"[2]. Now a days the Government has even stopped enforcing it because people no longer abide by it. It means that a law which is ahead of public opinion ceases to be observed. Nevertheless a Bill has to be brought up. Its implementation will depend largely upon the courage of caste Hindus and Harijans. Your law pundits will have to be careful of the word 'Harijan'. It is an apt expression, sweet but now embittered by many people.

[1] Minister, Industries, Fisheries and Backward Classes in Bombay

[2] The expression within quotation-marks is in English. The reference is to the Child Marriage Restraint Act, popularly known as the Sarda Act.

There seems to be an error in sub-clause 4 under IV B. You may look up [the passage] "But not caste therein,"[1] etc.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. TAPASE, MINISTER

POONA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

301. NOTE TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

[On or before *July 5, 1946*][2]

Please write to Shriman about the technical point you have raised and he will consult me. I will go through the papers and give my decision. Technically, of course, you are right. What I wrote for Gujarat cannot, technically, be applied to other provinces. The exemption is intended only for those who already know Hindi; it does not apply to anybody who may seek admission to the Sammelan[3] [examination] now and later to the Urdu Anjuman[4]. The former contains the word "Hindi". But now we cannot retain that word. It is on this issue that I resigned.[5] People do not still seem to have realized that Hindi which excludes the use of the Urdu script and Urdu diction cannot be called a national language. The Congress has purposely adopted the word Hindustani and its decision is perfectly correct.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10810

302. LEFT-HANDED COMPLIMENT

I am writing this letter with a hope of getting proper and immediate response from you. Along with the whole of India I am well aware of your sweet will and affinity towards the Mehtar Community. Your *Harijan* has obliged us to a great extent by enabling us to see through your heart. Especially the recent *Harijan* have emphatically revealed your thoughts about the Mehtar Community.

[1] The expression within quotation-marks is in English.
[2] The postal cancellation mark bears the date 5-7-1946.
[3] Akhil Bharatiya Hindi Sahitya Sammelan
[4] Anjuman Taraqqi-e-Urdu
[5] On July 25, 1945, *vide* "Letter to Purushottamdas Tandon", 25-7-1945.

I now wish to reveal my interrogatory heart in order to be well nigh to your feelings towards us and to be definite about our position in the muddled and complicated Indian political field.

By the time you will receive this letter it will be the last date of filling in nomination forms for the candidateships for the Constituent Assembly, which has, it is learnt, to be completed by the end of this month. Congress is proposing particular M. L. As and non-M. L. As for the same. It is believed that Scheduled Castes are also to be represented (adequately?). But is there any proposal from you or from Congress to elect adequate or at least some members from the Mehtar Community who, I am sure, will discharge their duty of citizenship and pick up their legitimate share in the future constituion of Free India?

2. Generous as you are towards us, may I assure myself and my community that Mehtar seats in the Constituent Assembly will not escape your notice?

3. Who will be the components of the Advisory Board? Caste Hindus or Minorities including (?) the Scheduled Castes?

4. Will the advice or proposals of the Advisory Board be binding to the Constituent Assembly? I think they will not. If so, what sense is there in appointing such a Board, which will be nonentity if the Constituent Assembly were not to pay heed to its advice? Is it not merely for the appeasement of the weak minorities?

You might say you have been [doing] and will do everything for us, but I wish to say 'let us be with you when everything for us is to be done. Let us be represented democratically.'

I strongly hope that my questions will be fully and satisfactorily answered by you with an obligation of immediate reply to me. I further humbly request you to be good enough to publish your answers in your weekly *Harijan.*

Hope to be excused for troubles.

I have reproduced the foregoing in order to show what havoc dangerous knowledge of English has produced in our society. This is a specimen not of English nor yet of Indian English. It is bookish English which the writer probably half understands. I suggest to him that if he had written to me in the national language Hindustani or in his provincial language, it would not have evoked an unfavourable response from me.

The writer has paid me a left-handed compliment and that perhaps in order to teach me how to express my love for the Bhangi, otherwise known as Mehtar. The writer is a discontented graduate,

setting no example or a bad example to Bhangis. He has isolated himself from them, though he professes to represent them.

He will certainly become my teacher if he will be a graduate in the art of being a good Bhangi. I very much fear that he does no scavenging himself; he does not know what scientific scavenging is. If he became an expert in the art, his services would be wanted by all the cities of India. When Bhangis really rise from the slumber of ages, they will successfully sweep the Augean stables everywhere and India will be a pattern of cleanliness and there will be in India no plague and other diseases which are the descendants of filth and dirt.

In the place where I am living in Bombay, my room and the adjoining lavatory are fairly clean, but I am in the midst of suffocating dirt. I have had no time to examine the tenements in front of me. They are as crowded and as dirty as the ones in the quarters where I was living in New Delhi. Had my graduate fellow Bhangi been an expert in the art, I would, without doubt, have requisitioned his services as my guide and helper.

As it is, not only have I no use for him, I have to risk his displeasure by telling him that he should not think of the Constituent Assembly or other assemblies. Let those go to them who are wanted there. Instead of getting rid of the wretched caste mentality, he argues that any Harijan is not good enough for the purpose but preference should be given to the Mehtar caste. I suggest to him that it is a harmful method, doing no good to anybody.

Anyway, he has expected the impossible from me. I am not made for these big institutions. I have never interested myself in the periodical assembly elections. I have not attended Working Committee meetings where they make these selections. What I know of the present selections is from the newspapers. I have become a Bhangi because I think that that is the vocation of every Hindu, that the hoary institution of untouchability as we know it today in its ugly shape will die a decent death only when the Hindus will be casteless by becoming Bhangis from the bottom of their hearts. That cannot be done by aspiring after the membership my correspondent has in view.

BOMBAY, July 6, 1946
Harijan, 14-7-1946

303. 'ALL ABOUT BHANDARS' [1]

An article under the above caption appeared in the *Khadi Patrika* of 3rd June. As it is important I give it in full below:

> It is our intention to make rapid changes in the running of our bhandars. In spite of the condition of yarn currency attaching to the sales of khadi, Bombay people have not yet taken to spinning. Most of the yarn given in exchange for cloth is bought. From the 1st of July, we shall give only Rs. 2 worth of khadi for one hank and, as a result, the sales of khadi will go down. One of the main reasons for khadi sales is that mill-cloth is rationed. Many persons who ordinarily wear mill-cloth are almost forced, as it were, to buy khadi. We take a statement from every customer as to whether the yarn given in is self-spun or spun by a member of the family or staff. But we have regretfully to admit that many customers do not appreciate their responsibility in the matter of making accurate statements. This irresponsible attitude is not in the best interests of khadi. Khadi production aims at self-sufficiency of village India. Other provinces will, therefore, now provide less and less cloth to our bhandars. The use of the words 'sale of khadi' is really inconsistent with the ideal. In the circumstances it is imperative for us to make timely changes in the running of bhandars. From July 1st we are closing two branches in Matunga and Dadar. For the last three months we have been giving training in Matunga in all the processes of khadi. In Dadar, there was some sale of khadi too, but these activities must now come to an end. In Girgaum, in the Khadi Printing Shop, the A. I. S. A. was running a training centre too. This shop will now be handed back to the trustees of the Khadi Printing Shop who will continue to give instruction in all the processes of khadi as well as arrange for some sales.
>
> The reduction of work involves dispensing with the services of fifteen workers.
>
> Ever since the new policy came into vogue, Gandhiji has been saying that the make-up of the bhandars must be changed. In order to fall into line we arranged facilities for teaching and weaving in some places but such outward changes have not connoted the real change. We felt that a change in our mental outlook is what was most needed. Therefore, examination of workers and such other reforms came into force.
>
> Nevertheless all the changes mentioned above have not enabled us to gain our object. At the time when customers looked upon khadi as being in the fashion, bhandars were purely commercial depots. Today the bhandar desires

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 14-7-1946.

to bring about a change in the mentality of the khadi-wearer. It no longer desires to remain a sales depot. It desires to become a centre for imparting knowledge in all the processes of khadi manufacture. It desires to become a centre of attraction for weavers and other craftsmen. To this end we must continue undeterred to bring about the necessary changes and *pari passu* change the outlook of Bombay khadi-wearers. Then only will bhandars reflect the reality. We expect the customers of Bombay to remain loyal to us in our endeavour.

Readers will note that the success of the purpose, as expressed in the article, rests on the faith, intelligence and capability of the workers.

BOMBAY, July 6, 1946

Harijan, 14-7-1946

304. LETTER TO J. J. SINGH [1]

BOMBAY,
July 6, 1946

DEAR SINGH,

Our mutual friend, Mr. Louis Fischer tells me that your persistent labours were solely responsible for the passage of the Indian Immigration Act. I congratulate you on your successful labours. You will, perhaps, oblige me by sending me a copy of the Act.

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindustan Times Weekly, 27-4-1969

305. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

BOMBAY,
July 6, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your postcard. Today we have come to Bombay. As far as I can see Manilal will now plunge into the struggle. We should wait to see its outcome and you should not therefore leave in a hurry. It will be proper to take Arun and Ila along with you when you wish to go. And about this too you should decide for yourself. Anything that

[1] This was reproduced by the addressee in his article entitled "Mahatma Gandhi—Some Reminiscences" wherein he says : "I received Gandhiji's letter in Hindi with a translation in English written by Rajkumari Amrit Kaur."

you do will meet with my approval. I am not competent to make the final decision.You know the children's attitude better than anyone else. Mind you, this time it will be your responsibility to coach them well in Gujarati. If there is anything particular to discuss we shall discuss it when you come to see me although you may stay only for two or three days.

I hope you are all keeping well. I shall return to Poona by the 9th at the latest. I shall be busy with the meting which is scheduled to go on till the 12th. On the 13th I shall go to Sasvad. To Panchgani on the 14th, where I shall stay till the 29th. Then Poona. I propose to be in Sevagram by 7th August.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

306. RESOLUTION ON SOUTH AFRICAN STRUGGLE[1]

BOMBAY,
July 6, 1946

This meeting of the A.I.C.C., while it is grieved that it has become imperative for the Indian settlers in South Africa once more to offer Satyagraha in the land of its birth against a law imposing on them a colour bar far more sinister than the one against which they had put up a brave fight between 1907 and 1914, congratulates the handful of satyagrahis on their brave but unequal action against heavy odds.

This meeting is pleased to find that doctors and such other men and women are at the head of the gallant struggle and that among them are represented Parsis, Christians, Muslims and Hindus. This meeting is also pleased to find that a few white men like the Rev. Scott[2] have thrown in their lot with the satyagrahis.

This meeting condemns the action of some white men in resorting to the barbarous method known as lynch law to terrorize the satyagrahis into submission to the humiliating legislation. It is worthy

[1] For Gandhiji's speech on the resolution, *vide* "Speech at A. I. C. C.", 7-7-1946.

[2] Rev. Michael Scott, a white clergyman who had stood up against the inequality of the segregation laws and the ill-treatment of Indian settlers in South Africa.

of note that a large part of the Indians are born and bred in South Africa, to whom India exists only in their imagination. These colonial-born Indians have adopted European manners and customs and English has become like their mother tongue.

This meeting notes with great satisfaction that the Indian resisters are keeping their struggle free from violence in any shape or form and conducting it with dignity and without rancour and that they are thus suffering not only for their self-respect but for the honour of India, and by their heroic resistance setting a noble example to all the exploited people of the earth.

This meeting assures the Indian settlers of South Africa of India's full support in this unequal struggle and is firmly of opinion that persistence in it is bound to crown their effort with success.

This meeting appeals to His Excellency the Viceory to use all his endeavours and ensure that of the British Government in aid of this struggle and invites the European residents of India to raise their voice in protest against white hooliganism and the anti-Asiatic and anti-colour legislation of South Africa.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

307. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

BOMBAY,
July 6, 1946

At the end of the prayer, Gandhiji asked how many Harijans were present in the hall. Not a hand went up. It was a great disappointment for him, Gandhiji said. He had come to live in a Harijan quarter because he had become a Bhangi. But there was not even one Harijan there.

I blame you and not those who are absent.

The reason for their absence is that the so-called caste Hindus have kept down the so-called untouchables for ages and that too in the name of religion. This hall is meant for the use of Harijans. Non-Harijans can come only by grace. Those who come here should make it a point to bring at least one Harijan each. If they befriend the Harijans, untouchability will disappear in the twinkling of an eye.

But he was grieved to find that they had not really done so. There were Harijan Barristers and lawyers. Even today, they could not live in the bungalows on Malabar

Hill. There was a Harijan volunteer girl working in his camp. She was studying in the B. A. class. There was nothing in her appearance to distinguish her from other girls. Why should the knowledge that she is a Harijan make her an untouchable to be treated differently from other girls?

Proceeding, Gandhiji said that he was embarrassed by the care and attention that was being lavished on him by those who were in charge of the management of the camp. Yet he was finding his stay very taxing. There was so much dirt and filth about the place. Dr. Dinshaw had told him that the lavatories were so dirty that he could not use them. There were so many flies about the place that he was anxious that he (Gandhiji) might catch some infection and get killed. He himself was not worried about that. Although the two doctors with him looked after him, he did not depend on anyone except God. The Almighty would take care of his health. But his companions did not have that faith in God.

He had brought with him a big party, Gandhiji went on. They were there to render personal services and to help him with the editing of his weeklies and his correspondence. He was anxious for them. He himself had been given a good clean lavatory. But all the party could not use it. He had been thinking that if he came here again, he should stay here all by himself. He was occupying the house of the overseer. He had been wondering why those in charge of sanitation, that is, the Municipality and the P. W. D., should put up with this filth. What was the use of his coming and staying there if it could not induce them to make the place healthy and hygienic?

What was the connection between all this and the prayer, asked Gandhiji. A man who did not observe the rules of external cleanliness could not pray for internal cleanliness. If the object of their attending the prayer was idle curiosity, they had committed a sin by coming. If they had come to join in the prayer, they must pray for inner and outer cleanliness. To say one thing and to do something different would be deception. No one could deceive God, because he was omnipresent and omniscient.

The Hindu, 8-7-1946

308. SPEECH AT A. I. C. C.[1]

BOMBAY,
July 7, 1946

I have often said that man plans but the success of his plans depends not on him but on the will of Providence which is the supreme arbiter of our destinies. Unlike you, I am [here] not in my own right but on sufferance. I have been told that some of my previous remakrs about the Cabinet Mission's proposals have caused a good deal of confusion in the public mind. As a satyagrahi it is always my endeavour to speak the whole truth and nothing but the truth. I never wish to hide anything from you. I hate mental reser-vations. But language is at best an imperfect medium of ex-pression. No man can fully express in words what he feels or thinks. Even seers and prophets of old have suffered under that disability.

I have not seen what has appeared in the papers about what I am supposed to have said regarding the Cabinet Mission's proposals. I cannot read all the newspapers myself. I content myself with perusing only what my co-workers and assistants may place before me. I hold that I have lost nothing thereby. Because of what has appeared in the Press, an impression seems to have been created that I said one thing at Delhi and am saying something different now. I did say in one of my speeches at Delhi in regard to the Cabinet Mission's proposals that I saw darkness where I saw light before.[2] That darkness has not yet lifted. If possible it has deepened. I could have asked the Working Committee to turn down the proposals about the Constituent Assembly if I could see my way clearly. You know my relations with the members of the Working Committee. Babu Rajendra Prasad might have been a High Court Judge, but he chose instead to act as my interpreter and clerk in Champaran.[3] Then there is the Sardar. He has earned the nickname of being my yes-man. He does not mind it. He

[1] On June 26 the Congress Working Committee had passed a resolution in New Delhi expressing willingness to "join the proposed Constituent Assembly with a view to framing the constitution of a free, united and democratic India" and demanding the formation of "a representative and responsible Provisional National Government" at the earliest possible date.

Gandhiji spoke on the motion moved by Abul Kalam Azad seeking ratification of the resolution of June 26 and the one on satyagraha in South Africa.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 25-6-1946.

[3] In 1917

even flaunts it as a compliment. He is a stormy petrel. Once he used to dress and dine in the Western style. But ever since he decided to cast his lot with me my word has been law to him. But even he cannot see eye to eye with me in this matter. They both tell me that whereas on all previous occasions I was able to support my instinct with reason and satisfy their head as well as heart, this time I have failed to do so. I told them in reply that whilst my own heart was filled with misgivings, I could not adduce any reason for it or else I would have asked them to reject the proposals straightway. It was my duty to place my misgivings before them to put them on their guard. But they should examine what I had said in the cold light of reason and accept my view-point only if they were convinced of its correctness. Their decision, which they have arrived at after prolonged deliberations and which is almost unanimous, is before you. The members of the Working Committee are your faithful and tried servants. You should not lightly reject their resolution.

I am willing to admit that the proposed Constituent Assembly is not the Parliament of the people. It has many defects. But you are all seasoned and veteran fighters. A soldier is never afraid of danger. He revels in it. If there are shortcomings in the proposed Constituent Assembly, it is for you to get them removed. It should be a challenge to combat, not a ground for rejection. I am surprised that Shri Jayaprakash Narayan said yesterday[1] that it would be dangerous to participate in the proposed Constituent Assembly and therefore they should reject the Working Committee's resolution. I was not prepared to hear such defeatist language from the lips of a tried fighter like Jayaprakash. One line from a song composed by the late Choudhary Rambhaj Dutt has always made a very deep appeal to me. It means: "We will never be defeated—nay, not even in death." That is the spirit in which I expect you to approach this resolution. A satyagrahi knows no defeat.

Nor would I expect a satyagrahi to say that whatever Englishmen do must be bad. The English are not necessarily bad. There are good men and bad men among the English people as among any other people. We ourselves are not free from defects. The English could not have risen to their present strength if they had not some good in them. They have come and exploited India, because we quarrelled amongst ourselves and allowed ourselves to be exploited.

[1] At the A. I. C. C. meeting

In God's world unmixed evil never prospers. God rules even where Satan seems to hold sway, because the latter exists only on His sufferance. Some people say that satyagraha is of no avail against a person who has no moral sense. I join issue with that. The stoniest heart must melt if we are true and have enough patience. A satyagrahi lays down his life, but never gives up. That is the meaning of the "Do or die" slogan. That slogan does not mean 'Kill or be killed'. That would be wilful distortion and travesty of its true meaning. The true meaning is that we must do our duty and die in the course of perfor-ming it if necessary.To die without killing is the badge of a satyagrahi. If we had lived up to that ideal we would have won swaraj by now. But our ahimsa was lame. It walked on crutches. Even so it has brought us to our present strength.I know what happened in 1942. You will perhaps say that it was sabotage and underground activity that had brought the country to its present strength. It cannot be denied that sabotage activity was carried on in the name of the Congress during the '42 struggle but I deny *in toto* that the strength of the masses is due to that. Whatever strength the masses have is due entirely to ahimsa however imperfect or defective its practice might have been. Our ahimsa was imperfect because we were imperfect, because it was presented to you by an imperfect being like myself. If then, even in the hands of imperfect instruments it could produce such brilliant results, what could it not have achieved in the hands of a perfect satyagrahi?

In 1942 our people showed great valour. But greater valour will be required of us before our goal is reached. We have done much, but more remains to be done. For that we must have patience and humility and detachment. You should try to understand what happened in 1942, the inner meaning of that struggle and the reason why it stopped short where it did.

This is no time for dalliance or ease. I told Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru that he must wear the crown of thorns for the sake of the nation and he has agreed.[1] The Constituent Assembly is going to be no bed of roses for you but only a bed of thorns. You may not shirk it.

That does not mean that everybody should want to go into it. Only those should go there who are especially fitted for the task by virtue of their legal training or special talent. It is not a prize to be

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru was elected President of the Indian National Congress.

sought as a reward for sacrifices, but a duty to be faced even like mounting the gallows or sacrifice of one's all at the altar of service.

There is another reason why you should join the Constituent Assembly. If you asked me whether in the event of your rejecting the proposed Constituent Assembly or the Constituent Assembly failing to materialize, I would advise the people to launch civil disobedience, individual or mass, or undertake a fast myself, my reply is 'No'. I believe in walking alone. I came alone in this world, I have walked alone in the valley of the shadow of death and I shall quit alone when the time comes. I know I am quite capable of launching satyagraha even if I am all alone. I have done so before. But this is no occasion for a fast or civil disobedience. I regard the Constituent Assembly as the substitute of satyagraha. It is constructive satyagraha.

The alternative is constructive work which you have never done justice to. If you had, you would have today got the Constituent Assem-bly of Jayaprakash's dream instead of the present one. But a satyagrahi cannot wait or delay action till perfect conditions are forthcoming. He will act with whatever material is at hand, purge it of dross and convert it into pure gold. Whatever may be the defects in the State Document of May 16th, I have no doubt as to the honesty of those who have framed it. They know they have got to quit. They want to quit in an orderly manner. And to that end they have produced the Document they could under the circumstances. I refuse to believe that they came all the way from England to deceive us.

A polish lady[1] has sent me a note just today saying that all Europeans had received secret instructions to leave India as the British army would no longer be able to give them adequate protection. If it is so, it is a sad reflection on us. We would be unworthy of the name of satyagrahi if even an English child did not feel secure in our midst. Even if we succeed in driving out the Europeans by these tactics, something worse will take their place. Our Quit India Resolution[2] has no malice about it. It only means that we will no longer be exploited.

Let us not be cowardly, but approach out task with confidence and courage. Let not the fear of being deceived dismay us. No one can deceive a satyagrahi. Never mind the darkness that fills my mind

[1] Wanda Dynowska; *vide* "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 9-7-1946.
[2] *Vide* Appendix "C. Rajagopalachari's Formula", before 5-8-1942.

He will turn it into light.[1]

Continuing, Mahatma Gandhi referred to the draft resolution on the satyagraha movement now being carried on by Indians in South Africa. He said that the Indians in South Africa were being ill-treated not because they were not whites but because they were considered as coolies. The Indians in South Africa spoke English and many of them were doctors and lawyers. In spite of all this, the South African whites looked upon them as coolies and called them as such. The Indians, of course, were in a minority and yet they were putting up a brave fight. They had no swords or guns but they were determined to resist the anti-Indian laws by soul force, which was the only force available to satyagrahis. Durban owed its present prosperity to the Indians. The South African whites had agreed to give the Indians the vote though not as equals but as inferiors.

The white civilization in South Africa could not be kept alive by such means. Mahatma Gandhi wondered how a brave man like General Smuts who had praised the Indians of their elementary rights.[2]

Commenting on the doings of the white hooligans who were said to have beaten to death an Indian, whom they mistook for a satyagrahi, Gandhiji remarked:

It is a sad event. Nevertheless, I feel happy. A satyagrahi must always be ready to die with a smile on his face without retaliation and without rancour in his heart. Some people have come to have a wrong notion that satyagraha means only jail-going, perhaps facing lathi blows and nothing more Such satyagraha cannot bring independence. To win independence you have to learn the art of dying without killing.

I venture to submit that a civilization which needs such barbarous legislation for its protection is a contradiction in terms. The Indians are fighting for their honour. The land in South Africa does not belong to the whites. Land belongs to one who labours on it. I would not shed a single tear if all the satyagrahis in South Africa are wiped out. Thereby they will not only bring deliverance to themselves but point the way to the Negroes and vindicate the honour of India. I am proud of them and so should you be.

His object in speaking to them, he continued, was not to move them to tears or to incite them to anger and vituperation against the whiters. Rather they should pray to God to guide the whites aright and grant strength and courage to their brethern to remain steadfast to the end.

The South African struggle may appear to be insignificant

[1] The report up to this point has been reproduced from *Harijan.* What follows is from *The Hindu.*

[2] What follows is from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan,* 14-7-1946.

today but it is charged with momentous consequences. Satyagraha is today being tried in the land of its birth. The success of a handful of Indians, mostly descendants of indentured labourers, has excited the jealousy of the whites of South Africa. And they are now subjecting them to unspeakable indignities. They are sought to be segregated into ghettos and further humiliated by being offered an inferior franchise. That all this should happen under the imprimatur of Field Marshal Smuts fills me with shame and humiliation. Our sins have a strange way of coming home to roost. We turned a portion of ourselves into pariahs and today the whites of South Africa are doing the same to our compatriots there. Let us purge ourselves of this curse and bless the heroic struggle of our brethern in South Africa. They do not need our monetary help. But they need all our sympathy and moral support.[1]

The Hindu, 8-7-1946, and *Harijan*, 14-7-1946 and 21-7-1946

309. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

BOMBAY,
July 7, 1946

I am glad the weather having cleared, it was possible to worship God in the open air. I hope you will cultivate the habit of collective prayers. I would like to impress upon you the need for learning Hindustani, our national language. Without a national language we could not call ourselves as of India.

The Hindu, 9-7-1946

310. NOTE TO BHIMSEN SACHAR

[After *July 7, 1946*][3]

Why does Sudarshan not make a written statement denying the accusation and saying his conduct has been pure? If he does not say even that much, how can I write that the report I have received is false?

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] After Gandhiji's address the debate was resumed. Prominent among those who opposed the resolution were Jayaprakash Narayan, Achyut Patwardhan and Aruna Asaf Ali, members of the Congress Socialist Party. The resolution was then put to vote and carried, 204 voting for and 51 against.

[2] As Gandhiji was observing silence his written speech was read out.

[3] This was in reply to the addressee's letter of July 7, 1946.

311. INTERVIEW TO "DAILY HERALD"[1]

[On or before *July 8, 1946*][2]

Gandhiji was gloomy about the world situation. He thought that there would be another war in less than ten years' time.

As for the atom bomb Gandhiji did not agree with the correspondent's suggestion that its frightfulness would force non-violence on the world. On the contrary Gandhiji's view was that the "Violent man's eyes light up with the prospect of much greater amount of destruction and death which he would now wreak."

Gandhiji told the correspondent that "there would be no real freedom in India until the untouchables were free". He, however, pointed out that untouchables suffered from no legal disabilities like the Negroes in the United States and the Indians and other Asiatics in South Africa.

The Hindu, 11-7-1946

312. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

BOMBAY,
July 8, 1946

Kind friends have inundated me with messages of congratulation on my providential escape from what might have been a nasty train accident.[3] As it is not possible to send individual acknowledgment, I hope the senders of messages will accept my thanks through the Press.

The Hindu, 8-7-1946

313. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[4]

BOMBAY,
July 8, 1946

Speaking at the prayer meeting this evening, Mahatma Gandhi congratulated the audience on their exemplary silence during the prayer.

Gandhiji drew pointed attention to the insanitation of the *chawls* around. Dr. Shushila Nayyar and Dr. Dinshaw Mehta had inspected the *chawls* at his request. They

[1] This was given to Petar Strusberg, *Daily Herald's* correspondent in India.
[2] The report appeared under the date-line "London, July 8".
[3] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 30-6-1946.
[4] The report in *The Hindu* has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.*

had reported to him that the filth and dirt that they saw were unbearable. In several places, the drain pipes were choked, with the result that they did not function properly. In other places, the drains overhead were leaking to the discomfort of those living below. There was great scarcity of water. Excepting for two or three hours during the day, the taps were not running. Flush latrines were worse than useless under such conditions. It was a wonder to him how anyone could use such filthy latrines. The arrangement for collection and disposal of refuse were most unsatisfactory. The open refuse tins emitted a foul smell.

The overcrowding in the *chawls* was appalling. It was the duty of those in authority to improve the sanitary conditions of the *chawls* and if the municipality failed in its duty, it was the right of the people to demand redress even by offering satyagraha. The owners of the *chawls* and the overseers and the managing staff should all do their utmost to rectify the wrong.

Gandhiji felt ashamed and hurt to find that his residence was being guarded by the police day and night. It was a matter of shame for them also. They should tell the police that he was in their charge and that they would look after him. The Harijans had cause to feel bitter about the caste Hindus and therefore, against him too, thought he had become a Bhangi. If they were angry with him also and vented their anger on him, he would feel no rancour against them. He had been doing his utmost to explain to the caste Hindus and the Harijans their respective duties. The Harijans, however, could well feel bitter towards him, because with all his efforts, untouchability had not disappeared root and branch. When he came again, he would like to have cleanliness all round and not merely in his room. And he would like to do without police protection. He had no desire to become a burden to them, the dwellers in the *chawls*.

The Hindu 10-7-1946, and *Harijan*, 14-7-1946

314. THE REAL DANGER

As during the two days of the session of the A. I. C. C. in Bombay I listened to some of the spirited speeches against the Working Committee's resolution submitted the A. I. C. C. for ratification, I could not subscribe to the dangers portrayed by the opposition. No confirmed satyagrahi is dismayed by the dangers, seen or unseen, from his opponent's side. What he must fear, as every army must, is the danger from within.

Opposition, however eloquent it may be, will defeat its purpose if it is not well informed, balanced and well based and does not promise action and result more attractive than what is opposed. Let the opposition at the late meeting answer.

My purpose here is merely to point out the danger from within. The first in importance is laziness of mind and body. This comes out of the smug satisfaction that Congressmen having suffered imprisonment have nothing more to do to win freedom and that a grateful organization should reward their service by giving them first preference in the matter of elections and offices. And so, there is an unseemly and vulgar competition for gaining what are described as prize posts. Here there is a double fallacy. Nothing should be considering a prize in the Congress dictionary and imprisonment is its own reward. It is the preliminary examination of a satyagrahi. Its goal is the slaughter-house even as that of the spotless lamb. Jail-going is, instead, being used as a passport to every office accessible to the Congress. Hence there is every prospect of a satyagrahi's imprisonment becoming a degrading occupation like that of professional thieves and robbers. No wonder my friends of the underground variety avoid imprisonment as being comparatively a bed of roses. This is a pointer to the pass the Congress is coming to.

The friends who opposed the resolution on the British Cabinet Delegation's proposals do not seem to know what they are aiming at. Is independence to be bought at the price of a bloody revolution as was, say, the French, the Soviet or even the English? Then frank and honest work has yet to begin. They have to tread a very dangerous path in openly making the Congress such an institution. My argument has no force if subterranean activity is a doctrine of univer-sal application and is now being employed against the Congress. The very thought repels me. I should hope for the sake of my own sanity that the thought is devoid of any foundation. Then it is clearly their duty to say to the Congressmen that now that there is Congress Raj or Representative Raj, whether of the Congress variety or the Muslim League, they must set about reforming it in detail and not condemn it *in toto*. Total non-violent non-co-operation has no place in popular Raj, whatever its level may be.

Who is responsible for the mad orgy in Madura and, coming nearer, in Ahmedabad? It will be folly to attribute everything evil to British machinations.This senseless theory will perpetuate foreign domination, not necessarily British. The British will go in any case. They want to go in an orderly manner as is evident to me from the State Paper or they will go and leave India to her own fate assuming that India has forsaken the path of non-violence with the certain result of a combined intervention of an assortment of armed powers. Let the

opposition say to the Congressmen what kind of independence they want. Congressmen in general certainly do not know the kind of independence they want. They recite the formula almost parrot-like. Or, their notion of independence is fully expressed in saying that they mean by it Congress Raj. And they won't be wrong. They have left further thinking to the Working Committee—a most undemocratic way. In true democracy every man and woman is taught to think for himself or herself. How this real revolution can be brought about I do not know except that every reform like charity must begin at home.

If then the Constituent Assembly fizzles out, it will not be because the British are wicked every time. It will be because we are fools or, shall I say, even wicked? Whether we are fools or wicked or both, I am quite clear that we must look for danger from within, not fear the danger from without. The first corrodes the soul, the second polishes.

BOMBAY, July 9, 1946

Harijan, 14-7-1946

315. TELEGRAM TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU[1]

July 9, 1946

YOU NEED NOT STAND. SARDAR HAS SEEN THIS.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

316. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

CAMP BOMBAY,
July 9, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

I quote below from a letter of a Polish lady[2] whom I have known for years:

[1] This was in reply to a telegram of July 8, 1946 from the addressee, a member of the Punjab Legislative Assembly, which read : "Working Committee has nominated me for Constituent Assembly. Kindly wire C/o Postmaster if this has your approval."

[2] Wanda Dynowska; *vide* "Speech at A. I. C. C.", 7-7-1946.

There are now about 5,000 Polish evacuees in India. They have been supported first by the Polish and then by the British Government. Now it is reported that they will be taken over by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. About 3,600 of them will soon be joining their families, also soldiers in Britain. About 1,400 have been evacuated, we do not yet know where. There is a tendency on the part of the Indian Government to evacuate all the Europeans from India in a hurry. Even those of the Poles who are working in different parts of India and require no charity and who are quite useful to the country in their present jobs will be compelled to leave India, much against their will. Among other reasons, the Government representatives give the unwillingness of Indians to have foreigners in their midst. Out of the 5,000 Poles here, only 77 are reported to be ready to return to Poland in her present position of utter slavery and terrorist regime.

You will oblige me if you could kindly inform me whether there is any truth in the statement of my correspondent.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 87

317. SUCCESS OF THE NEW TEAM

The success of the new team[1] depends as much upon the manner in which it carries out the work as upon the manners of the old. If the new team breaks with the old, it is bound to fail even like a son who repudiates the inheritance left by his father. It is also bound to fail if those who have retired do not help their successors in every possible way. They were selected by Maulana Saheb not in order to give them importance but by reason of their services in their own provinces. A servant does not cease to be a servant when he gives place to another for the sake of accession of new blood or some other similar and cogent reason. It is to be hoped therefore that the old ones will give the new ones the full benefit of their experience.

The most striking change is the retirement of the General Secre-

[1] On July 9 Jawaharlal Nehru had announced the formation of the new Congress Working Committee which included : Abul Kalam Azad, Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Govind Ballabh Pant, C. Rajagopalachari, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, Sarat Chandra Bose, Kamala Devi Chattopadhyaya, Rao Saheb Patwardhan, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, Pratep Singh, Mridula Sarabhai and Dr. B. V. Keskar.

tary who had held the post for an unbroken period of ten years. His help will be required constantly by his successors[1] who are new to the office and the new members of the Working Committee. I know they will get all the help they need from Acharya Kripalani. It is a good thing a woman fills for the first time in the history of the Congress the post of General Secretary. Shrimati Mridula Sarabhai was one of the pupils of Acharya Kripalani in the initial stage of the career of the Gujarat Vidyapith. Therefore, she will have full guidance from her *acharya* in the difficult task to which she is called.

To those to whom the change may give cause for misgivings, I would say that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru himself makes a find and stable bridge between the old and the new, assisted as he will be by some of the ablest members of the old team. No one need therefore entertain any fear of a break with the past. A healthy circulation is as necessary for the body politic as for the individual.

POONA, July 10, 1946
Harijan, 14-7-1946

318. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

POONA,
July 10, 1946

I know what is taking place there because in a way I belong to South Africa, having passed 20 years of the best part of my life there. It was there that satyagraha was born. The West is passing through a purgatory today. The vanquished lie prostrate at the feet of the victors. But those who have won the war have found that they are no more victors than those who have lost it. Yet it is not in the World War II that the Western civilization will have met its grave. It is being dug in South Africa. The white civilization in South Africa looks black in contrast with the coloured or the Asiatic civilization which is comparatively white. If our people remain steadfast and non-violent till the end, I have not a shadow of doubt that their heroic struggle will drive the last nail into the coffin of Western civilization which is being found out in its true colours in South Africa.

[1] Viz., Mridula Sarabhai and Dr. B. V. Keskar

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The speech was also reported in *The Hindu*, 12-7-1946.

The whites in South Africa are becoming like brutes. Eastern and Western cultures are pitted against each other. And what a contrast they present! The whites have enacted savage laws to force the Indians to live in ghettos. Field Marshal Smuts is a great philosopher. He calls me his friend. He has nothing to say against Asiatic culture. But he has to take measures to safeguard the white civilization. He told me that he did not look down upon coloured people. The fact that Mrs. Subbaroyan, when she went to England for studies stayed in Field Marshal Smuts' house supports that statement. But, said the Field Marshal, in spite of the absence of prejudice, he was bound to protect Western culture in South Africa and he hoped that an understanding man that I was, I would appreciate it.

Gandhiji failed to understand how a culture or civilization worth the name could require legal protection. The Indians were resisting the ghetto law in a civil, i. e., non-violent and therefore civilized, way. They welcomed the penalty for the breach of law which could not be morally defended. But the white hooligans too were breaking their own laws. Theirs was crminal disobedience. It was a matter of pride for India that the children of indentured labourers and traders—many of them descendants of Harijans—were proving themselves such brave satyagrahis. As against this the whites were resorting to lynch law. He remarked:

After all civil resistance had its birth in Asia. Jesus was an Asiatic. If he was reborn and went to South Africa today and lived there, he would have to live in a ghetto.

He hoped that as in 1914, Field Marshal Smuts would at long last realize that he could not persecute the Indians in South Africa for ever and come to an honourable settlement with them when he had tried them through and through. A committee of white men had been formed in South Africa to express sympathy with identify themselves with the cause of the Indian passive resisters there. There was something of that kind in his time also. But this time it seemed to be on a bigger scale. If this becomes extensive and the hooliganism is stopped and anti-Asiatic laws are repealed, there is hope of a blending of Eastern and Western cultures. Otherwise South Africa may prove to be the grave of Western civilization.

Harijan, 21-7-1946

319. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[After *July 10, 1946*][1]

CHI. SUSHILA,

There was nothing from you yesterday.Shirin checks the blood-pressure in the morning. It was 170/100; at midday it dropped to 155/90; yesterday it was 135/100. It seems to have subsided now. Not a drop of rain. Everybody is distraught. Unemployment is rising.

The Working Committee meets from today. Let us see how much time I am required to devote to it. Amtussalaam is expected about the 12th. Rani Vidyavati of Hardoi is arriving today. Of course, Rajkumari is coming.

Sankaran is all right.

The two men to be sent to Panchgani are ready. One is from Nalwadi and the other is a new arrival. I shall dispatch either of them today or tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

320. AN APPEAL

[After *July 10, 1946*][2]

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Thanks for the second purse from you. We are still short by a little amount, but I am told it will be made up in a couple of months or so.

I regard your contribution as the least you could do. I need your full assistance in the great task we have taken up here, which is no less than the all-round development of Uruli—physical, mental and spiritual. In this venture I need help from all, the old and the young, men and women and children too. We must forget the differences of caste and creed. Only then shall we be free from the three-fold

[1] This is written on the back of a note dated July 10, 1946.

[2] This appeal is scribbled on the back of a letter dated July 10, addressed to Amrit Kaur.

torment. The seven hundred thousand villages of India will have some hope if Urulikanchan accomplishes this task.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

321. LETTER TO S. RIDLEY

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
POONA,
July 11, 1946

DEAR MR. RIDLEY,

I am sorry that I am able only today to deal with your kind letter of 5th ultimo about sterilization of lepers. All the major principles mentioned in your letter are certainly commendable. Sterilization stands apart. Being a permanent disablement, it seems to be a highly deplorable measure. Its total effect on the delicate human system is still unknown. Man, in his hurry to secure immu-nity from outside, ignores the effect of his action on fellow man. I therefore, incline towards Dr. Cochrane's view that the real remedy lies in people gaining the right knowledge about leprosy and over-coming their hereditary but understandable repugnance towards lepers, whose power of infecting their neighbours is probably no greater than that of many other infectious cases. However, I am in touch with those who are in charge of the Sind Bill.

Yours sincerely,

S. RIDLEY, ESP. I.C.S.
COMMISSIONER, N. D.
COMMISSIONER'S BUNGALOW
AHMEDABAD NO. 4

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

322. LETTER TO DHIRUBHAI AND MADHURI DESAI

POONA,
July 11, 1946

CHI. DHIRU AND MADHURI,

I was hoping to come and see you during my stay in Bombay but it could not be done. So I contented myself with sending you a

message through Nathubhai from Bori Bunder. I did not wish to come on a condolence visit, but wanted to clear a misunderstanding you are reported to harbour. Both of you are reported to believe that I was the cause of Bhulbhai's early death. This is wholly untrue. The belief does no justice to Bhulbhai. I was in fact his well-wisher. I believe that Bhulabhai had accepted the usefulness of my advice. Even if this is doubted there can certainly be no doubt as to the soundness of my advice. I should like both of you to realize this. I hope both of you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Bhulbhai Desai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

323. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

POONA,
July 11, 1946

BROTHER RAJBHOJ,

I was glad to see your letter written in Marathi. But there is still one complaint. You could have written independently in Marathi. Instead, you have translated the letter from English. If any translating has to be done it should be done from Marathi into English, not from English into Marathi.

At the moment the work is so heavy that it is difficult to find time for a meeting. Still it should be all right if you come tomorrow between 8.30 and 9 p. m.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Marathi: G. N. 781

324. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

POONA,
July 11, 1946

Giving the latest news from South Africa to the prayer gathering, Mahatma Gandhi said that men and women from Johannesburg had gone to Durban to offer satyagraha. It was good news. Victory was sure if they kept up that spirit.

Referring next to the meetings of the A. I. S. A. and the Kasturba Trust which he had attended in the afternoon, Gandhiji mentioned that the A. I. S. A. had distributed five crores of rupees on an average of Rs. 25 lakhs per year among the poor spinners and weavers. It had done a lot, but compared to the task before it, its achievement appeared insignificant. It had to clothe the whole of India with khadi as was the case once upon a time. Not only did India produce enough cloth for herself, she was also able to export it. There were no mills in India then. He said:

I might say that every woman had her own mill in the charkha and the *takli*.

Modern mills were evolved from the charkha. Man was a mixture of divine and devilish forces. The force behind the spinning-wheel was divine, devoid of any trace of exploitation. The foreigner saw the hidden possibilities that were in it and, by the application of steam and electricity, created mills and used them as instruments of exploitation of the simple races of the earth.

This represented the power of the devil. There were so many cloth-mills in India and yet India went about almost naked. There was scarcity of cloth all over the world. The Prime Minister of the Indonesian Republic Dr. Sultan Sjahrir, had informed Pandit Nehru that they had surplus rice which they would gladly send to India to help meet the threat of famine. In return, they wanted no money, but would be glad to have cloth as they were suffering from cloth shortage themselves. They had neithter cloth-mills nor had they taken to the wheel. Pandit Nehru had broached the matter to some mill-owners who gladly gave quantities of cloth for despatch to Java. If out of the 40 crores of India, even 20 crores in her seven lakh villages took to spinning for one or two hours a day, they could not only clothe the population of the villages but even supply cloth for the cities. The conviction had dawned upon him even before he came to India that the revival of hand-spinning alone could restore India to its pristine glory. He had since compared the spinning-wheel to the central sun round which the solar system of village economy revolved. It provided the golden bridge between the rich and the poor.

To meet the crisis theat faced them, said Gandhiji, he suggested tha the popular Ministries should make a declaration that the villagers must produce their own cloth. They would be supplied with cotton, which they must spin and make into cloth. This would enable them to have cloth almost free of cost as it were.

The All-India Spinners' Association is likely to draw up a scheme for the expansion of the khadi industry in the country and place it before the popular Ministries. If the Ministers realize that there is no other way to clothe the naked in India, the scheme will go ahead without any difficulty.

Today, the city-dwellers complained that they could not get khadi at khadi bhandars, that they were asked to make partial payment in yarn spun by themselves. If they understood the new spirit behind the khadi drive, these complaints would

disappear. There was nothing to prevent the city-dwellers from producing their own khadi in the same way as the villagers were expected to do.

As for the Kasturba Trust its work was still more difficult than that of the A.I.S.A. They had collected one and a quarter crores of rupees, but the money had to be spent on the welfare of women and children in the villages. Take for instance maternity work in the villages. The village midwives were ignorant and dirty. The village women were more hardy than city women. Still the laws of Nature could not be defied. To teach clean methods to the village midwife was not an easy job. It was a matter of adult education and everyone knew that adult education was a much harder task than the education of the children. He could spend away the one and a quarter crores today by raising one or two big hospitals of the city type. But that would not be rendering real service to women and children in the villages. The money was collected in the name of woman who had become a villager and who died with her heart in the villages. He was not prepared to squander away that money anyhow. He knew that the public were becoming impatient. They felt that the work was progresing too slowly. But he wished to tell them not to lose patience. The work was going on slowly but surely. They were moving in unchartered waters. They must proceed with caution.

The Hindu, 13-7-1946

325. LETTER TO MANILA GANDHI

POONA,
July 12, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

Sushila has come here alone to consult me. I have advised her that she should miss the ship which sails on the 18th and await your letter. Whether to take the children along has to be thought about. This too you are in a better position to do. I should myself like them to stay on here. There are difficulties of course. So the right thing will be for you to consider the situation there and decide. I do see the need for Sushila's presence there.

I see from Sundaram's letter that both Sita and Sumitra are in Kashi at present.

Sushila is leaving today for Bombay., She will be there for a day and then go to Akola.

I am leaving for Panchgani tomorrow for a fortnight. Then by August 7, I shall be in Sevagram. My health is fairly good. I say some-thing every day about the situation in South Africa.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4984

326. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

POONA,
July 12, 1946

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

As you know, with the consent of you people (Holding Trustees) about 10 or 12 lakhs of rupees of the Kasturba Trust are at present lying in the fixed deposit account with the Central Bank and the United Commercial Bank. The Central Bank pays $1\frac{1}{4}$ per cent interest for a period of 12 months and the United Commercial Bank $2\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. Since the Trust is meant for philanthropic work I would like the Banks to pay to the Trust what they realize by way of interest from loans to the Government or from other sources. It means the Trust must get at least 3 per cent interest. I am writing to Sir Homi Mody about the interest from the Central Bank, and to you about the interest from the United Commercial Bank. It would be good if you, in your capacity as Chairman of the Bank, gave 3 per cent interest.

Tomorrow I am leaving for Panchgani. Please send the reply there.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
8 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLACE
CALCUTTA

From the Hindi original: C. W. 8050. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

327. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

POONA,
July 12, 1946

Gandhiji talked to the audience about the conditions of Indians in Ceylon this evening. He had visited Ceylon years ago.[1] If Kashmir with its snow-clad Himalayas was the diadem of Mother India, then Ceylon was the emerald pendent of the necklace round her neck. It was rightly described as Ceylon the Golden. Indians had played an important part in developing Ceylon. The Ceylonese had got a sort of constitution

[1] In November, 1927

now. There was nothing wonderful about it. But they felt that the Indians should be turned out of Ceylon. The Indians had gone there as labourers. They worked under the most difficult and unhealthy conditions. They worked for Ceylon and settled down there. It was hard for them to leave that country now, and they wanted equal citizenship rights with the Ceylonese.

The Ceylonese case was that the Indians could not ride two horses at one time. If they were Indians, they should return to India. If not, they should become Ceylonese nationals. There were others who were not prepared to have the Indians in ceylon in any circumstances. It was strange. The Indians and Ceylonese were brothers. A narrow strip of water separated India from Ceylon. A strong man could swim across the channel. They were both coloured people. The Ceylonese followed Buddhism and the birth-place of Buddhism was India. How could such a quarrel between Indians and Ceylonese be tolerated? They all wished them to bridge the gulf and become one. The A. I. C. C. had passed a resolution appointing a committee of four to go into the matter. It consisted of the Congress President, Shri C. Raja-gopalachari, Shri Ramachandran, and Shri Aryanayakum. The Indian labourers in Ceylon had gone on strike. The Congress had advised them to give it up. They did not wish to embarrass the Ceylonese. They wanted a brotherly settlement.

What was their duty in the matter? —Gandhiji asked the gathering. They should all pray to God to show light to both. It was their duty to know how their brothers overseas were faring. That is why he had told them all about the Indians in Ceylon. In the end, he asked them to keep up the habit of praying regularly both in the morning and in the evening after he had gone away from Poona.

The Hindu, 14-7-1946

328. LETTER TO PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

PANCHGANI,
July 13, 1946

BHAI PATTABHI,

There was a discussion about Bhai . . .[1] in the Charkha Sangh meeting. I knew nothing about the matter. I saw the letter. You have needlessly taken the matter to heart. Whatever institution we might be in, our decisions can be changed, they are subject to criticism. Why should we be sensitive about it? No one had anything else in mind beyond what was said. Nothing that was said warranted your tendering resignation. The Sangh having expressed its opinion has even left

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

the decision to you. It shows that there was no question of the trustees going to the court or anything else. You should have forbearance. You are a devotee of khadi and a dedicated worker; how can a *sevak* be so sensitive? Now that you have the right opportunity to serve khadi, avail yourself of it fully.

Owing to my bad handwriting I am dictating this. I hope you will have no trouble in following it. If you have any difficulty in replying in Hindustani you may do so in English.

I shall be in Panchgani up to the 28th. After that till the 4th August I shall be in Poona and then at Sevagram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

329. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

PANCHGANI,

July 13, 1946

In the song that has just been sung,[2] the world has been aptly described as the valley of sorrow and suffering. God alone enables us to brave it all. The poet, however has proceeded to call the world an illusion and a dream. Joy or what men call happiness may be, or really is, a dream in a fleeting and transitory world, where everything is like a dissolving phantasmagoria. But we cannot dismiss the suffer-ing of our fellow creatures as unreal and thereby provide a moral alibi for ourselves. Even dreams are true while they last and to the sufferer, his suffering is a grim reality. Anyway, whether the world be real or unreal, we have certain duties in life which must be faced, understood and duly performed while we are in this world.

Mahatma Gandhi said he was grateful to God for being able to come to Panchgani again this year although he was not able to come earlier because of his stay in Delhi on account of the Cabinet Mission. This annual short stay at the hill station enabled him, he added, to store up enough energy for carrying on his heavy work during the remaining months. From his experience of the last three years he found it beneficial to plan staying about six months on the side of Poona from

[1] The report in *The Hindu* has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.*

[2] By the Parsi girls of the Batha High School where the prayers were held

February to August and in Sevagram during the rest of the year.

He could not leave Sevagram altogether because of his close and fairly long association with various activities there, but he also wanted to devote some time to his newly found nature-cure centre at Uruli Kanchan and had therefore planned to spend some time there.

The Hindu, 15-7-1946, and *Harijan*, 21-7-1946

330. KHADI IN TOWNS

> Your scheme for making village India self-sufficient in the matter of clothing has hit town lovers of khadi pretty hard. You have gone so far as to say that sales bhandars may close as such and that townsfolk may even revert to the use of mill cloth.
>
> While there is no quarrel with the new ideology and the consequent basic change in the running of bhandars nor with the introduction of a certain quota of yarn currency for purchasing khadi, I would like you to solve the difficulty of town buyers who must use only khadi.

Let the readers fully understand the so-called new plan for khadi. I call it so-called, because what is being done is the logical step, if khadi is to clothe the villagers, as from the very start it was intended to do. Khadi was never meant merely for the townspeople, it was never meant to bleed the villagers as they are being bled so that the townspeople can live. Khadi was from its inception conceived for the sake of reversing the order though never to bleed the townspeople. To reverse the order was to restore the natural relation. Towns there were before the British arrival. Things were bad enough then. Now they are much worse. Towns became cities. The latter, in spite of their Indian millionaires, lived mainly for the British masters. Khadi was to undo the grave mischief. Mill cloth is the symbol of the slavery of village India as khadi is or should be the symbol of its freedom, both economic and political. If it cannot be that, it is meaningless. Therefore, any healthy change undergone in the process of khadi development is to be welcomed.

The defect in the existing development, good though it appeared, was not good enough for the villagers who spun yarn and wove khadi but did not use it themselves. They neither understood nor appreciated the dignity and value that its use carried.

The fault was not theirs. The workers themselves did not. The town-dwellers had to wear khadi and do the penance. They were

willing to buy penance for a few extra rupees which they could easily spare and be called patriots into the bargain. But how could the Charkha Sangh (called in English All-India Spinners' Association) belie its faith by ignoring the very foundation of khadi? And so it is employing its resources to making the villagers khadi-clad. It naturally begins with the spinners and weavers of hand-spun. If the move succeeds, as it is bound to, there will be after a time, ample khadi in the city and town markets. Then the only cloth available in India will be khadi. The A. I. S. A. is diligently working at the consummation. If its researches show that khadi has no such potentiality, it will have no hesitation in declaring its insolvency. Let the reader remember that it is a science which deals with the psychology of forty crores of people in the machine age. Thus considered, it is a tremendous problem, though at the same time fascinating and interesting. The very defeat, if defeat it is to be, will itself be no defeat. Let it be understood that it is not an attempt to go back to the dark ages when the charkha was the symbol of the slavery of the masses. Surely it will be a triumph of human understanding, i. e., of the soul of India, when India makes an effort through the charkha to break her bonds asunder. The freeman eats the same bread as the slave. The one eats the bread of freedom, the other of slavery.

But if the city-dwellers and the town-dwellers would learn the glad tidings that the charkha has to give, they will willingly employ their leisure time in carding, spinning, and weaving rather than in gambling on the race course or drinking and idling away their time in their clubs. And their children? Why —they could spin for their parents, for the liberty of India and have education of the type that India wants. I was in Rome[1] and Mussolini's officials took pride in showing the graceful manoeuvres of the little children who were being taught all naval tricks. And do the English children do otherwise than learn in their mother tongue what England needs? It is only reserved for India to teach her children the foreigners' language and through it, such things as the latter need. Who but a foreigner has devised the education code?

The A. I. S. A. sales depots will be used for a better purpose than before. They will teach the people, who, I hope, will flock to them, all the tricks of spinning and weaving. If they do, they will have all the khadi they need. Where there is a will, there is a way.

[1] In December, 1931

Lastly, let the reader know too that nowadays khadi like mill cloth is scarce. Let me not go into the reason why.

PANCHGANI, July 14, 1946

Harijan, 21-7-1946

331. JEWS AND PALESTINE

Hitherto I have refrained practically from saying anything in public regarding the Jew-Arab controversy. I have done so for good reasons. That does not mean any want of interest in the question, but it does mean that I do not consider myself sufficiently equipped with knowledge for the purpose. For the same reason I have tried to evade many world events. Without airing my views on them, I have enough irons in the fire. But four lines of a newspaper column have done the trick and evoked a letter from a friend who has sent me a cutting which I would have missed but for the friend drawing my attention to it. It is true that I did say some such thing in the course of a long conversation with Mr. Louis Fischer on the subject.[1] I do believe that the Jews have been cruelly wronged by the world. "Ghetto" is, so far as I am aware, the name given to Jewish locations in many parts of Europe. But for their heartless persecution, probably no question of return to Palestine would ever have arisen. The world should have been their home, if only for the sake of their distinguished contribution to it.

But, in my opinion, they have erred grievously in seeking to impose themselves on Palestine with the aid of America and Britain and now with the aid of naked terrorism. Their citizenship of the world should have and would have made them honoured guests of any country. Their thrift, their varied talent, their great industry shoul have made them welcome anywhere. It is a blot on the Christian world that they have been singled out, owing to a wrong reading of the New Testament, for prejudice against them."If an individual Jew does a wrong, the whole Jewish world is to blame for it." If an individual Jew like Einstein makes a great discovery or another composes unsurpassable music, the merit goes to the authors and not to the community to which they belong.

No wonder that my sympathy goes out to the Jews in their

[1] According to the newspaper cutting Louis Fischer had quoted Gandhiji to the effect that the Jews had a good case but he hoped the Arabs too would not be wronged.

unenviably sad plight. But one would have thought adversity would teach them lessons of peace. Why should they depend upon American money or British arms for forcing themselves on an unwelcome land? Why should they resort to terrorism to make good their forcible landing in Palestine? If they were to adopt the matchless weapon of non-violence whose use their best Prophets have taught and which Jesus the Jew who gladly wore the crown of thorns bequeathed to a groaning world, their case would be the world's, and I have no doubt that among the many things that the Jews have given to the world, this would be the best and the brightest. It is twice blessed. It will make them happy and rich in the true sense of the word and it will be a soothing balm to the aching world.

PANCHGANI, July 14, 1946

Harijan, 21-7-1946

332. QUESTION BOX

Q. Is it possible during prayers, for thousands who assemble at your prayer gatherings, to concentrate their minds on anything whatever?

A. I can only answer yes. For, if I did not believe in mass prayer, I should cease to hold public prayers. My experience confirms my belief. Success depends upon the purity of the leader and the faith of the audience. I know instances in which the audience had faith and the leader was an impostor. Such cases will continue to happen. But truth like the sun shines in the midst of the darkness of untruth. The result in my case will be known probably after my death.

A wag asks three questions in this matter. One requiring an answer runs: "Is not political education infinitely superior to the religious?" In my opinion, political education is nothing worth, if it is not backed by a sound grounding in religion by which is not meant sectional or sectarian belief. Man without religion is man without roots. Therefore, religion is the basis on which all life structure has to be erected, if life is to be real.

THIEVING

Q. What is the employer to do when an employee of his is addicted to stealing and is not amenable to correction whether it is by way of entreaty or the cane?

A. It may well be that the others too are addicts though they may not be found out. Observation would show that we are all thieves,

the difference being that most of us are tolerant towards ourselves and intolerant towards those that are found out and are not of the ordinary run. What is a man, if he is not a thief, who openly charges as much as he can for the goods he sells? If the reply be that the buyer is a willing dupe, it begs the question. In reality the buyer is helpless rather than willing. The stealing referred to is one of the symptoms of a deep-seated disease of society. It is symptomatic of the eternal strife between the monied few and the many paupers. Therefore, my advice to the employer will be to remove all temptation in the way of the thief, to treat him as if he was his own brother and, when he refuses to yield to any treatment, however humanitarian it may be, to ask him to go his way. Let the employer always ask himself whether he would treat his own brother in the same way at the given stage.

PANCHGANI, July 14, 1946

Harijan, 21-7-1946

333. "A DIRTY HABIT"

A sister writes:

> For some years I have been trying to help people to understand the danger of spitting everywhere. The filth and the dirt is so bad on account of spitting and cleaning noses everywhere that one does not know where to begin. Even small boys, girls, educated men and women, apart from illiterate folk spit on railway platforms, carriages, trams, outside shops, in corridors outside their houses and everywhere. Our country is getting dirtier and dirtier and diseases are spreading all over. Will not volunteers come forward for spreading the message of cleanliness?

Promiscuous spitting is a bad habit on which I have commented often enough. It is all part and parcel of the incredible ignorance that exists in our land among all classes of people in regard to the elementary laws of sanitation and hygiene. It is a habit which we must give up, if we would avoid certain diseases. My correspondent's suggestion is certainly commendable.

PANCHGANI, July 14, 1946

Harijan, 21-7-1946

334. KASTURBA MEMORIAL TRUST [1]

Some people complain that the funds of this Trust are not being spent fast enough and that no one knows how they are being spent. The complaint is baseless on both counts. The thing is that even though the donations to the Trust came largely from the cities, the aim has throughout been for the money to be spent in the villages, and in the interest of village women and children. Therefore, those who do not see the Trust accounts would not know how the money is spent in villages. The critics are all city-dwellers.Villagers neither read the newspapers nor care about how the money is spent. If any work is done in their own village they can see it for themselves. Anything done for the city-dwellers is widely publicised. If a building or a statue is being made, there is a discussion in the papers about how it is being made. Then when it is completed its opening or unveiling ceremony is performed with much fanfare so that people would know that the purpose for which the money was collected had been accomplished. There cannot be any such advertisement of the work which is being done for women in villages. Therefore, for the time being the newspaper readrs will have to be content with just knowing through whom the work is being carried on. When some work has been done in a few thousand out of the seven lakhs of our villages and the women and children of these villages have been prepared everyone will come to know of it. Take just one example. Training is being given to village women as midwives. Nurses are being trained to work in villages. If this information is not enough, what more can one say?

At the last meeting of the Executive Committee of the Kasturba Trust held recently at Poona, budgets were passed for the holding of training camps in several of the twenty-one provinces. But the women trained in this way have to go to villages. City-dwellers can know about them only if they are paraded in the cities. But this is not intended, nor would it be proper. There is another thing. The work to be undertaken in the villages is of a new kind and has to be taken up from the beginning. Therefore, the progress would perforce be slow as it has been in the case of khadi and other village industries. We paid very little attention to the villages. It is so even today. When city-dwellers turn their attention to the villages, things will be diffe-rent. So

[1] A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 21-7-1946.

long as this does not happen neither the newspapers will notice the work of organizations of this kind nor city-dwellers will take much interest in it.

There are occasions when it is not wise to spend the money as soon as it is collected, when wisdom in fact lies in spending it slowly and with care, as it has been in the case of the Kasturba Trust. The donors may be numbered in thousands, but the field in which the money is to be spent is 1900 miles long and the population to be served numbers forty crores. Time was needed to decide how to work and where. Time was also needed to find workers. And now that the workers are found time is being spent on training them. Therefore the donors must have confidence that the Trustees will neither spend money uselessly nor shirk spending from laziness when it is necessary to spend.

Ever since the committees were constituted, there have been complaints that they have not been constituted from among the donors and where donors have been taken on the committees their numbers are too few. The fact is that donors are not always the best judges of how and on what the donations should be spent. Suppose, for instance, a number of persons together donate a sum of ten crore rupees for the construction of a pond. But having done this, what else can they do about it? The money donated must pass into the hands of those who know how to make a pond. Only such people will form a committee and spend the money. Many such instances could be cited. In the first instance the committees formed by the trustees were formed in this manner. Later it was realized that whatever work women could do, should be got done by them and not by forming committees of them but through them as agents. Only thus can women be trained and the entire organization passed into their hands. In this way the responsibility of the work will rest with them. Efforts towards this end are underway. It was bound to take time and it will still take time. Difficulties are many, but it is hoped that ulti-mately the work will grow and women too will have been prepared to shoulder the burden. Only experience will judge of the result.

PANCHGANI, July 14, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 21-7-1946

335. LETTER TO SITA CHARAN DIKSHIT

PANCHGANI,
July 14, 1946

BHAI DIKSHIT,

I have a letter from Ratnamayibehn. It makes me happy as well as unhappy. Unhappy because the fear which I had and which I had expressed has proved true. And I am happy at the frank admission of weakness. If you even settle down in your present sphere of work and achieve success in it, I shall be satisfied. To have confidence about something which is beyond our attainment is also a fault, it is a sign of pride.

"All creatures follow their nature; what then will constraint avail?"[1]

Send this letter or a copy of it to Ratanamayi as I am not writing to her separately.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SITA CHARAN DIKSHIT
C/O *Nagpur Times*
NAGPUR

From the Hindi original: Sita Charan Dikshit Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

336. DISCUSSION WITH NIMBALKAR [2]

PANCHGANI,
[*July 14, 1946*][2]

N. What would you have us do next?

G. You should give proof of the same courage and bravery here that you people displayed on the battlefield. There was perfect unity in the ranks of the I. N. A. Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis; all communities were like blood brothers. There was no high or low, no untouchable. Demonstrate that unity here. But I am afraid you will not be able to do so.

[1] *Bhagavadgita*, III. 33

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". Captain Nimbalkar of the Indian National Army had come from Satara to meet Gandhiji on this date.

N. Yes, we cannot, so long as the British power rules over us.

G. Well, there is a lot that can be done in spite of the British. I have voluntarily become a Bhangi. Who can prevent me from doing so? Shah Nawaz[1] today is an Indian first and an Indian last. Nobody can prevent him from doing so. In fact, wherever he goes, he puts up with his Hindu friends. But even so, he realizes that he cannot achieve here what he could outside India. The I. N. A. men on returning to their homes take the complexion from their environment. They shed what they had learnt outside and it is difficult to prevent them from falling into the old rut.

Again, if you expect India to spend lakhs on you, that is not right. You should be like Garibaldi's[2] soldiers who were promised by their leader only "blood, toil and tears". They tilled the land and supported themselves when not engaged on the battle-field. No one paid them a salary. You have been trained by the British who spend lavishly. If you expect medals like Victoria Crosses and such prizes as the British can give, you will be disappointed. The starving millions of India cannot afford that. You have to become one with them and serve them. Today the man in the street is terrified of the military. The military man acts like a bully and there can be no appeal against his high-handedness. You have to prove that you are friends and servants of the people, so that they will not be awed by you.

N. We befriend the people here as we did outside India.

G. That is good. But I tell you, your leaders are finding it difficult to control the I. N. A. men in India. There are petty jealousies and rivalries. 'If A can get something, why not I?'—that is the kind of feeling coming uppermost. It was different abroad. You had a very capable leader in Netaji. In spite of our sharp differences I have always admired his burning patriotism, courage and resourcefulness.

N. You have no idea of the deep love and admiration he had for you. What should be our contribution in the next struggle for independence?

G. The struggle for independence is going on today. It has never stopped. But, if my will prevails, it will be a non-violent struggle. The lesson of the last 25 years of training in non-violence, has gone home to the masses. They have realized that in non-violence they have a weapon which enables a child, a woman or even a decrepit old man

[1] One of the three officers of the I. N. A. who were tried for treason but later released

[2] Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807-82); Italian General who liberated his country

to resist the mightiest government successfully. If your spirit is strong, mere lack of physical strength ceases to be a handicap. *Per contra* I have seen the Zulus in South Africa with Herculean bodies tremble before a white child. White soldiers could go into the the Zulu kraals and shoot men, women and children sleeping in their beds. There was no resistance in the Zulu and the physical strength could not make up for it.

Harijan, 11-8-1946

337. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

PANCHGANI,
[*July 14, 1946*][2]

Poverty, remarked Gandhiji, had a dignity in our country. The poor man was not ashamed of his poverty. He preferred his hut to the rich man's palace. He even took pride in it. Though poor in material goods, he was not poor in spirit. Contentment was his treasure. He might as well say to himself, 'Since we cannot all become rich and own palaces, let us at least pull down the palaces of the rich and bring them down to our level.' That could bring no happiness or peace either to themselves or anyone else, and God would certainly be not the friend and helper of the poor of such description. Poverty, in the sense of inequality of material possessions was there in every part of the world. That was perhaps in a certain measure inevitable, for all men are not equal either in their talents or the measure of their needs. Even in America which was fabulously rich and where Mammon had taken the place of God, there were many poor. Poet Malabari had come across some relatives of Shah Alam[3] begging in the streets of Rangoon. He had written a beautiful poem about it which had sunk into Gandhiji's heart. The substance of it was that he alone is rich who has God for his friend and helper. In India there was a particular type of man who delighted in having as few needs as possible. He carried with him only a little flour and a pinch of salt and chillies tied in his napkin. He had a *lota* and a string to draw water with from the well. He needed nothing else. He walked on foot covering 10-12 miles a day. He made the dough on his napkin, collected a few twigs to make a fire and baked his dough on the embers. It was called *bati*. He tasted it an found it most delicious. The relish did not lie in the food but in the appetite that honest toil and the contentment

[1] Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", from which this is extracted, reports it as "second day's discourse" at Panchgani. Gandhiji had reached Panchgani on July 13, 1946.

[2] *Ibid*

[3] His successor Bahadur Shah Zafar, the last Mughal Emperor, was exiled to Burma.

of the mind gave. Such a man had God as his companion and friend and felt richer than any king or emperor. God was not the friend of those who inwardly coveted others' riches. Everyone could copy that example and enjoy ineffable peace and happiness himself and radiate it to others. On the other hand if one hankered after riches, one had to resort to exploitation, by whatever name it might be called. Even then the crores could not become millionaires. True happiness lay in contentment and companionship with God only.

Harijan, 21-7-1946

338. LETTER TO KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI

PANCHGANI,
July 15, 1946

DEAR KHURSHEDBEHN,

Though you have said your last letter does not need any reply, in my opinion it demands one.

I see that your *ahimsa* and mine are poles asunder. I have great regard for Jaiprakash but not for his views. Aruna allows herself to be my daughter. She is a brave woman. But views like hers would take the paupers to future starvation and death. That I commended their names and others to J.'s[1] attention was not because of their views but in spite of them in the hope that responsibility under J. would show them the error of their ways. But they chose the opposite course. I shall now watch their course. They are all a power.

I shall hug my darkness, not their light. There is, therefore, hardly any chance of my following them.

I wish you well. May God be your protection and guidance.

I write this to make my position clear. I love you too well to keep you in the dark about it. How I wish I have misunderstood you. You had made your position clear the other day when you met me for half a minutue. Your letter under reply clinches the matter.

Of course you are at liberty to show this to our Socialist friends.

Love.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru's

339. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

PANCHGANI,
July 15, 1946

CHI. VALJI,

I have gone through your draft. It is a good summary. You have given better treatment to the vows than to the constructive programme. The latter lacks life. Maybe the original itself lacks it.

It would be quite wrong to give to this writing the title "Mohan Samhita". I do not see the quality of a *Samhita*[1] in it. A simpler title would be more becoming. Truly speaking what Manu Subedar wants is something much better. It has to be something original. He is not likely to want a mere summary. Probably what he has in mind is a booklet or two based on all my writings. You should show him your draft and find out. It is the title that I strongly object to. 'Mangal-prabhat' and 'A Summary of Constructive Programme' would be a better description of what you have written.

I hope you are well. It would be morally wrong to neglect your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Should I send the draft and the books with somebody or bring them with me when I come there?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7500. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

340. LETTER TO LILAVATI K. MUNSHI

PANCHGANI,
July 15, 1946

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. I have already written to Munshi[2] to come whenever he likes.

I like the idea of students being obliged to devote a few years to teaching. It is obvious that they should be qualified for the job. If a

[1] A treatise of laws and rules
[2] K. M. Munshi, addressee's husband

few years' conscription [for military training] is all right, why not for the noble work of education?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

341. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

PANCHGANI,
July 15, 1946

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have gone through both your letters, that is, I had them read out to me. Sushila Pai read them out while I span. I think I have replied to all your questions. There was no censure of you in my misgivings. It was your naivete. All I want is that you should be careful. Non-violence of the coward is worthless. In a brave person non-violence is an adornment, in a coward it can be a defect. Remember the saying "a helpless man becomes a saint". I admit this is not so in your case.

To overcome one's nature and to weed out subtle defects, striving and company of good men are required.

It is useless to work among the labourers or in an institution. If your health permits it will be best to remain with me. If not, we shall see.

I am returning both the letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2498

342. TESTIMONIAL TO SARDAR SINGH

PANCHGANI,
July 15, 1946

During my stay at Bhangi Niwas in Delhi, Sardar Singh used to drive the car with devotion—so said all those who used the car. As for me, I think I had no occasion to enjoy a ride in that car.

Blessings from
BAPU

BIRLA MILLS
DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

343. TESTIMONIAL TO AMAR SINGH

[*July 15, 1946*][1]

During the whole of my stay at Bhangi Niwas in New Delhi, Bhai Amar Singh always brought the car on time and drove me very carefully and with great love. He was always available, whatever the time.

Blessings from
BAPU

BIRLA MILLS
DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

344. TESTIMONIAL TO HARE RAM

[*July 16, 1945*]

When I was in New Delhi Bhai Hari Ram rendered all service willingly and with great care. It was rendered not by a mere servant, as it were, but in the spirit of pure devotion.

Blessings from
BAPU

BIRLA MILLS
DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This and the following testimonial are written on the same sheet as the preceding one.

345. A THOUGHT FOR THE DAY [1]

DELHI,

April 14, 1946

When God cares, why should we be full of cares?

April 15, 1946

More people die of worry than of natural causes.

April 16, 1946

Better to die once than to die daily.

April 17, 1946

When a man has lost patience, he should resort to silence, and speak only when he has calmed down.

April 18, 1946

When man realizes himself, he is saved.

April 19, 1946

When our outer life gets the better of our inner life, the result is bound to be bad.

April 20, 1946

One man's cruelty is the measure of another man's gentleness.

April 21, 1946

It is useless to recite Ramanama without acting in a manner worthy of Rama.

April 22, 1946

Perfection is only an ideal for man; it cannot be attained, for man is made imperfect.

April 23, 1946

Sacrifice with regret is no sacrifice.

April 24, 1946

When the inner lamp burns, it illumines the whole world.

April 25, 1946

How is it that a precept regarded as applicable to others appears inapplicable to oneself?

[1] At the request of Anand T. Hingorani, Gandhiji on November 20, 1944 started the practice of writing a thought for each day and continued it for about two years. These thoughts for the period covered by this volume are reproduced as a single item under the last date, namely, July 15, 1946.

April 26, 1946

When all forsake you, God shall still be with you.

April 27, 1946

What more do you want when the heavens are within you, and even God Himself?

April 28, 1946

Sweet are the fruits of patience.

April 29, 1946

Why should I depend upon anyone for my own affairs?

April 30, 1946

With whom will you be angry? With yourself? Do that every day. With others? Why need there be any reason for that?

May 1, 1946

We cannot act or even think, in two opposite ways at the same time.

SIMLA,
May 2, 1946

The nearer we approach our ideal, the more truthful we become.

May 3, 1946

To have good thoughts is one thing; to act upon them is another.

May 4, 1946

The benefit of solitude can be realized only by experience.

May 5, 1946

Faith is that which remains unshaken even in the face of adverssity.

May 6, 1946

Noise does not overcome noise; silence does.

May 7, 1946

Fewer people die from disease than from fear of disease.

Gurudev Jayanti, May 8, 1946

He who has divine endowment in him becomes thereby immortal.

May 9, 1946

To gain immortality through divine endowment is not a big thing. To fulfil our obligations in daily life is.

May 10, 1946

He who is not disturbed by bad news will not be elated by good news.

May 11, 1946

If the courage to endure everything with goodwill is lacking, goodwill becomes a lame virtue.

May 12, 1946

We are no better than any other—this thought is full of truth and humility.

May 13, 1946

It is very difficult to confess one's error; but then there is no other way of cleansing oneself.

KALKA,

May 14, 1946

It is not the whistle that moves the train but the power harnessed in the steam.

NEW DELHI,

May 15, `1946

God is everywhere. Even so, if we really wish to feel His being, we must remove the ego and make room for Him.

May 16, 1946

When the self dies, God fills the void.

May 17, 1946

He who looks for faults in others cannot see his own.

May 18, 1946

On the one side, truth; on the other, Dominion over the Earth. O my heart, thou shalt choose the Truth and reject the Dominion.

May 19, 1946

Being a slave to fear and selfishness is the worst form of slavery.

May 20, 1946

When everything belongs to God what shall we offer to Him?

May 21, 1946

If we call God our Redeemer and let our indolence grow, we are committing a sin.

May 22, 1946

Debts are redeemed by deeds, not by words.

May 23, 1946

What is in the mind must come out, sooner or later.

May 24, 1946

[Ramanama] is the only unfailing remedy for man's threefold ills.

May 25, 1946

He who seeks refuge in Ramanama, has Ramanama installed in his heart and is duly rewarded.[1]

May 26, 1946

Pure thought is far more potent than speech.

May 27, 1946

Restlessness and impatience are two diseases and both shorten life.

MUSSOORIE,

May 28, 1946

He who lacks peace and firmness cannot realize God.

May 29, 1946

If we do not forsake our ideal, the ideal will never forsake us.

May 30, 1946

To remain entangled in things physical and aspire for self-realization is like asking for the moon.

May 31, 1946

The soul dries up without the company of the good.

June 1, 1946

Our personal cleanliness counts for little if our neighbours are not clean.

[1] This is in Gujarati.

June 2, 1946

What is true of outer cleanliness is true of the inner too. If our neighbour is unclean inside, it will affect us also.

June 3, 1946

Bravery is not the monopoly of any one person; it is latent in all, only they are not aware of it.

June 4, 1946

To speak the truth, you have to weigh your words again and again.

June 5, 1946

A man of knowledge attains peace only through renunciation.

June 6, 1946

If we are late for a train, we miss it. What if we are late for prayer?

June 7, 1946

When a man's mind is filled with the Light of Heaven, all obstacles in his path vanish.

NEW DELHI,

June 9, 1946

Life is not a bed of roses; it is full of thorns.

June 10, 1946

No joy can compare with the joy of doing one's duty in silence.

June 11, 1946

Steadfastness in meditation indicates depth of thought; it also makes for purity and maturity of thought.

June 12, 1946

A calculating mind cannot attain self-realization.

June 13, 1946

What shall we call a person who, in the name of Rama, acts like Ravana?

June 14, 1946

One is a servant of him for whom one works, not to whom one pays only lip service.

June 15, 1946

When we give something, we must give the truest part of ourselves.

June 16, 1946

Knowing that everything has two sides, let us look at the bright side alone.

June 17, 1946

When attachment is present, the performance of even a pure deed involves manipulation.

June 18, 1946

When man smites, it is God who comes to our rescue.

June 19, 1946

How can a man who turns night into day be non-attached?

June 20, 1946

He who wants to drink of the nectar of Ramanama must purge himself of lust, anger and the like.

June 21, 1946

Even if he be your relation, do not try to hide his faults.

June 22, 1946

Evenmindedness is the best of all wisdom.

June 23, 1946

Even nectar turns into poison if poison is added to it.

June 24, 1946

Man must never suppress his inner voice even if he stands alone.

June 25, 1946

Intuition is lame if it is not supported by reason.

June 26, 1946

A river goes dry when cut off from its source. So does man when cut off from his original source, i.e., God.

June 27, 1946

Pure thought is so subtle and yet so powerful a thing that it becomes all-pervading.

June 28, 1946

A votary of truth must have a sense of discrimination and of time, as also a full understanding of the opposite side.

ON THE TRAIN TO POONA,

June 29, 1946

Man rests in the jaws of Death. He is said to be dead when the jaws close.

POONA,

June 30, 1946

Such being the case, where is the sense in making merry or becoming arrogant?

July 1, 1946

When Truth, that is God, is with us, what matters whether the world is with us or not, whether we live or die?

July 2, 1946

If you want to stand before God, you must go after shedding the robe of egoism.

July 3, 1946

If you are truly humble you will never, even in your dreams think disparagingly of those who do not practise such austerities as you do.

July 4, 1946

He who is not in the habit of keeping everything in its place is a fool. He wastes much time in searching for it when he wants it.

BOMBAY,

July 5, 1946

Divine Power is a thing that nothing can withstand.

July 6, 1946

We remember God when all is well with us. But a true devotee is he who remembers Him even when things go awry.

July 7, 1946

Man finds himself by losing his Self.

POONA,

July 8, 1946

He who explores the branch and forgets the root, strays.

July 9, 1946

The nectar of Ramanama brings joy to the soul and rids the body of its ailments.

July 10, 1946

Man dies when he cuts himself off from the source of his being, not when the soul leaves the body.

July 11, 1946

Meditation does not make one dull.

July 12, 1946

Meditation makes one strong and lucid.

PANCHGANI,

July 13, 1946

Just as drop by drop the lake fills up, so also every minute of sincere prayer nourishes the soul.

July 14, 1946

Man by himself is nothing. But when he has become one with God, he is everything.

July 15, 1946

When God is our Guide, we need worry about nothing.

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuke Ashirwad: A Thought for the Day*, pp. 466-601

346. LETTER TO SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

CAMP: PANCHGANI,
July 16, 1946

BROTHER SARAT BABU,

I write this in English so as to cause you less strain and be better understood.

I had long chats with Bela and Arvind. They feel deeply aggrieved by your treatment of them. It is not, as I could see, so much a question of money as of ill-treatment. They feel too that Amiya is the evil genius. As often happens among cousins they fight for no reason whatsoever. I wonder if this is such a case. Anyway, both Bela and Arvind are certainly disconcerted. They seem to have discussed the matter with Jawaharlal and Sardar. They appear to have said they can do nothing. I have advised them to put themselves at your disposal without any expectation of favour which they do not want. They say they want justice, they want to be treated as members of the family who have done no wrong to any of the members. They say they have been discredited without cause. This they resent bitterly. The issue is purely moral. This you should be able to fix up without any difficulty. They ought not to be cut off from the family, if they have been. I have given you an idea of what, as I see it, they feel.

I am sending them a copy of this letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

347. LETTER TO PUNDALIK

PANCHGANI,
July 16, 1946

CHI. PUNDALIK,

I went through your report and letter. The work seems to be going on well. If it goes on like this, success will come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5223

348. LETTER TO DHIRENDRA MAZUMDAR

PANCHGANI,
July 16, 1946

BHAI DHIREN,

I read *Krantikari Charkha* from cover to cover. I like it. None of the arguments irk me. You have correctly understood the place of the charkha. I want all lovers of the spinning-wheel to read your booklet and demonstrate its importance in the villages through their own work.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

349. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

PANCHGANI,
July 16, 1945

CHI. HOSHIARI,

I have your letter. Certainly I was a little annoyed. There was no reason for your coming to Delhi. If you found Gajraj in poor condition you alone were responsible for it. I had thought that you would be firm in your resolve but I find that you were not. I believed that you had given up your attachment to home but that too I did not find. Anyway, how does it matter? It is good that I now see you as you really are. It may be said, and rightly, that I have no reason to be unhappy about it. You may now realize the limit of your strength and do what you can. In that alone lies your well-being. Do not spoil Gajraj. Leave him alone but gradually, otherwise he will go completely out of hand.

I have your slivers.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. HOSHIARIBEHN
SEVAGRAM ASHRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Paper. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide "The Revolutionary Charkha", 18-7-1946.*

350. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1946

CHI. NARAHARI,

I did get your letter. The riots are a shameful affair from beginning to end.[1] I do get reports from all sources. It is a matter for concern that your sickness does not leave you. Sushila will soon be arriving there. See if she can do anything. My preference is for nature cure. I would consider extraction of teeth as part of the nature cure treatment. Jesus advised long ago that a limb which has become rotten should be cut off.[2]

I know a great deal about V.[3] now. We shall discuss the problem when I am there.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI NARAHARI PARIKH
ACHARYA, KHADI VIDYALAYA
A[KHIL] BHA[RATIYA] CHARKHA SANGH
SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA, C. P.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9143

351. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. I have gone through the speech of the Maharaja of Kashmir.[4] I do not like it. All the same I am quite certain that Jawaharlal should do nothing in haste. He should not go when it suits the Maharaja. It is for us to consider when he should. The Working Committee must meet and discuss it. He should go when the

[1] The reference is to the communal riots in Ahmedabad. *Vide* also "Bloodshed in Ahmedabad", 22-7-1946.

[2] *Matthew*, v, 29-20

[3] Vanamala, addressee's daughter

[4] The Maharaja in his announcement of July 15, 1946, had said that the Kashmir Government would resist any outside interference in their internal affairs fully realizing that such a course would lead to strife, disorder and bloodshed among the people of Kashmir.

Committee wants him to go. It may also be that the Kashmir affair will be used to sabotage the whole thing. I feel that we should not let such a possibility arise. I hope that whatever is done will be done after the Constituent Assembly meets. I would go so far as to say that the Maulana or you should go there first and find out what is feasible. It may also be necessary for the Maulana to issue a statement addressed to the people of Kashmir. If in spite of all that we do the whole thing collapses it cannot be helped. The situation requires very careful consideration. Munshi will tell you the rest.

Please also see the letter[1] I have written to Jawaharlal.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 308-9

352. LETTER TO GHULAM RASOOL QURESHI

PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1946

CHI. QURESHI,

I got your letter giving me the details. It is most painful. It seems they haven't learnt any lesson from the death of Vasantrao and others.[2] Send me further details.

I hope both of you as well as the children are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

GHULAM RASOOL QURESHI
SABARMATI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 17-7-1946.

[2] Vasantrao Hegishte and Rajabali Lakhani, two local youths, were killed while trying to bring about peace during communal riots in Ahmedabad on July 7, 1946.

353. LETTER TO SATYADEVI GIRI

PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1946

CHI. SATYADEVI,

Jayantilal brought me your letter giving me the news of Krishnamaiya's passing away. Later, on inquiring I came across Mahavir's telegram. It had been received by Pyarelal two days ago and was lying with him. He assumed that I must have been informed and so kept it for filing. Thus I could get the news only last evening. I believe that Krishnamaiya has found relief in death. I know from the death of Kashi, wife of Jaisukhlal, that cancer is painful disease. X-ray [*sic*], etc., is the right treatment for it. Your account also tells me that Mother passed away peacefully. We should all,therefore, be but happy about it. She has departed after seeing you all well settled. You should all now prove yourselves worthy of her name as well as your father's and also of the Ashram's where you were brought up. Mahavir is properly settled, so is Durga. You are study-ing. Once you recover your health, you are intelligent enough to be able to take care of yourself. Dharmakumar cannot be said to be doing too well. Maitri however has grown quite mature. She is the eldest among you. I am sure you will all regard her as your mother and conduct yourselves accordingly. Krishnamaiya's advice is right, i. e., you should all take care of her and she will look after you all. Thus the whole family will be protected.

I am not writing separately either to Mahavir or to Dharmakumar. All of you brothers and sisters should read this. I had only one letter from Dharmakumar regarding your operation.Under pressure of work I could not spare any time before this.

Blessings from
BAPU

KUM. SATYADEVI GIRI
VILLE PARLE

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

354. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1946

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have gone through what Munshi showed me,[1] though I did not have the time to examine it closely. He came today after 4 o'clock and will be going back tomorrow morning. I had a long talk with him about grouping. He will explain things to you. I have advised him to consult other lawyers as well. What he has prepared after seven days' labours may not be placed before the Committee just yet. Once it goes before the Committee, it will become public. I do not see the need of making it public so soon.

Your statement as published in the papers does not sound good.[2] If it is correctly reported, some explanation is needed. It must be admitted that we have to work within the limits of the State Paper. It is clear in Maulana's letters. We have given it our own inter-pretation. But if the Federal Court gives a different interpretation, we shall have to be firm. I think it necessary to say this clearly. If we do not admit even this much, we will be doing nothing and Jinnah Saheb's accusation will prove true.

Fischer[3] and Jayaprakash have come here today. They too will return tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

In regard to Kashmir, Sardar has sent me the Maharaja's speech. It deserves careful study. I think a meeting of the Working Committee should be called to consider it. Let us not be hasty. Let us not endanger the whole thing just for this reason. I am of the view that Maulana Saheb and, if necessary, Sardar too, should go to Kashmir. After all, has not the Working Committee assumed the entire responsi-bility?

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 7697

[1] The reference is to the Rules of Procedure in the Constituent Assembly.

[2] The reference is presumably to Jawaharlal Nehru's Press Statement of July 10, 1946, in which he had said that the Congress would enter the Constituent Assembly "completely unfettered by agreements and free to meet all situations as they arise".

[3] Louis Fischer

355. LETTER TO DR. T. J. KEDAR

PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1946

BHAI KEDAR,

I have your letter of the 4th inst. No one dies or lives or is born without God's grace. Then why rejoice at birth or grieve over death? I have no interest in elections. If your name is proposed for the Constituent Assembly, how can you escape it?

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. KEDAR
NAGPUR, C. P.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

356. INTERVIEW TO LOUIS FISCHER[1]

PANCHGANI,
[*July 17, 1926*][2]

LOUIS FISCHER: I would go into the Constituent Assembly and use it for a different purpose—as a battle-field—and declare it to be a sovereign body. What do you say to this?

GANDHIJI: It is no use declaring somebody else's creation a sovereign body. After all, it is a British creation. A body does not become a sovereign body by merely asserting it.To become sovereign, you have to behave in a sovereign way. Three tailors of Tooley Street in Johannesburg declared that they were a sovereign body. In ended in nothing. It was just a farce.

I do not consider the proposed Constituent Assembly to be non-revolutionary. I have said, and I mean it cent per cent, that the proposed Constituent Assembly is an effective substitute for civil disobedience of the constructive type. Whilst I have the greatest admiration for the self-denial and spirit of sacrifice of our Socialist friends,

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "After Four Years". Louis Fischer met Gandhiji twice on the 17th and then again on the 18th. The report here reproduced covers the two interviews on the 17th. For the interview of the 18th,*vide* "Interview to Louis Fischer", 18-7-1946. For extracts from Fischer's report of the interviews, *vide* Appendix "Extracts from Louis Fischer's Report of Interview with Gandhiji", 17-7-1946.

I have never concealed the sharp difference between their method and mine. They frankly believe in violence and all that is in its bosom. I believe in non-violence through and through.

L. F. You are a socialist and so are they.

G. I am, they are not. I was a socialist before many of them were born. I carried conviction to a rabid socialist in Johannesburg, but that is neither here nor there. My claim will live when their socialism is dead.

L. F. What do you mean by your socialism?

G. My socialism means 'even unto this last'. I do not want to rise on the ashes of the blind, the deaf and the dumb. In their socia-lism, probably these have no place. Their one aim is material progress. For instance, America aims at having a car for every citizen. I do not. I want freedom for full expression of my personality. I must be free to build a staircase to Sirius if I want to. That does not mean that I want to do any such thing. Under the other socialism, there is no individual freedom. You own nothing, not even your body.

L. F. Yes, but there are variations. My socialism in its modified form means that the State does not own everything. It does in Russia. There you certainly do not own your body even. You may be arrested at any time, though you may have committed no crime. They may send you wherever they like.

Does not, under your socialism, the State own your children and educate them in any way it likes?

G. All States do that. America does it.

L. F. Then America is not very different from Russia.

G. But socialism is dictatorship or else arm-chair philosophy. I call myself a communist also.

L. F. O, don't. It is terrible for you to call yourself a communist. I want what you want, what Jaiprakash and the socialists want: a free world.But the commu-nists don't. They want a system which enslaves the body and the mind.

G. Would you say that of Marx?

L. F. The communists have corrupted the Marxist teaching to suit their purpose.

G. What about Lenin?

L. F. Lenin started it. Stalin has since completed it. When the communists come to you, they want to get into the Congress and control the Congress and use it for their own ends.

G. So do the socialists. My communism is not very different from socialism. It is a harmonious blending of the two. Communism, as I have understood it, is a natural corollary of socialism.

L. F. Yes, you are right. There was a time when the two could not be distinguished. But today socialists are very different from communists.

G. You mean to say, you do not want communism of Stalin's type.

L. F. But the Indian communists want communism of the Stalin type in India and want to use your name for that purpose.

G. They won't succeed.

L. F. So you will not yourself go into the Constituent Assembly, but will support it?

G. Yes, but it is wrong to say we are going into the Constituent Assembly to seize power. Though it is not a sovereign body, it is as near it as possible.

L. F. Pandit Jawaharlal said that if the British tried to impose a treaty in terms of the State Paper of May 16, he will tear it up.[1]

G. Yes, an imposed treaty from outside.

L. F. And he said, Congress will not go into groupings.

G. Yes, I have said the same thing—unless the Federal Court or some other court gives a different decision.[2] As I see it, much can come out of the Constituent Assembly, if the British will play the game.

L. F. You say and I believe they will. But supposing they do not, won't you then offer your form of protest?

G. Not until the conditions are favourable. But it is wrong to speculate about the future, still more so to anticipate failure. If we take care of the present, the future will take care of itself.

They then passed on to the question of Hindu-Muslim unity. Gandhiji startled his visitor by proferring the remark that the Hindu-Muslim question, in the final analysis, was an offshoot of the untouchability question.

When Hinduism is perfectly reformed and purged of the last

[1] At a Press Conference in Bombay on July 10 Jawaharlal Nehru had said : ". . . If the British Government presumes to tell us that they are going to hold anything in India . . . because they do not agree either in regard to the minorities or in regard to the treaty we shall not accept that position. It will become a *casus belli* . . . we shall tear up any treaty they try to impose."

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 23-6-1946.

trace of untouchability, there will be no communal problem left.

L. F. I have heard that though the Congress Harijans have won at the elections against non-Congress Harijans, they were able to do so only with the Hindu votes!

G. What was the joint election for, if not to enable the caste Hindus to make a selection from successful candidates at the primary elections? No failed candidate at the primary elections can offer himself as a candidate at the joint elections. Moreover, it is not correct to say, as has been claimed, that in the majority of cases, the Con- gress Harijans won against the non-Congress candidates with the caste Hindus' votes. In Madras the non-Congress Harijans were defea-ted almost to a man in the primary elections, wherever they contested them. In the majority of cases the Congress Harijans were returned unopposed.

L. F. Some of them want separate electorates.

G. Yes. But we have resisted it. By separate electorates they put themselves outside the pale of Hinduism and perpetuate the bar sinister.

L. F. That is true. But, anyhow, they might say that Hindus have put them outside the pale.

G. But today the Hindus are penitent.

L. F. Are they adequately penitent?

G. I am sorry to say not yet. If they were, there would be no untouchability and no communal problem as I have already said.

L. F. Is there less social contact between the Hindus and Muslims?

G. No, rather the contrary. But politically there is a bar, thanks to Lord Minto.

L. F. Your young men are too Indo-centric.

G. That is only partly true. I won't say we have become international, but we have taken up forlorn causes, e. g., the cause of the exploited nations, because we are ourselves the chief exploited nation.

L. F. The growing anti-white feeling here is bad. In the Taj Mahal Hotel they have put up a notice "South Africans not admitted". I do not like it. Your non-violence should make you more generous.

G. That won't be non-violence. Today the white man rules in India. So, if the Taj Mahal has the gumption to put up that notice, it is a feather in its cap.

L. F. That is what any nationalist will say. You must say something better.

G. Then I will be a nationalist for once. They have no right to be here if they do not deal with Indians on terms of equality.

L. F. No right—yes. But you must give them more than their right. You must invite them.

G. Yes, when I am the Viceroy.

L. F. You mean the President of the Indian Republic.

G. No. I will be quite content to be the Viceroy, a constitutional Viceroy, for the time being.The first thing I will do will be to vacate the Viceregal Lodge and give it to the Harijans. I will then invite the South African white visitors to my hut and say to them:You have ground my people to powder. But we won't copy you. We will give you more than you deserve. We won't lynch you as you do in South Africa,' and thus shame them into doing th right.

L. F. There is so much anti-white feeling today.

G. Of course, I am opposed to that. It can do no good to anybody.

L. F. The world is so divided. And there might be another war and that may be between the coloured and the white races.

G. Europe seems to be heading for another war. It is not sufficiently exhausted.

L. F. Europe is terribly exhausted. But with the atom bomb human beings don't matter so much. A few scientists are enough. The next war will be carried on by pressing a few buttons. That is why colour war is so dangerous.

G. Anything is better than cowardice. It is violence double distilled.

And to illustrate his remark Gandhiji narrated the story of a Negro clergyman with a Herculean frame in South Africa saying 'pardon me brother', when insulted by a white man, and sneaking into a coloured man's compartment.

That is not non-violence. It is a travesty of Jesus' teaching. It would have been more manly to retaliate.

L. F. You are not afraid of what happens to you but what it may mean to others. It takes a great deal of irresponsibility to give vent to your feelings and slap the white man under the circumstances described by you. In India the situation is different. The white men are not so numerous here.

G. You are mistaken. Why, one Englishman is killed and a whole village is razed to the ground as a reprisal. What vindictiveness!

Harijan, 4-8-1946

357. QUESTION BOX

Q. I am a young businessman of 21 years and have 11 dependents. I believe in truth and non-violence but find I cannot strictly follow it in business. What should I do? Abandoning the business means suffering for my relations.

A. This begs the question. It is difficult but not impossible to conduct strictly honest business.The fact is that the honester a business the more successful it is. Hence the proverb coined by businessmen "Honesty is the best policy".What the correspondent lacks is application and an accurate knowledge of honest business methods. What is true is that honesty is incompatible with the amassing of a large fortune. "Verily, verily, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God." Nor therefore should an honest businessman, however capable he may be, support idlers whether eleven or more or fewer. The eleven dependents cannot all be infants or incapables. Honesty makes no impossible demands upon the resources of a businessman. An honest man cannot have dishonest kinsmen. The questioner will find on introspection that there is nothing wrong with honest business but that there is something wrong with him. Let him find out what it is that is wrong with him.

Q. Are the time, place and manner of death predestined by the Almighty for each individual? If so, why worry even if we are ill?

A. I do not know whether time, place and the manner of death are predestined. All I do know is that 'not a blade of grass moves but by His will'. This too I know hazily. What is hazy today will be clear tomorrow or the day after by prayerful waiting. Let this however be quite clear. The Almighty is not a person like us. He or It is the greatest living Force or Law in the world. Accordingly He does not act by caprice, nor does that Law admit of any amendment or improvement.His will is fixed and changeless, everything else changes every second. Surely, it does not follow from the doctrine of predestination that we may not 'worry' in the care of ourselves even if we are ill. Indifference to illness is a crime greater than that of falling ill. There is no end to the effort to do better today than yesterday. We have to 'worry' and find out why we are or have become ill. Health, not 'illth', is the law of nature. Let us investigate the law of nature and obey it, if we will not be ill or, if having fallen ill, will be restored.

PANCHGANI, July 18, 1946

Harijan, 28-7-1946

358. A TRAGIC PHENOMENON

My post contains so many letters from persons who want to be in the Constituent Assembly that it frightens me into the suspicion that, if these letters are an indication of the general feeling, the intelligentsia is more anxious about personal aggrandizement than about India's independence. And if I, though I have no connection with the applications of candidates for elections, receive so many letters, how many must the members of the Working Committee be receiving? These correspondents should know that I take no interest in these elections, I do not attend meetings at which these applications are considered and that I often only know from newspapers who have been elected. It is on rare occasions that my advice is sought as to the choice to be made. But I write this more to draw attention to the disease of which these applications are a sign than to warn my correspondents against building any expectation of my intervention. It is wrong to think communally in such elections, it is wrong to think that anyone is good enough for the Constituent Assembly, it is altogether wrong to think that the election carries any honour with it, it is a post of service if one is fitted for the labours and, lastly, it is wrong to regard the post as one for making a few rupees while the Assembly lasts. The Constituent Assembly should have such members only who know something about constitutions all the world over, above, all, about the constitution that India's genius demands. It is debasing to think that true service consists in getting a seat in the Assembly. True service lies outside. The field of service outside is limitless. In the fight for independence, the Assembly, like the one in course of formation, has a place. Nevertheless it is a very small place and that too if we use it wisely and well; certainly not, if there is a scramble for a seat in it. The scramble warrants the fear that it may become a hunting ground for place-seekers. I am free to confess that a Constituent Assembly is the logical outcome of parliamentary activity. The labour of the late Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru opened my eyes to the fact that the parliamentary programme had a place in the national activity for independence. I strove hard against it. It is certainly inconsistent with pure non-co-operation. But pure non-co-operation never held the field. What came into being also waned. Had there been universal non-co-opera-tion of the non-violent type in the Congress ranks, there would have been no parliamentary programme. Non-violent non-co-operation with evil

means co-operation with all that is good. There-fore, non-violent non-co-operation with a foreign government necessarily means an indigenous government based on non-violence. Had there been such complete non-co-operation, there would be swaraj today based on non-violence. But this never happened. In the circumstances it would have been vain to struggle against what the nation had been familiar with and from which it could not be completely weaned. The parliamentary step having been taken, it would have been improper to boycott the present effort. But that does not, can never, mean that there should be indecent competition for filling the seats in it. Let us recognize the limitations.

PANCHGANI, July 18, 1946

Harijan, 28-7-1946

359. "THE REVOLUTIONARY CHARKHA"[1]

Shri Dhirendra Mazumdar has written a booklet under this title. Though it is only forty small pages it contains everything about the new scheme. It tells us how true swaraj and true revolution lie in the success-ful working of the scheme. But the true revolution will remain only on paper unless the scheme is proved in work. It is, therefore, necessary to show how it may be proved and to act accordingly. Today there is much restlessness in the towns because townsfolk are not able to get khadi at any price. This has happened before. At that time I was able to assure people that khadi would soon be available because then the question was only one of money. Now this is not so. Money alone cannot answer the purpose. True revolution is not brought about by money. It is a difficult task to change the habits of a lifetime, to overcome laziness, to create rather than destroy. It is easy to acquire ten thousand rupees by looting a train. It is difficult to earn that sum by the sweat of one's brow. It is a common enough occurrence for someone to earn a lac of rupees in a single day in the share market. But to accumulate a lac of rupees in one day through one's labour is an impossible task. A beggar has been known to become rich by winning a lottery but no beggar has amassed wealth in a single day through his labour. He can only get his wage in the market. This may be eight annas or even two annas. Producing khadi is one thing, producing mill-cloth another. Swaraj cannot come

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 28-7-1946.

through the machine. But if two hundred million people with full understanding produce khadi with their own labour and wear it the face of India will be transformed. It will be another matter if out of the four hundred million people two hundred million cannot take the trouble to produce cloth for themselves. But I can never believe that.

PANCHGANI, July 18, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 28-7-1946

360. TESTIMONIAL TO HERBERT FISCHER

PANCHGANI,
July 18, 19[*46*][1]

I have known Mr. Herbert Fischer[2] and his wife for a long time. Mr. Fischer was for some time in the Village Industries section of my constructive activities. The Fischers belong to the Quaker Settlement at Itarsi. They are a simple godfearing family and lovers of humanity.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

361. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRAN

PANCHGANI,
July 18, 19[46][3]

CHI. RAMACHANDRAN,

I got your letter from Poona the day before yesterday. Murti had met me. What will he do in the Constituent Assembly? Have my talks with him been of no avail? I have written on this subject in *Harijan*.[4] Read it. You will have to go to Ceylon soon and correctly appraise the situation. I have had a talk with Ashadevi. I hope Soundaram's work is going on well.

[1] Although the source has 1940, this item has been placed among those of 1946. Moreover Gandhiji was in Panchgani on July 18, in 1946.

[2] He had come from the Fiji Islands. During the war he was declared an enemy and was arrested. Later he worked at Sevagram for Nayee Talim.

[3] The source has 1947 but Gandhiji was in Panchgani on this date; besides, the source has this letter among those of the year 1946.

[4] *Vide* "Tragic Phenomenon", 18-7-1946

You should now try to write in Hindustani.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

SHRI G. RAMACHANDRAN

MADRAS

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

362. INTERVIEW TO LOUIS FISCHER

PANCHGANI,

[*July 18, 1946*][1]

L. F. If the Working Committee had reacted to your 'groping in the dark' or as you have called it your instinct about the long-term proposals, they would have rejected them?

G. Yes, but I did not let them.

L. F. You mean you did not insist?

G. More than that. I prevented them from following my instinct unless they also felt likewise. It is no use conjecturing what would have happened. The fact however remains that Dr. Rajendra Prasad asked me: 'Does your instinct go so far that you would prevent us from accepting the long-term proposals, whether we understand you or not?' I said, 'No. Follow your reason since my own reason does not support my instinct. My instinct rebels against my reason. I have placed my misgivings before you as I want to be faithful to you. I myself have not followed my instinct unless my reason backed it.'

L. F. But you have said that you follow your instinct when it speaks to you on occasions as, for instance, you did before certain fasts that you undertook.

G. Yes, but even in these cases, before the fast began, my reason was able to back my instinct. My reason failed my instinct on the long-term proposals.

L. F. Them, why did you inject your 'instinct' into the political situation?

G. Because I was loyal to my friends. I wanted to retain my faith in the *bona fides* of the Cabinet Mission. So I told the Cabinet Mission also about my misgivings. I said to myself, 'Supposing they meant ill, they would feel ashamed.'

[1]*Vide* 1st footnote of "Interview to Louis Fischer", 17-7-1946.

L. F. You are strongly constitutionalist now. Is it for fear of the alternative—violence?

G. No. If India is destined to go through a blood-bath, it will do so. The thing I would fear is my own cowardice or dishonesty. I have neither. So I say, we must go in and work it out. If they are dishonest, they will be found out. The loss will not be ours but theirs.

L. F. I think you are afraid of the spirit of violence. It is widespread. I wonder whether it has not captured the mood of the youth and you are aware of it and you fear that mood.

G. It has not captured the imagination of the country. I admit that it has captured the imagination of a section of the youth.

L. F. It is a mood that has got to be combated.

G. Yes. I am doing it in my own way. It is my implicit faith that it is a survival which will kill itself in time. It cannot live. It is so contrary to the spirit of India. But what is the use of talking? I believe in an inscrutable Providence which preside over our desti-nies—call it God or by any other name you like. All I contend is that it is not the fear of violence that makes me advise the country to go to the Constituent Assembly. It is repugnant in a non-violent attitude not to accept an honourable substitute for civil revolt.

Harijan, 4-8-1946

363. "SCHEDULED CASTES"

A copy of a printed leaflet was thrown into my car on 6th July as I was driving to the A. I. C. C. meeting in Bombay. It was again handed to me by Shri Rajbhoj on the 12th instant. It is addressed to the members of the A. I. C. C. I promised to deal with the questions in these pages. I do so now.

The questions are such as not to need an answer from the members. I should not wonder if no member has answered them. They betray gross ignorance of Congress history. It is hardly the province of men gathered together for a particular purpose to deal with extraneous matters. But it is the province of newspapers to dispel ignorance. It is doubly mine, being conductor of a weekly and a Harijan by choice.

Q. What is going to be the place of the untouchables in your swaraj? The Congress has talked a lot about protecting the minorities. Why has the Congress

failed to produce its blue-print of plan for protecting the minorities? Is this silence not calculated to create want of confidence in the *bona fides* of the Congress?

A. The place of untouchables in the swaraj of my conception will be the same in every respect as that of the so-called caste Hindus. Such is also the position of the Congress. It has talked less and done more for minorities than any other cosmopolitan body known to me. There is no blue-print necessary when work speaks.

Q. Does the Congress regard the untouchables as a minority? Mr. Gandhi in an article in the *Harijan* in 1939 admitted that the only real minority in India were the untouchables. Why did Maulana Azad in his last letter[1] to the Viceroy say that the Congress was not prepared to recognize the untouchables as a minority?

A. The Congress should not regard the untouchables as a minority for the simple reason that they are not a minority in the sense in which Parsis, Jews, Christians and others can call themselves minorities. Harijans are a minority, if Brahmins, Kashatriyas and Vaishyas are minorities and Shudras are a majority. These are not minorities and majorities in the sense we are used to.We have fortunately not come to that pass. When we do, it will be good-bye to any kind of swaraj. The English may go today, they will some day, but if we become savages cutting one another's throats we will have the freedom that savages have.

The President of the Bombay Provincial Scheduled Castes Federation should have given the quotation referred to by him from the article in the *Harijan* of 1939. He has not taken the trouble of giving even the number and page of the *Harijan* in question. I have no recollection of ever having made the statement attributed to me. What the Maulana Saheb is reported to have said was undoubtedly right, irrespective of what I wrote in 1939 or did not write.

Q. What is the significance of the statement that the Congress does not regard the untouchables as a minority? Does it mean that the Congress will take away even those political safeguards which have been secured by the untouchables under the present Government of India Act?'

A. The significance is that untouchables are an integral part of Hindus. They are, therefore, better than minorities and worse if they claim to be and become a distinct community. A few educated untouchables may keep themselves as a class apart but the mass of them must sink or swim with the Hindus who, if they continue their

[1] Of June 25, 1946

misbehaviour towards Harijans—the so-called untouchables—must become extinct as a separate branch of the human family.

What 'political safeguards' the questioner has in view I do not know. If they refer to 'separate' electorates they must go even to the extent they exist today.They are a device of Satan named Imperialism It was never meant for the protection of the untouchables. It was a prop of Imperialism. Every statutory separation has been in furtherance of the policy of 'divide and rule'. It is inherent in the life of Imperialism even if it were to the called by a sweeter name.

Q. Does the Congress admit or does it not admit that the candidates of the Scheduled Castes who have been elected to the Provincial Legislatures came to the bottom in the primary elections and the candidates put up by the Scheduled Castes Federation came to the top? Does the Congress admit or does it not admit that if in the final election the failed candidates were elected, it was entirely due to the Hindu votes? Can the Congress deny that candidates elected by Hindu votes cannot be regarded as the real representatives of the Scheduled Castes?

A. I have not the statistics to verify the statement. My impression is to the contrary except in some cases.

Who were the 'failed' candidates? They could not offer themselves for the joint vote. The first four in the primary elections are the successful candidates, i. e., eligible for the joint vote. Surely it is a thing to be proud of, if the last successful candidate in the primary list won because of the caste Hindu vote at the joint election.

The Congress must deny that the top man of the primary election who failed to secure enough or any caste Hindu votes was the real representative of the Scheduled Castes. Can Sjt. Gaekwad and others like him, so long as they Hindus, be indifferent to the vote of their fellow Hindus, even though the latter are caste men? They must not cut the branch on which they are sitting. Separation must mean either change or religion or setting up a new religion—confusion added to confusion.

Q. At the time of the Poona Pact, Mr. Gandhi gave a pledge that the Hindus will not interfere in the election of the Scheduled Castes to the seats reserved for them. Why did the Congress violate the pledge and commit breach of faith?

A. I gave no such pledge as is imputed to me. The joint vote for the sake of which I fasted was interference, if it can be so called. If any other interference is meant, the questioner must explain and quote my writing in support of the contention.

Q. In the Simla Conference called by Lord Wavell in 1945, the Congress raised no objection to two representatives of the Scheduled Castes being included in

the Executive Council. Why did the Congress reduce the representation of the Scheduled Castes this time to one? Does it not prove that the Congress cannot be trusted to keep its word and that as soon as the Congress obtains the right to decide, it will break all its promises and withdraw all the political safeguards secured by the Scheduled Castes?

A. I do not understand this charge at all. The Congress, so far as I know, has committed no breach of faith.

Q. It has been admitted by all the workers of the Harijan Sevak Sangh and also by Mr. Gandhi that the removal of untouchability has made no headway at all. On the contrary, the tyranny and oppression of the untouchables by the caste Hindus which has been going on for ages, has increased in its rigour and has taken manifold forms. It is necessary to ventilate these grievances on the floor of the legislatures if any redress is to be obtained. No sensible man will deny that this work of ventilating the grievances cannot be done except by the representatives of the Scheduled Castes who are returned through separate electorates. Why does the Congress alone oppose the demand of the Scheduled Castes for separate electorates?

A. I have made no statement, and I do not know that the Harijan Sevak Sangh has, to the effect that the removal of untouchability has made 'no headway at all'. What all of us have admitted is that removal, so far as the caste Hindus are concerned, has made no satisfactory headway. That is not a new complaint. It is of long standing. Woe to the reformer who is easily satisfied with the progress of the reform, on which his mind is set. The reform is two-sided. So far as work among the Harijans is concerned, the Sangh has made fair strides. That in itself is no small contribution to the cause of removal of untouchability. The work among the touchables has gone on at a snail's pace. It is an uphill task. Yet I assert that it is making sure progress, though undoubtedly slow.

The charge that the tyranny and oppression by caste Hindus have"increased and have become intensified in rigour" is wholly wrong and cannot be sustained. What is true, and it is a healthy sign, is that there is a growing consciousness of the wrong among the Harijans, thanks largely to the efforts and the increase in the number of reformers and their impatience of the wrong. But they dare not be satisfied with the results so far achieved. They have to go much farther than they have done. I am sure that will never be through the legislatures or legislation, necessary as both are, though to very limited extent. As I have said in a previous issue, it is the hoary custom and not law, that is responsible for the mischief. Custom is any day

tougher than law. It can be removed only by enlightened public opinion.

Progress will be totally blocked by separation. It is a night-mare which must be given up, unless the goal of separation is extinction of Hindus including the so-called Scheduled Classes. They can only be misrepresented by separate electorates. How can others who are not interested in Scheduled Classes oppose separation?

Q. There is no connection between the religion of a community and its demand for separate electorates. Even communities professing one religion have claimed separate electorates. Europeans, Anglo-Indians and Indian Christians profess one common religion. Yet all of them have separate electorates. Nobody has raised any objection to their separate electorates, not even the Congress. Why does the Congress oppose the demand of the Scheduled Castes for separate electorates on the ground of common religion which it does not rely upon in other cases?

A. This question can only arise in the minds of those who support separate electorates as good in themselves. Not so the Congress. The parallel of Anglo-Indians, Europeans and Indian Christians is inapplicable and fatal. That separation is a glaring example of the mischief that separate electorates are, as also of Imperialism gone mad. Arrogance cannot go farther. Europeans have been separated as the ruling race, Anglo-Indians being a cross breed have been kept distinct from Indian Christians.

Q. There is no social separation between the Hindus and the Sikhs. In one family one member is a Sikh and the other a Hindu. The Hindus and the Sikhs intermarry and interdine. Yet the Sikhs have separate electorates to which the Congress has never raised any objection. The untouchables in the matter of social intercourse are far more separated from the Hindus than all the Sikhs and Muslims. If the Sikhs and Muslims can have separate electorates, why not the untouchables?

A. The Congress would do away today with these separate electorates if it had the power—not the power that the sword gives but that of persuasion. It is perfectly true that more is common between Hindus and Sikhs than between caste Hindus and untouchables. That is a blot upon caste Hindus and Hinduism. But the remedy is not to add evil to evil but to reform Hinduism, so that the demand for separation on the part of untouchables dies a natural death. Meantime Hindus cannot be expected to commit suicide which separation of Harijans from caste Hindus must mean.

PANCHGANI, July 19, 1946

Harijan, 28-7-1946

364. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

July 19, 1946

YOUR WIRE[1] SENT LETTER YESTERDAY. JUST RECEIVED LETTER FROM MINISTER ENCLOSING COPY MAHARAJA'S LETTER TO YOU. I CONSIDER THAT LETTER SATISFIES MINIMUM DEMAND. AFTER FINISHING WORK DELHI YOU SHOULD GO KASHMIR TAKING MAULANA IF HE WILL COME. INFORM MAHARAJA OF DATE DEPARTURE TELLING HIM YOU ARE AWARE OF BAN ON MEETING AND DEMONSTRATIONS ADDING YOU HAVE NO DESIRE TO DO MORE THAN MEETING SHEIKH ABDULLAH AND ATTENDING TO HIS DEFENCE. KEEP ME INFORMED OF YOUR MOVEMENTS.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

365. TELEGRAM TO JOACHIM DIAS [2]

PANCHGANI,
July 19, 1946

YOUR WIRE DOING ALL I CAN. GOANS SHOULD BE PREPARED SUFFER UTMOST. WRITING.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

366. LETTER TO JOACHIM DIAS

CAMP: PANCHGANI,
July 19, 1946

DEAR SHRI DIAS,

Your wire to Gandhiji came in yesterday and he has today sent you the following message[3] in reply.

"Your wire. Doing all I can. Goans should be prepared suffer utmost. Writing."

[1] Dated July 18, 1946, this read : "Have received no communication from Kashmir. In view Maharaja's recent speech as reported no change in policy indicated. Please advise about future action. Am going Delhi tomorrow."

[2] President, Goa Youth League, Bombay

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

Gandhiji has written to the Roman Catholic Archbishop[1] in Bombay as well as to His Excellency the Viceory.[2] Your ultimate success, however, lies in your own strength. Goans, he says, must be prepared to stand every hardship up to torture and death without retaliation.

Please keep Gandhiji informed of happenings in Goa.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI JOACHIM DIAS
PRESIDENT
GOA YOUTH LEAGUE
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

367. LETTER TO ARCHBISHOP, BOMBAY

CAMP: PANCHGANI,
July 19, 1946

DEAR ARCHBISHOP,

You must be aware of happenings in Goa.[3] I refer you to an account on page 6 of the *Bombay Chronicle* of 18.7.1946.

I recieved a wire[4] yesterday, a copy of which is in the *Bombay Chronicle* above referred to. Goan friends tell me that the Roman Catholic Bishop of Goa is actually party to the lawlessness there. This appears to me to be a matter needing investigation by you. I have no doubt that you can influence the Goan authorities in the way of peace.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHBISHOP OF BOMBAY
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 19-7-1946.

[3] The Portuguese authorities had been resorting to oppressive measures to deal with the Goans' demand for civil liberties. There were arrests and banishments, and meetings were forbidden.

[4] The telegram reported the arrest and detention of the Secretary of the Goa Congress.

368. LETTER TO MOTILAL SUNAR

July 19, 1946

Your wire does not give full information. Send details. Hope you have informed Jawaharlalji.

M. K. GANDHI

MOTILAL SUNAR
RATLAM

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memoral Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

369. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

CAMP: PANCHGANI,
July 19, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

Gandhiji desires me to refer you to happenings in Goa,[1] a vivid description of which is given on page 6 of the *Bombay Chronicle* of 18-7-1946.

I enclose a copy of a wire[2] Gandhiji received yesterday from Joachim Dias. Goan friends have been to see him too and related their woes. He wonders whether H. E. the Viceroy can do anything to stem the tide of what would appear to be lawlessness on the part of authority in Goa.

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

Encl: 1

G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ.
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO H. E. THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 99-100

[1] The Portuguese authorities had been resorting to oppressive measures to deal with the Goans' demand for civil liberties. There had been arrests and banishments and meetings had been forbidden.

[2] The telegram reported the arrest and detention of the Secretary of the Goa Congress.

370. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA KAK[1]

PANCHGANI,
July 19, 1946

BHAI SAHEB,

Your letter of the 12th was received today. Thanks. The Maharaja Saheb's reply seems appropriate. Its success depends on your wisdom, tolerance and patience. I have observed that even good work can be spoilt by haste or some other mistake.

The Maharaja Saheb's speech, if correctly reported in the newspapers, is irksome.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar; also *Sardar Patel's Correspondence,* Vol. I, p. 20

371. LETTER TO R. K. RAMLINGA REDDY

PANCHGANI,
July 20, 1946

CHI. RAMLINGA REDDY,

I have your postcard redirected from Poona. After all everyone has to lose his father someday or other. We too have to go. Why grieve over it? The thing to do is to emulate the good qualities of our fathers and forget their faults. Only then do we gain something. Go on doing your work with zeal and you will have perfect peace. I shall be reaching Sevagram in August. You may come then, if you want to.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 10416

[1] Prime Minister of Kashmir

372. TALK WITH MEMBERS OF HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH[1]

PANCHGANI,
[*July 20, 1946*][2]

Q. The Communist Party has successfully organized sweepers' unions and helped them to secure their rights through *hartals*, etc. But the Harijan Sevak Sangh's activities are confined mostly to welfare work. It cannot therefore successfully compete with the Communists for popularity among the Harijans. Don't you think that in view of this, the Harijan Sevak Sangh ought to alter its policy and method of work?

A. We must be guided in our policy by our sense of right, not by the lure of winning cheap popularity. If the Harijan Sevak Sangh is convinced that it is working on the right lines, it will keep on to them, regardless of what others might or might not do. Thus we may organize unions or even induce *hartals*, not from political motives or for such purposes but for bettering the social or economic position of Harijans.

Q. The feeling is gaining ground among the Harijans that the Congress is showing more solicitude for Muslim demands than for the just rights of the Harijans. What have you to say to it?

A. The Congress being a political organization is likely to be more susceptible to political pressure, which the Muslims are in a far stronger position to exert than the Harijans. If it succumbs to that pressure, it will pay the price for it.The Harijan Sevak Sangh, however, being a non-political organization, should never put expediency before its primary duty towards the Harijans.

Q. In your recent correspondence with Shri Shyamlal you have said that caste ought to go root and branch if untouchability is to be completely eradicated. Then, why do you not make anti-untouchability work part of a wider crusade against the caste system itself? If you dig out the root, the branches will wither by themselves.

A. It is one thing for me to hold certain views and quite another to make my views acceptable in their entirety to society at large. My mind, I hope, is ever growing, ever moving forward. All may not keep pace with it. I have therefore to exercise utmost patience and be satisfied with hastening slowly. As you must have seen from my preface to a recent Navajivan publication of my writings on *Varnavyavastha*,[3] I

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's report "Harijan Sevak Sangh Under Fire"
[2] From *Gandhi—1915-1948*
[3] *Vide* "Foreword to *Varnavyavastha*", 31-5-1945.

am wholly in agreement with you in principle. If I live up to 125 years, I do expect to convert the entire Hindu society to my view.

Q. Would you advise the so-called *savarna* Hindus to start, even under the pre-sent circumstances, an agitation in selected places for securing elementary civic and social rights for the Harijans? Would you for this purpose advise the Harijan Sevak Sangh to organize satyagraha against the *savarna* Hindus if necessary?

A. I would not advise the Sangh as an organization to offer satyagraha against the *savarna* Hindus, but I would certainly not only advise but expect members of the Sangh in their individual capacity to organize such satyagraha in their respective places. I shall certainly support any such move on their part if it is undertaken in the proper spirit. It is their duty.

Q. Would you, in the absence of popular government in the provinces, advise the Sangh to carry on a vigorous and energetic programme of temple-entry for Harijans?

A. I could. I understand it is being done even at present but at a rather slow pace. I would certainly like its tempo to be stepped up.

Q. Can the members of the Sangh refuse to interdine with the untouchables? Have your views on this question undergone any change?

A. At one time I did say that interdining was not an essential part of the campaign for the removal of untouchability. Personally, I was for it. Today I encourage it. In fact, today I even go further, as a perusal of my recent preface to which I have already referred would show.

Q. Should not the Harijan Sevak Sangh try to secure for the Harijans political power by demanding due representation for them on *gram panchayats*, municipalities and legislatures?

A. Certainly it ought to. No effort can be too great for it.

Q. Should not the Sangh give instructions in the essentials of Hindu religion in the Harijan hostels and in Harijan gatherings of adults?

A. It ought to be the primary duty of the Sangh to give to Harijan children and adults a grounding in the essentials of Hindu religion. If they were brought up in ignorance of these, they would not continue to remain in the Hindu fold, and the responsibility for it would rest on those who had failed to give them the necessary instruction.

Shri Sitaram Shastri of Vinaya Ashram, Guntur, asked whether the Sangh ought not to specially train a body of missionaries to carry on propaganda work

among the *savarna* Hindus. He was prepared to start a training centre for that purpose in his Ashram if he were given adequate help.

Gandhiji however had grave doubts as to the practicability of the suggestion. In fact, the question had actually been raised by Shri Ghanshyamdas Birla several years ago and dropped after full discussion. He would be quite satisfied, if at least the members of the Sangh would fully come up to the ideal.

Q. Ought not we to set up a precedent for having Harijan representatives in the Sangh or at least one Harijan member in the Executive Committee of the Sangh?

In reply he referred to the history of the birth of the Harijan Sevak Sangh at the conclusion of the Poona Pact, which resulted in the modification of the decision of the MacDonald Government on the question of the representation of the minorities. It was felt that if the rot was to be effectively stopped, Hinduism ought to be completely rid of the curse of untouchability. This called for a real change of heart and repentance for its past sins on the part of Hindu society. It was to that end that the Harijan Sevak Sangh was formed.

I am therefore opposed to both the propositions. I know that under the present arrangement some Harijans are included in the Board of the Sangh. But this was a concession to Thakkar Bapa's weakness. I have described the Harijan Sevak Sangh as an organization of penitent sinners. Its object is to call upon so-called *savarna* Hindus to do expiation for having harboured untouchability. The inclusion of a Harijan in the Sangh would be mere eye-wash and make-believe, as his would be a mere voice in the wilderness. Before long, he would himself heartily wish to be out of it. I say this from my personal experience of the way in which committees function. I know the Sangh cannot always keep up to the mark. It is of course open to the Sangh to alter its scope and give Harijans a majority in its Executive Committee or appoint a competent body of representative Harijans to act as a board of advisers and supervisors and keep the Sangh on the alert and on the right track.

Gandhiji was next asked to give his opinion on the recent work in the Gwalior State to enlist the services of the *Sadhu* community in the cause of Harijan uplift. Gandhiji replying said he had grave doubts as to the correctness or advisability of the step. It seemed to him to smack of politics. He would welcome the assistance of true *sadhus*, if it was available. But he confessed he looked in vain in the country for *sadhus* of his conception. Such *sadhus* as he saw disappointed him. There might be here and there honourable exceptions and their help would be welcome. But he was frankly sceptical of the possibility of utilizing *sadhus* as a body for their work. Even if they tried the experiment, he was afraid they would come to the parting of the ways

before long.

Another friend asked whether a portion of the Kasturba Memorial Trust Fund ought not to be earmarked for Harijan sisters. Gandhiji's reply was that they could have the whole of it if they could show the capacity to utilize it. No special earmarking of a part was therefore necessary.

I am responsible for the policy of conducting Harijan uplift work through the agency of the *savarna* Hindus. They had to do expiation. All of them, I argued to myself, could help with money even if they could not, owing to lack of necessary qualifications, render direct service. For instance, they might not be able themselves to do teaching work, but they could engage a competent teacher to give education to Harijan children. That would be one way of doing expiation. They would be able to penetrate Harijan society and help in its progress.

He knew there were sceptical critics, who questioned whether this kind of work could lead to the eradication of untouchability. He himself was at one time among the doubters. But he had since realized his mistake. He owed a debt of gratitude in this respect to the late Shri Devdhar, at whose activity he had at one time looked askance and which he had even criticized. A year's experience, however, had cured him of his conceit and taught him humility. He realized that if he confined himself exclusively to doing propaganda among the *savarna* Hindus with a view to their conversion, he might have to wait till the Greek Kalends and in the meantime the actual uplift work among the Harijans would remain hopelessly bogged. His own experience had since convinced him that if they could only have sufficient workers with the requisite purity and devotion and spirit of sacrifice to work among Harijans, untouchability would become a thing of the past, even if the *savarna* Hindus were left severely alone. But that would mean that they must first become Harijans at heart and live and labour among the Harijans as Harijans.

But can the members of the Harijan Sevak Sangh truthfully claim to have eradicated the last trace of untouchability from their own hearts? Are their professions altogether on a par with their practice?

A member asked as to what his criterion was in that respect.

Are you married?

THE MEMBER: I happen to be.

G. The have you an unmarried daughter? If you have, get for her a Harijan bridegroom, not to satisfy her lust but in a purely religious spirit and I shall send you a wire of congratulations at my expense.

You will now realize why the Harijan *sevaks* are unable to move the hearts of the *savarna* Hindus. The reason is that they have not that fire of faith in their hearts, that impatient hunger for service which is the first essential for an effective appeal. Let but a handful of *savarna* Hindus go forth in that true missionary spirit and they will leaven the entire Hindu mass. But not even a whole army of missionaries so called will produce any effect upon them.

It needed a Malaviyaji to make such a missionary. He (Gandhiji) could not convert his own sister. And if he could not, how could he blame others. That would show how hard and thorny was that path. It was however open to them, if they felt that they had the necessary qualification, to try the experiment for themselves in their locality.

The reason for this partial failure, Gandhiji proceeded to explain, was also that the approach of most of the members of the Harijan Sevak Sangh to their mission was not unmixed with political motives. If they really wanted to penetrate the hearts of *savarna* Hindus, they ought to be filled with a purely religious spirit. Mere dialectics was a poor weapon for this kind of work. As it was, they were too much weighed down by inertia, heedlessness and woodenness of mind.

The other method is more fierce and not altogether free from danger. It is the method of fasting.

He himself had before condemned fasting when it seemed to him to be wrong or morally unjustified. But to shirk a fast when there was a clear moral indica-tion was a dereliction of duty. Such a fast had to be based on unadulterated truth and ahimsa.

In passing he hinted at the possibility of his having to go through one more fast in his life, possibly even more than one. He warned them however that he had no present thought of any. It was only a vague premonition.

Harijan, 28-7-1946

373. LETTER TO KALYANIDEVI[1]

PANCHGANI,
[*July*][2] *20, 1946*

DEAR SISTER,

I am grieved to learn of Doctor Saheb's death but grief is momentary. Doctor Saheb left us doing work of service till the end. Let us all imbibe his good qualities and by doing so bear testimony to his immortality. Do not grieve for him but carry on his work even as

[1] Widow of Dr. T. S. S. Rajan of Trichy
[2] The source has October; *vide*, however, the following item.

Ramabai Ranade did.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SMT. KALYANIDEVI

C/O DR. T. V. S. SASTRI OF TRICHINOPOLY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

374. LETTER TO RAMA SHETTY

PANCHGANI,

July 20, 1946

SIR,

I got your wire. You did well in sending the wire. I have written to Kalyanidevi.[1] I remember the Doctor very well. I had stayed at his house when I went to Trichy the first time.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI RAMA SHETTY

PRESIDENT, TOWN CONGRESS

TRICHINOPOLY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

375. LETTER TO RAJAGOPAL

PANCHGANI,

July 20, 1946

CHI. RAJAGOPAL,

I got your letter. It is good that 128 people have taken the pledge to do spinning as *yajna*. It is certainly good that all of them will make their own slivers. This is as it should to be.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

376. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

PANCHGANI,
July 20, 1946

The verse from the *gatha* sung today says: 'Let me remember Thee by making my heart pure by righteous thought, by performing good and wise deeds and by right speech.' Unless all these conditions are fulfilled, one cannot expect to come near God.

Then the poet says: 'We bow to Thee and thank Thee for all that Thou hast done for us. We will always remain Thy debtors.' What is this debt towards God and how can one repay it? The answer is, by discharging one's duty completely. And since no mortal can completely discharge his duty in life, he must for ever remain a debtor to God.

Harijan, 28-7-1946

377. EXTRACTS FROM SPEECHES AT PRAYER MEETINGS[2]

PANCHGANI,
[Before *July 21, 1946*][3]

In the song that has been sung today, the devotee says: 'Keep my heart pure—guide me on the path of truth.Give me true happiness which springs from holding on to truth. Destroy the misery which results from relinquishing truth.' Believe me when I tell you after 60 years of personal experience that the only real misfortune is to abandon the path of truth. If you but realize this, your one prayer to God will always be to enable you to put up without flinching with any number of trials and hardships that may fall to your lot in the pursuit of truth. . . .

The verse from the *Zend Avesta* describes five kinds of physicians, but the fifth is the true physician, who depends on nothing but the name of God for healing. That is just what I have been saying in connection with nature cure. Ramanama is the sovereign remedy. It is an agreeable surprise to me to find an authority for it in the *gatha*. . .

In the song that has been sung, the poet says that God is hidden

[1]Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 21-7-1946
[2] *Ibid*
[3] *Ibid*

and yet present everywhere. . . . That is true. He knows our innermost thoughts better than we ourselves can do. One who depends on God will never be afraid of anybody, not even of the most despotic government on earth or its officers. For he will have as his protector the King of kings from whose eye nothing is hid. . . .

Just as a tree has many branches but one root, similarly the various religions are the leaves and branches of the same tree. Islam, Christianity, Hinduism and Zoroastrianism are the main branches but as for varieties of religion, they are as numerous as mankind. If you take the name of God in the prayer gathering and forget all about it on going out, it is not prayer but blasphemy. Religion has to be lived every moment of one's life.

The girls have sung, 'With folded hands, O Mazda! I beg of Thee to give me true knowledge and enable me to devote every moment of my life to the service of Thy creation.' It is a great prayer. The devotee begs of God to fill him or her with the thirst for service, so that service will become a pleasure and not a task. But what is the meaning of service? Is killing fellow human beings in war, for instance, also service? No. Therefore the devotee says, 'Whatever I do, whether in order to serve others or myself, let all my deeds be pure and noble. Let them fill me with Thy joy.' A man who lives up to this prayer would always be filled with His joy.

Referring to the riots in Ahmedabad he said that the Hindus and Muslims in Ahmedabad had not yet got over their insanity. Islam meant peace, Hindus claimed to follow the path of ahimsa. They both swore by God but in practice they followed Satan. The Muslim stabbed the innocent Hindu and the Hindu stabbed the innocent Muslim.

Of the three workers who were killed in Ahmedabad some days ago one was a Muslim[1]. It was a Muslim's dagger that killed him. He was in the company of Hindus. No one even knew that he was a Muslim. One of his companions Vasantrao was well known and commanded the respect of both Hindus and Muslims. While in jail one of his Muslim companions went on a fast.There was an overwhelming majority of Hindus amongst the satyagrahi prisoners. Vasantrao felt that he ought to give his moral support to the Muslim brother and went on a sympathetic fast. His senior companions in jail, tried to dissuade him. 'Are you wiser than all of us? You know the Muslim friend's fast is not justified. If it was, we would all have fasted

[1] Rajabali Lakhani; *vide* "Letter to Ghulam Rasool Qureshi", 17-7-1946.

with him.' His reply was:'I do not claim to be wise. I prefer to be a fool. I seek your blessings. If this Muslim friend dies in jail in the midst of all of us Hindus, with what face shall I return to my Muslim friends outside? Therefore, I would far rather die with him, whatever the issue of his fast.' Neither died in the end, but Vasantrao proved by his action that he was a true Hindu and a true Muslim combined into one.

Gandhiji concluded by exhorting the audience to cultivate that mentality. He was sure that if they prayed to God to restore to sanity the Hindus and Muslims of Ahmedabad, their prayer would not go unheeded, but leap across space and melt the hearts of the deluded rioters in Ahmedabad.

Harijan, 28-7-1946

378. INDEPENDENCE

Q. You have said in your article in the *Harijan* of July 15, under the caption "The Real Danger",[1] that Congressmen in general certainly do not know the kind of independence they want. Would you kindly give them a broad but com-prehensive picture of the Independent India of your own conception?

A. I do not know that I have not, from time to time, given my idea of Indian independence. Since, however, this question is part of a series, it is better to answer it even at the risk of repetition.

Independence of India should mean independence of the whole of India, including what is called India of the States and the other foreign powers, French and Portuguese, who are there, I presume, by British sufferance. Independence must mean that of the people of India, not of those who are today ruling over them. The rulers should depend on the will of those who are under their heels. Thus, they have to be servants of the people, ready to do their will.

Independence must begin at the bottom. Thus, every village will be a republic or *panchayat* having full powers. It follows, therefore, that every village has to be self-sustained and capable of managing its affairs even to the extent of defending itself against the whole world. It will be trained and prepared to perish in the attempt to defend itself against any onslaught from without. Thus, ultimately, it is the individual who is the unit. This does not exclude dependence on and willing help from neighbours or from the world. It will be free and voluntary

[1] *Vide* "The Real Danger", 9-7-1946.

play of mutual forces. Such a society is necessarily highly cultured in which every man and woman knows what he or she wants and, what is more, knows that no one should want anything that others cannot have with equal labour.

This society must naturally be based on truth and non-violence which, in my opinion, are not possible without a living belief in God, meaning a self-existent, all-knowing living Force which inheres every other force known to the world and which depends on none and which will live when all other forces may conceivably perish or cease to act. I am unable to account for my life without belief in this all-embracing living Light.

In this structure composed of innumerable villages, there will be ever-widening, never-ascending circles. Life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom. But it will be an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual always ready to perish for the village, the latter ready to perish for the circle of villages, till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals, never aggressive in their arrogance but ever humble, sharing the majesty of the oceanic circle of which they are integral units.

Therefore the outermost circumference will not wield power to crush the inner circle but will give strength to all within and derive its own strength from it. I may be taunted with the retort that this is all Utopian and, therefore, not worth a single thought. If Euclid's point, though incapable of being drawn by human agency, has an imperishable value, my picture has its own for mankind to live. Let India live for this true picture, though never realizable in its completeness. We must have a proper picture of what we want, before we can have something approaching it. If there ever is to be a republic of every village in India, then I claim verity for my picture in which the last is equal to the first or, in other words, no one is to be the first and none the last.

In this picture every religion has its full and equal place. We are all leaves of a majestic tree whose trunk cannot be shaken off its roots which are deep down in the bowels of the earth. The mightiest wind cannot move it.

In this there is no room for machines that would displace human labour and that would concentrate power in a few hands. Labour has its unique in a cultured human family. Every machine that helps every individual has a place. But I must confess that I have never sat down to think out what that machine can be. I have thought of Singer's sewing

machine. But even that is perfunctory. I do not need it to fill in my picture.

Q. Do you believe that the proposed Constituent Assembly could be used for the realization of your picture?

A. The Constituent Assembly has all the possibilities for the realization of my picture. Yet I cannot hope for much, not because the State Paper holds no such possibilities but because the document, being wholly of a voluntary nature, requires the common consent of the many parties to it. These have no common goal. Congressmen themselves are not of one mind even on the contents of Independence.I do not know how many swear by non-violence or the charkha or, believing in decentralization, regard the village as the nucleus. I know on the contrary that many would have India become a first-class military power and wish for India to have a strong centre and build the whole structure round it. In the medley of these conflicts I know that if India is to be leader in clean action based on clean thought, God will confound the wisdom of these big men and will provide the villages with the power to express themselves as they should.

Q. If the Constituent Assembly fizzles out because of the "danger from within", as you have remarked in the above-mentioned article, would you advise the Congress to accept the alternative of general country-wide strike and capture of power, either non-violently or with the use of necessary force? What is your alternative in that eventuality if the above is not approved by you?

A. I must not contemplate darkness before it stares me in the face. And in no case can I be party, irrespective of non-violence, to a universal strike and capture of power. Though, therefore, I do not know what I should do in the case of a breakdown, I know that the actuality will find me ready with an alternative. My sole reliance being on the living Power which we call God, He will put the alternative in my hands when the time has come, not a minute sooner.

PANCHGANI, July 21, 1946

Harijan, 28-7-1946

379. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

July 21, 1946

YOUR WIRE.[1] I UNDERSTAND REASON FOR GOING 24TH. ANY DATE AFTER SEVENTH AUGUST WARDHA WILL SUIT.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

380. TELEGRAM TO NAWAB OF BHOPAL

PANCHGANI,
July 21, 1946

H. H. NAWAB SAHEB
BHOPAL

THANKS YOUR WIRE[2]. MAHARAJAH'S LETTER TO PANDITJI LIFTS BAN FOR VISIT FOR SHEIKH ABDULLAH. THINK THIS SHOULD ENABLE HIM VISIT KASHMIR. YOUR WIRE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN SENT IN IGNORANCE OF MAHARJAH'S ABOVE LETTER. HOPE YOUR GOOD OFFICES WILL CONTINUE IN FURTHERANCE END DEADLOCK.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Of July 20, 1946, which read : "Received letter from Viceroy today about Kashmir. Thereupon decided go there twenty-fourth on brief visit as Abdullah's trial beginning twenty-second. Informed Viceroy Maharaja others my visit. Received your letter later. Consider change in programme not desirable now. Could early August suit you for Working Committee. Please wire suitable date place.

[2] In this, the addressee had informed Gandhiji of his advice to Nehru to defer his visit to Kashmir.

381. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

PANCHGANI,
July 21, 1946

YOUR WIRE.. HOPE RESISTERS WILL REMAIN FIRM TO THE END.

EVERYTHING POSSIBLE BEING DONE THIS END.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

382. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

PANCHGANI,
July 21, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

It is 4 a. m. and I am writing this by the light of lantern. All others are asleep and will rise when the electricity comes on at five. So I have only this piece of paper to write on.

I received all your letters. It was a good thing that you met Bhimarao Ambedkar. He will not agree. Why 20 per cent? I see a snag in this. Do think about it. The deposit ought to be paid. One can understand the condition that in all elections a certain minimum number of Harijans should be elected.

I think that the Maharaja's letter about Kashmir is fairly good. I already informed you of the advice I have given and I enclose copies herewith.

I have said that I will see Bhimarao if he comes to Poona or Sevagram. The newspaper report is false.

A great many things seem to be slipping out of the hands of the Congress. The postmen[1] do not listen to it, nor does Ahmedabad[2], nor do Harijans, nor Muslims. This is a strange situation indeed.

Yesterday, Deo[3] the Raja of Aundh, Appa[4] etc., came. We had a

[1]The reference is to the Postal strike in Bombay and communal riots in Ahmedabad.

[2] *Ibid*

[3] Shankarrao Deo

[4] Appa Pant, son of the Raja of Aundh

long discussion. Bhai . . .[1] came with representatives of East Africa. He will meet you. I think something can be done in the matter.

Are you not well enough to go to Ahmedabad? You are ruining your own health. I wish you had come here.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

68 MARINE DRIVE

BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 309-11

383. LETTER TO RASIKLAL SHUKLA

PANCHGANI,

July 21, 1946

BHAI RASIKLAL,

I have your postcard. It is sarcastic. If you had ever stayed with me even for a few days, you would have realized that I am never . . . .[2] Those who are with me are cooped up as in dovecots.

Your postcard reached Panchgani on the 20th and was handed to me the same day. You were impatient. The matter for *Harijan* is not written where *Harijan* is printed. The matter is sent from the places where I may happen to be touring. Thus things take time. The fact is that the day on which I got your wire I spoke on the subject at the prayer meeting and sent an account for *Harijan*. It must have now been published. Write whatever else you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. RASIKLAL SHUKLA

SARASWATI HIGH SCHOOL

SARANGPUR, AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] Omission as in the source

384. LETTER TO NRISIMHAPRASAD K. BHATT[1]

PANCHGANI,
July 21, 1946

CHI. NANABHAI,

I got your wire. Come along whenever you like. I hope you are well.

SJT. NANABHAI BHATT
C/O SARDAR PATEL
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

385. LETTER TO ARUNA ASAF ALI

PANCHGANI,
July 21, 1946

CHI. ARUNA,

I was not pained so much by your speech that day as by your visit later and the inquiry. You appeared to be putting up an act. You are not a goddess, nor do you want to become one. You should become an instrument of service, pure and simple. You are not an actress either. Beware !

This letter is a sigh of sorrow. Brajkisan will tell you more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C. W. 11338. Courtesy: Aruna Asaf Ali

386. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING [2]

PANCHGANI,
July 21, 1946

Gandhiji said that when he came to Panchgani under medical advice in 1944, after his release from detention, he found that there was no place where the poor and the destitute could put up, in order to take advantage of the beautiful climate. And what about the Harijans? He had received a long letter from one of them describing their woes.

[1] The letter bears the remark : "To be sent with Brijkrishna."
[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 30-7-1946

"It is all right so long as his identity is unknown. But the moment it is discovered that he is a Harijan, he suddenly becomes a *pariah*. He is unwelcome everywhere. All doors are shut against him. The shopkeeper receives his money but sells him the rottenest stuff and cheats him into the bargain by giving him less than the full measure. Should the poor unfortunate object, he is insulted and told to be gone. The landlord won't have him and asks him to quit. Where is the poor man to go?" It was heart-rending. He felt he could not come and stay in Panchgani unless there was a place where the Harijans would be welcome like all others. It had therefore given him great pleasure that Panchgani was at last going to hare such a place. Sheth Shantilal of Ahmedabad had purchased the 'Satish Kunj' property for Rs. 45,000 and had agreed to get it reconditioned and bear the running expenses of the institution for ten years. In the dharma shala which was going to be built, the poor of all communities including the Harijans would be able to come and stay without any distinction of caste or religion. They would be provided free accommodation but would have to make their own arrangements as regards food, etc. A Trust had been formed to look after the dharmashala, consisting of Sheth Shantilal of Ahmedabad, Sheth Mohanlal, Shri Bachharaj, Dr. Dinshaw Mehta and Gandhiji. He would have liked the dharmashala, said Gandhiji, to be built out of funds provided by the inhabitants of Panchgani itself. But finance was not everything. Although they had not contributed the money, they should give their blessings and co-operation. The institution would fail unless the people took active and genuine interest in it. He suggested that sisters from well-to-do families should visit the sick or the convalescent who might come to the dharmashala for a change of climate, soothe them by singing beautiful hymns and render them whatever service they could or was necessary.

The sanitary conditions in Panchgani were awful. In a climate like theirs there should never be any epidemics. Yet they had the plague only the year before and had to vacate the bazaar which was indescribably dirty. There was water shortage in spite of a plentiful rainfall. Why could not the rain water be captured and utilized for water supply? In South Africa, where rainfall was scarce and there was a dearth of underground water supply, they had a reservoir in every house for storing rain water. It was the duty of all of them, most of all the Municipality and the Public Health Department to remedy these defects. The Prime Minister Shri Balasaheb Kher[1] was there and was prepared to render them whatever help was necessary. If he were the Health Officer or the Chairman of the Panchgani Municipality, said Gandhiji, he would make the place so clean and neat that anybody might be able to lie down and sleep on the hill side in the open without any compunction. Today that was not

[1] Kher, Bal Gangadhar (1888-1957); Premier of the Bombay State from 1937 to 1939 and again from 1946 to 1952. He along with Patil and Tapase had come from Poona for the ceremony of dedication of 'Satish Kunj'

possible, because of the Municipal insanitation. People spat and made nuisance here, there and everywhere indiscriminately. He spoke from knowledge, he said. Before he came under the Mahatmaic handicap and was free to go into dharmashalas and other places of public utility without attracting crowds, he had occasion to study the conditions prevailing in those places. The insanitation, the filth and the stench of the public latrines and urinals of the railway stations and in the dharmashalas were simply awful. They could make Panchgani into a jewel among hill stations, if only they did their duty.

He then proceeded to make some concrete suggestions. The first and foremost of course was sanitation and night-soil disposal. Having become a Bhangi himself, he thought of it first. He had done a Bhangi's job right from South Africa. He knew how to do it without becoming filthy himself. The sight of a Bhangi carrying the night-soil basket on his head made him sick. Scavenging was a fine art. Not only must the cleaning be perfect, but the manner of doing it and the instruments used, must be clean and not revolting to one's sanitary sense.

You have only to see the privy I use. It is spotlessly clean without a trace of smell. That is so because I clean it myself. The municipal Bhangi pours out the contents of the night-soil waggons over a cliff converting a beauty spot into a plague spot. If you become your own Bhangis, not only will you ensure perfect sanitation for yourself, but you will make your surroundings clean and relieve the Bhangis of the weight of oppression which today crushes them. Do not imagine that thereby you would deprive them of their living. Today we have reduced them to the level of the beast. They earn a few coppers but only at the expense of their human dignity. The same Bhangi serves in the municipality as well as in your bungalow, with the result that he can do justice to neither. Look at him as he eats his food, cowering under the shadow of the latrine wall, surrounded by filth. It is enough to break one's heart. It should not be difficult for you to find a more decent avocation for him to follow.

The Nawab Saheb of Wai who had seen him earlier in the day had told him that they knew what to do, but that the municipality was too poor and the necessary finances were lacking. He had asked the Nawab Saheb, said Gandhiji, to send him a small note setting forth their handicap. He hoped to be able to show him that what they wanted to do and what needed to be done, need not be held up for lack of funds. After all the various improvements which he had suggested would not require more than ten lakhs of rupees. He wanted to tell the rich folk who frequented Panchgani that it was up to them to provide that amount. In free and progressive countries, the gentry considered it their special privilege and duty to shoulder the burden of providing municipal amenities and improvements. It was only in India that people looked for every little thing to the Government. They must learn to shed that mendicant habit if

they aspired to become a free and self-respecting nation.

Then they should do something to improve the drainage. For that, a suitable scheme would have to be prepared by an engineer. He hoped that the work would be taken up without delay.

Lastly, he hoped that something would be done immediately about the disposal of the night-soil. The present practice was a sin against man and God and its continuation even for a single day should be a matter of utter shame to them. He was sorry to tell them that Dr. Dinshaw had reported that even after nearly a fortnight, things were as bad as they were on their arrival in Panchgani.

He hoped that when he came to Panchgani next year, God willing, he would find things different. The gulf that separated the rich and the poor today was appalling. It had to be bridged. The rich must share all their amenities with the poor in the fullest measure. Their joining in the prayer gathering would have gone in vain if it did not help them to realize and do their duty. Such prayer would be vain repetition which could do no good to them, to him or to anybody.

Harijan, 11-8-1946

387. BLOODSHED IN AHMEDABAD[1]

Bloodshed had been going on in Ahmedabad for several days now. It is difficult to say who is at fault. The policy of the Government has been not to let anyone know who has stabbed whom. The Congress Government has adhered to this policy, so we should assume that there is some reason behind it. It could be in the manner of a thief's mother feigning grief over her son's doings, because in Ahmedabad everyone must know who is the aggressor or who is more to blame. My job is not to deliberate upon it; it is comparatively easier.

The best way is for one of the parties to desist. Then alone can true peace be established and the madness come to an end. In my childhood a cousin of mine and I took *bhang* and laughed and laughed at each other like two mad men. When morning came and we were sober, we were both ashamed of ourselves and could not face each other. That intoxication was comparatively harmless but this is frightful.

Is it not enough that three young men[2] have died in the attempt to stop the holocaust? I spoke about it at the prayer meeting at Poona.[3] Several friends have written to me about the martyrdom. If we

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 28-7-1946.

[2] Two of them were Rajabali Lakhani and Vasantrao Hegishte.

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 2-7-1946.

had sense that sacrifice would have quenched the fire. That has not happened. However, that does not mean that the sacrifice was in vain. It only means that many more such sacrifices must be offered before the fire can be quelled. Or both sides must tire themselves out. Some must face police bullets, some go to jail and some hang before the flames are extinguished. This is the wrong way; because the fire thus put out has every possibility of erupting again. It will not reduce the poison, only suppress it, which will then spread in the body politic and cause immense mischief.

Moreover, if the riots are suppressed with the help of the police and its elder brother the military, it will strengthen the grip of the foreigner and emasculate us still further Poet Iqbal has said: "Religion does not teach us to bear enmity towards each other." Can there be greater cowardice than to fight amongst ourselves.

There are ways even of fighting. If we must fight, why should we seek the help of the police and the military? The Government too should clearly say that the military, whilst it is in India, will only be used for the work of sanitation, for cultivating unused land and the like. And the police similarly will be used for catching thieves and dacoits, but never to put down communal riots. Let the people of Ahmedabad be brave enough to say that they will not seek the help of the police and the military, and they will not flee in panic. Rioters are mostly *goondas*. Even the white-collared *goondas* murder by stealth. I am told that nearly all the stabbings have been in the back, none or very few in the chest or the face. Why should one be frightened of such people? One should either die at their hands in the hope that they will in the end give up their madness and *goondaism*, or if one does not have that much courage one should fight to defend oneself. The question may rightly be asked how can one fight against a person who strikes from behind. It may not be possible to prevent such a person from stabbing people in the back but if the onlookers are not in collusion with him and are brave enough, they can catch hold of the culprit and hand him over to the police or to the community to which he belongs, or bring him before the *panch*. Only, they may not become judges.

PANCHGANI, July 22, 1946
[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 28-7-1946

388. A DHARMASHALA FOR PANCHGANI

When I first visited Panchgani after my release from jail, at a prayer meeting I mentioned the absence, in a beautiful place like Panchgani, of facilities for the poor, especially Harijans. In the event, for a person like me it becomes difficult even to stay at Panchgani. As far as I was concerned there were many who would put me up but where could the Harijans go? My host would accommodate the Harijans accompanying me but what about the rest? How could we put up with such a pitiable state of affairs? I told this to the audience assembled at the prayer meeting.

This created some stir. However, the result came only after two years. Sheth Shantilal bought a house and handed it on to me for lodging the poor. Such poor include myself and others I recommend. Of course they include poor Harijans and poor persons belonging to other religions who have nowhere to stay. There won't be any arrangement for their meals. Even poor people do eat at home, so they will have to do their own cooking or make whatever other arrangement is possible. Besides, the poor will have to keep the place given to them clean, deposit their trash in the municipal cans and observe all the rules of sanitation. Free supply to them of water and electricity will be arranged. No one will be allowed to stay for ever. Those who are not suffering from infectious diseases, are not invalid, and do not require looking after will be given free accommodation for a certain specified period. They will not be provided with bedding, etc. This is not to be a home for the crippled. Idlers will have no place here. There are many places in Panchgani and the neighbouring hills for the middle-class people who observe caste distinctions. However, there is none for those who have broken away from the circle of castes or are outside that circle. Here accommodation will be provided to the poor and industrious.

This activity can be pursued only if some local public worker is available. Shri Bachharaj Tribhovandas Doshi is such a worker. It was through his encouragement, as also of Gadhada's Sheth Mohanlal Motichand and of his won grandfather Jeshangbhai, that Sheth Shantilal bought the above-mentioned house.

Bhai Bachharaj stays in Panchgani most of the time. He has a flair and also love for this kind of work, so he will keep an eye on it. Sheth Shantilal has undertaken to bear the cost of repairs for ten

years. Five trustees have already been appointed. I am considering the names of the remaining two. Among the five trustees are the above-mentioned three gentlemen, Dr. Dinshaw and myself. At the moment the building is not fit for residence. It is in need of repairs and the water supply is incomplete. It may be ready for use only in October.

Thus a beginning has been made. Prime Minister Shri Kher along with two other Ministers Shri Tapase and Shri Patil, were present when this was announced after the prayer meeting in the hall of the Parsi Girls School on Sunday.[1] We should pray and wish that the work which has begun so well may really prove beneficial to the poor.

PANCHGANI, July 22, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 28-7-1946

389. LETTER TO C. W. B. RANKIN

CAMP: PANCHGANI,
July 22, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter to Rajkumari of 13-7-'46 was received on the 18th instant. Having slept over it for four nights, I feel it to be my duty to say that it seems His Excellency is wrong to delay the release of Shri Haridas Mitra. It is inconsistent with the declared policy of the Government.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

MAJOR C. W. B. RANKIN

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government 1944-47, p. 55

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 21-7-1946.
[2] Haridas Mitra was released soon after.

390. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

PANCHGANI,
July 22, 1946

BHAI RAJENDRA BABU,

I have your letter. A short preface is enclosed herewith. You may send it if you like it.

I hope you are fully recovered by now.

I shall be in Poona on the 28th and expect to reach Sevagram by the 6th or the 7th August.

What happened to the Urdu book?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

391. A TELEGRAM

July 23, 1946

MY BLESSINGS. NO GRIEF OVER INEVITABLE.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

392. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

PANCHGANI,
July 23, 1946

CHI. A. SALAAM,

Your letter to Rajkumari was received after she had left. She will be passing through Wardha. Most probably she has written to you. If your health permits, you may observe the Ramzan. I suppose you know that the Ramzan is truly observed by him who kills his anger and behaves rationally. Mere fasting serves no purpose at all. I shall be arriving there on the 7th or even earlier.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 523

393. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

PANCHGANI,
July 23, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. . . .[1] also came and saw me. It will be better if you issue a statement on Goa. You may mention in it that people belonging to various parties have been coming to you for advice and that it is risky for them[2] to have so many parties. They must all speak with one voice; and they should not build their hopes on people from outside Goa. Too many statements are likely to make for confusion. It will therefore be better if everything is sent to the Bombay Congress Committee and then an official statement is issued by it. As I see it, the present struggle in Goa is only for civil liberty and it must succeed. Although the whole of India sympathizes with it the hard-ships will have to be borne by the Indians in Goa. Goa's freedom is bound to follow India's freedom. There is little perhaps the people of Goa need do for that today.

I understand about Bhimarao. Do see him. His speeches are in bad taste. It would be good if you answered the two points he has made. I do not have figures about the elections and caste Hindus; I am getting them.

I do not agree with you at all about your health. You must do something about it. It is a pity you have no confidence at all in Dinshaw, but there are many others. In any case you must not allow your health to get worse.

I understand about Ahmedabad. There is no question of your going there when people themselves do not want it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine p. 312

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] Goans. The reference seems to be to A. G. Tendulkar, President, Goa Congress Committee; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 24-7-1946.

394. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

PANCHGANI,
July 23, 1946

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have your letter. Just now give Ramprasad what Jajuji has suggested. I hope to arrive there by the 7th. If necessary, I will think further about the matter. It is bad that Gordhandas[1] is having low fever. He should take rest.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10650

395. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

PANCHGANI,
July 23, 1946

BHAI MUNSHI,

Herewith please find Dr. Hiralal Sharma's letter. I have an impression that I sent you some papers earlier. I do not have the whole file with me here. The statements are such that you should not take long to come to a decision. You may, if you want, send for Sharma, in which case you would have to invite Lakshminarayan Gadodia, too.

I hope you succeeded in Delhi.

Blessings from
BAPU

Enclosed one letter.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Gordhandas Chokhawala, addressee's son-in-law

396. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

PANCHGANI,
July 23, 1946

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. I am writing to Munshiji. We shall see what happens. I do not have much hope.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 360

397. LETTER TO INDUMATI G. TENDULKAR

CHI. INDU,

Why do you want to go to America? For a person like you, the field of service [here] is vast. Spending a year or more in America would be a waste of time for you. You haven't yet moved through the length and breadth of India. I shall understand it if you go abroad after settling down in a particular job.Then you can go to Afghanistan or Central Asia to gain experience. Asia is always there. I am positive that America or Europe is not for you. You will learn about these countries from Tendulkar.

I had absolutely no idea where you were, nor where Tendulkar was. I was therefore glad when the visited me today. I hope you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

398. LETTER TO ABIDALI JAFARBHAI

PANCHGANI,
July 24, 1946

BHAI ABIDALI,

The papers report that you have undertaken a fast in protest against some mill and that too in the Congress House premises in

defiance of the manager.[1] If this is true it does not seem right to me. A sacred means like fasting should be used in a sacred way. I can give my judgment on your fast only after I get your letter. The same applies to the use of the Congress House. I shall be here till the 28th. Then to Poona. Maybe by the time you get this letter everything will have been settled. If the fast is still continuing I hope you are not feeling too weak. Have you allowed yourself to take . . .[2] during the fast?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI ABIDALI JAFARBHAI

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

399. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

PANCHGANI,

July 24, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I received your letter. Immediately I sat down to write to Abidali.[3] Nobody can forcibly lodge in the Congress House. And how can they resort to fasting?

I understand about Jawaharlal. For the moment everything is going to come off without a hitch. About the future we shall see.

Pyarelal tells me that there is a newspaper report about the meeting of the Working Committee in Wardha on the 8th.

You must have heard about Munshi's visit to Delhi. The situation is becoming more and more delicate.

There are other strikes on top of the postal strike. All this looks pretty significant. It is necessary that you and others should think about it very seriously. The Congress position may seem strong on the surface but it appears to have lost its hold on the people. Or it may be that the Congress itself is involved in these troubles if only from a

[1] The addressee, a trade union leader of Bombay, had undertaken the fast from July 22 in protest against the dismissal of S. A. Bhimji, an assistant engineer of the India United Mills and a member of the Union. On Gandhiji's advice he gave up the fast on July 30.

[2] Omission as in the source

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

distance. This must be clarified; otherwise the battle which we are on the point of winning will be lost.

I hope you are well. These days it has been raining here all the twenty-four hours.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 313-5

400. NOTE TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

July 24, 1946

I have gone through everything carefully. You seem to forget that I had offered to give you work only after you had decided what you wished to do regarding Kanchan. This time you have come to some decision, but it is incomplete. I had also told you what you should do in the meanwhile and I had explained, too, that if you finally decided to stay with me you would be welcome. But you can live and work with me only if you abide by my advice. Personally, I would welcome your staying with me; but if you experience any difficulty in doing so, is it not for you yourself to overcome it? You may ask for my help in that. Your work for each hour should be defined. Don't you observe complete silence? Never enter into an argument with anybody. If other people speak untruth or behave indecorously, how are you concerned with that? We may feel ashamed if we ourselves do so. It is true I have collected a mixed crowd round me. But is that a new story? This answers all your questions. How-ever, if any point is left out you may ask me. Do not reduce your exercise. Physical labour is necessary. Improve your proficiency in the languages. As soon as you have come to some decision I shall immediately be able to make arrangements for your work. In short you should know that I have given my word to Kanchan that as long as she is firm in her desire to live separately with you I will support her in her desire.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10238. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

401. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

PANCHGANI,
July 24, 1946

Doctor A. G. Tendulkar, President, Goa Congress Committee is the last one from Goa who has come to me with the latest news from the place.[1] He tells me that there are several parties there, working not necessarily for its inhabitants but for power. Yet at bottom the fight is good. He has produced voluminous papers in support of the statement that confusion reigns supreme in the minds of Goans, correctly described as Gomantakas. This confusion is bad in that the inhabitants of these Portuguese possessions are novices in the art of real politics. Its separate existence, it is clear, can only depend on the goodwill of the mighty British Government and the impotence of its Indian residents. It is therefore most essential for the success of the movement that it should be conducted by the Gomantakas on the clearest possible issue, i. e., civil liberty. The larger question of swaraj should await its attainment by the whole of India unless of course the Portuguese Government wisely come to terms with the inhabitants of the settlement through friendly negotiations. It cannot be attained by any direct action of the citizens, whether violent or non-violent. In non-violent action success is assured where every inhabitant is a hero ready to lay down his or her life. It is less to be thought of in Goa than in the more numerous and better seasoned and awakened British India. Therefore the clearest possible issue of civil liberty must be kept steadily in view.

The second condition of success is that the fight must be through non-violent and therefore also entirely open means.

Thirdly, there should be no parties struggling for power and position. Where the goal and the means are common, different parties have no meaning.

On reading the literature I find two persons called loyalists who have already made lavish declarations saying that nothing is wrong in

[1] Tendulkar saw Gandhiji in the afternoon of July 23; *vide* "Letter to Indumati Tendulkar", 23-7-1946.

Goa and that a false agitation is being carried on by some mischievous persons. Let not the circle of these loyalists grow larger. The best way to avoid this growth is for all parties to become one.

PANCHGANI, July 24, 1946
Harijan, 28-7-1946

402. QUESTION BOX[1]

Q. I have been repeating Ramanama according to your advice and I am getting better. I must add that the medical treatment for tuberculosis is also being followed. You have said that eating little and eating the right food enables a man to be healthy and promotes longevity. I have observed the rule about eating sparely for the last twenty-five years. Why should I have fallen a prey to tuberculosis? Would you say I should attribute this ill-luck to some evil deed in this life or in the previous one?

You say a man can live up to 125 years. Then why should God have carried away Mahadevbhai, who was so useful to you? He observed the rule of eating moderately and having a balanced diet and he served you as his God. Why did he fall a prey to high blood-pressure? Why did Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, who is looked upon as an incarnation of God, fall a prey to cancer, as deadly a disease as tuberculosis? Why was he not able to fight it successfully?

A. I have been expounding the rules of maintaining health as I know them. Spare and balanced diet may not be the same for everybody. It can be best worked out by the individual for himself through proper reading and careful thought. But that does not mean that the individual cannot make mistakes or that his or her knowledge is complete. That is why life has been called a laboratory. One should learn from the experience of others and go forward and if he is not successful, he should not blame others or even himself. One should not be too ready to find fault with the rule, but if after careful thought, one comes to the conclusion that a certain rule is wrong, he should be able to tell the right one and declare it.

So far as your own case is concerned, there may be several causes leading to your illness. Who can say whether you have made the right use of the five 'powers' in your own case? So long as I believe in the laws of nature as I know them, I have to say that you must have erred somewhere. As for Mahadev and Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, to feel that even they must have erred somehow is fitter

[1] The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 4-8-1946

than to say that the laws are wrong. These rules are not my creation. They are the laws of nature according to experienced men. I believe them and try to live up to my belief. Man is after all an imperfect creature. How can he know the whole truth? That the doctors do not believe in them or, if they do, they do so in a different sense, does not impress me. What I have said does not and should not in any way detract from the greatness of the individuals mentioned.

Q. In *Harijanbandhu* of 14-4-'46, you have said, "God is the Law and the Law-giver." I do not understand it. Laws are made by man and they keep on changing with time. For instance, Draupadi had five husbands and yet she was considered a *sati*. A woman who does that today will be considered immoral.

A. Law here means the law of God. Man interprets that law according to his understanding. We can therefore say that with the gaining of more knowledge he finds the previous assumption wrong.[1] For instance, the rotation of the earth is a law of nature. We are convinced of its correctness today. Yet before Galileo, astronomers believed differently. As for Draupadi, the *Mahabharata* in my opinion is an allegory and not history. Draupadi means the soul wedded to the five senses.

Q. God cannot be realized through reason. He has to be understood through faith. Do you believe in rebirth or is it that the Hindu seers[2] propounded it in order to enable people to appreciate the significance of good and evil deeds and derive some satisfaction from the belief?

A. God cannot be realized through the intellect. Intellect can lead one to a certain extent and no further. It is a matter of faith and experience derived from that faith. One might rely on the experience of one's betters[3] or else be satisfied with nothing less than personal experience. Full faith does not feel the want of experience. The distinction between good and evil is not meant to act as a consolation. Nor is faith in God meant for that purpose. The seers have held that there is good and evil and there is rebirth. I think this theory of reincarnation is capable of being understood by the intellect.

Q. The Congress has been fighting the British Government non-violently. When Congressmen come into power, they shoot their own brothers who have gone astray and are causing trouble. Is it right? If the Congressmen in power have not the courage to lay down their lives while attempting to put down the riots non-violently,

[1] This is taken from the Gujarati version.
[2] The Gujarati original has "Hindu dharma".
[3] The Gujarati original has "predecessors".

does it not show with the exception of a few individuals like Ravishankar Maharaj and Sane Guruji, the non-violence of Congressmen in general is the non-violence of the weak?

A. The question of violence and non-violence raised by you is an old question. I have said a lot in this connection. If like many others, non-violence does not appeal to your heart, you should discard it. I shall not find fault with you for that, and, if others do, you should not care. The principle is this: "That which has been propounded by the *rishis*, practised by the sages and appeals to one's heart should be followed and put into practice." The question might arise as to what one is to do when the thing that appeals to one's heart is contrary to what has been propounded by the *rishis* and practised by the sages. The answer is, that in such a case the individual can follow his bent at his own risk. Many reforms and new discoveries have been made in this way. Our Shankaracharyas have supported the institution of untouchability but both our head and heart consider it a blot on Hinduism. We do not care if others consider our belief to be wrong.

Q. From 1920 you have described the British Government's officials as the arms of Ravana. Congress Governments use these arms. Again, the laws made by the British Government say that it is an offence to beat a prisoner arrested on suspicion or for an alleged offence, in order to extort a confession or to frighten him. During the 1942 revolution, many like me were severely beaten after arrest. Should not the Congress Governments hold an inquiry into the police excesses thus committed?

A. I have severely criticized the British Government and do so still. But that does not mean that all police officials under the British Government must necessarily be devil's disciples even when they come under Congress Governments. No one has questioned Congress Govern-ment's right to inquire into the police excesses in 1942 or even before. But such rights are not always exercised. We all know that there are times when wisdom lies in not exercising certain rights. The Congress has in general followed the policy of not inquiring into the kind of excesses mentioned by you. You should know that often such offences are difficult to prove. I believe the right of inquiry has been exercised in cases where the offence was beyond doubt. But my advice is let us not sit in judgment on the Congress ministries. The belief that Congress has acted wisely in accepting power should suffice.

PANCHGANI, July 25, 1946

Harijan, 4-8-1946

403. HEAL THYSELF[1]

A correspondent has written to me about the butchery that is going on in Ahmedabad. I give below the relevant portions from his letter.

> I wish to write to you about the means to be employed for putting down riots. About two months ago you wrote an article on Ahimsak Seva Dal—non-violent volunteer corps.[2] But looking to the situation in the country, the suggestion will not do. Just as you have taught us how to fight against the British Government non-violently, you should go to some place of riot and show us the way of quelling riots in a non-violent manner by personal example. Supposing you were in Ahmedabad today and went out to quell the riots, any number of volunteers will join you. Two of our Congress workers, Shri Vasantrao and Shri Rajabali, went out in such a quest and fell a prey to the *goonda's* knife. They laid down their lives in the pursuit of an ideal and they deserve all praise. But no one else had the courage to follow in their footsteps. They have not the same self-confidence. If they had it, there would be no riots and, even if riots broke out, they would never assume the proportions and the form that the present day riots do. But the fact remains that such a state is merely an imaginary thing today.
>
> Your guidance and example can inspire many like me with courage and self-confidence. Once you have shown the way, the local workers will be able to follow it whenever occasion demands it. I feel that unless you set an example in action, your writings and utterances will not be of any use to the ordinary people, and even Congressmen, in organizing non-violent protection of society.

I like the suggestion mentioned above. People followed my advice and took to non-violent resistance against the British Government because they wanted to offer some sort of resistance. But their non-violence, I must confess, was born of their helplessness. Therefore, it was the weapon of the weak. That is why today we worship Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and his Azad Hind Fauj. We forget that Netaji himself had told his soldiers that on going to India, they must follow the way of non-violence. This I have from the leaders of the I. N. A. But we have lost all sense of discrimination. To restore it, the I. N. A. men will have to live up to the ideal placed before them by Netaji. The work of those who believe in non-violence is very difficult

[1] The Hindi original of this was also published in *Harijan Sevak*, 4-8-1946.
[2] *Vide* "Non-Violent Volunteer Corps", 26-4-1946.

in this atmosphere which is full of violence. But the path of true non-violence requires much more courage than violence. We have not been able to give proof of such non-violence. We might look upon the action of Shri Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, Shri Vasantrao and Shri Rajabali as examples of the non-violence of the brave. But when communal feelings run high, we are unable to demonstrate any effect of the sacrifices mentioned above. For that, many like Shri Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi will have to lay down their lives. The fact that no one else in Ahmedabad has followed the example set by Shri Vasantrao and Shri Rajabali shows that we have not yet developed the spirit of sacrifice to the extent of laying down our lives in non-violent action. The correspondent has rightly said that under these circumstances, I should act myself whether others join me or not. It will be disgraceful on my part to sit at home and tell others to go and lay down their lives. Such a thing cannot be an indication of non-violence. I have never had the chance to test my non-violence in the face of communal riots. It might be argued that it was my cowardice which prevented me from seeking such a chance. Be that as it may, God willing, the chance will still come to me, and by throwing me in the fire, He will purify me and make the path of non-violence clear. No one should take it to mean that sacrifice of my life will arrest all violence. Several lives like mine will have to be given if the terrible violence that has spread all over, is to stop and non-violence is to reign supreme in its place. The poet[1] has sung:

''हरिनो मारग छे शूरानो नहीं काथरनुं काम जोने।''

"The path of Truth is for the brave, never for the coward." The path of Truth is the path of non-violence.

PANCHGANI, July 25, 1946
Harijan, 4-8-1946

[1] The Hindi original has 'Pritam'.

404. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

PANCHGANI,
July 25, 1946

CHI. MIRA,[1]

I got on 22nd yours of 10th. Such are the vagaries of the post while the strike lasts.

Your letter to Dr. Katju[2] is exhaustive. The scheme is ambitious. I only hope that you will not have to give in. Let it be as unpretentious as you like but it should be failure proof.

Your illness worries me. You should find out the cause of these frequent breakdowns and deal with it.

Your quotation from *Talisman*[3] is very apt.

It has been pouring night and day. Yet the weather in Panchgani is harmless if you take care.

I hope to go back to Poona on 28th. Shall stay till 31st there, then go to Uruli for three days and then to Sevagram, reaching on 6th or 7th August at the latest. R. Kumari has gone to Calcutta for three days.

BAPU

MIRABEHN
DEHRA DUN

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

405. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

PANCHGANI,
July 25, 1946

BHAI MUNSHI,

I found this blank space on your letter and so I am using it to reply to you.

It was as well you went to Delhi. If you wish, you may come here. Most probably I shall leave for Poona on the 28th. The last date is 29th.

[1] The superscription is in Devanagari script.
[2] Dr. Kailash Nath Katju
[3] This was published in *Harijan*, 11-8-1946, under the heading "True Non-violence".

There are, of course, many difficulties in the way. We shall come into our own only when we have overcome them all.

I trust you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 7698. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

406. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

PANCHGANI,
July 25, 1946

CHI. ANAND AND GANGI,

I have the letters of you both. About your falling down and breaking the toe, what shall I call it, the grace of God or your carelessness! If you had come here we would surely have found some time to talk. What will happen in Poona I do not know. I shall reach there on the 28th or 29th.

Why should you cry when you have Gangi? Why should you not take it that in Gangi Vidya has returned to you? Now it is not a question of forgetting Vidya. Gangi is Vidya's image. She does as much work of service as Vidya did. She has married you at the instance of Vidya. What more do you want?

Surrender all your worries to God and become carefree.

Blessings to you both from

Bapu

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

407. LETTER TO GIRIRAJ KISHORE

PANCHGANI,
July 25, 1946

CHI. GIRIRAJ,

I have your letter. I shall write something about it in *Harijan Sevak*. Here I shall only say that your information is absolutely correct.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 8774

408. LETTER TO DEVICHAND SHAH

PANCHGANI,
July 25, 1946

BHAI DEVICHAND,

I got your letter. You are right in saying that what I have written about the monkeys could prove dangerous. It is as well that people should know me as I am. True, a way should be found to deal with the nuisance of monkeys without killing them, but it would hinder all progress if we did nothing while we went on thinking.

SHRI DEVICHAND SHAH

KUSHAL ASHRAM

SARDARPURA

From a copy of the Hindi. Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

409. ENTRY IN DIARY OF MUNNALAL SHAH

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1946

		Comments
4-5	Five minutes for toilet . . .[1] Prayer 50 minutes. Lack complete concentration.	Liked the Bhajan
5-6	The light did not come on. Enjoy-ed reading with the kerosene lamp. Read Urdu.	. . . .[2]
6-7	Walk and exercise. During the walk, reflected over life.	Nanabhai was with me for part of the time.
7-8	Wrote a letter to Kanchan. Explained my folly and admitted that she was blameless.	If only such noble thoughts conti-nue to occur to my mind.
8-9	Heated water. Did not strain it even though there was some dirt in it.	Was not this a sign of lethargy?
9-10	Shaved. It took seven minutes. After that read newspapers.	There were only Gujarati papers.

[1] A word is illegible here.
[2] A sentence here is illegible.

10-11 Did spinning. The yarn broke many times. The slivers were not good.

Concentration also was poor.

11-12 . . .

This is only a specimen. Rule the pages in the note-book in this manner and try to write a diary thus.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10243. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

410. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

Newspapers have published a telegram saying that you have arrived there. That is good. I received Sita's letter only yesterday. Sita and Sumi have both settled down in Benares. According to the present schedule, Sushila will be leaving in a few days. But when she came to Poona she told me that she would await your letter. These days again there is no letter from her. I shall go to Poona from here on the 28th. I shall stay there for two days and then in Uruli for three days. From there I shall go to Sevagram—that is my programme at present.

Things are going on as usual here. You get the news from here through cables so I do not write anything about it. Also I do not have the time. I shall be happy if you keep on writing to me regularly. You will know more from Medh's[1] letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5009

411. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1946

CHI. SITA,

I had occasion to see your handwriting after many days. I was glad all the same for the opportunity. There is a slight deterioration in

[1] Surendra Medh

the handwriting. You should improve it gradually. Your language also is not grammatically correct. You have eaten up the vowel marks. Don't do it hereafter. If you do not revise what you have written it cannot be considered to have been written. People who formed such a habit have been saved from a great many difficulties. If your pen cannot express what you think, will not the reader misconstrue the meaning? There are so many instances of this having happened.

The news that Manilal had reached Durban appeared in the newspapers. It was two or three days ago. You need not worry about anyone. Be engrossed in your study. Master your mother tongue by studying it at home. You will certainly master Hindustani. Learn thoroughly carding, sliver-making, spinning and doubling the yarn. And spin with the same thoroughness. Do not cultivate the mind at the expense of the body. One man make real progress only if all the three things develop simultaneously.

Both sisters should read both my letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4985

412. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1946

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. I understand your unhappiness. I am no less unhappy that I shall not be able to come to Saswad during this visit.[1] But you and I should understand Dr. Gilder's point of view. He is a straightforward man. He says what he feels to be the truth and acts accordingly. I have no fear of the plague. But as a public man I cannot act as I like in regard to public affairs. Both of us are under the same discipline. If I disregard his order or wishes, his authority over others also would be weakened. How can I make myself responsible for that? Deo has understood this point. You also should understand it. If I get leave to go to Saswad even later, before I leave Poona, I will come. I am reaching Poona on the 28th. I shall have a

[1] Gandhiji was to go to Saswad on July 13, but as there had been cases of plague in a neighbouring village, Dr. Gilder advised him not to go.

talk with Dr. Gilder and if it is in any way possible I will come. Otherwise you can show this letter to the other people. That also will be a good lesson.

Sucheta did not leave[1] on my suggestion. You may think that she has acted wisely, but I do not believe so. But does it matter in any way what you and I believe? She must do what she herself thinks right. I shall have to look for another woman worker now. I have had a talk with Sushila, but she will discuss the matter with you. She might consult her other friends, too, as also some sympathizers, and decide after that. I hope you also will help.

Come along to Wardha with me. I shall be glad.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10448. Also C. W. 6887. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

413. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1946

CHI. NARAHARI,

I got Vanu's postcard yesterday. I gather from it that you are held up there because of your dental trouble and because you want to have your rheumatism treated. I have written a letter to you at the Sevagram address. It will reach you after a bit of wandering. I shall reach Poona on the 28th. I take it that Vanu will meet me there on the 30th. I have forwarded to Sevagram a letter in original, so that she may not see it. It will be very good if you can improve your health fully after having all your teeth extracted.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI NARAHARI PARIKH
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9144

[1] Sucheta Kripalani had resigned from the Kasturba Memorial Trust to contest election to the U. P. Assembly.

414. LETTER TO H. P. MODY

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1946

BHAI HORMUSJI MODY,

I got your prompt reply. I thank you for the same and for offering higher interest.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

HORMUSJI MODY
BOMBAY HOUSE,
FORT, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

415. LETTER TO MRIDE

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1946

CHI. MRIDE,

I got your long letter of 3-7-1946 on the 25th. The wire has not come. You have given a lot of news in your letter. In the context of a movement of such magnitude it is futile if not difficult to guess who are noble and who are not. Water from many sources flows into the Ganga and yet the Ganga is pure as ever. A major movement is like the stream of the Ganga and is always pure. Under the circumstances our dharma is to stay as pure as the Gangotri. Then all will be well. If she did not remain pure for all time the Ganga would cease to be what she is and turn into a filthy river. We see such things happening in our midst.

Manilal will tell you the rest. The papers here carry a Reuter's cable saying that he has reached there. I am certainly very glad that he went there. Without doubt that was his dharma.

I had told Sorab that no help whatever should be sent from here. That is my advice now. I am arranging for a lot of other help and you will continue to receive it. It should be a rule with all struggles to depend solely on local support. You will remember that for my part I

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Shyamlal", 27-7-1946.

had tried to avoid help coming from India. But it did come. Some came from England, too, which I put to good use. One might say that in those times it was even necessary to some extent. My experience, however, is that whenever aid arrived from outside we grew lax. Now I see no need to send even a cowrie from here.

AIR-MAIL

SOUTH AFRICA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

416. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1946

BAPA,

Thinking that you would be in Delhi I sent you an airmail letter there yesterday. I got your letter of 14-7-1946 last night. (A copy of the letter is enclosed.)[1]

If you want to save your eyes you must keep them closed for the major part of the day. You should dictate. You do have someone to take you around. You can preserve your eyesight to some extent if you deliberately go about like a blind person. Resting the eyes may be the greatest exercise for them. I say this from personal experience. I have not yet achieved complete success in that, I still do some writing. My hands can do the work of writing and since my eyes can read I do a little reading too. Still, for most of the time, I work with my eyes closed. I expect you have now started travelling second class, and I think we can afford second class fare for whoever accompanies you. You may do your touring among the Adivasis as you please subject to this condition. I have no worry on account of the [Kasturba] Trust and the Harijan [Sevak Sangh] since you will continue to look after them.

I am certainly glad that Janakibehn has joined the [Servants of India] Society. It will please me if you dictate your letters to me rather than write them yourself. Make it an excuse to try the experiment of working with eyes closed. If you find any difficulty in keeping your eyes closed, since you are not used to this, you should bandage your

[1] Not available

eyes after the manner of Gandhari so that they will remain closed without any effort on your part.[1]

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

417. LETTER TO V. K. KRISHNASARMA

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1946

BHAI KRISHNASARMA,

I got your letter. Though in your view it contains deep knowledge, I can find none in it. I have read the book by Thomas a Kempis[2]. It is beautiful.

Blessings from
BAPU

V. K. KRISHNASARMA
7009 KALASEGUDA
SECUNDERABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

418. CLOTH SHORTAGE

Shri Manu Subedar who takes interest in khadi and other village industries, sent me the following note some time ago. But I delayed publication in order that I might make some more effective use of it than giving it in *Harijan*. I could not think of any. Hence this publication for the use, not only of all provincial governments but also of private individuals or organizations, in however limited a field it may be.

Here is Shri Subedar's scheme:

> One bale of cotton should be given to every village collectively. The people of the village could spin this yarn. The yarn will be used either for doubling or as weft and cloth could be made.
>
> One bale would yield approximately 2,400 yards of cloth (or 1,800 according to count).
>
> If charkhas and *taklis* are wanted, they should be supplied by the State. (Manufacture should be organized in jails.)

[1] The rest of the letter has been omitted in the source.

[2] German ecclesiastic and writer. The book referred to was presumably *Imitation of Christ*.

The cloth, when ready, should be made available to the people of the villages on a per head ration basis.

If and when it is important to collect grain in those villages where there is supposed to be a grain surplus in the hands of the farmers, the cloth should be substituted only for grain. In other cases, the people of the village should collect enough to pay for the value of the bale of cotton. In other words, for the price of cotton (which is in the first instance advanced by Government) they would get cloth.

While cloth shortage would be eased, cotton surplus would also be taken away and it will help the grower of cotton.

As the village *Panch* would have to take over the cotton bale and deal with the whole thing, the beginning would be made of:

(i) village industry,

(ii) joint and collective effort,

(iii) participation and labour contribution by the small and the big ones, and

(iv) elimination of the middleman.

If the experiment were made in the first instance with twenty thousand villages of the Bombay Presidency or even two thousand of them, the results would be seen in the course of the next six weeks.

Government will have to lock up funds for the cotton at the rate of Rs. 225 per bale. Much of this money will return either in the form of grain or in the form of cash. But it will have incidentally marked the beginning of something which the villages can do for themselves.

Assistance may have to be given where looms are not available, or where the yarn produced is not capable of being used both as warp and as weft. But these are details in organization which could be attended to by someone at the headquarters of every district.

On return of price of bale by a village, a fresh bale should be sent to them by Government as an advance.

I may add that this is a variation upon the one suggested by me. In my opinion, the original is probably better, but I attach greater value to Shri Subedar's note because he has worked out the figures, suggested a beginning with a bale of cotton and more specially because he as an economist has thought out his scheme independently of me. It will be easy enough to find flaws in every human scheme. Our business is to remove flaws if we know how or to make a beginning in spite of the flaws which we know but cannot mend. No reform is possible if we wait for perfection.

PANCHGANI, July 27, 1946
Harijan, 4-8-1946

419. NINTH AUGUST

Ninth August, like 6th April, 13th April and 26th January, is a red letter day in the battle of India's freedom. They are days for universal hartal in terms of satyagraha, i.e., truth and non-violence. But today, considered in terms of satyagraha, hartals are generally taboo and more specially so on the coming 9th of August. They would be fitting if hartals are designed to signalize violence.

Two powerful voices have spoken: one of the President of the Congress, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and the other of the President of the Socialist Group, Shri Jaiprakash Narayan. It is delicate for me to give my opinion when these two ardent lovers of their country speak in opposition. But as a satyagrahi I must overcome the delicacy.

Jaiprakash Narayan is a Congressman. It is an open secret that he was offered a seat on the Working Committee by Panditji, naturally under the belief that, whatever views he entertained, he was too honest to be disloyal to the Congress in action. If, now, in spite of knowing the Congress President's views to the contrary, he adheres to his own opinion given to the contrary, it would appear to be an act of disloyalty to the Congress. If, therefore, he has not withdrawn from the false position, I hope, recognizing the aptness of my remarks, he will see the wisdom of retracing his steps.

The Working Committee, rightly or wrongly, has taken a step. It has been endorsed by the A. I. C. C.[1] It is up to every Congressman to support the Congress going to the Constituent Assembly, by creating the atmosphere suitable for work in that Assembly. This I say even to those who distrust good faith in everything the British do. They may warn the Congress of the dangers they sense. This they were allowed by the President to have the fullest latitude to do at the recent A. I. C. C. meeting. Anything in excess of that opposition is surely harmful for the country. I would consider as such the hartal on the 9th August.

The Congress cannot have the cake and eat it too. It must be left free, it must be helped, to develop freedom through the Constituent Assembly. It will not be a waste of effort to honestly work the Assembly for the purpose. The Congress must not kill the hen before

[1] The resolution signifying acceptance by the Congress of the proposal regarding the Constituent Assembly contained in the Cabinet Mission's announce-ment of May 16, was passed by the Working Committee on June 26 and ratified by the A. I. C. C. on July 6.

it has laid.

Then mark the atmosphere in the country. There is senseless disorder as in Ahmedabad and elsewhere. There is a parody of satyagraha in the show staged by Dr. Ambedkar. In satyagraha the cause has to be just and clear as well as the means. The cause is certainly vague, even if the means are non-violent. I doubt the wisdom of the sympathetic paralysis of all business in Bombay and elsewhere, assuming the postal strike to be good on merits. Many would seem to have left off all thinking. They seem to take up any nostrum without caring to examine its merits. To call for hartal in this atmosphere is to invite disorder. No disorder is conducive to the growth of independence. Considered from every point of view, I hope that 9th August next will see no hartal in India, but a peaceful and dignified, orderly celebration of the day as advised by the President of the Congress.

PANCHGANI, July 27, 1946

[PS.] Before the despatch of this to *Harijan* I saw to my joy the withdrawal by Shri Jaiprakash of his proposal for hartal on 9th August. I am glad that the spirit of discipline has dictated this withdrawal. I might have cancelled the foregoing but for the important incidental observations in it.

Harijan, 4-8-1946

420. LETTER TO WANDA DYNOWSKA

PANCHGANI,
July 27, 1946

DEAR UMA,

I have the History of the Poles and your two letters. R. Kumari is in Calcutta. She will be back at the end of the month. I did write.[1] There is an acknowledgment and a promise of inquiry and of writing again. As soon as I have a definite answer I shall let you know. Keep cool and patient.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1211. Also C. W. 5102. Courtesy: Wanda Dynowska

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 9-7-1946.

421. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

PANCHGANI,
July 27, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. Sudhir[1] cannot refuse to go now. If Jinnah Saheb's man is also going, let him go. I think in the letter I wrote him I must have said that the Cabinet would welcome it if he also sent someone. Be it as it may, if there is time it would be as well if Sudhir meets you and me before he leaves. It is certainly necessary to think carefully over all that is happening, but it is no use worrying about it. I have not yet received Sudhir's letter; if I had, I would have sent it on to you at once.

I have already written a letter to Abidali which he must have received the night before last or yesterday morning.[2] I feel that if Abidali does not leave the Congress House, Congress officials should start satyagraha against him. That is, they can give him notice and then vacate and lock up all the rooms in the Congress House until he leaves. If such satyagraha is not possible, they should give him notice of trespass and ask him to leave.

I will leave Poona on the 5th or the 6th. I wish to go to Wardha. I have purposely decided to entrain at Kalyan. In that case there is no need to go to Bombay. I do not like living under police guard and putting my host and all others to inconvenience. I had told the overseer[3] all this. I had told Lilavati, too, and most probably Patil also. Nor would I like staying anywhere else. You agree with all this, don't you?

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. MANI,

You have stopped writing to me.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

BAPU NA PATRO—2: SARDAR VALLABHBHAINE PP. 316-7

[1] Sudhir Ghosh, Gandhiji's emissary for carrying on negotiations with the British Labour Government for transfer of power during 1945-47

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 24-7-1946.

[3] Gandhiji has used the English word here.

422. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

July 27, 1946

I believe that Kanchan will not be happy till you set up a house with her. It will be different if she herself gives it up later. Where you should stay is for you to decide. If you two willingly observe physical *brahmacharya*, i. e., do not touch each other for the satisfaction of physical craving and sleep in separate beds, I will have no objection to your staying in the Ashram. Do not Shakaribehn, Kashi and Gomati live thus? If Kanchan wants only that, the matter is quite simple. I unhesitatingly agree to your working in the office, irrespective of whether or not Kanu is there. I have some work also for you. Both of you will have to be ceaselessly vigilant and strive to banish thoughts of passion from your minds; otherwise you will both burn up. You will be listless all the time, be unhappy and make others unhappy. If you are going to burn with passion inside, you may as well live in a separate house away from the Ashram, gratify the desire for sex pleasure and, after you have tired of it, see what you can do. Show this letter to Kanchan. You may show it to others also. Even if you live away from the Ashram and pursue sexual enjoyment, I will still give you work.

I must not be pressed to decide about it just now. I must watch and you also will have to consider how you can find time for work, and how much, from your pleasure-seeking. You will feel as if you had been but recently married. I know the plight of newly-married couples.

I have never thought even in my dreams that you would knowingly tell a lie. But when you get excited while speaking, you behave like a man out of his senses and your face and words seem like those of a mad man. In a sense all of us are mad. But at such moments you seem to be the maddest of us all. You will not be cured of this madness unless you decide to speak as little as possible. I think the cause of this madness in you is self-suppression. For all I know it may be something else.

I understand about Uruli. I will know more if Kanchan explains it to me.

Show me the exercise book in which you write Urdu. You should not get up at night at two o'clock and write. It would be better to write a little whenever you get the time during the day.

It will save space if for writing the time you use the space to the left of the red line. The exercise-book should be kept as tidy as possible.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10244. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

423. LETTER TO B. G. KHER

PANCHGANI,
July 27, 1946

BHAI BALASAHEB,

I am of the view that the Governor's invitation should be accepted. At present we are not offering non-cooperation. I expect to reach Poona by tomorrow evening.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI BALASAHEB KHER
POONA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

424. LETTER TO DR. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

PANCHGANI,
July 27, 1946

BHAI PATTABHI,

Durgabai[1] cannot remain an agent of the Kasturba Committee if she gets into the Constituent Assembly. Can you suggest the names of a few deserving women out of whom we can choose someone in her place? Ashabehn[2] suggests the name of Bharatibehn Ranga[3]. What do you say to it?

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. PATTABHI
ANDHRA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Wife of C. D. Deshmukh
[2] Ashadevi Aryanayakum
[3] Wife of Prof. N. G. Ranga

425. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

PANCHGANI,
July 27, 1946

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I have your letter. In no case can we have [as agent] anyone who gets into the Constituent Assembly. Any kind of compromise here would, in my view, be harmful to the Kasturba work. We truly abide by a rule we have ourselves made only when we stick to it even in times of difficulty. Personally, I like the name of Smt. Bharati Ranga but I have written to Dr. Pattabhi and asked him to send me other names also if he has any in mind.

A letter has arrived on behalf of Sir Homi Modi to the effect that interest will be paid at the rate of three per cent.[1] I shall give the letter to you when I reach there. I do not consider it safe these days to send things by post. A report of the work of the Kasturba Trust has also come.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SHYAMLAL
WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

426. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

PANCHGANI,
[*July 27, 1946*][2]

In his farewell message at the prayer meeting yesterday Mahatma Gandhi told the people that God willing he would again visit Panchgani next year. But the uncleanliness of Panchgani had hurt him. The people should not sit tight on the plea that there was dearth of sweepers in Panchgani, added Gandhiji.

The paucity of water here was another factor which Gandhiji brought to their notice. He hoped to see proper arrangements made about water when he came next year.

Gandhiji said that he was pained to see the wide gap that prevailed in Panchgani between the rich and the poor. The poor could not afford expensive stay in

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H. P. Mody", 26-7-1946.
[2] The news item carries the date July 28.

the sanatorium and, therefore, he had opened a free sanatorium for poor patients. He wanted the public to co-operate and make his scheme of serving the poor a success.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-7-1946

427. ANSWER TO QUESTION[1]

PANCHGANI,
[On or before *July 28, 1946*][2]

Q. The English people have for years oppressed the coloured people in India, Ceylon and South Africa. Would their conduct not make an impression on their civilization? Can any one nation attain progress or preserve its existence through oppression?

A. An oppressor must perish in the end. But I wonder if that term can be strictly applied to the English people. Surely, they are not the worst. I have simply stated the divine law with regard to the oppressor. It is attested to by all religions. Irrespective of whether the conquest and exploitation by the English of other nations can be called oppression in the technical sense, their power cannot last for ever. Oppression is sin but submission to oppression is no less sin. History teaches us that neither the power of the oppressor nor the suffering of the oppressed can last for ever. Both must come to an end.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-7-1946

428. QUESTION BOX

Q. Whilst the food policy was in the hands of the Advisors to the Provinicial Governors, there was no effective method of checking them. Things under the responsible Provincial Governments are different. Should it not be a matter of conscience with Congress ministers to get their rations from common rationing depots and take not a grain more from any other source? This will immediately have a far-reaching effect. Today all controlling centres for food grains or cloth have public dens for thieving and corruption. Equipped with the moral force that the ministers will gain by acting as suggested, they will be able to fight out the evil with success.

A. This question is a consolidation of many letters of com-

[1] The question was asked by the U. P. I. representative attached to Gandhiji's camp.

[2] The report carrying the item is dated July 28.

plaints. I wholly agree with the suggestion made in the question. I fancy that the suggested practice is already being observed, not only by the ministers but all other Government servants. I do not know of any other source save the black market for getting supplies of foodstuffs. Of course, no exhortation can take the place of persons in authority setting a good example. If they took their rations from the same stock as is given to the public, the keepers of stores will soon find that it would not pay to dole out rotten stuff to the public. The practice of the ministers and other high-placed men in England taking their things in common with the public is, I am told, the usual thing, as it should be.

PANCHGANI, July 28, 1946
Harijan, 4-8-1946

429. KHADI WORKERS[1]

I have two questions about Khadi workers before me. One of these is in connection with village workers. It is their duty to spend their time mainly in spinning and making others spin. The new conception of khadi work includes all the processes from the cultivation of cotton to the preparation of cloth. A worker who does all these intelligently and can mend the spinning-wheel or the spindle, will never have any difficulty in earning his livelihood and teaching others to do so. Along with it, and without letting khadi work suffer, the worker might treat simple ailments and attend to the sanitation of the village. Education has to be imparted through a craft. Therefore I do not consider it apart from khadi work. Those who come for education must wear khadi and get education through khadi.

The second question is how long should a khadi worker work as a paid worker. In my view he should be self-supporting from the beginning. If that is not possible, he should fix a time limit for himself. Five years is the utmost limit in my opinion. A worker who is to become self-supporting at the end of five years, should reduce his allowance progressively from year to year. He cannot expect to become self-supporting all of a sudden at the end of five years. It is an art which requires careful thought and management. He who really teaches others should certainly become self-supporting himself.

PANCHGANI, July 28, 1946
Harijan, 4-8-1946

[1]The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 4-8-1946.

430. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 28, 1946

CHI. NARANDAS,

Read the accompanying letter from Kumi. See if you can give her some work in Rashtriya Shala. She is certainly hard-working and intelligent. Give her the enclosed letter[1]. Have a frank talk with her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C. W. 8634. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

431. LETTER TO VIJAYA M. PANCHOLI

PANCHGANI,
July 28, 1946

CHI. VIJAYA,

Nanabhai gave me your letter. I was very pleased to read it. Nanabhai gave me all the news from there. Your good lies in resisting the temptation of running to me. Only when we realize that physical meeting has no value can we be absorbed in our work.

I am surprised that you are not able to understand a very simple thing. I could not have thought this of you. If poison is freely available to a person, if someone stops him from taking it and if by and by that person comes to love nectar, how does it mean coercion? The village people gave up khadi because they were tempted by mill-cloth. If there is an opportunity to end that temptation but one does not utilize it, then that person would be a fool. How does it mean forcing khadi on the village people? If mill-cloth is not available and if people do not make their own cloth, then they have the right to shiver in the cold and remain naked—nobody can deprive them of that. One can say that a thing is forced on others when they are punished for not accepting a particular thing or are compelled to wear anything against their will.

Blessings to all of you from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7151. Also C. W. 4643. Courtesy: Vijaya M. Pancholi

[1] This is not available.

432. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

PANCHGANI,
July 28, 1946

BHAI MOTIBABU,

Your letter of 7th June came to hand only yesterday. I cannot blame anyone for this. I have been very busy and constantly on the move; hence those attending to my correspondence were unable to inform me. Thanks for clearing your debt to the Charkha Sangh. It gives me much pleasure to see that you have such khadi-lovers in the Pravartak Sangh. I hope to write another letter after reaching Wardha. I hope your eye is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MOTILALBABU
PRAVARTAK SANGH
CHITTAGONG

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

433. SPEECH AT MEETING OF DECCAN PRINCES[1]

POONA,
July 28, 1946

Gandhiji said that it was a great pleasure to him to be able to meet the Deccan Princes. He had read the papers and the note prepared for his edification by the Raja Saheb of Phaltan. He did not wish to speak on the papers. It was a good thing that the Princes were seriously thinking in terms of the whole of India, rather than of themselves and of the protection they had all these years thought they were getting from the Paramountcy of the British Power. Only a few years ago the Princes felt that they could not be safe except under the Paramountcy of the British Crown. It seemed to have dawned on most of them that that was not the correct attitude. This was but natural, for they were after all sons of the soil. He had said openly on another

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Deccan Chiefs in Conference". The meeting was held in the Servants of India Society's Library Hall. Among those present were the Rajas of Aundh, Phaltan, Bhor, Miraj (Senior), Jamkhandi and Kurundwad (Senior), Appasaheb Pant and Satawalekar from Aundh, Kore, Sathe and Thomre from Sangli, the Dewan of Bhor and representatives from Budhgaon and Ramdrug. N. C. Kelkar and Shankerrao Deo were also present on the occasion by special invitation.

occasion that the people of the States were slaves of slaves which the Princes were. They exercised their authority within their own principalities, so long as they were in the good books of the British Government. They were made or unmade at the pleasure of the British Crown. The Princes who had eyes opened to that vital fact were desirous of India's independence equally with the people of India. If then they felt that need, they did not want a union of the States but each State had first to form a union with its own people. Their people were the real power on whom they were to depend for their status. It became trusteeship if they became servants of their own people. If they took that attitude, they needed no terms with the Congress or with any other organization. The immediate need was an understanding with their own people.

He made bold to take up that attitude, though his might be a lonely voice. In his opinion, the Princes, as servants and trustees of their people, were worthy of their hire. It would then (but not before) be time to consider whether they and their people wanted a union among themselves. Such a union would be of a wholly different type from what they had conceived.

The speaker had a serious suspicion that the present proposal[1] was a creation of the British Rulers, meaning the Political Agents. No blame need be imputed to them if they advised such a union. They were brought up in no better tradition. They thought that when the British power was not in India, the Princes would fight amongst themselves. That fear was wholly unjustifiable. They honestly believed that before they retired, as they must within perhaps a few months, owing to force of circumstances, they should enable the Princes to consolidate their power by organizing them into a union.

It was his belief that if India was not merely to be independent of British control, but was to enjoy real freedom, which their country, by virtue of its ancient culture and tradition was entitled to, it should grow from the bottom upwards, not be imposed from above. Otherwise, it would be a question of change of masters only. Instead of the English, there might be the Allied Powers or whosoever could impose himself on them. He did not look forward to that time. He looked forward to a time when India would come into her own because of her intrinsic merit. To that consummation the Princes could make a most handsome contribution.

If the Deccan Princes played their part and set a solid example, they would follow. For that purpose, the speaker repeated, they did not need the suggested union. If, on the other hand, at the back of their minds they had the idea that they would give the so-called responsible Government to the people to the ear and break it to the heart, then the proposed union would be a kind of military combination after the manner of the European Powers. It would be used against the people despite their protestations. That Power would be useless against a first-class military Power. They

[1] For a Deccan States' Union

would be the first to lay down their arms before a venturesome aggressor. The British had taken good care not to give them training that might enable them to resist a Power like themselves by force of arms.

What applied to the States applied to the whole of India. She would have to serve a long period of tutelage at the feet of the Western nations before she could become a first-class military power. A quarter of a century's effort that the Congress had spent in teaching the country non-violence would in that event have been utterly wasted. That was not a prospect to which he could look forward with equanimity.

He had suggested to the Raja Saheb of Aundh that the Princes should, with necessary changes, copy the constitution of Aundh, if they wanted to take their due share in building up of a free India. That constitution was designed for the people. He, the speaker, would have liked it to go much further in such matters as the amount and control of the privy purse, etc. But all that had to come naturally. It could not be imposed. The working of that constitution, he added, had made considerable progress—though not all the progress—which the Raja Saheb of Aundh, his Prime Minister or he, would have liked.

After Gandhiji had finished, a discussion followed and questions were asked. "Unless we unite, not a single State would have a survival value," remarked one of them and asked for Gandhiji's opinion on that point.

GANDHIJI: I am prepared to join issue on it though mine is perhaps a solitary voice. Every village has a survival value. Why should not your villages and hence you, the Princes, if you will be part of the people? Aundh, one of the smallest among you, has a greater survival value than many of you. It depends upon you. So far as the people are concerned, they are one with the rest of India already.

In an article[1] that I have written for the *Harijan*, you will see my picture of Independence. In that picture, the unit is the village community. The superstructure of Independence is not to be built on the village unit so that the top weighs down on and crushes the forty crores of people who constitute the base.[2] The power will vest in the unit itself, which will be econo- mically and politically as autonomous as possible. Today power is perched on Mt. Everest. From there orders are issued and the people have to obey. The almighty British Government comes to the people once or twice in the year when the patel and the talati come to collect revenue.

I have conceived round the village as the centre a series of ever-

[1] *Vide* "Independence", 21-7-1946.

[2] The rest of this paragraph as also the following one has been taken from *The Hindu*, 1-8-1946.

widening circles, not one on top of the other, but all on the same plane, so that there is none higher or lower than the other. Maine[1] has said that India was a congerie of village republics. The towns were then subservient to the villages. They were emporia for the surplus village products and beautiful manufactures. That is the skeleton of my picture to serve as a pattern for Independent India. There are many faults in the ancient village system. Unless they are eradicated, there will not only be no hope for the untouchables in a free India but for India in the comity of nations.

"But we shall ask our people to draw up their own constitution. The plan of union that we have drawn up is only intended as a blue-print for their consideration," explained another.

G. With the best intention in the world you will not be able to do that. You are brought up in a different tradition. Therefore, I suggest you should see Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru about it, if you will really let the people judge. He is the proper person to deal with this question as the President of the States' People's Conference. You should not be afraid to go to the States' People's Conference with your suggestions. Let the Conference decide finally. Their present policy is sound and not hostile to you, considered as servants and trustees of your people.

Q. We are anxious to serve our mother country. But we are so small that we cannot serve unless we merge into a union.

G. Not in my picture of Independent India. A village unit as conceived by me is as strong as the strongest. My imaginary village consists of 1,000 souls. Such a unit can give a good account of itself, if it is well organized on a basis of self-suffi- ciency. Do not, therefore, think that unless you have a big union you will not be able to give a good account of yourself. If Princes are all of one mind and the interest of the people is first and themselves last, theirs will be more solid union than the one now proposed.

Q. What would you say if the States organized themselves on the basis of village republics first and then formed them into a union?

A. That would be excellent, but then you will speak a different language and proceed to work in an altogether different way.

Q. But that may take a long time and, unless it is done by people outside

[1] Sir Henry James Sumner Maine (1822-88), author of *Village Communities in the East and West*

first, our people will not take to it.

A. I have said that the States can make the finest contribution to the building of India's future Independence, if they set the right example in their own territories. They as individual States being compact, homogenous units can well afford to make experiments in government. As it is, the Princes have taken the lead only in copying the bad points of the British system. They allow themselves to be led by the nose by their Ministers, whose administrative talent consists only in extorting money from their dumb, helpless subjects. By their tradition and training they are unfitted to do the job you have let them do. Therefore, my advice to you is: 'Make Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru your Chief Minister, if you are in earnest. Let him present you with an outline. He will naturally consult the people.'

Q. We want to organize ourselves into a union so that our people may have *swaraj* first without waiting for the labours of the Constituent Assembly to be finished, which may take time.

A. That is the wrong way of going about the thing. If you are solicitous of the welfare of the people and want them to come into their own, give them the fullest liberty straight away. By the time you have done that, the Constituent Assembly will have finished its work. The constitution which it will frame will not be for British India merely, but for the whole of India. That constitution will necessarily provide for a States' union or unions, if it is desirable. You should assist them instead of anticipating them by forming your own union. Begin with the individual and you will not then go wrong.

N. C. KELKAR: Are you opposed to the union, because it is suspect in your eyes?

G. I began with that. But I do not oppose it on the ground for my suspicion. I suspect not you—A, B or C, but the

circumstances. You do not know the danger and mischief you are running into. Hence my advice to you to hasten slowly.

Q. If you stretch your argument, would it not apply equally to the district and taluq organizations in the provinces? Why do not you ask for their dissolution?

G. I am not asking you to dissolve anything that already exists—not that I am enamoured of the machinery of administration set up in British India. History tells us, it was devised mainly to facilitate revenue collection. You will follow it only at your cost. My point just now is: Do not do anything in the shape of unions. Leave

that work to be done by the Constituent Assembly. As a Sanskrit poet says, अनारम्भो हि कर्माणां प्रथमं बुद्धिलक्षणम् (not to rush into new enterprises is the first mark of wisdom).

Harijan, 4-8-1946, and *The Hindu*, 1-8-1946

434. FOREWORD[1]

I have gone through this summary. The beauty of it is that though it is a summary, I did not find anything missing in it.

POONA, July 29, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Prempanth, Book 1,

435. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

POONA,
July 29, 1946

CHI. AMRITLAL,

So you have completed 40 years. You must hope to live up to 125. Keep your body fit in any case.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. AMRITLAL NANAVATI
KAKAWADI
OPP. MAHILASHRAM
WARDHA C. P.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10811

436. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

POONA,
July 29, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. Deo also had a talk with me and will do so again. I met the Princes.[2] A full summary of the talks is being

[1] To *Prempanth*, a series of booklets containing extracts from Gandhiji's writings

[2] Of the Indian states of Maharashtra; *vide* "Speech at Meeting of Deccan Princes", 28-7-1946.

prepared. I shall send you a copy when it is ready.

There is a long letter from Abidali. I am replying to it today, suggesting that he should give up the fast, leave the Congress House and, if he so desires, refer the dispute to arbitrators.[1] Let us see what happens. The postal strike seems to have become worse. You must issue a statement saying that they do not listen to the Congress.

Do at least something for your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

68 MARINE DRIVE

BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

BAPU NA PATRO—2: SARDAR VALLABHBHAINE, P. 318

437. LETTER TO ABIDALI JAFARBHAI

POONA,

July 29, 1946

BHAI ABIDALI,

I got your letter last night and went through the whole of it, including your notice. In my opinion the notice is wrong, so also is the fast. And you certainly cannot undertake a fast in the Congress House premises. How can a Union be concerned with a senior official? If any injustice has been done to him, he should go to court. He can ask for arbitration.

Fasts and strikes will not help things. The whole matter can be referred to an arbitrator. Anything beyond this would, I am afraid, amount to coercion.

No one, however important, may occupy a portion of the Congress House without permission. My advice is that, if at all, you should take the matter to an arbitrator. But, first of all, give up the fast and leave the Congress House. See me whenever you like. I hope you are all right. Send me a wire saying that you have given up the fast and moved out of the Congress House.

Blessings from

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the following item.

438. NOTE TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH[1]

July 29, 1946

None of these three remedies will do you any good. I would advise to remain in bed even if you cannot go to sleep and go on repeating Ramanama. You will then be able to do every job at the time appointed for it. See the nightly practice that I have started.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10245. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

439. LETTER TO GHARPURE

POONA,
July 29, 1946

I arrived here only yesterday. Today early in the morning after the prayer, I devoted one hour to reading the book you have sent. Although I did not have much time, I could not put down the book after starting it. It is a very fascinating and instructive work. I thank you. I am returning the book. Your effort is commendable, no doubt about it. What help can I give you? Your work alone will take you to your goal.

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI GHARPURE, CURATOR
INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

440. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

POONA,
[*July 29, 1946*][2]

I shall go to Uruli on the 1st. I shall return from there for the death anniversary of Tilak Maharaj. Again Uruli on 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th. Wardha on the 5th. These two days I am busy with the ministers. Such being the situation, how can I find time for a talk? I can meet you alone but the question is of finding the time. How much time do you want? I must have some idea. Come tomorrow at one o'clock; I shall try.

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] Gandhiji scribbled this in the addressee's diary.
[2] As noted by the addressee

441. SPEECH AT EDUCATION MINISTERS' CONFERENCE[1]

POONA,
July 29, 1946

He knew clearly enough, said Gandhiji, what was to be done but he did not quite know how it could be done. So far they had their course mapped out for them, but now they had to sail on uncharted waters. He knew their difficulties. It was not easy for those who had been brought up in the old tradition to break away from it at a stroke. If he were in the Ministerial chair, he would issue broad instructions that hereafter all educational activity of the Government should be on basic education lines. Adult education drives had been launched in several provinces. If he had his way, he would conduct them also through a basic craft. In his opinion, cotton spinning and the allied processes were crafts *par excellence* for this purpose. But he would leave the choice of the craft to the people concerned in each case in the certain belief that in the end that craft alone which had the necessary intrinsic merit would survive. It should be the job of the inspectors and other officers of the Education Department to go among the people and teachers of schools and by persuasion and argument, edu- cate them in the value and utility of the Government's new educational policy. That was their primary job, not to lord it over them. If they had no faith in it or if they were unwilling loyally to work out the new policy, he would give them the choice to resign. But he did not think that it would be necessary, if the Ministers knew their job and put their shoulder to the wheel. Merely issuing orders would not do the trick.

What he had said about adult education applied equally to university education. It must be organically related to the Indian scene. It must therefore be an extension and continuation of the basic education course. That was the central point. If they did not see eye to eye with him on that point, he was afraid they would have little use for his advice. If, on the other hand, they agreed with him that the present university education did not fit them for independence but only enslaved them, they would be as impatient as he was to completely overhaul and scrap that system and remodel it on new lines consonant with the national requirement.

Today the youth educated in our universities either ran after Government jobs or fell into devious ways and sought outlet for their frustration by fomenting unrest. They were not even ashamed to beg or sponge upon others. Such was their sad plight. The aim of university education should be to turn out true servants of the people who would live and die for the country's freedom. He was therefore of the opinion that university education should be co-ordinated and brought into line with basic education, by taking in teachers from the Talimi Sangh.

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's report "Congress Ministries and Basic Education". The Conference had been convened by B. G. Kher to discuss the programme of basic education. Ministers from all the Congress-governed provinces except two attended.

The Ministers had accepted office as people's representatives. Their writ would not run beyond the four walls of the Council Hall unless they could carry the people with them. What was taking place in Bombay and Ahmedabad today, was an ominous symptom, if it portended that the Congress had lost its hold over the people. Nayee Talim was as yet a tender sapling but it held out big promise. Its growth could not be forced by ministerial ukases, if popular support was lacking. If, therefore, they could not command popular support, his advice to them would be to tender their resignations. They should not be afraid of anarchy. Theirs was only to do their duty according to their lights and leave the rest to God. People would learn the lesson of true independence even out of that experience.

Q. Can basic education be conducted minus the self-support basis?

A. You can certainly try. But if you ask my advice, I will tell you that in that event, you had better forget basic education altogether. Self-sufficiency is not an *a priori* condition but to me it is the acid test. This does not mean that basic education will be self-supporting from the very start. But taking the entire period of seven years, covered by the basic education plan, income and expenditure must balance. Otherwise, it would mean that even at the end of their training, the basic education students will not be fitted for life. That is the negation of basic education. Nayee Talim without the self-support basis would, therefore, be like a lifeless body.

Q. We have accepted the principle of giving education through a basic craft. But the Mussalmans are somehow opposed to the spinning-wheel. Your emphasis on spinning is perhaps all right in cotton tracts. But do you not agree that it is unsuited to areas where the cotton crop is not grown? May not some other craft be substituted for it in such places—agriculture for instance?

A. This is a very old question. Any basic craft to serve as a medium for education must answer the test of universality. As early as 1908 I came to the conclusion that to make India free and to enable her to stand on her own legs, the spinning-wheel had to hum in every home. If England can become an exporter of textiles to India and to the whole world, although she does not grow a pod of cotton, I cannot understand why we cannot introduce cotton spinning in our homes, merely because cotton would have to be obtained from a neighbouring province or district. As a matter of fact, there is no part of India where cotton was not at one time grown. Localization of cotton cultivation in 'cotton tracts' is only a recent and anomalous development, forced upon India by cotton manufacturing interests at the expense of the poor tax-payer and cotton spinner of India. Even today tree

cotton grows everywhere in India. Such arguments as yours speak ill of our capacity for taking initiative, for our enterprise and resourcefulness. It would kill all manufactures if transportation of raw materials from another place were to be regarded as an insuperable handicap.

Moreover, to enable a person to clothe himself through his own effort, when the alternative is to go naked, is in itself an education. An intelligent pursuit of the various processes related to cotton spinning has, besides, a very high instructional value. In fact, it covers the whole education of man as perhaps no other craft does. We may not today be able to dispel the doubts of the Mussalmans, as they are rooted in a delusion and delusion is a very real thing to its victim, while he is under its spell. But if our own faith is clear and firm, and we can demonstrate the success of our method, the Mussalmans will themselves come to us and ask to be taught the secret of our success. They do not seem to have realized that the charkha has done more for the poorest Mussalman masses than even the Muslim League or any other Muslim organization. The bulk of the weavers in Bengal are Muslims. Nor should it be forgotten that Dacca owed its world-wide fame for its *shabnams*[1] to the deftness and skill of Muslim women spinners and Muslim weavers.

The same applied to Maharashtra. The best cure for the delusion is to concentrate on the performance of one's own duty. Truth alone will endure, all the rest will be swept away before the tide of time. I must, therefore, continue to bear testimony to Truth even if I am forsaken by all. Mine may today be a voice in the wilderness, but it will be heard when all other voices are silenced if it is the voice of Truth.

AVINASHILINGAM CHETTIAR: To produce efficient teachers for Nayee Talim would take time. What should be done to improve education in the schools in the meantime?

G. If you realize that the present system of education cannot bring India Independence but only serves to deepen her slavery, you will refuse to encourage it, irrespective of whether any other takes its place or not. You will do whatever you can, within the four corners of the principles of Nayee Talim and be satisfied with that.

If people did not want the ministers on those terms, it would be

[1] A variety of muslin; literally, 'dew'

better for the ministers to resign. They could not possibly be party to serving poison because they could not provide or because the people did not relish life-giving food.

Q. You say that for Nayee Talim we do not need money but men. But to train men we again need institutions and therefore money. How can we get out of this vicious circle?

A. The remedy lies in your own hands. Begin with yourself. There is a good English proverb: 'Charity begins at home.' But if you yourself will sit in an easy chair like a sahib and expect others of the lesser breed to get ready for the job, you will get nowhere. That is not my way. It has been my practice ever since my childhood, to begin with myself and my immediate environment in howso- ever humble a way. Let us in this respect take a leaf out of the book of the British people. A mere handful of them came to and settled in India in the first instance and carved out an empire for themselves which is even more formidable in its cultural than in its political aspect, so much so that, today we are so infatuated with English that we hug it, just as a slave hugs its fetters, even at the cost of the mother tongue. Think of the faith single-minded devotion, sacrifice and perseverance, which must have been at the back of it. It only shows that where there is a will, there is a way. Let us be up and doing with the firm resolve not to give up, come what may, and all the difficulties will melt away.

Q. What is the place of English in this programme? Should it be made compulsory or taught only as an optional, second language?

A. I must cling to my mother tongue as to my mother's breast, in spite of its shortcomings. It alone can give me the life-giving milk. I love the English tongue in its own place, but I am its inveterate opponent if it usurps a place which does not belong to it. English is today admittedly the world language. I would therefore accord it a place as a second, optional language, not in the school but in the university course. That can only be for the select few—not for the millions. Today when we have not the means to introduce even free compulsory primary education, how can we make provision for teaching English? Russia has achieved all her scientific progress without English. It is our mental slavery that makes us feel that we cannot do without English. I can never subscribe to that defeatist creed.

Harijan, 25-8-1946

442. TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT, PHALTAN STATE PRAJA PARISHAD

[After *July 29, 1946*][1]

UNABLE ADVISE. NO TIME FULL STUDY.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

443. NOTES

DECENTRALIZATION

Appasaheb Pant of Aundh State writes:[2]

> The British have forged an adequate instrument in the "Services" to help them maintain themselves in this country. . . .
>
> We shall have to discard all this old machinery and through our own experience, create a new one that will aid us in the formation of an equitable and democratic way of life.
>
> For this purpose, one feels that the decentralization of administrative power is the first step. . . . The test of the Congress, in office with this centralized power in hand, lies in devising ways and means to create decentralization which will enable ordinary human beings to manage their affairs themselves and in that process become more human, creative and therefore happy.

Appasaheb writes from experience, having had much to do with the administration of Aundh.

POONA, July 30, 1946

Harijan, 11-8-1946

444. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

July 30, 1946

You have not lost me. Gangi is a good girl. I am only hoping that you will not look upon her with lustful eyes and all will be well.

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram seeking Gandhiji's advice regarding participation of the States' people in the proposed union of Eight Deccan States which was resolved by the rulers in their meeting held at Poona on July 29, 1946.

[2] Only extracts are reproduced here.

The real peace has to come from within. Do not think of Vidya, the figure of flesh and blood, but of her permanent self. Steady your nerves and Gangi will be a tower of strength to you.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

445. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

POONA,
July 30, 1946

DEAR SINGER (SAROJINI NAIDU),

I have seen your note to Sushila. You have the opportunity of getting thoroughly well if you will be well. Rest and be thankful.

You know all I am trying to do here; expecting to reach Sevagram on or before 7th August.

Love to you and the family.

SPINNER

PS.

R. K.[1] has shown me your letter. Be careful for nothing.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

446. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

POONA,
July 30, 1946

CHI. BHANSALI,

The sun may change its course but Bhansali's word will not change. You have but to live your life as the sentinel of Sevagram. Never mind if the body drops there. You are the pole-star and you have to remain that. You are not rotting in Sevagram. The very thought is dangerous. It indicates a tendency to swerve. A drop which has merged in the sea does not rot but lends the sea its greatness. In

[1] Rajkumari Amrit Kaur

the same way you endow with importance the sea that is Sevagram. If you forget this fact all will be lost. How if all the drops regarded themselves as rotting? Yes, there is one point. Only he who becomes a cipher can lend greatness. You can see clearly through a glass window. If you coat the pane with mercury you will see none but yourself. May you never take on such a coating.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHANSALIBHAI

SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

447. LETTER TO GOVIND REDDY

POONA,

July 30, 1946

CHI. GOVIND REDDY,

I have your letter. I have not known you enough. Consult Krishnachandraji and others and do whatever is considered proper. I hope to reach Sevagram on the 6th or 7th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 10666

448. LETTER TO ABIDALI JAFARBHAI

POONA,
July 30, 1946

BHAI ABIDALI,

I have your letter. It makes me very happy. Now, get well at Jassawala's and come to me whenever you like. I can take a lot of work from you.

I am not writing about the other matters just now.

It is 9.15 p. m.

Blessings from
BAPU

ABIDALI JAFARBHAI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

449. LETTER TO DR. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

POONA,
July 30, 1946

BHAI PATTABHI,

Your Hindi letter is very good. If you go on like this, you will write Hindi better than English. Your pleading is un-necessary for your sincerity is beyond doubt. Now forget all about it. Immerse yourself in khadi work and become of steadfast mind.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

450. SOUTH AFRICA

The following news from South Africa will be interest to the readers.

Rev. Michael Scott who has thrown in his lot with Indians in their struggle there, has written a note under the caption "Not by Might". It is already published in the dailies. It should make a special appeal to all Europeans. He adds in a personal note:

> The spirit which enshrined you and your movement here will not be extin-guished by the powerful and cunning forces which are now arrayed against it.

An English sister writes from Durban:

> I went along to the camp almost the first day just to give the campers a word of encouragement and was quite impressed by their cheerfulness and general attitude—it was the "real thing" like some of the Indian movements I have seen. Then I went to the court one day too and it seemed as though those on trial (apparently) were really the judges and the officials and the Government were in the dock. If you have seen the statements by some of the leaders, you will see they give the same impression.
>
> Rev. Michael Scott is a very good man. He is only about 40 years old and wears "shirts" as do many high Anglicans and is addressed as "Father Scott". He reminds me somewhat of C. F. Andrews.
>
> I am glad to know that Manilal is coming back. He will be a help to the leaders here, though, as a matter of fact, the struggle on the Indian side has been on a very high level up to the present. It is that that has drawn a group of Europeans to support the struggle but the number is not very large yet.

As I have said before, the battle will certainly go to our countrymen if they remain truly non-violent. Non-violence knows no defeat.

Another friend writes:

> You have heard of Mrs. Naidoo's[1] passing. She met with an accident about three months her death. During all that time the family could not get my number due to some error on the part of the exchange. Mrs. Naidoo wanted to see me but they could not contact me till the day after her death. I loved her. She was a sweet soul, a real friend and had a genius for home-making. There was always a beautiful atmosphere in the Naidoo home and one could drop in at any time, no matter how busy she was and always feel a welcome guest. And what a heroine she was! Think of the anxiety she must have gone through all

[1] Wife of Thambi Naidoo

the time the children were in India. I do hope that there will be a joint memorial to her and Thambi.

Incidentally I must mention that Mrs. Naidoo's husband was one of the first satyagrahis during the days of our struggle there in my time.

POONA, July 31, 1946

Harijan, 11-8-1946

451. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

POONA,
July 31, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You are not looking after your health—it is not good. Abidali writes to say that he has broken his fast and has left the Congress House. He has written a sweet letter.

I have to go and see the Governor today. I understand it is to be purely a courtesy call.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 318-9

452. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

POONA,
July 31, 1946

BHAI MUNSHI,

When you met me yesterday, I completely forgot about Sharma's case.[1] I have already sent you something regarding the case. Those people have not given me anything more than that. Can you do anything on the basis of what I have sent you? I am asking you this because I have had a telegram from Sharma.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 7699. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

[1] Hiralal Sharma's dispute with Gadodia. *Vide* "Letter to K. M. Munshi", 23-7-1946.

453. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

POONA,
July 31, 1946

BHAI PRAKASAM,

I have found your letter (of July) among my papers. I am sorry that we could not meet. It is good that the Harijans were let off.

I am aware of the constructive work you are doing in the Madras Presidency. I shall be very happy if it shows some results.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI T. PRAKASAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

454. SPEECH AT INDUSTRIES MINISTERS' CONFERENCE [1]

POONA,
July 31, 1946

Gandhiji explained his approach to Village Industries in the course of a thirty minute address. The conception underlying both the Nayee Talim and the Village Industries programme, including khaddar, was rooted in the same thing, viz., concern for the dignity and status of the village unit as against the big cities and of the individual against the machine. The concern was further augmented by the fact that India lives not in a handful of her big cities but in her 700,000 villages. The problem was of re-establishment of justice between the town and the village. As it was, the balance was heavily tipped in favour of the former to the disadvantage of the latter.

Ours has been described as the machine age, because the machine dominates our economy. Now, what is a machine?—one may ask. In a sense, man is the most wonderful machine in creation. It can neither be duplicated nor copied.

He had, however, used the word not in its wider sense but in the sense of an appliance that tended to displace human or animal labour instead of supplementing it or merely increasing its efficiency. That was the first differentiating characteristic of the machine. The second characteristic was that there was no limit to its growth or

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Congress Ministries and Rural Uplift". The Conference was convened by Vaikunthlal Mehta, Finance and Village Industries Minister of Bombay, and was attended by Bhimsen Sachar from the Punjab, Nityanand Kanungo from Orissa, R. K. Barlinga from C. P. and Ansari from Bihar.

evolution. That could not be said of human labour. There was a limit beyond which its capacity or mechanical efficiency could not go. Out of this circumstance arose the third characteristic of the machine. It seems to be possessed of a will or genius of its own. It was antagonistic to man's labour. Thus it tended more to displace man, one machine doing the work of a hundred, if not a thousand, who went to swell the army of the unemployed and the underemployed, not because it was desirable but because that was its law. In America it had perhaps reached the extreme limit. He had been opposed to it, said Gandhiji, not from today, but even before 1908 when he was in South Africa surrounded by machines. Their onward march had not only not impressed him but repelled him.

It then dawned on me that to suppress and exploit the millions, the machine was the device *par excellence*; it had no place in man's economy if, as social units, all men were to be equal.

It is my belief that the machine has not added to man's stature and it won't serve the world but disrupt it, unless it is put in its proper place. Then, I read Ruskin's *Unto This Last* during a train journey to Durban[1] and it gripped me immediately. I saw clearly that if mankind was to progress and to realize the ideal of equality and brotherhood, it must adopt and act on the principle of *Unto This Last*; it must take along with it even the dumb, the halt and the lame. Did not Yudhishthira —the Prince of Righteousness, refuse to enter heaven without his faithful dog?

In the machine age these had no place. Under it the fittest alone survived to the exclusion and at the cost of the weak.

That is not my picture of Independence in which there is room even for the weakest. That requires that we must utilize all available human labour before we entertain the idea of employing mechanical power.

It was with that background that he was instrumental in founding the Talimi Sangh and the A. I. V. I. A. The object was to strengthen the Congress which claimed to be essentially the people's organization. The Congress had created these autonomous institutions. The Congress Ministries could requisition the services of these organizations always and without any compunction. They existed and laboured for the villagers who were the back-bone of the Congress. But the Ministries were under no obligation. If they had no faith in what these organizations stood for, they should plainly say so through the Working Committee. To play with a thing when they had no heart in it would be worse than useless. They should take it up only if

[1] In June, 1904

they believed with him that it alone held the key to the economic and political salvation of the country. They should not deceive themselves or others.

The base and foundation of village industries is agriculture. Years ago I read a poem in which the peasant is described as the father of the world. If God is the Provider, the cultivator is His hand. What are we going to do to discharge the debt we owe to him? So long we have only lived on the sweat of his brow. We should have begun with the soil but we could not do so. The fault is partly mine.

There were people, remarked Gandhiji, who said that no basic reform in agriculture was possible without political power. They dreamt in terms of industrialization of agriculture by large-scale application of steam and electricity. He warned them that trading in soil fertility for the sake of quick returns would prove to be a disastrous, short-sighted policy. It would result in virtual depletion of the soil. Good earth called for the sweat of one's brow to yield the bread of life.

People might criticize that approach as being slow and unprogressive. It did not hold out promise of dramatic results. Nevertheless, it held the key to the prosperity of both the soil and inhabitants living on it. Healthy, nourishing food was the alpha and omega of rural economy.

The bulk of a peasant's family budget goes to feed him and his family. All other things come afterwards. Let the tiller of the soil be well fed. Let him have a sufficiency of fresh, pure milk and ghee and oil, fish eggs, and meat if he is a non-vegetarian.What would fine clothes, for instance, avail him if he is ill-nourished and underfed?

The question of drinking-water supply and other things would come next. A consideration of these questions would naturally involve such issues as the place of plough cattle in the economy of agriculture as against the tractor plough and power irrigation, etc., and thus, bit by bit, the whole picture of rural economy would emerge before them. In this picture cities would take their natural place and not appear as unnatural, congested spots or boils on the body politic as they were today.

We stand today in danger of forgetting the use of our hands. To forget how to dig the earth and tend the soil is to forget ourselves. To think that your occupation of the Ministerial chair will be vindicated if you serve the cities only, would be to forget that India really resides in her 700,000 village units. What would it profit a man if he gained the world but lost his soul in the bargain?

Q. You have called cities boils or abscesses on the body politic. What should be done with these boils?

A. If you ask a doctor he will tell you what to do with a boil. It has to be cured either by lancing or by the application of plasters and

poultices. Edward Carpenter called civilization a malady which needed a cure. The growth of big cities is only a symptom of that malady. Being a nature-curist I am naturally in favour of nature's way of cure by general purification of the system. If the hearts of the city-dweller remain rooted in the villages, if they become truly village-minded, all other things will automatically follow and the boil will quickly heal.

Q. What practical steps can be taken to protect our village crafts from the invasion of foreign and Indian manufactured goods under the present circumstances?

A. I can only speak in broad terms. If you have felt in your heart that you have taken office as custodians and representatives of the interests of the masses, everything that you do, your legislation, your executive orders, the instructions that you issue, will breathe concern for the villager. To protect his interests, you do not need the Viceroy's sanction. Supposing you want to protect the hand-spinner and hand-weaver against the competition of mills and solve the problem of cloth shortage for the masses, you will put aside red tape and send for the mill-owners and tell them that, unless they want you to go out of office, they must make their production policy conform to the requirement of the masses, whose custodian and representative you are. You will tell them not to send mill cloth to certain areas, which are put under hand production or produce a certain range of yarns and textiles which comes within the handloom weaver's domain. If you are in earnest, your word will go home and they will willingly give their co-operation as they did recently, when they provided the required textiles for export to Indonesia, in return for Indonesian surplus rice for the relief of the Indian famine. But there must be that inner conviction first, everything else will then be all right.

Harijan, 25-8-1946

455. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

POONA,
July 31, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi told the audience in brief how the last three days since his return to Poona from Panchgani had been occupied. First, there was a meeting with the Chiefs of the Deccan States. The Rajas wanted his advice as a friend as to what their duty was. He had told them that they must now shed their autocracy and be guided by the people's will. Up till now the princes had been ruled by the British and they, in turn, had ruled their people. Now that power was coming into the hands of the

Indian people, it should come into the hands of States' people too, for they were not different. The Rulers had recognized that they could not exist if they were at perpetual variance with their subjects. A true union with their people was the only way for them to live serve.

Ministers from various provinces had come here to discuss with the workers of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh and the All-India Village Industries Association as to how best they could forward these two great schemes, which had been brought into being and had so far been sponsored by the Congress. Gandhiji feared the audience were probably ignorant about Nayee Talim. This was not as it should be. After all the Congress Ministers were the elected representatives of the people and, therefore, their servants. They could not force anything down the throats of the people. It was up to the people to study and understand what Nayee Talim was. It was up to them to be orderly and disciplined and eager to learn. Only then could the Ministers take them along with them. Nayee Talim was a grand thing. It would help them and their children to become good citizens. The same applied to khadi and all the other village industries.

Both these schemes were for village India which was the real India. Really speaking, it was the farmers who fed them and ought, therefore, to be their masters, but things had been the other way round, and townspeople had been sucking the villagers' blood. It was now time that they became the servants of the villagers. If they realized this, the work of the Congress Ministers would progress and India would become prosperous.

Gandhiji hoped, as this was his last meeting with them this year, that their daily association with him in prayer had been of benefit to them and they would continue the practice in their homes

The Hindu, 2-8-1946

456. THE LIMIT OF INSANITATION [1]

Panchgani is a fine hill resort. The air itself is like medicine. Rajas and Maharajas do not frequent it like they do Mussoorie and yet there has been no place where the poor could stay.[2] Now at last if there is going to be a small haven for them, it would only be a tardy reparation. But if the present insanitary conditions continue, Panchgani will cease to exist as a health resort. I believe the same is true of Mahabaleshwar too. I am of opinion that such conditions are due to our own fault, rather than to that of Government. I have heard doct-

[1] The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 18-8-1946.
[2] *Vide* also "A Dharmashala for Panchgani", 22-7-1946.

ors say that everyone knows how to observe personal cleanliness up to a point, but our people do not seem to know the A B C of hygiene sanitation. The truth of this has to be admitted with sorrow. The following is a vivid account[1] of Dr. Dinshaw Mehta's observations regarding the lack of proper sanitary arrangements in Panchgani. I give it in the fervent hope that this disgraceful state of affairs will be remedied without undue delay.

POONA, August 1, 1946
Harijan 18-8-1946

457. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

POONA,
August 1, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

I am writing on behalf of Gandhiji to thank you much for yours of the 22nd July.[2]

I am sending a copy of it to the Polish friend at whose instance Gandhiji wrote to you.[3]

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 89

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] The addressee had said: "The present repatriation scheme refers only to those who came to India as refugees under arrangements made by His Majesty's Government and are maintained here at H. M. G.'s expense; it does not cover Poles who came to India on their own initiative and have found employment here."

[3] *Vide* "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 9-7-1946.

458. LETTER TO WANDA DYNOWSKA

POONA,
August 1, 1946

MY DEAR UMADEVI,

The enclosed[1] is a reply to Gandhiji's letter to the Private Secretary to H.E. the Viceroy.

In Gandhiji's opinion the reply is good and should set your mind at rest. No exception can be taken to what they are doing.

I hope you are well. I was away for six days and returned day before yesterday.

Yours with love,
AMRIT KAUR

From a photostat: G. N. 1208

459. LETTER TO GORDHANDAS CHOKHAWALA

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA,
August 1, 1946

CHI. GORDHANDAS

I have only today received your postcard of the 29th. I have come alone from Poona to Uruli for four days. I hope to leave here on the 5th and reach Wardha on the 6th.

I was happy to learn that you were better now. You have yet much service to render. Do not tax your body. I will not at all be displeased if you do only as much as you can. I see that Sharda and Anand are well. I was glad to read even a few lines by Sharda.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 10086. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

460. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

POONA,
August 1, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have not been able to answer your letter fully. The main problem is about Ambedkar. I see a risk in coming to any sort of

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

understanding with him, for he has told me in so many words that for him there is no distinction between truth and untruth or between violence and non-violence. He follows one single principle, viz., to adopt any means which will serve his purpose. One has to be very careful indeed when dealing with a man who would become a Christian, Muslim or Sikh and then be reconverted according to his convenience. There is much more I could write in the same strain. To my mind it is all a snare. It is a "catch"[1]. Besides, it is not necessary for him at present to insist on 20 p. c. If India becomes independent in the real sense—the provinces to some extent are— and if the caste Hindus are true to themselves, all will be well. But if the number of fair-minded persons is small and if power passes into the hands of fanatics, there is bound to be injustice, no matter what agreements you make today. You may come to any understanding you like today—but who are the people who beat up Harijans, murder them, prevent them from using public wells, drive them out of schools and refuse them entry into their homes? They are Congressmen. Aren't they? It is very necessary to have a clear picture of this. I therefore feel that at present we should not insist on an agreement such as you suggest. However, we should stress the capacity of the Congress to do justice. Mine may be a voice in the wilderness. Even so I prefer it that way. Therefore, if we negotiate with Ambedkar out of fear of the League we are likely to lose on both the fronts.

I will definitely leave here on the 5th and reach Wardha on the 6th. I have already written to you and informed you that I have deliberately decided not to go to Bombay and I adhere to that decision. But if you want it to be modified, do tell me be all means—that means I shall have to remain in a railway compartment for a few hours more. You may see me there if necessary but in any case not at the cost of your health. There is nothing we cannot deal with through correspondence. In any case do come to Wardha on the 8th. You may come even a day earlier if you like.

If postmen are using high-handed methods, I think it will be perfectly proper to raise our voice against it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 319-20

[1] Gandhiji has used the English word here.

461. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

[*August 1, 1946*][1]

CHI. MANI,

There is not enough time to write to you. You did well in reminding me about Chamanbhai. Send the accompanying letter to him.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Putro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 321

462. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL G. PAREKH

POONA,
August 1, 1946

BHAI CHIMANLAL,

Only yesterday Manibehn gave me the news that you were laid up. We can only live as God wills. It is well if He keeps us and equally well if he takes us away. Only the good we do will go with us.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI CHIMANLAL SHETH

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

463. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

URULI KANCHAN, *via* POONA,
August 1, 1946

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Herewith a letter from Ramanlal. I pass it on to you so that you can send him a reply; and maybe also give him peace. In this way I save my time. If you think it right show Ramanlal's letter to Krishnachandra also. I like some of the arguments Ramanlal has advanced. But are the facts what he assumes them to be? You are in the best position to know this.

[1] This letter was written at the bottom of the preceding letter.
[2] *Vide* the following item.

I have come to Uruli only today. I shall stay here for four days, leave on the 5th and expect to reach Wardha on the 6th. But let us see how it comes about. What God wills will be. This last statement is especially apposite, seeing the anarchy that is beginning to show itself.

I am not personally replying to Ramanlal, for a reply from you is as good as one from me. Let him take it that way.

M. K. GANDHI

SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

464. LETTER TO SURENDRA

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA,
August 1, 1946

CHI. SURENDRA,

I got your postcard of the 26th on the 31st at Poona. To- day I have come to Uruli, which is 18 miles from Poona. I came by car. The journey took half an hour. I don't remember your having written to me two months ago telling me about your faith in me. I have come here alone, leaving my companions at Poona, as this place cannot offer the necessary accommodation. Besides, I did not want to make a crowd. I can therefore . . . .[1] only when we meet . I hope to leave here on the 5th so as to reach Wardha on the 6th. Let us see what God wills.

It is all to the good if you have spent 11 years in Boriavi. Even if you had to spend a lifetime there, what would it matter? I would not mind as long as you could give an honest account of every single moment of it.

I stayed in Panchgani for 14 days. I enjoyed it. There was almist incessant rain. That there can be misfortune but no darkness for a devotee even if he seeks it, is fully true for a perfect devotee, not for an aspirant. I cannot count myself among the perfect devotees, I regard myself as no more than an aspirant. All I can say is that darkness cannot engulf me. I have no time to further analyse this.

BORIAVI

DIST. KAIRA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The source is not clear here.

465. LETTER TO D. D. JOSHI [1]

URULI KANCHAN, *VIA* POONA,
August 1, 1946

BHAI JOSHI,

I have gone through your letter. This is the answer to your question[2]. This thing is meant for villagers, for the villages. Therefore there is no place here for a microscope or an x-ray plant. Nor is there any place in nature cure for quinine, emetin, penicillin and such other drugs. Village sanitation, domestic cleanliness, per-sonal hygiene and health care have the first place and also full scope, the underlying idea being that this done there can be no disease. And in case disease has occurred, Ramanama is the basic remedy besides observance of the laws of nature. As long as the practitioner has not personally experienced the efficacy of Ramanama, the latter treatment cannot be applied universally. Hence, the treatment in the form of Ramanama cannot all of a sudden become universal. However, the endeavour is to cure disease with the help of whatever energy we can churn out of the five elements, viz.,earth, water, ether, fire and air. And this is where, I think, nature cure ends. Hence the experiment that is being now conducted at Uruli Kanchan is one of instructing the villagers in the art of health care and curing those who are sick with the help of the five elements. This includes the use of herbs locally available in Uruli, whenever the need is felt. It also covers restrictions as to diet.

M. K. GANDHI

D. D. JOSHI
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The text of the Gujarati letter was published in *Harijanbandhu,* 18-8-1946, and a translation of it appeared the heading "Question Box", in *Harijan,* 11-8-1946.

[2] The question was whether in nature cure x-ray and other devices could be used for diagnosis and certain medicines, with known efficacy could be used in treatment.

466. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

URULI KANCHAN,
DISTT. POONA,
August 1, 1946

CHI. SARALABEHN,

Your letter of the 29th addressed to Rajkumari reached today. I have come to Uruli for four days leaving Rajkumari and others at Poona. If anyone of them has any business with me, they will come and return in the afternoon in good time. I did not want to have a crowd here.

Your blood-pressure is very high. I cannot say I am wholly out of danger, but I think my blood-pressure is under control. Every-one does not have [high] blood-pressure for the same reason. [High] blood-pressure is not a disease in itself; it is a symptom of some other disease. It may, for instance, be caused by kidney trouble. A diseased kidney means the whole body becoming poisoned. Kidney trouble is caused by worrying too much or working under tension. In my view whatever the cause, fruit diet is an effective remedy. This should not include starchy fruits such as bananas. Oranges, pomegra-nates, pineapples and grapes are best. One must sleep well. To sleep is to rest. The fruits mentioned above may be taken as they are or their juice. They can be taken in either form. You may take gentle walks. There are also some exercises that one can do lying in bed. You should do such exercises. Along with this, if you enshrine Rama in your heart, I am sure your blood-pressure will be cured. *Ramanama* means having God in the heart in the form in which we worship Him. This is not superstition. This is scientific deduction. I shall not take you into the rationale thereof. I am writing this because I have known you as a saintly woman for many years which you are. I give no thought to the fact that you are the daughter of a rich father married to a rich man.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11150. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

467. LETTER TO PYARELAL

URULI,
August 1, 1946

CHI. PYARELAL,

I feel happy that here we have the *Gitai* and discourses in Marathi. It is absolutely peaceful here. No one distrubs me. Faces of Rajkumari, Sushila and Abha were around me. What does that mean? We shall have to give thought to this place also. Anybody who wishes can come tomorrow after 3 o'clock.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

468. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

URULI KANCHAN, *via* POONA,
August 1, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your letter of the 16th reached me yesterday the 31st. I understood from it that the rooms on chimanlal's side are not to be given for Nayee Talim. Please remember that I have given the word and I think you all have agreed to it. So they should be given whatever they want. In doing so we may have to vacate some Ashram space. But even if we have to do that I see no objection to it. What has happened has happened. I am not finding fault with you people. I am explaining my position. Ashadevi met me in the morning today. But your letter was not before me then, or I would have talked to her. Aryanayakumji also met me yesterday. I shall try to reach there on the 6th. Then we shall talk it over.

I understand about *Gitai*[1]. I like it.

Here we recite *Gitai* morning and evening.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4561

[1] Vinoba Bhave's rendering of the *Gita* in Marathi verse.

469. LETTER TO R. R. DIWAKAR

POONA,
August 1, 1946

BHAI DIWAKAR,

I could read your letter of 17th July from beginning to end only today. I have serious doubts about the resolution concerning yarn. I don't think is right to pass on the yarn to the weavers and oblige them to weave it before it has been doubled. The weavers will ungrudgingly accept all the yarn you have if you give it to them after doubling and twisting it. Only then can you tell the weavers not to take mill-yarn as long as such hand-spun yarn is available. I have written about it in *Harijan.*[1]

Do you have an estimate how many people act on the resolutions that have been passed and how they do it? If not, you should try to find out.

Your Resolution No. 22 calls upon the Government to examine the implements and the raw material of . . .[2] which I find rather impracticable. This job is for those who know the work. It is the constructive workers who can do this job. The Government can be asked to provide funds. I feel the same way about Resolutions 17, 18 and 21.

I have an impression that I have written to you regarding [Resolution] No. 27. I am of the opinion that Manohar Diwan cannot take up anti-leprosy work outside Wardha. He does not have enough workers. What you must do is to produce in Karnataka workers like Manohar Diwan. You can send them to Wardha to be trained, on the condition that all their expenses are met by you.

One more word of advice in general. Resolution No. 29 could have been put in nine or ten lines. It could have been more fully explained in a speech. I assume all these Resolutions were in Kannada and, when we think in our mother tongue or in the national language we do not do so in an orderly way. And then we do not attempt to bring precision and brevity to them. When we speak or write in English out of very shame we are more careful. This shows that our love of our mother tongue is no real, or say, not deep enough. It is the

[1] *Vide* "Cloth Shortage", 27-7-1946.
[2] Omission as in the source

duty of every Indian to overcome this failing. I have observed that true love of the mother tongue embraces the national language too.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. RANGANATH DIWAKAR

HUBLI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

470. DEDICATION OF HOSPITAL

POONA,

August 1, 1946

This hospital[1] is for Indian patients of all castes, all provinces and all faiths. And since there is no hospital for Harijans and the proprietor of this hospital is a Harijan, all those patients who happen to be Harijan will be given first preference. And the first bed in the hospital will be occupied by a Harijan and that will mark its inauguration. Furthermore, in this hospital the poor patients will have precedence over the rich patients.

Sd. MANIBEHN NANAVATI

May God help us keep the pledge.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

471. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING [2]

URULI,

August 1, 1946

The 25th anniversary of the late Lokamanya's demise[3] which fell on the day Gandhiji reached Uruli, evoked poignant memories. Speaking after the evening prayer, he recalled how he had gone to attend the Lokamanya's funeral on receiving the sad news over the telephone. The mammoth funeral procession was composed of Mussalmans and Parsis no less than Hindus. He himself had got caught in the crush and narrowly escaped injury. Those were the days when the atmosphere was not poisoned by communal bitterness.

[1] Uruli Kanchan nature-cure clinic

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" 5-8-1946

[3] Tilak died on August 1, 1920. *Vide* "Tribute to Tilak", 2-8-1920 and "Passing Away of the Lokmanya", 8-8-1920.

Much water has flowed under the bridge since then, but the memory or Lokamanya remains enshrined in the hearts and affection of his countryman as ever before. The lapse of time has only added to his popularity. He is still with us, though he is physically no more. He has given us the *mantra* that Swaraj is our birthright. That birth right belongs equally to all. Like the Infinite it is inexhaustible. To divide it is not to take it away.

May be that some questionable things are today being done in the late Lokamanya's name. That is the way of the world. Even divinity is not proof against abuse. The evil, however, remains with the evil-doer. It does not detract from the lustre of divinity.

India was today on the eve of attaining her birthright, Gandhiji went on to say. In his opinion, nature cure was an essential ingredient in the building of swaraj of his conception. The attaining of true swaraj presupposed the triple purification of body, mind and soul.

Harijan, 11-8-1946

472. LETTER TO THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF PORTUGUESE INDIA

August 2, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

It was kind of you to write to me in reply to what I had written in *Harijan*[1] about Goa affairs.[2] I suppose you know that I have visited Mozambique, Delagoa and Inhambane. I did not notice there any Government for philanthropic purposes. Indeed, I was astonished to see the distinction that the Government made between Indians and the Portuguese and between the Africans and themselves. Nor does the history of the Portuguese Settlement in India prove the claim set forth by you. Indeed, what I see and know of the condition of things in Goa is hardly edifying. That the Indians in Goa have been speechless is proof not of the innocence or the philanthropic nature of the

[1] *Vide* "White Man's Burden", 26-6-1946.

[2] In his letter of July 18 the addressee had *inter alia* observed: "If to authority is committed the preservation of the people's physical health against pestilence and the use of narcotics and toxics, with the same reason it must look after the mental health not leaving it a prey to unsettling ideas. I don't believe that there is lesser liberty in the existence of a benevolent censorship trying to educate without party spirit than in other forms of State intervention."

Portuguese Government but of the rule of terror. You will forgive me for not subscribing to your statement that there is full liberty in Goa and that the agitation is confined only to a few malcontents.

Every account, received by me personally and seen in the papers here in this part of India, confirms the contrary view. I suppose the report of the sentence by your Court Martial of eight years on Dr. Braganza[1] and his contemplated exile to a far off Portuguese Settlement is by itself a striking corroboration of the fact that civil liberty is a rare article in Goa. Why should a law-abiding citizen like Dr. Braganza be considered so dangerous as to be singled out for exile?

Though the politics of Dr. Lohia probably differ from mine, he has commanded my admiration for his having gone to Goa and put his finger on its black spot. Inhabitants of Goa can afford to wait for Independence, until much greater India has regained it. But no person or group can thus remain without civil liberty without losing self-respect. He has lighted a torch which the inhabitants of Goa cannot, except at their peril, allow to be extinguished. Both you and the inhabitants of Goa should feel thankful to the Doctor for lighting that torch. Therefore, your description of him as "stranger" would excite laughter if it was not so tragic. Surely the truth is that the Portuguese coming from Portugal are strangers, whether they come as philanthropists or as Governors exploiting the so-called weaker races of the earth.

You have talked of the abolition of caste distinctions What I see has happened is that not only no cast distinction has been abolished but at least one more caste, far more terrible than the system "caste", has been added by the Portuguese rulers.

I, therefore, hope that you will revise your views on philanthropy, civil liberty and caste distinctions, withdraw all the African police, declare yourself whole-heartedly for civil liberty and if possible even let the inhabitants of Goa frame their own government, and invite from Greater India more experienced Indians to assist the inhabitants and even you in framing such Government.

Yours, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Since your letter was sent to the Press, I am publishing this in *Harijan*.

M. K. G.

Harijan, 11-8-1946

[1] Dr. Tristo Braganza Cunha, who had started a Congress Committee in Goa

473. LETTER TO GENERAL MANAGER, G. I. P. RAILWAY

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA,
August 2, 1946

GENERAL MANAGER

G. I. P. RLY.

DEAR SIR,

A friend[1] in Cochin has sent me a cheque for Rs. 100/8/- to be presented to driver Mr. Pereira who was driving the third class special that brought me on 9th ultimo[2] to Poona from New Delhi, and by his skill avoided what might have proved a serious accident. I enclose the cheque herewith and request you to send it to Mr. Pereira if your rules permit the presentation of such gifts to your employees.

I am here till 4th instant after which date, letter may be addressed to me Sevagram, *via* Wardha, C. P.

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 10529

474. LETTER TO RANCHHODDAS

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA,
August 2, 1946

BHAI RANCHHODDAS,

I have your letter and cheque for Rs. 100-8-0. I have passed on the cheque to the driver through the General Manager.[3]

Indeed, who can touch him whom God protects?

BAPU

COCHIN (MALABAR)

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Ranchhoddas; *vide* the following item.
[2] This should be June 30.
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

475. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA,
August 2, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Radhakrishna[1] has written a letter about the strike. He has made the charge that the strikers stabbed a worker and beat up several others. I have written to Abidali. I enclose a copy of the letter.[2] If the violence continues, then the mill-owner should close down his mill and take steps to prevent incendiarism and damage to property by miscreants.

I have been thinking of writing about the League. Sometimes I feel that I should wait for the meeting of the Working Committee on the 8th and sometimes that I should write. Let me see what I finally do.

I hope to reach Sevagram on the 6th.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 322

476. LETTER TO ABIDALI JAFARBHAI

URULI KANCHAN,
August 2, 1946

BHAI ABIDALI,

I hope you are well. Khaitan saw me on the 31st. I advised him that if he had anything to say it should be placed before an arbitrator and if Bhimji or the strikers or Abidali had any complaints to make, they should also be referred to the arbitrator. This is the only civilized procedure.

A strike or any other kind of satyagraha can be undertaken only when all normal avenues for securing justice are closed and autocratic ways have taken the place of justice.

Today I got a letter from Khaitan in which he says that the night before last, that is, on 31-7-1946, the strikers beat up a head clerk and

[1] Radhakrishna Khaitan, owner of the Mill in which Abidali had organized a strike

[2] *Vide* the following item.

yesterday in the morning again inflicted injuries on a number of persons. They have not resumed work yet.

If it is true it is not good.The strikers being under your direction it is your duty to see that they do not indulge in any such excesses. If there is anything you want to say I would suggest your saying it to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

[From Hindi]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 322-3

477. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA KHAITAN

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA,
August 2, 1946

BHAI RADHAKRISHNAJI,

I have your letter. I have written to Abidali[1] and your own messenger is taking the letter. I have written that no excesses should be committed on either side and if both parties are willing to refer the matter to arbitration, the strike should be called off. Let us see what happens. If there is something you wish to say you may write to me again. Sardar is still there. Consult him and do as he says.

BAPU

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

478. TALK TO VILLAGERS [2]

URULI,
[*August 2, 1946*][3]

There were three ways, Gandhiji told the villagers of Uruli, of dealing with the case.[4] The first was the stereotyped orthodox way of reporting to the police. Very often it only provided the police a further opportunity for corruption and brought no relief to the victim. The second way, which was followed by the general run of the

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 5-8-1946

[3] Pyarelal places this on the day following the 25th death anniversary of Tilak, which was on August 1.

[4] A villager had been brought to Gandhiji with injuries inflicted upon him by thieves.

village people, was to passively acquiesce in it. This was reprehensible as it was rooted in cowardice. Crime would flourish, while cowardice remained. What was more, by such acquiescence we ourselves became party to the crime. The third way, which Gandhiji commended, was that of pure satyagraha. It required that we should regard even thieves and criminals as our brothers and sisters and crime as a disease of which the latter were the victims and needed to be cured. Instead of bearing ill-will towards a thief or a criminal and trying to get him punished they should try to get under his skin, understand the cause that had led him into crime and try to remedy it. They should, for instance, teach him a vocation and provide him with the means to make an honest living and thereby transform his life. They should realize that a thief or a criminal was not a different being from themselves. Indeed, if they turned the search-light inward and closely looked into their own souls, they would find that the difference between them was only one of degree. The rich, moneyed man, who made his riches by exploitation or other questionable means, was no less guilty of robbery than the thief who picked a pocket or broke into a house and committed theft. Only the former took refuge behind the facade of respectability and escaped the penalty of law. Strictly speaking, remarked Gandhiji, all amassing or hoarding of wealth above and beyond one's legitimate requirements was theft. There would be no occasion for thefts and therefore, no thieves if there was a wise regulation of riches and absolute social justice prevailed. In the swaraj of his conception, there would be no thieves and no criminals, or else it would be swaraj only in name. The criminal was only an indication of the social malady and since nature cure, as he envisaged it, included the triple cure of body, mind and soul, they must not be satisfied with merely banishing physical illness fro Uruli; their work must include the healing of the mind and soul too, so that there would be perfect social peace in their midst.

If they followed the nature cure way of dealing with the criminals, which, as he had already explained, was the way of satyagraha, they could not sit still in the face of crime. Only a prefect being could afford to lose himself within himself and withdraw completely from the cares and responsibilities of the world. But who could claim that perfection?

On the high seas a sudden calm is always regarded by experienced pilots and mariners with concern. Absolute calm is not the law of the ocean. It is the same with the ocean of life. More often than not, it portends rough weather. A satyagrahi would therefore neither retaliate nor submit to the criminal, but seek to cure him by curing himself. He will not try to ride two horses at a time, viz., to pretend to follow the law of satyagraha while, at the same time, seeking police aid. He must forswear the latter in order to follow the former. If the criminal himself chooses to hand himself over to the police, it would be a different matter. You cannot expect to touch his

heart and win his confidence if at the same time you are prepared to go to the police and inform against him. That would be gross betrayal of trust. A reformer cannot afford to be an informer.

And by way of illustration he mentioned several instances of how he had refused to give information to the police about persons who had been guilty of violence and had come and confessed to him. No police officer could compel a satyagrahi to give evidence against a person who had confessed to him. A satyagrahi would never be guilty of a betrayal of trust. He wanted the people of Uruli to adopt the method of satyagraha for dealing with crime and criminals. They should contact the criminals in their homes, win their confidence and trust by loving and selfless service, wean them from evil and unclean habits and help to rehabilitate them by teaching them honest ways of living.

Harijan, 11-8-1946

479. STRIKES

The statement in the daily press that I had approved of the postal strike[1] is not true. One day a postman asked to be allowed to just say 'Vande Mataram' to me. Kanu Gandhi brought him to me. The visitor, however, asked for my blessings for the postmen's strike which had just then commenced. I said to him that if the strike was justified and if they conducted themselves absolutely peacefully, they must succeed.[2] This was no approval of the particular strike. Apart, however, from what I said and apart from the merits of the postmen's strike, I feel that as an expert in successful strikes of an absolutely peaceful nature, I owe it to the conductor of this strike as to those of all others and to the public to state the conditions of successful strikes.

Obviously there should be no strike which is not justifiable on merits. No unjust strike should succeed. All public sympathy must be withheld from such strikes.

The public has no means of judging the merits of a strike, unless it is backed by impartial persons enjoying public confidence. Interested men cannot judge the merits of their own case. Hence, there must be an arbitration accepted by the parties or a judicial adjudication. As a rule, the matter does not come before the public when there is accepted arbitration or adjudication. Cases have, however,

[1] This commenced in Bombay on 11th July and ended on 2nd August, 1946.

[2] The Press had reported Gandhiji as having said: "If you conduct your strike in a peaceful manner success will surely be yours."

happened when haughty employers have ignored awards or misguided employees, conscious of their power to assert themselves, have done likewise and have decided upon forcible extortion.

Strikes for economic betterment should never have a political end as an ulterior motive. Such a mixture never advances the political end and generally brings trouble upon strikers, even when they do not dislocate public life, as in the case of public utility services such as the postal strike. The Government may suffer some inconvenience but will no come to a stand-still. Rich persons will put up expensive postal services but the vast mass of the poor people will be deprived during such a strike of a convenience of primary importance to which they have become used for generations. Such strikes can only take place when every other legitimate means has been adopted and failed.

In the present case we have National Provincial Governments. Postmen should consult these Governments before resorting to the extreme step. So far as I am aware Shri Balasaheb Kher, Shri Mangaldas Pakvasa[1] and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel have intervened. If their advice has been rejected by the men, they have taken a serious and dangerous step. If all these powerful unions disregard their own Governments and the Working Committee members, they disown the Congress.They have a right to do so if the Congress sells their interest.

Sympathetic strikes must be taboo until it is conclusively proved that the affected men have exhausted all the legitimate means at their disposal and until the Congress has been proved to have a betrayed or neglected their interest or until the Congress has called for sympathetic strikes in order to secure justice from obdurate and unsympathetic authorities.

One hears of strikes all over the country to paralyse the Government. This paralysis is an extreme political step, open only to a body like the Congress, not even to unions, however powerful they may be. If the Congress is the people's arm *par excellence* for the purpose of winn-ing Independence, paralysing action should be retained solely in the hands of the Congress.

At the present moment, the Congress is engaged in making a success of the proposed Constituent Assembly. There are interminable difficulties in the way. Paralysing strikes must seriously hamper Congress action.

It follows from the foregoing that political strikes must be

[1] President of Bombay legislative council

treated on their own merits and must never be mixed with or related to economic strikes. Political strikes have a definite place in non-violent action. They are never taken up haphazard. They must be open, never led by goondaism. They are calculated never to lead to violence.

Therefore, my humble suggestion to all strikers is to make a frank declaration of submission to arbitration or adjudication, to seek the guidance of the Congress and abide by its advice and for all sympathetic strikes to stop whilst the Congress is engaged in making the contemplated Constituent Assembly a success and while Provincial National Government are functioning.

URULI KANCHAN, August 3, 1946

Harijan, 11-8-1946

480. THE MEANING OF NATURE CURE [1]

Many people wish to come to Uruli Kanchan to learn nature cure. I dissuade them. The institution that is working at Uruli Kanchan on behalf of the Trust is for the villagers. Its three trustees are Dr. Dinshaw Mehta, Shri Jehangir Patel and myself. Though Dr. Dinshaw Mehta has a lot of experience of nature cure, he has gained this experience in towns. When he was conducting his nature cure home in Poona, though he took in poor patients, he gave them the same treatment as he gave his rich patients. As I conceived nature cure for the villagers, it should confine itself to such remedies as are available in the villages and should do without the aid of electricity and ice. This would be the limit of this treatment.

Such work can only be for a person like me who has become a villager and whose heart is in the villages even though he be living in a city. So the trustees have entrusted this work to me. I have begun the work but I have no trained personnel. It is another thing that I take help from Dr. Mehta when ever I need it. I have found a good helper in Dr. Bhagawat whose heart is wholly in the villages and who himself lives very simply. Even though he is an allopath, he believes only in nature cure, does not despise manual work and never tires of working. The others are all new to the work though filled with the spirit of service. I too am new to the work. Shri Datar has given his house for our use. He charges no rent, and so the work can go on. But the house

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan* 11-8-1946.

has not room enough for new students to be admitted. I myself cannot permanently stay in Uruli Kanchan. If God wills it I hope in future to spend six months in the neighbourhood of Poona and six months in Sevagram. Those who wish to learn nature cure should therefore understand that in the present circumstances it is quite impossible for anyone to be put up here.

Now a few words as to my conception of nature cure. I have written a little bit about it from time to time in previous issues. But since the idea is growing, I may as well explain the limits of nature cure as carried on in Uruli Kanchan. Diseases, whether in village or in town, are of three kinds: physical, mental and spiritual. And what is true of the individual is true of society.

The majority of the inhabitants of Uruli Kanchan are business folk. One part is inhabited by Mangs, another by Mahars, and yet another by Kanchans. The name of the village is derived from this last group. There are some Garudis living here too, who are classified as criminal tribes under the law. The Mangs earn their living by making ropes, etc. They were doing well during the war but are now having a lean time and living in penury. The problem that faces the nature cure physicians is how to deal with this malady of the Mangs, which is by no means slight. It is the duty of the businessmen to cure them of this disease. No medicines from any dispensary are going to avail in this case and yet it is as fell a disease as cholera. Some of the tenements of the Mangs are fit only to be burnt. But burning will not provide new dwellings for them. How would they protect themselves from rain and cold? Where would they put their belongings? All these are questions to which the nature cure physician cannot shut his eyes. What is to be done about the Garudis? They do not commit crimes for the love of it. It is a habit ingrained in them for generations and so they are described as criminal.

It is for the residents of Uruli Kanchan to wean them from this habit. The nature-cure physician cannot neglect this work. Several such questions face the nature cure worker. Nature cure work thus becomes purely work for swaraj and its field also becomes very wide. God willing, it can succeed, provided we, the workers and residents of Uruli Kanchan, follow truth and persevere.

URULI KANCHANS, August 3, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 11-8-1946

481. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

URULI,
August 3, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. If you see no risk in it, what is there for me to say? Do by all means settle with Bhimarao. I have nothing further to say in the matter.

I note what you say about your coming here. I shall await you on the 7th. Forward Rameshwardas's letter to him.

So Chimanlal has passed away. I hear there is again trouble from the postmen.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 323

482. LETTER TO NANUBHAI

August 3, 1946

BHAI NANUBHAI,

I have your letter. Also the books. Thanks. I had the article sent by you read out to me. I also had a gist prepared and went through it. I don't find in it anything that can be published in *Harijan*.

It contains criticism of the Council or the Ministers. Then there is something concerning what happened during the Ahmedabad riots. It says the people are not getting enough foodgrains and clothing and that there can be no true happiness in the absence of noble qualities.

I see no advantage in printing anything from this. Criticism will always be there and it hardly needs proclaiming that there can be no happiness without noble qualities. It needs to be acted upon—by you and me and everybody.

BAPU

ADVOCATE
BOMBAY HIGH COURT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

483. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA
August 3, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

I got your letter just now. I am sending to you Manilal's letter which I got yesterday. Please pass it on to Sita. I am glad that Manilal wired asking you to stay on. At this time of struggle, what else could you do but go to jail? I should like your going to jail, but I would not send you to South Africa just for that. But then this is my personal view. What really matters is what you think and what Manilal thinks.

I intend to entrain for Wardha on Monday and expect to reach there on Tuesday morning by the Mail. Whether this comes about is in God's hands.

I shall not dictate any more. You can travel in my compartment; I am sure there will be room for you. You did well in putting Arun and Ila to school. I have no time to write to them today.

Blessings from

BAPU

AKOLA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

484. LETTER TO QURESHI

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA,
August 3, 1946

BHAI QURESHI,

Bapuji is here these days. He will leave Poona for Sevagram on 5-8-46 by the morning train at 10.40. At Kalyan Station, his bogey will be attached to the Nagpur Mail.

I have to request you to send, if possible, a tin of cow's ghee with someone to the Nagpur Mail leaving Bombay at about 4.30 p. m. on 5-8-46. The gentleman can return after delivering the tin at Kalyan Station to one of us in Bapu's compartment.

Please excuse us for the trouble. I am writing this at Bapu's instance.

Pranams from yours respectfully,

MUNNALAL

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

485. DOCTORS CRITICIZED

1. Whether it is not a matter of common experience that the diagnosis by doctors is a very uncertain quantity and varies from time to time in the same case and often from doctor to doctor, and many cases remain undiagnosed until they recover or die?

2. Assuming that the diagnosis is correct what useful purpose does it serve if it cannot be followed by remedial measures which lead to a cure, even on paper. Medical books do not speak with a certain voice on this point. If nature cure alone is to be followed, why is a diagnosis needed at all, considering that it recognizes the unity of disease and not hundreds of diseases which the doctors believe in?

3. Do the doctors make any use of their knowledge of the body in prescribing medical treatment as distinguished from surgical treatment? If not why should the doctors get credit for having once upon a time read physiology and anatomy which are soon forgotten for want of use in actual practice? Are not the *vaids* entitled to equal credit or discredit for studying the physiology and pathology of *tridosha*[1] and not making but a nominal use of it in actual practice?

4. Are not the defects attributed to the *vaids* really due to the omission of its duty by the State to provide institutions for research, etc.? How can the system be blamed for the fault of the individual or the Government? Even the doctors in private practice carry out no research and very few of them even read about researches carried on abroad.

5. Does not the constant examination of Mahatmaji's body by the doctors give them an undue and undeserved prominence in the public eye and so tend to put into the background the other systems of medicine which also have an equal if not greater claim on Mahatmaji's attention?

These are Shri Brijlal Nehru's questions to which I reply as follows:

1. What the question implies is very true. Nevertheless doctors flourish. This phenomenon should make us all think.

2. My experience is that a correct diagnosis is followed by a re-medial measure answering the diagnosis. It will be wrong to blame medi-cal books because they mention several alternative measures. The complicated human system does not lend itself to one certain remedy. It would be untrue to say that nature cure does not demand

[1] This attributes the case of disease to the imbalance of the three humours namely, *Vata* or wind, *Pitta* or bile and *Kaf* or phlegm.

any diagnosis. As it believes in unity of disease and unity of cure, diagnosis adopted in nature cure is much simpler. Unity of disease and unity of cure is a good generalization. No nature cure man blindly applies earth poultices in all cases.

3. It is highly unfair to say that in their practice doctors make no use of their knowledge of physiology and anatomy No comparison can be set up between doctors and *vaids* for they employ wholly dissimilar methods of diagnosis. I am utterly ignorant of the value of the *tridosha* theory.

4. I am unable to subscribe to the condemnation of the State for not providing institutions for research. I have always blamed the *vaids'* apathy in the matter of real research. The top ones are busy making money. The others are too ignorant to do so or are easily satisfied with what they find in the orthodox Ayurvedic books. I am sorry for this view. I come to it, in spite of my great regard for the Ayurvedic system and the Yunani which are suited to the soil.

5. I do not think that constant examination by medical friends of my body gives them undue or any prominence. They do not stand in need of any. They were all flourishing before I appeared on the scene. Nor does it tend to put into the background the other systems of medicine. I have friends among *vaids* and *hakims*. But they do not need elaborate or frequent diagnosis. I submit my body to the diagnosis which is unfortunately advertised but I do not submit it to the treatment by drugs. The treatment is principally confined to the use of the five agencies of nature, diet changes and massage.

My love of nature cure and of indigenous systems does not blind me to the advance that Western medicine has made in spite of the fact that I have stigmatized it as black magic. I have used the harsh term and I do not withdraw it, because of the fact that it has countenanced vivisection and all the awfulness it means and because it will stop at no practice, however bad it may be, if it prolongs the life of the body and because it ignores the immortal soul which resides in the body. I cling to nature cure in spite of its great limitations and in spite of the lazy pretensions of nature-curists. Above all, in nature cure, everybody can be his or her own doctor, not so in the various systems of medicine.

URULI KANCHAN, August 4, 1946

Harijan, 11-8-1946

486. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

POONA,
August 4, 1946

DEAR MARY,

Bapu got your letter duly and was glad to have it. He hopes you will continue to give him such news as is worth giving from time to time. We follow it all in the papers with very deep interest. You can imagine how Bapu's heart is with them all there. He is wonderfully well considering the heavy burden he carries. We are off to Sevagram tomorrow. I do not think we have been more than a month in any one place since last October! Dr. Sushila is engaged to be married to Kaka Kalelkar's younger son. Kanu and his wife are setting up house as soon as we return to Sevagram. It will be nice to get there again after so long. My love to you and Bapu sends his too.

Yours,
AMRIT

[PS.]

Mira is in her Ashram in the U. P.

From a photostat: G.N. 8086. Also C.W. 3416. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

487. LETTER TO DINSHAW MEHTA

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA,
August 4, 1946

CHI. DINSHAW,

My idea of developing nature cure in Uruli Kanchan and the villages of India is fast expanding. It means teaching the hygiene of the body, mind and soul of the individual and society.Thus the workers in Uruli Kanchan have, besides cleaning the streets of the village, and attending to their bodily ailments through the judicious use of earth, sum ether, light and water, to attend to the pauperism of the criminal tribes called the Garudis—described in law as one of the criminal tribes of India[1] —and the rapacity of Pathans in exacting interest , [which] are all social diseases demanding treatment by a real nature cure man. That, ordinarily these things are not regarded as diseases in the nature cure books does not worry me. I, and if you like, we, as trustees for nature cure in the villages and cities of India cannot be satisfied with less. And, therefore we cannot be content if we

[1] *Vide* also "The Meaning of Nature Cure", 3-8-1946.

periodically reduce obesity and deal with other ailments, knowing that the same patients will suffer from the same diseases and return annually for treatment. The workers in Uruli Kanchan have been doing some such work as I have described above but not methodically. Now they must not be satisfied unless they become efficient workers and train similar workers who will be able to replace them. For this work, we do not need a long course. Our aim should not be to replace surgeons or physicians of modern type or *hakims*. Our work is conceived in a different key. It requires original training. We have to produce original books. It needs concentration of work in Uruli Kanchan. Before a visible picture, considered in this light emer-ges, and you are able to assimilate it, we may not be able to do much in Sinhagad.

Mahatma, Vol. VII, p. 192

488. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING [1]

August 4, 1946

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You have given me a second purse for which I thank you. Still there is some deficit. I have been told that it will be made up in two or three months.

I consider the money you have given the very minimum. The great work which is to be done here calls for your full co-operation. That work is the developing of the body, mind and soul of Uruli. For this, the co-operation of every caste, of the old and young, of children and women is needed. Only when we forget caste differences will our threefold afflictions subside. If Uruli Kanchan accomplished this work, we have some hope for the seven lakh villages of India.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 2742. Courtesy: Manibhai Patel

489. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 5, 1946

CHI. PYA.,

God knows if some trouble has developed in the kidney. I feel in good health. My appetite is good, the bowel movements are good;

[1] The written speech was read out at the meeting.

the urine is also satisfactory. However, it is true that I overwork. The burden of *Harijan* is not a small one. The conditions in the country are also worsening day by day. Both these things should not affect me. I am very much alert. My position is that of किं कर्म किमकर्मेति[1] . I utter Ramanama but do not leave all to Rama. You may call it a disease. But now let us see what Sevagram does.

Do not worry. Take upon yourself the burden that you can carry. Let us abide by the wish of God.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

490. LETTER TO RAJA OF PHALTAN

POONA,

August 5, 1946

RAJASAHEB,

I have your letter. I thank you for it. I have not read the papers enclosed with it. I understand your point. Personally I am not involved in the Princes' problem. That is why I advised you not to go by what I say. The right thing for you is to act as Panditji suggests. Today he is the voice of the people of the States and of the whole of India.

Had Tatya Saheb not suggested my publishing what I wrote to you I would never have considered publishing it. There is nothing special in what I have told you. Should my words be misunderstood, I shall try to remove the misunderstanding. Excuse me for not dealing with the matter further.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile of the Marathi in *Mahatma*, Vol. VII, p. 17

[1] That is, inability to decide between action and non-action; *Bhagavad Gita*, IV, 16

491. A KHADI LOVER'S COMPLAINT [1]

A Gujarati khadi lover living in South India writes as follows:

In the Khadi Bhandar here, it is hard to get cotton, spindles, charkhas and their accessories. I have up till now been carrying on with my own cotton. The slivers from cotton bought here were not at all good. I discovered it was of poor quality after I had bought it. I found hand-carding (*tunai*) of it difficult and could not get anyone here to teach me either.

I have just given my full quota of self-spun and self-carded yarn for 1946 to be woven into cloth. At first one could procure coupons for self-spun yarn and buy a certain amount of khadi with it. The yarn given in is to be woven into saris and dhotis. How are we to buy cloth for our other requirements of underwear, sheets, towels, etc.? I went to the Bhandar recently and they demanded the same number of hanks as the amount of rupees the cloth was worth. In addition I was told I had to be a member of the Bhandar. I spend 2 to $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours daily in carding and spinning. If I can spare any more time, I devote it also to this work. But, in spite of all my labour, I shall never be able to produce enough yarn for my requirements. What am I to do? The fact that I am unacquainted with the language is another difficulty. It would be easier if all the rules regarding khadi were written up in Hindustani. Moreover, it seems impossible to get anything done without outside influence. Is one to call it one's misfortune or part our nature? One needs some backing even to buy a spindle, to say nothing about a charkha. If the Charkha Sangh people themselves do not realize what difficulties one has to face in the matter of buying even small requirements to whom can one turn for help?

I spoke about this to a well-known Gujarati friend here. He got enraged. 'Gandhiji has constituted himself Viceroy. Why then should he listen to anyone? He does whatever comes into his head. Let him do so. We shall get khadi from wherever we can and what is more, we shall encourage uncertified khadi. As for Pyarelalji he only puts up to Gandhiji what he chooses and throws the rest into the waste-paper basket.'

The above angry criticism about my post does not need any comment, beyond saying that every worth-while letter is put up before me and that if I were to be acquainted with or read every letter that comes, the whole of my time would be spent on the post and I would be rendered useless for my real work. But what has been said about khadi demands consideration. That Sales Bhandars may disappear under the new scheme only means that they should be converted into

[1] The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 18-8-1946

schools for teaching all the processes of khadi. Therefore, cotton, charkhas, spindles and all other accessories of spinning, carding and ginning should certainly be available there. Above all, the khadi worker should be polite and obliging at all times. If he is not, it will mean the end of khadi and it will be a tragedy if khadi workers themselves were to be the cause of its death.

The criticism in the letter under reference can only be applicable to one or two Bhandars. This note is, therefore, only meant for those to whom it does apply. All such should early set their house in order.

Khadi-wearers who spin regularly and give in their self-spun yarn for being woven into cloth should be, as they are, entitled to purchase against cash the amount of khadi which, according to the A.I.S.A. rules, their above-mentioned yarn permits them to buy.

SEVAGRAM, August 6, 1946

Harijan, 18-8-1946

492. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING [1]

SEVAGRAM,
[*August 6, 1946*][2]

If I ask you how many of you spin, I am afraid very few hands will go up.[3] You have just heard the Ashram inmates giving an account of the day's spinning at the end of the prayer. The reason is that spinning has become a part and parcel of the Ashram prayer. The conception of spinning as sacrifice has been linked with the idea of God, the reason being that we believe that in the charkha and what it stands for, lies the only hope of salvation of the poor.

He had come to realize that it was difficult to earn one's livelihood through the charkha, but the villagers could easily spin for their own clothes. Because they had not realized the self-help principle in the matter of clothing, they showed a deplorable lack of it in other things too. It stultified even agriculture, so that they

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 11-8-1946

[2] Pyarelal says Gandhiji made the speech on the day he arrived in Wardha. This was on August 6.

[3] Gandhiji was addressing visitors who had come to Sevagram for the meeting of the Congress Working Committee to be held at Wardha.

suffered destitution in the midst of plenty.

We have plenty of fertile land where we can grow fruits, vegetables and other food-stuffs. But we do not make full use of our opportunity. Instead of eating fresh, whole foods, we eat them denatured. We grow cereals and eat them after converting them practically into dust. God has given us everything we need and He has endowed us with intellect and the use of two hands. We could raise our food, grow cotton and prepare our own clothes, rear cattle and supply milk to our children. Yet we go hungry and naked. Our children are ill-fed and undernourished. Could there be anything more tragic?

He compared the cities with the villages. The villages could subsist by themselves in regard to all the necessaries of life. Not so the cities. They could neither grow their own food, nor produce cotton for cloth, nor keep cattle without the help and co-operation of the villages. And yet he knew of no village in India which was today self-sufficient. Sevagram should have been such a village. But it was still far from it. Our villagers were lazy and lethargic and killed time by gambling, etc. If they tried to leave the wheel and concentrate on land exclusively, he warned them, they would soon find that it was not practicable. On the contrary, resuscitation of the wheel would help to revitalize agriculture by making them shed their inertia and apathy.

Referring to the unthinking admiration of the visitors who had literally laid siege to his hut the whole day, he describe how it had driven him to desperation almost. He was sick of it. It could do not good either to him or to them. True admiration consisted in carrying out the wishes of the person one admired, not merely staring at him and thus wasting his time and one's own.[1]

Unless there is an atmospheric calamity or some drasticaction by Government, my programme is to stay for six months here from August to January and later six months in Uruli Kanchan, Panchgani, Poona and near about.

Referring to the discontinuance in regular spinning by the Ashramites in the Mahadevbhai Desai Cottage, Mahatma Gandhi said:

When once begun it should have continued even in the absence of Durgabehn Desai. I have decided to spend 30 to 45 minutes daily in spinning in Mahadev's cottage.

He made a feeling reference to Mr. Mahadev Desai's association with him in the Aga Khan Palace in 1942.

[1] What follows is *Bombay Chronicle* version of the speech reported under August 6.

Mahatma Gandhi made a passing reference to the Constituent Assembly which he said might take some time.

Harijan, 18-8-1946, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 7-8-1946

493. HORSE RACING [1]

I have written before regarding the ruination of men and money through horse racing but a very strongly-worded letter from a friend who says that gambling on the race course is not a lesser evil than the drink habit, constrains me to write again on this subject. The writer further says:

> Special trains are run for the races and are full of people who wear Gandhi caps, call themselves Congressmen and go there only to waste their money. Where does this money come from? We now have popular Ministries, but they too are silent and put up with the evil.

Although, in my opinion gambling at races is not as great an evil as drinking of alcohol, one ought not really to draw comparisons. Less bad does not make gambling a good thing. I do not know all the intricacies of horse racing. All I can say is that if it is within the competence of the present Government to put an end to the evil; it should certainly do so.

SEVAGRAM, August 7, 1946

Harijan,, 18-8-1946

494. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA (C. P.),
August 7, 1946

DEAR SIR STAFFORD,

I have before me your two kind letters. Of course both will be treated as private and confidential, though you have marked one as personal and the other, received only two days ago, as private and confidential.

I see from Reuter's telegrams that your health has again given way and you have been obliged to take long rest. I am sorry and hope you are listening to your medical advisers and not wearing yourself out. I have come to know you and of you more through your good

[1] The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 18-8-1946.

wife than through anyone else.

I understand all you say about your and your colleagues' attitude.[1] I have always justified it from your own standpoint. Therefore so long as that trust continues, you will find me defending you. The testing time is coming. I shall watch what you will do in view of the latest Muslim League decision.[2]

With regards to you both and all good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

LONDON

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government 1944-47, p. 216

495. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,

August 7 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I arrived here yesterday. Sushila, Ila and Su's two friends joined me at Akola. I read your letter. We had a long talk. I approved of your idea and therefore I stated categorically that it was Sushila's duty to stay here and look after the children till you sent for her. Her own desire is to help you and join in the struggle, but her duty is to do as you wish. I assume that whenever you feel that Sushila should return there, you will unhesitatingly write or cable. Sushila is returning to Akola today. She will stay for a day at Mahila Ashram. The rest Sushila will write, or Kishorelal at any rate. He keeps indifferent health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4987

[1] The addressee in his letter of July 20 had said that he and his colleagues of the Cabinet Mission were aware that Gandhiji had a "feeling" that the practical steps they had put forward did not embody the "spirit of their desires" and proceeded to explain that their "procedure was not based upon an ideal but on a practical solution of the problem". He was convinced that the best practical solution for the Interim Government was a coalition.

[2] On July 29 the Council of the All-India Muslim League had passed two resolutions, one rejecting the Cabinet Mission proposals and the other deciding to resort to direct action for the achievement of Pakistan.

496. TRIBUTE TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE [1]

SEVAGRAM,
August 7, 1946

Gurudev's life was a continuous poem of service. He served Hindustan to the last breath of his life.

The Hitavada, 9-8-1946

497. QUESTION BOX

THE CENTRAL POINT MISSED

The following questions have been given by a British military officer who read with great interest the article in the *Harijan* of July 28, 1946 on 'Independence'[2]. The officer is a military engineer, widely travelled in America and Europe, and has seen with his own eyes the horrors of the war in Germany.

Q. 1. In this ideal State (there is no doubt that it is ideal) how can one be sure that outside aggression can be avoided? If the State has no modern army with modern weapons which are the product of the machine age, an invading army with modern weapons could over-run the country and subject and inhabitants to slavery.

A. The questioner, who claims to have read and reread my article carefully and says he has liked it and is a military man, has evidently missed the central point of my article, viz., that however small a nation or even a group may be, it is able, even as the individual, provided that it has one mind as also the will and the grit, to defend its honour and self-respect against a whole world in arms. Therein consists the matchless strength and beauty of the unarmed. That is non-violent defence which neither knows nor accepts defeat at any stage. Therefore, a nation or a group which has made non-violence its final policy, cannot be subjected to slavery even by the atom bomb.

WHY IN WANT OF FOOD?

Q. 2. India at the present time cannot grow enough food for its population. To buy food from abroad, India must sell other goods to pay for it, and in order to sell such goods, India must produce at competitive prices which, in my opinion, cannot be done without modern machines. How can

[1] The occasion was the death anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore.
[2] *Vide* "Independence", 21-7-1946.

this be done, unless the machine replaces manual labour?

A. The statement in the first sentence of the question is wholly wrong. I hold, in spite of opinions expressed to the contrary, that India is able at the present moment to grow enough food. I have previously stated the condition for growing enough food, viz., that the Government at the head should be National and a Government that knows its business and is capable of dealing sternly with all profiteering, black-marketing and, worst of all, laziness of mind and body.

The second part of the question really falls to the ground if my answer to the first is correct. But for the sake of dismissing the plea on behalf of modern machines as against human labour of which there is plenty in a land like India, I would say that if all the able-bodied millions work with one mind and with zeal, they could com-pete on their own terms with any nation, however well-equipped it may be with modern machines. The questioner should not forget that modern machines have up till now gone side by side with the exploitation of the machineless nations, dubbed weak. I use the parti-ciple 'dubbed' because they will refuse to be weak immediately they realize the fact that they are even at the present moment stronger than the nations equipped with the most modern weapons and machinery.

SWARAJ THROUGH SPINNING

A Congressman writes:

> Q. You will perhaps agree that in spite of considerable publicity, spinning and weaving have not yet found favour with the public to the extent to which they should have done. I think if every Congress Committee—at least those of the big cities—starts a sort of coaching-class for the public for this purpose, it can do immense good. Many people—particularly the poor—do not take to spinning because they do not know spinning and weaving, what type of wheels are more convenient to use and give greater output, how these are properly operated, how best they should dispose of or utilize the yarn thus produced, etc. If once or twice a week, some such classes are undertaken after proper publicity and people are instructed in this technique by practical demonstrations, things should improve much. At least the experiment is worth a trial by the Congress. Even if regular classes are not held but a group or groups of experts of this technique undertake a tour and give demonstrations and instruction to the public for some days in each city, it can serve the purpose to a considerable extent.

Questions like the above often come to me from Congressmen. Since this is exhaustive, I reproduce it as it is. The signature is

undecipherable. Therefore, I am unable to say to which province the questioner belongs. Surely it would have been appropriate if the writer had been good enough to frame his letter in Hindustani. The vast mass of Congressmen who are not on the Congress register but who are more Congressmen than the registered ones, do not know English and those who do, careless for spinning than for being on the Congress register for reasons they know and which I need not specify. There is, however, a great deal in what the writer says. If all Congress offices became institutions for teaching the art of spinning from the anterior and posterior processes right up to the manufacture of khadi, I am quite clear that the face of the villages would be changed and swaraj would be ushered in through the effort of the masses. I have shown in these columns how it will be ushered in. These lines are written to emphasize the point made by the correspondent.

SEVAGRAM, August 8, 1946
Harijan, 18-8-1946

498. RAMANAMA AGAIN

A friend sends me a letter received by him for an answer. The letter is long. I have only copied here the relevant part:

> India is in his blood but why should he cause resentment among his countrymen who are not of his religious faith by holding daily prayer meetings and chanting Ramanama (meaning the name of Rama, the Hindu God)? He should realize that India is full of manifold faiths and most of the conservatives are apt to mistake him (and this is one of the pleas of the Muslim League) if he openly goes on talking in the name of the Hindu gods. One of his pet terms is the establishment of *Rama-Rajya* (the rule of Rama). What would a devout Muslim feel about this?

I must repeat for the thousandth time that Ramanama is one of the many names for God. The same prayer meetings have recitations from the Koran and the Zend Avesta. Devout Muslims, for the very reason that they are devout, have never objected to the chant of Ramanama. Ramanama is not an idle chant. It is conceived as a mode of addressing the all-pervasive God known to me, as to millions of Hindus, by the familiar name of Ramanama. ‘Nama’ at the end of Rama is the most significant part. It means the ‘nama’ without the Rama of history. Be that as it may, why should an open profession by me of my faith offend anybody, much less the Muslim League? No

one is obliged to join these meetings and having joined is not obliged to take part in the chant. All that the visitors are expected to do is not to mar the harmony of the meeting and to tolerate the proceedings even when they are not in sympathy with any part.

As to the use of the phrase '*Rama-Rajya*', why should it offend after my having defined its meaning many times? It is a convenient and expressive phrase, the meaning of which no alternative can so fully express to millions. When I visit the Frontier Province or address predominantly Muslim audiences I would express my meaning to them by calling it Khudai Raj, while to a Christian audience I would describe it as the Kingdom of God on earth. Any other mode would, for me, be self-suppression and hypocrisy.

SEVAGRAM, August 8, 1946

Harijan, 18-8-1946

499. IS GOD A PERSON OR A PRINCIPLE? [1]

A friend from Baroda, who writes in English, says:

> You ask us to pray to God to give light to the whites in South Africa and strength and courage to the Indians there to remain steadfast to the end. A prayer of this nature can only be addressed to a person. If God is an all-pervading and all-powerful force, what is the point of praying to Him? He goes on with His work whatever happens.

I have written on this topic before. However, if one keeps on saying the same thing again and again in different words some new words or phrases used are likely to help someone or other to understand the matter better. In my view, whether called Rama, Rahman, Ormuzd God or Krishna, He is that Supreme Power that man is ever trying to find a name for. Man, though imperfect, strives after perfection and in so doing is caught up in the tides of thought. Then like a baby learning to toddle, he now stumbles, now stands up. Thus if we say that a reasoning man is only a few months' old child, we shall not in the least be exaggerating, judging by the immensity of cosmic time; we shall be stating a simple truth. Man can express himself only by means of language. But there can be no such medium as language for the Power that is God. Man however can describe this

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 18-8-1946, under the title "Is God a Person or Force?"

Infinite Power only with his imperfect means. If one has grasped this there is nothing left further to ask. Then it would be right to pray to Him in the language of man, for one can comprehend Him somewhat by yfitting Him into one's own mould. One ought always to remember, while dwelling on Him, that one is but a drop, the tiniest of creatures of the ocean that is God. One may experience Him by being in Him, but one can never describe Him. As Madame Blavatsky puts it, man, in praying, worships the Great Power residing within. Only he who knows this may pray. He who does not, need not pray. God will not be offended by it, but I can say from experience that that man will be the loser by not praying. So it is immaterial if some worship God as a Person and some others as Great Power. Both are right, each in his own way. Nobody knows what is intrinsically right and nobody is likely ever to know. The ideal, to be an ideal, must forever remain out of reach. All the other forces are static, while God is the Life Force, immanent and at the same time transcendent.

SEVAGRAM, August 8, 1946
[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 18-8-1946

500. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM,
August 8, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

I have your letter. This is my order and my advice: You will stir from that place only after finishing your work there.Take it as completed only after Prafulla Babu and Bhagirathji say to. Thereafter you should go to Badshahkhan. In whatever situation you are it is better to stay there till I come. I will not take you to Bengal if you come here in the meantime.

I shall see about the money. Pyarelal is in Bombay at present. He may come in a day or two.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 524

501. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL [1]

SEVAGRAM,
August 16, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have read your letter and copies of the correspondence with . . . .[2] I shall know more when I have further information. If you can take care of your health I shall consider it as part of the service rendered by you. But you being the Sardar, who may tell you to do anything?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 324

502. LETTER TO HIRALAL DESAI

[*August 8, 1946*][3]

BHAI HIRALAL,

I have your letter and I have gone through it. I am doing all that I can. It is a difficult task, but many painful problems can be solved through courteous dealing. I have with me the report from Aryanayakum and Ram. It is full of information.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

HIRALAL DESAI
CEYLON

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This may be read as the first letter under August 16, 1946, i.e., after the item "Move on", p. 166.

[2] Omission as in the source

[3] The source has this letter among those dated August 8, 1946.

503. LETTER TO JEHANGIR PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
August 8, 1946

BHAI JEHANGIRJI,

You could not catch hold of Munnalal but I had also spoken to you about another man called Ramprasad[1]. He is not physically as sturdy as Munnalal, but is just as hard-working. He is conversant with book-keeping. He has been trained under Bapa whom he has served well. He is married and has a child. If you decide to have him, he will for the time being come alone. He certainly needs Rs. 150 but I think he should be paid Rs. 200 if possible. There will be no question of raising this amount. If he does not need the whole amount he is honest enough to return the surplus. His child however is delicate. He himself is of course delicate, and so is his wife. Hence I suggest Rs. 200, so that in the event of a contingency arising he should not be without resources. I want to see to it that he is not obliged to economize on his food. I think your association ought to provide him residential accommodation. If he were to fend for himself and pay the current market rent he would hardly be free to move around. And as your work progresses he might have to run around a bit. Ramprasad's knowledge of English is rudimentary. Of course he understands it. He may also write it but will make mistakes. Gujarati, however, he knows well. He understands Marathi. He has an elemen-tary knowledge of indigenous medicine. His wife is a nice lady full of the spirit of service. And she has become one with Ramprasad. In her own life she does not harbour any prejudice. She is simple. I rarely have English-knowing women around me. This one knows absolutely no English. She can read and write Gujarati. Please let me have an early reply to this if possible.

Remember that Ramanama is the unfailing remedy for eradi-cating malaria. Having become a trustee of a nature-cure institution you have got to appreciate this thing. And Ramanama is the same as Ahurmazda.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Ramprasad Vyas

504. LETTER TO DR. B. S. MOONJE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA C.P.,
August 8, 1946

BROTHER MUNJE,

I have both your letters. My views on bigamy are opposite to yours. What can I do?

About Ahmedabad I have said what I wanted to.

Your
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: C. W. 9764. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX I

CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTION [1]

May 24, 1946

The Working Committee have given careful consideration to the Statement dated May 16, 1946, issued by the Delegation of the British Cabinet and the Viceroy on behalf of the British Government, as well as the correspondence relating to it that has passed between the Congress President and the members of the Delegation. They have examined it with every desire to find a way for a peaceful and co-operative transfer of power and the establishment of a free and independent India. Such an India must necessarily have a strong central authority capable of representing the nation with power and dignity in the counsels of the world. In considering the Statement, the Working Committee have kept in view the picture of the future, in so far as this was available to them from the proposals made for the formation of a Provisional Government and the clarification given by members of the Delegation. This picture is still incomplete and vague. It is only on the basis of the full picture that they can judge and come to a decision as to how far this is in conformity with the objectives they aim at. These objectives are : independence for India, a strong, though limited, central authority, full autonomy for the provinces, the establishment of a democratic structure in the centre and in the units, the guarantee of the fundamental rights of each individual so that he may have full and equal opportunities of growth, and further that each community should have opportunity to live the life of its choice within the larger framework.

The Committee regret to find a divergence between these objectives and the various proposals that have been made on behalf of the British Government, and, in particular, there is no vital change envisaged during the interim period when the Provisional Government will function, in spite of the assurance given in Paragraph 23 of the Statement. If the independence of India is aimed at, then the functioning of the Provisional Government must approximate closely in fact, even though not in law, to that independence and all obstructions and hindrances to it should be removed. The continued presence of a foreign army of occupation is a negation of independence.

The Statement issued by the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy contains certain recommendations and suggests a procedure for the building up of a Constituent Assembly, which is sovereign in so far as the framing of the Constitution is concerned. The Committee do not agree with some of these recommendations.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence" 24-5-1946.

In their view it will be open to the Constituent Assembly itself at any stage to make changes and variations, with the proviso that in regard to certain major communal matters a majority decision of both the major communities will be necessary.

The procedure for the election of the Constituent Assembly is based on representation in the ratio of one to a million, but the application of this principle appears to have been overlooked in the case of European members of Assemblies, particularly in Assam and Bengal. Therefore, the Committee expect that this oversight will be corrected.

The Constituent Assembly is meant to be a fully elected body, chosen by the elected members of the Provincial Legislatures. In Baluchistan there is no elected assembly or any other kind of chamber which might elect a representative for the Constituent Assembly. It would be improper for any kind of nominated individual to speak for the whole province of Baluchistan, which he really does not represent in any way.

In Coorg the Legislative Council contains some nominated members as well as Europeans elected from a special constituency of less than a hundred electors. Only the elected members from the general constituencies should participate in the election.

The Statement of the Cabinet Delegation affirms the basic principle of provincial autonomy and residuary powers vesting in the Provinces. It is further said that Provinces should be free to form groups. Subsequently, however, it is recommended that provincial representatives will divide up into sections which "shall proceed to settle the Provincial Constitutions for the Provinces in each section and shall also decide whether any Group Constitution shall be set up for those Provinces". There is a marked discrepancy in these two separate provisions, and it would appear that a measure of compulsion is introduced which clearly infringes the basic principle of provincial autonomy. In order to retain the recommendatory character of the Statement, and in order to make the clauses consistent with each other, the Committee read paragraph 15 to mean that, in the first instance, the respective provinces will make their choice whether or not to belong to the section in which they are placed. Thus the Constituent Assembly must be considered as a sovereign body with final authority for the purpose of drawing up a constitution and giving effect to it.

The provisions in the Statement in regard to the Indian States are vague and much has been left for future decision. The Working Committee would, however, like to make it clear that the Constituent Assembly cannot be formed of entirely disparate elements, and the manner of appointing State representatives for the Constituent Assembly must approximate, in so far as is possible, to the method adopted in the Provinces. The Committee are gravely concerned to learn that even at present moment some State govern-ments are attempting to crush the spirit of their people with the help of armed forces. These recent developments in the States are of great significance in the present and for the future of India as they indicate that their is no

real change of policy on the part of some of the State governments and of those who exercise Paramountcy.

A Provisional National Government must have a new basis and must be a precursor of the full independence that will emerge from the Constituent Assembly. It must function in recognition of the fact, though changes in law need not be made at this stage. The Governor-General may continue as the head of the Government during the interim period, but the Government should function as a cabinet responsible to the Central Legislature. The status, powers and composition of the Provisional Government should be fully defined in order to enable the Committee to come to a decision. Major communal issues shall be decided in the manner referred to above in order to remove any possible fear or suspicion from the minds of a minority.

The Working Committee consider that the connected problems involved in the establishment of a Provisional Government and a Constituent Assembly should be viewed together so that they may appear as parts of the same picture, and there may be co-ordination between the two, as well as an acceptance of the independence that is now recognized as India's right and due. It is only with the conviction that they are engaged in building up a free, great and independent India, that the Working Committee can approach this task and invite the co-operation of all the people of India. In the absence of a full picture, the Committee are unable to give a final opinion at this stage.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 679-82. Also A.I.C.C. File No. 1499K, 1946-47. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE [1]

OFFICE OF THE CABINET DELEGATION,
THE VICEROY'S HOUSE,
NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1946

MY DEAR GANDHIJI,

I thank you for your letter of yesterday. It seems to me quite natural that the Congress Working Committee should disperse while we are waiting for the Muslim League whose decisive meeting is, I understand, timed for June 5. But I hope very much they will be back on that day or as soon as possible after it, or else we shall have a further delay.

With regard to yourself I do not see why you should trouble to remain in Delhi

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence" 24-5-1946.

during the interval. But when the parties are here again after that I hope very much you will be able to come and give a helping hand.

I have come out here for the express purpose of launching India on its passage to sovereignty and independence and I greatly need your co-operation.

Sincerely yours,

PETHICK-LAWRENCE

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 687-8. Also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Govermnment, 1944-47*, pp. 197-8

APPENDIX III

LETTER FROM LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE[1]

Personal

OFFICE OF THE CABINET DELEGATION,
THE VICEROY'S HOUSE,
NEW DELHI,
June 10, 1946

MY DEAR GANDHIJI,

Thank you for sharing with me and Stafford your prayerful thoughts. I too have a strong feeling, where I am dependent on forces outside myself, that I must be content to accept the will of the Divinity that you call X; and that sometimes in Bjornsen's words may be "uber unserer kraft" (beyond our power). But where a decision of my own enters in I have a grave responsibility to all those who will be affected by it, to make it aright.

Did I ever tell you the following story illustrating the profound human belief in the rightness of things lying behind injustice? A parson said to a farmer who was worried about something, "Put your trust in Providence, my man." "No," said the farmer, "I have no trust in Providence. He lost me my pig 2 years ago. He let my home be burnt last year. He took away my wife last summer. No, I refuse to trust in Providence. But I will tell you what. There is a power above Him who will pull him up if he goes too far"

Sincerely yours,

PETHICK-LAWRENCE

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, p. 862. Also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47*, p. 203

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence" 10-6-1946.

APPENDIX IV

INTERVIEW WITH LORD WAVELL[1]

June 11, 1946

1. I told Mr. Gandhi that I had asked him to come to see me because there appeared to be a deadlock over the last stage of the Cabinet Mission's work, the formation of an Interim Government. It would be very great pity if after all the hard and successful work of the Mission there was a breakdown at this point; and we must avoid it in the interests of India.

The deadlock seemed likely to occur over the issue of parity between the Congress and the Muslim League in the Interim Government. It was quite clear that this Government must be a coalition of the two main parties; and the trouble threatened to arise because Mr. Jinnah would not commit the Muslim League to participation in the Interim Government unless he had parity with Congress, and it seemed that Congress would not come in on these terms. I said parity between the Congress and the Muslim League, in view of the respective number of voters whom they represented, was obviously illogical; but what we were concerned with was an expedient, which would not form a precedent, to get over the difficult interim period. I said that if both parties were determined to work for the common good of India in the interim period, parity had no real meaning; and that if one party was out to dominate the Government and order everything to its own advantage then obviously the Government would do no good. I said that I was personally convinced that Mr. Jinnah, if he came into the Government, would work for good administration and not merely politically; and that I was sure that the same would be true of the Congress.

2. I stressed the need for good administration in the forthcoming period, both to tide India over her present difficulties, the threatened famine and the railway strike, and also to lay the foundations of India's future prosperity and independence. I said that I thought it was the opportunity for the Congress to make a generous gesture and to agree to Mr. Jinnah's condition, even if they thought it illogical and unreasonable, and that I hoped they would be able to do so. The alternative to obtaining a stable Government in this interim period was likely to be chaos and disorder, and might ruin the last opportunity for a really united India.

3. I suggested that perhaps the best way out of this difficulty would be for me to see Jinnah and Nehru together and to endeavour to arrive at an agreed composition for the Interim Government with them.

4. Mr. Gandhi said that he was thoroughly anxious for a settlement, and that he agreed that a coalition was necessary. What was required was a homogeneous team

[1] As recorded in a note by Lord Wavell.

which would work together. It should not lean too much upon the Viceroy, who was, he said, only a bird of passage, but to work together as a team by themselves. I said that this was undoubtedly the ideal but that it was the first step which was necessary and that a mediator between the two parties would undoubtedly be essential.

Mr. Gandhi then went off into a rather long digression about the poverty of India and the necessity for more food and cloth; but at the end of it came back to my suggestion and agreed that the best thing would be for me to see the leaders of the Congress and the Muslim League together; and that since he realized the difficulty of Azad meeting Jinnah, the meeting should be between Jinnah and Nehru; he would advise me to pin them down to make a Government and not to allow them to leave the room until they had done so; that parity was of no account, nor whether the members belonged to the Congress or the league or anyone, provided they were the best men available. He said I should be prepared to go out of the room and leave them to themselves if necessary.

5. He then turned on to the matter of the Europeans' vote and said that it was a most important issue, and that the Europeans should make a declaration if they did not intend to vote. I said that it was a matter which must be left to the commonsense of the Europeans.

6. The conversation lasted for about forty minutes and Mr. Gandhi was quite friendly throughout. It is always difficult to fathom how his mind is working, but he gave the impression that he would advise the Congress to come to terms and not to allow a breakdown on the parity issue.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 864-5

APPENDIX V

RESOLUTION OF MUSLIM LEAGUE COUNCIL[1]

June 6, 1946

This meeting of the Council of the All-India Muslim League, after having carefully considered the Statement issued by the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy on May 16 and other relevant statements and documents officially issued in connection therewith, and after having examined the proposals set forth in the said Statement in all their bearings and implications, places on record the following views for the guidance of the National and direction to the Working Committee :

2. That the references made, and the conclusions recorded, in paragraphs 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 of the Statement, concerning the Muslim demand for the establishment of a full sovereign Pakistan as the only solution of the Indian

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence" 12-6-1946 and "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence" 13-6-1946.

constitutional problem, are unwarranted, unjustified, and unconvincing, and should not therefore have found place in a State document, issued on behalf and with the authority of the British Government. These paragraphs are couched in such language and contain such mutilations of the established facts, that the Cabinet Mission have clearly been prompted to include them in their Statement solely with the object of appeasing the Hindus, in utter disregard of Muslim sentiments. Furthermore, the contents of the aforesaid paragraphs are in conflict and inconsistent with the admissions made by the Mission themselves in paragraphs 5 and 12 of their Statement, which are to the following effect: First, the Mission "were greatly impressed by the very genuine and acute anxiety of the Muslims lest they should find themselves subjected to a perpetual Hindu majority rule." Second, "this feeling has become so strong and widespread amongst the Muslims that it cannot be allayed by mere paper safeguards."Third, "if there is to be internal peace in India, it must be secured by measures which will assure to the Muslims a control in all matters vital to their culture, religion, economic or other interests." Fourth, "very real Muslim apprehensions exist that their culture and political and social life might become submerged in a purely unitary India, in which the Hindus, with their greatly superior numbers, must be the dominating element." In order that there may be no manner of doubt in any quarter, the Council of the All-India Muslim League reiterates that the attainment of the goal of a complete sovereign Pakistan still remains the unalterable objective of the Muslims in India, for the achievement of which they will, if necessary, employ every means in their power and consider no sacrifice or suffering too great.

3. That notwithstanding the affront offered to Muslim by the choice of injudicious words in the preamble to the Statement of the Cabinet Mission, the Muslim League, having regard to the grave issues involved, and prompted by its earnest desire for a peaceful solution, if possible, of the Indian constitutional probem, and inasmuch as the basis and the foundation of Pakistan are inherent in the Mission's plan by virtue of the compulsory grouping of the six Muslim provinces, in Sections B and C, is willing to co-operate with the constitution-making machinery proposed in the scheme outlined by the Mission, in the hope that it would ultimately result in the establishment of complete sovereign Pakistan, and in the consummation of the goal of independence for the major nations, Muslims and Hindus, and all the other people inhabiting the vast sub-continent.

It is for these reasonss that the Muslim League is accepting the scheme, and will secession of Provinces or Groups from the Union which have been provided in the Mission's plan by implication.

The ultimate attitude of the Muslim League will depend on the final outcome of the labours of the constitution-making body, and on the final shape of the constitutions which may emerge from the deliberations of that body jointly and

separately in its three sections. The Mulim League also reserves the right to modify and revise the policy and attitude set forth in this resolution at any time during the progress of deliberations of the constitution-making body, or the Constituent Assembly, or thereafter if the course of events so require, bearing in mind the fundamental principles and ideals herebefore adumbrated to which the Muslim League is irrevocably committed.

4. That with regard to the arrangement for the proposed Interim Government at the Centre, this Council authorizes its President to negotiate with the Viceroy and to take such decisions and actions as he deems fit and proper.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 836-8

APPENDIX VI

INTERVIEW WITH LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE[1]

7.30 p.m., June 12, 1946

Gandhi came in and I said it was a pleasure to see him again after so long an interval and the Viceroy had asked me to thank him for his helpful talk the other day[2] and I wanted to thank him for the help he had been giving in the last few days. I knew he would agree with me as to the importance of not having a break now.

He said that was of course true but there were certain things that were wrong that must be straightened out. He then went in some detail into the question of the European vote in Bengal and elsewhere. I said we had promised when he was here before to discuss this with the Europeans and had scrupulously carried out this promise. But we could not amend the Statement and he himself had advised us not to do so. He said that though it was not expressly stated in the Statement it was implied by the references to adult suffrage, population, weightage, etc., that the tiny handful of Europeans should not have the voting power that they claimed and that, further, Europeans by virtue of the fact that they were aliens should not interefere with such a purely Indian question as the future constitution of India. (He did *not* if I remember right refer specifically to the sentence in paragraph 3). I said that I understood the Europeans were issuing some public statement. He interrupted me and I gathered he knew all about the statement. He said it did not alter the facts and that the Europeans ought to have the good sense not to intervene. I said that they were in a very difficult

[1] As recorded in a note by Lord Pethick-Lawrence. *Vide* "Letter to Lord Wavell", 13-6-1946.

[2] On June 11

position. I understood him to say that he appreciated this but it did not alter his strong feelings in the matter.

Turning to the Interim Government, I said that I was sorry it had not been possible to have the three-party interview which had been envisaged but that I understood the Viceroy had had a very full and interesting talk with Nehru. He said he was sure the plan he had supported provided a golden bridge with which to span the chasm. He then developed an attack on Jinnah alleging that Jinnah had said that he would use his position in the Interim Government to "water the seeds of Pakistan". When I suggested that if Jinnah came into the Interim Government he would work for the good of India, and that I found it difficult to credit him with the statement attributed to him, Gandhi said he would have the quotation looked up and send it to me.

I then stressed the fearful consequences of not reaching [an] agreement with which he seemed fully to concur. After some small talk in which I made reference to my desire to finish my work for Indian independence and to get back home, he took his departure. He had stayed about 40 minutes.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 888-9

APPENDIX VII

INTERVIEW WITH LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE[1]

1.30 p.m., June 16, 1946

Gandhi came to see me today at Willingdon Crescent. I described the document[2] to him stressing that the Viceroy had selected men that he thought would make a good team and would do good administrative work. I told him what the allocation between parties was, what would happen if one individual fell out, what would happen if the proposal were not accepted, and the need for the scheme of May 16th to go forward.

I said I understood that Congress had passed a resolution which in terms would prevent them from accepting this scheme but that, if it seemed good to him, I hoped he would not allow this decision to prevent them from accepting. I believed he knew that I had only one desire—to promote the independence, prosperity and friendship of India and as he had the same idea I asked him to help to get the scheme through.

He then took the document and read it. The first thing that caught his eye was the alpabetical order of the names which caused him to smile and I think approve. He wanted to be quite clear as to what would happen if an individual fell out and I said that if he were a Congressman Congress would be consulted. In response to enquiry I said

[1] As recorded in a note by Lord Pethick-Lawrence. *Vide* Interview tothe Press", 16-6-1946.

[2] *Vdie* Appendix "Lord Wavell's Statement", 16-6-1946.

I could not commit the Viceroy to accepting the advice of Congress in selecting an alternative name but I thought it likely that if after discussion with Congress they strongly urged a certain name he would probably accept it. He noted that there was no woman on the list, and I said that personally I regretted that it had not been found possible to secure a suitable name.

He said that he realised it was not now possible to alter a comma in the Statement.

He said that he would examine it carefully, but of course there was not time to do so now as it was nearly 2 o'clock. He then left.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 953-4

APPENDIX VIII

LORD WAVELL'S STATEMENT[1]

NEW DELHI,

June 16, 1946

1. His Excellency the Viceroy, in consultation with the members of the Cabinet Mission, has for some time been exploring the possibilities of forming a coalition Government drawn from the two major parties and certain of the minorities. The discussions have revealed the difficulties which exist for the two major parties in arriving at any agreed basis for the formation of such a Government.

2. The Viceroy and the Cabinet Mission appreciate these difficulties and the efforts which the two parties have made to meet them. They consider, however, that no useful purpose can be served by further prolonging these discusions. It is indeed urgently necessary that a strong and representative interim Government should be set up to conduct the very heavy and important business that has to be carried through.

3. The Viceroy is therefore issuing invitations to the following to serve as members of the Interim Government on the basis that the constitution-making will proceed in accordance with the Statement of May 16 :

Sardar Baldev Singh
Sir N. P. Engineer
Mr. Jagjivan Ram
Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru
Mr. M. A. Jinnah
Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan
Mr. H.. K. Mahtab
Dr. John Matthai

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 16-6-1946.

Nawab Mohammed Ismail Khan

Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin

Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar

Mr. C. Rajagopalachari

Dr. Rajendra Prasad

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

It any of those invited is unable for personal reasons to accept, the Viceroy will, after consultation, invite some other person in his place.

4. The Viceroy will arrange the distribution of portfolios in consultation with the leaders of the two major parties.

5. The above composition of the Interim Government is in no way to be taken as a precedent for the solution of any other communal question. It is an expedient put forward to solve the present difficulty only, and to obtain the best available coalition Government.

6. The Viceroy and the Cabinet Mission believe that Indians of all communities desire to arrive at a speedy settlement of this matter so that the process of constitution-making can go forward and that the Government of India may be carried on as efficiently as possible in the meantime.

7. They therefore hope that all parties, especially the two major parties, will accept this proposal so as to overcome the present obstacles, and will co-operate for the successful carrying on of the interim Government. Should this proposal be accepted the Viceroy will aim at inaugurating the new Government about 26th June.

8. In the event of the two major parties or either of them proving unwilling to join in the setting up of a coalition Government on the above lines, it is the intention of the Viceroy to proceed with the formation of an interim Government which will be as representative as possible of those willing to accept the Statement of May 16.

9. The Viceroy is also directing the Governors of the Provinces to summon the Provincial Legislative Assemblies forthwith to proceed with the elections necessary for the setting up of the constitution-making machinery as put forward in the Statement of May 16.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 954-5

APPENDIX IX

INTERVIEW WITH SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS[1]

[*June 20, 1946*][2]

I saw Gandhi at 1.10 p. m. and stayed with him till 2.40 p. m. He started by saying that I should address my arguments to the Maulana. I told him I had done so and the Maulana had suggested I should see him (Gandhi). To this he replied "he has done a disservice to both of us".

I made as strong an appeal to him as was possible on both the points, repeating all the arguments I had put to the Maulana.

On Engineer, which I dealt with first, he said he had no personal objection against him, indeed he had heard favourable accounts of the honourable way in which he had conducted the I. N. A. prosecutions. His objection was first that Congress had not been consulted on his name and second that as he was in an official post he would merely be another vote for the Viceroy.

I explained to him why Congress could not be consulted under the procedure we had adopted and I strongly stressed that his other fear was quite groundless as that was not the spirit in which the Viceroy was entering upon this task. He admitted that he had no reason to suspect it but maintained his objection "in principle" arising from his long experience of former Government and in South Africa. I pointed out the conditions of this Government would be quite different and one amongst 14 was not a basis for objection to "officials". I also pointed out that Engineer was not an official though he happened to hold an official post and that any way as he had accepted we were not able to make any alteration as it would be a wrong and impossible way of dealing with an individual. With this he agreed.

We then went on to the other point and he reiterated that he had always said this was the wrong way for forming a Government, that it should be left to one party or the other and not be a coalition forced on the two parties by the British. He did not regard a breakdown on this as final since it might lead to a better arrangement.

It was quite clear that he could not be influenced from his point of view and therefore, after a final appeal to him to at least let this method be tried, I left him.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 985-6

[1] As recorded in a note by Sir Stafford Cripps. *Vide* "Interview with Sir Stafford Cripps", 20-6-1946.

[2] Though placed under June 19, a footnote in the source says that it seemed probable that this meeting took place on June 20.

APPENDIX X

INTERVIEW WITH CABINET DELEGATION [1]

8 p. m. *June 24, 1946*

1. Mr. Gandhi raised the matter of the instructions issued by Governors for the elections to the Constituent Assembly. He produced to the Delegation a telegram which he had received from Assam and said that this, read with the instructions as he had first understood them, made him think that members of the Constituent Assembly were being required to accept the Delegation's interpretation of their Statement of the 16th May because of the words in it which said that a candidate agreed to serve as a member of the Constituent Assembly for the purposes of paragraph 19 of the Statement of 16th May. Mr. Gandhi explained that he had taken legal opinion which did not support his anxieties and said that he had seen the Press Communique put out by the Government of India. If he had seen this Communique originally he would not have been troubled to the same extent that he had been. In addition to the legal difficulty, however, he felt a moral difficulty about this matter.

The Secretary of State and Sir S. Cripps pointed out that the telegram from Assam was based on a complete misunderstanding of what members of the Constituent Assembly were required to undertake. Mr. Gandhi was shown the form of undertaking required by the Bengal regulations and agreed that it contained no obligation of the kind he feared. The Secretary of State emphasised that by signing the undertaking a member of the Constituent Assembly was not accepting anything in addition to what was in the Statement of 16th May already.

The Viceroy said that it was clear that grouping was an essential part of the Delegation's proposals. Sir S. Cripps pointed out that what was essential was the forming of the constituent Assembly in sections for the purpose of framing the constitution. Mr. Gandhi said that he felt that the regulations should have referred to the Statement of May 16th as a whole and not specifically to paragraph 19 was the only one which referred to the setting up of the Constituent Assembly. There were other parts of the Statement as a whole to which members of the Constituent Assembly could not be expected to give concurrence, for example, the paragraphs rejecting a sovereign Pakistan. Mr. Gandhi said that at the Press Conference Lord Pethick-Lawrence had interpreted the Statement to mean that the Constituent Assembly must meet in sections. He (Mr. Gandhi) had dissented from this view and his interpretation of the document was upheld by eminent lawyers. It

[1] *Vide* "Interview with Cabinet Delegation", 24-6-1946.

was clear that the Delegation were the law-givers and could not interpret their own law. It must be the Federal Court which would interpret the meaning of the Statement. His trouble was that by signing the declaration required by the electoral rules a member of the Constituent Assembly might be bound morally to accept the Delegation's interpertation. Sir S. Cripps said that any doubt on the point might be solved by the fact that the person who sent the telegram from Assam was under a misapprehension as to what members of the Constituent Assembly were in fact asked to sign. Mr. Ganghi had agreed that the form of declaration was innocuous morally and his lawyers had agreed with the interpretation of it which Sir Stafford himself had expressed to Mr. Gandhi earlier. The First Lord said that what mattered was what a person signed. Mr. Gandhi agreed that whatever views a man might have about sections or groups he could sign the form of declaration in the Bengal regulations.

2. Mr. Gandhi said he wanted to make his position about the Constituent Assembly clear. His view was that the Europeans had no vote and could not stand as candidates. He would like to ask the Delegation whether they had made any further progress or did they ask Congress to rely on whatever local assistance they could get if the Europeans say that they want to assert their right. Sir S. Cripps and the Viceroy said there was nothing more to be said about the Europeans since the statements issued by the European repressentatives.

3. Mr. Gandhi said there was one very delicate matter which he would like to raise. Mr. Sudhir Ghosh had reported to him his conversation with Sir S. Cripps on this subject and he felt that he would like to clear his mind. What he wanted to know was whether, if the whole thing was scrapped, would the undertakings to Mr. Jinnah also be scrapped, would the undertakings to Mr. Jinnah also be scrapped, or would the whole Statement be scrapped, or what would happen. It would not be a satisfactory thing from his point of view if this were the case. If the Government of India is appointed personally by the Viceroy he will be responsible only to the British Government. It would not be satisfactory to Mr. Gandhi nor did he think it would satisfy the Congress or, for that matter, the Muslim League. He thought the Delegation owed it to the Congress, the Muslim League and the public to tell them what they proposed to do. If the Delegation said that they could tell him nothing he would take that answer, but if they had anything to say to him so that he could advise the Working Committee with full knowledge, he would be obliged.

The Indian people would have to work this Constituent Assembly which had no statutory existence. It would be a difficult thing to do as the Delegation had created the Statement which had no legal existence. There were bound to be differences of opinion as to what it meant. The Congress, the Muslim League and the British Government used the same terms to mean differennt things. For example, the Congress independence meant independence now. To the Delegation it meant

independence when "this Charter is passed", but it would only become a Charter if the people went for it and the British Government afterwards legalized the Charter. Suppose that there were a change of Secretary of State or a change of Government and that the intention of the British Government changed. . . . The Secrtary of State here interrupted Mr. Gandhi to say that he would like to answer that point at once. It was not the practice of British Government to repudiate definite pledges given by their predecessors to third parties. They were not capable of doing that but if it were assumed that they were then the answer was that no statute would be any protection because a new statute could be passed altering the old one. He thought that this suggestion of a statutory basis for the Constituent Assembly would add nothing to the dignity or security of the Indian people. It would make the Constituent Body a creature of a British statute and if legislation were introduced attempts might be made to alter or amend the Statement. He thought that Mr. Gandhi would have been the first person to object if the Delegation had said that the Constituent Assembly could only be set up by an Act of the British Parliament. Sir S. Cripps said that apart from these considerations the lack of rigidity in basing a Constituent Assembly on the Statement and not on an enactment was very desirable. The origin of a Constituent Assembly should be the popular will and not the act of another State's Legislature. This gave the Assembly the right constitutional status. It did not give it legal status. Mr. Gandhi said that the Delegation did contemplate a statute after the Constituent Assembly had met. Sir S. Cripps said this was not for the purpose of enacting the new Constitution but of removing the existing legislation. The First Lord said that there was no question as he understood it of any legislation except to cancel the existing constitution and the British Government had said that they would enact this legislation at the proper time provided two factors were satisfied. First, adequate provision for the protection of minorities as to the necessity of which there was no controversy at all and both major parties had said that they intended to make such provision, and secondly, reasonably formal engagements to be entered into between the united Kingdom and India covering matters arising out of the transfer of power. This would deal with formal matters such as the arrangements in regard to the Services.

4. Sardar Patel said he understood that the Europeans would not put up candidates but he would like to know whether it was contemplated that they should vote. The First Lord said that the Secretary of State had fulfilled his undertaking to do what he could to arrange this matter. No European would now vote for a European to sit in the Constitution-making Body. That was the major point. Sardar Patel said that voting was very important. Sir S. Cripps said that the position on the Statement of 16th May was that members of the Legislatures were entitled to vote and therefore Europeans were entitled to vote. The document clearly did not intend that no one other than Indians should be members of the Constituent Assembly so that that

question was on a different footing. Whether the Europeans exercised their vote was legally a matter for them. The First Lord said that the Europeans had gone a very long way from the position which obtained when the Congress complained about this matter. He thought that the original complaint had had justification but 75 per cent of it had been met.

The Trannsfer of Power 1942-7, Vol. VII, pp. 1026-9

APPENDIX XI

LETTER FROM LORD WAVELL TO ABUL KALAM AZAD[1]

June 22, 1946

I understand from Press reports that there is strong feeling in Congress circles that the party should insist on their right to include a Muslim of their choice among the representatives of the Congress in the Interim Government.

For reasons of which you are already aware it is not possible for the Cabinet Mission or myself to accept this request, but I would draw your attention to paragraph 5 of the Statement of the 16th June which reads as follows :

"The above composition of the Interim Government is in no way to be taken as a precedent for the solution of any other communal question. It is an expedient put forward to solve the present difficulty only, and to obtain the best available coalition Government."

In the light of this assurance that no precedent is established we appeal to the Congress not to press their demand, but to take part in the strong Interim Government which the country so urgently needs.

The Transfer of Power 1942-7, Vol. VII, p. 1005

APPENDIX XII

GROUPING CLAUSE CONTROVERSY[2]

It has been reported in the Press that the text of a Bengal Government communique requires every delegate to the Constituent Assembly to sign a declaration accepting Clause 19 of the Cabinet Delegation's Statement of May 16. This allegation is without any foundation. The A. P. I. has been authorized to state that according to the instructions actually issued a candidate for election to the Constituent Assembly from any province is required to declare that he has not been proposed for candidature to represent any other province and that he is willing to serve as a representative of the province for the purpose of paragraph 19 of the

[1]*Vide* "Interview with Cabinet Delegation", 24-6-1946.
[2]*ibid*

Cabinet Delegation's Statement.

The plain purpose of paragraph 19 is the framing of a new Constitution for India and this has been made further clear in the actual form of a declaration prescribed for the purpose by the Governor of Bengal which is as follows :

"I hereby agree to this nomination and declare that I am willing to serve in the Constituent Assembly as a representative of the General or Muslim part of the Bengal Legislative Assembly for the purpose of framing a new Constitution for India. I further declare that I have not been proposed as a representative of any part of the Legislative Assembly of any other province in India in the said Constituent Assembly."

The other reference to paragraph 19 of the Statement in the instructions issued by the Bengal Governor is with regard to reporting the result of the election.

This reads as follows : "The returning officer shall report the result of the election to the Governor who shall cause the names of the candidates declared elected, to be published in the Calcutta *Gazette* on July 15, 1946 or as soon as may be thereafter; and the persons whose names are so published shall be representative of Bengal for the purposes of paragraph 19 of the above-mentioned Statement."

The Hindustan Times, 25-6-1946

APPENDIX XIII

EXTRACTS FROM CABLES FROM SOUTH AFRICA[1]

I

Acts of savage violence committed against peaceful passive resisters by mobs (of) unruly Europeans during last few nights when resisters have been beaten unconscious, two of whom still lying in serious condition and some going about with swollen faces, has only made Indian people more determined (to) carry their struggle for emancipation. Despite ban meeting held Nicols Square today (at) 5.30 p. m. attended by ten thousand Indian men and women resolved (to) carry on non-violent struggle. Permission holding meeting had been refused by city council. A gallant band (of) volunteers who have been camping on and off resistance camp whenever not in detention cell [*sic*]. Present amongst them Doctors Naicker and Gonnam and M. D. Naidoo who addressed meeting. . . . Immediately after meeting huge crowd (of) Indians accompanied 47 Indian passive resister volunteers (who) left for resistance camp. Large police force and misguided European crowd awaiting 8.20 p. m. Ajosskeevy District Commandant . . . "in name (of) magistrate issued warning declaring any gathering within five hundred yards of intersection Sumbbilo and Gale streets

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 27-6-1946.

unlawful assembly in terms of Riotous Assemblies [Act]. Order remains in force seven days." Crowds dispersed except forty-seven resisters who remained on camp ground. Arrested, taken in police van include Drs. Naicker, Gonnam and M. D. Naidoo, President, Vice-President (and) Secretary respectively (of) Natal Indian Congress, European resister Reverend Michael Scott and eight women. Doctor Dadoo on behalf of Joint Passive Resistance Council issued statement : "Consider police action and arrest first victory. Spirit of resisters excellent. Their non-violent behaviour under extreme provocation and assaults magnificent. Struggle continues more and more volunteers will go into action according to plan. We shall resist."

A. I. MEET
PASSIVE RESISTANCE COUNCIL
NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

II

Following statement made in court today by Dr. G. M. Naicker, President Natal Indian Congress and Chairman Passive Resistance Council when charged under Riotous Assemblies Act together with 46 other passive resisters : "I am South African born Indian peaceful citizen of this land. Recently Government has passed Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act 1946 which deprives my fellow countrymen and myself of certain basic elementary human rights. In protest to this unjust and inhuman law I have occupied land which Act debars me from. I am not challenging Durban City Council's ownership of land nor am I engendering hostility to any section of community. . . ."

In accordance with passive resistance code resisters pleaded guilty though no evidence brought before court to show ressiters guilty of any act of violence. . . . Marked feature about round-up that groups of Indians found there after expiry of 5 minutes' warning irrespctive of whether they waiting for transport arrested. But groups of Europeans seen standing in vicinity even an hour after expiry of warning were not touched by notice nor arrested.

DR. NAICKER
PRESIDENT, NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 303

1. COMPENSATION FOR MURDER[1]

I have been asked whether the brother or other relatives of the late Rajabali should demand compensation from the Government for his murder. The deceased himself would not have considered such a death a loss. He would have held that such a murder, if allowed to go unavenged, would ultimately put an end to further murders and was therefore beneficial. To demand even the smallest compensation for the death of such a man is bound to wash away to some extent the good that it might do. How can the spirit of the deceased tolerate this? I find much substance in this argument. Murder cannot be avenged by accepting compensation for it. The proper way to avenge murder is not to answer murder with murder. Those who hold this view will not demand money for murder or commit murder in retaliation. Avenging murder with murder will only lead to an increase in murders. We can see it clearly today. It may satisfy the individual but I am certain that is can never bring peace to society or advance it.

The question can certainly arise what an individual can do in a society where murder for murder is the rule. The answer would lie not in precept but in setting an example. And only those have a right to set an example who have the right to avenge, namely, the relatives of Rajabali. In the end the decision has to be theirs. I have only pointed out the way of ahimsa as I have understood it.

SEVAGRAM, August 9, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 18-8-1946

2. WHAT A CHILD CAN GIVE[2]

In Madras there is a little girl of five years called Aruna.[3] Last January when I was in Madras she watched me spin and was seized with the desire to do so herself. The atmosphere in which she is being reared has a spinning bias, but her cultured parents have been averse to forcing anything on her. They were content with what they were

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 18-8-1946.

[2] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 18-8-1946, under the title "what a Child Can Teach Us".

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Vinodini", 9-8-1946

able to make her do by suggestion and example. When Aruna evinced enthusiasm for spinning they were very pleased to give her encouragement. The result was that in a single day Aruna had prepared a sliver and brought it to me. Then when she saw me spin that sliver her joy knew no bounds. I explained to her the defects of the sliver and her parents helped her to remove them. Since then she has been making slivers and spinning quite well. Thus this five-year-old girl learnt two things at the same time : to clean and card cotton and make slivers and also to give to others the produce of her labour. When children take money from their parents to give it to others all the merit goes to the parents. A child truly gives when it gives what it has earned with its own labour, be it slivers or some other thing.

SEVAGRAM, August 9, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 18-8-1946

3. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA, C.P.,
August 9, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I am acknowledging your letter to Bapuji on his behalf. He hopes it will not be necessary for Shri Shriramulu to fast again.

I hope Shrimati Parvati will have an interesting and successful time in Switzerland.

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

From a photostat : G. N. 3231

4. LETTER TO VINODINI

SEVAGRAM,
August 9, 1947

CHI. VINODINI,

I preserved your article *Arunani Puni* till today. My first reading of it was cursory but interesting at it is, I do not consider it fit for publication. I see a mother's love in every single line, yet I would not call it literature. I cannot claim to know much about literature.

Besides, your article is, however unconsciously, laden with praise for me; no one is likely to gain from the publication of such an article. I therefore refrained from publishing it but preserved it because I had a mind to draw a lesson from it— how much a child can accomplish if it is led along the right way. You will find it in *Harijan.*[1] You might not have a copy and I can understand that as a mother you would value it, hence I am returning the article.

Blessings from

BAPU

VINODINIBEHN

MADRAS

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

5. SPEECH AT SEKSARIA COLLEGE OF COMMERCE[2]

WARDHA,
August 9, 1946

Giving a severe castigation to the unruly crowd that had indulged in window smashing and would have smashed in the roof too if they could, in the afternoon, Gandhiji remarked that it augured ill for the independence to come.[3] The Working Committee which was holding its meeting in their city was considering how to win Independence for the people of India in the shortest time. It was not labouring for a change of masters. If the masses wanted to enjoy independence, they had first to learn the secret of observing voluntary discipline. Otherwise discipline would have to be imposed upon them by the powers that be. That would not be independence but its negation. Every people got the Government they deserved. If they indulged in hooliganism, so would the Government and its officials in the name of law and order. The result would not be freedom or independence but a balancing of anarchies, each trying to keep the other in check. Voluntary discipline was the first requisite of corporate freedom. If the people were well-behaved the Government officials would

[1] *Vide* "What a Child Can Give", 18-8-1946

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The occasion was the inauguration of the change from English to Marathi as the medium of instruction. Those attending included Ravi Shanker Shukla, Premier of C.P., and the Vice-Chancellor of the Nagpur University.

[3] According to the source nearly ten thousand people had come to Wardha from outside and the crowd was so unmanageable and undisciplined that the time and venue of the function had to be shifted and it was held in the open instead of in the College hall.

become their true servants. Otherwise they would ride on their necks, not without a semblance of justification. During the Boer War he had seen thousands of soldiers perform a noiseless march through a dense, tropical jungle in the middle of the night, in pitch darkness for not even match-stick was to be struck to light a cigarette, lest it should betray their movements to the enemy. The whole troop formation moved like one man in perfect silence and harmony. The need for discipline for a nation on its march towards independence was infinitely greater. Without it, *Ramarajya* which meant the kingdom of God on earth would remain an empty dream.

The principal and the Management of the Seksaria College had taken a big step in deciding to make the mother tongue the medium of instruction in their college. But the reform would be still-born if they were lazy or if the public did not co-operate.

A fear had been expressed, observed Gandhiji, that the propagation of *Rashtrabhasha* or the national tongue would prove inimical to the provincial languages. That fear was rooted in ignorance. The present step of the Seksaria college was a living refutation of that suspicion. Provincial tongues provided the sure foundation on which the edifice of the national tongue should rest. The two were intended to complement, not supplant each other.

He deprecated the suggestion that it would need a lot of research and preparation to enable them to impart technical education through the medium of the mother tongue. Those who argued like that were unaware of the rich treasure of expressions and idioms that were buried in the dialects of our villages. In Gandhiji's opinion there was no need to go to Sanskrit or Persian in search for many expressions. He had been in Champaran and he had found that the village folk there could fully express themselves with ease and without the help of a single foreign expression or idiom. As an illustration of their resourcefulness, he mentioned the word *have gadi* which they had coined to denote a motor car. He challenged university scholars to coin a more poetic expression than that for a motor car.

One of the speakers had remarked that the reform would mean a saving of at least there years to the alumni of the College. But Gandhiji was of opinion that the saving in time and labour would be even greater.

Moreover, what they learnt through the mother tongue, they would easily be able to communicate to their mothers and sisters at home and thereby bring the latter into line with themselves. Woman had been described as man's better half. Today there was a hiatus between the thought world of men and women respectively in India, thanks to the intrusion of the foreign medium. Our womenfolk were backward and ignorant with the result that India was today like a patient with paralysis of the better side. India could not realize her full

stature unless that handicap was removed.

Harijan, 18-8-1946

6. HOW TO THINK OF GOD

A correspondent writes:

> You say that the rule should be that during prayer, everyone should sit with closed eyes and think of nothing but God. The question arises as to how and in what form we have to think of God ?

True meditation consists in closing the eyes and ears of the mind to all else except the object of one's devotion. Hence the closing of eyes during prayers is an aid to such concentration. Man's conception of God is naturally limited, Each one has, therefore, to think of Him as best appeals to him, provided that the conception is pure and uplifting.

SEVAGRAM, August 10, 1946

Harijan, 18-8-1946

7. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKVASA

SEVAGRAM,
August 10, 1946

BHAI PAKVASA,

I am sending you the draft of the Trust Deed of the Panchgani property and all the details of the auction sale carried through the High Court. The rest you will be able to obtain from the High Court itself. And whatever you cannot get now, you will be able to get from there when it is available. If, however, I can supply anything, please let me know. The Trust Deed must be in Gujarati or Marathi or Hindustani and if it is in Hindustani, It should be in Nagari and Urdu scripts. But not in English. We have adopted this as our policy. Afterwards you will have to show to Mavalankar the final draft which emerges. Shantilal insists that this should be done.

I hope you are keeping good health. Observe the rules.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 4785. Courtesy : Mangaldas Pakvasa

8. LETTER TO ADVAIT KUMAR GOSWAMI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
August 10,1946

BHAI ADVAIT KUMAR GOSWAMI,

Gandhiji has received both your letters. He does not send any messages. It is good that Raja Mahendra Pratap is coming back. You will all be pleased.

About South Africa Gandhiji feels that none of us should go there. They won't allow the party to land at all.

Yours,
AMRIT KAUR

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 805

9. TALK WITH A FRIEND[1]

[Before *August 11, 1946*][2]

FRIEND : You have called mine a negative attitude. But I am quite clear in my you mind. I do not mind the Congress High Command carrying on negotiations with the Cabinet Mission. But suppose the negotiations fail. What then? The British Government is prepared with its plan of action in that case. But we are not. It is my belief that we shall have to go through another struggle before freedom can be won. I find that you have a revolutionary mentality. I do not like *himsa* any more than you do. It is bad. My goal is the same as yours. Show a sure non-violent way of achieving our goal of Independence within a definite period and I shall most willingly follow you. In a way I do believe in ahimsa. A repetition of the 1933-37 pattern of struggle won't do. The leaders are put behind the bars at the very commencement of the struggle and then all contact between them and the masses ceases. It is not fair that we should sit in jails in comparative comfort and safety and expect the people to face the fire. The leaders should bear the brunt. Let there be, say, a hundred people with your name on the top followed by those of other front-rank Congress leaders to start a chain fast unto death, after giving due notice to the Government, and I am sure before the list is exhausted India will be free.

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" dated 11-8-1946
[2] *ibid*

The interviewer added that he himself would in that event, be prepared to abandon his own programme and join the fast. His complaint was that no top-ranking Congressman with the exception of Jairamdas Daulatram had yet received a bullet, although perhaps hundreds had died in recent years of bullets and lathi charges at the hands of the police and the military.

G. If and when the call comes to fast unto death, I will do so irrespective of others joining or not. Fasting unto death is the last and the most potent weapon in the armoury of satyagraha. It is a sacred thing. But it must be accepted with all its implications. It is not the fast itself but what it implies that matters. Have not even hypocrites been known to make a pretence of fasting ? Such fasts are a plague and a nuisance. They do not count. If I fast and you send a hundred or even ten men who would undertake it with a pure heart, I shall be happy. But such a fast should not be undertaken inside the prison.

F. What I mean is that mere jail-going is not enough. People should remain outside and face repression. Nine young boys faced the bullets and died before the Secretariat at Patna. Think how it would have electrified the masses if it had been Rajendra Babu instead of these poor boys.

G. I agree with you there. I have said before that merely filling the prisons is not enough. It is only the jail-going of the pure in heart that can bring swaraj. In fact in 1922, my instructions were that no one was to follow me in jail and that all should spin and carry out in full the constructive programme. The eighteen-fold constructive programme, if carried out in its entirety will, in my opinion, render civil disobedience unnecessary. The people of Bardoli in 1922 solemnly promised to carry out the constructive programme, to banish untouchability and liquor from their midst and to make khadi universal to the exclusion of mill cloth, imported or Indian. They have failed to fulfil their pledge up till now.

F. You say jail-going does not end the fight. We wanted to agitate for the abolition of the classification of political prisoners by the upper class prisoners voluntarily reducing themselves to ‘C’ class by refusing to accept privileged treatment. But some said that it was against your ideology. You wanted people to remain in the class in which they were placed.

G. That is hardly correct. In fact I do not want even the distinction between the political and non-political prisoners. I stand for fair and humane treatment of all prisoners. But mine has been a lonely voice. Even when power was in our hands, we failed to abolish

classification. I am the originator or jail-going as part of satyagraha. My jail-going was born out of ahimsa and ahimsa and privilege go ill together. I have fought the Government from inside the jail. As it is, today all sorts of people go to jail. Inside the jail, they behave anyhow, even apologize and come out. Jail-going has become a farce.

Harijan, 18-8-1946

10. A DISCUSSION[1]

[Before *August 11, 1946*][2]

QUESTION : What should be done about the strikes ?[3]

ANSWER : Does it mean that the Congress has lost its hold on the people ?

Q. No, but the Congress has not spoken with one voice and that has created confusion in the public mind.

A. If the strike is unjustified on merits, it should be unequivocally denounced.

Q. By whom?

A. By the Congress, of course.

Q. What do you mean by the Congress? The Working Committee might have. It has not.

A. By Congress, I mean the 400 millions of India speaking through the Working Committee.

A militant suffragette who happened to be present here joined in : "But the Working Committee no longer speaks with one voice, thanks to your choice which you have imposed upon the country. You have stifled democracy."

Gandhiji explained that the present Working Committee was not his choice but that of the Congress President who had been democratically elected. His part consisted mainly in persuading the Congress President to exercise his choice unfettered by consideration of personalities or the old tradition. The present Working Committee could not stay there for a day if it did hot reflect the mind of democracy. The only condition was that democracy should be wide awake and functioning. As an illustration, he mentioned the case of Mr. Churchill, who, in spite of his unique victories and achievements, had been set aside by the British people the moment he

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" dated 11-8-1946

[2] *ibid*

[3] The questioner was the Premier of one of the Congress-ruled Provinces.

ceased to reflect the nation's mind.

The return of labour to power in such overwhelming strength is a great event in the history of political democracy. It has a lesson which we would do well to take to heart.

Another in the company suggested that some sinister influence was at the back of the present strike fever. The motive was not economic but political. What was the remedy ?

A. You should reason with the strikers, warn them of the danger and resign if they or the people at large do not listen to you.

Q. But we owe a responsibility to the country. Shall we be justified in abandoning the country to sinister influences, who in fact want the Congress to go out of office and want to create chaos?

A. That is the only way in which democracy can function. It will educate the people. Sinister influences will not flourish if popular support is lacking. Once the people realize that the Congress won't carry on its rule by force, they will cease to act thoughtlessly or in an irresponsible manner and the sinister influence will be sterilized.

Harijan, 18-8-1946

11. LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
August 11, 1946

DEAR SIR M. ISMAIL,

Representatives from Hyderabad have seen me. They are Shri Kashinath Vaidya and Swami Ramanand Tirth. They have discussed with me the so-called reforms contemplated in the State. I have studied them somewhat as they appeared in the Press. The reforms seem to be only so-called. To me they appear to be a step backward rather than forward. I do not know that you can do much to alter them but I wonder why you cannot scrap them altogether. The least that any State can do at this time is to recognize the status and influence of the States' Peoples' Conference, of which Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is the President, and secure its endorsement before proceeding with any popular measure. This ensures smooth passage for any such thing.

Rajkumari has already drawn your attention to Shrimati Padmaja Naidu's pamphlet on police atrocities in some of the Hyderabad villages. I would like you to enlighten me on these two

points. I am sorry to have to worry you when you have just begun your new career.

The Hindu, 31-12-1946

12. LETTER TO SARALADEVI A. SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM,
August 11, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

Shyamlal has sent me the letter regarding Kamalabehn. This seems a rather difficult case but our course is clear. Let her deliver the child and if when it is three years old, she still has her heart in the work of service we can make full use of her. In the meanwhile she will have a lot of spare time which she should utilize to increase her knowledge of the art of service, serve women wherever she happens to be and adapt her own life to village ways and make it becoming of a village woman. And in order to do this she should maintain close contact with the activities of the Association.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. SARALADEVI SARABHAI
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

13. TESTIMONIAL TO MUKUL CHANDRA DE

SEVAGRAM,
August 11, 1946

Shri Mukul De is extremely keen on the development of Indian art. It is man's prerogative to desire that which is good. But God has kept the fulfilment of man's desires in His own hands. Therefore, prayerful reliance on God must be Shri Mukul De's sole support.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

14. HIS GREATEST CHARACTERISTIC

The greatest characteristic I can think of about Mahadev Desai was his ability to reduce himself to zero, whenever occasion demanded it.

SEVAGRAM, August 12, 1946

Harijan, 18-8-1946

15. NOTES

SOUTH AFRICA

The heroic struggle of the Indian settlers in South Africa continues with unabated zeal. It promises to be prolonged. The longer the resisters are made to suffer, the greater will be their glory and reward. It is true of all long suffering. What the Government of the Union of South Africa has done so deliberately of the going to be changed suddenly, even for the suffering of the brave men and women. This is said not to damp the zeal of the fighters but to steel them for greater and longer suffering. Their spokesman, when they were in India, were told in plain language that they must not expect the struggle to close quickly. Time runs always in favour of the sufferer, for the simple reason that tyranny becomes more and more exposed as it is continued. In reality it is never long. Sufferers need never lose hope whether their struggle appears to have a longer lease of life or shorter, when the result is a certainty.

GOA

The Goan authorities are going on merrily with their 'humanizing' activities by gagging the people of Goa. The latest instance is that of their 'court martial' sentencing Shri Braganza Cunha to eight years and deporting him to a far off Portuguese settlement in Africa for the crime of daring to assert his elementary right of civil liberty.[1] Well has the Working Committee passed a resolution in condemnation of the policy of the Goan authorities which stands in striking contrast to the action of the French Governor

[1] *Vide* "Letter to The Governor-General of Portuguese India", 2-8-1946

who has encouraged the people to throw in their lot with the people in British India.

SEVAGRAM, August 12, 1946

Harijan, 18-8-1946

16. LETTER TO UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM

SEVAGRAM,
August 12, 1946

DEAR UTTIMCHAND,

Your p. c. is interesting. You should give me the solution to your triangles. I admit my failure. I thought I knew geometry fairly well. You have demolished my pride. Having performed the act of destruction, you should now instruct by teaching me in small doses. Nothing of your correspondence is destroyed. Indeed I preserve it for days in the hope of giving time to the study of the problems set by you. And then it is destroyed.

Yours,
BAPU

UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM
BOMBAY BAKERY
HYDERABAD, SIND

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

17. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM,
August 12, 1946

CHI. LILY,

I have your letter. If you cannot get [money] from Jayantilal, tell Sumatibehn about it. She will either give you the money or get you the book. If there is any difficulty, do let me know. If necessary, you may show her this letter.

I hope your studies are progressing will.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI LILAVATIBEHN
G. S. MEDICAL COLLEGE
LADIES' HOSTEL
PAREL, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 10241. Courtesy : Lilavati Asar

18. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

SEVAGRAM,
August 13, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

Yours of the 3rd instant (No. 624/3) has only arrived here today, having gone to Panchgani first.

The position in Goa has not improved from the news that comes to Gandhiji. I enclose a copy of a note[1] he has written for the coming *Harijan.* While "intervention in the affairs of a friendly foreign country" may not be possible, surely a friendly remonstrance against harsh and unjust treatment of Indians should not be an impossibility.

At Gandhiji's suggestion I also enclose a copy of the Archbishop of Bombay's letter.[2] It will give you an insight into the way things are happening in Goa. Is it not an unfriendly act to regard Indians from this part as strangers going to Goa?

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

AMRIT KAUR

ENCL: 2

G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ.

PRIVATE SECRETARY TO H. E. THE VICEROY

NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 100-1

[1] *Vide* "Notes", sub-title "Goa"

[2] Gandhiji had received a complaint against the Roman Catholic Bishop of Goa to the effect that the Bishop was party to the lawlessness there. Gandhiji wrote to the Archbishop of Bombay that the matter called for investigation by him. The Archbishop's reply was to the effect that "the Patriarch of Goa is responsible to the Holy See alone" and that "with all countries of the world the universal Catholic Church has to live on working compromise as to all non-essentials".

19. LETTER TO MADHUSOODAN C. PAREKH

[*August 13, 1946*][1]

CHI. MADHUSOODAN,

I have your letter. Having known your father as intimately as I did, the news naturally came as a shock. But who can prevail against death? It will be enough if you all preserve the good name he has left behind and bring glory to it.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MADHUSOODAN CHAMANLAL PAREKH

P. B. NO. 40

AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

20. LETTER TO MOHANLAL M. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,

August 13, 1946

BHAI MOHANLAL (GADHADAWALA),

I think we should all be content with whatever Shantilal can do. But if Sir Chunnilal wishes to offer something, I would say let us have the estate known as Preston and the bungalow so that we can also open a sanatorium for the poor. Shantilal's plot cannot accommodate two projects. Therefore, please consider this matter.

Blessing from

BAPU

SJT. MOHANLAL MOTICHAND SHAH

GADHADA, *via* BHAVNAGAR

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] The source has this letter among those dated August 13, 1946.

21. LETTER TO MOHANLAL RUPANI

SEVAGRAM,
August 13, 1946

BHAI MOHANLAL,

I got your letter and Rs. 51. The amount has been credited to the Harijan account. Vrajlal's brother is bound to be like him. I can therefore understand your not introducing him. Still, if he had come to see me I would have spoken to him. I infer from your letter-head that you are quite well off. Is there some rule that letter-heads must only be printed in English ? Vrajlal has lived his life in such a way that we remember him every moment.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MOHANLAL RUPANI
MANEKIA CHAMBER
1ST MARINE STREET
DHOBI TALAO, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

22. LETTER TO DR. S. R. U. SAVUR

SEVAGRAM,
August 13, 1946

BHAI DR. SAVUR,

I got your letter. I am sorry I cannot accept the use of the Roman script for learning or teaching Hindustani. I have explained the reason in *Harijan.*[1] If we have occasion to meet I shall be able to explain to you how the Roman script would be disastrous for us.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. S. R. U. SAVUR
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
MADRAS

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] *Vide*, "Roman Urdu", 15-4-1946- "My Advice", 15-4-1946.

23. LETTER TO SHAFAAT AHMED KHAN

SEVAGRAM,
August 13, 1946

BHAI SHAFAAT AHMED KHAN SAHEB,

I was very glad to have your letter. I see that you still take a keen interest in the affairs of our people in South Africa.[1]

You have made many useful suggestions. Can't they be made public with the permission of the viceroy? You may be aware that from 1890 till the Boer War the British Government had an Agent-General in the Transvaal, and the correspondence he carried on with the Transvaal Government was published. That is the general practice.

May I make public use of any part of your letter?

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

24. LETTER TO RATANBEHN

SEVAGRAM,
August 14, 1946

CHI. RATANBEHN,

I have your letter to Chhaganlal. I have received Rs. 51 which you sent for distributing food-grains among the Harijans.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. RATANBEHN
C/O HASMUKHLAL FAUJDAR
15 LILY COURT
CHURCHGATE, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee had been Indian High Commissioner in South Africa in 1941-43.

25. LETTER TO HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB

SEVAGRAM,
August 14, 1946

BHAI MAHTAB,

I got your letter in English. Why in English ? In the letter I had sent to you, one of the complaints was that you yourself were going to start a mill. If it is so, do you need to ask for my opinion? In any case I would hardly have appreciated your reasoning that Orissa, because it is poor, needs a mill. For, that would mean that every poor region or village should have mills to remove its poverty. And if such is your view, I can hardly say anything.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB
CHIEF MINISTER
ORISSA

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

26. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
August 15, 1946

CHI. DINSHAW,

I have been planning to write to you but could neither write nor dictate a letter till the pressure of the Working Committee [meeting] was over. Today all the [members] of the Working Committee have left as also the Congress President, hence I am dictating this letter early in the morning. I have been thinking all these days about what you mentioned to me last time. I don't feel like making for you such arrangements as you desire in connection with the work I expected from you. Since you want to serve the villages you should appreciate the position and learn to live among and become one with all the others in the institution. And if you cannot learn this in my company it is going to be very difficult for you to learn it in any other place. If I were to create for you the facilities that you desire it would only mean that after all you can practise nature cure only under certain conditions, which means only in the towns or where urban conditions can be created. I don't suggest it is a failing on your part. I have

many friends whose habits are similar to yours. I content myself with whatever I can get out of them but you have yourself said that you want to give me much more and accordingly I hope to take from you a great deal. I shall persuade myself to be content even if I don't get as much as I hope. In that case both of us, or rather all three of us, will have to understand this. And I for my part do believe that under the present circumstances it does not seem as though you would be able to work here comfortably. But then only after I stay with you for some time and you get more used to me will you be in full flood.

In case the Gujarati language of this letter is incompre- hensible and if you often come in contact with Valjibhai you may consult him or the boys at his house and they will be able to correctly interpret the letter to you. I would recommend that you should be in frequent contact with him. He is very cultured and is also a man of erudition. It is worth paying a visit to his house. It will not be surprising if I happen to go to Delhi from here. But I don't know.

Read out this letter to Gulbai. It will be good if Jehangirji is also made familiar with the ideas expressed herein.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. DINSHAW MEHTA

POONA

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

27. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

SEVAGRAM,
August 15, 1946

DEAR LOTUS-BORN,

Your sweet letter. Your report is a good and great document. And I am making of it the wisest use I know. Have already written to Sir Mirza.[1] Hope to make still better use if it is necessary.

You should take care of the obstinate old (with apologies) Singer[2].

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirza Ismail", 11-8-1946 and 20-9-1946.
[2] Sarojini Naidu, the addressee's mother

28. LETTER TO BALWANTRAI K. THAKORE

SEVAGRAM,
August 15, 1946

BHAI BALWANTRAI,

I have your letter. I should very much prefer your hybrid Gujarati to your chaste English. Had you written hybrid Gujarati I could have had some fun at the cost of the man of letters that you are and would have gloated over the fact that I would not write such hybrid Gujarati. Besides, the practice of writing in Gujarati, however hybrid, is likely to result in the writing of chaste Gujarati.

For my part I like your scheme. But I think it cannot be implemented under the present circumstances. The Working Committee has received many such suggestions. Among them are some like yours. But in history there is no such thing as writing on a clean slate.

I hope you are all right.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

29. LETTER TO HOOSEINBHAI LALJEE

SEVAGRAM,
August 15, 1946

BHAI HOOSEINBHAI LALJEE,

I am glad you sent me a copy of your letter to Panditji. You will have to go deeper into it. The youngsters who threaten violence if a particular thing is not done will either have to conform to discipline or go ahead with the violence and face the consequences. If you will not show this firmness, I am afraid even those who wish to help you will not be able to help you fully.

Blessings from
BAPU

HOOSEINBHAI LALJEE
NAVASARI BUILDING
HORNBY ROAD
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers, Courtesy : Pyarelal

30. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

SEVAGRAM,
August 15, 1946

CHI. AMALA,

I have your letter. I am sorry that nothing materialized at Baroda. If you leave India you not likely to earn more elsewhere. Nor can you say that you know Gujarati. Besides, in a city like Bombay private tuitions should be easily available. My advice therefore is that you should not attempt go abroad in a vain bid to earn more but be content with whatever you can get in India. Your Semitic origin will be least resented in India. You know that the Sassoons have earned millions in India and are still going strong. And this is only one instance.

AMALABEHN
31 WODEHOUSE ROAD
FORT

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

31. LETTER TO BEGUM LATIF SYED

SEVAGRAM,
August 15, 1946

DEAR BEGUM SAHIBA,

I learnt about Dr. Latif only through Sarojini Devi. I was grieved. May God grant you courage and may you always serve the country as Doctor Saheb did.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

BEGUM LATIF SYED
HYDERABAD (DECCAN)

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

32. LETTER TO INDUMATI G. TENDULKAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 15, 1946

CHI. INDU,

I have your letter. It is good that at last you wrote. I am glad to learn that you have recovered. How can you ask for my blessings for a trip to America? I did not know you had so mush feminine obstinacy. But I also understand that Tendulkar too wants you to benefit from the American trip. It both of you are inclined that way who am I to say no? But if you ask me, my only answer will be: first accomplish something here and then go out. I know how little Tendulkar has gained from going abroad. I think he has gained nothing, but that is my own assessment. Others may not agree with me on this point.

To you both,

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : C. W. 10949. Courtesy : Indumati Tendulkar

33. LETTER TO N. G. RANGA

SEVAGRAM,
August 15, 1946

BHAI RANGA,

Your letters continue to be written English. I will however, write only in the national language. If you are unable to read or understand the national language you may enlist Bharatibehn's help.

It is not in my hands to hold or not to hold the Kisan Conference in Wardha. It is in the hands of Kamalnayan and Sardar. Besides, in the present conditions of scarcity of food, holding a large conference anywhere is a difficult matter. This, however, is not the only purpose of my writing this letter. I hear that there is much ostentation about your work and much impropriety, too. If it is so, it needs thinking over. No one had sad so before. It is only recently that someone casually mentioned the matter to me and I ought not to keep

it from you.

The continued scarcity of food in Mysore and Rayalaseema regions is a sad affair. If people have to starve I shall blame none but ourselves. If we can survive only by importing food we deserve to perish. Besides, we now have our own government in many provinces. Can't we do something? It is not big conferences that we want. What is required is understanding, hard work and purity. In the absence of these qualities, the poor must die.

PROF. RANGA

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

34. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SEVAGRAM,
August 15, 1946

Friends and admirers of Mahadev Desai have been following the practice of observing his death anniversary by occupying themselves with something dear to him. His was a rich, gifted hand. He had many loves. Among these the spinning-wheel held the first place. He span regularly and beautifully like the artist that he was. No matter how fatigued or over-worked he was, he always found time for spinning. It refreshed him.

Among his many accomplishments, not the least was his peerless handwriting. There he was master. Ramadas Swami in one of his couplets has likened beautiful handwriting to a lustrous pearl. The characters which Mahadev's pen traced were like pearls without a flaw.

His third quality which all should emulate and copy was his love of the Indian tongues. He was a linguist. He attained proficiency in Bengali, Marathi and Hindi and he learnt Urdu. In jail he attempted to learn Persian and Arabic under Khwaja Sahib M. A. Majid, who was a fellow prisoner.

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The occasion was the fourth death anniversary of Mahadev Desai. The programme of the day included mass spinning in the Mahadev Desai Bal Bhavan, reciting from the *Bhagavad Gita* and singing of songs.

The song which you have just heard was one of Mahadev's favourite songs. He has rendered it into Gujarati verse too.

When the heart is hard and parched up, come upon me with a shower of mercy,

When grace is lost from life, come with a burst of song.

When tumultuous work raises its din on all sides shutting me out from beyond, come to me, my Lord of silence, with Thy peace and rest.

When my beggarly heart sits crouched, shut up in a corner, break open the door of my mind, and come with ceremony of a king.

When desire blinds the mind with delusion and lust, O Thou Holy One, Thou wakeful, come with the light and Thy thunder.

—*Gitanjali*

That summed up the innermost yearning of the deceased's soul. May it do yours too. Mahadev's life was an inexhaustible well of virtues which you can all share. The sharing won't diminish its volume. That is the beauty of spiritual treasures. As the Upanishad says :

पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते ।
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥

Harijan, 1-9-1946

35. PREACHING TO EMPTINESS

SEVAGRAM,
August 16, 1946

Downes was a Seventh Day Adventist. He was a quack like me. He was my guest years ago in Durban. One day he said he must the preach the simple life to those who cared to listen to him. He succeeded in borrowing a chapel hall for one hour in Mercury Lane and asked me to preside. I warned him that with me as chairman in the very early days of my life in South Africa, probably in 1894, he must not expect an audience. He would not heed the warning. Precisely at the advertised time Downes began his address to an audience of one. I asked him in vain to wait a few minutes for other comers. He would not be party to stealing God's time and unconcerned, he went on with his speech. So far as I remember, a few stragglers, under ten, came in during the speech. I happened to relate this experience to Horace Alexander whilst I was in Delhi. He gave me in return the stranger story of Stephen Grellet, a Quaker, preaching to emptiness. I asked him to give me the authentic version for the readers of *Harijan,* it being a rich experience of living faith in God. I reproduce below the story as sent by Horace Alexander.[1]

Harijan, 8-9-1946

36. DO NOT FORGET HARIJANS[2]

A correspondent writes :

> Shri Ganesh-utsava started by the late Lokamanya is coming near; most of our ministers and leaders will be invited by various associations to speak on this occasion. I desire to suggest to the speakers that they should accept such invitations, provided that the management would allow Harijans to take part in the function; they should also make it a point to take at least one

[1] Not reproduced here. It told of how Stephen Grellet, a quaker preacher, instructed by the Lord to preach to woodcutters in some backwoods of America, preached in an empty building and how a woodcutter, hiding there had heard the sermon and in turn preached to other woodcutters and brought into the fold at least a thousand of them.

[2] This appeared as a "Note". The translation is based on the English version published in *Harijan,* 25-8-1946.

Harijan with them when they go to address the congregation.

The above suggestion is reasonable and apt. If caste Hindus really want to stamp out untouchability they should have the company of Harijans in their gatherings, and especially on such occasions as the celebration of Hindu festivals they should not fail do so to.

SEVAGRAM, August 16, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 25-8-1946

37. MASS MURDER

A friend writes :

> The food famine situation in Mysore and Rayalaseema is daily growing more serious. Unless imports pour in sufficient quantities, the local co-operative stores will fail to supply rations—starvation rations as they are, since only 8. oz. of rice is being given to peasants who need 24 oz. to keep them fit—to the peasant masses and I am afraid that we may have to be prepared to face deaths due to starvation in November and December.

If even half of what he says is true, it is a sad reflection on our capacity to cope with food famine in a vast country like India where there is land lying waste or ill-used and water running rapidly into the sea for want of human ingenuity to dam and store it. The writer says that unless imports "pour in sufficient quantities", meaning undoubtedly from outside India, "mass deaths due to starvation in November and December" are a certainty. I suggest to everyone concerned that if this happens, the Government of the country will be guilty of mass murder.

To look to outside sources for food supply is to invite starvation. Has it ever been made clear that India has no capacity for growing sufficient food between now and November? Need a vast country like India with its teeming millions starve, even if the whole world were to declare a blockade against it?[1]

SEVAGRAM, August 16, 1946

Harijan, 25-8-1946

[1] *Vide* also" Letter to N.G. Ranga", 15-8-1946.

38. MOVE ON[1]

On reading about my persistent darkness, a correspondent sends me the following lines of comfort:

The path may be clouded;
Move on, for the orbit is fixed for your soul;
And though it may lead into darkness of night,
The torch of the Builder shall give it new light.

SEVAGRAM, August 16, 1946

Harijan, 1-9-1946

39. LETTER TO DHIRUBHAI DIKSHIT

SEVAGRAM,
August 16, 1946

CHI. DHIRU,

Can we say that your problem has been solved? Dr. Bhagavat is a saintly man. Each time [I see him] he impresses me more and more. One can gain a lot from him provided one has the faith. I have no doubt about it.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. DHIRUBHAI
URULI KANCHAN

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

40. LETTER TO GANGABEHN BHATT

[*August 16, 1946*][2]

CHI. GANGA,

I am glad that you and Purushottam have gone there[3]. An undertaking is incomplete as long as there is no women worker. Kanchan has set up a separate household and Zohra has gone to study nursing. Abha too has set up a separate household.

[1] This was published under "Notes".
[2] The source has this letter among those dated August 16, 1946.
[3] Uruli Kanchan

And Amtussalaam looks after my food and other things. Write to me how you both fare there.

Blessing from

BAPU

SMT. GANGABEHN BHATT'

URULI KANCHAN

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

41. LETTER TO MAGANLAL

SEVAGRAM,

August 16, 1946

BHAI MAGANBHAI,

Chi. Paramanand saw me last night and gave me your cheque for Rs. 5,000. I am having the cheque sent to Uruli Kanchan. It will be utilized for the land purchased at Uruli Kanchan for a like amount. Chi. Paramanand informs me that if I agree you are willing to become one of the trustees of the Uruli Kanchan trust. Jehangir Patel and Dr. Dinshaw Mehta are my co-trustees. A local gentlemen has also been taken on the trust. I shall have to obtain these gentlemen's consent. However, before I initiate the process I must let you know that this trust has no merely ornamental names. All the trustees must mean business. This has been the tacit understanding among the original trustees. Hence, unless you can stay at Uruli Kanchan from time to time and participate in its activities I would consider your becoming a trustee as having no meaning. I know you are a hard-working man. Hence if you mean it you can be of much use. Moreover, you must have faith in nature cure. If you do not have it, your being a trustee would be a mockery. And how can I place you in such an embarrassing position? I understand from Chi. Paramanand that you will also want to build a house in Uruli Kanchan for your residence. This I shall certainly welcome, on the understanding that the ownership of the property will go to the Trust. The premises will be utilized under the provisions of the Trust and the trustees will make use of it for the Trust's business when you are not using it yourself. If Chi. Paramanand marries your daughter the couple will naturally use

the house. You of course will be there.

SJT. MAGANLAL
CHOPDA

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

42. LETTER TO MANILAL B. DESAI

SEVAGRAM,
August 16, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

Chi. Paramanand has given me all the news from there. He has brought a cheque for Rs. 5,000. This can be credited only there. I have written[1] to Maganlal regarding the problems that will have to be tackled in connection with his appointment as a trustee. Paramanand will tell you. I also learn that Gangabehn has arrived. That is a good thing. I hope Purushottam is better there. I expect you have had enough rainfall. Have you started implementing the suggestions I had left? How is Gokhale getting along? Balkrishna should write to me. Blessings to all the friends there.

SJT. MANILAL
URULI KANCHAN

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

43. LETTER TO RAMKRISHNA BAJAJ

SEVAGRAM,
August 16, 1946

CHI. RAMKRISHNA,

You are going West.[2] I do not quite see its benefit. But when a strong wind is blowing who can remain unaffected? Think what you will be taking from here and what you will be bringing from there. The student days are for the development of thought.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 3067

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The addressee was a delegate of the All-India Students' Congress to the International Student' Congress which was being held at Prague, Czechoslovakia.

44. MESSAGE TO JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA[1]

SEVAGRAM,
August 16, 1946

The goodness of a good man is itself his true jubilee. Dr. Zakir Husain's great work itself is his true greatness.

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

45. DISCUSSION WITH A FRIEND[2]

[Before *August 17, 1946*][3]

GANDHIJI : To appreciate fully the present policy of the A. I. S. A. you have to take in its etiology. In the initial stages emphasis was on bringing relief to the poor. Incidentally it provided a living link between the classes and the masses and assumed a political significance. . . We cannot make further headway on those lines. We cannot, for instance, further increase the wages. Khadi won't bear it. So far it was spun and woven by the masses. Now it must still be by the masses, but for their own use. The new policy of the A. I. S. A. has not failed. The latest figures show that it is steadily though slowly making headway.

There are difficulties. Weaving constitutes the bottleneck. We have not established a sufficient hold on the weavers. The fault, again, is mine. If I had from the very beginning insisted on all learning weaving along with spinning things would have been different today. The working capital of the A. I. S. A. now stands at twenty-five lakhs. It has taken twenty-five years to reach that figure. During that period it distributed over seven crores of rupees as wages among four and a half lakhs of the poor spinners and weavers, principally spread over twenty thousand villages of India. I do not know of another instance of such a huge turn-over with so little capital in such a wide area.

FRIEND : That is good but by no means unique. The Chinese Indusco did better.

G. That is not a fair comparison. I studied in detention Nym

[1] This was sent to Dr. K. G. Saiyidain on the occasion of the University's Silver Jubilee.

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Khadi On Trial", 17-8-1946

[3] *ibid*

Wales' book which was recommended to me. Indusco's activities were carried on under abnormal circumstances with the backing of the Chinese National Government. Besides, all its production was war-time production. You need not have gone as far as China for your illustration. The work of the Calicut Mission in South India would have provided a more apt instance. In each case the field was restricted. In the case of khadi it is trying to serve the whole of India.

F. We cannot today attract more artisans by offering better wages. The general level of wages in the country is already so high.

G. We do not want to.

F. You mean to say you want them to produce for self.

G. Yes.

F. How can that be made practicable?

G. I explained that to Mr. Casey[1] last year. I told him that by adopting my scheme, not only could we solve the cloth problem for Bengal, but for the whole of India. The essence of that scheme was that, instead of supplying textiles to the people, they should be taught how to make cloth for themselves and provided the necessary means—instruments, raw materials, etc.,—for the same. A reasonable time limit should be fixed after which no textiles would be rationed in the area covered by the scheme. In German East Africa, I am told, cloth shortage during World War I was actually met by the Negroes being induced to manufacture their own cloth. Whether that is so or not, if India made full use of her spinning and weaving tradition which is universal and the matchless hereditary skill of her artisans, she could not only solve her own difficulty but even help the world to meet the present crisis by releasing her mill production, for countries less favourable placed in the matter of cloth manufacture.

F. The fact, however, remains that in spite of there being such an acute cloth scarcity, khadi has failed to step into the breach. It has missed the bus.

G. Thanks to Government interference. They arrested khadi workers, burnt stocks of khadi and put khadi production under every conceivable handicap.

[1] R. G. Casey, Governor of Bengal in 1945, whom Gandhiji met in Calcutta on December 1, 2 and 3, 1945. *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 5-12-1945 and "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 7-12-1945.

F. The vacuum is growing. Production charges have already touched the ceiling and yet the wages that we can offer are not adequate to attract even the unemployed.

G. Where are these unemployed?

F. Well, there are one lakh of I. N. A. men.

G. I made an offer to them. It has yet evoked no response. You can take the horse to the trough but you cannot make it drink.

F. Cannot Government formulate a scheme?

G. It has been done in Madras. It is under examination. Nothing can be imposed from above. Everything has to be worked from below. And those who work them should have faith and conviction and spirit of service. A Government ukase won't do the trick. Government can assist. As I told Mr. Casey, I am prepared to work out my scheme if it is left to me and the Government accord necessary facilities. That offer still stands.

F. The danger is that, if we stop the supply of textiles to any area, as envisaged in your scheme, it may accentuate the present discontent and even cause an upheaval. There are elements ready to pounce upon and exploit any excuse to foment discontent. Restriction on cloth supply might even be enumerated as an 'atrocity' as prohibition was by a certain section in Bombay. How can we contemplate or invite a disturbance like that? This is not a constructive approach to the question. It smacks of compulsion.

G. Where is the question of compulsion? As it is, there is not enough cloth to go round. The stocks of cloth available for distribution being short of the demand, rationing becomes a necessity. The question is only of wise distribution. No stocks may be expected from outside for some time. America and England are making strenuous efforts to increase their cloth production. But it is all needed there. If we nationalize our textile industry and work it on a double shift basis, it would probably solve the problem of cloth shortage, but not of mass poverty. I won't then be able to press the case for khadi, not because there would be no case but because I won't be able to carry conviction.

F. That is not my point. An element of compulsion there is in all governmental measures. . . . If a fundamentally unsound and unstable economic situation is sought to be propped up by governmental compulsion, there is danger that it will crash one day and spread ruin all around. I am wondering if the

organization of khadi production on the present lines is not an instance of that type, whether pure theory does not need to be tempered with a measure of practical realism to suit the changed conditions. For instance, the woollen manufactures in Kashmir are not self-use. They cater for the market for fancy goods outside Kashmir. They are extremely popular. Now, if we introduce machine carding, they can hold their own against all competition. But that would be against the fundamental khadi principles. I have been thinking whether a compromise cannot be effected. To run cottage industries with man-power exclusively, has not much prospect of survival in this age of machinery. We may try to canalize economic trends, we may not run against them in a head-on collision. If we could run cottage industries with the help of cheap electricity, for instance, they would be able to hold their own without losing their essential character. After all, decentralized production is what we want. We might have projects for the development of cheap hydraulic power as an aid to irrigation schemes. They can be in operation in from six to ten years. It will then be possible to take electricity to every village. Shall we under those circumstances be able to work khadi on the present lines? Normally speaking, supply should balance demand. But instead of establishing khadi on a permanent basis, we are crippling it by artificial restrictions with the result that a lot of corruption and dishonesty has crept in. . . .

G. It is open to all those who cannot or do not want to spin to go in for mill cloth, whether Indian or foreign. I am walking with my eyes open. This is not first time in the history of khadi that demand has outstripped supply and *vice versa*. Each time heroic measures were adopted and the crisis was overcome. I do not expect a different result this time. Only, we must have faith and patience and the courage to apply the right remedy which is what I am doing at present. If in the process khadi dies, I must be prepared to take even that risk.

F. That is begging the question. It won't go down with people. We have got to adjust our policy to the popular need.

G. I cannot do that. Having discovered the error, I must correct it. That may take time. Therefore, I have suggested the removal of the khadi clause from the Congress constitution. When it was sought to be removed unsuccessfully at the Assam Congress, it gave me satisfaction. Now I will encourage and welcome abolition. If it has intrinsic merit, khadi will survive the Congress abolition. If it has not, it will deserve to go under.

F. That, however, would not solve our fundamental problem.

G. I am afraid I won't be able to convince you by argument. Time alone will show who was right.

F. You said weaving was the bottleneck. A weaver mill yarn, can today earn as much as Rs. 3 a day. The spinner and the weaver of the hand-spun won't work for lower wages.

G. I don't want him to. That is why I have recommended doubling of hand-spun yarn. If he depends on the supply of mill yarn, he is doomed. Mill-owners are not philanthropists to go on providing yarn to the handloom weaver when he enters into effective competition with them. But a weaver working on doubling hand-spun yarn will, in the end, be better off than the mill yarn weaver, for the former will find steady employment all the year round.

F. The very basis of textile industry has been revolutionized. Now they are preparing synthetic textile fibres from coal, air and water. Felting of cotton fibres with the help of resins is taking the place of weaving. Unless we make sure that our khadi policy rests on a sound practicable basis and fits into the over-all picture, khadi is bound to fail.

G. It may, but the labour expended on it won't have been wasted.

F. No good effort is ever wasted. But the latest orientation of your khadi policy continues to perplex many a sincere khadi lover and worker. Their perplexity ought to be removed. Some of them even talk of going in for uncertified khadi.

G. The perplexity won't be removed if they have no faith in khadi.

F. So long as there is demand for khadi, it ought to be fulfilled even if prices of khadi have to be raised.

G. That means that khadi will become fancy goods. It won't be right to use a vast organization for such a purpose. Our duty is to find out and remedy if there is any fundamental defect in our khadi policy and if in the process it is found that khadi is not basically a sound proposition, it should be given a decent burial. Today khadi is on its trial. It will successfully emerge from it only by virtue of its inherent strength and if it lacks that strength, all bother about it will be love's labour lost.

F. All I know is that where there is widespread and genuine demand for a commodity and the supply falls short, it should be possible to devise ways and means to adjust the economic balance and satisfy the demand in question.

G. I can only warn you of the danger. There was a time when we used machine-carded slivers for spinning. We might as well have used mill yarn. If we had not broken away from it and had not introduced hand-carding, khadi would have been defunct by now.

The late Sir Gangaram said to me : "Only give up the spinning-wheel, concentrate on the handloom and I am with you." He did not realize what we know today, that the use of mill yarn is the principal stranglehold on the handloom industry. In hand-spun yarn lies its only salvation. It the spinning-wheel goes, the handloom is bound to follow suit. Khadi will cease to have any value in my eyes if it does not usefully employ the millions. Many of the "compromises" that have been suggested are such as to take away from it its essential character. The late Sir Fazalbhai prophesied to me when I saw him thirty years ago that khadi was ultimately bound to fail. He is gone but khadi has remained. Maybe a new era has now opened and khadi is an anachronism in it. Only, I do not feel so.

Harijan, 25-8-1946

46. CONFUSION ABOUT RAMANAMA

A friend writes :

> Regarding your suggested cure of malaria by Ramanama,[1] my problem is that I do not understand how to rely on a spiritual force for my physical ailments. I am also not sure if I deserve to be cured and if I am justified in praying for my salvation, when there is so much misery amongst my countrymen. The day I understand Ramanama, I shall pray for their salvation. Otherwise I would feel more selfish than I do today.

This is from a friend whom I believe to be an earnest seeker of truth. I take public notice of his difficulty, as it is typical of that of many like him.

Spiritual force is like any other force at the service of man. Apart from the fact that it has been used for physical ailments for ages with more or less success, it would be intrinsically wrong not to use it, if it can be successfully used for the cure of physical ailments. For, man is both matter and spirit, each acting on and affecting the other. If you get rid of malaria by taking quinine, without thinking of the millions who do not get it, why should you refuse to use the remedy which is within you, because millions will not use it through their ignorance? May you not be clean and well because millions of others will not be so, ignorantly or maybe even cussedly? If you will not be

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. B.S. Moonje", 8-8-1946 and "Letter to Jahangir Patel", 17-8-1946.

clean out of false notions of philanthropy, you will deny yourself the duty of serving the very millions by remaining dirty and ill. Surely refusal to be spiritually well or clean is worse than the refusal to be physically clean and well.

Salvation is nothing more and nothing less than being well in every way. Why should you deny it for yourself, if thereby you show the way to others and beyond showing it, actually serve them in addition by reason of your fitness? But you are wholly selfish when you take penicillin in order to get well although you have the certain knowledge that the others cannot get it.

The confusion lying behind my correspondent's argument is obvious.

What, however, is true is that the taking of a pill or pills of quinine is much easier than gaining the knowledge of the use of Ramanama. It involves much effort as against the mere cost of buying quinine pills. The effort is worth making for the sake of the millions, in whose name and on whose behalf my correspondent will shut Rama out of his heart.

SEVAGRAM, August 17, 1946

Harijan, 1-9-1946

47. TELEGRAM TO KUNJUKRISHNA MENON

SEVAGRAM,
August 17, 1946

KUNJUKRISHNA MENON
TEACHER, MALAYALAM SCHOOL
PATTOM, TRIVANDRUM

VELUKUTTY NAIR MUST NOT FAST.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

48. TELEGRAM TO KAMTA PRASAD

SEVAGRAM,
August 17, 1946

KAMTA PRASAD
CHAKRATA

DO NOT KNOW MERITS CASE

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

49. TELEGRAM TO MADARNAHAK VIRAM

SEVAGRAM,
August 17, 1946

MADARNAHAK VIRAM
AJMER

PLANS UNCERTAIN. DO NOT COME NOW.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

50. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

SEVAGRAM,
August 17, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

I am instructed by Gandhiji to send you a copy of a wire[1] just received by him. It needs no comment. Things in Goa seem to be in a bad way.

Kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 101-2

[1] This was about ill-treatment in jail of Purushottam Kakodkar, Secretary, Goa National Congress; *vide* also Goa, 18-8-1946 and Goa, 1-9-1946.

51. LETTER TO JEHANGIR PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
August 17, 1946

BHAI JEHANGIR,

I have your English letter. Do you have my letters read out to you? If you could tell me whether you read my letters yourself and can follow them fully or have to have someone explain them to you, I could do something about it. If Ramprasad's case is likely to take long I shall have to think about the matter a little. I thought you needed a man urgently, and that obtaining sanction was only a formality. But what you say is right. Consider it only after having consulted your association. It would be better if you could tell me how much time it will take. But this you ought to bear in mind that Ramprasad is not unoccupied here. All I wish to convey is that I can spare him without inconvenience to me.

You will find in *Harijan* the answer to the question you have raised regarding Ramanama.[1] Nevertheless you will please ask me again if you do not understand it or are not satisfied with it. I think it is another matter whether you put it into practice or not. However, as a trustee you ought to have a correct understanding of it. And if I am making a mistake you should correct me. I note that Dinshaw has been seeing you. Write to me if you have anything to say regarding the views I have expressed.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. JEHANGIR PATEL
PATEL HOUSE
10 CHURCHGATE STREET
FORT BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* " Confusion about Ramanama", 17-8-1946.

52. LETTER TO K. M. PANIKKAR

SEVAGRAM,
August 17, 1946

BHAI PANIKKAR,

I have your letter. I am happy to know that there is no law against the Harijans in the State. Though, personally, I don't like gold ornaments being worn whether on the feet or any other part of the body, forbidding this by law is irksome. Poor Harijans can enjoy the sight of gold only on other people's persons. How can they own any gold? But what is the difficulty in getting rid of old ideas of prestige?

Blessings from
BAPU

DIWAN
BIKANER STATE

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

53. LETTER TO MANGHARAM BHAVANDAS

SEVAGRAM,
August 17, 1946

BHAI MANGHARAM,

I got your letter. Why should you grieve over your mother's death? We are all destined to go the same way—some now, some later. Our dharma is to go on doing our duty.

The money will be used for Harijan work.

Blessings from
BAPU

MANGHARAM BHAVANDAS
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

54. GOA[1]

The following telegrams have been received regarding Shri Kakodkar's arrest and imprisonment :

> Purushottam Kakodkar arrested in connection recent Satyagraha movement Goa. In spite being political prisoner imprisoned dingy ill-ventilated cell in company criminals awaiting trial for murder robberies. Food supplied most ordinary insufficient being half normal meal. Expressed willingness to work for his meal. Also pleaded on behalf his other unfortunate companions in cell for better treatment. In respect food authorities turned deaf ear. He is on hunger strike since last three days. Authorities' attitude arrogant offensive.
>
> Purushottam Kakodkar fifth day hunger strike. Condition precarious. Allowed see persons under guard. Attitude authorities unconcerned.

If the charges attributed to the Goan authorities are true, they reflect great discredit on them. It is to be hoped that the civil resisters of Goa will not be cowed down by any ill-treatment, however grave it may be.

I am not sure about the wisdom of the hunger-strike resorted to. Let me hope that it will produce the desired effect. In any case, having been undertaken, it must be prosecuted to the end.

SEVAGRAM, August 18, 1946

Harijan, 25-8-1946

55. DISLOYALTY TO KHADI

A correspondent writes :

> On 31st July 1946, at 6 p. m., 13 college students (khadi wearers) headed by a prominent Congressman, who is also a councilor, came in the Khadi Bhandar. The sale was closed due to shortage of khadi. Only a few pieces of khadi were kept in the cupboard upstairs, as it was not possible to satisfy about 1500 khadi wearers from these few pieces. They at once went up, took thirteen full pieces forcibly, asked the Manager to take money, and also without yarn, and on refusal of accepting money in protest by the Manager, they went away with the cloth.
>
> Was it not the duty of the Manager to lodge a complaint against them in the police, or what action should he have taken in preventing them from

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

taking away the cloth?

The manager should really have resisted the looting, non-violently, even at the risk of losing his life. He is entitled to lodge a complaint against the miscreants, provided that all other avenues of voluntary return of the loot have been explored and have failed.

Rowdyism by students has become a byword. If "a prominent Congressman" encouraged them, it was a matter of shame. The use of looted khadi betrays woeful ignorance of the elements of swaraj and makes khadi such a mockery.

SEVAGRAM, August 18, 1946

Harijan, 25-8-1946

56. LETTER TO JAYAKUNVAR DESAI

SEVAGRAM,
August 18, 1946

CHI. JAYA[1],

There is a letter from Manu saying that Bihari[2] has typhoid. Don't let typhoid scare you or Bihari and don't let anyone scare him. It has been my unfailing experience that if one leaves it alone it disappears after it has run its course. You may daily give him enema. I know from experience that if the patient is given fruit juices, his intestines heal up on their own. The doctors have other theories. What can I write to you about Ramanama? Trust everything to God. Keep me informed.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI JAYABEHN
HARSHAD VILLA
NEHRU ROAD
VILLE PARLE

From microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./XXIII

[1] Daughter of Amritlal Tulsidas Gandhi, Gandhi's cousin
[2] Addressee's son

57. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
August 18, 1946

CHI. SITA,

I have your letter. Your handwriting is good, but there is still room for improvement. Try and see what you can do. It is not proper that you give me no news about Sumi[1]. Learn Urdu by your own efforts. In my view, you will be receiving more useful education if you start going among the villagers and propagate spinning, etc.

Why do you write "majah" instead of "Maja".

Blessings from
BAPU

KU. SITA GANDHI
BENARES HINDU VIDYAPITH
WOMENS' HOSTEL
BENARES, U. P.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4988

58. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

SEVAGRAM,
August 18, 1946

CHI. VANU,

I have your letter. I had also got the letter which you sent with Dada. At that time I thought that since you would be soon meeting me it was pointless to reply. Besides, even if I had written I could not have done so in detail. We shall have a little talk when we meet. I am not at all happy about Narahari's illness. He may consult a homeopath if he wishes. I wish him, even for selfish reasons to get well somehow. From your letter I assume that all of you will arrive here around the 20th.

Blessings from
BAPU

KR. VANAMALA PARIKH
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI
B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 5798. Also C. W. 3021. Courtesy : Vanamala M. Desai

[1] Sumitra Gandhi, daughter of Ramdas Gandhi

59. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

SEVAGRAM,
August 18, 1946

CHI. BHANSALI,

I keep forgetting to write to you. I am glad to learn that you are taking so much interest in coaching the children. Make them develop the habit of writing. They should cultivate good handwriting; they should learn the three scripts, Gujarati, Devanagari and Persian. Those who are not Gujaratis should learn the last two. If they line the paper they will not fumble. There should be no mugging. If they follow everything intelligently they can make great progress.

Let me know if what I have written is wrong.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

60. LETTER TO DR. ATMARAM K. BHAGAWAT

SEVAGRAM,
August 18, 1940

BROTHER BHAGAWAT,

Chi. Paramanand has come here. He has given all the news. Your work is going on well and everybody has got the impression that you are a silent worker. I want to know three things from you. (1) What about the shoes? (2) Why the indifference in regard to the rules of cleanliness? (3) And why the growing of long hair? The experiment in balanced diet I have liked very much. I want to do it for myself. It saves us from many difficulties. But I am sorry that I have not yet been able to start on it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : C. W. 2741. Courtesy : Manilal B. Desai

61. LETTER TO L. N. GOPALASWAMI AYYAR

SEVAGRAM,
August 18, 1946

BHAI GOPALASWAMI,

This is in reply to your letter of 19th June. It is not good that you felt tired. You should first discuss the matter with Bapa as well as with me. Whatever step has to be taken should be taken only after that. I have had a talk with Rajaji and you will have got my message. You should not give any importance to the statements made by the Harijan M.L.A. Taking notice of such a thing in *Harijan* would only lend it unmerited prestige.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

62. SPEECH AT MEETING OF DOCTORS[1]

SEVAGRAM,
August 18, 1946

Gandhiji while thanking them all for the trouble they had taken, said he was afraid elaborate schemes costing large sums of money would not do. He wanted Sevagram to serve as a model and therefore he wanted nothing there which could not be multiplied in the 700,000 villages. If they could do that satisfactorily even in one village, it might solve the problem of the other villages of India. Otherwise progress would be at a snail's pace and ambitious planning in a few villages would only stand out as a monument of costly futility.

D.D.T. spraying was already being carried on. Gandhiji suggested that it should be intensified. The Government could use the place as a centre for experimental survey and malaria control. They could build a few septic tanks as an experiment, but he felt sure that trending, properly carried out, must remain the solution in the vast majority of cases. Shri Aryanayakum of the Talimi Sangh had

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The meeting had been called by Dr. Sushila Nayyar with a view to devising ways to rid Sevagram of malaria and improving the sanitation.

offered to make an experiment to see if trenching could not be done without fly-breeding.

Harijan, 1-9-1946

63. WHAT CAN VIOLENCE DO?

If newspaper reports are to be believe, responsible ministers in Sindh and other equally responsible Leaguers almost all over, are preaching violence in naked language. Nakedness is itself a virtue as distinguished from hypocrisy. But when it is a hymn of obscenity, it is a vice to be shunned, whether it resides in a Leaguer or any other person. Any Muslim who is not in the League is a traitor, says one. The Hindu is a *kafir* deserving the fate of such, says another.

Calcutta had given an ocular demonstration of what direct action is and how it is to be done.[1]

Who is the gainer? Certainly not the Muslim masses nor the sober followers of Islam which itself means sobriety and peace. The very salute *salaam alaikum* means 'peace be unto you'.

Violence may have its place in life but not that which we have witnessed in Calcutta, assuming of course that newspaper accounts are to be trusted. Pakistan of whatever hue does not lie through senseless violence. When I write of senseless violence, I naturally assume the possibility of sensible violence, whatever the latter may be. The Calcutta demonstration was not an illustration of sensible violence.

What senseless violence does is to prolong the lease of the life of British or foreign rule. I believe that the authors of the State Paper issued by the Cabinet Mission desire peaceful transfer of power to representative Indian hands. But if *we* need the use of the British gun and bayonet, the British will not go or, if they do, some other foreign power will take their place. We will make a serious mistake, if, everytime the British bayonet is used, we trot out the agent provocateur. No doubt he has been at work. Let us not ride that horse to death.

Calcutta has earned a bad repute of late. It has seen too many wild demonstrations during the past few months. If the evil reputation

[1] On August 16, which the Muslim League had declared "Direct Action Day", savage riots broke out in Calcutta. During four days of rioting, according to official estimates, some five thousand were killed and fifteen thousand wounded.

is sustained for some time longer, it will cease to be the City of Palaces, it will become the city of the dead.

Would that the violence of Calcutta were sterilized and did not become a signal for its spread all over. It depends upon the leaders of the Muslim League of course, but the rest will not be free from responsibility. They can retaliate or refrain. Refraining is easy and simple, if there is the will. Retaliation is complicated. Will it be tooth against or many against one?

SEVAGRAM, August 19, 1946

Harijan, 25-8-1946

64. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM,
August 19, 1946

CHI. MIRA,

This is merely to ask you how you would arrange the latrines for the Ashram and the village. Subsoil water being so near the surface, medical men who gathered here yesterday voted for septic tanks. I know you are averse to the idea. Send me your own opinion and a description of the preparation of compost. I forget if you include night-soil also as they do in Indore. Anyway give me an accurate description for me to print or show to medical friends.

Don't recommence work unless you are quite fit. You have ample to do in Mussoorie.

It is raining as I write.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

R. K. reminds me that I have already published your writings[1] on the thing. If they are enough don't trouble.

From the original : C. W. 6581. Courtesy : Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9913

[1] In *Harijan*, 10-3-1946 under the title "From Rubbish to Gold"

65. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
August 19, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

I could reach your letter of the 10th today. I have already dictated a postcard to Jaya.[1] Let us hope that Bihari will get well.

Who can convince Jaisukhlal? The description you give me of the conditions there has shocked me. I have seen Mahua. But from what you say it would appear, it is worse than what I had thought it to be. I remember that I stayed there only for a day.

If you can stay right near the seashore, things will be better. Why does Jaisukhlal fall ill so often, in spite of all his careful observance of dietary restrictions. There must be some reason. He must look for it and get will.

Your work seems to be progressing well. The important thing is that you are at peace there and have got independent social work. You should take up sanitation work. If you succeed in cleaning up Mahua, you will deserve a medal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./XXIV

66. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 19, 1946

CHI. PYARELAL,

Meet Prabhudayal and find out what he says about [my] Hindustani. Don't my Hindustani speeches go direct as they are?

Blessings from
BAPU

PYARELALJI

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* " Letter to Jayakunvar Desai", 18-8-1946.

67. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

SEVAGRAM,
August 19, 1946

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

I learn from Prabhudayal's diary that in Nalwadi, the place from which milk is distributed is very dirty. How far is the complaint true? If there is truth in it, study the rules of dairy hygiene and follow them. Our *goseva* must be ideal.

Blessings from

BAPU

RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

68. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

SEVAGRAM,
August 19, 1946

BHAI JAJUJI,

Read the enclosed letter and send me your comments. Can we today produce khadi for the market? Can we render any other service? The other questions are also there. Think over them too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

69. LETTER TO DHIRUBHAI DIKSHIT

SEVAGRAM,
August 20, 1946

CHI. DHIRU,

I cannot quite understand why you had to undertake the fast. Who made the complaint? And have I not said that no one may undertake a fast without asking me? This is the best course.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. DHIRUBHAI
URULI KANCHAN

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

70. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

SEVAGRAM,
August 20, 1946

CHI. KASHINATH,

I had thought of writing to Father. But then for the first two days I forgot all about it. Later when I suddenly remembered it no one could tell me his name. I think I had asked you to leave me his name and address and you had said I should ask someone or the other. No one however could give me the name. It is possible that you left it with Krishnachandra, but he stays in Paunar. I could not get it from the Mahila Ashram either. Now that I have to reply to your letter I shall say here what I want to write to Father. Tell him it is only natural for a father to be grieved by the passing away of a young son. But if one takes a dispassionate and broad view, why should one grieve? Everyone who is born must die, the only difference being whether death comes soon or late. Why grieve over it then? And one who looks upon all children as his own—and Father must adopt such an attitude—over whom can such a person grieve? Thus I would suggest that if the cause of this death has been found we should try and remove the possibility of its recurrence in respect of others. The main cause of typhoid is believed to be contaminated water. Wherever this cause has been removed casualties from typhoid have been reduced almost to nil.

Now the reply to your letter. Wherever there is a clash between groups of workers it should be understood that neither party seeks Government help. If this is assured the conflict tends to stop. And if they do not accept Government help one of the parties should wisely and courageously stay calm. The conflict will then dissolve. Everyone does not readily realize this. Hence, one should acquire enough strength for self-defence. Detecting and removing the cause of conflict is the universally accepted remedy. But where one party is determined to secure power by resorting to conflict, then there is nothing one can do. It is very clear and also painful. And the remedy lies either in the violent or the non-violent way described above.

SHRI KASHINATH TRIVEDI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

71. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM,
August 21, 1946

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I got the *rakhi* today. May you and Shankerlal get well and render service. I am getting along well.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI
MAJOOR MAHAJAN
BHADRA, AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

72. LETTER TO LILAVATI MUNSHI

SEVAGRAM,
August 21, 1946

CHI. LILAVATI,

I went through your draft law about ill-matched couples early this morning after the prayers. It seems to me that enacting such a law will bring no immediate gain. I think for the desired reform to come about a good deal of public opinion will have to be built up. There is every chance of a law not backed by public opinion remaining confined to the statute book. Have you not had such experience? Hence, if nothing has yet been done I would suggest your systematically cultivating public opinion in this regard. A few armchair reformers expressing a pious desire should not be mistaken for public opinion. In fact these reformers, at least some of them, do not hesitate to offer themselves as eligible candidates when opportunity arises.

I have your reply regarding the matter at Worli. And let me know if you come to know anything more. At the moment I do not wish to write anything to the Ministers.

Blessings from
BAPU

LILAVATI MUNSHI
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

73. ADDRESS TO HINDUSTANI PRACHAR TRAINEES[1]

SEVAGRAM,
August 21, 1946

We are slaves of the English language but we should overthrow its domination and use our language. If you want to be good Hindustani propagandists you must also learn to be good Bhangis like me.

You must try to grow your food, at least green vegetables, and cook for yourself and not depend on others or on servants as you are now doing.

Gandhiji recalled how he used green vegetables which tribesmen brought him during his satyagraha march in South Africa and advised students to grow some vegetables for their daily needs as it required little labour. He laid stress on dignity of labour which occupied a prominent place in Nayee Talim and asked students to realize its significance.

The Hindu, 23-8-1946

74. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

SEVAGRAM,
August 22, 1946

BHAI JAJUJI,

I have received a reply to my letter to Vaikunthbhai from which it appears that khadi is not likely to face any difficulty in the Bombay Presidency. All the same we shall see if any difficulty does crop up.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The students of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha's training college had assembled in Gandhiji's cottage to hear him. A meeting of the Sabha also decided during the day to bring out Hindi-Hindustani and Urdu-Hindustani dictionaries.

75. LETTER TO V. L. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
August 22, 1946

BHAI VAIKUNTH,

I got your beautiful letter written in as shabby a hand as mine. But can the pot call the kettle black? It would not be wrong if you engaged a clerk instead of sparing the Government the expenditure. Now that you have supplied me all the details, I shall be able to write something.

I take it that the articles that have been exempted include khadi.

To

VAIKUNTHBHAI MEHTA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

76. LETTER TO V. T. KRISHNAMACHARI

SEVAGRAM,
August 22, 1946

BHAI KRISHNAMACHARI,

The Rajasthan branch of the Charkha Sangh informs me that the Jaipur State does not give khadi full exemption from tax or license fee, etc. Can't poor khadi be exempted?

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR KRISHNAMACHARI, DIWAN
JAIPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

77. ENGLISH INTO HINDUSTANI

What English-knowing Indian has not felt the shame and sorrow at his failure to discover an equivalent for an English word in either his mother tongue or the national language? A Gujarati lad has an English-Gujarati dictionary in such a case to help him; similarly a Urdu or Hindi knowing lad has his dictionary to fall back upon. But for Hindustani, which is neither Persianized Urdu nor Sanskritized Hindi and which is the tongue of the common folk of the North, whether Hindu or Mussalman, a writer has no dictionary to fall back upon. An attempt will be made through a column at least of the *Harijan* each week to furnish for English a Hindustani word or two, spelt in both Nagari and Urdu script. An endeavour will be made to give the names of those who will contribute their labour to this fascinating task. This is pioneer work and therefore will, like all pioneer work, have defects. Those who detect them, will confer a favour by drawing the attention to them of the Editor. I would suggest to students that they copy out these words week by week in a note-book and add to or amend the attempt. They will find that the labour will combine recreation with instruction.

Only those English words which are in common use have been selected from a standard English dictionary. In reading the following[1], the reader should also know that no claim is made that the equivalents are the best possible or that they are exhaustive. They are a help to the searcher. The plan for this week is that those who are helping me to conduct the *Harijan* have prepared the first list. Kakasaheb and Acharya Shrimannarayan looked at the selection. The first letters of their names "Ka" or "Shri" have been given in parenthesis after the addition.

SEVAGRAM, August 23, 1946

Harijan, 1-9-1946

[1] Not reproduced here

78. WE ARE ALL INDIANS

A Roman Catholic student from Goa had the sad experience of being told by some of his fellow students in Bombay that he was a Portuguese and therefore a foreigner. When he told them that the Roman Catholics of Goa had castes just like the Hindus, he was not believed. These transitory lapses will take place whilst we are shedding our narrownesses and claiming all to be free Indians, slaves neither of the British, nor of the Portuguese nor any other foreign rule. If the same students were wisely handled, they would be proud to know their friend as an Indian and not as a Goan and be known themselves as Indians, not Bombayites. Everyone's religion is his own concern but his nationality is a corporate thing, carrying with it important and far-reaching consequences. That even among converts there are castes is a reflection upon Hinduism and should set every Hindu thinking and make him become, with me, a Bhangi.

SEVAGRAM, August 23, 1946

Harijan, 1-9-1946

79. TELEGRAM TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

Express SEVAGRAM,

August 23, 1946

DOCTOR DINSHAW
6 TODDYWALA ROAD
POONA

YOUR WIRE. NATURE CURE FORBIDS DESPAIR NOTWITHSTANDING ODDS. WROTE ON FIFTEENTH.[1] GOING DELHI SUNDAY. HOPE MOTHER BETTER YOU ALSO. LOVE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This was not received by the addressee; *vide* "Letter to D.V. Ramaswami", 29-8-1946.

80. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Express SEVAGRAM,
August 23, 1946

RASHTRAPATI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
18 HARDINGE AVENUE
NEW DELHI

WIRE RECEIVED. LEAVING SUNDAY. STAYING BHANGI QUARTERS. INFORM BIRLA BRIJKRISHEN.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

81. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

Express SEVAGRAM,
August 23, 1946

C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR
THYAGARAYANAGAR

YOUR LETTER. HOPE YOU WELL ENOUGH. ATTEND DELHI MEETING[1]

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

82. TELEGRAM TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

SEVAGRAM,
August 23, 1946

KASHINATH TRIVEDI
RANIPURA
BARWANI

TARAMANIBEHN CAN BE SENT PROVIDED YOU HAVE FIXED MAHILASHRAM. SHE CAN STAY SEVAGRAM FOR A TIME.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Of the Congress Working Committee which was held from 27th to 30th July 1946

83. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM,
August 23, 1946

CHI. LILY,

I have your letter. One too much crushed by debts feels not debts; one too much crushed by suffering feels not suffering. What are you afraid of? I have told you that you have neither relatives nor friends till you have passed your examination. Your studies are your relatives. I leave for Delhi on Sunday.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. LILAVATIBEHN
G. S. MEDICAL COLLEGE
LADIES' HOSTEL
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10242. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

84. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

SEVAGRAM,
August 23, 1946

BHAI MUNSHI,

I have your letter. Chi. Lilavati in her letter told me that you were busy day and night with the Constituent Assembly work. I feel no pity for you on that score, provided of course that you are not working at the cost of your health.

I am glad that the Sharma-Gadodia case is over. I did feel hesitant about burdening you with that work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 7700. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

85. LETTER TO UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM

SEVAGRAM,
August 23, 1946

BHAI UTTIMCHAND,

I have your letter. I was delighted to see your Hindustani. I read the Urdu also. I am sending the cheque to Sardar. I like the analogy from geometry and I got the answer too by drawing the figure.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM
BOMBAY BAKERY
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

86. ADDRESS TO TRAINEES OF BASIC TEACHERS' CAMP[1]

SEVAGRAM,
August 23, 1946

One of the complaints that has been made by one of you is that too much emphasis is laid here on manual work. I am a firm believer in the educative value of manual work.. Our present educational system is meant for strengthening and perpetuating the imperialist power in India. Those of you who have been brought up under it have naturally developed a taste for it and so find labour irksome. No one in Government schools or college bothers to teach the students how to clean the roads or latrines. Here cleanliness and sanitation form the very Alpha and Omega of your training. Scavenging is a fine art you should take pains to learn. Persistent questioning and healthy inquisitiveness are the first requisite for acquiring learning of any kind. Inquisitiveness should be tempered by humility and

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". There were 79 trainees sent by various Congress-ruled provinces and by the Kasturba Trust. The meeting was held in the Talimi Sangh Hall.

respectful regard for the teacher. It must not degenerate into impudence. The latter is the enemy of receptivity of mind. There can be no knowledge without humility and the will to learn.

Useful manual labour, intelligently performed, is the means *par excellence* for developing the intellect. One may develop a sharp intellect otherwise too. But then it will not be a balanced growth but an unbalanced distorted abortion. It might easily make of one a rogue and a rascal. A balanced intellect presupposes a harmonious growth of boy, mind and soul. That is why we give to manual labour the central place in our curriculum of training here. An intellect that is developed through the medium of socially useful labour will be an instrument for service and will not easily be led astray or fall into devious paths. The latter can well be a scourge. If you grasp that essential point, the money spent by your respective government in sending you here for training will have been well-spent.

Harijan, 8-9-1946

87. COCHIN[1]

I have read all that has appeared in *The Hindu* of 30th July about the announcement[2] made by the Maharaja of Cochin. It is good as far as it goes. His Highness deserves congratulations for his courage. But good words do not carry us much further, unless they are accompanied by present action. It would certainly be a tremendous advance if the Maharaja were to make the beginning today, irrespective of what Travancore or other States do or do not do. Will Cochin become a part of what is called British Malabar today, the Maharaja keeping for himself no status other than what the free vote of the adult population of Cochin gives him?

SEVAGRAM, August 24, 1946

Harijan, 1-9-1946

[1] This appeared under the heading 'Notes'.

[2] The Maharaja of Cochin in a statement had declared that he was prepared to discuss the unification of his State with Malabar and Travancore to form a State of Kerala.

88. LETTER TO MADALASA

Not revised *August 24, 1946*

CHI. MADU,

I feel pity for you. I am also angry with you. What you have told me fills me with pity. But I am angry because you kept it to yourself all this time.

We should blame no one except ourselves. That is the only way to be happy in life and remain clean. I have told you that you should find some work which will leave you no time to think about yourself. Mahila Ashram work was one such activity, but it did not suit you. You should, then, find some work which you can do alone or with a friend you will choose. If you can think of nothing, you could learn all the processes of spinning. Read books on nature cure. There are some in Gujarati, and in Hindi, too.

Do write to me every Tuesday, and that at length. Do not lose your temper with anybody, not even with yourself. Learn to sing the *bhajans* aloud.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 327-8

89. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEVAGRAM,
August 24, 1946

CHI. KAKA,

I have your letter.

Next week the dictionary must be published.[1] We canonly try, however. Please send me what you can. That will satisfy me. How can we pass imperfect material in order to finish the work? After all it is only a beginning. It was not possible to send for you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10973

90. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

August 24, 1946

I had long talks with Kanchan. I only pity her. She can take no decision just now. She certainly desires conjugal pleasure and to bear children. This wish on her part cannot be despised. You are a married man. No one can find fault with you if you beget progeny. It is only right for you to satisfy her and find satisfaction yourself. It is another matter if, seeing your ascetic disposition and out of love and compassion for you, she herself releases you. But at present this is beyond you both. You have not the necessary firmness of mind. Kanchan certainly wants to taste of the worldly pleasure. The two of you should therefore stay there for the present. When I arrive there it will not be necessary for you to visit the Ashram too often. You may come whenever you conveniently can. It will not matter if you don't. If in the meanwhile my plans have crystallized, we shall know how matters stand with regard to you. Kanchan has suffered much. She must not suffer more. She will explain the rest if she can. I have given you quite enough in this letter. I am not revising this.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10239. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] English-Hindustani dictionary which was to be serialized in *Harijan, Harijanbandhu* and *Harijan Sevak* from September 1, 1946.

91. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SEVAGRAM,
August 24, 1946

When the Ashram was first started in Kochrab we set before us certain ideals. The same ideals are before us today. What is our duty in terms of these ideals in the face of the conflagration that is raging in the country today? Let us be humble and confess that we have not got the strength today to meet all the expectations that the people entertain of us. But we are sincerely striving for it. If we had fully realized the principles for which we stand, we should have rushed into the blaze and offered the purest sacrifice which might have conceivably quenched the flames.

He then proceeded to give his definition of 'pure sacrifice'. It was not the thoughtless annihilation of the moth in the flame. Sacrifice to be effective must be backed by the uttermost external and internal purity. There is nothing that such sacrifice cannot achieve. Without the requisite purity, sacrifice is no better than a desperate self-annihilation devoid of any merit. Sacrifice must, further, be willing and it should be made in faith and hope, without a trace of hatred or ill-will in the heart.

Although we have fallen short of the ideal, we have never been found wanting in honest endeavour. The art of jail-going we have learnt with the rest. But jail-going is only the beginning, not the end of satyagraha. The acme of satyagraha for us would be to lay down our lives for the defence of India's just cause. Let us then pray to God to give us the requisite purity and fearlessness in the true sense of the term, to make our sacrifice worthy of the altar. Then alone shall we be worthy of the name of the Ashram.

Harijan, 8-9-1946

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's 'Weekly Letter', 3-9-1946

92. HINDUSTANI v. URDU AND HINDI

A Bombay Government circular of 16-8-1939 reads :

> It has been observed that the word "Hindustani" is being used indifferently for Hindi or Hindustani. Please note that Hindustani is different and distinct from both HINDI and URDU, and when a reference to that language is to be made, it should be made as "Hindustani" only.

On 9th October 1940 a press note was issued :

> In September 1938 the Government of Bombay announced their decision to introduce the study of Hindustani in the schools of the Province. Steps were accordingly taken to implement that decision and the language is being taught in the primary schools, secondary schools and in the training institutions. In actual practice the teaching of the language in the schools has raised certain difficulties which have to be considered. The chief of them are lack of literature in the language, as it has yet to develop, and the absence of suitable text-books for use in schools. The Hindustani text-books now in use have been found to be defective, both in regard to the language used in them which is said to contain too many words of Hindi origin and in regard to the subject matter of the lessons included in them, some of which are stated to be unsuitable for Muslim pupils. Besides, both Urdu and Hindustani have so much of a common vocabulary that it has been suggested that it is unnecessary to insist on the teaching of Hindustani in Urdu schools. The Government having carefully considered the whole question have now directed teaching of Hindustani in other institutions. Urdu educational institutions in the Province, i. e., the primary and secondary schools and training institutions where the medium of instruction is Urdu, should be exempted from the inclusion of such teaching in the curriculum.

Another circular issued in 1941 exempts Hindi schools from the teaching of Hindustani, thus leaving Hindu schools where the medium is other than Hindi or Urdu for teaching Hindustani. What is the present Government of the Province, which is based on popular will, to do?

The answer is contained in the admission that the present Provincial Government is based on popular will. If the Hindi schools wish to have Hindustani, the national language, taught in the primary and secondary schools, it should be taught. Naturally the question has to be decided by the parents of the children learning in these schools. If they do not want it and an attempt is made to impose it by force, the

claim for being a popular Government cannot be sustained. I should certainly advise the parents to want their children to be taught it. It should never be forgotten that Hindustani is essentially a cross between Hindi and Urdu and written in both the scripts. If the parents want either only Hindi or Urdu and only one script, they cannot impose it on an unbelieving or unwilling Government. Either party has freedom of action.

The question whether Hindustani is or can be a national form of speech is irrelevant at this stage. The argument has, moreover, been examined often enough in previous issues of the *Harijan*.

SEVAGRAM, August 25, 1946

Harijan, 8-9-1946

93. ADVICE TO AN ASHRAM INMATE[1]

SEVAGRAM,
August 25, 1946

Why should you want to touch my feet? Millions cannot do that and what millions cannot afford, we should voluntarily renounce. I go so far as to say that if ahimsa cannot be practised by the millions, I have no use for it for myself. But if they did not want to, although they could, I would hold on to it, even if I were all alone. People say that ahimsa is only for the saint and the seer. I think otherwise. If what they say is right, it ceases to have any value in my eyes. Similarly, if it were open to me alone to desire and strive to live for 125 years, I would not entertain that desire. But everybody can and should desire to live for 125 years, for the service of God and His creation. Self-interest too demands that. For what would life be worth in a world in which I am the sole survivor of all those I have worked with and known?

Harijan, 1-9-1946

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The inmate had wanted to touch Gandhiji's feet as Gandhiji was leaving Sevagram. According to the source this incident took place on the 25th morning.

94. ALTERNATIVE TO INDUSTRIALISM

A correspondent writes :

> Do you then believe that industrialization of India—to the extent of India producing her own ships, locomotives, aeroplanes, etc., —is necessary? If not, will you kindly suggest the alternative means by which India shall discharge her responsibilities as a free and independent nation?
>
> If you believe in the establishment of such industries, who should, in your opinion, exercise control over the management and the profits that will accrue?

I do not believe that industrialization is necessary in any case for any country. It is much less so for India. Indeed, I believe that Independent India can only discharge her duty towards a groaning world by adopting a simple but ennobled life by developing her thousands of cottage [industries] and living at peace with the world. High thinking is inconsistent with complicated material life based on high speed imposed on us by Mammon worship. All the graces of life are possible only when we learn the art of living nobly.

There may be sensation in living dangerously. We must draw the distinction between living in the face of danger and living dangerously. A man who dares to live alone in a forest infested by wild beasts and wilder men without a gun and with God as his only Help, lives in the face of danger. A man who lives perpetually in mid-air and dives to the earth below to the admiration of a gaping world lives dangerously. One is a purposeful, the other a purposeless, life.

Whether such plain living is possible for an isolated nation, however large geographically and numerically in the face of a world armed to the teeth and in the midst of pomp and circumstance, is a question open to the doubt of a sceptic. The answer is straight and simple. If plain life is worth living, then the attempt is worth making even though only an individual or a group makes the effort.

At the same time I believe that some key industries are necessary. I do not believe in armchair or armed socialism. I believe in action according to my belief, without waiting for wholesale conversion. Hence, without having to enumerate key industries, I would have State ownership where a large number of people have to work together. The ownership of the products of their labour,

whether skilled or unskilled, will vest in them through the State. But as I can conceive such a State only based on non-violence, I would not dispossess monied men by force but would invite their co-operation in the process of conversion to State ownership. There are no *pariahs* of society, whether they are millionaires or paupers. The two are sores of the same disease. And all are men "for a' that".

And I avow this belief in the face of the inhumanities we have witnessed and may still have to witness in India as elsewhere. Let us live in the face of danger.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, August 25, 1946

Harijan, 1-9-1946

95. ENGLISH NOTICES[1]

> You and Congress Government advocate immediate discontinuance of English as the medium of instruction in this country. Will you not exert your influence through the *Harijan* to get all sign and direction boards, plates of offices, names of roads, streets, lanes, villages, schools, colleges, hospitals, etc., written in the regional language of the district? A change in Government or semi-Government institutions will be a lesson to private shops, stores, saloons, etc., to follow suit. Articles in the Company's and other Acts requiring a name-board in English must go.

I believe that nowadays the tendency is towards the use of the regional language on signboards, etc. The correspondent is right regarding Government institutions and offices. Now that there are national Governments, the change should be introduced.

If any such rule exists in Company's or other Acts as referred to by the correspondent, it should certainly go.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, August 25, 1946

Harijan, 1-9-1946

96. HINDUSTANI PRACHAR EXAMINATIONS

The examinations for the Hindustani Prachar Sabha, Wardha, had been announced to take place on September 15th. But owing to the postal strike, letters were not delivered regularly for nearly a month, nor did the centres receive the examination books in time. In the circumstances, the time for examinations has

[1] This and the following item were published under 'Notes'.

been postponed to November 17th (Sunday). In view of the extra time afforded, it is hoped that advantage will be taken to open more centres and more examinees will be forthcoming. The last day for receiving applications for the examinations at the Wardha office is 30th September.

I endorse the hope that the extra two months gained by the postponement will mean more entrants for the examinations.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, August 25, 1946

Harijan, 1-9-1946

97. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI,
August 25, 1946

MY DEAR KU,

I am told that Zaverbhai has accepted a post under the Government on a fat salary. If this is so, it is a backward step.

In my opinion no responsible person belonging to our organization can accept any pay for services. Our advice and service should be rendered gratis. Rent and conveyance expenses actually incurred may be charged. We get money from the well-to-do, the government get from the starved masses. The less we have to do with Government money, the better.

Love.

[PS.]

I am sorry. I have to run away. Hope to be back in about a week.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 10183

98. LETTER TO DR. SATYAPAL

ON THE TRAIN
FROM SEVAGRAM TO DELHI,
August 25, 1946

BHAI SATYAPAL,

I got your letter. I am glad to know that you are happy.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. SATYAPAL (OF LAHORE)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

99. LETTER TO DR. SHEIKH MUHAMMED ALAM

ON THE TRAIN,
August 25, 1946

BROTHER ALAM,

I have your letter. I do remember the Begum and your daughter. I hope you are all well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G. N. 33

100. GOA [1]

The game of hunting lovers of civil liberty is going on merrily in Goa. A small power because of its smallness often acts with impunity where a great power cannot. If the facts are as they have come to me, Shri Purushottam Kakodkar is fasting in his prison and may soon join the majority. As a believer unto death in satyagraha, neither I nor any satyagrahi should deplore the death. In such deaths of spotless victims lies the seed of true liberty.

But what of the Portuguese power which boasts of philanthropy and alliance with the Roman Catholic Church? That power will have

[1] This appeared under the heading 'Notes'.

to justify itself man and God. The blood of the innocents (assuming the innocence of the victims) will cry out from their tombs or their ashes. It is more potent than the voice of the living, however powerful and eloquent.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, August 26, 1946

Harijan, 1-9-1946

101. IF I WERE THE MINISTER

The talks with the Ministers concerned at Poona on 29th to 31st July on village crafts and basic education have given rise to a lot of correspondence and private discussion. For the guidance of the Provincial Governments and others interested in the question of khadi which has naturally occasioned the bulk of the correspondence and discussion, I set forth below my thoughts on the subject.

I refer the reader to my note in the *Harijan* of 28th April last. My views, then expressed, remain unaltered. One thing has created a misunderstanding. Some friends have read compulsion in that note. I am sorry for the obscurity. In it I had answered the question as to what representative governments could do if they wished. I had, I hope pardonably, assumed that such governments' notices too could not be interpreted as compulsion. For every act of a *bona-fide* representative government would assume consent of the voters represented. The voters would mean the whole populace, whether registered as voters or not. With that background, I wrote that the Government should notify to the villagers that mill cloth would not be supplied to the villagers after a certain fixed date, so as to enable them to wear khadi prepared by themselves.

Whatever the meaning of my article of 28th April last, I want to state that any scheme adopted about khadi without the willing co-operation of those concerned must mean death to khadi as a means for attaining swaraj. Then the taunt that khadi was a return to the darkness and slavery of the Middle Ages would be true. But I have held the contrary view. Whilst khadi under compulsion was a badge of slavery, khadi intelligently and voluntarily prepared, primarily for one's own use, was easily the badge of our freedom. Freedom is nothing if it is not all-round self-help. I for one would have nothing

to do with khadi, if it were not a free man's privilege as well as duty.

A friendly critic asks whether khadi thus prepared couldalso and at the same time be for sale. Yes, if sale is its secondary use; not, if manufacture for sale is its only or even primary use. That we began with sale of khadi shows temporary necessity as well as our limited vision. Experience is a great teacher. It has taught us many things. Not the least is its primary use. But it is by no means the last. But I must leave this fascinating field of speculation and proceed definitely to answer the question put in the heading.

My first business, as the minister in charge of revival of the villages as the centre of all governmental activity, would be to find out from among the Permanent Service honest and incorruptible men capable for the work. I would put the best among them in touch with the A. I. S. A. and the A. I. V. I. A., creations of the Congress, and bring in a scheme for giving the village crafts the greatest encouragement. I would stipulate there should be no compulsion on the villagers, that they must not slave for others and that they should be taught to help themselves and rely upon their own labour and skill for the production of articles of food, cloth and other necessaries. The scheme would thus have to be comprehensive. I would instruct my first man, therefore, to see the Hindustani Talimi Sangh and see what it has to say.

Let us assume that the scheme, thus produced, contains a clause saying that the villagers themselves declare that they would not want mill cloth, say, after one year from a fixed date, that they require cotton, wool and necessary implements and instruction, not as a gift but to be paid for on the easiest terms. The scheme provides too that it will not apply at once to the whole of any province but only to a part to begin with. The scheme further tells one that the A. I. S. A. will guide and assist the working of the scheme.

Being convinced of its soundness, I would give it legal form in consultation with the law department and issue a notification, fully describing the genesis of the scheme. The villagers as well as the mill-owners and others would have been party to it. The notification will show clearly that it is the people's measure, though bearing the Government stamp. The Government money will be used for the benefit of the poorest villagers, making the largest return possible to

the people concerned. It will, therefore, be probably the most profitable investment in which expert assistance will be voluntary and overhead charges the least item. The notification will give in detail the whole cost to the country and the return to the people.

The only question for me as minister is whether the A. I. S. A. has the conviction and capacity to shoulder the burden of creating and guiding a khadi scheme to success. If it has, I would put my little barque to sea with all confidence.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, August 26, 1946

Harijan, 1-9-1946

102. THE PLACE OF MEDICINE IN NAYEE TALIM[1]

Shrimati Asha Devi does her own work and is considerate of my time. However, one day she asked me to give her five minutes. Her contention was that Nayee Talim should provide for some elementary instruction in medicine and she wondered whether, to make this possible, she herself should undergo training in medicine for four or five years.

I realized at once that with the best efforts on her part she had not been able to free herself wholly from the hold of the old system of education. Asha Devi, after all, has taken an M.A. degree from a University which was created by the British. I myself possess no degree, and I ceased long ago to attach any value to the little knowledge I acquired at High School. I have besides taken in deeply the system of nature cure. So I said to her: "You say the first lesson our children have to learn is how to keep fit and how to keep themselves and their surroundings clean. I say this covers all the medical knowledge we need. Nayee Talim is intended for the millions in villages. It is for their good. They live close to nature and yet do not know the laws of natural living. Those who know those laws do not follow them. It is from observing their way of living that we conceived the need for Nayee Talim. The knowledge that Nayee Talim imparts is scarcely to be had from books. It is from the book of nature that this knowledge is to be had. We must similarly seek what medical knowledge we need from the same book of nature. This means that if we know the laws of hygiene and follow them and take

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 1-9-1946.

the right nutrition we can become our own doctors. The man who eats in order to live, who lives in friendship with the five basic substances, namely, earth, water, ether, sun and air, who is a servant of God who has created these, can never fall ill. And if he does, he will surrender himself to God's care and calmly meet his end. He will be content to use such medicinal herbs and remedies as the grounds and fields of his village yield. Tens of millions of people live and die thus. They have not so much as heard of a doctor, let alone seeing one. We must make ourselves just like these villagers and teach village boys and adults who come to us also to live in that way. Doctors say that 99 per cent of all diseases are caused by insanitation, by eating things not fit to eat and by lack of proper nutrition. If we can teach 99 per cent of the people the art of living, we can forget the remaining one per cent. They will find some doctors like Sushila Nayar. We need not bother too much about them. Today pure water, pure earth and pure air are not available. We live sheltered from the sun. If we pay attention to these and take proper nourishment we shall have done the work of ages. Acquiring knowledge of this requires neither degrees nor money in crores of rupees. All that is needed is faith in God, the spirit of service, an acquaintance with the five basic substances and knowledge of proper diet. We can acquire all this with our own effort and in very little time without going to schools and colleges.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, August 26, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 1-9-1946

103. TELEGRAM TO SHAFAAT AHMED KHAN

NEW DELHI,
August 26, 1946

SIR SHAFAAT AHMED KHAN
CLARENDON COTTAGE
SIMLA

THANK GOD YOU ARE SAFE.[1] HOPE RECOVERY WILL BE RAPID.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

104. TELEGRAM TO DR. M. D. D. GILDER

Express NEW DELHI,
August 27, 1946

DR. GILDER
MINISTER
POONA

PLEASE CONVEY WISHES DOCTOR VISHWANATHAN FOR SUCCESS ANTI-MALARIA CAMPAIGN.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee had resigned from the Muslim League to join the Interim Government. On August 24, he was waylaid in Simla and stabbed seven times. He was sworn in on September 11.

105. TELEGRAM TO GOVERNMENT INFORMATION BUREAU, GOA

[*August 28, 1946*][1]

HEAD

GOVERNMENT INFORMATION BUREAU

NOVA GOA

HAVE JUST SEEN YOUR OFFICIAL CONTRADICTION ABOUT TREATMENT OF PRISONER KAKODKAR. PLEASE WIRE WHETHER YOU WILL LET A REPRESENTATIVE OF WEEKLY "HARIJAN" INTERVIEW PRISONER AND REPORT ON FACTS.[2]

The Hindu, 3-9-1946. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

106. MESSAGE REGARDING PARSI RUSTOMJI HALL AND LIBRARY

NEW DELHI,
August 28, 1946

WISH PARSI RUSTOMJI HALL AND LIBRARY SILVER JUBILEE FUNCTION EVERY SUCCESS AND HOPE THAT LIBRARY HAS SERVED AND WILL CONTINUE TO SERVE USEFUL PURPOSE. HOPE SORABJEE HAIL AND HEARTY AND WILL PROVE WORTHY SON OF WORTHY FATHER. IF RESISTERS CONTINUE CIVIL RESISTANCE UP TO END WITH PERFECT DIGNITY SUCCESS CERTAIN.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The source has "August 18" which appears to be a slip; *vide* "Telegram to Government Information Bureau",Goa,28-8-1946, ;26-8-1946 and; 29-8-1946. However, Pyarelal Papers have "August 29".

[2] The Goan authorities refused to "accept in a purely internal matter the interference of a newspaper man".

107. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

VALMIKI MANDIR,
READING ROAD, NEW DELHI,
August 28, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I write this as a friend and after deep thought.

Several times last evening you repeated that you were a "plain man and a soldier" and that you did not know the law.[1] We are all plain men though we may not all be soldiers and even though some of us may know the law. It is our purpose, I take it, to devise methods to prevent a repetition of the recent terrible happenings in Calcutta.[2] The question before us is how best to do it.

Your language last evening was minatory. As representative of the King you cannot afford to be a military man only, nor to ignore the law, much less the law of your own making. You should be assisted, if necessary, by a legal mind enjoying your full confidence. You threatened not to convene the Constituent Assembly if the formula you placed before Pandit Nehru and me was not acted upon by the Congress.[3] If such be really the case then you should not have made the announcement[4] you did on 12th August. But having made it you should recall the action and form another ministry enjoying your full confidence. If British arms are kept here for internal peace and order, your Interim Government would be reduced to a farce. The Congress cannot afford to impose its will on warring elements in

[1] For Wavell's version of the interview, *vide* Appendix "Lord Wavell's Note on Interview with Gandhiji and Nehru", 27-8-1946.

[2] The reference is to the riots that had occurred in Calcutta.

[3] Gandhiji had found Wavell's attitude so unhelpful that he caused a cable to be sent to Sudhir Ghosh in London to the following effect : "Gandhi says Viceroy unnerved Bengal tragedy. Please tell friends he should be assisted by abler and legal mind. Otherwise repetition of tragedy a certainty." Sudhir Ghosh accordingly met Pethick-Lawrence and Attlee to convey to them Gandhiji's feelings. For Sudhir Ghosh's letter to Gandhiji on the subject, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Sudhir Ghosh to Gandhiji", 7-9-1946

[4] This was to the effect that the Viceroy had invited the President of the Congress to make proposals for the formation of an Interim Government and that the Congress President had accepted the invitation.

India through the use of British arms. Nor can the Congress be expected to bend itself and adopt what it considers a wrong course because of the brutal exhibition recently witnessed in Bengal. Such submission would itself lead to an encouragement and repetition of such tragedies. The vindictive spirit on either side would go deeper, biding for an opportunity to exhibit itself more fiercely and more disgracefully when occasion occurs. And all this will be chiefly due to the continued presence in India of a foreign power strong in and proud of its arms.

I say this neither as a Hindu nor as a Muslim. I write only as an Indian. In so far as I am aware, the Congress claims to know both the Hindu and Muslim mind more than you or any Britisher can do. Unless, therefore, you can wholly trust the Congress Government which you have announced, you should reconsider your decision, as I have already suggested.

You will please convey the whole of this letter to the British Cabinet.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE

NEW DELHI

The Transfer of Power, Vol. VIII, p. 322; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47*, pp. 221-2

108. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

NEW DELHI,

August 28, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letters. The letter to Sushila I have given to Kishorelal and told him to forward it to her. You are in a proper quandary. Your duty, it seems clear, is to court imprisonment. There is no doubt at all that a fight has to be given. It is difficult for me to advise what should be done about the Press. You alone can decide. I should like Sushila being with you. But it appears that her duty is to be here. I cannot think of sending Arun and Ila there and I could not

countenance Sushila leaving them and going. This is the difficulty. You must consider and decide. In coming to a decision please give no thought to what I might want or other elders might want. Or course you have to consider what Sushila would want.

Here everything is in confusion. No one can tell what will happen. I do not even know how long I shall have to be in Delhi. My heart is in the Ashram of course. I shall see where He takes me. Devdas already cabled to you, so you will see that no compromising step has been taken here and you may rest assured that none will be taken. I shall not be surprised if the newspapers there publish fabrications to harm the cause. Wasn't I similarly attacked in 1896?[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4989

109. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
August 28, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

I got your letter here. I am glad that Ila has recovered. All that I could write to you is covered by my letter to Manilal, a copy of which is attached.[2] For the present I am camping here. I cannot say when I move out.

SMT. SUSHILA GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The reference is to be the assault on Gandhiji in Durban on January 13, 1897 following a distorted summary of a pamphlet of Gandhiji by Reuter.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

110. LETTER TO ARUN GANDHI

August 28, 1946

CHI. ARUN (GANDHI),

I am sorry that you and your friend told a lie. We are apt to fall into the habit. I regard this as the worst among all bad habits. It will be good if in future you keep away from it.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

111. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,[1]
August 28, 1946

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have given you quite a lot of work. Take care of your health, only doing what you can. This applies to Shakaribehn too. She must not ruin her health. See about Anna[2] and Kamala. If they both work well, they can do a lot of work.

Please tell Govind Reddy that I was not able to have a talk with him. I cannot say definitely when I shall be arriving there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10641

[1] This is a slip. Gandhiji was in Delhi on this date.
[2] Harihar Sharma

112. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

DELHI,
August 28, 1946

CHI. AMTUSSALAAM,

You were in my thoughts on Monday, but how was I to write? Yesterday also passed in the same way. Today I am writing at 6.30 in the morning. This is the last day of Ramzan. Remember what true Ramzan is. Be firm of resolve and make your body as strong as steel. How is Jajuji? How is Kishorelal? How is your finger? I am well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 526

113. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

[*August 28, 1946*][1]

CHI. HOSHIARI,

I expect you have started going to the Khadi Vidyalaya. You should have a healthy body and healthy mind.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

114. LETTER TO KAMALA SHARMA

NEW DELHI,
August 28, 1946

CHI. KAMALA,

If you have really become what you say, you will be able to render a lot of service. When the mind has been thoroughly cleansed, the body also will be all right. There is a saying that if the mind is pure the Ganga flows at one's door-step. In other words, if the mind

[1] In the source this letter is placed among the letters of this date.

is steady and *sattvic* the body too must become so.

I am not writing to Anna[1] separately.

SHRIMATI KAMALABEHN SHARMA

SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

115. LETTER TO LAKSHMINARAYAN GADODIA

NEW DELHI,
August 28, 1946

BHAI LAKSHMINARAYAN,

I got your letter and was sorry to read about Chi. Saraswati. You have both been tested. I hope she will get completely cured by naturopathy. Munshiji has written to me about your case. Sharma[2] came and saw me. I still do not have his opinion. Both of you will be informed when I have it.

LAKSHMINARAYAN GADODIA

DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

116. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
August 28, 1946

Even today I cannot tell you how long I may have to stay in Delhi. I am certainly here till the day after tomorrow because the Working Committee meeting will be held then instead of tomorrow. I hope to be able to speak to you day after tomorrow.

We run away from fear. We should not. Those who do have no faith in God. When God resides in our hearts, where is the need to get scared? If one loses one's life, it is because God wills it so. We do not matter at all. If we are beaten, it is God who has to put up with the beatings. How can one who always thinks of God get scared?

Referring to the Calcutta riots Gandhiji said :

I am not able to say what I want to say. Words fail me. Over

[1] Addressee's husband Harihar Sharma

[2] H. L. Sharma

such an outrage happening in India it is better to remain silent. Very often silence is the most effective communication because silence is filled with truth.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 29-8-1946

117. SALES TAX[1]

I have received many letters in regard to the Sales Tax Act of the Bombay Presidency. Many arguments advanced against it are, in my opinion, thoughtless. Nevertheless, I placed some of the complaints before the Finance Minister. Shri Vaikunthbhai Mehta is a cautious and conscientious Minister. He has sent me a full reply.

It appears that this Act was framed before the popular Government came in. The present Ministry have made some essential changes in it. The letters received by me were full of criticism giving the impression that the present Government was wilful, indifferent to public opinion and the tax was already in vogue. As a matter of fact, not only has the collection of the Sales Tax not begun, but it has been postponed till October 1st and may be delayed still further if need be. Moreover, many articles of necessary use have been exempted, thereby showing that the Government has paid due attention to public objections and inconvenience. I am aware that there are people who hold that there should be no Sales Tax at all. A great deal has been said in favour of this view. But no government could exist if it were to listen to abstract objections. In other words, it is wisdom, in such cases, not to raise basic issues.

The Sales Tax is in vogue in many provinces. The main criterion in judging any tax should be that it does not hit the poor. It should also be seen that the money raised thereby is used for the public good.

A popular ministry is responsible to the legislature, and cannot do anything without their consent. Every elected member in a popular legislature is responsible to his voters. Therefore the voter who represents the public should ponder well before embarking on any criticism of the government of his creation. Moreover, one bad habit of the people should be borne in mind. They do not like

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 8-9-1946.

any tax whatsoever. Where there is good government, the tax-payer gets full return for his money as, for example, the water tax in cities. No tax-payer could get water on his own for the same payment. But even so, and in spite of the fact that the tax is levied by the popular will, tax-payers always resent even paying such taxes. It is, of course, true that one cannot prove the benefit of all taxes as easily as the one I have cited as an example. But as society grows in size and complexity and the field of service also grows, it is difficult to explain to the individual tax-payer how he gets his return for any particular tax. This much, however, is clear that taxes as a whole should stand for the general benefit of society. If this were not so, the argument that taxes were levied by popular will would not hold. To the extent that we are still under foreign rule, the Government is not wholly responsible to the people. But in the Provinces today the Government are popular to a large extent and we must judge the Sales Tax accordingly.

NEW DELHI, August 29, 1946

Harijan, 8-9-1946

118. GOA

With reference to Mr. Gandhi's short commentary on Goa in the *Harijan* of the 18th instant,[1] where he gives the so-called "contrast" between French and Portuguese authorities, we have to state the following for your knowledge and publicity purposes :

There is nothing more out of place as a comparison between French India and Portuguese India. The objects, administrative methods and the goal are absolutely dissimilar in their essence. The recent integration (1816) of the French possessions in India in the French Colonial Empire and its setbacks, have nothing in common with Portuguese India which for more than 400 years, has been benefited by the Portuguese administration, completely identifying its destinies with the Motherland.

If the inhabitants of French India wish to identify their destinies with Free India (what has yet to be ascertained), the same does not happen in Portuguese India where the totality of the inhabitants wish to continue under the beneficial action of Portuguese administration which has been the cause of its material and moral progress to the point of Goa being the pride of the Portuguese colonizing effort and part and parcel of the

[1] *Vide* "Goa", 18-8-1946.

Motherland.

These being the facts based on historical data, we trust you will publish the relevant corrections in your paper :

This letter to the Editor of the *Harijan* from the Head of the Government Information Bureau, Nova Goa, makes sorry reading. It is an example of the truth of the proverb, "Comparisons are odious." Surely there is not much to choose between French and Portuguese imperialism. The hands of imperialism are always dyed red. The sooner imperialistic powers shed their imperialism like Ashoka the Good, the better it will be for the groaning world. One may be pardoned for giving credit to France where credit is deserved, as it is in the case of French India, assuming, of course, the truth of the newspaper version of the statement of the Governor of French India. Moreover, it is ridiculous for the Head of the Government Information Bureau to write of Portugal as the motherland of the Indians of Goa. Their mother country is as much India as mine. Goa is outside British India but it is within geographical India as a whole. And there is very little, if anything, in common between the Portuguese and the Indians of Goa.

I have read also the contradiction of my statement about Shri Purushottam Kakodkar. I must adhere to it in spite of the contradiction of the Portuguese authorities in Goa. Here is what his wife says in her letter dated 24-8-1946 :

Shri Purushottam Kakodkar, Secretary of the Goa National Congress, was arrested while talking to a friend on 9-8-1946 by the Portuguese authorities. On the 10th he was removed to Panjim (Nova Goa). On the 11th and 12th, he was kept on half rations. When he learnt that the authorities were deliberately underfeeding him, he went on hunger strike on the 13th and was still fasting on 20th.

The Portuguese Government is undeterred in its policy and up till now (24-8-1946) no attention has been paid to the written request sent in by Shri Kakodkar for adequate food supply to himself and other prisoners.

I ask the Portuguese authorities whether they would allow a representative from the *Harijan* to meet Prisoner Kakodkar and ascertain facts for himself?

NEW DELHI, August 29, 1946

Harijan, 8-9-1946

119. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

Express NEW DELHI,
August 29, 1946

RAJAJI
BAZLULLAH ROAD
THYAGARAYANAGAR

YOUR WIRE. YOU MUST NOT OVERSTRAIN YOURSELF BUT BE COMPLETELY WELL FOR TASK AHEAD.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

120. TELEGRAM TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

NEW DELHI,
August 29, 1946

DR. DINSHAW
6 TODDYWALA ROAD
POONA

REGRET MY LETTER NOT RECEIVED. NOW POSTING COPY. DESPONDENCY NOT PERMISSIBLE. HOPE MOTHER BETTER.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

121. LETTER TO D. V. RAMASWAMI

NEW DELHI,
August 29, 1946

CHI. RAMASWAMI,

I have your letter. The news of Mother's death has only brought me relief. Of what use can life be for a person ridden by disease. Besides, she was also advanced in age.

It is good that Hanumantha Rao's widow is looking after the

Kasturba Trust work in Sithanagaram.

Your work of service should now pick up momentum.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI D. V. RAMASWAMI

VIZAGAPATTAM, ANDHRA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

122. LETTER TO G. B. PANT

NEW DELHI,
August 29, 1946

BHAI PANTJI,

I see that Mirabehn is unable to do any work these days. She has shown me the correspondence she carried on. Now that the Ministry too has changed, is it advisable to have her even as an honorary adviser? She is, of course, a devoted worker and does not crave for office as such. Besides, her health, too, has suffered from incessant travelling. Please let me know what in the present circumstances would be the right thing to do. I wanted to talk it over with you, but could not do so.

In my opinion, Mirabehn may not be able to do much work for about two months. The fever still persists. Perhaps it is better to spare her.

G. B. PANT

LUCKNOW

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

123. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

HARIJAN COLONY,
NEW DELHI,
August 29, 1946

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

We never have a moment to ourselves. I do not ask for it. You never have any time to spare. Nor do I have any. So a good many matters remain untouched.

I have before me your letter of the 20th. It came to me yesterday *via* Wardha. It dwells on the question of who should be the Congress President in view of the fact that you will be the Prime Minister. You incline in favour of Maulana Saheb. This I do not understand and cannot understand. In my view, Maulana Saheb should not accept nomination. Maulana Saheb hesitates to accept ministership. The responsibilities of the President, especially in the present juncture, are I feel arduous. But in my view it is not the only reason why he should not be president. I cannot accept, too, that other than Maulana Saheb, Sardar Patel and Rajendra Babu, no suitable person can be found.

I cannot definitely say who else will be suitable because I am not any more in very close with the Congress organization.

One thing more. It is also a question as to who should be the President of the Constituent Assembly. I shall not write anything more about it now, because it is not certain whether the Constituent Assembly will meet. Once the Working Committee meeting is over I do not think it is necessary for me to stay on here or at Mussoorie. This hardly needs to be discussed at the Working Committee. Please consider and tell me what I should do. I shall do as you say.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have a great deal of work to do at Wardha. You may show this whole letter to Maulana Saheb.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

124. TELEGRAM TO MANAGER, SEVAGRAM ASHRAM

NEW DELHI,
August 30, 1946

MANAGER
ASHRAM SEVAGRAM
WARDHA

RAMPRASAD SHOULD REPORT HIMSELF TO JEHANGIRJI PATEL ON THIRD FOR DISCUSSION AND SETTLEMENT.[1]

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

125. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
August 30, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have not been able to write to you two. However I often think of you. I shall therefore only express the hope in this letter that both of you are calm. Whatever you do, do as a part of your duty. I hope that you will make each other happy, spending the least time in idle talk, and enjoy dreamless and sound sleep at night. Your daily activities must be going on as regularly as clock-work. You will also be improving your Urdu. I am not in a position yet to say when I shall be free from here. I am trying to make it as early as possible.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8392. Also C. W. 7216. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] *Vide* also "Telegram to Manager", Sevagram Ashram, 30-8-1946.

126. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
August 30, 1946

CHI. KANCHAN,

Be composed. Therein lies your good. Remember what I have told you. Your physical condition depends entirely on your mental condition. I do feel pity for you, and that is why I also feel irritated with you. Why do you make yourself an object of pity? I look upon you as a child. But considering your age, you ought not to be a child in mind. You should learn to think systematically. You should find your own path in life. Your day should be spent in service of some kind; your night should be given to sleep.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8254. Also C. W. 6978. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

127. LETTER TO JEHANGIR PATEL

NEW DELHI,
August 30, 1946

BHAI JEHANGIRJI,

I have your letter. I understand what you say[1]. I shall write in English whenever I have anything special to say. But I do want you to get used to reading and writing Gujarati.

I have wired Ramprasad to see you on the 3rd.[2] I have also written to Bhai Bhise. Your committee can now do as they like. I hope Khurshedbehn is well. It will be more than enough if she maintains her health. I am glad that Dinshaw will be going with you. Please comfort him.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI JEHANGIR PATEL

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jahangir Patel", 30-8-1946.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Jahangir Patel", 30-8-1946.

128. LETTER TO RAMPRASAD VYAS

NEW DELHI,
August 30, 1946

CHI. RAMPRASAD,

You have to go and see Jehangirji Patel on the 3rd. I think you will benefit by going to him. At present he has called you only for an interview. I should like you to see him and have a frank talk with him and try to join him if you find the work good.

Enclosed is a letter from Jehangirji[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

129. LETTER TO VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA

NEW DELHI,
August 30, 1946

BHAI VICHITRA,

Your resolve to present yarn on the occasion of Charkha Jayanti is indeed commendable and I hope it will succeed. My faith has ever been increasing that if we all take to spinning with the right understanding we can make greater headway along the path of freedom.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA
GANDHI ASHRAM
MEERUT

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also the preceding item.

130. LETTER TO VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA

August 30, 1946

BHAI VICHITRA,

Thinking over the talks I had with Dada[1] and with you and the letter that is in front of me, I have come to the conclusion that your work in the U. P. should be wholly independent of the Charkha Sangh work and should be complementary to it. You have many workers. They are capable. Though we all work for the same cause, there still remains a difference of outlook between the Charkha Sangh and the Gandhi Ashram. I feel that if Gandhi Ashram grows independently, the khadi activity will probably develop faster. I am taking the step in this hope.

You would still be under the debt of the Charkha Sangh. I think it is indeed difficult, if not impossible, for you to pay off the whole sum right now. Therefore, I would advise you to return the sum in ten annual instalments. In case of failure to send the yarn or the instalment as promised or in case of khadi work being given up, the whole amount must be returned forthwith. The first instalment—cash as well as yarn—will be payable one year after the date of this letter.

If your work does not succeed in any part of U. P., the Charkha Sangh will have the right to work there independently. The step is being taken in the hope that it will promote decentralization and help the Gandhi Ashram to develop independently.

If you want any modification, please let me know.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VICHITRA NARAYAN BABU

GANDHI ASHRAM

MEERUT

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] J. B. Kripalani

131. TELEGRAM TO MURIEL LESTER

NEW DELHI,
August 31, 1946

MURIEL LESTER
22 CLUB BACK ROAD
BYCULLA

WELCOME. CAN COME HERE. HOPE YOU WELL.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

132. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

NEW DELHI,
August 31, 1946

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter dated August 1, 1946. There is nothing wrong in your spending your life there [in Bochasan]. What you write about the Muslim boy makes interesting reading. I take it you have arranged for his education. If he is a Gujarati boy it is desirable that he knows Gujarati very well. And since he is a Muslim he ought to be taught to read the Koran. It is our duty to see to that.

Blessings from
BAPU

GANGABEHN VAIDYA
BOCHASAN

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

133. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

NEW DELHI,
August 31, 1946

CHI. SHARMA,

I have received Shri M[unshi]'s award. From what you told me I had thought it was in your favour. Now I find that it is not in your favour but against you. When I receive fair copies of the document I shall send one to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 364

134. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

NEW DELHI,
August 31, 1946

BHAI MUNSHI,

I have your letter as also the draft of your award. I have gone through the note you wrote for my information. I see that you have taken great pains over it. I agree with most of what you say in the note. You suggest that I should keep it confidential. I would rather show it to Sharma, if you would permit me. Your verdict is clear and concise. You had better write it in either Gujarati or Hindi. It need not be on stamped paper. The thing is not at all meant for a court of law. Of course it will be a different matter if such an action will involve any infringement of the Stamp Act. In that case we must affix the stamps. It will suffice to send your verdict only to me, and I shall forward it to both the parties, although it will be all right if you send a copy direct to each party. Of course you will send one copy to me. Do as you think right. I am required to stay here till the 7th. Please mind your health and if possible become as strong as steel. You have to render much service. I have sent the gist of your verdict to Sharma.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

135. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
August 31, 1946

Congress leaders were going into the Interim Government to make the path of freedom somewhat easy for the people, declared Mahatma Gandhi, addressing the prayer meeting on Saturday evening.

On September 2, Mahatma Gandhi said, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Babu Rajendra Prasad and others were going to wear crowns. But they were not going to be crowns of gold. They were to be crowns made of thorns which would try them sorely. They were going there—they whose whole life had been one of sacrifice—not to enjoy themselves or lead lives of ease but to serve the masses the more.

Gandhiji said he did not want the people to imagine that India was going to be free on September 2. Freedom he said, was not bought easily, nor was it a cheap commodity. It demanded its full price always. The leaders were going there to make the path of freedom somewhat easy for them. It was up to the people to help the leaders by being ready for sacrifices and willing to wear a crown of thorns themselves.

The A. I. C. C., Mahatma Gandhi said, was going to be held shortly in Delhi. Residents of Delhi would then be on trial. He hoped they would be sober, disciplined and peaceful and make such arrangements as to ensure the safety of the smallest child. They could only maintain their honour, as did Draupadi of old, by relying on God who alone could sustain them. He would not speak to them on the recent holocaust in Calcutta. Silence, he said, was his best friend.

He drew the attention of the congregation to a 'bhajan' sung during the prayer and said that it was a hymn which had been sung in his ears even before he went to jail in India for the first time in 1922. At that time he was sentenced to six years and for the first part of his prison life was kept by himself with two prisoner wardens to look after him. Since prayer had become part of his very being even while he was in South Africa, he used to sing the daily 'bhajan' however indifferently himself.

Out of the many who went to prison, Mahatma Gandhi said, there were those who looked out for every opportunity to escape, every opportunity to deceive and cheat. But he had long since decided that the ideal of a true satyagrahi was to make the prison a palace, and this could only be done by faith and prayer. The 'bhajan' (sung at the prayer meeting on Saturday) used to sustain him. It taught them that they could only be true to their resolution if they relied on God. He alone could keep them on the straight path. What could be the ideal of each one of those present except to make India free and keep themselves pure?

The Hindustan Times, 1-9-1946

136. TELEGRAM TO GOVERNMENT INFORMATION BUREAU, GOA

NEW DELHI,
September 1, 1946

HEAD
GOVERNMENT INFORMATION BUREAU
NOVA GOA

ALL OVER WORLD I HAVE HEARD OF FOREIGNERS AND FOREIGN JOURNALISTS BEING ADMITTED BY COUNTRIES CARING FOR WORLD SYMPATHY AND OPINION EVEN IN DOMESTIC SCANDALS.[1] SHOULD NOT HAVE THOUGHT THAT PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT WAS INDIFFERENT TO CRITICISM OF OUTSIDERS.[2]

The Hindu, 3-9-1946. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

137. TELEGRAM TO HANDLOOM CLOTH MANUFACTURERS AND MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION

NEW DELHI,
September 1, 1946

HANDLOOM CLOTH MANUFACTURERS AND
MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION
HOSHIARPUR

APPROACH GOVERNMENT.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Government Information Bureau, Goa, 1-9-1946.

[2] The Goan Government's reply to this was : "There are no domestic scandals in this country. That is why I don't find your point of view either correct or sound."

138. LETTER TO MADALASA

BHANGI NIWAS,
NEW DELHI,
September 1, 1946

CHI. MADU,

I got your letter. Keep up the spirit which that letter reveals. Never miss a Tuesday in writing to me, whether you receive my reply or not. Only one thing is required for keeping up your cheerfulness, namely, a living faith in God. Have a frank talk with Shriman, calmly and courteously. Similarly with Mother. You should be generous towards everybody and never take amiss what they say.

I shall have to stay here up to the 10th at any rate.

Kisses to Rasagulla.

Blessings to both from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 328

139. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 1, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

A cutting from the *Indian Opinion* sent by Sushila has reached me here in Delhi. If what it says is true it is a very serious matter. If the whole of the Negro population enters into a bloody conflict with the whole of the Indian population, there is not the least doubt that both will perish. One must have the capacity to fight to win in a bloody conflict. Neither party has this. Any help from the whites will be quite out of the question. You will lose even such help as you are now getting. I cannot therefore believe that except for a few crazy individuals there are any Indian groups who would wish to oppose the ghettoes through violence. There is only one sure way and everyone knows it. Your path, therefore, is clear. Even if you are alone you must clearly and courteously state your views and if they put you in prison you must go to prison. I am

becoming more and more convinced each day that Sushila should not go there for the present. If she takes care of the children as a good mother should, she will be doing her duty.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4990

140. ANTIDOTE

After giving a graphic description of the recent unfortunate and disgraceful happenings in Calcutta, a writer asks :

> What is our duty in such circumstances? The Congress gives no clear instructions to the rank and file in such crises. Sermons on non-violence from afar are of little use. To have offered non-violent resistance would have meant allowing all property to be destroyed and every Hindu to be killed.

The Congress Working Committee has given the clearest possible lead in the last sentence of its resolution published in the newspapers.[1] Fratricide will not abate by "intimidation and violence but by mutual understanding, friendly discussion and, if necessary, by agreed arbitration." One does not need to believe in non-violence as a creed to perceive the truth of this practical proposition. If through deliberate courage the Hindus had died to a man, that would have been deliverance of Hinduism and India and purification of Islam in this land.

As it was, a third party had to intervene in order to still mutual savagery. Neither the Muslims nor the Hindus concerned have gained by the intervention. Supposing that the Calcutta virus extends to the whole of India and British gunpowder keeps the two from stabbing one another, the British power or its substitute will be in possession of India for a long time to come. The length will be measured by the period required by the parties coming to sanity. It will come either by an exhausting mutual fight, independent of the foreign element or by one party eschewing violence in spite of the heaviest odds. Successful mutual strife is obviously impossible in the present state of general igno-rance of the use of modern weapons and their inaccessibility. Non-violence does not require any outside or outward training. It

[1] The Working Committee met in Delhi from August 27 to August 30.

simply requires the will not to kill even in retaliation and the courage to face death without revenge. This is no sermon on ahimsa but cold reason and the statement of a universal law. Given the unquenchable faith in the law, no provocation should prove too great for the exercise of forbearance. This I have described as non-violence of the brave.

Unfortunately for us, we are strangers to the non-violence of the brave on a mass scale. Some even doubt the possibility of the exercise of non-violence by groups, much less by masses of people. They restrict its exercise to exceptional individuals. Only, mankind can have no use for it if it is always reserved only for individuals.

Be that as it may, this much is clear that if the people are probably not ready for the exercise of non-violence of the brave, they must be ready for the use of force in self-defence. There should be no camouflage. Self-defence must be pure and simple. Then too it must never be cowardly or crude. It must, therefore, never be secret. Such is stabbing in the back and evading detection. I am conscious of the fact that we are a people unarmed and untrained in the use of arms. Opinions will differ as to whether it is good that we are in that position. There can be no denying the fact that no one needs training in the use of arms in self-defence. What is wanted for the purpose is strong arms and stronger will.

Doing injury to another is obviously violence but harbouring injury to another and yet unwillingness from cowardice to defend oneself or one's neighbour is also violence and probably worse than the first.

What then are the leaders to do? What are the new Ministers to do? They must ever seek to attain communal harmony—never under threats, ever for its own sake. I regard a Muslim or any non-Hindu as my blood brother, not in order to please him but because he is born of the same mother Hind as I am. He does not cease to be my brother because he may hate or disown me. I must woo him even, it may be, in spite of himself. The new Ministers must resolve never to use British troops, no matter what their hue is, not even the police trained by them. They are not our enemies. But they have been hitherto used not to help the people but to keep them under the foreign yoke. They should now, as they can, be used for constructive purposes. The military are specially qualified for such work. They are trained and expected to bring into being canvas cities in a moment. They know what it is to procure and keep clean water and

make perfect sanitary arrangements. No doubt, they know how to kill and be killed in the act. The public knows this part of their work only too well. But it is by no means the most substantial part of their work. It is the background which should be prized, advertised and followed. The animal part of it is unhuman, the other part is essentially human and clean. Let us copy it and humanize the troops if we can. The attempt is worth making. It can only be made by those who are not deceived by the glamour that hangs round them and the awe they inspire. This is possible only when we have the courage to face death without revenge or retaliation in mind or deed.

NEW DELHI, September 2, 1946

Harijan, 8-9-1946

141. FOR READERS

The 'Question Box' has become a regular feature of the *Harijan*. It tries to resolve the doubts of questioners as far as possible. But the post often contains questions which have been answered in one form or the other on more than one occasion. Readers should study the contents of 'Question Box' carefully.

Then there are letters asking for medical advice for sick people. The desire is there to answer such questions. But the fulfilment must take time. It is difficult too to satisfy incomplete postal inquiries. Ailing correspondents should wait awhile.

NEW DELHI, September 2, 1946

Harijan, 8-9-1946

142. VILLAGE INDUSTRIES EXHIBITION: WHAT IT SHOULD BE LIKE[1]

The Congress session is in the offing. The question arises what it should be like, considered from the villagers' point of view, for only the villagers' point of view can be relevant in India. If we want the villages to survive and become strong and prosperous the exhibition should be free from all pomp and ostentation characteristic of the cities. There should be no place for city games and entertainments. The exhibition should not under any circumstances be reduced

[1] The Hindi original of this was published in *Gramodyog Patrika*.

to a show or a source of revenue. It should not become an attraction for traders. No goods should be sold, not even khadi or other products of village industry. The exhibition should become a place of education. It should be interesting and should be such that, having seen it, a villager should be inspired to learn some craft or other. There should be people to explain to the visitors the shortcomings of the villages in general and how to remove them. They should be shown what progress has been made since the work for the uplift of villages was first taken up. There should also be someone to instruct the villagers in the ways in which village life can be made artistic. Let us now see how the exhibition can be made to conform to these requirements.

(1) There should be two models of villages: one showing an average village as it is today and the other showing the village as it will look after the reform. The reformed village will be clean, with dwellings, village paths, general surroundings, fields and the condition of the livestock greatly improved. There should be maps and charts and books to show how different industries are carried on and developed.

(2) Guidance should be provided on how the various village indus-tries are run and where the necessary tools for them are to be had or man-ufactured. There should also be demonstrations of the working of the va-rious industries. Along with this we should show the following things :

(a) Ideal village diet

(b) The difference between cottage industry and machine industry

(c) An object lesson in animal husbandry

(d) A model latrine

(e) An art section

(f) Organic manure *v*. chemical fertilizers

(g) The utilization of hides and bones of dead cattle

(h) Folk music and folk dances

(i) Village sports, gymnastics and wrestling

(j) Nayee Talim

(k) Village herbs

(l) Village maternity home

If further things can be added keeping in view the guide-

lines enunciated above, this may be done. The things I have enumerated should be taken only as illustrations. I have not included here the various village crafts, of which the charkha is the first. Without them the exhibition should be considered as of no value.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 2-9-1946

143. WHY GO ABROAD?

An Indian doctor went to America in order to learn neurosurgery, so that he might return and serve his people here. He has with difficulty secured a seat in the Columbia University and is working as a house surgeon.

He writes to ask me to influence students not to go abroad for the following reasons :

(a) The amount our poor country spends on sending and training ten students abroad could be better utilized by securing the services of a first rate professor who could train 40 students as well as equip a laboratory.

(b) Students who come here acquire basic knowledge in research but do not know how to equip a laboratory on their return home.

(c) They have no chance of continued work.

(d) If we have experts brought out, our laboratories will also get perfected.

I have never been an advocate of our students going abroad. My experience tells me that such, on return, find themselves to be square pegs in round holes. That experience is the richest and contributes most to growth which springs from the soil. But today the craze for going abroad has gripped students. May the extract quoted serve as a warning!

NEW DELHI, September 2, 1946

Harijan, 8-9-1946

144. NOTES

THE DEVADASI SYSTEM

A correspondent writes :

> It is a well-known fact that you are trying your best to uplift the Harijan community and even spending your most precious time in the Harijan Colony. But may I assure you that there are thousands of Devadasi girls of the Harijan community residing in Poona and Bombay and are leading a life of public prostitution. Why should this be so? Is it because these girls belong to low caste community and are induced to lose their moral character that they are neglected by the public and put to the shameful life of prostitution?
>
> May I be justified in stating that this is a most important and urgent problem. Is it not possible to stop this illegal practice in the Bombay province as in Madura and Madras by the Madras Government under the ruling of Section 366A, 366B, 372 and 373 of the Indian Penal Code, page No. 574?

I have, on more than one occasion, written about the shame attached to the Devadasi system, whether in temples or in other places. "Prostitutes" is commonly supposed to apply to women of lewd character. But the men who indulge in vice are just as much, if not more, prostitutes as the women who, in many instances, have to sell their bodies for the sake of earning a livelihood. The evil practice should be declared illegal. But the law can only help up to a point. The evil exists clandestinely in every country in spite of the law. Vigorous public opinion can help the law as it also hinders.

UNTOUCHABILITY AND THE FLUSH SYSTEM

Q. Do you consider that the adoption of the flush system is one way of eradicating untouchability? If so, you would not presumably oppose its introduction on the basis of your dislike of machinery.

A. Where there is ample supply of water and modern sanitation can be introduced without any hardship on the poor, I have no objection to it. In fact, it should be welcomed as a means of improving the health of the city concerned. At the moment, it can only be introduced in towns. My opposition to machinery is much misunderstood. I am not opposed to machinery as such. I am opposed to machinery which displaces labour and leaves it idle. Whether the

flush system will remove the curse of untouchability is open to grave doubt. This latter has to go from our hearts. It will not disappear through such means as has been suggested. Not until we all become bhangis and realize the dignity of the labour of scavenging and latrine-cleaning, will untouchability really be exorcized.

NEW DELHI, September 2, 1946

Harijan, 15-9-1946

145. ADVICE TO THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT

NEW DELHI,
September 2, 1946

All credit to the Madras Government for being the first in the field, among the Provincial Ministries, to put forward a definite Scheme[1] for the reconstruction of our sadly neglected villages including, as the most vital and fundamental part of it, a large-scale scheme for the development of khadi. I appreciate the completely sincere faith in khadi which has prompted the Madras Government to offer their resources, on a scale without precedent, for the rapid development of khadi, but I am afraid they have not realized that the conditions necessary for securing the success of such a large-scale venture probably do not exist now, and that they have yet to be created by extensive propaganda by all genuine lovers of khadi, including the Provincial Ministers and members of the Provincial Legislatures. I am quite clear in my own mind that it would be extremely unwise to force the pace in regard to a matter like khadi, until the proper atmosphere has been created and has borne fruit in the form of a strong public demand from the villagers themselves, thus guaranteeing immediate success and giving lasting benefit from large-scale expenditure of the money and energy such as is involved in the Madras Government's scheme. The Madras Government seems to have underestimated the difficulties of securing enduring success in a field, steady progress in which has not been found too easy even by experts, namely, the All-India Spinners' Association. I am naturally most anxious that Shri Prakasam should not embark upon any Khadi Scheme, the success of which is not assured. If we try to move too fast,

[1] The Khadi Scheme of the Madras Government which envisaged making villages as far as possible self-sufficient in cloth; *vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting, 25-9-1946.

I have no doubt that we shall fail, and fail badly, and such failure will not only reflect discredit on the Government which has embarked upon such a venture without sufficient consideration, but will also do great harm to khadi work in general. It is, therefore, necessary, especially as expenditure of funds allotted from Provincial Revenues is involved, that we should be very careful before undertaking the work on a large scale.

2. I would accordingly advise the Madras Government to be guided in this matter by the only expert body in India which can claim intimate and long experience of khadi work, namely, the All-India Spinners' Association. Subject to my approval, the Association will select a group or compact groups of villages in which khadi has made some progress already, and which will, therefore, be a hopeful field for intensive work of the kind contemplated by the Madras Government. The khadi work in these areas should be done in accordance with a plan prepared by the Association, which the Madras Government should announce after finalising it in consultation with the Association. The plan will provide for allotment of the necessary funds by the Government, and also for the appointment, by them, of the necessary wholetime staff in consultation with the Association. The staff so appointed will execute the Scheme under the instructions and guidance of the Association.

If, as we all hope, this modest scheme succeeds, I shall gladly support proposals for its extension, with modifications if any suggested by our experience of its actual working, to other and larger areas.

3. I am requesting Shri Jajuji to prepare immediately, a scheme on the lines indicated above, in consultation with the Provincial Textile Commissioner, Madras, who will be meeting him at Sevagram for the purpose, on his way back to Madras. I shall ask Shri Jajuji to forward the scheme to Shri Prakasam after I have approved it.

4. I not only agree, but I am most anxious, that in these areas selected for the khadi work, all other items of rural reconstruction, as envisaged in Shri Prakasam's note dated 22-5-46 should also be tried simultaneously in consultation with the A.I.V.I.A. and the A.I.T.S.

5. In any event, and in order to create the proper khadi spirit, all schools and colleges under the Government should be instructed to devote at least half an hour per day to spinning together with the anterior processes, the charkhas or *taklis*, as the case may be, to be

supplied by the Government, and khadi training schools be immediately established by them in consultation with and under the guidance of the A.I.S.A.

6. It should be remembered that the scheme I have in view does not contemplate any workshop for the manufacture of spinning-wheels, these being already in existence in the villages to be selected. The scheme also contemplates the manufacture of wheels and the like by the local village carpenters and blacksmiths.

M. K. GANDHI[1]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

146. NOTE TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL, RAJENDRA PRASAD AND JAGJIVAN RAM[2]

VALMIKI MANDIR,
NEW DELHI,
September 2, 1946

Since after the prayer I have been thinking only about you people. Abolish salt tax, remember Dandi March, bring together Hindus and Muslims, remove untouchability, adopt khadi.

[From Hindi]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 324

[1] This is in Devanagari.

[2] The addressees had gone to seek Gandhiji's blessings before they went to the Viceroy's House for the swearing-in ceremony. It being Gandhiji's Silence Day he wrote this note.

147. LETTER TO JHAVERBHAI PATEL

NEW DELHI,
September 2, 1946

CHI. JHAVERBHAI,

I have your letter. If I had met you, I would have told youin person.[1] But on receiving the complaint, I took the first opportunity, and thereby no harm has been done. In Nagpur, the Government must provide the accommodation. It must at any rate give you the travelling expenses. I am of opinion that we should not demand expenses for boarding and lodging, and that is what I have stated. Only thus can we remain clean. But we will talk further about it when I arrive there.

I fear I shall have to stay on here till the end of this month.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 1360

148. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 2, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have written to Manilal. A copy is enclosed. You will have all the news from it. Stay there quietly and look after the children. You may render any other extra service if you can. I shall have to stay on here till the 10th, or even till later; I can't say. We live from moment to moment.

SMT. SUSHILA GANDHI
AKOLA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee had taken up a job in the Government; *vide* "Letter to Jhaverbhai patel', 2-9-1946.

149. LETTER TO DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR

NEW DELHI,
September 2, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

Mataji wished you were here today. For no particular reason. She just expressed a fond wish since today a popular government is assuming office.

I have no doubt that your place is there till Vijaya arrives. I shall be here certainly till the 10th. Maybe I shall have to spend the whole month here. Let us see what God wills. Bal must have gone to Calcutta.

I hope you are well and the work of the clinic is progressing well. There is no letter from you. Chand has gone to Amritsar.

The weather cannot be said to be too warm.

SUSHILA NAYYAR
SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

150. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
September 2, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

You must have got one letter I wrote from here. Of course you are always in my thoughts. I had a talk with Khan Saheb, too. For the present he does not ask for you. Later we shall see. He went back the day before yesterday.

I have a lot of work to do here. Still I am well. You should become strong. What do you do? I may have to be here the whole of September. I am certainly here till the 10th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 529

151. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

NEW DELHI,
September 2, 1946

CHI. ANAND AND GANGI,

I have your letter. I continue to write the "Thought for the Day". It does not look good Mahadev being ill. I hope he has recovered by now.

Your foot will be all right. I have not received the album yet.

Blessings to all three from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

152. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 2, 1946

At last the way to purna swaraj has been opened. The whole of India has waited for this day for years and years and made innumerable sacrifices. Whatever our quarrels with the British Government in the past, we must thank it today, for it has voluntarily arrived at a settlement with our leaders.

A correspondent asks me, now that the Government is in the hands of Indians, when the Viceroy's House will be turned into a hospital for the poor. My answer is that this will be done when people have all the power in their hands. So far we have not secured full independence. There was no exaggeration in what I had said on the subject at the Round Table Conference. Undoubtedly Harijans are amongst the poorest of the Poor. The Viceroy is still there in the Viceroy's House. And so long as he occupies his office as Viceroy, it will be discourteous to tell him to vacate it.

We shall have full freedom only when our uncrowned king Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and his colleagues in the Interim Government devote themselves to the service of the poor as people expect them to do.

This is a memorable day in the history of India. There is no

occasion, however, for illuminations and jubilation. We must remember that today our ministers are putting on the crown of thorns.

The Muslim League, which is the second most important organization after the Congress and represents the Muslims of India, has not joined the Interim Government. Muslims are related to us by blood, for they are the children of the same land. They are angry with the Hindus. The Muslim League contends that the Hindus have betrayed them. The followers of the League are observing this day as a day of mourning. But the Hindus should not answer anger with anger and blow with blow. Time was when the Ali Brothers were with the Hindus. So, even though the Hindus cannot join the Muslim Leagues in observing the day as a day of mourning they should avoid illuminations, feasting and other forms of rejoicing. They should be patient. They should ask themselves for what failing of theirs the Muslims have come to regard them as enemies.

The Muslim League wants to launch direct action both against the British Government and the Hindus. But it cannot ride two horses at the same time. If it wants to non-co-operate with the British it must co-operate with its Hindu brethren. Then I really do not understand why it wants to non-co-operate with the latter. This is not in keeping with the teaching of Islam. I too claim to understand Islam a little. In South Africa I have lived and worked with Muslims.

The Congress cannot enter into a pact with the British against Muslims. The Congress agreed to join the Interim Government solely in order to secure freedom for the whole of India. This means that it wants freedom for the Muslim League too, and that is what wisdom, democracy and humanity demand. Nevertheless if the Muslim League continues to regard the Interim Government as its enemy, the latter should, by its actions, prove it wrong.

The question has been asked what the Congress Ministers should do as a first step. Here, my mind goes back to the days of the Dandi March. Our women played a great part at that time. The heroism and sacrifice they displayed then was unprecedented. The Dandi March symbolized the resolve of the Congress to secure freedom for the poor. The cry was raised that salt tax be abolished. Therefore the very first step of the Interim Government should be to abolish that tax, so that the poorest villager can have the feeling that the dawn of freedom has arrived. The poor include Hindus as well as Muslims of India.

I have said a good deal about communal unity. Unlike the

abolition of salt tax this cannot be achieved by a stroke of the pen. The Ministers will have to stake their lives for it. If I had my way I would not let them seek military or police help. Well, if Hindus and Muslims must fight each other it is better that they bravely do their fighting themselves. So long as we depend on the British for protecting us, true freedom will not be ours.

We are also committed to eradicating untouchability and to promote khadi. Being a Bhangi myself I have been pleading with the Viceroy, as the representative of the British Government, to improve the lot of the Bhangis. Now I shall go to the Interim Government for this. They must do something about the living quarters of the Bhangis.

They must encourage khadi activity to clothe the naked poor of the country. By promoting hand-spinning and hand- weaving villages should be made self-sufficient in cloth. Some people object to the condition that khadi may be bought only on tendering yarn. But why should anyone, I ask, expect to have anything without working for it?

If members of the Interim Government want khadi for furnishing their houses or offices they should come to me as friends. I shall give them the yarn for getting the khadi. There is no doubt a shortage of khadi in the country today. Still I shall try to secure for them as much khadi as they order. I cannot of course promise them the fine khadi produced in Andhra.

I hope the Interim Government will provide the right leadership to the country and take it forward on the path of truth, purity and genuine swaraj. Every Indian must whole-heartedly support this Government.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 3-9-1946

153. KHADI SCHEME OF MADRAS

[On or after *September 2, 1946*][1]

In my opinion the Madras Government would be well advised if they asked the Charkha Sangh as to how many *firkas* or how many villages and what area they are willing to take up at once and make self-sufficient as far as khadi is concerned. Government should only

[1]*Vide* the preceding item.

be responsible for finance and such other help as the A.I.S.A. may ask for.

The present scheme may sound well on paper but will become the usual top-heavy official scheme which will fail as it will not be of the people. The word compulsion may have been eliminated but there will be compulsion.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

154. SOUTH AFRICA

Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan who, but for the recent murderous assault on him, would have joined the Interim Government[1] yesterday wrote on August 6th to me an interesting letter from which I quote as follows :

> My study of the Indian community while I was in South Africa convinced me that but for your heroic work in the Union, the Indian race in that country would not have survived as a self-respecting community. You built up, cell by cell, the power of resistance in a highly gifted race and your work in that country is the inspiration of the Indian race in South Africa at the present time.
>
> My sole aim in South Africa was to lay the foundation of Indian unity in Natal. I do not think I succeeded completely in my aim but I am inclined to think that the heroic struggle which our race is carrying on at the present time would have been impossible but for the dissolution of the Natal Indian Association and A. I. Kajee's Natal Indian Congress and the revival of the Natal Indian Congress, which you had founded in 1894. This was accomplished on August 29th 1943 and since that time, there has been only one political organization of Indians in Natal.
>
> The South African situation is complicated and owing to conventions of diplomacy, my lips are sealed. My despatches from South Africa which give a complete picture of the political situation for three years and are very exhaustive, cannot be published owing to conventions of international intercourse. . . .
>
> I came to the conclusion that no redress of our grievances in South Africa is possible unless we are masters in our own homeland and India is free.

[1] *Vide* " South Africa", 3-9-1946

In reply to my letter[1] acknowledging receipt of the above, Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan further writes :

> You will be glad to hear that since my return from South Africa, I have been busy preparing my speeches in South Africa and have added a section in my book, shortly to be published, on the history of the Indian community in South Africa. In this I have made bold to give a brief account of your work there and followed with the greatest interest your march to Volksrust, etc. . . .
>
> For more than three years—1942-45, I wrote lengthy despatches to the Government of India on the South African problem and in April 1943 I warned them against General Smuts' policy and told them to take the strongest measures against the Union Government in connection with the Pegging Act. . . . Strong measures have been taken now, but I am afraid it is too late. If the Congress forms a National Government soon and the new member in charge of the Department decides to publish these despatches, particularly from April 1943 onwards, they will clear up numerous points for the next session of U. N. O. I am bound to say that the convention is that such despatches are not published unless and until there is rupture of relations between two countries. I offer no opinion as to whether they should be published at all. This is a matter which the new Government should decide.

NEW DELHI, September 3, 1946

Harijan, 8-9-1946

155. LETTER TO S. V. VENKATESWARAN

BHANGI COLONY,
NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

DEAR SHRI VENKATESWARAN[2],

There is one thing which got inadvertently left out in the note you prepared and which Gandhiji amended and added to and signed for you to take to Shri Prakasam. Both Gandhiji and you forgot to mention the fact that in the former's opinion khadi and textile mills cannot go hand in hand. As you may have noticed I took notes of your conversation with Gandhiji and on referring to them I find he said as follows: "Prakasam, if he swears by khadi, cannot work hand in hand with mills. If Madrasis are satisfied with khadi, mills must go. No new ones must be allowed." As this is a very important item Gandhiji wants you to add it to the note especially as Prakasam

[1] *Vide* "South Africa", 3-9-1946
[2] Textile Commissioner, Madras

has a scheme before him of allowing new mills to be started in Madras.

I am sending this to Shri Jajuji and asking him to hand it over to you if you are still in Wardha. Otherwise, he will send it on to you by post.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

AMRIT KAUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

156. LETTER TO PUSHPA DESAI

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

CHI. PUSHPA,

I have your letter. You may by all means join Nayee Talim. Sushilabehn tells me that you could do a lot of good work if you became a village nurse. Meet her also and then make your choice. Anything that makes of you a calm, steady and devoted worker will be welcome to me. "Live as you like, but attain Hari anyhow." This is what Akha said. Had I not been so far away, we could have talked more. Bhansalibhai's decision and . . .[1] are for your good.

Take care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Did you receive any reply from your father? . . .[2] is at peace.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9273

157. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

CHI. BHANSALI,

Guide Pushpa as you think fit. Let us hope that she becomes a sincere and dedicated worker. Sushilabehn has written suggesting that

[1] A few words are illegible in the source.
[2] The letter is damaged here.

she should become a nurse. Discuss the matter with her also, and then guide Pushpa as you think best. I shall approve of either ideal. Pushpa alone can say what would interest her more. It is difficult to say whether she knows what is best for her. That she is a simple girl we have observed ever since she first arrived.

Please eat regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9274

158. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

CHI. JIVANJI,

I saw the dictionary. I feel that we should go a little faster.[1] I therefore suggest that you regularly give four columns. That will make one leaf. If one whole leaf can be given, one can tear it off and preserve it. That was Kakasaheb's idea, but I was afraid that I might not be able to cope with the work. But now I have gained confidence. So I shall be able to send 120 words. This time if you can give four columns do so. You have enough material for it. Pyarelal has already written to you about sending the Muslim gentleman here. If you can spare him, please send him here immediately.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9968. Also C. W. 6942. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

[1] The first instalment of the dictionary covered only half a column containing thirteen words.

159. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

You say, "You and your circle have separated me from Father and so thrashing my arms and legs I try to swim on my own." Now is that true? When did I separate you? Who is my circle? You too are my circle. I have written to you that you may come whenever you wish. Yes I have asked for Jaisukhlal also to come with you. If you can find the strength to face the world by yourself I am ready to keep you here by yourself. But you alone know that. I do miss you of course. Many people ask me when you will be coming. The field of service is wide and the means of learning the work are many. Sushila tells me that if I were to send for you, she would make of you an excellent nurse. Chand has passed the examination. Zohra has joined the hospital. If you were to come three would get trained. Now the hospital is quite separate. I suppose you know that it is in the Birla Dharmashala?

Your problem is difficult. But if you are going to stay there be patient. The fruits of patience are sweet. Wait for a message from me. For you it is already there.

The talk about my going abroad is quite unfounded. Or are you referring to India? In India of course I have to travel from place to place. If you accompany me your routine of studies will be disrupted.

Jaisukhlal must improve his health. Everything has been fixed about Umia and Pratap. All the expenses on Vilas will be paid by Birla.

There is a separate letter for Atmaram.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

160. LETTER TO ATMARAM

NEW DELHI
September 3, 1946

BHAI ATMARAM,

I have your letter. You should put up everything to Nanabhai and do as he says.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. ATMARAM
C/O JAISUKHLAL HATHI
MAHUVA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

161. LETTER TO DHIRUBHAI DIKSHIT

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

CHI. DHIRU,

I have your letter. I understand about your fast and I am happy. Tamarind-water cannot be the cause of eczema because tamarind cures eczema and such other ailments. That is to say tamarind possesses the same properties that are found in lime. But the tamarind that is offered for sale is treated with chilli-water. Moreover, much of the tamarind available in the market contains dirt and is far from clean. I would say water mixed with such tamarind ought to be shunned. But the fault does not lie with the tamarind. It is due to the chilli the salt and the other impurities mixed with it. Tamarind sold in the market is also mixed liberal quantities of salt, in the absence of which it cannot be preserved for long. I have myself consumed tamarind in fair quantities and also persuaded others to do likewise. I do not remember anybody having come to harm on account of it. But I took dry pods of fresh tamarind and dispensed their juice or pulp. Please read out all this to Dr. Bhagawat, so that he will avoid buying the tamarind sold in the bazaar. Tamarind can be had almost

free if it is stocked during the season for it, because tamarind trees are found everywhere and I have never heard of their being leased out.

From a copy of Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

162. LETTER TO SHRILAL BHATT

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

BHAI SHRILAL,

I got your letter of the 29th on the 31st. The names of Vithaldas and others are not to be found on the Exhibition Committee. Have you consulted Jajuji and Kumarappa? I am glad that you have stopped the sale of khadi. I am of the opinion that products of other village industries ought to be sold as usual. This covers the answer for you.

SHRILAL BHATT
GANESHBAG
DADISHETH AGYARI LINE
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

163. LETTER TO HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

BHAI HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB,

I have your letter of August 23. I could not reply earlier as I was tied up with the work here.

I have received a note which I pass on to you. You will find that it is unsigned. Why, I do not know. If the note is a concoction and the statements contained therein are false, I shall have nothing to say. But it is my firm conviction that the absence of big mills is the cause of Orissa's poverty. And if, to set up four mills, one lac and nine thousand spindles have to be procured, the Orissa Government may as well forget about khadi. I conveyed the same opinion to Prakasam. His Textile Commissioner had come to see me on his behalf and left only yesterday. Big mills are not going to revitalize the Orissa villages,

and the real India lives in its villages. Now that the Government is in the hands of the people, it is the duty of people's representatives to turn their full attention to the villages and see that the wheel hums in every home and all the local industries are revived everywhere. This is my cherished dream and, I assume, yours too.

Supposing the members of the Orissa Assembly are not of this opinion, you should resign as Premier and let the reins of Government pass into the hands of those who favour setting up of big mills in Orissa.

I send you the letter I have received regarding the Sambalpur scheme. I shall certainly write on the scheme after I fully understand it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

164. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

NEW DELHI,
September 3 1946

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

Dr. Shaukatullah Ansari[1], who was here yesterday, tells me that your health is deteriorating and that there is fear of a nervous breakdown. People say that you keep working till past midnight. I am certain this is not at all good. For the work ahead of you, you need great care. This becomes impossible if you overstrain your mental resources.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Son-in-law of Dr. M. A. Ansari

165. LETTER TO K. M. PANIKKAR

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

BHAI PANIKKAR,

I have your letter regarding reforms in Bikaner State. I do not wish to write anything on the matter yet. I had advised the Maharaja Saheb that whatever is to be done should be done in consultation with Pandit Jawaharlal's All-India States People's Conference. It that were done the work would progress more smoothly.

Why is the Maharaja Saheb's appeal in English? How many among the Bikaner subjects know English? Why, again, is the Bikaner seal on documents in English? In my opinion you ought to learn Hindustani. Should this not be possible, it would be better to have the help of secretary to carry on your work in Hindustani.

Blessings from
BAPU

DIWAN, BIKANER

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

166. LETTER TO LADORANI ZUTSHI

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. Doing work of service among the coolies of Mussoorie is not an easy job. I am afraid you will not be able to do it. Consult Jawaharlalji and others.

I did not get your previous letter of 15-8-1946. Besides, in Africa people hardly get to know things.

SMT. LADORANI ZUTSHI

22 HAMILTON ROAD

ALLAHABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

167. LETTER TO RAM NARESH TRIPATHI

NEW DELHI
[*September 3, 1946*]

BHAI RAM NARESH,

I was sorry to learn of your illness. You must be getting the *Harijan Sevak*. I have started a new feature[1] in it. You may contribute to it whatever you can. You may suggest any additions or alterations to the terms already included. You may include as many village expressions as you can. If you can suggest any idiomatic expressions, well let me have a whole lot of them.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI RAM NARESH TRIPATHI
VASANT NIWAS
SULTANPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

168. LETTER TO A ZAMINDAR

[*September 3, 1946*][2]

RAJASAHEB,

I have your two letters. Why do you sign in English? I have written a lot about the Zamindars; I cannot remember in which particular issues. A good many collections of my articles have been published. With a little effort one of your secretaries will be able to look these up and tell you. My opinion, in brief, is that no zamindar or rich man should perish. The greatest need is to bring about a change of heart in them. If every zamindar, every Rajah and every millionaire lives as servant of the people there will be no problem. In the final analysis land belongs to the man who has worked on it. The present system which divides people into capitalists or landlords on the one hand and the have-nots or serfs on the other, should not be tolerated. All this I have explained in my articles a number of times.

[1] A glossary of English-Hindustani words in Devanagari and Urdu scripts, started from September 1, 1946.

[2] In the source this letter is placed among the papers of 3-9-1946.

As to religion, I feel our country, and indeed the world, should have room for all religions. I consider no one high and no one low. The duties enjoined on a Brahmin or Kshatriya are for all. Only, some have these in greater measure than others. But these are duties, never rights. One who claims a right to Brahminhood is not a Brahmin. Similarly, the claimant to the prerogatives of a Kshatriya ceases to be one. I have shown the easiest way to save Hinduism and that is that we should all become Bhangis voluntarily. For a Bhangi can have knowledge, valour and business acumen, while the spirit of service will always be there. In my own view all these are for service.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

169. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

The Viceroy's House is kept very neat and clean.[1] Not a scrap of waste paper, not a piece of rag can be spotted anywhere. The houses occupied by former members of the Viceroy's Executive Council were equally clean and well appointed. There is no gainsaying that we have not learnt the art of external sanitation to the degree that the English have. What is so distressing is that the living quarters of the menials and sweepers employed in the Viceroy's House are extremely dirty. This is a state of affairs the ministers of our new Government will not tolerate. Although they will occupy the same well-kept bungalows, they will see to it that the lodgings of their servants are kept as clean as their own. They will also have to pay attention to the cleanliness of the wives and children of the staff. Jawaharlal and Sardar have no objection to cleaning their own lavatories. How can they have any in having the living quarters of their attendants cleaned? A one-time Harijan servant of Jawaharlal is now a member of the U. P. Assembly. I shall be satisfied only when the lodgings of the ministers' staff are as neat and tidy as their own.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 4-9-1946

[1] Gandhiji was commenting on the fear expressed by some Englishmen that with the departure of the British the gardens of the house occupied by the members of the Viceroy's Executive Council would suffer neglect, the furniture would be ruined by oil and grease, lavatories would be left uncleaned, and so on.

170. NOTES[1]

THE LOWLY COW

A knowledgeable sister writes :

> Q. 1. With the exception of those cows or buffaloes that are in calf, cannot all others, whether in milk or not, be used to plough the land? This would be of immense help to the farmer but the general public is averse to the idea. What is your opinion?
>
> Q. 2. There is a great dearth of pasture land in our country. It is difficult for the farmer to provide fodder even for useful cattle. Are you then in favour of the slaughter of all such animals as cannot be made use of or do you think this slaughter should be forbidden by law?

A. 1. The first question was put to me as long ago as 1915. I felt then as now, that if the cows referred to were used for purposes of ploughing the land, it would not hurt them. On the contrary it would make them strong and increase their yield of milk. But this benefit could only come about provided the cow was treated as a friend and not cruelly as cattle in our land so often are. This friendly treatment should of course be insisted on for animals from whom we take service. Every living being has to work within or its limitations. Such work uplifts, never lowers either man or beast.

A. 2. The second question also has long since been answered by me. Cow-slaughter can never be stopped by law. Knowledge, education, and the spirit of kindness towards her alone can put an end to it. It will not be possible to save those animals that are a burden on the land or perhaps even man if he is a burden.

KHADDAR

Readers of the *Harijan* may well say that in the present atmosphere of mad frenzy any talk of khadi is meaningless, because many khadi-loving persons live in cities and so far, the trouble is, by the grace of God, confined to cities. As a matter of fact, all city-dwellers are by no means party to the senseless strife, and those who truly love khadi must always be actuated by thoughts of peace. We have either to make khadi universal among the masses or give up all dreams of non-violent swaraj. Therefore, all who love and believe in peace, however fiercely the storm of communal strife may rage

[1] The Hindi original was published in *Harijan Sevak* 15-9-1946.

around them, will forget neither the spinning-wheel nor khadi. They may omit their meals but not the charkha.

The request given below on behalf of the Charkha Sangh is thus quite proper. Such requests have been made by other khadi-loving organizations too. Those who look upon khadi in the above light will act on the resolution passed by the A. I. S. A. as referred to below :

1. The Trustees of the Charkha Sangh hereby appeal to all Khadi Bhandars and all khadi-lovers to try their utmost to secure 78,000 ordinary co-operators for the coming seventy-eighth Khadi Jayanti, of which number, at least half shall be self-sufficient.

2. By an ordinary co-operator is meant one who is a habitual khadi-wearer and will donate at least 6 hanks of self-spun yarn annually to the Charkha Sangh.

3. By 'self-sufficient' is meant one who, unless prevented by illness or other sufficient and unavoidable cause, regularly produces whether spun by himself or through his family members or friends, at least $7\frac{1}{2}$ hanks yarn, per month or 5 hanks, if he has done his own ginning, carding and slivering.

4. The Charkha Sangh has also passed a resolution to the effect that in all khadi producing centres, at least one square yard per person, according to the population, must be used by the people in the area. This much at least must be accomplished.

NEW DELHI, September 4, 1946

Harijan, 15-9-1946

171. CABLE TO SUDHIR GHOSH

NEW DELHI,
September 4, 1946

SUDHIR GHOSH
18 GROSVENOR PLACE
LONDON

YOU MUST BE SOLE JUDGE. I HAVE NO OBJEC-TION. AM HERE FOR SOME TIME.

GANDHI

Sudhir Ghosh Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

172. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 4, 1946

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your two letters. You have completed sixty. You should aspire to live to 125 and serve till the end.

Tell Gokibehn[1] not to worry about me. What was accomp- lished on the 2nd was nothing very great.[2] A great deal more still remains to be done. I shall indeed be happy if you keep her with you. It is good that you send her milk. Read this out to her with my humble *pranams*.

What you wrote to Kamalabehn Nimbkar was right. She has met me often. She is very talkative, and as obstinate. If she writes to me, I shall see what can be done.

I hope Jamna[3] is well. With me are Kanu, Abha, Sushila Pyarelal and R. K. A gentleman named Prabhudas has arrived from Bardoli. As typist we have Parasram. Muriel and Gladys have just arrived.

I hope Purushottam[4] and Vijaya[5] are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C. W. 8635. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Gandhiji's sister
[2] The reference is to the formation of the Interim Government
[3] Addressee's wife
[4] Addressee's son
[5] Addressee's daughter-in-law

173. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

NEW DELHI,
September 4, 1946

CHI. KAKA,

I have your letter. I understand about the Hindustani. Do what you can. I am getting the translation from English into Hindustani done by Rajkumari as best as I can. What will of it I do not know. In the end I have had to accept your suggestion of giving two pages. You believe it can be managed. I do realize that it is not advisable to go to Madras at present. Everywhere there is chaos. We have to make our way through it. I have been feeling that to ensure regular progress in our work, all of us must stay in one place for some time. I don't know when that will be possible.

Now, about Goa. I cannot understand how you can go to Belgaum, for I feel that if you go you will have to stay there for a long time. If you do not stay on, the work will suffer. I therefore feel that it might be better if you would be content with whatever you can do from Wardha.

I understand about Konkani. I am confident that you will be able to attend to such activities from Wardha.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10974

174. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 4, 1946

Gandhiji said that they had a right to hope that their country would soon become a country where there was no sorrow and sighing. That country, however, of the poet's imagination, Gandhiji reminded them, was in their hearts and they all knew the conditions necessary for bringing about that peace and happiness. If everyone made room in his heart for God, there could be no sorrow and no sighing. But today, alas! the people were filled with fear and anger. Brother quarrelled with brother and returned anger for anger and blow for blow. What could their Ministers do? Were they expected to send military and police to protect them? The whole atmosphere was

rotten. Offices and staff had been multiplied a hundredfold. No wonder bribery and corruption were rampant.

On Tuesday, Gandhiji said, he had spoken to them of the duty of proper attention to hygiene and sanitation. It was an essential factor for health and the duty of every citizen. But inward cleanliness was even more necessary and much more difficult. Nevertheless, if they did not purify themselves they would make Government impossible for their Ministers and displace the very men whom they had put in power.

Gandhiji again referred to the evil of untouchability. It pained him to hear and read of the persecution of Harijans in villages. If there was an epidemic they were beaten. They could not draw water from wells. They lived in hovels. This state of affairs, Gandhiji said, may not exist in the country of our dreams. All human beings are one in the sight of God and they must look upon Harijans as no less members of the great human family than they themselves were.

Gandhiji then said a word to the Bhangis whose first servant he said he was. It pained him to hear of the bribery and corruption among them. He did not want their so-called leaders to oppress them. He did not want Bhangis to look upon themselves as beggars at anyone's door. They must demand justice and fight for it but with clean hands. And now with their own Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and others as Ministers they need have no fear that justice would not be meted out to them.

The Hindustan Times, 5-9-1946

175. TELEGRAM TO J. P. BHANSALI

Express NEW DELHI,
September 5, 1946

BHANSALIBHAI
ASHRAM SEVAGRAM
WARDHA

YOU MAY GO TO RAJNANDGAON IF YOU CAN SPARE YOURSELF.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

176. LETTER TO MANILAL B. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
September 5, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. It is quite frank. May your twelve-year vow be a complete success. Never mind that you forgot to mention it to me beforehand or to obtain my prior permission. The work there will proceed but slowly. There are three Harijan settlements in Uruli Kanchan. In which of these three do you conduct the prayers? I think it is not proper for us to go for prayers where we are not wanted by the people. We cannot impose our dharma on others. Hence, if you have gone there after consulting the Harijans of the settlement you don't have to quit now. However, I would not consider it wrong to go to each Harijan settlement by turns. All of you should consult each other and then do what you think right.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MANIBHAI
URULI KANCHAN

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

177. LETTER TO MOHANLAL M. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
September 5, 1946

BHAI MOHANLAL,

I have your letter. By all means take the Preston land if you can. Sir Chunilal can certainly put up a building on the site if he wants. The final ownership should be the Trust's. It should also be used in a manner that the Trust can afford. The plot is so large that Sir Chunilal can have a piece of it for himself. Only Dr. Dinshaw Mehta can say where such a piece can be carved out. He knows every nook of the land. I have been there only once.

I am writing to Kumarappa and suggesting to him that he should pay a visit. I am not writing separately to Bachhraj.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MOHANLAL, GADHADAWALA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

178. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM BHATT AND GANGA BHATT

NEW DELHI,
September 5, 1946

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM AND GANGA,

I have your letter. It is a pleasure to read the letters from you both. Mix with everyone as much as you can. You must do nothing beyond your capacity. Why don't you ask Rama also to write? What does she do?

You must not force yourself to take any food that you cannot digest or that does not agree with you. This rule should be strictly followed. And you should regard as medicine whatever food you take; you should never eat anything only to indulge the palate.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. GANGABEHN BHATT
URULI KANCHAN

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

179. LETTER TO DR. ATMARAM K. BHAGAWAT

NEW DELHI,
September 5, 1946

BHAI BHAGAWAT,

I have your letter. It is lucid, though it leaves me with something to say. But you are right. We shall be able to decide something only when we meet.

I hold that soap is not necessary for cleanliness. I gave up the use of soap many years ago. I only use it to wash my hands after a

visit to the toilet, which means that one cake lasts me a year. As compared to soap, I consider the use of soap-nut more beneficial. However, letting dirt collect in the hair or the eyes or the teeth or the ears, I regard as a crime. I have noticed that we are very careless in observing the laws of hygiene. The rest when we meet.

DR. BHAGAWAT

URULI KANCHAN

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

180. HARIJANS AND WELLS[1]

Shri Hardev Sahay writes :

Last evening (4-9-'46) in your address to the prayer gathering, you drew the attention of the public to the disability attached to Harijans in the matter of drawing water public wells. After 25 years of incessant effort on their behalf, we have not yet succeeded in removing this disability. No one knows of their sufferings more than you.

It is my humble opinion that now that Congress Government are in power, they should forthwith proclaim their policy towards the Harijans and remove all such of their disabilities as they can by law. In this connection I should like to draw your attention to conditions in the Punjab. Leave aside the question of drawing water from wells, Harijans are not even permitted to obtain land for sinking a well for themselves. I would beg of you to appeal to the Punjab Government to provide wells for Harijans at State expense, wherever there are no facilities of drawing water or at least provide them with land for sinking wells for themselves. There are ever so many villages in the Punjab where, even if the Harijans are willing to spend their own money, they are not given the requisite land.

There are a few places where the Government has started making wells for the Harijans; but they are wholly insufficient. It is surely the duty of the State to see that a proper supply of drinking water is available to all its citizens.

The writer is perfectly right in what he says. It is the duty of the Government to provide wells for the Harijans. It is not enough only to give the land; the Government should be responsible for sinking the wells.

NEW DELHI, September 6, 1946

Harijan, 15-9-1946

[1] The Hindi original of this was published in *Harijan Sevak*, 15-9-1946

181. QUESTION BOX

NATURE CURE A PANACEA

Q. It has been said that nature cure can be applied to every disease. If so, can it cure short or long-sightedness, cataract and other eye diseases? Can one avoid spectacles? Can hernia, tonsils etc., which need the surgeon's knife be cured by nature cure?

A. I know that the claim attributed to nature cure has been made by its exponents. I do not count myself among them. This much, however, can be safely claimed. Disease springs from a wilful or ignorant breach of the laws of nature. It follows, therefore, that timely return to those laws should mean restoration. A person who has tried nature beyond endurance, must either suffer the punish- ment inflicted by nature or, in order to avoid it, seek the assistance of the physician or the surgeon as the case may be. Every submission to merited punishment strengthens the mind of man, every avoidance saps it.

FORCED MARRIAGE

A sister writes :

> What is an unwilling girl to do when her parents insist either upon her marriage or leaving the parental home? Where is she to go if she has not been educated enough to earn her own living? Whose protection is she to seek?

A. The question makes sad reading. It is wholly wrong of parents to force marriage on their daughters. It is also wrong to keep their daughters unfit for earning their living. No parent has a right to turn a daughter out on the streets for refusal to marry. Let us hope that such cruel specimens are rare. To the girl concerned, my advice would be not to look on any labour with her hands, down to scavenging, as beneath her dignity. Women may not look for protection to men. They must rely on their own strength and purity of character and on God as did Draupadi of old.

NEW DELHI, September 6, 1946

Harijan, 15-9-1946

182. CHARKHA JAYANTI AND HINDUSTANI

Shri Giriraj informs me that some examinees resent the holding of the Hindustani examination of the Gujarati Vidyapith on 22nd because that date falls on Charkha Jayanti, i. e., *Bhadarva Vad* 12. According to me, those who sit for the Rashtrabhasha examination are doing pure work. Khadi is the highest symbol of ahimsa. The same is true of all the other constructive activities of the nation. Khadi is the nucleus of all the activities. I therefore hope that on that day the number of examinees will go up and not go down. *Bhadarva Vad* 12 should never be a holiday. It is certainly not a day of enjoyment. On that day we should become more alive to the cause of service. And to sit for Hindustani examination is as much a matter of glory as it is a work of service.

NEW DELHI, September 6, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 15-9-1946

183. CONGRESS MINISTRIES AND AHIMSA[1]

Shri Shankrrao Deo writes :[2]

> People find it strange that men who once called themselves satyagrahis should, on becoming Ministers, resort to the use of the army and the police. They feel it is a violation of ahimsa, whether accepted as a creed or as a policy. It would seem they are right. This contradiction between the belief and the practice of Congress Ministers confuses our workers and they find it difficult to face the critics, inside the Congress and those outside the Congress who want to make capital out of it.
>
> By and large the ahimsa of the Congress has been the ahimsa of the weak. This was the only thing possible under the prevailing conditions in India. . . . I admit that there can be no objection to people who accept ahimsa only as a policy accepting positions of power. Thus many Congressmen have accepted positions in the Government and you have permitted them to do so. . . . But having won power through ahimsa, how should we practise ahimsa in such a way government becomes redundant? If you do not suggest a way satyagraha

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 15-9-1946.

[2] Only extracts from the letter are translated here.

will be deemed to be an insufficient means for the end we seek.

I think the answer is easy. For some time now I have been saying that the words "truth and non-violence" should be removed from the Congress constitution. If we proceed on the assumption that whether these words are removed from the Congress constitution or not we certainly have become removed from truth and ahimsa, we shall be able to judge independently whether a certain action is right or wrong.

I am convinced that so long as the army or the police continues to be used for conducting the administration we shall remain subservient to the British or some other foreign power, irrespective of whether the power is in the hands of the Congress or others. Let us suppose that Congress ministries do not have faith in ahimsa. Let us suppose further that Hindus, Muslims and others seek protection from the army or the police. In that case they will continue to get such protection. Then these Congress Ministers who are votaries of ahimsa and do not like to seek help the army or the police may resign. This means that so long as people have not learnt to settle their quarrels themselves, goondaism will continue and we shall never be able to generate the true strength of ahimsa in us.

Now the question is how to generate such strength. I answered this question [in the *Harijan* of] August 4[1] in my reply to a letter from Ahmedabad. So long as we do not develop the strength to die bravely, with love in our hearts, we cannot develop in us the non-violence of the brave.

Would there be State power in an ideal society or would such a society be Stateless? I think the question is futile. If we continue to work towards the building of such a society, to some extent it is bound to be realized and to that extent people will benefit by it. Euclid has defined a straight line as having no breadth, but no one has yet succeeded in drawing such a line and no one ever will. Still we can progress in geometry only by postulating such a line. This is true of every ideal.

We might remember though that a Stateless society does not exist anywhere in the world. If such a society is possible it can be established first only in India. For attempts have been made in India

[1] *Vide* "Congress Ministries and Ahimsa", 6-9-1946.

towards bringing about such a society. We have not so far shown that supreme heroism. The only way is for those who believe in it to set the example.

NEW DELHI, September 6, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 15-9-1946

184. LETTER TO INDIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION, LAURENCO MARQUIS

NEW DELHI,
September 6, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter and the demand draft for Rs. 3,425. Thanks for the same. I think you did not write the letter yourself, nor have you signed it. It should not be so.

I would like it even if you wrote an [indifferent] handsome day it would improve. I am utilizing your gift for khadi work, because you have left the decision to me. This is one of the many welfare activities carried on by me which badly needs funds.

HINDI MAHILA MANDAL
POST BOX 393
LAURENCO MARQUIS

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

185. LETTER TO GIRIRAJ KISHORE

NEW DELHI,
September 6, 1946

CHI. GIRIRAJ,

I have your letter. You are right about the examination. I am writing in *Harijanbandhu*.[1]

You are in somewhat of a dilemma over the dictionary. If there is need for another dictionary, it will also be prepared. Our misfortune

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Giriraj Kishore", 6-9-1946.

is that the English-knowing people are unable to render even common English words into Hindustani.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 8776

186. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
September 6, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi criticized the public for sending hundreds of telegrams daily to the Viceroy and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. He considered them a foolish waste of public money and at the same time waste of the Viceroy's and Pandit Nehru's precious time. Time was when the Viceroy was all-powerful and could do everything. But now he had of his own free will relegated his powers to the Cabinet of which, like the King of England, he was constitutional head. The King of England could not do anything without the consent of his Ministers. The people of England even beheaded one monarch because he went against their will. Gandhiji hoped that the people's Ministers here would never do anything of the kind because they had in their possession the matchless weapon of satyagraha, should occasion ever arise for its use. In any case, the people who sent these wires should realize that apart from burdening the recipients and the telegraph offices they were also wasting the people's money. The well-to-do imagined that it was their money, but it really belonged to the starving masses whom they exploited.

Gandhiji then turned with a heavy heart to the continued strife in Bombay. He did not know who killed whom. But it was tragic that some people even rejoiced that Hindus were enough to kill in return those who tried to kill them. Such revenge was folly. He would far rather that Hindus died without retaliation, for that was the only way to quench the fire of hatred. He did not want the people to ask the Government anywhere for military and police protection. They must generate their own strength and not rely on anyone else. Even if they demanded this help the Ministers should refuse it. The Ministers and leaders should be willing to go into the fray themselves and lay down their lives for the sake of Hindu and Muslim honour. As for military, they should be harnessed to all kinds of constructive work at which they were adepts. Let them grow more food for the starving millions and all kinds of other work that

[1] The report in *The Hindustan Times* has been collated with Pyarelal's report in his "Weekly Letter" appearing in *Harijan.*

was waiting to be done.8[1]

Some members of the Delhi Municipality and businessmen had come and complained, said Gandhiji, that in Delhi it was the Chief Commissioner's and Deputy Commissioner's raj. He had told them in reply that the remedy lay in their own hands. They should go to the Municipality for service only, with no personal end to serve. He was afraid they would not be able to stand that test. They had many sins of omission and commission to answer for. As elected representatives in the Municipality, they were responsible for the Harijan hovels and the dirt and squalor of Delhi. Businessmen and contractors exploited the poor. If communal strife occurs in Delhi, it is the citizens who are responsible. The day for the Commissioner's raj is over. It must now be the people's raj, but the people must be alive to their responsibilities.

Gandhiji brought his discourse to an end by expressing sorrow at the Qaid-e-Azam's recent utterances. He was the leader of a powerful organization and it behoved him to weigh every word he spoke. If he did, it would redound to his credit; it would be for the good of Islam, for the benefit of Hinduism, too, and for the welfare of India as a whole. But, said Gandhiji, each one was responsible for his own correct action and correct action on the part of everyone would make the Qaid-e-Azam act a right too.

The Hindustan Times, 7-9-1946, and *Harijan*, 15-9-1946

187. PROHIBITION

The following extracts from Rev. E. Gordon's writing provoke thoughts on total prohibition :

> With famine facing the country, we cannot very well quarrel with sincere efforts for combating the menace, but why prohibition of food- stuffs such as pastries, ice cream, etc., which have real good value, and why talk of prohibition or severe reduction of supply of sugar to aerated water and other mineral water manufactures and yet keep absolutely silent about the prohibition or severe reduction of cereals and sugar to the distilleries and breweries? Is the drinking of alcoholic liquors any less of a luxury than the eating of pies, pastries and cakes? Can even the most astute and ardent lovers of alcoholic beverages argue that these drinks are so essential to life that no reduction can be made in the amount of cereals and sugar required to make whisky, beer, etc.?
>
> Granted that there is a certain amount of food value in beer, is it equal in value to the barley that could be used in making bread or cakes?
>
> The President of the United States has ordered a drastic cut in the quota of wheat

[1] What follows is from the *Harijan* report.

to be issued to distilleries in the U.S.A. How can we from India plead with America to send us large quantities of grain to save millions from death by starvation, when no published statements assure us that grains, whether imported or grown in this country, will be used for intoxicating drinks?

We give our whole-hearted approval to the Congress Ministry of Madras in their desire to introduce prohibition as soon as possible. Not withstanding all that anti-prohibitionists say about the failure of prohibition in the United States, if they would honestly look at the other side of the picture, they would find that the drinking is far worse now than it was than and the amount of spirituous liquors is increasing year by year. Other things being equal, we sincerely believe that under prohibition, honestly tried courageously and indefatigably enforced, India will forge ahead much quicker and more rapidly than she could without prohibition. She will prove to the world the extent to which liquor has dragged and is dragging down the nations of the world.

The Reverend gentleman is right. India has the capacity and the opportunity to lead the world in the matter of prohi- bition. Can she forgo the revenue derived from this degrading traffic? She must, if she is to live. I have a hideous tale from South Africa, related to me by satyagrahi Cachalia Junior, a worthy son of the deceased father who was a hero of the first Satyagraha campaign in that country. He tells me that a thoughtless agitation has brought to the Indian community the freedom to drink, with the result that it is sapping their moral strength. I know what this deadly freedom means. On this issue there is no difference of opinion between Hindus, Mussalmans and, shall I say, others in India save the liquor interest.

I have no doubt that the loss of revenue which drains the moral and material means of the poor drinkers will be more than balanced by the gain accruing to them from prohibition. Moreover, the military burden, in defence of which the argument for the maintenance of the excise revenue has so far been used, cannot hold water in the New India, where that burden will not longer exist. The excise revenue must, therefore, be sacrificed without delay and without hesitation. No thought of the loss of this revenue, should interfere with the progress of this much-needed reform. Whether the happy conjunction between the Congress and the League takes place or not, the Congress Provinces should dare to do the right.

The positive side of prohibition must run side by side with the

negative. The positive consists in providing the drinker with counter-attractions giving him health and innocent amusement.

NEW DELHI, September 7, 1946

Harijan, 15-9-1946

188. HARIJAN WORK IN KISTNA DISTRICT

Shri G. Ramachandra Rao writes a letter giving an account of his Harijan work. The following is a precis of it :

> We have taken up the problem of the use of public wells by Harijans. Section 126A of the Madras Local Boards Act of 1920 provides for the use, by persons of whatever caste or creed, of wells, tanks, reservoirs, water-ways, etc., maintained by a *Panchayat*. It even imposes a fine of Rs. 100 on anyone who obstructs its operation. But the law is honoured in the breach where the Harijans are concerned. It is pathetic to see the latter often waiting in long queues for hours at a time in front of a public well for some generous non-Harijan to fill their pots with water. We chose Kankipadu village where a public well is maintained by the local *Panchayat* and explained to the leaders, not only the implications of the law but also their moral obliga- tions. The response, after about three weeks of propaganda, being heartening, we called a public meeting where, owing to overwhelming support for the proposition, it was announced that in future Harijans would be allowed to use the well in question without molestation.
>
> The next morning, however, the Harijans themselves were found to be too timid to take advantage of the decision. It was a sad commentary on their mentality and we had to work hard to bring them to the well. As soon as they began drawing water, a reaction set in among the caste Hindus, the vast majority of whom, even at personal inconvenience, refrained from coming to the well. A few, however, remained staunch to their resolve and gradually the opposition was worn down. I had also to appeal to the Deputy Inspector of Local Board to explain to the people the implications of section 126A.
>
> This experience has encouraged us to take up similar work in other villages too, where Harijans have no facilities for obtaining water. I am of opinion that for the removal of such disabilities, moral persuasion and legal provision should go hand in hand. Absence of one renders the other inefficient. The existing Government acts dealing with social disabilities are vague and weak. This defect must be remedied and the Government of Madras, who have set aside one crore of rupees for Harijan work, might well utilize a certain sum for publicity of the provisions of the relevant laws already on the

statute-book. Execution of the law is as important as its passing.

Professor Rao deserves hearty congratulations for his assiduous work on behalf of the oppressed Harijans. His effort ought to be supported by the public.

NEW DELHI, September 7, 1946

Harijan, 15-9-1946

189. ABOUT HINDUSTANI[1]

A gentleman from Bihar writes :

> The great and commendable work that is going on under your leadership for Hindustani-Prachar is of immense help for the country's progress and freedom. A nation that has no language of its own has hardly any right to exist. And that is our misfortune today. Yet our leaders are not fully aware of the problem. In spite of your efforts, Congress workers are not whole-hearted in this regard. You will also be aware that at Congress Committee meetings as also in our legislatures, most people, including even whose mother tongue is either Hindi or Urdu, prefer to speak in English. Is it not possible to make it obligatory for Congressmen to speak, whether at meetings or in legislatures, in Hindustani, as it is obligatory for them to wear khadi? Some concession can be allowed in regard to those who cannot at all speak Hindustani, but a time-limit should be set for them also to learn Hindustani. My experience is that responsible Congressmen who know Hindustani prefer to speak in English. This must be stopped. Unless this is done no transformation is possible in the country. The Congress is assuming the responsibility of office. Here too Congressmen should carry on their work in Hindustani.

The correspondent is quite right. The lure of English has not left us. And until it goes, our own languages will remain impoverished. Would that the people's Government everywhere would do their work either in the national or provincial languages! But to attain this, they must have people representing all languages in their offices and the public should be encouraged to address the Government in the provincial or the national language. We shall not only be saved much expense by adopting our own languages but it will also make

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 15-9-1946, under the title "Regarding Hindustani".

things much easier for the general public.

NEW DELHI, September 7, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 15-9-1946

190. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANT MEHTA

NEW DELHI,
September 7, 1946

BHAI CHANDRAKANT,

I have your letter addressed to Bapa dated July 24, 1946. The number of English words you use betrays your imperfect and inadequate knowledge of Gujarati. I wonder how, being what you are, you can marry a Harijan girl and be happy or make her happy. Moreover, I should like to know what it is that you call revolutionary in such acts of service. Strange that a revolutionary though I am I fail to understand what you want to say.

I certainly have a Harijan girl in view but I cannot afford to let her marry just anybody. I can only give such an alli- ance a religious character and hence indulgence can have no place in it. My advice therefore is that you should come and see me when I settle down at Sevagram.

SJT. CHANDRAKANT MEHTA

MORVI HOSTEL

[BANARAS] HINDU UNIVERSITY

BANARAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

191. LETTER TO GOKULBHAI BHATT

NEW DELHI,
September 7, 1946

BHAI GOKULBHAI,

You are too simple. God has not yet opened fully through my instrumentality the portal of swaraj for India. We are yet to enter it. I take it that you are not regretting that you gave up cereals. Anyone who can take milk and milk products does not need what are known as cereals. If we can eat fruit, sweet and sour, and various kinds of

leafy vegetables, roots and tubers, then there will be no need for cereals. This is my experience through many years. Now that you have resumed taking cereals I must warn you to guard against diseases caused by grain. So far as we are concerned, nothing needs to be celebrated. Following dharma is imperative for all of us.

Blessings from
BAPU

GOKULBHAI BHATT
SIROHI, RAJPUTANA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

192. LETTER TO KISANLAL C. TEJPAL

NEW DELHI,
September 7, 1946

BHAI KISANLAL,

I have your letter. I agree with what you say. What is there is to celebrate so long as we have not achieved complete independence? At the most we can say that we have got a glimpse of independence. But it would be a sign of stupidity to rest content with that. At present Hindus and Muslims in the towns are fighting each other. At such a time overseas Indians will have helped in bringing independence nearer if they effectively display unity. Since you live in Egypt you can contribute much in this regard.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI KISANLAL CHHOTALAL TEJPAL
C/O N. CHHOTA LAL & BROTHERS
SAQQUARA EL GIZA
CAIRO

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *Harijanbandhu*, 15-9-1946

193. LETTER TO GIRIRAJ KISHORE

NEW DELHI,
September 7, 1946

CHI. GIRIRAJ,

I was distressed to see your letter. Yesterday I heard the purport of your letter. This morning is went through Krishnamurti's article. I could not follow it fully so I asked to see your letter. What a messy handwriting! It is unbecoming for you to write such a hand. You are a teacher, your handwriting should be a model, as should be all your work.

Krishnamurti's article is good, but it is unnecessary to publish it. The English handwriting is also not good, and the letters are too small.

Do everything neatly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 8777

194. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 7, 1946

The speeches being made by the Qaid-e-Azam and his followers cause me much pain. They say that they will take what they want by force. It is true that the reins of the Government are now in the hands of the Congress, but this only adds to their responsibilities and duties. During the struggle for freedom Congressmen were arrested, beaten and persecuted. They were even killed. These are now things of the past. Had the Congress taken to the path of violence it would have come to a bad end. In true suffering there is no room for revenge. Then alone can success be assured. The 40 crores of Indian people, that is to say the teeming millions in the villages, do not think of violence. They are slaves. Violence is lodged only in the hearts of a handful of men in the cities.

I am a villager. I belong with the villagers. The Congress has accepted power for the sake of these downtrodden villages. I had taken up the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity long before I joined the Congress. I had a number of Muslim friends when I was at school. I went to South Africa to plead the case of some Muslim friends of my brother. I had gone there to gain my livelihood, but soon after my arrival there I gave the first place to service. As a coolie-barrister I served my friends of the labouring class. I had gone as an employee of a Muslim firm and I served the Hindus through them. My memory of those days is a happy one. It is a matter of deep regret that even in South Africa communal differences have arisen. Nevertheless they are unitedly fighting for the rights of Indians. I still remember those hefty Muslims, and especially Seth Cachalia, who participated in the satyagraha and who said they would rather die than live as slaves. When the Qaid-e-Azam and his followers describe Hindus as their enemies I am surprised and pained. I am not a Muslim but I venture to say that Islam does not preach enmity towards anyone. I think I am as much a Christian, a Sikh and a Jain as I am a Hindu. Religion does not teach one to kill brother however different his belief. No one can treat another as his enemy until the latter has become his own enemy. Muslim League leaders were not right when they said that they would compel the Congress, the Hindus and the British to accede to their demand.

I am reminded of an incident during the Khilafat days. I was speaking at a meeting of Hindus. I said to them: "If you want to protect the cow then protect Khilafat. If required even lay down your lives for it." When I said this it brought tears of joy to the eyes of the Ali Brothers. But what a tragic change we see today. I wish the day may again come when Hindus and Muslims will do nothing without mutual consultation. I am day and night tormented by the question what I can do to hasten the coming of that day. I appeal to the League not to regard any Indian as its enemy. I appeal to the English not to nurse the thought that they can divide Hindus and Muslims. If they do they will be betraying India and betraying themselves. Hindus and Muslims are both born of the same soil. They have the same blood, eat the same food, drink the same water and speak the same language. The Qaid-e-Azam says that all the Muslims will be safe in Pakistan. In

Punjab, Sind and Bengal we have Muslim League Governments. Can one say that what is happening in those provinces augurs well for the peace of the country? Does the Muslim League believe that it can sustain Islam by the sword? If it does it is committing a great error. The very meaning of the word 'Islam' is peace and I am certain that no religion worth the name can be kept alive except through peace.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 8-9-1946

195. TELEGRAM TO MANAGER, SEVAGRAM ASHRAM

NEW DELHI,
September 8, 1946

MANAGER
ASHRAM
SEVAGRAM, WARDHA
TELL SANKARAN TO COME.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

196. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
September 8, 1946

BHAI JIVANJI,

From the difficulty you mention it would appear that only as much English matter can go in as we can send from here. The same, we may take it, applies to the Hindustani. Only what we send from here will be published, and that just as it is. I take it that you have the necessary resources and facilities for having the Devanagari transcribed into Persian. But if you cannot do even this much you must tell me and we shall have the Urdu also sent from here. That of course would be too much. All our people should know both the scripts. That includes the compositors.

I understand what you say about Hunner. But I am thinking of sending all the Hindustani matter from here. Would you still want to engage him? I have sent to you the long letter he wrote to me. If you

return it to me I shall send Hunner the necessary reply.

You will have started giving four columns of the English-Hindustani. I don't think it is necessary to give it in *Harijan Sevak*. We proceed on the assumption that those who read *Harijan Sevak* do not know English. Since these will be four columns now it will make one whole leaf. It should go to the readers of *Harijan* free of cost. Those who ask for it separately should be charged 2 pice in cash.

If the prayer book is printed here on behalf of Navajivan and if it is printed quickly, what objection can we have? There is a great demand for it here. My feeling is that it cannot be printed in Ahmedabad as quickly as it can here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9969. Also C. W. 6943. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

197. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,

[*September 8, 1946*]

Though she could never swim in plenty, India could grow enough food for her requirement, chances of wastage being eliminated, said Mahatma Gandhi in his after-prayer speech on Sunday evening. Talking of cloth shortage, he said that if only the country took to the khadi scheme, no Indian need be in want.

Gandhiji said that their President Jawaharlalji had also referred to these two primary needs in his broadcast on Saturday evening. He had appealed to those countries abroad who could spare food also to send it to India. Gandhiji had no objection to anyone who could spare anything and felt like sending out foodstuffs. But he was quite certain that India could not live if she was going to depend on outside aid for her food. He had maintained from the beginning that India could grow enough food for her requirement.

An English sister who was like a relation of his, was with him just now on her way to China. She was a woman who had chosen to make her home among the poor in London and when he went there for the (second) R. T. C. she had invited him to stay with her which he gladly did and looked upon Kingsley Hall as a palace. She had told him how strictly rationed they were for everything in England, how rationing included everyone from the King and Prime Minister downwards and how proud everyone was to share the burden. These people were disciplined and war had taught

them to suffer willingly. If one goes further into the war-devastated countries of Europe, the suffering was much worse and would be still greater with the approaching winter.

Today the whole world was starving, and why should India look for relief from outside. Gandhiji maintained that if everyone put his shoulder to the wheel all would be well with them. No one must eat a morsel more than he required and everyone who had any little piece of land should at once grow vegetables or cereals on it. In the U. P. he had been told that 75,000 bighas of uncultivated land was waiting to be ploughed. All this meant that they could produce much more food if they directed their energies to it.

Gandhiji said it hurt him to hear it said that Travancore had food only for 15 days more. This was a land of plenty and yet the poor lived in perpetual want because of exploitation by a foreign power and the city folk. Gandhiji explained that when he said that enough food could be grown he did not mean that they could afford to waste anything. They would never be swimming in an ocean of milk. That was possible only for God. But for the absolute lack of any milk or ghee or even oil for the poor the city folk must hang their heads in shame.

Gandhiji next turned to India's nakedness. The answer to this was, in his opinion, quite simple. People talked glibly of starting more textile mills. But they needed none of these. The mills existed today in their villages in the shape of hands, spindles, wheels and looms. The art was an old one and was alive. He knew, as President of the Spinners' Association what wonders could be worked if only everyone would take to the wheel. It was a crying shame that we who had plenty of cotton to export should have to depend upon mills. He appealed to each one to spin and send the yarn to him. He would have it woven and given to the poor or sold to the giver of enough yarn. It was up to the public to be true to themselves and help to the utmost to solve the problem. The solution lay in their own hands, not in those of the few members of the Cabinet.

The Hindustan Times, 9-9-1946

198. WHAT TO DO?

A friend sends the following questions :

Q. 1. You have all along held and expressed the view that persons should observe strict non-violence even when attacked by hooligans or others. Does this hold good when women are attacked or outraged? If people are unable to follow your lead regarding non-violence would you advise them to die as cowards or resist aggression with violence?

Q. 2. Should you not unequivocally condemn the dual role that the Muslim

League is playing today? While, on the one hand, its leaders are openly preaching violence and *jehad* against Hindus, the same men continue, on the other hand, to hold office as Ministers having a controlling hand on all the threads of administration, including police and justice.

Q. 3. Is there no constituted authority in India which can put a stop to this grave anomaly which is unprecedented in history?

Q. 4. Do you realize that if the present happenings are allowed to continue, civil war will become inevitable? How would you advise your countrymen to face such a catastrophe, if it comes?

A. 1. In a society of my imagination, outrage posited by the questioner cannot take place. But in the society in the midst of which we are living, such outrages do take place. My answer is unequivocal. A non-violent man or woman will and should die without retaliation, anger or malice, in self-defence or in defending the honour of his womenfolk. This is the highest form of bravery.

If an individual or a group of people are unable or unwilling to follow this great law of life, which is miscalled my lead, retaliation or resistance unto death is the second best, though a long way off from the first. Cowardice is impotence worse than violence. The coward desires revenge but being afraid to die, he looks to others may be the Government of the day, to do the work of defence for him. A coward is less than man. He does not deserve to be a member of a society of men and women. Lastly, let me add that if women had followed or would now follow my advice, every woman would protect herself without caring or waiting for aid from her brother or sister.

A. 2. Of course, the dual role adverted to is unequivocally bad. It is a sad chapter in our national life. My condemnation is of universal application. Fortunately it is so bad that it cannot last long.

A. 3. The only constituted authority is the British. We are all puppets in their hands. But it would be wrong and foolish to blame that authority. It acts according to its nature. That authority does not compel us to be puppets. We voluntarily run into their camp. It is, therefore, open to any and every one of us to refuse to play the British game.

Let us also admit frankly that the British authority is struggling to quit India. It does not know how. It honestly wants to leave India but wants before leaving to undo the wrong it has been doing for so

long. Being in the position of 'the toad under the harrow', I must know where it hurts. I have been telling the authority, if it will undo the wrong quickly, to leave India to her fate. But those who compose the British service cannot realize this obvious fact. They flatter themselves with the belief that they know India better than we do ourselves. Having successfully kept us under subjection for over a century, they claim the right to constitute themselves judges of our destiny. We may not grumble, if we are to come into our own through the way of peace. Satyagraha is never vindictive. It believes not in destruction but in conversion. Its failures are due to the weaknesses of the satyagrahi, not to any defect in the law itself. The British authority having decided to quit, (whatever the reason), will show growing defects and weaknesses. Parties will find that it is more and more a broken reed. And, when parties quarrel as Hindus and Muslims do let one or the other or both realize that, if India is to be an independent nation, one or both must deliberately cease to look to British authority for protection.

A. 4. This brings me to the last question. We are not yet in the midst or civil war. But we are nearing it. At present we are playing at it. War is a respectable term for goondaism practised on a mass or national scale. If the British are wise, they will keep clear of it. Appearances are to the contrary. Even the English members in the Provincial Assemblies refuse to see that they were given seats by the Act of 1935, not because it was right but in order that they might protect British interest and keep Hindus and Muslims apart. But they do not see this. It is a small matter. Nevertheless it is a straw showing the way the wind is blowing. Lovers and makers of swaraj must not be dismayed by these omens. My advice is satyagraha first and satyagraha last. There is no other or better road to freedom. Whoever wants to drink the ozone of freedom must steel himself against seeking military or police aid. He or they must ever rely upon their own strong arms or, what is infinitely better, their strong mind and will which are independent of arms, their own or other.

NEW DELHI, September 9, 1946

Harijan, 15-9-1946

199. TELEGRAM TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

CHIMANLALBHAI
SEVAGRAM, WARDHA
REGRET NOT RETURNING BEFORE TWENTYFIFTH. INFORM ALL.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

200. LETTER TO SIBNATH BANNERJI

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

DEAR SIBNATH (BANNERJI)[1],

I am silent. I dislike this craze for the West. What this army of men and women will bring, I shall watch. Only do not seek my blessings for what I dislike. My opinion you know.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

201. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 9, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

I have your letter. God has granted your wish, for I cannot leave here before the 24th.

If you work only as much as your health permits, both your body and mind will become as strong as steel. You will then be able to do as much work as I want you to do.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 528

[1] Vice-President, E. I. Railwaymen's Union

202. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

FOOLISH KUSUM,

Manibehn gave me the news of Jadavbehn's demise. I said I wouldn't write anything till Kusum wrote to me. I do not wish to offer you condolences. I have looked upon you as a wise woman. Should I say now that you are ignorant? Jadavbehn led a very happy life. Both of you sisters have rendered valuable services. She had to depart, as you and I and all of us have to. You should have asked me to cheer you up and prayed that you might cultivate total dedication to service. From what you say I understand that Jadavbehn also expected the same from you . . .[1] Has my wish yet been fulfilled?

It is still far off. I wish to live for 125 years, whereas you are wishing me only a hundred years. This is another instance of your stupidity. What is Pushpa's[2] age? Give my blessings to Manibhai.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarat: G. N. 1855

203. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have received your two letters. Perhaps Anantram will have arrived there by now. I am glad that Krishnachandra is convinced by Vinoba's persuasion. Balvantsinha and Om Prakash came here and have now proceeded to Khurja. I would consider Hoshiari's problem to have been solved if Gajraj goes to you. It would be excellent if Madhu's shortcomings are overcome. You will be receiving twenty-five tents. They have been dispatched from there along with poles and

[1] Some three lines are illegible here.
[2] Addressee's younger sister

pegs. I hope all the mosquito-nets have been got ready and there is no shortage now.

Manmohan Choudhari, I hope, has recovered by now. How did he get fever? I hope Prabhu Dayal and Arjun have also recovered and Sinharaj is doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10651

204. LETTER TO GAJANAN NAIK

NEW DELHI
September 9, 1946

CHI. GAJANAN,

Your letter does not show impartiality. However, if the information contained in it is correct it is startling. I must show your letter to Jhaverbhai. Or I would say that there is no substance in your complaint. About the salary I have already taken steps. I will proceed after I get reply.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. GAJANAN NAIK
MAGANWADI
WARDHA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

205. LETTER TO GOKULBHAI BHATT

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

BHAI GOKULBHAI,

Herewith a letter from Jagannath. Read it and return it with your comments. I am postponing any further action until I have your reply.

SJT. GOKULBHAI BHATT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

206. LETTER TO MRS. HARILAL DESAI

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

I have your joint letter. I have certainly tried to do *tapashcharya*. It can be said to have borne fruit when we get rid of what Akha Bhagat has described as the "excess growth" and when Hindus and Muslims live as one. Will the Doctor undertake this surgery?

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

[C/O] DR. HARILAL DESAI
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

207. LETTER TO JAGANNATH JANI

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

BHAI JAGANNATH,

I have your letter, which I have passed on to Gokulbhai. After I have his reply I shall make further inquiries if necessary.

SJT. JAGANNATH JANI
ROHIRA, SIROHI STATE

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

208. LETTER TO RAMPRASAD VYAS

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

CHI. RAMPRASAD,

I have your letter giving me full and detailed information. I shall be able to reach there only after the 24th, when we shall have a long talk. I hope Kanta was able to manage during your absence.

I expect you could observe things in Bombay too. Perfect you Urdu.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. RAMPRASAD VYAS
SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

209. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

CHI. SHARMA,

M[unshi] is here today. He has sent you a copy of his award. The stamped one he has sent to Gadodiaji. He has also made a deposition. If you want I can send you a copy, but it is not necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 368

210. LETTER TO VITHALDAS KOTHARI

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

BHAI VITHALDAS,

I have your letter. I cannot regard the Hindustani translation as accurate but I see no misinterpretation in it. Since there is a question-mark I cannot see the possibility of any frightful interpretation of it. But I might understand what you want to say if you throw more light. I cannot revise what I have written regarding Kakodkar's case. Please remember that I have not said it in regard to fasting in general. I had only Kakodkar's fast in mind. The only untoward outcome of the fast would have been that he might have died and I would not have regarded it as a terrible consequence. I would have regarded it as wrong if the fast had been given up owing to fear hunger, or a false notion of morality.

Uncertified khadi means khadi that does not come up to the standard, but is it not khadi all the same? I for one would regard it as wrong to use mill cloth in place of such khadi. The fact is it is wrong to expect at present khadi for book-binding and so on.

SJT. VITHALDAS KOTHARI
GUJARATI VIDYAPITH

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

211. LETTER TO PRABHU

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

BHAI PRABHU,

Sushilabehn has given me your two cheques. The beginning has been good. The receipt, etc., will be sent by Kanu Gandhi. It will go along with this letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Both the cheques will be utilized only for the work that was dear to Mahadev.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9229

212. LETTER TO ABIDALI JAFARBHAI

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

BHAI ABIDALI,

I have your long letter. Isn't there a Gujarati proverb saying that suspicion is a demon and ambition a witch? This applies in your case. Whatever I did only out of love. It is true that I do not have confidence in your capacity for thought or your non-violence and I have said as much in my letters to you. When you accepted my advice to give up your fast and vacate the Congress House I was very happy and realized that you were as loyal as ever.

As regards prayer I see no need to say anything. I believe you totally when you say that you pray every day and that you have faith in prayer. And this makes me happy. One who has sincere faith in prayer is saved from many sins. I have no faith and no interest in going to Western countries. I try to dissuade those wanting to go. Only today I wrote to Sibnath Bannerjee along these lines.[1] Yesterday I spoke to Ruikar. That they may not stay back at my behest is beside the point. I gave them the advice I considered right and my duty was done. I think now I have answered all your points. I shall have to be in Delhi till the 24th. I would prefer your coming to Sevagram rather than Delhi to see me. But if there is something urgent you want to ask that you cannot put down in a letter, you may come over to Delhi. I was sorry that nothing had yet been done about arbitration.

Blessings from
BAPU

ABIDALI JAFARBHAI
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Abidali Jafarbhai", 9-9-1946.

213. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

CHI. CHAND,

I have your letter. What shall I say to you? What can I do? I consider it a great crime to let one's health deteriorate to such an extent. You are now wasting time, causing anxiety to your parents and others you hold dear. Well, what has happened has happened. Observe henceforth the rules of health and get well. I shall be here till the 24th. Sushila's wedding is to take place at Wardha on 2nd October. After that I shall be there. Don't worry. Cheer up.

Blessing from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

214. LETTER TO G. B. PANT

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

BHAIJI,

I have your letter. You did well in writing to Mirabehn. I am well. There is nothing to worry about. We are all in God's hands.

Blessing from
BAPU

GOVIND BALLABH PANT

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

215. LETTER TO RAMANAND TIRTH

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

SWAMIJI,

I have your letter. I am carrying on correspondence. Now you are coming on the 15th. I shall be here. We shall have a talk.

Blessings from
BAPU

SWAMI RAMANAND TIRTH

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

216. LETTER TO SANKARAN

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

CHI. SANKARAN,

Both your letters came into my hands only yesterday. I shall now be here till the 24th but I think it is pointless for you to come here to see me. Stick on there and do whatever work Sushilabehn gives you.

Your chief task is to bring about a change in your diet. You should set about this. If you maintain good health under all circumstances, I shall feel that at least in your own case nature cure has been of benefit. Chimanlalbhai does not take medicines. It would be a great thing if he, too, showed some improvement. The rest when we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SANKARAN
SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

217. LETTER TO SHIVAJI

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

BHAI SHIVAJI,

I have your letter. I was indeed sorry that even though Kakodkar was consuming fruit and milk he was considered to be fasting. At least you could have said that he was fasting on milk and fruit. When we utter what is untruth or very near to it it is our duty to correct ourselves even though this should cause us temporary harm. My experience is that this never causes harm. I am confessing my error through the Press and to the Goan Government.[1]

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

218. MESSAGE TO PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

I am asked when the salt tax will be removed; and why it has not been removed already. The question implies impatience. The Cabinet has only been in office for eight days. The Finance Member has not yet taken charge of his office. We must wait. The Cabinet must do everything after full deliberation. It is I who should be impatient, for it was I who initiated the fight for the abolition of this tax. Ialso know how the loss of revenue can be made up for. Nevertheless I think we should not be impatient. We should not hustle the Cabinet. The Cabinet is of the people and works under their mandate. We must have faith that the salt tax will go and he who has faith can afford to be patient. There are many other things that the Cabinet has to do for the people as quickly as possible. If we continue to give it our support it will surely do all that should be done for the good of the masses.

Yesterday I told you that if we would learn to make our cloth ourselves there would be no need for anyone to go naked. Many people do not know how to spin. It is therefore proposed to start

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Shivaji", 9-9-1946.

classes in the Bhangi Colony from September 11 to 22 for all wanting to learn the various processes from ginning to spinning. Morning classes will be held from 7 to 11 a. m., afternoon classes from 2 p. m. to 6 p. m. Only Re. 1 per head will be charged. Those who wish to join may send their names either to Shri Kanu Gandhi or to Gandhi Ashram, Chandni Chowk, by the morning of September 11. I hope as many persons as can will take advantage of this opportunity.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 10-9-1946

219 TELEGRAM TO GOVERNMENT INFORMATION BUREAU, GOA[1]

NEW DELHI,
September 10, 1946

I HAVE NOW LEARNT FROM MY ORIGINAL CORRE-SPONDENT THAT BY THE HUNGER-STRIKE OF SHRI KAKODKAR HE MEANT EXCLUSION OF ALL FOOD EXCEPT MILK AND FRUIT. HE ADDS TOO THAT THIS PARTIAL FAST IS DISCONTINUED. I REGRET THE ERROR INTO WHICH I WAS LED.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-9-1946, and *The Hindustan Times*, 12-9-1946

220. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

NEW DELHI,
September 10, 1946

MY DEAR HORACE,

Muriel read your letter and gave it to me last evening. I am glad you have frankly given me your reaction to the situation in Calcutta.[2] I wholly endorse your first reaction. It is in every way undesirable for the Congress to rely upon British troops or even police for upholding authority and keeping law and order. It is tantamount to suicide.

I wholly dissent from the second. One can waive a right. Can

[1] *Vide* "Bureau Goa", 10-9-1946 and "Telegram to Government Information Bureau, Goa", 10-9-1946.

[2] On August 16, which the Muslim League had declared "Direct Action Day", savage riots had broken out in Calcutta; *vide* "What Can Violence Do",19-8-1946.

one waive a duty? And I regard it as a duty not to sacrifice a principle, here a nationalist Muslim. Surely it should be enough in all conscience that Congress accommodates a nationalist or rather a non-League Muslim without encroaching upon the Muslim quota or any minority interest. Nor can Congress be party to the recognition of the League claim that it is the only body that can represent Muslim interests and that the Congress is a communal organization representing only caste Hindus.

Your question is quite good. Congress is more than willing so far as I know to form coalitions in provinces as also at the centre.

Your thought of running to me even for a day was quite sound. You can fly to me in a few hours from Madras, assuming of course, that you have no objection to flying.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

221. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 10, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

I kept the enclosed letter for two days. I am sending it now. See from it the love Sushila has for you and if you can come do so before the 2nd October. I would be glad if Jaisukhlal came too. I have not invited anyone. Need I invite you?

You must have got my previous letter. I am here till the 24th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

222. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

NEW DELHI,
September 10, 1946

BHAI JAJUJI,

I am quite certain that a Provincial Government which goes about setting up new mills should formulate no schemes for khadi. No Government is obliged to start a new mill. Prakasam's wire has arrived only today. I enclose a copy of it. I was under the impression that there would be no khadi exhibition at the Congress session. We have still not received any invitation. When the Gandhi Ashram workers consulted me, I told them that they could do so independently but they said they did not want to do anything without my consent and that it would be desirable that the Charkha Sangh itself took the initiative. I then asked them to consult you. In my opinion, we should not take the responsibility but should give whatever help they ask for. I have advised the Gandhi Ashram workers not to incur any expenditure. All the expenses should be borne by the Reception Committee. No khadi should be sent. The Khadi Vidyalaya may offer training in all the processes of khadi-making such as carding, making slivers, weaving, etc. They should sell all village industry products except khadi. They should demonstrate the techniques employed in the various village industries. For this they should seek help, though not monetary, from the A. I. V. I. A., the Talimi Sangh and the Goseva Sangh. Now you may write to them as you think best.

I hope you are keeping good health.

I forgot to send you a copy of the letter I wrote to Vichitra.[1]

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Presumably of August 30, 1946; *vide* "Letter to Vichitra Narayan Sharma", 30-8-1946.

223. LEPROSY AND CONTAMINATION

Dr. R. G. Cochrane, Principal of the Missionary Medical College for Women in Vellore, writes :[1]

My good friend Mr. Jagadisan has brought to my attention a paragraph in the *Hindu* of Madras of August the 26th. It reads: 'Bihar is going to have a separate jail for the leper prisoners, it is learnt, to save other prisoners from contamination. Arrangements are being made in the first instance, it is understood, to segregate about 100 such prisoners at Govindpur in the District of Manbhum. I was so pained by the news that I could not resist the urge to write to you, for you have been a consistent champion of those who suffer from leprosy and indeed, of all persons in society who are undeservedly stigmatized. I feel that I should write to you and say that it will be a great pity if the Bihar Government were to build a separate jail for prisoners with leprosy. It is a gratuitous measure whose only effect will be the strengthening of the public's prejudice against leprosy. On examination, it is likely to be found that 80 per cent at least of the prisoners with leprosy are non-infective, and therefore there is absolutely no reason why these should be separated from the other prisoners. With regard to the prisoners who suffer from infective leprosy, the main precautions are that the prisoner should not come into contact with healthy persons during night and should avoid direct close contact during the day. As leprosy is a mildly contagious disease, even its infective types, a prisoner with infective leprosy could be more easily dealt with than prisoners with other infective diseases. And yet, if the report is true, the Bihar Government is going to act on the fear of 'contamination'. The very use of this word indicates a mediaeval attitude to leprosy. It is a great pity that statements are being continually published to suggest that leprosy patients are contaminated in some way or other.

We in Madras, enthusiastically supported by Mr. Jagadisan, are doing all we can to protest against the discrimination of the patient suffering from leprosy on the grounds of social stigma. It is no more of a disgrace to get leprosy than to get measles, and not until the general public realize that it is not a rapidly spreading plague, as it is commonly believed to be, shall we make any advance in the control of leprosy. I am very grateful to hear from Mr. Jagadisan that you have now put leprosy work as an integral part of the nation's Constructive Programme. Your remark that the leprosy patient is as

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. R.G. Cochrane". 11-9-1946.

much a part of society as the tallest of us moves me deeply. May I hope that India's leave will follow your footsteps and do the right thing by the leprosy patient?

It is to be hoped that the information about Bihar is not true and that, if it is, this letter of his will dissipate the fear of leprosy. "Superstitions die hard." In this land of faith and superstitions, both flourish abundantly. Hence, they often intermingle and the contamination of superstitions—a multitude—seems to have overlaid faith, so much so that it is hard to distinguish between the two. But my faith, which burns too bright for the army of superstitions to touch it, tells me that leprosy is no contamination. We must learn the laws governing infectious and contagious diseases and obey them.

Dr. Cochrane is, I believe, a medical philanthropist. He knows a great deal about leprosy and lepers. I what that the National Governments will not be wrong in accepting his judgment that, of all the diseases of the kind, leprosy is the least among them. In its virulent form, it deprives a patient of his limbs and defies ordinary medical treatment. What nature does is yet unknown. But the ordinary man does not need to bother about this difficult matter. Enough if he realizes that a leper is as much his brother as any other, and he is on no account to be shunned.

NEW DELHI, September 11, 1946

Harijan, 22-9-1946

224. TIRED OF SATYAGRAHA?[1]

News comes from Durban that a group of Indians has sprung up in South Africa who have lost faith in satyagraha. They cherish the dream that they can overthrow the rule of the White man there only by joining forces with the Negroes the coloured people, other Asiatics and European sympathizers and adopting violent means. The rumour, if there is any truth in it, is disturbing and a definite fly in the ointment. All, whether they believe in non-violence or not, should realize that Indians in South Africa gained world-wide esteem simply because, in spite of being a handful, they showed infinite capa-city for suffering and did not, through losing their patience, resort to sabotage and violence. They learnt the wholesome lesson that true well-being

[1] The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 22-9-1946.

springs from suffering and that victory lies in unity. From my own experience, my firm advice to Indians in South Africa is that they should, on no account, be lured away into throwing aside the matchless weapon of satyagraha.

This does not, however, imply that they are not to accept the help of the coloured people, Negroes and any other sympathizers or that they will not help them in their need, should occasion arise. The only condition is that satyagraha should be their one and only weapon. If they go astray from the path of non-violence, they will conform to the description of the poor woman who as an Indian proverb goes, went in search of a son and succeeded in losing her husband!

NEW DELHI, September 11, 1946

Harijan, 22-9-1946

225. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, SRI NARAYANA DHARMA PARIPALANA

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

SECRETARY
WALLUVANAD SNDP
OTTAPALAM

EVERY GOOD ACT CARRIES ITS OWN BLESSINGS.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

226. TELEGRAM TO GANESH TRIPATHI

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

GANESH TRIPATHI
SECRETARY STEEL EMPLOYEES UNION
CAWNPORE

NO INTERVENTION FOR UNAUTHORIZED FAST.[1]

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

227. TELEGRAM TO MEHR CHAND KHANNA

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

MEHR CHAND KHANNA
MINISTER
PESHAWAR

MISS LESTER ARRIVING FRONTIER MAIL FRIDAY. INFORM DOCTOR KHANSAHEB AND BADSHAH KHAN.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Ganesh Dutt, a worker of J. K. Iron and Steel Mills, had gone on a fast from September 1 to press his demand for increased bonus. He gave up the fast on September 12 on the persuasion of Congress workers.

228. TELEGRAM TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

DR. SUSHILABEHN
SEVAGRAM
WARDHA

NO NOTICE HERE. EVERY THING THERE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

229. LETTER TO DR. R. G. COCHRANE

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

DEAR DR. COCHRANE,

I have just read your letter which I am publishing in *Harijan*[1] and a copy of which I am sending to the Bihar Minister concerned. I suggest that you should send me a well-considered medical opinion, signed by as many medical men as possible. I have been carrying on correspondence with the Sind Ministers also with whom I have not been able to make much headway. Hence my suggestion.

Yours sincerely,

MISSIONARY MEDICAL COLLEGE
VELLORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Leprosy and Contamination", 11-9-1946.

230. LETTER TO MADALASA

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

CHI. MADU

If you see only the faults in yourself and only the virtues in others you will advance fast, be happy and never experience sorrow. We have no right to expect anything from anyone. We are debtors and that is why we have been born. We are not creditors. Let this sink in your heart and the whole world will appear good to you. This is not mere pious advice but the surest way of making the stream of life flow smoothly.

Many kisses to Rasagulla.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 329

231. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

CHI. KAKA,

I got your letter just now. I have already sent a wire informing everybody about the date of my arrival. It would be strange if you did not receive it. I cannot reach there before the 25th.

I have not so far been able to share the dictionary work with others. All the work is being done by Rajkumari and myself. She has to give to it 6 to 7 hours every week. It would be good if you could go on sending the words you select. For the present of course we can do even if you send nothing. We are managing somehow. But the words you can send without too much trouble can certainly be useful. But you should not take this to mean that you must send them at any cost.

As for Tarachand, ask him to send only what he can. I think

you won't get any help from him about the dictionary.

Sushila had written to me about Chandan's[1] illness. There has been no news since.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10975

232. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS ASAR

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

CHI. LAKSHMIDAS,

I have your letter before me. I like your suggestion, but who can have it implemented? The Ministers did meet but God knows what the outcome was. For my part, I am at the moment pursuing the Madras scheme because the Minister there tells me that he will do what I ask him to do. Let me see how things shape. I take it that you would have come for the A. I. S. A. meeting.

I hope you are in good health. Enclosed please find a letter for Lakshmi which you should read before passing it on to her. I am sending a copy of my letter to Narandas.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. LAKSHMIDAS ASAR
SABARMATI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

233. LETTER TO LAKSHMI SHARMA

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

CHI. LAKSHMI,

I have preserved your letter of July 14. You ask me to show you the way but I don't think I can. Do as you think right. Go ahead

[1] Addressee's daughter-in-law, wife of Satish Kalelkar

along your own way. You have the land, you have the money and still you ask for help. This is something I don't like. I should like you not to take money from anybody and to preserve your self-respect. In my view a person who has money of his own and expects money from other places has bartered away his self-respect. I learnt this lesson when I was even younger than you are. I have conducted myself accordingly, and this is a thing that those who are regarded as my children as well as others should learn from me.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. LAKSHMIBEHN MARUTI

SABARMATI ASHRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

234. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

NEW DELHI,

September 11, 1946

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. What you think is correct. I shall write if I can think of something on the basis of what you say. I have the feeling that now is not the time for this kind of writing. However, if after thinking over it I feel that something can be written, I shall do so.

You yourself never say anything about your health. Dr. Jivaraj tells me that you are somewhat better. The rest you must be seeing in the papers.

Blessings from

BAPU

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal. Courtesy: Pyarelal

235. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

I had your letter and the newspaper cuttings. You will see that I have made use of them. I shall be here till the 24th. Then off to Sevagram. Arun, Ila will be well. I also have your letter of 3-9-1946. You are not to worry about what will happen to Ila.

To you all,

Blessings from

BAPU

SUSHILABEHN GANDHI

AKOLA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

236. LETTER TO HARGOVIND GUPTA

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

BHAI HARGOVIND GUPTA,

I had and still have a great regard for Ganesh Shankarji. Since Maithilisharanji is associated with the work it will be a literary accomplishment. But he true memorial to him will be if we generate in us a spirit of self-sacrifice even to the extent of laying down our lives.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI HARGOVIND GUPTA

GANESH SHANKAR HRIDAYATIRTH

CHIRGAON (JHANSI)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

237. UNCERTIFIED KHADI v. *MILL CLOTH*[1]

A Gujarati friend[2] asks :

> Ever so many national organizations insist that not only should their staff be dressed in khadi, but that even books should be khadi-bound. Since certified khadi can only be had from the recognized bhandars on payment of a certain quota of yarn, they naturally resort to uncertified khadi. Is this right? Is not mill cloth preferable to uncertified khadi? Is not insistence on khadi that results in buying it from uncertified shops really a false pretence?

When, among other things, there is a dearth of khadi, it is improper to insist on its use for purposes of bookbinding, etc. When there was an abundance of khadi, it was I who recommended its use for all such purposes. The entire Congress Camp in Ahmedabad in 1921 was bedecked in khadi. Today it would be madness to attempt such a thing. Time and circumstances alter methods.

But I do not understand the writer's plea for mill cloth as opposed to uncertified khadi. What is uncertified khadi? Is it not hand-spun and hand-woven cloth though uncertified? That there may be fraud about it is another matter. The Charkha Sangh cannot guarantee cent per cent purity in even certified khadi. That nothing in this world is proof against deceit has been true throughout the ages. Drawbacks in uncertified khadi are well known. In it there is no fixity of wages to the spinners and the weavers. Those who sell it make what profits they like. Often do persons set up shops, merely to spite the Charkha Sangh Bhandars. Nevertheless, where there is no fraud, all cloth which is hand-spun and hand-woven must be called khadi. What a person spins and has woven into cloth for himself, is not certified in the legal sense and yet it is khadi in the highest and purest sense of the term. It would be a crime on that person's part to use mill cloth instead of the cloth made from the labour of his own hands.

The upshot is that exclusion of mill cloth must be maintained. Uncertified khadi should be avoided as far as possible, but where certified khadi is not available and the choice lies between mill cloth and uncertified home-spun preference should be given to the latter,

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 22-9-1946.

[2] Presumably Vithaldas Kothari; *vide* "Letter to Vithaldas Kothari", 9-9-1946.

assuming of course that it is pure khadi. You may condemn, if you like, as uncertified, cloth made out of the labour of one's own hands; but the fact remains that it is a purer production than certified khadi. And, if all span enough to have cloth woven for their requirements, what need would there then be for the Charkha Sangh? Heaven and earth would then ring with cries of victory to the Charkha Sangh.

NEW DELHI, September 12, 1946

Harijan, 22-9-1946

238. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
September 12, 1946

BHAI JIVANJI,

I glanced through *Harijanbandhu* and *Harijan Sevak* today. I was a little unhappy to see that, while *Harijanbandhu* has sixteen columns, *Harijan Sevak* has only eight. I don't understand the reason behind this. Maybe you were not able to cope with the Hindustani articles. If I go a little deeper into this, I can find out whether or not this guess is correct. But I don't propose to do so. I will say only this: that as I have already informed you, you should print only as much Hindustani matter as I send from here and whatever translations you require for *Harijanbandhu* should be made from Hindustani, never from English. Though you have capable translators there to translate from English into Gujarati, I do receive complaints from time to time. Hence the best course would be that I should send from here Hindustani and Gujarati translations from English.Or I shall send Hindustani from here and Gujarati you can do there. It should be child's play to translate from Hindustani into Gujarati. If, however, there are any complications even in this, let me know. We should receive no complaints about translation. If we follow this policy there will be no difference in size between *Harijan Sevak* and *Harijanbandhu*. Our ideal should be to have the same size for all the three. It will take us some time to reach this ideal, for many things have to be put across to foreign readers and that can be done only through English.

I have already written to you about the dictionary and, therefore,

I don't repeat it here. It will be all right if you give four pages every fortnight. One column contains nearly forty words, which means 320 words for eight columns. I shall be satisfied with that. I shall not keep you waiting for it till the last. I hope to supply it in good time.

When I had dictated the above I looked again at Pyarelal's suggestion and found that the Urdu and Hindi editions of *Harijan Sevak* are not identical word for word. I must of course admit my negligence, namely, that I don't go through all the issues. Certainly I don't compare them. I did so today out of curiosity and discovered this. Pyarelal tried to put up some defence for this difference but he has not so far been able to justify it. Let us see if he can. He told me, however, that the Persian script occupies more space. This I knew and, therefore, I started looking into the issues and inspected the issues of September 1. On doing so, I found that the Hindi edition had eight pages whereas Urdu had sixteen and also that Urdu had nineteen articles and Hindi had thirteen. I will be glad if you explain to me the reason for this difference. If I go further into it, I may discover something more. I shall see what I myself can do. But I do expect it of you that you will not attempt anything beyond your capacity. You will then be able to do full justice to what you do.

You did very well in sending me the two complaints regarding the dictionary. If there are any other complaints, send them too. If there are any mistakes, it won't be difficult to rectify them. I will procure a copy of the dictionary which you have mentioned. I have told Brijkrishna about it.

Not revised.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9970. Also C. W. 6944. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

239. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

NEW DELHI,
September 12, 1946

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. I am inclined to think that the cost of the stamp was borne by M[unshi]. He is a lawyer of the first rank and at present he earns maybe 15 to 20 thousand rupees a month. Be that as it may, he is of a generous nature. Perhaps Gadodiaji will remit the cost of the stamp. I have not met him. You are at liberty to feel that the award is against you. But I do not feel so. I had written to you that all that should have been in your petition was not there.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, pp. 368-9

240. LETTER TO MORARJI DESAI

NEW DELHI,
September 12, 1946

BHAISHRI MORARJI,

Nagadi Sheth of South Africa brings you this note. This gentleman was an active participant in the struggle that I carried on in South Africa. Please see him.

BAPU

SJT. MORARJI DESAI
MINISTER

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

241. LETTER TO K. M. PANIKKAR

NEW DELHI,
September 12, 1946

BHAI PANIKKAR,

I have your letter. I understand your point. That your boys and girls will learn to read, write and correctly understand Hindi and Urdu—even this will be good.

But I cannot understand why, even in Bikaner, you cannot get all the work done in Hindustani. We shall talk about it if we have occasion to meet. I appreciate English in its own place.

BAPU

DEWAN, BIKANER

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

242. LETTER TO MOHAMMED YUNUS

NEW DELHI,
September 12, 1946

BHAI SAHEB,

I got your letter. There was nothing the matter with me except for a mild cold, which too has now gone. Do not worry. Who can harm a person as long as he is protected by God or keep him when He wants to take him away ?

All that you have written about Calcutta is shameful. Joint electorates are a noble solution, I agree, but how to bring it about remains to be seen.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

JANAB MOHAMMED YUNUS
(OF BIHAR)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

243. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

NEW DELHI,
September 12, 1946

BHAI MOTI BABU,

I could not reply to you earlier owing to pressure of work. Do please forgive me. If the Prabartak Sangh would go along with the A. I. S. A. you should strictly follow the rules of the latter. That would please me very much. But so long as the Sangh's views on khadi are at variance with mine it would be best to work separately, though in a spirit of friendship.

I appreciate the sentiments you have expressed with regard to khadi. The policy of the A. I. S. A. is inspired by the same sentiments and its experience in the field is extensive and, if one may say so, unique. I would therefore urge that you or some other representative of the Sangh should have a talk with a representative of the Bengal branch of the A. I. S. A. and do as seems proper.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MOTILAL ROY
PRABARTAK SANGH
CHITTAGONG

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

244. LETTER TO OM PRAKASH MITTAL

NEW DELHI,
September 12, 1946

BHAI OM PRAKASH MITTAL,

Swamiji gave me your letter. It would be wrong on the part of the Chamars to refuse to remove dead animals. In my view we should all do the work. We cannot oblige anyone to do a job.

A rise in wages is always to be welcomed. But what I say is of no significance. The right decision can be arrived at only after

hearing both the sides. All the committees can jointly decide on the right course.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI OM PRAKASH MITTAL
MOREGANJ
SAHARANPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

245. LETTER TO RANDHIR SINGH

NEW DELHI,
September 12, 1946

KUMARSHRI RANDHIR SINGH,

I have your letter. I do not think what you say about the existing condition is correct. Yes, I would certainly say that if zamindars and jagirdars devoted themselves to the service of their people no one would be able to touch them. After all, Maharana Pratap Became what he was because he always was a servant of his people.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

246. A NOTE

[On or after *September 12, 1946*][1]

It has been reported from Durban that your name is being freely used in support of a violent struggle in place of the present non-violent campaign being carried on in S.A. and the association of the Negroes, coloureds, other Asiatics and presently some Europeans in the violent effort is being sought. I would like you to give your reaction to the rumour about yourself.

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The note is scribbled on a sheet bearing the date September 12, 1946.

247. DISCONTINUE IT

Actionary that *Harijan* has been publishing already exists and asks why there should be another. If the question has substance I should think that *Harijan's* labour is wasted. If such a work exists it will cause me surprise and pain that none of my co-workers told me about it or themselves knew of its existence. I am making enquiries and have asked for a copy of the dictionary that has been mentioned. If I find I have made a mistake I shall set it right and save the labour.

Another friend, writing in English, has said the same thing and added that my Hindustani is in fact Urdu and it is making me more and more unpopular in the Hindi world. The same is true of the Urdu world, only for the opposite reason. The charge here is that in the name of Hindustani I am introducing into Urdu words from Hindi, that is Sanskrit. I welcome both charges. My Hindustani is neither Urdu nor Hindi. It is the mingling of the two. The Saraswati that is to flow from the confluence of these two is still invisible. Scholars tell me that at one time it had become visible and then it disappeared. Be that as it may. The idea behind Hindustani Prachar is that the two languages, which have the same grammar but derive their vocabulary from two different sources should not remain separate but should mingle and flow as one stream. Whether the effort will succeed or not will depend upon the zeal of those working for it. If they put some vigour in their efforts they will not go in vain. In the end of course success is in the hands of God. And where He is the Doer and the Destroyer, what cause is there for grief and sorrow?

And is the purpose of the effort to gain popularity? A public servant is not flattered by praise nor frightened by censure. He who swells with applause and droops with criticism cannot render service. The reward of the worker lies in the work he does. I would therefore request my critics that, rather than criticize me, they should help in this noble cause and enlarge and enrich the language written and spoken by the masses of such a vast country as India. Then both the sister languages Hindi and Urdu will shine and India will advance. It will not offend God if I call Him Khuda or Ishwar and my knowledge of that Supreme Power will increase. What quarrel can one have with

a person who respects both the languages and wants to unite the two?

NEW DELHI, September 13, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 22-9-1946

248. GUJARAT—PROUD OR INSANE?[1]

Who would not like Gujarat to be described as proud? One might in jest also describe Gujarat as insane. At the time of writing Gujarat appears not to be proud but insane in the proper sense of the word. Shri Parikshitlal is a servant of Harijans but how can he cope with the mad Gujarat? Those who are untouchables while alive remain untouchables when dead. On the cremation ground at any rate all should be one. Once the dead body is reduced to ashes any impurity in it is also burnt up. Nevertheless Harijans have not the right to burn their dead on the cremation ground. It required much effort to persuade the mahajan of Navasari to let an old Harijan be cremated on the common cremation ground. How culd it be called a favour? What is there in it to be pleased about? "In a treeless country the castor-oil plant is honoured." Similarly when a Harijan body was allowed to be cremated on the cremationground, the event was eulogized. It was justified. The result was good.

Then there is another case, which is wholly tragic.Shri Parikshitlal has furnished me the name and other particulars of the village which I shall not give here.[2] The reprehensible part of it is that when cattle die of an epidemic the Harijans are held responsible. The so-called *savarna* Hindus do not even bother to see the obvious cause of the mortality among the livestock. When there are rains grass comes up. It is infested with insects. The starved cattle go mad at the sight of the grass and devour it, insects and all. Then they sicken and die. The cause is thus obvious and Harijans'cattle suffer no less. And yet the Harijans are held responsible and they are subjected to abuses and beatings by the caste Hindus. Such is the woeful tale the letter before me contains. I wish my words could reach the villagers concerned.

Now that the reformers hold the reins of the Government, the

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 22-9-1946, under the title "Proud or Insane".

[2] *Vide* however "Persecution of Harijans", 6-3-1946

villages can be rid of much of the ignorance if the officials will make the effort. If the mahajans shed their superstition, if the Harijans wake up and the Government and Harijan Sevaks do their duty their is a chance that Gujarat can be freed of this evil.

NEW DELHI, September 13, 1946
[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 22-9-1946

249. TELEGRAM TO K. S. DESHPANDE

NEW DELHI,
September 13, 1946

DESHPANDE[1]
74 NARAYAN PETH
POONA

CONTEMPLATED OPENING OF TEMPLE GOOD WORK DESERVING IMITATION WIDE SCALE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

250. TELEGRAM TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM[2]

NEW DELHI,
September 13, 1946

JAIRAMDASJI
CARE HINDUSTAN
KARACHI

SEPARATE ELECTORATES IMPOSSIBLE. BUT RESERVATION CERTAIN SEATS SUBJECT TO MERIT DESIRABLE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Krishnaji Shivaram Deshpande of Sri Ram Mandir, Thakurdwar, Bombay

[2] Presumably this was in connection with the memorandum submitted by the Sind Provincial Scheduled Castes Federation demanding representation for Scheduled Castes on the local bodies. A similar telegram was also sent to the Sind Harijan Sevak Sangh.

251. LETTER TO JEHANGIR PATEL

NEW DELHI,
September 13, 1946

BHAI JEHANGIR,[1]

I send this letter to you in English. So far as I am aware you are a bankrupt concern if what Ramprasad has told me is true. And it is altogether wrong to get a good worker and to expect him to be a collector of funds. I should like to talk to Balasahib[2] about this. I take it that Bapa also is in this concern. Ramprasad tells me that your Association is under debt. He cannot be of any use in wiping it off. He can be of inestimable use so far as management of the Association is concerned and that too among the Adivasis. All other difficulties that he has mentioned can be easily waived. He has said so to me but I know that he must not be used for collecting funds. And please know that neither you nor members of your Association are in any way obliged to entertain Ramprasad's services.

As to Ramanama, we must talk about it. You cannot have it mechanically. It is not like a quinine pill or sun-bath. It stands on its own and by itself. I can understand and appreciate your objection to Ahuramazda because of the bad associations. Hence it is that we describe God as long suffering and patient beyond human endurance. Just now you must swear by your injections and pills although you are a trustee for nature cure.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI JEHANGIR PATEL

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The superscription and subscription are in Hindi.
[2] B. G. Kher

252. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 13, 1946

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I will write and send something for the *Rentiabaras*.[1] It will be published in the *Harijanbandhu* of the 22nd[2]. I will, therefore, send you a copy of what I write.

You must meet the demand for the equipment. There are two ways of securing the wood. You should collect or buy up old and disused furniture from people. The other way is to use the minimum quantity of wood in making the equipment. The box-charkha is a development of the Gandiva, and the latter can be set up on anywhere if you have but the two wheels. For instance, it can be set up a desk or on a parapet and one can easily spin on it standing. At any rate one can spin sitting. I had tried all these methods in Yeravda jail and found them suitable. In some jails there are cement platforms, covered with wooden boards, to sleep on. I used to place the Gandiva on the board. Then I had tried and made a charkha from deodar strips obtained from packing cases. I think I had even brought it to Sabarmati. Ultimately we have to work in the villages for the poor and should, as far as possible, acquire even in cities only such things as can be introduced in villages. Think over the matter from this point of view.

I have written to Kishorelal about a man. I have received about five names. We cannot trouble Mavalankar. And Saralabehn is ill.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

[1] Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram calender
[2] *Vide* "Charkha Jayanti",14-9-1946.

253. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

NEW DELHI,
September 13, 1946

CHI. KISHORELAL,

As usual Narandas has asked for someone in connection with Charkha Jayanti. He is asking for Saraladevi Ambalal. The other is Mavalankar. I think Mavalankar cannot go, nor should he be bothered with such functions. You should therefore find someone and send him. Dada Dharmadhikari, Gopalrao, Shriman, Janakibehn, Kaka—send any of these. These names are not in any order of preference or otherwise. I have dictated them as they have occurred to me.

Chimanlal writes that your health continues to be weak. But what is the point of lamenting over it? I get letters from Parikshitlal now and then. Both the incidents that he has narrated are painful. That we have to launch an agitation even for cremating the body of a Harijan in the cremation ground is a matter of shame.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA
SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

254. LETTER TO ANANTRAM

NEW DELHI,
September 13, 1946

CHI. ANANTRAM,

I have your letter. Have a good time in the hospital. Do some service as well. Go to the Ashram only when you are fully calm. Ramanama can work wonders. You have to prove it. Who will believe one's just saying it?

What if I did not come to the jail? How can I find time for such things?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of Hindi: S. G. 134

255. LETTER TO K. S. DESHPANDE

NEW DELHI,
September 13, 1946

BHAI DESHPANDE,

Sushilabehn told me about your father's death. I will not express grief. He was a very virtuous and devout man. He has left behind a great legacy for you. You must add to it and bring glory to your work of service.

A wire has been sent regarding the Harijan temple.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI TATYA DESHPANDE
74 NARAYAN PETH
POONA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

256. COLLECTIVE PRAYER

Q. You believe in mass prayer. It congregational worship as practised today a true prayer? In my opinion, it is a degrading thing and therefore dangerous. Jesus said: "When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are, but enter into thine inner chamber and having shut thy door pray to the Father which is in secret." Most people in a crowd are inattentive and unable to concentrate. Prayer then becomes hypocrisy. The *yogi* is aware of this. Should not the masses, therefore, be taught self-examination which is the true prayer?

A. I hold that congregational worship held by me is true prayer for a collection of men. The convener is a believer and no hypocrite. If he were one, the prayer would be tainted at the source. The men and women who attend do not go to any orthodox prayer house from which they might have to gain an earthly end. The bulk of them have no contact with the convener. Hence it is presumed, they do not come for show. They join in because they believe that they somehow or other, acquire merit by having common prayer. That most or some persons are inattentive or unable to concentrate is very true. That merely shows that they are beginners. Neither inattention nor inability to concentrate are any proof of hypocrisy or falsity. It would be, if

they pretended to be attentive when they were not. On the contrary, many have often asked me what they should do, when they are unable to concentrate.

The saying of Jesus quoted in the question is wholly inapplicable. Jesus was referring to individual prayer and to hypocrisy underlying it. There is nothing in the verse quoted against collective prayer. I have remarked often enough that without individual prayer collective prayer is not of much use. I hold that individual prayer is a prelude to collective, as the latter, when it is effective, must lead to the individual. In other words, when a man has got to the stage of heart prayer, he prays always, whether in the secret or in the multitude.

I do not know what the questioner's *yogi* does or does not. I know that the masses when they are in tune with the Infinite, naturally resort to self-examination. All real prayer must have that end.

NEW DELHI, September 14, 1946

Harijan, 22-9-1946

257. NOTES

BLANK MINUTE BOOKS

A student writes :

> It has become a fashion for all to pose as political workers. And politics consist in speeches and participation in election campaigns. You would be pained to know that the minute books of Congress Committees are entirely blank, except for proceedings of annual sittings. It is all power politics. Students also get drawn into its vertex. What is your ideal of a political worker?

I have all along stressed the need for constructive work and to that end, I drew up a list of items for the guidance of all workers. I hold that if the constructive programme were worked with vigour and understanding, the result would be far more than mere political swaraj. Speeches and election campaigns would be almost unnecessary if our workers established the Congress in the hearts of the people through service. Then there will be more service than power and the weekly or fortnightly meetings of Congress committees will be filled with a recital of the activities and achievements of committees in the wide field of work.

IS IT NOT COWARDICE ?

Q. Non-violence in your opinion is not cowardice, but it is a form of resistance to injustice. You have admitted that it is wrong to arrest and imprison innocent persons which civil resisters are. And you have cheerfully courted arrest and imprisonment. Is this not inconsistent and cowardly?

A. Evidently you do not know the working of non-violence. An unjust law is itself a species of violence. Arrest for its breach is more so. Now the law of non-violence says that violence should be resisted not by counter-violence but by non-violence. Any breach of a law carries with it a penalty. It does not become unjust merely because I say so. Nevertheless, in my opinion, it is unjust. The State has the right to enforce it, whilst it is on the statute-book. I must resist it non-violently. This I do by breaking the law and by peacefully submitting to arrest and imprisonment. I call such behaviour an act of bravery to the extent required. That imprisonment for a man like me today carries no suffering with it is irrelevant, if it may be assumed that ordinary prison-treatment would make no difference in my mental condition. Thus non-resistance in the case under discussion is an essential condition of non-violence, not a symptom of cowardice. Resistance in the shape of refusing to be arrested etc., on the other hand, will in this case be certainly blustering, thoughtless violence and might be classified as cowardly brag.

NEW DELHI, September 14, 1946

Harijan, 22-9-1946

258. CHARKHA JAYANTI[1]

What is known as Charkha Jayanti is not Gandhi Jayanti. It is true it has become linked with my birthday, but the reason for this is clear. Formerly the charkha bore no relation to freedom. If anything it stood for the slavery that lay behind it. For a crust of bread our women had to go through the drudgery of spinning. They span and a few cowries or pies were thrown to them each day. I remember watching, in my childhood, the Thakore Saheb of Rajkot throw to the

[1] A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 22-9-1946.

poor on the *Shili Satam*[1] day. I considered this throwing of money a game and it was fun to watch the game. I can imagine how, much in the same way, cowries must have been thrown to women spinners for their yarn and how greedily they must have pounced on them.

It was in 1908, in South Africa, that the idea came to me that if the poor of India were to be delivered from serfdom, we would have to learn to look upon the charkha, and the yarn produced on the charkha, not as a symbol of slavery but as a symbol of freedom and plenty. The person who to my knowledge understood this most fully was Narandas Gandhi. From this he understood the significance of the Charkha Jayanti. Before the date *Bhadarva Vad* 12 became associated with the charkha neither he nor anyone else, to my knowledge, had celebrated that day as my birthday. I was well known among the people in South Africa but I do not recollect anyone there celebrating my birthday. It was only here that the charkha was associated with it and Charkha Jayanti began to be observed on the day. It was then thought that my birthday according to the Western Calendar should also be observed and so two days, namely *Bhadarva Vad* 12 and October 2, came to be observed as Charkha Jayanti. Narandas took, as he still does, a leading part in all this. As I write this I can remember the observances in Rajkot on *Bhadarva Vad* 12 and October 2. But Charkha Jayanti will be truly observed when the charkha, which is the symbol of freedom and ahimsa, hums in every home. What can the observance signify if a few poor women, or even a million poor women, spin to earn a pittance? What great work will have been accomplished? This is possible even under a tyrannical regime and is indeed the normal thing in the capitalist system. The doles given to the poor help in sustaining the affluence of the millionaires, even if such doles be in the form of wages.

The observance will have meaning only when both the rich and the poor understand that all created alike by God, that all must work to attain glory and that the freedom of all will be protected not by guns but by the ball of yarn, not by violence but by non-violence.

If we consider the atmosphere of the world today, what I have

[1] The seventh day of the moon in the month of *Shravan*, observed as the day of *Shitala*, the goddess of smallpox

said above will sound ludicrous. But if we think deeply, this alone is right; this alone is true for all time. For the present it is only devotees of the charkha like Narandas who show this faith. Let us all observe Charkha Jayanti and October 2 in a similar spirit.

NEW DELHI, September 14, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 22-9-1946

259. AN APPEAL TO CORRESPONDENTS[1]

Some good people waste money on sending wires, asking me to secure seats on the Interim Government, others regarding strikes in various places, yet others on matters of fasting. To all these I would say that they not only take unnecessary trouble and waste money but pile work on an over-worked group of co-workers and helpers, without securing needed help from me. I have no wish to influence the National Cabinet in the choice of co-ministers and I hold that it would be wrong on my part or anybody else's to do so. The members of the Cabinet should be left undisturbed in their choice if they are to render national service in an efficient and honest manner. In matters of strikes and fasts, my views are well known. These should give sufficient guidance when and where required. It is impossible and improper for me to give opinion on incomplete and one-sided data. And I have no time for studying individual cases. I have only limited capacity left in me. I assure correspondents that it is being exercised to the full extent without needing further additions.

NEW DELHI, September 15, 1946

Harijan, 22-9-1946

260. VILLAGE UNIVERSITY

Dr. Kini has been a secretary in the education department in Mysore. He has sent a very long article for *Harijan*. His contention is that India is poor and has remained so because the Government has kept the poor of the villages away from right education. He believes that the existing colleges and universities in our cities cannot serve our

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

villages because the education imparted in these is designed to advance western influence and it is difficult to introduce education that will be of use to the villages.

Dr. Kini is of the opinion that there should be village universities for the villagers where adults also can study.

Dr. Kini writes to say that the village universities should provide instruction in agriculture, horticulture, village sericulture, animal husbandry, poultry farming, bee-keeping, fishery, khadi industry, rural sanitation and hygiene, rural electrical engineering, rural roads and transport, rural home economics, rural pottery, rural economics, rural sociology, rural reconstruction, rural trade, rural bullion and banking, etc. If all these subjects were taught in the villages as sciences, the writer feels that the face of rural India would be changed. The villages then would not have to look to the cities for help but on the contrary the cities would have to look to the villages for help.

I have just given a gist of Dr. Kini's article. If the Central and the Provincial cabinets accept his suggestions a great thing can be achieved. To give his proposals a concrete shape, Dr. Kini should consult Dr. Zakir Husain and the Aryanayakums. I personally believe that even urban universities can be changed.

NEW DELHI, September 15, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 13-10-1946

261. LETTER TO JOHN MATTHAI[1]

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

Herewith my file as it is. I see that some papers are missing. But what I send would give you what you need.

Yours sincerely,

DR. JOHN MATTHAI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] An economist, then Minister for Transport and Railways in the Interim Government

262. LETTER TO KHURSHED NAOROJI

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1946

DEAR SISTER,[1]

Your letter. You have done well to join the C. S. P.[2]

Who suggested that you showed off or did anything to please anybody? If you did, you [would] not be a *dandi* that you are. Cheer up!

Love.

KHURSHED NAOROJI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

263. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1946

CHI. JIVANJI,

I have your letter. I approve of the idea of giving eight columns of the dictionary every fortnight. You may, therefore, do whatever is convenient for you. The readers will probably find eight columns more convenient because it will be easier to preserve and bind them. It is for you to consider and decide what to do.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9971. Also C. W. 6945. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

[1] The source has "Vahala Behn" in Hindi.
[2] Congress Socialist Party

264. LETTER TO ANNADA SHANKER CHAUDHARY

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1946

BHAI ANNADA,

I got your letter. Since we now expect the salt tax to be lifted, I shall not publish your article. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI ANNADA BABU
924 COLLEGE STREET MARKET
CALCUTTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

265. LETTER TO DHARMANAND KOSAMBI

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1946

BHAI DHARMANANDJI,

Swami Satyanandji says that you are almost fasting. Please do not do so. It would be good to take four times a day as much of cow's milk as you easily can with half as much juice of some fruit mixed with it. If you wish to take some vegetable with it, such as lettuce, radish, gourd or carrot, it should be taken in boiled form. This too would be a kind of fast. You may do what work of service you can. I shall be glad to have a wire that you have accepted my advice.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Satyanand", 18-9-1946.

266. LETTER TO DHARMADEV SHASTRI

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1946

BHAI DHARMADEV SHASTRI,

We do not lend glitter to gold; similarly the name *gurukul*[1] also does not need any embellishment. Forget about the name and such other things. All noble deeds carry their own blessings. Remember this and stop begging for blessings from others.

ASHOK ASHRAM

P. O. KALSI (DIST. DEHRA DUN)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

267. LETTER TO HUNNAR

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1946

BHAI HUNNAR,

I had your letter. There has been some delay in replying as I was in correspondence with Jivanji[2]. I should indeed like to have you with me as I do not have many Urdu hands who can work with speed. Moreover, Pandit Sunderlal has spoken to me about you at length. However, Jivanji says that these days he is short of Urdu help. Therefore as long as you are required there you should keep quiet and so will I.

SHRI HUNNAR

NAVAJIVAN OFFICE

AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] A residential school run on traditional lines
[2] Jivanji D. Desai

268. LETTER TO SYED RAZA ALI

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1946

BHAI SAHEB,

I got your letter. Thanks. It was a misunderstanding on your part. It was wrongly reported in the papers. I shall not bother you with arguments. And I don't have the time.

RAZA ALI

RAZA LODGE

MORADABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

269. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1946

Gandhiji said that the sight of 144 of them attending the spinning classes[2] daily in the fullness of faith, made him hug the hope that one day the whole of India would be clad in khadi. When he started the spinning revival in 1918, India was buying 60 crores worth of foreign cloth excluding Indian mill cloth. This was the largest single import. Next came sugar with 18 crores and then hardware with 7 crores. Today, with the inflated prices the price of all mill cloth, indigenous and foreign, was probably 300 crores. Gandhiji asked his audience to ponder and realize what wealth this would mean to India, if 300 crores worth of cloth was produced by their own hands in the villages. There was a veritable mint of gold for them and if khadi became universal, the villages would rise to unknown heights. Today our masses were poverty-stricken, without the lustre of hope or intelligence in their eyes. The pure hands of the spinners could create this miracle for them and everyone could help. They should have understanding hearts and seeing eyes to detect the beauty in khaddar even if it is coarse and not be allured by mill finery which could never clothe their nakedness in the true sense of the term. The only way to clothe their nakedness and drive away hunger was for them to grow their own food and make their own cloth.

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly letter". A report of the speech was also published in *The Hindustan Times*, 16-9-1946.

[2] Under the eleven-day spinning course organized by Kanu Gandhi

If this happy consummation could be achieved, the eyes of the whole world would be turned towards India. Today everything seemed to be going wrong in this land. He referred to the story that had appeared in the Press of the mad gunmen in Bombay who caused death of several innocent people. This shameful news must have been flashed over the radio to the world and they must hang their heads in sorrow. But, said Gandhiji, if they would only listen to him, all would be well with India. If all purified themselves and all thought of themselves as Indians, then they would have succeeded in learning the true lesson of the charkha.

Harijan, 22-9-1946

270. TALK WITH A CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY[1]

NEW DELHI,
[Before *September 16, 1946*]

If I were a dictator, religion and State would be separate. I swear by my religion. I will die for it. But it is my personal affair. The State has nothing to do with it.[2] The State would look after your secular welfare, health, communications, foreign relations, currency and so on, but not your or my religion. That is everybody's personal concern!

You must watch my life, how I live, eat, sit, talk, behave in general. The sum total of all those in me is my religion.

Asked which movement, e. g., women's, political, scientific or religious, would have had the most far-reaching influence in the world of tomorrow and would be considered 50 years hence as having had the greatest impact on world affairs as a whole and for the greatest good of mankind, he said it was wrong to bracket religious movement with the rest. He said :

It is the religious movement that will dominate the future. It would do so today but it does not, for religion has been reduced to a Saturday or a Sunday affair; it has to be lived every moment of one's life. Such religion, when it comes, will dominate the world.

Q. Do you feel there is any special significance in the increasing number and magnitude of labour strikes, especially in India of late? What do you think will be the outcome of this labour trouble in India?

A. Strikes have today become a universal plague. there are

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 16-9-1946

[2] The missionary had asked whether in free India religion would be separate from the State.

strikes everywhere, America and England not excepted. But in India they have a special significance. We are living under an unnatural condition. As soon as the lid is removed and there is a crevice letting in the fresh air of freedom, there will be an increasing number of strikes. The fundamental reason for this spreading strike fever is that life here as elsewhere is today uprooted from its basis, the basis of religion, and what an English writer has called 'cash nexus' has taken its place. And that is a precarious bond. But even when the religious basis is there, there will be strikes, because it is scarcely conceivable that religion will have become for all the basis of life. So there will be attempts at exploitation on the one hand and strikes on the other. But these strikes will then be of a purely non-violent character. Such strikes never do harm to anyone. It was such a strike perhaps that brought General Smuts to his knees."If you had hurt an Englishman," said Jan Smuts, "I would have shot you, even deported your people. As it is, I have put you in prison and tried to subdue you and your people in every way. But how long can I go on like this when you do not retaliate?" And so he had to come to terms with a mere coolie on behalf of coolies as all Indians were then called in South Africa.

Harijan, 22-9-1946

271. POOR OR SMALL COUNTRIES

Shri Chandrashankar, basing himself on well-known English writers, has very ably described for *Harijan* the plight of the small countries during war time.[1] I give here the gist of it. The Gujarati readers are not going to benefit much by its translation. What will they gain by knowing the names of English writers? It will be enough if we know what views eminent writers of contemporary Europe hold on war.

They say that a time has come when only big and wealthy countries can fight a war. They have the money and the armed forces. The big nations either swallow up the small nations or wipe them out. Besides, the small nations are not able to manufacture armaments. They buy them from big nations and have to procure even spare parts from them. In the result small nations end up by becoming

[1] Chandrashankar Shukla's article "What Can Poor Nations Do?" appeared in *Harijan*, 13-10-46.

subservient to big nations.

Very often, whether they wish it or not, small nations are forced to buy arms from big nations. For example, when a big nation owes money to a small nation, it repays neither in cash nor in goods but in arms. Accepting such arms has only one implication for a small nation, namely, that it has become a vassal of the big nation.

The writers conclude that the time has come when small nations cannot have independent existence. They may well believe that triumph will not be of truth but of those who have the arms, the money and the bombs. But if we have faith, we will proclaim that in the end truth will prevail, never untruth. Experience also teaches this.

NEW DELHI, September 16, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 13-10-1946

272. CATTLE WEALTH[1]

Mirabehn writes that India cannot survive without cows and bullocks. In the war vast numbers perished and vast sums of money went down the drain. But the greatest loss was the destruction of the cattle wealth. Lakhs of cows and bullocks were slaughtered by the army for food. Breeding cattle requires about five years. Something can be done about it if the country wakes up right now. This work requires knowledge, incessant effort and assistance from the Central and Provincial governments. Can we hope for it?

NEW DELHI, September 16, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 29-9-1946

[1] According to the source this was written in Hindi, but the Hindi version is not available. This appeared under the heading "Notes".

273. RAMA THE SON OF DASHARATHA[1]

An Arya Samajist writes :

> How can the Rama whom you believe to be undying, be the Rama who is the son of Dasharatha and the husband of Sita? Tormented by the doubt, I do join your prayers but take no part in singing the *Ramdhun*. This irks me for you say that everyone should join in singing and you are right. Could you not so modify the *Ramdhun* that all can join in it.

I have already explained what I mean by everyone. It means everyone who can join heartily and sing in unison. The others should remain silent. But this is of small importance. The more important question is how Dasharatha's son can be imagined as undying. Tulsidas himself has raised the question and answered it. Such questions cannot be answered by the intellect or to the satisfaction of the intellect. This is a matter of the heart and the heart alone knows the ways of the heart. I first worshipped Rama as Sita's Lord but, as realization and experience grew, my Rama became undying and all-pervasive. This means that He continued to be Sita's Lord but the content of that description was enlarged. This is how the world goes on. The Rama of the man who conceives him merely as Dasharatha's son cannot be all-pervasive. But to the man for whom Rama is all-pervasive, Dasharatha also becomes all-pervasive. It may be said that this is all arbitrary, "to each man according to his faith". But I see no other way. If all religions are essentially one, we have to harmonize them. Today they are kept separate and that is why we kill each other. When we are tired of religion, we become atheists and then our ego alone is left and nothing else, not even God. But when we acquire true understanding, the ego perishes and God alone remains. Rama then is and is not the son of Dasharatha, the Lord of Sita, the brother of Bharata and Lakshamana. All honour then to those who not believing in Rama, the son of Dasharatha, still join the prayers. This is not rationalism. I have merely outlined what I do and what I believe.

NEW DELHI, September 16, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 22-9-1946

[1] A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 22-9-1946.

274. TRACTORS v. *BULLOCKS*[1]

Under this heading Mirabehn has written an article for *Harijan*. Since it merits consideration I give a gist of it below :

Some people say that there should be no mechanical ploughs or tractors. They require large fields. In the long run the soil is ruined as it does not get cow-dung manure and also the cattle are rendered useless. Mirabehn admits that there is substance in the argument.

But in reply she says that in U. P. alone there are 79 lakh acres of fallow land. Almost all the provinces have such fallow land. It is difficult to plough such land with the help of bullocks and even if it was done it would take years to bring it under cultivation. So she says that to start with such land should be broken with tractors. This can be done immediately. For the rest bullocks should be used. We would thus be making a legitimate and limited use of tractors and this would cause no harm. She agrees that using tractors permanently would be harmful. Also she says the tractors are imported from abroad and trained personnel are needed to operate them. Besides tractors require other implements. At the moment our country is not ready for that and it should never be.

NEW DELHI, September 16, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 29-9-1946

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

275. LETTER TO RUKMINI ARUNDALE

NEW DELHI,
September 16, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

I got your letter. What would you have me write? Basantibehn[1] had excelled me in many fields not one. I had become her devotee before you were born. Isn't it 60 years now? Wouldn't it suffice to publish just this?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIMATI RUKMINIDEVI
THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
ADYAR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

276. LETTER TO JAMES HENRY COUSINS

NEW DELHI,
September 16, 1946

DEAR COUSINS,

In the midst of my preoccupations I mistook your letter for Rukmini Devi's and this I did in spite of the fact that you had mentioned Mrs. Cousins. My love to you both. Please take my P. C. to Rukmini Devi[2] as the contribution of a humble devotee of the late Dr. Annie Besant. That we had political differences as well as perhaps others did not affect my devotion to her many gifts.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Dr. Annie Besant
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

277. LETTER TO S. A. WAIZ

September 16, 1946

BHAI WAIZ,[1]

I have your letter. Indians abroad—*Pardesvasi Hindi. Pravasi* is not correct. It means travelling or traveller. "Abroad" is not given in the *Harijan* Dict., because perhaps it is common.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI S. A. WAIZ

I. I. C. A.

SOHRAB HOUSE

235 HORNBY R[OA]D

BOMBAY FORT

From a photostat: G. N. 7940

278. LETTER TO MADALASA

NEW DELHI,

September 16, 1946

CHI. SILLY MADU,

I got your silly letter. Even so I find it sweet. You are as silly as ever. With Shriman looking after all your affairs, how are you ever going to be wise? Kamalnayan has immersed himself in business running into lakhs. The sisters are busy with their families. What is so strange about his going his own way? Don't mind Savitri leaving. Enjoy yourself and be happy. Leave all to Rama—even Kamalnayan. Nothing is going to happen to him as long as God protects him. Don't worry about anything.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 329

[1] The superscription is in Hindi. So are the first sentence and the words italicized in the text.

279. LETTER TO ABDUL HAQ

NEW DELHI,
September 16, 1946

BHAI SAHEB,

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur read out to me the report of your speech published in yesterday's *Dawn*. If it is true I am sorry that a competent *maulvi* like you should spread such false rumours. I have never, even in my thoughts, been inimical to Urdu. In South Africa as well as here I have always tried and am still trying to blend Hindi and Urdu. That it may be regarded as a mistake on my part is a different matter. But I am no one's enemy. It was I who first raised the issue of Urdu in the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan.

I am not writing this for the sake of argument but to remove the misunderstanding if possible.

Your letter has come but I have not yet been able to reach it.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

MAULVI ABDUL HAQ

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

280. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 16, 1946

When the charkha class is in progress, all else appears insignificant to me. For in every thread drawn I see Rama. I see swaraj in it. The thought of 20 crores of our people spinning fills me with boundless joy. How long it will be before that number of people take to spinning is another matter. But not to believe this possible will only show our ignorance and lack of faith. Is it impossible for the whole or even half of the population of the country to spin for half an hour everyday? If we cannot make even this small sacrifice for the country, what can we be worth? Is it so very much to ask? From the yarn that

will be spun we can have enough khadi to clothe ourselves. I appeal to all to spin.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 17-9-1946

281. TELEGRAM TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

NEW DELHI
September 17, 1946

J. C. KUMARAPPA
AIVIA, WARDHA

YOU MAY ARRANGE ANY DATE FROM THIRD TO SEVENTH.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

282. TELEGRAM TO KRISHNADAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

KRISHNADAS GANDHI
SEVAGRAM
WARDHA

YOU CAN ARRANGE ANY DATE BETWEEN SEVEN AND THIRTEEN CONSULTATION KASTURBA TRUST.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

283. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

CHI. CHIMANLAL,[1]

I am in the Harijan Colony today. It is 3 a. m. As I have woken up, I have started writing letters. I am writing to Sharda. She has fallen ill again. Never mind if Shakaribehn has gone away. There was no alternative. It seems now her time will be divided between Surat and Sevagram. Do only that which can be done well. It will be good if you do not over-burden yourself. I hope Pushpa is doing well.

A good many persons seem to be ill there. They should all get well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10652

284. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

CHI. BABUDI,

I am writing this at 3 a. m. I woke up early and so I am writing important letters. You never quite recover fully. I do not like it. Neither Sevagram nor Surat suits you. It is good that Shakaribehn has gone there. Keep her as long as you wish. I want that all three of you[2] should get well. I am here till the 24th at least.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 10069. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

[1] This is in Devanagari script.
[2] Addressee's husband and their son

285. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I am glad you have written a long full letter after many days.

I agree with your view as regards students. But who is to bell the cat? Lilavati Munshi has discussed at length the question whether they should give one year or more for public work. But who will persuade the students! You yourself are weak. Besides, you think too much and hence nothing tangible is achieved by you. Others do not think, nor do they influence students. Those who can influence students believe in the kind of work you write about and all of them honestly hold the opinions they express. Such is the prevailing confusion. And it is not confined to this country but prevails throughout the world as one can see from the papers. Now tell me, what we should do.

What you write about the happenings in Bombay and other places is correct. But the idea you have expressed appears to me to be rather immature. If there were two parties, one calm and the other agitated, I have no doubt that the former would stand to gain in the absence of the police and the military. This you can say, that no one barring me would carry on without the police or the military. Mine is a voice in the wilderness. Indeed I need and I yearn for clearer vision, greater penance and greater courage. But can it all come for the yearning? Isn't it a fact that "the fifth and the last factor is the Unseen"[1]? This is the truth. Let us therefore cling to devout faith and hope for human effort and Divine grace. The effort should be sincere. I can elaborate further. But where do I have the time? Sushila will write about what she was given to read. I don't let her have much time either. If I can organize things better or if they settle down themselves, I shall get some more time. There is much work to do. God's will be done.

Are you keeping well? How are Santok and Radha?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Bhagavad Gita* xviii, 14; the other four being the field, the doer, the various means and several different operations

286. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

You must be well. It will not do to fall ill. There is a letter from Manudi. I have kept it for you. She will be coming. Jaisukhlal will be coming too. Do not fall to the temptation of abandoning your work there and coming here. I would certainly be happy if you could come. Jivraj has examined me. I felt fine. The blood-pressure is 160/98.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SUSHILABEHN
KASTURBA HOSPITAL
SEVAGRAM
WARDHA

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

287. LETTER TO GANGA A. HINGORANI

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

CHI. GANGI,

It is good you wrote a long letter. I am making inquiries. I shall write to you later. You are serving Anand and Mahadev so well. God will prosper everybody. I am writing this quite early in the morning. I shall not write more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

288. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

CHI. ANAND,

I have your letter. I also got the notebook you have sent for the daily thoughts. This I am writing in the morning at 3 o'clock. Your toe must be all right now. However many troubles you may have, you must be happy.

What can I write about Mahadev? God will give him back his strength. I am writing to him. Also to Gangi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

289. LETTER TO MAHADEV A. HINGORANI

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

CHI. MAHADEV,

You should not have written when you were so weak. Write when you are fully recovered. Quietly, slowly get strong and then write.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

290. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

CHI. MALKANI,

I have received several letters about the Karachi Khadi Bhandar. Please write to me what the facts are.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 950

291. LETTER TO PRABHU DAYAL VIDYARTHI

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

CHI. PRABHU DAYAL,

I have your letter. How did you fall? Were you not careful?

Ramanama is the cure for sleeplessness. I know of no better remedy. One should have faith in Ramanama. There are no doubt external remedies, such as that there should not be too much of fatigue, laziness, heat or cold. One should neither be too full nor hungry, that is to say everything should be even. The mind should be healthy. I wish your body to become as strong as steel. And may you have equanimity.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a Photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 11667

292. TELEGRAM TO SATYANAND[1]

NEW DELHI,
September 18, 1946

SATYANANDJI
DEHRIGHAT

PLEASE TELL KOSAMBIJI NOT TO BE OBSTINATE. HE SHOULD TAKE MILK AND FRUIT.[2] WIRE RESULT.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

293. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 18, 1946

A U. S. Army general came to visit me a little before the prayer this evening. I was spinning at the time. As you all know the charkha to me is an inseparable companion. Whether I went to jail or journeyed to England, the charkha went with me. I laughingly told the American friend that since he would soon be going back to the U. S. A. he should tell his compatriots that Gandhi intended to defeat them with his puny spindles. The general laughed heartily at this but he understood the economic necessity of everyone producing to satisfy his own wants.

This is what I meant by defeating the U. S. A. Today India has to import cloth because, for our own fault, we do not have enough cloth in India. It will be a real victory for us when we can, without depending on mills, produce enough cloth to meet our requirements. This cannot be done through use of force. People should be able to look after their primary needs.

If it is folly to look to others for the foodgrains we need, it is equally folly to depend on others for our requirements of cloth. In doing this we go against the principles of natural living and that because we are too lazy. Laziness is a sin that makes us stray from

[1] Name assumed by Baldev Chaube, a village worker who had founded a Harijan Gurukul in Dehrighat, Distt. Azamgarh, U. P.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dharmanand Kosambi",15-9-1946.

our purpose. He alone is a wise man who makes full use of every minute of every day of his time. If we can but be self-reliant in food and clothing we shall be at peace with the whole world.

It is thus in the charkha that genuine freedom is to be found. The charkha is necessary for villages as well as towns. I have not the slightest doubt that if the inhabitants of Delhi take up spinning they can produce enough cloth for their needs.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 19-9-1946

294. QUESTION BOX[1]

WHAT USE AHIMSA?

Q. In whichever direction in the world one looks today one sees only violence, onslaughts on people's rights and power politics. This is true even of America and England where it is said the voice of the people is the sole arbiter. Have you considered what your ahimsa can do in such a situation?

A. It is true there is power politics everywhere. But you are mistaken in thinking that in America and England the voice of the people is the sole arbiter. The voice of the people should be the voice of God. That is why we say that the *Pancha* are *Parameshwar*. But where people themselves feed on other people, how can one say that the voice of the people is the voice of God? We see how America and England live on the coloured races, exploit other peoples. It needs no proving. Exploiters are seen to co-operate with exploiters but that does not make their voice the voice of the people. Where the voice of the people is the voice of God the people do not want to live on others. They have truth on one scale of the balance and ahimsa on the other, both always having equal weight. This covers my whole reply. For me ahimsa is not disabled; it is not weak; it is supreme. Where there is ahimsa there is Truth and, Truth is God. How that God manifests Himself I do not know. All I know is that He is all-pervading and where He is all is well. There is therefore one law for all. Wherever in the world truth and ahimsa reign there is perfect peace and perfect happiness. If they are not to be found anywhere we must understand that they are hidden from view. But they cannot totally disappear. Those who possess the barque of this faith will

[1] The sub-titles are from *Harijan*, 29-9-1946, in which a translation of this appeared.

safely go across in it and carry others across.

SHOULD FOREIGNERS BE WELCOME?

Q. You say that foreigners who decide to live in free India as Indians will have no cause for fear. You will admit that such has not been the case in any other country. Where emphasis is on self others are not disliked but even so some suspicion of them always remains. Can free India escape this?

A. I am firmly of the view that free India will escape this. I can cite striking evidence for it. But it is not necessary. Only this much must be remembered: foreigners have to live here as Indians. If a foreigner staying here wants to protect his rights as a foreigner it can become difficult. It will mean that he wants to stay in free India as a superior person. This must lead to friction. The present quarrel with the British Government cannot go on when India is free. If it does, India cannot be said to be free.

NEW DELHI, September 19, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 29-9-1946

295. TELEGRAM TO BAL D. KALELKAR

NEW DELHI,
September 19, 1946

BAL KALELKAR
Y.M.C.A.
25 CHOWRANGEE ROAD
CALCUTTA

SUSHILA JUST ARRIVED. CEREMONY WARDHA. WE REACH WARDHA BEFORE FIRST OCTOBER.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

296. LETTER TO ABDUL HAQ

NEW DELHI,
September 19, 1946

BHAI SAHEB,

I got your letter. I could go through it only today. I have no knowledge of what you write about. If you kindly send me the minutes of the proceedings, I shall be able to understand and also to suggest what ought to be done.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

MAULVI ABDUL HAQ
DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

297. CONGRESS MINISTERS, NOT SAHIB LOG[1]

A Congress worker asks :

> Should the Congress Ministers live in great State like their English predecessors? Will it be right for them to use Government cars for private work?

From my point of view there can be only one reply to both the questions. If the Congress wants to continue as a people's organization, the Ministers cannot live as *sahib log* nor use for private work facilities provided by Government for official duties.

NEW DELHI, September 20, 1946

Harijan, 29-9-1946

[1] This was published under the heading "Notes". The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 29-9-1946.

298. LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL

BHANGI COLONY,
NEW DELHI,
September 20, 1946

DEAR SIR M. ISMAIL,

Much as I should like to I may not write to you in Urdu.

I have now talked to Swami Ramanand Tirth and Shri Kashinath Vaidya. As I have already told you the contemplated reforms are no reforms.[1] The more I think of them the more I feel that they are not worthy of you. You may not seek to impose them on the inhabitants of Hyderabad. If you are sure that the States Peoples' Conference does not represent them, then of course I am out of court.

Maulana Sahib wants to help you. Sarojini Devi likewise. I count myself among them. But you know my limitations. I am a born satyagrahi and hope to die as such and that is my limitation as it is my strength. Strength has got to be proved. The limitation stares all my friends in the face.

If you cannot scrap the reforms and if you will not impose them you should postpone them and see whether they admit of amendments. Of course, their real guide is the States Peoples' Conference. But they have not yet learnt to forget me as I would like them to do. And since you and I know and like each other I must write this for what it is worth.

The Hindu, 31-12-1946

299. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
September 20, 1946

CHI. JIVANJI,

This is only about the *Bhajanavali*. This is going by airmail instead of by wire. Devdas will not be able to print 25,000 copies in four days. So the question is about the Congress. He says it will be

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Mirza Ismail",11-8-1946.

in the third week of November. If, therefore, you can print it before that, please reply immediately so that I can send the book to you or make some other arrangement—if, that is, you so desire. If you cannot print it by November, do write or wire to me and say also when you can print it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9972. Also C. W. 6946. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

300. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

NEW DELHI,
September 20, 1946

CHI. KAKA,

I got your letter about Urdu. We shall have to think a little more about it and since I shall be there in a few days I should like to meet you and discuss the matter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10976

301. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 20, 1946

CHI. KRISHNADAS,

I have posted Jajuji's letter after reading. I think it should be enough if the exhibition is not run in the name of the A. I. S. A. I am of the opinion that if they ask for any help we may give it without going out of our way and without incurring any expenditure. I think since we intend to hand over everything to Gandhi Ashram they had better undertake this work as their own and carry it through as best as they can.

I regard the work of handing over everything to Gandhi Ashram

as incomplete so long as I do not have a reply to my letter on the subject, a copy of which I have forwarded.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. KRISHNADAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

302. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS ASAR

NEW DELHI,

September 20, 1946

CHI. LAKSHMIDAS,

A portion of the Sabarmati Ashram has been rented out for a camp of the sisters of the Kasturba Trust. The tenancy expires on December 10. I think it would be helpful at this critical time if these people could somehow be accommodated for a longer period. You should therefore start some new activities. I feel it will be worthwhile retaining them even if you have to put up some huts. But consider the matter only on its merit and if after examining the pros and cons you find that they cannot be accommodated, please don't hesitate to write to me.

We shall discuss your scheme about khadi when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. LAKSHMIDAS ASAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

303. LETTER TO SARALADEVI A. SARABHAI

NEW DELHI,

September 20, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

I could have your letter read out to me only today. Yesterday Mridula came and gave me a copy of your letter. The original also reached me yesterday. I arrived here on the 16th. The stock of mail is

so large that I hardly ever manage to read any letter the day it arrives. In other words, with the co-workers I have I cannot hope ever to cope with my correspondence. And increasing the number of co-workers is something I would not like. Although I wish to live for 125 years I regard my life as ephemeral. I do not therefore like to increase my commitments.I do not know it there is now any need for you to hurry because as you say you have permission to stay on in Sabarmati till the 10th of December. I think many changes can take place in the meanwhile. Hence it would be better if you stayed on till we meet. For my part I am making arrangements to secure the Sabarmati accommodation for a longer period. Hence you had better stay on till we hear about it. I am sending this by airmail instead of sending you a wire. I need not write more at the moment. I hope you are well.

Do not work beyond your capacity.

How is Nirmalabehn's health?

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. SARALADEVI SARABHAI

AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

304. LETTER TO ANJANA CHOWDHARY

NEW DELHI,
September 20, 1946

DEAR ANJANA,

I have your letter. I must thank you for the account you have sent me. How long does it take you to spin four hanks (of 640 rounds each) every day? How much time does Subhadra spend on spinning?

What does Sita do?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapu: Maine Kya Dekha, Kya Samajha, p. 186

305. LETTER TO SANKARAN

NEW DELHI,
September 20, 1946

CHI. SANKARAN,

I have your letter. Now I can reach there any time after the 25th. I shall explain then. Meanwhile, do whatever is possible.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SANKARAN
ASHRAM
SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

306. LETTER TO VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA

NEW DELHI,
September 20, 1946

BHAI VICHITRA,

I think the substance of Jajuji's letter to you is that the exhibition which I have allowed to be put up in the name of the Gandhi Ashram and on their own responsibility should be a training camp

and not a money-making business. It would be better to leave out woollens also. Whoever needs these can get them from the Gandhi Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA
GANDHI ASHRAM
MEERUT

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

307. FOOD SHORTAGE

There is nothing so depressing as when fear pervades the atmosphere. I remember an occasion when the waters of the Sabarmati were rising fairly high and a message said to be from Sardar Patel was received after midnight to the effect that inside of an hour the Ashram would be covered with the rising waters and that we were likely to be drowned in them if we did not vacate. It was a most anxious time for all of us—men, women and children. A sigh of relief went up to heaven when it was discovered that after causing some loss to property, the angry waters had begun to subside and that no loss of life need be feared.

Precisely in the same manner the danger of shortage reported from authoritative quarters bids fair to demoralize us into a panic which would be more fatal than real starvation.Such was my plight when a paragraph in the papers was read to me that of all the places in the world its intrepid Diwan had seriously contended that Travancore had a storage of foodgrainsonly for a fortnight. Knowing Travancore so well I imagined all sorts of calamities not merely for Travancore but for all India. Travancore with its luxuriant growth of edible tubers, coconut and fish had no need to starve for a single day, even though it might have no other supply from the other parts of India. My faith in Travancore kept me whole. And to my joy I discovered that the shortage was not of food but of wheat and rice only. Travancore can grow rice, not wheat.So far as the cereals are concerned the inhabitants of Travancore are rice-eaters. They take to wheat with difficulty and under stress. Would that the present distress could make us shed our provincialism and induce all India habits so as to make us feel fully at home, no matter which part of India we happened to find ourselves in.

For the moment, however, my object would be fully served if all responsible men in India would definitely tell the people in their respective provinces, districts and States, not to look beyond India for supply of food but to grow what they can themselves and learn to eke out a living from their own produce. And, if the numerous authentic letters I receive are an indication of things as they are or should be, we need fear no starvation for want of life-giving vegetables plus a little milk for vegetarians and fish, flesh or fowl for non-vegetarians.

Let India realize that as yet we have no appreciable quantity of food from outside our shores. Many are willing to help but they are themselves for the most part sufferers or have more calls on them than they are able to cope with. The transport difficulty is very real for all of them and our own will commence when the food-stuff reaches our shores. Internal transport and distribution constitute a problem by themselves. It is, therefore, practical wisdom to brace ourselves for the struggle and declare with one voice our resolve that we shall grow our eatables for ourselves and perish bravely in the attempt if we must.

This is the only way and no other.

NEW DELHI, September 21, 1946

Harijan, 29-9-1946

308. DO NOT ELIMINATE TRUTH AND NON-VIOLENCE[1]

A correspondent who sends his name and describes himself as devoted to service writes :

> I read *Harijanbandhu* regularly. Recently in your reply to Shri Shankarrao Deo you said: "I have been saying for some time that the words 'truth and non-violence' should be removed from the Congress constitution."
>
> If this happens in the existing circumstances, people will lose their faith in the Congress because they will feel that so long as it was not in power it was thought best to adhere to truth and non-violence but now that power has come it contemplates removing these words from the constitution. They might even infer that the removal is being resorted to in order to counter the Muslim League's threat of direct action.
>
> If these words are eliminated from the constitution Congress will fall from the high pedestal which these means alone have secured for it. It will lose in

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 29-9-1946. The *Harijan* translation reproduced here has been revised to bring it into conformity with the original.

prestige. You have always said that you yourself cannot go forward one step without truth and non-violence and is it not their adherence to these that makes the public think of Congressmen as trustworthy, merciful, full of the spirit of service and bravery ? The tree must perish if its roots are destroyed. You must see to it that the roots go deeper and deeper and are not eradicated.

Therefore I feel that you should compel every Congressman to follow these principles and if he refuses, he must leave the Congress.

How can I, a champion of ahimsa, compel anyone to perform even a good act ? A well-known Englishman has said that he would rather be free and make mistakes than be unfree and avoid them. I agree with him. The reason is obvious. The mind of a man who is good under compulsion cannot be good; in fact it gets worse. And when compulsion is removed all the defects well up to the surface with even greater force.

Besides, no individual should have the power to force others. Even the Congress cannot force its members to follow truth and non-violence. These have to be accepted willingly from the heart.

I have been recommending the elimination of these words from the constitution for over a year, long before the Muslim League contemplated direct action. Thus my recommendation has no connec-tion with the League's resolution. But I have no help for those who invariably attribute sinister motives to my words.

I have strong grounds for my recommendation. The Congress may not hide untruth and violence under the guise of truth and non-violence. Is not this an all-sufficing reason ? If Congressmen would not be hypocrites, nothing could be better than that Congress should adhere to these two pillars.

It could never be my wish that the Congress, the moment it comes to power, should discard the very ladder by which it has climbed so high. I believe that if Congressmen, while in power, renounce truth and non-violence, the lustre surrounding the Congress will grow dim.

We must all guard against one mistake. There is no rule against following what is not in the constitution. Indeed my hope is that when these words are removed, all, or a large majority of Congressmen, will heartily follow truth and non-violence even to the point of death.

The writer has forgotten to mention one thing which I should like to clarify. The words in the Constitution are 'peaceful and legitimate'. I have no right to interpret them as truthful and non-violent, if

they don't bear that meaning. Congress has adopted them as a policy, not as a creed. The question of my right to retain or eliminate them does not arise. But whilst it lasts, policy is tantamount to creed and hence becomes obligatory.Of course, my recommendation has no meaning if 'peaceful' can be interpreted as violent and 'legitimate' as untruthful.

NEW DELHI, September 21, 1946

Harijan, 29-9-1946

309. LETTER TO INDRAVADAN MEHTA

NEW DELHI,
September 21, 1946

BHAI INDRAVADAN MEHTA,

I have your letter. You do admit that you are full of anger. Do you know anger is half way to insanity? How can one deal with insanity? However, if you are a regular reader of *Harijan* you will see that I have said much the same thing that you suggest.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

310. LETTER TO ZOHRA A. CHAVDA[1]

NEW DELHI,
September 21, 1946

CHI. ZOHRA,

I have your letter. Last night I had a talk with Sushilabehn. She says that you should take up some Kasturba Trust work. However, you can work wherever you want after you have finished your training, whether in Samau or in the Frontier Province, as Akbar may desire. But the condition will also be that wherever you are you will work for the Trust for three years. I think under the circumstances I should like you to join. In this way you will be bound down to one place, which will be better.

I do not like your constipation persisting. Sushilabehn says that you are not careful enough about your diet and sleep. This is not

[1] The letter is in the Devanagari script.

right. You must make your body strong as steel. As for night work, it is difficult but if you accustom yourself to having complete rest there may not be any difficulty.

We shall now meet in a few days. Manu too might reach in time for the wedding.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

311. NOT SENTIMENT BUT REASON

Prof. Brij Narain has devoted two columns of the Lahore *Tribune* in support of the salt tax. I dare not combat his arguments though they make little appeal to my lay mind. He has come to the gratuitous conclusion that I ask for repeal on grounds of sentiment rather than reason. He reminds me of armchair politics and philosophy. Salt tax hits not only men, women and children, but also fish and cattle. Reason demands its immediate repeal. It is not the amount of the tax that kills, it is the monopoly and all it means that kills the poor villager and his cattle. Imagine what would happen if the poor were prohibited from breathing air or drinking water without permission of the Government. The condition as to salt is not radically different. The scientist has not taken the trouble to study what this prohibition to prepare salt even for one's own consumption has cost India.

Prof. Brij Narain will not allow the Congress to be nationalistic enough even to warrant its abolishing a monopoly which presses heavily upon all the poor people without distinction, unless the Professor ignorantly imagines that the Muslims have no poor to think of.

NEW DELHI, September 22, 1946

Harijan, 29-9-1946

312. ABOUT KHADI BHANDARS[1]

Since I wrote on happenings in the Karachi Khadi Bhandar, I have received several letters about other bhandars also. The gist of

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 29-9-1946.

these is given below :

1. Khadi in bhandars is available only to friends of those in charge or to those who have influence.

2. Even if the bhandar is replete with khadi the reply the ordinary customer often gets is that there is none.

3. Some bhandars have no facilities for having yarn woven into khadi, while others cannot supply charkhas and their accessories.

4. In the circumstances khadi workers in many bhandars earn wages for doing no work. Time and again one's yarn is not accepted on the plea that it is too coarse.

It would not be right to console oneself by saying that all these complaints are untrue. Such conduct as described is unwise, callous and disloyal. None of these defects should obtain in any bhandar, much less in khadi bhandars. How can khadi command respect, if its servants behave in the manner described ? It is to be hoped that every khadi bhandar will become a model of service and thereby not only raise itself but also maintain the honour that khadi carries.

NEW DELHI, September 22, 1946

Harijan, 29-9-1946

313. ENTRY IN DIARY[1]

NEW DELHI,
September 22, 1946

The inwardness of the spinning-wheel seems to have been forgotten. I was angry. I have to consider what my duty under the circumstances is. It seems to be so very hard to maintain detachment of mind in the midst of this raging fire. My heart-searching continues.

Harijan, 29-9-1946

314. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The treasurer of the A. I. C. C. asks me to say that he has received Rs. 2,400 on behalf of the President of the Congress from the Indian community in Manila, Philippine Islands, for the purpose of famine relief.

Harijan, 22-9-1946

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

315. KARACHI KHADI BHANDAR[1]

Numerous letters have been received with reference to the note in the *Harijan* of 25-8-'46 entitled "Disloyalty to Khadi".[2] I am making inquiries and hope to announce the result as soon as they are completed.

Harijan, 22-9-1946

316. LETTER TO MADALASA

NEW DELHI,
September 22, 1946

CHI. MADU,

I have your letter. I liked this one. If it is true that so long you have only been receiving, then you have to pay twice the amount in debt. You should therefore go on paying it and be happy. Will you be able to come to Wardha about the time that I arrive there ?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchaven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 329-30

317. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 22, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

I am wearing today all the things you have given. They are good.

If we are not worthy of sacrifice and still die it won't be called a sacrifice. You have still to make yourself deserving. More when we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 529

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".
[2] *Vide* "Disloyalty to Khadi", 18-8-1946

318. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

NEW DELHI,
September 22, 1946

CHI. BABUDI,

Isn't it good I received your letter ? Would it not be better if you, as also Anand were at Sevagram while you were in indifferent health ? Maybe you will recover there; Anand also will recover and Gordhandas's worry will be lessened. You are of no help to him. Under the circumstances it is your duty to leave Surat. Both of you should think over this. Do not think of your bitter experiences in Sevagram. I will see only your foolishness in harbouring such thoughts. I have always considered you a generous person.We ourselves should commit no mistakes, but if others find fault with us we should not worry.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 10070. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

319. LETTER TO RAMANAND TIRTH

NEW DELHI,
September 22, 1946

SWAMIJI,

The following is my suggestion regarding the trouble that has arisen in Hyderabad State in the name of 'Reform'[1] :

If the desired changes cannot be brought about by the Reform, it should be completely boycotted. By boycott I do not mean that we should resort to picketing or take out processions or hold meetings. Our job would be to have peaceful volunteers go from house to house and explain to the voters that the Reform is only so in name, not in substance. We may distribute leaflets in the language of the masses. The strength of the people will grow if they abide by all the restrictions that might be enforced by law, and if the boycott is successful it will be a big victory for the State Congress. There must not be the slightest exaggeration in the language of the leaflets and the facts

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirza Ismail ",11-8-1946;20-9-1946

should be absolutely correct. The reason why I offer this suggestion is that there is yet no awakening in the State's subjects in general. If my opinion is not warranted by the actual position and Pandit Jawaharlal advises otherwise his advice should be accepted.

Blessings from

BAPU

SWAMI RAMANAND TIRTH

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

320. LETTER TO HEMANT KUMAR NILKANTH

NEW DELHI,
September 23, 1946

CHI. HEMANT KUMAR,

I got your letter about Nanalal Kavi. I had written something to his son about the matter. I got the news late; it is not that I omitted to write for want of courtesy. I shall now see what I can write.[1] Have you now recovered fully ?

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. HEMANT KUMAR
HARIJAN ASHRAM, SABARMATI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

321. THE LATE POET NANALAL[2]

A friend reproaches me as follows :[3]

One or two others also wrote in a similar vein. I kept silent. I shall be silent no more. If I thought it proper not to write in *Harijanbandhu* it was not because of any personal grudge. I had none of that. The readers should know that I notice someone's death when there is something special about it. Thus I did not notice the deaths of

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] Nanalal Dalpatram Kavi (1877-1946), eminent Gujarati poet

[3] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had suggested that Gandhiji should have noticed poet Nanalal's death in *Harijanbandhu; vide* the preceding item.

many friends in *Harijanbandhu*. Poet Nanalal sometimes praised me and sometimes censured me as he felt disposed. He had the right to do both. I never felt hurt by his criticism. A man may speak as he feels. Why should one be hurt by it ? It would not do simply for this reason to refrain from noticing his death. The fact is, I have very little understanding of poets and poetry. I remember reading only one of his books, *Jaya-Jayant*. I could not understand the poetry in it but I liked the subject-matter. I could not even read fully what he wrote about me.[1] The reason is that my life has been spent in working amidst storms. Such reading as I was able to do was done in jails. What should I do reading words in my praise: should I be flattered or should I weep? I hardly read anything for its literary worth. Should I relate anecdotes from my pleasant association with him? I kept silent because of this dilemma. It is recognized that Gujarat has suffered a loss in his death. What difference would my words make? Besides, I hold that good deeds are their own reward. Good and wicked deeds have their own laws, and only they are valid. Praise and blame are passing things and have no value. That is my belief.

NEW DELHI, 23-9-1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 29-9-1946

322. TELEGRAM TO SATYANAND

NEW DELHI,
September 23, 1946

SATYANANDJI
DEHRIGHAT

I CANNOT UNDERSTAND THIS OBSTINACY ON KOSAMBI'S PART.[2] PLEASE PLEAD WITH HIM AGAIN DESIST. GET WELL AND COME TO ME.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Nanalal wrote "Gujaratno Tapasvi", eulogizing Gandhiji on his fiftieth birthday in 1919. He turned into a critic of Gandhiji after the Congress session at Ahmedabad in December 1921.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Satyanand", 18-9-1946.

323. LETTER TO RENUKA RAY

NEW DELHI,
September 23, 1946

CHI. RENUKA,

Your long letter written after so many years revived old and pleasant memories. You and your husband[1] seem to have risen to the occasion during the terrible crisis thro' which Calcutta passed on and after the fateful 16th.[2] Who knows what is in store for Bengal and the rest of the country in the near future ? We have not gone through the worst yet. My views I have set forth as accurately as was possible in my article in *Harijan* of 15th inst[3]. Read it again and again and follow one of the two ways described therein, never the third.

Do write again when you feel like it.

Blessings from[4]
BAPU

RENUKA RAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

324. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 23, 1946

CHI. JAMNADAS,

Your explanation is correct. It is false to assert that there would have been no need for the police or the military if the Hindus had been helpless. The fact is that if the two communities fight each other, under whatever conditions, and both find themselves in a desperate situation, then in their own interest they are likely to behave. Such a situation will offer an opportunity to the person who wants to bring about amity. Today there is no such opportunity. Animosity and venom are growing. But the plain fact is that in the face of the

[1] Satyendra Nath Ray

[2] The reference is to the riots on August 16, which the Muslim League had observed as Direct Action Day.

[3] *Vide* "What can Violence do", 19-8-1946

[4] This is in Hindi.

intervention by the police and the military, no one can do anything. Just now both the parties need them. So the question of their not being called in does not arise. However, it is our duty to draw attention to the matter whenever there is opportunity.

I understand what you say about students.You should persevere. Let me have your suggestions with detailed information that I can use.

We shall leave for Wardha in a couple of days.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. JAMNADAS GANDHI
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

325. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

NEW DELHI,
September 23, 1946

CHI. CHAND,

I have your letter. How did you get malaria? Do you use a mosquito-net? It is good that your blood is improving. Don't be in a hurry. Come to Sevagram when you have completely recovered. I plan to leave here for Wardha the day after tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. CHANDRANI
C/O SARDAR KARMA SINGH
RTD. S.D.O.
KATRA JALLIANWALA
AMRITSAR, PUNJAB

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

326. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
September 23, 1946

The music of the charkha murmurs sweetly that we are all one, born to be equal sharers in the goods of the earth with no one higher or wealthier than the other. Yet the world is today full of inequalities of wealth and invidious distinctions of high and low. This is folly. In our arrogance we forget that we are all one day going to be levelled with the dust by death that knows no distinctions. The second lesson is that we are to earn our bread by the sweat of our brow—what a Russian savant has called "bread labour", and the third is that if we are one of and with the people, we should refuse to give food to those who are not in need or to take more than we need for health. If we all did that there would be no scarcity of food in this land and we would refuse to look across the seas for food-stuffs.

Yet his nearest comrades were about to make the mistake of serving refreshments, after the *Jhanda-vandan* by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, to volunteers and Harijans who were not in need of such.[2] Was it not criminal to fritter away food-stuff that would serve to keep alive twenty men, to provide titbits to Harijans and volunteers who were certainly not suffering pangs of hunger? They were deceiving themselves if they thought that thereby they served the Harijans. The real hunger of the Harijans which needed to be satisfied was not for morsels of food but for decent living as self-respecting equal citizens, for a square deal as human beings, for freedom from fear, inculcation of clean and sanitary habits, thrift, industry, education. That required perseverance, self-sacrifice and patient intelligent labour on our part. If they gave him money to feed Harijans he would refuse to accept it. For he did not want to make beggars and idlers of them. He pointedly referred to the fact that Dr. Rajendra Prasad was their Food Member who wanted to save for the famishing every morsel of food. In the circumstances he very much questioned whether the oversight of his comrades was not due to his being lax with himself. Was he not allowing himself to partake rather too freely of the fruits that were placed before him? The lesson of yesterday, he remarked, was a grave warning for all, if we are to learn truly the lesson of the charkha.

Harijan, 29-9-1946

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". *The Hindustan Times*, 25-9-1946, also reports the speech.

[2] This was to be in celebration of Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram calendar.

327. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

NEW DELHI,
[On or after *September 23, 1946*]

Q. Wrangling and corrupt practices have today become a common feature of our elections. What should be the attitude of Congressmen with regard to the elections?

A. What you say only shows that we seek leadership instead of being servants of the nation. There can be no room for wrangles when service is the ideal. Congressmen should realize that only a few can become leaders, the goal for all Congressmen to set before themselves can only be to qualify as true servants of the nation. An institution that suffers from a plethora of leaders is surely in a bad way. For instance, if every Khudai Khidmatgar aspired to become the chief, it would make the life of Badshah Khan hell besides disrupting the Khudai Khidmatgar organization itself.

If Congressmen lived up to the creed which they professed, viz., the attainment of swaraj through truthful and non-violent means, paraphrased in the Congress constitution by the words "peaceful and legitimate", there should be no wrangling and no corruption. The existence of election wrangles and irregular practices is thus only a proof that the Congress policy of "attainment of swaraj through 'peaceful and legitimate' means" is honoured more in the breach than in the observance. I have, therefore, suggested that it should be dropped in the amended constitution that is to come into being. Pending the setting up of the new constitution I have suggested a plan of work which does away with further elections for the time being and which requires all Congressmen to be active servants. If it is adopted it should cut across all our difficulties and troubles.

Q. Very few minorities' representatives have been returned at the elections. What remedy do you suggest ?

A. Minorities being a minority, their representation in the Congress organization will naturally be proportionately less. If they feel dissatisfied, they can keep out of the Congress without ceasing to be Congressmen as I have done. It is my claim that I am not less a Congressman but more by reason of my ceasing to be even a four-

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's report under the title "Some Posers". The questions were asked by the Presidents and Secretaries of various Provincial Congress Committees who had assembled in Delhi for the A. I. C. C. session held on September 23 and 24.

anna member of the Congress. At Faizpur Congress the question was raised by Mrs. Anasuyabai Kale at a gathering at which I was present. On interrogation it was found that the number of those who were four-anna members was very small. But in reply to the question as to how many in the gathering were not four-anna members, a forest of hands went up. These are real Congressmen seeking no reward but seeking ever to serve it. Bereft of them it would dwindle into a parlour show. The only worthy aim of a Congressman can be to belong wholly to the Congress, never to capture and dominate the Congress. If everybody took up the correct attitude there would be no minorities and majorities. To try to 'capture' the Congress would be to kill the Congress. And a Congressman who is worthy of his salt would die rather than be guilty of the murder.

Q. The policy of the Interim Government is to keep down the prices of foodgrains. Would it not adversely affect the production of foodgrains?

A. I want to reduce the prices of foodgrains still further. I claim to be a peasant myself and I know that only a fraction of the price paid by the consumer actually reaches the grower of food. It should be the business of the Interim Government to see that the tiller of the soil gets full value of his produce and that every pie paid by the consumer reaches the peasant's pocket or else it should get out. The Interim Government can never be guilty of wishing to provide cheap grains to the consumer at the expense of the grower of food. The trouble with the cultivator is not low prices but the middleman.

Even in khadi production I set the target of 8 as. a day for the spinners. We actually reached the rate of 4 as. in spite of the objection that dear khadi would spell the ruin of khadi production that illustrates my attitude towards the producer. I would eliminate the middleman altogether. It is he who today sponges upon the agriculturist. Otherwise, there is no reason why the peasant should starve. At the same time a peasant who profiteers or exploits the black market belies his calling. He is no less an exploiter than the zamindar.

Q. The growth of parties in the Congress is having a very adverse effect on the Congress organization. What is the remedy?

A. There can be only one party in the Congress, i.e., that of Congressmen and no other. That is not to say that there is no room in the Congress for individuals or groups holding different opinions. I do not believe in dead uniformity."All men are born equal and

free" is not Nature's law in the literal sense. All men are not born equal in intellect, for instance, but the doctrine of equality will be vindicated if those who have superior intellect will use it not for self-advancement at the expense of others, but for the service of those who are less forward in that respect than they. Today there are all sorts in the Congress. That is why I have suggested the removal of the words "peaceful and legitimate" from the Congress objective. That need not mean abandonment of truth and non-violence by Congressmen. The object is only to purge out hypocrisy. It jars. Let those who believe in the doctrine of the sword openly avow it. To take the name of non-violence when there is sword in your heart is not only hypocritical and dishonest but cowardly. Our non-violence vis-a-vis the British Government has been the non-violence of the weak. Otherwise, why should there be all these wrangles among ourselves? We try to justify the disorganization and chaos in our midst by pointing to the example of "squatters" in England, forgetting that blind imitation would not help us.There is nothing more demoralizing than fake non-violence of the weak and impotent. If we had the requisite non-violence in us, our public life would be characterized by utmost toleration. There will then be room for as many parties as there are opinions. Differences of opinion would be an indication of healthy independence of mind which is the law of life, not party intrigues and party strife. The latter are incompatible with independence.

Q. How should the Hindu-Muslim questions be tackled?

A. I must own defeat on that point. I know that mine is today a voice in the wilderness and yet I claim that mine is the only practicable solution. I can never subscribe to the view that because certain members of a particular community have indulged in inhuman acts, therefore the whole community may be condemned outright and put beyond the pale. The Muslim League may call Hindus names and declare India to be *Dar-ul-Harb,* where the law of *jehad* operates and all Muslims who co-operate with the Congress are Quislings fit only to be exterminated. But we must not cease to aspire, in spite of this wild talk, to befriend all Mussalmans and hold them fast as prisoners of our love. It would be a present possibility if Hindus in their lakhs offered themselves to be cut to pieces without retaliation or anger in their hearts. Non-violence is today rightly laughed out of court as Utopian. Nevertheless, I maintain that it is the only way to keep Hinduism alive

and India undivided. The history of the Congress non-violence for the last twenty-five years has taught us nothing if it has not taught us that.

Q. How can we counteract the activities of the Communists, who are openly opposing the Congress ?

A. The principle which I have laid down vis-a-vis the Hindu-Muslim question also holds good in respect of the Communists. By "Muslim" I mean the Muslim League. For, not all the Muslims are Muslim Leaguers. The Muslim Leaguers have today raised the slogan that ten crores of Indian Muslims are in danger of being submerged and swept out of existence unless they constitute themselves into a separate State. I call that slogan scare-mongering pure and simple. It is nonsense to say that any people can permanently crush or swamp out of existence one fourth of its population, which the Mussalmans are in India. But I would have no hesitation in conceding the demand of Pakistan if I could be convinced of its righteousness or that it is good for Islam. But I am firmly convinced that the Pakistan demand as put forth by the Muslim League is un-Islamic and I have not hesitated to call it sinful. Islam stands for the unity and brotherhood of mankind, not for disrupting the oneness of the human family. Therefore, those who want to divide India into possibly warring groups are enemies alike of India and Islam. They may cut me to pieces but they cannot make me subscribe to something which I consider to be wrong.

The question of the Communists stands on a slightly different footing. They seem to have made trouble-making their profession. I have friends among them. Some of them are like sons to me. But it seems they do not make any distinction between fair and foul, truth and falsehood. They deny the charge. But their reported acts seem to sustain it. Moreover, they seem to take their instructions from Russia, whom they regard as their spiritual home rather than India. I cannot countenance this dependence on an outside power. I have even said that we should not depend even on Russian wheat in our present food crisis. We must have the ability and courage to subsist on what our soil can give us rather than depend on foreign charity. Oterwise, we shall not deserve to exist as an independent country. The same applies to foreign ideologies. I would accept them only to the extent that I

can assimilate them and adapt them to the Indian scene. But I must refuse to go under them.

My formula for the Communists, therefore, is that I would prefer to die at their hands, but I will not retaliate.

Harijan, 6-10-1946

328. TALK WITH AN AMERICAN JOURNALIST[1]

NEW DELHI,
[Before *September 24, 1946*][2]

Q. Are you full of the joy of life ? Why do you want to live for 125 years?

A. Gandhiji told him that his desire to live up to 125 years was not for enjoyment but service. He explained that both were not the same and proceeded to explain to the puzzled interviewer the doctrine of "enjoyment through renunciation" as set forth in the *Ishopanishad.*

Q. When did your real enjoyment of life begin?

A. When I was born.

Q. No, I mean when did that pattern of life begin when service became a joy for ever ?

A. When I understood the inner meaning of life.

Q. Is that India's speciality?

A. The only speciality of India is her poverty as America's is her glamour of riches.

Q. May not there be occasions when one may have to compromise ideals with expediency?

A. No, never. I do not believe that the end justifies the means.

Q. Is it possible that your activities may some day be removed from the political field ?

A. Perhaps you do not know that I felt compelled to come into the political field because I found that I could not do even social work

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

[2] Pyarelal explains that the talk took place about the same time as the "Talk with an English Journalist", which was before September 24.

without touching politics. I feel that political work must be looked upon in terms of social and moral progress. In democracy no part of life is untouched by politics. Under the British you cannot escape politics in the good sense. It embraces the whole life. All who breathe must pay a tax. That is British rule in India. Take the salt tax for instance. It concern everybody. The collector of revenue and the policeman are the only symbols by which millions in India's villages know British rule. One cannot sit still while the people are being ravaged.

Q. Then your job will never be finished?

A. It will be finished only with my death. I must be watchful, whether it is the foreign government that is in power or indigenous, if I am a social reformer in the true sense of the term. This is applicable to all.

Q. When people attain power they grow away from the people. What about here?

A. Let us hope and pray that this will never happen here. I have likened our people's office-acceptance to wearing a crown of thorns and pretty sharp thorns at that.

Q. What do you think of the students' strikes?

A. It seems to be a universal malady, an epidemic.

Q. Do you ever feel depressed?

A. I believe in an over-ruling Power as I believe I am talking to you just now. This may be unreal, but that *is* real. It dominates me and enables me to remain calm even in the midst of storm.

Q. Gandhiji's questioner next asked his opinion about predestination.

A. It is a much-abused word. It is true that we are not quite as free as we imagine. Our past holds us. But like all other doctrines this may well be ridden to death.

Q. This provoked the question as to how one could overcome the unpleasant effects of one's predestination since predestination was a reality.

A. By taking the pleasant with the unpleasant in perfect detachment and thereby sterilizing the unpleasantness of its sting, even as you have tackled the problem of the prickly pear by removing its thorns through judicious selection and cultivation and converting it

into edible fodder for cattle.

Q. How to prevent the next war?

A. By doing the right thing, irrespective of what the world will do. Each individual must act according to his ability without waiting for others if he wants to move them to act. There comes a time when an individual becomes irresistible and his action becomes all-pervasive in its effect. This comes when he reduces himself to zero.

If the third war comes, it will be the end of the world. The world cannot stand a third war. For me the second war has not stopped, it still goes on.

Harijan, 6-10-1946

329. TALK WITH A FRIEND[1]

NEW DELHI,
[Before *September 24, 1946*]

I am filled with agitation; why could not I suffer this inner anguish with unruffled calmness of spirit? I am afraid I have not the detachment required for living up to 125 years. That also explains why charkha and khadi are making such slow progress. Success of khadi is impossible without infinite patience. A burning passion coupled with absolute detachment is the key to all success.

Harijan, 29-9-1946

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 24-9-1946

330. TALK WITH AN ENGLISH JOURNALIST[1]

NEW DELHI,
[Before *September 24, 1946*]

India is on the march to Independence, it is coming whether there is an agreement between the Muslim League and the Congress or not. No one can stop it. It is her destiny. She has bled enough for it. Of course, if there is heart-co-operation between the two, the progress will be quicker and smoother. But it must be real heart unity—not a make-believe.

Gandhiji, who claims kinship with Pressmen and therefore their friendship began by telling this friend what he considered to be the function of journalism.

There are occasions when a journalist serves his profession best by his silence.

Did not Gandhiji believe in the capacity of the average man to judge correctly provided he had enough knowledge of facts?

Not knowledge of facts. What passes for facts is only impressions or estimate of things and estimates vary. Hence one gets different versions of the same event. What is really needed to make democracy function is not knowledge of facts but right education. And the true function of journalism is to educate the public mind, not to stock the public mind with wanted and unwanted impressions. A journalist has, therefore, to use his discretion as to what to report and when. As it is, journalists are not content to stick to facts alone. Journalism has become the art of 'intelligent anticipation of events'.

As a public man and a social reformer, it is for me to judge when to say something and when to hold my tongue. What the world needs is not words but action. Actions and thoughts tell far more than speech. And this applies to all men both great and small.

Q. What do you think of Russia ?

A. Russia is an enigma to me. It hurts me to think (if the reports are true) that a country which stood for the people has turned into an imperialist power. But I may not pass judgment on a great people and a great man like Stalin. I lack the data.

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 24-9-1946. The talk took place in the course of Gandhiji's morning walk.

Q. Is the world progressing? Has the making of life and struggle for existence easier in the modern world resulted in the dulling of man's instincts and sensibilities?

A. If that is your comment, I will subscribe to it.

Q. And the atom bomb?

A. Oh, on that point you can proclaim to the whole world without hesitation that I am beyond repair. I regard the employment of the atom bomb for the wholesale destruction of men, women and children as the most diabolical use of science.

Q. What is the antidote? Has it antiquated non-violence?

A. No. It is the only thing the atom bomb cannot destroy. I did not move a muscle when I first heard that the atom bomb had wiped out Hiroshima. On the contrary, I said to myself, 'Unless now the world adopts non-violence, it will spell certain suicide for mankind.'

Q. What would be your fatherly advice to a young man about to launch into the world?

A. To hold his tongue. Was it not Shakespeare who said, 'Lend everybody thine ear, thy voice to none?'

Q. You followed that policy fairly in your own case.

A. Yes, I used to think in my early days that I was a dunce and an idiot, that I should never be able to speak. Now I feel thankful for that disability.

Q. You have been a fighter all your life. What has fighting done for you?

A. It has braced me for the next struggle. Fighting has done me good. What it has done to others, I do not know.

Q. Considering that the difference between the Muslim League and the Congress has narrowed down to one or two basic issues would it not be better to make a little sacrifice to secure agreement?

A. You can not sacrifice a principle to gain a doubtful advantage.

Q. After hearing both sides of the controversy, an outsider feels at sea. The only course, it seems, is to suspend judgment under the circumstances.

A. When two parties cannot agree and both are sincere in their convictions it is clear one of them must be wrong. Both cannot be right. The world must be the arbiter in that case. It dare not withhold judgment. It has often been found in the progress of non-violence

that even people who want to be perfectly just come to wrong judgment.

Before taking leave the friend tendered Gandhiji congratulations in advance on his coming birthday.

I attach no importance to it. Every day one is reborn. I, at any rate, am.

Harijan, 29-9-1946

331. ELEVEN-DAY CHARKHA CLASS[1]

The class was held in the Bhangi Colony. Shri Kanu Gandhi has given me an account of it. I give below some noteworthy parts[2] of it.

In my opinion, this class has been of great value. The numbers of the learners, the class from which they came and the perseverance with which they worked are worthy of note. Thousands turned up to see the small exhibition. Leaders joined in the collective spinning, which is a good sign. It is good to see what perseverance can achieve.

NEW DELHI, September 24, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 29-9-1946

332. LETTER TO M.W. H. DE SILVA

BHANGI COLONY,
READING ROAD, NEW DELHI,
September 24, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. Please do not think of a garden party for anyone, much less for the charkha class people. They do not come here now. Moreover, I am averse to encouraging entertainment being provided to anyone at this time of scarcity. Every morsel of

[1] A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 29-9-1946.

[2] Not translated here. Kanu Gandhi had said that 156 adults and 3 children attended the class, which was held from September 11 to 21, and that to encourage people an exhibition was held on the 22nd demonstrating the various processes of spinning.

food saved is so much food gained. Nevertheless, your good wishes I shall always treasure.

M. W. H. DE SILVA
CEYLON GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE IN INDIA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

333. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

DELHI,
September 24, 1946

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I have both your letters. I got the cheque with the second one. I hope to be in Wardha on the 2nd October. I am glad that you and Manu will be going there. It is good news that you have got well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

334. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 24, 1946[1]

Being awarded prizes should not fill the recipients with pride.[2] Many feel, and I am one of them, that people should not be given prizes for doing good work. Good work should be its own reward. I find it most annoying that when we do something worth while newspapers are filled with our praise.

Playing the charkha means doing body labour for the sake of India. By spinning we lend dignity to labour. The charkha teaches simplicity and strengthens our faith in God. The charkha is not a small thing. If we spin with full realization of the secret of the charkha, Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and Christians are seen as children of the same God. God comes to pervade the whole world. Let us partake

[1] *The Hindustan Times*, 25-9-1946, which also reported the speech, assigns to this the date September 23, probably wrongly.

[2] Earlier Gandhiji had distributed prizes to three women and two men for the best performance at the examination held for the charkha class.

of the goods of the world only as trustees. Then we shall see that India has become much stronger and risen much higher. India does not want to rise higher at the cost of others.

If India rises all rise with it. This is the message of India and this is the message of the charkha too.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 25-9-1946

335. DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR THE WORKING COMMITTEE[1]

[On or before *September 25, 1946*][2]

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the then President of the I[ndian] N[ational] C[ongress], had with the consent of the W[orking] C[ommittee] assured Pandit J[awaharlal] N[ehru] that the Congress would make his cause in Kashmir their own and that the Pundit should come back from Kashmir in order to continue the valuable work he was doing for the Congress. The Pundit willingly returned though not without misgivings. The W. C. regret to find that his misgivings were true. From all accounts received by the W. C. things are not going on as they should in that State. Repression of a subtle type is going on. Reforms though promising-looking on paper are reported to be so only in name. The W. C. cannot conceive the possibility of substantial reforms whilst unchecked repression is going on in Kashmir. The W. C. therefore earnestly recommend to the Kashmir State they should invite the Congress to send a deputation of reputable men of unquestioned ability and impartiality to find whether there is repression of liberty in Kashmir, whether there is tampering with the voters and whether reforms promised are substantial enough to secure contentment and prosperity of the people of the Statet. In this recommendation the W. C.invite the co-operation of all the enlightened States of India and the people residing in the States.

[1] The National Conference under Sheikh Abdulla had launched in May, 1946, "Quit Kashmir" movement. The Sheikh and his supporters were arrested. Jawaharlal Nehru, when he attempted to enter the State was arrested. He returned from there after Azad gave him the assurance that the Working Committee would take up the cause of Kashmir. For the Working Committee resolution as passed, *vide* Appendix "Congress Working Committee's Resolution on Kashmir", 25-9-1946.

[2] The Working Committee met on September 25, 1946.

The W. C. have noted with regret the sentence on Sheikh Abdulla, the President of the Kashmir People's Congress, but they would consider his incarceration as a worthy sacrifice if it results in the achievement of the freedom for which he was labouring.

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

336. TELEGRAM TO BAL D. KALELKAR

NEW DELHI,
September 25, 1946

BAL KALELKAR
Y.M.C.A.
25 CHOWRANGEE ROAD
CALCUTTA

POSTPONEMENT MARRIAGE INEVITABLE OWING SUSHILA'S HEALTH OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES. COME DELHI IF IMPATIENT KNOW CIRCUMSTANCES.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

337. TELEGRAM TO D. B. KALELKAR

NEW DELHI,
September 25, 1946

KAKASAHEB KALELKAR
KAKAWADI
WARDHA

POSTPONEMENT MARRIAGE INEVITABLE FOR SUSHILA'S HEALTH OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES. HAVE WIRED BAL ACCORDINGLY.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

338. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

NEW DELHI,
September 25, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

You have been good enough to send me your good wishes on my so-called birthday.[1] Thereby hangs a tale. The Indian calendar date is observed only in Gujarat, Bombay, never outside. Everywhere else in India and outside it is the Roman calendar date. And the birthday began to be observed only when it became identified with the revival of the spinning-wheel in its modern form, making it the symbol of freedom of the masses through constructive means. Can you in any way identify yourself with the rebirth of the wheel ?

In any case I repeat my thanks for your good wishes.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 219

339. LETTER TO H. GREENFIELD

VALMIKI MANDIR,
READING ROAD, NEW DELHI,
September 25, 1946

DEAR MR. GREENFIELD,

Herewith is my proposal as promised. In it I have endeavoured to minimize all dislocation and loss to the Government save what abolition of the tax must involve. But while salt will no longer be a dutiable article, as a source of national instruction, refining a vital food adjunct of all dirt and increasing its output for man and beast will continue and make increasing progress from day to day. I hug the hope that loss of revenue as a burdensome tax will be more than made up by increase in the consumption of salt.

[1] Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram calendar fell on September 22.

If you discover any flaw in this presentation, please tell me without the slightest hesitation.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. GREENFIELD, ESQ., C.S.I., C.I.E.

[ENCLOSURE]

Salt monopoly shall cease as from the first day of October 1946, and the duty on salt as from the first day of January 1947, subject to the exceptions and conditions hereinafter set forth.

The humanitarian clause on salt of the agreement popularly known as Irwin-Gandhi Pact shall be in full operation and all inspection of and interference with private manufacture of salt for evasion of duty shall forthwith cease.

Government control of salt works and factories hitherto maintained shall continue unabated till complete nationalization of salt industry is attained. These factories and works unlike private manufacture for sale shall carry duty up to 31st December.

In order to give full effect to the foregoing notification, any change in the Salt Act or rules or notices issued thereunder and required in law shall be made as soon as practicable but without interference with full effect being given to the foregoing notification.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 162-3

340. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

September 25, 1946

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Your letter is full of ignorance and sentimentality.

What I am doing I am not doing in anger. The error you people committed became merely the means. I was awakened. I sensed luxury in my food. The changes I have made are natural to me. It is not at all an atonement. You should rather pray that it may become natural to me. If it does not, I shall revert to my old diet. I have not given up leafy vegetables. I take their juice. There is more of jaggery than fruit. If it becomes necessary to take wheat I shall take it. Your atonement does not lie in feeling distressed, but in being awake and alert. Nor does it lie in fasting or imposing hardships on

yourself. It lies rather in overcoming ignorance and sentimentality and giving yourself up to work with carefulness and detachment. Do not worry about me at all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2497

341. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 25, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi spoke to the prayer audience on two matters, on Wednesday evening. First, he related how Shri Prakasam, Prime Minister of Madras, had undertaken to carry out three big schemes in that province, viz., the production of khadi with a view to clothe the entire province with it in time, the encouragement of village industries and the introduction of Nayee Talim in the villages.

Mr. Prakasam and his Ministry were also determined to root out the evil of untouchability, which was a special blot on the fair name of Madras, as also to bring in the much-needed reform of Prohibition. All these schemes had for many years been part and parcel of the Congress programme. To bring them into active existence, Gandhiji said, needed not to much intelligence as faith and determination, the faith and determination that enable man to die for a cause.

Congress leaders had to be true to their word and pure of heart. They must not be tempted by crores. They must be willing to go smiling to the gallows, if need be, for the sake of their principles. Textile mills had been started everywhere even before the last war. The provinces were being asked to start new ones. The machinery for them would be costly, but the money that was supposed to follow in their wake was the lure. Gandhiji explained how he thought textile mills were like poison for village India and therefore to be avoided.

People might wonder, Gandhiji explained, how he lived as a guest of a mill-owner—but these mill-owners had, in spite of his views, taken him in as one of their family, and non-violence demanded tolerance and love for all even if they differed from one. Shri Prakasam had promised Gandhiji that he would not be tempted with new textile mills for Madras and he would even hope to eliminate the existing ones as soon as enough khadi became available. For as Gandhiji said, mills and khadi could not go hand in hand. Khadi clothed everyone and put crores worth of cloth into the hands of the poor. The crores accruing from mills went into a few hands.

The second topic which Gandhiji referred to was food. Gandhiji said that Shri Rajendra Prasad had the heart of a king. He would share his last crust of bread with the

poor. The moment he heard a cry of distress from the South he got rice from wherever he could and promised them supplies. Gandhiji asked Shri Prakasam how his province could ever starve. He knew well the people of South India. His first introduction to the latter was in South Africa through a poor indentured labourer Balasundaram whose case he had sponsored. The poor man had his teeth knocked out. Later, when indentured Indians joined the Satyagraha movement he saw how clever and self-reliant they were. They only got a pound of bread and an ounce of sugar and during the resistance march he heard them singing and cooking a vegetable meal for themselves from soft edible leaves on the ground. Theirs was a land which produced the banana, the coconut, the yam, tamarind, greens and chillies. What more did they want?

They with their intelligence and resourcefulness could easily learn to do without rice if they were asked to do so. Gandhiji said he had asked Shri Prakasam not to worry. Shri Rajen Babu and he (Mr. Prakasam) had promised he would not. It remained to be seen what strength he was given by God to make Madras self-sufficient. It behoved everyone today, wherever they were, to be self-reliant and resourceful, brave and willing, with intelligence and determination to face the food crisis. If all joined forces it would be well with India.

The Hindustan Times, 26-9-1946

342. TELEGRAM TO S. V. VENKATESWARAN

NEW DELHI,
September 26, 1946

VENKATESWARAN[1]
TEXCOM
MADRAS

GANDHIJI APPROVES YOUR SCHEME[2] SUBJECT ANNOUNCEMENT THAT NO NEW MILLS WILL BE CREATED AS EXPLAINED.

PYARELAL

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] S. V. Venkateswaran, Textile Commissioner, Madras

[2] The khadi scheme of the Madras Government which envisaged making villages as far as possible self-sufficient in cloth.

343. TELEGRAM TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

NEW DELHI,
September 26, 1946

JAJUJI
SEVAGRAM
WARDHA

WIRED APPROVAL VENKATESWARAN.[1]

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

344. TELEGRAM TO BABA ANANDRAO DESHMUKH[2]

NEW DELHI,
September 26, 1946

DESHMUKH
MINISTER
NAGPUR

SUCCESS PIECEMEAL PROHIBITION DOUBTFUL NEVERTHELESS WISH SUCCESS. HOPE YOU ARE ATTENDING EDUCATIONAL SIDE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

345. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

September 26, 1946

BHAI MUNSHI,

I have only today been able to go through your papers concerning Ratlam. It seems you had no choice.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 7701. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Minister for Excise in the Central Provinces

346. LETTER TO S. P. PATWARDHAN

NEW DELHI,
September 26, 1946

BHAI APPA,

I am ashamed to read about your illness. If we workers keep falling ill, the service that we render will also be sickly; and how can any illness come to a nature cure worker? Now, get well soon, and write to me in detail. For the sake of people like you Dr. Bhagawat's retirement from the profession would be interrupted, wouldn't it?

Blessings from
BAPU

APPASAHEB PATWARDHAN
P. O. LANJE
DT. RATNAGIRI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

347. LETTER TO POTTISRIRAMULU

BHANGI NIVAS,
NEW DELHI,
September 26, 1946

BHAI SHRIRAMULU,

Bapuji got your letter. He says that for a Hindu to fast when Muslims are killed and thus to give up his life is quite wrong. One should not do this. About the temple of Nellore, Bapuji was under the impression that it had been thrown open to the Harijans. Do not be hasty. The Madras Government say that they are going to have the temple opened to Harijans.

Yours,
AMRIT KAUR

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 46

348. LETTER TO MAITHILISHARAN GUPTA

NEW DELHI,
September 26, 1946

BHAI MAITHILISHARAN,

I got your curious letter and also the four lengths of khadi from the two friends. May I thank you?

I have lost quite a lot for the sake of the charkha, but I do not feel the loss. I have gained more. It can be a true gain only when I feel perfect non-attachment. But that appears to be remote. When my own people err I lose my patience. That must not happen. That is the message of the charkha. Let us see when this comes about. If I wish to live up to 125 years I must achieve this state [or non-attachment] soon.

You must introduce weaving too in the household; it is not difficult. I should have laid stress on it from the very beginning; I did not. Well, morning is when we wake up. Kabir was a weaver, yet he left behind immortal poetry. If all of you turn weavers your poetry will have much greater power.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MAITHILISHARAN GUPTA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

349. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 26, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi asked the prayer audience on Thursday evening to ponder over the fact that all was not well with them. News of stabbing affrays came daily whether from Calcutta, Bombay, Ahmedabad, Dacca or elsewhere. This showed that they were not making any real progress. The latter could only be if they made God witness to every action of theirs. Mirabai's hymn that they had listened to during the prayer told them that God was the only one who could rid them of their woes and heal their pain. The devotee called God "Thou"—the most familiar of epithets—because all contact with Him was through love. It was up to man to own his own weakness. He was nothing without God's grace. If they leant on Him, then alone would one or the other party drop the sword.

A brave Bengali had put some questions to him, Gandhiji said, as to how they should act at such times as Calcutta had recently been through. His advice was that the highest duty would be for Hindu or Muslim to lay down his life without retaliation. Gandhiji said he was daily receiving letters from friends to say that some relative or other had died. He wrote to all that they should not mourn nor should they expect him to sorrow with them. Man is born to die. Death is the natural corollary to physical birth. It is the soul alone that is immortal. So, whether God sent them a natural death or whether they were killed by the assassin's knife, they must go smiling to their end.

Man cannot really kill anyone, said Gandhiji. That power rests in God's hands. If they realized this, there would not be knives and sticks seen all over the place, as they were today. Gandhiji, therefore, asked all to pray to God to rid this land of the present trial and give them the strength to live and die without killing.

The Hindustan Times, 27-9-1946

350. DISCUSSION WITH LORD WAVELL[1]

September 26, 1946

Lord wavell left the Interim Government not a moment's respite. On the 26th September, he invited Gandhiji to meet him. In the course of their meeting he again returned to his pet theme :

VICEROY: The League must be brought in somehow.

GANDHIJI: The Congress is ready provided the League is willing to come in a straight way. Let Jinnah seek an interview with Pandit Nehru and come to an honourable understanding. It will be a great day if and when the Congress and the League come together in the Interim Government after a mutual understanding, without any mental reservations, and not to non-co-operate and fight.

V. The only stumbling-block is the inclusion of a nationalist Muslim in the Interim Government. The Congress has undoubted right to nominate a nationalist Muslim. But in view of the fact that Jinnah is obstinate on that point, where is the harm in waiving it?

G. One may waive a right, one cannot waive a duty.

V. But if the League refuses to come in, what happens to the Constituent Assembly?

G. I admit that in that event the Constituent Assembl cannot properly meet.I must, however, make it clear that in this I represent nobody but myself.

[1] For Wavell's version of the discussion, *vide* Appendix "Lord Wavell's Note on Interview with Gandhiji", 26-9-1946.

V. Let us pursue this line of thinking a little further. If the Constituent Assembly is not called, what happens next?

G. The National Interim Government will carry on administration as it is doing at present. If you do not allow it to continue, you will expose your *bona fides* to suspicion.

V. How can we do that?

G. Then, do you want to retain power for yourself under this excuse? If you do that the whole world will condemn you. All you may insist on is that the Interim Government should include the Muslim League representatives. The Congress is prepared to do that.

V. For that I shall need a mandate from the British Cabinet. I can only act according to my instructions. I admit that my sympathies are with the League. My endeavour to bring in the League will continue.

Mahatma Gandhi: The Last Phase, Vol. I, p. 261

351. THE RIGHTS OF HARIJANS[1]

I have received letters from Harijan friends and some have been to see me too. They feel that now that power is in the hands of the people, there should be more than one Harijanminister. According to the population ratio the number should be at least three, and they should be similarly represented in every department. They hold that it would be erroneous to argue that there are not enough able persons among them. Besides, it is not as if only able persons were taken in every province. Numerous instances of nepotism could be cited.

I am not ready to admit the correctness of all they say. My ideas in this regard are different. Man must pursue his duty, his dharma. Rights spring only from duties well done. Such rights alone are becoming and lasting. There are vast numbers of non-Harijans possessing ability. If they all claimed their right society would be disrupted. Performance of duty is open to every one. The field of service is immense. Only a few can become leaders and those who try to do so do fall behind. I know, however, that people do not act as I have suggested. There is generally a scramble for power and many have to be disappointed.

Holding the views I do, and having acted on them and made others act on them over the last fifty years, I have no interest left in

[1] A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 6-10-1946

fighting for personal rights. I shall therefore advise Harijan brethren that they should think only of their duties. They may be sure that rights will follow fast on the heels of duties done.

NEW DELHI, September 27, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 6-10-1946

352. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

VALMIKI MANDIR,
READING ROAD, NEW DELHI,
September 27, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

It occurs to me that I should reduce to writing my impressions of our talk of yesterday.[1]

You were good enough to explain to me at length the result so far of your effort at peace-making between the Congress and the Muslim League. In the course of our conversation you told me that your leanings were towards the League. In your opinion there was left only one point of difference between the two parties, viz., the question of representation of a non-League Muslim out of the Congress quota. You recognized fully the reasonableness of the Congress position but you held that it would be an act of high statesmanship if the Congress waived the right for the sake of peace. I urged that if it was a question of waiving a right it would be a simple thing. It was a question of non-performance of a duty which the Congress owed to non-League Muslims. I entirely agreed with you on the proposition that it would be a great day if and when the Congress and the Muslim League came to a mutual understanding without reservations, mental or otherwise, and that it would be worse than useless if the two came together only with a view to fight each other. Moreover, I stressed the point that Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah should seek an interview with Pandit Nehru and try to come to an honourable understanding. If, however, the worst happened and the Muslim League boycott of the Constituent Assembly persisted and the British Government decided to discontinue the Constituent Assembly, I would hold it to be perfectly honourable. For,

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with Lord Waveli", 26-9-1946 and Appendix "Lord Wavell's Note on Interview with Gandhiji", 26-9-1946.

even though the Cabinet Mission had led one to suppose that they would continue the Constituent Assembly, I did not expect that they would or could continue it in spite of the successful boycott by one of the major parties. You then interpolated the remark that there were three parties, not only two. The States were the third party. You added that if the boycott persisted you had grave doubts as to whether the States would come in.

Though I might be alone to hold the view, I said that I could not envisage the framing of a workable constitution if one of the two parties withheld co-operation and force had to be used to keep the boycotters under restraint.

You then asked me to work out the logical conclusion of the discontinuance of the Constituent Assembly and asked me what I thought of the Interim Government. I told you that I had little doubt that no matter what happened, the National Government, having been once summoned, should continue to function unless they themselves felt unable, owing to their own incompetence or inability, to do so. I added that the Congress had put up its very best men, not at all in the spirit of gaining power for a party but in the spirit of selfless service of the whole nation. They were so considerate towards you and the League that they had hesitated to fill in the two Muslim seats in the hope of the League coming into the Interim Government. You doubted if you could contemplate the continuance of the Interim Government and that in any case you were only a servant of the Crown and that you would have to take your order from His Majesty's Government. Whilst I appreciated your stand, I said the continuance of a *bona-fide* National Government at the Centre was a vital necessity and that any departure from it would lay the British people open to the gravest suspicion on the part of the people of India and would be a tragedy of the first magnitude.

At the conclusion of our cordial talk, encouraged by you to say anything further if I wished to, I mentioned the Kashmir case about which the Working Committee had passed a very just resolution which, in the event of Kashmir State's obstinacy or notions of false prestige, might lead to far-reaching consequences and I asked for your friendly, as distinguished from legal, assistance to smooth out rough edges.

I had a talk last night with Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel and as a result I have decided to stay on here for some days, maybe even a month.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
THE VICEROY'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI

The Transfer of Power, Vol. VIII, pp. 604-6; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47*, pp. 223-5

353. LETTER TO H. GREENFIELD

BHANGI COLONY, NEW DELHI,
September 27, 1946

DEAR MR. GREENFIELD,

Whilst I thank you for your letter I shall await your promised counter-proposal if any.[1] Our agreed idea, I thought, was that the Finance Minister should not be troubled until you and I had either come to an agreement or had unfortunately agreed to differ. This was in order to save him unnecessary labour.

Yours sincerely,

M. K.GANDHI

H. GREENFIELD, ESQ., I.C.S.
SECRETARY, FINANCE DEPARTMENT
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 164

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H. Greenfield", 25-9-1946.

354. LETTER TO INDUMATI G. TENDULKAR

NEW DELHI,
September 27, 1946

CHI. INDU,

I have your letter. May you be happy in marriage and do great service. Come to Sevagram when you can. For the present I shall be here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 6258

355. LETTER TO S. P. PATWARDHAN

NEW DELHI,
September 27, 1946

CHI. APPA,

I have your postcard. In my opinion milk and fruit-juice is the diet for you, and of course rest. Maybe even a single day's fast without water will prove efficacious. If the bowels don't move having an enema might be necessary. But since Dr. Bhagawat has arrived there is no need for me to say anything more. Ramanama is of course there. I hope you have received the postcard I wrote yesterday.[1] It would be easier to guide you if the cause of the pain could be detected.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. APPA PATWARDHAN
P. O. LANJE

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to S.P. Patwardhan", 26-9-1946.

356. LETTER TO HUSSEINBHAI

NEW DELHI,
September 27, 1946

BHAI HUSSEINBHAI,

I have your letter. I understand that you had to rush back owing to the demise of your aunt who was also your mother-in-law. Is there any need for condolence? Birth and death are companions. One follows the other. Then what is there to grieve over? Let us live as God ordains.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

357. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 27, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. You have given me really painful news. I hope Tara is all right now. Arun's fever is likely to be as you say. I can understand you being upset by the news of the death[1]. But this is a common occurrence; it is inescapable. Whoever is born must also die. Vijayabehn has shown great courage and fortitude.

I am writing to Manilal and enclosing a copy of the letter with this.

I had a letter from Sita. Ask Ila to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Of Narayanbhai Patel, Vijaya M. Pancholi's father

358. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 27, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi at his after-prayer speech on Friday evening, narrated a curious incident of a magistrate resorting to hunger-strike in order to persuade people in his area to obey his orders.

This story had come to Gandhiji from an Indian State. Briefly, some goondas had looted some shops and even beaten some persons. The inhabitants were frightened and the shopkeepers closed their shops. A special magistrate was sent to restore order. He could not prevail upon the shop-keepers to open their shops in spite of the assurances he gave them. As the people were put to great inconvenience the magistrate, instead of resorting to the law and forcibly having the shops opened, undertook a fast. The effect on the populace was almost immediate and calm was restored and the culprits caught.

Gandhiji said he had never heard of such action by a magistrate. As a rule, officials were hard and rigid. It was, however, possible for the Viceroy or a Prince to act as this magistrate did. Officials differed only in rank. Perhaps people would say that it would be madness for them to do so. But Gandhiji did not think so. Many people today resorted to hunger-strike for all sorts of demands. Those were not proper fasts. This fast was undertaken to allay the sufferings of the poor people and melt the hearts of those who were putting them to trouble. It was, therefore, a big act if the story was true. It should be a matter of pride and joy that there was such a magistrate in India. He hoped there were many more.

Shri Suchetabehn having sung one of Gurudev's Bengali hymns at the prayer that day (Friday), Gandhiji referred to the desirability of having such gems translated into Hindustani. Mahadev Desai, who was a worshipper at the shrine of Gurudev's poetry, had done a translation of this particular 'bhajan' into Gujarati. There were few among them, but there ought to be many more, who should be familiar with Indian languages so that they could easily make translations of what was worth while. Gandhiji hoped to give them a Hindustani translation of the 'bhajan' the next day and to continue the practice when a non-Hindustani 'bhajan' was sung. He would not promise them printed translations. A servant of the people was a jealous trustee of the money he might raise.

The Hindustan Times, 28-9-1946

359. A DEED OF MERCY[1]

A Pathan, an ex-I. N. A. man, now employed by a firm, tried to defend a lad of 10 years. His entreaty was in vain. The assailants stabbed both the boy and the Pathan. The boy died. The Pathan lives. The deceased boy's father offered Rs. 4,000 as a reward for his bravery. He refused saying he tried to do his duty and would not take the reward offered. Would that such instances were multiplied!

NEW DELHI, September 28, 1946

Harijan, 6-10-1946

360. RIDING TWO HORSES[2]

There are a fair number of Tantis in Orissa. In law they are classed as Harijans and are known as Pan-Tantis. Many of them earn their living in Kolhan in Singbhum District. They do not call themselves Pan-Tantis but only Tantis. As a result they are not classed with Harijans in Bihar. Their leaders also, when entering office, do not identify themselves as Harijans. In my view what they do is right. Why should one desire to be classed as a Harijan? What is to be gained by it, unless it is the votes, Governmental assistance and scholarship from the Harijan Sevak Sangh for education? Why should one demean oneself for this? The very idea is debasing. Is one to debase oneself for bread?

Tantis do not have to be Pan-Tantis. Today we have popular governments. It is their duty to see that backward classes get the same deal as Harijans in the matter of education, etc.

It was the British Government that constituted the Harijans into a separate class. To the popular government all poor and illiterate people are one, or should be. It cannot distinguish between high and low, between this religion and that, for all are Indian.

The Tantis should not try to become Harijans. They should also not hanker after Government jobs. What will happen to the crores of other Indians will happen to them and others like them. I shall there-

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

[2] A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 6-10-1946.

fore advise the Tantis that they should themselves work to improve their condition. Others also should help them.

NEW DELHI, September 28, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 6-10-1946

361. TELEGRAM TO SHYAMLAL

NEW DELHI,
September 28, 1946

SHYAMLALJI
BAJAJWADI
WARDHA

ALL MEETINGS STAND BUT AT DELHI.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

362. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

VALMIKI MANDIR,
READING ROAD, NEW DELHI,
September 28, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of yesterday's date for which I thank you. As the conversation between us turned out to be important as I conceived it, I thought I would let you have my impressions so that you could correct me if I had erred. For I had to report the purport of our conversation to Pandit Nehru and other friends. Even during the Cabinet Mission's negotiations I had sent to Lord Pethick-Lawrence or Sir Stafford Cripps, as the case may be, my impressions of our talks and this was beneficial. As for your correction,[1] of course I accept it unhesitatingly.But my impression definitely was that at the very outset of your description of what had happened between you and Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah, I understood you to say that although in some of his presentations he was unreasonable, your leanings were towards the Muslim League. But after your correction my impression loses all its value.

[1] The Viceroy in his letter of September 27 had said : "I definitely did not say that my leanings were towards the Muslim League."

I would like to have your other corrections also if you have the time. Although we may never make public use of our conversations, I have found, throughout my 55 years' stormy public life, written records of inestimable value for promoting mutual understanding and further conversation. But, of course, I am in your hands in this matter and your wishes shall prevail for I want to fulfil your "hope" that I "should use" my "influence for a settlement". For this cause, which I have at heart, I would naturally ever want to understand you correctly and fully if only because, of all the persons in India, you enjoy a unique position.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
THE VICEROY'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI

The Transfer of Power, Vol. VIII, pp. 618-9; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47*, pp. 226-7

363. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

DELHI,
September 28, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have both your letters. I have already taken such action as they indicated. You will have seen it from the newspapers. Only I have not been able to find time to write to you.

I keep getting heaps of cables from there. Some of them are contradictory. The situation there would appear to have changed further. If, though alone, you remain unconcerned and do not swerve from your duty because many do not join you, I shall consider your contribution to have been ample. Jawaharlalji directly deals with the questions concerning South Africa. We often meet. The Indian delegation to the U. N. O. will include the best people available. My going is ruled out. Jawaharlal may go if he can be spared. Rajaji's name also deserves to be considered. You should not worry on this score either. Ultimately everything will depend on what you people there are able to do. Have no doubts about that.

For the next fifteen days or more I shall be in Delhi. The massacres here are very painful. The outcome is in God's hands.

Sushila is intelligent and therefore must be giving you all the news. I could write pages, but do not have the time.

Medh has not met me yet. Nor has he met Sushila. Do not at all worry about Sushila and the children. Devdas is engrossed in his work. He meets me only occasionally.

I have replied to your question in *Harijan*.[1] You must have read it.

Cachhalia had come to see me. He left a favourable impression on me. He seems to be an able man. I think he is good enough to be made even a trustee. But you alone can be the ultimate judge. Nagadi also came and spent a fairly long time with me.

I am well. There is no cause for worry. The heat here has gone down considerably.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4991

364. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 28, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

You must have seen from the newspapers that my going to Sevagram has been put off for the present, and the marriage also has been postponed. I shall, however, be happy if you and Jaisukhlal come over. Jaisukhlal writes that he will meet you in Bombay and then both of you will come here. I am here. I am heavily occupied with work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

[1] *Vide* "Tired of Satyagraha", 11-9-1946.

365. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

NEW DELHI,
September 28, 1946

BAPA,

I have both your letters. I am dictating this in the midst of a great rush. I have been going through some literature about the Mahanadi. I have discussed the subject with many people, including Dr. Khosla.

Work among the Bihar Adivasis is complicated. At the moment I am held up in Delhi. I have already sent a circular wire calling for the meetings of all the Sanghs[1] in Delhi. You will be getting it too. So I take it you will shortly be coming here. We can then talk about the Adivasis. I would not so soon put you on the giant wheel of embarrassment, lest the old man that you are should reel!

I have gone through your letter about Tata. I have asked the Tata people a few questions in this regard.

SJT. AMRITLAL THAKKAR
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
KALI GALI
CUTTACK

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

366. LETTER TO SHEELA

NEW DELHI,
September 28, 1946

CHI. SHEELA,

Your letter. Everyone did well. Do you ever observe silence during daytime while you are awake? You should do it.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHEELABEHN
NAWABHARATI
MEERUT

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Presumably the Khadi Gramodyog Sangh, Sarva Seva Sangh, Talimi Sangh, Akhil Bharatiya Charkha Sangh, Harijan Sevak Sangh, Adim Jati Seva Sangh, etc.

367. CRIMINAL WASTE[1]

All the suggestions made by the writer can and should be adopted at once if a major disaster is to be averted.

Harijan, 29-9-1946

368. THOU TOO, BIHAR !

It is a grim irony of fate that Bihar, which did so well during the golden days of satyagraha should now disgrace itself by criminal lawlessness. If the news published is authentic, chain-pulling and stopping trains without cause has become a common occurrence in Bihar, with the result that the trains rarely run to time. Passengers consider it superfluous to buy tickets for train journeys. Under a national government, they argue, payment should be unnecessary. *Jai Hind* is regarded as a cry for loot and murder.

I do not know what truth there is in these charges which are as wild as they well can be. I know some parts of Bihar where persons do not distinguish between things lawful and unlawful. I have even heard the argument that I am largely responsible for the prevailing lawlessness, not only in Bihar but throughout India. I need hardly say that it is a thoughtless charge. The lawlessness, if it can be so described, that I have advocated is like prescribing wholesome and necessary food for the body. Behind my 'lawlessness' there is discipline, construction and well-being of society. It is an effective protest against unjust and injurious law or act. It can never take the form of selfish evasion of a duty. It is a duty never to pull the alarm chain except in well-defined and rare emergencies and never to travel without due payment for the class in which we travel. Loot, arson and murder have never been part of my programme of so-called lawlessness. The answer to the argument that whilst my programme may be good enough for a select few, it can never be for the masses, lies in the question whether I am expected to starve the masses of good food for fear of their taking bad or poisonous food.

I have purposely entered upon what appears to be a personal

[1] The article under this title by Amrit Kaur described the inefficiency with which stocks of foodgrains were handled and suggested ways of saving food.

note, not at all in self-defence, but in order to drive the point home that what is said to be going on in Bihar is administration of rank poison.That way lies not self-rule but licentiousness, not independence but helpless dependence, not life but suicide. Is Bihar of Brijkishore Prasad and Rajendra Prasad that I have known and lived in come to the pass described above? Let the public workers of Bihar not permit the senseless destruction of the fair work construction done with patient toil. Bihar, beware!

NEW DELHI, September 29, 1946

Harijan, 6-10-1946

369. NOTES

CO-OPERATIVES IN KERALA

Sjt. Kelappan came to see me two days ago and informed me that co-operative movement was going strong and had become very popular in Kerala. If the societies are sound, it was heartening news that Sjt. Kelappan gave me. I, however, expressed my serious doubts. The secret of successful co-operative effort is that the members must be honest and know the great merit of co-operation and it must have a definite progressive goal. Thus holding a certain sum of money in co-operation for the sake of making more money by charging exorbitant rates of interest is a bad goal. But co-operative farming or dairying is undoubtedly a good goal promoting a national interest. Such instances can be multiplied. I wonder what these numerous Kerala societies are. Have they honest inspectors who know their work? It may be mentioned that such movements have often proved disastrous when the management has been dishonest and the goal questionable.

GURUVAYUR

Who does not know this historic struggle? Sjt. Kelappan had threatened to fast for the opening of this temple to Harijans.[1]He suspended it on my strong advice and assurance that I would fight for it. Then followed a successfully carried out referendum which resulted in an overwhelming vote of caste Hindus in favour of the opening.

[1]*Vide* Vol. LI

But the Zamorin protested helplessness. Later, I went to Guruvayur and a great public meeting signified its decided opinion in favour. I had the pleasure too of meeting the Zamorin who courteously reiterated his helplessness. Other Kerala temples have been opened. Travancore has set a brilliant example by its great State proclamation. The Minakshi and Palni temples are open. Why should Guruvayur yet remain closed? Surely no satyagraha should now be necessary? It is up to the Provincial National Government to see that the opinion of the great bulk of the temple-going public is not defeated by legal technicalities. It is a thousand pities that even at this time of day there are temples in India which shut out Hindus, miscalled Untouchables.

NEW DELHI, September 29, 1946

Harijan, 6-10-1946

370. LETTER TO M. W. H. DE SILVA

NEW DELHI,
September 29, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

It is very good of you to want to do something for the charkha class. So far as I am concerned, the delicacy of your gesture is equal to the best you can do. However, in order to please yourself, I suggest a small donation to the cause of the removal of untouchability.

Yours sincerely,

M. W. H. DE SILVA
(CEYLON REPRESENTATIVE IN INDIA)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

371. LETTER TO PHEROZE

NEW DELHI,
September 29, 1946

BHAI PHEROZEBHAI,

I have your letter. Why in English? Have you forgotten your Gujarati? And why are you staying in bed? Why are you subsisting on your friend's sympathies? What did you do all these years?

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

372. HAND-SPINNING v. MILL-SPINNING

Some time before the Provincial Ministries throughout India were formed, I had heard that quotas of spindles were offered to the Provinces on pain—if a particular province did not take its quota—of the refused quota being transferred to the other provinces. Now that the Provincial administrations are in full swing, the question has arisen as to whether these Governments can admit new mills and, at the same time, promote hand-spinning on a national scale. My answer is emphatically in the negative, if the encouragement of hand-spinning is meant to be sincere. Behind the India-wide quota is the fundamental belief that mills alone can and must supply India's needs for cloth and that hand-spun may be permitted to exist for the fastidious few. That was not how hand-spinning was conceived in Congress resolutions and that certainly is not the way that the A. I. S. A. has progressed. If the national Governments have come to the conclusion that hand-spinning has and should have no future, they should not waste a single rupee along the lines followed by the A. I. S. A. If, on the other hand, they share the belief of the A. I. S. A., they should forgo their quota even if the forgoing should involve some initial loss. The loss will be demonstrably for the future gain of the masses.

Another question has arisen as to why the Working Committee should not, at any rate, declare a uniform policy to be followed by all the Congress Provinces.There is nothing to prevent the Committee from doing so. But it is open to them to say that the Congress policy has been enunciated times without number. Each Province has to

measure its own belief in the Congress scales. The Working Committee might not go into details.

Then why may not the Central Government lay down a policy? The answer is obvious.The Central Government represents all India and all parties. It may not, therefore, lay down any exclusively Congress policy, much less a policy in a matter wholly within the jurisdiction of the Provinces. It would be an unwarranted interference with the rights of Provinces.

Looked at from all points of view, in the matter of khadi as of prohibition and other subjects allotted to the Provinces, the Provinces must evolve along their own lines. They will miserably fail if they look to the Working Committee to guide them. The Central Government simply has not the right, even if it had the unholy wish.

NEW DELHI, September 30, 1946

Harijan 6-10-1946

373. SCAVENGERS' LOT

Q. You have doubtless written on this subject before but I would like you to say a word again in regard to the duty of municipal and other authority as well as private employers in the matter of providing Bhangis with the proper means of scavenging. Unless water-tight iron pails are provided, for example, the drippings during the rainy season, through baskets or gunny bags, fall on the unfortunate workers. All scavenging should really be able to be done without soiling the hands or any part of the body. If this were so, the work would assume a dignity which it does not carry at the moment. Along with the supply of proper means of scavenging, sweeping, etc., the Bhangi needs instruction. It is a matter which local and provincial authority should take up in the cause of cleanliness.

A. I would advocate bye-laws requiring authorized receptacles, brooms, etc., which would avoid physical handling of dirt and would also prescribe simple working costume. Inspectors or overseers will be trained for the humane and sanitary work instead of being expected to exact work anyhow. The result of the present system is maximum of insanitation and minimum of work plus bribery, corruption and bad manners.

NEW DELHI, September 30, 1946

Harijan, 6-10-1946

374. HOW?

A correspondent writes :

You are aware of the backward States of the Simla Hills. The Raja Saheb of Rampur Bushahr is a man of orthodox views. Recently a young man of a high caste Hindu family married a Koli girl. The Lambardar of the village (Mandhol) brought the matter to the notice of the ruler. The Raja Saheb has sentenced both husband and wife to six months' imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 100 each. Such action is intolerable and retards progress. Some others who were contemplating inter-caste marriages have been deterred.

Must we wait till autocracy is wiped out?

The rule of one man over many is intolerable. It must end. How is the question. The way is for the many to begin to live. To cut off the head of one ruler is easy enough. Remember the legend of Ravana. He had ten heads. As soon as one was cut off, another popped up in its place. The moral is that no cutting off of heads becomes necessary in the presence of a living Demos. The one will respond and submit. In the given instance the couple will cheerfully undergo the sentence. Only many should follow their example, if the tie is not lustful bondage but a bond of love born out of the zeal for reform. If the reformers do not wish to suffer imprisonment, they should migrate to a free place where they can live without let or hindrance.

NEW DELHI, September 30, 1946

Harijan, 6-10-1946

375. TELEGRAM TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

NEW DELHI,
September 30, 1946

MAVALANKARJI

AHMEDABAD

SO FAR I AM CONCERNED FOURTEENTH SUITABLE. WIRING SHYAMLAL.[1]

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1]*Vide* the following item.

376. TELEGRAM TO SHYAMLAL

NEW DELHI,
September 30, 1946

SHYAMLALJI
BAJAJWADI, WARDHA

MAVALANKAR DESIRES FOURTEENTH KASTURBA EXECUTIVE. HAVE WIRED ACCEPTANCE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

377. TELEGRAM TO ZAMINDARI AND MALGUZARI SABHA

NEW DELHI,
September 30, 1946

ZAMINDARI AND MALGUZARI SABHA
NAGPUR

ADVISE SEEK APPOINTMENT AFTER RETURN WARDHA.[1]

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

378. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

"VALMIKI MANDIR",
READING ROAD,
September 30, 1946

I gave nearly one hour to Avinashilingam and probably over an hour next day to reading the papers you left with me on Basic Education and Village Industries. Both present an attractive though, in my opinion, a defective and expensive programme.I would like to warn you against going in for expensive programmes. That will betray a woeful lack of a knowledge of the realities in the 7,00,000 villages. It is not money so much as men that we want and if you have sincere

[1] The Sabha had held a meeting on 22nd at Nagpur to oppose the abolition of zamindari and its representatives had sought an interview with Gandhiji.

honest workers who will work for love of service but not for love of money, success is assured. And you will get ten-fold return for the little money that you will have to spend.

Your educational programme is, in my opinion, far too ambitious. Basic Education cannot be started piecemeal—and to introduce a craft in the ordinary curriculum is to defeat the basic fact, viz., whole education through a craft, for Indian cotton craft. This is wholly different from education plus a craft or even spinning. Spinning you have to introduce in all schools and colleges, if the Khadi Scheme is to make headway.Shri Aryanayakum came in today. I must show this to him and let him write to you separately.

As to village industries, have you looked at the appendices? If not, just see and you will realize the absurdity. Haste is waste. Think well before you act.

SHRI T. PRAKASAM
PREMIER
MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

379. LETTER TO NIRMALA

NEW DELHI,
Silence Day, September 30, 1946

CHI. NIRMALABEHN,

I cannot bear your still being bed-ridden. You have faith, you have humility—how can such a one contract a disease? It is a puzzle for one like me. It makes short work of my learning. If I was to stay in one place I would ask you to come to me and do what I can towards your recovery. Will it ever be?

Well or unwell, "drink the joy of Ramanama".

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. NIRMALABEHN
(THE) RETREAT
SHAHI BAGH
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

380. MESSAGE TO PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
September 30, 1946

Wherever I may be I am always surrounded by an atmosphere of spinning and khadi. I informed you the day before yesterday that another charkha class would be held here from today for seven days. This time the teachers are better prepared and all the accessories for teaching are also available. It was intended not to admit more than 30 persons at a time to the classes. But 38 came this morning and 34 this afternoon. There were 21 men and 17 women in the morning and 14 men and 20 women in the afternoon.

This shows that there is enough faith and enthusiasm in a certain section of the public. Is it then the fault of those who are responsible for teaching or the present age that spinning has not become universal? To put the blame on the times in which we live shows lack of courage. Faith and diligence should rise above circumstances. If all work were to be carried out on this basis and in this spirit, God would surely reward our labours.

Gandhiji requested those who had charkhas in their homes and were not using them to make them over to him either for payment or as gifts. More wheels were needed for the classes. Those whose charkhas were not in working order should take them to the Khadi Bhandar, Chandni Chowk, where they would be set right.

The Hindustan Times, 1-10-1946

381. NOTE TO AMTUSSALAAM

[*September 1946*][2]

Again you are making a mistake. The reason for my saying no is different. There is considerable danger in this. Instead of peace there can be rioting. I do not have the time now to explain. Have faith in my words if you can and forget about the thing. Service lies in

[1] It being a silence day, this message, which was in Hindi, was read out at the meeting.

[2] This was obviously written when the addressee was in Delhi with Gandhiji, i. e., in September, 1946.

refraining. If you want to sleep at Devdas's, you may go there. Eat, play, spin and read the Koran. Do you tell beads?

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 687

382. LETTER TO HANNAH

AS AT SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,[1]
INDIA,
October 1, 1946

MY DEAR HANNAH[2],

Manilal tells me you have not yet shed your sadness. I had hoped that you had left all your sadness in India as lumber to be thrown away. Those like you who believe in God should have no sorrow. When the life is wholly dedicated to Him, we live a consecrated life as trustees to do His will and to work for Him. Therefore, you have to live free from care. If you would be worthy of Herman you cannot afford to worry. Choose some field of service. It will leave you not time for worry. All enjoyment has to be derived from service. If you could have kept well here, I would have asked you to come and share the life with me. But that cannot be.

Tell me all about your activities and your health.

This goes care of Manilal as I do not know your address.

All whom you came in touch with whilst you were in India often think of you with affection.

Love.

BAPU

HANNAHBEHN
C/O MANILAL GANDHI
S. AFRICA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Permanent address
[2] Niece of Herman Kallenbach, Gandhiji's friend and co-worker in South Africa

383. LETTER TO SAROJ NANAVATI

NEW DELHI,
October 1, 1946

CHI. SAROJ,

Just now, after the morning prayer, Kakasaheb tells me that today is your birthday. He says that the few lines you sent for me were left behind there.

May your devotion to service go on increasing and Raihana's with yours, or yours with Raihana's. You may be separate in body, but are not you one in spirit?

Blessings to both from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10465

384. LETTER TO JAMSHED MEHTA

NEW DELHI,
October 1, 1946

BHAI JAMSHEDJI,

Tulsiram is an admirer of yours. that is why I was drawn towards him. He pleaded with me to write something to you. I told him that I knew you better than he did. You are dedicated to service. May your work of service grow.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. JAMSHED MEHTA
KARACHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

385. LETTER TO SARALADEVI A. SARABHAI

NEW DELHI,
October 1, 1946

CHI. SARALABEHN,

I am at present held up here. The meetings[1] will be held here. So, even though the meeting of the Agents may not take place it will be good if you come over about that time. We can then have talks. If you want to come even earlier you may do so whenever you please.

Preserve your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

386. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
October 1, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

You sent no letter with Deo. I am wearing only your dhoti. Now it will be one day yours and one day Avantikabai's.

I have been detained here. I may leave by the 20th. You should get well and be of steady mind. The sheep that is to be sacrificed should be free from blemish.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 530

[1] Of the various Sanghs

387. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

NEW DELHI,
October 1, 1946

CHI. HOSHIARI,

I have your letter. I am glad that you have taken up weaving. If you learn all the processes relating to cotton everything will be all right.

My stay here is getting prolonged.

Blessings from
BAPU

HOSHIARIBEHN
ASHRAM, SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

388. LETTER TO KALKA PRASAD

October 1, 1946

BHAI KALKA PRASAD,

Please sell khadi worth Rs. 50 to Tulsiram. You may assume that he has tendered the necessary yarn. However, please charge him the price of the yarn.

M. K. GANDHI

GANDHI ASHRAM
CHANDNI CHOWK
DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

389 SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

[*October 1, 1946*]

In the song that has just been sung, the poet says that he who loses the self finds God. If we understand its significance, we really need nothing more. This is what the spinning-wheel teaches us. You

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 7-10-1946

might ask how it is possible to find God through the spinning-wheel. As I have told you before, the spinning-wheel enables us to identify ourselves with the millions. The millionaires imagine that money can bring them anything in the world. But it is not so. At any moment death might come and snuff them out. Some are being stabbed daily but losing one's life that way is not the same thing as shedding the self. One has to learn to efface the self or the ego voluntarily and as a sacrifice in order to find God. The spinning-wheel rules out exclusiveness. It stands for all, including the poorest. It, therefore, requires us to be humble and to cast away pride completely.

It holds the key to swaraj. But can one spin for swaraj and yet not be filled with subtle pride? If pride is there, spinning won't bring one the swaraj of the spirit or the realization of God.

When the self is shed the change will be reflected in our outward behaviour. It will show in the least of our little acts. The whole outlook on life will be changed. Everything we do will be undertaken not for the self but for all.

The hymn goes on to say that to find God one need not go out anywhere. He resides in our hearts. But if we instal the self or the ego there we dethrone poor God. I have here used the epithet 'poor' advisedly.For, although He is the King of kings, Most High Almighty, yet He is at the beck and call of anyone who has reduced himself to zero and turns to Him in uttermost humility of spirit. Let us then become poor in spirit and find Him within ourselves.

Harijan, 13-10-1946

390. MESSAGE TO TAN YUN-SHAN

[On or after *October 1, 1946*][1]

Is not silent prayer better than a written message ?

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter of October 1, 1946 to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur.

391. TELEGRAM TO SHYAMLAL

Express NEW DELHI,
October 2, 1946

SHYAMLALJI
BAJAJWADI
WARDHA

SUSHILA[1] SAYS DIFFICULT CONVENE MEDICAL MEETINGS NOW. THEREFORE ADVISE POSTPONEMENT AGENTS MEETINGS ALSO.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

392. LETTER TO M. W. H. DE SILVA

NEW DELHI,
October 2, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I shall treasure your cheque for the cause of untouchability. May your work in India result in bringing the two countries together as never before.

Yours sincerely,
M. K.GANDHI

M. W. H. DE SILVA
CEYLON REPRESENTATIVE IN INDIA

From a copy. Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

393. LETTER TO DR. FOSS WESTCOTT

NEW DELHI,
October 2, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I got your kind letter of 18th Sept[ember] only three or four days ago. You know why it came into my hands so late.

[1] Dr. Sushila Nayyar

You are more Sudhir's director than I. He was wanted by the Cabinet Mission and he went at their instance. My part consisted in not dissuading him form going. In any case I have never thought that his youth went against a man. But let Sudhir's work tell its own tale. He is due on Saturday next.

You have given me interesting information about your activities. I am jealous of your youth.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. FOSS WESTCOTT

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

394. LETTER TO PYARELAL

October 2, 1946

CHI. PYARELAL,

There is so much change in my ideas. The teacher should not look upon his pupil as his wife. But you were helpless. One's nature cannot be checked. So I have decided not to stand in your way. I wished Manu would come. I naturally wanted to know her mind better, and dispel her fears. I have decided not to stop her in any way if she wants to marry. I will not perform the marriage. Beyond that I shall put no restrictions. This is my position.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

395. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
October 2, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have received the other clothes sent by you. Much work had been done. I see ignorance in your letter. Ability comes from doing work. There you eat without earning your bread. All this shows that you write for the sake of writing. Do go to Borkamata and do

whatever work you can. Only God knows where our good lies. How can man know God's will? Therefore one should go where one's heart may lead. After all God resides only in the heart.

Sankaran will come with Jajuji.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 531

396. LETTER TO POTTI SRIRAMULU

NEW DELHI,
October 2, 1946

CHI. RAMULU,

Now all your letters to me are in English. It is not good. Do not go about with a placard hung round your neck. The thoughts confined to the placard are valueless.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 107

397. LETTER TO PANDURANG PATWARDHAN

NEW DELHI,
October 2, 1946

BHAI PANDURANG,

I have your letter. I do hope that Appasaheb will recover. You did well in writing to me. I shall be more careful. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PANDURANG PURUSHOTTAM PATWARDHAN
SAHITYA MANDIR
RATNAGIRI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

398. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 2, 1946

It is as though God had sent us a special message in the form of this song.[1] In truth the springs of India's life are drying up. It would be folly to suppose that because there is a Congress Government at the Centre all is well. I shall not dwell on the stabbings that are going on, shocking as they are. To illustrate to you how the springs of our life are drying up, I shall say something on what is going on in Goa.

Goa is a small island. It is an integral part of India. News has come that Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia has been arrested immediately on his arrival there and placed in solitary confinement. A few days ago Shri Kakodkar was arrested for having raised his voice for civil liberty and sentenced to imprisonment for nine years. It is being said that he may be deported.

Dr. Lohia is a learned man. I may not agree with his views but this does not mean that I can remain untouched by his case. You must all be as much pained as I am by the arrest of Dr. Lohia and the happenings in Goa. I carried on some correspondence with the authorities in Goa, but it was infructuous. To tell any Indian that he cannot enter Goa is as insulting as to tell me that I may not enter any particular part of India. Goa is as much a part of India as Kashmir or any other State. It is intolerable that Dr. Lohia should be treated as foreigner and denied the right of entry into Goa.

Let us see what steps Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who has donned the crown of thorns, and Lord Wavell take to see that this high-handedness on the part of the Goa authorities is stopped.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 3-10-1946

[1] A song written by Rabindranath Tagore and sung at the congregation. Translated, its first line read : "When the springs of life are drying up, do then come as a shower of mercy."

399. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

NEW DELHI,
October 3, 1946

In the context of the forthcoming Congress Presidential election, some friends tell me, it is being said that I am in favour of Acharya Kripalani being elected. I have also been shown a newspaper report to this effect. Although I do have my own personal views in the matter I have told friends who came to consult me not to cite my name in any way in connection with the election. It is my firm view that Congressmen should exercise their vote in this election without being influenced by any other Congressman or by those who are not members of the Congress, such as myself. Congressmen should consider what is best in the interest of the country and vote accordingly.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 4-10-1946

400. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 3, 1946

Gandhiji expressed satisfaction that the second charkha class was going on better than the first. There were fewer absentees. They had only three more days left, but if the will was there much work could be done in three days.

Gandhiji then referred to a letter he had received asking him how they should celebrate *Dussehra.* Should they take out a procession and eat and drink and be merry? Yesterday he had told them that the fountain of life had gone dry. Could there be rejoicing in a country where daily stabbings were taking place and brother hated brother? *Dussehra* was the celebration of Rama's victory over Ravana, but this victory was not achieved by violence.

When Vibhishana asked Shri Ramachandra how unarmed, unshod, without any armour, he was going to defeat the heavily-armed and mighty Ravana with his chariots, Rama's reply was that it was faith and purity that would win the battle. His bow was his self-control. His victory was the victory of good over evil. Gandhiji, therefore, advised the people to spend *Dussehra* quietly at home in prayer if they had understood the real meaning of religion and *Dussehra.*

Gandhiji added that he was daily receiving letters of abuse saying that his

doctrine of non-violence was emasculating Hindus, that he was no Mahatma, that he was injuring them and leading them astray. He had never laid claim to being a Mahatma. He was an ordinary mortal as anyone of them. He hoped he had never injured anyone. What he told them he told them for their own and universal good. He had said that if they could not act non-violently they should defend themselves violently rather than be cowards.

But the ability to die smiling at the hands of a brother without any retaliation, physical or mental, was the highest bravery. In no case was it right to spoil for a fight. That was no self-defence. It was bad for them, bad for the country and utter disloyalty to their leaders. It was hindering them in their march towards swaraj.

Gandhiji reiterated that today no one had a right to feast and eat one morsel more than necessary. If they behaved in a disciplined manner, India would live. If they did not, then India would die and they would be unable to hold their heads high.

The Hindustan Times, 4-10-1946

401. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

NEW DELHI,
October 4, 1946

SATISBABU
KHADIPRATISHTHAN
15 COLLEGE SQUARE, CALCUTTA

DONT WORRY ABOUT ACCOMMODATION. WIRE TRAIN DATE ARRIVAL.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

402. AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CONGRESS, THE MUSLIM LEAGUE AND THE NAWAB OF BHOPAL[1]

October 4, 1946

The Congress does not challenge and accepts that the Muslim League now is the authoritative representative of an overwhelming majority of the Muslims of India. As such and in accordance with democratic principles they alone have today an unquestionable right to represent the Muslims of India. But the Congress cannot agree that any restriction or limitation should be put upon the Congress to choose such representatives as they think proper from amongst the members of the Congress as their representatives.

II. It is understood that all the Ministers of the Interim Government will work as a team for the good of the whole of India and will never invoke the intervention of the Governor-General in any case.

I accept this formula.

M. K. GANDHI

HAMIDULLAH [NAWAB OF BHOPAL]

SHOAIB QURESHI

Sardar Patel's Correspondence, Vol. III, p. 282

[1] This was intended to enable the Muslim League to join the Interim Government, which was to consist of 14 members—6 from the Congress, 5 from the League and 3 representatives of minorities to be nominated by the Viceroy. Jinnah put forth the condition that there should be no Muslim among the nominees of the Congress. Gandhiji therefore accepted the formula laid down in the agreement. As it was, it found no approval from other Congress leaders, notably Nehru, who found the formula "not happily worded". In a letter to Jinnah he was prepared to concede to the Muslim League "the right to represent the Muslims of India, provided that for identical reasons the League recognized the Congress as the authoritative organization representing all non-Muslims and such Muslims as have thrown in their lot with the Congress." He further suggested that no formula was necessary. In the event the Congress list contained the name of Asaf Ali and the League nominated Jogendranath Mandal.

403. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

DELHI,
October 4, 1946

CHI. SUMI,

I am glad you are comfortable there. You will do as much as you can, with due regard for your health, and go forward. That is what I hope.

I had certainly hoped to be in Sevagram this time[1] but I am held up here till the 20th on account of the work. Let us see when I can get away.

Let me have news from there.

Blessings from
BAPU

KUM. SUMITRA R. GANDHI
KHALASI LINE
NAGPUR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

404. LETTER TO ZOHRA A. CHAVDA

NEW DELHI,
October 4, 1946

CHI. ZOHRA,

I have your letter. You have my letter with you. You can make use of it in my absence so that the apparent contradiction will disappear. You should therefore quietly go on doing your work and improve your health.

Manu is at present here. Jaisukhlal too was here; he left last night. Manu will stay on for some more time.

Write to me what you decide.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Presumably for Charkha Jayanti

405. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

DELHI,
October 4, 1946

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. I agree that you should resign. But I see a number of difficulties in pursuing nature cure work in Khurja at present. I have not taken any decision yet. When you come here I shall understand your mind better. Then we shall decide. So come on Monday the 7th at 8 p. m. If in the meanwhile some other work crops up you will have to wait.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 370

406. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

NEW DELHI,
October 4, 1946

It is impossible for me to send individual acknowledgments to the senders in India and abroad of numerous messages of birthday greetings. I must content myself with sending them my thanks through the courtesy of the Press.

The Hindustan Times, 5-10-1946

407. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 4, 1946

In the song that has been sung Mirabai says that she has bought Govind. There is a similar song by her in Gujarati, too. How can one buy God? Not with money, but with love certainly. The yarn lovingly drawn by a student of the spinning class can find God. Our Rashtrapati yesterday said that Afghanistan was in need of cloth. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, as President of the Congress, is not only our

Rashtrapati, but he is also our Prime Minister. We cannot shut our eyes to the needs of others. Today we have to confess we have gone berserk and are fighting each other. But in 1920 we had resolved to fight the British with truth and non-violence. We achieved our freedom through non-violence and the whole world is congratulating us. How then can we be enemies of anyone? Badshah Khan is a Pathan. His Pathan brethren from across the border have asked us for cloth. It is India's duty to give them this help. This river of love can and should flow from India. Time was when India produced all the cloth it needed and more, when its muslin was famous the world over. Today, owing to our laziness, we go naked in our own country. By plying the charkha we can not only meet all our requirement of cloth but also that of other countries. It is to be regretted that there are not enough charkhas for this second charkha class. Carpenters have forgotten the art of making charkhas, though they make any number of chairs and tables. But we shall teach spinning on *taklis*.

I appeal to everyone to spin and bring the yarn to me. I shall have it woven to provide cloth to those who need it.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 5-10-1946

408. ROWDYISM RUN RIOT

A correspondent from Jubbulpore describes the rowdyism exhibited by a section of the Hindus at a benefit performance in aid of the local convent school for girls. A Hindu friend actually organized the show. The actors in the little drama were all girls from the convent. Towards the end there was a scene in which an orphaned girl, tired of the world, was praying to God. Angels appeared and advised her to have faith in her Christ and the play ended with a hymn in praise of Jesus. This was the signal for pandemonium. The Hindus who created the disturbances raised a hue and cry against Christianity, the organizer who tried to speak was unable to make himself heard and money for the tickets was demanded back. The writer asks whether this scene could have taken place if the hymn sung had been in praise of Shri Krishna instead of Jesus.

If what the correspondent says is true, the behaviour described was wholly unworthy. It betrayed extreme intolerance. Those who do

not like things that do not coincide with their notions need not patronize them but it is ungentlemanly to behave like less than men when things are not to their taste.

NEW DELHI, October 5, 1946

Harijan, 13-10-1946

409. QUESTION BOX[1]

IS NOT WORK WORSHIP?

Q. Would it not be better for a man to give the time he spends in worship to the service of the poor? If a man did this, would worship be still necessary for him?

A. I sense mental laziness and unbelief in the question. The biggest of *karmayogis* never give up devotional singing and worship. Of course as a general principle it can be said that selfless service itself is worship and those who engage in it do not need any other kind of worship. But in truth *bhajans*, etc., are a help in the work of service and keep the awareness of God ever fresh.

HOW TO REMOVE UNTOUCHABILITY

Q. It is no doubt good to provide education to Harijans, to let them use public wells and visit temples, but really Harijans should not be segregated in *cherries* and the like. Then alone can untouchability be uprooted.

A. It feels good to say that Harijans not having separate quarters will be a sign of the vanishing of untouchability. Even at present, so far as I know, there is no law compelling Harijans to live in locations especially built for them. Only the evil custom segregates them. The custom is going, though rather slowly. It is the duty of all to do away with it. It is a question of moving the hearts of people. Such an enterprise can succeed only with *tapascharya*. Tulsidas says :

Through the power of *tapa* Brahma created the world.

Through the power of *tapa* Vishnu sustains the world.

Tapa, O Parvati, is the basis of all creation.

Go and do *tapa*, knowing this in heart.

The day someone is born who has this power everything will become easy and dharma will be saved.

[1] A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 13-10-1946.

IS RAMANAMA THE SAME AS INCANTATIONS?

Q. My nephew was ill. The relatives did not give him any medical treatment. They called in medicine-men and resorted to incantations. One cannot say that these did any good. Maybe your mother did the same in your case. Now you talk of Ramanama. Could Ramanama be the same as incantations?

A. I have, in one form or another, answered this question before. But it is as well to do so again. So far as I can recollect, my mother did give me medical treatment. But she certainly believed in incantations too. I do not. I have a few learned friends who believe in them, but I cannot have this faith. I can therefore categorically say that incantations have no connection whatever with my Ramanama. I have said that to utter Ramanama or any other name of God from the heart is to seek succour from the supreme power. What that Power can do no other power can. The atom bomb is as nothing compared with it. It is the cure for all pains. It must, however, be admitted that it is one thing to talk about uttering Ramanama from the heart, quite another to do it. Nevertheless, however difficult it may be, it is the highest thing in life.

NEW DELHI, October 5, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 13-10-1946

410. A GOOD WAY[1]

The following is the gist of a correspondent's letter from Dalhousie :[2]

If this story is true, it just shows what a mighty weapon fasting can be in the armoury of the official class.

Harijan, 6-10-1946

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 6-10-1946.

[2] Not reproduced here. It described how in a certain village shops were closed in protest against terrorism by some goondas and how a magistrate had them opened by resorting to a fast. *Vide* "Speech of Prayer Meeting", 27-9-1946.

411. WELLS THROWN OPEN

Shri Kalyanji Mehta writes[1] :

It is a good thing that the wells were thrown open. But more than that it is a matter of shame that Harijans are still not able to draw water from numerous wells. The burden of shame will be lightened if after having come to know about it, others are inspired to throw open the rest of the wells.

Some went in for inter-dining. While congratulating them one can't help commenting—only so few!

NEW DELHI, October 6, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 13-10-1946

412. THE DANGER OF 'VANASPATI'[2]

In the *Harijan* of 14-4-1946 you have supported Sardar Datar Singh on the question of 'vanaspati'. His article contains several suggestions which, if acted upon, can check the evil. But the evil is spreading. In the Punjab, in Akola, Shegaon and Kurnool, permission has actually been given for starting new factories. At least this should be stopped. In a province like the Punjab the Government has not even ordered the colouring of 'vanaspati'.

The above is the substance of a letter I have received. I have put 'Vanaspati' in quotes. Its full name is 'vanaspati ghee'. Vanaspati, which means flowers, fruits, leaves and so on, is always good. But when it becomes the name of something else, it becomes a poison. Vanaspati is not and never can be ghee. If ever it were to become ghee, I would be the first to loudly proclaim that there is no further need for real ghee. Ghee or butter is the fat drawn from the milk of an animal. Selling vegetable oil in the form, or in the name, of butter or ghee is a great fraud perpetrated on India. It is a betrayal of India. It is the duty of the businessmen of India not to sell any oil or any other product in the name of ghee. Certainly no Government should

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had said that in Surat District many wells had been thrown open to the Harijans and a few leading persons had participated in a dinner to which Harijans had been invited.

[2] A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 13-10-1946.

countenance such sale. The crores of India today get neither milk nor buttermilk, neither ghee nor butter. The result is that people go on dying and becoming more and and more enfeebled. Human body, it would appear, needs meat and milk or milk products, such as curds, buttermilk, ghee and butter. Anyone who deceives people in this regard or countenances deception of them is an enemy of India.

NEW DELHI, October 6, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 13-10-1946

413. DOLA-PALKI[1]

The Hindus of the Garhwal District are so ignorant that they do not permit Harijan bridegrooms to ride in a *palki* or any conveyance and pass by temples or through public squares or the residential quarters of high caste Hindus. An evil custom like this should not be tolerated any more. A friend has even sent me a draft of a law, the passing of which might make these ignorant people see reason. This should be certainly done. In any case, whenever a Harijan bridal procession is taken out, these unfortunate people should be afforded police protection. The authorities should also distribute notices that no one is to be prevented from riding in a *palki* or using any other conveyance, and that anyone obstructing such a procession will be punished.

NEW DELHI, October 6, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 13-10-1946

[1] A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 13-10-1946.

414. TELEGRAM TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

NEW DELHI,
October 6, 1946

SARALADEVI
CARE BUSINESS
AHMEDABAD

YES CERTAINLY YOU CAN REACH EIGHTH OR WHENEVER YOU WISH.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

415. NOTE ON INTERIM GOVERNMENT

[On or before *October 6, 1946*][1]

1. No reference to the Viceroy at any stage on any matter.
2. League to nominate all League quota of Muslims whenever vacancy occurs.
3. Congress to nominate other members including other minorities including nationalist Muslims.
4. Communal safeguards shall be decided by joint consultation subject to reference to arbitration in point of difference.
5. Vice-President to be from the Congress.
6. The Chairman of the inner cabinet to be the Leader of the House.
7. The Congress would like Q. A. to join the I. G.

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the points listed in the note it is evident that they were set down by Gandhiji to be amplified by Jawaharlal Nehru in his letter to M. A. Jinnah, dated October 6, 1946; *vide* Appendix "Lord Wavell's Note on Interview with Gandhiji and Nehru", 27-8-1946.

416. UNCERTIFIED BUT GENUINE

The above two letters[1] are from blood sisters. That both of them are very sincere is clearly shown by their letters. Some may even recognize them. I have had to delete as much I could to conceal their identity.

I have also received other similar letters. I can also understand the anguish of those who write in English and Hindustani. Even then I have to adhere to my dharma as I understand it. I should therefore like to stick to what I have written. It is possible that my writing is not very clear. In fact no writing is perfect because writing circumscribes the thought of the speaker or the writer. It is impossible to convey the complete thought through speech or writing.

Whether khadi is certified or not, as long as it is khadi ideologically it is superior to mill cloth.[2] Mill cloth should be discarded even if compared to khadi it is cheap, soft and fine.

Those who buy cloth in the name of khadi knowing that it is not khadi are hypocrites. My writings are not meant for them. Genuine khadi even if it is uncertified is preferable to mill cloth.

The lady who, because of the purity of her thought returned empty-handed from a store selling uncertified khadi commands our respect.

There is a saying in English "Buyers Beware". If a buyer is cautious he will never be deceived. He will make sure before buying anything. Such a person will read my articles again and again and till he is thoroughly convinced he will not act on them. A time may come when the Charkha Sangh will stop giving the certificates. What will happen to khadi then? Will not all khadi be uncertified then? Among stores dealing in khadi some would be honest and some dishonest. A buyer will buy khadi from the store he prefers.

A businessman should be honest and should not sell uncertified khadi.

The other letter deals with the office-bearers of the Congress. It

[1] Not translated here. One of the correspondents had said that had to return empty-handed from an uncertified khadi store because it pricked her conscience. The other had complained about the corruption in the Congress.

[2] *Vide Vide* "Uncertified Khadi v. Mill Cloth", 12-9-1946

is a sad story. The corruption among us is responsible for the corruption that has crept into khadi. Those who have remained pure in spite of being in the midst of corruption, have to remain so. One needs steadfastness and generosity to cultivate that art. Is not being strict with oneself and generous to others the way to get rid of corruption?

NEW DELHI, October 7, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 13-10-1946

417. TELEGRAM TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

KUMARAPPA
MAGANWADI
WARDHA
BHANGI COLONY SUITABLE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

418. LETTER TO GENERAL MANAGER, G. I. P. RAILWAY

"VALMIKI MANDIR", READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

THE GENERAL MANAGER
GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY
BOMBAY

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your letter No. 20435-V 395 of 28th ultimo.[1]

My suggestion is that the driver himself should be asked as to what article or articles of use he would want and you or the Railway Board should decide what should be done. The donors will have no opportunity of coming to a correct decision and it would be improper for them directly to approach the person concerned.

Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 10531

419. LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

CHI. CHAMPA,

I have your letter. If only you are patient, the clouds of misfortune that have gathered over you will disperse.

It is surprising that Shanti has still not recovered. Write to Sheth Bachharaj Tribhuvandas at Panchgani. He will at once make some arrangements. Medical and other facilities are available there. And go there when he writes. There is no need to go to Miraj just now. Besides, the place may have no facilities. It must be getting a little cold in Panchgani now, but that is nothing to worry about. Let me

[1] The addressee had said that he had received a further sum of Rs. 1200 to be given as a reward to the driver whose vigilance had averted a serious accident to Gandhiji's train and had asked how the reward might be paid. *Vide* also "Letter to General Manager. G.I.P. Railway", 2-8-1946.

know what happens. Bachhrajbhai is known to us and you need not, therefore, go to another place.

Has Pramod stayed on there? I hope he has got well.

I shall have to stay on here for the present.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am not writing a separate letter to Gatulal. Let this be for him also.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 1049. Courtesy: Champa R. Mehta

420. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

CHI. LILY,

You did well in writing to me. Your letter is painful. What is His will He alone knows. We have gone completely mad. Thoughtful men and women should pray to God to save us. By "we" I do not mean you and I but everyone. You and I should ask that we may sacrifice ourselves in this conflagration. But we must also make ourselves fit for that, shouldn't we? Go on doing service.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. LILAVATIBEHN UDESHI
G. S. MEDICAL COLLEGE
LADIES' HOSTEL
PAREL
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10247. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

421. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

N[EW] D[ELHI],
Silence Day, October 7, 1946

CHI. KANCHAN,

I got both your letters. I do not at all like your having fallen ill. Now that your yearning has been satisfied, you should get well soon at least for the sake of the baby that will be born. You will do so not by overeating but by eating moderately, taking sun-baths, living in the open air, drinking clean water, taking fruit juice, eating steamed or boiled vegetables and avoiding sweets and spicy foods. If you take friction-baths and hip-baths, you will get well soon.

Why need you feel ashamed of being pregnant? That is what you were yearning for. Why need one feel ashamed of what one yearns for and of what happens to everybody? You must now overcome your sexual urge for three years at least. And that for the sake of the child.

Yes, Munnalal has reason to be ashamed of himself, for it was his ambition to observe *brahmacharya* though he had no capacity for it at all. I had cautioned him sufficiently. But what could even he do? Could he have helped following whither nature led him? If he humbly admits his weaknesses, they will disappear.

I advise you to have the confinement in Vyara itself. If you wish, you may go to Sevagram for it. But there are difficulties in that. To ensure easy delivery, Munnalal should be told to stay away from you. Moreover, he should now earn enough for a living. Nobody need hesitate to ask for his market-price.

I told Munnalal that, even if you two satisfied your passion, you could continue to do my work. If, therefore, he is ready to take up a regular job, I am prepared to give him one and pay him for it. Whatever may have happened from my point of view, Munnalal has committed on sin. He should, therefore, humbly admit what has happened without feeling guilty about it and take up whatever work is available. He should earn a modest living and do whatever other service is possible in the time he can spare from his duties as a householder. He should do nothing that will heighten sexual craving; he should try to control it. The birth of a baby is a reminder. You

may show this letter to everybody without feeling the least embarrassment. Neither of you has committed a sin. If any party is guilty, generally it is the man. For the present I am here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8253. Also C. W. 6977. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

422. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your letter written to Kanchan. Can the fact of pregnancy be ever concealed? And why need it be concealed? Surely you have committed no sin. And even if you have committed a sin, you should not commit another by hiding it. Sin is a kind of boil. If we let the poison circulate in the system we shall die, but if we throw it out with the help of natural remedies we shall live. You have committed no sin, but you did cherish great pride. Everybody thought that you were a strong-willed *brahmachari*. If that pride has melted, you have won. I have written to Kanchan at length and explained what she and you should now do. I shall not repeat it here. Generally I keep no copies of the letters I write to you. But copies of my letter to Kanchan and of this one shall be kept. They may also help me in refreshing my memory in future.

You should now, like a householder, earn an adequate living. You can be accommodated in one of our departments. Think over your needs and let me know. Also state what kind of work you would like. It would be better if you reply to this letter after reading my letter to Kanchan. It would be all right even if both of you stay in Vyara. You may go on serving the people while looking after your own affairs. I am of course of the view that during the period of Kanchan's pregnancy and for two years after the birth of the baby you should not cohabit with her. Doctors advise the same thing. It is for this reason that people adopt artificial methods of birth-control. I don't think, however, that your craving for indulgence is so strong as to make that necessary. But even if it is, you should humbly admit the

fact. There are numerous men and women who adopt artificial methods. Society does not boycott them; on the contrary, it even commends them. Sin is what we believe to be sin and virtue what we believe to be virtue. There are but few things which are sinful or virtuous in themselves. And in the last analysis even these are so because we think them so. I have written enough now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8398. Also C. W. 7217. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

423. LETTER TO S. P. PATWARDHAN

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

CHI. APPA,

I have your postcard. I hope you got my letters. You should leave only after you are fully recovered. Never mind if it takes time. If you are not completely cured and made strong, nature cure and Dr. Bhagawat will be put to shame. Handle from where you are as much Ratnagiri work as you can. Keep me posted with news of your health. You should regard me as free only when I leave this place.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. APPA PATWARDHAN
URULI KANCHAN

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

424. LETTER TO GAJANAN NAIK

NEW DELHI,
Silence Day, October 7, 1946

CHI. GAJANAN,

I am tired of you letters. I shall not get tired if you permit me to show them all to the persons about whom you write.

Many public workers go in for life insurance. How can they be bracketed together? You have to cultivate a liberal attitude.

One reaps as one sows. If we happen to notice someone's shortcomings we should feel alarmed and say to ourselves: "What if I have even more serious ones and others can see them!" This reflection should make us try to see our own shortcomings and to remove them.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI GAJANAN NAIK
WARDHA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

425. LETTER TO JATINDAS AMIN

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

CHI. AMIN,

I have already sent you the messages. There is certainly nothing wrong in acquiring knowledge. Learn to have calmness of mind, to develop the spirit of service, to free yourself of attachments and aversions and to make your intellect steadfast.

Sushilabehn will write the rest.

Blessings from
BAPU

KOLHAPUR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

426. LETTER TO MANGALDAS HARKISANDAS

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

BHAI MANGALDAS,

I was no doubt informed about your earlier cheque. Your cheque for Rs. 100 dated October 4, 1946, has reached me safely.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. MANGALDAS HARKISANDAS
BHAGA TALAO
SURAT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

427. LETTER TO PRAVINA DIWANJI

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

Kishorelal has forwarded to me here in New Delhi the noble gift you sent for me. It is beautiful.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. PRAVINABEHN DIWANJI
KHAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

428. LETTER TO SATISH D. KALELKAR

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

CHI. SATISH,

I have your letter. The story about the Chinese is very interesting. I might use it in *Harijanbandhu*.

I was very glad to read that Chandan has acquired faith in Ramanama and following in her footsteps so have you. How nice if

[the baby] possesses qualities worthy of the name it has been given and what a great delight it would be for all of you! If Rama came to dwell in Chandan's heart all illness would disappear from her.

To you all,

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. SATISH KALELKAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

429. LETTER TO DR. ATMARAM K. BHAGAWAT

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

BHAI BHAGAWAT,

Appasaheb should leave the place only when he has recovered fully and regained his strength. If the cure is not within your reach and you need help from someone do take it. It is a human virtue to know one's own limitations.

I hope everything else is going on well. How is Balkrishna? Is milk available?

My blessings to all.

URULI KANCHAN

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

430. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

CHI. CHAND,

It is bad that you keep falling ill. What service can you render if you continue to be ill? The weather there should be good these days. Do you get any sun in the house? Is the bathroom good? Do you get fresh air? I have stayed in Amritsar houses. One cannot say even the house of the rich are good. Is your diet all right? Air and diet are more efficacious than medicines.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

431. LETTER TO RAJ

October 7, 1946

CHI. RAJ,

Your handwriting is good. I was of course confident that your parents would be pleased with your sacrifice. Keep your pledge and strengthen your spirit of service.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

432. MESSAGE TO PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
October, 7, 1946

The talks[2] now going on give rise to the hope that the Muslim League will join the Cabinet. I shall pray for it. I ask all of you also to pray that the entente between the Congress and the Muslim League this time may be even more cordial and enduring than in 1916 or during the Khilafat days, that brother may not now abuse or kill brother and all may live in peace.

[From Hindi]
Hindustan, 8-10-1946

433. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

October 8, 1946

CHI. SITA,

I have your letter. I hope you received the message I sent in Behn's[3] letter. When does New Year commence for us? Is not time

[1] It being a Silence Day, the message was read out at the meeting.

[2] Jawaharlal Nehru had met M. A. Jinnah to explore possibilities of the Muslim League accepting the five seats offered to it in the Cabinet, so that the Interim Government could be worked as a Provisional National Government.

[3] Addressee's mother, Sushila Gandhi

changing ceaselessly? If we remain steadfast in all these changes, why need we care for a New Year?

But you may have the good wishes.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

And aspire to live for 125 years, doing service till the end.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4992

434. DISCUSSION WITH MEMBERS OF A. I. S. A.[1]

NEW DELHI,

[*October 8, 1946*][2]

A member suggested that the A. I. S. A. might pass a resolution requesting the Government to nationalize all new textile mills and the existing ones also as soon as practicable. Gandhiji demurring to the suggestion explained that they could not ask the Government to nationalize new textile mills when they were telling them that khadi and the erection of new mills could not go together. Shri T. Prakasam, the Premier of Madras, had already made an announcement to the effect that no new textile mills would be erected in the Madras Presidency. They might ask for the nationalization of the existing mills but he himself preferred putting them under strict State control to taking charge of and running them as a State concern. As a believer in non-violence he believed in trusteeship. He wanted a peaceful conversion of mill-owners, so that the mill-owners and their employees would all come under social control voluntarily. That meant that though, for instance, X might continue to be the legal owner, he would only take such commission out of the profits for himself as was warranted by his services and sanctioned by the people. The real owners would be the labourers in the mills. In one of the Tata concerns the labourers were reported to have become profit-sharers. Shri J. R. D. Tata's speech in that connection was worthy of perusal. He (Gandhiji) considered such solution to be the best. Several mill-owners had assured him that they were ready to co-operate in any such scheme, if required, and would prevent further expansion of their textile mills. He deprecated the idea of joint control of the mill industry by the Government, the A. I. S. A. and the mill-owners. He said:

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 15-10-1946 and 18-10-1946. The annual meeting of the A. I. S. A. was held at the Harijan Colony in Kingsway on the 8th, 9th and 10th October.

[2] From *Indian Annual Register*

Our job is not to run mills but to ply the little wheel by hand. Why should we spend time in discussing a thing which lies outside our sphere of action. I would not shed a single tear if all the mills were to close. If mills flourish, khadi must die. It might still function as a supplementary occupation for the relief of the poor. But for that you do not need a big organization like the Charkha Sangh.

He would, he concluded, be perfectly satisfied if the State exercised control over the textile mills in consultation with them and so far as possible according to their advice.

"Would it not be advisable", asked Shri Jajuji, "to ask the Government to give those who spin for themselves a subsidy so as to reduce the charges of weaving for self-spinners?" Gandhiji's reply was that they should not ask for subsidy but ask the Government to help in supplying cotton, the necessary implements and the services of teachers and technical experts to those who would take to spinning for their own cloth requirements. He did not want to have it said that the Charkha Sangh was cashing its influence to make the government squander money on the whims of cranks and faddists. He wanted no favour for the Charkha Sangh which must stand or fall on its merits. He wanted everybody to feel that nothing had been given at the instance of the Charkha Sangh which had not been paid back tenfold.

Another member suggested that the weavers should be required to weave a certain amount of hand-spun yarn and unless they did that the quota of mill yarn should not be given to them. Any kind of compulsion, replied Gandhiji, would only create a revulsion against khadi. It would then cease to be the 'livery of freedom'. He said :

The spirit of independence is in the air. The weaver might well refuse to be compelled.

"There is control in everything—food, cloth, etc. Why cannot joint control be introduced with regard to weavers?" Gandhiji replied :

I do not like the idea. We do not use compulsion with regard to spinners. We cannot use it for weavers. Let us go to the root of the difficulty. Our initial mistake was that we took to spinning but neglected weaving. If we had adopted universal weaving along with spinning, all these difficulties would not have arisen. The remedy is to improve the yarn so that the weavers have as little difficulty in weaving as possible. We should reason with the weavers and explain to them that dependence on mill yarn must kill their avocation in the end. Mill-owners are no philanthropists. They would draw the noose tight round the handloom weavers' neck the moment they came within effective range of competition with mill cloth.

If we have faith in the charkha, we must forge ahead undismayed by these temporary bottlenecks. The number of handlooms weaving hand-spun will increase in due course. We have got enough artisans and indigenous skill in our country to produce all the cloth that we require for ourselves.

JAJUJI: This means that the work must go on as before at a snail's pace. Our scheme of making 4 lakhs of people self-sufficient in cloth in a short time in this way will not succeed.

GANDHIJI: If it does not, the fault will be ours.

J. That is right in the ultimate sense. But circumstances also count.

G. It is man's privilege to overcome adverse circumstances. Is not conquest of nature the slogan of the age we are living in? If circumstances alone had counted, Germany and Japan would have won the war. Let us in this respect take a leaf out of the book of the English people who do not know what it is to admit defeat. We have to cultivate austerity and penance on our life. There is nothing that the power of penance cannot achieve.

"You have taught us to be straight and above board in everything," asked another member. "Is it not dishonest to wear uncertified khadi and be known as a khadiwala when one does not fulfil the conditions of wearing khadi? Is it not better to be honest and use mill cloth instead?"

Gandhiji replied that he did not approve of uncertified khadi, but he was of opinion that khadi, so long as it was genuine stuff, was preferable to mill cloth. All uncertified khadi was not dishonest.

For instance, people who spin for themselves or their family and have their yarn woven do not use certified khadi. Yet such khadi is of the highest merit. Certified khadi carried the guarantee that the rules of the A. I. S. A. have been observed, as for instance paying to the spinners a certain minimum wage. Khadi, even when the spinners are not paid the standard A. I. S. A. wage, is preferable to mill cloth. The higher wages paid to labourers in the spinning mills are more apparent than real. Mill cloth is $2\frac{1}{2}$ times cheaper than khadi today. Experts have told me that if the mill industry did not receive special privileges and concessions in several ways, which it today enjoys, mill cloth would not sell cheaper than khadi. For instance, we provide cheap transport facilities to the mills to enable raw materials and mass-produced finished goods to be taken from one place to another. Again, enormous sums have been spent on growing long-staple cotton

or on starting technical institutes and on research work. No one has bothered to do anything for any of the seven lakhs of India's villages. So the mills are today actually being subsidized in some shape or other. Remove all that and then see whether mill cloth is cheaper than khadi.

He could not possibly encourage uncertified khadi, continued Gandhiji, but mill cloth should be absolutely taboo.

A day might come when the A. I. S. A. might stop issuing certificates. Anybody would then be free to sell khadi. That would be inevitable when khadi became universal. The Charkha Sangh would then function as the custodian of the ethics and the general policy of khadi. Its business activities would cease.

People must become honest by habit and insist upon meticulous honesty on the part of the producers or the dealers in khadi so that only genuine stuff is sold and bought.

I have called khadi and the charkha the symbols of non- violence. But it is said that there is dishonesty even in certified bhan-dars. I wish it were not so. But there is no denying the fact that it is true of some.

I have objected to the term vegetable ghee because it is not ghee. It should be labelled as vegetable oil. Similarly, I cannot tolerate that cloth which is not khadi, i. e., is not hand-spun and hand-woven, should pass as such. The ultimate remedy lies in the buyer's hands. "Buyer beware" is a sound legal maxim for all to remember.

It was suggested that the formulation of khadi policy for each unit of area should be left entirely to local bodies which should be completely independent of the central organization. Gandhiji, while he was entirely in favour of the maximum decentralization of initiative and responsibility, was opposed to the creation of local committees of untrained men and women to take the place of khadi workers. For organization of khadi work what was needed was a body of technicians and experts, men endowed with business talent and filled with the spirit of service. There was no room in it for personal ambition or power politics. The latter had become the bane of the Congress. To get rid of corruption in the Congress organization he had suggested that it should convert itself into an organization of workers. To introduce an element of democracy into khadi work would be to kill khadi. The Charkha Sangh was not a democratic organization in the sense the Congress was. It was an organization created by the Congress for the building up of democracy. Like the Directorate of the Bank of England, it was a business organization first and last. Only it was motivated by an altruistic, not profit, motive. A business organization of a democratic body could not be bound by the procedure of the democratic vote. He said :

We want to disperse in the villages. A khadi worker can have no use for any other sanction save such as persuasion and service can command. The moment he seeks to arm himself with any other, he kills khadi.

"To make khadi universal," finally asked a friend, "you need to inspire the co-operation of everybody."

Gandhiji replied that since khadi workers were expected to be full servants of the people, their worth if there was any could create public opinion in their favour. The need was not for a committee of members who might be a hindrance rather than help, whereas if service drew supporters they would be a powerful help.

"What would be the authority of the A. I. S. A. after khadi became decentralized?" was another question.

The answer came quick! The authority of the Sangh would be merely moral and, therefore, more potent than at present. Its function would not be to provide money or material but only to smooth the way for khadi work by the creation of a moral sanction. It would lend the khadi workers the use of its name but not seek to impose its will upon them. Its moral authority would be available to anybody who accepted its policy. Even its present assets would be put at the disposal of any unit that was ready and considered fit to claim autonomy, provided only that it guaranteed the right use of the assets allotted to it and bound itself to return the same after a certain period. The Charkha Sangh would have the right of inspection but even that would be at the will of the autonomous unit.

Harijan, 20-10-1946 and 27-10-1946

435. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 8, 1946

We must all pray from the heart that the talks going on between the Congress and the Muslim League may bear fruit. I cannot give you any news today. I cannot even say what will happen in the future. Maybe it is the will of God that we should under go yet further suffering. If that be so, we must put up with the suffering.

If we sincerely desire peace and if we have faith in God we should pray for a successful issue of the Congress-League parleys, so that people who are today behaving like savages may be brought back to civilized ways. However people in Europe or other parts of the world may behave, we must never sink to the state of the brute. We must remember that our actions reflect our inner feelings. You who

are sitting here before me are but a drop in the vast sea of Indian humanity. If it is the wish of everyone to live at peace with his neighbour the Congress and the Muslim League will have to come to terms. Though it is true that the Viceroy acts under instructions from the British Cabinet, he is nevertheless an autocrat. Our leaders, on the contrary, are representatives of the people and must carry out people's wishes. You should therefore pray that your mind may be cleansed of anger and hate and the leaders may be granted good sense so that the country may become united and free. If we desist from the present strife and mutual slaughter, we shall certainly achieve freedom. There is so much that a free India has to do. We are hungry and naked. Corruption and black-marketing are rampant. All this should go. Then alone can we organize ourselves and bring into being the new order which we want to see established.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 9-10-1946

436. ENGLISH-HINDUSTANI DICTIONARY[1]

A friend from the Bhangi Colony, Delhi, asked me the other day why the *Harijan Sevak* had discontinued the above feature. I told him it appeared only in *Harijan*. He was disheartened. I explained to him that it was meant for the English-knowing public and, therefore, was not published in either the *Harijanbandhu* or *Harijan Sevak* and that it was by mistake it had appeared in *Harijan Sevak*. It would have been well to explain this in *Harijanbandhu* and *Harijan Sevak*. Those who are interested in it can remit postage stamps worth 1/6 and have the off-prints of the dictionary. Off-prints from the past issues are also available.

NEW DELHI, October 10, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 20-10-1946

[1] This was published under the heading "Notes".

437. TELEGRAM TO Y. M. DADOO

NEW DELHI,
October 10, 1946

DOCTOR DADOO[1]
DURBAN

GLAD PASSIVE RESISTERS ADHERE NON-VIOLENCE. HOPE NO WEAKENING OR DIVISION AMONG OUR PEOPLE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

438. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

NEW DELHI,
October 10, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

It was good of you to send me your wishes for my birthday which is synonymous with the rebirth of the spinning-wheel in 1918.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government 1944-47, p. 217

439. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

NEW DELHI,
October 10, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

Three letters I am writing after the morning prayer. The other two are to the Lawrences.

Many thanks to you two for your wishes. I am here only for the work you expect me to do. Heaven help us all.

[1] Indian leader; Chairman of the Passive Resistance Council and Democratic Action Committee

Hope you are really well and strong.

With love,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 218

440. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

NEW DELHI,

October, 10, 1946

CHI. DINSHAW,

I will not address you in the honorific plural. I cannot help writing to you today. Jehangir's letter has only a line about you. My heart cries out for you. Why should you, an adherent of nature cure, feel distressed? How can your sorrowing alleviate others' sorrow? Hasn't a nature cure practitioner himself said: "Physician, heal thyself.[1] If you can get away from there and if you are still depressed, come to me and have the cure for your depression. Never mind if I am in Delhi or Sevagram or anywhere else.

I hope Gulbehn and the children are well. Mother must have now recovered.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. DINSHAW MEHTA

POONA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This is in English.

441. LETTER TO RANGANAYAKI DEVI

NEW DELHI,
October 10, 1946

CHI. RANGANAYAKI,

I have your letter. You may come wherever I may be. God is in you. He will give you fortitude. You have ears to listen to His voice, then why bother to hear anything else?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI RANGANAYAKI DEVI
FIRST HOUSE
SRIRANGAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

442. NOTE TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

NEW DELHI,
October 10, 1946

It is wrong.[1] The really poor are never able to listen to the radio. I am therefore not at all enthusiastic about it.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 325

[1] Some one had suggested to the addressee that he should arrange for Gandhiji to broadcast on the radio, so that the whole country might hear him.

443. MESSAGE TO STUDENTS OF HARIJAN UDYOGSHALA[1]

NEW DELHI,
October 10, 1946

It is my earnest desire that the students of the Harijan Udyogshala and members of their families should become true Harijans—i. e., men of God.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 11-10-1946

444. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 10, 1946

Addressing the prayer meeting in Bhangi Colony on Thursday evening, Mahatma Gandhi said that he had thought that all the jewellery that had been presented to him had been auctioned out. But a ring had just then been given him which he auctioned, as usual, immediately after the prayer. . . . He was, led to recall how over than 20 years ago he had, during the course of one of his tours, begun collecting money by auction at Ahmednagar. In those days, auctions used to go on by the hour and he used to collect thousands in a day. Now he had not the physical strength to do this.

Among other things, he even used to auction garlands of flowers which were presented to him. Here he confessed that he had never liked garlands of flowers. He had always held it to be cruel or wrong to pick flowers from plants. Flowers should be allowed to fall to the ground in a natural way. They then made a beautiful carpet under the trees and looked just as lovely as when they were in blossom. In his ashram people were expected not to pick flowers from off the trees. Thus was introduced the custom of presenting garlands of hand-spun yarn in the place of flowers.

Gandhiji, however, assured the audience that he did not want them to think that all who bid at the auctions had to pay or indeed bid at all.

The Hindustan Times, 11-10-1946

[1] The message was for the convocation of the Udyogshala. Gandhiji was not able to be present.

445. LETTER TO PYARELAL

[After *October* 10, 1946][1]

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have not written without thinking. You have high regard for your own knowledge. Hence, I feel like a child before you. How can I feel attached because you consider me your father and respect me ? The very fact that your mind is in turmoil shows that in spite of your having lived with me for so many years you are in anguish ! Whatever I say or do has no effect on you ! How much should I write ? To whom should I write ? I am defeated.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

My silence does not apply when visitors like Nawab Saheb, Maulana Saheb come.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

446. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

BHANGI COLONY,
READING ROAD,
October 11, 1946

DEAR SHRI PRAKASAM,

I am writing to you under instructions from Gandhiji.

He has had a letter from a friend, whose name he is withholding, making certain complaints. I give the relevant extracts and Gandhiji would like to have your opinion on them.

(a) "An indescribable arrogance has entered into the mind and heart of 75% of Congressmen in the Madras Province which is arousing bitterness in all who are not Congressmen . . . Some of them are blackmailing officials and others by openly approaching ministers and thus pretending that they could do anything with their influence."

[1] The letter is written on a paper bearing the stamp of this date "October 10, 1946".

(b) "Members of the Legislature are paid Rs. 150/- p.m. They also get a large daily allowance and travelling *bhatta* when they attend the Councils. As paid men they should do some work for the district they represent but they don't . . . . They are very prominent only when ministers visit the districts."

Yours sincerely,

AMRIT KAUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

447. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
October 11, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

I have gone through your letter. I gave it to Sushila Pai, Kanu, Sushila (Dr.) and Pyarelal to read. Here I shall tell you only this, that I liked your letter.

Further, I shall be happy if you come over and have a talk with me. I do not wish to put any pressure on you. It is my earnest desire that you should remain a pure virgin till the end of your life and spend your life in service.

I hope Umiya's son is doing well.

Blessings to all from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

448. LETTER TO PERIN CAPTAIN

NEW DELHI,
October 11, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I wonder what I can do. I shall see what can be done; not much, I fear.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIMATI PERINBEHN CAPTAIN
ORIENT CLUB
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

449. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
October 11, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

Your letter is no doubt long. But it does not matter. If your heart prompts you to go to Borkamata, do go. I do not know what order to give you. When we meet we shall talk more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 532

450. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

NEW DELHI,
October 11, 1946

This[3] is a specimen of the yarn Punjabi women bring to me. The yarn has been given to me for the poor, including the Harijans,

[1] This sentence and the address are in English.

[2] A slightly different version of this speech also appeared in Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", *Harijan,* 20-10-1946.

[3] Here Gandhiji displayed a skein of yarn.

who are the most oppressed. The skein has a nice look, but it is difficult to unwind. It had been my experience in the past that unwinding the yarn took a long time and it frequently broke in the process. The result was further delay and more labour. What the spinner should do is to take off the yarn entirely from the spindle and put it on a winder that takes a round of four feet. They should count the rounds for each hank and tie them up. The yarn should be strong and even so that weavers do not find it difficult to handle. Today mill yarn is readily available. But this will not always be so. But why should weavers be dependent on mill yarn? If hand-spun yarn of good quality is available they will not buy mill yarn. If you can spin yarn of good quality you can clothe everybody and put an end to the mills.

I hope all spinners will take the trouble to do as indicated.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 12-10-1946

451. HINDU PANI AND MUSLIM PANI

A stranger travelling in Indian trains may well have a painful shock when he hears at railway stations for the first time in his life ridiculous sounds about *pani*, tea and the like being either Hindu or Muslim. It would be repulsive now that the Government at the Centre is wholly national and a well-known Indian in the person of Asaf Ali Saheb is in charge of Transport and Railways. It is to be hoped that we shall soon have the last of the shame that is peculiarly Indian. Let no one imagine that Railways being under a Muslim, Hindus may not get justice. In the Central and Provincial Governments, there is or should be no Hindu, Muslim or any other communal distinctions. All are Indians. Religion is a personal matter. Moreover, the members of the Cabinet have set up a wholesome convention that they should always meet at the end of the day's work and take stock of what each member has done. It is team work in which the members are jointly and severally responsible for one another's work. It is not open to any member to say that a particular thing is not his work because it is no part of his portfolio. We have a right therefore to assume that this unholy practice of having separate everything for every community at railway stations will go. Scrupulous cleanliness is a desideratum for all. If taps are used for all liquids there need be no

compunction felt by the most orthodox about helping themselves. A fastidious person may keep his own *lota* and cup and receive his milk, tea, coffee or water through a tap. In this there is no interference with religion. No one is compelled to buy anything at railway stations. As a matter of fact many orthodox persons fast for water and food during travel. Thanks we still breathe the same air, walk on the same mother earth.

All communal cries at least at railway stations should be unlawful.

As I have often said in these columns trains and steamers are the best media for the practical education of the millions of travellers in spotless cleanliness, hygiene, sanitation and camaraderie between the different communities of India. Let us hope that the Cabinet will have the courage to act up to their convictions and may confidently expect the hearty co-operation of the Railway staff and the public in making this much needed reform a thorough success.

New Delhi, October 12, 1946

Harijan, 20-10-1946

452. REAL INDIA

If my frequent wanderings throughout India of the villages have not deceived me, it can be confidently asserted that the 700,000 villages get and want no police protection. The solitary Patel to a village is a terrorist lording it over the villages and is designed for helping the petty revenue collector to collect revenue due to the *Ma-Bap*[1]. I am not aware of the policeman having aided the villagers in protecting their goods or cattle against depredations of man and beast. The Police Patel is not to be blamed for what he is. He has been chosen for his task which he does well. He has not been taught to regard himself as the servant of the people. He represents his master the Viceroy. The change at the top has not yet permeated the most distant village. How can it ? It has not come from the bottom. The Viceroy still retains legal and military powers to remove and even to imprison his ministers. The latter have no power, legal or other, to imprison the Viceroy. Even the Civil Service is still under his control. It is not suggested that the Viceroy does not mean to shed all power

[1] Government

nor that he does not wish the most distant village to realize that he is determined under instructions from Whitehall to shed every vestige of British control in the quickest time possible.

The relevance of all this writing is for showing that we do not yet learn from the village in which India lives that every Indian, man or woman, is his or her own policeman. This he or she can only do when neither harbours mischief against his or her neighbour, no matter what religion he professes or denies. If unfortunately the politically minded will not or cannot go as far as suggested here, he must at least shed all fear and resolutely deny himself all protection whether from the military or the police. I am positive that India will not come into her own unless every home becomes its own castle not in the sense of the ages known as dark but in the very ancient true sense that everyone has learnt the art of dying without ill-will, or even wishing that since he cannot someone else will do away with the would-be assassin. How nice, therefore, it would be if everyone of us had this lesson burnt into us. There is much proof in support of the lesson, if we will take the trouble to examine the proof.

NEW DELHI, October 12, 1946

Harijan, 20-10-1946

453. QUESTION BOX

ONENESS OF COSTUME A CURE?

Q. In these last four weeks, I have seen so much bloodshed and firing that it has left a bitter taste in my mouth. Every day since the riots started I have been on duty as a magistrate trying to maintain the peace. Now, more than ever before, I am convinced of the necessity that we should insist on every Indian wearing the same nationalist dress— as you remember I had broached the subject before but at the time you had not approved of the idea. Why is it that none of the stabbings have been of people wearing a shirt and pant? This should be conclusive proof that the dress causes the difference in religion to be accentuated. Your reply to this through the *Harijan* for others like me who think that communal riots would disappear within a short time on our wearing the same kind of dress would be most appreciated.

A. I publish this as from a well-versed, well-meaning friend. These three qualities combined do not necessarily make for clearness of thought. What is wanted is not oneness of costume but oneness of hearts. We have only to look at Europe to demonstrate the emptiness of the idea that oneness of costume will enable us to get out of the

mess we are in. Ill-will is like an ill wind. It must go and be replaced by the fresh and bracing wind of goodwill.

THE SMOKING EVIL

Q. While you have all along written very strongly in favour of prohibition, you have not spoken either often enough or with equal emphasis in the matter of smoking. This evil is increasing with alarming rapidity and even children are increasingly getting addicted to it. The crores that are literally burnt by smoking could be so well utilized in wise ways in our poor land.

A. The taunt is true but not new. The reason for want of equal emphasis is to be sought in the fact that smoking has attained alarming respectability. When a vice reaches that state it becomes difficult to eradicate. This admission does not mean that we should not agitate for abatement of the nuisance. How to do so and when is the question. I am sorry to have to confess my inability to answer it.

THE CURSE OF DOWRY

Q. The demand for dowries in the marriage market is growing. None is immune from this injustice. The richer the parent of the prospective bride-groom, the heavier is the demand of the dowry. The problem now is such that many marriageable girls cannot be married and the state of their parents can better be imagined than described. Popular governments should help to check the evil through the law.

A. It is a curious phenomenon the questioner notices. Education not only does not improve the situation but makes it worse. The affected class has to wake up before the curse destroys the class which in its terrible weakness shamelessly betakes to it. Let them ceaselessly and restlessly agitate. I know no other way.

WHY THIS SECRECY?

Q. Can you say why, when mutual slaughter between brother and brother is going on, the names of the respective communities should be with-held?

A. I confess that the question has often occurred to me. There seems to me to be no reason for this hush-hush policy save that it is a legacy from the autocracy which, let us hope, the national Government have displaced. Those who ought not to know, know who stabs whom. And those who should know are kept in the dark. I am sure there are many Hindus and Muslims and even members of other communities taking pride in being Indians first and last without ceasing to be devoted followers of their own religions and who love to do their best to dissuade blind fanatics from making mischief. I know

many such. They have no means of ascertaining facts except through the Press. Let darkness be exposed to light. It will be dispelled quicker.

NEW DELHI, October 12, 1946

Harijan, 20-10-1946

454. HOW TO MAKE THE WHEEL GO?[1]

Shri Kanu Gandhi's note[2] deserves consideration. It should be remembered that the charkha is not, nor can ever be, like the various small or big things made in the West. There are millions of watches, all made in the same place. They are sold all over the world. The same story applies to the sewing-machine. These things are symbols of one kind of civilization. The charkha symbolizes an opposite kind of civilization. We do not want to mass-produce charkhas in one place and scatter them all over India. Our ideal is to manufacture charkhas and accessories in the towns or villages where the spinners live. Therein lies the value of the charkha. If anything goes wrong with the charkha the spinners should learn how to put it right. It is for the Charkha Sangh to see to all this. So long as this does not happen khadi can never replace mill cloth.

NEW DELHI, October 12, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 20-10-1946

455. NOTE TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

[*October 12, 1946*][3]

I am too much preoccupied to give due attention to this matter. Jhaverbhai[4] should go. He does not want to take anything from the Government for his feed. This he wants to draw from A. I. V. I. A. You may talk to him and fix up what you think proper. That will save some time. He may see this note and you two may do what is necessary. Meanwhile let him not live on borrowed money. When I

[1] A translation of this also appeared in Harijan, 20-10-1946.

[2] Not translated here. The note had enumerated certain steps to be taken by Khadi Bhandars to make the charkha more popular.

[3] The date is in the addressee's hand.

[4] Jhaverbhai Patel

come to Sevagram we shall work it out. You may advance what he needs for the time.

From a photostat: G. N. 10184

456. LETTER TO H. GREENFIELD

VALMIKI MANDIR,
READING ROAD, NEW DELHI,
October 12, 1946

DEAR MR. GREENFIELD,

I have been shown a note[1] on salt circulated to the Members of the Cabinet. You were to have sent me an amendment which you had admitted was necessary. But instead I see the long and argued note without any amendment. It contains also a proposal to retain a portion of the tax and therefore the monopoly also I suppose.

I confess that I have glanced through the note most hurriedly. Rajaji has asked me to send him my amendment which I am now doing. A copy will be sent to you when I am ready [*sic*].

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. GREENFIELD, ESQ., C.S.I., C.I.E.
MEMBER, CENTRAL BOARD OF REVENUE
SECRETARIAT, NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 164

[1] Not reproduced here. It contained proposals, for which "general approval" of Gandhiji was claimed, envisaging abolition of excise duty on salt but continuation of Government production of salt, control of organized manufacture and retention of existing machinery for exercising such control.

457. LETTER TO KALKA PRASAD

NEW DELHI,
October 12, 1946

BHAI KALKA PRASAD,

Shridharani has just arrived from America. He needs khadi. Give him as much as he wants. Charge the actual price. Assume that the yarn is with me. Charge the price of the yarn also.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 10418

458. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
October 12, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi began his address by telling the audience that he had been in two minds whether or not to break his silence, which he had taken to for various reasons, in order to address them. Ultimately he decided to break it. He wanted to tell them that while he had not taken a vow of silence he had made up his mind for the time being to speak only on business to those whom he called his jailors. One result of his imposed silence was that he had been able to get through a fair amount of writing for *Harijan*.

Gandhiji went on to say how he felt impelled to tell them of the error committed by him three days ago. He was thoroughly ashamed of it. For him, at his time of life, it was unpardonable. No harm had been done to anyone because of it. It was not possible for him to remember ever having done anything to hurt anyone. His error consisted in being over-hasty. He read a little thing hurriedly, though there was no occasion for hurry, and fancied it was quite right whereas it was not quite that. No public servant had the right to act in this way. He seemed, for the moment, to have lost confidence in himself and the belief that he would live for 125 years.

The first verse of the *Ishopanishad* demanded giving oneself and all possessions to God. If a man fully did that, he could never be hasty. It may be that he was old now and his brain was getting weak. He knew that his memory was not as good as it used to be. It never was extra good. But when a man was guilty of error it was his duty to call God as witness and vow never to commit the mistake again. That

[1] A slightly different version of this speech also appeared in Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*, 20-10-1946.

was the only true way of repentance to realize the guilt and confess it immediately before the sun went down. Death had got to come to everyone, and who knew when it would come ?

Gandhiji said his life was an open book and he hid nothing from the world. They who listened to him were his world for the time. He was telling them of his mistake in order that they may learn a lesson from it and never be hasty or careless in their actions. While his mind had been relieved of a burden by confession, Gandhiji said it would take a long time for him to regain the lost confidence as far as living 125 years was concerned.

The Hindustan Times, 13-10-1946

459. RURALIZING UNIVERSITY EDUCATION[1]

There is much truth in what Dr. Kini says. He should put himself in touch with Dr. Zakir Hussain and the Aryanayakums and devote his energies to evolving a workable scheme. I see no difficulty in existing Universities conforming to the requirements of the villagers, who are India, instead of turning out indifferent imitators of the West.

Harijan, 13-10-1946

460. DR. LOHIA AGAIN

Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia's letter to the Chief Judge of the Goa High Court deserves more than passing attention. I copy it below from the daily Press :

> At the time of my arrest[2], I had not, so far as I know, violated any Goan law. I may have been intent on doing so but that is irrelevant. The police officer at Collem walked into my compartment, asked me no questions and put me straightway under arrest. International law, as it stands today, probably empowers the Portuguese Government to arrest and deport anyone whom they consider an undesirable alien but they are surely not empowered to hold him in prison unless he has actually violated some law. The Portuguese Government have in the past declared me as alien and taken up their stand on a provision in International Law with regard to me. They owe me an apology and damages for illegal imprisonment or else

[1] This was appended to an article by Dr. Kini, Secretary in the Education Department of Mysore; *vide* also"Village University", 15-9-1946

[2] On the 29th September

they must give up their attempt to apply International Law as between Goa and the rest of Hindustan. Furthermore, between September 29 and October 2, they kept me in a cell, which has probably as much ventilation as just keeps a man alive. They owe me an added apology and damages for this kind of treatment.

I continue to be held in solitary confinement, although under better conditions and I am not taken out of my cell except for bath and I am held incommunicado. These add to the illegality of my imprisonment.

Let no one laugh at Dr. Lohia'a presumption in asking for damages. If he had power behind him, the Goan authorities would quickly apologize and offer to pay damages. It is not an unusual thing for big powers to ask for damages and obtain them for injury or insult done even to insignificant subjects. Dr. Lohia is not a little man. Well, India has a National Government. I am sure they are as sensitive as any can be. I should not be surprised if they have lodged their protest and asked the Goa Government to mend their manners. Anyway, let the force of public opinion be behind the National Government and the injured Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia. The injury done to him is injury done to our countrymen in Goa and through them to the whole of India.

NEW DELHI, October, 13, 1946

Harijan, 20-10-1946

461. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

October 14, 1946

Q. Wouldn't it be better to set up a public institution at Bordi for conducting research in the Ayurvedic system of medicine?

A. It would be good to make Bordi a public institution.

Q. The Government Ayurvedic Colleges teach seventy per cent allopathy. Ayurveda should be taught as a separate science. When this question was first discussed you had said that you would arrange for me to meet Dr. Gilder.

A. The Ayurvedic education is something I have been long interested in. The work can certainly be pursued if there are *vaidyas* you know who think like you and who are selfless. Only then would it be useful for you to go to Dr. Gilder.

[1] The questions, reproduced here only in summary, were asked by Vallabhram Vaidya. Gandhi gave his answers in writing.

Q. It is difficult to find *vaidyas* who fully share my views. There are some who are too orthodox to allow any changes or innovations in the Ayurvedic system while others want to turn it into allopathy. In fact Ayurveda is based on theory of *tridosha*[1] and its cure is based on five basic substances.

A. What do you think of Joshi of Poona? If there is no one else, what can you do by yourself? Many doctors have told me that the treatment based on *tridosha* is a fraud. It is for you to prove that it is not so. It is also for you to train *vaidyas* like you.

What Dr. Gilder has passed has also been prepared by *vaidyas*. Bhadkamkar, Lagu, Gananath Sen and Vishwanath are from among you, are they not?

Q. The doctors do not know anything about the treatment based on *tridosha*. Bhadkamkar and other *vaidyas* are more of doctors than *vaidyas*, and that is why they have approved the scheme.

A. I can arrange a meeting with Dr. Gilder. But I would advise you to see Bhadkamkar and Joshi. Have a little talk with Sushila Nayyar, with Satis Babu, too. He is here at present.

Q. I have gone through the book *Prakritik Chikitsa* which you gave me. It is full of tall talk and is not based on the author's personal experience. He has described properties of medicines without citing authority.

A. I have noted the tall talk in it. Only you can write authoritatively on medicines.

Q. I will prepare the students. But it is obvious that my syllabus will be different from that prescribed by the Government Board. So what shall we do about its registration?

A. Prepare something. Do not worry about registration. First of all train the volunteers. It is not necessary for them to have degrees. If they are good I will accommodate them. I do not care for degrees.

From Gujarati: C. W. 2930. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya

[1] The three humours, viz., wind (*vata*), bile (*pitta*) and phlegm (*kapha*)

462. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
October 14, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

You had left a letter here. I sent the reply the very next day. You would not have got it. It went to Udaipur.

I have your letter today. I was sorry to learn about Shankarlal's illness. It is good you two sisters went to Udaipur. Tell Shankarlal that he should quickly get well. It does not behove a scout to fall ill. Whatever the job he may be doing, he cannot cease being a scout.

Why is Umia feeling unhappy ? Bring her along with you. It is another matter if you yourself do not come.

I am not calling you to me to make you unhappy. You are not afraid of me, are you ? It can never be that I would make you do anything against your wishes. I only wish you well. I wish to see you healthy and well.

Now there is no time to write more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

463. MESSAGE TO PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
October 14, 1946

Man should earnestly desire the well-being of all God's creation and pray that he may have the strength to do so. In desiring the well-being of all, lies his own welfare; he who desires only his own or his community's welfare is selfish and it can never be well with him.

Harijan, 20-10-1946

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". This was a written message read out at the meeting, it being a Silence Day.

464. DEADLY EMBRACE

In Bombay a Hindu gave shelter to a Muslim friend the other day. This infuriated a Hindu mob who demanded the head of the Muslim friend. The Hindu would not surrender his friend. So both went down literally in deadly embrace. This was how it was described to me authentically. Nor is this the first instance of chivalry in the midst of frenzy. During the recent blood bath in Calcutta, stories of Muslims having, at the peril of their lives, sheltered their Hindu friends and *vice versa* were recorded. Mankind would die if there were no exhibition any time and anywhere of the divine in man.

Shri Balasaheb Kher, the Premier of Bombay, has described in glowing terms the instance of two youths rushing to still the wrath of a Muslim mob and meeting what they knew was certain death. They met Death as their true friend. Let no scoffer deny the inestimable value of such sacrifice—sacred deed. It would be mock sacrifice, if every such act ended in success so called. The certain moral is that, if such instances are sufficiently multiplied, the senseless slaughter on either side in the name of religion will stop. One indispensable condition is that there should be no hypocrisy, no mock heroism. Let us appear as we are.

NEW DELHI, October 15, 1946

Harijan, 20-10-1946

465. DECENTRALIZATION

At the meeting of the Charkha Sangh at Delhi on the 10th many important subjects were discussed. One of them was decentralization. Decentralization is the soul of khadi. The ambition of the Charkha Sangh is to see that charkhas and looms find a home in the seven lakh villages of India, that crores of Indians wear only khadi and mill cloth is completely wiped out.

The time has come for a province to become self-reliant, if it wants. However, if it does not want to do so or if it cannot do so a district can become self-reliant. If it fails to do that a taluka can become self-reliant. If that is not possible a group of villages can and if even they can't become self-reliant, a single one can. Ultimately an individual can certainly become self-reliant.

One should not ask how this can be possible. Those who are members of the Charkha Sangh should write to its Secretary in detail, and their problem will be solved. Those who possess the property of the Sangh will have to make some arrangement to return the money. Only he will be bound by the policies of the Sangh who accepts them. No one is obliged to accept them. Discipline is for those who want to observe it. There is no uniform code of conduct. There is one root but there are many branches and each branch has many leaves. Diversity in unity is a wonderful law of the world.Therefore the Charkha Sangh has adopted as its policy the giving of as much encouragement as possible to decentralization. On the other hand the branches of the Sangh should aspire to become independent as soon as possible.

NEW DELHI, October 15, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 20-10-1946

466. TELEGRAM TO RAM MANOHAR LOHIA

NEW DELHI
October 15, 1946

DOCTOR RAM MANOHAR LOHIA
RAMNIVAS THALAKWADI
BELGAUM

YOU HAVE TO RE-ENTER GOA BUT BEFORE DOING SO COME HERE. NO HURRY. WIRE REPLY.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

467. TELEGRAM TO SIDDHINATH SARMA

NEW DELHI,
October 15, 1946

SIDDHINATH SARMA
GENERAL SECRETARY
GAUHATI

GODS WILL. DOING WHAT IS POSSIBLE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

468. LETTER TO H. GREENFIELD

BHANGI COLONY, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
October 15, 1946

DEAR MR. GREENFIELD,

I have to thank you for your letters.[1] The maps will be useful. As to the amendments I have spoken to Rajaji. I have, therefore, no copy to send you. You will know all from him. Nevertheless, if there

[1] Both dated October 12. The first assured Gandhiji that "provisions relating to the use of structures and to the enclosure of land for salt manufacture" had not been forgotten and the second enclosed maps showing production, consumption and distribution of salt.

is any difficulty, I trust you will see me again or write. In any case I would like to see the final form before it is published.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. GREENFIELD, ESQ., C.S.I., C.I.E.

MEMBER, CENTRAL BOARD OF REVENUE

NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 166-7

469. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

NEW DELHI,

October 15, 1946

DEAR LOTUSBORN,

Your two loving letters.

You are doing good and brave work. It will bear fruit. Hope you are keeping well.

Love.

PADMAJA NAIDU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

470. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

NEW DELHI,

October 15, 1946

DEAR PRAKASAM,

I have your two letters. Sjt. Kaleswar Rao I understand.

As to khadi, you have a difficult task, I have seen the attack in *Hindu*. Is your Cabinet with you, is the Assembly with you, is the public with you? Then you have nothing to fear. If you are to have success, you should carry the country with you. If it is not, you may drop the scheme. I have stated the conditions of success. I know that the attack is ignorant. You and I should know that often does ignorance rule the public.

I am with you in the scheme on merits. But who am I? Therefore, do not think of me, but think of the public and act.

Yours,

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

471. LETTER TO ABDUL HAMID

October 15, 1946

DEAR ABDUL HAMID,

I take it you know Gujarati. I await you every day. Your shoes are with me. How much money do you need? Why are you afraid of your parents? They don't want to suppress you. come and see me. They looked for you at the hotel but could get no news of you.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

MIAN ABDUL HAMID
HOTEL IMPERIAL
NEW DELHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

472. LETTER TO KANTILAL N. KAMDAR

NEW DELHI,
October 15, 1946

BHAI KANTILAL,

I referred your lettaer to a specialist in medicine. He says what you say is right but that there are so many scientific hitches involved that it is better not to go through the process. I therefore do not want to involve myself in the matter.

M. K. GANDHI

KANTILAL NAGARDAS KAMDAR
G. S. MEDICAL COLLEGE
PAREL, BOMBAY 12

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

473. LETTER TO MAULANA HIFZURREHMAN

NEW DELHI,
October 15, 1946

DEAR MAULANA SAHEB,

I have read all your papers. The attack is on me, not on Kripalaniji. if what I have always believed is a crime, then Kripalaniji is guilty.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

474. A LETTER[1]

October 15, 1946

BHAI SAHEB,

I have your letter. I have not had a minute to spare. . .[2] You take a perverted view of all that I say. God is our witness.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

475. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 15, 1946

Addressing the prayer meeting on Tuesday evening in Bhangi Colony, New Delhi, Gandhiji said he was grieved to learn that floods in Assam had taken a heavy toll of life and property. Thousands had been rendered homeless, property worth lakhs had been destroyed, and many persons were reported to have been washed away by the floods. That was an act of Nature.

But what was far worse than the news from Assam was the fact that there

[1] This could have been addressed to Moulvi Abdul Haq; *vide* "Letter to Abduk Haq", 19-9-1946.

[2] Blank space in the source

was rioting in Noakhali in Eastern Bengal. The papers said that the Hindus, a very small minority there, were being attacked by the Muslims. He did not want to go into the details of the happenings. He knew his doctrine did not count for much among the people today and yet it was his duty to give his advice whether they acted upon it or not. Gandhiji himself had never thought that there was any difference between Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis or others. All were brothers, sons of the same soil. But even brothers fought furiously with each other sometimes and this was what was happening today between Hindus and Muslims.

Ever since he had heard the news of Noakhali, indeed ever since the blood bath of Calcutta, he had been wondering where his duty lay. God would show him the way. But what he wanted to tell them and through them a wider public was that it was the duty of every Hindu not to harbour any thoughts of revenge on Muslims in spite of what they did in Noakhali. That was the creed of the Congress. It had brought them thus far. But was non-violence only an expedient against the British, as some people thought, because the British were so strong?

Such an approach to non-violence was wholly wrong. The Congress had an overwhelming majority of Hindu members but it belonged to all communities. Maulana Saheb had served it for years and through it everybody, irrespective of caste or creed. His name was up again but he was withdrawing it and Gandhiji had supported his withdrawal. He was an ill man today. The new President was Shri Kripalani whom he had first met in Champaran. He was going not only to wear a crown of thorns but also lie on a bed of thorns. It was a much more difficult place than even the Cabinet members were filling.

Shri Kripalani would have to teach people how to die. That was the only way to end this fratricidal war, to learn how to die without killing.

A friend from Ahmedabad had some time ago written and said that people knew how to return blow for blow, they had learnt how to be fearless of going to jail but they had not learnt how to die without killing. It was up to him and others who believed in non-violence to teach people this supreme way by personal act.

Gandhiji said that the Muslim League was, according to Press reports, coming into the Interim Government. He hoped they were coming in to work as brothers. If they did, all would be well. And just as he had exhorted Hindus not to slay Muslims nor harbour ill-will towards them, so he appealed to the Muslim League, even if they wanted to fight for Pakistan, to fight cleanly and in a friendly manner.

Quaid-e-Azam had said how everyone would receive justice in Pakistan. It was as good as Pakistan where they were in the majority and he implored them to treat Hindus as blood brothers and not as enemies. He hoped both Hindus and Muslims would vow not to hurt each other henceforth. Unless they did this he would like to

proclaim from the housetops that they had not got and would never get the independence they craved for. No man or people could be free who followed the law of the jungle.

The Hindustan Times, 16-10-1946

476. TALK WITH ASSAM DEPUTATION

[Before *October 16, 1946*]

In the course of his reply to the Deputation,[1] Gandhiji said that Assam need have no fear. Pandit Nehru's broadcast had made no change in the Congress stand as regards the grouping of provinces and Assam would be able to frame its future constitution by itself. Gandhiji added :

The Congress is an institution of the brave, not of cowards. The Congress would certainly help Assam if she marches on with courage.

The Hindu, 16-10-1946

477. TELEGRAM TO NARSEEBHAI DEVSHI

October 16, 1946

NARSEEBHAI DEVSHI

RANAVAV

YOU MAY COME THOUGH BUSY.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

478. TELEGRAM TO JANARDAN PRASAD

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1946

JANARDAN PRASAD

LAHERIA SARAI

AM GLAD HE[2] IS DELIVERED FROM AGONY. WE SHOULD ALL REJOICE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The Deputation, headed by Maulana Tayabulla, President of Assam Provincial Congress Committee, had expressed the "strong attitude" of Assam with regard to Grouping.

[2] Brijkishore Prasad, who had died on October 15, 1946

479. TELEGRAM TO YASHMILAP

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1946

YASHMILAP
LAHORE
INSUFFICIENT DATA FOR JUDGMENT.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

480. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1946

DEAR DR. HOLMES[1],

Your kind letter of 27-9-1946 and the little book came into my hands only yesterday. His goods had to follow Devdas. He could not carry them in his 'plane'.

I am glad Devdas made it a point to see you, no matter how busy he was.

The book I am keeping on my desk, in the fond hope that I shall snatch a few minutes to drink in the wisdom it contains.

The rest you get from the papers.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 10967. Courtesy: S. P. K. Gupta. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] American Unitarian clergyman, pastor of the Community Church of New York

481. LETTER TO LADY PETHICK-LAWRENCE

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

So you are two years ahead of me. You should try as we all should to live the full span of life—125 years. I seem to have lost the equilibrium I thought I would have to entitle me to entertain the wish. May you have what I seem for the moment to miss.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

LADY PETHICK-LAWRENCE
11 OLD SQUARE
LINCOLN'S INN
LONDON, W. C. 2

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

482. LETTER TO MADALASA

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1946

CHI. MADU,

I should like you not to violate your resolution.[1] If you are busy, you may write only a post-card.

Thank God Rajat has recovered.

The love of has recovered.

The love of husband and wife should be like that of intimate friends, and perfectly pure. They should share each other's joys and sorrows and must be able to tolerate each other's weaknesses. They should be generous to each other and perfect understanding should prevail between them. They should entertain no suspicions against and keep back nothing from each other.

[1] The addressee had resolved to write to Gandhiji on every Tuesday but for some reason had not been able to write on one of the Tuesdays.

I think this is enough. For examples of such love ask me when we meet.

Blessings to all from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako BAPU*ke Ashirvad*, p. 330

483. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

NEW DELHI,

October 16, 1946

CHI. PREMA,

Two letters of yours are lying in front of me. I started writing a reply as soon as I received the second one, but laid it aside when the people for whose sake I am here came in. I am, therefore, writing the reply today.

I will say nothing about Nuremberg. In barbarity there are no comparisons. Whether it is here or there, it is all "here".

It is not correct to say that I have abandoned constructive work to come here, nor that I have yielded to the temptation of politics. In fact life cannot be divided into compartments. The organs of the body are called by different names, but the body is one. The same is true about life. But since you think that it is an error on my part, you should believe it to be so. One day you will realize your error and see the unity of my life, or reform me. I have never laboured under the delusion that what I believe is true. Yes, what I believe is true for myself, otherwise I would cease to be a satyagrahi. The same rule applies to all.

And now your particular question. I should like the girls to remain unmarried, but they cannot be forced to do so. We must, therefore, help those who wish to get married.

It was, and is, Acharya Bhagawat's duty to plead with you and other co-workers and carry them with him in whatever he did.[1] He made a mistake in doing what he did without consulting you. You also should not tolerate his improper conduct through your desire for gaining something from him. But you did

[1] Acharya Bhagawat had persuaded women workers of the Kasturba Trust to get married and even arranged their marriages.

that. In this matter, too, the final decision must be yours. For occasions do arise when one has to swallow such bitter draughts. I have merely explained a general principle to you.

Please understand that I have no time to write more than this.

If Sushila, who is here, has understood the situation better, she will write to you. I am observing silence. It is doing me good. I was afraid that I might break down. More when we meet.

I was not happy that the meeting of the Agents[1] did not take place.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10449. Also C. W. 6888. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

484. LETTER TO DURGA M. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1946

CHI. DURGA,

Rest assured that I will not go against your wishes and encourage Bablo in any way. I also read the letter from Narahari. I shall not enter into any argument because now there is no question of sending Bablo to Afghanistan.

I think it is right for you to stay wherever Bablo may be living. I also like the idea of [his] working for Nayee Talim. Let us all wish that he may keep good health and grow strong in body, mind and spirit.

My return to Sevagram is again delayed. Everything is in the hands of God.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. DURGABEHN DESAI
ASHRAM, SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Provincial representatives of the Kasturba Trust

485. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

October 16, 1946

CHI. BABUDI (SHARDA),

I have your letter. Your weight will increase if you eat properly. Shakaribehn should try hip-bath and friction-bath. She should put a cold mud pack on the part of the head affected by migraine. I am held up here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 100671. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

486. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1946

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. As far as I can tell I am here till the 23rd. But you should understand that I live from moment to moment.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

BAPUki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 371

487. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1946

Gandhiji said that he could not sense any generosity in the nomination of a Harijan[1] by the Muslim League in their quota of five seats especially when he read of what was happening in East Bengal.

A man like himself ought to be glad, they might say, that another seat had been given to a Harijan. But he would be deceiving himself and Mr. Jinnah if he said so. Mr. Jinnah had always been of the opinion that Muslims and Hindus

[1] Jagendranath Mandal

were two nations, that the League was a purely communal organization. How then could they nominate a Harijan to represent them? Gandhiji said he feared that the League's mode of entrance into the Cabinet had not been straight. He was, therefore, forced to wonder whether they had come into the Cabinet also to fight. He hoped, nevertheless, that his fears would be proved wrong and that they would work there as brothers, determined to serve India as a whole. He hoped, too, that the Harijan member would prove a worthy son and servant of India.

Gandhiji paid a glowing tribute to Babu Brijkishore Prasad of whose death he had learned in the morning. It was a custom to condole with the relatives of the deceased. But Gandhiji had said in his telegram that they should rejoice that Brijkishore Babu had been relieved of his physical suffering. He had first met him at the Lucknow Congress and then when he went to assist the indigo labourers of Champaran, he had realized the sterling worth of Babu Brijkishore from the beginning of his acquaintance. Dr. Rajendra Prasad looked upon him as his chief.

Babu Brijkishore was a man of his word, honest and a true servant not only of Bihar but of the whole of India. Gandhiji became closely associated with Brijkishore Babu, so much so that he sent his daughter, Prabhavati Devi, to Sabarmati Ashram. She became as Gandhiji's own daughter. She married Shri Jayprakash Narayan. Brijkishore Babu had been a star in the firmament of Bihar and his memory would always be cherished.

The Hindustan Times, 17-10-1946

488. HAND-SPUN v. *MILL CLOTH*

The Premier of Madras has fallen foul of the big capitalist interests such as the Chamber of Commerce and even some Congressmen. I have had cuttings sent to me from the Madras Press. I am sorry to say that the criticism seems to me to be interested and ignorant.

My name has been dragged in the controversy. That I sponsored the Premier's scheme should not affect a dispassionate discussion of the very simple problem.

The simple question is merely this:can khadi become universal in Madras if encouragement is given by the Madras Government to new mills being erected or old ones being so expanded as to enable them to double production? Are the villagers expected to be so simple as not to understand that it would be merely playing with khadi if mill cloth, heavily aided, is to be dumped down in their midst, probably at

a rate cheaper even than cotton required to weave a particular length of calico? This happened when Japan sent her calico to India.

The Madras scheme is undoubtedly meant to utilize a part of the idle hours of the villagers for spinning sufficient yarn to clothe themselves. Is it chimerical to induce and expect the people to utilize their idle hours to do useful, national, honest labour?

It will be time to declaim against the Madras Government when there is a feasible scheme to find useful and more remunerative employment for all who need work. It is hardly an honourable pastime to dismiss from consideration honest servants of the nation by dubbing them idealists, dreamers, fanatics and faddists.

Let not capitalists and other entrenched personages range themselves against the poor villagers and prevent them from bettering their hard lot by dignified labour.

The great flaw about new mills in the Madras scheme was detected by me. It was when the Textile Commissioner was convinced of the absurdity of the two things running side by side and the feasibility of the scheme as envisaged by the A.I.S.A. that he ventured to recommend it to the Madras Government. His reputation will be at stake if it is impracticable or unworkable, not the critics'.

This is work for democracy by a democratic Government.

Hence the scheme must be popular at least where it is to be tried.

It must not be one man's scheme but the whole Government's.

It must have the backing of the Legislature.

In no case may it smack of compulsion.

It must be intrinsically practicable and of benefit to the masses.

These conditions of success are all reduced to writing. The Government has accepted them *in toto* after, I understand, full discussion with experts and among themselves.

Let it be remembered that the existing Madras mills will not be touched at present. That the whole mill industry will be affected if the scheme spreads like wildfire, as I expect some day such a thing must, goes without saying. Let not the largest capitalist rue the day when and if it comes.

The only question then worth considering is whether the

Madras Government are honest and competent. If they are not, everything will go wrong. If they are, the scheme must be blessed by all and must succeed.

NEW DELHI, October 17, 1946
Harijan, 27-10-1946

489. TELEGRAM TO RAM MANOHAR LOHIA

Express NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

DOCTOR LOHIA
RAMNIVAS THALAKWADI
BELGAUM
PROBABLY DELHI SOMEWHAT UNCERTAIN.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

490. TELEGRAM TO MEDH

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

MEDH
CARE MITRAVADAN DHRU, SANKADI SHERY
RUGHNATH BUMB'S POLE, AHMEDABAD
THOUGH MY MOVEMENTS UNCERTAIN YOU CAN COME.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

491. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 17, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,

This is a mere love letter, not a news letter. I hope you had a comfortable journey and that the little boil was not too troublesome. I see you had to negotiate stairs. Hope it did no damage.

It is after 3 o'clock now and yet the expected wire has not come. But I shall continue to expect it.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 4178. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7814

492. LETTER TO T. R. NARAYAN NAMBIAR

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

DEAR NAMBIAR,

Why write in English? Not to know the inter-provincial language, Hindustani, of India is worse than praying after sunset or eating during sunset or not smearing the forehead. God can be worshipped at any time and no one is worse off for not smearing the forehead.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

T. R. NARAYAN NAMBIAR, B.A.,B.L.
THUCKALAY, TRAVANCORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

493. LETTER TO LAXMI KANT V. PRABHU

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

DEAR LAXMI KANT,

Your p. c. All eatables are . . .[1] food whether vegetables, fruit, milk, cereals, pulses, eggs or flesh meat.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

LAXMI KANT V. PRABHU
C/O CAP. TARNSEJRA
AQUANDA
POST GOA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

494. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

CHI. PRABHA,

Yesterday I got the news of your father's[2] demise. I was glad. He was released from pain.

I hope you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I hope you got my wire.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3586

[1] Illegible in the source
[2] Brijkishore Babu; *Vide* also "Telegram to Janardan Prasad", 16-10-1946.

495. LETTER TO GANGA P. BHATT

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

CHI. GANGA,

I had your earlier letter. If you have to follow Purushottam it is no more than your dharma. You ought now to give up your hankering after social service. Purushottam has some kink somewhere but I cannot place it. He ought to withdraw from some field of work or other. He alone can know best whether his body will stand up to it, whether he can do as much as this. If he cannot, you must give up your attachment [for social service], but this too appears difficult. You may therefore go on living as seem best to you. I am held up here.

To you both,

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. GANGABEHN PURUSHOTTAM
29 BHAWANI PETH
POONA 2

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

496. LETTER TO MANILAL B. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your long but detailed and interesting letter. I don't get any time to write letters. I am simply stuck here and cannot get away.

It is unfortunate that Gangabehn left. She is such a public-spirited worker. But this is how a woman's life is. A man may desert his wife for any reason; a woman cannot do likewise even for the sake of selfless service. This is a flaw in dharma but it has gone so deep that it cannot be got rid of.[1]

You must have a woman worker with you and if possible you

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

should train one locally. Only intense purity on the part of all of you can bring about this result. Act only after full consideration. Don't be rash. Never mind if you have to carry on without a woman worker. If all of you are absolutely pure you will find one. Maybe Gangabehn will herself come back. We were hoping to have Kanchan but it cannot be thought of for the present. Amtussalaam is a big person. She might have to go to Bengal. Moreover, she will not stay there without me.

I cannot think of anyone else.

What you are doing is good.

It is now 6 o'clock in the morning and I must have my constitutional. So be content with this much.

Blessings to all.

MANILAL

URULI KANCHAN (POONA)

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

497. LETTER TO K. T. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

BHAI KHUSHAL SHAH,

I have gone through your statement and made a few changes that I thought were warranted. I have kept the substance intact. A point suggested itself and so I have added a paragraph which you may accommodate at the right place.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI K. T. SHAH
BARODA HOUSE
DELHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

498. LETTER TO SUNDARAM

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

CHI. SUNDARAM,

I got your letter in beautiful Tamil handwriting. I could follow the whole of it. Panditji[1], I hope, is well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 3178

499. LETTER TO DATAR

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

BHAI DATAR,

When will your work begin? When we work for someone on payment we have to observe a time-limit; the same applies to altruistic work.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI DATAR
NIJADHAM
URULI KANCHAN

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Madan Mohan Malaviya

500. LETTER TO S. M. CHITRE

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

BHAI CHITRE,

I have your letter.

Do what you can by your own effort. Why do you write in English?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI S. M. CHITRE
HARDIKAR HOUSE
BHANDARA, C. P.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

501. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

Gandhiji referred again to the tragic happenings in Noakhali and Tippera districts in East Bengal.

What hurt him very much more than the killings was the fact that women were being carried away, abducted and converted to Islam. Of course women generally did not carry swords. The Rani of Jhansi had one. All could not be Ranis. But he would remind them of the incomparable power of Sita whom all the physical might of Ravana could not defile. Women must learn how to die before a hair of their head could be injured. He would like to say to the Hindus wherever they were in the minority and *vice versa* to the Muslims not to die helplessly but face death bravely and without a murmur. Then only could the terrible killings now going on in Noakhali and Tippera come to a stop.

Sarat Babu, brother of Subhas Babu, who knew no barriers of caste or creed, will be visiting Bengal in a day or two. He was ill but that was not going to deter him. Shri Kripalani, the President-elect, and his wife were also going to do what they could to stop the slaughter. They were not going there to protect one party but to stop the fratricidal warfare. It was a good beginning for Acharya Kripalani and his wife.

The fair name of Bengal was being tarnished—Bengal which had given them

so much, Bengal the home of Gurudev, whose bhajan they had just heard. The hymn asked God to make the devotee pure of heart and fearless. It was with this hymn ontheir lips that they were going and it was the audience's duty to wish them every success.

Gandhiji referred to two letters he had received today in which the auctions he had been holding had been referred to as gambling and black-marketing. It was man's duty to keep his speech correct but these friends had not weighed their words before writing.

Gambling and black-marketing were indulged in for personal ends. Men even died for their selfish ends and stooped to anything to make money. The money spent at the auctions here was given for the Harijan cause. The articles bought were not for use but to be kept as souvenirs for the children to remember what their parents did to remove untouchability. Of course anyone could misrepresent a pure act as an impure one. Such base misrepresentation could not be helped.

The Hindustan Times, 18-10-1946

502. DISCUSSION WITH CO-WORKERS[1]

[On or before *October 18, 1946*]

In the course of the talk, one of them asked Gandhiji whether he would recommend fasting to check the orgy of communal madness that was spreading in Bengal. Gandhiji's reply was in the negative. He narrated how a valuable colleague from Ahmedabad had invited him to immolate himself. "We believe in the non-violent way but lack the strength. Your example would steady our wavering faith and fortify us."

The logic was perfect and the temptation great.

But I resisted it and said no. There is no inner call. When it comes, nothing will keep me back. I have reasoned with myself too about it. But I need not set forth my reasons. Let people call me a coward if they please. I have faith that when the hour arrives God will give me the strength to face it and I won't be found unready.

Fasting cannot be undertaken mechanically. It is a powerful thing but a dangerous thing if handled amateurishly. It requires complete self-purification, much more than is required in facing death without a thought of retaliation. One such act of perfect

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "The Travail", 18-10-1946. The interviewers were two co-workers from Bengal who had come to seek Gandhiji's permission to go to Bengal before he himself went.

sacrifice would suffice for the whole world. Such is held to be Jesus' example.

The idea is that you appropriate to yourself and assimilate the essence of His sacrifice symbolically represented by the bread and wine of the Eucharist. A man who was completely innocent offered himself as a sacrifice for the good of others, including his enemies, and became the ransom of the world. It was a perfect act. "It is finished" were the last words of Jesus, and we have the testimony of his four disciples as to its authenticity.

But whether the Jesus tradition is historically true or not I do not care. To me it is truer than history because I hold it to be possible and it enshrines an eternal law—the law of vicarious and innocent suffering taken in its true sense.

A Hindu and a Mussalman braved the fury of the maddened crowd in Bombay and went down together literally clasped in a fatal embrace but refused to desert each other. Rajabali and Vasantrao Hegishte similarly fell to the frenzy of a mob in the attempt to quell it. "What came of it?" people might ask, "the fire still continues to rage." I do not think for a moment it has gone in vain. We may not see the effect today. Our non-violence is as yet a mixed affair. It limps. Nevertheless, it is there and it continues to work like leaven in a silent and invisible way, least understood by most. It is the only way.

As a further illustration of his remarks he recalled the history of the Champaran Satyagraha. There had been several bloody risings within half a century preceding it against the infamous compulsory indigo plantation. But each attempt had only resulted in fastening the rivets tighter than ever before. Then came the Champaran Mass Satyagraha, untainted by acts of violence, and a century-old evil was overthrown in less than six months.

Go forth, therefore. I have done. I won't detain you for a day longer. You have my blessings. And I tell you there will be no tears but only joy if tomorrow I get the news that all the three of you are killed.

"It will be pure joy to be so killed," they echoed.

Go, but mark my words. Let there be no foolhardiness about it. You should go because you feel you must and not because I ask you to.

Harijan, 2-10-1946

503. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
[On or before *October 18, 1946*]

Gandhiji remarked at the evening prayer gathering that day that he had received numerous messages from Bengal inviting him to go there and still the raging fury. Whilst he did not believe that he had any such capacity, he was anxious to go to Bengal. Only he thought it was his duty to wait till Pandit Nehru's return and the meeting of the Working Committee.[2] But he was in God's hands. If he clearly felt that he should wait for nothing, he would not hesitate to anticipate the date. His heart was in Bengal.

Harijan, 27-10-1946

504. NOTES

HOW TO COMBAT UNHOLY BOYCOTT

A correspondent from Mercara (Coorg) writes to say that many youthful reformers do not believe in animal sacrifice offered to the village gods. Therefore, he says, the villagers have threatened to boycott them. What are the reformers to do?

Reformers all over the world have no easy task. The threatened boycott should have no meaning for the reformers. They must be ready and willing to submit to the hardships entailed by the boycott. They should on no account be angry with the villagers who honestly believe in superstitious practices. It is a question of the real education of the people. These village gods have no existence except in the villagers' imagination. Unmindful of the boycott, they should calmly persevere in their reasoning with the villagers, rendering them all the time such services that the villagers may be in need of. Patience and perseverance will overcome the mountains of difficulties that may face the reformers. The reformers may not summon police assistance against the villagers.

WAYS OF VIOLENCE

A straight line is one. Non-violence is a straight line. Lines that are not straight are many. A child who has learnt how to handle a pen

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's article "The Travail", 18-10-1946

[2] This was held on the 23rd, 24th and 25th October, under the presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru.

can draw as many lines as he wishes. He won't draw a straight line except perhaps by chance. Several readers ask me whether in the violence "permitted" by me several things mentioned by them could be included. Strange to say all the letters received are in English! The writers should reread my article and they will at once know why I cannot answer those questions. I am unfit probably for the simple reason that I have never practised violence. Above all I have never permitted violence. I have simply stated two grades of bravery and cowardice. The only thing lawful is non-violence. Violence can never be lawful in the sense meant here, i. e., not according to man-made law but according to the law made by Nature for man. Though violence is not lawful, when it is offered in self-defence or for the defence of the defenceless, it is an act of bravery far better than cowardly submission.The latter befits neither man nor woman. Under violence, there are many stages and varieties of bravery. Every man must judge this for himself. No other person can or has the right.

NEW DELHI, October 18, 1946

Harijan, 27-10-1946

505. ELOQUENT FIGURES

When Shri S. Venkateswaran, the Provincial Textile Commissioner, was in Delhi specially for the purpose of the Madras khadi scheme, I asked him to give me his own figures on the assumption that Madras had no mills and had to clothe the whole Presidency in khadi. Here are the figures[1] which speak for themselves :

Is it extravagant to expect every five persons out of eight to spin one hour per day, say, for love of the country of their birth?

NEW DELHI, October 18, 1946

Harijan, 27-10-1946

[1] Not reproduced here

506. NOTES

FIREWORKS DURING DIWALI DAYS[1]

I have received several letters complaining of the use of fireworks. The complaints are justified. I wrote against this practice in the columns of the *Navajivan*. I do not know whether the writing had any effect. At present when fire surrounds us it is a sin to have fireworks, illuminations with ghee or oil or electric lamps and consume sweets.

WHAT ABOUT DAKORE ?[2]

A friend from the Kheda District, who keeps Bhangi men and women in his house as his own brothers and sisters, writes: "Big temples in Madras are being thrown open to Harijans. Is it not strange that the deluded Gujarat should not throw open the Dakore temple?" If the deluded Gujaratis become sane, Dakore temple can be thrown open today. But if Gujarat must find joy in hugging a shameful custom, who can prevent her?

On the Trustees of the Dakore temple rests a heavy responsibility.

VICTIMS OF DUTY

I give below an extract[3] from a letter from a Parsee friend.

These two gentlemen are certainly worthy of commendation for their sacrifice and bravery. It is really baffling why neither the Congress nor the League said anything in their praise. There must be something at the back of it.

WHY THESE TEARS ?[4]

In his letter of birthday greetings to me, Professor Satish Kalelkar relates an interesting and instructive Chinese story, which I give below for the benefit of the readers of the *Harijanbandhu*.

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 27-10-1946.

[2] A translation of the original Gujarati published in *Harijan*, 27-10-1946, is reproduced here.

[3] Not translated here. The letter described the death of Gazdar and Nawdar of St. John's Ambulance corps during the riots in Bombay while they were engaged in removing the wounded.

[4] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 27-10-1946.

Dr. Wellington Koo, at one of his meetings in London, once narrated a sweet story about a Chinese family. The eldest member of the family was considered, as with us, the head of the family. As such he had the right to use an ancient family stick by way of punishment whenever necessary. Once a hundred-years-old man used the stick on the back of his seventy-five-years-old son. Tears ran down the withered cheeks of the son. The father asked the cause of the tears which he had never before seen him shed on a similar occasion. The son replied, "Father your stick has lost its original force. Your feebleness hurts me. Hence the tears.

Kakasaheb was in Delhi with me when the letter was received. I gave it to him to read and he said such things had happened in our country in the past and must be happening even now. He narrated the following incident :

One day a High Court judge of Madras is said to have gone out with a friend at the end of the day's work instead of going home as usual. When, therefore, he reached home late in the evening he met his mother standing in the doorway waiting for him. "Why have you come late?" asked the old lady with a slap on his face. Tears rolled down the son's cheeks.

The friend remarked that it was but natural that a grown-up learned man like him should feel insulted on being slapped like that. It was strange on the mother's part to have slapped him.

"No, there was no insult in that slap," promptly replied the judge. "It is my proud privilege to receive a slap from my revered mother now and then. My eyes became wet only because I missed this time the strength that used to be in her slap. Evidently she has grown old and weak. Should not that hurt a dutiful son?"

NEW DELHI, October 18, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 27-10-1946

507. WHAT WILL YOU DO FOR HARIJANS?

A gentleman writes the following pathetic letter[1] :

It is true. The correspondent himself is a Harijan *sevak*. It becomes difficult to bring about any reform when fraud is practised in the name of religion. This we see happening every now and then. Then again we are cowards. I have found only one royal road: namely, that one who has seen Truth should expound it through personal example, be generous towards opponents, never give up patience and remain happily engrossed in his own work.

NEW DELHI, October 18, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 27-10-1946

508. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
October 18, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,

The expected wire came after 5 p. m. yesterday. Everybody is anxious to know the result of medical examination there.

I have been incessantly writing for *Harijan*. Have practically or wholly finished. It is now 3 o'clock.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 4179. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7815

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had lamented that people had not adopted Gandhiji's programme for eradicating untouchability and asked him what changes he would suggest.

509. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

NEW DELHI,
October 18, 1946

CHI. KAKA,

I have your two letters but not the article. I received the story, and it is going to the press.

I am engrossed in work. I am observing silence, it is that which is sustaining me. I have not been able to get the peace that I seek. I am striving for it. I will, therefore, reply to your second letter later on.

I am enclosing Vidyalankar's scheme.[1] Please read it. Let Shriman also read it and then give me your opinion.

I see no possibility of my being able to go there in the immediate future. I feel that fate will take me to Bengal. It seems I shall be here till the 23rd.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10977

510. LETTER TO HEMANT KUMAR NILKANTH

NEW DELHI,
October 18, 1946

CHI. HEMANTKUMAR,

Why talk about prejudice? We should not think of it. You have made much improvement in your Gujarati. Continue to show such good results.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. HEMANTKUMAR
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chandragupta Vidyalankar", 18-10-1946

511. LETTER TO CHANDRAGUPTA VIDYALANKAR

October 18, 1946

BHAI CHANDRAGUPTA,

I have received the scheme. I have gone through it. You have taken great pains. Why have you put languages in two sections? It will be a source of quarrels and so far as I can see no purpose will be served. I have sent the scheme to Kakasaheb and Shrimanji.[1] They will scrutinize it more thoroughly. More afterwards.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 7209. Also C. W. 4865

512. LETTER TO JANAKIRAM

NEW DELHI,
October 18, 1946

BHAI JANAKIRAM,

Your case has appeared in the newspapers; there is no need to say anything more.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI JANAKIRAM
KADAVUR
VIZAGAPATTAM
SOUTH INDIA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to D.B. Kalelkar", 18-10-1946.

513. LETTER TO PARWANI

NEW DELHI,
October 18, 1946

BHAI PARWANI,

Personally I see nothing wrong in what you are doing.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI PARWANI
TEJ
KOTRI, SINDH

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

514. LETTER TO RATNAMAYEE DEVI

NEW DELHI,
October 18, 1946

CHI. RATNAMAYEE,

It is well that Dikshitji's[1] wife has left this world[2]. We should learn from such a death.

BAPU

SHRI RATNAMAYEE DEVI
BALIKA ASHRAM
OKHLA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Sitacharan Dikshit, who later served as Editor (Hindi) of *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*

[2] She had been ailing for a long time.

515. CHARKHA MANDAL[1]

The Charkha Mandal has evolved out of the three spinning classes held in the Bhangi Colony.[2] How I wish such Mandals would spring up all over the country! Before that can happen a number of Mandals should be opened in Delhi and function regularly. There are so many clubs formed for sports. Why should we not have organizations for useful work?

NEW DELHI, October 18, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 18-10-1946

516. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[3]

NEW DELHI,
October 18, 1946

Gandhiji advised the women in East Bengal to commit suicide by poison or some other means to avoid dishonour. . . . Yesterday he told the women to suffocate themselves or to bite their tongues to end their lives. But two doctors, B. C. Roy of Calcutta and Sushila Nayyar, had informed him that such means of suicide were impossible.

The only way known to medicine for instant self-immolation was a strong dose of poison. If this was so, he, the speaker, would advise everyone running the risk of dishonour to take poison before submission to dishonour. He had, however, heard from those given to yogic practices that it was possible by some yogic practice to end life. He would try to inquire. His was not an idle idea. He meant all he had said.

The very fact of steeling oneself for death before dishonour braced one for the struggle. A woman in our country was brought up to think that her place was with her husband or on the funeral pyre. He held wholly different views. He held that a woman could be as brave as the bravest man. If one half of India's humanity was paralysed,

[1] Kanu Gandhi's outline of the Charkha Mandal, on which this is the comment, is not reproduced here. The Charkha Mandal had been founded to encourage community spinning at fixed times and places.

[2] *Vide* "Eleven-day Charkha Class", 24-9-1946.

[3] The report has been touched up.

India could never really feel free. He would far rather see India's women trained to wield arms than that they should feel helpless. He knew, however, that arms were a poor weapon when it came to the matter of defending one's honour against odds. Honour knew no surrender to any power on earth.

Gandhiji then referred to a letter received from a Muslim friend to the effect that although he was ready to condemn atrocities by Muslims he preferred to be silent when Hindus committed them. He could only say that the charge was baseless. To him all human beings were like blood brothers.

Lastly, he mentioned messages received from Bengal inviting him to go there and help in restoring law and order. Whilst he did not believe that he had any such capacity he was anxious to go to Bengal. Only he thought it was his duty to wait till Pandit Nehru's return and the meeting of the Working Committee. But he was in God's hands. If he clearly felt that he should wait for nothing, he would not wait.

The Hindustan Times, 19-10-1946

517. THE COMING CONGRESS SESSION[1]

A basketful of letters are before me in connection with the Meerut Congress session to be held shortly. The correspondents complain of the 'lavish' expenditure that is advertised to be incurred in connection with it. I must refuse to sit in judgment upon the doings of the Reception Committee. I have neither the wish nor the required leisure to study the facts. The following, however, I can say without the necessity of studying facts and figures. It may be of some use to the Committee. There should be no *tamashas*. The Congress session is any day a serious business to be tackled seriously. There can be no side-shows. Crowds should not be attracted. The fact of the Congress session being held is by itself enough attraction.

All illuminations should be strictly avoided. Food to be provided should be of the simplest kind requiring little or no fat and sugar in its preparation. Uninvited guests should bring their own provisions or refrain from coming.

Sanitary arrangements should be perfect and serve as a lesson to all comers. Sight-seers should be discouraged.

NEW DELHI, October 19, 1946

Harijan, 27-10-1946

[1] This was published under the heading "Notes".

518. I AM DEFEATED

Letters continue to rain down on me regarding uncertified khadi. They are from persons of repute and experience. I do not find any flaw in my argument. My defeat would lie in the fact that though there are large stocks of uncertified khadi it is very difficult to find in it genuine khadi. If this is true then I have to withdraw my words and I do so.

It is necessary to understand in what lies the defeat. I do not have any doubt and indeed no one has any doubt that genuine khadi, even if it is uncertified, is superior to mill cloth. But my friends laugh at me because genuine khadi is always certified and what is available in the market is an imitation only. It is adulterated; there is fraud in it and the desire to cheat. I must accept that such khadi is as good as mill cloth. I have come to know from reliable sources that because of mywritings some dishonest traders were able to increase their loot. I therefore hope that from now onwards a khadi buyer will go only to a certified khadi bhandar and buy whatever is available there. He should not even by mistake go to a store where uncertified khadi is sold.

Those who can prove to me that they are unable to spin I will consider as friends and give them the certificate that I have received yarn from them, because I always have yarn accumulated with me.

NEW DELHI, October 19, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 27-10-1946

519. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
October 19, 1946

AMTUSSALAAM
SEVAGRAM, WARDHA
WRITING.[1] SELF MAY GO BENGAL AFTER 23RD.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 534

520. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
October 19, 1946

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I have wired to you. I have no information. What can I tell you? I do not consider myself fit to guide you. Go to Bengal if you want to.

I am myself getting ready to go there. I have said so in the Press also. When God will take me there I do not know.

Tell everybody to give up any hope of my returning to Sevagram for the present. I want to return there but God won't let me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 533

[1]*Vide* the following item.

521. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

NEW DELHI,
October 19, 1946

DEAR C. R.,

Here is something on salt for you, Matthai[1] and Greenfield to see. There seems to be much in what the writer says. It has no bearing on the tax which I hope is soon going.

Love.

BAPU

RAJAJI
NEW DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

522. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,

Your wire came in last night. So you were still suffering. That did signify subsiding. Let me hope it is better as I am writing this 5.35 p.m.

Here is a letter from V. G. D. You will see amusing remarks about the vocabulary. I must fully share the guilt with you about "architect".[2] It should [have] been नक्शा. We must give a list of amendments. You may return the letter and I shall make notes.

Renuka and her sister were with me last night.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 4180. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7816

[1] John Matthai, Finance Minister in the Interim Government

[2] The reference presumably is to the meaning of the word given in "Hindustani Dictionary" published in *Harijan*, 13-10-1946, where "architect" was explained as इमारत बनाने वाला

523. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

October 20, 1946

CHI. LILY,

I see in your talk the same shallowness as before. It does not seem good. You talk without thinking. You are not to accompany me to Bengal. You must finish your study. After that you may devote yourself to service as much as you wish. I will then gladly accept it. It would be a different matter if you were to lay down your life in Bombay. I don't like your doing no work here. You need not wait to be asked to do something. I am not referring to household chores. You can do some reading or writing or spinning. I see you doing none of that. I wish you would do some fine carding and spinning, repair spinning-wheels which go out of order and learn weaving. You will do all these things only if you feel a spontaneous urge to do them. But it does not seem likely. I shall be satisfied even if you become only a good doctor and do service.

Since it is now time for you to leave for Bombay, what more shall I say? Stop the bleeding.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9603. Also C. W. 6575. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

524. LETTER TO BAPU BHAI VASHI

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

BHAI BAPUBHAI,

I have your letter. Bengal has caught hold of me so completely that I may say I have absolutely no time whatever. You may therefore glean whatever you can from *Harijan*. When you are completely recovered do come to Sevagram if I am there. Writer to Pyarelal.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. BAPUBHAI VASHI
KAPOL SANATORIUM, BLOCK NO. 6
DEOLALI (G. I. P.)

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

525. LETTER TO BLIND STUDENTS

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

BLIND STUDENTS,

Thanks for the gift you have sent through Jayantilal on the occasion of Charkha Jayanti. It will be used in the service of Harijans.

Those who blindly drift along although they can see are truly blind. Those who go along the straight path are not blind.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

526. LETTER TO HARJIVAN KOTAK

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

CHI. HARJIVAN,

You have fallen ill again. Now get well soon.

I am held up here for the time being.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT HARJIVAN KOTAK
SHRI LALLUBHAI GORDHANDAS HOSPITAL
MANINAGAR
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

527. LETTER TO MANU SUBEDAR

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

BHAI MANU SUBEDAR,

I am going to make use of matter from your published article.

Have you seen what I have been writing recently on khadi? If you have, do you agree with it? If you have studied the Madras

scheme,[1] do you see any flaw in it? Don't hesitate to ask for any information regarding it that you may need.

Do you at all spin? Do you know carding and other processes? As I read your article I could see your faith in khadi and village industries.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

528. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

I am sending you this (Manilalbhai's letter). Nowadays I mostly observe silence. There is a great load of work. God carries it and hence I don't feel it so much. The less one's faith in Him the more one feels the burden. And I am certain there can be no burden where there is prefect faith. I take it that all of you are well. My return to Sevagram has been postponed for the present.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. SUSHILA GANDHI
AKOLA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

529. LETTER TO VACHHRAJ T. DOSHI

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

BHAI VACHHRAJ,

I got your two letters. I hope you got Champabehn's letter. Please do what is necessary. There is no sign of my going there for the present. You should all do what you can. You can have some

[1] *Vide* "Hand-spun v. Mill Cloth", 17-10-1946.

additions and alterations made. We had better have Preston Grover in the regular way.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAI VACHHRAJ TRIBHUVANDAS DOSHI

PANCHGANI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

530. LETTER TO MAHESH DATT MISHRA

October 20, 1946

CHI. MAHESH,

I have gone through your letter. I see that you have not yet recovered. Here you have constipation. For this you must be at fault somewhere. If there is any deficiency in the diet, it should not be so.

I have made up my mind about you. You must work in *Harijan*. Therefore your Hindi and Urdu should be strong. If your English could also improve, it would be still better. I want to put the entire burden of *Harijan Sevak* on you. The Hindustani should be excellent. Today it is not so. If you do not like this work tell me. The English translation should be of good quality. Rajkumari compiles the dictionary. That you should do.

If you have to go home, it would be well if you went now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6714. Also C. W. 4458

531. LETTER TO DHIRENDRA

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

BHAI DHIRENDRA BABU,

I had your letter. Please forgive me for the delay in replying. You can now take charge of the purse presented to me and spend the amount in accordance with the scheme you have sent to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI DHIRENDRA
VIDYA ASHRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

532. LETTER TO ISHWARDAS NATWAR

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

BHAI ISHWARDAS,

I have your two letters. Not a pie should be spent on your son's wedding.

The [desire to] come to me is ignorant attachment. Besides, there is nothing certain about me.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI ISHWARDAS NATWAR
MOHAN ASHRAM
HARDWAR, U. P.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

533. LETTER TO MAHAVIR PRASAD PODDAR

NEW DELHI,
October 20 , 1946

BHAI MAHAVIR PRASAD,

I have your letter. I am writing to Dr. Katju.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MAHAVIR PRASAD PODDAR
AROGYA MANDIR
GORAKHPUR, U. P.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

534. LETTER TO KAILAS NATH KATJU

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

BHAI KAILASNATHJI,

Read the enclosed letter. My suggestion is that the work will be done more quickly if you appoint someone for such jobs.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

535. LETTER TO KALYAN CHOUDHARI

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

SISTER,

I have your letter. I have nothing to give. You should remain there and serve.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SMT. KALYAN CHOUDHARI
C/O SHRI JAGDISH CHANDRA DUTT CHOUDHARI
MOHALLA MALIGUNJ
LUDHIANA, PUNJAB

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

536. LETTER TO SANKARAN

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

CHI. SANKARAN,

Your mental state does not appear to be good. What is it that has appeared in *Jeevan-Sakha*? It contains something about you which is not at all good. It does not suggest humility. Now, what are you going to do? It is not good to hang around here aimlessly. I allowed you to come here because I wanted to know your wishes. It is Sushilabehn who has made you what you are, and if you cannot get on with her how are you going to do the hospital work at Sevagram? Think for yourself and make a determined effort. I cannot talk. It is better for me to observe silence today.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SANKARAN

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

537. LETTER TO SANKARAN

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

CHI. SANKARAN,

If you remember the particular issue of *Jeevan-Sakha*, I shall obtain it from here. Perhaps it cannot be said that you possess scientific knowledge. That you have denied being a doctor is quite proper.

You will gain nothing by going around with me. By all means work in the Talimi Sangh if Aryanayakumji will have you.

What is the need of taking Jajuji into the Trust? He carries on his own activity. I do not find any harm in your working there. He will have assistance and you will add to your experience. My experience is little. You may sleep if you must. It will not be right to retire to a village.

It will be good to have a talk with Su[shila]behn.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. SANKARAN

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

538. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,

October 20, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi devoted his after-prayer discourse on Sunday to answering the question put to him during the previous 24 hours as to what should be done with persons who were forcibly converted or abducted.

He said he had no hesitation in maintaining that forcible conversion was no conversion at all nor abduction a bar to the return to her home of the abducted girl. He held that no purification or penance was necessary in such cases. Hindu society was wrong when it imposed penance on such persons. They had not erred.

Gandhiji said that he had lived for years among Muslims and Christians. They had all assured him that there could be no use of force in religion. Those who resorted to force did not deserve to be called men of religion. In a sense he and his audience who believed that God was one and no other and who believed that Mohammed was one of His messengers were Muslims. But if anyone forced them or him to recite the Kalma, they would flatly refuse to obey and take the consequences.

It was his fervent hope that all good Muslims would stand up against the practices reported from the affected areas in East bengal.

The Hindustan Times, 21-10-1946

539. A THOUGHT FOR THE DAY[1]

PANCHGANI,
July 16, 1946

He who loses patience, loses Truth as well as Non-violence.

July 17, 1946

There is no happiness like Truth, no misery like untruth.

July 18, 1946

The wonder is that even though a man knows where true happiness lies, he wastes his life in pursuing untruth!

July 19, 1946

Whatever we do should be done not to please or displease anyone, but only to please God.

July 20, 1946

Even if you have told someone something a hundred times and he has not listened, you must tell him again and again. That is patience.

July 21, 1946

Accepting undesired service, which is not joyfully rendered, is a painful burden.

July 22, 1946

Great caution is necessary when a man represses his nature.

July 23, 1946

If the nature is evil, it needs not repression but casting out.

July 24, 1946

He who wishes to save time will never do a single unnecessary thing.

July 25, 1946

He who obeys God's Law will never care for any other law which is opposed to the Divine Law.

[1] Gandhiji started writing "A Thought for the Day" for Anand T. Hingorani at the latter's request, on November 20, 1944, and continued the practice for about two years. The thoughts for the period covered by this volume are reproduced as a single item under the last date, 10-10-1946. These were originally in Hindi. The translation by Anand T. Hingorani is reproduced here with slight alterations.

July 26, 1946

Is it proper that one should give up a good thing not because one wishes to but for the sake of friends?

July 27, 1946

The first service is latrine-cleaning.

POONA,
July 28, 1946

Inexhaustible patience is needed if Truth is to be brought home to anyone.

July 29, 1946

However great the fury of the storm, the sea does not abandon its calm.

July 30, 1946

Why does a man become restless when he is unable to do his work?

July 31, 1946

There is goodness as well as greatness in simplicity, not in wealth.

URULI,
August 1, 1946

Whatever the crisis, the fire of love will overcome it.

August 2, 1946

Nothing turns out right so long as there is no harmony between body, mind and soul.

Saturday, August 3, 1946

Praise and censure should be alike for a votary of Truth. He will, therefore, neither listen to praise, nor be angered by censure.

August 4, 1946

He who is face to face with God does not speak, cannot speak.

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA,
Monday, August 5, 1946

Man has two eyes and two ears, but only one tongue; let him, therefore, do half as much talking as seeing, and half as much talking as hearing.

SEVAGRAM,

Tuesday, August 6, 1946

Man's capacity for self-deception is amazing.

Wednesday, August 7, 1946

Give all, gain all.

Thursday, August 8, 1946

Keep all, lose all.

Friday, August 9, 1946

What is 'big' or 'small' in sin? Sin is sin. To believe otherwise is self-deception.

Saturday, August 10, 1946

To destroy something is easy. To build requires great skill and care.

Sunday, August 11, 1946

We shall cease to think only of ourselves when we think of others.

Monday, August 12, 1946

Many things are wrought by patience, even as they are spoilt by impatience.

Tuesday, August 13, 1946

Simplicity cannot be affected, it should be ingrained in one's nature.

Wednesday, August 14, 1946

Man cannot raise himself by searching outside. The scope for growth lies within.

Thursday, August 15, 1946

Pure love removes all weariness.

Friday, August 16, 1946

How can one claim to be human if he acts like a beast?

Saturday, August 17, 1946

When Reason and Faith are in conflict, it is better to prefer Faith.

Sunday, August 18, 1946

He who is afraid of people's censure will never be able to do anything worth while.

Monday, August 19, 1946

Everything is right and proper in its place, improper when out of place.

Tuesday, August 20, 1946

It appears that man cannot escape the snare of exaggeration.

Wednesday, August 21, 1946

Insistence (or dogmatism) may be true or false. Falsehood does not shake (or eliminate) it. Truth is not affected (or tainted) by it.

Thursday, August 22, 1946

Do not do anything do not read anything without understanding.

Friday, August 23, 1946

The Ganga flows in man's heart, yet he does not bathe in it, and remains unwashed.

Saturday, August 24, 1946

He alone can offer sacrifice who is pure, fearless and worthy.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI,
Sunday, August 25, 1946

Despair corrodes man.

Monday, August 26, 1946

Selfishness and fear must go if one is to realize God.

NEW DELHI,
Tuesday, August 27, 1946

To surrender to force is a sign of unmanliness.

Wednesday, August 28, 1946

The real service to the Bhils would be to make them fearless and remove their despair.

Thursday, August 29, 1946

Silence above all.

Friday, August 30, 1946

The light of knowledge can never dawn on the proud.

Saturday, August 31, 1946

To quench one's thirst without the water of the Ganga and to satisfy the soul without God are both equally impossible.

September 1, 1946

Nobody progresses without opposition.

September 2, 1946

Every man should seek for the Source of his being.

September 3, 1946

He who does not know himself is lost.

September 4, 1946

The human body is like a musical instrument. Any note that is desired can be struck on it.

September 5, 1946

Thought pierces even a wall of steel.

September 6, 1946

Die and be saved.

Saturday, September 7, 1946

Faith makes the ship move.

Sunday, September 8, 1946

Why fear death when the threat is ever present?

Monday, September 9, 1946

We are all mad. Which of us shall call whom mad?

Tuesday, September 10, 1946

When we wipe the slate clean, we see God's signature clearly on it.

Wednesday, September 11, 1946

However lofty the ambition, even those considered the lowliest of creatures should come within its ambit.

Thursday, September 12, 1946

God and Satan cannot both occupy the throne of the heart.

Friday, September 13, 1946

Dying for religion is good; for fanaticism, neither dying nor living.

Saturday, September 14, 1946

Inner strength grows by prayer.

Sunday, September 15, 1946

If you see inner beauty, the outer will seem dull.

Monday, September 16, 1946

Life spent in service is the only fruitful life.

Tuesday, September 17, 1946

It is strange that we toil so much over externals without a care for what lies within.

Wednesday, September 18, 1946

All will be well with us if, even in the hour of our travail, we are able to realize the presence of God within us.

Thursday, September 19, 1946

The greater man's realization of the Self, the greater his progress.

Friday, September 20, 1946

A troubled mind causes more suffering than an ulcer.

Saturday, September 21, 1946

The pain of hunger is said to be severe. If we wish to live as human beings, let us rise above even this pain.

Sunday, September 22, 1946

Only experience makes us realize how hard it is to attain the state of non-attachment.

Monday, September 23, 1946

In egotism lies all trouble.

Tuesday, September 24, 1946

A life without thought is like that of a beast.

Wednesday, September 25, 1946

We have to make ourselves as nearly as possible like Him we want to reach.

Thursday, September 26, 1946

If you must be annoyed, why should it be at other people's lapses, why not at your own?

September 27, 1946

There is a lot of difference between living faith and a mere desire for faith. Man is deceived by not knowing this.

September 28, 1946

Not everyone is destined to acquire material knowledge. But all can acquire spiritual knowledge; it is their duty to do so.

Sunday, September 29, 1946

God is said to have four arms as well as a thousand. It shows that all this is mere imagery.

Monday, September 30, 1946

If we dwell on evil thoughts, they do not disappear; they are likely to become our companions. *"Dhyayato vishayan."*

Tuesday, October 1, 1946

The simple and one hundred per cent truth is that if we dwell on nothing but Ramanama, all our thoughts and actions will be automatically right.

Wednesday, October 2, 1946

Man has to do God's work, but how is he to know what that is?

Thursday, October 3, 1946

The way to know what God's work is heartfelt prayer and corresponding action.

Friday, October 4, 1946

Faith is the sun of life.

Saturday, October 5, 1946

If God keeps you, what does it matter if men reject you?

Sunday, October 6, 1946

If one man can become perfect, it is but fair to assume that all can become so.

Monday, October 7, 1946

What a pity that even though a man knows it, he still prefers to fall!

October 8, 1946

Let us think not of big things but of good things.

October 9, 1946

What does it matter if people look upon us as dreamers?

October 10, 1946

The possibility of living up to 125 years is receding. What right has he to live who has not achieved sufficient mastery over anger and attachment?

A Thought for the Day, pp. 602-88

540. TELEGRAM TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

NEW DELHI,
October 21, 1946

HEMPRABHADEVI[1]
15 COLLEGE SQUARE
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
CALCUTTA

YOU SHOULD BE CALM.[2] HOPE COME SOON.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

541. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
October 21, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,[3]

Your two letters came in together.

I am sorry for your sufferings. Let them do you good which they would if you interpret them correctly. Physical suffering can be, and should be, transmuted into spiritual joy. It is a difficult process but it has to be gone through if one is to be truly rich. This enforced idleness should be used for enriching one's thoughts.

That Shummy[4] is not angry with me shows his nobleness, not the care I should have bestowed on you. On the first sign of the boil I should have insisted on your going to Simla. This place is

[1] Wife of Satis Chandra Das Gupta, Founder-President, Bengal Khadi Pratishthan

[2] Communal riots on a large scale had broken out in Calcutta and Noakhali.

[3] The superscription in this and other letters to the addressee is in Devanagari.

[4] Shumshere Singh, addressee's brother

not made for nursing patients like you. It has its unavoidable limitation.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

V.[1] cannot be sent for as you suggest. I know him much better than you do.

From the original: C. W. 3699. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6508

542. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
October 21, 1946

CHI. VALJI,

I liked your letter of yesterday addressed to Rajkumari. If, extending the idea a little further, you yourself can prepare the dictionary[2], do so and send it. Rajkumari is herself compiling it with much effort. I have not found anyone as hardworking and regular as she is. I look through it but errors remain. Besides, Rajkumari is going to Paris[3] for two months. I do not wish to place too great a burden on you. Give as much as you can.

How are you now? I am stuck here for the present. I shall have to go to Bengal. If I go, it will be after the 23rd.

I have omitted your sixth story[4]. You will have seen the reason.

It will be better if you send the Gujarati or English also of whatever you send. If you can send the Hindustani, too, nothing like it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 3172. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1] Valji G. Desai; *vide* also the following item.

[2] The reference is to the English-Hindustani dictionary, which appeared fortnightly in *Harijan* beginning with the issue dated September 1, 1946; *vide* also "English into Hindustani", 25-10-1946.

[3] To attend the UNESCO session as a member of the Indian delegation headed by S. Radhakrishnan

[4] The addressee had been sending selected stories by different authors for publication under "Story Hour" in *Harijan.*

543. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

October 21, 1946

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Please pass on the accompanying letters to the addressees.

My return is being put off. Bengal is calling. One should live as He wishes and go cheerfully wherever He takes one. If we but reach the state where we know that we do nothing, what more can we desire?

How is Sharda[1]? Read the book she has. You will find in it something for Shakaribehn[2]. There is some exaggeration in it, but on the whole it is quite good.

If Shakaribehn wishes to cook separately for herself, let her do so. See that she and Babudi are happy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. G. 129

544. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKVASA

NEW DELHI,
October 21, 1946

BHAI MANGALDAS PAKVASA[3],

I have your letter. I do not like your falling ill again and again. There is no hurry about the Trust work.[4] Do it at your leisure.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 4693. Courtesy: Mangaldas Pakvasa

[1] Sharda G. Chokhawala, also called Babudi, addressee's daughter

[2] Addressee's wife

[3] Solicitor; President, Bombay Legislative Council from July 1937 to August 1947

[4] The reference, presumably, is to the drafting of Nature Cure Clinic Trust Deed; *vide*, "Letter to Mangaldas Pakvasa", 12-6-1945. and 25-6-1945.

545. LETTER TO MANILAL B. DESAI

October 21, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I forgot to write about the distribution of work[1] mentioned in your letter. I like it. Let everybody adhere to it and keep a daily account of his work.

The reason why Dhiru does not put on weight may be that his present weight is all that his system can carry. Only, he should keep up his energy and not lose weight further.

The cases have ended well. Has Datar[2] sent any reply?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 2739. Courtesy: Manilal B. Desai

546 LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

NEW DELHI,
October 21, 1946

CHI. DINSHAW,

I have your letter. It is all right if you stay for the sake of Mother and your hotel. You have my permission to come over whenever you want to. Your mind must become calm. I hope Ardeshir[3] and the little girl[4]are all right and Gulbai[55] is also well. My stay here has been prolonged.

I have written this in a great hurry.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. DINSHAW MEHTA
HEALTH HOTEL
TODDYWALA ROAD
POONA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] At Nature Cure Clinic, Uruli-Kanchan, where the addressee was Manager
[2] Datar Singh
[3] Son, daughter and wife of the addressee
[4] *ibid*
[5] *ibid*

547. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
October 21, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. In my opinion your place is there. If you cannot be cured there, what will do in Noakhali? The thing is that what I say does not appeal to you. What is the use of swallowing it as a bitter draught? So long as it does not come naturally, you should do as your heart dictates.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I shall probably leave for Bengal on the 24th or 25th. But God alone knows best.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 535

548. LETTER TO DR. ATMARAM K. BHAGAWAT

October 21, 1946

BHAI BHAGAWAT[1],

I am able to write to you only now. Go for the medical conference.

I have got Appa Saheb's[2] letter. I am writing to him at his address. He will have recovered by now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C. W. 2740. Courtesy: Manilal B. Desai

[1] Of Nature Cure Clinic, Uruli Kanchan
[2] Sitaram Purushottam Patwardhan

549. NOTE TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA[1]

October 21, 1946

I do not even remember that you said anything to me. Nobody has poisoned my ears. Kanu[2] and someone else, too, told me and, after getting their permission, I reported it to Hariji. Yes, the letter was from some Harijan.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2496

550. LETTER TO HARIHAR SHARMA

NEW DELHI,
October 21, 1946

CHI. ANNA[3],

I have your letter. There is art in dying also. As it is, all die, but one has to learn by practice how to die a beautiful death. The matter will not be settled even if everybody went to Noakhali and got killed. When the time comes I shall call for you, Reddy[4] and Amtussalaam to go there. So far I do not see that the moment has come. Your keeping indifferent health is another difficulty. Considering all this, please tell me what you would like to do. Can you go to Assam? Or to Sindh?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

551. LETTER TO PADAMPAT SINGHANIA

NEW DELHI,
October 21, 1946

BHAI PADAMPAT,

Mirabehn has forwarded to me the letters you wrote to Hari. In my opinion it is not right to postpone collecting the money till land

[1] The addressee had in a note complained that Thakkar Bapa suspected him of having instigated Swarupanand to poison Gandhiji's ears against Viyogi Hari.

[2] Son of Narandas Gandhi

[3] Secretary, Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha

[4] Govinda Reddy, an inmate of Sevagram

has been acquired. Do send the money and collect from other donors. The amounts will be returned in case the project does not materialize. I have collected money on many occasions; work always follows. Isn't this the history of all activities?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

552. LETTER TO GOVINDA REDDY

NEW DELHI,
October 21, 1946

CHI. REDDY,

Read the letter I have sent to Anna.[1] I shall let you know when the time comes for you to go. Anyway, you are all free. On your own you can do whatever you wish, go wherever you please.

Blessings from

BAPU

SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

553. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

NEW DELHI,
October 21, 1946

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your sorrowful letter. But despite all that you have to regain your composure. You cannot get over grief by nursing it and brooding over it. It can be got over only by effort and *tapas*. Take the name of God and engage yourself in your routine. God will show the way.

The wire[2] I am sending will have been received. I have drafted it. It is night time now, so it will be despatched tomorrow.

I am trying to get there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letteer to Harihar Sharma", 21-10-1946.
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Hemprabha Das Gupta", 21-10-1946

554. INTERVIEW TO PRESTON GROVER[1]

NEW DELHI,
October 21, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi declared in an interview today that the Muslim League Ministry in Bengal should be able to control the outbreak of disorders in East Bengal in which a good few thousands have been driven from their homes and an undetermined number killed or kidnapped. He said :

Control will depend on the Ministry. If the Muslim League wanted to control it, I should think that it could. The Muslim League has the overwhelming percentage of Muslim voters on their side.

Mahatma Gandhi described the Bengal outbreak as "heart-breaking". His comments on the outbreak of robbing, burning and looting in East Bengal were made in his small room in the Untouchable Colony where he has lived most of the time since the arrival of the British Cabinet Mission in March. He sat on a thin mat with a small sloping desk before him and I sat on the floor while he talked of many things including America, the new Government in India, South Africa and his own health.

He announced again his intention of visiting the troubled areas in Bengal after his meeting on October 23 with Pandit Nehru and the Working Committee where they will discuss problems created by the entry of the Muslim Group into the Central Ministry. He said :

The fact that I go there will satisfy the soul and may be of some use.

PRESTON GROVER: Will the Muslims listen to you?

GANDHIJI: I don't know. I don't go with any expectation, but I have the right to expect it. A man who goes to do his duty only expects to be given strength by God to do his duty.

To a question as to when this type of disturbances would end in India, he replied :

You may be certain that they will end. If the British influence were withdrawn, they would end much quicker. While the British influence is here, both parties, I am sorry to confess, look to the British power for assistance.

[1] Of the Associated Press of America

Turning to the affairs of the Interim Government, Mahatma Gandhi regretted the statement[1] of Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan, the Muslim League selection for the Central Government. To Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan's statement that the League was going into the Interim Government to fight for Pakistan, Mr. Gandhi said :

That is an extraordinary and inconsistent attitude. The Interim Government is for the interim period only and may not last long. While it is there to deal with the problems that face the country—starvation, nakedness, disease, bad communications, corruption, illiteracy. Any one of these problems would be enough to tax the best minds of India. On these there is no question of Hindu or Muslim. Both are naked. Both are starving. Both wish to drive out the demon of illiteracy and un-Indian education.

There is not much time to elapse between this Government and that to be set up by the Constituent Assembly. The time will be shortened if both apply their will to the completion of the work of the Constituent Assembly.

The Constituent Assembly is based on the State Paper. That Paper has put in cold storage the idea of Pakistan. It has recommended the device of "grouping"which the Congress interprets in one way, the League in another and the Cabinet Mission in a third way. No law-giver can give an authoritative interpretation of his own law. If then there is a dispute as to its interpretation, a duly constituted court of law must decide it.

[P. G.] But if the Muslim League do not accept the court interpretation?

[G.] They cannot impose theirs on others. If they do, they put themselves in the wrong box. The alternative is to come to blows. We are all savages and come to blows often when we don't agree. Yet we are all gentlemen. This is so whether in America or Europe.

Asked for his reaction to the decision of the Madras Ministry which has decided against any expansion of the cotton mills industry in the Province in order to promote the Gandhian plan for home spinning and weaving, the Mahatma said :

I think it is the finest thing going. If you want to follow this logically, then you must follow it through.

Asked whether it would then be logical to "follow through" to the extent that mills presently in the Province would be stopped, he replied that if in time, through

[1] Ghazanfar Ali Khan made the statement while addressing a students' meeting at Lahore on October 19.

the progressive programme, the mills came to have no customers, then they would quit—"unless they chose to sell outside India".

He assailed the Natal Sugar Mills industry as responsible for bringing indentured Indians there to work and thus creating the segregation problem.

To a question as to what would become of Englishmen in the service of the Government of India, Gandhi said :

I think that India has use for every one of them who is loyal to India and to Indian traditions and conditions and who will be above temptation and corruption. I don't want to say that they should be disloyal to England. That is not the point. They should not be disloyal to India. These things not conflict but it has happened in history. Most have come here to serve the country of their birth by exploiting India. That is hypocrisy. It is dishonesty. There is no room for dishonesty in any service or outside it.

Asked if he had any message for America, he said :

Dislodge the money God called Mammon from the throne and find a corner for poor God. I think America has a very big future but in spite of what is said to the contrary, it has a dismal future if it swears by Mammon. Mammon has never been known to be a friend of any of us to the last. He is always a false friend.

Mahatma Gandhi, who has passed 77 years of age, said :

I am shaken in that belief, although not because it is illegitimate. But there are well defined limits to the fulfilment of that wish. If you do not fulfil those limits, then you may not attain the wish. For the time being, I feel dislodged. I have not attained the necessary equanimity. I don't want to live 125 years or even one year on nostrums, medicines and that kind of thing. I want to live a life of service in my present way. That is possible provided you have equableness under every circumstance. Nothing should irritate you. I am not able to say today that nothing irritates me or has irritated me.

He said he had thought calmly of living until 125 "until a few days ago", when he had a "rude shock". It was on the occasion of his birthday by the Hindu calendar, which came this year ten days ahead of October 2, the day of his birthday by the ordinary calendar. Rajendra Prasad, the Food Member in the Cabinet, had come to preside at a flag raising in connection with the birthday, and on that occasion, he was told, "monkey-nuts, raisins, etc., were to be served to the Harijan children and volunteers in the camp".

He said he considered it an insult to the Food Minister to give food needlessly in his presence to children and others "who were not in need". His anger flared up, he said, because "every morsel of food has to be husbanded. If we do it, there will be no shortage. India is the last country in the world that should be short of food if our rulers know their business—and ther is no black marketing." The Mahatma said :

I flared up madly. I lost my balance. You can use any adverb or adjective you may like to describe it. It was then I discovered my failure. This loss of self-control has cost some years of my life—which it will be possible to regain if I regain my equanimity—or gain it. That is the humbler way to say it.

Harijan, 3-11-1946

555. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
October 21, 1946

Gandhiji pointed out to the people that the coming Diwali could not be an occasion for feasting. How could there be feasting in a house where there were any number of the starving and the naked? On top of that they were quarrelling amongst themselves. He had written and spoken enough on the subject. Yet he could not help repeating the same advice.

In these days those who were pure should become purer, those who were sinners should wash off their sins. All should save as much food as possible and spin as much as they could so that there might be more cloth. To save food was as good as producing it. To spin was to help reduce the nakedness of India. He who was truthful took the world a step forward. Let these things engage all their energies. It should be clear to them that these were not days of festivity or merry-making.

The Hindustan Times, 22-10-1946

556. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 22, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter. Don't worry about work here. It is clear to me that there was no sting. Something has come from within. Be patient and let it take its course.

I have written[2] to Valji G. Desai. What I sent you was for your

[1] It being Gandhiji's day of silence, the speech was read out.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Valji G. Desai", 21-10-1946.

amusement. Mistakes will occur in the work that is being done.[1] We must be as accurate as possible when the book is published.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 4181. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7817

557. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
October 22, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

I got yesterday your letter written from Udaipur. I think now I shall be going to Bengal in a day or two. I would have been happy if you had come before that. But now you may do as you wish. I will accept anything that makes you happy, restores your health and enables you to resume your work of service.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Stay there as long as necessary to please Umiya[2]. Your health should improve there. People praise the climate of the place.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

558. LETTER TO SANTOK GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
October 22, 1946

CHI. SANTOK,

I have your letter. It is difficult to solemnize the marriage[3] on *Kartak Sud* 12. God knows where I shall be on that day. The idea of my going is being hotly talked about. I will leave on the 24th or the 25th. It is not known how long I shall have to stay there. Under these circum-stances, we shall have to think what to do. Nor do I know when I shall be able to return, if at all, after I reach Bengal.

[1] The reference is to the erroneous meaning of "architect" in English-Hindustani dictionary published in *Harijan*, 13-10-1946;

[2] Addressee's elder sister, Umiya Agrawal

[3] Of the addressee's daughter, Radha, who was married to Dipak Dutt Chowdhary

Everything is uncertain. Such being the situation, there is a risk in asking me to solemnize the marriage. Let me know what you think best. I may leave here tomorrow or the day after.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

559. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
October 22, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

I have your letter. I cannot always be sending you telegrams. I have said what I had to say. It is strange your dragging Reddy and Anna with you. I have said 'No' to them. What can they do? I cannot see what even you will do. I merely told Jajuji[1] that if he felt so inclined, he might give his consent. Everyone is free, and may go anywhere in exercise of that freedom. But not on my behalf or the Ashram's behalf.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 536

560. LETTER TO MAHESH DATT MISHRA

October 22, 1946

CHI. MAHESH,

I have gone through your whole letter. I do not believe that you will learn anything by coming to Calcutta. Your coming would have been meaningful if you were ready to take up *Harijan* work.[2] I advise you to get well and prepare yourself for *Harijan*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6715. Also C. W. 4459. Courtesy: Mahesh Datt Mishra

[1] Shrikrishnadas Jaju
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Mahesh Datt Mishra", 20-10-1946

561. MESSAGE TO VALMIKI MANDIR

NEW DELHI,
October 22, 1946

It is good that the Valmiki Mandir has, on the occasion of the Charkha Jayanti, taken part in the national *yajna* by spinning . . .[1] hanks of yarn. May you repeat the performance in future too, and march forward.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

562. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 22, 1946

Gandhiji said that a correspondent had drawn his attention to the fact that he had said nothing against illuminations at Diwali in his message on Monday. It was an accidental omission. He had been opposed to illuminations even in the olden days when there was no food shortage. To burn oil or ghee today when there was not enough to eat was unthinkable. Real India did not reside in cities like Delhi. It resided in the seven lakhs of villages. For the hungry and naked villagers there could be no Diwali illuminations or any other kind of festivity. It was their duty to abstain and save all the ghee, oil and money they could.

Commenting on the Marathi *bhajan* sung by Shri Balasaheb Kher, the Premier of Bombay, Gandhiji said that like Shri Thakkar Bapa, Kher Saheb had been a servant of the Harijans and Adivasis ever since he had known him. Now he had put on the crown of thorns and become the Premier of Bombay. For Gandhiji his service to Harijans and Adivasis was more important than anything else. In the *bhajan* Tukaram makes the devotee say that he would prefer blindness to vision which could enable him to harbour evil thoughts. Similarly, he would prefer deafness to hearing evil speech. He liked only one thing, namely, the name of God.

The Hindustan Times, 23-10-1946

[1] Omission as in the source

563. UN-ISLAMIC

Sheikh Saheb Hisam-ud-Din, former President of the All-India Majlis-e-Ahrar, has issued the following to the Press :[1]

Maulana Saheb himself issued the following four days ago :[2]

The value of these statements lies not so much in the numbers of Muslims supporting it, but in the fact that these Muslims of undoubted repute in Islam have no hesitation in condemning in unmeasured terms the nefarious deeds of the Muslims in East Bengal. It would be wrong to stigmatize the doers as *goondas*. These perpetrators of wrong are undoubtedly misled by men who should know better. There is little wonder that the atrocities have taken place when one bears in mind the poison that is instilled into the credulous minds of simpleminded Muslims.

In order to meet the evil, the sane element in Islam must not only speak out its mind, but act accordingly and promptly. It would be interesting to know whether the former President of the all India Majlis-e-Ahrar has been able to send the contemplated body of volunteers to undo the mischief.

NEW DELHI, October 23, 1946

Harijan, 3-11-1946

564. HOW VILLAGES CAN MANUFACTURE THEIR CLOTH

After reciting the scheme which I copied in the *Harijan* of August 14, 1946, from his letter to me, Shri Manu Subedar[3] has given his argument in support of the scheme in the *Rast Rahbar*. I copy below two relevant paragraphs from the interesting article :[4]

> Not only will the cloth produced under the above scheme becheaper than the black market, but it would be cheaper than the mill cloth for the reason that many items, which go into the price of the mill cloth to the consumer, would be eliminated. Amongst these are profits of the mills and of the

[1] Hisam-ud-Din and Abul Kalam Azad, in separate statements, not reproduced here, had condemned the arson, murder and forcible conversions in East Bengal as un-Islamic and called upon the Muslim majority there to protect the Hindu minority.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Member, Central Legislative Assembly

[4] Only extracts are reproduced here.

middleman distributor of cloth, the cost of transport of cloth and cotton both ways, the cost of supervision and management, and interest charges and depreciation. Since the labour up to the stage of the yarn would be contributed and the labour charged for weaving would be in kind, even in normal peace time cloth produced under these conditions would be cheaper than factory cloth. . . .

I would invite the leaders to note that in the above scheme not only is there co-operation under the guidance of the village *Panch* and complete self-government, free from any interference of anybody outside, but there is the seed of the kind of economic revolution which we seek in this country. . . . The amount of State assistance involved in the proposal is so miserably small per head and is actually lower than the cost incurred by the State for many other purposes for the benefit of other groups and grades of the Indian population. The further advantage in this scheme is that it would be automatic in so far as in some villages it would take root quickly and they may want another bale inside a month. In other villages it might take them three or four months. Some of the villages will probably supply all their requirements by this method in the next few months and may have something to spare, and indeed I would not consider it wrong if cloth produced under these circumstances after it was found to be in excess of the requirement of the village which has produced it, was made available in the larger cities for sale to the general public. I would, however, sound a warning that the scheme would break down if individual exploitation is permitted. The surplus should not be dealt with except through the village collectively and should not be brought to the city except through the Government agency, which lands the bale at the door of the village. Nor should it be sold in the cities except at the Government retail shops. . . .

In a letter in Gujarati, Shri Subedar says :

If my scheme is not adopted, we may have the sorrowful spectacle of womenfolk going without cover and therefore remaining indoors.

The hard-heartedness which mill-owners and middlemen have exhibited require some such immediate remedy as I have suggested.

You have rightly said that the removal of the salt tax will drive home to the millions of villagers the truth that our *Sarkar* has now the reins of Government in its hands. Will they not also realize this truth, if the villages have cotton

cotton delivered at their homes on the easiest terms possible so that with a little corporate labour they can clothe themselves without difficulty?

NEW DELHI, October 23, 1946

Harijan, 17-11-1946

565. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 23, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter. It would be tragic if you couldn't go to Paris because of obstinate boil. T[he] doctor in attendance can't say even that much! I am sure a good *vaidya* or, perhaps better still, a *hakim* could prescribe an innocent ointment which would bring it to a head and open it nicely and close the opening within the limited time. Ramanama is the sovereign remedy but it cannot be prescribed. It has to come of itself, if it comes at all.

J.'s wound is nothing but Badshah's is bad. It was a narrow escape for the three.[1]

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3700. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6509

566. LETTER TO RENUKA RAY

NEW DELHI,
October 23, 1946

DEAR RENUKA[2],

I am doing all I can about your question.

I am sorry about the illness of your brother's child. Will you need to stay on whilst there is work in Bengal? Of course, you know where your duty lies for the moment.

Rajkumari is no better. The boil is obstinate. The surgeon in

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru, Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Dr. Khan Saheb, while returning to Peshawar after a study-tour of tribal areas of the North-West Frontier Province on October 21, were attacked by a mob. Abdul Ghaffar Khan, who tried to protect Nehru, was injured more than the other two.

[2] Congress worker and Vice-President of the Bengal Rehabilitation Committee

Simla says it cannot yet be opened.

Yours,
BAPU

SMT. RENUKA RAY
2 SAFDARJANG LANE
NEW DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

567. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

NEW DELHI,
October 23, 1946

CHI. KUSUM,

I do not know whether I shall be attending the Congress[1] this time. So forget me. If you wish to go there, make your own arrangements. At present, I am preparing for a tour of Bengal.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI KUSUMBEHN DESAI
MEHTA POLE
BARODA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 1852

568. LETTER TO SUSHILA, ARUN AND SITA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
October 23, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. The excerpts from *Indian Opinion* which you send me are quite useful. So continue the practice. Most probably I shall be going to Bengal in a day or two.

Sita will have recovered by now. I like her plan of rushing to Manilal. But she must not give up what she has undertaken. I will say she has rightly fulfilled her duty if she takes up Manilal's work in South Africa after completing her education. Build up well your body and mind. Go only after you have prepared yourself to leave the children in India. In the meanwhile Manilal will carry on. It is natural that he should want you and the children with him. But he has to

[1] To be held at Meerut from November 21 to 25

restrain himself.

It is good that your mother has returned. Take care of your health. How is Tari[1]? I have written[2] again about uncertified khadi. Do look it up. I did not realize that corruption has gone so deep. There have been many other letters too.

My silence is more spiritual than physical. It does not irk me; it pleases me. It saves me a lot of time. None of you are to worry.

Blessings from

BAPU

SUSHILA GANDHI

AKOLA

CHI. ARUN[3],

I am glad that you wrote to me. How nice that you like to study. Which do you like better, study or play? In which form are you? What games do you play?

Has Ila[4] become less naughty? I shall see about the photographs.

CHI. SITA,

I shall save my time since I have already written enough about you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

569. INTERVIEW TO ANDREW FREEMAN[5]

NEW DELHI,

[On or after *October 23, 1946*][6]

ANDREW FREEMAN: Has the spinning-wheel a message for America? Can it serve as a counter weapon to the atom bomb?

GANDHIJI: I do feel that it has message for the U. S. A. and the

[1] Tara Mashruwala, Sushila Gandhi's sister

[2] *Vide* "I am Defeated"

[3] Son and daughter of Manilal Gandhi

[4] *ibid.*

[5] Extracted from Pyarelal's "The Spinning-wheel and the Atom Bomb"

[6] According to Pyarelal the interview took place after Freeman of the *New York Post*, returned from his assignment in the N. W. F. P. tour with Nehru which was on October 23.

whole world. But it cannot be until India has demonstrated to the world that it has made the spinning-wheel its own, which it has not done today. The fault is not of the wheel. I have not the slightest doubt that the saving of India and of the world lies in the wheel. If India becomes the slave of the machine, then, I say, heaven save the world.

India has a far nobler mission, viz., to establish friendship and peace in the world. Peace cannot be established through mere conferences. Peace is being broken, as we all see, even while conferences are being held.

A. F. It seems so tragic. India must lead the way and India is in turmoil. If any country can really take up the wheel, it is India. Do you think it will?

G. It is doing so, but I confess the process is very slow. Pandit Nehru called khadi the "livery of our freedom". It cannot be that so long as it is the consolation of cranks and paupers only. There are many things that are not possible for man to accomplish. But everything is possible for God. If there is no living power called God, the spinning-wheel has no place.

A. F. Those who spin are not called cranks here.

G. No. I used that expression to anticipate what Americans would say. I allow myself to be called by that name to protect myself. I was described by a friend as a 'practical idealist'.

A. F. As a fairly intelligent human being and an American I can only say that though many Americans would call spinners cranks, there are not a few who are thinking hard. Something has to be found that would save civilization from destruction. Life must be simplified.

G. Human personality cannot be sustained in any other way. I stand by what is implied in the phrase 'Unto This Last'. That book[1] marked the turning point in my life. We must do even unto this last as we would have the world do by us. All must have equal opportunity. Given the opportunity every human being has the same possibility for spiritual growth. That is what the spinning-wheel symbolizes.

A. F. Would you like the Americans to take to the spinning-wheel?

G. Yes. But I do not know whether it will be taken up by anybody before it is well established here. If, on the other hand, India adopts it for clothing itself, I won't need to tell the world. It will adopt it of itself. Today there is such an onslaught

[1] By John Ruskin

on India of Western machinery that for India to withstand it successfully would be nothing short of a miracle. I must confess that today everything seems to point to the contrary. Look at our internecine quarrels.

A. F. But you have not given up hope?

G. I cannot, so long as I have faith in that living Power which is more with us than we know. But let me ask you a counter-question. Has America with all its Mammon-worship abolished unemployment, poverty, corruption, Tammany Hall?

A. F. The answer is obvious.

G. Has England? Has it not still to grapple with the problems that baffle her? It is a very curious commentary on the West that although it professes Christianity, there is no Christianity or Christ in the West or there should have been no war. That is how I understand the message of Jesus. There is much ignorance and superstition in India. But deep down in us is that faith in God—the instinct for religion.

A. F. All newspapermen and others have sensed that. But I must confess there are moments when I feel it is hopeless. Look at the recent attack on Pandit Nehru in the tribal areas from which I have just returned, and the happenings in East Bengal. You too must at times have felt the hopelessness of it all. Would you say Islam has repudiated its teacher, as Christianity of today has its Jesus?

G. I have said so openly. Where is Mohammed and his message which is peace? I said recently at a public gathering that if Mohammed came to India today, he would disown many of his-so-called followers and own me as a true Muslim, as Jesus would own me as a true Christian.

A. F. How can we bring men back to God or to the teaching of Jesus or that of Mohammed?

G. I might give the answer that Jesus gave to one of his followers: "Do the will of my Father who is in Heaven, not merely say Lord, Lord[1] ." That holds true of you, me and everybody. If we have faith in the living God, all will be well with us. I hope not to lose that faith even to my dying day. In spite of my numerous failings and shortcomings of which I am but too well aware, my faith in God is burning brighter every day. If

[1] *St. Matthew*, VII. 21

it did not, I would take the same prescription that I gave[1] to women threatened with dishonour and with no prospect of help or escape, viz., commit suicide.

A. F. Have you thought of the charkha as a therapeutic agent?

G. Yes. I have read some literature on the subject sent to me by a Glasgow professor. A retired Superintendent of a jail in Bengal too wrote to me describing the use of the spinning-wheel for curing lunatics, particularly by virtue of the soothing effect of its rhythmic motion.

Harijan, 17-11-1946

570. ABDUCTED GIRLS[2]

Q. You have called attention[3] to the fact that girls who are forcibly abducted have not erred and that society would be wrong in penalizing them. In further exposition of your views, would you tell us if any ceremony purporting to be one of marriage forced on unwilling victims of such outrage, should be considered binding in any way, against the will of the girls concerned? Is it not right that both society and the family should be broad-minded enough to receive them back? In the case of unmarried girls abducted or forced to undergo such mock ceremonies of marriage, should not a special effort be made by society not only to reclaim them, but to help them to contract marriage in the normal manner and thus be completely vindicated and restored to the fold?

A. You are right. All you say follows from my remarks referred to by you. I have no doubt that girls forcibly abducted have committed no crime, nor incurred any odium. They deserve the pity and active help of every right-minded man. Such girls should be received back in their homes with open arms and affection, and should have no difficulty in being suitably matched.

NEW DELHI, October 24, 1946

Harijan, 3-11-1946

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 18-10-1946

[2] This appeared under "Notes".

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 20-10-1946

571. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

NEW DELHI,
October 24, 1946

SATIS BABU
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
15 COLLEGE SQUARE
CALCUTTA

NO NECESSITY SPECIAL. SHALL WIRE DATE DEPARTURE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 8913

572. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
October 24, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

I replied the very next day to the letter you had sent. But you could not have received it. It must have gone to Udaipur.

I got your letter today. I am sorry to hear that Shankarlal[1] is ill. It was good that both of you sisters went to Udaipur. Tell Shankarlal to get well soon. It does not behove a scout to fall ill. He may take up any job but a scout does not cease to be a scout.

Why should Umiya be unhappy? Bring her along. If you yourself do not come, that is a different matter.

I am not sending for you to make you unhappy. Are you afraid of me? I will never force you to do anything against your wish. I always have your welfare at heart. I wish to see you healthy and happy.

I have no time to write more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./24

[1] Shankarlal Agrawal, husband of addressee's elder sister Umiya Agrawal

573. LETTER TO MAHESH DATT MISHRA

October 24, 1946

CHI. MAHESH,

I have gone through your whole letter. Give up your insistence on accompanying me to Calcutta at present. If I feel, after reaching there, that your coming may be good, I shall send for you. Now go home and get ready for *Harijan*. Improve your health.

I admit my mistake about *Harijan*; forget it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6716. Also C. W. 4460. Courtesy: Mahesh Datt Mishra

574. LETTER TO RAM NARAYAN DUBE

NEW DELHI,

October 24, 1946

BHAI RAM NARAYAN DUBE,

I read your book on nature cure. It is packed with information but there is much exaggeration. There is a "must" with every instruction.

I passed on the book to a well-known *vaidya* to read the chapter on herbal science. He says that your claim cannot be proved.

If it is so, the book needs to be drastically revised.

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI RAM NARAYAN DUBE

PRAKRITIK CHIKITSALAYA

BENARES

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

575. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,

October 24, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,

I am so glad the boil has been opened and it promises to heal within time.

Jawaharlal was here when I got your letter. I showed it to him.

Just about to go to the prayer.

It was good to have attended to the dictionary, so like you.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 4182. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7818

576. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
October 24, 1946

Gandhiji told them[2] that it had already reached them. His own place, he knew, was in Bengal. He assured them that the heart of every man and woman who believed in God was bleeding for Bengal. He admonished them for creating a disturbance at prayer-time and asked them to be calm and join in the prayers. . . .

The regular prayer was not recited. Gandhiji said their minds were not calm enough for it. *Ramdhun* was sung and as usual had a calming effect on the gathering. Although the regular prayer had to be given up, it was in his heart, said Gandhiji, and he was sure it would reach God.[3]

He assured the audience that if members of the Interim Government were convinced that even by offering their lives as a sacrifice they could put a stop to the disturbances in East Bengal, not one of them would hesitate to make that sacrifice.

Referring to the remark of the young man who had used the metaphor of a house on fire,[4] Gandhiji said that the duty of the owner of the house or his servant was that when the house was burning he should concentrate on putting out the fire and not lose his head. He alluded to the legend about King Janaka who remained calm and unperturbed when the report was brought to him that his capital was burning, because he had done all he possibly could before and after the accident and therefore could rest secure in his faith in God. If he had lost his head and run to the place of accident,

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter".

[2] A crowd of excited young men carrying placards and shouting slogans had come to demand redress for East Bengal and invaded the prayer ground saying they wanted their voice to reach the members of the Working Committee which was meeting in Gandhiji's room.

[3] The following paragraph is reproduced from *The Hindustan Times.*

[4] Somebody had shouted that they could not pray when their house was burning.

he would only have assisted the flames by distracting attention.

They were pained at the news of women's suffering in East Bengal, said Gandhiji. But they had so lost their heads that they had themselves failed to be considerate towards the women in the audience. They had scared them away from the prayer ground. They had occupied the place where women sat every day. It was a strange way of demonstrating their sympathy with the outraged womanhood of East Bengal. He hoped that they would see the irony and inconsistency of it. Our women were easily scared away. It was so more or less all the world over. He wanted our women to learn to be brave. His advice to them to commit suicide rather than allow themselves to be dishonoured had been much misunderstood. They could keep a dagger for self-defence if they wished to. But a dagger was no use against overwhelming odds. He had advised them to take poison and end their lives rather than submit to dishonour. Their very preparedness should make them brave. No one could dishonour a woman who was fearless of death. They had two ways of self-defence—to kill and be killed or to die without killing. He could teach them the latter, not the former. Above all he wanted them to be fearless. There was no sin like cowardice.

But there was a moral code even for those who believed in violence. He did not wish them to copy the methods said to have been adopted in East Bengal. They must have read Maulana Saheb's statement and the statement issued by the ex-President of the All India Majlis-e-Ahrar. They had said that Islam did not permit forcible conversion or abduction and molestation of women.[1]

Harijan, 3-11-1946; also *The Hindustan Times*, 26-10-1946

577. ENGLISH INTO HINDUSTANI[2]

This fortnightly attempt is proving its use. Its defects are not unknown to me. It is a labour of love for the Rajkumari. Insistence on such an effort was mine. I was anxious to give to the lovers of the blend of Hindi and Urdu something ready-made. The hope then was that the vocabulary will be the joint effort of perhaps half a dozen co-workers. But it could not be. It had to be made where I was. My lot happened to be cast in Delhi. The attempt was not to be interrupted. The Rajkumari took it up with rare passion. But she is no scholar of Hindustani. She produces every fortnight what labour of love can. When and if the labour is completed and the time comes to publish the vocabulary in book from, it will undergo revision and errors and

[1] *Vide* also "How Villages Can Manfacture their Cloth", 17-11-1946

[2] This appeared under "Notes".

defects will be removed. Friends will, therefore, please continue to send their corrections and suggestions which, where acceptable, will be adopted at the time of revision. The chief thing to be borne in mind is that the student may have by him a ready though not scholarly companion to refer to in case of need.

NEW DELHI, October 25, 1946

Harijan, 3-11-1946

578. PLUCKY STAND

Papers received from Natal contain among other things a remarkable correspondence between the Mayoral Secretary of Durban and the Natal Indian Congress Secretary. A committee has been formed for making arrangements for the royal visit to Durban proposed to take place in the month of March next year. The main committee has established a sub-committee to deal with the question of joining the coloured and non-European sections of the population of Durban. For the purpose, the Committee invited the Natal Indian Congress to appoint two representatives to serve on the sub-committee so as to give their advice and assistance to enable the Indian community to see Their Majesties and the Royal Princesses.

To this invitation the Joint Hon. Secretary of the Natal Indian Congress (Meer Saheb) sent the following plucky reply on the 11th September last :

> I am directed by my Executive to state that while the Indian community has the greatest respect for Their Majesties and the Royal Princesses, it must be noted that the Indians of South Africa are at the present moment passing through the most critical period in their history. A series of colour discriminatory Acts depriving us of our elementary human rights during the last half century has culminated in the passing of the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act, 1946, passed in the teeth of the strongest opposition ever voiced by our community. The action of the Union Government in thus oppressing a voteless section of its population has plunged the whole Indian community in a state of grave unrest. Recent trends in colour legislation leave no room for doubt as to what is in store for people of colour in this country. The colour of a man's skin has become the sole criterion of judging human qualities.
>
> As a result of all this the Indian community of South Africa resolved on the 13th June, 1946 to launch a campaign of passive resistance against colour discrimination in the laws of this country. This peaceful protest still goes on

and 627 of our people, including national leaders like Dr. Yusuf Dadoo and Dr. G. M. Naicker, have been sent to jail where they are treated like common criminals. Some of them have served their sentences and have been released after being subjected to inhuman treatment, but hundreds still remain behind prison bars and many more continue to be sent to prison daily.

While the Indian community finds itself in such an unhappy situation in a part of His Majesty's Empire, it is most unreasonable to expect Indians to participate in any rejoicing or celebrations in honour of Royalty. In the circumstances we cannot but suggest that you advise Their Majesties to postpone their visit until such time as there is peace and goodwill in South Africa between the rulers and the ruled, the White and the non-White, the represented and the unrepresented, the privileged and under-privileged, so that all who constitute the South African nation can equally share, not only its burdens, but also its rewards.

The Natal Indian Congress Executive is to be congratulated on the reply. The Royal visit can evoke no feeling of joy among those who are fighting for their self-respect in South Africa in the making of which they have no mean share. Let us hope that the Royal visit will be postponed to a more propitious time when the colour bar has become a thing of the past. Such self-denial on the part of Their Majesties will be quite in keeping with the direction which the King and Queen recently issued to substitute in the National Anthem the following new verses :

Nor on this land alone,
But be God's mercies known,
From shore to shore.
Lord make the nations see,
That men should brothers be,
And form one family,
The wide world o'er.

for the antiquated and indefensible verses :

Oh, Lord our God arise,
Scatter his enemies,
and make them fall.
Confound their politics,
Frustrate their knavish tricks.
On Thee our hopes we fix,
God save us all.

NEW DELHI, October 25, 1946

Harijan, 3-11-1946

579. A WISE STEP

Shri G. D. Tapase, Minister for Backward Classes (Bombay) has sent me a copy of the Bombay Harijan (Removal of Social Disabilities) Act just passed by the Bombay Legislature. I give below the most relevant clauses :

3. Notwithstanding anything contained in any instrument or any law, custom or usage to the contrary, no Harijan shall merely on the ground that he is a Harijan—

(a) be ineligible for office under any authority constituted under any law; or

(b) be prevented from—

(i) having access to or using any river, stream, spring, well, tank, cistern, water-tap or any bathing place, burial or cremation ground, any sanitary convenience, any road, or pathway which the members of all other castes and classes of Hindus have right to use or have access to;

(ii) having access to or using any public conveyance licensed by the Provincial Government or any local authority to ply for hire;

(iii) having access to or using any building, well, cistern or place used for charitable or public purposes maintained wholly or partially out of the revenues of the Province or the funds of a local authority;

(iv) having access to a place of public amusement or place of public entertainment;

(v) having access to a shop which the members of all other castes and classes of Hindus have a right to have access to;

(vi) having access to or using any place set apart or maintained for the use of Hindus generally but not for the use of any particular section or class thereof;

(vii) enjoying any benefit under a charitable trust created for the benefit of Hindus generally but not for the benefit of any particular section or class thereof.

3.A. No person in charge of any of the places referred to in sub-clauses (i), (iii), (iv), (v) and (vi) or any conveyance referred to in sub-clause (ii), or clause (b) of Section 3 shall impose any restrictions on a Harijan or act in a manner as to result in discrimination against him.

4. No court shall in adjudicating any matter or executing any order recognize any custom or usage imposing any civil disability on any Harijan

merely on the ground that he is a Harijan.

5. No local authority shall in carrying out the functions and duties entrusted to it under any law recognize any custom or usage referred to in Section 4.

6. Whoever—

(a) prevents any person, by reason of his being a Harijan, from having access to or using any of the places referred to in sub-clause (i), (iii), (iv), (v) and (vi) or any conveyance referred to in sub-clause (ii) of clause (b) of Section 3 or from enjoying any benefit under a charitable trust referred to in sub-clause (vii) of clause (b) of the said Section or abets the prevention thereof; or

(b) imposes any restriction on a Harijan or acts in a manner so as to result in discrimination against him or abets any person to impose such restriction or to act in such manner shall, on conviction, be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three months or with fine which may extend to Rs. 200 or with both.

7. If any person who has been convicted of any offence punishable under this Act is again guilty of the same offence, he shall be punished on the second conviction with imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months or with a fine which may extend to Rs. 500 or with both and if he is again so guilty shall be punished on the third or any subsequent conviction with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year and shall also be liable to fine which may extend to Rs. 1,000.

The author of the measure has kindly supplied me with the text of his speech delivered on his introducing the measure. From it I note below the most poignant passages.

> This untouchability amounts to irrationality. As soon as a Harijan is born, untouchability applies to him. . . . As a Harijan he is born, as a Harijan he lives all through his life and as a Harijan he dies. . . . However clean he may be, however wise he may be, however superior he may be, to the so-called orthodox Hindus, he is not a superior being. The worse of it is that even after his death his dust and ashes are not allowed to mingle with the dust and ashes of the others. . . . The agonies of the untouchable are further aggravated by the fact that he is treated as an untouchable not only by the caste Hindus but even by Christians, Muslims and others. . . . To my mind the Bill gives a *sanad*, a charter, to the Harijans for the exercise of certain social, civic, fundamental rights.

It is worthy of note that the Bill was passed without opposition worth the name from the Hindu side. That is a good augury for the

successful working of the Act. And yet it would not do to be over-sanguine about it. Unfortunately for us, we know that we pass resolutions by acclamation and allow them to become dead letter. The greatest vigilance will have to be exercised by the Government and the reformers in the strict enforcement of the law.

It is no use blinking the fact that the reign of irrationality referred to by the author of the relief bill is still very much to the fore in India. It is not merely in regard to untouchability but many other things. Reformers, therefore, have to watch the demon and utilize their watchfulness, courtesy and tact in dealing with those who are possessed by the demon.

NEW DELHI, October 25, 1946

Harijan, 3-11-1946

580. "AMONG THE SAVARAS OF ORISSA"[1]

The moral is that basic education, i. e., education through craft, is the education that India needs.

NEW DELHI, 25-10-1946

Harijan, 24-11-1946

581. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

October 25, 1946

CHI. BHANSALI,

You are impatient. You will definitely be offered in sacrifice at the proper time. In my opinion Pushpa[2] is not yet fully trained. Everyone should be given sufficient time.

We shall know more about the situation in Bengal after I reach there. If necessary I will write from there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9276

[1] The report by A. V. Thakkar under this title is not reproduced here. It gave an account of the efforts made by a social worker to attract Savara children to school and the difficulty the parents had in sparing the children from the various chores they were required to do.

[2] Pushpa Desai

582. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

NEW DELHI,
October 25, 1946

CHI. KAKA,

I have your letter. I do not at all remember what I said to Jainendra. Whatever I may have said, it is not certain whether I shall or can go to Meerut.[1] I do not know what purpose I shall serve if I do go there. I am also of the opinion that there should not be too many meetings on the occasion and if there are, everyone should not attend all of them. You may, therefore, give your own independent opinion.

I understand about Nanavati[2]. I had expected it.

Gajanan[3] has his own ways, and so has Babu Kamath.

I have been reduced to the position of Trishanku[4]. I am hanging in mid air. I do not know whether I shall go to Bengal or continue here or go to Sevagram.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10978

583. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

NEW DELHI,
October 25, 1946

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have your letter. Since you seem to have made up your mind, I will not interfere. No doubt you will be useful wherever you are. Your arguments do appeal to me. If I had any say in the matter, I would have asked you to wait till I reached Sevagram. But I do not insist on that, either. I do not know where Fate will take me. Let Him decide.

[1] For the annual session of the Indian National Congress

[2] Amritlal T. Nanavati

[3] Gajanan Naik

[4] Character in mythology who found himself suspended between earth and heaven

It is good that Vanamala[1] is staying on for the present.

It is all right about M.'s[2] daily diary. You must fully recover.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9145

584. LETTER TO G. D. TAPASE

NEW DELHI,
October 25, 1946

BHAI TAPASE,

I have your letter of October 4, 1946. Thanks. I have been able to reach it only today. I am giving the relevant parts in the *Harijan* papers.[3]

It should be properly implemented.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

585. LETTER TO DEVPRAKASH NAYYAR

October 25, 1946

CHI. DEV,

It is not required of you to go to Bengal just now. I did wish you to be with me during the holidays. My visit to Bengal has not yet been finalized. Of course, my heart is there. Here also there has been enough work. There is no need to decide anything in haste. Enough if you know that the work you have taken up there is not quite simple.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Vanamala N. Parikh, addressee's daughter

[2] Munnalal G. Shah

[3] *Vide* "A Wise Step"

586. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
October 25, 1946

India is passing through a difficult time. As a matter of fact the whole world is passing through a crisis and India is no exception. What help do we need to meet this crisis?

According to the teaching of the *Gita* the first requisite for spiritual conduct was fearlessness. On New Year's Day people made some good resolve. He wanted them to make a firm resolve to shed all fear. Without fearlessness all other virtues were turned into dust. Attainment of truth or non-violence was impossible without fearlessness.

Fearlessness did not mean arrogance or aggressiveness. That in itself was a sign of fear. Fearlessness presupposed calmness and peace of mind. For that it was necessary to have a living faith in God.

In the song that had been sung before them, Gandhiji concluded, the devotee says that divorced from God, he is a most worthless creature. God is his refuge all along. He who takes refuge in God has no fear.

Harijan, 3-11-1946

587. SIND BANS "SATYARTH PRAKASH"

One had thought that the ban on *Satyarth Prakash* had lapsed, never to be renewed.[2] But the hope was a dupe. Here is the renewed ban :

> Whereas it appears to the Government of Sind that Chapter XIV of the book in Sindhi entitled *Satyarth Prakash* contains matter which promotes feelings of enmity or hatred between different classes of His Majesty's subjects—
>
> Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 99-A of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898, the Government of Sind hereby declares to be forfeited to His Majesty every copy wherever found of the book in Sindhi entitled *Satyarth Prakash* written by Swami Dayanand Saraswati and published by Professor Tarachand D. Gajra, M.A., on behalf of the Pratinidhi Sabha, Sind, Karachi, and all other documents containing copies, reprints or translations of, or extracts from,

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

[2] The ban had lapsed on September 30, 1946.

Chapter XIV of the said book on the grounds that in the said chapter the author (a) ridicules some of the religious beliefs of the Muslims; (b) misrepresents and reviles the teachings of the Koran; (c) attacks and belittles the authority of the Prophet Mohammed; and (d) generally contains matter calculated to hurt and which hurts, the religious susceptibilities of Muslims.

It is wider in application than before. The lapsed ban made it criminal to print or publish the book containing Chapter XIV. The renewed ban makes the possession of such a copy a crime. I cannot help feeling that the ban is senseless and is calculated to wound the susceptibilities of the Arya Samajists all the world over. *Satyarth Prakash* enjoys the same status for 40 lakhs of Arya Samajists as the Koran for the Muslims and the Bible for the Christians. It is possible to understand a ban on contemporaneous controversial literature, though at this time of the day popular Governments are reluctant even then to use their power. But is seems to be mischievous to ban a scriptural book. I would, therefore, urge the Sind Government to withdraw the ban in question. The Sindhi translation of *Satyarth Prakash* is not a new publication. Is it to be contended that a book that has passed through so many editions and has been translated in most of the languages of the world has been now found to contain matter "which promotes feelings of enmity or hatred between different classes of His Majesty's subjects"? The virtue of toleration is never strained, especially in matters of religion. Differences of religious opinion will persist to the end of time; toleration is the only thing that will enable persons belonging to different religions to live as good neighbours and friends. Religion never suffers by reason of the criticism—fair or foul—of critics; it always suffers from the laxity or indifference of its followers.

NEW DELHI, October 26, 1946

Harijan, 3-11-1946

588. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
October 26, 11946

CHI. AMRIT,

This is just a line under great pressure of work. I do hope you will not be in a hurry to see the cut healed. Let it take its course. It will be the shortest.

I leave tomorrow morning.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 418. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7820

589. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
October 26, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,

You do not acknowledge my letter in yours of today. I have never missed a day.

I do hope your cut will heal by the time you are ready to fly and that you will be able to leave without any harm to the body.

We leave for Calcutta on Monday.

Herewith a letter from Shanta.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 4183. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7819

590. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

October 26, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your letter. I must have myself opened your letter if you had marked it 'Personal'. I must have thought of answering it; but it would appear owing to pressure of other work I was not able to do so.

You can, of course, join in my work. You must accept a salary

for that. There is nothing wrong or shameful in your having become a householder. You should do what all others do. All I suggest is that if you accept less than your market price, it will be tantamount to not accepting a salary. Your needs can never be many. Where then is the problem? Stop thinking too much and engross yourself in whatever you consider your duty. All my plans have been upset now. Whatever I can do from Bengal is all that is possible.

I am likely to leave for Bengal on Monday. I will do there what God prompts me to do. I shall be on my test. Under these circumstances, give up the idea of staying near me and engage yourself in some service. You need not consult Kanchan[1] in this matter. She will be agreeable to whatever you do. You have to decide by yourself.

It is surprising that Kanchan has not written. The first delivery is often difficult. It is for you to decide what is your duty in this matter. I would not know. The decision whether you should stay with her or away from her rests with you two.

I have written these lines on the basis of what I remember of the contents of your letter. Do not write 'Personal' henceforth. Let the whole world know the facts.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8400 and 8399

591. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
October 26, 1946

CHI. KRISHNADAS[2],

I have your letter. I agree that we should not demand yarn against [the sale of] such items as cotton-mats, carpets, webbing tape, etc.

Similarly, it seems right not to ask for yarn against khadi required for hospitals and such other institutions.

Tell Jajuji that I have his letter. Perhaps it would be only proper

[1] Addressee's wife

[2] Son of Chhaganlal Gandhi

for Rajaji[1] not to say anything because he is in the Government. I am writing[2] to Pattabhi.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. KRISHNADAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

592. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

October 26, 1946

BHAI MATHEW,

Rajkumari is at Simla. She is giving herself a rest. No letters are sent there. Why grieve over the passing of your mother? She has been freed from pain. I am going to Bengal.

Blessings from

BAPU

PROF. P. G. MATHEW
SACRED HEART'S COLLEGE
THEVARA
ERNAKULAM

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1546

593. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[3]

NEW DELHI,
October 26, 1946

Gandhiji said that the late Shri Mahadev Desai had rendered the song into Gujarati.[4] The burden of the song, commented Gandhiji, was that the devotee should have the strength to walk alone in the face of difficulties however great. If he realized that God was ever with him, he would not feel lonely. The *bhajan* was not meant for

[1] C. Rajagopalachari, who was in charge of Education and Arts in the Interim Government since October 6

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya", 27-10-1946

[3] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.* The opening sentence and the last two paragraphs are from *The Hindustan Times.*

[4] The reference is to Rabindranath Tagore's song 'Ekla Chalo Re'. It was sung by the poet's grand-niece, Nandita Kripalani.

evil-doers. They could not walk alone.

The League members, he continued, had come into the Cabinet. He hoped that they had come with the firm resolve to make a success of their business. The Government of the country lay in the hands of these fourteen men[1]. They had to find food and clothing, provide for the education of the crores and fair transport facilities for them and be responsible for the peace and order in the country. He said :

Let us all pray that they will be able to work as one team and all their dealings will be above board and corruption and jobbery would be things of the past.

Gandhiji then reminded the audience of the Charkha Mandals that had been established in Delhi. Only those who had learnt all the processes beginning with the separation of cotton seeds and ending with spinning could become members. Tomorrow there would be an examination for them. Those who knew the processes could take part in the examination. Cotton would be supplied to them when they came. The rest of the equipment they should bring with them.

The organizers had not been able to procure enough cotton as yet. Cotton ginned in mills was easy to obtain but it was no good for *tunai*. For that they required cotton as it came from the pod. The examinees were free to bring their own cotton to avoid disappointment in case of failure to procure it. They should learn the lesson of the *bhajan* to stand alone.

Harijan, 3-11-1946; and *The Hindustan Times*, 27-10-1946

594. WHO CAN BE A TRUSTEE?[2]

The purpose for which the A. I. S. A. has been created is so vast and great that the qualifications to be a trustee of the A. I. S. A. require careful consideration. In my opinion they should be as below :

1. No one should be a trustee merely in name or for the sake of name. A trustee should have the faith that in a country like India

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Asaf Ali, Baldev Singh, Jagjivan Ram, John Matthai, C. Rajagopalachari, C. H. Bhabha, Liaquat Ali Khan, I. I. Chundrigar, Abdul Rab Nishtar, Ghazanfar Ali Khan and Jogendra Nath Mandal

[2] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 3-11-1946. The translation reproduced here has been revised so as to bring it into conformity with the original.

where crores remain unemployed for four to six months in the year, everybody can easily be clad in self-spun cloth and need not touch any other if all those who are physically fit spin for a reasonable time every day, say on an average for an hour every day.

2. A trustee who has this unshakable faith will spin regularly to set a good example to others and for the satisfaction of contributing his or her mite to the service of the country.

3. He or she will try his or her best to attune his or her life with the life in the villages of India.

4. India is made of villages, but our intelligentsia has neglected them. A trustee of the A. I. S. A. would try his or her utmost to remedy the handicaps from which our village life suffers. In doing so he or she should remember that village life must not become a copy or appendage of city life. The cities have to adopt the pattern of village life and subsist for the villages.

5. If a trustee's husband is connected with the mill industry, she should engage a weaver out of her personal money to weave yarn spun by herself or her friends and relatives and use the cloth thus produced. A trustee should read all the literature about hand-spinning and hand-weaving and understand the economic and moral significance of the cloth-making industry. He or she should know that it is possible to make it universal and explain it to others.

6. A trustee should study and understand the history of the A. I. S. A. from the beginning to date and from it should learn how the various processes connected with cotton, i. e., carding, spinning and weaving, have been revolutionized.

I have given my views as suggestions. They cannot be obligatory. I shall welcome all helpful suggestions by way of amendment or addition.

NEW DELHI, October 27, 1946
Harijan, 3-11-1946

595. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
October 27, 1946

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SUMMER HILL
SIMLA

GLAD PROGRESSING. NO WORRY. ADDRESS KHADI PRATISHTHAN, COLLEGE SQUARE. LOVE ALL.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 4143. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7452

596. LETTER TO SARALADEVI A. SARABHAI

NEW DELHI,
October 27, 1946

CHI. SARALABEHN,

I had told you that I would send you my views regarding a trustee. I could not manage it earlier. But now I have written[1] something for *Harijanbandhu* and I am sending to you a copy. I see in it nothing that you cannot do. I shall therefore await your consent.

Tomorrow I leave for Bengal. I shall get your letter if you address it to Khadi Pratishthan, College Square, Calcutta.

How nice if Nirmalabehn were recovering.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARALABEHN SARABHAI
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

597. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
October 27, 1946

CHI. JIVANJI (DESAI),

Is there any hitch in working out this amalgamation (of the Sasta Sahitya [Mandal] and the Navajivan Trust)?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

(The suggestion is from Sjt. Manu Subedar.)

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Who Can Be A Trustee"

598. LETTER TO BABUBHAI JHAVERI

NEW DELHI,
October 27, 1946

BHAI BABUBHAI,

You should let your wife do what she thinks right. I see no point in dragging her to court. I have torn up the letter.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. BABUBHAI JHAVERI
248 DOSHIWADA'S POLE
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

599. LETTER TO SHANTILAL A. THAKKAR

NEW DELHI,
October 27, 1946

BHAI SHANTILAL,

I have your pathetic letter. If your repentance is genuine, you have started life anew. Seek *satsang*[1] if you can. If you cannot have *satsang* of people, read good books and meditate. You should give up pleasures and pastimes, but not exercise, *asanas*, etc., which are necessary for building up the body.

I am not available now. Nor am I useful any more for such work.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

SHANTILAL AMRITLAL THAKKAR
DOSSA JIVAN'S CHAWL
NEW HANUMAN LANE
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Company of the good

600. LETTER TO LILAVATI MUNSHI

NEW DELHI,
October 27, 1946

CHI. LILAVATI (MUNSHI),

I have your letter. I like your idea. But for the time being you or people like you will not be going with me. I have no idea what God wants me to do. I shall see my way after I reach there. And if I feel the need, I may write to you or send a wire.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

601. LETTER TO NANABHAI

NEW DELHI,
October 27, 1946

BHAI NANABHAI AND BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I had your letter. Yours seems to be a laudable effort. It was nice of you to have sent the skein of yarn. Carry the work forward with the help of Bhai Diwanji.

Blessings from
BAPU

BHAI NANABHAI
GANDHI KUTIR
KARADI (DIST. SURAT)

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

602. LETTER TO DR. B. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

October 27, 1946

BHAI PATTABHI,

It would be well if you issued a statement[1] to the effect that the attack on [the policy of] not having any new mills in Madras was not proper.

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to P. G. Mathew", 26-10-1946

I am going to Bengal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

603. LETTER TO SARASWATI GANDHI

October 27, 1946

CHI. SARU (SARASWATI),

I am able to write only this much while preparing to go to Calcutta. I got your letter. Kanti[1] is doing well. You too are growing wise. May you both make progress, enjoy long lives and always render service.

Blessings to all three of you from

BAPU

SHRI KANTI GANDHI

BANGALORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

604. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

NEW DELHI

October 27, 1946

Speaking before the evening prayer Gandhiji said that he was leaving for Calcutta the following morning. He did not know when God would bring him again to Delhi. He wanted to go to Noakhali from Calcutta. It was a difficult journey and he was in poor health. But one had to do one's duty and trust in God to make the way smooth. It was not that God necessarily and always removed hardships from one's path, but He always enabled one to bear them.

He did not want anyone to come to the station. India had given him enough affection. It needed no further demonstration.

He was not going to Bengal to pass judgment on anybody. He was going there as a servant of the people and he would meet Hindus and Muslims alike. Some Muslims looked upon him as an enemy today. They had not done so always. But he did not mind their anger. Were not his own religionists angry with him at times?

[1] Addressee's husband

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

From the age of seventeen he had learnt the lesson that all mankind, be they of any nationality, colour or country, were his own kith and kin. If they were God's servants, they had to become servant of all His creation.

It was in that capacity that he was going to Bengal. He would tell them that Hindus and Muslims could never be enemies. They were born and brought up in India and they had to live and die in India. Change of religion could not alter that fundamental fact. If some people liked to believe that change of religion changed one's nationality also, even then they need not become enemies.

Suffering of women had always melted his heart. He wanted to go to Bengal and wipe their tears and put heart into them if he could. In Calcutta he would try to see the Governor and the Prime Minister Mr. Suhrawardy and then proceed to Noakhali.

He was proceeding under auspices none too happy. He referred to the ugly demonstration before the Viceroy's House on the day before when Jawaharlalji and some of his colleagues in the Interim Government were abused and insulted. It was bad. Why should such things happen when the two parties, the Muslim League and the Congress, had formed a coalition at the Centre? Praise or abuse made no difference to the leaders who wanted to serve them to the best of their ability. But the people had to behave.

Let us all still pray and hope that all the Ministers will be able to work as a team. If India can speak with one voice, she will be the greatest country in the world and every true Indian must wish her to attain that status.[1]

Gandhiji told the audience that about 30 men and women had taken part in the spinning examination held in the afternoon. The cotton had been procured. God always enabled one to procure the means for a good project. He (Gandhiji) himself had joined them in spinning and had spun the slivers prepared by them. It was a noble sight. They all knew their job and went about it in perfect quiet. The music of a well-running wheel or wheels was most soothing for the mind and the spirit. All those who took part in the spinning were well-to-do people. They did it as a sacrificial act. A number of such mandals were being established to popularize the idea of sacrificial spinning. The whole conception and the demonstration of it that he saw that day were beautiful.

Harijan, 10-11-1946; and *The Hindustan Times*, 28-10-1946

[1] What follows is reproduced from *The Hindustan Times*.

605. DISCUSSION WITH DIRECTOR OF BRITISH DAILY[1]

NEW DELHI,

[Before *October 28, 1946*][2]

GANDHIJI: We are today suffering from a double evil—suppression of facts and concoction.

DIRECTOR: It does not pay to emphasize news about riots. My paper does not.

But Gandhiji told him that he and his paper would be doing a real service to India not by suppressing relevant facts but by presenting them truthfully, without bias or prejudice. He said :

Truth never damages a cause that is just.

Replying to another question as to when the present trouble would end, Gandhiji remarked that it was bound to go, though he did not see any signs of abatement just yet. He added :

There are interested parties fomenting it. Mine may be a voice in the wilderness today, but I maintain that so long as British troops are here, both Hindus and Mussalmans will continue to look up to them for help and the trouble will continue. Nothing worse could happen to a people struggling to be free.

This shocked the British conscience of the friend. He asked: "The Britisher would like his troops to go out quicker. Who obstructs?"

Who else but the British themselves, unless you can show that it is physically impossible to effect immediate withdrawal.

After some parrying the friend admitted that the British commercial and other vested interests in India and their henchmen stood in the way of their withdrawal. He was, however, still doubtful as to the function of British troops in the maintenance of law and order. "You say there can be no peace while they are here. Yet every day there is an increasing demand for them for the maintenance of peace. The complaint is that they are not sufficiently used."

G. That is the very reason why they should be withdrawn.

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "A Friendly Overture". Pyarelal explains that "a Director of an influential British daily paper had come to see Gandhiji at New Delhi and told him that his paper was anxious to do a friendly turn to India"

[2] Gandhiji left New Delhi for Calcutta on the morning of October 28, 1946.

Their presence, in my opinion, does not act as a preventive measure but becomes punitive. Where they are used to maintain law and order, it is after the trouble. Future historians will bear this out. Order will be restored in East Bengal too. But after what slaughter, what suffering? No, the British troops are in India not to protect India but to protect British interests which were imposed on India and which are now so well entrenched that even the British Government cannot dislodge them. The British did not come here as philanthropists, nor is there any altruism in their continued stay here or the continuation of their troops, all that might be claimed to the contrary notwithstanding.

D : How do you think the succession of war such as we have witnessed of late can be stopped?

G. I have no doubt that unless big nations shed their desire for exploitation and the spirit of violence of which war is the natural expression and atom bomb the inevitable consequence, there is no hope for peace in the world. I tried to speak out during the war and wrote open letters to the British people[1], to Hitler[2] and to the Japanese[3] and was dubbed a fifth columnist for my pains.

D : But non-violence might take a long time to act. But for the Second Front there probably would have been no Russia.

G. All these are arguments dictated by reason. It is not permitted me to think in these terms or else I would be denying my faith which today burns brighter than ever in spite of all the bitter experiences that I have had. History provides us with a whole series of miracles of masses of people being converted to a particular view in the twinkling of an eye. Take the Boer War. It has given to the English language the word 'mafficking'. People went mad on the Maffeking Day. Yet inside of two years the whole British nation underwent a transformation. Henry Campbell-Bannerman became the Premier and practically all the gains of war were given up. The recent labour victory at the polls was another instance in point. To me it is a sufficient miracle that in spite of his oratory and brilliance, Churchill should cease to be the idol of the British people who till yesterday

[1] *Vide* "To Every Briton"

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Adolf Hitler", 24-12-1940

[3] *Vide* "To Every Japanese"

hung on his lips and listened to him in awe. All these instances are enough to sustain the faith of a believer like me that when all other powers are gone, one will remain, call it God, Nature or whatever you like.

His own faith in the triumph of non-violence he likened to that of the witnesses in the Second Coming of Christ. It was to take place within the lifetime of the witnesses though it has taken two thousand years and yet remains a distant dream. Faith could think in no other terms.

Harijan, 10-11-1946

606. TELEGRAM TO SIND HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH[1]

[On or before *October 28, 1946*]

SEPARATE ELECTORATES ARE IMPOSSIBLE. BUT RESERVATION OF CERTAIN SEATS SUBJECT TO MERIT IS DESIRABLE.

The Hindu, 30-10-1946

607. CABLE TO VIJAYALAKSHMI PANDIT

[On or before *October 28, 1946*][2]

GOD HAS CROWNED YOUR EFFORT WITH SUCCESS.[3] CONGRATULATE CHAGLA[4] ON MY BEHALF. THE RESULT WILL HEARTEN OUR PEOPLE IN SOUTH AFRICA.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-10-1946

[1] The news report under the date-line Karachi, October 28, said : ". . . The Sind Provincial Scheduled Castes' Federation had submitted a memorandum to the Sind Government demanding representation for Scheduled Castes on the local bodies in the province. The Sind Government sought the views of the Sind Harijan Sevak Sangh over the memorandum and the Sangh in turn sought Gandhiji's advice."

[2] The cable was reported under the date-line October 28, 1946.

[3] The reference is to U. N. Steering Committee's decision against Gen. Smuts's proposal to omit from the agenda the South-Africa Indian question, which he argued was a domestic problem and not within the jurisdiction of the General Assembly. The addressee led the Indian delegation to the U. N. O.

[4] M. C. Chagla, a member of the delegation

608. TALK WITH A FRIEND

NEW DELHI,

[On or before *October 28, 1946*][1]

I do not know what I shall be able to do there. All I know is that I won't be at peace with myself unless I go there.

There are two kinds of thoughts—idle and active. There may be myriads of the former swarming in one's brain. They do not count. But one pure, active thought proceeding from the depth and endowed with all the undivided intensity of one's being, becomes dynamic and works like a fertilized ovum.

He was averse to putting a curb on the spontaneous urge which he felt within him to go to the people of Noakhali.

Harijan, 10-11-1946

609 LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,

October 28, 1946

CHI. SUMI[2],

I had your note. Didn't you go to Kashi a little early? I am today taking the train to Calcutta. I don't know how long I shall have to be there or what is going to happen there. But then, what have we to do with that? Let us live as God wills and go on doing His bidding. He has already shown us what we should do! You are studying, aren't you? Tell me.

The rest in my letter[3] to Sita. Both the letters are for both of you.

Blessings from

BAPU

SUMITRA GANDHI
BANARAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". According to Pyarelal Gandhiji was having an "argument with a very esteemed friend who made an eleventh-hour effort to dissuade him from setting out on such a long journey just then". Gandhiji however left Delhi on October 28, 1946.

[2] Daughter of Ramdas Gandhi

[3] This is not traceable.

610. LETTER TO SHANKARLAL G. BANKER

NEW DELHI,
October 28, 1946

CHI. SHANKARLAL,

I have sat down to write letters after the morning prayer. I have your letter before me, as also Anasuyabehn's[1].

I am getting ready for Bengal. I will be doing there what God commands. I wish to be there as long as He wills. I hope you are calm. You should be. How do you spend your time?

My address will be: Khadi Pratishthan, College Square, Calcutta. But I want to go on to Noakhali.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHANKARLAL BANKER
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

611. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

October 28, 1946

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I think it useless for you to come to Bengal at present. Your health is not such that it can bear the strain. Otherwise also, there is work to be done here. I do not know what the conditions there will be like.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2495

[1] Anasuyabehn Sarabhai

612. A LETTER

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA,
October 28, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

Pardon the bad hand. I am writing on a moving train. You need not worry over the happenings[1] of the 24th.

M. K. G.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

613. LETTER TO MADALASA

ON THE TRAIN,
October 28, 1946

CHI. MADU,

I am under the impression that I had immediately replied to your long letter. But I don't find your name in the despatch list. And yesterday, on the occasion of the New Year, I got another letter from you.

Let us wait and see when our New Year commences.

I did not tell Janakibehn[2] that you had written to me about Rama.[3] But in reply to a question by me she expressed her own opinion. Everything should be left to Rama. He is no more a child. We should do what he wishes.

I hope you are well. I don't know when I shall return from Bengal. Today only this much.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirwad, pp. 330-1

[1] Presumably a reference to the incidents in Calcutta, in which five persons were killed and forty others injured

[2] Addressee's mother, Janakidevi Bajaj

[3] Ramakrishna Bajaj, the addressee's younger brother. The reference is to his marriage.

614. LETTER TO KANAM GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN,
October 28, 1946

CHI. KANAM[1],

I am writing this on a moving train. I am going to Bengal. I do not consider your handwriting too bad. Still you can improve it. You are engrossed in your studies. I do not know when I shall be going that way. Ask Ushi[2] to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 9523. Courtesy: Kanam Gandhi

615. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

October 28, 1946

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I have your letter. I will write to Satyanarayan[3]. I am writing this on a moving train which is taking me to Bengal. Do what you can. The result lies in God's hands.

In the end the national language has to be Hindustani.

Cannot the books be sent with someone who may be going that side?

I cannot write more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10812

[1] Son of Ramdas Gandhi

[2] Usha, addressee's sister

[3] M. Satyanarayan of Hindi Prachar Sabha, Madras

616. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN,
October 28, 1946

CHI. RAMDAS,

I am writing this on my way to Bengal. I got your note. You had better preserve your health.

I had a postcard from Sumi. She seems to be deeply immersed in her studies. I don't know when I shall be able to return from Bengal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

617. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

ON THE TRAIN,
October 28, 1946

CHI. JAIRAMDAS,

I have your letter. We cannot give up the flag. A procession or drums may not be necessary but it is our duty to hoist the flag in a peaceful manner. More can be said only after observation.

I am going to Bengal. I do not know when I shall return.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

618. CRUELTY TO THE DUMB CREATION

A Mysorean draws my attention to . . .[1]

I have had the misfortune to advise the destruction of stray dogs. But that had to be, if men would be so cruel as, out of a false sense of pity, to feed *pariah* dogs and permit them to become a menace to the neighbouring population. But my advice can never include impounding such dogs and torturing them as those mentioned

[1] The extract from the correspondent's letter is not reproduced here.

by my correspondent seem to have been. Humanitarian instinct demands destruction of such animals in an instantaneous and painless manner. I would love to hope that there is exaggeration in what the correspondent has stated. Anyway, the Municipality in question and all such other institutions should mend their manner if they do not satisfy the test demanded by humanity.

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA, October 29, 1946

Harijan, 10-11-1946

619. DOLA-PALKI

The dola-palki dispute in Garhwal should be set at rest seeing that the U. P. Government are said to have passed orders for prompt measures to be taken against those who would interfere with Harijan bridegrooms riding on ponies or using any other form of conveyance in spite of custom to the contrary trotted out by objectors.

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA, October 29, 1946

Harijan 10-11-1946

620. VILLAGE INDUSTRIES[1]

A thoughtful friend, writing of village industries, says :[2]

. . . The children should be paid at the rate of one anna and the adults four annas per day from the day they begin to work. As they acquire more skill, the wages of the children should be increased up to five annas and those of the adults up to eight annas per day.

The manufacture in one village should be confined to one kind of goods only, so that in about two months' time the workers will acquire skill and avoid making mistakes. The manufactured article should be such as can be utilized locally. The State should arrange to supply raw material and appoint two or three experts to train workers. The State should also undertake to popularize the manufactured goods and arrange for their transport and cheap distribution to the poor consumer. . . .

This scheme will enable millions to add to their income and make the two ends meet without throwing them on the unemployment dole or loss of self-respect.

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 10-11-1946. The translation reproduced here has been revised so as to bring it into conformity with the original.

[2] Only extracts from the letter are translated here.

. . . The man who is engaged to keep stores, accounts etc., should be made responsible for the education of the children as well. After two or three years, the education should be carried on by the monitor system, that is to say, the senior boys should teach the junior ones and the teacher should teach the senior boys only.

This teacher should also keep about 50 commonly used drugs. . . . These drugs should be sold to the villagers at the cheapest rates.

The following is a list of some of the household articles that can be manufactured in this way: [1]

The letter is interesting and deserves consideration. One thing is apparent. The writer has given the first place to cloth. It is the only article in the list of universal importance. The various processes involved in khadi production can engage millions of adults and children and enable them to earn a fair amount. This includes the weavers. The weavers live in the cities today. The businessman exploits them and keeps them dependent on him. If the people's Government could supply them with all the yarn they require it would simplify things for them and put their vocation on a stable basis. They would not then need to live in the cities. But this is beside the point. Much has been said and will be said about khadi.

In regard to this letter I have two kinds of difficulties. One is whether it is possible to sell hand-made articles as cheaply as machine-made ones. The second is that out of the articles that have been enumerated in the scheme, there is hardly any except khadi which can become universal. They will not, in a large measure, be consumed locally and so will have to be sold in the cities. This is as it should be. The villagers should develop such a high degree of skill that articles prepared by them will command a ready market outside. When our villages are fully developed there will be no dearth in them of men with a high degree of skill and artistic talent. There will be village poets, village artists, village architects, linguists and research workers. In short, there will be nothing in life worth having which will not be had in the villages. Today the villages are barren and desolate and are like dung-heaps. Tomorrow they will be like beautiful gardens and it would be difficult to deceive the people there.

The reconstruction of the villages along these lines should begin right now. That might necessitate some modifications in the foregoing scheme. The reconstruction of the villages should be organized not

[1] The list, which named some 45 items, is not reproduced here.

on a temporary but on a permanent basis.

My second difficulty is that in the scheme under question training and education have been divorced from each other. In fact training is a judicious blending of craft, hygiene, education and art. According to Nai Talim, craft, literary instruction, hygiene and art are not separate things but blend together and cover education of the individual from the time of conception to the moment of death. Therefore, I would not divide village uplift work into water-tight compartments from the very beginning but undertake an activity which will combine all four. Instead of regarding craft and industry as different from education I will regard the former as the medium for the latter. Nai Talim therefore ought to be integrated into the scheme.

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA, October 29, 1946

Harijan, 10-11-1946

621. EXCISE DEPARTMENT IN C. P.[1]

This is a scandalous abuse of authority for raising revenue. Let us hope that now that the Government is representative in C. P., as elsewhere, this abuse will be set right.

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA, October 29, 1946

Harijan, 17-11-1946

622. AN INDIAN VILLAGE FIGHTS AGAINST FAMINE[2]

I would only add to this thanksgiving essay that God helps those who help themselves. The villagers must be taught to grow more food themselves. Then help from outside will come and will be welcome.

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA, October 29, 1946

Harijan, 24-11-1946

[1] The article under this heading by A. V. Thakkar is not reproduced here. It described how the "outstill system of liquor production and distribution by Government through the agency of licensed manufacturers who are also retailers of the same" had helped increase excise revenue, especially in tribal and backward areas.

[2] The article under this heading by Horace Alexander is not reproduced here. It described the famine conditions that Belgatta, a village in Mysore, had to face on account of the failure of rains and the help it received in the shape of foodgrains from America, Canada, Australia and Egypt.

623. LETTER TO PUSHPA DESAI

October 29, 1946

CHI. PUSHPA,

I am writing this on the train which is carrying me to Calcutta. You could not stick to Nai Talim. You are not right in saying that you will learn nothing there. It only means that you have not learnt the knack of doing such work. I think your going there was premature. We should give perfect service wherever we are. Those who have accepted service as their sole dharma must learn to be perfectly happy wherever they are serving. One acquires the necessary knowledge while doing such service.

You will be calm now and keeping perfect health.

You must have read what I wrote[1] to Bhansalibhai about Bengal. There is no question yet of your undertaking such work. I myself do not know how things will shape.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9277

624. LETTER TO GOVINDA REDDY

October 29, 1946

CHI. GOVINDA REDDY,

I had your letter but could not reply to it promptly. You should regard the work you are doing itself as Nai Talim. It can be said that work in the kitchen is the most difficult of all. It is not easy to humour people of different temperaments and yet get them to follow the rules. The task requires a *sthitaprajna*[2]. I cannot tell you how you should accomplish it; you will learn by experience. Only you must have a generous heart, self-restraint, calmness and thoughtfulness.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI GOVINDA REDDY
SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to J.P. Bhansali", 25-10-1946

[2] The man of steadfast intellect described in *Bhagavad Gita*, II, 55-72

625. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SODEPUR,
October 29, 1946

In his prayer discourse he told them how he had never dreamt that he would be coming back to Sodepur so soon.[2] But God had sent him in their midst again. The train had arrived five hours late. He called that also the will of God. No doubt there were big crowds at Aligarh, Khurja Road, Kanpur and other big stations and the train was detained as a result. But he literally believed in the old maxim that not a blade of grass moves but by His will. Some might say that all his talk about God was a make-believe which he used as a blind to cover his hypocrisy. All he could say was that he was not aware of any hypocrisy in himself. He spoke what he believed to be God's truth. As regards his future plan, Gandhiji said that he had come to Calcutta with a blank mind to do His will. What he could do here and how long he would stay in Bengal he did not know.[3] All he could say was that he had not come to stay in Calcutta. He would be in Calcutta only for a day or two and then proceed to Noakhali. His proper place was Noakhali. God would indicate to him the next step on reaching Noakhali.

Harijan, 10-11-1946; and *The Hindu*, 31-10-1946

626. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,
October 30, 1946

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE, SUMMER HILL
SIMLA

NO ANXIETY. GOING NOAKHALI PROBABLY FRIDAY.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 4185. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7821

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The prayer was arranged at 5.30 p.m. but Gandhiji could attend it only after 7 p.m.

[2] Gandhiji had earlier visited Sodepur in December 1945.

[3] The following three sentences are reproduced from *The Hindu.*

627. LETTER TO KALYANJI MEHTA

CALCUTTA,
October 30, 1946

BHAI KALYANJI (MEHTA),

I have your letter about the Dandi March Road. There is no need to write about it in *Harijan*. The project is such as can be accomplished with the efforts you make.

Blessings from
BAPU

DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
SURAT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

628. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SODEPUR,
October 30, 1946

The next day, owing to his engagements in Calcutta with H. E. the Governor and the Prime Minister[2], he had again to apologize to his audience for coming late to the prayer meeting. He remarked :

He who gives all his time to the service of people, his whole life is an unbroken sound of prayer.

He did not however, wish thereby to diminish the importance of fixed time for prayer. There was a difference between community prayer and individual prayer. He was sorry he had not been able to do justice to the former. It was generous of them to have waited for him with such exemplary patience and it filled him with joy and faith and confidence in regard to the task before him. But he could not forgive himself so easily for his failure to keep punctually the prayer appointment with them.

He drew their attention to the Viceroy's appeal issued in the name of the whole Cabinet of which the Viceroy was the President and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the Vice-President and which consisted of both Congress and Muslim League representatives. In that appeal the Viceroy, on behalf of himself and his colleagues, had appealed that the two major communities of India should bury the hatchet and become one at heart. The unity should be genuine,

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

[2] Sir Frederick Burrows and Huseyn Sheed Suhrawardy

not imposed by the military or the police. The speaker had come to Bengal for that purpose. He took no sides. He could only side with truth and justice. He wanted them all to pray with him for the establishment of heart unity between the Muslims and the Hindus. Their name would be mud in the world if they degraded themselves by fighting among themselves like wild beasts.

Harijan, 10-11-1946

629. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SODEPUR,
October 31, 1946

Addressing the prayer meeting Gandhiji said that he was sorry to tell the audience that he would not be leaving for Noakhali tomorrow as he had intended to. The Prime Minister had sent him word that the train could not be arranged for Noakhali tomorrow. He hoped to leave on Saturday or Sunday. In the meantime he would try to render here whatever service he could.

Gandhiji was able to tell his audience that he saw a faint ray of hope that peace might be established between the communities. He had met H. E. the Governor and his Prime Minister twice. The visit to the former was more or less in the nature of a courtesy call. His main business was with the Prime Minister. As one drove through the deserted streets with garbage heaps, at places banked up nearly two feet high against the pavements, and entire rows of gutted shops and burnt-out houses in the side-streets and by-lanes as far as the eye could reach, one felt overcome with a sinking feeling at the mass madness that can turn a man into less than the brute. By its very nature this state of things cannot last. Human nature won't stand it. As Abraham Lincoln said, "You cannot fool all the people for all time." There seem to be indications that the people are already beginning to sicken of the carnival of blood and bestiality. They had been fighting amongst themselves like wild beasts. The fighting could do no good to Calcutta, Bengal, India or the world.

To make peace between quarrelling parties, the speaker said, had been his vocation from his early youth. Even while he practised as a lawyer, he tried to bring the contending parties together. Why could not the two communities be brought together? He was an optimist, he said.

From them he wanted only this help: that they should pray with him that this mutual slaughter might stop and the two communities might really become one at heart. Whether India was to become divided or remain one whole could

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The first paragraph is reproduced from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

not be decided by force. It had to be done through mutual understanding. Whether they decided to part or stay together, they must do so with goodwill and understanding.

He could never be party to anything which might mean humiliation or loss of self-respect for anyone. Therefore any peace to be substantial must be honourable, never at the cost of honour.

In this he was only echoing the sentiment expressed to him by a prominent Muslim who had seen him. This friend had said: "We must reach our goal, whatever it might be—Pakistan or undivided India—without bloodshed or fighting. I go so far as to say that if it cannot be reached except through bloodshed and fighting amongst ourselves, it is not worth reaching."

Harijan, 10-11-1946; and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 1-11-1946

630. TELEGRAM TO SUDHIR GHOSH

[*October 1946*][1]

SUDHIR GHOSH

NARGISBEHN BROUGHT LETTER YESTERDAY. SUSHILA SEVAGRAM ATTENDING CHOLERA PATIENTS. HOPE VISIT BENGAL LAST WEEK OCTOBER. LOVE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

631. TALK WITH A MUSLIM FRIEND[2]

SODEPUR, CALCUTTA,
[Before *November 1, 1946*][3][2]

"Why do you want to go to Noakhali? You did not go to Bombay, Ahmedabad or Chhapra, where things have happened that are infinitely worse than Noakhali. Would not your going there only add to the existing tension?" Was it because in these places it was the Muslims who had been the sufferers that he did not go there and would go to Noakhali because the sufferers there were Hindus?

[1] From the reference to Gandhiji's visit to Bengal in the last week of October; he reached Calcutta on October 29, 1946.

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", dated November 1, 1946

[3] *ibid.*

Gandhiji's reply was that he made no distinction between Hindu and Muslim. He would certainly have gone to any of the places mentioned by the friend if anything approaching what had happened at Noakhali had happened there and if he had felt that he could do nothing without being on the spot. It was the cry of outraged womanhood that had peremptorily called him to Noakhali. He felt he would find his bearings only on seeing things for himself at Noakhali. His technique of non-violence was on trial. It remained to be seen how it would answer in the face of the present crisis. If it had no validity, it were better that he himself should declare his insolvency. He was not going to leave Bengal until the last embers of the trouble were stamped out.

I may stay on here for a whole year or more. If necessary, I will die here. But I will not acquiesce in failure. If the only effect of my presence in the flesh is to make people look up to me in hope and expectation which I can do nothing to vindicate, it would be far better that my eyes were closed in death.

He had mentally prepared himself, he added, for abstention from the Congress session, if necessary. He had similarly disengaged himself mentally from all his responsibilities in respect of Sevagram and Uruli—his latest love.

Harijan, 10-11-1946

632. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SODEPUR, CALCUTTA,
Friday, [*November 1, 1946*]

The whole of India, Gandhiji said, was faced with a difficult situation. That of Bengal was still more so, he remarked in his after prayer address on Friday last. He had been asked as to what their duty was under the circumstances. According to the scriptures, that was dharma which was enjoined by the holy books, followed by the sages, interpreted by the learned and which appealed to the heart. The first three conditions must be fulfilled before the fourth came into operation. Thus one had no right to follow the precepts of an ignorant man or a rascal even though they commended themselves to one. Rigorous observance of harmlessness, non-enmity and renunciation were the first requisites for a person to entitle him to lay down the law, i. e., dharma.

He had told them what he considered to be his duty. But they had to judge for themselves what their duty was. He did not ask them to follow him but he pointed out to them the way to discover what their duty was in the difficult position they found themselves in. The *Gita* had told them that if they only waited on God, they would know the way.

Harijan, 17-11-1946

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

633. GREEN CROSS SOCIETY

Red Cross Society one is aware of. It had at one time only military associations and used to have an imperialist flavour. Now it has expanded into civil work and covers every form of first-aid work for the relief of suffering humanity. Nevertheless its activities are largely confined to cities. It has hardly touched Indian life.

England is a country for lost causes: humanitarian and even strange causes. One such is represented by the Green Cross Society for the wild life heritage. Mrs. M. H. Morrison is its Hon. Secretary (41, Asmuns Place, London, N. W. 11).

The Society aims at the U. N. O. identifying itself with it. The following resolution is to be submitted to the U. N. O. for acceptance :

(a) That U. N. O. ideals should include immediate effort in each country to delimit the area of any suitable National Park incorporating Nature Reserves for the protection of unique and valuable wild life—flora, fauna, avifauna—with the distinctive terrain upon which these depend.

(b) And, further, that the world at large should consent to an International Park, or World National Park in South America, Africa or Asia. If in Asia then upon, around or within—it is suggested—the immense mountains encircling Tibet, Britain, China, India, Russia and U. S. A. appointing Custodians and acting as Trustees.

Reasons adduced for inviting the U. N. O. to pass the foregoing resolution are :

1. That a stand must now be made against the maddening encroachments of materialism.

2. That the idealism and realism of the United Nations Organization should include an urge to all the world and to each nation to protect our heritage of wild life—its beauty, grandeur and interest—wild birds, wild animals, wild flora (flowers, plants, trees) and wild country or landscape; to protect our heritage wherever possible; and with special care within the Nature Reserves of National Parks.

3. That the United Nations will jointly set an example to the component nations by claiming its own World Nature Park, or International Park in South America, Africa or Asia. If in Asia, then upon, around, or within the immense mountains encircling Tibet. In this case Britain, China, India, Russia and U. S. A. might appoint Custodians and act as Trustees to prevent disastrous and disfiguring exploitation.

4. And, further, that such "Far Horizon', can give direction and cohesion to friends, allies, sympathizers and well-wishers gathering in groups along the way for the march and drive on toward the distant goal.

Among the numerous signatories to the resolution are Sir Alfred J. Munnings, President, Royal Academy of Arts, Dame Laura Knight and the world famous George Bernard Shaw.

Mrs. Morrison would like the signatures of leading Indians and other leaders in Asia and Africa. Those who would endorse the resolution should put themselves in communication with Mrs. Morrison.

SODEPUR, November 2, 1946

Harijan, 17-11-1946

634. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

CALCUTTA,
November 2, 1946

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. You are a brave girl; why then have you gone soft? It is true that generally during illness the spirit droops. But there was a girl just eighteen years old, whose mind retained such fortitude that, though suffering from a protracted illness, she wrote a fascinating book which has become very famous. You can achieve some such thing if you but make up your mind.

The secret of Ramanama is that one should repeat it mechanically even when one cannot concentrate. If one does this with faith, then all disturbing thoughts vanish and we become calm. If we take pleasure in repeating the name, it drives all maladies away. Ramanama does not bar other remedies. About food, consult the book and make necessary changes in your diet.

I am stuck here for the present. God knows when if at all we shall meet.

Do you strip completely for sun-bath? You can arrange for such privacy. It would be worth while to try the treatment recommended in the book you have, viz., sun-treated water in coloured bottles. If you

do not have the energy to do all that, seek help from Shankaran[1]. He has trained himself a little in this treatment. He will guide you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10072. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

635. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

SODEPUR, CALCUTTA,
[*November 2, 1946*]

Mahatma Gandhi indicated that he was trying to do some work in the metropolis. He was not, therefore, leaving for Noakhali . . . Gandhiji added that the arrival of the four members[3] of the Interim Government might help in the peace movement.

Gandhiji impressed upon the people how the desire of retaliation and the tendency to look to the Viceroy or the Governor, the military and the police for protection were incompatible with independence to which they were all pledged. The Viceroy's powers vested in the Cabinet, the Governor's in the Bengal Ministers. If they wanted lasting peace, it must come from the people's hearts. He had been proclaiming from the housetops that no one could protect them except their own stout hearts. No one could ever dishonour the brave. Retaliation was a vicious circle. If they wanted retaliation they could not have independence. He said :

Supposing someone kills me, you will gain nothing by killing someone else in retaliation. And, if you only think over it, who can kill Gandhi except Gandhi himself? No one can destroy the soul. So let us dismiss all thought of revenge from our hearts. If we see this clearly, we shall have taken a big stride towards independence.

Harijan, 17-11-1946; and *The Sunday Hindustan Standard*, 3-11-1946

[1] Shankaran Nair

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The first paragraph is reproduced from *The Sunday Hindustan Standard.*

[3] The reference is to Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, Liaquat Ali Khan and Abdul Rab Nishtar who were expected to visit Calcutta.

636. LETTER TO PYARELAL

Silence Day [After *November 2, 1946*][1]

CHI. PYARELAL,

I understand nothing of this. What is a drop in the ocean ? What in particular can I ask ? What can I say ? That is why I said that you should tell me what you want to tell me so that my knowledge of the subject may be increased.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

637. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

[*November 3, 1946*][2]

"MORNING NEWS" REPORTS BUTCHERY BY HINDUS OF MUSLIM PASSENGERS.[3] MUSLIMS FLEEING FROM MOB FURY AND PREMIER[4] COUNTENANCING. WIRE PARTICULARS.[5]

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-11-1946

638. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[6]

SODEPUR, CALCUTTA,
November 3, 1946

Gandhiji said that the Prime Minister of Bengal had asked him to delay his departure for Noakhali till after the Bakr-Id and the speaker had agreed to do so. The Prime Minister wanted him to pass the Bakr-Id in Calcutta. His presence in the city might be helpful for peace. Gandhiji said that he had come to Bengal to serve the Muslims as well as Hindus and others.

[1] This is written on the reverse side of letter dated November 2, 1946.

[2] *Vide* the following item and "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 4-11-1946

[3] Communal rioting had broken out in Bihar following a hartal on October 25, and *Morning News*, an organ of the Muslim League, had stated that the number of persons killed was of the order of hundreds of thousands.

[4] Srikrishna Sinha

[5] For Jawaharlal Nehru's reply, *vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 4-11-1946

[6] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The first paragraph is reproduced from *Hindustan Standard*.

From his earliest childhood, he had learnt to dislike the wrong, never the wrongdoer. Therefore, even if the Muslims had done any wrong, they still remained his friends, but it was his duty to tell them that they had done wrong. He had always applied that rule in life with regard to his nearest and dearest. He held that to be the test of true friendship. He had told them on the previous day that revenge was not the way of peace, it was not humanity. The Hindu scriptures taught forgiveness as the highest virtue. Forgiveness became a brave man. A learned Muslim friend had come to see him on the day before. He had told the speaker that the teaching of the Koran was also similar. If a man killed one innocent person, he brought upon his head the sin, as it were, of murdering entire humanity. Islam never approved of but condemned murder, arson, forcible conversions, abductions and the like.

If they could be generous enough to forgive a person who gave them a slap, remarked Gandhiji, they could give him one in return. He could understand that. But if the miscreant ran away and the injured party slapped his relation or co-religionist by way of retaliation, it was below human dignity.

If someone abducted his daughter, the speaker continued, was he to abduct the abductor's or the abductor's friend's daughter? He held it to be infamous. Muslim friends had condemned such acts in Noakhali. But what was he to say of Bihar if what he was told was true? He was pained beyond measure to hear of the reported happenings in Bihar. He knew the Biharis well. The cry of blood for blood was barbarous. They could not take revenge in Bihar for the happenings in Noakhali. He was told that some Muslims, who were running away from Bihar in panic, were murdered by Bihari Hindus. He was shocked to hear it. He hoped that the report was not true. It was contended that the *Mahabharata* advocated the way of retaliation. He did not agree with that interpretation. The lesson of the *Mahabharata* was that the victory of the sword was no victory. That great book taught that the victory of the Pandavas was an empty nothing.

He told them of the talk he had with Shaheed Saheb, their Prime Minister. Years ago he had met him at Faridpur. Shaheed Saheb then took pride in calling himself the speaker's son. He knew they had many grievances against their Prime Minister. But the latter had given him his assurance that he wanted peace. It had grieved him to alienate his Hindu friends. He, the speaker, could not disbelieve that assurance till it was found to be untrue. He had by giving that assurance put himself to test. The golden way was to be friends with the world and to regard the whole human family as members of one family. He who distinguished between one's own family and another's, miseducated the members of his own and opened the way for discord and irreligion.

Harijan, 17-11-1946; and *Hindustan Standard*, 4-11-1946

639. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 4, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,

Your packet just came. Am over head and ears in work though this is silence day. Bihar has shaken me to bits. I have been for the past six days on spare diet (milkless) principally for health. Now Bihar will send me to complete fast if things do not radically mend. There will be no time limit. Do not agitate yourself but be really glad that I feel I have the strength to go through the ordeal and live up to my creed.

Do not interrupt your Paris programme. If that programme is not to come off at all and if you are strong enough, you are at liberty to join me.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3701. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6510

640. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

CALCUTTA,
November 4, 1946

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I have received Manu's letter and along with it the one you wrote to her. As requested by her, I return both herewith. I write this to you since I am not sure whether Manudi has reached there or not. I do not have the time to write a separate letter to her. I may say that I don't have the time even to write this. But I must. . . .[1]

This letter has been written in three instalments. I am afraid this will be the last letter. The happenings in Bihar have made me decide that if people's hearts do not change for the better I must not be a witness to them. These days I am observing something like a partial fast. The main reason for its being partial is my health. But Bihar will lead me on to a total fast. I will go to Noakhali the day after tomorrow. These days I write very few letters. After coming here this is the longest I have written today. These days, therefore, Manu should

[1] Omission as in the source

be with me. But it seems it is now impossible for her to come. May she be out of trouble and happy. The rest you will see from the newspapers.

[From Gujarati]

Eklo Jane Re, pp. 3-4

641. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA[1]

CALCUTTA,
November 4, 1946

DEAR KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA,

Because you are the oldest person in the Ashram, I am writing to you. Read this to all. Bihar has moved me. Chiefly for the sake of the body, I am on a semi-fast. Later on it may take the shape of a gradual complete fast. Gradual because I still have some work on hand. I have to go to Noakhali. You can read further details in the newspapers.

Nobody should run up to me, nobody should fast in sympathy, all should stick to their place and be completely engrossed in their work. Each should try to remove his own defects and should obtain purity for hard *tapas*. Nobody should worry about me. Let all pray for me that I may come out with flying colours through this penance and that I should not prove to be a coward.

Bhansali must not take any risks. When I am on fast, none should follow suit. Anything may happen after my passing away. I am not certain that, should I pass away, people's hearts will melt. If that does not happen, my passing away will at least reduce the burden on the earth, for my capacity for progress will have come to a standstill.

Let Asha Devi[2], Aryanayakam[3] and Deo[4] act up to the principles of Nai Talim. Let Shanta bring glory to her work. What can I say about Jajuji and Krishnadas Gandhi? There is a heavy load on Kumarappa[5] also. I am not writing separately to Vinoba. Nor can I

[1] The Gujarati original of the letter is not available.
[2] Ashadevi Aryanayakam and E. W. Aryanayakam
[3] *ibid*
[4] Shankerrao Deo
[5] J. C. Kumarappa

write separately to Kaka.

Krishnachandra will be all right. I am still more convinced today of the correctness of what I have written[1] to Pushpa.

Let Chimanlal[2] not feel too much burdened with responsibilities. Let Balvantsinha overcome anger. I have left out many names but that is only because I have no time to write more and not because I have forgotten.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy: G. N. 10185

642. LETTER TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY

SODEPUR,

November 4, 1946

BHAI SHAHID,

The arrangements for rail-cum-steamer journey that you have made for me are for big people. I have already told Satis Babu that I don't want all this. I shall be quite content with ordinary arrangements. All my companions will sit with me. Third class is good enough for us. It will suffice if we can have privacy on the steamer. We shall carry our own food and it will be enough. For myself I do not need even the special train. If the Railway people want it, then it is another matter.

There is no need for a journalist. Why make it a big caravan?

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

BHAI SHAHID,

Is this from the *Nationalist*? Is there any truth in it? And why? I am disturbed over the Bihar episode. May God save us.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Pushpa Desai", 29-10-1946

[2] Chimanlal N. Shah

643. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SODEPUR, CALCUTTA,
November 4, 1946

Yesterday, while speaking to you, I referred to the news which had come from Bihar. The news moved me deeply, and so I sent the following telegram[2] to Jawaharlalji through the Prime Minister, Shaheed Saheb. Panditji has sent the following reply :

> Report in *Morning News* grossly exaggerated and vague. Government here doing its utmost but situation tense and grave in many places. Am staying on here with Nishtar. Vallabhbhai and Liaquat Ali going on to Delhi.

It is evident from the reply that although there has been exaggeration in the news, yet things have gone wrong and the condition is serious. This is unbearable for me as one who is attached to the province of Bihar and also wants that the infection should not spread to other provinces. I have been thinking deeply what my duty should be in this connection.

The Congress belongs to the people, the Muslim League belongs to our Muslim brothers and sisters. If Congressmen fail to protect the Mussalmans where the Congress is in power, then what is the use of a Congress Premier? Similarly, if in a League province the League Premier cannot afford protection to the Hindus, then why is the League Premier there at all? If either of them have to take the aid of the military in order to protect the Muslim or Hindu minorities in their respective provinces, then it only means that none of them actually exercises any control over the general population when a momentous crisis comes. If that is so, it only means that both of us are inviting the British to retain their sovereignty over India. This is a matter over which each of them should ponder deeply.

Let us wait for what Panditji and Nishtar Saheb are able to do in Bihar. Let us see whether the Hindus of Bihar shed their madness or not? Tomorrow is the day of Bakr-Id. It is not an occasion when we should quarrel with one another. Let us also wait and see what Shaheed Saheb does tomorrow. How nice it would be if from tomorrow Hindus and Mussalmans and every other community

[1] It being Gandhiji's silence-day, the speech was read out by Satis Chandra Das Gupta.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meetting",

in India start living with each other as friends, and the military or the police find no occasion to use their arms at all.[1]

We always put the blame on *goondas*. But it is we who are responsible for their creation as well as encouragement. It is, therefore, not right to say that all the wrong that has been done is the work of the *goondas*.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-11-1946

644. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,
November 5, 1946

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE, SUMMERHILL
SIMLA

COUGH DISTRESSING OTHERWISE WELL. GLAD YOU BETTER. VOCABULARY RECEIVED. SEND DIRECTLY TO "HARIJAN". GOING NOAKHALI TOMORROW.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 4186. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7822

645. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

CALCUTTA,
November 5, 1946

CHI. LILI,

I may have to resort to a fast. If that happens, do not get panicky but concentrate on your studies and bring credit to me if not to yourself. Trust in God. You will not help me in any way by rushing here. I am getting more help here than I need. The additional help lies in each one doing his or her duty steadfastly. Those who come here uninvited will certainly be a hindrance. Therefore do not worry at all. Complete your studies and then engage yourself in my work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9604. Also C. W. 6576. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] *Vide* "To Bihar", 6-11-1946

646. LETTER TO MANILAL B. DESAI

CALCUTTA,
November 5, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

For the present, you should all give up any hope of my coming to Uruli. I cannot leave Bengal and Bihar. I see that I shall have to resort to a fast if the carnage does not stop. You may see everything from the newspapers. I myself shall not be able to write, but I will have others to write. Let each one remain engrossed in his or her work, without worrying. Do not give up your work in Uruli, whatever happens to me. Dr. Bhagawat, Dhiru, Balkrishna[1] and you are of course there. If Parmanand is inclined to stay on, then he and his wife to be are more than enough.

This letter is for all of you. There will be no problem about money.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 2738. Courtesy: Manilal B. Desai

647. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

CALCUTTA,
November 5, 1946

CHI. DINSHAW,

Today is the seventh day of my restricted diet. I am fine. The main reason for my going on this diet was the cough and eruptions. Now it will continue and I may even go on a fast. The reason is the current massacre in Bihar. Whatever will be, will be. God is the doer as well as the undoer. There is no need to rush to me. Serve your mother who is there. Place your sanatorium on a sound footing. Write to me and ask me anything you want to.

[1] Balkrishna Bhave, brother of Vinoba Bhave

Gulbai, I hope, is well and so also are the children.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. DINSHAW MEHTA

POONA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

648. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

November 5, 1946

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

The events in Bihar have distressed me. I can clearly see my duty. My bonds with Bihar are close. I cannot forget it. If half of what I hear is true, it means that Bihar has lost all humanity. To say that *goondas* were responsible for whatever happened there would be quite untrue. Although I have tried hard to avoid the fast, I shall not be able to do so. It is the seventh day today since I gave up milk and cereals. The cough and the boils were responsible for it, but also I was tired of the body. Then Bihar made matters worse. And the cry came from within: 'Why should you be a witness to this slaughter? If your word, which is as clear as daylight, is not heeded, your work is over. Why do you not die? Such reasoning has forced me to resort to fasting. I want to issue a statement that if in Bihar and other provinces slaughter is not stopped, I must end my life by fasting.

The letter Mohammed Yunus wrote to Shamsuddin[1] is with Sardar Baldev Singh[2]. See it. Is what it says correct? It is our duty to give full report of what happened.

My low diet will continue. There may be delay in undertaking the fast. In Delhi you had asked me about the fast. I had said I had no idea then. Now the situation is not the same. Still you may say what you want to say. If it appeals to me I shall give up the idea of a fast. What I hope is that, knowing my nature, you will appreciate my position. Whatever the issue, I shall advise that all of you continue to do your work. Do not waste time thinking of my

[1] Shamsuddin Ahmed, Minister for Commerce, Labour and Industries in the Bengal Muslim League Ministry

[2] Minister of Defence in the Interim Government

death. Leave me in the hands of God and stop worrying.

You can show this letter to the Bihar Cabinet. Is this the Bihar of Brijkishore Prasad[1] ?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 326-7

649. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SODEPUR,
November 5, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I am enclosing a copy of my letter[2] to Jawaharlal, which please see. I have nothing more to say. If you have anything to say, do let me know. I am willing to listen. This fast is not like the ones you have witnessed, though it is not too different either. I have passed through no small agony.

Rajaji, Devdas and others should read this letter.[3]

No one should come rushing to me. There are so many to assist me. My going on living depends entirely on complete peace being established in India. You will certainly do everything to achieve that end. Do not attach too much weight to the warnings about my death. Say rather that if I have erred, there will be no harm in letting me die. I am well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro— 2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 325

[1] A Congress leader of Bihar; father-in-law of Jayaprakash Narayan

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] In a postscript, Sushila Nayyar added that it was Gandhiji's wish that Abul Kalam Azad also should be shown the letter.

650. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SODEPUR, CALCUTTA,
November 5, 1946

The Hindus, said Gandhiji, might say: did not the Muslims start the troubles? He wanted them not to succumb to the temptation for retort but to think of their own duty and say firmly that whatever happened they would not fight. He wanted to tell them that the Muslims who were with him in the course of the day had assured him that they wanted peace. They were all responsible men. They said clearly that Pakistan could not be achieved by fighting. If they continued quarrelling with each other, independence would vanish into thin air and that would firmly implant the third power in India, be it the British or any other. India was a vast country, rich in minerals, metals and spices. There was nothing in the world that India did not produce. If they kept on quarrelling, any of the big powers of the world would feel tempted to come and save India from Indians and at the same time exploit her rich resources.

They wanted independence. They were ready to sacrifice their all for the Congress, the organization which had done so much for India. Were they going to undo all that the Congress had done for more than the last 60 years? He had told them they should return blow for blow if they were not brave enough to follow the path of non-violence. But there was a moral code for the use of violence also. Otherwise, the very flames of violence would consume those who lighted them. He did not care if they were all destroyed. But he could not countenance the destruction of India's freedom.

The reports of the happenings in Bihar were awful if true. Pandit Jawaharlal had told the guilty parties that the Central Government would never tolerate such barbarism. They would even use aerial bombing to put it down. But that was the way of the British. The Congress was an organization of the people. Was the Congress to use the foreign mode of destruction against the people whose representative it was? By suppressing the riots with the aid of the military, they would be suppressing India's freedom. And yet what was Panditji to do if the Congress had lost control over the people? The better way, of course, was to give up the reins of Government, if the people were not amenable to discipline and reason.

To retaliate against the relatives or the co-religionists of the wrong-doer was a cowardly act. If they indulged in such acts, they should say good-bye to independence.

Harijan, 17-11-1946

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

651. TO BIHAR

SODEPUR,
November 6, 1946

TO BIHAR,

Bihar of my dreams seems to have falsified them. I am not relying upon reports that might be prejudiced or exaggerated. The continued presence of the Central Chief Minister and his colleagues furnishes an eloquent tale of the tragedy of Bihar. It is easy enough to retort that things under the Muslim League Government in Bengal were no better, if not worse and that Bihar is merely a result of the latter. A bad act of one party is no justification for a similar act by the opposing party, more especially when it is rightly proud of its longest and largest political record. I must confess, too, that although I have been in Calcutta for over a week I do not yet know the magnitude of the Bengal tragedy. Though Bihar calls me, I must not interrupt my programme for Noakhali. And is counter-communalism any answer to the communalism of which Congressmen have accused the Muslim League? Is it Nationalism to seek barbarously to crush the fourteen per cent of the Muslims in Bihar?

I do not need to be told that I must not condemn the whole of Bihar for the sake of the sins of a few thousand Biharis. Does not Bihar take credit for one Brajkishore Prasad or one Rajendra Prasad? I am afraid, if the misconduct in Bihar continues, all the Hindus of India will be condemned by the world. That is its way, and it is not a bad way either. The misdeeds of Bihari Hindus may justify Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah's taunt that the Congress is a Hindu organization in spite of its boast that it has in its ranks a few Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, Parsis and others. Bihari Hindus are in honour bound to regard the minority Muslims as their brethren requiring protection, equal with the vast majority of Hindus. Let not Bihar, which has done so much to raise the prestige of the Congress, be the first to dig its grave.

I am in no way ashamed of my ahimsa. I have come to Bengal to see how far in the nick of time my ahimsa is able to express itself in me. But I do not want in this letter to talk of ahimsa to you. I do want, however, to tell you that what you are reported to have done will never count as an act of bravery. For thousands to do to death a few hundreds is no bravery. It is worse than cowardice. It is unworthy of

nationalism, of any religion. If you had given a blow against a blow, no one would have dared to point a finger against you. What you have done is to degrade yourselves and drag down India.

You should say to Pandit Jawaharlalji, Nishtar Saheb and Dr. Rajendra Prasad to take away their military and themselves and attend to the affairs of India. This they can only do if you repent of your inhumanity and assure them that Muslims are as much your care as your own brothers and sisters.

You should not rest till every Muslim refugee has come back to his home which you should undertake to rebuild and ask your Ministers to help you to do so. You do not know what critics have said to me about your Ministers.

I regard myself as a part of you. Your affection has compelled that loyalty in me. And since I claim to have better appreciation than you seem to have shown of what Bihari Hindus should do, I cannot rest till I have done some measure of penance. Predominantly for reasons of health, I had put myself on the lowest diet possible soon after my reaching Calcutta. That diet now continues as a penance after the knowledge of the Bihar tragedy. The low diet will become a fast unto death, if the erring Biharis have not turned over a new leaf.

There is no danger of Bihar mistaking my act for anything other than pure penance as a matter of sacred duty.

No friend should run to me for assistance or to show sympathy. I am surrounded by loving friends. It would be wholly wrong and irrelevant for any other person to copy me. No sympathetic fast or semi-fast is called for. Such action can only do harm. What my penance should do is to quicken the conscience of those who know me and believe in my *bona fides*. Let no one be anxious for me, I am like all of us in God's keeping.

Nothing will happen to me so long as He wants service through the present tabernacle.

Your servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Harijan, 10-11-1946

652. LETTER TO KIRON SHANKAR ROY

SODEPUR,
November 6, 1946

DEAR KIRON SHANKAR[1],

Please see Sarat Babu[2] to whom I talked last night about my interview with Muslim friends.[3] My opinion is that you should all join the proposed advisory committee if it comes into being.

Yours
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

653. INTERVIEW TO UNITED PRESS OF INDIA

SODEPUR,
November 6, 1946

Gandhiji was asked whether he thought that after the withdrawal of the British troops from this country, the present disturbances would immediately stop and how he thought that the minority communities would be safeguarded from a fear of the majority communities in the different parts of the country. Replying Mahatma Gandhi observed :

The disturbances will not stop immediately, but they must stop much quicker when the British troops are withdrawn. Today we have to witness the degrading spectacle of wanting the help of the British troops. When they are withdrawn, people will necessarily learn the art of self-defence with counter-violence or, better still, with non-violence. The minorities will undoubtedly keep the British troops if they can unless they learn to be brave and trust the majority.

Again, when the British troops are gone, the majority will know how to behave towards the minority. Today, even the best behaviour of the majority does not receive its full value

[1] Congress member of the Bengal Legislative Assembly

[2] Sarat Chandra Bose

[3] Gandhiji had met them on November 5 at the residence of H. S. Suhrawardy about forming a Central Peace Committee; *vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 5-11-1946

whilst the temptation of relying on British troops exists. By British troops, I do not mean merely White soldiers, but all who have been trained by British officers and have been trained to be loyal to the British in India and have often enough been used against the people to crush their freedom.

In any event people will have first to learn to do without the protection of the military or the police during communal troubles. The function of the police is to protect the citizens against thieves and robbers, of the military generally to defend the country against the foreign aggressor where the people have not learnt the matchless bravery of non-violence.

When Gandhiji's attention was drawn to the fact that in Calcutta and other places, people could move about quite safely even in the riot-affected areas if they were dressed in European fashion as the miscreants took them to be Christians, he said :

It is impossible for any self-respecting man to appreciate the advice that he must look like a Christian in order to avoid murder. The suggested change would cast a reflection on the Hindu as well as the Muslim. In order to live at peace with one another, we have to imbibe the virtue of toleration of the manners, customs and dresses of the different communities living in India.

The Hindu, 11-11-1946

654. LETTER TO MOHAMMED YUNUS

November 6, 1946

BHAI MOHAMMED,

What has happened in Bihar? I am stupefied. Read my letter[1] to Jawaharlal. The train is leaving. Send me a full account.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 5106

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 5-11-1946

655. SPEECH AT KUSHTIA

November 6, 1946

Addressing the waiting crowd Gandhiji said that his object in going to Noakhali was not to take sides and promote mutual quarrelling. He had toured all over Bengal including East Bengal with the late Ali Brothers. Those were the days when they had Hindu-Muslim unity. Large numbers of Muslims joined the Congress. The Congress then belonged to all. But today he was not going to East Bengal as a Congressman. He was going there as a servant of God. If he could wipe away the tears of outraged women, he would be more than satisfied.

Shaheed Saheb wanted to accompany him on the East Bengal tour but he was held up in Calcutta. He had sent Shamsuddin Saheb (the Labour Minister) instead. Shamsuddin Saheb had not come to spy upon him but to ensure Government help wherever it was required. He was hopeful that the tour would have good effect and the Hindu-Muslim unity of the Khilafat movement would come back. In the Khilafat days, no one talked of dividing India. Now they did so. But partitioning, even if it was desirable, could not be achieved through violence. Even if it could be achieved, it could not be retained except by the goodwill of the people concerned. The Bengal Ministers had assured him yesterday that the Muslims did not believe in Pakistan through force.

Continuing, Gandhiji said that perhaps his place now was in Bihar. He had served Bihar much more and he had much greater influence on the people there than in Bengal. For the time being, instead of proceeding to Bihar, he was satisfied by addressing an open letter[1] to the Biharis which they would all see and all that he had to say to the audience was that they could not live in India as enemies. They had to be friends and brothers. All that had happened in Bengal and was happening in Bihar was most unbecoming. They were being disgraced before the whole world. He had to go to Noakhali and would stay on till Hindus and Muslims again lived as blood-brothers.

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-11-1946

656. SPEECH AT GOALUNDO

November 6, 1946

Addressing a fairly large crowd that had gathered at Goalundo Ghat, from the deck of the steamer, Gandhiji said that he would like to visit every affected village in Noakhali if he could possibly do so. He was going to Noakhali to console the victims

[1] *Vide* "To Bihar", 6-11-1946

of the riots, to wipe the tears of the oppressed.

If they thought in terms of revenge and kept quarrelling, Hinduism and Islam would both ultimately be destroyed. No religion, he said, sanctioned what was reported to have happened in Bihar and if anybody thought that Bihar had done the fine thing by way of teaching the Muslims a "lesson", he was greatly mistaken. Such talk was sheer folly. In his opinion Bihar had disgraced itself and the fair name of India, even as Bengal had done. The Prime Minister at the Centre, Pandit Nehru, had told the Biharis that they had to kill him before they could touch a single Mussalman.

The reins of the Government were in the hands of the 14 members of the Central Government, but if they suppressed the riots with the aid of the military, the reins would pass into the hands of Lord Wavell, the Viceroy. Gandhiji said he could never tolerate that. If a population of 1,000 Muslims attacked the members of the minority community living in its midst and if they looted their homes, molested their women and tried to convert them forcibly, they thereby stabbed their own religion.

He was not going to leave Bengal till the Hindus and Muslims had told him that his presence in Bengal was no longer necessary. There was, of course, the call of Bihar. But Pandit Nehru had assured him that his presence was not required there at present.[1]

It is sad that people should have left their homes and flocked to towns for relief. You must stick to your villages in face of any aggression and violence. Fight violence with non-violence if you can and if you can't do that, fight violence by any means, even if it means your utter extinction. But in no case should you leave your hearths and homes to be looted and burnt.

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-11-1946; and *The Hindu*, 9-11-1946

657. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF AMERICA[2]

November 6, 1946

CORRESPONDENT: In view of recent Indian history—1942 unrest, I. N. A. movement and unrest, R. I. N. mutiny, Calcutta-Bombay disturbances, movements in Indian States such as Kashmir and recent communal riots—can it be said that your creed of non-violence has failed, in so far as non-violence has not taken roots in Indian life?

GANDHIJI: This is a dangerous generalization. All you mention

[1] What follows is reproduced from *The Hindu.*

[2] The interview appeared under the title "A Challenge to Faith" by Pyarelal. According to *The Bombay Chronicle*, 8-11-1946, the interview took place on board the steamboat *Kiwi* during Gandhiji's journey to Chandpur.

can certainly be called *himsa* but that can never mean that the creed of non-violence has failed. At best it may be said that I have not yet found the technique required for the conversion of the mass mind. But I claim that the millions of the 700,000 villages of India have not participated in the violence alluded to by you. Whether non-violence has taken roots in Indian life is still an open question which can only be answered after my death.

What should one do in his day-to-day life—that is, what is the minimum programme—so that one can acquire non-violence of the brave?

The minimum that is required of a person wishing to cultivate the ahimsa of the brave is first to clear his thought of cowardice and in the light of the clearance regulate his conduct in every activity, great or small. Thus the votary must refuse to be cowed down by his superior, without being angry. He must, however, be ready to sacrifice his post, however remunerative it may be. Whilst sacrificing his all, if the votary has no sense of irritation against his employer he has ahimsa of the brave in him. Assume that a fellow passenger threatens my son with assault and I reason with the would-be-assailant who then turns upon me. If then I take his blow with grace and dignity, without harbouring any ill-will against him, I exhibit the ahimsa of the brave. Such instances are of everyday occurrence and can be easily multiplied. If I succeed in curbing my temper every time and though able to give blow for blow I refrain, I shall develop the ahimsa of the brave which will never fail me and which will compel recognition from the most confirmed adversaries.

Harijan, 17-11-1946

658. TALK TO CONGRESSMEN[1]

CHANDPUR,
[*November 6, 1946*][2]

Replying to memoranda presented to him by prominent leaders of Tippera district at Chandpur Gandhiji observed :

We feel helpless, but we are not so helpless. If we rely on the

[1] The report said: "A number of Congressmen headed by Kamini Kumar Dutt, leader of the opposition in Bengal Legislative Council, met Gandhiji on board the steamer at Chandpur and apprised him of the situation. They submitted a detailed report of happenings from the beginning."

[2] Gandhiji reached Chandpur at 8.30 p. m. on November 6. He left the following morning.

military and the police then we are really helpless. If 20,000 people of Chandpur fight, then it will be a sight for the gods to see and I would like them to do this.

People must not take the offensive, but defend themselves they must, even, if necessary, with the help from the neighbouring people. None must flee and even if one is surrounded by 1,000 people, one should, if need be, die fighting. Those marooned should stick to their places. People should learn to die. Constructive work requires the spirit of sacrifice. But fighting must never be secret. In no case should women and children or invalids be touched.

The Hindu, 9-11-1946

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM JAWAHARLAL NEHRU TO M. A. JINNAH[1]

October 6, l946

I have consulted some of my colleagues about the matter discussed by us yesterday and over the possibility of a rapprochement between the Muslim League and the Congress. We are all agreed that nothing could be happier and better for the country than that these two organizations should meet again as before as friends having no mental reservations and bent on resolving all their differences by mutual consultation and never desiring or allowing the intervention of the British Government through the Viceroy or others or of any other foreign power. We would, therefore, welcome the decision of the League to join the Interim Government for it to work as a united team on behalf of India as a whole.

The points put forward by you in our conversation yesterday were :

1. the formula suggested to you by Gandhiji,
2. the League not being responsible for the members at present representing the Scheduled Castes and the minorities,
3. what should be done in case any vacancy should arise among the members representing the minorities other than the Scheduled Castes
4. the procedure tobe adopted over what may be called major communal issues, and
5. alternating Vice-Presidentship

Regardng No. 1, we feel that the formula is not happily worded. We do not question the purpose underlying it. We are willing as a result of the elections, to accept the Muslim League as the authoritative representative organization of an overwhelming majority of the Muslims of India and that as such and in accordance with democratic principles they have today the unquestionable right to represent the Muslims of India, provided that for indentical reasons the League recognises the Congress as the authoritative organization representing all non-Muslims and such Muslims as have thrown in their lot with the Congress. The Congress cannot agree to any restriction or limitations to be put upon it in choosing such representatives as they think proper from amongst the members of the Congress. We would suggest, therefore, that no formula is necessary and each organization may stand on its merits.

Regarding No. 2, I am to say that the question of the League being responsible does not arise and, as you do not raise any objections to the present constitution of

[1] *Vide* "Uncertified Khadi v. Mill Cloth", 12-9-1946.

the Government in this respect, there is no question to be solved.

Regarding No. 3, I am to say that if any such vacancy arises, the whole Cabinet will consider what should be done to replace the vacancy and advise the Viceroy accordingly. There can be no question of right in the matter of consultation with the League in regard to the representation of these minorities.

Regarding No. 4, your suggestion about the Federal Court is not feasible. Matters coming before the Cabinet cannot be made subject matter of references to court. We should thrash out all such matters amongst ourselves and bring up agreed proposals before the Cabinet. In the event of failure to reach an agreed decision, we should seek the method of arbitration of our own choice. We hope, however, that we will act with such mutual trust, forbearance and friendliness that there will be no occasion to go to such arbitration.

Regarding No. 5, it is out of the question to have any rotation in the Vice-Presidentship. We have no objection if you desire to have an additional Vice-Chairman for the Co-ordination Committee of the Cabinet who can also preside over such Committee meetings from time to time.

I am hoping that if your committee finally decide upon the League joining the National Cabinet, they will also decide simultaneously to join the Constituent Assembly or recommend to your council to this effect.

I need hardly mention that when an agreement has been reached by us it can only be varied by mutual agreement and not otherwise.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladev Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

APPENDIX II

LORD WAVELL'S NOTE ON INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI AND NEHRU[1]

August 27, 1946

I said that I had asked them to come and see me because I had returned from Calcutta. I gave a description of what I had seen in Calcutta; and said that the only way to avoid similar trouble all over India on an even larger scale was by some lessening of communal tension and settlement between Hindu and Muslim. I stressed the importance of coalition Governments, both in Bengal and at the Centre.

1. I said that while I recognized the difficulty in reopening negotiations with the Muslim League, I felt sure that the country expected it as a result of what had happened in Calcutta. The crux of the whole matter lay in the doubt about the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Wavell", 28-8-1946

Congress interpretation of the Grouping in the Constituent Assembly. I said that I thought I had been quite clear in my mind that Congress had now agreed to abide by the Statement of May the 16th, and to me this had meant the acceptance of the Grouping arrangements. When I made my broadcast a few nights ago, the draft of which I had shown to Nehru, I had been quite convinced that this was the intention and that it was on this understanding that I had said what I did in my broadcast. I said that I thought the only chance of a peaceful transfer of power in India was if the Congress made a categorical statement that they would accept the position that the provinces must remain in their sections, as intended by the Mission, until after the first elections under the new Constitution. I said that I could not undertake the responsibility of calling together the Constituent Assembly until this point was settled. I handed to Gandhi and Nehru the draft of a statement which I asked them to make, as follows :

2. "The Congress are prepared in the interests of communal harmony to accept the intention of the Statement of May 16th that provinces cannot exercise any option affecting their membership of the Section or of the Groups if formed until the decision contemplated in paragraph 19(viii) of the Statement of the 16th May is taken by the new Legislature after the new constitutional arrangements have come into operation and the first general elections have been held."

3. Gandhi began by saying that he thought it was a matter for the Interim Government. I said that it was a matter for Congress who had challenged the interpretation of the Mission. He then went off into long legalistic arguments about the interpretation of the Mission's statement. I said that I was a plain man and not a lawyer, and that I knew perfectly well what the Mission meant, and that the compulsory Grouping was the whole crux of the Plan.

4. The argument went on for some time, and we did not make much progress. Nehru at one time got very heated and said that this was simple "bullying" by the Muslim League. Gandhi said that if a blood-bath was necessary, it would come about in spite of non-violence. I said that I was very shocked to hear such words from him. In the end they took away the formula, but I do not think there is much hope of their accepting it.

5. The interview lasted about forty minutes.

W(AVELL)

27-8-1946

From a copy: India Office Library & Records, London; also *The Transfer of Power.*

APPENDIX III

LETTER FROM SUDHIR GHOSH TO GANDHIJI[1]

LONDON,

September 7, 1946

DEAR BAPUJI,

I got your message of the 28th August. . .[2] and I cabled an answer back. I went and saw Pethick-Lawrence as soon as I got the cable. . . .[3] I guessed that you had sent it after your meeting with the Viceroy the previous evening. I therefore knew what it meant and I had no difficulty in interpreting it to Pethick-Lawrence.

I had a long discussion with him but he was rather sticky. He took the line that Congress people were trying to have it both ways; on the one hand they want to get hold of as much power as possible and want the British and their Viceroy to have as little to do with India's affairs as possible and on the other hand they want British to step in and take a retrograde step, viz., to exercise their extraordinary authority in provincial matters and to suppress a constitutionally elected ministry in Bengal. He expanded himself on the subject. I explained to him that there was no desire on the part of Congress to take any retrograde step; all that we were worried about was that we could not afford to have a repetition of the Bengal tragedy. If Mr. Suhrawardy feels that injustice has been done to the Muslim League and he must seek redress by breaking the law of the land he is entitled to do so, and in that case he should go out of the Government, break the law and face the consequences. But if he chooses to be the keeper of the law and the breaker of the law at the same time, the situation becomes intolerable. Pethick-Lawrence pointed out that he had no evidence that Mr. Suhrawardy was implicated in the crime of breaking the peace in Bengal. I told him that I could not produce legal proof but there was enough circumstantial evidence of his guilt and in any case even if he was not implicated in the crime of breaking the peace, it was obvious to the whole world that he had fallen down on the job of maintaining order in the province which is the primary duty of a Government, and it resulted in gruesome tragedy, such as we have never before witnessed in the history of our country; this was sufficient justification for the dismissal of the Ministry in Bengal. Nobody in the Congress would like to take such a step, but how are they to deal with the numerous big problems that await their attention if they are not in a position to keep the country as a whole in order? Pethick-Lawrence explained that he did not believe that that was the way to keep the country in

[1] *Vide* footnote 3, "Letter to Lord Wavell", 28-8-1946
[2] Omissions as in the source
[3] *ibid*

order. In his view the root of the trouble was the dissatisfaction in the Muslim mind and the only way to remedy it is for the Congress, who are now in a powerful position, to make some further concession which would induce Mr. Jinnah to come into the Government and thus there would be no further trouble from the Muslims. The concession which he thinks would satisfy Mr. Jinnah is that Congress should allow the provinces to go into their respective sections, according to the British plan, when the Constituent Assembly meets, and that they should make an announcement to that effect right now. He suggested that I should make a suggestion to Mr. Gandhi and persuade him to see the reasonableness of it. I had to be rather harsh to him and to tell him that I myself did not see the reasonableness of such a suggestion and therefore I was unable to say anything to Mr. Gandhi about it and in my view such a policy of appeasement would only make things worse. He was rather upset about it. Thus I have made myself somewhat unpopular.

But Attlee showed a great deal more understanding. I went to him two days after I saw Pethick-Lawrence. I showed him the cable and explained to him what it meant. I also showed him the cuttings of the *Statesman* editorial comments on the Calcutta tragedy. He did not try to be diplomatic. He plainly said that if in Gandhi's judgment the situation is such that the Viceroy needs the assistance of a mind abler than his own and if Gandhi thinks that, otherwise, a repetition of the Calcutta tragedy is not only possible or probable but certain, then that is a matter which must be taken seriously. He explained that he was naturally anxious to leave these things to the Secretary of State but he was going to call the Secretary of State and have a talk with him about all this. He told me that your letter to the Viceroy on this subject had been cabled to the British Government and he showed me the copy he had got. He said that all these things would be discussed at the next meeting of the Cabinet and he added that I might go and see him again on Wednesday the 4th. I therefore went to see him again on Wednesday. He said he was happy to hear from the Secretary of State that although the week-end was difficult time at Delhi, things had improved since the Congress leaders actually took office on Monday, the 2nd September and that there is really no need to worry about the progress of things at Delhi. He then talked at some length about the Viceroy and your message. He admitted that there was a good case for a new Viceroy but there was no sense in making a change unless he was in a position to find someone who was obviously better than the present occupant of the post. And it is not easy to find a man from this country who is very much better. Then he went on to remark (he was thinking aloud) that the kind of assistance which Gandhi thinks the Viceroy needs should now be provided by Nehru—who has a very able mind and legal mind. (Here he joked about legal minds and remarked that although he himself was a barrister he had left the profession early enough!) I said that the Prime Minister had hit the nail on the head; if he would now

give instructions to the Viceroy that henceforward the Viceroy, in the exercise of his extraordinary authority, must always be guided by the advice given him by his Prime Minister Pandit Nehru, then the whole problem would be solved. The Prime Minister would not commit himself but he said he very much hoped things would work out that way.

Cripps is returning to London tomorrow. But I hear he is not very well in spite of his stay in Switzerland. He therefore will not be able to do much to help us. I have kept him fully informed about developments in India but he really has no very great influence with the British Cabinet. He is a good man but he is not what they call a good "party man" like Pethick-Lawrence is. Cripps's influence therefore is much less than that of Pethick-Lawrence. Attlee, on the whole, is very sensible about India. I am told that he is very different from what he used to be during the Round Table Conference days. My impression is that he is keen to get on with Congress.

Love from

SUDHIR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47 pp. 370-2

APPENDIX IV

CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTION ON KASHMIR[1]

September 25, 1946

Recent events in Kashmir have been repeatedly considered by the Working Committee and the Committee have been greatly affected by them. They refrained, however, from expressing any opinion as they hoped that the situation could be handled satisfactorily by friendly mediation. Their approaches, however, to the State authorities had an unfriendly response, and the situation has progressively deteriorated, involving repression of, and suffering for, the people.

Recently, the popular leader of the people and the President of the Kashmir National Conference, Sheikh Abdullah, was sentenced to three years' imprisonment. This has added to the gravity of the situation and distressed and angered large numbers of people within and outside the State.

When Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru went to Kashmir and was arrested there, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the then President of the Congress, asked him to come back in order to continue the valuable work he was doing for the Congress in connection with the negotiations with the Cabinet Mission.

Maulana Azad had assured him then, with the consent of the Working

[1] *Vide* "Draft Resolution for the Working Committee", 25-9-1946

Committee, that the Congress would make his cause in Kashmir their own. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru willingly returned, though not without misgivings. The Working Committee regret to find that his misgivings were justified.

From all accounts received by the Committee, repression of an open as well as a subtle type is continuing, and the people connected with the Kashmir [National] Conference are being harassed in many ways.

It is reported that while elections have been announced for the State Assembly, large numbers of names are being struck off the electoral rolls, and many prospective candidates for the election have been disqualified. No attempt is being made to liberalize the Constitution and to make it more democratic and responsible.

In view of these reports, the Working Committee feel it necessary to send a deputation, consisting of persons of unquestioned ability and impartiality, to inquire into the reports of repression and suppression of civil liberties. The Committee, therefore, earnestly recommend to Kashmir State that they should invite such a deputation.

Recent events in Kashmir have a large significance affecting the rulers and peoples of all the States in India and Committee trust that the States will welcome the step that they are taking in regard to Kashmir.

While noting with deep regret the sentence passed on Sheikh Abdullah, the Committee would consider his incarceration as a worthy sacrifice if it results in the achievement of the freedom for which he was labouring. The Committee express their sympathy for all those who have suffered or are suffering for the cause of freedom in Kashmir.

Sardar Patel's Correspondence, 1945-50, Vol. I, pp. 23-4

APPENDIX V

LORD WAVELL'S NOTE ON INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI[1]

September 26, 1946

I had also an hour with Mr. Gandhi. He told me that there was no fixed date for his departure, and obviously means to stay as long as the negotiations last.

I outlined to him the result of my discussion with Jinnah and used the same general line of argument as with Nehru. He listened patiently and then said that he had no doubt of the honesty of British intentions, that he entirely agreed that the Muslim League must come in, but that the Nationalist Muslim was a difficult issue. As usual, he then began splitting hairs, saying that if it was merely a Congress

[1]*Vide* "Discussion with Lord Wavell", 26-9-1946 Lord Wavell also transmitted the text of the note to the Secretary of State the same day.

"right", they could make concessions on it, but that if it was a "duty", it was a different matter. He said that the proper way of settling the matter would be by a meeting between Jinnah and Nehru.

Gandhi then really disclosed his hand, by saying that he wished to know what we should do if the worst happened and the Muslim League did not come in. His own view was that in that event it would be of no use for the Constituent Assembly to meet, and it would be quite honourable for the British Government to say that their scheme could not be enforced, and that the solution of a Constituent Assembly in which the Muslim League was not represented would not be maintained by British arms.

I then said to him that that was a possible line of argument, but supposing the worst did happen, which I refused to admit and was not going to allow, what was his solution : "Where did he go from there?"

He than said that though the Constituent Assembly should be dropped, the Interim Government should go on, the vacant Muslim seats being filled by other prominent Muslims. This of course has been Gandhi's objective and the objective of the majority of the Congress, I think, from the first : i. e., to establish themselves at the Centre and to suppress, cajole, or buy over the Muslims, and then impose a Constitution at their leisure.

I said quite firmly that I was not prepared to accept his solution; I was not going to allow the present negotiations to fail, but that if they did His Majesty's Government would have to reconsider the whole position.

He concluded by saying that he hoped I would do something to prevent Kashmir from becoming a major issue.

W(AVELL)

26-9-1946

From a copy : India Office Library and Records, London

1. TALK TO RELIEF WORKERS[1]

CHANDPUR,

November 7, 1946

GANDHIJI: What goes against my grain is that a single individual can be converted or a single woman can be kidnapped or raped. So long as we feel we can be subjected to these indignities, we shall continue to be so subjected. If we say we cannot do without police or military protection, we really confess defeat even before the battle has begun. No police or military in the world can protect people who are cowards. Today you say thousands of people are terrorizing a mere handful, so what can the latter do? But even a few individuals are enough to terrorize the whole mass, if the latter feel helpless. Your trouble is not numerical inferiority but the feeling of helplessness that has seized you and the habit of depending on others. The remedy lies with you. That is why I am opposed to the idea of your evacuating East Bengal *en masse*. It is no cure for impotence or helplessness.

A WORKER: East Bengal is opposed to such a move.

G. They should not leave. 20,000 able-bodied men prepared to die like brave men non-violently might today be regarded as a fairy tale, but it would be no fairy tale for every able-bodied man in a population of 20,000 to die like stalwart soldiers in open fight. They will go down in history like the immortal three hundred of Leonidas who made Thermopylae :

> Stranger! Tell Sparta, here her sons are laid,
>
> Such was her law and we that law obeyed.

I will proclaim from the housetops that it is the only condi- tion under which you can live in East Bengal. You have asked for Hindu officers, Hindu police and Hindu military in the place of Muslim. It is a false cry. You forget that Hindu offi- cers, Hindu police and Hindu military have in the past done all these things—looting, arson, abduction, rape. I come from Kathiawar—the land of petty principa- lities. I cannot describe to you to what depths of depravity human

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "The First Lesson". A group of 20 to 25 workers and representatives of relief organizations had met Gandhiji in the dining saloon of the *Kiwi* on the morning of November 7.

nature can go. No woman's honour is safe in some principalities and the chief is no hooligan but a duly annointed one.

W. These are cases of individual depravity. Here we have got this on a mass scale.

G. But the individual there is not alone. He is backed by the machinery of his little State.

W. He is condemned even by his compeers. Here such acts are not condemned by the Muslims.

G. I have heard nothing but condemnation of these acts from Shaheed Suhrawardy downwards since I have come here. Words of condemnation may tickle your ears, but they are no consolation to the unfortunate women whose houses have been laid desolate or who have been abducted, forcibly converted and forcibly married.

What a shame for Hindus, what a disgrace for Islam! No, I am not going to leave you in peace. Presently you will say to your- self, 'When will this man leave us and go?' But this man will not go. He did not come on your invitation and he will go only on his own, but with your blessings, when his mission in East Bengal is fulfilled.

A WORKER: It is a part of their plan for Pakistan.

G. It is midsummer madness and they have realized it. They will soon sicken of it. They have already begun to.

W. Why do not they come here then and set this right?

G. That stage will come. Sickness only marks the crisis. Convalescence must precede cure. You see I am a nature-curist.

A WORKER: But here we are a mere drop in the ocean.

Gandhiji replied that even if there was one Hindu in East Bengal, he wanted him to have the courage to go and live in the midst of the Mussalmans and die if he must like a hero. He should refuse to live as a serf and a slave. He might not have the non-violent strength to die without fighting. But he could command their admiration if he had the courage not to submit to wrong and died fighting like a man.

There is not a man, however cruel and hard-hearted, but would give his admiration to a brave man. A *goonda* is not the vile man he is imagined to be. He is not without his noble traits.

W. A *goonda* does not understand reason.

G. But he understands bravery. If he finds that you are braver than he, he will respect you. You will note that for the purposes of our present discussion I have not asked you to discard the use of arms. I

can't provide you with arms. It is not for me to provide arms to the Chittagong Armoury Raid[1] men. The most tragic thing about the Armoury Raid people is that they could not even multiply themselves. Their bravery was lop-sided. It did not infect others.

A WORKER: No wonder it could not. They were condemned.

G. By whom? I may have—that is a different thing.

W. The people did so. I am myself an Armoury Raid man.

G. They did not. You are no Armoury Raid man or, you should not have been here to tell these things. That so many of them should have remained living witnesses of the things that have happened is in my eyes a tragedy of the first order. If they had shown the same fearlessness and courage to face death in the present crisis as they did when they made that raid, they would have gone down in history as heroes. As it is, they have only inscribed a small footnote in the page of history. You will see I am not, as I have already said, asking you just now to unlearn the use of arms or to follow my type of heroism. I have not made it good even in my own case. I have come here to test it in East Bengal. I want you to take up the conventional type of heroism. You should be able to infect others—both men and women—with courage and fearlessness to face death when the alternative is dishonour and humiliation. Then the Hindus can stay in East Bengal, not otherwise. After all, the Mussalmans are blood of our blood and bone of our bone.

W. Here the proportion of Mussalmans and Hindus is 6 to 1. How can you expect us to stand against such heavy odds?

G. When India was brought under British subjection, there were 70,000 European soldiers against 33 crores of Indians.

W. We have no arms. The Government backs them with its bayonets.

G. The odds were much heavier against the Indians in South Africa. The Indian community there was a mere hand- ful in the midst of an overwhelming majority of Europeans and Negroes. The Europeans had arms. We had none. So we forged the weapon of satyagraha. Today the Indian is respected by the White man in South Africa, not so the Zulu with all his fine physique.

A WORKER: So we are to fight with arms anyhow?

G. Not anyhow. Even violence has its code of ethics. For

[1] Carried out by a group of terrorists on April 18, 1930

instance, to butcher helpless old men, women and children is not bravery but rank cowardice. Chivalry requires that they should be protected even at the cost of one's life. The history of early Islam is replete with such instances of chivalry and Islam is all the stronger for them.

W. Would you permit the Hindus to take the offensive?

G. The people of Bihar did and brought disgrace upon themselves and India. They have set the clock of India's independence back. I have a right to speak about Bihar. In a sense I feel closer to Bihar than to Bengal as fortune enabled me to give a striking demonstration of the non-violence technique in Champaran.[1] I have heard it said that the retaliation in Bihar has 'cooled' the Muslims down. They mean it has cowed them down for the time being. They forget that two can play at a game. Bihar has forged a link in the chain of our slavery. If the Bihar performance is repeated or if the Bihar mentality does not mend, you may note down my words in your diary: *Before long India will pass under the yoke of the Big Three with one of them probably as the mandatory power. The Independence of India is today at stake in Bengal and Bihar*. The British Government entrusted the Congress with power not because they are in love with the Congress but because they had faith that the Congress would use it wisely and well, not abuse it. Today Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru finds the ground slipping from under his feet. But he won't let that happen. That is why he is in Bihar. He has said he is going to stay there as long as it may be necessary.

Biharis have behaved as cowards. Use your arms well, if you must. Do not ill-use them. Bihar has not used its arms well. If the Biharis wanted to retaliate, they could have gone to Noakhali and died to a man. But for a thousand Hindus to fall upon a handful of Mussalmans—men, women and children —living in their midst is no retaliation but just brutality. It is the privilege of arms to protect the weak and helpless. The best succour that Bihar could have given to the Hindus of East Bengal would have been to guarantee with their own lives the absolute safety of the Muslim population living in their midst.

Their example would have told. And I have faith that they will still do so with due repentance when the present madness has passed away. Anyway that is the price I have put upon my life if they want me to live. Here ends the first lesson.

Harijan, 1-12-1946

[1] In 1917

2. DISCUSSION WITH MUSLIM LEAGUE LEADERS[1]

CHANDPUR,
November 7, 1946

One of them remarked that no disturbances had taken place in Chandpur sub-division. The rush of refugees to Chandpur was due to panic caused by false Press propaganda. The number of Hindus killed by the Muslims was only 15 while double that number of Muslims had died as a result of firing by the military who were mostly Hindus.

Another member of the deputation who was an M. L. A. was even more bitter about the fact that the Hindus were still evacuating and their rehabilitation was being 'obstructed' by the Hindu workers who encouraged them to migrate in order to discredit the Muslim League Government and paralyse the administration.

Shamsuddin Saheb who was present at the meeting along with Nasrullah Saheb[2] and Abdul Rashid Saheb interposed that it was no use isolating Chandpur sub-division and ignoring what had taken place elsewhere in the district. Equally irrelevant to their present argument was their reference to the military firing.

When they had finished, Gandhiji replying remarked that if what they had said was to be taken at its face value, then it amounted to this: that the Muslims had committed no excesses. The mischief had all been provok ed by the excesses of the police and the military who were harassing the Mussalmans and it was they, therefore, who together with the panic-monger ing Hindus were the real culprits. That was too big a pill for anybody to swallow. Why had it become necessary to call the military, if no disturbances had taken place? A deputation of 20 to 25 Hindus had a meeting with him in the morning.[3] They had told him awful tales of what had happened in Tippera and Noakhali. Similar tales had been pouring into his ears ever since he had set foot in Bengal. Even Muslim Leaguers had admitted that terrible things had been done. They disputed the figures which they feared were exaggerated. He was not concerned with numbers. Even if there was a single case of abduction, forcible conversion or forcible marriage, it was enough to make every godfearing man or woman hang down his or her head in shame.

He was not going to keep anything secret, Gandhiji proceeded. He would place all the information which he might receive before the Ministers. He had come to

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Overproof is Admission". Several prominent Muslim League leaders of Tippera District met Gandhiji at Chandpur on board the *Kiwi* before he left for Chaumuhani.

[2] K. Nasrullah, M. L. A. and Parliamentary Secretary in the Home Department of the Muslim League Ministry in Bengal

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

promote mutual goodwill and confidence. In that he wanted their help. He did not want peace to be established with the help of the police and the military. An imposed peace was no peace. He did not wish to encourage people to flee from their homes in East Bengal either. If the mass flight of the refugees had been deliberately planned to discredit the Muslim League Ministry, it would recoil on the heads of those who had done so. To him it seemed hardly credible. He suggested that the right course would be to make a clean breast of the matter.

It is far better to magnify your own mistake and proclaim it to the whole world than leave it to the world to point the accusing finger at you. God never spares the evil-doer.

The gentleman who had spoken first thereupon admitted that he had heard of some cases of arson and looting but the looting had taken place after the occupants had fled. The deserted houses offered too strong a temptation to the hooligans.

GANDHIJI: But why should people flee from their homes? People do not do so normally. Everybody knows that an unoccupied and unprotected house is bound to be looted by someone or the other. Would anyone risk the loss of all he owns just to discredit the League?

Still another member of the deputation remarked that only one per cent of the people had indulged in acts of hooliganism. The rest of the 99 per cent were really good people and in no way responsible for the happenings.

That was not a correct way of looking at it, Gandhiji replied. If 99 per cent were good people and had actively disapproved of what had taken place, the one per cent would have been able to do nothing and could easily have been brought to book. Good people ought actively to combat the evil, to entitle them to that name. Sitting on the fence was no good. If they did not mean it, they should say so and openly tell all the Hindus in the Muslim majority areas to quit. But that was not their position as he understood it. The Qaid-e-Azam had said that the minorities in Pakistan would get unadulterated justice. Where was that justice? Today the Hindus asked him if Noakhali was an indication of what they were to expect in Pakistan. He had studied Islam. His Muslim friends in South Africa used to say to him: "Why not recite the *Kalama* and forget Hinduism?" He used to say in reply that he would gladly recite the *Kalama* but forget Hinduism never. His respect and regard for Hazrat Mohammed was not less than theirs. But authoritarianism and compulsion was the way to corrupt religion, not to advance it.

Shamsuddin Saheb agreeing with Gandhiji quoted a verse from the Koran to the effect that there can be no compulsion in religion. He had told the Mussalmans, he said, that if they wanted Pakistan they must mete out justice to the minority community and win its confidence. "By doing what you have done, you have killed Pakistan," he had told them.

G. Mr. McInerny, the District Magistrate of Noakhali, in a leaflet he has issued, has said that he will assume, unless the contrary is conclusively proved, that anyone who accepted Islam after the beginning of the recent disturbances was forcibly converted and in fact remained a Hindu. If all the Muslims made that declaration, it would go a long way to settle the question. Why should there be a public show of it, if anybody genuinely felt inclined to recite the *Kalama*? A heart conversion needs no other witness than God.

Mere recitation of the *Kalama* while one continued to indulge in acts which are contrary to elementary decency was not Islam but a travesty of it. That reminded him of the Plymouth Brothers[1] who had invited him to embrace Christianity because then he would be free to do anything he liked since Christ redeemed the sins of those who accepted him. As against that there was the conclusive verse of the New Testament: "Not everyone who says Lord, Lord, with his lips comes to me."[2] It was therefore up to the leaders of the Muslims to declare that forcible repetition of a formula could not make a non-Muslim into a Muslim. It only shamed Islam.

"All that has happened is the result of false propaganda," argued one member of the deputation who had not hitherto spoken.

G. Let us not make a scapegoat of false propaganda. False propaganda would fall flat if we are all right.

Finally one of the deputationists remarked that they were all prepared to go into the interior along with the Hindu leaders to restore peace and confidence but the latter distrusted them.

Gandhiji replied that that did not matter. He would gladly accept their offer. He said :

You and I will visit every village and every home in the interior and restore peace and confidence.

Harijan, 24-11-1946

[1] *Vide* "An Autobiography"
[2] *St. Matthew*, vii. 21

3. TALK TO REFUGEES[1]

LAKSHAM,
November 7, 1946

I have not come on a whirlwind propaganda visit. I have come to stay here with you as one of you. I have no provincialism in me. I claim to be an Indian and therefore a Bengali even as I am a Gujarati. I have vowed to myself that I will stay on here and die here if necessary, but I will not leave Bengal till the hatchet is finally buried and even a solitary Hindu girl is not afraid to move freely about in the midst of Mussalmans.

The greatest help you can give me is to banish fear from your hearts. And what is the talisman that can do that for you. It is the unfailing *mantra* of Ramanama. You may say, you do not believe in Him. You do not know that but for His will you could not draw a single breath. Call Him Ishwar, Allah, God, Ahura Mazda. His names are as innumerable as there are men. He is one without a second. He alone is great. There is none greater than He. He is timeless, formless, stainless. Such is my Rama. He alone is my Lord and Master.

Gandhiji touchingly described to them how as a little boy he used to be usually timid and afraid of even shadows and how his nurse Rambha had taught him the secret of Ramanama as an antidote to fear. "When in fear, take Ramanama. He will protect you," she used to tell him. Ever since then Ramanama had been his unfailing refuge and shelter from all kinds of fear.

He resides in the heart of the pure always. Tulsidas, that prince of devotees, whose name had become a household word among the Hindus from Kashmir to Cape Comorin as Shri Chaitanya's and Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa's in Bengal, had presented the message of that name to us in his immortal *Ramayana*. If you walked in fear of that name, you did not need to fear any man on earth, be he a prince or a pauper.

Why should they be afraid of the cry of "*Allaho Akbar*"? The Allah of Islam was the protector of innocence. What had been done in East Bengal had not the sanction of Islam as preached by its Prophet.

Who could dare to dishonour their wives or daughters if they had faith in God?

[1] According to a report in *Hindustan Standard*, 8-11-1946, Gandhiji addressed a gathering of about 10,000 people—Hindus and Muslims—waiting from early morning at Laksham Junction—*en route* to Chaumuhani, which he reached shortly after midday.

He, therefore, expected them to cease to be afraid of Mussalmans. If they believed in Ramanama, they must not think of leaving East Bengal. They must live where they were born and brought up and die there if necessary, defending their honour as brave men and women.

To run away from danger instead of facing it is to deny one's faith in man and God and even one's own self. It were better for one to drown oneself than live to declare such bankruptcy of faith.

If you ask the military, they will tell you that God is their protector. I want you, therefore, to be able to tell Shamsuddin Saheb that you no longer need the protection of the police and the military, which may be withdrawn, but would rather put yourself under the protection of Him whose protection they all seek.[1]

Gandhiji said that the military and the police could not give any protection. They could ask the soldiers (who were then standing with them) whether anybody could save them in war. Guns were unavailing before death. It was only God who could protect. The only way to save oneself was to rely on one's fellowmen, no matter whether they were Hindus or Muslims. It was the gospel of love that he had come here to preach.

The Bengal Ministers and other officials were accompanying him, he added, but not to look after him. They would help him preach and convince the people to have faith in their fellowmen and neighbours and remove fear from their minds. Gandhiji felt convinced that the people would soon learn to dispense with the military and the police. The sooner they could do so, he said, the better. He would like to hear people say so from today.

Harijan, 24-11-1946; and *The Hindu*, 10-11-1946

4. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

CHAUMUHANI,
November 7, 1946

Gandhiji told them how he had toured East Bengal in the company of the Ali Brothers during the Khilafat days. In those days the Muslims felt that all that he said was right. If the Ali Brothers went into a women's meeting, they went blindfolded. He was allowed to go with his eyes open. Why should he blindfold himself when he went

[1] What follows is from *The Hindu.*

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The meeting was held in the compound of the Hindu Vidya Mandir, a local school. The audience was estimated at 15,000, the majority of whom were Muslims.

to his mothers and sisters? He had no desire to go among the *purdah* ladies. But the Ali Brothers insisted that he must go. The women were eager to meet him and they were sure that his advice would do good to them. In South Africa he had lived in the midst of Muslim friends for twenty years. They treated him as a member of their family and told their wives and sisters that they need not observe *purdah* with him. He had become a barrister in England but what was a dinner barrister worth? It was South Africa and the struggle that he had launched there that had made him. It was there that he discovered satyagraha and civil disobedience.

He had come to them in sadness. What sin had Mother India committed that her children, Hindus and Muslims, were quarrelling with each other? He had learnt that no Hindu woman was safe today in some parts of East Bengal. Ever since he had come to Bengal, he was hearing awful tales of Muslim atrocities. Shaheed Saheb, their Prime Minister, and Shamsuddin Saheb had admitted that there was some truth in the reports that one heard.

I have not come to excite the Hindus to fight the Mussalmans. I have no enemies. I have fought the British all my life. Yet they are my friends. I have never wished them ill.

He had heard of forcible conversions, forcible feeding of beef, abductions and forcible marriages, not to talk about murders, arson and loot. They had broken idols. The Muslims did not worship them nor did he. But why should they interfere with those who wished to worship them? These incidents are a blot on the name of Islam. He said :

I have studied the Koran. The very word Islam means peace. The Muslim greeting *'Salam Alaikum'* is the same for all, whether Hindus or Muslims or any other. Nowhere does Islam allow such things as had happened in Noakhali and Tippera. Shaheed Saheb and all the Ministers and League leaders who met me in Calcutta have condemned such acts unequivocally. The Muslims are in such overwhelming majority in East Bengal that I expect them to constitute themselves the guardians of the small Hindu minority. They should tell Hindu women that while they are there, no one dare cast an evil eye on them.[1]

Harijan, 24-11-1946

[1] *The Hindu*, 10-11-1946, reported: "After Gandhiji concluded the 20 minute speech and before a Bengali translation of the speech could be given by Satis Chandra Das Gupta, it was time for Muslims to offer the evening *namaz*. An interval of ten minutes was allowed to enable Muslims in the gathering to offer their prayers."

5. MESSAGE TO PEOPLE OF CHITTAGONG[1]

CHAUMUHANI,

[On or after *November 7, 1946*][2]

Cultivate the spirit of fearlessness and self-sacrifice. Do not evacuate.

Hindustan Standard, 16-11-1946

6. TALK TO RELIEF WORKERS[3]

CHAUMUHANI,

[On or after *November 7, 1946*]

GANDHIJI: The tragedy is not that so many Muslims have gone mad, but that so many Hindus in East Bengal have been witnesses to these things. If every Hindu in East Bengal had been done to death, I would not have minded it. Do you know what the Rajputs did? They killed their womenfolk when they issued forth to sacrifice themselves on the battlefield. The surviving ones immolated them- selves by mounting the funeral pyre before the fortress fell rather than allow themselves to be captured and dishonoured. There is nothing courageous in thousands of Mussalmans killing out a handful of Hindus in their midst, but that the Hindus should have degraded themselves by such cowardice, i.e., being witness to abduction and rape, forcible conversion and forcible marriage of their womenfolk, is heart-rending.

QUESTION: How can we create a sense of security and self-confidence?

By learning to die bravely. Let us turn our wrath against ourselves. I am not interested in getting the police substituted by the military or the Muslim police by the Hindu police. They are broken reeds.

To whom should we appeal—the Congress, the League or the British Government?

[1] The report said: "A deputation from Chittagong waited upon Gandhiji at Chaumuhani and apprised him of the situation in Chittagong."

[2] Gandhiji reached Chaumuhani on November 7.

[3] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

To none of these. Appeal to yourselves, therefore to God.

We are men—made of flesh and blood. We need some material support.

Then appeal to your own flesh and blood. Purify it of all dross.

A WOMAN WORKER: What is your idea of rehabilitation?

GANDHIJI: Not to send them to Assam and West Bengal but to infuse courage in them so that they are not afraid to stay in their original homes.

How is that possible?

You must stay in their midst and say to them: 'We shall die to the last person before a hair of your head is injured.' Then you will produce heroines in East Bengal.

That was once our idea too.

I do not mind if each and every one of the 500 families in your area is done to death. Here you are 20 per cent of the population. In Bihar, the Muslims constitute only 14 per cent.

They know they won't be molested there.

They have been butchered in a more unsufferable manner and there have been cases of molestation of women too, this time.

If the Government do not provide rations?

There are so many relief organizations. Rations can be purchased but honour and self-respect cannot be bought. I have a feeling that even the Bengal Government do not want this thing to go any further. The lesson has been taught not by Bihar but the vile things done in Bengal. They stand aghast.

You have opened up a new vista before us, Mahatmaji. We feel fresh blood coursing through our veins.

Harijan, 8-12-1946; and *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. I, Book II, pp. 20-1

7. SPEECH AT DATTAPARA[1]

November 8, 1946

Gandhiji told them that it was a shame for both the Hindus and the Mussalmans that the Hindus should have to run away from their homes as they had done. It was a shame for the Muslims because it was out of fear of the Muslims that the Hindus had run away. Why should a human being inspire another with fear? It was no less a shame for the Hindus to have given way to craven fear. He had always said that man should fear none but God. The Government officials accompanying him were all anxious that they should return to their homes. To feed and clothe thousands in one place involved difficulties for the refugees as well as for the Government. The Government officials were ashamed of the fact that such things should have happened in their jurisdiction. He wanted them to forgive and forget what had happened in Noakhali and Tippera. That did not mean that they were to become cowards. But it served no useful purpose to keep on recalling the unpleasant past. He hoped and prayed that the Hindus and Muslims of these parts would become friends once more. He knew the Hindus had suffered a lot and were suffering still. He would not ask them to return to their homes till at least one good Muslim and one good Hindu came forward to accompany them and stand surety for their safety in each village. He was sure there were plenty of good Hindus and good Muslims in these parts who would give the necessary guarantee.

A Muslim friend from the audience said, they had already given them the assurance that they would look after them but the Hindus would not listen to them. Gandhiji replied that they should try to understand and appreciate the reasons of the Hindus' distrust and overcome their fear. A Hindu refugee got up and asked[2] how they could have confidence in the assurances of the Muslims any more. When the trouble was threatening they had promised to look after them but had failed to protect them afterwards. Besides, where were they to go and stay? They had lost their all. Were they to go back and stay in the jungles? And when fifty good Muslims in the village had failed to save them on the previous occasion, how would one good Muslim do so now? Moreover, miscreants were still at large roaming about in villages even after one month of the incidents.[3] Gandhiji replied that the Government would see that

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". Gandhiji was on his way back to Chaumuhani in the evening after a visit to Gopairbagh where, according to *The Bombay Chronicle* report, 19 out of the 22 male members of a family had been butchered and burnt in a corner of the compound. At Dattapara, the house where Gandhiji halted had at the time some 6,000 refugees.

[2] According to *The Bombay Chronicle*, Gandhiji invited questions from the refugees.

[3] This sentence is from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

their huts were rebuilt and they had food and clothing when they returned to their homes. Whatever might have happened in the past, if now one good Muslim and one good Hindu took the responsibility for their safety in each village, they could rely on their word backed as it would be by the collective invitation of all the Muslims in the village. If they were still afraid they were cowards and not even God could help the cowardly.

Harijan, 1-12-1946; and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 11-11-1946

8. DISCUSSION WITH MUSLIM LEAGUE LEADERS[1]

CHAUMUHANI,
November 8, 1946

One of the friends suggested that in order to restore confidence Hindu leaders should reinforce the appeals of the Muslims to the refugees to go back to their villages. Gandhiji replied that that was not the right way to dispel the apprehension and distrust of the Hindus which was well grounded. He would not be able to advise them to return to their homes unless there was at least one good Hindu and one good Mussalman for each village who would stand guarantee for their safety and security and who would be prepared to immolate himself before a hair of their head was touched. It was for the Muslim League leaders who were also members of the Government to say whether such men would be forthcoming. There was no other way to restore confidence after all that had happened. They all agreed with Gandhiji's suggestion and said that they would do their best to give effect to it.

Harijan, 24-11-1946

9. LETTER TO JITENDRA CHAKRAVARTI

CHAUMUHANI,
November 8, 1946

BHAI JITEN[2],

In the present condition of Noakhali and Tippera you can sell khadi without insisting on yarn in exchange. Keep sending an account of the khadi thus sold.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly letter". Pyarelal says: "That night Shamsuddin Saheb with his colleagues from Calcutta and some local prominent Muslims saw Gandhiji and discussed the question of refugees."

[2] Jitendra Chakravarti, Secretary, Bengal Charkha Sangh

10. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

[After *November 8, 1946*][1]

BHAI JAJUJI,

Keep this letter. My advice is that you should have Saraladevi's name among the trustees. She is an extremely pure-hearted and truthful lady. What I wrote[2] in *Harijan* was regarding her. If you see anything wrong in this, write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

(Enclosure: Saralabehn's letter of November 8, 1946)

SHRI SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

11. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

November 9, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

Do not worry on hearing about my fast, rather rejoice. When somebody does his duty, instead of worrying one should feel greater zeal in doing one's own work. I am on a partial fast but am able to do my work as usual. Let us see when the total fast begins. That is in the hands of the Biharis. Rajendra Babu and the others have gone there. There are hopes that they will succeed in their mission. Whatever happens, should I not do my duty as I understand it? And, therefore, without worrying in the least, you should do yours.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4993

[1] From the date of the enclosure

[2] *Vide* "Who Can be a Trustee", 3-11-1946

12. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

CHAUMUHANI,
November 9, 1946

Two telegrams from Patna reprove me on my "threatened" fast. "Threatened" is the word used in one of the wires. My proposed fast is not meant to coerce anyone; it is meant to quicken the dead conscience into life. Those who act from fear harm themselves and the cause they profess to serve. Surely, it is as plain as A. B. C. that the action of the Biharis in injuring the very small minority of Muslims in Bihar must postpone the day of India's independence and ultimately sour Muslims all over India unless Bihar repents her folly of senseless and cowardly violence.

Rashtrapati Acharya Kripalani, whom every Bihari knows for his sterling services, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr. Rajendra Prasad and now Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Shri Jayaprakash Narayan are now in Bihar and expect to show fair Bihar that their terrible ill-treatment of the Muslims is communalism of the worst type and is calculated to defeat the growing nationalism of Bihar. I, therefore, warn everyone from abusing my contemplated fast which is in no way intended to deflect anyone from what he believes is the course of duty for him.

The Hindu, 11-11-1946

13. LETTER TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY

DATTAPARA,
November 10, 1946

BHAISHRI SHAHID SUHRAWARDY,

The work here is more difficult than I had imagined. And the Qaid-e-Azam's statement[1] given to the representative of the *Globe* which I saw in the *Morning News* of November 10, has rendered it even more difficult. In the beginning it uses the expression 'caste Hindu', later followed by the word 'Hindu'. Is co-operation between Hindus and Muslims an utter impossibility? If it is so, what will be the plight of Bengal and Hindustan? What will happen to Noakhali and

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 14-11-1946

Tippera?

The refugees here do not get even half their rations and the rice they get is unfit for consumption. They have nothing to cover themselves with during winter. Their houses are damaged, the sanitation is unsatisfactory. Satis Babu has prepared a report which I am sending you.

The officials here are fully co-operating with me for which I am grateful to you as well as to them. But is it not our task to settle the differences and turn both the communities into mutual friends?

Yours

M. K.GANDHI

14. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

DATTAPARA,

November 10, 1946

Whether you believe me or not, I want to assure you that I am a servant of both the Hindus and the Mussalmans. I have not come here to fight Pakistan. If India is destined to be partitioned, I cannot prevent it. But I wish to tell you that Pakistan cannot be established by force. In the *bhajan* that was just sung 'the poet has likened God to the philosophers' stone. The proverbial philosophers' stone is said to turn iron into gold. That is not always desirable. For instance, if all the rails of the railway track were turned into gold by the touch of the stone, the trains would not be able to run over them. But the touch of God purifies the soul. That is always desirable.

That philosophers' stone is within us all. All that I wish to tell my Muslim brethren is that, whether they live as one people or two, they should live as friends with the Hindus. If they do not wish to do so, they should say so plainly. I would in that case confess myself defeated. The refugees cannot stay on as refugees for ever. The Government cannot go on feeding them. And what sort of feed are they getting? Less than half the daily ration of cereals to keep an able-bodied man alive, no fish, no vegetables, nor anything else to

[1] This appeared under the title "An Appeal to Conscience" as reported by Pyarelal.

supplement it. It is not possible for them to exist like this for any length of time. If, therefore, the Muslims do not want them back in their villages, they must go elsewhere.

But even if every Hindu of East Bengal went away, I will still continue to live amidst the Muslims of East Bengal and eat what they give me and what I consider lawful for me to partake of. I will not bring my food from outside. I do not need fish or flesh. All that I need is a little fruit, vegetables and some goat's milk. As far as goat's milk and cereals are concerned, I would take them again only when it pleases God that I should do so. I have given it up and would not resume it till the Hindus are really penitent of what they have done in Bihar.

For a thousand Hindus to surround a hundred Mussalmans or for a thousand Mussalmans to surround a hundred Hindus and oppress them is not bravery but cowardice. Fair fight means even numbers and previous notice. That does not mean that I approve of their fighting. It has been said that the Hindus and Mussalmans cannot stay together as friends or co-operate with each other. No one can make me believe that, but if that is your belief, you should say so. I would in that case not ask the Hindus to return to their homes. They would leave East Bengal, and it would be a shame for both the Mussalmans and the Hindus. If, on the other hand, you want the Hindus to stay in your midst, you should tell them that they need not look to the military for protection but to their Muslim brethren instead. Their daughters and sisters and mothers are your own daughters, sisters and mothers and you should protect them with your lives. I addressed them in the refugee camp yesterday. The District Magistrate, Mr. McInerny, told them that all mankind being descended from Adam and Eve, they were all members of one family—relatives, whatever their race or religion. So they should live together as relatives.

One man is said to have returned to his village last evening after the prayer meeting. He found his house surrounded by Muslims. They would not let him take his property. How can I, under these circumstances (if they are true), ask anyone to go back? You should ponder over what I have said and let me know what you really wish. I shall advise the Hindus accordingly.

I am told and I believe that there are many good Muslims who

would welcome the Hindus back but the *goondas* stand in the way. I wish to tell you that if the good Muslims spoke out with one voice and acted according to their professions, the so-called *goondas* would become ineffective and would mend their ways.

Harijan, 1-12-1946

15. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

November 11, 1946

These days I write very few letters myself. One of them is this one to you. Your telegram[1] was thoughtlessly drafted. You don't know the facts. The newspapers are more or less useless. You are very ill. You can know almost nothing of the latest developments, and any conclusions you may draw from such knowledge will be mostly wrong. You have not even understood the full meaning of the step I have taken. I am writing this only to tell you that, though you are wise, you are unnecessarily spoiling your health. Better read good books, reflect on them and write on them. Or just think of God, that is, repeat Ramanama so that it may get inscribed in your heart. If you do so, you will not waste your energy in useless thoughts.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 214

16. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

DATTAPARA,
November 11, 1946

Gandhiji poured out the anguish which the sights which he had seen had filled him with. Wherever he had gone, he had seen burnt houses and heard stories of looting and forcible conversions. Hindu women were without the auspicious vermilion mark on their heads and foreheads and without their conch-shell bangles. How he wished that all Muslim brothers would condemn these atrocities with one voice so that the Hindus could go back to their homes and live there as they used to before the disturbances. Their houses would be rebuilt before they could go back. The Muslims should help in that. Such he believed was the injunction of the holy Koran too.

Harijan, 1-12-1946

[1] This had reference to Gandhiji's intended fast over the Bihar atrocities.

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". It being a silence-day the speech was read out.

17. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[DATTAPARA,]
November 11, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. You will send the khadi here.

I shall certainly come but I cannot say when. If I am late, Bapa will come. The work is difficult. But whatever the situation, we have to do our duty. What more shall I write? I have now come back from Noakhali and Sonachaka. Prayer is over and I am writing this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 538

18. LETTER TO N. K. BOSE[1]

[DATTAPARA,]
November 12, 1946

DEAR NIRMAL,

You went away suddenly and without seeing me. I was under the impression that you were with Satis Babu and therefore [with] me to the end. Hemprabha Devi says you would come if I needed you. I do need you for any work that may be assigned to you by me directly or through Satis Babu. If you are agreeable, please come without delay.[2]

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 10532. Courtesy: N. K. Bose. Also G. N. 10507

19. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

November 12, 1946

CHI. LILY,

What a letter you have written ! Your mind is extremely unsteady. No one can travel with me as a matter of right. How often did Mahadev have to leave me? Is there any rule that a daughter must

[1] The addressee, a professor in Calcutta University, had accompanied Gandhiji during his Noakhali tour till November 8 and then left to resume university work.

[2] He rejoined Gandhiji on November 17.

travel with her father? I have showed you your dharma. You are doing well in your studies. Do better still; I shall be fully satisfied with that.

I was not displeased with you when you were in Delhi. If you see only the bad in everything, how can I help it? The only way to please me is for you to complete your studies and use your knowledge for serving others.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9605. Also C. W. 6577. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

20. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

CAMP DATTAPARA,
November 12, 1946

If this conflagration does not subside, I am certain that I shall be consumed by it.

I intend to fix all those who are accompanying me separately or they will take up their own independent work.

I shall be touring the surrounding villages here. I shall not be able to use your services. You may go on sending for *Harijan* whatever you can. Your place is in Assam. By all means go there. Bardoloi[1] needs somebody by his side, and you are the right man.

Your duty is to look after the Hindustani work and bring credit to it. All need not offer themselves up in the sacrifice I am performing. Everyone should remain engrossed in his own work.

I got the articles sent by you. They will be published without any mention of my name. What is the point in giving my name in a journal being published by me, and that, too, over an article written by you? You can do that only after my death or in some other journal. But that also with a restrained pen.

I hope you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10982

[1] Gopinath Bardoloi, Prime Minister of Assam

21. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

CAMP DATTAPARA,
November 12, 1946

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I see that it is useless sending for you here. There is no possibility at all of your being with me. Arrangements are being made for all those who are with me to be put in separate places. Therefore your duty is to stay on in Delhi and render whatever service you can there. The first duty is to make your body healthy.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2494

22. LETTER TO MAHESH DATT MISHRA

November 12, 1946

CHI. MAHESH,

I think of you every day. I can now say definitely that your coming here will be useless. I am suggesting that each coworker should be put in a different village. What would be the good of sending for you? In fact, they should all be Bengalis. First I have to see about those who are with me. What shall I do if I send for new workers? How does it help if the new arrivals remain with me. Now do whatever you think is right. What will happen to me, only God knows. Have you fitted yourself for Hindustani *Harijan.*[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6717. Also C. W. 4461. Courtesy: Mahesh Datt Mishra

23. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

DATTAPARA,
November 12, 1946

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

I feel that today you are the God in Bihar. Will Bihar really become calm? We have committed a grievous error. Write to me frankly what is likely to happen now. Give me your unreserved

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mahesh Datt Mishra", 22-10-1946 and "Letter to Mahesh Datt Mishra", 24-10-1946

opinion. I have a feeling that there should be no Congress [session] this time. Leaders of all the provinces should remain in their own provinces. You may convey my opinion to all. I may not be able to do it as I have little free time.

Where is Prabha[1] ? What does she do?

I hope you are keeping well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN
PATNA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

24. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

DATTAPARA,
November 12, 1946

BHAI RAJENDRA BABU,

You have again fallen ill ! How are you now? What is the condition in Bihar? Are those who committed the atrocities relenting? Do they need me there? They should not. If the Bihar fury does not abate, I do not wish to remain alive because my life would then be meaningless. Write to me what precisely the condition is.

The work here is very delicate. Let us see what comes about.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. RAJENDRA PRASAD
PATNA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

25. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

DATTAPARA,
November 12, 1946

Gandhiji again referred to the question of repatriation. The Moulvi Saheb, the Vice-President of Union No. 6, who had addressed them before him had invited them in the name of the Mussalmans to return to their homes. But it was not so easy in action as it was in speech. Everyone was anxious to see the two communities live in

[1] Prabhavati, addressee's wife

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.* The audience consisted mostly of refugees.

peace and harmony once again. For that it was not necessary that they should have the same religion. He had seen awful sights of destruction. He had seen the terror-stricken faces of the sufferers. They had been forcibly converted once and they were afraid the same thing would be repeated. He wanted them to shed that fear. He alone deserved to live who refused to give up God's name.[1] He remembered how during the Jallianwala Bagh days, young English lads made big, hefty men crawl on their bellies. The lane through which they were made to crawl was called the crawling lane. Those men had a human form but they were worse than worms. So they must learn to be brave and face death rather than give up Ramanama.

He was not enamoured of the military and the police. The function of the police was to arrest thieves and dacoits, that of the military to guard them against foreign aggression. The police and the military could not teach them to cease fighting among themselves and live as friends. He would not ask anyone to return to their homes unless one good Hindu and one good Muslim stood surety for their safety in their respective villages.[2] He referred to the scheme for repatriation but it could work only if the Muslim League wished to have peace and fully co-operated. Shamsuddin Saheb was coming in two or three days. They would hear from him what the League Government wanted to do.

Harijan, 1-12-1946; and *Hindustan Standard*, 15-11-1946

26. TRIBUTE TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

DATTAPARA,
November 13, 1946

In Pandit Malaviya's death[3] India loses the oldest and one of the ablest and unswerving servants. Up to the last moment he never ceased to think of India and her freedom.

Hindustan Standard, 15-11-1946

27. DISCUSSION WITH CO-WORKERS

DATTAPARA,[4]
November 13, 1946

Early in the morning Gandhiji announced to his party an important decision. He had decided to disperse his party detailing each member, including the ladies, to settle down in one affected village and make himself or herself hostage for the safety and security of the Hindu minority of that village. They must be pledged to protect

[1] The rest of the paragraph is from *Hindustan Standard.*

[2] This sentence is from *Hindustan Standard.*

[3] Madan Mohan Malaviya died on November 12, 1946; *vide* also "Letter to V. A. Sundaram", 18-11-1946

[4] Extracted from Pyarelal's "A Venture in Faith"

with their lives, if necessary, the Hindu population of that village. His decision was not binding on anyone of his party, he said. Those who wanted to, were free to go away and take up any of his other constructive activities.

Those who have ill-will against the Mussalmans or Islam in their hearts or cannot curb their indignation at what has happened should stay away. They will only misrepresent me by working under this plan.

So far as he was concerned, he added, his decision was final and irrevocable and left no room for discussion. He was going to bury himself in East Bengal till the Hindus and Mussalmans learnt to live together in harmony and peace. He would deprive himself of the services of all his companions and fend for himself with whatever assistance he could command locally.[1] His ahimsa would be incomplete, he argued, unless he took that step. Either ahimsa is the law of life or it is not. A friend used to say that the *Ahimsa Sutra* in Patanjali—*Ahimsa Pratishthayam Tatsannidhau vairatyagah* (अहिंसा-प्रतिष्ठायां तत्सन्निधौ वैरत्यागः):was a mistake and needed to be amended and the saying *Ahimsa Paramodharmah* (अहिंसा परमो धर्मः) ought to be read as *Himsa Paramodharmah* (हिंसा परमो धर्मः) ; in other words, violence, not non-violence was the supreme law. If at the crucial moment he lost faith in the law of non-violence, he must accept the deceased friend's amendment which appeared to him to be absurd. Gandhiji continued :

I know the women of Bengal better than probably the Bengalis do. Today they feel crushed and helpless. The sacrifice of myself and my companions would at least teach them the art of dying with self-respect. It might open, too, the eyes of the oppressors and melt their hearts. I do not say that the moment my eyes are closed theirs will open. But that will be the ultimate result, I have not the slightest doubt. If ahimsa disappears, Hindu Dharma disappears.

"The issue is not religious but political. It is not a movement against the Hindus, but against the Congress," remarked one member of the party.

GANDHIJI: Do you not see that they think that the Congress is a purely Hindu body? And do not forget that I have no watertight compartments such as religious, political and other. Let us not lose ourselves in a forest of words. How to solve the tangle—violently or non-violently—is the question. In other words, has my method efficacy today?

[1] Pyarelal says what follows was explained by Gandhiji in the evening. In the discussion which followed, Thakkar Bapa and Sucheta Kripalani also took part.

QUESTION: How can you reason with people who are thirsting for your blood? Only the other day one of our workers was murdered.

GANDHIJI: I know it. To quell the rage is our job.

Another worker asked whether it was right to invite people to return to their villages under the prevailing conditions which involved a considerable amount of risk.

Gandhiji's reply was that there was no harm in asking them to return to their villages if the Muslims of that village collectively guaranteed their safety and their guarantee was backed by one good Hindu and one good Mussalman, who would stay with them in that village and protect them by laying down their lives, if necessary. If there was that much guarantee, the refugees ought to return to their homes and face whatever risk there might be. If they had not the courage to live on these terms, Hinduism was doomed to disappear from East Bengal. The question of East Bengal is not one of Bengal alone. The battle for India is today being decided in East Bengal. Today Mussalmans are being taught by some that Hindu religion is an abomination and therefore forcible conversion of Hindus to Islam is a merit. It would save to Islam at least the descendants of those who were forcibly converted. If retaliation is to rule the day, the Hindus, in order to win, will have to outstrip the Mussalmans in the nefarious deeds that the latter are reported to have done. The United Nations set out to fight Hitler with his weapons and ended by out-Hitlering Hitler.

QUESTION: How can we reassure the people when the miscreants are still at large in these villages?

G. That is why I have insisted upon one good Mussalman standing surety along with a good Hindu for the safety and security of those who might be returning. The former will have to be provided by the Muslim Leaguers who form the Bengal Government.

Harijan, 24-11-1946

28. TALK TO OFFICIALS[1]

DATTAPARA,
November 13, 1946

It was represented by the Maulvi Saheb who had spoken the previous day in the prayer meeting that the Muslims, far from wanting to drive away the Hindus, themselves felt insecure as a number of them with status and standing had been put under arrest although they were innocent and that was the real obstacle in the way of

[1] The officials included the District Magistrate, the Superintendent of Police and some officials. There were besides a number of representatives of relief organizations, the refugees and some local Muslims.

their befriending the Hindus. Gandhiji replied that he did not see how that could stand in the way of their establishing good relations with the Hindus. On the contrary, it ought to provide an incentive for cultivating their friendship and winning their confidence so that there would be no motive left to get innocent Muslims implicated. The issue was really irrelevant to the proposition before them.

When large numbers have participated in crime, it is but natural that some innocent men will be implicated with the guilty ones. It is so all the world over. That does not mean that the guilty ones should not be proceeded against.

The remedy was for the Muslims to confer with the Hindus and produce agreed lists of those who had been really guilty. No innocent person would then suffer. To bring to book the really guilty ones was the acid test of the sincerity of the authorities and the local Muslims alike. Addressing the members of the Muslim League in the gathering, Gandhiji proceeded:

I have come here to seek your co-operation. You are a powerful party. What has happened here does not show Islam at its best or even at its worst. It is the very negation of Islam. The first question we have got to settle is whether there *can* be co-operation between the Hindus and Muslims. I have apprised Shaheed Shurawardy of the things that have prevented the refugees from returning to their villages. The havoc which I saw yesterday was appalling. These things cannot be whitewashed. Energetic steps have to be taken.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book 2, pp. 29-30

29. LETTER TO SUDHIR GHOSH

November 14, 1946

CHI. SUDHIR,[1]

I have your two notes.[2] You are just now more useful there[3] than here. But when you feel that you want to consult me on anything, of course you are free to come. I am fixed up in East Bengal for some time, perhaps months, to come.

Both your letters are good so far as they go. Of course I was wholly right in what I had said about the Viceroy.

[1] This is in Devanagari.

[2] In *Gandhi's Emissary,* "Discussion with Amiya Chakravarty", 4-12-1946, the addressee explains that these were his drafts of letters written to interpret Gandhiji to Stafford Cripps and Pethick- Lawrence.

[3] In New Delhi

Both the major parties are demoralized each in its own way. So is the third party—the British rulers. They cannot think cogently. Military glory and love of power will not allow them to do so. We see others as we are. Hence the central teaching of the *Gita:* acquisition of the capacity to see things with detachment as perfect as it is humanly possible.

In my opinion for the British not to leave India till there is perfect peace in the land seems to be an impossible dream. What they can and must do is to transfer the whole power to the willing and capable party at the earliest moment, to withdraw the British part of the army and disband the rest. They should not think of keeping any part for the protection of British interests. These must be left to the goodwill of the people of India. This is the royal road to peaceful transfer and no other. This conviction has not yet gone home to the cabinet. I doubt not that you can work out all the corollaries to the above. If you flounder at any point, send me your questions through a messenger.

Love to you and Shanti.[1]

BAPU

Sudhir Ghosh Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also a facsimile in *Gandhi's Emissary,* Between pp. 212 and 213

30. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

November 14, 1946

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I have replied to your wire. I cannot call both of you to stay here. Here it is a matter of 'do or die'. Do' means making the Muslims see light. Besides, those who are with me will each have to go and camp in a different village and, if necessary, lay down his life. How can you then fit in here? You are in service. How can Manu stay alone in a strange village? Nevertheless, if both of you are willing to stay in separate villages and sacrifice yourselves, I shall be ready to take you. But if your telegram is meant only to seek permission for the two of you to come and see me, by all means do come. There will no doubt be some risk in that too. I cannot say where I shall be then. I expect of course to be somewhere in East Bengal. I do not even know whether I shall be alive. Now do as you think fit.

I hope Manudi has recovered. If she keeps indifferent health,

[1] Addressee's wife

she will not feel comfortable here. The climate and water are not very good. Even the necessities may not be available, or available only with great difficulty. The roads are difficult. The distance in miles from Calcutta is not great but there is a river to cross which is as wide as a sea. So it takes time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./24

31. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

DATTAPARA,
November 14, 1946

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

I began with 'Chi'. and therefore do not score it out to make 'Bhai'. You are to me what you are. Acharya[1] told me everything. I have communicated my view to Jawaharlal. Please see it. The more I think about it, the more I find myself against the Congress session at Meerut. It is best not to have a session, but if you must have one, have it in New Delhi.[2] Since it is Kripalani's affair, it is only right to let him take the final decision, though everyone should give his own view. His address may be printed and read if the Congress is called off. You have many problems before you. You need peace to be able to solve them. You need time as well. If a mistake is made now, it will prove to be very costly.

I cannot leave this place. If it is necessary to consult me, you should come here and ask me. That is the only way out. Truly speaking, there should be no need at all to consult me. I have said and done enough. The work here may perhaps be my last. If I survive this, it will be a new life for me. My non-violence is being tested here in a way it has never been tested before.

I hope you are all well enough to be able to work.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 327-8

[1] J. B. Kripalani

[2] The session was held in New Delhi on November 19 and 20 and at Meerut from November 21.

32. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING[1]

SHAHPUR,
November 14, 1946

Gandhiji had been told that there would be a big gathering at Shahpur. But someone had spread the rumour that he would be accompanied by the Superintendent of Police, the District Magistrate and an armed guard who would utilize the occasion for making arrests, with the result that very few people were in evidence when Gandhiji arrived there.

"It is a cruel joke," remarked Gandhiji. For so far as he was concerned, he had never wanted any police or district authorities to accompany him. But the authorities said they could not take the risk of letting him go about unprotected.

It had been brought to his notice that in several places, while the local Mussalmans professed to be anxious that peace should be re-established, they were not prepared to do anything for it or give any guarantee unless the Muslim League leaders asked them to. Gandhiji, recognizing the reasonableness of their suggestion, referred to a statement of Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah which he had read that morning. He did not like everything in that statement but there were some things in it which should commend themselves to all. In that statement Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah had said:

"If the Mussalmans lose their balance and give vent to the spirit of vengeance and retaliation and prove false to the highest codes of morality and preachings of our great religion Islam, they will not only lose their title to the claim of Pakistan but also it will start of a most vicious circle of bloodshed and cruelty which will at once put off the day of our freedom and we shall only be helping to prolong the period of slavery and bondage."

He had further said :

"We must prove politically that we are brave, generous and trustworthy . . . that in the Pakistan areas the minorities will enjoy the fullest security of life, property and honour just as the Mussalmans themselves, nay, even greater."

He would like them, remarked Gandhiji, to ponder over that statement, if, on examination, they found that his quotation was correct. Murder, loot, arson, abduction, forcible marriages and forcible conversions could not but prolong India's slavery. If they kept on quarrelling among themselves, if they looked to the police and the military for protection, they would be inciting the third party to rule over them.

Harijan, 1-12-1946

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". Gandhiji left Dattapara for Kazirkhil in the afternoon. *En route* he addressed a public meeting at Shahpur.

33. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

KAZIRKHIL,

November 14, 1946

Gandhiji said he found indescribable peace in the natural scenery around him but he found that peace missing on the faces of the men and women. And how could they have peace after all that they had been through? He found a number of guards standing there to protect him and his party. Against whom were they to protect him? He was not used to going about with a guard. He had toured in Bengal unprotected before this. He said:

But today the authorities would not let me do so. It is a matter of sorrow and shame for me and more than me it should be a matter of shame for the Mussalmans of East Bengal.

Even the schools and temples had been destroyed, he proceeded. Shamsuddin Saheb, their Minister, did not like it. The happenings in East Bengal, he said, had hurt him deeply. The hearts of the people had to be purged of hatred. For that their help and co-operation was necessary.

This fratricide was more awful than anything in his experience. He had carried on a grim struggle for 20 years in South Africa and for the last 30 years in India. But this mutual slaughter had nonplussed him. He did not know how he could induce the two communities to live in peace and harmony again. He had come to Bengal to find out a solution for the problem. Bengal was a big province. If the communal problem could be solved here, it would be solved elsewhere also. If he succeeded here, he would go away from Bengal with a new lease of life. If not, he wished God to remove him from this earth. He did not wish to leave Bengal empty-handed. The word "pessimism" was not to be found in his dictionary.

The Muslims butchered the Hindus and did worse things than butchery in Bengal and the Hindus butchered the Muslims in Bihar. When both acted wickedly it was no use making comparisons or saying one was less wicked than the other, or who started the trouble. If they wished to take revenge they should learn the art from him. He also took revenge, but it was of a different type. He had read a Gujarati poem in his childhood which said: "If to him who gives you a glass of water, you give two, there is no merit in it. Real merit lies in doing good to him who does you evil." Gandhiji concluded:

That I consider noble revenge.

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". At Kazirkhil, Gandhiji had been lodged in a partially destroyed house which had been cleaned up and made habitable. Prayers were held in the compound of the house.

I read a story about one of the earlier Caliphs. A man attacked the Caliph with a sword. The Caliph wrested the sword from the assailant's hands and was going to kill him when the assailant spat on his face. The Caliph thereupon let him go free because the indignity had filled him with personal anger. This produced a great impression upon the assailant and he embraced Islam. One who is forcibly converted to Islam ceases to be a man. To recite the *Kalma* through fear is meaningless.

Harijan, 1-12-1946

34. TELEGRAM TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

RAMGANJ,
November 15, 1946

JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

CARE SCINDIA NAVIGATION COMPANY

MAHUVA

DIFFICULT FOR YOU COME HERE. WHEN IS MANU COMING MAHUVA? WRITING.

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./24

35. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

November 15, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. There is no doubt at all about my going to Dashgharia[1]. Discussion is going on with the Muslim League. There is no need for you to come here. You should get absorbed in your own work. Do not worry too much. Do what your strength permits you to do and be content.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 539

[1] A village, four miles from Kazirkhil, where the addressee was working. Gandhiji had posted her in Siraudi centre and she had under her charge ten villages.

36. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

RAMGANJ,
November 15, 1946

Gandhiji reiterated and emphasized his previous day's appeal. He could talk to them of nothing but sorrow and suffering these days. Wherever he went he saw awful sights of destruction. There were no tears in his eyes. He who shed tears could not wipe those of others, but his heart did weep. He had come with the hope that he could have a frank talk with the Mussalmans and that they would repent of their misdeeds and request the Hindus not to leave their homes. If the repentance was genuine, the Hindus would recognize their sincerity and regain lost confidence. But he could see that the Hindus and the Muslims of East Bengal had been embittered against one another. He would not go into the reasons thereof. But the Muslim brethren would permit him to say that so far as he knew, in East Bengal they had been the aggressors. The Hindus were mortally afraid of them. At Chaumuhani Muslims came to his meeting in larger numbers than the Hindus did. But he did not know why they were avoiding him after the first meeting at Dattapara. It hurt him. He wanted the few Mussalmans who were present at the meeting to carry his message to the rest. A Muslim sister who had been going about meeting leading Muslims in these parts had said that the Muslims told her plainly that they wanted orders from the League leaders before they could promise to befriend the Hindus or attend Gandhiji's meetings. The exodus of the Hindus was still continuing. If the Muslims assured them that they were neighbours, friends and brothers, sons of the same soil, breathing the same air and drinking the same water, that the Hindus had nothing to fear from them, the exodus would stop and even those who had left their homes would return. Even animals were friendly to those who befriended them. But man was made in the image of God. To justify his inheritance, man had to return good for evil. Whosoever was at fault, this truth applied to both the parties. The Muslims wanted orders from the League. He could understand it. There was a League Government in the province. But that did not mean that the Government should be inimical to those outside the League.

He reiterated what he said[2] about Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah's message on the previous day. They should search their hearts and ask themselves if they had lived up to that message. He concluded:

So far as I know, Islam does not permit forcible conversion and atrocities on women. What good can a mere repetition of the *Kalma* do to one whose heart does not accept Islam? You should ask your leaders, therefore, whether you are to be friends with the Hindus or

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The meeting was held in the school *maidan*.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting", 14-11-1946

enemies and tell me. If you wish to be enemies, the Hindus should be asked to leave East Bengal. For myself, I have come to stay in East Bengal till there is reconciliation between the two.

Harijan, 1-12-1946

37. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

November 16, 1946

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

Yesterday I read the letter written to you by your colleagues there. I do not consider it uncivil. The answer to it is not your resignation[1]. On the contrary, you should have a talk with them and satisfy them . . .[2] is one of them. Work under him. To come out from there would be forsaking your duty. If you find yourself in a dilemma, you may come here and thrash it out with me. Bapa has seen this. He agrees with me. Both of us are stuck here.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Badonke Preranadayak Kuchh Patra, p. 19

38. LETTER TO MANORANJAN CHAUDHURI

November 16, 1946

BHAI MANORANJAN BABU[3],

Why do you fall ill so often? It is the duty of a worker to keep his body and mind healthy. Observe scrupulously the rules of good health. I hope there is no fever now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 10576

[1] From the Udyogshala of Harijan Sevak Sangh

[2] Omission as in the source

[3] Hindu Mahasabha leader, who had been working for the formation of a peace committee

39. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

KAZIRKHIL,
November 16, 1946

Gandhiji, addressing the meeting after Goffran Saheb[2], began by referring to Shamsuddin Saheb's speech[3] at Chaumuhani a few days ago. They had now heard Goffran Saheb. The Ministers wanted them to live together as friends. The police and the military could not protect them. God alone could protect them. They had, therefore, to look to each other for their safety. Goffran Saheb had told them that the Government did not wish the Hindus to leave East Bengal. Awful things had no doubt happened but they should let bygones be bygones. They must turn a new leaf. When one had suffered as they had, one was liable to become filled with suspicion. But that had to be overcome.

A member from the audience had requested him to allow him five minutes to reply to Goffran Saheb's speech which he said, required correction in several places. But Gandhiji replied that he was afraid he could not allow the meeting to be turned into a public debate. Whatever was said at the meeting was said in good faith[4] and to do His work. But if the friend in question sent him a letter, not couched offensively, he would gladly forward it to Goffran Saheb. He rebuked the audience too for not observing pindrop silence while the Muslim Members of the audience were performing *namaz*. Culture and good breeding required that they should observe silence when others said their prayer. There should be mutual respect. All worshi-pped the same God, whatever their religion. He was glad to see the Congress and the League flags flying together in the prayer ground. Both had great significance. They should realize as Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah Saheb had said that if they kept on quarrelling among themselves the country would remain a slave country and Pakistan would vanish into thin air.

He was receiving threatening letters, said Gandhiji. Some Muslims feared that he had come to suppress them. He could assure them that he had never suppressed anyone in all his life. They asked him why he had not gone to Bihar. He had declared his resolve to fast[5] if Bihar did not stop the madness. He was in constant touch with Bihar. Pandit Jawaharlalji, Dr. Rajendra Prasad and others had assured him that his

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

[2] Abdul Goffran, Minister for Civil Supplies, Bengal Government

[3] Shamsuddin Ahmed met Gandhiji on November 8, *vide* "Discussion with Muslim League Leaders", 8-11-1946.

[4] *Hindustan Standard* has "in God's name".

[5] *Vide* "To Bihar", 6-11-1946

presence there was not required. Bihar, he understood, was practically peaceful now. Tension was still there, but it was going. The Muslims were returning to their villages. The Government had taken the responsibility to build the houses of those who had been rendered homeless. He was also receiving many telegrams from Hindus asking why he did not fast against the Muslims for the happenings in Bengal. He could not do so today. If the Mussalmans realized that he was their friend, he would be entitled to fast against them also. If he was to leave East Bengal he would go only after peace ruled the breasts of the Hindus and the Muslims. He had no desire to live any longer otherwise.[1]

He was in the midst of a Muslim population in Noakhali, he said. He did not like the idea of staying with Hindu friends. He would like to see if he could stay with a League Mussalman.

My requirements are very few. All I want is cleanliness, clean water, permissible food and the freedom to pray to God in my own way.

The Muslim friends will have an opportunity to examine me at close quarters and find out whether I am an enemy or a friend.

Harijan, 8-12-1946; and *Hindustan Standard,* 21-11-1946

40. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

KAZIRKHIL,
November 17, 1946

The District Magistrate had issued orders and advertized the fact, remarked Gandhiji, that forcible conversions, i.e., conversions out of fear, would not be recognized by law. He did not know if everyone of those who had been converted forcibly had been restored to Hinduism. It not, it should be done if they wanted to replace the present bitterness between the two communities by cordiality.

Some abducted girls were still missing. They should be returned without further delay. A dhobi had brought to him his boy of one year this afternoon. He had recovered the child after a month from a Muslim with police help. It was the duty of the Muslim brethren to put an end to such acts. They should make a frank confession of error in the past and promise to avoid it in future. He, who tried to hide his mistakes, could never rectify them. He himself was a votary of truth. Even when he

[1] What follows is extracted from Pyarelal's "The 'Do or Die'Mission".

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". On the morning of November 17, Gandhiji had visited the village of Dashgharia, two miles from Kazirkhil, where he was met by a large number of women, who had all been forcibly converted and now reconverted to their own religion.

practised law, he told his clients to tell him the truth if they wanted him to take up their case. He would not plead for a false case. The result was that only true and *bona-fide* cases were brought to him. He had long ceased to practise law and had even been struck off the rolls of the Bar register[1] for the offence of sedition. But he continued to follow the same principle. His advice to the Hindus and the Muslims was to get rid of all evil in themselves. Without that they would not be able to live in peace or have respect for one another.

Gandhiji observed that he had heard that because he did not allow a gentleman to reply to Goffran Saheb's remarks there and then at the meeting, the Hindus were annoyed and had boycotted the meeting.[2] He was unrepentant. He never said or did anything merely to please others. He had always taught that one should do one's duty irrespective of the reaction it may have on others. A man who always did what he believed to be right never feared anyone.

Harijan, 8-12-1946

41. TELEGRAM TO VIYOGI HARI

November 18, 1946

BAPA I GLAD YOU WITHDREW RESIGNATION. WRITING.[3]

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

42. TELEGRAM TO D. B. KALELKAR

[*November 18, 1946*][4]

KAKASAHEB

YOUR LETTER. WROTE YOU TWO LETTERS.[5] YOU CAN COME. DISCUSS THINGS.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Gandhiji had been disbarred on November 10, 1922, following his conviction by Ahmedabad Sessions Court on March 18, 1922.

[2] Gandhiji was later assured "that they had not boycotted the meeting but as it was Sunday and the bazaar day, the women were afraid to come out as there would be many Muslims, including *goondas* about. *Vide* also "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 19-11-1946

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Viyogi Hari", 18-11-1946

[4] This was found among items of this date in the source.

[5] *Vide* "Letter to D. B. Kalelkar", 25-10-1946 and "Letter to D.B. Kalelkar", 12-11-1946

43. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO N. K. BOSE

November 18, 1946

I want you, if you can and will, to be with me wherever I go and stay while I am in Bengal. The idea is that I should be alone only with you as my companion and interpreter. This you should do only if you can sever your connection with the University and would care to risk death, starvation, etc. Satis Babu knows all about my design. You will know from him.

Secondly, I want to collect from *Dawn, Azad, Mornin News* and *Star of India* all the telling extracts from Qaid-e-Azam's and other League leaders' writings and speeches and put them in chron-ological order giving under each extract date and origin.

These things you can do simultaneously.[1]

From a photostat: C. W. 1533. Courtesy: N. K. Bose

44. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

November 18, 1946

CHI. SUNDARAM,[2]

So Panditji is gone and yet he is not gone ! How can he, of so many unrivalled services? His ailing body is delivered from torture. But he is immortal.

Now is your testing time. You have to do all you can to make his monumental work a success. I do not mean merely financially. I am trying to write an article[3] which you will see, if I succeed in finis-hing it as I hope to.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 3197

[1] The addressee replied saying: "The university releases me for your service and as long as you are in Bengal. . . . I shall try to fulfil your conditions."

[2] Secretary to Madan Mohan Malaviya. The superscription is in Tamil.

[3] *Vide* "Malaviyaji".

45. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

November 18, 1946

CHI. DINSHAW,

I got your letter of the 11th today. Do whatever you wish calmly and with deliberation. Nature-cure treatment is not only for the body but also for the mind.

Your duty at present is to stay near your mother. You can think of coming here only after she is all right. Whatever you are doing there, you are doing as a matter of duty. Moreover, there is also the work of the sanatorium, which also you must attend to. I am carrying on as usual. God is there to take care of me.

Blessings to Gulbehn, children and you from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not given any address because we don't stay at one place. It will do if you address the letters to Khadi Pratishthan, Sodepur. For the time being, I may not have to go on a total fast.

BAPU

DR. DINSHAW MEHTA
POONA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

46. LETTER TO GOVIND MALAVIYA

KAZIRKHIL,
November 18, 1946

CHI. GOVIND,

Father is gone, yet not quite gone. He is in our midst in the manifold services he rendered. So his having passed away only means that he has been freed from physical suffering, which I regard as a relief. Now it is your duty, and your brothers' and ours as well, to make a success of his great work as best as we can. I am writing an article in this connection; see it when it is published.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI GOVIND MALAVIYA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

47. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

KAZIRKHIL,
November 18, 1946

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

I have your wire. I have sent a wire[1] saying that we are both glad. You must have received my other letter[2] as well. Now have an amicable discussion with colleagues and mend matters where necessary.

You deserve to be President of the Sammelan[3]. Render whatever service you can. My blessings you have but I wish to say nothing about the Sammelan. So my name must not be brought in on any account.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

48. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[4]

KAZIRKHIL,
November 18, 1946

What can I tell you on my silence day? The more I go about in these parts, the more I find that your worst enemy is fear. It eats into the vitals of the terror-stricken as well as the terrorist. The latter fears something in his victim. It may be his different religion or his riches that he fears. The second kind of fear is otherwise known as greed [or love of material possession][5]. If you search [deeply] enough, you will find that greed is a variety of fear. But there has never been, and will never be, a man who is able to intimidate one who has cast out fear from his heart. Why can no one intimidate the fearless? You will find

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Viyogi Hari", 16-11-1946 and "Telegram to Viyogi Hari", 18-11-1946

[2] *ibid*

[3] Hindi Sahitya Sammelan in Karachi

[4] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". It being a silence day, the speech was read out. The first and the last sentences are reproduced from *Hindustan Standard*, 22-11-1946, which also reported that "the prayer meeting was held in the camp compound."

[5] From *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*

that God is always by the side of the fearless. Therefore, we should fear Him alone and seek His protection. All other fear will then disappear by itself. Till fearlessness is cultivated by the people there will never be any peace in these parts for the Hindus or for the Mussalmans. Hence in order to establish any real peace, I have suggested that each affected village must have one good Hindu and one good Mussalman to accompany the returning refugees.

Harijan, 8-12-1946; and *Hindustan Standard*, 22-11-1946

49. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

MADHUPUR,
November 19,1946

Gandhiji observed that a friend[2] had told him that the explanation[3] was a make-believe. If they had boycotted the meeting, he did no mind it. They owed him no apology on that account. And if they had stayed away out of fear, certainly no apology was due to him. But it was a shame for them to be so afraid. Were the men also such cowards that they had stayed away out of fear? Were the Muslims going to eat them up? If they were such cowards, they were not worthy of living in this country. The sister who had gone to him in the morning to request him to hold a women's meeting at Madhupur had put before him three questions. The first question was that in spite of all their efforts they were unable to rescue some of the abducted women. He had told her that she should write to him about it and he would forward the letter to Shaheed Suhrawardy. He could even write to the Prime Minister directly. It was a matter which brooked no delay. Secondly she said there were some women in the villages who wanted to come away but wanted a military escort. He never could be a party to that. He had told the Prime Minister that he for one was not enamoured of the police and the military and that he could withdraw it at any time. The Hindus and the Muslims should be free to break each other's heads if they wanted to. He would put up with that. But if they continued to look to the police and the military for help, they would remain slaves for ever. Those who preferred security to freedom had no right to live. He wanted the women to become brave. To change one's religion under threat of force was no conversion but rather cowardice. A cowardly man or woman was a dead weight on any religion. Out of fear they might become Muslims today, Christians tomorrow and pass into a third religion the day after. That was not

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"
[2] According to *Hindustan Standard*, this was Uma Guha.
[3] *Vide* footnote 3, "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 17-11-1946

worthy of human beings. It was up to the men workers to tell the women that they would be their escort and would protect them with their lives. If still the women were afraid to come away, there was no help for them. He had come to proclaim from the housetops that the women had to become brave or else die. They should make use of the calamity that had befallen them to cast out the demon of fear. Lastly the sister had asked as to how they could advise the refugees to go back to their homes. He would not ask them to go back under police or military protection. They had run away out of the fear of the Muslims. Therefore, it was the Muslims who had to come forward and reassure them that they would regard them as their own mothers, daughters and sisters and protect them with their lives. Everybody must be entitled to retain his or her own religion without interference. All worshipped the same God although under different names. "If I see my God in this tree and worship it, why should the Muslims object?"

It was wrong for anyone to say that his God was superior to another's. God was one and the same for all. Hence, his formula was that from every village one good Hindu and one good Muslim should stand surety for the peace of the village. Then and then alone would he ask the refugees to return. The Ministers had liked his suggestion.

Harijan, 8-12-1946

50. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"[1]

KAZIRKHIL,
[*November 19, 1946*][2]

QUESTION: Will the new experiment, which you propose to inaugurate tomorrow, of going and living singly in affected villages, infuse courage into the hearts of refugees and succeed in persuading them to return to their villages? What is the significance underlying this experiment?

GANDHIJI: This question would not arise if you knew that I was going to a village for my own sake, that is, to test my ahimsa. I am not going singly; there will be Nirmal Kumar Bose as my Bengali interpreter and my stenographer Parasuram from the South. If I have the requisite courage and capacity to undergo a comparatively hard life and to encourage inner ahimsa, I should expect to affect both Hindus and Muslims in the right manner.

You should also know that all members of my original party will similarly distribute themselves, taking with them a local Bengali

[1] The report said that Gandhiji's interview to "a special correspondent" was on "the eve of his departure for Srirampur". He left for Srirampur on November 20.

[2] *ibid*

worker. The choice of village will rest with Satis Chandra Das Gupta.

Asked whether Bengal Government would not feel that his action was aimed at bringing ridicule on them, Gandhiji replied:

I think not, only because I have not the remotest idea of bringing ridicule on them, assuming of course that Bengal Government have meant every word of what they have said. Indeed, I am in search of a League Muslim who will harbour me in his house as a member of his family.

Q. Are you not taking a serious liberty with your life at this stage by proposing to live in a village which is perhaps not free from *goondas* ?

G. I recognize no one as a *goonda*—or all are *goondas*, some more, some less. I have the conviction that so long as God wants my service in the present body, He will keep it from all harm.

Hindustan Standard, 22-11-1946

51. A TALK[1]

[On or before *November 20, 1946*][2]

When I was in detention in the Aga Khan Palace, I once sat down to write a thesis on India as a protagonist of non-violence. But as I proceeded with my writing, I could not go on. I had to stop. There are two aspects of Hinduism. There is, on the one hand, the historical Hinduism with its untouchability, superstitious worship of stocks and stones, animal sacrifice and so on. On the other, we have the Hinduism of the *Gita*, the *Upanishads* and Patanjali's *Yoga Sutra* which is the acme of ahimsa and oneness of all creation, pure worship of one immanent, formless imperishable God. Ahimsa which to me is the chief glory of Hinduism has been sought to be explained away by our people as being meant for sannyasis only. I do not share that view. I have held that it is *the* way of life and India has to show it to the world. Where do I stand? Do I represent this ahimsa in my person? If I do, then deceit and hatred that poison the atmosphere should dissolve. It is only by going into isolation from my companions, those on whose help I have relied all along, and standing on my own feet that I shall find my bearings and also test my faith in God.

Harijan, 8-12-1946

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "The 'Do or Die' Mission"

[2] From the reference to decision of "going into isolation from my companions". Gandhiji reached Srirampur on November 20; *vide* the preceding item.

52. LETTER TO N. G. RANGA

November 20, 1946

MY DEAR RANGA[1],

This[2] is one of the many letters about you. If there is any truth in it, you tell me. Why such complaints? My movements are fleeting. Hence the address is Khadi Pratishthan, Sodepur, Bengal.

Blessings from

BAPU

PROF. N. G. RANGA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

53. LETTER TO SHAH NAWAZ

November 20, 1946

DEAR SHAH NAWAZ,

I dare not write to you in Urdu[3] during the short time at my disposal. I sent you a wire yesterday in reply to yours. Things here are so complex that they defy me. I do not know what use I can make of you at this juncture. I am breaking up even the party I have brought with me. I am distributing them singly in villages. There appears to me to be an atmosphere of falsity. Therefore I can only say: do the best you can wherever you are. I shall tell you further if I see more light.

BAPU

CAPT. SHAH NAWAZ

CONGRESS CAMP

MEERUT

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] President, All-India Kisan Sabha; President, Andhra Provincial Congress Committee; Member, Congress Parliamentary Party; Founder-President, Swatantra Party

[2] The enclosure is not traceable.

[3] This word is in Devanagari.

54. LETTER TO SATINDRANATH SEN

November 20, 1946

DEAR SATIS[1],

Amrit Babu has given me your letter.

A most complex position faces Bengal. I am not sure what is the exact thing to do. I am hoping that light will pierce through this darkness. I can therefore give you no guidance at present. Wait, watch and pray.

BAPU

SHRI SATINDRANATH SEN

BARISAL[2]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

55. LETTER TO VIJAYA

November 20, 1946

CHI. VIJAYA,

You have been married for quite some time but I am able to write to you only today. I intended and wished to write to you earlier. I trust your married life is happy and the capacity of both of you to render service has further increased as both of you are inclined to serve. You will have recovered. I hope the climate of Sevagram is suiting Apteji.

Sushila must be writing to you about the conditions prevailing here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 3161

[1] A Congress leader

[2] This is in Devanagari.

56. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI AND SAROJ NANAVATI

KAZIRKHIL,
Wednesday, November 20, 1946

DEAR DAUGHTERS RAIHANA AND SAROJ,

I had two letters from you. Yesterday I started taking milk and shall take whatever diet agrees with me. Rajendra Babu says that the Bihar affair is settled now.[1] Let us see what God now prompts us to do. My proposal to fast was absolutely right but there is no time to argue about it. I shall argue it out if we meet some day, and I hope that you will agree that my action was right, or you will point out my error. I shall be satisfied either way.

It will not be right to invite you two here. The weather here is also not good.

Blessings from
BAPU

RAIHANA TYABJI
WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

57. LETTER TO MALATI CHOWDHURI

November 20, 1946

CHI. MALATIBEHN[2],

Bapa has shown me your letter.

Send me the judgment. But now that Mahtab Babu[3] is the Premier, why can't he do something? Since there is a popular ministry, a man like me is redundant.

It will not be right for you or anyone else to come here at present. There is darkness all around which will not be dispelled but

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 20-11-1946

[2] President of the Utkal Provincial Congress Committee; subsequently nominated as a member of the Constituent Assembly

[3] Harekrushna Mahtab

only deepen with the arrival of outsiders. The best thing is to remain where you are and do your duty.

BAPU

SMT. MALATI CHOWDHURI

CUTTACK

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

58. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

November 20, 1946

I find myself in the midst of exaggeration and falsity. I am unable to discover the truth. There is terrible mutual distrust. Oldest friendships have snapped. Truth and ahimsa by which I swear, and which have, to my knowledge, sustained me for sixty years, seem to fail to show the attributes I have ascribed to them.

To test them, or better, to test myself, I am going to a village called Srirampur, cutting myself away from those who have been with me all these years, and who have made life easy for me. I am taking Prof. Nirmal Kumar Bose as my Bengali teacher and interpreter and Shri Parasuram, who has been my most devoted, selfless and silent stenographer.

The other workers, whom I have brought with me, will each distribute themselves in other villages of Noakhali to do the work ofpeace, if it is at all possible, between the two communities. They are, unfortunately, all non-Bengalis except little Abha[1]. They will, therefore, be accompanied by one Bengali worker each as teacher and interpreter, even like Prof. N. K. Bose will be to me.

Distribution work and selection work will be done by Shri Satis Chandra Das Gupta of the Khadi Pratishthan. My ideal is to live in a local Muslim League family, but I see that I must not wait for that happy day. I must meanwhile establish such contacts with the Muslims as I can in their own villages. My suggestion to the League Ministers is that they should give me one honest and brave Muslim to accompany one equally honest and brave Hindu for each affected village. They should guarantee, at the cost of their lives if need be, the

[1] Abha Gandhi, wife of Kanu Gandhi

safety of the returning Hindu refugees. I am sorry to have to confess that without some such thing it seems to me difficult to induce them to return to their villages.

From all accounts received by me, life is not as yet smooth and safe for the minority community in the villages. They, therefore, prefer to live as exiles from their own homes, crops, plantations and surroundings, and live on inadequate and ill-balanced doles.

Many friends from outside Bengal have written to me to allow them to come for peace work but I have strongly dissuaded them from coming. I would love to let them come if and when I see light through this impenetrable darkness.

In the meantime, both Pyarelal and I have decided to suspend all other activities in the shape of correspondence, including the heavy work of the *Harijan* and the allied weeklies. I have asked Shri Kishorelal, Shri Kakasaheb, Shri Vinoba and Shri Narahari Parikh to edit the weeklies jointly and severally. Pyarelal and I may, if our work permits, send stra contributions from our respective villages. Correspondence will be attended to from Sevagram.

How long this suspense will last is more than I can say. This much, however, I can. I do not propose to leave East Bengal till I am satisfied that mutual trust has been established between the two communities and the two have resumed the even tenor of their life in their villages. Without this there is neither Pakistan nor Hindustan—only slavery awaits India, torn asunder by mutual strife and engrossed in barbarity.

No one need at present be disturbed about my low diet. On receipt of the following wire from Dr. Rajendra Prasad :"Letter received. Have already wired quiet. There have been no incidents for a week now. Situation satisfactory. Most earnestly desire resumption of normal diet. Myself going Delhi 19th", I resumed goat's milk from yesterday and propose to revert to normal diet as early as the system permits. The future is in God's keeping.

Harijan, 1-12-1946

59. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SRIRAMPUR,
November 20, 1946

Speaking after the prayer at Srirampur to an audience of about a thousand persons, Gandhiji said that he had never imagined he would be able to come and settle down in a devastated village in Noakhali so soon. This had become possible through Satish Babu's efforts. He had come here alone, with two companions only. One was to act as his interpreter and teach him Bengali, while the other, Shri Parasuram, who was from Malabar, had been brought along because he knew no Bengali and little Hindustani and so could not be set up in a village alone. For all practical purposes he had thus come here alone. His companions had been left behind at Kazirkhil, and each of them was likewise to choose one village for himself. His idea was that every Hindu worker thus sent should be accompanied by a single Mussalman worker, and both of them together should mix with the local people and gradually create an atmosphere in which the refugees would shed their fear and be able to come back and live in peace and friendship once more. For a Mussalman worker he depended on Shaheed Saheb and Shamsuddin Saheb. But he could not afford to wait until such a worker was available. He had, therefore, come here as soon as he found the opportunity. It was good that some Mussalmans were present in the meeting and two local Mussalman friends had already invited him to visit their homes. They had assured him that they also wanted the Hindus back in the village, but the Hindus were not yet in the proper frame of mind to do so.

Fear is a thing which he disliked. Why should one man be afraid of another man? Man should stand in fear of God alone, and then he can shed all other fears. Pyarelal had come to the meeting a short while ago. On his way, he had met about 150 refugees who were going away from the village with their belongings. On enquiry the refugees had told him that they were afraid that when the military and police left there would be fresh trouble. Whilst the roads were safe, therefore, they took the opportunity of moving away to some place of safety. But the man who is possessed by fear will not find safety anywhere. What help can the military or the police give to such a man? To depend on military and police aid is to add to one's helplessness. He would therefore like these refugees to develop personal courage so that they would consider it beneath their dignity to fly from fancied danger merely for fear of losing their lives. Therefore, the better course for intending refugees would be to derive personal courage from men like him who went to the affected villages, assuming of course that these had the requisite courage.

But whether he could personally infuse such courage in another man or not he

[1] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary", which was "prepared from Press messages in newspapers . . . to make handy for the reader Gandhiji's utterances. . ."

did not know. So long he had lived amidst a number of companions. But now he had begun to say to himself, "Now is the time. If you want to know yourself, go forth alone." It was therefore that he had come practically alone like this to the present village. With unquenchable faith in God he proposed to persevere so as to succeed in disarming all opposition and inspiring confidence.

He would live here amidst the Muslim villagers, form intimate acquaintance with each family, know their mind, and help them also to know his mind. When they thus knew one another intimately, then would perhaps come the time when the atmosphere would change and sweetness prevail in the relations between Hindus and Mussalmans, where sourness was prevailing today.

Harijan, 5-1-1947

60. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"[1]

SRIRAMPUR,
November 20, 1946

When I asked him whether he did not feel he was living alone as in jail, Gandhiji said :

Yes, but with this difference.,In jail I had willy-nilly to live alone. Here I have deliberately imposed it on myself. There are now two with me and they are too many. While Nirmal Babu will be my interpreter, Parasuram will help me in other ways. I want to reduce my correspondence to the minimum and I may write for the *Harijan* if I feel the urge.

When asked whether he was not putting too great a physical strain on himself, he said :

People have been pampering me too much. I would not have felt free until I was severely alone. . . .

Asked how long he proposed to stay in the village, he said that it all depended on how things shaped in the coming days.

Explaining his programme of activity in the village, Gandhiji said that he had already seen local Muslims and explained the object of his visit. He proposed to go every morning to the houses of local Muslims and talk to them in order to ascertain their real views on the present situation. He would invite them to attend his prayer meetings and would influence them in every way so as to bring about friendly relations between the two communities.

The Hindu, 24-4-1946

[1] The correspondent reported that he saw Gandhiji in the "evening in his new abode in Srirampur, sitting calmly in a half-burnt house amidst ruins".

61. A WARNING[1]

[On or after *November 20, 1946*][2]

In the army, a soldier who does not take care of his feet, for instance, and allows corns to form makes himself liable to be cashiered; much more is expected of a soldier of non-violence.

Harijan, 12-1-1947

62. NOTE TO PYARELAL[3]

[On or after *November 20, 1946*]

You are not to proceed to your village. Those who go to village have to go there with the determination to do or die. If they fall ill, they must get well or die there. Then alone would their going have any meaning. In practice, this means that in case of illness, they must be content to do with home remedies or the therapy of nature's elements. Sushila's medical services are not supposed to be available to the members of our party. Her services are all premortgaged to the village folk of East Bengal. She has her work cut out in her village. . . .[4]

It won't do to live in the villages like a jinn. We must learn to live and move with the proverbial cautiousness and wisdom of a she-elephant. Then alone shall we have the fitness to live there. To live in the villages of Bengal calls for a special knack. We have all to cultivate it. You and I have to pass that test.

Come to me when you are well and I shall further explain the meaning of 'Do or Die'.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book. II, pp. 73-4

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's article "Initiated". Gandhiji gave the warning "when he sent out the members of his party separately on their 'Do or Die' assignment" on November 20.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Pyarelal explains that he had had an attack of malaria even before he had set out for his village and a worker had written to Gandhiji to send Sushila Nayyar to look after him. The following day he received the note in Gandhiji's own hand. Gandhiji had disbanded his camp on November 20, 1946. *Vide* also the preceding item.

[4] Omission as in the source. Dr. Sushila Nayyar had set up a free dispensary for the poor at Changirgaon.

63. LETTER TO SEVAGRAM ASHRAM INMATES[1]

[On or after *November 20, 1946*][2]

I am afraid you must give up all hope of my returning early or returning at all to the Ashram. The same applies to my companions. It is a Herculean task that faces me. I am being tested. Is the satyagraha of my conception a weapon of the weak or really that of the strong? I must either realize the latter or lay down my life in the attempt to attain it. That is my quest. In pursuit of it I have come to bury myself in this devastated village. His will be done.

Harijan, 8-12-1946

64. NOTE TO V. V. DASTANE[3]

[On or after *November 20, 1946*][4]

I have understood the aforesaid and it expresses my own opinion.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

65. LETTER TO DEVPRAKASH NAYYAR

November 21, 1946

CHI. DEV,

I read your letter to Pyarelal. Your dharma is clear. If you are not able to make yourself understood through talk, you should put down in writing what you want to say. Loyalty demands that you should frankly tell both of them what you feel and then dissociate

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "The 'Do or Die' Mission"

[2] From the reference to Gandhiji's decision "to bury myself in this devastated village"; *vide* also the preceding two items.

[3] According to the source, this was Gandhiji's postscript to Pyarelal's letter to the addressee which read: "Your institution being an authorized one, all the rules of the Charkha Sangh should apply to it and, therefore, the Charkha Sangh alone is entitled to the profits accruing therefrom."

[4] In the source, the letter has been placed between the items of November 20 and 24.

yourself from the Sangh.[1] Run an independent school on the same lines. This of course is for the future. If you give your consent I am prepared to write to the couple[2].

What he says about Balvantsinha and Chimanlal is totally incorrect. I don't know how this misunderstanding arose.

I hope you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India

66. EXTRACT FROM DIARY[3]

SRIRAMPUR,
November 21, 1946

Conducted the morning prayer myself with the exception of the *Gita* chapters. After prayer, wrote letters to X, Y and Z. A Maulvi attached to the Howrah mosque (Noakhali) had a talk with me during the morning walk. A and B (two Hindu workers) came afterwards and had a long talk.[4] Told them that people ought to take their courage in both hands and return to their villages, especially where there is a good Hindu with a good Muslim to give guarantee of safety and protection. . . .

Massaged the body with my own hands but had to forgo a shave (for lack of time). Had curdled milk with vegetable soup for midday meal. Some Muslims . . . saw me before the evening prayer; some more followed after the prayer. Made inquiries about local Muslims . . . . Had a two hours' talk with M. and his friends. Diet the same as yesterday but without grape-fruit.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p. 40

[1] The Talimi Sangh. The addressee was a probationer in Nayee Talim.

[2] E. W. Aryanayakam and Ashadevi

[3] Omissions here and in other extracts from Diary are as in the source.

[4] For a talk with the Hindu worker, *vide* "Talk With Hindu Workers", 21-11-1945

67. TALK WITH NALINI MITRA AND RASHAMOY SUR [1]

SRIRAMPUR,
November 22, 1946

Gandhiji told them that if Noakhali set any precedent in the transfer of population to other districts in Bengal, other provinces might follow it, and such a policy would be suicidal for the whole country. He could never approve of such a scheme. He would not advise the people to leave their homes and go away somewhere else. The Bengalees were always in the forefront of civilized life in bravery and sacrifice and it was really shocking to find that people would run away in fear giving up their hearths and homes. He wanted to see every Hindu family settle down in its own village and face the situation fearlessly and with courage.

Concluding, Gandhiji told them that the present problem was not the question of Noakhali alone; it was a problem for the whole of Bengal and the whole of India.

Hindustan Standard, 24-11-1946

68. SPEECH AT MEETING OF REPRESENTATIVES OF HINDUS AND MUSLIMS[2]

RAMGUNJ,
November 22, 1946

Consenting to the formation of the Committees, Mahatma Gandhi said that

[1] The U. P. I. report said: "On behalf of Noakhali Central Relief, Rescue and Rehabilitation Committee, they met Gandhiji during his morning walk to place before him concrete suggestions about the temporary removal of refugees to West Bengal or outside for rehabilitation on a planned scheme."

[2] In *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Pyarelal says: "A conference of about 30 representatives of both the communities and Government spokesmen was held at Ramgunj Dak Bungalow on the evening of November 22, when a plan for the establishment of peace, based on the Bengal Government's proposals, was finally hammered out, and a nucleus of the Peace Committee for Ramgunj police station was formed. The formula adopted was that there should be Peace Committees, with equal number of Hindus and Muslims, for the village, the village union, and the police station. The Muslims would be selected by the Hindus and an official would be the chairman. The Government would undertake to implement the recommen- dations of the Peace Committees. . . . The functions of the Peace Committees were defined to be (a) to do intensive propaganda work to restore confidence, (b) to help in constructing shelters for the returning refugees, and in procuring and distributing relief, e.g., food, clothing, etc., (c) to draw up lists of culprits and disturbers of peace, who should be rounded up, and (d) to prepare a list of houses destroyed or damaged during the disturbances."

the Committees' decisions should be accepted by the Government if they called themselves a people's government. He again stressed the need for one honest Muslim and one honest Hindu to stand as sureties for the protection of the villagers and these two men must be prepared to die if necessary. Even if they died the result would be good, he added.[1]

Hindustan Standard, 25-11-1946

69. EXTRACT FROM DIARY

SRIRAMPUR,
November 22, 1946

Rose at 4 a. m. The *Gita* recitation took two hours. Pronunciation of the reciter was very unsatisfactory.

Wrote to R. that his son (who recently lost his wife) should not remarry, or marry a widow if he must.

Visited a Muslim *badi*[2] at 7.30 a. m. The way was long. It took full 20 minutes to get there—55 minutes coming and going.

Gave myself massage like yesterday. . . . At 10.30 a number of visitors came. After they had gone, had a short nap with mud-pack on the abdomen. Span for one hour. Abdullah (the Superintendent of Police) with some others came for the meeting at Ramgunj in the evening. Started at 4 p. m. with them for Ramgunj. Reached Ramgunj at 5.20 p. m. The meeting continued till 10.30 p. m. Addressed a few words at the end. . . . Had evening prayer on the boat on the return journey and then some sleep. Had milk while proceeding to Ramgunj; hot water on return. Reached Srirampur at midnight.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p. 40

70. MALAVIYAJI[3]

There is a saying in English, "The King is dead, Long Live the King". The same may be said with reference to Malaviyaji. Malaviyaji was born for India and lives in the works he did for India. They were many. They were great works. The most magnificent among them is the Hindu Vishva Vidyalaya. We erroneously call it the Benares Hindu University. For this, not Malaviyaji but his followers are to blame.

[1] The report said that after three hours' discussion, the representatives agreed to form and join peace committees.

[2] Homestead or a cluster of homesteads

[3] A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 8-12-1946.

Malaviyaji was a servant of his servants. He let his followers do as they liked. I know he was full of such magnanimity. He had it to the point of a fault. But the saying 'no blame attaches to the mighty' applies equally to Malaviyaji. He cherished the name Hindu Vishva Vidyalaya. The correction is even now due. Every stone of this University should reflect Hindu dharma. Not a single building should symbolize the materialism of the West, rather, it should stand for spirituality. The same should go for the teachers and scholars. Is that so today? Can it be said that every scholar of the University is a living embodiment of pure religion? If not, why not? The University will be judged not by the number of its scholars but by the degree to which they exemplify Hindu dharma, however small their number.

I know the task is an arduous one. But this is of essence for the University. If this be not so, the University is no- thing. The duty, therefore, of Malaviyaji's sons and followers is clear. What place does Hinduism occupy in the world today? What are its blemishes? How can they be removed? It is for the devotees of Malaviyaji to answer these questions. Malaviyaji has left us his bequest. To make it lasting and to develop it would be the right memorial for him.

Malaviyaji collected a great deal of money for the University, but a great deal still remains to be collected. Everyone can make his contribution to this work.

So much for his outward activity. His inner life was of the purest. He was an ocean of kindness. His knowledge of the Shastras was immense. *Bhagavata* was his most favourite book. He was a competent preacher. His memory was prodigious. His life was clean and simple.

I leave out his politics and his other manifold activities. He whose life was dedicated to selfless service and who was endowed with so many gifts, could not be confined in his activities. I have wanted to draw attention only to the most abiding of his works. Those who wish to make of the University an institution full of purity, would better study, ponder and follow the ideals of Malaviyaji.

SRIRAMPUR, November 23, 1946

Harijan Sevak, 8-12-1946

71. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

SRIRAMPUR,
[*November 23, 1946*][1]

Beyond feeling still weak[2] and having skin eruptions I am feeling no ill effects of the recent reduction in diet. This is the fourth day since I resumed taking milk. Dr. Sushila Nayyar thinks that normal diet will remove skin eruptions which, she thinks, are due to lowered vitality, and restoration of normal strength is a matter of days now if I take care of myself otherwise.

Like the rest of my companions she has gone to a village near by. I may add that my work has not suffered and I hope it will not have to suffer for my physical weakness.

Hindustan Standard, 26-11-1946

72. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

CHANDIPUR,
November 23, 1946

Gandhiji said his advice to them was that all must help in the work of the Peace Committee[3] that had been formed and strengthen its hands. By staying out of the Committee and carrying on Press propaganda they would not be helping the cause. He wanted to tell them his own experience in Champaran. As a result of the struggle there, a Commission of Enquiry was appointed. He was requested to become a member of the Commission unconditionally. He consulted his friends and accepted the offer. The result was that the indigo monopoly ended. It was probably a century-old wrong. Seven times the labourers had rebelled before. Each time the rebellion was put down ruthlessly, so that their condition was worse than before.

Similarly, let everyone join the Peace Committee and air his views before it. Probably there would be redress of every legitimate grievance.

They had heard the speeches of Minister Shamsuddin Saheb, Parliamentary Secretary Hamiduddin Saheb and others. They had requested the refugees to return to

[1] According to the report, Gandhiji made the statement "prior to departure to Chandipur" on this date.

[2] A report said that Gandhiji had had an attack of diarrhoea and vomiting while going by boat to Chandipur.

[3] *Vide* "Extract from Diary", 22-11-1946. For a more detailed report of Gandhiji's views on the subject, *Vide* "Talk with Hindu Workers", 21-11-1946

their villages and had assured them that they would guarantee their safety and honour. They should accept their assurance.

They might say all this was mere talk. They had been deceived before. It was beneath one's dignity to distrust a man's word without sufficient ground. If all Muslims were liars, Islam could not be a true religion. But his knowledge of history contradicted such a theory. A false thing could not last long in this world.

Islam spread amongst crores of people all over the world. It spread mostly because of its own intrinsic merits. Here were elected Muslims who were running the Government of the Province who gave them their word of honour. His advice to Hindus was to believe their word and give them a trial. This did not mean that there would not be a single bad Mussalman left in East Bengal. There were good and bad men amongst all communities. Dishonourable conduct would break any ministry or organization in the end. Shamsuddin Saheb had told them plainly that Pakistan could not be achieved by cruel deeds. It was clear to him as daylight that if they kept quarrelling amongst themselves, a third power was bound to rule over them. Whether it was British or Allied Powers, it made no difference. They would remain slaves.

There was a time when Hindus and Muslims had been united. There was the pact of unity between the League and the Congress in 1916. Whether it was good or bad was not the question. He was a newcomer in India at that time and hardly knew anybody or affairs in this country. Then came the Khilafat Movement and there was a communal unity that had never been seen before that. Today Hindus were frightened when they heard the cries of "*Allah-o-Akbar*". In those days, these were the slogans repeated at all meetings: "*Vande mataram*", "*Allah-o-Akbar*" and "*Sat Sri Akal*". Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs in their thousands shouted these slogans with one voice. They were the same people today. Those who were youngsters in those days were grown-up men today. Why could not they live together as friends now? Gandhiji was not prepared to admit that bitterness had gone so deep that it could not be overcome.

The Peace Committee could not function without their help. If they wanted real peace there was no other way except to have mutual trust and confidence. Bihar, they said, had avenged Noakhali. Supposing Muslims in East Bengal or Muslims all over India made up their minds to avenge Bihar, where would India be?

Gandhiji said that where houses had been burnt and destroyed, Government was, he understood, raising new ones. If there were any difficulties or they were harassed in any way after they returned to their villages, they should place their complaints before the Peace Committee.

The speaker referred to a letter that had been handed to him during the meeting. It was said that in Chandipur the damage amounted to a crore of rupees and it should be compensated. He did not know whether it was a crore or a lakh. But the Government

was bound to do what it could in such matters.

Then it was said in the letter that the Chief Minister's speeches breathed fire. God alone knew the hearts of men. He could not say whether Suhrawardy Saheb was a good man or a bad one. But he knew that he was elected by the voters. Hindus and Muslims had to live under his Government just as those in Bihar had to live under the rule of the Congress Government. If people did not like a particular Government the electorate could change it. But it was not in his power to do so.

The letter further said that the Superintendent of Police was a bad man and should be sent away from Noakhali. Again, he did not know whether the Police Superintendent was a good man or bad. But he had the confidence of his chief. Gandhiji himself had come into contact with him fairly frequently during the last few days and he felt that the Superintendent would deny those charges if they were false, and express regret for his mistake if they were true. But he wanted to tell them this. If he was bad, it was so because the people of Noakhali were bad. There were very few men who remained good in the midst of bad people. All those in the Congress were not angels.

Then there was a request that the military must stay on. According to the present constitution, the military had to act under the orders of the Ministers. That was democracy. When the Ministers themselves were offering to become their soldiers, why should they ask for the military? After all, if the worst came to the worst they could only lose their lives. They must do so as brave men and women. By running away from East Bengal they would become the worst cowards. He could never wish that for anybody.

If all Hindus were bad, Hinduism must be bad. If all Muslims were bad, Islam must be bad. But neither Hinduism nor Islam was bad. Christ had said that he alone was His disciple who did His work, not he who merely called him 'Lord, Lord'. That applied to all religions.

If Shamsuddin Saheb and his companions did not mean what they said they would know. Gandhiji for one did not wish to be a living witness of such a tragedy.

The Hindu, 28-11-1946

73. EXTRACT FROM DIARY

SRIRAMPUR,
November 23, 1946

Recited the *Gita* chapters (during morning prayer) also myself. In future Pyarelal is to recite the *Gita* only when he has sufficiently mastered the pronunciation. Had an English hymn sung at the prayer.

Completed the statement[1] on the death of Malaviyaji. Visited a Muslim house at 7.30 a. m. Talked about the Koran to the inmates. Later they sent a present of coconuts and oranges.

Massage was given by N. so that I was able to have a 40 minutes' nap on the massage table. Leafy vegetable served at midday was very bitter. Took it with 1 oz. of coconut milk. . . . Next unsuccessfully tried to have a little sleep — nausea and gripe. Gave myself enema. . . . Dozed off with mud-pack on the abdomen while proceeding to Ramgunj. . . . Had to stop the boat on account of violent diarrhoea and vomiting. . . . Felt relieved. . . . Reached Ramgunj[2] at 5 p. m. Had another motion during the recess but was able to address the meeting at the end without difficulty. Started on the return journey at 8.15 p. m. . . . Reached Srirampur at 11 p. m. . . . Completed the daily quota of spinning, partly on the boat while proceeding to the meeting and the balance at the meeting itself.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, pp. 40-1

74. A TELEGRAM

[On or after *November 23, 1946*][3]

DO PERFORM MARRIAGE CEREMONY BOMBAY. WISH WELL.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

75. FOREWORD TO "SATYAGRAHA WA SWARAJYA"

Appasaheb Patwardhan[4] is one of my few co-workers who have thought over my views in an independent way. I have known him for the last several years. His thought is reflected in his behaviour. That is why his articles have a great impact. I have gone through this book, but not thoroughly. I do not have the time. I have very little knowledge of the Marathi language. I can't speak it but I do

[1] *Vide* "Malaviyaji", 8-12-1946

[2] According to other available sources, Gandhiji did not go to Ramgunj on the 23rd November.

[3] The draft of the wire is scribbled on the reverse side of a telegram received on November 23, 1946.

[4] Sitaram Purushottam Patwardhan

understand the substance of the articles. Hence I cannot assert that whatever is written in this book conforms to my thinking. But I can certainly say that there is great similarity between my views and those stated in this book. Appasaheb needs no certificate from me. The source of his ideas may be my views, but their final form is entirely his own. That only adds to the value of the book. The readers, too, will find much material to ponder over and will be able to form their ideas independently.

M. K. GANDHI

SRIRAMPUR, EAST BENGAL, November 24, 1946

[From Hindi]

Satyagraha aur Swarajya

76. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

November 24, 1946

CHI. KAKA,

Here is my Foreword[1]. I could manage it in time. You will get it in time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10983

77. TELEGRAM TO D. B. KALELKAR

November [*24*][2], *1946*

KAKASAHEB, KAKAWADI

WARDHA

FOREWORD APPA'S BOOK POSTED.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 10984

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] *ibid*

78. NOTE TO N. K. BOSE

November 24, 1946

CHI. NIRMAL,

Put this in an envelope and give it to Shailen[1]. When his man goes to Chandipur he should post it from there. Ask him if he would do so. Herewith a telegram; write it down and give it to Shailen. Tell him to send it. Give him the charges for the telegram. Send a telegram to Bihar also.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 10514

79. DISCUSSION WITH S. C. BOSE AND OTHERS[2]

SRIRAMPUR,

[*November 24, 1946*][3]

Gandhiji agreed that the leaders had sunk to the lowest level, but not the common people. Their hearts were still sound. He added :

Even in this village I have noticed some response. But, of course, I do not build upon it.

BOSE: We believe your attempt is to raise humanity from the lowest level. But we are sceptical as to whether you will succeed.

GANDHIJI: I myself am sceptical about it. I may succeed, I can perish in the attempt. Success or failure is not the final test.

B. You are right.

G. And attempt up to the last is the only real test.

Bose next asked Gandhiji if there was any change of mentality on the part of

[1] Shailen Chatterjee

[2] This appeared under the title "At Srirampur" by Pyarelal, who in *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase* says: "Early in the morning of November 24, Sarat Chandra Bose . . . Bengal Congress leader, with a number of friends from Calcutta had a two-hour talk with Gandhiji at Srirampur in regard to the Government's peace proposals. In *My Days with Gandhi*, p. 67, N. K. Bose says that Chapalakanta Bhattacharya, Editor, *Anand Bazar Patrika*, Debnath Das, Capt. Razik, Lieut. Samson of the Indian National Army and another local friend accompanied S. C. Bose.

[3] *ibid*

the authorities. Gandhiji replied :

There is a change in the Government policy for the better. But as for the change of heart, it is for you and me to make a contribution to that consummation.

The interviewer remarked that it was painful to see how listless the Hindus had become. Gandhiji replied :

It is no prerogative of the Hindus. Listlessness is common to us all. Even if I am the only one, I shall fight this listlessness that has come over the Hindus of East Bengal. I have not come here to do a good turn to this community or that. I have come to do a good turn to myself. Non-violence is not meant to be practised by the individual only. It can be and has to be practised by society as a whole. I have come to test that for myself in Noakhali. Has my ahimsa become bankrupt? If I fail here, it won't be any proof that the theory is wrong. It will simply mean that my *sadhana* has been imperfect, that there is some fault somewhere in my technique.

B. If the League leaders were to take the Noakhali situation as seriously as you and Jawaharlal took Bihar, order would be restored in a day.

To make such comparisons is to degrade oneself. What is called for is introspection and more introspection.

I have come here not only to speak to the Mussalmans but to the Hindus as well. Why are they such cowards? The Harijans, the Namashudras, have been relatively better so far as courage and physical prowess is concerned. They are brave. But the other Hindus must shed utterly the caste distinctions. If this calamity would open the eyes of the Hindus and result in eradicating untouchability root and branch, it will have served a good purpose.

Narrating his earlier experiences in India he recalled how during the Champaran Satyagraha, in Rajendra Babu's absence, he could only sit in the outhouse in Rajendra Babu's house and how Rajendra Babu's servant would not let the speaker bathe at the well. Things had improved, but much more remained to be done.

The visitor agreed that Hinduism had still to go a long way to eradicate the evil. Talking of forced conversions in Noakhali, the interviewer remarked that unless those who had been converted were brought back to the Hindu fold quickly, the cleavage between the Hindus and the Muslims might become permanent.

G. Many had returned. But all must.

The question was put to him whether by taking up an unbending attitude on conversion, he was not identifying himself with one particular community. How

could his stand in this respect be squared with his claim that he regarded all religions as equal?[1]

G. I have, of course, always believed in the principle of religious tolerance. But I have even gone further. I have advanced from tolerance to equal respect for all religions. All religions are branches of the same mighty tree, but I must not change over from one branch to another for the sake of expediency. By doing so, I cut the branch on which I am sitting. Therefore, I always feel the change-over from one religion to another very keenly, unless it is a case of spontaneous urge, a result of inner growth. Such conversions by their very nature cannot be on a mass scale and never to save one's life or property or for temporal gain.

He narrated his meeting with a South Indian Bishop who was a Harijan converted to Christianity and retained all his original weakness in spite of the change of religion. He had told the late Charlie Andrews that to his mind he was no bishop at all.

B. There is no end to the monstrosities that have been committed here and that too in the name of religion. It is enough to fill one with blank despair.

G. I have met human monsters from my early youth. I have found that even they are not beyond redemption if we know how to touch the right chord in their soul.

And he cited two instances within his recent experience of the milk of human kindness welling up in hard-boiled, sun-baked functionaries at the sight of stark human misery and devastation.

G. The whole thing is so ghastly. You do not need to exaggerate it. I have told the authorities I do not care for numbers. Has a single case of abduction, rape, forcible marriage, or forcible conversion occurred? If so, it is enough for me. It is admitted that such things have happened.

B. What about the rescue of abducted women? It was complained that as soon as information was received about such cases and the rescue party with the military police set out on their assignment, the miscreants received intimation and removed the victim to some other place.

G. I have told our people :'Do not depend on military and the police help.' You have to uphold democracy, and democracy and dependence on the military and the police are incompatible. You cannot say it is good in one place and bad in another. Military help

[1] This paragraph is reproduced from *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*.

will degrade you.[1] In a democracy, if you set up a hooligan as the head of the Government, you lie in the bed you have made. The only remedy is to educate and convert the electorate by satyagraha, if necessary. We should be consistent all along. If democracy is good in Bihar, it ought to be good in Bengal, too. I must, therefore, go to the popular, elected Ministers, for they are my Ministers. If they fail, public opinion must be created to replace them. That is democracy. Whether it is Bihar or Bengal, the people have to be brave and stand on their legs. I want everyone to die at his post like a brave man and not to leave his home or his village.

Another interviewer[2] asked Gandhiji why Pandit Jawaharlal went to Bihar and took such an active part in putting down disturbances there while he did nothing for Bengal. If the Interim Government could not interfere in one Province because of provincial autonomy, how could it do so in another?

Gandhiji replied that they must not forget that besides being the Vice-President of the Interim Government, Jawaharlal was the first servant of the Congress. As the Vice-President of the Central Cabinet, he must act within the four corners of the constitution. It does not permit interference with provincial autonomy. But in Bihar, Pandit Nehru and Rajendra Babu have a standing and responsibility as Congressmen.

One of the interviewers remarked that Bengal was being used as a pawn on the political chess-board.

G. No. Bengal is in the forefront today because Bengal is Bengal. It is Bengal that produced Tagore and Bankim Chandra. It was here that the heroes of the Chittagong Armoury Raid were born, however misguided their action might have been in my eyes. No, you must understand it. If Bengal plays the game, it will solve all India's problem. That is why I have made myself a Bengali.[3] I have seen enough of ravages in Noakhali to make me weep my eyes out but I am not going to shed a tear for what has happened. We have a long way yet to go. Why should there be cowardice in the Bengal of such men?

B. Yes, when I see these desecrated places of worship, I ask, why did not every man, woman and child of the house die there before those places were touched.

[1] The following six sentences are reproduced from *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*.

[2] Chapalakanta Bhattacharya

[3] The following two sentences are reproduced from *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*.

Q. If they had done that, you would not have required any other help. Today Noakhali is bereft of its leading men. They refused to take the risk and have left their hearths and homes. Poor Manoranjan Babu is in a fix. Whom is he to put on the Peace Committees? I have told him that the common man must rise to fill the vacuum. There is no such thing as a vacuum in nature. Nature abhors it. Let him write to them, I have told him. If they come back, well and good. Otherwise, the common man must come forward. It is his day.

Q. Mahatmaji, tell us in one word, whether it is war or peace? Peace Committees or War Committees?

G. Peace Committees. War results when peace fails. Our effort must always be directed towards peace, but it must be peace with honour and fair security for life and property. On these two conditions alone will the refugees return. Of course, if they develop enough courage, they will return without any safeguards. Today I have suggested one Hindu and one Muslim standing surety for each village. If the people have the requisite courage, they would depend on none but God and their own strength of spirit for their defence. If they do that, all the *goondas* in Noakhali will feel the change in the atmosphere and behave decently. I know what I am saying. I come from Kathiawad, a Province notorious for its bandits. I know that they are not beyond redemption. Nor do I believe that *goondas* are responsible for all that had happened.

A suggestion was next made as to why they should not have only Muslims in the Peace Committees as the Hindus had played no part in breaking the peace.

G. No. The Hindus must be there to play their part, else the Peace Committees will be a farce.[1]

B. Was it not possible no control Bihar with non-violence? Why did the Congress Ministers resort to the free use of Military there?[2]

G. Yes. But Bihar has been having a lesson in organized violence since 1942 and before. Our weakness for the *goondas* rose to the highest in 1942. I know the merits of 1942. The people were not

[1] In *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase* Pyarelal says "During the morning walk in which Sarat Bose joined, Gandhiji remarked that he was beginning to feel that even if Muslim workers were not forthcoming for his peace mission, Hindus alone might do. A handful of such workers, if they were worthy of their salt, could turn the tide. The only condition was that the local Hindus should play the game. The least that he expected of them was that they should eradicate the curse of untouchability root and branch from their midst. Otherwise they would never come into their own."

[2] This question is reproduced from *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*.

cowed down. But all the same I cannot shut my eyes to our mistakes. We have to learn to do better [or else pay the penalty].

Harijan, 12-1-1947; and *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. I, Book II, pp. 48-50

80. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SRIRAMPUR,
November 24, 1946

I am sorry I had to start the weekly silence earlier than usual. Such was Shamsuddin Saheb's order. But wherever I may happen to be, my heart is here. I can have no peace until the Muslim brothers and sisters of the village call back the Hindus who used to live here, and they return to their homes. They should treat this as a duty and try to fulfil it.

Harijan, 5-1-1947

81. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

November 25, 1946

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. It is good that you have written and given me the news. If you want to go to Vinoba, you may. But your first task is to improve your health. I cannot move from here. Give me all the news about the Congress. Of course, you are already rendering service. Who was at fault at Garhmukteshwar?[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2493

82. SPEECH AT PEACE COMMITTEE MEETING

RAMGUNJ,
November 25, 1946

Brothers, I had no desire to speak to you tonight, for, as you see, my voice is still very weak. Let me hope that your work will proceed well.

But there are indications that trouble is brewing even now. I

[1] It being a silence-day, the speech was read out.

[2] There had been a communal riot there on the occasion of an annual fair on November 8, and a large number of people had been killed.

have just received a wire from Sandwip and some more complaints which tend to show that all is not well. I am handing them over to Shamsuddin Saheb for enquiry and necessary action, if the reports prove true.

With regard to the Peace Committees formed in villages,[1] a complaint has reached me that some of the Muslim members on the Committees are not reliable. The Hindus stand in fear of them but have not the courage to speak out openly. But unless they muster such courage, and if wrong people are left there, the Committees will not be able to command confidence. What we really want is the right sort of person. My suggestion is that if two good and brave men, one a Hindu and another a Mussalman, take the responsibility of preventing mischief even at the cost of their life, that would be enough. Why should there be eagerness for entering the Committees? It is not a place for acquiring position or honour but a place of service, and if anyone really wishes to serve, he can as well serve outside as on the Committee.

It is only in order to serve the cause of Islam that the Muslims are being called to join the Committees. The most important task is to restore the confidence among the Hindus so that they would be able to pursue their religious practices in freedom. Mr. Akhil Dutta has lately sent me a cheque for Rs. 850 and a letter stating that 200 pairs of conch-shell bangles and a pound of vermilion had been despatched to Noakhali. These are for distribution among women who had suffered during the riots. The best part of the presents is that they were collected by eleven Muslim gentlemen and one Englishman. I have met women who put on the vermilion mark indoors but wipe it off when they stir out in public. Such fear has to be removed by the Muslims. It is not a question of giving monetary aid, but of restoring confidence by respect shown to the culture of others. I will ask my Mussalman friends to treat this as their sacred duty. The Prophet once advised Mussalmans to consider the Jewish places of worship to be as pure as their own and offer it the same protection. It is the duty of the Mussalmans of today to assure the same freedom to their Hindu neighbours. Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah has said that every Muslim must show by his conduct that not a single non-Muslim need be afraid of him, the latter would be guaranteed safety and protection.

[1] Shamsuddin Ahmed, who was present, had announced that seven Peace Committees had been formed.

For, thus alone can the Mussalmans command honour and respect.

My Days with Gandhi, pp. 72-3

83. LETTER TO RENUKA RAY

SRIRAMPUR,
November 26, 1946

MY DEAR RENUKA,

I have delayed answering your letter for pressure of work. I am in an out-of-the-way village, quite happy but a little run down owing to the silly mistake I made in taking a very bitter *bhaji*. My work has not been interrupted.

You are doing well as you are. I dare not guide you from here. If you wish to see me, you will have to come to this out-of-the-way place.

Love.

BAPU

SHRIMATI RENUKA RAY
CHANDPUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

84. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

November 26, 1946

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

You know I am staying at Srirampur all by myself, with only Prof. Nirmal Kumar[1] Bose and Parasuram as my companions. The people with whom I am putting up are gentlemen. There is only one Hindu family in the entire village, the rest are all Muslims. They all stay widely separated from each other. The hundreds of villages here do not maintain much contact with each other through any conveyance after the water dries up. The result is that work is possible only on foot. Therefore, only desperadoes, hooligans, or able-bodied men can maintain contact among themselves. I am living in one such village at present and intend to spend more time in another village similar to this. It is my intention to stay on here so long as the Hindus and Muslims do not start living together as sincere friends. God alone

[1] The source has "Nirmal Chandra".

can keep man's resolve unshaken. At the moment I have forgotten Delhi, Sevagram, Uruliand Panchgani. My only desire is to do or die. This will test my non-violence, too. I have come here determined to emerge successful from this ordeal. If you are anxious to see me, then you can come over here. I personally do not see any necessity for it. If you wish to send a messenger to know something or carry letters by hand, you can do so.

I am not going into the Constituent Assembly; it is not quite necessary either. Jawaharlal, Sardar, Rajendra Babu, Rajaji, Maulana—any of these or all five can go—or Kripalani.

Send them the message.

If it is possible to arrange for a sitting of the Constituent Assembly only with the help of the military, then it is better not to have it. If it can be arranged peacefully, then the laws can be framed only for the participating Provinces. Let us see what the future of the police and the military will be. We have also to see what the Muslim majority Provinces will do, and what is to be done in the Provinces where Muslims are in minority, how the British Government will conduct itself, and how the Princes will react. I believe the State Paper of May 16 will probably have to be changed. The job is complicated enough, if we want to work independently. I have only given an indication of how I view the problem.

Friends will also do well to bear in mind that what I am doing here is not in the name of the Congress. Nor is there any thought of associating it with this work. What I am doing is only from my personal view of non-violence. Anybody, if he so desires, can publicly oppose my work. That in fact is his right; it may even be his duty. Therefore, whosoever wishes to do anything or say anything, let him do so fearlessly. If anybody wants to warn me of anything, let him do that too.

Please send a copy of this to Sardar so that he may tell the others named above. Or you can get copies made and send them to the five friends yourself.

Do express whatever you wish to. Write to me direct so that I may reply. Pyarelal, Sushila, etc., all are in different villages. Pyarelal has been ill since yesterday. I hope you are all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C. W. 8081. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. also G. N. 2212

85. LETTER TO CHANDRAMANI VIDYALANKAR

November 26, 1946

BHAI CHANDRAMANI VIDYALANKAR,

I have your letter. Thanks. I am myself in the dark. Under the circumstances I do not regard it as proper to send for anyone. You should do your duty remaining at your own place.

Blessings from

BAPU

PANDIT CHANDRAMANI VIDYALANKAR

BHASKAR PRESS

DEHRA DUN

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

86. INTERVIEW TO MEMBERS OF COMMUNIST PARTY AND STUDENTS' FEDERATION[1]

November 26, 1946

Gandhiji stated that he was personally cast in a different mould; when he had no confidence in a particular step, he never took it. Under the present circumstances, he did not think that the step suggested by the friends would be of any use. Personally, he was trying to have everything done through the Ministry. He had also undertaken a programme here all by himself and this was without the co-operation of the tallest in Bengal. The Hindu population in Bengal could co-operate by utterly forgetting caste, not as mere lip-profession but in actual practice. They had also to purge themselves of all fear. For, it is only when a man's heart is freed from fear that the flower of religion can find a place in it. Finally he added :

I do not want to retire from Bengal as a defeated coward. I would like to die here, if need be, at the hands of an assassin. But I do not want to court such death.

My Days with Gandhi, p. 74

[1] N. K. Bose explains: "Some members of the Communist Party and the Students' Federation saw Gandhiji by appointment at 8.20 a. m. As he sat basking in the sun outside his room, they reported that people apprehended fresh trouble on December 9, when the Constituent Assembly was to begin work. They had gone to Hamiduddin Ahmed for assurance, but had been advised by him to wait for the direction of the League High Command in this connection. The friends suggested that Gandhiji should convene an all-parties' meeting in the district and co-ordinate the work done severally by various organizations."

87. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SRIRAMPUR,
November 26, 1946

Gandhiji said that even if a solitary refugee had to return to his village populated by Muslims, he would unhesitatingly advise his return. Whether they were men or women, if they were to become brave people, this courage was indispensable. Numerous letters had been coming to him in which people had questioned the wisdom of thus tempting faith, but he held that this was necessary if they were to become a self-respecting nation. He made no distinction between men and women. The latter should feel just as independent as men. Bravery was not man's monopoly. The art of self-defence excluded all outside help. What he saw and heard showed him that people were apt to forget self-respect in order to save themselves. There was no *swadesh* and swaraj for persons who would not sacrifice themselves or their belongings for their honour. As his hearers knew, the Ministers and the Parliamentary Secretaries, who had come to Noakhali, had been proclaiming that for the sake of their honour and the influence of Islam, they were anxious that the refugees should return to their villages and feel perfectly safe and serene in the midst of the majority of Muslims living there. The speaker had no hesitation in trusting their pledged word and asking the people to do likewise. Those who trusted were never the losers; deceivers ever were. There was no room for *goondaism* in any religion worth the name, be it Islam, Hinduism or any other. He was trying to become a Bengali in order that if God gave him strength, he might try to live the life in the midst of the people of East Bengal and induce them to do likewise.

Harijan, 5-1-1947

88. LETTER TO ASUTOSH SINHA[1]

November 27, 1946

If the refugees had the required spirit of co-operation, it would be possible. But it is a plant of slow growth and personal courage does not come even from co-operation. It comes when it does come, because it is a virtue which is its own reward. Therefore, the principle that there should be volunteers who would go to each one of the

[1] Vice-President, Tippera Rescue, Relief and Rehabilitation Committee. The addressee had suggested that in order to restore their self-confidence the refugees instead of living separately should live and work together in one or two selected *badis*.

affected villages is perfectly sound. You may have noticed that I have been giving effect to it myself and I have made a beginning. Those who came with me from Sevagram are following suit. Whether they will prove themselves worthy of the great trust reposed in them remains to be seen. That may be said even about myself. Only I am not following anybody but am the originator so far as I am concerned, of the idea. Therefore, if you have any volunteers in view with the requisite qualifications, please send me their names and addresses.

He did not want to make a public appeal, he explained, because the right quality of men and women would not come in answer to an advertisement.

They have to be persons of sterling worth and equally high courage. . .[1] full of ahimsa, i. e., respect for the Muslims. It would be a pity if these volunteers started with distrust. Real courage is based on trust which is the surest foundation for it.

Besides, if he allowed volunteers, who might be attracted by the glamour of his presence to inundate Noakhali, it would create unhealthy excitement and cause the authorities and the local Muslims unnecessary trepidation. To make an individual act non-violently he has to be put absolutely at his ease first. Meticulously correct conduct on their part would put the local Muslims and the Bengal Government on their honour. He concluded :

I am watching what the Government are doing. People cannot be compelled to return to their villages. It would be a disastrous experiment in my opinion.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, pp. 62-3

89. LETTER TO PYARELAL

November 27, 1946

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have your letter. It is good that you think that what I wrote was unnecessary. I do not think so. I do not understand what is painful in it? Sushila has come now to see the patient she did not see yesterday. Whether it is anger or pain or both it is the same as before. Let me see what happens.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Omission as in the source

90. LETTER TO SYED MAHMUD

SRIRAMPUR, RAMGUNJ,
November 27, 1946

BHAI MAHMUD[1],

I have your telegram. Rajendra Babu writes that I need not go to Bihar. Everything necessary is being done there. I am quite all right. Whatever weakness is left will go away. Write to me how things are over there. Are the Muslims who had fled coming back? Do write fully. Here my work is going on well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 5105

91. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

SRIRAMPUR,
November 27, 1946

QUESTION: How do you think lasting peace can be achieved by your new plan, unless the Muslim League itself which presumably guides the majority of the Muslim intelligentsia, sincerely co-operates in creating such atmosphere by their words and deeds?

GANDHIJI: My new plan does contemplate the necessity for a lasting peace and sincere co-operation of the Muslim League in establishing friendly relations between the two communities, irrespective of the merits or otherwise of Pakistan.

Asked as to what was the guarantee that some months later this sort of calamity would not be repeated in places like Noakhali, where Hindus were in a minority, Gandhiji said :

The only real guarantee is to be sought in the personal courage of individuals. Everything else depends on it.

The next question asked was whether he should not advise people in those areas where one or two houses were Hindu and the rest Muslim, to migrate to areas inside a district where the Hindus were in comparatively larger numbers, so that in case of emergencies they could put up some sort of resistance if they did not believe in non-violence. Gandhiji's reply was:

[1] Minister for Development and Transport, Government of Bihar

There is no such safety as you imagine in numbers in imagined conditions. Migration is no remedy whilst there is hope of co-operation. It will become a necessity when the majority party wishes it, if a clash is to be avoided. All this is a matter of mutual adjustment, not arbitrary action. What is needed is that barbarities must cease, if we are to survive as one nation or two, or many free nations still living in friendly co-operation.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-11-1946

92. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

November 28, 1946

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Herewith I am sending you two cheques for Rs. 412 and Rs. 451 received from Uganda. I have countersigned them. Credit them to Harijan [Fund]. Ultimately the amounts are to be sent to Delhi to the Harijan Sevak [Sangh] office.

I intend to write to Babudi[1]. It will depend on when I can spare the time. I hope things are going well there. Keep on writing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10653

93. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

November 28, 1946

CHI. JIVANJI,

Herewith an article which I could write with great difficulty.

I hope you will not find it too difficult to decipher the handwriting. There is an English translation too. Just now, you must not expect me to do articles for *Harijan*.

Write to me and let me know how things are. Pyarelal will send you whatever is possible.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9973. Also C. W. 6947. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

[1] Sharda G. Chokhawala, addressee's daughter; *vide* "Letter to Sharda G. Chokhawala", 29-11-1946

94. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SRIRAMPUR,
November 28, 1946

Gandhiji related the story of how the Ashram prayer had taken its present shape. When he came to India in 1915, Gurudev invited him through the late Deenabandhu Andrews to stay at Santiniketan along with the inmates of the Phoenix Settlement. Kaka Saheb and Harihar Sharma were there and so were the late Deenabandhu Andrews and Pearson. These friends had created a sort of South African group at the place. The prayer which was recited at that early time by the small group practically continues to this day so far as the Sanskrit part is concerned.

While on his Harijan tour in Travancore, he added the first Hindu verse of the *Ishopanishad* to it, as, in his opinion, it contained the cream of spiritual thought. Later on, Raihana Tyabjee, daughter of the late Abbas Tyabjee, who is noted for her musical talents, proposed the incorporation of a passage from the Koran, and this was done. Lastly, on Kasturba's death[1] at the Aga Khan Palace, Dr. Gilder[2] had recited a passage from the Zoroastrian scripture. Since then that prayer has been a part of the Ashram prayer. In addition there was a *bhajan* in an Indian language or an English hymn and *Ramdhun*.

The prayer which has thus taken shape can, on no account, be considered as belonging to any single community or religion. It is of universal appeal; and no one, whatever his denomination may be, should have hesitation in sharing it.

Harijan, 5-1-1947

95. LETTER TO FOSS WESTCOTT[3]

SRIRAMPUR, NOAKHALI,
November 29, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I fear that I have neglected your question for a long time. You know the reason why. Many of my activities, including important correspondence, are held up and must remain so for the time being. Meanwhile I pick up what comes uppermost for the moment. Such before me is your letter to Pyarelalji.

[1] On February 22, 1944

[2] M. D. D. Gilder, Minister of Health and Excise in the Congress Ministry of Bombay, 1937-39.

[3] Bishop of Calcutta and Metropolitan of India, Burma and Ceylon, 1919-45

Of course conversions will, so far as I know, continue under swaraj but there would be no State favouritism as there has been during the British regime.

Let us hope, under Swaraj, there will be no one man's rule but the people's. You and I will probably not be alive to see it in action.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

THE REV. DR. FOSS WESTCOTT

THE RECTORY

ST. PAUL'S SCHOOL

JALAPAHAR, DARJEELING

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

96. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

November 29, 1946

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Herewith a cheque from Bangalore for Rs. 895. Credit it to my different accounts. I have sent a receipt to the *Vanarasena*[1].

A letter for Babu is enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10654

97. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

November 29, 1946

CHI. BABUDI,

Chi. Chimanlal writes in his letter that since you are not recovering quickly you are in a hurry to go to Surat. This is not right. Now you should go only after getting fully well. You will thereby be helping Gordhandas[2]. If you make up your mind, you can certainly get well in Sevagram. You don't seem to be suffering from any disease. If you take enough milk, fruit and vegetables, you are bound to get well. You must take hip-baths and friction-baths. Apply mud-

[1] A team of young volunteers

[2] Addressee's husband

packs regularly and take sun-rays through blue glass. Do you have any problems there? If so, write to me.

Now about your letter. When I repeat Ramanama, or even otherwise, I have no definite image in my mind. I do not believe in such image-worship. In fact God is without form. There is no need at all to invest Him with a form while worshipping Him. We must believe God to be the absolute Truth and worship Him. He is both the law and the law-giver. If this sinks in one's mind, there is nothing more to think about. This being so, if you ask what more does one gain by repeating His name, my answer is that, as the saying is, a man becomes what he thinks. By repeating His name, we become one with Him.

Your mind keeps changing. But don't worry. Keep on ceaselessly repeating the name, so that no other thoughts may enter the mind. I know it is difficult for the sick to do this. Do not worry about it. If that repetition is diligently done, it sinks in one's heart and proves an unfailing remedy even for the sick. Do not, therefore, think further but stay on there. Cling to nature-cure remedies and to Rama, and everything will be all right.

I hope Anand[1] is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10073. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

98. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

November 29, 1946

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. Yesterday I sent you a letter for Rajaji which is to be sent to him through someone. You will know after reading it.

I do not know what I am doing. If I have imbibed ahimsa I could not act otherwise. Let us see what God prompts me to do.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C. W. 8082. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Addressee's son

99. LETTER TO RAVISHANKER SHUKLA

NOAKHALI,
November 29, 1946

BHAI SHUKLAJI[1],

What is this complaint[2] about? Please return the letter of complaint with your reply.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

PANDIT RAVISHANKAR SHUKLA
NAGPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

100. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA RANO

November 29, 1946

BHAI RANO,

I had your wire. As it is, I do not interfere in such matters. Moreover I am not at all acquainted with this case.

I am returning the proforma for reply.

Vande Mataram from
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI RAMACHANDRA RANO
HARIJAN BADRI
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

101. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[3]

SRIRAMPUR,
November 29, 1946

Gandhiji explained to the audience the object of his visit which he said was not to cause the ill-feeling between the two communities go deeper, but to cement their fellow-feeling so that Hindus and Muslims could live as brothers as before. God,

[1] Premier, Central Provinces

[2] The reference is to an open letter dated November 18, 1946, from the Secretary, City Muslim League, on the statement of the addressee that there was no communal disturbance in the Central Provinces.

[3] According to the report Gandhiji held the prayer meeting at the house of a Muslim villager, about a mile from his place of residence. About 500 people, mostly Muslims, attended.

he said, had not distinguished between a Hindu and a Muslim. Why should man, breathing the same air and drinking the same water, do it?

Hindustan Standard, 2-12-1946

102. LETTER TO SECRETARY, ARYA PRATINIDHI SABHA

November 30, 1946

SECRETARY
ARYA PRATINIDHI SABHA
HYDERABAD (DN.)

SIR,

I have received your letter along with an English translation. Now please write to me what happened.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

103. A SIGN OF PROGRESS

Though I have noticed it in the Gujarati columns of the *Harijanbandhu* from a different source, at the risk of repetition in another form, I must quote[1] from a touching letter from Shri Parikshitlal Majumdar addressed to Shyamlalji[2], a copy of which has been sent by the latter.

> I am writing this from Bardoli . . . . This year, during the Gandhi Jayanti week, nearly 40 public wells have been freely opened for the Harijans. . . . People have taken to this programme of their own will . . . local people have invited Harijans and taken them to the public wells. . . . I myself have attended some functions and personally have become a witness to the marvellous change. . . . No doubt, it is Gandhiji's efforts and the recent writings that have brought this change. . . . Numerous inter-communal dinners have been held. There was one such big dinner at Nadiad, the real capital of the Kaira District. . . . One prominent well has been opened in Kadi, a citadel of orthodoxy and 150 people dined with Harijans at Padra in Baroda. There are numerous such incidents but I cannot enumerate them at present. . . .

Of course, compared to what we want to achieve, this progress is a miserable show. But seeing that Gujarat has been so far behindhand in this matter of removal of untouchability, the little progress of which Shri Parikshitlal takes note with pardonable

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

[2] Secretary of Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Fund, Sevagram

satisfaction is pleasant, if it is permanent and is a precursor of better things to come. Every nail driven into the coffin of untouchability is a step in the right direction towards the purification of Hinduism.

SRIRAMPUR, November 30, 1946

Harijan, 15-12-1946

104. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

VILL. & POST. SRIRAMPUR,
"VIA" RAMGANJ, DISTT. NOAKHALI,
E. BENGAL,
November 30, 1946

DEAR PRAKASAM,

Sri Sriramulu has sent me his letter addressed to the Minister for Endowments, Madras. Therein he says he will fast from the 1st of January next, if your Cabinet does not bring forward a bill permitting Harijans in all public temples in your province when there is much overwhelming public support and demand. I thought there was some such Act already in your statute book. You will please let me know full facts.

I am dictating this lying on my back because I need frequent rest during the day from having to sit. The semi-fast of twenty-one days,[1] though it enabled me to do a little physical and full mental work, has weakened the body somewhat. No harm has been done.

SHRI T. PRAKASAM
PREMIER
MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

105. INTERVIEW TO UNITED PRESS OF INDIA

November 30, 1946

GANDHIJI: There is no limit to the time I am going to stay in East Bengal. I hope to be able to do so, so long as I think it necessary. It may even be a lifetime. I shall try to do whatever I can in order to bring together the hearts of Hindus and Muslims who have lived so long together as friends and brothers and sisters. But what I shall be able to do is more than I can answer. Man can but make an attempt.

[1] From October 30 to November 19, 1946; *vide* "To Bihar", 6-11-1946, "Statement to the Press", 9-11-1946 and "Statement to the Press", 20-11-1946

Success can be given only by God.

CORRESPONDENT: Here is one serious difficulty. Canal water will dry up shortly. People will not then be able to leave these villages even if they want to do so. Would you ask them to stay on, or do you want them to leave at once?

GANDHIJI: I have said at many meetings I have addressed in this part of the country that if the people are brave, whether they are few or many, they will not leave their homes, but will remain there, whatever the risk. And this I say irrespective of military or police protection. It is beneath the dignity of free men or those wanting to be free, to seek such protection. Surely during the past few days much has happened to encourage people to remain in their homes.

Hindustan Standard, 2-12-1946

106. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SRIRAMPUR,
November 30, 1946

Gandhiji explained the meaning of the first *mantra* recited in the Ashram prayer: *Namyo Horenge Kyo*. Its purport is, "Salutation to the Enlightened Ones."

A Japanese Buddhist monk[1] who had happened to stay in Sevagram for two or three years was responsible for its introduction. He had come to India with the object of mastering the secrets of the religion which had its origin in India. The monk had a sweet nature and had endeared himself to every member of the Sevagram Ashram by unostentatiousness, affableness and silence. Every morning he used to walk round the Ashram grounds for full one hour, while beating upon a drum and reciting the above *mantra* in a deep musical voice which sent a thrill into all those who heard him. He used to recite it at the prayer meeting. The recitation continued even after he was removed by the Government after hostilities with Japan began.

Harijan, 5-1-1947

107. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SRIRAMPUR, *via* RAMGUNJ,
December 1, 1946

CHI. MIRA[2],

I have your letter of November 2 received only today. You must have had mine written to you from Bengal. My cold and cough have disappeared. I am not driving too hard the "Brother Ass". Therefore, do not worry on that score. As you see, I did not, because I could not, attend the Congress or the Working Committee. I am not likely to leave this place for some time to come, if ever.

[1] Rev. G. Haishao

[2] The superscription in this and other letters to Mirabehn is in Devanagari.

I see you are making steady headway. I hope it will be all solid progress. Your article[1] on Mussoorie Bhangis will go in *Harijan* as it is.

As you may have read, all the company that I brought with me from Delhi is dispersed in different villages in Noakhali. Bapa has made common cause with me. So he is also in a village. Abha is with him. I have Prof. Nirmal Kumar Bose and Parasuram with me. You have to walk from place to place. No conveyance possible except country boats and these will cease to ply inside of ten days as there will not be enough water in the canals. I am not fit enough to walk three or four miles even. I like this isolation but you can imagine what it must be for poor people who live in dread.

I am glad that the spirit moved me to this place. Let us see what is in store.

Blessings from
BAPU[2]

SHRIMATI MIRABEHN

From the original: C. W. 6519. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9914

108. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO PARASURAM

[SRIRAMPUR, NOAKHALI,
December 1, 1946][3]

Let Nirmal Babu examine my replies for the style as well as the manner. Are they satisfactory?

From a photostat: C. W. 19534. Courtesy: N. K. Bose

109. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

December 1, 1946

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have prepared a personal statement[4] about the Constituent Assembly. Profulla Babu[5] will give it to you. Go through it and send your opinion to the Sardar.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C. W. 8083. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] "All Is Not Gold that Glitters"; it appeared in *Harijan*, 29-12-1946.
[2] The subscription is in Hindi.
[3] From a note, presumably by N. K. Bose, in the source
[4] *Vide* "Note on the Constituent Assembly", 3-12-1946
[5] Profulla Chandra Ghosh, a Congress nominee for the Constituent Assembly which was to meet in Delhi on December 9

110. LETTER TO RAMAKRISHNA BAJAJ

ON NOAKHALI TOUR,
December 1, 1946

CHI. RAM,

You have come back after gaining a lot of experience. Now give its benefit to the country and also to your own business. We shall meet if I can free myself from here. There is no use coming here. I do not want to send for even Mataji[1]. I may send for her only when I emerge from darkness into light. I trust she is all right, as also Savitri[2].

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 3068

111. EXTRACT FROM DIARY

December 1, 1946

The back ached. Revised an article for *Harijan* lying in bed. Dozed off in the middle.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p. 41

112. LETTER TO AZIZ HUSSAIN [3]

SRIRAMPUR,
DISTT. NOAKHALI,
December 1, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for inviting me. There is no possibility whatsoever

[1] Janakidevi Bajaj
[2] Wife of Kamalnayan Bajaj, addressee's elder brother
[3] In reply to the addressee's letter of November 25, 1946, inviting Gandhiji to his house to spend a few hours with him while passing through Lucknow.

of my going to Lucknow and, even if I pass through Lucknow, of my staying there. However, I appreciate your invitation.

My wants are simple. All I need is good sanitary surroundings.Such food as I need I can cook for myself. Your request therefore is in no way unfair.

What is your occupation? Why do you write to me in English? Do you not know Urdu? I send you my answer in English for fear you may be a foreigner in India, not knowing any of its languages.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

JANAB AZIZ HUSSAIN

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

113. LETTER TO A. REDMOND

AS FROM SEVAGRAM,
"VIA" WARDHA (INDIA),
CAMP: SRIRAMPUR (BENGAL),
December 2, 1946

DEAR MADAM,

I have your letter of 11th ultimo.[1]

I am afraid I must not encourage you to visit India for the purpose of studying Buddhist or Hindu teachings which you can pick up from books. If it is Hindu life you wish to study, I must warn you against coming to India for that purpose because you hardly realize the reality unless you are able to probe deep enough. And for doing humanitarian work you certainly do not need to tour any part of the world to learn the art of doing it. It is the art of humanity which is needed and that you will find in all countries and under all climes. As I have lived in South Africa for twenty years I know that there is

[1] In which the addressee had sought Gandhiji's permission to visit India to study Buddhist and Hindu teachings so that she could do practical 'humanitatian' work amongst her fellowmen.

enough humanitarian work in front of one in South Africa. This is merely a warning against hopeless delusions.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MRS. A. REDMOND

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

114. LETTER TO CARL HEATH

AS FROM SEVAGRAM,
"VIA" WARDHA (INDIA),
CAMP: SRIRAMPUR (BENGAL),
December 2, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I got your touching letter[1] yesterday. I had heard that you had aged considerably and that you were passing through physical suffering. I hope it was an exaggerated statement and that this will find you in enjoyment of health.

I understand and appreciate your remarks about Dr. Ambedkar[2]. I suppose you are aware that I know him very well and that I have met him often enough. He represents a good cause but he is a bad advocate for the simple reason that his passion has made him bitter and made him depart from the straight and narrow path. As I know to my cost, he is a believer in questionable means so long as the end is considered to be good. With him and with men like him the end justifies the means. Have you read his book? It is packed with untruths almost from beginning to end. I am sorry to have to say this of a countryman who has himself been obliged to put up with insults which have embittered men mightier than Dr. Ambedkar. You need not take all I say as gospel truth. I have written this to you in order to

[1] The addressee in his letter of November 14, had referred to the bitter attitude of B. R. Ambedkar "largely directed against yourself" and asked Gandhiji to secure political justice for the untouchables. He had further asked him to invite Ambedkar to see him.

[2] B. R. Ambedkar (1891-1956); leader of the Depressed Classes, jurist and author; in 1942 formed the Scheduled Castes' Federation; member, Constituent Assembly; Chairman, Drafting Committee for the Constitution of India.

give you my . . .[1] that if I do not go out of my way to seek contact with Dr. Ambedkar it is not for want of will or want of regard for you and friends like you but because I know that such seeking will, in my view, harm the cause [rather] than help it. No question of prestige will deter me from walking to him. I can say that the question of prestige has never interfered with my doing what I believed was a duty. I have laboured to show that in this case duty points the other way.

You are at liberty to share this letter with all mutual friends.

With regards to yourself and your wife.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

115. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

December 2, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

The child may misbehave, but can the mother ever do so? Your letter is a hotchpotch. You have assumed things which I never said in the letter. That is why I consider you silly. Jaisukhlal has called you a slovenly girl. You have received education but learnt no wisdom. I do not, however, wish to point out your faults. I will do so and pull your ears when you come here. You will yourself admit that you have made those mistakes. You need not come just to meet me. Come only if you wish to take up some work here. Otherwise you had better stay with Jaisukhlal at present. You will know in a few months what happens to me. The job here is a difficult one. I am not going to leave the place till everything is settled.

I understand about Umiya. So long as we are satisfied with Shankarlal, we need not pay much attention to what sort of people the other family members are. It is Umiya's job to reform the in-laws. She must regard Birla Sheth as filling the place of Jaisukhlal now. The problem about Pratap[2] also will be solved. In your ignorance you are thinking too much about this matter. As long as Umiya is happy with Shankarlal, there is no cause at all for worry. Ask Shankarlal to write to me and explain frankly what the problem is. It is a mistake to

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] Umiya's son

suppose that he cannot write to me because I am a big man. I don't regard myself as one, and in any case of what value is my supposed greatness in relation to you, the children? Since Shankarlal has married Umiya, he also is like a son to me.

Be calm now and do what you believe to be your dharma. If you wish you may come to stay with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Vinodini[1] is ill. I had, therefore, asked her to come if she wished. But she has left now.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

116. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

December 2, 1946

CHI. SARALABEHN,

I am able to attend to your letter only today. I have written to Jajuji.[2] He will write if there is anything more to be done. He will write to me if there is anything to be said. I am very happy by your acceptance. May your good act bear fruit.

I am glad to hear that Nirmalabehn's health is beginning to improve. You must recover fully.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11151. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

117. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

December 2, 1946

BHAI JAJUJI,

If Prakasam remains firm about the mill at Madras no one will or can compel him. It would be a good thing if all the provinces followed an identical policy but probably it will not be possible. Prakasam had mentioned absolutely nothing about the difficulty. Of

[1] Addressee's sister

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Shrikrishnadas Jaju", 8-11-1946

course, I am going to do all that is possible. But there is certainly some difficulty in acting from here.

How is your health?

Let me see what I can do about the Charkha Sangh in Bengal.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

What is being done in Madras about the Charkha Scheme?

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy Pyarelal

118. LETTER TO J. B. KRIPALANI

[*December 2, 1946*][1]

DEAR PROFESSOR,

Do you know anything about the Madras Charkha Scheme?

How are you getting along?

Whose wire is this? I cannot persuade myself to invite anyone here. It is all darkness for me; I could think of something if I saw a ray of light. I am watching developments.

When is Sucheta coming?

Krishnadas met me and gave me all the news.

Blessings from

BAPU

Enclosure: A telegram

ACHARYA KRIPALANI

NEW DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

119. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

December 2, 1946

CHI. SATIS BABU,

See this letter[2]. What can we do in this matter? Is there any likelihood of your meeting Profulla?

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In the source this is placed among two letters of this date.

[2] Dated November 15, 1946, from Shrikrishnadas Jaju to Sushila Pai

120. LETTER TO KUNDAR DEWAN

December 2, 1946

CHI. KUNDAR,

I got your letter and also the book. You have done well in translating it.

I have sent to Kaka Saheb a foreword[1] for Appa's book.

What can I say about the Hindu-Muslim [problem]? Let us see what I can do. I am surrounded by darkness. I can see no light. I hope there will be light. Ahimsa is indeed put to the test now. We shall have a talk when we happen to meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI KUNDAR DEWAN
NALWADI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

121. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

December 2, 1946

CHI. RAMESHWARIBEHN,

I have your letter. I myself do not believe that one can defend oneself by carrying weapons. People can defend themselves only if they have courage. Otherwise they will have to have Government protection or employ private body-guards. I think we can only express our opinion in the matter. We shall have to leave it to others to act for themselves. The same idea can be applied to other places also.

Here too, the state of affairs is grave and delicate.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. RAMESHWARI NEHRU
WARRIS ROAD
LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Foreword to "Satyagraha Wa Swarahya"

122. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[1]

SRIRAMPUR,
[*December 2, 1946*][2]

The question of the exchange of population is unthinkable and impracticable. This question never crossed my mind. In every province, everyone is an Indian, be he a Hindu, a Muslim or of any other faith. It would not be otherwise even if Pakistan came in full.

For me any such thing will spell bankruptcy of Indian wisdom or statesmanship or both. The logical consequence of any such step is too dreadful to contemplate. Is it not that India should be artificially divided into so many religious zones?

When asked if, in view of the unsettled situation, it was not better to adopt a migration policy, Gandhiji said :

I see nothing to warrant such a policy. It is one of despair and, therefore, to be adopted in rare cases as a last resort.

QUESTION: You said the other day that there was no limit to your stay in East Bengal. Do you think that by confining yourself to Srirampur you will be able to send your message of peace to other villages of Noakhali?

GANDHIJI: Of course, I am not burying myself long in Srirampur. I am not idle here. I am seeing people of the surrounding villages and others. I am studying things and regaining lost physical strength meanwhile. The idea ultimately is to go on foot, when possible and necessary, from village to village and induce the evacuees to return. This I can only do with effect when I have seen things myself. It is quite clear to me that my mere word carries very little weight. Distrust has gone too deep for exhortation.

Gandhiji was next asked regarding the report that he found himself in darkness, and why and when the darkness came over him and whether he saw any release from it. Gandhiji said :

I am afraid the report is substantial. Outside circumstances have never overwhelmed me.The reason for the present daness lies within me. I find that my ahimsa does not seem to answer in the matter of Hindu-Muslim relations. This struck me forcibly when I came to learn of the events in Noakhali.

[1] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary"

[2] *Hindustan Standard*, 4-12-1946, reported the interview under the dateline "Srirampur, December 2".

The reported forcible conversions and the distress of the Bengali sisters touched me deeply. I could do nothing through pen or speech. I argued to myself that I must be on the scene of action and test the soundness of the doctrine which has sustained me and made life worth living. Was it the weapon of the weak as it was often held by my critics or was it truly the weapon of the strong? The question arose in me when I had no ready-made solution for the distemper of which Noakhali was such a glaring symptom.

And so setting aside all my activities, I hastened to Noakhali to find out where I stood. I know positively that ahimsa is a perfect instrument. If it did not answer in my hands, the imperfection was in me. My technique was at fault. I could not discover the error from a distance. Hence I came here trying to make the discovery. I must, therefore, own myself in darkness till I see light. God only knows when it will come. More I cannot say.

Harijan, 19-1-1947

123. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SRIRAMPUR,
December 2, 1946

Speaking after prayer, Gandhiji chose as his theme the story referred to in the *bhajan* which had just been sung. The chief of the elephants had gone for a drink to the river when he was caught hold of by an alligator. A furious struggle ensued, but in spite of his strength, the elephant was dragged into deeper waters. When he was on the point of being drowned, the elephant realized that his huge strength was of no avail, and he prayed to God for succour. God, the help of the helpless, came to his rescue and saved him from the jaws of death.

The moral was obvious. The strength of the strong without God's help had been often found to be useless. Therefore, he advised dependence not on outside sources but upon the inner strength which came to all who sincerely sought it from God. This was the lesson which the people in Noakhali sorely needed to learn.

Harijan, 5-1-1947

124. EXTRACT FROM DIARY

December 2, 1946

Must stop. Even the left hand now aches and has struck work. To bed—9.30 p. m.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p. 41

[1] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary"

125. NOTE ON THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY[1]

SRIRAMPUR, NOAKHALI,
December 3, 1946

I am quite clear that if there is a boycott by the Muslim League of the Constituent Assembly,[2] it should not meet under the Cabinet Mission's statement[3] of May 16. It clearly contemplates the co-operation of the two major parties, viz., the Congress and the League. Therefore, if one of them proclaims a boycott, the Constituent Assembly cannot with propriety meet under that Paper. If the Government convene the Constituent Assembly in spite of the boycott, they can legitimately do so only under some other statement which they can draw up in consultation with the Congress. It should never be forgotten that however powerful the Congress has become, Constituent Assembly as contemplated today can only meet by action of the British Government.

2. Even if the Constituent Assembly meets in spite of the boycott, but with the willing co-operation of the British Government, it will be under the visible or invisible protection of the British forces, whether Indian or European. In my opinion, 94 we shall never reach a satisfactory constitution under these circumstances. Whether we own it or not, our weakness will be felt by the whole world.

3. It may be said that not to meet as a Constituent Assembly under these circumstances will amount to a surrender to Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah or the Muslim League. I do not mind the charge because the waiver will not be an act of weakness, it will be one of Congress strength because it would be due to the logic of facts. If we have attained a certain degree of status and strength to warrant us in

[1] In *My Days with Gandhi*, N. K. Bose explains that Gandhiji dictated this in the afternoon for the Working Committee.

[2] The Muslim League had refused to attend the Constituent Assembly unless the Congress gave up its reservations on the question of grouping. The British Government, in an attempt to bring about a compromise, invited the leaders of the two parties to London for negotiations from December 3 to 6. No headway was made. For the British Cabinet's statement dated December 6, *vide* "British Cabinet's Statement on Grouping",6-12-1946

[3] *Vide* "Statement of Cabinet Delegation and Viceroy", 16-5-1946

convening our own Constituent Assembly irrespective of the British Government, it will be a proper thing. We will have then to seek the co-operation of the Muslim League and all the parties including the Princes, and the Constituent Assembly can meet at a favourable place even if some do not join. Thus it may be only the Congress Provinces plus Princes who may care to join. I think this would be dignified and wholly consistent with facts.

From a photostat: C. W. 10535. Courtesy: N. K. Bose. Also G. N. 3786

126. EXTRACTS FROM LETTER TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY

December 3, 1946

Having waited some time for the return of Shamsuddin Saheb as he had led me to expect, I write this to you and that in English in order the better to enable you to deal with the matter referred to herein.

1. Somehow or other the Committees that were being formed do not appear to be functioning properly. As yet, they have failed to inspire confidence.

2. In spite of all my efforts exodus continues and very few persons have returned to their villages. They say the guilty parties are still at large, some finding a place on the Peace Committees, that sporadic cases of murder and arson still continue, that abducted women have not all been returned, that forcibly converted persons have not all returned, that burnt houses are not being rebuilt and generally the atmosphere of goodwill is lacking. How far these charges are true or can be proved I do not know. My object just now is to bring these to your notice. It might be that a summary impartial inquiry is necessary to restore confidence.

3. Restrictions are being placed on volunteers irrespective of the organizations to which they belong. I can understand illegal activities being restricted, but no other restriction would be advisable.

4. Adequate food and warm clothing and fit habitation is surely necessary while there are *bona-fide* refugees. To deny these amenities would create suspicion and defeat the purpose of sending them back to their villages. I am of opinion that if the Government are unable to provide adequate food and clothing, facility should be readily given to benevolent persons to supply them.

5. As I write this the following letter has reached :[1]

6. Another letter says :[2]

This is by no means an exhaustive catalogue. I do not know whether you have an adequate conception of the mischief done.

My Days with Gandhi, pp. 93-4; and *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. I, Book II, p. 101

127. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

December 3, 1946

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter only today. I am in a far-off place. There is no post office here. How, then, can there be any facility for telegrams?

I am stuck here. I may never leave the place. I can leave only when things become perfectly normal again. If they do not, I would prefer to die here. You may assume that just now I have forgotten all about Sevagram, Uruli-Kanchan, and so on.

I am alone here, but it is not likely that I shall be left so. I do not seem to be destined for such a test.

I will inform you when the dhotis[3] are received. I will start wearing them immediately. My ahimsa is going to be severly put to the test here. The job is a difficult one.

Sushila[4] came to see me for the first time yesterday after she had gone and taken up work in a village. I suppose you know that it was her birthday. She is deeply engrossed in her work.

How can you leave your work? You can easily be assigned one village. You are perfectly fit for the work, but I should not like to ask you to leave your work there. If you can come without any dislocation of your work you may do so.

[1] The letters are not reproduced in the sources. *The Last Phase*, however, says that one of them gave details of an incident in which a Muslim mob of 250 had attacked a Hindu village, and the other referred to the economic boycott of Hindus by Muslims in the Chandpur sub-division.

[2] *ibid*

[3] The addressee used to send two hand-spun dhotis to Gandhiji every year.

[4] Sushila Pai, one of Gandhiji's secretarial aides; she had been working in a village called Karpara.

Sushila must be sending you all the details. I shall not, therefore, write more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10450. Also C. W. 6880. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

128. LETTER TO PYARELAL

December 3, 1946

CHI . . . .

I have written about this matter to Suhrawardy.[1] Read it when you come here. Write to Sir Datar Singh that I have written to the Premier. I shall inform him of the developments.

BAPU

From the Gajarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

129. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

SRIRAMPUR,
December 3, 1946

By way of introduction Gandhiji said that he felt very happy that Prof. Nelson[3] had thus shared in the prayer. While in detention at the Aga Khan Palace, Mirabehn used to sing this hymn to him in her rich, sonorous voice. He then paraphrased the meaning of the first three verses and said that the sentiment expressed in it was the same as found in the *Gajendra Moksha bhajan* sung last evening. There was the same reliance upon God, who was the source of all strength when every other earthly aid failed us. All human power was transient and real safety could lie only when we placed our reliance wholly on God.

Beneath the shadow of Thy throne
Thy saints have dwelt serene;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone
And our defence is sure.

This was a lesson which all of us in Noakhali sorely needed to learn.

Harijan, 5-1-1947

[1] Sushila Pai, one of Gandhiji's secretarial aides; she had been working in a village called Karpara.

[2] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary"

[3] Professor Stuart Nelson of Howard University, Washington. He had come for relief work in Noakhali on behalf of the Friends Service Unit. He attended the prayer and recited from Isaac Watt's famous hymn 'Our God, our help in ages past'.

130. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SRIRAMPUR, NOAKHALI DISTRICT,
December 4, 1946

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter dated November 18 reached me only yesterday. You know I am in a more inaccessible place than you are in.[1] The distance is not too great but there is no cart road even. When the overflow canal water dries up, as it will in about ten days, all but walking to and fro will be out of place. The post is taken by runners as it was in Kathiawar only a few years ago and is in some places even now.

Don't worry about me. Put your faith and trust in God. I am in His safe keeping. He will make or mar me. For Him it will be all making, never marring.

Newspapers do not come here regularly. When they come, they come behind time and what does come is local newspapers. Therefore, one does not know what appears in the Press. My prescription i"Don't believe what appears in the Press", and remember that no news is good news. Do you know that A. J. Balfour[2] when he was Prime Minister used to boast that he never read newspapers and lost nothing.

Then I suppose you know that all my companions are distributed in different villages. Pyarelal sees me often but he is not with me. He is in a village by himself assisted by a Bengali interpreter. I have Parasuram with me and therefore am able to dictate. The original idea was that I should take and want no assistance except a Bengali interpreter. Parasuram always helped Pyarelal but here he could not be placed by himself in a village. He was naturally anxious to be with me directly but he could not when I had all other assistance and was doing another class of work. Now that he is here, in addition to looking after me personally, he does my shorthand

[1] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, "Note to Manu Gandhi", 19-1-1947, Mirabehn explains: "In April, I had become Honorary Adviser to the United Provinces Government in connection with the 'Grow More Food' campaign. This had entailed a lot of tour in the hot weather, and I was now in Mussoorie for recouping my health."

[2] Arthur James Balfour, British Prime Minister, 1902--05

work, which enables me to go through what I had not expected or bargained for. And the Bengali assistant is a Professor who has for years made a deep study of my writings. Therefore, I have got most desirable assistance, but that assistance cannot cope with newspapers. Hence my outside work has been reduced to a minimum.

The work here is new, very pleasant, equally taxing. My ahimsa is on its trial. More of this another time. This is only to relieve you of all anxiety on my behalf. I am now taking or trying to take the usual diet but it may take some time after the twenty-one days' denial to get used to it. I am progressing towards normal strength as quickly as I can. I dare not be in a hurry.

Now I see you resumed the thread you left on November 18, on 22. Your problems are extraordinary but they are all of your own making.Therefore you can, as you must, reduce them to a manageable degree. You will not find the men or the man by searching. He or they will come to you if God wants you to do the type of work for which you want the man. I will, therefore say, wait on Him and do what you can with-out vexing the soul. Krishnachandra, I think, will not come. He is now content to be under Vinoba and gives him full satisfaction and, so far as I know, is himself satisfied. He has not written to me for over a month. I know no other person whom I can send to you, nor do I think will Ghanshyamdasji be able to give you any guidance. He can only give you money but that is not what you need or should need. The Ashram is purely your own original idea. If the present site is not suitable for you, you should make what use you can of it. Personally, I would say, give up the idea of Ashram life except for your own person. Then you won't feel cramped and you can expand as high or as broad as the universe. You know that as ashram I disbanded Sabarmati and it became a Harijan institution. The original was Satyagraha Ashram. That is gone for ever. Do not therefore ever think of handing over to anybody else the Ashram of your conception. Have in the present place married men or bachelors or whoever serves efficiently the activities you may take up. Otherwise, you will break down in health in spite of the most ideal weather you can have. Remember that in all I have said in the foregoing I have made the fullest allowance for your conception of the Ashram and because I have done so I have advised you to restrict the Ashram

ideal to yourself, taking as your co-workers as many capable persons as you can get so long as their presence or manners do not jar on you or interfere with your own growth.[1]

I hope I have carried to you the whole of my meaning. If so, I have done.

This I have dictated before going out for my walk, i. e., as soon after 7.30 in the morning as possible. I have been working since 4 o'clock Standard Time—5 o'clock Local Time. This includes the usual prayer time. The prayer is conducted by Parasuram.

Blessings from

BAPU[2]

From the original: C. W. 6520. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9915

131. LETTER TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY

SRIRAMPUR (EAST BENGAL),
December 4, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

Sardar Bahadur Sir Datar Singh of the Department of Agriculture, Government of India, New Delhi, writes to me to say that difficulty is being experienced in their land being restored to the Calcutta Pinjrapole Society. This was seized for military purposes evidently during the war period. The reason given for the refusal is that "the Provincial Government have under consideration a scheme for the development of the Kanchrapara area". I fancy that the decision about the development scheme must necessarily take a longtime to make. When and if it is made there should be no difficulty in the Government appropriating the restored land. Meanwhile, it could be utilised for a benevolent purpose, namely, increase in the

[1] Mirabehn explains: "This letter led me definitely to the decision to give up the idea of trying to keep Kisan Ashram as a *Brahmachari* Ashram and to put married men with their families there. Bapu's advice that I should restrict the Ashram of my conception to myself, I whole-heartedly accepted and as I was at that time planning a Government scheme for cattle development in the reserve forests near Rishikesh, I decided to settle in a little cottage on Gangaji's bank in the middle of the grazing lands and make that my Ashram."

[2] The subscription is in Hindi.

supply of milk for the city of Calcutta. Of course, the stipulation for restoration may well be made that the reverted land should be used only for the above purpose.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

THE HON'BLE THE PRIME MINISTER
(BENGAL)
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

132. LETTER TO E. STANLEY JONES

AS FROM SEVAGRAM,
"VIA" WARDHA (INDIA),
CAMP: SRIRAMPUR,
EAST BENGAL,
December 4, 1946

DEAR DR. JONES,

Dr. Nelson[1] was with me yesterday with Mrs. Alexander and we immediately became as old friends. He gave me your letter which I had not read when I made myself at home with him. The reason for my not reading your letter there and then was that he was in the company of several friends and I was about to go to the prayer meeting[2] in which he took keen interest and wanted to read from a Pelican book in his possession, "Our God, our help in ages past" which I readily let him do, and at the close of the prayer the few words that I said to the audience consisted of a free rendering of the hymn he read but could not or would not sing. I have invited him to drop in again when he wished to which he said he would do in a few days time.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. G.

REV. DR. E. STANLEY JONES
150 FIFTH AVENUE
NEW YORK CITY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Dr. William Stuart Nelson of Howard University. Washington. He had come for relief work in Noakhali on behalf of the Friends Service Unit.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 3-12-1946

133. LETTER TO NAZIR

CAMP: SRIRAMPUR,
EAST BENGAL,
December 4, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your draft for 5,000 rupees on behalf of the Ahmadiya Community for relief to sufferers in the recent Noakhali disturbances. The amount will be used as earmarked by you.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

THE NAZIR
UMOOR KHARIJAH
QADIAN

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

134. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SRIRAMPUR,
December 4, 1946

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

Herewith a statement of my views[1] about the Constituent Assembly. Please go through it and do what you think fit. Jawaharlal's absence will be a handicap. I hold very strong views in the matter. There is certainly no weakness on our part in giving up the plan. Doing what the situation demands is no weakness. But maybe I am quite wrong.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 328

[1] *Vide* "Note on the Constituent Assembly", 3-12-1946

135. LETTER TO P. C. GHOSH

December 4, 1946

CHI. PROFULLA,

My views [about the Constituent Assembly] are enclosed herewith. You can show them to those of our friends whom you want to. Even after the meeting on the 9th, their publication can be put off or withheld. Personally I would like their publication. One of the two drafts will have to be finalized for publication.

My views will have to be conveyed to Maulana in any case.

Meet Ghanshyamdas. Do consult him.

Show them to Sharat Babu. I have already written who should publish it. There was no need for it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am sending one more copy.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 3785

136. DISCUSSION WITH AMIYA CHAKRAVARTY[1]

[*December 4, 1946*][2]

At meal time Prof. Amiya Chakravarty of the Calcutta University, who had come to him on a visit, asked him the question as to what should be the technique for approaching the wrongdoers so that their resistance should be dissolved. "The chief difficulty with the callous perpetrators of crimes is," Dr. Chakravarty remarked, "that they are not only unrepentant but defiant and even jubilant over their misdeeds." Gandhiji replied :

Yes, they have their own reason to be jubilant and the only way to meet their attitude is not to succumb to it but to live in their midst and retain one's sense of truth. Goodness must be joined with knowledge. Mere goodness is not of much use as I have found in life. One must cultivate the fine, discriminating quality which goes with spiritual courage and character. One must know, in a crucial situation, when to speak and when to be silent, when to act and

[1] Extracted from "Do or Die at Work" by Pyarelal

[2] From *Hindustan Standard*, 9-12-1946

when to refrain. Action and non-action in these circumstances become identical instead of being contradictory.

I am groping for light. I am surrounded by darkness; but I must act or refrain as guided by truth. I find that I have not the patience and the technique needed in these tragic circumstances; suffering and evil often overwhelms me and I stew in my own juice. Therefore, I have told my friends that they should bear with me and work or refrain as guided by wisdom which is now utterly demanded of us. This darkness will break and, if I see light even those who created the tragedy of the recent communalism in Bengal, will.[1]

The new basis has to be built here in the villages where the Hindus and the Muslims have lived and suffered together in the land of their forefathers and must live together in the future. For the time being I have become a Bengali and a Noakhali man. I have come to live and share their task, to cement the two together or to perish in the attempt. I am in the midst of a raging fire and will stay here till it is put out. For this reason, I do not want to leave these parts. Life must be made livable for the sorely afflicted men and women. The work of organization must go on and the physical as well as moral rescue achieved.

Dr. Chakravarty next suggested that the reports from Gandhiji's associates who are now working separately in the different villages should be collected and collated so that fellow-workers could gain new light on the technique of the non-violence of the strong that was being evolved and experimented within East Bengal. Gandhiji replied :

The time is not yet ripe for that.[2] They have gone with my best wishes but to an atmosphere which is still unhelpful. They are following not a beaten path but a trackless route. Their work lies in the midst of a Muslim population. They do not know the language and are not familiar with local problems. I myself don't know what the next step is and cannot guide them. They are unable to send reports now. If I made a chart for them, they would be able to keep a log-book. Even the great Thakkar Bapa, as old as myself, a seasoned worker and utterly selfless, is working away without knowing what he is doing—a thing he has never done before in his life. But I am hopeful that order will come out of what is for us the necessary chaos. Then what you wish, and I also, will be forthcoming and will be a most

[1] This sentence is reproduced from *Hindustan Standard*, 8-12-1946.
[2] This sentence is reproduced from *Hindustan Standard*, 9-12-1946.

valuable record for future workers.

A. C. That is what all our people feel and also workers abroad. Noakhali has now become a laboratory where a crucial test is being made; the remedy will apply to situations all the world over where disputes arise between communities and nationalities and a new technique is needed for peaceful adjustment.

G. From London too I have heard to the same effect. People are interested in what happens in Noakhali. I feel that my responsibility is great and that our work has to ring true.

A. C. That Bengal should be chosen for this great task, that you should have made this your centre, is, to us, a supreme privilege though people have suffered and are suffering beyond description. The whole of Bengal is conscious of your arrival and of the fact that you have come to live and work with the suffering men and women who need you so much at this hour.

G. For me, if this thing is pulled through, it will be the crowning act of my life. I had to come down to the soil and to the people of East Bengal. The first person to whom I mentioned this was Jawaharlal. Without a moment's hesitation he replied: "Yes, your place is there. Although we need you so much here, we need you more in Noakhali." I asked him, "When?" As soon as you feel like it," he replied. In two days I started.

Harijan, 12-1-1947; and *Hindustan Standard*, 8-12-1946 and 9-12-1946

137. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SRIRAMPUR,
December 4, 1946

As Gandhiji began his daily discourse, he gave unstinted praise to the musicians.[2] Indeed, he said, he had never heard the Bengal *mridanga* (drum) played so well as was done at the meeting. When played well it had a sweetness all its own. He had also appreciated the *namasankirtan*; but he hoped that it did not come merely from the throat but from their heart. For, a parrot also can repeat what it learns from its master. There is hardly any virtue when we take the name of God when we live in safety. It becomes real only when taken in danger.

He would never mind if a Hindu recited the *kalma* willingly and with a full

[1] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary"

[2] The report said: "Shortly before prayer, a group of people from the neighbouring villages arrived, singing the *namasankirtan* to the accompaniment of the *khol* (drum) and the *karatala* (cymbals). When the *Ramdhun* was being sung, they kept time by means of the *khol*."

heart. But if he did so out of fear of losing his life or possessions, then he took the name of God in vain, for it was the voice of Satan which then spoke through him. As he understood Islam, it had never prospered nor could prosper by means of force. Any man who pretended to serve Islam in that manner only did a disservice to the noble religion.

Every religion today had become tainted by unwanted accretions. In Hinduism we treated a large part of our brethren as untouchables, and Gandhiji said he had no doubt that we were paying sorrowfully for that sin.

The first verse of the *Ishopanishad* contained the essence of Hindu spiritual experience. The purport of the verse was that all that existed in the universe was pervaded by and had its being in God. Therefore, no man could claim anything as his own. He should dedicate his body, mind and all that he possessed to that Universal Being and use only what he received through His grace. The moral of it was that we should deprive no man of his wealth, whether it be in the shape of life, honour or religion. A believer in this truth, living up to it, shed all fear and lived in perfect peace.

The verses[1] of the *Bhagavad Gita* were then referred to as they formed the next item in the Ashram's evening prayer. They described the characteristics of one who had attained knowledge and brought his senses under full control. The lesson of the *Bhagavad Gita* was meant not for those who had forsaken the world, but for every householder, irrespective of his birth and state. Everybody's duty should be to attain the state described therein and this could only be done if life was built on the rock of fearlessness.

Harijan, 5-1-1947

138. NOTE TO PYARELAL[2]

[After *December 4, 1946*][3]

I am still groping.[4] I see I have not the knack. I have not yet quite found the key to ahimsa. Here I am out to perform a stupendous *yajna*, but my unfitness for the task is being demonstrated at every step. There can, however, be no running away. And where can I run away? Success or failure is not in our hands. It is enough if we do our part well. I am leaving no stone unturned. Ours is but to strive. In the end it will be as He wishes.

Harijan, 12-1-1947; and *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. I, Book II, p. 77

[1] II. 54-72
[2] Extracted from "Do or Die at Work" by Pyarelal
[3] Inferred from Pyarelal's introductory remarks
[4] This sentence is reproduced from *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*.

139. LETTER TO HANNAH LAZAR

AS FROM SEVAGRAM,
"VIA" WARDHA, INDIA,
CAMP: SRIRAMPUR,
EAST BENGAL,
December 5, 1946

DEAR HANNAH[1],

I have your letter full of pathos and also full of news which I would not have got otherwise. I like your frankness. Who does not like life? Therefore, it is no fault in you that you should like life and that you should have also likes and dislikes. But though these are common to mankind we have got to overcome them if life is to become rich in reality, and the memory of departed dear ones is to become a treasure. It can only be to the extent that it enables us to translate in our own lives the best parts of dear ones and Hermann undoubtedly had many such parts which we may copy with advantage. You should therefore try to do so.

I am glad you went to Phoenix to help Manilal when he was so much in need of your help. I am glad Isele has qualified as a doctor and that she has got a permanent job as house physician in the General Hospital. Are you otherwise at peace with yourself? Manilal will tell you that I am at present engaged in tackling the most difficult piece of work in my life and I am staying in a most inaccessible part of India at the present moment.

Do not hesitate to write to me whenever the spirit moves you. It is easy enough for me to promise not to write in reply every time I hear from you. This time I feel like writing in order to encourage you to write to me regularly and also to tell you that you have in me your best friend who will try somewhat to do what Hermann used to do so fully. You are bound to miss him as we all do. He certainly expected to come back to me had he lived. But God willed otherwise.

Love,

BAPU

HANNAH LAZAR
JOHANNESBURG

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Niece of Hermann Kallenbach, Gandhiji's co-worker in South Africa

140. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

SRIRAMPUR,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
December 5, 1946

DEAR PRAKASAM,

I have your letter with enclosures. I have studied all the papers you have sent to me. Your statement appears to me to be in order so far as it goes. But I do feel that if the new policy[1] becomes popular with the masses, the concentrated production of cotton will become decentralised and distributed like khadi cloth itself and to that extent the Presidency will be the gainer, as the whole of India will, if it takes up the Madras policy, as it will, if Madras succeeds, as it ought to if the villagers take up khadi with zest. They will, if khadi becomes cheaper than unprotected mill cloth, as Shri Manu Subedar has shown from the figures, which I have printed in *Harijan.*

The argument in the cuttings you have been good enough to send me makes no appeal to me and if I get time from the heavy Noakhali work before me I shall write in *Harijan.* But I know nothing about the legal argument which, of course, you will get properly examined by the Advocate-General and other lawyers expert in the matter and, if the legal argument is against you, naturally you will resile from the position taken up by you.But I take it that you had the legal position carefully examined before you took the plunge.

But apart from the question of establishing new mills or expanding the old ones, how is the scheme progressing? Have you already made the commencement? How are the people concerned taking it? Is the legislature overwhelmingly with you? I am in such an inaccessible place that I get very few newspapers and they are local ones. I, therefore, know very little of what is going on outside Noakhali. Therefore Noakhali at present is my world and it is large enough for me.

Please keep me informed of what is going on about the scheme and do not hesitate to make concrete suggestions if you expect me to do anything concrete.

Yours,
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Madras Khadi Scheme

141. LETTER TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY

SRIRAMPUR,
December 5, 1946

A special messenger from the District Magistrate, Comilla, delivered your packet containing your two letters dated 2nd and 3rd instant respectively. I am glad that you are going to issue some such statement as suggested by me. In these days of fear, sometimes not without ground and sometimes groundless, no contradiction should be superfluous, much less appear foolish.

2. If "some mischievous Hindu young men have been throwing crackers and missiles at Muharrum processions", I would suggest that they should be brought to book.

3. I note that you have devoted a considerable portion of your letter of the 2nd December and the whole of the 3rd December to Bihar, and you have repeated the advice you have given me often enough that my place is rather in Bihar than in Noakhali. If I find any confirmation of the most serious statements made by you about Bihar, I confess that I have egregiously blundered by resuming normal diet.[1] But I am loath to reject the testimony of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, then of Dr. Rajendra Prasad, both responsible men and persons who had gone specially for the purpose of seeing things for themselves andallaying mob fury. They admit that the behaviour of the Hindu crowds was bad enough in all conscience but they do not bear out the statements made in your letter. Nor do they uphold the figure given by you. They also tell me that mob fury has subsided and that the Government have regained control undoubtedly with the assistance of the military. If I could feel that my presence was at all necessary in Bihar, I assure you that I would not need any encouragement from you to do so. On the contrary, my informants assure me that my presence is not required in Bihar. In these circumstances, unless I feel sure of my ground, I know that I must go to Bihar. But I would like to make the assurance doubly sure and with that end in view I would be glad to get your permission to send copies of your letters to the Prime Minister of Bihar and know his reaction. There too you will pardon me, will you not, for not taking your statements as gospel truth. For one thing, you have no first-hand knowledge of events. I suggest that

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 20,11-1946

there should be an impartial commission, appointed with the consent of the two Governments, to go into the disturbances both in Noakhali and Bihar.[1] If your statements are true and the callous behaviour of the Bihar Government, which you so graphically describe, can be sustained, it is a bad day for the Bihar Government, a bad day for the Hindus and good-bye to restoration of friendly relations between the two communities, and it would be a serious question for me to consider where I stand. The least I can permit myself to say is that then I should have no hesitation in publicily denouncing the Bihar Ministers and Bihar Hindus. I would plead with you to suspend, if you at all can, final judgment in the matter.

4. Now I come to Noakhali. I sent you a longish letter yesterday and I asked Satis Babu to arrange for its quickest delivery through a special messenger. I tried even to see if there was possibility of sending it by air but I failed. You have painted a rosy picture of things in Noakhali. I wish I could share your estimate. I have formed no judgment. I have passed on to you the purport of much of what is handed to me in writing and what is given to me by word of mouth. If the information imparted to me is correct, things are not safe enough in Noakhali. Hindus have not shed their fear and from what you say even the Muslims are not free from it. My business in coming here is not to sow or promote dissensions between the two. I regard myself, as I have ever been, an equal friend of both. I know that through no fault of which I am conscious I have lost caste in the Muslim League circles. No Muslim friend has yet been able to tell me what I have done to deserve that fate. I am in Noakhali to be judged by my conduct. My non-violence is at stake. Bear with me whilst I am groping. I am the same person as I was when we met in Faridpur and later in Deshbandhu's house after his death. This much is enough for time being.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Wish you could show me a quicker way of reaching my letters to you, as they are likely to be important and probably frequent.

M. K. G.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Apparently Gandhiji's suggestion did not find favour with the Muslim League.

142. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

AS FROM KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
CAMP: SRIRAMPUR,
December 5, 1946

DEAR AGATHA,

Ramakrishna Bajaj has sent me your welcome letter. Carl Heath did write to me and I wrote to him at once. I have no doubt he will share that letter with you. I, therefore, say no more about the subject matter of the letter, important though it is.

Here I am in an inaccessible part of Bengal and dealing with the most difficult part of my mission in life. I have never been in such darkness as I am in today. And the darkness does not come from outside. It is due to my limitations. My faith in ahimsa has never burned brighter and yet I feel that there is something wanting in my technique of it that I feel as though I were on an unbeaten track.

As you must have known, my fast has blown over just now. Bihar is quiet and I am therefore trying to take the usual diet though I have still to be cautious. I hope soon to get over the physical weakness which was inevitable with no-protein and no-starch and no-fat diet. The most satisfactory thing about this reduced diet was that I was able to do full amount of mental work and a fair amount even of physical work.

If this letter reaches while Amrit is still in Europe, please tell her that I have received all her letters but I have written none to her purposely, feeling that she was soon to return and there was every danger of my letters missing her, especially as I am in an out-of-the-way place where there is no post office worth the name and no telegraph office at all. Naturally I am not in touch with what is going on in Delhi. If my mission succeeds here I shall be fit enough for further work. Anyway, so far as I know, I have to bury myself here till mutual confidence and friendship between the communities are restored. What happens here will happen throughout India, because Bengal is the nerve centre.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1527

143. LETTER TO YVONNE PRIVAT

AS FROM SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,
CAMP: SRIRAMPUR,
December 5, 1946

DEAR BHAKTI,

I have your very good letter. I am sorry that you are not getting *Harijan* at all. I am inquiring. Probably there is some legal difficulty in sending *Harijan* to foreign parts. I cannot understand that the Manager has neglected your copy.

Pyarelalji tells me that the paper edited by Anand[1] is being received.

Of course, under the new arrangement all the co-workers are distributed in the affected villages of Noakhali.

I am hoping with you that some day we shall meet again. How, when and where, God alone knows. Of course I remember the occasion when I called you "babes in the wood" which you always will be to me.

Love to you both.

BAPU

MADAME YVONNE PRIVAT
1 AVENUE DE LA GARE
NEUCHATEL
SWITZERLAND

From a photostat: G. N. 8802

[1] Edmond Privat, addressee's husband

144. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SRIRAMPUR, NOAKHALI,
December 5, 1946

CHI. NARANDAS,

Your letter calls for a reply. I have resumed my normal food. Hence there is no cause at all now for worry. Really speaking worry has no place in a thoughtful life. The present mission is the most complicated of all I have undertaken in my life."I cannot see my path in the thick darkness of the night, take this your child under your protecting care. Light up the path of my life."I can sing these lines[1] with perfect truth. I do not remember to have experienced such darkness in my life ever before, and the night seems long. My only consolation is that I have not accepted defeat or given way to despair. His will be done.

I mean to do or die here."To do" means to restore amity between Hindus and Muslims; or I should perish in the attempt. This is difficult to achieve. But it will be as God wills.

All the co-workers have offered themselves up in this sacrifice of their own accord, but if they repent, they are free to leave. They have been posted, each in one village, with a Bengali interpreter to help him or her. Kanaiyo also is away from me as a part of this plan, and so is Abha.

I am camping in an unfortunate village in the interior. Parasuram, who cannot be posted alone because of the language difficulty, is with me. He is a silent worker and an expert stenogr-apher. The other is a Bengali professor. Both give me perso-nal services, too. Most of the others are at a distance of ten miles from me. They can come and see me whenever it is necessary. Pyarelal, Sushila Nayyar and Sushila Pai also are camping in different villages. Kanaiyo had fever for one day. He is better now. There is no cause for worry. He himself is quite cheerful. He leads the *Ramdhun* and remains fearless. God has blessed him with fine health. Abha is perfectly safe. She has gone with Bapa. She is in a village sixteen miles away. Kanaiyo preferred this arrangement. Bapa has taken great interest in her and is pleased with her spirit of service. She makes *rotlis*

[1] From Narasinhrao Divatia's "Premal Jyoti" a Gujarati rendering of Newman's "Lead, Kindly Light"

for him and, being a Bengali, works among Bengali women. She was not happy to be separated from me, but dharma dictated that course and so I sent her away. I had also started regarding her services as a necessity. However, in this difficult *sadhana* of mine, how can I afford to make a habit of getting service from others? You will now see that every step taken is being dictated by dharma. Everybody there should rejoice at what is happening. I have now written enough. You should go on with your work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C. W. 8637. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

145. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

December 5, 1946

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

Yesterday you must have left a little wiser. Life should be reflective. Without thinking, life becomes worthless. That is why I am sending you this postcard from Raihana[1]. Write a line to her when you get the time. I am not writing to her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 542

146. DISCUSSION WITH HINDU MAHASABHA LEADERS[2]

December 5, 1946

Put yourself in Mr. Suhrawardy's shoes; do you think he would favour it, or even the Muslim residents of Noakhali? For it would be interpreted as a preparation for war. But if you believe that this is the only workable scheme, you can go ahead with it.

For myself, the path is different. I have become a Bengali to

[1] Raihana Tyabji

[2] N. K. Bose explains: "Nirmal Chandra Chatterji and Debendranath Mukherjee, President and Secretary of the Hindu Mahasabha, Naren Bose, brother of Suren Bose, the first victim of Noakhali, and a few others had a 45-minute interview when the Mahasabha's project of segregating the Hindu population in Noakhali for purposes of safety was discussed."

all intents and purposes. Today Nirmal Babu is my ears and is indispensable, but when I learn enough Bengali, he will be free to go.

Then he explained his own plan—how he had already posted one worker in each village, with a Bengali interpreter where necessary, in order to "steal the hearts of the inhabitants". It did not matter if there was only one or many Hindus in a village; his prescription was that they should stick to their posts and even face death, if necessary, with courage and willingness. If they lived in clusters, it would really mean accepting the Muslim League's mischievous two-nation theory. Then he added :

If there has to be migration at all, it must be complete. I am not going to be a willing party to Pakistan. Even if I fail to prevent it and all Hindus go away, I shall still remain here; and shall not make a single change in my religious practice.

Nirmal Babu remarked that no one had taken to this advice so far, as the scheme was beyond the strength of the average individual. Gandhiji replied :

If some could die like this, the few shall become many. I am not a visionary as I am generally supposed to be. I am an idealist, but I claim to be a practical idealist. I have been born a Hindu and I shall die a Hindu, a *sanatanist* Hindu. If there is salvation for me, it must be as a Hindu. Hinduism absorbs the best in other religions, and there is scope for expansion in it.

Nirmal Babu thanked him for his kindness in thus taking up the cause of Bengal. Gandhiji immediately replied that it was no kindness and if it was, it was kindness to himself. He said :

My own doctrine was failing. I don't want to die a failure but as a successful man. But it may be that I may die a failure.

My Days with Gandhi, pp. 96-7

147. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

December 6, 1946

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

I got your letter of December 2 today as also Rajendra Babu's.

What you have written is reasonable, but I feel that this resistance to evil is not honest. My point is that the whole game is lost if we resort to the law of the jungle. One may react to violence by counter-violence, but that counter-violence can be either brutal or civilized and effective. What happened in Bihar was brutal and ineffective and so was the case in Garhmukteshwar. In such matters the precedents from *Mahabharata* and *Bhagavata* can mislead us. Our life, that is, the ways of our people should become thoughtful and orderly. My effort

is in this direction, the result is in the hands of God. I am not writing to Rajendra Babu separately. Please do not worry about my health. I take good care of it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C. W. 8084. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

148. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SRIRAMPUR,
December 6, 1946

Gandhiji began his after-prayer speech by saying that true prayer never went unanswered. It did not mean that every little thing we asked for from God was readily given to us. It was only when we shed our selfishness with conscious effort and approached God in true humility that our prayers found a response.

In the Ashram prayer nothing was asked. The prayer was for God to make them better men and women. If the prayer came truly from the heart, God's grace would surely descend upon them. There was not a blade of grass which moved without his will, not one single true thought which did not leave a mark on character. It was good, therefore, to develop the daily habit of prayer.

Harijan, 5-1-1947

149. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

Unrevised

SRIRAMPUR,
December 7, 1946

CHI. KAKA,

I have the letter you wrote on your way back from Assam. You have given a concise but complete description.

I think you cannot leave Wardha. Being the *Kaka* of Wardha you have a responsibility which you cannot forsake. Moreover, Satish[2] is with you and can give you all the help you need in English. If Narahari[3] joins you there, nothing like it. But I shall understand if he cannot and also if he does. I know that whatever decision he takes will be prompted by his regard for dharma.

[1] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary"
[2] Addressee's elder son
[3] Narahari Parikh

Whatever happens, do not give up writing for *Harijan*. And dictating, too. You will be able to collect a lot of material from there. Pyarelal does write something every time. I have asked him not to carry that load.

I am getting more and more busy with the work here. I may not, therefore, be able to write anything. The task here is a difficult one.

The situation in Assam seems all right. Bardoloi need have no fear. What need he fear who does his duty?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have still not been able to take up the Hindustani work.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10985

150. LETTER TO JUGAL KISHORE BIRLA

SRIRAMPUR,
December 7, 1946

BHAI JUGAL KISHORE,

Baba Raghavdas gave me a full account of the passing away of Malaviyaji. He also mentioned your pledge. You should therefore certainly set apart Rs. 25 lacs for the temple[1]. However, I am afraid, it will not be conducive to the progress of Hinduism if Malaviyaji's concept of the temple complex is translated literally. If the spirit of his concept is followed, it would raise Hinduism to greater heights. Today Hinduism is being compared with other religions. Under the circumstances, if we followed [his words] literally Hinduism would perish, while the spirit behind them will put new life into it. Baba Raghavdas will tell you the rest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] It was to be erected on the Banaras Hindu University campus.

151. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SRIRAMPUR

December 7, 1946

Gandhiji referred in his few words to a writing by a Mussalman. In it the writer had rightly contended that a man of God was never afraid to die or to lose his possessions for the sake of his self-respect or religion. God had given us life and could take it away. That teaching was universal and applied to all, Hindus as well as Mussalmans. Those who had in God their sole refuge cast out all fear. Then there could be lasting friendship between the two. He had been trying all these days to din this lesson into the ears of his listeners. There was a time when Mussalmans also listened to him; but now things seemed to have changed and even among Hindus there were not many who would follow his advice. But he felt sure lasting peace could come only when men of whatever community refused to surrender to any fear save the holy fear of God.

Harijan, 5-1-1947

152. LETTER TO PYARELAL

8.20 p. m., December 7, 1946

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have your letter and also the description. The description is good. It moved me deeply. It is true that the sooner all of us learn Bengali the better will it be. I have always believed that the task is a difficult one. There will be nothing more difficult than this in my lifetime. We shall survive if God wills.

You are not to rush in where the situation is dangerous. We have to suffer what falls to our lot. I feel that it would have been all right even if you had not gone to that place. Anyway I am not upset about it. Let us all die while doing our duty. Sushila is sitting by my side. We shall meet on Tuesday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Gujarati: *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. I, Book II, facing p. 65

[1] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary"

153. MESSAGE FOR BABA RAGHAVDAS[1]

[After *December 7, 1946*][2]

It is my firm conviction that the education imparted by the British administration, whether at the primary or the higher level, is not conducive to the progress of India, nor could it ever have been so. I have no doubt that only the scheme of education devised by the Talimi Sangh is the right education. And that is meant for all village people whether Hindus or others.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

154. A LETTER[3]

SRIRAMPUR (NOAKHALI),
December 8, 1946

What you describe as my "unparalleled action" is really the natural and logical conclusion of the creed of non-violence which I hold as dear as life itself.

Hindustan Standard, 12-12-1946

155. LETTER TO SATYENDU SUNDER CHAKRAVARTY

SRIRAMPUR,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
December 8, 1946

DEAR SATYENJI,

I was delighted to receive your letter not merely for its contents but also because you are the late Syam Sunder Chakravarty's son. I can never forget his features, his transparent sincerity and fearlessness. What you describe as my "unparallelled action" is really the natural and logical conclusion of the creed of non-violence which I hold as

[1] Pachapurkar Raghavendra Seshappa (1896-1958); joined Indian National Congress in 1920; elected to U. P. Vidhan Sabha in 1946; an ardent advocate of Hindi, he established the Rashtrabhasha Mahavidyalaya at Gorakhpur.

[2] In the source the message is placed after the material of December 7, 1946.

[3] The report said that this was in reply to "a correspondent in Calcutta who had written to Gandhiji about the task he had undertaken to accomplish in Noakhali".

dear as life itself.

Do come whenever there is need to. Better come any day between 2 and 5 p.m. On Tuesday I have to be out at Madhupur.

Yours,

SHRI SATYENDU SUNDER CHAKRAVARTY
STAFF REPORTER
"HINDUSTAN STANDARD"
1 BURMAN ST.
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

156. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

December 8, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have your postcard. I think your way of service has changed. You cannot now undertake the risks involved in the work here. The task here is a difficult one. Your duty is to live with Kanchan and make her perfectly happy. That is your *swadharma*. I see your spiritual progress only through her happiness. Whatever happens will be for the good. You are doing right in supervising the construction of the hospital buildings. Take similar interest in the other activities there and do them well. In whatever you do you should have Kanchan's fullest mental co-operation. Physical co-operation she does give, willingly or unwillingly. But work is true karma only when both body and mind co-operate. This is nothing to be ashamed of. On the contrary, that is the right way to live and only those who live in this way make any progress.

> He who curbs the organs of action but allows the mind to dwell on the sense objects, such a one, wholly deluded—is called a hypocrite.

Reflect over this verse[1] and rejoice. Kanchan should write to me as long as she has the strength to do so. The rest if and when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8401. Also C. W. 7219. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 6

157. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

Unrevised *December 8, 1946*

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. I do respect your eagerness to go and stay with Gordhandas. I know, however, that in your present condition you will not be a help but a burden to him. The better course would be for you to stay in Sevagram, to get well and do as much service there as you can. If, however, Gordhandas does not like that, it would certainly be your duty to respect his wishes. I shall enclose with this the letter I am going to write[1] to him. If Chimanlal and you agree, he may leave that place. If you also cannot be happy there, I think it useless to force you to stay on. I think your remaining there is best for everybody. You are living there as a matter of right and not on sufferance. You belong to the Ashram. Do not worry about me. There is God to protect me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10074. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

158. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

December 8, 1946

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

A letter[2] for Munnalal is enclosed. Read it and then pass it on to him.

Read what I have written[3] about Babudi and then advise her as you think fit. If she can be patient and live there peacefully, it would be desirable from every point of view. If she has any difficulties, remove them. She must not feel the slightest want in regard to food. If necessary, Shakaribehn may run her own kitchen and mother and daughter may have their meals separately from the others. It will be enough if you have your meals in the Ashram kitchen. Never mind if anybody criticizes you for this.

[1] *Vide* the following page.
[2] *Vide* the preceding page.
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

Vijayalakshmi's wire[1] which Ramprasad gave to the Press does not seem to be reported in any of the papers. What happened? I hope you are keeping good health and the pressure of work is not excessive. The job here is becoming more difficult every day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10656

159. LETTER TO GORDHANDAS CHOKHAWALA

December 8, 1946

CHI. GORDHANDAS,

It is a matter for regret that Chi. Sharda is still not getting well. She is now impatient to go to you. If you need her, it is her duty to go and it is our duty as her elders to send her. But I believe that as long as she remains ill she will not be of any help to you. If you wish to have her near you in the hope that that will benefit her health, I would count it as your ignorance. From the point of view both of climate and other facilities, Sevagram is the right place for Sharda. I am keen that she should first get well and then go to you and help you. If she has patience, with God's grace she is bound to get well. Since she has not lost any weight, we can certainly hope for improvement. By and by the fever is bound to go. Notwithstanding what I think, however, ultimately, what you wish will be done.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10087. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

160. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

SRIRAMPUR,

December 8, 1946

Gandhiji said that a friend had sent him a book containing the sayings of Prophet Mohammed. He read the book whenever he could snatch a few minutes' time. Today he tried to select something out of the book for them. Both Hindu and Muslim friends were assembled there and these sayings were such that both ought to practice what they learnt from them.

If men lived according to these precepts, then there would be an end to all

[1] *Vide* "What will South Africa Do", 29-12-1946

[2] It being Gandhiji's silence day, the speech was read out.

quarrels. They should be able to live as good neighbours in spite of differences of opinion and of religious belief. He would now present them with the translation of two sayings. The first was this in the original book by Abdullah Almamun Alshua Nawardy: "Actions will be judged according to intentions."

The second was: "Man is an unbeliever unless he desireth for his brother that which he desireth for himself."

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-12-1946

161. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

December 8, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

Only today I got your letter. It is excellent. I intend to find some space for it in *Harijan* and publish it. You are getting excellent help. compliments to all.

You won great credit for yourself as prisoner. Never mind the loss of weight. You will get it back. I was very glad that otherwise you could preserve your general health. It is strange that things should be so bad. Vijayalakshmi's performance in America is considered to be very good. It is a painful thing, though, that the others spoiled the effect. It is enough that you have proved your worth. How can one tell who will ultimately win the laurels in this?

Acting on your letter, I have already written to Sushila and told her to proceed there with or without the children. I would not risk doing anything against your wishes in this matter. There is no doubt at all that Sushila will be a help to you. Do use the services of the children, too. It will be good if both of you see to it that they do not forget Gujarati but, on the contrary, learn it properly. I am writing this after eight in the evening and cannot, therefore, write more.

I have written to Hanna[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4994

[1] Niece of Hermann Kallenbach, Gandhiji's co-worker in South Africa

162. LETTER TO MANU S. MASHRUWALA

December 8, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

I was very glad to see your handwriting. I am of course engrossed in work, but I would welcome letters from you all. Do not worry on my account. I made *khakhari*[1] only once. Who will let me work? With the great God above to protect me, why need you worry? I get plenty of dry fruits, etc.

I hope all of you are well. Do not spoil your health. It is 8.35 p. m. now and I must, therefore, stop.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 1583. Courtesy: Manu S. Mashruwala

163. EXTRACT FROM DIARY

December 8, 1946

I see my discipline of silence is only skin-deep. Silence is a great art, not easy to master.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p. 41

164. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA MUKHERJEE

SRIRAMPUR, NOAKHALI,
December 9, 1946

DEAR SATIS BABU[2],

Did Krishnadas tell you about the very silly mistake made, viz., that you had gone to your rest? How I came to have that impression I cannot make out except for the fact that I had not heard from you for a long time. You can therefore imagine my joy when he told me that you were very much alive, were able to have regular walks and were able to give instruction to true seekers as usual. I would love to think

[1] Chapati made of bajra, wheat or jowar flour

[2] 1865-1948. Worked for education on national lines and founded Bhagavat Chatushpathi in 1895; Editor, *Dawn*, 1897-1913; succeeded Aurbindo Ghosh as principal of the National College, Calcutta; in 1922, following Gandhiji's arrest, helped the management and publication of *Young India*.

that you will finish your full span of 125 years which I may not do for want of the equanimity prescribed in the concluding verses of the *Gita*, our *kamadhenu*. I am trying hard to reach that state. Do please write to me when you have the time.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 10536

165. INTERVIEW TO DEOBHANKAR[1]

December 9, 1946

When Deobhankar asked him as to how the Muslim masses could be won over and unified under the Congress and if this could not be achieved best through some form of economic struggle along class lines, Gandhiji replied that so far such a plan had not succeeded in respect of the people whose communal sentiment had proved too strong. What we had to do was to prevent the Congress from turning into a Hindu communal organization. Anyone who had made India his home should be protected by the Congress. Hindus should never think that Hindustan belonged exclusively to them. The Parsis had come centuries ago, and the Syrian Christians were Christians ever since the time of St. Thomas. Every one of them had to be treated as an Indian enjoying the same rights as any other Indian.

Congressmen should not however approach Muslims in a spirit of appeasement or flattery. Although something like that had been done, and it might even be justifiably said that he himself had partly been responsible for such an attitude, yet, his eyes were now opened and he held that it had been unwise to do so. It was by safeguarding every person's legitimate interests that Congressmen could prove their genuine love of nationalism. He did not mind even if the Congress were manned by Hindus alone. If its members placed the cause of the whole nation above everything else, then their idealism would ultimately triumph over communalism.

What the Hindus or Mussalmans had exhibited so far in Bengal or Bihar was violence mixed with cowardice; there was no element of bravery in it. To those who did not believe in non-violence, he could hypothetically suggest a more civilized form of revenge than what they had actually been guilty of. Supposing there were a Government in Bihar which believed in violence and not in non-violence, they could have written to the Government in Bengal after the Calcutta riots, 'Now, here are the inhabitants of this province who have returned from Calcutta. They have become

[1] Deobhankar, Shridhar Purushottam Limaye and Rai Bajrang Bahadur, Raja of Bhadri in Partapgarh, U. P., had come with letters from Kripalani, Mridula Sarabhai and Ram Manohar Lohia.

furious and are bent upon taking revenge on the 14 per cent of Mussalmans in Bihar. But we will prevent them from doing so, if we can. In the meanwhile, you should do everything to stop the riot which is even now going on in Bengal.'

Along with sending such a letter to the Muslim League Government in Bengal, the Government of Bihar should have kept the Muslims of Bihar informed about their efforts. If conditions in Bengal did not improve, they could have notified the Bengal Government that unless the Bihar Muslims left the province for Bengal within, say, eight days, they would have to send the latter forcibly over to Bengal rather than allow them to be butchered in Bihar. And when the eight days had passed, they might have taken necessary steps for evacuating the Muslims of Bihar.

It was quite likely that the Muslims of Bihar would have refused to move and declared that they were with the Congress rather than with the League in the policy that the latter had been pursuing in Bengal. That would have meant a victory for the Congress not only in Bihar but in all those provinces where the Government was run by the Congress.

Such action, though fully violent, would have been better than that to which Bihar had lowered herself today. Violence, when cowardly, only served to degrade and did not yield the desired political result.

Gandhiji lastly said that today he was seeking for a non-violent solution for his own sake alone. For the time being, he had given up searching for a non-violent remedy applicable to the masses. He had yet to see if non-violence would prove successful in the present crisis or not. He expected that things would take a definite turn one way or the other within two months and not remain uncertain as they were at the present moment.

My Days with Gandhi, pp. 102-4

166. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SRIRAMPUR,
December 9, 1946

Gandhiji, in a short address, told them that it was their duty to take Ramanama at least twice a day, morning and evening. They must take Ramanama in difficult and troublesome days as they did in peaceful days when they lived a peaceful life without fear from anyone. He was very much pleased at their recitation of Ramanama.[1]

Hindustan Standard, 12-12-1946

[1] The report said: ". . . for the first time . . . the people of Srirampur and its neighbouring village Kamardiya have picked up courage to recite Ramanama in chorus after the days of Noakhali disturbances. . . ."

167. LETTER TO DEVPRAKASH NAYYAR

December 10, 1946

CHI. DEV,

I have your letter. It is good. I agree with what you say but at the same time I think that you yourself have to find your own way. We shall do what we can. Come to me when you get leave for this year. Perhaps I may not engage you in the work here. But we shall have a talk and if I can throw some light on the issue I will do so. There is no hitch from my side but do as is convenient to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India

168. TALK TO WOMEN[1]

SRIRAMPUR,

[*December 10, 1946*][2]

Gandhiji told them that since his arrival in Noakhali he had been telling them all to be fearless. If they acted accordingly and were fearless in all their work, they could live in peace. Pointing towards the sky, Gandhiji said :

Believe in Him. Pray to Him and fear Him alone, and none in this world.

Harijan, 19-1-1947

169. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SRIRAMPUR,

December 10, 1946

If Hindus and Muslims in India gathered courage and cast from their hearts the fear of loss of possessions and life the face of India would change in no time, Gandhiji said. But the reformed social relations must be based upon character built on the rock of fearlessness; only thus could true mutual trust be generated. He referred to the saying of Prophet Mohammed quoted on Sunday last and said that in every

[1] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary". According to the source, "a number of women met Gandhiji . . . in a corner of a paddy field where he was taking his evening walk to tell him their sad tales and the present conditions in which they were living."

[2] From *Hindustan Standard*, 12-12-1946

religion there was a common fund of spiritual experience which applied all over the world.

Whatever differences struck our eyes were the results of requirements limited to particular epochs of time and place. Indeed there were as many religions as there were men on earth; for the needs of no two men were wholly alike. In spite of that, the commonness underlying all the religions could never be missed. A tree had a single stem, many branches and innumerable leaves, no two of which were wholly alike; it was even so in the case of religion.

No religion today was without blemishes. Islam had given rise to the noblest of characters and he counted among his friends men who stood tall and high over their neighbours. But unwanted accretions had gathered in the practice of Islam, which ran counter to the fundamental teachings of that religion.

Similarly, Christian nations, who followed their Master, who taught mankind to love their enemies, had been responsible for two major wars during our generation, which had blighted the face of earth and had left a legacy of suspicion, hatred and violence from which the whole world was suffering today.

In Hinduism too, diabolical wrong had been perpetrated in the name of religion. Our so-called untouchable brethren had been reduced to a condition which was the very opposite of human dignity. Indeed this very charge had been laid against us by General Smuts at the United Nations Assembly in America when Shrimati Vijayalakshmi Pandit demanded justice against the treatment meted out to us in South Africa.

Gandhiji wound up by saying that both Hindus and Muslims were like blood-brothers. They were nourished by food grown from the same soil, quenched their thirst by water of the same river and finally laid themselves to rest in the same earth. If they feared God, they would fear no one else.

Hindustan Standard, 12-12-1946

170. ANSWER TO QUESTION[1]

[On or before *December 11, 1946*][2]

QUESTION: Don't you think that Bengal Ministers may regard your very presence here as an oppression and that whatever they do out of their own sense of justice towards the rehabilitation of the refugees may be regarded by the outside world as being done under the pressure of your presence?

ANSWER: In the first place your assumption is gratuitous. But if it was not, and the assumption were to accord with facts, your

[1] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary". The question was asked by the correspondent of a Madras newspaper.

[2] From the *Hindustan Standard* report which appeared under the date-line "Srirampur, December 11".

deduction would be correct and my stay here would not be consistent with ahimsa. I have come here to put my ahimsa to the acid test in this atmosphere of rank distrust and suspicion.

I claim that I have come as a friend as much of the Muslims as of the Hindus in this part of the world. You may recall my visit to Champaran in the very early period of my etur to the mother-land. I was even served with a notice to quit. The conviction against me was cancelled on the orders of the then Viceroy and the Magistrate was instructed to permit and even help in my unofficial enquiry with the result that I was invited to become a member of the official Sly Commission[1] and a century-old wrong was removed.

Harijan, 19-1-1947; also *Hindustan Standard*, 13-12-1946

171. TELEGRAM TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

RAMGUNJ,
December 11, 1946

JAISUKHLAL GANDHI
CARE SHEPHERD
MAHUVA

IF YOU AND MANU SINCERELY ANXIOUS FOR HER TO BE WITH ME AT YOUR RISK YOU CAN BRING HER TO BE WITH ME. WIRE ARRIVAL KHADI PRATISHTHAN, COLLEGE SQUARE, CALCUTTA.

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./24

172. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

SRIRAMPUR, NOAKHALI DISTRICT,
December 11, 1946

CHI. SUNDARAM,[2]

Your letter today with Press cuttings which you have done well in sending. I have read them all. I have already written[3] to Sheth J. K. Birla and sent the note by hand through Baba Raghavdas. You will probably see that letter and you will see too that I have spoken about you to him. In my opinion, your course is clear. If you can breathe the soul of Hinduism into the Viswa Vidyalaya[4]

[1] The reference is to the Champaran Agrarian Enquiry Committee of which Frank Sly was the president.

[2] The superscription and the signature are in Tamil.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Jugal Kishore Birla", 7-12-1946

[4] Banaras Hindu University

you should stay, not otherwise. I have advised that the stipulated sum should be collected as was desired by Panditji[1]. Therefore, an appeal should go from the University to the Princes. They can easily find the sum expected of them and if it is properly managed they will do so. Businessmen will find their portion and the rest will come easily. But all this can and should be done only if a living, befitting temple is built.

The whole of the sum will not be spent in stone and mortar. Some marble is necessary. It should be a unique thing. It ought not to contain any idol. An idol is not a necessity of Hindu belief or a Hindu temple. Such a model structure but very artistic has been built in the Harijan Colony, Kingsway, Delhi. You have seen it. The one in the Viswa Vidyalaya grounds will be twenty times larger, with a great dome with proper acoustic properties, to accommodate an unlimited number of people. It will be a striking thing and there should be a daily service conducted there by priests who will show piety in every one of their activities, private and public. If the idea is grasped, the proper persons will come. More I need not say. You can dot the *i*s and cross the *t*s.

I have not really the time to spare from the work here before me, but Panditji's memory is a sacred trust for me. He was much greater than he himself knew. But his limitations were amazing. The wonder is that he surmounted them all.

I am in the hands of God. He will shape me as He will. Don't worry or fret about me.

You can, if you wish, share this letter with those who were near and dear to him. It is not for publication at all.

BAPU

SHRI V. SUNDARAM

From a photostat: G. N. 3200

[1] Madan Mohan Malaviya

173. LETTER TO J. B. KRIPALANI

SRIRAMPUR,
NOAKHALI,
December 11, 1946

DEAR PROFESSOR,

Sucheta is still in Calcutta attending to her ailing sister. I have asked her not to hasten so long as in her opinion her presence in Calcutta is necessary for her sister. She has not sent me the medical certificate but in her letters she says she will hand it to me when she comes. You may depend upon my not letting her overdo things to the damage of her health. I will see that she is quite safe with me.

Yours is no easy job. But probably it is more difficult than you or I had imagined. I do not think of the two letters of which you have sent me copies in the way you do. I think they are honest letters. Evidently, they have remained members of the Committee, but if I were you I would not insist on their remaining. I will take them at their word and have new blood with you, and I would say that if you find that you are unable to shape the organization in the best way possible and if they let you resign you should do so without a moment's thought. We can only think of the organization we serve and nothing else.

The friend who brought your letter and Sucheta's brought also a packet from Mridula. It contained copies of her note prepa-red for the Congress and another note prepared by her on her experiences of Garhmukteshwar. You must have seen both. I liked them. I read the note on the Congress organization only today. Her suggestions make a forcible appeal to me. I would advise you to ask her to see you and discuss all her proposals with you and enlist her services as also Keskar's[1] to the extent that they allow you to do so. I think that you should discuss her suggestions with Jawaharlal and let him take an active part in carrying them out. Whether he remains a member or whether he does not, I would not for one moment question his downright honesty. He promises to render all the help he can and I have no doubt that he will do so and perhaps more efficiently, because he would then enjoy freedom of action which he will not do otherwise. He is right also in his reflections on the Hindu-

[1] B. V. Keskar

Muslim question. It is a terrible problem and a great responsibility rests upon the Congress now–therefore, the greatest on you.You have asked me to send for you if I want to. I am not likely to do so, but I do want to feel that you are at liberty to come at any time you like without notice, if you want to consult me about anything. Personally I would say that you should do as your reason and conscience tell you, irrespective of what I may think or may not think. I am too much engrossed in the work before me to think of anything else, unless a letter like yours moves me.

Darkness around me still persists. It comes from within, not from without, but it certainly does not deject or disappoint me. I am passing through a fire such as I have never passed through before. All the same I am quite happy in thought that I am not shirking what I hold to be my duty. God is the Rock of ages and I cling to that Rock.

Blessings from

BAPU

ACHARYA J. B. KRIPALANI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Libary. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

174. LETTER TO MANU S. MASHRUWALA

December 11, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

I got your letter after many days. I think I have already replied[1] to it. But these days I cannot keep a complete list for I am practically alone. You need not worry about me at all. I am quite well. I do not make my own *khakharis*. I made them only once. Parasuram is with me.

I hope all three of you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 2682. Courtesy: Manu S. Mashruwala

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Manu S. Mashruwala", 8-12-1946

175. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

December 11, 1946

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your two letters. In reply I have sent you a telegram which you must have received. In order to make progress you must not do what you wish to do, you must follow my instructions. Your first duty, as I see it from this distance, is to improve your health. Whether you have to stay at Benares for six months or more will be decided by me, and that too after seeing how you fare there. After all you will render some service even at Benares. I am not here entirely unattended. I am being looked after very well. It is Parasuram's first duty. Besides, Nirmal Babu is also here and he takes great pains. Therefore do not worry about me at all. Your welfare lies in doing what I say. The error committed by you on your birthday was a small one. You have done ample atonement. This should be enough.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2492

176. LETTER TO SHANTA

December 11, 1946

CHI. SHANTA,

I have your letter. Do as much work as you can. You are bound to succeed. Teach the people to be clean. They should keep themselves, and the water and the lavatories clean. This kind of work does not require money. This can be done only by patience and by example. You have to keep healthy. The body is the abode of God, it is the real temple. Temples made of stone are temples only in name.

I am here on a difficult mission. Though there is darkness, I am not worried.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India

177. EXTRACT FROM DIARY

December 11, 1946

Exhaustion continues. . . It seems I was not fully awake. Fancied it was before me, when in fact it was not. . . . Woke up with a start. Began to grope for it in the dark. Found it after a few minutes. . . .[1] Wanted to take a dose of castor oil. Called Pyarelal thrice. . . . No reply. Tried to go to sleep by reciting Ramanama. Succeeded at last. . . . Why cannot I, who preach the all-healing virtue of Ramanama to others, be content to rely on it exclusively myself?

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p. 41

178. WHAT WILL SOUTH AFRICA DO?

The deputation headed by Shrimati Vijayalakshmi Pandit and sent to the U. N. O. Conference by the Interim Government has undoubtedly done very effective work with marked ability and success. That is clear from the following cablegram sent by Shrimati Vijayalakshmi Pandit from New York :

> Today with your blessings justice of South African Indian cause was vindicated. Committee voting twenty-four to nineteen in our favour. Went to General Smuts after meeting and shook hands. He expressed appreciation at manner in which I had conducted case.[2]

It remains now to be seen how the Parliament of the Union of South Africa and its European public respond. Field Marshal Smuts was able to hurl at the Indian deputation the taunt that India treated her so-called untouchables, legally described as the "Scheduled Classes", much worse than the Union treated her Asiatics or for that matter the Africans. There would be much to be said for

[1] Pyarelal explains : "After the morning walk he felt so utterly exhausted that he had to lie in bed. It must have been about midnight when he got up to visit the chamber-pot."

[2] According to a report in *The Bombay Chronicle,* 30-11-1946, Vijayalakshmi Pandit, in her reply to Heaton Nichols of South Africa before the U. N. General Assembly had said : "When I was coming here I saw Mahatma Gandhi, who is very much interested in this whole case. He said to me as I was leaving : "I do not mind whether you come back having won your case or having suffered defeat; but you must come back as a friend of General Smuts.' And that is not what any man in Mahatma Gandhi's position would have said."

the Field Marshal's taunt if it was true. It is true of South Africa that her treatment of Asiatics has legally deteriorated from time to time, so much so that it has now become well-nigh unbearable. Almost every promise made by the Union Government to the Government of India has now been broken. In India, on the other hand, there never has been any law carrying the bar sinister against the Scheduled Classes. It can be proved up to the hilt that the law has always sought to protect the Scheduled Classes. There is no legal bar, so far as I am aware, against any of the Scheduled Classes being regarded as equal in status to the tallest Indian. What is however true to the shame of orthodox Hinduism and the Sanatani Hindus is that religious custom has denied to these untouchables the rights which the law has allowed, and it is unfortunately also true that sometimes custom overrides the law. But public opinion is progressively rising against this barbarous custom and it is merely a question of time when the custom will be swept out of existence. Let us, therefore, hope that instead of taking doubtful advantage of the things in India which no one defends and against which public opinion is pro-gressively rising, the Europeans of the Union of South Africa will recog-nize that if the U. N. O. Conference is any index of world opinion, it is decidedly against the European prejudice which has hardened into law.

SRIRAMPUR, December 12, 1946

Harijan, 29-12-1946

179. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO JAGNESWAR GHOSH[1]

December 12, 1946

Your suggestion is that people of the same culture should be brought together in a common territory and placed under a common government. Of course, for administrative purposes, men have to be divided into groups. This is best done on economic grounds or on the basis of linguistic unity. What Gandhiji objects to is the redistribution of population on the basis of religion. That would mean an admission that people of different faiths cannot live on friendly terms within the same State. The Muslim League has suggested a similar remedy for the present Hindu-Muslim tension, when the minority who remain over in each Province will be held as hostages for the good behaviour of the majority in the

[1] N. K. Bose who wrote this on behalf of Gandhiji, explains : "A correspondent named Jagneswar Ghosh has sent a letter from Chinsurah in which he proposes that Bengal should be partitioned, because, after all, the cultures of the Hindus and Muslims of this Province are incompatible with one another."

neighbouring Province. This would amount to an armed truce and not peace on terms of equality, friendship and mutual trust. To cut up India into specifically religious zones, and then redistribute population to fit in with such an artificial scheme would, in Gandhiji's opinion, be monstrous. For it will cut across many of the linguistic, cultural and fundamental bonds of co-operation which have held together our people in the past.

My Days with Gandhi, pp. 105-6

180. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO RAMANIMOHAN SEN SHARMA[1]

SRIRAMPUR,
December 12, 1946

Gandhiji can only ask an evacuee to return to his house if he can do so with full reliance upon God. Those who do not feel the necessary confidence in themselves, can certainly not be advised to return.

Gandhiji keenly feels that any word from his mouth cannot bring courage to anyone; and he would not therefore advise any person to return home by relying upon such a frail reed. If one can put faith in God, let him return.

My Days with Gandhi, p. 106

181. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

December 12, 1946

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I have two letters from you now. The second arrived only today. Manu had asked for a wire in reply to the first and I had, therefore, wired to say that you could come over and leave Manu with me on condition that she would stay with me till the end.

I find the second letter in a different strain. If both of you believe that the atmosphere here is impure, how can Manu stay with me ? I can certainly see that nobody harasses her. Whether or not she should talk with Pyarelal will be left to her choice. Just now he is in one village, I in another. If she does not want even to see him, she will be able to keep that resolve too. But I think that rather than live under such strict discipline it might be better for her to stay in a freer

[1] Presumably drafted by N. K. Bose, who explains that the addressee was "a physician in the affected town of Sandwip in Noakhali". In the source this appears after the letter to Jagneswar Ghosh; *vide* the preceding item.

atmosphere. It would be proper for her to come to me only if she feels perfectly safe with me. Pyarelal's eyes are clean and he is not likely to force himself on anybody. I don't think he did anything wrong in placing his idea before me in the presence of all. But we should forget all this now. Manu's good lies in allowing her to do as she likes, and I want nothing but her own good.

I did not see the letter addressed to Kanu. It must have gone to him directly. Neither I nor anybody else here knows how it went astray. Here I am the only person knowing Gujarati. I shall know by and by what happened.

Kanu also is away from me. All the letters are first received by Satis Babu. I don't know if he sends them to Pyarelal. He comes and sees me once a week at least. I shall know more from him when he comes here next.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

182. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SRIRAMPUR,

December 12, 1946

Indeed this[1] is the meaning of hymns wherever they are sung by saints and devotees. They always say: "Lead us from darkness to light, from untruth to truth."

The *Ramdhun* has also a story behind it. Once Saint Tulsidas was touring on foot different shrines even as Chaitanya Mahaprabhu had walked to Puri and Brindavan, and reached the temple of Dakore. That temple is dedicated to Vishnu.

Tulsidas said to himself that unless God revealed himself in the form of his favourite Rama, his head would not bow in obeisance.

The story has it that this happened and the devout pilgrim saw before him seated in all their glory Rama and Sita surrounded by Lakshmana, Shatrughna and Hanuman. Hence the *Ramdhun*, meaning intoxication of God.

[1] The report said : "Two friends who had joined the day's evening prayer had sung a song which Gandhiji had chosen as the theme of his after-prayer speech. The purport of the song was prayer to God to light the lamp of truth in the heart after it had been freed from the blemishes by the abundance of God's love."

It is enough if the prayer springs from the heart and leads us from darkness to light and from fear to fearlessness.

Hindustan Standard, 16-12-1946

183. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

December 13, 1946

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

You have asked why the progress of anti-untouchability work is so slow. The reason is plain. The problem has one feature not to be found in any other, namely, that in this case *adharma* has been assumed to be dharma. It takes time to explain and understand this. Moreover, it requires great *tapascharya* to convince the people that what is known as dharma is in fact *adharma*. Those who would do so effectively must themselves be perfect embodiments of dharma. None of us are that. We are full of liking and aversion, yearn for worldly pleasures, lack the capacity to love even our enemies, are without courage and self-control. Who will, therefore, listen to us? This work requires not so much intellectual ability as spiritual strength. If you think over the other items of the constructive programme, the difference I have explained will become clear to you.

Please have patience and do your utmost to cultivate the virtues I have mentioned above.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 5-1-1947

184. LETTER TO MANILAL B. DESAI

SRIRAMPUR,

December 13, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

The fact that I have not written to you recently does not mean that I do not think about you or others and Uruli-Kanchan. I really feel sorry that I cannot write. I spent, and made others spend, so much money over the things there, and at Panchgani too, and now God has tossed me here and is testing me. All the time, therefore, the saying "God's will prevails" echoes in my ears.

I should like to have a detailed letter from there every week. I have not at all lost interest in the institution. How are Dr. Bhagawat's experiments progressing? Are any dietetic experiments being conducted? We don't get clean water anywhere here. Can anybody there say how this water can be easily purified? How is Dhiru? Is Paramanand still there? What about his marriage? How is Balkrishna? Does Gangabehn[1] pay occasional visits? Has any woman worker been trained there? What about Gokhale? Do the local people help? What is happening about the building? Do you see Dr. Mehta sometime? The situation here defies description. I have got stuck here now. Does anybody look after Motilal's affairs? Whom has he left behind?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 2737. Courtesy: Manilal B. Desai

185. ADVICE TO WORKERS[2]

SRIRAMPUR,

December 13, 1946

The name *Rakshi Dal* did not appeal to Gandhiji. Who could pretend to be the "protector" of another? Each one had to learn the art of self-protection whether it was a child of ten, a young girl or a grown-up man. If they felt they could protect themselves and others by means of violence alone, they should learn the art of warfare and the use of arms. But in such an enterprise he could give them little aid. Not only that, it had been his uniform experience that those who set out to protect others with the sword ended by turning oppressors themselves. Under his plan, not many men were needed in a village for the protection of the few against many. One or two would be enough. If they laid down their lives in the performance of their duty without flinching and without anger in their hearts, their example would probably inspire others to exhibit non-violent courage likewise, so that they would either be able to melt the hearts of their oppressors or die in the act of defending their self-respect and honour in a non-violent way. He, therefore, advised the workers to turn themselves into *Sevaks* or servants rather than "protectors".

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, pp. 61-2

[1] Ganga P. Bhatt

[2] Pyarelal explains : "About a hundred workers from villages around Srirampur came to consult Gandhiji; they wanted to organize themselves into a *Rakshi Dal* — Protection League."

186. EXTRACT FROM DIARY

December 13, 1946

Wrote to B.[1] that anti-untouchability work proceeds at snail's pace. . . . A worker who wants to work for this great cause has need to be duty (dharma) incarnate. . . .

For the evening meal had a *khakhara* (a paper-thin wafer) from two *tolas* of barley meal . . . followed later by some jaggery. They allayed hunger.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p. 114

187. REMARK TO A FRIEND[2]

[Before *December 14, 1946*][3]

I don't want to return from Bengal defeated. I would rather die, if need be, at the hands of an assassin. But I do not want to court it, much less do I wish it.

Harijan, 12-1-1947; also *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. I, Book II, p. 77

188. NOTE TO PYARELAL[4]

[Before *December 14, 1946*][5]

I have said from the very beginning that it is going to be a most hazardous task. A more hazardous task is not likely to fall to our lot in this life. Let us entirely resign ourselves to Him. His will be done. . . . You are not to rush into danger unnecessarily but unflinchingly face whatever comes in the natural course. If, in this way, all of us are wiped out, I would not mind it in the least.

For myself, I am putting myself more and more in God's hands.[6]

Harijan, 12-1-1947; also *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. I, Book II, p. 77

[1] Bhagwanji P. Pandya; *vide* "Letter to Bhagwanji P. Pandya"

[2] This and the following item are extracted from Pyarelal's "Do or Die at Work". They were reported under the date-line : "Bhatialpur, December 14, 1946."

[3] *ibid*

[4] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Do or Die at Work"

[5] *Vide* the preceding item.

[6] According to Pyarelal, this sentence was in "another note".

189. TELEGRAM TO RAJBALI PANDE

December 14, 1946

PANDIT RAJBALI PANDE
HINDU UNIVERSITY
BENARES

YOUR LETTER RECEIVED ONLY YESTERDAY EVENING. AM CLEAR PANDIT KASHINATHJI'S FAST IS ILLEGITIMATE. HE SHOULD ABANDON.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

190. LETTER TO A MAHARAJA

SRIRAMPUR, NOAKHALI,
December 14, 1946

MAHARAJA SAHEB,

Yesterday I got your kind letter of the 9th instant which was delivered to me by Diwanbahadur Bijoyakumar Sen. Please accept my thanks for the same. I have had a detailed discussion with the Diwanbahadur about the subject which you have mentioned in your letter. He will personally tell you my views on the subject. Therefore I am not mentioning them here.

I am told that you will be returning from Calcutta in January. If you could find some time for me then, I would be very glad to meet you in Noakhali. This is all I have to say.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Bengali: C. W. 10427

191. SPEECH AT MADHUPUR

[*December 14, 1946*][1]

Gandhiji in his speech said that although hospital work was not in his line, he had responded[2] to Dr. Das Gupta's invitation because he was given to understand that

[1] From Chandulal Dalal, *Gandhi—1915-1948 : A Detailed Chronology*

[2] According to Chandulal Dalal, Gandhiji was opening a hospital which the Indian Medical Association had started under the guidance of Dr. J. N. Das Gupta.

the workers were actuated solely by a spirit of service. He knew that the task was a very delicate one today. Refugees had gathered together in camps and it was up to the workers to create an atmosphere when they could safely return to their deserted homes. Moreover, work here was not city work but lay in the villages where insanitation and wretched water supply had to be dealt with.

Those who read his writings in the *Harijan* knew that for some time past he had been advocating nature-cure methods. He confessed, this was an old love for him. His experience, as years rolled by, had been that there could be no greater healer than God Himself. It was only when man departed from the laws of Nature as set by Him that he became subject to diseases of body and mind. It was usual for the medical profession to pay heed to the body exclusive of the mind and the spirit. The result was bad. The health of all the three was their supreme concern. Here the chief malady was fear—a feeling which not only benumbed their senses, but also inhibited every attempt to restore conditions of healthy normal living.

The speaker had heard that Muslim villagers would not go to Hindu doctors. He hoped it was wrong. Medical profession knew no distinction between man and man, no matter to what faith he or she belonged.

It should be the aim of doctors posted here not to depend on foreign remedies. The countryside was teeming with potent herbs. Ayurvedic and Unani physicians made wide use of them. Why should not doctors with Western learning make use of these cheap remedies? Acharya Profulla Roy[1] , Gandhiji had noticed one day, used plain mustard oil and salt, instead of depending on many oils and pastes turned out by the Bengal Chemical Works. When asked about it, Acharya Roy laughingly replied that those things were meant for simpletons and he was not going to add to their number by using them.

Hindustan Standard, 18-12-1946

192. EXTRACT FROM DIARY

December 14, 1946

Got up at 2.30 a.m. Applied sulphur ointment for scabies, then went off to sleep with the help of Ramanama.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p. 114

[1] P. C. Roy, founder, Bengal Chemical and Pharmaceutical Works

193. TELEGRAM TO MAHOMED TAYABULLA[1]

SRIRAMPUR,
[On or before *December 15, 1946*][2]

I AM WATCHING.[3]

GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-12-1946

194. INTERVIEW TO ASSAM CONGRESSMEN[4]

SRIRAMPUR,
December 15, 1946

Asked for guidance in regard to the question of Grouping,[4] Gandhiji replied :

I do not need a single minute to come to a decision, for on this I have a mind. I am a Congressman to the very marrow, as I am mainly the framer of the constitution of the Congress as it stands today. I told Bardoloi that if there is no clear guidance from the Congress Committee, Assam should not go into the Sections. It should lodge its protest and retire from the Constituent Assembly. It will be a kind of satyagraha against the Congress for the good of the Congress.

Rightly or wrongly, the Congress has come to the Decision that it will stand by the judgment of the Federal Court. The dice are heavily loaded. The decision of the Federal Court will go against the Congress interpretation of Grouping as far as I can make out, for the simple reason that the Cabinet has got legal advice which upholds their decision.

The Federal Court is the creation of the British. It is a packed court. To be consistent, the Congress must abide by its decision

[1] President of the Assam Provincial Congress Committee

[2] The telegram was reported under the date-line Gauhati, December 15, 1946.

[3] Tayabulla had reiterated Assam's protest against the Grouping Clause in the Cabinet Mission's plan and had sought Gandhiji's help "at this hour of Assam's peril". *Vide* also the following item.

[4] Bijayachandra Bhagwat, M.L.A., and Mohendra Mohan Chowdhury, Secretary of the Assam Congress Parliamentary Party, met Gandhiji on behalf of Gopinath Bardoloi. This appeared under the title, "Gandhiji's Advice to Assam".

[4] The reference is to the British Cabinet's statement dated December 6; *vide* "British Cabinet's Statement on Grouping", 6-12-1946

whatever it may be. If Assam keeps quiet, it is finished. No one can force Assam to do what it does not want to do. It is autonomous to a large extent today.

It must become fully independent and autonomous. Whether you have that courage, grit and the gumption, I do not know. You alone can say that. But if you can make that declaration, it will be a fine thing. As soon as the time comes for the Constituent Assembly to go into Sections you will say, "Gentlemen, Assam retires." For the indepen-dence of India it is the only condition. Each unit must be able to decide and act for itself. I am hoping that in this Assam will lead the way.

I have the same advice for the Sikhs. But your position is much happier than that of the Sikhs. You are a whole Province. They are a community inside a Province. But I feel every individual has the right to act for himself, just as I have.

Q. But we are told that the framing of the Constitution for the whole of India cannot be held up for the sake of Assam. Assam cannot be allowed to block the way.

A. There is no need to do that. That is why I say I am in utter darkness. Why are not these simple truths evident to all after so many years? If Assam retires, it does not block, but leads the way to India's independence.

Q. The British Government has said that the Constitution framed by the Constituent Assembly cannot be imposed on unwilling units. So, if some parts do not accept it, the British Parliament won't accept it.

A. Who is the British Government? If we think indepen-dence is going to descend on our heads from England or some-where, we are greatly mistaken. It won't be independence. We will be crushed to atoms. We are fluctuating between independence and helpless dependence. The Cabinet Mission's plan lies in between.

If we act rightly, there will be the full blown flower of indepen-dence. If we react wrongly, the blossom will wither away. Mind you, the League standpoint is quite correct. If they stand out, the Constituent Assembly cannot impose its Constitution on an unwilling party. The British Government has no say in the matter one way or the other.

The British cannot interfere with the working of the Constituent Assembly. Supposing the vast majority, including the Muslims and others form a constitution, you can defy the British Parliament if it seeks to interfere. Power is in your hands. Some such thing happened

in Ireland only recently. And de Valera is no non-violent fighter. The position of India is far better than that of Ireland. If we have not the penetration, we will lose the advantage we have, as it is apparently being lost today.

If Assam takes care of itself, the rest of India, will be able to look after itself. What have you got to do with the constitution of the Union Government? You should form your own constitution. That is enough. You have the basis of a constitution all right even now.

I have never despised the 1935 constitution. It is based on provincial autonomy. It has the capacity for fullest growth, provided the people are worth it. The hill people are with you. Many Muslims are also with you. The remainder can be, too, if you act on the square.

You will have to forget petty jealousies and rivalries and overcome your weaknesses. Assam has many weaknesses as it has much strength, for I know my Assam.

ASSAM CONGRESSMEN: With your blessings we can even go outside the Congress and fight.

GANDHIJI: In 1939, when there was the question of giving up the Ministry, Subhas Babu opposed it as he thought Assam's was a special case. I told Bardoloi that there was much in what Subhas Babu had said and, although I was the author of that scheme of boycott, I said Assam should not come out if it did not feel like it. But Assam did come out; it was wrong.

The Assam Congressmen said that the Maulana Saheb had then said that exception could not be made in the case of Assam.

G. Here there is no question of exception. Assam rebelled and that civilly. But we have that slavish mentality. We look to the Congress and then feel that if we do not follow it slavishly, something will go wrong with it. I have said that not only a Province but even an individual can rebel against the Congress and by doing so save it, assuming that he is in the right. I have done so myself. Congress has not attained the present stature without much travail.

I remember in 1918, I think, there was the Provincial Conference of the Congress workers of Gujarat at Ahmedabad. The late Abbas Tyabjee was in the chair. All the old guards were there. The Ali Brothers had not yet joined hands with me fully then, as they did later on. The late Shri Vithalbhai Patel was there, and I moved the non-co-operation resolution. I was a nonentity then. A constitutional question arose. Could a Provincial Conference anticipate the decision

of the Congress? I said, "Yes." A Provincial Conference and even a single individual could anticipate the Congress for its own benefit. In spite of opposition of the old hands, the resolution was carried. That paved the way for the Congress to pass a similar resolution at Calcutta. India was dumbfounded at the audacity of a Provincial Conference passing the revolutionary resolution.

We had formed a Satyagraha Sabha outside the Congress. It was joined by Horniman[1], Sarojini Devi[2], Shankarlal[3], Umar Sobhani and Vallabhbhai. I was ill. The Rowlatt Act was passed. I shook with rage. I said to the Sardar I could do nothing unless he helped me. Sardar was willing. And the rest you know. It was rebellion, but a healthy one. We celebrate the 6th of April to the 13th. You have all these historical instances before you.

I have given you all this time to steel your hearts, to give you courage. If you do not act correctly and now, Assam will be finished. Tell Bardoloi I do not feel the least uneasiness. My mind is made up. Assam must not lose its soul. It must uphold it against the whole world. Else I will say that Assam had only manikins and no men. It is an impertinent suggestion that Bengal should dominate Assam in any way.

Asked if they could tell the people that they had rebelled against the Congress with Gandhiji's blessings, Gandhiji said :

Talk of God's blessings. They are much richer. Tell the people even if Gandhiji tries to dissuade us, we won't listen.

Harijan, 29-12-1946

195. EXTRACT FROM DIARY

December 15, 1946

Had a visit from Justice D. and his wife. Told them it was not possible to work in Noakhali without renouncing one's all.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p. 114

[1] B. G. Horniman; the then editor of *The Bombay Chronicle*
[2] Sarojini Naidu
[3] Shankarlal Banker

196. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO KAMALA DAS GUPTA[1]

December 16, 1946

Personally I do not think the extent of the evil is so great. Many such cases have not come under my observation. In any case you may keep in mind the young men who will take in such girls and see what can be done when you come across a *bona-fide* case.

From the original: C. W. 1472. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

197. NOTE TO C. BHUSHAN CHOWDHURY

SRIRAMPUR,

December 16, 1946

Write to Kaka Babu that he is doing a lot of work by staying there. How is Manostan Babu?

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 8911

198. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

December 16, 1946

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

Your letter of November 17 came into my hands on December 14. Such is the postal arrangement here !!! You have done right. Now the work for Harijans will shine forth. The times are such that everyone must do the greatest penance. And of course you have the capacity for it. You have done right in becoming the President of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. You should serve to the best of your ability. This work should not hinder your Harijan service. You must have got my letter[2] to this effect.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Badoken Preranadayak Kuchh Patra*, front cover

[1] The addressee explains : " . . . a friend . . . had received, in response to an appeal, 86 letters with the offer to marry the molested and dishonoured girls of Noakhali . . . I, as Secretary of the B. P. C. C. Women's Committee, went to . . . meet Mahatma Gandhi and requested him to take the responsibility of disposing of them in any manner he chose. I reached . . . Srirampur . . . on December 16. . . . As it was Gandhiji's silence-day, he noted down his reply on two small pieces of paper."

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Viyogi Hari", 16-11-1946

199. SPEECH AT WORKERS' MEETING[1]

SRIRAMPUR,

December 16, 1946

The chief duty of a servant of a village is purification.

Today the villages are a festering sore upon the countryside. It is no use blaming the British Government for all our ills. The latter are going to quit India and we have already got a Government manned[2] by our own people.

When the British first established themselves firmly in India their idea was to build cities where all rich people would gravitate and help them in exploiting the countryside. These cities were made partially beautiful; service of all kinds were made available to their inhabitants while the millions of villagers were left rotting in hopeless ignorance and misery.

Now that we have a Government manned by our own people let it not be said that they also care for the city people at the expense of the villagers. There is a saying in Gujarati: 'Dawn is whenever one wakes up.' Let it be so with us.

Let the popular Government in the Provinces, whether Congress or League, wake up to the urgency of renovating India's rural life.

But this can never be the work of the Government alone; every citizen has to take his due share in public work before we can become a great nation.

Gandhiji then drew the attention of local workers to the pitiable condition of the villages. Clean drinking water was nowhere available, roads were in miserable condition, while the canals were choked up by water hyacinth. Every village seemed to have more than its share of dysentery, cholera and smallpox, all of which were preventable diseases. There were plenty of men of bad character who took every opportunity of fishing in troubled water for personal gain.

Purification of this dreadful double disease of mind and body is a task to which workers should address themselves. India is not lacking in manpower; what is necessary is collective effort rightly directed. Government can do much but they can only do so if there is enlightened public opinion behind them. Men are now living like

[1] The source reported that about a couple of hours before prayer, Gandhiji had addressed a workers' meeting and at the end of the prayer the same subject was further continued. The text has been edited.

[2] The Interim Government had assumed office on September 2, 1946.

worms in villages. Darkness will give way only to patient and persevering endeavour. Bad men will then no longer find the environment in which they can grow or thrive. Harmonious relations will be restored among communities when poverty and ignorance have disappeared.

It was with that object Gandhiji said that he had come to Noakhali. He could not leave the place until his task was done. He did not mind laying down his life in that attempt.

Hindustan Standard, 18-12-1946

200. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SRIRAMPUR,

December 16, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi, making his first reference to the Constituent Assembly, mentioned the resolution[1] moved by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru at the Constituent Assembly defining the objectives which the Constituent Assembly should have. Gandhiji said that the resolution was placed by the mover after mature consideration of every aspect of the complicated issue facing the country and with due regard to justice to all communities.

Gandhiji was sure that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru would stick to that resolution, whatever be the criticism advanced or opinion held by others.

Gandhiji also referred to Pandit Nehru's recent visit to London where he had gone and from where he had returned not happily. This taught the lesson that we should make our decision after careful deliberation and having full regard to truth and justice and then stick to that decision, whatever the consequences. Gandhiji said that he felt that he must stay on here until the situation had completely improved. His determination was inflexible, whatever other people might say or feel about it. In this connection, Gandhiji cited the story of an artist who had painted a picture. The artist placed it at a road corner and invited opinion on his work. Later the artist found that his picture had been marked in every place with remarks of disapproval. But this, Gandhiji continued, should not be taken by the artist in the light that his work was really not good. What one thinks best one should pursue. One should know what the wise say and see what the saints practise and then one should search one's own heart whether it wants that thing. One should accept immediately what others might say or do. One must look to one's own conscience and see if one is prepared for it.

Therefore, Gandhiji's advice to people was not to return to their homes simply because he asked them to do so. They should know what the wise men say, what the saints do and also what was in their own mind or heart.

Hindustan Standard, 19-12-1946

[1] *Vide* "Constitution Assembly Resolution"

201. EXTRACT FROM DIARY

December 16, 1946

S. and his friends have come with the desire to work under me in Noakhali. Told them that is hardly possible while I am still surrounded by darkness. They should go and report themselves to the Superintendent of Police, Abdullah; I have no accommodation or any amenities for them.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p. 114

202. NOTE ON CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY[1]

SRIRAMPUR,

December 17, 1946

In my opinion, it will be a grave mistake if the Constituent Assembly attempts, in the face of the boycott by the Muslim League, to frame a constitution for the whole of India. If and when the Muslim League boycott becomes an established fact, the Constituent Assembly should have a right to frame a constitution of independence for all the Provinces, States and units that may be represented at the Constituent Assembly. This will be an honourable and consistent position for the Constituent Assembly as it is at present constituted. There should be no fear of another or for that matter more constituent assemblies sitting, if the attitude advised by me is taken up. No other such constituent assembly can sit or function except under the aegis of the British Government whilst the latter functions in India. If the British Government wills it, such other constituent assemblies cannot [be] prevented except through a terrible struggle put up by the Congress, whether of a violent or non-violent nature.

I feel too that the Congress can subscribe to the contention of the British Government about Grouping if it allows Assam and the Frontier Province to secede from the Congress for the purposes of the Constituent Assembly. The Congress has no power save the moral to compel obedience by a Province or a group such as Sikhs.

Sardar Patel's Correspondence, Vol. 3, p. 317

[1] According to the source, this was an "enclosure" to a letter dated December 20 from Asaf Ali to Vallabhbhai Patel.

203. LETTER TO SARAT CHANDRA BOSE [1]

December 17, 1946[2]

Gandhiji is very anxious on your account, and wishes to learn everything about the present course of treatment, and also if there has been any improvement in your condition.

He says further that it would not do for you to fall ill like this. When one has taken upon himself the responsibility of serving the country's cause, one has also to master the art of keeping oneself in a workable and healthy condition. However heavy the burden of duties may be, the daily routine for maintaining the body in good order must never be broken. Otherwise one's work is likely to be interrupted.

He would thank you also for news about Mrs. Bose.

My Days with Gandhi, pp. 110-1

204. LETTER TO S. RADHAKRISHNAN

SRIRAMPUR,

December 17, 1946

DEAR DR. RADHAKRISHNAN[3],

Om Prakash gave me your letter yesterday. My congratulations on your decision. I had expected nothing less of you. You will be in charge as long as you are needed there.

I never dreamt of any of the brothers being Pro-Vice-Chancellor or holding any of the high offices in the University or even any office whatsoever except it be required in its interest. They should all be mute servants. Perhaps you have seen my article[4] on the subject in *Harijan*.

Dr. Shyamaprasad is an ideal man for the post. Only I wish he was as sober a Hindu Sabha man[5] as he is an able and learned administrator. You may show this to him. You are calling him to no easy job.

[1] N. K.Bose explains : "Just after the early morning prayer, Gandhiji asked me to write a letter in Bengali to Sarat Babu; he had noticed in the newspapers yesterday that Sarat Babu was ill."

[2] *ibid*

[3] Then Vice-Chancellor, Banaras Hindu University

[4] *Vide* "Malaviyaji"

[5] Shyamaprasad Mookherjee was elected President of the 27th Session of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha to be held at Gorakhpur on December 27, 28 and 29.

As to your last paragraph, the less said the better. I am on the anvil.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile: *Mahatma*, Vol. VII, between pp. 344 and 345

205. LETTER TO ASAF ALI

SRIRAMPUR,
December 17, 1946

DEAR ASAF ALI,

You are an old and seasoned Congressman. I know how you stood in the estimation of the late lamented Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan and Dr. Ansari and what value Maulana Abul Kalam Azad puts upon you, not to mention the many important Hindu and other friends you have. It is well therefore that the Interim Government of India has chosen you as its first Ambassador in America. India has a right toexpect you to represent the combined culture India's many religions represent. What is perhaps more, you will represent simple living and high thinking for which the National Congress stands, and of which you are a distinguished member.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.

From a copy: Asaf Ali Papers. Courtesy: Aruna Asaf Ali

206. LETTER TO PYARELAL

December 17, 1946

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have your strange letter.

Whatever was important, you have settled while leaving. I know I cannot change your decision. I am not able to see my mistake. If I have made a mistake, it is your duty to point it out to me; and if you cannot do it, that is, if you cannot convince me, then you should follow my rule. If you are clear to the last moment, then there is no doubt that you should leave me. Now you may act and act quickly in the light of what you consider your duty. I have informed you that for me this is my severest test. If I do not do or die you must think me worthless. Then you may take it that my life is a burden.

You write that my confession was such a heavy punishment for Sushila that compared to that her keeping away without notice should be considered real mercy. This I cannot swallow. If that is so, then what I did in the case of Ba, my father and many other dear ones should be considered a mistake, is that not so ? Surely you do not wish to say that I made a mistake only in this case ?

You also realize that if I make mistake again and having committed it, do not publicly correct it, there is no hope of success in my present work. Hence, I can do nothing else.

Though I may make a mistake and proclaim it to the world, yet the heaviest punishment is borne by one at whose cost the mistake is made ! ! ! How can that be so ? Is there not something very wrong in this line of thinking ?

Suppose that A who is innocent is assaulted and abused by B. Then B repents and makes a public apology. In thus purifying himself B will have proved guilty and yet A will suffer, is that so? That A's love may cause anguish to him is an other matter. Such anguish is only for the good.

If you consider B's confession proper, there is no difference between him and me. Even if A is not innocent, B, who adheres to non-violence will not be proved innocent because by his own yardstick he has definitely been guilty. And anyone who has accepted my moral standard will say that it would be only proper that A also makes a public confession of his guilt.

Now, in deference to both of you, I have taken the only course possible for me. I have not mentioned anything in the diary. I do not give as much importance to my diary as you do.

Sushila of course insists that everything may as well be known to the public. But here insistence has no value because she says it out of anguish. She does not regard it as a duty. That is why I have not sent the note I had written to Nirmal Babu. I have torn it up. I have written to Sushila that her duty is to follow your advice; when you and I say different things, in my opinion she should do what you say. Now I have said everything that needs to be said. You may do what you consider proper.

Sushila is very deeply wounded. I have tried my utmost to pacify her. It may be good if you remain with her for the time being. I wish you would go to the village and stay with her. Both of you should together consider and decide what your duty is. The task this

time is extremely delicate.

I have written all this after careful deliberation. This is the first thing I did after the morning prayer. Before this I wrote a postcard about Sriramulu and the first few sentences in the diary.

I must keep a copy of this, but probably you will not wish it copied in the diary. So you may return this to me or a copy of it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have sent replies to Asaf Ali's questions.[1] Read them when you get the copy. So, Sushila will be coming here on Saturday.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

207. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

December 17, 1946

DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. What shall I say to you? I have already said that you do not understand me and still call me your guide. You caused pain to Kanu also. Now what shall I say? It is a crime even to talk to you. I shall be satisfied if you act according to what you have gained and be happy. I am afraid to talk to you about anything. You misinterpreted what I told you with great affection and caused pain to Kanu by giving him your interpretation. Neither you nor I will lose anything if you do not come here. Lose yourself in whatever service you like to take up.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 543

208. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SRIRAMPUR,

December 17, 1946

Gandhiji told the audience that it was for the first time today that he could visit

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Shrikrishnadas Jaju", 8-1-1947

that place[1] to hold his prayers. God willing, he would like to tour such affected villages one by one. He had not the strength in him to undertake that big task now. For that strength he depended on God. He would like to hold his prayers wherever he goes during his village-to-village tour.[2]

Explaining further the object of his present mission, Gandhiji said that the task of rehabilitation of refugees had still to be undertaken and it remained an uphill one. He was glad that volunteers from far off places were coming forward to lend a helping hand and mentioned Sardar Niranjan Singh Gill and Sardar Jivan Singh, both of Azad Hind Fouj, who had met and expressed their desire to place their services at his disposal. Gandhiji said that both had met the Bengal Premier before coming to Noakhali and had been promised full support in their mission of assisting speedy rehabilitation.

Introducing Sardar Jivan Singh to the prayer audience, Gandhiji said that detailed plans of their work had been worked out by Sardars Jivan Singh and Niranjan Singh Gill and would be placed before Bengal Premier. Gandhiji was glad that members of the small Sikh community in far off Punjab considered that the problem facing East Bengal was an all-India problem and that no part of the country could afford to remain indifferent to happenings in other parts. This was a correct example which every one should emulate. Gandhiji was particularly glad that these bold Sikh soldiers who joined the Azad Hind Fouj and fought had now come without even their *kirpans*[3] to work non-violently for the promotion of communal harmony. This perhaps explained the futility of violence in contrast to the efficacy and potentiality of non-violence.

Introducing Mr. Asaf Ali, Member of the Interim Government, to the prayer gathering, Gandhiji observed :

We are on the threshold of freedom. But we must not forget that we have not yet attained full freedom.

Gandhiji said that the Interim Government thought it desirable to have a representative in America for the purpose of interpreting India to the American people and Mr. Asaf Ali had been chosen to hold that high office and fulfil the mission entrusted to him. Referring to the Railway Portfolio now held by Mr. Asaf Ali, Gandhiji said that the immediate problem which should engage the serious attention of the Railway Member was to improve travelling facilities for the third-

[1] According to the report in *The Hindu*, the meeting was held in another part of Srirampur village where no less than 63 houses had been completely destroyed.

[2] The following three paragraphs are reproduced from *The Hindu.*

[3] A small sword carried by Sikhs as a religious symbol

class passengers and abolish the unhealthy system of supplying Hindu *pani*[1] and Muslim *pani* in railway stations.

Gandhiji then referred to his anger which had overcome him on Monday night.[2] He did not have even proper rest that night, but from half-past-two at night he began his work. In this connection Gandhiji related how once his father was angry when Gandhiji went to see a theatre. But his angry father did not say anything to him. Instead, he (his father) began to weep and beat his head. Similarly, he at the time of his anger that night began to beat his own head. But he did not like to weep like others. Instead he wanted to unburden his heavy heart by placing before the whole world what mistake he had committed by being angry. For he knew that a man of 'ahimsa' like him should not be angry. But he tried his best to suppress his own anger, but so far he had not completely succeeded. He said :[3]

> I am not a Mahatma; I am an *alpatma*. I am an ordinary mortal like you all and I am strenuously trying to practise ahimsa. Today I lost my temper and, therefore, I am not a perfect man. If an imperfect man like me can try to practise ahimsa, all of you also can do so. I have come here with the determination to put my ahimsa to test and in that process either succeed or perish.

He said that every personal act had to be dominated by truth and non-violence if they were to be evidenced in big things. These were not wooden things but living organisms. He felt that he had not attained the necessary stage of detachment described in the *Gita*.

He asked his hearers to discard the thought that what one man could do was not possible for all human beings even if a persistent attempt was made. It was simple wisdom to remember that man's vocation was to make the attempt and God's grace alone could bless it with success.

Hindustan Standard, 20-12-1946 and 22-12-1946; and *The Hindu*, 20-12-1946 and 21-12-1946

[1] Water

[2] In *My Days with Gandhi*, "Letter to N. K. Bose", 12-11-1946, N. K. Bose explains : "At 3.20 in the morning, I heard Gandhiji talking aloud to Sushila Nayyar. His voice seemed worried . . . suddenly all of us heard a deeply anguished cry . . . . It was Gandhiji's voice, and then we heard the sound of two slaps . . . then a heavy sob." On December 20, Gandhiji explained to N. K. Bose : "When she learnt about my proposed journey by foot, she was insistent that some old companion who knew about my personal requirements should be in my company . . . ." *Vide* "Talk with N. K. Bose", 19-12-1946 and"Letter From Dr. Sushila Nayyar to N. K. Bose", 22-12-1946

[3] The following paragraph is reproduced from *The Hindu*, 20-12-1946.

209. LETTER TO ASAF ALI

December 18, 1946

MY DEAR ASAF,

Here is the letter I drafted, and a copy typed and signed. You make what use you like of it. May I suggest that if you have not, you should now pick up the Hindi and Urdu forms of Hindustani in both the scripts— [Dev]nagri and Urdu. Herewith the letters for Aruna[1] and Jawaharlal.[2]

I am glad you came.

Yours,
BAPU

From a copy: Asaf Ali Papers. Courtesy: Aruna Asaf Ali

210. LETTER TO SACHINDRA NARAYAN ROY

SRIRAMPUR,
NOAKHALI,
December 18, 1946

DEAR PROF. ROY,

I have just got your letter of 25th ultimo and read it. I am sorry I have not yet got your open letter. Therefore, I do not know its contents. You need not worry about the contents of that letter whatever they may be.

What you say about Nasrulla Khan Saheb is startling.[3] May I send your letter to him? Are you able to prove the statement ? Is it possible to give the names and addresses and other particulars about the missing girls? I have had such complaints from other sources but no particular have been forthcoming.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. G.

PROF. SACHINDRA NARAYAN ROY
31 SHAH SAHIB LANE
DACCA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Aruna Asaf Ali", 18-12-1946

[2] Not available

[3] In his letter, the addressee had informed Gandhiji that K. Nasrulla Khan, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Chief Minister had concealed and confined not a few but several abducted girls in the Muslim areas of the city.

211. LETTER TO N. G. RANGA

SRIRAMPUR,
NOAKHALI,
December 18, 1946

MY DEAR RANGA[1],

I have your letter of the 11th instant and the enclosures. You ask me not to wade through the latter but ask my Secretary to go through them and bring to my notice the most important things. You do not know what I am doing and where I am staying. If you did, you would not have dictated that letter, but I see that you are too busy to look at the daily papers or my poor doings in this part of the world. Well, I am in an out-of-the way village hamlet where many dwellings have been burnt down and the contents looted. I have deprived myself of secretarial assistance. I have a Bengali professor who has elected to become my interpreter and teacher and even gives me massage, etc. Parasuram of Malabar is with me by accident, and as he came to me as an expert short-hand writer and typist I make occasional use of him for taking down letters such as this. But generally he is in the charge of everything pertaining to my personal wants and I am sorry to confess that this business is so taxing and exacting that it takes the bulk of his time. But he is an uncomplaining, tireless worker, and as he had not had the opportunity of coming in personal touch with me during the two years he has been with me, he loves the work that he is doing now and I love him. Other fellow-workers have been distributed at the peril of their lives in various burnt and looted villages in the attempt to bring the two warring elements together and bring, if human effort can, peace to this unhappy portion of India. I confess that it is not the only unhappy portion of India, but Destiny chose it for putting me or rather my ahimsa and truth on their trial and here am I undergoing that stiff but self-imposed test. Therefore, you see that either I must myself wade through your papers or neglect them for the time being. But I dare not take the second course for the reason that I invited the task, and I must not complain. I am half through the long documents. It is deeply human and interesting and for the love I have towards you I will like to give much more than cursory attention to the papers you have prepared with such

[1] President, All-India Kisan Sabha; President, Andhra Provincial Congress Committee; Member, Congress Parliamentary Party; Founder-President, Swatantra Party.

elaboration.

As so many trustworthy servants of the nation are up against you, I wish to suggest that you should, for the time being, neglect me and go your way honestly and therefore fearlessly, reposing the fullest trust in your honesty rather than on friends like me of doubtful value because of their national preoccupations and limited capacity for grasping and understanding facts, figures and statements. I however promise that I shall pursue such inquiry as I can during the moments that I can snatch from my present work, and if I can say anything useful I shall write to you. You on your part will not hesitate to give me all the facts you can.

Yours,

BAPU

PROF. N. G. RANGA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

212. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM[1]

December 18, 1946

DAUGHTER,

I went through your letters. I do not understand the fast.[2] My advice is: do what Satis Babu asks you to do. I am ill at ease. Even though Kanu repeated it, you could have said that you did not have full knowledge. Kanu had no right to harass you. But whatever is done cannot be undone. After all you will follow me only as you understand me; what else can you do?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 544

[1] This was an enclosure to "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta"; *vide* the following item.

[2] At Sirandi, Amtussalam had decided to go on a fast from December 26 in protest against some local Muslims who had stolen three *khadags* (sacrificial swords) belonging to Hindus. At Gandhiji's instance, she broke her 25-day fast on January 20th; *vide* "Draft Pledge for Muslim", 20-1-1947, and "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 21-1-1947.

213. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

December 18, 1946

CHI. SATIS BABU,

I am not prepared to say that Amtussalaam's fast is not justified from any point of view. Full information is also not available with me to enable me to give any verdict. It would be good if the two of you could give your considered decision. I hope Hemprabha is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Enclosed is a letter to Amtussalaam. Send it to her.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 545

214. LETTER TO ARUNA ASAF ALI

December 18, 1946

CHI. ARUNA,

I should like you to accompany Asaf[1] to America. You will be able to give him much help there, and it would also be a service to the country. I would also say that you will be able to do much independent work in America.

I think it is your duty to accompany Asaf.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2201

215. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SRIRAMPUR,

December 18, 1946

Gandhiji emphasized the need for truth in expression. He said there were some newspapers in which matters were expressed in such a way as to increase their sale. They were put in exaggerated form or briefly. But as truth is greater than the sun, some day or other it will come to light.

Hindustan Standard, 21-12-1946

[1] Asaf Ali had been appointed ambassador to the U. S. A.

216. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO SIKHS

[On or before *December 19, 1946*][1]

Gandhiji in a letter to the Sikhs has advised them to demand an unequivocal declaration from the Congress that it shall never agree to Grouping in any shape or form.

He has further advised them to walk out if no such undertaking was forthcoming.

Revolt against the Congress. I have revolted[2] several times myself.

The Bombay Chronicle, 20-12-1946

217. LETTER TO POTTI SRIRAMULU

NOAKHALI,
December 19, 1946

DEAR RAMULU[3],

From Narasimuloo's letter I learn that your fast persists and that you have not heard from me. I have written[4] to you to desist from your fast. What is this news I get? I have seen nothing in the papers.

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

As this was going to the post I received your welcome postcard of breaking the fast.

From a photostat: G. N. 117

[1] The letter was reported under the date-line New Delhi, December 19, 1946.

[2] *Vide* also"Interview to Assam Congressmen", 15-12-1946

[3] A Congressman of Nellore

[4] On December 8, Gandhiji had advised the addressee to end the fast, which he had undertaken on November 25, for throwing open the temples to Harijans in Madras Province.

218. INSTRUCTIONS TO PRESS REPRESENTATIVES[1]

December 19, 1946

1. They should seek the permission of the villagers before staying anywhere. They should not be a burden to anyone.

2. They should help one another and share news without reserve.

3. They would not be allowed to accompany him in the walking tour as Gandhiji did not want to travel with a large retinue.

4. He wished that the correspondents should make independent observation in the surrounding villages and try to find out if evacuees were returning home or not, and what was the effect of Gandhiji's presence on Muslim villagers.

My Days with Gandhi, p. 113

219. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[2]

SRIRAMPUR,
December 19, 1946

1. As to the National Flag, my opinion is that whilst we are part of the British Dominions it is but right and proper that in the Ambassador's office in America the Union Jack is flown side by side with the National Flag. In view of the Muslim League revolt, I would go so far as to question the prudence of flying in America the Congress flag as our National Flag. But it is a ticklish question and you should ask, on this and the other questions, for the instructions of the Interim Government, not merely of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Every Ambassador carries written instructions within which he is bound to act. These he can neither diminish nor extend.

2. As to the second, India as she is at present cannot omit the Union Jack in foreign countries. Take instructions.

3. As to the third, there is a new British National Anthem, omitting all the objectionable words. I have no doubt that what was

[1] N. K. Bose explains : "At prayer time Gandhiji felt too tired to make any speech. The news had gone round that he was about to begin to tour on foot through the affected villages of Noakhali and Tippera, and therefore several Press representatives and photographers arrived. . . . I met them in a private conference and communicated to them the following instructions from Gandhiji."

[2] The questions were asked by Asaf Ali, who had been appointed Ambassador to the U.S.A. and were sent through Pyarelal; *vide* "Talk with Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 7-1-1947

done in England only recently can be safely done by the Indian Ambassador in America. Whether we can sing *Vandemataram* or *Jai Hind* or the Tricolour song at the same time should be decided by the Interim Government.

4. The Ambassador's speeches where audiences are purely or predominatly Indian should be in Hindustani first and he can translate the same into English whenever occasion requires it. For pure American audiences speeches should be only in English. It would be pompous and unreal to deliver before American audiences speeches first in Hindustani and then translations in English.

It should be remembered that the most polished Ambassadors have read their speeches which they have prepared or have been prepared for them in advance.

From a copy: Asaf Ali Papers. Courtesy: Aruna Asaf Ali

220. LETTER TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY

SRIRAMPUR,
NOAKHALI,
December 20, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I wrote to you three letters–one dated 3-12-46[1] on the general situation, a second dated 4-12-46 regarding Sardar Bahadur Sir Datar Singh's suggestion and a third in reply to your letters of 2nd and 3rd December.[2] I am sorry that all the letters have remained unanswered. I can only ascribe to heavy pressure on you the absence of any communication from you.

I took the liberty of sending to Abdulla Saheb three complaints which had come under my notice—one of very recent murder, another of rape and third of loot. He was good enough to call on me yesterday and to tell me the result of his investigation which he was good enough to hold very promptly. The first one he said was true as to the event itself but not sustained about the culprits named. I believe the guilty parties are being traced. The second has been found by him to be a concoction. The third is found to be true and is being pursued.

[1] *Vide* "Extract from Letter to H. S. Suhrawardy", 3-12-1946 and "Fragment of Letter to H. S. Suhrawardy", 5-12-1946

[2] *ibid*

For me the relevance for the purpose of this letter lies in the fact that the trouble is not over and the fear is not wholly without foundation. Indeed, complaints have been almost daily coming to me showing how difficult the problem is. If you can possibly regard me as a well-wisher of your Ministry and of the Muslim League, you will please continue as you began to let at least one Minister to be on the spot and keep himself in touch with me. If this expectation is too great or cannot be fulfilled, you will please tell me whether you approve of my keeping in touch with the District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police to whom I could directly refer the matters which come under my notice and which I consider to be worthy of being put before them.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Just as I was about to sign this, two messengers from Comilla came in and handed me your letter. I have not read it. I am letting this go and shall write again if necessary.

THE HON'BLE THE CHIEF MINISTER OF BENGAL

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

221. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SRIRAMPUR,
December 20, 1946

CHI. KAKA,

Your letter of the 6th arrived at Kazirkhil on the 12th. It seems to have been given to me on the 16th. I have been meaning to reply to it every day since then, but could manage to dictate this only now at 5.15 (local time) after the morning prayer. I am so helpless at present.

I am dictating this to Manu who arrived from Mahuwa yesterday. I wished to write the letter myself, but could not do that. I have been awake since 2.30 this morning. I have, therefore, been dictating letters lying in bed. I have just left the bed to drink warm water and honey. After that I shall lie down again. On careful reflection I feel that you are inclined now, on Mavalankar's persu-

asion, to join the new University[1]. By all means do so. I have no doubt at all that you will adorn whatever work you take up.

But I will blame you if there is the slightest slackening in Hindustani work. I will not then accept the reply that you joined the University with my consent. I should like you to join the University with this understanding. But you must know that your headquarters will necessarily be at Wardha. You should also tell Mavalankar that Sardar and other Gujaratis should agree to your joining the University. It will be enough if you inform him to that effect.

Your shield will be Dada[2]. I could not follow your definition of "residential". I have understood the word merely to mean that colleges and other institutions outside the University area should not be placed within its jurisdiction. For instance, the Aligarh University. Any student may join such a university, but there will be no affiliated colleges. Why does Dada insist that the Committee should have only Gujaratis as members? You are regarded as a Gujarati, and so is Mavalankar. But suppose it were not so; according to me it would be narrowmindedness then, if, on that ground, you could not be elected. If the U. P. or Bihar were to reject Kripalani as being a Sindhi, would it not be an illustration of the dog-in-the-manger attitude? One cannot oneself eat but would not let others eat. If, therefore, it is considered necessary to add a fifth qualification to the fourth mentioned, I would suggest this: Nobody will be appointed a member of this Committee merely because of his status or to please him, though any such person who possesses the other qualifications for passing the test will be accepted.

I understand about Narahari and Kishorelal. See that the latter does nothing at the cost of his health. I would describe my health as excellent. The climate here wholly agrees with me.

Bisen[3] is working with Satis Babu. The latter had sent him today to me for my final decision. I had a long and frank talk with him. I have also understood what kind of a man he is. I will now think and decide in a day or two where to post him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10986

[1] Presumably the Committee for recommending the constitution of a new university for Gujarat. G. V. Mavalankar was appointed Chairman of the Committee.

[2] G. V. Mavalankar

[3] Shiv Balak Bisen, who was for some time secretary to Gandhiji

222. NOTE TO MANU GANDHI

December 20, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

Stick to your word. Don't hide even a single thought from me. give a true answer to whatever I ask. The step that I took today was taken after careful thinking. Give me in writing what effect it had on your mind. I shall certainly reveal all my thoughts to you. But this much I want at the moment. Have it engraved in your heart that whatever I ask or say will be solely for your good.

If it is so indeed,[1] I shall have to ask for nothing more. I shall only have to understand it. If your faith has really gone that far, then you are safe. You will play your full role in this great sacrifice even though you are foolish. Preserve this.

Question me if you cannot decipher any words.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Eklo Jane Re, p. 10

223. LETTER TO DINESH SINGH

SRIRAMPUR,

December 20, 1946

CHI. DINESH,

I received the cheque for Rs. 1,000/- sent by Bhai Feroze Gandhi on your behalf for relief work in Noakhali. Please inform Bhai Feroze.

I may not remember to write to you. When you find me free from here, write to me and meet me. I hope everything is going on well.

Blessings from
BAPU

RAJASAHEB KALAKANKAR
KALAKANKAR HOUSE
PRATAPGARH

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 8677

[1] The addressee assured Gandhiji that she had full faith in him and that she was prepared to undergo all hardships till the end. The more he told her about the atrocities, the more she was inclined to stay there. *Vide* also "Extract from Diary", 20-12-1946

224. LETTER TO SYED MAHMUD

December 20, 1946

BHAI SYED MAHMUD,

I cannot dictate this in the Urdu script because Manubehn does not know Urdu. If you are not required to stay there, I should like you to come and stay here and *Harijan* will be despatched from here. Have a talk with Pandit Sunderlal and take whatever decision you wish to.

Blessings from

BAPU[1]

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

225. INTERVIEW TO RAYMOND CARTIER[2]

December 20, 1946

As soon as the French gentleman entered the room Gandhiji greeted him in French "*Comment allez vous*?"[3] And then added with a loud laughter that he had exhausted his entire stock of French ![4]

The visitor was surprised and was all smiles on hearing Gandhiji greeting him in French.

Gandhiji then told him that he had learnt some French in his school days. Gandhiji then referred to Victor Hugo and said that he could still picture before his mind "Jean Valjean" crawling through the lanes of Paris.

Gandhiji then told Cartier that he had been to Paris thrice and had on every occasion wanted to stay in the quarters inhabited by the poor. It was surprising, he said, that the first city of the world in regard to fashion, luxury and certain other things should have miserable slums lying in the heart of the city.

On being asked by Cartier as to what Gandhiji thought about the present condition of Europe, Gandhiji said that people of Europe were talking of peace but harboured war in their hearts. Unless they shed violence from their hearts, it was not possible for them to have peace.

[1]The subscription is in Gujarati.

[2] *The Sunday Hindustan Standard* reported that the interviewer, editor of three French Newspapers, *Matin, Samed Soir* and *Excelsior*, was on a world tour. He arrived in the afternoon when Gandhiji was taking nature-cure treatment with an earth bandage on forehead and eyes closed.

[3] How do you do?

[4] This sentence is reproduced from *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*.

When the last war began, Gandhiji said, he had felt that unless Europe changed its ways this war would only be a prelude to a third and more disastrous war.[1]

Raymond Cartier asked: "We who are children of violence in Europe, how do you expect us to become non-violent?"

In reply, Gandhiji said that if they continued like this, they were sure to perish. What had happened in Europe was that Hitlerism had only been destroyed by super-Hitlerism and this chain was endless. It would go on like that.

Raymond Cartier asked if the remedy lay in a new form of education.

Gandhiji said that education must be of a new type for the sake of the creation of a new world. He referred to Aldous Huxley[2], who, he observed, represented a new type of thought which was working in the mind of Europe today. It might be in a minority today but if Europe was to save itself from suicide, something along the lines of non-violence had to be adopted.

Asked as to how it would be possible to destroy Hitlerism by non-violence, Gandhiji said that was what we had to find out. Otherwise, if one depended upon superior violence in order to destroy violence of the Hitlerism type, then small nations would have hardly any chance of survival. It was only when a nation individually refused to be beaten by Hitlerism or any combination of forces of violence, and stuck to its post at the cost of its life, but not at the cost of its honour, that it had a chance of survival. So, non-violence was the only guarantee of protection against the heaviest odds. Unless we could develop this courage and this type of resistance, democracy could never survive.[3]

Cartier next asked, how France could have at all survived if it had not defended itself against the Nazi hordes.

Gandhiji replied that for that matter even the Maginot Line had not availed them much. Hitler had reduced it to nothingness.

Cartier said that the fault lay not in the principle; it was a technical flaw in the Maginot Line to which military strategists attributed its collapse. Gandhiji rejoined :

Maybe; but beyond that there is a deeper flaw which is fundamental to the whole philosophy of the Maginot Line. Unless you can better Hitler in violence, you cannot gain victory. But the moment you

[1] The following five paragraphs are reproduced from *Harijan*. They are extracted from "Srirampur Diary".

[2] Aldous Leonard Huxley (1894-1963), British author remarkable for his mocking humour who in later life became increasingly drawn to Hindu philosophy and mysticism.

[3] The following three paragraphs are reproduced from Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase.

do that, it is Hitlerism that wins and the whole plan of eradicating violence by superior violence is reduced to futility. It is by non-violence alone that you can vanquish Hitlerism or any other species of violence. If I were a Parisian and the Germans invaded my city, I would stir up the Parisians, so that they would lay down their lives to the last man in the defence of their city, not as they did in the last war, but by showing that higher type of courage which the conquest of violence by non-violence calls for. That is what I am trying to evolve in Noakhali. How far I shall succeed, I do not know.

Lastly, Gandhiji again referred to the works of Victor Hugo and to two of his books, namely, *Les Miserables* and *Ninety-three* and recalled the story of the clergyman's son who represented the type of courage to which Gandhiji was referring.

The Sunday Hindustan Standard, 22-12-1946; also *Harijan,* 19-1-1947, and *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. I, Book II, pp. 58-9

226. EXTRACT FROM DIARY

Friday, December 20, 1946

Got up at 12.30 a. m. Woke up Manu at 12.45 a.m. Made her understand about her dharma. Told her to have a talk with Jaisukhlal. She could still change her mind, but once having taken the plunge she would have to run the risks. She remained steadfast.[1] For my sake she would have a talk with Jaisukhlal. But he had left everything to her and would do so in future too. It was now 1.15 a. m. and I again got up at 3 for prayers.

[From Gujarati]

Eklo Jane Re, p. 9

227. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

December 21, 1946

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I got your letter. What you write about Champa[2] seems to be right. If, despite that, she insists on cooking her own food, she may do so on condition that that should throw no additional burden of work on the Ashram. She should make her own arrangements for buying the necessary provisions. In short the burden on the Ashram

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Syed Mahmud", 20-12-1946

[2] Champa R. Mehta, daughter-in-law of Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta

should not increase.

I hope Pushpa will settle down. The news of Rajnikant's expected arrival is alarming. But when there is a rent in the sky itself, how can we stitch a patch on it? It is possible that that relation is perfectly pure. But the father at any rate must be informed, and his consent obtained. Read my letter to Pushpa.

We may do whatever is possible for Sharda and then stop worrying. What is fated will happen.

Now about myself. You should give up the hope of my return, or early return there, as also of that of the other co-workers. The task here is a difficult one. I am being tested. Is the weapon of satyagraha of my conception really a weapon of the strong or only of the weak? It is, therefore, my firm resolve to accomplish my mission here or to lay down my life in the attempt. What is true of me applies to most of the other co-workers as well. It is with this idea in my mind that I have come and camped in a ruined village. God will do as He wills. All the letters will be received there. From here I will attend to the minimum of outside work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10655

228. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

December 21, 1946

CHI. VALJI,

I got your letter. We have dispersed and camped in different villages which have been seriously affected. Everybody has a Bengali interpreter with him or her. My companion is a gentleman named Nirmal Kumar. He is a professor. Another companion is Parasuram, who cannot be posted alone in any village, for he knows very little Hindustani. He comes from Malabar. You know him. We have dispersed and camped in different villages, Sushila Pai in one and Dr. Sushila in another, Pyarelal in a third, Kanu in a fourth, Abha and Bapa in a fifth and Prabhu[1] in a sixth. The task is a complicated one. Everybody's ahimsa is being tested. I am sending your note to Sushila Pai. Everybody comes and sees me occasionally. I do not

[1] Prabhudas, a young man who used to be in Gandhiji's party as office assistant

know what the outcome is going to be.

You have given good news about Manu[1] in the note addressed to Sushila. He is bound to make headway. He is a very good, intelligent and industrious young man.

I feel your leg should now get fully cured. When I think on it I cannot help the feeling that you are being lax.

Now about junior. If I can recollect all the incidents, I can point out the reason. But the papers have gone to Ahmedabad. It was for you to find out the reason. I had discovered it in the origin of those incidents, but I have forgotten everything now. If I get the papers again or if you send them to me and I can recollect the reason, I will let you know.

A large number of words have accumulated for the dictionary. They are at Ahmedabad. Rajkumari will come and give you. I have sent the material in all the three languages received from you to Ahmedabad.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7501. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

229. LETTER TO SRIKRISHNA SINHA

SRIRAMPUR,

December 21, 1946

BHAI KRISHNA SINHA,

I wrote a letter to you but have not received a reply. Possibly it was lost. It does happen to some of my letters.

I have received a copy of the Bihar Provincial [Muslim] League's report. You too must have received a copy. I am therefore not sending it to you. It is a terrible thing if even half of what is stated were true. It even mentions that I should ask the Bihar Ministry for a full clarification of the massacre for which they were responsible. And if one has been already issued, I may be sent a copy. I should like to take you even further than that. I read in some newspaper that the Bihar Ministry does not propose to hold any inquiry[2]. I was sorry

[1] Mahendra V. Desai, addressee's eldest son

[2] The appointment of a Commission of Enquiry was announced by the addressee on February 13, 1947.

to note it. I want the ministries of both the provinces to hold an impartial inquiry by a joint committee to probe the incidents in both the provinces. Even if Bengal does not co-operate, it is the Bihar Ministry's duty to hold such an enquiry. It will be good if you can also let me know the true condition at present. What is the truth in the report that many Muslims have left Bihar and many are still leaving? There is also a complaint that representatives of the Muslim League are not even allowed to visit the Muslim refugee camps set up by the Bihar Government. I am sending a copy of this to Rajendra Babu.

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

230. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SRIRAMPUR,

December 21, 1946

Gandhiji began by saying that he held very strong views on the question of charity. It was wrong both to accept as well as to offer anyone a free gift. In our land irreligion often masqueraded in the name of religion. India was said to have a contingent of 56 lakhs of religious mendicants, not many of whom could be considered worthy in any sense. Even the hateful custom of untouchability had been given sanction of religion in this land of sorrow.

The problem of relief and rehabilitation, Gandhiji went to say, had become a serious one. People from all over India were eager to help the afflicted inhabitants of Noakhali with money or free gifts of all kinds, and there was a chance that the latter might slip into a mentality of willing dependence on public charity. This had to be combated as much as the complacence of those who might feel they were acquiring religious merit through charitable gifts.

Referring to the attitude which the Government should exercise with regard to the refugees in comparison with that held by public charitable bodies, Gandhiji proceeded to explain that it was true that people had gathered in the refugee camps for no fault of theirs. Their homes had been burnt and they were without shelter; others had been robbed of all their belongings although their cottages might still be standing, while a third group had deserted their homes mainly from a feeling of insecurity. It should be the object of the Government to deal with each case on its merits and help the people to return home with a feeling of security.

[1] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary"

Before necessary conditions were created, it would not be right for the authorities to stop rations unless the evacuees went back home with their whole families. If the evacuees were expected to brave hardships and perhaps even death in order to reinstate themselves in their homes, then there would be no need of a state; it would be a condition of enlightened anarchy where every man would be able to protect himself by his own strength in the face of the greatest danger. But as things stood today, much of the necessary work of social service had to be conducted by Governmental organizations.

Adequate protection had to be given and an atmosphere created where the people might once more pursue their life's work in peace. So long as the conditions were not forthcoming, arrangements for relief had to continue.

But the case of public charitable societies stood on an entirely different footing. Gandhiji held it was wrong for any man to live on public doles. While the South African satyagraha was going on, large sums of money were donated to cover the expenses of the satyagrahis. The Tolstoy Farm near Lawley in the Transvaal was established to accommodate the families and dependents of satyagrahis who worked to the best of their ability for their upkeep. Consequently, the satyagraha organization was able to refund large sums of money at the end of the campaign.

In accordance with the same principles, the charitable institutions now working here should plainly tell the people that everyone should deem it a dishonour to eat a single meal without honest labour. If we could shed the aversion to labour and adapt ourselves to unexpected changes of fortune, we would go a long way towards the acquisition of fearlessness and thus towards an upliftment of our national character.

He would venture to tell the refugees that whether they were poor or rich, they should say to the authorities that they would consider it below human dignity to accept doles from the Government. Poor or rich had nothing left to them. Therefore, they were in need of food, clothing, shelter and medical assistance. Therefore, they had a claim upon the State for providing these vital necessities of life. But they would be robbing society if they accepted this aid without each healthy man, woman, boy or girl, labouring to the extent of his or her ability and therefore he would like the Government to provide such useful work for society which they were capable of doing.

Harijan, 19-1-1947

231. EXTRACT FROM DIARY

December 21, 1946

After the morning prayer, worked on reports of prayer addresses till it was time for the morning walk. Walked double the usual distance. It took forty minutes; however felt no fatigue. . . . Dictated a letter to Suhrawardy while having the midday meal. Birla's man brought some fruit from Calcutta. Had to give him time. That left very little time for spinning. Felt most unhappy.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p. 114

232. MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE OF PANIALA UNION[1]

SRIRAMPUR,
December 22, 1946

BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF PANIALA HINDUS AND MUSLIMS,

I am sorry that I am unable to come to you today, because the road is bad and I have no strength to walk that distance. I am glad that those Hindus who had left their home are returning. I hope that the Muslims there will reassure the Hindu brothers and sisters; those who are guilty will confess their guilt and all will live together amicably. I hope Hindus will eradicate untouchability. Let everyone eat together and let no one be an outcaste.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 10419

233. LETTER TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY

SRIRAMPUR,
NOAKHALI, DISTT.,
December 22, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I sent you yesterday by way of postscript a mere acknowledgment of your letter of 15th instant which came in as mine was going for despatch. I observe that Bihar is still on your brain and that

[1] This was sent on the occasion of an inter-caste dinner which Gandhiji could not himself attend. The message was sent through Amrita Lal Chatterjee who was in charge of the Gandhi Peace Mission Centre for the relief and rehabilitation of the riot-affected Hindus and re-establishment of peace and concord between the two communities spread over some forty villages.

you are evidently so worried by the many cares of office that you have not taken the trouble to read my letter carefully, for you have quoted me from memory which has proved a false friend even to men of genius rightly proud of their memory. If you don't mind, let me assist you by quoting the relevant portion from my letter of 5th instant referred to by you.

> If I find any confirmation of the most serious statements made by you about Bihar, I confess that I have egregiously blundered by resuming normal diet. But I am loath to reject the testimony of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, then of Dr. Rajendra Prasad, both responsible men and persons who had gone specially for the purpose of seeing things for themselves and allaying mob fury. They admit that the behaviour of the Hindu crowds was bad enough in all consience but they do not bear out the statements made in your letter nor do they uphold the figures given by you. They also tell me that mob fury has subsided and that the Government have regained control undoubtedly with the assistance of the military. If I could feel that my presence was at all necessary in Bihar, I assure you that I would not need any encouragement from you to do so. On the contrary, my informants assure me that my presence is not required in Bihar. In these circumstances, unless I feel sure of my ground, I know that I must not go to Bihar. But I would like to make the assurance doubly sure and with that end in view I would be glad to get your permission to send copies of your letters to the Prime Minsiter of Bihar and know his reaction. There too you will pardon me, will you not, for not taking your statements as gospel truth. For one thing, you have no first-hand knowledge of events. I suggest that there should be impartial commission, appointed with the consent of the two Governments, to go into the distrubances both in Noakhali and Bihar. If your statements are true and the callous behaviour of the Bihar Government, which you so graphically describe, can be sustained, it is a bad day for the Bihar Government, a bad day for Hindus and good-bye to restoration of friendly relations between the two communities, and it would be a serious question for me to consider where I stand. The least I can permit myself to say is that then I should have no hesitation in publicly denouncing the Bihar Ministers and Bihar Hindus. I would plead with you to suspend, if you at all can, final judgment in

the matter. To this, which I hold is a full and frank statement of my position, you were good enough to reply :

I was a little bit taken aback to read in your letter that having heard something from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Babu Rajendra Prasad you thought that nothing had taken place in Bihar to justify your presence there.

I hope that the juxtaposition of the two quotations is enough to demonstrate to you the wholly unwarranted inference drawn by you. But if you still maintain in the correctness of your inference I shall gladly endeavour to demonstrate the unwarranted nature of your inference.

Further, you say :

I do not know . . . whether they said that there had been no murders, loot, massacre, rape, abduction, conversion or cruelties of unimaginable bestiality and brutishness.

I suppose, in support of this charge you have the report issued by the Bihar Provincial Muslim League, of which you have been good enough to send me a copy. In parenthesis, I may say that no other copy was received or seen by me. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. Rajendra Prasad admit loot and massacre but they do not admit rape, abduction and conversion in Bihar and if "unimaginable bestiality and brutishness" are used to convey more than has been conveyed by the words preceding, I would like you to instruct me as to the exact implication of the phrase. I had a visit only the other day from Pandit Dhanraj Sharma, M.L.A. (Bihar Congress). I try to get as much information as I can from those who come to me from Bihar. Perhaps, it will interest you to know what he had to say about the charges such as have been made in the Bihar report referred to above. I have read the main parts of that report and I must confess that it is not a balanced document. Its framers have failed to convince the reader of a fair measure of impartiality. Be that as it may, it carries no conviction to me and is in flat contradiction to what all my informants have given me including Pandit Dhanraj, a copy of whose letter I am sending you. The Bihar report confirms the suggestion I have made to you for the appointment of an impartial commission of inquiry. To this suggestion of mine, you have omitted to make any reply. Now that I have got a copy of the report of the Bihar Provincial . . .[1] suggest to them the appointement of such a commission. I shall

[1] The source is mutilated here.

certainly tell you of the result.

You proceed to say :

> It is true that it is the Muslims who have suffered in Bihar and not Hindus.

And then you insinuate,

> therefore, perhaps, your going to Bihar will not have any effect in re-establishing confidence amongst Muslims but the problems are by no means dissimilar.

Let me say that I do not regard the Muslims to have less claim on my service or attention. However, I admit that my going to Bihar for the time being will fail to re-establish confidence amongst Muslims. I must not go into the causes at this stage. I cannot help deploring the fact. This distrust is so utterly baseless. I regard myself as an efficient servant of India. Let me tell you, whether you as a late friend and other members of the Muslims League believe me or not, that I am here to regain the lost confidence. Nothing will move me away from Noakhali unless the lost confidence is regained, which will be the case if the Hindus and Muslims in these districts trust one another without needing the presence of the police or the military.

I observe that insistence on my leaving Noakhali is gathering volume. You also share that feeling. I urge you to show me how my presence offends and ask you to instruct the District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police to keep a strict watch on my movements and tell these gentlemen in what way I have been erring. Let me repeat my assurance that I have come here with no intention whatsoever of sowing dissension between the two communities or to prefer the interest of Hindus over that of Muslims. I am doing everything I can to dispel all fear and the spirit of helplessness. I have told you how the fear is still persisting. I do wish that I could support your hope that the process of confidence and rehabilitation is making progress.

I must say I do not know that dissessions at the centre are widening nor have I the slightest notion that “the Congress has accepted the lead of the great Hindu Mahasabha leader, Mr. Shyama Prasad Mukherji”. Throughout its long career it has never accepted the leadership of anyone who has not been avowedly a whole-hearted Congressman.As to the rest of the points covered by my three letters

whose receipt has been acknowledged in your letter under reply, I shall await a further and considered reply.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Encl: 1

THE HON. THE CHIEF MINISTER OF BENGAL

CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

234. EXTRACT FROM DIARY

December 22, 1946

Woke up at 1.30 a. m. Worked till prayer time.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p 114

235. LETTER TO PYARELAL

December 22, 1946

CHI. PYARELAL,

Sushila's letter has brought me no peace. I have not the strength or desire to argue any more. I wish I could unsay whatever I have said by way of arguments. I may not mention her name, speak of her or write about her letters that others may see– these are conditions impossible for me to fulfil. I therefore do not propose to write except in specific public interest.

But I do think it necessary that for my satisfaction you should visit her from time to time and write to her at least one letter every day and ask for reply.

In my opinion either she is out of her senses, or I am. I do not notice the symptoms in me. This incident has nothing at all to do with what Devdas, etc. wish. I do not wish to turn her away. The cause of the friction is that I do not wish to take any service from her. I do not see how I can make it my duty to take service from her.

I consider the present spectacle very bad for Manu. I have given my soul to protect her and I am still doing it. I wanted to achieve two purposes by letting her come: first, she would be in a better situation and, secondly, you would be restored to normalcy. But for that, I

would not have accepted her conditions. When I feel the need I may take service from anybody. But how can anyone wanting to serve lay down conditions ? If your attitude is the same as Sushila's, you too must consider whether you should continue any relations with me. What personal benefit can you have in remaining with me ? If you continue to be with me under pressure or unwillingly, it will do no good to you or to Sushila or to me. The position which Sushila is maintaining is in my opinion against dharma.

Why should a personal question of this kind arise at this moment at all ?

I belive that you can keep nothing secret from Manu. That is what I have understood from you. I have not even liked the note, of which she has no knowledge. As for Sushila you can tell her (Manu) that from sheer helplessness you must withhold things from her. As I have understood you, you have absolutely no reason to hold back anything from her. If you have not understood how I have presented your case to her, ask me, and I shall again try to explain it to you.

You need not give me a copy of my letter to Sushila, nor of my letter to you. I did express the desire to have copies of both the letters but it is not important.

You can write or tell Sushila anything you wish out of this letter or the whole of it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

236. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO N. K. BOSE[1]

Monday, December 23, 1946

A pupil to be worthy must make previous preparation for the lesson before the teacher.

From a photostat: C. W. 10537. Courtesy: N. K. Bose

[1] According to N. K. Bose, "Gandhiji was learning Bengali and as he had not prepared his lesson that day he wrote this note to me".

237. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO N. K. BOSE[1]

December 23, 1946

I do not know what God is doing to me or through me. If you have the time and inclination I would like you to walk to Sushila at daybreak and return after passing some time with her and learning all about her requirements and her health. You can give her the whole of our conversation[2] about her without reserve. The rest you will know from her if she cares to tell you. You can show this to her if you wish. If you propose to shoulder this burden, you will act as the spirit moves you. Don't work beyond your capacity.

My Days with Gandhi, p. 120

238. INSTRUCTION TO REFUGEES[3]

December 23, 1946

I do not want them to hunger-strike at present. Let there be a full cause ready for such a strike. The question therefore is: are those who get their rations prepared to share with those (300) what they get? If they are, these should take their share while the matter is being prosecuted.

My Days with Gandhi, pp. 120-1

239. LETTER TO J. ASKELTON

SRIRAMPUR,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
December 23, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 10th instant[4] received here on the 17th. As an English Divine has said, when a man does his duty he is really discharging an obligation. We shall have come to a pitiable

[1] According to N. K. Bose, Gandhiji had "handed" this note to him "early in the morning, at 5 o'clock".

[2] *Vide* "Talk with N. K. Bose", 19-12-1946. Also *vide* footnote 3, "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 17-12-1946

[3] N. K. Bose explains : "Arun Datta, a volunteer, had come from the Nandigram Refugee Camp where, out of 1,800 evacuees, Government rations had been stopped for 300. The Government were trying to force the evacuees to return home."

[4] Thanking Gandhiji for the wonderful work he was doing in the distress areas of Bihar and Noakhali.

condition when the discharge of an obligation becomes a cause of merit. In doing the little I am able to for Bihar and Noakhali, I am doing no more than a serious attempt to discharge an obligation. My firmness is at present on its greatest trial. Shall I be able to stick to truth and non-violence in word, deed and thought in the midst of the greatest suspicion, distrust and exaggeration? I, therefore, appreciate the addition of your prayers to mine that I may not fail in the examination.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SGT. J. ASKELTON

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

240. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

December 23, 1946

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

Manudi reminded me just now at 6 in the morning and I started writing this. It is, as you know, my silence day.

You had given me a sample of the slivers made from cotton carded by Ratilal. I spun all of them. They were fine. The slivers for spinning such fine count yarn are long and are wrapped in leaves or paper. I wish Ratilal's venture all success.

Manudi is very well. She is giving me satisfaction. I heard from her that you recite the *Ramayana* as sweetly as Paramanand Gandhi[1] used to do. When I heard that, I felt sorry that I did not know it earlier; had I known it, I would certainly have urged you to stay on for a while and asked you to recite some portions. Parmanandbhai's melodious voice still echoes in my ears. I don't think you saw him. Kalidas[2] has inherited a little of that sweetness. We shall meet now only when God wills. Remember my suggestion.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

[1] A cousin of Gandhiji

[2] Son of Parmanand Gandhi

241. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

6 a. m., December 23, 1946

BAPA,

You are working furiously, but why should you, like Sucheta, be bewildered? This is how it goes on in most places. We should do what we can wherever we happen to be, and be satisfied with it. None of us is almighty. If there were a number of Almighties, you and I would not be here. He is the One and only One who unmoved manipulates us; and we should dance to His tune. I will not give you a longer sermon. Where do I have the time?

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

242. NOTE TO KANCHAN AND MUNNALAL G. SHAH

December 23, 1946

KANCHAN AND MUNNALAL,

They may write when they feel like it. They need not wait for a letter from me. I may or may not write, so pathetic is my condition now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8412. Also C. W. 5618. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

243. LETTER TO S. G. RANADE

SRIRAMPUR,

December 23, 1946

BHAI RANADE,

I have reached your letter of December 7, 1946 only today. I am engaged in a mighty *yajna* here and am of no other use at present. May your plan, undertaken at the instance of Sane Guruji, to have a common meal with a thousand people prove a success.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI S. G. RANADE

POONA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

244. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SRIRAMPUR,

December 23, 1946

Gandhiji first referred to certain personal letters addressed to him as well as a number of articles or comments published in newspapers in which the opinion had been expressed that his continued presence in Noakhali was acting as a deterrent to the restoration of cordial relations between the Hindus and Muslims for his intention was to bring discredit upon the League Ministry in Bengal.

Two days ago he had tried to refute a rumour that a satyagraha movement of an extensive character was secretly planned by him in Noakhali. He had already said that nothing could be done by him in secret. If recourse were taken to secrecy and falsehood, satyagraha would degenerate into *duragraha.*

Today he found it necessary to answer the second charge levelled against him, to which reference had already been made. He would like to proclaim that he had come to Bengal solely with the object of establishing heart unity between the two communities, who had become estranged from one another. When that object was satisfactorily achieved, there would no longer be any necessity for him to prolong his stay.

His intention could never be to embarrass the League Government in Bengal, Gandhiji added. On the other hand, his relations with the Ministry, as well as with the officials, had been very cordial and he had been able to gather the impression that all of them looked with favour upon his peace mission. He had discovered no indication yet of his presence causing embarrassment to anyone. It was open to the Government to ask the Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police to convince him of his error if they were themselves convinced. As yet they had said not a word to that effect. If he felt convinced of any error on his part, he would leave.

Gandhiji said that he had enough work to do elsewhere which demanded his attention. There was Uruli-Kanchan, the seat of his nature cure experiments, and Sevagram, and there was Delhi again, where he might be of some service. He would love to spare trouble to the leaders who had to come to this out-of-the-way place in order to consult him. But personally he felt convinced that the work undertaken by him here was of the greatest importance for all India. If he succeeded in his present mission, it was bound to have a profound influence on the future of India, and, if he might be permitted to say so, even on the future peace of the world, for it was to be a test of faith in non-violence.

[1] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary"

A copy of the Bihar Provincial Muslim League Report on the Bihar atrocities had been sent to him. He had gone through it with care and had felt that it bristled with over-statements. Nevertheless, he was making inquiries on the basis of the report. It was certainly true that much that had happened in Bihar was brutal enough and deserved the severest condemnation. The overstatement blurred the gruesomeness of the reality. He was assured that calm had been restored. It was on that assurance that normal diet was resumed by him.[1]

The reason why he had not proceeded to Bihar, Gandhiji explained, was that he could exercise his personal influence effectively even from a distance. But if there were any reason to suspect that things still continued in Bihar in the manner described in the League report and that he had been misled by false assurance of his friends, then his place would surely be in that Province and he might even confess that this might imply that the life in the present body was now over and that there was no longer any room for him in the land of the living.

But he could not help uttering a word of warning that leaders of public opinion had a serious responsibility. Their word would be believed by the credulous public, and they all knew the tragic consequences. This he said irrespective of whether the leaders belonged to the Congress or the Muslim League.

Harijan, 19-1-1947

245. EXTRACT FROM DIARY[2]

Monday, December 23, 1946

Had sound sleep today. Woke up at 3.15 a.m. Felt un-happy. How do I cope with the work here ? How strong is my non-violence and what is my skill?[3] How shall I cope with the multitude of problems that beset me ? All round me is raging fire. . . . Thank God,

[1] On November 19; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 20-11-1946

[2] Pyarelal explains : "Untruth, negligence of duty or imperfection in his associates, Gandhiji regarded as a projection of his own shortcomings. . . . One day he noticed a changed look in the face of one of his companions and recorded his observation in his diary . . . . A few days later, this same worker absented himself from the camp without telling him, thinking it too trivial a matter to bother him with. But he took a very grave view of it and afterwards remarked that it revealed to him in a flash the nature of the goings on about him. He was filled with anguish when a trusted co-worker made a statement to another which he denied afterwards when Gandhiji confronted him with it. On still another occasion he became angry and did not rest till he had owned his lapse and 'utter unworthiness' before the evening prayer gathering."

[3] What follows is reproduced from *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase.*

it is my day of silence. . . .Told them[1] not to launch on a hunger-strike as a protest against the treatment in the refugee camp but to give me a chance to strive with the authorities. . . . Abdullah handed me two printed placards demanding my expulsion from Noakhali.

[From Gujarati]

Eklo Jene Re, p. 22; and Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p. 114

246. LETTER TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY

December 24, 1946

MY DEAR SHAHEED,

I remind you of our pleasant meeting in Faridpur when Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das was still in his physical case. If I remember rightly, you were the only one sitting in front of me spinning assiduously, though you were unable to pull an even or fine thread. And then, if I remember rightly, when I applied to you some distant adjective of affection, you corrected me by saying that you felt as son to me. I would like to think still that you are the same Shaheed and to feel proud that my son has become Chief Minister of Bengal. . . .[2]

I wish you had Bengal on the brain rather than Bihar. Assume the truth of all that has been said in the Bihar provincial Muslim League's reports. . . . You do not want to satisfy yourself by thanking God for Bengal being as bad as Bihar. . . . You seem to believe the stories of Bihar cruelties with which you have been regaled. . . . I frankly confess to you that these reports do not carry conviction to me. If even 50 per cent of the stories are true, life would become a burden for me. . . . You should know that though here, I was able to affect events in Bihar by my putting myself on protein-and-fat-free diet and by my proposal, if things did not mend, to undertake complete fast.[3]

Though I have not come out publicly, and I hope I shall

[1] Refugees from Nandigram; *vide* "Instruction to Refugees", 23-12-1946

[2] Omissions as in the source

[3] *Vide* also the preceding item.

never have to do so, things in this part of Bengal are not at all rosy. Fear still dominates the refugees. Refugees ought not to be threatened with stoppage of rations. There are several other humane ways of inducing them to return to their homes. If you really want them to do so, you ought to supply them with proper food, warm clothing and decent habitation . . . . If you cannot do so, because of want of funds or sufficient workers, it would be quite proper and honourable to make that announcement and let philanthropists do the needful. There are workers enough in the country who would respond to the call. You, single-handed, will not be able to cope with the work. And if you really mean the thing, you ought to send a responsible Minister whose sole task would be to attend to this public duty. In this you will find in me a ready, willing, and, I hope, efficient helper.[1]

Yours,

BAPU

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p. 104

247. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

SRIRAMPUR,
December 24, 1946

Gandhiji began his speech by saying that complaints had been pouring in that people were unable to shed their fear because persons known to be guilty were freely moving about. He said that although this might be true, his advice to them would still be to take courage in both hands and return to their homes. When several persons had complained that the amount offered by the Government for rebuilding was inadequate for the erection of any kind of shelter, he felt sure that the Government which was determined on repatriation would extend their aid to the necessary extent.

What Gandhiji would personally prefer was that the refugees should be resourceful enough to tide over the present difficulty. He would honour a man who begged nothing for himself nor depended on outside aid for protection. If anyone depended on him for that purpose, he was depending on a broken reed.

[1] Replying on December 25, the addressee said that he could not spare any minister for Noakhali for the time being as there was "considerable amount of administrative work to be done at Calcutta". He could "certainly. . . have no objection" to Gandhiji bringing to the notice of local officers any complaints he received.

[2] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary"

The only effective protection came from reliance upon internal strength, i. e., on God. Everyone should realize the secret that oppression thrived only when the oppressed submitted to it. If they shed fear from their hearts, nobody would or could oppress them.

Harijan, 19-1-1947

248. MESSAGE TO B. S. MURTHI[1]

[On or before *December 25, 1946*][2]

My blessings to the temple-entry movements should be presumed. I am working here single-handed against odds.

The Hindu, 28-12-1946

249. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SRIRAMPUR,
December 25, 1946

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

Your letter addressed to Pyarelal reached me direct yesterday. Pyarelal and all the rest are engrossed in their own duties and are staking their lives. He could, when we were together at one place, write or send you something. He cannot do so now. Your letter went to Kazirkhil; so Satis Babu forwarded it to me here. Pyarelal does not know about your letter. He comes to see me occasionally and will read it when he comes here next.

I am dictating this at 3 a.m. I shall have a wash at 4 a.m. and prayers after that. This is the present routine. I shall carry on only if such is God's will. However, there is no need to worry about my health. The body responds to the demands made upon it, but I am being tested. My truth and non-violence are being weighed in a balance which is much more accurate than any pearl merchant ever used. It is so sensitive as to register the difference of even a hundredth fraction of a hair. Truth and non-violence themselves can never be imperfect. If anything is to be found wanting, it may be I who have constituted myself their representative; if so, I at least hope that God

[1] The message was sent "in connection with the temple-entry movement that has been launched" by Andhra Harijan Sevak Sangh, of which the addressee was Secretary. The Report appeared under the date-line Srirampur, December 25.

[2] *ibid*

will take me away and work through some other agent. I am sorry that I cannot myself do the work which Pyarelal used to do for me and I have not yet been able to arrange with the two men who are with me to do it. But both are intelligent. I therefore hope to be able to arrange it. In this, your letter will afford me encouragement. Jaisukhlal left Manu here at her own wish three or four days ago. I allowed her to come and stay with me on her terms, as she was prepared to live and die with me if necessary. And now I am dictating this to her, lying with my eyes closed so as to avoid strain. Sucheta[1] is also in the room. She is still asleep and I am dictating this letter in a low voice, lying on the wooden bedstead. The bedstead is of a size on which three persons can easily sleep. I do all my work on it. The telegram you have forwarded to me has no substance. There is no limit to exaggeration here. Not that people exaggerate intentionally; they simply do not know what exaggeration means. The imagination of the people runs riot like the local vegetation which grows like grass on all sides. All around us I find huge coconut and betelnut palms, and a large variety of greens grow in their shade. The rivers are all [big] like the Indus, the Ganges, the Jumna and the Brahmaputra. They empty their waters into the Bay of Bengal. My advice is that if you have not already replied to the correspondent who sent you the telegram, you should ask him to furnish proof for his statements so that the Central Government may try to do something about it though they have no power to interfere in terms of the Constitution. And add: 'Gandhi is there in your midst and it is impossible that he would not listen to you. But he is an apostle of truth and non-violence and it is therefore likely that you are disappointed with him. But if he disappoints you, how can we, who were trained under him, hope to satisfy you ? But we shall do what we can.' Don't tell anyone that since I am here, he need not bring his problems to you. Tell him that he may write to you nevertheless and that it will be your duty to afford relief to him even by going against me, for that is what I have taught you.

The situation here poses many difficulties and problems. Truth is nowhere to be found. Violence masquerades as non- violence and heinous crimes are committed in the name of religion. But truth and non-violence can be tested only in such conditions. I know this and that is why I am here. Do not send for me. If I run away from cowardice that will be my own misfortune; but I do not yet see such a misfortune befalling the country. I am here to do or die. News came

[1] Sucheta Kripalani

over the radio yesterday that Jawaharlal, Kripalani and Deo are coming to have consultations with me. That is good. What is the use of my meeting everyone? However, if anyone among you wants to ask me anything, he is welcome. What I wrote[1] about Assam was not meant for immediate publication. If you know how it came to be published, please let me know. But rest assured that I am right on that point. I am in the furnace here. I, therefore, am in a good enough position to testify what is happening in it and what the truth is. [Sardar Jivan Singh][2] often comes to me, asks for suggestions and assures me that he will implement them to the letter. I think I can trust him. I had a wire from [Sardar Niranjan Singh][3] saying that he had not been able to win you over. But I did not understand what he actually meant. Tell him this if he is there and if you happen to meet him. And if you have been able to understand what he wants to ask me, let me know.

You will have seen the report of the Bihar [Muslim] League. I have written to Rajendra Babu about it and have asked him to acquaint all of you with my views. I have written[4] to the Chief Minister also. It is dreadful even if half of it is true. I have no doubt at all that an impartial commission of inquiry, which is above reproach, should be immediately set up. There should not be delay of even a single day. Whatever is true in the allegations must be admitted straight away and the rest should be referred to the commission. Discuss this with your Muslim League colleagues in the Cabinet also. I am in correspondence with Suhrawardy. It is continuing. I will send it all to you when it is completed. Jawahar and others will see what has passed between us so far. If you are not doing so already, please read the summaries of my postprayer speeches which are sent to the newspapers. Or go through the cuttings which Mani[5] may give you. I know even from here the great pressure under which you are working, but there are certain things which have got to be done despite the pressure. To keep yourself informed of what I say, is one

[1] The reference presumably is to "Talk to Assam Congressmen"; *vide* "Interview to Assam Congressmen", 15-12-1946

[2] From Pyarelal Papers, Niranjan Singh Gill was conducting relief operations with his headquarters at Kazirkhil. In his letter dated December 19, he had requested the addressee to approve his budget for the relief work, and had also requested that the number of workers be increased from 100 to 300 and the programme be made for longer period. On December 22, the addressee had replied that the budget amount was too lavish to be approved by Gandhiji and that for the present the number of workers be limited to 100 and only for a period no longer than three months.

[3] *ibid*

[4] *Vide* "Letter to H. S. Suhrawardy", 24-12-1946

[5] Manibehn, addressee's daughter

of them.

How can I say you will be well? I will assume that you are well enough to carry on the work. I am sure you can improve your health. I would still advise you to send for Dinshaw[1]. I have no doubt that he is a good and a sincere man with an altruistic outlook. What if he is not so efficient? You ask about Sushila[2]. I cannot say that she is in very good health. She too is in an inhospitable village and is doing good work. Even a quack is a rarity in these parts; so naturally people make much of someone like her. Do not, therefore, be anxious for any of us here. And when everyone of them is here, ready to die, their falling ill should be of no great concern. If one dies, it is as well; only let the death be pure and earn commendation.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhaine, pp. 336-40

250. LETTER TO MEMBERS OF FENI SUB-DIVISION MUSLIM LEAGUE

December 25, 1946

GENTLEMEN,

I have just received your postcard[3] scribbled out in ink and thank you for your advice. I am unable to follow your advice which is definitely based on ignorance of facts. In the first place, I know that the situation is not normal here and that in so far as I can contribute to the Bihar problem, I have to inform you that such influence as I have on Bihar can be and is being efficiently exercised from Srirampur.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

My Days with Gandhi, p. 122

[1] Dr. Dinshaw K. Mehta

[2] Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[3] According to N. K. Bose, it contained a copy of the resolution passed by that body, which read: "It is appreciated that Mr. Gandhi's presence in Bihar is much more useful than at Noakhali where the situation is normal. He is therefore requested to leave for Bihar."

251. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

December 25, 1946

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

Manudi suggested to you that you might meet Shankarlal's need from her money which is in your custody. I like the suggestion very much. She deserves to be encouraged in her generosity. Shankarlal, moreover, is not begging for an outright gift. He may even pay some interest. There is, therefore, no risk. And even if the sum is lost, how will it matter ? You can even procure the amount from some other source. But why look for other sources when the best is at hand ?

Manudi is doing very well. The result is in God's hands.

Think over my suggestion concerning you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

252. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SRIRAMPUR,
December 25, 1946

Sailen Chatterjee who appeared to Gandhiji more as a fellow-worker in the cause of independence than a journalist, asked him whether he would, in his post-prayer remarks, say something about Christianity because it was Christmas Day and reminded him that he had done some such thing on the previous Christmas Day. Gandhiji said he had not thought of it though he should have .

He said he was thankful for the reminder and he informed the audience that he had accepted the suggestion without the slightest hesitation. Then he had to think about what he should say. He was baffled about his choice for he said that it was almost universally realized that everywhere irreligion masqueraded as religion.

Whilst he was searching for something apposite for the occasion he thought of two beautiful note-books in which Rajkumari had copied out gems from the Bible and Christian hymns. Rajkumari had been chosen by Pandit Nehru, their Foreign Minister at the Centre, as a member of the deputation on behalf of the Government of India to represent it in the Educational Conference that was held in Paris. She was a member of the ruling family of Kapurthala. Her father would have occupied the *gadi,*

but for his being a Christian.

Rajkumari was proud of being considered a Sikh, a Hindu and a Christian and had chosen to throw in her lot with those who were downtrodden. He would invite the audience to give thought to the best from Christianity which he had selected from Rajkumari's collection. Only a few days ago he commended to their attention two of the best sayings from Prophet Mohammed.

He believed in equal regard for all religions. Mere tolerance was not of much value. No religion worth the name stood in need of patronage. It should command respect. He added that Jesus Christ might be looked upon as belonging to Christians only but he really did not belong to any community inasmuch as the lesson that Jesus Christ gave belonged to the whole world[1]. So saying, he asked Prof. Nirmal Bose to translate the following[2] from the New Testament on love, which he preferred to render as ahimsa.

Hindustan Standard, 30-12-1946; and *Harijan*, 26-1-1947

253. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[3]

December 26, 1946

QUESTION 1. Would it not be better to have pure joint electorate with reservation of seats, than the half joint and half separate electorate which we have today ?

ANSWER 1. The answer to your Ist question is yes. Second is very difficult.

Q. 2. When you speak about the removal of untouchability among Harijans, to whom do you refer ? Which section among us ? For many among us, scheduled people, consider themselves higher than the rest.

A. 2. I agree with you that the removal of untouchability among the so-called untouchables is more difficult than its removal between caste Hindus and non-caste Hindus, i.e., untouchables.

Q. 3. Will not our condition truly improve only when Congressmen take up Harijan service in earnest, rather than leave it to the fitful efforts of political adventurers among Scheduled Caste people ?

A. 3. The answer to your 3rd undoubtedly yes.

Q. 4. Could not men like Sarat Babu, Kiran Babu do something to spread the message

[1] This sentence is reproduced from *Harijan*, 26-1-1947.

[2] *I Corinthians*, XIII. 1 to 7, not reproduced here

[3] The questions were asked by Vidyadhar Mandal, President, Namashudra Hitaishi Samiti.

of the Congress among the Scheduled Castes ?

A. 4. I thing the gentlemen you name have done their best to spread the message. Many others who have more leisure have been doing for a long time the class of work referred to by you.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

254. LETTER TO MANILAL B. DESAI

SRIRAMPUR,
December 26, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I got your letter and the supplement. I cannot recollect the letter which you mention, and am not bothering to search for it. Strictly speaking, the suggestion about cows does not fall within the scope of the Trust. You can establish contact with the Goseva Sangh. If you try to do that work, you will not be able to do the work you have undertaken. In attempting an ambitious plan, you may fail in both the tasks like the sadhu who lost both this world and the next. Or you may undertake the work in consultation with somebody who knows it. The idea of making the Arogyabhavan self-supporting is not a bad one. But if you engage two persons for that work, no work will be done and your plan for starting cultivation will have to be abandoned. The difficulty about money can be met. It is not necessary to employ some persons specially for that purpose. As soon as I know the final decision, I shall be able to find the money. You will of course need a well. Get one sunk. I think you mean a deep well to be sunk at a cost of Rs. 4,000. I am inclined towards a well of that type. Or, we can have the type of water-works constructed by the military and can draw the water in the same way as they do. I think we can get enough water from the water-works built by them. We cannot have a buffalo in the *goshala.* I have no doubt on this point. If we do not insist on having cows only, you may rest assured that they will die out. And the cow will always be followed by the buffalo. Animal husbandry experts have finally come to this conclusion. I cannot judge about buying the plot belonging to Patangiya. All that I can say is that you may do what you think best.

I think this answers all your questions. It is, therefore, not necessary for you to travel all this distance.

I am dictating this letter after waking up at three in the morning. I don't have the courage, therefore, to try to write to Dr. Bhagwat, Dhirubhai and others, as it is nearing four o'clock now and I have to start preparing for the prayer. I understand about Dhulia. If Maganbhai cannot stay there regularly and take active interest in the work of the Trust for a few months in the year at least, there will be no point in making him one of the Trustees. I think I have written to you about this in a previous letter. I will [not], therefore, [write more in this].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W.2736. Courtesy: Manilal B. Desai

255. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SRIRAMPUR,
December 26, 1946

BAPA,

I have your letter. Two persons are certain to come on behalf of the Sikhs. I am not going to send them back in a hurry. I must admit that I cannot command the pace at which you go. I don't have the time to find out why. Today I am up since 2 o'clock. It does not harm me. Nowadays I have made it a practice to get up at 3 o'clock. Yet, I cannot say that I am able to finish the day's work. I don't want you to come when Jawaharlal comes. It will be strenuous. Considering that you have just recovered from fever you should not strain yourself so much. If you go to Delhi fairly late, I hope I shall be there when you are there. If this cannot be, I am sure to be there during your absence. I wish we could meet before you went to Delhi. I have had a good deal of talk with Abha who has grown wings. She is now prepared to live in a village and has, in consultation with Satis Babu, selected Chandigram, which is five miles from here. Here, too, she has met a number of Muslim families. She even took me to a

place in the hope of introducing me to the women who, however, never came out. Abha had her object-lesson. I already knew that the women would not come out but I agreed to go with her because they had made a promise to Abha. Abha spoke to me about the two girls whom you have selected to be sent to the Mahila Ashram. Shantabai also has been consulted. The younger one is to be sent to the Mahila Ashram and the older one to the Balika Ashram. Both will thus have different experiences. I see advantage in it.

Are you sure you are not being hasty in organizing the people's programme in different places? But for this doubt I have nothing to say on the matter.

Now, if you agree to my suggestion about Abha, I wouldfurther suggest that you send her soon so that she takes up the work, because [Chandigram] will be my first camp during the tour. She would like to be there before that, and so would I. If Malati[1] has already arrived there. I have nothing to say. But don't send for her if she does not come for the present.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

256. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SRIRAMPUR,
December 26, 1946

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

This I am dictating to let you know about a person called Dr. Filchner concerning whom Dinshawji wrote to me. I just cannot cope with the work. Something or the other always remains in arrears. So I do not know what is going to happen to me. Whatever does happen will happen here. I am very happy. Though there is total darkness before me, I remain cheerful and consider my health to be excellent. Do not worry on my account in the least. If the person whom Dinshawji recommends can be allowed to remain, he should, in my opinion, be granted the permission. That, of course, only if you can

[1] Malati Chowdhary

let him stay consistently with your duty to the State. Not knowing the facts, I cannot say any more.

Do be careful about your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 340

257. LETTER TO PYARELAL

December 26, 1946

CHI. PYARELAL,

It was fortunate I did not have to go to Comilla. But I must say that as long as we are living independently in separate villages, it is good to give up the temptation of going anywhere—even to the Working Committee meetings. For the present, all attention must be concentrated on our respective villages. Then only can we hope to succeed. it is a difficult task. But that alone is worth doing. I am also not interested in attending the Working Committee. But it may be my duty to attend. Even for that I would not like to go far. You will understand this more when you come here. I hope you have not allowed the hand pricked by thorns to become septic.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

258. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

SRIRAMPUR,
December 26, 1946

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

Lying in bed I am unable to write to you myself.

Those who were doing such work for me have been sent to different places. Manu alone is with me out of attachment and does all work for me. I won't be able to dictate a full reply to your letter. I do not even remember all your queries.

As for your coming here, if I have not already written to you I

want you to stay on there for the present. That alone is your duty. Be composed, restrain your anger and live like a *sthitaprajna.*

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1968

259. LETTER TO GIRDHARI

SRIRAMPUR,
December 26, 1946

BHAI GIRDHARI,

I have your letter. The news is very vague. Something can be done upon receiving more details. However, I am arranging to get further information.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

260. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

SRIRAMPUR,
December 26, 1946

CHI. HOSHIARI,

Your letter. I like it. The reason for my not writing to you is that I am confident that if you are fully engaged in your work, you will not worry about a letter from me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

261. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SRIRAMPUR,
December 26, 1946

Gandhiji said that he had no doubt in his mind that the British would have to quit India. But if Indians were foolish enough to quarrel among themselves, he could

[1] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary" which says "The speech was provoked. . . by the fact that when he asked some people offering to serve in Noakhali whether they would continue to serve, if necessary, for a lifetime even after he had left, they were reluctant to commit themselves. This reluctance led him to believe that people were anxious to come and serve in a manner which would attract his attention and that such people were not keen on service for the sake of service."

very well visualize the destiny of the whole country. India would probably be placed under the United Nations which would mean not one but many masters, and, hence, goodbye to independence.

He was soon going to make the greatest experiment of his life . That would be perhaps his last experiment. He was not a holder of any Degree—B.A. or M.A. But if he succeeded in the examination he was taking in Noakhali, he would think he had received his highest Degree of life—his M.A. And if he succeeded in this examination of his, he would share all that he achieved together with his Degree with the forty crores of people of this country.[1]

Continuing, Gandhiji said that the task he had undertaken in Bengal was most serious. Here a community which had been friendly to him previously now looked upon him as its enemy. He was out to prove that he was "a real friend of the Muslims". So he had chosen for his greatest experiment a place where the Muslims were in a majority.

For the fulfilment of his mission it would suffice if he toured the countryside alone, and the presence of the workers from outside soliciting his advice and direction raised fresh problems for him instead of assisting him to solve the already complicated task he had undertaken. Much of the misunderstanding could be removed if those really keen on serving the people of Noakhali would directly approach the Bengal Ministers with their plan of work and obtain not only their written permission to carry on their work but also their approval of the plan.

Gandhiji gave this advice to some doctors who came from Bombay yesterday for rendering medical aid to the refugees in the affected areas. To some people who sent him letters and telegrams offering to come to Noakhali for service, Gandhiji had replied that they could serve the cause by carrying on constructive work around their own places. To those who sought directions as to how best to serve in Noakhali, Gandhiji said that he himself was groping in darkness and a blind man could not be the best guide.

Harijan, 26-1-1947; and *The Hindu,* 29-12-1946

262. EXTRACT FROM DIARY

December 26, 1946

Everything seems to be going awry. There is falsehood all round.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p.114

[1] This paragraph is reproduced from *The Hindu.*

263. LETTER TO HAMIDUDDIN AHMED[1]

December 27, 1946

DEAR HAMIDUDDIN SAHEB,

Nirmal Babu read to me your writing in the *Azad* of the 14th instant. It staggered me and I asked him kindly to give me its literal translation. If there is any incorrectness, you will please send me your correction. I say it staggered me, because you had left an impression on me that you had entirely realized my sincerity and my usefulness not merely for the Hindu inhabitants of the district but equally for the Muslim inhabitants. Assuming the accuracy of the translation, your article is an indictment against me. Indeed, most of us were under the impression that while Shamsuddin Saheb was leaving for a few days to meet the Chief Minister, You would be staying behind to continue his work and help the Peace Committees that were just then being formed. But the next day, I learned with sorrow that owing to some affliction of your eyes you had to leave abruptly with Shamsuddin Saheb. What had happened in the meanwhile to warrant what I have called your indictment I do not know. Why do you in common with many advisers advise me to leave Noakhali and go to Bihar or somewhere else?[2]

I have not come to East Bengal to hold an enquiry. I have come to make my humble contribution to a lasting and heart peace between the two communities. I think that I made this statement during the speeches I had made in your presence. Why then the sudden change betrayed by the article in question ? Do you not think that after the exuberant regard you showed for me, I had the right to expect from you a friendly and personal enquiry from me, to inform me of the change and giving the grounds for the change? Perhaps, on reflection, you will discover in your very article valid reason for my longing to be in Noakhali in preference to Bihar. How can I test the efficacy and soundness of my ahimsa except in a place where even the loudest protestations of trust in my professions can be so short-lived as in your case ?

You are right when you say: "In Mr. Gandhi's opinion, the

[1] Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Commerce, Government of Bengal

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Members of Feni Sub-Division Muslim League", 25-12-1946

condition in Noakhali is not yet such that Hindus can shoulder the responsibility of returning to their homes." I have chapter and verse to show why the Hindu refugees who proved themselves deficient in personal courage are reluctant to go back to their homes. The peace Committees which you left in the process of formation are not in working order.

The Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries would not return to their work of seeing the Committees doing their duty. I urge you for the sake of the League Ministry in whose efficiency and goodness I am at least as much interested as you ever can be. Believe me, I have not come to East Bengal for the purpose of finding fault with the League. I have come in order to induce it by my conduct to shed its complacency and give solid work for the sake of itself and india. For I believe that if you and I can produce in Bengal the right atmosphere, the whole of India will follow.

You say, again :"If he (Gandhi) had issued a statement about the real nature of the happenings, perhaps the atmosphere would have cleared to a large extent. His silence with reference to this matter raises suspicion in the minds of many ." Why this insinuation when the fact stares you in the face that I am not in a position to speak in praise of what has been and is being done on behalf of the Bengal Government? If you will care to study the thing, you will appreciate restraint instead of coaxing me to speak.

You are again right when you say: "Mr. Gandhi does not wish to leave for Bihar." But your reasons for reluctance are wholly wrong. My "trusted Bihari followers" have indeed kept me informed of the happenings there. The information they give is wholly contrary to what you believe. In common with all, the Bihar Government deplore the tragic happenings. But they claim that they have acquired control over the turbulent elements and are straining every nerve to give satisfaction to the afflicted.

It will not serve the cause of peace if I went to Bihar and found the Bihar Muslim League's report to be largely imaginary and the Bihar Government's conduct substantially honourable, humane and just. I am not anxious to give them a certificate of good conduct as I am to give you, much though you may not want it. My spare diet and contemplated fast, you know well, were against the Bihar misdoings. I could not take such a step in the matter of Noakhali misdoings. It pains me to think that you, a seasoned lawyer, should not see the

obvious.

I assure you that I am not guilty of "importing numberless volunteers from outside to serve his (mine) object". In the first place, I have not imported numberless volunteers. In the second place, my object is not what you have been pleased to insinuate in the same paragraph. Let me tell you that for the fulfilment of my object, I do not need any volunteers here except myself. If you really think that their presence is a menace to the peace of Noakhali, the Government have but to say that they are a danger and to serve a notice on them to quit, and I assure you that without a murmur they would leave this district. From this undertaking, I and one of my company, whose name I need not disclose at this stage, are excepted. You will be astonished to learn that, dear as they are all to me, and valuable as I count their services to the nation, I told them in this mission of mine I had no need to have any associate with me; for the quickest way to fruition required no protection or co-operation save what God sent. Such is my conception of the working of ahimsa. I hope that before the Government takes the adumbrated action they will depute an officer of their choice or trust to find out from me or them the kind of work they are doing. Their life is an open book. There is nothing hidden or underground about their activities.

Permit me to give you my impression that your writing bristles with unprovable and reckless statements without regard to facts. I have noticed only some of them.

As it is, my letter has become much longer than I had sketched in my mind but as I proceeded I could not shorten it if I was to give you some conception of my deep grief. If you will know more. I suggest to you that you should take the trouble of coming to me and passing with me half an hour or so and cross-examine me on the charges you have framed against me.

This letter is not an open letter as yours is. I have written only for you, cherishing the hope that it may perhaps appeal to you as coming from a well-wisher open to conviction.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

My Days with Gandhi, pp. 123-7

264. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

December 27, 1946

DEAR DAUGHTER,

Harilal gave me your letter. He is here till the 3rd. He is a gentleman. He says he may probably stay on longer. Keep me informed daily. Use boiled tepid water for the enema and add two or three grains of potassium permanganate so that the water becomes pink. Drink boiled water and take juice of half a *mosambi*. Take such water every two hours. I am sending you a bottle of honey. Take it whenever you like.

Apply a mud-pack on the abdomen. Use the mud slab direct without spreading it on a piece of cloth. You will be cured. There is no one here whom I can spare; but if you remain ill, I will find someone. Do not ask for anything from Borkamta. Keep me informed. Postpone your fast for the present. We shall think of it after you get well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 546

265. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

December 27, 1946

DAUGHTER,

You have fallen ill. How is it ? Your companions have asked for a doctor's assistance and a thermometer. I have told them you need neither a doctor nor medicine. Your medicine is earth, water, sky, sun and air, and along with it Ramanama. Stand up in the open air, with Koran in hand, and absorb as much bright sunlight as you can tolerate and take in clean air and water. If God does not want service through you, He will take you away.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Write to me or ask someone to write.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 547

266. LETTER TO BELA MITRA

SRIRAMPUR, NOAKHALI,
December 27, 1946

DEAREST BELA,

Haridas has come back. He is full of hope but at the same time what a burden of anxiety he carries! Will you still remain bed-ridden? I send you my hearty blessings. Recover soon and help your husband in his work, giving him courage and strength. I stop here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Bengali: C. W. 1471. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

267. DISCUSSION WITH SWAMI JNANANANDA[1]

December 27, 1946

There was nothing tangible to be shown yet, but non-violence sometimes worked in unexpected ways.

Gandhiji's advice to the Swamiji was that violence should be eschewed altogether. There should not even be a trace of it among the workers entrusted with organizations. He emphasized the need for constructive work which could bring food to the hungry millions as well as anti-untouchability work to remove the disabilities which had crippled the Hindu society to a very large extent.

Hindustan Standard, 28-12-1946

268. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING [2]

SRIRAMPUR,
December 27, 1946

Gandhiji in his address said that a friend had been telling him that his reference[3] to "darkness" surrounding him was very confusing to many. The friend thought that people at a distance saw light shimmering through his plan, and there was enough proof that the confidence was slowly returning in that affected area.

[1] The report said : "Swami Jnanananda of Shakti Math, Dacca . . . discussed with Gandhiji the situation prevailing in rural areas of Dacca and also the possibilities of constructive work in those places."

[2] Extracted form "Srirampur Diary"

[3] *Vide* "Extract From Diary", 26-12-1946

Gandhiji said he would tell this friend and others who thought like him that they had misunderstood him to some extent. The darkness in which he was surrounded was of a character the like of which had never faced him before. It was indeed now a vital test that his *ahimsa* was passing through. He would not be able to say that he had come out successful until the object was reached.

It was true that night was darkest before dawn. He himself felt that and although friends at a distance could see glimpses of the breaking dawn, he himself felt that he was surrounded by complete darkness.

Gandhiji said that many years ago a friend of his used to carry Patanjali's *Yogasutra* constantly in his pocket. Although Gandhiji did not know Sanskrit yet the friend would often come to him to consult about the meaning of some of the *sutras.* In one of the *sutras* it was stated that when *ahimsa* had been fully established it would completely liquidate the forces of enmity and evil in the neighbourhood. Gandhiji felt that the stage had not been reached in the neighbourhood about him and this led him to infer that his *ahimsa* had not yet succeeded in the present test. That was the reason why he was saying that there was still darkness all round him.[1]

Referring to a statement of Mr. Suhrawardy, Premier of Bengal, Gandhiji said it seemed to him that he was beginning to see glimpses of light. The Bengal Premier had said that he hoped Mahatma Gandhi's mission would be successful and bring results beneficial not only to Bengal but to the whole of India. The Bengal Premier had also said that he must provide escort to protect Mahatma Gandhi on his walking tour. Gandhiji said that Mr. Suhrawardy had only been doing his duty in offering him protection. He knew that military and police had been posted round about his cottage. He sometimes exchanged greetings with them. Beyond that he thought none could do so if God willed it otherwise.

Referring to his walking tour Gandhiji said in a couple of days details would be settled. As soon as the programme was ready he would communicate it to the Bengal Premier, for he felt he should do nothing without his knowledge.

Gandhiji said that his plan was to proceed with the least number of companions on his march, and that he would prefer to stay in the houses of Muslim friends. He had reduced his needs and these could be met even by the poorest villagers. He would like to go absolutely unprotected if it was to prove that in his heart he had nothing but love and friendship for the Muslims.[2]

Gandhiji said that if he was absolutely alone on his mission his services would have gained considerably in quality. He would also have been able to assess in that case his ability for facing the present problem of Bengal.

[1] The following three paragraphs are reproduced from *Hindustan Standard.*
[2] What follows is reproduced from *The Sunday Hindustan Standard.*

Numerous friends had for some years past placed their services unreservedly at Gandhiji 's disposal. When he first came on his mission to Noakhali, he had intended to dispense with the services of those friends. His idea was to place himself absolutely in God's hands. Of course God helped his devotees through human agency but in that case it would come naturally and without his asking.

If the original plan of coming here alone had been followed to the letter, complaints that were now being made against him would have been neutralized to a large extent. Even now his advice to anyone who wished to serve in Noakhali would be not to seek his advice, far less to depend on his directions.

Those who would like to come here should instead contact the League Ministry and secure their written permission. Moreover, they should place before the Ministry in detail the nature of work they propose to do and while working here they should confine their activities within that scheme and on no account go beyond it. He was suggesting this course, because it was the League Ministry's authority which prevailed in this Province.

Today he was regarded as enemy number one by the League and if people from outside came to help him they were bound to be regarded as helping an enemy. But he was very anxious that this should be avoided.

There were men and organizations who were of the opinion that Hindus who were numerically weak should learn self-defence in terms of violence. Muslims on the other hand also felt that they could swamp Hindus by means of their overwhelming numbers. But he had no doubt about it that both of them were not only injuring their own communities but also acting against the interests of India as a whole.

Concluding, Gandhiji prayed to God that he might be successful in cementing differences between the two communities which had unhappily been estranged from one another and said that in this great experiment he would like to march all alone with God as his sole guide.

Harijan, 26-1-1947; and *The Sunday Hindustan Standard,* 29-12-1946, and *Hindustan Standard,* 30-12-1946

269. EXTRACT FROM DIARY

December 27, 1946

Got up at 2 a. m. Woke up Manudi at 2.15 a. m. Made her understand about. . . [1] Spoke to her about simplicity in clothes and hair styles and about not wasting time in talking to. . . or others and convinced her that many times one's company affects one's character.

[1] Omissions as in the source

Explained to her the importance of [my] signature. She understood everything quite well. Talked with . . . after prayers. Devoted a fairly long time to it. Did my Bengali lesson. It was 5.45 a. m. by then . . . .[1] is ill. Wrote to her that she need not call any *Vaidya* or doctor from outside. She should rely on God or the five elements and do as she pleases.

[From Gujarati]

Eklo Jane Re, p. 34

270. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

RAMGUNJ,
December 28, 1946

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SUMMER HILL
[SIMLA]

YOUR LETTER. AM WELL. HOPE FAMILY WELL AND HAPPY. SUSHILA WRITING FULLY. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 4187. Courtesy: Rajkumari Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7823

271. TELEGRAM TO SHANTI GHOSH[2]

RAMGUNJ,
December 28, 1946

SHANTI GHOSH
9 WINDSOR PLACE
NEW DELHI

BOTH OR ONE MAY COME. LOVE.

BAPU

Sudhir Ghosh Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Amtussalaam; *vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 27-12-1946
[2] Wife of Sudhir Ghosh

272. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

SRIRAMPUR,
December 28, 1946

MY DEAR PRAKASAM[1],

I have now your letter enclosing papers. I hope you have my reply to your telegram, copy of which is enclosed herewith. I have nothing to add to what I have said. I regard Central Government's reply as a challenge to your faith in yourself, the charkha and the dumb masses of Madras. If the latter are really with you, as I hope they are, you can accept the challenge[2] and you will benefit not only Madras but the whole of Indian humanity.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

273. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

December 28, 1946

DAUGHTER,

I have your letters. Jawaharlal is here with me. What you say is right. Fast and be happy. Some attendant, male or female, ought to be with you. After all He, the Master of us all, is omnipotent. More some other time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 548

274. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SRIRAMPUR,
December 28, 1946

Introducing Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Gandhiji said that he was one of the two Rashtrapatis present. Panditji occupied the position of Vice-President in the

[1] Premier, Madras province

[2] The reference is to the Madras Government's khadi scheme and the Premier's announcement that no new textile mills would be started in the Madras province. The scheme had met with criticism from many quarters.

Cabinet, where he represented the Indian people. The other, namely, Acharya Kripalani, was now at the head of the Indian National Congress. The former was at the helm by virtue of Government office. The latter had nothing but moral authority. Mr. Shankarrao Deo, the present General Secretary, and Miss Mridula Sarabhai, the outgoing one, were also in their midst. All the four were servants of the Indian National Congress and through it of the nation.

There were some who described the Congress as a Hindu organization. They only betrayed their ignorance of the political history of India. At one time the Hindu Mahasabha was in the hands of the Congress and so was the Muslim League and others.[1] Congress was not a Hindu organization. It did not serve Hindu interests to the exclusion of the other communities.

It was hinted that the Congress leaders had come to consult him with regard to the interests of the Hindus. Had they done so they would have lowered the stature of the Indian National Congress in the eyes of the world. They had come to consult him, as an expert on the Hindu-Muslim question, as to how best to serve the national cause in the present crisis. The reins of Government had come in the hands of the people's representatives; the nation was well on the way to independence, but it had yet to be achieved. It was sure to come if we made wise use of our strength. The leaders were determined to do without British aid in solving our problems. One single step might injure the national cause.

On the previous evening, the speaker added, he had said[2] something about Suhrawardy Saheb. If the people respected democracy, they could not disregard the Ministry. If anyone wished to serve the afflicted people of Bengal then nothing should be done without the knowledge and sanction of the Ministry.

There should be no mental reservation.

Gandhiji concluded by saying that he had come to prove by his action that he was a sincere friend and a well-wisher of the Muslims. Restoration of the feeling of amity and brotherhood was his sole concern.

The Hindu, 2-1-1947; and *Harijan*, 26-1-1947

275. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

December 29, 1946

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. Why do you write yourself? An anti-phlogistine tin is being sent. Ma[3] will send you someone to work for

[1] The following two sentences are reproduced from *Harijan.*

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 27-12-1946

[3] Hemprabha Das Gupta

you according to your instructions. Dictate your letters. Drink plenty of water.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 549

276. LETTER TO JWALA PRASAD

SRIRAMPUR,
December 29, 1946

BHAI JWALA PRASADJI,

I have your letter. I cannot take up any other work at the cost of the work here. I do only what I cannot avoid; therefore, please excuse me. I got the issues of *J. K. Review* sent by you but I have not been able to read them. I do not read even the daily newspapers. I make do with the news given me by others

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

277. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

Sunday, [On or after *December 29, 1946*][1]

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. I never persuade anyone to give up a fast. I quite understand that you alone have to arrive at a final decision in this matter. Once I have done my duty, I am content.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 573

[1] The first Sunday after the addressee had begun her fast fell on December 29.
[2] *Vide* also "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 21-1-1947.

278. INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE

SRIRAMPUR,
[*December 28/30, 1946*][1]

During its unbroken career of sixty years, the Congress has been invariably and progressively representative of all the communities—Hindus, Muslims and others. It has been also progressively representative of the masses. That it has always had a number of hypocrites is but an ode to these two among its many virtues. If those who represent these two virtues are found to be in a hopeless minority, they should lodge their protest and leave the Congress and influence public opinion from outside. Then only will they be true servants of the nation. Therefore at this critical period I hold it to be necessary for the Working Committee to give the proper, unequivocal lead to the Congress by laying down these propositions :

1.It is now perhaps late to cry off the Constituent Assembly though I still hold it to be the best course to make the Congress position absolutely clear.

2.The second best is to accept the Cabinet Mission's statement with the joint interpretation of it between themselves and Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah.

3.It must be clearly understood that it is open to any Congress individual or unit to declare his or Group's or Province's secession from the Congress stand which the Congress should be free to accept whilst still openly guiding the seceding elements. This will be in accordance with the Cabinet's position that they will not compel any Group or Province.

The result of this would be that the members of Section A would prepare a full constitution in terms of the Cabinet Mission's statement and B and C Sections would have to frame what they can in spite of the seceders, i.e., as at present conceived, Assam in the East and Frontier Province in the West, the Sikhs in the Punjab and may be Baluchistan.

[1] From *My Days with Gandhi*, p. 128,in which N. K. Bose explains: "During these three days the Congress leaders held long discussions with Gandhiji. . . . After discussion with the leaders, Gandhiji prepared instructions for the Working Committee. This was . . . handed over to Jawaharlal Nehru and others."

It may be that the British Government will recognize or set up another Constituent Assembly. If they do, they will damn themselves for ever. They are bound when a constitution is framed in terms of the Cabinet Mission's stand to leave the rest to fate, every vestige of British authority being wiped out, British soldiers retiring from India never to return.

This position of the Congress is in no way to be interpreted as playing completely into Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah's hand. And if this he considers to be what he meant, the Congress will be thanked by the world for giving Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah a universally acceptable and inoffensive formula for his Pakistan. The Congress dare not shirk the right thing because it completely coincides with his view.

The constitution will be for whole India. It will have to contain a specific clause showing in what way it will be open to the boycotters to avail themselves of the constitution.

From a photostat: C. W. 10539. Courtesy: N. K. Bose

279. NOTE TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

December 30, 1946

Your affection is extraordinary and so natural ! Come again, when you wish, or send someone who understands you and will faithfully interpret my reactions . . .[2] when, in your opinion, consultation is necessary and you cannot come. Nor is it seemly that you should often run to me even though I claim to be like a wise father to you, having no less love towards you than Motilalji.

Do not depart from the spirit of the draft[3] you showed me yesterday. . . . Somehow or other I feel that my judgment about the communal problems and the political situation is true. I have no doubt now about the wisdom of what I had said[4] in Delhi when the Working Committee accepted the Cabinet Mission's statement. This does not mean that what was done by the Working Committee should

[1] According to Pyarelal, "Jawaharlal Nehru's plea with Gandhiji to return to Delhi did not succeed." This was "scribbled at 3 o'clock that morning".

[2] Omission as in the source

[3] *Vide* "Jawaharlal Nehru's Draft of Congress Working Committee Statement", 22-12-1946

[4] *Vide* "An Analysis", 26-5-1946 and "Vital Defects", 26-5-1946.

not have been done. On the contrary, I had completely associated myself with all that the Working Committee did. I could not support with reason what I had felt so vaguely.

This time it is quite different. My reason wholly supports my heart. I notice daily verification. So, I suggest frequent consultations with an old, tried servant of the nation.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p. 127

280. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SRIRAMPUR,
5.15 a. m., December 30, 1946

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. Jawahar and others will be able to tell you about what happened here.

I hold strong views about. . . . The work being done here cannot be carried on with the Congress funds or funds collected by you. He should collect the money publicly both from Hindus and Muslims. I am also getting more convinced from experience that all activities which are carried on with the help of money alone are sure to fail. You also should give up any idea of getting things done with money. It is essential that . . . should not deviate even an inch from what is agreed to between him and me. I am resolved that I will get out of it as soon as I see even the slightest impurity. This mission is most delicate and the biggest that has fallen to my lot. God has sustained me so far. I wake up and start work at 1.30 a. m., standard time, and there has been no difficulty yet. About tomorrow, God alone knows.

I have heard many complaints against you.[1] If there is any

[1] Denying the charges in his letter dated January 7, 1947, Vallabhbhai Patel, *inter alia,* said : "The complaints are false of course but some of them do not make sense. The charge that I want to stick to office is a pure concoction. I was opposed to Jawaharlal's hurling idle threats of resigning from the Interim Government. They damage the prestige of the Congress and have a demoralizing effect on the services. . . . Not even any Leaguer has said that I insult the League time and again. . . . It is my habit to tell people the bitterest truths. . . . The remark about meeting the sword by the sword has been torn out of a long passage and presented out of context. . . . If any of my colleagues has complained to you about me, I should like to know. None of them has said anything to me."

exaggeration in "many", it is unintended. Your speeches tend to be inflammatory and play to the gallery. You have lost sight of all distinction between violence and non-violence. You are teaching the people to meet violence with violence. You miss no opportunity to insult the Muslim League in season and out of season. If all this is true, it is very harmful. They say you talk about holding on to office. That also is disturbing, if true. Whatever I heard I have passed on to you for you to think over.The times are very critical. If we stray from the straight and narrow path by ever so little, we are done for. The Working Committee does not function harmoniously as it should. Root out corruption; you know how to do it. If you feel like it, send some sensible and reliable person to explain things to me and understand my point of view. There is no need whatever for you to rush down here. You are no longer fit to run about. It is not good that you do not take care of your health.

I will stop here. It is now 5.35, Calcutta time, and there are heaps of arrears to be disposed of.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 341-3

281. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

December 30, 1946

CHI. BABUDI,

I got your letter today. I had made all arrangements for Calcutta. If Anand[1] gets constant fever, Gordhandas should give up his attachment, or Anand himself should be trained to live with him. But I think all this advice is useless. What is in store for you will happen

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 101075. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

[1] Addressee's son

282. LETTER TO PYARELAL

December 30, 1946

CHI. PYARELAL,

You certainly should have proper food. A soldier must keep his body fit. You must always keep with you *roti* or biscuits. If you take with it some coconut it makes a complete diet. If you add to it some *gur* it will make a complete diet (I have tried all this). So, even while being on the march, it can be eaten at fixed times. You will have read in the *History of* [*Satyagraha in*] *South Africa* that during the march to the Transvaal, I ate while walking. If you do this you will never have to depend on anyone. You can take whatever fruit is locally available.

You have agreed that you and I should never talk keeping Manu apart. You cannot entertain any doubt about her at all. Hence I advise you to convey to her the purport of our talk. Show this also to her. Then whatever bad feelings she may be having will automatically come to the surface. Affection can never last till the end. It certainly did not last in this case. Hence you must be cheerful and confident and inspire in her as much confidence as possible. Letting her know of your doubt will be an act of loyalty. Then you must do whatever you can without entertaining any doubt. God belongs to everyone. He will do as He wills. I am doing only that. I am having her sleep close to me. She sleeps naked but sleeps soundly. She has to be woken up whenever there is work, be it at 2 o'clock or 3 o'clock. I consider it a very good sign that she is able to sleep like that. I have known it since the Aga Khan Palace days that she is quite unself-conscious. The main thing was that she should be with me, in my care and associate with you and learn. That has happened. Now we must all wish that only what spontaneously occurs to her will happen. Only then will she be completely free from fear.

That you want to conquer is my own expression. You must learn to understand my language. The English word 'conquer' is ofno use to me. I can never utter the word in that sense. The conquest that I am talking about has to be achieved by everyone. It is religion. We have to conquer untruth by truth, violence by non-violence. How nice if you could unlearn English reading and English thought ! What I am asking for is that you narrate to Manu all the incidents you have mentioned. It would be nice if you could let me know. I should follow it better in the written form. This would be an act of service to Manu.

It would never mean betrayal of her.

For the present we cannot all three of us hope to be together. What is possible is that when you come, the three of us may occasionally sit together.

It is not proper that I would keep you with me right now. The present *sadhana* consists in our being apart. The most glaring example of this is Abha. Abha has risen thereby and I think she will rise still higher. Bapa is happy and looks happy. As we absorb ourselves in our work, God will bring us together. And even if we have to sacrifice ourselves while being apart, no harm will be done. I shall not feel sorry in the least if Amtussalaam passes away while she is fasting. She is brave and it seems what she has done now has been after proper thought.

I agree that you are missing something by being away from me at this time. But what you are gaining in the process is much greater.

Hence, you must know that the time of disappointment is now past. I do not think I have anything more to say now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

283. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SRIRAMPUR,

December 30, 1946

CHI. PYARELAL,

If I have understood correctly what Sushila has said is startling. I get the impression that you have been terribly disappointed. You have not told me everything about Manu. You are not even eating properly. If you have concealed anything from me for whatever reason, it is all over for me. I think there is some misunderstanding. Atleast it is clear to you that I have brought Manu for your sake, is it not?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

284. NOTE TO PYARELAL

SRIRAMPUR,
December 30, 1946

It is amazing you do not realize that this is impossible. I am no God. I have no doubt that you are telling the unadulterated truth. But I am not in a position to compel. Had I not believed you why would I have bothered so much ? You do not know how much I have talked to her and how much I have tried to persuade her. You may speculate but you seem to be having doubts about the propriety of my efforts. How can I dispel your doubts ? Try to depend on God if you can.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

285. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

December 30, 1946

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. Two men—a Muslim and a Sikh—are being sent to you. They will read the Koran to you and render whatever other service they can.

I do not approve of your giving up water. Do you want to escape from sorrow and commit suicide? Your duty is to pray to God and remain calm. You had hoped that the fast would cure your cough, but it did not. I would only say that in the name of God do whatever you wish. The cough stays because God is absent from your heart. What can you do about this?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 550

286. LETTER TO SAMPURNANAND

December 30, 1946

BHAI SAMPURNANANDJI[1],

How can I ignore your letter? I trust the silver jubilee[2] will be

[1] U. P. Congress leader who succeeded G. B. Pant as Chief Minister of U. P.; ealier Minister of Education and Finance

[2] On January 27, 1947; the institution was founded by Gandhiji in 1921.

celebrated in fine style. May Kashi Vidyapeeth bring forth true workers.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: C. W. 10428. Courtesy: Kashi Vidyapeeth

287. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

December 30, 1946

MY DEAR HORACE,

Your good letter received only today.

I understand all your points. Do come whenever you can. My movements are uncertain. Add to this the fact that I am compassing a walking tour of the affected villages. But you need not worry about it. The newspapers will keep you informed of my movements.

This I am writing at night.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

For the peace meeting you will make the choice. My partiality will be for Santiniketan, not that Sevagram has no advantages. The balance I think is in favour of Santiniketan.

From a photostat: G. N. 1442

288. EXTRACT FROM DIARY

December 30, 1946

Jawaharlal had about ten minutes talk before leaving. It was to the effect that I ought to be with them at Delhi.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p. 127

289. LETTER TO BULSARIA

SRIRAMPUR, NOAKHALI,
December 31, 1946

BHAI BULSARIA,

I got your postcard of the 20th. I hope you have the wire I sent

you. His[1] death has caused profound grief in Panchgani. How did he suddenly pass away? Please convey my grief to his widow. Who will look after his work?[1] I am held up here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

290. LETTER TO MOHANLAL M. SHAH

NOAKHALI,
December 31, 1946

BHAI MOHANLAL,

Bulsaria informs me that Vachharaj is no more. The passing away of a good, silent worker is a painful thing. Who will now look after his work? What will they do about his Panchgani estate? Please think over it and do what is necessary. For my part I am stuck here and I see no possibility of my getting out.

I hope you are all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHETH MOHANLAL
GADHADA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

291. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

SRIRAMPUR,
December 31, 1946

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I got your letter. You did well in writing to me. I came to know about the late Vachharaj from Bulsaria. As you say, Panchgani will miss him very such. But no institution has the exclusive privilege of losing its true workers. God picks up impartially any worker He likes. Why, then, grieve over such a death? I have met Vachharaj's wife, but as I do not recollect her name I did not write to her. But I

[1] Vachharaj Tribhovandas Doshi
[1] *Vide* also the following two items.

have written to Bulsaria. You did well in giving me the information about Vachharaj's brother. I am not writing to him, either. What purpose will it serve? Send him a copy of this letter. Or do what you think right. To write a letter of condolence will mean observing a customary formality. I do not wish to do that. I only want that both of them should bring honour to Vachharaj's memory and wipe the tears of all those in Panchgani who believe themselves widowed; serve them and lighten the burden of their widowhood. The passing away of a man widows not only his wife but all those, whom he was serving, for instance, myself. I, therefore, liked your resolution to make up for the loss yourself. It is wholly worthy of you. If Jugatram[1] can spare you without inconvenience and agrees to your leaving, the climate of Panchgani is bound to suit you very well.

If the sanatorium authorities are fully agreeable and if Jayabehn and Vachharaj's brother are unable to shoulder the burden of the work and, therefore, desire you to go, I can only say that you should go as early as possible. You should certainly go there if you wish to serve everybody without distinction of caste or creed, irrespective of whether he is poor, of a low caste or a Muslim. The sanatorium should pay you enough to meet your daily needs. I think they should bear that expenditure. You may show this whole letter to the proprietor of the sanatorium or anybody else in charge there.

I hope that all of you are in good spirits and that you enjoy good health. About the situation here Manu will write in this very letter. If you go, I will be greatly relieved and our enterprise there will shine forth.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9754. Also C. W. 733. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

292. LETTER TO SYED MAHMUD

SRIRAMPUR,
December 31, 1946

BHAI SYED MAHMUD,

I have your letter. From what the Bihar Muslim League has reported and what is being conveyed to me,[2] I can't make out the truth. Write to me how many things are false in the Muslim League

[1] Jugatram Dave

[2] In *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. I, Book II, p. 249, Pyarelal explains : "Gandhiji encouraged Col. Niranjan Singh Gill . . . to proceed to Bihar and report. Though Col. Gill's report exploded many a myth propagated by the Muslim League, it was damaging enough to the Bihar Government."

report. I have written[1] to Srikrishna Sinha. I have already received a telegram that he will send the report. But you send me yours. Also write what the condition is at present.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 5101

293. TALK WITH FRIENDS

SRIRAMPUR,

December 31, 1946

If the Hindus and Muslims cannot live side by side in brotherly love in Noakhali, they will not be able to do so over the whole of India, and Pakistan will be the inevitable result. India will be divided, and if India is divided she will be lost for ever. Therefore, I say that if India is to remain undivided, Hindus and Muslims must live together in brotherly love, not in hostile camps organized either for defensive action or retaliation. I am, therefore, opposed to the policy of segregation in pockets. There is only one way of solving the problem and that is by non-violence. I know today mine is a cry in the wilderness. But I repeat that there is no salvation for India except through the way of truth, non-violence, courage and love. To demonstrate the efficacy of that way I have come here. If Noakhali is lost, India is lost.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, pp. 51-2

294. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SRIRAMPUR,

December 31, 1946

The basis of their talks was Hindu-Muslim unity. The leaders[2] did not come for any proposals. They had read about my work for Hindu-Muslim unity in the newspapers but they wanted to come and see personally how I was working.

The leaders wanted to avoid what had happened in Noakhali happening in all India and, therefore, they wanted help and advice on how to prevent quarrels among Hindus and Muslims in regard to the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Srikishna Sinha", 21-12-1946

[2] The reference is to the visit of Jawaharlal Nehru, Kripalani and others; *vide* also "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 28-12-1946

Constituent Assembly. The Congress was never against any community.

The leaders have not taken any proposals but have taken my written suggestions[1] about the approaching constitutional problems in terms of unity between the Hindus and the Muslims. With these suggestions they will make decisions in the Working Committee[2].

Hindustan Standard, 3-1-1947

295. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO N. K. BOSE

[*December 1946*]

If this is not quite correct, you should show me the correct form.[3]

From a photostat: C. W. 10538. Courtesy: N. K. Bose

296. MESSAGE TO INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL[4]

1946

It is my earnest wish that all the boys and teachers of this Harijan Nivas and the members of their families may become true Harijans, that is, true devotees of God.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1089

297. NOTE TO. G. D. BIRLA

1946

My heart is sore but not because of what is happening.

I have to consider where my place is. My voice carries no weight in the Working Committee. If I leave the scene, the soreness will go. I do not like the shape that things are taking and, Icannot speak out. In these circumstances, I can do some quiet work if I

[1] *Vide* "Instructions for Congress Working Committee", 28/30-12-1946

[2] To be held in Delhi from January 4 to 7, 1947

[3] Below this note Gandhiji had written the Bengali alphabet; *vide* also "Silence-Day Note to N. K. Bose", 23-12-1946

[4] For its eighth convocation held in Harijan Colony, Delhi. Gandhiji had presided over the first convocation on July 27, 1939.

withdraw. Today I feel like Trishanku. Is it really time for me to retire to the Himalayas? Many people have started suggesting this. They say it from ignorance but what they say has merit. Bihar and Noakhali are of course there. I cannot explain to you all this through the written word. I can do so only when we meet and talk.

You will admit, won't you, that Malaviyaji was not a *brahmachari*. 'Where is the need for it?' The ideal has never been realized. It can only be approached. I agree. I am repeating the same thing in what I am writing today for *Harijan*. This is no matter for faith. Malaviyaji confessed it to me and so did Shraddhanandji. In their later years, they had come very close to me. I affirm that, if I attain to the state of *sthitaprajna* today, I should certainly live to 125 years. It is not just a matter of faith. It is like two and two making four. It is a different matter that we do not come across such a man. If we attain to that state, it is still possible.

I am not sure, but I may have added at least three pounds.

What news about Gopa? Has the operation been performed? I have wired that the operation should be undertaken if considered necessary. It is good even if one life can be saved.

From the Hindi original: C. W. 8085. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

298. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

Unrevised *5.25 Local Time, January 1, 1947*

CHI. AMRIT,

I have been sending you messages. Sent you a wire[1] through J. Though I did not write because I could not, you were never out of my mind.

Hope you found Shummy, Maud and Beryl quite well and the old servants our friends. Of course I had all your letters.

I have studied your programme. You will go through it. Now you need not come to me to discuss your programme. The journey is long and tedious. You may get a special plane if you will waste a lot of money. Even so you cannot avoid a wretched motor journey of a few hours. It is not worth it. So you must not come except when you must.

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Amrit Kaur", 28-12-1946

I suppose you know all about the accident to Renuka.[1] She was so anxious to do substantial service. But cruel fate would not let her. Such is life. She has come nearer to me.

My trek will take a few days yet. I change my abode tomorrow. You may address letters at Noakhali. They will send my letters wherever I may be.

Love.

BAPU

From a original: C. W. 4188. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7824

299. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 1, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. You should hope to remain alive for service and also be prepared to die. Herewith a letter to Harilal. I do wish to send Manu [to you] but [cannot do so] because of ignorant attachment. I am sending home-made antiphlogistine.[2]

I have already told Harilal. He will leave on the 3rd.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 571; *also Bapuke Patra*—8: *Bibi Amtussalaamke Nam*, p. 266

300. ADVICE TO WEAVERS[3]

SRIRAMPUR,
January 1, 1947

Gandhiji advised them to depend on hand-spun yarn from the charkha which would be available at cheaper rates and in any quantity.

The hand-spun yarn he said, suffered from mill competition, but while the latter produced one very low grade and another very fine grade, hand-spun yarn could be varied to intricate designs to meet the change of fashion.

Gandhiji further told them that if they wanted to survive, they must depend on hand-spun yarn.[4]

[1] Renuka Ray

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Amtussalaam", 2-1-1947

[3] According to *The Hindu*, the weavers had sought Gandhiji's "intervention" as they could not get "enough mill-made yarn to keep the looms going".

[4] What follows is reproduced from *The Hindu.*

He had suggested that they should be spinners themselves and teach others also to spin. When there were enough of such people in the village, there would be no longer any need for dependence on mill yarn. In this way they could lay the foundation of real independence to the masses.

Hindustan Standard, 3-1-1947; and *The Hindu*, 14-1-1947

301. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SRIRAMPUR,
January 1, 1947

Gandhiji began by saying that his stay in that village had been amply enriched by the abundance of love showered upon him by the members of the household in whose midst he had been living. But God had so designed that he had never had the fortune of staying at any one place for a very long time. His travels had now been crowded by experiences both bitter and sweet. He added that the people were requesting him to prolong his stay in this village because they said that they were gaining courage by his continued presence in their midst.

As a matter of fact both contact and separation were normal parts of a man's life. So the daily prayer of the Ashramites was that God should give them strength enough to pass through life's varying experiences in a state of equipoise. Verses from the second chapter of the *Gita* which were recited every evening described the characteristics of the man who had actually attained that mental state. Its appeal was not to men of any particular status or calibre alone, but the lesson was of universal significance.

That he was going to leave the village of Srirampur on the following morning was because his duty now called him away from that place. He had now to roam from one village to another in order to contact people in their homes and carry the message of love and friendship to them. On other occasions, such as that of Dandi march, he had been followed by lakhs of people, but this time he would be going alone. It was his heart's prayer that when he left any place, people should be able to say of him that now one had left them who was their friend and not an enemy.

Today was the New Year's Day for the Christians. It was curious that they celebrated this day in India with more enthusiasm than they did the coming of Samvat or Hijra era. That was due to their long association with the ruling class who were Christians by faith.

But as he looked upon all religions as equal, being derived from one source, there was no harm in observing the Christian New Year's Day. At first Gandhiji's idea was that he would give them a reading of two choice sayings from Prophet Mohammad. But later he changed his mind and thought of presenting portions from Christian hymns which had been collected and presented to him by Rajkumari Amrit Kaur.

There was another matter which had exercised his mind for some time past. Friends, he added were friends only when they helped a person to progress in life. If they discovered any faults in him, it was their clear duty to acquaint him with them so that he might be able to correct himself. But this had to be done in a sweet manner and with a spirit of helpfulness.

It was the beginning of the New Year and his prayer was that the audience and he might be ushered into it free from impurities of the lower self, and thus rendered fitter instruments of service to a common cause.

Hindustan Standard, 3-1-1947 and 4-1-1947

302. EXTRACT FROM DIARY

January 1, 1947

Woke up at 12 at night. Talked to Manu for one hour. Letter writing and Bengali exercise from 3.15 till the prayer time. At 6.15 a. m. fell into a doze and had a very sweet nap for four or five minutes after which woke up greatly refreshed. . . . More letter writing. . . . Dozed off again while dictating a letter.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, P. 115

303. LETTER TO PARASURAM

January 2, 1947[1]

CHI. PARASURAM,[2]

I have read your letter with great care. I began it at 3 a. m.; finished reading it at 4 a. m. It contains half truths which are dangerous. You wronged me, the parties you mention, yourself and the cause by suppressing from them and me your opinion about them. I am sorry that Sushilabehn without my knowledge and consent has read your letter to me. No harm has been done. I shall respect your wish and shall not show the document to the journalists of whom you spoke to me. Nor shall I publish it. To Pyarelal I am bound to show it. You should trust me to do the right thing.

I cannot concede your demands. The other points you raise do not make much appeal to me.

Since such is my opinion and there is a conflict of ideals and you yourself wish to be relieved, you are at liberty to leave me today. That will be honourable and truthful. I like your frankness and

[1] These are in Devanagari.
[2] *ibid*

boldness. My regard for your ability as a typist and shorthand writer remains undiminished and I was looking forward to taking a hand in bringing out your other qualities. I am sorry that it cannot be.

My advice to you is that you should confer with Pyarelalji and Sushilabehn. You should take Kanubhai's guidance in shaping your future. I shall always be interested in your future and shall be glad to hear from you when you feel like writing to me. Finally let me tell you that you are at liberty to publish whatever wrong you have noticed in me and my surroundings. Needless to say you can take what money you need to cover your expenses.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 5860. Also C. W. 3074

304. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

CHANDIPUR,
January 2, 1947

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I had your letter read out to me. I am dictating this letter with a mud-pack on my eyes. What I sent to you serves exactly the same purpose as anti-phlogistine. It must be applied well. I had only one tin of imported anti-phlogistine, which I sent to you. You must still be having the earth which I sent to you. Use it. Today I have come to Abha's village. I hope I shall not have to go right up to that place. It is very good that you drink water. If you have to take an enema, you should take it with someone's help. You need not, if the bowels move naturally. If you feel heaviness in the head, use a mud-pack, just as I am lying now with a mud-pack [on the eyes]. This cures heaviness of the head. In the same way it would be good if you applied a mud-pack on the stomach also. If you feel cold, keep a hot-water bottle in the bed. Ramanama, of course, does everything, but it should come from the heart. Then nothing else is needed. Whether the person who helps you with the enema is a man or a woman, it should make, and I am sure it will make, no difference to you at all. As for mytour, it will really begin after three or four days. Satis Babu has brought me to Chandipur for five or six days before the tour begins.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 551

305. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

CHANDIPUR,
January 2, 1947

Gandhiji said that his mission was for the establishment of friendship between the sister communities living here and not to organize any one community against the rest. So far the non-violence which had been practised was the non-violence of the weak but the new experiment in which he had been engaged here was the non-violence of the strong. If it were to be successful, it should succeed in creating a moral atmosphere helpful to both the communities around him. Only when the Hindus and Muslims shed their fear and mutual suspicion could real unity of heart come. There should not be any cause for hostility when their hearts were one.

Referring to the task of village reorganization, Gandhiji said that East Bengal was a land of gold but unfortunately the life of the people was not as it should be. The water in the tanks was so dirty that he could not dare even wash his hands in them. The villages were also unclean. The rich were growing richer and the poor were getting poorer. That was not forced upon them by nature. That was a Satanic state of affairs. But although the social arrangements were Satanic, individuals were not so. Individuals should raise their organization and shape it according to new ideas of equality and comradeship.[2]

Gandhiji pointed out that the rule that they were going to establish in India in the near future should be free from defects which marked the old system. Hindus and Muslims today found themselves estranged from one another here, but if both of them devoted themselves to the noble task of reorganizing the village life and improving their economic conditions through development of their cottage industries, they would find themselves working in a common task and unity would grow among them.

Workers who had been sent here by Satis Babu, Gandhiji said, had faced many dangers. Gandhiji's advice to all workers was that they should shed fear of death from their hearts and try to win over those who opposed them. In that attempt some might die, but Gandhiji had the faith that however impossible it might appear, the oppressor's heart would surely be touched if love and courage from their side was of an unfailing character.

To workers as well as to villagers Gandhiji would like to say that they should render a proper account of every single minute of their life. They should devote all their time to selfless service of common humanity.

Gandhiji, continuing, said that he would personally like to live for 125 years,

[1] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary"
[2] The following three paragraphs are reproduced from *Hindustan Standard.*

not with the help of medicines but by natural ways, in which he would be able to serve the nation and humanity.

He exhorted the audience to carry on his eighteen-point constructive programme which would be a life-giving influence for the entire countryside.

Harijan, 26-1-1947; and *Hindustan Standard*, 4-1-1947

306. EXTRACT FROM DIARY[1]

January 2, 1947

Have been awake since 2 a. m. God's grace alone is sustaining me. I can see there is some grave defect in me somewhere which is the cause of all this. All around me is utter darkness. When will God take me out of this darkness into His light?

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p. 115

307. LETTER TO CHHOTUBHAI

CHANDIPUR, CHETGRAM,
January 3, 1947

CHI. CHHOTUBHAI,

I got both your letters. I have formed a high opinion of Shivabhai. If I feel that I shall be staying fairly steadily at one place, I shall be able to utilize the services of many persons like him. It will be a pleasure to do so. What you sayabout cultivating fearlessness may be realistic, but it does not become you. If known criminals are going about at large, people must learn to cultivate fearlessness. We shall remain mere animals till we digest this teaching. Forget about violence and non-violence in this matter. Let those who believe in violence use the violence of the brave and die. Those who believe in non-violence will be able to demonstrate its power only in situations like the present one. By describing the non-violence of cowards as genuine non-violence, we bring discredit on the latter. It would be more correct to describe it as a device of the coward. We learnt the trick and that is why I have begun to feel a doubt about myself, whether all that

[1] Pyarelal explains: "On the day of his departure from Srirampur, Gandhiji woke up at 2 a.m. once more to ask himself the question: 'Why does it not work?'. . . He woke up Manu, too, and told her to remain alert and wide awake all the time in view of the ordeal that lay ahead of them. . . . Referring to the atmosphere around him, he muttered to himself: 'There must be some serious flaw deep down in me which I am unable to discover. . . . Where could I have missed my way? There must be something terribly lacking in my ahimsa and faith which is responsible for all this."

I have learnt, and taught others to do, is to use a device of the coward. I, therefore, have come here to know the measure of my strength and let myself be tested. I am accompanied by the police, etc., and now some Sikh brothers also have joined. And Nirmal Babu has been here all the time. May it be because of them, I wonder, that I go about with a show of fearlessness ?

"That state of mind cannot be affected even in dire circumstances or at the moment of death."

This is what Raychandbhai sang and, at the age of 20 or 21, it became my dream to attain such a state. I can go on in this strain, but, as the saying is, "What need of many words before the wise?"

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am sending this letter for your information. Keep it in the file.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

308. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 3, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

Last night Satis Babu, Daroga Saheb and others had come. Daroga Saheb says that if you postpone your fast for fiftteen days, he will trace the culprit within that time and if the matter is not settled satisfactorily, you may resume your fast. I think this is quite fair and if Daroga Saheb gives this in writing, you should give up your fast. Later on we shall see. If you break the fast, live on fruit-juice and glucose for the first two days and after that take milk and water. Of late you have become very thin. Get yourself restored by constantly keeping Ramanama in the heart and by remaining calm. I do not worry at all. I remain satisfied by doing what I can from this place. Daroga Saheb has said this as a Muslim.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Abha is coming there to serve you. Get back your health soon and send her back. And it you listen to what Daroga Saheb says, then

you too will be able to come here in four or five days' time.[1]

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 577

309. NOTE TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA[2]

CHANDIPUR,
January 3, 1947

Now give up the hope of a letter in my hand. Get well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2507

310. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING[3]

CHANDIPUR,
[*January 3, 1947*][4]

Gandhiji said that women should depend on God and on their own strength and not on others. They should be more courageous and should have more confidence in their own strength. If they were afraid, they would fall easy victims to the onslaughts of the miscreants.

Indian women are not *abalas.* They are famous for their heroic deeds of the past, which they did not achieve with the help of the sword, but of character. Even today they can help the nation in many ways. They can do some useful work by which they can not only help themselves, but also the nation as a whole, thereby taking the country nearer her goal.

Gandhiji told them that not the men of Noakhali only were responsible for all that had happened, but women too were equally responsible. He asked them all to be fearless and have faith in God like Draupadi and Sita of the past.

Gandhiji also asked them to eschew untouchability. He said that if they still went on disowning the untouchables, more sorrow was in store for them. He asked the audience to invite a Harijan every day to dine with them. If they could not do so, they could call a Harijan before taking a meal and ask him to touch the drinking water or

[1] In *Bapuke Patra—8: Bibi Amtussalaamke Nam,* the addressee explains that, after discussing the matter with the Daroga for several hours, she decided not to give up the fast.

[2] This was a postscript to Manu Gandhi's letter to the addressee.

[3] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary". The meeting was held at the courtyard of the house where Gandhiji was staying.

[4] From *The Hindu,* 6-1-1947

the food. This, Gandhiji said, would go a long way to cement the gulf created between different classes of people by artificial caste barriers. Unless they did penance for their sins in that way, more calamities and more severe ones would overtake them all.

Harijan, 26-1-1947

311. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

CHANDIPUR,
January 3, 1947

Gandhiji began by saying that what he had undertaken was comparable to pilgrimage which people undertook to places like Kashi or Badrinath. God did not reside in any particular place to the exclusion of another but in the heart of man. If one undertook pilgrimage in the right spirit, one would grow purer and purer.

What did it matter to them, said Gandhiji, if their house had been burnt and their properties looted so long as they had the will to face any calamity with courage and determination to build up their lives once again on their own labour? Refugees should bravely face the reality and learn some craft by which they could maintain their families and earn their bread.

Gandhiji said that those who did not labour but lived on the toil of others were thieves. No man was free from obligation of voluntary labour in order to support himself. One might feel tempted to ask what a few individuals could do. The speaker's answer was that if 40 crores of small bits of wood were tied together, it would be enough to build a bridge over which the mightiest army could pass. Similarly, if in India 40 crores of men developed new bonds of sympathy and mutual help, they would be able to build a new life in which every man, woman and child could prosper.

Fear of hard work and of sudden calamities being thus removed from their hearts, they would march a long way towards freedom. If they could shed fear, they would be able to stand up before their assailants.

Gandhiji added that the fulfilment of his mission would come only when those who were left behind were able to say that now they had got rid of impurities which had been corrupting their lives so far and would go forward to rebuild their own lives on the basis of labour courageously and joyfully undertaken.

Hindustan Standard, 7-1-1947

[1] *The Hindu*, 6-1-1947, reported that the meeting was held at the Ramajusbagh Ashram in Tamaltala, about one mile from Gandhiji's residence.

312. EXTRACT FROM DIARY

January 3, 1947

While walking, saw the ravages in the colony of Namasudras. The mind started thinking: how could anyone stoop so low as to perpetrate such havoc in the name of religion or for selfish gain.

[From Gujarati]

Eklo Jane Re, p. 44

313. MESSAGE TO INDIAN NATIONAL ARMY[1]

January 4, 1947

My message to I. N. A. people is that they must serve the country and die, if necessary, in achieving their goal. If they do so sincerely, they will be doing real work of Netaji Subhas.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 7-1-1947

314. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

AS FROM KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ POST,
DISTT. NOAKHALI,
CAMP: CHANDIPUR,
January 4, 1947

DEAR PRAKASAM,

I have your two letters dated 10th and 11th [ultimo] and telegram sent from New Delhi. At the time of dictation they are not in front of me. I am dictating this in the small hours of the morning. I am glad the fast of Sriramulu[2] ended in the happy manner you describe. He had sent me a telegram immediately he broke his fast. I know he is solid worker though a little eccentric.

I am glad too that Shri Daniel Thomas[3] never delivered the speech attributed to him.

About the Madras quota spindles I am absolutely clear. If I were the Government of Madras as you are and I had the backing of

[1] According to the report Debnath Das, Secretary, I. N. A. Peace Committee, Bengal, had met Gandhiji and asked for a message to the I. N. A. personnel in India.

[2] Potti Sriramulu had been fasting to secure temple-entry for Harijans in Madras Province; *vide* "Letter to Poti Sriramulu", 19-12-1946

[3] Minister of Prohibition, Madras.

public opinion in the shape of mass opinion I would do this in spite of the manufactured opinion of interested parties and, if the worst happened, I would pay for the spindles of my quota and yet not use them. I regard mill-owners' and Chamber of Commerce's opinion to be interested in the sense that they and their supporters have made up their minds that what is good for them is good for the whole of India. It is not a question of honesty and dishonesty, it is a question pure and simple of conflict of ideals. Of course, it is open to these gentlemen to retort that in my sense the opinion of the masses may also be called interested. If such be the argument I would hold that the interest of the masses as conceived by them must prevail over that of the classes. It is conceivable that in certain cases the opinion of the classes may be intrinsically right and that of the masses intrinsically absurd. This to my mind is the crux of democracy. Hence, as the Government, if I am confident about the backing of the masses, I would tell the Centre that my Government would pay damages for breach of contract if that be the legal result. I must serve the masses to the best of my ability.

Jajuji tells me that the scheme you have announced has not been put into operation.[1] If you do not strike the iron while it is hot the whole thing might become stale and might not produce the anticipated result. Of course, I am utterly out of court here because I do not know full facts.

Blessings from

BAPU[2]

SHRI T. PRAKASAM
PREMIER
MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

315. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH[3]

CHANDIPUR,
Saturday, January 4, 1947

What you say is correct, but I have got so deeply involved in this problem that I cannot say when I shall be able to come out of it. Kanchan should take proper care of her health. Never mind what expense has to be incurred for that purpose. It has got to be incurred.

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to T. Prakasam", 28-12-1946
[2] In Devanagari
[3] This was dictated to Manu Gandhi who appended it to her own letter to the addressee.

You may draw it from Kanchan's account. We shall adjust all that afterwards. In the last resort there is the Ashram. Do not, therefore, worry on that account. Keep me informed about Kanchan's health.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 5619. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

316. LETTER TO MUNNALAL AND KANCHAN M. SHAH

[*January 4, 1947*][1]

CHI. MUNNALAL AND KANCHAN,

The building for the office about which Pyarelal wrote to you is not to be constructed. If we return alive from here, we shall see. Go on devotedly with your work as if it was the work of service. To me both of you remain what you were. Do full justice to whatever task comes to you unsought.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I may not be able to write to you any more for some time now.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 5620. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

317. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 4, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. I am not worried. I can't feel at ease as long as your cough persists. There is fever too. Ramanama should cure both. I will not compel you to break the fast.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 552

318. SPEECH AT OPENING OF SCHOOL[2]

CHANGIRGAON,

January 4, 1947

At the school, Gandhiji enquired as to what subject were taught and especially whether any craft was taught.

Gandhiji pointed out that he would not like schools to be run on the same old

[1] From the G. N. register

[2] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary". The report explains that the village was about a mile from Chandipur. Gandhiji opened the school in the morning.

lines and he advised the introduction of crafts. The school should ask for a grant for the introduction of crafts and if a grant was not sanctioned, it should carry on without it.[1]

If the school wanted his advice, Gandhiji said, he would advise Nai Talim (new education) which gives training in crafts. The aim of education should be to make the students self-supporting.

Harijan, 26-1-1947: and *Amrita Bazar Patrika,* 7-1-1947

319. DISCUSSION WITH MEMBERS OF CHANDIPUR-CHANDIRGAON GRAM SEVA SANGH [2]

January 4, 1947

QUESTION: What should the Sangh do to appease the aggressive mentality of the majority community?

ANSWER: Appeasement has become a word of bad odour. In no case can there be any appeasement at the cost of honour. Real appeasement is to shed all fear and to do what is right at any cost. Blood for blood is a played-out game and non-violence of the brave is the only real approach to the problem.[3]

In answer to a question whether the refugees should accept monetary assistance from the Government even if it was quite insufficient for the erection of temporary shelter, Gandhiji said:

Refugees must honestly find out what they need for the least kind of temporary shelter. If their basic requirements are not covered by the proposed Government grants, they should refuse to accept them but should still return to their homes even if it meant no cover over their heads. This has to be done in a spirit of sports-manship

Q. In the course of rehabilitation, should the members of the minority community be lodged together in sufficient numbers for the purpose of safety ?

A. Such concentration of population is an unthinkable proposition. It would imply that the whole country would be divided into hostile sections, perhaps enjoying a sort of armed peace. The manly thing to do is for every individual, of whatever sect, whether young or old, to derive protection from his inner strength which comes from

[1] This sentence is reproduced from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*.

[2] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary". *The Hindu,* 6-1-1947, reported that the Gram Seva Sangh was organized by Souren Bose, in accordance with Gandhiji's instructions.

[3] This sentence is reproduced from *Hindustan Standard.*

God.

Asked what arrangements for the safety of the refugees could be made in view of the fact that miscreants were moving freely in the affected areas, Gandhiji said:

No place in the world today is free from miscreants. So villagers should fall back on their own strength for protection. The strength which will give them lasting protection is the strength of the heart. For those who accepted God as their protector, what did it matter if miscreants roamed about? People should do what was right for them and leave the rest to God.

His immediate advice to the refugees would be that they should brave all risks and come back home. It did not matter to him that some might suffer in the attempt due to exposure or shortage of supplies, but the attempt was still worth while.[1]

Q. If Government and private relief is stopped, what work can we give to the refugees so that they can earn their daily bread?

A. Although personally I should be tempted to suggest hand-spinning as a universal occupation, I would not necessarily do so in the present case. Instead, I would suggest that the workers should find out on the basis of detailed local enquiries what occupation could be undertaken in each village. And when such information is available, I would love to give advice in greater detail. It is certain that the work must be done in co-operation.[2]

Gandhiji said that there were a number of tanks in this part of Bengal but he had not yet seen a single tank sufficiently clean to wash his hands in. This villagers were in the habit of using the same tank for all purposes without any scruple whatsoever. A clean water supply was the prime necessity of life. He suggested there should be natural filters sunk near the tanks and also artificial filters for corporate use. Certain tanks could also be reserved for drinking purposes only. If no suggestion was found workable, tube-wells should be sunk in every village. A second alternative would be to have filters in each household made with a number of earthen vessels, set one over another, some of them half-filled with charcoal and sand as was done at some big railway stations. The third alternative was tube-wells. He did not favour the last so much as it could not be prescribed for the rich and the poor alike. It was, however, all right as an expedient and should be resorted to at once in this area. If there were any difficulties with regard to the supply of materials, he would try to help them in securing these from the Government.

Harijan, 26-1-1947; *Hindustan Standard*, 7-1-1947; and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 9-1-1947

[1] This paragraph is reproduced from *Hindustan Standard.*
[2] What follows is reproduced from *Amrita Bazar patrika.*

320. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

KAZIRBAZAR,
January 4, 1947

Gandhiji began his speech by stating that the two sister communities had become estranged from one another today and he was even looked upon as enemy number one by some members of the Muslim community. His object in confining himself to Noakhali was to test himself. In all his long life he had never harboured enmity against Muslim community. In fact plenty of the best years of his life had been spent among Muslim friends in South Africa.

Gandhiji said that it was continually being impressed upon him that his place was no longer in this Province but in Bihar where infinitely worse things were alleged to have taken place. The audience should be aware that he had all along been in correspondence with the popular Government in Bihar and all influence possible was being exercised by him over that Government from here; but he did not want to leave Noakhali because his task there was of an entirely different order. He had to prove by living among the Mussalmans that he was as much their friend as of the Hindus or any other community. This could evidently not be done from a distance or by mere word of mouth.

A Bihar Minister and several responsible officials who had come to him yesterday had placed before him all the facts within their knowledge without any reservation. They had admitted that brutal things had taken place in the course of one fateful week and that they were prepared to bear all justifiable censure passed on them on that account.

They knew their duty as a responsible Government. The charge of complicity or failure in doing all that was humanly possible was denied by them and they said they were prepared to undergo any ordeal in order to prove their innocence. They had been trying to answer the charges made by the Muslim League against them. Gandhiji said he would like to assure the audience that he would not rest until he was satisfied personally about the Bihar case and had done all that was humanly possible.

Gandhiji thought 'that the attendance of both Hindus and Muslims at prayer meetings was dwindling and one day he would be left without anybody to listen to him at all'.[2] But he said that even then there would be no reason for him to give up

[1] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary". The date-line and the first paragraph are reproduced from *Hindustan Standard,* which reported that the meeting was "specially held at the request of a local leader, Maulvi M. Fazlul Huq".

[2] In *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. II, Book II, p. 135, Pyarelal explains that this was a reference to a statement by Hamiduddin, Parliamentary secretary.

his mission in despair. He would then roam from village to village taking his spinning-wheel. With him it was an act of service to God. Such labour undertaken with an unselfish mind would speak for itself among those who were around him. A worker, he said, who travelled from village to village teaching the people how to clean their ponds effectively and teaching them other arts and crafts so as to enrich the life of the villagers, should be able to make the villagers long for his company rather than shun him.

Continuing, Gandhiji said that news had just reached him that the evacuees were now returning in fair numbers and the question of rehabilitation was becoming more and more acute. His advice to the evacuees would be that they should brave all hardships and return home quickly. By means of their own labour they must determine to rebuild their homes as well as their own lives. Government should extend all necessary help and they should be approached by the evacuees. He was aware of the fact that various relief organizations were prepared to help the evacuees with finances and other material assistance. But why should they undertake a task which rightly belonged to the Government set up by the people themselves? If the Government failed to extend it either quickly enough or to a satisfactory extent, then it was for them to say so and seek supplementary aid of public charities in order to rehabilitate the people. But whatever shape these arrangements might take, the evacuees must be prepared to return home in the face of all possible dangers and difficulties.

Harijan, 26-1-1947; and *Hindustan Standard, 8-1-1947*

321. DRAFT TELEGRAM TO MAHOMED YAMIN

[On or after *January 4, 1947*][1]

MAHOMED YAMIN SAHEB
LIAISON OFFICER
PUNJAB MUSLIM LEAGUE
PATNA

YOUR WIRE. HAVE GIVEN NO OPINION. SEND ME CUTTINGS. HAVE MINIMIZED NO MUSLIM SUFFERINGS. I MAKE NO DISTINCTIONS. DON'T SEE MY WAY GO BIHAR ALLEVIATE DISTRESS. FEEL I DO THAT BETTER FROM HERE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 10526

[1] The telegram was in reply to one from the addressee dated January 4, in which he had described Gandhiji's statement of December 23 as "unfair" and had urged him to visit Bihar.

322. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

Friday[1]*, January* [5]*,1947*

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. You were bound to get cured. Recite Ramanama. Today Sushilabehn has gone there to see you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 553

323. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

CHANDIPUR,
January 5, 1947

I have not come here to talk politics.

His purpose, Gandhiji said, was not to reduce the influence of the Muslim League or to increase that of the Congress, but to speak to the people of the little things about their daily life, things which, if properly attended to, would change the face of the land and create a heaven out of the pitiable conditions in which they were all living today.

Bengal, said Gandhiji, was a land full of verdure, with plenty of water and fertile soil. Nature had showered her abundance on Bengal, but through ignorance, the people were suffering from poverty and disease. They appeared to be content with what little could be earned from betel-nut and coconut gardens and a little of agriculture. But with more knowledge, they could increase the productivity of the land many times and convert their villages into cleaner abodes of peace and prosperity. If all the villagers joined together, the face of the land would be changed in no time.

Referring to the evacuees, Gandhiji said that they must come back home and face all dangers and difficulties. Anyone who had committed a sin should likewise make a clean confession to God, and then depend upon God for whatever He might choose to do. Truly religious men who made a confession to God did not repeat their errors.

Gandhiji said that only in the morning he had visited a house where the owner had been assured that if he divulged his secret hoard of gold, his life would be spared.

[1] This is a slip—January 5 was a Sunday.

[2] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary". The date-line and the last paragraph are reproduced from *Hindustan Standard*, which reported that "the meeting was held near Harishchar School, a mile from Chandipur".

But when the man did so, the miscreants killed him and looted the gold. No man is free from sin and his advice to the miscreants would be to come forward and depend on God and live like brave honest men

Harijan, 26-1-1947; and *Hindustan Standard*, 8-1-1947

324. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

AS FROM KAZIRKHIL, RAMGUNJ POST,
NOAKHALI DISTRICT,
CAMP: CHANDIPUR,
January [*2/6*][1], 1947

CHI. MIRA,

Your registered letter is in front of me. The news will be given to you by Parasuram together with this letter. I simply dictate to say that the position you adumbrate is the correct thing. Everything depends upon one's purity in thought, word and deed, using the word 'purity' in its widest sense. Then there may be no cause for even so much as a headache. Only get hold of this fundamental fact. We often loosely use the word 'purity' and excuse all sorts of lapses. Do not ever worry how I am faring or what I am doing here. If I succeed in emptying myself utterly, God will possess me. Then I know that everything will come true but it is a serious question when I shall have reduced myself to zero. Think of 'I' and 'O' in juxtaposition and you have the whole problem of life in two signs. In this process you have helped me considerably for, though at a distance, you seem to be doing your duty to the fullest extent possible in your field[2] of work.

This was dictated four days ago when I was resting in bed. But it remained untyped. Meantime your another letter and samples of khadi have been received. Have you any khadi to spare for sale? I make this inquiry for the sake of the refugees. Do not overdo things. Do not overwork. "Be careful for nothing."[3] The pilgrimage on foot commences tomorrow. There may be then no letter to you. A bulletin will be sent to you. This I am scribbling in the

[1] Inferred from the contents; the source, however, has "January 4, 1947".
[2] Up to here the letter is typewritten; what follows is in Gandhiji's hand.
[3] *Philippians*, iv, 6

early morning. "Blessed are they that expect nothing."[1]

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6521. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9916

325. LETTER TO M. A. ABDULLAH

January 6, 1947

DEAR ABDULLAH SAHEB,

I have carefully read your letter. The answer is obvious. My non-co-operation was purely non-violent in conception as also in effect. This does not mean that practice was always perfect. Theory and practice hardly ever coincide even as Euclid's line in practice never coincides with his theoretical definition.

The non-fraternization policy of the Allies led to disastrous results, which he who runs may see and the pity of it is that the disaster is not yet completed. No one knows where it will lead to.

I thought it better to send you the reply of which you may make any use you like. But if you prefer that I should send a public letter in answer to your letter used as an anonymous letter, I shall gladly do so.

I hope you are doing well in your new place.

H. ABDULLA SAHEB, I.P.
C/O. KHAN SAHEB,
SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE, NOAKHALI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

326. LETTER TO PYARELAL

January 6, 1947

CHI. PYARELAL,

Read the enclosed letter from Nirmal Babu[2], have Sushila read it and then return it. I advise you not to come here for the present. I have had a long talk with Dev.[3] I am taking a lot of work from him. He will write more. Manu has developed a terrible dislike for things. If you come it will only be aggravated. I came to know about it from

[1] From Alexander Pope's letter dated September 23, 1725 to Fortescue
[2] Nirmal kumar Bose
[3] Devprakash Nayyar

Nirmal Babu's letter afterwards. Manu has lost her equanimity. Kishorelal's letter has played a great part in it. If instead of worshipping her, you worship God—if it is possible for you do that—then everything will become easy. If you cannot do that, then everything will go awry. Maybe even this *yajna* will come to nothing. And if that happens I shall be the main culprit, not any of you. But this is all too long to tell. I can see that you will not be able to have Manu as wife. If God wills otherwise, it is another matter. But if you on your own try to accomplish your design, Manu, who is with me, may be lost to you and she will certainly never learn anything from you. But if you pray to God to grant her as your wife, you will be able to have her as a pupil. This is a hard situation. Do what you can. I cannot see anything else.

Dev will write the rest. It will be good if you share all this with Sushila. Do show her Nirmal Babu's letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

327. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO N. K. BOSE

January 6, 1947

Tell him in Bengalee that if the complaint is true, it should be reported at once to the police. I would esteem a copy of the statement[1] with permission to make what use I like of it. As it is I am making private use of the letter under reply to find out the facts. If the complaint states the truth, it is undoubtedly bad. The evil must be nipped in the bud.

From a facsimile: *Mahatma*, Vol. VII, between pp. 384 and 385

[1] This word is in Hindi.

328. A LETTER[1]

[*January 6, 1947*][2]

BHAI,

[The money] has not come as yet. It is my firm belief that the work here cannot be done with money. I don't want a single cowrie from the Congress. The work is to be done only with whatever money is collected at Johar. Even if they give nothing, I shall have to carry on. True service cannot be rendered here otherwise.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 344

329. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

CHANDIPUR,
January 6, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

I feel concerned about your health. You must get better. There is so much work to do.

The situation is very delicate. Watch the developments here. I am in complete darkness but my hope burns as bright as ever.

I am writing to. . . [3] The letter is enclosed, it may please be passed on to him. By regarding money as our God, we forget the true God. I forget to write about so many things whenever I sit down to write to you at the last moment; and I cannot be ready to write till then. Hence Sudhir will tell you the rest.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 343-4

[1] This was an enclosure to "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 6-1-1947; *vide* the following item. The name is omitted in the source.

[2] *ibid*

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

330. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 6, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your long letter. Did you get my yesterday's letter[1] ? I had written two letters. Why do you wish to die in my lap? Have you decided to die! All this is against dharma. I cannot go there specially [to see you]. I do whatever I can from here. You have to die or live as God wills. Give up any other thought. Your village is also there in my itinerary. If you are alive till then, we shall certainly meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 454

331. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

CHANDIPUR,

January 6, 1947

My weekly silence will come to an end at about 7 o'clock. Therefore, I am writing down whatever I want to say. I pray to God that the tour which I begin tomorrow may be duly completed and produce the intended result. All of you should join me in this prayer. But before offering the prayer you should know why I have undertaken this tour. There is only one purpose behind this tour and it is very clear. May God cleanse and purify the hearts of Hindus and Muslims and may the people of the two communities give up mistrust and fear of each other. All of you should join me in this prayer and say that God is our Lord and may He give us success.

One may ask, where is the need for a tour to achieve this object? How can one whose heart is not pure tell others to be pure? How can one who lacks courage, inspire courage in others? How can one who is himself fully armed, advise others to give up arms? These are all relevant questions, and such questions have also been put to me. During this tour I shall try my best to convey to every villager that there is no impurity in my heart at all. I can prove all that only when I live and move among those who distrust me. The third question is difficult to answer because I myself move under police protection.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 5-1-1947

[2] This appeared under the title "Why Walking Tour?" with an editorial note that it was written by Gandhiji in Hindustani and rendered into Bengali by N. K. Bose.

Fully armed police and military personnel are with me. They are alert and always respectfully guard me. All this is entirely in the hands of the Government. Our Government is of the view that it is its duty to provide me police protection during my tour. How can I stop this? I can only say that none but God is my protector. I do not know if you will believe me. I am speaking the truth. God alone knows a man's heart; none else can know it. It is the duty of every believer in God to obey the dictates of his heart. It is my claim that I act in this way. But the Sikhs have not been deputed by the Government. Can I not prevent their accompanying me? You should better know that they are also accompanying me on my tour with the permission of the Government. They have not come here with the intention to fight. They have even left behind their *kirpans.* They have come here to serve the two communities without any discrimination. The first lesson of the Indian National Army, which Netaji had formed, was that people belonging to all religions, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis, etc., should regard India as their own country and should all work in such a way as to bring about unity. The Sikhs want to serve both the communities and they wish to do so under my guidance. How can I reject such friends, and why should I? They are serving because they have vowed to serve and not to show off. If I refuse to accept their service, I shall go down in my own estimation and shall prove a coward. It is my request to you that you also should trust these brothers of ours and, by treating them as brothers, take advantage of their help. They can help a lot; they have a great deal of experience. God has given them health and honesty.

If what I have said about them is proved false, they will go away from here; and if I am keeping them here with any evil intention, I shall myself be doomed and the experiment for which I have come here will fail.

During this tour, I want to teach you a few essential things, as for example, how to get pure water in the villages, how to keep ourselves clean, how best to utilize the soil from which we have sprung, how to breathe in life's energy from the infinite sky above our head, how to draw fresh life from our surroundings and how best to use the sun's rays. Our country has become impoverished. I shall try and teach you so that you may, be making proper use of these resources, convert this into a land of gold. I pray to God that during this tour I may succeed in performing such service to you.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 26-1-1947

332. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

CHANDIPUR,

Tuesday, January 7, 1947

. . .[1] Don't worry about my health. It permits my doing a lot of work these days. God alone knows for how long it will be so. It was due to my own folly that I fell sick in Kaira. I knew nothing of dietetics and pampered the palate. I realize every moment that if I submit to its cravings, it may undo all that I have methodically done till now, whether I eat five items of food or only one. Moreover I tell . . . and . . . not to worry about me. It is enough that one Almighty Physician is above us all to take care of me. I had your letter about . . . Don't ask for a reply. I do write a few letters but that is because I get up very early. I just cannot cope with the work here. But I do not worry about that either. I am ashamed to admit that though I do get *Harijan*, I am not able to read it. . . . are in their respective villages. I will certainly speak up whenever I find things going wrong. The task here is a difficult one. I have to make my way through darkness. But "one step enough for me". All this is just introductory.

[From Gujarati]

Eklo Jane Re, pp. 51-2

333. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 7, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. Now it is time for prayer. I am sending a thermos flask. Keep me informed. I shall be happy if you are cured.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 555

334. TALK WITH SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA[2]

January 7, 1947

I cannot afford the luxury of having a folding hut being carried from place to place for my use during the journey.

[1] Omissions as in the source

[2] Pyarelal explains: "At 9 o'clock, the party reached Masimpur. Satis Chandra Das Gupta had put up for Gandhiji's accommodation a small, neat-looking, comfortable hut . . . made of light, detachable panels of split bamboo, cane and grass. . . . But Gandhiji pronounced the hut to be 'palatial'. . . ."

I can make myself comfortable anywhere and everywhere. If there is no one to receive me under his roof, I shall be happy to rest under the hospitable shade of a tree.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p. 140

335. TALK AT MEETING OF MASIMPUR-MEROA GRAM SEVA SANGH [1]

MASIMPUR,
January 7, 1947

People should try to purify themselves and their religion from within and not indulge in outward show, said Mahatma Gandhi.

Replying to a question regarding the wearing of the sacred thread which, the questioner said, the Arya Samaj wanted every Hindu to wear, Gandhiji said that anyone who liked might wear the sacred thread but there should not be any movement or propaganda in this behalf. No good would be done by wearing the sacred thread alone as it could not remove the defects of the Hindu religion.

Replying to another question as to whether there was difference between his ideals and those of the Arya Samajists, as the latter were telling the people, Gandhiji said there were differences in Arya Samaj itself, as there were several branches of it. Some of their ideals tallied with his, but with regard to others he differed from the Arya Samaj. For instance, while he had no difference as to ideals with Arya Samajists like Ghanshyam Gupta, Speaker of the Central Provinces Assembly, the same could not be said of every Arya Samajist.

Asked for his advice as to how people should earn a living, Gandhiji said his advice was spinning for all people. He would also suggest weaving and carpentry. The people should devote themselves more and more to these professions, thereby leading a pure life.

Gandhiji again stressed the importance of supply of pure drinking water in every village.

The Hindu, 9-1-1947

[1] The meeting was held in front of Gandhiji's mobile cottage, soon after his arrival.

336. DISCUSSION WITH A. ZAMAN [1]

January 7, 1947

Gandhiji said that if people did not accept this grant, namely Rs. 250 per family, Government should step in and build suitable houses without distinction of rich and poor and ask people to live therein. These houses must, however, be inspected by a competent engineer. No building but huts would do for the present.

Mr. Zaman said that he had recommended to Government that the amount of loan should be increased to a maximum of Rs. 1,000 and these loans should also be interest free, to be payable in ten equal instalments. Moreover, an artisans' grant of Rs. 200 should be granted. He had also recommended a utensils grant of Rs. 10 for each member of a family with a maximum limit of Rs. 100 to a family, this grant being free for members of a looted family. And finally he had recommended a cattle purchase grant of Rs. 250 for every farmer.

Gandhiji, in his reply, said that he did not see why interest should be charged for these loans. He added that If Government did not charge interest it would be very much appreciated by the people.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 10-1-947 and 19-1-1947

337. DISCUSSION WITH ANNADA SHANKAR CHOUDHURY[2]

January 7, 1947

The displaced persons should be trained to be self-reliant in order to maintain themselves and not depend upon charities. Some amount in charity will, of course, have to be distributed. But total dependence on it will encourage idleness and aversion to earning a living.

[From Gujarati]

Eklo Jane Re, p. 55

338. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[3]

MASIMPUR,

January 7, 1947

Gandhiji said that some Muslims had left the prayer ground. On enquiry he had come to learn that they had left because *Ramdhun* was being sung. He was glad that it occurred on the very first day of his pilgrimage. It was a matter for deep regret that his

[1] Additional District Magistrate of Noakhali, who was in charge of relief and rehabilitation. According to the report, he met Gandhiji in the afternoon regarding the quantum of grant to the refugees about which there was disagreement the different relief organizations and the authorities.

[2] Congress leader and member of Bengal Legislative Assembly

[3] Reports of the speech in the various sources have been collated.

Muslim friends should have been upset at the singing of *Ramdhun*. It indicated the nature of obstacles that must be faced and overcome if the country was to make progress. The nature of propaganda carried on here has been such that the Muslims could not even bear to hear *Ramdhun* sung by Hindu devotees.

I am sorry because some of my friends had not been able to bear any name of God except Khuda but I am glad because they have had the courage of expressing their dissent openly and plainly. This small incident probably gives an inkling of the mentality which had prevailed during the fateful October disturbances in the district. I am extremely careful not to wound the susceptibilities of anyone unneces-sarily. It is essential that my Muslim brethren should realize as also the Hindus that it does not matter by what name God is addressed. It is the same Creator whom people worship through many tongues. I appeal to the Muslim brethren to assure me of that freedom which is true to the noblest traditions of Islam. Even from the Muslim League platforms it has been repeatedly said that in Pakistan there will be full tolerance of the practice of their faiths by the minorities and that they will enjoy freedom of worship equally with the majority.

Gandhiji observed that Pakistan did not and could not mean that Hindus in Bengal and Sind should give up their religion and follow the practice of the majority community in order not to rouse the latter's displeasure. God could be approached through *namaz* as well as *Ramdhun* and there could not be a quarrel among branches of the same tree.

Gandhiji said that there was nothing to quarrel over the Hindus, Muslims and Christians. When Gandhiji started from Chandipur, it was proposed that all through his way *Ramdhun* would be sung. But he thought better of it lest it displeased the Muslims. Although *Ramdhun* was very dear to him he did not like the idea that his Muslim brothers should think their Hindu brothers to be so arrogant as to march singing *Ramdhun* because of Gandhiji's presence.

Gandhiji added that he had been very careful in his speeches and deeds not to offend his Muslim brethren. He would desist from anything that displaced their sentiments or offended their religion. But he could never give up his *Ramdhun* which brought him so much mental peace. He had come to Noakhali to serve all communities, to help them to live together peacefully and in healthy atmosphere. Every day during prayer, he not only recited from the *Bhagavad Gita* but also from the Koran, and religious differences simply did not exist for him.

He had come to Noakhali, Gandhiji said, to serve Hindus and Muslims alike. But he would be helpless if Muslims wanted him to forgo the name of his God in exchange. As he did not like to parade his religion, so also he could not forgo his

religious belief. It was the unity of God and religion that he had come to preach. He could not give it up, Gandhiji said, so long as he lived.

Concluding, Gandhiji pleaded for tolerance from the majority community and urged and minority community not to give up reciting *Ramdhun* in all humility and without any feeling of hostility towards others. With proper understanding of each other's religion, Gandhiji said, Muslim progress would be repaid and certain.[1]

Hindustan Standard, 9-1-1947; *The Hindu*, 9-1-1947; and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 20-1-1947

339. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

Wednesday, January 8, 1947

CHI. JAJUJI,

Your letter of December 9 reached me around the 19th. Manu read it out to me. But it remained unanswered for lack of time. In the meanwhile I received another letter yesterday—it is dated December 30—and it was also yesterday that I embarked on my walking tour. During the tour the correspondence is to be reduced to the minimum. For the past few days, I have been waking up daily at 2.30 or 3 in the morning and writing or dictating. In no other way can I cope with my work. I know that this method of working is wrong but I have no choice. If God wishes to save me, He will. If I restrict myself to the work here and completely stop letter-writing, there will be no need to wake up too early. Maybe I shall have to do that. Another way is that I should appoint old workers and sit back myself. But this seems wrong to me. There is no doubt that it was the proper thing to entrust independent work to the old co-workers. A great deal depends on how much burden Manu can bear. Enlisting someone else will go against my resolve. Throughout the tour I have to face the conflict between dharma and *adharma*. Manu sleeps in the same bed with me. When I get up I wake her up and dictate to her. So far she too is pulling along well. So much for the background—it was necessary to give some, otherwise I could have saved this much time.

Now I come to the letter of December 9. From the latest I heard about your health from V. Lal it would seem that it is improving. Keep up the improvement and remain fully absorbed in your work.

[1]*The Hindu* report concluded: "Towards the close of prayer, a large number of Muslims who had left earlier returned and sat down in silence to hear the Bengali translation of Gandhiji's speech."

My work should not be a hindrance to anyone. You may ask me whatever you wish to. I am carrying on a pleasant correspondence[1] with Prakasam about the work in Madras; whatever will be will be. I am rendering some help. We ourselves will have to act as experts. He will not be able to do it. What he can see to is that there will be no obstruction from the Government machinery. The Textile Commissioner it would appear is a competent man. The final result is in the hands of God. Regarding Saraladevi what I want is that she should be appointed without delay. She is a very neat and efficient worker. I believe Dastaneji is already carrying on some correspondence with her. If I am unable to give a final verdict, obviously the Board of Trustees must do what it deems proper. About the Punjab developments I feel that if things reach the point of fighting we should fight. But I think the occasion will not arise. You should keep writing to Rajkumari. If there is an opportunity I shall write something.

Your second letter is brief. There is nothing more to be said about the exhibition in Madras. I say this much for the future that if the Provincial Government or the Central Government or even the Congress itself adopts a policy contrary to that of the A. I. S. A., we must follow our khadi policy even at the risk of leaving the Congress. There is no doubt that we shall render true service to the Congress and the nation by acting in this manner. We are entitled to hold an independent opinion, which means that the public is quite awakened and enlightened regarding our policy.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have gone through the statement of the A. I. S. A. I got up at 3 o'clock, had it read out to me and read some of it myself. I am sending a wire today. You will have got it. I do not think that the statement needs to be revised. On the whole it reads well. You should regard me as useless for such work till my work here is completed. On reading it I was convinced that we should have decentralization as soon as possible. I think I did write upon this matter. We must

[1] *Vide* "Letter to T. Prakasam", 28-12-1946

produce experts. We had better grant Dhiren Mazmudar the amount he wants. Rajkumari is probably in Delhi. She will not come here now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

340. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

MASIMPUR,
January 8, 1947

CHI. RAJENDRA PRASAD,

I have your letter of . . .[1] It is futile to worry. Not only I but we all are in the hands of God. We shall act as He moves us. I cannot have Kanu with me. I have given everyone independent work. Chi. Manu has come of her own accord. She was keen to come only to work under me and I agreed to it and she is working with zest. She is not as capable as Kanu, but where faith and purity exist talent and strength must follow. Manu has to prove this. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

341. LETTER TO MADHAV BIRLA

FATEHPUR,
January 8, 1947

CHI. MADHAV,

Don't spoil me. Hariram is devoted to me. He has given me much service. But I am being well looked after. I am eating well. Therefore I am sending both back. You may send me what I ask for; anything more will be an excess. Write to Ghanshyamdasji. Don't worry.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Omission as in the source

342. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 8, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I was glad to have your letter. Nothing but dharma can help you. If it is God's will that we should meet in person while doing our duty, we shall certainly meet. Not otherwise. How does it matter even if we don't? We have never been separate spiritually nor shall we ever be. Whatever happens, remain happy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 584

343. A TALK

January 8, 1947

If you don't treat the Hindus as your kith and kin, you will land yourselves in trouble. It is the easiest thing to harass the Hindus here, as you Muslims are in the majority. But is it just as honourable? Show me, please, if such a mean action is suggested anywhere in your Koran. I am a student of the Koran. Besides, I have many friends among the Muslims. And even today many Muslim girls are as much my daughters as this girl[1] is. One of them is Amtussalaam, who is on a fast here. You must be knowing her. She is the kind of girl who will sacrifice her life for me. So in all humility I appeal to you to dissuade your people from committing such crimes, so that your own future may be bright.

[From Gujarati]

Eklo Jane Re, pp. 57-8

344. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

FATEHPUR,

January 8, 1947

I am so happy to see so many of you here this evening. It is a grand day for me.

[1] Manu Gandhi

[1] The reports in the various sources have been collated.

When he reached Fatehpur in the morning, Gandhiji said, he had been surrounded by affection all round, and among the messages received were also some from sisters. They wanted to present him with sweets specially prepared by them, but Gandhiji had replied that he was hungering not for sweets for the tongue but for sweets for the heart. He was grateful for the accommodation offered by the village, that was all that he needed. Gandhiji did not want to be a burden on any village through which he was passing. His own food was carried along with him while the expenses of the whole party had already been defrayed by loving friends.

Some Muslim friends had asked him why a feeling of estrangement was growing between the two communities in spite of the able leadership around, more specially in the Congress and the League. Gandhiji confessed that it was indeed true that the people in general always followed the lead which came from above. Therefore, it was not enough that leadership was able but it was necessary that there was accurate knowledge of the wants of the people. For himself he was only trying to depend wholly upon God and work at the task which came naturally to him. He commended the same course to everyone.

Today I am going through the greatest test of my life. I am now to find if the road that I follow is really the true road for all people of this country. I will not leave Noakhali unless I am assured by members of both communities that they would live like brothers in perfect unity. If success does not come to me, I will not go away from Noakhali a defeated man, but would rather die in the achievement of my mission.

Gandhiji told his audience that some Muslims had come to him to seek his advice as to which was the right road he should ask them to follow. He told them that he himself was in darkness and was searching for the right road and unless he found the same, he could not show them that path. The road that he was searching today was the road of unity but he could not tell them how to reach that road. He wanted them all to pray for success of his mission so that he might show to the country the right road to follow.

Harijan, 26-1-1947; *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 11-1-1947; and *The Hindu*, 10-1-1947

345. LETTER TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY

KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P. S.,
NOAKHALI,
January 9, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

As you are aware I am on the move from day to day and this is the third day[1]. I have had varied experience on the first two days

[1] Of a village-to-village walking tour; *Vide*, "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 6-1-1947

which is worth noticing. On the first day at Mashimpur at the evening prayer there was *Ramdhun* as usual. The Muslim part of the audience stayed there during the *Ramdhun* and then some of them withdrew at half-past five without saying why they were going. I observed that it was not time for evening *namaz* because the sun was still shining. So I asked one of my co-workers to enquire why they had gone. They quickly replied that they did so because *Ramdhun* was recited at the meeting. I, therefore, spoke about the withdrawal, a report of which you must have seen in the papers.[1]

Yesterday was a pleasing contract. I was accommodated at Fatehpur by Maulvi Ibrahim Sahib in his madressa. He and his fellow-Muslims were very kind and very attentive. The Muslims attended the prayer meeting in large numbers. I had enquired beforehand whether they had any objection to the *Ramdhun* and they said they had none. But they would like us to have no *tabla* or accompaniment because the meeting would be held practically in front of the mosque. I at once saw the point and without a murmur told my companion, who was in charge of the tour, not to have any such accompaniment. The Muslim part of the audience sat out the whole meeting and Maulana Ibrahim Sahib took part in it and spoke affectionately about the programme.

Today however, at at Dashpara, I observed that at first a poor Muslim had consented to have me on his farm. But later on he recanted and said he would not like to run the risk of the resentment of fellow-Muslims. And so I am on a plot of ground owned by a Hindu. The population in this village is overwhelmingly Muslim, there being 350 Muslim families to sixteen Hindu families.

I do not mention this by way of complaint. I had expected varied experience both pleasant and unplesant. I bring this to your notice in order that, if you felt like it, you might use your influence in the direction you must consider right as a man, not as the Chief Minister. You will readily do so if you realise that I am engaged on purely a mission of peace and as an equal friend of both the parties.

I enclose herewith a copy of a statement made by Dr. Varadarajan Pillai. It seems to be an extraordinary thing if it is true. I have asked Prof. Nirmal Kumar Bose, whom of course you know and who is with me, to write to the Magistrate. But I felt that I should bring this matter to your notice.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 7-1-1947

There are other things that have come under my observation. But I am anxious not to tax your energy more than necessary. For the time being therefore I forbear.

One thing more I had forgotten to mention earlier. In this village (Dashpara) Muslims told some Hindu friends that all my attempts at bringing about real friendship between the two communities must fail so long as I go about fully protected by armed police or military, by whatever name these guards may be called. The fright of the military keeps them from coming to me and asking all sorts of questions for the resolution of their doubts. I do see some force in their argument. There will be none if either community was really brave. Unfortunately both lack this very necessary human quality. I would, therefore, like you to reconsider the position and if you feel convinced, to withdraw this escort. I do not need it. I even feel embarrassed and it certainly interferes with my *sadhana*. If you think that a firm and unequivocal written absolution from me will solve your difficulty I would be quite prepared to consider any draft that you may send me for signature. Failing that I suggest your making a declaration that on a satisfactory assurance being given to you by the Muslims in the area through which I may pass regarding my safety, you will withdraw the escort. If this happens it will be a dignified procedure. I will certainly appreciate it and it will produce a good effect all round. I hinted at some such thing at the prayer meeting this evening.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

346. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 9, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

Chi. Abha has become like a daughter to you. Now you should wish to live for her sake. How is it that no treatment is able to cure your fever and why does the cough persist? It is now time you got rid of both. Do you use mud-packs? Do you not apply antiphlogistine? Do you take inhalation? Do so. Do you know the method? Take

whatever service you need from the gentleman who is there, at least for some days. It will be all right if he leaves after a few days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 556

347. TALK WITH KRISHNA KUMAR CHATTERJEE[1]

January 9, 1947

I am still in darkness. I hope I shall see light soon. This light is sure to come if my work goes on without any interruption and if all co-operate in making my present mission a success.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 12-1-1947

348. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

DASPARA,
January 9, 1947

Gandhiji said he had been assured of a large Muslim gathering at Daspara as the village was predominantly Muslim but very few had assembled and he was told that many Muslims had left and that others did not come through fear of the police accompanying him. He felt ashamed that even one Muslim should have absented himself due to fear.

Gandhiji said that at the previous village he had lived in the house of Moulvi Ibrahim and a large number of Muslims were present at the prayer. He had always intended that he should live in Muslim houses during his tour in Eastern Bengal. His hosts would not have to spend anything as his needs regarding food would previously have been arranged for. From his Muslim friends he only wanted shelter.

He was pained to learn that many people in the village had left as they heard that Gandhiji had with him military and police. He would not like to depend on the military or the police for protection but the Bengal Government had decided to give him this protection. After all who could protect him if he fell ill or was otherwise to die. Only God could give real protection. Innocent people need have no fear. If people had done anything wrong they should repent before God and pray for His forgiveness.[3]

One who is afraid of God should shed all fear of man. Those

[1] The report said that Krishna Kumar Chatterjee met Gandhiji in the afternoon, "after his recent visit from London where he had fasted for five days for a declaration of India's independence".

[2] The meeting was held in the compound of the local school.

[3] What follows is from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 20-1-1947.

who are guilty must take refuge in God. No man on earth can say of himself that he has never erred in life. It is only when one realizes one's mistakes, makes a clear confession of all one's crimes before God and takes a solemn pledge that one will not repeat them that one may expect mercy from God. But in any case, the sinner should humbly stand before God and be prepared to accept whatever punishment He may bestow.

I would suggest one course to Muslim friends assembled here. You must tell the Bengal Government, which is guided by public opinion, that my tour of the villages in the district means no harm to anyone and that I should be taken at my word. You must assure the Government that you could not possibly do any harm to a sojourner in your midst and that you regard it as an affront that the Government should fear any mischief on the part of the local Muslims and decide to send an escort for me. If you write in that vein to the Ministry, then my own request[1] to the same quarter to withdraw military protection from me is likely to be entertained.

The Hindu, 12-1-1947; and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 12-1-1947 and 20-1-1947

349. LETTER TO DISTRICT MAGISTRATE, TIPPERA

GANDHIJI'S CAMP,
NOAKHALI,
January 10, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

Under instructions from Gandhiji. I beg to draw your attention to an incident which happened in Gandamara village on the 2nd instant. He is personally very much interested in the case, and would be anxiously awaiting any information received from you. The statement of Dr. Varadarajan Pillai speaks for itself. You will surely agree that as long as the mentality revealed is not changed, things will not return to normal.

Hoping to hear from you soon.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE
DISTT. MAGISTRATE
TIPPERA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* "Fragment of Letter to H. S. Suhrawardy", 8-1-1947

350. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

DASPARA,
[*January 10, 1947*][1]

CHI. MANILAL,

I got your letter of December 16, 1946. I am advising[2] Sushila to go at the earliest opportunity. The education of children will be disturbed, but that seems to me inevitable. I had a letter from Sushila, too. I therefore, think, that she will start at the earliest. You should now wait for her and put up with the hardships till she arrives. It is no use at all worrying about me. God is taking the utmost care of me and protecting me. These days I get up daily at 3, and there has been no trouble so far. But I feel unhappy that, though I am able to eat my normal food, I cannot attend to all the work. However, that problem also will be solved. I am now arranging the work with that end in view. Do not worry in the least. And, moreover, I have so arranged the work that it is desirable to have the fewest possible co-workers with me just now. Sushila Pai and Sushila Nayyar have been posted separately and are working independently. With me are Nirmal Babu and Manu and a person named Ramachandran. He works hard but I cannot use him much. The man has come to me in distress, and I have kept him because I could not turn him away. I had thus planned the work so as to be able to do it with very few workers, and I still adhere to that plan. I had, therefore, decided to attend to no outside work. But I have not been able to stick to it fully. That is why I feel hard pressed for time. I am now thinking of forcing myself not to attend to such work. If I succeed in that, I shall get enough free time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4998

351. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

January 10, 1947

CHI. SUSHILA,

I need not write at length as I am enclosing herewith my letter[3] to Manilal. You have to prepare yourself for going. You are not to worry on my account. I will consider it a great achievement if I can do without having to get up at 3 o'clock. You should be perfectly calm

[1] From the G. N. Register
[2] *Vide* the following item.
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

till you reach South Africa. And now that Vasant[1] had come over you don't have to worry about Akola. It is certainly regrettable that Vasant and Kanti do not wear khadi but can we make all, or even a few, into replicas of ourselves? Besides, but for our capacity for self-deception the world would come to a standstill. We should therefore be more than satisfied if all live according to their own fancies but within certain limits. We should be satisfied if both of them preserve their health and participate in voluntary work as much as they can.

Blessings from

BAPU

SUSHILABEHN GANDHI

NANABHAI MASHRUWALA'S HOUSE

AKOLA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

352. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

DASPARA,

January 10, 1947

CHI. RAMDAS,

I got your letter. I do believe that you will prove worthy of your responsibility. It will be enough if you maintain your health. Don't at all worry about me. I am not starving. I allow myself the necessary facilities and also get them wherever I go. Manu has taken up a lot of work and I expect her to take upon herself further responsibilities as the days pass. I have asked her to write about her sharing the bed with me. I am dictating this letter after getting up at 3 o'clock. I am also preparing to introduce changes in this programme. I am still surrounded by darkness. I have no doubt whatever that it indicates a flaw somewhere in my method. Take it as though I had confined myself to this place to detect that flaw. It must lie somewhere in my practice of ahimsa. Could it be that I am nurturing only weakness in the name of non-violence! Weakness can take a number of forms, but it is meaningless to plunge into a discussion about it. That alone is true which we realize by experience. You may not therefore bother with it but try to do your own work as best as you can. That is enough for me. Kanu seems to be making good progress. He is gradually

[1] Wife of Kanti Mashruwala, addressee's brother

maturing. He must get rid of the cold; and I believe he will. I had a long letter from Nimu[1] but now I shall not write to her. She should content herself with the understanding that a letter to you is [also] to her. If she attended to all her work there and still maintained her health, I would consider that she was doing my work.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

353. LETTER TO KANAM GANDHI

[*January 10, 1947*][2]

CHI. KANU,

I have your nice letter. I am keen on writing to you but I must restrain myself. It will soon be 4 o'clock and I must brush my teeth and wash. Get rid of the cold. Did you not learn that from Vinoba? Learn to do *pranayama*[3] . Learn a few yogic exercises also and find out the right diet for you. The result of your examination will surely be in your favour as you are so energetic and also growing in wisdom. May God grant you long life.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

354. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

FATEHPUR,
January 10, 1947

BHAI MAVALANKAR,

I am sure you don't expect a letter from me but I may as well drop you a postcard. According to my definition I would regard you and Kaka as Gujaratis and nothing else. Therefore the question of Gujarati and non-Gujarati has no relevance for me. I have written to Kaka that he can implement his suggestion if the Sardar is fully agreeable to it. There are other things also about which I will say nothing just now. Since I am inextricably caught up here you will have to see to the work of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial

[1] Addressee's wife, Nirmala Gandhi
[2] In the source the letter appears below the one of this date addressed to Ramdas Gandhi; *vide* the preceding item.
[3] Yogic breathing exercises

Trust yourself, and I know you will do it quite well. You must thoroughly recoup yourself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

355. LETTER TO MANIBEHN

FATEHPUR,
January 10, 1947

CHI. MANIBEHN,

I regard you as my own daughter. But, for the time being, I have stopped all my sons and daughters from coming to me. If I see some light I might send for a few. I am sure, however, that just now I must not ask anyone to come. And then you are not unoccupied. You are certainly acquitting yourself creditably in the work you have undertaken. And I am of the view that those who do full justice to their own self-chosen activities fully participate in the *yajna*.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

356. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 10, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

You don't have to die; we should hope to live and be prepared to die. Give up the desire that I should come there. I am already with you. I must be occupied with my work and you with yours; this precisely is our *tapascharya* and our dharma. Sushila is trying to persuade me to visit you. I think it would not be proper. I wish you also to think likewise.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 557

357. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 10, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I do what one as a human being should do after leaving the

thing in the hands of God. Then I don't worry about it. Take inhalation. Your fever must go and also the cough. Send away Gunasindhu[1] if you don't need him any more. The Sikh brothers are there for any service needed. I don't feel any need to inform your brothers. But I shall do as you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 558

358. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

JAGATPUR,

January 10, 1947

Gandhiji said he had been hearing for some time—and more insistently since yesterday—that if Muslims asked Hindus to accept Islam if they wanted to save themselves or their property, and if the latter responded, there was no compulsion. Gandhiji said he was not concerned for a moment with the truth or otherwise of that statement. What he wanted to say was that this was acceptance of Islam under all the threat of force.

Conversion, Gandhiji held, was made of sterner stuff. The statement reminded him of the days when Christian missionaries so called used to buy children in days of famine and bring them up as Christians. This was surely no acceptance of Christianity. Similarly, acceptance of Islam, to be real and valid, should be wholly voluntary and must be based on proper knowledge of the two faiths—one's own and the one presented for acceptance. Gandhiji could not conceive of the possibility of such acceptance of Islam by the women in front of him or children. This was the view Gandhiji had held all his life. He did not believe in conversion as an institution. He would not ask his friends to accept Hinduism because he happened to be a Hindu. Those who came to him with such a mind were recommended proper study of Hinduism and were told to incorporate in their own religion what was considered good in Hinduism. He called himself not merely a Hindu but a Christian, a Muslim, a Jew, a Sikh, a Parsee, a Jain or a man of any other sect, meaning thereby that he had absorbed all that was commendable in all other religions and sub-religions. In this way, he avoided any clash and expanded his own conception of religion.

What he had said might not commend itself to everybody. But he would like every Muslim to consider whether from what he had said it was not possible for them to see that Islam was much superior to what had been described to him during his pilgrimage. He had prayerfully studied as much as he could in his busy life of Islam's

[1] Muslim gentleman sent by Gandhiji to look after the addressee

history written by Muslim divines and he had not found a single passage in condonation of forcible conversion such as he had described. Real conversion proceeded from the heart and a heart conversion was impossible without an intelligent grasp of one's own faith and of that recommended for adoption.

Concluding, Gandhiji said that he was not going to be satisfied without a heart understanding between the two communities and this was not possible unless the Hindus and Muslims were prepared to respect each other's religion leaving the process of conversion absolutely free and voluntary.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 14-1-1947

359. LETTER TO MARWARI RELIEF SOCIETY, RAMGANJ

CAMP LAMCHAR,
NOAKHALI,
January 11, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

Mr. Hashmar Ullah Khan came to see Gandhiji with a request to expedite certain payments which are due to him on account of rice supplied to your relief camp at Chatkhil. His letter in original as well as enclosures are being sent to you. Gandhiji wishes you to enquire into the matter and say how far the case is true. After receiving your reply, he will pursue the matter further if necessary.

Yours sincerely,
NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE

THE OFFICER-IN-CHARGE
MARWARI RELIEF SOCIETY
RAMGANJ CAMP

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

360. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS

JAGATPUR,
January 11, 1947

CHI. MADHAVDAS,

I am glad to read your long letter although at the moment I have no time to read long letters, nor to have them read out to me. And Manu read out your letter to me. In order to cope with the work to some extent, I have to get out of bed before 3 o'clock, just as I have done today, and am now dictating this. Please don't worry on

my account. You have settled down in the right place. Serve as much as you can and acquit yourself with credit. Blessings to all brothers and sisters who are there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

361. LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

JAGATPUR,
January 11, 1947

CHI. CHAMPA,

I have your letter. Vachharajbhai of Panchgani has passed away. However, arrangements can be made if you must go. But from what you write it seems there is now no need for you to go. I wish Shashi[1] to recover completely. Sarala has been slightly indisposed. She seems to have a great capacity for work. You must not take upon yourself any worry. We should fulfil our dharma and not bother about anything else. God alone awards the fruit [of action]. There cannot be any question of worrying on my account. I am doing God's work. He will take care of me as long as He wills. I am quite well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

362. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM AND ABHA GANDHI

January 11, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

Day by day try to get better and when the time comes to die, die with a healthy body. If you don't get rid of the cough and fever it will not be a sacrifice of the purest type. But what can you do in this? Let it be as God wills.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. ABHA,

Continue making progress. I am sending the tooth-powder.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 559

[1] Addressee's son

363. LETTER TO MANILAL T. DOSHI

JAGATPUR,
January 11, 1947

CHI. MANILAL[1],

I have your letter. Bulsaria from Panchgani had promptly given me the news about Vachharaj. Panchgani has sustained a great loss. Can you bring lustre to the work left behind by Vachharaj?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

364. LETTER TO DAMODAR MUNDADA

JAGATPUR,
January 11, 1947

CHI. DAMODAR,

I have your letter. I have not heard what Suchetabehn said. But no such situation has arisen that I should send for some other men or women workers. The circumstances today are such that I must work alone. Only if the local Government [appreciates][2] our work, can we ask others to come here. One alternative is there, viz., that we should apply to the Chief Minister that he should grant our request; but I don't feel the need for this course. Certainly, you have my blessings for the annual function. May the work of the Mahila Ashram always grow and may the sisters learn simplicity and know their own worth. I have received a letter from Shantabehn[3] but I am not writing to her. Please inform her.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Brother of Vachharaj Doshi
[2] One word here is illegible.
[3] Shantabehn Raniwala, founder of the Mahila Ashram at Wardha

365. LETTER TO SADHU

January 11, 1947

CHI. SADHU,

I have your letter. There is no need for anyone to come here. We shall think of it when the need arises. Stay where you are, doing your duty with perseverance.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

366. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

LAMCHAR,

January 11, 1947

Gandhiji began his after-prayer speech at Lamchar by saying that he would confine himself to a question that had been facing him for the last few days. He gathered that a large number of artisans had lost both their homes as well as their instruments of trade which had either been destroyed or stolen. What was going to be done about these people?

There was a time, he said, when our villages had a full complement of artisans serving farmers. The latter were the centre of gravity of village economy. Payment was then made in kind, and it was in conformity with the needs of the producers, just as production itself was strictly related to the needs of the people. Different occupations were knit together by a bond of interdependence into an integrated whole. This was India's village economy in pre-British days and in it all communities, including the Mussalmans shared to the fullest extent. Under its dispensation, no man could go without food, shelter and clothing in a village.

But the problem which faced the villagers in this part of the country today was what should be done about the artisans whose life had been dislocated by riots. Gandhiji expressed his hope that it would even now be possible to restore village economy to a sufficient extent to cope with the problem of unemployment. It was the first duty of the Government to provide the artisans with dwelling houses as well as to supply them with instruments and raw materials needed for plying their trade. Cash loans may be arranged; these should be free of interest and the payment spread conveniently over a long term. Naturally the question of security should not arise. The Government should be prepared to lose their money if any artisans died before full recovery of loans.

But if the Government did not perform its obvious duty, then moneyed men should come forward for the same purpose. They should help the artisans on the same terms as sketched above. Indeed, it was their duty to do so. The bond of co-operation which would thus be created between different classes of population, was a necessary

factor if our object was once more to restore healthy village life.[1]

He advised the evacuees to brave all hardships and return home quickly. By means of their own labour they must be determined to rebuild their ruined homes as well as their lives.

The Hindu, 14-1-1947; and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 20-1-1947

367. TELEGRAM TO KAFI KHAN

[*January 12, 1947*][2]

KAFI KHAN[3]
POST BOX 653
BOMBAY

AMTUSSALAAM FASTING AGAINST MUSLIM MISCREANTS. SEVENTEENTH DAY. NO CAUSE ANXIETY. ONE OF YOU MAY COME IF YOU THINK NECESSARY.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

368. LETTER TO SUMATI MORARJI

January 12, 1947

CHI. SUMATI,

I am dictating this while spinning. I get little time during the day to write. It is only after the morning prayer that I can do some writing. Moving daily from one village to another does take time.

It was only yesterday that I learnt from Lilavati's[4] letter about the passing away of your brother. I decided to write immediately, but could not find the time. Meanwhile, Manu read out to me Shantikumar's[5] letter to her. I can understand your grief. But if we can offer to God both happiness and sorrow, the sorrow comes to an end. I

[1] What follows is reproduced from *Amrita Bazar Patrika.*

[2] From the reference to the seventeenth day of the 25-day fast by Amtussalaam; she began her fast on December 27, 1946 and ended it on January 20, 1947; *vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 21-1-1947

[3] Brother of Amtussalaam

[4] Lilavati Asar

[5] Addressee's husband

know that you do have enough knowledge to understand this. Use that knowledge and remain calm. The blood-pressure was but an instrument. Death spares nobody.

Blessings to both from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 845

369. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

KALPATALI, EAST BENGAL,
January 12, 1947

CHI. LILI,

Either I must dictate or give up the idea of writing. I do not like to do the latter, and hence I dictate, even though you had only asked for a few lines from Manu. I had you in mind in regard to the Harijan girl. However, consult Lilavati Munshi and if she knows of any educated Harijan girl who would be ready to marry a non-Harijan, ask her to write to me. I am glad that the other girl's problems has been solved and that she will now be able to complete her study. Complete your course, too. Avail yourself fully of the services of the excellent professors you have. That will be as good as your coming to me. You will later get abundant opportunity for service. If you had not taken up the course at all, it would have been a different matter. But having once taken up a project, one must see it through. Yes, if one has made a mistake in taking up something, one may rectify the mistake at any time. But you have committed no mistake in deciding to study. Had you done so, do you think I would have given my consent? I not only gave my consent, but also arranged for the necessary facilities. For there is no shame in becoming a doctor. You should not, therefore, in the least degree feel bad. Manu will tell you the rest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9606. Also C. W. 6578. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

370. LETTER TO MANILAL T. DOSHI

January 12, 1947

BHAI MANILAL,

Your letter of December 16, 1946 reached me as late as yesterday. Such are the vagaries of the postal department. I, however, had the news of his death from Bulsaria. Later, other letters also came. It is difficult to fill up the void created by his death. Are you going to do your part?

Blessings from

BAPU

MANILAL TRIBHOVAN DOSHI

PANCHGANI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

371. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM AND ABHA GANDHI

January 12, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. Satis Babu related everything to me. He is pleased with your penance. If you cannot decide whether or not to take anything through the rectum, you can take lemon and salt. These two things you can take through the mouth also. But if anything is to be taken through the rectum, then why not glucose also? But whatever you decide about these things I would consider it right. No one should stand in the way of your deciding for yourself.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. ABHA,

Your letter is fine. Keep on writing like this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 560

372. LETTER TO TULSIRAM

January 12, 1947

BHAI TULSIRAMJI,

I have your two letters and also the three books. But *Sanskrit Shikshika* is not among them. A Hindi, English or Bengali edition ought to be available in Calcutta. The Bengali must be available there. Bapa has written that you looked after him extremely well.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

373. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNA SINHA

January 12, 1947

BHAI SHRIKRISHNA SINHA,

Bapa writes that Jaglal Choudhari has refused to become Excise Minister because the Ministry has decided not to implement prohibition till 1948. I know nothing of this matter nor could accept the decision. I have written to Bapa that I would correspond with you. What shall I write to you?

It is bad that the enquiry commission has not yet been appointed. I think that it should be appointed immediately. Many letters of complaint are coming in. Only the commission can answer these letters.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

374. LETTER TO OM PRAKASH GUPTA

January 12, 1947

CHI. OM PRAKASH,

I have your letter. You grieve for nothing. If you continue to be infatuated of a degree, and you have admitted the infatuation in the past, you should complete your thesis and obtain the degree. In the meanwhile you are certainly doing some work there and all that is not useless. I feel sorry to hear about Govindji. Nothing will happen till December, I hope. At least that is some relief. In the meanwhile some way might be found.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

375. INTERVIEW TO AN EX-ARMY OFFICER[1]

January 12, 1947

The All-India Congress Committee by its Delhi resolution[2] had accepted the December 6 statement[3] of the British Government and had gone to its "farthest limit consistent with its principles" to declare its friendly attitude to the Muslim League.

Gandhiji is reported to have added that he could not say what would be the League's attitude to this friendly gesture, but he could only hope that they would reciprocate.

Harijan, 2-2-1947

376. INTERVIEW TO A MUSLIM VISITOR

KARPARA,
January 12, 1947

The visitor had asked which of the two alternatives for a solution of the present situation in India would be preferable—Pakistan or civil war.

Gandhiji is reported to have said that he would approach the problem differently. Neither of the two suggested solutions would be good. It was wrong to think that Pakistan could be achieved through civil war.

The interviewer asked what kind of Government would be good for a free India.

Gandhiji's reply to this was that it was not a question for him to answer. The question would be ripe for answer after freedom had been achieved.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 16-1-1947; also *Harijan*, 2-2-1947

377. SPEECH AT KARPARA

January 12, 1947

I have come to bring about heart unity between the two communities and if necessary to lay down my life in that attempt. The Hindus and Muslims should remember that they are nourished by the same corn and live under the same sky, quench their thirst by the same water, in calamities that overtake the country are afflicted in the same way, irrespective of their religious beliefs. It is very essential that both the communities should bury their differences and live in peace.

Those who have imbibed the true spirit of religion cannot hate

[1] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary". This appeared as reported by the *Hindustan Standard* special correspondent.

[2] *Vide* "A. I. C. C. Resolution"

[3] *Vide* "British Cabinet's Statement of Grouping", 6-12-1946

any man for his faith. Hinduism has undoubtedly sinned gravely through its custom of untouchability. All my life I have struggled for the eradication of that evil. But if the Muslims hate the Hindus because they worship the one God by a different name and in a different way, then the Muslims are practising the untouchability which is against the teachings of Islam. I am working for the day when the Muslims will be able to say to their Hindu neighbours that it does not matter by what name or in what way they worship God.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 20-1-1947

378. NOTE TO M. A. ABDULLAH[1]

SHAHPUR,
Monday, January 13, 1947

You should simply do what duty demands and nothing more. If she is obstinate and dies, let her die and be disgraced. If she is right and the right is not vindicated in her lifetime, her death will be a fit atonement. I shall certainly bring all these things to her notice.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

379. NOTES TO PYARELAL[2]

January 13, 1947

You must bear whatever comes. We must accomplish what we have set out to do. We must experience everything. When we have abandoned all fear, why worry ?

* * *

In my view you must draw comfort from her happiness. If you trust her, I consider it your duty to do as she says. But if you do not think it is your duty, you should certainly not give up your fast. I shall bear everything. But Manu's case is different. This thing is clear to me. For the present, your duty is to forget her and be absorbed in

[1] Gandhiji wrote this on a slip after hearing the addressee's report about Amtussalaam's fast. She, however, broke the fast on January 20. Pyarelal explains : "Police officials declared their helplessness in the matter. They even accused Amtussalaam of 'obstinacy' and 'wilfulness' in making a major issue out of a trifle."

[2] The following notes to Pyarelal, all bearing the same date, were scribbled on separate bits of paper, presumably at different times of the day as it was a silence day for Gandhiji.

your work. And that is the way of winning her. Be the result what it may. Understand, if you can, that there is no other way of being absorbed in the thought of the loved one.

* * *

This is not something mechanical. It should spring from the heart. A parrot utters the name of Rama. What the parrot does is mechanical and hence useless. In the work that I am doing, my work itself is the name of Rama. That is how I am proceeding and that alone is correct. If you can understand this, give up your fast and feel happy. If this is not convincing, then keep the fast.

* * *

You are unable to give up the idea of having her as your wife. Whether or not you can give it up only God knows. What is to be done when you do not understand what I write ? I have compared her to Ramanama. We utter the name of Rama to find Rama. But we must do His Work to find Him. If even now you do not understand, think over it. Do not take my time.

* * *

In this way the situation will further deteriorate. When did I rebuke you ? If you see rebuke in what I said can we go on ? I do not even know if she talked to you before or after my suggestion. Now from what you say it seems you are beginning to have doubts about her purity. You are not able to forget her in spite of my writing so much. I appeal to you that even if you cannot forget her leave me out of it. All this is included in my letter, which you said, you have understood.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

380. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 13, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

What shall I do? Yesterday I sent a letter to you. Satis Babu who worries so much took it with him. But I got the letter back. Now I am sending it again. I did not complain of your obstinacy[1]. I do not know what Sushilabehn said. It is enough for me that you have faith. I shall

[1] The word is in English

be happy whether you die reciting *Ramanama* after getting rid of your ailments, or are saved.

You yourself told me to inform Kafikhan[1] and that is why I did so. I had not thought of it. Now I do not want to do anything. You can send a telegram asking him not to come.[2] It will be all right even if you don't.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 561

381. LETTER TO SUCHETA KRIPALANI

KARPARA,
January 13, 1947

CHI. SUCHETA,

I have your letter. You are bound to accomplish something wherever you go. You are not spoiling your health, I hope. Do you take work from the refugees? Do you teach them anything? Every camp should be a hive of industry. It should be clean and well organized with perfect lavatory arrangements.

Can I make public use of the reports you have sent in English? Have you sent them to the Magistrate and the Associated Press? Amtul Salaam is brave; her fast is continuing. She is of course weak but otherwise all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

382. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SHAHPUR,
January 13, 1947

Gandhiji said that want of real education was the root cause of differences between Hindus and Muslims. He observed that there was much to be said about this village, but he had purposely avoided that today. This much he would say that after all

[1] Addressee's brother

[2] According to a report in *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 16-1-1947, Gandhiji had sent a telegram to her brother at Bombay saying that though there was no cause for anxiety if they thought it necessary one of her relatives might go to Sirandi.

Hindus and Muslims had to live side by side and all had to work towards that end. They must remove internal weaknesses which stood in the way of their unity.

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-1-1947

383. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNA SINHA

[After *January 13, 1947*][1]

BHAI SHRIKRISHNA SINHA,

People's bullocks have been killed here and the farmers cannot do anything without bullocks. People tell me that they used to get bullocks from Bihar prior to the war but they cannot get them now. Is this true? Cannot people here get bullocks even after paying for them? I was to get a note on Bihar. I have not received it, nor has a single well-informed person from Bihar come to me. It does not matter if someone cannot come but the note must come. What happened about the Commission?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

384. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

ON TOUR,

6.10 a. m., January 14, 1947

CHI. JIVANJI,

I send herewith an article received from Valji[2]. I found it between the pages of a book. It contains the sayings of Prophet Mohammed.

Is there any improvement as regards subscribers?

I wrote to you asking you to inquire why Professor Edmond Privat does not get his copies of *Harijan*. Let me know the outcome.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9974. Also C. W. 6948. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

[1] In the source, this letter is placed between two letters of January 13 and January 26.

[2] Valji G. Desai

385. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

BHATIALPUR,
January 14, 1947

CHI. SATIS BABU,[1]

Your prohibition is wrong. The Sikhs prevention was tactless. The man who prevented you is a good man. You should have laughed at his prohibition and appreciated it. You should have been satisfied when Sardar Jivan Singh and Niranjan Singh made amends. We cannot afford to resent personal affronts. Therefore I propose to take the Sikhs unless you satisfy me to the contrary.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 8716

386. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SHAHPUR,
January 14, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

. . .[2] Now about the proposed Bihar commission of inquiry. It was some gentleman from Bihar who gave me the information. I did not note down his name. Is it not a fact that you, the Governor and the Viceroy are against the appointment of a Commission and that this is sufficient to stop the Chief Minister from appointing one?[3] In spite of all this, I am strongly of opinion that if no commission is appointed, the League's report will be accepted as true. I alone know what pressure is being put on me.

This is my view regarding Sudhir. If the League Ministers and the Viceroy also agree, I do not see any harm in appointing[4] him. If he is to work under the High Commissioner, the post also will have to be approved by you three. Moreover, it is the members of the Cabinet who are suggesting Sudhir's appointment. If so, they should invite him publicly. If this point is not made clear beyond any possibility of

[1] The superscription is in Devanagari.
[2] Omission as in the source
[3] *Vide* also "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 5-2-1947.
[4] As Public Relations Officer at the Indian High Commission in London

doubt, Sudhir will lose whatever value he now has. You may now do what all of you think fit. I saw just now that Sudhir's name has appeared in the statement.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 344-5

387. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM AND ABHA GANDHI

January 14, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. Forget about Kafikhan. If he wants to come, he will come. Just think of God alone. You will have taken an enema with lemon and salt. Remain cheerful.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. ABHA,

God will reward you for your dedication.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 562

388. SPEECH TO WOMEN

BHATIALPUR,
January 14, 1947

Emulate Sita and Savitri. Be courageous.

Gandhiji observed that it was often said that women were naturally weak—they were *abalas*. His advice to women was that they should not believe such things. Women, in his opinion, could be as hard as men. Could anybody think of Sita or Savitri as less courageous than any man in any country? No woman, therefore, should think that she was naturally weak and thus demean herself.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 16-1-1947

389. TALK WITH MUSLIM YOUTHS[1]

BHATIALPUR,
January 14, 1947

Gandhiji thanked them and said :

If your words come from your heart and not merely from your lips, then their effect will not be confined merely to India but will spread over the whole world.

They asked what his objection was to the setting up of a separate Muslim State after the events in Bihar. Gandhiji replied :

If a Muslim State implied freedom to make unfriendly treaties with foreign powers to the detriment of the country, then obviously it cannot be a matter of agreement. No one can be asked to sign an agreement granting freedom to another to launch hostilities against himself; it would be suicidal policy.

On the young men asking whether Gandhiji did not think it advisable to concede Pakistan since it was holding back the issue of Indian independence, Gandhiji said:

Only after independence has been won can there be a question of granting Pakistan. To reverse the process was to invite foreign help. *Azadi* and Pakistan require the exclusion of all foreign powers. Until and unless India is free, there cannot be any other question.

When you think of establishing Pakistan first you think in terms of getting it with the aid of a third power. When I think of the freedom of India, I think in terms of achieving it without any foreign aid, be it Russian, Chinese or any other, but on the basis of our own inner strength. Then only will freedom be real and lasting. Once freedom is secured for the country as a whole then we can decide about Pakistan or Hindustan.

Gandhiji was then asked why he should not go to Bihar where the tragedy was on a colossal scale compared to Noakhali. His reply was :

What has happened in Bihar is shameful enough. But the people

[1]According to *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, as Gandhiji was returning home from his evening walk, a number of Muslim youths joined him and expressed gratification at his work in Noakhali. They assured him that nothing that had happened in the past was going to be repeated and that they would stand guarantee for it. The reports in the various sources have been collated.

there are said to have realized their mistake. By going there I cannot do anything more than what I can do from here, for I am able to affect the Government and people of Bihar from Noakhali.

The last question put to Gandhiji was: After the recent disturbances there is neither Pakistan nor peace. What is your solution to this situation? Gandhiji replied :

That is exactly what I am searching for in Noakhali. As soon as I discover it the world shall know it.

While taking leave of Gandhiji the Muslim youths asked for Gandhiji's blessings to enable them to fulfil the promise made. Gandhiji said that so long as they spoke from their hearts and honestly tried to give effect to their promises, God would be on their side. Gandhiji told the youths that they must discuss what he had said with friends and meet him again if they had more questions to ask.

The Hindu, 17-1-1947; *Harijan,* 2-2-1947; and *Amrita Bazar Patrika,* 19-1-1947

390. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

BHATIALPUR,
January 14, 1947

It has been said that Pakistan did not imply curtailment of liberty to practise one's own religion and pursue trade or profession after one's own heart. Therefore, it would be wrong on your part to think in terms of boycotting the minorty community and thus making it impossible for them to carry on their normal life.

Gandhiji further observed that boycott implied intolerance and the assumption of an attitude of superiority by some over others and said :

We are sinners because we look down upon Harijans as untouchables. But Islam is great because it made no distinction whatever between man and man. If, however, you look down upon Hindus because they worship the same God under other names, then you are practising the same untouchability which is definitely a violation of a fundamental principle of Islam.

The number of Muslims who attended the meeting, Gandhiji said, was not in direct proportion to their population in the locality. When women were not afraid of him, he was puzzled why men should be afraid to meet him. Islam, Gandhiji emphasized, taught fear of only God and not man. One should be afraid to commit sin, but having committed it, one should surrender oneself to God and cheerfully bear any punishment that might be meted out. Gandhiji made a passing reference to the *purdah* system and urged that it should be scrapped. The system kept women in complete

darkness in every respect. The women of both communities should mix more freely and get to understand each other better.[1]

Gandhiji repeated his request to the Muslims to write to H. S. Suhrawardy, the Bengal Premier, for withdrawal of Military and Police giving him protection.

Gandhiji made a reference to his visit to Muslim houses that morning. He found that the Muslim women hesitated to come out in his presence. He recalled the days of the Ali Brothers. At a Muslim women's meeting the Ali Brothers had tied their eyes with a piece of cloth and delivered their lecture but Gandhiji was allowed to address the meeting with open eyes. Gandhiji added that real *purdah* was not of the body but the mind. What was needed was real education among women, more so among Muslim women. If darkness of their mind was not removed they could not do anything with outward *purdah*. Gandhiji also asked the audience to realize that Khuda and Rama were one, only called by different names. He had heard that many Muslims were afraid of punishment and had fled from their homes. A true Muslim, he said, should be afraid of sin and not punishment that might be inflicted due to that sin. Hindus also must learn that Khuda and Rama were one. This was the lesson he would impress upon the audience.

The Hindu, 17-1-1947; and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 17-1-1947

391. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[2]

January 15, 1947

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

NEW DELHI

PATHETIC TELEGRAM RECEIVED FROM PESHAWAR ABOUT MURDER ARSON AND LOOT. RECEIVED SIMILAR WIRE [FROM HAZARA].[3] PLEASE REPLY ABOUT TRUTH ALLEGATIONS.[4]

BAPU

Prime Minister's Secretariat: File No. 388-PS/46

[1] What follows is reproduced from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*.

[2] An identical telegram was also sent to Vallabhbhai Patel.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 24-1-1947

[4] Nehru's reply of January 16, 1947, read : "Owing to false and exaggerated propaganda about Bihar, several serious incidents took place in Hazara district involving attacks on Hindus, Sikhs, arson and loot. Number of persons killed probably not considerable. Large numbers refugees. Frontier Government has taken strong action against miscreants, also helping refugees. Situation now quiet. We are keeping in close touch and will take all necessary steps."

392. LETTER TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P. S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
January 15, 1947

I see from the papers that you are in Bihar exactly as I am in Noakhali, only, if the newspaper reports are correct, you are literally alone. My being alone is a fraud. Do let me have a line from you about what you are doing. I suppose it will be too early to enquire what success you are meeting with. Here the task is tough. My ahimsa is being weighed on the balance. Have I represented throughout life real ahimsa of the brave ? If so, it ought to find response from the Muslims at least of Noakhali. I cannot give you any forecast yet. I am acting as, according to my belief, God guides me from moment to moment.

I enclose herewith a copy of a telegram received from Peshawar.[1] Can you at all say whether the version given is likely to be true ? I have telegraphed to Dr. Khan Saheb and the friends in New Delhi.[2] In order to save time I am dictating this letter through the good offices of friend Rangaswamy whom you know as one of the important reporters of *The Hindu* (Madras). I cannot write Urdu as yet with facility. Pyarelal and Sushila I must not fall back upon although I see them often. They have their village-work cut out for them and neither they nor I should be exposed to any temptation.

KHAN ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN SAHEB
C/O CHIEF MINISTER
BIHAR GOVERNMENT
PATNA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The telegram dated January 11, from some Akali Sikhs in Peshawar reported deterioration in the communal situation in N.W.F.P., with murders of Hindus and Sikhs, looting of property and desecration of temples and Gurudwaras.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amtussallam and Abha Gandhi", 15-1-1947

393. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

AS AT KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P. S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
January 15, 1947

DEAR BROTHER,

Here is a copy of a telegram received by me. I know you are in Calcutta in Dr. Bidhan Roy's good and able hands. At this time you ought to be spared all the trouble from friends who seek your assistance and advice. But I thought that you would perhaps know the facts much more than anybody else and give truer guidance. Hence, this trouble.

I have telegraphed to Jawaharlal, Sardar, the President of the Congress and Dr. Khan Saheb. I purposely refrained from sending a wire to you in Calcutta. This too will be delivered to you by hand.

I have seen your statement to the Press about your acceptance of office in the Interim Government. It is quite good and I have not the slightest doubt that your presence in the Cabinet will be of great service at this very critical juncture.

I hope you will make rapid and solid recovery. Please do not hurry over the treatment. A medical adviser is entitled to consideration from a patient. That he happens to be a close friend of the patient should prove no disqualification from title to consideration if only because consideration shown to a medical adviser is really consideration shown to oneself.

About movement here I dare say you glance at the newspaper reports of my words at the prayer meetings. I have put myself on trial as to whether I am an exponent of true ahimsa or only ahimsa so called. I am not relying upon Pyarelal or Sushila for my Urdu work though I see them often enough. Pyarelal is with me today, this being the last of the fifth village within his beat. If I do not follow this rule, the whole superstructure will come to pieces and the distribution of the party in affected villages will be a mockery.

Yours,
GANDHI

MAULANA SAHEB
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

394. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM AND ABHA GANDHI

January 15, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. Keep up your strength by reciting Ramanama. Pass as many days as possible in peace. That way God will be pleased and the work will progress. There is no need to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. ABHA,

Remain cheerful.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 563

395. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

NARAYANPUR,

January 15, 1947

The public should know that all that is humanly possible is being done in connection with the fast. Bibi Amtussalaam is in great peace and all attendance needed is being given to her. She is calm, cheerful and resigned. She does not want the fast to be advertised for her. It is a pure spiritual effort and she feels that in the prevalent atmosphere of fear, distrust and suspicion, her invocation of Divine intervention can only be emphasized by readiness for supreme sacrifice.

This statement has become necessary because of the appearance in the Press of the news about her fast which can only be terminated happily by the discovery of a weapon which is reported to have stood for several murders and all that that discovery means [*sic*].

The Bombay chronicle, 18-1-1947

[1] The report said the statement was issued by Nirmal Kumar Bose "on behalf of Gandhiji".

396. SPEECH AT GRAM SEVA SANGH MEETING[1]

NARAYANPUR,
January 15, 1947

Gandhiji said that it was their primary duty to remove untouchability. Unless this virus was removed from their society, there could not be any real progress in this country. Secondly Hindu-Muslim unity should be effected. Both the Hindus and the Muslims should be eager to achieve this end. They took water from the same tank and rice from the same paddy fields. For the time being, they should forget politics and devote their sole attention to improve villages, spread education, develop industries and other constructive work. For this purpose, workers must be prepared to die.

Replying to a question whether the refugees should now return home, Gandhiji said that they must return home at the earliest. They must, however, shed fear. Spinning also should form an important part of the duty of the workers. If they span at least one hour a day, they could supply yarn to weavers who were now looking up to the Government for such supply for their handlooms. The cloth problem would consequently be easier in this way.

Harijan, 2-2-1947

397. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NARAYANPUR,
January 15, 1947

At the beginning of his prayer speech at Narayanpur, Gandhiji expressed his happiness at having been able to spend another night under the roof of a Muslim friend in the course of his walking tour. In spite of the fact that he had been trying to reduce the size of his entourage, his efforts in that direction had so far not been very successful. And he was glad that his host had proved equal to the occasion and had not been baffled by the size of his party.

Then Gandhiji referred to an incident that had occurred a short while ago. The elders of the house wanted him to meet the *zanana* ladies. He had made an attempt, but without success. It was true, he continued, that Hindu women attended the prayer in large numbers. In this respect they were more advanced. But as such it became their duty to befriend their Muslim sisters and rescue them from the thraldom of the *purdah*. If they neglected this neighbourly duty, there was obviously some defect on their part.

India, Gandhiji said, was aspiring to be free. But if half the population was to remain in a paralysed condition, the type of freedom the people would attain could

[1] This and the following item are extracted from "Srirampur Diary".

never be perfect. Therefore, with utmost humility, he once more appealed to the elders among the audience to examine the effect of the *purdah* system and do away with it in the shortest possible time. For, in his opinion, the system, as he saw in his peregrination, was quite contrary to what the Prophet had preached.

Harijan, 2-2-1947

398. TELEGRAM TO BAQI KHAN

January 16, 1947

BAQI KHAN[1]
CARE TATA CRAFT
TATA GARH
CALCUTTA

YOUR WIRE. SENT WIRE TO KAFI KHAN[2] REPORTING FACT AND

SUGGESTING THAT IF ANY OF YOU WISH TO SEE HER YOU SHOULD COME THOUGH SHE HERSELF IS PERFECTLY AT PEACE AND DOES NOT WANT ANY BROTHER TO COME.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

399. LETTER TO GLYN

KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
January 16, 1947

MY DEAR GLYN,

Pyarelal has shown your letter to me as also your letter to him. Your statements are good and I find no inconsistency in your attitude. I have always held that one's wife being really the better half is entitled to full consideration and equal share in all one's undertakings. This is specially true in your case. I have no doubt that she will share your wish to the fullest extent. But in any case this is not a

[1] Brother of Amtussalaam
[2] *Vide* "Speecha at Prayer Meeting", 11-1-1947

matter you can decide through mere exchange of letters. Therefore, your desire to go to her and discuss your projects with her was quite correct.

I do not think I need say more at this stage. There will be time enough I expect for an exchange of letters between us and of course Pyarelal will write to you more fully.

My love to you and yours.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

400. LETTER TO S. WOLFF

KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
January 16, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter which Pyarelal read to me. As you know, he and others of my co-workers are distributed in the affected villages of Noakhali. Therefore, it is not possible for me or him to overtake all the correspondence. But your letter could not be ignored. Hence, this hurried reply.

Distance lends enchantment to the scene. Let India remain the enchanted island of your imagination. I do not think that you need to come to India in order to learn yoga in practice. My own Ashram is no exception to the general statement I have made. India has its full share of bad men if she has also her share of good men. Yoga in India of which you read in books is not much in evidence today. What it was like in her palmy days, I do not know. Therefore, I cannot encourage you to come to India.

I would advise you strictly to remain where you are and perfect by practice and discipline the system you have found so attractive. The field of service is limitless and I have no doubt whatsoever that it is no less so in Palestine where terrorism appears to be the order of the day.

Yours sincerely,

S. WOLFF, ESQ.
PALESTINE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

401. LETTER TO R. R. DIWAKAR

KAZIRKHIL, RAMGUNJ P. S.,
NOAKHALI DISTRICT,
January 16, 1947

MY DEAR DIWAKAR[1],

Sucheta has given me your letter to her about Tendulkar. Of course I know him so well. He needs no introduction nor recommendation. But I must not have him in Noakhali. He is too much Westernized to appreciate the fact that those who leave me in perfect peace serve me and the cause whereas those who seek to advertise this effort do positive harm. I want you to enter into the spirit of this remark and support my decision.

Blessings from[2]
BAPU

From the original: D. G. Tendulkar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

402. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM AND ABHA GANDHI

January 16, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. I am writing this on Baqui's[3] telegram. I have sent him a telegram saying that, if he wants to come, there is no objection. Remain calm. I have given a short statement.[4] I will send you a cutting when it is published.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. ABHA,

I shall start the silence day on Sunday at 12 noon. I shall end it there on Monday at 12.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 564

[1] Karnataka Congress leader; Member Constituent Assembly; served as Minister in Union Government 1948-52; President, Gandhi Smarak Nidhi and Gandhi Peace Foundation

[2] This is in Hindi.

[3] Addressee's brother

[4] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 15-1-1947

403. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

RAMDEBPUR,
January 16, 1947

Gandhiji said that he had received certain questions from some Muslims while he was in Narayanpur yesterday.

[The first question was :] How could he advise[2] Assam and the Sikhs in the Punjab to stay out of Groups if his aim was Hindu-Muslim unity and how, after this, was it possible for the Muslim League to join the Constituent Assembly?

Gandhiji said there was no "if" about his aim. Hindu-Muslim unity had been his aim from his youth upward, that is, for an unbroken period of 60 years. He saw no contradiction between his aim and his advice to the people of Assam, the Sikhs and, for that matter, the Frontier and those who felt like it, to stay out of Groups or from the Constituent Assembly. The Cabinet Mission's Paper was of a voluntary nature and no party could be compelled to join the Constituent Assembly. They had no force to back their resolution or wishes except the force of public opinion.

He had, therefore, given no advice which should make it impossible for the Muslim League to join the Constituent Assembly. So far as he had read the resolution passed at the recent A. I. C. C. meeting,[3] the Congress had completely identified itself with the Cabinet Mission's Paper.

Gandhiji hoped that the Muslim League would join the Constituent Assembly in which it was open to it to make good its position by an appeal to reason. Otherwise the Constituent Assembly, because it was a voluntary organization brought into being by the only party that had force behind it, was like a house of cards. It could only become a solid structure if it was backed by the opinion of the Indian masses. Staying out by certain provines or groups could not and should not be a hindrance to the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly, if it was otherwise good.

Gandhiji would ask: Why should Assam be absorbed in Bengal against its will or the Frontier Province or the Sikhs into the Punjab and Sind? The Congress or the League, as the case may be, should make their programme and policy intrinsically attractive so as to appeal to the reason of the recalcitrant Province or Group.

The second question put to him was: Gandhiji claimed to be a friend of both the communities, but he had been nursing back his own community for the last two months in Noakhali. What about the Muslims of Bihar, who have lost their all?

He would say the question ignored facts. He was not "nursing back" his own

[1] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary"
[2] *Vide* "Letter to S. Rahdakrishnan", 17-9-1946
[3] *Vide* "A. I. C. C. REsolution"

community. He had no community of his own except in the sense that he belonged to all communities. His record spoke for itself. He freely admitted that he was trying to bring comfort to the Hindus of Noakhali, but not at the expense of the Muslims. If there was a sick member in his family and he seemed to attend to the sick member, it surely did not mean that he neglected the others.

He had had repeated an insistent advice from Muslim friends that his place was more in Bihar, where the Muslims were, in point of numbers, much greater sufferers than the Hindus in Noakhali. He was sorry that he had hitherto failed to make his Muslim critics see that he had sufficiently affected the Hindus of Bihar in favour of the Muslim sufferers. If he listened to his critics against his own better reason and went to Bihar, it was just likely that he might injure the Muslim cause rather than serve it.

Thus, for instance, he might not find corroboration for the many charges brought against the Bihar Hindus and the Bihar Government and, in order to be able to make such a declaration, he had accepted the better course, namely, to advise the Bihar Ministry, which had accepted his advice, that they should jointly with the Bengal Government or by themselves, appoint an impartial commission of inquiry.[1]

[The third question was :] Why cannot the apostle of non-violence, the modern Buddha stop internecine war and blood-bath in the country?

Gandhiji, replying to this question, acquitted himself from the charge of being the modern Buddha. He was and claimed to be a simple man having extensive experience at his back, but on that account claimed to be no better than any member of the audience. He was an equal servant of both the communities or all the communities of India. He wished he had the power to stop 'internecine war' and consequent 'blood-bath'. The Buddha or the prophets that followed him had gone the way they went in order to stop wars. The fact that he could not do so was proof positive that he had no superior power at his back. It was true that he swore by non-violence and so he had come to Noakhali in order to test the power of his non-violence. As he had repeatedly said ever since his arrival in Bengal, he had no desire to leave Bengal unless both the communities showed by their action that they were like blood-brothers living together in perfect peace and amity.

Gandhiji also dealt with a question that was raised by the Muslim friends who had seen him before the prayer meeting. They had asked him how he expected friendly relations between the two communities when the Hindus agitated for the arrest and trial of those who were guilty of murders, arson and loot during the disturbances. The speaker confessed that he did not like these complaints. But he sympathized with the complainants so long as the wrongdoers avoided arrest and trial and so long as Muslim opinion in Noakhali did not insist upon the guilty parties

[1] What follows is reproduced from *Harijan*, 9-2-1947.

disclosing themselves. He would be glad to see Muslim opinion working actively to bring the offenders not before the court of justice but before the court of public opinion. Let the offenders show contrition and let them return the looted property. Let them also show to those against whom offences were committed that they need fear no molestation, that the days of frenzy were over. Muslim public opinion should be such as to guarantee that miscreants would not dare to offend against any individual and only then could Hindus be asked to return safely to their villages. The speaker was sure that such purging before the court of public opinion was infinitely superior to a trial before a court of law. What was wanted was not vengeance but reformation.

Harijan, 2-2-1947 and 9-2-1947

404. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
January 17, 1947

DEAR PRAKASAM,

I got yesterday your air mail letter of 9th instant. This means six days and you will know for your information how far I am from the haunts of so-called civilization. I got also your telegram yesterday saying that you would be sending a special representative with documents and instructions. I shall await them.

Meanwhile, I have hurriedly read through your Advocate-General's opinion[1]. In the place of his signature there is a blank. The opinion is very elaborate and instructive. Will you, however, tell the Advocate-General that it would have been very helpful if he had summarised his conclusions and also if he had framed questions he has answered? Better still would have been if you had stated a case for his opinion. Then you could have sent to the Press for public information the question and his answers. The public would not be interested in the elaborate legal argument with which he has backed his conclusion.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] In the dispute with the Government of India in regard to supply of spindles to Madras, which the Madras Government decided not to use, in keeping with its policy not to promote mill production of cloth.

405. LETTER TO HAMIDUDDIN AHMED[1]

KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
January 17/19, 1947

DEAR HAMIDUDDIN SAHEB,

I thank you for your letter of 10th instant received by me only yesterday. I understand the cause of delay that took place in replying to my letter. I do not propose to enter into any controversy with you. But I propose to confine myself to removing misunderstanding that lurks in your letter.

A statement of mine about the happenings in Noakhali would have been premature, for the impressions formed have been damaging and facts that come to me even now are disturbing, if they are true as at least some of them seem to me to be. The volunteers who are working are not under my guidance or discipline. Their removal is surely the function of the Government. I can only remove those whom I have brought with me. I have already told Saheed Saheb that if for any reason whatsoever he finds the presence of anyone of them to be harmful to the country, he has but to serve a notice on them and they will go away without a murmur. I have excepted from the category only myself and a grand-daughter of mine who is with me. Of course I know nothing of the subversive activities of any of the volunteers. But if the report received by you is true and I were in your place I would certainly see to it that those responsible for such activities were summarily removed. I have no recollection of your having ever suggested to me to get rid of any volunteer. I would like you to tell me what I have said in public about the Bihar Government or the report of the Bihar Muslim League. I have been most reticent about these things. I have certainly entered into correspondence with Saheed Saheb and others. But I am not aware of having said much in public.

I am sorry that I cannot accept your advice about Bihar nor can I endorse your estimate of the situation if I were in Bihar. My firm opinion is that I could not do service to the Muslim cause by going to Bihar. Immediately I feel that I could, I assure you that I would not

[1] Parliamentary Secretary, West Bengal Government

wait for any prompting from you or any other friend. I have been in correspondence with friends who know and they dissuade me from going to Bihar, and that for very good reasons. But I must not go into it at this stage.

You astound me when you tell me that you found Hindus were not the least enthusiastic about peace committees. When we last parted, you left me under the impression that you at least were going to stay in the district and see through the working of the peace committees and you then appeared to be very enthusiastic about all that was happening at the formation of the peace committees.

Of course I should like you to visit this district again irrespective of whether I still "require any explanation".

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

406. LETTER TO PYARELAL

January 17, 1947

CHI. PYARELAL,

I am writing this with a trembling hand at 6.35. I do not have the letter before me. I have of course signed the letter to Glyn.[1] You can send away the Sikh if you wish. Everybody has gone from here yesterday. I have kept only Sardar Jivan Singhji.

I have given your letter to M. It is in his box. He will at least write a couple of lines. You must be absolutely calm. I shall follow your suggestion as far as I can.

You say you have sent the books. They have not reached me. The bearer of the letter did not give me the books. I remained in my bed till late in the afternoon. More later. A lot remains to be said.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have a long letter from Sushila. I want to send it to you. That too later. If she is there, tell her I cannot write right now.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Tulsiram", 12-1-1947

407. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 17, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. Now good-bye. Two Sardars are with me. I cannot write to Abha separately.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G N. 565

408. SPEECH TO WOMEN

PARKOTE,

January 17, 1947

What has happened in Noakhali is God's curse, not only for Bengal but for the whole of India and it is high time that our outlook was changed.

Gandhiji said that Hindu women should give up the habit of differentiating between high and low and between caste and caste. They should move with all women on a basis of equality. In particular Gandhiji advised Hindu women to mix freely with their Muslim sisters. If the women of the two communities had been on terms of friendship and if Hindu women were in close touch with their Muslim sisters, much of what happened in Noakhali could have been prevented.

Gandhiji also advised women in the villages not to waste any of their spare time but to take to spinning and other subsidiary work, such as keeping their villages clean and the water in their tanks pure.

Gandhiji also said that his advice to the Hindu women applied to the men also and they should move as friends among the Muslims. By friendly contact misunderstandings were cleared and chances of quarrels were eliminated.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 20-1-1947

409. SPEECH TO GRAM SEVA SANGH VOLUNTEERS

PARKOTE,

January 17, 1947

The sword can be met by the sword but that will lead to nothing. Remain non-violent and harbour no fear. If every one of you sheds fear, then the forty-two of you will be as strong as 4200.

After the talk Gandhiji asked the volunteers whether they were free from fear.

One of the volunteers said they felt no fear—but only when all forty-two of them were together.

That means that each of you is still possessed by fear, which means that all of you are.

Volunteers should have no fear even individually. Whatever may happen, you should never bow down your heads and succumb to fear and dishonour.

Gandhiji asked the volunteers to engage themselves in work beneficial to the village. They should mix with the Muslims as brothers and friends. He deprecated the taking up of the lathi to fight the lathi and said this would never solve the problem. He said :

You cannot defeat anyone with the help of the lathi, but only with love.

When the volunteers asked Mahatma Gandhi to give them his blessings, Gandhiji said :

You have my blessings, but only if you follow my advice.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 20-1-1947

410. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

PARKOTE,

January 17, 1947

At Parkote, on the morning of the 17th, Gandhiji had read a speech delivered by the Qaid-e-Azam on the occasion of the foundation ceremony of a Girls' High School by his sister, Miss Fatima Jinnah. During the after-prayer speech in the evening, he translated a portion of that speech in which Mr. Jinnah was reported to have said that Muslims should develop a high sense of responsibility, justice and integrity. Wrong was not to be imitated. If after consulting one's conscience one felt that a contemplated action was wrong, one should never do it irrespective of any consideration or influence. If people acted up to this rule, no one would be able to prevent them from attaining Pakistan.

Commenting upon this, Gandhiji said that as there was no question of force here and if Pakistan was going to be established by sterling qualities of character, everybody would welcome such a State, no matter by what name it was called.[2]

No one could agree, he said, that loot, arson or forcible conversion,

[1] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary"

[2] The following three paragraphs are reproduced from *Amrita Bazar Patrika.*

no matter where committed, could ever be supported by the awakened conscience of man.

Gandhiji referred to the fact that the celebration was in connection with a girls' school and recalled that Mr. Jinnah had advised the Education Minister in Sind to launch a determined drive against illiteracy. In this lay the secret of future peace and unity. Literary education by itself did not carry one far for there never had been any dearth of literary men. What was needed was education for life. Men and women, he continued, were two limbs of the social body and if one limb was atrophied then the whole body would suffer in consequence. It was, therefore, very unfortunate that our sisters should be left in darkness and ignorance.

Hindu women joined the prayer in large numbers. Why should not Muslim girls, if not women, find it possible to join the prayer? The obvious duty of the Hindu sisters, Gandhiji continued, was to go to their Muslim sisters purely in a spirit of service.

Gandhiji added that they ought to remember Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah's advice and act up to it; for it was advice not confined to any particular community; it was of universal significance. The qualities which he had advised people to develop were not combativeness but a sense of justice and truth; and this implied that whenever justice was at stake, people ought to appeal to reason instead of taking recourse to barbarous methods of settling disputes whether private or public.

Harijan, 9-2-1947; and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 20-1-1947

411. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

KAZIRKHIL, RAMGUNJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DISTRICT,
January 18, 1947

CHI. AMRIT,

I had your letter. I indulge in the luxury of dictating it as our friend Rangaswamy has volunteered to do all shorthand work that may be necessary, Parasuram having gone, let us hope only for the time being.[1] Of course if he retains his strong opposition to some of the things I stand for, naturally I do not expect him to return. He is such a good man that I have left it open for him to return if ever his mind is clear and he wishes to come back.

Whatever opportunity for service that may be offered to you and which you feel you should undertake, you will always have my

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Parasuram", 2-1-1947

approval. You know my own reaction to the visits to the West. At the same time I do not altogether discount the service of those who feel that they have a mission abroad. Of course the condition is that you keep well and do not work yourself to death. I do hope that Sardar will take care of his health.

I enclose herewith a letter from Madeleine Rolland[1] received by Pyarelal. It has reference to you also. In any case you would like to see the letter. You can return it to Pyarelal after you have read it.

Blessings from

BAPU[2]

From the original: C. W. 4189. Courtesy Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7825

412. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO ALI HUSSAIN[3]

January 18, 1947

Are you not my old tireless correspondent to whom I could carry no conviction? You have started with an emphatic statement of opinion without caring to inquire how I am passing my time and telling me on what grounds you have come to a conclusion. You have condemned me guilty without even hearing me, the accused. You have also laid down the law that Bihar needs my presence more urgently than Noakhali. Since I am in a position to know more fully than any other person whether I am wasting my time in Noakhali or not, it is fair for me to assume that your conclusion about Bihar is as erroneous as about Noakhali.[4]

The second paragraph of your letter is as disappointing as the first. You could have no knowledge whatsoever of the information that (the Bihar deputation). . . could have given me and yet you pronounce judgment and say that (they) . . . gave me "all wrong information" and that Mr. Houlton[5] was party to it. . . . So far as I am aware, an impartial commission of inquiry is to be held and if it is, I think it is up to you and me to suspend our judgment.

[1] Sister of Romain Rolland

[2] The subscription is in Hindi.

[3] A barrister of Patna

[4] Pyarelal explains that "Gandhiji got the Bihar Government to send him a detailed reply . . . dealing with all the points raised in the [addressee's] letter" and gave "his considered verdict after a painstaking scrutiny of all the evidence that had been brought to him in Noakhali."

[5] Relief Commissioner, Bihar

I am firmly of opinion that whilst the Bihar Ministry may not be accomplices in the crime committed by the Bihar Hindus, to their shame and disgrace, as responsible Ministers they could not be acquitted of responsibility for the behaviour of crowds within their jurisdiction.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, pp. 248 and 278

413. LETTER TO KRISHNA VALLABH SAHAY

KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
January 18, 1947

DEAR KRISHNA VALLABH BABU,

I enclose herewith a copy of Barrister Ali Hussains's letter and my reply.[1] What about the newspaper report of your opinion ? For ready reference I send you also the cutting sent by the Barrister. Please favour me with a reply.

What about the promises you made to me when we met ? The enclosure is by no means the first of its kind. But the other things I did not consider it important enough to worry you about.

Blessings from
BAPU[2]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

414. LETTER TO PYARELAL

January 18, 1947

CHI. PYARELAL,

You sent a whole pile yesterday. Do not do it. Leave everything to God. Let us do our duty and then leave everything to God. Your letters indicate something else. I do not think it is correct. Manu is agitated. She is trying very hard. She works the whole day. How will she manage everything ? Leave her also to God's mercy. Her legs are better. Whatever treatement was given was given only by me. I am taking care of her food, etc. You continue giving her lessons. Let me

[1] In his letter Ali Hussain had criticized the Bihar Government and ministers for their mishandling of riots and their leniency towards rioters.

[2] In Devanagari

know if you have any particular suggestion regarding her diet.

You persist in your attitude that secrecy should be maintained.

This is a great obstacle. This restriction is not right. I know it.

Inabiding by it even my diary becomes soiled, and I have the feeling that I should discontinue writing it. I am sending today Sushila's long communication. That will give you some idea. As for me, I have fully abided by her wish despite my disinclination. But do not be impatient to know about it. You will know it when she tells you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

415. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 18, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

Today there is no letter from you. Sushila has given all the news. Amtul[1] has sent a wire from Lucknow. I will send a wire in reply. I hope to meet you on Monday by 8.30.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 566

416. TALK WITH JOURNALISTS

January 18, 1947

Even if my mission here should fail, it will not be the failure of ahimsa itself. It will be the failure of my ahimsa.

What he was testing here was his own ahimsa, Gandhiji added.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 20-1-1947

[1] Addressee's niece

417. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

BADALKOT,

January 18, 1947

Gandhiji's answer was that he did not maintain illusion and never ascribed to himself any superior powers. He had met Mr. Jinnah many times, as they knew, and their meetings had been marked by nothing but friendliness. Yet the results were negative as they all knew.

The fact was, continued Gandhiji, that a leader was made by his fol- lowers. He reflected in a clearer manner the aspirations lying dormant among the masses. This was true not only of India but of all the world. What he would therefore suggest to both Hindus and Mussalmans was that they should not look to the Muslim League or the Congress or the Hindu Mahasabha for the solution of their daily problems of life. For that they should look towards themselves; and if they did that then their desire for neighbourly peace would be reflected by the leaders. The political institutions might be left to deal with specifically political questions but how much did they know about the daily needs of individuals? If a neighbour was ailing, would they run to the Congress or the League to ask them what should be done? That was an unthinkable proposition.

On the previous evening Gandhiji had quoted Mr. Jinnah's advice that women should rapidly be rescued from illiteracy. But Gandhiji said that that was not enough. Was the condition of the literate men any better for their literacy? Were they not, he asked, subject to the passing fashions of the political world? Germany, which had lain so long under Hitler, proved what he meant; as all knew it was in a sorry plight today. It was not literacy or learning which made a man, but education for real life. What did it matter if they knew everything but did not know how to live as brothers with their neighbours?

Gandhiji continued that if some people had committed grievous mistakes in their dealings with their neighbours, they should repent and ask God to forgive them. If He forgave them but the world did not, even then it did not matter to a man who had learnt to depend on God; such punishment nobly borne served to elevate a man. Gandhiji then said that in a book of sayings of the Prophet he had found that a man should never leave an error uncorrected. If he did, he would be hauled up on the Day of judgment and find no favour in the eyes of God.

[1] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary". The report explains : "A short while before prayer the Muslim friend at whose house Gandhiji had halted on his way to Badalkot, approached him and said that if there was a settlement between Mr. Jinnah and him, peace would be established in the country."

It was not enough that they acquired the art of reading, writing, etc. It was necessary that they should learn the art of living on friendly terms with their neighbours. They should rescue the womenfolk, who formed half their numbers, from the thraldom of ignorance and superstition. Men should live in co-operation and work for the common good. For this, they should not look up to political parties for direction, but to their own souls or God.

Personally, Gandhiji said, he had addressed himself wholly to that task. He would not leave this part of the country alive if the work remained unaccomplished. If he succeeded in overcoming the distrust of his Muslim brethren, and in establishing the fact that, after all, it was the daily things of life such as he had mentioned which mattered most, then its effect would be felt not merely in this part of the country but over the whole of India; and as such might even deeply affect the future peace of the world.

Harijan, 2-2-1947

418. NOTE TO R. R. DIWAKAR[1]

January 19, 1947

I am becoming more and more convinced that the four-anna membership should go. The membership of the Congress should be forty crores, the whole of the population, no matter to what sect, religion or Province or State or the so-called independent possessions a particular individual belongs. The members have an equal right with all to service by the Congress Organization. These forty crore member will exercise no privilege by reason of their recognition as such by the Congress.

The organization will be worked by those who have been habitual wearers of khaddar one year before the date of commencement, who have renounced untouchability in all its forms and who are not dealers in foreign cloth or intoxicants, who have full belief in the constructive programme of the Congress and who are prepared and willing to do work referred to in schedule A hereto and who have passed a probation period of six months in doing that work.

All committees and sub-committees shall be formed from the workers above named.

The schedule to be prepared by you.

From a photostat: G. N. 6211

[1] This was an enclosure to a letter to the addressee, *vide* the following item.

419. LETTER TO R. R. DIWAKAR

KAZIRKHIL, RAMGUNJ P. S.,
NOAKHALI DT.,
January 19, 1947

MY DEAR DIWAKAR,

I have hurriedly glanced through the note left with me by the President[1], of principles discussed and decided upon by the Congress Constitution Committee. There are other clauses which I do not want to touch. I have dealt with the foundation. No one is bound to attach the slightest importance to what I have said in the enclosed note unless it makes a forcible appeal to his head and heart.

Blessings from
BAPU[2]

From a photostat: G. N. 6211

420. LETTER TO PYARELAL

January 19, 1947

CHI. PYARELAL,

There is no time at all to write to you at length. I am now finding the burden of work too heavy. I am hoping to lighten it. I have interpreted the word 'secret' just like you have done. I am pondering over what my duty is. Kanu may do anything. If Manu is right and you are right, Kanu too will understand. Manu's intrepidity deserves to be encouraged. If you must fast whatever the circumstances, let it be on Saturday. You should give it up after full understanding. Keep giving lessons to Manu. Good lies in surrendering wholly to God.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] J. B. Kripalani, Congress President, who along with Jawaharlal Nehru, met Gandhiji in the last week of December

[2] The subscription is in Hindi.

421. NOTE TO MANU GANDHI

January 19, 1947

If a hot bath agrees with you, why don't you take it? Unless, of course you don't like it. I shall be happy if I know whether you will accompany me on the walk in the morning or in the evening or at both times.

I intend to write to Jaisukhlal. He expects me to do something about you. But I don't know how I can help if you are scared all the time.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIII

422. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 19, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I am glad to get even two lines from you.

Amtul's address is not legible. Give it to me tomorrow.

I wanted to reach there tonight. But it has not been possible. I had to go to two places and there were other difficulties also. By the grace of God we shall meet tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 567

423. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

ATAKHORA,
January 19, 1947

Whatever I have been trying to say in these days, is contained in the sayings of the Prophet. The following passages are therefore culled for your benefit :

> No man is a true believer unless he desireth for his brother that which he desireth for himself.
>
> He who neither worketh for himself nor for others will not receive the reward of God.

[1] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary". Since Gandhiji had started his silence on Sunday, the speech was read out.

He is not of me, but a rebel at heart who when he speaketh, speaketh falsely, who when he promiseth, breaketh his promises and who when trust is reposed in him, faileth in his trust.

Muslims are those who perform their trust and fail not in their word and keep their pledge.

Whoever is kind to His creatures, God is kind to him.

A perfect Muslim is he from whose tongue and hands mankind is safe.

The worst of men is a bad learned man and a good learned man is the best.

When a man committeth adultery *iman* leaveth him.

He is not a Momin who commiteth adultery or stealeth, or who drinketh liquor or who plundereth or who embezzleth; beware, beware.

The most excellent *jehad* is that for the conquest of self.

Assist any person oppressed, whether Muslim or non-Muslim.

The manner in which my followers become eunuchs is by fasting and abstinence.

Women are the twin halves of men.

Learned are those who practise what they know.

The most valuable thing in the world is a virtuous woman.

Give your wife good counsel; if she has goodness in her she will soon take it; leave off idle thinking and do not beat your noble wife like a slave.[1]

Gandhiji said that certain Muslims had asked him: 'Who is this Muslim woman Amtussalaam who is fasting at Sirandi?' Gandhiji said Amtussalaam had been with him for a long time. She was a true Muslim. She always had *Koran-e-Sharif* with her and she was never without it. She also read the *Gita*. After giving her noble family connections, Gandhiji said :

But this pious and noble lady is now on the road to death for the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity.

He wished Amtussalaam to be successful in such a great cause.

Harijan, 9-2-1947; and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 22-1-1947

[1] What follows is reproduced from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*.

424. DRAFT PLEDGE FOR MUSLIMS[1]

January 20, 1947

With God as witness, we solemnly declare that we bear no antagonism towards the Hindus or members of any other community. To each one, to whatever faith he might belong, his religion is as dear as Islam is to us. There can, therefore, be no question of interference by anybody in the observance of the religious practices of others. We understand that Bibi Amtussalaam's object is the establishment of Hindu-Muslim unity. The object is gained by the signing of this pledge. We wish, therefore, that she should give up her fast.[2] We realize that if we are found to have acted with any mental reservations in this matter we shall have to face a fast on Gandhiji's part. Our endeavour for the recovery of the remaining sword shall continue.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, pp. 156-7

425. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

A correspondent writes to me to say that the strained relations between the Hindus and the Muslims bid fair, if timely warning is not taken, to replace Nagari and Urdu scripts with Roman. There are undoubtedly protagonists of the Roman as the universal script. It seems to me that it would be a great human tragedy if such a result comes about. Time-saving devices are good up to a certain point. But they take the form of a mania when they destroy human relations and desirable restraints. I must not tarry to examine what they are. Suffice it to say that lovers of the Nagari script, which is scientifically almost perfect, and the Urdu script, which is so graceful, will not be carried away by the lazy craze for the Roman script. Would that both the communities will be sane enough to realize that the mutual dislike is not allowed to replace the two Indian scripts. But if that happy consummation does not take place, let those few or many who have regard for sacred human understanding assiduously learn both the scripts and thus enrich the Indian national language, Hindustani, as the

[1] According to Pyarelal, a large gathering of local Muslims had met Gandhiji at Sirandi on the day of his arrival and told him that they had tried their utmost to recover the sword but had failed. They had asked what assurance on their part would satisfy Amtussalaam and induce her to give up her fast. Gandhiji drafted this pledge for them to sign.

[2] Amtussalaam broke her fast at 9.30 p. m. after the "pledge" was explained to her by Gandhiji.

easy fusion of Hindi and Urdu. Let the Provincial Governments beware of the lure of the Roman script. Let it not be said of India that it is so degraded as to become the blotting sheet of civilization.

KETHURI (NOAKHALI), January [21],[1] 1947

Harijan, 2-2-1947

426. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

KETHURI,
January 21, 1947

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have your letter. I understand about Madhu. I am happy that she has got her freedom, and also that she is staying in the Ashram without fear. I have always believed that we can take much work from the girl. Dhiren wants to live in the Ashram and do khadi work there. Read the postcard I have written to him. If you see any difficulty in his staying in the Ashram in the manner suggested, don't hesitate to say so. I should, however, be pleased if you could admit him. If he keeps good health there, I am sure he will work very hard. I understand your reason for sending money to Anna[2]. He will continue to be a cause of worry to you. Neither Jajuji nor you need worry about me. I have stopped getting up at 3. I take all possible care of my health. Walking daily is of course tiring. But if I can preserve my health or if it remains unimpaired on its own, I think I shall survive. But all that is in God's hands. He will solve all difficulties if He wants to take service from me and wants my efforts to succeed. If Dev arrives, I shall see.

Amtul Salaam broke her fast yesterday. We spent the whole day in talks with Muslims. On the face of it the result is good. Everything is reduced to writing.[3] You will read it in the papers. She displayed great fortitude and courage.

Send Bapa a cheque for Rs. 25,000 for the Adivasis. One cheque for the same amount has already been sent. It was decided to send Rs. 50,000. I do not know what amount was earmarked for this purpose. However, whatever is received in future will be credited to that account. But whether or not we receive any money, the above sum

[1] Gandhiji was in Kethuri on this date. The source has "24", a misprint.
[2] Harihar Sharma
[3] *Vide* "Draft Pledge for Muslims", 20-1-1947

is to be paid to him from the money that stands in my name. Please, therefore, send it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10657

427. LETTER TO PYARELAL

January 21, 1947

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have your letter. It is all right that you played a trick with God and sent it just at the time of breaking the fast. I do understand why . . .[1] is taken away. It is certainly not with me.

I assure you it will be no hardship for me to send the blanket. I am sending it along. Manu will manage about the milk powder. The diary is going with this letter. You can return it at your convenience. Why should I be in a hurry ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

428. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

KETHURI,

January 21, 1947

Gandhiji explained the reasons which actuated the twenty-five days' fast of Bibi Amtussalaam and the reasons which brought it to an end. The fast was broken at 9.30 last evening after the recital of the *Al Fateha* in a powerful and melodious voice by a Muslim gentleman who happened to be at the meeting. Many Muslim friends including Abdulla Saheb and his lieutenant exerted themselves during the day to find out how the fast could be ended while Gandhiji was present in Sirandi. It was common cause that the *khadag* for which the fast was said to have been undertaken could not, in spite of strenuous and honest efforts by many persons, be traced. And if Amtussalaambehn persisted in wanting the production of the *khadag*, she must die. But Gandhiji had explained to her that that could not be the real object of the fast; it must be a symbol of something behind it. Gandhiji then said that the lady's whole

[1] One word here is illegible.

[2] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary"

life was devoted to a heart unity between the Hindus and the Muslims. Therefore if there was a real prospect of such unity at least within the area where she was working, there was every prospect of the fast being ended.[1]

After full and complete deliberation, a document was signed laying down the principle that to each one his religion was equally dear with any other person's and that therefore different religions were to be mutually respected. To this end the signatories to the agreement have pledged themselves. Naturally, any wilful breach of the promise would implicate me in a fast. On the document being interpreted to Amtul Salaambehn, the lady broke the fast as said before.

Gandhiji assured the signatories that he would help to the best of his ability in the matter of preserving the just rights of each community even as he expected them actively to implement their promise.

Gandhiji also expressed his desire that any development of any kind within the area mentioned in the document must be brought to his notice and convinced them that he would actively assist in the settlement of all disputes. Gandhiji told the Hindus and Muslims of his dislike of matters being rushed to police and law courts. Any surrender of its legitimate rights by the majority community or even the minority community for the sake of reaching an agreement, Gandhiji warned, would not lead to a lasting peace.

Harijan, 9-2-1947; and *The Hindu*, 23-1-1947

429. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

January 22, 1947

How delighted I shall be to find that you have turned over a new leaf! Just think of the affection I have lavished upon you! Mine is an arduous pilgrimage. I invite you to join in it if you can. . . . If you purify yourself, no matter where you are, you will have fully shared it. Take it on the authority of the *Bhagavata* that you will then also cease to look prematurely old as at present.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p. 136

[1] What follows is reproduced from *The Hindu.*

430. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

AT A MEETING,
January 22, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. Do not be in a hurry. Everything will be all right if you go slow. If you like goat's milk, then certainly keep a goat. It is my wish and hope that by whatever means you will get well in all respects.

The cough must be cured.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 568

431. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 22, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

Though your fast has ended, still I want you to keep writing to me. We shall see after you start moving about. I hope you are all right.

I was expecting Sushila to come in the morning today, but in my heart I was praying that she would not turn up too early. I do not think she stayed behind because of you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 569

432. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 22, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. I understand about Sushilabehn. The copy[1] which you want is enclosed herewith.

Amritlalji wants to call Abha back after she is relieved of attendance on you. She may remain as long as she is with you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 570

[1] Of the pledge signed by the Muslims; *vide* "Draft Pledge for Muslims", 20-1-1947

433. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

January 22, 1947

CHI. SATIS BABU,

I did not like the attack on the Press reporters in the *Shanti Patrika*. I have not read it, but I have read their rejoinder. They have sent a copy to me. If there has been a mistake it is your duty to issue a clarification.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 8723

434. LETTER TO SYED MAHMUD

KETHURI,
January 22, 1947

BHAI MAHMUD,

Give me a clear picture of Bihar. I want from you detailed information. Is everything being done for the Muslims who have been ruined? Are those who were spared quite satisfied? Give me all the details.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 5108

435. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

PANIALA,
January 22, 1947

Gandhiji was happy that at last he had been able to visit the village of Paniala.[2] But that was not enough; he would feel happier still if the Hindus and the Mussalmans succeeded in establishing unity and friendship between themselves.

Amtussalaam had undertaken her fast, as they all knew, with the same object. And the assurance that the villagers in her neighbourhood had given to her should go a long way in healing the wound which tore the face of Bengal.

[1] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary". The report explains that the "gathering was . . . of the largest size so far encountered".

[2] Gandhiji had desired to visit Paniala in December; *vide* "Message to the People of Paniala Union", 22-12-1946

One problem, continued Gandhiji, which had been recently exercising him was in connection with the families of those who had lost their all in the course of the disturbances. There were many families which had lost their earning members. The survivors had to be looked after, while the children had to be educated and given adequate protection. That undoubtedly was the duty of the Government. Both he and they if they wanted heart peace should look at the question from a broader standpoint. In his humble opinion, where the wrong was done by some Muslims, reasonable arrangements for the above purpose should be made by the Muslims of the neighbourhood.

Government would only act through force while the common citizen would act through persuasion and agreement. Through the establishment of good human relations, citizens should try to tide over the disasters which might overwhelm the social body. It was not good to depend on an organization based on force like the State for the above purpose.

Gandhiji then referred to two more matters, namely, the duty of volun- teers and the rehabilitation of artisans. With regard to the volunteers his advice was that they should never discriminate between one type of duty and another, have no preferences, but should stick to their post even at the cost of their lives. It was the quality of discipline and sacrifice which made small things great in organized action. Then, referring to the pro- blem of the artisans, he continued, they ought not to depend upon charity however well-intended but on their own resources in order to tide over their present difficulties. In this connection he referred to his view supported by the scriptures of the world that he who ate his food without returning its equivalent by means of body labour was no better than a thief. Permanent peace would come in the world only when the bond of labour shared in common held together different units of the social body.[1]

The first question was: "You said that Muslim majority provinces if they so chose had Pakistan already. What did you mean by this?"

Gandhiji replied that he fully meant what he had said. Whilst there was an outside power ruling India there was neither Pakistan nor Hindustan, but bare slavery was their lot. And if anybody maintained that the measure of provincial autonomy they enjoyed was equal to independence, they were unaware of the contents of Independence. It was true that the British power was certain to go. But if they could not patch up their quarrels and indulged in blood-baths, a combination of powers was certain to hold them in bondage. Those powers would not tolerate a country so vast and populous as India and so rich in potential resources to rot away because of internal disturbances. Every country had to live for the rest. Days when they could

[1] Gandhiji then answered questions by Muslim Leaguers.

drag on the frog-in-the-well existence were gone. Even before the Congress had taken up non-violent non-co-operation as the official policy for the whole of India, that is, before 1920, a resolutionto that effect was passed in Gujarat under the chairmanship of the late Abbas Tyabji Saheb. The speaker had said that it was open even to one province to vindicate its position and become wholly independent of the British power. Thus supposing that following the prescription, Bengal alone became truly and completely independent, there would be complete Pakistan of his defi-nition in Bengal. Islam was nothing if it did not spell complete democracy. Therefore, there would be one man one vote and one woman one vote irrespective of religion. Naturally, therefore, there would be a true Muslim majority in the Province. Had not Jinnah Saheb declared that in Pakistan minorities would, if possible, be even better off than the majority; therefore, there would be no underdog?[1]

Gandhiji reiterated that if such a State was established by sheer merit and so long as the qualities of truth and justice were emphasized, as had been done by him (Gandhiji), nobody would raise any objection, call it Pakistan or by any other name. If the Muslims felt that in their contemplated Pakistan, Muslims alone would be allowed to remain, Gandhiji thought he must say that it was something un-Islamic. Islam, he said, was based on the fundamental principle of democracy and toleration of other faiths. If any individual, be he Hindu or Muslim or Christian, disobeyed the fundamental basis of others' religion, it was he who fell, and not the religion. If Pakistan meant anything more, the speaker did not know; and if it did, so far as he knew, it would make no appeal to his reason.

The second question was: "How did your ahimsa work in Bihar?"

Gandhiji said that it did not work at all. It failed miserably. But, if the reports received by him from responsible quarters were to be relied upon, the Bihar Government was making full amends and the general population in Bihar also had realized the heinousness of the crimes committed by large masses of Biharis in certain portions of that Province.

One of the Bihar Ministers came to Noakhali with the promise from the Bihar Government that they would spare no pains for rehabilitating the people. Gandhiji said he was receiving letters and resolutions passed by the Muslim League and he was conversant with the case referred to by them. He sent every case for immediate attention and thorough investigation by the Bihar Government. To the Bihar Government Gandhiji had suggested the setting up of an impartial tribunal to enquire into the happenings and the Bihar Government had promised to abide by its findings *in toto*.[2]

The third question was: "Why are you silent about the eviction of Bengalis by

[1] The following paragraph is reproduced from *The Hindu.*
[2] This paragraph is reproduced from *The Hindu.*

the Assam Government?"

Gandhiji said that he was not deliberately silent. The question was not new for him. Gandhiji said that he had it in his programme during his last visit to Assam. So far as his information went, Assam Government's objection was to those who had settled in different parts of that Province without permission of the Assam Government.[1]

When some years ago he went to Assam he was taken to the very spot where Muslims from Mymensingh had migrated and taken possession of vacant lands. He had then given his opinion and held it even now that it was not open to persons to usurp vacant land wherever it may be, that is, whether in their own Province or in another. For him it was not a Hindu-Muslim question. What he had said was of universal application. If Assam attempted to evict lawful possessors, it would be guilty of crime against humanity. What he had heard was quite the contrary. But if there was a question of unlawful eviction, the Assam Government would not be above law and it was open also to the Bengal Government to vindicate the position of evicted Bengalis, here happening to be Muslims.

Gandhiji said that if the friends here had another tale to narrate he was ready to hear it. Most he could do was to advise the Assam Ministry to set up an impartial commission of inquiry as in Bihar and refer the whole subject to it. As a matter of fact the present Ministry of Assam was pursuing a policy chalked out by the Ministry previously in office.[2]

The next question was: "What in your opinion is the cause of communal riots?"

Gandhiji said that in his opinion the riots were due to the idiocy of both the communities.[3]

No one party could create a riot, he said, if the other party remained non-violent and honest. Referring to the recent outbreaks in Bombay and other places, Gandhiji said he had seen how an "eye-for-an-eye and a tooth-for-a-tooth" policy had been pursued to its bitter end in these places. One day one Muslim was stabbed and the following day a Hindu was found stabbed and *vice versa*. What else could it be called, Gandhiji asked. It was the same outlook that lay at the root of all communal riots. Gandhiji asked :

We are children of the same soil and have the same origin and if any of my brothers provoked me to commit some evil act, why shall I submit to him? If anybody tried to force a change of religion or if

[1] The rest of the paragraph is reproduced from *Hindustan Standard.*
[2] This paragraph is reproduced from *Hindustan Standard.*
[3] The following three paragraphs are reproduced from *The Hindu.*

anyone tried to molest a woman, why should he or she submit before this brute force?

He added it was incumbent upon anyone to court death non-violently in resisting such force. How long would an oppressor continue in acts of violence if he found non-violent people who were determined to face death instead of surrendering? Retaliation, according to Gandhiji, was not the remedy and it was non-violence alone which could counteract wrong and put an end to the madness that was inherent in communal riots.

The fifth question was: "Do you think that you would be successful in bringing peace to Noakhali without having it at the Centre?"

Gandhiji replied that if by the Centre was meant a pact between Jinnah Saheb, President of the Muslim League and Acharya Kripalani, President of the Indian National Congress, he certainly held that such a pact was not necessary in order to bring about harmonious relations between the Hindus and the Muslims in Noakhali. So far as he knew neither the President of the Congress nor the President of the Muslim League desired discord between the two. They had their political quarrel. But the disturbances in India whether in Bengal, Bihar or elsewhere were insensate and hindered political progress. He, therefore, felt that it was open to the Hindus and the Muslims in Noakhali to behave like men and cultivate peaceful relations among themselves.

The last question was: "Who according to your opinion have saved the Hindus and Hindu property in Noakhali? Do you not think that Muslim neighbours saved them?"

Gandhiji replied that the question assumed a subtle pride. What was wanted was a spirit of humility and repentance that there were enough Muslims found in Noakhali who had lost their heads to the extent of committing loot, arson and murder and resorting to forcible conversions, etc. If more mischief was not done, God alone was to be thanked, not man. At the same time the speaker was free to confess that be it said to their honour, there were Muslims who afforded protection to Hindus.

Harijan, 9-2-1947; *The Hindu*, 25-1-1947; and *Hindustan Standard*, 25-1-1947

436. LETTER TO PYARELAL

January 23, 1947

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have your letter.

No new man is needed. Ramachandran suddenly arrived and I did not think it proper to turn him away. Parasram insisted. He stayed on. Now he has gone but it means no loss. Manu is getting the help she needs. She has to learn to solve problems. A new person will be an

obstacle in her education. Besides, so far as possible we must engage only a Bengali. It is only proper. Now if this new man turns out well, train him. Do not send anybody to me.

It has to be considered whether or not Jivanji will have Parasram. It does not quite suit me. If his place is not with me, then he is certainly free. This is a point to be understood. If you have not understood it, there is no time at present to explain.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

437. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

Thursday, January 23, 1947

CHI. SATIS BABU,

Bhopal Babu has been taken away from Pyarelal. Has no one been appointed in his place who is conversant with the work?

The work here is obviously enormous. To manage all these things is a big job. You must go about the work taking care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 8721

438. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

DALTA,

January 23, 1947

Gandhiji announced that the Chowdharis of the village had decided to give him the plot of ground on which the meeting was being held. He congratulated the Chowdharis on their generous action. The gift to him carried no meaning beyond that it was presented for public use irrespective of caste or party. Naturally there would be a proper document setting out the grant. He hoped that the donors would carry out the full purpose of the gift. The further cause for congratulation was that he was accommodated in the house of Rai Mohan Mali. He did not consider himself to belong to any caste. He belonged to the lowest rung of the Hindu ladder. In reality there was no ladder; no high, no low. All were equal in the eyes of God as of law. It was a happy

[1] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary"

conjunction of events that it happened to be Netaji's birthday. What could be happier than that the Chowdharis should make their gift on this day and that a Scheduled Class friend, Rai Mohan Mali, should provide him habitation? In the speaker's opinion the great and most lasting act of Netaji was that he abolished all distinctions of caste and class. He was not a mere Hindu, nor a mere Bengali; he never thought of himself as a caste Hindu. He was Indian first and last. What was more, he fired all under him with the same zeal so that they forgot in his presence all distinctions and acted as one man.

No doubt there was much else to be credited to Netaji. Thus he had sacrificed a brilliant career for the sake of the country's service and enlisted himself under the late Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das. He suffered various imprisonments, twice became President of the Congress and at last by great strategy gave the slip to the guard put over him by the then Government of Bengal and by sheer courage and resourcefulness reached Kabul and passed through European countries and finally found himself in Japan, collected from scattered material an army of brilliant young men drawn from all communities and from all parts of India and dared to give battle to a mighty Government. A lesser man would have succumbed under the trials that Netaji went through; but he in his life verified the saying of Tulsidas that "all becomes right for the brave".

Gandhiji ended by saying that the Hindus should progress by forgetting all distinctions of caste and both the communities should develop unity of heart. He was reminded of a saying of the Prophet in which it was said that a man would be judged on the Day of Judgment not by what he professed by his lips, nor by whom he followed, but by what he had himself done to implement the teachings received by him.

Harijan, 9-2-1947

439. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

KAZIRKHIL, RAMGUNJ P. S.,
NOAKHALI DISTRICT,
January 24, 1947

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

Whilst preparations are being made to massage me, I want to devote a few minutes to letters about things with which I am intimately connected. Yesterday I wrote to Aryanayakam. Today it is your turn.

How is the village work flourishing? Are all kindred activities correlated with one another? Or is there still the jarring note? The work I am doing here is the most difficult of all I have hitherto undertaken and I know that those who are working for the country take an effective part in the work here if they do their best in their respective spheres. The village work that has been your lot can contribute probably the most to the fruition of what is being done

here. At the same time I know that it is the most uphill work, as I find walking from village to village and putting before them sanitation, the spinning-wheel, weaving and the craft peculiar to the particular village. They listen, nod, assent but beyond that they will not go. Add to this the local differences and troubles.

What is Bharatan[1] doing? Who has taken his place? Are you overworked? What about your blood pressure?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 10186

440. LETTER TO MAHOMED TAYABULLA[2]

KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
January 24, 1947

CHI. TAYABULLA[3],

I have your recent letter. I cannot understand this panic on the part of the Assamese. It is panic which always unhinges man, much more so when it seizes a large number of people. The resolution passed by the A.I.C.C.[4], if it is correctly reported in the papers, gives enough if not clear guidance to Assam for it will not compel Assam to act against the declared wish of the people through the Legislative Assembly. Second, naturally Assam has to watch the future developments and act as occasion requires. It would be unwise to take any precipitate action. Whatever action is taken must always be taken so as not to impair the autonomous character of the constitution of Assam. There need be no confusion in anybody's mind.

You will please write to me further if what I have written is not quite clear to you.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Addressee's brother

[2] This was in reply to the addresee's letter apprising Gandhiji of Assam's dissatisfaction at the A.I.C.C. resolution and seeking guidance from him.

[3] President of the Assam Provincial Congress Committee

[4] *Vide* Appendix A.I.C.C. Resolution".

441. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

DALTA,
January 24, 1947

CHI. PREMA,

I have preserved your postcard. I am writing this while on my way to another village. Sushila distributed the *tilguls* exactly on the *Sankranti* Day[1] for all to eat. I also accepted my share. Shankarrao gave the dhoti, too. I put on that also. I shall now meet you when you can find the time to come. But let me say this. Save yourself the trouble. Save that much money and go on doing your duty. That will amount to participation in this *yajna*. You will not receive here what you get from staying there. But do as you please.

I hope you are calm.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10451. Also C. W. 6890. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

442. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

MURIYAM,
January 24, 1947

CHI. BABUDI,

I am dictating this while spinning. There is no other way. It is no easy matter to change one's house every day. I am convinced that your good lies in respecting Gordhandas's wishes. You must, therefore, stay in Surat till he desires otherwise. From one point of view his plea that you should depend entirely on what he can provide for you, is just. But from another point of view it is not just. Whatever arrangement I make is bound to be within limits of propriety and reason. You need, therefore, feel no hesitation in accepting it. However, I have no doubt at all that in this matter too, you should respect Gordhandas's wishes. That is the only way for both of you to rise. I hope Anand is well. Persuade him to write to me sometimes.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a Gujarati original: C. W. 10076. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

[1] January 14, 1947

443. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

DALTA,
January 24, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

I have both your letters. I am dictating this while spinning. A messenger has come and I must send this with him. I get no information about what is happening in other parts of the country. I had heard about Hazara and so I sent the wire.[1] The work here takes up all my time. It is no easy matter to change one's house daily. God has somehow sustained me so far. Let us see what He does now. The poison [of communalism] is public knowledge. Non-violence has to make its way through it. That is the only way in which it can be put to the test.

The letter from the Nawab of Bhopal contains nothing new. He has not answered my question. Notes were taken of my conversation with him when I was in Delhi. I did not have a copy, and he has now sent one. I have not read them, but I assume that they are all right. The question which I had put to him is bound to come up.

I was glad to learn that your health was better and that you had called in a naturopath though not Dinshaw. In my view, nature cure is the only thing for you.

Parasuram the typist has left. His departure has made no difference. He has lost his balance. But I do not need any substitute.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 345-6

444. TALK TO REPRESENTATIVES OF KRISHAK SAMITI[2]

MURIYAM,
January 24, 1947

Representatives of the Krishak Samiti, Hashnabad People's Relief Committee, informed Gandhiji about the way in which Hindus and Muslims of Hashnabad raised a

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Jawaharlal Nehru", 15-1-1947

[2] This appeared under the title "Self-help to Avoid Food Crisis".

volunteer corps of about twelve hundred strong to defend the area from an onslaught of communal riots. Gandhiji remarked :

I heard of Hashnabad some time ago as the bright spot of Hindu-Muslim unity during the riot period.

The interviewers then told him of a food cricis developing in that area and asked him if he would say something about it in his speeches so as to draw the attention of the Bengal Government. Gandhiji replied :

Though I am not saying anything about the coming food crisis, I am aware of the situation. I am trying to solve it in my own way. I do not see why the people should depend upon Government or other agencies for help. We hear nowadays of people trying to secure foodstuffs from foreign countries. As a matter of fact if people will help themselves, then the Government is bound to move and this is what I will call real democracy, which is built up from below. Bengal possesses rich lands. They can produce edible roots. But again it is difficult to induce people to revise their tastes and old habits. Look at these coconut trees. Coconut makes a good nutritious food. I am trying to accustom myself to it. Of course, I extract the oil from it and the remaining portion as you know, contains good protein. Then take the many kinds of roots in the soil of Bengal which belong to the potato tribe and these can be used as good food. Then again, you have abundance of fish. Fish, coconuts and these roots can easily take the place of rice.

Incidentally Gandhiji mentioned the general supineness of the people. As an instance he mentioned the water hyacinth which, if the people *en masse* volunteered their services for a week without any aid from Government, they could get rid of within a week's time, causing a saving of thousands of rupees.

Gandhiji was asked his opinion about the *Tebhaga* Movement[1] in Bengal. Gandhiji confessed his ignorance about the movement and asked for a note on the subject which the questioners have undertaken to supply.

QUESTION: Can we not build up Hindu-Muslim unity through a concrete political programme?

GANDHIJI: Probably you can. But I have got my own ways. I think if people help themselves, then politics will take care of themselves.

[1] The movement was for reduction of the landlord's share in the produce of land. For Gandhiji's views on the movement, *vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 31-1-1947

Q. This *Tebhaga* Movement of the Bengal Kisans expects blessings from you.

G. Yes, yes, all good movements have my blessings.

Harijan, 9-2-1947

445. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

MURIYAM,
January 24, 1947

Gandhiji began by saying that he felt much pleasure in being housed in a Muslim[2] house. He and his party had received every attention. The Muslim friends went so far as to find a maidan large enough to hold the largest number of visitors possible. And it so happened that the meeting was the largest of all during his pilgrimage. He attributed the largeness of the meeting to the fast of Bibi Amtussalaam which had a happy ending because of the sincere labours of Abdullah Saheb and his assistance and that of the leading Muslims of the villages concerned. Whether his inference was justified or not, he flattered himself with the belief he had expressed.

He was sorry that there was poison administered to the public by some newspapers. Newspapers today had almost replaced the Bible, the Koran, the *Gita* and the other religious scriptures. It was wrong but the fact had to be faced. Such being the case, he held it to be the duty of newspapermen to give nothing but facts to their readers.

He was also of opinion that the movement of minorities to the majority provinces was an impracticable proposition. He knew the time when the late two Imam brothers[3] and the late Mazharul Haq[4] Saheb led both the communities and the leading Hindus, such as the late Brajkishore Prasad and Dr. Rajendra Prasad gladly worked under them. Muslims of that Bihar must not leave Bihar. It was true that some Bihar Hindus had acted inhumanly but that aberration ought not to deflect the Muslims from their clear duty bravely to stick to their homes which were theirs by right. And the Bihari Hindus had to make all possible amends for the misdeeds of the Hindus who had become insane. He would say the same to Noakhali Hindus and Muslims. It was therefore a good omen that there were Muslims in the village to harbour him. It was their duty to make even a solitary Hindu absolutely safe in their midst and Hindus should have faith enough to stay in Noakhali.

Harijan, 9-2-1947

[1] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary"

[2] Habibullah Saheb Patwari

[3] Sir Ali Imam, who died in October 1932, and Saiyed Hassan Imam, who died in April 1933

[4] A barrister of Patna; fellow student of Gandhiji in England

446. TELEGRAM TO JIVARAJ MEHTA

[On or after *January 24, 1947*][1]

DR. MEHTA
16 ALTMOUNT RD.
BOMBAY

YOUR LETTER TO SUSHILABEHN.[1]. SHAKUNTALA SHOULD NOT COME EAST BENGAL.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

447. MESSAGE TO SOUTH INDIA[2]

[On or before *January 25, 1947*][3]

I am glad to learn that several temples, including the ancient Srirangam Temple, are being thrown open to Harijans. But a great deal more remains to be done in order to remove this age-long iniquity.

The Hindu, 26-1-1947

448. LETTER TO PRESIDENT, MONGHYR DISTRICT MUSLIM LEAGUE

January 25, 1947

Your letter . . .[4] is . . . hysterical. . . . I would like you to tell me how I can serve the Muslims better by going to Bihar. Whilst I do not endorse your remark that the atrocities committed by the Hindus in Bihar have no parallel in history, I am free to admit that they were in magnitude much greater than in Noakhali. . . . I would urge you, as

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter to Sushila Nayyar dated January 24, 1947.

[1] The addressee in his letter had recommended a young woman, Shakuntala Shrinagesh who was keen to work in Bengal with either Sushila Nayyar or Sucheta Kripalani.

[2] According to the report Gandhiji had received a telegram from the Srivaikuntham Taluk Congress Committee stating that from February 20 about forty temples within the taluk were being thrown open to Harijans.

[3] The message was reported under the dateline Hirapur, January 25.

[4] Omission in the source.

President of the Monghyr District Muslim League, to confine yourself to proven facts which, I am sorry to say, you have not done.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p. 247

449. LETTER TO SYED NASIRUDDIN[1]

KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DT.,
January 25, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[2] You belong to a great University and hold the degree of M.A. But I am sorry to have to tell you that your letter is wholly unbalanced.

You will let me serve Hindus, Muslims and others in the best manner I know. If fail I shall feel sorry. But I cannot change my programme according to an opinion which does not appeal to my reason.

As to your note about the Noakhali Muslims, I should think that you should take your complaint through the proper channel. Have you written to the Provincial Government ? If not, I would suggest your doing so at the earliest moment.

I *refuse to draw the distinction between aggressive and non–aggressive communities.* This I say apart from the merits of the Pakistan controversy. It is enough for me to claim to belong to India, irrespective of caste or creed. Religion is my personal concern. It ought not to interfere with my duty as a citizen of India.

Yours sincerely,

SYED NASIRUDDIN SAHEB
ADVOCATE
ALIGARH (U.P.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] This was in reply to one date January 11, which said that ‘as the leader of the aggressive community’ Gandhiji ought to have toured those places where ‘appalling and horrible atrocities have been committed by your community’.

[2] Of January 11, in which the addressee had said that, as the leader of the aggressive community, Gandhiji ought to have toured those places where “appalling and horrible atrocities have been committed by your community”.

450. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

January 25, 1947

CHI. SATIS BABU,

This is surprising. Yes, do file (the case), but did I not say that we should pass on the case to Su. and say that we on our part wanted to do everything but some letters from Chowdhury Saheb have not come? Consider what is appropriate.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

451. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 25, 1947

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

Read this telegram[1]. Your letter shows you are making very good progress. If the cough is cured and there is no fever you will do a lot of work. You will write, if you need anything.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 572

452. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

January 25, 1947

Gandhiji first drew attention to the fact that the *tal*[3] given was out of tune. He suggested that all they did in the name of God should be in tune. If they were out of tune outside, they were likely to be out of tune within. He then alluded to two telegrams received from the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Islam in Madras and Bombay respectively. They said that he, an unbeliever, had no right to interfere in the Islamic Law. He submitted that the telegrams were based on ignorance of facts. He had not interfered at all in the practice of religion. He had neither the right nor the wish to do so. All he had done was to tender advice and that based on his reading of the Prophet's sayings, etc. What was more, he had observed in many cultured Muslim families total

[1] Dated January 23, from Sushil Sarkar to the addressee, which read : "The Hindus request you to give up the fast. The nation expects better service from you."

[2] Extracted from "Srirampur Diary"

[3] Rhythmic beat

disregard of the *purdah* as it is observed today. But that did not signify less observance of the *purdah* of the heart, which was the reality, in his opinion, aimed at by Islam. Whatever it was, it was open to the Muslim hearers to reject his advice if they felt that it was in conflict with the tenets of Islam. The critical telegrams received by him betrayed, in his opinion, grave intolerance of other opinion than that of the critics. Let them not forget that the courts of law including the Privy Council, which were often composed of non-Muslims, interpreted the Islamic Law and imposed its interpretation on the Islamic world. He, on the contrary, sought merely to give an opinion. If he could not do so for fear of criticism or even physical punishment, he would be an unworthy representative of non-violence and truth.

Harijan, 9-2-1947

453. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MAHOMED TAYABULLAH[1]

January 26, 1947

I cannot understand the panic on the part of the Assamese. Panic unhinges man, much more so when it seizes a large number of people. The Resolution passed by the A. I. C. C.,[2] if correctly reported in the papers, gives enough, if not clear, guidance to Assam, for it will not compel Assam to act against the wishes of the people, declared through the Legislative Assembly.

Naturally, Assam has to watch the future developments and act as occasion requires. It would be unwise to take any precipitate action. Whatever action is taken must always be taken so as not to impair the autonomous character of the constitution of Assam. There should be no confusion in anybody's mind.[3]

The Hindu, 2-2-1947

454. LETTER TO MANILAL B. DESAI

January 26, 1947

CHI. MANILAL,

I am reaching your letter somewhat late. But it is difficult to attend to outside work in the midst of a tour in the course of which I keep on moving from one village to another every day.

[1] The report said that this was in reply to the addressee's letter apprising Gandhiji of Assam's dissatisfaction at the A. I. C. C. resolution and seeking guidance from him.

[2] *Vide* "A. I. C. C. Resolution"

[3] According to the report, Gandhiji concluded his letter by asking the addressee "to write to him again if the letter was not clear".

Why did Dr. Bhagawat have to give up that diet? Has he also accepted defeat? I do not, of course, suggest by this that, if he has not accepted defeat, he should resume the whole food experiment. One should eat only such food as helps one to keep good health. If Datar refuses to put up the building, is anybody else willing to do so? Discuss the matter with the people there and let me know. Does Datar permit the use of his bungalow? Or does he seem reluctant to do so? You should not trouble Jehangirji in regard to shortage of funds. If needed, you may call for an additional five thousand from the Ashram. Ultimately, however, the expenditure on that place will have to be found by the village. If it cannot be done, we will have to consider whether we should stay on there permanently. We shall not succeed in propagating nature cure in villages by obtaining money from outside. I am certainly not unaware of the fact that Dr. Dinshaw is not able to attend to village work. This need not frighten you. There will be no harm if the Trust is made into a sub-trust of the Poona Trust, nor if it is made an independent one. However, even if it is a sub-trust, it must include some residents of the village. We should also ascertain what the residents themselves desire.

I am glad that Gangabehn pays occasional visits to the place. Will the lady whom Appa Saheb has sent stay there permanently? Has she become friendly with the other women? I was happy to learn that Gokhale had calmed down still further. Can you say that Purushottam had been fully restored? I hope Paramanand's eczema has been completely cured. I should advise him to get married immediately, for it is most uncertain when I shall be able to leave here. It is indeed a question whether I shall return alive from the place. The best course, therefore, would be to go through the marriage immediately. As far as I understand, this marriage is not intended to be a means of pleasure. This is not the time for such marriages. I believe that it is intended as a help in self-control. If my assumption is correct, it need not matter where I am.

The problem of the well seems to be a difficult one. If a deep well can be successfully, sunk, it will be a great achievement. But such efforts do not always succeed. You have written that you are going to

think over it further. It will be good, however, if the Government people guide you in your deliberations in the matter. Ask Morarjibhai.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 2734. Courtesy: Manilal B. Desai

455. LETTER TO MADALASA

HIRAPUR,

January 26, 1947

CHI. MADU,

You have become irregular in writing letters. I hope it is not a sign of lack of orderliness. Be that as it may; remain cheerful and calm. I would like to send for you and Ramakrishna[1]. But I consider it a false attachment. If you eliminate 50 per cent of what you read in the newspapers you will be able to assess the situation to some extent. Haven't you heard that the hills appear beautiful from a distance? And when I daily move from one village to another those who are just idle on-lookers become a burden. I say 'No' to so many of them. Then how can I say yes to you two? I know that the two of you won't be a burden in anyway. Still, try to restrain yourself. I will consider you as having taken part in the *yajna* to the extent that you serve from there. Look after the children. Look after yourself. I trust Ramakrishna is all right. Has he come to a decision about himself?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 331

456. LETTER TO PYARELAL

At night, January 26, 1947

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have your letter. It is all right about the man from England. He will work well if he comes. Write to him.

In my view it will be good if as far as possible you check your

[1] Ramakrishna Bajaj, addressee's brother

desire to come. I am saving time. I do not like to talk. There is a pile of work. I am not able to do justice I should to the villages. The body is unable to give more work. I must be content with whatever service it gives.

Ramachandran came yesterday. He says he is now calm, physically and mentally. A bed was made for him on the floor of my hut. The place is now becoming smaller. I like it.

Hunnar has come. Let us see how he turns out. He is quiet. You will find everything in the diary. I am trying to fill it as much as possible. There are shortcomings and they irk. Once that feeling disappears it would be almost perfect. If that does not happen, the fault will be mine.

Manu is doing a lot of work. She has no time left for reading. I cannot give time for that. But it would seem she is shaping up. You had promised to send her some Sanskrit lessons. Send them.

Now it is 5.30 in the morning.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

457. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

January 26, 1947

CHI. MRIDU,

Tendulkar casually gave me your letter. Tomorrow a telegram will go to you: "My opinion adverse." It is 7.45 in the evening now. There is no post office or telegraph office here. Everything will be carried by someone to a telegraph office tomorrow. This letter too will be posted tomorrow.

If you do not wish to live with me or near me what will you do ? The work here is complicated. You may gain something by being with me. But I do not see any good in that. If it is granted that I stay here, then I would like your coming. Right now it is with great difficulty that I am able to keep even the few who are already here. Troubles are endless.

You will know more when Tendulkar gets back.

How could the letter written to you have been lost? I still feel

that you will get it. I do not even remember the contents now to enable me to write again.

I cannot swallow the idea of abortions. I can understand the argument about the children thus conceived having to be brought up. If you can convince me about the advantages of abortion it will be another matter. Western sisters who were considered great failed to convince me. In this respect I am impervious.

Are you keeping good health? Are you taking care?

Sardar is deliberately spoiling his health.

Jawaharlal is very careless. It is amazing how he is able to carry on. Who can harm those whom God protects ?

I heard today that Jayaprakash has reached here. He may pay me a visit tomorrow. I am told he is at Kazirkhil.

I see from the newspapers that Major General Shah Nawaz is in Calcutta. I do hope he will come to visit me. Niranjan Singh Gill came today and has gone back. His work also is incomplete.

My boat is being propelled only by faith.

I think I have written to you that Manu is here and sleeps with me, seen by all and with the knowledge of all. This has nothing to do with the experiment. The experiment is stopped; though I still have no doubt as to its relevance. It is stopped only because of the colleagues.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11259. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

458. LETTER TO A. K. BHAGAWAT

January 26, 1947

BHAI BHAGAWAT,

There is no letter from you. Manibhai[1] writes that the work is going on well. How is it that you have given up the whole-food experiment? Have you found it to be unwholesome? And what is lacking in it? Is Appa Saheb completely cured?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 2732. Courtesy: Manilal B. Desai

[1] Manilal B. Desai

459. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

January 26, 1947

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. I was glad to know about the gentlemanliness of the *vaidya*. Continue his treatment for three months and have confidence in him. As for the rest of the matter in your letter there must be another side to it. Have you had a heart-to-heart talk with Rajendra Babu? If you allow me to mention your name, then I can write to Sardar and Jawaharlal. Neither of them would swerve from duty. Amtul Salaam and Manu will write the rest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2506

460. REPLY TO SAILEN[1]

January 26, 1947

To me, this sacrifice which I have begun is itself a continued celebration of the Day. But to cheer up the spirit of the local people, you all (Pressmen and others) may certainly go ahead with your idea.

[From Gujarati]

Eklo Jane Re, p. 94

461. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

BANSA,

January 26, 1947

Today is the 26th of January, the day of our freedom. When Congress was born, India obtained a new lease of life. Only a few Indians at the time were aware of the political significance of this, but gradually the Congress grew strong and it awakened freedom-consciousness in every village by starting mass agitation. In the days when there was no communal hatred no one cared whether a person

[1] According to Manu Gandhi, an A. P. I. representative who came up with a proposal for celebration of independence. The flag salutation was performed by Niranjan Gill and Gandhiji merely attended the function. *Vide* also the following item.

was a Hindu or a Muslim. It is a sad thing to have to say that there are two opinions now where there was only one before. But for the poisoned atmosphere prevalant here, I would have unfurled the tricolour flag myself. Some friends suggested that I should perform the ceremony, but I refused. Had an English officer, however, decreed that there should be no flag-hoisting here, I would certainly have unfurled the flag, even if it cost my life. But to whom may I appeal today. Suppose I unfurled the flag and even my Muslim brothers accepted it but in sullen silence, I would not want that. At the same time, I must say what is in my heart. When the question of our having a flag of our own came up, I thought it unjust to have only one colour for it, as there are not one but many communities in India. A day there certainly was, when all the communities of India—Hindu, Muslim, Parsi and others—cherished this flag as their own. Even lives were sacrificed for it. Today many flags have come into being. But the tricolour should stand alone as the Union Jack did at one time. But that golden day of unity unfortu- nately now belongs to the past. But to whom shall I appeal. With whom shall I fight? We are all sons of India and hence are brothers. What is our freedom worth if it accentuates internecine strife and hatred? But proclaiming unity is as absurd as building castles in the air.

There can be only one call at present that we shall not rest till freedom is won. Today brother is fighting brother. How can there be a Pakistan before we win our freedom? Is it the British who will grant Pakistan? And who knows what kind of freedom we shall have? The Britisher is certain to quit. But America and Russia are not yet out of the picture. If we are not alert we are lost. Only a little while ago you all sang "*Jana-gana-mana*". What an ennobling song! And we have many such. We can be united if we but sing them sincerely, from the heart. And if we don't unite we shall be considered fools by the rest of the world. If you feel at heart that you should heed this warning of an old, experienced man, you must start from today to change your thoughts and deeds in accordance with my advice.

I did not unfurl the flag today but the Pressmen with me unfurled it. It was for this same freedom that that great man of Bengal, Subhas Chandra Bose, laid down his life. If even for his sake we can't perform the *yajna*, for whom shall we do it?

[From Gujarati]

Eklo Jane Re, pp. 94-5

462. A WOMAN'S DILEMMA

Q. What is a woman to do when attacked by miscreants—run away or resist with violence? Have boats in readiness to fly or prepare to defend with weapons?

A. My answer to this question is very simple. For me there can be no preparation for violence. All preparation must be for non-violence if courage of the highest type is to be developed. Violence can only be tolerated as being preferable always to cowardice. Therefore I would have no boats ready for flight in emergency. For a non-violent person there is no emergency but quiet dignified preparation for death. Hence whether it is a man or a woman he or she will defy death even when he or she is unassisted; for the real assistance is from God. I can preach no other thing and I am here to practise what I preach. Whether such an opportunity will come to me or be given to me I do not know. If there are women who when assailed by miscreants cannot resist without arms they do not need to be advised to carry arms. They will do so. There is something wrong in this constant enquiry as to whether to bear arms or not. People have to learn to be naturally independent. If they will remember the central teaching, namely, that the real effective resistance lies in non-violence, they will model their conduct accordingly. And that is what the world has been doing although unthinkingly. Since it has not the highest courage, namely courage born of non-violence, it arms itself even unto the atom bomb. Those who do not see in it the futility of violence will naturally arm themselves to the best of their ability.

In India, since my return from South Africa, there has been conscious and constant training in non-violence with the result we have seen.

Q. Can a woman be advised to take her own life rather than surrender?

A. This question requires a definite answer. I answered it in Delhi just before leaving for Noakhali. A woman should most certainly take her own life rather than surrender. In other words, surrender has no room in my plan of life. But I was asked in what way to take one's own life. I promptly said it was not for me to prescribe the means and behind the approval of suicide under such circumstances was and is the belief that one whose mind is prepared for even suicide will have requisite courage for such mental resistance and such internal purity that her assailant will be disarmed. I could not carry the argument any further because it does not admit of further development. It requires positive proof which, I own, is lacking.

Q. If the choice is between taking one's own life or that of the assailant, which would you advise?

A. When it is a question of choice between killing oneself or the assailant, I have no doubt in my mind that the first should be the choice.

PALLA, January 27, 1947

Harijan, 9-2-1947

463. LETTER TO S. G. A. AGHA

KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
January 27, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

This is in answer to your question.

1. It is a fact that I was hurt at the behaviour of many Muslims who sat out during the prayer and left when I commenced my address.

2. I did say that I could not give up Ramanama at the bidding of any person or even if the kingdom of the world was offered to me; for Ramanama was to me the same as Allah, Khuda or God.

3. I do hold that the God of Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsees, Jews and others is one and the same, no matter by what name a votary mentions Him or recognizes Him. The idea is not my own. But I have learnt to believe that it is universal.

4. I do believe that all religions have equal status and that they are like leaves of the same tree. No two leaves are identical though they are from the same source.

5. It is a fact that in my daily prayers the *Gita,* the Koran and the other religious texts find place. You have but to procure a copy of the prayer book published by the Navajivan Press, Ahmedabad and others to find what they are. Nothing is my composition.

6. My religion embraces Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, etc., for the simple reason that I believe them to have an equal status. It is not a combination sweet or otherwise. Every religion has its own place even

as every leaf has. If I believe in the equal status of all the leaves of a tree, it is not a combination of my make but a recognition of a scientific fact.

Yours sincerely,

ADVOCATES. G. A. AGHA
ZAMINDAR
DADY (SIND)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

464. LETTER TO KODANDARAMAYYA

January 27, 1947

BHAI KODANDARAMAYYA,

I could reach your letter only today. Your meeting was to be held on the 19th. I hope it went off well.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9109. Also C. W. 9198

465. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

PALLA,
January 27, 1947

I am really happy that I am staying with a Harijan weaver. He looks after me with such love and care! A place where love is not is a prison; and a hut where love abides is more than a palace. The fact is that I am charmed with all these huts of Bengal. How can you get light and air in a closed room? The tragedy is that while the style of living here is so simple and Nature has lavished her gifts so abundantly the Hindus and Muslims here do not treat one another as brothers. Shall we debase ourselves simply because our creeds differ? But I have every hope that we shall forget all this very soon and understand our responsibilities. Even now shops continue to remain closed in areas affected by the riots, and people look at each other with suspicion. But this harms only ourselves and no one is the gainer. On the one hand there is danger of a famine from failure of crops on the other we are harming ourselves by our ignorance and inertia. We are only digging

[1] It being Gandhiji's silence day, the speech was read out.

our own graves if we continue to behave as we are doing now.

There are so many things we can do without troubling the Government. We can easily do many things ourselves; for instance, improving general health and sanitation, insisting on cleanliness, cultivating fresh fruit and flower plants, making good manure and compost, etc. Several such matters are awaiting our attention. If we use our brains to this end what a stupendous gain it will be to us all! And I guarantee that then we will not have a moment to spare for quarrels. But we can attain this happy state only if we have wisdom. It is my constant prayer that God may grant us good sense as this girl here has just been singing and endow us with the strength to do things purposeful.

[From Gujarati]

Eklo Jane Re, pp. 97-8

466. LETTER TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY

KAZIRKHIL, RAMGUNJ P. S.,
NOAKHALI DISTRICT,
January 28, 1947

Sardar Niranjan Singh Gill has told me of all the talk he had with you. He says whilst you do not mind his men working in Noakhali you would doubt his *bona fide* until he with his men worked in Bihar just as assiduously as in Noakhali. In the circumstances I have told him that he should first go to Bihar and work there and in order to be able to do so effectively he should take from you a note[1] of recommendation to the leader in Bihar of the League Party. Unless he is so armed, I have told him, his work might, from the League point of view, fall flat. I added that he should keep himself in touch with you regarding his work there.

As to his work in Noakhali, I have told him that, regard being had to your views as interpreted by the Sardar, he should withdraw his men from Noakhali unless you approved of his work in Noakhali. It is not enough that you tolerate his men's work. It should have your written approval. His men can only be here as accepted friends of both Hindus and Muslims. I cannot entertain them on any other terms. I have told him too that he should find financial support not from private sources, including funds at my disposal, but should, in

[1] The addressee sent a letter to Jafar Imam in Patna on February 4, 1947.

order to be above board, depend upon open public support. Therefore I have suggested to him too that, if you approve of his activity here, you should subscribe to his appeal even if it be a token rupee. But there may be difficulty in this of which I could have no knowledge even though you might approve of his activity in Noakhali.

Sardar Patel's Correspondence, Vol. IV, p. 225

467. LETTER TO J. B. KRIPALANI

Confidential *January 28, 1947*

MY DEAR PROFESSOR,

Your letter and enclosure. You cannot sit still if you find that even justice is not done. You have to discuss things with Pantji[1], Kidwai[2] and finally with Jawaharlal and Sardar. If nobody listens to you, you should resign. If these steps are not taken and if what you say is true, the Congress will collapse. You can show this to the parties I have named.

About your health I accept your assurance and hope that you are well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 10871. Courtesy: J. B. Kripalani\

468. LETTER TO ASHRAFUDDIN AHMED CHOWDHURY

KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
January 28, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry. I reached your letter only today. In the constant movement I feel called upon to do from day to day the letter was mislaid and it was discovered yesterday by chance in my unassorted and undocketed papers whilst I was searching for another document. From the trend of my answer you will see that nothing has been lost

[1] Govind Ballabh Pant
[2] Rafi Ahmed Kidwai

by the delay for which I must hold myself responsible.

You have done well to give me your views briefly. Having had such views before me often enough I have no difficulty in giving you my reply.

1. I do not think that leaflets and pamphlets can do any good at the present moment. Unfortunately for the country those who have any influence over the masses have already made up their minds and closed them against any criticism. In such a state of society I feel that the kind of activity you suggest must fall flat. You should know also that such an attempt has been made[1] before and is even now being made, in my opinion without producing any appreciable effect.

2. A volunteer corps such as you have in view could not be formed. If by any chance it is formed its effort will be discounted. Before that happy time comes it is necessary for each party or community to form its own corps of sincere Muslims and Hindus who will work for peace without any mental reservations. Out of such a band of selfless workers of Hindus and Muslims a combined corps is bound to come into being. Unfortunately we have not such men in any appreciable measure.

3. I doubt if there are many Muslim missionaries. But if there are even a few, there is nothing to prevent them from doing this valuable mission work. You say it is necessary to secure such service. My experience covering a period of sixty years tells me otherwise. Such services are not secured. They are freely given.

4. Of course it is possible to organize a volunteer corps of Muslims only. The pity of it is that it has not been done up to now in a proper friendly manner.

5. I have already said that a combination will be premature. Of course I have no knowledge of what the Congress organization is doing here and indeed elsewhere except such knowledge as is of no use being vague. I hope you realize your suggestions do not require money but men and women of the right type. Are they available ?

Yours sincerely,

ASHRAFUDDIN AHMED CHOWDHURY SAHEB
97-A SOUTHERN AVENUE
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The source has “done”.

469. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 28, 1947

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. You should get quite well. If plenty of spinning and weaving could be done there, then everything would be accomplished.

As for Abha, I am writing to her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 575

470. INTERVIEW TO MUSLIM DEPUTATION[1]

PANCHGAON,

January 28, 1947

I have come here with the greatest goodwill in the world. I know if I fail in Noakhali my whole non-violence fails.

Gandhiji said that he had always been a man of the masses and a man for the masses and he wanted to identify himself completely with the masses. If they could tell him the way how he could reach more effectively the hearts of Muslims, he was ready to listen. But on no account could he leave Noakhali.

So far as others working in Noakhali were concerned it was the duty of the Government to find out if they were really standing in the way of restoration of peace.

Referring to the question of his going to Bihar, Gandhiji said that he knew that it was the opinion of the Muslim League circles that he should go to Bihar. He was, however, doing his best for the Muslims of Bihar from Noakhali. He was in constant touch with the Bihar Government in this respect and a representative of that Government was now travelling with him. If he went now to Bihar and found that the Bihar Government had left nothing undone, he would have to say it without any reserve which in his opinion might not help the Muslim League case.

With reference to the question of large-scale arrests of Muslims here, Gandhiji said that the duty of a reformer was to try to replace corporal punishment by awakening of the conscience. He had tried to do it in his life and succeeded though not

[1] The deputation, which was led by Mujibur Rahman, Secretary, Noakhali District Muslim League, met Gandhiji in the evening. The report said that the deputationists wanted Gandhiji to visit Bihar. They also pointed out that Gandhiji being a Hindu, recitation from the Koran at his prayer meetings was not appreciated by the Muslims.

in many cases. Their duty also should be to try to awaken this conscience so that culprits would come forward and own up their guilt. So long as this was not done, the ring-leaders should be arrested.

With regard to conducting of prayers, Gandhiji said that if there was so much intolerance that one could not hold one's prayers as one liked he did not know what lay in store for poor India. It was at the request of a devout Muslim friend that he had included verses from the Koran in his prayer. Of course, he never wanted to go against the tenets of Islam but he could not also listen to one particular person or half a dozen persons to whom they might refer him as to whether he was going against Islam by reciting from the Koran.

Hindustan Standard, 30-4-1947

471. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

PANCHGAON,
January 28, 1947

On my way here I was taken to three homes, one Hindu and two Muslim. It gave me very great pleasure as all I crave for is love. I was not informed in advance of the places I would be taken to, but I saw love in the eyes of those who invited me, and so I went. At all the three places I was offered something or other to eat, but it was not the time when I usually ate, so I said I would gladly accept some fruit if they sent any to my next halt. My granddaughter accompanies me. The women welcomed her with love and an old lady embraced her on knowing who she was. A Muslim sister who had made fish curry and rotis at the time, pressed her to partake of the fare. What was the poor girl to do? She refused the offer on the ground that she did not take anything at that early hour. The Muslim women thereupon suspected that this Hindu girl was not willing to eat, because at heart she felt she would be polluted. So, to allay their suspicion, she broke a piece from their roti and ate it. The sisters were satisfied. Neither I nor those who associate with me make any distinctions of caste or creed and we have no inhibitions against dining with anybody. But I appeal to my Muslim friends to look kindly upon those Hindus who think they would lose their religion if they ate at the hands of a Muslim. I understand that that belief is wrong. But the test of brotherly love does not lie only in eating together. This erroneous belief is sure to wear off with time. Much has been achieved already in this direction. But till that attitude changes please learn to appreciate love wherever you find it. Only in this way will you come near one another.

The Pressmen who follow me had arranged a mass dinner of all castes and creeds. Muslim brothers did not join in it. But the host of the Pressmen begged them earnestly not to insist on his participation in the common dinner. 'You will leave me in a day', he said 'but calamity will beset me after you go. The people here will bring pressure to bear upon me saying that I had lost caste by eating with you and so I must become a Muslim.

I felt that the man's fear was well founded. So I had to request the Pressmen not to hold the common dinner in the poor man's hut. I don't know when Hindus and Muslims will shed their weakness and come close to one another. But I am prepared to give up my very life, if need be, to see this object realized, and I appeal to you all to pray with me: "O! God ! bring that golden day soon."

[From Gujarati]

Eklo Jane Re, pp. 100-1

472. LETTER TO PUSHPA DESAI

PANCHGAON,
January 29, 1947

CHI. PUSHPA,

I got your letter. I am glad that you are devoting yourself whole-heartedly to weaving. I myself do not know whether or not I shall be able to leave this place. I cannot go anywhere without solving the problem here. Why do you remain confused? With a man like Bhansalibhai to guide you, why do you feel physically or mentally lethargic? Understand fully Chapter XII of the *Gita*. We should surrender to the Lord all that we do. The mind will not then waver. It is as clear as daylight that we cannot cease even for a moment from action in some form or another. If nothing else, breathing goes on, does it not? Wisdom, then, lies in surrendering to the Lord everything we do. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9279

473. LETTER TO PYARELAL

January 29, 1947

CHI. PYARELAL,

I forgot to reply to your note concerning Shahpur. I am having to work in such rush.

Join Dr. Gupta's committee. But Gupta himself should be told that the local Muslim doctor should not be boycotted. Why should the local doctor not be on the committee ? You may also consult the Muslims.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

When should I send the diary ?

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

474. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

PANCHGAON,
January 29, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. I feel sorry to hear about Abha's illness. Why trouble Abha for anything? Ask in writing. It is not good to go or send anyone needlessly. In my view you should not start or run a small dispensary. For some time do not even talk of moving about. I do not get any letters from Bihar. I am sending herewith a report of the Muslim League. Return it after perusal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 574

475. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

JAYAG,
January 29, 1947

Gandhiji at the outset dealt with a question that was raised by some Muslim friends. Did he want Muslims to attend his prayer meetings? The reply was that he insisted on neither the Muslims nor the Hindus attending the prayer meetings. If the

[1] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary"

questioner meant to ask whether he would like the Muslims to attend such meetings, he had no hesitation in saying that he would certainly like them to attend. What was more, numerous Muslims had attended his prayer meetings which had gone on for years. The next question was whether he, the speaker, did not consider it wrong for him, a non-Muslim, to recite anything from the Koran or to couple Rama and Krishna with Rahim and Karim. They said it offended Muslim ears. The speaker replied that the objection gave him a painful surprise. He thought that the objection betrayed narrowness of mind. They should know that he had introduced the recital from the Koran through Raihana Tyabjee, a devoted Muslim with a religious mind. She had no political motive behind the proposal. He was no avatar as was suggested. He claimed to be a man of God humbler than the humblest man or woman. His object ever was to make Muslims better Muslims, Hindus better Hindus, Christians better Christians, Parsis better Parsis. He never invited anybody to change his or her religion. He had thought, therefore, that the questioners would be glad to find that his religion was so expansive as to include readings from the religious scriptures of the world.

The next thing was that some friends had said that all prosecutions initiated by the Hindus against the Muslim offenders interfered with the progress of the work of peace between the two. It surprised him. What had peace between gentlemen to do with the prosecution of criminals. He could understand the objection if it meant that false prosecutions should be withdrawn. He would be whole-heartedly with the objectors. He went further and said that all such persons should be brought to book as perjurers. He said also that the proper course to avoid court procedure was for the guilty persons in all humility to make an open confession of their guilt and accept the judgment of the public. He would gladly help any such movement.

The third thing was that young men who had gone to Calcutta and other places in search of a career were bound to give a portion of their time to the villages. The easiest thing for them to do would be to meet together and make an arrangement by which, say, half of them would take leave from office and serve for a stipulated number of months, at the end of which their place would be taken by the next batch. If they had a will, there would surely be some way also for serving the cause of the villagers. Those who did not find it possible to offer personal service might help by cash.

Gandhiji ended by citing the example of England, Russia and other countries where every family had sent as many able-bodied men and women as possible for the defence of their country. This was how unity of heart was actually achieved in the world and he hoped that we in our country would be able to rise above small selfish considerations and create that unity without which life itself would not be worth living.

Harijan, 23-2-1947

476. FOREWORD TO "SELECTIONS FROM GANDHI"

The following pages represent a labour of love. Professor Nirmal Kumar Bose first published his selections in 1934[1] and they contained extracts from my writings up to 1934. But my writings have never ceased and so the Professor felt that he should bring up his selections to as late a date as possible, i. e., up to 1942 with isolated later additions. Though therefore this is called a new edition, it is in reality a new book. The earliest and most elaborate attempt was made by the late Amulakhrai in Gujarati. But that was years ago. He covered my writings in Gujarati and Hindi too. The volumes being in Gujarati never attracted much attention. Such is our disregard of our own languages. But I have known nothing so thorough of its kind as these volumes.

Professor N. K. Bose's is such an attempt. He gave me his manuscript early in 1946 when I was in Bengal to do with it what I liked. But my preoccupations left me no time to look at them till for very shame I was compelled to do so. The selections made by the author show the thoroughness with which he has gone into his subject. Those who are interested in my writings will not fail to appreciate the author's labours.

M. K. GANDHI

AMKI, NOAKHALI, January 30, 1947

Selections from Gandhi

477. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
January 30, 1947

DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have yours of the 20th instant about Shri Bhargava's offer[2] from Katni. The gentleman wrote to me probably at the same time that he wrote to you and I replied promptly. I cannot lay my hands on a copy of what I wrote. But the purport was that there would be no

[1] It was published under the auspices of the Navavidhan Publication Committee, Calcutta.

[2] B. K. Bhargava had made an offer to maintain and find a home for a 100 to 200 Hindu families from East Bengal.

ladies [willing] to go so far. I think I told him also that I did not like his laying stress upon Hindus.

In my wandering I did not find that there is any inclination on the part of the sufferers to go out of Bengal. Nor do I think it wise. For it they cannot, out of fright, return to their village homes, they will all be accommodated in other parts of Bengal. A large number are already in Assam. Some have gone to Bihar because there is a large Bengali settlement there. My own effort is to send them to their villages, to make them shed all fear and to dissuade them from forsaking their ancestral homes. Nevertheless, if there are any who would like to go to Katni, of which there seems to be no likelihood, I would of course bear Shri Bhargava's offer in mind.

Blessings from

BAPU[1]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

478. LETTER TO MADALASA

January 30, 1947

CHI. MADALASA,

I have your letter. I would like you to go to Gulbehn because her company is what I call *satsang*[2]. Moreover the climate of Poona is very good for you and the children. If you go to Poona, do visit Uruli-Kanchan also. You must have got my earlier letter.[3]

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 331

[1] In Devanagri
[2] Company of the good
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Madalasa", 26-1-1947

479. A LETTER[1]

January 30, 1947

There is only one unfailing cure on earth and that is Ramanama. Of course one who repeats it must observe certain essential rules. But, how many of us make use of this remedy!

[From Gujarati]

Eklo Jane Re, p. 109

480. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 30, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. I feel sorry about Abha. Why did she fall ill? Sushilabehn is here. She intends to see Abha on her way back from here. I had sent for Kulranjan, a Bengali naturopath, for you; he has arrived here today. He met on the way. He should call on you today. Have a full and frank talk with him and listen to what he says. If he tells you anything new and you find it worth trying, do so. He does not work only for the sake of money. So if you find something worth knowing from him which is useful to villagers, pay attention to it. Ask him all relevant questions. I am very glad to know that you are keeping good health. As for my health, so far it has been going on well. So long as God wants me to live he will keep me well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Blessings to Abha.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 576

481. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

AMKI,

January 30, 1947

Gandhiji began by apologizing for the fifteen minutes' delay. It was due to his having been occupied with Zaman Saheb and Yusuf Saheb. These officers took him to a model cottage they had had erected. It was a good house but in his opinion unfit for

[1] According to the source, this was addressed "to an ailing sister".

[2] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary"

human habitation in the Indian climate. Such a house could well be described as a box. The inmates would be baked as in an oven and they would be suffocated when they closed their doors and windows as had become their habit. He, therefore, suggested comfortable cottage of bamboo, straw and thatch. Such cottages will be airy, cool and artistic in the Indian setting, especially in the midst of stately palms of coconut and *supari.*

He was also pleased when these officers informed him that the refugees had commenced to return from the places where they had taken refuge. He hoped that this return would continue with unabated zeal. He was of opinion that the people should dismiss all fear from their minds and feel safe in the midst of their own countrymen, whether Hindus or Muslims. When they learnt to fear their Maker alone they would cease to fear their fellows. They would find that there were none to frighten them if they were not afraid themselves. This had been his uniform experience in the course of the last sixty years of his life.

The third question taken up by him was in connection with some fishermen who had met him on the previous evening. They had complained that in this country where fishing was confined to privately owned ponds for the major part of the year, it was impossible for them to live if they were boycotted by the majority community. Gandhiji expressed his surprise at this state of affairs and suggested that unless the Hindus and Muslims could rise above their present political differences and reasserted their common humanity and common brotherhood, life would become an impossibility where nature had designed otherwise. He hoped, therefore, that the alleged conditions would be corrected by the joint efforts of the people concerned and real peace restored in the countryside.

Harijan, 23-2-1947

482. LETTER TO M. ISMAIL

KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
January 31, 1947

DEAR SIR,

I have your letter of the 21st January, enclosing copies of your telegrams[1] to Suhrawardy Saheb and me. In this age of reason why do you want to shelter Islam from reasoned criticism, especially when it is

[1] Which read : "Madras Ulemas' meeting held under auspices of Primary Muslim League, Royapettah, Madras, says Islamic Code ideal. Please desist from pronouncement against Islam. Muslim nation will not tolerate interference with Islamic tenets."

from a friend of Islam that I claim to be ? What I have said is, I claim, in consonance with the Prophet's teachings. *Purdah* as it is practised today in many parts of India is a mockery. Real *purdah* is *purdah* of the heart of which I spoke at the meeting referred to by you.

You will not make me responsible for everything that may be attributed to me in the Press, which I do not even get time to read. Let me inform you that what I said at the meeting I have believed and said for over half a century. Let me also inform you that what I have said I have learnt from Muslim friends.

Yours sincerely,

M. ISMAIL SAHEB
MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

483. LETTER TO MANILAL B. DESAI

January 31, 1947

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. You must have received my long letter[1]. I believe that Maganbhai should be included among the Trustees. Show this to Dinshawji and Jehangirji. If possible, I shall write to them separately. Otherwise use this letter. I am writing to Maganbhai.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 2733. Courtesy: Manilal B. Desai

484. NOTE TO MANU GANDHI

January 31, 1947

How long you detained me ! I just sat there holding the coconut. Then I got tired and put it down. For me this was heavy going. Besides, you held up my work. You should have waited a little, or, kept a vessel handy. Then the floor too was dirty.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Manilal B. Desai", 26-1-1947

485. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING[1]

NABAGRAM,
January 31, 1947

An old lady asked Gandhiji what they should do in case they were threatened with conversion.

Gandhiji said that to him the answer was simple :

Religion is the breath of one's life and as no one could agree to forgo the right of breathing under any threat or compulsion, so no one should forsake his faith even if it be an alternative to death.

Be it man or woman, if one forsook one's faith at anyone's command, one had no religion. Unfortunately, Gandhiji continued, India had come to such a stage that some Indians easily abandoned their supposedly cherished faith. Religion was one's breath of life. If anyone agreed to forgo his religion under threat, he would reduce himself to a brute.[2]

One of them asked what a woman, whose husband had turned a recluse, should do. Gandhiji said :

Such a woman should lead a very chaste life. She should work for her livelihood. She should not hoard anything but only keep that which is absolutely necessary. It is wrong to assume that a person is a true hermit simply because he wears an ochre robe. If the desolate woman is at a loss to know what to do, she could take to spinning. I have called the spinning-wheel the *kamadhenu.* She should also chant God's name as she spins. In my opinion this type of renunciation will surpass that of her husband. She should constantly keep herself occupied in altruistic work such as sweeping the village streets, giving bath to dirty children, etc. There is a proverb saying an idle mind is the devil's workshop. There must be a similar proverb in Bengali. If we sit idle, doing nothing, a thousand unhealthy thoughts will crowd our mind. So one should never be without some sort of work at all times. This is the best solution for the problem.

The Sunday Hindustan Standard, 2-2-1947; and *Eklo Jane Re,* p. 110

[1] The meeting was held in the afternoon in the courtyard of the house where Gandhiji was staying.

[2] What fo6llows is translated from *Eklo Jane Re*.

486. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NABAGRAM,
January 31, 1947

Gandhiji congratulated the audience, which was exceptionally large, on the perfect quiet they observed throughout the prayer. He then referred to two communications he had received from Muslim writers who consoled him against his critics who questioned his right to speak about the *purdah* or other things pertaining to Islam. The writers asserted, quoting from the Koran, that Islam was broad-based and was exceptionally tolerant. It welcomed criticism and invited the world to study the Koran. One of them also held that no group or nation had remained without a prophet or teacher. He mentioned these communications to show that all Muslims did not hold what he considered to be intolerant views. He hoped too that the audience which contained a large number of Muslims would appreciate the testimony of the two writers who did not appear to be biased.

He then dealt with the following question addressed to him by some of the workers :

The Muslims were boycotting Hindu artisans and craftsmen and were taking to occupations like fishing, fir trade, *pan*[2] cultivation, etc. Workers who desired to bring about peace between the two communities did not know what to do under the circumstances.

Gandhiji said he hoped that the news was exaggerated and that the boycott was confined to the fewest Muslims possible. He thought that it could not be sustained. The logical result was that any such move would be a compulsory exodus of the Hindus from the Muslim majority provinces, a result he had not heard a single leader encourage or contemplate. He invited his informants to bring the matter to the notice of the authorities, not with a view to having anyone punished but with a view to having an authoritative pronouncement from them. He further advised the audience to pray for wisdom to both the communities.

The second question was: There is a movement[3] for reducing the share of the owner from half to one-third of the agricultural produce. What is your opinion about this?

Gandhiji welcomed the move for the reduction of the landlord's share from half

[1] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary"
[2] Betel leaf
[3] Popularly known as *Tebhaga* movement; *vide* also "Talk to Representatives of Krishak Samiti", 24-1-1947

to one-third. He thought the move was substantial.[1] He was prepared to go further and concede the entire produce to the tillers of the soil. He believed that no one could claim ownership of land, which belonged to God alone. He further believed that no one who did not till the land had any claim to the produce. Only those who toiled should have a share in the output. But in no case should anybody claim proprietorship of the land itself. The land belonged to the Lord of us all and therefore to the worker on it. But till that ideal state of things came about, the movement towards the reduction of the landlord's portion was in the right direction. But he warned the people against the use of compulsion or violence. He could have no part or share in violence. It was a reform to be brought about only by the cultivation of healthy public opinion. The reformers must have patience. He believed implicity in the aphorism: 'As the end so the means'. In his opinion it was pernicious to hold that so long as the end was good any means, however violent or unjust, were justified. Many movements had come to grief by reliance on doubtful means.

Harijan, 23-2-1947; and *Hindustan Standard*, 2-2-1947

487. TELEGRAM TO VINAYAKRAO CHANGOLE

[After *January 31, 1947*][2]

VINAYAKRAO CHANGOLE
SECRETARY
DEPRESSED CLASSES LEAGUE
NAGPUR

WIRE RECEIVED YESTERDAY. DO NOT KNOW FULL FACTS. CONSULT VINOBA OR VALUNJKAR.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

488. LETTER TO ATINDRA MOHAN ROY

February 1, 1947

DEAR ATINBABU[3],

I have no such trainer you ask for.[4] My work lies in the opposite direction. Non-violent defence is the supreme self-defence, being

[1] The following five sentences are reproduced from *Hindustan Standard.*
[2] This was written on a telegram postmarked January 31, 1947.
[3] Secretary and Treasurer of Tippera District Central Relief Committtee
[4] The addressee in his letter dated January 20 had asked for a trainer to "train villagers in self-defence".

infallible. No trainer is required for the purpose. And in this part of the country, self-defence through training in some kind of arms is suicidal. Anyway I am the wrong person to look to for the purpose.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 10530

489. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA MUKERJI

February 1, 1947

DEAR SATISBABU[1],

Your lovely letter.[2] I endorse all your propositions though probably I would put them differently and comprise them into one. But that does not diminish the value of the propositions. Alas I am far as yet from that state ! At the same time, I am hastening towards it. If I attain that state or even come near enough to it (and probably that is all that a human being can reach), this problem of Noakhali will be easily solved. Let us see what happens.

Please do not hesitate to write to me or dictate a letter for me whenever you feel like telling me something. Know that your messages will never be a strain on me.

And now I put before you a poser. A young girl (19) who is in the place of granddaughter to me by relation shares the same bed with me, not for any animal satisfaction but for (to me) valid moral reasons. She claims to be free from the passion that a girl of her age generally has and I claim to be a practised *brahmachari*. Do you see anything bad or unjusti-fiable in this juxtaposition? I ask the question because some of my intimate associates hold it to be wholly unjustifiable and even a breach of *brahmacharya*. I hold a totally opposite view. As you are an experienced man and as I have regard for your opinion, I put the question. You may take your own time to

[1] (1865-1948), one of the pioneers in the field of swadeshi and national education; edited *Dawn*, a monthly published from Calcutta, 1897-1913; in 1922, following Gandhiji's arrest, came to Sabarmati and spent two months helping in bringing out *Young India;* later took to spiritual pursuits and came popularly to be known as 'Nanga Baba'

[2] For extracts from the addressee's letter, *vide* "Letter From Satis Chandra Mukerjee", 14-1-1947

answer the question. You are in no way bound to answer it if you don't wish to.

Hope you are well.

Yours,

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 10557

490. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

February 1, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

These two friends have told me the tale of their woes. What can I tell them, or do for them? If what they say is correct, it is a painful matter. They asked for an introduction to you; so I am giving this to them.

I hope you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

1 AURANGZEB ROAD

NEW DELHI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 347

491. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

February 1, 1947

CHI. MANILAL,

I got your fine letter. You seem to have made good changes in your diet. I like them. My *tapascharya* is like the hills which seem beautiful from a distance. I undergo no suffering. People come and see me daily. My ahimsa is being severely tested. You need not worry, however. Remain absorbed in your duty. Do not let the fact of Manu sleeping with me perturb you. I believe that it is God who has prompted me to take that step. If, however, you cannot understand, do not get upset and bear with me. I write this because Kishorelal and others have got upset. I see no reason for that at all. I think Sushila will go there at the earliest opportunity.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 1445. Courtesy: Sushila Gandhi

492. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

February 1, 1947

CHI. SUSHILA,

I got your letter. I think it is desirable now that you should go to Phoenix as early as you can.

Give up the desire to see me. It is no joke to come and see me here. It will take a lot of your time and mean much waste of money. Moreover, I shall be touring from village to village. In such circumstances, what discussion can we have about personal matters? And in that case, what would you gain by coming?

I should like you not to get upset by the fact of Manu sleeping with me. But I do wonder whether you can help being upset when a man like Kishorelal could not.[1]

From Gujarati: C. W. 1444. Courtesy: Sushila Gandhi

493. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

NABAGRAM,

February 1, 1947

I will consider my mission fulfilled if I see heart unity among Hindus and Muslims and until this is achieved, I must be moving about in this area.

Gandhiji emphasized to me that this was the first opportunity he had had of testing whether the ahimsa he had been practising was really of the brave. He said that in the past he had successfully tested the efficacy of his non-violence in his struggle with the British Government but he felt that his ahimsa was really not of the brave as somewhere in the background lurked the feeling that superiority in numbers would tend to sway the balance in such a struggle. Gandhiji does not think that real bravery has ever been brought into full play so far in his practice of ahimsa.

Noakhali, Gandhiji said, offered an almost ideal situation for testing whether ahimsa could effectively be used by a small number of people against an almost sullen if not hostile majority all round. The problem here was also complicated by the fact of the existence of a popular Government controlling the destinies of the people. Even if he differed from the politics of those running the Bengal Government he was definite that if democratic Government was good for one Province it was equally good for another and, therefore, he must not do or say anything which would in any way

[1] The letter is incomplete.

derogate from the prestige and authority of the Government. A straight fight with the alien ruling power was one thing for him, but a struggle with his own countrymen, however recalcitrant unwilling they might be in doing the right thing by those under their care, was a thing too difficult for him to contemplate. It was this difficulty that had induced him to keep the Bengal Premier posted with everything he saw or did in and about Noakhali.

Ever since the commencement of his walking tour, Gandhiji has been moving amidst a sullen population on the one side and a frightened one on the other. He is, therefore, engaging himself in the dual task of infusing courage into the frightened Hindus and at the same time convincing the majority community of the right to protection of the minorities. He is placing before both communities his ideal of brotherly living and also a programme of sanitation and rural economy calculated to help both communities to better and healthier living.

Asked if he would regard the return of all refugees to their villages as a sign of success of his ahimsa, Gandhiji replied in the negative and said that it would not be impossible to persuade all refugees to return home within a few days. But this would not be any indication of the success of the ahimsa of the brave; for the refugees would then be relying for protection on those who persuaded them to return. It would be real success if men and women picked up courage and decided of their own accord to return, willing to face cheerfully even death and starvation in preference to surrender or fight. It was towards achieving this that Gandhiji had been addressing Hindus.

The Hindu, 2-1-1947

494. TALK WITH A DOCTOR[1]

AMISHAPARA,
February 1, 1947

Gandhiji said that he wished to live up to the age of 125 and humorously enquired of the doctor if he could suggest any recipe for that.

In reply to a suggestion by the doctor that he should spend some time in Calcutta to recoup his health, Gandhiji said that he could not leave Noakhali until communal amity had been established there.

Hindustan Standard, 2-2-1947

[1] He had accompanied Gandhiji from Nabagram to Amishapara.

495. TALK WITH BRITISH ARMY OFFICERS[1]

February 1, 1947

Gandhiji laughingly said that journalists[2] were dangerous people-and he was saying so as a journalist himself. Gandhiji also humorously said that Australia had not only become the whiteman's preserve for the present but also, it appeared, for posterity. Gandhiji said that India was, in that respect, too hospitable.

Hindustan Standard, 3-2-1947

496. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[3]

AMISHAPARA,
February 1, 1947

Gandhiji drew the attention of the audience to the fact that the universal law applicable to all meetings was that the visitors should be perfectly still and observe silence no matter how vast the audience was.

Yesterday evening a Maulvi had wanted to speak for a short time. Gandhiji had sensed what he wanted to say. He therefore, contrary to his wont, allowed him to speak for the five minutes which he wanted by the watch. The Maulvi took no more than three minutes but said what he had wanted to say. He resented Gandhiji's remark on the *purdah* system in vogue in Bengal as according to him, Gandhiji had no right to speak on the Islamic Law.

Gandhiji thought this was a narrow view of religion. He claimed the right to study and interpret the message of Islam. Gandhiji said that throughout his long life he had had the privilege of mixing with many. Muslims in and out of India but he had nowhere heard anybody say that. Denouncing the system of *purdah*, which varied from country to country, Gandhiji said that he was certain it had little to do with the Koran. He was not inclined to believe that Islam was so susceptible to damage as to be confined within a narrow space beyond other people's view. Gandhiji was sure that it was contrary to Islamic teaching.

The Maulvi had further resented coupling of the name of Rama, a mere young king, with Rahim, name of God; similarly of Krishna with Karim. Gandhiji said this was a narrow view of Islam. This erroneous view had emanated from his wrong notion that Rama and Krishna were names of ordinary human beings. Man worshipped the same God under different names and the Koran was not opposed to it. Rama and

[1] Eight British Army officers met Gandhiji in the afternoon to convey their good wishes on his peace mission in Noakhali.

[2] One of the officers was a young Australian, who introduced himself as a journalist.

[3] The reports in the various sources have been collated.

Krishna were names of God and there was no bar in worshipping God as such, it certainly did not offend Islam. Islam was not a creed to be preserved in a box. It was open to mankind to examine it and accept or reject its tenets. He hoped that this narrow view was not shared by the Muslims of Bengal or India.

Purity of heart was the criterion of a religious man but persons who looted other people's properties, killed fellow-beings and took God's name at the same time were irreligious. In this connection Gandhiji wanted to draw the attention of the audience to the work. Dr. Sushila Nayyar was doing in Changirgaon. She wanted to go to Sevagram to attend to the hospital for whose management she was responsible, but her Muslim patients would not let her go till they were restored to health. She had also mentioned that in the village those, who had shared in the loot of October last were of their own accord bringing back some of the looted property. He was of opinion that this was a happy omen. If the infection spread, the courts would have no work to do so far as public loot was concerned. He for one would ask Government to waive the right of prosecution if the looted property was returned. But he said the return must be sincere and full, whether by the guilty one or the public, and not a mere token to avoid prosecution. What he aimed at was a change of heart and not a truce superimposed by the military or the police. A popular ministry could not impose its will on the people. Gandhiji said :

> I shall most gladly leave Noakhali when I am certain that all are acting with amity and sincerity, but I shall lay down my life here for the fulfilment of my mission.

Gandhiji then answered the following question :

You have asked rich men to be trustees. Is it implied that they should give up private ownership of their property and create out of it a trust valid in the eyes of the law and managed democratically? How will the successor of the present incumbent be determined on his demise?

In answer Gandhiji said that he adhered to the position taken by him years ago that everything belonged to God and was from God. Therefore it was for His people as a whole, not for a particular individual. When an individual had more than his proportionate portion he became a trustee of that portion for God's people.

God who was all-powerful had no need to store. He created from day to day. Hence men also should in theory live day to day and not stock things. If this truth was imbibed by the people generally, it would become legalized and trusteeship would become a legalized institution. He wished it became a gift from India to the world. Then there would be no exploitation and no reserves as in Australia and other countries for white men and their posterity. In these distinctions lay the seeds of a war more virulent than the last two. As to the successor, the trustee in office would have the right to nominate his successor subject to legal sanction.

Gandhiji referred to "small-talks, whispers and innuendos" going round of which he had become aware. He was already in the midst of so much suspicion and distrust, he told the gathering, that he did not want his most innocent acts to be misunderstood and misrepresented. He had his granddaughter with him. She shared the same bed with him. The Prophet had discounted eunuchs who became such by an operation. But he welcomed eunuchs made such through prayer by God. His was that aspiration. It was in the spirit of God's eunuch that he had approached what he considered was his duty. It was an integral part of the *yajna* he was performing and he invited them to bless the effort. He knew that his action had excited criticism even among his friends. But a duty could not be shirked even for the sake of the most intimate friends.

Harijan, 23-2-1947; *Hindustan Standard,* 3-2-1947. and *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. I, Book II, pp. 219-20

497. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

AMISHAPARA,
February [*1/2*][1] *1947*

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

Please go through this letter.

Frydman[2] is the same as Bharatanand; Please see if you can grant him Indian citizenship.

* * *

I want you not to be unhappy. Please leave me in the hands of God.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 347

[1] Gandhiji was at Amishapara on February 1 and 2. The source however has "4", obviously a slip.

[2] Maurice Frydman, a Polish engineer who came to Sevagram in 1938; the inventor or *dhanush takli.*

498. TELEGRAM TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

[*February 2, 1947*][1]

KISHORELAL
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI
YOUR LETTER. SEE PUBLIC STATEMENTS[2] MADE YESTERDAY. WRITING.

BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 10559

499. LETTER TO ATINDRA MOHAN ROY

SATGHARIA,
February 2, 1947

DEAR ATINBABU,

I have your note. I think you are unnecessarily agitated. I refuse to tax my mind even as to the proposed section until it becomes part of the constitution. And in any case there is no harm in your corresponding with the President of the Congress.

I am destroying your note.

ATINDRA MOHAN ROY
SECRETARY
TIPPERAH DISTRICT CENTRAL RELIEF COMMITTEE
COMILLA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

500. A LETTER

February 2, 1947

DEAR A . . . BABU,

I thank you for your written message conveyed through you by the District Muslim League Secretary[3].

My answers to the three points[4] are as follows :

[1] According to *My Days with Gandhi* this telegram was sent on the day following Gandhiji's prayer speech referring to his experiments in *brahmacharya*; *vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 1/2/-2-1947.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Mujibur Rahman, who had met Gandhiji on January 28, had demanded that all the leaders and volunteers from outside should quit the district, that local Muslims and Hindu leaders should be "left alone" and that Gandhiji's presence was no longer necessary and as such he should discontinue his prayer meetings in public; *vide* "Interview to Muslim Deputation", 28-1-1947

[4] *ibid*

1. If the presence of anyone is a bar to the restoration of normal conditions, such a person or persons should be dealt with by the Government under its powers.

2. Of course, the responsibility for the restoration of peace rests as it must on the local Hindu and Muslim leaders. I should think however that they would not disdain the help of others when it is proffered.

3. If my prayer meetings are disliked by Muslims, they have but to abstain from attendance. I hope it does not mean that non-Muslims may not offer public prayers in the manner they know best. Whilst I must give what weight I can to the opinion of District Muslim League, I must be allowed to judge for myself whether my presence is necessary and whether I must move from place to place or not.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 10532

501. TALK WITH RIOT VICTIMS[1]

February 2, 1947

My heart weeps not to man but to God. I have not come here to make people weep.

Gandhiji said that man could do nothing but surrender himself completely to the will of God, as everything happens by His will. Great empires had crumbled down. Hitler had desired to conquer the world. What had become of him? People here, as elsewhere, sometimes went mad, but on that account there should be no ill-will between Hindus and Muslims, because they were brothers.

The Hindu, 3-2-1947

502. A TALK

February 2, 1947

No one should come to see me without urgent work or without my sending for him. Therein lies the good not only of myself and the *yajna* but also of the worker. Everyone should use his discretion and act accordingly.

[From Gujarati]

Eklo Jane Re, p. 113

[1] Gandhiji visited a ruined house during his walk from Amishapara to Satgharia. The inmates of the house told him that they had nothing to offer him except ashes, for they had lost nine members of the family in the riots.

503. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SATGHARIA,
February 2, 1947

Gandhiji deliberately referred to his private life because he had never thought that the private life of individuals did not affect the course of the public activities of those individuals. Thus he did not believe that he could be immoral in private life and yet be an efficient public servant. His public conduct was bound to be affected by his private. He held that much mischief was made throughout the world by divorce between public and private conduct. And when he was engaged in the supreme test of non-violence in his life, he wished to be judged before God and man by the sum total of his activities, both private and public. As he had said years ago, non-violent life was an act of self-examination and self-purification whether by an individual, a group or a nation.

This led him to the answers of some questions addressed to him and arising out of his remarks on trusteeship.

Q. Was it possible to defend by means of non-violence anything which could only be gained through violence?

A. It followed from what he had said above that what was gained by violence could not only be defended by non-violence but the latter required the abandonment of the ill-gotten gains.

Q. Was the accumulation of capital possible except through violence whether open or tacit ?

A. Such accumulation by private persons was impossible except through violent means but accumulation by the State in a non-violent society was not only possible, it was desirable and inevitable.

Q. Whether a man accumulated material or moral wealth he did so only through the help or co-operation of other members of society. Had he then the moral right to use any of it mainly for personal advantage?

A. No, he had no moral right.

Q. How would the successor of a trustee be determined? Would he only have the right of proposing a name, the right of finalization vested in the State?

A. As he had said[2] yesterday, choice should be given to the original owner

[1] This appeared under the title "Gandhiji on Trusteeship". Gandhiji began his weekly silence as the prayer started. His written speech was rendered into Bengali and read out by Nirmal Kumar Bose.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 1-2-1947

who became the first trustee, but the choice must be finalized by the State. Such arrangement puts a check on the State as well as the individual.

Q. When the replacement of private by public property thus took place through the operation of the theory of trusteeship, would the ownership vest in the State, which was an instrument of violence or in associations of a voluntary character like village communes and municipalities, which might of course derive their final authority from State-made laws?

A. That question involved some confusion of thought. Legal ownership in the transformed condition vested in the trustee, not in the State. It was to avoid confiscation that the doctrine of trusteeship came into play retaining for the society the ability of the original owner in his own right. Nor did he, the speaker, hold that the state must always be based on violence. It might be so in theory but the practice of the theory demanded a State which would for the most part be based on non-violence.

Harijan, 16-2-1947

504. LETTER TO SECRETARY, BIHAR PROVINCIAL MUSLIM LEAGUE

SATGHARIA,
[On or before *February 3, 1947*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 15th [ultimo][2]. It came into my hands on the 31st. The Prime Minister of Bengal did send me a copy of the resolutions of your working committee, but I did not know that those were sent to me at your instance. If I had understood so I would undoubtedly have sent you an acknowledgement. So far as I know I have made no public statement with reference to resolutions of your report. But I do confess that they do not bear the impress of sobriety. And many statements appear to me to be unbelievable. Nevertheless, as you should know, I have made strong recommendation that the Bihar Government should appoint an impartial commission of enquiry into the whole of the painful episode.

[1] Gandhiji was at Satgharia on February 2 and 3 1947.

[2] The source has "instant". The addressee had informed Gandhiji about the "unimpeachable instances of human monstrosities in which the Hindus indulged during the period of Bihar carnage". He had criticized the Congress for its indifference towards riots.

I should be very sorry if your statement about Dr. Mahmood is proved to be true. I am, however, enquiring into the matter.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

THE SECRETARY
BIHAR P. M. LEAGUE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

505. A NOTE

SATGHARIA,
February 3, 1947

There is a lunatic here.[2] Manu prescribed the right medicine. It is Ramanama. If a believer repeats it before him rhythmically long enough, he will surely get out of his insanity. Please tell the inmates this much. More from me latter.

From a photostat: C. W. 10558

506. LETTER TO PYARELAL

February 3, 1947

CHI. PYARELAL,

I am sending to J. your letter to him. I think it is better to send also Vinod's letter to him. The letter you wrote to Vinod, I am sending to him (Vinod). I am enclosing herewith Manu's letter to you. She should not be hurt anymore. Let her talk to whomsoever she desires. In a way she is tied down at the moment as you are tied down. Even though you are tied down at my bidding, there is continued harmony between the two of you. Future should be entrusted only to God. You are still not doing it and because you are not doing it, Manu is becoming agitated too. This is not right. Either God exists and only His wish is done or He does not exist. There is no middle course. If He exists, there is no question of your breaking down. Even if you have Manu's good at heart, she must be entrusted to God and must be

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 5-2-1947

[2] Gandhiji was requested to help an insane patient in the house in which he was put up.

allowed to shape herself. What more should I write? Wake up if you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

507. LETTER TO CHANDRAGUPTA VIDYALANKAR

February 3, 1947

BHAI CHANDRAGUPTA,

I do not remember if I have already written to you regarding your scheme. I am sending you Kakasaheb's opinion which I found lying in my papers here. At present I am unable to do anything more than this.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Return Kakasaheb's opinion after reading it.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 7210. Also C. W. 4866. Courtesy: Chandragupta Vidyalankar

508. TALK WITH A CORRESPONDENT

SADHURKHIL,
February 3, 1947

A pilgrim has to bear every kind of life. Whether rain or water, he must continue on his journey to reach his goal. And I am a pilgrim today. Why should I be afraid of rains or water.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 6-2-1947

509. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SADHURKHIL,
February 3, 1947

At the outset, Gandhiji said that what he had said about his private life was not for blind imitation. He never claimed to have extraordinary powers. What he did was

[1] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary". The first paragraph is reproduced from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*.

for all to do if they conformed to conditions observed by him. If that was not done, those who pretended to imitate his practice were doomed to perdition. What he was doing was undoubtedly dangerous, but it ceased to be so, if the conditions were rightly observed.

Gandhiji referred with hesitation to the resolution passed by the Muslim League[1] on the Constituent Assembly. It considered the Congress resolution to be dishonest and that it did not mean what it said. It was also said that the elections and other dealings of the Assembly were illegal. The speaker pleaded that there should be no imputation of dishonesty by one party to the other. It was not good for the great organization which they both were. There was no reason why they should regard each other as enemies. That practice would not lead them to independence. If the elections and proceedings were illegal their legality should be challenged in a court of law. Otherwise, the charge had no meaning. If they did not wish to recognize the courts as he did in 1920 and later, then the talk of illegality should cease. He would plead with the League that they should go into the Assembly and state their case and influence the proceedings. But if they did not, he would advise them to test the sincerity of the Assembly and see how it dealt with the Muslim problem. It was due to themselves and the rest of the country unless they wanted to rely upon the law of the sword which he was sure they did not wish to do. Then the League had said that the Assembly represented only the caste Hindus. Surely there were in the Assembly the Scheduled Classes, the Christians, the Parsis, the Anglo-Indians and all those who considered themselves sons of India. Then Dr. Ambedkar[2] was good enough to attend the Assembly, not to mention the other large number of the Scheduled Classes. The Sikhs too were still there. It was open to the League to put up their fight within the Assembly.

As to the British Government who the League contended should dismiss the Assembly, he entertained the hope, though he admitted it was somewhat shaken, that they would honestly carry to the end the voluntary document. He submitted that the British Government was bound to act according to the State Paper even if a few Provinces chose to establish their independence in accordance with the Paper. He hoped that the British would not forfeit all credit for honest dealing with India.

Gandhiji concluded by saying that whilst he felt obliged to refer to League politics, he warned the audience against inferring that the Hindus and Muslims were to regard each other as enemies. The League had made no such announcement. Let the political quarrel be confined to the politicians at the top. It would be a disaster if the

[1] On January 31, in Karachi

[2] B. R. Ambedkar (1891-1956); leader of the Depressed Classes, jurist and author; in 1942 formed the Scheduled Castes' Federation; member, Constituent Assembly; Chairman, Drafting Committee for the Constitution of India

quarrel permeated in the villages. The way to Indian independence lay not through the sword but through mutual friendship and adjustment. He was in Noakhali to show what real Pakistan could mean. Bengal was the one Province in India where it could be demonstrated. Bengal had produced talented Hindus and talented Muslims. Bengal had contributed largely to the national struggle. It was in the fitness of things that Bengal should now show how the Muslims and the Hindus could live together as friends and brothers. Then there would be no reason for Bengal to remain a deficit province. It ought to be a province of plenty.

Harijan, 23-2-1947; and *Amrita Bazar patrika*, 6-2-1947

510. LETTER TO GADIYA, HAJIRA AND M. M. NAGDEE

P. O. RAMGANJ,
NOAKHALI,
February 4, 1947

DEAR FRIENDS,

Gandhiji is in receipt of your letter dated the 22nd of January, 1947, in which you have spoken about Abdul Hamid Nagdee. He has not, however, heard from Nagdee Saheb as yet. But that is not of much moment. If you are in touch with Abdul Hamid please let him write directly to Gandhiji. Gandhiji wrote several letters to him but had no reply from him. If Abdul Hamid is ready to go to South Africa, Gandhiji would gladly find his passage on behalf of Abdul Hamid's father.

Yours sincerely,
NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE

GADIYA NAGDEE
HAJIRA NAGDEE
M. M. NAGDEE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

511. LETTER TO HASHMI

February 4, 1947

BHAI HASHMI,

What a thing for you to teach me Hindustani lesson in English ! You too have written to me in anger like those who have graduated from the Aligarh University. One does not care for facts while in anger. You have not even cared to ascertain the facts. You write that I can make the Congress do anything. The fact is quite the contrary. You say that Congress has done nothing about the Nagari and Urdu

scripts. The truth is that the resolution[1] passed by the Congress at Kanpur. . . .[2]

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

512. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[3]

SADHURKHIL,
February 4, 1947

At the time of Gandhiji's speech some Muslim friends wished to read an address in Bengali which Gandhiji said might be read if it pleased the friends. It referred to the music before mosques, cow-slaughter, etc. Gandhiji said he was not concerned with these questions. They were questions of law. He wanted to capture their hearts and see them welded into one. If that was attained, everything else would right itself. If their hearts were not united, nothing could be right. Their unfortunate lot would then be slavery. He asked them to accept the slavery of the one Omnipotent God no matter by what name they addressed Him. Then they would bend the knee to no man or men. It was ignorance to say that he coupled Rama, a mere man, with God. He had repeatedly made it clear that his Rama was the same as God. His Rama was before, is present now and would be for all time. He was Unborn and Uncreated. Therefore, let them tolerate and respect the different faiths. He was himself an iconoclast but he had equal regard for the so-called idolaters. Those who worshipped idols also worshipped the same God who was everywhere, even in a clod of earth, even in a nail that was pared off. He had Muslim friends whose names were Rahim, Rahman, Karim. Would he therefore join on to the name of God when he addressed them as Rahim, Karim or Rahman?

Let them beware of the thought that all was well in Noakhali or the neighbouring parts. If the reports he received were at all true, things had not quite settled down. He did not refer to these things or the destruction that had been wrought because he did not wish to excite passion. He did not believe in retaliation. He had lived with Pathans. Badshah Khan[4], being tired of retaliation which had descended from generation to generation, had learnt the virtue of non-violence. He did not claim perfection for him. He could be angered. But he did claim for his friend the wisdom that dictated to him restraint on one's love of vengeance. He wanted the same thing in Noakhali. Unless they sincerely believed that without real peace between the communities there was neither Pakistan nor Hindustan, slavery was their lot.

[1] Presumably the reference is to the resolution passed by the Congress in 1925.

[2] The letter is incomplete.

[3] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary"

[4] Abdul Ghaffar Khan

He had a visit from four Muslim friends who deplored the fact that he had not corrected the exaggeration about the number of murders in Noakhali and the adjacent parts. He had not done so because he did not wish to bring out all he had seen. But if it at all mended matters he was free to declare that he had found no evidence to support the figure of a thousand. The figure was certainly much smaller. He was also free to admit that the murders in number and brutalities in Bihar eclipsed those in Noakhali. But that admission must not mean a call for him to go to Bihar. He did not know that he could render any greater service by going to Bihar than from here. He would not be worth anything if without conviction he went there at the bidding of anybody. He would need no prompting, immediately he felt that his place was more in Bihar than in Noakhali. He was where he thought he could render the greatest service to both the communities.

Harijan, 23-2-1947

513. LETTER TO EDMOND AND YVONNE PRIVAT

SRINAGAR CAMP,
ADDRESS AS AT KAZIRKHIL,
P. O. RAMGANJ, NOAKHALI,
February 5, 1947

MY DEAR ANAND AND BHAKTI,

It was a perfect delight to receive your letter.

It is interesting to hear about Mr. R.'s[1] views. What you said was perfectly true, namely, without purity of heart real non-violence was impossible. If Mr. R. is of opinion that purity of heart is not an essential of non-violent conduct I would like to know the reason why he thinks so.

That the real non-violent conduct of a person may well be followed in practice by the multitude is perfectly true. Such was my case and is today. But the prime mover has to be *au fait* with the science of non-violence.

That Mr. R. may be an atheist would not matter if his conduct corresponds to that of a man of God. Such for instance was Bradlaw[2] [*sic*]. His atheism was only so-called. He had faith in the moral

[1] The name is omitted in the source.
[2] Charles Bradlaugh (1833-91); an English free-thinker and radical

government of the world and his conduct was so straight that his funeral was attended by several clergymen. I was an eye-witness because I attended the funeral myself.[1] His body was cremated at Woking[2].

I wonder if this answers your question. If this does not you must tax me again.

My walking pilgrimage is going on steadily and it certainly gives me immense peace of mind. The upshot I do not know, nor do I care to know. Man has no control over results. That is the sole prerogative of God. Hence I can sing with Cardinal Newman :

One step enough for me

I do not choose to see the distance scene

Lead Thou me on.

You know the hymn, don't you? The initial verse of the hymn is: "Lead Kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom."

I hope you will soon get your *Harijan*. I am exceedingly sorry that you have been without it all these months. I say "months" [as] it was revived only recently[3].

I hope both of the babies are looking as young as when we first met.

Tell me when you think you will be ready to pay another visit to India.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 2341

514. LETTER TO C. P. RAMASWAMY IYER

February 5, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I have very hastily glanced through the Press communique which you have been good enough to send me. Is there not a discrepancy between para 2 and para 45?

The reservation powers seem to me to be so great as virtually to neutralize the liberality of the promised constitution. Further than this

[1] *Vide* "An Autobiography"

[2] The source, however, has "Geoking".

[3] On February 10, 1946

I dare not go. Naturally I would like yours[1] to be the most progressive State in the whole of India.

C. P. RAMASWAMY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

515. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

February 5, 1947

DEAR DR. HOLMES,

You have given me not only exciting but welcome news. The news appears to be almost too good to be true and I am not going to believe it in its entirety unless you are physically in India.

Of course we shall, as we must, meet, no matter in what part of India I happen to be at the time. My pilgrimage is the longest part of my life. I am only hoping and praying that God will give me the strength to go through the fire. "Do or die" was the motto given in 1942. It is the motto, having given it then, I must endeavour to live it myself.

I am glad you are to come *via* London and that for many reasons, besides seeing Lord Pethick-Lawrence. Many things will have happened here between now and October.

I have no doubt about your ability to do full justice to the challenge that has come your way.

COMMUNITY CHURCH OF N[EW] Y[ORK]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

516. LETTER TO M. A. ABDULLA

February 5, 1947

DEAR KHAN SAHEB,

It is due to you to inform you that Sri Ramachandran who is an ex-air man and who had absconded and changed name and who ultimately took shelter under me has suddenly left me. I do not know whether you need or can do anything against him. But it is well for you to know that such a man is at large in Noakhali. He belongs to Malabar. I am sorry for him. He can be a good worker if he is steady.

S. P.

NOAKHALI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Namely Travancore, where the addressee served as Dewan

517. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SRINAGAR (BENGAL),
February 5, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter. I made a long speech[1] about the League. A report of it has been sent to the Press. You may have read it in the newspapers. It summarizes my views on the subject.

I take the Cabinet Mission statement to mean that there is nothing to fear if even the Princes do not join the Constituent Assembly. Nothing will be lost even if they do not interpret it in the same way. And if they do, it will only be worthy of them and we shall be able to work without obstruction. It is as clear as daylight to me that there is no need to put up with shortages in food and cloth. It is another matter if I cannot convince others about it. In such circumstances it makes no difference whether or not I come there. My place is here only. I am satisfied with what I can do here. I believe that I am bringing some little solace to the people here and may be able to bring more if I continue the work. But that is in the hands of Providence.

I hear that your opposition is reported to be the reason why the Bihar Ministry does not appoint an inquiry commission.[2] I do not believe the story, but I bring it to your notice. If a commission is not appointed, it will do great harm. The Ministry will be regarded as guilty. If their work has been above board, what harm can the Commission do to them? Considerable pressure is being exerted on me, but I do not go because I have reposed confidence in the Ministers. But if a Commission is not appointed after all, I shall have no choice but to go to Bihar.

[1] On February 3; *vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 3-2-1947

[2] In his reply dated February 10, the addressee wrote : "Who told you I have a hand in the non-appointment of a Commission of Inquiry in Bihar? I do hold the opinion that there is no gain but only harm if the Commission is appointed. If in spite of it a Commission is appointed, how can I prevent it? . . . . The Bihar Governor is behind the non-appointment of the Commission. The Viceroy, too, does not want it."

I hope you are taking sufficient care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI

HOME MINISTER

NEW DELHI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 348-9

518. LETTER TO ASHRAF ALI

February 5, 1947

BHAI ASHRAF ALI,

I have your letter written in a beautiful hand. Is it for me or for you to say which Rama I worship? If only I am entitled to say what I do or believe in, I may tell you that my Rama is not a human being. My Rama is present today, was present in the past and will be present in the future too. He is invisible and formless. That is why to me Rama, Krishna, Rahim and Karim are all names of the same Being.

How is it that you invite me to visit your school while you are yourself in Bombay?

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

519. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNA SINHA

February 5, 1947

BHAI SHRIKRISHNA SINHA,

I am sending you the letter and the papers received from Jamiat-ul-Ulema in connection with Monghyr. You may send the reply to me in Urdu or English and return the papers.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

520. LETTER TO ABDUL HAMID AZMI

February 5, 1947

BHAI ABDUL HAMID AZMI SAHEB,

I have your letter and copy of the Press statement enclosed therewith. If all that you say is true, I should give serious thought to

the matter. I am making enquiries.[1] I shall write to you again if I have anything to communicate. You have obliged me by writing to me. I suppose you know that I have advised the Bihar Government to appoint an impartial commission to look into the events in Bihar.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

521. LETTER TO SYED MAHMUD

KAZIRKHIL CAMP

P. O. RAMGUNJ, NOAKHALI,

February 5, 1947

BHAI MAHMUD[2],

The secretary of the Muslim League has written to me. An extract from that letter is as follows :

> I have reports that the Hindu mentality is so strong in the Congress Cabinet of the Bihar Government that even a Muslim colleague is avoided. I am told that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Dr. Rajendra Prasad decided that Dr. Mahmood be entrusted with the relief operations in Bihar to inspire the lost Muslim confidence, still he is kept at arms length.[3]

Please write to me whether this is correct and if it is what you have done in the matter. The Secretary further writes :

> One of your Ministers who undertook tour of the affected areas is Dr. Mahmood. He can give you a true idea of the brutalities and damages. We do not want to exaggerate the facts. They are of such enormity that no one can honestly minimize their impact. Even now the Government is callously indifferent. They have lost the confidence of the Bihar Muslims.[4]

Please let me know all the facts.

From a photostat of the Urdu: G. N. 5100

[1] *Vide* the following item.
[2] Minister for Development and Transport, Bihar
[3] The quoted paragraphs are in English.
[4] *ibid*

522. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SRINAGAR,
February 5, 1947

Gandhiji began his remarks by asking the volunteers to refrain from providing decorations and a kind of ornamental shade where he sat. He was averse to all these things. It was a waste of labour and money. All that was needed was a raised seat with something clean and soft to rest his fatless and muscleless bones. He wanted to deal that evening with a question that arose out of the meeting of the third instant but he could not deal with on the fourth as he had to deal with the statement read to him by the Muslim friends. The question was as follows :

You have asked those provinces which have the necessary courage to frame their own constitutions and then ask the British army to quit their territory as proof of the attainment of independence. What, in your opinion, should be the basis of the franchise in those free Provinces of India? Should communal electorates be replaced by functional ones in the Assemblies? Should there be functional instead of communal representation? Should there be joint electorates with reservation of seats for communal minorities or functional groups? Should there be favoured representation of any group for the time being? If so, of what group? Should we have joint electorate, and full adult franchise?

Gandhiji's answer was unequivocal. Even one Province could frame its own constitution and enforce it, provided that it was backed not by a majority of one but by an overwhelming majority. Gandhiji held that no power on earth could resist the lovers of liberty who were ready not to kill opponents but to be killed by them. This was the view that he had enunciated at one time.[2] But today they had made considerable progress. He put a favourable interpretation on the Cabinet Mission's State Paper. So far as he could see they could not resist the declared wish of a single province. If that was true of one province, say Bengal, how much more was it so for a number of provinces which the Constituent Assembly undoubtedly represented? But he was indifferent as to what the British Government said so far as India's independence was concerned. That rested with the people and with no outside power. Nor was there any question as to what India would do if the State Paper was withdrawn. India had been accustomed to a life in the wilderness. When Pandit Nehru and his friends accepted office he had said that it was not a bed of roses but a bed of thorns. Their goal was liberty and liberty they would have no matter what happened.

Naturally he could speak with confidence when the people had only non-violence in view as a steadfast simple policy without reservation. If, on the other

[1] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary"
[2] *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 8-2-1947 here has "in 1919".

hand, they thought they could drive away the English by the sword they were vastly mistaken. They did not know the determination and courage of the British. They would not yield to the power of the sword. But they could not withstand the courage of non-violence which disdained to deal death against death. He knew no other power higher than non-violence. And if they were still without real independence, it was, he was sure, because the people had not developed sufficient non-violence. Anyway, the State Paper in his opinion was in answer to the non-violent strength that India had so far developed.

If they contemplated the last War, they would plainly see that whilst the enemy powers so-called were crushed, the Allied Powers had won but an empty victory. Apart from the wanton destruction of human heads, they had—between the Allies and the enemies—succeeded in draining the world of its food materials and cloth. And the former seemed to be so dehumanized that they entertained the vain hope of reducing the enemies to helotry. It was a question whom to pity more—the Allies or the enemies. Therefore he asked the people bravely to face the consequence whatever it was, feeling secure in the confidence born of non-violence, be it as an honest policy.

As to the franchise he swore by the franchise of all adults, males and females, above the age of twenty-one or even eighteen. He would bar old men like himself. They were of no use as voters. India and the rest of the world did not belong to those who were on the point of dying. To them belonged death, life to the young. Thus he would have a bar against persons beyond a certain age, say fifty, as he would against youngsters below eighteen. Of course, he would debar lunatics and loafers. Of course, in India free, he could not contemplate communal franchise. It must be joint electorate, perhaps with reservation of seats. Nor could he contemplate favouritism for anyone, say Muslims, Sikhs or Parsis, for example. If there was to be favouritism he would single out physical lepers. They were an outcome of the crimes of society. If moral lepers would ban themselves, the physical lepers would soon be extinct. And they, poor men, were so frightened of modern society that they put forth no claims. Educate them truly and they would make ideal citizens. Anyway, side by side with adult franchise or even before that he pleaded for universal education, not necessarily literary except perhaps as an aid. English education, he was convinced, had starved their minds, enervated them and never prepared them for brave citizenship. He would give them all sufficient knowledge in the rich languages of which any country would be proud. Education in the understanding of the rights of citizenship was a short term affair if they were honest and earnest.

Harijan, 2-3-1947

523. TELEGRAM TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

[On or after *February 5, 1947*][1]

KISHORELAL
HARIJAN ASHRAM
AHMEDABAD

CANT DECIPHER NATHJI'S[2] ADDRESS. HE IS WELCOME IF HE CAN COME THOUGH I HAVE PUBLICLY DECLARED MY VIEWS.[3]

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

524. QUESTION BOX

INTELLECTUAL AND MANUAL WORK

Q. Why should we insist on a Rabindranath[4] or a Raman[5] earning his bread by manual labour? Is it not sheer wastage? Why should not brain workers be considered on a par with manual workers, for both of them perform useful social work?

A. Intellectual work is important and has an undoubted place in the scheme of life. But what I insist on is the necessity of physical labour. No man, I claim, ought to be free from that obligation. It will serve to improve even the quality of his intellectual output. I venture to say that in ancient times Brahmins worked with their body as with their mind. But even if they did not, body labour is a proved necessity at the present time. In this connection I would refer to the life of Tolstoy and how he made famous the theory of bread-labour first propounded in his country by the Russian peasant Bondaref.

DHARAMPUR (NOAKHALI) February 6[6], 1947

Harijan, 23-2-1947

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram of February 5, 1947 which read: "Guess statement being reconsidered. Suggest invite Nathji for discussion before taking irreconciliable step. Nathji's address Shanti Kunj, Bazar Dadar."

[2] Kedarnath Kulkarni; *vide* also "Letter to Amtussalaam", 22-1-1947

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 1/2-2-1947

[4] Rabindranath Tagore

[5] C. V. Raman, the physicist

[6] *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 10-2-1947, published this as Gandhiji's answer given at Prasadpur, on Friday, February 7, to a question by Bina Das, a Congress worker in a neighbouring village.

525. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

February 6, 1947

I know that if I were free I could take my share in trying to solve the various problems that arise in our country. But I feel that I should be useless unless I could do something here. . . . We are all in the hands of Power which we call God.

* * *

Very great pressure is being put upon me to go to Bihar because they all say that things are not properly represented to me on behalf of the Bihar Government. I am watching.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, pp. 208 and 247

526. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

February 6, 1947

The way to truth is paved with skeletons over which we dare to walk.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p. 220

527. A NOTE

February 6, 1947

I had your wire, but I have not sent you a reply back by wire. That does not mean that I do [not] want your khadi. I shall be able to take every yard of what you have. I think you have not sent me the price list. Send me the price list. I may take some time before I send for your khadi. You are at liberty to sell what you have if there is any importunate customer. Otherwise you can reserve what you have for me, and not worry about the sale of what you had when I wrote. I have yet preserved a sheet of your writing "Septic Tank v. Earth Latrines". Are you going to rewrite it as you said you would?

Whether I succeed in writing to you or not you keep me informed of your movements and your health.

[1] Nehru in his letter dated January 30, 1947, had written : "I know that we must learn to rely upon ourselves and not run to you for help on every occasion. But we have got into this bad habit and we do often feel that if you had been easier of access, our difficulties would have been less." *Vide* also "Extract from Letter to Abul Kalam Azad", 12-2-1947

The pilgrimage on foot is going on according to time-table. Satis Babu has given me no more than four miles at the most. What I do in the evening depends largely on me. I think it comes to . . .[1]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

528. LETTER TO PYARELAL

February 6, 1947

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have gone through your letter, as also your letter to Manu. Come if you must. I do not see any good in it. That will show that you have no trust in God – I still say that you should leave Manu and yourself in the hands of God. I am giving it a lot of time. The more you try the more complicated the situation will become. There is nothing for you to explain. But if you are convinced that you cannot keep away for the present then come. You can serve Manu better from there if you so decide. Understand that I am not preventing you, but if the picture I have presented can help you to check yourself then stay back.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Manu says :"I would not know. You can write what you want."

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

529. LETTER TO TULSIRAM

February 6, 1947

BHAI TULSIRAMJI,

I have your letter, and also the two books. They are very good but too long for a beginner. Send me a small book in Sanskrit if you can find one. If you cannot, I shall manage. Sharmaji met me. Why does he keep indifferent health? He ought to regain his health through nature cure.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Incomplete in the source

530. LETTER TO EKANATH

February 6, 1947

BHAI EKANATH,

I have your letter. I am glad to learn that you try to provide treatment to both Hindu and Muslim patients and they accept your services. I have already spoken about cleanliness in my speeches. But I shall keep your suggestion in mind and will say something about it.[1]

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

531. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

DHARAMPUR,
February 6, 1947

Gandhiji referred to a letter he had received from the Medical Superintendent of the Marwari Relief Society. The doctor said that he treated both Hindus and Mussalmans without any distinction. Muslim men and women gladly accepted his services. He noticed that in this part of the world the Muslims were poor. There was dirt and insanitation wherever he went. Would he (Gandhiji) say something about it?

He (Gandhiji) would gladly do so. For he had been a lover of cleanliness and sanitation for over fifty years. He had to speak much in disparagement of the West. It was therefore a pleasure to him to be able to say that he had learnt the laws of cleanliness from Englishmen. He was pained to see the same tanks in Noakhali used for drinking and cleaning purposes. It was wrong. The people thoughtlessly dirtied the streets, lanes and footpaths by spitting everywhere and clearing their noses. This was the cause of many diseases in India. No doubt, their chronic poverty was responsible for the diseases. But their chronic breach of the laws of sanitation was no less responsible. It was surprising that India lived at all. But it was worst in point of high death rate. America was probably the first in the list. And then those that lived were specimens of living death. The sooner therefore the inhabitants of Noakhali attended to the laws of sanitation the better for them. Poverty was no bar to perfect sanitation.

Then there was an invasion of Pressmen from far and near. The expression, Press Camp, was an attractive expression. But this Press Camp was in keeping with the village surroundings and that too with his. His surroundings were inconsistent with pomp. The Pressmen who accompanied him were living under difficult conditions. They had to live in such huts as the villagers were able to provide. They

[1] *Vide* also the following item.
[2] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary"

had no unlimited accommodation. He would advise them not to venture out but be satisfied with the news that the five or six were able to provide. His barefoot walk need not provide sensation. It ought not to excite people. It was no difficulty for him. The earth of Noakhali was like velvet and the green grass was a magnificent carpet to walk on. It reminded him of the soft English grass he had noticed in England. It was wholly unnecessary to wear sandals to be able to walk on the Noakhali earth and grass. He could not probably have done it in Gujarat, and then he had inherited the traditions of his country. A pilgrimage was always performed barefoot. For him this tour was a pilgrimage pure and simple. But that should be no attraction to Pressmen and others. He considered it as no strain on him. And if God willed it, He would allow him to pull through it.

Let the Pressmen save the time and money; the latter they could contribute to the Noakhali Relief Fund or the never-to-end Harijan Fund.

He then came to the questions put to him.

Q. Supposing one or the other of the provinces wishes to declare its independence, what kind of constitution would you advise them to prepare? In 1925, you declared that in the Free India of your dreams only those would have voting rights who had contributed by manual labour to the service of the State. Do you adhere to that advice today with regard to the above provinces?

A. Independence could be the same as for the whole of India. He adhered to what he had said in 1925, viz., that all adults above a certain age, male or female, who would contribute some body labour to the State would be entitled to the vote. Thus a simple labourer would easily be a voter whereas a millionaire or a lawyer or a merchant and the like would find it hard if they did not do some body labour for the State.

Q. If contiguous provinces in India do not declare such independence but scattered ones do so, would not the presence of the non-federating units create difficulties for the rest in the matter of common action?

A. He saw no difficulty if the society was of his conception, that is, based on non-violence. Thus supposing populous Bengal with its gifted Tagores and Suhrawardys framed a constitution based on independence and Assam with its opium habit dreamed away life, Orissa with its skeletons had no wish and Bihar was occupied in family slaughter, they would all three be affected and covered by Bengal. Such infectiousness was inherent in his scheme of independence which was friend to all and enemy to none. It might well be that his was a voice in the wilderness. If so, it was India's misfortune.

Q. Do you expect the constitution of the free provinces to be made so attractive that others would voluntarily be drawn into it?

A. Attractiveness was inherent in everything that was inherently good.

Q. Supposing the whole of Group A forms a common constitution, do you think provinces which are now under Group B or C will be able to join A if they so desired?

A. It went without saying that if the Group A succeeded in framing a good constitution not only would it be open to B and C to join, they would irresistibly be drawn to it.

Q. What about the States? Who will decide whether a State should join the Union or not: the present rulers or the people? If it is to be the latter then what changes would you expect to be first made in the constitutions of the present States?

A. He was a mere humble ryot but he belonged to the many crores. The Rajas were nominally 640, in reality they were probably less than 100. Whatever the number was, they were so few that in an awakened India, they could only exist as servants of the ryots not in name but in actual practice. He did not share the fear underlying the question that the British would be so dishonest as to play the Rajas against the ryots. That was not the note of the Cabinet Mission Paper. But why should India depend upon the British Cabinet? When India was ready, neither the British nor the Rajas, nor any combination of the Powers could keep India from her destined goal, her birthright, as the Lokamanya[1] would have said.

Harijan, 2-3-1947

532. LETTER TO N. K. BOSE

February 7, 1947

CHI. NIRMALBABU,

I never succeeded in writing to you on your first personal letter. The second on B's relation with A now comes. I must undertake this second today. I sent your letter to A. You left it open for me to do so. My loyalty to him demanded that I should.

B has led you into doing an injustice to A. I discussed it with her. She saw the truth of it. A's love is wholly free from animal passion. I have called it poetic. It is not a perfect adjective but I can find no better. He loved once a girl with the same passion with which he loves B. In either case, it was philanthropic. The first came in a flash, the second took practically two years to discover. He thought he would give B the best of him in point of education. In his opinion both cases went wrong because of my initial aversion. In the first, I relented when, as A thinks, it was too late. In the second, it is almost

[1] B. G. Tilak

too late. The first girl is married. He is entitled to hope till B is married elsewhere, if she is. So far as B knows herself, it is a sealed book. Now mark the beauty of it. A says so long as B does not change her mind, she will be as sister or daughter to him and [that he] would never make any other advances to her. B believes this assurance, what she objects to is his shadowing her as she calls it.

If he does not get B as wife, he will never think of making love to another woman. He is too pure to think of any such thing. If you accept my analysis, you will render justice to A and lead B aright.

I do wish you could see that in non-violent conduct, whether individual or universal, there is an indissoluble connection between private, personal life and public. You may be as generous and charitable as you like in judging men, but you cannot overlook private deflections from the right conduct. If you are convinced about this proposition, you should pursue my connection with Manu and if you find a flaw, try to show it to me.

I have written in order to save your time and to let you think. But I shall welcome discussion, if you like it.

Asirbad[1],

BAPU

My Days with Gandhi, pp. 156-7

533. LETTER TO PYARELAL

February 7, 1947

CHI. PYARELAL,

Your agitation disturbs me. My mind works in a way contrary to yours. In such a situation, one must follow one's own counsel. So come. Sushila Pai has just arrived unexpectedly.

What more should I write ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Blessings

534. LETTER TO KRIPANATH

February 7, 1947

BHAI KRIPANATH,

I have your letter. I have not wholly understood it. But I shall be able to say something if you tell me what your wife is doing.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

535. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

PRASADPUR,

February 7, 1947

QUESTION: You have always been against charity and have preached the doctrine that no man is free from the obligation of bread-labour. What is your advice for people who are engaged in sedentary occupations but lost their all in the last riots? Should they migrate and try to find a place where they can go back to their old accustomed habits of life or should they try to remodel their life in conformity with your ideal of bread-labour for everybody? What use shall their special talents be in that case?

In reply, Gandhiji said that it was true that for years he had been against charity as it was understood and that he had for years preached the duty of bread-labour. In this connection he mentioned the visit he had had from the District Magistrate and Zaman Saheb along with a police officer. They wanted his opinion about giving doles to the refugees. They had already decided to put before them the work of removal of the water hyacinth, repair of roads, village reconstruction or straightening out their own plots of land or building on their lands. Those who did any one of these things had a perfect right to rations. He said that he liked the idea. But as a practical idealist he would not take the refugees by storm. A variety of work should be put before the people and they should have one month's notice that if they made no choice of the occupations suggested, nor did they suggest some other acceptable occupation but declined to do any work though their bodies were fit, they would be reluctantly obliged to tell the refugees that they would not be able to give them doles after the expiry of the notice. He advised the refugees and their friends to render full co-operation to the Government in such a scheme of work. It was wrong for any citizen to expect rations without doing some physical work.

He could never advise people to leave their homes. He would like even one solitary Hindu to feel safe under any circumstances and would expect the Muslims to make him perfectly safe in their midst. He should welcome them to worship God in

[1] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary"

the way they knew.

He certainly did not consider money got through speculation as rightly gained. Nor did he consider it impossible for man to shed bad or evil habits at any time. If everybody lived by the sweat of his brow, the earth would become a paradise. The question of the use of special talents hardly needed separate consideration. If everyone laboured physically for his bread, it followed that poets, doctors, lawyers, etc., would regard it their duty to use those talents gratis for the service of humanity. Their output will be all the better and richer for their selfless devotion to duty.

Harijan, 2-3-1947

536. PREFACE TO "ASHRAM BHAJANAVALI"

It is with sadness that I write this preface to the new edition of *Ashram Bhajanavali*. Its compiler was the late Shri Khare Shastri[1].

I do not feel myself equal to the task. But this much I can say that the primary aim of the collection was to sustain right conduct. Let it also be remembered that it has brought together a group of people who for years have been reciting these hymns[2] with great devotion. And, thirdly, it has not restricted itself to any particular sect or religion. Gems available from all places have been collected. Therefore many Hindus, Muslims, Christians and others, recite from it with pleasure and derive whatever moral sustenance they can.

Shri Kishorelal Mashruwala has taken great pains to translate the Sanskrit verses.

M. K. GANDHI

PRASADPUR, February 8, 1947

[From Hindi]

Ashram Bhajanavali

537. LETTER TO E. F. MCINERNY[3]

February 8, 1947

This is the letter I promised you when you were good enough to see me yesterday.

I am quite clear that you should not abruptly stop rations until

[1] Narayan Moreshwar Khare, who died on February 6, 1938

[2] For their rendering into English by Gandhiji.

[3] N. K. Bose explains : ". . . there was a proposal for closing down refugee camps, Gandhiji woke up at night and wrote the . . . letter to the Magistrate of the District."

due notice (at least one month) of their stoppage is given to the refugees that they will be stopped unless one of the specified items of work is done by them against the rations which should be adequate and medically fit for consumption. The items should include :

1. Road construction or road repair for at least two hours per day, Sundays excluded.

2. Removal of water hyacinth for the same period as in (1), under supervision.

3. House building on their own vacated lands for the same period as in (1), with material and tools supplied by the Government.

4. Village reconstruction for the same period as in (1).

5. Cleaning of tanks for the same period as in (1).

6. Hand-spinning for four hours per day, cotton and wheel or *takli* being supplied by the Government; spinning to include ginning, carding or *tunai* or *punai*.

7. Weaving for the same period as in (6), tools and accessories and yarn, double-twisted in the case of hand-spun, being supplied by the Government.

8. *Dhenki*-husking, same period as in (1), *dhenkis* being supplied by the Government.

9. Oil-pressing out of coconut or seeds supplied by the Government.

10. Any other village craft chosen by the Government or refugees, approved by the Government for the period as in (1) or (6) as the case may be.

Efficient working of the foregoing is wholly dependent upon a well-thought-out scheme capably managed by the Government. This is no famine measure. It is conceived wholly in the spirit of the maxim, no labour no food.

No breakdown in transport or other Government machinery should stop the supply of rations to the helpless unfortunate sufferers.

I would suggest that refugees who are not willing or are otherwise incapable may be supplied rations against payment at fixed rates.

The time for ploughing for the next crop is soon ebbing away. Therefore agricultural implements, bullocks and seeds have to be supplied at once or disaster may have to be faced.

This was written at 2 a. m. and has not been seen by Shri Satis

Chandra Das Gupta of Khadi Pratishthan. I would suggest your seeing and consulting him since I am wholly ignorant of local conditions.

My Days with Gandhi, pp. 141-2

538. LETTER TO NIRANJAN SINGH GILL

CAMP: PRASADPUR,
February 8, 1947

DEAR SARDARJI,

I have your letter and enclosures. The Chief Minister's letter[1] seems to me to meet the case. You will now go to Patna and see what the League members have to show and meet the member[s] of the Ministry. Please do not fail to see Dr. Mahmud, Prof. Bari[2] and the other Muslim Minister[3]. Make written notes of what they say. Test accurately what the refugees are getting in the way of food and clothing. Examine the condition of the sanitation of the refugees camps. Thus you will be able to prepare a fairly exhaustive report. Do not make any statement to the Press. Do not be in a hurry to return nor take unnecessary time over the work.

Hazara[4] business is a sorry affair. I have not reached the bottom yet. But of this when we meet.

Things here are not as they should be. That too later.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 807

539. LETTER TO PYARELAL

February 8, 1947

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have your letter. The diary is not ready today. I do not want to detain the courier. I also want to read your letter carefully. Hence, both the diary and the reply will be sent tomorrow. Be completely at

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H. S. Suhrawardy", 28-1-1947. Suhrawardy had written to Zaffar Imam of Bihar Muslim League recommending Gill for work in Bihar.

[2] Abdul Bari, President, Bihar Provincial Congress Committee

[3] Qaiyum Ansari, Minister for P. W. D. and Cottage Industries, Bihar

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam and Abha Gandhi", 15-1-1947

peace and let us stop discussing this subject altogether. Let us only talk about work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

540. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NANDIGRAM,
February 8, 1947

Q. The Mussalmans are boycotting the Hindus. Those Hindus who possess more land than they can till themselves are in a serious difficulty. What is your advice to them? What will they do about the surplus land which they hold but cannot till themselves, even if they take up the plough themselves?

A. In answer Gandhiji said that he had heard of the boycott and had made some remarks at previous meetings. He hoped, indeed he knew, that the boycott was not universal in Noakhali. It was probably confined to a few. Whatever the extent, he had no doubt that it was wrong and would do no good to the boycotters as it could not to those against whom it was directed. That opinion was held by him for a large number of years, say sixty. But there was a condition in which he would conceive it possible, i. e., if the Muslims regarded the Hindus as their enemies and wished to avoid their presence in Noakhali. That would amount to a declaration of war from which every Indian would recoil with horror. In isolated cases, his opinion was emphatic. The Hindu under the boycott would allow his land to lie fallow like the Australians or he would sell the surplus land. What was best was that nobody should possess more than he could himself use. That was the ideal the society should strive to reach.

Q. You have been working here for the last three months. Has there been any appreciable change in the mentality of the Hindus?

A. The question could best be answered by the Hindus concerned. He flattered himself with the belief that the Hindus had, at least for the time being, shed their cowardice to an extent.

Q. There is certainly a peace-loving section among the Mussalmans. After your presence in their midst, have they been influenced to such an extent that they are able to assert themselves against the worse element in their own community?

A. As to this third question he was glad that the questioner admitted that

[1] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary"

there was a peace-loving section among the Muslims of Noakhali. It would be monstrous if there was not. Whether they had developed courage to oppose the bad and mischievous element in Muslim society, he would give the same answer that he gave to the second question. The Muslim friends could reply with certainty. But he was vain enough to believe that several Muslim friends had been so affected. As for instance, the Muslim witnesses in Bhatialpur declared that the destroyed *mandir*[1] he had opened[2] they would defend against destruction in future with their lives. There were other consoling instances he had met with during his tour.

Q. Several workers are engaged in village work according to your direction. what had been the result of their work on the local Hindu or Muslim population? If you had not been here, would their influence have been equal to what it is at present? Will the present influence of your workers be of a lasting character?

A. As to this fourth question Gandhiji said that if he was pure and meant what he said, his work was bound to survive his death. He believed that there must be perfect correspondence between private and public conduct. Similarly, if his associates were actuated purely by the spirit of service and were pure within and without and were not dominated by the glamour that surrounded him, they would work on with unabated zeal and their joint work would flourish with time. He had never subscribed to the superstition that any good work died with the worker's death. On the contrary, all true and solid work made the worker immortal by the survival of his work after his death.

Harijan, 2-3-1947

541. LETTER TO PYARELAL

February 9, 1947

CHI. PYARELAL,

The lessons you give to Manu tend to be very long. I have read them today. Today's lesson is also long. She cannot digest such long lessons. She must be given short lessons and the handwriting should be big and beautiful like beads. Even I am not able to read these. There should not be so much scratching. She has made this complaint twice or thrice before. I have asked her to write herself. What I have written is only on my behalf. But Manu has seen it and she approves of it. Her grasp is slow. Moreover, right now she does not even wish to

[1] Temple
[2] On January 14

see all the letters that are received concerning her. Even so they affect her.

Now Shailen has come to read the newspaper. So, I should stop.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

542. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

February 9, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

It is now 6.30 a. m. I understand about Abha. It is true that I have no time at all. Then why do you ask for letters from me? I am there with you, if you can understand.

Don't be in a hurry. Work only according to your capacity. It is enough if you can sit and spin and continue to double the threads.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Manu sleeps with me. If you want to say anything about it, you may.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 578

543. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

BIJOYNAGAR,
February 9, 1947

Q. It has been our experience that a worker becomes power-loving after some time. How are the rest of his co-workers to keep him in check? In other words, how are we to preserve the democratic character of the organization? We have found that non-co-operation with the party in question does not help. The work of the organization itself suffers.

A. This is not your experience alone; it is almost universal. Love of power is usual in man and often it only dies with his death.

[1] This appeared under the title, "Some Important Questions" with the following editorial note : "Gandhiji dealt with some questions that were sent to him during the day. It being his day of silence, he wrote out the answers which were read out at the prayer meeting."

Therefore, it is difficult for co-workers to keep him in check, if only because they are more likely than not to have the same human frailty; and so long as we do not know a single completely non-violent organization in the world, we cannot claim to know the utterly democratic character of an organization because, as can be definitely proved, no perfect democracy is possible without perfect non-violence at the back of it. The question would be proper if non-co-operation was violent as it often, if not invariably, is. Claiming to know somewhat from experience the non-violent character of non-co-operation, I suggest that given a good cause, non-violent non-co-operation must succeed and no organization can suffer through offering non-violent non-co-operation. The questioner labours under the difficulty of having experience of non-co-operation, at best partially non-violent, at its worst bare-faced violence sailing under the name of non-violence. The pages of the *Harijan* and *Young India* are filled with instances of abortive non-co-operation, because of these two vital defects, non-violence being partial or totally absent. During my long experience, I also noticed that those who complain of others being ambitious of holding power are no less ambitious themselves, and when it is a question of distinguishing between half a dozen and six, it becomes a thankless task.

Q. In almost all villages there are parties and factions. When we draft local help, whether we wish it or not, we become involved in local power politics. How can we steer clear of this difficulty? Should we try to bypass both parties and carry on work with the help of outside workers? Our experience has been that such work becomes entirely contingent upon outside aid and crumbles down as soon as the latter is withdrawn. What should we do then to develop local initiative and foster local co-operation?

A. Alas for India that parties and factions are to be found in the villages as they are to be found in our cities. And when power politics enters our villages with less thought of the welfare of the villages and more of using them for increasing the parties' own power, this becomes a hindrance to the progress of the villagers rather than a help. I would say that whatever be the consequence, we must make use as much as possible of local help and if we are free from the taint of power politics, we are not likely to go wrong. Let us remember that the English educated men and women from the cities have criminally neglected the villages of India which are the backbone of the country. The process of remembering our neglect will induce patience. I have never gone to a single village which is devoid of an honest worker. We

fail to find him when we are not humble enough to recognize any merit in our villagers. Of course, we are to steer clear of local politics and this we shall learn to do when we accept help from all parties and no parties, wherever it is really good. I would regard it as fatal for success to bypass villagers. As I knew this very difficulty, I have tried rigidly to observe the rule of one village one worker, except that where he or she does not know Bengali, an interpreter's help has been given. I can only say that this system has so far answered the purpose. I must, therefore, discount your experiences. I would further suggest that we have got into the vicious habit of coming to hasty conclusions. Before pronouncing such a sweeping condemnation as is implied in the sentence that 'work becomes entirely contingent upon outside aid and crumbles down as soon as the latter is withdrawn', I would go so far as to say that even a few years' experience of residence in a single village, trying to work through local workers, should not be regarded as conclusive proof that work could not be done through and by local workers. The contrary is obviously true. It now becomes unnecessary for me to examine the last sentence in detail. I can categorically say to the principal worker: 'If you have any outside help, get rid of it. Work singly, courageously, intelligently with all local help you can get and, if you do not succeed, blame only yourself and no one else and nothing else.'

Q. If we are to start khadi work in the devastated areas in Noakhali, should we begin with financial and technical aid from outside or slowly build up the whole structure with local men and money alone?

A. I will say in your own words: 'Slowly build up the whole structure with local men and money' taking care to make yourself sure that you know the whole art of spinning in the widest sense I have given to the term. What that sense is you should learn from my writings in the *Harijan* which you will do if you have the requisite eagerness.

Q. The cultivators and land-owners who used to have their land tilled by Muslim labour have lost two crops namely *mircha* (long pepper), *til* seeds and mustard seeds owing to the loot of agricultural implements and bullocks and want of labour from Muslims. The time for ploughing fields for the next *boro* and *aus* crop is impending and unless the cultivators get these within fifteen days, they will almost lose that crop also.

A. This is most unfortunate if it is true. I have no doubt that all such land should be put under cultivation not only for the sake of the

owners but also for the State, which is or should be more concerned with the cultivation of food crops even than the owners. Therefore the owners should ask the authorities for this assistance and the State should see to it that all such land is beneficially cultivated. It is the duty of the State to ask and encourage Muslim labour to render this essential service whether the owner be a Muslim or a Hindu. The State should certainly see that all labour is adequately paid by fixing the wages.

Harijan, 2-3-1947

544. TELEGRAM TO JIVANJI D. DESAI[1]

[On or after *February 9, 1947*][2]

SIMILAR WIRE RECEIVED FROM KISHORELALBHAI.[3] SORRY BUT HELPLESS. SURE THEY WILL GIVE NECESSARY HELP TILL NEW ARRANGEMENT MADE. YOU ARE A TRUST. YOU AND TRUSTEES HAVE TO DECIDE WHETHER MY HELP CAN BE TAKEN CONDUCT NAVAJIVAN PAPERS. I SHALL NOT MISUNDERSTAND ANY OF YOU DISSOCIATE FROM MY ACTIVITIES. IF YOU AND TRUST CONSCIENTIOUSLY DESIRE MY ASSOCIATION I SHALL RESUME EDITING FROM HERE. SHOW THIS TRUSTEES OTHERS AND WIRE.

BAPU

My Days with Gandhi, p. 158

545. TELEGRAM TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA[4]

[On or after *February 9, 1947*]

KISHORELAL
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI

SORRY YOUR DECISION. YOU ARE ENTITLED. REGARD IT HASTY. ANY CASE YOU WILL RENDER NECESSARY HELP TILL NEW ARRANGEMENT MADE. WIRED JIVANJI.

BAPU

My Days with Gandhi, p. 158

[1] According to the source, this and the following telegram were sent on receipt of the addressee's telegram late at night on February 9, 1947.

[2] *ibid*

[3] *Vide* the following item.

[4] *Harijan* papers and correspondence. Charge against Jaisukhlal withdrawn in second letter on learning our misunderstanding. Writing Kishorelal, Narahari."

546. LETTER TO VINOBA BHAVE

February 10, 1947

CHI. VINOBA,

I do not at all feel happy in having to take your time, but you are being drawn into this.

The friends in our circle have been very much upset because of Manu's sleeping with me. Kishorelal's agony is difficult to bear. He is so upset that he is on the verge of breaking down. The same is the case with Narahari and Swami[1]. I do not know how the women at Sevagram and elsewhere must be suffering. Here, on the contrary, everybody knows what is happening but I see no sign of its having any effect. Maybe that prevents me from feeling the full impact of people's reactions. I keep playing with such fancies, for the co-workers' pain makes me lose confidence in myself. My own mind, however, is becoming firmer than ever, for it has been my belief for a long time that that alone is true *brahmacharya* which requires no hedges. My experiments arose from this belief. I did make mistakes inthem. Unthinking imitation may also have harmed the persons concerned. But I am not conscious of myself having fallen.

Manu's sleeping with me is not a part of my experiment, but is a part of the present *yajna*. My mind daily sleeps in an innocent manner with millions of women, and Manu also, who is a blood relation to me, sleeps with me as one of these millions.

If she stops doing that out of deference to custom or to please co-workers, would I not be a hypocrite of the type described in chapter III [of the *Gita*]? If I do not appear to people exactly as I am within, wouldn't that be a blot on my non-violence? I go to this length: Suppose that non-violence has no effect on the people here and I die. If I don't let Manu sleep with me, though I regard it as essential that she should, wouldn't that be a sign of weakness in me, and in that case would not my death, since I would have failed to realize perfect ahimsa, be the best thing for me? In other words, would not my experiment in ahimsa and truth remain incomplete or be tainted? Perhaps I have not expressed this last thought clearly. I referred to the subject in three speeches[2] of mine. Fuller reports

[1] Swami Anand

[2] Of February 1, 2 and 3

appeared in Hindi. I myself drafted the English versions for newspapers. They do not seem to have been published in full. I have, therefore, sent to co-workers copies of the extracts which have appeared. I am sending one to you also. Please let me have, your view.[1]

How is Krishnachandra doing? Ask him to write to me.

How are you?

I finished this letter at 6.15 a. m. local time, that is, 5.15 a. m. according to our own time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 10545. Courtesy: Vinoba Bhave

547. NOTE TO MANU GANDHI

BIJOYANAGAR,

Monday, February 10, 1947

You must discover a remedy for this cold of yours. *Ramanama* is an unfailing remedy. If so, it must cure the cold. Remember you had to admit this only a little while ago. I think you should wrap something round your chest and throat. Whatever it may be there is a law concerning *Ramanama* which brooks no exception, namely, that Nature's laws must not be violated. Learn to bear this in mind.

[From Gujarati]

Eklo Jane Re, p. 128

548. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

BIJOYNAGAR,

February 10, 1947

At the outset Gandhiji referred to the fact that he was to go to Gopinathpur and was assured that it was no more than one and a half miles. He began his trek but Gopinathpur seemed to be receding from view. When they had walked for forty-five minutes he said he should go no further if he was not to collapse. He therefore, retraced his steps. It took full one hour and twenty minutes which was too much for

[1] The addressee in his letter dated February 25, 1947, replied that he did not agree with Gandhiji on this issue, as any consciousness of the difference between man and woman was contrary to ideal *brahmacharya.* But he did not wish to argue.

[2] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary"

him. In future, those who invited him to walk to a place should measure the time taken by a leisurely walk. He tendered his apology to the Hindus and Muslims of Gopinathpur and they owed an apology to Noakhali for not having been accurate and precise in their speech. He incidentally mentioned that the people were found to have blown their noses on the path. This was dangerous and dirty, especially for a people who had the habit of walking barefoot.

A friend had told him that he found a Muslim trader who had proper scales and a Hindu who had improper scales and asked him whether it wasnot true that the Muslim traders were honest and the Hindu traders dishonest. He was sure that the inference was wrong. In this imperfect world no community was wholly honest or dishonest. All he could say was that a man who sported false scales for deceiving his customers was a criminal. But he could not take it upon himself to condemn the whole group or community.

Q. You have said that you will stay here as long as perfect peace and amity between the two communities was not established and that you will die here if necessary. Do you not think that such a long stay here will unnecessarily focus Indian and world attention on Noakhali, leading people to think that excesses still continued to be committed here, whereas on the contrary no unseemly acts have been committed by Mussalmans for sometime now?

A. No impartial observer could draw the mischievous inference from his presence. He was there as their friend and servant. His presence had certainly advertised Noakhali as a beautiful place which would be a paradise on earth if the Hindus and the Muslims lived in hearty friendship. It may be that at the end of the chapter he might be noted down as a failure who knew very little about ahimsa. Moreover, it was impossible for him to stay in Noakhali if the Hindus and the Muslims satisfied him that they had established hearty friendship between themselves. He was sorry to tell them that he had evidence to show that things were not quite as they should be.

Q. Don't you think that the Hindus are artificially keeping up the appearance of tension by staying away from their homes in spite of promises of good behaviour by the Mussalmans which they have also made good in cases where they have been given an opportunity?

A. He did not think that many Hindus were wilfully staying away from their homes. No one would want to be away from his home without attractive inducements. He had heard nothing of such inducements. But he knew that fright and the absence of the wherewithal were keeping them back. Nevertheless, he was assured by the officials that the number returning was satisfactory. They could not cope with a greater number. When these obvious causes were present there was no occasion to draw far-fetched inferences which could not be proved. If, however, there were any

instigators keeping them back, the law was there to punish them. The proof of the pudding was in the eating. If it was true that the general body of the Muslims really wanted the refugees back, he was quite sure they would gladly return. But the picture was not so rosy as was painted by the questioner.

Q. Don't you think that the dictates of non-violence and friendship to all demand withdrawal or dropping of cases against the Mussalmans?

A. He did not know that there was much non-violence in the air. Even non-violent conduct could not arrest the course of law. And non-violent conduct on the part of the frightened injured party could not operate until the culprits declared themselves and were penitent. The fact was that not only was there no penitence on their part, but they were absconding. He was averse to mass arrests. And he was for severe punishment of those who were proved to have manufactured complaints.

Q. Is not the double-faced policy of the Cabinet Mission at the root of the present trouble between the League and the Congress and ultimately between the Muslims and the Hindus?

A. He would not accuse the Cabinet Mission of double-dealing. They had honestly suggested a solution which in their opinion was fair. The beauty of the Paper was that it contained no compulsion. Naturally, after acceptance the clauses became obligatory for the accepting party. But any party could refuse acceptance. Thus if Assam in the east and Baluchistan in the west rejected the Grouping, no power on earth could compel them under the Cabinet Mission Paper. Lastly, assuming that the Cabinet Mission Paper was a trap, why should the Congress and the League fall into it?

Q. Pakistan means complete independence for the Muslims in the Muslim majority Provinces and for the Hindus in Hindu majority Provinces. Why then does the Congress object to it?

A. The answer was simple. If Pakistan meant independence only to the Muslims in the Muslim majority provinces and *vice versa*, it was summarily rejected. Happily not one Muslim leader, certainly not the Qaid-e-Azam, had ever given that meaning. Were the Hindus in Bihar to be independent and the Muslims helots? Or were the Hindus to be helots in Bengal? He hoped not.

Q. Can there be any hope of establishing Hindu-Muslim unity here in spite of the Congress-League differences which are at the root of all the troubles everywhere? Even if it is established, how long can it be expected to last?

A. He admitted that Hindu-Muslim unity could not be sustained in the face of Congress-League differences. He hoped, however, that apart from party politics, whilst there was time, the Hindus and the Muslims in Noakhali would act together as real friends. They should set an example to all India and especially to the League and the Congress. Anyway, that was the mission that brought him to Noakhali. He

wanted to pass his examination in pure ahimsa. If it was pure, it must result in establishing that friendship which he desired at heart. Therefore, if it was not established, the failure would be his. And as ahimsa knew no failure, he had said he would do or die in Noakhali. Let the questioner and those who thought like him help the fruition of the effort.

Harijan, 9-3-1947

549. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

HAMCHANDI,
February 11, 1947

QUESTION: A Bill[1] has been introduced in the Bengal Assembly which contemplates reduction of the landlord's share from one-half to one-third of the crop in certain cases. According to the new proposal, a farmer who has been in service on his master's land on or after December 22, 1946 cannot be ousted from the land for a term of three years. Muslim farmers on the *char* lands have suddenly developed extraordinary enthusiasm for securing land on the *barga* system from Hindu land-owners. Many of the so-called owners in *char* lands are in fact farmers themselves, only they left the land in charge of the *bargadars* (tenants) when they fled during the riots in October last. Muslim farmers cannot just now be ousted from the land as the crop will not mature till about the month of June. Hindus will, therefore, lose possession of the land for the next three years at least if the Bill becomes law. Now that Hindu farmers are once more coming back to their lands, what should they do in order not to lose their agricultural occupation through the vagaries of the law?

ANSWER: It is improper to die before one's death. Let them wait till the Bill becomes law. Yet, I would advise them to welcome reduction of the landlord's share from one-half to one-third. The time is coming when all lands will belong to the State, that is, to the labourer on the land. This is not to be looked upon as a communal question. It may be that the landlords are Hindus in Noakhali. But if the legislation is sound, it should not matter whom it affects. I have serious doubts as to the propriety of not ousting labourers for a period of three years. I would want to see the proposed legislation. As to the alleged usurpation of land by the Muslims, in my opinion, that is indefensible, if true. Let there be authentic instances and I have no doubt that the grievances would be remedied. No Government of the people can, for a moment, tolerate usurpation. If there are Muslims who had tilled the land that was unoccupied by reason of the

[1] Bargadars (Land Tenancy) Bill

disturbances, all that the tiller could claim is wages for the work done on the land. In reality, if he tilled the land for his neighbour who was in adversity, it would be a neighbourly act for which there could be no remuneration. Any such proved usurpation has to be reported to get remedied.

Q. You have advised both men and women to turn into voluntary labourers to hold no more land than they can till themselves. But under our present social system in which the State does not take responsibility for the education of the young and the maintenance of the aged and the infirm when there is none else to look after them, these expenses are paid out of rent received from the land or from profits derived from private ownership. What will happen to the above persons when land and capital are taken away from them? Could not suffering be avoided and adequate provision made for the education of the young and the maintenance of the aged or infirm?

A. I admit I gave the advice and I still adhere to it. I laid down a universal proposition for an ideal society. In the present case it is a virtue of necessity for it is said that they cannot get labour which is principally Muslim. The question about the education of the young and maintenance of the old and the infirm should not arise. The young would get education at home and persons who work willingly will find that the old and infirm would be supported.

I am, however, free to confess that it is the business of the State to provide suitable education for the young and support for the aged and infirm. It should also be remembered that I have not suggested that owners should give up their land free of price. They would sell it on suitable terms or hold on to it and let it lie fallow. It will not hurt.

The Hindu, 14-2-1947

550. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

February 12, 1947

If the ahimsa about which I have written so much and which I have striven to realize in practice all these years does not answer in a crisis, it ceases to have any value in my eyes. Your affection prompts you to say that if only I were near you, all would be well.[1] The truth however is that so long as I cannot make good here, I can be of no use anywhere.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p. 207

[1] The addressee, had suggested to Gandhiji to make Calcutta his headquarters if he could not go and stay at Delhi.

551. LETTER TO A. ZAMAN

KAFILATOLI,
February 12, 1947

DEAR ZAMAN SAHEB[1],

Herewith I enclose report of an extraodinary situation. On the strength of declaration made on behalf of the Government, refugees have returned or are prepared to return. There seems to be no doubt whatsoever that grants are due to these people; and yet through some bungling between the C. O. and the President of the Union Board, the thing is held up.

I do hope that you will act quickly, for in such cases quickness is the essence of the thing if a breakdown is to be avoided.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

552. LETTER TO PYARELAL

February 12, 1947

CHI. PYARELAL,

Your handwriting is good on the first page. After that it has deteriorated. Even if it takes time, if you wrote just like on the first page, you would learn to write well. It would save a lot of time and one would like to read merely for the handwriting. It was for the sake of the handwriting that I read Jain's interesting account. I also learnt a new meaning of the word 'locust'. Now I shall also test Manu with interest on the same thing. It would be nice if you sent a story and a *sloka* on alternate days. It would be better that instead of Manu I think in the matter. Right now I am shaping her and I shall continue to do so as long as she does what I say.

Kishorelal, etc., are continuing their attacks.[2] It is better that you do not involve yourself in the matter. Only I should bear that burden.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Additional District Magistrate of Noakhali, who was in charge of relief and rehabilitation.

[2] Gandhiji had been facing up to a barrage of criticism from friends over his experiment of having Manu Gandhi sleep with him; *vide* also "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 1/2-2-1947 and "Letter to Vinoba Bhave", 10-2-1947

553. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

KAFILATALI,

February 12, 1947

Gandhiji said that when he was studying in London over 45 years ago, he had read of the bravery of the Manipuris. The members of the delegation[1], Gandhiji said, had complained to him that although caste Hindus in Assam considered the Manipuris part of themselves, yet they did not look after the interests of the Manipuris who had a separate language, a separate culture and a separate tradition of their own. The caste Hindus, the delegation had complained, took advantage of the presence of the Manipuris in their midst only to swell their votes. But none either understood or cared for the Manipuris' interests. Therefore, they thought, some arrangement should be made for safeguarding their interests.

Gandhiji said that all that he wanted to say on this was that if Hinduism was to survive, it would have to be casteless. He had long since forgotten that he belonged to any caste. Therefore, he delighted in calling himself a Bhangi and acting like one. He did not believe in any artificial divisions.

If caste Hindus meant Brahmin, Kshatriya and Vaishya, these three were a hopeless minority which, when the British had wholly withdrawn and independence was truly established would, as the three superior castes, be wholly extinct. Gandhiji hoped that all inequalities would be a thing of the past. Then the so-called downtrodden would come into their own.

Gandhiji said that, when untouchability was really gone, there would be no caste. But while the caste system was in vogue, the untouchables would naturally want to belong to the higher castes. But that was an impossibility. Therefore any such attempt, according to Mahatma Gandhi, meant war among caste members on the one hand and the untouchables on the other. But when castes disappeared, all would be Hindus pure and simple. What he would say to the untouchables was that they should abolish all distinctions among themselves and observe the laws of cleanliness better than the so-called caste Hindus. And instead of working for separate treatment for themselves they should endeavour to merge themselves in the ocean of Hindu humanity.

Gandhiji, replying to a question, said he was emphatically of the opinion that the Hindus of Noakhali should not live in a special centre in Noakhali and erect factories where they could work. Apart from his views on cottage industries, he could

[1]The delegation which met Gandhiji on February 11 had come from Cachar District; it claimed for the two Lakhs of Manipuris in Assam minority representation in the Assam Assembly.

not contemplate separate quarters and separate industries for them. That was the way to establish poisonous Pakistan all over India.

He could not approve of the idea anywhere in India. That was the way to create wars among themselves. It was not the way to independence. He could not approve of separate "quarters", for communities professing different religions.

Independent India, as conceived by me, will have all Indians belonging to different religions living in perfect friendship. There need be no millionaires and no paupers; all would belong to the State, for the State belonged to them. I will die in the act of realizing this dream. I would not wish to live to see India torn asunder by civil strife.

The Hindu, 13-2-1947 and 15-2-1947

554. NOTE ON TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INQUIRY COMMISSION[1]

[Before *February 13, 1947*][2]

To examine and report upon the cause of the recent communal disturbances beginning on . . .[3] and the measures taken by the Government of Bihar to deal with them; also to state what steps still remain to be taken by the Government of Bihar in order to restore confidence among the injured Muslims.

2. The enquiry shall be open to the public and the Judge[4] shall have all the powers required in law to call for records and to summon witnesses.

3. The Judge is to present his report to the Government on or before. . . .

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 28

[1] This note was sent to the Bihar Ministers. On February 13, Shrikrishna Sinha, Chief Minister of Bihar, while replying to the debate in the Assembly on the no-confidence motion against his Ministry, announced the Government's decision to appoint a Commission of Inquiry to report on the communal disturbances in Bihar.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Omissions as in the source

[4] Justice Reuben of Patna High Court was to be the one-man Commission. Ultimately however, on 30th October, 1947, the Bihar Cabinet decided to drop the idea of appointing the Commission.

555. A LETTER

KEROA EAST,
February [*13*][1], *1947*

One should not associate with a man who follows immoral ways. . . .[2] He deserves no respect, no matter how highly placed a person he might be. So far God has protected my honour. . . .[3] As for condemnation by man I have become thick-skinned.

[From Gujarati]

Eklo Jane Re, p. 138

556. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[4]

EAST KEROA,
February 13, 1947

After congratulating the audience on the manner in which they had kept time during the *Ramdhun*, Gandhiji dealt with the two questions which had been put to him in course of the day.

Q. We agree that intrinsically a movement for reducing the share of the owner from half to a third of the crop is justified.[5] But could not the present *Tebhaga* movement in Bengal be postponed until such time as when the affected persons can be smoothly absorbed in other occupations according to some long-term plan sponsored by the State? We know you have said that the only way to effect such a radical transformation in society is through non-violence. But interested parties will sleep over that portion of your advice and parade your moral support to their demand and carry on the movement in their own violent way. Hence is it not wrong for you to lend support to the Movement under the present circumstances when there is every chance of the entire middle class of Bengal being completely ruined as a result? The common villager will also suffer no less because he will also be deprived of the services now being rendered to the village economy by them.

A. In reply, Gandhiji uttered the warning that he only dealt with principles as he knew them. He had not studied the local question. Therefore, the questioner ran the risk of his ignorance causing injustice.

He felt that the question betrayed exaggeration on the part of the questioner.

[1] The source has 14, which appears to be a printer's error.
[2] Omissions as in the source
[3] *ibid*
[4] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary"
[5] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 11-2-1947

There was no ruin impending for the landlord. His land was not being confiscated. His portion, which he could take even if he was in Timbuktu, was merely to be reduced from 50% to 33%. He could see no ruin in the proposal. He was afraid they were too much obsessed by the communal question. They should rise above it and examine every problem strictly on merits. Then they would never go wrong. Therefore they should accept the moral principle underlying the demand for reduction of the owner's share and work for solid amendments in which they were likely to succeed. Let them not face confiscation rather than moderate reduction. Let them remember that for years past India had lived through confiscation. Industry after industry had been ruined and both the artisans as well as the farmers of India had been progressively reduced to poverty.

If the desired changes were brought about through non-violent means, the world would not be deprived of the talents of the classes, but then the latter would not exercise them at the expense of the labourers. In the non-violent order of the future, the land would belong to the State, for had it not been said '*sabhi bhumi Gopalki*'[1]? Under such dispensation, there would be no waste of talents and labour. This would be impossible through violent means. It was therefore a truism to say that the utter ruin of the land-owners brought about through violence would also involve the ruin of the labourers in the end. If the land-owners, therefore, acted wisely, no party would lose.

Q. Some women workers who earn part of their living by weaving mats were advised by you the other day to work on co-operative principles. Bengal's agriculture has been reduced to an uneconomic proposition through extreme fragmentation of holdings. Would you advise farmers also to adopt co-operative methods? If so, how are they to effect this under the present system of land-ownership? Should the State make the necessary changes in the law? If the State is not ready, but the people so desire, how are they to work through their own organizations to this end?

A. Replying to the first part of the question, Gandhiji said that he had no doubt that the system of co-operation was far more necessary for the agriculturists than for the mat weavers. The land, as he maintained, belonged to the State; therefore, it yielded the largest return when it was worked co-operatively. Let it be remembered that co-operation should be based on strict non-violence. There was no such thing as success of violent co-operation. Hitler was a forcible example of the latter. He also talked vainly of co-operation which was forced upon the people and everyone knew where Germany had been led as a result.

Gandhiji concluded by saying that it would be a sad thing if India also tried to build up the new society based on co-operation by means of violence. Good brought about through force destroyed individuality. Only when the change was effected

[1] All land belongs to God.

through the persuasive power of non-violent non-co-operation, i. e., love, could the foundation of individuality be preserved and real abiding progress be assured for the world.

Harijan, 9-3-1947

557. LETTER TO PYARELAL

February 13, 1947

CHI. PYARELAL,

Do whatever you can about Shahpur. The task is very difficult. But it has to be so. Manu's lesson is as short is it should be. The handwriting is not big and beautiful. There is also shortage of space. It should not be so. Today this much is enough.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

558. TELEGRAM TO HINDI TATWAJNAN PRACHAR SAMITI

[On or before *February 14, 1947*][1]

I CANNOT LEAVE HERE. OTHERWISE TOO I WOULD NOT WISH TO PRESIDE.[2]

The Bombay Chronicle, 15-2-1947

559. LETTER TO SHANTI GHOSH

February 14, 1947

CHI. SHANTI,

Sudhir has told me everything about you. Of course he had also written to me. I congratulate you and Sudhir on having taken the decision independently. It is a different thing that I do not approve of your decision. I have written this letter in order to congratulate you,

[1] The telegram appeared under the date-line Ahmedabad, February 14.

[2] Over the all-religion's conference to be held in Ahmedabad in April

not to stress our difference of opinion. Sushila[1] is going to Delhi for two days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Sudhir Ghosh Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

560. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

WEST KEROA,

February 14, 1947

Gandhiji read two passages from Abdullah Suhrawardy's collections of the sayings of the Prophet. Three Muslim friends of the place had come to him and asked him to pray that God might make both [Hindus and Muslims] live in peace and friendship. When these friends came he was reading the sayings which he proposed to read to them. They were as follows :

Be in the world like a traveller, or like a passer-on, and reckon yourself as of the dead.

He considered it as a gem of gems. They knew that death might overtake them any moment. What a fine preparation for the event if all became as dead. The very next question was who was the best man and who was the worst. The Prophet considered him to be the best who lived long and performed good acts and him the worst who did bad acts. It was a striking saying that man was to be judged by what he did, and not by what he said.

These sayings were for all men and women and not merely for those who called themselves Muslims. Was the Hindu part of the audience doing good acts? Was untouchability a good act? He had shouted from the house-tops that it was a blot on Hinduism. So long as that blot remained, there was no peace and freedom for India. The British would go but their freedom would not come without the complete removal of untouchability.

Harijan, 9-3-1947

[1] Sushila Nayyar

[2] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary"

561. LETTER TO MADALASA

RAIPURA,
February 15, 1947

CHI. MADALASA[1],

I got your letter. You have not asked for a reply but I am writing one because I find that you still remain too much concerned with small matters. If the fact of Manu sleeping with me has not upset you and you have not lost faith in me, you should take my advice and merge yourself in Shriman. I have observed that he is all adoration for you. You also adore him, but you lack his wisdom. I see nothing wrong in your telling Vasanti everything. She is a wise woman, but I don't think she is capable of guiding you. I have no doubt that your happiness lies in merging yourself in Shriman. If you were a woman of spiritual knowledge, I would have advised you to oppose Shriman. But you admit that you have no such knowledge. If this advice appeals to you, act upon it whole-heartedly. If you have the slightest doubt, show this letter to Vinoba and abide by his advice. Even otherwise you should show this letter to Vinoba. Show it to Vasanti, too. I understand about Ram[2]'s betrothal. I did not take any interest in the affair. May both be happy and, by dedicating themselves to selfless service, bring still greater lustre to Father's name. Convey this to Ram.

I got your second letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5853

562. LETTER TO PYARELAL

February 15, 1947

CHI. PYARELAL,

I received your letter just now. The lesson for Manu is attractive from the point of view of handwriting. It needs more meticulousness. As you become more meticulous, your handwriting will become as beautiful as pearls. Then I shall not only read it myself, I shall also make Manu read it. This time there are four pages. My suggestion is that just two pages will be sufficient. Manu will not be able to take in

[1] Daughter of Jamnalal Bajaj, married to Shriman Narayan
[2] Ramkrishna Bajaj, addressee's brother

more at present because she has a heavy load of work and she does not wish to give up any of it. So she has no time left. I have not even asked her what she herself has in mind. I am not asking her even while dictating this. I am stealing even this little time. I am quite fatigued mentally and physically. The body wants to relax. Not so the mind. The mind is absorbed in Bengali. But the memory having become blunted, the progress is slow. Swamiji is not here. As such, I am the only one left to teach Sanskrit. And I cannot spare time. One cannot say that even Swamiji was giving much time. Manu's development does not depend on learning all that. It largely depends on me. And so, it will depend on my efficiency and patience. I have not even in my dream considered keeping Kishorelal's letter, or any letter, secret from you. But I do wish to spare you mental anguish. But if you cannot check your curiosity it would be only proper that you should see it. So I am sending you the letter. Return it after reading. From my point of view, it contains as much ignorance as love. From his point of view, there is a whole group of people who believe that my practice is impelled by lust. How can I say that the view of this group is altogether wrong ? For, man does not know himself. You will not find any open accusation made in these letters, though in Devdas's letter it is openly made. Whether or not I am free from physical desire will probably be known only after my death. The term 'probably' is deliberately used, because it does not always happen that we are able to correctly judge a man after his death. Only God understands the heart of man. When I cannot say with any certainty about myself that I do not feel the weight of whatever is happening, who can say that about Manu ? She appears to be unconcerned, but she herself may not be fully aware of the turmoil in her mind. I am not bothering her about it. I am carrying on, leaving everything in the hands of God. For me, all this is an inseparable part of the *yajna* and it remains to be seen how far my non–attachment can carry.

I have read both your papers. I am sending them back, though you have said that it is not necessary to return the second paper. Your reply to Satis Babu is correct. The reply about Dr. Chandra Shekhar is also correct. He must certainly be given medicines, etc. If possible, persuade him to reduce the use of medicines. More than medicines, what is needed is nursing and reassurance.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

563. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

RAIPURA,
February 15, 1947

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

I sent you a letter through Sushila. But I have been upset somewhat by Sardar's letter. Devdas's letter is still ringing in my ears. I do not remember what I wrote to you, for I have not kept a copy of it. All I wish today to write is that you should give up your attitude of neutrality. Sardar is quite clear in his mind that what I look upon as my dharma is really *adharma*. Devdas of course has written as much. I have great faith in Sardar's judgment. I have faith in Devdas's judgment too, but then, though grown up, in my eyes he is still a child. This cannot be said of Sardar. Kishorelal and Narahari too are grown-ups; but it is not difficult for me to understand their opposition. The link between you and me is your faith that my life is pure, spotless and wholly dedicated to the performance of dharma. If that is not so, very little else remains. I would, therefore, like you to take full part in this discussion, though not necessarily publicly—for I certainly do not want your business to suffer. But if I am conducting myself sinfully, it becomes the duty of all friends to oppose me vehemently. A satyagrahi may end up as a *duragrahi* if he comes to regard untruth as truth—that being the only distinction between the two. I believe that is not the case with me; but that means little, for after all I am not God. I can commit mistakes; I have committed mistakes; this may prove to be my biggest at the fag end of my life. If that be so, all my well-wishers can open my eyes if they oppose me. If they do not I shall go from here even as I am. Whatever I am doing here is as a part of my *yajna*. There is nothing I do knowingly which is not a part and parcel of that *yajna*. Even the rest I take is as a part of that *yajna*.

I am dictating this with a mud-pack over my eyes and abdomen. Shortly afterwards I shall be going to the evening prayer meeting. This business about Manu is taking up a lot of my time, but I do not mind it because even her presence here is for the sake of that *yajna*. Her test constitutes a part of that *yajna*. I may not be able to explain it to you—that is a different matter. The point I must make my friends grasp is this: When I take Manu in my lap, do I do so as a pure-hearted father or as a father who has strayed from the path of virtue?

What I am doing is nothing new to me; in thought I have done it over the last 50 years; in action, in varying degrees, over quite a number of years. Even if you sever all connection with me, I would not feel hurt. Just as I want to stick to my dharma, you have to stick to yours.

To come to another matter, the Hindu weavers here—known as *tantis*—are very angry. Their spinning-wheels and houses have been for the most part burnt. If they do not get a supply of yarn they have either to be idle or take to earth work as labourers. The officer in charge here tells me that the Government cannot provide them yarn unless the Central Government helps. I told him I might be able to obtain the needed supply if they were prepared to pay for it. He has agreed. Can you supply the yarn? If yes, then how much, when and at what price? Will it be necessary to obtain the sanction of the Interim Government? Please let me know in detail.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C. W. 8086. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

564. A TALK[1]

RAIPURA,

February 15, 1947

Give that welcome address to me here and now. How can I receive a welcome address at a time like this? And love is a thing of the heart. There is no need to make a show of your sincere feeling. And after all, what have I done? Whatever good has come is entirely due to God's grace. Keep your love for me in your hearts and carry on. If you have love for me do the work I have undertaken. It is as good as having given me an address. Don't frighten others or be afraid of them.

[From Gujarati]

Eklo Jane Re, p. 141

[1] Manu Gandhi explains that four or five representatives of Muslims, Hindus and weavers of the town met Gandhiji.

565. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

RAIPURA,
February 15, 1947

The first question was: All over the district of Noakhali there is talk that the Muslim population should boycott the Hindus in every way. Some Muslims who have worked for the Hindus recently or helped them during the riots report that they are under threat of boycott. In this context what should be the duty of those Muslims who genuinely desire peace.

Gandhiji replied that he had heard of the boycott before. But he entertained the hope that such was not the case on any extensive scale. He had one case brought to his notice three or four days ago by a Muslim traveller from Gujarat who had come to see him. He was rebuked for daring to want to see him. The traveller stood his ground and came out of the ordeal safely. Another poor Muslim who had come today was threatened with dire penalty if he dared to go to him. He did not know what truth there was in the report. The speaker then instanced printed leaflets that were pasted on the walls in the name of the Muslim *pituni*[2] Party. These instances gave colour to the question. He would say to the Muslim friends and others that these things should not frighten or disturb them. They should ignore these things if they were isolated instances. If they were on an extensive scale, probably the Government would deal with the situation. If unfortunately boycott became the policy of the Government, it would be a serious matter. He could only think non-violently. If they gave proper compensation he would probably advise acceptance. He could not think out there and then the pros and cons. If, on the other hand, they resorted to confiscation, he would advise people to stand their ground and refuse to leave their homesteads even on pain of death. This he would say of all provinces whether Muslim majority or Hindu majority. He however hoped that no Government would be mad enough to subscribe to the policy of boycott whether with or without compensation. Those who belonged to the land for ages could not be removed from their homesteads merely for the reason that they found themselves in a minority. That was no religion, Hindu, Muslim, Christian or any other. It was intolerance.

The second question was: At East Keroa you advised[3] peasants to work co-operatively in their fields. Should they pool together their land and divide the crop in proportion to the area of the fields they held? Would you give us an outline of the idea of how exactly they are to work in a co-operative manner?

Gandhiji said that the question was good and admitted of a simple answer. His

[1] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary"
[2] Violent
[3] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 13-2-1947

notion of co-operation was that the land would be held in co-operation by the owners and tilled and cultivated also in co-operation. This would cause a saving of labour, capital, tools, etc. The owners would work in co-operation and own capital, tools, animals and seeds etc., in co-operation. Co-operative farming of his conception would change the face of the land and banish poverty and idleness from their midst. All this was only possible if people became friends of one another and as one family. When that happy event took place, there would be no ugly sore in the form of communal problem.

Harijan, 9-3-1947

566. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

RAIPURA,
February 16, 1947

Gandhiji referred to the two visits[2] and expressed his gratefulness for being able to pay them. He then referred briefly to the speech reported to have been made by the ex-Premier Maulvi Fazlul Huq. He was reported to have said that as a non-Muslim Gandhi should not preach the teachings of Islam, that instead of Hindu-Muslim unity he was creating bitterness between the two communities and that had he (Gandhiji) gone to Barisal[3] he would have driven him into the canal. He also wondered how the Muslims of Noakhali and Tippera could tolerate Gandhi's presence so long.

Gandhiji said that he had grave doubts about the accuracy of the report. If it was the correct summary of the speech, he would consider it to be most unfortunate coming from a man holding the responsible position that the Maulvi Saheb held and aspiring to be the President of the Muslim League. He was not aware of having done anything to create bitterness between the two communities. The speaker had never claimed to preach Islam. What he had undoubtedly done was to interpret the teachings of the Prophet and refer to them in his own speeches. His interpretation was submitted for acceptance or rejection.

In the same speech Fazlul Huq had said that when Gandhiji returned from South Africa he had asked him (Gandhiji) to embrace Islam, whereupon Gandhiji had said that he was a Muslim in the true sense of the term. Mr. Huq had requested him to proclaim it publicly, but Gandhiji refused to do so. He said that he had no recollection whatsoever of the conversation and he was never in the habit of suppressing from the public what he had said privately. The audience, however, knew that he had stated in

[1] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary"

[2] Gandhiji had attended a community dinner and had visited a mosque in Raipura.

[3] Fazlul Huq's home town

various speeches in the district that he considered himself as good a Muslim as he was a Hindu and for that matter he regarded himself as an equally good Christian or Parsi. That such a claim would be rejected and on some occasions was rejected, he knew. That, however, did not affect his fundamental position and if he had said what was attributed to him by Fazlul Huq, Gandhiji would gladly declare his repentance if he would believe what was represented to him. Indeed he had put forth the claim in South Africa to be a good Mussalman simultaneously with being a good member of the other religions of the world. He would repeat for the sake of the ex-Premier of Bengal that he was misreported and he would welcome the correct version from him.[1]

Harijan, 9-3-1947

[1]*Vide* also "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 19-2-1947

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

TALK WITH HINDU WORKERS[1]

November 21, 1946

Your proposal that these demands should be satisfied before the Peace Committees can be formed, virtually means a summary rejection of the peace offer. This will only succeed in embittering feelings still further. The Government offer should be accepted on grounds of expediency. I do not however plead for peace at any price, certainly not at the price of honour. Let us act on the square, and let us put them in the wrong. It was exactly in this way that Indians were able to gain the silent sympathy of a large number of Europeans in South Africa. If, after a fair trial, the Committees are found unworkable, you can come out with your honour intact. That sense of honour will give you a courage which no man can beat.

If I succeed cent per cent in my own plan, then conditions will improve. But of this, there does not seem to be any prospect at the present moment. Yet, as a man of hope, I continue to hope against hope. In the present case, I confess through bitter experience that there is no sign of change of heart, but certainly there has been a change of plan. Considerations of expediency demand that the proposal should therefore be accepted.

He also added that hitherto our non-violence had been non-violence of the weak; but now that we had to apply it against a section of our own countrymen instead of against the British, it had to be non-violence of the strong.

The demands were now examined one by one. In place of the demand that certain Muslim officers should be replaced by Hindu officers, Gandhiji remarked that it was unreasonable and a communal demand.

While putting forward such a proposal, you should ask yourself if the Muslims of Bihar can reasonably make a similar demand. In my opinion, the present demand is absurd and I would personally never countenance it. You can, of course, substitute in its place, “impartial officers in place of biased ones”; that would be fair.

Then there was a demand for the removal of the Superintendent of Police. Gandhiji was against it also. In his opinion, the guilt lay elsewhere. The Chief Minister’s wishes might have been carried out by this officer, for he could not

[1] *Vide* “Letter to Devprakash Nayyar”, 21-11-1946

obviously act on his own initiative. Someone remarked that Abdullah Saheb was a man without conscience. Gandhiji immediately replied :

I have yet to see a Police Superintendent who has a conscience. Mr. Suhrawardy was perhaps the fulcrum. He wanted to show the whole world what he was capable of doing. But he over-reached himself.

Someone then pointed out to Gandhiji that the Ministry in Bihar had employed Muslim armed soldiers to quell the disturbances, the suggestion being that this was for the appeasement of the Muslims. Gandhiji was clearly of opinion that such a thing, if true, was surely a sign of weakness.

The last point raised was in connection with the Hindu members of the Peace Committees. Manoranjan Chaudhuri pleaded for postponement, as most of the leading Hindus had left the district and only poor weavers, blacksmiths or farmers remained behind. If these were to be on the Committees, they would be no match for the more intelligent and educated Mussalman representatives. Gandhiji said with some warmth that if many had fled, leaving neighbours to their own fate, they did not deserve to be called leaders. The seats would have to be occupied by barbers, washermen and the like, who were as much interested in the preservation of their life and property as the rich. It was not unlikely that they might submit to the influence of Muslim members. But the risk had to be run if true democracy was to be evolved. Gandhiji then referred to the history of democracy in England, and expressed his admiration for the manner in which the common people of England had fought every inch of the ground for the preservation of their rights; and in this connection he mentioned the name of Wat Tyler.

My Days with Gandhi, pp. 60-2

APPENDIX II

BRITISH CABINET'S STATEMENT ON GROUPING[1]

December 6, 1946

The conversations held by His Majesty's Government with Pandit Nehru, Mr. Jinnah, Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan and Sardar Baldev Singh came to an end this evening, as Pandit Nehru and Sardar Baldev Singh are returning to India tomorrow morning.

The object of the conversations has been to obtain the participation and co-

[1]*Vide* "Extract from Diary", 2-12-1946 and "Interview to a Muslim Visitor", 12-1-1947

operation of all parties in the Constituent Assembly. It is not expected that any final settlement could be arrived at since the Indian representatives must consult their colleagues before any final decision is reached.

The main difficulty that has arisen has been over the interpretation of paragraph 19(v) and (viii) of the Cabinet Mission's Statement[1] of May 16, relating to the Meetings in Sections which run as follows :

> *Paragraph 19(v)* : These Sections shall proceed to settle provincial constitutions for the Provinces included in each Section and shall also decide whether any Group constitution shall be set up for those Provinces and if so, with what provincial subjects the Group should deal. Provinces should have power to opt out of Groups in accordance with the provisions of sub-clause (viii) below :
>
> *Paragraph 19(viii)* : As soon as the new constitutional arrangements have come into operation, it shall be open to any Province to elect to come out of any Group in which it has been placed. Such a decision shall be taken by the Legislature of the Province after the first General Election under the new Constitution.

The Cabinet Mission have throughout maintained the view that the decisions of the Sections should, in the absence of agreement to the contrary, be taken by simple majority vote of the representatives in the Sections. This view has been accepted by the Muslim League, but the Congress have put forward a different view. They have asserted that the true meaning of the Statement, read as a whole, is that the Provinces have a right to decide both as to Grouping and as to their own constitutions.

His Majesty's Government have had legal advice which confirms that the Statement of May 16 means what the Cabinet Mission have always stated was their intention. This part of the Statement, as so interpreted, must, therefore, be considered an essential part of the scheme of May 16, for enabling the Indian people to formulate a constitution which His Majesty's Government would be prepared to submit to Parliament. It should, therefore, be accepted by all parties in the Constituent Assembly.

It is however, clear that other questions of interpretation of the Statement of May 16 may arise, and His Majesty's Government hope that if the Council of the Muslim League are able to agree to participate in the Constituent Assembly, they will also agree, as have the Congress, that the Federal Court should be asked to decide matters of interpretation that may be referred to them by either side and will accept such a decision, so that the procedure both in the Union Constituent Assembly and in

[1] *Vide* "Statement of Cabinet Delegation and Viceroy", 1 6-5-1946

the Sections may accord with the Cabinet Mission's Plan.

On the matter immediately in dispute, His Majesty's Government urge the Congress to accept the view of the Cabinet Mission in order that the way may be opened for the Muslim League to reconsider their attitude. If, in spite of this reaffirmation of the intention of the Cabinet Mission, the Constituent Assembly desires that this fundamental point should be referred for the decision of the Federal Court, such reference should be made at a very early date. It will then be reasonable that the meetings of the Sections of the Constituent Assembly should be postponed until the decision of the Federal Court is known.

There has never been any prospect of success for the Constituent Assembly, except upon the basis of agreed procedure. Should a constitution come to be framed by a Constituent Assembly in which a large section of the Indian population had not been represented, His Majesty's Government could not, of course, contemplate—as the Congress have stated they would not contemplate—forcing such a constitution upon any unwilling parts of the country.

The Transfer of Power, Vol. IX, pp. 295-6

APPENDIX III

CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION[1]

1. This Constituent Assembly declares its firm and solemn resolve to proclaim India as an independent sovereign republic and to draw up for her future governance a Constitution;

2. wherein the territories that now comprise British India, the territories that now form the Indian States, and such other part of India as are outside British India and the States, as well as such other territories as are willing to be constituted into the independent sovereign India shall be a Union of them; and

3. wherein the said territories, whether with their present boundaries or with such others as may be determined by the Constituent Assembly and thereafter, according to the law of the Constitution, shall possess and retain the status of autonomous units, together with residuary powers, and exercise all powers and functions of government and administration, save and except such powers and functions as are vested in or assigned to the Union, or as are inherent or implied in the Union or resulting there from; and

4. wherein all power and authority of the sovereign independent India, its

[1]*Vide* "Speech at Workers Meeting", 16-12-1946. The resolution was moved by Jawaharlal Nehru on December 13, 1946 and was unanimously passed on January 22, 1947.

constituent parts and organs of government, are derived from the people; and

5. wherein shall be guaranteed and secured to all the people of India justice, social, economic and political; equality of status, of opportunity, and before the law; freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship, vocation, association and action, subject to law and public morality; and

6. wherein adequate safeguards shall be provided for minorities, backward and tribal areas, and depressed and other backward classes; and

7. whereby shall be maintained the integrity of the territory of the republic and its sovereign rights of land, sea and air according to justice and the law of civilized nations; and

8. this ancient land attain its rightful and honoured place in the world and make its full and willing contribution to the promotion of world peace and the welfare of mankind.

The Transfer of Power, Vol. IX, pp. 343-4

APPENDIX IV

TALK WITH N. K. BOSE[1]

SRIRAMPUR,

Thursday, December 19, 1946

In the morning, while I was administering his daily bath, Gandhiji spoke to me of his own accord about the happenings of the 17th. Ever since that day, no word had passed on this subject between him and me.

He wished to learn from me as well as from Parasuram 'if Sushila Nayyar had fallen in our estimation' (*Tumhari nazar me gir gai hai*?) on account of that day's incident. I said I could speak for myself, not for Parasuram. She had undoubtedly fallen, and the reason was this. No person however great had the right to disturb him as Sushila had apparently done. Gandhiji then said, 'Supposing she did so with a good intention, perhaps to help me in my own work? She may have been suggesting certain steps even for my sake, not for her own; even then, would you say she was wrong?'

I said, 'Yes, even then. If she felt that you were contemplating a wrong step, she might have offered her suggestions and then left you free to decide.'

Gandhiji said, 'She is against my plan of tour on foot in the present condition of my health. she thinks that at least one old companion who knows all about my personal needs should accompany me, and she offered her own services. She

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 17-12-1946 and "Silence-Day Note to N. K. Bose", 23-12-1946

suggested that it would not be safe to depend on new workers like you and Parasuram, who know so little about my physical requirements.'

I said, 'If I had been in her position, I would have placed my views fully before you and left you free to decide. If the decision had not been favourable, I would have waited patiently until you discovered your error.'

After I spoke, Gandhiji repeated the substance of my views in his own language in order to make sure that he had understood me rightly.

My Days with Gandhi, pp. 114-5

APPENDIX V

LETTER FROM DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR TO N. K. BOSE[1]

SRIRAMPUR,

Sunday, December 22, 1946

At night while reading Bapu's diary I read "I had a curious dream". I casually asked him what it was. He did not say and I kept quiet.

At three o'clock the next morning, I woke up with the noise of Bapu jumping in bed. He said he was very cold and was taking exercise to warm up. After that, he asked me if I was awake and started telling me of his curious dream. After the dream he started explaining how his present step was a *tapascharya* (penance) for him, and how he was going through inconveniences. On the previous day, I had remarked that God did and would send him helpers in whatever he did. . . . In a short note I asked him if I would be allowed to come with him. I mentioned that what he had said about *tapascharya* and what I had said about God sending him help were not contradictory and tried to explain it. He answered with irritation that he had tried to explain things to me but had not succeeded. . . . I could see that he was getting worked up. So . . . I walked away. Suddenly I heard him slap his forehead. I rushed back and stopped him. . . .

I am completely unnerved . . . . I came yesterday with great trepidation. Bapu had asked me to come for *Gita*. . . . He again raised the topic this morning and I found that my self-control has not returned as yet.

My Days with Gandhi, pp. 119-20

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 17-12-1946

APPENDIX VI

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S DRAFT OF CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE STATEMENT[1]

December 22, 1946

The Working Committee have given careful consideration to the state ment issued by the British Government on December 6, 1946, as well as other statements made recently on their behalf in Parliament. These statements, though made by way of interpretation and elucidation, are clearly additions to and variations of the British Cabinet Mission's Statement of May 16, 1946, on which the whole scheme of the Constituent Assembly was based.

2. The Statement of May 16, 1946, laid down in paragraph 15(iii) as basic principles of the constitution "all subjects other than Union subjects and all residuary powers should vest in the Provinces", and that "Provinces should be free to form Groups with executives and legislatures". The Provinces were thus intended to be autonomous, subject to the Union controlling certain specified subjects. Paragraph 19 laid down, *inter alia*, the procedure for Sections to meet, for decisions to be taken as to whether Groups should be formed or not, and for any province to elect to come out of the Group in which it might have been placed.

3. In their resolution of May 24, 1946, the Working Committee pointed out what appeared to be a divergence between the basic principles and the procedure suggested, in that a measure of compulsion was introduced which infringed the basic principle of provincial autonomy. The Cabinet Mission, thereupon issued a Statement on May 25, 1946, in which it was stated that "the interpretation put by the Congress resolution on paragraph 15 of the Statement, to the effect that the provinces can in the first instance make the choice whether or not to belong to the Section in which they are placed does not accord with the Delegation's intentions. The reasons for grouping of the provinces are well known and this is an essential feature of the scheme and can only be modified by agreements between the two parties".

4. The Congress made it clear later that their objection was not to provinces entering Sections but to compulsory grouping and the possibility of a dominating province framing a constitution for another province entirely against the wishes of the latter. This might result in the framing of rules, franchise, constituencies etc., for elections and otherwise which might seriously prejudice or even nullify the provision for a province subsequently to opt out of a Group. We pointed out that this could never be the intention of the Cabinet Mission as it would be repugnant to the basic

[1] *Vide* "Note to Jawaharlal Nehru", 30-12-1946

principles and policy of the scheme they had propounded. Our own approach to the problem of constitution making has all along been that coercion should not be exercised and that the constitution of free India should be drawn up by the co-operation and goodwill of all parties concerned.

5. In a letter dated 13th June, 1946, from Lord Wavell to Maulana Azad, the President of the Congress, it was stated that "The Delegation and I are aware of your objections to the principle of grouping. I would, however, point out that the Statement of 16th May does not make grouping compulsory. It leaves the decision to the elected representatives of the provinces concerned sitting together in Sections. The only provision which is made is that the representatives of certain provinces should meet in Sections so that they can decide whether or not they wish to form Groups". Thus the principle which was emphasized again was that grouping was not compulsory and in regard to Sections a certain procedure was indicated. This procedure was not clear and could be interpreted in more than one way and in any event a point of procedure could not override a basic principle. We pointed out that the right interpretation should be one which did no violence to that principle. Further, in order to smooth the way to the co-operation of all concerned in the working of the proposed scheme we suggested that if our interpretation was not accepted, we would be agreeable to a reference on this point to the Federal Court.

6. It is well known that the proposal in regard to grouping affected injuriously two provinces especially, namely, Assam and the North-West Frontier Province, as well as the Sikhs in the Punjab. Their representatives expressed their strong disapproval of this proposal. In a letter from Master Tara Singh to the Secretary of State dated 25th May, 1946, he gave expression to the anxiety and apprehensions of the Sikhs and asked for clarification in regard to certain matters. The Secretary of State sent an answer to this letter on 1st June, 1946, in the course of which he said, "I have considered carefully the detailed points you raise at the end of your letter. I fear the Mission cannot issue any additions to, or interpretation of, the Statement."

7. In spite of this explicit statement, the British Government have, on December 6th, issued a statement which is both an addition to, and an interpretation of, the Statement of May 16, 1946. They have done so after more than six and a half months, during which period many developments have taken place as a consequence of the original Statement. Throughout this period the position of the Congress was made repeatedly clear to the British Government or their representatives, and it was with full knowledge of this position that the British Government acted. That position was in conformity with the basic principles laid down in the Statement of May 16, 1946, which Statement the Congress had accepted in its entirety. Further, the Congress had expressed its willingness to refer, if necessity arose, the point of

interpretation to the Federal Court, whose decision should be accepted by the parties concerned.

8. When the invitation of the British Government was received by the Congress at the end of November last to send its representatives to London, the Congress position was clearly indicated again. It was on certain assurances of the Prime Minister of Great Britain that a representative of the Congress proceeded to London.

9. In spite of this assurance and of previous assurances to the effect that no additions to, or interpretations of, the Statement of May 16, 1946, were going to be made, the British Government have now issued a statement which clearly, in many respects, goes beyond the original Statement, on the basis of which progress has been made till now.

10. The Working Committee deeply regret that the British Government should have acted in a manner which has not been in keeping with their own assurances, and which has created suspicion in the minds of large numbers of people in India. For some time past the attitude of the British Government and their representative in India has been such as to add to the difficulties and complexities of the situation in the country. Their present intervention, on the eve of the meeting of the Constituent Assembly, and the manner and tone in which this has taken place, has lessened the chances of a peaceful and co-operative transfer of power in India, for which the Congress has been working. This has created a new situation which is full of peril for the future, and because of this, the Working Committee have been anxious and given prolonged thought to it. Many of the speeches made recently in the British Parliament, which abound in wrong statements and inferences, are in tone and content representative of the authoritarian and aggressive traditions of British Imperialism. The India of today cannot tolerate this approach from any outsider and resents alien interference and intervention.

11. The Congress, however, cannot be diverted from its path by provocative utterances and external intervention. It seeks to frame, through the Constituent Assembly, a constitution of a free and independent India with the willing co-operation of all elements of the Indian people. The Working Committee regret that the Muslim League members of the constituent Assembly have refrained from attending its opening session. The Committee, however, appreciate and express their gratification at the presence in the Constituent Assembly of representatives of all other interests and sections of the people of India, and note with pleasure the spirit of co-operation in a common task and a high endeavour which has been in evidence during the sessions of the Assembly. The Committee will continue their efforts to make the Constituent Assembly fully representative of all the people of India and trust that members of the Muslim League will give their co-operation in this great

task. In order to achieve this, the Committee have advised Congress representatives in the Assembly to postpone consideration of controversial issues to a subsequent meeting.

12. In their Statement of December 6, 1946, the British Government in giving their interpretation of a doubtful point of procedure have referred to it as a "fundamental point", and suggested that the Constituent Assembly may refer it to the Federal Court. Subsequent statements made on behalf of the British Government have made it clear that they are not prepared to accept the decision of this court should it go against their own interpretation. On behalf of the Muslim League also it has been stated that they will not be bound by the decision of the Federal Court. While the Congress has always been willing to abide by such a reference and decision in regard to this matter, any reference now, when none of the other parties are prepared to join in it or to accept it, becomes totally uncalled for and unbecoming, and unsuited to the dignity of either the Congress or the Federal Court. By their repeated statements, British Statesmen have ruled this out.

13. The Working Committee are still of opinion that the interpretation put by the British Government in regard to the method of voting in the Sections is not in conformity with provincial autonomy, which is one of the fundamental bases of the proposed constitution. Nevertheless, the Committee are anxious to avoid anything that may come in the way of the successful working of the Constituent Assembly. To ensure this they will endeavour to seek and obtain the largest measure of co-operation, provided that no fundamental principle is violated. They are, therefore, advising Congress representatives in the Constituent Assembly to accept the procedure suggested. But they cannot be parties to any coercion of a province against its will or to the interests of the Sikhs being made to suffer by a majority in a Section. In particular, any attempt to impose the basic structure of a provincial constitution, such as franchise, constituencies etc., against the wishes of the majority of representatives from the province concerned will have to be resisted. Such an imposition would render nugatory the right to opt out which has been given to a Province.

14. The Working Committee earnestly hope that their efforts to gain the co-operation in the Constituent Assembly of those who have so far denied it will meet with response and success, so that the great work that has now begun may proceed rapidly and end in the framing of a constitution which does justice and gives freedom and opportunity to every man and woman in India. In any event the Constituent Assembly must go on till it has accomplished its task and a free, democratic, and sovereign republic emerges from its labours.

A. I. C. C. File No. 1499-I, 1946-47. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX VII

A. I. C. C. RESOLUTION[1]

The A. I. C. C. having considered the events that have taken place in the country since the Meerut Session of the Congress in November last, the statement issued by the British Government on December 6, 1946, and the statement of the Working Committee of December 22, 1946, advises Congressmen as follows :

The A. I. C. C. endorses the statement of the Working Committee of December 22, 1946, and expresses its agreement with the views contained therein.

While the Congress has always been agreeable to making a reference to the Federal Court on the question of interpretation in dispute, such a reference has become purposeless and undesirable owing to recent announcements made on behalf of the British Government. A reference could only be made on an agreed basis, the parties concerned agreeing to abide by the decision given.

The A. I. C. C. is firmly of opinion that the constitution for a free and independent India should be framed by the people of India on the basis of as wide an agreement as possible. There must be no interference whatsoever by any external authority, and no compulsion of any province or part of a province by another province. The A. I. C. C. realizes and appreciates the difficulties placed in the way of some provinces, notably Assam, the N. W. F. P. and Baluchistan and the Sikhs in the Punjab, by the British Cabinet's scheme of May 16, 1946, and more especially by the interpretation put upon it by the British Government in their statement of December 6, 1946. The Congress cannot be a party to any such compulsion or imposition against the will of the people concerned., a principle which the British Government have themselves recognized.

The A. I. C. C. is anxious that the Constituent Assembly should proceed with the work of framing a constitution for free India with the goodwill of all parties concerned, and, with a view to removing the difficulties that have arisen owing to varying interpretations, agrees to advise action in accordance with the interpretation of the British Government in regard to the procedure to be followed in the Sections. It must be clearly understood, however, that this must not involve any compulsion of a province and that the rights of the Sikhs in the Punjab should not be jeopardized.[2] In

[1]*Vide* "Interview to A Muslim Visitor", 12-1-1947 and "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 16-1-1947 The resolution, moved by Jawaharlal Nehru, was passed after four days of discussion.

[2]In place of this and the following two sentences, "the draft prepared under Gandhiji's guidance" had : "5. The consequence of this may be that a province or group might prefer to keep out of the Constituent Assembly or any of its Sections in

the event of any attempt at such compulsion, a province or part of a province has the right to take such action as may be deemed necessary in order to give effect to the wishes of the people concerned. The future course of action will depend upon the developments that take place and the A.I.C.C., therefore, directs the Working Committee to advise upon it, whenever circumstances so require, keeping in view the basic principle of provincial autonomy.

The Indian annual Register, 1947, Vol. I, pp. 114-5

APPENDIX VIII

LETTER FROM SATIS CHANDRA MUKERJEE[1]

January 14, 1947

Longevity can be prolonged indefinitely if only the utterance of Ramanama (the lord's name) becomes with the *sadhaka*, not an act of conscious will or choice, but gets to be an automatic, inward process, springing from within and expressing itself outwardly, consciously or sub-consciously. This, in my view, is only possible when the utterance of the Lord's name gets tacked on to, or better, becomes a part of the *sadhaka's* breathing-movement.

Therefore my second point is that the Lord's name or Ramanama is no more an outer sound emitted by the *sadhaka*, but is verily a form of spiritual or Divine Energy.

My third point is that when the utterance of Ramanama gets to be intimately associated with the breathing-movement of the *sadhaka*, it is bound to react on the whole of the *sadhaka's* external system, including the mental apparatus, scripturally known as the *Lingasharira* or the *sukshma sharira*.

My fourth point is that when the Spiritual or *Chit* Energy of the Divine so reacts, then the whole apparatus *sthula* and *sukshma*, gets to be impregnated with the Spiritual or *Chit* Energy derived from, or inhering in, Ramanama. Therefore when that happens, what is to us at present material (whether of grosser or the finer variety), becomes so energised by the Spiritual or *Chit* Energy (which is the essence of Ramanama), that the laws of matter manifesting themselves in material disinte-

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the initial stages. Those who participate in the Constituent Assembly or the Sections will proceed to frame a constitution in terms of the Cabinet Mission's Statement, which constitution will be initially binding on them alone. 6. The constitution must be framed for the whole of India with specific provision laying down how those who have not participated in its making may avail themselves of it." (*Sardar Patel's Correspondence*, "Indians in Ladysmith")

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Mukerji", 1-2-1947

gration and decay become, for the time being, suspended so to say. As the result of such suspension, the *sadhaka* could go on existing on the objective plane (as an objective entity), immune from the operation of the force which tends towards disintegration and decay.

Lastly and fifthly, at this stage equanimity, a term which you have used, cannot be termed mental, that is, born of the control of the mind-stuff. Then it comes to be a function of the *sadhaka's* soul life, and may therefore be called soul-born. At this stage the equanimity in question comes to be natural, deep, and spontaneous.

The above point may be made clearer by saying that the type of equanimity which comes to be born of the process of utterance of Ramanama along with every exhalation and inhalation of the *sadhaka's* breath, far transcends in its very nature the kind of equanimity of which we cannot at present conceive. the reason for it, as already pointed out, is that the type of equanimity in question is no longer mindborn, but is essentially an apparatus of soul-life or spirituality. This higher type of equanimity is scripturally termed as *shanti*. Of this type of *shanti* there are higher and higher grades of which the *Gita* speaks as, for example, (IV. 39) *para shanti* and (V. 12) *naishthiki shanti*.

Nangababa Satis Chandra Mukerjee aur Gandhiji, pp. 82-6

1. A LETTER

DEVIPUR ,
February 17, 1947

My reply to your previous letter was still pending when I got this second one from you. But there was nothing in your first letter that needed immediate reply. At present there is great strain on me, both physical and mental. My work here instead of getting easier is becoming more difficult each day, as oppsition is increasing. All the same, my faith and courage are steadily growing. After all, I am here to do or die, am I not? There is no middle course here. . . .[1] It is not certain when the third stage of my tour will begin. I have to reach Haimchar on the 24th. . . .[2] The further programme will depend on how exhausted I feel. I shall be satisfied if God sustains me through the programme even up to the 24th.

[From Gujarati]

Eklo Jane Re, p. 144

2. ADVICE TO A CONGRESS WORKER[3]

DEVIPUR ,
February 17, 1947

Did you realize that by indulging in this vain display you would acerbate communal passions? This display means nothing to me. . .[4] but it will leave a legacy of ill-will behind which will continue to poison the communal relations in this village for a long time to come. You are a Congressman. Did not it occur to you, knowing my strong views on khadi, that ribbons and buntings made of mill cloth would only hurt me?

I wouldn't have felt so hurt if, instead of floral decorations, you had presented me with garlands of yarn. They are decorative, and

[1] Omissions as in the source
[2] *Ibid*
[3] A grand reception had been arranged for Gandhiji at Devipur. The village had been decorated with flags, buntings, streamers and garlands of yarn. It jarred on Gandhiji. As soon as his weekly silence was over, he sent for the principal worker.
[4] Omission as in the source

afterwards can be used for making cloth also. So nothing is wasted. It seems there is a lot of money in this village. Otherwise you would never have thought of making such costly ephemeral garlands in these hard times. You are mistaken if you have done this to express your love for me. That does not show your love at all. It is enough if, out of love for me, you do as I say. I just cannot imagine how after this terrible massacre of your own people you could ever think of spending anything over these flowers.[1]

The day's experience has set me thinking furiously. Would my colleagues, too, if they ever became Ministers, betray the same weakness for garlands and the like? I claim no extraordinary virtue for my workers. But this much I do expect of them that even as Ministers they would never forget the ideals that the Congress has professed and fought for all these years. What I have seen today, however, makes me wonder whether I am not living in a fool's paradise. It seems that God has woken me up with a rude shock to enable me to see where I stand.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p. 191; and *Eklo Jane Re*, p. 146

3. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

DEVIPUR ,
February 17, 1947

Gandhiji drew attention to two things that had been brought to his notice. The first was that a complaint, in sending which he was unfortunately an instrument, had been found on enquiry by the officers to be without foundation. The articles which were reported to have been looted were mostly found in the very place from where they were said to have been looted. This was a serious matter. It was the second case that had come under his notice. Yesterday some Muslim friends had come to him and admitted that the Muslims had undoubtedly gone mad in October last but though they had not been so bad as the Hindus had been in Bihar, the Hindus were making up for it by putting the Muslims to inconvenience by lodging false complaints against some of them. They said that false complaints were far larger in number than true ones. That was not the way to bring the two together. He said that all those who lodged false complaints should be prosecuted and severely punished on conviction. If he was the Superintendent of Police or a Minister, he would certainly institute proceedings and

[1] This paragraph is translated from *Eklo Jane Re*.
[2] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary"

bring the perjurers to justice. As for himself, as a citizen desirous of serving his country he would only be able to do something if the names and addresses of perjured complainants were given to him. So far he had received no such names. The only case that was sent to him could not be supported when the complainant was requested to support his complaint. Generally he would say that the Hindus who lodged false complaints injured themselves, their co-religionists and the whole country.

The other thing he wished to draw attention to was a letter he had received from a responsible person who was doing the work of bringing about peace between the two, that a Hindu lad was molested by some Muslims and that the latter had threatened the Hindus that they were to expect more drastic measures than last October's after he had left Noakhali or, which was the same thing, after his death. He would like to think that this statement was untrue, but he feared it was not. But he did hope that the poison was restricted to a few illmannered persons. Whether, however, it was restricted to a few or whether it was a widespread trait, he ventured to think it was wholly against Islam. This he said with apologies to Fazlul Huq but no less firmly on that account. It would be an evil day for Islam or for any religion when it was impatient of outside criticism. He did not believe himself to be an outsider. He respected Islam as he respected every other religion as his own and therefore he claimed to be a sympathetic and friendly critic. It was up to every good Muslim to take up a firm and unequivocal stand against what he believed to be vicious propaganda.

Harijan, 16-3-1947

4. A NOTE[1]

ALUNIA ,
February 18, 1947

I was very much upset today. Such is my nonattachment. I felt disgusted with myself. I even wonder whether I am really going to pass the test of my ahimsa. It is God's infinite kindness that He bears with me and sustains me.

Be vigilant.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Eklo Jane Re, p. 148

[1] Gandhiji wrote this in Manu Gandhi's diary just after the morning prayers.

5. LETTER TO M. A. ABDULLA[1]

NOAKHALI,
February 18, 1947

When all parties become displeased with one it is generally a sure sign of one's having done one's duty. May it be so with you.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 399

6. LETTER TO HARI SINGH GOUR

KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
February 18, 1947

DEAR SIR HARI SINGH GOUR,

I have yours of the 5th February delivered to me only today. Please do not ask me to make any public statement. With the support of so many distinguished men whom you mention you should find no difficulty. My own way of thinking always tells me that everything which has intrinsic merit succeeds sooner than later because it is like a straight line which is the shortest distance between any two points. If you have the League support your project will have plain sailing. But I see that you had not even an acknowledgement from Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah at the time you wrote to me. I hope you will secure his approval.

Your sincerly,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The addressee, Superintendent of Police, who was transferred from Noakhali to Murshidabad District, had, in his letter dated February 11, said: ". . . Some Calcutta Muslims told me that the Chief Minister got annoyed with me because I did not take action to prevent police and military *zulum* (oppression) upon the Muslims. . . . Another source informs . . . that my differences . . . with some British officers were the real cause. . . . Government . . . gave different statements to different parties . . . I do not bother . . . as long as I am sure that my conscience is quite clear."

7. LETTER TO RUKMINI DEVI ARUNDALE [1]

KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
February 18, 1947

I have yours of the 6th instant delivered to me today. Much as I should like to have you here you can have no idea of the trouble you have to undergo in coming here unless you travel by air transport. Even so I am in a part of the country where there are no motor-roads worth the name. I am at a far distance from the nearest aerodrome which is in Comilla. I am in no mood to shoulder any burden whilst I am carrying the one in Noakhali.

I am in full agreement with you that the worthy project that Dr. Arundale initiated has to be carried to fruition and that most of all by you. Of course I love to see you, *veena* in hand, leading the people into the way of truth and peace.

SHRIMATI RUKMINI DEVI
PRESIDENT
KALAKSHETRA
ADYAR
MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

8. LETTER TO MANILAL B. DESAI

February 18, 1947

CHI. MANILAL,

Your letter of November 14, 1946 reached me only three or four days ago. Such is the confusion here. You have, of course relieved me of my worries and so I feel completely at ease.

I think almost all the questions in your letter have been answered in my last letter to you. Jehangirji and Dr. Dinshaw must be among the trustees, for they are completely loyal and were members

[1] Eminent dancer and wife of the English Theosophist George Sydney Arundale; founder of Kalakshetra, Madras

of the original Trust. It might be objected that they did not fully agree with my views. But I think that cannot be helped. I am sure they will not do or order anything there against my wishes. The other trustees to be selected will be persons who will have to be there. I approve of Gulbai's name. About Maganbhai also I have written to you. If you can be sure that the well can be sunk for anything up to four or five thousand rupees, the expense is worth incurring. But let me know first if anybody is prepared to give such assurance.

I would approve of a partner-cultivator, but not of loaning him money for buying bullocks and other requirements. We are not property-owners, but trustees. A trustee can be appointed only for a specific purpose. Our object is Nature Cure. we cannot incur such expenditure in pursuit of that object. We may do what is possible with our own labour. In either case, however, we will need water. If, therefore, you can obtain an assurance that the scheme will succeed, we will incur the expenditure. About crops, we may grow only what we can with our own labour. We can raise the vegetables and fruits we need. We cannot grow foodgrains. We do need milk, and therefore the provision of cows is essential. We have got to incur the expense necessary for that purpose. If and when a building is ready, we shall have to spend some money for buying mattresses, etc. If Datar himself undertakes to look after the construction of the building, I shall take it that the problem has been solved. There has, of course, been some misunderstanding in regard to the woman whom Appasaheb has sent, but if she is otherwise good and ready for hard work, we have no option but to overlook her not wearing khadi. You may gradually persuade her to change over to khadi. If you want, I am prepared to write to Appasaheb. But think over the matter carefully and let me know. I will wait till I hear from you.

I understand about Paramanand.

Parasuram has left me. At present he is working for *Harijan.* Sushila (Dr.) has gone to Sevagram to look into the affairs of the hospital there. Sushila Pai, Amtussalaam, Abha, Kanu and Pyarelal have been working in different villages and I am camping at some distance from them. Therefore, we are unable to meet one another often. A map of my tour has been published in the newspapers there too. I suppose you consult it from time to time. Manu sleeps with me. She is as a granddaughter to me, for her grandfather is the son of my father's elder brother. She is, therefore, really a granddaughter to me.

She came to stay with me at Sevagram when she was just a little girl. I have written about this matter to Balkoba.[1] He knows her. If you have any comments to make after reading that letter, you may write to me. I want you to write frankly and say what you feel.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 2731. Courtesy: Manilal B. Desai

9. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

February 18, 1947

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

Your letter of November 14, 1946, reached me only three days ago. Such is the confusion in the postal arrangements here. It is also true, of course that I am, from the point of view of postal communication, in a rather inaccessible place. Your health seems to be sufficiently restored now. Do you experience any difficulty in singing? If you do not, you should freely use your gift for the service of the people. But of course not at the cost of your health.

You will see the letter I have written to Manibhai. The problems there are quite complicated and you will be able to play an important part in solving them.

Probably you do not know that Manubehn (Jaisukhlal's) sleeps with me. This has pained Bhai Kishorelal, Narahari, Swami and others and they have, therefore, stopped their connection with *Harijan.* Sardar also is very angry with me. For me Manu's sleeping with me is a matter of dharma, and I am resolved to drive home the lesson that a person cannot give up what is a matter of dharma to him for the love of those who are dear to him or out of fear of anybody. If in a situation like this I give up what I believe to be my dharma through false regard for friends or fear or love, my *yajna* would remain incomplete and bear no fruit. This is my side of the case. Kishorelal's side, as far as I can understand it, is the opposite. He thinks that I have come to regard *adharma* as dharma and that, therefore, my practice dishonours my *brahmacharya* and sets a bad example to people. The thought that a man like me should set a bad example is intolerable to

[1] Balkrishna Bhave; *vide* the following item.

them, and, therefore, these friends have started non-co-operation with me. They are free to take whatever further step they choose. I do not know what Vinoba thinks. But the friends named above have corresponded with him and therefore I also have written to him and asked for his opinion.[1] Either be guided by Vinoba's reply to my letter or think for yourself and write to me what you think. I have discussed this matter in three of my speeches. I send copies herewith. You need not return them. Show them to the friends there.

As regards Gokhale, I have already written to him. I had assumed that he had not joined the Uruli experiment and, therefore, did not mention his name. I had no intention at all of ignoring him. But this is merely in reply to your query.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 820. Courtesy: Balkrishna Bhave

10. LETTER TO SARLA

February 18, 1947

CHI. SARLA,

I got your letter. The characters are well formed and the words well spaced out, and the handwriting, therefore, is pleasing to the eye. However, your composite letters are not correct. You have misspelt '*gram*'.

I am glad you wish to come to me. But there are bound to be all kinds of problems when I am daily on the move and moving from one village to another. Touring through villages involves several inconveniences: insufficient accommodation, very bad water, and so on. In such circumstances I simply don't have the courage to ask you to come. I, therefore, advise you to have some patience. God willing, the time will come when you will be able to stay with me. I can see from the account given by you that you are doing excellent work. Go on with it and continue your progress. Master the art of weaving. If in spinning also you acquire firstclass skill you can make yourself an indispensable worker, for your services will then be in demand everywhere. I am sure you will have improved your Marathi.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vinoba Bhave", 10-2-1947

Complete your study and learn everything about nature cure. Acquire the highest proficiency in the Urdu script and language. Learn Sanskrit. And all this you should do as if you were merely amusing yourself. If you do so, you will not even know how time passes. Keep up contact with me through letters. I am not happy that Shashi's[1] fever has still not left him. If you study nature cure all over again—and it is easy to study it—you yourself will be able to cure it. All that is necessary is to be careful about his diet and give him hipbath and frictionbath and treat him with mud-packs. If this is done, he will soon get well. He should of course remain calm.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 1052. Courtesy: Champa R. Mehta

11. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING [2]

ALUNIA ,

February 18, 1947

Q. Do you support evacuation of the Hindus from the affected areas if the League Government or the majority community agrees to give us due compensation?

A. He had supported the proposition from the non-violent standpoint. It was applicable to all Provinces whether the majority was Hindu or Muslim. What could the Government do if the majority had become so hostile that they would not tolerate the presence of the minority community? In his opinion it would be improper for them to force the majority into submission, nor could they undertake to protect the minority at the point of the bayonet. Suppose for instance that the majority would not tolerate *Ram*

Harijan, 16-3-1947

[1] Son of Ratilal Mehta

[2] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary"

12. TELEGRAM TO A. FAZLUL HUQ

[On or after *February 18, 1947*][1]

THANKS FOR YOUR WIRE. DO OVERTAKE ME AT ANY STAGE OF SETTLED PROGRAMME PUBLISHED AND WE SHALL RENEW OUR OLD ACQUAINTANCE AND IF YOU CONVINCE ME I SHALL DO YOUR BIDDING.

The Hindu, 21-2-1947

13. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

ALUNIA ,
February 19, 1947

CHI. MRIDU,

I got your two telegrams, and that was yesterday. I am today sending you a telegram in reply. You are worried but there is no cause at all for worry. So far my life has been running its course smoothly. More and more each day I see that it is all to the good. What I did at Sevagram was by way of an experiment. An experiment may be stopped any time. So for the sake of the colleagues, I had postponed it. I did not publish the statement for your sake or Bapa's sake. Here the situation is totally different. Sleeping with Manu is for me aninseparable part of the *yajna*. Why it is so need not be explained here. I shall explain when you come. Since this act of mine has caused an uproar, a great deal of my time is taken up with arguing with colleagues and pacifying them. But inasmuch as I consider this act part of the *yajna*, sparing that much time does not irk me. So you should carry on your work without getting upset. If you want to come only for this thing, I would urge you not to come. Kishorelalbhai by himself should be sufficient to persuade me to desist. But you wanted to come even otherwise, so I shall not stop you. Whatever it is, write to me freely. Ask me anything you want.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 1260. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

[1] The addressee, in a telegram, dated February 18, had requested Gandhiji for an interview after February 23 and added: "Go to Bihar and bring about friendly relations between the two communities and then hurry up to Delhi to save India."

14. TELEGRAM TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

[*February 19, 1947*][1]

MRIDULABEHN
CONSTITUTION HOUSE
NEW DELHI

RECEIVED BOTH WIRES YESTERDAY. NOTHING LOST BY PUBLICATION WHICH WAS INEVITABLE, FELT COMPELLED WRITE FRIENDS BUT COME WHEN YOU CONVENIENTLY CAN AND DISCUSS. IF I PERCEIVE THAT I HAVE ERRED SHALL GLADLY RETRACE STEP. MEANWHILE DO NOT FEEL UNEASY.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

15. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

CHARDUKHIA,
February 19, 1947

Q. What should a Hindu worker do when he is being deliberately misrepresented by interested parties in Noakhali?

A. The answer in terms of ahimsa, generally, would be that acts should be allowed to speak for themselves. Whilst this was good as a general proposition there were occasions when to speak and explain was a duty and not to speak would amount to falsehood. Therefore wisdom dictated that on occasions speech must accompany action. Of course, one could conceive the possibility of mere thought taking the place of speech and action. Such was the attribute of the Almighty and might be almost possible for one in a billion, but he knew no such instance.

Q. You have advised[3] evacuation if the majority become irrevocably hostile. But you have also maintained that a truly nonviolent man should never give up hope of converting his opponent by love. Under these circumstances, how can a nonviolent man accept defeat and evacuate?

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary"
[3] *Vide* the preceding page.

A. As to this question, it was perfectly correct that a non-violent man would not move out of his place. For such a one there would be no question of compensation. He would simply die at his post and prove that his presence was not a danger to the State or the community. He knew that the Hindus of Noakhali made no such pretension. They were simple folk who loved the world and wanted to live in the world in peace and safety. Such persons would consult their honour if the Government honourably offered them compensation in order to see the majority living in peace. If the mere presence of the Hindus irritated the Muslims who were in the majority, he would consider it to be the duty of the Government to offer compensation as it would be of the Government in a Hindu majority province to offer compensation to the Muslims if their presence irritated the majority community.

Q. In case of evacuation, under advice from the Government, should the evacuees ask for compensation for (a) all their movable and immovable property, (b) loss of business? In other words, what would you consider to be adequate compensation?

A. Gandhiji said that the Government would be obliged to compensate for both immovable and movable property when the latter could not be or were not carried away with him by the evacuee. Loss of business was a ticklish question. He could not conceive the possibility of any Government shouldering the burden of such compensation. He would understand the proposition that asked for a reasonable sum for enabling the person concerned to start business in a new place.

Whilst he examined and admitted the possibility of evacuation, his experience of all India told him that the Hindus and the Muslims knew how to live at peace among themselves. He declined to believe that people had said goodbye to their senses so as to make it impossible to live at peace with each other as they had done for generations. For he believed with the late poet Iqbal that the Hindus and the Muslims who had lived together long under the shadow of the mighty Himalayas and had drunk the waters of the Ganges and the Jamuna had a unique message for the world.

Harijan, 16-3-1947

16. EXTRACT FROM THE DIARY

February 19, 1947

On this day[1], and exactly at this time (7.35 p. m.) Ba quitted her mortal frame three years ago[2].

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p. 195

17. A LETTER[3]

BIRAMPUR,

February 19, 1947

Ba passed away on this day and at this time at 7.35 p. m. The recitation was attended by the guests who had recently arrived. I vividly recalled this fact during the *yajna* today, one reason being Manudi herself. She completed the recitation quickly, all by herself. In the Aga Khan Palace, too, were we not alone? When, therefore, after the Chapter VI I stretched myself and dozed off a little, I felt as if Ba was lying with her head on my lap.

[From Gujarati]

Eklo Jane Re, p. 154

18. LETTER TO M. A. ABDULLAH

NOAKHALI,

February 20, 1947

According to the letter[4] under reply there is not much to choose between the two districts. I suppose a police officer having to deal with crimes, will naturally spot first the weakness of the society to which he goes. It flatters me to think that you will miss my association in Berhampore. I am sure that would be a temporary phase only, and in any case it can be well made up by correspondence.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 399

[1] Mahashivaratri Day, *Magha Vad Chaturdashi*, traditionally observed with fast and worship of Lord Shiva. Gandhiji observed it as "a day of fasting and prayer".

[2] On February 22, 1944

[3] This was addressed to one of Manu Gandhi's sisters.

[4] In his letter dated February 15, the addressee had said: "I miss here nothing except your valuable and instructive association, which I enjoyed so long at Noakhali."

19. LETTER TO E. STANLEY JONES

KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
February 20, 1947

DEAR DR. STANLEY JONES[1],

It almost appears as if you had never gone to America. Trains and steamers have very effectively reduced distances. Air transport marks a further stage in that reduction. Nevertheless, I am not satisfied that it has increased the real happiness of mankind.

You have kindly referred to my tour in Noakhali. The result is in God's hands. You have mentioned Bihar in the same breath. I do think that the Bihar crime was much greater than that of Noakhali in magnitude. Man became brute, I hope temporarily only in both the places. But I haven't yet seen the light leading me to Bihar. If I can see that, I should have no hesitation in going there. I am in constant touch with the ministers and the people of Bihar. So far as I can see there is real repentance. But I cannot positively swear that I am not being misled. Immediately I feel the call I should interrupt my work in Noakhali and hasten to Bihar. All I can say today is that I am on the watch. One thing I would add. I have come here to put my Ahimsa to test. I have no misgiving as to the effect of Ahimsa. But I am fully conscious that I may not know the whole technique and may not even be living up to what I do know. Therefore, I have submitted myself for examination here. Hence, if that examination demands my presence in Bihar I shall go.

I am glad you are organizing vigils of prayer. As to the letter you have enclosed[2] I do not know that I can render any service in the shape of sending a contribution. I do not think that I can send anything effective.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] American missionary, author of *The Christ of the Indian Road,* etc.
[2] *Vide* the following item.

20. LETTER TO ROBERT A. FANGMEIER

KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
February 20, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter through Dr. Stanley Jones. Please do not ask me for any article at the present moment. Whilst I am shouldering the present burden, I have neither the time nor the inclination to go outside the present task. Remuneration would have been no consideration for I never write for remuneration.

Your sincerly,

ROBERT A. FANGMEIER, EßSQ.
1236 11TH STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON 1, D.C.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

21. LETTER TO P. N. BANERJEE

AS FROM KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
February 20, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

Dr. Amiya Chakravarty has handed me your affectionate letter[1]. Much as I should like to give you a decisive answer I cannot do so and, therefore, I would not trouble you to come to this part of the country to fix up the programme and to appoint a convenient date. My hands are tied up here and I dare not leave this place until real peace is established which may never be during my lifetime. In that case, as I have said repeatedly, I should finish the rest of my life in the attempt here. But of course man can only propose. God disposes. It is just possible that I might have to go to Bihar so as to be better able to do the work here. But I do not think ahead of the future. In the words

[1] In which the addressee had requested Gandhiji to preside over the Annual Convocation of the University of Calcutta.

of Cardinal Newman 'one step is enough for me'.[1] Forthe rest Dr. Chakravarty will be able to tell you all for I had a long conversation[2] with him.

Your sincerly,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

22. LETTER TO GOPINATH BARDOLOI

AS FROM KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
February 20, 1947

DEAR BARDOLOI[3] ,

Your letter of the 14th instant. Nirmal Babu who saw your letter suggested that one of his pupils might be induced to do the work mentioned by you. He will write to you as soon as he has heard from his pupil.

I hope all your troubles will dissolve.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

23. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

February 20, 1947

CHI. CHAND,

I had a talk with Dev[4] today. The subject was whether or not you two may write to each other. He says that he would rather that I wrote to you and gave him news of your health than that he should write to you. Hence this letter. Otherwise I had no intention of writing to you today.

Now please write to me what you feel about this matter. Give me full news of your health. You should never neglect your health. How is your work progressing?

You should know well Gujarati, Marathi and Urdu. You do

[1] The verse by Newman in his hymn "Lead Kindly Light" runs thus: "One step enough for me I do not choose to see the distant scene Lead Thou me on."

[2] *Vide* "Discussion with Amiya Chakravarty", 20-2-1947

[3] Prime Minister of Assam

[4] Dev Prakash Nayyar

understand the reason.

Sushilabehn will give you all the news from here. Dev is doing all the work that Pyarelal used to do for me. He shares a room with me.

I hope your sister is steadfast in her vow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Chandrani Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

24. DISCUSSION WITH AMIYA CHAKRAVARTY[1]

February 20, 1947

Even if I fail, truth will not have failed. I must strive and carry this issue towards light. I live or perish in the attempt. Noakhali and Tipperah are not an isolated problem but it is a problem which India must solve for herself and for humanity. Fortunately or unfortunately I have had success in the most difficult ventures of my life. But I do not know what will happen this time. The greatest trial is given to us but it is never beyond our power to overcome it.

Truth is God. And He is discoverable only to non-violence and all it means. Here will be decided the clear issue. Those who think of separation must know where we stand. Let the facts be faced. If people will not tolerate differences in religion, usage, food, dress or individuality and will insist on boycott, then they cannot do so without the help of the Government which represents the people.

If boycott is the policy of the Government, we must know about it. A community cannot take action by itself. Bengal as well as other provinces must understand this.

As to changeability of human nature to normality, if opportunity was given, Mahatma Gandhi said:

If I did not believe so, I would not be here.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 24-2-1968

[1] Professor at Calcutta University; at one time served as secretary to Rabindranath Tagore

25. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

CHAR LARUA,
February 20, 1947

Q. If you think the Government may boycott, i. e., remove the minority community after giving adequate compensation, may not people take time by the forelock and go?

A. As to this he said that those who felt that they would take time by the forelock and form a Hindu corporation to take the Hindus away, he had nothing in common with them. He could not be party to any such scheme. The burden lay entirely on the majority community and the Government. He merely meant that when they declared bankruptcy of wisdom, the minority should go if they were adequately compensated. The other way was the way of violence, i. e., civil war, not of non-violence.

Q. You have said castes should go. But then will Hinduism survive? Why do you thus mix up Hinduism with the progressive religions like Christianity or Islam?

A. He maintained that caste as it was understood must go if Hinduism was to survive. He did not believe that Christianity and Islam were progressive and Hinduism static, i. e., retrogressive. As a matter of fact he noticed no definite progress in any religion. The world would not be the shambles it had become if the religions of the world were progressive. There was room for *varna*, as a duty. This was true of all religions whether the name used was other than *varna*. What was a Muslim Maulvi or a Christian priest but a Brahmin if he taught his flock its true duty not for money but because he possessed the gift of interpretation? And this was true of the other divisions.

Q. As you are an advocate of the abolition of caste, are we to take it that you favour intercaste marriages? Many occupations are now the monopoly of specific castes. Should not this be abolished?

A. He was certainly in favour of intercaste marriage. The question did not arise when all became casteless. When this happy event took place, monopoly of occupations would go.

Q. If there is only one God, should there not be only one religion?

A. This was a strange question. Just as a tree had a million leaves similarly though God was one, there were as many religions as there were men and women though they were rooted in one God. They did not see this plain truth because they were followers of different prophets and claimed as many religons as there were prophets. As a matter of fact whilst he believed himself to be a Hindu, he knew that he did not worship God in the same manner as one or all of them.

Harijan, 16-3-1947

[1] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary"

26. LETTER TO E. W. ARYANAYAKUM[1]

February 21, 1947

You have given me a cutting from the *Hindustan Standard* purporting to report the views of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad[2] on education. Assuming the correctness of the report I say categorically that it is inconsistent with the line followed by the Hindustani Talimi Sangh. It is in the villages of India where India lives, not in the few Westernized cities which are the citadels of a foreign power.

I do not believe that the State can concern itself or cope with religious education. I believe that religious education must be the sole concern of religious associations. Do not mix up religion and ethics. I believe that fundamental ethics is common to all religions. Teaching of fundamental ethics is undoubtedly a function of the State. By religion I have not in mind fundamental ethics but what goes by the name of denominationalism. We have suffered enough from State-aided religion and State Church. A society or a group, which depends partly or wholly on State aid for the existence of its religion, does not deserve or, better still, does not have any religion worth the name. I do not need to give any illustrations in support of this obvious truth as it is to me.

The second point deserving attention in the report in question is regarding the replacing of the Urdu and Nagari scripts by the Roman script. However attractive the proposition may appear to be and whatever is true of the Indian soldiers, in my opinion the replacing would be a fatal blunder and we would find ourselves in the fire out of the frying pan. In this connection, I would like you to read my statement[4] on the subject issued to the Press on January 21 last.

The third thing that pained me was the reference to military education. I think that we have to wait a long time before a nationwide decision on the point is made. Otherwise, we are likely to become a curse rather than a blessing to the world. Leaders are not made, they

[1] Secretary, Hindustani Talimi Sangh. This appeared under the title "Religious Instruction, Military Training and the Roman Script."

[2] Member, Education and Arts in the Interim Government. He was reported to have said : "It is likely that under State supervision even denominational teaching can be imparted in a more liberal spirit than under private control. The aim of all religious teaching should be to make men more tolerant and broad-minded and it is my opinion that this can be more effectively done if the State takes charge of the question than if it is left to private initiative."

[4] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 2-2-1947

are born. Should the State be in a hurry over this matter even before full independence is established? Therefore, I am surprised that the Central Advisory Board should be party to such a sweeping recommendation as they have made.[1]

Harijan, 23-3-1947

27. LETTER TO P. R. CHENGALVAROYA CHETTIAR

KAZIRKHIL, RAMGANJ P. S.,
NOAKHALI DISTRICT,
February 21, 1947

DEAR CHENGALVAROYAN,

Many thanks for your letter. Real forgiveness accrues to him who is truly penitent. Harilal[2] knows that when he has shed his evil habits he will be welcome in Sevagram. All those good people who, out of mistaken kindness, nurse [his] evil habits are his enemies.

Here is a letter[3] for him.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

P. R. CHENGALVAROYA CHETTIAR
40 VENKATACHALA CHETTY STREET
TRIPLICANE, MADRAS

From a photostat: G. N. 102

[1] The recommendations of the Central Advisory Board of Education were as follows : "The Central Board of Education has endorsed the view of the Working Committee of the National War Academy that residential schools, where boys may obtain adequate facilities for developing the character and powers of leadership, should be started by provinces and States to act as 'feeders' for the National War Academy. The Board is of opinion that the new type of schools contemplated in the scheme of National Post War Education will provide the necessary training for the leadership, character, intelligence, courage and physical fitness required by the military authorities for the Army, Navy and Air Force. It directs the attention of provincial authorities to the necessity of developing their schools on these lines which will actually serve as the kind of schools which the military authorities have in mind...."

[2] Harilal Gandhi, eldest son of Gandhiji

[3] The letter is not available

28. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

February 21, 1947

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your long letter yesterday. Manu[1] read it out to me in the evening.

What you say about cultivation is absolutely correct. We should grow as much grain as we can and give it to the people. We did this once at Sabarmati. Were you there at that time? We raised a *bajra* crop out of season and gave potfuls of it to the poor people. We did, of course, charge them something. Vrajlal[2] used to spend the whole day in distributing the grain to labourers. Something like that should be done at Sevagram too, and that on a much larger scale. Money should be no difficulty. You may show this to anybody you like.

I was indeed very happy to learn about Kanchan[3]. May her delivery pass off without difficulty. I cannot judge whether her plan of going to Vyara is right or not. Sushilabehn[4] is going there and she might be able to guide you better. It is very good that Kanchan's sister has arrived there. It is as well that you are looking after the building work. That work also had to be done by somebody. You are an expert at the job.

My fate lies entirely in God's hands. If I am able to accomplish my mission here[5] and leave Bengal, I will certainly go there. But I do not know whether I shall succeed. If I should die in my attempt here, I would welcome such a death. Your running down here will serve no purpose. If you have learnt anything from me, build further on it. If you happen to come to this side and call on me incidentally, that would be another matter. I had an excellent letter from Kanchan, but have had no time to reply to it. Now lying in bed I dictate letters to Manu and to others if the letters are in other languages. I am thus able to give sufficient rest to the body and cope with the correspondence to a certain extent. There are some newspaper correspondents with us and they also help. Their help partly makes up for Parasram's[6]

[1] Daughter of Jaisukhlal Gandhi

[2] An Ashram inmate

[3] Addressee's wife

[4] Sushila Nayyar

[5] Gandhiji had gone to Noakhali on November 6, 1946 and had been touring on foot from village to village from January 2, 1947 to establish peace and communal harmony.

[6] Gandhiji's stenographer who accompanied him during part of the Noakhali tour. *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 20-11-1946 and "Letter to Parasuram", 2-1-1947

absence. I dictate Urdu letters to Dev[1] and Bengali letters to Nirmal Babu[2]. Thus my correspondence work seems to be well arranged now and I am able to spare both my hands and eyes. That I do not write to Kanchan should not mean that she need not write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8628. Also C. W. 7210. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

29. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[3]

KAMALAPUR,

February 21, 1947

Gandhiji congratulated the audience on having come from the surrounding villages. He however sympathized with them for being exposed to the sun. He also hoped that they were not afraid of the Indian sun, perhaps the greatest gift from God. Happy was India which had clear blue sky for the larger part of the year.

He then referred to the fact that he had gone to Chandpur more than once whilst India's grand old son Shri Haradayal Nag[4] was alive. He was then his guest. He knew, therefore, what importance Chandpur had. He was glad that Chandpur had played its part in looking after the refugees. But he deplored the disregard of the laws of sanitation and cleanliness. If they rigidly carried out these rules they would not have to live in constant dread of the plague and other diseases which were the brood of insanitation.

He then told them that they must not harbour ill will against their Muslim neighbours. He appealed to both the parties to live at peace with each other. But he held that even if the Hindus alone harboured no ill will against the Muslims, or vice versa, strife would abate. If however both harboured ill will, one against the other, strifes were bound to be the result. There was a *mantra* in the Upanishads [which says] that man became what he thought.[5] How true it was found in every walk of life! Let them beware of harbouring an evil thought.

[1] Devprakash Nayyar

[2] Nirmal Kumar Bose, a professor of Calcutta University, was touring with Gandhiji as his "companion and interpreter". *Vide* "Silence-Day Note to N. K. Bose", 18-11-1946 and "Statement to the Press", 20-11-1946

[3] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary"

[4] (1853-1942); participated in the non-co-operation movement and Salt Satyagraha; devoted his life to constructive work

[5] "According as one acts, according as one behaves, so does he become. The doer of good becomes good, the doer of evil becomes evil. One becomes virtuous by virtuous action. Others, however, say that a person consists of desires. As is his desire, so is his will; as is his will, so is the deed he does, whatever deed he does, that he attains." *Brihadanranyakopanishad*, IV. 4.5

He then came to the two questions before him. The first was:

Q . You advocate inter-caste marriages. Do you also favour marriages between Indians professing different religions? Should they declare themselves as belonging to no denomination, or can they continue their old religious practices and yet inter-marry? If so, what form should the marriage ceremony take? Is it to be a purely civil function or a religious function? Do you consider religion to be an exclusively personal matter?

A . Though he admitted that he had not always held the view, he had come to the conclusion long ago, that an inter-religious marriage was a welcome event whenever it took place. His stipulation was that such a connection was not to be a product of lust. In his opinion [if it was a product of lust][1] it was no marriage. It was illicit intercourse. Marriage in his estimation was a sacred institution. Hence there must be mutual friendship, either party having equal respect for the religion of the other. There was no question in this of conversion. Hence the marriage ceremony would be performed by priests belonging to both faiths. This happy event could take place when the communities shed mutual enmity and had regard for the religions of the world.

Q. Should religious instruction form part of the school curriculum as approved by the State? Do you favour separate schools for children belonging to different denominations for facility of religious instruction? Or, should religious instruction be left in the hands of private bodies? If so, do you think it is right for the State to subsidize such bodies?

A. As to this question he said that he did not believe in State religion even though the whole community had one religion. State interference would probably always be unwelcome. Religion was a purely personal matter. There were in reality as many religions as minds. Each mind had a different conception of God from the other. He was also opposed to State aid, partly or wholly, to religious bodies. For he knew that an institution or group, which did not manage to finance its own religious teaching, was a stranger to true religion. This did not mean that the State schools would not give ethical teaching. Fundamental ethics were common to all religions.

Harijan, 16-3-1947

[1] From a report in *Amrita Bazar Patrika*

30. LETTER TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY[1]

KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
FEBRUARY 22, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

Sardar Niranjan Singh Gill[2] was with me yesterday having returned from Bihar. He has prepared a memorandum which I have glanced through. I suggested that he should submit it to you. As it was he had not shown it to the Prime Minister of Bihar. I told him that the memorandum was incomplete without its being seen by the Prime Minister. He perceived the appositeness of my remark and said that he was going to send a copy to the Prime Minsiter. If he feels that any of his inferences require correction he would make the correction and pass it on to you.

There is one thing which he has recommended, namely, that I should go to Bihar if only for a few days. As you will see Dr. Mahmud also, if his report is correct, thinks likewise. I am in constant correspondence with Dr. Mahmud. I want to check up the statement with him. I am also writing to the Prime Minister. If he also thinks likewise I will then interrupt my work here to go to Bihar.

I have seen in the newspapers a statement attributed to you which reads like a jibe at me[3]. I would not expect that from you. Therefore, I give you the credit for believing that I have the "Inner Voice" to which I listen. My belief is that all mankind has it. But the outside din and noise have practically deadened it for the vast majority of people. When that voice speaks I shall find myself in Bihar without any further prompting.

While I am sending this to you I feel I ought not to omit mention of the fact that things are not as good as they might be and ought to be. I continue with some caution to worry the officials immediately concerned.

BENGAL PREMIER

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] An extract from this letter has been reproduced in "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 22-2-1947

[2] Of the Indian National Army, under whom a group of I.N.A. men were working in Noakhali.

[3] The addressee had made a frivolous reference to Gandhiji's "inner voice"

31. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

KAZIRKHIL, RAMGANJ P. S.,
NOAKHALI DISTRICT,
February 22, 1947

CHI. AMRIT,

Just as I am dictating to friend Rangaswamy[1] I get your letter and I have interrupted the dictation in order to see your letter. I have now read it and hasten to dictate my answer.

I have received all the letters referred to by you and I have sent replies also. I can't recollect just now but I will see if I can give you the dates. I do hope that by the time this reaches you, you will have recovered your voice fully.

Of course there is every chance of your getting back your Hindi and Roman-Urdu dictionary. I don't think I carry it with me. I will enquire and send it to you, care of Sardar[2] as soon as I trace it.

There is no cold here but there is still a freshness in the air. Real hot weather has not set in. Nights are quite cool and I use all my blankets. But there is no need to worry about me. I am keeping good health and have been able hitherto to go through my programme with clockwork regularity.

The second stage of the pilgrimage ends in Haimchar on Monday, the 24th instant.[3] It is Thakkar Bapa's[4] headquarters. I want to watch myself for a few days in Haimchar before resuming the third stage. It may also be that I might have to hurry to Bihar[5]. Sardar Niranjan Singh Gill[6], who was in Bihar for three days, gave me the impressions of his tour and had strongly recommended that I should go to Bihar if only for a few days. I have put myself in

[1] Correspondent of *The Hindu*

[2] Vallabhbhai Patel, Member, Home and Information and Broadcasting in the Interim Government

[3] The first stage of Gandhiji's walking tour had begun at Shrirampur on January 2 and the second stage commenced from Srinagar on February 5.

[4] A. V. Thakkar (1869-1951); President, Gujarat Antyaja Seva Mandir; Secretary, Harijan Sevak Sangh; General Secretary, Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust; established Bharatiya Adimjati Sevak Sangh.

[5] Where communal riots had broken out on October 25, 1946, which was celeberated as Noakhali Day

[6] Of the Indian National Army, under whom a group of I. N. A. men were working in Noakhali

communication with the Prime Minister of Bihar[1] and await his reply.

I begin the pilgrimage every day at 7.30 or 7.35 and the stages are so divided as not to require me to walk more than one hour and fifteen minutes at the most. The least I have been called upon to walk is thirty minutes. Once and only once has it been one hour and thirty minutes.

I see that this dictionary business[2] causes a lot of worry and takes away much of your time. Would you like to be relieved of that work? If you would, I would then like to keep your dictionary for the time being.

I am glad that the licensing clause in regard to khadi has been removed. How I would love to think that you have carried conviction to the Prime Minister[3] of the Punjab about *vanaspati*[4]; Pyarelal is in his village,[5] now about twenty miles from here, and doing excellent work. Sushila has gone to Sevagram in order to put matters straight about the maternity home and hospital. It is growing by leaps and bounds and has become very popular. She may return to her village work here as soon as she has finished her work in Sevagram. Renuka[6] is here with me at the village. Her village is less than two miles from here. In appearance she looks just as she was. She has had to take great care of herself. But she is all right otherwise. Only this morning she enquired about you. I told her that I heard from you fairly regularly but that you were trying to save my time as much as possible. She asked me whether you were ever coming to this part of India. I told her not whilst I was moving from day to day but that if I stayed for any length of time in one place and if you are well and available from your work in the Assembly or otherwise, I would like you to come for a few days, and she was happy. She is doing her work steadily with her little band of workers.

Manu I have reserved to the last. Everybody here knows everything about her. Therefore I would love to say a word or two for

[1] Shrikrishna Sinha

[2] The reference is to the English-into-Hindustani dictionary published fortnightly in *Harijan*, from September 1, 1946. It was originally intended to be the joint effort of a few co-workers but had subsequently to be taken up by the addressee herself at Gandhiji's instance; *vide* "Plucky Stand"

[3] Khizar Hyat Khan Tiwana

[4] Hydrogenated vegetable oil

[5] The workers accompanying Gandhiji had spread themselves out in the villages of Noakhali. *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 20-11-1946

[6] Renuka Ray

your information. But I must forbear for it is now towards one o'clock and I must have a little bit of rest and grease on the soles of my feet.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Keep both the shawls with you. Give them to me when we meet. Have you given your consent to the Central Advisory Board's recommendation[1] regarding military training?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 4190. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7826

32. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNA SINHA

KAZIRKHIL,

RAMGANJ P.S.,

NOAKHALI DISTT.,

FEBRUARY 22, 1947

SHRIKRISHNA SINHA,

I dictate this to you in English in order that it might be easier for you to make public use of my letter which I hope will never be necessary.

Sardar Niranjan Singh Gill saw me yesterday and gave me a report which he has prepared with reference to his summary visit to Bihar. I suggested that he should send you a copy so as to enable you to correct any mis-statement into which he might have been betrayed. I advised him too to send a copy to the Prime Minister of Bengal, advising him at the same time that he should mark the copy as confidential till it has been checked by you and your corrections, if any, had been accepted by him and the Memorandum accordingly corrected. I hope you have got the Memorandum.

There is one thing in it which refers to me. Dr. Syed Mahmud and others would like me to visit Bihar. Sardar Niranjan Singh Gill endorses the suggestion. Do you feel likewise? Please tell me unhesitatingly what you feel.

Now that you have announced your Ministry's decision to appoint an impartial enquiry commission as soon as possible I remind

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, "Letter to P. R. Chengalvaroya Chettiar", 21-2-1947

you of the proverb “he gives twice who gives in time”.

BIHAR PREMIER

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

33. A LETTER

February 22, 1947

I say you cannot tread this path (the path of *brahmacharya*) if you fight shy of the thorns, stones and pitfalls in the way. Maybe we shall stumble, our feet will bleed, we may even perish. But we dare not turn back.

* * *

If I am successful, the world will be enriched by my venture. If on the other hand I am found to be a fraud or a misled fool, the world will reject me and I shall be debunked. In either case the world will be the gainer. This is as clear to me as two and two make four.

Mahatma Gandhi — The Last Phase, Vol. I, Bk. II, p. 223

34. LETTER TO PYARELAL

February 22, 1947

CHI. PYARELAL,

It is 6.15 now and I must stretch myself. And if I feel sleepy, I must sleep. That is why I am dictating this letter. I read your lessons and I like them. It would not do your spoiling your handwriting and then asking to be forgiven. Asking forgiveness every now and again would be like following the English practice. That would not be proper. Your handwriting should be such that you do not have to ask forgiveness at all. You may write less. If you resolve that whatever you write will be in a beautiful handwriting, writing Manu’s lessons in a beautiful handwriting will not be burdensome to you. Duty should never be a burden. And it is one’s duty to make one’s handwriting beautiful like beads. In spite of knowing this I myself do not follow this. You should consider it a failing on my part, and not imitate me in this.

I have sampled your other *roti* too. It was harder and there must be something lacking in it. If you have started making *roti* and if you have decided to do it, why not do it the way you formerly did? In other words you had started mixing in it lime or tamarind juice or tomato juice. If you do that, the *roti* will be lighter and easily

morespongy. In case you do not do that, I have already suggested *bhakhri.* It would turn out nice if you add sufficient oil in the dough. Do not think that you have to send it to me. You may send it whenever it is convenient to do so.

Sushila's letter is enclosed. I am very much impressed by it. If she is able to act according to the wish she has expressed in it, I shall consider it a great triumph in this *yajna.* You must also encourage her. Have I not told you that you, Sushila and Manu could play the greatest role in the success of this *yajna.* And even there, Manu would be undergoing the severest test. The indications so far are good. Its complete success would no doubt depend very largely on my own efficiency. On the one hand is the gravest doubt on the part of Kishorelal and others and on the other my stubbornness. My mind is oscillating between the two. But it bends more towards action.

There is only to act, not to think about the reward.

My letter to Parasram could go only yesterday. It was merely negligence on my part. What could I do? Once the letter goes in the file, it is immediately forgotten. The moral of the thing is that everything should be promptly attended to. Whatever comes later, should also be taken up later. The diary came into my hand only yesterday. I am sending the previous one today.

At night, February 22, 1947

I have your second letter. I have already told Dev to send the *roti* tin. I do not know if it has been sent or not. And Dev is not here at present. I shall send William's letter. It would be a great feat on your part if Kalu Mian recovers. It is of course good that you are writing to him. I am writing about him to Kul Ranjan. He may be able to suggest something. You try applying mud-pack even on the eyes. I am doing it everyday. I am not using a piece of cloth now but applying the earth direct. Needless to say that the eyes must be kept closed. Jaya's letter is enclosed.

February 23, 1947

I am in a great hurry. Hence, I am sending this without revising. Now, send the papers about my subject.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

35. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

CHAR KRISHNAPUR,
February 22, 1947

At the outset Gandhiji said that he had received from a Muslim friend in Baluchistan a printed sheet containing what he thought were the sayings of the Prophet and the teachers. The whole selection was good but he was attracted by the following from Prophet Mohamed's sayings:

> When God made the earth it shook to and fro till He put mountains on it to keep it firm. Then the Angels asked, O God, is there anything in Thy creation stronger than these mountains? And God replied, iron is stronger than these mountains for it breaks them.
>
> And is there anything in Thy creation stronger than iron?
>
> Yes, fire is stronger than iron, for it melts it.
>
> Is there anything stronger than fire?
>
> Yes, water, for it quenches fire.
>
> Is there anything stronger than water?
>
> Yes, wind, for it puts water in motion.
>
> O our Sustainer, is there anything stronger than wind?
>
> Yes, a good man giving alms. If he gives it with his right hand and conceals it from his left, he overcomes all things. Every good act is charity. Your smiling in your brother's face, your putting a wanderer on the right road, your giving water to the thirsty, is charity. A man's true wealth hereafter is the good he has done to his fellowmen. When he dies people will ask, what property he had left behind him? But the Angels will ask, what good deeds has he sent before him?

Gandhiji then dealt with the following questions.

Q. Why should there be insistence on temple-entry? Of course, we understand that in case of objection, there is scope in it for satyagraha. No- caste dinners have a limited value; for those who join do not shed untoucha- bility in their homes or during social ceremonies. They look upon these dinners, organized by Congressmen or other progressives, as special occasions when caste rules are held in abeyance; something comparable to what one does when one goes to Jagannath Puri and partakes of cooked rice offered to Jagannath without reference to one's caste. Anti-untouchability has not yet gone deep enough to affect the normal social life of individuals. What can be done to break down barriers in private homes? Even with regard to temple-entry there is one question. Do you think that priests in public service in free India will be drafted from among competent men and women without any reference to their former castes?

A. Gandhiji said that it was an apt question in this part of Bengal where there

[1] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary"

were the largest number of *Namasudras*. He welcomed the question doubly because he had occupied the lowest rung of the Hindu ladder and because he did not believe in the ladder of castes. He invited all to occupy that lowest rung. Then there would be no occasions for such questions as were addressed to him. Meanwhile, he was bound to deal with them. He entirely endorsed the proposition that untouchability would be doomed and totally abolished when there was no prohibition applied against anyone by reason of his caste. The only universal prohibition would be against insanitation, degradation, etc. But he clung to the belief that temple-entry took the first place in the programme of removal of untouchability and he made bold to say that social public dinners would precede as they were preceding the final conquest over the demon of untouchability. He prophesied that Hinduism would be destroyed if untouchability was not destroyed, even as the British race would lose its name if British rule was not destroyed *in toto*, as it was certainly being dissolved before their very eyes.

Q. You wrote about economic equality in 1941. Do you hold that all persons who perform useful and necessary service in society, whether farmer or Bhangi, engineer or accountant, doctor or teacher, have a moral right only to equal wages with the rest? Of course, it is understood, educational or other expenses shall be a charge of the State. Our question is, should not all persons get the same wages for their personal needs? Do you not think that if we work for this equality, it will cut sooner under the root of untouchability than any other process?

A. As to this Gandhiji had no doubt that if India was to live an exemplary life of independence which would be the envy of the world, all the Bhangis, doctors, lawyers, teachers, merchants and others would get the same wages for an honest day's work. Indian society may never reach the goal but it was the duty of every Indian to set his sail towards that goal and no other if India was to be a happy land.

Harijan, 16-3-1947

36. A SILENCE-DAY NOTE

February 23, 1947

Difference between defensive and aggressive is wholly unconvincing and meaningless. You can't blow hot and cold. Either have hate or love. I have already said how to deal with the want of seeds and instruments.

M. K. G.

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

37. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

CHARSOLADI,
February 23, 1947

Q. *Namasudra* girls are usually married off at the age of 12 or 13; formerly the usual age was 8 or 9. The bridegroom has to pay a dowry of Rs. 150 for the bride. The average difference between the two is about 12 to 15 years. As a result of this the number of widows in the *Namasudra* society is rather large. Among one section of the caste widow-marriage was prevalent. But in imitation of another section which was looked upon as superior, the former are giving up that practice. What is your advice regarding child-marriage and widow-remarriage?

A. Dealing with the question Gandhiji said that his opinion was definite. In the first instance there should be no possibility of child-widows. He was averse to child-marriages. It was an evil custom which unfortunately the *Namasudras* had perhaps taken from the so-called higher castes.

Gandhiji was also against the system of dowry. It was nothing but the sale of girls. That there should be castes even amongst *Namasudras* was deplorable and he would strongly advise them to abolish all caste distinctions amongst themselves. And in this they should bear in mind the opinion the speaker had often expressed that all caste distinctions should be abolished, and there should be only one caste, namely, Bhangis, and all Hindus should take pride in being called Bhangis and nothing else. This applied to the *Namasudras* as well.

When child-marriages were abolished, naturally there would be few, if any, young widows. As a general rule he was for one man one wife for life, and one woman one husband for life. Custom had familiarized women in the so-called higher castes with enforced widowhood. Contrary was the rule with men. He called it a disgrace, but whilst society was in that pitiable condition, he advocated widow-remarriage for all young widows. He believed in equality of the sexes and, therefore, he could only think of the same rights for women as men.

Q. You say that you are in favour of inter-religious marriages[2] but at the same time you say that each party should retain his or her own religion and, therefore, you said, you tolerated even civil marriages. Are there any instances of parties belonging to different religions keeping up their own religions to the end of their lives; and is not the institution of civil marriage a negation of religion and does it not tend towards laxity of religion?

[1] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary". It being Gandhiji's silence day the questions and answers were read out.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 21-2-1947

A. Gandhiji said that the questions were appropriate. He had no instances in mind where the parties had clung to their respective faiths unto death because these friends whom he knew had not yet died. He had, however, under his observation men and women professing different religions and each clinging to his or her own faith without abatement. But he would go so far as to say that they need not wait for the discovery of past instances. They should create new ones so that timid ones may shed their timidity.

As to civil marriages he did not believe in them but he welcomed the institution of civil marriage as a much-needed reform for the sake of reform.

Harijan, 16-3-1947

38. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

KAZIRKHIL, RAMGANJ P. S.,
NOAKHALI DT.,

February 24, 1947

Today being silence day I am writing this. But it will be typed for your easy reading.I have read Attlee's speech[1]. Lest I might embarrass you by an untoward word or phrase I am not saying anything just now.

Evidently I had anticipated practically the whole of it in my speeches here, i. e., if I am interpreting the speech correctly. My interpretation is this

Independence will be recognized of those parts which desired it and will do without British protection.

The British will remain where they are wanted.

This may lead to Pakistan for those provinces or portions which may want it. No one will be forced one way or the other. The Congress provinces if they are *wise* will get what they want.

Much will depend upon what the Constituent Assembly will do and what you as the Interim Government are able to do.[2]

If the British Government are and are able to remain sincere the declaration is good. Otherwise it is dangerous.

Now about Sardar Niranjan Singh Gill. He has been to Bihar and has produced a report which somewhat reflects upon the Sinha

[1] In the House of Commons on February 20; for excerpts from it, *vide* Appendix I.

[2] The addressee was Vice-President, Member-in-Charge, External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, in the Interim Government.

Ministry.[1] You should see him and his report. It has gone to Suhrawardy and Sinha under my advice. He and Sardar Jiwan Singh have not hit it off. The whole thing is bad. I. N. A. seems to have split up. Probably you know all this.

In view of the above report I might have to go to Bihar. God knows. You may show this to friends.

Hope you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU[2]

[PS.]

I take it that you have a cable from Durban about orders against Drs. Dadoo and Naicker.[3] I trust you have taken prompt action. I have cabled F. M. Smuts.

BAPU

From the original:Jawaharlal Nehru Papers (M. O. Mathai). Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

39. LETTER TO J. B. KRIPALANI[1]

KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
February 24, 1947

This is a very personal letter but not private.

Manu Gandhi, my grand-daughter as we consider blood relations, shares the bed with me, strictly as my very blood, not to give me animal satisfaction but as part of what might be my last *yajna.* This has cost me dearest associates, i.e., Vallabhbhai, Kishorelal, probably C.R. and others. This includes Devdas. I have lost caste with them. You as one of the dearest and earliest comrades, certainly before Sardar and Kishorelal, should reconsider your position in the light of what they have to say. Perhaps Sucheta will help you somewhat. She knows something of this episode. Am I worthy of the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Niranjan Singh Gill", 8-2-1947

[2] The subscription is in Hindi.

[3] It had been reported that the Government of South Africa had refused passports to Yusuf Dadoo and G. M. Naicker and impounded their certificates of identity.

[3] (1888-1982); Principal, Gujarat Vidyapith, 1920-27; General Secretary, Indian National Congress, 1934-45; elected its President in 1946 but resigned in 1947; Member, Constituent Assembly; resigned from Congress in 1951

companionship of so many old associates? I have given the deepest thought to the matter. The whole world may foresake me but I dare not leave what I hold is the truth for me. It may be a delusion and a snare. If so, I must realize it myself. I have risked perdition before now. Let this be the reality if it has to be.

I need not argue the point. I have simply conveyed the intensity of my thought.

I suggest your discussing with Sardar and Rajaji. And then come to the conclusion and let me know. You have to think out your relationship not merely as a friend but as President. Of course you can share this with Jawaharlal and Maulana. Do not consider my feelings in the matter. I have none. All I want is to *do* the truth at all cost, as I see it.

Blessings from

BAPU[1]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

40. LETTER TO PYARELAL

February 24, 1947

CHI. PYARELAL,

Herewith is a copy of the letter to the Professor.[2] You will learn from it what is happening. My association with *Harijan* now seems to have ended. I am not worried in the least. I am anxious about Manu's state of mind. All this is an ordeal for me. May truth alone triumph.

Blessings from

BAPU

[P.S.]

Send the papers about me.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] In Devanagari

[2] *Vide* the peceding item

41. DISCUSSION WITH A. V. THAKKAR ,

February 24, 1947[1]

BAPA: Why this experiment here?

GANDHIJI: You are mistaken, Bapa; it is not an experiment but an integral part of my *yajna*. One may forgo an experiment, one cannot forgo one's duty. Now if I regard a thing as a part of my *yajna* — a sacred duty — I may not give it up even if public opinion is wholly against me. I am engaged in achieving self-purification. The five cardinal observances are the five props of my spiritual striving. *Brahmacharya* is one of them. But all the five constitute an indivisible whole. They are inter-related and inter-dependent. If one of them is broken, all are broken. That being so, if in practice I resile in regard to *brahmacharya* to please Mrs. Grundy, I jettison not only *brahmacharya* but truth, ahimsa and all the rest. I do not allow myself any divergence between theory and practice in respect of the rest. If then I temporize in the matter of *brahmacharya*, would it not blunt the edge of my *brahmacharya* and vitiate my practice of truth? Ever since my coming to Noakhali, I have been asking myself the question, 'What is it that is choking the action of my ahimsa? Why does not the spell work? May it not be because I have temporized in the matter of *brahmacharya*?'

B. Your ahimsa has not failed. Do not miss the wood for the trees....[2] Just think what would have been the fate of Noakhali if you had not come. The world does not think of *brahmacharya* as you do.

G. If I accept your contention, then it would amount to this that I should give up what I hold to be right for me, for fear of displeasing the world. I shudder to think where I should have been if I had proceeded like that in my life. I should have found myself at the bottom of the pit. You can have no idea, Bapa, but I can well picture it to myself. I have called my present venture a *yajna*—a sacrifice, a penance. It means utmost self-purification. How can there be that self-purification when in my mind I entertain a thing which I dare not put openly into practice? Does one need anyone's approval or permission to do what one holds with all one's being to be one's duty? Under the circumstances, there are only two courses open to friends. Either they should have faith in me, in the purity of my motives and my *bona*

[1] From *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 27-2-1947. The source, however, has "February 25".

[2] Omission as in the source

fides, even though they are unable to follow or agree with my reasoning, or they should part company with me. There is no middle course. I dare not shrink from putting into action the logical implications of my conviction when I am launched on a sacrifice which consists of the full practice of truth. Nor must I hide or keep my convictions to myself. That would be disloyalty to friends. Let X, Y and Z, therefore, go the way they choose, but how can I run away from the test? My mind is made up. On the lonely way to God on which I have set out, I need no earthly companions. Let those who will, therefore, denounce me, if I am the imposter they imagine me to be, though they may not say so in so many words. It might disillusion millions who persist in regarding me as a Mahatma. I must confess, the prospect of being so debunked greatly pleases me. Thousands of Hindu and Muslim women come to me. They are to me like my own mother, sisters and daughters. But if an occasion should arise requiring me to share the bed with any of them I must not hesitate, if I am the *brahmachari* that I claim to be. If I shrink from the test, I write myself down as a coward and a fraud.

B. What if your example is copied?

G. If there is blind imitation or unscrupulous exploitation of my example, society will not and should not tolerate it. But if there is sincere, *bona-fide* honest endeavour, society should welcome it and it will be the better for it. As soon as my research is complete, I shall myself proclaim the result to the whole world.

B. I for one cannot imagine anything base in you. After all, Manu is in place of a grand-daughter to you — flesh of your flesh and bone of your bone. I confess, I had my mental reservations in the beginning. I had come in all humility to press upon you my doubts. I did not understand. Only after our talk today have I been able to have a deeper understanding of the meaning of what you are trying to do.

G. Does that make any real difference? It does not and it should not. You seem to make a distinction between Manu and others like her. My mind makes no such distinction. To me they are all alike— daughters.[1]

Mahatma Gandhi — The Last Phase, Vol. I, Bk. II, pp. 224-6

[1] According to the source the conversation had an unexpected sequel. Manu told Gandhiji that she saw no harm in conceding to Thakkar Bapa's request to suspend the practice for the time being, provided Gandhiji agreed. Gandhiji readily agreed. *Vide* also "Letter to Vinoba Bhave", 10-3-1947

42. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

HAIMCHAR,
February 24, 1947

This being the last stage of the second part of his pilgrimage, Gandhiji thanked God for the happy ending of the second part. He referred to the intense wish that Bapa, whom he described as the chief priest and servant of the Harijans, had expressed that he should include Haimchar in his programme. He referred also to the origin of the distribution of workers in the villages that had suffered and how Bapa had instinctively selected the Haimchar area as the field of his service.

He then referred to the communications, telegraphic and otherwise, he had received for his opinion on Mr. Attlee's statement[3]. He said there were the Congress and the League, not to mention other associations, which would express authoritative opinions. He would however permit himself to say that the statement had put the burden on the various parties of doing what they thought best. It had declared that British rule would end before or during the month of June, 1948. It was up to the parties to make or mar the situation. Nothing on earth could overturn their united wish. And so far as he was concerned, he was emphatically of the opinion that if the Hindus and Muslims closed their ranks and came together without external pressure, they would not only better their political condition but they would affect the whole of India and probably the world.

It was an easy descent to what was uppermost in the mind of his audience composed mostly of *Namasudras*. He warned them against considering themselves as fallen or untouchables. Those so-called higher castes were the guilty ones; they were responsible for what they had become. If they realized the fact, they would never make the mistake of imitating the evil customs and habits of the higher classes.

He was sorry to hear that there were child-marriages amongst them and that child-widows were compelled in imitation of the higher castes to abstain from remarrying. The result, he had learned, was that diseases which resulted from promiscuity were prevalent among them. Their betterment would not come from the legislatures or from any other outside agency. It depended on their own efforts. they should remember what the late Malaviyaji[3] used to say, that children of God should confine themselves to earning an honest cowrie and eat what it could procure. Then there would be happiness for them and untouchability would be a thing of the past.

[1] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary"
[2] *Vide* Appendix I.
[3] Madan Mohan Malaviya (1861-1946); President, Indian National Congress, 1909 and 1918; Member, Legislative Assembly; founder of the Benares Hindu University and its Vice-Chancellor from 1919 to 1939

The higher castes so called would be ashamed of their sin against them.

Bapu pointed out the destruction that had been wrought. He was sorry for it but he would not shed a tear for it nor harbour ill will against the destroyers. Let them not bewail their lot. They were used to hard labour or should be. They might plead with the Government to do justice and that in time. But they would not give in if that assistance did not come. They must trust their hands and feet to set them up again in life. God always helped those who helped themselves. Their reliance must be on the living God and on the ever-toiling masses.

Harijan, 16-3-1947

43. FROM THE DIARY

February 24, 1947

After the morning prayer, tried to study the outline of Bengali numeral one and to improve the outline of the second numeral. Next struggled unsuccessfully for about ten minutes to understand the distinction between *nio* and *nao* (future imperative and present indicative respectively of the Bengali verb 'take'). In the meantime Manu brought orange juice. Put the same question to her. She too failed to give a satisfactory explanation. That accounted for another ten minutes. Sent for Nirmalbabu. Put the poser to him in turn. He fared a little better but in the end he, too, gave up perplexed. In between he handed Sardar Gill's file. That started a conversation about Gill. This went on till 6·35. Wrote a letter to A. Then lay down to rest for about ten minutes; got up at 7·25, inspected the trench latrine and set out on the day's march.

Mahatma Gandhi—Last Phase, Vol. I, Bk. II, pp. 200-1

44. TELEGRAM TO KEDARNATH KULKARNI

HAIMCHAR,
[On or after *Feburary 24, 1947*][1]

NATHJI
SHANTIKUNJ NAIGAM
CROSS ROAD, DADAR
BOMBAY-14

READ YOUR LETTER WITH ATTENTION. IT CONTAINS MISSTATEMENTS. OBSERVE THAT WIDE DIFFERENCES EXIST BETWEEN US. NEVERTHELESS COME IF YOU CAN CONVENIENTLY AND WITHOUT INJURY TO HEALTH OWING LONG AND TIRESOME JOURNEY.[2]

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

45. TELEGRAM TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

HAIMCHAR,
[On or after *February 24, 1947*][3]

YOUR WIRE. SENT LONG WIRE NATHJI.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Muesum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Gandhiji was in Haimchar from February 24 to March 2, 1947.

[2] The addressee, along with Swami Anand, came to Bihar on March 14 and held discussion with Gandhiji on March 15 and 16; *vide* "Discussion with Swami Anand and Kedar Nath", 15/16-3-1947

[3] *Vide* the peceding item.

46. NOTE TO S. HAQ[1]

[After *February 24, 1947*][2]

I have your note. I am a simple man, no reader of visions. "Fear God and no other and love your neighbour as thyself" is my motto.[2]

From a photostat: C. W. 10231. Courtesy: Basant Apte. Also G. N. 11398

47. LETTER TO MAHENDRA PRATAP

KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
February 25, 1947

DEAR RAJA SAHEB,

I have your wire. You are probably almost right not for the argument you have used but for deeper reasons. I have advisedly used the adverbs 'probably' and 'almost'.

Yours sincerely,

RAJA MAHENDRA PRATAP
BRINDABAN

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

48. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

February 25, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

Your two letters are lying with me. Owing to heavy work I was not able to write to you. Even this I am writing very early in the morning.

I have read your Bengali letter. I had a talk with Satis Babu[3].

[1] The addressee in a letter in Bengali dated February 24, 1947, had written to Gandhiji about a dream in which he had seen Gandhiji preaching Islam.

[2] This is followed by the instruction "Render this into Bengali and I shall sign it."

[3] Satis Chandra Das Gupta

You do not need money. This is not Borkamta.[1] Who are the spinners? Are they Hindus or Muslims? You have made no mistake in breaking the fast.[2] God alone knows if you have not got a new birth. If you can come just for a day in a jeep, do come. I will explain to you what you have to do. Satis Babu can bring you. I will be in Haimchar for six days. Don't be in a hurry. Come if you can stand the strain. I will explain fully. But don't mind if you do not like to travel by jeep. In that case I will write and tell you what I wish to say. Jeep is also a temptation. I do not want to lure you into it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The *dhoti* that you have sent is very good. I wore it immediately. Today also I am wearing it. My blessings to the weavers.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 579

49. QUESTION BOX

[*February 25, 1947*][3]

Q. What is the difference between your non-co-operation and the non-fraternization of the Allies?

A. The answer is obvious. My non-co-operation was purely non-violent in conception as also in effect. This does not mean that its practice was always perfect. Theory and practice hardly ever coincide even as Euclid's line in practice never coincides with his theoretical definition.

The non-fraternization policy of the Allies led to disastrous results which he who runs may see, and the pity of it is that the disaster is not yet completed. No one knows where it will lead to.

Harijan, 16-3-1947, and *The Hindu*, 27-2-1947

[1] The addressee had worked in the Kasturba Seva Mandir, Borkamta from 1944 to 1946.

[2] Amtussalaam who had been working in Noakhali from October 1946, had undertaken a fast for the return of the sacrificial swords to Hindus. She broke her fast on January 20, the twenty-fifth day of the fast, on Gandhiji's advice. *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 21-1-1947

[3] From *The Hindu*

50. TALK WITH DEB NATH DAS[1]

February 25, 1947

Netaji[2] will remain immortal for all time to come for his services to India.

The Hindu, 27-2-1947

51. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING[3]

HAIMCHAR,
February 25, 1947

Unity between Hindus and Muslims is the first thing to be achieved to facilitate the work of village reconstruction and no work will be done without this.

Gandhiji said that instead of making schemes of great projects they should start in a humble way the construction of good roads for peasants and destruction of water hyacinths in tanks. Cleanliness was the one thing necessary in villages in order to prevent diseases. If the officers engaged in village uplift task wanted to work in co-operation with the people they must let the latter know that they were their servants. Concluding, Gandhiji said that as he was a servant of the people he would be glad to render all possible help in this regard.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 28-2-1947

52. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[4]

HAIMCHAR,
February 25, 1947

Gandhiji drew the attention of the audience to the meeting[5] he was invited to attend by the Relief Commissioner, Nurannabi Chowdhury. He asked them to follow the advice he had given without waiting to know what others would do. He said that he

[1] Secretary, Indian National Army Peace Committee. He met Gandhiji in the morning and apprised him of the work done by the Peace Committee camps in Tipperah and Noakhali.

[2] Subhas Chandra Bose (1897-1945); General Secretary of Indian National Congress, 1927, its President, 1938 and 1939; founded All-India Forward Bloc; organized the Indian Independence League and the Indian National Army

[3] Held in the afternoon on the grounds of Haimchar Bazar, the meeting was arranged by the Rehabilitation Commissioner, Chittagong Division.

[4] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary"

[5] *Vide* the preceding item.

wanted the Kingdom of God on earth. Surely we did not want to wait for anyone else to do so.

Then he dealt with the questions that were addressed to him.

Q. Do you not think that a strict enforcement of the purdah system would improve the moral condition of women?

A. He was warned by some Muslim critics against speaking on the purdah. He had therefore some hesitation in speaking about it. But he took heart when he turned round and saw that many Hindu women observed it and that numerous Malaya Muslim women among whom he had many friends did not observe the purdah. He also knew many distinguished Muslim women of India who did not observe it. Lastly, the real purdah was of the heart. A woman who peeped through the purdah and contemplated a male on whom her gaze fell violated the spirit behind it. If a woman observed it in spirit, she was truly carrying out what the great Prophet had said.

Q. To those who had lost all their trade your advice is that they should voluntarily turn themselves into labourers. Who will then look after education, commerce and the like? If you thus dissolve the division of labour, will not the cause of civilization suffer?

A. The question betrayed ignorance of his meaning. If a man could not carry on his original mercantile business, it was not open to him but obligatory on him to take to physical labour, say, scavenging or breaking stones. He believed in the division of labour or work. But he did insist on equality of wages. The lawyer, the doctor, or the teacher was entitled to no more than the Bhangi. Then only would division of work uplift the nation or the earth. There was no other royal road to true civilization or happiness.

Spirit giveth life, the letter killeth. A Ganapati with an elephant's head was a monster but as a representation of *Om*[1] was an uplifting symbol. Ravana with ten heads was a fabled fool but if it meant a man who carried no head about him and was tossed to and fro by fleeting passions, he was a many-headed demon.

Q. How can the caste Hindus look after the interests of the untouchables? How can they realize the feelings of the classes who have suffered so long at their hands? Is it not then better to entrust the interests of the untouchables to men of their own caste?

A. He was of the opinion that the caste Hindus owed a sacred duty to the so-called untouchables. He must become a Bhangi in name and action. When that happened the untouchables would rise at a bound and Hinduism would leave a rich legacy to the world. If that happened, the system of cleaning closets would undergo a transformation. In England the real Bhangis were famous engineers and sanitarians. That could not happen in India so long as society was sluggish and slothful.

Harijan, 23-3-1947

[1] The sacred syllable or *Pranava*

53. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

February [26][1], *1947*

The last week of March next is at present for me a far cry. If God wills He will find a way for me to attend the Conference.[2]

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 89

54. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

HAIMCHAR,
February 26, 1947

Referring to the news about the Union Government's refusal of passports and impounding the certificates of identity for Drs. Dadoo and Naicker, Gandhiji said:

The Union Government will not be able to sustain their anti-Asiatic policy by such an action.

He added that the action was wholly unwarranted and arbitrary if the facts stated in the cablegram he had received in this connection were correct.[3]

Gandhiji hoped that either there were some justifying peremptory reasons for the refusal and impounding or that second thoughts would convince the Government that it was a hasty step and therefore it would be cancelled.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 28-2-1947

55. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[4]

HAIMCHAR,
February 26, 1947

Q. When things are all going wrong at the Centre, what can common people do to restore unity?

A. There was a law of science which enunciated that two forces were simultaneously at work: the centripetal and the centrifugal. He wanted to apply the law to life also. The centre, therefore, of the Government attracted us all to it and in good government we would respond to that centripetal force. Similar was the centrifugal force in obedience to which we, the villagers of Haimchar, attracted the

[1] The source has "6", obviously a slip, since this letter was in reply to the addressee's letter dated February 24, soliciting Gandhiji's presence at the Inter-Asian Relations Conference which was to be held in New Delhi from March 23.
[2] Gandhiji ultimately did attend the Conference on April 1 and 2.
[3] *Vide* footnote 3, "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 24-2-1947
[4] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary"

centre. Thus, where these forces worked well there would be ordered and orderly government at the centre and the circumference. When, however, the centre was going wrong, it should be pointless to dominate the seven hundred thousand villages. On the other hand, the villagers would live in perfect amity if they were wise in leaving alone the centre to look after its so-called high politics?

Q. A man who sacrifices self-interest for the sake of his community is at least unselfish to that extent. How can the heart of such a man be affected so that he will sacrifice communal interests for the interest of the nation?

A. A man whose spirit of sacrifice did not go beyond his own community became selfish himself and also made his community selfish. In his opinion the logical conclusion of self-sacrifice was that the individual sacrificed himself for the community, the community sacrificed itself for the district, the district for the province, the province for the nation and the nation for the world. A drop torn from the ocean perished without doing any good. If it remained a part of the ocean, it shared the glory of carrying on its bosom a fleet of mighty ships.

Q. In free India whose interest shall be supreme? If a neighbouring State is in want, what should free India do?

A. Gandhiji said that the first part of the question had been answered in the above. A truly independent free India was bound to run to the help of its neighbours in distress. He instanced Afghanistan, Ceylon and Burma and said that the rule also applied to the neighbours of these three and thus, by implication, they became India's neighbours too. And thus, he said, if individual sacrifice was a living sacrifice, it embraced the whole of humanity.[1]

Gandhiji gave to his ideal society the name *Ramarajya*.

Let no one commit the mistake of thinking that *Ramarajya* means a rule of the Hindus. My Rama is another name for *Khuda* or God. I want *Khudai raj*, which is the same thing as the Kingdom of God on earth.

The rule of the first four Caliphs was somewhat comparable to it. The establishment of such a *rajya* would not only mean welfare of the whole of the Indian people but of the whole world.

Harijan, 23-3-1947, and *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. I, Bk. II, pp. 189-90

[1] What follows is reproduced from *Mahatma Gandhi — The Last Phase*.

56. TELEGRAM TO SUDHIR GHOSH

February 27, 1947

SUDHIR GHOSH
1 AURANGZEB ROAD
NEW DELHI

GOD BE WITH YOU.[1]

BAPU

Sudhir Ghosh Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *Gandhi's Emissary*, p. 200

57. TELEGRAM TO SYED MAHMUD

Express *February 27, 1947*

MINISTER SYED MAHMUD
PATNA

YOUR WIRE. NEWSPAPER ANNOUNCEMENT UNAUTHORISED. WROTE SHRI BABU[2] IF YOU ALL CONSIDER MY PRESENCE NECESSARY IN INTERESTS INJURED PARTY PREPARED COME EVEN EARLIER THAN EIGHTEENTH. WOULD LOVE TO STAY WITH YOU UNLESS YOU ALL DESIRE OTHERWISE.[3]

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The addressee had been appointed Public Relations Officer at the Indian High Commission in London.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Secretary, Muslim League", 28-4-1947

[3] Late in February Gandhiji received a report from Dr. Syed Mahmud, Minister for Development and Transport, Bihar saying that the situation in Bihar was indeed serious and required his personal attention; *vide* also "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 28-2-1947

58. LETTER TO LUDWIG BORSCH

KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
BENGAL,
February 27, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 11th ultimo.[1] Distance lends enchantment to the scene. I would, therefore, warn you against visiting India for the enrichment of your life. Life, as it is found in India, is wholly different from the life described in the best books on ancient wisdom in the East. I wish I could give you definite guidance on the selection of your diet. We in India, not excluding myself, have learnt much from English and American literature on the diet question. The ordinary Indian diet is unbalanced and is heavily spiced. Therefore, I would advise you to consult the many American and English text-books written on vegetarianism and more especially on the kind ofdiet. You will gain much more than I could give from this literature if you used discretion.

LUDWIG BORSCH, ESQ.
66 TENIMORE STREET
BROOKLYN
NEW YORK

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

59. LETTER TO PYARELAL

February 27, 1947

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have your two letters. If you send me the prescription for Satis Babu and anything else that is required, I shall do the needful. Pay the doctors fee if it must be paid. But you must know the way I feel, the way I acted in Bihar. Let us render such help as we can and be content. What you are doing for Kalu Mian is an ideal thing in my view. We should provide him personal service, give him proper diet and be content with that. For that purpose, a doctor is not needed. I

[1] In which the addressee had expressed his desire to visit India "to find and learn about those things, which in the material-minded West one regarded with a sort of pitying contempt" and sought Gandhiji's advice on diet.

followed this practice in Champaran from beginning to end. The doctors and the teachers were Ba, Durga, Manibehn Parikh, etc. It was very impressive and very rewarding. This is just to suggest what in my view would be the ideal thing.

I am convinced your good lies in controlling your desire to come. A.S. and Kanu arrived yesterday. I shall send the letter you have asked for. There is no hurry about it. Kanu and A.S. will also read it.

What you have written about *Harijan* is correct. It all depends on what Sardar finally does. It is hardly possible that he will now run it independently. But if he does, we shall remove your name. We have so far entirely depended on our *sadhana*, particularly mine. I am without fear. I am unconcerned. But it irks me that I have not yet cultivated non-attachment to the extent I should have. But in the end there must be the grace of God behind human effort. Without that, human effort is futile.

If Kalu Mian feels hot in the soles, I know the usefulness of a mud-pack. I think it should be used.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I received another letter just while this was going. It is a lovelyletter. I have not been able to read the account of your activities and the lesson for Manu. I shall arrange to send the letter which you are so eager to read. I had completely forgotten what you wrote about Rajaji. If you write a letter about it and send it to me, I shall send it on to him. You can write to anyone from among Rajaji, Kishorelal, Narharibhai, Jajuji, etc. Do not worry at all about my health. Should not a person having faith in God be free from worry?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

60. TALK WITH FAZLUL HUQ

February 27, 1947

GANDHIJI: Oh, don't stand up. You were the Chief Minister when I met you last !

HUQ: I shall be frank with you. It is no use saying one thing and having

something else up your sleeve.

Gandhiji nodded complete agreement.

The Maulvi Saheb began: Gandhiji had not gone to Bihar; his place was in Bihar rather than in Noakhali; Noakhali Muslims, far from being aggressors, were the victims of police repression. Hindu police officers were harassing innocent Muslims and implicating them in false cases—they should be withdrawn; Muslims were not criminals, abductors of women, etc.; Islam never taught that.

Gandhiji again agreed so far as the teachings of Islam in the abstract were concerned.

HUQ: Very few understand Islam. They call it the religion of the sword. The minorities in the Muslim State were the special responsibility of the majority. The non-Muslims were *zimmis*.[1]

The Maulvi Saheb's last point was that far from the Hindus having cause to be afraid of the Muslim majority in Noakhali, it was the latter, in fact, who were afraid of Hindu domination. The Hindus should shed their fear and accept Pakistan. His Majesty's Government's statement[2] of 20th February, 1947, would only bring civil war to India.

G. (In a tone of light banter): So, if I come to Barisal, there is only the *khal*[3] for me, is it not?

HUQ: No, no, Mahatmaji, you are always welcome. That was only a joke. I never can let go a joke—even at the expense of my father. That is my nature !

Gandhiji said that he had always asked Jinnah to convince him of the meaning and implications of Pakistan. His formula[4] was before the Muslim League leader and the country and so far as he was concerned the offer still stood. As regards withdrawal of criminal cases, it rested with the Bengal Government. Regarding Bihar, he continued:

I may shortly go there. But it will not be to oblige you.

He was awaiting Dr. Mahmud's[5] reply, he told the Maulvi Saheb, but if the latter could assure him that the majority community in Noakhali would stand guarantee for the safety and security of the minority community, he would feel free to leave Bengal immediately. Could he give that assurance?

To this the Maulvi Saheb gave no straight reply. Instead, he bagan to talk

[1] Who were required to pay a tax called *jazia* for protection by the State

[2] *Vide* "Clement Attlee's Statement", 20-2-1947

[3] A canal. Fazlul Huq was reported to have said that as a non-Muslim, Gandhiji should not preach the teachings of Islam, for, instead of Hindu-Muslim unity, he was creating bitterness between the two communities. Had he been to Barisal, he would have driven him into the canal. *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 16-2-1947

[4] Presumably the Rajaji Formula. *Vide* "C. Rajagopalachari's Formula"

[5] Syed Mahmud, Minister for Development and Transport in Bihar

about a coalition Government in Bengal as the only remedy for Bengal's ills!

At this point one of Fazlul Huq's companions broke in: "I was a worker in the Khilafat movement[1]; you were the first leader who taught me politics."

G. If you had taken your politics off me, you would have given a much better account of yourself.

G. (TO HUQ): What is this quarrel between you and Suhrawardy? I do not like it.

But the Maulvi Saheb again avoided the issue and talked instead of his profession and his chronic trouble—lack of finance! Gandhiji thereupon twitted him for his spendthrift nature and sent him away laughing.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Bk. II, pp. 250-2

61. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING [2]

HAIMCHAR,
February 27, 1947

Q. Can a man serve his immediate neighbours and yet serve the whole of humanity? What is the true meaning of swadeshi?

A. Gandhiji said that the question had been answered by him on the previous evening.[3] He believed implicity in the truth that a man could serve his neighbours and humanity at the same time, the condition being that the service of the neighbours was in no way selfish or exclusive, i.e., did not in any way involve the exploitation of any other human being. The neighbours would then understand the spirit in which such service was given. They would also know that they would be expected to give their services to their neighbours. Thus considered, it would spread like the proverbial snowball gathering strength in geometrical progression, encircling the whole earth.

It followed that swadeshi was that spirit which dictated man to serve his next-door neighbour to the exclusion of any other. The condition that he had already

[1] Which was launched in 1919 "against the threatened dismemberment of Turkey and removal of the holy places of Islam from the Caliph's control"

[2] According to "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary" from which this has been extracted, Gandhiji offered prayers in a temple which was destroyed during the riots and was rebuilt by the Government. The idol in the temple, however, eescaped destruction because the resourceful priest had put it away in a safe place. Gandhiji hoped that the old and rusty tins used in rebuilding the temple would be painted so as to prevent further deterioration.

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 26-2-1947

mentioned was that the neighbour thus served had in his turn to serve his own neighbour. In this sense swadeshi was never exclusive. It recognized the scientific limitation of human capacity for service.

Q. The Government has been introducing schemes of industrializing the country for the maximum utilization of her raw materials, not of her abundant and unused man-power which is left to rot in idleness. Can such schemes be considered swadeshi?

A. Gandhiji remarked that the question had been well put. He did not exactly know what the Government plan was. But he heartily endorsed the proposition that any plan which exploited the raw materials of a country and neglected the potentially more powerful man-power was lopsided and could never tend to establish human equality.

America was the most industrialized country in the world and yet it had not banished poverty and degradation. That was because it neglected the universal man-power and concentrated power in the hands of the few who amassed fortunes at the expense of the many. The result was that its industrialization had become a menace to its own poor and to the rest of the world.

If India was to escape such disaster, it had to imitate what was best in America and the other Western countries and leave aside its attractive-looking but destructive economic policies. Therefore, real planning consisted in the best utilization of the whole man-power of India and the distribution of the raw products of India in her numerous villages instead of sending them outside and rebuying finished articles at fabulous prices.

After the questions had been answered, Gandhiji touched upon the fact that he had a visit from some members of the Scheduled Classes. He had told them that his mission was to teach people how to be really brave. They need not be afraid for their lives because the so-called high-caste men had not yet returned to their places. If they shed their fear they would have no enemies. The Muslims would be their friends when they recognized bravery in them. Cowards were ever exposed to the enmity of all, whether Muslims or others. The way to the attainment of that courage lay not in the possession of the sword and the efficiency to kill one's opponent, but in the refusal to recognize in any other human being an enemy, along with the determination to lay down one's life and yet not surrender at the point of the sword.

Gandhiji then referred in detail to some of the abuses current in local society, like child-marriage, absence of widow-remarriage, etc., which resulted in the lowering of the moral stature of the people. If they could shed these weaknesses, they would gain the power to die for their faith and honour.

Harijan, 23-3-1947

62. TELEGRAM TO SHRIKRISHNA SINHA

[*February 28, 1947*][1]

DR. SYED MAHMUD AND OTHERS WOULD LIKE ME TO VISIT BIHAR . . . .[2] DO YOU FEEL LIKEWISE? PLEASE TELL ME WHAT YOU FEEL.

Mahatma Gandhi — The Last Phase, Vol. I, Bk. II, p. 253

63. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

HAIMCHAR, TIPPERA DISTT.,
February 28, 1947

MINISTER RAJAGOPALACHARI
NEW DELHI

YOUR WIRE. NINETEEN HUNDRED BALES PER MONTH REQUIRED. COUNTS TWENTY TO FORTY. PROBABLY GOING BIHAR FOR SHORT TIME.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

64. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

February 28, 1947

SECRETARY
NICELY
DURBAN

HAVE MADE PUBLIC STATEMENT SUPPORTING STEP ABOUT ROYAL VISIT.[3]

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] This was sent the day after Fazlul Huq's departure, i. e., February 27. *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 28-2-1947

[2] Omission as in the source.

[3] *Vide* Vol. LXXXII, p. 28.

65. LETTER TO RAMDASIA MAZHABI SIKH FEDERATION

KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
February 28, 1947

DEAR FRIENDS,

I have your letter signed by eleven members of your group. The names are typed instead of there being original signatures. I must confess my ignorance of the existence of this group. I do not know what I can do to remedy the difficulty you complain of. I feel helpless.

Yours sincerely,

THE RAMDASIA MAZHABI SIKH FEDERATION
THROUGH THE PRESIDENT
MISTRI HARNAM SINGH
P.B. SAMRALA
DISTT. LUDHIANA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

66. LETTER TO BUTT KRISTO PAUL & CO., LTD.

KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
February 28, 1947

GENTLEMEN,

I thank you for your prompt attention to my suggestions with regard to the first-aid box. I have examined the contents of the few box[es] sent by you. Whilst I was about to send you my considered opinion Shri Satis Chandra Das Gupta was with me and so I handed the box to him to examine it and give his expert opinion on the contents and the make-up of the box. Naturally I cannot hurry him. He is such a busy man. I will therefore advise you not to multiply the new pattern and await my considered reply. I have some what I think

valuable suggestions. But having taken advantage of Satis Babu's presence I want to fortify myself with his expert assistance.

Yours sincerely,

BUTT KRISTO PAUL & CO., LTD.
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru uemorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

67. LETTER TO A. J. MUSTE

KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
February 28, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

Muriel Lester has sent me your letter of the 27th September last which has remained on my file for some time. She has also given me a brief description of your selfless labours. How I wish I could send you some useful suggestions by way of help in what you very rightly term as crisis ! The aftermath of the last war is in reality much worse than the war itself if only because its bloodiness is so hidden from view that man deceives himself into the belief that he is at last safer than when the war was on.

I wish too that I could give you the assurance that India, when she has come to her own completely, will not join the race for the increase of armaments. I can only say that whatever I can do to prevent any such misfortune will not be left undone.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

A. J. MUSTE, ESQ.

From a photostat: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

68. LETTER TO T. HAYES

KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
BENGAL,
February 28, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1] of the 16th ultimo. I do not know that I can send you anything useful beyond saying that you should glean my writings on fasting in the columns of *Young India* later transformed into *Harijan.* Mr. Richard Gregg (The Putney School, Putney, Vermont, U.S.A.) might be able to help you in getting hold of copies of this weekly.

Yours sincerely,

ED. T. HAYES, ESQ.
7622 ROBIN ROAD
DALLAS 9, TEXAS, U.S.A.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

69. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

HAIMCHAR,
February 28, 1947

I have received a cablegram from the ex-Natal Indian Congress which says that the Congress, the Transvaal Indian Congress, the Coloured People's Organization and the African National Congress have decided on their part to refrain from taking part in or in any manner assisting in the celebrations in honour of the Royal visit to the Union of South Africa. They feel that in view of the disabilities imposed upon the Asiatics and Africans and other coloured people it would be improper on their part to share in the rejoicings of the white people of South Africa. The cablegram asked me to endorse the abstention which they describe by the name of "boycott". I take this opportunity of publicly endorsing the abstention as a natural and dignified step by any self-respecting body of people.

The Hindu, 1-3-1947

[1] In which the addressee had requested Gandhiji to send him scientific or spiritual treatise on fasting.

70. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING [1]

HAIMCHAR,
February 28, 1947

Gandhiji took up the thread of his remarks of the previous evening about the *Namasudras*. He had no time to refer to the question of education. The blame for the neglect of education among them must lie solely upon the so-called high-caste Hindus. It was preposterous to expect that those who were deliberately suppressed by Hindu society would themselves take to education. What he, however, deplored was that there were men among them who taught them not to accept good things from the so-called high-caste Hindus. He was of the opinion that it was mischievous propaganda. Therefore, he expected the *Namasudras* to give definite assurance about land [for school] and the attendance of boys and girls. In that case he had no doubt that there were enough penitent Hindus who would gladly take up the duty of educating these neglected children. He invited the *Namasudras* to send the required assurance to Thakkar Bapa who might be trusted by them to do the rest and he hoped that there were enough local Hindus who would offer their money and ability for the performance of the honourable duty of educating these children.

He then referred to the prospect of his having to go to Bihar and to the atrocities that had been committed by the Hindus of Bihar before which the happenings in Noakhali or Tipperah paled into insignificance. He had enough pressure put upon him by the Muslims in Bengal to go to Bihar. He had refused to listen to the advice because he had the hope that he could work with equal effect among the Bihar Hindus without having to go there. But he had a visit from the secretary of Dr. Syed Mahmud. He had brought a long letter from Dr. Mahmud. They should know that Dr. Mahmud was a valued friend of his. He was himself Development Member of the Bihar Ministry. In answer to his question, Dr. Mahmud had written to him asking him to visit Bihar as soon as he could. He had said that all was not as rosy as it should be and that his presence in Bihar would ease the situation and reassure the Muslims that he was equally concerned about the welfare of the Muslims as of the Hindus. He could not resist Dr. Mahmud's letter. He had, therefore, sent an urgent wire[2] to Bihar and it was highly likely that he might have to hurry to Bihar. In that case, he would have to interrupt the tour in Noakhali and Tipperah. But the message he would leave for the Hindus and Mussalmans here, during the short period he expected to be absent, was that they should live with one another as brothers. This they could only do if they shed internal weaknesses and were prepared to lay down their lives without retaliation for the defence of what they considered sacred.[3]

[1] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary"
[2] *Vide*"Telegram to Shrikrishna Sinha", 28-2-1947
[3] The following two paragraphs are reproduced from *Amrita Bazar Patrika.*

Gandhiji said that he was in constant communication with the authorities concerned on the Bihar situation and had been speaking unequivocally against the madness of Bihar Hindus. He was sure that he was there where he could serve both the communities. He had come to Noakhali to serve both the communities and not to create bitterness between them.

He had come here to create fearlessness among the affected people. He asked them not to despair and told them that his associates would be working here as usual. People here must not quarrel among themselves. They must not antagonize Muslims but they must not also yield to threats. They should rather lay down their lives. Gandhiji emphatically said that he had decided to go to Bihar, not for the relief of Muslims, but to effect a change of mentality among the Hindus of Bihar. He hoped that Hindus and Muslims would live together in amity all over India.

Gandhiji then passed on to a question which had been referred to him that evening. It was with regard to the partition of Bengal into two pro- vinces, one having a Hindu and the other a Muslim majority. Bengalis had once fought against and successfully annulled the partition of their province.[1] But according to some, he proceeded, the time had now come when such a division had become desirable in the interest of peace. Gandhiji expressed the opinion that personally he had always been anti-partition. But it was not uncommon even for brothers to fight and separate from one another. There were many things which India had to put up with in the past under compulsion, but he himself was built in a totally different way.

In a similar manner, if the Hindus, who formed the majority in the whole of India, desired to keep everyone united by means of compulsion, he would resist it in the same manner as before. He was as much against forced partition as against forced unity.

Gandhiji then proceeded to say that whatever might have been the history of British rule in the past, there was no shadow of doubt that the British were going to quit India in the near future. It was time, therefore, that the Hindus and the Muslims should determine to live in peace and amity. The alternative was civil war which would only serve to tear the country to pieces. One did not know what the future had in store for them. If the people really and sincerely, and with a pure heart, wished unitedly for a particular thing, speaking in human language, it could be said that God, being the servant of His servants, would Himself carry out that will.

Harijan, 23-3-1947, and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 2-3-1947

[1] The partition of Bengal in 1905 was annulled in 1911.

71. A NOTE

February, 1947

Let Nirmal Babu examine my replies for the style as well as the manner. Are they satisfactory?

From a facsimile: *Mahatma*, Vol. VII, between pp. 384 and 385

72. NOTE TO DHIRUBHAI B. DESAI [1]

[*February 1947*][2]

Where is Madhuri[3]?

It should be done immediately.

I have never forgotten Bhulabhai's[4] ability. I know that he entered politics at my instance. The difference which arose between us was one of love. There are innumerable people who drink. There are many such in the Congress, too, and I could say nothing to them. But Bhulabhai's addiction pained me and I told him about it. Afterwards he even wept before me. I could not bear his being a slave to the drink habit. And it was with him that I first discussed the matter. Let me tell you that I had a great share in his being taken up on the Working Committee. I had to fight for his inclusion. I was behind his inclusion in the Constitution Committee also. Need I say more? I also knew about the proposal to appoint you ambassador. Calm down and acquit yourself well in your job with patience and self-control. Send me Madhuri's book.

[From Gujarati]

Bhulabhai Desai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Son of Bhulabhai Desai

[2] The note is written on the reverse side of a letter dated "February 1947".

[3] Addressee's wife

[4] (1877-1946); eminent lawyer; member, Liberal Party; joined Congress in 1930; Leader of Congress Party in Central Assembly

73. LETTER TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY

KAZIRKHIL,
RAMGANJ P.S.,
NOAKHALI DISTT.,
March 1, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I hope you heard from the S.D.O. Chandpur, Tipperah District that I am endeavouring to leave for Bihar tomorrow. I wish I could say that I am trying to go because of your pressing advice to Fazlul Haq Sahib who spoke publicly the other day and repeated the same thing, though very courteously, on Thursday last when he was good enough to call on me. The memorandum of Sardar Niranjan Singh Gill about which I wrote to you on February 22, had predisposed me towards a temporary visit to Bihar. What decided me however was a long letter from Dr. Syed Mahmud who has sent it with his Private Secretary. In order to come to a final decision I sent a peremptory message yesterday through the good offices of Khan Sahib, the S.D.O. of Chandpur, asking whether the Bihar Chief Minister had any objection to my immediately proceeding to Patna. The reply may be received any minute. If I go I would like you to give me hints as to what I should see. The desire to go has arisen because suspicion has been created in my mind that all is not well in Bihar so far as the Hindu behaviour towards the Muslims of Bihar is concerned. The cause in either case, in Bihar or Bengal, is identical.

There was consternation among the Hindus yesterday when I announced my intention of immediately proceeding to Bihar. They said they were afraid of being molested as in October. I hope that the fear will prove groundless and that you will do all you can to allay the fear. It is said that all aid in the shape of rations will be stopped from the 15th instant. If this information turns out to be true there would be widespread avoidable distress. The machinery provided for relief is very slow.

Sufficient material for building is not there. Weavers have got no yarn for weaving. Fishermen have got none for making nets. Carpenters have got no tools. Agriculturists have no bullocks. There are no seeds for sowing. Thakkar Bapa mentioned the difficuly of merchants in Haimchar for a loan in order to enable them to start business. He has prepared an application to be sent to you. It makes a

business like proposition. I should have thought that people who have lost their all would be entitled to adequate grants for starting business. On the contrary, however, he offers even interest if it is required for the loan he proposed. I hope there will be no delay in granting the loan. I would strongly urge that interest should not be asked in such cases.

There is a strong belief that there is boycott by the Muslims of Hindus so far as labour for them is concerned. Of course I have said that no government can compel any community to labour for another. Critics have no difficulty in agreeing to my proposition against compulsion. They however suggest that boycott is approved, even encouraged, by your Government. I hope that my information is wholly wrong.

I am leaving a copy of this letter with Satis Babu of Khadi Pratishthan who is at present stationed at Kazirkhil and who will represent me during my absence which I hope will be only temporary and will be attended by success. Though my absence will be temporary, I cannot omit to mention that so far as I am personally concerned, the whole of the official world has been courteous and considerate to me and in this mention I include the police whom you have put to guard my person.

H. S. SUHRAWARDY SAHIB
PRIME MINISTER
BENGAL

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

74. LETTER TO ALI HUSAIN [1]

March 1, 1947

I am surprised at your asking me to condemn the Bihar Ministry unheard. I am ashamed that at this time of day you should think of the application of Section 93. There are many honourable ways of exposing the corruption no matter where it exists. The application of Section 93 is not among them.

Mahatma Gandhi — The Last Phase, Vol. I, Bk. II, pp. 248-9

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter dated February 18, 1947, which read : "To save Bihar from further calamity I hope you will have the courage to declare that the Bihar Ministry should be dismissed, Section 93 be applied, and the present Governor may also be changed with this corrupt Ministry."

75. INTERVIEW TO WORLD YOUTH DELEGATION [1]

March 1, 1947

Gandhiji told the World Youth Delegation that youth in India was influenced by foreign ideologies too much. They had no living contact with the real life of India.

The Hindu, 3-3-1947

76. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

HAIMCHAR,
March 1, 1947

Gandhiji said that he would try to cover Bajpati also on his return.[3] He could not fix the time. He was not leaving Noakhali or Tipperah without the establishment of heart unity. There was time for satisfying all reasonable expectations.

I hope to leave for Bihar tomorrow afternoon. I will leave Haimchar at about three in the afternoon. I will go to Calcutta and from there proceed to Bihar.[4]

He did not expect to stay there long. He would not be able to hold the prayer meeting [tomorrow] in Haimchar but would like to have it in Chandpur.

Q. You have referred to numerous social abuses prevalent among us. They are there; but then if the men are unwilling to effect the necessary social changes what can we women do about it?

A. Gandhiji said that there was no occasion for women to consider themselves subordinate or inferior to men. It was proclaimed that woman was half of man and by parity of reasoning man was half of woman. They were not two separate entities but halves of one. The English language went further and called woman the better half of man. Therefore, he advised women to resort to civil rebellion against all undesirable and unworthy restraints. All restraints to be beneficial, must be voluntary. There was no possibility of harm resulting from civil rebellion. It presupposed purity and a reasoned resistance.

Q. Those who have lost their dear ones, or the homes which they built up

[1] The members of the delegation had asked Gandhiji the reason for differences in the youth movement in India.

[2] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Walking Tour Diary"

[3] People from Bajpati had complained that Bajpati had been dropped from Gandhiji's programme.

[4] This paragraph is from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*.

through years of patient care, find it extremely difficult to forgive and forget. How can they get over that feeling and look upon the community from which the miscreants came with a feeling of brotherhood?

A. The speaker said the one way to forget and forgive was to contem- plate Bihar which had done much worse than Noakhali and Tipperah. Did they want the Muslims to take dire vengeance for the Hindu atrocities there? They could not. From this they should learn to forget and forgive, if they did not wish to descend to the lowest depths of barbarity. Moreover, they must not harbour an inferiority complex. They should be brave. And forgiveness was an attribute and adornment of bravery. Let them be truly brave. True bravery refused to strike; it would suffer all infliction with patient cheerfulness. That would be the truest way of disarming opposition.

Q. Speaking about the proposed partition of Bengal, one of the proposals is that there should be only two separate administrative divisions without any exchange of populations taking place. This arrangement would keep each community in its place in peace. What is your objection to such a proposal?

A. Gandhiji considered two administrative divisions to be as impracticable as exchange of populations. That would result in an armed neutrality which was bound to kill all healthy growth. The leaders of both the communities must come together as friends and reduce their differences and suffer them. Any other way was the way of barbarism and subordination to a third power.

Harijan, 23-3-1947, and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 4-3-1947

77. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

CHANDPUR,
March 2, 1947

CHI. SATIS BABU,[1]

I had a long talk with Sardar Jiwan Singhji[2]. If you think that his men are really required for service wanted, you should discuss the thing with him and do what you wish. If in your opinion they are not really required, you should pay them out to date plus Rs. 30 each for passage to their destination. Sardarji will show you the detailed [expen]diture[3]. He himself proposes to render service in every case. His case can be considered separately on my return or even by correspondence.

Blessings from
BAPU[4]

From a photostat: G. N. 8717

[1] The superscription is in the Devanagari script.
[2] Of the Indian National Army. *Vide* p. 36.
[3] The source is damaged here.
[4] The subscription is in Hindi.

78. NOTE TO MANU GANDHI

March 2, 1947

Bapa was pleased with you in Haimchar. He spoke to me about it. But what pleased me particularly was that, during my week's stay there, I could convince[1] him in regard to many things and he revised many of his views. He is a man of great self-sacrifice and humility. Didn't you observe that during all these days he took some of my time only on one day? On the other days he didn't come at all to take my time. Such is his consideration for others. He is a class by himself. If he realizes that he has made a mistake, he corrects it immediately without the slightest hesitation. I also felt happy that you could be of some service to him. That is why I encouraged you in your attempt. I have still to read the last two days' entries in your diary. Leave it with me tomorrow. I will go through it in the morning after prayer.

[From Gujarati]

Eklo Jane Re, p. 181

79. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

CHANDPUR,

March 2, 1947

Gandhiji explained why he had to interrupt his work in East Bengal and hurry to Bihar. He had turned a deaf ear to pressing requests made to him by the Bengal Premier and Mr. Fazlul Huq to go to Bihar.

Their statements could not find an echo in my heart. I had flattered myself with the belief that I would be able to affect the Bihar Hindus from my place in Bengal. But Dr. Syed Mahmud has sent his secretary to me with a long letter which showed me that I should go to Bihar for the sake of the Muslims of Bihar.[3]

He expected to return to his chosen scene of service — Noakhali — as soon as

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with A. V. Thakkar", 24-2-1947

[2] This was Gandhiji's last prayer meeting in East Bengal and was attended by over 30,000 people.

[3] The following paragraph is reproduced from *Mahatma Gandhi — The Last Phase*.

possible. Dr. Mahmud's secretary had said they would not detain him for more than a fortnight. Meanwhile Gandhiji hoped that the Muslims would belie the fears of the Hindu refugees that they would not be allowed to live in peace.

Gandhiji, in conclusion, appealed to Hindus and Muslims to live in peace as brothers and friends and exhorted the officials and the police to conduct themselves in such a way that the public would look upon them as their friends and servants who by their selfless service and tact helped the communities to act as friends.

The Hindu, 4-3-1947, and *Mahatma Gandhi — The Last Phase,* Vol. I, Bk. II, p. 255

80. NOTE TO JIWAN SINGH[1]

March 2, 1947

I do not want to lose you personally.[2]

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Bk. II, p. 255

81. A NOTE

[*March 2/3, 1947*][3]

You should see to it that all who are on the steamer on our account pay the legitimate fare and expenses. Either they pay the Government or we collect and send. It looks ugly if we all travel free.[4]

Show it to Nirmal Babu. Let Mridulabehn[5] also see it.

From a facsimile: *Mahatma,* Vol. VII, between pp. 384 and 385

[1] According to the source Gandhiji's party boarded the steamer at 9.30 p. m. Col. Jiwan Singh was the last to take leave. His contingent of the I. N. A. could not fit into Satis Chandra Das Gupta's scheme. As Gandhiji scribbled out his orders that he should send away his men, Jiwan Singh felt hurt and unhappy, thinking it was a sort of dismissal for him. He was about to bid good-bye with a heavy heart when Gandhiji wrote this note on another slip of paper. *Vide* also "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 2-3-1947

[2] The addressee stayed on in Noakhali even after Gandhiji's death.

[3] From the reference to the steamer. Gandhiji boarded it at Chandpur on March 2 and reached Goalando the next day.

[4] What follows is in Gujarati.

[5] Mridula Sarabhai, daughter of Ambala Sarabhai

82. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

ON THE STEAMER FROM CHANDPUR,
March 3, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter yesterday in Chandpur. I am not happy about your ailment getting worse. It was possible to check it in the past and it may be so still. If you do not think much of Dinshaw[1], I have other [naturopaths] in view. But who can persuade you? You always do what you like. Do you realize how many people are dependent on you?

I understand about Sudhir. There was a wire from him. . . .[2]

I may not be able to convince you about the necessity of my work here, but I am sure it is of the utmost importance.

I leave today for Bihar. There was a letter from . . .[3] and now there is another from Dr. Mahmud. Both are shocking and so I am going. You are all stalwarts there and carrying on the work. In these parts I am something of a giant among pigmies. So let me remain here. If anything is accomplished, it will benefit the country. If nothing can be done, nothing will be lost.

I was pained to hear about Dr. Kanuga's illness. We should learn to live as God ordains.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

BAPUna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 350

[1] Dinshaw K. Mehta
[2] Omissions as in the source
[3] *ibid*

83. TELEGRAM TO J. B. KRIPALANI

CALCUTTA,
March 3, 1947

ACHARYA J. B. KRIPALANI
PRESIDENT, CONGRESS
NEW DELHI

YOUR WIRE[1]. REGRET INABILITY. SEND MESSENGER BIHAR.

BAPU

From the original: A. I. C. C. File, 1946-48. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

84. LETTER TO PYARELAL

March 3, 1947

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have your letter. You are unnecessarily worrying yourself. One for whom Ramanama is the unfailing cure would not beget [problems of] blood-pressure and would not hear the drumming noise in his ears. However, if both these do occur, he would bear them patiently and die while doing so. I have no doubt about the truth of this point. I do get [high] blood-pressure and get buzzing in the ears. This shows that I should depend on Ramanama rather than take medicines, thinking that Ramanama is not serving any purpose. It is true that this is not easily done. In the matter of the sacred task here, we should have recourse only to Ramanama. Even so, I did take *sarpagandha* yesterday. I do have doubts about its efficacy. My duty is to die in peace if it is necessary to die. Why should you be disturbed when I die? You should work harder in that event. I still hope to recover only with the help of Ramanama. But if I have ceased to be of any use, it would be best to go.

I liked your *bhakhri* very much.

I have instructed Dev to send you all the papers that he can. Still I shall look into it.

[1] Which read : "We all consider your presence here next Working Committee meeting sixth essential. Kindly postpone Bihar programme till ninth."

I shall be leaving for Patna today. I want to stay there only for a few days. Dev, Hunar, Manu and Nirmal Babu will accompany me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

85. INTERVIEW TO UNITED PRESS OF INDIA

[*March 3, 1947*][1]

To a question whether Gandhiji's stay in Noakhali had improved the situation there, Gandhiji said:

This question should rather be addressed to the interested parties — people who have suffered. I worked among the people and preached my message of love and communal amity.[2] Personally I feel the situation has improved and there is more self-confidence among the people today, but the sufferers alone can tell you whether the situation has really improved. It is they who matter most.

Asked about the duration of his stay in Bihar, Gandhiji said:

I cannot exactly say how long I shall be there. I am going to Bihar after a long time. I shall be working among the Bihar sufferers and shall discuss the problem with the local leaders. I hope it will not be too long.

Gandhiji expressed his resolve to go back to Noakhali.

I shall continue my work there after my return.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 5-3-1947

[1] *The Indian Nation*, 6-3-1947, reported that the U. P. I. representative had met Gandhiji in the "evening immediately on his arrival at Sodepur". Gandhiji reached Sodepur on March 3 at 9.30 p.m.

[2] Gandhiji had visited 40 villages in Noakhali district and seven in Tipperah during his walking tour, covering a distance of 116½ miles.

86. TALK WITH AMIYA CHAKRAVARTY[1]

SODEPUR,
[*March 4, 1947*][2]

I am going to Bihar but my work lies unfinished in Noakhali and Tipperah. I am going back to the Noakhali furnace and if I come out alive I shall have something to tell Noakhali and Bihar and I can think of nothing else. I am going to Bihar to find out what is happening there. I shall come back as soon as I am satisfied.

The Indian Nation, 6-3-1947

87. FROM THE DIARY

SODEPUR,
March 4, 1947

About Manudi. . . .[3] She has still not ceased to be childish in some ways. She must learn to behave like a mature girl. I am quite hopeful she will do that before long. She is very simple-hearted. She looks after me with the utmost devotion. She is wholly absorbed in that work. But she is not careful about her food and rest, and as a result her health suffers. I am very much pained by this. . . .[4] But otherwise I am quite satisfied with her work.

[From Gujarati]

Eklo Jane Re, p. 185

[1] Rabindranath Tagore's secretary, who, according to the source, met Gandhiji in the morning

[2] Gandhiji had reached Sodepur at 9.30 p. m. on March 3 and left for Patna in the evening of March 4.

[3] Omissions as in the source

[4] *Ibid*

88. LETTER TO ARUNA ASAF ALI

ON THE RAIN TO PATNA,
March 5, 1947

CHI. ARUNA[1],

I have your letter.

I am glad. What was there to mind in your not accompanying Asaf Ali[2]? Go on doing what you regard as true service.

Here I am learning the lesson of absolute non-violence. I do not know how far I shall succeed. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Brijkrishna Chandiwala Papers. Courtesy: National Gandhi Museum and Library

89. INTERVIEW TO RAJENDRA PRASAD[3]

PATNA ,
March 5, 1947

Gandhiji told him that he was not yet ready with his plan. On one or two points, however, he had come to a definite decision. He would allow Muslim concentration under certain conditions but he would neither give arms nor Muslim military and police. Instead, he would give them effective protection. Dr. Rajendra Prasad agreed. . . .

Mahatma Gandhi — The Last Phase, Vol. I, Bk. II, p. 260

[1] (b.1909); Member, Congress Socialist Party; President, Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee, 1947; joined Socialist Party in 1948; elected first Mayor of Delhi in 1958

[2] Addressee's husband, who on being appointed Ambassador to the United States of America had left Karachi for Washington on February 8

[3] (1884-1963); joined Gandhiji in 1917 during the satyagraha in Champaran; President of Indian National Congress, 1939 and 1947; Member, Food and Agriculture in the Interim Government; President, Constituent Assembly; Minister, Food and Agriculture, Government of India; President of India, 1950-62

90. INTERVIEW TO C. P. N. SINHA[1]

March 5, 1947

SINHA: Well, now that you have come, our burden is lightened.

GANDHIJI: I have come to lighten it. I have also wired Badshah Khan[2] to come.

s. What did Badshah Khan think of the work that is being done here?

G. He said that the Ministry were agreeable to everything he told them but the officers would not be able to cope with the problem. People alone can do it. He further suggested that there should be a committee for the purpose but it should be purely non-political. I also feel the same way.

s. There are many Hindus who did good work during the disturbances. Where there were such workers, very little damage was done. The Muslims still have faith in them.

G. All this should never have taken place.

s. People forgot themselves for a while. Where some care was taken, nothing happened. Congress workers did not check the disturbances at all places as they ought to have done.

G. That is the truth. Advantage lies in admission. Then alone can the remedy be applied.

s. At places Hindus did their best to protect the Muslims. But the problem calls for whole-hearted active co-operation of all sections. They are ready to give it.

Mahatma Gandhi — The Last Phase, Vol. I, Bk. II, p. 257

91. DISCUSSION WITH RAJENDRA PRASAD AND BIHAR MINISTERS

March 5, 1947

We should make a public confession of our mistake. No commission of inquiry has been appointed to date. If we are not quick

[1] Chandreshwar Prasad Narain Sinha, Vice-Chancellor of the Patna University

[2] Abdul Ghaffar Khan (b. 1891), popularly known as "Frontier Gandhi"; founder of the Red Shirt or Khudai khidmatgar movement; Member, Congress Working Committees; was detained by Pakistan Government for demanding Pakhtoonistan

about the matter, it will lose its effect. If we do not appoint a commission, we shall be held to have admitted the League's case.

The Chief Minister, Shrikrishna Sinha, expressed the fear that the League would make political capital out of it. Gandhiji admitted that that was not improbable. But justice never paused to consider if it would be exploited.

[GANDHIJI:] My sixty years' experience has taught me nothing if not that. That is also the lesson of my three months of travail in Noakhali. I was groping in the dark but I said just what seemed to me to be the truth. Those who regarded me as their enemy could exploit it. But I had faith that sooner rather than later they would see their mistake. Be that as it may, my only strength lies in my ahimsa. The same applies to you also. If you grasp that, you will get over your fear and, undaunted by extraneous considerations, do justice.

Again and again Gandhiji tried to clear his old friend of unmerited suspicion.[1] Dr. Mahmud's letter which had brought him to Bihar was in reply to his (Gandhiji's) peremptory inquiries; the Doctor had not acted disloyally towards his colleagues. Dr. Rajendra Prasad explained that there was really no difference. The Bihar Ministers were never opposed to Gandhiji's coming earlier. But they had judged that the situation might call for the employment of drastic measures; how could they call Gandhiji in that context? The Chief Minister put in that they had never tried to "minimize" the atrocities.

GANDHIJI: From what I have been hearing, it seems to me that the Bihar massacre was like the Jallianwala Bagh massacre[2]. Dr. Mahmud's wife today brought some Muslim women to me. I had no reply to their tears.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad . . . repeated what he had already told Gandhiji that many Biharis thought that they had done well.

Gandhiji replied that it was to save them from that sin that he had come. He had told Nawab Ismail[3] that he would "do or die" in Bihar.

RAJENDRA PRASAD: I have full faith we shall succeed. Give us orders.

GANDHIJI: In Champaran nobody ordered anybody.[4] It was

[1] Dr. Syed Mahmud had incurred the displeasure of his colleagues by inviting Gandhiji to Bihar without consulting them.

[2] At Amritsar on April 13, 1919

[3] Muslim League Member in Bihar Assembly

[4] Gandhiji had launched satyagraha in Champaran in 1917 to get the grievances of the peasants redressed. As a consequence the *Tinkathia* system under which peasants were required to grow crops on 3/20 of their holdings at the will of the landlords was abolished.

spontaneous loyalty. You saw the miracle. If that happens here, we shall win over even the League.

Mahatma Gandhi — The Last Phase, Vol. I, Bk. II, pp. 258-9

92. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

PATNA,
March 5, 1947

Gandhiji apologized for having come in a motor-car instead of walking to the prayer meeting. This was, he said, a reflection on the Biharis who should know the art of welcoming people in a quiet and dignified manner instead of the present embarrassing manner. They should have had consideration for his old age, he said, and spared him the shouts, however well-meant they were but which were too much for his ears.

He complimented the vast audience on their exemplary silence, but expressing his regret over their half-hearted participation in chanting the *Ramdhun,* he said:

An earnest prayer is very effective. If God is a Power, which indeed He is, then people must pray. Devotees of every religion pray according to their practices in their respective places of worship. It would be more beneficial if all of them prayed together in a common congregation.

It would be terrible if people should 'Victory to India' and work for her annihilation. Such action will bring no glory to India. If we wish victory for India, we ought to work to that end. If we merely repeat '*Jai Hind*' or '*Sitaram*' without the appropriate sentiments it would be mere parrot-like repetition. Please do not think that I do not want victory for India. In fact I have staked everything I possess for the sake of bringing glory to India.

I am visiting Bihar after many years. It is not as though I did not wish to come earlier. It was Bihar that made me known to the whole of India. No one knew me earlier. I had almost become a Negro after staying in Africa for twenty long years. Then I came to Champaran and the entire country woke up. Earlier I did not even know the location of Champaran; but when I arrived here I felt as if I had known the people of Bihar for centuries and they too seemed to know

[1] At the Bankipur Maidan where over one hundred thousand people had assembled. All the Ministers were present.

The Urdu version of the speech has been collated with the report in *Harijan* published under "Gandhiji's Bihar Tour Diary".

me.

This Bihar of ours has today committed a heinous crime. The atrocities perpetrated on a handful of Muslims have no parallel, so say the Muslims, in the annuls of history. I too have read some history. I know that the world has witnessed greater brutality by man on man. But it is no use repeating them here. We must not compete in doing evil and that too against whom? Those who cry for avenging Noakhali in Bihar do not know the meaning of vengeance. Is it manliness to return barbarism for barbarism? We ought to overcome violence by love.

At present I have no evidence to say that Congressmen have committed these crimes. Tomorrow I may have to admit so. I must, however, say that Bihar has sullied the fair name of India. When I heard in Noakhali the reports of atrocities committed in Bihar, I decided to undertake a fast.[1] It had been reported to me that some Congressmen had a hand in these crimes. It would be wrong even today to say that there was not a single Congressman involved in the mad upheaval. In India the Congress has to accept the responsibility for the misdeeds of all communities and all individuals. I had claimed in London[2] on your behalf that the Congress represented the whole of India by right of service. Hence any sin committed by India comes to the door of the Congress. You who are listening to me may not have done any evil, yet you have to accept the responsibility. I have become hard-hearted now. I have not come here to shed tears or to make you cry. I would rather wish to steel your hearts. I could make you cry if I chose. But I do not wish to do so. We should not disown responsibility by saying that our hands are clean. India consists of many communities. We have the tribal people among us. We are responsible for them as well. If we disown responsibility for them, we have no right to claim that India belongs to us.

The way to achieve independence consists in all Indians saying with one voice that unless they gave to the whole world all that was good in them, their survival would be meaningless. Are we going to compete in [making] atom bombs? Are we going to match barbarism

[1] In his appeal to Bihar is dated November 6, 1946 Gandhiji had expressed his intention to go on a fast unto death unless the madness in Bihar ceased. His appeal had an immediate effect on the situation in Bihar and the contemplated fast was not undertaken. His partial fast, however, as a penance for the Bihar tragedy commenced on November 6. *Vide* "To Bihar", 6-11-1946

[2] At the Round Table Conference in December, 1931. *Vide* "Speech at Plenary Session of Round Table Conference", 1-12-1931

with even more barbarous acts? India has placed before the world a new weapon. I adopted the way of non-violence in 1920-21. We have been insisting that we will attain independence through non-violence. I do not claim that all Indians have accepted non-violence as a matter of creed. But even when we accept anything as a matter of policy, it becomes our duty to act upon it.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad told me today that some people believed that the Bihar riots had arrested the crimes in Noakhali, otherwise. Hindus everywhere would have suffered a similar fate. This is not correct. If Hindus had to suffer similar atrocities everywhere I would say that they were a cowardly lot. Who can frighten a person who has shed all fear? While touring in Bengal I used to tell the people that Hindus as well as Muslims of Noakhali had admitted that the miscreant was a coward and the victim who feared him a greater coward. Those who are under the illusion that Bihar has saved other people by committing these barbarities are talking nonsense. This is not the way to attain freedom. If Muslims believe that they would annihilate the Hindus or if Hindus believe that they would annihilate the Muslims, I should like to ask them what they would gain thereby? Muslims will not serve Islam if they annihilate the Hindus; rather they would thereby destroy Islam. And if the Hindus believe that they would be able to annihilate Islam it means that they would be annihilating Hindu dharma.

I consider myself a follower of Islam, Christianity, Zoroastrianism and every other religion because I am a true Hindu. All religions are equal and they are founded on the same faith. Various religions are like different leaves on the same tree, with slight differences in shades and shapes. Scriptures have said that one who condemns other religions, condemns one's own religion. I consider myself a representative of all the true religions.

We should not gloat over the massacre of Muslims by Bihar Hindus. There can be no greater shame for India. Dr. Syed Mahmud told me that this had brought humiliation to him and to all Congressmen. He wrote to me to come and see the madness in which the people of Bihar, who claim to follow me, were indulging and asked me to stop their madness. Earlier I had wondered, what I could do by coming here but Dr. Mahmud's letter compelled me to come here. The Hindus of Bihar have committed a grave sin. They will raise the head of Bihar much higher if they do honest reparations, greater

in magnitude than their crimes. There is an English saying: "The greater the sin, the greater the saint." I went to Noakhali with the determination to do or die. I have come here with the same resolve. If our thoughts are not right our actions are bound to go wrong. As soon as there is an opportunity, we commit a crime. Why should all of us not unite? After all we are servants of the same God, by whatever name we may call Him. We may call him Rama or Rahim, Krishna or Karim.

I had also been summoned to Delhi. 'Come here', they said, 'what are you doing in Noakhali? We need you here'. But I did not leave Noakhali. But when I received Dr. Mahmud's letter regarding Bihar, I came over here. Muslim Leaguers used to abuse me and say 'go to Bihar'. It had no effect on me. But how could I ignore Dr. Mahmud's appeal? I felt that I would become worthless if I did not go to Bihar even now. When I came and saw the conditions here I realized that we had, indeed, committed a great sin here. It is our duty to atone for our sin and do reparations. Those who have committed these misdeeds have done great harm to India. Those who think that this massacre in Bihar has saved India are really mad. This is not the way to free India; such methods would delay the day of India's deliverance. May God grant us wisdom as Manubehn has just now sung before you:

ईश्वर अल्लाह तेरे नाम।
सबको सन्मति दे भगवान॥[1]

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar — I, pp. 1-6, and *Harijan*, 23-3-1947

93. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

PATNA,
March 6,[3] *1947*

Gandhiji began his post-prayer address by complimenting the audience as well as Bari Saheb[4], the President of the Provincial Congress Committee and his comrades

[1] Ishwar, Allah
both are your names,
Oh God, grant wisdom to us all.

[2] The Urdu version has been collated with he report in *Harijan* published under "Gandhiji's Bihar Tour Diary".

[3] *Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar* has "7", obviously a slip, for Holi, which Gandhiji observed "will be celebrated tomorrow", fell on March 7.

[4] Abdul Bari

for the orderliness which had been successfully maintained during the evening.[1] While the *Ramdhun* was being sung there were some beats out of time. His advice was that they should practise more until both the tune and the time were in perfect unison.

A note had been handed to him reminding him that Holi was on the following day and people would like to hear his opinion as to how it ought to be celebrated. Gandhiji began by saying that he had no doubt in his mind that a religious ceremony like the Holi should never be marked by wild revelry, but by a disciplined effort to put oneself in communion with God.

Holi will be celebrated tomorrow. If we wish to celebrate it in a religious spirit, we must meet and greet each and every Muslim in the true spirit. With our overflowing love we should reassure the Muslims that the Hindus are their brothers and that there can be no difference between us.

Dr. Mahmud is a Congress Muslim; but I have been meeting Muslims belonging to the League too. We meet one another with great affection and talk in the most friendly manner. Houses of Muslims have been burnt down and their fathers, brothers, sons, innocent children, womenfolk and friends have been done to death. We should not disclaim responsibility for these acts by saying that some other people are responsible for them. Whoever might have actually done it, we cannot escape the responsibility. Muslims say that they live in great terror here. Hindus in Noakhali also used to say that they lived in terror of the Muslims.

We should not terrorize each other. If at all, we should overawe each other with our love and affection. Some Muslim friends say that the Ministry here may allot some houses or lands to the Muslims under political compulsion. But this will not do much good so long as the Hindus and Muslims do not sincerely love or trust each other. They say that Hindus and Muslims have been living together here for centuries, used to refer to one another as paternal or maternal uncles and attend wedding and funeral ceremonies. Today, however, they have turned into sworn enemies. How could the Muslims live here if this enmity persisted? I had to hand my head in shame when I heard this from Muslim friends.

I have heard that Hindus here start shouting and threatening when they see Muslims. They raise the slogans of *Jai Hind Vande Mataram*. It is all very well to shout slogans; but we must make sure

[1] On the previous evening, in their eagerness to go near Gandhiji and have his *darshan* a large section of the assemblage had become quite unruly.

that they do not terrorize, or intimidate our upset other people. We are guilty of a great sin. Do we intend to announce through our slogans that we are proud of these acts? Our that we regard them as right actions? Hindus in Noakhali were also afraid of the slogan *Allah O Akbar* raised by Muslims. The slogan merely means 'God is Great' and no one need be afraid of this slogan. But when slogans are used for a wrong purpose, their meanings too are misunderstood and they become curses instead of boons.

Jai Hind does not mean victory to Hindus and defeat for Muslims. But nowadays the Muslims take it in that light because we have put it to wrong use and threatened them with it. When we hear the slogans shouted by another person we think that the other fellow is preparing for a fight, and we also start getting ready for it. If we go on fighting like this and wreak vengeance for one place upon another, rivers of blood will flow all over India and still the spirit of vengeance will not subside. Hindus should behave so uffectionately that even if a Muslim child comes into their midst, they should wash and clean him, dress him well and shower him with such love that the child should feel entirely at home. Only when this happens will Muslims realize that Hindus have become their friends.

Gandhiji was firmly of the opinion that this could never be our fate if we were determined to have it otherwise. His hope lay more in women who, he had ever maintained, were the living embodiment of ahimsa and of self-sacrifice, without which ahimsa could never be a reality. Gandhiji want- ed everyone to celebrate the Holi in such a manner that every single Muslim felt that the Hindus had not only repented what had been done to them but had also gathered love for them to an extent which outdid their previous sentiments. If the Holi was marked by this revival of the old friendly relations then indeed it would be a truly religious celebration.

A gentleman remarked to me that they had always regarded Hindus as a very noble people, incapable of kidnapping anyone's wife or daughter, since it was immoral and barbarous to do so. But the Hindus had stooped to such things. Many Muslim girls are missing. That gentleman also stated that it was difficult to tell the exact number of such girls, because whole families were missing. Muslims think that many of their girls have been forcibly kept in Hindu houses. "If we say this," these friends say, "no one will pay any heed; but if you make an earnest appeal, it may produce a serious response."

I had made a similar appeal to Muslims in Noakhali and I repeat it here to the Hindus. If any Muslim girl is held by any Hindu, he should release her. If he is afraid of returning her to the court or to the Police Station, let him take her to Dr. Mahmud or to his wife or to me or to Dr. Rajendra Prasad. I can assure the abductors that no harm

will come to them, if they approach me. In fact, they should not be afraid of suffering punishment for their crime. He is brave who confesses his crime and is prepared to suffer due punishment.

Another thing which the gentleman told me was that the Muslims were afraid that the Hindus did not want the Muslim refugees to return to their homes. I have heard the same story in Noakhali from Hindus and now I am hearing it from the Muslims in Bihar. Our behaviour should be so exemplary that even if an Englishman lives amidst us we should not let him feel that we are his enemies.

I repeat here what I said in Noakhali. As long as the Hindus and Muslims together do not assure me that their hearts have been cleansed and that I could leave them without any anxiety, I will not leave this place. I shall continue to stay here as long as the Muslims do not come to me and reassure me that the Hindus have become better than what they were in the past. I use the word "better" on purpose. In a way, all of us are filled with evil intentions. But every heart which has evil traits also possesses noble impulses. And now we have to overcome our evil traits with our nobler qualities.

You should contribute liberally to the funds raised for Mus- lim victims. But more than giving money, you have to cleanse your hearts. We have to win over the hearts of Muslims. We must realize that politics leads to all sorts of things. But even Muslim Leaguers have conceded that had Jawaharlal not arrived in Bihar[1] the fate of Muslims would have been much worse. They have undertaken to tell the whole world that some Hindu Congressmen have at the risk of their lives saved the Muslim Leaguers.

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—I, pp. 9-12, and *Harijan*, 23-3-1947

94. INTERVIEW TO NATIONALIST MUSLIMS[2]

March 7, 1947

Gandhiji assured them that he would not leave Bihar until he felt that cordial relations between the two communities had been restored.

The Hindu, 9-3-1947

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel accompanied by Liaquat Ali Khan and Abdul Rab Nishtar had reached there on November 3, 1946.

[2] This was reported to the United Press of India by one of the members of the deputation which had met Gandhiji in the morning and discussed matters concerning relief and rehabilitation work.

95. DISCUSSION WITH KHAKSARS—I

PATNA,
March 7, 1947

Gandhiji told them that while the Bihar Government would naturally welcome help from any organization which was willing to work on their terms, he could not advise them to abdicate any of their functions in favour of a private organization.[1] The Khaksar leader proceeded hyperbolically to praise their own past record of selfless service which was without the "slightest communal bias". Gandhiji told them to spare themselves that trouble, for they were not meeting him for the first time; he knew them well enough![2]

Mahatma Gandhi — The Last Phase, Vol. I, Bk. II, p. 327

96. TALK WITH MANU GANDHI[3]

PATNA,
March 7, 1947

You did notice, didn't you, that even a beggar made a specific donation to the Muslim relief fund instead of using it for himself. In my eyes his four annas are more valuable than four crores of rupees. This is true charity ! These are the people of Bihar. Today is only the third day of my arrival here. A gesture of this kind so soon after my arrival has deeply moved me. It is God's grace that my voice has reached so far. The more pure and true we grow — the more God enables us to see these virtues reflected in others. Think deeply over this incident.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 15-6

[1] The Khaksars who had come to Bihar to render service to the riot victims stipulated certain demands which included that (1) *bona-fide* refugees attested to by them should be allowed a grant of Rs. 1,000 per man; (2) they should be empowered to settle disputed matters with Chief Minister; (3) resettling refugees should be at their discretion; (4) immovable properties belonging to settlers should be disposed of at the discretion of Khaksar Relief Committee; (5) they should create an organization of engineers and Bihar Government should pay for their services; and (6) their proposal for levy of cess to make relief scheme effective should be considered favourably by the Government.

[2] The source here adds : "The subtle irony was lost on the sturdy soldiers. ... Their leader jumped at the remark and said that as Gandhiji knew them, he was sure he would stand guarantee for them and "compel" the Government to "accede" to their demands. . . . They met him again a few days later." *Vide*"Discussion with Khaksars-II", 7-3-1947

[3] A blind beggar had given four annas to Gandhiji for the Muslim relief fund. Gandhiji, patting him on the back, had asked him to give up begging, for even a blind person could do a lot of work — he could at least spin.

97. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

PATNA,
March 7[2]*, 1947*

Gandhiji began his address this evening by saying that just before starting for the prayer-ground he had taken a brief rest.

Today also I was wondering all the time whether we have realized that we had committed a great crime, a sin, and whether we had atoned for it. All my waking hours during the day have been spent in listening to the reports brought in by many Muslim and Hindu friends. All of them narrated the grievous wrongs done by us. None of them has been able to assure me that things have now settled down to complete normalcy. While I experienced the impact of these reports on me, I also wondered about the nature and intensity of the impact which these crimes and atrocities must have produced on the hearts of those who witnessed them.

The ideal of the *sthitaprajna* (man of steadfast wisdom) described in the second chapter of the *Gita* was always before him and he was ceaseless in his efforts to reach that ideal. Whatever others might say of him, he knew he was yet far from it. When one really reaches such a state, his very thought becomes charged with a power which transforms those around him. But where was that power in him now? He could only say that he was a common mortal, made of the same clay of which others were made, only ceaselessly striving to attain the lofty ideal which the *Gita* held before all mankind.

While speaking yesterday, I had quoted an English proverb. It means the greater the sinner, the greater the saint he becomes if he really repents and decides to reform himself. Bihar has committed a monstrous sin. It must now make reparations of the same magnitude and become nobler. Bihar is a land where the verses of the *Ramayana* are always on the lips of the people. I have moved widely in Bihar and I know the people here very intimately. They live a simple life and their voice ever rings with the music of the *Ramayana*. Their misdeeds are of terrible proportions; but their capability for making reparations is also equally great. I have been a witness to this. Then why should

[1] The Urdu version has been collated with the report in *Harijan* published under "Gandhiji's Bihar Tour Diary".

[2] From *Harijan and The Hindu. Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar*, however, reports it under "March 6".

they not confess their sins and atone for them? I do not know whether my voice does reach the people who have actually committed these crimes. Those who are sitting here in the audience and who had no hand in these crimes may also wonder how people could go berserk. I don't know whether or not I shall be able to reach those people who had done wrong to their Muslim brethren. But I want to reach them. They are unlettered; they do not read what appears in newspapers. I think I must go to their homes and stay with them.

I have heard that these people shouted *Mahatma Gandhiki Jai* while carrying out the massacre. I do not consider myself a Mahatma. But I cannot understand how people who consider me a Mahatma dragged in my name for committing such heinous crimes. I learnt of these terrible riots in Bihar while I was trekking the villages in Noakhali and attempting to unite the hearts of Hindus and Muslims. Now that I have come to Bihar, I think I must visit the scenes of actual massacre. I have not yet decided whether I should go to these places by car or whether I should travel there as in Noakhali, on foot. In any case, I must make myself heard by those people whom my words do not reach and, even when they do reach, they do so in a distorted form.

I said it yesterday and I repeat today that all those Hindus who kidnapped Muslim women should return them. I am staying at the house of Dr. Mahmud. It will indeed be a brave thing if the miscreants come forward and openly confess their sins and are prepared to undergo due punishment. But if such courage is lacking, they can at least restore the girls to me without any fear of harm coming to them. I shall not hand them over to the police.

There was however one thing more he would like them to do. It had been reported that property worth about a crore of rupees had been looted or destroyed. It did not matter what the exact figure was. For, if a man was deprived of a couple of rupees when he had only that amount it meant that he had lost his all.

It is the duty of everyone who has looted the properties of Muslims to return the stolen goods. Many families have been completely wiped out. But some of their relatives may be alive. And even if no one is left behind, the return of stolen goods will convince the Muslims that the Hindus have undergone a change of heart and they will begin to trust the Hindus.

I shall once again appeal to you that those of you who have

understood my message, should certainly co-operate in this noble work and convey my message to the culprits. I can say nothing more at present. But I have resolved to go to each and every affected village and to strive to reach the ears of every man.

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—I, pp. 6-8, and *Harijan*, 23-3-1947

98. DISCUSSION WITH KHAKSARS— II

[After *March 7, 1947*][1]

They said they wanted freedom to work in their "own way"—the Government should provide the finance.

Gandhiji was, however, clear that they had to work under the Government and carry out its policy. He reminded them that the Government had to consider other parties as well. For instance they were bound to try to secure the co-operation of the Muslim League in the first place. If the League refused to co-operate then only could it negotiate with other parties.

The Khaksars talked of the desirability of raising an "auxiliary force" drawn from the refugees for affording protection to those who returned. Gandhiji was opposed to this also. Nor was he agreeable to the proposal for forming a trust of the properties of those who had left the province. He would instead advise the Government to declare their terms. Such refugees as returned should have all the protection and help which they needed, but the Government could not undertake any responsibility in respect of those who chose to stay away. [Gandhiji said:]

If in this way only five return and they are well treated, they are bound to draw another five after them. If the Government implements its trust fully, I am sure, all the refugees would return.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Bk. II, pp. 327-8

99. INTERVIEW TO MOHAMMAD YUNUS[2]

March 8, 1947

Mohammad Yunus agreed that those who had prompted or taken part in the disturbances could be no friends of the Congress even though they might carry the Congress label.

GANDHIJI: Could Jinnah be left out of the picture? Was it not up

[1] *Vide* footnote 4, "Interview to Nationalist Muslims", 7-3-1947
[2] Chief Minister of Bihar before the Congress accepted office in 1937

to those Muslims who thought that he was going the wrong way to try to correct him?

MOHAMMAD YUNUS: Alas! That cannot be. Either you follow Jinnah or you get out of the Muslim League.

G. Then the future is dark indeed for Islam and for India — more for Islam than for India.

In reply to the question as to how long he expected to be in Bihar, Gandhiji said that he had set no time limit. Islam had not yet forgotten the Karbala[1], where brother's arm was raised against brother, although it had happened 1,300 years ago. How could he forget his Karbala that was Bihar?

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Bk. II, pp. 262-3

100. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

PATNA,
March 8, 1947

Gandhiji said at the prayer meeting that he hoped the audience would forgive him for speaking always and exclusively on the them which had brought him to Bihar. It had become his duty to listen to the tales of woe that the Muslim sufferers unfolded before him from day to day. One of them had come to him and complained that even so recently as two days ago, things were pilfered from the Muslim houses. If such was the case it was most unfortunate and it betrayed a lack of the spirit of repentance without which there was no possibility of concord between the two communities in Bihar, indeed, in the whole of India.

Whenever any new matter comes to my knowledge in connection with the work I have undertaken these days, I state it frankly before the public. Yesterday I referred to one matter. Today I heard something more about it. I shall report it to you frankly. "We had imagined that your arrival would put a stop to all mischief," I was told, "but it is now four days since you came here and yet the mischief goes on unabated." I am witnessing here what I saw in Noakhali. No one should say: 'Why should we not do what they are doing there? We are in a greater majority here.' Even if we have been

[1] A town in Iraq, which was the scene of battle between the Sunni and the Shia Muslims in A. D. 680. As a consequence, Imam Hussain, the leader of the Shia sect, and his followers were put to death.

[2] The Urdu version has been collated with the report in *Harijan* published under "Gandhiji's Bihar Tour Diary".

wronged, does it mean that we should try to compete with each other in goondaism?

We behave decently not for the sake of anyone else. An English scholar has said that one who does good deeds only performs his duty. If we do a good deed, we do nothing extraordinary. We do only what we ought to, and we shall be failing in our duty if we do not do so.

We have our newspapers here. It is their duty and that of the Chief Minister to remind the people constantly that they have committed a shameful crime, that Hindus and Muslims have to live together and all of us are Indians. Everyone of us is equally guilty of what anyone of us has done. We can achieve freedom only if we act in this spirit.

Riots are raging in the Punjab.[1] The administration in that province is being run under Article 93. This is no fault of the British that it is under the Governor's rule. They have to run the government as long as they are here and no one else is prepared to undertake the responsibility. It is India's misfortune that we cannot co-operate amongst ourselves and act unitedly. It would be wrong for a Bihari to excuse himself on the plea that others have perpetrated greater crimes. Let us admit that we are the greater sinners. Only then can we hope to reform ourselves.

Let us try to tread the straight path. I have received a telegram from a Hindu brother. It says that I must not condemn the Hindus in Bihar. It warns me that due to my influence over them I may mislead them and prevent them from taking revenge. Look at the cheek of this gentleman who is trying to teach me my duty! He calls himself a Hindu but does not act like one. I claim to be a sanatani Hindu and therefore represent the best things of all the religions created for the worship of God. Every one of you, if you are honest, must feel likewise. We have committed a dirty crime and I have come here to cleanse the dirt and brighten the image of Hinduism. Am I going to flinch from my duty if someone beats me up or abuses me for doing it? It is my duty to speak out the truth and if I withhold it, I shall be disloyal to Hindus, to Muslims and to India. I shall therefore advise you not to listen to those who incite and misguide you.

[1] Following the resignation of the Coalition Ministry, Hindus and Sikhs staged "Anti-Pakistan" deomonstrations in Lahore on March 4 and communal riots broke out in the province. The Governor of the Punjab promulgated Section 93 in the province on March 5.

I wish to tell you one thing more. It is now four days that I have been here. I have been collecting money for Harijans every day and I have already collected a lot. But today an idea crossed my mind. The Hindus in Bihar have committed a grave error, they have been very unjust to Muslims. Hence they should do their duty by contributing to a fund for the relief of Muslims by way of repentance. No one should think that he need not lift his little finger since there is already a Congress ministry with a Congress majority here, which will do everything that needs to be done. The ministers have to work under great stress in making use of public finances. You should realize that this is your responsibility. If you donate money to me, you will be giving it to a miser who has been on this job for the past sixty years. I have collected lakhs of rupees; but no one can say that I misappropriated the funds. Otherwise no one would have entrusted his money to me. I shall therefore appeal to you to donate the money not for my use, not for any other cause, but for the sake of the Muslim sufferers. Give with an open heart. A wealthy landlord has promised to give land as well as money for the Muslims. He will look after all the Muslims who would be placed under his care. Many more people should come forward with such offers.

I did not beg for money in Noakhali because I received unsought about three lakh rupees. Today I thought I should hold out the begging bowl here and awaken the conscience of the people. I should take everyone's help. What can I do by myself? And this is indeed your work; I can only remind you of your duty. I cannot perform your duty. Hence you must contribute generously to the Bihar fund. A Muslim child must feel entirely safe in a Hindu locality and the Muslims should be convinced of this change of heart. A friend came to me and asserted that there was a time in Bihar when Hindus and Muslims lived together and called each other uncles. Today it is no longer like that. We must atone for this.

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar —I, pp. 136, and *Harijan,* 3031947

101. INTERVIEW TO UNITED PRESS OF INDIA

PATNA,
March 9, 1947

When the United Press of India's special representative read out a message from New Delhi regarding Mahatma's contemplated fast, Gandhiji burst out laughing

and said:

Of course, there is just a little bit of truth in it.

But he strongly disapproved of the practice of making a mountain out of a molehill.

Gandhiji told him that there was no present intention of fasting but circumstances might arise of which he had no present knowledge, which might compel him to undertake a fast.

The Indian Nation, 10-3-1947

102. DISCUSSION WITH BINODANAND JHA[1]

March 9, 1947

Binodanand Jha protested that the Government was falsely accused of slowness in dealing with the situation. Immediately after the riots broke out, the Chief Minister had sent him to Gaya and then to Bhagalpur. The disturbances were the result of a "joint conspiracy" between the political opponents of the Congress, . . . and the British officials in the services. In proof he produced a pamphlet issued by the Hindu Mahasabha and another by the zamindars. Still another pamphlet asked people to organize themselves and take revenge for Bengal as the Congress seemed to be unconcerned about the insult to Hindu women in Noakhali and Calcutta. In Bhagalpur, the Minister complained, the disturbances were precipitated by the Muslim League's propaganda. It was they who after getting the Muslims to congregate in large numbers had set the ball rolling. The Government had information that the arms they had allowed for Muslim defence had reached the Muslim National Guards.

GANDHIJI: I am against the giving of arms.

After the riots, the Minister continued, the League had deliberately implicated important Hindus. The League did not want things to settle down.

G. In the same way in Noakhali the Muslims complained that the Hindus were accusing wrong persons. I told them we should not be afraid of false cases. But we should not hide true ones. I do not want a single criminal to remain unpunished. The people should themselves come forward and confess their faults.

J. It was all a reaction against the happenings in Bengal.

G. We should not allow anything to deflect us from doing our duty.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Bk. II, pp. 2634

[1] Minister, Local Self-Government and Medical in Bihar

103. DISCUSSION WITH P. C. C. MEMBERS

PATNA,
March 9, 1947

Gandhiji told them that the more he heard of the Government spokesman's apologia, the more he felt the need for turning the searchlight inward. He wondered if behind his earlier determination to stay on in Noakhali was not "sheer obstinacy" on his part.

ONE MEMBER: Tell us how we can wash off our sin. What are your orders?

Gandhiji replied that he was ever averse to issuing orders. In Noakhali he could not. In Bihar he could but did not want to. The very nature of the work precluded it. What he wanted was to awaken their conscience and win their reasoned co-operation. Since the advent of power, Congressmen had forgotten the path of duty. In a way Muslims had come to believe Jinnah's charge that the Congress did not belong to all, that the Muslims that were with the Congress were there as mere puppets of the Congress with an axe to grind to the detriment and ruin of Islam. If the Hindus were sincere and brave, even the few Muslims that were with them could give the lie to that calumny and enable the Muslim masses to see that they were being misled, and perhaps save them from being so misled.

He had served Bihar before. He had now come to them on what might be his last pilgrimage. If he died striving there, he would have done his duty. All things hung on truth, courage and knowledge. If none of these virtues was there, the future was dark indeed for Bihar and for India.

A Congressmen got up to say that some Congressmen had taken part in the riot. He was interrupted by another Congressman who emphatically declared that no Congressman had taken any part in the riot. Gandhiji felt hurt. The gentleman, he cut in, did not seem to know what he was talking about. Even their own colleagues had admitted that some Congressmen had taken part [in the riot]. If their confession was half-hearted they would not gain anything by it. He had said enough. They were all responsible people. They should search their hearts.[1]

The Chief Minister explained the genesis of the trouble and how his Government had tried to do all they could before, during and after the outbreak. They were caught unprepared. The Governor[2] was absent. The Chief Secretary and the Inspector-General of Polie, both Englishmen, had let them down. British officers were having their revenge for 1942. He was sure, the inquiry would fully vindicate the Bihar government. Of course, they could not act with the strength of Pandit Nehru, who gave a thorough shaking to the officers. If it could be proved that the Government had intentionally allowed a single Muslim to be killed, said Chief Minister, they would have no right to remain in office.

[1] After this all except the Chief Minister and a few others left.
[2] Sir Hugh Dow

Then, put in Gandhiji, it had to be admitted that there had been lack of foresight. They should not bring in the Governor or the English officers. The popular Ministers had to act as if the Governors did not exist. Granting that they (the Ministers) had not been guilty of any wilful neglect of duty, still something was owing for what had actually happened. That needed intelligence, courage and purity of heart. Never had he been confronted with such a stupendous task in his life. Everything turned on what he could do with Bihar and the Biharis. If he succeeded in Bihar, India would be saved, the situation in the Punjab would be controlled, and the Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan would come into their own.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Bk. II, pp. 264-5

104. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

PATNA,
March 9, 1947

It is good that I have one day of silence in the week. How beautiful it would be if everyone could spend at least a few hours in the day in silent introspection if it were not possible for them to spend a whole day in complete silence. If people were accustomed to such spiritual exercise, then their hands could never have been stained by deeds which have actually taken place in Bihar. But this is not the occasion for dilating upon the benefits of the practice of silence.

Today I wish to indicate in brief the duty of those who did not personally participate in the shameful killings which took place in this province. Their first duty is to purify their own thoughts. When thoughts are not pure, one's actions can never be purified. Pure action can never come from imitation. If one tries to become good by merely imitating the good conduct of others, such conduct never succeeds in radiating any influence upon others; because it is after all not the true stuff. But one whose heart has become really pure along with his actions, can at once sense the true character of the thoughts which influence the behaviour of his neighbours. When thoughts and actions have both become pure there can be no repetition of the deeds which have marred the fair face of Bihar. But the world never progresses in a straight line. The thoughts and actions of men never follow a parallel and uniform course. For all men these two can never be completely purified at any single point of time.

Therefore, I would wish to indicate this evening only that ideal

[1] It being Gandhiji's silence day, his written speech was read out.

of duty, which the workers should keep before themselves. If workers are available in sufficiently large numbers, it should be their first duty to explain clearly to the miscreants the full consequence of their misdeeds. It should be explained to the wrongdoers that such deeds can never be of any good to them personally, nor can they serve the cause of Hinduism or that of the country in general. It should be explained to them that they have not been able to serve those whom they intended to serve. They should also be induced to come forward and make a clean breast of their misdeeds before the public. They should also restore looted property and abducted women to the proper quarters.

A change of heart can never be brought about by law. It can only be effected through conversion of one's thought. When that is accomplished, there is no longer any need of compulsive laws.

I had asked you to help in the relief of Muslim brothers and sisters who have suffered during the last riots. Yesterday you did not come prepared for that purpose. I expect of you today to contribute to your fullest extent in this noble cause.

The Indian Nation, 11-3-1947

105. FROM THE DIARY

PATNA,
Sunday, March 9, 1947

Explained to Manudi her duty quietly. She must learn to do everything in an orderly fashion. I would never abandon her as long as I am alive. This is the assurance I gave her at Shrirampur. But she is at liberty to leave me. It seems sinful to me that she should neglect her health for the sake of my work. On who desires to follow the path of service must first look after one's own health. It was 1 a. m. by the time she finished counting the fund money, and yet she did not sleep a wink in the afternoon. This hurt me and I had to make her cry.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 24

106. A LETTER[1]

PATNA,
Monday, March 10, 1947

CHI. . . .

I have just received your pathetic letter[2]. Luckily today is my silence day. Why should you cry? It is your duty to resist. Crying should be totally forbidden. Fight as hard as . . . did. I have already said that . . . is not putting up a tough fight and is feeling miserable. Why this misery? Let ... abandon me if I have come to regard *adharma* as dharma. If there is the slightest room for doubt, let me have the benefit of your opinion and see what happens. I am not big, nor are you small. We are all fellow-workers working in the same field. . . . My ideas are becoming firmer. How can I know whether it is [my] good sense or bad sense? In my view it is good sense. But it is similar to "appearance of silver in the mother of pearl"[3].

To conclude, do not despair. Carry on your work without giving any room to despair. By all means, leave me. Right now I am in the midst of the sacred fire. I would either be burnt or saved. Though you are far away from me, pray for me that I may have good sense. May you all be well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 28-9

[1] Omissions in the letter are as in the source.
[2] Dated February 22
[3] A verse by Tulsidas which means: "Appearance of silver in the mother of pearl and that of a sheet of water in the mirage, though non-existent at all times, are yet perceived. Such is this illusion which none can dispel."

107. LETTER TO HARSHADABEHN

PATNA,
March 10, 1947

CHI. HARSHADABEHN,

I got the cheque for Rs. 55 sent on the occasion of Hemendrabhai completing 55 years. My blessings to you both. The way you celebrated Ba's anniversary was but expected. Send the yarn, etc., at your convenience. These days I am wandering from place to place. With God to protect me, what more do I need?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI HARSHADABEHN
RASIK VILLA
15TH ROAD
KHAR
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10431

108. LETTER TO VINOBA BHAVE

PATNA,
March 10, 1947

CHI. VINOBA,

I have your frank letter.[1] Somehow I am not convinced by your argument. Nowadays Manu does not sleep in my bed. It is her own wish and is due to a pathetic letter from Bapa.[2] But according to my view it does not make any difference in the situation even if I am practising *adharma*. But at the moment I am not going to take any more of your time. In my daily prayers I earnestly pray to God to lead me from untruth to truth. Isn't the same idea conveyed in "Lead kindly light"[3]?

Carry on your Bhangi work at Surgaon.

Take care of your eyes. Let someone read out [Dr] Agrawal's book to you. Haven't you heard of it?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 10546. Courtesy: Vinoba Bhave

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vinoba Bhave", 10-2-1947
[2] *Vide* also "Discussion with A. V. Thakkar", 24-2-1947
[3] A hymn by Cardinal Newman

109. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

March 10, 1947

CHI. ANAND,

I read your letter addressed to Dr. Mahmud. Don't worry if you have not been able to write to me.

Gangi[1] will not be able to do anything here. It is enough if she looks after you and does whatever she can from there. I think I have already written to you.

May you both be happy.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI ANAND HINGORANI
7 EDMONSTONE ROAD
ALLAHABAD

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

110. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

PATNA,
March 10, 1947

CHI. CHAND,

I got your letter only today. Dev is all right and does a lot of work. He is not physically strong but he will become so. He is learning quite a few new things.

Do you get any news from Amritsar? Are Father and Mother still there?

Mehboob[2] is to be married on the 15th. He is still like a fakir. He wanted to invite you but I told him you would not be able to come, though he could send you an invitation if he so desired.

I am all right so to say. Touring is inescapable even here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Chand Rani Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

[1] Addressee's wife

[2] Syed Mehboob, eldest son of Dr. Syed Mahmud; *vide* also "Blessings to Syed Mehboob", 14-3-1947

111. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

PATNA,
March 10, 1947

As the audience took some time to settle down during this evening's prayer, Gandhiji remarked at the beginning of his address that it would be difficult for him to tell them all that he wanted to if they continued to behave in that manner. He expected that they had come to the prayer-ground with an earnest desire to pray and then do the work of God, not for mere sight-seeing.

I have been accused of utilizing the prayer meetings for the propagation of my political ideas. My detractors will continue to criticize me and those who have made it a habit to abuse me will continue to indulge in their pastime. I speak of political matters in a religious spirit. A person who leads a religious life cannot divide it in to different compartments. As unscrupulous person who accumulates huge wealth through fraud and deceit, and thinks that he can wash off his sins by chanting the name of God at home, is deceiving himself. God is not such a simpleton.

Indeed, it might even be said, continued Gandhiji that the Law which held together the universe was indistinguishable from the Law-maker. Speaking in human language, one might even go so far as to say that God Himself was subject to the wheel of the Law. We were used to the saying that "the king can do no wrong". But in God's universe even such a distinction was hardly permissible. One could only say that 'there could be no wrong in the Law, for the Law and the Law-maker were one and the same'. There was no scope for even the least little blade of grass to be free from the operation of God's laws.

God is Himself the Law and the Law-giver. He does not transgress the Law laid down by Himself nor does He allow others to transgress it. You should understand that in our prayers we do not merely remember him but also undertake to do His work. If you realize this, then the meaning of my words will be easy to grasp.

A friend has written to me a frank and honest letter and that is why I like it. He wonders why I cannot see that the quarrel between Hindus and Muslims is not on account of religious differences but is essentially political in origin. The Hindus want a united India. The Muslims want Pakistan so that Muslims will rule in Pakistan and Hindus in Hindustan. I really do not understand its implications. One thing is very clear. Religious or political differences should not lead to

[1] The Urdu version has been collated with the report in *Harijan* published under "Gandhiji's Bihar Tour Diary".

a total war.

But what he wanted to impress upon the audience was that supposing it were only a so-called political struggle, did it mean that all rules of decency and morals should be thrown to the winds? When human conflicts are divorced from ethical considerations, the road can only lead to the use of the atom bomb where every trace of humanity is held completely in abeyance.

It is wrong to imagine that, in political warfare, one could slaughter men, women and children, innocent and guilty alike, without compunction. This is sheer brutality. Will forty crores of human beings descend to the level of beasts? Will such brutality secure us freedom? This is absolutely impossible.

We do not know what is actually happening in the Punjab. As long as we do not get full and reliable reports, let us hope that they have not descended to the beastly level of slaughtering innocent women and children. But even at present we must admit that brutality is very much in evidence in the Punjab. But to what extent, will be known later on. Brutality can neither secure Pakistan nor preserve India. It will destroy both Pakistan and India, leaving abject slavery behind. I used to regard Punjabis as a brave people. I can no longer regard them as such. Those who are burning houses, looting properties and slaughtering the innocent, do not even know why they are perpetrating these crimes and atrocities. In a regular war both the sides know what they are fighting for. We are all slaves and our civil war will harm only ourselves. We should realize the teachings of our religions and act according to them. Our politics also should be consistent with our religion.[1]

You should contribute generously for the relief of Muslims. I shall stand up myself and collect the money. If you ask me whether Muslims in Noakhali contributed funds for the sake of Hindus, I have to confess that I did not get much. The reason is I am now looked upon as an enemy by the majority of the Muslims. Even then, some Muslims and Christians in Comilla had contributed more than Rs. 800 along with a box containing vermilion and conch-shell [bangles] for distribution among women who had been forcibly deprived of these auspicious symbols.

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—I, pp. 18-20, and *Harijan*, 30-3-1947

[1] At this stage the audience near the dais became rather noisy and Gandhiji had to cut short his speech.

112. A LETTER

PATNA,
Tuesday, March 11, 1947

I listened to your long letter to the end. I liked it, but it pained me none the less. We must be hard and sharp with ourselves but generous with others. Let us not take the view that all three. . .[1] of them are at fault. No one is without fault; so who can blame whom? Should I write to them about those faults of theirs which you have mentioned? It is your duty to talk with these people politely. Look within. When pride enters the mind of a *sadhaka*[2], his progress is hampered. This is what I fear from the way you have written. Go deep into the matter and write to me. This will do for the present.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 32

113. A LETTER

PATNA,
Tuesday, March 11, 1947

. . .[3] I have your affectionate letter. I would have been happier if I had found in it as much knowledge as affection. My relationship with Ba was not merely physical. For me, Ba is alive even today. She is by my side. Ba was aware of everything I did. Nobody could have known Ba as intimately as I did. . . .

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 32

114. A LETTER

PATNA,
Tuesday, March 11, 1947

I have your letter. Now you and Shantilal have to worry about Panchgani. I don't think I can leave this place in the near future. I must do or die. God alone knows the final result. I understand about Bhangis. As regards village industries consult Kumarappa[4].

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 33

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] Seeker
[3] Omissions as in the source
[4] *Ibid*
[5] J. C. Kumarappa, Secretary, All India Village Industries Association

115. A LETTER[1]

PATNA,
Tuesday, March 11, 1947

I have your letter. Why should I feel hurt when you have stated facts? Write if you know something more. . . .[2]

[From Hindi]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 33

116. LETTER TO B. G. KHER

PATNA,
March 11, 1947

BHAI KHER[3],

I don't think I can leave this place in the near future. It is either "do or die".

What are you doing about Hindustani? I hope the Government will clarify its policy regarding it. Today we are falling from our stand. Someone ought to remain steady in the circumstances.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: B. G. Kher Papers, File No. 26. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

117. TALK WITH MUSLIM LEAGUE MEMBERS

PATNA,
Tuesday, March 11, 1947

In your own interest please do not exaggerate. I admit that whatever has happened here is really deplorable. But in Noakhali also [the Hindus] are full of fear. Volunteers amongst you should go there and convince the people that we haven't yet attained independence and ask them why they are fighting with each other. You should go and declare that even a little Hindu girl or boy is just like your

[1] This was addressed to a student who had complained against a girl studying in his college who was known to Gandhiji.

[2] Omission as in the source

[3] (1888-1957); Chief Minister, Bombay, 1937-39 and 1946-52; member Constituent Assembly; High Commissioner in Britain, 1952-54; Chairman, Gandhi Smarak Nidhi, 1956-57

daughter or son and that they [Hindus] should not worry at all. If you go and do this much, peace will automatically return to the Punjab and Bihar. At the same time your name will shine forth in the world. Everyone is liable to make mistakes; but if they are rectified in time with a sincere heart, they will be forgotten.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 35

118. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

PATNA,
March 11, 1947

Gandhiji began his address by saying that that was perhaps his last evening prayer for the time being in the city of Patna, because his tour was going to begin on the following day. For the next few days, he would tour with the city as the centre and return to it every night for rest, the prayers being naturally held elsewhere. He expected, however, that the spirit in which the previous evening's contributions to the fund for the Muslim sufferers had been made would continue unabated. The collections had amounted to nearly Rs. 2,000, besides some ornaments which yet remained to be auctioned. He was glad that women had given their ornaments, and he reminded them in this connection that the true ornament of woman was a pure heart, the place of which could never be taken by any physical adornment.

A friend said to me today that what the Hindus had done was no doubt very wrong, but that they had acted under great provocation. How could they remain peaceful after such incitement and provocation? Well, we should not try to minimize our guilt. The above argument would mean that if someone abuses or beats you, you will also return the abuse and hit back. Is it good to do the very thing which angers you? You in your turn will provoke further anger. The world has reached the stage of atomic warfare in returning violence for violence. Let us pray to God that He may save us from this atom bomb mentality. I have been persuading everyone to observe silence in reply to abuse or violence.

The whole world tries to suppress the coward. Even God does not help the coward. He says, 'A person who is afraid of anyone except me, lacks faith in me.' The brave man who has learnt the lesson of non-violence does not return abuse for abuse, nor does he slaughter innocent children and women under any provocation.

[1] The Urdu version has been collated with the report in *Harijan*, published under "Gandhiji's Bihar Tour Diary".

If I am starving and you feed me, the contentment in my eyes will brighten your face too. But take another instance. Suppose I am starving and demand food from you by abusing you. You will drive me away, saying: 'Go and starve yourself to death.' My abuses will not get me food. They will, however, make me feel that I am a brave man. Again, if you ask your gate-keeper to beat me up for my abuses, that will sow the seeds of hatred against you in my heart. I will say, 'You may deny me food if I abuse you; but why did you beat me?' The next day I shall gather a few friends and retaliate. Or, if you manage to kill me, it will create among my relations and friends a feeling of revenge against you. This will aggravate the quarrel. I look upon all this as cowardice. Even if the Muslims had incited the Hindus, they should have remained peaceful.

An evil returned by another evil only succeeded in multiplying it, instead of reducing it. It was a universal law, he said, that violence could never be quenched by superior violence but only by non-violence or non- violent resistance. But the true meaning of non-violent resistance had often been misunderstood or even distorted. It never implied that a non-violent man should bend before the violence of an aggressor. While not returning the latter's violence by violence, he should refuse to submit to the latter's illegitimate demand even to the point of death. That was the true meaning of non-violent resistance.

I shall now discuss Pakistan. Jinnah Saheb is my friend. I have gone to his house many a time. If Jinnah Saheb says to me: 'Concede Pakistan or I will kill you,' I will reply: 'You may kill me if you like; but if you want Pakistan, you should first explain it to me. If you convince me that Pakistan is a worthy ideal and Hindus are maligning it for no reason, I shall proclaim to the Hindus from the house-tops that you should get Pakistan.'

But if the demand was backed by force, then the only course open to the non-violent man was to offer non-violent resistance against it as long as he was not convinced of its justice. One was not to return violence by violence but neutralize it by withholding one's hand and, at the same time, refusing to submit to the demand. This was the only civilized way of getting on in the world. Any other course could only lead to a race for armaments interspersed by periods of peace brought about by exhaustion, when preparations would be going on for violence of a superior order. Peace through superior violence inevitably led to the atom bomb and all that it stood for. It was the complete negation of non-violence and of democracy which was not possible without the former.

The non-violent resistance described above required courage of a superior order to that needed in violent warfare. Forgiveness was the quality of the brave, not of the cowardly. Gandhiji here related a story from the *Mahabharata*: one of the Pandava

brothers[1] was accidentally injured while living in disguise in the home of King Virata. The brothers not only hid what had happened, but for fear that harm might come to the host if a drop of blood touched the ground, they prevented it from doing so by means of a golden bowl. It was this type of forbearance and courage which Gandhiji wished every Indian to develop, whether he was a Hindu, Mussalman, Christian, Parsi or Sikh. That alone could rescue them from their present fallen condition.

A friend has written to me eulogizing the sword. The Muslims came here, says he, hurling abuses and unfurling Muslim League flags. We tried to disuade them, continues the friend, but they did not listen. When, however, we pulled out the swords, asserts the friend, they came to their senses and became our friends. I tell you this was no true bravery. The persuasion was backed by the threat of the sword. Threats do not produce true friendship. If you were honest, you should have told the Muslims: 'Look here, you are only a handful and we are in a vast majority. You are abusing us. You want to unfurl your flag. And yet we shall not say anything to you nor return your abuses. But we shall not allow you to unfurl the flag nor shall we salute the Pakistani flag.' If the Muslims had seen that, in spite of your vast majority, you do not wish to fight them, but that on the other hand you wish to be friendly with them, their conscience would have awakened and they would have become your true friends. The weapon of non-violence is mightier than the weapon of violence. The last Great War also proves this truth.

The lesson of non-violence was present in every religion but Gandhiji believed that perhaps it was here in India that its practice had been reduced to a science.

Hindu religion prescribes great *tapashcharya*[2] for the realization of ahimsa. It is said that innumerable Hindus had shed their blood in the cause of ahimsa until the Himalayas became purified in their snowy whiteness by means of that sacrifice. The Hindus of today pay only lip service to ahimsa. You must demonstrate true ahimsa in this land of Ramachandra and King Janaka. True bravery consists in true ahimsa. At the moment you are guilty of committing very cowardly acts.

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar —I, pp. 20-2, and *Harijan,* 30-3-1947

[1] Yudhishthira
[2] Penance

119. CABLE TO "CAVALCADE"[1]

Unrevised *March 12, 1947*

RECEIVED WIRE. REGARD DECISION WITHDRAWAL BRITISH POWER AS PERFECTLY SOUND.[2] NO ORGANIC PEACE POSSIBLE WITHOUT COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE INCLUDING WITHDRAWAL OF BRITISH TROOPS AND INFLUENCE FROM INDIA. IMPOSED PEACE DISTURBED HUMAN RELATIONS. HENCE ESTABLISHMENT OF ORGANIC PEACE IN INDIA INEVITABLY INVOLVES SENSELESS STRIFE AS IN BENGAL, BIHAR AND NOW PUNJAB. THIS WILL END QUICKER WHEN NO PARTY IS ABLE TO LOOK TO BRITISH POWER FOR PROTECTION. FORCED EMASCULATION OF A GREAT NATION WAS BOUND TO HAVE THIS SAD RESULT. NO DOUBT MUCH WILL DEPEND UPON INDIAN WISDOM FOR MINIMIZING MISCHIEF. WHILE CONNECTION [REMAINS][3] HONESTY AND SAGACITY OF BRITISH STATESMEN AND BRITISH RESIDENTS IN INDIA [EQUALLY][2] NECESSARY. MUST REGRETFULLY SAY THAT DISTRUST OF BRITISH STATEMENTS AND PROMISES HAS GONE TOO DEEP AND THAT PERHAPS LEGITIMATELY. THEREFORE BRITISH DEALINGS HAVE TO BE STRICTLY FRANK AND ABOVE SUSPICION AT THIS CRITICAL MOMENT. GIVEN THESE CONDITIONS I EXPECT NO DIFFICULTY ABOUT HEALTHY ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES. PLEASE REGARD THIS AS MY INDIVIDUAL OPINION. ENDS.

GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 10560. Also a facsimile: *Mahatma*, Vol. VII, between pp. 416 and 417

[1] The British news magazine had sent a cable asking for Gandhiji's message.

[2] Here follow the words "When perfect severance British", which appear to have been struck off.

[3] Illegible in the source

[4] *Ibid*

120. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

PATNA,
March 12, 1947

Gandhiji referred, in the beginning of his address, to the decision of the British Government to quit India. The British were a nation with a strong sense of reality: and when they realized that it did not pay to rule, they did not hesitate to withdraw their power over a country. This had been the course of British history in the past. If the British were going, as they surely were, what should be the duty of Indians at the same time, asked Gandhiji. Were we to return blow for blow among ourselves, and thus perpetuate our slavery, only to tear up our motherland, in the end, into bits, which went by the name of Hindustan and Pakistan, Brahministan and Achhutistan? What greater madness could there be than what had taken place in Bengal and Bihar, or what was taking place in the Punjab or the Frontier Province?

Today I visited a village where Hindus had caused great damage. An old Muslim showed me his own house and those of his relations with broken door-frames where bricks were removed from the door-sill. I was shocked and shaken to see that the Hindus had caused these depredations. I had wept when I saw the ruins caused by Muslims in Noakhali. Today also I might have wept. But my tears cannot render any succour to the sufferers. What I witnessed today does not behove human beings. We are all responsible for this vandalism so close to the city of Patna. Even if you did not participate personally in the loot, you cannot escape the charge of abett-ing the marauders. A mosque was also damaged in the village Kumarahar. This also I consider to be a devilish deed. It is no justification to argue that the Hindus damaged the mosque because the Muslims were desecrating the temples. Hindus worship idols, while the Muslims do not. But every human being does worship something or other.

God resides everywhere; not only in the Bible and the Koran, in a mosque or a temple, but in the nose, ear, nail or even a single hair of the body of man. I have been taught ever since my childhood that God resides everywhere. He is subtler than the air. It is one and the same thing whether one worships Him in a mosque, a temple or a church. I am as much an idol-worshipper as an idolbreaker. Still when I go to a temple, I am happy if I find it neat and clean.

Those who desecrated the mosque were not men but devils; because mosques, temples or churches are all houses of the Lord. I have come here today to convey to you my grief. You may perhaps

[1] The Urdu version has been collated with the report in *Harijan* published under "Gandhiji's Bihar Tour Diary".

be smiling and thinking that whatever happened was all very good. But I assert that this is potent injustice. I am grieved when I hear that Muslims have desecrated a temple. Should I retaliate by damaging a mosque? How can such damage save the temple or benefit the Hindu religion? If Muslims are about to desecrate a temple, it becomes my duty to prevent them from their vandalism, irrespective of my not being an idolworshipper. I should hug the idol and request them not to demolish the temple. I should lay down my life to protect the idol but refuse to hand it over to them. My entreaties will impress them, they will realize that I mean no harm to them and then they will become my friends.

Muslims are demanding Pakistan. They should therefore explain its advantages. No one will oppose it if he sees its advantages. But if they want to establish it forcibly, it will be a *Napakistan* (impureland) instead of Pakistan (pureland).

Badshah Khan is sitting by my side. He is a fakir by nature. But people, out of affection, call him Badshah[1] because he rules the hearts of his people through love. He comes from a tribe whose tradition is to return a blow for a blow, and blood feuds are handed down from sire to son. But Badshah Khan has full faith in nonviolence. I asked him how an expert swordsman like him came to believe in nonviolence. He said that they had come to realize nonviolence. He said that they had come to realize non-violence as the only road to their national freedom. If the Pathans do not give up the policy of blow for a blow and do not adopt nonviolence, he said they would perish in their internecine feuds.

When he took to nonviolence, he realized a kind of transformation coming over the Pathan tribes. It did not mean that every Pathan had undergone the transformation or that Badshah Khan had himself reached the highest goal of nonviolence. As far as he, the speaker, knew, he (Badshah Khan) was every day nearing the goal because he realized the truth of it. It was this type of brave nonviolence which Gandhiji wished the audience to imitate.

If we continue to fight among ourselves, the shackles of slavery will never be removed. The British are bound to quit this country. They are a nation of businessmen. They calculate the profit and loss from every transaction. They have realized that it is no longer profitable to rule India. But what good will that freedom be to us if we continue to fight among ourselves after the British leave?

Gandhiji continued that he had come to Bihar in order to make the people realize the extent of the madness to which they had stooped. His object was to induce them to repent and thus undo the wrongs which had been perpetrated.

[1] Emperor

I have been told that a storm is still raging in the hearts of the citizens of Patna. I wish to remind you today that Bihar is the hallowed land of Lord Buddha and King Janaka. Lord Ramachandra had also once walked on this soil. It will be a great shame if this sacred land continues to witness the devilish dance of violence. You can retrieve the ancient glory of Bihar by means of nonviolence. I do not want the bravery of swords or words. Today we need that nonviolence which was exemplified by the people of Champaran in 1917.

Gandhiji added that, in his opinion, the departure from the straight path of nonviolence they had made at time in 1942 was very probably responsible for the aberration to which he had referred. He instanced also the spirit of general lawlessness which had seized them inasmuch as they dared to travel without tickets, pulled chains unlawfully or in senseless vindictiveness, burnt zamindari crops or belongings. He was no lover of the Zamindari system. He had often spoken against it; but he frankly confessed that he was not an enemy of the zamindars. He had no enemies. The best way to bring about reform in the economic and social system, whose evils were admittedly many, was through the royal road of selfsuffering. Any departure from it only resulted in merely changing the form of the evil. Violence was incapable of destroying the evil root and branch.

Lastly, Gandhiji referred to a letter he had received from the Harijans, asking him to visit their quarters and to live with them. He would have loved to do both the things; but he had to restrict himself to the mission that had brought him to Bihar. But having made himself a Bhangi in thought and deed, he could never forget the Harijans. He was sorry to say that the latter were still suffering from disabilities and that they did not get ready redress of their grievances.

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—I, pp. 23-5, and *Harijan*, 30-3-1947

121. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

PATNA,
March 13, 1947

CHI. MUNSHI[1]

I got your note. I was sure that you would be able to win over Panditji[2]. He admires hard work and intelligence. You have both in good measure. And you have got work in which you can shine.[3] May

[1] (1887-1971); lawyer, educationist and man of letters; member Constituent Assembly; Food Minister, Government of India, 1952; Governor, Uttar Pradesh, 1953-58; resigned from Congress in 1960 and joined Swatantra party; founded Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan

[2] Jawaharlal Nehru

[3] The addressee was on the Experts Committee appointed by the Congress Working Committee in July 1946, to prepare the material and draft proposals for the Constitutent Assembly.

your heath be preserved and may you go on serving all your life.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I cannot say how long I shall have to stay here. According to me, the Bihar and Bengal problems are really one problem. It is going to be "do or die". Let God's will prevail.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

[PPS.]

This paper is made from linseed reeds.

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 7702. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

122. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

March 13, 1947

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your long letter. It is good that you wrote in detail. What shall I write to you? I don't have full information of what is happening in the Punjab. In my view what I am doing is right. I am trying to transform both [the communities] from beasts to human beings. It is in God's hands to grant success. We have to do our duty. I have no time to write more.

How is it that you have written nothing about your treatment?

I have not received your earlier letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2505

123. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

PATNA,
March 13, 1947

Today too I was a witness to heart-rending scenes. This seems to be my destiny. We have indeed committed a great sin. We had lost our sanity. Even now we are not aware of its root cause. You can ask me whether you should not retaliate for what happened in Calcutta or

Noakhali. But I have told you that this is not a healthy reaction. We should never think in terms of retaliation. If the sequence of retaliations goes on snowballing, India will be in ruins. Why should Muslims in Bihar be killed because some Bihari Hindus were killed in Calcutta?

If we seek freedom, it should be for the whole of India. It is not proper to seek separate freedom for Hindustan, Pakistan, Achhutistan or Sikhistan. For, such a mentality may even lead a person ultimately into demanding freedom for his own village above everything else. This tendency is wrong. We are all Indians and an evil deed committed anywhere in India is the concern of every Indian. I shall stick to my pledge of "Do or Die" so long as the whole of India does not become free.

We should not spread poison; on the other hand we should try to prevent it from spreading. If someone commits murder, we should be sorry because the murderer after all is our own brother. There must be something wrong in us; that is why our brother could stoop to such a sin. We should not become murderers to put an end to the murderer. If our hearts are filled with ill will, we must not hide that fact. We must openly confess it. We should think over our sins and repent for them. Sincere penitence reduces the incidence of sin. If we do not realize this truth, freedom of India will recede still further.

The British are leaving India; but if we continue to hate one another even after they leave us, then that freedom will bring us no benefit; someone else will come and snatch the freedom from us. If we look upon everyone as our brother, then only can we reap the full gains of freedom. Whatever is happening in the Punjab or the Frontier today is a matter of grave concern and regret. But we should not try to imitate the gangsterism of the Punjab. People say that Bihar has made enough amends for its sins and the Government here is also very alert and that I should now go to the Punjab. But what shall I do? I can go to the Punjab only when the Hindus and Muslims of Bihar tell me with one voice that they need me no more and that I may safely go to the Punjab. That will also give me strength enough to tackle the Punjab. It lies with you to strengthen my hands. If you do not give me strength, how can I go? You will yourself accuse me of running away from my pledge of "Do or Die". God is the source of all strength. If He commands me, I shall go to the Punjab. I am only an humble instrument in His hands. If my voice can reach the Hindus, Muslims

and Sikhs of the Punjab, I would tell them that the happenings in their province are doing good to no one. If the wild fire that is raging in the Punjab is not controlled, it will vitiate the climate in the whole of India.

Today I visited the ruined and deserted villages in the neighbourhood. I hung down my head in shame. The people who perpetrated these crimes should also feel ashamed. Those who have looted Muslim properties should return them. If they dare not surrender to any authority, let them come to me or to Dr. Mahmud. They should not apprehend punishment. We will not tell the police. But one should not be afraid of undergoing punishment for one's sin. It would be praiseworthy indeed if you confessed your guilt even when there is fear of punishment. Those who have caused damage to others should pay compensation for the same.

While I was returning from my tour today, the villagers of Siparah stopped my car and presented me with a purse. The purse also contained a letter which stated that the villagers were sorry for what they had done. They assured me that they would try to resettle their Muslim brothers in the village. I appeal to all of you to atone for your sins as honestly as the brothers at Siparah. The amount which that small village has contributed and the manner in which they have expressed their sentiments deserve praise. It will be yet more commendable if they come forward to return the looted property.

I shall report to you something which I saw in a village today. One of your Ministers, Anugraha Babu[1], is sitting here. I wish to report to him also and to ask him why there is so much delay in atoning for that sin. Why are these villages still wearing a forlorn look? You will say this is a job which the Government ought to do. I am asking you, why should the Government do this job? Did you seek Government's permission while ruining the villages? It is your responsibility to rebuild the villages. You must remove the debris and clean the villages. The Government will be thankful to you and will send you experts who can guide the work of sanitation. This is a job wherein even women and children can participate. You should help the Government and the Government will help you.

The village I visited today was more unclean than the one I visited yesterday. Rains will make it even worse. Someone has

[1] Anugraha Narayan Sinha, Minister, Finance, Labour, Supply and Price-Control

recorded that India is strewn with excrement. One cannot contradict him if one visits the villages. Every corner in the village we visited was dirty. The lanes were very filthy and the roads were in a shabby state. I would call upon you to clean up these villages so that they reflect the cleanliness of your hearts. Besides contributing money you should be prepared for the work of sanitation. If you do not clean up the villages, how can I ask the Muslims to return to their homes? It is your duty to start the cleanliness drive from today. If your hearts are clean, the Muslims will surely return. I myself wish to undertake sanita tion work. I have done this work in my time; but now I do not have the physical strength to do it. You must make your villages clean and beautiful. You should grow flowers and main tain a garden where women and children can walk about. The lanes should be spotlessly clean. The roads even if they are narrow, should be so well-maintained that even a blind man should be able to walk on them. This alone can turn the villages of India into heaven on earth.

[From Urdu]

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—I, pp. 27-9

124. LETTER TO PRESIDENT, SAIVA PARIPALAN SANGAM

PATNA,
March 14, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

The draft you have sent will be used as suggested by you. Though I am in Bihar at present, the headquarters for Noakhali continue to be Kazirkhil, Noakhali.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

PRESIDENT
SAIVA PARIPALAN SANGAM
BADULLA, CEYLON

From a photostat: G. N. 779

125. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

PATNA,
March 14, 1947

CHI. SATIS BABU,

There has been no letter from you and none from Pyarelal or others. What is the reason? How is everything going on there?

I gather from Rajagopalachari's letter[1] that we will not be able to get yarn from that source. How are you managing at present? What will you do about obtaining yarn?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 8963

126. LETTER TO GANGI A. HINGORANI

PATNA ,
March 14, 1947

CHI. GANGI,

I have your letter and also Anand's telegram. You and Anand can come over just to see me but you will not be able to go with me wherever I go. In this tour the fewer the people the better it is. So my advice to you is not to come. I shall not be in PATNA after Monday. What is the use of just meeting me?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi : Courtesy : National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] C. Rajagopalachari, who was member Industries and Supply, in the Interim Government, in his letter dated March 5, 1947, had written: "Your telegram about 1,900 bales per month came as a surprise. It is unlikely that we shall be able to secure more than about 100 to 200 bales of yarn for this purpose. It would be possible for the Government of India to arrange for a regular monthly quota of yarn to Noakhali."

127. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

PATNA,
March 14, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I am unable to forget the last day of our meeting[1]. I do not find any mistake in my observation. If there is, tell me.

There is no letter from you. How is the work going on? How is your health ?

I am well. The task is a difficult one.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 580

128. BLESSINGS TO SYED MEHBOOB[2]

March 14, 1947

I would give you anything you like just for the asking.

The Hindu, 16-3-1947

129. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[3]

KHUSROPUR,
Mach 14, 1947

I wish that whatever I tell you now should touch your hearts. The scene I witnessed today after my tour of two days was very painful. I do not suggest that my visits to villages earlier were not painful. Large houses of Muslims have been razed to the ground. Women and children had been slaughtered. I just cannot describe it in detail. Although I have hardened my heart, I am incapable of describing all the details even if I wish to do so. Muslims were your brothers and they are so even now. I have been hearing that Muslims in Bihar were particularly gentle. There used to be occasional disputes

[1] The addressee, at Gandhiji's instance, had come to see him at Haimchar on February 26. *Vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 25-2-1947

[2] On the eve of the addressee's marriage Gandhiji presented him with two yarn garlands, one for him and the other for his bride.

[3] The Urdu version has been collated with the report in *Harijan* published under "Gandhiji's Bihar Tour Diary".

between Hindus and Muslims. But such disputes are bound to occur as long as the world lasts. But they should not tear heart from heart. Unfortunately this has happened now. I am fated to witness worse scenes than what I have seen during the last three days. What is happening in the Punjab is heartrending. God alone knows how long such riots will continue. The people who are fighting in the Punjab do not even know what are the likely consequences of their action. If we go on fighting among ourselves in this manner, a third party may impose itself on us as an arbiter, and all sorts of witnesses, honest or dishonest, may come forward. It is better to have an arbitrator from among ourselves rather than allow an outsider. But the best thing is that the need for arbitration should not arise at all. I wish that Hindus and Muslims should cleanse their hearts and live like brothers.

Those who have committed crimes should come forward and confess their guilt with God as witness. No one should do so in a spirit of bravado. If someone has misbehaved in imitation of others, he too should own his mistake. I want a genuine feeling of repentance and an honest atonement for the atrocities committed by thousands of Hindus on a handful of Muslims.

Referring to the method of violence, Gandhiji said that some sort of peace might perhaps be established in the province by means of force. He would hope, but it could never be said with confidence, that the evil would not spread throughout India, as it happened in the case of 1857. Similar things, as we know, had happened during the Sepoy War when it was quelled by means of superior arms. Outwardly, things quieted down but the hatred against an imposed rule went deep underground with the result that we were even today reaping the harvest of what was then sown. The British Government took the place of the East India Company. They established schools and law courts and Indians took to these with enthusiasm; they even co-operated in the diffusion of Western culture; but, in spite of all this, they could never bear the insult or the degradation involved in political subjugation. Similarly, but in a worse manner, if the Punjab quietened down by reason of superior force used against the people of the Punjab, the seed of further conflict and bitterness between brothers that the Hindus and the Muslims were, would go still deeper. Violence, continued Gandhiji, thus could never be ended by counter-violence. The only effective answer to it was the way of non-violence.

People had adopted ahimsa in Champaran at my instance. I now feel that it was the ahimsa of the weak. The British, who were our adversaries, were a mighty power. That is why we seem to have

adopted non-violence in facing them; but we could nor remain non-violent in our dealings with one another. We should feel sorry that we resorted to violence in dealing with our brothers. The mothers and sisters of Muslims are like our own mothers and sisters. If we have behaved with them like devils, it is our duty to atone for that sin.

Hindus and Muslims in Bihar should come closer than ever before. The followers of the two religions should never be afraid of one another. We should be afraid only of being overpowered by one another's love and affection. It is for you to consider whether you prefer to live in amity or wish to convert the whole of India into a boiling cauldron like Bihar or the Punjab.

Women have had a great hand in the growth of ahimsa. They can, if they choose, play a big role in Bihar. The events in Noakhali, Bihar and the Punjab are most unfortunate. If you have made up your mind to torture Gandhi, I cannot complain. In spite of my services to the country and to you, you have every right to say that Gandhi has cheated you and, but for him, you would have slaughtered all the Muslims — although you could not have done so. I would plead with you to pay attention to what I have to say. I do not wish anyone to be swayed by my personal influence; I want you to think calmly and act on my advice only if it appeals to your head and heart.

The Secretary of the Provincial Muslim League who had been good enough to come to him had complained that although the Government had made arrangements for repatriation, the mental attitude of the Hindus was not sufficiently reassuring. Gandhiji firmly said that the reality had to be faced and a determined effort made by every one of them to root out the least trace of the feeling of hostility and make it possible for their Muslim neighbours to live in brotherly love once more.

Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs are all engaged in a bitter feud in the Punjab. Sikhs have always claimed that one Sikh is equal in fight to a lakh and quarter of men. They arm even their children with *kirpans*. Many people are embracing Sikhism, lured by the *kirpan*. If you sincerely think that the way of the Punjab is the proper answer to the challenge of the times, you are free to follow it. I plead with you in all earnestness to tell me frankly that you do not approve of my way. I will not be hurt by your honesty.

Gandhiji would rather not live than see the day when the weapon of nonviolence was given up. It did not matter where he laid down his life for achieving his cherished aim; anywhere in India would still be India for him. But he still hugged

the hope that nonviolence would surely be crowned with victory in the end; for in the example which Bihar might set in this line today lay the hope of peace and progress for our unhappy land.

I shall not say that Bihar has ignored my past services. I do not want you to do anything for my sake. I want you to work in the name of God, our Father. Confess your sins and atone for them with God alone as witness.

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar — I, pp. 31-4, and *Harijan,* 30-3-1947

130. LETTER TO DR. B. S. MOONJE

PATNA,
March 15, 1947

DEAR DR. MOONJE,

I got only today your letter of the 17th ultimo. You will appreciate my difficulty when I tell you that at present I have no time to read anything outside the scope of my present activity. But I have no hesitation whatsoever in saying that if we succeed in driving [out] the twin demons of untouchability and the socalled caste, we shall have gone a long way towards removing the third demon, i.e., communalism.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

131. DISCUSSION WITH RELIEF COMMITTEE MEMBERS[1]

March 15, 1947

QUESTION: Will you advise Muslims to return to their villages in the prevailing disturbed conditions ?

ANSWER : If you have the courage and if you have the requisite faith in God, I shall advise you to return to your villages. I do realize that it is a difficult task. If I had under gone such harrowing experience, perhaps I myself would not have been able to go back; it would have made me a raving lunatic. The memory of murdered men and women would have haunted me. But I aspire to reach a stage when I shall have such abiding faith in

[1] Some members of the Muslim League Relief Committee had met Gandhiji and asked him several questions on behalf of the Muslim refugees of Phulwari Sharif.

God that I would go and stay in the midst of people who had become my enemies.

Q. If there is no change of heart in the majority community, what should the suffering minority do ? Should they live in small pockets or leave the province for ever ?

A. If you do not return and since it was the fault of the Hindus, the Government is bound to compensate you for the loss of your property. But I do not understand your demand that the Government should allot land somewhere else. Well, if you can arrange mutual exchanges, no one can prevent you. But if the Government arranges this, it will not lead to a purification of hearts. Many people are talking of pockets. I simply do not understand this. If those villages where the Muslims are in majority welcome you, who can prevent you from going there? Similarly, no one can prevent you from leaving the province if you decide to go in spite of my promises of affection. There is a law in the U.S.A. that anyone wanting to migrate from that country has to obtain Government's permission. I do not approve of such a law.

Q. Should or should not those who have committed murder, rape, arson and other heinous crimes receive appropriate punishment? If you think they should, how will you advise the Government of Bihar?

A. Of course, those responsible for devilish deeds must be punished. The Government of Bihar has not abjured the principle of punishment. There is no such government anywhere in the world today. When such a government comes into being, I shall listen to their argument. But a government which believes in the theory of crime and punishment but does not punish the criminal has no right to call itself a government.

Q. Should the Government of Bihar make adequate Provision for the relief of orphans and widows who have no one to support them? If some organization has undertaken such work, what will you advise the Bihar Government on this?

A. They are the responsibility of the State. If some organization wants to render relief in its own manner, it will not be justified in expecting assistance from the Government. This work has to be done either by the Government itself or in a manner approved by the Government.

Q. How will it be possible to make good the historical, cultural, social and religious damage done by the madness of the majority?

A. This has been a cruel and terrible tragedy. Such holocausts

have shaken the world earlier and will do so even in the future. Only when we are reformed and tolerant enough to realize that all religious lead to the same God called by various people by various names, will the world change for the better. Till then the earth not be a habitable place. Till that change comes about, it is impossible to prevent such barbarity and the irreparable losses resultant from it.

Q. What should be done with those officers who openly helped the rioters and deliberately helped one side against the other?

A. Those officers against whom such charges can be proved can have no place in the government.

Q. What do you propose to do to prevent the repetition of riots at place where the Muslims have suffered? Even now the houses and properties of Muslims are being damaged.

A. I am doing my best to prevent a repetition. I shall continue to stay here till I succeed in my effort. I have already declared that I shall do or die. God will either grant me success or put an end to my life. I believe that a change of heart is essential if I am to succeed. As I have been telling the Hindus in Noakhali, this is not a work where the army or police can be of much help. You must gather courage and fear on one except God. I shall advice the Ministers to frame a law making Hindus responsible for the safety of the Muslim minority. Such laws will not in fact be needed where hearts have been purified.

Q. Can the cruelties and injustices meted out to us detain you for long in Bihar? Your prolonged presence is needed for the help of the refugees.

A. You need not worry on that account. I shall not leave Bihar so long as Hindus and Muslims do not jointly allow me to do so on the basis of their brotherly feelings.

Q. Will you call them Congressmen who organized and led the recent riots? If not, what action will be taken against them to preserve the prestige of the Congress?

A. How can those who participated in riots be called Congressmen? Before condemning them, I must listen to their versions of the story. I am a devotee of truth and shall lay down my life in serving truth.

[From Urdu]

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar— I, pp. 35-8

132. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

PATNA,
March 15, 1947

I have been absent from here for the last three days. During these three days I visited a few villages. The villagers there have contributed their mite for the relief of Muslims. They gave more small coins than notes. Rich and wealthy people live here. You donated one thousand rupees on the first day and two thousand on the next day. When the gathering is large, it becomes very difficult to collect the donations.

When Gandhiji began his address he first referred to his visit[2] and said that people might naturally be interested to learn why be had gone there. For him it was a courtesy call because he could not go expecting any favours or services from the Governor as of yore. Under a responsible government, which theirs was, services and favours he could expect only from the Ministers who were the representatives of the people. The Governor had undoubtedly powers with reference to the minorities but these too he could exercise only with great restraint. What they discussed it was for the Governor to communicate to his Ministers. One thing, however, the speaker was free to tell them. To his agreeable surprise, the Governor had said that those who were responsible to the people had to begin with themselves. If they did not begin with their individual lives and show relative perfection, they could not be real reformers or servants of the people.

Gandhiji wanted the people also to disabuse themselves of any thought that they had usurped any power from the British. Nonviolent noncooperation did not admit of any such assumption. What they performed was a simple duty. The result undoubtedly was that the British naturally and voluntarily divested themselves of much authority and power and it was up to the people to do their duty along the lines of non-violence, if they were to have complete power as and for the people.

We have only partly recovered what we had lost through our folly. There is on doubt that we shall regain the power in full measure. I have already explained to you the way to complete freedom.

The recent events in Bihar were a departure from that right conduct and, if the

[1] The Urdu version has been collated with the report in *Harijan* published under "Gandhiji's Bihar Tour Diary".

[2] Gandhiji had gone to meet the Governor about an hour before prayer time and had returned five minutes late for the prayer.

truth was not recognized and if the infection of the Punjab spread, he had not a shadow of doubt that they would lose what was within their grasp. He, therefore, expected Bihar to recognize the fact and do its duty honourably and well.

You must not fight among yourselves and should not kill women, children and old men. You must put a complete stop to these internal feuds. If you think that these feuds will bring freedom, you are sadly mistaken. The belief that through internal fight we will attain freedom is like expecting a barren woman to give birth to a child.

During the last three days I saw that houses had been razed to the ground, roofs pulled down and a lot of destruction had been caused. I hear that old men, children and women had been slaughtered. Our first duty therefore is to repent for our misdeeds. We should resolve not to commit these horrors again and to prevent others from doing so. The same thing applies here also. We must first reform ourselves and then try to reform others.

It was painful for him to find the houses in the same condition in which the rioters had left them. If they wanted their Muslim neighbours to come back, it was necessary that proper conditions should be restored and the debris completely cleared. Every individual who felt it was his duty to make the return of the refugees smooth, could at once lend a hand in rendering the broken homes habitable once more.

Some poor Muslims had also come to see me today. I advised them to return to their homes. I assured them that the Ministers were looking after their interests. I have given them an assurance on your behalf and asked them to return to their homes. The Muslims can be safe amidst you, if it is your wish. You should now start living together as before and always remember that I gave the assurance to the Muslims in your name and on your behalf. I have assured a flourishing Muslim merchant that he should not be afraid of restarting his business in full confidence, for I am sure that the Bihari Hindu would honour that pledge.

I am confident that the recent tragedy will never be repeated. I shall appeal to the Ministers to keep the interests of Muslims at heart. I cannot order them. I have never ordered anyone in my life. I only wish to appeal to everyone.

When nonviolence finds expression through a person, it influences other people too. I am not a great man. I am just the same today as I was when I came to Bihar for the first time. Of course there has been one change. My heart has been steeled now. I have assured the Muslims on your behalf that no Hindu will abuse them or hurt

them or think of doing any such thing. Bihar should set an example of ahimsa which could be followed by other provinces. Rather than imitating Bengal or the Punjab, you should build a Bihar which Bengal and the Punjab would like to emulate. I have come to Bihar from Noakhali, but my heart is still in Noakhali. I used to say there that I was working for Bihar in Noakhali. Similarly, I have not lost sight of the work in Noakhali while I am in Bihar.

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—I, pp. 39-41, and *Harijan*, 30-3-1947

133. FROM THE DIARY[1]

March 15, 1947

Talked with . . . for an hour. Received . . . 's letter. Since I took time to explain why I was not moved by . . . 's letter though it was very loving, I could go to bed only at 11 o'clock. Got up at 2.30 to visit the toilet. The rest of my time was spent in deciding how I could convince him about my point. Still, I do not feel exhausted.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 53

[1] Omissions in the item are as in the source.

134. DISCUSSION WITH SWAMI ANAND AND KEDAR NATH

[*March 15/16, 1947*][1]

QUESTION : Why did you not, according to your wont, take your co-workers into confidence and carry them with you before embarking on this novel practice[2] ? Why this secrecy ?

GANDHIJI : No secrecy was intended. Everything was fortuitous. Previous consultation with friends was ruled out by the very nature of the thing. Besides, I hold that previous consent was unnecessary. At the same time I should have insisted on ventilating the matter thoroughly at the very start. If I had only done that, much of the present trouble and commotion would have been avoided. The omission was a serious flaw. I was asking myself as to what would be an appropriate penance for it when Thakkar Bapa came[3]. You know the rest of the story.

Q. The irreparable harm, if you weaken the foundation of the moral order on which society rests and which has been built up by long and painful discipline, is obvious. But no corresponding gain is apparent to us to justify a break with established tradition. What is your defence ? We are not out to humiliate you or to score a victory over you. We only wish to understand.

G. No moral progress or reform is possible if one is not prepared to get out of the rut of orthodox tradition. By allowing ourselves to be cribbed by castiron social conventions, we have lost. The orthodox conception of the ninefold wall of protection in regard to *brahmacharya* is in my opinion inadequate and defective. I have never accepted it for myself. In my opinion even striving after the true *brahmacharya* is not possible by keeping behind it. For 20 years I was in closest touch with the West in South Africa. I have known the writings on sex by eminent writers like Havelock Ellis and Bertrand Russell and their theories. They are all thinkers of eminence, integrity

[1] According to *My Days with Gandhi*, Swami Anand and Kedar Nath came to Bihar on March 14, 1947. Their discussion was entirely private and continued the next two days. *Vide* also footnote 1, "Letter to Nirmal Kumar Bose", 17-3-1947

[2] Gandhiji's experiment in *brahmacharya*, involving Manu Gandhi. *Vide* "Letter to Nirmal Kumar Bose", 17-3-1947 also "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 1/2-2-1947

[3] On February 24, 1947; *vide* "Discussion with A. V. Thakkar", 24-2-1947

and experience. They have suffered for their convictions and for giving expression to the same. While totally repudiating institutions like marriage, etc., and the current code of morals—and there I disagree with them—they are firm believers in the possibility and desirability of purity in life independently of those institutions and usages. I have come across men and women in the West who lead pure lives although they do not accept or observe the current usages and social conventions. My research runs somewhat in that direction. If you admit the necessity and desirability of reform, of discarding the old, wherever necessary, and building a new system of ethics and morals suited to the present age, then the question of seeking the permission of others or convincing them does not arise. A reformer cannot afford to wait till others are converted; he must take the lead and venture forth alone even in the teeth of universal opposition. I want to test, enlarge and revise the current definition of *brahmacharya*, by which you swear, in the light of my observation, study and experience. Therefore, whenever an opportunity presents itself I do not evade it or run away from it. On the contrary, I deem it my duty—dharma—to meet it squarely in the face and find out where it leads to and where I stand. To avoid the contact of a woman or to run away from it out of fear, I regard as unbecoming of an aspirant after true *brahmacharya*. I have never tried to cultivate or seek sex contact for carnal satisfaction. I do not claim to have completely eradicated the sex feeling in me. But it is my claim that I can keep it under control.

Q. We are not aware of your ever having put before the people at large these ideas of yours. On the contrary we have all along known you to have put before the public ideas with which we are familiar, and which we have associated with your striving. What is the explanation ?

G. Even today, so far as the people in general are concerned, I am putting before them for practice what you call my old ideas. At the same time, for myself, as I have said, I have been deeply influenced by modern thought. Even amongst us there is the Tantra school which has influenced Western savants like Justice Sir John Woodroffe. I read his works in Yeravada prison. You have all been brought up in the orthodox tradition. According to my definition, you cannot be regarded as true *brahmacharis*. You are off and on

falling ill; you suffer from all sorts of bodily ailments. I claim that I represent true *brahmacharya* better than any of you. You do not seem to regard a lapse in respect of truth, nonviolence, nonstealing, etc., to be so serious a matter. But a fancied breach in respect of *brahmacharya*, i.e., relation between man and woman, upsets you completely. I regard this conception of *brahmacharya* as narrow, hidebound and retrograde. To me truth, ahimsa and *brahmacharya* are all ideals of equal importance. They all call for an equal measure of striving on our part, and lapse in respect of any of them is to me a matter of equal concern. I maintain that my conduct in no way constitutes a departure from the true ideal of *brahmacharya*. As against it, *brahmacharya* which reduces itself to a system of prescriptive do's and don'ts and which is in vogue amongst us today has a baneful effect upon society; it has lowered the ideal and robbed it of its true content. I deem it my highest duty to put these prescriptive conventions and taboos in their proper place and to release the ideal from the fetters that have been put upon it.

Q. One last question. If your attitude and practice constitutes such an advance in the cultivation of true selfrestraint, why does not its beneficial effect show in your surroundings ? Why do we find so much disquiet and unhappiness around you ? Why are your companions emotionally unhinged ?

G. I know well the shortcomings as well as virtues of my companions. You do not know their other side. You jump to hasty conclusions from superficial observation, which is unbecoming in a striver after truth.

I am not so lost as you seem to think. I can only ask you to have faith in me. I cannot give up at your bidding what to me is a matter of deep conviction. I am sorry, I am helpless.

Q. We cannot say we have been convinced. We feel unhappy. We cannot leave the matter here. We shall continue to strive with you. Should you again feel prompted to go against the established rules, just think of your sorrowing friends.

G. I know. But what can I do when I feel impelled by duty ? I can imagine circumstances when I may feel it my clear duty to go against the established rules. In such circumstances I cannot allow myself to be bound down by any commitment whatsoever.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Bk. II, pp. 226-9

135. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

PATNA,
March 16, 1947

MY DEAR KU.,

I have your letter[1]. I have seen the power of attorney which I enclose herewith. I suppose you know that it displaces your Chairman and other members of the Board[2] and enables you to play ducks and drakes with the assets of the Board. So long as you know and realize the immensity of the power you are taking, I feel quite safe.

I see from the papers that you have become a member of the Congress Working Committee. There is much to be cleaned in those stables. I have no doubt that you will count no cost too dear to perform the cleansing operation. I shall watch your career with considerable interest.

Send my love to Bharatan[3] wherever he is. Do you ever hear from Sita[4]? Or, has she entirely disappeared from the village life such as it was?

You will pass on to me all the titbits that you may consider I should be aware of.

It is just discovered that you do not need my signature at all. I had thought that I was the President of the Association. But if I am not, I am glad of it because so much burden is off my shoulders.[5]

Love.

BAPU

SHRI J. C. KUMARAPPA
MAGANWADI
WARDHA

From a photostat : G. N. 10188

[1] Dated February 1, 1947
[2] Of Management of the All-India Village Industries Association
[3] Addressee's brother
[4] Bharatan Kumarappa's wife
[5] On March 26, the addressee replied :"Thanks for the power of attorney which reached me at Madras. You are still our President but not a Trustee. Only the Trustees have to sign it. We shall not leave you off so easily from the Association. . . ."

136. LETTER TO SOLOMON ALEXANDER

PATNA,
March 16, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

Of course I knew your brother very well indeed. But I plead with you to spare me at the present moment. I must not divide my attention for things great or small. It will be time for me to consider others if I come out safe from the fire which I am trying to quench. The odds are so great that the fire may quench me, instead of my quenching it.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SOLOMON ALEXANDER, ESQ.
BARRISTER-AT-LAW
25 RUE TALAAT HARB
ALEXANDRIA
(EGYPT)

From a photostat : G. N. 8037

137. LETTER TO T. R. VENKATARAMA SASTRI

PATNA,
March 16, 1947

DEAR VENKATARAMA SASTRI,

I have your precious letter about the proposed Sastriar Memorial[1].

Let me tell you that I have not identified myself with the Malaviyaji Memorial although I am deeply interested in the doings of the Kashi Vishwavidyalaya.

As for the proposal, whilst I am deeply concerned with everything about Sastriar I wonder if it is necessary to have an institution in memory of the deceased for political education. Isn't that function performed by the Servants of India Society for which he gave his life ? Political education is today being given by so many

[1] In memory of V. S. Srinivasa Sastri who had died on April 17, 1946

parties in which I may mention the Socialist Party and the Communist Party. However much one may differ from their way of thinking, it is not possible to withhold admiration from them for drawing to their fold people of learning, industry and self-sacrifice. I intensely dislike destructive criticism unless it is accompanied at the same time with constructive suggestions. I claim no exemption for my criticism. Strictly speaking mine is no criticism. I have simply thrown out a thought for your consideration. As at present equipped I would say that it might be a good thing to make an appeal for sustaining and expanding Sastriar's last and best beloved institution. That it needs expansion I have no doubt. I haven't thought out how. I will add however that the donors should earmark their donations for the object to be particularized in the general appeal. At this juncture when everything is in the meltingpot and institutions are undergoing rapid transformation it may be necessary to take the precaution. If you think that my suggestion is worthy of consideration you will have to consult the present President[1] of the Society.

The fact that I have taken deep interest in your project should not be taken to mean that I shall identify myself with that or any other project. My views about memorials have undergone change for some years and experience is daily strengthening them. But this is not for engaging you in considering them.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI T. R. VENKATARAMA SASTRI

"KAUSTUBHA"

EDWARD ELLIOTS ROAD

MYLAPORE

MADRAS

From the original : T. R. Venkatarama Sastri Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Hriday Nath Kunzru

138. LETTER TO GEORGE WINTHROPLE

PATNA,
March 16, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Of course I am interested in everything about Thoreau and Emerson. My knowledge of Thoreau is confined to *Walden* and *Civil Disobedience* and some stray writings of his. *Civil Disobedience* was the work that gripped me. But I do not consider myself worthy enough for the purpose of identifying myself with any Thoreau Society.

GEORGE WINTHROPLE, ESQ.

CONCORD

MASSACHUSETTS

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

139. LETTER TO TARABEHN JASANI

PATNA,
March 16, 1947

CHI. TARA,

It is a great calamity for Manu, you and other members of the family. I learnt about it only from Satish's wire. I never expected such an end to Mohanlal. But do we not see every day that the most unexpected things happen ? He who is born must die. Knowing this, we should learn to remain calm.

What more need I write. Write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8788

140. ADVICE TO MUSLIM REFUGEES[1]

PATNA,
Sunday, March 16, 1947

You have my sympathy in your misery. What has happened should never have happened. But I believe that everything is futile unless there is a change of heart. I would suggest that you should go to Noakhali. Go there and find out for yourself if the Hindus have not been oppressed. If you are convinced about it, engage yourselves in relief work and service in that place. Impress upon the minority that they are your brethren, that they cannot leave the country, and that they may do so only over your dead bodies. Tell even the oppressors — let me say they are the members of the [Muslim] League — that such tyranny would neither bring any benefit to their party nor would it protect it in any way. And if the tyrants still continue to oppress, you must lay down your lives to protect your brethren. You must courageously tell them that they should first strike you before striking the innocent. Even if there is one such person among you, your fame would be matchless in all the world and God would shower flowers over you, and that fragrance would spread in the entire country. I am merely showing you your duty, since you have come to seek my advice. I would be the happiest man to see you rising high and to see Pakistan becoming really *pak*[2]. And, if you do this people would come to you to learn the lessons of nonviolence and love.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 63

[1] The refugees, accompanied by S. N. Maulvi, Dr. Azad Hussain and Hakim Tasadduq Hussain, called on Gandhiji at 2.15 p. m.

[2] Pure

141. ADVICE TO MUSLIM WOMEN[1]

PATNA,
Sunday, March 16, 1947

You should have faith in God. He is the one who looks after everyone. I am only striving [to do my duty]. You mix with the Hindu women. Tell the children in your families things which promote love [among the two communities]. What you can do, men can never do. Tell your husband, son or father, or whoever is there, that he should rush to the rescue of the Hindus if they are terrorized by the Muslims anywhere in the country. Protect the Hindu women and inspire confidence in them that they are your own sisters. I have described women as the very embodiment of nonviolence. God has given to woman a loving heart which man does not possess. You should put it to good use. It is as clear to me as daylight that as long as women do not acquire qualities of refinement and do not realize their duty, the country can make no progress. Women from numerous such Muslim families have come to me. So many of them are just like daughters to me. One of them is right in Noakhali. Amtussalaam is just skin and bones, but she is putting up a brave fight. She undertook a number of fasts. Raihana who comes from the family of Abbas Tyabji is just as brave. She is a devotee of Krishna. She reads the *Gita* and the Koran together. She understands the meaning of the *Gita* as much as she understands the meaning of the Koran. I believe that she has more Hindus than Muslims among her friends. There are many girls who have given up distinctions of caste and creed. My advice to you is that you should forget distinctions of caste and community if you want to be happy. It is one God who has endowed us with human life. We are all human beings, all men and women belonging to the same country. Let us justify our religion as human beings.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 64

[1] The Muslim women came clad in *burqas*. Gandhiji asked : "Why do you observe purdah from me ? Women do not observe it with me. The real purdah should be of the heart." The women then removed their *burqas*.

142. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

PATNA,
March 16, 1947

I did not find time to write my speech for this silence day. I had told you yesterday itself that Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan would speak to you today. He will therefore address you today instead of me.

[From Urdu]

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—I, p. 42

143. FROM THE DIARY[1]

PATNA,
Sunday, March 16, 1947

Today I was wide awake as it struck two. I did not seem to get sleep. Then all at once I heard Manudi reciting the *shlokas* of the morning prayer. I was startled. I called her a couple of times. Then she was quiet. She did not say anything, but she was frightened. She lifted my mosquitocurtain and held my hand. I stroked her for a few minutes and asked her to be calm. Now she became conscious and withdrew her hand. I asked her to go to sleep without worrying. I told her not to worry about the prayers and assured her that I would wake her up [in time]. That girl is worrying so much about me! She is just like an innocent child. It is only because of that quality in her that she has remained with me in such a trying *yajna*. I started thinking about it. I am not happy about the bleeding from her nose. I have asked her to keep a mud-pack on the back of her neck. I started thinking about . . . I did not like the manner of . . .'s questions and the grin on his face. I started thinking about my dharma and it was already 3.30 a.m. I started cleaning my teeth and then woke up Manudi . . . Got the prayers started at 3.55 a.m.

Held talks between 7.30 and 9.30 a.m. I explained to them my point of view. In the light of my present views about *brahmacharya* I felt that their ideas about *brahmacharya* were faulty and imperfect. It is very necessary for them to improve those ideas along my line. I have never sought the company of a woman with a view to satisfying my passions. Of course I mentioned one exception. I have made

[1] Omissions in the item are as in the source.

progress by my actions and expect to advance further. I am not in any way bound to. . . They may continue to write letters. I shall try to reply. It would be better if only one of them wrote.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 60-1

144. LETTER TO SIR HUGH DOW

PATNA,
March 17, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I was so struck by your reference (strange for a bureaucrat) to individual conduct that I referred to it on Saturday at my after prayer speech.[1]

Yesterday evening I met your Ministers and gave them the purport of our talk of last Saturday. I told them that

1. you considered them to be dilatory about placating the Muslims who were so much the injured party;

2. permanent officials interpreted this to mean that the Ministers did not want them to be prompt in taking energetic action to restore confidence among the Muslims;

3. the guilty ones were not properly dealt with;

4. the League demands were turned down not on merits but because they were League demands.

The Ministers present totally refuted all these imputations and the Chief Minister expressed considerable surprise. The Chief Minister said that he and his colleagues had often differed from you on several questions including the minorities. He added, however, that on behalf of himself and his colleagues he had given you the assurance that in their handling of the minority question they would readily accept your advice even though there were differences between you and them.

I am showing this to the Chief Minister to check up my version of what the Ministers had said.

My only reason for writing this is not to advertise differences between you and your Ministers but to remove misunderstandings and to assist, wherever I can, in promoting goodwill between the retiring British official world and the Indian politicians who are, and are

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 15-3-1947

becoming growingly, responsible for the well being of the people whom they guide and serve.

I casually referred to the condition of the working men in the mica industry. But I shall await your promised note before I can pursue it fully.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E., THE GOVERNOR OF BIHAR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 228-9

145. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

PATNA,
March 17, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

Please read the enclosed papers about Paul and do what is necessary. I am sorry to have to put you to all this trouble but I cannot help it. However, if you can find no time at all to read them, forget about the matter and return the papers. If you do anything about it, you need not send them back.

Nathji and Swami had been here. We talked at great length.[2] They themselves will write to you.

Sushila writes that you are not keeping good health; please be careful.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 351

[1] For the addressee's reply, *vide* "Letter from Sir Hugh Dow", 17-3-1947
[2] *Vide*"Discussion with Swami Anand and Kedar Nath"

146. A LETTER[1]

PATNA,
Monday, March 17, 1947

You seem to believe that after thousands of years I am the one born (as an incarnation of God). But I don't think so. I claim that all those who work with the same earnestness as I do can certainly do what I have been able to. It should be possible for everyone to be always vigilant and go on trying ceaselessly. But if what you believe is true, should I not be able to realize even the physical impurities in me ?

Our definition of *brahmacharya* is imperfect. I am trying to make it perfect. Even the sharp intelligence of . . . is incapable of [understanding] *brahmacharya*. It was clear from the conversation between us that . . . also does not know the meaning of *brahmacharya*. I cannot express the pain I feel as I write these words. I am steeling my heart to write this. . . . I claim that except on one occasion I have not been a victim of passions and that is why I write the harsh words above.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 67-8

147. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

ON THE TRAIN
March 17, 1947

CHI. SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. Write and tell me how the whole work is going on. I understand about Sardar Jiwan Singh. I had written that the accounts should be checked first.[2] But it does not matter if the money has already been given. Now the balance should tally. Sardar Jiwan Singh must be staying with you. If he needs special diet, arrange for it. He requires meat and fish. Let him have these. Everything will be set right with love.

[1] Omissions in the letter are as in the source.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Stis Chandra Das Gupta", 2-3-1947

Now how do you manage for the cloth? Could you get handspun yarn? Do the weavers weave it? They are our true support.

Where is Hemprabhadevi[1]? How is she? She should not worry.

Nathji and Swami had come. They discussed Manu with me at length.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 8964

148. NOTE TO NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE[2]

March 17, 1947

You may post it if you wish. There are errors of facts in the letter. There are other defects to which I would draw your attention. I would therefore advise you to wait till you have seen my opinion. But do just as you please.[3]

My Days with Gandhi, p. 175

149. LETTER TO NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE[4]

March 17, 1947

CHI. NIRMAL BABU,

Your letter is full of inaccuracies and unwarranted assumptions. I had asked you to discuss the thing with me. You could not do it. The result is bad. I do not mind what opinion you hold, only it must be well fortified

You should have ascertained my views from me before accepting second-hand evidence however honest it might be.

I go beyond the orthodox view as we know it. My definition does not admit of laxity. I do not call that *brahmacharya* that means

[1] Addressee's wife

[2] According to the source, after their discussion with Gandhiji, Kedar Nath and Swami Anand asked the addressee his views since Gandhiji had mentioned that "his immediate personal associates did not see anything wrong in his acts". The addressee stated his views in a letter and gave it to them for communication to other friends. Afterwards he placed before Gandhiji a copy of the letter along with the post-script. As Gandhiji was observing silence, he wrote this note in reply. For extracts from the addressee's letter, *vide* "N. K. Bose Letter to Kedar Nath and Others", 16-3-1947

[3] *Vide* also the following two items.

[4] This was written on the train to Masaurhi and handed over to the addressee who was accompanying Gandhiji.

not to touch a woman. What I do today is nothing new for me. So far as I known myself, I hold today the same view I held when about 45 years ago I took the vow. Without the vow in England as a student, I freely mixed with women and yet I called myself a *brahmachari* for the period of my residence there. For me, *brahmacharya* is that thought and practice which puts you in touch with the Infinite and takes you to His presence.[1] In that sense Dayanand Saraswati[2] was not. Most certainly I am not. But I am trying to reach that state and, in accordance with my belief, I have made substantial progress in that direction.

I have not become modern at all in the same sense you seem to mean. I am as ancient as can be imagined and hope to remain so to the end of my life. If this displeases you, I cannot help it. Let me appear to you and others as naked as I can.

You have not done justice to A, B or C. You do not know them fully. Have you any right to judge them before you have taken the trouble of knowing them as fully as possible? That you may not want to or that you have no time, I would appreciate. But that very fact should prevent you from passing judgement on them.

I am amazed at your assumption that my experiment im- plied any assumption of woman's inferiority. She would be, if I looked upon her with lust with or without her consent. I have believed in woman's perfect equality with man. My wife was 'inferior' when she was the instrument of my lust. She ceased to be that when she lay with me naked as my sister. If she and I were not lustfully agitated in our minds and bodies, the contact raised both of us.

Should there be difference if it is not my wife, as she once was, but some other sister ? I do hope you will acquit me of having any lustful designs upon women or girls who have been naked with me. A or B's hysteria had nothing to do with my experiment, I hope. They were before the experiment what they are today, if they have not less of it.

The distinction between Manu and others is meaningless for our discussion. That she is my grand-daughter may exempt me from criticism. But I do not want that advantage.

"Experiment" or *prayog* is an ill-chosen word. I have used it. It differs from the present in the sense that the one could be stopped by

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 18-3-1947
[2] Founder of Arya Samaj

me, the other being dharma could not be. Now comes the stop.

That I should take the public in my confidence before I do anything new is [not] novel to me. In the present case there is nothing new.

BAPU

My Days with Gandhi, pp. 176-8

150. NOTE TO NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE[1]

March 17, 1947

When must you go? There is no immediate hurry, is there? Let us wait till the three days' tour is over.

My Days with Gandhi, p. 178

151. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING [2]

MASAURHI,
March 17, 1947

It is not necessary, perhaps, to tell you that I have undertaken this tour not for pleasure but out of sorrow. I visit only those places where Muslims have suffered in some way or the other at the hands of Hindus. Everywhere I appeal to Hindus to atone for their sins.

A large number of Hindus attacked a handful of Muslims and killed women and children. This is not bravery but cowardice. It is cowardly to kill a person even under an apprehension that he is likely to kill us. We have to show true repentance for whatever has happened. If a brother of ours commits a crime, we cannot escape the responsibility. I include myself when I say "we". No one should think that he has committed no crime and this old man is unnecessarily implicating him. When one man commits a crime, all mankind becomes responsible for it. Hence even if a single Hindu has misbehaved here, all the Hindus will be put in the dock.

What the Muslims have done in Noakhali or what the Hindus

[1] After receiving the letter dated March 17, *vide* the preceding item, the addressee told Gandhiji that he "might have to 0leave him earlier than by the end of the month". *Vide* also "Letter to Nirmal Kumar Bose", 18-3-1947

[2] The meeting was attended by more than thirty thousand people. A very large number of people participated in the *Ramdhun* for which Gandhiji congratulated them.

have done in Bihar brings no benefit to India; on the contrary it is an obstacle to India's independence. I have been told that people shouted *Mahavirjiki jai* and *Gandhijiki jai* while committing these heinous crimes. Such people have not understood me. I am appealing to Hindus here that whoever has committed a crime should confess it. Those who have committed robbery, arson or murder should come to me and make a confession. I am no police officer; nor have I come here to prosecute you. You should not hesitate to make a confession before me at any rate. I shall not report the names of the criminals to the Ministers here, even though they are my friends. You should display your courage by confessing your guilt and ennoble your soul by atoning for it.

Hindus have written to me that they have indeed committed the crimes; but they plead that they have had enough provocation. According to them, the Muslims took the offensive and the Hindus retaliated in selfdefence. Now, I pose this question before you. Suppose a man speaks ill of me or abuses me, should I retaliate by abusing him and soil my own tongue? If a man turns into a devil, should I confront him by becoming a devil myself? One who attacks another person is a coward, but it would be an act of bravery to refuse to be provoked even in the face of an attack. One should realize that if the aggressor commits a shameful act one should not oneself commit a similar act.

I know the people of Bihar very well and I have visited this province very often. I had built great hopes on Bihar but this time the people here have dashed them to the ground. The only thing left to us now is to confess honestly that we are guilty of a serious crime. We should atone for the crime and declare that it would never be repeated. A Hindu friend has said, "I agree that you should have fought with those Muslims who had provoked you; but what is the justification for thousands of Hindus killing innocent women and children? Even if you had resorted to violence, you should have done it in a brave manner."

Muslims complain that the Provincial Government's hands are also not clean and the Ministers participated in the atrocities committed on the Muslims. It is difficult for me to believe this; I cannot also believe that the Chief Minister had a hand in this. Hindus

152. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

PATNA,
March 18, 1947

CHI. AMRIT,

I had your letter. I wanted to write to you at once but never got the chance. It is a very strenuous time I am having here. But do not worry.

You remember those two notebooks containing rich treasures from the Bible and other Christian literature. If they have not taught you and me to be anxious for nothing and nobody, they have taught nothing worth learning, for our faith in the living God is to be measured by the extent of freedom from anxiety of any kind whatsoever and full faith in God requires an accurate knowledge of His laws and corresponding obedience thereto. This is the sum total of nature cure. The supreme law, making others superfluous, is heart-assimilation of Ramanama in every fibre of our being. The truth of this is verified in everyday experience.

I note what you say about your suffering and about Dr. Jacob's treatment. I hope to be able to learn some day that you have shed all your illnesses.

Tell Shummy[1] that he belies the teaching of the Bible which among our company he seems to know best.

Sardar[2] must not have any swelling whatsoever. But his obstinacy is very great.

I have asked you to pay me a brief visit. You might be of some use in the work that is being done here. That means your sparing a fortnight at the most. But I do not want you to neglect the duty you have undertaken, of course with my full consent.

Who told you that I had consented to take some rest? That rest must certainly come some day. Meantime I am learning day by day, though little by little, that all work, without any the slightest trace of anxiety, is true and living rest.

Jajuji[3] has sent me a copy of your letter about the Secretaryship.

I want you to give me a full and accurate account of the big tragedy that is going on in the Punjab.

Surely you cannot be called "Her Highness" as Catlin calls

[1] Shumshere Singh, addressee's brother
[2] Vallabhbhai Patel
[3] Shrikrishnadas Jaju, Secretary, A. I. S. A.

you.

Lastly about myself. I had an affectionate but mournful visit from Nathji and Swami Anand. I gave them as much time as I was capable of giving. Our discussions were full, frank and cordial. You will have no difficulty in accepting at its face value my statement that not one of our company knows the full value and implications of *brahmacharya*, and that among these ignoramuses I am the least ignorant and the most experienced. With one solitary exception I have never looked upon a woman with a lustful eye. I have touched perhaps thousands upon thousands. But my touch has never carried the meaning of lustfulness. I have lain with some naked, never with the intention of having any lustful satisfaction. My touch has been for our mutual uplift. I would like those who have felt otherwise, if there are any, truly to testify against me. Even the one solitary instance referred to by me was never with the intention of despoiling her. Nevertheless my confession stands that in that case my touch had lustfulness about it. I was carried away in spite of myself and but for God's intervention I might have become a wreck.

My meaning of *brahmacharya* is this:

One who never has any lustful intention, who by constant attendance upon God has become proof against conscious or unconscious emissions, who is capable of lying naked with naked women, however beautiful they may be, without being in any manner whatsoever sexually excited. Such a person should be incapable of lying, incapable of intending or doing harm to a single man or woman in the whole world, is free from anger and malice and detached in the sense of the *Bhagavadgita*. Such a person is a full *brahmachari*. *Brahmachari* literally means a person who is making daily and steady progress towards God and whose every act is done in pursuance of that end and no other.

You say K.[1] and N.[2] had agreed to withdraw their boycott. From the letters I have, such is not my impression. Nor did I gather that impression from N[athji] and S[wami].

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3702. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6511

[1] Kishorelal Mashruwala and Narahari Parikh; *vide* "Telegram to Kishorelal G. Mashruwala", 9-2-1947

[2] *Ibid*

153. LETTER TO NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE[1]

March 18, 1947

CHI. NIRMAL BABU,

If you must leave today I must not stand between you and your duty as you conceive it. You made me so used to you that I shall miss you. Pyarelal I cannot have just now. He must be in his place. If you leave today, I suppose you have arranged to hand over all papers in perfect order. The only one who can take charge is Dev.

Your explanation does not give me satisfaction. But I must not argue. If you want me to do so, I could do it through correspondence which perhaps better suits your nature. Of course you are at liberty to discuss the whole of me and my writings with anybody you like. This applies equally to the three letters[2]. I simply drew your attention to what appeared to be a hasty decision and that too in order to see as much perfection in you as possible.

"Haste is waste".[3]

BAPU'S
blessings

My Days with Gandhi, p. 181

154 LETTER TO JAG PARVESH CHANDAR

PATNA,
March 18, 1947

DEAR JAG PARVESH CHANDAR,

I have tried desperately to overtake your letter received on the 26th ultimo. It is remarkable that you have not dated your letter.[4]

I did get your book *Is Grouping of Provinces Compulsory*? and

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter written after a long discussion with Gandhiji. For extracts from the letter, *vide* Appendix V.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Nirmal Kumar Bose", 17-3-1947; also "Letter to N. K. Bose", 7-2-1947

[3] The addressee explains: "At a quarter to three in the afternoon I bade good-bye to Bapu. . . . He blessed me and said, "You have taken your decision in haste."

[4] This was in reply to the addressee's undated letter which read: "Ever since December 22, 1946 I am confined to bed due to nervous breakdown. All my limbs are tied with the strings of fear. I am under the treatment of expert doctors but a few words of advice from you will carry more weight than anything else. Once the late Shri Mahadev Desai suffered from nervous breakdown and he was under your care. Please do spare a few minutes and let me know the treatment that Shri Desai underwent."

I noticed that you have answered the question in the negative. A trained lawyer in Nagpur has done likewise.

Mahadev I suppose did not have the same malady that you seem to have. In any case unless I know more fully I can't guide you. Moreover, Mahadev had put himself under an Ayurvedic physician at that time, staying in bed. Of course he did so with my consent. Therefore you will see that I cannot appropriate full credit for such recovery as Mahadev had.

You will see that I am just now in Bihar for the same cause which took me to Noakhali which means that I have to attend to two. I would like you to tell me all about the tragedy that is still going on in the Punjab. Has your portion of Lahore also been affected?

SHRI JAG PARVESH CHANDAR
8 J BLOCK
MODEL TOWN
LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

155. LETTER TO VINODINI

PATNA,
March 18, 1947

CHI. VINODINI[1],

How is it that you have still not sent to Chi. Jaisukhlal the letters regarding Pyarelal? He is perturbed and is drawing unfavourable conclusions against you both and Pyarelal. Pyare- lal of course has written to say that all the letters should be sent. What objection can you have, then? And that, too, when you have to show the letters to your own father? I would advise you to send the letters immediately to Jaisukhlal and apologize to him for the delay.

I trust both of you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

For the present I shall have to stay on in Bihar. I shall be touring the different parts, but the headquarters will be at Patna. Manu is well. She also is angry with you, but will of course calm down.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

[1] Daughter of Jaisukhlal Gandhi

156. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

PATNA,
March 18, 1947

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I got your letter. I have written to Vinodini again.[1] There must be some misunderstanding. That she would deliberately withhold the letters is not the impression I have of her. However, I have written quite strongly to her.

Manu is getting on quite well. She wins everybody's heart by her spirit of service. I am quite hopeful that her health will become perfectly normal. She is being treated with my remedies only—earth, water, ether, fire and air. If Ramanama sinks deep into her heart, it will be easy enough for her to benefit from these five elements. She is quite regular, of course, in her lessons.

You need not worry at all regarding Pyarelal. I do not see the slightest need for Manu to give up her lessons, etc., owing to this. Manu's good will be Pyarelal's good. Manu is firm in this matter. There will be reason for fear only if I am proved mistaken.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

157. DISCUSSION WITH MUSLIM REFUGEES

MASAURHI,
March 18, 1947

REFUGEES: Please give us an assurance that our lives, property and honour will be protected.[2]

GANDHIJI: Efforts are being made in this direction. I shall advise the Government to hold all the Hindus in a village responsible for any harm to its Muslim minority and to punish them strictly according to law.

R. Securities should be taken from gangsters and influential people in the locality so that they may not foment riots again.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Most of the houses in Masaurhi were razed to the ground during the riots and all but 25 out of a population of 1,000 had fled from the village.

G. Those persons who had led the riots should be held responsible for law and order in the locality to prevent recurrence of riots. As it is not right to hold everyone responsible for the riots, it would not be right to punish everyone for the riots; nor would it be easy to do so. But if you can recognize and prove anyone's participation in the riots, the law will certainly punish him.

R. We should be issued licenses to possess arms for self-protection.

G. It is strange that I am hearing the same arguments here which I used to hear in Noakhali. I shall certainly oppose this. I can never understand why some or all of you should be given arms. This is not the way of creating an atmosphere of friendship. I had told the Hindus in Noakhali that they could not live there nor could the local Government protect them if the entire Muslim population was hostile to them. Should the Government kill 80 per cent of the population to protect them? No government can do this today. I would like to tell you that my ways are different. I believe that a man should become brave but bravery consists not in killing but in getting killed and that too without hatred for the killer. Muslims were no cowards, but they are terrified today and that too on account of us—this makes me hang my head in shame. If my staying here has any meaning, you should shed your anxiety. I shall not go away till you yourself ask me to go, and assure me that Hindus and Muslims are living like brothers again.

R. There should be some arrangement so that all Muslims can live together.

G. This talk of 'pockets' is not new to me. As soon as I arrived in Bihar, I went to see the leader of the Muslim League, Barrister Abdul Aziz of Patna. He explained to me everything. Earlier I used to oppose the idea of 'pockets'; but now I understand the logic behind the demand. I can very well understand that one just cannot stay at a place where one's relations and friends have been massacred. Hence if people want to shift to villages where there is a large number of Muslims, they can migrate there with mutual consent.

I have advised the Government to build houses for displaced persons or give them funds for the purpose if they so choose. If you demand, however, that the Government should provide you everything, it may not be in a position to do so because it would mean acquisition of some people's lands. And this would lead to all sorts of complications. If there is any vacant piece of land and you can settle

there, you may certainly do so. A big landlord from North Bihar was ready to take as many Muslims as would like to stay on his lands. If you agree I shall write to him.

R. We should receive compensation for whatever we have lost.

G. Even the Government would go bankrupt if it agreed to this. Some people claim they have lost lakhs, some others claim they have lost crores. How can we evaluate the actual loss? I think the Government would not be in a position to pay even onefourth of the claims. It can only provide shelter or give money to enable people to stand on their own feet. In Noakhali, many weavers and fishermen had practically nothing to support themselves. There I had suggested that the local Government should advance them loans which could be repaid in easy instalments. Money alone has no value. You are all farmers, a hard working lot. If you take courage in both hands, you will forget in no time what you have undergone. Moreover a commission is being set up. Its object is not only to record whatever has happened, but also to examine the steps that are being taken and to recommend measures for the future.

R. 50 per cent of us should be taken in the police force.

G. I am totally opposed to such demands. I told Hindus in Noakhali: "I will not put in a word for a Hindu police officer. Does it make any sense that an officer is removed just because he is a Muslim? Of course, he should certainly be removed if he is inefficient. And after all, the officers are going to carry out only what the Chief Minister of Bengal, Shaheed Suhrawardy Saheb, wants them to do. If Shaheed Saheb is good, the officers will be good; but if he himself is bad, how can they remain good?"

R. The Government or the Congress should pay us compensation or loans in proportion to the size of our business.

G. The Government should only advance loans and not pay compensation.

R. Stolen goods are being recovered. This work should be done swiftly and firmly. Aid should be given to those who want to buy looms and yarn. They should be given free rations as long as they do not earn enough for their sustenance.

G. All efforts must certainly be made to recover looted property. To those whose tools and properties have been totally destroyed Government must provide shelter and foot till they can stand on their

own feet. But if someone argues that the Government should go on providing everything free, then that will not be feasible. It will mean the Government should provide everything free to an exmillionaire until he starts earning his millions. This is a ridiculous proposition.

R. Adequate arrangements should be made for recovering abducted girls.

G. Certainly. Please give the names and addresses of such girls to me. I shall immediately try to trace them. Hindus have been writing to me to let them know even if there is one such girl; and they will move heaven and earth to recover her.

R. We should have complete freedom to practise our religious rites, as we used to enjoy before the riots.

G. Certainly, it should be so.

R. The Government should make early and adequate arrangements to repair or rebuild before the rainy season such houses as were damaged during the riots.

G. Certainly, this work should be finished early.

The following decisions taken at the meeting of the refugees were placed before Gandhiji for his comments:

1. The relief camps should be situated near police stations instead of inside the towns. Gandhiji should be requested to depute two special workers for each camp.

G. I agree.

2. We shall, besides Government help, raise volunteers with the cooperation of Hindus for our protection, clearing of our houses and so on.

G. Right.

3. Panchayats will be formed which will perform such functions as scotching false rumours, settling internal disputes, returning mortgages and striving to recover stolen goods and so on.

G. Formation of panchayats is welcome. If people cooperate among themselves, I shall help them in every possible way.

4. The loans for relief should be advanced in a spirit of mutual help.

G. Right.

5. Women volunteers should also be recruited from among the Muslims as well as Hindus and they should, in addition to other work, strive to recover abducted women.

G. Right.

6. After constructing the houses, essential things like utensils, cots, small

tables, etc., should also be provided.

G. Right.

7. Licences for arms should be issued on the recommendations of the panchayat. They should not be issued to persons who do not need them or who want them for sport.

G. That's right.

[From Urdu]

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar— II, pp. 4-9

158. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

BIR,
March 18, 1947

I saw today the wreckage caused by us at Masaurhi. I had read in newspapers the Muslims League version of the happenings at Masaurhi, and I confess that I thought the version was grossly exaggerated. I did not believe that man could be so depraved or that Biharis could stoop so low. But today I witnessed it with my own eyes. When Muslims fled you either looted their property or destroyed it. They had not harmed you in any way. I have come here with the resolve or serving the Muslims. I am a servant of God and therefore consider it my duty to serve all human beings.

It is very unfortunate that our hearts have not yet been cleansed. I concede that the Muslims behaved very viciously in Calcutta and Noakhali. But how can that be avenged in Bihar? It was a very wrong decision to observe a Noakhali Day here.[1] Had I known it, I would never have allowed such an observance in Bihar. I am very sorry that my name was falsely dragged into this affair and I was maligned.

My statements were presented to the public in a twisted and distorted form. When Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru constituted the Provisional Government at Delhi,[2] people wished to celebrate the occasion like Diwali. When I heard this, I said we should do no such thing because Jawaharlal and his colleagues had put on a crown of thorns.[3] The Muslim League had not joined the Government and it was a pity that riots had broken out in Noakhali. But my statement was

[1] On October 25, 1946
[2] On September 2, 1946
[3] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 2-9-1946

distorted and people were told that Gandhi wanted them to observe a Noakhali Day. I had never even dreamt of this. And when the Noakhali Day was observed, people were so much excited that they thought they were expected to settle the Noakhali scores with the Muslims.

Hindus and Muslims used to live here as good neighbours. They had mutual love and affection. They might have quarrelled occasionally, but that did not affect their relations. They used to become friends again soon. It is an altogether different story now. Today celebration of any Day leads to fratricide. I have said that this must not happen while I am alive. I can never be a witness to fratricide. If this thing is repeated in Bihar I shall perish in that conflagration. I have heard that the Muslims here are panicstricken over the Punjab Day to be observed on the 23rd. I hope this is a false alarm. I assert that we must not observe a Punjab Day. If we do this, it will lead to dreadful consequences. The freedom of our country will become a distant dream. I pray to God that He must never let me live to witness that day. I am awakening the whole of Bihar through these words addressed to you.

While I was coming to the village of Bir, the residents of two villages stopped me on the way and handed over to me two letters. The first letter was addressed jointly by the Hindus and Muslims of Sain. They also contributed Rs. 55 for the relief of distressed Muslims in Bihar. I wish to read out to you their letter. They write:

> We the residents of Sain are pained to see you in anguish which has been caused by our foolishness. We are extremely sorry for what has happened. Here, however, we Hindus and Muslims lived like brothers despite the prevailing lawlessness and we are happy and proud to tell you that we are living as brothers even today. We seek your blessings that we may continue to live in love and affection.

The other letter was given to me by the residents of Barni. They write:

> When the riots were going on all around we formed a peace committee. No one was harmed here and no disturbance was caused in our area. There is absolutely no difference between Hindus and Muslims. We are working on the same lines even today, and we assure you that we will always continue to live like brothers.

The residents of this village also were not involved in any riot; and yet they are feeling sorry. This has made me very happy.

Some of our Muslim brothers have said that they are afraid of returning to their homes. Thieves and dacoits have carried away their goods. According to me, even the thieves and dacoits are our brothers. It would be ideal if they gave up their profession. But if that is not possible, they should at any rate not rob the innocent people whom we have beaten away from their homes.

Now you should contribute as much as you can for the relief of the Muslims in distress. I cannot collect the donations myself, because that exhausts me, besides I shall have to work during the night also. Volunteers are going round for collection. Please donate the maximum amount you can and thereby earn the merit for it and at the same time atone for your sins.

[From Urdu]

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—II, pp. 10-2

159. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

PATNA,
[*March 19, 1947*][1]

SATISCHANDRA DASGUPTA
KAZIRKHIL
RAMGANJ

IF YOU CAN SPARE BISEN[2] AND IF HE WISHES HE CAN JOIN ME PATNA IMMEDIATELY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 7713

160. LETTER TO NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE

BIR,
March 19, 1947

CHI. NIRMAL BABU,

Now that you are gone, I must say I did not like your abrupt departure. Manu was disturbed and Y asked if she had been the cause of your sudden departure. I told her I did not think so; but there was an uncertain ring about my 'no'. If you went without any other cause

[1] From the reference to the telegram in the letter to the addressee; *vide* p. 128.
[2] Shiv Balak Bisen

than the call from the University,[1] I have nothing to say.

What is Freudian philosophy? I have not read any writing of his. One friend, himself a professor and follower of Freud, discussed his writings for a brief moment. You are the second.

I do not want to emphasize my impression[2] that you jump to hasty conclusions. You ought to know the three more fully. You are not just to them.

Have you in the light of my letter[3] and discussion accepted my position that I am not guilty of modernity? If you hold on to the view you have expressed in your letter[4] to K. you owe it to me to explain your standpoint and enable me to understand myself more fully than I do.

Blessings from

BAPU

My Days with Gandhi, p. 183

161. DISCUSSION WITH CONGRESS WORKERS[5]

BIR,
March 19, 1947

Shah Uzair Munimi, President of the District Congress Committee, described the devastation in Patna district. According to him the district of Patna was the worst-hit in Bihar. After listening to his report, Gandhiji said:

What should we do now? Have you thought of something?

Shah Saheb replied that if they could get even a few honest men, things could be set right. Thereupon Gandhiji asked:

Is it or isn't it a fact that quite a large number of Congressmen took part in the disturbances? I ask this question because people are making this allegation. But the Congressmen assembled here can themselves tell the truth. How many of the 132 members of your Committee were involved? It would be a very great thing if all of you assert that none of you was involved. But this assertion cannot be made. These 132 are supposed to be the elected representatives of the people. But I learn there is a lot of fraud involved in this. There are many in the Congress who register bogus members by paying four

[1] As stated by the addressee in his letter dated March 18; *vide* Appendix V.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Nirmal Kumar Bose", 18-3-1947
[3] *Vide*"Letter to Nirmal Kumar Bose", 17-3-1947
[4] *Vide* "N. K. Bose's Letter to Kedar Nath and Others", 16-3-1947
[5] This was held in the morning.

annas from their own pockets and thus become elected representatives. I have also worked in the Congress. Today I am not even a fouranna member. But there was a time when I was a member of the Working Committee and I was virtually all in all. Hence I know the Congress inside out. This Police Station has jurisdiction over 300 villages which have elected 132 representatives. They can do substantial work if they so choose.

I wish to ask you, how could you live to see an old woman of 110 years being butchered before your eyes? How could you tolerate it? I do not wish to talk about anything else. I have vowed to do or die. I will not rest nor let others rest. I would wander all over on foot and ask the skeletons lying about how all that had happened. There is such a fire raging in me that I would know no peace till I have found a solution for all this. You know what happened when I reached Sodepur[1]. I had not gone there for rest. Hence I left for Kazirkhil and Chaumuhani. Chaumuhani is a big Station. What was the use of waiting there? Kazirkhil had been devastated. But the station-master there had transformed it into some sort of an ashram. So I requested him to take me to some place where there were no amenities. Hence I proceeded to Srirampur[2]. It was a predominantly Muslim area with only a sprinkling of Hindu houses which had been burnt down. The Muslims welcomed me. Even then I hurried from there and wandered from village to village. I am afraid I will have to go through the same ordeal in Bihar. If I find that my comrades are deceiving me, I will be furious and I shall walk barefoot on and on through hail or storm. I would throw away the soft seat and other amenities which you have offered me. After all, it was in Bihar that I had renounced similar comforts earlier. When I came to Champaran in 1917, though Rajendra Babu and other leaders were my friends, they used to have their meals in separate kitchens. I asked them why we should eat separately when we were all engaged in rendering service. Then I set up a common kitchen. My wife Kasturba, Mahadev Desai's wife Durgabehn, and Narahari Bhai's[3] Manibehn all of them together used to cook and all of us had our meals together. I would never get more loyal and hearty co-operation in the whole world than what I got from Rajendra Babu, Brijkishore Babu, Janak Babu, Dharani Babu and Gorakh Babu. As a result of this there was a transformation in Champaran. The British indigo planters lost their hold. But I am told the Indian planters today have become even more powerful. The lesson we learnt in Champaran was the result of the hardships

[1] On October 29, 1946
[2] On November 20, 1946
[3] Narahari Parikh

undergone by the people of Bihar. Without them I could not be what I am nor could my achievements be worth much. I am a bird of passage. God has not allowed me to stay at one place. We have to work in the same spirit today with which Brijkishore Babu had worked. Today I do not find that honesty or loyalty. I once again appeal to you to work only if you can do so truthfully. My words may sound harsh, but you must realize that even if you forsake me, I shall not leave Bihar. It is difficult to force me out of Bihar. During the Champaran satyagraha, the Commissioner of Tirhut notified me that I, being an outsider, should leave the area.[1] I told Brijkishore Babu and Rajendra Babu that I wished to challenge the Government and that they would have to give up their legal profession and become my clerks or interpreters if they decided to back me up. I gave them a night's time to think it over. Rajendra Babu had been offered a judicial post. But the next morning itself he and Brijkishore Babu announced that they had decided to give up their legal practice and to become my clerks and interpreters. The Bihar of today is the result of the transformation of their hearts. It is now for you to decide whether I should go in the car or travel on foot. Of course I prefer walking. When Muslims in Noakhali taunted me to go to Bihar, I used to feel hurt. Some Muslims look upon me as an enemy of Islam. Some people expressed doubts whether I could achieve what I wanted to in Noakhali. But I had no doubts. Even today I believe that I can work for Noakhali and the whole of India from Bihar. The non-violent fight which I had launched against injustice and oppression in Champaran had sent new life pulsating throughout India. The work in Bihar this time is far more difficult and significant. This time it seems I will have to strive to the utmost to prove that Hinduism and Islam can exist side by side. This is being put to test today. Many people believe that they cannot and one will have to remain subordinate to the other. I do not think so. If the Hindu Mahasabha insists that Muslims should remain subordinate to Hindus or if the Muslim League insists that Hindus should subordinate themselves to Muslims, this will not do. No one need live as subordinate to another. All have to live together as equals. Even Jinnah Saheb has now declared that the minorities will be shown greater consideration in regions where Muslims constitute the majority.

Q. All people lived like brothers in Bihar before the trouble started in Bengal. Later on Noakhali turned everyone's head. The events in the Punjab are also casting their shadows. It is necessary that we go and live among the people to prevent the outside evil influence from spreading and to maintain cordial relations. But today

[1] *Vide* "Letter to District Magistrate, Champaran", 16-4-1917 and Appendix "N. K. Bose's Letter to Kedar Nath and Others", 16-3-1947

many Congressmen do not wish to serve the people; they want power for themselves. They join the Congress for their own selfish ends and indulge in intrigue and groupism. How shall we get out of this mire? If we strengthen the Congress in Bihar we can check the evil. The people of Bihar have behaved badly, we have become vicious, the whole atmosphere has been vitiated. In this atmosphere, many Congressmen kept quiet and could not stem the tide, and some of them were carried away by it.

A. It was easy to wrest power from British hands but it is very difficult to overcome our own weakness and to set up an efficient administration. You should tell me whether you can cooperate with me in this work or not. If you cannot, I request you to leave me. There are people today who declare that I am out of date and that I should give up all politics. I do not agree with this. This region is teeming with Hindus. We will not rely upon the police for our work although they are our police. We must do this work ourselves. Suhrawardy Saheb had developed the police in Noakhali to protect me from Muslim fanatics; but I made friends with Muslims there. The Government here have also deployed the police. I ask them, what is the police for? Muslims are not going to kill me here; the Hindus may probably think of doing so. That is why I wish that the task of establishing peace should be undertaken by you all and not only by the Government although it is our Government. You should either achieve success in your mission or die in the attempt.[1]

[From Urdu]

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar — II, pp. 13-6

162. TALK WITH VILLAGE REPRESENTATIVES[2]

BIR,
March 19, 1947

Great care should be taken while constituting the panchayats, otherwise gangsters may get into them. The British Government by appointing revenue and police functionaries for every village has

[1] According to *Mahatma Gandhi — The Last Phase,* Gandhiji was visibly agitated. In a low, impassioned voice he shared his anguish with Badshah Khan, who sat listening with a grave face. Soon Badshah Khan also left and only one of Gandhiji's secretaries remained in the room. Sadly Gandhiji turned to him and remarked: "You see where I stand !"

[2] Shah Uzair Munimi had reported that, from among the representatives, an eleven-member committee had been formed and it had agreed to ameliorate the conditions in the six affected circles as also to form volunteer corps and panchayats.

strengthened the hands of the goondas. This has undermined the authority of the village panchayats. While exercising centralized power over the country, the British Government has polluted the atmosphere in the villages. The petty village officials have become masters instead of being servants. So great care has to be taken to ensure that these gangster elements do not get into the panchayats. It will be a good procedure to elect the panchayat by ballot. Let everyone secretly write on blank pieces of paper five names of persons whom he or she may like to form the panchayat. The first five persons who get the maximum votes should be elected to the panchayat.

Those who have committed murders and taken part in riots, or those who are suspected of such acts, should be debarred from membership of the panchayats. They should themselves keep out of these bodies. If we are not able to cultivate this spirit we shall not be able to do anything well. Even a government cannot function unless the people are organized. The committee that has been formed will wield real power and do some useful work if it works honestly.

At this stage, Gandhiji was asked: "Can those Congressmen who have allegations against them remain office bearers in the Congress?"

Suppose I am innocent but the Muslims suspect my *bona fides* and want me to stay out of it, I shall stay out but still I will continue to serve them. I shall advise even leaders like Jagat Babu and Murli Babu to keep out if they have been so accused. This is the convention in Britain too. If there is a false accusation against you even when you are absolutely innocent, you should keep out of any committee and continue to serve the Muslims. If you work in good faith, believe me, the Muslims who are suspicious today will give up their suspicion and cooperate with you.

There are many thugs in the Congress. Thugs are in the ascendance everywhere today. Those Congressmen who are suspect should leave the Congress and serve the Muslims if they so choose. But one should never carry a dagger in one's sleeve while pretending to chant the name of Rama. Some people ask how any work can be done where there are a number of gangsters. The volunteers can tell the gangsters that they are not afraid of them and continue to work. If they say this and courageously go ahead with their work, no one dare displease them. We have to be brave and honest. Wherever there are goondas there are good people as well and they should tell the

goondas that they would rather die than run away in the face of an attack. Today there are more goondas than honest people in a village. The problem is how to remedy the situation.

[From Urdu]

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—II, pp. 17-8

163. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

GORIAKHARHI,
March 19, 1947

I shall say after the prayers the few things that I wish to tell you. Since there is some time yet for the prayers to commence, I wish it to be utilized for collecting money for the relief of afflicted Muslims. We have committed a great sin by killing and robbing innocent Muslims. We can do some atonement through such donations. Hence I appeal to you to contribute your maximum.

After the prayers Gandhiji continued:

I have seen signboards put up at the prayer ground to indicate separate enclosuers. Some of them are in English and some in Hindi. I was amazed to see the English boards. For whom are they written? The newspaper correspondents are all Indians and they can read Hindi. Are the English signboards then intended for Badshah Khan? Or did you think that I had stayed away from India for many years and had therefore been denationalized?

This is very objectionable. I am not an enemy of the English language or script. But I believe that a thing in the wrong place is ugly. I can be honoured only by being kept in my proper place. Similar is the case with the English language and script. They are not appropriate for the Indian people. I have said it time and again, and I repeat it, that Hindustani alone can become the common language of all Indians. Neither Hindi nor Urdu can take that place. I do not claim to be proficient in Hindi; but I do understand Hindi well and to some extent Urdu also. I used to attempt conversation in Urdu with my friend Maulana Abdul Bari of Firangi Mahal, Lucknow and other friends; and even now I try to speak chaste and correct Urdu with Muslim friends.

Till all the Hindus and Muslims in our country willingly accept

one language and one script, it is essential that we learn both Hindi and Urdu. Whether or not the Muslims learn Hindi and Devanagari, we must learn the Urdu language and script. At the moment we have also to atone for our crimes against the Muslims. Hence it is all the more necessary that we demonstrate our affection and sympathy for them by learning their language and script. From tomorrow onwards I wish to see signboards in Hindi and Urdu wherever I go. Brijkishore Babu and Rajendra Babu who accompanied me during those early days in Champaran normally used to write in Urdu only.

We should try our utmost to rehabilitate the Muslims who used to live in our neighbourhood. We should appeal to them to forget the past. We should bring them back to their homes. We should tell them that they can kill us if they want to, but must come back to their homes. The volunteers should become *Khudai Khidmatgars*[1]. They should respectfully appeal to the people to follow the dictates of their religion which taught them that their outward behaviour should be in keeping with their conscience and that they should tread the path of truth. Those who have committed crimes should honestly confess them and atone for them. All those who have taken part in the riots are sinners and they should atone for their sins.

[Form Urdu]

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—II, pp. 19-20

164. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[2]

March 20, 1947

I would like you. . . to tell me what you can about the Punjab tragedy. I know nothing about it save what is allowed to appear in the Press which I thoroughly distrust. Nor am I in sympathy with what may be termed by the old expression of "hush hush policy". It is amazing how the country is adopting almost the every measures which it criticized during the British administration. Of course, I know the reason behind it. It makes no appeal to me.

* * *

[1] Literally, servants of God

[2] Omissions in the letter are as in the source.

I have long intended to write to you asking you about the Working Committee resolution[1] on the possible partition of the Punjab. I would like to know the reason behind it. I have to speak about it. I have done so in the absence of full facts with the greatest caution. Kripalani said in answer to a question in Madras that it was possible that the principle might be applied to Bengal also. I was asked by a Muslim Leaguer of note. . . if it was applicable to the Muslim-majority provinces, why it should not be so to a Congress-majority province like Bihar. I think I did not know the reason behind the Working Committee's resolution, nor had I the opportunity. I could only give my own view which was against any partition based on communal grounds and the two-nation theory. Anything was possible by compulsion. But willing consent required an appeal to reason and heart. Compulsion or show of it had no place in voluntariness.[2]

Mahatma Gandhi — The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 34-5

165. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

MASAURHI,
March 20, 1947

You know I have returned after a two days' stay at Bir. I could see within these two days the damage wrought by us.[3] Today also I saw a village[4] which had been deserted, and where a large number of women and children had been killed. I cannot narrate the whole story,

[1] Passed at its meeting held in New Delhi on March 6, 7 and 8. For the text of the resolution, *vide* "Congress Working Committee's Resolution on the Punjab"

[2] The addressee on March 25, replied, "About our proposal to divide the Punjab, this flows naturally from our previous decisions. These were negative previously, but now a time for decision has come and mere passing of resolutions giving expression to our views meant little. I feel convinced and so did most of the members of the Working Committee that we must press for this immediate division so that reality might be brought into the picture. Indeed this is the only answer to partition as demanded by Jinnah. I found people in the Punjab agreeable to this proposal except Muslims as a rule. For the present it means an administrative decision without any change in law."

[3] Gandhiji had visited Andari and Garriakhari the previous day. Out of 168 there was not a single Muslim in Andari. At Garriahkhari out of 400 Muslims 119 were killed, 11 injured and 12 were missing. The houses were all in ruins.

[4] Harla

because my heart is so full that I might burst into tears if I tried to tell it. One who wants to see things for himself can still go there. We have not been able to do anything by way of reparations during all these months. The devastated villages continue to wear a deserted look. Even now thieves and dacoits haunt the place and carry away goods since no Muslim stays there. And how can the Muslims stay at a place where their brothers and sisters, parents and children have been slaughtered? The mere memory of the massacre will stun them. I myself, perhaps, could not have stayed there. You might argue that the Government should rebuild or repair the damaged houses. But I ask you, 'Did you seek permission from the Government, when you resorted to murder, loot and arson?' You have to atone for the sins, not the Government, because, after all, the Government is your own and not imported from England.

If you rebuild Muslim houses and clean up their villages, they may think of returning to their homes in the confidence that Hindus had become their brothers, forgetting and forgiving the death of their relatives, who, after all, had to die one day or other. But this can happen only if you rebuild their houses with your own hands, clean their wells, sink new wells to replace the old ones filled with corpses of massacred Muslims. Muslims will trust you only when you do all this; and then they will return to their villages on their own. I appeal to every Hindu brother and sister to participate personally in undoing the damage. Those who are convinced that this is their duty should enter their names in the list with me or with Mridulabehn. Those who cannot come to me here or at Patna, should send their names by post. Much work remains to be done at Masaurhi too. You should render service wherever necessary, preferably in your own neighbourhood. There is no need for outsiders to come over to Masaurhi for the work of resettlement. Put up beautiful houses in place of the debris so that one who looks at them will hardly believe what ruins were there. When you do this it is bound to influence the other provinces too and its fragrance will spread all over India.

I would request you not to think of celebrating a Punjab Day. Never make the mistake of avenging the Punjab in Bihar. Just as the Muslims here are in panic, so are the Hindus trembling in fear in Noakhali at the talk of a Pakistan Day. I wish to reach the ears of Janab Suhrawardy Saheb, the Chief Minister of Bengal. I wish to remind him that he had called upon me, as a Hindu, to go to Bihar

where Hindus had perpetrated many atrocities, and that I came to Bihar at his bidding. The Hindus here have indeed committed many sins which need to be atoned for. I am myself undergoing penance. That is why I am here in Bihar although I have many tasks awaiting me at Sevagram, and in Delhi. If Suhrawardy Saheb wishes that I should remain in Bihar, he should prevent the observance of a Pakistan Day in Bengal. I do not want to prevent the Muslims from demanding Pakistan; but they should do so by explaining the advantages of Pakistan. Even if they want to observe a Pakistan Day, they should do so by convincing the Hindus so that they don't get nervous.

Hindus have been writing to me and confessing their guilt. I am also receiving letters written by Hindus and Muslims that because of the fraternal feeling there had been perfect peace in their villages and that they will never turn into each other's enemies. Such sentiments make me happy. I am also happy that people are contributing generously for the relief of afflicted Muslims. But now I would appeal to you to donate not merely money but also your own hard labour ; take up the trowel and get down to reconstructing the homes of Muslims which you have destroyed.

[From Urdu]

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—II, pp. 19-20

166. TELEGRAM TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY

Confidential *March 20, 1947*

CHIEF MINISTER, BENGAL

KHADI PRATISTHAN REPORTS THAT CASES ARSON LOOT ETCETERA INCREASING, FURTHER STATES THAT IT IS RUMOURED THAT 22ND INSTANT TO BE OBSERVED AS PAKISTAN DAY AND THIS HAS CREATED CONSTERNATION. I EXPECT RUMOUR BASELESS. I HAVE MADE PUBLIC APPEAL ALSO AT THIS EVENING'S PRAYER MEETING. I SUGGEST YOUR PERSONAL ATTENTION AND COMING IN TOUCH WITH SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA. I AM PLUNGED INTO THE WORK HERE, THEREFORE DO NOT WANT RUSH NOAKHALI AND EXPECT YOU TO ACT NOBLY AND CORRECTLY.[1]

GANDHI

From a Photostat: G. N. 8967

167. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

PATNA,
March 19/ [*20*][1] *, 1947*

CHI. SATIS BABU,

I must dictate this to save time. The dictation can only be in English because Rangaswamy is not an efficient Hindustani writer.

The first thing is to give you the sad news that Nirmal Babu abruptly left yesterday. He had prepared me for the news two days ago. He was wanted by his University. He had some private work too. And so he was to leave. But he suddenly took it into his head to leave yesterday. I had not the heart to detain him against his will and to come between him and what he thought was his dharma at the time.

[1] "The addressee in response to this "issued orders prohibiting the holding of 'open air meetings, demonstrations and processions' in areas in which prohibitory orders were already in force and sent one of his colleagues to Noakhali to restore confidence."

[2] From the reference to the telegram to Suhrawardy in the post-script it appears the letter was completed and despatched on March 20 ; *vide* the preceding item.

Kakasaheb[1] wrote to me three days ago that he would like me to have Bisen by my side. I was thinking what to do and though I know that he could not in any way be a substitute for Nirmal Babu the latter's absence has made me come to a hurried decision that if Bisen is not wanted by you he should join me. He is a handy man who knows Gujarati as well as his mother tongue. He is a willing worker. So if you can spare him and he wants to come you can send him. Let him go to Patna and report himself at Dr. Mahmud's place. I sent you a telegram today about sending Bisen here.[2]

I am here touring in Patna district and looking at the awful scenes of destruction wrought by human beings gone mad. I had hoped that I would be able at the outside, in a fortnight, to go back to Noakhali and its velvety earth and soft grass. I very much fear that I must now do Noakhali work from here as I had flattered myself while in Noakhali that I was also doing Bihar work. Having come here I see how vitally necessary it was for me to come. I do not know that I won't have to undertake a pilgrimage on foot here also. Probably I shall not be able to do so on foot. But everything is in the lap of God.

It is quite clear to me that whatever be my fate you should all, including the Sevagram party, stick to your posts.

How is Sardar Jivan Singhji shaping himself?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I had your wire. I have sent a wire to Suhrawardy.[3] Sent . . .[4] also a wire.

SHREE SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

KAZIRKHIL

RAMGANJ P. S.

NOAKHALI

From a photostat: G. N. 8966

[1] D. B. Kalelkar (1885-1981) ; Educationist, litterateur and a close associate of Gandhiji ; Vice-Chancellor of Gujarat Vidyapith, 1928-36; Principal, Gujarat National College ; President, Hindustani Prachar Sabha.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Satis chandra Das Gupta", 19-3-1947

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

[4] Illegible in the source

168. FROM THE DIARY

MASAURHI,
March 20, 1947

It was 1 a.m. when Manudi completed counting the money. She should have gone to bed soon after the collection. She could have written the *shlokas* some other time. Or, I should relieve her of some of my work. It distresses me very much that she is not getting enough sleep. I wonder what I should do about it. Let her tell me if she can think of something. She can help me a lot in this matter if she wishes to. But she is unwilling to free herself from any work whatever. The collection was a thousand.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 80

169. LETTER TO SIR HUGH DOW

PATNA,
March 21, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your three letters for all of which I thank you. As you know at present I am touring in the affected parts of Bihar. But I shall bear in mind your kind offer about making use of your beautiful garden to rest a little from the din and noise that surround me.

The word "bureaucrat" was used[1] by me in its original sense. You do not represent autocracy. Certainly not democracy. But, as I hold, you essentially represent bureaucracy. Several English friends, some holding as high a place as you do, told me frankly that, representing as they did a big corporation of bureaucrats, they were unable to give effect to the full man in them. With this thought at the back of my mind I could not help admiring your remark that experience had taught you that after all the true reformer must begin with himself.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Hugh Dow", 17-3-1947

In his reply dated March 22, the addressee about this said : "I suppose, I am a bureaucrat in the sense used by you : it is not a term that I resent. The complexity of modern life ties most rulers to their desks more than they like, and this must be true even of yourself. But I look forward to the early day when neither half of this word will have much application to me."

As to the rest of your letter of March 17 which you were kind enough to send so promptly, I gladly accept your correction and the presentation of your position.[1] I am hoping that something will come out of this frank interchange of views.

I got your letter of the 18th instant only this morning. It was delivered some time yesterday. But it came into my hands only today. The note[2] referred to in your letter to the Prime Minister of Bihar has not yet come into my hands. I suppose it will be received by me tomorrow when I hope to reach Patna if I do not receive it earlier.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. SIR HUGH DOW

GOVERNOR OF BIHAR

PATNA

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 233-4.

170. LETTER TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY

March 21, 1947

DEAR SUHRAWARDY,

Pardon the somewhat familiar style. I hope you got my wire[3] [of] yesterday and that there was no justification for the fears expressed to me. I have a right to expect you to act on the square. The heart is too full to enable me to say more.

I am just now in a little village in the devastated area.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 8968

[1] *Vide* "Letter from Sir Hugh Dow", 17-3-1947

[2] The addressee had prepared a note on the plight of child labour in mica factories, a topic which had cropped up during his talk with Gandhiji. The note said that the Bihar Government had recommended strict enforcement of the Employment of children (Ammendment) Act of 1939, and that "in no circumstances should children below the age of twelve be employed in mica factories."

[3] *Vide* "Telegram to H. S. Suhrawardy", 20-3-1947

171. TALK WITH MUSLIM REFUGEES[1]

HANSDIH,

March 21, 1947

I have been constantly trying to make everyone understand that they should give up fear. There is no fear in my heart and I advise you to fear no one but God. But how can people go and stay in houses which have been burnt or destroyed? I shall be glad if the Government builds houses for them or advances money for the purpose. When a man turns into a devil, he is neither a Hindu nor a Muslim.

I do not know what arrangement has been made regarding rations. I believe it should not cause anyone any inconve- nience. People should remove every trace of fear from their hearts. Who can protect man better than God? We should have full faith in Him and muster up courage. He is not brave who perpetrates atrocities. That man is brave who boldly faces any calamity. I wish to reassure you. I have been unequivocally saying that any Hindu who harms or as much as touches a Muslim, would be causing my death. I am going everywhere. Patna district has been the worst-affected. Hence it may take a little more time. Subsequently I shall tour other districts ; but I shall not go out of Bihar. Badshah Khan had planned to go to the Frontier, but he has postponed his departure and will remain here for some time. He believes that the climate all over India will improve if Bihar improves its ways. Shah Nawaz Saheb[2] has also arrived. His presence will be a great help. Mridulabehn has been accompanying me. She may go to Delhi for a couple of days, but will return immediately. She is working very hard, and she does not discriminate between a Hindu and a Muslim.

I have thrown in my lot with you here. I do not get time even to read the newspapers. Friends read out some news to me. I have written to Pandit Nehru and sought information about the general conditions.[3] From what we hear, neither the Punjab nor Noakhali is yet entirely peaceful. But I shall stay on in Bihar till you are satisfied and until Hindus and Muslims on their own reassure me and tell me that I can leave without any anxiety.

[1] Who had come to meet Gandhiji from the neighbouring villages.
[2] Shah Nawaz Khan of the Indian National Army
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 20-3-1947

Only tents have been erected at Masaurhi ; the camp will start functioning soon. But it would be better if you built your own houses, because the whole atmosphere is reeking with corruption and black-marketing and the contractors are after unlawful gains. You should therefore try to build your own houses. I have been calling upon Hindus to help Muslims in every possible way, by cleaning their houses, streets, and removing the debris. I am going to make the same appeal to Hindu Congressmen and representatives of villages today.

[From Urdu]

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—II, pp. 24-5

172. TALK WITH VILLAGE REPRESENTATIVES[1]

HANSDIH,
March 21, 1947

Q. Is it [not] difficult to stop riots so long as the system of zamindari continues? The landlords are the persons who incite riots and will continue to do so.

A. I think it is foolish to connect riots with zamindari. The problem of zamindari is very old. How is it rational to kill Muslims to solve that problem? And many of the zamindars are themselves Hindus. The Maharaja of Darbhanga is a very big zamindar. Should he and his wife be killed? I am very friendly with him. He respects me like a father because his late father was a good friend of mine. A Hindu zamindar from North Bihar has promised to provide land to the Muslims. It is not proper to link the problem of Hindu-Muslim riots with the zamindari system. The latter is an altogether different problem and we have to consider ways and means of abolishing the system.

Then Gandhiji was informed of the talk that the property lost by the Muslims here would be restored to them only when what was lost by the Hindus in Noakhali and the Punjab was restored to them. There would be friendship only when cases in Bihar as well as in Bengal were withdrawn simultaneously.

Has the time arrived when the Muslims in Bihar must obey the dictates of Hindus? Must they stop going into mosques or reciting the Koran if Hindus prohibit it? No one has yet shown the courage to say this. But the demand that Muslims should live at the mercy of Hindus

[1] The meeting was held at 2.30 p.m.

boils down to this. Those who are demanding Pakistan also seem to think on these lines. I ask those who see no harm in imitating the Punjab and Bengal whether Hindus should also turn ruffians if Muslims choose to do so. After all, how should a Hindu devoted to ahimsa or *brahmacharya* carry himself? I do not intend to suggest that nothing untoward happened in Noakhali. But there women, children and old persons were not murdered the way it happened here, nor was it on such a large scale. As it is Satis Babu has again invited me to Noakhali. But I think if I have to die in the attempt to restore communal harmony, it is better to die here than in Noakhali.

Nor is it right to demand withdrawal of prosecutions. Our non-violent methods are altogether different, but the Governments functioning today are based on the theory of punishment. Why then should they not arrest and punish the culprits? If the culprits in Noakhali are not being arrested, it is the fault of the Government there, which is not following the tenets of Islam. If the present trends continue there, Bengal will not become free, nor will Muslims there be free. Your proportion in the population is much greater here. In Bengal, the proportion of Muslims to Hindus is 51 to 49. Here, only 12 persons in 100 are Muslims. What sort of bravery is it to kill the 12? The *Ramayana* says that even a dog should be given a hearing. Rama abandoned Sita in response to the argument of a washer-woman. Devotees of the *Ramayana* ought to fall at the feet of every guilty person and appeal to him to come forward and confess his crime. When he pleads guilty and repents or atones for it or begs to be given due punishment for his crime, we may then let him go with a mild chastisement in view of his honest penitence.

I wish to give vent to the fire that is raging within me in the course of my answers to your questions. Why should we behave in this manner? Neither you nor I have a correct picture of what is happening in the Punjab. Anyway, whatever it may be, it is indeed deplorable. But we have to keep our houses clean. We need not make our houses filthy because another person fills his house with filth. If you [do not] act according [to my advice], remember you will be sorry for it. You will regret that you did not listen to this old man's advice. There are people, I know, who say that Muslims are like serpents and that just as we would kill a snake we should also kill Muslim women and children along with their menfolk. I tell you such

people are mad. They are not Hindus ; they do not know what is Hinduism. There are similar fanatics among Muslims too; but they are not true Muslims. In the beginning the protagonists of Pakistan used to insist that Hindus in their region would have to live like Muslims. But now they concede that minorities will have to be protected. I remind you again that those who hurt Muslims will be hurting me. I am camping here simply to put an end to this fratricide or die in the effort.

Q. What should we do if Muslims do not trust us even when we reassure them?

A. If you speak to them earnestly and reassure them, they will certainly come, because no one likes to leave his home on his own. Give us the names of the villages whose Muslim residents are not ready to return to their homes in spite of assurances from the Hindus so that we may trace those people and persuade them to return to their villages.

[From Urdu]

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—II, pp. 26-8

173. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

CHORHUAN,
March 21, 1947

I wish that those who have assembled here would think of the damage done and the number of men, women and children brutally done to death in this village, and sit in mournful silence in memory of the deceased. This will do you good. You will consider for yourselves why those who committed these crimes did so. Was it to save their religion? I would rather say that they did not thereby save any religion but harmed it. No religion teaches anyone to kill his neighbours. Righteous wars do take place, but I do not approve of them either. In the *Bhagavadgita,* too, oppressors and tyrants were resisted in a righteous war. It is the work of ruffians to kill innocent children and blameless men and women. A marauder wreaks destruction on others out of selfishness or ignorance. Whatever has happened here is, in my opinion, the work of oppressors and barbarians. Many houses have been burnt down and many others have been reduced to debris. The houses which a few months ago were full of life, are now desolate.

Why we turned into such barbarians will be revealed only in future. But the immediate problem is what you should do next. It is the duty of all men and women, I think, to clean the ruined houses and make them neat and habitable. We can always render some service, however poor we may be. Mere bathing in the Ganga does not wash away our sins. We should undertake honest cleansing. We can keep our bodies clean by bathing in clean water. But all men and women should cleanse themselves in every other way also. They should render all service honorarily and in a spirit of expiation. Did those who committed arson do it for any payment? We must wipe out the stains of their demoniac deeds with the water of human kindness. You should go to the Muslim brethren and tell them to forget the past, that it will never be repeated and persuade them to return and live peacefully as before. Tell them that their misery is your misery, that you are their brothers, that both Hindus and Muslims are sons of the same soil, both eat and drink from the same source and breathe the same air, hence there should be no ill will between them. Tell them that you will not get any peace of mind until they return to their homes. It is possible that the Muslims may turn round and ask how they can go back and live in the houses where their kith and kin have been done to death. They will be justified in saying so. But if the guilty persons go to the Muslims with truly penitent hearts, I am sure, they will be persuaded. Human hearts melt before love. When the murderers themselves go to them in sackcloth and ashes and promise them never to repeat such deeds, even a stony heart will melt.

You should not depend on the Government to do this work. The Government will of course lend a hand. But it is mainly your task. The Government can give you tools and materials ; but the cleaning has to be done by you.

Amidst this mad upheaval there were some Hindus, like oases in a desert, who risked the wrath of the violent mobs and saved the lives of many Muslims and gave them shelter. They deserve congratulations though they do not need any. They have done their duty and acquired *punya*[1]. *Punya* contains all congratulations. Since we have become strangers to human sentiments these days, we are impelled to congratulate any evidence of human love. Those who gave shelter to Muslims did not do so from any selfish motives. If I have not gone to meet them, let them not think that I have no regard or respect for them. I would love to meet them and know how they

[1]Merit acquired from good acts.

saved the lives of Muslims. I have been unable to go to them in spite of my admiration because I have come here like a physician who goes only to those who are suffering. I have come to lighten the sufferings of Muslims in Bihar.

I have been told that the Hindus have also suffered in the riots at some places. If there are any such Hindus, they too will be given relief. But I pay more attention to Muslims because there are quite a few of them here who are willing to help the Hindus.

I have been told that about fifty persons, who were wanted in connection with riot cases, surrendered themselves the day after my arrival at Masaurhi. I welcome this and hope that others who had taken part in the riots will also surrender to the appropriate authorities, making a clean breast of the crimes they had committed and taking whatever punishment might be given to them. If they do not have the courage to surrender to the authorities, let them come to me or to Badshah Khan or to Major-General Shah Nawaz with their confessions.

A friend from Bengal[1] had recently come to me and told me that the Hindus in Noakhali are apprehensive about the preparations being made by the Muslims to observe the Pakistan Day and wish that I should return to Noakhali. I have asked the friend to return to Bengal without insisting on my going there. I am doing the same work here that I was doing in Bengal. If the Hindus in Bihar become honest and convince the Muslims that no harm will be done to them and if Muslims too do not want to take revenge in view of the Hindus' promise to look after them well, it will have its effect on the whole of India. As a result of this Muslims in Noakhali may also assure Hindus of their safety. There is no question of abandoning my post of duty till the Hindus and Muslims from both these regions assure me that they do not need my services. The Muslims of Bihar and the Hindus of Bengal should accept me as security for the safety of their lives and property. I shall suffer if they are made to suffer in any way.

I have repeatedly said that I have come here to do or die. If communal peace is not established, I shall pray to God to hasten my end, because, in that event, I shall not be in a position to serve anyone.

[From Urdu}

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—II, pp. 29-32

[1] According to *Harijan,* from Khadi Pratishthan

174. LETTER TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY

PATNA,
March 22, 1947

I have seen your press note[1] and I am glad that you had anticipated my request to you. I must confess that it does not give me much satisfaction. May we hold Pakistan Day celebration meetings in parts of Bengal where Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code is not in action or where there is no other prohibitory order? And if meetings can be held indoors, are they not likely to be far more dangerous than public meetings?

I hope you got my note[2] sent you through Arunanshu Babu last night.

H. S. SUHRAWARDY SAHIB
PRIME MINISTER
BENGAL
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

175. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

PATNA,
March 22, 1947

CHI. AMRIT,

This is a mere love letter. Mridula asked me if I did not want to write to you and I at once said of course, I do. Hence this note.

How are you now? Tell me all you can about the Punjab.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 4191. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7827

[1] For the press note, vide footnote on "Telegram to H. S. Suhrwardy", 20-3-1947

[2] *Vide* "Letter to H. S. Suhrawardy", 21-3-1947

176. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

PATNA,
March 22, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

If you can, please explain your resolution[1] about the Punjab. I cannot form any judgement.

I trust you are well.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro— 2: *Sardar Vallabhbhaine,* p. 351.

177. TALK WITH WOMEN REFUGEES[3]

PIPALWAN,
March 22, 1947

I am sad as well as glad to meet you all. There are many sisters here whose husbands, sons and relations have been killed. Their tragic tales make me sad. I was very glad to hear that the S. D. O. acted very promptly and prudently to prevent riots here, and that refugees from other places were given shelter here. Hindus from this place have written to me saying that they did not participate at all in the riots.

I have seen with my own eyes how much people have suffered because of the riots. I have seen houses which were burnt or looted, and I was told that the residents had been killed. The aggrieved people, the people whose houses have been destroyed, wish to resettle

[1] *Vide* "Congress Working Committee's Resolution on the Punjab"

[2] On March 24, the addressee replied : It is difficult to explain to you the resolution about the Punjab. If was adopted after the deepest deliberation. Nothing has been done in a hurry or without full thought. That you had expressed your views against it, we learnt only from the papers. But you are, of course, entitled to say what you feel right. The situation in the Punjab is far worse than in Bihar . . . . The military has taken over control. As a result, on the surface things seem to have quietened down somewhat. But no one can say when there may be a flare-up again. If that happens, I am afraid, even Delhi will not remain unaffected. But here of course we shall be able to deal with it.

[3] While returning to Patna Gandhiji met some Muslim women refugees at Pipalwan in the morning.

at some other place. Personally, I do not approve of this. Why should we lose heart? We should keep up courage. The Hindus have committed a sin. What have they gained thereby? You do not trust them. But if their hearts are cleansed, if they clean your houses, if they build new houses for you and if they sincerely atone for their sins, why should you then not return to your homes? True bravery on the part of Hindus consists in confessing their guilt and changing their hearts. I shall be only too glad if they do this.

People should return to the houses where there had been no killing. If the residents don't feel like going to murder-haunted houses they may shift to another place. It would be good if lands can be exchanged by mutual consent. It may not be possible for the Government to arrange such transfers. In any case whether they return to their own villages or shift to some other place, Muslim brothers and sisters should eschew all anger and bear no ill will towards Hindus. You should not think of taking revenge against those who have oppressed you. That is true bravery.

How transitory is this life? Everyone has to die one day. It is difficult to comprehend the ways of God. Is there any place where He is not present? Some people hold God responsible for whatever has happened. Who can understand His ways? God cannot be talked about disparagingly. Why should we, then, blame Him for these happenings? I do not wish to hear such talk from the lips of those who recite the *kalma.* In fact, no one should even speak in this vein.

I wish to reassure all of you that I am wandering from place to place to prevent a repetition of what has happened so that Hindus and Muslims may live like brothers. I shall stay and strive here as long as hearts are not cleansed and fraternal feelings are not revived. I shall do or die; I shall either succeed in my mission or perish in the effort.

[From Urdu]

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—II, pp. 33-4

178. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

PATNA,
March 22, 1947

I have returned to Patna today after a five-day tour. You would have learnt from newspapers where I went and what I said. I liked the attitude of the villagers. They are genuinely penitent. Liberal contributions are being made by them for the relief of their Muslim brethren. I was very happy to see this. Many persons have also written to me that they will not misbehave again.

In a number of places, Gandhiji said, due to the bravery of the local Hindus, no incidents had occurred. He was told by the Muslims themselves that in Dinapore Sub-division no trouble occurred though the Muslims were greatly nervous.

Gandhiji said that he had addressed the Muslim women refugees in the morning at Pipalwan.[2] He did not wish at present to enter into a description of the feelings of these women and their present condition. His heart was too heavy and he did not wish to shed tears. He only wanted to tell them how to repent. He tried as best as he could to console them and persuade them to pick up courage and return to their villages, placing reliance on God. At this meeting he was told that Muslim women and men dreaded the approach of March 22, as it had been reported that Punjab Day would be observed in Bihar on that date. He had told them that the Bihar Government had banned the observance of any kind of day, be it Pakistan Day or Punjab Day. The Minister who was present also gave the assurance that no celebration of any kind would be permitted and that the ban would be strictly enforced throughout the province. The Bihar Government, Gandhiji said, had banned the *kisan* rally also.

It is a different thing that the rally should not have been tarred with the same brush. But the situation is very delicate today. Our people's hearts are not clean. Hence even a *kisan* rally should be abandoned. I shall appeal to the people concerned not to celebrate either a Punjab Day or a Pakistan Day. The Ministers have issued the order after much deliberation; hence the order must be obeyed. If one wishes to disobey a law as a satyagrahi, one can do so. When we have the voting right we can remove the Ministers if we do not approve of their policies. But so long as they are in authority, we must carry out

[1] The Urdu version has been collated with the report in *Harijan* published under "Gandhiji's Bihar Tour Diary".

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

their orders.

A true satyagrahi should implicitly obey the directions of those he had himself put in power. What Gandhiji said did not refer only to March 22. It applied to the future also and at no time should these celebrations be indulged in, so long as the atmosphere remained as it was that day.

There is a conflagration in every quarter today. A *kisan* rally is not advisable in these circumstances. You can write to the Government about the difficulties you are facing. You can agitate through newspapers. Rallies are intended to awaken the *kisans* and to organize the people. I have been leading such activities for the past sixty years and am quite an expert in these matters. Conditions today are not conducive for such activities. The *Gita* speaks of action in inaction and inaction in action.[1] If I apply this to the present-day context, it means we can do a lot of good by keeping quiet. We should discriminate between dharma and *adharma*. There are occasions when keeping away from *adharma* becomes the dharma. It is no doubt our duty to awaken the *kisans*. But this is not the time for it. It is the duty of every Hindu to follow the teachings of the *Gita*, although anyone in the world can derive benefit from the *Gita* . No one can say that we should repeat the same action in season and out of season. We are subserving our waking hours even when we sleep; but if we go on sleeping all the time we will be as good as dead. This only means that every action has its appropriate time. Desisting from an inopportune action is as good as timely action.

The 22nd March has passed off peacefully. It is a good thing. We should now forget all about it. We don't have to celebrate a Punjab Day or a Pakistan Day. These days are intended only to make us fight. But our Muslim brothers here do not wish to fight. Why should we then celebrate a Punjab Day?

I concede that a *kisan* rally stands on a different footing. But the times are not propitious even for a *kisan* rally. Every action should be undertaken at an appropriate time. This is an occasion for penitence. We should first atone for our sins. It is part of the atonement to realize that the atrocities committed on Muslim brothers and sisters constitute grave sins. If we are convinced that the Hindu heart has been cleansed through such atonement, then we can organize a *kisan* rally.

[1] IV. 18

Major-General Shah Nawaz Khan has arrived here. Badshah Khan who intended to leave, has postponed his departure. A scheme is being prepared to rehabilitate the Muslims who have suffered at our hands. Every Hindu brother and sister should go to villages and put in hard labour, not for the sake of wages but in a spirit of service. We should clean up Muslim villages and rebuild their houses to convince them that once again we have become their brothers although for a time we had gone berserk.

Some officials have informed me that about fifty persons have confessed their crimes. They have admitted that they are guilty. They are prepared to undergo any punishment meted out to them. This is a welcome development. But thousands have committed such crimes. All these thousands should confess their crimes. Then the Muslims will not be in a position to say that the criminals have not been arrested. Whoever has committed a crime should frankly say that earlier he was afraid of prosecution, but having made a confession he is now prepared to undergo any punishment. This would not only enhance their own prestige but also that of Bihar as a whole.

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—II, pp. 35-7, and *Harijan*, 6-4-1947

179. LETTER TO SHIV BALAK BISEN

March 23, 1947

CHI. BISEN,

Your letter was frank. That your views about the Ashram inmates are not correct does not matter. As for your desire to stay with me, we shall think about it when I return there. I cannot decide just now. Normally I would have welcomed your services, but at present I have to consider what [my] dharma is. We are going to meet before long, aren't we?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7726

180. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

March 23, 1947

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

The reply you gave to Narandas is perfectly correct. I have written to him, too.

You need not worry about Manu at all. She is still forgetful, of course, and indifferent about herself. I have explained to her that those who are free from all impure feelings or desires are indifferent about nothing, nor do they forget things. She understands this, but is unable to act upon it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U/III

181. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

PATNA,
March 23, 1947

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I read both your letters and gave them to Khan Saheb for reading. He says he is watchful and will go when it is necessary. If I ask him to go he is ready to leave today. But I do not feel the need for it. Your anxiety is meaningless. You must have received my previous letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2504

182. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

PATNA,
March 23, 1947

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

After sending a letter[1] today I received your letter of the 20th and also the paper cuttings.

If you have stopped Dubeji's treatment, my advice is that you should go to the Nature Cure clinic in Calcutta. You can come over here to see me. You can come wherever I am or come after my third tour.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2503

183. DISCUSSION WITH WOMEN WORKERS [2]

PATNA,
March 23, 1947

QUESTION: Can women take part in politics while they are working in the Kasturba Memorial Fund?

GANDHIJI: This question can be answered in two ways: they can and cannot take part in politics. If they want to serve, they should not take part in politics. There is Congress rule in the country at present (it may be socialism or communism in future). Now, supposing it is necessary to sell spinning-wheels or khadi for the sake of propaganda in the villages, women can take part in such activities. But supposing the intentions of the Congress go wrong and instead of khadi it wants to sell liquor in the villages, the *sevikas*[3] would certainly not take part in such an activity. Rather, they would start a satyagraha campaign against it if it became necessary. Women can take part in any activity which is in the interest of the country irrespective of the 'ism' of the ruling party.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Fund who met Gandhiji at 4 p.m.
[3] Women workers

Q. When we raise slogans in the villages the Muslims do not join us. What should be done about it?

G. You must keep quiet and try to persuade them. If they still do not come forward, you must give up raising slogans. As for me, I do not give importance to slogans any more. People have been stabbed while cries of *Bharatmataki jai* and *Gandhijiki jai* were being raised. That is why slogans have become so repugnant. It is easy to understand such feelings.

Q. Women do not still seem to give up untouchability and purdah. What should we do?

G. If they do not give them up they must be persuaded to do so. You must carry on your work. You should not worry about the results. Those who want to serve should continue to work more and ever more, and firmly hold on the truth.

A. HARIJAN WOMAN: Nobody is willing to sit by my side. What should I do?

G. (Smiling): There are so many women sitting around you. You must forget that you are a Harijan. Things would automatically smoothen out if you do that.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 89-90

184. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

PATNA,
March 23, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I request you and those others whom my voice could reach to understand the aim of life. The sole purpose of life is that we should serve the creation of the Power which has created us and on whose mercy or, say, kindness, depends out very breath. Let us not destroy this creation. But today, in our arrogance we have either lost sight of this cause or we tend to forget it and are either fighting each other or preparing to do so. If we cannot avoid this calamity, you may be sure that India's independence is an impossibility. If you think you can

[1] As Gandhiji was observing silence his written speech was read out at the meeting held at the Bankipur Maidan.

achieve independence by the simple fact of the British quitting the land, you are sadly mistaken. If we continue to fight amongst ourselves even after their departure some other power would step in. To think that we can fight the world with its own weapons is like expecting a barren woman to give birth to a child.

A friend has written that a semblance of peace appears to have been established in the Punjab. But this peace and tranquillity has come through military occupation. Everyone is preparing openly for a fight and is busy collecting arms. If these preparations continue the peace established through the army or the police will ultimately turn out to be the peace of the grave. Real peace will come about only when one party at least silently adopts the course of true bravery. Bihar has realized through its own experience that there can be no bravery in killing women and children, or old and innocent people, that it is sheer cowardice. What a grand thing it would be if Bihar could show the real power of non-violent bravery and thus guide India and the whole world on the path of true life.[1]

[From Urdu]

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—II, pp. 38-9

185. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

PATNA,
March 23, 1947

CHI. AMRIT,

I sent a love note[2] yesterday thro[ugh] Mridula. I have yours of 21st.

When I get the time to write, your letters are not before me. Hence the omissions.

Tell me whether you have the dictionaries[3] you wanted.

I fancy that I wrote[4] to you twice about paying me a brief visit but never at the sacrifice of your duty undertaken there. Mine may be regarded as a selfish wish. We shall exchange thoughts about it when the 4th April is on us.

I was satisfied with your answer about Aryanayakum.

[1] According to *Harijan,* at the end Gandhiji informed the audience that the prayer meeting on Monday would be held near Poonpoon.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 22-3-1947

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 22-2-1947

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 18-3-1947

I think now I have answered all your questions, your letter was in front of me.

I have taken the Monday silence. It is now 6.10 [p.m.] when I finish this.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 4192. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7828

186. LETTER TO JAIKRISHNA BHANSALI

March 23, 1947

CHI. BHANSALI,

I do not like the change in your diet. Even a person of self-control may not disregard nature's laws. You cannot eat *kodra*[1], *banti*[2], etc. uncooked. You may, if you wish, make your food moderate or even abstemious. I should advise you to eat cooked *kodra,* take a moderate quantity of milk and fruit and eat such green vegetables as can be eaten raw.

I think you should now stop going out. People are exploiting you.

According to me, your work is to keep a watch over the Ashram in a spirit of non-attachment. In any case it will do no good to take Pushpa out.[3] She is still immature. She ought not to give up khadi work. Her knowledge is very imperfect. Explain all this to her. She must not visit Raju.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10441. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

187. LETTER TO PUSHPA K. DESAI

PATNA,

March 24, 1947

CHI. PUSHPA,

You feel tempted to go out with Bhansalibhai, but that is not proper. Your dharma lies in completing the khadi work and learning

[1] Cereals

[2] *Ibid*

[3] *Vide* also the following item.

to see God in that work alone. You have a long way to go yet. You must learn to be steady in your mind. Do not think of going out anywhere.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9278

188. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

March 24, 1947

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

You are writing to Dev, but he cannot read Hindi with ease. Ultimately I have to strain myself. It would be better if you write in Gujarati. He finds it difficult to decipher your Nagari characters.

Bhansali may go [out], but Pushpa ought not to. Read what I have written to them.[1]

I am surprised about Gomati.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10658

189. A LETTER[3]

PATNA,
March 24, 1947

I have not read your letter to . . . but I have read the reply. The reply seems correct to me. And so long as he has faith in me what else could he write? Moreover, there is no question of practising it just now. But where there is no pretence, is it not thought itself that matters most? And therefore what all of you have to consider is whether it is proper to remain with me if my thoughts are unconsciously impure. If they are so, all of you who have firmly stood by me should withdraw your co-operation. As far as I can see . . . agrees on this point. At least I hope so. Copies of the letters written to . . . must have been sent to

[1] *Vide* The preceding two items.
[2] Wife of Kishorelal G. Mashruwala
[3] Omissions in the letter are as in the source.

all of you. Ask for the copies if you have not received them. Do not hesitate to write to me anything you may wish to write . . . is in a great dilemma. I have written him a letter and passed it on to . . . for posting . . . is very much perturbed. You had better meet and talk with him. The situation is such that no one can remain neutral. There can hardly be any scope for compromise when it is a matter of determining what is dharma and what is *adharma*.

[For Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 91-2

190. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

PATNA,
March 24, 1947

CHI. SATIS BABU,

I find that it is difficult to leave Bihar. The work here seems to be easier than it was there. But it is difficult all the same. This much is clear that if I am able to do something here, it will have its impact everywhere. Think over it and send me your opinion.

Never give up the work in Noakhali even if you have to die.

Tell Sucheta[1] and Annada[2] if they have done anything against [your wishes]. I have received *Dinlipi* [3].

Cholera must have completely subsided by now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 8969

[1] (1908-1975) ; wife of J. B. Kripalani ; Secretary, Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust; Member Constituent Assembly; Chief Minister of U. P. in 1963

[2] Annada Choudhary

[3] A cyclostyled daily bulletin, issued by the Gandhi Camp in Noakhali for circulation among workers and friends

191. NOTE TO GLADYS OWEN[1]

March 24, 1947

1. Dr. Gopichand is Gopichand Bhargava[2]. Initials I do not know. I shall give you a letter. He is well known to everyone of note.

2. Answered above.

3. No reply necessary. You will feel your way when you reach there. Of course You should go quickly.

4. My confidence is a little shaken because I have begun to fear that I might not quickly reach the requisite state of detachment described in the *Gita.* Read if you care the last 18 verses of Chapter II of the *Gita* in Edwin Arnold's translation[3]. I become impatient and irritated. It is not conducive to a life of utter consecration without which a long life of 125 years is neither possible nor desirable.

5. I am not particular about your seeing anything here. You may go to Ramzanpur now. But I would like you to return to take my letter to Dr. G. and see what I write to Horace[4]. This I may not do now. I must go to the massage table. But you should please yourself.

6. I shall write to Catlin and give him a date.

Note: Give me a copy of answer 4. If you go away now you may send a copy at leisure.

From a photostat: G.N. 6201

192. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

RAJGHAT,

March 24, 1947

It is well nigh impossible for me to say anything amid such noise. I can say something only when you are quiet. In the first place, I wish to address a few words to the men and women volunteers. I

[1] The addressee, a Quaker educationist and teacher, explains : "On March 23, 1947, I went to Patna to see if there was anything Bapu wanted me to do and this is part of Bapu's conversation with me on his silence day, March 24, 1947, when he asked me to go to . . . "

[2] (1889-1966) ; Chairman of Punjab Branch of Harijan Sevak Sangh; Chief Minister of Punjab, 1947-51

[3] *The Song Celestial*

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Horace Alexander", 25-3-1947

have told them before also what they should do during the tours. It is the duty of women volunteers to guide women as to how they should sit and conduct themselves at public meetings. For this they should distribute leaflets beforehand and should read them out for their benefit. The men who are either standing or sitting are keeping quiet, but because the women are not quiet, they cannot also hear anything. In fact, it is not women alone who are to be blamed for this. They are over-worked, poor and illiterate. They behave as they are told by their menfolk. If we have to take work from them, we should make them understand things and educate them. It is the duty of the women volunteers first of all to tell women the rules to be observed at public meetings.

Today I saw a village[1] where Hindus too have suffered losses. I had been asked earlier to visit that village. I realize the Hindus have suffered but that in no way mitigates their guilt. I did not visit the place with the thought of the Hindus who have suffered there. But that does not mean that I am hurt only at the loss of Muslims and that Hindus' sufferings do not move me. I am equally pained at the sufferings of all persons. In the words of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, founder of the Aligarh University, I would say that the Hindus and the Muslims are like the two eyes of Mother India. Just as the trouble in one eye afflicts the other too, similarly the whole of India suffers when either Hindus or Muslims suffer. If you realize this, I would think my purpose has been fulfilled.

[From Urdu]

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—II, p. 40

193. LETTER TO HORACE ALEXANDER

PATNA,
March 25, 1947

MY DEAR HORACE,

Gladys has given me your letter and I had a fairly long discussion[2] with her as a result of which she has written to you a letter which I enclose herewith. She has gone to see the Friends' Unit[3] and she is expected to return tonight. I think her presentation of my

[1] Behrawan
[2] *Vide* "Note to Gladys Owen", 24-3-1947
[3] Friends' Service Unit

position is fairly correct. But let me put it in my own language.

What I feel is that however much detached we may want to be from our surroundings and the unseen atmosphere about us, we cannot but be affected by it. Hence I am not sure whether, whilst the British military forces are in India, we can possibly be in real Indian atmosphere of peace and tranquillity, if these are ever to be her lot during our generation. The present distemper may continue beyond January next and if it does not I am afraid it won't be because of sanity regained by the communities but because of the fear of the military. What is the use of our meeting under the protection of the bayonet, whether it is British or Indian? May it not be wise therefore for sincere peace-lovers to pray in their own homes, every day if you like, even for five minutes at the same time throughout the world? It will be easy enough for everyone to find out the hour which should correspond with the time, say, in Calcutta or any place in India. We can even make the calculations and publish the different times for the different centres. The value would lie in finding the exact time. If you still think that a meeting should take place here, I suggest postponement till after the withdrawal of British arms.

These are my random thoughts, not for you to act upon unless they fully appeal to you, because in this matter I have yielded to your judgment. If you propose to go on with your idea and want to have the meeting at the time you have conceived, send me the thirty names and I shall send you my suggestions as to whether I want to add to the list.

With reference to milk distribution in Madras you have another Ministry there now.[1] I wonder if it will make any difference. I hold on to my suggestion.

About my own private affair I have done and am doing all I can. I suppose you already know that Manu no longer sleeps in the same bed with me. This departure was made by her with my full approval in order to please Bapa who, though he saw absolutely nothing wrong, would appeal to her not to continue [it] whilst I was in Bihar and whilst I was engaged in this important work. I do not agree with the conclusion. But I did not wish to argue and therefore I promptly agreed.

Whilst I am dictating this letter I see that you could not know

[1] The Ministry headed by T. Prakasam had resigned on March 14 and the new Ministry assumed office on March 23, under the leadership of O. P. Ramaswami Reddiar.

this because the decision was made on the last day of my stay in Haimchar. What, however, is the subject of examination is my mental attitude, whether it is correct or whether, as Kishorelal and some other Indian friends consider, it is a remnant of my sexuality however unconscious it might be. My whole mental outlook will be changed immediately I saw this defect in me. Only then, the weakness was coeval with the time when I took the vow of *brahmacharya* which was probably in 1902[1] .It may be that their definition of *brahmacharya* is different from mine.

I return the draft with very slight corrections if it is to go at all.

Love.

Yours,
BAPU

HORACE ALEXANDER, ESQ.
1 UPPER WOOD STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G. N. 1443

194. LETTER TO SIR HUGH DOW

PATNA,
March 25, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

Many thanks for your letter[2] of the 22nd instant. I have to deny myself the pleasure of writing in my own hand for the sake of sparing you the infliction of bad handwriting, of which I am really ashamed. Whenever you feel that you want to discuss anything with me please do not hesitate to tell me so and I shall be at your disposal.

I am going on my third tour tomorrow morning. I return on the 28th instant.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. SIR HUGH DOW
GOVERNMENT HOUSE
PATNA

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 234-5

[1] Gandhiji took the vow some time in August-September, 1906 after his return from ambulance service during the Zulu revolt in Natal; *vide* "An Autobiography"

[2] *Vide* footnote 1, "Letter to sir Hugh Dow", 21-3-1947

195. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

PATNA,

March 25, 1947

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I got your letter. Enclosed is a letter for Dhiren[1]. Read it and then pass it on to him. I have merely given in it my opinion, but I think it will be enough for you. All the same, if you on your own wish to keep him, you may do so. I could not train him, nor could Satis Babu. This would be a charitable view. If we take an uncharitable view, we might say that both Satis Babu and I kept him with us for his own good, but he could not stay with either. However, sooner or later he is bound to stay somewhere. He does have a certain kind of ability, and will be able to earn enough for a living. Those who wish to get married can certainly do so. Dhiren, therefore, will miss nothing. I now look upon him as completely free.

You may now do what you think fit. Kakasaheb will of course see this. Give the accompanying letters to the two brothers.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10813

196. LETTER TO TARABEHN JASANI

PATNA,

March 25, 1947

CHI. TARA,

As soon as Satish[2] told me about Mohanlal, I wrote[2] to you at Wankaner. Now Bal[3] writes and tells me that you are there and feel very much depressed. Why are you so weak? Have you ever known anybody's dear one to have lived for ever? The way Mohanlal has gone, you, I and all others have to go. Why, then, rejoice or grieve over things? Is it not our selfishness that we do so? You have to shed lustre on Mohanlal's name, and you have the ability to do that. If you

[1] Dhirendra, son of Amrita Lal Chatterjee. The letter is not available.
[2] Sons of D. B. Kalelkar
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Trarbehn Jasani", 16-3-1947
[3] Sons of D. B. Kalelakr

do not have it, cultivate it. Arise, awake, open your eyes and see. Do your duty.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

CHI. TARABEHN
C/O SHRI G. JASANI'
36 DOCTOR RAJENDRA ROAD
BHAWANIPUR, CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8789

197. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

PATNA,
March 25, 1947

CHI. SATIS BABU,

I have your three letters. It can be said that the danger about which you have written in two of them does not exist now. But no one can say what will happen in the end.

I think it is better to store paddy after obtaining a permit.

I am enclosing herewith the two cheques, one for Rs. 400 and the other for Rs. 182 with the letters received along with them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 8970

198. LETTER TO NAGEN BABU

PATNA,
March 25, 1947

BHAI NAGEN BABU,

I got your letter. Bhai Kalipada will give you all the news. I can only say that my heart is in Noakhali, and whatever I do here is bound to have some effect there. No one need by scared and no one should be a coward. What God wills will be done.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

199. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

PATNA,
March 25, 1947

My third tour will commence tomorrow. I shall go to Jahanabad and return on March 28. The prayer meeting will again be held here on the 29th.

I saw the destruction in the village which I visited and met the Hindus and the Muslims there. Today also I have been meeting people throughout the day. One Muslim friend said that it was very good indeed that I visited them. Now they were convinced that nothing of this sort would recur. But I was pained by what another Muslim friend told me. He said that the Hindus were now boycotting the Muslims. Sometimes boycott could be a welcome thing but it is bad if it is directed against one's own brother. Suppose we have been under the treatment of a Muslim doctor till today, as for instance I used to be treated by Dr. Ansari,[1] Hakim Ajmal Khan[2] or Dr. Abdul Rehman. Should we stop being treated by him as soon as a Hindu-Muslim riot breaks out? Boycott had an important place in our struggle against the British. But if it is adopted amongst ourselves it will amount to violence. The Hindus have committed a sin in Bihar and today they are the guilty ones ; do they now want to persist in doing wrong? The case of the doctor was cited only as an example. The gentleman mentioned by me is a businessman and landlord. Both Hindus and Muslims had their shops on his land and did business there. It was a source of income for him. But now the Hindus have stopped going there; this is a pernicious boycott. It so happens sometimes that one who is engaged as a tailor does not like anyone else to take up that profession. There was a time when a tailor's son took to tailoring only. But now a tailor's son can also become a head clerk. Such ill will and feeling of animosity should be given up.

[1] M. A. Ansari (1880-1936) ; physician and surgeon ; Member, Congress Working Committee; President, Indian National Congress, 1927 ; Chancellor, Jamia Millia Islamia, 1928-36

[2] (1863-1927) ; Chief Physician to the Nawab of Rampur, 1892-1902; President, Indian National Congress, 1921 ; first Chancellor of Jamia Millia Islamia, 1920-27

Let me give you some good news too. Today some League friends met me and expressed their wish to live with the Hindus amicably and wanted the Government to listen to them. I said to them that though the League represented a large number of Muslims I did not agree that those who were outside the League were not Muslims or that the League was the sole representative of the Muslims. The boycott of the League would not do. I even asked the Noakhali Muslims to obey the orders of the League. So long as they were in the League, it was their duty to carry out its orders. But if the League misguided them and asked them to slit the throats of the Hindus, they should refuse to obey it and quit the League.

The League friends also said: "Though we belong to the League still we are friends of the Hindus. If the Government does not take us into confidence, how can the Muslims trust it? It we plead with the Muslims who had run away, they will come back. But if we do not co-operate how many Muslims can you bring back? Maybe a few of them would return. But all of them will not . The Government should consult us." I told them it was a good and straightforward suggestion. Each should co-operate with the other and do his duty. When we work unitedly it will have its impact on India as well as on the world. It will purify our hearts. We should act only with a pure heart. What is the use of our being together without unity of hearts?

I also heard some Muslims say that there were ten crore Muslims and even if one crore perished the remaining nine crores would fight for founding a nation of their own. I told them that if they had such notions they would not serve Islam in any way. On the contrary they would destroy it. I had told the Hindus also in Noakhali that they should get rid of all fear. We should fear God alone. It is cowardice to agree to something or to bow our heads before others out of fear.

The friend from Noakhali has informed me that after my return from Noakhali the situation there has deteriorated again. I told him that if the Hindus in Bihar co-operated with me, I could work for Noakhali while I was still here. I would appeal to the Muslims of Noakhali, if my voice could reach them, to live in unity with Hindus, wherever they may be. Hindus should do likewise. I do not know what will happen in Noakhali in future—whether the surviving Hindus will be killed, their houses looted or burnt. But if this happens, the Muslims will dig their own graves. Even here I hear voices are being raised that scores will be settled once Gandhi goes away. This is a bad omen. I beseech you not to become cowards, but to be truthful and

have faith in God. It is folly to agree to anything out of fear. Today some Domes came to see me. They told me that it was not only caste Hindus who boycotted them but even the Bhangis among Harijans boycotted them. They said that the Domes were normally engaged in bamboo work, only the poor ones did scavenging. They are not even aware of the exact strength of their community. Only one boy from the community goes to college. The Domes invited me to stay with them. I told them that, though I would like it, I was at the moment engaged in other very important work. I was grieved to know that the Bhangis did not allow them to draw water from their wells. Bhangis and other Harijan friends should not discriminate amongst themselves. I fail to understand why others regard Harijans as inferior. I have myself become a Bhangi. If I swept your lanes and cleaned your latrines, and you hurled abuses at me and I tolerated them, how would I then become low? Those who are engaged in scavenging are not inferior but it is those who abuse others that are low. Those who do the cleaning for us and serve us should be treated with love by all of us.

[From Urdu]

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—II, pp. 41-4

200. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN[1]

PATNA,
March 26, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 22nd instant received by me yesterday.

You have rightly gauged my difficulty about moving out of Bihar at the present moment. But I dare not resist your kind call. I am just now leaving for one of the disturbed areas of Bihar. Will you therefore forgive me if I do not send you the exact date of my departure for Delhi? I return from this third Bihar tour on the 28th instant. My departure will therefore be as quickly as I can arrange it after the 28th.

In order that this may be in your hands as early as possible I

[1] The addressee had taken over as Viceroy and Governor-General of India on March 24, 1947.

send this through His Excellency the Governor of Bihar.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. LORD LOUIS MOUNTBATTEN OF BURMA
NEW DELHI

[PS.]

I expect to leave for New Delhi on the 30th instant.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: G. N. 10832

201. LETTER TO SYED ZAFAR IMAM

PATNA,
March 26, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 25th instant. It will be a matter of pleasure to me if someone on behalf of the League accompanies me during the tour[1]. I think Mridulabehn has already told the local League in the same strain. You will certainly be informed when the date for the visit to Tilhara is fixed.

In the second paragraph you refer to my 'inner voice'. Is this a gibe, a compliment or an unthought remark? I ask this question purposely because I want all the help that the local League can render sincerely in the difficult task in front of me.

S. ZAFAR IMAM SAHIB
PATNA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

202. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

PATNA,
March 26, 1947

Gandhiji's attention being drawn by the A. P. I. to a report in a section of the Press (not *The Indian Nation)* about a letter said to have been received by him from the new Viceroy and his alleged reply thereto, he said that it was packed with half-

[1] To Tilhara, to ascertain the true extent of damages caused to the Muslim lives, properties and holy places of worship during commual riots in Bihar.

truths which he always held as more dangerous than full untruths and therefore, characterized half-truths as "a lie and a half".

Pressed for clarification Gandhiji said that he had no desire to run into the trap, however unconscious it might be. He added that whoever had concocted the message had done no service to the cause of Indian independence or to honest journalism. He would like Indian journalists not to copy the worst features of journalism of the West with which unfortunately it was reeking. But if there was to be imitation it should be of the best in Western journalism of which he was happy to be able to testify. Gandhiji said:

There are several brilliant examples in journalism and as a journalist of long standing, though an amateur, I must conclude by the warning that journalism which is rightly called the Fourth Estate should never degrade itself by becoming a means of making money. This caution is doubly necessary at the present critical time in the history of the country.

The Indian Nation, 27-3-1947

203. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

JEHANABAD,
March 26, 1947

Gandhiji began his post-prayer speech by referring to the common weakness of misunderstanding opponents, attributing to them motives which could not be proved. Such behaviour often led to untoward results which prudent people would avoid. Such misunderstanding was responsible for differences between the Congress and the League.[2] Both the organizations had a large following. The responsibility resting on them was all the greater for their popularity. Their conduct towards each other had to be above suspicion.

Gandhiji next referred to his visit to Kako Relief Camp[3] and the village of Saistabad. Men and women burst into tears when they saw him. He told them that to break under one's sorrow did not become brave people. All religions taught that sorrow should be bravely borne.

As he watched crowds of sturdy men pursuing him, mobbing his car and

[1] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Bihar Tour Diary"

[2] Gandhiji had offered to stay in Jehanabad with some members of the Muslim League who had called on him at Patna. Not knowing this, one of his secretaries arranged for his stay with the authorities. When Gandhiji came to know of it, he tried to contact the members of the Muslim League but could not. The latter, however, accused him of breach of promise.

[3] Where 500 refugees had taken shelter

shouting vociferously *Mahatma Gandhiki jai,* etc., he could well imagine the havoc they must have wrought when they attacked a handful of Mussalmans. The Hindus should be ashamed of the act. They should take a vow never to succumb to the madness again. Nor should they think of taking revenge for the incidents of the Punjab or the like. Would they themselves become beasts simply because others happened to sink to that level? If ever they became mad again, they should destroy him first. His prayer in that case would be that God may give him the strength to pray to Him to forgive his murderers, that is, to purify their hearts. He prayed that God may enable him to show by example what true bravery was. No one could mistake arson and murder of innocent women and children as a brave act. It was cowardice of the meanest type.

Gandhiji next referred to a complaint that he had received from the Hindus of Kako enumerating their sufferings at the hands of Muslim zamindars. He interpreted it as intended to minimize their own offence against the Mussalmans. It was not manliness to attempt to do so.

Again Gandhiji referred to a report that he had heard of the Hindus threatening the Mussalmans that they would wreak vengeance on them when he (Gandhiji) was gone. It ill became the votaries of the *Ramayana* to try to suppress the fourteen or fifteen per cent of the Muslims in their midst. Men aspiring to be free could hardly think of enslaving others. If they tried to do so, they would only be binding their own chains of slavery tighter. It became their duty to go and beg forgiveness of the Mussalmans, and by their true repentance they should try to persuade them to go back to their homes. They should rebuild their houses. They should make their sorrow their own.

Harijan, 13-4-1947

204. TELEGRAM TO CHOATHMAL

CHOATHMAL

SECY. PROVINCIAL SWEEPERS' FEDERATION

[On or after *March 26, 1947*][1]

YOUR WIRE[2]. DIFFICULT ADVISE FROM HERE. SEE VINOBAJI, VALUNJKAR. ACT AS THEY ADVISE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the postmark

[2] The addressee had requested Gandhiji's intervention in the ill-treatment of leaders of sweepers in jail.

205. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

GHOSI, JEHANABAD,
March 27, 1947

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

You may make whatever arrangement seems best to all of you regarding Kanchan. It is essential that her delivery pass off without any difficulty.

Kanchan's own desire in this matter should get the first priority. If she wants to have the delivery at her mother's, please arrange it that way.

It is for you all to decide whether you can arrange for the delivery in the old hospital building. I will raise no objection if you decide that. I cannot say more than this from here.

I understand about Hoshiaribehn[1].

I trust Mohan[2] and Anasuya[3] are doing well. How long will they stay there?

Tell Bhansalibhai that he should stop eating cereals and pulses until the fever disappears completely. He should till then live on milk, butter-milk and fruit. If he does that, the body will recover its normal health quickly. Raw *kodra* is taboo. We are not strong enough to digest it.[3]

Tell Prabhakar that he must get rid of his weakness.

If Shashi[4] takes friction-bath regularly and observes the necessary restrictions on diet, I am sure his fever will disappear. It will of course be good if he goes to Panchgani.

I understand about Kausambi's[5] illness.

Why does Nayakumji get severe attacks of cold so often? Tell him that he must get rid of the disease once for all with the help of rural remedies, that is, by nature-cure methods. This is also part of basic education.

If Sharda[6] can do without Shakaribehn[7] , I think it would be

[1] Niece of Balvantsinha

[2] Son and daughter-in-law of Narahari Parikh

[3] *Vide* also "Letter to Pushpa K. Desai", 24-3-1947

[4] Son of Ratilal Mehta

[5] Dharmanand Kausambi, who had been Professor of Buddhist Literature at the Gujarat Vidyapith, was suffering from a severe skin ailment.

[6] Addressee's daughter, married to Gordhandas Chokhawala

[7] Addressee's wife

good for her to return to the Ashram. Let her do what keeps her happy and contented.

Parnerkar's[1] leg must have got all right now. Manohar also, I hope, is all right. This is my third tour. I am in a village today. I have to leave for Delhi on the 30th to meet the Viceroy there. I shall be staying there for two or three days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10659

206. TALK WITH MUSLIMS[2]

AMTHUA,

March 27, 1947

Gandhiji said that the style in which the memorandum had been written, it could not represent the views of the people who surrounded him there because when he himself understood so little of it he was sure the illiterate friends around him could not understand what it conveyed. He asked how could the reader of the memorandum claim to represent the views of those for whom he spoke.

Referring to the complaints against the Hindus, Gandhiji said it was his mission to make people brave whether they were Hindus or Muslims and he asked the people who had submitted the memorandum not to preach cowardice among the Muslims. He gave the example of South Africa where he led the Indians, a bare handful of 13,000 in the entire sub-continent, against great odds and those Indians were courageous enough today to fight their oppressors. In Bihar the Muslims were in a much greater majority than the Indians in South Africa and therefore they should be brave.

Gandhiji reaffirmed that he was not disloyal or unfaithful to the Muslims and that his one aim in life was to help the Muslims as long as he was alive and he would try to help them even by dying.

Before he left he invited the Muslims to come and see him and place fore him all the difficulties in their way.

The Indian Nation, 29-3-1947

[1] Y. M. Parnerkar, a dairy expert

[2] Gandhiji visited Amthua at 8 a.m. where Muslims presented to him a memorandum written in highly Persianized Urdu. It stated among other things that Gandhiji's visit was likely to do more harm than good and that the Government had helped rioters and Congressmen who were in league with them.

207. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING [1]

OKRI,
March 27, 1947

Gandhiji uttered the warning that Indians might lose the golden apple of independence which was almost within their grasp, out of insanity, which had caused scenes of desolation and destruction, and stated that the peace that reigned in the land was only on the surface. He said this while referring to his visit during the morning and afternoon to some riotaffected villages.

Gandhiji added that they knew the very first pronouncement that the Viceroy had made when he assumed office stated that he was sent as the last Viceroy to wind up the British rule in India. They must have noticed that the pronouncement was deliberate, unconditional and unequivocal. He said that we must trust British promises for it would be cowardice to say that all Britons were dishonest. That, he explained, would mean that we were ourselves dishonest. Gandhiji added that the jar of British sins was full and they must go but it was not right to abuse them while they were departing. He knew that it had become a fashion, though not without cause, to distrust every British declaration. He for one would advise the acceptance of every declaration at its face value without qualifying it in the light of past experience to the contrary. His experience was that it was the deceiver who always lost and never the dupe if he was honest and brave. But he very much feared on account of what had happened in the country that by their folly or, what was worse than that, insanity, they might let slip out of their hands their hard-won prize before it was strongly locked in their unbreakable fist.

Gandhiji referred to Bihar and the Punjab and said that he had wisdom enough to see that they themselves might tempt the Viceroy to eat his own words, uttered solemnly on a solemn occasion. Heaven forbid that such an occasion should arise, but, if it did, even though his might be a voice in the wilderness, he would declare that the Viceroy should firmly and truly carry out his declaration and complete the British withdrawal.

Gandhiji then referred to his tour today in villages Amthua, Belai and Ghosi, this morning and Abdal Chak, Zulfipur and Abdalpur[2]. He said that the same stories of atrocities were repeated the whole day. He advised the Congressmen who had approached him and said that innocent men were in jail as a result of communal cases, that they should produce those who were guilty and if they failed they should cease to be Congressmen. Gandhiji also advised the guilty to confess to him, for he would not give them away to Government but then they thought to atone for their sins. Gandhiji also requested Hindus to return all abducted women and girls, if any in their possession, at once.

[1] The reports in *Harijan* and *The Indian Nation* have been collated.
[2] In the afternoon

Gandhiji referred to the police strike[1], and said that the police, like the scavengers, should never go on strike. Theirs was an essential service and they should render that service irrespective of pay.

There were many other effective and honourable means of getting grievances redressed. If he were a Cabinet Minister, he would offer the strikers nothing whatever under the threat of a strike, which implied force. He would give them the choice of an impartial arbitration, without any condition. He said:

> It will be a bad day for India if the military, including the police, rule India.

He hoped the police would call off their strike unconditionally and request the Ministry to appoint an impartial arbitrator to investigate their case.

Gandhiji also appealed to the policemen not to behave in the manner in which they were behaving then. Every policeman, he said, was a servant of the people and his duty was to behave like the Khudai Khidmatgars. Policemen were the custodians of law.

Continuing, Gandhiji said that if every man, woman and child tried to understand his or her duty and if there was no theft or dacoity, there would be no need for policemen. Everyone could then become a policeman and help each other.

Gandhiji expressed regret that the Bihar Government had employed British soldiers to deal with the strikers. No matter what the cause was, and wherever it was, the Indian Governments must never requisition the services of British soldiers to deal with civil disturbances. Otherwise it would mean that the Indian Governments were helpless without British arms.

Harijan, 13-4-1947, and *The Indian Nation,* 29-3-1947

[1] On March 20, 1947, a police havildar was convicted of contempt of court by the Sub-divisional Officer, Gaya. The Gaya police then gave notice of strike unless redress was given to the havildar and the Sub-Divisional Officer punished. An immediate inquiry was ordered by the District Magistrate. The strike commenced on March 24 and the strikers refused to return to duty in spite of the inquiry which began the same day. From Gaya the strike spread to Patna and Monghyr.

208. TELEGRAM TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

JEHANABAD,
March 28, 1947

ANAND HINGORANI
7 EDMONSTONE ROAD
ALLAHABAD

LEAVING THIRTIETH MORNING.

GANDHI

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

209. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

JEHANABAD,
March 28, 1947

CHI. MANILAL,

I got your long letter of March 7. You have given sufficient details. You need not hesitate to write to me out of compassion for me because of the pressure of work on me. I have not known a father who would not welcome a letter from his son or daughter. On the contrary, every father looks forward to such letters. It is true, of course, that if my sons were to write silly and sentimental letters, I would be pained to read them. But I have never taught any of you to be sentimental or to write such letters, nor is it in the nature of any of you to be or act so. I, therefore, have no fear on that score.

I understand what you say regarding me. It is enough for me that you do not worry about me but leave me in God's hands. It is also true that, if what I am doing is wrong, I alone will have to suffer the consequences. If it is good, its benefit will be shared by millions.

If refusal to extend a welcome to the Prince[1] is likely to do us any harm, we should endure it. When we accorded a welcome in our time the circumstances were different, and moreover we extended the

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", p. 28.

welcome jointly with other people.[1] Keep on sending me newspaper cuttings which you think I should read. I rarely read your journal[2]. And moreover in the midst of all this touring, how can I even get it?

Dadoo and Naicker called on me[3] as soon as they arrived. I was in Patna then. I had only a brief talk with them. They said they would come back and call on me again. They didn't say a word regarding you. Nor did I ask them. I didn't think it advisable to do so. And, moreover, your letter gives me all the information, and so really speaking I had nothing to inquire about.

One thing seems certain, namely, that now the struggle will be carried on through selfless and elected representatives. I cannot say how long I shall be detained in Bihar and Noakhali.

I have to leave for Delhi the day after tomorrow to meet the new Viceroy. I think I will have to stay there for two or three days and then return here.

Don't worry at all about Sita[4]. I do whatever is necessary.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. SUSHILA,

Despatch this letter to Manilal. You may add whatever you wish

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4997

210. TALK WITH MUSLIM REFUGEES[5]

JEHANABAD,

March 28[6]*, 1947*

One memorandum suggested that Gandhiji's reference to the Noakhali incidents in his speeches instead of suppressing the feeling of Hindus here would aggravate them.

[1] The reference appears to be to the visit of Duke of Cornwall and York to South Africa; *vide*

[2] *Indian Opinion*

[3] On March 20

[4] Addressee's daughter

[5] The report in *Harijan,* reproduced from *The Searchlight,* 30-3-1947, has been collated with the version in *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase.* Gandhiji was replying to a written memorandum submitted by the Muslim refugees.

[6] *Biharni Komi Agman* however gives this talk under March 26.

Gandhiji answered that the inference was not correct for he had not spared the Hindus. In fact there was a time when he used to be equally plainspoken with the Muslims, too. He had even fasted for twenty-one days for what they had done in 1924.[1] The Muslims did not then regard him as their enemy.

Gandhiji said that as the Muslims today generally considered him as their enemy, he was sometimes obliged to speak with restraint. In the Punjab worse things were happening and at first he did not believe the newspaper stories but his subsequent enquiries made him believe that far more excesses than the newspapers reported were being committed in the Punjab. Because it was the doing of a particular community, should he not speak about it? His mission could not be successful by such suppression, he said.

As far as possible I have refrained from discussing the affairs in Noakhali in my speeches. But whenever I have had occasion to speak about Noakhali, I claim that I have spoken with great restraint. Do the Muslims want that I should not speak about the sins committed by them in Noakhali and that I should only speak about the sins of the Hindus in Bihar? If I do that, I will be a coward. To me the sins of the Noakhali Muslims and the Bihar Hindus are of the same magnitude and equally condemnable.

Gandhiji thereafter replying to another memorandum, which stated that the signatories had no confidence in the present Ministry, said:

I told the Hindus of Noakhali, who also expressed lack of confidence in Mr. Shaheed Suhrawardy, that they could not remove Shaheed Saheb from the Ministry as he was returned by the separate electorate system. So long as Shaheed Saheb enjoys the confidence of the community he represents, no one can remove him. Similarly, how can you remove the Ministers when they have been returned by the Hindu electorate? This unfortunate situation has been created by the communal electorate system which, you know, I have always condemned. Dr. Khan Saheb[2] also said the same thing the other day that so long as he enjoyed the confidence of the Pathans there was no question of his resignation. Moreover, what will happen if the Ministry goes out? There will again be the rule of the bureaucratic Government. That apart, I can take good work from these Ministers as my relationship with them is most friendly.

The Bihar Ministers have told me that if I asked them to resign, they would do so. But it would be wrong on my part to ask them to

[1] *Vide* "Statement Announcing 21-Day Fast", 18-9-1924

[2] Premier of the North-West Frontier Province

resign. I can ask them to do only what is reasonable.

Referring to the demand that fifty per cent of the officers and constables put in charge of new *thanas* [1] should be Muslims, Gandhiji replied:

I disapproved of the very same demand of the Noakhali Hindus. This demand cuts across my peace mission. If conceded, this will mean so many small Pakistans and a division of Bihar. After all, wherever you live, you have to live by creating mutual goodwill and friendly relations with your neighbours. Even the Quaid-e-Azam once said that in the Pakistan areas the majority must so behave as to win the confidence of the minority. In the same manner, I am urging upon the Hindus here to win your confidence. Either Pakistan or Hindustan, whichever is established, it must be based on justice and fair play.

Referring to another demand that the Muslims may be allowed to resettle in certain exclusive areas, Gandhiji said:

You cannot force the Government to keep you in certain exclusive areas. Could I tell that to Shaheed Saheb for the Noakhali Hindus? I never gave any encouragement to the Noakhali Hindus for such a move. I told the Hindus of Noakhali that if they were afraid, they could go anywhere if they got compensation. And why should the Government not pay compensation when they got the properties? Similarly, I will tell you to go anywhere provided you get adequate compensation. But I must tell you that it is not my heart's desire. Leaving your homestead in such a manner is nothing but cowardice. If the Government is not prepared to pay compensation, I should say it is unworthy of them and the Government cannot refuse it. Moreover, if the Ministers who have been returned by the Hindu votes say that the Hindus here have gone beyond control, it is better for them to consume themselves in the flames of the Hindu rage than to continue in office. The Government has to do justice and cannot afford injustice in any manner.

Referring thereafter to the Muslim grievances regarding the reported appointment of Mr. Justice Reuben to conduct the Bihar Riots Enquiry, Gandhiji said, the memorandum suggested that the Muslims had no faith in Mr. Reuben. But they never suggested whom they wanted. To hold anyone as a suspect simply because he was a non-Muslim was not right. Personally he would have liked the Judge to be a Muslim provided he was acceptable to all. Unfortunately in the vitiated atmosphere of

[1] New police stations that were being set up to create confidence among the refugees.

the times, Hindus did not trust the Muslims and the Muslims the Hindus.

We must have faith in some non-Muslim such as Mr. Justice Reuben. There is no harm in the one-man Commission. If the Muslims want, they can submit a panel of names from amongst which the commission should be appointed. Then I can inform the authorities. I am not one of those who would refuse to do anything simply because the League wants it. Truth alone should be our criterion, no matter who utters it.

With regard to the demand of restoration and finding out of abducted women, Gandhiji said:

Since my arrival in Bihar I have been telling all those Muslims who told me about the abducted girls to give me the names and the family connections of such girls in order to help find out if they were still alive. But till now not one name has been submitted to me. I again ask you to submit the names of the unfortunate girls.

In the meeting . . . was also present Mahant Bhagwat Das, M.L.A, against whom Muslims brought forward charges that he infuriated the Hindu mob during the riots. Bhagwat Das then stood up and told Gandhiji that he was innocent and asked the Muslims to bring forward specific instances to prove the charges.

It was further alleged that he was related to a notorious dacoit. The member of the Assembly denied that he was related to the dacoit in question. As for the allegations against him, he was prepared to face an inquiry by a body of Muslim Leaguers themselves. If they found him guilty, he would submit to any punishment. Even otherwise, he would carry out Gandhiji's orders.

Gandhiji remarked that if the dacoit referred to was still at large, every effort should be made to arrest him and all should co-operate with the Government to that end. Gandhiji said:

It is a challenge to the Government. If the Government fails to arrest the culprits it will stand discredited.

Turning to the member of the Assembly in question, he told him that a special responsibility rested upon him, he being a member from the locality. If the Muslims suspected him of complicity in the riots, he should resign his seat even though the suspicion against him was unfounded. To the Muslims Gandhiji said that they should seek God's truth only, prove their charges and if they could not be proved, unreservedly withdraw them.

Harijan, 13-4-1947, and *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. I, Bk. II, pp. 309-11

211. TALK WITH MUSLIM REFUGEES AND VILLAGE REPRESENTATIVES[1]

March 28, 1947

Gandhiji agreed with them that where the Muslims had in panic sold their property at ridiculously cheap prices they should be able to get the same back at those very rates. Police outposts should be opened at places where looting and destruction of property was still going on. An inquiry should be held into the conduct of the officers who were guilty of gross neglect of their duty during the disturbances, and those against whom the charges were established should be dismissed. It was further suggested to Gandhiji that attention should be paid to the irresponsible and communal-minded section of the Congress. Gandhiji replied that unlike the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha the Congress was meant to serve all. If it belied its nationalist character, it would destroy itself.

QUESTION: Does the experience that you have had and the atmosphere that you find around you lend you any hope of success in your mission of re-establishing lost confidence between the Hindus and Muslims?

GANDHIJI: Man can only try. The result is in the hands of God.

Addressing the village representatives, Gandhiji exhorted them to cleanse their hearts. If they told him they were innocent, he would not believe them. If a single Hindu had committed the crime, they were all responsible for it. Could he reassure the Muslims on their behalf, he asked, that the realization of their sin had been brought home to them and their hearts had been thoroughly cleansed by genuine repentance? If, on the other hand, they felt that in butchering the Muslims they had done the right thing, they should say so plainly, so that he might know exactly where he stood and decide his future course of action accordingly. For, he had sworn to "do or die" in Bihar.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Bk. II, p. 311

[1] In the afternoon Gandhiji met representatives from the surrounding villages and Muslim refugees. Gandhiji's answers to questions that had been asked at the meeting of the Muslim Refugees in the Morning were read out to them. They then proceeded to ask further questions. *Vide* also the preceding item.

212. TALK WITH CONGRESS WORKERS[1]

March 28, 1947

QUESTION: It is being said that Congressmen have taken quite an active part in the riots and there is an increasing tendency among the workers to take bribes.

GANDHIJI: I do not know whom I shall hold responsible for this. My faith in God, however, is not a whit shaken by it, rather it is strengthened. These incidents have shown me the persons I trust in their true colours. I will not be losing anything if they prove to be false, because they will be shunned wherever they go. I am not anyone's master, I am only an humble servant. When the dawn of independence is on the horizon, our people are indulging in such madness.

Q. The Muslims who fled their homes are trying to sell their properties at cheap rates and the Hindus naturally want to buy them. Should they do so?

G. Honesty demands that the deal should be fair. The Hindus should pay the Muslims a fair price for their properties. As a matter of fact, instead of buying, they should hold them in trust.

Q. Should we ask the Hindus not to buy their properties?

G. Yes. But it should not develop into a boycott as in Noakhali. We should not take advantage of the Muslims' distress.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol, I, Bk. II, pp. 311-2, and *Biharni Komi Agman,* p. 94.

213. TALK WITH POLICEMEN[2]

JEHANABAD,

March 28, 1947

Gandhiji told them that their strike was ill-advised and there was no convincing argument in favour of continuing it. They were not mere wage-earners. They were members of an essential service. Limbs of the law were expected to put duty before self-interest. If they continued their strike until their demand was conceded, it would jeopardize their case. They should, therefore, immediately and unconditionally call off the strike. The Government of the day was their own and there was no loss of dignity in surrendering to it. But they should follow his advice only if their leaders

[1] The account in *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase* has been collated with the Gujarati version in *Biharni Komi Agman.*

[2] The policemen who were on strike came to see Gandhiji at 1.15 p.m.

accepted it. While they belonged to their organization, loyalty demanded that they should consult their leaders before they acted upon his advice.

Gandhiji deprecated the growing rift between the Hindu and the Muslim policemen and told them that Hindu policemen should treat their Muslim colleagues as their brothers. Their conduct should be such that both Hindus and Muslims should have equal faith in them and the Muslims should not feel that for their protection they needed Muslim policemen and *vice versa*.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Bk. II, p. 313

214. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

ALLAHGANJ,
March 28, 1947

Gandhiji began by saying that he had passed a very full and heavy day. The day was begun with a long meeting[2] with the members of the local Muslim League at the bungalow of Mr. Azharul Haq, local League leader. He was with them for over an hour and had a hearty chat with them answering all kinds of questions. Then he had a meeting[3] at his residential quarters with Hindus and Muslims belonging to JEHANABAD and the surrounding villages. He had then a meeting[4] with the Congressmen which included members of the various Congress Committees. Later he met the members of the local Hindu Mahasabha. Finally he had a heart-to-heart talk[5] with over 25 members of the police force on strike. Then at half past three again he visited the villages of Malathi, Gangasagar, Bola and Allahganj, in which Muslims had suffered badly.

Referring to his visit to the villages, Gandhiji said that naturally he was full of topics on which he wanted to speak and bespeak their attention. He was sorry to say that Hindu repentance was not open and sincere enough to inspire confidence among the Muslims. He had told the afternoon meeting that it was open to the representative Hindus who were present at the meeting to disabuse the Muslims of their suspicion. He was sorry to say that not one Hindu got up to give the needed assurance. He had not the heart, therefore, to ask his Muslim hearers whether they (the Hindus) had cleansed their hearts. Muslims were the injured party in Bihar and it was not open to anyone to expect a satisfactory answer from them unless the guilty Hindu party had led the way

[1] The reports from *Harijan*, *The Indian Nation* and *The Hindu* have been collated.

[2] *Vide* "Talk with Muslim Refugees", 28-3-1947

[3] *Vide* "Talk with Muslim Refugees and Village Representative", 28-3-1947

[4] *Vide* "Talk with Congress Workers", 28-3-1947

[5] *Vide* the preceding item.

by repentance. There were, yet, ring-leaders like Mathura Singh at large and successfully evading arrest. There was, therefore, little cause for wonder if the Muslims were afraid to return to their respective villages. Gandhiji said that he could not help feeling that the culprit could not long remain at large if the Hindu population did not give him shelter. He asked Mathura Singh's friends and sympathizers to advise him to discover himself and face the consequences of his action. He would also like to tell him that it was no act of bravery for him to evade arrest. He was thus rendering a disservice to himself, his religion and his country. He suggested to the Congressmen, in whose midst the inhumanities were enacted, that they could not absolve themselves from the guilt, unless they made every effort to induce all the culprits to come out into the open and to wash their guilt as publicly as they had committed the crimes.

Continuing, Gandhiji said that he had visited a mosque in the village Bola which was damaged during the disturbances. He was told that on the day of Holi the mosque was again desecrated by some villagers who played Holi inside the mosque premises. If it was true, Gandhiji said, it was undoubtedly a notice given by them to the Muslims not to enter their homes even when they were rebuilt, not dare to visit the mosque. If this reported desecration on Holi day was a fact, it was a bad omen for the Hindus, for Bihar and for the whole country. He regretted the reported action of the local Hindus and warned them to respect all places of worship alike. He called upon the culprits to confess. But, Gandhiji regretted, new parties and new leaders had risen who believed in all sorts of crimes and perhaps nobody was prepared to listen to him. He recalled the theme of today's *bhajan* and prayed to God for help and hoped Bihar would come out of the difficulty now facing the province.

Gandhiji went on to say that he had heard at the Muslim League meeting in the morning and at the meeting of the Hindus and the Muslims in the afternoon that Mahant Bhagwat Das who was a member of the Bihar Legislative Assembly was himself a participator in the crime and was himself present at both the meetings. The speaker advised him whilst he was under suspicion to give up his membership. He was glad to say that Mahant Bhagwat Das, without a moment's hesitation, welcomed the advice and promised at once to act up to it. He also added that Bhagwat Das was in no way a participator directly or indirectly in the crime and that he was quite ready to face an open, impartial enquiry to be made by the Muslim League itself. If it was a sincere declaration, Gandhiji said, it was certainly a refreshing thing at a time when there was no real sign of sincere sorrow and repentance on the part of the Hindus in the affected areas. This he was obliged to say in spite of welcome letters of repentance to which he had made reference at the previous evening's meeting.

His attention has been drawn, Gandhiji said, to the fact that the Government lorry which had accompanied him in his tour was forcibly boarded by passers-by as if they had a right to travel in it even as the authorized occupants. He was sorry at the unmanly exhibition of authority and lawlessness. Such licence could not be tolerated even in the freest country in the world. Those who defied the law were digging the

grave of Indian independence before it was in their hands.

Gandhiji fervently appealed to all Bihar and through Bihar to the Indian people not to plunge the country into a turmoil in the prelude to the dawn of freedom over this land which he called the *arunodaya* of the new age. Gandhiji warned the nation to awaken before the day of freedom dawned, just as all good men were up from slumber and prayed before sunrise.

Gandhiji set at rest all speculation about his visit to Delhi in response to Lord Mountbatten's invitation by announcing that he was leaving Bihar for three or four days. Gandhiji said he was determined to stay in Bihar and see the work he had taken up through and no man could prevent him from doing it. God alone could keep him away if He so desired.[1]

Harijan, 13-4-1947, *The Indian Nation*, 30-3-1947, and *The Hindu, 31-3-1947*

215. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

PATNA,
March 29, 1947

MY DEAR KU.,

I wrote to you thoughtlessly a few days ago.[2] But having now got your letter of the 22nd instant[3] I feel that the healthy rule which prevents the members of constructive organizations from becoming members of the Working Committee should not be tampered with however tempting a particular offer may be. What the President can do however is to invite you and such other members when expert advice is wanted on village matters. If you were a fullfledged member you would be obliged to give your thought to many other matters which did not fall within your jurisdiction as a village scavenger. Hence my opinion is that we must resist this temptation. However, I am likely to see the President during the next few days. I shall discuss the matter with him and if there is anything to change my view I shall write again.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

SHRI J. C. KUMARAPPA
WARDHA

From a photostat: G. N. 10192

[1] With this Gandhiji concluded the third part of his tour in Bihar.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to J. C. Kumarappa", 16-3-1947
[3] In which the addressee had sought Gandhiji's advice regarding the Congress President's request to him "to serve on the Working Committee in the place of Jayaprakash Narayan"

216. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

PATNA,
March 29, 1947

At the outset Gandhiji told the audience that he would be leaving for Delhi the next day and hoped to return in about four or five days.

Gandhiji then feelingly referred to the death on the previous evening of Prof. Abdul Bari, President of the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee, under tragic circumstances. Prof. Bari was a disciple and co-worker of Dr. Rajendra Prasad. Dr. Rajendra Prasad has built for himself a unique and undisputed position and influence in the province by his service and sacrifice. Prof. Bari had also by his service in the cause of the workers in Jamshedpur and other places endeared himself to the people and risen to occupy the position of the President of the Provincial Congress Committee. A fearless fighter, Prof. Bari was with the Congress during the different phases of its struggle for freedom.

Gandhiji referred to his visit earlier in the day to Prof. Bari's house to console the members of the bereaved family and ask them not to grieve and to hearten them for the work that had specially descended upon the weak shoulders of his children. Gandhiji said that as he entered the house he was struck with its simplicity and the simple life Prof. Bari had led. The house was located in an ordinary narrow lane and what he saw inside the house fully bore out what everyone had said about Prof. Bari, that he was a poor man and that though he had opportunities he scrupulously maintained his integrity as far as public finances were concerned. At a time when the administration of the country was in the Congress hands and crores of rupees had to be administered, men of Prof. Bari's honesty would have been of invaluable help. He had hoped on his return from the third tour just finished, to be more closely associated with him and to make an effective appeal to him to modify, if not altogether get rid of, his short temper which went ill with the very high office, in fact the highest in the province of Bihar, especially when there was a nationalist ministry at the head of affairs which naturally had to be influenced by the premier provincial Congress organization. Gandhiji said that he had had full faith in Prof. Bari and had known that his word carried great weight with him. But God had willed otherwise and He had deprived Bihar of the great service of a very brave man with the heart of a *fakir.* But men like Bari never died, and it was for those who remained to carry on the noble work he had left behind.

Gandhiji then referred to the circumstances of Prof. Bari's death and said that

[1] Extracted from "Gandhiji's Bihar Tour Diary"

in an unfortunate altercation that had ensued between him and one Gurkha member of the anti-smuggling force and a former member of the Indian National Army, the latter shot him. He warned the audience that there was no politics of any kind in the death and that it would be wrong and unjustified to associate the whole I. N. A. organization with the death of Prof. Bari because of what one single individual did.

Harijan, 13-4-1947

217. LETTER TO SYED ZAFAR IMAM

PATNA,
March 30, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I see upto the time of writing you have not acknowledged my letter of 26th instant.[1] As unfortunately I have to go to Delhi, I hope only for a few days, I must refer to the first paragraph of your letter of 25th instant. I wish you would disabuse your mind of the impression that anything hangs on my actually witnessing all the damage done during the wretched carnage. I have, therefore, advised the ministers to be as speedy as possible in clearing all debris and rebuilding all damaged property. This essential work ought not to stop for a single day especially because of the impending rains. If there is anything, [any] particular damage which you would like me to see I would suggest your taking Shrimati Mridulabehn Sarabhai with you to see it. It would be as good as my seeing it.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Syed Jafar Imam", 29-4-1947

218. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

ON TRAIN,
March 30, 1947

What do you two[1] want to do in Delhi? I shall have little time to talk. I have become perfectly useless for such things now. If success attends my effort in Bihar and Noakhali I shall live.

Where would you want to stay˙˙˙ in Delhi? Who are they? What is he doing? I do not know what is going to happen in Delhi. I have only two with me this time. Let us see.

Supposing that your hearing is restored, why not the million deaf people also should have the restoration?[2] And how would it benefit humanity? Do you know that Beethoven the great musician was deaf? You are worrying about nothing. But that is my view. You must do what you think is best for you.

In your place I should welcome this deafness. You are spared much useless hearing. There is no harm in friends writing what they wish to tell you .

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

219. A NOTE[3]

ON THE TRAIN,
March 30, 1947

Meet the prisoners if they[4] permit you to do so. But offer them only as much as Jayaprakash suggests. I do not want that he and I should differ on this issue. The real work is to be done by him. I have no doubt at all that my policy is absolutely correct. The Chief Minister should grant you permission to meet them. He should not even think that you will help any party of Socialists. If any political gain is made out of it, it would be a poisonous legacy of the British rulers. A volunteer cannot be in a party. As far as possible the police

[1] The addressee and his wife Gangi Hingorani

[2] The addressee had sought Gandhiji's approval to proceed to the United States for treatment of his deafness.

[3] According to the G. N. register this was addressed to Dr. Syed Mahmud. But from the form of address it appears to have been written to a lady. The note carries the remark : "Regarding the Police".

[4] The Government

prisoners should be released. The cases of those charged with murder will have to be considered separately. The duty of the police is to remain faithful to the government of the time. Today's Government is counted as the people's Government. Here the question of capitalist and labour does not arise. A solution can be found to the problems. The police should keep aloof from them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G. N. 5099

220. INTERVIEW WITH LORD MOUNTBATTEN[1]

April 1, 1947

Gandhiji asked the Viceroy if Manu[2] could in the meantime roam about the garden so that they could proceed with their talk uninterrupted.

"Certainly", replied the Viceroy. Then addressing Manu he added: "All this is yours; we are only trustees. We have come to make it over to you." Gandhiji put in laughing:

You can search her person for any hidden arms.

"I am perfectly satisfied there can be no need for that in a disciple of yours," replied the Viceroy with a smile.

The Viceroy told Gandhiji that it had always been the British policy not to yield anything to force, but the Mahatma's non-violence had won. They had decided to quit as a result of India's non-violent struggle. Towards the close, on being invited to do so, Gandhiji placed before the astonished Viceroy his solution to the Indian deadlock.[3]

He reiterated what he had said often before, that he did not mind Jinnah or the Muslim League turning the whole of India into Pakistan, provided it was done by appeal to reason and not under threat of violence. But while he had previously held that this could be properly done only after the British had quitted, and while in principle he still adhered to that view, the crux of his present proposal was that he was now prepared under Mountbatten's umpireship—not as Viceroy but as man—to invite Jinnah to form a government of his choice at the centre and to present his Pakistan plan for acceptance even before the transfer of power. The Congress could

[1] Gandhiji called on the Viceroy at 9 a.m. At their meeting the previous day, the talk had mostly centred round Gandhiji's early life, his sojourn in England and subsequent struggles in South Africa and India.

[2] Who along with Brijkrishna Chandiwala had brought in Gandhiji's lunch

[3] For the outline of Gandhiji's plan, *vide* "Outline of Draft Agreement", 4-4-1947

give its whole-hearted support to the Jinnah Government. At the same time since the Muslim League would now be the Government, it would have no further excuse for continuing the movements of organized lawlessness, which it had launched in some of the provinces. These must be called off. Further, since the Viceroy had declared that he was out to do justice only and nothing would be yielded to force, if the League did not accept the offer, the same offer *mutatis mutandis* should be made to the Congress. The old policy of trying to please both the parties must be given up.

Gandhiji told the Viceroy that the system of British policy of "divide and rule" had brought about a situation in which the only alternative to a continuation of the British rule, which they had found was no longer feasible, was to accept the logic of the "Quit India" demand and retire unconditionally, leaving India to her fate. The role of peace–maker in the "communal triangle" which they had themselves helped to create was not for them.[1]

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 77-9

221. DISCUSSION AT INTER-ASIAN RELATIONS CONFERENCE [2]

April 1, 1947

The Azerbaijan delegate, Mr. Yousotoff, who was presiding at the Plenary Session, requested Gandhiji to say a few words.

Gandhiji replied that he would be attending the closing session of the Conference on April 2 and would speak then. For the present, he would answer any questions that the members might like to put to him.

In answer to a question whether he believed in the theory of one world and whether it would succeed under the present conditions, Gandhiji declared:

I would not like to live in this world if it is not to be one world. Certainly I should like to see this dream realized in my lifetime.

I hope that all the representatives who have come here from the different Asian countries will strive their level best to have only one world. They will have to think out ways and means for achieving this goal.

If you work with fixed determination, there is no doubt that in

[1] For an account of the interview as recorded by the Viceroy, *vide* "Interview with Lord Mountbatten", 1-4-1947

[2] The Conference, attended by 250 delegates representing 22 Asian countries and 10,000 visitors, had been inaugurated on March 23, 1947, at the Red Fort by Jawaharlal Nehru.

The report in *Harijan* under the title "Strive for One World", has been collated with the version in *The Hindu.*

our own generation we will certainly realize this dream.

Dr. Han Liwu from China asked him his views on the proposal to set up an Asian institute. Gandhiji replying said:

The question is certainly very nice. Let me confess my ignorance. I have really to apologize to you. Pandit Nehru had asked me long before this Conference was scheduled to take place whether it would at all be possible for me to attend it. It has proved to be a much more important conference than it was expected to be. I was obliged to say at that time that I was very sorry and would not be able to come.[1] When Lord Mountbatten, the new Viceroy, invited me to meet him, however, I could not say 'No'. It would have been foreign to my nature to do so. The Viceroy had already told me that the credit for bringing me to Delhi during the Asian Conference was really his. And I told the Viceroy: "I am your prisoner. But I am also Pandit Nehru's prisoner, for, after all, he is your Vice-President !"

Through correspondence I know almost all parts of the world and naturally, therefore, of Asia, though I know very few of you personally—perhaps none of you. I am doubtful whether I can say anything useful but the question is one after my heart. Some portions of the question put to me now were discussed by Pandit Nehru yesterday. It is a great event that for the first time in our history such a conference takes place on the Indian soil. I am sorry that I have to refer to the conditions that we see today. We do not know how to keep peace between ourselves. We have so many differences which we cannot settle between ourselves in a humane and friendly manner. We think we must resort to the law of the jungle. It is an experience which I would not like you to carry to your respective countries. I would instead like you to bury it here.

India is now on the threshold of complete independence. India wants to be independent of everybody who wants to own this country. We do not want a change of masters. We want to be masters on our own soil, though I am not quite sure how it will come about. All that we know is that we should do our duty and leave the results in the hands of God and not in the hands of man. Man is supposed to be the maker of his destiny. It is only partly true. He can make his destiny, only in so far as he is allowed by the Great Power which overrides all out intentions, all our plans and carries out His own plans.

I call that Great Power not by the name of Allah, not by the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 26-2-1947

name of Khuda or God but by the name of Truth. For me, Truth is God and Truth overrides all our plans. The whole truth is only embodied within the heart of that Great Power—Truth. I was taught from my early days to regard Truth as unapproachable—something that you cannot reach. A great Englishman taught me to believe that God is unknowable. He is knowable but knowable only to the extent that our limited intellect allows.

You, gentlemen, have come here from different parts of Asia, and having come with eagerness and zest you should all have yearly meetings or two-yearly or three-yearly conferences. You should carry away sweet memories of the meetings and make every effort to build the great edifice of Truth.

All the Asian representatives have come together. Is it in order to wage a war against Europe, against America or against non-Asiatics? I say most emphatically 'No'. This is not India's mission. I am free to confess that I will feel extremely sorry if India, having won independence through essentially and predominantly non-violent means, was going to use that independence for the suppression of the other parts of the world. Europeans have hitherto exploited different races inhabiting this vast continent called Asia. It will be a sorry thing if we go away from this Conference without a fixed determination that Asia shall live and live as free as any Western nation. I just wanted to say that conferences like the present one should meet regularly, and if you ask me where, India is the place. You will forgive me for this partiality for India.

Harijan, 20-4-1947, and *The Hindu*, 2-4-1947

222. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
April 1, 1947

Today as soon as Manu Gandhi uttered the first word of the *Kalma* from the Koran a young man stood up, marched right up to the stage where Gandhiji sat and said, "You go away from here. This is a Hindu temple where we will not allow a Muslim prayer. You have been repeatedly telling this thing to us but our mothers and sisters continue to be slaughtered. We cannot tolerate it any longer." Gandhiji told him:

You are free to go. If you do not want to pray let the others do

it. This place does not belong to you. This is not the right way.[1]

You did not do the right thing. You forcibly removed the young man from the meeting. You should not have done such a thing. It would give him a sense of triumph. He was very excited. He did not wish to listen to the prayer. But I know that you all wish to listen to it. I do not wish to hold the prayer in spite of protests. Now I intend to give up the rest of the prayer. You are all familiar with the prayer I offer. You have heard it even before I went to Noakhali. In my sequence of prayers, the Muslim prayer is followed by the Parsi prayer. After that this girl would have sung to you a *bhajan* in her melodious voice and then there would have been *Ramdhun.* But now I am leaving out the Parsi prayer and also the *Ramdhun*. *Auz-o-Billahi* is the beginning of one of the verses of the Koran. You think that uttering this expression is an insult to Hinduism. But I am a true sanatani Hindu. My Hinduism tells me that along with the Hindu prayer I should also offer the Muslim prayer and the Parsi and Christian prayers. True Hinduism lies in offering prayers of all religions because only he is a good Hindu who is also a good Muslim and a good Parsi. The young man said that this was a Hindu temple and such prayers could not be held here. But that is wild talk. This temple belongs to the Bhangis. Even a single Bhangi can throw me out of this place if he so desires. But these people love me. They know that I am a Hindu. Jugal Kishore Birla, on the other hand, is my brother. He is a big man in terms of money but he regards me an elder. He has put me up here because he considers me a pious HIndu. He also takes me to the big temple built by him. If in spite of all this the young man insists that I should go away and I cannot pray here, it is merely his arrogance. But you should have won him over with love. You threw him out by force. What is the point in offering prayers by resorting to force? The young man was in a rage and in his anger was talking wild things. It was out of such talk that all those things happened in the Punjab. This rage is what starts all the fanaticism.

The *shlokas* just recited by this girl say that when a man broods on objects of the senses—that is, all the five senses—he is caught up in craving. Then he is possessed by wrath which leads to stupefaction,

[1] But the young man could not be silenced. He came close to Gandhiji. People tried to pull him back but he stood firm and persisted in arguing. A lady put herself between Gandhiji and the young man. Gandhiji asked her to keep away, saying, "Let no one stand between me and him." But the people removed the young man from the meeting.

i.e., insanity.[1]

Driven by such frenzy the simple folk of Bihar have indulged in such acts as make me hang my head down in shame. In the same mad fury the people of Noakhali indulged in excesses. But the law of the jungle was more in evidence in Bihar than in Noakhali and it was even more so in the Punjab.

If you are true Hindus, you should not act in such a manner. If in a meeting something is being said which we do not like to hear we must get up and leave the meeting. There is no need to shout and make a row. Moreover, this is a matter of religion. Leave alone religious discussion this man would not even allow people to pray. Prayers should not be disturbed as was done by this young man. Such acts help no one.

None of those who have died in the Punjab will ever come back. Ultimately all of us have to go the same way. If is true that these people met their death by being slaughtered whereas others die of cholera or in some other way. He who is born is destined to die. In being born there is, to an extent, some human responsibility, but in the matter of dying, none but God has any hand. Death cannot be avoided on any account. Death is our companion, our friend. If people have died with courage, they have lost nothing. Rather, they have gained something. But the great problem is how to deal with those who committed these murders. True, to err is human. After all man is but a bundle of errors. But we ought to rectify the errors. God will not overlook our acts. When we go to Him He will look into our hearts. He knows our hearts. If there is a change of heart in us, he will pardon all our lapses.

I have many friends in the Punjab who call themselves my devoted followers. But who am I that they should describe themselves as such? All these friends insist that since I have already come as far as Delhi I should go over to the Punjab at least for one night, so as to comfort the people there. It would take only a few hours if I fly. But how can I go at somebody's bidding? I shall go there only at God's bidding or at the bidding of my own heart. I did not go to Noakhali at someone else's call. Before leaving this place I had said that I was going there because my heart urged me to do so. People had been for long asking me to go to Bihar but I had not gone there at anyone's call. I went when Dr. Mahmud Saheb wrote to me that my going there would alone clear the minds of the Biharis.

[1] *Bhagavadgita,* II. 62 and 63

Bihar is a province where Hindus and Muslims can live together [in peace]. But there too women and children have been subjected to outrages no less violent. Blind with fury, people killed innocent children; they slaughtered the womenfolk and threw the bodies into the wells. I am not talking in the air. All these are facts that can be proved by evidence. After that the Muslims are bound to say that they would not live there. But once they are assured that they would not be treated like that again, they would come back. The Bihari Muslims had nearly come to appreciate this ; so much so that if we could have reassured them, I was confident that the Muslims who had fled to Asansol and Sind would have come back. They were on the point of returning. But now, should the atrocities in the Punjab be avenged in Bihar? Then, will it be repeated in Madras? And where will this end? Will all of us become barbarous in this way? The Congress fought a non-violent battle against the British. Should we now start killing our own brethren? True, Muslims are perpetrating atrocities, but should we also do the same? Was there an act of atrocity that the British did not commit?

But now the British are going. The Viceroy told me that they had never retreated, but they were leaving India, as a result of her non-violent struggle. You might say that they are doing it for show, because in any case they had got to go. But, if anyone comes to us with honest intentions, why should we interpret his honesty as wickedness? I have learnt to accept honesty on the face of it till I have experience to the contrary. Just at the moment of the departure of the British should we present the spectacle of pleading for the retention of their army although they are leaving? In the Punjab today we are protected solely by them. But can we call it protection? I wish we could protect ourselves even if only a handful of us survived. Let us not be afraid of dying. If we are to be killed, would we not rather be killed by our Muslim brothers? Would a brother cease to be a brother because he has changed his religion? Moreover, do we not indulge in the same acts as they do? What have we not done to the women in Bihar? The Hindus have done it, which means I have done it. It is a matter of shame. Do you think I should hurl two abuses in return for one? But that is exactly what both the Hindus and the Muslims are secretly doing and they are possessed by a mad frenzy.

Here is Badshah Khan sitting right beside me. Who can remove him from here? How much prayer did I leave unfinished because of

that young man? I did so because I wanted to demonstrate, I wanted to proclaim to one and all that I would be a good Hindu only if I am a good Parsi, a good Muslim. Would it be religious to abuse other religions? For me, there is nothing like different religions.

All these people who have come from all over Asia[1] talk very lovingly to Jawaharlal. They are all very pleased with him. By the grace of God, we have a gem of a man in our midst who wants to embrace the whole world. Should we not maintain peace if only to honour him?

Now let me say a few things about the Viceroy. I was with him yesterday for more than two hours, and therefore could not come for the prayers. Fortunately the girl started the prayers as I had instructed her. Today also I talked with the Viceroy for two hours.[2] He said that he was making an honest effort. He assured me that he was the last Viceroy. He said he never wanted to come to India. He wanted to be on the seas but he came here because he was prevailed upon.

He was sent here when the Labour Government of Great Britain decided to quit India, since he belongs to the royal family. The British want to depart from India with grace. He said he was eager to hand over this country even to a single Parsi if he came forward to take it, not to mention a Hindu or a Muslim. Why should I not listen to one who comes to me with such honest intentions? The British have done us enough harm in the past. But Lord Mountbatten has done us no harm. He says that he would like to be a servant right from today if it were possible. But it is not proper that he should run away while we are fighting with each other. He, after all, belongs to a brave race. Why should he run away? He is thinking of the manner in which he should leave the country. He is making good efforts. He is proceeding honourably. If we too proceed accordingly, what has never before happened will happen now. If anyone wants to accommodate a fellow who would not conduct himself honourably but would act barbarously, let him learn from me how to do it. I am a prisoner of the Viceroy till Friday. Jawahar also wants to detain me here. After three days I shall tell you everything. I do not want to hide anything. But what can possibly happen? Whatever the Congress decides will be done; nothing will be according to what I say. Mr writ runs no more. If it did the tragedies in the Punjab, Bihar and Noakhali would not

[1] For the Inter-Asian Relations Conference

[2] *Vide* "Interview with Lord Mountbatten", 1-4-1947, and "Interview With Lord Mountbatten", 1-4-1947

have happened. No one listens to me any more. I am a small man. True, there was a time when mine was a big voice. Then everyone obeyed what I said; now neither the Congress nor the Hindus nor the Muslims listen to me. Where is the Congress today? It is disintegrating. I am crying in the wilderness. Today everyone can forsake me but God will not. He has His devotee tested. An English poem[1] describes God as the "Hound of Heaven". He is the retriever of dharma, i.e., He seeks out dharma. It would be enough if He hears me. When God rules your hearts you will do only as He bids. We should therefore behave like rational creatures. We ought not to let loose our tongues at the slightest provocation.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana-Pravachan—Part I, pp. 5-11

223. TALK WITH MANU GANDHI

April 1, 1947

It is here that my non-violence will undergo its true test. But you are in charge of conducting the prayer. The purity and sincerity with which you conduct the prayer is sure to have its impact on the general public. The people will learn a new lesson through it. Your responsibility in this regard is indeed great. And if the recitation of *Ramanama* is from the heart Rama will himself inspire right-mindedness in all. I have no doubt about it.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 118

[1] By Francis Thompson (1859-1907)

224. A LETTER

April 2, 1947

I have come here but I could see the Sardar only for a few minutes. His field of work has grown so vast that I do not like to engage him in talks. I would rather not encroach upon his time even to know his views about me and about *Harijan.* When I look at the work-schedule of the Cabinet I feel as if I had more time than they. It looks surprising, yet it is true.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 120

225. ADVICE TO MAHARAJA OF KAPURTHALA[1]

April 2, 1947

All you can expect to hear from me is that you should cease to be a ruler and become a servant of the people. I can say no more.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 121

226. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

DELHI,
April 2, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

If there is anybody who intends today to object to the prayers, as was done yesterday, I should like to be informed so that I may not begin the prayers at all. I do not wish to hold the prayers in the face of opposition by anyone.

Two persons stood up and said, "If you wish to have your prayers you should hold them in the grounds outside this Hindu temple."

GANDHIJI: This temple belongs to Bhangis. I too am a Bhangi. It would be a different matter if the Trustees object. I shall hold the prayers in this very place if you would let me do so.

A YOUNG MAN: This temple belongs to the public. We have seen what has

[1] This was given to Sir Jagatjit Singh Bahadur, who met Gandhiji and sought his advice.

happened in the Punjab. We shall certainly not allow you to hold the prayers.

GANDHIJI: I do not wish to enter into an argument. Let me tell you with due respect that you can't represent the Bhangis. I am a Bhangi by choice. I have removed night-soil. If I ask you, you will not be able to do so. Even so if you object I shall not hold the prayers.

"We wish to hear the prayers. We want to have the prayers", people shouted.

GANDHIJI: Among these thousands of people you are the only two persons who are putting an obstruction. If does not behove you. I know you are full of anger. I shall have the prayers, but not unless you calm yourselves and try to understand.

The young man shouted: "If you want to recite the verses of the *Gita* in a mosque, will the Muslims allow you to do so? We have witnessed so much in the Punjab."

GANDHIJI: It is not necessary to shout. You are not protecting Hindu dharma by doing so, in fact you are murdering it. I am not postponing the prayer out of fear. If anybody wants to stop me once I have started the prayers I shall not stop even if I am killed. And you will see I shall be reciting *Rama Rahim* and *Krishna Karim*[1] when I breathe my last. I have told you that I am a Bhangi, a Christian, a Muslim, besides of course being a Hindu. How can you stop me when Badshah Khan is here with me? But you may stop me, even a child can do so.

YOUNG MAN: Go to the Punjab.

GANDHIJI: What shall I do by going there? I am straining every nerve to do what service I can for the Punjab, Bihar and Noakhali even while remaining here.

Some persons tried to remove the young man.

GANDHIJI: Please do not push him. Be patient.

YOUNG MAN: Give us four minutes, we would like to talk to you.

GANDHIJI I don't have the time and I don't want to enter into an argument. I would only urge upon you respectfully to tell me in the affirmative or negative [whether I should hold the prayer or not].

YOUNG MAN: We shall not allow you to hold the prayers.

[1] According to the source after his return from Noakhali, Gandhiji replaced the refrain *Bhaj man pyare Sitaram* by *Bhaj man pyare Rama Rahim, bhaj man pyare Krishna Karim.*

GANDHIJI: Everyone should remain seated peacefully. I am going. No one should molest these persons. You may consider this to be your triumph but is it so? Is it bravery to stab anybody in the back? I must say that by doing so you are murdering Hinduism. You must try to think and understand. I will put the same question to you tomorrow and if you object to the prayers I shall go away.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana-Pravachan—Part I, pp. 11-3

227. SPEECH AT INTER-ASIAN RELATIONS CONFERENCE [1]

April 2, 1947

I do not think that I should apologize to you for having to speak in a foreign tongue. I wonder if this loud speaker carries my voice to the farthest end of this vast audience. If some of those who are far away are unable to hear what I may say, it will be the fault of the loud speaker.

I was going to tell you that I do not wish to apologize. I dare not. You cannot understand the provincial language which is my mother ton-gue. I do not want to insult you by speaking in my own language (Guja-rati). Our national speech in Hindustani. I know that it will be a long time before it can be made into an international speech. For international commerce, undoubtedly, English occupies the first place. I used to hear that French was the language of diplomacy. I was told when I was young that if I wanted to go from one end of Europe to the other, I must try to pick up French. I tried to learn French in order that I may be able to make myself understood. There is a rivalry between French and English. Having been taught English I have naturally to resort to that language.

I was wondering as to what I was to say to you. I wanted to collect my thoughts but, let me confess to you, I had no time. Yet I had promised yesterday that I would try to say a few words. While I was coming with Badshah Khan I asked for a little piece of paper and pencil. I got a pen instead of a pencil. I tried to scribble a few words. You will be sorry to hear from me that that piece of paper is not by my side though I remember what I wanted to say.

[1] The version in Harijan entitled "The Message of Asia", has been collated with *The Hindu* report. More than 25,000 persons attended the concluding session presided over by Sarojini Naidu. Gandhiji spoke in Hindi.

You, friends, have not seen the real India and you are not meeting in conference in the midst of real India. Delhi, Bombay, Madras, Calcutta, Lahore—all these are big cities and are, therefore, influenced by the West.

I then thought of a story. It was in French and was translated for me by an Anglo-French philosopher. He was an unselfish man. He befriended me without having known me because he always sided with the minorities. I was not then in my own country. I was not only in a hopeless minority but in a despised minority, if the Europeans in South Africa will forgive me for saying so. I was a coolie lawyer. At that time we had no coolie doctors, not coolie lawyers. I was the first in the field. You know perhaps what is meant by the word coolie.

This friend—his mother was a French woman and his father an Englishman—said: "I want to translate for you a French story. There were three scientists who went out from France in search of truth. They went to different parts of Asia. One of them found his way to India. He began to search. He went to the socalled cities of those times—naturally this was before British occupation, before even the Moghul period. He saw the socalled high-caste people, men and women, and he felt at a loss. Finally, he went to a humble cottage in a humble village. That was the cottage of a Bhangi and there he found the truth that he was in search of."

If you realy want to see India at its best [*sic*], you have to find it in the humble Bhangi homes of such villages. There are 7,00,000 of such villages and 38 crores of people inhabit them.

If some of you see the villages, you will not be fascinated by the sight. You will have to scratch below the dung heap. I do not say that they ever were heavenly places. Today they are really dung-heaps. They were not like that before. What I say is not from history but from what I have seen myself I have travelled from one end of India to the other and have seen the miserable specimen of humanity with lustreless eyes. They are India. In these humble cottages, in the midst of these dung-heaps, are to be found the humble Bhangis in whom you find the concentrated essence of wisdom.

Again, I have learnt from books—books written by English historians. We read books written in English by English historians but we do not write in our own mother tongue or in the national language—Hindustani. We study our history through English books rather than through the originals. That is the cultural conquest which

India has undergone.

Stating that wisdom had come to the West from the East, Gandhiji said:

The first of these wise men was Zoroaster. He belonged to the East. He was followed by the Buddha who belonged to the East—India. Who followed the Buddha? Jesus, who came from the East. Before Jesus was Moses who belonged to Palestine though he was born in Egypt. After Jesus came Mohammed. I omit any reference to Krishna and Rama and other lights. I do not call them lesser lights but they are less known to the literary world. All the same I do not know of a single person in the world to match these men of Asia. And then what happened? Christianity became disfigured when it went to the West. I am sorry to have to say that. I would not talk any furher.

I have told you the story in order to make you understand that what you see in the big cities is not the real India. Certainly, the carnage that is going on before our very eyes is a shameful thing. As I said yesterday, do not carry the memory of that carnage beyond the confines of India.

What I want you to understand is the message of Asia. It is not to be learnt through the Western spectacles or by imitating the atom bomb. If you want to give a message to the West, it must be the message of love and the message of truth. I want you to go away with the thought that Asia has to conquer the West through love the truth. I do not want merely to appeal to your heads. I want to capture your hearts.

Of course, I believe in "one world". How can I possibly do otherwise, when I became an inheritor of the message of love that these great unconquerable teachers left for us? In this age of democracy, in this age of awakening of the poorest of the poor, you can redeliver this message with the greatest emphasis. You will complete the conquest of the West not through vengeance because you have been exploited, but with real understanding. I am confident that if all of you put your hearts together—not merely heads—to understand the secret of the message these wise men of the East have left to us, and if we really become worthy of that great message, the conquest of the West will be complete. This conquest will be loved by the West itself.

The West is today pining for wisdom. It is despairing of the multiplication of the atom bomb, because atom bombs mean utter

destruction not merely of the West but of the whole world, as if the prophesy of the Bible was going to be fulfilled and there was to be a perfect deluge. It is up to you to tell world of its wickedness and sin—that is the teaching your teachers and my teachers have taught Asia.

Harijan, 20-4-1947, and *The Hindu*, 3-4-1947

228. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

PATNA,
April 3, 1947

SATISH BABU
KAZIRKHIL
CAMP NOAKHALI

SEND BULLETIN IN ENGLISH.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

229. A TALK [1]

April 3, 1947

We must project ourselves in a better light in foreign countries. Foreigners observe us with a view to learning something from us. But we, in our turn, come under their spell. As a matter of fact we should try to impress them with what is our own. For instance, while there we should insist on wearing khadi, should ply the charkha regularly, abstain from smoking, drinking and taking tea and should have vegetarian food if possible. We must live as simply as possible, conforming to our way of life. If we do this, we shall be able to impress the people there and enhance our country's glory. We should demonstrate to them the advantages of our way of life. What is the true meaning of appointing our ambassadors in those countries or their ambassadors in our country? It means that these ambassadors, through their conduct and manner of dressing and their food habits, should reveal their own cultural heritage to the other country so that it can benefit from it. Such mutually advantageous exchanges would spread friendliness which in turn would promote world peace, and this

[1] On the conduct of Indian ambassadors abroad

would enable people to live in harmony and peace and make progress. In my opinion this is the basic purpose of appointing ambassadors in every country. No doubt there are distinct international advantages accruing from this in the commercial and economic spheres, but the most signifi- cant is the former advantage. Hence we must take great care to see that our representatives exhibit no undesirable trait. Then alone would we shine forth and rise from our present backward state. There is a saying in English that if wealth is lost nothing is lost, if health is lost much is lost but if honour is lost everything is lost.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 130-1

230. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
April 3, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Yesterday there were only two or three persons who wanted to stop the prayers, but today the matter has gone further. I have received a letter written by the president of some scavengers' union. It says that I must not stay here. Just look at the ordeal an old man like me has to go through. But the president of the scavengers' union here is another person. After all I am a scavenger myself and all my scavenger friends here listen to me. I have been staying here after consulting them and will continue to stay. Moreover, Jugal Kishore Birla is the boss here. He has put me up here. When the person who has accommodated me does not ask me to leave, why should I go?

Again today I shall ask you whether I should hold the prayer or not. But before that I would like to ask if you have understood what I said to you yesterday. If you have, you would have realized why I stopped the prayer yesterday. If somebody tells me not to hold the prayer or that, if I did, I may not include the recitation from the Koran, should I accept defeat and continue the prayer? I am not going to give up the prayer even if I have to lose my life. Those who stop the prayer in this manner do not advance Hinduism but harm it. Yesterday there were only two or three such persons ; today there are many.

I am disturbed by what I heard today. I hope it is not true—

namely, that the persons obstructing prayers belong to a big organization[1].

But those who do physical exercises and drill here every morning and are members of that organization love me. If they do not want me to stay here there is no point in my staying on. I must not remain here. But I had a talk with their leader. He said that it was not their intention to harm anyone. The Sangh was not formed to oppose anyone. True, they had not accepted my method of non-violence; but they were willing to confine themselves within the Congress discipline. So long as the Congress rules non-violently they would remain peaceful. He thus talked with me very cordially.

If you still want to stop me, then kindly do not come here from tomorrow. I do not wish to hold prayers in this manner. I am made of different stuff. If I am a Hindu, I am also a Muslim. And the Sikhs are almost Hindus. I have seen the Granth Sahib. In many parts it is Hinduism to the letter—the religion I follow. Hence, with great humility I request you to remain peaceful because I would stop the prayer even at a child's wish. If you want to recite God's name by creating a row you would be acting like a devil although you may be uttering the name of God. And I can never do the work of the devil. I am a devotee of God alone.

Please do not take it as cowardice on my part. Had you been in large numbers and had all of you insisted that I should not hold the prayer, I would certainly have carried on. I would have asked you to cut my throat and continued the prayer. But here in the presence of so many of you, a handful of persons want to stop me. If you suppress them and insist on my continuing the prayer it would be the act of a devil and I cannot follow the devil. He who is God's enemy is the devil. I cannot co-operate with the devil. My method of resisting is like Rama's. During the battle between Rama and Ravana Vibhishana asked Rama how he would fight against Ravana without a chariot. Rama then pointed out how one could fight a war with the help of qualities like truthfulness, valour and so on. Rama was a devotee of God and talked like one. I have regarded Rama not as God but as a devotee. Later on from a devotee he came to be regarded as God. Tulsidas too has described Rama as without a body. This One without form pervades all forms. Him we worship. I am a worshipper of this Rama. How can I ever worship Ravana? You may kill me, spit in my

[1] The Rashtriya wayamsevak Sangh

face but I shall go on repeating *Rama Rahim* and *Krishna Karim* till my last breath. And even at the moment you shower blows on me I shall not blame you. Nor shall I complain to God whatever may be done to me. I am His devotee. I shall accept His wish.

But today, even if a child wants me to stop, I shall stop the prayer. I shall leave the place. Please remain seated in silence and do not indulge in arguments. Silence is also a form of prayer, and my prayer is not meant for the world to see. It is for peace of mind, for cleansing the heart. In the present circumstances we cannot cleanse our hearts by praying while they are full of anger. Hence, let us consider silence itself as prayer.

If people forced me down from all sides, stopped me from praying and under pain of bodily injury I discontinued the prayer it would be irreligion, not religion. It would not cleanse our hearts. What face would I have to go and tell the Hindus of Noakhali not to be afraid and to go on repeating Ramanama? That is why I ask you to understand this peaceful method of mine. How can I carry on the prayer if all of you want to stop me? But I would continue the *Ramdhun* and *Rama Rahim Krishna Karim,* and so on and leave the place if a child wants me to do so.

Now I ask you to reply 'yes' or 'no'. Do not argue. Shall I conduct the prayer?

Some thirty persons stood up and said: "Do not hold the prayer, we do not want your prayers."

GANDHIJI: Well, so, all of you are against it?

Two to three hundred persons cried out: "No, all of us are not against it. Do hold the prayer."

G. No, there are too many people against it. I am defeated, you have won. Tomorrow more people can raise their hands. Even now your number is considerable. I can hold the prayer, but I have no desire to be killed at your hands. I want to live and work.

PEOPLE: Not all, only a few are not in favour.

G. That's all right, there need not be more ! Even these few can kill me if they want.

This was followed by shouting from both the sides and there was a great deal of noise. Gandhiji stood at the edge of the dais and said:

Please listen. Do not get so excited. You are all Hindus. A Hindu

ought to think calmly and speak after great thought and consideration. Please go home and think how the wound of the Punjab can be healed. I am also thinking about it as best as I can. But the wound is not going to be healed by getting angry.

With this Gandhiji finished his speech. But a voice came from the crowd: "Please answer one question before leaving. Why did you stop *Ramdhun* at Noakhali?[1] Stop it here too and hold your prayers in your room."

G. I do not wish to give any answer here. Please leave this place and do not quarrel even after you have left.

Gandhiji then started to leave. In the meantime the police tried to restore order. This created confusion in the meeting. Then Gandhiji returned to the dais. People asked him to start the prayer. They offered to pacify those who were protesting. They said they would all sit down, and that they were all ready to lay down their lives for him, but he should not abandon the prayer.

G. If you are going to die let it be on my condition. Allmy life I have been teaching the art of laying down life and learning it myself. If you want to lay down your lives, you should not do it boiling with rage. You should meet death with the strength of coolness. Right now these people are confused. They think that it is only Gandhi who is going about doing all the harm. So, for the present, consider only my silence as my prayer. I know at present everyone's blood is boiling because of the events in the Punjab. Isn't my own blood boiling? There is a fire raging even in my heart. I understand the problem of the Punjab fully well. The Punjabis are all my brothers. Right now they are all enraged. They must calm down. The people of Bihar were also angry. I have contained their anger. In the present situation we can make any headway only by containing our anger.

The police have taken away those few persons. How can I hold the prayer when they have been removed? Let them return to this place and sit here in silence and then we shall all pray together.

Just now, I am using my energy in thinking how to prevent what is going on. What else? Do you think I visit the Viceroy for dinner parties?[2] We are both putting our heads together and trying to find out

[1] According to the source *Ramdhun* was never stopped during prayers at Noakhali. A few Muslims did leave the prayer meeting when the *Ramdhun* started, but the prayer did not stop.

[2] For reports of the interviews with the Viceroy on April 2 and 3, *vide* "Interview With Lord Mountbatten" and "Interview With Lord Mountbatten", 3-4-1947

a way. He is more eager to put an end to all this chaos than I am. It is just as well that he should. I request you again to remain quiet. Silence by itself is prayer. I do not like those who protest being stopped by force.

When Gandhiji turned to go, people stopped him for the third time and said: "Why do you listen to those few persons who are causing obstruction? Actually, they have suffered nothing. It is we who have suffered in the Punjab—who have been wronged. But we are not preventing you. We request you to hold the prayer, if only for some time."

G. You are right. But you must give them a chance to understand.

Some people said: "Will you answer our question?"

G. You just think. I am an old man. Can I keep standing and talk? I tell even the Viceroy that he should not expect me to talk standing. Do I have all that energy? But God makes me talk. He gives me strength. I am having [high] blood-pressure these days. Still He is pulling me along. Tomorrow I shall talk more provided there is no opposition.

Let those who are at the root of this opposition at least come to me and talk. If all they want is that I should not stay here I shall go away. There are many people who would have me stay with them. But I am a Bhangi, and am content to put up in the Bhangi Colony. I could even have all this accommodation here. They have only small holes to live in. I cannot stand it. I insist on cleanliness. If God grants me the strength, I shall start living in one of them.

May God be kind to all and grant independence to India.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana-Pravachan—Part I, pp. 14-9

231. OUTLINE OF DRAFT AGREEMENT[1]

April 4, 1947[2]

1. Mr. Jinnah to be given the option of forming a Cabinet.

2. The selection of the Cabinet is left entirely to Mr. Jinnah. The members may be all Muslims, or all non-Muslims, or they may be

[1] At the end of his interview with the Viceroy on April 4, Gandhiji dictated this to Lord Ismay, Chief of Staff. *Vide* "Letter to Lord Ismay", 5-4-1947 and "Interview with Lord Mountbatten", 4-4-1947

[2] *ibid*

representatives of all classes and creeds of the Indian people.

3. If Mr. Jinnah accepted this offer, the Congress would guarantee to co-operate freely and sincerely, so long as all the measures that Mr. Jinnah's Cabinet bring forward are in the interests of the Indian people as a whole.

4. The sole referee of what is or is not in the interests of India as a whole will be Lord Mountbatten, in his personal capacity.

5. Mr. Jinnah must stipulate, on behalf of the League or of any other parties represented in the Cabinet formed by him that, so far as he or they are concerned, they will do their utmost to preserve peace throughout India.

6. There shall be no National Guards[1] or any other form of private army.

7. Within the framework hereof Mr. Jinnah will be perfectly free to present for acceptance a scheme of Pakistan even before the transfer of power, provided however, that he is successful in his appeal to reason and not to the force of arms which he abjures for all time for this purpose. Thus, there will be no compulsion in this matter over a province or a part thereof.

8. In the Assembly the Congress has a decisive majority. But the Congress shall never use that majority against the League policy simply because of its identification with the League but will give its hearty support to every measure brought forward by the League Government, provided that it is in the interest of the whole of India. Whether it is in such interest or not shall be decided by Lord Mountbatten as man and not in his representative capacity.

9. If Mr. Jinnah rejects this offer, the same offer to be made *mutatis mutandis* to Congress.[2]

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 238-9

[1] A volunteer corps organized by the Muslim League

[2] For further developments, *vide* letters to Lord Ismay, "Letter to Lord Ismay", 5-4-1947 and "Letter from Lord Ismay", 6-4-1947 and "Letter from Lord Mountbatten", 7-4-1947

232. TALK WITH MANU GANDHI

April 4, 1947

Whatever has been lately happening during the prayer meetings is a measure of my own purity. I shall succeed to the extent that I am pure. The responsibility lies as much on you. The success of my action depends on you. We might have left Noakhali; but the *yajna* is the same. I am being tested no doubt. But you are being put to a greater test because the person conducting the prayers has his own influence. If there is not the slightest negligence, the frequent bleeding of your nose must stop. You must look after yourself as much as you look after me and my belongings, for you too are one of them. Then alone would you succeed.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 137

233. TALK WITH REFUGEES[1]

April 4, 1947

Q. You tell people to discard arms, but in the Punjab the Muslims kill the Hindus at sight. You have no time even to go to the Punjab. Do you want us to be butchered like sheep?

GANDHIJI: If all the Punjabis were to die to the last man without killing, the Punjab would become immortal. It is more valiant to get killed than to kill. Of course my condition is that even if we are facing death we must not take up arms against them. But you take up arms and when you are defeated you come to me. Of what help can I be to you in these circumstances? If you cared to listen to me, I could restore calm in the Punjab even from here. One thousand lost their lives of course, but not like brave men. I would have liked the sixteen who escaped by hiding to have come into the open and courted death. More is the pity. What a difference it would have made if they had bravely offered themselves as a non-violent, willing sacrifice! Oppose with ahimsa if you can, but go down fighting by all means if you have

[1] The Gujarati version in *Biharni Komi Agman* has been collated with the report in *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*.

A group of refugees from Rawalpindi came along with Dr. Lehna Singh, and Dr. S. D. Kitchlu, President, Punjab Provincial Congress Committee. Out of about one thousand Hindus, only sixteen had escaped and that too by hiding.

not the non-violence of the brave. Do not turn cowards.

There was a time when the most casual remark from me was honoured as a command. Such is not the case today. Man after all is mortal. We are born only to die. Death alone is the true friend of man. [Birth and death] are like the two sides of a coin.

How did we react in Bihar? Man's claim to humanity consists in his magnifying his own fault a million times and minimizing others' faults correspondingly. You ought to know that I have been to villages where death reigned supreme. But in spite of it if I feel like it I would certainly go to the Punjab. But now I am doing the same work from here. I believe I have calmed down Bihar to some extent. Naturally it could be only with God's grace, without which nothing happens. Why, I had said to none else than Master Tara Singh that I was the true heir of Guru Govind Singh and not be. . . .[1] Matters can be mended only if you try to understand this without getting excited.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 97, and *Biharni Komi Agman,* pp. 137-8

234. TALK WITH EGYPTIAN DELEGATES[2]

April 4, 1947

One of the delegates asked: "If the British quit, would you still provide them with military facilities in India? And would India adhere to your policy of non-violence after you attain independence? Would you welcome American aid for winning India's independence?"

With regard to the first, Gandhiji replied, he could, in certain circum- stances, contemplate the possibility of Britain approaching independent India with that request, as a friendly concession vital to her (Britain's) existence. He hoped that in that event India would consider the request on its merits, uninfluenced by the memory of past wrongs.

Of course, today non-violence is no more to be found. But, I hope, when the hurdle of foreign domination is removed everything will be peaceful. I can never think of seeking foreign aid for the attainment of independence. I believe in the dictum a known enemy is better than an unknown one. I do not know what the national policy of India after independence will be. But looking at the present state of

[1] Omission as in *Biharni Komi Agman*

[2] The Gujarati version in *Biharni Komi Agman* has been collated with the report in *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase.*

The delegates were accompanied by Jawaharlal Nehru.

affairs I do not think I shall live to see it. I would advocate the policy of non-violence as far as we can stretch it. India can contribute substantially towards world peace and progress leading to its reconstruction. All the same, I would say that there are many militant groups in India. India's history also points in the same direction. Naturally therefore our national policy is sure to tend towards some kind of mild war policy. But I shall certainly die with the hope that my efforts of the last thirty years will not be in vain and that there surely will be a powerful section in the country that would hold steadfastly to the doctrine of true non-violence. You have already met my heir Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and his associates. I hope you have had a discussion with him. But I have faith that a day will come when the world will come to India in search of peace and India and Asia will become the light of the world. I do not know whether I shall survive to witness the day, for I might be consumed in the conflagration that is raging now. But you who are all young men will live to see it. [Laughter.] I tell you all that our 'Jawahar', meaning a 'jewel', is sure to become one. And he will belong not only to India but will become an ornament of the whole of Asia—of those countries from where you all have come here to cultivate our friendship. However, without your help nothing can be achieved. You have come here from distant lands drawn by your love of him and he deeply appreciates it. I have also had the privilege of meeting you. I sincerely thank you all.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 98, and *Biharni Komi Agman,* pp. 144-5

235. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
April 4, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Will there be peace today or are you going to repeat what you did yesterday and the day before?

Voices came from all sides: "It is all quiet today. There will be no trouble today. Please hold the prayer."

Gandhiji asked again:

Are you sure you did not drown a voice or two in your own? Is there anyone who wants to oppose?

A hand went up. Gandhiji said:

Very well. In that case, there will be no prayer today also. I shall not hold the prayer so long as there is even one person who refuses to understand or does not voluntarily leave the meeting. It serves no purpose if the police seizes him and takes him away. People should not gang up like this to suppress a smaller group. Even if there are only a few who oppose, they should be persuaded. They should leave the place if they disapprove of anything that happens here. They should not create disturbance. If this one person is convinced of my point and goes away from here I shall hold the prayer. Otherwise he must sit through the prayer in silence.[1]

Are you all quiet now? Has the gentleman who did not want the prayer to be held, left? I shall appeal to all of you that he should not be threatened or bullied. What will happen to the poor man if the police take him away? Whatever may be his opinion about himself, I shall only pity him. Who will protect him if I do not? If a person calls himself a Hindu or a Muslim and wants to stop me from holding the prayer, why should he be attacked?

He says that I should not hold the prayer in this temple. But this temple belongs to the scavengers who come to me and complain against outsiders creating trouble in their temple. How can I console my little brothers? I am their elder brother. I am an excellent Bhangi. I do the external cleaning and clean the latrines, but our hearts too need to be cleansed. A true Bhangi has to do the inner cleaning too, which I am doing. If we do not cleanse our hearts, if we do not get rid of the feeling of high and low, Hinduism is not going to survive. It has survived so far because it is a great religion. It is still alive even though it is gasping for breath. But if we do not give up the feeling of high and low it would go on weakening even though it is a great religion. Even Dr. Moonje[2] has supported me in this. He has written me a letter saying that even though he does not agree with me on other points—he believes in the training of the sword—he is in complete agreement with me in the matter of removal of untouchability and the feeling of high and low.

Hence, those who oppose my prayer are destroying Hindu dharma. They should understand that I am as much a Parsi, a

[1] A pundit then requested Gandhiji to hold the prayers and appealed the people to maintain silence.

[2] B. S. Moonje

Christian and also a Muslim as I am a Hindu. What wonderful meaning is conveyed by *Auz-o-Billahi.* I have not read the *Yajurveda.* But a gentleman writes to say that everything is contains is to be found in the *Yajurveda.* In that case why should you oppose it? Religious sentiment whether expressed in Arabic, Sanskrit or Chinese, is always noble. That is why I would like to ask that gentleman if he has understood my point.

If he is not a Hindu and belongs to some other religion, let him not attend the prayer. In any case only a few Muslims join my prayer. The Muslims too have been asking me what right I have to recite portions from the Koran. Yet they did not prevent me from doing so in Noakhali. Could they not have stopped me?

But no one who belongs to Hinduism can have reason to complain. We have 108 upanishads. One of them is the *Allopanishad.* The wonderful thing about Hinduism is that it assimilates people from outside. But its one great limitation is untouchability or the feeling of high and low. This poison has spread in it. It can survive only if the poison is removed. These people ntalk of saving Hinduism with the help of the sword. They carry swords while doing their drills. Why? For killing [their oppoents]? This is not the way to advance Hinduism.

A religion grows through truth alone. I have learnt this from Hindu dharma. It has also taught me that "there is no religion greater than Truth"[1] and that "ahimsa is the greatest religion"[2]. Patanjali[3] put the five vows of non-violence, truth, non-possession, non-stealing and brahmacharya on a scientific plane. These are to be found in the other religions too. But Hinduism alone has provided a scientific basis for them.

After this Gandhiji while narrating the story of the South Indian Harijan saints Nandanar and Avvaiamma, said that Avvaiamma's feet were stretched towards the temple's deity. When some Hindus found fault with her, she asked them to place her feet where God was not present. But whichever side they turned her feet God was surely there.

Idol worship is only one form of worshipping. But if God resides in one's heart, it hardly matters where one's feet may be. Man can worship with his feet, and he can also kick with them. If there is a fire raging like a volcano it cannot be extinguished with water. If I

[1] नास्ति सत्यात् परे। धर्मः *Mahabharata,* Shantiparva, XI, 13

[2] अहिंसा परमो धर्मः *Mahabharata,* Adiparva, XI, 13,

[3] Propounder of the Yoga philosophy

control it with stones and standing on it save the lives of millions of people I will certainly have worshipped God with the stones and my feet. One can worship with one's feet and hands and also with one's tongue. Worship should be sincere, no matter what method one adopts.

That is why, if that gentleman is present here, I would like to request him to allow us to carry on the prayer in peace.

I would like to emphasize that I am not at all angry with those young men. How could I be angry with them? The *Gita* does not preach anger. And right from my South Africa days I have been reciting the *Gita* verses in the course of my prayers. I have learnt this teaching of the *Gita* right from there and have carried it here with me. Those who oppose it do not know what Hinduism is. Not realizing it they indulge in devilish acts and forget God.

After this the people were quiet and the prayer was held in peace. Gandhiji said:

I am extremely grateful to God that today on the fourth day He allowed us to have our prayer in peace. Let me also tell you that nobody should think that no prayers were held during these days. When you came here, I came here and we all sat in silence, it was as good as praying, because there was prayer in our hearts.

Then, I am also indebted to those who tried to disturb our prayers. I am grateful to them because I had an opportunity to look into my heart. I had no opportunity before to examine my heart about the question of prayer. I had to search within to find out where I stood. Was there anger in my heart against them? Did my prayer mean something different? God wants to test His devotees in ever so many ways, and ultimately, He frees His devotee from his trouble as you have just heard in the *bhajan*[1]. From this we must learn that whatever we suffer is ordained by God. It is God's grace that I have passed this test today.

I am also grateful to the gentleman who was persuaded by the pundit's appeal.

God has saved me from a more difficult test. Once the prayer was started, even if as few as four persons had asked me to stop, I would have said: 'You may cut my throat if you want, but I shall keep on repeating *Rama Rahim, Rama Rahim,'* and even at that moment, instead of allowing myself to be overpowered by anger, I would have

[1] By Mirabai, namely, *Hari tum haro janaki bhir. Vide* "Ashram Bhajanavali"

prayed to God to grant them good sense as was said in the *Ramdhun*.

Let me narrate to you one thing that happened at Noakhali. It was with great difficulty that *Ramdhun* could be started there. Every time I started my journey we used to sing *Ramdhun* and as we approached some village we entered it with *Ramdhun*. We used to explain to the people that Rama, Rahim, Khuda, Ishwar were all names of God. In fact, God is known by millions of names.

If I explain to you the meaning of *Auz-o-Billahi* you would not even know that it has been taken from Arabic. Would it then be a crime if I pray in Arabic? Please do not reduce Hinduism to a worthless faith by such acts. Hinduism is a great religions. It is an ancient religion. Lokamanya Tilak[1] has proved it to be ten thousand years old. But in my view it is older than a hundred thousand years. It is eternal. What is contained in the Vedas is the essence of dharma and dharma has come into being with the functioning of human beings. That is why the Vedas are said to be without a beginning. When men realized those things they inscribed them in their hearts. They were reduced to writing much later, because man learnt the art of writing afterwards. Many of the writings too are lost. Thus a large part of the Bible too is lost from memory. The same is the case with the Koran. Many scholars of the Bible are of the opinion that it has a number of interpolations. Thus, the Shastras are endless. The essence of the Shastras, i. e., the Vedas, is that God is, and He is One. The essence of the Koran and the Bible is the same. No one may say that the Bible mentions three Gods. It mentions only one God.

I frequently visit the Viceroy. I am spending quite some time there. But that time is not wasted. I do there what I would do in Bihar, the Punjab, Noakhali and all the other places. For me the smallest work is as important as the biggest. For me whatever is in the atoms and molecules is in the universe. I believe in the saying that what is in the microcosm of one's self is reflected in the macrocosm[2]. If I leave out the Punjab, Bihar or Noakhali, I can do no work for India. For me India lives only in such places.

Today I have explained so many things to you. I feel happy

[1] Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920) ; patriot, scholar and writer; one of the founders of the Deccan Education Society; was sentenced to six years' deportation in 1908 ; launched Home Rule League movement with Annie Besant in 1916; started the Congress Democratic Party in 1920; author of the *Orion, The Arctic Home in the Vedas* and *Gitarahasya*

[2] यथा पिण्डे तथा ब्रह्माण्डे

about it. I thank you for maintaining peace.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana-Pravachan—Part I, pp. 19-24

236. TALK WITH EUROPEAN VISITORS [1]

April 5, 1947

Q. What can be India's contribution to the elimination of violence in the world?

GANDHIJI: If the Congress succeeds in its non-violent effort the rest will settle down automatically. There are reports of quite a few Congressmen being involved in the Bihar riots. At this stage I cannot sift the truth in these reports. But how could such a rumour, even if false, spread?

One of them asked Gandhiji a question about his conception of free India's economic policy. Gandhiji replied:

I hope we shall never want to get rich by exploitation of others, having passed through that experience ourselves. For instance, we might export our textile manufactures to help a neighbouring country that was suffering from a cloth shortage, as a friendly act, but not to exploit indus-trially backward people. At present India exports raw materials to the U. S. A. How much do we have to suffer on that account? All our indus-tries have been ruined. How I wish Western powers learnt to look upon India not as a country to be exploited but as a country whose independence they should respect because it has been won without the power of armaments. Good relations should be maintained by both the parties. If you expect courtesy from me. I ought to treat you accordingly. If we lacked the technical know-how, they could provide it to us in a spirit of mutual help, not at a fabulous price. At present you have brought us to such a pass that we cannot do without your motor-cars and other luxury goods. You have crippled us. Christianity that came to India from the West was a mixed affair. If only Christian missions had come to render humanitarian service to the poor village folk, without the proselytizing motive, they would have earned their undying gratitude and proved themselves true heirs and representatives of Jesus Christ. But I regret to say that this does

[1] The Gujarati version in *Biharni Komi Agman* has been collated with the report in *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase.*

The visitors were accompanied by Dr. Sjahrir of Indonesia and Jawaharlal Nehru.

not benefit you. As for us we never stood to gain by it.

I would say to whoever assaults me that he may destroy my home and hearth, why, even my person, but he would not be able to destroy my soul. I would not defend my country with foreign arms. If I could have my say I would place in the hands of the police hoe and spade instead of bayonets so that they could take to farming. Besides, a country wedded to non-violence is not bothered about foreign aggression because every citizen will be prepared to lay down his life. It is my belief that non-violence is not an entirely personal quality. It is an easy way of spiritual as well as political action for all—individual, society and country.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 98-9, and *Biharni Komi Agman,* pp. 146-7

237. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
April 5, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

It is a painful thing but for the remaining few days I shall have to ask you if there would be any protest from any quarter against the recitation from the Koran. If there are it will benefit neither you nor your religion. Just as God, in spite of the many names that describe Him, is but one, dharma although known by several names is but one; because all religions have come from God. They would be worthless if they had not come from God. Any religion which is not the religion of God is the religion of the Devil, and cannot but be worthless. You must, therefore, realize that if what has been happening for the last three days continues, it would mean the end of Hindu dharma.

If I am a Hindu, why can I not recite from the Koran, or from the Zend-Avesta? Besides, the Hindu mode of worship also is no less diverse. Some would have recitations from the upanishads and not from the Vedas; some would want the *Gita* and not the upanishads, a third one would demand the *Atharvaveda* in preference to the *Yajurveda.* In other words, each one is entitled to pray in his own way. If you want to stop me, even today I am willing to accept defeat and let you win. If anyone from among you so desires, he can give me this cup of poison. If somebody does give it to me I would be glad to drink it and you too should bear with it. You do not have to drink the

poison but you will please witness it. Do not be angry but please understand that if this old man is forbearing he is doing the right thing.

It is a good thing that you have come here in such large numbers. But if even one of you is opposed to the recitation of *Auz-o-Billahi*, I will abandon the prayer and you will have to go back peacefully.[1]

I must thank you for maintaining the peace. Such peace was not usual before. If indicates that we have not lost our dharma by what happened during the past three days. If man does not live in peace, if he never inwardly examines his thoughts, is caught in the mad rush of life and remains excited all the time, he cannot produce what Shaukat Ali Saheb used to call "cold strength". Mohammed Ali Saheb also used to say that we had to achieve independence by fighting the British and the *taklis* would be our cannon and the cones our cannon-balls. He had as much poetic imagination as erudition.

And all this happened in your Delhi. In those days I had been staying with Rudra Saheb[2] at his St. Stephen's College residence. The College has now been shifted to some vast premises, but I first met Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in the same old building. There I met Prof. Abdul Bari as also many other great Maulanas. After long discussions it was decided that the Congress could join the Khilafat movement[3] only if the whole movement was conducted peacefully. If was decided with God as witness that every activity of the Khilafat movement would be peaceful. It was a matter of swearing by Ishwar or Khuda. There was no distinction between Ishwar and Khuda. We are going to be rewarded with the fruit of what we did then.

I mention this incident because tomorrow the National Week begins. It was on this day[4] that India realized herself. India then realized that she lived not in Delhi or Bombay or Lahore but in her seven lakh villages. If there were a terrible earthquake destroying the entire urban population, even then India would not die. Even if the entire population of two crores in the cities perished, the 38 crores in the seven lakh villages would continue to live. The terrible earthquake that had rocked Patna[5] too caused damage only to the big cities,

[1] The people reassured Gandhiji and the prayer went off peacefully.

[2] S. K. Rudra, Principal, St. Stephen's College, Delhi

[3] Which was launched in 1919; *vide* "Comment on a Protest"

[4] In 1919

[5] In January, 1934

leaving the tiny villages untouched. Of course, if the Cosmic Being described in the eleventh chapter of the *Gita* decides to swallow all, none would escape. It is however clear that India is alive because of her villages.

These seven lakh villages were suddenly aroused on the 6th April, 1919. When I had issued an appeal on the 5th April[1] I had not imagined even in my dreams that India would be aroused to that extent. On that day I was at Salem in the house of Rajagopalachari who is your Minister now. I was thinking the whole day how to start the satyagraha. Shri Vijayaraghavachari—who is no more—and others too met me there. When the thought occurred to me I asked Mahadev—alas, he too is no more—to send for Rajaji. Rajaji agreed with me and we issued the appeal. Just by the appeal India was so aroused that I was wonder-struck. In those days the Congress had neither volunteers nor any means to carry messages, still it was like the passing of an electric current.

We had appealed to the people to observe a fast and pray on the 6th of April. The Hindus observe fast for 36 hours where- as the Muslims may observe a *roza*[2] for only 24 hours. The Hin- dus too observe *pradosha*[5] for 24 hours. We also decided upon a fast for 24 hours so that both Hindus and Muslims could observe it. During this fast no food, milk, vegetables, etc., could be taken. One could take any amount of water. I had instructed that the aged and the weak like me could take fruit. But when you undertake the fast tomorrow you should not take fruits like bananas which satisfy hunger. This would be something like what my mother did, she used to put me on a fast-diet and feed me with *puris*[3] of *kutu*[4] and *gulabjamun*[5] the whole day long. I do not intend to pamper you as my mother pampered me. Those who cannot observe a complete fast may take fruit juice.

The special message for the 6th April is Hindu-Muslim unity, khadi and village work; but who would do it today? Today if there is Hindu-Muslim unity anywhere, it is only in my heart. Even the charkha is lying only by my side. You can also take up these things

[1] Apparently the reference is to the appeal issued on March 23, 1919, when Gandhiji was in Madras; *vide* Vol. XV, pp. 145-6. For the instructions issued on April 5, *ibid.*, "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 29-3-1947

[2] Fasting during daytime.

[3] A fried delicacy

[4] A cereal which may be taken

[5] A sweetmeat

tomorrow if you wish. For doing this you must forget the past happenings. No matter what atrocities had been committed by the Muslims in the Punjab and by the Hindus in Bihar, both the communities should forget these things and think in terms of establishing brotherly relations. If you do not think along these lines, are you going to pray to God that He should make you as fanatical as the people in the Punjab and Bihar? Would you thus save yourselves and your religions? That is why you should undertake the fast only if your hearts are imbued with the spirit of 1919 and you would be able to imbibe that spirit only if you remain peaceful and calm.

How would you attain peace? Spin for an hour daily and then tell me if you do not find peace. Pattani Saheb[1], Chairman of the Bhavnagar Council, member of the Council of the Secretary of State for India, could sleep after spinning for an hour at night when all other remedies failed.

Hindu-Muslim unity can be established only through peace. I know it is a difficult task. Out non-violence is tested when we can remain calm even though a volcano may be raging in our hearts.

And what is the harm if all of us die by remaining peaceful? Even if some Muslim kills me, he will be after all my brother. If we fail to preserve peace and forcibly retain the country's unity our hearts will remain divided. And, if [the spirit of] Pakistan persists in our hearts and we are not willing on any account to live with our brothers peacefully, I warn you India will not be able to retain her freedom.

Yes, in a way, Pakistan can be full of the nectar of nectar. But why do you need pistols, spears and swords for it? A Pakistan forced on others will be full of poison. Why should we force people to swallow this poison? If I do not poison others' hearts, have no poison in mine and do not mind it if I have to die fighting all others, the Pakistan [thus achieved] would be a thing of love and so would be India. India will be full of the nectar of love when she belongs not only to the Hindus but also to the Muslims, Parsis, Christians and Sikhs in equal measure. And that Pakistan alone would be full of love where there would be place for all the communities and no malice against anyone. Because I am a believer in such an India and such a Pakistan, I would recite *Auz-o-Billahi* even while I recite the *Gayatri*[2]

[1] Sir Prabhashankar Pattani

[2] A Vedic hymn invoking the creative energy of the sun; *Rig-veda*, III. 62, 10.

and the *Gita.*

Today is the seventh death anniversary of Andrews Saheb[1]. We should remember his qualities. He lived a very simple life. We were very close friends. He was a white man, but he was so simple and mixed so well with the villagers that it was difficult to believe that he was an Englishman. He did not even know how to dress properly. He used to wrap a *dhoti* loosely round his large body. He was not bothered about appearances. He had a heart of gold.[2]

In conclusion, Gandhiji said that he had received a letter, which he would release to the Press, from the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh that they had had nothing to do with the raising of objections to the prayer on the three previous days. He was glad to hear that and believed it. No organization could protect life or religion if it did not work absolutely in the open.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana-Pravachan—Part I, pp. 25-9, and *Harijan*, 20-4-1947

238. LETTER TO LORD ISMAY

BHANGI COLONY, NEW DELHI,
April 5, 1947

DEAR LORD ISMAY,

Pandit Nehru gave me what you have described as an outline of a scheme. What I read is merely a copy of the points I hurriedly dictated,[3] whereas, as I understood from H. E. the Viceroy, you were to prepare a draft agreement after the line of the points I had dictated. Of course you were at liberty to amend them, add to them and omit what you wished to omit.

I had a chat with Pandit Nehru twice during the day, the second time when he handed a copy of the outline at 5 p.m.

The seventh point should read thus: "Within the framework hereof Mr. Jinnah will be perfectly free to present for acceptance a scheme of Pakistan even before the transfer of power, provided, however, that he is successful in his appeal to reason and not to the force of arms which he abjures for all time for this purpose. Thus, there will be no compulsion in this matter over a province or a part

[1] C. F. Andrews (1871-1940); British missionary, author, educationist and a close associate of Rabindranath Tagore and Gandhiji

[2] What follows is reproduced from "The Delhi Interlude" in *Harijan.*

[3] *Vide* "Outline of Draft Agreement", "Outline of Draft Agreement", 4-4-1947

thereof."

What I could not recall yesterday I now recall.

The eighth will read as follows: "In the Assembly the Congress has a decisive majority. But the Congress shall never use that majority against the League policy simply because of its identification with the League but will give its hearty support to every measure brought forward by the League Government, provided that it is in the interest of the whole of India. Whether it is in such interest or not shall be decided by Lord Mountbatten as man and not in his representative capacity."

I have finished dictating this at 8·45 p.m. I am anxious that it reaches you tonight. Therefore, I have only made manifest correction and addition. The outline is by no means complete. When a draft agreement is prepared, many other points which should occur to any draftsman will have to be covered.

I must add that Pandit Nehru has at least one vital objection to the outline. But I will not tax you with its mention here. If the outline appears workable to H. E. I would like to wait on him once more and discuss Pandit Nehru's objections. Before putting it before Q. A. Jinnah I would like to show it to a few friends.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 237-8

239. LETTER TO LORD ISMAY

BHANGI COLONY, NEW DELHI,
April 6, 1947

DEAR LORD ISMAY,

Many thanks for your letter of even date.[1]

The very thought that at the threshold of my friendship with Lord Mountbatten and you, there can be any misunder- standing at all fills me with grave doubts about my ability to shoulder the burden I have taken upon my weak self. It is impossible, at every stage, to reduce to writing conversations, and that would be, in my opinion, a bar to friendship. I can only say that there must be some defect in my understanding or my attentiveness if I misunderstand very simple things. I do not feel inclined to reproduce the talk about this topic

[1] *Vide* "Letter from Lord Ismay", 6-4-1947

except to mention one thing, viz., that H. E. mentioned [V. P.] Menon to you and said you should prepare something in conjunction with him and I was to give you the points which were to become the basis of the draft you were to prepare.

So far as you are concerned you correctly took down what you heard from me. But as it did not answer what I wanted to say I have given you my considered view about point 7.[1]

Now that I have seen Nos. 3 and 4 I must differ from you in your view that with the new version of No. 7 and filling in of No. 8, Nos. 3 and 4 become redundant. But of this later, if we ever reach the consideration stage of the "outline".

Since writing this Badshah Khan came into my room and I find that he confirms the gist of the conversation with Lord Mountbatten as described by me and adds that when we went to your office I told you that I had only to give the points as I hastily thought of them in order to enable you and your draftsman to prepare a draft agreement.[2]

yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 240-1

240. A TALK

BHANGI NIVAS, NEW DELHI,
April 6, 1947

Both of you should go to the Bhangi Colony and take up the task of teaching the children and of sanitation and so on. No one can afford to sit idle here. I would rather like Manu also to go there daily but she is not keeping well and as it is I am making her work beyond her capacity. Why worry about your husband's loss of hearing? He can very well look after the sanitation work and you can teach the children. You will be learning something thereby. Then alone your and my stay here will serve any purpose. Along with this you should take interest in the prayer and study the opposition that is being voiced during the prayer meetings. There are women too in the opposition, and you should try to persuade them. I am surprised why none of these things occurred to you or [Anand]. If you work only

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] For the Viceroy's reply in this connection, *vide* "Letter From Lord Mountbatten", 7-4-1947

when I point it out to you, it has no meaning. One has to look for work wherever one happens to be. There is no dearth of work here. If there is any dearth, it is that of workers, not of work.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 151-2

241. TALK WITH ABDUL MAJID

April 6, 1947[1]

"Bapuji is now going to drive us out of India in our old age," Khwaja Abdul Majid remarked to a member[2] of Gandhiji's party, affecting a laugh. "When India is divided, I shall come to take asylum with you. You won't let the Hindus murder me," he added playfully. Gandhiji, overhearing the remark, interjected:

If a fanatic should kill you, I shall dance with joy ! My misfortune is that I have not many like you who would die bravely and without anger.[3] If I had even half a dozen [men] like you, the flames that threaten to devour us would be put out and peace would reign in India in no time.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 100

242. A TALK[4]

BHANGI NIVAS, NEW DELHI,
April 6, 1947

What a great misfortune it is for us that two brothers should talk to each other in English ! One of them claims that it is only in English that thoughts occur to him ! We have become such slaves to the English language. This slavery is of our own choice. I have openly told the British that it was wrong on their part to educate Indians through the English medium and in doing so they had caused immense harm to our country. But I cannot blame them when in

[1] Abdul Majid, a nationalist Muslim leader and a trustee of the Aligarh Muslim University, met Gandhiji on this date ; *vide* also p. 218.

[2] Manu Gandhi

[3] *Biharni Komi Agman* here says : "It is a pity that no one kills persons like you who would court death bravely. Otherwise all the dices would be cast in my favour, won't they ?"

[4] This was addressed to two brothers whom Gandhiji happened to overhear talking in English.

normal course two Indians talk in English. For this we are ourselves to blame. We consider it to be our good fortune to be able to speak English. To fulfil that ambition we sacrifice endless time. If we speak faultless English and an Englishman happens to compliment us, we feel elated. If we were to count the hours we spend in learning English we would realize that we thereby deprive the country of the precious time that would have been otherwise devoted to its service, thus resulting in the wastage of countless hours. Still we cannot ever fully master English. I receive letters from persons holding high degrees, whose English is simply awful. One feels disgusted by them. No doubt, one should learn English as a hobby. It has a vast treasure of literature. But one should not make indiscriminate use of it. Quite a few dignitaries from among the delegates to the Asian Conference came to see me. But they conversed in their languages, viz., Japanese, Turkish, etc. There used to be an interpreter conversant with English and their languages. It occurred to me that that was the occasion when Hindustani could have become the language of the whole of Asia. Under such circumstances the interpreter would have learnt the language of the particular country as well as our national language. If it happens, Asia, which at present is divided into different parts, will witness one country developing cordial relations with the other as members of one family. It would indeed be a magnificent achievement. But to whom can I address my advice? You two brothers, fully conversant with Hindi and Punjabi, continue to talk in English !

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 154-5

243. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
April 6, 1947

While I was listening to this *bhajan*[1], as also to the *Ramdhun*, the scene of my Noakhali days came vividly before my eyes. The party[2] comprising these very men and women used to accompany me for about half a mile while I proceeded on my tour in the morning.

I only wish to tell you that you should not give up your goodness. If all the Muslims say that they wish to sever all connection with the Hindus and wish to live separately, should we out of anger start killing them? If we do that we shall be engulfed in such a holocaust that we shall all be reduced to ashes and none will survive Indiscriminate looting and arson will only spell disaster for the whole country. Regular warfare also, I must say, causes only destruction and nothing is gained thereby.

What has been said in the *Mahabharata* is of universal application. It does not apply to Hindus alone. It depicts the story of the Pandavas and the Kauravas. Though they were blood-brothers the Pandavas worshipped Rama, that is, goodness, and the Kauravas followed Ravana, that is, evil. Renouncing ahimsa they took to violence and fought among themselves with the result that not only were the Kauravas killed, but the Pandavas also were losers in spite of their victory. Very few among them survived to see the end of the war and those who did found their lives so unbearable that they had to retire to the Himalayas. This is exactly what is happening in our country today.

Today is the first day of the National Week. I trust you are observing it as a day of fasting and prayer. There was mass spinning also from 3 to 4 p.m. in which the Congress President, his wife, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Acharya Jugal Kishore and many others took part. The spinning *yajna* having been completed so beautifully and enthusiastically you will soon be breaking the fast but how good it

[1] By Rabindranath Tagore. The purport of the *bhajan* was : "Let us all aspire and say that our Bharat may rise to great heights in the world. It may attain eminence in the field of religion and action. Again a new sun will rise above it."

[2] Which, besides Manu Gandhi, included the Press correspondents, Sailen Chatterjee and Biren Sinha.

would be if as a result of today's rededication the names of Rama and Rahim and the message of the *bhajan* are permanently engraved in our hearts. But today all this remains but a dream in India.

I am being inundated with abusive letters and telegrams. This shows how grossly some people misunderstand my ideas. Some think I consider myself too big even to reply to their letters while others think I am enjoying myself in Delhi while the Punjab is in flames. How can they understand that I am working day and night for them wherever I am? True, I cannot wipe their tears. God alone can do that.

Khwaja Abdul Majid, who is a trustee of the Aligarh University, came to see me today.[1] He has a lot of landed property but at heart he is a *fakir*. He used to be my host whenever I went to Aligarh. Swami Satyadev Parivrajak, who had been on a pilgrimage to the Himalayas, used to accompany me. He was a very active worker but now God has taken him away. He told me he would accompany me but he would not join me if I dined with a Muslim. On hearing this Khwaja Saheb said, "If that is what his religion enjoins, I shall make separate arrangements for him." Though the Swami was accompanying me Khwaja Saheb did not mind when the Swami did not dine with him. Would that those good old days were here again when there used to be heart-unity among Hindus and Muslims. Khwaja Saheb continues to be the president of the nationalist Muslims. Other nationalist Muslims who had graduated from the Aligarh University in those days are today ideal students of the Jamia Millia and are excellent workers. They are like on oasis in the Sahara. Even if somebody killed Khwaja Saheb he would not wish him ill. Such people may be few but we must retain our innate qualities. When faced with bad characters we should not stoop to their level. But we committed this mistake in Bihar. Nationalist Muslims had been killed by Hindus there and Hindus friends of Islam had been done to death by Muslims.

We should dispassionately think where we are drifting. Hindus should not harbour anger in their hearts against Muslims even if the latter wanted to destroy them. Even if the Muslims want to kill us all we should face death bravely. If they established their rule after killing Hindus we would be ushering in a new world by sacrificing our lives. None should fear death. Birth and death are inevitable for every

[1] *Vide* "Talk with Abdul Majid", 6-4-1947

human being. Why should we then rejoice or grieve? If we die with a smile we shall enter into a new life, we shall be ushering in a new India. The Concluding verses[1] of the second chapter of the *Gita* describe how a godfearing man should live. I would exhort you to read and understand those verses and ponder over their meaning. You will then realize what our ideal is and how far short of it we are today. Our independence is at our threshold and it is our duty to ask ourselves whether we are fit to have it and sustain it. This week, while I am here, I propose to administer you the dose which would make you worthy of freedom. If we keep on quarrelling amongst ourselves we shall lose our freedom even after attaining it.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana-Pravachan—Part I, pp. 29-32

244. TALK WITH DELEGATES FROM VIET NAM

April 6, 1947

If the Congress firmly implements the constructive programme given by me, including khadi, village industries, prohibition, removal of untouchability, communal harmony, uplift of women, adult education, etc., it would become a truly non-violent body and freedom would automatically come.

India's contribution to the welfare of the allied nations and world peace would be without compromising her adherence to non-violence and truth and her goal of complete independence.

I believe that there is unnecessary delay in granting us independence and irrelevant issues are being raised. The presentday communal riots are also an unfortunate outcome of that policy. I, therefore, say with certainty that thereby the British are harming themselves. This is the moment of my greatest trial. The moment has now arrived to demonstrate successfully my weapon of nonviolence. And, in this quest I am not taking a moment's rest. Day and night I pray to God that He may give me light. There is considerable violence in the hearts of Congressmen and they are no less selfish. I have sufficient evidence of this. Even if Congressmen alone had imbibed

[1] " Speech to Prayer Meeting", 8-3-1947

nonviolence and truth, freedom would have come sixteen years ago, that is, in 1931, and our history would have been different. But I do not wish to complain about that. I must manage with whatever knife I may be having to cut this *mosambi.* If I do not have a knife I should learn to cut it even with the blunt edge of a dish. How long can one carry on with a borrowed knife? And, if I borrow a knife from someone, I cannot refuse if in turn he asks for a precious thing from me. That is why I flatly decline to seek help from any other country to attain the independence of my own country.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 1578

245. MESSAGE FOR PEOPLE OF VIETNAM [1]

[*April 6, 1947*][2]

My heart is always with the oppressed peoples of the world, and I have full sympathy with the cause for which the people of Viet Nam are fighting.

The Hindu, 10-4-1947

[1] This was sent through Tran Van Heun, leader of the Viet Nam Delegation to the Inter-Asian Relations Conference, who called on Gandhiji on April 6, 1947; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] *ibid*

246. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

NEW DELHI,

April 7, 1947

SATIS DAS GUPTA
KHAZIRKHIL
RAMGANJ

ALL YOUR PRECISE BUT PAINFUL WIRES[1] ALSO FROM HARAN BABU[2] (STOP) CASE SEEMS TO BE FOR EXODUS OR PERISHING IN FLAMES OF FANATICISM (STOP) HOPE YOU WILL NOT ADVISE MY COMING TO ADVISE ON CHOICE (STOP) HOLD COUNSEL WITH WORKERS AND ACT PROMPTLY.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 897, and *Harijan*, 20-4-1947

247. TELEGRAM TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY

BHANGI COLONY, NEW DELHI,

April 7, 1947

THE CHIEF MINISTER BENGAL
SUHRAWARDY SAHEB
CALCUTTA

I CONTINUE RECEIVE DOLEFUL WIRES ABOUT INCREASING LAWLESSNESS NOAKHALI (STOP) I SUGGEST PROMPT ATTENTION WIRES[3] OF STATISCHANDRA DASGUPTA AND PROMPT ACTION (STOP)

[1] The addressee had informed Gandhiji that he had sent two telegrams to the local authorities and the Chief Minister of Bengal. The one dated April 2, 1947 read : "There have been five cases of arson between march 23 and yesterday. Yesterday's case. . . was an attempt to burn alive three families consisting of twentyone persons male, female, children. . . ." Another telegram dated April 5, 1947 read : "Have to bring to your notice another case of arson last night. . . Haralal Bhowmik found himself locked from outside in his sleeping room while all structures including sleeping room were burning . . . . Request you thijk over these gruesome attempts of burning alive the Hindus and shape Government policy by shaking off inactivity."

[2] Haranchandra Ghosh-Chowdhary; *vide* "Telegram to Haranchandra Ghosh-Chowdhury", 7-4-1947

[3] *Vide* footnote 1, "Telegram to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 7-4-1947

AM PUBLISHING WIRES (STOP)

GANDHII

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *The Hindu,* 8-4-1947

248. TELEGRAM TO HARANCHANDRA GHOSH-CHOWDHURY

BHANGI COLONY, NEW DELHI,
April 7, 1947

HARANCHANDRA GHOSH CHOWDHURY
CHOUMHANI (NOAKHALI)

IF WHAT YOU SAY[1] IS TRUE CLEAR CASE FOR EXODUS OR PERISHING IN THE FLAMES OF MADNESS AND FANATICISM. CONSULT SATIS BABU AND ACT UNITEDLY.[2]

GANDHII

From a photostate: G. N. 7826. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

249. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

Personal and Immediate

BHANGI COLONY,
GANDHI,
NEW DELHI
April 7, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I have pressing letters from friends in the Punjab asking me to go there even if it be for a few days. Pandit Nehru agrees. Nevertheless I would like you to guide me too.

[1] The addressee's telegram dated April 6 read : "Rehabilitation in Noakhali is becoming increasingly difficult. Lawlessness, theft, burglary, house-breaking, night raids, burning of houses, hay-stacks, becoming common.

Ploughing of fields in some areas obstructed. In about five hundred cases involving loot, arson, murder, final reports submitted on pleas non-availability sufficient evidence which under present circumstances can be had from riot vicitms alone. Absconders and culprits moving freely reported holding meetings now. People suspect foul play in original cases as all Hindu officers in charge affected *thanas* transferred. Those officers who have timely submitted chargesheets against good number of offenders also transferred. Proceedings drawn against officers who attempted quell riots or arrested large number of culprits of whom ninety per cent now bailed out. More than hundred counter cases against workers. Hindu police and army staff are seriously enquired into and in some cases summoned or otherwise harassed."

[3] The draft of this telegram bears the following instruction in Gandhiji's hand

[4]: "Note for Arumanshu—if this is right it should be sent."

Then Noakhali calls.[1] If wires received by me during the last two days are to be relied upon, there is increasing lawlessness in Noakhali. Attempts at roasting people alive have been traced twice, and loot, etc., is going on. You will see my public statement in the press.[2]

This outbreak of violence is not a mere detail. If it cannot be dealt with now, it won't be fourteen months hence.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHII

HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 242. also C. W. 6523, 6524 and 6525, Courtesy: Mirabehn

250. LETTER TO DALAI LAMA

BHANGI COLONY,
READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI
April 7, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I have three letters from different functionaries saying the same thing. I thank you for them.

I advised the friends who saw me on your behalf to give up secretiveness and superstition if Buddhism (which is but an attempt to reform Hinduism) is to live.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHII

H. H. THE DALAI LAMA
TIBET

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This sentence from the initial draft (C. W. 6523) was omitted by Mirabehn in her copy (C. W. 6525). The draft (C. W. 6524) carries the following note by Gandhiji : " 'Then N. calls' was necessary. Punjab calls, then Noakhali. But I shall let it go as it is."

[2] According to The *Transfer of Power,* Vol. X, the reference is to a report in *the Statesmen,* 7-4-1947, of Gandhiji's speech at prayer meeting on April 5, in which "he reminded his audience of the folly of looking upon one religion as better than the other. He said he was sure that recent happenings were due to the atmosphere of hate that pervaded the land and he called on his audience to join him in fasting during a 'National Week' to begin the following day. "*Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 5-4-1947

[3] For the addressee's reply, *vide* "Letter from Lord Mountabatten", 7-4-1947

251. NOTE TO ARUNANSHU

April 7, 1947

You should understand properly all the steps.[1]

From a photostat: G. N. 8030

252. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING [1]

NEW DELHI,
Monday, April 7, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I am constantly receiving letters accusing me of being subservient to M. A. Jinnah[2] and being a fifth-columnist. One correspondent has accused me of becoming a communist. But I an unaffected by such attacks. The verses of the *Gita* to which you listen every day are always in my mind and give me the strength to put up with such things. If my critics understood the meaning of these verses they would not say such things. I am a sanatani Hindu and therefore claim to be a Christian, a Buddhist and a Muslim. Even some Muslims feel I have no right to recite from the Koran. They think by doing so I am trying to beguile the muslims. They do not realize that religion cannot be confined within the boundaries of language or script. I do not see why I can't read from the Koran or consider Mohamad as my prophet. I have faith in the saints and prophets of every religion. I pray to God that I may not lose my head over those who accuse me; in fact I am ready to die at their hands. I firmly believe that if I am steadfast in my faith I shall be serving not only Hinduism but also Islam.

Today a Hindu from Rawalpindi narrated the tragic events that had taken place there. Fiftyeight of his companions were killed just

[1] According to the source the note was regarding the Noakhali situation.

[2] It being Gandhiji's silence day, his written message was to be read out. But as the meeting began half an hour late and by then Gandhiji had broken his silence, he addressed the gathering himself.

[3] One of the letters bore the address "Mahmud Gandhi". In one he was called a communist, in another "Jinnah's slave". This only amused Gandhiji; he wrote : "Its the people who have conferred upon me the titles of 'Mahatma' and 'Bapu'. Shouldn't I welcome the new titles given by them ?"

because they were Hindus. He and his son alone could survive. The villages around Rawalpindi have been reduced to ashes. What a pity that Rawalpindi where Sikhs and Muslims once vied with one another in welcoming me and the Ali Brothers has become a danger spot for non-Muslims. The Hindus of the Punjab are seething with anger. The Sikhs say that they are the followers of Guru Govind Singh who has taught them how to wield the sword. But I would exhort the Hindus and Sikhs again and again not to retaliate. I make bold to say that if Hindus and Sikhs sacrifice their lives at the hands of Muslims without rancour or retaliation they will become the saviours not only of their own religions but also of Islam and the whole world.

I have been preaching truth and non-violence for the last thirty years I had done the same thing in South Africa for twenty years and I believe that the Indians there have been the gainers for following my advice. Even here those who have trodden the path of truth and non-violence have not been losers at all. True, the satyagrahis have sacrificed their all. But what does it matter? They have gained a gem and thrown away what was worthless. I am hesitating to go to the Punjab as I am not sure what I would do there. Should I go there to take revenge? The thought of taking revenge appears quite pleasing but God tells me that it is not for me to take revenge. A number of persons have advised me that I must go to the Punjab. But I have told them that I am not going to speak in favour or retaliation because that would be doing a disservice to Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims.

Let me tell the Muslims also that it is sheer madness to talk of wresting Pakistan by fighting with the Hindus and Sikhs. Pakistan is supposed to be the land of peace. M. A. Jinnah asserts that justice will prevail there. Today why don't we find justice there? What happened in Bihar, he may ask. But the Bihar Chief Minister is miserable today. 'Where had the Congress gone? What has it done?", one may ask. It is a big question. The Congress should exercise equal authority over both Hindus and Muslims. But this is not the case today. I cannot even think of Pakistan where there would be no peace and security for a non-Muslim nor can I think of an India where Muslims may be in danger. I went to Bihar and tried to pacify angry Hindus and to create a sense of confidence among the Muslims in respect of the Hindus. Happily a large number of Hindus expressed regret and promised that such a thing would not be allowed to be repeated in future. Similarly, I would appeal to Muslim leaders to ask their fellow-Muslims in

Muslim majority provinces to refrain from trying to wipe out non-Muslims in those areas. No matter how provocative had been the language of Hindus and Sikhs in the Punjab, that was no excuse for the barbarity and cruelty perpetrated on non-Muslims by Muslims in the areas where they were in a majority.

During the last two days distressing news has again been received from Noakhali. But in spite of everything it is wrong and cowardly to seek police or military protection. Those who cry when the disturbances break out are slaves and those who seek military protection will remain slaves for ever. People do not like civil war nor do they like to remain in slavery. In their letters Satis Babu and Pyarelal have inquired what is to be done when thatched huts with scores of people locked inside are set ablaze.

Haran Babu has also written in the same strain from Chaumuhani and sent the information that some people in their charge who were intending to leave have been persuaded to stay on. I have telegraphed to the Chief Minister of Bengal that this is a dangerous development.[1] I have sent a message to the people that those who have the fortitude and courage should sacrifice their lives and let themselves be burnt. If they don't find in themselves the strength to do so they may migrate to other places.[2] Many a great men has resorted in the past to migration. Mohamed did it once. Whatever people do, they should in no case call the army belonging to the British, whom we wish to drive away. So many sons of England and Japan died in the last War but their people didn't grieve for them. Theirs are brave races. To have a preference for British rule would be a shame for us.

Will the land protected by the immortal Himalayas and irrigated by the waters of the healthgiving Ganga ruin itself through violence? I hope in my heart of hearts that we shall give up the very thought of maintaining large armies. The armies are not going to do us any good and so long as they remain our independence will be meaningless.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana-Pravachan—Part I, pp. 32-5

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to H. S. Suhrawardy", "Telegram to H. S. Suhrawardy", 7-4-1947

[2] *Vide* telegrams to Satis Chandra Das Gupta and Haranchandra Ghosh-Chowdhury, "Telegram to Satis chandra Das Gupta", 7-4-1947 and "Telegram to Haranchandra Ghosh-Chowdhury", 7-4-1947

253. TALK WITH GOSWAMI GANESH DUTT

April 7, 1947

I shall proceed to the Punjab as soon as there is a call from God. Unless God urges me to visit the Punjab, I cannot leave my present mission unfulfilled. I had gone to Noakhali and Bihar on my own initiative and without waiting for an invitation from the sufferers in these parts of the country. Rama's call made me go. When He wishes it, I shall immediately proceed to the Punjab.

Gandhiji asked Goswami Ganesh Dutt to see him next Friday again.

The Hindustan Times, 8-4-1947

254. A TALK [1]

BHANGI NIVAS, NEW DELHI,
April 7, 1947

First of all, let us take up communal unity because that is the crying need of the day. Had the 18-point constructive programme[2] been acted upon earnestly since the time I had put it forward, the tragic events all over the country would not have overtaken us. I hold that without communal unity we are simply crippled. If any one of the functions in our body stops we are considered ill. The same thing applies to our country. How can such a country achieve independence? And even if it is achieved, how can it be preserved? There are innumerable communities like Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Sikhs, and others in India and unless all the communities are united we shall continue to be weak and sickly. That is to say we shall remain slaves and even if we achieve independence there will be no happiness in it. In fact that freedom will be worse than slavery. This is my reading of the present situation.

My faith is being strengthened every day that no one need buy an inch of cloth if everyone plies the charkha daily—just for half an hour. Not only that, this is the key to the preservation of swaraj. If crores of people devoted half an hour to spinning, its result would amaze the whole world. There is no alternative to khadi for bettering the lot of the famishing millions. A number of industries have developed in the wake of khadi which provide livelihood to artisans like carpenters, blacksmiths, peasants, weavers and so on. I compare

[1] Two students from Santiniketan, who believed in communism, called on Gandhiji and asked questions about the constructive programme.

[2] *Vide* "Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place", 13-12-1941

the charkha to the sun and say that so long as its wheel goes on rotating, it spreads light throughout the whole country. The uplift of India depends solely on the uplift of the villages. India lies in its seven lakh villages, not in Bombay, Madras, Calcutta, Lahore or Karachi.

Third on the list is removal of untouchability. So long as untouchability remains we shall not be able to touch one another's hearts. How can people so estranged gain swaraj through non-violent means? The gross indifference with which we treat our brethren who carry night-soil is a blot on our country. If we believe in non-violence and truth we should make no discrimination between high and low and should have no false sense of superiority. We should regard the whole world as a family and live like members of one family.

Intoxicants have impoverished us physically as well as economically. Ours is not a cold climate where drinking of alcohol may be necessary. Moreover an addict to intoxicants has no moral sense and therefore the habit would put an end to spirituality in our land. Then as the *Gita* says, "loss of memory ruins the reason"[1]. And those who have lost their reason are as good as dead.

Woman in our scriptures is called *ardhangini* [2]. But instead of treating her as an *ardhangini* we treat her as a plaything. Or in our country she is still being treated like a slave. The birth of a girl spreads gloom, whereas the birth of a boy is considered to be a festive occasion. So long as this evil custom is not done away with root and branch, women can make no progress whatsoever. Man and woman will attain equality only when the birth of a girl is celebrated with as much joy as in the case of a boy. Every worker, therefore, should respect woman as his mother sister or daughter. The way we are misbehaving with women and dishonouring them, about which one hears daily, shows the extent of our shamelessness, meanness and bestiality. I think there is no redemption from this sin.

So long as enough attention is not paid towards sanitation of villages, the inhabitants will never have purity of heart and their condition will be symbolized by the garbage dumps one finds in the villages. Therefore, sanitation in villages is an equally important item in village reconstruction.

I have seen that if we want to impart education with good foundation, basic education is necessary. And it can only be given through Nayee Talim. Unless we adopt Nayee Talim crores of India's children cannot be educated. Adult education will also come within its scope automatically. Similarly we will have to adopt the national

[1] II. 63.

[2] Woman as an organic part of man

language. We are too much enamoured of English. Only yesterday I have vent to my thoughts regarding English.[1] It is because of out infatuation with English that we have neglected our national language, which is inexcusable. A worker, who knows the national language, will not bother himself about the controversy of Persianized Urdu or Sanskritized Hindi but will speak a language which is easily understood by local people. He will learn the local language of the village selected by him and try to inculcate respect for the national language among the people there. Thus one who learns a new language loses nothing, on the contrary his knowledge increases thereby.

In the end I would only say that under *swarajya* efforts should be made for providing everyone at least with a square meal, enough clothing to cover himself and a house to live in. At present while some have utensils of gold and silver, others have not even post of clay—some have garments of silk and brocade whereas others have not even enough clothing to cover their nakedness. The constructive programme, as presented by me, is the only solution for the removal of such gross inequalities. Instead we are showing a leaning towards Russian communism which draws its strength from the pistol. That is the way of violence. Even there it has not proved successful as yet. If we adopt that method here the handful of capitalists that we have will become paupers, while a vast majority is already living in a state of poverty. Instead, if we propagate economic equality through non-violent means as suggested by me, these capitalists will out of shame realize that they ought not to eat sweets and don brocades while their brethren were without food and clothing. This will naturally foster a feeling of fraternity and serve the larger interests of the nation.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 162-5

255. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

1 AURANGZEB ROAD, NEW DELHI,
April 8, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

Many thanks for your two letters[2] of the 7th inst.

As to the first, I am glad that as I read it, whatever

[1] *Vide* "A Talk", 6-4-1947

[2] *Vide* "Letter from Lord Mountbatten", 7-4-1947 and "Letter from Lord Mountbatten", 7-4-1947

misunderstanding, if there was any, was of no consequence.

As to the second letter, the weather would not stand in the way of my going to the Punjab. I must ask the voice within for the final guidance. If I do go, I shall let you know the date.

Of course, you can rely upon my help no matter wherever I happen to be at the time.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 10833.

256. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

April 8, 1947

CHI. SATIS BABU,

I have your telegram[1]. I want to make public use of all the telegrams.

I would not be sorry even if everyone there gets killed although innocent.

No letters from Pyarelal, Amtussalaam and others. I shall enclose with this as many [letters] as possible.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostate of the Hindi: G. N. 8975

257. LETTER TO SUSHIL KUMAR

NEW DELHI,
April 8, 1947

BHAI SUSHIL KUMAR,

I have your cheque for the refugees. It has been sent to Satis Babu, and the receipt to you.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6758. Also C. W. 4501. Courtesy: A. K. Sen.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 8-4-1947

258. INTERVIEW WITH SIR M. DERLING [1]

BHANGI COLONY, NEW DELHI,
April 8, 1947

Q. It appears now the British are preparing to quit. Will they partition the country? What type of government will be formed and which parties will be invited to participate in it?

BAPU: My objective opinion is that the British should leave without worrying about us. And this is in their interest as well. America and England are, no doubt, big nations—advanced and ambitious, but in comparison with the mute millions of Asia and Africa, their eminence is just like dust. Until they wash clean the blot on their faces they have no right to talk big. And equally true is the fact that people are no longer going to be fooled by their tall talk. It will be in their interest to earn the blessings of the millions of Africa and Asia by giving them the human right of freedom.

I admit there will be chaos once the British leave India. Even at present, strife is very much in evidence everywhere. But I believe if they grant the country its independence in all sincerity and in an orderly manner, all the quarrels will come to an end and the leaders of all the parties will be able to come together and form a stable government. But I do not know whether it is going to happen or not, because I am aware of the fact that there is a large section in favour of the vivisection of India. Who cares for the nation today? Everyone wants to realize his ambition and grab power by creating dissensions. This is the situation obtaining today.

However, I am an optimist. I therefore think that the sincerity with which the British relinquish power will determine how well organized the new Government will be. And the Congress, the Muslim League and the States will be well represented in it.

It hurts me to talk about the partition of the country. What will be the plight of a body if it is dismembered? Similarly, dismemberment of a prosperous country like India will utterly ruin the people. Today it is the country which is being divided, tomorrow it may be Kashmir and the day after it may be the State of Junagadh in the remote corner of Kathiawar. How is it all possible? Let the whole of India be handed over to the League. I would not mind it. That is why I believe that if, after the exit of the British power, the people of

[2] Gandhiji gave the interview while having his meal.

India are not awakened, India will become the battle-ground for the Princes to fight among themselves and the big ones among them will try to gain sovereignty by swallowing up the smaller ones.

My non-violence will not destroy anyone, it will only purify. I therefore tell the Princes that they need not have any fears because the Congress has always been in favour of coming to terms with them. The Congress has adopted the policy of non-violence. The Princes have to delegate power to the people's representatives of their own accord. Then the Congress will treat them with respect. We do not want to do away with the Princes After all, they are also citizens of India, aren't they? The Princes have only to reform themselves and become servants of their subjects. The Congress will be on their side to help them. Unless they mend their ways they will be inviting their own doom.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 167-8.

259. TALK WITH AMERICAN JOURNALISTS[1]

BHANGI COLONY, NEW DELHI,
April 8, 1947

If you are proud of your country and wish to convey that impression during your visit to another country, you should exemplify in your conduct, the innate good qualities and special features of your nation. If, therefore, you, who have come here to make a study, want to leave a good impression about your country, you will have to bear yourself accordingly. Otherwise you are liable to be misunderstood and might unknowingly be done injustice. I give the same advice to Indians living abroad. There are many good features in our country. Take for example non-violence and khadi among industries. Therefore I cry myself hoarse telling the Indians settled abroad that even if they did not ply the charkha here, it is their duty to ply it regularly there. Even if they did not wear khadi here, there they should wear it habitually. Instead, innumerable Indians have become enamoured of silks and other things available in foreign countries. The result is that the country does not gain in moral strength. They should demonstrate to the women there that we can do

[1] Three journalists, two men and a woman, from the U.S.A. had come on a four-month visit to India.

without brandy or cigarettes; they should tell them what an Aryan woman stands for.

Addressing the woman journalist Gandhiji said:

Similarly you should show here that woman occupies an important place in the world and she is not merely a plaything for men, that she is courageous too. Try to leave upon the women here an impress of your culture.

I would like to make a suggestion to you which I feel would appeal to you. If you like it, you may keep it in mind and try to act accordingly, otherwise forget it. I am obliged to you even for listening to me. My suggestion is that women can play a very important role in establishing peace. Instead of being carried away by science they should follow the path of non-violence because women by nature are endowed with the quality of forgiveness. Women will never succeed in aping men in everything, nor can they develop the gift nature has bestowed on them by doing so. They should neither allow their family members to have, nor should they themselves have any connection with anything relating to war. God has endowed women with hearts overflowing with love. They should utilize this gift properly. That power is all the more effective because it is mute. I hold that God has sent women as messengers of the gospel of non-violence.

Gandhiji's fair visitor was deeply moved: "If there is anyone in the world who can point the way of deliverance to womankind, it is you . . . . We realize that what you have told us today is also the answer to the challenge of the atom bomb. . . . Why do you not visit our country?"

BAPU: Yes, I would indeed like very much to visit your country. But at present I see no such prospect. If you want me to go there I would request you to help me by devoting yourself to the service of my coutnry. Try to quell the riots that are raging amongst us and help in stopping the killing of women and children. I shall certainly be free to visit your country provided you are successful in your attempt, provided a democratic government is proclaimed here and the millions of people here are as happy as you are in your country. But this is like attempting to pluck a flower from the sky.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 169-71

260. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
April 8, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I find that you are nowadays so quiet that there is no need to thank you every day. Today I wish to speak about my own sad plight and I hope every word of mine will enter your ears and my message will touch your hearts, that is, it will move you to the depths of your hearts.

You must have seen the telegrams from Satis Babu and Haran Babu in the newspapers yesterday. Today Satis Babu has sent a telegram in reply in which he states that Jiwansingh, Pyarelal and other co-workers of mine who have been working there have decided to stick on till the last moment and everybody agrees that what I say is right. Hindus will abide by my advice. The danger is very grave and the risk to one's life is constantly increasing. They are miserable but are still preparing

themselves in a determined and peaceful manner. Now they do not like the idea of running away in fear. They think that if they have got to face death it is better to accept it as a gift from God. It means laying down one's life cheerfully, not dying after killing. All this is the result of the work done so far.

I had asked them whether they desired me to leave my work here and go to them. I have other important things to do. I have to go to Bihar. Then there is the Punjab, too. They have written to me that I should not think of going there at all.

All these people are working in different places. Satis Babu is working in one place while Haran Babu is doing a difficult job at Chaumuhani. Amtussalaam, Pyarelal, Kanu and Abha[1] have selected a village each. I am confident that they will all conduct themselves in the manner I expect them to do. And, what is my expectation? I expect that, as this girl sings in the *Ramdhun*, "May God grant good sense to everyone". I shall go on hoping that the people would realize that nothing is to be gained by force and violence. If anyone does gain something or gets something done by others through violence, his gain would not last long. This is the way of robbers and bandits. If

[1] Abha Gandhi, daugther of Amrita Lal Chatterjee, married to Kanu Gandhi

others resort to robbery, should we also do the same? No, we shall certainly not go their way. If they want to kill us, we shall willingly die.

I am happy to see that we have in our midst brave people who are willing to meet death in this manner. Such people as well as the country will benefit from their bravery. Even while dying they will bear no ill will against those who kill them, nor will they wish to get them punished. Those who kill are not going to escape punishment. God will punich them. Who are we to mete out punishment? We would not appeal even to God to punish them, because God is all merciful. We would pray to Him for mercy for ourselves and also for our enemies, and would meet death trying to bear goodwill towards all, including those who might kill us. No matter what happens, in whatever He does, God will only be merciful.

But if anyone from among these people dies, do you think I would say: 'Oh, what a tragedy !' No I would not. I would rather say that he had done well to have rendered such a great service. I would say that he had served the Muslims too while carrying out God's work.

But death retreats from those who show courage and are ready to die. We should hope that they do not have to die. There is Suhrawardy Saheb and also other officer, big and small. God will grant good sense even to those who have taken to robbery and they will also take the warning and give up oppressing people. I even hope that all the Muslims there would come together and take upon themselves the responsibility of protecting their Hindu brethren and I would receive telegrams from the Muslims everywhere that I should have no worry and that there was nothing to fear from their side. When this happens, I would dance with joy.

A friend asks why I, though a Hindu, say that I am a Muslim [also]. This is an obvious thing. I have learnt this from the *Gita.* The *Gita* says.

यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वं च मयि पश्यति ॥
तस्याहं न प्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति ॥[1]

That is, "he who sees Me everywhere never vanishes from Me nor I from him." For instance there is Rama in the Koran, the Zend Avesta and the Bible as well and god as worshipped by the Christains,

[1] VI. 30

Ormuzd as worshipped by the Parsis and Khuda as invoked by the Muslims are but different names of Ishwara. And, because I am a true Hindu, believing in Hindu dharma, I am also a Christian and a Muslim. This is no mere fancy or empty talk. This is the truth. The *Ishopanishad* also says: "I am in everything and everything is in me."[1] It further says: "He moves and He moves not."[3] Thus God has been described in various ways in the *Gita* and the upanishads.

In another letter I have been asked to explain why I call myself a servant [of God] and if Rama and Rahim mean the same to me, why do I not choose either one of them. I give this explanation because I claim to be a servant of God. Lord Vishnu is known by a thousand names. But God is known not by just a thousand but a hundred thousand names. In fact I would say God has 400 million names. Hence, why must call Him just Rama or Rahim? And then someone asks whether I talk like this merely to appease the Muslims.

My answer is No. I have not formulated this prayer after any deliberation. Abbas Tyabji's daughter Raihana, who is a staunch Muslim and also a Hindu, had asked me if she could teach me *Auz-o-Billahi.* I consented and said she might as well convert me to Islam. She declined and said that I was as good as her father and she was my daughter. She called me a good Hindu and saw no need to convert me to Islam. But she taught me *Auz-o-Billahi* and since then it has formed a part of the prayer. In the same way, after [one of] my fasts Dr. Gilder taught me a Zoroastrian hymn which too has been a part of the prayer ever since. I always hunger for Ramanama. I will recite it in a thousand ways and if someone comes and forces me to recite or not to recite any particular name I will recite no names at all.[2]

Q. You said that those who have neither the courage nor the wish to die should migrate. But where should they go?

A. These few men can be accommodated anywhere in this vast country. In the first place they can create a settlement for themselves in the Punjab itself, but if that is not possible this country is big enough for them to find some place in it. I need not tell them where they should go. Let it be remembered, however, that they should not go about begging, stretching out their hands before others but should rely on their own strength.

[1] Verses 6 and 5 respectively

[2] After this Gandhiji replied to some written questions.

[3] *ibid*

Holding up to ridicule some letters in English, Gandhiji said that he himself did not know English well and he was like the castor-oil plant being treated as a tree in a desert. But if even he could find so many mistakes in their English how many more mistakes would be found by an English expert? In any case, what was the need of writing in English and typing the letters?

Q. Are you not ashamed of calling the police during your prayers?

A. I am really very much ashamed and every time the police have attempted to restore peace during the prayer I have stopped the prayer. Moreover, I did not beg of Sardar Patel to send the police for my protection. But if the police do come in spite of this, they also might learn a few good things form the prayer and Ramanama. Why should we resent it?

Q. From where did you bring non-violence into Hinduism? With non-violence you are turning the Hindus into cowards.

A. I cannot think even in my dream that anyone has become a coward because of me. Even the young girl Abha who used to be a little afraid before has become brave after staying with me. I told her that her husband would not be accompanying her. And now she visits the sensitive spots all by herself. Would you call her a coward? She goes there unarmed. She does not insist even on having a dagger before proceeding to such places. She hardly keeps even a kitchen knife. I have never said that the moment you hear a danger signal you should run for your lives. We have to die and die without killing others. Non-violence is the quintessence of Hinduism. Your *Gita* teaches non-violence. I say the essence of Islam too is non-violence and Christianity too teaches non-violence.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana-Pravachan—Part I, pp. 36-40

261. TELEGRAM TO TARALIKA[1]

[On or after *April 8, 1947*][2]

CARE KHADI PRATISTHAN
COLLEGE SQUARE
CALCUTTA

SHOCKED. KEEP ME INFORMED. ADVISE SEEING KULARANJAN[3] CARE MARWARI RELIEF[2]. GOD BLESS PANCHU AND YOU.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 8725

262. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

April 8, 1947

CHI. JIVANJI[3],

Bhai Shivabhai Amin in East Africa wishes to write and publish a book about me in the Swahili language. Please do the needful as quickly as possible to give him the necessary permission to translate, etc.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9975. Also C. W. 6949. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai.

263. LETTER TO STUDENT

April 9, 1947

Students should go to their own villages and acquaint the people with the happenings in the outside world. They should set up civil defence squads. They should realize how ill-informed we are with regard to shortages of food and clothing. They must find out how, if we so desire, we can get over these shortages and then convince others

[1] Satis Chandra Das Gupta's daughter in her telegram dated April 8, 1947, had sought Gandhiji's blessings for her husband who was critically ill.

[2] Ibid

[3] Kularanjan Mukherjee, a naturopath of Calcutta

[4] Marwari Relief Society

[5] Manager, Navajivan Press

about it. They should teach the villagers, as best as they can, all the processes of cloth-making starting with the sowing of cotton to the weaving of cloth. They should give particular attention to sanitation of the villages. They must get latrines put up at convenient places so that people do not ease themselves just anywhere. People should be instructed to cover night-soil properly with earth. The villagers should be taught how night-soil can be turned into good manure. They should be persuaded to take to adult education and to give education to their children.

It is my belief that communalism is one of the many evils of city-life. It is necessarily an outcome of urbanization. Such an atmosphere is not to be found in the villages. The villages cannot even afford to be communal. Our villagers are so poor that they constantly need one another. Their mutual relations are such that they live in a kind of family atmosphere. Hence the problem does not arise there.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 173

264. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

DELHI,
April 9, 1947

CHI. MRIDULA,

I have your letter. I have gone through it. You must write without hesitation whatever you want. I cannot rush there in a hurry. I am in touch with Jawaharlal and others. I have your telephone number of course. Rajendra Babu saw me last night. He has asked for time. Tomorrow morning, that is on Thursday, I am meeting him again, when I shall know more. I know you will not panic easily. You must be getting help from Dev and Hunar. Dr. Mahmud should devote full attention to this work, if he is not doing so. Now you may be coming yourself and so there is no need for me to write more. Badshah Khan may go to Peshawar in a day or two. He is still agitated.

You have written nothing about the police trouble. I do keep thinking about it.

As I see it the situation here is pretty grim. God will put things right if such is His will.

I have written to you about coming a few days later. Come if you can be spared from there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11262. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

265. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

April 9, 1947

CHI. AMTULSALAAM,

Have you boycotted me? There is not a single letter from you. Think over what happened on the last day. Forget that I was angry; try to understand the reason behind it. Write to me about the conditions there. How is your health?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 581

266. A TALK

BHANGI COLONY, NEW DELHI
April 9, 1947

Gandhiji remarked to Manu:

You should understand the whole episode as such incidents are quite common.

Addressing the woman[1] Gandhiji said:

Your husband has got the degrees of B. A. and LL. B. I would still call him ignorant. He has behaved in a manner that does not befit his education. The right course would have been to educate you and remove your ignorance. But your husband played a trick on you and you were gullible enough to believe him. I see nothing strange in it. Women in our society take pride in being led by the nose by their husbands. So long as people are not ashamed of resorting to such mean conduct we shall not reach our goal. This I have said in your defence. Now the main question is, what should you do in the present circumstances? You should devote yourself to any work of service. If you are not prepared for that you can go and join the classes that are run under the Kasturba Trust. You should therefore prepare yourself for service and forget that you were ever married.

Another alternative is, if you are not able to restrain yourself, you should find an eligible partner and marry him. Such companions are not easily found. Therefore be content in making the effort and if

[1] Whose husband had remarried after tricking her into signing the divorce papers

your efforts are good they are bound to be crowned with success.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 173-4

267. TALK WITH FRIENDS [1]

BHANGI COLONY, NEW DELHI
April 9, 1947

The nearer we are approaching independence, the more dependent on others, I believe, we are becoming. According to me independence means that one should not seek anyone's help for fulfilling one's own needs. Independence does not mean mere physical indepen- dence.

A businessman desires his customers' needs to go on increasing. On the one hand our needs are on the increase and on the other there is a class clamouring for ending capitalism. I fail to understand this. For instance, you know that readymade food is available in England and America. The trend has come here also. When people invite someone for dinner they place an order with a hotel like Taj Mahal of Bombay. The result will be that the class of women that used to take up cooking as an art will gradually disappear. And I can even imagine a time when perhaps cooking will be a forgotten art for women. Let me give you a small example. If you ask my daughter her to make *bajra* chapatis she won't be able to prepare them. If the girls of today are forgetting such small things, what would they not forget in future?

All laughed looking at Manu.

That is why I hold that if one wants to enjoy independence one should oneself learn to produce the things one needs daily.

One should be able to do without the things one could not produce oneself. This increases self-reliance and one's progress. If we are not able to make good use of political freedom, what purpose would it serve? Self-reliance is the foundation of independence and dependence on others is a sign of slavery. Such self-reliant persons need never go to court or have any disputes. They settle their disputes among themselves. They will impose a small tax upon themselves and with its revenue a number of schools will be opened for children,

[1] Who had come from Kathiawar

where teachers will earn their livelihood and also get the necessary training. Such education will not be a burden on anyone. Where is the need for army or police if we are able to protect ourselves? There are progressive and enthusiastic workers in Kathiawar. They have to be alert to shoulder heavy responsibilities in future. I have full faith that a small State like Kathiawar will set an ideal for the whole country. And the Kathiawaris have the capability to guide the whole nation. They are not very knowledgeable but are courageous and wise.

At the same time Kathiawar has many defects. The Kathiawaris as you know wear pugrees. According to a saying they have as many twists in their hearts as they have in their pugrees. If that is so, that very Kathiawar can prove to be a blot on the country.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 174-6

268. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI
April 9, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Last time when I was here you heard the same *bhajan*[1] which Sucheta Devi sang just now. Its beautiful words were sung in a voice as sweet as the words. Even today while listening to it I felt as though it were new and I had not heard it before. How wonderful if our country were as described in the *bhajan* and we could say that there was no sorrow or suffering. But we know the country is in no such condition. If one after another everyone becomes good as suggested in the *bhajan,* the country would also become good. What is the strength of an ocean? After all, it is made up of individual drops. Similarly, a country too is constituted of its citizens. Today we are not in a position to sing the *bhajan* with a clear conscience. Suppose we start looking for such a country, where would we find one? Our body is such a country and the *atman* residing within is the inhabitant of that country. They *bhajan* describes the qualities that should belong to the *atman.* We ought to imbibe these qualities in us. If we are able to do so our country would surely be beautiful—whether it is known by the name of Hindustan or Pakistan, whether it has 11 provinces or 21, or

[1] *Ham aise deshke vasi hain; vide* "The Hymn"

any other number. We must all live in such a way that everyone lives in comfort, none remains poor and none oppresses his fellow-beings.

To build such a country you have to live, all of us have to live, in-cluding myself. But what is happening now is just the opposite. The piles of letters I receive contain abuse as well all praise. We should surrender all abuse as well as praise to God and have nothing to do with either.

I think some of those who write these letters must be present in this meeting. I am glad that they are hearing my words, because listening to me they will understand me and work for the benefit of the country.

We are going to attain independence. We have not yet attained it. If we work unitedly, the Viceroy would leave this very day, or he would entrust all responsibilities to us and silently watch us or would stay on to do what we might ask of him, for his own satisfaction. He is not the kind of man who would sit idle. He belongs to the royal family and is extremely intelligent. His wife also is a talented lady. We can utilize their talents to advantage. But this cannot be done under the prevailing circumstances. He would continue to be here for another fourteen months and testify whether India behaves well or otherwise. It was with a view to seeing India that the delegates from the Asian countries had come to attend the Inter-Asian Relations Conference. But they went back with the impression that the Hindus and Muslims were fighting with each other. Nobody knows why they are fighting. I at any rate do not know what they are quarrelling about.

Are the Muslims fighting for Pakistan? They say that they would have Pakistan at any cost. Would they have it by compelling us to give it? Would they take it by force? By force they cannot have even an inch of land. By persuasion they may have the whole of India. I would welcome it if Jinnah Saheb became the first President of free India and formed his own Cabinet. But there would be one condition, namely, that with God as witness, he should regard Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and all others as equals.

One of the correspondents asks why I should not be called "Muhammed Gandhi"? And then he hurls the choicest abuses, which need not be repeated here. If we ignore the person who abuses us, he will repeat his performance once, twice, thrice, several times—only to tire of it. Being tired he would either keep quiet or, driven by anger,

kill us. But what would happen after he kills us? We would lose nothing. One might ask: 'Who would protect our wives and children?' But he should realize that there is God to protect them. Why, then, should we worry?

The best way to stop the agitation for the partition of Bengal[1] is to persuade the Hindus through reasoning and assure them right now that they would not be forced to act one way or the other. By their wholly impartial conduct the Muslims must prove that the Hindus need have no misgivings about justice and fairplay in Pakistan, that no favours would be shown to the Muslims just because they are Muslims, and while selecting men for Government jobs merit alone would be the consideration. If Suhrawardy Saheb acts in this manner, the whole of Bengal would become an independent province. Then there would be no question of dividing the province into three or four. By placating the minorities he should thus win them over. He should treat the Hindus in such a way that they insist on having Suhrawardy as their Chief Minister. He should enjoy theirfull confidence.

But that is not the position now. Today I have received a letter from Sushila[2] who was formerly running a school at Rajkot. Describing the situation where she is now working, she says that there was so much terror in the air that no Hindu woman ventured to go there even if escorted, not to speak of going alone. When she herself went there, the other women could go with her.

I cannot help saying that if Indians evince true courage the coercive method now adopted to achieve Pakistan cannot but fail in its purpose. I dare say the talk of achieving Pakistan by force and threats is but an idle dream.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana-Pravachan—Part I, pp. 40-3

[1] On April 4, the Executive Committee of the Bengal Provincial congress Committee and the Bengal Provincial Hindu Mahasabha conference had made a demand for the partition of Bengal.

[2] Sushila Pai

269. DRAFT FORMULA[1]

[*April 10, 1947*][2]

1. So far as pakistan is concerned and so far as the Congress is concerned nothing will be yielded to force. But everything just will be conceded readily if it appeals to reason. Since nothing is to be forcibly taken, it should be open to any province or part thereof to abstain from joining Pakistan and remain with the remaining provinces. Thus, so far as the Congress is aware today, the Frontier Province is with it (Congress) and the Eastern part of the Punjab where the Hindus and the Sikhs combined have a decisive majority will remain out of the pakistan zone. Similarly in the East, Assam is clearly outside the zone of Pakistan and the Western part of Bengal including Darjeeling, Dinajpur, Calcutta, Burdwan, Midnapore, Khulna, 24-Paraganas, etc., where the Hindus are in a decisive majority will remain outside the Pakistan zone. And since the Congress is willing to concede to reason every- thing just, it is open to the muslim League to appeal to the Hindus, by present just treatment, to reconsider their expressed view and to divide Bengal.

2. It is well to mention in this connection that if the suggested agreement[3] goes through, the Muslim League will participate fully in the Constituent Assembly in a spirit of co-operation. It might also be mentioned that it is the settled policy with the Congress that the system of separate electorates has done the greatest harm to the national cause and therefore the Congress will insist on joint electo- rates throughout with reservation of seats wherever it is considered necessary.

3. The present raid of Assam[4] and the contemplated so-called civil disobedience[5] within should stop altogether.

[1] Gandhiji wrote on this in Hindi "Gandhi's draft".

[2] According to the letter to Lord Mountbatten dated April 11, 1947, *vide* pp. 254-5, Gandhiji discussed the formula with the Congress Working Committee members on the previous night.

[3] *Vide* "Outline of Draft Agreement", 4-4-1947

[4] The Muslim League had launched a large-scale invasion of Assam using Muslim immigrants to alter the communal ratio of the population in the province.

[5] The Working Committee of the Assam Provincial Muslim League had, on March 30, decided to start a civil disobedience movement in Assam.

4. Muslim League intrigues, said to be going on, with the Frontier tribes for creating disturbances in the Frontier Province and onward should also stop.

5. Frankly anti-Hindu legislation hurried through the sind Legislature in utter disregard of Hindu feeling and opposition should be abandoned.

6. The attempt that is being nakedly pursued in the Muslim majority provinces to pack civil and police services with Muslims irrespective of merit and to the deliberate exclusion of Hindus must be given up forthwith.

7. Speeches inciting to hatred, including murder, arson and loot, should cease.

8. Newspapers like the *Dawn, Morning News, Star of India, Azad* and others, whether in English or in any of the Indian vernaculars, should change their policy of inculcating hatred against the Hindus.

9. Private armies under the guise of National Guards, secretly or openly armed, should cease.

10. Forcible conversion, rape, abduction, arson and loot culminating in murders of men, women and children by Muslims should stop.

11. What the Congress expects the Muslim League to do will readily be done in the fullest measure by the Congress.

12. What is stated here applies equally to the inhabitants of Princes' India, Portuguese India and French India.

13. The foregoing is the test of either's sincerity and that being granted publicly and in writing in the form of an agreement, the Congress would have no objection whatsoever to the Muslim League forming the whole of the Cabinet consisting of Muslims only or partly Muslims and partly non-Muslims.

14. Subject to the foregoing the Congress pledges itself to give full co-operation to the Muslim League Cabinet if it is formed and never to use the Congress majority against the League with the sole purpose of defeating the Muslims. On the contrary every measure will be considered on its merits and receive full co-operation from the Congress members whenever a particular measure is provably in the interests of the whole of India.

From a facsimile: *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. II, between pp. 128 and 129

270. LETTER TO HENDERSON

BHANGI COLONY,
NEW DELHI

April 10, 1947

DEAR DR. HENDERSON,

I am glad to have your letter and to learn that we have corresponded with each other before.

I am, I confess, surprised at your question. He who believes in a living God never feels the slightest doubt about his mission, especially in a country which has regained its lost independence.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

20 A GOLBURN ST.
SYDNEY
AUSTRALIA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

271. MESSAGE FOR PYARELAL[1]

April 10, 1947

I would not be able to guide him. He should act according to his lights and consult Satis Babu. It is not desirable for him to come here all the way from Noakhali merely to discuss things. I have already given all the advice I could. He should now act as he thinks proper.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 180

272. TALK WITH MANU GANDHI

BHANGI NIVAS, NEW DELHI
April 10, 1947

These people [of Russia] believe in destroying their property so that it may not fall into enemy's hands. Not only that, they are all

[1] Who had sought Gandhiji's permission on telephone to come and discuss with him the situation in Noakhali

praise for this scorched-earth policy and give it great importance. I am surprised that learned people there praise this policy. But somehow I do not as yet feel like saying anything in its favour. It is possible that my knowledge is limited in comparison to theirs. This trend is evident in our country as well. I see neither sacrifice nor bravery in eliminating the capitalists. If I were to know that the enemy were approaching I would leave my property intact instead of destroying it. I believe that would be true sacrifice and this is how love for humanity could be preserved in its noblest form. I claim that if we behave in this manner the enemy cannot but become our friend. A society as such cannot be treated separately from the individuals who constitute it. Truly speaking, we are all like brothers. At present the Government is trying to do its work as best as it can but it can refrain from doing so at will. Then the responsibility will fall on those men and women who constitute society. And if at that time we fail to realize that we are like brothers and to act as such, there may be chaos and anarchy and no one will benefit by it.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 178-9

273. TALK WITH MANU GANDHI

BHANGI NIVAS, NEW DELHI
April 10, 1947

If we are able to judge when to use a machine and when to avoid it and if while using it we do so with understanding, quite a few of our difficulties will be solved. For instance, if we are hurt tincture iodine (poisonous medicine) is applied to the affected part. But if we are down with fever we do not take tincture iodine orally. We should be as careful in using machines as a doctor is in prescribing poisonous medicines. Machine-power can make a valuable contribution towards economic progress. But a few capitalists have employed machine-power regardless of the interests of the common man and that is why our condition has deteriorated today.

While talking with some friends today we discussed the idea of fitting rubber tyres in bullock-carts in our villages. I told them that to me it was clear that rubber tyres will not make things easy for the villagers; on the contrary they will increase their requirements and

make them dependent on others. And this will become another means of their exploitation.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 179

274. TALK WITH WOMEN WORKERS [1]

BHANGI NIVAS, NEW DELHI
April 10, 1947

I would prefer women and men to work in separate fields. The work to be done among women is so much that sometimes owing to paucity of women workers men have to work in organizations meant exclusively for women. Our society has shown gross negli- gence towards women. We desperately need intelligent and service- minded women workers to work among them. However, I would advise you to keep it in mind that there should be no rivalry between men and women workers. Both and equally important and equally essential. There should be no secrecy between them. Their con- duct towards each other should also be natural and without inhibition.

A number of workers who in the past were staunch believers in non-violence are, so to say, taking it lightly today. Even if people were to renounce and condemn non-violence, truth, constructive programme and khadi, etc., I shall continue to proclaim my faith in them till my last breath, for I see no other way for India's progress. No progress will be possible unless we make the requisite effort for implementing the constructive programme and learn to cultivate goodwill towards wrong-doers. Eminent persons have made experiments and invented armament but they fail to tempt me. With the increase in armament my conviction is becoming deeper that the power generated by non-violence is immense and incomparable. I have been a votary of this power for the last 30 years. I am not going to take this power lightly at a critical juncture as at present. Even if no one is with me I am my own companion.

India has been disarmed against her will. But if everyone in India cultivates the courage to face death bravely, India can proclaim that she can defend herself and make progress not through the atom

[1] The women workers had asked whether they should work only among women or also among men.

bomb but through non-violence along. Women alone can take the lead in this, for God has endowed them with great power.[1]

Every village has to become self-reliant. Things required in a village should be produced in the village itself. Only under special circumstances should these be brought from outside. Every village should build schools, community halls and dharmashalas from money raised by the people from among themselves. If possible, even the artisans should be from the village itself. You should ensure that everyone in the village is provided with clean grain, clean water and a clean house. Under the Nayee Talim scheme education should be imparted to every child from beginning to end. Every activity should be conducted on a co-operative basis. Disputes should be settled amongst the villagers themselves. There should be no distinction of high or low castes in villages. A committee or panchayat consisting of five or seven elected adult men and women should be formed in each village. The panchayat should look after the public activities and act as the executive and legislature for the village.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 180-1

275. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI
April 10, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

The *bhajan*[2] is as sweet as its meaning is sublime. If is of great significance to you as to all of us today. The essence of the *bhajan* is that even in the darkest hour we may not lose hope and faith. The lamp that is alight might go out and darkness spread around, but we must live through it. The flame that has ceased to burn, the life that is lost, these do not come back. Hindus and Muslims might take to the law of the jungle, but they ought to remember that they are not invertebrate animals but men standing erect. Hence even in the worst calamity they should not lose their faith and forget their dharma.

[1] At this point the workers expressed a desire to understand Gandhiji's idea of village swaraj.

[2] The Bengali *bhajan 'Yadi tor dak sune keuna ase tabe ekla chalore'* by Rabindranath Tagore had been sung by Sucheta Kripalani.

I have again received a number of letters today. A gentle- man writes to say that both Hindus and Muslims have turned into beasts. They are fighting each other. Is there no way out? There certainly is. The one simple way out of the situation is for either of the two communities to stop descending to the level of beasts. The correspondent, however, mentions one more thing. He says the important question is as to how the third party acts. He believes that the Viceroy has come here definitely to transfer power to Indian hands. If may be granted that he has come with sincere intentions; that the British have deputed this illustrious soldier of the royal family only to wind up their power spread far and wide in India and that the British Ministers responsible for deputing him are also honest in their purpose. But he still doubts the *bona fides* of the representatives of British commercial interests here. They had done everything to exploit this land. Till this day they had monopolized all our trade. What would they do now? It is a pertinent question. If the Hindus and Muslims together wish to keep them, would they stay on as our friends or would the British businessmen force themselves on us even if we did not want them? There is also the hold of the Civil Service. They have come to have such a stranglehold over us that we are not sure whether we would get freedom at all. It was by the grace of God that we adopted certain methods and the circumstances too so changed that the British are not talking of leaving. But the Civil Service is still here and also the British soldiers. If they can earn their livelihood here, why should they leave?

Another doubt is that the Viceroy's offer might quietly be withdrawn. To this doubt I can only say that under the present circumstances we can say precious little. It is as yet only the dawn of freedom; the sun has not yet come up. We have no idea how warm the sun will be. At the moment we are shivering. Out hearts are full of fear. Only when the sun shines forth will we be able to feel its warmth. In this connection I want to say nothing to you. But I would appeal to the British in India, whether civilians, soldiers or businessmen, to leave India if they wish to preserve their good name. Till now they have been riding on our backs, which was not fair on their part. They had better climb down willingly. Lord Mountbatten has come here precisely to help them do it and he is not alone. He represents the full strength of the British people. Surely they will have to suffer some losses in doing it. But they are prepared for it. In fact they have already given some proof of their willingness. We said that the civil

servants should go and they are leaving, they are going to inflict themselves on their own countrymen, that is, now it will be for Great Britain to pay them their pensions, etc. On the one hand Lord Mountbatten has summoned the Governors along with their secretaries to be briefed about the true state of affairs.[1] On the other hand Churchill and his party will not give in without putting up resistance. Even then the Viceroy maintains that he represents the British people and as per their wish they should now withdraw. The Governors, the British commercial interests and members of the Civil Services should all help the Viceroy in this task and they should leave. Those who wish may stay on with pleasure. But they should act very differently from what they had hitherto been doing. In other words, instead of exploiting us they should help us prosper. They will leave behind a good name if they act in this manner.

But news is pouring in from all quarters that their mischief was at the root of all these riots. Lord Mountbatten too has an inkling of it. He is afraid lest this popular suspicion should prove true. The British in India will now have to see to it that the suspicion of both Hindus and Muslims that the British has a hand in the riots is not substantiated. If this suspicion proves correct history will not spare them. It will be recorded in history that they were plunderers.

But they can say let bygones be bygones and now they have turned over a new leaf. Lord Mountbatten is honest in his intention but his success is in the hands of the British commercial interests, the British army and the British civilians. If they are not sincere, whatever the Viceroy has done will be undone. Let us therefore pray to God to grant them good sense. Whatever the trouble in quitting India, even if they face a dark future ahead, still I would tell them that their good lies in deciding to leave India.

Afterwards they can help us resolve our disputes, and they might even succeed in doing so. Then it will bring them good name. I pray to God that they quit India not as enemies but as true friends, and leave us to cherish friendship for them in our hearts.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana-Pravachan—Part I, pp. 43-5

[1] A two-day conference of provincial Governors was scheduled to begin on April 15.

276. TELEGRAM TO SAMUEL M. LEVY[1]

April 11, 1947

CANNOT CONTROL NEWSPAPER REPORTS. DID MENTION MOSES.[2]

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

277. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

BHANGI COLONY, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI
April 11, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I had several short talks with Pandit Nehru, and an hour's talk with him alone, and then with several members of the Working Committee last night about the formula[1] I had sketched before you, and which I had filled in for them with all the implications.[2] I am sorry to say that I failed to carry any of them with me except Badshah Khan.

I do not know that having failed to carry both the head and heart of Pandit Nehru with me I would have wanted to carry the matter further. But Panditji was so good that he would not be satisfied until the whole plan was discussed with the few members of the Congress Working Committee who were present.

I felt sorry that I could not convince them of the correctness of my plan from every point of view. Nor could they dislodge me from my position although I had not closed my mind against every argument. Thus I have to ask you to omit me from your

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram dated April 7 which read : "At the Pan-Asiatic Conference you did not mention Moses, the law giver who was the father of monotheistic and human religions, whose precepts extended even to the Far East."

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Inter-Asian Relations Conference", 2-4-1947

[3] *Vide* "Outline of Draft Agreement", 4-4-1947

[4] *Vide* "Draft Formula", 10-4-1947

consideration.

Congressmen who are in the Interim Government[3] are stalwarts, seasoned servants of the nation and, therefore, so far as the Congress point of view is concerned, they will be complete advisers.

I would still love to take the place that the late C. F. Andrews took. He represented no one but himself. And if you ever need my service on its merit, it will be always at your disposal.

In the circumstances above mentioned, subject to your consent, I propose, if possible, to leave tomorrow for PATNA.

I have not forgotten the book about tribal expeditions. I have not yet been able to lay my hands on it for I cannot recall the name of the author nor the year in which I read the book. As I told you it was years ago in S. Africa that I came across it. My search will continue wherever I am and as soon as I trace it, it shall be sent to you.

I must also confess a slip of memory I am answerable for in the course of our talks. I was wrong in connecting Sir Francis Mudie[1] with the late Pandit Nehru[2]. The incident I referred to was in connection with Muddiman[3], not Mudie. The charge, almost universally believed by Congressmen against the present Governor of Sind, remains unaltered—in spite of my slip of memory.

I hope these constant interviews are not proving an unbearable strain.[4]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 244-5

[1] Namely, Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajenda Prasad, C. Rajagopalachari, John Matthai, Baldev Singh, Jagjivan Ram Abul Kalam Azad and C.H. Bhabha

[2] Governor of Sind

[3] Motilal Nehru

[4] Sir Alexander Muddiman, Chariman of the Muddiman Committee, formed in 1925, to examine the working of the Montford Reforms.

[5] For a report of Gandhiji's interview with the Viceroy, *vide* "Interview with Lord Mountbatten", 12-4-1947

278. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR

April 11, 1947

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

I have gone through your papers. You should not have undertaken the fast without my consent. It is good that you have broken it. You had better do only such work as Shantabehn lets you do. More if we meet any time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9035. Also C. W. 9159. Courtesy: Prabhakar.

279. TALK WITH KRIPAL[1]

BHANGI NIVAS, NEW DELHI

April 11, 1947

Living with me is like living on a razon's edge. There is no certainty about meals, nor are there proper beds for sleeping. These girls have become accustomed to such hardships. They sleep like a log even on a mat. While with me even such soft clothes [as you wear] will not be available. One has to get up early in the morning and clean lavatories. Prepare yourself for all this. You may join me when I go to Sevagram. In the mean time you will, of course, come here whenever I happen to be in Delhi.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi agman, p. 186

280. A TALK

BHANGI NIVAS, NEW DELHI

April 11, 1947

Your duty lies in remaining in bengal and rendering service there. If anyone propagates any ism or forms any party, we need not worry about it or discuss it. One who serves silently with all the resources at one's command—mental, physical and material—does

[1] Daughter of Sir Datar Singh who had expressed her wish to serve Gandhiji.

not do so in vain. Service consists in using Godgiven gifts in pleasing Him, in utilizing them properly and thus keeping oneself happy and contented. All else is hypocrisy.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 186-7

281. TALK WITH Y. M. DADOO AND G. M. NAICKER

April 11, 1947

Truly speaking, it was after I went to South Africa that I became what I am now. My love for South Africa and my concern for her problems are no less than for India, because it was in South Africa that I discovered the weapon of satyagraha, and it was there that I offered a successful non-violent satyagraha. It encouraged me in my line of thought and strengthened my faith.

India is now on the threshold of independence. But this is not the independence I want. To my mind it will be no independence if India is partitioned and the minorities do not enjoy security, protection and equal treatment. Because the independence of my dreams is altogether different. The country is not yet completely independent. If what is happening today is an earnest of things to come after independence, it bodes no good for the future. We have a proverb saying that the cradle bespeaks the child's future. I, therefore, feel ill at ease. But I am content to leave the future in God's good hands.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 187

282. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI
April 11, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I am sorry to have to inform you that today I have suddenly decided to leave for Bihar. You are aware that my field of work is Noakhali and Bihar. It is not that I have chosen these places. I went to

Noakhali just by chance or, say, at the call of God. I had to go to Bihar also in the same connection. I could accomplish something during the days I spent in Noakhali. The Hindus there smarting under the reign of terror had some respite. But just as I worked for the Hindus, I also worked for the Muslims there. Today it may not appear significant; but in future when the climate changes the country will realize the value of the work done there. In a way, some benefits of the work can be noticed even now. Even today good Muslims have come to accept their Hindu neighbour as their brothers. But the number of such people has not grown as much as it should. Even so, there is no doubt that the work that is being done there today will bring many benefits in the future.

For the present I am needed not so much in Noakhali as in Bihar. I have a telegram from a Muslim friend from Bihar saying that I had stayed away from Bihar for a long time and should now return there. He says that they would feel reassured only when I go there. It is true that my decision to go to Bihar has not been prompted by this telegram. But now my mind has turned to Bihar because I had told them that I would do or die there.

By "doing" I mean that the Hindus and Muslims of Bihar should live in amity like brothers. Even if there is frenzy raging like a fire elsewhere, the Hindus and Muslims of Bihar should live in amity. There are quite a few village in Bihar still untouched by the outside fire. Not only in Bihar but in Noakhali and the Punjab, where there has been so much trouble, there are some villages where people continue to live together in peace and with mutual trust. You will come across such village all over the country.

You can turn round and tell me that just a couple of days ago I had talked of going to the Punjab. You can ask me why I now intend going to Bihar. You can also ask me if my talks with the Viceroy are over, as I had come here for that specific purpose. You can insist that if my talks with the Viceroy are over, I should wait at least to see the result. But why should I wait to see the result? It is not in my hands to produce any results. There are other people to take decisions in the matter. I wanted to discuss a few things with the Viceroy which I have already done. I had said earlier that in Delhi I was a prisoner of two persons, namely, the Viceroy and Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru. Rajendra Babu had come to me. I have discussed the matter with him and also sent a message for Nehru. I have decided to go to Bihar with their

permission.

It is my *svadharma*[1] to go to Bihar. I worship the *Gita*. The *Gita* ordains that one should perform one's own duty and stick to one's own field of action. The *Gita* clearly states that better is death in the discharge of one's own duty and in one's own field. Running after another's function is fraught with danger. Hence, staying in a place like Delhi which is another's domain is for me fraught with danger.

If I had had a call from God directing me to go to the Punjab I would have certainly gone there. You may well ask me if it is God who prompts me. That way, God does not come to me in person. But I do hear an inner voice. One who becomes a devotee of God hears His voice from within. I did not hear such a voice with regard to the Punjab.

But let me tell you that I have thought enough about going to the Punjab, and have come to the conclusion that my going there now would not serve any particular purpose, because we do not rule the Province. Even if the Muslim League had been ruling there, it would have meant our rule, because if the Muslim League members come to power there it would be on the strength of the votes of the people; and then it would be our rule. A rule established by the votes of the people would be the rule of the people. It is up to us to see whether such a rule brings happiness or unhappiness.

Supposing it were our misfortune to have Hindu rule in one part of the country and a Muslim-ruled Pakistan in the other, if both the states take the attitude that the people of the other community may not live in peace inn their land, the Hindu state would become a hell and likewise Pakistan would be a *Na-Pakistan*[2]. True Pakistan is a place where there is proper justice, where there is no rule of force and where everything is done and achieved by effecting a change of heart in the opponents. But today we have forgotten our ideals.

But whether I go to the Punjab or not, I shall certainly work for it. Whatever I want to tell the people after going there can as well be conveyed to them from outside the Punjab. I want to teach only one thing which I shall never tire of repeating. And it is that every Hindu and every Sikh should resolve that he would die, but would never kill. Master Tara Singh says the Sikhs shall kill. In my view what he says is not proper. He should say that if they do not get what they want they

[1] One's own duty
[2] Land of impurity

would die for it, even if they may be only a handful, and rest only when they had achieved their goal. He should not talk in terms of killing. I need not go all the way to the Punjab to say this.

I could have conveyed my feelings to Bihar also from outside, but I feel that it is necessary to go there and persuade the people. For the same reason I went round in Noakhali. I was warned that I would be killed. But I tell you that even if all of you try to protect me you will not be able to save me from death. Even doctors and hakims would be of no avail. Even Hakim Lukman, quoted in today's *bhajan*[1], says in despair that the grandeur of life is only transitory. Why then should we try to run away from death? We ought to face death with courage. We must conduct ourselves in such a way that the world would condemn those who would attack us. Let the whole world ask them how they would get Pakistan by adopting tyrannical means.

The essence of satyagraha is that the satyagrahi converts the whole world to his view. I have said right from the beginning that we need not send our workers to the United States or to Britain to carry on propaganda for our cause. Truth will shine through our work right here and the whole world will come to witness it. In the same way I had won world sympathy while I was in South Africa and the British as well as Americans had upheld my stand.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana-Pravachan—Part I, pp. 46-9

283. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

NEW DELHI,
April 12, 1947

SATIS DAS GUPTA
RAMGANJ

GOING PATNA TONIGHT. YOU HAVE DONE WELL KEEPING LOCAL AUTHORITY MINISTER AND PUBLIC INFORMED. ARUNANSHU ACCOMPANYING.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 9073

[1] *Hai bahare bagh dunia chand roz* by Nazir Akbarabadi; *vide* "Ashram Bhajanavali"

284. A JOINT APPEAL[1]

April 12, 1947[2]

We deeply deplore the recent acts of lawlessness and violence that have brought the utmost disgrace on the fair name of India and the greatest misery to innocent people, irrespective of who were the aggressors and who were the victims.

We denounce for all time the use of force to achieve political ends, and we call upon all the communities of India, to whatever persuasion they may belong, not only to refrain from all acts of violence and disorder, but also to avoid both in speech and writing any words which might be construed as an incitement to such acts.

M. K. GANDHI[3]

M. A. JINNAH
April 15, 1947

From a facsimile: *Mahatma, Vol. VII, between pp. 448 and 449.* Also *Harijan,* 27-4-1947

285. TALK WITH SIKHS

BHANGI NIVAS, NEW DELHI
April 12, 1947

Once prejudice comes to dominate reason, it is difficult to get rid of it. I hold Guru Govind Singh in high esteem. Excuse me, but Imake bold to say that I am perhaps a truer follower of his than you all. Many of his *bhajans* are sung during prayers at the Ashram. But one cannot bring about any change in a person by law, it can be done only through persuasion. Therefore, no one can ever become non-violent through law. Violence is not obligatory under any religion, it is non-violence that is enjoined by all religions. But why don't you understand that before asking others to respect one's religion one must give due respect to every other religion? It is a pity I am unable to convince you about it today.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 191-2

[1] This was signed by Gandhiji on April 12, 1947, at the suggestion of the Viceroy and was issued tothe Press on April 15, 1947. *Vide* "Interview with Lord Mountbatten", 12-4-1947 also "Telegrtam to Lord Mountbatten", 14-4-1947

[2] Ibid

[3] The signature is in the Roman, Devanagari and Urdu scripts.

286. MESSAGE FOR ARABS

April 12, 1947[1]

The Jews are a persecuted people worthy of world sympathy and India sympathizes with them. They are energetic, intelligent and progressive. The Arabs are a great people with a great history and therefore if they provide refuge for the Jews without the mediation of any nation, it will be in their tradition of generosity.

The Hindu, 1-5-1947

287. ADVICE TO A CHINESE FRIEND[2]

April 12, 1947[3]

Take to spinning. The music of the wheel will be as balm to your soul. I believe that the yarn we spin is capable of mending the broken warp and woof of our lives. The charkha is the symbol of non-violence on which all life, if it is to be real life, must be based.

Harijan, 27-4-1947

288. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI
April 12, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Tomorrow is the last day of the national Week. April 6[1] was the day of awakening. On that day we witnessed how the whole country was united. The towns in any case have a kind of unity without which they cannot function, but on that day we realized that India's villages too were united.

It is really remarkable that the villages should have been so united. I had appealed to the people to fast on April 6 and the whole nation followed my call. Who was I? But it was the voice of God. That

[1] From *Biharni Komi Agman*

[2] Reproduced from Amrit Kaur's "With Gandhiji in Delhi". The Chinese friend had asked Gandhiji "how it was possible to find peace of mind in these troublous times".

[3] From *Biharni Komi Agman*

[4] In 1919

[5] Ibid

was why all the villages from Madras to the Punjab and from the Punjab to Dibrugarh in Assam were astir. India was awakened that day. April 13[2] was the day of massacre in India. That was the day when Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs were all massacred indiscriminately in the Jallianwala Bagh. It was not really a *bagh*[3] but an enclosure with walls on all four sides. It was not possible to escape from the enclosure, as there was only one small exit. Here unarmed people were slaughtered, bringing the death toll to two, or may be five, thousand. The blood of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs mingled at the place. No one could tell how much blood of which community way spilt there. If a blood sample were to be sent to the most experienced doctor even he could not have determined whether it belonged to a Hindu or a Sikh or a Muslim. In other words, all the Indians became fellow-martyrs in Jallianwala Bagh.

Do not turn round and ask me how they could be called martyrs since they had not gone there with the intention of getting killed. It is true that they had not gone there prepared to meet death but they were all innocent people. Massacre of innocent people is a serious matter. It is not a thing to be easily forgotten. It is our duty to cherish their memory. So horrifying was the tragedy that the whole nation was moved. It provoked Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore to write a letter[1] to the Government and he joined our ranks. You have, therefore, to observe April 13 [as Martyrs' Day]. I shall not be able to join you here tomorrow. I am not happy about it, but I have now decided to go to Bihar.

It may be asked why I could not postpone my departure by a day. But, again, I am not going to Bihar for pleasure. There too I shall be serving India to the best of my capacity. As for fasting, it can be done even on the train. So, I shall be leaving today. You must fast tomorrow and observe April 13 in the same manner as you had observed April 6 on Sunday last.

If you have properly understood everything that was said during these seven days, then those of you who have been coming here regularly should resolve tomorrow that you would die but never kill. Why should we say that we would die after killing? Why should we also say that we would have the courage to die only if we have a sword

[1] Garden

[2] Addressed to the Viceroy, renouncing knighthood. It appeared in *Young India*, 7-6-1919; *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 6-6-1919

or a gun in our hands? Do you think it brings us any credit to say that we would have no fear if we had a gun with us, but would feel afraid without one? Let us discard lathis, swords and guns and go ahead with God as our companion. Free from fear let us then go everywhere and proclaim that we Hindus and Muslims would never indulge in mutual strife.

But today we are fighting bitterly. I feel ashamed before the foreigners when they come to see me. Still I tell them that those who turn fanatics are only a few, that the entire population of 400 millions has not gone crazy and that I have full faith that a day would come when all the Indians would resolve to achieve their end not with the might of arms but with the strength of reason. If India desires true freedom, everybody should learn this lesson.

Another thing I want to tell you is that however loud our protests might be, our Press refuses to mend its ways. Today one of the newspapers has gone to the extent of stating that Gandhi is going away because of his differences with the Congress Working Committee, and now he is not able to get along with the Working Committee. This comment has appeared not in some small, insignificant paper but in a leading paper with a large circulation. I feel ashamed to see how low our newspapers have sunk.

I have explained to you yesterday why I am going and that is the real truth. What the newspaper says, despite my explanation, is sheer nonsense. I am going, no doubt; but there is no quarrel among us. Our relations are no less cordial. Maulana Saheb was here a little while ago. Rajaji, the Sardar, Nehru and Kripalani were also here. We were all talking amicably. Only Rajendra Babu[1] had not come; but does his absence mean that he had quarrelled with me? Isn't all this gossip mischievous? It can certainly be said that we have our differences. But was there any time when we had no differences? Such differences have always been there. Even father and son have their own differences. But this paper is not merely hinting at our differences ; it clearly says that we have fallen out.

If I were going because of any quarrel, why should I have gone to seek permission from the Viceroy? Why did I take permission from Nehru and Kripalani? I would have just gone away without consulting anyone.

Not only that, the Sardar asked me a little while ago about my

[1] Who was down with fever.

return. I replied that I would be back the moment I heard his summons. Would I talk that way if we had quarrelled? If I choose to be a rebel I can be a pretty tough one. If I would not listen to anyone neither would I do violence to anyone nor persecute anyone.

But it is a trick of their trade to create panic among the people and thus increase their sales. It is a very wicked thing to indulge in order to fill this wretched tummy. I have also been a journalist and in those African jungles where there was none to bother about the Indians I had done a lot of journalistic work. If for earning their livelihood these people fill the pages of their newspapers and thereby harm the interests of India, then, they must give up journalism and find some other occupation for their livelihood. In the English language the Press is called the Fourth Estate. The Press can help or harm the country in so many ways. If the newspapers do not maintain a healthy attitude, what purpose would be served by India becoming free?

We too have developed such a habit that we can do without the Koran, without the *Gita* or the *Ramayana,* but we cannot do without the newspapers in the morning. Even great men have become slaves to the newspaper [habit]. If we do not get our morning paper we are upset. The newspapermen have also created this dependence on the papers by indulging in unfounded gossip. But all this gossip hardly serves any purpose.

I would suggest that you throw away such useless newspapers. If you want to get news you can enquire from people. You are not going to lose anything by not reading the newspapers. If you must read a newspaper take care to choose those which are published to serve the interest of the country and call upon Hindus and Muslims to live in amity. Then the journalists too would not be in such a mad rush to work overnight and also forgo their rest during daytime. Then there would be no rush for giving publicity to baseless rumours.

If good journalists happen to hear about any quarrel between Gandhi and Nehru or Kripalani and Maulana Azad, they must first verify it with Gandhi or Nehru before rushing to print it. Had they come to us to verify it, we would have rebuked them sternly for talking nonsense.

Today a Muslim friend has sent me a nice letter. A Hindu friend has also written me a nice thing. The Muslim friend writes to say that Satavlekarji's interpretation of the verse from the *Ishopanishad* is

indeed sublime. Similar is the meaning of the verse *Auz-o-Billahi,* etc. There is no difference between the two, only, one is in Sanskrit and the other in Arabic.

My Hindu friend has asked me why, while I regard the Koran as a scripture, the Muslims do not similarly regard the *Gita* and the Upanishads. Why don't they recite from these in the mosques?

The answer is clear. As a true Hindu I regard the Koran as a book of religion because it contains words that praise Khuda. But what is the logic in forcing Muslims to regard our scriptures also as their books of religion? This would not be an act of goodness.

I hope to meet you again. I shall come back when Jawaharlal or Kripalani or the Viceroy sends for me. I shall continue to work for you and for the people of the Punjab, Bihar and Noakhali also. You should always continue your prayers with the same devotion as you have been doing all these days.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana-Pravachan—Part I, pp. 49-53.

289. TELEGRAM TO THE EDITOR "THE HINDU", MADRAS

[After *April 12, 1947*][1]

PRESIDENT

EDITORS' CONFERENCE

YOUR WIRE. MY LAST DELHI ADDRESS WAS PURELY FOR JOURNALISTS. IN VIEW OF QUAID-E-AZAM JINNAH'S AND MY APPEAL[2] FOR PEACE AND THEREANENT TO JOURNALISTS IT BEHOVES THEM TO EXERCISE UNUSUAL RESTRAINT UPON THEIR PENS. I HOPE THAT JOURNALISM IN INDIA WILL RISE ABOVE COMMUNALISM AND INCITEMENT TO STRIFE.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the reference to the appeal, jointly made by Gandhiji with M. A. Jinnah which is dated April 12, 1947; *vide* "A Joint Appeal", 12-4-1947.

[2] Ibid

290. NOTE ON GRAMSUDHAR TRUST, URULI-KANCHAN[1]

ON THE TRAIN TO PATNA,
April 13, 1947

The local Trust for Uruli may be kept separate from the original Trust.[2] Only then will you be able to carry on rural reconstruction activities under it. Among these you may include farming, cow-rearing, weaving, running indigenous oil-mills, etc. The Trust will be called Gramsudhar[3] Trust. Nature cure will be a part of its activities. All the activities should be mentioned in the Trust deed. You may ask Mangaldas Pakvasa to prepare the draft. Get it done soon. Even Balkrishna[4] may prepare it. I leave to the local workers the decision whether the Trust should be an independent one or a sub-trust of the original Trust. If you wish to have an independent trust, you will have to be ready to stand on your own feet and shoulder all the responsibility. If you make a sub-trust, you will have to work within the framework of the original Trust's constitution. You will not, then, be able to take up rural reconstruction programme.

The trustees will be, beside myself, Dr. Dinshaw and Jehangirji (if they are willing to be included among the Trustees of an independent Trust), Maganbhai, Gulabi[5], Balkrishna and a local worker, provided he is capable, Balkrishna will have to agree to be one of the Trustees. Maganbhai is not one of the Trustees of the original Trust. He has been included only on the Uruli Trust.

If farming, cow-rearing, running indigenous oil-mills and similar activities are to be carried on through the Trust, they will have to be self-supporting. You will have to be ready to run them all [in that manner]. I should be happy if you can do without bullocks. For *goseva* work, you should utilize the services of resi- dents of the village. Our methods of work ought not to be like those of capitalists. You may employ local workers who have the spirit of service in them for farming, cow-rearing and indi- genous oil-mills, etc. The other family members of these workers should also give their services. Oil-

[1] Presumably this was addressed to Manibhai B. Desai who was with Gandhiji on the train; *vide* "Letter to Chimanlal N. Shah", 13-4-1947

[2] All-India Nature Cure Trust

[3] Rural reconstruction

[4] Balkrishna Bhave

[5] Wife of Dinshaw K. Mehta

engines must not be used.

For all these activities, you may get the money from Sevagram. I will give a note to Chimanlal[1]. You cannot use the money of the original Trust. And the expenditure should not exceed one lakh rupees. If patients from the village do not seek admission to the hospital, you may admit outsiders. Local patients should get priority and the expenses on their treatment also should be borne by the institution. You may fix a fee for patients from outside. The standard of treatment for everybody will be simple. This should be laid down among the objects of the Trust. If any men or women workers from outside wish to join, they may come and stay in a spirit of service. They cannot be paid any remuneration. Menial staff should be employed from amongst the villagers and should be paid. You may engage ten or twelve-year old children from the village and pay them, and also arrange to teach them according to the Wardha Scheme. Get a few service-minded workers from outside. Train some servants and children from the village and admit only as many patients as you can easily look after. The workers will be subject to the Ashram rules. For the servants, you may frame lighter rules. There will be bye-rules relating to such matters. If, after his marriage, Paramanand starts an establishment of his own, we will pay him just enough to meet his expenses. We may pay something to Gokhale, too, if he needs it. Fix the amount in consultation with Balkrishna. The equipment for the hospital should also be very simple. It would, of course, be best if you got it made in the village itself. For tubs, you can even use large containers made of baked earth. Or you can get them made of tin. For beds, you may arrange bricks to form the four legs and place a plank over them. This is merely by way of a suggestion. I am of the view that non-vegetarian food has no place in the treatment. I am not here looking at the matter from a religious point of view. Instead of tea, you may serve Indian-style decoction. In any case, wheat coffee will do. We cannot supply *bidis.* Don't mind if persons addicted to these things do not come for treatment. Try to explain the reasons to the people. Patients suffering from tuberculosis, leprosy and other contagious diseases may be admitted if there is provision for separate accommodation for them. Non-violent honey should be extracted in the village itself. Teach the local Vagharan[1] the improved method of extracting honey. You may even start bee-keeping. Make arrange-

[1] Chimanlal N. Shah; *vide* "Letter to Chimanlal N. Shah", 13-4-1947

[2] Woman of a community of Gujarat

ments to supply cow's milk and ghee. But in the absence of cow's milk, you can supply buffalo's or goat's milk.

You may send for Hoshiraribehn after she completes her education. For preserving good health, more expenditure may be incurred if necessary. Every inmate of the Ashram must put in at least seven years of total work. I would not like anybody to be permitted to cook his or her own meals. Decide about the Ashram rules after discussion with Balkrishna. I will write about the subject when I get time. It would be better if Bhagwat[1] gives up the idea of visiting other centres for the present.

The additional expenditure on account of the current construction work should also be obtained from Sevagram. The money may be kept in the custody of Dr. Mehta, if he agrees. It would, however be better to keep it with a respectable banker in Uruli. There is no need just now to call any meeting of the Trustees which I must attend. This should be enough.

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile of the Gujarati: *Mahatma*, Vol. VII, between pp. 448 and 449. Also C. W. 2729. Courtesy: Manibhai B. Desai

291. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ON THE TRAIN,
April 13, 1947[2]

CHI. AMRIT,

This is just a line. The crowds were thin and extraordinarily quiet. I slept the whole night without disturbance. It has been a rich, novel and pleasing experience It gives me a new hope. And I am without a police or any other guard.

The heat is great but quite bearable.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3703. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also. G. N. 6512

[1] A. K. Bhagwat
[2] The date-line is in Hindi.

292. LETTER TO NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE

ON THE TRAIN,
April 13, 1947

CHI. NIRMAL BABU,

Your letter is frank.[1] It does you credit on that account, but it makes me sad.

On your own showing, you were less than truthful. Had you shown the requisite courage and spoken out, I would not have let you go so abruptly as you did.

I see that I have lost caste with you. I must not defend myself. If we ever meet and it you would discuss what I consider to be your hasty judgment, we shall talk.

My Bengali continues, though slowly.

Love.

BAPU

My Days with Gandhi, p. 188

293. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

ON THE TRAIN,
April 13, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

I forgot to ask you one thing. I could not find the time. I now see that I must write something I *Harijan* . . .[2] I also notice that there

[1] Stating the reasons for his abrupt departure the addressee had written : "On 20-12-1946,. . . you said that. . . you had been telling Manu how your old life had ended and a new chapter had begun. You were going to conduct a new experiment in non-violence of the brave. . . I determined to serve to the best of my ability in this new experiment. . .

The fact is that...small but significant series of events led me to believe that you did not want to cut yourself away from your old moorings as much as I had been led to expect. . . . you permitted yourself to be weak in respect of particular persons. Hence I did not feel the same joy in work. . . as I had experienced in Noakhali. . . .

In the meanwhile, I had received a letter from the University that work was suffering on account of my absence. . . I clearly felt that the quality or quantity or work I was doing in Bihar was less than what I would be able to put in at the University. Hence I came away on that ground."

[2] Omission as in the source. Gandhii had suspended writing for the *Harijan* weeklies in November 1946 while he was touring Noakhali; vide "Talk with Women Refugees", 22-3-1947

are frequent difference between your approach and mine. Such being the case, would it be advisable for me to meet the Viceroy even as an individual?

Please think over this objectively, keeping only the good of the country in view. If you like, you may discuss the matter with others. Please do not see the slightest suggestion of a complaint from me in this. I am thinking of my duty in terms of the country's good. It is quite possible that what you can see while administering the affairs of millions may not be realized by me. If I were in the place of you all, I would perhaps say and do exactly what you are saying and doing.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
1 AURANGZEB ROAD
NEW DELHI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro— 2: *Sardar Vallabhbhaine* pp. 352-3

294. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN,
April 13, 1947

CHI. SITA,

I will be reaching Patna today. Come and join me as soon as you can get relieved there. Do not worry about anything.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. SITAKUMARI GANDHI
KUMARIKA MANDIR
BENARES HINDU UNIVERSITY P.O.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4999

295. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

ON THE TRAIN TO PATNA,
April 13, 1947

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Manibhai is on the train. I could have a full talk with him only on the train. You may send from my personal account, without

consulting me, any amount up to rupees one lakh which Manibhai may ask for the institution at Uruli. The money will be used for meeting the expenditure on construction of buildings as also for current expenses. If he needs more, he will try to raise the money from the Uruli village. It is Manibhai's resolve not to seek any financial help from outside Uruli. What we shall do if I live to go to Uruli and see things for myself, is another question.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 2730. Courtesy: Manibhai B. Desai

296. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

ON THE TRAIN,
April 13, 1947

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

I had a long talk with Manibhai.[1]

I understand about Manu. The consideration of possible effect of an act on others is not important in itself. It has only relative validity. And if we pay exclusive attention to it, we can make no progress. It is, of course, necessary to be sure that there is no trace of hypocrisy or untruth or pride in the reformer. More than this I need not say just now.

The burden of Uruli will be entirely on Manibhai and you. Of course, Dr. Bhagwat, Dhirubhai[2] and Gokhale are there. But they have to begin from the beginning Even if they join, only the two of you will be there to serve till your last breath. If there is temperamental incompatibility among the workers or if they lack the qualities required for running institution, it is bound to fail. About you, too, I have one condition, namely, regarding your health. Manibhai will tell you all about that.

He will also tell you about my limitations at present. I see no possibility of being able to free myself from them in the immediate future.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 821. Courtesy: Balkrishna Bhave

[1] *Vide* "Note on Gramsudhar Trust, Uruli-Kanchan", 13-4-1947
[2] Dhirubhai Dikshit

297. LETTER TO R. B. GREGG

ON WAY TO PATNA, [ON] TRAIN,
April 13, 1947

MY DEAR GREGG,

I have your letter. I see that for you there is no bed of roses. If is all thorns. I suppose if we read aright the lesson that a 'bed of roses' teaches us, we should do well, for there will be no discontent nor quarrel with anybody. I wish that when this letter reaches you Radha[1] will have made complete recovery. Of course you are coming back to India as soon as both of you are in a position to do so.

Here things are in the melting-pot. Brother is fighting brother when the English protest that they are withdrawing from India in fourteen months' time. I am straining every nerve to prevent this wanton bloodshed. Behind this waste of blood there are unmistakable signs of a sincere desire for peace. The result of this fight between God and Satan is a certainty. Let us all stake everything for the certainty.

Love to both.

BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 4522. Courtesy: Richard B. Gregg

298. A LETTER

April 13, 1947

. . .[1] talked to me about your temper, and also your non-conformist conduct. A member of an organization who acts independently of it ultimately harms it. An organization can exist, sustain itself and progress only when the workers observe its rules to the letter and work within its framework.

You have ample capability. You have a fair knowledge of nature cure. But all your good qualities will be in vain if you lack the quality of fitting yourself in an institution . . . [2]

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 196

[1] Addressee's wife; Gandhii had given her this name and the addressee "Govind".

[2] Omissions as in the source

299. A LETTER[1]

ON THE TRAIN
April 13, 1947

CHI. . . . ,

. . . . is with me. I have a lot to write. Let us see when I shall be able to do so. Right now I am submerged in work.

. . . came and met me. I had a frank talk with him. I am not convinced. There is some untruth somewhere. But if you feel satisfied you can ignore my view.

I am still thinking about nature cure. My views tend to become stronger. The Uruli Trust should be independent and separate. It should include the whole programme of village uplift together with nature cure. I would like . . . to be associated with the Trust. It may not be necessary to trouble Nargisbehn[2]. She may join if she wants to. The development of Uruli should be along distinctive lines. The limit of its expenditure has been fixed. It is decided to accept outside help to the extent of Rs. 1 lakh, and that, through me. If anything more is needed, it should be provided by the people of Uruli. Or we may curtail our activities. Foreign equipment, etc., cannot be permitted.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 196-7

300. A LETTER

April 13, 1947

I have no doubt that the poor should never be robbed.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 197

[1] Omissions in the letter are as in the source.

[2] Nargis Captain, Dadabhoy Naoroji's grand-daughter

301. LETTER TO REGISTRAR, VISHVABHARATI

ON WAY TO PATNA,
April 13, 1947

SIR,

Received your letter dated 24th March. I humbly accept the honour which the Senate has decided to confer upon me.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

REGISTRAR, VISHVABHARATI
P.O. SHANTINIKETAN
DT. BIRBHUM (BENGAL)

From a copy of the Bengali: C. W. 10621. Courtesy: Vishvabharati, Shantiniketan.

302. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

[On or after *April 13, 1947*][1]

CHI MANILAL,

I am dictating this letter in reply to yours of March 23. Sushila and you are faced with a difficult problem. Shanti having left, Sushila will now have to think where she should stay. You have been very considerate. If you can really do without Sushila I think it would be well for her to remain here. She and Sita will be meeting me in a few days at Patna. I will know more then.

Dadoo and Naicker met me in Delhi[2] . But it was just a courtesy call. We could have no talk. However, they have promised to call again.

It is getting very hot in Patna. I am able to cope with the burden of work by snatching a little sleep every two hours. I have stopped touring for the present. I will resume it if necessary.

The task here is of course very difficult. It is never easy to change people's settled ways and make them see their own errors. The task has become all the more difficult in the present situation.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4998

[1] Evidently the letter was written after Gandhiji arrived at Patna on April 13, 1947.

[2] On April 11, 1947; *vide* "Talk with Y. M. Dadoo and G. M. Naicker", 11-4-1947

303. TELEGRAM TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

PATNA,
April 14, 1947

H. E. VICEROY

JUST RECEIVED MESSAGE[1]. MANY THANKS. I HAD COMPARATIVELY QUIET JOURNEY. AM OF OPINION PRESIDENT CONGRESS SHOULD ALSO SIGN. YOU SHOULD KNOW REASON FOR EXCLUSION PRESIDENT CONGRESS. HOWEVER I LEAVE FINAL DECISION YOU AND PANDITJI.[2]

GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 246

304. LETTER TO DENIS HAYES CROFTON

PATNA,
April 14, 1947

DEAR MR. CROFTON,

Many thanks for your offer. But it would be perhaps quicker if you will kindly send the enclosed message[1] by wire.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 246

305. A LETTER

April 14, 1947

I returned here yesterday evening and read again your letter of March 12, 1947. I have an impression that I have already written

[1] Which read : "Mr Jinnah is perfectly ready to sign statement deploring acts of violence, etc., which you signed before you left Delhi provided that your and his signatures are the only ones that appear on the document. As you mentioned that you thought Mr. Kripalani's signature might also be added, though I gathered that you did not make this a stipulation, I am not issuing statement until I hear from you. Pandit Nehru is agreeable to leaving matter to my discretion, but I feel I must have your views. Unless statement bears you signature alone Mr. Jinnah will not sign. May I therefore appeal to you to agree. Please reply urgently."

[2] The addressee wired in reply : "I am glad to inform you that Pandit Nehru also agreed to leave the decision to me. I consider it so vital that the appeal should issue that I thought it best that is should go out over the signatures only of yourself and Mr. Jinnah."

[3] The addressee, Secretary to the Governor of Bihar, who was going to Delhi by plane had offered to take Gandhiji's reply to the Viceroy; *vide* the preceding item.

something to you. Or have I omitted to write? If your insistence on certain policies had raised you high and if it is now pulling you down, you should take it that basically your insistence was obstinacy and that you had not at all risen high. There are some big men who hold this view. They think that the teaching of non-violence has proved disastrous. They believe that the way of the spinning-wheel would only take us back to the medieval ages. They think the same of village industries and Nayee Talim. Could it not be that there was something basically wrong with me which led me to have a misguided view of things all through? However, my views are the same as they have, always been.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 198

306. A LETTER

April 14, 1947

We shall be able to meet in thought when we have achieved identity of thought and when our thinking has become absolutely pure. When that happens we shall have conquered even death. Such a state cannot be attained without sacrifice and effort. Let us at least have an ideal. God will one day grant us the strength to attain the ideal.

[From Hindi]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 198

307. A LETTER

April 14, 1947

It is futile to argue in terms of *ifs* and *buts.* It is wrong to say that it would have been better if such and such a thing had been done in such and such a way. And this particularly applies to one who claims to be guided by God. Only a person whose heart is pure can claim to be guided by God. I try my best to keep my heart pure. Hence I bring God into the picture.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 198

308. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

PATNA,
April 14, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You maintained good silence during the prayer. Kindly remain as peaceful till I finish speaking. In the first place I must tell you about my journey. Things went on smoothly right from Delhi so that I could sleep comfortably throughout the night. Even though a big crowd had gathered at Kanpur the people were peaceful. I was fast asleep and did not know about the gathering. It was all very peaceful till I reached the Bihar border, but with my entry into Bihar the disturbances began. This was so at least in my view. I can sleep even during the day if only people would let me. I had work to do and I went on doing it. I would ask the Biharis not to behave in the manner they did. There is a limit even to love. It serves no purpose going beyond a limit. Love should not be expressed in such a way as to upset the other person.

I had gone to Delhi to meet the Viceroy. I discussed with him many things. He seems to be a man of honest intentions. He kept repeating that he was the last Viceroy and that he would be in office only till 30th June next year. But this does not mean that he has nothing to do till then. He is preparing for his departure. It is my impression that he is keen on going, whether or not we continue to fight among ourselves. The British have ruled us for more than a century. They have given us education, but have we learnt only to quarrel? On the one hand our independence is approching and on the other we continue to fight among ourselves. A good deal of discussions were held in Delhi. Panditji, Rajaji, Vallabhbhai and all others are trying to think of ways and means to consolidate our independence which we are about to attain. They are making efforts so that there may be peace and calm in the country and the defects of foreign rule may be removed.

People ask me why I did not go to the Punjab. All I can say in reply is that I can neither go nor refrain from going anywhere at somebody's bidding. For this I need a call from within, in other words, the inner voice. There were quite a few people who said that I should go and as many advised to the contrary. I listened to both the views. But then my inner voice told me that my work lay in Bihar and Noakhali. "Better is death", it is said, "in the discharge of one's

[1] Held at the Bankipur Maidan

duty, another's duty is fraught with danger." The *Gita* says that one's duty, however small, is better than another's, however great. I felt that I should come here, and so I consulted the Viceroy, Panditji and other leaders. This does not mean that I shall never go to the Punjab. I shall go there when I feel I should.

I had said at Noakhali that I would either do or die. Maybe I will die, not in Noakhali but in Bihar, or, I might die not even in Bihar but in the Punjab. It would be just as well if I succeed in Noakhali, for it would have its good effect all round. If the Hindus and the Muslims of Bihar tell me that my work here is over and that I should leave, then I shall go to Noakhali. Those Muslims who are writing abusive letters to me should be able to say that although the Hindus have misbehaved they would not do so any more. If these Muslims feel reassured, they would certainly be able to say so. Let the Hindus of Noakhali also say the same thing. When I was in Delhi, the Muslims of Bihar were asking me why I did not go to Bihar. It pained me that they did not say that they had restored brotherly relations with the Hindus and I need not go to Bihar. And now, what about Noakhali? Suhrawardy Saheb says that because Gandhi released to the Press so many telegrams it probably led to the communal explosion in Calcutta. What Satis Babu has written makes everything clear. It is another matter if the charges are false and cannot be proved. But if they are true, it will be known to everyone. What is the point in hiding the guilt? It would be better if the newspapers publish the outrages committed by both Hindus and Muslims. People should know who has committed what crime. This will show what is the truth and what is the untruth and the poison will come to the surface. Just now people only make guesses while the poison works within. Suhrawardy Saheb says that his officers give him such reports. This is not a good practice. This is what the British too used to say. They also used to believe their officers' reports that all was well. The officers in Bihar and Bengal have given similar reports, but they are not reliable. Satis Babu and Suhrawardy Saheb are old friends. Satis Babu used to go round with him during the disturbances in Calcutta. Whatever he says is only after proper investigation. It is not right to say that he gives wrong information. He gives full details of arson and looting. It is futile to say that these are lies. Because Noakhali and came here to serve the Muslims I have a right to go on a fast. When I was in Bengal I had said that I would undertake a fast unto death if the riots in Bihar did not stop.[1] I have a similar right [to

[1] *Vide* "Blessings to Syed Mehbob", 14-3-1947

fast] on behalf of the Hindus of Noakhali. But it is not easy to undertake a genuine fast. I do not mean that I am going to undertake a fast right from today. It will please me very much if the reports sent to me about Noakhali are proved exaggerated and Suhrawardy Saheb in right in saying that the Hindus have not suffered any loss. But what would happen to me if the fear proves will-founded and something happens to the Hindus who have stayed on on the assurance from Satis Babu and Haran Babu? I have told everyone that I would go to Noakhali, so I shall have to do something. Surely I cannot take poison nor hang or shoot myself. I can end my life only by fasting. Suhrawardy Saheb says the Hindus are in a minority in Bengal but the difference in the numbers of the Hindus and the Muslims is very small. The proportion may be 55 to 45 per cent. The Hindus of West Bengal have decided that Bengal should be divided. If I were in Suhrawardy Saheb's place I would have gone to the Hindus and asked them not to have any fears. I would have asked them what their trouble was. Why do the Hindus want separation? Let him satisfy them. You may have Pakistan or Hindustan, but it is wrong if the Hindus say that they would force the Muslims to stay on. And if the Muslims say that they would achieve their goal by resorting to force I would say that they would not get an inch of land from us. I would tell them they could turn the whole of India into Pakistan by persuading us and converting us to their view. I had said the same thing in Delhi. But what can we do in a situation as at present? Shall we also resort to violence? No, we shall lay down our lives, but we shall not let them have their way by force.

Bengal entered its New Year yesterday. India has a number of New Year days. I expect a day will come when the whole of India will observe the same New Year Day. By the grace of God may the Bengali New Year bring peace and comfort to the whole of Bengal. In the coming New Year the Hindus should learn new things. They should learn to die. They should learn to die not while engaged in plunder and arson but while pursuing dharma and serving others, for service of man is service unto God. Let all Bengalis learn this. The Muslims do not follows the Bengali year now. At one time they used to follow it. But even if only the Hindus of Bengal learn to follow the new path from the New Year, I would say it would be for the benefit of all and they to would stand to gain by it.

[From Urdu]

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—III, pp. 5-8

309. TALK WITH MUSLIM LEAGUE MEMBERS

April 14, 1947

I firmly believe that if only the British quit India, we would almost be united. Why cannot the Muslim League see that the first thing for all is to end India's slavery? We may talk about partition after that. Either the Muslims regard India as their home or they do not. If they do, then this senseless massacre of innocent people should stop, the British should be made to quit and our own Government set up. We can then settle the question of partition by mutual persuasion or fight it out amongst ourselves, if necessary. But I do not understand why thousands of innocent people are being killed treacherously. And if the Muslims do not regard India as their home, the question of Pakistan does not arise.

The Muslim League friends replied that they also condemned such killings. Bapu said:

Then you should issue a statement to that effect on behalf of the local Muslim League and write to Jinnah Saheb. That would be true service rendered to the Muslim League, and thus you will not subjected to unwarranted suspicion.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 200-1

310. LETTER TO A TEACHER[2]

April 15, 1947

Students must not be given corporal punishment. But there should be such a rapport between the teacher and the taught that if the teacher punishes himself in some way the children, because of their affection for him, should feel sorry, their hearts should melt and they should change for the better. I am not talking in the air. This has been my personal experience. Mothers also can reform their children in the same way. In South Africa I had looked after Hindu, Muslim and Parsi boys and girls. During those days I remember having only once beaten a pupil.[1] But it was my experience that my non-violent method was more successful. If the children have affection for their teacher

[1] After the members of the League had left, Gandhiji remarked that, in spite of their assurances, he was afraid nothing would come out of it.

[2] The addressee, a believer in non-violence, had posed the problem of reforming some of the difficult students without corporal punishment.

[1] *Vide* "an Autobiography"

they are bound to feel sorry when they find the teacher suffering on their account. That would soften them. But if in spite of that there is a difficult pupil, we should non-co-operate with him. But that is another method. The former is the better method.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 202-3

311. TALK WITH MANU GANDHI

ANDHI CAMP, PATNA,
April 15, 1947

Socialism is a term of the modern age but the concept of socialism is not a new discovery. Lord Krishna preaches the same doctrine in the *Gita.* One need have in one's possession only what one requires. It means that all men are created by God and therefore entitled to an equal share of food, clothing and housing. If does not require huge organizations for the realization of this ideal. Any individual can set about to realize it. First of all in order to translate this ideal into our lives we should minimize our needs, keeping in mind the poorest of the poor in India. One should earn just enough to support oneself and one's family. To have a bank balance would thus be incompatible with this ideal. And whatever is earned should be earned with the utmost honesty. Strict restraint has to be kept over small matters in our lives. Even if a single individual enforces this ideal in his life, he is bound to influence others. Wealthy people should act as trustees of their wealth. But if they are robbed of this wealth through violent means, it would not be in the interest of the country. This is known as communism. Moreover, by adopting violent means we would be depriving society of capable individuals.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 201-2

312. TALK WITH SHAH NAWAZ KHAN[1]

GANDHI CAMP PATNA ,
April 15, 1947

I have high hopes of you. I have to convert you into a perfect non-violent soldier with the sole weapon of non-violence. You were

[1] During the morning walk

decorated with the rank of Colonel while serving under Netaji. I wish to make you a Colonel of non-violence. If you qualify to receive this honour, I shall have no doubt about the establishment of communal unity. Win over everyone with love. You should learn spinning.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 203

313. A TALK

GANDHI CAMP PATNA ,
April 15, 1947

There is a highly sensitive balance in science for weighing minute particles of dust and even a hair can be weighed by it. We should have a similar balance that would indicate even a hair-like minute slip in the observance of truth and non-violence. We have to put ourselves to this test and pass it. It does not therefore behove a man of non-violence to imagine anything about another person. There is no reason to believe that anyone who criticises us must be against us. For example, if misunderstanding crops up between two friends or brothers, they do not cease to be brothers or friends. There are many instances like this. For example, water is two parts hydrogen and one part oxygen. Still we should experiment both ways by separating the elements and integrating them again, and if as a result we get water only then our inference about water will be regarded as correct. Similarly, in our everyday life on many occasions what appears clear as daylight may turn out to be an illusion. We decidedly violate truth and non-violence if we draw an inference without making proper enquiries. Having taken the vow of truth and non-violence we have to be extremely cautious and alert at every moment. I meet Rajas and Maharajas with due respect and welcome them, in spite of my knowledge of their numerous shortcomings. They are themselves not responsible for them, it has become their nature owing to the circumstances. We can change them only through love and then alone will they accept us as their friends; thus on several occasions they were ready on their own for atonement.

You know that Deenabandhu Andrews used to be treated with discourtesy by Government officials. But in spite of that he continued to visit them off and on with the result that some of them came to

regret their conduct. Only if I succeed in my experiment in truth and non-violence here amongst you can I go to the Punjab and Sind and then I am bound to achieve success everywhere. Therefore one who has embraced non-violence should always be vigilant and constantly examine himself.

Pointing to the figurine of three monkeys Gandhiji said:

This guru of mine always teaches me never to see evil in others. That is why it has its eyes closed. The other one has closed its ears because one should hear no evil of others. [The third one] has closed its mouth because one should neither speak evil of others nor utter a single word which might hurt anyone.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 205-6

314. TALK WITH SYED JAFAR IMAM[1]

April 15, 1947

Gandhiji told him that if there was an order that the League volunteers should leave the camp, they should do so, otherwise it would be very difficult for him to plead for them with the Government.

JAFAR IMAM: We bow before your affection. The Government wants to remove the League from the camp in order to destroy its influence amongst the refugees. That would render the refugees helpless and force them to go back under pressure of Government threat. We feel that to attempt to weaken our organization in this fashion is not proper.

Gandhiji assured him that no one could destroy the influence of the League that way. He had even declared that he would gladly have Jinnah as the first President of free India. He had no quarrel with the League though it regarded him as its enemy. Such things only amused him. He related how in Delhi a Muslim League leader had openly declared him to be an enemy of the Muslims, but the wife of this gentleman with her sister came and had a friendly and cordial talk with him the next day. If he was sincere, he added, others were bound to understand him one day. They had fallen on evil days but he had full faith in God.

GANDHIJI: Then let us meet again and discuss the whole affair.

JAFAR IMAM: We are all going to Delhi and will not be back till the 20th

[1] President, Bihar Muslim League. He explained to Gandhiji that they were not obstructing the rehabilitation work in the interest of the masses, that the Government had ordered all the refugees to go back to their villages, otherwise their rations would be stopped. The Magistrate would be going that day to get the order executed and if no settlement was arrived at, his volunteers would court arrest.

April.

GANDHIJI: Then depute somebody who can act on your behalf.

JAFAR IMAM: There will be nobody here. You kindly get the order stayed till the 20th. When we are back we shall discuss the matter with you and arrive at a decision.

GANDHIJI: I shall talk the matter over with the Ministers, and understand their point of view. If after talking to them I feel that your volunteers should leave, will they do so?

JAFAR IMAM: We pray that you don't go there. If somebody misbehaves, if would be very painful to us. We would not like you to be disobeyed.

One of Gandhiji's secretaries intervened at this stage and explained that the Government order only for the time being was that the volunteers would not get Government rations or be allowed to sleep there. The order applied equally to all volunteers and was not directed against any particular community or organization.

JAFAR IMAM: Night is the only time when women and children require protection.

GANDHIJI: Suppose I or any of my representatives goes and sleeps there, would it not serve the purpose?

JAFAR IMAM: We do not want you to take this trouble upon yourself at this age. We would only request you to get this order stayed till the 20th. That would prevent many unnecessary complications.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Bk. II, pp. 323-4

315. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

PATNA,
April 15, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

While I was in Delhi I had received many letters from Bihar, some containing abuses, some in praise and few expressing doubt whether I would at all return to finish the work in Bihar or whether I had forgotten all about Bihar. The doubt expressed has no foundation. He who follows his own dharma commits no mistake. Praise is wholly unnecessary for him; dharma for him is a duty. One must return a hundredfold what one receives.

We must put up with the abuses hurled at us. They do not affect me. Do or Die is my motto and I must lay down my life doing my work wherever it might be. Some persons have accused me of leaving Noakhali and coming to Bihar not at the request of a Hindu but at the

behest of a Muslim so that the Muslims may do what they like in Noakhali. But you know I have come here at the invitation of Dr. Mahmud. He is the son-in-law of the late Mazhar-ul-haq and is an able person. He has rendered great service to the Congress and has been a member of the Congress Working Committee. I knew his father-in-law Mr. Mazhar-ul-Haq even before I had heard of Rajendra Babu or Brijkishore Babu. He was my fellow-student in England. I had come to Bihar at the instance of Rajkumar Shukla and my prior acquaintance with Mazhar-ul-Haq proved to be a great advantage. I have known Dr. Mahmud since the days when there was no Hindu-Muslim tension of the sort which has now developed. I have come here at his invitation for he is an old friend of mine. According to me, by summoning me here Dr. Mahmud has done good both to the Hindus and Muslims. Bihar after all is my land, it has made me. My coming here is not a new thing. I have worked here and have become attached to it. My attachment to it is as pure as to a mother. It is true I have come here at the instance of Muslims but it is sheer folly to say that Muslims are devils and have drawn me away from Noakhali to do what they please there. How is it possible for Dr. Mahmud, who has done so much work and whose father-in-law has served the country so well, to do any such thing? Are all the Muslims in the world bad? Muslims also may say that all the Hindus are bad. So long as there is even one good man in the world the world belongs to the good. If everyone turns evil, the world will go to Satan. But Satan has no real existence. In fact Satan is a name or evil. On reflection we will realize that even if there is one good man the world will go on as a result of his noble endeavour.

I stay in Dr. Mahmud's house and all the persons in my party are treated as members of his family. Mr Muztuwa, Dr. Mahmud's secretary, takes great care to make us feel at home. Both Dr. Mahmud and Qaiyum are your ministers. Are they good for nothing? If you recognize that they are not true servants of the Congress you may remove them but they have been chosen by Hindu ministers. Ministries can be formed without Muslims being included if no honest Muslim is available: but it would be dishonesty not to have them when honest Muslims are available. Our good lies in taking all good men along with us. The Muslim League people who met me also say that non-League Muslims are not their enemies. The Bihar Muslim League President, Jafar Imam, is in fact a good friend of Dr. Mahmud. Badshah Khan is also a Muslim but he is a *fakir.* Khudai Khidmatgars

are also Muslims but they have given complete protection to the Hindus though the Hindus there are fewer even than the Muslims here.

People may write to me what they like but this you must understand, that whatever may be the deterioration in the situation in the Punjab, Bengal and Sind, Hinduism will be saved if Bihar at any rate follows the right path. Even if the Muslims in the Punjab, Bengal and Sind harm the Hindus there, and if Bihar shows true courage in protecting and comforting Muslims and their children, Bihar will have raised India in the estimation of the world.

To protect the minorities is not to appease them. This I expect from Bihar by right of service and because of its people's deep devotion to Rama. I have been constantly on the move but the doctors have advised me not to tour in this heat; they want me to go to a cooler place during summer, but I shall tour as long as my health permits. The tours will have to be curtailed. A lot of work remains to be done in Patna. I do not want to leave in a hurry.

I have many more things to tell you. But since these things must be properly explained I shall try to tell them tomorrow or some other day.[1]

[From Hindi]

Bihar Samachar, 17-4-1947

316. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

PATNA,
April 16, 1947

CHI. LILI,

I am happy that you are with Sushila.

You did well to let me know your ideas. I do not approve of them. But where is the time to explain why? Moreover, your ideas are fleeting. You do give vent to your feelings. There is no harm in your doing this before me. But behave like a grown-up before others.

Since you wish to keep nothing secret, I don't mark your letters as confidential. I apply the rule strictly to Sushila's letters.

Write to me regularly.

I hope you understand that it is for your own good that I have

[1] Gandhiji's speeches at prayer meetings were published by the Bihar Government in *Bihar Samachar,* a daily bulletin, for distribution in the villages.

forbidden you to come here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9607. Also C. W. 6579. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

317. A TALK[1]

PATNA,

April 16, 1947

The way to true repentance lies in making a firm resolve not to soil one's hand with evil in future. If ever again you happen to commit a wrong you should not sleep over your confession. If is human to err. Therefore one is bound to commit an error, but that in itself is not a very grave matter. The danger lies in hiding that error. When a person resorts to untruth to hide his error he commits another folly. If one continues to make mistakes one after another, it can be very harmful. If there is an abscess in the body, one can press it and remove the pus. But if the poison is not removed and it spreads in the body it may result in death. The same in true of a person who commits a sin but does not confess it. A sinner may commit many sins but if at the last moment there is sincere repentance, God forgives him. One should pray for the well-being not only of human beings but of all creatures, which also are the creation of God. And the only way to attain this strength is to meditate upon God morning and evening. The prayer for the welfare of all includes our welfare as well.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 209-10

318. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

April 16, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I can only tell you this today. While I was in Delhi I met the Viceroy a number of times. I also met him just before coming here. He showed me an appeal[1] which he wanted me to sign. I told him I

[2] To a person who had confessed his guilt

[1] *Vide* "A Joint Appeal", 12-4-1947

could do so with the consent of Pandit Nehru and the Congress President. Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah was also to sign it. The purport of the appeal was that we are both in agreement that the recent acts of lawlessness and violence have brought the utmost disgrace to the fair name of India and the greatest misery to innocent people and unleashed a reign of terror everywhere. We are not to consider who were the aggressors and who the victims. We denounce for all time the use of force to achieve political ends and we call upon all the communities of India, to whatever persuasion they may belong, not only to refrain from all acts of violence and disorder but also to avoid both in speech and writing any word which might be construed as an incitement to such acts.

To obtain my signature on such an appeal is not of very great significance, for I have all along been saying the same thing and will go on repeating it. But it is significant that the Quaid-e-Azam has also signed it. Everyone should now take care that riots do not take place. Though they break out even now we have now a right to expect that the riots will not occur in future. The Muslim League people are also here. They can assure me that my work has been completed and that I could now return and resume my work. My signature was not necessary at all, for I represent nobody. I am your servant because I have served Bihar. It is for you to tell me that having committed a sin once your will not repeat it. You may ask me why Pandit Nehru and Kripalani did not sign the appeal. I do not want to go into this matter but you must realize the significance of my signature. It will be very bad if you now kill any Muslim. It should not be that you applaud me and kill innocent people. Such applause would be my undoing. How long would you applaud me?

I had said the other day[1] that I had a right to undertake a fast on behalf of Bihar but after coming here I have earned a similar right in case of Noakhali also. It is a different matter if I do not go to Noakhali or don't exercise my right. But the Hindus and Muslims of Noakhali must know that I have got that right and I may sacrifice my life for them. I have also received an anonymous telegram which says that if I have to go on a fast I should do so immediately. But I do not act at other people's bidding. I shall undertake a fast when my inner voice prompts me to do so, for the inner voice is the voice of God. I have signed the Viceroy's appeal. The implication of my signature is that I shall be responsible if Hindu-Muslim riots break out anywhere in India. I have no power, no army, I have only my life which I can sacrifice. I do not represent the Hindus. I claim that all religions are equal. You just heard in the prayer about equality of religions, which

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 14-4-1947

means all religions are equal and I shall have to atone for the crimes committed by the people irrespective of their religions. I have taken a tremendous responsibility on my shoulders. You should realize my responsibility; Hindus and Muslims should live like brothers for ever. I can make a similar claim on behalf of Shri Jinnah also. Today he speaks for the Muslims alone but there was a time when he was regarded as a representative of the whole country. He was a Congressman and had a high position in the Congress. He had put up a brave fight against the Governor of Bombay single handed and the latter had to yield.[2] The Jinnah Hall in Bombay stands as a memorial to his good name. He can speak for everyone even today because the appeal is addressed to all the communities irrespective of their faiths.

I would also appeal to the Press to refrain from publishing reports which would incite one against another. A great burden has fallen both upon Shri Jinnah's shoulders and mine, since the appeal has been signed only by the two of us. Had the appeal been signed by 25 persons the burden would have been less. It is now the duty of every Hindu and Muslim to realize this and explain it to others.

The Viceroy has taken a very good step; we must thank him for it. But it would have been much better had Shri Jinnah and I drafted the appeal jointly and signed it. It would then have been a great thing. But the Viceroy who is an outsider had to initiate it. How good it would be if we agreed to act upon it ! How great would India's reputation be ! Let us bear no more ill-will against each other nor hurt others by any thought, word or deed of ours. Lest the world should look down upon us we should not profess one thing and practise another. We should admit our mistake and decide not to lose our heads again.

My understanding of the situation is that the Congress and the League should together open a new chapter. It would have been excellent if they could have arrived at an agreement without the intervention of a third party. However, I hope there would be no enmity or misunderstanding between the Congress and the League even if they were brought together through the good offices of the Viceroy.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Samachar, 18-4-1947

[1] Presumably the reference is to the anti-Willingdon demonstrations held to protest against the Governor's provocative statements regarding the Home Rule League leaders at the Bombay provincial War Conference on June 10, 1918 *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Bombay", 16-6-1918

319. TALK WITH WOMEN WORKERS

GANDHI CAMP PATNA ,
April 17, 1947

You should have faith in yourselves and in God and thus build up your self-confidence and courage. Everyone frightens the timid. Therefore if you continue to be timid you will not be able to make any use of the strength with which God has blessed you, the strength t cultivate courage in oneself. In order to utilize your strength you have to realize the power inherent in you.

God only knows who invented the word *abala*[1] for the women of India. To call them *abala* is to condemn the inherent strength of women; in my view it is an insult to them. If we peruse the history of the Rajput, Mughal or *Mahabharata* period of our country we shall come across marvellous instances of bravery shown by women. They not only exhibited their bravery through arms, but by building up their moral courage they developed immense strength. If women resolve to bring glory to the nation, within a few months they can totally change the face of the country because the spiritual background of an Aryan woman is totally different from that of the women of other countries.

We hear reports, not only from Bihar or Noakhali, but from everywhere about goondas having molested or abducted women. I feel terribly upset hearing such sorry tales. I wonder why our women have become so timid. Their glory has been diminishing and for this you women are yourselves responsible. You should have such boundless faith in God, as Draupadi and Sita had. You should get rid of the distinctions of Hindu, Mussalman, Parsi or Jew. Follow the religion which appeals to you. Who are the persons who violate the honour of women? Are they not your brother, father or son? After all they are all our countrymen, aren't they? You should restrain your menfolk from committing such atrocities and warn them that if they violated any Muslim woman it would be tantamount to violating your honour, because she is after all your sister. But today even women have stopped thinking on these lines. Instead, some women take pride in their son, brother, father or husband killing or molesting other women. I have seen a number of such cases. But remember that those

[1] Weak, helpless

who are dishonouring other women today will treat you in the same way tomorrow. As a result even a brother and sister might be forced to follow immoral ways. As I see it, this will be the outcome of the massacre that is going on. I do not wish to live to witness thing. I would plead with you not to become an instrument in dragging India's ancient culture into the mire. You are only twelve or fifteen but you are all workers. If you can carry my voice, I would like to convey my anguish to every woman in the country.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 214-6

320. TALK WITH CONGRESS WORKERS[1]

GANDHI CAMP PATNA ,
April 17, 1947

Only this morning I poured out my anguish before some sisters. I did not expect that you also would be the cause of similar pain. It is a bad habit with us that whenever we call a meeting to discuss some work, we start indulging in personal recrimination, lose our tempers and thus waste our time. It seems there is a growing inconsistency between the public and private life of a Congress worker. The result is that goondaism, lack of discipline and carelessness are increasing day by day. As preparations are afoot for transferring the Government into our hands, our responsibility is also increasing. We must get rid of anger, intolerance, etc., otherwise we will not be able to stand on our own. Not only this, we might be caught up in a bigger bondage. I want a swaraj in which the millions of illiterates in our country will realize its benefits. You have to cultivate the strength to achieve that. The government [under swaraj] should be such that people may clearly see the distinction between the arbitrary and autocratic British rule and the democratic government run on non-violent lines. I am an optimist. I maintain that once the reins of Government are transferred to us we will realize our responsibilities and all the artificial barriers existing at present will vanish.

My faith in non-violence and truth is being strengthened all the more in spite of the increasing number of atom bombs. I have not a

[1] The workers who had called on Gandhiji in the afternoon started accusing one another. Gandhiji listened to them for some time but when things went our of hand, he gave them a piece of his mind.

shadow of doubt that there is no power superior to the power of truth and non-violence in the world. See what a great difference there is between the two: one is moral and spiritual force, and is motivated by infinite soul-force; the other is a product of physical and artificial power, which is perishable. The soul is imperishable. This doctrine is not my invention; it is a doctrine enunciated in our Vedas and Shastras. When soul-force awakens, it becomes irresistible and conquers the world. This power is inherent in every human being. But one can succeed only if one tries to realize this ideal in each and every act in one's life without being affected in the least by praise or censure.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 216-7

321. MESSAGE TO MAHARAJA OF DARBHANGA

April 17, 1947

Be a servant to your subjects. And spend no more than you need from the State exchequer, considering yourself a trustee of the entire property.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 217

322. TALK WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF JAMIAT- UL-ULEMA

PATNA,
April 17, 1947

BAPU: Instead of being anxious to find out how many Muslims were killed by the Hindus, your primary duty is to find out how many Hindus the Muslims had killed and where and persuaded them not to commit such atrocities. Similarly you should go among the Hindus and serve them. You should assure them that all Muslims are not bad and thus remove their fear. If the nationalist Muslims of India did just this at the risk of their lives they would raise Muslims and Islam to greater heights and Khuda would shower His choicest blessings on them. But today who listens to me? If out of the four crore Muslims I could have only a hundred such brothers and sisters, they would be

able to render great service to the forty crore Hindus and Muslims of India. Now, tell me, is any one of you prepared to take up this mission?

What our brethren are doing is, of course, wrong but we never support them.

BAPU: It is our sorrow that we always think in terms of mine and thine. You should realize that a wrong committed by even a child of India is a wrong committed by each one of us. Till we imbibe this spirit, we shall not have peace.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 217-8

323. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

April 17, 1947

Explaining why he was late by 15 minutes Gandhiji said that he wanted the prayers to start 15 minutes later than scheduled because it was the time for *namaz* for the Muslims. He also said that even if the Muslims came in small numbers we must keep their *namaz* in mind.

We should respect all religions. In our prayer we also recite some portions from the Koran. I have heard that some boys ridicule the recitations from the Koran. We should not ridicule anybody's religion. If we do so, other people will ridicule our religion, too, and that would lead to strife. I cannot give up reciting from the Koran in the course of my prayer. The whole prayer consists of recitations from several scriptures. Not a single item can be omitted from it even if it comes to discontinuing the whole prayer. Even if you do not participate in the prayer, you must listen to it carefully, and even if you do not understand it you should not ridicule it.

After the prayer Gandhiji said:

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Some Muslims came to see me today and they gave me some painful new. They said that in PATNA city the Hindus have done considerable harm to the Muslims, and are still not repenting what they have done, and that they continue to threaten the Muslims. I had a similar report about Bihar-Sharif. There too the Hindus bully and threaten the Muslims in the same way and the Muslims are afraid to return. It is our duty to rebuild the houses that have been destroyed. How can this be done when the Hindus harass even those who go there

as labourers? What would the Muslims do? This is a very complicated question. I was surprised to hear this and felt ashamed. At one time the Hindus and the Muslims of Bihar used to live as brothers. But now they treat each other as enemies. I have received complaints from other places too. I could not go to Monghyr and Bihar-Sharif, but I hope to go to other places. I have grown weak and it would be more difficult on account of the heat. There was time when I did not bother about these things. But I have now grown old. You can spare me that trouble if you wish. If you can carry my voice up to Bihar-Sharif, tell the Hindus there that they should not go on troubling an old man like me. My work can become easier if you wish. Some Muslims have demanded rifle licences. Personally, I would not like anyone to have a rifle. A rifle may be used for hunting. But we have no danger of tigers here Today rifles are used by the Hindus and the Muslims to kill or intimidate each other. If proper arrangements are made, rifles and guns would not be needed at all. It is said in the Bible that we should look forward to an age when no swords would be needed and the material used for making them could be diverted to make other useful things. It is said in the *Ramayana* That when Rama was asked how he would fight against Ravana, Rama said that he would have the armour of purity and his noble endeavour would stand by him. In my view the Muslims should not even think that they can have protection against the assaults from the Hindus if they possessed rifles. The Hindus should tell them that so long as they are alive no harm will come to the Muslims. They must tell the Muslims that their sisters and daughters are as much their own sisters and daughters and they will protect them.

Some big Hindu landlords came to see me today. Then some Muslim landlords also met me. I do not wish to convey to you everything they said to me. I shall speak about these things to the Ministers who can do something about them. Even so, I do wish to tell you a few things. I have come to know that the peasants and the workers have started thinking that they have become the rulers, and therefore they are free to abuse the landlords. They think that they can withhold the revenue and deprive the landlords of their due. This would do them no good. The peasants are harming their own interests. Even if they kill a few landlords, how is it going to help? The peasants and workers are too many and the landlords too few. What is the point of riding roughshod over the landlords and wanting to finish them off? It is said that the peasants are doing everything in the name of

disobedience to law. But disobedience to law as taught by me does not involve ruining and annihilating others. I am leaving aside the Muslims just now. We cannot win freedom in this way. We must be friendly to all. Granting that the landlords had been plundering the peasants till now, it does not mean that now that we have achieved power we should plunder the landlords. Will the peasants remove the landlords and occupy their positions? We should do everything in a proper manner. If we follow violent methods we shall only spread violence. And, when that happens you yourself would turn round and ask if that was what Ramarajya meant. You would say that you were comfortable during the British rule and have no peace now. I should like to tell all the peasants and workers that they should not create chaotic conditions. Let them not think that they are the sole masters of the country. They should not think that just because the railways belong to us they can pull the chain and bring the trains to a halt wherever they want, or that they can travel without tickets and rob others. This is not a proper thing to do; it is rowdyism by which we can achieve nothing. We therefore must do everything possible to stop such things. Let us go to those who indulge in such activities and persuade them to desist from such actions and explain to them that no one stands to gain by acting in this manner.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Samachar, 19-4-1947

324. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA[1]

PATNA,
Evening, *April 17, 1947*

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter. I understand what you write about Hoshiari. I am enclosing a letter for her, too.[1] In my opinion there is no need for you to go to Khurja. Your duty lies in staying on at Sevagram and doing whatever you can. Gajraj[3], I hope, is doing well. I am pleased to

[1] The addressee, being unhappy about the deteriorating condition of the Ashram dairy and not having enough work to keep him occupied, had requested Gandhiji to come and set right the affairs at Sevagram or permit him to go back and work in the villages near Khurja.

[1] The letter is not available.

[2] Hoshiari's son

know that Krishnachandra is making good progress under Vinobaji. What can I say about the dairy? It is almost impossible for me to go to Sevagram in the near future. It will be possible only if I can free myself from Bihar and Noakhali. It is very hot here. Let us see how God keeps me.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1974

325. LETTER TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY

PATNA,
April 18, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

Many thanks for your letter of the 9th instant.

I cannot endorse your insinuations. I have never subscribed to hush-hush policy. Publication of false news I hold to be a crime against humanity. If true news gives rise to conflagration there is something wrong with society and its leaders.[1]

I began publishing the wires received from Noakhali when I despaired of getting a hearing from you and when living outside Noakhali I felt helpless. Probably my presence in Noakhali would have made no difference in the situation. Only I would have derived the satisfaction from the fact that I was in Noakhali sharing the trials of its people and my co-workers.

It surprises me that you should discount the statements of facts supplied by Shri Satis Chandra Das Gupta. The culprits may never be traced but the facts of arson and loot could not be disputed, nor could the community from which the culprits are derived by disputed. The rulers whether democrats or autocrats—whether foreign or indigenous—forfeit the right to rule when they fail to deal properly with crimes even when the culprits are able to defy detection.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: G. N. 9074

[3] The addressee had banned throughout Bengal publication of the wires exchanged between Gandhiji, Satis Chandra Das Gupta, Haranchandra Ghosh-Chowdhary, and himself, on the ground that their publication would havse brought about "another conflagration". *Vide* "Telegram to H. S. Suhrawardy", 7-4-1947

326. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

April 18, 1947

. . . [1] Even to avoid causing pain to dear ones, one cannot stop what one considers a *yajna*. But where one is both the doer and the deed one must realize the difficulty of a neutral attitude and accept any step that may be taken against one. My ideas are what they have always been. In fact I am becoming more and more convinced about them. I see nothing wrong about them. . . .[2]

From a copy of the Gujarati: G. N. 10460. Also C. W. 6898. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

327. LETTER TO M. S. ANEY

April 18, 1947

DEAR BAPUJI ANEY[2],

Only today I am able to attend to your letter of March 16. I read your loving message for the New Year[3] the moment it arrived, but had no opportunity to write a reply. I could have certainly found time but I do not keep all my papers with me while travelling. The result has been that the letter remained unanswered till today.

The situation here is quite serious. People have ceased to trust each other. In such a situation any message from a person like me can only be a cry in the wilderness. I take consolation by reminding myself of the last words which Vyasa had put in the mouth of Dharmaraj[4] and which you had once conveyed to me.

Is it possible to do anything there[5]? Did the Asian Conference have any impact?

[From Hindi]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 221-2

[1] Omissions are as in the source.

[2] *Ibid*

[3] Madhav Shrihari Aney (1880-1968); member, Congress Working Committee, 1924-25 and 1931-34, acting President of Congress, 1933; member, Central Legislative Assembly; India's High Commissioner in Ceylon, 1943-47; Governor of Bihar, 1948-52

[4] According to the Saka calendar *Chaitra Sud* 1, which fell on March 23

[5] Yudhishthira, the eldest of the five Pandava brothers

[6] In Ceylon

328. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

April 18, 1947

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

Who will now sign the cheques concerning the Jallianwala Bagh[1] since Malaviyaji[2] is no more? As the Sardar happens to be there, consult him and let me know.

Blessing from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 222

329. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

PATNA,
April 18, 1947

CHI. SATIS BABU,

Arunanshu Babu writes to you, so I do not write. He is thinking of going over there; it is good.

You have to preserve your health for the sake of service. Write to me if you feel you need my presence there. I think if I can achieve anything here it will surely have its effect there. But there are difficulties everywhere.

Blessing from
BAPU

[PS.]

What shall I write about Taralika becoming a widow? Out of our selfishness we regard death as a cause for grief. I have written to Taralika.[3] I hope Hemprabha is calm.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9075

[1] Jallianwala Bagh Memorial Trust
[2] Madan Mohan Malaviya
[3] The letter is not available.

330. LETTER TO MOHAMMED HUSAIN KHAN

PATNA,
April 18, 1947

BHAI SAHEB,

Maulana Saheb gave me your letter of April on the very day I left Delhi. I read it after reaching PATNA. I read all the enclosures too. The whole matter is painful. I am doing whatever I can. The result is in the hands of God.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

331. TALK WITH SYED MAHMUD AND OTHERS

GANDHI CAMP PATNA ,
April 18, 1947

You should make it a point to meet the Muslim families whether they belong to the Muslim League or not, take them into your confidence, talk to them and win over their hearts. Rioters are not the only murderers. Bigger culprits are those who instigate these riots and are still regarded as honourable men. If we can reform these gentlemen, the poor people will be prevented from acting as their instruments, since they commit the misdeeds merely from greed for money and not because they relish them. It would be a great achievement if you could win the confidence of these Muslims. You should also have a talk with Ansari.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 220

332. TALK WITH MANU GANDHI [1]

GANDHI CAMP PATNA ,
April 18, 1947

I will have no regrets if the money invested in these machines is reduced to dust. True India lies in its seven lakh villages. Do you know that big cities like London have exploited India and the big cities of India in turn have exploited its villages? That is how palatial mansions have come up in big cities and villages have become impoverished. I want to infuse new life into these villages. I do not say that all the mills in cities should be demolished. But we should be vigilant and start afresh wherever we happen to make a mistake. We should stop exploiting the villages and should closely examine the injustice done to the villages and strengthen their economic structure.

I have no doubt that we have gained much strength through truth and non-violence. The country would never have risen high had it not adopted the weapon of non-violence. But truth has not been followed by the people to the extent it ought to have been. I am often surprised to see so much untruth prevailing in the country. No doubt our practice of non-violence is far from perfect, but if we had not adopted it, we would not have progressed so much. Our goal is truth and truth can be reached only through the observance of non-violence. Non-violence is only a means. Speaking truth is a habit I have formed right from my childhood, but I had to make efforts to practise non-violence. If we adopt non-violence, truth can be followed along with it. Sometimes good comes out of evil, but that is divine dispensation. Human experience is that as good comes out of good, only evil comes out of evil. Retaliation cannot end violence. If humanity is to rise above violence there is no alternative but to adopt non-violence. Love alone can conquer hatred. The principles of truth and non-violence are nothing new; they have been in existence from the beginning of creation. After 60 years' experience my faith in these ideals is growing stronger day by day.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 220-1

[1] Manu Gandhi asked Gandhiji what would be the fate of factories in big cities if people adopted village industries, following his advice.

333. TALK WITH ZAMINDARS

GANDHI CAMP PATNA ,
April 18, 1947

Zamindars or capitalists will not be able to survive if they continue to suppress peasants and labourers. Now you should behave towards them not as their masters but as partners and friends, and act as their trustees; then alone can you survive. For a long time during the British regime you have been exploiting the labourers and peasants. Therefore I advise you in your own interest that if you do not see the writing on the wall, it will be difficult for you to adjust.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 222

334. TALK WITH PEASANT AND LABOUR LEADERS

GANDHI CAMP PATNA ,
April 18, 1947

If labourers aim at asserting their rights, they can do so only by co-operating with zamindars, not by harassing or killing them. Abolition of zamindari is not a very difficult task. We have only a handful of zamindars here. But if you take the law into your own hands you will be striking at the root of your own interest. You can place your complaints before the Government but you cannot take the law into your hands and resort to violence. One who seeks to destroy others invites one's own doom. There are numerous such instances. The best known is that of the Yadavas[1]. If you work whole-heartedly during your working hours, your employers will have to pay you your proper wages. But if you harass them in any manner you will not earn anybody's sympathy. I told the zamindars who were here a little while ago what I thought right and I tell you the same. It is my nature. I cannot act otherwise. I must tell you what I think proper.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 222-3

[1] Shri Krishna's kinsmen, who destroyed themselves in internecine fighting. *Vide* also the following item.

335. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

PATNA,
April 18, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Some landlords came to me yesterday and brought several complaints, one of which was that the peasants and labourers were out to ruin them. In this connection I said yesterday that this was a dangerous thing to do. By indulging in such acts they are only harming themselves. Abolition of zamindari is but a small matter. When the zamindars and the peasants develop cordial relations the former need not be eliminated. The landlords are like a drop in the ocean. It is no great problem to dispense with them. But this should not be done by force. The *Mahabharata* tells us that the Yadavas were themselves annihilated when they were out to destroy others. They took to drinking, and fighting among themselves destroyed each other. Similarly, if the peasants and labourers will think of destroying others, they will themselves be ruined.

A gentleman told me today that I was not fully aware of the situation. He said that the peasants and labourers did not try to force their way, still the landlords oppressed them. I told him that if the landlords and the capitalists still exploited the peasants and labourers, they were harming their own interests. They would never survive if they behaved like masters. They could if they agreed to act as trustees.

If I am a millionaire, I should spend my wealth on those who help me in my accumulation of the millions. It is only when I do this that I can be called a trustee. But I cannot be called a trustee if I appropriate Rs. 1,000 and indulge in luxuries when I actually need only Rs. 5 or Rs. 50. I can also take money for the upkeep of my children as for my own. But I cannot give my children shares worth 5 or 10 lakhs so that they own four or five cars and live in grand style. You should not find fault with me if I say that I cannot manage on Rs. 5, that I cannot take *sattu*[1] and need fruit and milk in order to be able to work. You should let me have the money to meet my needs. But I should not take even a pice more than I need. I had demonstrated in Champaran how labourers could assert their rights. The indigo planters virtually ruled the place. They had their separate colonies and

[1] Flour of roasted grain

the poor were not supposed to cross their way. But I saw that their rule came to an end. People did not set fire to the houses of the planters to end their rule. Nor did they kill the planters. They only refused to work. Today also the proprietors must march with the times.

Some visitors told me today that a punitive tax had been imposed on them. A punitive tax is one imposed by the Government on the people of an entire village or neighbourhood. Suppose we harbour three goondas in our village and they misbehave with and kill the Muslim women and children of the village, the Government cannot arrest us because we are respectable people. Even if we are arrested the courts will acquit us for want of evidence. The rowdies also cannot be arrested because we harbour them. And so, the Government imposes a collective fine on the whole village by way of punishment. If some of us confess the crime and undertake to pay the tax, then the Government would not impose the tax on the innocent. But we do not reveal the names of those guilty of arson and assaults.

The visitors also complained that the persons responsible for the riots, who had attacked the Muslims and ruined them, were still at large and moving about freely. They said they could not return to their villages. I had said at Jahanabad that those who had caused the ruin and destruction should themselves help rebuild the houses they had destroyed. We should go to the Muslims and confess our guilt and ask for their forgiveness. We must reassure them that we would now protect them and act as their guards. We should ask them to return to their homes and should offer to meet their expenses. The people of the villages where the punitive tax has not been imposed should also inform the Government of their willingness to pay the tax. They should tell the Government that they would rebuild the houses of the Muslims and ask the Government to provide wood and bricks at the villagers' cost. But the Government should not sell it at a profit. This will be Bihar's atonement for the grave crime committed by it and it will thereby rise to great heights.

The villages harbouring such culprits should confess their crimes and seek forgiveness. For the Government can arrest a few criminals, but how can it apprehend a mob of thousands mounting an attack? If this is done the Muslims also would not clamour for retaliation against the Hindus. And if some miscreants create trouble, the other Muslims would stop them. Even the Muslim League supporters would stop them because Jinnah Saheb has expressed his

view against the use of force in politics. Newspapermen should also refrain from inciting one community against the other. They can render great help in maintaining peace if they so desire.

If we honestly admit our crimes we would be reducing the burden on the Government. Just now the Government is overburdened. The present Government is a people's government. If the Ministers are not leaders but servants, they must inspire such confidence among the Muslims that they would testify that they would never leave Bihar, that they had nothing to fear here and that they would continue to live here of their own will.

There is a third point which, God willing, I shall talk about tomorrow.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Samachar, 20-4-1947

336. TALK WITH MUSLIM STUDENTS

GANDHI CAMP PATNA ,
April 18, 1947

I greatly value the magnificent role played by students in the fight for freedom. But today this enthusiasm has taken a different direction. If you make a firm resolve you can be of great help in my effort for Hindu-Muslim unity. Befriend the Hindu students. Treat their sisters as your own sisters. If they are in difficulty, go and share their misfortune and build your character. You are the architects of the future India. It was from amongst people like you that prophets like Mohammed Saheb came. Why need I go further? There are living examples right in front of your eyes, aren't there? The non-violent and truthabiding workers like the Maulana[1] and Khan Saheb[2] are from amongst you. Now they have grown old. You have therefore to develop the strength to shoulder the responsibility of running the government when it is transferred to you. And to acquire this strength you should have strength of character.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 223-4

[1] Abul Kalam Azad
[2] Abdul Ghaffar Khan

337. TELEGRAM TO KAINARAYAM

[On or after *April 18, 1947*][1]

INTERVENTION DIFFICULT WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE PARTICULARS. ADVISE SUSPENSION PENDING INFORMATION. SECRETARY SHOULD RESIGN UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES MENTIONED.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

338. LETTER TO E. STANLEY JONES

PATNA,
April 19, 1947

DEAR DR. JONES,

I got your letter this morning and am so glad to learn that you were able to visit Sabarmati and renew your recollections. I remember well how you missed a looking glass in the room that was alloted to you, and how philosophically you took the absence of the article considered so useful in the West.

When the British troops, that powerful emblem of British rule, is removed from India that very fact will be a triumph, besides which every other pageant that can be conceived, must fade into insignificance.

I have no notion when I shall be able to leave my present haunt. I fully appreciate your prayerful sympathy in the task before me.

Please pass on my love to Mrs. Stanley Jones whenever you write to her. I don't know whether she is in India at present or whether she is in U.S.A. Please tell her that I remember the promise I hastily and lightly made to her that I will, when I got the necessary leisure, write out a dialogue for the use of children in the many schools she was conducting. I never got the leisure. But what is more true is that the task was much more difficult than I had imagined and to this day I do not know how I could deal with the delicate subject of the evil

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram of April 18, 1947 which read: "Shaligram Shukla with wife fast unto death Harijan temple entry since sixteenth before temple owned by District Congress Secretary and Assembly member. Two others followed. Pray intervention."

habits of children.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C. W. 11344. Courtesy: Mrs. Eunice Jones Mathews

339. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

PATNA,
April 19, 1947

CHI. JIVANJI,

There was a wire from the Sardar today stating that neither you nor anyone else in our circle has any objection to my writing in *Harijan.* I should like to interpret this to mean that you want me to write. If that is true, there should be no restrictions whatsoever.[1] I do not regard myself the proprietor of *Harijan.* You people there are the real proprietors, for it is you who keep it running with your conscientious work. I am fully aware that whatever right I have is purely moral.

I am getting ready to start writing, but please do not hesitate to let me have your views.

When should an article reach you at the latest? Pyarelal is far away from me, and so it is I who will have to look after all this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9976. Also C. W. 6950. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

340. TALK WITH WORKERS[2]

GANDHI CAMP PATNA ,
April 19, 1947

We cannot fully enjoy the freedom of our country unless we bring about a fundamental change in our education system. Education should be imparted through the means of crafts. Today we pass our examinations studying the text-books prescribed for us.

[1] In February 1947 portions of Gandhiji's prayer speeches in Noakhali, referring to his experiment in *brahmacharya,* were not published in *Harijan. Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 1/2-2-1947

[2] Of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh, the All-India Village Industries Association and the All-India Spinners' Association.

Instead of wasting time over those worthless books we should carry out experiments. For example, we should study how to grow cotton and make experiments in all the processes, right from cotton-growing to weaving of cloth. And then we can find out the names of the different varieties of cotton grown in various countries and also show their samples to children. Knowledge of history, geography, arithmetic and language can easily be imparted through this craft. And thus we can get rid of the lethargy that has overtaken us and can become industrious. If this craft is made compulsory in a large number of schools, we can easily achieve our object. University education does not serve much purpose. On the contrary it is harmful because an educated young man then can think of nothing except taking up a job. There are quite a few such young men who, to my knowledge, are totally ignorant in spite of their education and are unable to earn a single pice. On the other hand an illiterate artisan is quite capable of earning at least Rs. 6070 a month. These college-educated young men without jobs are driven from pillar to post. They do require, nonetheless, a minimum standard of clothing, shoes, etc., to suit their education. Thus parents first spend money on their education and then spend as much again to keep up their 'position' even during their unemployment. Our students today are in such a state of bankruptcy—and as a result the plight of the people is equally miserable. In order to improve the lot of our people, therefore, it is essential to launch a campaign for education through crafts. But such changes cannot be brought about merely by making speeches or issuing official circulars. No doubt they will help to some extent. But if the leaders, i.e., those in power, were to devote regularly an hour or so daily to some craft, it would have a tremendous impact. How was it that a handful of Englishmen could keep us in bondage for so many years? One of the reasons was that they introduced a system of education that could produce only clerks.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 225-6

341. TALK WITH ENGLISHWOMEN [1]

GANDHI CAMP PATNA,
April 19, 1947

The foreign power will be withdrawn before long, but for me real freedom will come only when we free ourselves of the domination

[1] Two Englishwomen had come to see Gandhiji.

of Western education, Western culture and Western way of living which have been ingrained in us, because this culture has made our living expensive and artificial, both for men and for women. Emancipation from this culture would mean real freedom for us.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 226-7

342. TALK WITH BIHAR MINISTERS

April 19, 1947

1. Ministers and Governors should, as far as possible, use articles manufactured in India, have khadi alone to wear for themselves and their family members and keep the wheel of non-violence going and help the crores of poor earn their bread.

2. They should learn both the Nagari and Persian scripts, abjure use of English among themselves and use Hindustani for all public occasions. They should also encourage the use of provincial languages. Hindustani should be their medium for all official purposes and all their office orders and circulars should be issued in it so that the enthusiasm to learn Hindustani grows and it may automatically become the *lingua franca* of India.

3. They should be completely free from the taint of untouchability, casteism, and nepotism. Those holding high positions should be impartial towards all, whether the person be his own brother, son or an ordinary citizen, be he an artisan or a labourer.

4. Their personal lives should be models of simplicity. They should perform body-labour for at least an hour daily either in the form of spinning or growing food or vegetables to help the country to make good the food shortage.

5. They should not live in bungalows or have cars. They should live in simple houses. They might make use of a motor-car but sparingly, only for special reasons, such as going long distances. Although the need for a motor-car will always be there it should be used as sparingly as possible.

6. By living in one place or close to one another, Ministers, their families and their staff would come into closer touch with one another. This would ensure better co-ordination among them.

7. They and their family members should, as far as possible, avoid the use of servants and do their own domestic chores.

8. The use of costly foreign furniture, sofa sets, almirahs, glossy chairs, etc., should be avoided, particularly in view of the prevailing conditions when, let alone carpets, crores of people do not have enough to cover themselves.

9. The Ministers should be free from all vices and addictions.

If they set an example in plain living and high thinking, they would need no bodyguards. I am sure people themselves would provide all the security they might require instead of their having to take security measures in the form of half a dozen policemen. Ministers wedded to non-violence ought to feel embarrassed by such arrangements. This would mean a lot of saving.

But who will heed my advice? Nevertheless I cannot remain silent as I do not want to be an unprotesting witness to what is taking place around me in the country today. It is up to the Bihar of Dr. Rajendra Prasad to set an example in this regard.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 227-8

343. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

PATNA,
April 19, 1947

I intended to talk to you about two letters that I have received. One of the letters is written by a Bihari gentleman. He has mentioned his name but not his address. He writes: "There is no doubt about your being a great man. Everyone calls you Mahatma. And you are a god because people worship you. Who would challenge you in politics?" Poor Chanakya's[1] spirit must be running from place to place in fear ! Then he suggests that I should retire to the Himalayas. He asks me, "What is the crime of the Biharis?" Again, if the Hindus of Bihar have oppressed the Muslims, why don't I look at the Punjab where the Muslims are perpetrating so much tyranny? He says I am turning the Hindus into cowards. The other letter is from a woman from the Punjab, well known to me from her very young days. She tells me that she had till now believed in my creed of non-violence but

[1] Also known as Kautilya ; Prime Minister of Chandragupta Maurya and author of *Arthashastra,* a treatise on politics

believes in it no longer. Her letter expresses her anguish. Then she goes on to say that we need brave men today. Both these persons have written with great consideration. Of course they are both angry. The second chapter of the *Gita* says: "Wrath breeds stupefaction, stupefaction leads to loss of memory, loss of memory ruins reason and ruin of reason spells utter destruction."[1]

Those who are possessed by anger would find even my plain words harsh. It is said that women's honour can be protected if their menfolk are brave and always keep their swords drawn. But let me tell you this is not true. Even if there are millions of brave men around, strife persists in the world. Even if India's 400 million men turn brave nothing can be expected to happen, unless the women themselves become brave. When the women become brave no one will dare raise his eyes to them. You have seen how the people of Champaran suffered hardships for a century because of the custom of *tinkathia*. The indigo planters who ruled the province were not concerned about them at all. But when the peasants and labourers fought non-violently against their rule of terror, in six months their rule came to an end. The people of Bihar do not have to go far. They can learn a lot from Champaran.

Now, I too have signed the peace appeal along with Jinnah Saheb. God alone knows what the result will be. What I am doing in Bihar today is something which cannot be postponed or dismissed. I am serving Bihar more this time than I did during the Champaran days. I appeal to you to give up this madness and make genuine atonement which will help Bihar raise the reputation of the whole country and set an example to the world.

The meetings of the Charkha Sangh and the Talimi Sangh will be held from today and will continue for the next four or five days. Today was the first meeting of the Charkha Sangh. I want to tell you something about khadi. The late Jamnalal Bajaj had started the khadi work while I was still in prison. He had also set up the Khadi Board. In the early days khadi was given primary importance in the Congress. But later the parliamentary programme was given priority and the constructive programme secondary importance. Khadi was made the centre of the constructive programme. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru called

[1] II. 63

khadi "the livery of freedom"[1]. Our flag also carries the emblem of the charkha. From the time the Congress evolved its flag I had been saying that we would win swaraj with the help of the charkha. Today it appears that the British rule over India would end more or less within the next twelve months. The British soldiers will also leave the country. The British could stay on in free India but as our friends, as servants of India. Whether people accept it or not, khadi has contributed greatly towards our free-dom. Had all the people truly believed in khadi, every Indian would have been wearing khadi today, and there would not have been a single textile mill in the country. Khadi found a place in the Congress, but we did not give it the place in our hearts we ought to have. Today the khadi work is progressing very well and because of khadi several crores of rupees have gone to poor men and women.

You must understand the place of khadi very well. Khadi is widely used in Bihar. But if everyone had known the real significance of khadi we would not have witnessed the madness that prevailed here. People in the Punjab, Bengal, Bombay and Ahmedabad had fallen victims to a similar madness. They are in the grip of such madness even today. The hearts of those who wear khadi should be as spotless as the khadi they wear. Had people sincerely adopted khadi they would not have let themselves be swept away by such frenzy. Khadi shows to what extent we are non-violent at heart, although God alone knows what we are truly at heart. But we ourselves cannot know our own hearts. He who does is the wise one. There is a saying in English that he who knows himself knows all. This means that we do not know ourselves.

Khadi is a symbol of non-violence. Hence, right from the time khadi came into vogue I have been saying that khadi ought to spread to the seven lakhs of villages of India. Once I was asked if khadi, being a sacred thing, could be used by prostitutes. I said it could be. Khadi is for wearing as food is for eating, whether by the pure or the impure.

Those who wear khadi should never commit an impure act. You might say that there would be barely half a dozen such individuals in the country. That is why I say that everyone should wear khadi. Today people wearing khadi caps are respected. They make their way

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 30-7-1937 & "Livery of Freedom"

into the assemblies and the Congress. Some people even deceive others by wearing khadi. I have heard that in Bihar people wearing khadi have even committed murders. Today we do not give khadi the respect due to it. That is why such things have been happening.

Khadi is a symbol of non-violence. Man makes God in his own image. Good makes man, no doubt; but man also makes God. They God of the murderers prompts them to commit murders. We have made great efforts to make khadi the symbol of non-violence. In spite of my being a member of the Charkha Sangh, I must admit that even though much work has been done to propagate khadi, much more remains to be done.

[From Urdu]

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—III, pp. 21-4

344. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

PATNA,
April 20, 1947

CHI. AMRIT,

I have your letter. I am quite clear that Dr. Ambedkar's[1] demands cannot be conceded. Please look up what is known as Macdonald Award[2] at the Round Table Conference which was born of a wicked conspiracy against Indian nationalism. For the first time it created a division amongst Hindus and Hindus while granting separate electorates for the so-called scheduled classes. It was against this vivisection of Hindu society that I had prophesied revolt.[3] As a result reservation of seats was very considerably increased and primary elections were separated but the total separation was undone. In my opinion this was the utmost that could be conceded to the separatist tendency and the attempt to break up Hinduism. The opposition and the influence of caste Hindus in joint electorates is in my opinion nonsensical. Joint electorate means the influence of the party with which the electorate becomes joined. Such evil as there is in joint electorate can be obviated only by right type of education and

[1] B. R. Ambedkar

[2] Announced on August 17, 1932. *Vide* Vol. L, pp. 383-4.

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Minorities Committee Meetting", 13-11-1931 Gandhiji went on fast against the Award on September 20, 1932 and broke it on September 26. *Vide*

enlightenment. If Dr. Ambedkar's objections were upheld for any length of time, be it ever so little, it would undermine Hinduism. The fear of boycott, therefore, should produce no consternation.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3704. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6513

345. LETTER TO B. M. DAS

PATNA,
April 20, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I am surprised that you, an M.A. and Solicitor write a letter without knowing full facts. They are all to be gleaned from written records available to every student of modern political literature. I must therefore be satisfied myself by saying that you should study that literature and you will find that you will be unable to prove me guilty under any of your many counts. Incidentally I may add that whatever I am saying here to the Hindus I said unequivocally to the Muslims of Noakhali. For your sake I hope that no newspaper has cared to publish your very irresponsible letter. Why not write to me in Hindi and in the absence thereof in Bengali?

B. M. DAS, M. A.
7 OLD POST OFFICE ST.
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

346. REMARK TO MANU GANDHI

GANDHI CAMP PATNA ,
April 20, 1947

If there is some misunderstanding I expect you also to remove it and bring about reconciliation.[1] You have this ability in you and should make use of it. Mahadev was like that. This is an ordinary

[1] Two workers of the Talimi Sangh who had called on Gandhiji earlier had been complaining against each other.

matter. Mahadev had an amazing capacity to reconcile the parties even in serious matters. Pyarelal too can do that. But this quality deserves to be cultivated particularly by women, for I have no doubt that if women develop this quality, they can serve the nation through the families or the communities to which they belong.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 231

347. TALK WITH WORKERS[1]

GANDHI CAMP PATNA ,
April 20, 1947

I give more importance to cultural education than to knowledge of the three R's. Good cultural background should be evident from the minutest detail of children's daily behaviour—from the way they sit, talk and dress, and so on.

I go a step further. In a poor country not a single pie should be spent unnecessarily, otherwise no distinction would be felt between our Government and the British Government.[2] Even a foreign pin should not be used in our offices. If we need pins we should use Indian pins, or else do without them, i.e., we should stitch papers together with needle and thread. This is only by way of an illustration. I go even to the extent of saying that Ministers and Governors should take a vow along with their oath of allegiance that they will insist on only swadeshi goods being used for their personal and office requirements.

But who listens to me today? Maybe I am growing old and perhaps even senile. (Bapu laughed heartily.)

If I were the Chief Minister of Bihar, my first act would be to make the wearing of khadi compulsory for all Government servants and the people at large, not by purchasing it from the khadi shops but by making it a rule that no ration-card holder would be entitled to

[1] The Gujarati version in *Biharni Komi Agman* has been collated with the account in *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase.*

[2] The workers had sought Gandhiji's opinion regarding the use of the A.I.V.I.A. products by the various Ministries.

draw his ration unless he span for half an hour daily.

It was clear to him, he said, that if they all learnt to spin and to weave, India could not only become self-sufficient in the matter of cloth without dependence upon mills but could even clothe the world. It was simple arithmetic. And if knowing all that, they could not get even that much done, what were the Ministers good for and what was their statecraft worth? He was afraid, they had developed the habit of making simple things which admitted of very simple solutions unnecessarily difficult and complicated. What they needed was not costly and elaborate machinery or highly paid technicians and experts, but plain common sense, combined with the will to go down to the masses, share their lives, think in their terms and win their confidence. They should teach them by personal example how they could in the immediate present provide themselves with what they so sorely needed but had hitherto lacked. The masses would instinctively feel that the era of the common man had arrived.

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 231-2, and *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. II, p. 123

348. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

PATNA,
April 20, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today again I shall talk to you about khadi. The second meeting of the Charkha Sangh was held today. Had I been your Chief Minister like Shri Babu and had I been in a position to have ministers of my choice I would have told you plainly that you would get no mill-cloth. I would have given you all facilities for the purpose. I would have provided you cotton, spinning-wheels and all the other things. I would have also arranged for the repair of the spinning-wheels when they went wrong. And I would have told you that you had to make your own clothing as also your own slivers and weave the cloth as the Assamese women do. Assamese girls cannot find grooms unless they learn weaving. But the weaving in Assam is very poor. Assam grows a lot of cotton but it is not of good quality. However, things are improving now. The Trustees of the Charkha Sangh are very efficient and they are now introducing changes to improve the weaving. If our country can make good progress in weaving, we would be able to clothe the whole world because ours is a vast

country. In the past we used to import Japanese textiles in large quantities. But now Japan is almost out of picture. Even Great Britain does not produce enough cloth to meet the requirement of the whole world. Just as we arrange to cook our own food at home we should also do the same to meet our requirement of clothes. At one time it used to be so in our country. It was so during the medieval period. We often call it the dark age, but I do not agree. No doubt there were some disgraceful practices prevalent then. But we cannot describe the present age, either, as the age of truth. Today the black market thrives throughout the world. We should not close our eyes to the remarkable features of that age by calling it a dark age. Let us forget its bad points and follow the good ones. Even today, if we start substituting homemade *roti* by the biscuits manufactured in Britain or in India, we are going to ruin our health. As in the case of food, we should stop getting our clothing too from outside. Had I been in Shri Babu's place, I would put a stop to black markets. No accounts are kept for the *roti* cooked in the house. The flour is made in the house and so also the *roti*. In the same manner, we would provide a charkha to everybody and there would be cloth for everybody. But no one is going to make me a minister! I have tto address my words to those who are already occupying the ministerial chairs. I would tell them that no new textile mill should be set up in Bihar. The existing mills should not be burnt down, but all the cloth produced by them should be exported. In this way people all over the world would be happy and would praise us for sending to them finished textile goods while opting for handwoven material for ourselves. Thus we should earn as much foreign exchange as possible. But if we let black-marketing flourish even in this trade the result would be bad. Even now if the people resolve to manage with a few clothes only and cut down their requirement, something can be achieved. Today Bihar has been left completely free. It means now the work has been decentralized. The work of the Charkha Sangh in Bihar is now being looked after by Lakshmi Babu and his colleagues who have been entrusted with the entire Charkha Sangh work in the province. They may produce as much cloth as they like. They may work with the help of Shri Babu and his colleagues so that khadi is produced in the villages and consumed locally.

You might ask what the people of Patna would have for

themselves. But the villagers can provide khadi for the citizens of Patna too. But even if they do not you can produce your own khadi if you wish. There are many schools and colleges here where boys and girls go to study. The boys go to study the English language but hardly achieve anything worth while. They may obtain the M.A. or B.A. degrees, but most of them cannot write English. They just manage to speak a little English, and consider themselves great. If all the students learn spinning and weaving for an hour or two daily they would be doing all the work themselves in a few days. If even those who are not studying give an hour or two to khadi work while sitting idle at home they can produce more khadi than they would need. Khadi does not need coercion. If you do this work voluntarily, you can produce khadi of every kind. The village people have been exploited enough. The townspeople consume the cloth produced by them. But I wish villagers to consume the cloth they produce. It should be so even for the townspeople.

Everything that goes with the mills comes from outside; so much so that even the spindle of the mill's spinning-wheel is not produced here. The textile engineers also come from outside. But all the components of the charkha can be produced here. If khadi is woven in the villages, every village can become selfsufficient and meet its own requirements of food and clothing.

Bihar is now free from [the supervision of] the Charkha Sangh. Lakshmi Babu will demonstrate how decentralization works. If he fails I shall ask him if the people of Bihar are capable only of plunder and massacre and can do nothin5g good.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Samachar, 21-4-1947

349. LETTER TO SUDHIR AND SHANTI GHOSH[1]

PATNA,
April 21, 1947

CHI. SUDHIR AND SHANTI,[2]

I have had all your letters. The work in front of me leaves little room for correspondence that is not absolutely necessary. I have little to say to you. I have to listen to what you may have to say. You must have seen all I had to do with the Viceroy. We have come to like one another. Events will show of what he is made. He is certainly working hard as behoves a naval man.

Both of you are on your trial there. I have no doubt you will come out well through the ordeal. How is Shanti keeping in health? What is she learning there?

My work is very difficult. I have no business to grumble. When I approached it, I knew the difficulty. I suppose you are getting some Indian papers.

Give my love to Agatha[3] and other friends. I do hope Carl Heath is better.

Love to you both.

BAPU[4]

SHRI SUDHIR GHOSH
INDIA HOUSE, ALDWYCH, W. 62
LONDON, S.W. 1

Sudhir Ghosh Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] A copy of this letter sent to the addressee carries the following postscript in Gandhiji's hand: "This is a copy of the letter that was posted to you yesterday stupidly to the wrong address. Not wishing to run the risk of delay I had the text copied out. The original was written in my own hand."

Later the original letter was also received by the addresee.

[2] The superscription is in the Devanagari script.

[3] Agatha Harrison

[4] The subscription is in the Devanagari script.

Z350. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

PATNA,
April 21, 1947

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

Please do not worry about Manu in the least. Her mind has improved considerably, but not to my satisfaction. I think her health depends on her mind. She seems to be keeping back something, but I have not been able to understand what. Perhaps she herself does not understand. I think of her all the time. My hopes are very high. This is enough for today.

Pyarelal is working hard in Noakhali. But we do not understand why he has not written to anybody here. I see that Manu's mind is completely normal now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U./XXIV

351. LETTER TO MADALASA

PATNA,
April 21, 1947

CHI. MADU,

I have your letter. Radhakisan[1] and Jajuji are here. You know there was a meeting of the Charkha Sangh.

Get rid of your unsteadiness and your stupidity. If you submerge yourself in Shriman your own self will be revealed to you. For you there is no other way but this. Have you understood this man who signed a blank sheet for you?[2]

Blessings from

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 332-3

[1] Radhakrishna Bajaj

[2] The addressee's husband, Shriman Narayan, had given her a signed blank sheet, when she asked him for a reward, to be filled in by her at will.

352. A NOTE

GANDHI CAMP, PATNA,

April 21, 1947

Saralabehn[1] is the wife of a mill-owner but she has embraced poverty for the sake of the country and that too not under any pressure but voluntarily. It can be truly said of her that there is no woman equal to her in India. She ought to be taken on the Board of Trustees[2] because then alone the attitude of mill-owners will undergo the change I desire. I know that my friends in the Charkha Sangh will not agree with me. Saralabehn perhaps is the first woman among Gujaratis who is rendering service silently. She is a good worker and an equally efficient housewife. She is the wife of a millionaire but she is the living image of simplicity and sacrifice.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 234

353. LETTER TO SARALADEVI A. SARABHAI

April 21, 1947

The day before yesterday the Board of Trustees discussed your name. They were nearly unanimous that at a time when khadi was under a cloud and when the khadi policy was obviously operating against the mills, the inclusion of the wife of a textile king on the Board was sure to cause an uproar. In spite of it the Board of Trustees might have agreed to your appointment if I had insisted on it. I refused to ask for a favour in this manner. The Trustees were happy. I therefore withdrew your name. But my calculation in this case went slightly awry. I have often of late noticed that my word does not carry weight with my co-workers and colleagues as it once used to do. In a way it pleases me. Maybe, I was stifling their reason before and it has now found its freedom! Or, is my thinking out of tune with the times? Be that as it may, I have fully opened my mind to you. Such is my regard for your purity. What I expect of you is that you will continue to take interest in developing the science of khadi as if you were actually a trustee of the Spinners' Association and belie the doubts

[1] Wife of Ambalal Sarabhai
[2] Of the A.I.S.A.

and fears of the sceptics by showing to them that the wife of a mill-owner can be as much a lover of khadi as the most ardent of khadi workers.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 234-5

354. A LETTER

April 21, 1947

The kind of work which had to be done before attaining independence was different and now that swaraj is on its way we need the co-operation of each and every Indian to carry on the affairs of the nation. For instance, Girijashankar Bajpai. You do know, don't you, how in 1942 he had circulated blatant lies regarding Ba's death, not to mention those about me. But now we ought to utilize his talents. And it is being done. This is how organizations for the constructive programme should function. It is essential that everyone should give up past prejudices and contribute one's mite in laying the foundation of a strong country. That is why I wanted. . .[1] to be taken on the Board of Trustees.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 236-7

355. A LETTER

April 21, 1947

The words "I have lost interest in everything" are not proper. One who regularly recites Ramanama cannot say any such thing. Where is happiness? Where is unhappiness? What is happiness? What is unhappiness? Are you rendering service? I see no obligation for you to go to Gujrat[2]. I would have gone but I was prevailed upon not to go. I shall talk about it some other time. If I could fulfil my duty here, it will certainly have an impact on Gujrat, rather, on the whole world.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 236

[1] Omission as in the source. The reference is to Saralabehn Sarabhai; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] A district in the Punjab

356. A LETTER

April 21, 1947

Why were you worried by the young man's vulgar words? If you are a brave woman you will die before anyone molests you. We are all prepared to die; that alone is our duty. You have the armour in the form of Ramanama. How can you have any fear? . . . [1]

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 236

357. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

PATNA,
April 21, 1947

CHI. SATIS BABU,

I have your letter.

(1) It is necessary to make arrangements for rehabilitation, but if the Government or the Muslims do nothing what can we do?

(2) What work can we possibly offer if the Government extends no help?

(3) It is my firm belief that we will not get mill yarn. What little [yarn] we might get will not serve our purpose. We should produce hand-spun yarn. The weavers should spin themselves and so should others.

(4) If all the detenus are released we should not bother about bringing as action. It is outside our field.

(5) I read Abha's letter. I attach no importance to it.

Dr. Mahmud has arrived there. Let us see what he does.

I am eager to go there. I am watching the situation here.

Will it be better if I write in English? I can also get Sailen to write in Bengali. I shall do as you say.

What shall I write about Amiya?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9076

[1] Omission as in the source

358. LETTER TO SHALIGRAM SHUKLA

PATNA,
April 21, 1947

BHAI SHUKLA,

What is this telegram?[1] Do fasts have to be undertaken for such things even now???

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

359. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

April 21, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today also I wish to speak to you about khadi. Its secret lies in hand-spun yarn. Spinning used to be the occupation of women who were regarded as slaves. Who would pay the poor souls the wage that was their due? In the middle ages women were compelled to spin for a mere pittance. Except in Assam, weaving everywhere was considered to be man's occupation. Weaving has survived even today, but if hand-spinning is not revived weaving too is certain to die out in course of time.

If every man and woman does not regard spinning as his or her dharma, that is, does not do carding , or make slivers and spin himself or herself, khadi is bound to die. I shall not call it khadi if a few wear it by way of fashion. My definition of khadi is that it should replace mill-cloth throughout India. I do not have the words to describe the strength it is bound to generate.

This will remain but a dream if men do not spin by way of atonement and the injustice done to women does not cease. The wages payable to women for an hour's spinning should be the same as are paid to men. There should be no inequality in the wages paid to men and women. The times have changed when man was regarded as

[1] This was from Ananddas, Secretary, Raipur Ashram, informing Gandhiji about the addressee's fast for Harijans' entry into a temple owned by a Congressman; *vide* also "Speech at Prayer Meeting",1-5-1947

[2] It being Gandhiji's silence day, his written speech was read out.

woman's master. That we do not admit this is a different matter. God has made man and woman one complete whole. One must not lord over the other. An endeavour is being made to establish this truth through khadi.

Time will come when a mill-owner's wife will herself become a worker and a carding woman. Then there will be no need for mill-cloth. Women should prepare themselves to hasten the advent of such a day.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Samachar, 24-4-1947

360. TALK WITH MANU GANDHI

GANDHI CAMP, PATNA,
April 21, 1947

I am against machines just because they deprive men of their employment and render them jobless. I oppose them not because they are machines but because they create unemployment.

That boy will grow into a courageous, healthy and service-minded boy, provided he gets a wholesome environment.[1] His body as well as his mind will develop in right proportion. He will be free of any fraud or immorality. Staying in the village he will serve the villagers and will be content to live on the subsistence provided by the villagers. Through his service and the knowledge acquired by him he will provide proper gui-dance to the people around him and thus train more young men. I expect that a student trained under the Nayee Talim would develop on these lines.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 228

361. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

PATNA,
April 22, 1947

CHI. NIMU,

Sita and Sumi arrived last night. Sumi's health seems to have improved. She is enjoying herself and wants to stay for a few days. I

[1] Manu Gandhi had asked how a boy would shape if he got training under the Nayee Talim up to the age of 14-16 without going to any school.

have laid down the condition that she could stay only if I was present and it had the approval of you both. Sita shall be leaving for Akola tomorrow.

Hope you are keeping good health.

I have no time to write more.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

362. A LETTER[1]

GANDHI CAMP, PATNA,

April 22, 1947

Excessive liberty leads to terrible consequences. Those who wish to go in for a love-marriage may get engaged provided they have their elders' approval but should avoid any personal contact for a least three years and should continue doing their respective work during that period. I have no doubt that young men and women who act on these lines are bound to be happy in life.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 239-40

363. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

PATNA,

April 22, 1947

CHI. BRAJKISAN,

I have your two letters. My going there is not certain. Do not believe the newspapers.

If I invite the Socialists there will be an outcry in the country. It would be better the Jayaprakash sees me whenever necessary. The whole situation is getting out of hand. No one knows how it can be remedied. You should not worry. It will be God wishes.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I got the list.

[1] The addressee wanted to marry a college mate of hers.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2502

364. LETTER TO GOVIND DAS

PATNA,
April 22, 1947

BHAI` GOVINDDASJI,

I have your letter. Congratulations on getting a grandson. May your grandson have a long life and may he become a true worker.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI GOVIND DAS
RAJA GOKULDAS MAHAL
JUBBULPORE, C.P.

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 10422. Courtesy: Seth Govind Das

365. DISCUSSION AT HINDUSTANI TALIMI SANGH MEETING

PATNA,
April 22, 1947

ZAKIR HUSAIN[1]: In the morning session we heard the reports from the provinces. The budget was sanctioned and the question of how much aid we should seek from the Government was discussed.

GANDHIJI: The Government would be prepared to give us as much as we ask for. But the very move to seek Government aid would mean the end of Nayee Talim.

ZAKIR HUSAIN: No, the question was only regarding the students' fees. The point under discussion was how many students should we admit. If we take more students it will naturally help us in meeting the expenses but then we would be ruining our cause.

GANDHIJI: Of course, that is obvious. We should take only as many students as we want—not more. I have quite a few things to say about the budget. I would like Ashadevi and Aryanayakum to sit and discuss it with me and make whatever alterations they possibly can in it. After three years nothing should be expected either from me or

[1] President, Hindustani Talimi Sangh

from anyone else. If we fail to achieve this, Nayee Talim will not work. If you want to make it self-supporting you should prepare you budget accordingly. And if at the end of three years we do not succeed we will have to declare our bankruptcy before the country. We should not keep silent lest we lose the credit we have earned. True credit lies in success.

ZAKIR HUSAIN: We have received a request from Madras[1] that the Talimi Sangh should run a school there. The Government is prepared to bear its expenses. They have asked for Ramachandran to take up the responsibility of conducting Nayee Talim under the Ministry.

GANDHIJI: Ramachandran hasn't come, has he? I shall have to talk with him about this. As regards the school we should take up the task only if we are capable of fulfilling it, other- wise we shall be putting the Government in a fix. Today we have our ministries and crores of rupees have come into our hands. We can spend the amount any way we like. If our own conscience does not question it, perhaps no one else would. This can work for a year or two. But in the absence of any concrete achievement it is not going to last long. I would, therefore, advise you to accept this responsibility only if you feel you are competent enough to shoulder, it. If we are not, we ought to admit that we can teach [Nayee Talim] only at our centre and that the provinces are beyond our reach. Instructors from Madras are welcome to come and have a look at the work going on at Sevagram.

Our system of education has three aspects. It leads to the development of the mind, the body and the soul. The ordinary system cares only for the development of the mind. Our system, I claim, purifies the mind and is conducive to its harmonious development. Moreover, it provides nourishment to the soul as well. What does it matter if we do not impart religious instruction? Religious teaching—that again from books—is not indispensable for the soul. Through practice we shall teach the boys the noble principles from all the religions.

Nayee Talim is not confined to teaching spinning and sweeping. Though indispensable, these in themselves are not sufficient for our purpose. We shall have to give them up unless they promote the development of the soul. Here I am engaged in other tasks. But Nayee Talim has never been out of my mind.

[1] From Avinashilingam, Education Minister

The charkha occupied an important place much before Nayee Talim was even conceived of. I knew almost nothing about the charkha when I first referred to it in South Africa in 1908. It was only later on that I learnt more about it. Afterwards came the days of civil disobedience and the Ali Brothers, and the charkha continued to hold an important place. Yesterday in my prayer meeting[1] I had drawn before you the picture of khadi as I visualize it. Khadi of my conception is that which can take the place of all mill-cloth. I would not insist on including khadi in Nayee Talim, if you could suggest some other means for the eradication of poverty. In that case I would gladly admit my mistake. I had discussed this point with Vinoba, Krishnadas[2] and Narandas. To me it is a simple calculation. I feel that if everyone spins for an hour daily all would be able to have the cloth required. If, however, it would require six hours a day from everybody to achieve this, khadi was bound to perish. For people have to do other work also. They have to produce food and do some intellectual work as well. Moreover, Nayee Talim would lose its meaning if one was ever to toil like a bullock under it. An hour spent in spinning is an hour of self-development for the spinner. When Saiyidain Saheb[3] said that at least in the post-basic stage the mechanical processes in the mills would have to be taught, I could not accept it. I hold that if khadi is sound as a foundation for basic education, it ought to be further developed during the post-basic stage. Yesterday Dev Prakash showed me an article which he had written on the *takli* and the broom. He has done some work under Nayee Talim. If all that he writes is true, a lot of knowledge—including the knowledge of higher engineering—can be gained through Nayee Talim. But only when we have assimilated all this knowledge can we impart it to others. We have not evolved the science of these essential crafts. The British cloth mills evolved out of our *takli* and loom. They planned the mills because they wanted to exploit us. We do not want to exploit anyone. We do not, therefore, need mills, but we must build up the science of the *takli* and the loom. If India were to copy Europe in this matter, it would mean destruction for India and the world. Of course, if you are in favour of mills then let us talk about them.

ZAKIR HUSAIN: [The difficulty is that] the boys who graduate from our

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 21-4-1947
[2] Son of Chhaganlal Gandhi
[3] Khwaja Ghulam Saiyidain

schools look to the mills for employment.

GANDHIJI: The boys that will come out of the school of my conception will not look to the mills for employment. As a matter of fact mill-cloth should not sell side by side with khadi. Our mills may export their manufactures. In Lancashire you do not get the cloth manufactured there. The whole of it is exported. But perhaps our mills may not be able to sell their product for long even in foreign markets.

You are right when you say that you cannot help it if the whole atmosphere around is surcharged with the idea of mill-cloth, and even our own ministers are interested in opening mills. The way for us is to die in living up to our faith. If we believe in the truth of khadi we must spread it and convince the ministers that we are doing the right thing and will continue to do so. We are not going to accept defeat. The Congress created the Talimi Sangh but never took any interest in it. Similarly the Congress was instrumental in setting up the Charkha Sangh but it never adopted its programme. Who cares for these institutions today? When Congressmen had a little money and some experience they paid some attention to the constructive work. No doubt, they did some constructive work too. Today, however, the entire Government has come into their hands. They have not yet digested the power it has brought. They will take time to do so.

ZAKIR HUSAIN: We are faced with a great difficulty. To run a school under Nayee Talim means bringing about a new order. Moreover, all the power is in the hands of the ministers who do not fully share our views.

GANDHIJI: No doubt about it. After all schools in the cities cannot be created out of nothing.

ZAKIR HUSAIN: Either you help to co-ordinate the activities of the Government and the Sangh or let us be on our own.

GANDHIJI: I confess I no longer command the same influence as I used to . I do not blame the Government for this. They have inherited a set machinery which they have to work. If I had been a minister, perhaps, I too would have acted similarly. Still, I am talking things over with Jawaharlalji and others. I have to talk and convince them about the work of the Talimi Sangh, have'nt I? I pray to God either to call me to Himself or endow my words with such power that they are able to carry conviction to the people and their representatives.

You should give up Nayee Talim if you do not believe that it is full of potentialities. Some people come to tell me that now my work is over. So far ahimsa was followed but now the time has come for me to leave. They are not going to listen to me any more.

ZAKIR HUSAIN: But Bapuji, the Congress ought to have explained its policy regarding the Talimi Sangh to the ministers. It never did. I met Maulana Saheb before coming here. He had expressed sympathy and said that he would like to meet the Sangh. The Sangh has now decided to see him.

GANDHIJI: They should have invited you before this. Let Mr. Sargeant[1] work but he should work under your guidance. In fact I have advised them to invite Zakir Husain Saheb and suggested that only after discussing things with him should they plan their work.

ZAKIR HUSAIN: We feel that with a little effort it could have been done but we never did make that effort.

GANDHIJI: Today the whole machinery of the Congress is crumbling into pieces. Everyone does not realize it but I do.

ZAKIR HUSAIN: In my view facilities should be provided and time apportioned for religious education in our schools, so as to enable those well versed in religion to come and teach there. If the Government decides to undertake more than this it would only increase misunderstanding and friction. Supposing Maulana Saheb prepares the curriculum, not everyone will be prepared to accept it.

GANDHIJI: You should talk it over with Maulana Saheb. I do not subscribe to the view that the Government should provide religious education. If there are some Mussalmans who want to give religious education of the wrong type, you cannot prevent it. If you try to do so, the result can only be bad. Those who want to give religious education, without expecting any remuneration for it, may do so on their own. We will only teach ethics based on the fundamental principles of all religions.

ARYANAYAKUM: One more question remains to be discussed. We have to grant certificates to the boys who have just completed their seven years' course. What should we state in the certificate and what name should we give it?

GANDHIJI: Please prepare a draft in Hindustani and have it in both the scripts so that it is understood by all. Clearly state the boy's qualifications in it. Supposing we mention that our boy is more

[1] Sir John Sargeant, Educational Adviser to Government of India

qualified than a matriculate, we have to be specific about it. The name should correspond with the qualification certified therein. Giving a thing a high-sounding name when its worth does not correspond to it reflects no credit on the giver.

ZAKIR HUSAIN: We may certify that the boy has completed a full course of basic education.

GANDHIJI: I would rather have a precise word for it just as the Hindi [Sahitya] Sammelan has precise names for its different diplomas.

AVINASHILINGAM: Though the Talimi Sangh follows the policy of co-education, we in the South do not want to introduce it there.

GANDHIJI: In that case you have the option to say that as it will not be convenient for you to adopt Nayee Talim fully in Madras you will be implementing it only partially. If you have co-education in your schools, but not in your training schools, the children will think there is something wrong somewhere.

AVINASHILINGAM: I think there is no harm if we have co-education among the grown-ups, when they know their own minds. But, in my view, it is not proper for girls of 15 or 16 when they join our training camps.

ZAKIR HUSAIN: The Sangh has not made co-education obligatory for the training schools.

GANDHIJI: Your (Avinashilingam's) arguments, I am afraid, fail to convince me. Even if my children have a tendency to go astray, I would let them run the risk. We shall have to rid ourselves one day of this sex mentality. We should not seek examples from the West. Even in the training schools if the teachers are competent, pure and filled with the spirit of Nayee Talim there is no danger. If, unfortunately, some accidents do take place, we should not be frightened. They are bound to be.

ZAKIR HUSAIN: We are not familiar with the conditions prevailing in Madras. If you feel that the atmosphere there is not favourable for co-education you should wait till it changes in its favour. For the time being you can send your girls to Sevagram.

AVINASHILINGAM: Another difficulty facing us is that we do not have the requisite literature for Nayee Talim. If we can have it ready at one place, it can be adjusted according to the needs of the different provinces. The Talimi Sangh should

take up this task. It can get the blocks made at cheaper rates, have the pictures printed and do such other jobs.

ARYANAYAKUM: There were ten such persons, among those who attended our last training camp, who were competent to produce the literature. Two of them are in Madras. Let us have them for this job.

AVINASHILINGAM: With your permission I would suggest that these books should have beautiful get up.

GANDHIJI: Basic education does not imply work of inferior quality.

AVINASHILINGAM: The books should have such a get up that they attract the children by their very appearance.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 9-11-1947

366. TALK WITH BIHAR MINISTERS

GANDHI CAMP, PATNA,
April 22, 1947

I am seriously considering what is my dharma in the present circumstances. Nevertheless, it is my firm belief that God will show me the way through it all. What I say regarding non-violence has no impact today. I do appreciate the love people shower on me. But the only way for me to return that love is that I should place before the world the truth as revealed to me by God. We adopted the weapon of non-violence to drive away the powerful British Government from India. Now if we resort to violence against our own brethren we will be regarded as cowards and will be condemned by the world. You are wearing crowns of thorns on your heads, not of diamonds and pearls.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 243

367. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

April 22, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Till yesterday I talked to you about khadi because the meetings of the Charkha Sangh were being held all this time. Today there was a

meeting of the body formed for Nayee Talim, viz., the Hindustani Talimi Sangh. I wish to tell you about Nayee Talim today. Through you it would be known to the people of Bihar and then the information would spread throughout India. Nayee Talim is now seven years old. There is Congress rule in many provinces. In some provinces[1] the Muslim League is in power. But actually, in all provinces, it is the people who rule.

The Congress introduced the Nayee Talim. Actually the Nayee Talim scheme was prepared some time earlier, but the Congress put its own stamp on it. Let us assume that where the Congress is in power the scheme of Nayee Talim would be carried out by its own workers. We shall carry it out since we have decided to do so. Even if the Congress does not adopt it, those who have accepted Nayee Talim would carry it out. Others would follow if they are convinced.

Now if everyone in Bihar understands how Nayee Talim works, no other scheme can be implemented. If we teach khadi work to all the boys and girls according to the Nayee Talim scheme we shall be able to produce khadi without difficulty. And then Nayee Talim includes many other things as well. People say that the Congress does not carry out all those things. The Charkha Sangh and the Hindustani Talimi Sangh are the Congress organizations; then, why does the Congress not carry out those things? For the present I do not wish to go into this controversy. During the day today the Nayee Talim workers held a meeting. Dr. Zakir Husain was also present. Zakir Saheb is all in all at the Jamia Millia.[2] He has also received training abroad. Without his whole-hearted devotion the Jamia Millia could not be run as it is run now. The Jamia Millia came into being during the Non-co-operation days, when we had called upon boys and girls to come out of their schools and colleges. During those days the trustees of the Aligarh Muslim University said that the students were free to leave the University if they wished. A large number of Muslim students then gave up studies. Then came the problem of their future. It was then that the Jamia Millia was born. I also played some part in it. The Ali Brothers were then with us. Zakir Saheb was not there. But people had their eyes on him. When he came he took upon himself the responsibility and developed Jamia Millia into a great institution.

Aryanayakum and Asha Devi of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh have also come here. Nayee Talim includes a great many things. I

[1] Namely, Bengal and Sind
[2] He was the Vice-Chancellor of Jamia Millia Islamia.

shall not talk about all of them. Nayee Talim means training our boys and girls through the medium of such handicrafts as are to be found in India and thus contributing to their growth and development. There should be harmonious development of the body, mind and soul. If everyone is given this type of training, there would be no fighting among ourselves such as is going on in the country today. Countries like England, Germany, Japan, Italy, etc., rely on the sword. Hence training of their children also follows the same pattern. You would be convinced if I explained all the points to you. These countries train their people in the light of the course they want them to follow. Under such training there is almost no scope for spiritual development. It emphasizes only physical development and the people with such training are appointed to high posts in the army and the government departments.

We have followed the opposite course here. We followed the path of non-co-operation and achieved our aim through non-violence and truth. This in itself was Nayee Talim. When I called upon students to come out of their educational institutions I hardly had an idea about what was to be done with them. When we attained power, which was hardly of any use, I thought about our course of action and then we hit upon Nayee Talim and it came into being.[1] The most wonderful thing about Nayee Talim is that under this scheme the students have to spend nothing on their training. Another remarkable thing is that it is self-supporting, i.e., it does not need funds from outside to run it. I shall elaborate on this point tomorrow. Only if everyone understands the importance of Nayee Talim, it can become true training. It does not need investment of crores of rupees. It is said that we would require crores of rupees if we try to train everyone in the country. But, in my view, it is futile to talk in terms of millions and billions of rupees. That is not the way to go about training 400 million people. From where are we going to get so much money? Nayee Talim has so many possibilities that it costs nothing [to carry it on]. These days education costs a lot, but true Nayee Talim is one which would be self-supporting.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Samachar, 24-4-1947

[1] The Hindustani Talimi Sangh was formed on April 23, 1938.

368. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

PATNA,
April 23, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your two letters. What you say is not right. I can say what I had said in Delhi laying stress on what was reported from Kanti and Devdas. I never bestow undeserved praise still. I will say nothing about you, if you cannot stand what I say.[1]

Your stomach must return to normal. It is imperative to boil the water. Utensils should be cleaned with boiling water.

Abha should consider it a sin to remain in ignorance. How long will she stay with you?

As desired by you, I tore up your letter of yesterday. Your second letter is good.

If the Muslims have cleansed their hearts and the Hindus have regained confidence as you say, there can be no cause for worry. But then what about the reports from Satis Babu? Did you have a talk with Satis Babu?

Sita and Sumi[2] are here. Today Sita is going to Akola.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 582

369. TALK WITH MUSLIM LEAGUE MEMBERS

GANDHI CAMP, PATNA,
April 23, 1947

If the League wants to make progress it has to change its objective. I request you to search your conscience. Although the League has joined the Interim Government,[3] still things are not running as smoothly as they should when two brothers work in perfect

[1] According to a report in *Harijan*, referring to the addressee in his prayer speech on April 8 Gandhiji had said she was "physically frail but a true Muslim and a Hindu too".

[2] Sumitra, Ramdas Gandhi's daughter

[3] The Muslim League had joined the Interim Government on October 26, 1946.

unison. If you are true representatives of the League you should frankly tell Jinnah Saheb or Liaquat Ali Saheb that they are going in the wrong direction; only then you would be serving the League faithfully. Noakhali, Bengal and the Punjab are still witnessing massacres by Muslims. I do not deny that Hindus too are perpetrating such crimes, but both Jawaharlal and I have been strongly condemning their misdeeds and publicly appealing to them to desist. Has any representative of the League made any such appeal to Muslims? Let the leaders fight if they want Pakistan. But how is it possible to carry on if everyone takes the law into his hands? Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah Saheb has given the assurance that full protection would be given to the minority community. But I must tell you that so far this assurance has not been fulfilled. I claim to be a faithful friend of all and I have to prove that friendship. It is my sincere appeal to you to treat Hindus as your own brethren. It will lead to your progress.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 244-5

370. DISCUSSION AT HINDUSTANI TALIMI SANGH MEETING

PATNA,
April 23, 1947

ZAKIR HUSAIN: The report from the U.P. was read out to us. Everyone felt that we should take over the basic schools from the local boards and run them ourselves. In a way it is desirable that the local boards alone should run such schools. But you are aware how they work. Even now it is the Government that plans out the programmes whereas the local boards are expected to implement them. The local boards embezzle funds and do not make regular payments to the teachers. It would therefore be better if the Government ran these schools.

GANDHIJI: At present I know nothing about them. Only after examining the working of the local boards will I be in a position to say something on this point. Just now I won't commit myself to anything. I would only suggest that if the Government feels that it can shoulder this responsibility and the local boards are willing to hand over the schools, it should take them over.

ZAKIR HUSAIN: Then the report about the post-basic education was read out. After one month's [training] the trainees are equipped to earn 8 as daily by working

for 5 hours. Moreover, we have just commenced our work. Only after some time would it be possible to make a correct estimate about it. The third point is regarding being self-supporting on which Jajuji will speak to you.

JAJUJI: Seven years have passed since we introduced Nayee Talim. Even now it is doubtful whether the students passing out of the basic schools can be self-supporting. The wages they can earn very from craft to craft. A student can earn two to three rupees if engaged in carpentry whereas spinning is a much less paying occupation. These days one earns much less if one does with the hands the work otherwise done in mills. They can, of course, earn 6 or 8 as, a day at the Charkha Sangh rates. But if we succeed in opening basic schools all over the country, the Charkha Sangh will not be in a position to buy all the yarn produced in these schools. Even today there is a large quantity of yarn which the Sangh is unable to buy And we shall get very little if we sell the yarn at the market rate. The Government may buy all the yarn spun in these schools. Under such circumstances which craft, do you think, should we adopt?

GANDHIJI: We should not think in terms of money as we do now. Khadi is the centre of our activities because we all need cloth and we have before us the question of clothing the seven lakhs of villages. Today, we get our yarn woven by offering higher wages to lure the weavers. It was wrong of me not to have insisted on everybody weaving as I did in the case of spinning. It must, however, be seen that it does not require more time than can be spared for it. If it takes up all the time one can spare we shall have to think anew. The teacher under Nayee Talim will be a craftsman, not merely a wage-earner. His wife and children too must join him in his work. Only then will true co-operation be born. It would be a great achievement if we could take Nayee Talim to every village in India.

Some people ask me why agriculture could not be the centre of Nayee Talim. The answer is that through agriculture no handicraft can be taught. The function of Nayee Talim is not merely to teach an occupation, but to develop the whole man through the teaching of handicrafts. It aims at helping the students to understand the essence of life. Nayee Talim endeavours to remove the imperfections of man.

But though I do not begin with agriculture, it is bound to come in ultimately. We cannot do without it. One, of course, gets enough mental training in learning to grow fruits and vege- tables. Moreover, we also have to grow wheat for the students and provide them milk. All this cannot be accomplished under the old system. The field of Nayee Talim is more comprehensive. It has to determine the pattern

of a whole life. A teacher of Nayee Talim should be a first-class craftsman. All the boys of the village will naturally live in the village and in co-operation with the teacher produce all they need in the village itself. In this way, the education would automatically become free and universal.

Today the condition of India is such that the vegetables and fruit grown in a village are not consumed by the villagers themselves. The villagers of Travancore cannot use the coconuts that are grown there. They are collected at one place and sent to the towns. In the places where basic schools are opened the fruit grown will be first available to the villagers and then to others. Again, today we cultivate cash crops such as tobacco, cotton, indigo, etc. Those trained in Nayee Talim will cultivate crops which are essential for life.

ZAKIR HUSAIN: The All-India Congress has appointed the Constructive Programme Committee with Nayakum, Jaju, Kumarappa, Shankarrao Deo, Jugal Kishore, Prafulla Babu[1] , Jairamdas Doulatram and Sucheta Kripalani as its members[2]. In a meeting of the Committee held at Allahabad it was decided that the Talimi Sangh should run a training school and a basic school for a specified area in every province.

JAJU: In accordance with the programme chalked out it was agreed that the work should be carried on by the Provincial Congress Committee, which would be allowed to raise funds for it. In this way we plan to train one lakh students in the country who will be self-supporting as regards cloth.

GANDHIJI: Today the Congress organization is not functioning smoothly. Wherever the Congress is in power, the Provincial Congress Committee and the Government should work in perfect co-operation and be a source of strength to each other. Today, each wishes to have his own way without having any regard for the other. They should work as one organic whole.

SAMPURNANAND[3]: This is not feasible. The Congress Ministries are keen to take up such tasks; you should get the work done by them. But you cannot accomplish this work through the Congress Committees. Today, the Congress Committees want to boss over the Government and this cannot be.

GANDHIJI: It might be suggested that the Government should define their area of jurisdiction. Today, we cannot raise funds from the people. They would refuse to pay as they would have already made their contributions to the Government. We should tell the

[1] Prafulla Chandra Ghosh. The source has “Nirmal”, evidently a slip.

[2] The Committee appointed on March 7, 1947, also included R. R. Diwakar among its members.

[3] Minister for Finance and Education in the U. P.

Ministers that so much funds are required for such and such constructive activity. If they refuse, we should protest to them and put before the people the correct position. But we cannot ask the public to donate for the work which the Government is capable of undertaking.

AVINASHILINGAM: We do collect funds for the Harijans, don't we?

GANDHIJI: That is a different matter. It is our atonement.

AVINASHILINGAM: The Government do not have enough funds to execute all the plans.

GANDHIJI: Of course, people should take up such work as the Government cannot, and also raise funds for it.[1]

If we want to serve, our service should be in one direction alone.

We have to cross an ocean. This is the time of our trial. We have to disperse the thunder-clouds gathering from all sides. There is no better guide than the Supreme Helmsman who can help maintain the balance and steer our ship in the right direction. Therefore everyone of us should gird up his loins and be prepared to perform his duty without finding fault with others.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 9-11-1947, and *Biharni Komi Agman*, p. 246

371. TALK WITH PEACE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

GANDHI CAMP, PATNA,
April 23, 1947

We all want freedom. The Congress has ceaselessly striven to attain it and made tremendous sacrifices for it. I feel we have become indifferent in our loyalty to such a noble organization. If it is true, we had better disband the Congress or sever our connection with it. Do we want to let the splendid achievements of the Congress slip out of our hands? If you do not have the courage to follow the path of non-violence but whip the person who has flogged you, I can understand. But how can an Indian, being afraid of those who flog him, commit the crime of flogging the innocent by way of revenge? Even the use of violence is subject to certain rules ad regulations and failure to respect them leads to one's own destruction. If I am unable to make you see this point which is clear as daylight, the fault is mine. If a man

[1] What follows is translated from the Gujarati in *Biharni Komi Agman*.

can meet death in the right manner, I would regard it as the fulfilment of his life. But the ill omens I am seeing before the advent of freedom, will lead to a greater slavery than the one you have been subjected to for the last 150 years and you will never get peace.

The peace prevailing in Bihar at present is due to the force of the military, and I do not call it peace at all. When your peace brigade is able to influence people and they realize of their own accord that every Hindu or Muslim is their brother, sister or daughter, then alone will this peace endure. But you will be able to exercise your influence only if your dedication is one hundred per cent true, otherwise it would serve no purpose. Please do nothing just to please me. You are welcome to leave me alone if my words fail to carry conviction with you. But if after joining the peace brigade its soldier continues to think of revenge of any kind whatsoever, it would deeply hurt me. If either in retaliation or to avenge some evil done, you stoop to kill people professing religions other than your own, it would be regarded as an unmanly act and you will be endangering the freedom of India.

If you want to cultivate the non-violence of the brave, you have to purify your hearts and discard cowardly thoughts from your minds. Why should one who has adopted non-violence be afraid of anyone? He will clearly explain his viewpoint to others without losing his temper at all. Therefore if you have any doubts, you can certainly ask me or Shribabu. I am happy to see Muslim brothers here in the Peace Committee. I will advise them also to frankly state whatever they consider proper and right. They should have the courage to tell Jinnah Saheb publicly that by following the way of fighting and violence he will not be able to make Pakistan a holy land. If we continue to fight among ourselves we will have to forget freedom and some third power will come to subjugate us. Have you ever paused and thought what a golden land our India is? Instead of fighting over petty matters we should broaden our outlook. We have rich minerals, valuable metals and untold wealth of material in our country. We should make India prosperous by utilizing our time in discovering all this wealth. Instead, whither are we drifting, have you ever thought? Others will take advantage of our folly. If you have grasped what I have said, think over it and follow it in your lives This will automatically help the people come into their own. A great moral responsibility lies on the shoulders of the workers. If you lack the

requisite strength, admit it humbly otherwise carry on the responsibility you have undertaken, faithfully utilizing all your resources, physical, mental and material.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 246-8

372. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

PATNA,
April 23, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I keep my eyes closed during the prayer. Hence, I do not know if people take part in the *Ramdhun.* But Manubehn tells me that the women do not join the *Ramdhun,* nor do they beat time correctly. Those who come for the prayer meeting must abide by the rules of the gathering. *Ramdhun* is a collective prayer. When all men and women present at the prayer collectively utter Rama's name and meditate on it, they feel the love of God kindled in their hearts. If all the people do not join the *Ramdhun* its purpose is not fulfilled. One must practise the *Ramdhun* even at home.

Ramdhun occupies an important place even in Nayee Talim. Nayee Talim begins at the age of seven and till the fourteenth year basic training is imparted. But what should a child do till he is seven years old? Actually, the mother should start training the child from the time she is carrying him inside her. This is not my experience but of the whole world, that while the child is still in the womb the mother's work and discipline have a great influence on the child's life. This means that the mother can train the child from the time of conception till he is seven years old. This is followed by basic training till the child is fourteen years old. But Nayee Talim is necessary even for the old, in fact, for every man and woman as also for a labourer.

But from where to get crores of rupees for educating the entire population? India is a very poor country. And we must spread literacy among the whole population of 400 million and the education of the child is to start from the time he is born One's head starts reeling when one thinks about making all the necessary arrangements, finding so many teachers and the resources to pay them. You might ask me if my head too starts reeling. I should say, no. You might then think that either I am a stupid fellow who understands nothing, or I am very wise and know everything about it. This, in fact, is true. My head does not

reel. Nor am I given to talking in the air. Congress Ministers are ruling in seven Provinces. In some Provinces the Muslim League is in power. Let them be considered separate for the time being, though I do not regard them as separate. One day they are bound to be united with us. True, they might not agree to give this type of training and the Congress wants to implement the programme of basic education. But how can I tell Suhrawardy Saheb that I want to impart basic education in Bengal? He would ask me what right I had to make any such suggestion. I can also work a lot in Sind. If we can give basic education to the people there the whole face of the province would change. The Hindus want to run away from there. They come to me and ask me what they should do. What they should do is another thing.

All this time we had been having foreign education which also imposed a foreign language on us. This was because the British needed men to carry on their work and wanted their empire to expand. They needed clerks. I would have done the same thing if I were in their place. If I had needed doctors, engineers, etc., from where could I have found Englishmen for all these professions? How could Englishmen have communicated with the people of Bihar or those of Madras who speak Tamil? And so, they established big colleges and universities for the spread of English education. They started producing doctors and engineers, but in fact, they were turning out only loyal slaves. Even today we are living in the same age. Times cannot change merely by wishing. We are still enamoured of the English language. Work even in the Congress offices is being done in English. The notices I receive are also in English. Things have taken such a course that we cannot free ourselves from English easily. For that very reason the scheme of basic education has been prepared. It is a living education and a true education. English has not been given a place in it. A boy who has had basic education comes to his parents and proudly tells them what he has learnt. But if I study in an English school and my father from the village asks me what I learnt I would tell him only about England and the English people. If he asks me anything about my own place, about Bihar, I would not be able to tell him anything. But it does not imply that I should go on abusing the English people. As it is, I do not abuse anyone. The English say that this is our country and that they are going. When recently the Viceroy asked me to sign the peace appeal I said that I would sign in Hindi, Urdu, and I put my signature in Hindi, Urdu and English. This pleased the Viceroy.

Our average income today is Rs. 60-62 a year. Some people have an income of Rs. 60,000. This means that out of 400 million

there must be so many without an income and they must starve. How can we educate all of them? Today we are almost paupers. How can we go on if our children do not get ghee, milk and clothing? We have to increase our income with the help of the right kind of training. Today our men and women have nothing to cover themselves with. I saw the same thing in Noakhali too. And let me tell you, in the old days—when I was in Champaran—the women had nothing but a single sari. The women told me that they did not have more than one sari. How then could they bathe and what could they have to wear? And things were then far better compared to the present. Today cloth is so scarce. Food is also scarce. You must all get food to eat and clothes to wear. But the Government will not provide all these things for you. You must produce the grain yourselves. You must produce ghee and milk. You must make your own clothes. Your children would help you.

You have to make education self-supporting. Otherwise you cannot yourself become self-reliant. This virtue is to be found in Nayee Talim. The aim of Nayee Talim is not to make our children slaves. Nor does it aim at making them leaders. Its aim is to make all of them Indians.

There should be food for everyone; but food does not mean only a handful of grain, a pinch of salt. As a matter of fact everyone ought to have pure ghee and milk and enough clothing. Today all this appears to be a mere dream. But it would not remain a dream. Nayee Talim will not make all students barristers, engineers or doctors. It aims at developing the students into good human beings. And we have to make them nothing less than good human beings.

[From Urdu]

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—III, pp. 33-6

373. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

PATNA,
April 24, 1947

CHI. LILI,

I have your letter. I have written to Su. at the hospital address. I did not remember Pya. Gupta's address.

You are silly. I have not forsaken you. When you feel that you

can no longer stay away from me, come over. I myself am without any home just now. But come wherever I am. You have served Sushila but that's in your nature. Work hard without being impatient and read carefully and intelligently, and you will pass with good marks. There is no reason at all for you to give up hope or feel defeated. If you lose one year, there will be no harm. You will learn more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9608. Also C. W. 6580. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

374. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

PATNA,
April 24, 1947

CHI. SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. You have done the right thing. It is no use trying to hide what has happened.

I have been summoned to Delhi again. I shall have to leave on May 2. I hope that now there will be no need for my presence there.[1] Even here I am doing what needs to be done there and I hope I shall be doing the same in Delhi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9077

375. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

PATNA,
[*April*][2] *24, 1947*

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I hope to leave this place early in the morning on May 2 and to reach there on the 3rd. I had a telegram from Panditji.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2501

[1] In Noakhali
[2] From the contents. *Vide* the preceding item.

376. TALK WITH HOULTON[1]

GANDHI CAMP, PATNA,
April 24, 1947

We should have only one colony set up for the refugees. You need not build *pucca* houses. You can have the houses built with mud and mortar as is the usual practice in villages. I would rather wish that people built such houses themselves and the Government paid them their proper wages. I consider it a sin to distribute food free.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 250

377. ADDRESS TO WORKERS

SADAQUAT ASHRAM, PATNA,
April 24, 1947

Lakshmi Babu's complaints against the workers are a shame for Biharis. The subject of decentralization[2] is being discussed for the past three years. I had mentioned it after my release from jail.[3] There was some mental reservation about it in the beginning. But now it is all clear to me. Lakshmi Babu had welcomed my suggestion right at the beginning. Only if you explain to me your difficulties in the plan for decentralization will I know where the trouble lies. It is not that the sales can be pushed up only under the patronage of the Charkha Sangh. It would only mean the ruin of khadi. Let khadi be for those who spin, so that there could be only genuine khadi-wearers. And I need only such genuine workers. This would mean the saving of the crores of rupees invested in the Charkha Sangh. Bihar has greatly increased the importance of spinning in India. The age of machines started only 200 or 300 years ago. Before that we used to do all the work with our hands and cheerfully too. With the advent of the machine age our hands have been cut off. Handicrafts and body labour are disappearing with the result that we have become lazy. Khadi will lose all its value if we turn the Charkha Sangh into a commercial body. People, whether in towns or in villages, should spin

[1] The Relief Commissioner. The source however has "Walton", a slip.
[2] Of khadi work
[3] On May 6, 1944. *Vide* "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of Bombay", 6-5-1944

and wear khadi. It should be as natural as cooking one's own food which is done in every home. This is not a very big thing. We shall all perish if we do not practise this. We are facing starvation because we do the things we ought not to do. India is a country poorer than even China. We appear to be human beings, but actually we live like animals. What would happen to the cow if human beings turn into animals? If every village in India became self-sufficient in the matter of food and clothing, we would easily save a billion rupees. I have no doubt about this. We would require no help from anyone, and the whole of India would become a co-operative enterprise. There are co-operative organizations in Japan and Germany. We too have among us ideal men like Lakshmi Babu and we must strengthen his hands. Decentralization is a teaching in itself. It has a wonderful significance like the daily lighting of the stove in every home for the day's meals. If we are all ready for it and become self-sufficient in our khadi production, the experiment which Lakshmi Babu wants to carry on may well be the first of its kind in independent India. Vichitra Babu[1] in the U. P. has also made some efforts. But it would all be in vain unless we make all our villages self-sufficient.

It is possible to develop yet another industry here. It is possible to produce beautiful cloth out of the stems of linseed. I have not the time, otherwise I would have proved that mill-cloth is like poison in effect, while khadi is like nectar. Khadi is meant for everyone. Even a depraved man, a sinner, a drunkard, a gambler, anybody, can wear it. But the sacred quality of khadi is that it is a symbol of freedom. Those who wish to live in free India ought to wear khadi. And those who wear khadi will be satyagrahis. They must be *sattvika* in the true sense of the term as described in the *Gita.*[2] Khadi carries that quality.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 250-1

[1] Vichitra Narayan Singh
[2] "Letter to Esther Faering", 12-2-1920

378. TALK WITH HARIJAN WORKERS

SADAQUAT ASHRAM, PATNA,
[*April 24, 1947*][1]

In the meeting with the workers of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. . . a challenging poser was presented. The Harijans were asking why, if the caste Hindus were sincere in their professions of equality between the "touchables" and [the] "untouchables", no inter-marriages were being celebrated. What should be the caste Hindus' answer to that? Gandhiji replied that the Harijans had a right to ask that question. He had already conceded their point. Marriage was a strictly personal affair. While nobody could be compelled to contract a marriage against his or her will, on the ground of caste there should be no bar to such inter-marriages. He reminded them how he had long ago made it a rule not to be present at, or give his blessings for any wedding unless one of the parties was a Harijan. Untouchability in the sense of pollution by touch had already become a thing of the past. What was needed now was the cultural and economic uplift of the Harijans, so that the very distinction between "touchables" and "untouchables" would be obliterated.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 121

379. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

PATNA,
April 24, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today I kept my eyes open during the *Ramdhun* to find out who among the women beat correct time and joined the *Ramdhun.* I found some women moving and clapping their hands, but they were not keeping the time! This wouldn't do. I had told you yesterday that if all of you want to recite the name of God in unison and with single-minded concentration, you must learn the rules of collective prayer. When everyone recites the name of God with genuine feeling and with one voice, the blissful notes would give rise to a very pleasant,

[1] From *Biharni Komi Agman*

delightful feeling. I can see the women because they sit right before me. But the men stand at a distance and I am not able to see them well. The dais on which I sit has been made like the stage in a theatre. There is special lighting arrangement so that people can have a good view of me, as of an actor on the stage. But the men stand in the dark. The light should be directed at the people. After all we are all in a way actors on the stage of life. I cannot see their hands but I can make out from the sound that they do not all join the *Ramdhun*. This is not good and it should not be.

Some Harijan workers came to me this afternoon. I talked to them for an hour. We had a long discussion. Then I went to the Sadaquat Ashram where a meeting of the Harijan Sevak Sangh was held. The Harijan workers told me that there was very little feeling of untoucha-bility in Bihar. But I have heard that it is not true. Yesterday a shameful thing happened here. I came to know later that a few Harijan women had come to the prayer meeting, but some women did not allow them to sit down. They let their contempt by known and the Harijan women left the place. Had I known it yesterday, I would have talked about it. Today Hari-jan workers, both men and women, came to me. After hearing their tales I felt sad realizing that if those who considered themselves high caste, did not give up their fancied superiority and did not discard their unfounded pride, we would not be able to preserve our freedom even if it came.

I say this not only for Patna or Bihar, but for the whole of India. Your Ministers are your elected representatives and they ought to guide you. Some people asked me if it was enough to touch the untouchable. I said no. The feeling of untouchability cannot be wiped out just by touching the untouchable.

There was a time when the Hindus who considered themselves high-born never even touched the untouchables. But the people are now fairly enlightened. It is because of this awakening that we are now at the threshold of freedom. People no more mind inter-dining. But inter-marrying is still unmentionable. There are a number of high-placed men in Bankipur. If the untouchables come to their houses they are received with respect. They consider these men worthy of honour. But the untouchables cannot go to the houses of orthodox Brahmins or sanatani Hindus. These distinctions of touchable and untouchable are man made. Otherwise there is no such label of untouchability tagged on to anyone. I ceaselessly go on telling

everyone that unless the blot of untouchability is removed Hinduism would be completely wiped out. I hope that the activities of the Charkha Sangh and Nayee Talim would be very useful in this field too.

Actually we have committed a great crime, for which we ought to atone. I am sticking to this place in the hope that Bihar will do as much good as it has indulged in wrongs. The Hindus should so placate the Muslims by their conduct that they should be convinced that the Hindus committed a mistake once but that they are really not such senseless people.

Another thing is that we must completely eradicate untouchability. I have already told you that Bihar is now independent of the Charkha Sangh. The headquarters of the Charkha Sangh are at Sevagram. Now Bihar has withdrawn itself from the central body and is free to produce as much khadi as it wants. Now you must think how Bihar should work. Bihar should take a concrete step in the right direction. I told you yesterday that Nayee Talim was a lofty tree and under its cool shade we could live in great comfort.

Let the women remember that they should not repeat their mistakes. And those who committed the mistake should make amends by each one bringing with her one untouchable woman a day.

[From Urdu]

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar— III, pp. 37-9

380. TALK WITH BIHAR MINISTERS

April 24, 1947

. . .[1] says one thing to me, and does something else. We shall not be able to preserve our freedom at this rate. After all, how have you people reached such a high position? By whose efforts have you done it? Have you not been trained by me? If there can be such confusion in Bihar which belongs to Rajendra Babu, it seems I shall be able to say nothing to anyone. I do not like it. It pains me that even . . .[2] Babu is not able to clarify the matter. He is efficient and noble hearted. If he is seeking only my guidance, why are these strange things happening? Do people say yes to me merely to please me? If you do so, you would betray your own country. It makes no difference to me, but betrayal of the nation would bring no good. There is no reason to believe that all that I say is correct, but saying yes to whatever I say would make both of us guilty. Your consent should spring from your heart. If you are not convinced by my words you must try to persuade me. But we should not agree with anyone just in order to please him. The things that are happening in Bihar are extremely shameful. Please note it down in your diary that if things go on like this, once again India will have to be under the domination of the big three, viz., Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union. It would not be wrong if I say that the events in Bihar, Bengal and the Punjab are hindering India's freedom. You are the leaders here. If the leaders themselves lack unity, harmony and principles, how can I expect these in others?[2]

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 252

[1] Omissions are as in the source.

[2] *ibid*

[3] According to *Mahatma Gandhi —The Last Phase,* Vol. II, when the Ministers met Gandhiji again on the last day of his stay in Bihar, he made amends by telling them that what he had said to them on the previous occasion must not be taken as condemnation but only as a measure of his jealous concern for them. "I do not hope to be able to find better colleagues than you. I entertain high hopes of you. It hurts me, therefore, when I hear anyone criticizing you with good reason."

381. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL[1]

PATNA,

April 24, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

There is a telegram from Jawaharlal that I should go there in the beginning of May. I therefore propose to start from here on the 2nd[2], arriving there on the morning of the 3rd. I will have the same people with me, and stay as usual in the Bhangi Colony. Please inform Ghanshyamdas, Maulana and others.

I hope you keep good health.

I received your telegram about *Harijan.*[3] I am now preparing to start writing. I wrote to Kishorelal and Jivanji[4].

Just now we have been having meetings of the Charkha Sangh and the Talimi Sangh.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: *Sardar Vallabhbhaine,* pp. 353-4

382. LETTER TO SYED ABDUL AZIZ[5]

April 25, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

Many thanks for your letter and the pamphlets. I must take time to read the latter.

[1] According to *Biharni Komi Agman* this was written after 10 p.m.

[2] From *Biharni Komi Agman.* The source however has "27", obviously a slip. *Vide* "Letter to Satis Chabndra Das Gupta",24-4-1947

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 13-4-1947

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Jivanji D. Desai", 19-4-1947

[5] In reply to the addressee's letter which read: "Your opposition to the formation of small colonies in which the Muslims. . . could live [in] safety and your determination to disallow even a few guns to the needy Muslims have deeply depressed me and many others. . . . You have. . . repeatedly said. . . that you could not allow anyone the right of private defence. . . . Muslims faced with overwhelming majority in seven out of eleven Provinces, feel that your law, if practised, would spell disaster for them."

It is impossible not to admire your courage in surviving your cruel disability and retaining your mind unimpaired. Mine was no mere social call. It was a pleasure to meet you and listen to you. I never expected you to return that call. You have but to tell me that you would like me to see you again and I would gladly do so.

I must confess that I had never realized until I came to Bihar the extent of damage to life and property by man become fiend for the time being. Let us hope that the awful scene will never be repeated in Bihar. My opposition to the formation of colonies is restricted to the Government co-operation even to the extent of land acquisition. I would have no objection to affected Muslims congregating in Muslim areas. There should be no check on free movement or congregation.

Your legal acumen should have prevented you from making the sweeping remark that I had ever denied the right of self-defence. That right does not and ought not to carry with it the licence to bear arms. A moment's reflection would show you its futility. What you want probably to convey is that it is the right of the citizen, however humble he or she may be, to demand protection by the State against the thieves, robbers and miscreants. A Government that fails to perform that duty forfeits all claim to govern. Let me add, too, that neither during my stay in England nor for 20 years in S[outh] Africa did I ever know a Westerner feeling incompetence to defend himself without arms when and if the occasion arose. Like several superstitions, this one you name seems to be confined only to this unhappy land of ours. Your gibe at the ministers and incidentally at me, though wholly irrelevant to your argument, is well deserved.

I am wholly at one with you in your desire that the Congress and the League should live at peace with each other.

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

383. A LETTER

April 25, 1947

I too have been watching with an anguished heart what you write about the Congress. Let us hope that ultimately it will be God's will that will be done and Satan will be overcome.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 255

384. TALK WITH ENGLISHMEN[1]

GANDHI CAMP, PATNA,
April 25, 1947

Sooner or later India is bound to get its freedom. Having made such tremendous sacrifices our earnest endeavour is not going to end in failure. But if the League co-operated with us we could win freedom tomorrow. The League representatives who have joined the Interim Government at present have not done so willingly. It would be a happy union if only it is a sincere union. The world today needs action, not speeches. Our beliefs will have any value only if we put them into practice. Otherwise it is difficult to achieve anything. We have no doubt fought our battle with the weapons of truth and non-violence. Though, I must confess, I have not reached the ideal of my conception—as far as preparing the people on those lines is concerned, but so far as I know my own conscience I have myself striven through thought, word and deed to reach the ideal and am still striving to do so. If unconsciously I have been guilty of a lapse, I am not aware of it. But no society of men can ever be happy at all without following the path of non-violence. This doctrine is not of my invention, it is something that has been followed from time immemorial. A country like Russia which stood by the rights of its people has been caught up in establish- ing an imperialistic State. How tragic it is! I hold that he who invented the atom bomb has committed the gravest sin in the world of science. The only weapon that can save the world is non-violence. Considering the trend of the world, I might appear a fool to everyone; but I do not feel sorry for it. I rather consider it a great blessing that God did not make me capable of inventing the atom bomb.

It is wrong to say that the people in the West have gone crazy about the atom bomb. There are also people among them who are having second thoughts about it. I can make this assertion in full faith and with conviction that people will be happy and content only where truth and non-violence are followed. Though at present both appear to have disappeared they have not disappeared entirely. You inquired about foreigners. I may say that ultimately they can stay here only if they are willing to stay as Indians. Otherwise there is no place for them here. After India achieves freedom, we have to cultivate

[1] Gandhiji had a talk with two Englishmen during his morning walk.

friendship with the people of other countries and avoid all discord. We are aware that we might commit many mistakes and face innumerable difficulties in safeguarding our freedom. It is quite possible we may fall short of the expectations of our people. But I see no danger in that. We will learn only through our mistakes and trials. But if the Congress renounces truth and non-violence, its moral strength and its prestige are bound to suffer. But truth and non-violence have to be followed willingly. Then alone can they endure. Nothing done under compulsion will endure. Such rules are not written in a constitution. I can go to the extent of saying that just as it is essential to wear clothes—irrespective of whether they are good or bad—and we have accepted the principle of covering our body, similarly it is imperative that every human being should adopt truth and non-violence.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 253-4

385. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

PATNA,
April 25, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I am going to speak to you today about something which has just come to my notice. It is a subject close to the hearts of the Hindus, viz., cow-protection. I wrote a book called *Hind Swaraj*[1] when I was in South Africa. That was in 1909[2],that is, 40 years ago. In those days too I held the same views as I do now. There was a statement in the book saying that I considered the cow as our mother and I have an honoured place for her in my heart because she gives me milk. If I want to protect myself, I must also protect the cow. The cow is worshipped even in Bihar. But, as I wrote in 1909, even though we claim to protect the cow, in fact we are killing her. Many Hindus were angry with me for making such a statement. But I was firm in my view.

Nowhere else in the world is the condition of the cow as poor as in India. If we look at the way we treat our cows, it would be clear to us that even though we claim to worship the cow, in our hearts we have no true respect for her. We treat the cow very harshly. Look at it from

[1] *Vide*
[2] The source has 1908, a slip.

my point of view and think of the hard work we extract from the bullocks. It is a mute animal and cannot complain. But we yoke the bullocks to the cart and load it so heavily that we do not even bother to think that the cart might give way. And, when the bullocks cannot move we beat them mercilessly. We give no thought to the health of the bullocks. When I see their bones sticking out, I wonder how they manage to walk at all. The bullocks' condition is similar to the poor people's. Just as a poor man does not get ghee, milk, and so on, the cattle too do not get proper fodder. Experts say that either the animal world will destroy us, or it will be our duty to kill them in order to survive. If that happens people will ridicule us that we, the cow-worshippers, have taken to cow-slaughter.

However, for protecting the cow, instead of laying down our own lives we kill others. And whom do we go and kill? The British? Of course not. How can we kill them? They are powerful, and even though they are few in number, they are the rulers. They possess arms. They consume as many cows as they wish. They trade in beef. They take away from India any number of cows of healthy and good breed to slaughter them. These cows are not sold by the Muslims, for they do not keep cows in such large numbers. It is you who sell the cows to them. Then they sell beef tea to us which we consume. Our children consume it too because the doctors recommend it. I have a Vaishnava friend who had beef tea saying he had to take it because his doctor said that he would not survive without it.

I have heard some Bihari Hindus complain that the Muslims slaughter our cows. Why then should the Muslims not be killed, they ask. Even in 1908 when I was in South Africa I used to be amused at the Hindus' claim that there were several societies for cow-protection. Here too people go about collecting funds for cow-protection. But how can we protect the cow when we kill our own brethren? You cannot kill the British because they are strong. Today if they are going it does not mean that you have grown stronger or that they have grown weaker. They have decided to leave because the force of our satyagraha has compelled them to go. It will have to be accepted that they are honest, because in the matter of leaving the country they have shown much honesty. When they came, you could have told them that they should not eat beef. You could have told them that if they ate beef, cow's ghee or milk would not be available and that they could manage to live without beef. But in America and England where people freely eat beef the cow is very well protected. They raise the cows very well and milk them properly, and they sell pure milk. But as for you, you sell ghee by adulterating it with fat. You also sell vegetable ghee. You consume beef tea and beef extract too; but if the

Muslims eat beef you kill them. I once stayed with Maulana Abdul Bari Saheb of Firangi Mahal at Lucknow. He left us long ago. He said that if the cow was so useful to us, it was our duty also to protect her. In those days the Hindus and the Muslims used to be united and they had no quarrels. Had we maintained the same friendly relations, the Muslims would have given up beef-eating. You also said that a large number of cows were saved in one year. Nowhere in the Koran is it said that it is one's duty to eat beef. But if we forcibly stop the Muslims it would become obligatory for them to eat it. I wish to tell you about it because complaints have been made not by one but many Hindus. If we wish to create an atmosphere of harmony, we ought to give up such methods of coercion.

Some work of cow-protection is being done in the U.P., Bihar, Gujarat, the C.P. and other places. For that matter there are also some Hindus who insist on eating beef. They also quote a Sanskrit *shloka* which shows that in the ancient times even Brahmins used to eat beef. That is not incorrect either. It is another matter if the passage is interpreted differently. No one ever mentions cow-protection in Andhra and Madras. If we want to protect the cow we must know our dharma, know what true compassion is, learn how to look after cattle. In our country this is not done properly even in the dairies. I have had a hand in the setting up of the Goseva Sangh.[1] It is our duty to protect the cow. In fact, I would say it is the duty of every human being, because taking cow's milk and ghee is beneficial to everyone. Even the non-vegetarians have to take ghee, milk, and so on. Buffalo's milk is not as good as cow's milk. But that does not mean that I do not wish the buffalo to exist. If the cow is saved, the buffalo would be saved too. But the cow cannot be saved in the way we are trying to do it at present. We are blinded by selfishness and a feeling of animosity. We ought to learn from England and America how to rear cattle. Our knowledge of the subject at present is very poor. There is need for us to learn from other countries how to rear cattle, what fodder we should give them and the proper way to milk them. First of all we must try to cultivate humility in order to protect the cow. Let us not be angry with anyone. On the contrary, let us try to protect the cow by persuading others. That alone would render our efforts successful.

[From Urdu]

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—III, pp. 40-3

[1] In February, 1942. *Vide*

386. TALK WITH SITA AND SUMITRA GANDHI[1]

GANDHI CAMP, PATNA,
April 26, 1947

One may give up everything but not prayer. Prayer is the broom that sweeps clean our minds. If we stop praying, all the rubbish and cobwebs will accumulate in our minds and make our inner being impure. I expect all of you who are in the college to get up early and create an atmosphere for prayer. It has been my wish—and will always be wherever I am till I breathe my last—that every member of the Ashram, boy or girl, man or woman, wherever he or she may be, should create the atmosphere of the Ashram. If nothing else, at least spinning, simple food, simplicity, khadi and prayer ought to become the permanent features in one's life after one has stayed in the Ashram. But what can you do in this respect? Not all the desires of man are ever fulfilled. It seems the fault is only mine and this is only a reflection of my imperfection.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 257-8

387. LETTER TO HORACE ALEXANDER

PATNA,
April 26, 1947

DEAR HORACE,

Your letter. You may expect me in Delhi (D.V.) on 3rd proximo at the latest.

BAPU

FRIEND HORACE ALEXANDER
24 RAJPUR ROAD
DELHI

From a photostat: G. N. 1444

[1] Who could not get up in time to attend the morning prayer

388. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

PATNA,
April 26, 1947

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have been working under such heavy pressure that I could not find time even to write a letter to you and send it with Sita. I meant to write yesterday but could not. I read just now Manilal's letter which you had sent to Kishorelal and which the latter had for- warded to me. Such is my condition. God, however, has preserved my health so far and will preserve it as long as He wants to take work from me.

Since Sita had come and met me, she herself told me that there was no need for me to write a letter, but that an oral message would suffice. I agreed with her. I have discussed the matter with her as fully as possible. There is no need whatever for you to worry about her. You must have seen the letter she wrote to Krishnakumar and the one I wrote to him. You will learn everything from them. Please therefore do not worry about her at all. And as Kishorelal suggests, it is now desirable that you should go and join Manilal. If you wish, you may come and see me. I shall have to go to Delhi on May 2. You may come and see me there if you like. But it is very hot now. If you wish to escape the heat and don't wish to come, you may not. We may discuss the more important problems through correspondence and should be satisfied with that.

I am returning Manilal's letter. My heart endorses the different view which you two have taken. Since I am the property of the masses, they have a perfect right to search me inside out. But, even so, if the masses seek to press their point of view on me, I would feel suffocated.

About Kishorelal and others it is a different matter. They are, after all, co-workers who seek guidance from me. If they disapprove of any action or views of mine today, they should have the right to discuss them fully. The painful thing in this matter is that their approach and mine to the question seem different. Conduct based on such [different] approach is bound to be at variance [with their views] and cannot but give pain. My ideas and conduct are not new. I can say that they go back to fifty five years ago. It is possible that I might not have been able to express my ideas clearly in my writings or talks.

I don't say positively that I have written on the subject, only because if I could spare the time to go over all my writings I might be able to quote the statements I have made from time to time. But what is to be gained by doing so? The action has already been abandoned for the present. As for my views, Kishorelal and I have been discussing them [through letters]. That discussion need not be stopped, nor need it upset anybody. If there is any error in my reasoning, the discussion may help to remove it. Or, if there is no possibility of either of us changing his view, we will put up with the difference in our views and also in our conduct. I am hopeful that that will not be the outcome. One or the other will correct his error and both will come to the same view. I am hoping, however, that Kishorelal and others who are non-co-operating with me partially will withdraw their non-co-operation.

I hope you are all unperturbed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5000

389. LETTER TO CHAMPA MEHTA

PATNA,
April 26, 1947

CHI. CHAMPA[1],

I got your unhappy letter. I was surprised to learn that Shashi[2] and you had to suffer so much. But we should never think of happiness or unhappiness. The incident shows that for those who have linked their fate with mine, Sevagram is the only place. Those who are resolved to live or die there will alone swim. The rest will sink.

I sent two wires, one to you and the other to J. A. Bulsaria. The latter has been writing to me. If you have been able to see him, the problem must have been solved.

God alone knows whether or not you did right in sending for Gatimama from Rajkot. If he has arrived, his presence will certainly comfort you.

Write to me occasionally and keep repeating Ramanama.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1054. Courtesy: Champa Mehta

[1] Wife of Ratilal P. Mehta
[2] Addressee's son

390. A LETTER

April 26, 1947

I have gone through your report[1]. If it had been a statement expressing your personal views I would have complimented you and would have made some important suggestions too. You are a great economist and a learned man and you are running a flourishing business. But I know more about village industries. Hence we have proceeded on the understanding that I am qualified to instruct you. Even if there were no such understanding, I, at any rate, have proceeded on that assumption. In doing so I have not been prompted by my ego. But such is the situation today. What I have read concerns the Committee appointed by the Government of Bombay, and you are presiding over it. From that point of view I have much to say about the statement. Fortunately we had here meetings of the Trustees of the Charkha Sangh and members of the Nayee Talim in which Kumarappa[2] and Dhotre[3] were present. Hence I could exchange views with both of them. . . . [4] I am not able to look up *Harijan* at present. I do not send for the matter before it is printed. Pyarelal too has not been writing for it.

I do not approve of the very resolution which has led to the appointment of the Committee. In my view Lakshmidas[5] and Dhotre cannot function under that resolution. Before passing the resolution the Government of Bombay should have consulted the Charkha Sangh, the Gramodyog Sangh and the Hindustani Talimi Sangh. You are probably not aware that all these three organizations have the backing of the Congress and are known as Congress organizations. No other organization in India has or is likely to have more experience in the field of village industries. But I still cannot say how such a mistake could happen. Considering your intelligence I feel that you ought to have stopped Lakshmidas and Dhotre from signing the report. I would also say that even you could not have prepared such a report by yourself, because, if you prepare a report disregarding certain basic facts, it would be like raising a structure on sand. This is what has happened with regard to this report. At the moment I am not in a position to suggest anything more. If you have the courage I

[1] Of the Gramodyog Samiti. *Vide* Also the following item.
[2] J. C. Kumarappa
[3] Raghunath Shridhar Dhotre
[4] Omission as in the source
[5] Lakshmidas Asar

what has happened with regard to this report. At the moment I am not in a position to suggest anything more. If you have the courage I would suggest that you write to the Government of Bombay that the report is incomplete and should not be implemented straightaway. Dhotre has withdrawn his endorsement. He must have sent you a copy of his letter. I have a lot more to write but don't have the time. Why say more to a wise person?

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 259-60

391. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS ASAR[1]

April 26, 1947

. . . must have written you a detailed letter. You have given your name for the Gramodyog Samiti of the Government of Bombay. But in my view you could not have done so as the Samiti would be functioning under the instructions of the Government. Moreover, you should have consulted the Charkha Sangh, the Gramodyog Sangh and the Talimi Sangh and sought their opinion. There is much to be said about its merits and demerits, but I leave it out. It your views have undergone a fundamental change, it would be an altogether different matter. But I do not think this is the case. In my view, you must put your signature to the letter Dhotre has written to Balasaheb[2]. Before the Government starts acting on the report, it must clearly understand our policy. I have also written to Bhai. . .

You must be keeping good health. Does your health permit you to do your full work?

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 260

[1] Omissions in the letter are as in the source.
[2] B. G. Kher

392. A LETTER[1]

April 26, 1947

CHI. . .,

I have your letter of the 20th. I am awaiting your detailed reply. Your words breathe love. I need not say anything if you feel the same way I feel towards you all. But your letters have left a different impression on me.

I have come to the conclusion after reading your letters that . . . should go to. . .

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 261

393. A LETTER[2]

April 26, 1947

I myself can do nothing about Chi. . . . Pandit Jawaharlal is scrupulously fair. All those applications are considered on merit. No recommendation would be necessary for . . .

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 261

394. LETTER TO ARUNANSHU

PATNA,
April 26, 1947

CHI. ARUNANSHU,

I have your postcard. You have made a good attempt to write in Hindustani. How nice it would be when I shall be able to write as much in Bengali. My Bengali lessons continue and nowadays Bisen is my instructor. Manu sings a Bengali *bhajan* in the morning. Let us see what happens in the end.

I learnt from Satis Babu's letter that Nirmal Babu will be here in a day or two. If he does come it will be fine.

[1] Omissions in the letters are as in the source.
[4] *ibid*

It is pretty hot here. We have screens of *khas*[1] put up on the windows, which makes the heat bearable. I shall have to go to Delhi towards the end of this month. I do not know how long I shall have to stay there.

Didimony[2] has not written anything to me. Does she remain very sad? Or does she avoid writing to me in order to save my time? If it is so, tell her that I do not want to have my time saved in that manner.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 8727

395. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

PATNA,
April 26, 1947

CHI. SATIS BABU,

I have your letters. Now I know that Nirmal Babu will be here in a day [or two]. I will have a clear picture of the situation there when he comes.

I am afraid arrangements are being made for my going to Delhi. Perhaps I may have to leave as early as the 30th. Let me see what happens. I hope now there will be peace in Noakhali.

I hope you are well. You must preserve your health. What is the arrangement for water supply in this hot season ?

Abha needs must improve her health. She is a very delicate person.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have a telegram and shall therefore leave on the 30th.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9079

[1] Roots of a kind of grass used in summer as screen for cooling the air
[2] Taralika. *Vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 18-4-1947

396. A LETTER

April 26, 1947

Received your letter. Why is it in English? If you do not know Hindustani, you could have written in Marathi. I am so far away.

[From Hindi]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 261

397. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

PATNA,
April 26, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Since I have to visit the Muslim brethren I do not wish to give you the whole of my time today. You must have heard of Maulana Shafi Daudi. I came to know about him when I had come to Bihar for the first time. Later I went to his house also. On his invitation I have promised to attend a meeting of the Jamiat-e-Islam. I therefore wish to leave early.

Please remember what I told you about the cow yesterday. I told the *goshala* people who came to see me today that they should all come to me together. Then I would tell them what could be done to improve the breed of the cow. They too agree that the condition of the cow anywhere in India is not as bad as in Bihar. This is an exaggeration, for the condition of cattle in some other parts of India is found to be worse than in Bihar. All the same, according to me, it would suffice to say that the condition of cattle in India is the worst in the whole world. This is a matter of great shame and a blot on us since we call the cow our mother and worship her. If we had been following our dharma India's name would not have been tarnished. We must remove this blot.

I hope you will think over what I have told you, for I shall say no more today.

[From Urdu]

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—III, p. 44

398. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

[*After April 26, 1947*][1]

CHI. SUSHILA,

I am sending herewith a copy of the letter I wrote to you. You did get the letter. If you had sent that to Kishorelal, send this to Manilal.

Su. has already written about Sita.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5001

399. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

PATNA,
April 27, 1947

CHI. AMRIT,

This I am writing after prayer and my Bengali lesson and *Gita* for Manu. It is now 5.50. I must be off for the walk at 6 a.m. Meanwhile these lines to tell you what you know already. I hope to be there the morning of 1st May.

The heat is trying here, must be there too. I keep myself in good order by sleeping several times during the day and reducing food rigorously.

Hope you are all well.

The rest when we meet.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
C/O SARDAR PATEL
1 AURANGZEB ROAD
NEW DELHI

From the original: C. W. 3705. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6514

[1] This is written below the letter to the addressee dated April 26, 1947.

400. LETTER TO TARALIKA

PATNA,
April 27, 1947

CHI. DIDIMONY,[1]

I do not know how best to address you.

I have been daily expecting your letter. It comes today.

You will come whenever you wish. I am off to Delhi on 30th for a few days.

Hope the girls are composed.

Am glad Charu is with you. You must even from now apply yourself to some service of man and through him of God.

Love to you all.

BAPU

SHRI DIDIMONY
3 ALIPORE PARK AVENUE
ALIPORE
BENGAL

From a photostat: G. N. 8728

401. A NOTE[2]

April 27, 1947

1. The land will belong to the village organization and will be under the control of the Housing Society. Building work should be carried on subject to the Society's approval. Those shareholders will become members of the Society who will pay their contribution and will abide by other conditions. Such members as pay their contributions, be it just one rupee, will alone be entitled to put up buildings. First a co-operative bank should be formed and then the work should be started. But such a bank will not be like a commercial bank. Loans will be raised partly from the people. We will pay interest at the rate of 3 per cent. If more money is needed I can be approached. The workers of the Housing Society will act as its trustees and will not make profit in a commercial manner.

[1] The superscription is in the Devanagari script.
[2] Regarding Sevagram

2. It may not be right to divide the newly purchased land into plots and sell them. This will be a commercial practice. Nor should buildings be put up with a view to earning rent. It does not matter if we are required to pay land revenue. Proper arrangements must be made first. So long as this work is not carried on the principle of trusteeship, it should be kept pending. Earning money is certainly not the underlying idea. In the meantime [the society] can take up co-operative farming.

3. Let the work of revenue collection be carried on in the name of the village organization. There is no harm in drawing from it whatever money may be needed for the expenses.

It should be remembered that all my views are *ex parte* . . . .[1] I have not heard the other side.

It is my view that we must make the whole village a health resort. The hospital has no place in it. We must be satisfied with what little we may be able to do in the prevention of disease. Present-day doctors have no place in the scheme of my conception. We must be content with medical herbs available in our villages and fields. Ramanama is the unfailing remedy.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 264-5

402. TALK WITH MUSLIM WOMEN

GANDHI CAMP, PATNA,
April 27, 1947

Now we can hope that India is shortly going to become free. If women were to make a resolve, they could demonstrate the remarkable strength bestowed on them by God. And it is essential for it that you should pray daily. But today prayer has come to be regarded either as a pastime of old women or of those who have retired from life. And I can quote such instances where young men and women regard prayer, *bhajans* or discourses as something ridiculous and worthless. This has led to our present degeneration. But if we can understand the secret of prayer, we would realize its wonderful power. Our indepen-dence will be stable if we attain it through prayer. But spiritually in-clined men and women should also

[1] Omission as in the source

understand the secret of non-violence. We should realize that if our non-violence is the non-violence of the weak, our independence will not be stable. And it will further prove that we cannot protect ourselves even with weapons, for we have neither arms nor training in their use. We have the wonderful and unrivalled weapon of truth and non-violence. Not only for winning freedom but also for preserving it there is no alternative to ahimsa. Those who regard us as their enemies, can be won over by love and non-violence alone. Women can easily accomplish this. Let me give a simple example. You marry your daughter aged fourteen, fifteen or sixteen into a strange new family and hand her over to a stranger; the girl becomes one with the new family or after a short while even becomes the mistress of that household. How does this happen? God has blessed her with a loving heart. She can win over everyone with her love, affection and non-violence. This is our every-day experience. Similarly in the larger context of society, if you learn to treat your Hindu sisters as your friends and try to emulate their good qualities they will certainly reciprocate. Women have the remarkable capacity for sacrifice.

Under varying situations in life and in order to advance or strengthen your country you should learn to efface the self and meet death bravely with prayer in your heart, whenever the occasion demands it. In order to cultivate the courage to meet death, prayer is the first and the last *mantra* of the art of dying. Implicit faith is essential for it. Without faith, no satyagrahi can ever succeed. Rama, Rahim, God or Allah—call Him by any name you like, His Law is universal.

Think over what I have said. You have come in purdah but the real meaning of observing purdah is that you should guard against lust, anger and attachment. That is, one has to exercise restraint over oneself. This outward purdah is mere hypocrisy. Its observance is meaningless if one's heart is impure.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 266-7

403. TALK WITH I. N. A. MEN

April 27, 1947

Should we not refer to the I.N.A. as non-violent I.N.A.? this is because you cannot expect to hear anything else from me. Subhas

Babu was like my own son. Even though there were differences in our views, I admire his capacity for work and his patriotism. We shall be able to win freedom only through the principles the Congress has adopted for the past thirty years. We should not look upon anyone as our enemy. We must give up the feeling of animosity and vindictiveness and we shall have to become *sthitaprajna*[1]. As I am saying this you may be thinking that you are not *mahatmas* after all. But this principle is not meant for *mahatmas* alone. Anyone who wishes to be happy has no alternative but to adopt this principle in his life.

It is all very well that you fought with arms in foreign countries. But you saw the result. You have gained nothing thereby. Of course, you faced many hardships with courage. But Netaji himself has said that while in India you have got to work within the Congress. Just as you had tried to defend your army with force of arms in Burma and prepared for the attainment of freedom, you must now work to wipe out communal differences with the force of love and non-violence. You must eschew all differences of caste and creed and considering every woman your mother, sister or daughter you should accomplish the task which Netaji began. A remarkable spirit which Netaji has inculcated in the I.N.A. is that there are no distinctions among the soldiers. You must carry that spirit to every home.

You must thoroughly convince yourselves that developing spiritual strength is a thousand times more difficult than developing the strength of the sword.

As far as food, sleep and so on, are concerned, there is no difference between human beings and animals. Even so, today we have a choice only between human life and animal existence. We in India have wonderful religious treatises. But let me tell you that all that spiritual preaching has been of no avail. We are not able to translate anything from those scriptures into practice. I venture to state with all humility that the path of non-violence is the path leading to God and only the brave can follow it as the poet[2] says: "The path of God is for the brave." Who is this God? He is not a corporeal human being. You should develop this strength of the brave. You will then be able to perpetuate Netaji's name in every village and every corner of India and keep it alive for ages to come. That means that Netaji lives

[1] Man of steadfast awareness
[2] Pritam

even though he may not exist in the body. It is wrong to think that only an embodied person exists and that a dead person does not. A person whose name has become immortal, who rendered incomparable service and who used to rush to help the poor, lives for ever even after death.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 267-8

404. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

April 27, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

The *bhajan*[1] you heard just now was sung before also. I want to give you something of the background of this *bhajan*. It first echoed in my ears when I went on a fast while in jail. But while fasting one's memory becomes weak. None of my co-workers remembered the *bhajan* fully either. And so I sent a telegram and the *bhajan* was sent to me telegraphically in the Roman script. The *bhajan* delighted me so much that I forgot my fast. My grandson Kanu was with me at the time. At my request he sang it for me. There is nothing special about this *bhajan* by Tulsidas. He only says that he lives by two syllables[2]. Everything, he says, is accomplished only with the help of Rama. All other gods are amenable to offerings. For, when people go to worship the deities they offer a couple of pice before offering their prayers. The mother of a sick child offers a little money before praying for the recovery of her child. Another woman offers money to Lord Mahadeva pleading to be spared the nightmares she goes through. Some other woman who has too many daughters prays for a son. But all this is futile. Tulsidas says that God needs no flattery.

I told you yesterday that I was going to a meeting of Muslims. It was a function of Jamiat-e-Islam. In a way it is an association of *fakirs*. But they are not the *fakirs* who live by begging. They do not beg for money but they are *fakirs* at heart. If they eat at somebody's cost,

[1] और नहीं कछु काम के,
मैं भरोसे अपने राम के ।
दोऊ अक्षर सब कुल तारे,
वारी जाऊँ उस नाम पे ।
तुलसीदास प्रभु राम दयाघन,
और देव सब दाम के ।

[2] Namely, *Ra* and *ma*

they first do some work for him. They say that all human beings are servants of the One God and all should abide by His command. One cannot meet God merely by visiting a mosque or a temple; the real thing is to do His work.

I felt that someone might now think that since Bihar has just 13 or 14 per cent Muslim population and the rest are Hindus, why placate the Muslims? But I say that if the Muslims invite me with love I shall go to them even barefoot. But, born though I am in a Hindu family and brought up in the Hindu tradition, I will not go to visit a big Hindu if he orders me to do so. But here the Muslims are few in number, and so I would walk barefoot to their houses. Yesterday I went in a car because I had to go very far and I would not have otherwise reached there in time. If the Hindus think that I am trying to give undue importance to the Muslims, they are mistaken. I have come here only to see that they get what is their due. The Congress is in power here and it was not strictly necessary for me to come and see to it myself; but I came just the same.

It is also wrong to quarrel with anyone over the names—Rama or Rahim. For, whether we say Rama or Rahim, Krishna or Karim, God or Allah, we mean the One God.

There was a mention of the child Rama in the *bhajan* which was sung yesterday. Tulsidas has sung to the glory of Ramanama so much that you would find his *Ramayana* recited wherever you go in the country. Although there are many other epics in India they are not so steeped in devotion. On seeing an image of Krishna, Tulsidas is believed to have said: "Tulsi's head would bow down to you only if you take up the bow and arrow[1]." He was a devotee of Rama. Hence he insisted that he would bow to Krishna only if he appeared before him in the form of Rama. Even you, if you are worshippers of Rama, should love everyone. There was a time when it used to be said that if one wanted to know what true religion was, one should visit India. That was because the Hindus did not kill anyone. But now there are robbers, dacoits and also murderers among the Hindus. Let me warn you, however, that if you let the fact of the Hindu majority turn your head and attempt to eliminate other people, Hinduism is not going to benefit in any way. On the contrary, it would perish.

Let me wind up by referring to the point about two syllables. If

[1] Weapons associated with Shri Rama

you are worshippers of Rama, you must also accept that Rama belongs to all. He is the Saviour of all, whether Hindu, Muslim, Christian or Parsi. And whoever wishes to worship Rama should do so sincerely.

[From Urdu]

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—III, pp. 45-7

405. A NOTE

PATNA,
April 28, 1947

I have read the note left with me by Mr. Houlton[1] . I am quite clear in my mind that those Muslims in the affected areas who by reason of fear or the distressing memory of their dead kinsmen do not wish to return to their homes should have the option of settling where they like even outside Bihar against compensation being given to them for loss of land and tenements, which will revert to the State. Compensation will consist of the sum fixed by valuators at the present rates of land and habitable tenements in place of those destroyed by the rioters. The valuation of the tenements must not exceed Rs. 1,000 at the outside. The above having been conceived purely in the interests of the sufferers, it presumes every previous effort being made by the State to dispel all fear of repetition of tragedy by adequate police protection and ridding the place of known marauders, etc.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 10561

406. LETTER TO SYED ABDUL AZIZ

PATNA,
April 28, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

Of course there could be no question of annoyance caused by your letters. You are too courteous to cause any. Where frankness is the common article of exchange nothing but good can be the result in the end.

If any of my actions were based on the attitude of the ministers,

[1] The Relief Commissioner had expressed the fear that "if the Government declared that in all cases where a refugee refused to go back to his old home, he would be given the cash value of his land and house, . . there would be a temptation . . . to take the money and go to another province".

I should be of little use here.[1] I have come, if I can, to serve the Muslim minority in Bihar as I was in Noakhali to serve the Hindu minority. In so doing my fond belief was and is that I should serve the majority too. Thus I was and am against pockets promoted by authority in either case and so against firearms. That way lies strife, not friendship whose roots are firmly fixed in love, not fear. Man can but perish in the attempt. Success is from God.

If the Hindus are to be considered as a hostile community for all time, I confess that the segregation is the safest policy. That is the logic of Pakistan which I have opposed, knowing full well that I might find myself in the minority of one.

When ministers and I cannot live without armed guards, you undoubtedly prove our cowardly impotence but do not sustain your argument for possession of firearms by impotent men.[2] Fancy me carrying a pistol for self-defence ! ! !

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

407. LETTER TO SECRETARY, MUSLIM LEAGUE

April 28, 1947

. . .[3] Such Muslims as regard India as their home will always be welcome to stay here and it will be the duty of the Government to give them full protection. At the same time the Muslims too should be conscious of their own duty and must realize that if they continue to harbour hatred in their hearts against the Hindus, it will jeopardize the future of the crores of Indian Muslims. I have received complaints that the harassment of the minority community in the Muslim majority areas of Bihar has the passive support and sympathy of other Muslims. I see no good coming out of it, if it is true.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 270

[1] The addressee had written: "If your opposition to the formation of colonies is based on the attitude of the Bihar Government and not on the merits of the proposition, we would feel that you have not exercised your vast influence with them."

[2] The addressee had referred to Gandhiji and Ministers having armed guards.

[3] Omission as in the source

408. LETTER TO SHIV BALAK BISEN

April 28, 1947

CHI. BISEN,

I read your letter again. I do not wish to lose any of you. Whoever goes, will go of his own accord. You do have the capacity to work. I like that, but the lack of harmony among you all pains me. You ought to be keen to have it removed.

I see no need to do anything [in this matter] till I return from Delhi. Nor do I wish to show your letter. This is a matter which you should discuss with them. You should listen to what they have to say. If you do not have the courage nor the desire to do so you should forget the thing. If you wish to come to a decision before I leave for Delhi, you should yourself discuss the matter with them immediately today, or take whatever other action you wish to.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7725

409. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

PATNA,
April 28, 1947

CHI. LILI,

I have your postcard. You are studying, but you have not learnt to use your common sense. You wrote to me and asked me to write to you at the Hospital address. I did so, and now you complain of not having received any letter from me. Sushila is ill, and so I try to write daily. If you are going to value my love from the number of letters I write or your being able to meet me, I must acknowledge defeat right from the beginning. I write to Manilal at long intervals and only when necessary. To my own sister I never write, and to Devdas I write once in four to six months. Tell me now, with what are you going to measure my love? Do learn to use some common sense.

I still do not know whether or not you have gone to the Hospital.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9609. Also C. W. 6581. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar.

410. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

PATNA,
April 28, 1947

CHI. SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. Now I can go there only after my return from Delhi. We shall know more after Nirmal Babu's arrival.

There is a report in the *Hindustan Standard* about some incidents in Comilla. Do you know anything about it? I have passed it on to Sailen. Dr. Mahmud has not yet returned. He is coming on Wednesday. Perhaps he will travel with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9078

411. ADVICE TO STUDENTS

PATNA,
April 28, 1947

If we could shake off our lethargy we would be true socialists. But we haven't yet done that. If I were to ask you I am sure to get the reply that all fifteen of you have servants in your homes.[1]

Well, then I fail to understand your desire to serve others — which you call socialism—when you do not do your own personal work in your homes. If you want my advice, I may

tell you that students while they are studying should not involve themselves in any ism. They may by all means read about every school of thought, think over it, put as much of it into practice as possible, but they should not endeavour to become leaders. If we want to banish exploitation and violence from our society, we ought to do body-labour and manual work. And naturally it ought to be undertaken by all. Unemployment is rampant in our villages which were [once] regarded as happy and self-sufficient units; this is because of our subjugation and feelings of high and low as also caste distinctions.

[1] All the fifteen students replied in the affirmative.

Our political slavery is now nearly coming to an end. Hence we now need to become all the more vigilant and in this process the students can prove very helpful. For example, (1) when you get up in the morning you can roll up your own bedding; (2) help in preparing your breakfast and milk, etc., whatever you take, without waiting for your mother or anyone else to prepare it and serve you; (3) give a helping hand in sweeping and scrubbing; (4) do your own laundering; (5) help your mother with the cooking and cleaning the dishes; (6) make your own cloth by spinning regularly every day; (7) keep your books clean and neatly arranged, economize on exercise-books as much as possible; (8) learn to do with a pen-holder and ink costing two annas, instead of a fountain-pen costing Rs. 50.

If you adopt a number of such rules in your life you will not need to bother with any ism. And if every student in the country does it, I am sure the guardians' burden will be lightened a thousand times and without making any other effort we will be called socialists. But I doubt if you will follow what I say. All the same, when you return home please reflect if there is any sense in the few lines that this experienced old fellow wrote out for you on his day of silence.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 270-1

412. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING [1]

PATNA,
April 28, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I am sorry to let you know that I shall have to go to Delhi by the morning train the day after tomorrow. There is a call from Pandit Nehru. Congress President Shri Kripalani has also sent a telegram from Rajputana that I should be in Delhi by the first of May. The Congress Working Committee is to meet there the next day. It pains me to have to leave you at this stage. I do not relish the idea of leaving Bihar unless the Mussalmans have completely shed their fear and both the communities allow me to leave cheerfully. I felt the same thing when I left Noakhali. For both these places I have the same motto before me "Do or Die". The cause in both the places is the same. My

[1] It being his day of silence, Gandhiji's written speech was read out.

non-violence bids me dedicate myself to the service of the minorities. It would be a new birth for me and would give me new strength if the Hindus and the Mussalmans of both these places become friends and shed their animosity. God alone knows what will happen ultimately. Man can only try and perish in the attempt to do God's work. God is all in all. We are only zeroes. The same mission takes me to Delhi, that is, to work for Hindus and Muslims. I hope to return within a short time and be among you.

You may be astonished to learn that I continue to receive letters charging me with having compromised the interests of the Hindus by acting as a friend of the Muslims. How can I carry conviction with the people by mere words if the sixty years of my public life have failed to convince them that by trying to befriend Muslims I have only proved myself a true Hindu and have rightly served the Hindus and Hinduism? The essence of true religious teaching is that one should serve and befriend all and should be enemy of none. I learnt this in my mother's lap. You may refuse to call me a Hindu. I would only quote a line from Iqbal's famous song which means "Religion does not teach us to bear ill will towards one another".[1] It is easy enough to be friendly to one's friends, but to befriend the one who regards himself as your enemy is true religion. All else is mere business.

[From Urdu]

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—III, pp. 48-9

[1] मजहब नहीं सिखाता आपस में बैर रखना ।

413. REMARK TO MANU GANDHI [1]

GANDHI CAMP, PATNA,
April 28, 1947

How can we afford to forget the charkha? The spirit behind spinning implies equality of all. The charkha teaches us the unique lesson of identifying ourselves with the forty crores and be in perfect harmony with them. It will not admit of any distinction of high and low, master and servant, which is the cause of conflict in the world today, isn't it? The charkha warns us against it. How can we, therefore, fail to worship God in the form of the charkha?

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 273

414. LETTER TO SYED ABDUL AZIZ

PATNA,
April 29, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

In acknowledging your kind letter[2] of even date, I must say that my impression was that our correspondence was meant for knowing each other better. But I have no objection whatsoever to your releasing the correspondence to the Press. I wish to add that what I have said to you about pockets and firearms I have said publicly many times in Bihar and elsewhere.

You are less than right when you say that "the policy of the Govt. . . for good"[3] . My policy is no firearms to civilians in the ordinary course and perfect protection to every citizen be he poor or

[1] Gandhiji had gone to sleep at 9.30 p.m. and since he was exhausted on account of the extreme heat Manu Gandhi did not remind him about spinning. After a little while, however, Gandhiji got up and made this remark while spinning.

[2] In which the addressee had desired that the correspondence between him and Gandhiji should be released to the Press so that the Muslims would know about Gandhiji's views that they would neither be helped to form 'pockets' nor be granted licences for firearms.

[3] The full quotation from the addressee's letter read: "The policy of the Government supported by you should help Muslims to decide either to surrender completely to the Congress or abandon the Province for good."

rich. If I know anything of the Government of Bihar, they do not want Muslims or anyone else to surrender to the Congress or leave the Province for good.

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

415. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

PATNA,
April 29, 1947

CHI. MANILAL,

Yesterday I got your letter of the 14th. Who knows when the final deluge will come? Sooner or later that day also will come. Why need we worry whether, when it does come, one or two will have survived or all will have perished? If we but do our duty from moment to moment, we shall be able to face the Supreme Judge.

I think Sushila will now join you at the earliest opportunity. If Sita keeps her promise, four or five years will soon pass. I think she will keep her promise. I will look after her. None of you, therefore, need worry about her.

I should, of course, be very happy if you could live on boiled vegetables and fruit. It should be quite easy to do without ghee, oil and butter, since you eat curds. If you eat them in sufficient quantity, together with vegetables and fruit they make a balanced diet. That diet will sustain your energy and keep your brain perfectly clear. The vegetables and fruit to be consumed should be properly selected. Do you eat dry fruit or nuts? If you do, which ones? I shall be happy if you write to me in detail, for am I not taking special interest in nature cure? This diet must make a change in your complexion too. Dadoo and Naicker have not called again. I am leaving for Delhi tomorrow. Perhaps they may look me up there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5002

416. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

PATNA,
April 29, 1947

CHI. SUSHILA,

I got your letter of the 26th, together with Manilal's. I have enclosed a reply to Manilal, which please forward to him. You will learn about yourself also in that letter.

I think I shall know about Arun's[1] result in the next letter. Why don't you ask them both to write to me? Do not let them be lazy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5003

417. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

PATNA,
April 29, 1947

CHI. BABUDI,

I got your unhappy letter just now. I will only say this about you for the present. If Chokhawala willingly permits you, you should go to Sevagram with a resolve that you will not return to Chokhawala if you do not get will. Stay at Sevagram in whatever condition you may have to. At present Sankaran is in charge there. Others also are there. Go there first, we may be able to think of something else there.

Chokhawala himself is so busy that he cannot attend much to you. We shall have to think about Anand[2]. If he can be looked after in Surat and if Chokhawala is eager to bring him up, you may leave him there. For doing all this, you will need firmness of mind.

Forget for the present about Calcutta.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10077. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

[1] Addressee's son
[2] Addressee's son

418. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

PATNA,
April 29, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I got yesterday your letter of the 6th which you had sent to R. K. It is a good letter.

I think what you write about Abha is correct. I am writing to Kanu.

What you write throws a new light. If rice is being hoarded, how can I stop that? You should have a talk with Satis Babu. Or do you want me to pass on your letter to him ?

It would be good if you could utilize the whole amount collected from the Muslims also. I shall write to Satis Babu.

If you can get money from Bhagirath[1] you can take it.

I have been able to write this much with great difficulty.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 583

[1] Bhagirath Kanodia, an industrialist

419. TALK WITH MANU GANDHI

GANDHI CAMP, PATNA,
April 29, 1947

I am surrounded by exaggeration and untruth. In spite of my search, I do not know where truth lies. But I do feel that I have come nearer to God and Truth. It has cost me quite a few of my old friends but I do not regret it. To me it is a sign of my having come nearer to God. That is why I can write and speak frankly to everyone. I have successfully practised the eleven vows undertaken by me. This is the culmination of my striving for the last sixty years. You have become an instrument in this. In this *yajna* I got a glimpse of the ideal of truth and purity for which I had been aspiring. And you have fully contributed towards it. Still, being so young, you cannot at present realize the implications of this *yajna.* I daily go through your diary which reminds me of Mahadev. Seeing what you write and study these days and the ability you have to understand the *yajna* I feel that had Mahadev been alive this girl would have developed differently. I can't give you enough time much as I would like to. Mahadev surpassed me in certain qualities. Since no one is accompanying me during the walk today, I had the time to tell you all this.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 274

420. DISCUSSION AT PEACE COMMITTEE MEETING [1]

PATNA,
April 29, 1947

Q. What should be the attitude of the Peace Committee towards the culprits who have not been arrested and those who are under suspicion? Should the workers of the Committee co-operate in getting such persons arrested and prosecuted and in carrying on the investigations ?

GANDHIJI: The duty of the Peace Committee is to supply all the information to the authorities. If the officers are corrupt the Ministers should be informed. The matter should be brought to the notice of the Press. Let those who have seen with their own eyes murders or other criminal acts being committed give the culprits' names to the police. The members of the Peace Committee could even try to reform the offender and persuade him to go to the police and confess his crime. The Government should take public opinion into consideration. Suhrawardy Saheb says that the police who are the eyes and ears of the Government do not report any untoward incident, whatever Satis Babu might say. I say that the police are the deaf ears and blind eyes of the Government. It is our task to awaken the police. If in the face of arson, murder and abduction of women an officer maintains that for want of evidence culprits cannot be arrested he deserves to be dismissed. How can a helpless victim produce any evidence? And if anybody says that he himself set his house on fire, it is sheer nonsense. Would the poor man burn his own house? He is too terror-stricken to do so.

If the Government were not to trust public opinion it would mean heavy expenditure and inconvenience. It would then need C.I.D. men in large numbers. That is the way of the alien Government. Under a swadeshi government the people are the C.I.D. for the government. If there is popular rule there would be fewer rogues. Otherwise, the Government would be in the hands of rogues. A government full of rogues can also function, but where I cannot say. Even the Congress Government can turn out to be such a government.

[1] The meeting held at Gandhiji's camp in the evening was attended among others by Sarju Prasad, Secretary, Peace Committee.

You have mentioned lack of workers for the Peace Committee. It only means that we have no influence over the masses. And if we haven't, what is the reason behind it? It implies that something is lacking in us. And we ought to get over our limitations.

Q. Occasionally we receive news about trouble in various places. Even where there have been no riots people are in panic because of the vitiated atmosphere, and are running away. Some mischief-mongers have gone into hiding in other places and are misleading the people. How should the workers of the Peace Committee proceed under these circumstances ?

A. Whatever news we receive is not all correct. But no doubt there is trouble in some places. The Peace Committee should help the Government in every way. Most of the people present here would, of course, be Congressmen. If so, it is their duty to help the Government. And if they do not do so it means that the Government does not have popular support. If would be shameful to say that our public opinion reflects a mob mentality. It is our duty, not the Government's, to mould public opinion. The Government's responsibility is to quell the riots and punish the offenders. But a government obliged constantly to mete out punishment for every little thing cannot be called a good government.

If some work could be done in the riot-affected areas, things would settle down even in places where the situation is tense and people are fleeing in panic. Vitiated atmosphere implies that we have not done our duty well.

It is a function of the Peace Committee to trace the offenders and inform the police. If some mischief-mongers have gone into hiding in some other places and are misleading the people the members of the Peace Committee should also go and work there. I had heard that the [Hindu] Mahasabha President had been giving protection to Mathura Singh. The former is the Secretary to the Maharaja of Darbhanga and is a big shot in his own right. When he had come to me I had asked him if my information was correct. He told me it was not. Being President of the Mahasabha how could he do such a thing, he protested.

Q. People come to us saying that a particular person under arrest is innocent and that we should have him released. What should we do in such matters ?

A. If innocent persons happen to be arrested, you can arrange legal help for them.

Q. How far can the Government help the Peace Committee in its work ?

A. The Government can give financial help to the Peace Committee. But such help would be given not for everything but for what the Government considers proper. The Government's resources are limited. If the Government is not discreet in disbursing help we have to bring it to their notice. But necessities have got to be provided by the Government and whatever they cannot provide, should be arranged for by the Peace Committee. This is a function of private charity. The Friends' mission[1] is functioning along these lines. They are working in the places where the Government cannot reach. The work of the Friends' mission can serve as a model for us. They have done a good deal of work in Midnapore and Noakhali. They had only a few workers but they did a lot of work. Some Hindus and Muslims too had joined them. The Muslims were very few but they were remarkable workers. It is enough if you are sincere, and so many of you are honest workers ready to help the helpless.

The Government will help as far as it can. It will certainly do so if you win its confidence. But it is not enough just to be Congressmen to deserve that confidence. Whatever the Government cannot provide will have to be met by collecting funds from private sources.

Q. What should we say to those who seek our help for procuring rifles ?

A. I am absolutely opposed to any demand for rifles. Even in Noakhali I was opposed to it. Wanting a rifle implies the desire to fight. Actually the police and the Government should function efficiently. I would even suggest that all nice and decent people should surrender their licences. People say that the Muslims are bringing in arms clandestinely. Quite possible; but they will not be able to keep them. Anyway, the Government should not supply arms. I am absolutely firm about it. If the Government wants to do it, it should arm the whole nation and that cannot be done in a day. Our freedom would be meaningless if it cannot be preserved with non-violence.

Maulana Minnat Allah Saheb asked whether or not Government should provide alternative accommodation to the people where there had been a heavy loss of life and property or where the Muslims were in a very small minority and still afraid to return to their homes on any account.

GANDHIJI: By all means, the Government should get houses built

[1] Friends' Service Unit

for them.

The Maulana then asked if the people should be given rations till they found employment and if the Government should help them in finding employment.

GANDHIJI: The Government should certainly help them. Those who have lost their means of livelihood like the loom, etc., should be provided these things so that they can stand on their own feet once again.

[From Urdu]

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—III, pp. 53-6

421. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

April 29, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

This is my last evening here. Tomorrow I shall have to go to Delhi. I beseech you not to come to the station to see me off. I do not like people shouting and making noise. My ears cannot stand noise. If there is no noise around I can even sit down to work as there is always a lot of work pending with me. But if a lot of people gather round and raise a din I cannot work. Nor can I rest when I want to. Two or three persons who would be escorting me would be enough. I grant that people come out of love. But forming such big crowds is no sign of true love. What is that love which makes a nuisance of itself ?

Major General Shah Nawaz came to me today. He is working in Masaurhi. The Muslims who are going to settle down there are being looked after by him. The Government is no doubt doing all this work but help from those who can give it is also welcome. Shah Nawaz Saheb is doing this work very well. He talked to me about his work. I asked him to put down his points in writing. I shall give you the gist of what he has written down for me:

A meeting was held at Atarpur at which a panchayat of the local Hindus and Muslims was formed. The head of the Panchayat came to Patna and exhorted the Muslim refugees to go back to their homes. He told them that they should regard him as their friend as before and trust him. He assured them that he would protect them at the cost of his life. His words had some effect and some fifty Muslim families returned to their villages. They are now living there is peace and they

no longer require police protection. The Government also provides them food through General Shah Nawaz. When he distributed the foodstuffs to the Muslims, the Hindus protested. They said the Muslims had suffered at their hands and so they would arrange for their food. And they have been doing it. The local Hindus are also helping the Muslims in harvesting their crops.

Shah Nawaz Saheb also went to Bir. A Muslim from that place went up to him and said that he wanted to return to his village. But he saw danger in going three. The General permitted him to go and, providing him a police escort, asked him to proceed without fear. But as he was going a few Hindus of the village Panchayat stopped him and asked why he had the police escort with him. The Muslim villager was scared. He said he was frightened to go alone. The Hindus said it was a shame on them that he should go under police protection. They urged him to trust them and said that they would look after his safety and he should not have the police to escort him. The Muslim villager was persuaded at last. He realized that the Hindus were after all his friends and he sent back the escort.

The third thing is that there are also some Sikhs working with Shah Nawaz Saheb who are discharging their responsibilities very well. One among them is Lt. Kartar Singh. He carried the beddings of the returning Muslims to their respective houses. The Muslims appreciated this gesture. They thought they need not be afraid of men who had been offering such services to them. When somebody died in one of the Muslim families, Kartar Singh dug the grave all by himself. This has been very largely removing the fear from the hearts of the Muslims. And the work is proceeding well. But that does not mean that things are going on equally well in all places. If, in all the places where the Hindus have committed grave crimes, work is done along the lines followed in these three places, the Muslims would certainly return to their homes. There is no doubt about it. The Government would of course rebuild the houses that have been destroyed or damaged. But you too should help in putting up the houses again.

All the houses should be ready by June. This is what Shah Nawaz Saheb also desires. Hence you must give your full help.

If all the Hindus here start treating the Muslims in a friendly manner, the fire that is raging today would be extinguished. This fire should be put out at once. If no attempts are made to extinguish the fire at its source it would reduce everything to ashes. Bihar is a big

province. If all is well here Calcutta and the other places which are going through fire will return to normal.

I wish that when I return from Delhi your hearts would have changed so much that all the Hindus and Muslims of this place would be able to tell me that I need not stay here and that I could go back.

[From Urdu]

Gandhijike Dukhe Dilki Pukar—III, pp. 50-3

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

CLEMENT ATTLEE'S STATEMENT[1]

February 20, 1947

It has long been the policy of successive British Governments to work towards the realization of self-government in India. In pursuance of this policy, an increasing measure of responsibility has been devolved on Indians, and today the civil administration and the Indian armed forces rely, to a very large extent, on Indian civilians and officers. In the constitutional field, the Acts of 1919 and 1935 passed by the British Parliament, each represented a substantial transfer of political power. In 1940, the Coalition Government recognized the principle that Indians should themselves frame a new constitution for a fully autonomous India and, in the offer of 1942, they invited them to set up a Constituent Assembly for this purpose as soon as the war was over.

The declaration of the Prime Minister of 15th March last, which met with general approval in Parliament and the country, made it clear that it was for the Indian people themselves to choose their future status and constitution and that, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, the time had come for responsibility for the Government of India to pass into Indian hands. . . .

The Cabinet Mission . . . proposals, made public in May last, envisaged that the future Constitution of India should be settled by a Constituent Assembly composed in the manner suggested therein, of representatives of all communities and interests in British India and of the Indian States.

Since the return of the Mission, an Interim Government has been set up at the Centre. . . . In all the Provinces, Indian Governments, responsible to legislatures, are in office. . . .

His Majesty's Government are anxious to hand over their responsibilities to a government which, resting on the sure foundation of the support of the people, is capable of maintaining peace and administering India with justice and efficiency. It is therefore essential that all parties should sink their differences, in order that they may be ready to shoulder the great responsibilities which will come upon them next year. . . .

Cabinet Mission . . . obtained . . . the method by which a Constitution

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 23-2-1947. Only extracts are reproduced here.

should be worked out. . . . His Majesty's Government there agreed to recommend to Parliament a constitution worked out in accordance with the proposals made therein by a fully representative Constituent Assembly. But if it should appear that such a constitution will not have been worked out by a fully representative Assembly, before the time mentioned in paragraph 7, His Majesty's Government will have to consider to whom the powers of the Central Government in British India should be handed over, on the due date, whether as a whole to some form of Central Government for British India or, in some areas, to the existing Provincial Governments, or in such other way as may seem most reasonable and in the best interests of the Indian people.

Although the final transfer of authority may not take place until June 1948, preparatory measures must be put in hand in advance. It is important that the efficiency of the civil administration should be maintained and that the defence of India should be fully provided for. But, inevitably, as the process of transfer proceeds, it will become progressively more difficult to carry out, to the letter, all the provisions of the Government of India Act of 1935. Legislation will be introduced in due course to give effect to the final transfer of power.

In regard to the Indian States, as was explicitly stated by the Cabinet Mission, His Majesty's Government do not intend to hand over their powers and obligations under Paramountcy to any government of British India. It is not intended to bring Paramountcy, as a system, to a conclusion earlier than the date of the final transfer of power, but it is contemplated that for the intervening period, the relations of the Crown with individual States may be adusted by agreement.

His Majesty's Government will negotiate agreements in regard to matters arising out of the transfer of power with representatives of those to whom they propose to transfer power.

His Majesty's Government believe that British commercial and industrial interests in India can look forward to a fair for field their enterprise under the new conditions. The commercial connection between India and the United Kingdom has been long and friendly and will continue to be to their mutual advantage.

His Majesty's Government cannot conclude this statement without expressing, on behalf of the people of this country, their goodwill and good wishes towards the people of India as they go forward to this final stage in their achievement of self-government. It will be the wish of everyone in these islands that, notwithstanding constitutional changes, the association of the British and Indian peoples should not be brought to an end; and they will wish to continue to do all that is in their power to further the well-being of India.

The Indian Annual Register, 1947, Vol. I, pp. 142-3

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM J. B. KRIPALANI[1]

March 1, 1947

. . . These matters are, I find, beyond my depth. Moreover I have enough to do to keep myself morally straight to sit in judgement on others and specially those who are morally and spiritually miles ahead of me. I can only say that I have the fullest faith in you. No sinful man can go about his business the way you are doing. Even if I had a lurking suspicion, I would rather distrust my eyes and ears than distrust you. . . .

Sometimes I thought that . . . you may be employing human beings as means rather than as ends in themselves. But then I take consolation in the thought that that consideration cannot be absent from your mind and that if you are sure of yourself, no harm can come to them. Then knowing you to be a great student of the *Gita* I have wondered if you are not doing violence to the principle of *lokasangraha* (conservation of social good), wisely propounded therein. But this consideration, too, I am sure, must not be absent from your calculations, in this experiment of yours. . . . I know your attitude to woman is the only right attitude as you are one of those who consider her an end in herself and not merely as a means. You have never exploited her.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Bk. II, p. 221

APPENDIX III

LETTER FROM SIR HUGH DOW[2]

GOVERNOR'S CAMP,
BIHAR,
March 17, 1947

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Thank you for your letter of today's date. I have always held that no public man can hope to reform other people and make them better unless he searches his own heart and devotes his first attention to trying to become a better man himself. I do not know why you should have been so surprised at this view being held by what you call a bureaucrat: it is probably not rarer among them than among other loosely labelled classes.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to J. B. Kripalani", 24-2-1947. Only extracts are reproduced here.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Sir Hugh Dow", 17-3-1947

I do not wonder that my Ministers reacted strongly to your summary of our conversation. May I put your points a little more fully:

(1) From the beginning of the riots I thought my Ministers should have at once declared their intention to compensate those who had suffered damage in them. Had it been done immediately, I think a good deal of the organized hostility against the Ministry's measures would not have arisen. At it was, it was only after considerable delay that an announcement was made.

The Prime Minister is well aware of my views about this. On my part, I quite realized the difficulties he felt about making a commitment of unknown financial liability.

(2) I think it is true that some officials drew from this the inference that the Ministry did not regard the matter as urgent. When I visited Chapra in the middle of January, no money or materials had actually been distributed, although the riots had taken place at the end of October, and the debris was just as the rioters had left it.

I told the Prime Minister my impressions on my return, and I am glad to say that he took the necessary steps at once by impressing on district officers that rehabilitation was the most urgent work before them. I believe the Prime Minister has always realized this, and I certainly did not intend to convey to you, that the Ministry themselves were in any way half-hearted about it. But for some months, in my opinion, this view was held by many subordinate officials, because of the original delay in getting off the mark.

(3) I have no recollection of having touched at all on the topic of punishment of the guilty. Perhaps, as you have been seeing so many people in rapid succession, you have attributed to me views given by some of your visitors.

Actually, my views on this are rather the reverse of those suggested. I do not think it is going to be possible to punish, judicially, any but a tiny fraction of the culprits, and that a lot of time of police and magistrates, that might be better spent, is likely to be entirely wasted in the attempt. In my opinion, the only effective way in which this matter could have been effectively dealt with was by the imposition of collective fines.

(4) I do not think the Ministry has turned down League demands merely because they were League demands. But I think the Hindu public of Bihar was, and perhaps is, averse from treating Muslim refugees more generously than they think Hindu refugees are treated in Bengal, and in

the beginning there was a tendency to wait and see.

I think we have been unwise in taking a hostile attitude to "pockets". What we should have done was to have been prepared to consider such proposals on their merits, and to place on the Muslims themselves the responsibility for suggesting definite schemes and carrying them out if they were sanctioned. I have discussed this with the Prime Minister who is aware of my views and I think not hostile to them. When we have paid compensation to a sufferer, it should be left to him to decide where and how he will spend it, just as it would be if he had drawn his compensation from an insurance company.

As regards the question of minorities in general, differences between me and my Ministers have never, I think, gone to a stage when they were not resolved by friendly discussions. In this particular matter of the recent disturbances, I have never had occasion to think of exercising any special powers in opposition to ministerial advice. The question of restoring confidence between the two great communities is one of extraordinary difficulty, and I should not like you to get the impression that there has been any lack of co-operation between me and the Ministers on this subject.

As regards the mica industry, I will send you a note as soon as I can prepare it. But my personal concern in this is not about the condition of the working men in the industry, about which I know little, but about the way in which child labour is exploited.

Yours sincerely,

HUGH DOW

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.

PATNA

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 229-32

APPENDIX IV

N. K. BOSE'S LETTER TO KEDAR NATH AND OTHERS

PATNA

March 16, 1947

MY DEAR . . .,

. . . Swami Anand asked me this morning if he could say to his friends that I disapproved of Gandhiji's action. It is with reference to this question that I should try to make my position clear. Hence this letter.

. . . From a serious study of Gandhiji's writings I had formed the opinion, which was perhaps not unjustified, that he represented a hard, puritanic form of self-discipline, something which we usually associate with mediaeval Christian ascetics of Jain recluses.

So, when I first learnt in detail about Gandhiji's *prayog* or experiment, I felt genuinely surprised. I was informed that he sometimes asked women to share his bed and even the cover which he used, and then tried to ascertain if even the least trace of sensual feeling had been evoked in himself or his companion. . . .

But when I learnt about this technique of self-examination employed by Gandhiji, I felt that I had discovered the reason why some regarded Gandhiji as their private possession; this feeling often leading them to a kind of emotional unbalance. The behaviour of A, B or C, for instance, is no proof of healthy psychological relationship. Whatever may be the value of the *prayog* in Gandhiji's own case it does leave a mark of injury on the personality of others who are not of the same moral stature as he himself is, and for whom sharing in Gandhiji's experiment is no spiritual necessity.

This has been the reason why I have sometimes spoken or written strongly to Gandhiji on the subject of repression and its effects upon those who come under his influence either in private or in public life. But, you will see, this charge is quite different from the one to which you or your friends subscribe. This is also the reason why I have drawn a distinction in the case of Manu, whose relation to Gandhiji is of a completely different order.

I hope my position is quite clear. But if it is not, please do not hesitate to write.

Yours sincerely,

NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE

Post-script

Even with regard to the 'experiment', I would stand by Gandhiji, if—

1. the other party were a willing agent, voluntarily entering into the experiment with a knowledge of the possible consequences upon her own personality;
2. and the public knew about the experiment and expressed their mind over it.

The second is otherwise unnecessary, but has only been called for because Gandhiji himself invited public opinion on this subject twice in his prayer speeches in Noakhali. He expected the public to express an opinion even when they did not know the entire details of the situation. But, even if after knowing everything, the public thought that Gandhiji was in the wrong, while he considered himself to be right, I would stand by him.

My Days with Gandhi, pp. 173-5

APPENDIX V

LETTER FROM N. K. BOSE[1]

MASAURHI,

March 18, 1947

BAPUJI,

After receiving your letter written yesterday in the train, I had about an hour's talk with you in which I tried to refute the charge against me that I had formed judgement hastily without giving A or others any chance of presenting their case fully. . . .

Personally, I have practised the Freudian technique of dream analysis on myself and have derived immense benefit, as it has helped to bring to the surface submerged desires which had been causing trouble, and thus helped me to deal with them satisfactorily. . . .

Bapuji, you originally called me to service under you while you were in Bengal. The University gladly granted me indefinite leave so long as you needed my services. But the interest of my students has also been suffering. When I have to choose between the amount of service I can render to you here in Bihar and for science in the University, I would place the latter first. But if it had been in Bengal, I would have sacrificed the latter interest, because I would then have known that so far as translating your speeches into Bengali was concerned, I would have been more useful than most of your other assistants. But now that you are in Bihar, men like Pyarelalji or others would be in their elements with their mastery over Hindustani and their undoubtedly great ability for secretarial work. So I would love to make room for anyone whom you may choose.

When once more you are in Bengal and feel the need of my services, the University will gladly grant me leave for service under you without hesitation.

Hence my plan is to leave for Calcutta even tonight if you do not object.

Yours affectionately,

N. K. B.

My Days with Gandhi, pp. 178-81

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Nirmal Kumar Bose", 18-3-1947. Only extracts are reproduced here.

APPENDIX VI

CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTION ON THE PUNJAB[1]

During the past seven months India has witnessed many horrors and tragedies which have been enacted in the attempt to gain political ends by brutal violence, murder and coercion. These attempts have failed, as all such attempts must fail, and have only led to greater violence and carnage.

The Punjab, which had thus far escaped this contagion, became six weeks ago the scene of an agitation, supported by some people in high authority, to coerce and break a popular ministry which could not be attacked by constitutional methods. A measure of success attended this, and an attempt was made to form a ministry dominated by the group that had led the agitation. This was bitterly resented and has resulted in increased and wide-spread violence. There has been an orgy of murder and arson and Amritsar and Multan have been scenes of horror and devastation.

These tragic events have demonstrated that there can be no settlement of the problem in the Punjab by violence and coercion, and that no arrangement based on coercion can last. Therefore, it is necessary to find a way out which involves the least amount of compulsion. This would necessitate a division of the Punjab into two provinces, so that the predominantly Muslim part may be separated from the predominantly non-Muslim part.

The Working Committee commend this solution, which should work to the advantage of all the communities concerned, and lessen friction and fear and suspicion of each other. The Committee earnestly appeal to the people of the Punjab to put an end to the killing and brutality that are going on, and to face the tragic situation, determined to find a solution which does not involve compulsion of any major group and which will effectively remove the causes of friction.

The Indian Annual Register, 1947, Vol. I, pp. 118-9

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 20-3-1947

APPENDIX VII

INTERVIEW WITH LORD MOUNTBATTEN[1]

Top Secret *April 1, 1947*

Mr. Gandhi . . . gave me his views on the origin of Hindu-Muslim animosity, and though he did not hold the British responsible for its origin, he said their policy of "Divide and Rule" had kept the tension very much alive, and that I should now reap what my predecessors had deliberately sown.

He urged me whatever happened to have the courage to see the truth and act by it, even though the correct solution might mean grievous loss of life on our departure on an unprecedented scale.

Finally, he gave me the first brief summary of the solution which he wishes me to adopt:

Mr. Jinnah should forthwith be invited to form the Central Interim Government with members of the Muslim League. This Government to operate under the Viceroy in the way the present Interim Government is operating.

Any difficulty experienced through Congress having a majority in the Assembly to be overcome by their able advocacy of the measures they wished to introduce.

I need not say that this solution coming at this time staggered me. I asked "What would Mr. Jinnah say to such a proposal?" The reply was, "If you tell him I am the author he will reply 'Wily Gandhi'." I then remarked, "And I presume Mr. Jinnah will be right?" To which he replied with great fervour, "No, I am entirely sincere in my suggestion."

At this moment the A. D. C. reported that the Tibetan Mission had arrived, and our conversation therefore had to be terminated until the following day.

I did however obtain Mr. Gandhi's permission to discuss the matter with Pandit Nehru and Maulana Azad, in strict confidence, the next time they came to see me.

ADDENDUM:

During the course of the discussion Mr. Gandhi gave it as his considered opinion as a student of history and of world politics that never before, in any case of history he had read about in recent or past times, had so difficult or responsible a task been imposed on any one man as that which now faced me. I thanked him sincerely for realising the position in which I was placed.

From a photostat: C. W. 11020. Lord Mountbatten Papers. Courtesy: Broadlands Archives Trust. Also *The Transfer of Power,* Vol. X, p. 69

[1] As recorded by Lord Mountbatten. *Vide* "Interview with Lord Mountbatten", 1-4-1947

APPENDIX VIII

INTERVIEW WITH LORD MOUNTBATTEN[1]

Top Secret *April 2, 1947*

The meeting lasted from 2.30 p. m. to 4.30 p. m.

To begin with we discussed the question of holding enquiries in Bihar and Bengal. I told him the views of the Governor of Bihar, of Sardar Patel and of myself, that enquiries were a waste of time and money, as well as a potential source of further communal strife.

He flatly disagreed, and said that it was, in his opinion, essential that the Congress Government in Bihar should in all events show good faith by holding an enquiry which would reveal the appalling excesses committed by the Hindus in Bihar.

We both agreed, however, that this was really a matter for the Provincial Government to settle, and I suggested that he should discuss the matter in the meanwhile with the Home Member, Sardar Patel.

After this Mr. Gandhi came down firmly for his great plan, which he had revealed to me originally on Tuesday. I will repeat it here in greater detail.

He wants me to invite Mr. Jinnah to form a new Central Government for India, which will be the Government to which I am to turn over power. He suggests I should leave it to Mr. Jinnah to select the Ministers, if necessary entirely from the Muslim League, but if he feels so inclined he can of course then make it a coalition Government by including Nehru and other Congress Ministers as well as representatives of Minorities. In fact he suggests that Jinnah would be well advised to try and get the highest class team together and one likely to enjoy the greatest confidence of the Assembly.

He assured me that the Muslim League had many men of greater calibre than, for example, Nishtar and Ghazanafar Ali Khan.

The essence of the scheme was that it should be put through quickly in order that I might have as many months as possible as Viceroy and President of the Cabinet, and, by retaining the right of veto, continue to exercise complete control in the interests of fair play. The fact that I should be there to see fair play for the first few months would ensure Mr. Jinnah's Government not doing anything foolish which would prejudice its reputation in the Assembly or in the country; and he felt that I could guide them along in a manner which would ensure their continuing along the straight and narrow path after I left in

[1] As recorded by Lord Mountbatten. *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 3-4-1947

June 1948.

If Mr. Jinnah refused this offer, then, Mr. Gandhi pointed out, the offer would have to be made to the only other great party in India—Congress. He hoped that Congress would invite Ministers from all shades of opinion including the Muslim League to participate in a Coalition Government.

I twitted him that he really desired me to form a Central Government run by Congress, to whom I would turn over power, and that the preliminary offer to Jinnah was merely a manoeuvre.

He assured me with burning sincerity that this was so far from being the case that he then and there volunteered to place his whole services at my disposal in trying to get the Jinnah Government through, first by exercising his influence with the Congress to accept it, and secondly by touring the length and breadth of the country getting all the peoples of India to accept the decision. He convinced me of his sincerity, and I told him so.

He agreed that I should discuss this plan with Maulana Azad and Nehru.

Finally, he said that he proposed also to discuss it with those two and with Mr. Kripalani. He agreed as to the supreme importance of complete secrecy, particularly as far as the Press were concerned.

He asked if he might quote me as being in favour of this plan, to which I replied that the most he could say was that I was very interested by it, but that I would require an assurance from some of the other leaders that they considered it capable of being implemented before I would commit myself to its support.

We discussed alternatives, and I told him I favoured the Cabinet Mission plan most of all, and he replied that he too would be in favour of it if it could be revised.

Finally I discussed the possibility of turning over power to the areas of India in accordance with the wishes of the majority of the residents in those areas. Broadly speaking this would make a Hindu India with a Congress Government in Delhi, a truncated Pakistan, and the large states like Mysore, Travancore, Hyderabad, Kashmir, and groups of States, each having separate power turned over to them, owing allegiance to a Central authority for Defence, External Affairs, Communications, and possibly food.

He agreed that whatever the decision, it should be taken soon and implemented as early as possible, and that meanwhile it would be an excellent thing if I remained in charge of the Central Government with the power of veto until June 1948.

From a photostat: C. W. 11021. Lord Mountbatten Papers. Courtesy: Broadlands Archives Trust. Also *The Transfer of Power,* Vol. X, pp. 83-4.

APPENDIX IX

INTERVIEW WITH LORD MOUNTBATTEN[1]

Top Secret *April 3, 1947*

The meeting lasted from 2.30 p. m. to 4.30 p. m.

We continued our talks on Mr. Gandhi's great scheme for the All-India Jinnah Government. He informed me that those of the leaders of the Congress he had spoken to had all agreed that it was feasible and would support him, but that he had not yet had time to talk to Pandit Nehru, which he intended to do that evening.

He was more than ever intense about his scheme as being the best solution. But he agreed that if I was unable to decide on that solution, he would support me in any other solution which I could put before him as being in the best interests of the Indian people.

He agreed that if the Muslim League were completely intransigent, partition might have to come, though he was most anxious to retain as strong a Centre as possible in this case.

He agreed that an early decision was vital to end communal conflict and to give time to implement the decision. And finally he reiterated his desire that whatever happened I should retain firm charge at the Centre till June 1948 at the very earliest, in order to act as an umpire and exercise a guiding hand during the early stages of self-government.

He said that his great friend Badshah Khan was staying with him. I had never heard the name and asked him to elucidate. He referred to him as the Frontier Gandhi, and I then recognized him to be the same person as I knew under the name of abdul Ghaffar Khan, brother of Dr. Khan Sahib the Premier of the Congress-Muslim Government in the N. W. F. P.

Mr. Gandhi said that Abdul Ghaffar Khan had informed him that the Governor, Sir Olaf Caroe, had demanded the resignation of his brother, Dr. Khan Sahib and had shown himself to be very partial towards the Muslim League and to influence the British officials in that Province accordingly.

In view of the fact that Lord Ismay had just returned from a visit to the N. W. F. P. I sent for him, and Mr. Gandhi repeated his allegation.

Lord Ismay explained the position as he saw it, and pointed out that there must have been misunderstanding.

I invited Mr. Gandhi to bring Abdul Ghaffar Khan at 2.30 the following day to meet Lord Ismay and myself.

From a photostat: C. W. 11022. Lord Mountbatten Papers. Courtesy: Broadlands Archives Trust. Also *The Transfer of Power,* Vol. X, pp. 102-3

[1] As recorded by Lord Mountbatten. *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 3-4-1947

APPENDIX X

INTERVIEW WITH LORD MOUNTBATTEN[1]

Top Secret *April 4, 1947*

The meeting lasted from 2.30 p. m. to 4.30 p. m.

Mr. Gandhi brought with him as promised Abdul Ghaffar Khan. Lord Ismay attended the meeting.

Abdul Ghaffar Khan gave a very forthright denunciation of the Governor of the N. W. F. P. and all his officials, particularly the political officers dealing with the tribes. . . .

I asked Mr. Gandhi for his views. He said he feared that there were many British members of the I. C. S., particularly among the highly placed ones, who cold not bear to see the British leave India, and who had clung all along to the theory that if they could only support the Muslim League actively, to the point at which it could be held that the British could not leave India to civil war, then the British would be compelled to stay.

He pointed out that the views held by Mr. Winston Churchill were so well known that had he been in power or had there been any chance of his returning to power, the line taken by all those I. C. S. officials would have achieved its object. . . .

I asked Mr. Gandhi for some more examples of biassed officials. He said that although he did not know Sir Francis Mudie personally, all his friends in Sind told him that he was extremely pro-Muslim League and much too friendly with his Government.

I pointed out that he had previously agreed with Abdul Ghaffar Khan that Sir Olaf Caroe was insufficiently friendly with his Congress Government in the N. W. F. P., and now he accused Sir Francis Mudie of being too friendly with the Muslim League Government in Sind.

Mr. Gandhi replied that he did not wish Governors to be biassed one way or the other; their friendliness with their Government should be the impartial friendliness which a constitutional monarch should bestow upon any government which came to power.

He advised me most strongly to get rid of any officials who could not be brought to see that they must remain impartial and helpful during the final stages.

After this Mr. Gandhi spoke about the Princes. He said that the Princes were really the creation of the British; that many of them had

[1] As recorded by Lord Mountbatten. *Vide* "Outline of Draft Agreement", 4-4-1947

been gradually created up from small chieftains to the position they now held, because the British realized that they would become strong allies of the British under the system of paramountcy

In fact he maintained that the British had, from the imperialistic point of view, acted very correctly in backing the Princes and the Muslim League, since between these two, had we played our cards really well, we could have claimed it was impossible for us even to leave India. He appreciated that my task was rendered all the more difficult by the line taken by my predecessors.

He considered it wicked of Sir Stafford Cripps not to have recommended the turning over of paramountcy to the Central Government representing the sovereignty of the Indian nation.

I replied that although I could see the argument for turning over paramountcy to a really strong Central Government representing the whole of the Indian nation, I had not yet seen any workable scheme for producing a really strong Central Government, and in fact the chances of there being anybody to whom paramountcy could be turned over seemed to me to be remote.

Only one scheme would achieve this, and that was the famous Gandhi scheme. I therefore asked him to explain this once more for Lord Ismay's benefit. On conclusion I asked Abdul Ghaffar Khan if he really thought that Congress would accept this scheme, and that it would be workable. To this he gave a very definitely affirmative reply.

I then invited Lord Ismay to take Mr. Gandhi to his room and put his scheme in writing.

From a photostat: C. W. 11023. Lord Mountbatten Papers. Courtesy: Broadlands Archives Trust. Also *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. X, pp. 120-1.

APPENDIX XI

LETTER FROM LORD ISMAY[1]

Personal

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE,
NEW DELHI,
April 6, 1947

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Thank you for your letter of 5th April. It was very kind of you to dictate it at such a late hour in order that it might reach me last night.

I think that there has been some misunderstanding about the form of the short note which I prepared last Friday. As I understood it, Lord Mountbatten, on the conclusion of his talk with you, asked if you would be so

[1] *Vide* "Outline of Draft Agreement" and "Letter to Lord Ismay", 6-4-1947

good as to spare a little more time for a talk with me about your plan, in order that I might prepare a short note summarizing its salient features in general terms. He had no intention, so far as I know, that I should attempt anything formal or elaborate. I have now shown him your letter and he confirms that my interpretation of his wishes was correct.

I have prepared a revised copy of my note substituting your version of point 7 for the original and including your point 8. This covers much the same ground as my original points 3 and 4, which therefore now become redundant.

Lord Mountbatten has asked me to say that he much looks forward to having another talk with you about your plan before you leave.

May I conclude with an expression of my personal thanks for having spared me so much of your time last Friday.

Yours sincerely,
ISMAY

[PS.]

The Viceroy assures you that he will not mention your plan to Mr. Jinnah until he has had a further talk about it with you.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 239-40, and *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. X, p. 140

APPENDIX XII

LETTER FROM LORD MOUNTBATTEN[1]

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE,
NEW DELHI,
April 7, 1947

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Ismay has shown me your letter to him of 6th April, and we both are most upset to think that any act, or omission, on our part should in any way increase the great burden you are bearing. I therefore think it right to send you the following personal explanation.

As we were parting last Friday afternoon, I said that your plan had many attractions for me and I asked you if you would be so good as to explain it to Ismay, who had not been present when you first propounded it. On your agreeing to do so, I asked Ismay to make a note of its salient features, and I authorized him to talk it over in confidence with the Reforms Commissioner. I am extremely sorry if by these observations I gave you the impression that I wished your plan reduced to the terms of formal agreement.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Ismay", 6-4-1947

As I explained to you during the many talks that we have enjoyed, my aim has been and is to keep a perfectly open mind until I have had the advantages of discussions with important Indian political leaders with the object of seeking an agreement between all parties, so that peace can be restored in the country and an acceptable basis for the transfer of power be worked out. When these preliminary conversations have been completed, I shall then have to make up my mind as to what I am going to recommend to His Majesty's Government and, before I do so, I shall most certainly take advantage of your kind offer of further discussion with you.

Yours sincerely,
MOUNTBATTEN OF BURMA

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
BHANGI COLONY
READING ROAD
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 241-2, and *The Transfer of Power,* Vol. X, pp. 145-6

APPENDIX XIII

LETTER FROM LORD MOUNTBATTEN[1]

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE,
NEW DELHI,
April 7, 1947

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Many thanks for your letter of today. I find it difficult to advise you. Though the root causes of the disturbances in the Punjab still exist there has been a considerable measure of success in dealing with immediate disturbances, and I doubt whether you ought to exhaust yourself by undertaking any tour in the Punjab at this time of the year.

I quite agree that those outbreaks of violence are not a mere detail. What we have to secure is a settlement between the parties at the centre and, if possible, a combined front against violence. It is the effort to find a solution which will occupy all my efforts in the near future, and I know I can rely on help from you wherever you may be.

I enjoyed meeting you so much and found all you had to say of the greatest interest.

Yours sincerely,
MOUNTBATTEN OF BURMA

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 242-3, and *The Transfer of Power,* Vol. X, p. 147

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Mountbatten

APPENDIX XIV

INTERVIEW WITH LORD MOUNTBATTEN[1]

Top Secret *April 12, 1947*

The meeting lasted from 11.45 a. m. to 1.45 p. m.

I thanked him for the letter he had sent me the previous day saying that he had been unable to get his great plan for a Jinnah government through responsible members of Congress, and had therefore had to withdraw it. He regretted his failure very much, but said he thought I could still go ahead on the plan myself if I ardently believed in it.

I told him that however much I believed in it I couldn't possibly go ahead with success in a matter in which he had already failed himself with the Congress.

I then told him I wanted to report to him in strict confidence all my conversations with Mr. Jinnah, to put him in the picture.

I then said that although my mind was still open I was now particularly studying two alternative solutions:

(a) the Cabinet Mission plan; (b) a truncated Pakistan. I asked him how much he personally favoured a united India, and of course he said he was extremely anxious for it. I asked him how far he thought Congress would go towards accepting the Cabinet Mission plan and warned him that Mr. Jinnah was bitterly opposed to the Cabinet Mission plan and therefore Congress would have to go at least as far as Mr. Jinnah wanted before he would even consider it.

Mr. Gandhi said that the whole bone of contention was the interpretation of the meaning of the Cabinet Mission plan, and he suggested that I should call in the High Court to interpret it. I told him that the differences of opinion had already been resolved by the statement of the Cabinet of the 6th December; but he held that the people who drafted the statement were not the people who had to interpret it, and gave as an analogy Acts of Parliament. He said that if a difference of opinion arose as to the meaning of a particular clause in law, it was the judge who settled the meaning and who interpreted the law and not the people who framed the law. He seemed convinced that the Congress would accept any interpretation the High Court gave.

I told him I did not see how we could possibly have a different interpretation put on the meaning of the Cabinet Mission plan to that which the Cabinet Mission themselves had announced on December the 6th after

[1] As recorded by Lord Mountbatten. *Vide* "Letter to Lord Mountbatten", 11-4-1947 and "A Joint Appeal", 12-4-1947

taking legal advice.

I then discussed the joint statement calling for a truce and a denunciation of the use of force to obtain political ends. He said he would gladly sign the statement shown to him or any similar statement if Mr. Jinnah and I wished him to do so; though he must point out that the statement, to have any value, should be signed by Mr. Kripalani on behalf of the Congress as a whole.

He said he had told Pandit Nehru that if indeed I could get Mr. Jinnah to sign and abide by this statement, I should have taken the greatest step politically in the recent history of India, and one which he hoped he had been instrumental in putting into my head.

Although I have absolutely no recollection of Mr. Gandhi making any such suggestion, I felt it would be politic not to point this out. For although I believed it to have been my own idea, I am only too delighted that he should take the credit.

In the meanwhile Lord Ismay came down at my request with the Cabinet Mission plan and the Statement of December the 6th. Mr. Gandhi appeared never to have read this statement although he knew of its existence. He thought he was at Noakhali at the time and did not have time to read it. After reading it very carefully he came back to his original point of view that the Cabinet Mission statement should be submitted to the High Court for interpretation, and he felt sure the Congress would abide by their decision.

Lord Ismay pointed out that it was less a matter of finding out what the actual legal interpretation was than of ascertaining what common interpretation would be acceptable both to the Muslim League and the Congress; and to this Mr. Gandhi unreservedly agreed.

Meanwhile he called upon me to renounce the use of the British Army, and said that he included the British officers of the Indian Army in that term; in other words any of the armed forces under my orders.

I pointed out that except for the Punjab, which is under a Section 93 Government, in all other provinces it was the local Government that called out the troops, and that if he wanted that practice to stop why didn't he make a start by talking to the Congress Government in Bihar where he was off to that evening. He said sadly he had already spoken to them, and that if they had had a strong conviction of non-violence they would offer themselves as sacrifices rather than allow these massacres to continue of trying to stop them by the use of troops

I did not altogether follow his argument here, and may have misquoted him. But since it appeared to be purely academic, and a matter he was going to put before the local Congress Government in Bihar, I did not pursue it.

He then said that he advised me to go on strengthening the Interim Government, and making them function correctly for the next 14 months; after which he considered I should hand over power to the Interim Government. This

staggered Lord Ismay and myself, and we both pointed out that that meant handing over power to one party, namely Congress, to the grave disadvantage of the other party, the Muslim League, which would not fail to produce strife, possibly leading to civil war.

Mr. Gandhi, with a wily smile, pointed out that if Mr. Jinnah indeed signed the paper we were sending round to him he could not again use force for political purposes.

I must say I was speechless to find that he proposed, if Mr. Jinnah indeed meant to sign and stick to the statement, to take advantage of this to impose a Congress Government over the Muslims. Here again I find it hard to believe that I correctly understood Mr. Gandhi.

Finally, after substituting the word "communities" instead of "peoples" and having the declaration of truce retyped, Mr. Gandhi appended his signature in all three scripts: English, Urdu and Gujarati; and Lord Ismay took the paper for Sir Eric Mieville to take round to Mr. Jinnah.

From a photostat: C. W. 11024. Lord Mountbatten Papers. Courtesy: Broadlands Archives Trust. Also *The Transfer of Power,* Vol. X, pp. 211-3

1. LETTER TO MAHESHDUTTA MISHRA

PATNA,
April 30, 1947

CHI. MAHESH,

I went through everything [you sent me]. I like you. You can come when I am here, not in my absence. Ask me after my return.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Do as Mridulabehn says. I do not need [anyone knowing] English. One should know well the Devanagari and Urdu scripts and Hindi as well as Urdu. It is essential that one should be [aware][1] of the potency of the charkha and the handloom and should also know Bengali and Sanskrit well. My handwriting has come out badly due to haste.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6718

2. LETTER TO FRANCESCA STANDENATH

[*April 1947*][2]

CHI. SAVITRI[3],

I was delighted to receive your letter. Indeed I did not know you were alive. But then there is saying that God keeps those whom he wants to keep even through most stormy weather.

The news you heard that I was going to the Frontier was wholly wrong. But where I am is worse than the Frontier. And yet one rarely knows what is good for us and what is bad. Therefore if we knowingly put ourselves in the hands of Almighty, whatever happens must be deemed good. And I try literally to follow that precept.

Now that you have commenced writing you should continue to write as often as you can.

[1] One word is illegible here.

[2] As in the source. This was in reply to the addressee's letter dated January 23, 1947.

[3] In Devanagari

Tell me, what is your feeling under the new condition? What are you doing now for your living?

Love from,

BAPU

SAVITRI *alias* FRANCESCA STANDENATH
GRAZ IN STYRIA
TRANTMANNDORFGOSSET
AUSTRIA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

3. TELEGRAM TO P. S. SANE[1]

[*May 1, 1947*][2]

ON THE FACTS BEFORE ME YOUR FAST IS WHOLLY WRONG. PANDHARPUR MANDIR WILL BE OPENED SHORTLY TO HARIJANS. YOUR COURAGE AND GREATNESS SHOULD DISDAIN TAUNTS OF MEN HOWEVER GREAT OR MANY. PLEASE STOP THE FAST AND WIRE.[3]

The Hindu, 3-5-1947

4. TELEGRAM TO BARVE[4]

[*May 1, 1947*][5]

YOUR WIRE. I HAVE MET BALASAHEB[6] AND SHANKERRAO[7]. I AM QUITE CLEAR THE FAST IS WHOLLY INDEFENSIBLE. PLEASE DISSUADE SANE GURUJI AND WIRE.[8]

The Hindu, 3-5-1947

[1] Popularly known as Sane Guruji, the addressee went on a fast unto death on May 1 to secure entry of Harijans into the Vithoba Temple at Pandharpur.

[2] The report of this and the following item appeared under this date-line.

[3] The addressee gave up the fast on May 10, after an assurance that the templewould be opened to Harijans; *vide* also the following item and letter to the addressee, p. 401.The temple was opened to *Harijans* in November, 1947.

[4] President, Maharashtra Harijan Sevak Sangh, Pandharpur

[5] *Vide* the preceding item.

[6] B. G. Kher, Chief Minister of Bombay

[7] Shankerrao Deo

[8] *Vide* also “Telegram to G. V. Mavalankar”, 7-5-1947.

5. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
May 1, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

It is only twenty days since I had left Delhi. But even as I went I had a feeling that I might have to return soon. But my place was then in Bihar and Noakhali and I could not stay back even for a fortnight. That was why I went to Bihar. I had told you that I was Jawaharlal's prisoner and would return whenever he sent for me. I have come back as soon as I received the summons from him and Kripalani.

You will be happy to learn that when I went to Bihar people left me in peace. They did not bother me on my way. I slept in peace, I was not tired and could even do some work. But that was not the case on my return journey. People created noisy scenes at every place. It did not occur to them that an old, infirm man like me should be left in peace, and his sleep should not be disturbed. Today I felt exhausted as I was not able to sleep well. Even so, I did work during the day, because it is work that sustains me. I cannot live without work; but I could work very little. What I really cannot stand is shouting by the people and the slogans they raise. Through you I wish to convey to all people that they should not greet me with noise and should not raise slogans. It would be all right if the people gathered at the railway stations if they wished, for, if they came, some collection would be made for the Harijan Fund. But they should not make noise.

I wish to tell you what I did in Bihar. The work done there is considerable. Gen. Shah Nawaz has installed himself in a small place. He is now meeting with success in his work. The Muslims who had fled to Asansol under duress have come back. They had to undergo too many hardships at Asansol. They realized that people could be comfortable only in their own place. Their children had grown so emaciated that their bones were sticking out. They were not looked after in any way there. Now these children are provided with milk. It is impossible to get fresh milk because our cattle have gone dry. Hence, these children are being given powdered milk. Powdered milk does not have the vitamins fresh milk has. But the inherent nutritive property of milk is preserved in powdered milk. After their return from Asansol these children have regained health because of the powdered milk and they have started putting on weight.

Then there was the question of rations for the adults. How to provide food for so many people who had come back? They were afraid to go out and buy the rations themselves in a place where they had been persecuted. The Government arranged to have the rations sent to them. But their Hindu neighbours protested saying that the Muslims were their guests and they would themselves bring the rations to their houses, and that it was not necessary for Government officials to trouble themselves on that account.

In another place, where Muslims had been killed in large numbers, those who had survived were hesitating to return. Some I.N.A. men escorted them so that they could get over their misgivings. On seeing the I.N.A. men going with them some Hindus told them that they need not take the trouble. They were going to serve these Muslims. They would protect them even if it meant death. The I.N.A. men said that they were obeying the command of their General, and they could not go back. Then the Hindus pleaded that they would not always be mad. Earlier they had really lost their heads. Was it any bravery that ten thousand people should come together to kill one thousand? They would never do it again. Thus the Hindus drove away the fear from the hearts of the Muslims, and encouraged them to return to their homes. As a result the Muslims themselves asked the I.N.A. men to go back. I am confident that if the situation in Bihar turns out well, the trouble continuing in various parts of India would come to an end. All I wish to say is that all of us have to be courageous. But I hear that people are now indulging in dastardly acts in Delhi also. Every day crimes are being committed insidiously. Shameful things are happening in Dera Ismail Khan too.[1] They have not yet ceased.

People ask me what has happened to our signatures. Why is peace not being established? I did not affix my signature after meeting and consulting Mr. Jinnah. The Viceroy insisted that I should sign the appeal. I asked him what authority I had to sign the appeal. I am not even a four-anna member of the Congress. What good would my signature be? I am a small man. Of course the Quaid-e-Azam is a big man, his signature would carry much weight. But the Viceroy told me that Jinnah Saheb was keen on my signature. He was not ready to affix his own signature unless I affixed mine. He said that if I gave my signature, he would at least know what Jinnah Saheb really meant.

[1] Murders, arson, loot, destruction of property and conversions on a large scale had been reported in Dera Ismail Khan and Hazara Districts.

Thus I put down my signature. I will not discuss what followed.

Signing a peace appeal is nothing new for me. All my life I have done that and I continue to do it. But Jinnah Saheb's signature is a great thing. If all Muslims are under Jinnah Saheb's influence, they must now abide by his words; for he has signed on behalf of the Muslims. But have I given my signature because I am a Hindu? I have influence over none. I belong to no party. I belong to all. If the Hindus of Bihar act in frenzy again I shall fast unto death. In the same way, if the Muslims in Noakhali lose their heads, I shall lay down my life there. I have earned that right. I belong to the Muslims no less than to the Hindus. I belong to the Sikhs, Parsis and Christians in the same measure. I may be crying in the wilderness, but whatever I say would be on behalf of all and addressed to all.

But Jinnah Saheb presides over a great organization. Once he has affixed his signature to the appeal, how can even one Hindu be killed at the hands of the Muslims? I would tell the Hindus to face death cheerfully if the Muslims are out to kill them. I would be a real sinner if after being stabbed I wished in my last moment that my son should seek revenge. I must die without rancour. But why in the first place would a Muslim kill at all when he has been asked not to do it?

But the thing is that they have still to realize that in politics force cannot avail. People ask why our signing the peace appeal is not having any effect. Why are the Muslims still not contained? Why are Dera Ismail Khan and the Frontier Province rocked with violence? Dr. Khan Saheb and Badshah Khan tried to stop it but the people there claimed that they belonged to the Muslim League.

If the people of the Frontier Province, even as supporters of the Muslim League, do not honour the words of Jinnah Saheb, I would venture to suggest that it is his paramount duty to leave everything and work to restore peace. Why is he not following that course? Is he going to achieve Pakistan by following his present course? If he wishes to have Pakistan, let him have it by adopting peaceful methods. When someone achieves something by force, it is snatched away from him by a greater force. Jinnah Saheb's idea of achieving Pakistan by force can never succeed.

But I want to ask even the Viceroy why he is not able to do anything after getting the signatures from both of us. Why does he not take me to task? Why does he not take Jinnah to task? If the

Hindus and the Muslims continue to fight even after that, if the Sikhs continue to fight, the British should step aside.

But what would you do if the British continued to stay here? You say you would take up arms, but the British are not going to be frightened by your arms and give you anything. Even now, they are not talking of granting us freedom because of our arms. They think that India has shown a new way to the world. That is the reason why we are getting our independence. As it is, there are too many people in the world who meet force by force. They even talk of killing two for one, let alone one for one. But, I say there will never be any peace even if you kill not ten but a hundred for one. There is nothing brave about dying while killing. It is an illusion of bravery. The true martyr is one who lays down his life without killing.

You may turn round and ask whether all Hindus and all Sikhs should die. Yes, I would say. Such martyrdom will not be in vain.

You may compliment me or curse me for talking in this manner; but I shall only say what I feel in my heart. While you are listening to me patiently, I shall only express my heart's anguish and ask you to be courageous and not get frightened. If someone wants to scare us into surrendering anything we would part with not even a cowrie. If he comes to persuade us we may give him even crores. If you cannot show such courage and if the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs all become mad, whatever the British may do for us and whatever they may grant us, will never remain in our hands. What we want to achieve we must achieve through persuasion. If we learn this art all will be well with us; otherwise there is absolutely no doubt that India is doomed to perish.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana-Pravachan—Part I, pp. 54-8

6. TALK WITH MANU GANDHI

BHANGI NIVAS, NEW DELHI,
May 1, 1947

The members of the Congress Working Committee are unnecessarily insisting on my presence. Specially Jawaharlal is earnestly pressing me for it. I, however, do not feel that my presence will be of much help, since my line of thinking at the moment is entirely different. I have come here because I could not resist Jawahar's invitation. Otherwise my heart is in Bihar. It seems I won't have to stay here for long. Maybe, I will have to go to Calcutta. Complete peace has not yet been restored there. Stray incidents are occurring daily.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 283

7. TALK WITH RAJENDRA PRASAD[1]

BHANGI NIVAS, NEW DELHI,
May 2, 1947

I do not wish to stay here for long. I hold that if I am able to do something in Bihar or Noakhali, it will have far-reaching consequences in the whole country. Even if we get swaraj, if there is no peace in people's hearts it will not be of much use. And I believe that I can do more work there than here. But here I am a prisoner of Jawahar and the Sardar. If they release me I would like to leave by the first available train.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 283-4

8. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

NEW DELHI,
May 2, 1947

MY DEAR HORACE,

Naughty of you to be ill. I must make a desperate effort to see you in your bed and make you laugh.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1445

[1] Who accompanied Gandhiji during his morning walk

9. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

NEW DELHI,
May 2, 1947

CHI. SATIS BABU,

I have all your letters. I am unable to write but the work I am doing is the same.

Amtul Salaam is unhappy. Please satisfy her if you can. I have written a letter[1] to her. Please read it and pass it on to her.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9080

10. A LETTER

May [*2*][2] *, 1947*

On the train to Delhi I read about Kshitish Babu's demise. I reached Delhi yesterday, and got from Thakkar Bapa your name and address.

All of us must feel sad about the passing away of an ardent worker like Kshitish Babu. But if we all do his work he should not be dead so far as we are concerned. Bapa tells me that your sister also is with you. I hope you two would render such great service that Kshitish Babu's name would be immortalized through your lives.

[From Hindi]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 287

11. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
May 2, 1947

After a passage from the Koran was recited, a young man shouted, "Stop it. Victory to Hinduism." Hearing this Gandhiji stopped the prayer and said:

Very well, let his wish be granted today.

Gandhiji asked the man to calm down but he continued to shout.[3] Gandhiji said:

[1] The letter is not available.

[2] From the reference to Gandhiji's arrival at Delhi where he reached on May 1. The source, however, has "May 3".

[3] In the mean while the police arrived and took the man away.

If my words can reach the policemen I would request them to release the man and allow him to come over here. I do not approve of the police coming here to maintain order during the prayer. If the police go on arresting people every day and I rely on them to hold the prayer, it would be no prayer at all. I can hold the prayer only when all the people gladly allow it to proceed peacefully. You saw that I stopped the prayer when the young man wanted it to be stopped. I would again stop the prayer if he wants me to do so tomorrow. But "Victory to Hinduism" cannot be won in this manner as he has said. He must realize that religion only declines by such acts. How can we protect our religion by preventing others from praying? But I do not blame him. Today the atmosphere is such. Today everything is seen upside down. No one understands the obvious thing. Hence, if someone asks me to stop the prayer, I shall submit to the demand.

But what pains me more is that he created a disturbance in the midst of the prayer. I would not have started the prayer at all if he had made his intention known in the beginning. Where was the need for the police to intervene? It is a matter of shame to me that so much police force should stay here to maintain order during the prayer. How can the police protect my religion? My religion would be protected only when I myself Protect it. Or rather, it is pretentious to say that I would protect my religion. It is God who would protect my religion. If there is prayer in my heart, God is bound to protect me. What does it matter if the external prayer is not conducted ?

But what can you do? You are all sitting quietly. You have come here to meditate on God and imbibe some goodness. All of you have to suffer because of one person. But you are not going to realize God by getting together to suppress a single individual and carrying on the prayer by force. That would be only betraying yourselves.

I wish that the young man had calmed down and heard what I had to say. I would have brought him round. He would have been convinced if not today then tomorrow, if not tomorrow, then the day after. Whatever it may be, we have to remember that force cannot be employed in furtherance of religion. One would have to lay down one's life in the pursuit of religion. There has been no religion in the world which did not call for the sacrifice of life. Only after one has mastered the art of laying down one's life does one's religion attain strength. The tree of religion is watered only by those who are prepared to die. Religion progresses through one who recites the name of God, who works for God, who praises Him, who undertakes

vows and fasts and pleads with God to show one the way since one cannot find it oneself. Then the people know him for a devotee and follow him. Religion takes shape only that way. No religion has grown by killing. It has grown only by dying. This is the basis of religion. Sikhism has progressed only in this way.

Prophet Mohammed also fled to Medina without fear in his heart and God saved him and Hazrat Ali from thousands of enemies because of their faith in Him. Prophet Mohammed, as it were, strengthened the roots of Islam by risking death.

Similar is the story of Christianity. And Buddhism too, if we regard it as separate from Hinduism, grew only when some people sacrificed their lives for it. I have not found a single religion which did not in the earlier stages call for sacrifices on the part of its followers. When a religion is well established people in large numbers come forward to follow it. This gives rise to bigotry. Now even the followers of Hinduism have stooped to killing and slaughtering although Hinduism never advocated violence.

Today people are scared at the mere mention of religion. I wonder why people are so scared. The Hindus, the Sikhs—why, the whole of the Punjab is in a tumult. And from the other end one hears the shrieks from Bengal. People say that the Punjab and Bengal should be partitioned. But if they have to be divided, why do they go to the Viceroy ? Why do they not come to me? Why do they not come to you? If Pakistan is being granted, is it for the purpose of annihilating the Hindus and Sikhs?

Jinnah Saheb has stated that the Hindu and the Sikh minorities would be absolutely safe in Pakistan and that they would not be persecuted. But why are such conditions not obtaining today? I can have a glimpse of Pakistan in only what is happening in the Punjab and Bengal, isn't it? If that is not what Pakistan is going to be, why does not Jinnah Saheb bring about what he says? Why is not every Hindu in the Muslim majority places protected? Why do the Hindus of Sind, who form only 25 per cent of the population, have to live under the shadow of fear? Does Pakistan mean that all the non-Muslims, the Hindus, Sikhs, Christians and those belonging to other religions have to live as slaves? If that is so, it would not be a true Pakistan. Hindustan too can be considered true Hindustan only when no harm is done even to innocent Muslim children in the Hindu majority provinces.

Jinnah Saheb can question us about the deeds of the Hindus.

The Hindus of Bihar have behaved no better. Indeed they are at fault. But today the Hindus of Bihar are repenting. Even the Chief Minister owns his guilt. If the same thing happens at all places I would know that something worthwhile has been achieved. But today everybody has given up his religion, and if others follow their religions people rush to attack them. This is not correct. The Muslims in their turn should tell their minority neighbours that they could all follow their own religions and that they would not come in their way.

After all, why should we let a thing slip from our hands when we are about to have it ? But everyone is acting like that only. The Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, all should free themselves from this sin of internal quarrels and there is only one way of doing it, namely, to fear God. Then there would be no demand for arms. Then no one would clamour for military [protection] or for weapons. But today there is an all-round demand for *kirpans* such as the Sikhs have. Again the demand is for big *kirpans* as the traditional ones are small. But whom are they going to kill with these weapons? If there are going to be such weapons in all the houses, you would not find me anywhere around.

I have only one solution whereby we can completely wipe out even the firmly entrenched British power. That method is to say 'No', i.e., to non-co-operate. They would be completely uprooted by peaceful non-co-operation. It is a great thing. Once it is adopted we shall not have to go in for military training.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana-Pravachan—Part I, pp. 59-62

12. TALK WITH ASHADEVI ARYANAYAKUM[1]

BHANGI NIVAS, NEW DELHI,
May 2, 1947

This girl won't have any trouble if only I can set right her digestion. She is sick because of some disorder in her intestines. Her health should improve to the extent she and I are able to enshrine Ramanama in our hearts. This girl is my partner in this *yajna*. I have not a shadow of doubt that whatever her thought, word and deed, they are bound to interact on my actions and the purity or impurity of my thought, word and deed will have a bearing on her actions. Therefore the more sincere I am in reciting Ramanama the greater will be her improvement.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 287

13. LETTER TO P. S. SANE

May 3, 1947

BHAI SANE GURUJI,

Your wire. I am sorry you don't understand my simple argument.[2] Initially you wanted to undertake the fast because of the criticism from some four or five people, and now you are demanding opening of the temple for the Harijans. I do not understand where dharma comes in. In any case I would appeal to you to give up your fast.

Shankerrao and Balasaheb are your friends, not enemies. You should also listen to the advice of friends such as these. May God grant you better counsel.

Yours,
GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 288

[1]Ashadevi had drawn Gandhiji's attention to the continuing ill health of Manu Gandhi.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to P. S. Sane", 1-5-1947 and "Telegram to Barve", 1-5-1947

14. TALK WITH MANU GANDHI

BHANGI NIVAS, NEW DELHI
May 3, 1947

I had hoped you would come only after finding out the price of the mangoes. You should have served them only after ascertaining their price. You did not bring the information on your own and not even after I asked you. I learn that these days a mango costs ten annas. If it is true, I can live without them. Such things do not give me nourishment, rather they are harmful for me. At a time of such distress and when prices run high, you have given me a glassful of juice of four mangoes which cost two and a half rupees. How can I possibly drink it?[1]

This clearly shows that God is helping me. I was in a dilemma and was wondering where I stood. Otherwise how could this girl think of making juice of such expensive mangoes for me? But God sent me these children—and particularly those who are dearest to me. You can see how merciful God is to me !

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 289

15. TALK WITH KIRAN SHANKAR ROY

BHANGI NIVAS, NEW DELHI
May 3, 1947

If the British want to give us swaraj after large-scale massacre and migration of population, we do not want it. Jinnah Saheb has stated that full protection will be given to the minorities in Pakistan but it is only a verbal assurance and has not been put into practice. It therefore becomes the duty of the British to remonstrate against the injustice being done to the minorities. The Viceroy should issue a statement to that effect. But I don't see any move in this direction. Maybe, I am growing old and becoming senile. I am, therefore, left all alone to plead for my line of thinking. Gurudev's *bhajan—Ekla Chalore* is my only consolation. Now my only wish is to sacrifice myself in this effort. If nothing else, God will at least grant me this wish. Remember, if you divide India today, tomorrow provinces and

[1] Gandhiji gave the juice to the two refugee children who had come with their mothers to see him.

states will be fragmented into smaller parts. And thus Rajputana, Gujarat, Bihar, Delhi, Maharashtra and the Punjab also will follow suit. We might escape its consequences because we are on the brink of death but generations to come will curse us at every step for the kind of swaraj we shall have bequeathed to them.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 290

16. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
May 3, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You must now be quiet as you are every day, You come here for the prayers, hence you must sit quietly as you arrive. We can always talk. You can talk when you disperse after the prayer. But till then you must remain silent because silence is the essence of prayer.[1]

It appears that the rest of the prayer is allowed, but there is objection only to the recitation from the Koran. Hence, from tomorrow I shall start the prayer with *Auz-o-Billahi.* So far the prayer used to begin with a Buddhist hymn which is in the Japanese language. A Japanese monk[2] used to stay with me at Sevagram. He used to sing this hymn in a strong, melodious voice as he circled round the Ashram for one hour every morning sounding his *dimdim*[3] He expressed a desire to sing the hymn in the prayer, to which I agreed, and since then the prayer has always begun with the singing of this hymn. But from tomorrow I shall begin the prayer with *Auz-o-Billahi* and the prayer would be carried on if there is no obstruction from anyone. Otherwise, you will all sit in silence and pray in your hearts, and go back peacefully.

However, I would request you to carry in your hearts the prayers of all religions when you go back. Please understand that all religions are good. Have the faith that all religions are lofty. The fault does not lie with any religion. If the fault lies anywhere, it is with the people who follow these religions. Every religion has produced some evil men. It is not as if any particular religion has a monopoly of

[1] Someone then objected to the recitation from the Koran and Gandhiji stopped the parayer.

[2] The Rev. G. Haishao

[3] A percussion instrument

producing evil men. Hence it is our duty to see the good points in every religion rather than those evil men. Let us pick up the gem-like qualities from every religion and thus enrich our own.

Now let me tell you what I propose to say today. We find ourselves in a very delicate situation these days. India is such a big country that the whole world is watching us. You saw in the Inter-Asian Relations Conference convened by Jawaharlal that all eyes were fixed on India. Sjhariar[1] is not an ordinary man. He is quite a big man. But even he has his eyes on you, that is, on India. Even the people of the Arab countries look up to us with the hope that the Asian countries would be able to follow suit provided India takes the lead. Japan could do precious little. There is no doubt that Japan showed great courage. She also acted shrewdly. But where is she now? She has not been able to lead Asia. She has lagged behind. One feels sad looking at that country.

As for us, we have not even attained our independence as yet. But even now the world is keen to know how we act. This is because we struggled for our independence in a manner no other people did. Such struggles had been carried on in the name of religion. But among struggles for freedom this one is the first of its kind. On April 6, 1919, we took our first step in the direction of independence which now is but a matter of time. And it is universally hoped that with India becoming independent, the whole of Asia and then Africa too would become free. This would mean a new birth for the whole world.

The delegates to the Inter-Asian Relations Conference returned with this understanding. When they came here the atmosphere was vitiated. But they did not look at the dismal things here. Rather they looked forward to our freedom. Those who understand know that when a river is in flood the water goes turbid. Similarly in our country the approach of independence has vitiated the atmosphere. There is a surge of independence in our country and it is likely to cause some disturbances. But it is our duty to see that in course of time we make our freedom pure like the waters of the Ganga which become clear once the floods subside.

How can this be done? India cannot be protected by looking upon irreligion as religion. Nor can we have religious freedom that way. But what is happening today? What happened in Dera Ismail Khan? What happened in Hazara? Why is there such a holocaust in the

[1] Dr. Sultan Sjhariar, Premier of Indonesia

Frontier Province? Why is there such a race for getting swords and spears and guns? Why are those things collected openly as well as secretly? Why are bombs manufactured secretly? Why do people go on proclaiming that they would resort to force and violence and would get things done under threat?

With all this we can protect neither ourselves nor others. In this way neither India nor Asia would be able to achieve freedom; the rest of the would too would fail to attain freedom.

Let us all then pray and clearly understand that all religions are one. it would be a great thing if we could be good even as individuals.

The next thing I want to talk about is the Press. One of the newspapers has published reports about the Viceroy's talks with our Ministers. They have also circulated reports about the discussions at the meeting of the Congress Working Committee. It is not a small newspaper. Nor is it run in the interests of our opponents. It is a paper supporting the Congress. It has drawn certain conclusions about the Viceroy's plans. It is highly improper that newspapers should indulge in such speculation. They should let the Viceroy himself make a public announcement about what he intends doing. And why should any surmises be made even about discussions at the Working Committee meeting? Only the official report issued by the Working Committee should have been published.

I know there are a great many journalists who scoop up bits from different places and manage to build up a story. But I would say that these people are grabbing at left-overs of a meal. It is not the function of a journalist to depend on left-overs.

The British have sent here a nice man from amongst them. He has come to save Britain's honour. He has been acting with the same good intention with which he has been sent. Then, what right do we have to give publicity to his actions without consulting him? What right does anyone have to wheedle information out of everybody by sweet words, draw inferences from here and there and then publish them in the paper?

I too have been a journalist for the past fifty years. I know how newspapers are run. I also know how newspapers are run in England and America. But why should we ape the evil practices prevailing in England and America? We shall perish if we imitate the bad things in others.

I do not say that everything this journalist has reported is wrong. Some of the things he has written are correct, some are incorrect. He

has just made a hotch-potch of the thing. I totally disapprove of this kind of journalism.

Through you I wish to address myself to all journalists that they should not try to make money in this manner. If we cannot earn our livelihood in a straightforward manner, let us perish. But why should this journalist talk in a manner that would harm the country? He has even invented a headline no one would have dreamt of.

It would be good to ignore whatever is unwholesome about England and America and adopt their good points.

Today Jawaharlal expressed his sorrow over this to me. To how many people can he go on expressing his feelings? And moreover what consolation can I offer him? We have led a crusade of dharma and it is with dharma that we are going to win our independence. I would request journalists also to help us in this.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana-Pravachan—Part I, pp. 62-6

17. A TALK[1]

BHANGI NIVAS, NEW DELHI,
May 4, 1947

I admit that our struggle for freedom had not been purely non-violent. Had all congressmen honestly followed true non-violence, we would not have been today in a state of utter confusion. It is becoming clear to me day by day that what we regarded as non-violent fight was not really so. Otherwise the dragon of communalism would not have raised its head amongst us; untouchability would have been a thing of the past, distinctions between employer and employee would have ceased to exist and both would have performed body-labour alike without any distinction. Nowhere have we heard it happen the way the honour of our daughters and sisters is being violated in broad daylight in our country. Had we followed the path of truth and non-violence we would not have seen human hearts so devoid of humanity, and society would have been well-organized and without any trace of animosity. Today we do not see a single good sign. Everywhere Congressmen are being condemned and people seem to have lost faith in them. The muslim League may not trust us, but even the States have become indifferent towards us. You and, maybe, I too, are to blame for this. Had we followed truth, non-

[1] With Rajendra Prasad, Amrit Kaur and Harekrushna Mahtab

violence and sacrifice one hundred per cent, not only the masses but even children, would have revered us. Instead the atmosphere is quite different. Even now we should realize our mistake and retrace our steps. Otherwise sixty years' glorious record of the Congress will be wiped out within a decade.

Unless we kindle the flame of unadulterated non-violence and truth within ourselves we shall not realize our goal of complete independence. With that light kindled within us, the tendency towards violence will automatically vanish and riots will be brought under control.

Nevertheless I do not presume that the police will have absolutely no place in a vast country like India inhabited by such a diversity of people. In a situation like this, if we are unable to manage things without the aid of the army, how can we say that we will do without the police? No doubt I cherish a fond vision that we may be able to do without the police, for I would call them not 'police' but 'social reformers'. They will be the servants of the people, not their masters.

Just as in training for violence one learns to kill, similarly in adopting non-violence one should learn the art of dying. There is no place at all for fear in non-violence. Not only that, one has to develop the spirit of sacrifice to such a high degree that one would not hesitate to sacrifice one's family, property and even one's life. A votary of non-violence should fear God alone. One resorts to violence to protect one's physical body. But we should realize that the body is perishable and it is the soul which really matters. And in order to protect the honour of one's soul there is no alternative to non-violence.

There is no school where such non-violence can be taught. Our non-violence is tested only when we act with courage. Today we are being put to this test and in my opinion we have failed in the test. Otherwise every four-anna member of the Congress should have been engaged in quelling the riots or should have died in the attempt. Instead they dare not save their neighbours from being butchered. I have even heard of instances where people ran away in panic to save their lives leavin behind their wives, mothers, sisters and daughters in peril. I shudder when I hear such tales. What cowardice on our part! A truly non-violent person should brave the danger and prove his worth. The courage of a non-violent person is many times superior to the courage of a violent person. But who listens to me? I do, however,

hope to meet death, if anyone should come to kill me, without a trace of anger, calmly, with a smile, and all the while remembering my chosen God. I believe that God will grant me this strength. If there is any shortcoming or ego in me its proof will be found in the hour of my death. I used to talk about living up to 125 years but I no longer have the desire because every day I see only falsehood and treachery all round me. I am, however, growing daily stronger in my conviction that God will bless me with a death befitting a non-violent person.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 292-4

18. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI
May 4, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today the prayer will start with the recitation from the Koran, but before that I would ask if there is anyone who does not want this large gathering to have the prayer. If anyone objects to the prayer after it is started the prayer would be stopped; but that would be an uncivilized act. Hence if anyone has any objection he can stop the prayer before we begin it. Is there anyone among you who wants to do so?

A man cried out from the audience: "Yes, I object."

GANDHIJI: Why?

There can be no recitation from the Koran in a temple.

Do you wish to come in the way of such a large gathering?

Yes.

You must all listen I shall talk to this man. Let us try to know his mind.

Then, turning to the man Gandhiji said :

You need not get excited. Kindly explain to me coolly why I should not pray in this temple today when I do it every day.

The temple belongs to the public. You should not hold your prayers in a public temple.

It is a public temple, no doubt, but the priest and the trustees of the temple are not preventing me. Then why do you want to stop so many people who have come to chant God's name? I really do not understand.

Because I too belong to the public.

Well, then you will not allow the prayer?

No, I will not.

Well, then I stop the prayer. But I want to explain to you all the place of harmony and non-violence in religion. If you continue to stop my prayer every day, you humiliate not me but yourselves. The right thing should be that if one person is unwilling to respect the wishes of so many, he should himself leave the place. How can a single man stand in the way of such a large gathering? This is possible only with me, i.e., in the world of non-violence. Of course the temple belongs to everybody, but this does not mean that one man may go about creating obstructions at his whim. If such a thing is allowed all the activities of the temple would come to a halt. Had I been alone and he had stopped me, it would have been a different matter. But if he went on shouting in the midst of so many people and I continued the prayer, you would all be provoked. You would hurl abuses at him and hand him over to the police. What credit would it bring us? If that happened, what would the world say about us?

Hence I stop the prayer. But they cannot stop the recitation of *Auz-o-Billahi*, etc. It is very much in my mind. We shall not recite it today. We shall observe silence for two minutes during which you will offer the same prayer. True, you do not know *Auz-o-Billahi*, etc., by heart, but while observing silence you should bring it to your mind that Rama and Rahim are but one. In other words, Hinduism and Islam are both great religions and there is no difference between them. I fail to understand why any two religions should be at logger heads. Hence I wish that your *mantra* while observing the silence should be: 'Thou art God, million are thy names.' I had told you that in Hinduism the recitation of *Vishnusahasranama*[1] is very much in vogue. I even believe that God has as many names as there are human beings in the world. *Ishwara, Bhagawan,* Khuda, God, or Ormu-zd—whatever name you prefer to say—these are all His names. And, He is over and above all these names. How can anyone ever talk of stopping people from reciting the name of God who is so great that none can know Him? Such an act is sheer impudence, it is barbarism, it is violence.

It would be still better if you could sit with your eyes closed as you observe silence. If, in the mean time, the gentleman sees reason

[1] A hymn containing the thousand names of Lord Vishnu

and decides against obstructing the prayer we shall hold the prayer. If not, I shall tell you what I have in mind.[1]

I had to go to the Viceroy today as you already know.[2] We sat to-gether for one and a half hours and had a nice and useful discussion. I can-not reveal everything to you here. However, I shall talk about one thing.

The Viceroy told me that I should tell my people on his behalf, or, if I had trust in him, on my own that he had come to transfer power and wind up the British Raj in this country. It was not possible to wind up such a vast empire in a day. Such a large army could not be moved out just by snapping one's fingers. But he assured me that the British had no intention of staying here beyond June 30, 1948. He said he had come here to do this task and was doing his utmost to accomplish it.

But he complains that he is upset by what appears in our newspapers. That obstructs his work. It is his complaint that on the one hand we fight among ourselves and on the other blame and discredit the British. Maybe, the British Government committed errors in the past. But now we must forget about the responsibility of the British for our quarrels. Nothing worth while would be gained by harping on the responsibility of the British for this and that. He has advised us not to talk in this vein and to forget the past in deciding the issues that belong to the future.

The Viceroy says that our newspapers do exactly this and their obduracy hampers his work. He says he had said nothing from which the Press could have any clue. Nor had any of his close associates said any such thing.

The Viceroy expects the people of India to behave with a reasonable degree of decency. The headlines carried by the newspapers also largely twist the point. On what basis had the Press reported that Khan Saheb's Government in the Frontier Province would be overthrown? When the nationalist papers indulge in such writing, the Muslim papers try to outdo them.

This, the Viceroy said would only spread poison on both sides and he had not come here to spread poison. If the Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis and Christians lived together in peace it would give a

[1] The gathering then observed two minutes' silence.

[2] For a report of the interview as recorded by the Viceroy, *vide* "Interview with Lord Mountbatten", 4-5-1947

good name to the British that they left behind a united India.

The Viceroy also wished to say that if the people of India desired freedom they must remain reasonably peaceful. He said they did not want to leave us quarrelling among ourselves. That is why he is trying his best to solve all issues whatever the result. He carries on his work on the assumption that they are definitely leaving by June 30, 1948.

Appealing to my faith in him he assured me that he took every step in accordance with his conscience. Although he is a naval commander and believes in physical force he has utmost faith in God too as I have, and is guided by nothing but his own conscience. He acts according to his own lights such as God has granted him. Moreover, he could serve the British nation in no other way.

He would try his utmost to see that our people worked together in harmony. He did not wish to do anything which might jeopardize the interests of the minorities. Otherwise it would be said that they had granted everything to the Hindu majority by suppressing the Muslims, Parsis, Sikhs, etc. Who was going to intervene if we chose to fight after they had gone? Right now he was silently making efforts for a compromise. But once his patience came to an end, he would not keep quiet. He said now even the Defence Minister[1] was our own man. But if he too would appear to have failed in handling the situation the Viceroy would exercise his responsibility with the help of the Englishman[2], who was still the Commander [-in-Chief] of the British army, which was by no means small, and the personnel trained by them. But if the people accepted his advice straightaway, it could somewhat lighten his work.

Not doubt, the Viceroy's task is difficult; but the British are not a people who would run away from a difficult task.

This was not meant to be conveyed to you. But I elt that since we have gathered here in such numbers I might as well tell you about it today, and through you, convey it to the Press.

I told you yesterday that unless Lord Mountbatten proves guilty of a breach of trust, we should not talk about him irresponsibly. If he does nothing even when we behave well, we can tell the British people that their Viceroys come in succession to grant us freedom but all they do is to suppress us.

[1] Sardar Baldev Singh
[2] Claude John Eyre Auchinleck

We need not express it in an impolite way. Everything can be expressed in an agreeable language. If we behave in an uncivilized manner, we cut our own throats.

It would make their departure difficult if we continue to fight among ourselves. Defence, of course, is in their hands, but that is only to resist foreign aggressors. How can they stop our internal quarrels? They would merely say that the Hindus are condemning the Muslims and the Muslims are condemning the Hindus. What can they do about it? They have got to go. If we went on fighting till the end of June and they failed to do anything we would tell them that they had no more right to stay on and they should quit.

If they stay on, they can stop the Hindus and also the Muslims from fighting by using force against both as they have done before. Thousands of men have been done to death for the killing of a single Englishman. But they cannot do such a thing at the moment of their departure. Hence, it is our duty to make their departure easier by demonstrating our faith in them. Let us not add to their troubles.

But what is happening today? There is scarcity of food and cloth-ing—you and I do get them, but there are millions in the country who do not get any food or clothing. A minister from Madras who came to me today told me that there were floods in the State and that but for the disturbances it would have been possible to reach food to the poor people. One does not think in terms of Hindus and Muslims in the matter of distributing food—it has to be provided to all the people of the country.

But today everyone has but one thought, i.e., of killing and slaugh-tering, and that too in a savage manner. The muslims kill any Hindus they come across and the Hindus kill any Muslims they come across.

If we stoop to such beastly ways and say that we shall mend our ways once the British have gone, it is a wrong attitude.

Let me tell you one more thing. General shah Nawaz came today. He has been working in Bihar even after I came away from there. He draws no salary. Even so he has taken formal leave for fifteen days and is going home. He says that even those Muslims from Bihar who were hesitating to return and who were intimidated by the Hindus have now started coming back. That was because the Hindus realized their duty when they were persuaded and worked continu-usly for two days and cleared the way for the return of the Muslims

and also helped in putting up the huts that were razed to the ground. Similar good work has been done in other villages as well.

If work proceeds along the same lines all the Muslims who have fled from Bihar will come back. The Government is helping them financially; but the Hindus should bring round those who are terrorizing them or are creating obstacles in their way. Then alone would things get done.

In short, there are some decent people even in the midst of the cry to kill and slaughter. Not every Muslim, every Sikh, every Hindu, is a bad man.

Just as peace is restore in Bihar, so will it be in Dera Ismail Khan and the Frontier Province.

If Jinnah Saheb means what he has written, he has got to stop the riots. The army cannot stop those riots. The riots can stop only when the people are persuaded to stop them. If they do not stop, it means that the people do not pay heed to Jinnah Saheb's words, or, Jinnah Saheb is not keen on stopping the riots.

But why should we harbour unkind thoughts about Jinnah Saheb? When things do not seem to be going well, one does start getting suspicious. If I affix my signature to something and my action is quite contrary to it, it is bound to arouse suspicion. Hence some doubts in his case too. But we shall have to watch Jinnah Saheb's actions till the last moment.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana-Pravachan—Part I, pp. 66-72

19. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

NEW DELHI,
May 5, 1947

Sheth Cachalia,[1] Honorary Secretary of the Transvaal Indian Congress, cabled for a message on the rally which was to take place in Johannesburg of all the non-European races in the Union of South Africa on the question of racial disabilities in the Union. The question is most intricate and almost baffling. It is intricate enough when confined only to the Indian disabilities but the inclusion of all the races while logically correct is fraught with grave danger, if the struggle is not kept at the highest level and is not firmly based on

[1] Ahmed Mahomed Cachalia

truth and non-violence. I wanted to warn the organizers of the rally against rhetorical display or raising idle hopes and to advise them to carry on their demonstration with dignity and restraint. Let no one doubt that the salvation of all the exploited peoples of the earth and, therefore, of the world, lies in the strictest reliance on the coin on whose one face is written 'truth' and on the other 'non-violence' in large letters. Sixty years of experience has taught me no other method.

The Hindu, 6-5-1947, and *Harijan*, 18-5-1947

20. LETTER TO DHARMANANDA KOSAMBI[1]

May 5, 1947

Your postcard. Death is our true and unfailing friend. He takes charge of one when one's time is over. So, if you must depart, first enshrine Rama in your heart and then go to meet Him cheerfully. Where is . . .[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 297

21. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

DELHI,
May 5, 1947

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter. You have been entrusted with a very great responsibility[3]. I am sure you will shoulder it well. Of course, you have to learn to overcome your anger. But the forest is not the place for it. You can be sure that you have mastered your anger only when you succeed in restraining it even under provocation. The incident

[1] (1876-1947); scholar of Buddhism; taught Pali in National College, Bombay and Fergusson College, Poona; participated in non-co-operation movement; was professor of Buddhist literature in Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad.

The addressee who was suffering from an acute skin ailment was on a restricted diet. *vide* also "Letter to Balvantsinha", 12-5-1947.

[2] Omission as in the source

[3] Namely, the management of the Ashram at Sevagram during the illness of Chimanlal N. Shah

you mention[1] does not surprise me but the responsibility you have undertaken will save you. You did well in offering an apology to the parents of the boy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1975

22. INTERVIEW TO REUTER[2]

May 5, 1947

DOON CAMPBELL: Is the communal division of India inevitable? Will such division solve the communal problem?

GANDHIJI: Personally, I have always said 'No', and I say 'No' even now to both these questions.

Do you subscribe to the opinion that Britain will be morally obliged to stay on in India if the outstanding Hindu-Muslim differences have not been resolved by June, 1948?

This is a question that had never been put to me before. It would be a good thing if the British were to go today—thirteen months means mischief to India. I do not question the nobility of the British declaration, I do not question the sincerity of the Viceroy, but facts are facts. Neither the British Cabinet nor the Viceroy, however outstanding he may be, can alter facts. And the facts are that India had been trained to look to the British power for everything. Now it is not possible for India to take her mind off that state all of a sudden. I have never appreciated the argument that the British want so many months to get ready to leave. During that time all parties will look to the British Cabinet and the Viceroy. We have not defeated the British force of arms. It has been a victory for India by moral force. Assuming, of course, that every word of what has been said is meant to be carried out, then the British decision will go down in history as the noblest act of the British nation. That being so the thirteen months' stay of the British power and British arms is really a hindrance rather than a help because everybody looks for help to the great military machine they have brought into being. That happened in Bengal, in Bihar, in the Punjab, and in the North-West Frontier Province. The

[1] The addressee had slapped a little boy whom he had found tinkering with the garden fence.

[2] This appeared under the title "Quit Now".

Hindus and the Muslims said in turn: 'Let us have the British troops.' It is a humiliating spectacle. I have often said before but it does not suffer in value through repetition because every time I repeat it, it gains force: the British will have to take the risk of leaving India to chaos or anarchy. This is so because there has been no home rule; the [rule] has been imposed on the people. And, when you voluntarily remove that rule there might be no rule in the initial state. It might have come about if we had gained victory by the force of arms. The communal feuds you see here are, in my opinion, partly due to the presence of the British. If the British were not here, we would still go through the fire, no doubt, but that fire would purify us.

What sort of Indo-British relationship do you envisage after June, 1948?

I envisage the friendliest relationship between Britain and India assuming that a complete withdrawal takes place with complete honesty behind it—no mental reservations of any kind whatsoever.[1]

Does the clause incorporated in the Draft Constitution on the abolition of untouchability in itself represent a great reform?

No. That clause does not represent a great or any reform. It registers the fact that a great revolutionary reform has taken place in Hindu society. I confess that untouchability has not yet been pulled out root and branch from the soil. Like the evil effects of the British connection, those of untouchability, a much older institution, do not disappear in a flash. It may take some years, perhaps, before a stranger coming to India can say there is no untouchability in any shape or form.

Do you believe the United Nations Organization, as at present constituted, can maintain a lasting peace?

No. I fear the world is heading towards another showdown. It is a fear that permeates many minds. But if all goes well in India, then the world may have a long peace. It will largely depend on the manner in which India takes it. And that will depend largely on British statesmanship.

What is the solution to the Palestine problem?

It has become a problem which is almost insoluble. If I were a Jew, I would tell them: 'Don't be so silly as to resort to terrorism, because you simply damage your own case which otherwise would be a proper case.' If it is just political hankering then I think there is no value in it. Why should they hanker after Palestine? They are a great

[1] According to *The Hindu*, referring to Lord Mountbatten Gandhiji said, "The British have sent their great warrior and statesman as Viceroy to finish the great act."

race and have great gifts. I have lived with the Jews many years in South Africa. If it is a religious longing then surely terrorism has no place. They should meet the Arabs, make friends with them, and not depend on British aid or American aid or any aid, save what descends from Jehovah.

Harijan, 18-5-1947, and *The Hindu,* 6-5-1947

23. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
May 5, 1947

In order to escape from the evil one, I seek refuge in God. O God ! I begin every task with the remembrance of Thy name.

Thou art the compassionate and the merciful. Thou art the Creator of the universe. Thou art Lord and Master. I praise Thee alone and desire only Thy help. Thou will mete out justice on the Day of Judgment. Show me the right path, the path which Thy saints have trod, not the wrong path of those who have offended Thee.

God is one. He is eternal, all-powerful, uncreated. There is none other like Him. He has created all things. None has created Him.

This is a translation of the verses read daily from the Koran-e-Sharif. It passes my comprehension how anyone can object to their recitation. I affirm that the enshrinement of this prayer in our hearts can only uplift and make better men and women of us.

I shall not say more today.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana-Pravachan—Part I, p. 73

[1]Owing to inclement weather the written speech could not be read out on May 5. The following day as Gandhiji could not return in time from a meeting with M. A. Jinnah, the prayers began at 6.30 p.m. Again there was objection to the recitation from the Koran, two minutes' silent prayer was, therefore, offered and this was read out.

24. TELEGRAM TO KSHITIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

NEW DELHI,
May 6, 1947

SHITIS AS UPTA[1]
K HADI RATISHTHAN
SODEPUR
HARAGANAS, ENGAL

REACHING CALCUTTA NINTH MORNING DELHI EXPRESS.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 8924

25. LETTER TO H. GREENFIELD[2]

ALMIKI ANDIR, EADING OAD,
NEW DELHI,
May 6, 1947

DEAR MR. GREENFIELD,

I received your letter of the 17th ultimo on the 25th when I was preparing to come to Delhi. I thank you for it.

Have you sent it to me for suggestions which you could incorporate in the treatise? If that is the case will you please give me the date before which I should send them? In any case the type-script I shall carry about with me to read when I feel I have a little leisure.

Yours sincerely,
GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government—1944-47, pp.1 67-8

[1] Brother of Satis Chandra Das Gupta

[2] The addressee, Member, Central Board of Revenue, had sought Gandhiji's comments on his treatise "on the subject of salt in India, in order to provide a clear bird's-eye view of our present production, distribution and consumption of salt, and to assist the Cabinet in deciding what form our future salt administration should take."

26. A TALK[1]

BHANGI NIVAS, NEW DELHI,
May 6, 1947

The only effective means for improving the lot of our people and preventing the eruption of violence around us is our *Sudarshan Chakra*[2] —the spinning wheel.

The history of cotton in our country is worth studying. Thanks to the British rule—even a sample of the cloth woven by our weavers 150 years ago is not available today. As the saying goes the snake has gone leaving only the track behind. If everyone in India spins daily, not an inch of cloth need be imported. Our Government says that Bengal is poor and so is Orissa. But somehow I am not able to swallow this. Cotton is not grown anywhere on such a large scale as in our country. The truth is we are not poor, we are lazy. If we discard laziness and ply the charkha daily for at least half an hour knowing [all its implication], our creative energy will automatically grow. I can do without food but not without sacrificial spinning even for a single day. Swaraj and peace lie in the spinning-wheel. When I first took up the spinning-wheel I did not have much knowledge about it. But my nephew Maganlal Gandhi renounced everything for it and did a lot of research in this field. One who possesses the spinning-wheel enjoys complete freedom. Whereas those depending on mill-cloth become slaves of mill-owners. Every person should determine his own needs and should himself try to fulfil them and seek other' help only when it becomes unavoidable. Unless everyone develops this attitude and becomes completely self-reliant, we can never be really free.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 301

[1] A British woman correspondent accompanied by Sarojini Naidu met Gandhiji while he was spinning.

[2] The Wheel of Vishnu

27. A TALK[1]

BHANGI NIVAS, NEW DELHI,
May 6, 1947

GANDHIJI: Because I was late in returning after meeting Jinnah Saheb, this mad girl[2] got panicky lest someone might have killed me. That is why I took a few minutes in reassuring her.

VISITOR: Europe is in the grip of industrialization. Do you think India will follow suit? Wherever I had been I found people talking about nothing but industrialization.

What you say is true. Western influence is on the increase. It would not be wrong to say that at present I am the only person having faith in village industries. No doubt I have some co-workers who are busy experimenting in the Sevagram Ashram. But if among crores there are only a hundred or a thousand having faith in village industries, it is like a drop in an ocean. Even so I dare say that India does not require mills or machines to the extent Europe does. If India chooses, it can do without them. But it is not easy to resist the temptation.

I had asked only for two minutes and you have been kind enough to grant me your precious time. I shall never forget it. I shall be taking to my country the sweet memories of these moments.

I am equally delighted to meet you.[3]

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 305-6

28. DISCUSSION WITH ARUNA ASAF ALI AND ASHOK MEHTA[4]

[*May 6, 1947*][5]

SOCIALISTS: Is there any alternative to Pakistan?

GANDHIJI: The only alternative to Pakistan in undivided India. There is no *via media*. Once you accept the principle of partition in

[1] With a British woman to whom Gandhiji applogized for having kept her waiting

[2] Manu Gandhi

[3] Gandhiji later remarked: "These people have this special quality. We must admit that they are outstanding as far as etiquette and discipline are concerned."

[4] The two socialist leaders met Gandhiji a day after his interview to Reuter; *vide* "A Letter", 24-7-1947

[5] *ibid*

respect of any province, you get into a sea of difficulties. By holding fast to the ideal of undivided India, you steer clear of all difficulties.

Then why does not Congress give a clear lead?

Because it feels helpless. It is not in favour of division. But it says, and with perfect logic, that if Pakistan is to be conceded, justice should be done to non-Muslim majority areas of Bengal and the Punjab, and to the Sikhs, and these provinces should be partitioned on the same principle on which the Muslim League demands the partition of India. I do not agree with that view. In my opinion, the Congress should in no circumstance be party to partition. We should tell the British to quit unconditionally. If they do not listen and partition the country in spite of us, we shall know what to do. Why should we make ourselves accessory to what we hold to be evil?

In other words, you think that the British power need not stay on in India for another thirteen months?

Quite so. If their intention is perfectly honest, they should not bother as to what would happen to the country after them. The country is quite capable of taking care of itself. They can quit with a clear conscience.

The Congress leaders have said that the British cannot go away without bringing about a settlement between the Congress and the League.

Supposing no agreement can be arrived at between the congress and the League even after thirteen months, would that be a 'reason' for them to stay on in India even after that date? I therefore say: Let them quit now, otherwise their going even after thirteen months will be problematical.

But if they go to whom are they to hand over power?

They can hand over power either to the Muslim League or to the Congress, I do not mind which. If they hand it over to the Congress, the Congress will come to a just settlement with the League. But even if they make it over to the League, the Congress has nothing to fear. Only, let the transfer of power be complete and unqualified. The way they do it will provide a test of their sincerity and honesty. so far the British have said that they had yielded to Congress non-violence; it was because of the non-violent struggle launched by the Congress that the Cabinet Mission was sent and the British Government made its famous declaration[1] to withdraw from India. If

[1] Of February 20, 1947; *vide* "Clement Attlee's Statement", 20-2-1947

this is really so, they should have no difficulty in handing over power to the Congress. But so far as I, for one, am concerned, they are free to ignore the Congress and hand over power to the League. They will then have bowed before the power of violence. For that is what the League swears by. We shall then pit our non-violence even against the League's violence. Non-violence was meant not to give fight to the British only. It is ubiquitous in its application and scope. We shall settle with the League by offering our innocent blood to be spilt without spilling any and we will succeed.

Your position is perfectly logical and consistent. You said in 1942 that the British power should withdraw immediately and unconditionally. You have not changed. We are wholly with you there. But a considerable section among Congressmen today has begun to think in terms of collaboration with the British power.

You are right. I have not changed. I would change only if I saw my mistake. But I see none. On the contrary, with every fresh experience I am becoming firmer and firmer in my views.

What is your attitude on the States question?

Irrespective of the Congress policy, Gandhiji told them, he had hitherto been in favour of the preservation of the States. But his attitude in that regard had stiffened of late. The British had allowed the States to exist on their sufferance. In certain matters they kept them completely under their thumb while they gave them free rein in others to serve their selfish ends. They were in honour bound to settle the question of the States before leaving. It would be a gross betrayal to leave that question to be decided after independence. For instance, could the Nizam be free to follow a policy antagonistic to India, or to set up ordnance factories or factories for the manufacture of heavy armour within his dominion?

We do not wish the destruction of the Princes. Let them by all means live, but only as servants of their people . . .[1] If the British are not insincere, they should withdraw from the whole of India including the States, leaving the map of India unchanged.

What is our duty?

If you agree with my analysis, you and those over whom you have influence should join me in preparing the atmosphere for non-violence in the country. I would love to have you with me in that.

The whole country is with you.

In a sense, yes. But I suppose, "the whole country" includes

[1] Omission as in the source

you also. Now tell me how many of you are with me? Is Aruna with me? Are Ashok and Achyut[1] with me? No, you are not. The Congress is not. So I am left to plough my lonely furrow and I am content to do so. If you decide to launch forth with me, I shall take it to mean that you have pledged yourselves to die without killing, abjured the doctrine that the end justifies the means. I have admiration for what Jayaprakash, Aruna, Achyut and others did in 1942. They thought nothing of playing with their lives. I have paid tribute to their fearlessness and courage[2], But you will now have to cultivate the higher courage which dying without killing calls for. In that campaign sabotage can have no place. You may not agree but it is my conviction that if the Bihar masses had not had the lesson which they had at your hands in 1942, the excesses which bihar witnessed last year would never have occured. To me it is little consolation that those who sponsored the sabotage programme did not themselves directly participate in violence. They should have known that once the evil spirit of violence is unleash-ed, by its inherent nature it cannot be checked or even kept within any prescribed limits. All violence inevitably tends to run to excess. Therefore, I repeat, and I shall continue to repeat with my last breath, that it is for us to inculcate amongst the people the spirit of innocent suffering and self-sacrifice only without any evasion into or truck with its opposite.

I am proceeding to Calcutta. Some people are trying to dissuade me from going there. They say things there are worse even than in Noakhali, that there I shall be faced by ruffians who understand nothing. I tell them, that is the very reason why I want to go there. If in the course of it death comes, I shall welcome it. What better use can there be for this body that has already weathered seventy-eight winters? My death will immediately stop the fratricide.

If you cast in your lot with me, I shall call every one of you, top-rankers, to defy death with me. I own no party. But you will then be my party. Long before you were born I was a socialist. You are arm-chair Socialists. Your ideal is to provide a motor-car and a bungalow to everybody in India. Till that happens, you will continue to live as at present, without sacrificing any of your comforts. I, on the other hand, believe in putting myself on a level with the poorest and the least here and now. My socialism is not of today. I began to live socialism while I was still in South Africa. Even then many labourite

[1] Achyut Patwardhan

[2] *Vide* "Answer to Visitors", 7-5-1944 and "Letter to Aruna Asaf Ali", 9-6-1944

socialists, so called, used to come to me with their bedraggled ties of dirty red to invite me to join their ranks. But they remained to join mine instead. For they saw that true socialism can be based only on non-violence.

If you tell me that non-violence is your ultimate goal, but in order to realize it you have to make use of violent means, because in this matter-of-fact world there is no other way, I shall say you are labouring under a great delusion. Cannot even Jinnah, that way, claim to be a votary of non-violence, for in Islam it is clearly laid down that anyone who oppresses the weak is no Muslim? But see where this has taken historical Islam.

Once you open the flood-gates of violence, you cannot control it. You will be borne away before its onrushing tide. I have, therefore, one and only one thing to say to you: Carry to its ultimate conclusion the fearlessness which characterized you in 1942. Now is the time and the hour. If you let it slip away, it may never return. By learning the art of dying without killing you can mould India's destiny. There is no other way.

Can we sum up your position by saying that the British should quite immediately and unconditionally leaving India to God?

You may put it that way. And if in the result there is chaos, that should not frighten us. We shall emerge from the ordeal all the stronger.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 161-5

29. TALK WITH PRATAP DAYALDAS[1]

NEW DELHI,

[On or before *May 7, 1947*][2]

Asked to clarify his advice that Sind Hindus should migrate in the event of partition, Gandhiji told Paratap Dayaldas:

I said that you should suffer bravely, but non-violently unto death. But if you cannot do that and must make a disgraceful surrender of all including honour, your womenfolk and religion, in that case, the only safe and proper course for you to take is migration, not singly, but of all the Hindus and other non-Muslims,

To a further query as to what would be the plight of the minorities in Sind in the case of a partition of India, Gandhiji replied :

[1] This appeared in *Harijan* under the title "Gandhiji's Advice to Sindh Hindus."

[2] Gandhiji was in New Delhi from May 1 to May 7, 1947.

That question is to be fought out in the Constituent Assembly, but I am certain that all protection that is humanly possible will be stipulated for. You must not be weaklings.

Harijan, 25-5-1947

30. TELEGRAM TO G. V. MAVALANKAR[1]

May 7, 1947

ADA AVALANKAR

ERVINDIA

OONA

WIRED BARVE ABOUT GURUJI.[2] SIDDAMAPPA BASSAPPA FASTING. KNOW NOTHING ABOUT IT. INQUIRE.

BAPU

Samsmarano, p. 217

31. A TALK[3]

NEW DELHI,
May 7, 1947

Asked . . . whether Pakistan would die a natural death if conceded, Gandhiji's reply was :

Can you describe Pakistan to me? What reply can be given to an unknown premise? I have tried to understand what it is and have failed. And if the Punjab and Bengal today are hall-marks of Pakistan, then it can never exist.

I cannot understand the meaning of Pakistan. Should Pakistan be attained after so much blood-shed? I am the lone follower of my ideas. Maybe, my intellect is deadened by old age! Still, how can I help mentioning the facts? Since I regard myself as a servant of the nation I would be betraying the faith of the people if I did not express what is in my heart. Personally I will say that the matter concerning

[1] This was in reply to the addresse's wire which read: "Sane Guruji may perhaps be induced to give up fast if majority of temple trustees . . . sign declaration of willingness to open temple . . . Trustees . . . seem to interpret your advice to them and Sane Guruji as meaning that they need take no steps now to open temple in view of new legislation . . . "

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Barve", 1-5-1947

[3] This was addressed to some local Muslims and representatives of two social organizations of Delhi as also to two Europeans.

Amrit Kaur's report of the talk in *Harijan,* "How Gandhiji Feels and Acts", has been collated with the Gujarati in *Biharni Komi Agman.*

the partition of the provinces should be decided by us peacefully after the British have withdrawn and with mutual consultation. Why should we have the British between us? keeping them between us is an indication of our cowardice and mutual lack of trust. Is it a matter of any credit if two brothers take their quarrel to a third man and seek judgment from him? Moreover I am surprised that no one stops to think that the British would exploit to their advantage this weakness of ours. Looking up to the British for every little thing dissipates our strength and cripples us. I would say even with regard to the Princely States that they are in such a helpless state that I pity them. The British were their protectors. Now, if they want to be happy they will have to be part of India and become servants of the nation handing over their powers to the people.

Since the last two days socialists have been coming to me.[1] I have been telling them the same things. I say that if they are keen on bringing about socialism in the country, they should forget their internal differences, do physical labour and develop character by thoroughly examining their private and public lives. Socialism will not come by occupying positions of power and by delivering speeches from the platform. They must carefully examine every moment of their lives from the time they get up in the morning to the time they retire to bed at night. They must have before them a clear and perfect goal. And if truth and non-violence are not observed scrupulously the socialism which they are trying to bring about would be just shattered and no trace would be left of their existence. The same thing applies to the Congress. If the Congressmen and the Socialists, beautiful both in name and implication, do not follow their principles in action, there will be a revolt in the country and communism will make inroads. I shall not live to see it. But expand your activities in such a way that the future generations do not curse you.

The day we all give up our dharma will be the day of our downfall. Today the Hindus and the Muslims have forgotten their religions. But it is my hope and faith that like turbid flood waters which bring with them all the dirt on the way but turn clear once the flood subsides the present tide in the country will also subside and the atmosphere will clear up and present a hopeful picture to the world because we would have attained our freedom through dharma and *tapashcharya.*

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with Aruna Asalf Ali And Ashok Mehta", 6-5-1947

There was a time when Great Britain was considered the Empress of the Oceans. There was none to contest her claim. Hence if Britain maintains true and honest friendship with India, she will attain the highest moral stature and the world will bow before her. Not only that, she will attain a position even higher than that of an Empress and all countries will have to look to her to shape the future of the world. This is because I know from experience that the British do possess these qualities and powers. I have lived among the British for many years and a large number of Englishmen and women are my friends.

I have passed some of the best years of my life among them and I have always voted against the name of "Perfidious Albion" for them and have preferred to subscribe to Cowper's well-known verse "Hypocrisy is an ode to virtue". But Britain has yet to rise to those heights.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 308-10, and *Harijan*, 18-5-1947

32. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
May 7, 1947

As soon as Gandhiji arrived at the prayer meeting he inquired whether smt. Uma Devi had come . . . . She was persuaded to sit on the platform at Gandhiji's insistence. Gandhiji also invited Smt. Vibhavaribai Deshpande and said that these two women had protested against the recitation from the Koran. Gandhiji referred to a letter signed by some twenty persons suggesting that the prayer should not be stopped because a few persons protested.

Do you think there are only two or twenty persons who think like this? I think that all of you who do not protest and sit here silently day after day have the same thought in your minds which is expressed in the letter.

But I would like to request you to be patient. Religion can be pursued only with patience. Hinduism has given great importance to tolerance. Shankaracharya has stressed the importance of patience so much that he has said that we need greater patience to attain *moksha*[1] than to transfer the waters of the ocean to another pit drop by drop with the help of a blade of grass. Now suppose a man starts emptying the waters of the ocean with the help of a jug, if not with a blade of

[1] Salvation

grass, and even finds a hollow place big enough where he can transfer those waters, and if moreover the man lives for hundreds and thousands of years, he may be able to empty the limitless expanse of the ocean. But what would happen to the fresh water pouring into the ocean? How much patience would then be needed to dry up the ocean? Naturally Shankaracharya is speaking of the infinite patience expected of a person desirous of attaining *moksha*. He says that with one foot on the stirrup of a neighing horse and the other ready to mount, we cannot ask our guru to tell us what Brahman is. That is not the way one can know Brahman. All of us who have gathered here have come with a desire to learn. We all desire to attain *moksha*. But do we have the capacity to cultivate the necessary patience? If not, let us at least cultivate enough patience to pray. What good will it do us if we go on praying while a child may be howling away? A prayer to God has to come from the heart. God is not so gullible as to accept words from the lips as prayer. Prayer does not mean mere chanting of words! And why should we insist on such utterance when we are facing opposition of any kind? What we in our superior strength do after having threatened the young man into silence—would you call it pursuit of dharma? Dharma lies in putting up with the young man. I am glad that you who have gathered here in such large numbers followed your religion peacefully and tolerated an ignorant person.

But today we are not faced with a young man but with a lady. I find that she is younger even than my adopted daughter. She is the wife of a secretary[1]. She has sent me a letter. I shall discuss it first.

The contents of the letter show not knowledge but sheer ignorance of Hinduism. This manner of protecting religion is, in fact, one that would degrade it. I wish to tell all Hindus and Sikhs that they should not adopt such misguided methods. I shall reply to the questions of this lady one by one.

1. It is not correct to say that a temple is defiled by reading the Koran there. How can praise of God in a temple be contrary to dharma? No one protested when the meaningof *Auz-o-Billahi*, etc., was explained[2] here in Hindi yesterday. Would it be an irreligious act if someone recited the *Gita* in its Arabic translation? If there is anyone who says so, he is an ignoramus. There was a rule in the Frontier

[1] Of the Akhil Bharatiya Deshi Rajya Hindu Mahasabha, who ran *Rajasthan Samachar*, a daily

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 5-5-1947

Province that the Koran might not be subjected to translation. But Dr. Khan Saheb, who is now the Premier, is a sensible man. He said that if the Koran were translated, it would spread wider. More people would read it and understand it. If Khan Saheb offered his *namaaz* in this temple, would the temple be defiled? The *namaaz* consists of recitations from the Koran. Would such recitation be a sin?

2. You might say that the Muslims have sinned against the Hindus. But have the Hindus lagged behind? You should know what the Hindus have done in Bihar. They killed women and children, set houses on fire and chased the Muslims out of their homes. Now if a Muslim came forward and said that the readers of the *Bhagavadgita* had committed great sins, what a travesty of truth it would be. To a certain extent I am willing to admit that the Muslims have committed atrocities, that they have sinned. But what is beyond my comprehension is the contention that because a reader of the Koran happens to be a sinner the Koran itself is sinful. That way, the *Gita,* the Upanishads, the Vedas, in fact, all religious books, can be proved to be sinful. People draw different meanings even from the *Gita.* Some people interpret the? *Gita* in quite a different way from how I do. I find in the *Gita* the message of non-violence, while others say that the *Gita* ordains the killing of the *atatayi*[1]. Can I go and stop them from saying so? I listen to them and do what I feel is correct.

3. Saying that I have not read the *Gita* in a mosque only means that I am a coward, does it not? Granted that I am a coward and am afraid of saying my prayer before the Muslims in a mosque. But if I am a coward in one place, need I be a coward everywhere? Do you want me to be a coward here also?

You ought to know that in many places I stay with the Muslims, where I regularly offer my prayers without hesitation. And, while I was touring in Noakhali I often held my prayers very near the mosques although not actually inside one. Once I held the prayer within the enclosure of a mosque, in a building on its premises. And I used to have all the paraphernalia of the prayer with me. There used to be the beating of the drum and *Ramdhun* with the clapping of hands. We did not have the drum with us but we did have *Ramdhun* with clapping of hands in the premises of the mosque. I told the local Muslims that just as they took the name of Rahim, I would take the name of Rama. I said that it was not worthy of those who took the

[1] One who is guilty of heinous crimes, viz., the incendiary, the posisoner, the assassin, the roubber, the usurper of land and the ravisher (I. 36)

name of Rahim to stop people from taking the name of Rama. And they did not stop me from taking the name of Rama.

You talk of atrocities. There have been many atrocities in Noakhali. But let me tell you that the atrocities committed by the Muslims in Noakhali are not equal to those committed by the Hindus in Bihar. I am a witness to this fact. I have been to Noakhali and I have also toured Bihar.

Anyone who says that I cannot go and offer my prayer before the Muslims does not know Gandhi. What does this poor Uma Devi Know of the stuff Gandhi is made of? I am not ashamed of myself but of what she has been saying. I am ashamed of this gentleman of a secretary who, in spite of holding office in the Hindu Dharma Sabha, is so terribly ignorant. When the ocean catches fire, who can extinguish it?

But the fact is she is not opposed to the particular prayer but to the Arabic language. Yesterday, when a translated version of the Koranic portion was read out it did not hurt anyone.

Gandhiji then repeated the translated version.

Now see, I have read out the whole prayer again. It has not hurt even this lady. She finds nothing wrong with it. Had she found anything sinful, would she have allowed me to read it? Would she not have stopped me and said: 'Keep quiet. I do not wish to hear it.'

But how could she stop me? In what other way can I pray to God? Does she want that I should not refer to God as *Aja*[1]? Or that I should not consider Him Immortal? Or that I should not call Him Almighty? Or that I should not refer to Him as the Lord? What else then can I say in my prayer? What ignorance, then, to say that whatever we wish to say in our prayer becomes sinful when we put it in the Arabic language? We must save ourselves from this gross ignorance.

Let us then pray to God to protect us from darkness. In our Hindu prayers even the words chosen say: "Lead us from darkness to light."[2] I feel very bad that instead of appreciating such an unparallelled religion we should discard it like a stone. And it hurts me all the more when the wife of a man who wishes to serve religion is bent upon bringing down religion by such acts. In our society the husband is entrusted with high duties. It is his duty to prevent his wife's

[1] The Unborn

[2] तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय। *Brihadaranyakopanishad*, III. 28. *Vide* "Ashram Bhajanavali"

thoughts from going astray. But this gentleman has imparted to his wife a training in utter intolerance. How can religion survive under such conditions?

If we continue to be like this, Hinduism is certainly not going to survive. Nor will India be able to survive. We shall not be able to save India even if the British quit. In Independent India we have to live like brothers. Those who are enemies today would become friends tomorrow, Would you then tell your Muslim neighbour that he should not read the Koran? Would it in any way raise the status of Hinduism?

Hence I am asking you to pray in silence. For, if so many people sit silently and pray and do not betray their anger against a couple of individuals, we shall be purified, we shall become pious.

You all know that I had gone to meet Jinnah Saheb yesterday. I cannot tell you everything that took place between us. We have come to an agreement that what we talk would remain between us, and not be allowed to leak out. None the less, I have conveyed to Badshah Khan, Pandit Jawaharlal and our other leaders the gist of my talks with Jinnah Saheb. Here too I shall briefly mention it. We both have signed a document[1] which involves two points. The first thing is that we shall not coerce anyone to fulfil our political objectives. Each side will try to convince the other about its own point of view and would never resort to threat or bullying.

The other point is about restraining the people from indulging in acts of violence and other atrocities. You must have realized from Jinnah Saheb's Press statement[2] yesterday that we have clear political differences. Jinnah Saheb wants Pakistan. Congressmen have also decided in favour of acceding to the demand for Pakistan. But they insist that the Hindu and Sikh [majority] areas of the Punjab and Bengal cannot be included in Pakistan. Only the Muslim [majority] areas can be separated from India. But I for one cannot agree to Pakistan on any account. I cannot tolerate any proposal for vivisecting the country. There are many things happening which I cannot bear. But they still do not stop. They go on happening. But in this case,

[1] *Vide*"A Joint Appeal", 12-4-1947

[2] Which was issued with Gandhiji's concurrence; *vide* "M. A. Jinah's Statement to the Press", 6-5-1947

when I say that I cannot bear it, I mean that I do not wish to be a party to it. In other words, I am not going to be influenced by them in this matter. If they want to have Pakistan, let them, settle it with their fellowmen. I cannot talk as a representative of any one party. I represent everyone. It is my attempt to be a trustee of all the Hindus and Muslims, Sikhs and Parsis, Jains and Christians living in this country. I wish to be their trustee even if I have not the capacity or fitness for it. Hence, I can-not be a party to the formation of Pakistan. When I know that what Jin-nah Saheb wishes to do is a dangerous thing, how can I put my signature to the proposal of acceptance of Pakistan? I conveyed this point to him very patiently. We did not quarrel. We talked to each other cordially.

I told Jinnah Saheb in polite words that he could not have Pakistan by resorting to force. He could not compel me to acquiesce in the forma-tion of Pakistan. None but God can compel me. If he wishes to have it by persuasion, why, he can have not only Pakistan but the whole of India.

I have joined him in issuing the peace appeal and in order to make that appeal effective I have requested Jinnah Saheb to take from me whatever work he might wish to take. I told him that I would go with him even a thousand times if that was necessary.

Let me also tell you that everyone had tried to stop me from going to Jinnah Saheb. They asked me what I would gain by going to him. But did I go to him to gain anything? I went to him to know his mind. If I have not gained anything by going to him, I have not lost anything either. I claim to have his friendship. After all he also belongs to India. Whatever happens, I have to spend my life with him. How can I refuse to go to him?

We shall have to live in amity. We should not compel anyone even to live in harmony. I would say that if they want Pakistan they should bring us round to their point of view. Let them also convince others that [the formation of] Pakistan is in the interest of everyone in which case I would definitely agree to their proposal. But if they expect to force me into granting it—well I am not going to give my consent.

You might ask me why India cannot be divided. You might wonder what harm it would do. Let me tell you my head is not empty. I have in my head many ideas concerning this matter. But please read

and hear [from others] about these ideas. Today I have given you a fairly good amount of my time.

Now I am going to Calcutta. I do not know what I would be able to do there. Nor do I know how long I would stay there and when I would return. I have given my word that I would come whenever Jawaharlal, Kripalani or the Viceroy sent for me. And I do hope I shall be seeing you again.

In the mean while, please understand that nothing will be gained by preventing me from holding the prayer. I get the advantage of remaining silent. Nor would you people who have suppressed your anger and remained silent benefit less. But those who cause the obstruction have everything to lose. You people should help them see reason. You would remember that when there was trouble during the prayer the other day, the Secretary of the Hindu Mahasabha had pacified them by persuasion. You should also persuade them in the same way. You should win them over not by threats and force but with peaceful argument that in Gandhi's prayer there is only religion, not irreligion. If they fail to be convinced I have the patience to offer silent prayer. Even in this temple I would offer the same prayer all by myself. The same prayer was offered the day before yesterday when it rained. It was the same temple and the same Hindus were present. But again today there was a protest. This is the sad state to which we are reduced.

Hence I request you to convince these people by your non-violent behaviour so that they may tell me that I am free to have my prayers here, whether it is in Arabic or Persian or Sanskrit.

Now please sit quiet for two minutes and offer silent prayer. Better still if will keep your eyes closed.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana-Pravachan—Part I, pp. 74-81

33. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

IN THE RAIN TO PATNA
May 8, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

It strikes me that I should summarize what I said and wanted to say and left unfinished for want of time, at our last Sunday's[1] meeting.

[1] May 4; *vide* "Interview with Lord Mountbatten", 4-5-1947

I

Whatever may be said to the contrary, it would be a blunder of the first magnitude for the British to be a party in any way whatsoever to the division of India. If it has to come, let it come after the British withdrawal, as a result of understanding between the parties or of an armed conflict which according to Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah is taboo. Protection of minorities can be guaranteed by establishing a court of arbitration in the event of difference of opinion among contending parties.

2. Meantime the Interim Government should be composed either of Congressmen or those whose names the Congress chooses or of Muslim League men or those whom the League chooses. The dual control of today, lacking team work and team spirit, is harmful for the country. The parties exhaust themselves in the effort to retain their seat and to placate you. Want of team spirit demoralizes the Government and imperils the integrity of the services so essential for good and efficient government.

3. Referendum at this stage in the Frontier (or any Province for that matter) is a dangerous thing in itself. You have to deal with the material that faces you. In any case nothing should or can be done over Dr. Khan Saheb's head as Premier. Note that this paragraph is relevant only if division is at all to be countenanced.

4. I feel sure that partition of the Punjab and Bengal is wrong in every case and a needless irritant for the League. This as well as all innovation can come after the British withdrawal, not before, except always for mutual agreement. Whilst the British power is functioning in India, it must be held principally responsible for the preservation of peace in the country. That machine seems to be cracking under the existing strain which is caused by the raising of various hopes that cannot or must not be fulfilled. These have no place during the remaining thirteen months. This period can be most profitably shortened if the minds of all were focussed on the sole task of withdrawal. You and you alone can do it to the exclusion of all other activity so far as the British occupation is concerned.

5. Your task as undisputed master of naval warfare, great as it was, was nothing compared to what you are called to do now. The single-mindedness and clarity that gave you success are much more required in this work.

6. If you are not to leave a legacy of chaos behind, you have to

make your choice and leave the Government of the whole of India including the States to one party. The Constituent Assembly has to provide for the governance even of that part of India which is not represented by the Muslim League or some States.

7. Non-partition of the Punjab and Bengal does not mean that the minorities in these Provinces are to be neglected. In both the Provinces they are large and powerful enough to arrest and demand attention. If the popular Governments cannot placate them, the Governors should during the interregnum actively interfere.

8. The intransmissibility of paramountcy is a vicious doctrine, if it means that they[1] can become sovereign and a menace for independent India. All the power wherever exercised by the British in India must automatically descend to the successor. Thus the people of the States become as much part of independent India as the people of British India. The present Princes are puppets created or tolerated for the upkeep and prestige of the British Power. The unchecked powers exercised by them over their people is probably the worst blot on the British Crown. The Princes under the new regime can exercise only such powers as trustees can and as can be given to them by the Constituent Assembly. It follows that they cannot maintain private armies or arms factories. Such ability and statecraft as they possess must be at the disposal of the Republic and must be used for the good of their people and the people as a whole. I have merely stated what should be done with the States. It is not for me to show in this letter how this can be done.

9. Similarly difficult but not so baffling is the question of the Civil Service. Its members should be taught from now to accommodate themselves to the new regime. They may not be partisans taking sides. The slightest trace of communalism among them should be severely dealt with. The English element in it should know that they owe loyalty to the new regime rather than to the old and therefore to Great Britain. The habit of regarding themselves as rulers and therefore superiors must give place to the spirit of true service of the people.

II

10. I had a very pleasant two hours and three quarters with Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah on Tuesday last. We talked about the joint statement on non-violence. He was agreeably emphatic over his belief

[1] They States

in non-violence. He has reiterated it in the Press statement[1] which was drafted by him.

11. We did talk about Pakistan *cum* partition. I told him that my opposition to Pakistan persisted as before and suggested that in view of his declaration of faith in non-violence he should try to convert his opponents by reasoning with them and not by show of force. He was, however, quite firm that the question of Pakistan was not open to discussion. Logically, for a believer in non-violence, nothing, not even the existence of God could be outside its scope.

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur saw the first eight paragraphs, the purport of which she was to give to Pandit Nehru with whom I was to send you this letter. But, I could not finish it in New Delhi. I finished it on the train.

I hope you and Her Excellency are enjoying your hardearned rest.[2]

Yours sincerely,

GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY

SIMLA

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 247-50

[1] *Vide* "M. A. Jinhas Statement to the Press", 6-5-1947

[2] Acknowledging this on May 11, the Viceroy thanked Gandhiji "for the advice you were kind enough to send me which I appreciated receiving."

34. ADVICE TO STATION MASTER

PATNA,
May 8, 1947

I do not find fault with you for coming to ask me.[1] You have been trained that way. Will you go to every compartment and ask the occupants as you ask me? If you would not go there you should not have come here either. I am not a Government official. These Ministers are but they have not come to meet me in their official capacity. They have come as family members. If they had not come I would not have been able to do anything to them. But at heart we are old colleagues. They have come to me like many others who would have come to meet their relatives passing through the station. It is your duty to blow the whistle and start the train at the correct time, even if the highest official may be in the train. It is another thing if your superiors have given you any instructions in writing. Except in such a case you must carry on your routine work. It would be good training for you and also for these Ministers as well as the people. You should not be scared at the sight of the Ministers. They are servants of the people. Hence you should in fact be fearless in their presence. The Ministers too should regard persons in their departments not as servants but as their younger brothers. Then alone would we be happy and be able to enjoy the fruits of democracy. So the rule which applies to other passengers in this train also applies to me. Of course I must admit that the rule is not observed fully. For instance, even though we travel third, this compartment is reserved for the two or three of us. But I can do nothing about it. If this is not done, everybody would want to get into this compartment. So, this practice of obliging me by reserving my compartment has been continued since the days of the British. I am not saying this to scold you. Please do not feel hurt. But this is an occasion from which all of us can learn something, and how would you know if I do not mention it to you? And I am a teacher after all, and it is my nature that I cannot help correcting what my conscience regards as an error. Well, I have given you these few minutes and now do not hesitate to start the train at your convenience. I know you have come to me to show me courtesy,

[1] As Gandhiji was busy talking to the Bihar Ministers the Station Master came to enquire whether he could start the train.

but I have ventured to mention these things as they occurred to me.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 317-8

35. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS [2]

IN THE RAIN,
May 9, 1947

QUESTION: The Government are at present unable to supply the requisite material for building purposes. Should a non-official organization now take up this task?

ANSWER: In my opinion the task of rehabilitation is entirely Government's work. If a private agency takes up any financial responsibility it would be a dangerous thing. For it would carry with it the implication that those who have been rehabilitated by private financial help would also be defended privately. I hold this to be impossible and unwise, if not impossible. It should be our ende-avour to induce local Muslims to help the evacuees in rehabilitation when Government aid is inadequate. But if neither the former nor the Government prove no helpful, no non-official organization should or can undertake the task for reasons given above.

Many cases are being withdrawn by the police after enquiry as evidence is reported to be lacking; we have heard of more than 600 of such cases. Should these be reopened and a legal committee set up for the purpose? The Noakhali District Relief, Rehabilitation, Rescue Committee has a legal branch. But it is not active. Should Satis Babu try to take up this work with the help of the N.D.R.R.R.C.?

I think this we must not do on any account. The legal committee must work efficiently and effectively. It does not fall within our province. Our province is to teach the people to help themselves even up to the point of defence against Government or other oppression; that is the meaning of 'Do or Die'.

Rice now sells at Rs. 25 a maund. The Government have stopped selling rice to riot-affected people at controlled rate. If we store rice and sell at controlled rate it

[1] The Station Master was very pleased and said that in his 45 years of life that was the first instance of strict discipline and fearlessness and wished that every department had a disciplinarian like Gandhiji.

[2] Some workers met Gandhiji at Burdwan Station on his way to Calcutta. A number of questions had been kept ready to which Gandhiji dictated answers on the train.

will require a capital of 20 lacs of rupees. Should we undertake this work?

I think, in dangerous areas such as Noakhali, we must not supply rice through private agency. I would far rather that after a clear statement the people trek to safer parts and in doing so they get all the help necessary, financial or other.

It is strange but true that every difficulty that faces us in Noakhali is present in Bihar almost to the same extent as in Noakhali. Realization of this fact should make us think furiously and enable us to deal with the Noakhali problem clearly and bravely. We should on no account countenance any lethargy, falsehood, cowardliness or selfishness on the part of the refugees.[1]

The Hindus being influenced by your preaching of ahimsa may in the near future get beaten by the Muslim League followers. This is the general feeling in view of the belief that the Muslims are being secretly armed on a wide scale.

The assumption is serious. If it is sound, it casts a grave reflection upon the Provincial Governments. In any event, how I wish the Hindus were influenced by my teaching of ahimsa which is a force mightier than the force of arms however powerful. No teacher can be held responsible for a caricature of his teachings. Do we not know how geometrical propositions are caricatured by indifferent pupils? Are the teachers to be blamed? The utmost that can be said against me is that I am an incompetent teacher of ahimsa. If such be the case, let us pray that my successor will be much more competent and successful.

After the British withdrawal from India, there is a likelihood of chaos and anarchy prevailing in the country. There is a fear that the nationalists unless they immediately started learning self-defence with fire-arms, may suffer and ultimately find themselves under the heels of the Muslim League whose followers believe only in fighting. Pakistan or no Pakistan, the trouble is coming because there is the secret hand of imperialism working behind the scenes. Would you not modify your theory of ahimsa in the larger context of such a political situation overtaking the country for the sake of individual defence?

The nationalists are not worth the proud name they bear, if they fear the Muslim League as you imagine. Can the nationalists exclude the followers of the League from the sphere of their action? I am not thinking of vote-catching devices. I am thinking of the Muslims as Indians, the same as others, needing their care and attention. If the leaders have ceased to believe in ahimsa, they should boldly and

[1] What follows appeared in *Harijan* under the title "Ahimsa, A Fact of Life".

frankly say so and set about putting their house in order. For me there is no scope for any change. Ahimsa is no mere theory with me, it is a fact of life based on extensive experience. How can a man who had tasted apples and repeatedly found them sweet be induced to describe them as bitter? Those who say they are bitter have tasted not apples but something looking very much like them. Ahimsa should not fear the secret or open hand of imperialists assuming for the sake of argument that it is working as suggested in the question,

My Days with Gandhi, pp. 223-4, *Harijan*, 25-5-1947, and *Biharni Komi Agman*

36. LETTER TO VIDYAVATI

May 9, 1947

CHI. VIDYA[1],

You will learn from the back of this what I have done.[2] Now something will have to be done there itself. What makes you think you will go mad? Those who have faith in God can never lose their head. Bear with patience whatever unhappiness comes your way.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati Papers. Courtesy: National Gandhi Museum and Library

37. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[3]

SODEPUR,

May 9, 1947

Gandhiji said that he had not expected to come to Calcutta but when he had reports from friends about the events in Calcutta he thought that he should come to Calcutta and put in his work in pursuit of the same object that had taken him to Noakhali and then to Bihar. They saw before them Gurudev's portrait with floral decorations. The 25th of *Baishakh* was Gurudev's birthday. That was why they had two hymns from the pen of Gurudev sung to them. Great men never died and it was up to the people to keep them immortal by continuing the work they had commenced.

[1] Of Hardoi

[2] This was a letter from the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals, Bihar, regarding the admission of a Talukdar from U. P. to the European Mental Hospital, Kanke.

[3] The report in *Amrita Bazar Patrika* has been collated with the version in *The Hindu.*

The second hymn that was sung to them, namely, *Hinshaya unmatta prithvi* (the world was mad with violence) was most apposite at the moment when Hindus and Muslims were fighting. The purport of the hymn was that God should take them from darkness unto light, from untruth unto truth and from misery unto bliss indefinable. That was the *mantra* with which he had armed Deenabandhu Andrews and Pearson[1] when he permitted them to proceed to South Africa. These two were amongst the best of Gurudev's numerous devotees throughout the world.

It was a good thing, proceeded Gandhiji, that Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah's words uttered to the Pathan deputation that had waited on him were to the same tune. They should read those words for themselves. If they all followed the advice India would truly become a unique land of real peace.

You know that I am joint signatory to the document[2] on non-violence. That at once imposes on me the duty of fasting unto death if either Hindus or Muslims descended to the level of savages or beasts. Let the Hindus of Bihar and the Muslims of Noakhali remember the fact.

Continuing, Gandhiji said that he had earned the right of fast by the service he had rendered and was still rendering to the Muslims of India. The poet Iqbal had taught them already that true religion did not teach men to hate one another. Let them all take that lesson to heart and render India a land of peace and brotherhood amongst men.

The British are surely going to quit India and if we have any differences between ourselves, let us make it completely our own affair and not approach the British for a settlement. As for the latter, they have no duty except to quit at the earliest possible moment. If they fulfil that part of their task, all else can be settled between ourselves as between brother and brother.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 10-5-1947, and *The Hindu,* 10-5-1947

[1] William Winstanley Pearson
[2] *Vide* "Talks With Sikhs", 12-4-1947

38. INTERVIEW TO ABUL HASHEM[1]

SODEPUR,

Saturday, May 10, 1947

Hashem Saheb opened his case[2] by stating that Bengalis were after all Bengalis, whether Hindu or Muslim. They had a common language, a common culture and did not wish to be ruled by Pakistanis who lived a thousand miles away. Gandhiji said :

But haven't we been so long ruled by people who live seven thousand miles away?

Yes, but then that would mean that Pakistanis of the West would rule over us in Bengal.

But supposing they do not rule over you, and you wish to form a voluntary alliance with Pakistan because you have a common religion which both of you wish to propagate throughout the world, then where is the objection?

But then you are talking of Pan-Islamism.

Yes I am. Perhaps you do not know how deep the Muslim feeling about it is. I had evidence of that even while I was a student in England many years ago. What is then your objection to a voluntary federation of different countries professing the same religion?

Hashem Saheb did not reply.

Then Gandhiji asked me[3] to bring a Bengali primer which he had been reading lately. When this was brought, Gandhiji proceeded to tell Hashem Saheb that, to all intents and purposes, he was trying to become a Bengali. He found hardly any difference between the language of a Bengali Hindu and a Bengali Muslim. Bengal was the only province in India where common Muslims did not understand Urdu. His intention in learning the Bengali language was to be able to read Gurudev's poems in the original, for, from them he received the message of the Upanishads, which lay at the root of the culture of the whole of India.

Hashem Saheb said that every Bengali looked upon Rabindranath with the

[1] Secretary, Bengal Provincial Muslim League, who was accompanied by two students and Sarat Chandra Bose, President of the All-Bengal Anti-Pakistan Committee. The report in *My Days with Gandhi* has been collated with the Gujarati version in *Biharni Komi Agman.*

[2] For a tripartite division of India into India, Pakistan and United Sovereign Bengal

[3] N. K. Bose

highest veneration, and in this, Muslims were one with Hindus. That was the chief reason why Bengali Muslims did not want Bengal to be broken up into two.

It is the spirit of the Upanishads which binds Rabindranath to the whole of Indian culture. Does not Bengal derive her deepest culture from what is the priceless heirloom of all India? If that is so, and Bengal wishes to enter into voluntary association with the rest of India, what would you say about that?

Hashem Saheb had no reply for this question either.

You have not really made up your mind about Pakistan. Please think about it once more, and then we shall discuss the new proposal.

You are following the same path of non-violence as was followed by Lord Buddha and the Prophet. People consider you a reincarnation of these. You must extinguish the fire of violence in Calcutta. You must also do something so that our brethren in Bihar can live in peace

First and foremost, it is a mistake to consider me a reincarnation of Buddha or of the Prophet. I have never made any such claim. I am an ordinary man. Of course I do try to follow the principles of life as preached by our scriptures and our great men. I have even succeeded to a certain extent. Yet, I do not claim that I am a person with divine qualities or higher than you. I am a servant of all human beings, be they Hindu or Muslim. I do wish I had the power to end the bloody strife raging among men and women of the same country. I should then be happy. Great men like Lord Krishna and Lord Buddha were so many incarnations of God. Our scriptures say that these great men had the divine power to establish peace and happiness. But you will realize that I am no divine person since I am not able to establish peace. And, if I presume to be such a person, I would not be able to survive in the world even for a minute. I have certainly been tested in my vows of truth and non-violence. That is why I have come here after touring Noakhali, Bihar, Delhi. I wish either to do something in this field or die. If you feel what Gandhi is doing is correct and Gandhi is needed in Calcutta I would first of all wish to make an humble request if you would allow me.

Yes, of course. You can command us to do anything.

The first thing is that if you are loyal to the party to which you belong and for which, you work you must ask Jinnah Saheb why, after signing the peace appeal with Gandhi, he is sitting in Delhi when thousands of Hindus are dying in the Punjab, the Frontier Province

and Noakhali and thousands of women are being raped. Why should every worker belonging to your party not stand by the Hindus and protect them? If you are keen on saving the Muslims you will have to give protection to all these Hindus. And as far as you are concerned, you must go and post yourselves in Noakhali whether or not you get the orders from Jinnah Saheb. You must prove to the Hindus that they are your brothers and sisters and if any Muslims come to kill them in the name of religion, you would offer to die first and protect them, that their mothers, sisters and daughters are your mothers, sisters and daughters. Let me tell all three of you that if you prove it not by words but by your actions, you would uphold your religion, and bring glory to your organization and this would have its effect in the whole country and your leaders would shine out by such remarkable acts. Today your leaders and your organization stand discredited in the world. If you want to strengthen your organization, if you want to allow the Muslims of India to live in peace and happiness and unity, this is the only way and there is no other. I know very well that you are not going to be convinced by what I say. But I would be untrue to you if I did not tell you what appears truth to me. This is so because I consider you all as my brothers and my friends, and my duty as your friend and brother obliges me to speak to you the truth.

My Days with Gandhi, pp. 227-8, and *Biharni Komi Agman*, pp. 327-8

39. TALK WITH MANU GANDHI

SODEPUR,
May 10, 1947

Today I spoke to them[1] frankly so that they may act properly instead of saying things just to please me. Now I know that they will not do anything, but at least they will not think that they have done their duty merely by coming here and praising me as if I were the Buddha or the Prophet. I must speak out what I feel. I am longing for work, not praise. One should not put much trust in a person who praises one to one's face. Instead I consider my critics as my well-wishers because they caution me by pointing out my mistakes, which is beneficial to both the parties. Either the critic realizes his mistake or the person criticized corrects himself if he is in the wrong.

One who desires to follow the non-violence of the brave in one's daily life must shed despair and cowardice, should be careful

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

even in the most trivial things and should not give in under threat or intimidation. There is no dearth of such brave persons in India. Still the world may say that since Indians had no weapons they could not learn to use them. Dying demands much greater courage than killing. The foreigners have branded us as cowards, and we must disabuse them of this notion. Instead what is happening is just the opposite. Man's mind is such that it is often influenced by things which are repeatedly hammered into it and he changes accordingly and becomes what he in fact was not. The British have ruled over us for the past 150 years and called us a weak people and in spite of our inherent strength we have become weak. They have robbed us of our self-confidence.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp.329-30

40. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
May 10, 1947

Speaking at the prayer gathering Mahatma Gandhi addressed himself to two questions that were asked of him. In view of the sourness between Hindus and Muslims that seemed to be daily growing, was it possible for the two to become friends? He answered emphatically that the enmity could not last for ever. They were brothers and must remain so in spite of temporary insanity. But perpetual feud was not an impossibility between communities as it was not between two individuals. He hoped that that would not happen, for he prophesied that in that case they would bury the two religions in India and would sell their freedom for a mess of pottage.

The second question was, could partition of Bengal be avoided in view of the rising Hindu opinion in its favour. Gandhiji recognized the force of that opinion. He was not in a position to pronounce an opinion. But he could say without fear of contradiction that if there was partition, the Muslims majority would be responsible for it, and what was more, the Muslim Government that was in power. If he were the Chief Minister of Bengal, he would plead with his Hindu brethren to forget the past. He would say to them that he was as much a Bengali as they were. Differences in religion could not part the two. He and they spoke the same language, had inherited the same culture. All that was Bengal's was common to both, of which both could be equally proud. Bengal was Bengal. It was neither the Punjab nor Bombay nor anything else.

If the Chief Minister could possibly take up that attitude, he (the speaker)

would undertake to go with him from place to place and reason with Hindu audiences and he made bold to say that there would not be a Hindu opponent left of the unity of Bengal, the unity for which Hindus and Mussalmans had fought together so valiantly and undone "the settled fact"[1] of so powerful a Viceroy as Lord Curzon. If he were Suhrawardy he would invite the Hindus to partition his body before they thought of partitioning Bengal. If he had that sturdy love for Bengal and Bengalis, whether Hindus or Mussalmans, that love would melt the stoniest Hindu heart. As it was, fear and suspicion had seized the Hindu mind.

He could not forget Noakhali or even Calcutta, if all he heard was true, as it was equally true of the Muslim mind in Bihar and he had not hesitated to tell the Hindus of Bihar that they should remove all suspicion and fear from the Muslims mind. He believed in the sovereign rule of the law of love which made no distinction of race, colour, caste or creed. He was glad that he had in Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah a powerful partner in the belief, which was no secret from the world.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 11-5-1947

41. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

CALCUTTA,
May 11, 1947

PANDIT NEHRU
CARE HIS EXCELLENCY VICEROY
SIMLA

YOUR WIRE[2] . HOPE REACH DELHI SIXTEENTH MORNING. HAVE YOU SEEN MY SOCIAL LETTER[3]. RAJKUMARI KNOWS.

BAPU

From the original: Jawaharlal Nehru Papers (M.O. Mathai). Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The partition of Bengal which took place in 1905 was described later by Lord Morley, the Liberal Secretary of State for India, as "a settled fact" but was annulled in 1911.

[2] Requesting Gandhiji's presence at the forthcoming meeting of the Congress Working Committee on May 16. On May 10, the Viceroy had announced that a conference of the Congress, Muslim League and Sikh leaders would be held on May 17 to announce the plan of the British Government for transferring power to Indian hands. The leaders invited were: Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, M.A. Jinnah, Liaquat Ali Khan and Sardar Baldev Singh. On May 11, however, it was announced that the proposed conference was postponed to June 2, 1947.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Mountbatten", 8-5-1947

42. LETTER TO A MINISTER[1]

May 11, 1947

Your letter regarding. . . .Why do you write to me in English? What happens to be your mother tongue is our national language. Then why should we bother to write in English? Yes, you can say that the means for writing in English are readily available in Minister's offices. You can employ clerks who can write in Hindustani instead of in English. It would mean less expense and greater convenience for the common man. After all only a handful of people in India know English. Swadeshi administration cannot be run for their sake. Whatever you do today will be pursued even after the British rule is completely eliminated from the country. You must also remember that you have to serve those people who are exploited the most, and represent them with credit.

Now I come to the points of our correspondence. I have not read the Panchayat [Raj] Bill of the United Provinces. I do not subscribe to the view that there should be a Harijan in all the elected bodies. Nor should you hold such a view. It would not be proper to insist that Harijans should be taken on such bodies even if none is found qualified. The important thing in tackling such problems is to make the Harijans better informed. But here I have suggested something fundamental. . . .

[From Hindi]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 332-3

43. A LETTER

May 11, 1947

. . . Shri . . . has passed on to me the letter you wrote to him. Why did you write in English? Your mother tongue and . . .s' is the same. I can see from your letter that your knowledge of the English language is poor. . . .

[From Hindi]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 333

[1] Omissions in this and the following two letters are as in the source.

44. LETTER TO GOVIND BALLABH PANT[1]

May 11, 1947

. . . has written to Shri . . . regarding the Panchayat Raj Bill. . . . He has sent both the letters to me. The remarkable thing is that all the letters are in English. And . . . 's English is a wonderful specimen. His letter to the Congress party is also in English. Our laws are also in English. We are possibly going to be free from British imperialism; but we might never gain freedom from the domination of the English language. If we do not, what will the masses do? Or, are all our efforts meant for the handful of English-knowing people in the vast ocean that is India? But this is a digression.

Before I can give my opinion on the point under consideration I must know the nature of your Bill and what. . . has to say in reply.

[From Hindi]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 333

45. A TALK

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,

May 11, 1947

When such ugly incidents occur we call their perpetrators goondas. But after all who are these goondas? They are our brothers. We condemn their deeds as goondaism but we too are to be blamed for them. Whatever good or evil is being done in the country, all, men and women, are equally responsible for it. Man is no different from other animals, as far as eating, sleeping and other functions are concerned. The only distinction is that being endowed with reason man can try to lead a moral life and distinguish himself from animals. "The path of God is trodden by the brave, not by the coward." Non-violence requires such courage. But today it is being regarded as cowardice. The path of God is the path of truth and non-violence. But while following that path we might have erred somewhere. I myself believe in acknowledging and correcting the mistakes I might have committed. Confession of one's guilt leads to self-purification. True non-violence does not consist merely in taking the blows. It means we should speak out what we consider to be the truth and act accordingly when the occasion arises. That is why for the last two days I have been telling the truth to the Government here. To remain silent at this hour

[1] Chief Minister of U. P.

would be a sign of unmanliness which would put non-violence to shame. A votary of non-violence must cultivate this courage, and for this it is necessary to give up all attachment.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 333-4

46. TALK WITH MANU GANDHI

KHADI PRATISHTHAN SODEPUR,
May 11, 1947

Again I have to go to Delhi[1] . We are mere sojourners. God created us for the journey in this world—so we must move on. No stability is possible in my life at least for the time being. It is possible only if I die or Indians understand [my message]. You know I used to consider attainment of independence an easy task but its preservation is going to be difficult. The signs at present are not good. This is the hour of out trial. Our capacity for sacrifice will also be put to test. Without the wherewithal one naturally leads a simple life but it is very difficult to do so when one has [wealth], and to consider it as belonging to God, not to oneself. The first *shloka*[2] in our prayer reads:

ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वं यत्किञ्च जगत्यां जगत्।
तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीया: मा गृध: कस्यस्विद्धनम्॥

One who recites the above *shloka* should first surrender to God all his possessions and then take for use only what is required for oneself. To take more than one's needs is sin. Just as we are considered thieves if we take what belongs to others, similarly, since everything here belongs to God we will stand guilty before God if we take more than our share. Thus true sacrifice will be proved at this hour. Try as we may, no sacrifice will endure without renuniciation.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 334-5

[1] *Vide* "Letter to A Minister", 11-5-1947

[2] *Ishopanishad,* 1: "All this that we see in this universe is pervaded by God. Renounce it and enjoy it. Do not covet anybody's wealth." For Gandhiji's explanation of this *shloka, vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 23/28-10-1930 and "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 11-11-1930

47. ADVICE TO MILL-WORKERS[1]

May 11, 1947

We do not judge properly when and against whom we may offer strikes. Nowadays in India, going on strike is regarded as an act of bravery. There are strikes in mills over trivial matters. For insignificant issues students in schools and colleges go on strike. Have you ever considered who are the worst sufferers in such situations? It is the workers and the students who suffer the most. The rich people and the Government schools and colleges have nothing to lose. If the mills are closed for a day or a month, the mill-owners would not have to worry about their daily bread. But what would happen to you who live from day to day? Similar is the case with Government clerks and postmen going on strike. Of course I believe in equal wages at all levels. Why should a sweeper get only four annas a day while a lawyer may get one hundred rupees? But the world has not yet reached that ideal state, because people pay huge fees to lawyers and barristers in their own interests. It will take many years before incomes would be equalized in our society. If injustice is being done to you, go to your employer with an open mind, try to convince him about your point. But do not go on strike being swept away by others in the current of their parties and 'isms' that are daily coming up like mushrooms. You are an illiterate lot, you are workers. Hence see that others do not take undue advantage of you. I believe that the mill-owners too will now have to see reason. If they continue to suck the blood of the workers their mills will be reduced to ashes. Their huge mansions, their cars and all other things are the result of your labour. However, it is my impression that the majority of the mill-owners are sensible. I do hope that they will under- stand the prevailing situation in the country and treat the workers accordingly. If not now, in the coming year or two mill-owners and workers will have to develop relations like father and sons. Therein lies the good of both. If this does not happen both will come to grief. I have no doubt about it. Hence I humbly suggest that

[1] Workers of the Birla Mills were on strike and had turned violent. Some of them called on Gandhiji.

you must all go back to work. Choose and appoint a committee of five persons from amongst you. Let the five go to the mill-owners and present the entire case to them. You must understand their difficulty and they must understand yours. Finding a proper way by mutual compromise is in the interest of both sides.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 336-7

48. INTERVIEW TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY[1]

SODEPUR,
Sunday, May 11, 1947

H. S. Suhrawardy, the chief sponsor of the united sovereign Bengal scheme, drew a rosy picture of the proposal. Gandhiji said that a new Bengal could not be born in utter disregard of the past. When the past was so full of wrongs, how could people believe in the sincerity of the new proposal unless past wrongs were set right? Suhrawardy-said, his Government had been wholly impartial and equal justice had been meted out to all; otherwise how could it have the support of a large number of Hindus? Gandhiji expressed the opinion that this was no different from the argument of British imperialists.

A friend of mine[2] had written a letter in which he described the utter incompetence of the Government and the veiled connivance of police officers in encouraging Muslim rioters. Gandhiji had read his letter and asked me how to hand it over to the Chief Minister. The latter went through it and said, "Yes, it is a bad case. But I am sure, you realize that this is an exception."

Then with Gandhiji's permission, I placed before Suhrawardy another case of murder[3] in which the police had not taken up any enquiry even when seven days had passed. Suhrawardy tried to bypass the charge against his Government by saying, "Do you know, there are more than half a dozen versions of that event? One even accuses me of complicity in the murder." Gandhiji had been silently listening to our conversation. He now broke in by saying:

Yes, you are responsible not only for that murder but for every life lost in Bengal, whether Hindu or Muslim.

[1] Who was accompanied by Mohammad Ali and Abdul Hashem.

The version in *My Days with Gandhi* has been collated with the one in *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase.*

[2] N.K. Bose, author of *My Days with Gandhi*

[3] Of Jadunath Sarkar's son

Suhrawardy immediately retorted, "No, it is you who are responsible for it, for you have denied justice to the Mussalmans."

I have rarely seen Gandhiji lose his temper in public. For one moment he flared up and said:

Don't talk rot !

But immediately he became restrained and calmed down. He told Shaheed [Suhrawardy] that if he was really serious about his new Bengal, he should go amongst the hooligans, wherever there was disturbance, and stop the mischief by risking his own life if necessary.

If you do it even for a day, it will transform the atmosphere—not only in Calcutta but in the whole of India.[1]

My Days with Gandhi, pp. 230-1, and *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. II, p. 182

49. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

SODEPUR,
May 11, 1947

Mahatma Gandhi said that he had the privilege of receiving Shaheed Sahib at Sodepur. He had wished to go to the latter's house but he would not let him go to his place. He had no information to give on the interview save that he had to repeat what he had said yesterday.

Gandhiji then addressed himself to the two questions put to him at the prayer meeting. The first was: "You have advised us to work for an undivided Bengal. But can there be an undivided Bengal with a divided India? What can we do to preserve a united Bengal in a united India? "

The answer was that if what he had said was well understood it followed that nothing could happen without the joint wish of both Hindus and Muslims. If a third party was not to decide their fate it would only be decided by their joint will. Then there was no question as yet of a divided India. If the distant event unfortunately did come to pass, the joint and free will of Hindu and Muslim Bengalis would decide which of these divisions to join.

[1] Later Gandhiji remarked: "What a curious man ! It matters nothing to him what he says. He wants people to trust him because, he says, the new Bengal which he wants to build will assure to all communities equal treatment. But the future is the child of the present. If what is happening in Calcutta today is an earnest of things to come, it does not bode well for his plan."

[2] There was a mammoth gathering, representing all communities. Many had to turn away for want of space.

The second question was: "The British have not quit. Should not that be our first demand? Can we not wait to settle matters between ourselves *after* power is really transferred to the Indian people?"

This question really did not arise for, when the whole of Bengal had one united mind, it was irrelevant whether it was expressed today or after the British power had actually withdrawn.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 12-5-1947

50. NOTE TO MANU GANDHI

May 12, 1947

The more you rest, the sooner you will recover. Try to enshrine Ramanama in your heart. In this way you will not be omitting any of the jobs you do for me. Understand that when you rest yourself that too is a part of my work. Since you have dedicated yourself wholly to me you must lie down as long as I ask you to. Instead you go on working and I have to explain to you the meaning of the *Gita.* At the prayers you daily recite the verse from the *Ishavasya Upanishad* but you do not act upon it. How can your body stand it if you go on preparing *khakhras*[1] and do the other odd jobs for me? The body does not belong to you; it belongs to God. Even if we live in rented quarters we have to keep them clean in our own interest. The same thing applies to the body. Hence ruining one's health by overworking amounts to an offence against God.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 338-9

51. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SODEPUR,
May 12, 1947

CHI. LILI,

I got your letter today. I am returning the papers, duly signed, by air-mail.

[1] Slow-baked crisp *chapatis*

The news about Chakrayya[1] is shocking. I am glad you are there. Do what you can now. A letter on that subject also is enclosed.[2]

Sushila has been causing you a lot of worry. What God has ordained will happen.

Come when you wish. Do not get nervous at all. It is enough if we do our duty.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You will see from the newspapers where I shall be on the day you write to me.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9610. Also C. W. 6582. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

52. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

SODEPUR,
May 12, 1947

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your three letters before me. I would like Chimanlal to stay on at Sevagram whether his health improves or gets worse. Sending for Dubeji will do him no good. Milk, fruit and vegetables—raw or cooked—should prove quite a good diet for him. Groundnuts, if taken, should first be soaked in water for 36 hours. But it is not indispensable. A cold-water bath in a tub may prove good; it can be tried. Do all this and ask him to repeat Ramanama and then let matters take their own course. I can't consider Uruli for him.

Kosambi may live on water, if he cannot digest any food whatever. If he cannot take even water, then, of course, there is no help and the body will slowly die. Inner peace being established, there remains nothing more to be achieved However, do as Vinoba says, Show this to him.

Chakrayya has reached Bombay, writes Lilavati. I have written to

[1] A Harijan from Andhra who had joined the Sevagram Ashram in 1935 and became an expert craftsman. He was sent on account of a protracted illness for treatment to Bombay where it was diagnosed as brain tumour.

[2] The letter is not available.

him as also to Dr. Purandhar, the opthalmologist.

If Hoshiari has no more internal complaint she ought not to fall ill again. You are being tested severely.[1]

Do not wait [for my advice]; but keep me informed of any changes in Kosambi's condition. I prefer cremation but I shall not insist on it.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1976, and *Bapuki Chhayamen*, p. 389

53. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR

SODEPUR,
May 12, 1947

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

I finished my post. After that I read some more letters from another file in which I found your letter. You have done the right thing about Chakrayya. I came to know about him from Lilavati.

I am happy to learn the good news about the hospital there. You are right when you say that where there is consciousness of dharma even thorns seem like flowers. There is some complaint from Sankaran; I am enclosing the letter. What is it about? I have written to him to talk to you and I say the same to you . we are but a few. If there were to be reservations amongst us where would we find straightforwardness? Look into it.

I hope you are in good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9036. Also C. W. 9160. Courtesy: Prabhakar

[1] What follows is translated from *Bapuki Chhayamen.*

[2] Kosambi had expressed a desire to be buried after death, if being the least expensive disposal of the body.

54. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SODEPUR,
May 12, 1947

The thought that is uppermost in my mind today is how to combat the goonda rule that seems to be fast enveloping us. This I say of all India, perhaps it is true more or less of the whole world.

Let the Hindus not deceive themselves with the belief that it is well with the Hindus. As a devout Hindu that I claim to be, I wish to affirm that we Hindus will be living in a fool's paradise if we harboured any such thought. Goondaism is no preparation for taking the place of foreign rule. The thoughtless interference at prayer meetings is not a small symptom of the disease I am describing.

Intolerance is a form of goondaism. It is no less disgraceful than the savagery which we see announced in the daily Press. Let all political workers, be they Hindus, Muslims or any other, ponder well over what is happening before their eyes. Let it not be said by the future generation that we were trying to learn how to lose the liberty before it was even gained. I would ask all the schoolmasters of India, now that they are no longer under the observation of the foreign masters, to recognize their true function even at the risk of their lives and give the right bent to the minds of those whom it is their proud privilege to mould.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 13-5-1947

55. INTERVIEW TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY[2]

May 12, 1947

These people say only one thing, namely, they consider the Hindus and the Muslims as equals. They say their Government makes no distinctions of any kind. But I told them in plain words: "Jinnah Saheb does not do what he says. Being the President of a big organization like the Muslim League he could eliminate rowdyism if he wished. I represent no one. I possess no power. Of course, there is one thing and it is that the Hindus regard me as their servant and they

[1] It being Gandhiji's silence day his written speech was read out.

[2] The first paragraph, translated here from the Gujarati in *Biharni Komi Agman*, is a gist of the interview as reported by Gandhiji to Manu Gandhi. Finance Minister Mahomed Ali, Abul Hashem and Abdul Hakim were also present.

trust me. That was how the Hindus in Bihar were pacified. And how much are those people expiating even now ! In the same way, Jinnah Saheb and all of you can do what you wish. And I should make it plain that I do charge you with having adopted now the policy of encouraging rowdyism. Through you I wish to send a message to Jinnah Saheb conveying the agony of my heart, because I am his faithful friend. The triumph of Islam lies in doing what you preach. In that lies the good of all. But right now it seems that I shall see such days only when God wills so. I am sure that if the Ministers follow my words, Jinnah Saheb too would have to adhere to his words. But that is not the case today. In view of the false propaganda by Jinnah Saheb, I am wondering where the ship of our country would drift. In the course of our non-co-operation movement against the British rule we courted imprisonment, faced lathi blows and innumerable young men even faced bullets. But it seems to me that compared to the present ordeal that was easy. I started working for Hindu-Muslim unity from my childhood days. In order to earn my livelihood I went to South Africa as an adviser to a Muslim[1]. He looked after my children and my family. I went to the unknown land of South Africa only with an orthodox Muslim family. How could I then be an enemy of the Muslims? Jinnah Saheb thinks I am his worst enemy. But how can my conscience accept the charge? Let him at least give some evidence of my enmity. We can live in peace only if we assimilate in our life the principle that we are all God's creatures. I have bitter words to say to you and you may be displeased and angry with me on that account and you may even abuse me. But that is not going to affect me in any way, because I believe that, when my task is over, God will recall me. This world moves by the will of God. I have experienced this several times in my life. Hence I am not worried about it. That is why I am able to say this. If the Muslims believe that they can take things by force they will have nothing at all. But, by peaceful means, they may have the entire country for themselves. There was an unprecedented awakening during the Khilafat days. But today the Muslim League leaders have aroused such hatred among the Muslims that they think it sinful to talk with the Hindus. But I am telling not only the Hindus and the Muslims but also the British and all human beings that we are

[1] Abdullah Sheth of Dada Abdulla & Co.

all born equal . God has granted in equal measure to everyone the right to live. Hence we should not be enemies. And let me also warn you to be on the alert even if the British are instigating you. If they think that they can firmly establish their rule by driving a wedge between us, it is an absolute impossibility. And it would be sheer stupidity if anyone thinks that such a thing could be done. I also asked these people, while Jinnah Saheb said that everything would settle down once Pakistan was granted, what was the situation wherever the Muslim League was in power? See what is happening in this city right before our eyes. Nobody knows what real Pakistan means. I am a student of the Koran. I have come in contact with many learned Muslims. None of them has said that Islam ordains punishing the innocent, raping of women, slaughtering and ruining and rendering homeless happy families, breaking into their houses at night, plundering their property and shedding blood."

Gandhiji reiterated to them that the only way in which they could prevent the partition of Bengal was by getting Jinnah to implement the joint peace appeal to which he was a signatory. For this the Bengal Ministry and Shaheed Suhrawardy, its head, would have to act in the manner he had suggested[1] on the previous day.[2]

Suhrawardy Saheb confessed that the chief obstacle was that no Hindu would listen to him today; he found it hard to prove the utter sincerity of his proposal.

Gandhiji said, he would act as Suhrawardy's secretary, live under the same roof with him and see to it that the Hindus at least gave him a patient hearing. Was he prepared to accept the offer?

Suhrawardy Saheb said nothing and bade him good by.[3]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 341-3, *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. II, pp. 182-3, and *My Days with Gandhi,* p. 232

[1] *Vide* "Interview to H. S. Suhrawardy", 11-5-1947

[2] This paragraph is from *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase.* What follows is from *My Days with Gandhi.*

[3] As N. K. Bose took Suhrawardy to his car, the latter muttered almost to himself, "What a mad offer ! I have to think ten times before I can fathom its implications." When Bose reported the matter to Gandhiji, he immediately took up his pen and on two slips of paper wrote down a letter to H. S. Suhrawardy. *Vide* the following item.

56. LETTER TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY

[*May 12/13, 1947*][1]

I recognize the seriousness of the position in Bengal in the matter of the partition. If you are absolutely sincere in your professions and would disabuse me of all the suspicion against you and if you would retain Bengal for the Bengalis—Hindus or Mussalmans—intact by non-violent means I am quite willing to act as your honorary private secretary and live under your roof till Hindus and Muslims begin to live as [the] brothers that they are.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 10562. Also *My Days with Gandhi,* pp. 232-3.

57. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

SODEPUR,
May 13, 1947

CHI. KANTI,

I have your letter. I hope you received my reply to your previous letter. Quite a few days have passed since I sent it.

I like the views you have expressed about the Charkha Sangh in your present letter. I am sending it to Krishnadas[2] for information. He may accept from it whatever appeals to him.

I have no time to go into details and correct the errors of fact in your statements. Nor is that necessary. You will learn from experience.

You probably know that khadi work is being decentralized.

I have written about your studies in my previous letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7384. Courtesy: Kanti Gandhi

[1] As the addressee could not be contacted on the phone till late at night, Gandhiji signed the letter the next morning, that is May 13, and had it personally delivered to the addressee.

[2] Son of Chhaganlal Gandhi

58. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SODEPUR,
May 13, 1947

CHI. SATIS BABU,

Charu[1] is leaving earlier as you are not well. As it is, his presence was not necessary [here]. He makes himself useful in many ways. But this is my home. My convenience is looked after well enough. The real centre is there[2]. No one should go away from there. That is why Ajit did not come.[3] Now have complete rest and get well. I have no time to write anything else.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9081

59. TALK WITH MANU GANDHI

May 13, 1947

Look, I am now fresh after ten minutes of rest. So long as God grants me this capacity to take a short nap, everything is well. The day this capacity is reduced I must realize that my non-attachment has weakened and I am on my way down. I am telling you this, because you have promised to be with me till the last moment. Didn't Ba also, while on her way to the jail, instruct you that she should be draped in a sari made from the yarn spun by me? Similarly, whenever I tell you such things, you must remember to note them down because I wish to reach the stage of a perfect *sthitaprajna* and attain perfect non-attachment. The success of my attempt depends solely on how I meet death. One can say nothing till the moment of death comes, because though the body ages physically, the mind does not. Hence, if I were to declare right now that I have reached such a state, there would be no greater fool than I . On the contrary, I would be fit to be called a

[1] Charu Chandra Chaudhari

[2] Namely, at Noakhali

[3] Ajit De, who had been looking after Gandhiji's personal requirements during his tour in Noakhali, was not permitted to accompany him when he left for Bihar in February.

presumptuous fellow. But, if it occurs to me to utter the name of Rama with my last breath, it should be taken as a proof of the success of my attempt. And as you are a witness to this *yajna* of mine, I do wish that you should be my witness in this and not go before me. Even though there have been differences between me and my old and intimate friends, I find myself more firm in my ideas and this gives me great satisfaction and contentment.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 346

60. ADVICE TO CONSTRUCTIVE WORKERS

May 13, 1947

Independence is now as good as come. But it is only political independence. Let not anyone think that once the British quit India there will be more comfort and convenience and the constructive programme would become superfluous. But from the prevailing atmosphere it seems that for at least a decade after independence our condition would continue to deteriorate. This political freedom no doubt will remove the restraints over us and we shall be able to accomplish our cherished aims. Real hard work will have to be done only after independence. Unless poverty and unemployment are wiped out from India, I would not agree that we have attained freedom. Real wealth does not consist in jewellery and money, but in providing for proper food, clothes, education, and creating healthy conditions of living for every one of us. A country can be called prosperous and free only when its citizens can easily earn enough to meet their needs. But today the situation is so tragic that on the one hand there are people who roll in pomp and luxury and on the other there are people who do not have enough clothes to cover their bodies and who live on the brink of starvation. Today men are sitting idle having no work to do. A man should have full opportunity to develop himself. That will happen only when there is an awakening among the constructive workers. The country does need politicians. But now when it is necessary to work hard for the prosperity of the country we need devoted constructive workers. I am convinced that people who are wedded to machinery are going to be disillusioned. Everyone, if

only after being disillusioned, will have to ply the charkha. One has to be self-reliant in everything. If people do not start working of their own free will, time and circumstances will make them do so. But right now I find it suffocating to see the manner in which we are marching towards freedom. I find no light anywhere. Now that the British are contemplating transfer of power every community is keen on grabbing it. But, if we do not do our duty, we will be giving a chance for the people to say that slavery was better than this freedom. To the extent the constructive workers are bold and fearless, these qualities would be reflected in their actions and through their work spread in the atmosphere. If the nation breathes such a healthy air, it would definitely grow healthy. So, the time has come for every constructive worker to gird up his loins and plunge into action. Let him put this moment to good use and justify the life God has granted him.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 346-7

61. INTERVIEW TO SHYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE

SODEPUR,
Tuesday, May 13, 1947

Shyamaprasad[1] had heard that the scheme for united sovereign Bengal had received Gandhiji's blessings. So he had come to ascertain the truth of the report. Gandhiji replied that he had not yet made up his mind about it but was trying to find out what the proposal really meant. Then he asked Shyamaprasad for his own opinion on the scheme.

Shyamaprasad began by saying that although Mr. Suhrawardy was apparently its author, it was really being sponsored by the British commercial interests in Bengal. If Bengal were partitioned, it would create serious difficulties for the jute industry, for the mills would be in West Bengal and the raw materials in another State. Moreover, he said that the Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, had personally asked him to give the proposal careful consideration. Gandhiji said:

So your objection is on account of its parentage ! No, I want you to criticize the scheme on its merits.

Then Shyamaprasad proceeded to say that although Mr. Suhrawardy was now sponsoring the cause of a united Bengal, yet, once division had taken place, what was there to prevent this Bengal from seeking voluntary alliance with Pakistan? He could

[1] President of the Bengal Provincial Hindu Mahasabha

surely manipulate a decision of this kind by means of the majority of Muslim votes. Gandhiji said:

But has he not spoken of "mutual consent", between Hindus and Muslims in the formation of a separate Bengal?

Shyamaprasad asked what difference that made so long as the majority of the Legislative Assembly were Muslims. Gandhiji replied:

But a decision by a simple numerical majority is not by "mutual consent". I would interpret that term differently. It ought to mean that if a majority of Hindu members and a majority of Muslim members agree to form a separate sovereign State, then it comes into being by "mutual consent", not otherwise. That majority may be 51 is to 49 or may be fixed at any other figure by mutual discussion before the agreement is entered into. And if Suhrawardy has to win the majority of the Hindu members of the Assembly over to his side, don't you see that the present communal situation in Bengal will immediately change for the better?

But supposing Suhrawardy does succeed in winning over many Hindu members and a separate state is formed, then, one day, that state may federate itself with Pakistan if the decision is by majority of votes.

No. Such a decision should also be by "mutual consent" as interpreted before separation from India.

Shyamaprasad then asked what would happen if the majority of Hindu members wanted to federate with India and the majority of Muslim members with Pakistan.

Then there would be a partition of Bengal. But that partition will be brought about by mutual agreement of the people of Bengal and not by the British. It is a partition by the British which has to be prevented at any cost.

But can you contemplate Bengal lying separated from the rest of India?

You ask me that question !

Finally, Gandhiji said to Shyamaprasad that we should take Mr. Suhrawardy's new proposal at its face value, even if we may have no faith in him personally. Preservation of united Bengal in a united India should not be made the condition precedent in the present negotiation, that would defeat one's purpose. Having placed faith in the *bona fides* of Mr. Suhrawardy's proposal for a united Bengal, we should work out its logical implications. An admission that Bengali Hindus and Bengali Mussalmans were one would really be a severe blow against the two-nation theory of the League. If therefore Mr. Suhrawardy was prepared to accept the real meaning of the term "mutual consent", it would mean either the end of the League or of Mr. Suhrawardy.

My Days with Gandhi, pp. 233-5

62. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
May 13, 1947

At today's prayer meeting Gandhiji dealt with the questions that were put before him.

The first was: What could we do to save ourselves and our culture—whether Hindu or Muslim?

Gandhiji said that he thought that nobody else could protect their culture for them. They had to protect it themselves and could destroy it by their folly. Thus, if Bengal had one culture, as he believed it had, it was for the people of Bengal to protect it.

The second question was: When everything at the top goes wrong, can the goodness of the people at the bottom assert itself against its mischievous influence?

In answer, Gandhiji said that if the people at the top went wrong, it was certainly open to, and it was the duty of those at the bottom, to remove the wrong top even as he would remove an umbrella which appeared to be at the top but which was sustained by him.

Thus Pandit Nehru was at the top. But in reality he was sustained by them. If he went wrong, those at the bottom could remove him without trouble. Coming nearer home if they found Suhrawardy Saheb to be unworthy, they at the bottom could certainly remove him, not by physical force but by the way he [Gandhiji] had had the honour of putting before them. The argument that he was elected by the Muslim voters was beside the point.

It all boiled down to the fact that if the people at the bottom were ignorant, they would be exploited. Such was the case with the English. When the people realized their strength and the fact that the bottom sustained the top, it would be well with them. Therefore, he would say that if the top was wrong there was something radically wrong with the bottom. Let them, therefore, dispel their ignorant helplessness.

Before he dealt with the question, Gandhiji told some demonstrators that they need not be afraid of his doing anything that they did not like. He represented nobody but himself. He could only give advice which they were free to accept or reject. Therefore, if Bengal was divided or united, it would be their act.

Harijan, 25-5-1947

63. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

SODEPUR,
May 14, 1947

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I got your birthday wire. May you live long and render much service.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 4809. Courtesy: Shantikumar N. Morarjee

64. TALK WITH DR. B. C. ROY

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
May 14, 1947

GANDHIJI: When there is a fire raging all around, I have no desire to prolong my life by taking rest.[1]

DR. ROY: It is not for yourself that you have to take rest. Is it not your duty to take rest so that you may render more service to people?

Yes, I shall certainly do so if people listen to me and if I could be of some help to them or to the authorities. But now I do not feel that I can be of any use to any one. Perhaps my mind is growing weak ! Still, instead of taking rest at such a critical juncture I would rather " do or die". I wish to die in harness, with the name of Rama on my lips. My faith in this *yajna* is growing so strong that I feel God will grant me this wish. I am the lone adherent of my views today. But Gurudev's *bhajan Ekla chalore* sustains me. That is why I do not feel lonely and God gives me the courage to put up a determined fight with many of my friends. This to me is a manifestation of God—His Divine help. God does not mani-fest Himself in human form, nor is He seen with adornments as depicted in pictures. If we can remain in a

[1] In view of Gandhiji's extreme fatigue and exhaustion Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy had advised him to stop all interviews and take rest.

state of constant awareness and thus tread the path of righteousness, this itself is Divine Grace and a means to have a glimpse of Him.

She[1] will not have frequent bouts of fever if she had Ramanama firmly enshrined in her heart. Maybe, I too have not attained the ideal; otherwise this girl, who stays with me all the twenty-four hours and serves me with devotion, should not fall ill. After all I have made her my partner in this *yajna*. If Ramanama is firmly rooted in my heart, this girl should be free from her ailments.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 352-3

65. TALK WITH COLLEGE STUDENTS

May 14, 1947

Students are the true heirs of the country. The nation can be saved only if they turn out to be good citizens. But the education you have received so far is absolutely irrelevant now. The British had a selfish motive in introducing this system of education because they wanted to rule over you. They provided you a system of education that produced clerks. It was an administrative trick of the British to give us such education as would automatically bind us to their service, as clerks to bosses in an office. If I could have my way or if my words could reach the ears and hearts of all, I would say that the system of education should be fundamentally changed as soon as independence is achieved and we should impart training as envisaged in Nayee Talim, so that every student becomes self-reliant and does not have to face the problem of employment after leaving school. Under the present system of education students have to spend a lot on textbooks. But more than that, think of the expenses of college life. The moment the students start learning English they must have the latest types of jackets, trousers, shoes, socks, fountain-pens, watches, perfumed oils, etc. ! This has become a natural thing. But now that India is going to achieve freedom the State will be free to shape the people the way it chooses without any restrictions of any kind. I would suggest that the students learn the letters, language, arithmetic, history, geogra- phy and all other subjects through agriculture and body-labour. If we put in their hands hoe and spade, their expenditure on western dress

[1]Manu Gandhi

would be automatically eliminated, for it would not be convenient to the students themselves to do the digging in such a dress. They would find it easier to do the job in plain shorts and shirts. Thus there would be an automatic transformation in the lives of the students. Similarly they would acquire the knowledge about what seeds are sown in what manner, where a particular crop can be raised in abundance, in which century and under whose rule as also why there used to be good crops of cotton, foodgrains, oilseeds, and in what quantity, etc. Through such subjects a student comes to acquire knowledge of every other discipline. I say this just by way of an illustration. But if education is planned according to the principles of Nayee Talim, I am confident that a twelve-year old boy or girl would acquire the capacity to be self-sufficient in matters of food and clothing. Today even twenty-five-year old students who have obtained their M. A. degrees after wasting thousands of rupees of their parents are despondent not knowing what to do after completing their studies. Even in terms of health such a student, though alive, seems starved. Whereas, a boy brought up in Nature's lap under the educational system of my conception would be healthy and since he would be surrounded by a spiritual atmosphere he would also maintain his mental health.

Moreover, students have been very much exploited by various political parties too. It seems to me to be a great blunder. This mistake ought to be corrected now. We must think afresh about the type of education that should be made available to the children of a free nation. The students too must start thinking independently. But that does not mean that they should resort to strikes and throw stones at their teachers to have their demands accepted. Rather, they must deal with the management in a persuasive manner.

As I said a little while ago, once we stop imparting the western type of education the fashions that have come with it would disappear of themselves. When the students, instead of considering their studies an irksome task, start looking upon it as their national duty and derive true pleasure out of it, I shall accept it as true education. Our ancestors have rightly described student-life as the life of an ascetic. But before expecting any such thing from the students I must say that it will be the primary duty of the government of independent India to create the necessary atmosphere. Just as it is the duty of the mother to provide milk to the child that is born, so that it develops and grows well, it is the duty of the government to look after the education of the students.

Gandhiji asked many questions of the two girls in the group. He asked them

where and what they were studying.

You had come for two minutes but I have given you ten minutes. It is a matter of pleasure for me to mix with students and talk with them whenever I meet them. Of course, I am not able to fully satisfy my desire in this matter as I am busy with many other activities. But tell me—will you give me just five rupees each for this autograph? Moreover, I have signed in Bengali. Should I not get a higher fee for it? [1]

I have made it a profession to serve *Daridranarayana.* Hence whatever other occupations I may take up my own profession will always be the focal point. But if you cannot pay me more, help me in my work of communal unity. Let there be no distinctions of caste or community among the students. And, if you cannot help the suffering poor at least sympathize with them by being good to them. If you do this honestly, I shall take it that you have paid me a good price.[2]

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 353-6

66. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
May 14, 1947

Gandhiji said that he was leaving for Patna and then proceeding to Delhi, and hoped to return to Calcutta after his work in Delhi was finished.

He had spent two hours in visiting the scenes of the recent disturbances in the company of the Chief Minister and could see that the destruction was small compared to the August disturbances[3]. He hoped this was the last of disturbances in Calcutta.

Gandhiji then replied to the two questions put to him. The first question was: Calcutta has virtually become divided into Hindu and Muslim zones. What can be done by the citizens so that normal life can once again be restored? Gandhiji replied:

The only way is for at least one party to be wholly truthful and non-violent. Then they will fear no one but God. Such men are the men of courage. All parties will make friends with them and even goondas will shed their goondaism before them. I know of no other

[1] There was a roar of laughter. The students said: "Bapuji ! You have adopted a Bania's technique !"

[2] One of the girls then donated her gold ring on behalf of the group.

[3] Of 1946

better way. I have appealed to the Muslims who are in a majority to take the lead.

The second question was: Why do you ask the Hindus to study the Koran also? Is it not enough if they study their own religion? Replying, Gandhiji said:

It is the duty of everyone to study the scriptures of other religions besides his own. This enables people to keep their religion pure and rid it of blemishes. Moreover we have Christians, Muslims, Parsis and followers of other religions amongst us. I behoves the Hindus to study their religious books if they regard them as their brothers.

Harijan, 25-5-1947

67. TELEGRAM TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

[Before *May 15, 1947*][1]

MRIDULABEHN

CARE DR. SYED MAHMUD

BANKIPORE

(PATNA)

PANCHGANI BUNGALOW AVAILABLE ON TERMS. REACHING THURSDAY PUNJAB MAIL.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 10578. Courtesy: D. C. Jha

68. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

PATNA,
May 15, 1947

CHI. MIRA,

Your two letters. I do not reach there before 25th so far as I can see. I do not know what you should do now. No more time.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABAI

P. O. RISHIKESH

DIST. DEHRADUN

From the original: C. W. 6526. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9921

[1] According to the donor this telegram was communicated on telephone during May-August, 1947. Gandhiji reached Patna on May 15, 1947 which was a Thursday.

69. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

PATNA,
May 15, 1947

CHI. SUSHILA,

Your letter is lying in front of me. I will not misunderstand you for not going [to Manilal].[1] If Vijayalakshmi desires your presence there, you should stay.

I met Krishnakumar. He stayed with me for three days. He did not like the condition of refraining from correspondence. I told him I would be able to decide only after seeing Sita again. He seems to be a nice person. I could not talk much with him. Sushila Pai was with me at that time. I asked her to have a frank talk [with him], which she did. If both of them willingly agree to wait for seven years, I would have no objection to their marriage. More when you come. I shall be here till the 24th, then Delhi. Arun has done well.

Tell Arun and Ila to write to me.

Blessings form
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5004

70. A LETTER

May 15, 1947

CHI. . .,[2]

Your letter. I could not find the second edition of *Bhajanavali*.

Consult either Vinoba or Kaka regarding the best sayings of the Prophet. I am not in a position to concentrate on this task.

I am a little surprised and also sorry to here about your marriage. There must be something wrong somewhere as what should be a natural thing seems to be extremely difficult. I am writing this to caution you, not to dissuade you. Do as Vinoba says.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 369-70

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Manilal Gandhi", "Letter to Manilal Gandhi", 29-4-1947
[2] The name is omitted in the source.

71. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

PATNA,
May 15, 1947

CHI. SATIS BABU,

I read your letter today in Patna. I had it yesterday at Sodepur.

Kashinath's statement is in bad taste. It could hardly be worth anything since he never had the courage to make a truthful statement. I do not know what we can do now. Maybe, something can be done if he has the courage to stick to a truthful statement and has enough evidence to prove that such is the case.

It is also painful that Kashinath's brother paid the money. If people continue to part with their money at the bidding of goondas or live in perpetual dread it will only encourage the goondas to indulge in their evil doings. Such people should go and live somewhere else.

I shall be here till the 24th. I have to reach Delhi on the 25th.

I hope you are all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9082

72. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

PATNA,
May 15, 1947

Gandhiji addressed the prayer gathering today in Bankipore Maidan at Patna after a fortnight. In the interval, he said, he had been to Delhi and Calcutta. He had not foreseen his visit to Calcutta. For, his vow of do or die was taken only for Noakhali and Bihar. But what he heard about Calcutta made him feel that he might be of some use there. And he could say that he had not been entirely unsuccessful. In Calcutta also he was serving Bihar. For the cause was the same. By going to Calcutta or elsewhere, where he might be called upon to go in future, though the possibility was very remote, he did not leave out Bihar or Noakhali. It only extended the field of the operation of his do or die mission. He felt that success at one place would be followed by success at other places. The future was, however, in God's hands.

During his absence Gandhiji had kept himself informed about the work going

on in Bihar. During the day he had received more information. Affairs in Bihar moved slowly. The Biharis were, however, not slow when they committed acts of madness. There was no reason why they should be slow in making amends. The rains were coming. They were working against time. The Ministry had concentrated the control of rehabilitation work in Ansari Saheb's hands for the sake of efficiency. General Shah Nawaz, who had gone on a short leave, would be presently in their midst. If sufficient capable women workers imbued with the spirit of loving service came forward to work among the Muslim women, he felt sure the work would go forward.

Gandhiji was sure that if Bihar succeeded in instilling confidence in the Muslims, her influence would be felt throughout India. Some Hindus wrote to Gandhiji to ask if he expected them to flatter and fawn on the Mussalmans. He, as a life-long fighter, with truth and ahimsa as his weapons, could not countenance that. What he counselled was the control of their baser instincts of anger and hatred. And if avoiding harshness and adopting perfect gentlemanliness was flattery, he would not hesitate to use that word.

Gandhiji then informed the congregation that he could not bear the strain of touring every place in the heat. He had to content himself with holding his prayer meeting at different places every day.

Harijan, 25-5-1947

73. FROM THE DIARY[1]

May 15, 1947

Bengali after prayers. Had juice. Talked to Madalasa[2] about Manudi. I told her that Manudi was going to be with me as long as I lived. I have allowed her to join me on this condition. She can leave me but I will not leave her. I wish to develop the fine qualities that she possesses. I spoke about such other things.

* * *

Alighted at Gulzar Bagh. Had a walk after I came. Massage, bath. Talked with Mridula during the meal, with Dev before taking a nap. . . .[3] Manu has a severe stomach-ache, she also had vomiting and is running temperature. I therefore called in the doctors who examined her. Manu's complaint was diagnosed as appendicitis. I had her removed to the hospital immediately. She will be operated upon at

[1] As Manu Gandhi was hospitalized she could not maintain her diary for five days. She later copied out extracts from Gandhiji's diary at his instance.

[2] Daughter of Jamnalal Bajaj, married to Shriman Narayan

[3] Omission as in the source

night. I called back Madalasa and Santok[1]. They came. Watched Manu's operation at the hospital. Mridula and Madu were keeping her company. But they were not allowed inside the operation theatre. I had put on a surgical mask and watched the whole operation. She was taken to the room upstairs at 10.30. I entrusted her to the doctor's care and returned at 11.10. I went to bed after 11.30. Dr. Col. Bhargava[2] performed the operation.

In place of Manudi, Madu is attending upon me. I continued to think of Manudi during the night.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 360 and 366

74. LETTER TO GLADYS OWEN

PATNA,
May 16, 1947

DEAR GLADYS,

I am glad that you went to Lahore and did what was possible. I am sending you a copy of my reply. I think it is wrong for friends to come to India to learn non-violence, whether from me or anybody else. Don't you?

I am plodding. The work is difficult but faith to be faith has to overcome mountains. We have to try to cultivate such faith.

Love.

BAPU

MISS GLADYS OWEN
NUR MANZIL
LAL BAGH
LUCKNOW

From a photostat: G. N. 6200

[1] Widow of Maganlal Gandhi
[2] Col. Dwarka Prasad Bhargava

75. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

PATNA,
May 16, 1947

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

My pride has been humbled. Last evening Manu was operated upon for appendicitis in a hospital. I was by her side. It is a little before six in the morning just now. A man came to inform me that Manu says she is all right.

I had suspected even in Delhi that it was appendicitis. I had hoped that treatment with mud-pack would help her to get well. But it did not help her sufficiently. I, therefore, called in the doctors yesterday. They advised an operation, and I therefore got her operated upon. Thus it is that God humbles man's pride. I do not know what new lessons He is still going to teach me. Whom can I advise now, 'Die but do not give up nature cure.' I will be satisfied if I can put that into practice in my own life.

You must not worry. Madalasa and Santok visited Manu at twelve. She is fine. I will go and see her in the evening.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

76. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA[1]

May 16, 1947

. . . There was a telegram yesterday saying that Jehangir[2] would be going to Japan for some time. I did not worry knowing that he was by your side. I never stop thinking about you. I was attracted by you and followed you and got myself involved in nature cure. But having got into it I see and am increasingly realizing that probably there is a great difference between our approaches. I do not think I can change my outlook now. Probably you cannot change yours either. And so, we must both decide about our course of action. There is no need for

[1] Omissions in this and the following two letters are as in the source.

[2] Jehangir Patel, who, along with Gandhiji and the addressee, was a trustee of the All India Nature Cure Trust at Uruli Kanchan.

you to rush to me. I am passing through a process of change, am trying to perfect myself. I have to be constantly on the move. I am striving to perfect my non-violence. I cannot divert my attention from it and take up other things. For me nature cure too comes under non-violence. As for you, your dharma, your *sadhana* consists for the present of two things. You must serve Maji, remain by her side and give thought to your own needs. This cannot be done by being with me, because Maji is not with me and I am not with her. About money too you have to think for yourself.

Now, the second thing is a matter of shame for me. Chi. Manu always follows my instructions, and so, I was wondering how far I could take her with me. Even while I was in Delhi I had suspected that she had appendicitis. But my knowledge being absolutely superficial, how could I trust myself? Even so I treated her with earth and water. I also laid down her diet. I used to ask her to have enemas. After constipation she started having motions. Then it was that her appendicitis was detected. Two naturopaths came my way. But the poor fellows had very little knowledge. I have still not come across a perfect naturopath. I was eager to put you in that category. But in trying to do so I realized that I myself was by nature a true naturopath, though an imperfect one. Then I came here and since I had to be here for ten days I found some spare time. Instead of one, four doctors arrived. They recommended an operation. Accepting defeat I allowed the operation. Today is the second day. I am dictating this in the morning. I have received information from the hospital that Manu is well. I did not at all like the idea of the operation. If I had expert knowledge I would never have allowed it. What would you have done in a similar situation? I am asking this question so that I can have some help in future. You can reply at your own convenience when you have the time. There is no hurry. According to my present information I have to be in Delhi on the 25th. God alone knows where I shall be tomorrow. I hope your mind is at peace. Maji must be all right. . . . and both the children must be fine.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 373-4

77. A LETTER

PATNA,
May 16, 1947

CHI . . . .,

Received your letter. It is good that Rameshwardas has sent his reply. I will be satisfied if your itching stops completely and you are able to take proper food. It is a matter for concern that Sankaran and you are not getting on well together. But what can be done about it? Win him over if you can ; but this too not at the cost of your health.

I had to swallow my pride and get Manu operated upon for appendicitis yesterday. I knew it had to be done, but I had it put off from Delhi to Calcutta. I got her examined by doctors as we had ten days here. My fear was right. They suggested an immediate operation. I agreed. Today there is a message from the hospital that she is doing well.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 370

78. A LETTER

PATNA,
May 16, 1947

CHI . . . ,

Your telegram. I am sending. . . I do not know where he is today . . . had mentioned your telegram. I agree with your view. Their love is pure but their temperaments differ a lot. If he writes to that effect the problem would be solved the sooner. I can issue a public statement only when both of them agree. I do hope that the matter would soon be settled.

Both of you must be doing well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 370

79. LETTER TO DHARMANANDA KOSAMBI

May 16, 1947

BHAI KOSAMBI,

I get regular reports about you. Balvantsinha has conveyed to me your message as well. I am very happy that you are staying in the Ashram.

I have no doubt that you will depart in peace.[1]

[From Hindi]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 372

80. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

PATNA,
May 16, 1947

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

Your letter, written in the early hours before prayers. It is a pleasure to read all that you write about Kosambi.[2] I am enclosing a letter for him.[3] You may hand it over or read it out to him if he is still alive when this reaches you.

I have no doubt whatsoever that his stay in the Ashram has sanctified it.

Sankaran's letter is enclosed. It would be good if something could be done.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1977

81. A LETTER[4]

May 16, 1947

CHI. . . . ,

. . . .writes to say that you and . . .do not get along well. In your capacity as a physician you have to win the heart of the patient; the patient has not to win the physician's. When the patient wins the heart

[1] The addressee passed away on June 1.

[2] The addressee had written at length about the mental and spiritual tranquillity of Kosambi.

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

[4] Omissions in the letter are as in the source.

of the physician, the physician becomes the patient and *vice versa*. That is how it should be with you. If the patient needs the services of the physician, but is not able to accept the treatment in full, the physician should try to adjust himself to the patient and serve him to the best of his capacity. He must handle him with great patience. If you have caught the meaning of my words, act accordingly.

[From Hindi]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 371

82. LETTER TO A PHYSICIAN

May 16, 1947

I had read your letter as soon I received it. But I saw the accompanying article only today. I was happy to read it. It is not enough to say that you have cured all your patients through yoga exercises. You ought to have indicated the particular exercises and mentioned whether diet, etc., played an important part.

In all books whether worthwhile or no, details are mentioned. You should do the same.

I thought of you when out of sheer despair I had to seek the help of doctors for my own little girl. I told myself how nice it would have been if I could have cured this girl with the help of yoga exercises, etc. She had appendicitis and inflammation. She could not be cured with the earth-water-and-diet [treatment]. I consulted two naturopaths. They also could not help. A *hakim* even suggested treating her with *myrobalan* and wood-apple. This also did not help . Now she is lying in the hospital. I who believed in nature cure and yoga exercises had to confess defeat. I did not like it. But I could do nothing about it. If the girl took fruit she used to get seven or eight motions. She was kept on just a little buttermilk. I could stop neither her motions nor the inflammation of her appendix. Now, tell me, what should I have done in such a case?

[From Hindi]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 372

83. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

GULZARBAGH,
May 16, 1947

Gandhiji referred to his visit to the refugee camp[1] nearby prior to the prayer meeting. He had not been able to see it as thoroughly as he would have liked to do. But what he saw and heard from the Superintendent made him really glad.

The camp was being run on the principle of self-help. Men worked and were paid their due. The children also worked, though they were paid more than what they would be otherwise entitled to. Such self-help bred self-respect.

They were innocent men and women, who had suffered at the hands of the Hindus who had gone temporarily insane. It was their duty, therefore, to make all the amends they could. They should go and visit the refugees in the camp, interest themselves in every detail of their lives, and seek to help them in every way they could. If they did that, Gandhiji said, it would be in part payment of the debt that they owed to the wronged refugees.

Similarly, they need not beg the refugees who had left the province through fear or due to false propaganda, to come back. They should win them back by the magnetic power of their love. If they could create such an atmosphere of affection and brotherliness most of the Muslims who had left the province would return. His work and that of the Government would be considerably lightened. And Bihar would truly become '*vihar*' (a garden), as its name signified.

The Indian Nation, 18-5-1947

84. FROM THE DIARY

May 16, 1947

After prayers went through the Bengali literature that had arrived from Santiniketan. Quite early a message came that Manudi was all right. Once during the night while coming out of the anaesthesia she had called for me. But she soon woke up and sent word that she was well. Wrote letters to Khurshedbehn, Pyarelal. Went for a walk. Madu had come but I asked her to go and visit Manudi; so she left early. In Manudi's absence everything is going topsy-turvy. It

[1] Industrial Home for refugees

shows how much of my work was taken up by the poor girl. She is crazy about serving me.

For these few days Madan Babu will attend to the massage and Dev will bathe me. Sailen read out the newspapers. 9.45 Sat down to my meal. 10.30 The Khaksars called. Then I slept for a little while. I woke up at 11. Took coconut water. While sleeping, in the absence of Manudi Madu massaged with ghee. After getting up wrote letters to Jaisukhlal, Satis, Rameshwari Nehru, Sushila Nayyar. Had mud-pack at 12 and went to sleep after dictating a letter to Chimanlal. Shriman, Santok went to see Nalanda. Got up at 1 o'clock. While spinning dictated letters to Bisen for Balvantsinha, Kosambi, Sankaran ; after the spinning, for Kalyanam, Savitri (Austria), Perry, Martin and Mira. Went to sleep when the eyes were heavy with sleep. Got up at 3.15. Dictated a letter to Vrijlal Nehru. Dictated a letter to Gladys Owen. Talked with Ansari and Mridula. Prabha arrived. Took jaggery. Omitted taking milk. 5.15 Jayaprakash arrived as I was setting out.

Jayaprakash too accompanied me. Sat by Manudi's side for twenty minutes. She is well. She has not yet passed urine. She has grown very weak. Prayers were held at Gulzarbagh. Manudi's absence was felt very much. Returned from there at 7.45. Talk with Anugraha Babu and Ansari. From tomorrow Prabha will come for the massage. Dictated something for *Harijan.* Went through the discourse written by Dev. At 8.30 p. m. a message arrived that Manudi had passed urine after an injection. She is being given penicillin every three hours. Ramanand Mishra's man had come. He talked about fasting. Advised to refrain from undertaking a fast. Afterwards took a walk. Mridula kept me company. Gave myself a sponge bath. Slept at 9.30.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 366-7

85. LETTER TO GOPALDAS A. DESAI[1]

PATNA,
May 17, 1947

BHAI. . . ,

I have received your telegram. You had never ceased to be a Prince. I was quite sure that you were going to regain the title which had been snatched away from you. This has appeared in the

[1] Ruler of Dhasa principality in Saurashtra, who had been deprived of his title and estate in July 1922. These were restored to him on May 13, 1947.

newspapers. I was not at all surprised. Your telegram was received today. When it came to Calcutta I had already left. Now that you have got back your title I hope and expect you would be humbler, purer and more devoted to service. With the restoration of the title, your field of service has not narrowed ; rather it has widened. Your responsibility has increased. You should add glory to the title. We are all passing through critical times. It is not possible to predict today who amongst us would pass the test.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 375-6

86. A LETTER[1]

May 17, 1947

There is a letter from Chi. . . to Sushila. But actually it is meant for me. Read that letter if you have not already done so. Think over it and solve her difficulty. Or, write to me if necessary.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 376

87. A LETTER

May 17, 1947

CHI. . . ,

Your letter to Sushila has arrived today after having gone to all sorts of wrong places. You should not be impatient. What I have told you is the eternal truth. God always removes the troubles of true servants. That is why He is called the Remover of troubles. . . .I have written to. . . I suppose he will meet you. I shall be in Delhi on the 25th. But you will have more correct information for the newspapers.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 376

[1] Omissions in this and the following two letters are as in the source.

88. A LETTER

PATNA,
May 17, 1947

CHI. . . .,

Received your letter. I think it is difficult to make any provision for destitutes from the Kasturba Fund. Even if something could be done, it is in the hands of Labanyalata[1]. But if you feel particularly for any such person, write to me. I shall find some way out. Apart from the Fund we have, there is no programme for relief to destitutes.

As for Satis Babu I have decided that in view of his bad health he ought not to be exposed to risk. Didimony[2] must be doing well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 375

89. LETTER TO RAMANAND MISHRA

PATNA,
May 17, 1947

CHI. RAMANAND,[3]

I have had a talk with Bachchu Singh[4]. I shall do whatever I can. There is no need to hurry with the hunger-strike. Bachchu Singh will tell you the rest.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8024

[1] Labanyalata Chanda, Agent in Bengal for the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust.

[2] Taralika

[3] The source has "Ramnandan".

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Gopaldas A. Desai", 17-5-1947

90. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

PATNA,
May 17, 1947

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,[2]

Your note[3]. I must deny myself the pleasure of going to Mussoorie. I am quite fixed up here and can easily delay coming to Delhi till 31st May[4] or even a day later.

Give my love to all at Mussoorie and take full rest whilst you can.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the original: Jawaharlal Nehru papers (M. O. Mathai). Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

91. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

PATNA,
May 17, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI PATEL,

I got your letter and Jawaharlal's. I don't feel like going to Mussoorie at all. You may stay in Mussoorie as long as you can. Whatever days I can get here will be spent usefully; if therefore, you agree, I shall reach Delhi on the 31st; or any time you wish. I should

[1] This and the following letter were sent to the addressees through a messenger who had brought their letters in the evening. *Vide* p. 488.

[2] The superscription and the subscription are in Hindi.

[3] Dated May 16, which read: "You must be following the rapid developments taking place here. Mountbatten is going to London on Sunday next for two weeks. I understand you intend arriving here on the 25th. Vallabhbhai and I feel that it would be a very good thing if you would come to Mussoorie for a few days before coming to Delhi. This would suit us and it would also give you a few days of rest. . . . I was in any event thinking of going to Mussoorie for a few days. . . .Vallabhbhai is also going to Mussoorie."

[4] The Congress Working Committee meeting scheduled for May 16 was postponed to May 31.

like you to take complete rest in Mussoorie. We shall discuss the problems in Delhi.

I read about Darbar in the newspapers. I was sure that it would happen. There was a telegram from him today and I have replied to him.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 354

92. FROM THE DIARY[2]

PATNA,
May 17, 1947

After prayers talked with Madu[3]. Dictated letter to . . . . Received a message on telephone that Manu is all right. Letter to Secretary, Bihar Catholic Association. Went for a walk; Shriman and Madu accompanied. Prabha gave the massage. Intimated that I was not going to have *khakhras* today. A telegram from Sushila[4] came from Delhi offering to come to help Manudi. I sent wire that it was not necessary. No letter from Sushila for many days. Talked with Santok and Bala during the bath and the meal. Dr. Mahmud called. Afterwards had a nap. On getting up took coconut water and listened to the mail read by Dev. Sailen came. I told him that since the news about Manu had appeared in the papers they [the Press correspondents]were now free [to write]. I said this because on reading the news in the papers telegrams started coming in one after another. Especially since her sisters would be needlessly alarmed. Sailen read out the newspapers. 12.15 Went to the privy, Had a talk with Mridula. At 1 p.m., lay down with mud-packs. At 1.40 took off the mud-packs. Dev brought the mail. It look a lot of time. Went through Dinshaw's letter. Wrote to. . .because he had said categorically that Manu did not have appendicitis.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Gopaldas A. Desai", 17-5-1947
[2] Omissions in the item are as in the source.
[3] The source has "Manu", obviously a misprint.
[4] Dr. Sushila Nayyar

Dictated to Bisen letters for Hemprabha Devi, Darbar Saheb, Jugatram and Annapurna. .. . . Bachchu Singh, Ramnandan Mishra's representative, called. At 4 Mrityunjaya Prasad and Naleshwar Prasad had come. 4.15 Jayaprakash, Prabhavati and three others talked about the police strike.[1]

The dentist came to see me. 5.30 Went to the hospital to see Manudi. Stayed there for 30 minutes. Manudi was overcome with emotion on seeing me. Went to Dinapur for prayers. Returned at 6.40[2]. Talked with Anugraha Babu.

Messenger came with special letters from Jawaharlal and Sardar. . . . Wrote replies and handed them over. 8.45 Went for a walk. Mridula was with me. Retired to bed at 10.15.

Today neither the prayer nor the discourse was satisfactory. The crowd was very large. In the absence of any arrangement there was no peace[3]. Therefore we returned after finishing only the prayers. Prayers were at Dinapur.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 374-5

93. LETTER TO LADY MOUNTBATTEN

NEW DELHI,
May 18, 1947

DEAR SISTER,

So you are celebrating [the][4] silver jubilee of your wedding amid a shower of congratulations and good wishes. Let me add mine to them. I hope that your joint career here will blossom into citizenship of the world.

I hope your daughter is fully restored.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

LADY MOUNTBATTEN OF BURMA

From a photostat: G. N. 10831

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 27-3-1947

[2] The source has "5.40", evidently a slip.

[3] A huge crowd of nearly a hundred thousand people had assembled but because of persistent noise Gandhiji told the gathering that he was leaving the prayer-ground without addressing them. He remarked: "It is clear you do not wish to hear me; you want me to hear you. As I have already done so I would beg your leave."

[4] The source has "your".

94. A LETTER

PATNA,
May 18, 1947

CHI. . . ,[1]

I got your two letters together. You have now taken to aeroplanes. I am not saying it by way of reproach.

How very odd that my letters should hurt you and my sweet words should seem like poison to you? Why does not such a situation seem pitiable to you? Don't you know that the word *mara* [2] became Rama in the mouth of a devotee? Isn't there a similar story in Valmiki's work? I have forgotten the original Sanskrit. The proverb "a father's rebuke is nourishing like ghee" has come from that. If this does not apply to you, should I not consider myself at fault? What should I write now? Let things take their own course. I am not going to write anything to the newspapers. You relish whatever you find pleasant and start wilting when you are confronted with something unpleasant. Indeed, what a merit in a doctor !

A niece[3] of Dr. Bhargava is working in the hospital here. She used to study in your college. She was junior to you by four years. She told Manu: "If. . .takes me on the Kasturba [Memorial] work I would work honorary." God alone knows how much truth there is in this.

May it not be that the apparent contradiction in my words is based on my experiences on the different occasions? Is it not possible that the same patient who may seem healthy to you today may appear unhealthy the next day?

I shall reach Delhi on the 25th. It would be nice if you could go to Simla in the meantime. Come down on the 25th.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 380-1

[1] The name is omitted in the source.
[2] Meaning 'dying'
[3] Dr. Lajja Bhargava

95. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI [1]

PATNA,
May 18, 1947

CHI. . . .,

I saw this letter among the papers I have taken up after prayers. You have asked me to send a telegram about the photographer. Your letter is dated April 25. Manu did tell me something about it. After coming here I have just taken up the pending papers. I am able to attend to your letter only today, and so, I am not sending you a telegram. I am not so enthusiastic about the photographer. But I do not wish to disappoint you, hence, I leave it to you.

People have built roads with their own labour and, if the Government does not pay them wages, I don't think there is anything wrong if as an exception we pay. For, they would have certainly expected payment in this case. But we cannot create a precedent like that.

It will do if you show this letter to . . . However, I will write a separate letter or dictate one.

Most probably I have written to you about. . .I have been a little worried about . . . after . . .'s letter. And I cannot say that I approved of . . .'s suggestion that . . . should stay only with you. But I have accepted the suggestion. I did not like it because it was contrary to what I had decided. Both of you had accepted it, too. But I consider . . .a mere child, and hence, if she cannot bear the life there, she should not be forced to live there. But you alone can decide about it. I can only say that you have my permission. And . . . ought to improve her health. How is she going to serve, if she does not improve her health?

I shall probably leave here on the 24th for Delhi. Manu has been operated upon for appendicitis. You must have known it already. She is still in the hospital. She is all right. It is terribly hot here. During these months it is bound to be hot everywhere in India except on the hills. I have so far not found the heat unbearable.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 378-9

[1] Omissions in the letter are as in the source. It is evident from the contents, however, that this was addressed to Kanu Gandhi; *vide* the following item.

96. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

PATNA,
May 18, 1947

CHI. SATIS BABU,

I think I have already replied to what Chi. Kanu writes but today I am writing[1] to him again. The letter is enclosed with this. It being in Gujarati you will not understand it. All that I have meant to convey is that those who have laboured for clearing the road, etc., should get their wages from one or the other source, either from the Government or from us. We have given our word and so somehow they must be paid. Think over it and do what is proper.

I got two copies of *Dinalipi*, one should be enough. It says that your health suffered because of your carelessness.

I hope you have my letters and given up your carelessness.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9282

97. A LETTER

PATNA,
May 18, 1947

BHAI SAHEB,

I am enclosing herewith the article from the *Janata* dealing with the complaints about the zamindars. After the abolition of the indigo planters' reign in Bihar,[2] any zamindar should be ashamed to have behaved in the way described in the *Janata*. I have talked to the writer. He tells me that there is no exaggeration in his article. Look into the matter and do what you consider proper.

[From Hindi]

Bihrani Komi Agman, p. 378

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The Champaran Agrarian Bill was passed on March 4, 1918, by the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council. *Vide*

98. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

PATNA,
May 18, 1947

CHI. BRAJKRISHNA,

I have your letter full of anger. Why can't you see that Hindus and Muslims have lost their humanity? Never forget Bihar. There are other examples like this, but I do not want to go into any controversy. God will give us all good sense.

What you write about fasting is full of misunderstanding. Ask me, when we meet, if I have the time. Now I may not come on the 25th, but I must on the 31st. I shall, however, be prepared to leave on the 24th. If I get more time, so much the better. After all my presence does help one way or the other.

I hope you are all right.

You must have learnt about Manu's operation. She is all right.

Blessings form
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2500

99. MESSAGE TO SOUTH AFRICA[1]

May 18, 1947[2]

Field Marshal Smuts[3] is a trustee for Western civilization. I still cling to the hope that he will not sustain it on the suppression of Asiatics and Africans. South Africa should present a blend of the three.

To the people of South Africa, to whom I am no stranger, I would say that they should not make the position of their representatives impossible by their unwarranted prejudice against colour. The future is surely not with the so-called white races if they keep themselves in purdah. The attitude of unreason will mean a third war which sane people should avoid. Political co-operation among all the

[1] This was sent through Dr. Y. M. Dadoo and Dr. G. M. Naicker, who met Gandhiji on May 18 and 19; *vide* also p. 495.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Jan Christiaan Smuts (1870-1950); Prime Minister of South Africa, 1919 to 1924 and 1938 to 1948

exploited races in South Africa can only result in mutual goodwill, if it is wisely directed and based on truth and non-violence.

I have no doubt that those South African Indians who seek to create a division will do harm to themselves and to the great cause of liberty for which the movement of satyagraha has stood and must stand.

To the satyagrahis I would advise strict adherence to the fundamentals of satyagraha which literally means force of truth and this is for ever invincible. It is a good sign that they have a progressive European group solidly behind them. The satyagrahis of South Africa should know that they have India at their back in their struggle for preserving the self-respect of the Indians in South Africa.

Harijan, 25-5-1947

100. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

PATNA,
May 18, 1947

It pained me that yesterday though men and women had assembled in large numbers my voice could not reach them all owing to the clumsiness, or inefficiency, of the volunteers, or because of some defect in the loud-speakers.[2] As a result people failed to maintain silence. It is a matter of shame for us. We ought to learn how to maintain perfect silence even when we gather in hundreds of thousands. If we fail to learn this, we shall not be able to protect our independence. Democracy requires everyone, man or woman, to realize his or her responsibility. This is what is meant by panchayat raj. A single limb of the body ceasing to function properly throws the whole body mechanism out of gear. Similarly, the whole of India is one body and we are its limbs. If we become lax, the whole country would be affected likewise. That is why I lay so much stress on the need for discipline at meetings, on trains or on railway platforms. It is on such occasions that we are tested. I go so far as to say that if we had learnt to keep order at gatherings of hundreds of thousands, riots like those in Bihar would not have occurred. Today, the smallest disturbance is given a communal colour, with the result that it provides an opportunity for a communal flare-up. Volunteers, therefore, should understand this and educate the people to keep order at

[1] As Gandhiji was observing silence, his written speech was read out.

[2] *Vide* " A Letter", 18-5-1947

meetings, etc. This will not be accomplished by merely attempting it when meetings are actually being held. Training in this respect must find its way into the very homes of the people. I would suggest that they tell the people that yesterday's meeting failed in its purpose because of the noise, and that in order to have me again in their midst they must learn to keep silence. I become apprehensive about our future when I see slackness around me in everything. Lethargic people can never accomplish anything, nor can they develop courage. We have to be vigilant if we desire to raise independent India to the highest position in the world.[1]

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 1-6-1947

101. A LETTER[2]

PATNA,
May 18, 1947

CHI. . . ,

Got your letter today. I am writing the reply at night. You are unnecessarily perturbed. I have not neglected you. True, I have not pampered you. Do you know with how many people I had to argue on your account? And why should you know it too? Why do you feel upset because of . . .? Was he not the one to discover . . .? And he was the one who encouraged him. Instead of being grateful to him, why do you find fault with him? If you are clinging to the money . . .has left behind, why do you hope for something else? Give up your attachment to that money and everything will turn out well for you. You are miserable because you are not social. You are restless. You have gone far ahead. And now, you are your own obstruction. If I do not point out these things to you, who will?

It is good that you have started going your way. But you would go very far and shine forth if you gave up being too obstinate. Just now I am going around in the nearby areas. I shall go to Sevagram if God grants me another life. If not, I shall do or die somewhere here.

[1] According to the source, this and the following five prayer speeches are reproduced from *Bihar Samachar*.

[2] Omissions in the letter are as in the source.

Manu had been suffering from appendicitis. She had to be operated upon.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 380

102. FROM THE DIARY[1]

PATNA,

May 18, 1947

After prayers looked through the letters dictated yesterday and signed them. Bengali [lesson]. Dictated a letter to . . .about the zamindars.[2] Went for a walk. Madu kept me company. Madan Babu gave the massage, Dev, the bath. After bath completed the letter to . . .because it was not yet time for the meal. Listened to the letter from Brijkishan. Could not be completed. At 9 Drs. Dadoo and Naicker came. Talked to them while taking my meal. Reduced the quantity of food. Slept. Got up at 10.45 and drank coconut water. Wrote message for South Africa. 11.45 Sat down to spin. 1.10 Had mud-packs. Went through the whole of Ansari's scheme[3]. Dictated letter to Satis Babu. Read Brijkishan's papers. Dictated a reply. Had a talk with Mridula. 3.20 Dadoo and Naicker called again. Wrote the discourse. Prabha came. 4.15 Talked with Ansari and Mridula. 5 Went to the clinic for the dentures. From there went to Manudi. Prayer at Bankipur Maidan. Letter to . . . .Went for a walk. Santok and Mridu were with me.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 376-7

[1] Omissions in the item are as in the source.

[2] *Vide* " A Letter", 18-5-1947

[3] On rehabilitation; *vide* "Note on Rehabilitation", "Note on Rehabiltation", 24-5-1947

103. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

PATNA,
May 19, 1947

CHI. AMRIT,

I have your long descriptive letter. It was received yester- day. It is interesting. We shall presently know what is to happen.

I am glad you are having a little change and perhaps some rest.

The weather here has been oppressive. It is cool just now as it has been raining. The [venue of] prayer meetings change [s] daily. Today we have to go a fair distance.

It was discovered that Manu had appendicitis. Much to my shame as a believer in nature cure, I had to yield to the advice of the doctors. This is the fourth day. She is doing well. No worry.

I reach D.V. Delhi on 25th inst.

Thanks to Mridula she is keeping the living-room as cool as she possibly can by using blocks of ice and *khas tattis.*

I have not yet been able to cope with *Harijan* writing. My time is occupied in overtaking arrears.

If Sushila is there, tell her I wrote to her two letters at New Delhi and give her the date of my reaching N. D.

Love to all in the house.

Blessings from
BAPU[1]

From the original: C. W. 4193. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7829

104. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

PATNA,
May 19, 1947

CHI. . . .,

I got your letter yesterday. Today is silence day and I am, therefore, able to reply immediately.

Why need you thank me for having sent you the shawl[2]? Does it mean that, when you send me something, I also should thank you?

[1] The subscription is in Hindi.

[2] For which the addressee had asked as a token of Gandhiji's love

That is no true love which expects formal courtesy from the person loved.

I did not understand your point regarding Karnataka[1] Write to me again about it. Did a large number of girls come under bad influence?

You seem to be doing good work in Maharashtra.[2]

If I do have to fast, I should certainly like you to be with me at the time. But should I fast merely for that reason? If a fast does come about, we shall think then what your and my dharma should be. We need not even think about the matter just now. It was with some hesitation that I gave even the hint you refer to. It would not have seemed right if I had not given it.

The news which Gadgil gave you is not correct. I cannot conceive of any circumstances in which I might have to fast against women. Banish from your mind all thoughts about a fast and go on with your work.

As a doctor, Dr. Gilder will only say that my point of view is clear. A man who becomes a *sthitaprajna* in the sense described in the verses which we recite every evening, from the second chapter of the *Gita* cannot but live for 125 years. The word *shatam* used in the *Ishopanishad*[3] does not mean 99+1. It means 120, 125 or 130. I mentioned 125 on August [8][4], 1942, in Bombay,[5] and have been mentioning the same figure since then. If, however, I cannot overcome my passion and anger, I cannot live to be 125. In the case I ought to give up such an aspiration. My desire, thus, is conditional.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: G. N. 10461. Also C. W. 6899. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

[1] At a meeting of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust, the Karnataka Agent had mentioned certain lapses on the part of some women workers.

[2] As Agent of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust

[3] Verse 2 which reads: "Doing verily works in this world one should wish to live a hundred years."

[4] The source has "7".

[5] Gandhiji, however, had mentioned "120". *Vide* "Sppech at A. I. C. C. Meeting", 8-8-1942

105. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

PATNA,
May 19, 1947

CHI. DINSHAW,

Yesterday I got your letter of the 13th and I could read it only today.

I read again the note[1] I had drawn up earlier. I remembered the contents. I feel, however, that it would be better, considering the manner in which the arrangement is working, to let it remain independent. (Whatever may be the fate of the original Trust, I should like the Uruli work to go on.) Having regard also to the fact that the progress of the work depends entirely on Manibhai, it seems better to let it remain independent. We, who are the original Trustees, will remain on the new Trust also and ensure that our point of view prevails.

Jehangir had told me that there was some difference of opinion between him and you. That is bound to happen.

I won't mind if you make an independent trust for Purandar also. It may, in course of time, develop into a university. I don't cherish any such hope. Where do we have the men? There is no school for naturopathy, nor any college. Without them, how can we have a university? If you devote yourself to the work at Purandar, I don't think that will harm the Trust in any way. For, if you can take up work at one place, no matter which, pay all your attention to it and succeed in the task, I will think that you have served the Trust.

You may send me any papers or details you wish to regarding that project. I think any success you achieve in popularizing nature cure is bound to benefit the Trust.

How can you make any progress if you cannot write fast in Gujarati? How will you, in that case, be able to work in a village? I feel tempted to write in English out of pity for you, but that would not be true friendship.

I understand about Maji. I am reaching Delhi on the 25th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 2728. Courtesy: Manibhai Desai

[1] *Vide* "Note on Gramsudhar Trust, Uruli-Kanchan", 13-4-1947

106. A LETTER[1]

PATNA,
May 19, 1947

CHI. . . ,

I was under the impression that we had some money in the Bank at Calcutta. But I find that the amount was withdrawn and deposited there. So, make out a cheque for Rs. 36,000 in favour of Badshah Khan for the building[2] and send it to him.

You must be regaining your strength. Your itch must have gone. I shall leave here on the 24th for Delhi. I shall be there for at least seven days. I may have to stay even longer.

The above was dictated in the morning. I received the mail from there about two o'clock in the afternoon. There I found your letter. I am very happy that even in your sick-bed you are gaining useful knowledge. "A wise person should seek both wealth and knowledge as if he was never going to get old or to die."[3] Even if I have quoted this maxim earlier, it deserves to be borne in mind. You would know its meaning. If not, ask . . . . He knows.

Blessings form
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 385-6

107. A LETTER

PATNA,
May 19, 1947

. . . Received your letter. I am sorry that you have taken so much pains in writing it.

I do not intend presenting my views in the manner you suggest. I am in no hurry. Nor do I have the time. I would not like them to remain as they are. But I do not think that the world or I will have lost anything thereby. I believe in rebirth. Whatever remains to be

[1] Omissions in this and the following three letters are as in the source.
[2] For a school in abdul Ghaffar Khan's village
[3] अजरामरवत् प्राज्ञो विद्यामर्थं च चिन्तयेत्।

improved in this life will be improved in the next. I accept my dharma to do my best in this life. I consider it wrong to be slack in one's efforts under the excuse that there are going to be several births.

Your statement that you would[1] be able to put up with my conduct of which you do not approve, ought to be withdrawn. Would you not be shocked if I told a lie, or, if I committed a murder? Don't you see any error in your thinking?

The people you wish to suggest for giving a verdict on my views are not likely to undertake the task. I would never thrust that burden on them. How can one be sure that any code of conduct they lay down would not be wrong? It cannot be applied to you. And as for me, only my own code is applicable to me. So, we both remain where we were. Moreover, can we put before the world anything that is superficial? Fortunately, nothing like that is going to happen. They do present their views in their own way. True, they have not done it in this particular case; but so what?

I do not wish to close this discussion between us on my own. I see some point in . . .'s statement. But I shall gladly continue to write to you so long as you do. It would please me if I could give you some satisfaction by doing so. I do need you all—my co-workers.

Blessings form

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 383-4

108. A LETTER

PATNA,

May 19, 1947

. . . Your letter. What can I say about Greenfield[2]? Each man has his own reasons for writing. Some people abuse me while others shower praise. What can I say about it?

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 384

[1] The source has "would not" here.

[2] The source has "Greenwich", evidently a misprint. *Vide* "Letter to H. Greenfield", 6-5-1947

109. LETTER TO A MINISTER

PATNA,
May 19, 1947

. . . Got your letter today. The meeting must have been held yesterday. I hope it was a success. I know that we have taken an important step by changing the name[1]. How wonderful if, by our work, we became worthy of our name!

[From Hindi]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 385

110. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

BARH,
May 19, 1947

The day before yesterday I had gone to Dinapur. A big crowd had gathered there, as it has here, but in the absence of any proper arrangement there was too much noise and din. I don't know what went wrong but our purpose was defeated. In all that noise what could I speak and to whom could I address my words? When I speak I do so not to hear my own voice but in order that people can listen and I can explain to them their dharma. What is the point in addressing people if my voice fails to reach them? By God's grace we have today peace and order. I congratulate the volunteers as well as the organizers on their achievement. Now the role of our volunteers has changed. Formerly they were expected to teach people how to fill the jails not to create disturbances or use abusive language. While fighting with the Empire we had to have cool courage. With cool courage we were able to achieve a lot. Of course, we cannot claim that everyone had acquired that courage. Even then we used to get a kind of training. But now the Government is our own and we have to impart training of a different nature. Noise creates disorder which leads to disturbances. Even then there used to be riots, etc., but it was never like this. Today we are fighting with one another. If it continues, I have no doubt that we will lose the independence we are about to attain.

But this is not the subject I am going to talk about today. A full

[1] The name Congress Committee had been changed to Peace Committee.

report of the recent riots here should have reached me by this time. But it could not be. However, the people working here have confessed to me today that they had committed a grave error. India is undergoing incalculable sufferings as a result of the sins committed in Bihar and she might have to undergo more in future. If we want to get out of it we shall have to atone for it.

Atonement does not mean merely expressing it in words, it implies a change of heart. We should resolve not to err again. The bad people who have indulged in nasty acts and still continue to intimidate the Muslims, threatening them with physical violence, should confess their guilt and stop behaving like that.

The work of rehabilitation has been entrusted to Ansari Saheb. No doubt it is a difficult task. If the Muslims do not return, whose fault is it? When we do not deal with them in a friendly manner, do not plead with them to return, how can they come back?

They would surely return if we sincerely wished it and pleaded with them in a gentle and friendly way. If you want to atone for your sins you should confess them and bear the punishment awarded for them. This is the way of true atonement. Even if you wish to escape punishment you should confess your guilt. The court also awards a lighter punishment to a culprit if he confesses his crime and frankly admits it in the court. There is no other way but this to escape the consequences of your acts. At present people are running from place to place but how long can they evade punishment? Some day or other they are bound to be arrested. If the Government is afraid of them and does not arrest them it means it is in-efficient and corrupt. It ought not to act like that. If people justify their sins with the argument that by killing and punishing the Muslims of Bihar they had avenged the crimes committed in Noakhali, which were a sequence of the happenings in Calcutta, well, it is the law of the jungle; it is beastly behaviour. Have beasts ever attained freedom? If you have heard of it, please tell me—at least I haven't. People ask me what they should do when the Muslims indulge in such excesses; should they retaliate with two slaps in answer to one? Some persons even do it. But this is the way of the beasts. I tell you that this method of retaliation and violence would not help the world, certainly not India. You have witnessed what the world has come to by following it. Germany, Italy and Japan are all ruined. Those who commit violence and instigate riots are bound to perish. This is the way of cowards. I never preach

such cowardice—on the contrary I have always been teaching the lesson of true bravery. In [South] Africa the Indians were only a handful among the Negroes. The English could have suppressed them, and then how could we have lived there? In spite of that we courageously fought them. You have yourselves witnessed how here in Champaran too we put up a brave fight. Not a trace of the indigo-planters' reign of terror, which had lasted for hundreds of years, is to be found today. It is a different matter if some of our people have turned out to be like the indigo-planters. In Champaran we did not kill or persecute anyone; we abolished an evil system through satyagraha. The peasants told the indigo-planters that they would not work for them and they stuck to their decision. They proved no cowards. Today we have to develop the same bravery, but to a much greater extent.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 1-6-1947

111. FROM THE DIARY[1]

May 19, 1947

I have decided to start my entire routine half an hour earlier from today. Accordingly got up at 3.30. 3.50 Prayer. Bengali lesson. Silence day. Set right the bowels. Wrote a letter to. . . Immediately posted it. 5.15 Went for a walk. Santok was with me. After washing my feet talked with Dadoo and Naicker who are leaving. At 6 o'clock went for the massage. At 8 finished my bath. 8.45 Listened to letter from Kishorelal while taking my meal. 9.20 Lay down. Wrote a letter to. . . There is a letter from Jawaharlal in the mail. Spun. While spinning listened to Sailen reading the newspapers. 11.10 Finished spinning. Went to the privy. 12.30 took off mud-packs Drank coconut [water] and wrote letters. . . . 2.15 Kamala Devi Chattopadhyaya. Attended to the correspondence. Letters to. . . . 3.30 Wrote letters to Rajkumari, Satya Narayan Sinha, Maharaja of Cooch Behar. 4.50 Left for the station. Viceroy's letter[2] acknowle-dging receipt of mine came through the Government of Bihar. Prayer at Barh, a village. The train came at 9.30 instead of at 8.30. From there to Manudi at 10. She was asleep. But soon woke up when I passed my

[1] Omissions in this and the following four items are as in the source.

[2] Dated May 11; *Vide* footnote 2, "Letter to Lord Mountbatten", 8-5-1947

hand over her head. She was very glad to see me. 10.35 Returned from the hospital. 10.50 Prepared to go to bed. Wire from Jawaharlal. Again a wire from Gopaldas. It was very late; so went to bed without eating anything.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 381

112. A LETTER

PATNA,
May 20, 1947

. . . Your letter. How can one have lasting peace? Is not this lesson meant for all of us?

[From Hindi]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 386

113. A LETTER

PATNA,
May 20, 1947

CHI. . . . ,

Your letter. As for Kosambi, see the letter I have written to. . . . I understand what you say about the hospital. Even so, it is your duty to discuss the matter with. . . . You should not leave the Ashram while Kosambi is still there. You say that nature cure has its own limits. That is, amputating the fractured leg of a person and fixing an artificial one is beyond nature cure. Does the same thing apply to appendicitis? It is another matter if a person with a fractured leg manages without a leg and bears the pain. Should the person ailing from appendicitis go to the extent of facing death?

If there is chaos amongst the naturopaths it means that there are no two naturopaths in India who are agreed in their opinion. Each clings to his pride. They never even think of expanding their knowledge. Such a situation is chaos. You may interpret chaos as disorder. Am I clear now?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 387-8

114. A LETTER

PATNA,
May 20, 1947

CHI. . . . ,

Your letter. I like it. . . If they can spare you from the Ashram responsibilities you may go to see your mother. And go also to Kaka Saheb. . . .

[From Hindi]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 387

115. LETTER TO A VILLAGE WORKER[1]

PATNA,
May 20, 1947

CHI. . . . ,

I have your letter after a long time. I was delighted to read it. I consider it a blessed moment that you would be completing twelve years in the same place. And so now you have done well in not turning away the fortune that came your way. Why should it add to your worry if the money came unsought? That money has not come to. . . (the worker himself) but to his work. If it was God's work, the money has come to God. You should utilize it as His servant. It should be used only for those boys and girls from Boriavi who are untouchables or considered near-untouchables. It does not matter if that money is spent slowly or is used up quickly but properly. I am devoted to Nayee Talim and I can therefore only think that all training should be along the lines of Nayee Talim.

. . . and Bhai . . . are with you. It is your duty to act as they direct. Then alone will you be able to preserve your detachment.

I appreciate your desire to meet me; but that desire would be fulfilled by controlling it. We shall certainly meet when we happen to. I can go to Sevagram again only in my next birth. By next birth I mean when I shall be free from this field of work after the problems here, at Noakhali and Calcutta are solved or I die in the process. This is my meaning of renunciation of my field of activity. It does not hurt me. I rather like it because I regard it as my dharma.

[1] Of Kaira district

Since I have put my signature along with Jinnah Saheb, my field of work might expand. I cannot then say 'No'. I think this sums up everything.

Your good health is a matter of great credit for you. I am going to Delhi on the 24th. I shall be there for a week at least.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 388-9

116. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

HILSA,
May 20, 1947

On my way I have heard all about Hilsa.Here the Hindu brethren have played havoc. It is a matter of regret and shame for us, not of joy. The greatest sinner becomes the greatest saint provided he makes genuine atonement for his sins. Hinduism, Islam and Christianity are full of such instances where great sinners turned great saints through sincere atonement and pious deeds. What is the remedy for the happenings in Bihar? I am wondering how best to act or speak to you so that it might change your hearts. Committing a wrong is as bad as being in hell. But then no one remains at peace in hell. One would like to run away from there as soon as possible. In fact, comm-itting anevil act is even worse than being in hell. If this is the reaction on the body, what about the spirit? It would prove beneficial for the Hindus, for India and the world if we atoned for the evil deeds committed here. How can we atone for it? It has been suggested to me that I should stay and work among those who had resorted to violence and should go from house to house; it might perhaps change their hearts. But owing to the hot weather I am not able to follow this advice. No doubt the heat of agony and shame is more unbearable than that which affects the body, however severe it might be. But man cannot get over his love of life. He is afraid to work in this heat lest he should fall ill. It might be called lack of faith. But if my own faith is not firm enough what can I say to others? I quietly bear with whatever is said about me. With whatever strength and gift of speech that God has granted me, I try to speak to you to the best of my ability.

I observe that the Muslim brethren who return to their villages

go back again because their houses which had been destroyed or burnt down are yet to be rebuilt.The rains are approaching. When shall we rebuild those houses and persuade the Muslims to return? No doubt that is the responsibility of the Government. But I suggest that all of you who belong to the village should take up this responsibility and rebuild the houses. Till the houses are rebuilt you should vacate your own houses for the Muslims or accommodate them in your own houses. Thus you should persuade the Muslims to return and atone for your sins. I hear there are amongst you men who are not touched by remorse. It is a matter of great shame. You have all assembled here in large numbers to listen to me and we are having a huge meeting here. I would urge those who are able to hear me to follow my advice. In following it you will not be put to any inconvenience. We do welcome relatives coming from the Fiji Islands or from South Africa and accommodate them in our homes, don't we? In the present case we are the offenders. Let us now welcome the Muslims as our friends whom we had turned into enemies. The people of Bihar are great workers. Those who have the strength should live with the Muslims as if they were their blood-relations. Let one be an uncle, another a brother and a third one a sister, and so on. Then enmity will become a thing of the past. If you act on my advice and cleanse your minds and hearts, welcome back those who have migrated and accommodate them in your midst, it will be a wonderful achievement.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 1-6-1947

117. FROM THE DIARY

May 20, 1947

Bengali after prayers. Talked to Bisen about . . . [1] Dictated answer to a question received for *Harijan.* Went for a walk. Was accompanied by Madu. Massage, bath. While taking bath dictated something for *Harijan.* Lay down. Mahesh has come. Woke up at 10.20 and took coconut water. Sat up to write. Talked with Mridula. Went to the privy. Spun. While spinning Sailen read out the newspapers. 10.50 Went to sleep with mud-packs. Woke up at 11.30. Examined the matter for *Harijan.* Attended to correspondence. There are letters from Surendra, Anand Hingorani. Went through the mail and dictated replies. 3.10 A deputation of zamindars called. Received

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

the Khaksars. 4.10 Went to the hospital to see Manudi. From there went direct to the station. Prayer at Hilsa.Was accompanied by Shah Nawaz. To bed after 10.30.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p.386

118. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

PATNA,
May 20/21, 1947

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter of the 17th. I do not remember anyone having written to me about the disposal of Kosambi's body.[1]

But today I have received Sankaran's letter which deals with this subject in detail. If Kosambi leaves the final decision in this regard to us, I would advise cremation as the best form of disposal. It is now being recognized as such throughout the world. Nor is it so very expen-sive; at any rate it should not be. Burial, if it is performed in accordance with scirptural injunctions, would involve a great deal of expenditure. As regards the other things, which he would like to be done after his death, let him rest assured that his wishes pertaining to Pali, etc., will be duly carried out[2] . I have now to request him to forget about such matters and fix his mind on withdrawing himself into a state of inner concentration whether the body subsists a little longer or withers away soon. Tell him also that though Lanka might be the most suitable place for studying Pali, as far as the study of Buddhism is concerned I do not think that Lanka is the place for it. One does not get at the secret of Buddhism by getting to know its externals.

Govinda Reddi's[3] letter has arrived. Study it and take whatever decision you want.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Signed on the morning of the 21st.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1978

[1] However, for Gandhiji's opinion on the subject; *vide* "Letter to Balvantsinha", 12-5-1947

[2] Dharmananda Kosambi had expressed a wish that after his death a couple of students should be sent to Shri Lanka every year to study Pali and on their return they should propagate Buddhism in India.

[3] An inmate of the Sevagram Ashram

119. LETTER TO P K. ELAYADAM

PATNA,
May 21, 1947

DEAR ELAYADAM,

Your letter. I have not received the money mentioned by you. If you give me more particulars I shall make further inquiry. You cannot live with me during my present very uncertain life. You must shed all misgivings.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 10563

120. LETTER TO ANAND AND GANGI HINGORANI

PATNA,
May 21, 1947

CHI. ANAND AND GANGI,

I was glad to see your handwriting. But why have Gangi and Mahadev[1] not written? I can understand in the case of Gangi. How can she write when she is being borne down by physical pain? I had my fear that her operation would be very painful because she had allowed her disease to grow. She will forget the pain if she gets well, and the bitter experience of pain will make her happier. Isn't this what we call life? So it is with mental agony. Evil is mental agony and nobility is mental happiness. There is a saying in English to the effect that a great sinner undergoes penance and becomes a holy saint.

I like your asking Mother to come over to Poona and keeping Mahadev with you. But then decide for yourself what your dharma dictates.

I got your letter yesterday. I am dictating this reply today after the early morning prayer. So far my body is equal to the work. The heat is severe but it does not affect me much. Sometimes there are showers which make the day cool.

Manu had to be operated upon for appendicitis. She is in the hospital. She is well. My pride in nature cure has been shaken. Let us

[1] Anand Hingorani's son by his first wife, Vidya

see where God leads me.

I am reaching Delhi on the 25th. I will have to stay there for at least one week. After that I may go either to Patna or Calcutta.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of Indian and Anand T. Hingorani

121. LETTER TO ARBAB SHER AKBAR KHAN[1]

May 21, 1947

In view of the draft of the agreement[2] you have sent me, I hardly think it worthwhile our meeting. The agreement seeks, in my opinion, to displace the Government for a particular purpose. This, I think, no government can or should do. . . .[3] My views being as strong as they are, the west way for you is to settle directly with the Government.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Bk. II, p. 328

122. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

BIKRAM,

May 21, 1947

First, let me congratulate you on the perfect silence you maintained throughout the prayer, in spite of the mammoth gathering here, and on the correct beating of time. Those who beat time should learn to do it well which would show that they were praying wholeheartedly. I will request the sisters to learn it well.

I hear there was no outbreak of lawlessness in this *thana*[4] . The Congressmen and others here came together and saw to it that there was no trouble. Usually once a riot starts it spreads like an epidemic and infects all. It is good that the people here curbed the riot before it could spread. Chand Saheb, Secretary of the District Congress Committee, told me that tension did prevail and people were afraid of

[1] President, Khaksar Negotiating Committee

[2] Between the Government of Bihar and Khaksars regarding rehabilitation of refugees in Bihar. *Vide* "Discussion with Khaksars-I", 7-3-1947 , "Discussion with Khaksars-II", 7-3-1947 and "Letter to Arbab Sher Akbar Khan", 22-5-1947

[3] Omission as in the source

[4] Police circle

the possible trouble. As a result many Muslims fled. Some of them have since returned but not all.

I advise those who have returned to persuade all the others to return. There has been no damage to property. You should clean the houses which are lying vacant. On hearing the news that their properties are being looked after they will all come back. If this is done in all places, it would be very good.

I shall tell you now what I was going to say yesterday. The Congress has come to have a tradition of its own. For years—for more than sixty years—it has fought the British Government. As Tulsidas says, "The name of Rama has become greater than Rama Himself"; similarly the name of the Congress has become greater than the Congress. But what is the condition of the Congress now? Congressmen think that now it is their Government. Formerly there were not even a hundred or two hundred rupees in the Congress fund which would need any elaborate accounts to be maintained. With great difficulty a crore of rupees were collected for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. An equal amount could never be collected again for the Congress. Now in every province crores of rupees come to their coffers and the Congress leads thousands of people. But truly speaking one can only be a servant of the people, not their leader. It would be a misfortune if the spirit of service disappears and everyone thinks only of grabbing a share out of the crores of rupees. It would be no service to the nation if devoid of the spirit of service we concern ourselves only with serving our own ends or those of our relatives and friends by seeking the favours of the Chief Minister or by capturing the Congress office to further our own interest. Everywhere Congressmen are thus scrambling for power and favours. This is true not only of Bihar but of all provinces. If this continues, I am afraid, we shall not be able to hold the reins of the Congress firmly, nor will those who are in the Government be able to run it efficiently. A government seems to have only military power behind it, but it cannot run on the strength of that power alone. What is the real power of the Government? The real power is in your hands. Their power is only what you delegate to them. Therefore once you have your own government you become your own master. It is a different matter if you fail to recognize your own strength and remain in darkness. But if we realize that real power is now in the hands of India, i. e., in our own hands, we should use it judiciously. No doubt, there had been riots all over the country, not

only in Bihar. But if we do not hold firmly to the power that has come to the hands of the Congress, if we do not have harmonious relations among ourselves and refuse to fulfil our duties, I am afraid our whole purpose would be defeated. And I too shall not be able to do what I have come here for. It might be suggested that I should finish the work of establishing good relations among the Hindus and the Muslims, for which I have come here, and should not take up any other task; that first the Hindu-Muslim conflict should be settled and any other problem should be tackled only after that. But it is not like this, all these problems are inter-related. In tackling one problem others too have to be tackled.

A rot has set in the Congress. It means that Congressmen are no more honest. If those who are selfish capture the Congress it cannot function well. Now there are various groups in the Congress and all of them have the one thought of capturing the Congress. But in this way none of the groups will be able to hold the organization. The Congress would slip from their hold and pass into the hands of unscrupulous men. And they are white-[clad] goondas who appear respectable but are goondas at heart. How can our purpose be served, if the reins of the Congress pass into their hands? We will all perish if we ourselves disintegrate into groups such as the Forward Bloc, the Socialists, and so on. We all belong to the Congress. The Congress aims at serving the whole nation, not any particular party or group.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 1-6-1947

123. FROM THE DIARY

May 21, 1947

No *bhajan* could be sung at the prayer-meeting. Signed the letter that I had dictated. Letter to . . .[1] 5.10 Went for a walk, Madu accompanying. Had the letters from . . .[2] read to me while I had my meal. Talked with Shah Nawaz at 9 o‘ clock. Got news from Rawalpindi that the Hindus have surrendered. Went to sleep at 10.30. Took coconut water. Attempted to read Arunanshu’s letter in Bengali. Letter from Bal has arrived. Span. Listened to [the reading of] newspapers. 12.10 Mud-pack. Talk with Doctor Saheb. Wrote letters.

[1] The names are omitted in the source.

[2] *Ibid*

Wrote out reply to the Khaksars. 2.15 Krishnavallabh Babu[1] called. 3.45 Gen. Stable and his A. D. C. called. Two policemen who were released on bail called at 4 o'clock. 4.15 Took some jaggery. Anugraha Babu (Home Minister) called. Sarju Prasad also called. 4.35 Went to the hospital to see Manu. From there proceeded to Vikram in a car. After the prayers returned at 8.40 Members of the Cabinet—Shri Babu, Krishnavallabh Sahai, Anugraha Babu, Binodanand Jha[2] , Ansari—came. Did not take milk. Ate some grapes. Looked through the discourse written by Dev. Went to sleep at 10 o'clock.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 389

124. LETTER TO ARBAB SHER AKBAR KHAN[3]

May 22, 1947

I see that we do not see eye to eye on things. I have never accused the Bihar Government of "shameful and disgraceful conduct". I would like you to send me the paper from which you have quoted me. I cannot suggest another draft agreement. There can be none. It is open to you to place any blame you like on me for things done or not done by the Bihar Government. I can see nothing wrong or offensive in the Government letter of which you have sent me a copy.[4]

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Bk. II, pp. 328-9

[1] Minister for Revenue and Forest in Bihar

[2] The source, however, has "Vivekanand Jha".

[3] This was in reply to the addressee's letter which read: "We have read the agreement drafted by us . . . and I fail to see how the agreement 'seeks to displace the Government for a particular purpose'. I assure you that trere is no purpose (behind it) except quick, smooth and efficient work of rehabilitating the unfortunate lakhs who are now groaning under what you yourself called 'shameful and disgraceful conduct of Bihar Ministry'. . . . If you don't say anything nothing will happen. . . . The blame for nothing having been done so far, I fear, rests on you. . . . I shall agree to the draft you propose. Please keep it ready when we meet you tomorrow."

[4] To this the addressee replied, "There is no question of 'our not seeing eye to eye on things'. We. . . . can accommodate ourselves in spite of difficulties. You have already expressed yourself on the matter of rehabilitation and you can mend matters if others cannot. . . . you may point out our shortcomings in the proposed draft." For Gandhiji' draft, *vide* "Draft Proposals for Khaksars", 23-5-1947

125. LETTER TO DR. M. D. D. GILDER

PATNA,
May 22, 1947

BHAI. GILDER,

Chi. Samyukta is my grand-daughter. She is Chi. Manu's sister and daughter of my nephew, Jaisukhlal Gandhi. She has been suffering for a long time. Her father, therefore, has wired to me to write a letter of introduction to you, requesting Dr. Jivraj Mehta and you to examine her and suggest some treatment for her.[1]

I think you have once examined her. I do not know if Dr. Mehta is there. I am, therefore, writing to you. Please do your best. Chi. Samyukta's husband can afford to pay your fees. You may, therefore, charge whatever fees you wish. They want a letter of introduction only because they are not sure whether you will now be able to spare time from your public work. If I write a letter of introduction to you, they hope to be able to see you.

Hope you all are happy.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

126. LETTER TO SAMYUKTA H. SHAH

PATNA,
May 22, 1947

CHI. YUKTI,

I had a wire from Jaisukhlal. I have also discussed the matter with Manu. Your passing so much blood in the sputum has worried Jaisukhlal. He, therefore, has asked me to write letters of introduction to Dr. Gilder and Dr. Jivraj.

I am sending the original letter to Dr.Gilder himself. A copy of it is enclosed. You two should seek an appointment with Dr. Gilder and see him. Whether you will benefit or not God alone knows. It may be one's duty, however, to try to seek hope from whatever source one is likely to get it. There is only one unfailing remedy in

[1] *Vide* also the following item.

the world, and that is Ramanama, together with the observance of such rules as may be necessary to make oneself fit to use that remedy. But this is a remedy which all of us are not able to try. I could not have patience in Manu's case. Besides, how will my being patient help? I cannot kill the girl who has been entrusted to my charge. How can I judge the depth of her faith in Rama, how indeed? In my impatience, therefore, I consulted the doctors here and they advised an operation. She was operated upon on the very same day. She is in the hospital just now and is better. She will accompany me to Delhi on the 24th. We shall stay for a few days in Delhi–how many, God alone knows.

I got your wire. I did not send a wire in reply, since you must have received Manu's letter by now and I also hope that your husband will be patient.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

127. ADVICE TO NURSES[1]

May 22, 1947

Your work is such that you serve others even while serving your own interests. It is only as a result of accumulated merit that one acquires such training leading to unselfish service. Therefore bring credit to this profession of serving others which God has blessed you with and give up the desire for money.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 398

128. A LETTER

PATNA,
May 22, 1947

Somebody had told me that you had been ill. Yesterday I suddenly remembered it. One falls ill owing to one's own fault. What

[1] The two nurses attending on Manu Gandhi had asked for Gandhiji's autograph, not knowing that he charged Rs. 5 for it. But Gandhiji remarked that he was giving it free for Manu's sake.

was your fault? Why did you commit it? Does not service suffer on account of illness? Where is...[1]?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 397

129. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

FATEHPUR,

May 22, 1947

It was my good fortune that last evening I could congratulate the people at the prayer meeting on maintaining proper silence and correctly beating time to *Ramdhun* . Today I am again fortunate to congratulate you here. I would also like to congratulate the volunteers because, while I was coming in the car, in spite of quite a few persons having gathered along the route, there was no noise or shouting. As a result I could carry on my work as I wanted. The purpose behind holding prayer meetings at different places every day is that all people can attend them and I can tell them what I want to say. To walk four five miles is nothing for the young, even for little boys and women it is nothing much. I would suggest that you define a circle with the venue of the prayer meeting as its centre. It would be nice if people living within a radius of five miles from the point come to attend the meeting. This would be a sort of training for setting up panchayat raj. It is a good idea.

If the work being done in Bihar continues to progress well, it would be a great thing for the whole country.I have been told that a peace committee has been formed here and it has both Hindus and Muslims on it. In Bihar the Muslims form only 13 or 14 per cent of the population. But we ought to cover them all through the committee. Then alone will a peace committee in the true sense be formed. The work of the peace committee is easy enough. It has to compensate for the damage caused by us and repair the houses which have been burnt. If it succeeds in doing this much, the rest would be easy to accomplish.

A sister has asked me how women could help in this work. The

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

sisters who are sitting here do not observe purdah. They can work in these areas. True purdah should be of the heart. What is the value of the outer veil? I go so far as to say that even the Koran Sharif does not mention outward purdah. How rapidly the times we are in are moving. Today we are here, tomorrow we will have moved far ahead. In such times what is the point in continuing the worthless custom of purdah? If the Hindu women here have sincere love for their Muslim counterparts, I would ask them to go to them and try to relieve their suffering. For this one need not be a B.A. or an M.A. It is enough to be true and sincere.

Today I heard from a sister about an incident at Masaurhi, where Maj. Gen. Shah Nawaz is doing [rehabilitation] work. At the milk distributing centre there a Muslim sisters did not allow her child to take milk as she thought it should not drink milk from the container used by Hindu children. I would only say that although this is not good we should not take offence at it. It is we Hindus who observe untouchability; Islam does not know it. It does not admit of untouchability in any form. It rather preaches the lesson of peaceful co-existence. We were the first to observe untouchability. Later on it spread to the Muslims and now it is being taught to the children as well. Those sisters who sincere and have realized that we have plundered and massacred the Muslims and ostracized them should go among the victims. They should visit the women of the neighbouring Muslim families. Our greatest dharma is to go and work at places where atrocities were committed. We should also go to places where no untoward incident happened and bring about unity of hearts between the Hindus and the Muslims. They have to make the Muslim women their true sisters and teach the lesson of true love to the children.

My grand-daughter who had been in the hospital recently related to me an incident that occurred there. The people at the hospital have come to believe that Congressmen have grown very arrogant. They now seem to think that everything belongs to them, even the hospital is their private property. To think like this is not wrong. But it is misinterpreted and misused that is certainly wrong. It is not as if donning a white cap or khadi alone entitles one to rule over others or makes one a saheb. My grand-daughter told me that since she had fever the gate-keeper at the hospital had orders not to allow anyone to visit her. But when a khadi-clad gentlemen came to visit her and was stopped he created trouble for the gate-keeper protesting that

he could not be stopped. He was an M.L.A., and no one could stop him. How arrogant we have grown! I would say, let alone an M.L.A., even if Dr. Mahmud had been there he should have been stopped. It is the doctors and the nurses who are the authorities of the hospital. Their word should prevail there. Even Shri Babu cannot interfere in such matters. In a way Congressmen have a right in all matters, but regarding the internal affairs of an institution the officer in charge there should be the sole authority. Without discrimination all patients should be accommodated in rooms which are vacant. Even for a minister no one should be asked to vacate his room. My grand-daughter is sharp enough. She asked me if nothing could be done about this. I wish that the rights we have acquired should not be abused. It would be well if my message reached the educated too.

I would like to say one thing more. I hear black-marketing is rampant in Bihar. It is difficult to say whether it is more widespread or in the U.P., or in the States like Orissa, Gujarat and Maharashtra. Since I am now here, I take it that black-marketing flourishes on a large scale in Bihar. Rajendra Babu was saying the other day that there would be great scarcity of food-grains in July-August and we would be able to manage only if we got some from outside. I feel very unhappy when I hear this. India is not a country which should face scarcity of food-grains. We had always fed other Our granaries used to be full and everyone had his fill, such used to be the food position. And if it is no more so we can still bring about that state. People should be told that they must put in hard labour to produce and store more food-grains. It is essential to work hard. Hard work alone would keep them in good health. All this can be done in Bihar. I grant that there is scarcity of foodgrains and cloth in the country. But the fact is that a thing not available in the open market is available in the black-market, though at a higher price. In other words, what cannot be obtained honestly in the open market can be had through dishonest means in the black-market. This is a complicated problem. It is a problem for the Ministry, the Congressmen and for everyone. But things would be all right if everyone resolved not to buy anything in the black-market. Matters would improve if the traders decided against black-marketing. But people succumb easily to corruption. Trades are to be carried on to serve the people, not only to fill the coffers of the traders. Money can be earned through honest means as well. What shall we do if we did not get foodgrains from outside? When we made a request to the Australians for wheat they asked for

linseed in return. They have a right to ask for it and we would also give it to them if we had it in surplus. But in case we do not have linseed in surplus, they should accept money instead. But such are the conditions nowadays that we have to accept the terms they lay down. If we do not, they become aggressive. If we hit them they hit back with double force. I would, therefore, say that if all the traders carried on their trades in an honest way; it would also facilitate their business. Bihar is the land of King Janaka and Lord Buddha. It would be a great misfortune if the people here turn dishonest and resort to corrupt prac-tices. I earnesty appeal to the black-marketeers to run their trades honestly so that they may word off the difficult times looming large before us.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 1-6-1947

130. TALK WITH MANU GANDHI

[*May 22, 1947*][1]

I know, if I had refused to get you operated upon and you had died as a result, your father would not have minded in the least. On the contrary, he would have welcomed it (as a sacrifice in a noble cause). But I had not the courage to let a girl entrusted to me die like that. . . . Call it attachment, weakness, or what you will, but there it is.

During the last eight days, since I sent you to the hospi-tal, I have been constantly thinking where I stand, what God demands of me, where He will ultimately lead me. . . Though I have no longer the desire to live for 125 years, as I have said again and again of late, my striving to meet death unafraid with Ramanama on my lips continues. I know my striving is incomplete; your operation is a proof. But if I should die of lingering illness, it would be your duty to proclaim to the whole world that I was not a man of God but an impostor and a fraud. If you fail in that duty I shall feel unhappy wherever I am. But if I die taking God's name with my last breath, it will be a sign that I was what I strove for and claimed to be.

Mahatma Gandi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 195

[1] According to *Biharni Komi Agman.* Gandhiji spoke while taking his grapes; *vide* the following item.

131. FROM THE DIARY

May 22, 1947

4.45 Manudi returned. The doctors also came. Had Chi. Manu's cot arranged in my own room facing my seat. Sat by Manudi's side for a while. . . .[1] Returned at 8.30. Sat by Manudi's side on her cot to eat my grapes.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, p. 395

132. DRAFT PROPOSALS FOR KHAKSARS[2]

May 23, 1947

Where houses are not already rebuilt and the refugees themselves choose to rebuild, the Government will grant not more than Rs. 1,000 against proof of actual and necessary expense to that extent. Special cases requiring greater expense will be considered on merit.

Rehabilitation grant not exceeding Rs. 500 per family of five members will be granted when required.

Artisans and agriculturists will get interest-free loans to be repayable in five years in five instalments for the purchase of seeds or implements such as looms, etc.

Free education will be provided for children and work will be given to those who may need it. Rations against work during the recuperation period will also be provided.

Provision for orphanages and widows' homes will also be made.

From a photostat: G. N. 5121. Also *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. I, Bk. II, p. 329

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] *Vide* footnote 3, "Letter to Arbab Sher Akbar Khan", 22-5-1947

133. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

MANER,
May 23, 1947

About eight hundred years ago Saint Makhdum Maneri lived in Maner. Though communal tension did prevail here, with the efforts of the Congressmen Maner was spared the devastation that follows a riot. As I had said[1] [the day before] yesterday, since most of our social problems are inter-related I cannot help mentioning other problems along with my present task of rehabilitating the people who had fled to other places. Take for instance the question of the zamindars. You all know that the century-old reign of the white indigo-planters was brought to an end by the will and concerted action of all the people and their leaders, prominent among whom were the late Brijkishore Babu and Rajendra Babu. But I have been told that the tyranny of the white rulers is being continued even today by the Indian zamindars. They exploit their ryots economically, terrorize them through their officials and escape due punishment through collusion with the authorities. If it is true, the zamindars are digging their own graves. They can survive only if they become trustees of their ryots.

But as a devotee of truth and justice I must discuss the other side of the problem as presented to me by the zamindars. Because of my friendship with all, the zamindars also regard me as a friend, although they know my identification with the masses. They tell me that with the Congress coming into power and drawing its sanction from the masses the ryots feel that they can commit all sorts of excesses, dispossess the zamindars of their entire property, destroy their crops and terrorize them by other acts of violence. Similarly, under the influence of false propaganda, labourers in the mills think that they can become the masters of the mills by damaging them.

As one of the masses I can only say to the peasants and labourers that they are only harming their own cause by following this senseless policy. They constitute the real masses and they should realize their own strength. In a mad fury, the millions can easily destroy the handful of zamindars but ultimately their madness would bring about their own ruin.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 21-5-1947

I have heard destructive criticism of the Government by the people who can neither wield the power that has come to the nation nor let others who deserve wield it. The ministers on the other hand should be true servants of the people from whom they derive their power. They should not show any partiality while allocating jobs to the candidates, should be free from the evil of bribery and mete out equal justice to all.

If all the three—the zamindars, the ryots and the Government in Bihar—do their duty, Bihar would set a noble example for the whole nation.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 1-6-1947

134. NOTE ON REHABILITATION[1]

[Before *May 24, 1947*][2]

If I were Minister in charge of rehabilitation work, the first thing I would do would be to have my duty clearly defined. The Ministers would have to put me in charge of the magistracy and the police, in so far as I need them, to enable me to clothe the refugees with full protection against loot, arson and murder and give me control over the movement and prices of foodstuffs, clothing and building material for the refugees. Having thus secured my position, I would proceed immediately to find out the number of those who have returned, where they are and how they are faring. I would do this personally and deal with their complaints there and then.

As to those who have not yet returned, I would issue notices in the Press and distribute leaflets in the language of theprovince, stating precisely the terms under which they may return. I would not worry about those that do not return. . . .[3] The Government's duty . . .[4] commences only when they return. I would promptly deal with the communications from or on behalf of those who wish to return and even get private persons to help the needy to return. The lands and buildings of the absentees, I would hold in trust for them but would

[1] Gandhiji discussed the scheme of rehabilitation formulated by Abdul Qayum Ansari for quick disposal of work and later put down his ideas in the form of a note for his guidance.

[2] The note was written before Gandhiji left Bihar on May 24, 1947.

[3] Omissions are as in the source.

[4] *ibid*

give notice that, after the lapse of the period stipulated in the notice to be issued, the buildings and the land would vest in the State for it to make such use as it deems fit for the benefit of the absentee's next of kin or failing them the Muslims of the province or a portion thereof.

I would invite the co-operation of the local League and give their recommendations every legitimate consideration.

I would not give doles to the refugees but expect them to do some work which they are capable of doing against rations or other aid given to them. I would make them feel in every way that they are fully worthy of all the aid the State can give them in this manner.

I would bring to trial without delay all those who are detained as suspects and arrest those who are still evading justice. No stone should be left unturned in order to trace culprits and bring them to justice.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Bk. II, p. 338

135. LETTER TO ARBAB SHER AKBAR KHAN

PATNA,
May 24, 1947

DEAR NAWAB SAHEB,

With reference to the draft proposals[1] a copy of which was sent you last evening by Shrimati Mridulabehn and which I would be prepared to recommend for adoption by the Bihar Government, I hope your organization will be able to work under the Government and its instructions. Of course, the Ministry will be at liberty to vary the proposals from time to time as may be required by circumstances. I would advise you to see Ansari Saheb, the Minister in charge and settle details of work.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

NAWAB ARBAB SHER AKBAR KHAN
PRESIDENT, NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE
SHAMSUL ULEMA MOHIBUL HAQ
BANK ROAD, PATNA

From a copy : G. N. 5121

[1] *Vide* "Draft Proposals for

[2] But before the Khaksars could get in touch with Ansari they came in conflict with the police and many of them were arrested. The Government released them later when they offered to leave the province.

136. LETTER TO SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

PATNA,
May 24, 1947

MY DEAR SARAT,

I have your note.[1] There is nothing in the draft stipulating that nothing will be done by mere majority. Every act of Government must carry with it the co-operation of at least two thirds of the Hindu members in the executive and the legislature. There should be an admission that Bengal has a common culture and a common mother tongue—Bengali.

Make sure that Central Muslim League approves of the proposal notwithstanding reports to the contrary.[2] If your presence is necessary in Delhi I shall telephone or telegraph. I propose to discuss the draft with the Working Committee.[3]

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat : G. N. 10534

137. TALK WITH KHAKSARS

May 24, 1947

We may attain complete independence in the coming few days. However precious political independence may be, we should not rest quiet till something tangible is done in terms of national welfare. We must now have such a social system from which exploitation will be completely eliminated and in which all work will be carried out in a democratic manner. Whatever may be the desire of the British or any other nation, it is not possible now to delay our independence which is

[1] Enclosing a copy of the draft proposal for United Sovereign Bengal the addressee had sought Gandhiji's "help and guidance" in securing an agreement between the Congress and the Muslim League; *vide* also pp. 442-4 and 464-5.

[2] On May 20 the Working Committee of the Bengal Provincial Muslim League adopted a resolution to the effect that it had nothing "to do with the proposal that had been published in newspapers for the settlement of a constitution for Bengal" and that it "stood firmly with the Muslim League demand for Pakistan."

[3] The A. I. C. C. however passed a resolution on June 15, accepting the partition plan.

just round the corner. If we are not vigilant in the intervening period, our condition will be like that of a typhoid patient. We nurse the typhoid patient while he is running temperature. But he needs to be really looked after only after the fever has come down. If the patient does not have proper care after his fever has come down he suffers a relapse and faces the danger of death. Such is going to be the period immediately after independence. If we want to qualify ourselves for independence we shall have to learn to put up with some hardships. We shall have to be large-hearted. We should be as accommodating as the ocean. The waters of many rivers and a lot of dirt from the banks go into it; many creatures live in it and a number of steamers sail on it and still it is considered sacred and we believe that we can wash away our sins by bathing in it. Even so, if we can be generous and ignore the harsh words of some people and even assaults by them, regarding them as our brethren, we shall become as sacred as the ocean. We have won freedom through non-violence and truth. I am going around right now with the idea of creating an atmosphere of mutual trust and a feeling of equality. But I need your help in that work. Peace established with the help of the army and police is no peace at all, it conceals a smouldering fire of revolution. I have no doubt that if the police are away even for a little while this fire would burst into flames. Forced peace is no peace at all. The only way of removing fear is that every member of legislature and every minister should, along with his family, mix with the common people. The Hindu members should mix with the Muslim population and the Muslim members should mix with the Hindu population. Women should mix with other women and children should laugh, play and study with other children while the menfolk should, in the light of their own understanding, exchange views as to how best independent India can be served. If this is done, I have no doubt that the standard of our society would rise high. No minister will then think of himself as a ruler. No minister's wife would think of her husband as the boss of a particular department. And his children too would not think of themselves as minister's children. If even half a dozen ministers and their families in each State create such an atmosphere of mixing with the common people, I have no doubt that we would not be facing times like these. It is my personal knowledge that Shri Babu was more sociable before he became a

minister. Today, when he has become a minister, his position is the same as mine was when I was in the grand mansion of the Aga Khan Palace.[1] I am not singling out Shri Babu. What I say applies to every minister. When they became ministers, they at once started having police guards at their gates. Now that they have become ministers, they have to get their guards ready in advance. How can they go about without body-guards? They have got themselves entangled now. While before they became ministers, if they wanted to go anywhere in the middle of the night they could jump out of their beds and start off. Frankly speaking, I pity the ministers and, if I should speak my own language, their condition is worse than that of prisoners.

[From Gujarati]

Biharni Komi Agman, pp. 398-400

138. QUESTION BOX[2]

HOW TO COMBAT HIMSA

The leaders and followers of the League do not believe in attaining their object through non-violence. In such circumstances, how is it possible to melt their hearts or to convince them of the evil of violent action ?

Violence can be effectively met only by non-violence. This is an old established truth. The questioner does not really understand the working of non-violence. If he did, he would have known that the weapon of violence, even if it was the atom bomb, became useless when matched against true non-violence. That very few understand how to wield this mighty weapon is true. It requires a lot of understanding and strength of mind. It is unlike what is needed in military schools and colleges. What is requires is purity of the mind. The difficulty one experiences in meeting *himsa* with ahimsa arises from weakness of the mind. Moreover, let us not forget that Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah has, in his interview to the delegation from the Frontier Province, stated explicitly that is was not proper to resort to violence for attaining their rights, i.e., Pakistan.

[1] From August 9, 1942 to May 6, 1944

[2] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak* of the same date.

Today many people are beginning to fell that a clash, possibly of a violent character, with the supporters of the League is inevitable. The nationalists feel that until the League agrees to the partition of Bengal and the Punjab, its demand for Pakistan is unjust. What means should they adopt to meet the situation?

If the answer to the first question is held valid, the second question does not arise. However, the question may be discussed for a clearer understanding. If the majority of the Muslims obey Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah, a violent conflict should be out of the question, or if the majority of the Hindus take their stand on non-violence, no matter how much violence the Muslims use, it is bound to fail. One thing, however, should be perfectly understood. The votaries of non-violence cannot harbour violence even in thought, let alone doing it. If Pakistan is wrong, partition of Bengal and the Punjab will not make it right. Two wrongs will not make one right.

The majority of the Socialists claim that if there was a socialist revolution the economic question would come to the forefront throwing the communal conflict in the background. Do you agree? If such a revolution takes place, will it promote the establishment of the Kingdom of God which you call *Ramarajya*?

The socialist revolution you envisage is likely to make the Hindu-Muslim tension less acute. It is common knowledge that there are quite a few things at the root of our troubles. Even the end of the Hindu-Muslim conflict will not end all our troubles. It might be said that the Hindu-Muslim conflict has assumed a formidable form and the end of other petty conflicts would undoubtedly reduce the danger. What is happening is this. With the end of slavery and the dawn of freedom, all the weaknesses of society are bound to come to the surface. I see no reason to be unnecessarily upset about it. If we keep our balance at such a time, every tangle will be solved. As far as the economic question is concerned it has to be solved in any case. Today there is gross economic inequality. The basis of socialism is economic equality. There can be no *Ramarajya* in the present state of iniquitous inequalities in which a few roll in riches and the masses do not get even enough to eat. I accepted the theory of socialism even while I was in South Africa. My difference with the Socialists and others consists in advocating non-violence and truth as the most effective means for any reform.

You say that a raja, a zamindar or a capitalist should be a trustee for the poor. Do you think that any such exists today? Or do you expect them to be so transformed?

I think that some very few exist even today, though not in the full sense of the term. They are certainly moving in that direction. It can, however, be asked whether the present rajas and others can be expected to become trustees of the poor. I think it is worth while entertaining such a hope. If they do not become trustees of their own accord, force of circumstances will compel the reform unless they court utter destruction. When Panchayat Raj is established, public opinion will do what violence can never do. The present power of the zamindars, the capitalists and the rajas can hold sway only so long as the common people do not realize their own strength. If the people non-co-operate, what can a raja, a zamindar or a capitalist do? In a Panchayat Raj only the Panchayat will be obeyed and a Panchayat can work only through the law of its making. If the Panchayat follows non-violence in conducting its business, all the three would become trustees by law and if it resorts to violence it would mean the end of their power.

NEW DELHI, May 25, 1947
Harijan, 1-6-1947

139. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

BHANGI COLONY, NEW DELHI,
May, 25, 1947

CHI. MIRA,

I have your precious letter just received, i.e., 5 o'clock. I am dictating this whilst spinning. The whole day has been spent in seeing people with a little break for rest. You need not wait to see the Vicereine. But you should proceed to Uttarkashi or Mussoorie as the case may be. Your solitude, the bracing air that you get in Mussoorie and Uttarkashi and consequent clear thinking are more precious to me than your seeing high personages or even coming to see me because I appear to be so near. That is only an appearance. I am near enough wherever you are and wherever I am physically. The rest of your letter it is unnecessary for me to touch. I approve all your programme. I am quite well, though in boiling heat. I must not think of Mussoori or any other similar climate. My work today lies in the affected parts. If God

wishes me to do His work, He would keep me well in spite of adverse climate.

Love.

BAPU

SHRIMATI MIRABEHN[1]
P. O. RISHIKESH
DEHRA DUN DISTRICT

From the original : C. W. 6527. Courtesy : Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9922

140. LETTER TO JULIAN HUXLEY [2]

May 25, 1947

DEAR DR. JULIAN HUXLEY,

As I am constantly on the move, I never get my post in time. But for your letter to Pandit Nehru in which you referred to your letter to me, I might have missed your letter. But I see that you have given your addressees ample time to enable them to give their replies. I am writing this in a moving train. It will be posted tomorrow when I reach Delhi.

I am afraid I can't give you anything approaching your minimum. That I have no time for the effort is true enough. But what is truer is that I am a poor reader of literature past or present, much as I should like to read some of its gems. Living a stormy life since my early youth, I had no leisure to do the necessary reading.

I learnt from my illiterate but wise mother that all rights to be deserved and preserved came from duty well done. Thus the very right to live accrues to us only when we do the duty of citizenship of the world. From this one fundamental statement, perhaps it is easy enough to define the duties of man and woman and correlate every right to some corresponding duty to be first performed. Every other right can be shown to be usurpation hardly worth fighting for. I wonder if it is too late to revise the idea of defining the rights of man apart from his duty.

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The address is reproduced from *Bapu's Letters to Mira.*

[2] The portion in the last paragraph of this letter relating to rights and duties has been reproduced in "Walls of Protection", and "Letter to Julian Huxley", 17-10-1947

141. TALK WITH C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[1]

May 25, 1947

I am not likely to be lured by your logic. After all I am a Bania, am I not?

However, I came here precisely because I was confident of carrying on from here my work for Noakhali and Bihar. And it is being done. I am not lucky enough to enjoy a change of climate. Before I proceed anywhere for a rest the Hindus and Muslims of Noakhali and Bihar must assure me that they no longer require my services. The Government also should help me in this. Then alone will I think of going somewhere for rest. In any case God will certainly grant me the final rest some day or the other. I see no place for myself in what is happening around us today. You know I have given up the hope of living for 125 years. I might last a year or two more. Of course, my health continues to be fairly good. And in spite of all the hard work God continues to grant me new strength. But I have no wish to live if India is to be submerged in a deluge of violence, as is now threatened.

Again, besides communal unity I had recommended to the nation only one thing, viz., handspun yarn with which alone we could bring swaraj nearer.

The spinning-wheel has almost been forgotten. There is all this talk of militarization and industrialization. But it is my conviction that a day will come when they will all see for themselves that for India there is no way other than that of village industries and non-violence. We shall not find a way out unless we develop these. But I am still optimistic.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 4-5

142. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI
May 25, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You know that we should maintain silence during the prayer. You gave me the taste of peace here and your example is followed by

[1] Minister in the Interim Government for Industries and Supplies

people everywhere. You will be glad to know that in Bengal this time even huge prayer meetings were peaceful. Usually when I am travelling crowds gather and people, out of affection, raise loud slogans. I do appreciate this affection but now my health cannot stand the din. I am grateful to you that in spite of the disturbances you maintained silence at the previous prayer meetings and set a good example to others. Prayer meetings in Bihar were also as peaceful as in Bengal. In Bihar people gathered in much larger numbers. I am not now physically strong enough to travel far in this terrible heat. Hence in Bihar I travelled for an hour or an hour and a half by train or car, and went to different places where we used to have prayers. In one place by a river bank more than a lakh of people had gathered. Every little while fresh crowds arrived and raised cries of '*jai*'. There was so much noise that I could not hold the prayer. But barring this one place, I could hold regular prayers at every place in Bihar. The gatherings in Bihar tended to be larger than those in Bengal. The people of Bihar knew me but still came round to have a look at me. We are 400 million people and how long can we remember an individual by seeing and hearing him only for a while? People are always eager to see me. They wonder what Gandhi looks like. They want to see if he is a creature with a tail and horns. Thus people used to gather in huge numbers. The Muslims were so few there that the Hindus could well have clamoured that they would not hear any prayer in Arabic. But not a single person in such large gatherings said any such thing. Why should anyone have said so? Why may not one recite from the Koran?

You too are maintaining silence here. But peaceful though you are, you also create disquiet. As here, so in Bengal too, a young man had the audacity to obstruct the prayer. I thought that in the name of non-violence it was leading to violence. I did not pay any attention to him. He realized the situation and kept quiet. Fortunately the police did not intervene. We held the prayers at the Khadi Pratishthan and, in spite of the large numbers, the gatherings were always peaceful.

Obstructing the prayer has become a regular feature here. Now women have started writing letters to me. Today I have received a letter from a lady in Marathi. She says in her letter that she is not in favour of the recitation from the Koran in a temple. In other words she means to say that all of you are against it because the Muslims

who recite the Koran have perpetrated atrocities on thousands of innocent women and children.

But now I am not going to give up the prayer because of these obstructions. Non-violence should not be allowed to prevent something [good] from being accomplished. I cannot be a witness to the commission of violence in the name of non-violence. Hence, even if this lady creates a disturbance my prayer will go on. I would like to tell the lady and her husband, if he is here, that such impudence does not behove us. For the sake of a single individual we cannot offend thousands. If they are not in favour of this prayer they should not come here. In spite of this if the lady creates trouble no one will do her any harm. She need have no fear. Let not even the police, if they are around, arrest her. I shall continue with the prayer even if I hear her voice or those of her supporters. All of you have also put up with enough. I do hope that there are no supporters of this lady's view among you. But, in case all of you subscribe to her views, I would say that all these young men with me would not offer the prayer. I would do it all by myself and you can all get round together and kill me. I would die smiling with the name of Rama on my lips. When you are so many I cannot kill you all by myself. Nor can the police stop you from killing me. But I hope that except for this lady there is none other among you who is opposed to the Koran. I would request you not to heed the lady's shrieks and shouts. Let no one even touch her. Let the prayer be carried on peacefully.

After this the prayer was held. At the end of the prayer Gandhiji said :

I compliment the lady for being satisfied with my reading out her letter to you. The same pattern will be repeated tomorrow. Whatever the opponents may have to say will be conveyed to you but the prayer will go on. But I do hope there will be none tomorrow wanting to obstruct the prayer.

I wish to tell you that the Hindus in Bihar have not lagged behind in committing atrocities. Not only were the atrocities of Noakhali avenged, but much more was done. And then the chain reaction reached as far as Dera-Ismail Khan. In the light of the atrocities suffered at the hands of the Hindus of Bihar, if the Muslims started saying that they would not allow the recitation of Tulsi's *Ramayana*, the *Gita* and the Upanishads and the Vedas, would it be right? If there are any Muslims who talk like that I would ask them what harm the *Ramayana* or the *Mahabharata* had done them, and

what crime the Vedas, the most ancient treatises, had committed. What harm had Ramachandraji done them? But the same argument would apply to the Koran and Mohammed Saheb. What harm have they done us? You will therefore realize that because I wish to read the *Ramayana* and the *Gita,* I also think it neces-sary to read the Koran.

Now you will want to know what I did at Calcutta and Patna. I cannot tell you now about everything I did in Calcutta. There I met Suhrawardy Saheb and had talks with him. Now we shall have to await the outcome of those talks. Whatever it is, people felt a little reassured by my going there. Sarat Babu is doing his best there. But violence has not yet completely ended there.

In Bihar too there is not much improvement. Refugees are returning to their homes, but the Hindus and the Muslims are not yet free from anger against each other. They are still not in a position to say that they are no more scared or that they will not now indulge in any excesses. But the atmosphere is clearing and there is no doubt about it.

Now the question is, why I came here. Frankly, I do not know why I have come. But one thing is certain. I have served the Congress for many years and people remember me as their servant. They want to know my views though they may or may not accept them.

But I wish to tell you that the tendency to look up to Londan is not desirable. We are not going to have our freedom sent over from London. The Kohinoor of India's freedom is not going to come to us from the hands of others. We can have it from our own hands.

I am not referring to the Kohinoor which is kept in the Tower of London. I am referring to the Kohinoor of our freedom. This Kohinoor is coming to us. We may throw it away if we wish or keep it with us if we so desire. Whatever we decide to do is up to us, not others.

Why then should we look up to Lord Mountbatten? Should we wait to see what he brings for us from England?[1] Our newspapers are all filled with predictions about what Lord Mountbatten is likely to bring from London. But why should we not look to our own strength?

What would happen to the other minorities? Granted that the Hindus, the Sikhs and others are not looking up to the English. But the Muslims are looking only in that direction. Should then the

[1] The Viceroy had left for London on May 17 for consultations.

Hindus and the Sikhs too start looking towards them? If they do start looking towards them and Lord Mountbatten heeds them to some extent, what would happen to the rest of the Indians? Would Lord Mountbatten care to listen to the Parsis who are a very small minority? And there are many other people in India for whom neither the Viceroy nor anyone else cares.

Under these circumstances I have to do my duty. In other words, India has to fulfil her own duty and thus attain independence.

Some people among us have lost their senses. We all come to these prayer meetings purely to become truthful. In order to be truthful we should be slaves to none but God. Then independence is just within our reach. Should we also lose our senses? And do you wish that so long as those few fanatics do not come to their senses Lord Mountbatten should keep them under his control and stay on here?

I do not approve of this. I have taught you something else. Ever since I returned to India in 1915[1]. I have been saying that each one of us should look after himself. If we do it, not only England or America or Russia but all the three together cannot destroy us. Nobody can deprive us of what belongs to us as a birthright. It is our freedom and, if our intentions are honest, it has got to come.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 82-6

143. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

DELHI
May 25, 1947

CHI. JIVANJI,

It is nearing 10 now. I finished the Hindi in Patna, the English on the train, and have just finished the Gujarati. They will go by air-mail tomorrow and you should, therefore, get them on Monday. That is what you wanted.

Blessings from
BAPU

[1] The source, however, has '1916', which is a slip. Gandhiji had returned from South Africa on January 9, 1915.

[PS.]

I have not revised the Gujarati. I have revised one English item. Please revise the rest there.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 9977. Also C. W. 6951. Courtesy : Jivanji D. Desai

144. A LETTER

May 26, 1947

I shall be staying here up to June at least. Afterwards God alone knows. It is extremely hot here. But we are in no position to congratulate ourselves at each other's expense. I hope cool breezes have started there. It is not yet time for that here. You must be gaining strength.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

After writing the above I opened the letters which I have brought with me on the train and the first one I read was yours. I am writing to…[1] and suggesting to him that if he cannot do the work assigned to him he should leave. I cannot keep him with me here. Even now there are too many with me. I have no wish to train anybody. I suppose…is away from the Ashram? Write to him and tell him not to come. Send on to him the letter which I am addressing to him. It would be proper to fix a regular salary for…However, all of you there may think over this and do what seems right to you. Do not eat *mosambis* or anything else that does not agree with you. I feel that it is always the individual concerned who knows best in these matters. This, of course, does not refer to one who cannot think for himself at all.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pacchi Dilhi, pp. 8-9

[1] Omissions as in the source

145. LETTER TO AN ASHRAM INMATE

May 26, 1947

I have your letter. . .[1] bhai has written to me about you. I am sending with this the original letter. If what he says is true, how can [you][2] stay on in the Ashram? I am sure you will not treat the exemption which you have enjoyed as a permanent feature of Ashram life. If a person cannot observe *brahmacharya*, he certainly cannot be forced to do so. Of course, some inmates of the Ashram must observe the rule. But don't you think it proper that anybody who does not like the Ashram life should be permitted to leave it? You should also remember that you do not know the art of working in co-operation with others. It is not at all certain whether I shall be able to go there. In fact I see no such possibility at present. I have no wish to keep anybody with me. Maybe I lack the necessary art or do not know how to adjust myself to others. I do not know which of the two is the correct reason. I would not mind it even if those who are with me decided to leave. The task which I have undertaken requires a great deal of time and I am inclined to take from every worker I have found whatever service he can give. All of you, therefore, should arrange your lives as if I was no longer in your midst. I think this last suggestion sums up all that I have to say on the subject. Meet…and make whatever arrangements you think necessary. Show this letter to…

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 9

146. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

NEW DELHI

May 26, 1947

I saw your letter on the train. But I had a good deal of writing work to do then and, therefore, did not read it. Your zeal is sincere but you wish to take up a task that is beyond you. ''Better one's own

[1] Ommissions as in the source

[2] The verb is in the third person in the source.

duty bereft of merit, another's duty is fraught with danger.''[1] What you have been doing is your real dharma. How will you succeed in bringing about unity between Hindus and Muslims? This, of course, you can do. You may treat the few Muslims who still remain there as your blood-brothers. This should be enough for you to understand things.

Why is it that Truth is not seen to possess the power of a magnet? Tell me if you have seen perfect truth anywhere, and then ask me that question. Truth is not a common pebble but a jewel rarer even than a diamond. Much harder labour is needed to discover it than to dig a mine.

How can anybody occupy Durgabehn's[2] quarters? That may be considered only if she gets totally tired of them and gives them up. You must, therefore, for the present remain where you are. It will be time to consider the matter after Kanchan's[3] confinement is over and the baby is a few months old. Or we may have to think about it if Kanchan or you relax in your resolution about *brahmacharya*. One should learn to live as God ordains. I hope Kanchan is fine.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8411. Also C. W. 5621. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

147. LETTER TO AN ASHRAM INMATE

May 26, 1947

You will not be able to stand the Ashram life. He himself keeps indifferent health, and wants only as much burden as cannot be avoided. I would therefore advise you to give up your craving for Ashram life. You may stay anywhere else you like. It does not seem likely that I shall go to Wardha or anywhere near it. If I cannot survive in these parts I have decided to face death. Anyway I have been praying to God to help me fulfil my resolve. All of you too must wish for the same.

I hope you are both keeping well.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 10

[1] *Bhagavad Gita,* iii. 35
[2] Durga Desai, wife of Mahadev Desai
[3] Addressee's wife

148. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
Monday, May 26, 1947

I had written out the speech for today. Then after 5 p.m. or so I received a letter from the lady who had objected yesterday saying that I had broken my promise by holding the prayers. This was farthest from my thoughts. I appealed to you and called upon you to hold yourselves in restraint in order to protect the objectors and you agreed to have the prayer. It will be discourtesy on my part if I do not hold the prayers because of such obstruction. Generosity in that case would amount to avarice. That is not how ahimsa works. The lady, therefore, should forgive me, for the prayer will go on.

I must repeat what I told you yesterday. Public prayer is a precious duty. It cannot be lightly thrown away. One who objects to it commits a crime, but it is good to pray silently if there is a possibility of the objector being molested. You responded to my entreaty by maintaining complete peace and order and did not molest the objectors but when I felt that this restraint was being abused I decided to follow the other course. I was glad that the lady who had objected remained calm. Whatever be her own opinion. I hope she will maintain her composure. One must at least observe a minimum of decorum. I would like you to continue the prayers in future in spite of the objectors but at the same time you should be generous with them instead of being angry.

I had told you yesterday that it was unbecoming on our part to keep looking towards London. The British cannot give us our freedom. They can only get off our backs. This they have already promised to do. But it is for us to safeguard our freedom and give it a concrete shape. How should we bring this about? In my opinion we are unable to think coherently whilst the British rule continues in India. It is not for the British Government to change the map of India. All it has to do is to withdraw from India, if possible in an orderly manner, maybe even in chaos, but withdraw in any case on or before the date it has itself fixed.

There is an additional reason why no vital change in the map of India is possible in the present state of the country. A joint statement[1] has been issued by the Qaid-e-Azam and me that violence should not

[1] *Vide* "A Joint Appeal", 12-4-1947

be used for achieving political ends. If, in spit of that appeal, people continue the mad course of large-scale violence and if the British Power yields before it in the vain hope that everything will be all right after this fit of madness is over, it will have left a bloody legacy for which not only India but the whole world will hold it guilty. I would therefore urge every patriot and certainly the British Power, irrespective of the worst kind of violence, to leave India under the Cabinet Mission's document[1] of the 16th May of last year. In the presence of the British Power today we are only demoralized by the orgy of bloodshed, wanton killings, arson and worse. After it is withdrawn, I hope, we shall have the wisdom to think coherently and keep India one or split it into two or more parts. But even if we keep on fighting after that, I am convinced that we will not be so demoralized as we are today, though all violence is bound to cause a certain amount of demoralization. I still hope against hope that a free India will not again offer an example of violence which has already made her so miserable.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 86-8

149. LETTER TO AN ASHRAM INMATE

May 27, 1947

I am in the midst of a raging fire. Is it God's mercy or irony of fate that the flames do not consume me?

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 14

150. TALK WITH SOCIALISTS[2]

May 27, 1947

The very idea of partitioning the country is frightening. Our concern today should be to bring about an agreement in a peaceful manner to ensure that the country is not partitioned and still the British leave. Even partition may be tolerated, but I cannot bear the thought that it should be imposed by the British. Why should a third

[1] *Vide* "Statement of Cabinet Delegation and Viceroy", 16-5-1946

[2] Jayaprakash Narayan and his co-workers, about a dozen men and women, were with Gandhiji from 2 to 4·30 p.m.

party intervene in a dispute between us brothers? Are we not strong enough even to solve our own problems? It is this which makes me feel that our ahimsa was not the ahimsa of the strong but something else. But God has opened my eyes today. If we invite the British to act as intermediaries in the dispute between us brothers, it will be a great blot on our glorious history. That is why I declared in a prayer speech that, if we could not live together, we could certainly separate through mutual agreement, but that third-party intervention should not be tolerated. This is what I am going to tell the Viceroy today. This Viceroy is a very intelligent man. He will displease no party and still have his own way. This is, therefore, going to be a test for us all. Don't forget that Lord Mountbatten is taking measure of our courage and intelligence. As the saying is, a known enemy is better than an unknown friend. Lord Linlithgow or Lord Wavell were not dangerous to us, for we knew what their policy was. I appreciate your desire to bring about equality of living standards in society. I want the same thing. But our first concern should be to come together, think what is in the best interest of the country and set the people to constructive work. Our people have lived in slavery for 150 years and need to be trained for a different way of life now. I do not fully agree with the idea that it will happen when we have power in our hands or that we can do a great deal through power. No doubt transfer of power will remove many obstacles. But we shall have to do solid work among the people. Since you look upon me as an adviser and seek my advice of your own free will, I have only one advice to give, and that is that, if you wish to establish socialism, there is only one way in which it can be done : go and live among the poor in the villages, live as they live, be one with the village people, work for eight hours daily, use only village-made goods and articles even in your personal lives, remove illiteracy among the village people, eradicate untouchability and uplift the women. I will even go so far as to suggest that you should establish such a living bond with the village people that, if anyone amongst you is unmarried and wishes to marry, he or she should choose a partner from among the village girls or boys. It anybody else seeks your advice on this subject, give him or her, too, the same advice. Make your life an ideal one in this way; when the people see your transparent lives every minute of the day as clearly as we see pictures on a screen, their influence will be felt throu-ghout the country and reform its life. The Congress will soon have power in its hands, but the Congress is not wedded to an exclusive doctrine and

does not belong to any one party. Tolerance for all points of view still remains its principle. It is true that the principle is occasionally violated in practice, but even while making this admission I can assure you that if you workers can draw up a programme for village uplift and if the progra-mme does not remain merely on paper but is actively implemented, then the Congress may be in power but the Congress Ministers will assuredly help you in your real solid work. Jawaharlal will even congratulate you with all his heart. I am, however, pained to say that, instead of doing such constructive work, what you are doing today is to incite the people and call for strikes. And at the same time there is communal fighting going on. All of you are men of intellect and learning. Why can't you see who is being harmed by what you are doing? Such a struggle was all right against the British, for we wanted them to go. But whom do you wish to drive out now? What will you gain by fighting against our own countrymen? You should be large-hearted and offer your co-operation for the great work of national uplift. If those in power commit mistakes, oppose them through your work, not by mere criticism or speeches or agitations. Take the village people and slum-dwellers in your hands and give them the benefit of your knowledge, skill, insight, constructive work and patriotic spirit. Give the people this true education through the example of your own lives. Let all your activities be directed to the welfare of the people. If that is not done and if the people lose patience, our plight will be much worse than the present slavery. Before the people take to the path of destruction, see that they are given constructive, life-giving training. I make this suggestion not to you alone. I have opened out my heart to you because you have come to seek my advice. But what I have said applies to Congressmen, too. Let, therefore, all public workers and all officers of the Government forget their quarrels and disputes over ideologies and start learning and teaching spinning, khadi work and village industries. If the British leave and at the same time the people are given a new life through such education, I am confident that in five years India will be a leading country in Asia.

Q. Why do you oppose the growth of industries in our country through machinery?

A. You can use machines to manufacture cars, engines, aeroplanes and things of that kind. But I am strongly opposed to the use of machines for grinding corn, manufacturing cloth and ploughing the land. The consumption of mill-ground flour has deprived us

of all vitality, for machine-grinding destroys all the vitamins. In the old days in Kathiawar we didn't have even water-taps. The women used to fetch water from the river,with shining pots resting on supports studded with bright beads; it would be early morning and the women thus had a sun-bath daily and that kept them healthy. They used to grind the corn in the early dawn, singing *bhajans* the while, including prayers to God. These simple innocent songs contai-ning useful moral wisdom taught them some music and [the grinding] provided them exercise. Afterwards the whole family would go to work in the fields, so that hardly anybody knew what illnes was or even the names of the diseases of lungs so widespread these days. In such a vast country, or say, rather, a family, containing a variety of communities and races, there is no need for machinery at all. Mach-inery does the work in very little time and that is harmful in every way, physically and economically. With so much leisure on hand, the people get busy in mischief, for, as the saying is, an idle mind is the devil's workshop. Or they waste their time in cinemas and theatres. Many people argue with me and try to convince me that the cinema has an educative value. But the argument doesn't appeal to me at all. For one thing, sitting in a closed theatre one feels suffocated. I had been to such a theatre only once, when I was a small child. If I had my way, I would see to it that all the cinemas and theatres in India were converted into spinning halls and factories for handicrafts of all kinds. And what obscene photographs of actors and actresses are displayed in the newspapers by way of advertisement! Moreover, who are these actors and actresses if not our own brothers and sisters. We waste our money and ruin our culture at the same time. If I was made Prime Minister of the country, these would be the first things I would do : I would stop all machine-driven flour-mills and restrict the number of oil-pressing factories but install the indigenous mills all over the country. I might not destroy the existing textile mills, but certainly would not help them in any way and, in any case, would not permit new ones to be set up. I would close all the cinemas and theatres, though I might, as an exception, permit exhibition of pictures of educational value or showing scenes of natural beauty. But singing and dancing I would stop completely. I have great regard for dancing and music. I love music indeed. I may even claim that I understand what is good music and what is not. But I would surely prohibit music and dancing which tend to pervert the minds of young men and women. I would stop the sale of gramophone records. That is, I would suggest to the Government that

it should impose heavy taxes on all such life-killing activities. Similarly, harmful drinks and drugs like liqours, tobacco and tea also should be heavily taxed so that their consumption would automatically decrease. Moreover, ideal villages which are self-reliant in regard to food, which have not a single flour-mill and in which the residents grow all the cotton they need and manufacture their own cloth, right up to the stage of stitching gram-ents in their own homes, should be awarded prizes and exempted from all taxes. In such and ideal village, every resident will be his own policeman, his own doctor and his own watchman, and the people will have no time then to quarrel and fight among themselves.

See, I have given you so much time. What I have described is only my dream of a free India, and idle dream like Sheikhchalli's[1]. My heart was full and I, therefore, poured it out to you. At present, however, I see no sign of any of the things I have suggested being implemented. I know this and still I cannot keep back my thoughts, and so when people like you come I pour them out.

Q. But, Bapu, who would oppose the suggestion to make you Prime Minister? If you agree to accept the responsibility, I don't think anybody would oppose the proposal.

A. You are the chief opponents. You will ask me why. Well, if you but act as I have advised, my dream would no longer remain a dream but become a reality. You will have economic equality in the country only along the road I have pointed out. Perhaps you will not understand this today; but note my words and remember them when I am dead and you will say that what this old man of seventy-five said was true. This is not a prophecy I am making; I am saying this on the basis of my lifelong experience. A time will surely come when nobody will listen to your long speeches; nobody will even attend your meetings, for preaching sermons to the people without following those principles in your own lives does not work long in society. The people will ask you for an account of your own work, will ask you what you yourselves are doing, before they listen to you. Similarly, in regard to the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity you will succeed only to the extent that you practise it in your own conduct and put your heart in it. Till now we acted like blind men and let ourselves be led by the hand by the British. But now we have to use our own eyes and

[1] Character in a folk tale; one who indulges in idle dreams.

find our own path. If you don't watch your step and walk straight ahead, you are bound to stumble and fall into pits.

Now be off. I have to go and see the Viceroy.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 14-9

151. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
May 27, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today also I have received a long letter from the Maharashtrian lady. She has complained in her letter that the volunteers did not act properly in stopping her. She has also said that the Koran ordains the killing of non-Muslims and hence there should be no recitation from the Koran. I have read the Koran and I found nothing of the kind in it. On the contrary the Koran lays down that one should have love for non-Muslims as well. If those who read the Koran do not obey its teachings, how can we blame the Koran? Even on our side, who follows in practice what is written in Tulsi's *Ramayana*, the *Gita* and the Vedas?

I do not intend following irreligion in the name of religion. I utter every word with the fear of God in my heart. I am pained to find the lady insists on writing something about which she has no knowledge. Why does she believe that such and such a thing is written in the Koran because somebody says so? But you must be firm in your mind. You must concentrate on the prayer even if she protests. But even if all of you start talking like her, I will continue the prayer till my last breath.

Her second complaint is that the male volunteers touched her while removing her. In my view there is nothing objectionable about it. It is the function of the volunteers to stop trou-ble-makers from creating distrubance, whether they be men or women. Of course, they shold not raise their hands against women or beat them. They must persuade them gently. When there are no carnal thoughts in the mind, there is nothing sinful if one happens to touch a woman. I too rest my hands on the shoulders of girls while walking. Am I committing any crime? They are all like my daughters. If I have evil thoughts in my mind, it would be definitely sinful. Volunteers also

should treat the women who come to attend the pra-yers as their mothers or sisters while looking after the arrangements of the meeting. A volunteer may touch a woman as she would his mother. That is his duty.[1]

It is quite late today. Hence, I shall be brief.

You all know that I am working in Bihar. There are very few Muslims in Bihar. They would be hardly 14 per cent of the population. Similarly, the Hindu population in Noakhali is also small. I went to Bihar in connection with my work in Noakhali.

I have received a phone call from the friend working in Bihar that people there have started thinking about June[2]. In the same way they were in panic about the 9th when the Constituent Assembly was to meet. I used to receive letters from all corners asking me what should be done. People in Noakhali were being threatened that although during the November riots some Hindus were allowed to survive, this time all the Hindus would be converted. I had then told them that I would return there if they so desired. But there was nothing much I could do there except lay down my own life. But they did not send for me. They prepared themselves to face any eventuality. As a matter of fact, I do not think that the plan of converting all Hindus to Islam can ever succeed.

Similarly, the Muslims need have no fear in Bihar. Why should we have any fear of the 2nd of June? Granting that the Viceroy is bringing *laddos*, why should we be so eager? As I have already said, they are of no use to us. Only the thing we have produced ourselves would be of use to us.

I am asking you, why should the Bihari Muslims panic? Would not the Hindus who recite the name of Rama think of their Rama?

Similarly, why should the Hindus in Sind be afraid? Why should they panic? I have a letter from there saying that the Hindus are overcome with fear. But instead of being frightened, why do they not take the name of Rama? The people of Sind want me to go to them. I have not been to Sind for many years but I have maintained such close relations with the people of Sind that at one time I used to call

[1] Then the prayer was conducted. Despite shouts from the lady to stop the prayer, Gandhiji insisted that it should continue. What follows is the speech after the prayer.

[2] Lord Mountbatten was to return from Dondon on May 31 and make an announcement on June 2 about the country's future.

myself a Sindhi. I used to have Sindhi companions also in South Africa. Sindhis, Marwaris, Punjabis, all have co-operated with me. Some of them even drank and ate non-vegetarian food. In spite of their inability to give up these things they called themselves Hindus. I was friends with all of them. One of them asks me in a letter if I have forgotten him and Sind. But how can I forget?

People everywhere are filled with fear about the announcement to come on June 2. It is being said that the Muslims are making massive preparations. But what preparations? Are they preparing to turn themselves into brutes? Do they not pray in their mosquess that God may make them all good human beings? The Hindus also are not writing to me to say that they would pray to God in silence that He should grant the British the good sense to quit India and wisdom to all those among the Muslims who have been possessed by a frenzy.

They are apprehensive also in the Punjab because they are in a minority. There the Hindus have the Sikhs also with them. Why should the Sikhs be afraid? Why is there fear on both sides as to who would be the first to raise the sword?

If the Hindus of Bihar slaughter the Muslims, they would be killing me. I say the Muslims of Bihar are like my blood-brothers. They are glad to see me. They are convinced that at least this one man belongs to them. Anyone who kills them kills me. If they insult their sisters and daughters, it is insulting me. From this platform I want to convey this to all the Hindus of Bihar.

Why should the Muslims of Bihar be afraid? Two excellent Muslim workers are serving them. Then, Shrikrishna Sinha runs the Bihar Ministry and he is very much on the alert.

It is being rumoured these days that Gandhi wants to go to Bihar and get the Hindus slaughtered. But I would like to proclaim at the top of my voice that even if all the Muslims lose their heads not a single Hindu should follow suit.

As for the Sikhs they claim that a single Sikh is equal to one and a quarter lakh [of others] and five Sikhs are equal to six lakhs. I like them for talking thus. The *Granth Saheb* and the Guru are as much mine as theirs. If I can call myself a Muslim, what is there to be ashamed of in my calling myself a Sikh? And the Sikhs have done brave deeds in a spirit of satyagraha at Nankana Saheb. But today they are thinking of the sword.

They do not realize that the age of the sword is past. They do

not realize that no one can be saved by the strength of the sword. This is the age of the atom bomb.

Guru Govind Singh preached the use of the sword. But that cannot be applied today. Of course his teaching that a single Sikh is equal to one and a quarter lakh is useful even today. But it would become true when the Sikh dies for his fellowmen and the whole country.

There have been equally gallant women. In one place when all their menfolk were killed and there was no hope of any help, instead of quietly surrendering they chose to die. This really happened. Some seventy-five women died in this manner; they first killed their children with their own hands, because they did not want their children to be ill-treated by others.

I would say that only when people have behaved like this has their religion remained alive whether they were Hindus or Muslims. I would say the same thing to the Sikhs, namely, that if each one of them is equal to one and a quarter lakh they should all concentrate on God and die with the cry of *'Sat Sri Akal'* on their lips. What greater act of bravery can there be?

I don't mind if anybody calls me a coward. God alone knows whether or not I am a coward. We should accept a lesson in bravery even if it is offered by a coward. I do not want to make a coward of anyone. I have not made anyone a coward, nor am I one myself.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 88-92

152. LETTER TO KAREL AND HARRIET HUJER[1]

NEW DELHI,
May 28, 1947

DEAR KAREL & HARRIET,

I have your touching letter and I write this only to tell you that I am still in the land of the living and read your letter with much joy.

[1] An extract from this is reproduced in "Letter to Karel Hujer", 28-5-1947

I am the same as when you saw me except that my faith burns if possible brighter than before.

MR. KAREL HUJER
UNIVERSITY OF CHATTANOOGA
CHATTANOOGA, TENN., USA

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

153. LETTER TO A FOREIGN NATUROPATH[1]

[*May 28, 1947*][2]

You will be pleased to know that I became a confirmed convert to natue cure when I read Kuhne's *New Science of Healing* and Just's *Return to Nature* over forty years ago. I must confess that I have not been able fully to follow the meaning of 'return to nature' not because of want of will but because of my ignorance. I am now trying to evolve a system of nature cure suited to the millions of India's poor. I try to confine myself to the propagation of such cure as is derivable from the use of earth, water, light, air and the great void. This naturally leads man to know that the sovereign cure of all ills is the recitation from the heart of the name of God whom some millions here know by the name of Rama and the other millions by the name of Allah. Such recitation from the heart carries with it the obligation to recognize and follow the laws which nature has ordained for man. This train of reasoning leads one to the conclusi on that prevention is better than cure. Therefore, one is irresistibly driven to inculcating the laws of hygiene, i.e., of cleanliness of the mind, of the body and of one's surroundings.

Harijan, 15-6-1947

154. LETTER TO A NATUROPATH

May 28, 1947

I appreciate your enthusiasm. But the Indian nature-cure system cannot subsist on enthusiasm alone, nor will my identification with it help to keep it alive, as I regard myself an ignoramus in the science.

[1] Extracted from Sushila Nayyar's "Medicine for the Masses"
[2] From *Bihar Pachhi Dilhi*

There would be some hope if you transmuted your enthusiasm into knowledge.

If you admit the shortcomings of your system, why don't you try to overcome them by a systematic study of anatomy and physiology? If you had equipped yourself with the knowledge which the allopaths have gained after years of laborious research, you would not have committed the mistake you did.[1] Do not deceive yourself with the belief that allopathy today holds the field by virtue of the backing and patronage that it receives from the Government. In my opinion it holds its present position in the world because, though it is a false science, its votaries have faith in it and have made great sacrifices to advance it. But the modern naturopaths have made no sacrifices. They are easily satisfied. No wonder they feel they have earned the right to fleece the poor and gullible and grow rich.

I am not writing this in praise of allopathy. I have a fundamental difference with the allopaths. They are too easily satisfied with half-baked knowledge and exploit their diplomas to fill their pockets. There is a craze today for rushing to the West for specialization as if it were the sole repository of knowledge. I would entreat all doctors and would-be doctors of medicine to think in terms of the seven hundred thousand villages of India. They would then see how great the need is in India of a medical cadre trained not in the Western style but in the system of rural medicine. They would then abopt many indigenous practices and prescriptions that have proved successful in India, and not become mere dispensers of foreign imported drugs when our fields are teeming with natural, medicinal herbs. The true function of the medical profession, as I conceive it, is not to prescribe cures, whether foreign or indigenous, but to prevent illness by teaching the people observe the rules of health.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 24-5

[1] The addressee had failed to diagnose Manu Gandhi's appendicitis.

155. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

May 28, 1947

CHI . . .[1],

You are right in what you have written to…[2] It is the failure of the nature cure doctor, not of nature cure itself. Chakrayya[3] is in doctors' hands. Chances of his surviving are small. I am keeping in touch.

I got your letter. I have not misunderstood you in the least, let alone my being displeased with you. I am glad that you state your views frankly. I had only explained how my mind was working, how nature cure was becoming an increasingly simple thing in my eyes.

I don't wish to have you come here for my sake, for as far as possible I hope to keep up my health purely with the help of Ramanama. It is a difficult job, but I should like to try. I think, moreover, that your place is there. If, nevertheless, you cannot control your desire, there is certainly no ban on your coming. I do not know how long I shall be here.

And now about…'s[4] house. I have no doubt that we cannot purchase it in the name of the Trust. Before we purchase a buliding, we must have the men [to work in it]. But how can I object to your accepting it if it is offered to you for 'missionary' work?

As regards Uruli-Kanchan, I will have no objection to your proposal if you believe that its conversion into a separate institution would harm the original Trust. From a purely legal point of view, however, I believe that in that case it cannot be used to further other aims.

Consult Bhai Pakvasa[5]. I am sure that its being made into a

[1] Although the source does not mention the addressee, it would appear from the contents that it was Dinshaw Mehta.

[2] The name is omitted in the source.

[3] The source has omitted the name; *vide*, however, the following item. Chakrayya was from Andhra and had joined Sevagram Ashram in 1935. He died on May 28, 1947, during an operation for brain tumour in a Bombay hospial. *Vide* also "Speech at Prayer Meeting", "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 31-5-1947

[4] The name is omitted in the source.

[5] Mangaldas Pakvasa, solicitor; President, Bombay Legislative Council, 1937-47; became Governor of Central Provinces and Berar in 1947; helped in drawing up the Trust Deed for the original Nature Cure Trust in 1945. *vide* "Letter to Balkrishna Mavalankar", 14-5-1945

separate institution cannot affect the original Trust. I was glad to learn that Mother was keeping well.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 25

156. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

BHANGI NIWAS, NEW DELHI,
May 28, 1947

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter. I had a telephonic message that everything possible was being done for Chakrayya; hence it was not necessary to send anyone to be by his side. Even so I don't forbid anybody from going to him. If anyone feels that he must go, he may do so. Moreover, one of you has already been there. We need not worry over the girls at the hospital. After all Vijayabehn is there already. Chand, Zohra and the others are nice girls. But ultimately whatever is destined will happen.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1979

157. INTERVIEW TO DR. LO CHI LUEN[1]

May 28, 1947

[DR. LO CHI LUEN:] How do you think things will shape themselves? How do you predict the future?

[GANDHIJI:] I am an irrepressible optimist. We have not lived and toiled in vain all these years that we should become barbarians as we appear to be becoming, looking at all the senseless bloodshed in Bengal, Bihar and the Punjab. But I feel it is just an indication that as we are throwing off the foreign yoke all the dirt and froth is coming to the surface. When the Ganges is in flood, the water is turbid. The dirt comes to the surface. When the flood subsides, you see the clear blue water which soothes the eye. That is what I hope for and live for. I do not wish to live to see Indian humanity becoming barbarian.

And who can predict the future? Years ago I read Butler's

[1] Chinese Ambassador in India. The interview is extracted from Sushila Nayyar's "In Delhi". Jawaharlal Nehru accompanied the Ambassador.

Analogy. Therein I read that the 'future is the result somewhat of our past'. This thought has persisted with me bacause it coincides with the Indian belief. We are the makers of our own destiny. We can mend or mar the present and on that will depend the future.

History sometimes repeats itself, because we do not learn the lesson of history.

It is only a half-truth. History may seem to be repeating itself today. I believe that nothing remains static. Human nature either goes up or goes down. Let us hope, in India, it is going up. Otherwise, there is nothing but deluge for India and probably for the whole world.

They talked of the havoc wrought by the war in China. Would the war-weary Asiatic countries follow in the footsteps of Japan and turn to militarization?

The answer depended, Gandhiji replied, on which side India threw her weight.[1]

Let us hope that India will rise to the occasion, not only for its own sake but for the sake of the world. . .[2] The world is today tottering on the brink of self-destruction. Flames of hatred and violence threaten to engulf us. It is my faith and hope that independent India will provide an object-lesson to the world in the way of peace, non-violence and brotherhood.

The learned Ambassador conveyed to Gandhiji the deepest respect and affection of the Chinese people. Gandhiji valued their affection and said he would love to visit China which had so much in common with India. The Ambassador began to talk of Chinese philosophy and quoted Lao-tse's maxim: "Production without possession, action without self-assertion, creation without domination".

You are talking the language of the Upanishads. The same thought is to be found in the *Ishopanishad*.

Harijan, 8-6-1947, and *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. II, pp. 202-3

158. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
May 28, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I am happy that no one created trouble or raised any protest today, I am sure frenzy cannot last forever. The same applies to Hindu-Muslim clashes. I continue to get letters, a few of them nice.

[1] This sentence and the following paragraph are from *Mahatma Gandhi The Last Phase.*

[2] Omission as in the source

Some good Muslims write to me that it does not matter if Hindus and Muslims follow different religions. They should not feel separate at heart on that account. Some Hindus even threaten me with dire consequences if I do not stop the recitation from the Koran. They say that they would come here with black flags.[1] And what will they do after coming here? The atmosphere is such that people do not bother to see or hear anything, they just create rows. They too will come and disturb the prayer. But even if such a thing happens, our prayer will continue to be held so long as you give me your peaceful co-operation. But if all of you should come with black flags, I would have my prayer by myself. I would continue to recite Ramanama even if you assaulted me. Even if I have the police to protect me from you or I wield a sword or a gun I have to die ultimately. Then what is the harm if I die with the name of Rama on my lips? When I die in such a manner, you would feel remorse. You would tell yourselves that you did a terrible thing and gained nothing by killing me. But if I have police protection or if I beat you up, you would remark after killing me that it was just as well that I was killed. But I hope you will remain as peaceful as you were when you came.

Today I would like to answer some of your questions. Of course, I cannot answer all the questions today. Yesterday somebody asked what we should do with a mad dog, whether we should not kill it. This is an odd question. He should have actual asked what should be done when a man went mad. But the fact is that if we have God in our hearts even a dog cannot behave madly with us. Once a friend of mine came to ask me what should be done with a mad dog that was biting everyone. I told him that the dog should be killed and the responsibility would be mine. But it was a matter concerning a dog. It cannot apply to human beings. I remember when I was about ten, a brother of mine had gone mad. Afterwards he was cured. He is no more. But remember him well. In a fit of madness he would rush out and strike everyone. But what could I do to him? Could I beat him? Or could my mother or father beat him? Nobody in the family beat him. A *vaidya* was called in and he was asked to treat my brother in every possible manner except by beating him. He was my blood-brother. But now I make no such distinctions. Now all of you are like

[1] The reference is to the warning given by the members of the Anti-Pakistan Front of Gujarat.

my blood-brothers. If all of you lose your sanity and I happen to have an army at my disposal, do you think I should have you shot? Even an enemy may not be shot if he goes crazy. Anyone who goes mad should be sent to a lunatic asylum. You ought to know that there are a number of such asylums in India. I have actually seen such mad persons who really deserve to be shot. But we leave them to the care of the doctors.

I used to have an intimate friend who was almost like a brother to me. His son became mad and when seized by madness would rush out to kill people. I did not suggest to my friend that his son should be shot. I could have had him shot if I wished, because I was called a Mahatma. And, in our country, a mahatma enjoys the right to do anything. He may commit murder, indulge in acts of debauchery or whatever else he chooses; he is always pardoned. Who is there to question him? But I feared God. I thought that I was answerable to God, if to no one else. As a matter of fact there is no mahatma in our midst these days. All are *alpatmas*[1].

Anyway, I had the boy sent to a doctor. He ran away from him too. He is still not restored. He has children, and all the members of the family are with him. We must try to find out a way of dealing with this madness, as in the case of my friend's son.

Today our blood is boiling. We hear from all sides speculations about June 2. At first there were clashes at three or our places. Now there is talk of killing all the Hindus. And the Hindus would ask why, if the Muslims kill us, we should not kill them in turn. They too would want to spill blood. If this is not madness, what else is it? I trust that you, who are seated here so peacefully, would not give in to such frenzy. If the people who are caught in the frenzy are bent upon killing us, we would let them do so. Would they be cured of their madness if we let ourselves be killed? The prevailing madness is not such as would blind us to all reason. Even when a really mad person rushes towards us with a knife in his hand, we should face the danger. We do not panic. Similarly, if the Muslims come with raised swords screaming for Pakistan, I would tell them that they cannot have Pakistan at the point of the sword. They must first cut me to pieces before they vivisect the country. If everybody talks to them in the same vein, God would cleave their sword asunder. I am a poor helpless fellow. But you will see my courage when the occasion arises. I will

[1] Little souls

not then wield lathi against a lathi. I wish we would not meet madness with madness. If we remain sensible the madness on the opposite side will disappear. Their [craze for] Pakistan will die down too. If theirs is a true Pakistan, it would have to be the entire Hindustan.

If you got into a frenzy the British would ask if non-violence was meant only for them. They would accuse us of indulging in mutual violence, and ask us whatever had happened to our non-violence. They would describe themselves as superior to us, as paragons of non-violence and say that even if they resorted to force, they at least maintained order. They have to rule after all; and they may quite justifiably argue thus. But I would tell them that they should not do so. They have got to go and they will go because of our non-violent struggle. Here millions of people have shown the courage of non-violence. You did not bow down to the Union Jack. You courted imprisonment and allowed yourselves to be ruined. It is as a result of all this that we are about to be independent. But now we are not talking about gaining independence on the strength of that courage. Today we are behaving in a manner that must invite the world's contempt.

But we must never do such a thing. You will attain true freedom when, instead of killing others, you die yourselves.

Lord Mountbatten is coming. All are apprehensive about what he might bring. If he offers something to the Hindus, why should the Muslims get into a state? And, if he offers something to the Muslims, why should the Hindus get frightened? Let us not look up to him, nor watch for June 2; let us look at ourselves.

If he does not give us anything, shall we all become so mad as to massacre old people, children and women?

The second question is why the members of the Interim Government are dancing to the tune of the British. Are there only three communities in India, namely, the Hindus, the Muslims and the Sikhs? Why are Parsis not consulted? Is it because they possess no arms? And if the Parsis were to be invited, for what fault are the Christians to be left out? And then, why not the Jews? The question is quite pertinent. I am also pained by this situation. The Congress is for all. All people support it. Then why is it wanting in courage? It does not belong exclusively to the Hindus. True, the majority of Congressmen are Hindus but there are others too. If the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs come to an agreement among themselves, would

they crush the Parsis? Would the Jews and the others have to perish? And, after coming to a settlement with them, what shall we do with the rest? Shall we discard them? They would ask if that was their reward for supporting the Congress in its first stages. They would want to know why the Viceroy should talk only to certain members of the Interim Government. Is it because Jawaharlal is a very big man? Or because the Sardar is the hero of Bardoli? Or because Rajendra Babu is a great scholar and Rajaji has a great intellect?

I wish to tell you that these are not the only persons in the Congress. All of you belong to it. All those who have stood by the Congress and worked for it belong to it. Those who do not go on deputations and are not vocal are as much members of the Congress as anyone else. It these three communities come to some settlement in utter disregard of the others, it would be a very unhappy situation and their curse would fall on us. Hence, let us realize that whatever we do should be equally in the interests of all the communities.

When the Muslims also realize this, things will proceed very well. Then the document signed by Jinnah Saheb and me, that we should not resort to violence for the attainment of political objectives, will be accepted by all as reasonable.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan-I, pp. 93-7

159. A NOTE[1]

[After *May 28, 1947*][2]

I may add that the one that was stolen[3] had radium disc as yours has and had also a contrivance for alarm. It was a gift to me. But the cost then was over 40/-. It was a zenith watch.

From a microfilm: M.M.U./XXIII

[1] The note is written on a letter dated May 28, 1947.

[2] *ibid*

[3] The reference is to Gandhiji's watch, a present from Indira Nehru, which he had been using for about 20 years, and which was stolen at Kanpur station on May 25.

160. LETTER TO J. B. KRIPALANI

NEW DELHI
[*May*][1] *29. 1947*

MY DEAR PROFESSOR,

Your letter.

Your letter to the *Chronicle* requires close thinking. If you think that the Congress should accept the two-nation theory, it is a very serious matter. You should show the letter to the chief members of the Working Committee and send it after their approval.

I have read your Kashmir speech you left with me and defended it before critics. I see nothing wrong in it though I may not deliver it. Do come on Tuesday and we shall talk further about it.

Giridhari[2] told Brijkrishna yesterday that you felt in me a touch of coldness towards you. I expressed surprise at the idea, for I have been trying to do the reverse.

I know that you had not come latterly to me merely to spare me as you had nothing particular to say to me.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

161. TALK WITH A CO WORKER

NEW DELHI,
May 29, 1947

CO-WORKER: You have declared you won't mind if the whole of India is turned into Pakistan by appeal to reason but not an inch would be yielded to force. You have stood firm by your declaration. But is the Working Committee acting on this principle? They are yielding to force. You gave us the battle-cry of Quit India; you fought our battles; but in the hour of decision, I find you are not in the picture. You and your ideals have been given the go-by.

GANDHIJI: Who listens to me today?

[1] The source has June, obviously a slip, for the Congress had finally accepted the ''two-nation theory'' on June 14. They were giving serious consideration to it in May.

[2] Son of addressee's brother

Leaders may not, but the people are behind you.

Even they are not. I am being told to retire to the Himalayas. Everybody is eager to garland my photos and statues. Nobody really wants to follow my advice.

They may not today, but they will have to before long.

What is the good? Who knows whether I shall then be alive? The question is: What can we do today? On the eve of independence we are as divided as we were united when we were engaged in freedom's battle. The prospect of power has demoralized us.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 209

162. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

May 29, 1947

When we do not get enough food in spite of very hard work, what should we do?

It is an eternal law that anybody who does useful work must get enough to eat. But when that does not happen, it may be assumed that there is something wrong in the working of the Govern-ment. But in the changed times now we cannot meet this [situation] by looting Government shops or starting riots, for we ourselves will have to suffer because of the resulting loss. Instead, the people may pea-cefully sit down in front of the shops and, as a last resort, fast indefinitely. But this weapon should be employed only after careful thinking, for these days people have made this sacred weapon very cheap. In any case it should never be employed to gain a personal end.

Probably you know that your statues are being set up and your photographs unveiled at many places. What do you think about this?

How can I say I do not know that my statues are being erected and my photographs are being unveiled everywhere in the country, that they are garlanded and lights are waved before them? But I attach no importance to these things, for I dislike such things intensely. They are a sheer waste of money. And I strongly fell that these activities do me no honour but, on the contrary, are an affront to me. If the people wish to honour me, let them honour the charkha, that is, spin daily by way of *yajna*. That will be as good as honouring me. Let them also read the *Gita* and meditate over its teaching. And if they cannot do even that, let them just repeat Ramanama. To understand a man's virtues and follow his principles in one's own life is as good as honouring the man himself. I know full well what labour

it costs to set up statues of a living man or unveil his photographs, to distribute sweets after the ceremony and to make the function a success at great expense. I, therefore, believe that we degrade our religion through such activities. No man can be described as perfectly good or wise or as a mahatma before he is dead. Nobody but God knows a man's heart. I would rather wish that instead of setting up my statues or unveiling my photographs, people opened spinning and weaving schools or did something else which would benefit the country socially, spiritually, economically or politically.

You advise non-vegetarians to eat more meat and save as much grains as possible. Is not this advice of yours contrary to the principle of non-violence?

You have perhaps not understood, or I have not been able to explain, my argument properly. Those who are non-vegetarians do eat meat in any case, but they also eat vegetarian food at the same time and are thus doubly guilty. If they became completely vegetarian, of course nothing would be better than that. But they are not likely to do that, or, if they try, they change might harm their health. Looking at the matter from another point of view, vegetarians also commit violence. In fact we continually commit violence from the moment we are born. These are the conditions in which we have to observe non-violence. Forcing a non-vegetarian to become a vegetarian is a form of coercion and, therefore, violence. Violence consists in people fighting against one another, in amassing wealth at the cost of the poor, casting lustful glances at women and forcing draught animals to carry excessively heavy loads; persons who do these things are the really violent people. I believe that, compared to such persons, non-vegetarians who save cereals and otherwise lead decent lives, live happily themselves and let others be happy, are better human beings.

It is only with God's grace that we are able to endure the sufferings which fall to our lot in life. In this transient world, things are always happening and passing. But that fact does not absolve us from our moral responsibility. To the man in distress, his misfortune is a stark reality. Many learned men describe this world as *maya*. Be that as it may, so long as we live in this world and remain caught in the cycle of birth and death we have some duties to discharge and must discharge them; there can be no doubt about that. To face courageously the misfortunes that befall one is the best use one can make of life in this human body.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 30-2

163. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
May 29, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Please remain silent till the prayer is over and I finish saying whatever I have to say. I wish that so long as I am here and alive, those of you who come here out of devotion—let us not talk of those who come only to watch the spectacle—would join me in reciting the name of God. Then please listen to what I say in silence. I am going to talk to you about something very important today.[1]

There are only a few days now before June 2. In the coming days I shall deal each day with some aspect of the problem which is uppermost in your minds. You have drawn me to you by remaining peaceful and by exercising restraint, and thereby compelled me to open my heart to you. How nice it would be if the people who consider themselves the children of this country would think calmly and be courageous. It is indeed a difficult thing to do while the Press conti-nues to give publicity to frightful stories of arson and loot and killings.

I am not at all worried about what June 2 will bring, or what Lord Mountbatten will say on his return. I am not in the habit of worrying over what the Government might say. It has been my way ever since I came here in 1915.

I was born in India. I left the country at the age of 22. It was like being in exile. After spending twenty years, i. e., the best years of my youth in South Africa I returned home. I did not accumulate any wealth in the intervening period. Right from the beginning I had realized that God had so shaped me that I should not run after money, but serve Him. God made me feel that I would not succeed in doing anything else. I learnt the way of service from the *Gita* which says that whatever we possess is not ours but belongs to God. Then came the question how God could be realized. I learnt that God resides in every human being in the world and he who serves mankind serves God.

Then we come to the *mantra* from the *Ishopanishad*[2] which says: ''Gods pervades everything in the world.'' I used to explain the

[1] The prayer was them conducted. What follows is the speech after prayer.
[2] Verse 1

meaning of this *mantra* every day when I was in Travancore. The *mantra* further says: "Leave everything do your work and do not covet wealth that belongs to another."

This is a simple thing which even a child can understand. But its deeper meaning is something not easily understood. We are however all grown-ups and we must understand this meaning. That is why I spoke to you about his great thing. If we understand this meaning, what have we to quarrel about?

This is a big thing I have talked about. Let me now come to the main point which I want to touch upon today. I have taken some trouble today. Do I have the time to write out my speech in English every day? Our English newspapers must publish my speeches. But how can our journalists render my speeches into English? Are they able to understand English perfectly? They possess B. A. and M. A. degrees of course. But they do not have adequate knowledge of the English language to convey my Hindi statements correctly in English. For English is not their own language. It is a foreign language for them. Here, however, I shall speak in Hindustani because it is almost a mother tongue for me and entirely so for all of you. Hence you are able to understand correctly whatever I say in this language. This lady here (Dr. Sushila Nayyar) translates my speeches into English because she knows English fairly well. Still there are some defect in her rendering. That is why today I spent some time and wrote my speech in English. Today I shall talk to you bearing this thing in mind. But newspapers will publish only my written speech.[1]

So, I would like to begin by mentioning the letter in which I have been cursed for continuing the prayer. It says that I am a liar and do not answer questions properly. Those who write such things are childish. They may be adults in age, but they are still children in terms of mental growth.

What pricks them most is the fact that I keep calling upon them to lay down their lives instead of rousing them to kill. They want me to call upon the Hindus to avenge violence by violence, arson by arson. But I cannot deny my whole life and be guilty of advocating the rule of the jungle instead of the law of humanity. If someone comes to kill me I would die imploring God to have mercy on him. Instead, these people insist that I should first ask you to kill and then

[1] The written speech is not traceable.

die if need be. They tell me that if I am not prepared to say such a thing, I should keep my courage to myself and retire to the forest. But why do they say that to me? Because the Muslims are killing people? On that account, should the Hindus also stoop to kill? And should both sides thus give themselves up to frenzy? If the Muslims go wrong, should we also go wrong? They maintain that all Muslims are sinister; that they are wicked at heart. They also claim that all Hindus are angels. But I cannot accept such a claim.

I have received a letter from a Muslim woman. She asks me why I do not recite the ''*auz abillah*'' in urdu verse. I would like to say in reply that if I started reading it in Urdu verse the Muslims would be enraged and ask me what authority I had to translate it from the Arabic. What would I tell them when they threatened to beat me up?

The fact is that a thing sounds sweet in its original language or in a version over which many people have laboured. Bishops have laboured hard and seen to it that the English of the Bible is very sweet. Somehow, that English has turned out sweeter that the original Latin. Students of English must definitely study the Bible. I do not hate the English language. Rather I admire it. But it becomes clumsy in a wrong place. Hence I am not prepared to sacrifice the sweetness of the language of ''*auz abillah*''. We do not have poets who can translate it into something equally sweet.

Today I shall not speak about the eternal law of non-violence much as I believe in it very firmly. If the whole of India adopted this law after due deliberation she would become the unquestioned leader of the whole world. Here, however, all that I wish to stress is that no man should ever yield except to reason.

But today we seem to have given up reason altogether. Reason can hold sway only when we have courage. There is nothing brave about what is going on today. It is a sheer negation of humanity. We have well-nigh turned into beasts. Our papers scream at us every day that the Hindus have played havoc in one place and the Muslims in another. Both the Hindus and the Muslims are indulging in wickedness. I am prepared to accept that the Muslims have played greater havoc. But while both are playing havoc, it is futile to find out who surpasses whom. Both are equally guilty.

News has come that many villages of the neighbouring district of Gurgaon have been burnt down. I am trying to find out which of the two communities is guilty of this arson. But it is difficult to have

correct information. People might ask when so much is happening in my vicinity how I can sit idle and wax eloquent. But when you people have come here and when so much is unfortunately happening in Gurgaon, I shall definitely tell you what is in my heart. All I have to say is that even if there is fire burning all around us we must keep calm—why, we should even let ourselves be consumed without being perturbed. Why should we, out of fear, go about saying that such and such a thing is going to happen on June 2? For those who will keep up their courage, nothing is going to happen on that day. Be absolutely sure about it. Each one of us has to die one day. No one is born immortal. Why then should we not resolve that we will die with courage but never do wrong till the very last breath, that we shall not deliberately kill anyone? Once you resolve to do this you will be able to maintain your mental balance, and will not need to look up to anyone. You would make it clear to those who want to have Pakistan under threat and intimidation that they would not get even an inch of Pakistan that way. If they will be guided by justice, convince us with reasoning and persuade the world, they can have the whole of India for themselves. But we shall never grant it under coercion.

And what can I say to the British? It will be an act of betrayal if they do not stand by the proposals of the Cabinet Mission. We shall not betray nor shall we allow them to betray us. We are both concerned with the proclamation of May 16. The Constituent Assembly is sitting in terms of the May 16 paper.[1] It is for the British to hand over power and quit. The government of free Indians formed under the constitution worked out by the Constituent Assembly can do anything afterwards—keep India one or divide it into two or more parts. We shall go ahead on that basis. We know nothing more than that if we face reality in terms of the welfare of our own country, we should first agree to establish peace in the country, telling the turbulent elements in the country firmly and boldly that there can be no departure from the document of May 16 until they stop the sanguinary strife.[2] But we shall not be cowed down.

We shall achieve everything if we learn this lesson during these four days. Let them try out all the arms they have accumulated. When we stood firm against such a mighty empire and were not afraid of all their arms, when we did not bow down to their flag, why should we

[1] The following two sentences are reproduced from Harijan.

[2] This sentence is from *Harijan.*

falter now? Let us not make the mistake, on the eve of our hard-won freedom, of thinking that we are likely to lose it if we do not yield, even thought it be to brute force. That way lies perdition.

I do not take the cables from London seriously. I must cling to the hope that Britain will not depart by a hair's breadth from the letter and the spirit of the Cabinet Mission's statement of May 16, unless the parties, of their own free will, come to an agreement on any variation. For that purpose they have to meet and hammer out an acceptable solution. That statement has been accepted by the Congress and the British Government. If either of them go back on it, it will be a breach of faith.

The British officials should know what the people are whispering.[1] It is said that the British officers in India are dis- honest. It is said that they have a hand in these riots and that they are even inciting both the communities to fight. But we must refuse to believe the serious charge unless it is established beyond doubt. In fact, I would say, how can fighting break out unless we want it? If I do not wish to quarrel with my daughter here, who can force me to do so?

And Lord Mountbatten's task is not easy. He is a great commander, he is brave, but he cannot show his bravery here. He has not come here with his soldiers. He has not come here in his military uniform. He has come here as civilian and says that he has come to grant India freedom from British rule. Now we have to see how and in what manner they leave. Lord Mountbatten has to lend dignity to the office of Governor-General that he is occupying. He has to prove his intelligence and true statesmanship. It would not be fitting if he commits a slip or loses time. Hence let us all pray together that God may grant him good sense. And let him understand that he cannot force any change in the statement of my 16. If he does anything, it will be betrayal and betrayal helps none. Betrayal can never bring about a good result.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan-I, pp. 97-103; and *Harijan*, 8-6-1947

[1] This and the last two sentences of the preceding paragraph are from *Harijan.*

164. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
May 30, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Please do not look up to London. Do not look up to the Viceroy. Not that all Englishmen in Britain are dishonest. A large number of them are noble. Lord Mountbatten is also a noble person. But they are all good in their own places. When they come here and interfere in our affairs they all turn wicked. Now the old idea that our future depends on the protection of the British no longer holds good. We are not in duty bound to retain the Englishmen in our civil services. The civilians may stay on if they wish. Similarly, the businessmen may stay on too, if they desire. But no English soldier will be kept here to protect them. They can stay on here only on the strength of their service and the affection of the Indian people. We shall not be responsible if in a frenzy anybody harms them. It may be some time before the British finally quit India. They have fixed June 30, 1948, as the target date. It will be exactly one year from today [*sic*]. They must leave before that date if they can. But they cannot stay on even for a single day after that date. It is like honouring a promissory note. It the money on the promissory note is to be paid on Sunday, the payment cannot be postponed to Monday. Similarly, the British cannot stay on after June 30, 1948. They have to abide by the command of the British people. After all, the Viceroy is the servant of the British people. On the 2nd or 3rd June he will reveal what he intends doing and in what manner he will leave. It is his duty and he as to fulfil it. We have to look to our own duty.

And then I wonder who I am. Whom do I represent? I left the Congress many years ago.[1] I am not even a four-anna member of the Congress. But I am a servant of the Congress. I have served it for many years and I continue to do so. Similarly, I am a servant of the Muslim League and also of the Princes. I serve everyone but represent no one. Of course I do represent one person. I represent the Qaid-e-Azam, because I have signed the peace appeal along with him. Both of us have together said that no political objective may be attained by

[1] In 1934

violence. This is a very big thing. The appeal deserved to be signed by other people too. But Jinnah Saheb insisted on having Gandhi's signature. And so I became Jinnah Saheb's representative. Apart from him I represent no one else.

But I did not sign the appeal in my capacity as a Hindu. I was born a Hindu, no doubt. No one can undo the fact. But I am also a Muslim because I am a good Hindu. In the same way I am also a Parsi and a Christian too. At the basis of all religions there is the name of only one God. All the scriptures say the same thing.

I have read the Koran and I do not share that lady's belief that the Koran ordains the killing of the infidels. I consulted Badshah Khan and Abdus Samad Khan who recited the Koranic passages so beautifully today and they also confirmed that the Koran did not ordain the killing of non-Muslims. No Bihari Muslim told me that since I was a non-believer they would kill me. Nor did the Maulvis in Noakhali say any such thing. On the contrary, they allowed the *Ramdhun* to the accompaniment of the *dholak*. All that the Koran says is that an infidel would be answerable to God. But God would demand an explanation from everyone, even from a Muslim. And He would not question you about you words but your deeds. But then those who are keen on seeing dirt can find it everywhere. There is nothing in which good and bad are not mixed up. Why, our *Manusmriti* talks of pouring molten lead into the ears of the untouchables[1]! But I would say that that is not the true teaching of our scriptures. Tulsidas gives the essence of all Shastras in his statement that compassion is the root of all religions. No religion ever teaches us to kill anyone. We must act in accordance with the following couplet of Tulsidas:

Sentient and insentient, good and bad, are all creations of God. The man of God takes the good and leaves the bad even as the swan which drinks the milk and leaves the water.

We shall have to tell the Muslims that that is not the way to achieve Pakistan. They cannot have Pakistan so long as the arson and killings do not stop. In the same way Hindus also cannot force the Mus-lims to stop harping on the theme of Pakistan. But my question is: Why should you needlessly quarrel in the name of Pakistan? After all, Pakistan is not a spectre? True Pakistan is that which guarantees the safety of every child. Whether it is Pakistan or Hindustan, people

[1] As punishment for hearing Vedic verses being recited

with different religions and ways of life ought to be able to live in safety there, no matter whether they are Brahmins or Banias or Pandits or belong to any of the other creeds. Hence, I would like to invite Jinnah Saheb to join me on a tour of the whole country and work to end these acts of violence.

I would like to tell my colleague Jinnah Saheb and the whole world that we are not prepared to hear anything about Pakistan so long as these excesses continue. Once they stop, we shall sit down and decide whether there should be Pakistan or Hindustan. When we sit together like brothers, we shall distribute sweets and have illuminations. It is through friendly relations that Pakistan can come into being and through friendly relations alone can Hindustan survive. If we keep on fighting, Hindustan will be destroyed.

The Statement of May 16 of last year is the basis for the settlement. Not a comma can be removed from it. The British have no right to do anything which falls outside the purview of this Statement. Nor are we demanding anything more than what is contained in the Statement. We must make it clear that even if we all have to die or the whole country is reduced to ashes, Pakistan will not be conceded under duress.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan-I, pp. 103-6

165. TALK WITH ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

May 31, 1947

GHAFFAR KHAN: So, Mahatmaji, you will now regard us as Pakistanis? . . . A terrible situation faces the Frontier Province and Baluchistan. We do not know what to do.

GANDHIJI: Have you read what I have been saying during the past two or three days? One who has faith in non-violence should not yield to despair in this manner. You and your Khudai Khidmatgars[1] are going to be tested now. You can say that you do not accept Pakistan and then submit to whatever is inflicted on you. We have, as you know, adopted the motto of 'do or die'. It does not befit one who professes such a motto to give way to despair. And whatever happens I

[1] Meaning 'Servants of God'; popularly known as 'Red Shirts', it was an organization of the Khan brothers pledged to non-violence and had been following nationalist policy.

am going to visit the Frontier Province, for I don't believe in these divisions of the country. I am not going to ask anybody's permission. If they kill me for my defiance, I will embrace death with a smiling face. That is, it Pakistan comes into existence, I intend to tour it, live there and see what they do to me. This girls[1] will of course be with me, so that we two old men and this girl will tour together. Will that be all right?

I understand. I won't take any more of your time.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 45-6

166. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
May 31, 1947

As Gandhiji came on the platform he asked the people to be quiet, telling them that during the prayer one's eyes should be closed and one's ears open.

That man[2] wearing a hat like an Englishman is demanding that Jinnah should be arrested. Does he really want to arrest Jinnah? You may have the power to do so. I too possess such power. But my way of acting is different. Ever since I came from South Africa I have been training you in my way. I am not such a great teacher at that. But then, even a mad person can speak out his mind. For the past fifty-four years I have been regularly saying that we must hold our enemy. For you Jinnah is an enemy, but I regard none as enemy. I have said it and it is the perfect truth that I have become his representative. How can I then regard him as my enemy? Even the British had become my enemies. But I did not become their enemy. I became their friend, their representative, and I told them things that were in their own interest.

There are two ways of 'holding' one's enemies. One way is the way of coercion, the other is the way of love. I have 'held' you by love. When I ask you to be silent, you remain silent. You must have realized that I have used the term 'holding' as a joke but you must

[1] Manu J. Gandhi

[2] According to the source, he had protested against the recitation from the Koran, but the prayer was carried on peacefully.

have taken it in the right sense. What I mean is that at times we shall no doubt succeed in holding Jinnah Saheb. Do you think the police would arrest him? The police cannot do so. The police cannot arrest me, nor Khan Saheb. Of course the British authorities can arrest him at will. But even Jinnah Saheb would not be quite imprisoned. He would be truly held if I could bring him here and make him stand before you.

There was a man called Mir Alam. He belonged to the Frontier, Badshah Khan's land. He was even taller than Badshah Khan, who is himself a mountain of a man. He was my friend at one time. But the Pathans are very simple-hearted. That is why they are Badshah—noblemen. Somebody told this man, Mir. Alam, that Gandhi had taken £15,000 from General Smuts and had betrayed the Indian community. That was enough. One day Mir Alam confronted me as an enemy. He carried with him a heavy-headed stick. He hit me with it right on my neck. I fell down on the pavement and broke my teeth. I survived because God willed it. Mir Alam was caught by a few Englishmen who were passing. But I had him released. I told the Englishmen that he had been misled by a rumour that I had succumbed to money and it was no wonder that the honest Pathan's blood had boiled and he had rushed out to hit me. Thus it was that I held Mir Alam. He became a close friend.[1]

God willing, Jinnah Saheb too will come and sit here one day and say that he is not, and never has been, our enemy. He will say that he is asking for Pakistan, but his Pakistan will be a great thing and will be in the interest of everybody. Then we would all gather and have illuminations and distribute sweets.

I am not saying this from cowardice or by way of flattery. I am talking only of being brave. We have to be brave like the Sikhs, one of whom is equal to one and a quarter lakh of others. I have already explained to you how one Sikh becomes equal to one and a quarter lakh. That is not because of the *kirpan* which he always keeps to show that he would never be afraid of it. Whether one and a quarter lakh together or a single one of them come to attack him, he would never raise his hand. Who can say that a person who can die in this manner is a coward? Everyone would call him a truly courageous person.

[1] For details of the incident, *vide*

I said yesterday that we would not let Pakistan be formed by threat of force even if the whole of India were burnt down; but if they influenced our hearts with reason and persuaded us and if we were convinced that they had no evil intentions at heart, we would accede to the demand for Pakistan. But then you will have to inspire confidence in us that no one need fear the Muslims in Pakistan. When you have declared, with God as you witness, that there would be no violence for the attainment of political objectives, how can you adopt violent action for attaining Pakistan?

We want neither Birla's nor the Nawab of Bhopal's raj in India. Birla says he is not keen to rule. In the same way, the Nawab of Bhopal also calls himself a friend of his people. He too is unwilling to accept power by going against his subjects. Who then would hold the reins of power? They would come into your hands. Not only into your hands, but into the hands of the poor.

There are many Birlas in the country. What is their power? They have to get their work done by labourers and they can get it done only when they pay for it. When the workers refuse to work, the millions would remain stuck with the rich. If these rich people own land, they are not going to till it themselves. If they do not find anyone to plough their land their vast stretches of land would lie useless. Similarly, all the swords and spears and horsemen of the Nawab of Bhopal are going to be rendered useless. After all, how many people can they kill? Over whom would he rule after killing his own subjects? He would be able to rule over his subjects only by becoming their trustee.

Instead of this, it anyone says that because the Nawab of Bhopal is a Muslim, Bhopal would be a Muslim territory and that in Kashmir a handful of Brahmin would wield power, this will not be conceded at all.

Take the case of the Nizam of Hyderabad. It is said that the moment he has an opportunity, he will try to bring the whole of India under his rule. But who precisely is going to do it? His subjects are Hindus.

The British would be betraying us if they thought that they would find a place for themselves in Hyderabad, Bhopal, Rajkot or some other place after they quit India. But I have not gathered any such impression. I believe that the British intentions of leaving India are perfectly honest. Now that they are leaving India, their sovereignty

also ends. How are some footholds here and there going to be of any help? And, when the British are gone, the Princes are going to have their place in the midst of their subjects.

Once when Malaviyaji wen to Bombay, I accompanied him. Both of us went and met some Maharajas there. They made us sit on elevated seats, and themselves sat at our feet. Those were the days when the British power was at its peak. Now when the Imperialist power is withdrawing, they will at once realize that they can retain their position only when they listen to the people. The only way of responding to the people is by coming into the Constituent Assembly. If they take an obstinate stand and refuse to joint the Constituent Assembly, they cannot remain rulers.

No Muslim Prince in India can say that he will kill all the Hindus. If anyone says such a thing, I would ask him why he was their protector all this time, why he lived by their food. Similarly, any Prince, just because he is a Muslim, would not be entitled to say that he would join Pakistan. Nor can a Hindu ruler, because he is a Hindu, say that he would be with the Congress. Either would have to follow the wishes of the people.

In the end Gandhiji announced the death of the Chakrayya, a young Harijan from Andhra.

He was an inmate of the Sevagram Ashram. He was trained under Nayee Talim. He was a hard-working craftsman. He was not given to weaknesses like falsehood, fraud and anger. By some misfortune he developed some brain trouble. He was a believer in nature cure but his friends insisted that he should be operated upon by surgeons. The disease had affected his eyes. Yet with great effort he wrote me a letter before he was taken to the operation table. He said in this that although he liked nature cure he was willing to undergo the surgery and if he had to die in the process, he would do so reciting the name of Rama. Eventually he passed away on the operation table in a hospital in Bombay.

I feel like crying over his death; but I cannot cry. For whom should I cry and for whom should I refrain from crying? If Mother India should have any children, they should be, as Tulsidas has said, either generous or brave. Chakrayya was generous because he was a selfless worker, always contented. He was also brave because he welcomed death. He was a Harijan but knew no distinctions of Harijan and *savarna* and of Hindu and Muslim. He regarded all as human

beings and was himself a true human being.

Today I have talked in one breathe about the Nawab of Bhopal and Chakrayya. In India there is room for both. Let the Nawab of Bhopal be a trustee of his people. And let us have millions of young men like Chakrayya. Then alone will India be able to live in peace and happiness.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan I, pp. 106-11

167. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

June 1, 1947

Do you feel that India will ultimately be united under one central government regardless of what the immediate settlement may be?

The future will depend on what we do in the present.

Do you foresee the possibility of the world being united under one central governing body composed of representatives of the component parts?

That is the only condition on which the world can live.

Do you think there is any possibility of armed conflict between Russia and the United States?

Anything is possible but it is highly improbable.

What do you feel is the most acceptable solution to the Palestine problem?

The abandonment wholly by the Jews of terrorism and other forms of violence.

Do you believe that Egypt and the Sudan should unite under one government when the British leave?

I have no doubt that they ought to.

As a result of your experiment during the past five months do you feel that the principle of non-violence can yet be triumphant in the solution of the world's problems?

My five months in Noakhali have only confirmed my previous experience that non-violence can cure all our ills.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-6-1947

[1] The questions were conveyed by Gerald J. Rock, staff correspondent, of the United Press of America.

168. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

June 1, 1947

CHI. . . ,

I was glad to have Dr. Jivraj Mehta's report about you. And now [Dilip] has advanced so far that he is able to maintain a fine car. You can have a daily ride in it to the Hanging Garden. If the experiment has no adverse effect on your health, we may assume that the crisis is over. Do you have Nathuram Sharma's collection of 108 Upanishads? Or any other collection which includes the *Allopanishad?* It is there in Nathuram Sharma's collection. If you have it, get a copy made and send it to me. I don't want the whole book. The *Allopanishad* is the shortest one. My impression is that it consists of about five lines.

I hope . . . is keeping quite well. I can't say how long I shall be here.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 52

169. LETTER TO MANIBHAI B. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
June 1, 1947

CHI. MANILAL,

I have already written to them to send you the money. Even if Dhirubhai is frequently occupied with his own work and Paramanand has not become steady as his wife keeps indifferent health, I suppose you will stick to the place and hope to manage somehow. Ask Balkrishna[1] also to think over the matter.

1. You may give whatever name you wish to the Trust. Respect Dinshawji's wishes in the matter.
2. The main activities will remain the same.
3. There is no need to think about the future.

The budget seems to be all right. I do not have the time to go deeper into the matter. It is with great difficulty that I have been able to write this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10439. Courtesy: Manibhai B. Desai

[1] Balkrishna Bhave

170. LETTER TO BALWANTRAI K. THAKORE

June 1. 1947

BHAI BALWANTRAI[1],

I have your letter. Probably you do not know that I am but a villager. Mine is a voice in the wilderness. Give up your delusion.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 52

171. TALK WITH MANU GANDHI[2]

June 1, 1947

The purity of my *yajna* will be put to the test only now. Today I find myself all alone. [Even the Sardar and Jawaharlal][3] think that my reading of the situation is wrong and peace is sure to return if partition is agreed upon. The Viceroy is a nice and intelligent man. They did not like my telling the Viceroy that even if there was to be partition, it should not be through British intervention or under the British rule. They wonder if I have not deteriorated with age. But if I did not show myself as I am, I would prove a hypocrite. And I must speak as I feel, if I am to prove a true and loyal friend to the Congress. Never mind if I am not a four-anna member of the Congress. But they all come an consult me, seek my advice. Similarly I am also a friend of the British. I must therefore tell the British what is good for them. Else, of what use is my being their friend? If I were to prove my true and loyal friendship to them it becomes my bounden duty to lay bare the facts before them and show them the right way, regardless of whether my advice is appreciated or resented. I see clearly that we are setting about this business the wrong way. We may not feel the full effect immediately, but I can see clearly that the future of independence gained at this price is going to be dark. I pray

[1] Gujarati poet and man of letters

[2] In *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, "Memorial to Secretary of State for the Colonies", 15-3-1897, Pyarelal explains that in the morning, "mistaking the hands of his watch, Gandhiji woke up earlier than usual. . . . he remained lying in bed and began to muse in a low voice.''

[3] *Vide* The source has ''people''.

that God may not keep me alive to witness it. And I have left you in this vast field to fend for yourself. I have done it with full deliberation because you share my burden in this sacrifice although you are a little girl with no experience of life. In order that God may give me the strength and wisdom to remain firm in the midst of universal opposition and to utter the full truth, I need all the strength of purity that you will have in your sincere work, whether in thought or act, while waking or asleep or even when you are not conscious of yourself. In the matter of devotion or purity, or in treading the path of truth years hardly count; what is needed is spiritual strength. Wasn't Prahlad very young? Had little Dhruva attained a mature age? But they had the strength to tread the path of truth. Moreover, a man may grow old and yet be a fraud. But somehow in spite of my being all alone, in my thoughts, I am experiencing an ineffable inner joy and freshness of mind. I feel as if God himself was lighting my path before me. And it is perhaps the reason why I am able to fight on single-handed. People now ask me to retire to Kashi or go to the Himalayas. I laugh and tell them that the Himalayas of my penance are where there is misery to be alleviated, oppression to be relieved. There can be no rest for me so long as there is a single person in India whether man or woman, young or old, lacking the necessaries of life, by which I mean a sense of security, a life style worthy of human beings, i.e., clothing, education, food and shelter of a decent standard. I said the same thing to Sarat Babu yesterday. I cannot bear to see Badshah Khan's grief. His inner agony wrings my heart, but if I gave way to tears, it would be cowardly and, stalwart Pathan as he is, he would break down. And I don't want him to break down. But maybe all of them are right and I alone am floundering in darkness. The more you remain vigilant and cheerful by maintaining good health the more you will influence all that I do.

I shall perhaps not be alive to witness it, but should the evil I apprehend overtake India and her independence be imperilled, let posterity know what agony this old man went through thinking of it. Let not the coming generation curse Gandhi for being a party to India's vivisection. But everybody is today impatient for independence. Therefore there is no alternative. This is like eating wooden *laddoos*, if they eat it they die of colic; if they don't they starve.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 50-2

172. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 1, 1947

Today also a Brahmin objected to the recitation from the Koran, but the prayer continued. Two young men from the audience took him by the arms, made him sit down and tried to silence him. This created some disturbance in the meeting. When the police came in to take him away Gandhiji said :

Please, constable, don't take him away. Let him sit where he is. Please only see that he does not create any more trouble. The recitation from the Koran is already over. Now we shall have some *bhajans* provided this gentleman allows it. If he does not, we shall have no *bhajans* for the day.

At this that Brahmin gentleman smilingly raised his elbow and said: "Just look, in this scuffle, I sustained these bruises. Is this your non-violence?"

Well, forget about your bleeding. You just tell me whether I should continue the prayer. We shall have *bhajans* if you say 'yes'. If you do not agree, we shall have no *bhajans* today.

The gentleman cheerfully agreed to listen to bhajans.

Hinduism does not belong only to you. I am a Hindu too, and a perfect *sanatani*. Now, why should we read only the *Gita*? Why should we not read the Koran too? We must gather pearls wherever we find them. Power is now about to come to us. The Viceroy is impatient to hand it over to us. Would you, at this moment, quarrel like this and show your folly? You must learn to be courteous. You can learn courtesy from Badshah Khan. Today when Manu went to bring him to the prayer he said he would rather keep away as some Hindu might be hurt by his presence. I then sent him a message saying that he was huge as a mountain and I was a mere Bania, and if I was not scared, why should he be? And now, having come here, there he sits more gentle than a lamb. We too should be well-behaved like him. Granted that there are some uncharitable things in the Koran. But is there any work which does not contain such things? I have lived in the midst of hundreds of Muslim friends. No one has ever told me that I was an undesirable person because I was not a Muslim. A Muslim friend[1] who is no longer alive, and who, a jeweller that he was,

[1] Umar Jhaveri, a businessman of South Africa

possessed also the qualities of a jewel, had warned me to beware of Muslims since all of them were not angels. But I told him I need not look at the darker side of things. I was happy to have found such a good friend. And he was not the only one. I can give you quite a few such names. I had even accepted one of them[1] as my own son. He was always ready to serve people. But God took him away. When such wonderful persons can be found among the Muslims, I say the Hindus should not lose their heads because of what a few Muslims do. The British kept us under control by the force of arms. Shall we start fighting when they are leaving? This is certainly not worthy of us.

After the *bhajans* and the *Ramdhun* had been gone through in an orderly xmanner, Gandhiji complimented the people as well as the Brahmin gentleman for remaining peaceful and said:

If people would act with a little understanding, independence is almost in their hands, because Jawaharlal is the Vice-President in our Government. True, the Government is headed by the Viceroy; but he has to keep silent now. Your real king is Jawaharlal. He is a king who wants to serve not only India, but through it the whole world. He has acquainted himself with the peoples of all lands and is adept at dealing with diplomats from all countries. But how long can he go on doing it all by himself?

This uncrowned king is at your service. Should he put down your disturbances with bullets? If today he suppresses one person, he will have tomorrow to act similarly in another case. And that would not be swaraj, not Panchayat raj either. Only when you remain disciplined will Jawaharlal be able to lead us and our freedom be safe.

Here is an example of the discipline to which Jawaharlal submits himself. Last year when he had gone to Kashmir Lord Wavell wanted to meet him. Maulana Saheb wanted to send for him. When I persuaded him he abided by the order of the Congress President and came here leaving the problem unresolved over there.[2]

Today also Jawaharlal's mind is in Kashmir, where Sheikh Abdullah[3], the leader of the people, is locked behind the bars. I told Jawaharlal that he was needed more here. I told him that if it was necessary I would go to Kashmir and do his work, and that he should

[1] Hussain Main

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 22-6-1946

[3] Leader of Kashmir National Conference—a nationalist organization fighting for a democratic set-up in the State, to which the Maharaja was opposed.

stay here. I also told him that although I was bound by my word to do or die only in Bihar or Noakhali, I could still go to Kashmir because there too the problem of the Muslims was involved. I would go there and befriend the Maharaja of Kashmir and work for the good of the Muslims. But Jawaharlal has not yet agreed to this.

In short, now that we have attained swaraj, each one of us should act with discipline, humility and understanding. Then alone would India deserve her independence.

Yesterday I talked to you about the Princes. Similarly today I want to talk about the trading community. Yesterday I said that India would not be ruled by a Birla, nor by the Nawab of Bhopal, nor the Nizam nor the Maharaja of Kashmir. The Princes would be only servants of the people.

It cannot be that the people of India should become free in one place and be under subjugation in another place. When freedom comes, it shall be for all.

Now freedom is definitely coming. Because if the British are honest, and it is my impression that they are, they have to quit. The Viceroy Lord Mountbatten says that he wants to leave as early as possible. And he will stick to his word.

When the British go will we become the rulers of the country? And shall we quarrel among ourselves when we become the rulers of India? Will the Princes then ride over us? No, they will all become the trustees of the people. In other words, they will be servants of society like Chakrayya. Only then can they continue as our rulers.

In the same way, we should not be ruled by the business community either. We want the rule of the *Bhangis*. The *Bhangis* are the highest of all because their service is the greatest. That is why I have volunteered to be a *Bhangi* myself. By the rule of the *Bhangis* I mean that once you make a scavenger you minister, you must respect his word as much as the British respected the word of the seventeen-year-old Queen Victoria, and everyone, big and small, did his duty. I have seen with my eyes the manner in which the British perform their duties.

I have been to London several times. On one occasion I stayed there for three years. But I was then a mere boy. I have gone to London twice or thrice subsequently. There the people are so reasonable and law-abiding that the police are never obliged to wield firearms. They have in their hand only a baton. People know that the police are their servants. Hence they follow the instructions of the

police. The police also try to help the people to the maximum. Things are not done there through bribery. The police do not accept bribes even if offered.

Our Indian police to should follow this example now. They should not accept any bribe at all. If they are not getting enough to subsist upon they can ask the Sardar for higher wages. Let them approach Baldev Singh[1]. Let them go to Nehruji. When big officers and ministers get thousands, why should the policemen receive meagre salaries? These people would do something about it. But the policemen must give up taking bribes.

I also want to say something about businessmen. They must all come together and proclaim with one voice that they all want to become true Banias and true Marwaris. A true Bania is one who weighs things correctly. All the Banias and all the Marwaris and all traders must get together and resolve not to indulge in black-marketing and not to give or take bribes.

If they can do this much Rajendra Babu's[2] helplessness in providing food for the people would be removed. I have received a letter which says that even though I had the salt tax repealed, salt is now costlier than before. How is that? I say after the repeal of the salt tax we should get salt almost free. For such a thing to happen the traders will have to do business for the sake of India instead of for their own sake. They should forget black-marketing altogether. When that happens, the ministers of the Interim Government would be able to carry out their respective tasks, and Rajaji, Rajendra Babu, Jawaharlalji, Matthai[3], Bhabha[4] and all the four League Ministers[5] would be able to serve you in every way. Even after that, if India cannot have enough food and clothing and there is no progress in the country, you can remove them from office.

But how would you remove them? Would you have them ousted by the Viceroy's action? No. You would ask the Viceroy not to

[1] Defence Member in the Interim Government.

[2] Rajendra Prasad was Minister of Food and Agriculture.

[3] John Matthai, Member for Railways and Transport in the Interim Government

[4] C. H. Bhabha, Member for Works, Mines and Power in the Interim Government

[5] They were: Liaquat Ali Khan for Finance, I. I. Chundrigar for Commerce, Abdur Rab Nishtar for Communications (Posts and Air) And Ghazanfar Ali Khan for Health

bother. You would 'hold' the Ministers yourselves in the manner in which I said yesterday I would 'hold' Jinnah. Then you would be able to make them do as you wish.

I have learnt from Jawaharlal that people are starving in London. I was sorry to hear that. However guilty the British might have been in our case, they must certainly get enough to eat.

Ours is a very vast country. If our traders behave properly and if they are sensible we can say that so long as India is alive, the world cannot go hungry. We would provide food for the world. I am a Bania and I know something about trade. If all the Banias and traders co-operate with me and also co-operate with the Interim Government, and if all the Muslims co-operate, I can provide food for everyone. I am not at all prepared to accept that we do not produce enough in our country. If we work hard enough and act with reason and if by the grace of God there is sufficient rain, we can have plenty to eat. But it is not possible to clap with one hand. This can happen only if I can have co-operation from all, and then it would be such a thunderous clap that all of you would be happy and the whole world would be happy.

I tell you in no uncertain terms that if everybody in independent India does his duty well, the whole country will be happy.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan-I, pp. 111-6

173. DISCUSSION WITH A CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY

[On or after *June 1, 1947*[1]]

You will wish to know what are the marks of a man who wants to realize Truth which is God. He must be completely free from anger and lust, greed and attachment, pride and fear. He must reduce himself to zero and have perfect control over all his senses beginning with the palate or tongue. Tongue is the organ of speech as well as taste. It is with the tongue that we indulge in exaggeration, untruth and speech that hurts. The craving for taste makes us slaves to the plate so that like animals we live to eat. But with proper discipline, we can make ourselves into beings only a ''little below the angels''. He who has mastered his senses is first and foremost among them. All virtues

[1] Pyarelal say that the missionary had ''a ten-minute talk'' with Gandhiji ''in the first week of June''.

reside in him. God manifests Himself through them. Such is the power of self-discipline or self-purification.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 233

174. HOW DID I BEGIN IT?[1]

Readers must have notice that last week I started writing for the *Harijan*. How long I shall be able to continue it, I do not know. God's will be done in this as in other things.

When I think of it, the circumstances under which I stopped writing for the *Harijan* have not altered. Pyarelalji is far away from me and in my opinion is doing very important work in Noakhali. He is taking part in what I have called a *mahayajna*. Parasuram, the English typist, who had become used to the work, has gone to Ahmedabad of his own choice to help Jivanji. Kanu Gandhi was of much help, but he is also engaged in the *mahayajna* of Noakhali. Most of the other helpers are also unable to do any writing for lack of time and other reasons. To resume writing for the *Harijan* under these adverse conditions would ordinarily be considered madness. But what appears unpractical from the ordinary standpoint is feasible under Divine guidance. I believe I dance to His tune. If this be delusion I cling to it.

Who is this Divinity? I would love to dwell upon it but not today.

The question that is foremost with us all, I discuss every evening after the prayer. This writing will come before the readers after seven days. This interval would be considered too long in the context of the pressing problems. Therefore, in these columns for the moment, I must confine myself to things of eternal value. One such is *brahmacharya*. The world seems to be running after things of transitory value. It has no time for the other. And yet when one thinks a little deeper it becomes clear it is the things eternal that count in the end.

What is *brahmacharya*? It is the way of life which leads us to the Brahman. It includes full control over the process of reproduction. The control must be in thought, word and deed. If the thought is not under control, the other two have no value. There is a saying in

[1] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu* which was published simultaneously with the source. The translation has been edited.

Hindustani: ''He whose heart is pure has all the purifying waters of the Ganga in his house.'' For one whose thought is under perfect control, control over speech and action is easy. The *brahmachari* of my conception will be naturally healthy, will not even suffer from a headache and will enjoy a long life. His mind will be brilliant. He will never be slothful. Mental and physical work will not cause him fatigue. His outward tidiness will be a reflection of his inner being. He will exhibit all the attributes of the man of steadfast intellect described in the Gita.[1]

If there is not even one person who answers the description we should not worry in the least. There is nothing to wonder at if one who is an *urdhvareta* should the above characteristics. Who can measure the creative strength of such sublimation, one drop of which has the potentiality of bringing into being a human life?

Patanjali has described five disciplines[2]. It is not possible to isolate any one of these and practise it. It may be possible in the case of truth, because it really includes the other four. And for this age the five have been expanded into eleven. Vinoba has put them in the form of a Marathi verse: They are non-violence, truth, non-stealing, *brahmacharya*, non-possession, bread labour, control of the palate, fearlessness, equal regard for all religions, swadeshi and removal of untouchability.

All these can be derive from truth. But life is not so simple. It is no possible to enunciate on grand principle and leave the rest to follow of itself. Even when we know a proposition, its corollaries have to be worked out.

It is well to bear in mind that all the disciplines are of equal importance. If one is broken all are broken. There seems to be a popular belief amongst us that breach of truth or non-violence is pardonable. Non-stealing and non-possession are rarely mentioned. We hardly recognize the necessity of observing them. But a fancied breach of *brahmacharya* excites wrath and worse. There must be something seriously wrong with a society in which values are exaggerated and underestimated. Moreover, to use the word *brahmacharya* in a narrow sense is to detract from its value. Such detraction increases the difficulty of proper observance. When it is isolated even an

[1] II. 55 to 68

[2] In his *Yogasutras*; they are: non-violence, truth, non-stealing, *brahmacharya* and non-possession.

elementary observance becomes difficult, if not impossible. Therefore, it is essential that all the disciplines should be taken as one. This enables one to realize the full meaning and significance of *brahmacharya*. In practice he alone is a true *brahmachari*, who observes, in thought, word and deed, the eleven-fold vow in its entirety.

NEW DELHI, June 2, 1947

Harijan, 8-6-1947

175. NOTE TO MANU GANDHI

June 2, 1947

When a person does not know the prayer by heart, the result is always an awkward situation. That is what happened today as also three or four days ago. . .[1] could not begin the prayer. I then led with the first verse. The same thing happened today. I do not like all this. He must learn the prayer by heart. I may not tell him this, but he himself ought to have realized it. That he did not do so, what does it indicate? If even the three or four persons nearest to me have no heart in the prayer, must not the fault be mine? We seem to be going through the prayer as if it were a forced task. It means cheating God. We may not like praying or may feel it is a burden, but we must not cheat God.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 56

176. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN[2]

June 2, 1947

I am sorry I can't speak; when I took the decision about the Monday silence I did reserve two exceptions, i.e., about speaking to

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

[2] The interview took place at 12.30 p.m. In his note marked 'Secret' Lord Mountbatten said: ''I saw Mr. Gandhi immediately after the first session of the meeting with the seven Indian Leaders. As this was a Monday, he was observing his day of silence; and he apparently did not consider the occasion of sufficient importance for him to break this rule, so he satisfied himself by handing me the attached note. The original of this is in my possession; it is written on the back of five separate old envelopes and will be, I feel, a document of some historic importance.'' (C.W. 11026, Lord Mountbatten Papers, Broadlands Archives Trust, Broadlands, Romsey, Hampshire).

high functionaries on urgent matters or attending upon sick people. But I know you do not want me to break my silence.

Have I said one word against you during my speeches? If you admit that I have not, your warning is superfluous.

There are one or two things I must talk about, but not today. If we meet each other again I shall speak.

Badshah Khan is with me in the Bhangi Colony. He said ''Do ask the Viceroy to remove the Governor[1]. We won't have peace till he is gone.'' I don't know whether he is right or wrong. He is truthful. If it can be done decorously, You should do it.

From a photostat: G.N. 10835

177. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 2, 1947

Mahatmaji gave his reactions to the statement[2] of His Majesty's Government and to the draft letter.[3] He said that though he did not agree with the decisions of the Working Committee regarding the division of India, he did not want to take any step which would stand in the way of the Working Committee in implementing its previous decision. He however pointed out that there was still some scope for further clarification, and he suggested that Clause 20 relating to the right of the parts to decide to remain or not within the British Commonwealth should be clarified and the Government should be informed that the Congress does not want that any differential treatment should be meted out to any seceding part of India. He also wanted that a written and categorical assurance should be forthcoming from the Muslim League that it accepts the statement as a final settlement and will not make any further claims beyond what is conceded in this statement.

A. I. C. C. File No. 1499-P, 1946-48. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Sir Olaf Caroe of North-West Frontier Province

[2] The statement was officially announced on June 3, but copies of it were given to the Congress, Muslim League and Sikh leaders, viz. Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, J.B. Kripalani, M.A. Jinnah, Liaquat Ali Khan, Abdul Rab Nishtar and Sardar Baldev Sing, during their conference with the Viceroy in the morning. For the text of the statement and the letter to the Viceroy, drafted by Jawaharlal Nehru in consultation with J.B. Kripalani, Vallabhbhai Patel and Govind Ballabh Pant, which was earlier read out but subsequently redrafted to incorporate Gandhiji's suggestions, *vide* British Government Statement", 3-6-1947 and "Jawaharlal Nehru's Letter to viceroy", 2-6-1947

[3] *ibid*

178. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

DELHI,

Monday, June 2, 1947

I am unable to tell you what has happened or is happening on the political plane. But I would like to repeat what I have been saying these last three or four days, namely, that the common man should not concern himself with what the Viceroy has brought from England. We should concern ourselves with what our duty should be in any situation that may arise. The one thing the country should make clear is that it will accept nothing through force.

Continuing, therefore, the thought that I have been developing these last few days, I should like to ask what our doctors and scientists are doing for the sake of the country. One finds them readily going to foreign countries to learn new ideas and the latest treatments for curing diseases. I would suggest that they should turn their attention to the seven lakhs of villages of India. They will then find that all medical men and women can find work to do there. Not in the Western fashion, of course, but in our own fashion in the villages. They will then also know many indigenous remedies which they will be able to make use of. There are so many herbs in India that we have no need to import drugs at all. But more than through drugs they will help the people by teaching them the right mode of living.

What shall I say to the scientists? Are they giving their attention to growing more food? And this not with the aid of artificial fertilizers but through proper methods of tillage and by use of organic manure? In Noakhali I saw people using even the water hyacinth which grows wild and blocks the flow of river water. This our scientists will do when they learn to live for the country rather than for themselves.

I spoke yesterday of the invaluable work that Jawaharlal is doing. I had described him as the uncrowned king of India. He cannot be replaces today when the Englishmen are withdrawing their authorityfrom India. He, who was educated at Harrow and Cambridge and became a barrister, is greatly needed to carry on the negotiations with the English-men. But the time is fast approaching when India will have to elect the first president of the Republic. I would have proposed the name of Chakrayya, had he been alive. I would wish with all my heart to have a brave, selfless and pure-hearted scavenger girl to

be our first President. It is no vain dream. We can certainly come across such Harijan girls if only we make an effort to find them. Had I not selected little Gulnar, the late Maulana Mahomed Ali's daug-hter? But the silly girl went and married Shuaib Qureshi. At one time she led the life of a fakir and had met me when the Ali Brothers were in jail. Gulnar is now the proud mother of many bright children, but she cannot now be my successor.

Our future President will have no need to know English. Of course he will be assisted by men who are proficient in political matters and who also know foreign languages. These dreams, however, can be realized only if we devote all our attention to our villages instead of killing each other.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 116-8

179. A LETTER [1]

[On or after *June 2, 1947*][2]

Probably no one is more distressed than I am over the impending division of India. But I have no desire to launch a struggle against what promises to be an accomplished fact. I have considered such a division to be wrong and therefore I could never be party to it. But when the Congress accepts such a division, even though reluctantly, I would not carry on any agitation against that institution. Such a step is not inconceivable under all circumstances. The Congress association with the proposed division is no circumstance warranting a struggle against it of the kind you have in mind. Nor can I endorse your attack upon the British. They have not in any way promoted or encouraged this step.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 244

[1] The addressee, in his letter, had said: "The British are quitting India but leaving it divided. . . In case you launch a struggle against the division of India on communal or Indian States basis . . . I respectfully offer about one lakh . . . disciplined volunteers loyally to carry out your orders.

[2] From the reference to the Congress Working Committee decision to accept the British Government's proposal, which was on June 2.

180. A LETTER [1]

[On or after *June 2, 1947*]

I feel helpless. I do not know that a parallel between Ireland and India can be drawn. The Congress and the League have come to terms, the former, no doubt, unwillingly. That being the case, one has to do the best that is possible under the circumstances. This I am trying to do according to my lights.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 244

181. LETTER TO NARMADA GANDHI

BHANGI NIWAS, NEW DELHI,
June 3,[2] *1947*

I have your letter.[3] I have many sons, some of whom bear the name Gandhi and some bear other names. A man who has risen above caste or community, who holds Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and Jews in equal regard and who delights in calling himself a Bhangi—if you can count how many crores of sons, and therefore daughters-in-law, such a man is likely to have, please do the total yourself. Your letter was not in your handwriting. Perhaps you don't even know how to sign. The letter, therefore, deserves little attention. Be that as it may, a wise man should use his ancestral well to swim in, not to drown in or to commit suicide. That would be lack of understa-nding. A man who swims in it is a *janni*. You must give up that place. Be satisfied with what they give as compensation. I shall understand your demanding another house in exchange. To insist on having this very house is the limit of ignorant attachment. I don't care for a memorial. I have seen a good

[1] This was in reply to an Indian in Dublin who had written: "The Indians in Ireland strongly protest against the present talk of partition in India. . . . Ireland had the same fate when the British Government was leaving the country and now the result is that the people of the North and the South Ireland . . . are trying . . . to abolish this partition. . . . India will have to do the same thing. We Hindus and Muslims in this country have firm faith that India can't commit suicide by accepting division under your able leadership and guidance."

[2] From *Bihar Pachhi Dilhi*, "Question Box"

[3] The addressee, a member of the Gandhi family, had sought Gandhiji's help to resist the proposal to acquire for the nation their ancestral home at Porbandar.

many memorials turn into ruins. That may happen in the course of time to this one. too. If, however, it is proposed to use our ancestral house for a good purpose, you or your advisers should not stand in the way.

I have spared this time for you under very heavy pressure of work, thinking that in your heart you would understand. If I am right in my belief, do not allow yourself to be misled by anybody but go on doing your dharma. You can show this letter to your relations and well-wishers.

Blessing from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Otabapano Vadalo, p. 9

182. A LETTER

June 3, 1947

I do not get a moment free. After the prayer I give some letters to Manu or Bisen to read out to me and then dictate replies to them. I think I have done all I could to win you over. But it seems I have failed . . .[1] When we fail to satisfy somebody, we should assume that there must be something wrong with us. Dharma requires that we should not find fault with others but should always be willing to see our own. I should, therefore, advise you to go forward by yielding the way to others.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 62

183. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING[2]

NEW DELHI,
June 3, 1947

I ask the Socialists if they want to capture the Congress or to

[1] Omission as in the source.

[2] J. B. Kripalani, who had been holding discussions with the leaders of the Socialist Party with a view to minimizing the differences existing within the Congress, had places before the Committee a memorandum submitted by them. The Committee were of opinion that the President should continue the discussions and place before the Committee any agreed proposal Gandhiji was requested to express his opinion on the question.

serve it. If they want to capture it, it is better that they should remain out. The Congress is a great organization, but no organization can live only on its past. It must always keep abreast of times and attract new blood and justify itself. If the Socialists come into the Congress as *khidmatgars*, and I hope they do want to come as such, they are welcome, for they cannot always remain a party which always complains and refuses to assume responsibility. When I use the Congress platform to advocate any view, I do not try to utilize it to damage the institution. Whether I remain in the Congress or outside I cannot imagine being ever disloyal to it.

A. I. C. C. File No. 1499-P, 1946-48. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

184. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 3, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

If in our view the League has not acted in a praiseworthy manner, let us say that the League has not acted in a praiseworthy manner. Similarly, if the Congress has not acted rightly let us tell the Congressmen too that their action is not right. Only then will democratic rule be established. One group functioning according to its own will does not constitute democratic rule.

Democracy is where even the man in the street is heard. When we are out to establish a democratic order, the Viceroy's House, or even Jawaharlal's house, is not the seat of the Government. I have described Jawaharlal as the uncrowned king. And we are a poor nation. We are so poor that we shall walk rather than ride in a car. Even if somebody offers us a lift in his car, we shall decline his offer saying that he can keep his car, we would rather walk. If we are over-hungry, we shall eat a little more. Thus democracy means the rule of the man in the street. One who always goes about in a car is spoilt. One who lives in a palace cannot rule the Government. That is why I say that we are not going to benefit by what the British, who have ruled over a world empire, might propose for us. Even if the rulers of India think something which does not appear proper to us, we ought to say so.

I said yesterday that the Banias were to blame for the black

market. The difference between an ordinary trader and me is that I work for the good of the whole country while other traders fill their own coffers. Like Rajendra Babu I am also worrying about providing food for the whole country.

I am told that these days not much trade is left in the hands of the Banias. There are very few traders who can indulge in black market practices and the whole confusion is due to the Government Departments since the whole thing is managed by the Government. It is up to Rajendra Babu, who is the king of Bihar, to provide food. And it is in the hands of Rajaji, who has been a popular minister in Madras, to provide clothing. Still these things do not reach the people because corruption is rampant among the civil servants. If Rajendra Babu and Rajaji are surrounded by wicked persons whom they are not able to control, then they too should be considered responsible for the rot.

I do not know how far it is right to present the Government servants in this light. But I would certainly say that none from amongst us should resort to black-marketing. If there are some Government officers who give to their favourites twice or thrice the number of ration cards that their families are entitled to, those who receive these cards and those who give them are both guilty. It is possible that hitherto things could go on because of the awe of the British. But if this state of affairs continues even now, God alone can save India. But such things should not continue now. Today it is not necessary to act according to the order of the boss, regardless of whether it is fair or unfair. We are not under foreign bosses any more. Rajendra Babu cannot issue orders in this way. He does not have under him the police that would force people to accept orders. Even Rajaji or Nehruji or the Sardar cannot compel people to obey their orders through force. Sardar Baldev Singh does have the army under him but even he cannot threaten to have the entire military force cracking down on the people to subdue them. You could not remove the British officers, but you can remove these people. They can rule over you only by pleasing you. I wish to inform you that your *Panchayat Raj* has begun from today. It will be twelve months before we acquire full power. In the meantime, God alone knows what may or may not happen. But you must accept the method of democratic rule right from now. Let no one among us fill his stomach by harming the country.

To all those who are in the Civil Service—be they white or Black,

Hindu or Muslim, in the Secretariat or in the higher echelons of the police, to all whom my voice can reach I would say that their duties have now become ten times heavier. you must all now become clean and straight. Then alone will the whole task of our independence become easy and each one of us experience freedom.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I pp. 118–20

185. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

NEW DELHI,
June 4, 1947

DEAR DR. HOLMES[1],

This will be presented to you by Dr. B. C. Roy, one of our foremost physicians. Any country would be proud of him. I am sure that he needs no introduction from me. But he insisted. Hence this note. I know you will do all you can to bring him before America.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 10968. Courtesy: Prof. Roger W. Holmes and Frances L. Brown

186. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

BHANGI COLONY, NEW DELHI,
June 4, 1947

MY DEAR KU.,

Your letter. I have sent Shoorjibhai[2] the following wire: "You can take Kumarappa if he can leave work to proper substitute."

If you can conveniently spare yourself without damage to village work entrusted to you, you can go.[3] Of this you are the sole and fittest judge.

[1] 1879-1964; American clergyman, author of *My Gandhi;* Chairman, American Civil Liberties Union; visited India as the Rabindranath Tagore Memorial Visiting Professor from October 1947 to January 1948

[2] Shoorji Vallabhdas; one of the founder-members of the All-India Village Industries Association

[3] To London, with a delegation of Indian businessmen; *vide* also "Letter to J. C. Kumarappa", 11-6-1947

You have also to judge how far Shoorjibhai will really need your services. I have grave doubts about it. In this matter again, you can judge much better than I can.

You can share this with Shoorjibhai as I am not writing to him.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 10193

187. LETTER TO SURENDRA[1]

June 4, 1947

I have your letter. I like what you say. It was my belief till now that you had adopted Nathji[2] as your guru. I am like a father to you all, and I am happy about it. If what I say appeals to your head and heart them alone should you accept it. You are free to pick and choose. But that cannot be said in regard to one whom we regard as our guru. There is no pick-and-choose there. Whatever the guru says should go straight home without the aid of reason…[3] In the absence of such a guru one should listen to everybody and then act as one feels prompted. There is a proverb which says that our own intuition (such as it is) is a better guide than all the learning and intellect of another. As you know, I have searched in vain for a guru of the type which I fancied you had found. I have mentioned this more than once either in *Harijan* or *Navajivan* and I have envied those who have claimed that they had found one. These friends in their turn recommended to me the names of Ramana Maharshi, Aurobindo Ghosh, Sahebji Maharaj of Agra, Upasani Baba, Mehar Baba and another name in Karnataka which I have forgotten. But I could adopt none of them and in the end came to the conclusion that perhaps, as with ideals, the quest is more than the attainment. An ideal ceases to be an ideal if it is realized. One can contemplate it, come ever closer to it, but never reach it. So much about the guru.

You should also ponder whether my conception of *brahm-acharya,* on which I have tried to base my life, may not after all be the result of a delusion on my part, since I cannot make others see what to

[1] A senior member of the Ashram

[2] Kedarnath Kulkarni, Kishorelal Mashruwala's guru

[3] Omission as in the source

me is clear as daylight. The ultimate criterion of the soundness and purity of my theories and conduct must be whether my life., taken as a whole, has moved in the direction of greater self-control and renunciation or of self-indulgence. I shall regard it as your victory if they restore their earlier relationship, because I do not consider them lesser votaries of truth, in speech or action, than I. The question here is not one of absolute Truth. None has perceived it. I am talking about relative truth. . . . Today I shall stop here. Lilavati who is here, has seen your letter. Manu has seen it. Sushila Nayyar has seen it and if more people desire it I shall let them see it.

I shall remain in this furnace of a place for some more time.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 67-8

188. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR

NEW DELHI,
June 4, 1947

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

I have your letter. It is your duty to make Anasuya a genuine worker. It will be good to send Rs. 10 a moth to Chakrayya's mother. From his belongings whatever belongs to the Ashram may be retained but the Ashram is bound to return the rest to his mother. Besides his mother, whom did Chakrayya leave behind? What do they do? Where do they live? Do they have any of Chakrayya's qualities? We should do for them, in however small a measure, what Chakrayya would have done if he had lived longer. It becomes our duty to fully understand it.

Now that Kishorelalbhai is not there, Chimanlal, Balvantsinha, Chhaganlal and the others should decide things among themselves. There is no need to consult me.

By all means write about Chakrayya whatever you think proper. But it will be good to send it to me before sending it over to *Harijan.* I have already written about my impressions, you must have read it. I have written what I believe.

If what Lilavatibehn[1] says is true—and I think it is—then he certainly deserves to be the first President of independent India. He who is devoted to God and is a brave servant of the people can

[1] Lilavati Asar

become President. I have no doubt about it. Perhaps I had said something to this effect in Godhra in the year 1917 or 1918 as President of the Political Conference. I had said that I would have no peace until and unless a Chamar or some such [untouchable] became President of India.

Vijayabehn told me everything about her sister. I have given her the right advice.

Write to Chakrayya's close relatives on my behalf that they should all become *sevaks* or *sevikas* as Chakrayya was. It will be good if they resist all temptations.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9038. Also C. W. 9162. Courtesy: Prabhakar

189. DISCUSSION WITH RAJENDRA PRASAD

[*June 4, 1947*][1]

He told Dr. Rajendra Prasad that the first thing for them should be to lighten the burden of taxation and implement in full the constructive programme to which Congress had pledged itself. The politics of the country should be based on it. That did not require much cleverness but determination and honesty of purpose. For instance, universalization of khadi was simplicity itself, but if they yielded even by a jot in the matter of creating new mills, their khadi scheme would come to naught. They must not succumb to filling the exchequer like the previous Government.

I am also of the opinion that we should introduce fresh blood into the Congress organization. Because Congressmen have gone to prison, it does not mean that they should now hold all administrative jobs as a reward for their past sacrifices. On the contrary, shedding all prepossessions and party prejudices we should freely make use of administrative talent and experience wherever it is to be found even outside the Congress ranks.

This particularly applied to the Indian States. There was a vast fund of experience, knowledge, administrative talent and statesmanship in the States, which could be put to use with greatest advantage to the country.

I am sure they will be able to give us much that we lack and need. Congressmen know how to give fight, fill jails, but they lack the

[1] From *Bihar Pachhi Dilhi*

art of government, never having had any experience of administration. The States can provide us with all that if we know how to tap and utilize it.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 229-30

190. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 4, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You know that I am coming straight after meeting the Viceroy. Not that I had gone to get anything out of him. Nor had he called me in order to give me anything. Actually the talk between us was not even finished. But I excused myself saying to the Viceroy that I would not like to miss the prayer time so long as it was humanly possible. He appreciated my point and said that our talk could be resumed later.[1]

I told you that we would not give even an inch of land as Pakistan under coercion. In other words, we would not accept Pakistan under the threat of violence. Only if they can convince us by peaceful, argument and if their proposal appeals to our reason would we concede Pakistan.

I cannot say that this whole question has been treated rationally. The Congress Working Committee insists that they have not granted anything under duress. They are not scared because so many people are dying and property is being destroyed. It is not at all true that they have accepted defeat in the face of violence. I should not take them to be a timid lot. They have taken this course because they realized that it was not possible to get round the Muslim League in any other way. For, once the Muslim League agrees to at least some points, our task becomes easy. In short, the Working Committee claims that they have accepted the vivisection of the country into Pakistan and Hindustan not out of fear but after realizing the prevailing situation.

We do not wish to force anyone. We tried hard. We tried to reason with them, but they refused to come into the Constituent Assembly. The League supporters kept on arguing that they were

[1] For the Viceroy's note on the interview, *vide* "Lord Mountbatten's Note on Interview with Gandhiji", 4-6-1947

afraid of the Hindu majority in the event of their joining the Constituent Assembly.

What can the Viceroy do under these circumstances? He says that whatever happens, he wants to quit by June, 1948. He would not like to stay beyond that date even if you wanted him to…. He says they must grant full independence to India. Why he insists on this is another matter. You might say that the British have now become helpless because they are no longer the mighty power they used to be. We would want them to be a first-class power even now. It is true that they have tyrannized over us for 150 years. I also know that we have been fighting against their might for the last 32 years. But I never make an enemy of my opponent. I would still appeal to God and pray that He should be good to them. And whatever God does would be just.

I shall speak no more now about God's infallible power. Let us realize this much that every human being is prone to commit mistakes. Hindus. Muslims and Sikhs all can say that the Muslims have committed a great blunder. But on what ground can we absolve ourselves of the blame? Let us leave it to God to pass judgment.

I would say this much, that it was wrong on their part to demand Pakistan. But they can think of nothing else. They say that they can never live where the Hindus have a majority. They are harming themselves by making this demand and I pray to God to save them in time from any harm coming to them. When my own brother, whether he follows my religion or some other religion, wants to harm me I cannot aid him. Even though he may not be aware that he is harming me. If I do it I am sure to be crushed between the two stones of a quern. Why should I not keep my own millstone apart?

And now I want to reassure you about the British. I want to tell you, not in the light of the Viceroy's speech[1] but in the light of my own talks with him, that the Viceroy has had no hand in this decision. The decision has been taken jointly by all the leaders in consultation.

[1] In his broadcast of June 3, 1947, the Viceroy had stated: "I am of course just as much opposed to the partition of Provinces as I am to the partition of India herself and for the same basic reasons. For just as I feel there is an Indian consciousness which should transcend communal differences, so I feel there is a Punjabi and a Bengali consciousness which has evoked a loyalty to their provinces. And so I felt it was essential that the people of India themselves should decide this question of partition."

The leaders say that for seven years they insisted on the unity of India. The Cabinet Mission also gave a reasonable award. But the League went back on its assurance and now this course has had to be adopted. They (the Muslims) have got to come back to India. Even if Pakistan is formed, there will have to be mutual exchange of populations and movements to and fro. Let us hope that co-operation endures.

But now that this decision has been taken, should I say that we should all rebel against the Congress? Or, should I ask the Viceroy to intervene? The Viceroy says that he never wanted partition. Jawaharlal says on behalf of the Congress that he too does not approve of it. But they have all been obliged to accept it, not for fear of violence, but because of the circumstances. For the Hindus, the Sikhs, all say that would live in their own homelands, not in the Muslims'. The Hindus are willing to be under Sikh rule because they say the Sikhs never compel them at the point of the sword to bow before the *Granth Saheb*.

Master Tara Singh came to see me today. I told him that he should not remain a lone soldier, but become equal to one and a quarter lakh. The Sikhs should learn to die without killing and then the history of the Punjab would be completely changed. With it the history of India would change too. The Sikhs are few in number, but they are brave. That is why the British are afraid of them. If the Sikhs became truly brave, rule of the Khalsa would spread throughout the world.

I told you these things to relieve you of your pain. You should not feel sorry at heart that India is to be divided into two. The demand has been granted because you asked for it. The Congress never asked for it. I was not even present here. But the Congress can feel the pulse of the people. It realized that the Khalsa as also the Hindus desired it. You have lost noting, nor have the Sikhs, nor the Muslims. The Viceroy has already stated in his speech and he has also assured me that when we approach him united this decision would be revoked. Only our united decision would be accepted. The Viceroy says that his task is merely to see that the British carry on their task honestly till power is transferred and then quit in peace.[1] The British people do not

[1] In his speech the Viceroy had said: "Whichever way the decision of the Indian people may go, I feel sure any British official who may by asked to remain for a while will do everything in his power to help implement that decision."

wish that chaos should reign after they quit this country.

I had already said that they should not worry about anarchy. I am, after all, a gambler. But who would listen to me? You do not listen to me. The Muslims have given me up. Nor can I fully convince the Congress of my point of view. Actually I am a slave of the Congress, because I belong to India. I tried my best to bring the Congress round to accept the proposal of may 16. But now we must accept what is an accomplished fact. The wonderful thing about it is that we can undo it any time we want.

In the end, I would only say that you had better forget the Viceroy, It pains me that instead of having direct talks we should negotiate through the Viceroy as mediator. It does us no credit that the League should convey its point to the Viceroy who in turn conveys it to the Congress and the Congress again conveys its own view to the Viceroy. But what can be done when the Muslim League does not agree to anything at all? The Congress agrees to something and the Sikhs have joined the Congress. And the Viceroy then had to request Jinnah Saheb day and night to climb down a little. Thus he found this solution. Even while doing all this the Viceroy says that he is wondering what the League would say and what the Congress would say. But he goes on doing his work in the name of God. Let us therefore have trust in his honesty so long as we have no experience to the contrary.

But I would like to request Jinnah Saheb, implore him, to have direct talks with us at least now. Whatever has happened is all right, but now let us sit together and decide about the future. Let him forget all about the Viceroy now, and let him invite us to come to any understanding he wishes to have, so that it is in the interest of all of us.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 120–4

191. A LETTER

June 5, 1947

It is very difficult—practically impossible—to achieve real freedom without self-denial. Nobody had ever dreamt in those days that our sacrifices would be materially rewarded. But today we are engaged in a race for positions of power. What a misfortune! Shall I describe it as my own tragedy, the tragedy of our soldiers of truth and ahimsa? You may take it either way you like. That, however, is the state of affairs today.

[Form Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p.73

192. TALK WITH COLLEGE STUDENTS[1]

June 5, 1947

GANDHIJI: We do not know the real meaning of freedom at all. I am not unaware of the fact that while the day of freedom is nearing licence also is increasing. Don't we see frequent strikes and students in schools and colleges insulting their teachers and paying no attention to their studies?

STUDENTS : Yes, that is true indeed. But what should we do when injustice is done to us?

G. You may, while observing perfect self-restraint, investigate whether or not injustice has been done in fact. But you said that you felt no freedom in the air and I have replied to that statement. Aren't you, for example, exercising your freedom when you attack school or college buildings, force the authorities to give you a holiday or insult your teachers? I want your reply to that. We shall have the fragrance of real freedom only when we learn to observe perfect self-control. I ask these girls, if they have ever looked after their homes, whether they are or are not free to throw out left-overs and dirty water on the street.

As long as every child in the country does not realize that he

[1] The students who came from Bombay and Poona wanted to know about partition and said that they did not feel the glow of independence anywhere.

must not spit or throw rubbish anywhere it likes, for that makes his own country unclean and harms the people's health, till then this is the kind of education that we most need. A country whose inhabitants are narrow-minded and undisciplined can make no progress. Now every man or woman is both subject and king, and it should, therefore, be everybody's aim to see that the country prospers. If that were so, the mutual slaughter that has started with the [proposal for] partition and which bodes ill for the future of the country would not have occurred. If only I could convince the Hindus of this and if we could learn to face death courageously, I have no doubt that our country would rise to the grea-test height among the nations of the world. Until we learn forgiveness, there is no hope of real progress for man. All of you have come to Delhi. This is a historical city and has been the capital of India for centuries. From the time of Shri Krishna down to the coming of the Pathans, the Moguls, the Rajputs, the Marathas and lastly the British and now our own Government, there has been a succession of rulers, But don't jump to the conclusion that, having got power in Delhi, we have won the blessings of freedom. As long as prosperity and education do not reach the hundreds of thousands of villages in the country and make them happy, I will not believe that we have swaraj. All of you are college students, receive higher education in your colleges and follow the Western way in every detail of your daily lives, from your mode of dressing to the food you eat. It is not your fault that you do so; it is only the result of the fascination the British Government exercises on us. But I will continue to believe ourselves slaves as long as all these things do not disappear completely. For example, every Indian, whether educated or uneducated, has learnt to have tea and biscuits the first thing in the morning. It is little wonder to me that you have not felt the glow of freedom when I see you hugging to yourselves the symbols of your cultural slavery.[1] You are wearing socks in this intolerable heat. (Laughter.) I can go on citing such instances without end. My Point, in brief, is that till we have eschewed, even in small matters, all Western things and ways which harm the country, the society and our family life, we shall remain slaves. Some features of their civilization are admirable indeed. But we hardly see anybody emulating those.

In the circumstances in which we are places today, it will be inviting a calamity on us to resort to violence, for it will be extremely

[1] This sentence is from *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase.*

difficult for us to exercise any restraint in the use of violence. Don't think that it is only here that political parties are fighting with one another and that there are no such disputes in Europe and America. But the people in those countries are so well educated that they do not lose their sense of proportion but always keep in mind the interest of the country as a whole in everything they do.

They do not make a mountain out of a molehill as we do. They never lose their sense of proportion. They have learnt to subordinate everything to what they regard as national interest.[1]

Therefore, for India, non-violence was an absolute necessity. And the need would be even greater, he emphasized, after independence when the external control, which prevented various parts and parties from flying apart or at each other, would be removed.

We have fallen so low that there is rivalry even between Banias and Brahmins, that we never think who our real enemies are but only consider to which community the other person belongs. Instead of working in co-operation with our own countrymen and living happily with them, we try to seek the co-operation of foreigners. We had the most telling example of this the day before yesterday when with the Viceroy's help we partitioned the country. I know, and I suppose you also do, since you hail from Bombay and Poona, that even our religious observances and calendars differ. There is no uniformity even in the incidence of the *ekadashi* or other days of fasting! On the days on which the *Vaishnavas* fast, the *Shaivas* do not. And people have made their God exclusively their own. There is but one God, only He is known by different names. This is made plain in every scripture beyond any shadow of doubt. The time has now come to banish all ignorance about such matters. If we do not get rid of it, we shall pay dearly for the mistake in future.

You are students. The future of the country depends on you. When you asked me for time, I immediately agreed in spite of the heavy pressure of work on me, for I look upon myself as a real friend of students. Whenever I get an opportunity of meeting students, I look upon it as my good fortune. And I am now seventy-eight and can, therefore, say from my long experience that the more deeply you

[1] This and the following paragraph are from *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase.*

think, while you are students, over the best way of making progress in life and follow it, the more you will be able to advance your own welfare and that of the society and the country. Student life is the best time when you can learn to lead such a fruitful life.[1]

It is time we shed our inertia and girded up our loin, to grapple with the challenge of independence.

What the situation demanded, he continued, was work, solid work; not recriminational or verbal pyrotechnics. Nobody had the right to waste a single moment in idleness, self-seeking or disgruntled brooding. They had to be "like a mother to whom no joy is greater than rearing and nourishing her child without a thought of reward for her pains. . .[2] Striving is everything. But if we strive with an eye to fruit, it hinders our progress." For instance, India had adopted the method of truth and non-violence not as an end but only as a means to the attainment of independence. Therefore, the moment that goal was reached, they fell away from it.

In the result we are where we are today. If we do not wake up in time and replenish our depleted reservoir of non-violence by engaging in constructive work as before, our last state will be worse than the first.

If he had his way, Gandhiji went on to say, he would begin with a radical reform of the military and the police. Under a non-violent order, they might keep a small armed force for defence against external aggression while the people were being organized for non-violent defence. But in the meantime and as a preparation of it land armies with pickaxes and spades should take the place of armed police and engage in growing more food, building roads, constructing drainage channels and teaching people discipline and strict observance of the rules of sanitation and cleanliness. Their selfless service would then enable them to command spontaneous co-operation of the people so that the anti-social elements would find themselves isolated and powerless. Such a force could become a means for the realization of a non-violent social order instead of being an instrument of coercion in the hands of the State.

As with the army so with the police. In England the police was regarded by the people as their best friend and helper, a personification of the sense of duty, but in India its counterpart was dreaded by the common people as a bully and an oppressor.

I have not the slightest doubt in my mind that 99 per cent of the responsibility for the present bloodshed and chaos rests on the police and the military. Instead of protectors, they have become the disturbers of peace. The whole thing ought to be remodelled and the

[1] The following five paragraphs are from *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase.*

[2] Omission as in the source

colossal waste of public revenue on these two departments checked immediately. The only way to cope with the rising tide of violence successfully is to begin with police reform.

I have never been able to stop anybody who was eager to go abroad for studies. I could not save even boys brought up in the Ashram from falling a victim to such a desire. But hardly anybody who goes abroad shows himself eager to be of greater service to the country by going abroad. Of course there is much for us to learn in foreign countries. But I can not help wondering why we are eager to go abroad but make no effort to attract foreigners to our country. If we wish to do so, them there is only one way, and that is that we should overcome fascination foreign countries have for us and start such activities in our own country. We shall be able to do that and create something new only if we make experiments. For example, new drugs are discovered and new surgical instruments are manufactured in foreign ountries. Surely all these things did not happen without experi-ments. But we have become so lethargic that as long as we get a thin readymade we don't wish to try and make it ourselves. I do not, therefore, feel inclined to bless people who wish to go abroad.

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp.73-6; and *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. II, pp. 221-3

193. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 5, 1947

Announcing the death of the Buddhist scholar Shri Kosambi, Gandhiji said :

Perhaps you have not heard his name, and so cannot feel grieved. Even otherwise we should not grieve over anyone's death. But it is human nature to grieve over the death of one's dear or revered ones. We are so made that we raise to the skies anyone who goes about beating his own drum and indulges in political acrobatics but fail to appreciate the silent worker.

Kosambiji was one such silent worker. He was born in a village. He was a Hindu by birth, but he had come to believe that no other religion, not even the Vedic religion, gave as much importance to non-violence, piety, etc., as Buddhism did. So he embraced Buddhism and gave himself up to the study of Buddhist scriptures. He acquired such proficiency in the subject that he had no equal in India in scholarship. He taught Pali at the Gujarat Vidyapith and the Kashi

Vidyapith and freely gave of his profound learning.

He sent to me Rs. 1,000 which somebody had given him. He wrote to me that I should send someone to Ceylon for the study of Pali. But I asked him whether anyone would acquire insight into Buddhism by studying in Ceylon. I have told the Buddhists the world over that if they want to understand Buddhism they can do so only in India, its birthplace, that they must seek it where it first emerged as an offshoot of Vedic religion. They would grasp the deep signifi-cance of Buddhism 88-6 only when they had also studied the works of Shankaracharaya, that unrivalled scholar who was described as a Buddhist in disguise.

But in scholarship I cannot compare myself with Kosambiji. I am merely a barrister who became one by attending dinners in England! I have a very meagre knowledge of Sanskrit. If I have become a Mahatma today it is not because I read for the bar in England, but because I have devoted myself to service through truth and non-violence. If I command any respect today it is due to the little success I have achieved in my pursuit of truth and non-violence.

When Kosambiji realized that he was no longer physically fit to carry on any work, he decided to give up his life through fasting. At Tandonji's instance I made Kosambiji, very much against his wishes, give up his fast. But his digestion had been severely affected and he was not able to eat anything at all. So, in Sevagram, he again gave up food and keeping himself only on water gave up the breath after forty days. During his illness he refused all nursing and all drugs. He even abandoned the desire to go to Goa where he was born. He comm-anded his son and others not to come to him. He left instruc-tions that no memorial should be set up after his death. He also expressed the desire that he should be cremated or buried according to whichever was cheaper. Thus, with the name of the Buddha on his lips he passed into that final sleep which is to be the estate, one day or another, of all who are born Death is the friend of everyone. It will visit us as destined. One may be able to predict the time of birth, but no one has yet been able to predict the time of death. We saw the same thing in the case of Chakrayya.

I beg you to forgive me for taking so much of your time over this.

I received a telegram yesterday saying that I had been talking so loftily for four or five days about not yielding even an inch of land

for Pakistan under coercion, that they could take anything by appealing to our hearts. Now that Pakistan has come to be, why am I not undertaking a fast against it?

I am asked why I indulged in such talk then and why I have cooled off now. Why do I not rebel against the Congress? Why am I slavishly toeing their line? How can I remain a servant of the Congress? Why do I not undertake a fast and give up my life?

They are entitled to say these things. But I have no right to be angry with the correspondent. Getting angry means losing one's balance. There is an English saying: 'Anger is short madness.' The *Gita* also says: 'Wrath breeds stupefaction, stupefaction leads to loss of memory.'[1] Then how can I who have studied the *Gita* give way to anger?

How can I go on a fast because somebody wants me to do so? I believe I have to undergo one more fast in my life. Ever since my fast in the Aga Khan Palace[2] I have had a strong feeling that that was not my last fast, that I shall have to undertake one more fast. But I will not do it at anyone's bidding. I will do it when God commands.

I have said that I have become a witness of Jinnah Saheb. He wants peace in the country. I too desire peace. But if, in spite of that, riots continue to rage everywhere throwing the country into turmoil and God tells me, that is, my own heart tells me, that now I must depart from the world, I shall do so. Jinnah Saheb persuades me to sign the appeal that there should be no violence in politics. Lord Mountbatten also cast his spell on me and had me sign the appeal instead of Kripalani or Nehru. I signed the appeal on Jawaharlal's advice. Hence, we are three partners to this deal: the two of us because we have put our signatures to it, and Lord Mountbatten—not in his capacity as Viceroy, but as Mountbatten—for he is more than a mere witness.

In other words, there has to be peace in the whole country. If there is not, Jinnah Saheb will be guided by his God, Mountbatten by his and I by mine.

But through you I wish to convey to both of them that the moment they ask me to, I shall accompany them on foot or in a vehicle, whichever way they prefer. I cannot go by air. What shall I be able to see down below from an aeroplane? Besides I have never

[1] II. 63

[2] From February 10, 1943 to March 3, 1943

travelled by a plane. Of course I have seen aeroplanes from below and they look like fishes.

Gurgaon is still burning. I have not received any information about it today, but the Jats and the Meos are in confrontation there. Fortunately they do not wish to indulge in the mad frenzy of killing women and children and old people. They are fighting like soldiers. But why should they fight at all? That they fight is a matter of shame to me, to Jinnah Saheb and also to Lord Mountbatten. It is similarly a matter of shame for Sardar Baldev Singh and Jawaharlal. Fortunately, nothing much happened on June 2 or on June 4.

But one thing has definitely come to pass. Hindustan and Pakistan have come into being and their separate Constituent Assemblies have been formed. Should I now die to nullify them? I am not going to die that way.

I have a very big job to attend to. It is said that now India is going to be industrialized. But industrialization of my conception has to be carried out the villages with the charkha plying in every home, and cloth being produced in every village.

I would not approve of their idea of having a thousand mills in the place of one Birla Mill. I mention Birla's name because he is my friend. But I have all mill-owners in mind. I would not be disturbed if there was an earthquake or the Birla Mill caught fire, I would shed no sympathetic tears before the Birla brothers. Of course, if someone deliberately sets out to destroy his mills, I would take that person to task.

It seems that now the Congress has decided to set up a large number of mills all over India and spread a network of mechanized industries. And it wants to have a large army in the country. But I have nothing to do with that. Did I have anything to do with the violence in Bihar? And what is there now left in India that can gladden my heart? But I am still here, because the Congress has now grown into a great institution and I cannot go on a fast in protest against it. But I feel as if I was thrown into a fire-pit and my heart is burning. God alone knows why I continue to live in spite of this. Whatever I am, I am after all a servant of the Congress. If the Congress is seized with madness, should I also go mad? Should I die in order to prove that I alone was right? I want to appeal to the reason of you all, of the Congress, of the Muslims, of my friend Jinnah Saheb and win their hearts.

I would like to ask Jinnah Saheb, now that his slogan of *Pakistan Zindabad* has been realized, why he still goes to Lord

Mountbatten. Why does he not go to the Congress? Why does he not invite Badshah Khan and Dr. Khan Saheb? Why does he not show them what a pretty rose Pakistan is?

But I have been receiving complaints about Pakistan. I have a letter today which says that a British firm will be going to Lahore to manufacture arms. It is also being said that the Muslim League has decided to remain in the Commonwealth, and that it will confine itself to the Dominion Status.

The Congress has committed no crime in accepting Dominion Status. It has accepted it provisionally, with a view to putting an end to the British rule immediately. It will opt for complete independence as soon as the Constitution is ready. Will the Muslim League still keep to the Dominion Status? Both our countries should have uniform Constitutions. Both have declared complete independence as their objective. Then it also becomes Jinnah's duty to have nothing less than complete independence. That duty cannot be performed by indulging in mutual fights.

All the Hindus got tired of persuading him, and they conceded Pakistan in the hope that at last they would have peace.

One may ask why I allowed such a thing to happen. But should I then insist that the Congress should do everything only after consulting me? I am not so mad. And, if I rebel against the Congress, it will mean that I am rebelling against the whole country, because the Congress belongs to the whole country. I shall do such a thing only when I find the Congress has gone over to the capitalists.

But so far, I think, the Congress is working for the poor. It may be following a path different from mine and have its mind fixed on armaments, an army and factories but I have to convince them by arguments, not by resorting to a fast.

Even fasting can be devilish. May God also protect me from such devilish fasting. May He keep me from devilish actions, devilish speech and devilish thoughts. Better far that He takes me away before I succumb to any such thing. If I undertake a fast it will only be a pure and godly fast.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 124-30

194. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

DELHI,
June 6, 1947

CHI. ANAND,

I have your letter. I had it read out at 4.15 a. m. after the prayers and now I am dictating this. I cannot answer all the questions. I can offer no solace to you. One who has lost faith in oneself has only Ramanama to fall back upon. So great is the value of repeating God's name that one may die with it on one's lips and yet stand to gain. So my advice to you and Gangi is that you should do whatever you can reciting His name all the time.

Everything about me is uncertain.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI ANAND HINGORANI
GURPURI BUNGALOWS
DECCAN GYMKHANA
POONA

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

195. A LETTER

June 6, 1947

I am replying to your letter today itself. You are gravely mistaken in assuming that as soon as swaraj comes prosperity will flood the country. If, before assuming that, you had used your imagination a bit to see that after 150 years of slavery, we would need at least half that much time to cleanse our body-politic of the virus that has infiltrated every cell and pore of our being during our subjection, you would not have found it necessary to ask me. I am sure you will understand what I mean, namely, that far greater sacrifices will be needed after the attainment of self-government to establish good government and raise the people than were req-uired for the attainment of freedom by means of satyagraha.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 81

196. DISCUSSION WITH RAJENDRA PRASAD

June 6, 1947

If all the leaders join the Cabinet, it will be very difficult to maintain contact with the people at large. The result will be that opportunists and enemies of the Congress will incite the people and our poor people will easily fall a prey to their propaganda. That is why I suggested even in my prayer speech that a Harijan like Chakrayya or a Harijan girl should be made the nation's first President and Jawaharlal should become the Prime Minister. If similar arrangements are made in the provinces too, we shall have gained two ends at the same time. The leaders will be able to keep in touch with the people and young men and women will get trained.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 81

197. NOTES FOR DISCUSSION WITH VICEROY

[*June 6, 1947*][1]

Frontier Province—postponement of referendum before Pakistan scheme disclosed otherwise bloodshed is a certainty. Therefore the Ministry[2] may make a statement and resign.

2. There must now be no coalition Ministry but only the Congress. You may have another Pakistan Ministry, provisional.

3. You should ask Ji[nnah] at this stage to talk to Congressmen and settle all other matters and work as friends excelling one another in well doing.

4. Agreement between the States that each will have identical status and treaty with the British.

From a facsimile: *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. II, between pp. 288 and 289

[1] Gandhiji met the Viceroy on June 6, 1947 at 4.30. p. m. Presumably, these were the points discussed at the Working Committee meeting and referred to in "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 7-6-1947. These were conveyed in detail to Lord Ismay on June 6, 1947; *vide* the following item.

[2] The Congress Ministry in N. W. F. P. headed by Dr. Khan Saheb

198. TALK WITH LORD ISMAY[1]

[*June 6 , 1947*][2]

Mr. Gandhi suggests that H. E. should speak to Mr. Jinnah in the following sense :

I am extremely anxious lest the referendum in N.W.F.P. should lead to bloodshed and blood-feuds between brother and brother Pathan, and I have been wondering whether it could possibly be avoided. Now that you have got your Pakistan, would it not be wise for you to go to the N.W.F.P. and speak to the people of the Province, of whatever party they may be, including the present Ministry and their followers? You could explain what Pakistan which has hitherto been a vague expression, really is and present your case in an attractive manner, in the hope that you will be able to woo them to become a Province of Pakistan, with perfect freedom to frame their own Provincial constitution.

If you are successful in your persuasion, the proposed referendum and all that it involves would be avoided. If you felt disposed to adopt this suggestion, I could, I think, give you a positive assurance that the Khan Brothers and their followers would meet you as friends and give you an attentive hearing.

Mr. Gandhi asked that if this appeal to Mr. Jinnah was unsuccessful, he (Mr. Gandhi) might be informed of the fact, in order that he might consider the position again.[3] Mr. Gandhi added that Abdul Ghaffar Khan was so anxious about the permanent blood-feuds which would result from the referendum that he would go to almost any length, consistent with honour, to avoid it. In the last resort, he would be prepared to advise his brother and his colleagues in the Ministry to resign, and then to ask the Viceroy to put the N. W. F. P. under Section 93.

[1] This was an enclosure to a letter dated June 7 from Lord Ismay, Chief of Viceroy's personal staff, to Gandhiji which read: "I enclose herewith a copy of a note that I have sent to the Viceroy, summarizing the suggestions…you put forward in our talk yesterday evening."

[2] *ibid*

[3] For M. A. Jinnah's response, *vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 13-6-1947

Mr. Gandhi emphasized that he had not discussed the above with his colleagues, and therefore that it should not be mentioned to anyone at this stage

Mr. Gandhi suggested that Mr. Jinnah should be advised to try to win over West Bengal and Eastern Punjab to Pakistan by the same methods.

Mr. Gandhi suggested that H. E. the Viceroy should speak in the following sense to Mr. Jinnah, when he found him in the right mood to listen:

I am here to help both parties to reach an agreement in any way that I can, and I regard this task not only as a pleasure, but as a duty. You must remember, however, that I cannot in any event, be here forever. Now, therefore, that the decision has been made and you have your Pakistan, why do you not go yourself and talk with the Congress leaders as friends, and try to get a settlement between yourselves on all the various points at issue? This would make for a much better atmosphere than adhering to the practice of only meeting together under my chairmanship.

Mr. Gandhi said that there was a lot of loose talk going about that H.M.G. might have different agreements with Hindustan and Pakistan which would possibly end to favour one over the other. It was, therefore, important that an announcement should be made to the effect that it was H.M.G.'s wish either to enter into tripartite arrangements with both the Dominions, or to have identical bilateral agreements with each of them; and that, in any event, there would be no question of differentiation.[1]

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 254-6. Also from a copy: India Office Library and Records, London

199. DISCUSSION WITH MEMBERS OF HINDU MAHASABHA

[*June 6, 1947*][2]

Gandhiji explained to them that his whole life was dedicated to God's service. His politics was not unrelated to the deepest things in life. It was only an extension

[1] In his letter dated June 10, to Gandhiji, Lord Mountbatten said: "Thank you so much for the admirable suggestions which you had handed to Lord Ismay…I will, of course, take the earliest opportunity of mentioning to Mr. Jinnah the points you made. I will do my best to convince him, but I hope you will not count too much on my intervention. I think the idea in the fourth paragraph of your note is a good one, and I will follow it up with H.M.G. Perhaps the Prime Minister would give an assurance in debate in parliament." *Vide* also "Letter to Lord Mountbatten", 10/11-6-1947

[2] In the source, the discussion precedes an account of Gandhiji's meeting with "some missionaries", who, Pyarelal says, "came on the following day" that is, on June 7; *vide* "Discussion with a Philippino And Missionaries", 7-6-1947

or application of the ideals of truth and non-violence to the social sphere. He would die in the propagation of those ideals rather than barter them even for independence. They must, therefore, excuse him for not taking their advice.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 233

200. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 6, 1947

I shall not waste time in reading out her long note.[1] I was under the impression that people had understood me by now. But I find that we are not so fortunate. Irreligion is being practised in the name of religion. But we shall have to put up with irreligion. If the lady tries to interrupt, let no one harass her. Now she has gone a step further and writes to me that I should not even deliver my speech. She may say what she likes. The prayer will not stop nor will I desist from delivering my speech. If everyone starts behaving in this manner the administration of the country cannot function. You will please remain peaceful.

I see that you are all oppressed by the heat. But you have got to listen and I have got to speak. But I can speak to you only when you maintain quiet. This does not mean that you should not fan yourselves with a piece of paper or a handkerchief. Even though it is hot, I am getting some air. This girl is fanning me, how can I then stop you?[2] If all of you do the fanning yourselves, I would not say that it is the job of a woman. You can bring your own fans. A woman can also act like a man. If she does not become disheartened, woman is man's 'better half'.

In the *bhajan*, the *gopi* says that hearing the flute she wants to go to the forest. But the *bhajan* is not meant only for women. We are all like *gopis* before God. God by Himself is neither male nor female. For Him there is no distinction of status, no distinction of birth. He can be described only as 'not this, not this,'. God resides in the forest that is the heart and His flute is the voice within. We do not have to go to desolate forests. We have to hear the divine music that goes on in our own hearts. When each one of us starts hearing that sweet music,

[1] A lady had again objected to the verses from the Koran being recited at prayer.

[2] There was laughter as the person wielding the fan was a man.

all would be well with India.

We heard this *bhajan* at an opportune moment. This lady tells me that I should retire to the forest for it is I who have spoilt Jinnah. But who am I to spoil him? If at all, I can only hope to transform him. I can do it not by force but by love. One can only destroy by force, by the atom bomb. The atom bomb has only wrought destruction. It has not drawn anyone to itself. If there is any real magnet in the world which can draw man to man, it is only love. I am witness to it. The lady says I should not read the Koran, should not speak at all, only retire to the forest. But even if I go to the forest you will drag me back. Men are created to live together. If I had learnt the art of living in a forest and drawing people there, I would not have had to make speeches or to say anything. I would have lived in solitude and silence and you would have done what I wanted. But God has not yet qualified me for that.

You may want to know what I talked[1] with the Viceroy during my long session with him today and what I have brought from him. What could he give? He is helpless. He has nothing to take and nothing go give. He tells me that he is praying to God that every man in India, whether Hindu, Muslim or Sikh, should realize that he has not come here to rob the country or cause internal strife. He has come here only to leave, if possible after seeing peace established, if not, he will leave in any case. He says that the British would not remain in the country after August 15. He will stay on as the Governor-General only if we want him to do so. The Viceroy says that at present he has nothing more than Dominion Status to give. It would have been different if we had driven them out. But this, he says, is the best way if they are to leave as friends.

The Viceroy also told me that the British were leaving as friends because India did not try to drive them out by force. People did sabotage the railways, telegraph service, etc., in 1942. But they were only a few. The masses did not indulge in such activities. He told me that we behaved decently with them. We only asked them to quit, because we were pained that they had spread poison in the country. But, he said, the Congress did not give them poison. The Congress only resorted to non-co-operation and the British realized that they

[1] For Lord Mountbatten's note of his interview with Gandhiji, *vide* Appendix IV.

could not hold on except with the help of Martial Law, and so they had decided to leave

Had our non-co-operation been perfect, the British would have left long ago and in a much better manner. The Congress had called upon the students, Government servants and soldiers to come out and join the movement. But they were weak; they could not leave their positions. But still we did not threaten to kill them or poison them. The British recognized this strength in us and so they are going. But the Viceroy says that the people still do not trust him. A journalist has written that the British had come here to rule and are now going away after dividing the country into two so that both the parts should fight and one or the other should seek the help of the British, and thus provide them the excuse for staying on.

This would mean betrayal and I hope the British will not betray us this time. Even if they do we should ourselves be brave. Why should the brave be afraid of betrayal? When the Viceroy talks to me with such honesty, why should I doubt his intentions? The Viceroy asked me if I at least trusted him. I told him that I would not have gone to him if I did not trust him. I told him I was truthful and honest.

I talked to the Viceroy in this vein and I also conveyed to him my pain at the division of the country into India and Pakistan. He then told me that it was not the doing of the British, that they had given what the Congress and the League had unitedly asked for. He said that the British could not leave at once because even dividing the effects of a small house took time and here it was the question of dividing a whole country. But I asked the Viceroy to relax. It would be better that we should attend to the task of division ourselves.

For the past two or three days I have been pleading with them that, now that they had got what they sought, even though it be a little less than expected, they should show what it is. Is it a rose in name only or does it also have the fragrance? Why not let us at least smell it? Tell us if there is place for the Sikhs and the Hindus in Pakistan. Or are they to be slaves? And do they intend to split up the N. W. F. P. by having a referendum there? Do they want to split up Baluchistan too?

Would they not show even now by their actions that though so long the Muslims had considered the Hindus their enemies they consider them so no longer? That they would not divide the Pathans, the Baluchis and also the Hindus? Will they not show that India will

remain one even if we must divide the assets like brothers and that we will carry on our affairs without the British?

I shall not mind it if they abuse me for talking in this manner. Even yesterday abuse was hurled at me when someone exclaimed why I did not die. But let these people at least explain what is in their mind. Why do they not come to me even now? Why do they not come to you? Why do they not invite the Congressmen or the non-Congressmen to meet them? There was a time when they had forged an agreement between the Congress and the League. Why do they not forge a stronger and lasting agreement now ?

Let us all try together to be friends and not enemies. The Viceroy by himself cannot achieve this. Nor can the Congress alone do it. We can become friends only by making united efforts.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 130-4

201. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

June 7, 1947

I had a long conversation with His Excellency . . .[1] The more I see His Excellency the more I feel that he is sincere. But it is quite possible to damage him if the surrounding atmosphere of which the Indian element is the author overwhelms him as it may well do any of us.

All the points we discussed[2] at the Working Committee meeting yesterday were touched upon by me and I carried with me the impression that he really appreciated them.

To be wholly truthful requires the highest from of bravery and therefore of non-violence.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 220

202. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

June 7, 1947

The oftener we meet the more convinces I am becoming that the gulf between us in the thought world is deeper than I had feared. He (the Sardar)[3] says that you are largely responsible for the present

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] *Vide* "Notes for Discussion with Viceroy", 6-6-1947

[3] Vallabhbhai Patel had an hour's talk with Gandhiji on the night of June 6.

situation. He is of the opinion that Badshah Khan's . . .[1] influence is on the wane. Badshah Khan has not left any such impression on me. Whatever he is today, he was always. There is undoubtedly more steadiness today than before. I also feel that Dr. Khan Saheb[2] and his colleagues would be nowhere without the Badshah. He alone counts in so far as the Congress influence is concerned.

If the Qaid-e-Azam does not go to the Frontier and does not woo the Badshah, his brother and his other colleagues, the Frontier Ministry should resign and so also the Parliamentary majority on the sole ground that a referendum at this moment must lead to bloodshed and probably, if not certainly, to a lasting blood-feud, which they should avoid in so far as it is humanly possible. Amrit (Rajkumari Amrit Kaur) tells me that you think to the contrary. You think the referendum should take place now. . . You are also of opinion that a referendum will not cause bloodshed, indeed that my proposal would be more likely to cause it. I do not share this view. I had told the Badshah that if I do not carry you with me. I shall retire at least from the Frontier consultation and let you guide him. I will and cannot interpose myself between you and him. After all, was it not you who brought him to me? You will now decide and tell me.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 268-9

203. DISCUSSION WITH A PHILIPPINO AND MISSIONARIES[3]

June 7, 1947

I would put my old-fashioned spinning-wheel even against a modern invention like the atom bomb. If everybody plied it even for half an hour daily, we should see a miracle in only five years. Europe is now looked upon as the leader in civilization and has advanced very far, but at one time Asia was more civilized than Europe. We wish to get rid of the artificial European civilization, bases on machinery, that has invaded our country. We have no need for it at all. I wish to revive out ancient culture which is rooted in non-violence and spiritual

[1] Omissions as in the source

[2] Prime Minister of N. W. F. P., brother of Abdul Ghaffar Khan

[3] In *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Pyarelal explains: "They praised India's non-violent revolution which was without a precedent in history. But they wondered if it was possible to abolish war in the present era of science and industrialization and realize the ideal of world peace."

values. Our happiness, prosperity and peace lie in doing so. If we can revive out ancient culture, we shall serve as a beacon-light in the world's effort to establish peace.

Every individual and every nation should search their hearts far more seriously than they do today. Instead of think- ing of strife and competition and wealth, we should cultivate family-feeling, strive for self-purification and spread love and a sense of brotherhood. That alone can be called an ideal state in which men can lead a really 'human' life and get opportunities to cultivate perfection in every sphere. Today even in our own country anarchy is reigning. The fault is not wholly ours. We have been suppressed as slaves for a hundred and fifty years. The British and American missionaries in India have rendered no real service to the country. Their conception of service is to do work of compassion and serve the poor. But by establishing hospitals, schools and such other institutions, they attracted our children and men and our people left their own religion and embraced Christianity. Our religion is in no way inferior to Christianity. I can cite you numerous instances like these to show how far we have been bled. And when the blood has disappeared, only the skeleton remains. That is our plight today, but I am full of hope that we shall regain our health in a few years and a revitalized India will make missionary bodies also reorientate their outlook and activities.

This body is not mine, but belongs to God, and I have this mud-pack regularly, follow a strict routine and take care of my health in order that I may loyally and with a sense of responsibility safeguard His gift and use it for the service of the people.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 93-4; and *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. II, pp. 233-4

204. DISCUSSION WITH SOCIALIST WORKERS

June 7, 1947

Today the rulers are not foreigners but our own country-men. If we do not work in perfect harmony with them, our newly-won freedom will be in danger. Let all people sit together and find a proper solution to problems on which there are differences. But our greatest defect is that, as soon as we differ from somebody ever so slightly, or a misunderstanding arises, instead of meeting the person concerned and trying to find a solution we take him to task publicly.

This creates a great mental gulf between people, leading to antagonism. Parties and isms are only results of such differences. One fruit of this poison we have seen in the coming into existence of Pakistan. Are we not satisfied even with that? You have simply not understood what socialism means. The Russian type of socialism will not suit India at all. Even in Russia their policies have not succeeded completely. Why don't you try to save the country from the calamity which has befallen it today? So long as this communal virus has not been eradicated, socialism will never come. Note down and remember, all of you, these words of an old man. The people will want to see our work and our sacrifices; they will judge our labour and look for perfection of character in us. But you wish to pay no attention to these things. On the one hand, hundreds of thousands of our brothers and sisters have become homeless. If now you incite the people and exploit these riot to establish new parties or spread your isms, rest assured God will never forgive this terrible crime of betrayal of the country.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 4-5

205. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 7, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I am telling you in all humility that it is improper to obstruct the prayer. I cannot stop the prayer. It will go on. But I find that every day there is some complaint or other. It pains me very much.

I want to continue with the same subject. I want to talk about what is in the air, because great pressure is brought to bear on me. I am being told that while I kept on opposing [the idea of Pakistan] till the Viceroy's declaration and saying that we would not agree to anything under coercion, now I have become silent. I am being rightly told so. I must confess that I am not happy about this decision. But many things happen in the world that are not to our liking; and yet we have to put up with them. We have to put up with this thing in the same manner.

A newspaper has said that even now the All-India Congress Committee can reject the proposal. I also think that the All-India Congress Committee is fully entitled not to accept the proposal. But

we should not suddenly oppose the Congress to which we have been loyal all this time and which has earned reputation in the world and has also done so much work.

A large number of *Sanatanists* believe in the monster of untouchability and think they are following their religion by clinging to this monster. But God alone will judge who is a true *Sanatanist* amongst us. Similarly, if the Congress also puts a religious garb on irreligious practices, we shall have to wind up the organization. Who can kill the Congress? We shall all lay down our lives before it. We will do it not by committing suicide. But we shall continue to fight it and will not bow down to it till we bring it on to the correct path or die ourselves. But we shall do this when we find that the Congress is deliberately erring. In my view, it is not committing a deliberate blunder at present. Nor has it committed deliberate blunders earlier. Had it functioned so far by accepting irreligion as religion, it would not have risen to the position it has today.

It is not correct to say that the Congress Working Committee should have consulted the A.I.C.C. before taking this decision. The Working Committee cannot function if it has to wait for consultation at every step. Subsequently the A.I.C.C. can challenge the Working Committee and vote it out to form a new one.

When I was working regularly for the Congress and enjoyed the right to enforce the constitution of the Congress, I had said during one of the discussions that we could not collect 300 or 1000 members of the A. I. C. C. every now and again. It would be impossible for the Working Committee to function in this manner. Of course, later on, the A.I.C.C. can certainly call for an explanation from the Working Committee. It can also remove the Committee by passing a vote of no confidence so as to make sure that it will not repeat its mistakes, and form a new Committee.

Supposing the Working Committee issued a *hundi* of several lakhs in the name of the A.I.C.C. which the latter did not approve. The A.I.C.C. would still have to honour the *hundi*, but it could certainly dissolve the Working Committee and elect a new one so that the mistake was not repeated. In fact in such a situation the A.I.C.C. ought to take such a step.

The same rule applies in the case of its decision regarding the Hindustan-Pakistan affair. The division is now a *fait accompli*. But there is still ample scope for adjustment. We can make or unmake at

will Hindustan and Pakistan or whatever else we call it. True, the Congress does not represent the League. But as I have looked at the Congress I feel that the Congress represents the entire Indian nation. On that account the Congress can never say that because the Muslims have done great harm to us it will also harm them in return. The Congress would not remain what it is if it did that. Even when I went to the Round Table Conference[1] I had said that I would do them a good turn even if they harmed us.

The Congress wants to establish democratic rule. It will not act against the interests of the Princes either. But the Princes will be able to retain their position only when they become the trustees of their subjects like the Raja of Oundh[2]. A small principality like Oundh will be long remembered only because it bowed to the sovereignty of the people. As against this, the State of Kashmir, although it is worth millions, will be wiped out if it does not listen to the voice of its people. Hitherto these rulers may have behaved arrogantly with the support of the British authorities; but now they must realize that their authority issues from the people. I made a special mention of Kashmir because at the moment our eyes are fixed on it. But this applies to all the native State.

I talked at such length in order that the Congress may continue to belong to the people and the people may continue in the Congress fold, i.e., they may follow the Congress discipline. If we start having internal strife, the Congress is going to perish. If you do not approve of the decision of the Working Committee you can frankly say so at the next A.I.C.C. meeting. I have no intention to attend the session. I will attend if I am invited. But who is going to listen to my solitary voice? After all you are the people. You can convey it to the Congress in a civil manner whether or not you approve of what it has done.

Now it becomes the duty of the Congress to give up what has been granted as Pakistan and make its best efforts in the portion that remains with it. Let the people in Pakistan go ahead of the Congress in their efforts to bring progress to their land. If this happens the two can live in amity and happiness.

In the end Gandhiji repeated his appeal to Jinnah Saheb and called upon him to invite the Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and all others to come to a settlement

[1] In 1931

[2] Appasaheb Pant

and spare the Viceroy the trouble and the Congress leaders the needless running around. He appealed to Jinnah to build a Pakistan where the *Gita* could be recited side by side with the Koran, and the temple and the gurudwara would be given the same respect as the mosque, so that those who had been opposing Pakistan till now would be sorry for their mistake and would only sing praises of Pakistan.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 134-7

206. A LETTER[1]

[Before *June, 8, 1947*]

All rights to be deserves and preserved come from duty well done. Thus the very right to live accrues to us only when we do the duty of citizenship of the world. From this very fundamental statement perhaps it is easy enough to define the duties of man and woman and correlate every right to some corresponding duty to be first performed. Every other right can be shown to be a usurpation hardly worth fighting for.

Harijan, 8-6-1947

207. WALLS OF PROTECTION[2]

Let us ask ourselves what walls should be erected to protect *brahmacharya* of which I wrote[3] last week. The answer seems clear. It is not *brahmacharya* that needs walls of protection. To say that is easy enough and sounds sweet, but it is difficult to understand the import of the statement and more so to act accordingly.

It is true that he who has attained perfect *brahmacharya* does not stand in need of protection walls. But the aspirant undoubtedly needs them, even as a young mango plant has need of a strong fence round it. A child goes from its mother's lap to the cradle and from the cradle to the push cart till he becomes a man who has learnt to walk without aid. To cling to the aid when it is needless is surely harmful.

I made it clear last week that *brahmacharya* is one out of the

[1] Extracted from 'Gleanings'

[2] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu,* which was published simultaneously with the source.

[3] *Vide* "How didi I Begin it"

eleven observances. It follows, therefore, that the real aid to *brahmacharya* are the remaining ten observances. The difference between them and the walls of protection is that the latter are temporary, the former permanent. They are an integral part of *brahmacharya*.

Brahmacharya is a mental condition. The outward behaviour of a man is at once the sign and proof of the inner state. He who has killed the sexual urge in him will never be guilty of it in any shape or form. However attractive a woman may be, her attraction will produce no effect on the man without the urge. The same rule applies to women. But he or she who has not conquered lust should not turn the eyes even towards a sister or a brother or a daughter or a son. This advice I have given to friends who have profited by it.

As for myself I have to admit with great shame that while the sight of women had ceased to rouse any sexual urge in me in South Africa, in the early days of my return to India past recollections roused the urge against which I had to battle fairly hard. The same is true of the vague fear which is so unbecoming in man.

I was cowardly by nature. I was frightened to sleep in the dark. To sleep alone in a room was an act of bravery for me. I hope I have lost that cowardliness. Yet I do not know what would be my state if I lost my way and had to wander alone in a thick forest on a dark night and if I were to forget that God was ever with me. If this childhood fear has not completely gone from me, it would be certainly more difficult for me to be fearless in a lonely jungle than to control the sex urge.

There are certain rules laid down in India for the would-be *brahmachari*. Thus he may not live among women, animals and eunuchs, he may not teach a woman alone or even in a group, he may not sit on the same mat with a woman, he may not look at any part of a woman's body, he may not take milk, curds, ghee or any fatty substance nor indulge in baths and oil massage. I read about these when I was in South Africa. There I came in touch with some men and women who, while they observed *brahmacharya*, never knew that any of the above-named restraints were necessary. Nor did I observe them and I was none the worse for the non-observance. I did give up milk, ghee and other animal substances but for different reasons. I gave up the attempt two or three years after my return to India. But if today I could find any effective vegetable substitute for milk and ghee, I would gladly renounce all animal products. But this is another story.

A perfect *brahmachari* never loses his vital fluid. On the contrary, he is able to increase it day by day and, what is more, he conserves it; he will, therefore, never become old in the accepted sense and his intellect will never be dimmed.

It appears to me that even the true aspirant does not need the above-mentioned restraints. *Brahmacharya* is not a virtue that can be cultivated by outward restraints. He who runs away from a necessary contact with a woman does not understand the full meaning of *brahmacharya*.

Let not the reader imagine for one moment that what I have written is to serve as the slightest encouragement to life without the law of real restraint. Nor is there room in any honest attempt for hypocrisy.

Self-indulgence and hypocrisy are sins to be avoided.

The true *brahmachari* will shun false restraints. He must create his own fences according to his limitations, breaking them down when he feels that they are unnecessary. The first thing is to know what true *brahmacharya* is, then to realize its value and lastly to try to cultivate this priceless virtue. I hold that true service of the country demands this observance.

NEW DELHI, June 8, 1947

Harijan, 15-6-1947

208. LETTER TO P. K. ELAYADAM

NEW DELHI,
June 8, 1947

MY DEAR ELAYADAM,

I have received your letter of 3rd instant informing me that Rs. 500 have been received by Khadi Pratishthan. I have before me also your letter of 12th May describing your condition. I fear that what you say leads me to think that your mind is not sound and that you are unnecessarily afraid of being murdered. I am sure that nobody is after you. Imagining the worst happened to you, why should there be any fear? You see in the papers that innocent persons are daily murdered throughout the world. From that you should derive the lesson that since death is the inevitable lot of every creature born, it should be welcomed as a faithful friend whether it comes out of illness or accident, even though it may be named murder. Therefore I would

advise you to lead a useful life of service wherever you are and on hearing from you I shall instruct Khadi Pratishthan to refund the money received by them.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

P. K. ELAYADAM, ESQ.
C/o SHREE KASHI VISHWANATH SEVA SAMITI
50, BURTOLA STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: C.W. 10566

209. LETTER TO SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

June 8, 1947

I had gone through your draft.[1] I have now discussed the scheme roughly with Pandit Nehru and the Sardar. Both of them are dead against the proposal and they are of opinion that it is merely a trick for dividing Hindus and the Scheduled Caste leaders. With them it is not merely a suspicion but almost a conviction. They feel also that money is being lavishly expended in order to secure the Scheduled Caste votes. If such is the case, you should give up the struggle at least at present. For the unity purchases by corrupt practices would be worse than a frank partition, it being a recognition of the established division of hearts and the unfortunate experiences of the Hindus. I see also that there is no prospect of transfer of power outside the two parts of India. Therefore, whatever arrangement is come to, has to be arrived at by a previous agreement between the Congress and the League. This, as far as I can see, you can't obtain. Nevertheless, I would not shake your faith, unless it is founded on shifting sand consisting of corrupt practices and trickery alluded to above. If you are absolutely sure that there is no warrant whatever for the suspicion and unless you get the written assurance of the local Muslim League supported by the centre, you should give up the struggle for unity of Bengal and cease to disturb the atmosphere that has been created for the partition of Bengal.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 187-8

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sarat Chandra Bose", 24-5-1947

210. A LETTER[1]

June 8, 1947

Hinduism has denied to women the right to remarry. Therefore, to be fair, men too ought not to remarry, much less expect or ask for my blessings. But if they must remarry, let them select as their partner a widow who is desirous of remarrying. If widowers stopped marrying maidens they would be highly obliging the country.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 101

211. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

June 8, 1947

The work you are doing in the Constituent Assembly is also service done to me. Personal service, when it merges into universal service, is the only service worth doing. All else is rubbish.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 241

212. TALK TO A WOMAN RELATIVE[2]

June 8, 1947

Women at any rate should think of God and His infinite power and know that His is the only real support. While cultivating self-confidence and courage, they should also exercise wisely their natural qualities of humility, simplicity and kindness with which God has endowed them. India's women were never weak, are not so even today and will not be so in future. If we think over the matter, we shall see that from the times of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* their courage has been unrivalled, and that courage has been the result of strength of character. Revive that strength of character. If the women do not remind themselves of the examples of Draupadi and Sita and display the same strength of virtue, they will never be able to serve the country well no matter how many of them get educated. If the atrocities one hears of are perpetrated on women, the fault does not lie with men alone. Women also are responsible. I know that today women have taken the downward path. In their craze for equality with men, they have forgotten their duty. Ba was in no way weaker than I;

[1] A widower wanting to remarry had asked for Gandhiji's blessings.

[2] She was one of a group from South Africa on a visit to India.

in fact she was stronger. If I had not had her co-opeation I would have been sunk. It was that illiterate woman who helped me to observe all my vows with the utmost strictness and kept me ever vigilant. Similarly in politics also she displayed great courage and took part in all the campaigns. From the worldly point of view she may have been illiterate, but she was an ideal woman who had received what I regard as true education. She was a devout *Vaishnava*, used to worship the *tulsi*, religiously observed sacred days and continued to wear the necklace of holy beads right up to her death. I have given that necklace to this girl[1]. But she loved the Harijan girl as much as she loved manu or Devdas's Tara. She was a living image of the virtues of a *Vaishnav*a described by Narasinha Mehta in his *bhajan*. It is because of her that I am today what I am. She never spared herself, no matter how ill she herself was, in serving me. And often I have been in danger of my life. In the fast of 1943[2] I may say I was nearly at death's door, but she never cried or lost courage but on the contrary kept up other people's courage and prayed to God. I can see her face vividly even today.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 98

213. TALK WITH COMMUNIST WORKERS

June 8, 1947

I will tell you the same thing that I told[3] those Socialist friends on two days. All of you should think first of the interest of the country as a whole. Instead of doing that, you are wasting your time over minor grievances. The moment you come upon some error by somebody, real or imaginary, without any investigation you Communists start making in-flammatory speeches, denounce the Government and incite the people. Is there not a single act of Government deserving your co-operation? Just think for a moment. If you were in the place of Nehru, what would you do? You should, therefore, either take the places of Nehru or Sardar—I stand guarantee that they will step down the moment you ask them to do so—or co-

[1] Lakshmi

[2] The source has '1942', a misprint.

[3] On may 27 and June 7; vide "Talk with Socialists", 27-5-1947 and "Discussion with Socialist Workers", 7-6-1947

operate with them. That will be for your own good. In any case you should stop making speeches full of baseless allegations. Your principles are fine indeed. But you do not seem to follow them in practice, for you do not seem to know the difference between truth and falsehood or justice and injustice. What is more saddening about you is that, instead of having faith in India and drawing inspiration from its unrivalled culture, you wish to introduce Russian civilization here as if Russia was your motherland. I disapprove of relying on any outside power, however much that may materially benefit us, for I believe in the principle that your eating is not going to satisfy my hunger, that I can satisfy my hunger only be eating myself. I tell Rajendra Babu the same thing every day, that in the matter of food we should not depend upon any foreign country. It would be more honourable for us to share among ourselves the food that we have than to live on other people's charity. Let us be worthy of our freedom. We may certainly accept useful and beneficial ideas from foreign countries, but this does not mean that we should uncritically admire everything foreign. There are good and bad things in every country. It is a grave error to believe that everything in our country is bad and in other countries good. Some things in foreign countries are good while some features of our culture are unrivalled. You also use the work 'satyagraha' as part of your jargon. But anybody who uses this word should realize that by doing so he accepts a great responsibility. A satyagrahi should rely wholly on truth. He cannot then afford to be ambiguous in his attitudes. He cannot jump on to a bandwagon. In brief, he cannot depart from his principles in the smallest degree. A satyagrahi cares for nothing but truth. He will give no pain or do no injustice whatever to anybody either in thought, word or deed. And he must always have perfect clarity in his thoughts.

All of you are servants of the country and are eager to serve it. Such as we are, we are brothers and sisters born in the same country. As such, we should supplement one another's work, give up slandering one another and stop fruitless arguments, be generous and mutually forgiving. Let us give up out narrow-mindedness, cultivate generosity of heart and raise the good name of the country to the highest point in the whole world. In that lies everybody's happiness, peace and prosperity.[1]

All of you are like my own children. Since you heard me

[1] What follows is in Hindi.

patiently, I poured out my heart to you. You can come to me whenever you wish. I want your help. I can do something only if I have it. What can I do by myself? One cannot clap with only one hand, as the saying is.

[Form Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 102-4

214. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 8, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Our peace during the prayer should not be disturbed even if bombs are showered from the sky and there is an upheaval. As the *gopi* hears the notes of the flute in the wilderness, the devotee of God hears the voice in the recesses of his own heart. It has been described as 'the voice of silence' in English. In other words, we can hear that voice only when we are quiet.

I have already informed you that Prof. Kosambiji who was an erudite scholar and was considered a leading authority in Pali recently died at the Sevagram Ashram. Balvantsinha, Manager of the Ashram, writes that he had not witnessed such a death so far. It was exactly as Kabir described in the following couplet:

The servant Kabir says: Although we wear this sheet with ever so much care, it has to be given up even as it is.

If we can all befriend Death in this manner, it would be to the good of India.

I am told that I should act as an arbitrator in the dispute between the Meos and the Jats. But how can I act as an arbitrator? In the first place I do know any of them. And then, only a person who has the authority to have his judgment accepted can act as an arbitrator. I possess no arms nor would I seek the help of a court of law. But I think they should now restrain themselves. Whether what has happened is good or bad, now the Congress and the League have also come to a settlement. They should not go on fighting till either side accepts defeat. The Meos are a brave community and the Jats and Ahirs too would not give a chance to an-one to say that they had been defeated. Fortunately, they are not killing the aged, infants and women. Both the sides have amassed enough arms. They are fighting

bravely, but anyway it leads to destruction. A poor man is as much pained when his hut is burnt down as a king when his palace is burnt down. Fighting is going on so close to us and yet we able to do nothing about it. Darkness has descended over the region. Even so those of you who know them should carry my voice to them if they can and try to stop the fighting.[1]

I am accused of spoiling the situation in Bengal. It is my claim that nothing is spoilt at my hands. Whether it is in Bengal, Bihar or Noakhali, nothing has ever been spoilt at my hands. I can only improve things and I have done so. Now, like the Punjab, Bengal too is going to be divided. In one part of Bengal the Muslims are in a majority and in the other the Hindus. A large number of Hindus desire partition, for, how long can one put up with turbulence? They say one there is partition they can at least live in peace in their homeland. The Muslim League in Bengal has rejected this proposal. But who takes the Bengal Muslim League seriously? Division of Bengal is certain under the new proposal.

Now I am being blamed for not letting Bengal be divided. It is true that I do not want the division. But then I also totally disapprove of the whole country being divided into Hindustan and Pakistan. Even if I was the only Hindu remaining, I would still have the courage to go and live in the midst of the Muslim majority. What is the worst they could do? Kill me; could they do anything worse? But they would not kill me. They would protect one solitary individual. God would protect me. God always protects one who has no one to protect him. That is why the poet says, "God is the strength of the weak." I do not at all like the division of Bengal. But I will say that the Hindus should let themselves be subdued and give up their desire in order to save their life and property. If they feel that they will be able to live in peace in their part of the province, let no one imagine that I shall come in the way.

Sarat Babu came to me the other day. He does not want Bengal to be partitioned. He says that the whole Province has one culture, and the same food habits. Why them should it be divided in the name of religion? Sarat Babu has his view, I have mine. The people however have the right to act as they desire. My individual opinion cannot thwart the opinion of many.

[1]*Vide* also "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 29-5-1947 and "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 5-6-1947

I always co-operate in good things. If a bad man recites Ramanama, shall I not join him? I shall certainly join him in reciting Ramanama. And if a man considered good indulges in wicked acts, shall I join hands with him? If I do so, I shall not be Gandhi for Gandhi can never worship Satan. Whoever acts out of good intention, out of love, will have my support.

I have come to know that money is being squandered to stall the partition of Bengal. Nothing enduring can be achieved with the help of money. Votes purchases with money have no force. I can never be party to such an act. I can never support an act of goondaism, even if committed by my own kith and kin.[1]

Hence, I would like to tell Sarat Babu that even though he and I would like to stop the partition of Bengal we should forget about it for the time being. It cannot be achieved by impure means. God cannot be realized by impure means and no means for obtaining anything dishonourable can ever be pure.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 137-40

215. TELEGRAM TO SARAT CHANDRA BOSE[2]

[After *June 8, 1947*][3]

HOW CAN BRIBE-GIVERS AND BRIBE-TAKERS BE PUNISHED BY PRIVATE PERSONS EXCEPT AT THE BAR OF PUBLIC OPINION? BE CALM AND STEADFAST.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 188

[1] *Vide* also the following item.

[2] The telegram was in reply to that of the addressee which read: "If information false, punish informants, if information true, punish bribe-givers and bribe-takers." The addressee was referring to Gandhiji's allegation regarding "votes purchases"; *vide* the preceding item.

[3] *ibid*

216. MESSAGE FOR ANNIE BESANTS'S BIRTH CENTENARY[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 9, 1947

When I was studying in London in 1888 and after I had become, like many, an admirer of Bradlaugh[2] and Besant[3], imagine my excitement when one fine morning I read in the London Press that Annie Besant had become a Theosophist under Blavatsky's[4] inspiration. I was a mere boy practically unknown to anybody. I would have been more than satisfied if I could have touched the hem of the garments of the massive Blavatsky and her distinguished disciple. But I could not though some friends had kindly taken me to Blavatsky Lodge. When Dr. Besant came to India and captivated the country I came in close touch with her and though we had political differences my veneration for her did not suffer abatement. I hope therefore the centenary celebrations will be worthy of the great woman.

M. K. GANDHI

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 109-10

217. A LETTER

NEW DELHI,
June 9, 1947

MY DEAR…,[5]

I am ashamed to have kept you long in suspense. This is my day of silence. Rajkumari reminds me of yours of 20th May and I wrote out the enclosed[6] which I hope you can decipher. Now that I tax my

[1] Which was to be on October 1, 1947

[2] Charles Bradlaugh (1833-91), English free-thinker and radical, prominent for his championship of individual liberty; was close associate of Annie Besant till 1885.

[3] 1847-1933, British Theosophist; founded Indian Home Rule League in 1916; and was President of Indian National Congress in 1917

[4] Helena Blavatsky (1831-91) founder of Theosophical Society

[5] The name is omitted in the source. Presumably the addressee was Marjorie Sykes.

[6] *Vide* the preceding item.

memory, I fancy that the Williams Brothers[1] whom you would not have known took me to madam Blavatsky. This is of no consequence. I have written this for the sake of accuracy.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 109

218. FOREWORD TO "CHARLES FREER ANDREWS"[2] DRAFT[3]

Charlie Andrews though a very great scholar was simple like a child, straight as die and shy like an Indian woman. With the biographers the record was a labour of love. I am sorry I have not read it.

M. K. GANDHI

NEW DELHI, June 9, 1947

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 108

219. LETTER TO MARJORIE SYKES

NEW DELHI,
June 9, 1947

MY DEAR MARJORIE,

Yours received just now. Here are a few words of foreword.[4] I have no time to look at your chapter. I have handed it to Rajkumari who is sitting near me.

Love.

BAPU

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 108

220. DRAFT OF LETTER TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

June 9, 1947[5]

DEAR BADSHAH,[6]

Here is a note from Jawaharlal.[7] It is the result of a difference of opinion between him and me. In the circumstances I must not guide

[1] *Vide* "An Autobiography"
[2] By Benarsidas Chaturvedi and Marjorie Sykes
[3] For the foreword as published, *vide*
[4] *Vide* the preceding item.
[5] From of the source
[6] The superscription is not in Gandhiji's hand.
[7] For extracts from Jawaharlal Nehru's note, *vide* Appendix V.

you. He has put forth his argument as usual in his very able manner. Now you have to act as you think best. His suggestion that you should come to Delhi and discuss the situation before taking any final decision is worthy of consideration. I am planning to go away to Bihar, if I can, before the meeting of the A.I.C.C.

I hope you were none the worse for your journey to Peshawar.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile: *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. II, facing p. 289

221. DRAFT OF LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

June 9, 1947[1]

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,[2]

I have your note which I have read most carefully. If I shared your Premises, I should whole-heartedly agree with you.

I am sending your note by messenger to the Badshah with my covering letter[3] of which I enclose a copy herewith.

The more I contemplate the differences in outlook and opinion between the members of the W. C. and me, I feel that my presence is unnecessary even if it is not detrimental to the cause we all have at heart. May I not go back to Bihar in two or three days?

Would it be wrong if you insisted that referendum would be wrong without the presentation of the picture of Pakistan?[4]

From a facsimile: *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. II, facing p. 289

222. A LETTER

June 9, 1947

CHI. . . .,[5]

Bhai . . . has gone to you. I had a long talk with him at the end of which it was decided that both of them would leave the Ashram. . . . The step will pain both Bhai . . . and me. But, having regard to his health and his mental suffering, I have advised him that since it is

[1] From the source
[2] The superscription in Devanagari is not in Gandhiji's hand.
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.
[4] This sentence is not in Gandhiji's hand.
[5] Omissions as in the source

quite uncertain when I shall come there it is best that he should not continue in the Ashram, I have . . .'s letter. I cannot reply today . . . .

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 106-7

223. A LETTER

June 9, 1947

CHI. . . .,

Kosambiji has passed away. We should send to Ceylon as quickly as we can some Indians who follow Buddhism and are desirous of learning Pali. Do you have any such students in mind? Try to think over what rules we should frame for selecting such students and give me some suggestions. For instance, what would be the expense for each student, etc. . . .

I got your article on Anandshankarbhai.[1] If you had written in Gujarati instead of in English, Gujaratis would have benefited by your article. Whom will this benefit? I could read only the first paragraph.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 107

224. LETTER TO MADALASA

June 9, 1947

CHI. MADALASA,

I have your letter.

Shriman is coming here on the 12th. Since I have started writing in *Harijan*, you may get your problems solved through it. I have not been able to understand your question properly. Do not try to explain away to yourself any writing or action of mine. Whenever you feel perplexed by something, you must try to get your doubt resolved. My writing can never warrant indulgence. My life is dedicated to the cause of self-control. It is possible that I might not succeed in reaching my

[1] Anandshankar Dhruva died on April 7, 1942.

ideal. But I am sure that I will never give people excuses for self-indulgence.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 333

225. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR

DELHI,

June 9, 1947

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

I am enclosing Sankaran's letter. How far is this true? He also writes about Bhai Ranade. What is all this? However much we may work, if our minds are not pure or if or conduct is not sincere, we are good for nothing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N.9037. Also C.W. 9161. Courtesy: Prabhakar

226. TALK WITH VISITORS[1]

June 9, 1947

This fight between brother and brother is not going to stop so long as the masses do not get work as well as bread. Order in the society, in fact in the country, cannot possibly be restored unless the indigenous crafts are developed. This is the sole remedy for banishing starvation from the country. The affluent in India can be counted on one's fingers, whereas there are millions who are starving.

I fought for India's independence. There were satyagraha movements and as a result we have achieved what the world would consider success (not the kind I would have wished). The partition has come in spite of me. It has hurt me. But it is the way in which the partition has come that has hurt me more. And it is difficult to say what the result of the constant tension will be. I have pledged myself to do or die in the attempt to put down the present conflagration. I

[1] The source does not identify them excepts as foreigners.

love all mankind as I love my own countrymen, because my God dwells in the heart of every human being and I aspire to realize the highest in life through the service of humanity. It is true that the non-violence that we practised was the non-violence of the weak, i.e., no non-violence at all. But I maintain that this was not what I presented to my countrymen. Nor did I present to them the weapon of non-violence because they were weak or disarmed or without military training, but because my study of history has taught me that hatred and violence used in howsoever noble a cause only breed their kind and instead of ensuring peace endanger it. There is no miracle except love and non-violence which can drive out the poison of hatred. Thanks to the tradition of our ancient seers, sages and saints, if there is a heritage that india can share with the world, it is this gospel of forgiveness and faith which is her proud possession. I have faith that in time to come India will pit that against the threat of destruction which the world has invited upon itself by the invention of the atom bomb. The weapon of truth andlove is infallible, but there is something wrong in us, its votaries, which has plunged us into . the present internecine strife. I am, therefore, trying to exainine myself becasue it must be owing to some shortcoming in me which it has been my fate to see reflected in the present outburst of violence.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 111-2

227. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 9, 1947

I have received some letters saying that *Allopanishad* about which I had talked to you some days ago is not to be found in any collection of religious writings. I had mentioned this work from memory so I consulted a friend[1] and he has written to say that the collection I have in mind does mention *Allopanishad*, saying it has seven *mantras*. These Upanishads date back to the time of the Atharva Veda. He has said much else which would be of greater interest to students. Hence I shall not quote that part of the letter.

Then I have a letter from Jayachandra Vidyalankar. Jayachandraji says :

[1] Mathuradas Trikumji; *vide* the following item.

Maharana Kumbha, grandfather of Rana Sanga, was the first to offer organized resistance to the Muslims aggressors. He conquered the territories occupied by the Muslim in Gujarat and Malwa and erected the victory pillar at Chittor. On the pillar side by side with the many representations of Hindu gods and goddesses and next to those of Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh the name of Allahs is also inscribed. It is well known how the Hindu leaders like Maharana Ranjit Singh and Chhatrapati Shivaji respected Islam. Why do these champions of Hinduism who resent the recitation from the Koran at your prayers not object to Allah's name inscribed on this victory pillar ?

After pointing out that the cause of Hindu-muslim animosity lies in faulty writing of history, Vidyalankarji requests me to see to it that the teaching of history is done in the right spirit, without which all attempts to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity must fail.

Lately I have been receiving a large number of letters attacking me. A friend points out how ineffective were my words when I said that vivisection of the country would be the vivisection of my own body and calls upon me strongly to oppoose the partition of the country. But I do not think I am in any way to blame in this matter. When I Said that the country should not be divided I was confident that I had the support of the masses. But when the popular view is contrary to mine, should I force my own view on the people? I have repeatedly said that we should never compromise with falsehod and wickedness. And today I can say with confidence that if all the non-Muslim were with me, I would not let India be divided., But I must admit that today the general opinion is not with me, and so I must step aside and stay back. The lesson which we have been trying to learn for the past 30 years and which we now tend to forget is that only through truth and non-violence can we triumph over untruth and violence. Impatience can be overcome only with patience and excitement with calm. Today we cringe before our own shadow. There is nothing in common between me and those who want me to oppose Pakistan except that we are both opposed to the division of the country. There is a fundamental difference between their opposition and mine. How can love and enmity go togethrer?

Another friend writes that this Viceroy is even more dangerous that the other Viceroys; that whereas the others crushed us at the point of the sword this one trapped the Congress with his smooth talk. I can never agree with this opinion. The correspondent has unwittingly and unknowingly praised the Viceroy and has debunked the intelligence

and efficiency of the Congress Ministers. Why can he not understand the simple thing that the general opinion, that is, the opinion of those who are fit to hold any opinoin, is supporting the Congress leaders? The leaders are not fools. They too find the partition repugnant, but as representatives of the country they cannot go against public opinion. They derive their power from the people. The situation would have been different if the correspondent had the power. And under no circumstances would it be proper to criticize the Viceroy when the leaders are elected representatives of the people or when our own pepole betray the country. The saying ''as the king so the subjects'' is not so apt as its reverse: ''As the subjects so the king.''

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 140-2

228. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

June 10, 1947

CHI. . . ,[1]

I am writing this at 4.30 in the morning after the prayer. I got your letter yesterday. You are as persevering as ever. I even used yesterday the information you sent.[2] Do you read reports of my speeches these days? I was somehow under the impression that *Allopanishad* was included in Nathuramji's collection. I see now that it is referred to in his notes. Your other discovery also does you credit. So you have regained sufficient strength to write all that! You have been a close student of my life. Even so, I wrote something in order to save your time and mine. I do feel unhappy that I have not been able to convince people that I am perfectly pure. But time always does its work, and it will do so in this case, too. I am being tested. The task here is a very difficult one. I think I shall be here up to the 15th at any rate. How I wish you would recover completely!

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 215; also *Bihar Pachhi Dilhi*, p. 107

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

[2] The addressee had sent to Gandhiji copies of *Allopanishad* from a manuscript as well as from the Adyar collection of *Unpublished Upanishads* found at the Royal Asiatic Library. What follows is from *Bihar Pachhi Dilhi*, which, however, places this under June 9, 1947.

229. A LETTER

June 10, 1947

If we examine all that we say we shall find that we indulge in exaggeration so much that it has almost become a habit with us. We do not care to examine the truth or otherwise of our idle talk. If we appreciated the value of silence we would be rendering a great service to the nation. The present time particularly is not for making speeches. Deeds, not words, are what is demanded of us. 'Silence is everything.'[1] He who wants to see truth and take shelter in God must observe at least one day of weekly silence. I say it on the strength of my own experience of silence on Mondays.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 112-3

230. A LETTER

June 10, 1947

This is a time of trial. I have passed through many an ordeal in my life. But perhaps this is to be the hardest. I like it. The fiercer it becomes, the closer is the communion with God that I experience and the deeper grows my faith in His abundant grace. So long as it persists, I know it is well with me. I am dictating these letters early in the morning. I woke up but lay reciting Ramanama. However, since attending to one's duty is as good as reciting Ramanama, I woke up Chi. Manudi. I send the girl to sleep whenever it suits me and wake her up when I wish. And whenever I wake her up she promptly gets up and can prepare herself to take down with an alert mind what I dictate. She falls ill now and then. No doubt I am overtaxing her. I know I make her work beyond her capacity. But God seems to sustain her in spite of it all as if to help me in my hour of trial. Hence she can sit upright at any hour whether it be midnight or very early in the morning. This too is Divine help in my time of trial. Still another sign of His grace is the way in which He is keeping up my physical strength enabling me to maintain my serenity in the midst of daily shocks and turmoil. I remain happy and cheerful. It may be said that it is for this reason that I have been constantly realizing that

[1] Gandhiji quotes the saying, मौनम् सर्वार्थ साधनम्।

‘‘Adversity so-called is not adversity, nor is prosperity what we know the that name; the only adversity is to forget God, the only prosperity His ceaseless remembrance’’.[1] For sixty years we have been in the thick of the fight, and now we have ushered the goddess of liberty into our courtyard. Yet many big tasks remain to be fulfilled. For the situation is much like having a sumptuous meal all ready and someone pouring dal into the pot of rice pudding. Thus, having worked so hard and for so long we now need most to cultivate humility and capacity for hard work.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 113

231. A LETTER

June 10, 1947

The spinning-wheel is the key to swaraj. It helps us to identify ourselves with the poor millions. But we should not on that account succumb to a feeling of pride. If one spins with the egoistic feeling that one is thereby helping the poor, one’s spinning would be futile. Helping the poor is, however, one’s duty; it is a Divine obligation. If God has granted a man inexhaustible means of wealth to sustain himself, he needs must do this much for the sake of his countrymen. One who spins with the realization that it is one’s dharma is the true *sevak*.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 113-4

232. A LETTER

June 10, 1947

To seek God one need not go on a pilgrimage or light lamps fed with ghee and burn incense before the image of the deity or anoint it or paint it with vermilion. For He resides in our hearts. If we could humbly obliterate in us the consciousness of our physical body, we would see Him face to face.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 114

[1] Gandhiji quotes from *Ashram Bhajanavali*; *vide* Vol. XLIV, p. 390.

233. ADVICE TO HINDU MAHASABHA YOUTHS[1]

June 10, 1947

You do not know I repudiated the title of Mahatma long before you questioned it. But maybe out of your concern for me, you feel it necessary to put me on my guard lest I should fall into the dotage of old age.

He repeated to them that if people did not know how to face death non-violently, they could by all means die fighting valiantly. But even if they wanted to avenge wrong-doing in Pakistan, the right way was to go to Pakistan and fight with those who were the authors of it. There could be no bravery in taking cowardly reprisals on the Muslims residing in India.

I say the same thing to Pakistan, too. In England they managed to survive when odds seemed all against any chance of survival. The secret of it was their wonderful unity, national discipline and organization. For betrayal of the country, father did not hesitate to send his son to the gallows. But in India, even after partition. Hindus and Sikhs are quarrelling among themselves. Each wants to go his own way. Nobody listens. Where will it all end? We, old leaders, are like autumn leaves. Tomorrow you shall have to shoulder the whole burden. It is up to you, the youth, therefore, to shed your indifference, inertia and sloth and throw yourselves into constructive work with all your heart and soul.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 247-8

234. TALK WITH RAJENDRA PRASAD

June 10, 1947[2]

We ought to take warning from this.[3] If I could free myself from here, I would like to tour all over the country and launch a new movement among the youth to throw themselves into constructive work. I can see their enthusiasm to do something for the country. But it is getting no sustenance and there is every danger of its running into a wrong channel. I sensed the malady from which our country is suffering long ago. We, top leaders, are getting old. Before we pass

[1] The two youths had come during Gandhiji's morning walk. They said Gandhiji was no mahatma and that he was misleading the Hindus.

[2] Inferred from Pyarelal's introductory remarks in the source

[3] The reference is to the remarks of Hindu Mahasabha youths who had met Gandhiji the same day; *vide* the preceding item.

away, we should devote whatever strength God has given us to train younger people to shoulder the responsibility of building up the India of our dreams just as we trained them before as non-violent soldiers for the freedom struggle. People cannot be trained for the serious tasks ahead unless at least a portion of the top-ranking leaders remain outside the Government to work among the people.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Volume II, p. 248

235. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 10, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Whatever I have said in connection with the decision of Bengal, I have not levelled allegations against any party. I have only repeated what I have heard. Who would not be happy if Bengal was spared partition and could remain one undivided whole? But I cannot join hands with anyone who talks of preserving unity through falsehood, fraud and bribery. Nothing need be said if no Bengali—either Hindu or Muslim—has done it. Why should anyone wear the cap if it does not fit ?

But people do entertain suspicion that something wrong is being perpetrated in Bengal. Those who told me this also gave me their names and addresses. But I do not think it proper to disclose those here. It they have been telling me falsehoods, it is bad and they should be punished. But who am I to punish anybody? I have not the power to punish anyone.

But I have one great thing with me and that is public opinion. Public opinion has tremendous power. In our coutry the significance of this expression has not yet been fully realized. In the English language, however, the expression has a forceful connotation. Even the king is helpless in the face of what the English call'public opinion'. Even the redoubtable Mr. Churchill, scion of a great family, a powerful orator and erudite scholar—certainly not an ignoramus like me—could not save his office in spite of all his achievements. It only means that public opinion in England is highly awake, no one can do anything in opposition to it.

In India public opinion is not as vigilant as in England. Had it been so a worthless fellow like me would not have presumed to

become a mahatma. And even after I became a Mahatma everything that I did would not have been put up with. As it is, in India anyone who is called a mahatma ceases to be answerable to the publice, whatever—right or wrong—he might do.

Tolstoy had been a great warrior, but when he realized that war was not a good thing he gave up his life in trying to put an end to war. He has said that the greatest power on earth is public opinion and it is generated by truth and non-violence.

That is what I am trying to do. But nothing is going to come of my efforts unless public opinion in India is informed with courage and truthfulness.

But that is not the case today. The impression I have is that we do not want the Dominion Status that is to be granted to us on August 15. The reason is the public opinion that has been forming over the years in favour of complete independence. This talk of Dominion Status pricks the country. The feeling is justified and yet not quite right. It is not right because we are not aware of the potentialities of Dominion Status. First, with the coming of Dominion Status the British will quit India in two months. Secondly, we can shake off the Dominion Status whenever we want. Of course if we persist in our madness others are hardly to blame. Anyway, to return to the subject of public opinion, if it stays vigilant all will be well. If through public opinion, without any bribery, without any corrupt methods being adopted, Bengal decides to remain one, then it is well and good. But we have been cowards and slaves so long that we are unable to resist the temptation to do ignoble acts.

But if one has not acted wickedly and still people level charges against one, why should one feel unhappy? For instance, there are many high-placed officers who do not become corrupt, who remain clean; and yet allegations of corruption are made against them. This does not perturb them. If someone calls me a wicked and corrupt man, do I have to weep? Do I become wicked merely because someone calls me so? I do admit that false allegations are sometimes made against people out of malice and cowardice. We should not talk ill of anyone.

We should see good points of people. If we want to be free let us not find fault with others, let us look at their better side and try to encourage them.

I now assume that the division of India is a fact and the

Congress has been forced to accept it. But if the partition cannot make us happy, why should it make us unhappy? Only we should not let our hearts be sundered. We must save our hearts from bieng fragmented. Otherwise Jinnah Saheb's claim that we are two nations will stand vindicated. I have never believed in it. When we are descended from the same ancestors, can our nationality change simply from our changing our religion? When Sind, the Punjab and maybe the Frontier Province too go to Pakistan will they no more belong to us? I for one do not regard even Britain as an alien country, why should I then regard Pakistan as another nation?

It may be said that I belong to India and in India to the Bombay Presidency, there again to Gujarat, in Gujarat, particularly to Kathiawar, where again to a small town of Porbandar. But because I belong to Porbandar I also belong to the whole of India, that is, I am also a Punjabi and if I go to the Punjab I shall live there regarding it as my home and if I am killed I shall accept death.

I am happy that Jinnah Saheb has said that Pakistan will not belong to an emperor, but that it will belong to the people and the minorities too will get a square deal there. I would only like to add that he should put into practice what he says. He should also impress this upon his followers and tell them to forget all talk of war.

We too will not think of suppressing the minorites in our part of the land. Even the handful of Parsis in India shall be our co-sharers. It would be bad if the Hindus and Muslims joined hands and threatened to annihilate the Parsis saying they were drink-addicts. The Parsis are my friends and I tell them that if they do not give up drinking they will kill themselves. But we shall not kill them. In the same manner Hindus and Sikhs should be protected in the Punjab. The Muslims should treat them kindly and in a brotherly way and reassure them. If the Muslims start tyrannizing over them, the Hindus and Sikhs should tell them, without fear of death, that they will not accept Islam under duress nor partake of [beef][1]. The Hindus should not think that they have become a new community which cannot accommodate Muslims. We are in a majority in this part of India. We must enlighten the majority and work with courage. Courage does not reside in the sword. We will become truthful, we will become servants of God and, if need be, we will lay down our lives. When we do this India and

[1] The source has 'meat'.

Pakistan will not be two separate entities and the artificial partition would become meaningless. If we fight among ourselves the charge of our being two nations will be proved. Let us all therefore pray to God that although India and Pakistan have become separate nations our hearts may not be divided.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 142-6

236. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

NEW DELHI,
June 10/11, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

The Rajkumari has given me the purport of you conversation with her.

Though you have been good enough to tell me that I could see you at any time I wanted to, I must not avail myself of the kindness. I would like, however, to reduce to writing some of the things I hold to be necessary for the proper and swift working of the scheme.

1. As to the referendum in the Frontier Province I must confess that my idea does not commend itself to Pandit Nehru and his colleagues. As I told you, if my proposal did not commend itself to them, I would not have the heart to go any further with it.

2. This, however, does not in any way affect my proposal that before proceeding with the referendum, you should invite Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah to proceed to the Frontier Province and to woo the Ministers including Badshah Khan and his Khudai Khidmatgars who have made the province what it is—better or worse. Before he goes, no doubt, he should be assured of a courteous hearing from them.

3. Whether he favours the idea or not, Qaid-e-Azam should be asked to give a fair picture of the Pakistan scheme before the simple Pathan mind is asked to make its choice of Hindustan or Pakistan. I fancy that the Pathan knows his position in Hindustan. If he does not, the Congress or the Constituent Assembly now at work should be called upon to complete the picture. It will be unfair, I apprehend, to choose between Hindustan or Pakistan without knowing what each is. He should at least know where his entity will be fully protected.

4. There is as yet no peace in the Frontier Province. Can there be a true referendum when strife has not completely abated? Minds

are too heated to think coherently. Neither the Congress nor the League can disown liability for disturbances by their followers. If peace does not reign in the land, the whole superstructure will come to pieces and you will, in spite of division, leave behind a legacy of which you will not be proud.

5. The sooner you have a homogeneous ministry the better. In no case can the Lague nominees work independently of the whole Cabinet. It is a vicious thing that there is no joint responsibility for every act of individual members.

6. The only way to keep the wonderful time-table made by you is to anticipate the future and ask your special staff to work out all the items presented by you, without reference to the Cabinet and then when the time comes, the report should be presented to the respective parties for acceptance, amendment or rejection.

7. The more I see things the more firmly I believe that the States' problem presents a variety of difficulties which demand very serious and fearless treatment on your part.

8. The problem of the civil and military services, though in a way not equally difficult, demands the same firm handling as the States. Gurgaon strife is an instance in point. So far as I know one single officer is responsible for the continuance of the mischief.

9. Lastly may I suggest that the attempt to please all parties is a fruitless and thankless task. In the course of our conver-sation I suggested that equal praise bestowed on both the parties was not meant. No praise would have been the right thing. 'Duty will be merit when debt becomes a donation.' It is not too late to mend. Your undoubted skill as a warrior was never more in demand than today. Fancy a sailor without his fleet, save his mother wit!

10. I have tried to be as succinct as possible. I could not be briefer. If any of the points raised herein demand a personal talk, you have but to appoint the suitable time. Please do not think of calling me for the sake of courtesy.[1]

11. I received you kind note of 10th instant whilst I had almost finished this note. It does not call for a separate reply.

[1] The addressee in his reply of June 12, said that the doubted ''whether it would be practicable to make any special staff work out all the details of splitting up of the Departments of the Government of India.''

This was finished at 9.25 p.m. It will be typed tomorrow.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

From the original: India Office Library and Records, London; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government*, 1944-47, pp. 256-8

237. LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

NEW DELHI,
4.15 a.m, June 11, 1947

CHI. CHAMPA[1],

I have your letter. My advice is that, as the girls are there. You should stay on there and return to Sevagram when it is cooler. Let the girls study whatever they can there. You do the same. Nothing is definite about me. Your place is ultimately in Sevagram. More in my next letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. CHAMPABEHN MEHTA
SATISHKUNJ
PANCHGANI, DIST. SATARA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8761. Also C.W. 1053. Courtesy: Champa Mehta

238. LETTER TO PARASURAM

NEW DELHI,
June 11, 1947

CHI. PARASURAM[2],

Shri J.P. Narayan tells me that you would like to serve the Socialist Party if I agreed. I could have no objection whatever to your bettering your prospects. I was told you were in the *Harijan* office till you felt you could join me. You know that I have not filled your

[1] Daughter-in-law of Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta

[2] Hailing from Malabar, he was Gandhiji's stenographer for two years and left the service in the beginning of January, 1947; *vide* "Letter to Parasuram", 2-1-1947

place and I have no intention of doing so. You will return when you like.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5858. Also C.W. 3072

239. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 11, 1947

MY DEAR KU.,

The Bania fingers seem to be paralysed. May your departure be as distant as possible!

Love.

BAPU

PROF. KUMARAPPA
A. I. V. I. A.
MAGANWADI
WARDHA

From a photostat: G. N. 10196

240. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

DELHI,
June 11, 1947

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have your letter. I get no free time at all, and so you should not worry if I do not reply or am late in replying.

Kosambiji has passed away. We shall be honouring his memory by sending out scholars of Pali.

We may take it that physical division of the country is now certain. Since the Congress has accepted the plan, we must now look for another way. That way I have been showing. Just as land or other property can be partitioned, so also can men's hearts. If, therefore,

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter of June 9, in which he had discussed his going to London with a delegation of Indian businessmen. Referring to the British Government's plan to scale down their war debts he had expressed the hope that Gandhiji would not let the sterling credits slip through his Bania fingers.

our hearts are true we can behave as if they had not been partitioned.

I hope Kanchan and the baby girl are doing well. Kanchan must be delighted beyond measure.

Find out where I am in July. You will also have to consider whether you will be able to free yourself from your work at the time. I shall be here up to the 15th at any rate. After that, Rama alone knows.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I got your long letter just now. I understand your unhappiness. We shall talk over the matter when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8410. Also C.W. 5622. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

241. ADVICE TO SADHUS[1]

June 11, 1947

Those who live carefree lives at the expense of other peoples's sweat can never achive spiritual progress. Today religion has become fossilized. . . The corruption that is evident today in all religious orders and the mental, physical and moral deterioration of our society are all traceable to the fact that we have looked down upon physical labour. . . You should, therefore, map out a programme which will enable you, besides spreading the knowledge of Ramanama, to serve society by performing bread labour and getting the masses to do the same.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 238.

242. TALK WITH MANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
June 11, 1947

But I do not at all believe in such violent activities.[2] They have only one occupation: to incite people wherever possible. There is a

[1] Two of them had joined Gandhiji on his morning walk.

[2] Manu had asked Gandhiji why he was so critical of the Communists.

saying in Kathiawad, now current in Gujarat, that one my look for insects in water but some look for them even in milk. These people thus have no such thing as principles. They make no distinction between truth and untruth, violence and non-violence. What is even more pitiable is that they receive their guidance from Russia. We certainly want to adopt what good things or good ideas we find in others but at the same time we should be practical. The Communists in Bengal and other places are indulging in destructive activities. They must see who will ultimately suffer by that. The country has not even become fully independent. Will it bring equality if people surreptitiously set fire to Government buildings or destory post offices and telegraph wires? And whatever is destroyed belongs to the people ultimately. That is why I do not believe in this ideology. My communism will be full of dignity and courage. To cause harm clandestinely is unmanly and barbarous. It suggests cowardice. If we examine our history we shall find that when the Rajputs fought they fought bravely in the field and at sunset they stopped combat and men of both sides met each other as friends. What does the legend of the *Mahabharata* show? There may be differences of opinion about the truth of the actual events narrated in this epic created by our ancestors but the idea behind it and its moral are wonderful. Besides, socialism or communism is in our very blood. Our prayers, our Vedas and Shastras provide innumerable instances of it. What do we say in our morning prayers?

> I desire not a kingdom nor paradise, nor even release from birth and death. I desire only an end to the pain of the anguished.

What can Lenin, the Communist leader, add to this? Why are we so much infatuated by him?

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 121-2

243. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 11, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Although I have spoken to you about the impending division of Bengal, nevertheless I wish to speak to you about it again a third time.

I have just received a letter.[1] It is full of anger. As I have told you, anger is a kind of madness. The man who is a prey to anger loses all discrimination. The letter I received shows such anger.

The writer says that I have caused great harm to Bengalis. In what way have I caused harm to Bengalis? I have said that I do not want that Bengal should be vivisected. It is true that I do not want that. If a just scheme were offered to us I would say that a Bengali is above all a Bengali, be he Hindu or Muslim or Christian. If he wants to uphold his mother tongue, uphold his country, who can interfere? I wish to tell you that even the Congress cannot interfere, nor can the League. It is very clear that if Bengal could remain united it would be a very good thing. But how is that to be? That is the question. If we wish to achieve something good but choose a method which is crooked we shall not reach our goal. If you adopt a worng path and want to go east you will end up by arriving in the west. We must therefore not choose a wrong path. We should take the right path. That is what I have been saying. But people get angry. I want to tell you that I stick to what I have been saying. I stand by what is right. If someone does not have right on his side, whether he is my brother or my son. I do not care. I therefore tell the Bengalis that if Bengal is to be divided it will be through their own decision and if Bengal is to remain united it will also be through them. So far nothing has happened. This much for Bengal.

But I have other matters brought to my attention, too. Today some friends from Campbellpur came to see me. They said that they were so far living happily there. They did not run away. But what were they to do? They are scared about what their plight would be in Pakistan and Campbellpur certainly would be included in Pakistan. I told them that whatever the situation might be in Pakistan they were after all living in India. If the map of India is divided in two, how can it affect them? I said, ‘‘You are brave people. You don’t fear anyone except God. Anyone who fears God need fear no one else in the world. I therefore cannot advise you to leave Campbellpur.” They wanted to know how they could defend themselves if they remained there. I said I had told the Hindus in Noakhali that they were not to move out from where they were. They wanted weapons. But what could they be doing with the weapons? The Government had the weapons and if the Government could not protect them, they being in

[1] From H. S. Suhrawardy; *vide* the following item.

a minority, then the Government was incompetent.Such a Government should go and I told them to force such a Government to go. If a few Muslims are left behind here are they to be slaughtered and would the Government merely watch? Then the Government no longer remains a Government. It becomes a tyranny. And why should we live under a tyranny? We have been fighting the British for so many years. Must we now fall from the frying pan into the fire? Is it for this that we have undergone so much suffering, made so much noise and resorted to satyagraha and non-co-operation?

That will not be right. I said the same thing to the Muslims of Bihar. They said that I could talk in that way because I was a Mahatma, but they were traders and had businesses and families and children to look after. I must show them a way. I said I was helpless. I could not change now in my old age.

What were they to say? They were good people and I was busy. I told them to go saying I could only advise them to be brave. I do not indulge in tall talk. Man is born to be brave. Man is not born to become cowardly or to become scared. Man is a part of God. He has in him the divine spark. I have not heard that a cow or a bullock or a horse partakes of the divine spark. It is true that as all creatures are creatures of God we are more or less alike. But the difference between man and other creatures is that we do not say of the latter, as we can about men, that they have in them the divine spark. Then if we have the divine spark, is it so that we may become frightened of each other or is it so that we may love each other? So I tried to explain things to them. But how were they to understand?

Mr. Jinnah is doing something very big. Nobody had ever dreamt that in this day and age Pakistan would become a possibility. But today Pakistan is a reality. True, it has not yet come into being. But surely by the 15th of August it will be formed. When I think over the matter I tell myself that I should not grieve over it. The Congress says there was no alternative to division. Jinnah says that he will not rest till India is divided. So let there be division. But shall I throw up my hands and accept this division? I say that nobody can cut me into pieces. Therefore nobody can cut India into pieces. This is mere talk. I tell you that if you become truthful, then whether it is Pakistan or India or whatever other name you may choose, the task will be the same. Who can tear asunder that which God has created one? But I can ask Mr. Jinnah what he intends to do with regard to those people. It is already agreed what parts are to be included in Pakistan.

Campbellpur is so included. It cannot be shifted. What are the people there to do? Should they flee? Does he want that they should continue to live there? He says that all will get justice; that in Pakistan the same standard will apply to all and no one will be discriminated against merely on the ground that he is a Hindu or a Christain. He says that all will get the same justice.

Today my tongue, my words, have lost their power. But he still has that power. He is the ruler of Pakistan and nobody can deny it. So I ask the ruler of Pakistan, what he intends doing. He should make his intentions public. Let me now go a little further. Badshah Khan is a friend. Badshah Khan can go somewhere else. He can stay with Maulana Azad. He has a beautiful bungalow. He can eat there what he wants. He can put up with Jawaharlal. He has a huge mansion. It is not like my poor hut. And what would I offer him to eat? I cannot even provide meat. He agrees to take whatever I eat, cereals, a little fruit, and that is all. But he is happy with it and thus he is my friend. He is a fakir. Dr. Khan Saheb is his brother. Dr. Khan Saheb can do nothing without Badshah Khan's help. Badshah Khan is a fakir. That is why he is "Badshah" or king. He has become a king not through the sword but through love, through service. When I go there I never hear him called by any other name. It is here that he is called the Frontier Gandhi. There they do not even know Gandhi, to say nothing of Frontier Gandhi.

So Badshah Khan and others decided that there ought to be a referendum. Tempers have not yet cooled, for Pathans are hot-blooded. What will be gained by a referendum? They will not all of them say that they want Pakistan or that they want Hindustan. Then there will be division among the Pathans. I should like to ask the leader of Pakistan if he wants a division among the Pathans. And will he compel one of the parts? Would it not be better for him instead to explain what Pakistan is ?

Pakistan has been granted. The Congress has agreed, willingly or unwillingly. Now Punjab is to be divided, Bengal is to be divided. I tell you that it is in the hands of the leader of Pakistan to stop the division of the Punjab and Bengal. Why does he not say 'I now have Pakistan. Why do you fear? We have fought. Let us forget who has been or has not been at fault. I have just signed that declaration with Gandhi that we shall not resort to the sword to gain political ends. We shall try to gain those ends by argument. Let us then argue. I will not

resort to a referendum.' If Jinnah says that he will welcome all the Pathans, those who consider him their enemy and those whom he considers his enemies—the Khudai Khidmatgars, the Khan Brothers, the Hindus, the Sikhs, the Parsis and Christians—he will welcome all, then I will say that you lose nothing by remaining in Pakistan. Why should he not say this much? Why should he not say what shape Pakistan is going to take? If he says this everyone will be happy.

Pakistan is not something imaginary. India is not something imaginary. I should ask the Congress also to explain. No poison must be spread. If poison continues to be spread, what will be the result? Then the Pakistan that has been formed will be a bad thing. The English will have gone, leaving the Indians, both Hindus and Muslims, to abuse them.

Pakistan was not inevitable. But when they saw that Hindus and Muslims could not make up their minds to work together in the Constituent Assembly, what could they do? Then they talked with both the parties and both agreed on Hindustan and Pakistan being separate entities. I am not concerned with what name you give it. But it should be done properly. If it is not done properly the poison will remain. I am sorry that Mountbatten has come today. He has not come with any wicked intention. But I have a fear that through him harm will come. Unless of course he stops doing what he must do, unless he pleads with me, pleads with the Congress, pleads with Mr. Jinnah, pleads with you and tries to satisfy everyone. But in this world nobody can please everybody. He who tries to please everybody always fails. This is the law of God. It is the experience of the whole world. So he cannot expect to please all. I would say that if the Congress is erring he should take it to task. He should say, 'I have come here. I am an officer of the Navy and I like to talk frankly.' He should say that what we do is not right, what the Congress does is not right. But why should we bother him? After all his dharma is different from ours. But why should brother fight against brother? Why now? When there was time we fought. We shed blood. What we were fighting for, we got.

I notice that Ibn Saud has sent a telegram to the Qaid-e-Azam. He says in it that he is not happy over what has happened. But he hopes that there will be peace in the world. The Qaid-e-Azam has said in reply that he also wants peace. But where is peace to come from? There is no peace in India today and if Hindus and Muslims continue

to fight as enemies, how can there be peace? I shall say that all the telegrams addressed to me, all the anger directed at me, are futile. I say simply, where there is truth there is God. Where there is non-violence, there is God. Where these are not, there is nothing.

I shall only say that Mr. Jinnah carries a great responsibility. He has to reassure the world. At any rate, he has to reassure those who are in Pakistan and those whom he wants to be in Pakistan. He has to draw them to him. If he cannot do so it is bad for India and it is bad for Pakistan. It is bad for the Hindus,and for the Muslims. I cannot wish anyone ill. My sole prayer is that we may do only what is right.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All-India Radio

244. LETTER TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY

June 12, 1947

I have your long, angry letter[1]. Instead of being angry you should be thankful to me that I have dispelled all suspicion, if there was no ground for any. . . Do you not realize that the unity of Bengal is as dear to me as it is to you? The partition agreed to by the Congress and the Muslim League, however reluctanty it may be, can still be undone by you if you have the Muslim opinion behind you and if you would, as I suggested to you when we met, stoop to conquer the Hindus.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 190

[1] Dated June 10, it read : ''I am sorry that by this statement of yours the issues also have become confused. Newspapers have been only too glad to jump on the statement that the United Bengal plan is dishonest. I do not expect any answer from you. . . or even that this letter will have the slightest effect upon you but I conisder it my duty to convey to you my reactions in view of the irreparable—pardon me, Mr. Gandhi, for using this expression—mischief that your statement might cause. Not being able to specify whom you mean, you have slandered all persons who believed in a United Bengal.'' *Vide* also the preceding item and ''Telegram to Sarat Chandra Bose'', p. 110.

245. TALK TO ARMY MEN

NEW DELHI,
June 12, 1947

I know that this is a transitional period and going through the pages of history we find that whenever there has been a revolution such inhuman things have happened. But I wanted to change history. For example we fought the battles of satyagraha on the strength of ahimsa and truth for sixty years and achieved something which is beyond imagination. In the same way I want to put army men to good use and see how theycan serve the country in a different way. But I want one thing and people want something different. What is to be done about that? Only His will truly prevails. It is no exaggeration if I say that science is being misused these days, that it is being put to diabo- lical use. Nothing can stand up to it except ahimsa. I have no doubt about it.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 127

246. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 12, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You see Khwaja Saheb[1] sitting to my right. I told you earlier how I once went to his house with Swami Satyadev. At that time Swami Satyadev would not even drink water offered by a Muslim. But Khwaja Saheb was not offended and warmly welcomed him. He was then a trustee of the Aligarh University. Later he resigned the trusteeship to join the non-co-operation movement. I seem to remember that at the time I went to his house a meeting of the League was in progress there. Was there any satyagrahi in that assembly?—I asked. The Maulanas Mohammed Ali and Shaukat Ali were in jail and everyone was feeling discouraged. Khwaja Saheb told me that I could have two satyagrahis and a half. One was Shuaib Qureshi, who was a well-known and courageous young man. Then there was another gentleman, present there, who was a staunch satyagrahi. He had once been assaulted by a mob and injured in two places on his arm. But

[1] Khwaja Abdul Majid, President, All-India Nationalist Muslim Majlis

though he was strong he remained calm and did not offer physical resistance. Lastly, Khwaja Saheb said, he himself was half a satyagrahi. From then on he has been like a brother to me.

He did not want the country to be divided. Nevertheless it has happened and he has come to me to lament it. I told him that we would not weep and I made him laugh.

Sapru Saheb too has felt hurt by what has happened. Well, the League wanted it, but the Congress did not like it. How long can a thing over which the two are not agreed last? Geographically we may have been divided. But so long as hearts too have not been divided, we must not weep. For all will be well so long as our hearts remain whole. The country may well be divided today into Pakistan and Hindustan. In the end we have to become one. Not that they will come and join us through vexation. Our behaviour will be such that even if they want to they will not be able to keep themselves away from us.

It irks Jawaharlal that the rest of the country should be called Hindustan. When one part is now Pakistan, how can the other part be Hindustan, he asks. He is right. For it will mean that it belongs to the Hindus. What then would the Christians, the Jews and the Muslims left here do? Must they leave? Must Pantji ask Khawaja Saheb, who belongs to U.P. and is a friend of his, to leave U.P.? If this happens, Mr. Jinnah will have been proved right in his assertion that the hearts were already divided.

But this is not what history says. I told you about the letter I had from the well-known historian Shri Jai Chandra Vidyalankar. He says that even when Hindus and Muslims fought against each other they never killed in the name of religion. In our childhood also we never felt that we had separate identities. In days gone by when, accompained by Hindus, Jainuluddin[1] set out on a pilgrimag to Kashi, he got repaired all derelict temples he passed on the way. The name of Allah is inscribed on the Victory Tower of Chittor.

Why should our hearts now become so soiled that we cannot sit together or see each other with a kindly eye ?

Assuming that a few Muslims have become wicked, shall we then also become wicked? This is not what Jawaharlal wants. He says that so long as Muslims were part of the country the name Hindustan was fine for the understanding was that anyone born in Hindustan belonged to

[1] Sultan of Kashmir; contemporary of Rana Kumbha of Chittor, the great-grand-father of Rana Pratap

Hindustan, whatever his religion. Now Hindustan will imply that the country belongs to Hindus. And who among the Hindus? Only the caste Hindus. But as I have said the caste Hindus—Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas—are a very small part of the population. The vast majority consists of untouchables and Advivasis. Will they be ruled by the few caste Hindus? True, today it is they who rule the roost. But if the untouchables and the Adivasis are allowed to fall under the domination of the caste Hindus, Mr. Jinnah will have been proved right in saying that a handful or caste Hindus want to keep all the rest under their heel. Could we be such fools? Could we accept the two-nation theory of Mr. Jinnah? It would mean that if my son becomes a Muslim he becomes a national of another country. If we segregate three-quarters of our fellow country-men and keep them away from the governance of the country, our Hindustan will be just as Mr. Jinnah has pictured it.

Then there will be a Parsistan, a Sikhistan, separate bits for the untouchables, the Adivasis and so forth and Hindustan will no longer remain Hindustan. It will undergo Balkanization.

If this is what the English desire there will be no place left in the world for them.

So we must not weep over what has happened. Jawaharlal has suggested Union of Indian Republic as the name for the country. That is, all will live together here. If a part wants to secede we shall not force it to remain, but those that remain shall live as brothers. We shall so treat them that they will not want to break away, they will not feel that they are separate. All will be loyal to the Union and serve it.

Today someone asked me why we should still continue with Hindustani. Such a question should not be raised. If we adopt the attitude that since Urdu will be the language of Pakistan we should have Hindi as our language then the charge of separatism against us also will be proved. Hindustani means an easy language to speak, read and write. It used to be one language at one time but lately we have Urdu loaded with Persian expressions which the people cannot understand and Hindi crammed with Sanskrit words which also people cannot understand. If we used that language we should have to eject from our midst people like Sapru. Although a Hindu, his mother

tongue is Urdu. If I start talking to him in Sanskritized Hindi he will not be able to make head or tail of it. We should therefore continue the work of Hindustani—of the Hindustani Sabha—and prove our love for those whose language is Urdu.

I see God's will in what has happened. He wants to test us both to see what Pakistan will do and how generous India can be. We must pass the test. I am hoping that no Hindu will be so mad as to show inadequate respect for things the Muslim consider sacred or fail to accord the same status to the Aligarh University as he does to Malaviyaji's Hindu University. If we destroy their sacred places we shall ourselves be destroyed.

Similarly we should protect the fire temples of Parsis and the synagogues of Jews as we protect Hindu temples. I must also say that untouchables will be treated here on par with the people of the highest caste. True Hinduism embraces all religions.

We must see that we have a hundred per cent success in this. We cannot act on the principle of tit for tat. That is an obsolete principle. The times have changed. Now if someone abuses us we have to answer him by love. We have to answer lies with truth and meanness with generosity. Always and in every situation our eyes, ears and hands should remain pure. Only then can we save ourselves; only then can the world survive. I have not the least doubt of it. We must not run away with the idea that now that we have given the Muslims what they wanted we can do what we like.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 150-4

247. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

NEW DELHI,
June 13, 1947

DEAR QAID-E-AZAM,

His Excellency the Viceroy writes saying that you will gladly accept my suggestion and put the case of Pakistan to the leaders and the people there, provided I can obtain an undertaking from the Congress that they will not interfere.

I do not know what you mean by the undertaking from the Congres that they will not interfere.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

QAID-E-AZAM M. A . JINNAH

10, AURANGZEB ROAD

NEW DELHI

From a copy: India Office Library and Records, London; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government,* 1944-47, p. 261

248. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

NEW DELHI,

June 13, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

Your two letters of 12th instant were received last night for which I thank you. I have sent a letter to Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah of which a copy is enclosed herewith.[2] The condition precedent to the Qaid-e-Azam accepting my suggestion is dangerous in its implication. My suggestion is simply what I conveyed to you in my letter[3] of 11th instant.

Before proceeding with the referendum you should invite Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah to proceed to the Frontier Province to woo the Ministers including Badshah Khan and the Khudai Khidmatgars. . . I have added, ''Before he goes, no doubt, he should be assured a courteous hearing from them.'' The visit, therefore, if it takes place, will take place for convincing and converting the Ministers and Badshah Khan and his Khudai Khidmatgars. It should in no sense be a propaganda tour. I hope both you and Her Excellency would have a quiet and cool week-end in Simla.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY

From the original: India Office Library and Records, London. Also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government,* 1944-47, pp. 260-1

[1] The addressee in his reply of even date, *inter alia,* said : ''I thought it was quite clear what I meant, that the Congress should undertake that they will not interfere with the people of the Frontier in any way whatsoever.''

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Mountbatten", 10/11-6-1947

249. A LETTER

June 13, 1947

A time-table should be drawn up for all the work to be done. If everything is done according to a schedule, one will not fall ill and one will certainly have peace of mind. That is how I am keeping myself alive. Ramanama is our only Saviour. Therefore whenever we have the time we should repeat Ramanama.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 132

250. LETTER TO A WOMAN

June 13, 1947

I have your loving letter. That you did all this on getting a son is something I do not like. I personally like daughters more. Nature has not endowed man with the power and feelings that daughters are blessed with. It will not be well with us till women shed the ignorance that makes them value sons above daughters. And you have come to me for ''thanks-giving''. By the same token you may vow tomorrow that if you become addicted to drink you would come to me for thanks-giving! I say this in jest but it will show you my distress.

Besides, I do not possess the power you attribute to me. I am a sinner like others. However, may God protect you and your son. You should bring him up so that he grows up to serve the poor of India.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 132-3

251. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 13, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

When I was walking around in Noakhali I saw that people were very frightened. And frightened poeple cannot think of God. Then we had to pass through villages and find our way along narrow tracks round the fields—something which few men and women in Noakhali ever did. But the experience I gained from this walking tour I could not have gained otherwise. We had to pass through the fields owned

by both Hindus and Muslims. So we uttered both names of God as we walked.

When God is here, there and everywhere God must be one. If then we call Him by different names and are intolerant of other people's names for God it would be nothing but madness. That is why I had posed the question whether those calling God Rahim would have to leave Hindustan—of course now we must give up calling the country Hindustan—and whether in the part described as Pakistan Rama as the name of God would be forbidden. Would someone who called God Krishna be turned out of Pakistan? Whatever be the case there this cannot be permitted here. We shall worship God both as Krishna and Karim and show the world that we refuse to go mad.

A friend has sent me a harsh letter asking me if I must still persist in my madness. ''In a few days you will be leaving this world,'' he says, ''Will you never learn? If Purushottamdas Tandon[1] says that everyone should take up the sword, become a soldier and defend himself, why do you feel hurt? You are a votary of the *Gita*.You should be beyond dualism. You should not feel grief or joy over every little thing. You talk like the foolish sadhu who again and again tried to save a scorpion from drowning while it went on stinging him. If you cannot give up your refrain of ahimsa you can at least allow others to take the path of their choosing. Why do you become a hindrance?''

If I have the steadfast intellect of the *Gita* I am going to live a hundred and twenty-five years and not a day less. If all of us cultivate steadfastness of intellect there is no reason why even one person should not live to 125 years. Of course if God so wills it He may remove me today, but I am not going to die in a hurry. I have to live and work yet. Purushottamdas Tandon is an old co-worker. We have worked together for years. Like me he is devoted to God. When I heard that he was saying the things he did I was grieved. Were we going to lose what we had learned from thirty years of experience and what we had been so assiduously cultivating? Self-defence is invoked for taking up the sword. But I have never known a man who has not passed from defence to attack. It is inherent in the idea of defence. Now, for my feeling hurt. If I had perfect steadfastness of intellect I

[1] 1882-1961, Congress leader; president of the Congress in 1923; actively associated with Servants of the People Society, Hindi Sahitya Sammelan and Rashtra Bhasha Prachar Sabha

would never have felt hurt. Even as it is I am trying not to feel hurt. But each day I advance a little further. Otherwise I should be a hypocrite for reciting the *sthitaprajna* verses of the *Gita* every day. Of course mere recital of the verses cannot make one a *sthitaprajna* in a day.

If I utter Ramanama and it does not spontaneously come out of the heart in a single day, should I give up? I had a Punjabi friend, Rambhaj Datt Chowdhary, who is now no more. Sometimes he composed poems. When he came out of jail he brought along a poem he had composed, and since he himself could not sing he asked his wife Sarla to sing it. In her melodious voice Sarla sang: ''Never admit defeat even if you should lose your life.'' And I told myself that I would never accept defeat. If I regularly recite the *sthitaprajna* verse every day I must one day achieve steadfastness of intellect. Then nothing that Tandonji or anyone else can say will make me laugh or cry. I shall then leave the laughing and crying to God and give up grieving.

The example of the sadhu and the scorpion is a good one. When some person without faith asked him why he was so set on saving the scorpion, whose very nature it was to sting, he answered: ''If it is in the nature of the scorpion to sting it is in the nature of man to put up with the sting. If the scorpion cannot give up its nature, how can I give up mine? Do I have to become a scorpion that stings and kill it ?''

In the end the learned friend has counselled me that if I cannot give up being stubborn and must persist in ahimsa I should at least not stand in the way of others. Shall I then become a hypocrite? Shall I deceive the world? The world then will only say that there is a so-called Mahatma in India who mouths sweet phrases about ahimsa while his co-workers indulge in killing.

Something regrettable has happened. I have been a friend of the Princes, and their servant too. I have been a servant also of the rich. I haae been dragging the Rajas and the rich people to the Bhangi Colony to secure their help. Where was the occasion otherwise for them to visit the Bhangi quarter? But I am a Bhangi and they come there.

I have seen Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer's statement in the Press. He is a learned man. He has been a disciple of Annie Besant. On my

Harijan tour[1] I went to Travancore on his invitation and I stayed there as his guest. I had gone there not to quarrel but to work together with him. I find his statement jarring. If he has been misreported he must forgive me but if the report is true he should give thought to what I have to say. He says that on August 15 when India gains freedom Travancore will be declared independent. And the independence he has in mind is of such a nature that already the Travancore Congress has been forbidden to hold meetings. According to a report Sir. C. P. has declared that all those who are opposed to the idea of independence should quit Travancore. This order comes from a man who himself belongs not to Travancore but to Madras. How can he say such a thing?

While there was British Raj Travancore was required to pay homage to the British. Now that India will be a free democracy how can it do what it likes? The State now is ours, that is, it is part of democratic India. As I have often said, in a democratic India a raja and a scavenger will have the same status. As human beings they will be equal. They may well be different in their intellectual endowments. If the Maharaja of Travancore is gifted with a greater intellectual calibre he should use it in the service of the people. If he uses his intellectual gifts to suppress the people it is a worthless thing. If he suppresses or annihilates the people of Travancore, does he propose to rule over the bare land?

I am told Hyderabad is going to follow suit. They have not yet stated their position very clearly. They say for the time being they will watch without joining either Dominion. But of whom will the Nizam become independent? Ninety per cent of the population of Hyderabad consists of Hindus and they include among them some well-known figures. If the independence contemplated by either Hyderabad or Travancore is not such as can make the people feel that they are free, then these States cannot survive. The times have changed and they should realize the fact.

Is this what the Englishmen, who have come here to do good, will in the end bring about? I cannot understand the English. People say I am mad because I trust everybody—yes, while I am called mad because I do not give up my insistence on ahimsa I am also called mad because I trust the British. Why do I listen to Mountbatten ?—they ask. If he is an honest man, can't he—acompetent commander—

[1] In 1934

see that to allow some six hundred Princes, who were not able to make the slightest move without permission before, to do as they like, is to make a mockery of freedom? It is a blessing that quite a number of Princes have already expressed themselves in favour of joining India.

The British say that they are going, that they will not double-cross us. Let us then pray that God may grant wisdom to the British and their representatives. May they be brave and truthful so that after they leave no one can call them names and say that they caused harm to India.

So far as I am concerned they may leave right now without waiting two months. We could then all come together and settle things between us. I even go so far as to say that even if we have to indulge in mutual slaughter, we should be left to ourselves. Only the English should go.

To the two States I shall say they may stay but they must stay only to serve the people. Even the Congress will not survive if it does not serve the people.

Let the Princes not question the right of the Congress to say anything in the matter. The Congress has rendered much service to them. I remember when I was at school something had gone wrong with the succession in Mysore and the Congress had helped to secure the throne for the Prince. Something similar once happened in Kashmir and the Congress helped. Then Baroda had once been in disgrace and the Congress made not a little effort to rehabilitate the Prince. The Congress always considered the Princes as its own countrymen. What harm could they do? In time, it was thought, they would co-operate. If the Princes now stand up and say, "Well, we are the rulers", it would not be proper. They ought to come into the Constituent Assembly, rather they should send popular representatives there.

If they do not do so then it seems that strife is going to be India's lot. We are hardly out of the Hindu-Muslim quarrel and we are faced with this new conflict with the Princes. Then there will be the I. C. S. I hope the Civil Service will conduct itself decently and no occasion for a quarrel will arise. But if there must be quarrels there are innumerable little groups who will advance their claims to this bit of the country or that. But what will become of India then? There will be nothing left for anybody. The country will be destroyed.

My fate has ever been to be involved in conflict. I want that

conflict should now cease. But I cannot see the country lose its freedom while petty factions fight.

In the end I shall say that we must go on uttering the names: Rama—Rahim, Krishna—Karim. We may not abuse the Princes, but we must tell them that they should be the servants of their people; they can be masters no more.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 154-60

252. WHO AND WHERE IS GOD ?[1]

I have defined *brahmacharya* as the way of life which leads to Brahman. The knowledge that Brahman is God does not help us to know what His real nature is. So if we have true knowledge about God we can know the correct path that leads to Him.

God is not a human being. Therefore to say that He incarnates Himself in the form of a human being is also not the whole truth. We can only say that God incarnated in the form of a man only means that that man has more godliness in him than other men. As God is omnipresent, He is everywhere and dwells within every human being and all may therefore be said to be incarnations of Him. But this leads us nowhere. We call Rama and Krishna incarnations of God because people saw divinity in them. In truth Krishna and others exist in man's imagination—they are creations of his imagination. Whether they were historical figures or not has nothing to do with man's imagination. Sometimes we tread a dangerous path in believing that Rama and Krishna were historical entities and are compelled to take recourse to all manner of arguments to prove that.

The truth is that God is the force. He is the essene of life. He is pure consciousness. He is omnipresent. In spite of that all do not get benefit from or shelter in Him or say everyone is not able to secure shelter under him.

Electricity is a great force but all cannot benefit from it. There are certain laws for generating it and therefore we can get electricity only if we abide by those laws. Electricity is a lifeless force. Men, the living beings, have to labour hard to acquire the knowledge of its laws.

[1] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanabandhu* which was published simultaneously with the source.

Similarly there are laws for knowing the great living force which we call God. But it is self-evident that it requires hard labour to find out those laws. That law in short is termed *brahmacharya*. I can say from my experience that the simplest way to cultivate *brahmacharya* is Ramanama. Devotees and sages like Tulsidas have shown us this path. No one need give undue importance to my experience. Perhaps I realized it only at Uruli-Kanchan that Ramanama was the panacea for all ills. Very little work remains to be done by a person who knows how to make full use of it, and yet his work would be most impressive.

There are numerous aids to *brahmacharya*. But the true and eternal one is Ramanama. Only when Rama descends from the lips into the heart can one know His real power. The eleven vows are certainly there to achieve this infalliable means. The ends should be such that it should become difficult to differentiate between the ends and the means. Take only truth from among the eleven vows. We can well ask whether Truth is the end and Rama is the means or vice versa.

But let me come to the point. The current meaning of *brahmacharya* is complete control over the sex organs. The golden means to attain that end is Ramanama. For proving the efficacy of Ramanama there are undoubtedly certain rules. They have been discussed once. Even so we shall dwell on them again.

NEW DELHI, June 14, 1947

Harijan, 22-6-1947

253. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

NEW DELHI,
June 14, 1947

DEAR QAID-E-AZAM,

Yours[1] of the 13th instant was received when I was at a meeting.

I had hoped that H. E. had not clearly understood your meaning. I now see that I was mistaken. I cannot ask the Congress to commit hara-kiri.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 375

[1]*Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 13-6-1947

254. TALK WITH MANU GANDHI

BHANGI COLONY,
NEW DELHI,
June 14, 1947

I can see as through a crystal the sincerity and love in Jawahar.[1] He has always argued with me and made me feel confused over so many issues. But today he hardly ever argues over anything that I say. He would be heart-broken if I hesitated to attend the A. I. C. C. He has made me a captive of his love. That is why I have proclaimed that I am at Jawahar's and Sardar's orders. He has the heart of a child. And yet he has the intellect, learning and power that only the greatest among intellectuals could boast of. He can renounce things as easily as a snake its slough. His tireless energy would put even a youth to shame.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 137-8

255. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 14, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I am very fond of this prayer of the Elephant King. The story of *Gajendramoksha* is part of our best literature. When the elephant, even with his immense strength, is helpless and sees that his own might cannot save him from being dragged down by the crocodile, then he surrenders himself to God.

We are in a similar plight. It appears to us at the moment that we are vanquished but we are not really vanquished. He who sees God by his side can never be vanquished.

God has so made man that when man is about to be drowned, when he sees that he has lost all, only then does he think of God. When he is happy he does not think of God.

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru had met Gandhiji at midday to inform him that he would be called upon to address the A. I. C. C. in the evening; *vide* p"Speech at A. I. C. C. Meeting", 14-6-1947

Yesterday I spoke[1] of what Sir C. P. Ramaswamy, the Diwan of Travancore has said. This is the age of telegraph and radio. What I said reached him and he has sent me a very long wire.[2] He has explained many things but he has not lifted the ban on meetings and processions by the Travancore Congress Committee. He has not said a word about it. This is not good. It bodes ill.

He says further that Travancore has always been a free country. This is right in a way. In ancient days our country was divided into innumerable kingdoms but India was always considered one country. Our saints and seers established places of pilgrimage in all parts of the country and did many things that promoted its social, economic and religious unity. But politically the country was never united. During the reigns of Chandragupta and Ashoka, India had to a large extent become unified but even so a small bit in the South remained outside the empire. It was only when the English came that for the first time the country became one from Dibrugarh to Karachi and Kanya Kumari to Kashmir. The English did it not for our good but for their own. It is wrong to say that Travancore was free under the British regime. The Princes were never free. They were vassals of the British, they were subservient to them. Now when the British rule is on the way out and power is coming into the hands of the people, for any Prince to say that he was always independent and shall remain independent is wholly wrong and not in the least becoming. True Sir C. P. has been a friend of mine. But what of it? Even if it be my son why should I hesitate to say what is true? If when India is free Sir C. P. declares that Travancore is independent, it means that he intends to enter into a conflict with free India.

I can only tell him that he should descend from the pedestal of power and live as a servant of the people of Travancore. If after once dispossessing you of the kingdom the British for a consideration returned you to power and gave you the right to oppress your subjects, what is there to be so proud about it? It would be a matter of pride if you considered your subjects as your masters. Of course India is not down. But if it is faced with problems it is not a gentlemanly thing to kick someone who is down. If India has become divided into two, you are not concerned with it. You must be decent and understand, you must not promote useless strife.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 13-6-1947
[2] *Vide* "Telegram from C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer"

Some friends have come from Rawalpindi with news of happenings there. Sucheta Kripalani also gave me the distressing report of the situation there. One thing made me very sad. When the Pakistan issue was still undecided the conditions there were tolerable but now the Muslims are on the rampage. They say that now that they have Pakistan, they will make slaves of everyone else. I mention this at the prayer meeting here so that what I say may reach the ears of the Muslims. It will certainly reach the ears of Mr. Jinnah. If what I say is wrong, let my Muslim brethren take me to task and say that it is not right. Let them invite me to Peshawar to see how happy Hindus, Sikhs, women and children are. But I have got the names. If some ordinary men had said such things, one need not have worried because there are always a few irresponsible people everywhere. But if all the Muslims think and express themselves in these terms then it is very bad.

Mr. Jinnah says that under the Muslim majority the minorities will live in peace. But what is in fact happening? If after Pakistan has come into being the conflict is further sharpened then it will only mean that we have been made fools of. It will mean that they will be masters and anyone following a different religion will have to stay there as a slave or a servant and admit that he is inferior to them.

I am eager to hear from them that all are well treated in Pakistan and that temples also are well looked after. When I see that I shall bow my head to them. But if that does not happen then I shall know that Mr. Jinnah was uttering a false-hood and I shall begin to suspect Lord Mountbatten who although a commander of such a high rank was in such a hurry. He could have allowed the carnage to go on, if it had to go on, and said that he would not bow before the sword.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 160-3

256. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 14, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I wish I had made some preparations for this meeting. Unfortunately I could not. You will no doubt agree that no one could be as much hurt by the division of the country as I am. And I don't

think that anyone can be as unhappy today as I am. But what has happened has happened. You know of my efforts in the building up of the Congress. Why was the Congress Working committee formed? When a govern-ment has to be run, even if it is a government of the people, a cabinet of ministers has to be appointed. Our Working Committee performs a similar function. It acts in your name. You have the power to keep it going or to dismiss it. The Working Committee has on your behalf accepted partition. Now we have to consider what our duty is. If you want to throw out the resolution[1] you can do so. But you cannot make any changes in it. If the Congress Working Committee has done this, it has done so deliberately and for certain weighty reasons. And this decision has been taken jointly by the Congress, the Muslim League and the British Government. The Working Committee does not approve of the scheme in its entirety. But even so it has accepted it. The Cabinet Mission plan had been devised by the British Government, but not this new plan. Both the Congress and the League have a share in its formulation. If you reject it, the world will call you irresponsible. You must therefore go along with those who have acted on your behalf. If you want to reject it, you must remember that what the country needs most today is peace. If you are sure that your rejecting the scheme will not lead to further breach of the peace and further disorders you can do so. Whatever you decide to do, you must do after a great deal of deliberation.

So many things are happening today which bring to mind the English saying about swallowing a camel and straining at a gnat. The decision that has been arrived at has been reached with your complicity and yet you complain of the Working Committee, the Working Committee which has men of such great calibre on it. Those people had always said that the Congress would not accept Pakistan and I was opposed to Pakistan even more. However we may leave aside my position. The decision has not been mine to take and the Working Committee has accepted it because there was no other way. They now see it clearly that the country is already divided into two camps.

But our constitution permits it and your duty demands it that if

[1] The resolution, passed by the A. I. C. C. on June 15, welcomed the decision of the British Government to transfer power and accepted the British Government's proposals of June 3, which were "likely to lead to the secession of some parts of the country from India".

you feel that the Working Committee is in the wrong you should remove it, you should revolt and assume all power. You have a perfect right to do so, if you feel that you have the strength. But I do not find that strength in us today. If you had it I would also be with you and if I felt strong enough myself I would, alone, take up the flag of revolt. But today I do not see the conditions for doing so.

We have great problems to tackle and mere criticism cannot help in the solution of great problems. It is easy to criticize but doing some work is not so easy. The Congress has to its credit some important achievement but the Congress so far has not borne the responsibility of Government. It has not even had a look at it. It was kept busy by work which was even more important. Everything cannot be done at the same time. When now the responsibility of Government has devolved on us we have gladly accepted it and we have detailed some of our best workers for the job. There they have to grapple with some very intricate problems. They have to attend to the affairs of the millions of our countrymen.

I criticize them, of course, but afterwards what? Shall I assume the burdens that they are carrying? Shall I become a Nehru or a Sardar or a Rajendra Prasad? Even if you should put me in their place I do not know what I should be able to do. But I have not come here to plead for them. Who will listen to my pleading? But the President[1] said that I should at least show my face here. Hence I have come to show my face and to speak a few words.

It is most important that you should understand the times. The demand of the times is that we should bridle our tongues and do only what will be for India's good.

You will have seen from the newspapers what I have been doing these days. But you may also hear it from me. If through me something has been spoiled then it is my duty to use all my power for putting it right. It is open to me whether to spoil it further or to mend it. I shall cite here the example of Rama. His father went mad and his mother became foolish and Rama was exiled. The people of Ayodhya were grieved but it all led to something glorious coming out at the end. I do not consider the *Ramayana* as history but the lesson that is to be drawn from it is of daily use. It would be wrong to believe that Ravana had ten heads. But there was a Ravana that was *adharma*. It was this Ravana that Rama killed during his exile and saved dharma.

[1] J. B. Kripalani

This is what we have to do today. We have to draw something good out of this bad thing. I am not the one to be upset by defeat. From my childhood up I have spent my life fighting and my struggle has been to extract good from evil. If there is gold in mud, even if there is a lot of the mud and very little gold it should not be thrown away. We should draw out gold and diamonds even from mud.

This decision puts both our religions on trial. The world is watching us. In the three-quarters of the country that has fallen to our share Hinduism is going to be tested. If you show the generosity of true Hinduism, you will pass in the eyes of the world. If not you will have proved Mr. Jinnah's thesis that Muslims and Hindus are two separate nations, that Hindus will for ever be Hindus and Muslims for ever Muslims, that the two will never unite, and that the Gods of the two are different. If, therefore, the Hindus present at this meeting claim that India is their country and in it Hindus will have a superior status, then it will mean that the Congress has not made a mistake and that the Working Committee has only done what you secretly wanted.

But if you want to save dharma you must be true Hindus. There are only a hundred thousand Parsis in India. Our ancestors gave them shelter and set an example in world history. Must we now kill them? And what shall we do with the Jews? We must so treat them that they will enjoy perfect freedom here. And what about the untouchables? It is said that Islam has risen to abolish untouchability. If you say that untouchables are nothing, the Adivasis are nothing, then you are not going to survive yourselves. But if you do away with the distinction of *savarna* and *avarna*, if you treat the Shudras, the untouchables and the Adivasis as equals then something good will have come out of a bad thing. There should be no distinction of high and low in a democratic polity. But if we oppress them and oppress those following other faiths then it will mean that we do not want India to survive, that we are out to destroy it. It does not matter if the land is divided. But if we divide the hearts then what the Congress Working Committee has done has been well done.

It is not a small thing that some States should secede from India. It is a very serious thing. Today and yesterday at the prayer I said a great deal about the States. I shall briefly repeat here what I have been saying. I myself come from a native State. Time was when I myself used to be severe with the States' people telling them not to force their burden on the Congress for we were fighting against a third power and the States' people also were giving us help in our fight. I had

wanted them to consolidate that strength. But now with the British gone, we cannot let the Princes do as they please. Those of them who now want to be independent should ask themselves what good the British ever did them. They were content to be vassals of a foreign government, the British Government, for so many years, but now that the millions of India are going to have the reins of power in their hands the Rulers refuse to be subservient to the people's government. I must tell the Diwans of all the States that if they do not advise the rulers to join the Constituent Assembly, they would be showing disloyalty to the Rulers. We do not want to be enemies of the Princes. If they want to be independent they may be independent. We shall not imprison them. If they want to stay on in the country, they must understand that their subjects are with us. If they do not want to stay in the country they may go and settle down in Paris or elsewhere. But if they want to remain in India they must remain as servants of the people. They must under- stand the implications of democratic government. They must concede that all men are created equal. They must not don the mantle of superiority. Only then can they survive for ever. They must recognize the paramountcy of the people as they recognized the paramountcy of the British Government. Then they can freely carry on in their own States. Only they cannot carry on as they did during the days of the British regime, plundering the people. They must dedicate themselves to the service of the people and become their true friends.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 142-6

257. LETTER TO PIR MAQDOOMSHAH BANORI

[After *June 14, 1947*][1]

BHAI PIR MAQDOOMSHAH SAHEB,

Mridulabehn gave me your letter. I am sorry to know what you say about the Khaksars.[2] It is bad if it is true. I am making enquiries

[1] This was in reply to addressee's letter date June 14, 1947.

[2] The reference is to the opening of fire by the police on Khaksars who in violation of the order banning processions, etc., had taken out a procession which is resulted in violence.

of the Bihar Government. I shall do what I can. Be calm.

Mridulabehn has gone to Ahmedabad.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

258. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNA SINHA

[After *June 14, 1947*][1]

BHAI SHRI BABU,

Pir Maqdoom Shah has written about the Khaksars. I enclose the letter. What are the facts?

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

259. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

NEW DELHI,
June 15, 1947

CHI. PREMA,

It is 4·30 just now. I am writing this after the prayer. Others around me are sleeping. The nib of the pen is broken and I don't wish to get up and get a new one. Meanwhile Chi. Manu came in with a glass of fruit juice and I asked her to bring me a nib. And now I am writing with a new nib, and it won't move smoothly till the grease on it has gone. This is how the old man's work goes on. What place does a man like me have in the midst of you all who are soaring in the sky in the refreshing breeze of the coming independence?

I am now waiting to see where God will lead me next.

I cannot permit you to publish my letter. It will do me no harm, But I am afraid lest my imperfect memory harm somebody else.[2]

General Shah Nawaz told me that he would not be able to do full justice to the job unless its control was entirely in his hands. I replied that, if it was so he should resign. This is all so far as I am concerned.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item; both letters are written on the same sheet of paper.

[2] The addressee had wanted to publish her correspondence with Gandhiji in connection with the Rashtra Seva Dal's allegation against Shankarrao Deo, the Congress Secretary, that he had obliged Shah Nawaz Khan to resign from the supreme command of the Congress Seva Dal in spite of Gandhiji's sympathies with the latter.

I accepted . . .'s[1] offer because she wanted to work under me in Bihar. She is a great help to me indeed. It is perfectly true that she has no faith in truth and non-violence. But, then, how many others like her have been doing such fine work! Who cares for truth and non-violence these days? You look at the matter from one point of view only. Go on doing your work to the best of your ability and bring credit to yourself.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–5: Kumari Premabehn Kantakne, pp. 325–6

260. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

NEW DELHI,
June 15, 1947

CHI. MIRA,

I have your another long though interesting letter.

I am sorry about your illness. You must get rid of it even if you have to be in Uttarkashi for a long time.

I am myself thinking of going to Uttarkashi but it is all in the realm of dreamland. Therefore take no thought of it. You may however send me every detail about it.

I must not think of Dharampal just now. Those who are with me are too many. I want to be alone but I know I cannot be. My movement is quite uncertain.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6528. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9923

261. A LETTER

June 15, 1947

When seemingly good men become bad, they develop cunning. A bad man is in the same plight as a cunning man. The [answer to the] second question is beyond your understanding. You may ask it when we meet again. If everybody did his own duty, our condition

[1] Omission as in the source

would improve immediately. The *atman* is its own friend and its own foe.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 141-2

262. A LETTER

June 15, 1947

Only the self-reliant man can progress towards success in any task. This is as true of a country as of a man. At present we have no faith in ahimsa because we have no self-reliance. It has become second nature with us in every matter to look to other people or other nations. As a result we have become so weak in body, mind and resources that we cannot protect even our own selves. That is why I tell Rajendrababu every day that it is better for us to starve than to import even a single grain of food from outside. But mine is a voice in the wilderness. Or could it be that I am growing too old and therefore losing my grip over things?

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 142

263. TALK WITH MANU GANDHI[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 15, 1947

If I did not feel unhappy I would be a person with a heart of stone. It is easy to become a saint and sainthood gives greater satisfaction. Sitting in a forest or in solitude and pursuing knowledge is no doubt a kind of spiritual living, but to practise goodness while living in the world is, in my opinion, more difficult kind of spiritual living. One may not be a scholar but one must show sympathy towards the poor and the afflicted. Yes, it is a sign of a *sthitaprajna* to remain calm in the face of a calamity or illness or the death of a dear one. But it is the duty of a man to show sympathy towards those who suffer and to endeavour to lighten their suffering.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 141

[1] Manu Gandhi had asked Gandhiji why the happenings in the country made him unhappy if he was trying to become a *sthitaprajna*.

264. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 15, 1947

I am sorry that today my silence has to begin earlier than usual, because tomorrow afternoon there is going to be a meeting of the Working Committee. I therefore give you my message in writing. I have had letters from various countries asking me one question which I wish to answer today through this message. The question in brief is: 'Why is it that in your country political parties take recourse to violence to gain political ends? Day by day violence continues to increase in your country. Can you explain why? For thirty years you fought the British non-violently. Why does it end up thus? Would you still want to give the world the message of non-violence?'

In answering the question I have to confess my bankruptcy. However, ahimsa can never suffer bankruptcy. As I have explained the ahimsa which we have practised during the last earlier thirty years has been the ahimsa of the weak. Whether this view of mine is valid or not you will judge for yourselves. What has to be admitted is that in the changed conditions of today the ahimsa of the weak has no place. The truth is that India has not so far had an opportunity to practise the ahimsa of the brave. Nothing is gained by my repeating that no power in the world can stand before the ahimsa of the brave. For the truth of this can only be proved by repeatedly and extensively manifesting it in life. So far as I can I have endeavoured to manifest it in my life. But maybe I am not fully qualified, maybe I am a beggar. Why then should I ask you to follow me when I am not able to show results? The question is pertinent and my answer is simple. I ask no one to follow me. Each should go by the voice within. If you cannot hear the voice within you may do as you like. In any case you must on no account blindly follow anybody.

Another important question is that, if I am fully convinced that India is following the path of error, why do I associate with those who are in error? Why do I not go my own way in the faith that if I am on the right path my old co-workers will all return to me? I like the question. I shall not argue against it. I will merely say that my faith and my creed are as they were. They have not weakened. It is possible that my method was wrong. When one is in a difficulty old experiences and old patterns help but one should not become merely

mechanical.

I further request all those who wish to advise me that they should have patience with me and above all they should join me in the faith that to ameliorate the pains of this suffering world there is no way save that of ahimsa, however arduous it may be. Millions like me may not be able to practise this in life. For this they themselves will be to blame, not ahimsa.

I may here mention another matter to you. Although I am observing silence, some friends from Travancore came to see me. They assured me that there was not the least bit of exaggeration in what I had been saying concerning that State. They also told me that where meetings were organized they were lathi-charged and yesterday some thirty-five persons were taken into custody. The voice of the people there is being throttled. Whatever may be the case I have not the least doubt that in a free India it is an absurd thing for a State to proclaim independence. This may even be interpreted to mean that they have declared war against the hundreds of millions of people of free India. It is a very unwise thing especially when the Maharaja does not enjoy the support of his people. It was perhaps possible when the British were at his back. But now the conditions are drastically changed.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 163–5

265. A LETTER

June 16, 1947

Every day all kinds of reports keep appearing in newspapers. This should not happen. They are all mere speculation. Just by chance a report may turn out true and from this newspapermen claim that they can foretell the future. There is, however, only one power in the world that knows the future and that is God, and He never makes predictions. I never read the predictions appearing in newspapers and I would advise you too not to read them. I have never seen anybody profiting from them. I would, therefore, request you not to trust even English or British newspapers.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 151

266. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 16, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

This morning when I was observing silence, Shri Purushottamdas Tandon paid me a visit. I have told you how I was pained by Tandonji's statement that every man and woman should carry arms. A correspondent had asked me how I, a votary of the *Gita,* could feel hurt. The letter also said that Tandonji believed in the principle of tit for tat. I asked Tandonji about it. Tandonji explained that although he did not believe in the principle of tit for tat, he certainly believed that everyone should carry arms for self-defence. This he said was also the teaching of the *Gita*.

I told Tandonji that he should at least write to the friend and explain that he did not believe in the principle of tit for tat so that he should not labour under a misapprehension. I do not believe that the *Gita* advocates violence for self-defence. I understand the *Gita* differently. If the *Gita* or some other Sanskrit work advocates this I am not prepared to accept it as Shastra. An utterance does not become scriptural merely because it is couched in Sanskrit. Tandonji reminded me that I had advised the killing of the monkeys which ravaged fields or otherwise caused harm. I do not like to kill any living thing, not even an ant. But the question of fields is a different question and people differ.

Tandonji said we might not adopt the principle of tit for tat or a tooth for a tooth and a slap for a slap. But if we did not take up arms and show our strength how were we to defend ourselves?

My answer is that self-defence is necessary; but how does one defend oneself? If someone comes to me and says, 'Will you or will you not utter Ramanama? If you do not, look at this sword.' Then I shall say that although I am uttering Ramanama every moment I will not do so at the point of the sword. Thus I shall risk my life in self-defence. Now if I recite the *Kalma* I do not lose my religion. What does it matter if I say in Arabic that Allah is one and that Mohammed is His only Prophet! There is no sin in saying this and if by my merely saying this they accept me as a Muslim, I shall consider it a matter of pride. But if someone comes to me and wants to make me recite the

Kalma at the point of the sword I will never do so. I will defend myself with my life. I want to stay alive to prove this paradox. I do not wish to stay alive in any other way.

I have said that geographically our land may very well be divided but that our hearts should not be divided. But who will listen to me? The day was when everyone listened to Gandhi because Gandhi showed the way to fight the British. And how many Britishers were here? Only seventy-five thousand. But they had such resources, such might, that, as Annie Besant said, they answered brickbats with bullets and our violence was wholly ineffective. Ahimsa promised to be more efficacious, so Gandhi was looked up to, but today they say that Gandhi cannot show the path and therefore arms should be taken up for self-defence. One can then only say that all these past thirty years that we spent in non-violent struggle had been wasted. We should have thrown out the British through violence.

But I do not think that the thirty years were wasted. It was good that under the severest oppression we remained non-violent. They used their arms against us. But we were not cowed down and the message of the Congress spread throughout the length and breadth of India. Only it did not penetrate the seven lakh villages of India because our ahimsa was the ahimsa of the impotent. No one at the time showed us how to make an atom bomb. Had we known how to make it we would have considered annihilating the English with it. But there having been no alternative my advice was accepted. But today people say that nobody now cares for me.

But all of you who come here to the prayer meeting every day, why do you do so? How do I force you? You come bound by the string of love and quietly listen to me. If I can thus make myself heard by even the Hindus alone, you will see that India holds her head high in the world. I say nothing of the Muslims. They think I am their enemy but the Hindus and the Sikhs do not consider me their enemy. If the Hindus will heed my advice regarding the non-violence of the brave I shall tell them to throw their arms into the sea; I shall show them how the brave can rely on non-violence.

The Congress Working Committee consists of only a handful of men. I have seen that some of them are narrow- minded, as I could gather from one or two speeches. But I have information from all over India. They say, ‘Where will the Muslims now go? What the Muslims can do we can do, for we are in a majority. After the British leave we

shall rule over them. We consider ourselves rightful rulers because we went to jail and submitted to beatings and whippings.' It does not become us to talk in this way. This is violence. If you do not wish to listen to any talk of non-violence, if you are predisposed towards violence it is a matter of shame. If you go by the principle of tit for tat, you can take it that both the faiths will be destroyed. Islam will be finished, as also Hinduism.

If we practise the non-violence of the strong, the Pakistan that they have secured will only remain a plaything. We shall lose nothing through non-violence.

I do not consider Pakistan and India as two different countries. If I have to go to the Punjab, I am not going to ask for a passport. And I shall go to Sind also without a passport and I shall go walking. Nobody can stop me. They might say I am their enemy but if I went I would go not to become a member of some Assembly but to serve and it would not be for the first time in my life. I went to Noakhali and let no one imagine that, because it is now to be included in Pakistan, I would not go there again. A part of me lies there. I shall tell the Hindus there that if they are true Hindus they should not fear anyone even if they are surrounded by murderers.

I shall consider myself brave if I am killed and if I still pray to God for my assassin and I shall utter the name of God not with my lips alone but seeing Him in my heart. I shall not go to temples and mosques looking for God.

Today Badshah Khan, who has been so brave, is not able to show bravery. For years he has been instructing the Pathans in ahimsa. But today he says he cannot declare allegiance to India. If he did that there would be a carnage ten times as bad as in Bihar. What is he to do? Ahimsa is not a commodity which can be bought in the market. If we could display true ahimsa, the Frontier Province alone could save the whole of India.

The Muslims cannot drive a bargain with us. They cannot have all that they were given under the British regime. They cannot be given separate electorates if they ask for them. Separate electorates were a poisonous weed planted by the British but we shall be just to them. Their children will have as much opportunity of education as other children. In fact if they happen to be poor, they will have even more facilities. If we show such justice the people of India will have

proved their courage[1].

The A. I. C. C. passed its resolution only yesterday. But Gandhiji received two newspaper cuttings, one from a Nagpur paper purporting to report a speech by the Premier of the Central Province and the other criticism of the speech. The speech makes the Premier say as follows: It was Mr. Jinnah's claim that the Muslims had a separate culture and that in Pakistan only Islamic law would prevail. It would be difficult for non-Muslims to live in Pakistan in such conditions. Pandit Shukla pointed out that while there were 1,85,00,000 Hindus in the Muslim areas of British India, There were 30 million Muslims in the Hindu areas of British India, and these have lived in these parts for generations. What would be the condition of these, Pandit Shukla asked. They would be treated as aliens. They would have no citizenship rights. The grants that were being given today for their education would be withdrawn and they would have to depend on their own resources.

The report went on to say: Pointing to Minister[2] Hasan who was sitting next to him, Pandit Shukla jocularly observed that Dr. Hasan would not only have to quit the Cabinet, but that he would not be allowed to live in Wardha. He would have to seek shelter in Pakistan. Even though religious and cultural freedom might be conceded to the Muslims living in Hindustan, they would have no representation in the legislatures or in the services. They would have to maintain their own institutions and they would be entitled to no Government grants.

If the report was fairly accurate, Mahatma Gandhi observed, the speech was unfortunate, although it might have been made in lighter vein. Surely the Union Provinces were not going to be caught in the trap prepared for them. They had to show by their action that the Muslim members in the Provincial Cabinets were just as welcome as they were before and that no matter what was done in the so-called Pakistan provinces, the Union Provinces would be strictly just and fair in their treatment of their Muslim brethren. Pakistan should make no difference in their regard for the Muslims as well as the other minorities. This had no reference to the apples of discord which the foreign power had thrown in their midst such as separate electorates.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 166-70; and *The Hindu,* 17-6-1947

267. A LETTER

June 17, 1947

Your letter was read out to me today at 4·15 after the morning prayer. After taking honey in hot water, I am now replying to it.

[1] What follows is from *The Hindu.*

[2] For Health

Maybe I read your letter or listened to it in a hurry. But one may be able to concentrate even when one is in a hurry . . . .[1] I have spent my whole life in examining principles and I am still doing the same. I may not be able to convince you just now. But won't you agree that "one had rather lose a hundred thousand than one's credit"?

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 159

268. A LETTER

June 17, 1947

Time is kind and time is also a healing friend, but it is equally cruel and can also be an enemy.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 159

269. LETTER TO SURENDRARAI B. MEDH

NEW DELHI,
June 17, 1947

CHI. MEDH[2],

Tell the satyagrahis[3] that they should adhere to truth and non-violence and not violate their pledge even in the face of death.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5005

270. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 17, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I have no hand in choosing the *bhajans* that are sung these days. But often the *bhajan* that is sung fits the occasion. Today's *bhajan* says that in the company of the good one forgets the notions

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] A co-worker of Gandhiji in South Africa
[3] Of South Africa

of self and others and no one is an enemy or a stranger. This indeed is the need of the hour. But everyone coming to me says, 'However much you may shout, the separation is going to endure. Each party must consolidate itself. I do not like this kind of talk, though I am not much worried either. I shall continue to say that what has happened has happened; only it should not be sealed and made permanent.

As you know, when the prayer ended yesterday, a friend asked a question. I asked him to put it in writing. He has done so. He says that if the decision about Pakistan is not undone he and his wife will both end their lives by fasting and they will do the fasting here at this spot.[1] But if someone must fast it is I. There is a philosophy about everything, that is, there are certain laws and certain methods for doing everything. Even a small thing like the charkha has a philosophy. We did not know it before but now a theory has been evolved, and we have come to realize the power of the charkha. I go so far as to say that the whole world will gain its freedom through the charkha. The world will not be freed through the atom bomb. There are two kinds of Shastras in the world—one *satvik* and the other *rajasik*, one conforming to dharma, the other not conforming to dharma. The shastra of the atom bomb does not conform to dharma. It does not show faith in God. It usurps the place of God.

Fasting, similarly, has its shastra. Fasting not governed by a philosophy does not conform to dharma. If someone says he will fast so long as God does not appear before him, he may well die but God will not appear before him.

Fasting for a public cause also has its shastra and I am the only one adequately versed in it. I cannot consider the fast proposed as conforming to dharma. My heart is not going to be touched by it. The world too will have no sympathy with it. I should therefore advise the couple to give up this idea and return to their home. This does not mean that they should sit still. We must not let the thought enter our minds that we have become separated. Let us not recognize Pakistan in our hearts; let us not consider anyone an enemy or an outsider.

All this will come about by keeping the company of the good, by reading noble works and by giving up wicked thoughts. Only then

[1] Gandhiji could not offer them hospitality as he himself was a guest there. So the couple fasted in front of the Bhangi Colony. They however yielded to Gandhiji's advice the next day, i.e., June 18, and broke their fast saying henceforth they would devote themselves to constructive work; *vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 19-6-1947

will our hearts become cleansed of evil thoughts. Cleansing the heart is not an easy thing. Only by uttering Ramanama can this be accomplished.

But our minds today are filled with hankering after comforts. We will not think of Rama but rather of a cigar. Our thoughts turn in wrong directions. People continue to proclaim that they will teach the Muslims a lesson. We thus lend support to the argument for the perpetuation of Pakistan.

It is Mr. Jinnah who created Pakistan. We had not thought it possible even in our dreams that he would manage to get it. But he is a brave man. With the help of the British he has succeeded in getting Pakistan. If we now shut our eyes to it and go about saying that we shall teach the Muslims a lesson it is not going to undo the fact of Pakistan.

I am not asking you to kowtow to the Muslims. One does not kowtow to one's younger brother. One does one's duty by one's younger brother and earns his trust.

You will have seen from the newspapers that I had been to see the Viceroy today.[1] The Viceroy asked me, "Did you see the newspapers today?" I said, I rarely saw newspapers. Then he said, "We have accomplished something good today." He had received separate reports from the Hindus and the Mussalmans on the question of partition and was able to make them agree to produce a joint report.

What I say is that when two brothers have decided to sepa- rate it cannot be done by losing temper. If there is a chair in the house it cannot be broken into two. If there has to be division in the ratio of three and one the statistics will have to be worked out very carefully. The good thing we have started with the formation of a committee should be carried further. One's goodness is not proved merely be one's displaying a smile. If what we have is not merely sweet words but a sincere desire to work together, then I will say that the creation of Pakistan has been to the good. Then it will not be necessary to trouble the Viceroy. We shall merely tell the experts to sit together and compile an inventory that will satisfy both the parties. Where calculation helps we should resort to calculation. Where calculation does not help we should draw lots. But we must not fight.

[1] For the Viceroy's report of the meeting, *vide* "Lord Mountbatten's Note on Interview with Gandhiji and M. A. Jinnah", 17-6-1947

Lastly, I have today received a lengthy wire from Sir C. P. Ramaswamy, the Diwan of Travancore, in which he has tried to explain to me that he has the support of the Christians and others in Travancore. I dislike such wires. By sugarcoating something bitter it cannot be made sweet. The very basis of the thing is wrong. "Come now, we are independent." Independent of whom? Of the people? What is to be gained by becoming independent of India? Why do they indulge in this kind of circumlocution? They should boldly say that they are with India. Only then will it be said that they are loyal to their people; else they are disloyal to them.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 170-3

271. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

NEW DELHI,
June 18, 1947

CHI. DINSHAW,

I have your letter. Let the [clinic] at Uruli-Kanchan be a separate one.

The nature-cure clinic at Purandar is not required for what I have in mind, but for Gulbai's sake you may buy it over if you have the money.

I am not in a position to send for you nor have I the time. I have lost interest in everything. I have not the strength to guide you. In the case of nature-cure, nothing save Ramanama has any relevance in my life. Read what I am writing for the *Harijan* journals these days, both in Gujarati and English.

You may write to me in English whenever you want to.The bond of love that has grown between us is for ever. But you are an urban, anglicized gentleman, whereas I am an unsophisticated villager. That is why you and I cannot see the same thing in the same way. Similarly although I am very close to my English friends they go their way and I go mine. Still the love grows; it certainly does not diminish. Truth binds us all.

Now I have covered everything. Is there anything more?

Of course you are free to come whenever you wish.

I understand what you say about Manu. You have said enough.

Can you read all this?

Blessings to all of you from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

272. A LETTER

June 18, 1947

. . .[1] is making a great mistake in leaving home. Is there any difference between Sevagram and Gopuri? It is best that he should live where he feels happy. We can live only in our own bodies. Another's body may seem attractive to us, but we can hardly live in it.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 165

273. LETTER TO MOHAN SINGH THAKUR

June 18, 1947

CHI. MOHAN SINGH,

So your brother is gone, as you too will, and I and all of us. Our grief is due to selfishness. So do not grieve. Do what you think is your duty. If you can come back, do.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi: C. W. 10429. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

274. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

NEW DELHI,

June 18, 1947

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your short but newsy letter. Letter[2] to Mohan Singh is enclosed. Read what I have written to Chimanlal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat the Hindi: G. N. 1980

275. A LETTER

June 18, 1947

I have your letter. I think your relations with the women are not pure but are tainted with lust. You should free yourself of it. When a

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

person belongs to an organization, he should abide by its rules.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 165

276. A TALK

NEW DELHI,
June 18, 1947

If people start fasting over every little thing right from now, what is going to happen later? For my part I shall certainly plead with them[1], try to make them see reason, but if, nevertheless, they fast I am not going to yield even if they come to the verge of death. Because even that is a test of my truth and non-violence. To yield to a wrong thing out of fear is also a kind of lie and violence. A devotee of truth and non-violence remains steadfast even if the whole world goes against him. Only then can he propagate the principles of truth and non-violence. Who knows that God is not thus testing me? But I feel that Hindus themselves are responsible for subverting Hinduism. How can there be peace when there is no unity? There are so many castes and sub-castes among Hindus. Why, they have even separate festivals. I remember there is a festival called *Shitala Satam*[2] in the month of *Shravan*. My mother used to say that *Shravan Sud Satam*[3] was of *Kanabis* and *Shravan Vad Satam*[4] was ours. I can cite many such differences. These so-called small things have a profound impact on the people and make them feel that they are separate from others. That is why I say that the scholars, poets and writers of today should try to stamp out such bad customs and do their best to promote unity through their speech, thought and deed. Such customs were perhaps appropriate for the period in which they originated. But now we must get out of the rut. And religious leaders, writers, poets and scholars should lead the way. If that happens people will slowly come nearer to each other and, if they do so outwardly, they will automatically come nearer mentally also.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 165-6

[1] The Maharashtrian couple who had decided to go on a fast; *vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 17-6-1947

[2] Seventh day of the month

[3] Seventh day of bright fortnight of the month

[4] *ibid*

277. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 18, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I spoke to you yesterday about a friend and his wife who were fasting on the road outside Valmiki Mandir. Today they have sent me a very respectful letter. But the letter does not show wisdom. They are young, I am old. If I say that I possess a little wisdom they should accept my word. They say they can see the wisdom of what I say but that their conscience will not let them give up their fast.

You must have heard of the *Gita Rahasya* written by Tilak. It is so rich in thought that it needs to be studied again and again. I read it in Yeravda jail. True, I do not find myself in agreement with everything he says but the fact remains that Tilak was a great scholar and had a vast knowledge of Sanskrit literature. It is a long time since I read this work and so I cannot remember his exact words. But I shall tell you the substance of what he says. I think what he says is right.

He says at one place that "conscience" is an appropriate word for the inner voice, but that when one says that one acts according to the promptings of one's conscience it does not really mean that one acts according to the promptings of one's inner voice. According to the Vedic thought all creatures are endowed with conscience. But in many people conscience is dormant, which is to say the inner voice is torpid. How can it then be described as "conscience"? According to our Shastras the inner voice awakens only when one follows *yama-niyamas* and practises various other disciplines. I have digested this teaching of Tilak well so that I am able to tell whether what is taken for the inner voice is really the inner voice or not. If a voice told a thief, 'kill that girl, cut off her limbs and take away her jewellery', I would not say it was the still small voice within. It would be sheer wickedness. We are all today sunk in stupor. It frequently occurs to us to kill innocent children. But the prompting does not come from the inner voice.

Then I am an expert on fasting. Some Jain friends had resorted to fasting merely because they were not able to get something which they wanted. I persuaded them to terminate the fast. I told you also how even a great scholar like Dharmanand Kosambi had given up fasting on my advice. Kaka Kalelkar, who is here, tells me that just

before his death Dr. Kosambi had told him that I had been right in advising him to give up his fast. So, as an expert on fasting, I advise the couple to terminate their fast if they can do so. Three days should be enough.

You will have seen from the newspapers that I met Mr. Jinnah yesterday. I could not tell you about this meeting before because such a meeting had not been mooted. When I was at the Viceroy's House, the Viceroy told me that Mr. Jinnah was present there and that I should see him. Well, I could not have refused. I am the kind of person who would not hesitate to visit Mr. Jinnah at his house. We met and we agreed that it would be good if we also met Badshah Khan. Then we were to see the Viceroy in the evening. But Badshah Khan, like the humble man he is, had taken a bus to Deoband and it took him not three but five hours to get back and this meant that we could not see the Viceroy again in the evening.

The Viceroy has left Delhi today but he would have been happy if we could have met. We therefore went to Lord Ismay at 4.30 in the afternoon. Badshah Khan has now gone to see Mr. Jinnah at his residence and he is still with him.

Do not please build any great hopes on this. But we can certainly hope that the wound that we have received in the shape of Pakistan can be prevented from becoming still deeper. We can but strive. The result is in the hands of God. Let us pray that the effort may lead to a happy result.

What would be a happy result in this instance? This, that the Pathans in the Frontier Province may all be united. Pathans are a sword-happy people. One can hardly find a Pathan who cannot wield a sword or a gun. From generation to generation vendetta rules their lives but Badshah Khan saw that they could defend themselves better by dying than by killing. He wanted the Pathans to develop this lofty courage and render service. But before this dream could be realized this question of referendum came up.

Some will now say that they want to be with Pakistan. Some others will say that they will remain with the Congress. And the Congress of course has come to be regarded by some as an organization of the Hindus. This will create a schism among the Pathans and may lead to a strife which it may be difficult to curb. They will indulge in mutual slaughter. Badshah Khan wants that by some means it may be made possible for the Pathans to remain free without having to submit to a referendum. They should make their

own laws and remain united. It would not then matter whether they chose Pakistan or India. They say they have no money. They are a poor people. They do not want to be an independent nation. But they would decide which country to join after they have got over the present quarrels.

Then it also irks Dr. Khan Saheb that some Hindus found it necessary to take refuge in Hardwar. Therefore Badshah Khan wants these Hindus to return to N. W. F. P. There are still numerous Hindus in the N. W. F. P. who are too poor to be able to leave. They can feel secure only after this question of the referendum is settled. It is for this that Badshah Khan has gone to see the Qaid-e-Azam. What he brings from there remains to be seen.

Khwaja Abdul Majid has been to see me. He wants to be assured that, now that Pakistan has been conceded, the Nationalist Muslims will not be ignored. The Khwaja Saheb, being a good Muslim, also considers himself a good Hindu just as I being a good Hindu consider myself a good Muslim. He says that separate electorates should be done away with for we all want to present the Union of India to the world as a united nation. We may follow different religions but in the eyes of the law we shall all be citizens of India and anyone who is loyal to India should have the same rights as everyone else. I assure Khwaja Saheb that he would certainly have all those rights. At least there are two of us, who regard each other as a man of religion and goodwill. We shall see to it that no one is deprived of his rights on the ground of religion. At the same time we have to see that no special concessions are made on religious grounds. This is what Mr. Jinnah did. First he advanced eleven demands, then fourteen, then twenty-one and in the end he advanced the demand for Pakistan. Nobody now shall be permitted to do this. India is a vast country and it has a place for everyone who will be loyal to it.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 173-7

278. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
4.30 a. m., June 19, 1947

CHI. KANCHAN,

I have your letter. I hope you are now content. Munnalal is in your hands, and so certainly are you in his. If you understand this, it

will be more than enough. If the Ashram does not improve, how can Sevagram improve? If Sevagram does not, how can India?

May all of you keep well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 6251. Also C. W. 6975. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

279. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

NEW DELHI,

After morning prayers, June 19, 1947

CHI. MATHURADAS,

This is only to tell you that I admit the truth of what you say.[1] It is very true that even-mindedness is yoga.[2] Neither Truth nor ahimsa can be attained without this even-mindedness. Whenever I get excited, I feel ashamed of myself afterwards, become unhappy and my hope and wish to live for 125 years loses its edge. Long life is not for indulgence. Are not anger and impatience also forms of indulgence? Why should you become unhappy because I am unhappy? Rest assured that I am quite vigilant. My position is like that of a castor-oil plant on a treeless heath. Wait and watch. I have now a whole heap of copies of the *Allopanishad*. The search has certainly benefited us. These days there are no interruptions during the prayers.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Gujarati: *Bapuni Prasadi*, pp. 217-8

280. A LETTER

June 19, 1947

With regard to you letter the following emendation easily suggests itself. Cohabitation for purposes of procreation is still after all sense-enjoyment. It is, therefore, right to forbid it. But I do not wish to stretch the point. Your argument as a whole seems correct. But I cannot go into it in detail. I am returning the letter. Since you have

[1] The addressee had conveyed his uneasiness at Gandhiji's growing irritability.
[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 48

faith in me, you seem to think along lines similar to mine . . . .[1] It is perfectly possible that pure conduct may not have behind it pure thought. What we must examine is the thought and in doing so we must be severe. Examine a thought with complete objectivity, even if it be the thought of an impure man.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 172

281. LETTER TO MAHESH DATT MISHRA

NEW DELHI,
June 19, 1947

CHI. MAHESH,

I have your two letters. My going there has been postponed. It will not be possible to have you or anyone else with me. Your place is to study. It will be different if I settle down somewhere else. Mridulabehn was saying to Manubehn: "Why does Bapu stop Mahesh? His place is in his own town or in the C. P." If you think I am stopping you then you are wrong. You can go where you wish, but there should be some stability.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6719. Also C. W. 4463. Courtesy: Mahesh Datt Mishra

282. LETTER TO DAMODAR

NEW DELHI,
June 19, 1947

CHI. DAMODAR,

I have your letter. You must recover fully.

What is there in your brother's inter-caste marriage to ask for my blessings? For a marriage of this nature, a person like you should not ask for anyone's blessings.

Most marriages take place for pleasure, by no means for preser-

[1] Omission as in the source

vation of dharma. It should be enough that they are performed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi. Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

283. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 19, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Yesterday at the end of the prayer meeting a friend asked me a question. I told him to put it in writing, which he did. But the slip of paper containing the question remained in someone's pocket and when the garment was washed, the slip suffered in the process and when it reached my hands nothing could be made of it. It is a matter of shame but the questioner is not present at the meeting so I do not know to whom I should express my apology.

What I told you yesterday about the couple fasting here for the last 3 or 4 days first made them somewhat angry. How could I describe myself as an expert on fasting? Why was I so proud? But when I met them at 9 o'clock last evening I explained to them that if a man five-foot tall claimed to be five-foot tall he could not be called proud. They had said it in the heat of the moment. And they realized that rather than fast they should not in their hearts recognize the division of India. They broke their fast with milk and fruit. I congratulated them. They asked me, "Tell us, how can we co-operate with injustice ?" I said, "Give up the gains accruing from injustice." We should not use coercion against anyone. We should not benefit from injustice. This is the path of non violence. This is non-co-operation.

I had said yesterday that Badshah Khan was seeing Mr. Jinnah and that we should pray for the success of the meeting. It may be asked what fruit our prayer has yielded. I cannot tell you more than what Mr. Jinnah has stated in the newspapers. He says that the talks were cordial. That is good. But what has been the issue? He says the issue will be known when Badshah Khan sends word from the N. W. F. P. This means that there is no issue. But we cannot expect to see today the fruit of yesterday's prayer. He who expects this does not know

God. Let me tell you something about the significance of prayer.

We cannot demand the results of prayer nor may we give up praying. We may give up food and drink for a time and occasionally we should do so. But we may never give up praying. We must go on praying till our last moment. As food nourishes the body so Ramanama nourishes the soul. There are times set for the recitation of *Gayatri* in the morning and evening worship and for *namaz*. But there is no time set for uttering Ramanama. He who utters Ramanama with every breath is blessed. Such a man can live to 125 years. If I die before completing 125 years then you may consider that I had not attained to the state that I have described.

I shall go to Hardwar the day after tomorrow. Jawaharlal will be accompanying me. He is supreme in the United Provinces. Today he is supreme in the whole of India. We are faced with a complex situation. There are thousands of refugees there. What shall we do about them? I am against providing free food to people. One must do something for the food one gets. God has ruled that only he who works shall eat. I must tell the refugees that they must work. Of course they should try and get back home as soon as they can. But in view of the happenings in the N. W. F. P. I cannot ask them to rush into the jaws of death. I must ask the Muslim League that they should bring to book all those in Pakistan who have committed crimes. I do not advocate abuse for abuse and violence for violence. But it is the duty of the Government to protect the people it governs even if they be followers of a different faith. True, they have asked everyone to come back. But how can people go back if they know that they will be ill-treated there. Therefore the government there should declare that it will punish the criminals and see that people are protected. If they do this I will see to it that the refugees do not stay on in Hardwar even for a day.

In the N. W. F. P. today it has been made clear to the people that they are to cast their ballot for either India or Pakistan. India is being represented as Hindu raj and people are reminded of Bihar. In this atmosphere hardly any Muslim would want to give up Pakistan for India. Under the circumstances Badshah Khan wants that for the time being N. W. F. P. should be a free province, i. e., without joining either Pakistan or India, the Pathans should be allowed to formulate their own laws and frame their own constitution.

The Congress should tell the Pathans to make their own

constitution and assure them that the Congress will not interfere in it in any way. We shall have such control as the centre exercises in other provinces, but in internal matters they can carry on their affairs according to the *Shariat*.

The League should similarly declare that the provinces to be included in Pakistan will have freedom in internal matters and the centre will be responsible only for certain given subjects. That is to say, we shall be having two centres with the provinces enjoying the maximum autonomy. If this is conceded there will no longer be any need for a referendum. I will also then advise the Pathans that since they are nearer to Pakistan geographically they should join Pakistan. Today I cannot tell them this because I do not know how things in Pakistan are going to shape.

If in this confused situation a referendum is still considered necessary it may be held but the choice should not be between Pakistan and India but between Pakistan and Pathanistan. This, simply, is what I wish to tell them.[1]

He was, however, able to tell them that the movement for a Free Frontier State called Pathanistan had come to stay, for it was a solid movement. If it was an anti-Indian movement, it was a bad and mischievous thing. If it was meant to conserve, as he thought it was, pathan life and culture, it deserved every encouragement. Geographically, it was only a bit of India. Numerically too, the Pathans were very few, compared to the millions of India. But their war-like qualities and their position on the map of India gave them a unique importance.

Also, the Frontier was a Congress province. It was so when the Congress was in the wilderness, and it was now the same too when Congress was in power. It was also represented on the Constituent Assembly. But now, it was face to face with a delicate position. There was the referendum immediately to be held. Both the Congress and the League were committed to it. It was not open to any one party to vary the terms. The issue was to be Pakistan or Hindustan. That had a sinister meaning in the context of what had happened in front of them. Were they to be with the Hindus or with the Muslims ?

The Congress was not a Hindu organization. It never was and, he hoped, never would be. But how could the Pathan mind grasp the difference in the midst of confusion becoming worse confounded from day to day? He would advise the Congress to make its position clear and would ask the Muslim League to do likewise. Let both honour the Pathan sentiment and let the Pathans have their own constitution

[1] What follows is from *The Hindu.*

for internal affairs and administration. It would promote Pathan solidarity, avoid internal conflict, retain Pushtu culture and the Pushtu language. If they would do that, they would be better able unitedly to federate with Pakistan or the Union of India, and that would be his advice whether there was a referendum or not. Any premature referendum would be a leap in the dark.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 178-82; and *The Hindu,* 29-6-1947

284. LETTER TO VINA

NEW DELHI,
June 20, 1947

DEAR VINA,

Your letter is unnecessarily long. I have thought of you as a determined girl with terseness of speech. It therefore pains me when I find it otherwise.

Of course the best men or women irrespective of party laws should be selected for responsible service, provided that they are always lovers of the country and incorruptible.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

285. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

NEW DELHI,
June 20, 1947

CHI. AMRIT BABU,

Your two letters. I am sorry about Ramen[1] and Abha[2]. How I wish both will be healed under Kularanjan Babu. Shanti Kumar[3] wants Abha in Bombay. I have sent his communication to Kanu. My movement is unsettled. Otherwise I would have her with me. My own inclination is that she should give the fullest trial to Kularanjan Babu.

[1]Addressee's son and daughter, Ramendranath Chatterjee and Abha Gandhi; they were both ill and taking nature-cure treatment under Kularanjan Mukherjee in Calcutta.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Shantikumar N. Morarjee.

About Paniala[1] you should discuss with Satis Babu and act as he decides. It grieves me that I am not in Noakhali. I do not know when I shall return. The poor widows should be supported. You can show this to Satis Babu.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 10567. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

286. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 20, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I shall set out for Hardwar tomorrow morning. And I shall be back by the evening. I expect it will be night by the time I return. I shall therefore not be present here for the prayer. If you desire you can nevertheless assemble and pray. I have to go there to reassure the refugees. I do not think I shall be able to do much. But it is a duty I have to do.

Today someone has sent a letter to this little girl Manu warning her that if she recites verses from the Koran at the prayer she will be killed. To threaten someone thus is not in keeping with our traditions and Manu is only a little girl. If she recites verses from the Koran she does so under my instructions. I myself do not have a good voice. If it is a joke, it is not a good joke.

As for the verses from the Koran, I have explained my position to you. There is nothing objectionable in the verses. I have explained to you the meaning. The Muslim friend who is my constant companion says that he who recites this prayer is not harassed by Satan. Tulsidas says the same thing in his *Ramayana* about the virtue of Ramanama and we have the same feeling about the *Gayatri Mantra.* Why then such threats? What good do they do? If any good comes from such threats it will be only for the threatened girl for such things make her more fearless.

I want to tell you that today we have forgotten swadeshi. I have

[1] The reference is to the rehabilitation of women widowed during communal riots in Paniala, Noakhali.

been telling you from the beginning that if we ape foreign manners it is futile to talk of self-rule. Such threats show Western influence. What harms us, what keeps us starved, is not the swadeshi. Formerly when someone did something in the style of foreigners I used to take him to task. But then at that time I held sway and the gun did not rule the country. Today my writ does not run. I am an old man. I cannot run about from place to place. If even today my voice could reach people, I would say the same thing that I have been saying for the last thirty-two years. I am now 78 but I spent my youth in exile in South Africa and what I have taught for thirty-two years after my return from South Africa has amounted to this: that in imitating Western ways we will destroy whatever we have achieved. Swadeshi is that which appeals to the soul.

I talked about completes swadeshi and I insisted that khadi was its centre.We did not then have the national flag. We later devised the tricolour which represents all the people of India. Today the tricolour has all but ceased to flutter. If we enshrine it in our hearts we can rise very high.

Today although we wear khadi or a khadi cap there is only emptiness inside. I had then said that not only foreign cloth but even the mill-cloth produced in India was taboo for us. Camphor which we do not produce here and which is a very useful thing is not foreign when imported from Japan. But if we import from Japan something which we can produce here it is poison to us. Our people in their millions used to make cloth. They met their own requirements and also exported shiploads of it abroad. What crime have they committed that now they should send out their cotton and the cloth made from it should then be brought to India and sold here cheaper than the cotton? What lies behind this is something that can make one's hair stand on end.

There was a time we made piles of foreign cloth and burnt it and nobody said that national wealth was being destroyed. Mrs. Naidu burnt a sari that had come from Paris and the late Motilal Nehru applied the match-stick to all his foreign clothing. He had wardrobes filled with foreign clothing. When he went to jail he sent me a letter—I am unable to trace it now—in which he said that it was only now that he was really living and that all the prosperity of Anand Bhavan had never given him the joy he felt there. In the jail he had no cigars, no drinks and no meat. He was not even given enough to eat. But he still

felt happy. True all this did not last long. Man after all wants to soar high but he cannot always sustain himself in the flight. Again and again we rise only to fall. But the rising becomes a cherished memory. At least it is so in my case. But where are those times now?

It is not the times that have changed. A well-meaning petty trader has sent me a postcard bemoaning the change. He says we have all become selfish, not only the traders, the rulers too are selfish. Our ministers are selfish. And the British even while they are going indulge in petty tricks and incite quarrels in order to gain something. If they want to go, why don't they give up their greed? Why don't they make their going decent? But why talk about the British? The Congressmen themselves are selfish. Who shall put out the flames when the ocean catches fire? If salt loses its savour with what shall it be salted? The Congress made so many sacrifices and fought for so long. Where is that glory now? They now want to be Presidents and Secretaries. All this in my opinion represents foreigners.

I hear that there are curbs on the sale of Indian mill-cloth, but that there are no curbs on the sale of imported cloth. What is all this? I do not understand this swaraj. What we gain with one hand, we seem to lose with the other. It is a matter of sorrow.

A correspondent asks me to reassure West Punjab. I have done so, but expressions of mere sympathy are not going to do much good. After all Punjab is a place where Lala Lajpat Rai was born. It is the home of brave men. It is the country of the Sikhs. I do not admire the bravery of the Sikhs wielding the sword. In my view true bravery is that which an unarmed man shows. But the people in the Punjab today talk of acquiring arms. When I asked them if they wanted money, they said, ''No, we want weapons.'' This mentality is again foreign. What can I tell them to assuage their suffering? I can only tell them that the Punjab should produce not sheep and goats but lions. I know the Punjab. I know its women too. They are strong of body. They should also be strong of heart. The atmosphere there is not conducive to making men lion-hearted. Women of the Punjab today crave for gaudy foreign clothing. They want saris which will be transparent. The men too are not far behind. Even if they do not wear such clothes they want to attire their women in them. When the sisters from Punjab come to me and I ask them why they display so much jewellery and dress themselves in such clothes they answer that their husbands or fathers or brothers insist on their wearing them. Why do mean make

dolls of their women?

If we give up all this we shall not feel frightened. Whom are we afraid of? The Muslims? If they become devils let us become men. Then they will also become men. When I, a poor bania, am not frightened, why should you be? The worst they can do is to kill me. Let them kill me. Will they drink my blood? Let them do so. That will save some food and I shall consider that I have been of service. But who am I to render service? It would be more appropriate to say that it is God who has used me for service. Hence I tell you, ''Do not be frightened.''

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 182-7

287. TOWARDS REALIZATION[1]

What is the mark of him who has Rama enthroned in his heart? If we do not know this, there is danger of Ramanama being much misinterpreted. Some misinterpretation is already in existence. Many sport rosaries and put the sacred mark on the forehead and vainly babble His name. It may well be asked whether I am not adding to the current hypocrisy by continued insistence on Ramanama. I must not be deterred by such forebodings. Silence thus brought about is harmful. The living voice of silence needs to be backed by prolonged heartfelt practice. In the absence of such natural silence, we must try to know the marks of him who has Rama in his heart.

A devotee of Rama may be said to be the same as the steadfast one (*sthitaprajna)* of the *Gita.* If one goes a little deeper it will be seen that a true devotee of God faithfully obeys the five elemental forces of nature. If he so obeys, he will not fall ill. If perchance he does, he will cure himself with the aid of the elements. It is not for the dweller in the body to get the body cured anyhow—he who believes that he is nothing but body will naturally wander to the ends of the earth in order to cure the body of its ills. But he who realizes that the soul is something apart from, though in the body, that it is imperishable in contrast to the perishable body, will not be perturbed nor mourn if the elements fail. On the contrary he will welcome death

[1]The Gujarati original appeared under the title ''Marks of a Votary of Ramanama'' in *Harijanbandhu*, which was published simultaneously with the source.

as a friend. He will become his own healer instead of looking for medical men. He will live in the consciousness of the soul within and look to the care, first and last, of the indweller.

Such a man will take God's name with every breath. His Rama will be awake even whilst the body is asleep. Rama will always be with him in whatever he does. The real death for such a devoted man will be the loss of this sacred companionship.

As an aid to keeping his Rama with him, he will take what the five elements have to give him. That is to say, he will employ the simplest and easiest way of deriving all the benefit he can from earth, air, water, sunlight and ether. This aid is not complementary of Ramanama. It is but a means of its realization. Ramanama does not in fact require any aid. But to claim belief in Ramanama and at the same time to run to doctors do not go hand in hand.

A friend versed in religious lore who read my remarks on Ramanama some time ago wrote to say that Ramanama is an alchemy such as can transform the body. The conservation of the vital energy has been likened to accumulated wealth, but it is in the power of Ramanama alone to make it a running stream of ever-increasing spiritual strength ultimately making a fall impossible.

Just as the body cannot exist without blood, so the soul needs the matchless and pure strength of faith. This strength can renovate the weakness of all man's physical organs. That is why it is said that when Ramanama is enshrined in the heart, it means the rebirth of man. This law applies to the young, the old, man and woman alike.

This belief is to be found in the West too. Christian science gives a glimpse of it. In this issue of the *Harijan* Rajkumari has given apt illustrations culled from a book written by Seventh Day Adventists.[1]

India needs no outside support for a belief which has been handed down to her people from time immemorial.

HARDWAR, June 21, 1947

Harijan, 29-6-1947

[1] In her article ''Education in Health'', Amrit Kaur explains that three Seventh Day Adventist friends came to see Gandhiji and presented a book to him called *The Ministry of Healing.*

288. LETTER TO SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

HARDWAR,
June 21, 1947

MY DEAR SARAT,

I have a moment to myself here. I use it for writing two or three overdue letters. This is one to acknowledge yours[1] of 14th instant.

The way to work for unity I have pointed out when the geographical is broken. Hoping you are all well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 10535. Also *The Nation,* 11-6-1949, and *My Day with Gandhi,* p. 236

289. ADVICE TO REFUGEES[2]

HARDWAR,
[*June 21, 1947*][3]

It is useless and depressing to recount the story of the horrors they have gone through.

But every affliction has its own rich lesson to teach if we would learn it. I hear many of those who were well-to-do in the past are idling away their time in playing cards and even gambling. Some are reported to be buying property or resorting to other methods of making money. I call it criminal behaviour. If I was given the rare opportunity of making common cause with poor refugees, I would share with them my talents and such riches and I had brought with me. All of you should make a co-operative effort so that wherever you go ultimately you lead a better and corporate life as a result of the life lived in Hardwar. Hardwar is considered to be a holy place. I do not think it is holy but you can make it so by your behaviour.

Harijan, 6-7-1947

[1] Reiterating his proposal for a united Bengal; *vide* also "Letter to Sarat Chandra Bose", 8-6-1947.

[2] Extracted from ''Weekly Letter'' by Sushila Nayyar who explains that a deputation of sixteen representatives of the refugees from the N. W. F. P. and thePunjab met Gandhiji at Hardwar.

[3] *ibid*

290. FROM AMERICA[1]

Mr. Richard Gregg writes from U. S. A.:

> Today's New York newspaper carries a dispatch from New Delhi stating that you have given up hope of living for 125 years and that there is no place for you in India because of the deluge of violence. If this report is substantially correct, I beg you, please reconsider your attitude. As I see the matter there is far more at stake than present violence in India, even if this should last for fifteen years.
>
> India is the source of the deepest and strongest spiritual insight and culture in the world. . . . It is also the most enduring. Despite the grave harm that has been done to Hindu culture by the modern loss of religion and contact with the West which so fully embodies that secularism, Hindu culture still stands supreme. . . .
>
> More than anyone else, you represent that Hindu culture, and the continuance of your life is of great importance to all the world. Even though for a time the number of those who agree with you and truly follow the road of ahimsa may shrink to only a handful, the very smallness makes possible an enhancement of quality and spiritual power. We may not tell God that if violence (the folly men) does not stop within a certain time that fits our hopes, we will stop doing our utmost including living as long as we can in order to our utmost. I only dare say this to you because I want you so much to stay with us.

The dispatch from which Mr. Gregg quotes is substantially correct. The loss of hope arises from my knowledge that I have not attained sufficient detachment and control over my temper and emotions which entitle one to entertain the hope. One day I found to my cost that I had not attained the required detachment. No one has the right to live at all unless it is a life of service. And a man without detachment in terms of the Gita cannot render full service.

A faithful confession of one's failings is good for the soul. It enables one the better to get rid of those failings. Let the readers of the *Harijan* know that I am making every effort to get out of them so that I can regain the lost hope. In this connection I should also repeat that the hope is open to every one who dedicates himself to the service of his fellowmen. Nor need it be laughed out as an idle dream. That it may not be realized in me and many fellow aspirants should be no

[1] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.

proof of its futility.

The statement that I find no place for myself in a society that bases itself on violence had nothing to do with the reported loss of hope. I deliberately use the adjective 'reported' for I do not want to harbour the thought of hopelessness. What was true when the report was made, need not be and is not true in an equal measure today.

It must be clear that there can be no place for a man of peace in a society full of strife. Yet he may live the full span of 125 years and may hope by ceaseless striving to make a place for himself. That is exactly the meaning of my second statement and no more. I am in that society, though not of it. The statement registers my protest.

Has the non-violent effort of the past 30 years come to naught? I have already argued out the position in my speeches reported in these columns. It is to be hoped that the violence has not penetrated India's villages. Be that as it may, I wholly endorse Mr. Gregg's warning that ''we may not tell God that if violence (the folly of men) does not stop within a certain time that fits our hopes, we will stop doing our utmost including living as long as we can.'' I very much fear that the dispatch in question tore the sentences out of their context and evoked the doubts expressed by Mr. Gregg. I hope I am incapable of judging God.

NEW DELHI, June 22, 1947

Harijan, 29-6-1947

291. LETTER TO H. GREENFIELD

BHANGI COLONY,
NEW DELHI,
June 22, 1947

DEAR MR. GREENFIELD[1],

I have just finished reading your very interesting monograph on salt. If it has not been sent for printing and if it still admits of improvement, I would suggest that the tenth chapter on future development should be expanded so as to place at the disposal of the public cheap and effective methods of producing salt in small quantities.

[1] Member. Central Board of Revenue

You have suggested a Salt Board. The idea seems to be attractive but I do not at all like the suggestion about controlling production and distribution through selective licences. I am studying the present movement of salt and so far as I know it is very unsatisfactory. Special contractors are said to produce salt and control its price also. My information may be inaccurate, even faulty. If it is neither inaccurate nor faulty the manner is a great handicap. I abide by the suggestion made to you at one of our pleasant talks that salt should be manufactured by Government or under its supervision but without monopoly. Whoever wishes may compete with the Govern-ment at his own risk. By so doing the best quality of salt would be produced at the cheapest rate. If this is done with care, attention and faithfulness, India will be able to produce all the salt required for the consumption of men and animals and for purposes of curing and industry.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 168-9

292. TALK WITH RAJENDRA PRASAD AND OTHERS[2]

NEW DELHI,
June 22, 1947

You do not know it but only yesterday I went to Hardwar and the hardships of the people there made me very unhappy. One can have an idea of the life women and children are leading there only if

[1] As the addressee was on leave in London, F. M. Innes, who was officiating, replied on June 23 : ''. . . I am arranging . . . for an account of cheap and effective methods of producing salt to be drafted. . . It would be better to add this as an Appendix to the monograph rather than include it in Chapter X . . . with regard to your comments regarding the proposed Salt Board and . . . control . . . through licences it is difficult to say anything at present … I hasten to assure you, however, that it is not the present intention to establish a Government monopoly . . .'' The addressee, to whom the letter was forwarded assured Gandhiji in his letter dated August 4 that his monograph had not yet been printed and therefore it was possible to make changes. He added : ''Any properly constituted Salt Board would, I am sure, readily supply clear . . . instructions on the manufacture of good cheap salt . . . . The important thing is to see that the Board is composed of competent . . . persons . . . As for the question of monopoly it is for the Government of the future to decide . . .''

[2] Rajendra Prasad was accompanied by two friends from Himalayan territories.

one has actually gone through it. But we are not ordained to have that kind of experience. In a few days the rains will arrive. Only God knows what will happen then. There is so much work to be done and yet all of us are sitting idle. I do not understand it. This is the chief difference between the foreigners and us. When five of us meet we plan big schemes, talk about them but in the way of implementation the result is zero, whereas the people outside will have no peace till they have achieved what they decided on. These days I received heaps of letters. Everyone thinks that we are now sure to get swaraj, so why not by some means or other get into positions of power? I feel very unhappy when I read such letters and tell this girl to say in reply: ''Bapu has no power. Yes, if you want to do scavenging work, you can come with a broom and a basket. He has the power to give that work because he is himself a scavenger.''

I do want to visit the Himalayas. But first I want to have a look at the tragic scenes of mass killing in Hardwar, Noakhali, Bihar and the Punjab. You have just seen the striking natural beauty of the Himalayas. I have seen the reverse. I have seen to what extremes the stone hearts of human beings can go. What is going on in the Frontier Provinces today? How much a great man like Khan Saheb has to suffer? Only I can understand his unhappiness. It is only God who keeps him alive. His physical health is so bad that the less said about it the better. But he does not care. His intestines do not function at all. But he has never paid any attention to that. He roamed about in the villages of Bihar in the hot sun. He never bothered whether he had anything to eat or not. Whenever he got time he slept on the floor using his only pair of clothes wrapped in a towel as a pillow. He loves this girl very much and therefore he accepts services from her. He improved in health when she daily cooked new dishes for him to eat and looked after him. Manu broke down when he embraced her while taking leave but the eyes of a Pathan like Khan Saheb were also filled with tears. Who knows how much that Khudai Khidmatgar has still to suffer? But he is a brave soldier. He is born for the sake of the country. He will bravely face all the hardships that come his way and when the time comes he will embrace death with a smile on his face. Of that I have not the least doubt.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 191-2

293. TALK WITH WOMEN WORKERS[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 22, 1947

Frankly speaking we are not going to make any progress till we have patriotism, sincerity and honesty. We are not even fully independent yet and I have been receiving complaints that some so-called eminent leaders of India are making money through their sons, that nepotism is on the increase as also is corru-ption and that I should do something about it. If it is true all one can say is that we have reached the limit of our misfortune. I am an old man. Why should I be afraid of anything? How long can this kind of administration go on? The fact is that we have raised our standard of living so much that we are compelled to resort to dishonest ways. We are human beings. Since God has granted us human form we should show at least a modicum of honesty in our conduct. We are betraying our way of life and that is why we are suffering. I have a few letters describing some of the dishonest means Congressmen are resorting to in order to further their selfish interest. This has made me unhappy. I must also confess that at present I am not in a position to say anything to anyone. For haven't I grown too old and therefore has not my mind too atrophied? However, bear in mind that all this is not going to go on for very long. I do not want to live to see all this. But if they go on deceiving us there will be such a tremendous upheaval that the golden history of our cherished freedom, won without shedding a drop of blood, will be tarnished. A mother, having brought forth a child, selflessly devotes herself to his care till he grows up and becomes independent. Even after the children are grown up her constant desire is to make herself one with them. Unless we have the same feeling and devotion for our motherland, many countries will be lying in wait to crush us down. You sisters can do much if you are disposed to. But to my grief and shame I have to say that women today have given themselves up to luxurious ways of living. They take pride in going to the clubs, wearing foreign dresses and talking in English with their own countrymen. I can understand one's talking in English with those who do not know our language. But to say nothing of compatriots talking among themselves in English, even husbands and wives,

[1] Four or five women working in refugee camps who were accompanying Gandhiji during a walk

brothers and sisters prefer to talk with each other in English rather than in their own language. Shall I call this our shame or our sorrow? But these seemingly small things are an indication of how little devotion we have for our country or rather of how much influence the British exercise on us.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 192-3

294. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 22, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

As you know I had been to Hardwar to see the refugees from the Punjab and N. W. F. P. There are some 32,000 refugees there from Dera Ismail Khan and other places. I had no time to enter into any discussions with the refugees but I talked[1] to them fully. I also visited their camps. I heard many things said about the refugees. There are two kinds of people among them: there are those who are really poor and in a bad way and there are others who are well-to-do. Some of them are given to gambling, drinking and to questionable methods of making money. I must say that it does not behove them to behave thus at this time of crisis.

People have gone there driven by their misery. They have got separated from their relatives. But what can be gained from crying over it? I told them to try and forget their sorrow. By forgetting sorrow one gets rid of sorrow. They have to create joy from sorrow. A great calamity has come to pass in the shape of the division of India, but why should I cry over it?

I want to tell you and through you I want to tell them that they should forget their sorrow. These 32,000 men and women should form themselves into a co-operative organization. They should take up work. They should not gamble and drink and smoke hemp. They should keep themselves engaged in some work or other. The Government cannot feed so many of them even if it wants to. Today everywhere the black market is rampant. Even if people are truthful

[1] *Vide* "Advice to Refugees", 21-6-1947

they cannot get full rations for themselves. But crying and complaining will not help. People should learn to co-operate.

In that historic march in South Africa we covered twenty miles each day. We were a large crowd. All I had to give to each was an ounce of sugar and a little bread. This did not constitute enough rations for a person. It was always evening by the time we had done our twenty miles. I would notice cooking going on. I discovered that people were picking edible leaves from grass, adding salt and then cooking it. Water there always was. It made me very happy. One could always travel in such company.

The soil of Hardwar is even more fertile and various other industries can also be taken up there. If they do this they will not feel the fatigue. Those who have to live on other should so conduct themselves that they are not felt to be a burden.

Let them profit by the reported holiness of Hardwar though he was sorry to have to confess that the holy places had become dens of thieves and mendicancy had received the stamp of virtue. He had very sad memories of the Kumbha Mela of 1915 when he had the privilege of serving as a servant with his companions from South Africa in the Servants India camp. It was open to the refugees, if they would, to make the place holy by their behaviour.[1]

I met a few sisters there who were engaged in sewing and spinning. I met a few men also who were doing something or other. It is good. They should not become beggars. They should be brave and fearless.

As I could not go everywhere myself, Dr. Sushila Nayyar went around the camps. She found the conditions there extremely insanitary. This should not be so. And it is a thing the Government will not do for us. We must ourselves keep our surroundings clean. The camps should be spread out. It is said there is danger from wild animals. But why should wild animals be feared. As man fears animals of the forest so the latter fear man. The 32,000 refugees should really not be frightened of wild animals.

They should be ashamed of fear of man or wild animals. Wild animals fled the haunts of men. Such was the universal experience. Let them recollect that Shraddhanandji founded his Gurukul on the other side of the Ganges which was infested by wild animals. Then they should remember that the police were there to afford such protection as they needed. Courage, hope, personal bravery, purity and industrious co-operation would make their life pleasant. They would then not be a

[1] This and the paragraph below in small type are from *The Hindu.*

burden on those among whom they lived but they would be, as they should be, like sugar to milk.

A distressing thing has come to my ears. It is from Kabul. It seems the Hindus living in Kabul are living there on suffer-ance. They have to wear turbans of a particular colour. It made me very sad to think that people can put up with such indignities for the sake of money. We must live there only if we can safeguard our rights, otherwise we should leave the place. This sort of thing cannot be tolerated. Then Kabul is our home territory. It is the country of the Pathans. The only difference is that on this side there is British rule while on that side there is no British rule. My fight in South Africa was over issues very much similar. It is intolerable that our people should not live as free citizens in Kabul. I am sure the report is exaggerated. I shall find out.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 187-90; and *The Hindu, 23-6-1947*

295. LETTER TO PURNANANDA

NEW DELHI,
June 23, 1947

DEAR PURNANANDA,

Your letter. I do not even understand the pros and cons. Let justice prevail though the heavens weep.

Yours,
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers, Courtesy: Pyarelal

296. LETTER TO PARASURAM

NEW DELHI,
June 23, 1947

MY DEAR PARASURAM,

Your letter. I am sorry you feel cramped in Ahmedabad.[1] Of course you will go to the Socialist Party in Bombay where you will get greater scope for service according to your notion.

Keep well wherever you are.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5859. Also C.W. 3037

[1] The addressee had gone to help Jivanji D. Desai in printing and publishing *Harijan; vide* also "Letter to Parasuram", 11-6-1947

297. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

VALMIKI MANDIR
NEW DELHI,
June 23, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI.

The news today is the limit. Look at the Reuters cable.[1] The Bill provides for two nations. What then is the point of the big talks going on here? If there has been no tacit acceptance on our part you people can prevent this crime.

Once the Bill is passed, no one will listen to you.

In my opinion [Ravishankar Shukla]'s[2] speech was certainly bad. That he said what he did in jest does not take away from the gravity of the lapse. I personally feel that he[3] should be asked to resign only if he is also guilty of some other lapse. To dismiss him solely on this ground will be difficult.

I have also written to Jawaharlal about this.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
1, AURANGZEB ROAD
NEW DELHI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 355

298. A LETTER

June 23, 1947

Religion should really unite all hearts. Only then is it truly religion. It is clear to me that violence should be banished not only

[1] It gave a ''colourful description of the grand ceremonial that was scheduled to mark the introduction in Parliament of the Independence Bill, announcing the birth of two nations''. *Vide* also "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 23-6-1947

[2] The name is omitted in the source; *vide* however "Speech at Prayer Meeting, 16-6-1947

[3] Dr. Hasan, a minister in the Central Provinces Government

from India but from the whole world and all people, from the youngest to the oldest, should feel a new life both in their bodies and souls. Today, wickedness flourishes in the name of religion. A medicine is good only if it cures the patient of his illness. What is the use of a medicine which aggravates the complaint? Personally, of course, I do not believe in medicines. There is only one never-failing medicine and that is Ramanama. It is a sin to feel proud of one's community or caste. And it is ignorance too.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 196-7

299. A LETTER

June 23, 1947

We should learn to be humble. If we but care, we can learn even from a tree. If you hit with a stone a mango hanging from the branch of a beautiful mango tree the tree will immediately let it fall to the ground. If man will only think, he can learn a great many noble lessons from trees and birds and beasts. That is what I am trying to do and, having succeeded in some measure, sometimes feel like advising others also to do the same. I will, however, go on working as God prompts me and as long as He wants to take service from me.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 197

300. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
June 23, 1947

CHI. JIVANJI,

Has there been any significant difference in circulation since I started writing?

I have gone through the correspondence with Tandonji sent by you. I see no objection to its being published. How did this question arise?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I see from Parasuram's letter that he is leaving the office there.[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9978. Also C.W. 6952. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

301. LETTER TO RALIATBEHN[2]

DELHI,
June 23, 1947

RESPECTED SISTER,

Manu and the others have come just now. Manu says you are bed-ridden. One may say you have more faith than I. So you must be repeating Ramanama. I would say your capacity to bear is also much more. What then is happiness or unhappiness to you ?

Shamaldas[3] had come and he assured me that I should not in the least worry about you. He would look after everything. Narandas also is here and so I am not worried.

Nothing is definite about my stay. Here today, where tomorrow, God alone knows!

I hope Phuli[4] is all right.

Obeisance from
MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Parasuram", 23-6-1947
[2] Gandhiji's sister
[3] Gandhiji's nephew; son of Lakshmidas Gandhi
[4] Addressee's daughter

302. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
June 23, 1947

CHI. NARANDAS,

Show the accompanying letter[1] to Aunt. What is her complaint? Who is treating her? Ramanama is compatible only with the use of the five elements: water, earth, etc.

How are you affairs? How about khadi, the school, music, Harijan work, etc.?

I didn't like Abha's[2] falling ill. I write to her regularly. If I could stay at one place, I would keep her with me and hope for her complete recovery.

Jaisukhlal's Manu is fine. The cut has healed.[3] I heard that Jamna[4] and others paid a visit to Bombay. I hope she is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II/526. Also C.W. 8638. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

303. LETTER TO LILAVATI P. ASAR

NEW DELHI,
June 23, 1947

CHI. LILI,

I have you long letter. It is very good that all that effort of yours has borne fruit. Then why complain? It is good if you listen to Shanti Kumar. He gives money. What more should we expect after that?

One thing is certain that you do not have to study if you have to put up with insults. Of course one must learn to know when one is insulted and when one is not insulted.

You are calm at the moment. Remain calm thus and study well and pass the examination.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Addressee's daughter-in-law
[3] She had been operated upon for appendicitis.
[4] Addressee's wife

304. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 23, 1947

The proposed partition of India and of the provinces is going to be a test for us. Today's newspapers say that the Bill for the partition of India will be introduced in Parliament with much ceremony and India which has so far been one nation will now become two nations. It is a sad occasion and calls for no celebrations. We cherish the hope that although we are separating we are separating as brothers belonging to the same family and that we shall remain friends nevertheless. If what the newspapers say is true Britain intends to divide us into two nations and that with fanfare. Will this be their parting shot? I hope not.

But if the larger part of the country, that is the Indian Union, does its duty, they will be checkmated by their own move. We cannot now escape division however much we may dislike it. But a higher dharma demands that we should pursue straight path and still consider ourselves one nation refusingto treat the Muslim minority as outsiders. India is as much their country as it is ours.

It means, clearly, that we have to bring about revolutionary changes in Hinduism. We are marred with the blot of untouchability. It certainly is our weakness. One reads that Muslim League leaders have been holding out the bait of separate electorates for the untouchables in Pakistan. Is this an invitation to them to join Pakistan and Islam? I do not wish to comment on the recent reports of forcible conversions. I have myself heard things from untouchable brethren. I am full of fears about what is going to happen.

There is only one way of getting rid of this fear and it is that the spectre of untouchability should be exorcised. Let there be no untouchables in India. Let all Hindus be one. Let there be no high and low. Let us show special consideration for those poor sections, such as untouchables and the *adivasis,* whom we have so far ignored. Let us educate them, see to their proper living. All should be listed alike in the voters' roll. The present condition should be changed. It should become vastly better. Will Hinduism rise to such heights or will it cling to false values, copy other in their evil ways and thus commit suicide? That is the question before us.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 190-1

305. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

NEW DELHI,
June 24, 1947

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

I have your letter, It is 4.55 a.m. just now. I don't like your plan. A plan which costs as much as you say is of no use to a village. You should start by yourself there. Whatever money you need will come without your asking for it. It will not wait for numberless printed explanations.

Even as a ghost finds a *pipal* tree, in the end you too may find your place of work.

Remember what I told you on a previous occasion.

What need for a man like you to bother himself about such things?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2923. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya

306. LETTER TO DILKHUSH DIWANJI

NEW DELHI,
June 24, 1947

CHI. DILKHUSH DIWANJI,

Parents' blessings do not cease when they die. Though the body perishes, the *atman* inhabiting it certainly does not. You must free yourself from the delusion that it does.

I remember your mother. She was very particular about punctuality. I have passed on the cheque for Rs. 74 for Harijan work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10432. Courtesy: Dilkhush Diwanji

307. LETTER TO PRAGJI DESAI

DELHI,
June 24, 1947

CHI. PRAGJI,

I have your letter. You seem to be too hasty in coming to conclusions. If you study my speeches, you may find some light.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5040

308. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
June 24, 1947

CHI. MAGANBHAI,

I just got your letter and am writing the reply.

Mahadev's[1] work will not be carried on by associating his name with an educational institution. Then why bother about the name? If the teachers and students imbibe his spirit, all will be well. Be careful in your work, and know that it will immortalize his name.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

309. TALK WITH SIKH VISITORS

NEW DELHI,
June 24, 1947

So long as we do not realize the importance of limiting the necessities of life, so long as we do not realize the value of will power, we shall remain unhappy. There is nothing impossible in this world for a person who has an iron will. What tremendous progress science has made today. There was a time when if a man wanted to go from one village to another he had to walk the distance. Today in twenty-

[1] Mahadev Desai who died on August 15, 1942

four hours he can with the greatest ease reach another part of the world. There are many other conveniences to make life easy. Why then is man unhappy? The main reason in my view is our shallow mentality. We will never be at peace so long as we have the desire to rule over others, are jealous of others' happiness and find happiness in killing. I have my sympathies with you. You have left your beloved motherland. You have left behind your possessions and your dear ones. All this suffering is not a light matter. However, we should learn a lesson from that. We are lost in sectarian quarrels and are ourselves making our case complicated. Humanism is true religion. *Daridra-narayan* is the true and the highest God. We are all children of one God. Our lives are very short. Death is inevitable for us all. However long a man may live, if he has not done any good deeds he is as good as dead. A man will still be alive, though his physical body perish, if he had done some good deeds. If, therefore, we learn a lesson from the misery that has overtaken us and make our lives successful, then that misery is not misery but happiness. There are many sad events in a man's life and all of them are like blessings. Had Rama been crowned a king, he would have spent his days in luxury and comfort and the world would hardly have heard of him. But the day he was to be crowned, he had to put on bark clothing and go into exile. Isn't it the limit of unhappiness? But Rama and Sita turned that sorrow into joy and went into exile with smiles on their faces. It is for this reason alone that His name is uttered every morning by millions of people. The unhappy event in His life turned out to be a blessing. If I had been able to bring this home to the people of India, they would have been supremely happy today.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 201-2

310. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 24, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

This *bhajan* dwells on the piteous plight of Rama in the story. Here is Rama, about to be crowned but ordered to go to the forest as an exile! Can there be anything more pitiable? Something similar is now happening before our eyes. There is on the one hand rejoicing

everywhere in the world at the British Government's decision to grant Dominion Status to India. On the other hand we are engaged in a fratricidal strife in the name of defending religion. I receive many letters every day attacking me. Some say I have destroyed the Hindus, some others that I have been appeasing the Muslims. They make no impression on me. I seek to appeal to no one except God, for we are all His creatures, His servants. And why should I allow myself to be annoyed by these letters? How have I offended? I only say that no one can protect his religion by doing sinful things or by committing atrocities on others. This applies to Hindus and Muslims alike. That Pakistan is a bad thing, I agree. What is there to rejoice over it? Our country has been divided. What is there in it to celebrate? For the last sixty years, since I was a schoolboy, I have believed that all Indians, be they Hindus, Muslims, Parsis or Christians, are brothers. Now that our land has been divided, does it mean that we should divide our hearts? How can the people of a country become two peoples? India can have only one people. When I say this they abuse me. Shall I listen to them and become a murderer? By so doing I shall only be harming myself. One is one's own foe as well as one's own friend. Hindus alone can destroy the Hindus and no one else.

Today flames are raging everywhere. Hinduism will be saved only if we can save ourselves from these flames. My physical powers are waning. I am no longer strong enough to put with this heat. It is a permanent law that truth ever triumphs and falsehood perishes. What I say is not addressed to the feeble of heart but to those who are brave and unselfish, those who know how to die defending their mother, their daughter and their religion. The man who can die happily is more courageous than the man who kills. I want the whole of India to rise to this standard of valour.

I shudder to see what is going on everywhere around me. With whom must I argue? We are looking up to the British. How long must we? After the fifteenth of August the British will have left. Whom shall we look up to then? It has been suggested that Punjab should be placed under martial law. I have seen Punjab once placed under martial law. I know what martial law means. It cannot change men's hearts. I shall still say that if Muslims want to save Islam, Hindus Hinduism and the Sikhs their Gurudwaras, they must together resolve

that they will not fight. If there is a dispute over division it should be settled not through resort to force but through arbitration.

Sir C. P. says that Gandhi and the Congress are all too willing to grant independence to N.W.F.P. but not to Travancore. How can a learned man like Sir. C. P. say such a silly thing? If Travancore becomes independent then Hyderabad, Kashmir, Indore and other States will also declare themselves independent and India will be Balkanized. Then Badshah Khan does not want to secede from India. He says that he will not join Pakistan. Must he then be a slave of the Hindus? It is said that the Congress has been bribing him. If the Congress had resorted to bribery to gain support of people it could not have survived. Badshah Khan tells us to frame our constitution first. In the meanwhile he will have come to some decision. But what Sir. C. P. says is something quite different. In N. W. F. P. it is the voice of the people. But in Travancore it is a Maharaja and his Prime Minister speaking on behalf of the Hindus. Sir C. P. cannot throw dust into people's eyes by advancing the example of N.W.F.P. I would suggest to Sir C. P. That Travancore should come into the Constituent Assembly.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 190-4

311. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

NEW DELHI,
June 25, 1947

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. I understand about your birthday. How is it that all of you wish to leave before I do? What will be my condition then? What selfishness is this? Thank God, living or dying is not in our hands. All our efforts to that end are in vain. As the saying is, that which we do alone keeps us company.

My future plans are wholly uncertain.

What public statement can I make in connection with the Gen. Shah Nawaz affair?[1] How am I responsible for what someone else may say? I am certainly responsible for what I do or say, but for nothing else.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Prema Kantak", 15-6-1947

Publication of the correspondence with you will serve no useful purpose. If Deo wishes to publish anything, he will ask me.

If what you say regarding Mridula is true, that is to say, if I have correctly followed your meaning, then you make too subtle distinctions. Reflect over this.

This much is true. If you come and spend a few days with me, you will probably understand the position better. That is, you should come and stay for three or four days at a time at short intervals. Alternatively, go on doing whatever work falls to your share and let the world go its own way.

You are doing your work well.

Sushila Pai has left.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: G. N. 10455. Also C.W. 6894. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

312. A TALK

NEW DELHI,
June 25, 1947

The Interim Government should first of all set about changing the education system. Only if we begin now can we expect to see the results after a certain number of years. As far as possible the Universities should be set up in the village so that they may serve the villagers. Most of our people live in villages and this is the only way to make the city-dwellers take interest in their daily life and necessities. Mere literacy or a smattering of languages should not satisfy us. If I were the Education Minister, I would impart instruction in alphabets only through crafts. For instance I would not make a child trace over and over again a letter of the alphabet but would make them draw the letter as they would draw a crow or a parrot. I would thus instruct them in art. Similarly I would teach history, geography, geometry and arithmetic with the help of a charkha or *takli*. With it the mind, soul and body can also be fully educated. *Takli* is a thing through which we can teach all the subjects to a child. Primary education these days is inordinately expensive and because of their poverty most students are unable to reach High School. If education is imparted through arts

and crafts, it will not only make the students self-reliant but bring in enough money to pay the salaries of the teachers. They will, however, develop self-confidence and an urge to be of help to their parents. Today, so many educated youths are unemployed. There are so many instances of educated youths before me who do not render even a penny's worth of help to their parents. I am becoming more and more convinced that the basic education can be of great help in our economic, political and social advancement.

Here you must also note another thing: one must not depend on the Government for every little thing. When the National Govern-ment comes into being a certain amount of assistance will certainly be forthcoming. But if today it is the Congress Government tomorrow some other party may form the Government.

The educationists however should concern themselves solely with providing to the people education that is sound and cha- racter-building. We look down upon those who do manual work. In Kathiawad one has to bathe if one happens to touch a weaver. Since all this is being done in the name of religion, we have become complacent. The main reason for all this is that we acquiesced in our slavery and abjectness for so many years. Had we assigned to craftsmen and artisans a place of dignity in society, like other countries we too would have produced many scientists and engineers. But now we must wake up.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 206-7

313. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 25, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

The refugees from N.W. F. P. and the Punjab I met in Hardwar told me that Hindus residing in Kabul are obliged to wear turbans of a particular colour to make them easily distinguishable. In this connection the Afghan Consul[1] has today issued a long statement contradicting the report. He says that there is no such thing in Kabul. He says that the Hindus even have temples in Kabul and they have the right to build temples there. If that is so we can feel proud.

The carnage in Lahore, Amritsar and Gurgaon is a matter of

[1] Ghulam Mohammed

shame for all the three communities—Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. This carnage should be stopped by whatever means and people should be brought together. I saw in the newspapers today that yesterday in Lahore there was a conference of the representatives of the three communities at Nawab Mamdot's house which lasted till midnight and at which it was agreed that the rioting should be stopped. This is good news. After all, is Pakistan to be raised over the ashes of Lahore and Amritsar? And these are no small townships. They have taken generations to build. Amritsar moreover has the Golden Temple of the Sikhs. It is a matter of grief that man can thus forget his humanity and become Satan. These leaders will meet again tomorrow,[1] and if they are successful it will not be necessary for martial law to be imposed in these cities. These leaders therefore deserve our thanks.

I find myself in a dilemma. I feel the urge sometimes to go to Bihar, sometimes to Noakhali. In Noakhali my work was just started and it has given much comfort to the Hindus. I must go to Bihar too. I had intended to be here eight days but I have already been here a month. Where am I to go and what am I to do? I am perplexed. For a devotee of God it is good in a way. A devotee should think only of today and not of tomorrow for tomorrow is in God's hands. There are some who jibe at me for my tall talk about ahimsa and ask why I do not visit Amritsar or Gurgaon. But what shall I gain by going there? I want that you should see me as I am. I have never been a prey to misgivings. But today there is so much confusion in the world and India that it is difficult to see things clearly. The *Gita* says that one must attend to one's present duty. There is large-scale rioting going on in several places and I cannot make up my mind which one to go to. God gives me no guidance here. I ask friends. When the heart is besieged by doubt the best thing is to wait in patience. Throwing a stone may further spoil things. Nawab Mamdot says that the minorities will be given fair treatment in Pakistan. Why should I distrust him? If Hindus can live in Afghanistan as citizens, why should they not in Pakistan?

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 194-6

[1] A security committee consisting of Iftikhar Hussain Khan of Mamdot, Bhimsen Sachar and Swaran Singh was formed for day-to-day review of the law and order condition in the province.

314. A LETTER

NEW DELHI,
June 26, 1947

DEAR RAI SAHIB,

I have you interesting letter. If your daughters are wise girls, they will certainly contribute to the success of my dream. Let them be in touch with the Kasturba work in Gauhati. Hope you are better.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

315. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

NEW DELHI,
June 26, 1947

CHI. RAMESHWARIBEHN,

I got all your letters. I had dictated a postcard. The address was correct.

I am myself in a dilemma. I do not know what to do. I know how things are there. They got Pakistan through conflict. Now everything is sought to be achieved through conflict. My faith is in Ramanama. Let me see what way Rama shows.

My programme is uncertain. for the moment I am here. I shall certainly be doing something. I wish to go everywhere and nowhere. Kashmir is also in my mind. It is well you did not go to Kashmir. If you want to come do come.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 8011. Also C.W. 3111. Courtesy: Rameshwa Nehru

316. LETTER TO RAVI SHANKAR SHUKLA

NEW DELHI,
June 26, 1947

BHAI SHUKLAJI,

I have your letter and all the documents. I have read the ones in Hindi and English. I do not like these opinions. I have expressed my views through the newspapers.

Yes, Hassan's conduct was not at all correct but it will not be proper to ask for his resignation.[1] However, if there is some other complaint, then that can be a reason for demanding his resignation.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am writing to Dr. Hassan.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

317. A TALK

NEW DELHI,
June 26, 1947

Khadi activity will not gather momentum if you have the slightest misgivings about making khadi the national dress. As a result unemployment will increase. If you want to give work to the millions khadi alone provides such work. Its various processes right from the growing of the cotton to the weaving of the cloth will provide employment to every member of a peasant family. It indirectly provides employment to the families of carpenters, blacksmiths, weavers and tailors. The National Government will have to give priority to this issue and concentrate attention on it, for a new argument will be pressed before us as to what would be the harm in

[1] Consequent to the addressee's speech on June 16, Dr. Hassan had been reported to have tendered his resignation and also given publicity to it in the papers besides writing to Gandhiji, which was resented by the Premier as well as the Congress Parliamentary Board.

using mill-cloth. It is indigenous, it will be argued, cheap and attractive. However, I have not the slightest use for mill-cloth however attractive and cheap, when there is the question of providing food to the millions. Police, Government officers, peons, Government guest houses and Government offices should as far as possible use only khadi. I use the expression khadi activity in its broadest sense. All the things produced by village industry should be encouraged.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 212

318. TALK WITH MANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
June 26, 1947

As against the sins of crores of men, perfect purity of even two persons will certainly have an effect. Yes, there is this that these two persons are very severely tested. For example, a man will buy a brass plate after approving its outward appearance but the same man while buying a gold plate will examine the gold thoroughly to ascertain whether it is genuine or not. Thereafter he will guard the plate as he would his own life. He will have it tested at a thousand places. There is a similar difference between a pure and a sinful soul. God tests the pure soul many times. And after a devotee has passed through the tests God values him more than He does Himself. Does not the *bhajan ''Gajendramoksha''* say the same thing? We should not commit sins because crores of people do so. If we are pure in all respects we will certainly make an impression and people will strive to become like us, or such persons will be rejected as unwanted grains. Those who work with a pure heart and without any expectation of reward will certainly triumph. There is not the least doubt about it. If all of us learn to be unselfish all the quarrels of the world will end right away. If true love manifests itself in the heart everything will be all right.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 213

319. TALK WITH VISITORS[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 26, 1947

Yes, I am not at all satisfied with the kind of freedom we are about to get because the freedom of my imagination is quite different. I did not want mere political freedom. If our non-violence were genuine and of the brave the shameful things which are happening in India today would not have happened. The power to which I have been wedded for the last thirty and more years is certainly genuine. But I, the votary of that power, am imperfect. I have no doubt that we were able to hold out against the British only because of our non-violence. And I have no doubt that only non-violence is going to help us in the communal strife. But I am not able to see how I can convince the people of this. People welcomed my lead because we had no strength to use arms against the British and that was chiefly why we succeeded against them However, that was the non-violence of the weak. But what is wanted now is the non-violence of the brave. I must also make it clear that a third power has taken advantage of our weakness, sparing no pains to spread poison among us. I am positive that the sooner the foreigners leave our country the better it will be for us. Aren't the British, perhaps, showing their cleverness even while they are leaving?

We have no need for big mills and heavy machinery. If one machine does the work of a hundred men, then where are we to employ those hundred men? In a country with such a huge population proliferation of mechanized industries will surely lead to large-scale unemployment. I have great regard for technologists. I have respect for scientists. But I have no use for machinery if a person owning it becomes a millionaire, spends his life in comforts and luxury, lives in bungalows, moves about in a car, gets milk when he asks for water, and wears soft and expensive clothes, while on the other hand thousands of people do not even have roofs over their heads, have to sweat for bread, have no clothes to cover themselves with and then have their work snatched away by one millionaire. The real India does not live in Bombay, Delhi or Calcutta but in seven lakh villages.

[1] These were two men from Payoda.

If we wish to make those villages self-reliant, the human machines should be activated. If there are riots in India today, the cause is to be found in idleness and unemployment. If everyone ate what he earned by the sweat of his brow, if they had to work eight hours a day for their livelihood, no one would have even a minute to spare. Our best religious book is the *Gita.* In it Lord Krishna says that whoever eats without performing *yajna* eats stolen food.[1] The new meaning of *yajna* is that a man has no right to eat till he has earned his food with hard labour. There is in this world no one happier that a self-reliant man who finds happiness in the accomplishment of his work. Isn't there a saying that 'dependence on others always ends in disappointment'. It is very true. If we look around we find that there is no peace or happiness on the face of anyone. The main reason for it is that people expect help from others even for the smallest things.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 214-5

320. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 26, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I was with the Viceroy for an hour and half today. I had no specific business with him. I had not gone there to give the Viceroy something or take something from him. He has his own way of working. He felt that since I have been fighting for the freedom of India and serving the people, he should summon me also as he has been summoning others. He consults every one and then he does what he has to do. What he has in his heart God alone knows.

I get many letters full of abuse. The abuse has no effect on me for I take the abuse as praise. But people hurl abuses at me not because I take it as praise but because in their eyes I am not what I ought to be. There was a time when these same people used to sing my praises. I have selected two questions contained in a letter I have received today which I shall answer here. The first question is: ''You

[1] *Bhagavad Gita,* iii. 12

have become so used to the British army. What will happen to you after the British army withdraws from here?'' I answered this question when I was in South Africa and again answered it after my return here many years ago. I still say the same thing. We have no use for the British army. It does not increase our strength but reduces it. I am of course a votary of non-violence but this applies even to those who do not believe in non-violence. If everyone becomes a soldier and learns to wield the rifle, what need would there be left for the British army? If the withdrawal of the British army shocks us, then how can we be said to be fit for swaraj? If a man's lungs become diseased, he cannot keep himself alive with another person's lungs. Swaraj constitutes the lungs of India. If we want to survive we cannot do so with others' help. We are today like a man who has spent his life in a dark cellar and, being suddenly let out, is for the time being blinded by sunlight. We do not want the British army or any other army either to suppress us or to defend us.

But the riots in Amritsar, Lahore and other places have made us lose faith in ourselves. We have become so wicked that we have begun to fear each other. The idea has begun to take root in our hearts that if the army is not there people will eat each other up. But the fact is that so long as there is a third party ready to suppress us we cannot hope to be strong ourselves. Swaraj is not for cowards.

The second question is: "What a silly old man you are that you cannot see how your ahimsa stinks. Your ahimsa can save neither the Hindus nor the Muslims. If we suffer you to live it is not for your ahimsa but in consideration of the services you have rendered to the country."

What stinks in my nostrils is not my ahimsa but the blood that is flowing everywhere around me. My ahimsa smells sweet to me. A man who drinks nectar every day does not find it so sweet as when he drinks it after having swallowed a draught of poison. Ahimsa did not always smell as sweet as it does now. For then the atmosphere was permeated with ahimsa. But today when violence is giving out so much stench it is only my ahimsa which acts as an antidote. The letter also asks me why I am repeatedly meeting Mr. Jinnah. He is our enemy and we ought to keep away from him. The Baluchis similarly

are our enemies and the Congress ought to have nothing to do with them. How can the Congress do so? Its mission is to serve all. I agree that Mr. Jinnah has done a disservice to the country in denouncing Hindus, especially *savarna* Hindus as his enemies. If a man acts wickedly one feels sorry but after all he is our brother. Hindus cannot go mad. Although Mr. Jinnah has got Pakistan it does not mean that we should cease to associate with him. There are many disputes which can be settled only if we meet together.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 196-8

321. LETTER TO MAHESH DATT MISHRA

NEW DELHI,
June 26/27, 1947

CHI. MAHESH,

I have your letter. Do what service you can from there. Take care of your health.

My programme has become quite uncertain. I cannot say where I shall be. Now you have to look after things there. It is good if you can write something for *Harijan*.

Whenever you want to send anything you have written, do please send it. Nothing is certain about Kashmir.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6722. Also C.W. 4464. Courtesy: Mahesh Datt Mishra

322. LETTER TO DEV PRAKASH NAYYAR

NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1947

CHI. DEV,

Yesterday Sushila[2] handed me your letter of the 24th instant. Today at 4·15 after the prayers while sipping warm water I had it read

[1] The reference is to Gandhiji's intended visit to Kashmir in place of Jawaharlal Nehru as the Maharaja objected to the latter's visit; *vide* "Letter to Lord Mountbatten", 27-6-1947

[2] Dr. Sushila Nayyar, addressee's sister

out to me, and then Mahesh's letter. Now I am dictating the reply. I like your letter, also Mahesh's. I have no idea when I shall be going there. Do understand that I am not staying on here of my own inclination. My desire is to be in Bihar and Noakhali. But we cannot have things all our own way. Knowingly I refrain from doing anything. God can toss me anywhere He chooses; I wish only to be a ball in His hands.

I feel hurt to hear the statement of Ansari Saheb[1]. Why did he go to Jharia? Nor did I understand why Shah Nawaz Saheb went. I have sent for him. The matter will be decided after his arrival. Mridulabehn too is here. I shall show your letter to her.

I greatly appreciate your staying on there. You are gaining direct experience. You will find in it the key to adult education. Adult education in my opinion is a very important matter. It puts us to test. Preserve good health, both physical and mental. I notice it every moment that perfect mental health ensures physical health.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

323. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

Immediate NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

Panditji was with me at noon and I gave him the purport of the conversation about Kashmir and he immediately asked whether the lettter[2] you were kindly sending to the Maharaja Saheb was going by wire or post. I could not give him a satisfactory answer and I said it would probably be by post. He said the letter would take some days to reach there and the reply too might be delayed. I share his anxiety that the matter brooks no delay. For him it is one of personal honour.

[1] Abdul Qayyum Ansari, Minister for Rehabilitation, Bihar

[2] The letter to Hari Singh was dictated by Mountbatten on June 26 in Gandhiji's presence; *vide* "Letter from Lord Mountbatten to Hari Singh", 26-6-1947

I have simply undertaken to replace him to the best of my ability. I would like to free him from anxiety in this matter. I seek your aid.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY

NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 269-70

324. LETTER TO KULARANJAN MUKHERJEE

NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1947

DEAR KULARANJAN,

Your letter. Abha is there. It is now for you to convert her to your method. I am anxious for her to gain complete recovery. I am glad her brother is progressing.[2]

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

[PS.]

What about the phone?

SHRI KULARANJAN MUKHERJEE

114-255-2C HAZRA ROAD

KALIGHAT

CALCUTTA

From a photostat: C.W. 10569

325. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1947

CHI. NARANDAS,

You will have received the letter[3] I wrote to you about Abha and Aunt. This is regarding Anna's[4] Kamala[5]. She wishes to return and

[1] Mountbatten replied that the letter had gone by post but that he was telegraphing to the Resident to inform the Maharaja of the despatch of the letter and its contents.

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Amrita Lal Chatterjee", 20-6-1947

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 23-6-1947

[4] Harihar Sharma and his wife

[5] *ibid*

stay there with her children. I have asked her to write to you and told her that she may go if you agree. Do not think about what I would like. I have no particular wish in the matter. You yourself will have to think and decide. If you don't need any person there, you can say no to her. You ought not to be burdened.

My plans are uncertain.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8639. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

326. LETTER TO MAHESH DATT MISHRA

NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1947

CHI. MAHESH,

I have your letter. I have already dictated a letter[1] to you and sent it. This is another I am dictating. Do not harbour the fear that I shall ask you to go. You came of your own accord and you will go when you want to go.

Forget what Mridulabehn said. Do not split hairs. Let us not consider in what light others see us. It will be enough if we can see ourselves as we are. You know the English dictum, "Man, know thyself." It is very apt. When a man fully knows himself, he will certainly not become God but he will be able to realize God.

I had realized that you desired, like so many others, to live near my physical body. This desire I cannot satisfy and do not want to satisfy. I wish for solitude. But this again is a matter of wishing. I do not want to exercise my wish in anything. I want to be a devotee of God. In the words of Mira:

Hari holds me by a fragile thread,
I move as he moves me,
I am pierced by the rapier of love.

It will be very good if you get on with Dev[2]. You would complement each other. You have both imbibed the education devised by the British. You have both seen the terrible inadequacy of that education and you are both with me and perhaps, it may be said,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mahesh Datt Mishra", 26/27-6-1947
[2] Dev Prakash Nayyar

under my discipline. Travel everywhere in Bihar, not together but separately. Compare your experiences and go ahead. I shall then be free from anxiety and my work there will proceed smoothly. Do not both be out of Patna at the same time.

Send me whatever you have written. I have left it for you to find out all that has been written about the Frontier Province.

Make your body as hard as steel.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6725. Also C.W. 4465. Courtesy: Mahesh Datt Mishra

327. LETTER TO SOHANLAL

NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1947

BHAI SOHANLAL,

I have your letter. I have no doubt that we should continue our work. The result is in God's hands. Even so ask Shri Jajuji[1]. If you want to send him this postcard do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6865

328. LETTER TO R. D. RANADE

NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1947

BHAI RANADE,

Why should you atone for any error that I may commit? It is totally against Hinduism.

" *Raghupati Raghava*" is not a *bhajan*, it is a *Ramadhun*. This refrain is nobody's monopoly.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Shrikrishnadas Jaju

329. TALK WITH RAJENDRA PRASAD

NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1947

I do not know why but I cannot swallow the idea that mechanization should be stepped up in India and that the country should find happiness through it. Either I am in error or I am not able to make myself understood. Have you given thought to the possible consequences of using tractors and pumping machines to water the fields and trucks instead of carts for transport of goods? How many farmers will become unemployed, how many bullocks will become idle? Moreover, I feel that in the long run the land will lose its fertility if it is ploughed with machines and tractors. People will stop keeping cattle and we shall have to import fertilizers. Even the small children get work if a peasant has a plough in his own house and tills his land himself. For example one person can work on the *kos*[1], another channels the water to the fields, one can plough while another does the weeding. In this way each will live on the labour of each. How natural and happy village life is, while life dependent on machinery is unhappy and brings unemployment. Yes, machinery has a place but it has been misused. So far we had been fighting against the British in order to give the village industries their due place. We should be careful that the same thing is not repeated.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 220-1

330. TALK WITH ARUNA ASAF ALI

NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1947

While we are in a foreign country, we should work to spread our culture….[2] spends too much money. The foreigners will not have any regard for us if even our ambassadors behave in this way…. They are very capable and intelligent. But once they go out they behave as they

[1] A big leather bucket in which water is drawn from a well with the help of a bullock for watering the fields

[2] Omissions as in the source. The reference presumably is to Asaf Ali who had been serving as India's ambassador in Washington.

like, thinking that there is no one to question what they do. We have ambassadors in every country. If such a large amount is spent on one ambassador, the rest of them would also spend on a similar scale. How can a poor country like India afford that? You do know that you can make plain *chapatis* as well as *laddoos* and other sweets out of wheat flour. But what a great difference there is between the two expenses as well as in digestibility. If we make *laddoos* every day and eat them, we shall become ill physically as well as financially. On the other hand, *rotis* are beneficial in both the respects. If you can understand this thing, you can understand about…. When I see such a great reaction among national servants, and that too so soon, I tell myself that those who had dedicated themselves as such, donned khadi, gone to jail, adopted non-violence and participated in the spiritual programme had not done so with knowledge, that it was merely sheeplike behaviour. Otherwise, how can one change one's way of living so soon and to such an extent?

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 226-7

331. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today I have received a distressing letter. A friend writes from Delhi that a large number of refugees from the Punjab are on their way to Delhi. They have left their homes because they felt that their lives and property were in danger. But where can they flee? If we hear that there is going to be an earthquake in Delhi tomorrow, shall we flee the place? The brave never run away. Death is one's constant companion. No one is immortal. As for property it is something one is always acquiring and losing. The friend also writes that when the refugees who have come to Delhi want to rent houses, the landlords ask for premium. My advice to those who have houses or land in Delhi is that they should welcome these homeless people to their houses. But even if they cannot do so, at least they should not demand premium but be content with such modest rent as the refugees can pay them. It is their paramount duty to give shelter to the refugees. I take

it that in the case of some of the landlords, rent from their houses is the sole source of income. But even so the rents they charge should be reasonable. The letter suggests that the Interim Government should consider this problem and as far as possible reduce the difficulty faced by the refugees.

I cannot answer all the questions addressed to me through letters and newspapers. But I shall select a few and attend to them. Today I have selected three questions. The first question is that since in the world money has replaced God, what is India to do? My answer is that dependence on money power, physical force or brute force is folly. The mightiest power is God, before whom, as a *bhajan* says, all powers become ineffective. Today the materialist outlook prevails and we have come to feel that there is no such thing as spiritual power or soul-power for it is invisible and intangible. But I am a believer in the power of the spirit and I place no value on brute force. I still say that brute force is transient while soul-force is eternal for it is truth itself.

The second question is: "After the British leave, Dominion status will continue only till the Constituent Assembly has finalized the constitution. Thereafter will you be friends of the British or their enemy ?"

The answer is that we have always hoped that we shall continue our association with England. The bad deeds of a bad man are buried with him, only the good is left behind. India today is passing through the agony of child-birth. If the English emerge well out of it, that is if the Viceroy and his English advisers do what will be good for the country, then how can they remain our enemies? Even Dominion Status we have secured by being their friends. We now become partners in Commonwealth. Even when we leave the Commonwealth we shall still have friendship for them. In this lies their good and ours. Jawaharlal Nehru, the Vice-President of the Interim Government, has already said that no one need fear an independent India. India will cultivate friendship with all countries.

The third question is: "Who will be the President of the Indian Republic? Will it be some Englishman, and if it is not to be an Englishman then should we not have Jawaharlal Nehru? For he is a highly educated man, can speak English and French and has large experience of foreign countries." My answer is that if I have my way the President of the Indian Republic will be a chaste and brave Bhangi girl. If an English girl of 17 could become the British Queen and later even Empress of India, there is no reason why a Bhangi girl of robust

love of her people and unimpeachable integrity of character should not become the first President of the Indian Republic.[1] It is not necessary that the President should be a highly educated person knowing many languages. We do not want to display our pride to the world by electing a learned Brahmin or a Kshatriya as the President of India. By electing a Harijan girl to that office we shall demonstrate our soul-force. we shall show to the world that in India there is no one high and no one low. Only the girl should be clean in body and mind. She should be chaste as Sita and her eyes should radiate light. Sita had such radiance that Ravana could not touch her. If I can find such a girl she will be our first President. We shall all salute her and set a new example before the world. After all she does not have to concern herself with running the Government of India. She will have a cabinet of ministers and she will act on its advice. She will merely have to sign papers. All the Indians, be they caste Hindus or Muslims or followers of some other faith, should declare with one voice that whoever may be the President they will all salute him. This is real moral power. All the rest is falsehood. If such a girl of my dreams becomes President, I shall be her servant and I shall not expect from the Government even my upkeep. I shall make Jawaharlal, Sardar Patel and Rajendra Babu her ministers and therefore her servants.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 199-202

332. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

Urgent NEW DELHI,
June 27/28, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I sent you a note[2] in the afternoon. The time after the evening prayer and walk I wish to devote to talking to you on certain matters I was able to touch but could not develop when we met.

I told the Parliamentary Delegation that heralded the Cabinet Mission and the Cabinet Mission itself that they had to choose between the two parties or even three. They were doomed to fail if they tried to please all, holding them all to be in the right. I had hoped that you were bravely and honestly trying to extricate yourself from the impossible position. But My eyes were opened when, if I

[1] This sentence is from *The Hindu*, 28-6-1947.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Mountbatten", 27-6-1947

understood you correctly, you said that Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah and the League members were equally in the right with the Congress members and that possibly Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah was more so. I suggested that this is not humanly possible. One must be wholly right in the comparative sense. You have to make your choice at this very critical stage in the history of this country. If you think that Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah is, on the whole, more correct and more reasonable than the Congress, you should choose the League as your advisers and in all matters be frankly and openly guided by them.

You threw out a hint that Qaid-e-Azam might not be able to let you quit even by 15th August especially if the Congress members did not adopt a helpful attitude. This was for me a startling statement. I pointed the initial mistake of the British being party to splitting India into two. It is not possible to undo the mistake. But I hold that it is quite possible and necessary not to put a premium upon the mistake. This does not in any way impinge upon the very admirable doctrine of fair play. Fair play demands that I do not help the mistaken party to fancy that the mistake was no mistake but a belated and only a partial discharge of an obligation.

You startled me again by telling me that, if the partition had not been made during British occupation, the Hindus being the major party would have never allowed partition and held the Muslims by force under subjection. I told you that this was a grave mistake. The question of numbers was wholly untenable in this connection. I cited the classic example of less than one hundred thousand British soldiers holding India under utter subjection. You saw no analogy between the two instances. I suggested the difference was only one of degree.

I place the following for your consideration:

(a) The Congress has solemnly declared that it would not hold by force any Province within the Union.

(b) It is physically impossible for millions of caste-ridden Hindus to hold well-knit though fewer millions of Muslims under subjection by force.

(c) It must not be forgotten that Muslim dynasties have progressively subjugated India by exactly the same means as the English conquerors later did.

(d) Already there has been a movement to win over to the Muslim side the so-called scheduled classes and the so-called aboriginal races.

(e) The caste Hindus who are the bugbear are, it can be shown conclusively, a hopeless minority. Of these the armed Rajputs are not yet nationalists as a class. The Brahmins and the Banias are still untrained in the use of arms. Their supremacy where it exists is purely moral. The Sudras count, I am sorry, more as scheduled class than anything else. That such Hindu society by reason of its mere superiority in numbers can crush millions of Muslims is an astounding myth.

This should show you why, even if I am alone, I swear by non-violence and truth together standing for the highest order of courage before which the atom bomb pales into insignificance, what to say of a fleet of Dreadnoughts.

I have not shown this to any of my friends.

If I have misunderstood you in any single particular you have only to correct me and I shall gladly accept the correction. If I am obscure anywhere, I shall try to remove the obscurity either by letter or by meeting according to your wish.

My anxiety to save you from mistakes as I see them is the sole excuse for this letter.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

From the original: India Office Library and Records, London; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47,* pp. 250-2

333. LETTER TO DAS

NEW DELHI,
June 28, 1947

DEAR DAS,

I wrote out a note the moment I got Mrs. Sen Gupta's[2] letter.

[1] In his reply dated June 28, the addressee said: "Thank you for your letter of this morning, which I have read with much interest. I am glad you wrote because after reading your letter I feel that almost from first to last I must have failed to make clear to you my meaning. I am glad that you have not shown your letter to others, since I should be very sorry that views should be attributed to me which I did not, in fact, express. I hope you will agree to discuss these matters again at our next meeting." Lord Mountbatten who read out Gandhiji's letter at his staff meeting that day stated how he had been misinterpreted by Gandhiji. For the minutes of the meeting, *vide* "Extract from Minutes of Viceroy 48th Staff Meeting", 28-6-1947

[2] Nellie Sen Gupta (1886-1973); widow of Jatindra Mohan Sen Gupta; she was President of Indian National Congress at one of its critical sessions in 1933; after partition in 1947 she settled in Pakistan.

I am averse to multiplying newspapers which crop up like mushrooms.

Mrs. Sen Gupta should not be dragged into this thing.

Despriya's[1] memory would be letter served by doing his work silently and selflessly.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

334. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
June 28, 1947

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Your interpretation is correct but still let me explain the thing a little more. It is only proper that the amount earmarked for the Talimi Sangh in the budget should be handed over to them. We shall see if there are further dues. If Manibhai asks for the whole amount in lump sum it is only right that we should pass on to him what we have decided to give him. I know he has been asking for it although Balkrishna is the moving spirit behind it. Since it is not possible to supervise things from Sevagram, it is better that we hand over the amount earmarked for them so that they manage their affairs as best as they can. Our ship sails on faith and that is how it should be. I can understand that you will not take an independent decision. That burden should be shouldered by me so long as I live and am capable of doing so.

I understand what you say about your health. Don't spare any efforts. Ask me anything you wish regarding your treatment or diet.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Jatindra Mohan Sen Gupta (1885-1933), a Congress leader of Bengal who succeeded C.R. Das; he served several terms of imprisonment and died as internee at Ranchi on July 23; was connected with the English daily *Forward* and himself founded the English daily *Advance*.

335. LETTER TO JUSSAWALA

NEW DELHI,
June 28, 1947

BHAI JUSSAWALA,

I did get your letter. I did not send a reply as I had neither the time nor the inclination. Now that another has come I would only say that we cannot gain more from America.

I have quite a few letters from there and I have frankly told them that their prescriptions and equipment are of no use to the Indian masses. For the rich, they are like toys. My views are being confirmed in the opposite direction, that is, towards simplicity. I am therefore not in favour of your going to America. If I had my way I would stop you from going.

The thing for which you intend going to America is no longer to be found anywhere. But this is a different subject. There is another gentleman like you who also has an invitation. I have been able to convince him that there is no point in going. The best thing is frankly to tell them what we think.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

336. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

NEW DELHI,
June 28, 1947

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter. I was happy to read about Pandurang. It will be very good if he can be firm in his resolve. There must be no place for clandestine adultery. It is difficult for him to remain an unmarried widower.

May God save him.

You did well in writing about the Goshala. I should advise you clearly to spell out your ideas in writing to Aryanayakumji. You should not be concerned with how others take it. If we are pure and others still think us impure, it only means that we have to be even purer and more determined. You should therefore tell Aryanayakumji frankly. That would be in keeping with true friendship. That the land has been taken from us should not weigh in considering the matter of

the Goshala.

It will be good if Shakaribehn[1] comes. It will give relief to Chimanlal.

The restraints involved in *brahmacharya* also include not living among animals and eunuchs. I have advised against them.[2]

Why did Kishorelalbhai[3] leave Sevagram? Did he give any reason for it or was it that he just came and went.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am glad to know that Hoshiari[4] is improving.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1981

337. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 28, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

What I am going to tell you today will be something very special. I hope you will hear me with attention and try to digest what I say. When someone does something good he makes the whole world partake of the good. When someone does something bad, though he cannot make the world share his action he can certainly cause harm. The Constituent Assembly is discussing the rights of the citizen. That is to say they are deliberating on what the fundamental rights should be. As a matter of fact the proper question is not what the rights of a citizen are, but rather what constitutes the duties of a citizen. Fundamental rights can only be those rights the exercise of which is not only in the interest of the citizen but that of the whole world. Today everyone wants to know what his rights are, but if a man learns to discharge his duties right from childhood and studies the sacred books of his faith he automatically exercises his rights too. I learnt my duties on my mother's lap. She was an unlettered village woman. She was unable even to sign her name. Nobody in those days thought of learning to read and write by employing tutors. I am telling you of

[1] Wife of Chimanlal N. Shah
[2] *Vide* "Walls of Protection", 15-6-19 74
[3] Kishorelal G. Mashruwala
[4] Addressee's niece

things seventy years ago. My father was a Diwan, but at that time a Diwan did not have to be particularly well versed in English. He dressed himself in an *angarkha* and wore village-style shoes. He did not even know what trousers were. My mother taught me to repeat Ramanama. She knew my dharma. Thus if from childhood we learn what our dharma is and try to follow it our rights look after themselves. I could live only on condition that I drank the milk that my mother gave me. If I had shirked the obligation to drink milk I would have forfeited my right to live. The beauty of it is that the very performance of a duty secures us our right. Rights cannot be divorced from duties. This is how satyagraha was born, for I was always striving to decide what my duty was.

Today we notice a strange phenomenon. He who is a ruler for a moment gets it into his head that has been created by God solely to rule over people, that he has the right to hang some, to imprison others and to fine some others. He wants that all the duties should be discharged by the people. He says he has derived his right to rule from God. Industrial workers and industrial magnates are demanding their respective rights. The zamindar insists on his rights, the peasant on his. But there are no such two classes here that one of them should exercise only rights and the other discharge only duties. If a ruler shirks his duties while the people do theirs then the people become the ruler. If the ruler does his duty and considers himself the trustee of his people he will survive. But if he becomes authoritarian he cannot survive in this age. Till now we have been sunk in darkness. The rulers have forgotten their duties and so have the ruled. The rajas have only been repeating that they were descended from the sun or the moon. But in truth a sovereign is only the first servant of the people. It is the duty of the servant to surrender all to the master and then live on what is left over. The people similarly should learn to do their duty. They are in millions. If they are so disposed they can kill the ruler. But by so doing they will only harm themselves. If we keep our streets clean and well lighted or do something similar we should do it as a duty. Every one of us should become a scavenger. A man who does not first become a scavenger cannot live, nor has he a right to live and we are all scavengers in some sense or other even if we do not admit it. If the people pay taxes it is not so as to fill the coffers of the ruler but because without that the administration cannot function. The same thing applies to mill-workers and mill-owners. Here at hand and around is squalor in the Harijan quarter. When I see it my heart cries

out at our worthlessness. I live in such beautiful and clean surroundings while they have to wallow in dirt. Mill-owners should similarly first feed the workers and themselves eat only afterwards. But even if the mill-owners do not do their duty, does it mean that the workers should kill them? They can certainly do so. But then the whole structure would collapse. They gain nothing by frightening the mill-owners. They would themselves be behaving as masters then. If they want to improve their lot they must not forget that they will earn their rights only by doing their duty. There are today millions of workers. If they forget their duty anarchy and chaos will result.

Every man is born a debtor. The scripture also says that we are born debtors in the world to which we owe a debt and we are dependent on others right from birth. Man becomes man only by recognizing his dependence on others.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 202-5

338. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

NEW DELHI,
June 28/29, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I have to inflict another letter on you—this time about the Frontier referendum.

Badshah Khan writes to me to say that he is carrying out the plan I had discussed with you and he with Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah. The plan was to move for free Pathanistan framing its own local constitution and when the Pakistan and the Union constitutions were out, to decide either to belong to one State or the other. In this move he has failed. Therefore the referendum would go on without any interference by his followers, the latter abstaining from voting either way. He fully realizes that in this case the Frontier would probably go to Pakistan.

He wants me also to draw your attention to the fact that Punjab Muslims, men and women, are being freely introduced in the Frontier Province to affect the referendum and that notable non-Frontier Muslims too have been sent to the Frontier Province for the same purpose. This increases the risk of blood-shed and worse.

He also says that the non-Muslim refugees numbering many

thousands will have no chance, so far as he is aware, of taking part in the referendum and they are threatened with dire penalty should they dare to exercise the vote.[1]

I see in today's papers that Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah contends that if the Pathans abstain from voting, the abstention will constitute a breach of the terms of the referendum. I do not see the force of the contention.

Many thanks for your telegram[2] to the Resident in Kashmir.

Yours Sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

From the original; India Office Library and records, London: also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47,* p. 262

339. SOME VALUABLE HINTS

The writer is a student of the country's politics.[3] I am not *au fait* with the Congress work. Therefore I have no right to announce any opinion on the foregoing hints which should, therefore, be taken for what they are worth.

NEW DELHI, June 29, 1947
Harijan, 6-7-1947

340. A PERPLEXITY[4]

I give below extract from a letter received from a well-educated Indian in England.

I am in a confused state with regard to the relations between men and

[1] The addressee in his reply said that he was asking the Governor to "take such steps as may be necessary about Punjabi Muslims being introduced into the Frontier…and non-Muslim refugees having no chance to vote."

[2] *Vide* footnote 2, "Letter to Lord Mountbatten", 27-6-1947

[3] The article by "Anonymous" is not reproduced here. Advocating the slogan "Produce or Perish" instead of "Industrialize or Perish", the author suggested; "The Congress should set up a number of committees of experts, one on the defence of India, the second on economic planning, the third on industrial Planning and the fourth on the secretariat planning."

[4] The Gujarati original appeared under the title "A Difficulty" in *Harijanbandhu* which was published simultaneously with the source. The translation has been revised.

women. I have already written to you that I believe in certain restrictions on these. Yet my situation is very like that of Trishanku. I often feel that if these relations were more natural than they are, there might be less sinfulness. Yet something within me tells me that every touch, be it ever so superficial, is bound to lead to the eruption of animal passion. When one examines the court cases here even about brother and sister or even father and daughter, the beginning seems to have been quite innocent. In my opinion the glow of mere touch drags down inside of a month, even a week, one who is not endowed with extra purity. A good man may take even ten years but he is sure to go down the incline of vice. There is a constant conflict between the habit which we have inherited and the thoughts developed from the study of books by modern writers. The question often arises—can society altogether abjure contact between the sexes? I have not been able to come to a decision. Such in short is my sorry plight.

This is the state of many young men and women. There is only one way for such young people. They have to avoid all contact with the opposite sex. The checks and restraints described in our books were the result of experience gained during those times. They were, no doubt, necessary for the writers and their readers. Today every aspirant has to pick out from them the necessary items and add new ones which experience may make necessary. If we draw a circle round the goal to be reached, we shall find many ways leading to the goal, from which each one may choose according to his needs.

An aspirant who may not know his own mind will certainly fail if he blindly copies another.

Having said so much by way of caution, I must add that to find the true way to *brahmacharya* through a study of court cases and erotic literature is a wild goose chase. The true way is not to be found in English law courts or in the novels. They have their use in their limited field, but they are of no use to the aspirant after *brahmacharya*. English men and women who tread the difficult path are not afflicted by the imaginings of the correspondent quoted above. Those whom I have in mind have their God enthroned in their hearts. They are neither self-deceived nor would they deceive others. To them sisters are sisters and mothers are mothers. All women are to them sisters and mothers. It never occurs to them that every contact with them is sinful or that it is fraught with danger. They see in all women the same God they see in themselves.

It betrays lack of humility to say that such examples do not exist

because we have not come across them. It also amounts to lowering the glory of *brahmacharya*. Rejecting the possibility of perfect *brahmacharya* is like saying that there is no God because we have not seen Him face to face or met men who have had that experience.

NEW DELHI, June 29, 1947

Harijan, 6-7-1947

341. A THOUGHTFUL SUGGESTION

As the originator of the first design, I should say that the three stripes were to represent all the communities and the charkha was the symbol of non-violence.[1]

NEW DELHI, June 29, 1947

Harijan, 6-7-1947

342. A LETTER

June 29, 1947

Often it is easier to win independence than to preserve it. Time alone will show whether the goal that the Congress has achieved, the freedom that has been won, will endure. Speeches and discussions are not going to help now. I do believe that if those holding positions of responsibility and power show some restraint in making speeches and pay more attention to work it will have an effect.

And now a new development is taking place. People who believe themselves to be Congress workers, shun members of other parties or criticize them in public as if non-Congressmen had no spirit of patriotism in them. These Congressmen think that they are the only servants of the people. If this state of affairs continues, the atmosphere in the country will become more and more bitter.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 239

[1] This note appeared under an article on the national flag by S. D. Kalelkar, not reproduced here. The author *inter alia* says "our wheel may have three stripes of red, white and green (of the mother earth and her children the tillers) with a wheel with eight spokes superimposed in any suitable colour."

343. TALK WITH BHIMSEN SACHAR[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 29, 1947

I shall be happy if you and your family do not leave Pakistan but all of you bravely sacrifice your lives there. I will not weep. All of you are my fellow soldiers. The strength of an army depends more on the soldiers than on the captain. I am sure that peace will be established in India if I get even twenty-five brave soldiers of my imagination. But I am sorry to say that the local leaders who have some influence are trying at any cost to transfer their property and family to safety. When this is happening, with what face can I advise the poor, the common people not to run away but to die wherever they are? Think over all this is you can.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 239-40

344. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 29, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Yesterday I talked to you about duty. However I was not able to say all that I had intended to say. Whenever a person goes anywhere certain duties come to devolve on him. The man who neglects his duty and cares only to safeguard his rights does not know that rights that do not spring from duties done cannot be safeguarded. This applies also to the Hindu-Muslim relations. Whether it is the Hindus living in a place or Muslims or both, they will come to acquire rights if they do their duty. Then they do not have to demand rights. A child feeds at his mother's breast because it is his duty to do so. And this alone gives him the right to live. This is a paramount law and no one can change it. If Hindus consider Muslims their brothers and treat them well, Muslims too will return friendship for friendship. Take a village for example. If there are in it five hundred Hindus and five Muslims, then the five hundred Hindus come to have certain obligations

[1] Leader of the Congress party in the Punjab Assembly

towards the five Muslims which *ipso facto* gives Hindus certain rights. In their arrogance they should not think that they can crush the Muslims and kill them for it cannot be anyone's right to kill. There is no bravery in killing. It is cowardice and a disgrace. The duty of the Hindus is to share with the Muslims in their joys and sorrows even if they wear beards and face towards the West during *namaaz.* They should see whether they are getting enough food and water and whether their other needs are being satisfied. When the five hundred Hindus do their duty, then they earn the right to expect that the five Muslims also would do theirs. If the village catches fire and the Muslims think that they should let it burn and do everything to see that it spreads, then they will not be doing their duty. Fires in villages are a common occurrence. If someone lights a *bidi* and throws away the burning match-stick and it comes into contact with a little dried grass or wisp of cotton, a fire starts. And since villages mostly have thatched roofs just a little wind can make the fire consume the whole village. But as a matter of course in such an eventuality the five Muslims will also want to extinguish the fire and will set about bringing pails of water for the purpose. By thus doing their duty they automatically acquire rights. Today we do not do our duty. The work goes on because God has so made the world that its progress does not stop. But supposing the five Mussalmans are bent on mischief, supp-osing you give them food and water and treat them well and they still abuse you, what then will be the duty of the five hundred Hindus? It cer-tainly is not their duty to cut them down. It would be bestial, not human, to do so. If a brother of mine has gone mad, shall I then start beating him up? I shall not do so. I shall confine him in a room and stop others from treating him roughly. This is the human way. Similarly if the Muslims in question do not want to behave in a friendly manner and keep on say-ing that they are a separate nation, that though they are only five, they can summon five crores of Muslims from outside, the Hindus should not let themselves be frightened by such a threat. They should tell the Mus-lims outside that they want to be friends with the five Muslims, but that they don't reciprocate. That if they want to help them it is their affair, but the Hindus would not be frightened or subdued by force. The world will understand that the five hundred Hindus are good people and want to do their duty. The same thing applies to a village where there are five hundred Muslims and only five Hindus. There are many such villages in Pakistan. Some people from the Jhelam area had been to see me.

They were concerned about their future in their home country. I told them that if the Muslims there were good people, could exercise self-control in doing their duty, then they would have nothing to fear. But if the few Hindus there were wicked, then even if Hindus from all over India went to help them nothing would be gained.

Some Indian Princes are offended. They believe that so long as there are the sun and the moon in the sky, they ought to remain on their thrones. They argue that it was not the people who installed them as the rulers, it was the British or the sun or the moon. This does not show that they are doing their duty. This bespeaks pride and arrogance. So long as they were protected by the British these Princes squandered crores of rupees in England and America. They indulged in wild orgies. Now it cannot continue. Now they can remain rulers only on the sufferance of the people and as their servants. Of course even servants must eat. So long they plundered their people. They should also be allowed to continue in their palaces for they can say that they have been used to live in palaces and have never lived in huts. What can the people lose by letting them do so? But if the Princes refuse to recognize the rights of the people, if they say that they will blow their subjects to bits with cannon, then they will not be doing their duty. What then should the people do? In that eventuality it becomes the duty of the people to fight against the ruler and remove him from the throne. That does not mean that they should set fire to the palaces and destroy everything. That would be wickedness. If the ruler is on the wrong path the duty of the people is not to drag him down. The people should fight against him with courtesy, truth and peace. The people should not merely run after rights. He who runs after rights does not secure them. His plight is that of a dog who sees his reflection in the water and wants to attack it. His right is illusory. When you do your duty the rights will drop into your lap.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 205–8

345. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

NEW DELHI,
June 29/30, 1947

CHI. MIRA,

I have your two wires and two letters giving me a vivid description of your experiences in Uttarkashi. The second letter is disturbing. After I commenced dictating I felt like dozing and I dozed. After the dozing was finished I got your third letter telling me

about your movement to Dhanaulti.[1] I hope that you were able, without any harm to the body, to negotiate the journey in your dilapidated condition. It grieves me to think that even Uttarkashi with all its sacred associations could do no good to your body and that you found the water there to be too heavy and the atmosphere stifling. I hope the new place will treat you better. By going to Uttarkashi you have knocked on the head and on the principle of 'once bitten twice shy'. I shall look upon every Himalayan place with suspicion. However, I am in God's hands. I shall wish neither one way nor the other. Sufficient unto the day is the good thereof. I must not think of the evil. No one knows what is really good or evil. Therefore, let us think of nothing but good. Coming to mundane matters, when I am free from here I must go to Bihar and Noakhali and I might have to go to Kashmir almost immediately. Date will be decided, I hope, inside of a week. To Hardwar I went only for a few hours to see the refugees. The weather was too hot to permit of much movement.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MIRABEHN
C/O SHRI DEVDAS GANDHI
BIRLA HOUSE
MUSSOORIE

[PS.]

So Pandit Jagatram's[2] wife is dying. She will be well rid of her pain. I have noticed your well-thought-out suggestions.

This was going to Devdas to be forwarded to Dhanaulti. Now I have your fourth letter. I do hope all these changes will result in sending you to a place which will give your mind and body the needed rest.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6530. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9925

[1] She however went instead to Pratapnagar where she settled down to the work of reading through and selecting from Gandhiji's letter to her.

[2] Pandit Jagatram Bharadwaj

346. TELEGRAM TO P. SIVASHANMUGHAM PILLAI[1]

[On or before *June 30, 1947*][2]

GLAD RAMESWARAM AND OTHER TEMPLES ARE BEING OPENED TO HARIJANS. HOPE INTERNAL CLEANSING WILL FOLLOW.

The Hindu, 1-7-1947

347. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

NEW DELHI,
June 30, 1947

CHI. JAWAHAR[3],

Your letter. I have the invitation. I shall be at the Viceroy's house at 10 a. m. tomorrow. You or Vallabhbhai can fetch me, if that will save petrol.

Blessings from[4]
BAPU

[PS.]

I spoke at the meeting about B[adshah] Khan.[5]

From the original: Jawaharlal Nehru Papers (M. O. Mathai). Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

348. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
June 30, 1947

CHI. AMRIT,

Better a p. c. than no letter. Sushila is just off to Wardha to attend to her hospital work. Nothing certain about me. Hope you are better. It is not so oppressive here as when you left. Love to you all.

BAPU

[1] Speaker, Madras Legislative Assembly

[2] The telegram was reported under the date-line "Rameswaram, June 30". The temples were opened to Harijans on June 30.

[3] The superscription and subscription are in Hindi.

[4] *ibid*

[5] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 30-6-1947

[PS.]

When this was going to be posted, your letter was received. How funny. My movement still uncertain.

From the original: C.W. 4194. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7830

349. A LETTER

NEW DELHI,
June 30, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter. I cannot agree. Why should the Harijans not enter when the temples are open to them? Temples are Godless whilst they are closed against Harijans.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

350. LETTER TO TALEYARKHAN

NEW DELHI,
June 30, 1947

DEAR TALEYARKHAN,

Your letter. My advice is 'stop where you are'.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

351. LETTER TO MARJORIE SYKES

June 30, 1947

DEAR MARJORIE,

I have your long tale of woes. I am powerless to guide. If you permit me, I can send it to Ratibaboo. Otherwise be guided by Heaven.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

352. LETTER TO HOOSENBHAI LALJEE

June 30, 1947

BHAI HOOSENBHAI,

I have your letter. These days it is no use consulting me; I don't know what is happening. I am buried in my own affairs. I shall now show your letter to friends.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

HOOSENBHAI LALJI

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

353. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,

June 30, 1947

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have already written[1] to you regarding Kamala. Now I am also sending with this the letter I received from her today. Decide as you like and let me know, and write directly to her too.

Abha is really ill and is in Calcutta.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C. W. 8640. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

354. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

ON THE TRAIN,

June 30, 1947

CHI. MRIDU,

Regarding H[indus]. M[uslims]

1. Keep seeing the Leaguers. If they want to show you anything, go and see it, note down what you see and take their signatures

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 27-6-1947

on your notings.

2.A. They are free to do picketing on their own if they wish. They must not ask or expect the Government to lend them support.

B. If anyone vacates his land or house, the property will be taken over by the Government. If he wishes to retain the possession of the land or the house, he cannot expect to get anything from the Government. He can ask for the damages to the house if any.

C. Recruitment of Muslims in the Police cannot be demanded.

Demand can always be made for good, impartial Police.

D. The culprits should be brought to book. Mathura Singh must be arrested. If he is not arrested, it will show the bankruptcy of the Government.

E. Wherever riots have taken place, the Hindus must pay a fine voluntarily or compulsorily.

F. Repairs in the villages should mean that ideal sanitary conditions will prevail in the villages and streets will be clean without dirt and dust; villagers and school children should do this work on voluntary basis. There should be adequate provision for water.

G. The Government as well as the people should give up their dependence on the Police. Local Hindus should take up the responsibility. And the Government shoud pass a legislation that wherever there is destruction of Muslim life and property, the Hindus must pay the damages.

H. There should be provision for clean water everywhere.

I. Gen. Shah Nawaz should be appointed advisor and his recommendations should be accepted as far as possible.

MISCELLANEOUS

Ansari was to meet me. I regret he has not done so.

Mahant Bhagwan Das should resign.

It is right to demand surety from confirmed criminals.

It is desirable that relief centres should be controlled by Government. But others cannot be forbidden. Those who are being given help by way of food, etc. should contribute their utmost to work.

Both the Muslim ministers should give their full co-operation in this and they should be included in all negotiations.

Help should be sought from all political parties. There should be no party politics in such matters.

The places where destruction has taken place should be shown in the presence of the Panch, and should be photographed wherever possible and the rubble must be cleared at once.

You may give this to the Ministers after having it translated into Hindi.

You should talk in Hindi with Hindi-knowing persons. This work must be carried out only in Hindi. Both the scripts should be used. Even if you are entertaining different ideas in the matter, you must follow my ideas and methods of working. Then only will you bring credit to it and to yourself and help me in the task.

You are keeping very late hours at night. That is not service but attachment.

REGARDING THE POLICE

Only that much should be done about which Jayaprakash is convinced. I do not want two contradictory voices--mine and his. The actual work has to be done by him. I am in no doubt whatever about the absolute correctness of my policy.

You should meet the prisoners, if that is allowed. The Premier should let you meet them freely. You should not even think that you would work or benefit on behalf of the Socialist or any other party. If the politicians take advantage of the situation, it is the venomous legacy of the British practice, a volunteer has no party.

Let the police release the prisoners as far as possible. The cases of those who have indulged in murders will have to be considered. It is the duty of the Police to remain faithful to the present Government. The present Government should be regarded as popular Government. The question of capital and labour must not be allowed to be raised. That problem must be solved. It is possible to solve it. The Police should keep itself aloof from it. Jayaprakash must fully play his role in this and other matters. He has the spirit of self-sacrifice. He has intelligence. He is brave and courageous. I have a very high opinion of him. I do not want him to do anything for the sake of his position but for the sake of people. Many things about the Socialist Party can find wide acceptance. I believe that the policy by which he has become like a God to the people cannot work today. If he agrees to what I am saying, let him talk in the language of peace and make a public announcement of it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11261. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

355. A LETTER

June 30, 1947

Our worst enemies are fear and lethargy. We can become aware of our strength only when we have driven out these two….[1] We should not live on anybody's charity. We should seek help only from ourselves and from God. . . .

A servant of the people should never worry about his livelihood. Anybody who has voluntarily taken up the mission of service comes to command through his service such respect that people will come and offer him one rupee when he needs only half a rupee. But the public servant who renders such effective service must put up with many conditions and restrictions. I am not stating a mere copy-book maxim. I write from my own experience.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 242

356. A LETTER

June 30, 1947

I am surprised and pained to hear that you are marrying again. What you say about how grieved you were at the death of your first wife and how devoted you two had been to each other does not interest me much. Dharma requires that since you worshipped her so much for her virtues you should strive earnestly to imbibe those virtues and fulfil the aspirations which she cherished. I can write more on the subject but there is this conflagration raging around and I must either let myself be consumed in it or discover Truth. So I do not have any time at all. You, who have accepted the path of service and constructive work, do you not know that women's education and uplift is one of the eighteen points I have enumerated? I therefore feel disposed to say that as long as a widow in our society does not have the right to remarry without fear, a widower also should observe the restriction. But perhaps it is too late now. Please reconsider if it is still possible. Otherwise throw this letter into the waste-paper basket.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 242-3

[1] Omissions as in the source

357. A LETTER

June 30, 1947

I was pained to read about your illness. He who wishes to serve must not fall ill. And if one does not want to fall ill, then surely one must not transgress nature's laws! If you had made proper use of nature's gifts, namely, air, sun, earth, water, food and rest and had at the same time kept repeating Ramanama, you would have escaped such serious illness. Drink plenty of water, apply mud-packs, take baths and live only on fruit juice. We look upon a fruit diet as a costly diet, but this is a great error. The truth is that in our lethargy we do not take the necessary trouble to grow vegetables and fruits. If we shed our lethargy and ignorance, we shall find this seemingly costly diet quite inexpensive and be able to maintain perfect health.

In the morning, you should take sun-bath with the whole body, except the head, completely uncovered. You should also take hip-baths in warm and cold water. If you do not pass clear stools, take enema. And take complete rest. The mind also has a great effect on the body.

Therefore, without tiring yourself read some good books or have them read to you in a spirit of devotion, and shut your eyes and meditate on God. I am sure you will get well if you do this much. Dictate a letter to me from time to time. Avoid the labour of writing yourself.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p 243

358. LETTER TO P. C. GHOSH

NEW DELHI,
June 30, 1947

CHI. PROFULLA[1],

Sardar has sent word that there should be a Marwari in your Cabinet, either Badridas Goenka or Khaitan. I think it will be proper to do so, improper not to.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 3787

359. LETTER TO Y. M. PARNERKAR

NEW DELHI,
June 30, 1947

CHI. PARNERKAR[2],

I have your letter.

I am strongly against people going abroad. I cannot appreciate the assumption that all knowledge is concentrated abroad and only ignorance abounds at home.

Keep in mind that in the West they experiment on living beings so that the human body may be preserved. In order to extract all that they can from the cow they slaughter her as well as the bull and feed on their flesh. What can we learn from them?

But I am alone although my being alone does not hurt me. What if I am in the wrong? Am I not confining the mistake to myself? Therefore I have only one advice to offer, that you should do what the Goseva Sangh suggests. But no going abroad even if they suggest it. Serving the Goseva Sangh means serving the cow because the former came into being only for the latter's sake. Try to bring round your colleagues by your knowledge.

I have no time or inclination to write more.

I hope Sharad[3] is doing well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Leader of the West Bengal Assembly Congress party; Chief Minister after partition

[2] A dairy expert at Sevagram Ashram

[3] Addressee's daughter, Sharad P. Machve

360. LETTER TO SIYARAM SHARAN GUPTA[1]

June 30, 1947

BHAIJI,

I have your letter. I do not think your flag-salutation [song] can be popular in today's atmosphere. But if it has life, some day it will.

Blessings from

BAPU

SIYARAM SHARAN

JHANSI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

361. TALK WITH PRABHAVATI AND OTHERS

NEW DELHI,

June 30, 1947

God has sent us here so that we should get rid of our sins, our meanness and narrow-mindedness. There is only one way of doing that and it is prayer. You can pray in any way you like. If you want you can call Him Allah or Rama or Shiva. It is all the same. I feel that if only the leaders would realize it we have a golden opportunity here. If we but make up our minds and come together and calmly, without casting aspersions on one another, consider things and set actively to work, we shall add lustre to truth and non-violence, the power with which we secured our freedom, and the whole world will begin to look up to India for advice. We have no need for any 'isms'. Codes of conduct given in our scriptures are replaced by 'isms'of modern times. That little book *Gita* teaches us that those who eat without doing any work are thieves, that those who eat while their neighbours starve eat sin and that we should look upon everyone with an equal eye.[2] I do not believe that communism or socialism of Russia, America of England can teach us anything more than this. Our scriptures are full of religion and philosophy. We are heirs of those who wrote such great books. But without caring to see what we have, we run to others. It is not as if those others had achieved perfection.

And it is possible that the experiments which were successful

[1] A Hindi poet

[2] *Bhagavad Gita,* iii, 12 and 13

there may be quite unsuitable for this country and we may as a result find ourselves in the plight of a washerman's dog[1]. If you listen to my advice the best course, and the only course, for all of us is to extend as much co-operation to the National Government as we can. If you are opposed to certain things, if you do not like a particular policy, then you only have to…[2] They are all very wise men. They will certainly listen to you if you try to explain to them your point of view. Give them as much active help as possible. We are all one body. If there is a thorn in one foot the whole body suffers for it. One feels relieved only when it is taken out. Similarly, we all have to suffer for the mass-slaughter going on in the country. What can Sardar and Nehru alone do? There are only a handful of such wise men in the country today. Do not let your abilities be frittered away when the National Government is about to be formed. Utilize them in useful activities. It is not as if politics were the only field of service. There are so many others which are untrodden. Take up the one in which you are interested. Bear in mind the welfare of the country. I do not wish to say anything more.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 246-9

362. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 30, 1947

People are today watching the referendum that is about to be held in the Frontier Province because legally the Frontier Province has been and still is a Congress province. Badshah Khan and his co-workers are being asked to choose between Pakistan and India. The word Hindustan is being misunderstood as if Hindustan is Hindu and Pakistan is Muslim. The problem before Badshah Khan is how to get out of this difficulty. The Congress has pledged its word that after consultation with Dr. Khan Saheb there should be a referendum in the Frontier Province under the direct supervision of His Excellency the Viceroy. The referendum will thus be held on the appointed date.

The Khudai Khidmatgars will not participate in the referendum. This will result in a clear victory for the Muslim League and the

[1] Which belongs neither here nor there
[2] Omission as in the source

Khudai Khidmatgars will also not have acted in defiance of their inner voice, granting that they have one. How does this violate any conditions of the referendum? The Khudai Khidmatgars who have so long bravely fought the British are not going to be scared by defeat. Various political parties take part in elections knowing full well that they will be defeated and when a party does not take part in an election the defeat is certain.

Badshah Khan is chided for raising a new demand of Pakhtoonistan. As far as I can remember even before the formation of the Congress Ministry Badshah Khan was taken up with this notion of freedom for the Pathans in their homes. Badshah Khan does not want to set up a separate State. If he is only free to make his own constitution he will gladly join one of the two federations. I can see no ground for objection to this demand of Pakhtoonistan. Of course if the idea is to teach the Pathans a lesson and to humble them anyhow it is a different matter. A serious charge levelled against Badshah Khan is that he is playing into the hands of Afghanistan. I am quite sure that Badshah Khan cannot practise deceit against anyone. He will never allow the Frontier Province to be absorbed into Afghanistan.

As a friend of his I know that he has one weakness. He has a suspicious nature and he has always suspected the intentions of the British. I must ask him that he should get over this weakness, which is not peculiar to him. It does not become a leader of his stature. I have called this a weakness on his part and so it is, but it is also in a way his strong point, for even if he wants he cannot hide his opinions.

From the Frontier Province I now take you to Rameswaram where it is said Rama had built a bridge or causeway for his horde to cross into Lanka, which he conquered but did not retain and gave to Vibhishana, the brother of Ravana. The temple at Rameswaram has now been opened to Harijans. Thus except for the temples in Cochin all the famous temples in the South have been opened to the Harijans. The following is the list of the important temples furnished me by Rajaji: Madurai, Tinnevelly, Chidambaram, Srirangam, Palni, Triplicane, Tirupati, Kanchi and Guruvayur. The list is not exhaustive. The Harijan Speaker[1] of the Madras Assembly has been going to these temples along with other Harijan and non-Harijan devotees. It may be that educated Harijans and others do not see the great importance of this reform. Let us not however underestimate its import, for this

[1] P. Sivashanmugham Pillai; *vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nerhu", 30-6-1947

reform has been brought about without bloodshed. We shall hope that Cochin too, like Travancore, Tamilnadu and British Kerala, will open its temples to Harijans.

The temple-entry reform will remain incomplete so long as temples do not become truly sanctified through internal reform.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 209-10

363. LETTER TO SURENDRA

NEW DELHI,
July 1, 1947

CHI. SURENDRA,

Your letters are too long. Why do you write such long letters to a man like…[1] I have no doubt that he is making a mistake, unless I myself am in error. His mistake lies in the remedy he is adopting and it is as clear as daylight. But only work can correct it, not argument.

My remarks which you cite were true in relation to the problems to which they referred. Now I say what I feel and think today.

I do not interpret the Shastras as you do. I have never said that the body can become immortal. How can a thing which by its nature is perishable become immortal? Old age which is the result of the natural process of living is different from the condition that is brought on by disease. Think over the problem independently of the *Sankhya* doctrine. Does not the *atman* exist independently of the body and survive it? If one realizes it, one may believe—as I do—that one's body will grow old but not the spirit. As regards the other points, I will deal with them if I write to you again. I am extremely busy these days. It is 5 a. m. now.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 249

[1] Omission as in the source

364. LETTER TO ABHA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
July 1, 1947

CHI. ABHI,

I have your letter. You can be arrogant and obstinate. Whatever be my wishes, what does it matter when I have once given you my permission?

Why should I be angry about your getting treated by Dr. Roy? Have I not myself taken his treatment? It may not have been the same kind as you are taking but that is of no moment. I want you to be completely cured. Am I not also concerned about your illness? Now for my wishes. Even since you fell ill I have always felt how nice it would be if you could remain with me! I certainly wish that you should come and stay with me. The question is whether during my tour you should be running around with me while you are ill. I might be going to Kashmir shortly but nothing is certain. Nevertheless you can come over. I shall do whatever I think best for you. While you stay with me, my treatment will have priority. I take the help of a doctor only when I am defeated as I did in the case of Manu. Understand that yours will be a similar case. In my eyes there is no difference between you and Manu.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

365. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

NEW DELHI,
July, 1, 1947

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Your letter. I have written[1] fully to Abha. You will read my letter.

Hope Ramen is all right. In spite of my letter, if Abha prefers to go to Sevagram, of course she will do so. I am quite prepared to take charge of her in spite of my wanderings.

BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 10568. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

366. LETTER TO KULSUM SAYANI

NEW DELHI,
July 1, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER KULSUM,

I have received your letter. Convey my blessings to Hamid and Zarina. May they serve the country. There is no mention of the daughter-in-law in the card!

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Begum Kulsum Sayani Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

367. A LETTER

July 1, 1947

There is a perpetual conflict in man's heart between the two opposing forces, darkness and light. If these did not exist there would be no life. I am, therefore, struggling to find light.

A handful of capitalists are ruling over millions with the help of machines. They are impelled solely by self-interest and greed. I am ready to devote all my energies to ending this economic inequality, but only if I emerge safely from this conflagration.

Let us take a warning from the damage we have suffered from the present Hindu-Muslim conflict in the country and the shameful exhibition of ourselves that we have made before the world. If we do not take a similar warning also from the existing economic inequality, we shall suffer the same fate in future that we are doing today. I must admit, however, that today I am alone in thinking as I do. No one has so far paid any attention to the Harijan men, women and children with whom I am staying these days. It remains to be seen how much I can do from here.

I assume that you take sufficient care of your health. 'If the mind is pure, we have the Ganga flowing by the doorstep.' Remember, therefore, that health of the body depends upon that of the mind.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 250

368. A LETTER

July 1, 1947

A man who wishes to be good, to keep himself constantly occupied with work or to devote himself wholly to service of the people, must first of all acquire the virtue of concentration.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 250

369. COMMENTS ON INDIAN INDEPENDENCE BILL[1]

July 1, 1947

1 (1) Two Dominions

3 (b) No province excluded without consent of the dominion concerned.

9 & 10

15 Legal Proceedings

16 (3) Aden

19 (3b) Pakistan Assembly to be set up after the Act

1. Some declaration should be made, if it cannot be included in the Statute, that Dominion Status would be temporary.
2. That it would be equal treatment for the two.
3. There is nothing to show that Pakistan is a seceder and that entity of India is retained in spite.
4. No province can go over to the other Dominion without consent.
5. Pakistan Assembly will not meet before the appointed date.
6. The States' position is uncomfortably weak. May 1946 statement would not be used to block progress.

From a facsimile: *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. II, between pp. 288 and 289

[1] The Viceroy wrote to Gandhiji on June 30 saying that Nehru, Patel and he felt that Gandhiji should ''unquestionably be shown'' the Indian Independence Bill and invited him to the Viceroy's house for the purpose at 10. a. m. the following day. Gandhiji scribbled his comments partly in pencil, party in ink.

370. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 1, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You will have understood the *bhajan* that has been sung. It was composed by Tukdoji Maharaj of the Central Provinces. Its language is Hindustani—not the Hindustani crammed with Arabic and Persian words but the Hindustani of Delhi. It has beauty and sweetness. It says that Rama is accessible to one who has suffered loss of home and property, the loss of friends and companions or suffers from bodily disease. If a person in spite of such misfortune does not leave Rama then he finds Rama.

A friend complains that I have been saying at prayer meetings that the division of India has somehow to be undone. But I have never said this. When something has been agreed upon between the Congress and the League and the country has been divided, what can be gained by opposing it? After all the hearts have not been divided. The Congress has accepted Pakistan and we must let it go at that.

A Sikh youth asks me what I, claiming to love the Sikhs, am doing to prove it. Hindus and Muslims have both gained something. But what have the Sikhs gained? I can only say that if the Punjab has been divided I can do nothing about it. I have not the power in my hands. To me there is no difference between Sikhism and Hinduism. I have read the *Granth Saheb*. What it contains is also contained in the Vedic dharma. But today they are treated as a separate community. It is a small community but well known for its valour. I had visits from two friends who have settled in Canada. They say Canada has a large number of Sikhs and they are doing good work there. There are Sikhs also in Africa. One finds Sikhs everywhere one goes. They are farmers, engineers, railway mechanics, motor-car drivers. Today the Sikhs live in great material comfort.

I had today a wire from the Muslim League at Mathura. They say that the Hindus there are ill-treating them. I do not know how far this is true. But if it is true it is not good. We should not display the cruelty of numbers. The arrogance that comes from the strength of numbers can only destroy us.

You must be eager to know the result of my meeting with the Viceroy today. I had been to see the Viceroy with Nehru and the

Sardar. I must ask the Press correspondents not to indulge in guess work but wait for an authoritative announcement from the Viceroy's House. They should do nothing at the present juncture that may harm the country.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 211-3

371. LETTER TO K. KELAPPAN[1]

[Before *July 2, 1947*][2]

It is very good that all temples have been opened. I agree that opening of temples in Cochin also is now necessary. Now there ought to be reform of temples, as in every way the condition of Harijans will be exactly like that of *savarna* Hindus. For this work why should Pracharakas be sent from this side? They may be prepared there only. Why not you yourself?

BAPU

The Hindu, 4-7-1947

372. LETTER TO MOHAMMED HUSSAIN KHAN

July 2, 1947

Must I despair of converting you to the use, whenever you can, of Urdu language in place of English? Thus your letter . . .[3] is a case in point. You will then probably have avoided exaggerations into which you have been betrayed.

There was certainly no compulsion against Bihar Government in regard to the acceptance of your demand nor could there be any demand by a member of the public upon his Government, nor was your proposal for the payment of Rs. 1,500 per family of Bihar refugees accepted. So much about what you state as facts within my knowledge. Though I cannot speak from knowledge, I am quite sure that there was no connection whatsoever between what happened[4] on

[1] President of the Kerala Provincial Congress Committee

[2] The letter was reported under the dateline ''Calicut, July 2, 1947''.

[3] Omissions as in the source

[4] The reference is to the opening of fire by the police on Khaksars who in violation of the order banning processions, etc., had taken out a procession and violence had broken out.

the 10th June last and the rehabilitation scheme.

I also told you when we met…that Pandit Nehru should be ruled out of the discussion of your proposals. I do not see how he could intervene as a member of the Central Government.

Further, is not your statement that the Bihar Government's action ''surpasses in cruelty and arrogance all human imagination'' somewhat extravagant? I suggest that the use of such language and statements as cannot be supported by evidence is not the way to attain a peaceful end… Nevertheless . . . I am sending . . . (your letter)[1] to the Chief Minister of Bihar, I note that you were good enough to send me an extra copy of your letter.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last: Phase, Vol. I, Book II, p. 331

373. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
July 2, 1947

CHI. SUSHILA,

I got your letter today. Why do you worry? It is very likely that Krishna Kumar goes to the movies. Manu reminds me that she had told me about it. I don't remember such things, but I believe Manu. She didn't see anything objectionable in that. Who doesn't go to the movies these days? Manu did. She herself has not come under the bad influence of movies. I am sure Sita[2] also must have done so. And I know that Manilal[3] at any rate goes. Probably you also must have gone occa-sionally. So far as I know, I am the only person who has never seen a movie. But no, I did go once, not knowing what the thing was about, and saw a film[4] about the exile of Janaki and Ramachandra. It was a depressing experience and I felt like running away from the place, but could not do so. It was sheer waste of time. This incident occurred in Shantikumar's[5] house. But now that you write to me I will make further inquiries if an opportunity offers itself. I cannot say that Brij Krishna has done justice to Kr. Kumar. The latter didn't impress

[1] In addition to throwing the blame for the incident on Congress, the addressee had made some demands: ''(1) Rs. 20,000 for each Khaksar martyr, (2) unconditional release of Khaksar prisoners (3) rehabilitation of the Bihar Muslim refugees… with further assurance that such acts of arrogance and cruelty will not be repeated again.''

[2] Addressee's daughter and husband

[3] *ibid*

[4] The movie was 'Ram Rajya' which Gandhiji saw in Bombay on June 2, 1944.

[5] Shantikumar N. Morarjee

me as a shallow youth. I would be pained if Sita selected a shallow person. However, there is no question of engagement just yet. You may, therefore, leave for South Africa without least worry.

I have discovered, however, that I have much less strength to bear pain or hardship that I thought I had. What is happening today in the country and the Congress in connection with independence and Pakistan fills me with agony. And moreover the weather is bad. I have therefore given up counting on my being alive very much longer. And if, after you have left, I pass away, you will feel unhappy. You wouldn't be able to bear the thought of Sita's present condition while Manilal and you were far away from her. Because I put all my trust in God nothing will happen to me. But I mentioned this because I thought it my duty to do so.

I have replied to the letter which you have received regarding Sita's college. See it yourself and show it to Sita. My letter was dispatched today. I shall let you know immediately I receive a reply to it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5006

374. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

DELHI,
July 2, 1947

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have read your letter regarding the *Rentia Jayanti*. I am sending on the statement[1] as revised by me. I am sending a copy to you. We are thus quite in time. I am forwarding Balasaheb's letter to you. I spin daily without fail for half an hour at least. But as regards the number, it is all confusion, for I am drawing two threads at a time and then combining them into one, so that I cannot keep count of the number. However, I will see what I can do. I don't think there will be any harm in counting 75 rounds a day.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–9: Narandas Gandhine–II, p. 316

[1] Addressee's appeal for celebration of Gandhiji's birthday; *vide* ''Statement on Rentia Jayanti'', footnote 1, "Statement on Rentia Jayanti", 12-7-1947

375. A LETTER

July 2, 1947

He who has chosen the path of truth and ahimsa has not the slightest cause to fear anybody. He need not worry what will happen if the British play false with us.

As for me, I must do or die. But I do not yet see my way to either course. I am still groping in the dark all alone. When I see my way clear either way, then alone will the country, it seems to me, have new light. My faith in God is daily becoming stronger so that even though I am wrestling with my thoughts all alone in this intolerable heat of Delhi, my physical strength has not suffered. How merciful is Rama!

Why do you write to me in English? Though we have not achieved the swaraj of my conception, why should we not make good use of what we have got? How long shall we remain slaves of the English language? Since your mother tongue is Urdu, you should write to me in Urdu or Hindustani. I feel ashamed to have to preach his sermon to a nationalist Muslim like you.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 257

376. A LETTER[1]

July 2, 1947

You did a good thing in sending to me the money you received as present on the occasion of your birthday. I will spend it on poor Hindu and Muslim children. However, this money which you sent me was given to you by somebody else. I want money earned by your own labour. I hope you understand what I mean by such money.

Spin for half an hour daily for *yajna* and wear the khadi made from that yarn. If there is any surplus, send it to me for being distributed to poor children like you. If you do that, I will bless you that you may live up to a hundred and twenty-five years, on condition, however, that you promise to devote your whole life to service. My

[1]According to the source this was addressed to a child.

blessings to mother. Learn Hindustani well. Sanskrit, of course, you must learn. And you must be as strong as a tough.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 257-8

377. A LETTER

July 2, 1947

If we follow the same policies as Pakistan what will be the difference between them and us? Even if somebody has done us an ill turn, we should wish to do him a good turn. If I cannot convince people like you or inmates of the Ashram that love alone can prevail against anger, whom else can I hope to convince?

God is humbling my pride. I am being severely tested. But still my heart is full of joy.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 258

378. LETTER TO UDESHI

NEW DELHI,
July 2, 1947

BHAI UDESHI,

Why did you have to take the trouble of writing to me in English? How far does your knowledge of English go? You may be trying to say that those who read *Harijan* are more intelligent than those who read *Harijanbandhu*. God knows! From your name, you appear to be a Gujarati and still you write to a Gujarati like me in English. It seems you have not the least suspicion how utterly absurd this is. I am sorry.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

379. LETTER TO VASANTLAL

NEW DELHI,
July 2, 1947

BHAI VASANTLAL,

I have your letter. I am rather surprised that you have to recommend Sheth Husainbhai to me. And who am I to write to Sardar

Vallabhbhai? Perhaps he knows Husainbhai better than I.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

380. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

NEW DELHI,
July 2, 1947

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. At the moment it is 50 minutes past 4 o' clock. I am dictating this letter while sipping fruit juice. I had your letter read out to me at a quarter past four, soon after the prayers. My earlier advice stands. You should give up worrying about mundane matters. You are ripe for meditating upon the eternal. I am going to dictate as much as I can in a few minutes.

America is not India. America worships gold. The golden calf is her god. She is almost like Australia. The only difference is that Australia is peopled by those who are considered the scum of England whereas America is peopled by that of Europe. However. sometimes one does come across a diamond in a coal-mine. In modern parlance they constitute the New World; India is an ancient land. India will never be considered primarily a worshipper of the golden calf. I do not think so and also never heard anyone saying so. Still if what you say is true, then I have missed the truth right from my childhood.

Pride of language, village and religion have long been coexisting and they still do. Now it is five o'clock and I must go for my walk with Rajendra Babu. What more can one say to the wise?

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

381. LETTER TO RAMASWAMI

NEW DELHI,
July 2, 1947

BHAI RAMASWAMI,

I have your letter. I do not remember you. I have forwarded your letter to Bhai Ramachandran. You may see him.[1]

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also ''Letter to Ramaswami'', 10-7-1947

382. SPEECH AT DELHI PROVINCIAL POLITICAL CONFERENCE

DELHI,
July 2, 1947

If you want to hear the few things that I have come to tell you please maintain silence.

Yesterday your Vice-President came and invited me to this conference. I had not known till then that Jayaprakash was the President of the conference. When people persisted I was in a fix. It would not be right to refuse. Drawn by your love, I was forced to come. The police tie us up in iron chains, but the bond of love, in the words of Mirabai, though fragile and tenuous, is stronger than any iron chain. And drawn by this bond I came here punctually at a quarter past eight. Here I shall speak out a few things. It has become a fashion these days to call oneself a socialist. It is a mistaken notion that one can serve only if one carries a label of some 'ism'. I have been studying the question since the time when Jayaprakash perhaps had not even been born.

Some fifty years ago when I used to practise law in South Africa there were many people there who called themselves socialists but in fact they were less socialist than I was. I used to work among the coolies. I had made this work my life's mission and I lived as the coolies lived. I have always considered myself a servant of the workers and peasants but I have never found it necessary to call myself a socialist. My socialism is of a different kind.

Even if everyone forsakes me I shall not be worried. I am your friend and, therefore, I tell you that if a cripple cannot obtain something he needs we should ourselves give up that something. I shall first watch the cripple's life and his food and only then shall I think of doing something for myself. This is my socialism. If you want to bring about this kind of socialism, then I shall be the first to come forward to help. It is my firm belief that even a king can become a socialist by being a servant of his people.

If we want to make the king as well as the people socialist, how shall we set about it? We can convert others to socialism by setting an example ourselves. It is said that there are two ways of changing the king. Either by cutting off his head or by depriving him of his throne. My method is to make the king a socialist through love. It is heinous to kill. If you teach thousands of people to kill, the order that you will

bring about will not be a socialistic order but an order of murderers. The Viceroy can call himself a Congressman as the speaker calls himself a Congressman. But would the Viceroy be ready to give up his powers if he were asked to do so? Similarly there are many people who call themselves Congressmen but are they indeed Congressmen? Are they true socialists? There are many who have drowned themselves in their wealth and in the pleasures which wealth can buy.

I firmly hold to truth and love. By love I do not mean the kind of bond that binds husband and wife or father and son, for this depends on self-interest. By love I mean that bond which binds the devotee to God.

In South Africa although the Whites treated me as an enemy, nevertheless many of them came to me as friends. If socialism means turning enemies into friends I should be considered a genuine socialist. This idea of socialism is my own. All the socialists should learn socialism from me. Only then shall we be able to produce dedicated workers and bring about peasants' rule. I do not believe in the kind of socialism that the Socialist Party preaches. Maybe my preaching to you is a cry in the wilderness, maybe you will not listen to me. There are people who call me names and treat me as a madman. I cannot teach you violence because I do not believe in violence. I can only teach you not to bow your head even if you should lose your life. Therein lies true courage. Nobody can take away this courage from me. When I die you will all admit that Gandhi was a true socialist.

When I talk of trusteeship people call me mad. But there is something in that madness. If you think a little deeply you will understand it. Today I can say with conviction that if there is anyone among all these people who is a socialist it is I. And this gives me the right to say what I am saying. The public life and the private life of a public servant are interrelated. Socialism cannot be established without moral purity. Socialism has been in vogue ever since the time of Lord Krishna. He played with the cowherds. He lived with them, ate with them; he went along with Sudama to cut firewood in the forest for the wife of his preceptor. There are many such instances. He even became the charioteer of Arjuna to show that there was no one high or low for him. He comported with the cowherd maidens freely for there was no impurity in his eyes. Thus what you call socialism, the thing which you think you should learn from Russia or America or England, has

been there in our country for a very long time.

Jayaprakash is like a son to me and the other leaders of the Socialist Party are all my friends. I humbly want to tell them that if they adopt the kind of socialism I have described the whole country will be with them. I regret I cannot support the theory of socialism you accept, for I know that those who advocate it do not conform to it in their lives. Their precepts and practice vary. It will not do merely to preach. Rama spent fourteen years in exile in the forest and we worship him. But if he had not done so and merely contented himself with saying that a son should obey his father, who would have remembered him today? Today there is murder, plunder and rape in the air. My voice is not heard. People consider me mad. I am expected to teach how to return two blows for one but I cannot do so. All I can say is: 'Friend, if you want to kill me you may do so, but I will kill no one.' I pray to God that He may keep me filled with this courage to the end. One who has cultivated such courage cannot be plundered. When Gandhi is dead you will all say Gandhi was a socialist. I say it humbly but with conviction because I have full sixty years' experience to back it.

[From Hindi]

Gandhijiki Delhi Diary—III, pp. 188-90

383. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 2, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

A friend writes to me: ''There are things in the world which people like and things which people do not like. To do things which people do not like is the limit of folly. You used to give some guidance to the people. You should do so now and support the people in the path they may choose.''

But I do not like this. What is the good of supporting something that is already popular? One must do something which is not so popular. One loses nothing by being alone. One has a right to do what one likes, whether people are pleased or displeased. If someone wants to make a rope out of grains of sand he will not succeed.[1] For ropes

[1] According to *The Hindustan Times*, 3-7-1947, Gandhiji said that he was told by way of illustration that he was trying to twist a rope of sand in trying to popularize Hindustani with the two scripts Nagari and Urdu, especially when Pakistan had become an established fact.

can be made only from fibre. One should do things which it is reasonable to do.

People say when I was in the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan I used to praise that languages sky-high. I used to propagate Hindi in the South where people spoke Tamil. It was all the good. But why Hindustani? My answer is that Hindustani has been born from Hindi. I attended to the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan at Indore.[1] I also went to the Marwari Sammelan out of love for Jamnalalji. I had no desire to go there. It was love that drew me. I made it clear there that my Hindi was of a special kind. It was a language spoken by the Hindus, Muslims and others. It could be written either in Persian or in Devanagari. My Hindi is the Hindi that every illiterate man can speak. I speak such rudimentary Hindi but I do make myself understood. I have read Tulsidas but I have not been educated in Hindi. I have not been educated in Urdu either. I have not the time. Since the Hindi I advocated was not popular with the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, I left[2] that body. Hindi today has become Sanskritized and Urdu is of a kind that only Maulana Saheb[3] or Sapru Saheb[4] can speak and understand. I have therefore said that I do not want either Hindi for Urdu. I want the confluence of the Ganga and the Yamuna. But the people call me a fool. Where there are Anjuman Tarakki-e-Urdu working of Urdu and the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan working for Hindi, I can never succeed. Then there would be no Pakistan. This renders my striving for Hindustani a futile exercise. But my heart rebels. Why should I leave Hindustani? Why should I leave a good thing? When we go to Prayag and take a dip where the Ganga and the Yamuna meet, we become purified. Similarly I wish to become purified in the confluence of Hindi and Urdu.

The Muslims today consider me the greatest enemy of Islam. But I say that if I remain alive, one day they are going to turn to me. Everyone is behind me. Only my fear is that the madness that has inundated India may carry us away. even if I am the only one left to say so, I shall still say the Hindustani is the national language. Both India and Pakistan are my country. Nobody can stop me. Even Mr.

[1] Gandhiji presided over the Sammelan which was held on April 20-22, 1935; *vide* "Speech at Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Indore", 23-4-1935

[2] On July 25, 1945; *vide* "Letter to Purushottamdas Tandon", 25-7-1945

[3] Abul Kalam Azad

[4] Tej Bahadur Sapru

Jinnah cannot stop me. I have not become a foreign national so that Mr. Jinnah may imprison me. I am not going to take out a passport for going to Pakistan. You should all have the same courage. Mother India whose flag we have been carrying all this time has made so many sacrifices. Shall we now take it that she has been decapitated? Let no one make the mistake of taking up Hindi at the cost of Urdu. What one person does many persons will take up. As for me, I am not going to budge from my position even if I should die.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 213-5

384. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

NEW DELHI,
July 3, 1947

CHI. LILI,

I got your postcard and also the telegram. You are born for service. Don't worry. Do to the best of your ability whatever work comes to you unsought. I don't like your relations calling on you for help. But you cannot escape such requests. If your brother recovers soon and you can be free, you will be able to devote yourself to study. Even now I suppose you are not kept busy the whole day looking after him. What is necessary is that the mind should form the habit of study. Sushila is at Wardha.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10436. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

385. A LETTER

July 3, 1947

A man harbouring a sense of guilt is a coward. Every man makes mistakes. I have made many in my life. But he who realizes his mistakes will be saved. Understand your mistake properly and then it will no longer give you a feeling of guilt, but will become a blessing.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 265-6

386. A LETTER

July 3, 1947

A true *brahmachari* will have no imperfection in him, no pretension and no fear. If you are such a *brahmachari*, why need you be afraid to talk to women? You will be afraid only if there is some impurity hidden in you somewhere. Think over this.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 266

387. LETTER TO DHIRU

NEW DELHI,
July 3, 1947

CHI. DHIRU,

I have your letter. You have travelled quite a lot. In my opinion, you need not go anywhere for studies. Learn whatever you can from experience and books. Inner purity has much more value than outer behaviour. Now calm down and render such service as you can. I have hardly time to write this much. If I don't surely it would never get done. I have Dr. Pranjivandas's[1] speech. Why should he have spoken in English where people understand [Gujarati].

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

388. A LETTER

July 3, 1947

I want to see *Ramarajya* established but how is it to be brought about? I will be possible only if we become brave, give up fear and have faith in God.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 265

[1] Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta of Jamnagar

389. TALK WITH RADHAKANT MALAVIYA AND GOVIND MALAVIYA

NEW DELHI,
July 3, 1947

We have so many big institutions. Some of them are even good. But sometimes the entire institution goes to pieces because of the mutual bickerings among its workers. In most cases bickerings arise out of rivalry for an office. The teachers and the managers in their selfishness do not realize how much harm they are doing to the students and to the institutions on the establishment of which so much money was spent. In ancient times the gurus always lived in the forests and the children of both kings and paupers had to go there for study. The guru had to worry only about his food and the students saw to that.

There were therefore no bickerings. But we in our wisdom improved upon this. to save the children the arduous journey into the forest we established institutions with all the conveniences, thus making ourselves unhappy rather that happy and squandering public money. In Kathiawad there was a very good institution by the name of Dakshinamurti, but it was not self-supporting and ultimately it became a burden. That was owing to quarrels among the workers.

I do not understand why the educational institutions cannot become self-supporting. Sometimes an institution becomes morally depraved. I blame the teachers and managers more than the boys and girls. In some way they are guilty of some lapse…[1] A similar incident concerning… had once come before me. Educationists are a menace to society if their character is not perfect. That is why I have been advising everyone to think twice before opening an institution. I do not know whether you know… I have just given an example. Generally all such things do happen in educational institutions in India.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 268

[1] Omissions as in the source

390. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 3, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You have heard the *bhajan*. It says that it makes one laugh to think that a fish in water should remain thirsty. We are in the world of God and we do not know God. It is our ill-luck, for God is always with us. As nails are not apart from fingers, God is not apart from us. If a nail gets broken it causes pain; similarly when one breaks from God, it is painful.

India today is in pain. But the pain is in the cities. The seven lakh villages of India do not revolve round the cities. India is a country 1,900 miles long and 1,500 miles broad. The division of India does not change the map of India. It remains as it was.

A friend writes to me that the Brahmins in India are like a rock in sea. Their number is infinitesimal. I am in a minority if I am all by myself. The rock is in a minority if it stands aloof from the sea. Then it shrivels up. But when it is in the sea it is a part of the sea. How can then the Brahmins be a minority in the sea that is the Hindu community.

There was a time when only Brahmin boys went to school. Since they have been given to learning from the very beginning, they also learnt wherever there was something new to be learnt. Today of course even those who are not Brahmins get education. Why should then the Brahmins complain about their sons not getting admission? I have been talking to you about rights. There is no such thing as a right. If a Brahmin claims education as a matter of right, I may ask him how he came to acquire the right. I do not believe in birthright. Rights are a result of the duties done. You will agree that a sinner has the right to reap the harvest of his sins. I say that one who does noble deeds has a right to the fruits of those deeds. If someone asks me what the rights of the Brahmin are I shall say it is his right to know the Brahman. A Brahmin has only two duties—to know the science of the Brahman and to teach it to others. A Brahmin who fulfils these duties earns the right to live as a Brahmin. Formerly people used to give grains and other things to a Brahmin to enable him to live. The Brahmins on their part took only as much as they needed and returned the rest. A Brahmin's right thus is to teach the science of the Brahman. Why

should they cry that their sons are not able to go to college? How can everyone go to college? How many boys and girls in the seven lakh villages of India go to college? That is possible on under Nai Talim, of which I shall not talk today.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 215-7

391. LETTER TO UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM

NEW DELHI,
July 4, 1947

MY DEAR UTTIMCHAND,

Your note and cheque for Rs. 500 for the A. I. S. A., the latter being sent to be used as per your instructions.

I am surprised that Rs. 350 have not been acknowledged. Nothing remains unacknowledged. I am inquiring. Owing to my wanderings it is difficult to carry all records.

Of course I would have accepted the prize money with pleasure if the perplexity had been solved by me or my friends. It is quite clear that we are unfit to cope with your puzzles. And now we are all scattered.

Jairamdas[1] is here. I know about the loss of his brother. I shall see that your note reaches him.

You are right. People are often wise after the event.

I almost despair of seeing peace in my lifetime. But man proposes and God disposes. Who can fathom His ways?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

392. A LETTER

July 4, 1947

I know that people have no faith in ahimsa. If they bravely employed violence, though I would not co-operate with them I would not oppose them either. But the violence which has broken out is the violence of cowards.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 270

[1] Jairamdas Doulatram

393. A LETTER

July 4, 1947

I was surprised to learn about your civil marriage. Personally I do not believe in this form of marriage. In the marriages I arranged in the Ashram, there was nothing beyond the religious rites and today the parties are all living happily. If we thus introduce law in the sphere of human relationships, there will be little purity and dignity left in our lives. For the rest, everybody is his or her own judge in such matters. I for one believe that more numerous the laws the more the harm done to the people. But I suppose I am an old man now. How can I convince others that I have not grown senile? I regret that I do not have much time to do written exercises in Bengali. You should write to me in Bengali instead of in English. I shall be able to read it slowly.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 271

394. MESSAGE TO STUDENTS FROM THE PUNJAB

NEW DELHI,
July 4, 1947

The country's most priceless possession are its students. We are old now. Today we are here, tomorrow we may be gone. You are the true leaders of the country. Students' role in satyagraha movement was by no means insignificant. Many young students sacrificed themselves for the sake of swaraj. If I find that this valuable wealth is being wasted anywhere I feel very hurt. I use the word ''wasted'' because the students become instruments in the hands of others. I feel unhappy when people take undue advantage of you and incite you to go on strikes, drag you into politics and you do all that without using your discrimination.

Do not entertain any communal feelings. Put your powers to good use and treat all the women as your sisters whether they are Hindus or Muslims. To the men and women who have come here, teach rules of sanitation; give those who are ignorant knowledge of the alphabets, maintain the accounts of the camps with great honesty, arrange religious discourses or *kirtans* at night so that the afflicted souls may be comforted. If you can do all this, then the calamity that

has befallen us will have become a blessing, you will gain experience and learn something new from it.

As far as possible give up the fondness for English. I find it is somewhat more in this part of the country. English is a great and rich language. But we can't set fire to our hut at the sight of someone's place. Can we? Do learn that language as a pastime if you want but never at the cost of our national language and the mother tongue.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 272-3

395. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 4, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Some people ask me if what has happened and what is happening and the Dominion Status that we are about to get will lead to *Ramarajya.* Those who put the question are usually sarcastic and I have to admit that I cannot say that all this will lead to *Ramarajya.* All the signs I see are against it. The country has been divided and there will be two Dominions and, if they are hostile to each other, how can we expect the estab-lishment of *Ramarajya*? Of course Dominion Status does not imply subservience to the British. It is as good as independence. But the other Dominions in the British Commonwealth are more or less of the same race. Since India is an Asian country, how can it remain a Dominion? If all the countries of the world were to become such Dominions, that would be a different matter and then *Ramarajya* could be brought about. But what has come about cannot lead to *Ramarajya* or the Kingdom of God. The British Government had originally intended to transfer power to Indian hands by June 30, 1948. But now they have decided that the sooner they get out the better it would be. But how can they do that? So they came to the conclusion that if Dominion Status were granted to the divided India there would be no risks because then they would still have links with us.

I do not want India to be a frog in the well, unaware of what happens outside the well. Jawaharlal and other leaders have said that we will not be hostile to any country. We shall have friendship for all

including the British. Do they then want a world federation? As I said at the Asian Relations Conference,[1] a world federation is possible of realization and in that case it would not be necessary for countries to maintain armed forces. Some countries today describe themselves as democratic but of course one does not become a democrat by simply saying so. What is the need for an army where there is rule by the people? Where the army rules the people cannot rule.

There can be no world federation of countries ruled by armies. The military dictatorships of Germany and Japan had tried to inveigle various countries into friendship with them. But the deception did not last long. Today I look around and find *Ramarajya* nowhere.

People ask me if the rule of the sword and the bullet that prevails today is not the result of my teaching of truth and non-violence for thirty-two years. But does this then mean that for thirty-two years I have prevailed through lies and hypocrisy? Does it mean that the millions of people who imbibed the lesson of ahimsa from me have after thirty-two years suddenly become liars and murderers? I have admitted that our ahimsa was the ahimsa of the weak. But in reality weakness and ahimsa cannot go together. It should therefore be described not as ahimsa but as passive resistance. But the ahimsa I advocated was not the ahimsa of the weak while passive resistance is only for the weak. Then passive resistance is a preparation for active and armed resistance. As a result the violence the people had been harbouring in their hearts has now suddenly erupted.

Our passive resistance has not been a complete failure. We have all but won our freedom. The violence we see today is the violence of cowards. There is also such a thing as the violence of the brave. If four or five men enter into a fight and die by the sword, there is violence in it but it is the violence of the brave. But when ten thousand armed men attack a village of unarmed people and slaughter them along with their wives and children it is the violence of cowards. America unleashed its atom bomb over Japan. That was the violence of the cowards. The non-violence of the brave is a thing worth seeing. I want to see that non-violence before I die. For this we should have

[1] For Gandhiji's two speeches at the Conference, *vide* "Discussion at Inter-Asian Relations Conference", 1-4-1947 and "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 3-4-1947

inner strength. It is a unique weapon. If people had realized its beauty all the life and property that have been lost would never have been lost.

If people had learnt the lesson of ahimsa which I had been trying to impart to them over the last 32 years, there would have been no need at present for rationing of food and cloth. If we are thoughtful in consuming food and cloth, there can be no scarcity of either in India. If people learnt to live truthfully and help each other there would be no need for us to look towards the Civil Service. The late Mr. Montagu had described the Civil Service as a wooden structure. Civil servants do not consider themselves servants of the people nor are they employed for the service of the people. They are here somehow to keep the foreign rule going. Ensconced in their offices they issue orders through peons. If we could learn to stand on our feet and give up dependence on Civil Service there would be no need in India either for rationing or for the Civil Service today. Some kind of civil service no doubt will be needed for running the administration. If civil servants could change with the times and run the administration to serve the people, then a truly democratic regime could be brought about.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 217–20

396. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

BHANGI COLONY,
NEW DELHI,
July 5, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter[1] which came into my hands after the evening prayer.

[1] Dated July 4, it *inter alia* said: "It is reported to me from the Frontier that Red Shirts are now "persuading" people not to vote. I think you will agree that any action of this sort is likely to lead to…violence…. I trust that if the reports are true, in view of the policy stated in your letter you will be able to persuade Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan to implement that policy."

Agitation is undoubtedly being carried on today by Badshah Khan and his lieutenants to tell the voters that it is wrong for them to take part in the voting. There should be no demonstration during the voting days and there should be no approach to the voters during the voting time. If this is what you mean I shall be glad to refer to the matter in those terms at the evening prayer. I am quite prepared to adopt quicker means of reaching Badshah Khan, if you suggest any.

If you have any other thing in view, you will please let me know.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY

NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 264

397. LETTER TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

BHANGI COLONY,

NEW DELHI,

July 5, 1947

DEAR BADSHAH,

Khudai Khidmatgar Alam Khan saw me before 12 o'clock and he said that he was leaving for Peshawar tonight. I did not send any letter through him. But I told him that there should be no demonstration against the Muslim League, that it should be enough that in the present state of tension and misrepresentation Khudai Khidmatgars should not vote at all one way or the other, that they were entitled so far as internal affairs were concerned to claim and to have complete autonomy without any interference from Pakistan or the Union, and that they could come to a decision as to the choice between the Union or Pakistan when the constitutions of the two were promulgated and when the Frontier Province had fashioned its own autonomous constitution. Above all, every occasion for clash with the Muslim League members was to be avoided. Real Pathan bravery was now on its trial. It was to be shown by cheerfully meeting blows or

[1] Replying on the same day, the addressee requested Gandhiji "to deprecate any agitation before the polling days" and to send a letter to Badshah Khan "as soon as possible".

even meeting death at the hands of the opponents without the slightest sort of retaliation. Boycott would certainly result in a legal victory for Pakistanis, but it would be a moral defeat if without the slightest fear of violence from your side the bulk of Pathans refrained in a dignified manner from participating in the referendum. There should be no fuss, no processions, and no disobedience of any orders from the authority.

I had acted promptly on receipt of your letter. I wrote a long letter[1] to His Excellency on which he took action. You must have seen also how I had dealt with the question of the Frontier Province in one of my post-prayer speeches.[2] I send you herewith a copy of my letter to the Viceroy and of my post-prayer speech. This letter is also in answer to a complaint received by the Viceroy that it was reported that there was fear of disturbance to be caused by the Khudai Khidmatgars.

I hope the strain under which you are working is not telling upon your health.

Love.

BAPU

Abdul Ghaffar Khan, p. 445. Also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government,* 1944–47, pp. 266–7

398. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

NEW DELHI,
July 5, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I received your kind letter of even date just after I had finished my prayer speech and was going out for my walk. Fortunately about noon I had a visit from a Pathan whom I had known to be a Khudai Khidmatgar. He was going to Peshawar and so I gave him the message which I have reproduced in the letter[3] I enclose herewith. You may read the letter and if you think that it covers the new point you have raised you may send the letter by special messenger as suggested by you. I am hoping that there will be no disturbance on the part of

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Mountbatten", 28/29-6-1947 and "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 30-6-1947

[2] *ibid*

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

Badshah Khan and his followers. In the message that I sent through the Pathan Khudai Khidmatgar I covered much more ground than mentioned in me letter to Badshah Khan.

I thank you for giving me the purport of the telegram received by you from the Resident in Kashmir.[1]

I hope Her Excellency was none the worse for her visit to the Bhangi Basti.

It is open to you not to send the enclosed if it does not merit your approval.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY

NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 265

399. LETTER TO MECMANAGE

NEW DELHI,

July 5, 1947

DEAR MECMANAGE,

Your letter. You should earn your own salvation. Forget Dr. Mehta. Let God be your sole Guide. You have my blessings in whatever good you may do.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers, Courtesy: Pyarelal

400. A LETTER

July 5, 1947

Seeing God does not mean seeing a being like man, with two hands and two feet and holding a conch, disc and mace. Seeing God means getting an opportunity of serving humanity, it means serving the poor and making ourselves blessed through service.

Though we cannot see God, we can feel His compassion and His goodness everywhere, and this cannot but have its effect on us. For

[1] The Resident acknowledged the receipt of the addressee's letters to himself and the Maharaja and said he was meeting the Maharaja as soon as possible.

instance, imagine a beautiful picture drawn by a great painter. We may not know the painter, but from the painting you can certainly from an idea of his artistic ability. Likewise, we do feel the presence of a Divine power behind the creations of nature and this infinite universe.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 276

401. LETTER TO A JOURNALIST

July 5, 1947

Newspapers are a very important means of education and spread of knowledge. But how far is this ideal pursued by journalists?

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 276

402. LETTER TO GAJANAN NAIK

NEW DELHI,
July 5, 1947

CHI. GAJANAN,

Who is bothered about principles these days? One does what one can. I think it is useless to involve me in this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

403. LETTER TO JAYACHANDRA VIDYALANKAR

NEW DELHI,
July 5, 1947

BHAI JAYACHANDRAJI,

I have your letter. My energy is depleted now. I cannot take up any new venture. There is also no time to look after everything. I am also no use in respect of the Oza[1] Memorial. Moreover my stay here is uncertain.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Prof. Gourishankar H. Oza

404. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 5, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Lady Mountbatten has been to see me today. She had no particular business with me. I even told her on the telephone not to take the trouble to come and see me. But she said that since I had gone and seen them so many times she felt bound to return the visit. I pointed out that I only went to see the Viceroy on business. But she was firm and she came. She has simple ways. She came and squatted down as we are squatting here, and inquired after everything. She asked how we find it here and listened with interest. I told her that I lived here among the sweepers. I also told her that I lived in a temple which was clean as it ought to be. If she wanted to see the living conditions of the sweepers she should visit their quarters which were nearby. She visited the sweepers' quarters and inspected the condition there with much interest. I did not go with her because crowds might have collected. Then she went to Harijan Nivas where Harijan boys are given training. She was very happy to see it.

I have today received a letter which I had not intended to deal with here.[1] But now I feel that I should not keep it over till tomorrow. What has happened among the Sikhs on the issue of division of the Punjab is distressing. Formerly there was no distinction between the Hindus and Sikhs. All the poison was spread by Macauliff who wrote the *History of the Sikhs*. Since Macauliff was a well-known historian, everyone swallowed what he said. The *Granth Saheb* of the Sikhs is actually based on the Hindu scriptures. Sikhs are a brave community. But their number is small. If the Punjab is divided Sikhs must be divided too. The letter says that the Sikhs who have now come over to East Punjab will be all right. But what will happen to the Sikhs in West Punjab, he asks. Will the Congress help if they find themselves in trouble? I can only say that those who are brave do not need anyone's help. They should only look to God for help. And why must you assume that the Sikhs in West Punjab will find themselves in trouble? If something happens to them, do you imagine that the vast masses of people in India will look on indifferently and do nothing? The Sikhs

[1] It was from the editor of *Ajit*, an Akali daily of Lahore.

therefore should not worry.

The Bill that has been introduced in the British Parliament will very soon be enacted into law. India will then be divided into two Dominions, that is to say, the British Commonwealth will have two new members. The Bill has 20 clauses which I have read. I cannot say that it has any ambiguity or that the English have used a language which can bear different interpretations.

No Englishman wants to deceive us. But the Bill certainly contains the poison. That poison we have drunk and so has the Congress. The British carried on their rule in India for 150 years and the British Govern-ment accepted the fact that politically India was one nation. They also tried to develop it as a nation and to some extent they succeeded also. Before them the Moguls had made a similar effort but they were less successful.

Having first unified the country, it is not a very becoming thing for them to divide it. I do not say that was their intention. The Cabinet Mission too had treated India as one single country and had produced arguments in support of this assumption. Today those arguments have become irrelevant. Thus the Bill in creating two Dominions gives us poison. It is true that both the Congress and the Muslim League gave their assent to the Bill. But accepting a bad thing does not make it good.

What the Quid-e-Azam used to say has come to pass. I think one can say that he has won complete victory. In my view the Bill puts to test ali the three parties including the British. It makes us a Dominion but that is only a temporary phase. The Governor-General will have to put his signature to the Constitution that the Constituent Assembly has framed. He cannot change even a comma of that document. The same thing will happen in Pakistan. If after the constitution comes into being the two Dominions proclaim their independence from the British Commonwealth, nobody can stop them. It seems to me that that is what they will do. Of course all these things belong to the future and nothing definite can be said at present. What is clear at the moment is that India is now broken up into two self-governing Dominions.

The British have also given rise to a situation which will be yet another test of their *bonafides*. All the various Princely States in India ought to have been brought within the Indian Union. The present dangerous situation should not have been allowed to remain.

The supporters of Pakistan have now got what they wanted. It

may not be very much in terms of land area but they have been brought on a footing of equality. Till recently when the fight for Pakistan was on I was unable to understand what Pakistan meant. Even today I cannot understand it. The outline of Pakistan will emerge after its Constituent Assembly gives shape to its Constitution. But the real test of Pakistan will be the way it treats the nationalist Muslims, Christians, Sikhs and Hindus in Pakistan. Then Muslims themselves have various sects; there are Shias and Sunnis and various others. It is to be seen how these various sects are treated. Will they be friends with the Hindus or will they declare war against them? Will they perhaps take it into their heads that they are masters and all the rest are slaves? They will have to furnish answers to these questions in their Constituent Assembly.

India too has to show whether the Muslims in India will be treated as friends or as enemies. To me all religions are one. They are branches of the same tree. All religions worship the same God. Formerly there used to be wars over religion in Europe too. But now there is a new climate in the making. People have got so fed up with such strife that they are even giving up God. If this is the way the world is moving, how long can India be kept behind ?

To those who consider India one nation the question of majority or minority does not arise at all. This Bill in a way is a test for all the parties. If we pass the test, we can accept it as a godsend. If not it will act as a noose for us.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 220–4

405. LETTER TO MOHAMMED HUSAIN KHAN

[After July 5, 1947][1]

I have your two letters. As I have intimated to you, I sent your letter, written in English, to the Bihar Government the moment it came. I shall write to you when I get the reply. If it is found necessary to see you, I shall trouble you.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter dated July 5, 1947.

406. WHO IS A SOCIALIST?[1]

Socialism is a beautiful word and so far as I am aware in socialism all the members of society are equal—none low, none high. In the individual body the head is not high because it is the top of the body, nor are the soles of the feet low because they touch the earth. Even as members of the individual body are equal, so are the members of society. That is socialism.

In it the prince and the peasant, the wealthy and the poor, the employer and the employee are all on the same level. In terms of religion there is no duality in socialism. It is all unity.

Looking at society all the world over there is nothing but duality or plurality. Unity is conspicuous by its absence. This man is high, that one is low, that one is a Hindu, that one a Muslim, third a Christian, fourth a Parsi, fifth a Sikh, sixth a Jew. Even among these there are sub-divisions. In the unity of my conception there is perfect unity in the plurality of designs.

In order to reach this state we may not look on things philosophically and say that we need not make a move until all are converted to socialism. Without changing our life we may go on giving addresses, forming parties and hawk-like seize the game when it comes our way. This is no socialism. The more we treat it as game to be seized, the further it must recede from us.

Socialism begins with the first convert. If there is one such, you can add zeros to the one and the first zero will account for ten and every addition will account for ten times the previous number. If, however, the beginner is a zero, in other words, no one makes the beginning, multiplicity of zeros will also produce zero value. Time and paper occupied in writing zeros will be so much waste.

This socialism is as pure as crystal. It, therefore, requires crystal-like means to achieve it. Impure means insult in an impure end. Hence the prince and the peasant will not be equalized by cutting off the prince's head, nor can the process of cutting off equalize the employer and the employee. One cannot reach truth by untruthfulness. Truthful conduct alone can reach truth. Are not non-violence and truth twins? The answer is an emphatic 'no'. Non-violence is embedded in truth and *vice versa*. Hence has it been said that they are

[1] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, which was published simultaneously with the source.

faces of the same coin. Either is inseparable from the other. Read the coin either way. The spelling of words will be different. The value is the same. This blessed state is unattainable without perfect purity. Harbour impurity of mind or body and you have untruth and violence in you.

Therefore, only truthful, non-violent and pure-hearted socialists will be able to establish a socialistic society in India and the world. To my knowledge there is no country in the world which is purely socialistic. Without the means described above the existence of such a society is impossible.

NEW DELHI, July 6, 1947

Harijan, 13-7-1947

407. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

4.30 a. m., July 6, 1947

CHI. DINSHAW,

The relations between us remain the same as before. How can we go on if you don't express your views freely to me? And should I hide my thoughts from you? Could we in that case remain close? I don't like your worrying all the time. I would certainly like to help you out of your anguish. How can he who has chosen to be a guru guide others if he himself is in the dark? Can one blind man lead another? What will you do when I die? I shall lead you to light as soon as I see it. I am what I am. I have just shown you my limitations.

My stay also is not certain. I may go to Kashmir or to Bihar or to Noakhali or God knows where.

Why did you have to undertake the fast?

Calm down. Engage yourself in whatever work you know.

I would send for you if I could settle down somewhere.

Blessings to all the four of you from,

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

408. A LETTER

July 6, 1947

It was and still is my aspiration to live up to 125 years. But I have lost my place among the people. If it were not so, why would

they suddenly forsake the ahimsa to which they had clung for nearly 32 years? But I shall be satisfied if I can show that I can die bravely.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 284

409. A LETTER

July 6, 1947

There is certainly power in Ramanama. But the person who utters it may possibly be imperfect.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 285

410. A LETTER

July 6, 1947

We shall never be able to raise the standard of public life through laws. We are not mad that way. Only if the lives of the leaders, both private and public, are perfect, will they be able to produce any effect on the people. Mere preaching will have no effect.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 285

411. TALK TO HINDUS

NEW DELHI,
July 6, 1947

If you have finished saying what you wanted me to hear I will say a few words. I am a Hindu, by birth and up-bringing, by practice and faith. In addition to the Hindu scriptures, I have read the holy books of almost all the other religions. I wish to raise my Hinduism higher and that is the reason why I respect other religions. Can an old man like me all of a sudden become an apostate? Calmly seek an answer to this question from your heart. I do not want your testimonial. I do not live by anyone's testimonials. I live by a testimonial from God alone. And if I have to die in obtaining that, I shall die bravely. If at that moment I get the fruits of my last sixty years' penance for truth and non-violence, I shall feel more than rewarded. I shall regard it as a grace of God. I am not at all angry with you for

venting your anger on me. You have the right to do so and it is only for that that you have come here. I only say that I feel sorry for all of you. You do not know what is true religion. How can we blame a child if he throws away a glass utensil? He does not know that it will break. Similarly in spite of the fact that you are very angry with me I feel sorry for you.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 287–8

412. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 6, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I believe that the N. W. F. P. referendum will begin from tomorrow. I have advised Badshah Khan and his ministers not to cast their votes either way. I have offered similar advice to the League. It is of course left to them to accept or reject it. I shall advise the Khudai Khidmatgars to cease this mutual strife.

With the division of the country our army also is to be divided. Does it follow that the two sections of the army should engage in mutual warfare? The Congress has a long history of anti-militarism. Ever since the Congress was formed, ever since the time of Dadabhai Naoroji, the G.O.M. of India, Hume, Ferozeshah Mehta and Tilak, we had been complaining that while the expenditure on education was insignificant, huge sums were being spent on the army. The army in fact had been created so as to keep the 40 crores of India under subjection. Then there were the French in a part of the country and the Portuguese in another part. Clive was worried about the danger posed by the French and the Portuguese settlements and he created an army to keep himself safe from the danger. There was also a further fear. Afghanistan was a conglomeration of tribes and Russia might launch an invasion across Afghanistan.

Notwithstanding the army we were able to hold our own against the British. But our ahimsa was not the ahimsa of the strong but of the weak. I showed the way of passive resistance and we did not prepare ourselves for armed resistance. But the army still remains. Why? It is a matter of shame. The way things are today it looks as if both the countries would be increasing their armed forces. If one country

increases the army the other will do the same. The Pakistanis will say that they must increase their armed forces to defend themselves against India. India will repeat the argument. The result will be war. The question is, shall we spend our resources on the education of our children or on gunpowder and guns, and give our youth military education?

Pakistan does not believe in peace. They say the Koran does not say anything about it. But I ask you, what are you going to do? Will you do the same?

If we are given Dominion Status we remain two countries. If we become independent we still remain two countries. But have we become two countries in order to fight? What the British have done gives me no cause for satisfaction or for pride. To me the future appears dismal. When I think about it I shudder. If India and Pakistan go to war and one defeats the other what good does that do? I am in the dark. May God show us light. "From darkness lead us to light."

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 224–6

413. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[Before *July 7, 1947*][1]

CHI. AMTUSSALAAM,

Will the loom be given free? If not, how will the money be realized? Do you want the khaddar for clothing? Do you want more than what has been sent? Will they pay for the yarn? How will they pay?

You must take rice from the relief officer.

Give the conch-shell bangles, vermilion and the beadstrings only to those who wear them. Satis Babu and Vishvambharnath should be shown this.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 720; also *Bapuke Patra—8; Bibi Amtussalaamke Nam,* p. 280

[1] In *Bapuke Patra—8: Bibi Amtussalaamke Nam,* the letter precedes the letters of July 7.

APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW WITH LORD MOUNTBATTEN[1]

Top Secret *Sunday, May 4, 1947, 1605 to 1730 hrs.*

I thanked him for the strong and courageous statement he made rebuking the Press in general, and his own in particular, for their uncalled for attack on me.

He said that he thought that the Press in India was very immature and had only just been released from censorship and did not realize the harm they were doing by the methods they adopt.

I outlined the plan which Lord Ismay had taken to London and asked Mr. Gandhi if he agreed that the method I was proposing to adopt, whereby the people of India would decide how they wished power to be transferred, was not a good one. He replied that he did not agree that we were leaving the people of India a free choice since we were practically imposing partition on them.

I then asked him what his plan was and he returned to his original idea and reiterated that if I believed in it firmly I could put it through.

In fact, he finally invited me to turn over power either to the Muslim League or, if they would not take it, to Congress for the whole of India, and give them immediate Dominion Status and then remain as Governor-General for 13 months and then leave them to their own devices. When I pointed out that this would lead to a civil war and a blood bath, he replied "not if Mr. Jinnah means what he has signed with me."

I told him Jinnah signed in good faith when he thought I was going to give a fair decision and that I did not for one moment suppose the Muslims would not immediately go to war if I attempted to betray them in this matter. In any case, I pointed out that H. M. C. would never allow me to hand over a colossal minority like the Muslims into the power of Congress and I much regretted therefore that his plan was not acceptable. I did, however, say I would report it to London.

From a photostat: C. W. 11025. Lord Mountbatten Papers. Courtesy: Broadlands Archives Trust. Also *The Transfer of Power,* Vol X, pp. 610-1

[1] As recorded by Lord Mountbatten. *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 4-5-1947

APPENDIX II

M. A. JINNAH'S STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

May 6, 1947

We discussed two matters. One was the question of division of India into pakistan and Hindustan and Mr. Gandhi does not accept the principle of division. He thinks division is not inevitable, whereas, in my opinion, not only is Pakistan inevitable but this is the only practical solution of India's political problem.

The second matter which we discussed was a letter[2] which we both have signed jointly appealing to the people to maintain peace and we both have come to the conclusion that we must do our best in our respective spheres to see that that appeal of ours is carried out and we will make every effort for this purpose.[3]

The Hindu, 7-5-1947

APPENDIX III

BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S STATEMENT[4]

June 3, 1947

1. On February 20th, 1947, His Majesty's Government announced their intention of transferring Power in British India to Indian hands by June 1948. His Majesty's Government had hoped that it would be possible for the major parties to co-operate in the working out of the Cabinet Mission's Plan of May 16, 1946, and evolve for India a constitution acceptable to all concerned. This hope has not been fulfilled.

2. The majority of the representatives of the Provinces of Madras, Bombay, the United Provinces, Bihar, Central Provinces and Berar, Assam, Orissa and the North-West Frontier Provinces, and the representatives of Delhi, Ajmer-Merwara and Coorg have already made progress in the task of evolving a new constitution. On the other hand, the Muslim League Party, including in it a majority of the representatives of Bengal, the Punjab and Sind as also the representative of British Baluchistan, has decided not to participate in the Constituent Assembly.

3. It has always been the desire of His Majesty's Government that power

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 7-5-1947

[2] *Vide* "Talk with Sikhs", 12-4-1947

[3] Asked whether there would be any further meeting with M. A. Jinnah Gandhiji replied that no further meeting was likely. M. A. Jinnah however declined to answer.

[4] *Vide* "Speech at Congress Working Committee Meeting", 2-6-1947

should be transferred in accordance with the wishes of the Indian people themselves. This task would have been greatly facilitated if there had been agreement among the Indian political parties. In the absence of such agreement, the task of devising a method by which the wishes of the Indian people can be ascertained has devolved upon His Majesty's Government. After full consultation with political leaders in India, His Majesty's Government have decided to adopt for this purpose the plan set out below. His Majesty's Government wish to make it clear that they have no intention of attempting to frame any ultimate Constitution for India; this is a matter for the Indians themselves. Nor is there anything in this plan to preclude negotiations between communities for a united India.

4. It is not the intention of His Majesty's Government to interrupt the work of the existing Constituent Assembly. Now that provision is made for certain provinces specified below, His Majesty's Government trust that, as a consequence of this announcement, the Muslim League representatives of those provinces, a majority of whose representatives are already participating in it, will now take their due share in its labours. At the same time it is clear that any constitution framed by this Assembly cannot apply to those parts of the country which are unwilling to accept it. His Majesty's Government are satisfied that the procedure outlined below embodies the best method of ascertaining the wishes of the people of such areas on the issue whether their constitution is to be framed:—

(a) in the existing Constituent Assembly; or

(b) in a new and separate constituent Assembly consisting of the representatives of those areas which decide not to participate in the existing Constituent Assembly.

When this has been done, it will be possible to determine the authority or authorities to whom power should be transferred.

5. The Provincial Legislative Assemblies of Bengal and the Punjab (excluding the European members) will, therefore, each be asked to meet in two parts, one representing the Muslim majority districts and the rest of the province. For the purpose of determining the population of districts, the 1941 census figures will be taken as authoritative. The Muslim majority districts in these two provinces are set out in the Appendix to this announcement.

6. The members of the two parts of each Legislative Assembly sitting separately will be empowered to vote whether or not the province should be partitioned. If a simple majority of either part decides in favour of partition, division will take place and arrangements will be made accordingly.

7. Before the question as to the partition is decided, it is desirable that the representatives of each part should know in advance which Constituent Assembly the Province as a whole would join in the event of the two parts subsequently deciding to remain united. Therefore, if any member of either Legislative Assembly so demands,

there shall be held a meeting of all members of the Legislative Assembly (other than European) at which a decision will be taken on the issue as to which Constituent Assembly the Province as a whole would join if it were decided by the two parts to remain united.

8. In the event of partition being decided upon, each part of the Legislative Assembly will, on behalf of the areas they represent, decide which of the alternatives in paragraph 4 above to adopt.

9. For the immediate purpose of deciding on the issue of partition, the members of the legislative assemblies of Bengal and the Punjab will sit in two parts according to Muslim majority districts (as laid down in the Appendix) and non-Muslim majority districts. This is only a preliminary step of a purely temporary nature as it is evident that for the purposes of final partition of these provinces a detailed investigation of boundary question will be needed; and as soon as a decision involving partition has been taken for either province a boundary commission will be set up by the Governor-General, the membership and terms of reference of which will be settled in consultation with those concerned. It will be instructed to demarcate the boundaries of the two parts of the Punjab on the basis of ascertaining the contiguous majority areas of Muslims and non-Muslims. It will also be instructed to take into account other factors. Similar instructions will be given to the Bengal Boundary Commission. Until the report of a boundary commission has been put into effect, the provisional boundaries indicated in the Appendix will be used.

10. The Legislative Assembly of Sind (excluding the European members) will at a special meeting also take its own decision on the alternatives in paragraph 4 above.

11. The position of the North-West Frontier Province is exceptional. Two of the three representatives of this province are already participating in the existing Constituent Assembly. But it is clear, in view of its geographical situation and other considerations, that if the whole or any part of the Punjab decides not to join the existing Constituent Assembly, it will be necessary to give the North-West Frontier Province an opportunity to reconsider its position. Accordingly, in such an event, a referendum will be made to the electors of the present Legislative Assembly in the North-West Frontier Province to choose which of the alternatives mentioned in paragraph 4 above they wish to adopt. The referendum will be held under the aegis of the Governor-General and in consultation with the provincial Government.

12. British Baluchistan has elected a member, but he has not taken his seat in the existing Constituent Assembly. In view of its geographical situation, this province will also be given an opportunity to reconsider its position and to choose which of the alternatives in paragraph 4 above to adopt. His Excellency the Governor-General is examining how this can most appropriately be done.

13. Though Assam is predominantly a non-Muslim province, the district of Sylhet which is contiguous to Bengal is predominantly Muslim. There has been a demand that, in the event of the partition of Bengal, Sylhet should be amalgamated with the Muslim part of Bengal. Accordingly, if it is decided that Bengal should be partitioned, a referendum will be held in Sylhet District under the aegis of the Governor-General and in consultation with the Assam provincial Government to decide whether the district of Sylhet should continue to form part of Assam Province or should be amalgamated with the new province of Eastern Bengal, if that province agrees. If the referendum results in favour of amalgamation with Eastern Bengal, a boundary commission with terms of reference similar to those for the Punjab and Bengal will be set up to demarcate the Muslim majority areas of Sylhet District and contiguous Muslim majority areas of adjoining districts, which will then be transferred to Eastern Bengal. The rest of the Assam Province will in any case continue to participate in the proceedings of the existing Constituent Assembly.

14. If it is decided that Bengal and the Punjab should be partitioned, it will be necessary to hold fresh elections to choose their representatives on the scale of one for every million of population according to the principle contained in the Cabinet Mission's Plan of May 16, 1946. Similar elections will also have to be held for Sylhet in the event of it being decided that this district should form part of East Bengal. The number of representatives to which each area would be entitled is as follows:—

Provinces	General	Muslims	Sikhs	Total
Sylhet District	1	2	nil	3
West Bengal	15	4	nil	19
East Bengal	12	29	nil	41
West Punjab	3	12	2	17
East Punjab	6	4	2	12

15. In accordance with the mandates given to them, the representatives of the various areas will either join the existing Constituent Assembly or form the new Constituent Assembly.

16. Negotiations will have to be initiated as soon as possible on the administrative consequences of any partition that may have been decided upon :

(a) Between the representatives and the respective successor authorities about all subjects now dealt with by the Central Government including defence, finance and communications.

(b) Between different successor authorities and His Majesty's Government for treaties in regard to matters arising out of the transfer of power.

(c) In the case of provinces that may be partitioned, as to the administration

of all provincial subjects, such as the division of assets and liabilities, the police and other services, the high courts, provincial institutions, etc.

17. Agreements with tribes of the North-West Frontier of India will have to be negotiated by the appropriate successor authority.

18. His Majesty's Government wish to make it clear that the decisions announced above relate only to British India and that their policy towards Indian States contained in the Cabinet Mission's memorandum of 12th May, 1946, remains unchanged.

19. In order that the successor authorities may have time to prepare themselves to take over power, it is important that all the above processes should be completed as quickly as possible. To avoid delay, the different provinces or parts of provinces will proceed independently as far as practicable within the conditions of this plan. The existing Constituent Assembly and the new Constituent Assembly (if formed) will proceed to frame constitutions for their respective territories; they will, of course, be free to frame their own rules.

20. The major political parties have repeatedly emphasized their desire that there should be the earliest possible transfer of power in India. With this desire His Majesty's Government are in full sympathy and they are willing to anticipate the date of June, 1948, for the handing over of power by the setting up of an Independent Indian Government or Governments at an even earlier date. Accordingly, as the most expeditious, and indeed the only practicable way of meeting this desire, his Majesty's Government propose to introduce legislation during the current session for the transfer of power this year on a Dominion Status basis to one or two successor authorities according to the decisions taken as a result of this announcement. This will be without prejudice to the right of the Indian Constituent Assemblies to decide in due course whether or not the part of India in respect of which they have authority will remain within the British Commonwealth.

His Excellency the Governor-General will from time to time make such further announcements as may be necessary in regard to procedure or any other matters for carrying out the above arrangements.

The Muslim majority districts of Punjab and Bengal according to 1941 (census):—

1. THE PUNJAB

Lahore Division—Gujranwala, Gurdaspur, Lahore, Sheikhupura, Sialkot.

Rawalpindi Division—Attock, Gujrat, Jhelum, Mianwali, Rawalpindi, Shahpur.

Multan Division—Dera Ghazi Khan, Jhang, Lyallpur, Montgomery, Multan, Muzaffargarh.

2. BENGAL

Chittagong Division—Chittagong, Noakhali, Tipperah.

Dacca Division—Bakerganj, Dacca, Faridpur, Mymensingh.

Presidency Division—Jessore, Murshidabad, Nadia.

Rajshahi Division—Bogra, Dinajpur, Malda, Pabna, Rajshahi. Rangpur.

The Indian Annual Register, 1947, Vol. I, pp. 143-6

APPENDIX IV

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S LETTER TO VICEROY[1]

6 JANTAR MANTAR ROAD,

NEW DELHI,

June 2, 1947

1. The Congress Working Committee have considered the statement which H. M. G. propose to make tomorrow and a copy of which you were good enough to give me this morning.

2. The proposals contained in this statement are of far-reaching importance and affect the whole future of India. These envisage the possibility of certain parts of India seceding from the rest.

3. As you know, the Congress has consistently upheld that the unity of India should be maintained. Ever since its inception, the Congress has worked towards the realization of a free and united India. Any proposal, therefore, which might bring about separation of a part of India from the rest is painful to contemplate and, in the opinion of the Congress, is harmful to all the parties concerned. Such a proposal would normally have to be considered by the All-India Congress Committee. The Working Committee would make its recommendations to that Committee, but the final decision would rest with the All-India Congress Committee, or the full session of the Congress itself.

4. We have realized, however, that in the peculiar and abnormal situation of today it is not possible to delay matters and decisions have to be reached rapidly. There has been far too much uncertainty in the country and this has led to instability and to violence on a large scale. We have also appreciated that the negotiations that have been going on for some time between you and [the] Indian leaders had of necessity to be secret.

5. My Committee considered the principles underlying the present proposals about a month ago and generally accepted them. This acceptance was conveyed to you in paragraph 12 of the letter dated 1st May, 1947, which Shri

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Congress Working Committee Meeting", 2-6-1947

Jawaharlal Nehru wrote to you.

6. As we have stated on many occasions, we accepted in its entirety the Cabinet Mission's Statement of 16th May, 1946 as will as the sub-sequent interpretation thereof dated 6th December, 1946. We have indeed been acting in accordance with it and the Constituent Assembly which was formed in terms of the Cabinet Mission's Plan has been functioning for nearly six months. We are still prepared to adhere to that Plan. In view, however, of subsequent events and the situation today, we are willing to accept as a variation of that Plan the proposals now being made.

7. I do not wish to enter into any detailed examination of the proposed statement of H. M. G. It has been produced after considerable consultation and I am desired to say by my Committee that we are prepared to accept it and to recommend to the All-India Congress Committee to do likewise. We do so in the earnest hope that this will mean a settlement. We feel that the situation in India, political and economic, as well as com-munal, demands more than ever a peaceful approach to all our problems. These problems cannot be solved by methods of violence, and there can be no submission to such methods.

8. While we are willing to accept the proposals made by H. M. G., my Committee desire to emphasize that they are doing go in order to achieve a final settlement. This is dependent on the acceptance of the proposals by the Muslim League and a clear understanding that no further claims will be put forward. There has been enough misunderstanding in the past and in order to avoid this in the future it is necessary to have explicit statements in writing in regard to these proposals.

9. We believe as fully as ever in a united India. The unity we aim at is not that of compulsion but of friendship and co-operation. We earnestly trust that when present passions have subsided our problems will be viewed in their proper perspective and a willing union of all parts of India will result therefrom.

10. There are some matters, however, to which I should like to draw your attention. My Committee realize that the proposals being put forward may result in injury to the Sikhs unless great care is taken and their peculiar position in the Punjab is fully appreciated. We are aware that H. M. G. and you are anxious to protect all legitimate Sikh interests. The matter will have to be considered by the Boundary Commission provided for and we earnestly trust that all other factors, apart from population, will be taken fully into consideration. The Sikhs have played a vital role in developing a considerable part of the Punjab. They have been pioneers in the canal areas and have converted by their labours the desert into the richest part of the Punjab. It has been made clear in the document that the national partition is of a purely temporary character and the final boundaries will be determined by the Boundary Commission.

11. In the last sentence of paragraph 9 it is stated that "until the report of the Boundary Commission has been put into effect, the provisional boundary as indicated in the Appendix will be used." It is not quite clear to what this refers and what the use will be. It is well known that the notional division ignores other important factors and that the Sikhs are distressed by it. If any further use is made of this notional division for ad-ministrative or other purposes, this will inevitably affect the final division and will give rise to a great deal of apprehension in the minds of the Sikhs. We would, therefore, urge you not to apply that notional division for any administrative purpose during the interim period. This would be in keeping with the spirit of the document and with what you conveyed to us this morning.

12. In paragraph 11 of the statement reference is made to a referendum in the N. W. F. Province. There has been a growing demand in the Province for independence and subsequent decision as to their relation with the rest of India. The referendum should also provide for this.

13. In paragraph 20 of the statement, which, we are told, is an addition to the original draft, the last sentence refers to the right of the Constituent Assemblies to decide in due course whether or not India or any part of it will remain within the British Commonwealth. It seems to us extremely undesirable and likely to lead to friction if the relations of Britain with the Indian Union and the seceding parts of it are on differential basis. We should, therefore, like to make it clear that we cannot be consenting parties to any such development.

14. In view of the importance of the proposals and decisions being made, my Committee intend to convene a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee at an early date. They propose to recommend the acceptance generally of the statement of H.M.G. as a settlement of our political and communal problems.

HIS EXCELLENCY VISCOUNT MOUNTBATTEN OF BURMA

VICEROY'S HOUSE

NEW DELHI

A. I. C. C. File No. 1499-I, 1947. courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX V

LORD MOUNTBATTEN'S NOTE ON INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI[1]

June 4, 1947

In connection with the last sentence in Paragraph 20 of His Majesty's Government's statement[2], Mr. Gandhi suggested the possibility of a tripartite

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 4-6-1947

[2] *Vide* "British Government' Statement", 3-6-1947

agreement between Great Britain and the two new Dominions—or two bilateral agreements.

Mr. Gandhi also spoke to me of "you and your magic tricks" in getting Congress and the Muslim League to agree on anything.

Mr. Gandhi said that he was very keen on going to Kashmir. I pointed out that Pandit Nehru had also declared such an intention and suggested that perhaps the best course might be for me myself to go.

From a photostat: C. W. 11027. Lord Mountbatten Papers. Courtesy: Broadlands Archives Trust

APPENDIX VI

LORD MOUNTBATTEN'S NOTE ON INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI[1]

June 6, 1947

I had received an urgent letter from Krishna Menon warning me that Mr. Gandhi was in a very unhappy and emotional mood, and that some of the Congress leaders feared he might denounce the plan and its acceptance at his prayer meeting that evening.

I immediately sent a message inviting Mr. Gandhi to come and see me at any time before the prayer meeting. He arrived at 6 with the prayer meeting due at 7 p. m.

He was indeed in a very upset mood and began by saying how unhappy he was.

I replied immediately that whilst I could quite understand and indeed shared his upset feelings at seeing the united India he had worked for all his life apparently destroyed by the new plan, I hoped to convince him that this plan was nevertheless the only possible course.

I told him that although many newspapers had christened it "The Mountbatten Plan", they should really have christened it "The Gandhi Plan", since all the salient ingredients were suggested to me by him. I enumerated these as follows:

(a) Mr. Gandhi advised me to try and get the Cabinet Mission Plan or any other plan retaining the unity of India accepted by all the leaders provided it did not involve coercion or violence. I had bent every effort to follow the first part of his advice; but when no agreement could be reached I had followed the second part of his advice and not insisted on a plan which would involve coercion with its attendant risk of violence.

(b) Mr. Gandhi had advised me to leave the choice of their own future to the Indian people. It was therefore he who gave me the idea for letting the Provinces choose, and the method proposed seemed the simplest and fairest way of carrying out

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 6-6-1947

his suggestion.

(c) Mr. Gandhi had told me that the British should quit India and transfer power as soon as possible and not later than the end of this year. I told him[1] that this had been the most difficult of all of his ideas to carry out, and I was very proud to have found a solution.

(d) I told him that I had understood that in his earlier days he had not been averse to Dominion Status. Mr. Gandhi was kind enough to say that this was indeed so, and that even during the war he had expressed himself as not being against it; and he later sent me an extract from *Harijan* dated 16th December 1939, in which appeared the words: "Similarly, I have said to a friend that if Dominion Status was offered, I should take it, and expect to carry India with me."

Note: I subsequently reported this conversation to both Mr. Krishna and Mr. V. P. Menon, and asked them to work on similar lines in talking to Mr. Gandhi. Both reported that the line I had taken had been remarkably successful, since Mr. Gandhi now felt that I had honestly tried to follow his advice, and that he had taken a far greater part in shaping the future of India than had at first sight appeared to him from the way the plan was worded.

From a photostat: C. W. 11029. Lord Mountbatten Papers. Courtesy: Broadlands Archives Trust.

APPENDIX VII

EXCERPTS FROM JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S NOTE[2]

June 8, 1947

"There is no doubt that the Governor and many of the Frontier officials have not only not co-operated with the Provincial Government but have actually sometimes obstructed its work. . . . In any event they are nearly all leaving the Frontier soon and we must proceed on that basis. There is no particular point in our raising this issue of *en masse* withdrawal now."

The question of referendum… came up "not exactly on the Pakistan issue" but in view of certain changes and developments in the all-India situation. . . . it was . . . stated that in view of this new situation it would be advisable to have a referendum in the Frontier in order to determine to which Constituent Assembly the N. W. F. P. desired to belong. The proposal, therefore, was not just meant for the N. W. F. P., but became part of a larger plan which provided for referendum in the N. W. F. P., Baluchistan and Sylhet. It seemed a logical and reasonable proposal apart from the particular circumstances prevailing. . . ."

[1] The source has 'me'

[2] *Vide* "Foreword to "Charles Freer Andrews", Draft", 9--6-1947

"But in all likelihood parts of Bengal and the Punjab will decide in favour of secession and so we may take it as almost granted that the question will arise for decision in the N. W. F. P. The present position is that the British Government and the Viceroy are definitely committed to this referendum. Some of us are also more or less committed…. The question of referendum, therefore, appears to be a settled one and it is not quite clear how we can get out of it. For the Viceroy it is still more difficult. Any change in the plan… may even lead to conflict on a bit scale. We may, therefore, take it as a settled fact that a referendum will take place."

In order to ensure peaceful conditions during the referendum, Pandit Nehru explained, it was proposed that "it should be organized by British military officers to be imported from outside…. The Provincial Government would be closely associated with the machinery for this referendum". Normally speaking, Pandit Nehru did not think that there was much chance of "any big violent conflict".

The proposal that the people of the Frontier should be allowed to vote for sovereign independence raised certain difficulties: "The Viceroy said he can only agree if the parties agree…. It may also introduce an element of confusion in the voting when there issues are before the voter…. Votes may well be split."

As for the suggestion that the Frontier Congress should keep out of the referendum, Pandit Nehru argued that it would mean "accepting the Muslim League's dominance in the N. W. F. P.—in effect a surrender to the Muslim League agitation".

"Whether it will lead to peaceful conditions or not, it is difficult to say. But I imagine that any such waiver or surrender is even more likely to lead to conflict and bloodshed because the Muslim League would celebrate this surrender as a great victory for the League. . . . They would be justified then in claiming that the present Ministry does not represent the bulk of the population. . . . It seems difficult for the Provincial Ministry to continue after a decision has been given against them by a referendum or by a waiver of referendum. . . . Possibly, the question would immediately arise of another election to the Provincial Legislature. Having avoided the referendum . . . we do not avoid trouble and difficulty and the Provincial Ministry cannot continue. The election takes palace anyhow with all its possible evil consequences. . . . The only other course is a peaceful submission to the Pakistan idea, and I doubt very much if most of the Pathans will agree to it."

. . . Pandit Nehru concluded . . . to keep away from the referendum "would be to ensure a wrong decision" and that too "not by the ordinary democratic process but by private arrangement".

"This seems to me a very dangerous procedure to follow both in regard to avoidance of violence and regarding our own future in the N. W. F. P. To fight democratically and to be defeated does not weaken us for long and we can renew the struggle in other ways later. But to give up without a struggle means a certain lack of

integrity through fear of consequences and leads to the collapse of the organization which was unable to face the issue.

In view of all these circumstances, it seems to me that the only right course is for us to accept the referendum and to prepare for it with all our strength. We have a good chance of winning it. . . . We should go to the referendum on the cry that we want the largest measure of freedom and independence in the Frontier. . . . This is not a straight issue of sovereign independence but a slight variation of that theme which should prove helpful. . . . In effect, after Pakistan comes into being in Western Punjab, and the Frontier is cut off from India, the N. W. F. P. will inevitably have, because of this cutting off and other reasons, a very great deal of autonomy and independence. . . .”

“. . . If there is risk in this course, there are far greater risks of bloodshed in other courses. The course suggested is a brave, frank course of accepting battle peacefully. To give up the battle, when final decisions are being taken, will result in deep psychological injury to our people.”

“. . . To some extent he (Mountbatten) is naturally bound by the past and the present set-up; but he is trying his best to go ahead in the right direction. He realizes the difficulties of the Frontier problem and wants to do everything in his power to solve them. I think he will prove helpful. He is convinced, however, that in the peculiar condi-tions that are arising in India now owing to possible secession of some parts, a chance must be given to the Frontier people to decide themselves by means of a referendum. He is definitely committed himself to this and he cannot get out of it without grave injury to his own prestige and impartiality. He would probably prefer to resign than to face such a situation.”

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 269-72

APPENDIX VIII

TELEGRAM FROM C. P. RAMASWAMY IYER[1]

Will you allow me to protest against erroneous statements made by you at your prayer meeting yesterday relying on inaccurate reports. There was no banning of meetings in Travancore except where breaches of peace were apprehended and a number of meetings have been actually held. Fourteen persons alone have been arrested throughout the State, of whom eight have been ordered to be released. Those who were arrested were dealt with for defying the Magistrate’s orders in places where breach of peace was apprehended. There was no lathi-charge anywhere.

You have asked the Indian States not to rely on the British. It is not Indian States that are now relying on the British Government, but the Congress and I am

[1]*Vide* “Speech at Prayer Meeting”, 14-6-1947

aware that the British Government are more anxious to secure the consent of the Congress to Dominion Status than to befriend the States. I wish to assure you that we are at least as conscious of our need for self-reliance as you are. You will find out for yourself that the people of Travancore are, as an overwhelming majority, in favour of the stand for independence. May I also make it clear that this independence is wholly consistent with close relations as regards defence, foreign affairs and all matters of common concern with the rest of India.

The needless threats indulged in by Pandit Nehru are really uncalled for because no Indian State wishes to enter into any relations with foreign and hostile powers against the interest of India. I hope you will persuade yourself and your followers to credit those who differ from you with as much patriotism as you claim for yourself. With regard to the audacity attributed to Indian States by you, I may invite your attention to the statement of Sir Stafford Cripps at the Press Conference on May 16, 1946, in which he said: "It is not necessary for me to state that a contract or arrangement of this kind cannot be handed over to a third party without the consent of the States. They will, therefore, become wholly independent." On July 18, 1946, both Lord Pethick-Lawrence and Sir Stafford Cripps have stated: "As for States, they need have no anxiety. It is for them to agree to come in or not as they choose" Lastly the present Secretary of State on June 3, 1947, stated that after the transfer of power, States should be free to choose their own future and that British Paramountcy would end. The course left open to them would be autonomy or affiliation with either Pakistan or Hindustan.

The audacity, if any, is on the part of those statesmen under whose aegis the Congress is now embarking on Dominion Status. The threats of Pandit Nehru and his reliance on world powers, including Britain, to help him to implement those threats will no doubt be considered by Lord Listowel and Sir Stafford Cripps, but it is difficult to see how they can go behind their own statements. I note with intense regret that you have not yet withdrawn the false allegation that I have asked Travancoreans who do not agree to independence to quit the State in spite of my denial and the telegram addressed to you by twelve journalists who attended the Press Conference. The B. B. C. has repeated the calumny this morning evidently taking shelter under your statements.

The Hindu, 17-6-1947

APPENDIX IX

LORD MOUNTBATTEN'S NOTE ON INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI AND M. A. JINNAH

June 17, 1947

I saw Mr. Gandhi from 10 to 11 a. m. The main topic of the discussions was the referendum. He still wanted Mr. Jinnah to go and see the N. W. F. P. Government leaders to [talk to] them as suggested in the statement he had prepared with Lord Ismay.

He was most dissatisfied at Mr. Jinnah's stipulation about no Congress interference; and he still wanted me to urge Mr. Jinnah to go, as their correspondence had come to a full stop.

I asked him whether he would agree to see Mr. Jinnah right away, and on obtaining his agreement, sent a telephone message to Mr. Jinnah asking if he would come earlier than his original time, to see Mr. Gandhi. Mr. Jinnah came at 11.0 a . m. and joined the meeting until 12 noon.

Both these great men spoke in such low voices that they could not hear each other, so I had to move their chairs close together. After a good deal of mutual recrimination about their correspondence, I finally solved the problem by suggesting that since Abdul Ghaffar Khan had been invested with plenary authority by the Frontier Ministry, Mr Jinnah should take advantage of his presence in Delhi to meet him here.

Both leaders seemed to think this a good idea, but Mr. Gandhi said that Abdul Ghaffar Khan was most mistrustful of Mr. Jinnah and would not come unless he received a written invitation. Mr. Jinnah said he had frequently extended verbal invitations, and that if Abdul Ghaffar Khan was not prepared to accept these, the certainly had no intention of sending him a written invitation.

After this wrangle had gone on for some time, I solved the difficulty by offering to invite all concerned to meet me at 7.45 the same evening. Both accepted and honour was satisfied.

Unfortunately, Abdul Ghaffar Khan had an engagement 100 miles outside Delhi, and although he was due back between 6.0 p. m. and 7.0 p. m., he did not get back in time for the meeting. I personally telephoned Mr. Jinnah and Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur, Mr. Gandhi's secretary, and got them to agree to a meeting with Abdul Ghaffar Khan at the Viceroy's House the following day, under the chairmanship of Lord Ismay.

Before Mr. Jinnah's arrival, I mentioned to Mr. Gandhi that I believed a question was likely to be asked in the House concerning the position of those Indian States who declared their independence. I informed him that on being asked this

question, in my Press Conference, I had replied to the effect that States would not be allowed Dominion Status and that the question of separate negotiations with States was a hypothetical question which had not yet arisen. If I received such a request, I would refer it to H. M. G. I pointed out that Hyderabad had a Trade Commissioner in London, and I was sure that H.M.G. could not be expected to cut off trade relations with Hyderabad.

Mr. Gandhi begged me on no account to make any statement in Delhi, and, if possible, to make no statement about this question until he returned. Since he wished to continue the discussion with me and I was unable to do so, I invited him to see Lord Ismay and arrange for an immediate meeting.

MOUNTBATTEN OF BURMA

17-6-1947

From a photostat: C. W. 11031. Lord Mountbatten Papers. Courtesy: Broadlands Archives Trust

APPENDIX X

LETTER FROM LORD MOUNTBATTEN TO HARI SINGH[1]

June 26, 1947

I am writing to tell Your Highness that I have had a talk with both Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Nehru, who are both still anxious to visit Kashmir. I pointed out to them that any visit from a big Congress leader in which speeches were made could not fail to cause the League to send speakers of the order of Mr. Jinnah to counter their propaganda. This would in effect produce the electioneering atmosphere which you so rightly wish to avoid, since, as you pointed out to me, there has been no bloodshed up to date and only violent political speeches could now bring about the bloodshed.

Mr. Gandhi tells me that Pandit Nehru is prepared to forgo his visit if he (Mr. Gandhi) goes instead.

I am therefore writing this at Mr. Gandhi's request…to suggest that you should agree to his visit in the near future and make things as easy as possible for him. He has given me his firm assurance that he will make no political speeches or carry out any form of propaganda. The object of his visit would be to see Madame Abdullah; and, if you granted permission (but only if you did grant him permission), he would like to see Sheikh Abdullah. He would like to meet the people in general way, but has no desire to address them or to collect large crowds.

May I suggest that Your Highness or your Prime Minister should communicate direct with him to save time.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 269

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Mountbatten", 27-6-1947

APPENDIX XI

EXTRACT FROM MINUTES OF VICEROY'S 48TH STAFF MEETING[1]

June 28, 1947

His Excellency The Viceroy read out a letter which he had received that morning from Mr. Gandhi. He stated that throughout this letter Mr. Gandhi had completely misinterpreted what he had said at his meeting two days previously. In fact, he had told Mr. Gandhi that he was finding increasing difficulty in helping to get matters connected with Partition settled. He had pointed out that it was for Congress not a question of fair play to ensure that the various issues were settled speedily, but of sheer expediency. If Congress took the line that they were not going to help, Mr. Jinnah would point out to the world at large the Congress's acceptance of the Statement of 3rd June had not been honest. He had told Mr. Gandhi that it would be very foolish of Congress to give Mr. Jinnah any excuse for not being ready to take over power on 15th August. He had assured Mr. Gandhi that he intended in any event to hand over power on that date, but had explained that Congress would be put in a very poor position in the eyes of the world if they made it difficult for Mr. Jinnah to take over. Mr. Gandhi had stated that the words "fair play" did not exist in any Hindustani dialect. He (The Viceroy) had reiterated that he was not expecting or demanding fair play; all that he was requesting was a degree of common sense so that Congress would not put themselves in the position of wrecking an agreement which had been honourably reached.

His Excellency the Viceroy directed P. S. V. to draft, for his approval, a reply to Mr. Gandhi's letter.

From a copy: India Office Library and Records

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord mountatten", 27/28-6-1947

1. LETTER TO WANDA DYNOWSKA

NEW DELHI,
July 7, 1947

MY DEAR UMA,

Your letter. You are suspicious. Sardar is not so bad as you imagine. He has no anti-European prejudice. Don't be sentimental but deal with cold facts and you will succeed.

My movement is uncertain. You will come when I am fixed up somewhere.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers, Courtesy: Pyarelal

2. LETTER TO DR. D. P. GUPTA

NEW DELHI,
July 7, 1947

DEAR DR. GUPTA,

Your letter.[1] Faith to be faith stands all trials and thanks God. Are not the prayers of your Muslim neighbours sufficient encouragement for you to persist in well-doings?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 10570

[1] The addressee, whose son had suffered injuries at the hands of Muslim rioters, had written that he could no longer have any faith in the doctrine of winning one's enemy by love notwithstanding the sympathetic attitude of Muslim neighbours who prayed for his son's recovery.

3. LETTER TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

[*July 7, 1947*][1]

DEAR BADSHAH,

No news from you. I hope you had my long letter and that you have acted up to it. Your and my honour is involved in strict adherence to non-violence on our part in thought, work and deed. No news up to now (9.30) in the papers.[2]

Love.

BAPU

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 279–80

4. MESSAGE TO KINDERGARTEN SCHOOL

July 7, 1947

Are all the Bal Mandirs which are coming up these days worthy of the name? This is a question to be considered by all who are interested in children's. education. The country needs good facilities for children's education as much as it needs food, cloth and houses to meet its physical needs, for its future depends on the children.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 290

[1] According to the source this was written two days after "Letter to Abdul Ghaffar Khan", "Letter to Abdue Ghaffar Khan", 5-7-1947

[2] The addressee's reply dated July 12, *inter alia* read: "I and my workers have been going about from village to village asking the people to remain non-violent even under provocation on the part of the Muslim Leagues. . . . We have been working under very difficult and trying circumstances but have adhered to non-violence. . . . How long a state of affairs like this can last, it is not easy for me to say. . . . They Muslim Leaguers backed by officials are out to create disturbances…. Another thing causing concern is the presence in our province of a large number of Punjabis who openly incite people to violence…. suggesting…that top leaders of Red Shirts should be done away with."

5. LETTER TO MADALASA

NEW DELHI,
July 7, 1947

CHI. MADU,

I have your letter. You must have got my telegram. I hope Bharat[1] has regained health. Do not let him wander around.

I wish you to get engrossed in the Mahila Ashram work. That is a major activity among the many activities of Jamnalal. One reason for keeping you near by is that you may get immersed in that work. Now stop having more children if both of you can exercise self-control so that you can look after the two you have and manage the Mahila Ashram work. The Ashram does need a worker like you. If you start doing that work, Shriman will take more interest in it.

Sushila has come from Wardha today.

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 333–4

6. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
July 7, 1947

CHI. JIVANJI,

I have your letter. I shall be content with whatever Narabhai[2] brings out. I do not also have the time. It may, perhaps, be necessary to show the matter to pyarelal. This may mean some more time, but Pyarelal has worked with him. I put no great value on August 15. You must have read my speech of yesterday, I see no joy on anybody's face here. Now do as Naraharibhai advises.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9980. Also C.W. 6954. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

[1] Addressee's son

[2] Narahari Parikh, who along with Kishorelal Mashruwala was editing *Harijan* during Gandhiji's Noakhali tour.

7. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
July 7, 1947

CHI. JIVANJI,

This time I am sending a Gujarati article[1] of mine together with its translation, one article by Maganbhai, one published article by Kakasaheb and reports of my speeches. I am alone just now. Rajkumari and Sushila have gone out of Delhi. They will return tomorrow. I don't think you will be short of English matter. I have with me Gujarati translations of my speeches made by Mridulabehn. I have not been able to revise them. Perhaps I may send them on Tuesday. But I don't think you will need them.

I have followed your other suggestions.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9981. Also C. W. 6955. Courtesy: Jivanji Desai

8. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
July 7, 1947

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter.

I don't at all remember having received the previous one regarding the Trust. Letters do get lost in this way these days.

I agree with you about Kamala….[2] arrived here yesterday. I shall show him the relevant portion of your letter. About the Trust, I shall think and then write.

Abha arrived here yesterday. I shall see now what can be done. I thought it right to let her come.

I was pleased to read about the work you are doing. Isn't the place where you are working as good as an ashram? Where else will

[1] "Who is a Socialist?", *vide* "Who is A Socialist", 6-7-1947.
[2] Omission as in the source

you build another?

Today is my silence day. It is nearing 2. I have heaps of work lying in front of me. I have just managed to write this.

I understand about Aunt. She will live on as long as she has debts to collect from you all. Is she calm in mind? Does she talk with anybody? What things is she able to eat.

Is Fuli strong enough to do the nursing?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 642. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

9. A LETTER

July 7, 1947

You ask for my help, but who am I to help you? God alone is the true helper and source of support. Seek help from that Almighty God.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 290

10. A LETTER

July 7, 1947

I sympathize with you in your misfortune. But it is ignorance to think that we suffer because of our misfortunes. Misfortune is really a test for us. And if we pass the test, all will be well with us. Only those who are blessed with grace can understand this. You should try to understand this truth and patiently strive to strengthen your power of endurance.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 291

11. A LETTER

July 7, 1947

I am able to say from my own experience that the mind also is an important factor in recovering from illness. Fear, anger, impatience and depression aggravate the illness. The more cheerful you are the sooner will you recover. You should therefore try to

create such an atmosphere around you. It is a sin against God to fall ill. I have repeatedly pointed this out to Chi. Manudi and made her cry for neglecting her health. But I have noticed during these past two days that she has become a little more sensible. I can only hope that this will not prove temporary.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 291

12. LETTER TO GOPALRAO KALE

NEW DELHI,
July 7, 1947

CHI. GOPALRAO,

The Hasan chapter is not yet closed. I have a long letter from him. Let me know if he is clean enough.

Herewith I am enclosing a copy of my Gujarati article. When should the whole matter reach you?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

13. LETTER TO DR. HASAN

NEW DELHI,
July 7, 1947

BHAI HASAN,

I have your letter Who wrote it? Neither the handwriting nor the language of the letter appears to be yours.

What do Bhai Gopalrao and Dada Dharmadhikari say?

I am having another complaint. I desire that at least a few Muslims should prove perfect in every way. I want to see you become such a one. The time is extremely delicate. I am sending a copy of your letter to Shuklaji.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

14. LETTER TO RAVI SHANKAR SHUKLA

NEW DELHI,
July 7, 1947

BHAI SHUKLAJI,

I have a long letter from Dr. Hasan, a copy of which I am sending to you. Is this episode closed now? Has everything been cleared up? Is there no more complaint against the Doctor?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

15. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
July 7, 1947

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM

I have your letter. I know I have not been able to write to you often. How can it be anger? I am buried in work.

Pakistan has come into being. But our duty remains the same. Those who are there have to do or die.

I want to reach there early. When it will be only God knows.

Whatever rice we get we should accept. We should not carry on trade in it. I consider it immoral. I cannot go into greater details.

How are you?

Abha came here yesterday. She does not appear to be well. Today is my silence day.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 586

16. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

NEW DELHI,
July 7, 1947

CHI. BALVANTSINHA.,

I have your letter. My anxiety is that Kishorelalbhai is unnecessarily worried and he is leaving the house that he had built for

himself. I do not mind that he distrusts me. Time will show whether I deserved to be trusted. But let us leave everything to time.

The Prabhakar episode I think is now closed. I presume that Shankaran's accusation against Prabhakar was wrong. Prabhakar flatly denies it. He will never do anything to discredit the Ashram. It is good that you had a talk with Aryanayakum about the dairy. He has not written anything to me. When he does I shall say if there is anything for me to say. I want you to do as much service as you can. What will he do by having only the building? But I cannot say anything. It is not very likely that Anna will continue to live in the Ashram now. Can she (Kamala) live in the Ashram without Anna and undertake to observe the rules of the Ashram? Anna says she can now take care of herself.

It is a different thing if Ramprasad and Kanta, observing the rules of the Ashram and eating in its mess, can live there. Otherwise I think they have to leave the Ashram.

My stay here is uncertain.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1982

17. A LETTER

July 7, 1947

What has happened to us today that we are killing one another in the name of religion? Can anybody tell me which religious scripture teaches this ?

If you regard yourself as a true Muslim, you should issue a statement. You should do this, however, not because I am suggesting it. If you yourself feel in your heart that Muslims are committing an error in the name of religion, then you may issue whatever statement you deem fit. Don't think that you should issue such a statement merely because Gandhi says so. Such a statement will have no effect.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 291

18. A LETTER[1]

July 7, 1947

I know that even today we are apathetic with regard to this problem, because we look upon the practice as a part of dharma. But you should strive harder still. I should like you to dedicate your whole life to this one mission. Those who serve only according to their capacity find their work quite easy. If one undertakes several tasks at once, one is unable to do justice to any of them.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 291-2

19. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 7, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Last evening I told you why it was that the prospect of freedom that is about to be ours did not fill me with joy. Today I wish to tell you how you can turn a bad thing into a good thing. What has happened has happened. Nothing is to be gained by brooding over it or blaming others. In legal terms it will be only a few days before freedom comes into effect. All the parties have arrived at an agreement and they cannot go back upon their word. Only God an undo what man has decided to do.

The easiest way would be for the Congress and the League to come to an understanding without the intervention or the help of the Viceroy. In this the League would have to take the first step. I do not in the least imply by this that the decision about Pakistan should be undone. It should be taken as final, no more open to discussion now. But if ten representatives of either party sit together in a mud hut and resolve that they will not leave the hut till they have arrived at an understanding, then I can say that the decision they arrive at will be a thousand times better than the present Bill which is before the British Parliament and which envisages the setting up of two Dominions. If all the Hindus and Muslims who come to see me or write to me do not

[1] This was addressed to a member of Bihar Harijan Uddharak Mandal who came to see Gandhiji.

deceive me, then it is clear that no one is happy with the division of India. They all accept it against their will.

There is also another method, perhaps as difficult. The army is going to be divided—the army which so far had one single purpose—whatever that purpose might have been. This division of the army certainly fills the heart of every patriot with fear and misgivings. Why are two armies being created? Are they to defend the country against foreign aggression or are they to fight against each other and prove to the world that we are good only for fighting and killing each other?

I have deliberately painted before you this frightful picture so that you may be warned. The way to escape this is, at any rate in my view, attractive. Will the Hindu masses and all those who have taken part in the struggle for freedom pass the test today? Will they rise up and say that they have no need for an army or at least take a pledge that this army will not be used against their Muslim brethren whether they be living in India or Pakistan. By saying this they will turn their thirty-year-old weakness into strength. Maybe the method I suggest will be considered foolish. However, I must say that God has the power to turn foolishness into wisdom as He has done so many times in history. Those who have set out on the dangerous course of dividing the army should pay heed to what I say.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 227–8

20. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR

NEW DELHI,
July 7/8, 1947

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

I have your letter. Sushilabehn told me everything. No blemish can attach to the innocent. Those who accuse them become themselves soiled. You do not, therefore, have to undergo penance. Still we should be careful in everything.

Take care of your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9039. Also C. W. 9163. Courtesy: Prabhakar

21. DISCUSSION WITH DR. SUSHILA NAYAR AND ARUNA ASAF ALI

NEW DELHI,
July 8, 1947

God has chastised me severely. I have not known a test more severe than this. What a high standard of morality we had when we were slaves. We are about to suffer the greatest fall from that lofty height in the so-called "priceless freedom" which is approaching. What more is left to be witnessed now? How can I give you any idea of what is going on in my mind? At one time I feel that Bihar is calling me, at another time I hear the call from Noakhali where I succeed to some extent in establishing peace. When I came here from Patna a month ago, I imagined that I would be back at my work in a week. But in the course of this one month so many changes have taken place in the country that a family wouldn't have seen as many in a generation. I am rotting in Delhi. However, I have not at all given up Noakhali and Bihar work. I am very keen to go to the Punjab also. But I cannot decide where to go. Being in this state of mind, I am following a great thinker who said, "If you cannot see your way, it is better to stay where you are." So I am here. I cannot go to sevagram at present. I must either accomplish something or die in the attempt. I will think of something new only when I have reached one of these two places. There is no third way. At the moment I do not feel like giving any advice to the Ashram inmates. In all these years I have said much to them, made them do much work. Now every one of them should do what they think best. Ultimately all service is alike in value. The head is perched high in the body and it has great value but the soles, though at the very bottom and in contact with dirt, are not any lower in value. If the sole is pricked by a thorn and one is unable to walk, how much one feels it! Similarly those who have dedicated themselves to service may render it in any manner they like according to their ability and interest. To me every kind of service is valuable.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 294–5

22. INTERVIEW TO DEPUTATION FROM QUETTA[1]

NEW DELHI,
July 8, 1947

Pandit Malaviyaji had told me specifically that I must visit Uttarkashi once. He himself was to take me along. But that was not to be. Now it occurred to me that I might visit the holy places which Malaviyaji described to me. For I do not at all hope to live for 125 years. Nor do I have that desire. I hope and trust that God will take me away while I am clinging to the aims and principles to which I have been devoted and before anything ugly happens to the country. Then Mirabehn is there. However, the weather there is not favourable at present and so I have postponed my going. Now I will come to the main thing.

When people learnt that I was going on a pilgrimage to Uttarkashi they imagined that I must be having differences with the leaders and that that was why I was retiring to the Himalayas. Yes, it is true I had difference of opinion with the leaders concerning the present situation because it seemed to me that the *Ramarajya* of my dreams was not materializing. But I do not worry because I have developed detachment and I am doing what I have been doing all along and what I feel is true. I do not worry if anyone is not convinced by what I say. I will tell the world from the house-tops what is true. Since the people have agreed to be governed by the leaders, the latter should fulfil their obligations towards the former. It is a rule of democracy that the leaders cannot impose on the people what they do not want I have forebodings that the future of India will be something different from the people's conception of it. I am therefore very much worried.

Sometimes I wonder whether during the last thirty years I have not taken the country in the wrong direction. However, as I have confessed time and again, our non-violence was not that of the brave. As there was no other alternative we adopted it. Had it not been so we would not have been indulging in perfidious mass murders to solve mutual quarrels among brothers. Our struggle was only 'passive

[1] A member of the deputation had asked Gandhiji if it was true, as the rumours suggested, that he was going away to Uttarkashi because of his differences with the leaders.

resistance.' Our struggle was based on the non-violence of the weak. Even then a great power had to leave the country. If I alone can adopt non-violence of the brave I can show to the world splendid results it can bring about.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 296

23. DISCUSSION WITH V. K. KRISHNA MENON[1]

NEW DELHI,
July 8, 1947

We must integrate the Princely States. Otherwise as there has been one Pakistan there will be a thousand Pakistans. We must put the talents of the Princes to good use.

The problem of Kathiawar is very difficult. When I suggested that Balwantrai[2] should be taken into the Working Committee I had done so after careful thought. He has been brought up in a cultured State like Bhavnagar. He renounced everything and worked there. Certainly Dhebar is also capable. But the two differ in talent and temperament.

Moreover, in the whole of Kathiawar the Bhavnagar State is politically the most advanced. I have been associated with it from the time of Sir Prabhashankar Pattani[3] or even earlier, when I joined Shamaldas College.[4] Whenever I think of Sir Prabhashankar Pattani, his image, white-bearded, floats before my eyes. He was also a poet. At that time he composed verses on the spinning-wheel, khadi and swaraj. I do not recall the words but they still ring in my ears. This biggest executive of a princely State began his spinning in a small village of Bhavnagar State. I will not take up your time in dwelling on the details. If I start telling stories about him, there will be no end of them. Let me therefore, come to the main point. His son Anantrai is also a very capable person.[5] His services should be utilized. . . .

[1] Secretary, India League, London, 1929-47; Special Representative of the Government of India in London, 1946–47, and Indian High Commissioner, 1947–52; later served as Defence Minister, Government of India

[2] Balwantrai Mehta, Chief Minister of Gujarat, 1964-65

[3] Who served as Dewan of Bhavnagar State

[4] In January 1888

[5] Omissions as in the source

There are numerous small Stated in Kathiawar. They have been exploiting the people. Balwantrai will be able to tell you their whole history. I should therefore like you to discuss this subject with him. There is no doubt that he is a capable person. Dhebar is a good man, while Balwantrai is "capable". That is the difference between the two. That is why I made the suggestion to Kripalani. If Kathiawar can be brought into line, it is bound to have an impact on other India States. Moreover Balwantrai has much knowledge of the Indian States. I may say you wouldn't be far wrong if you called him the Sardar of Kathiawar. He has so much talent that I should like you to utilize his service if you can.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 298–9

24. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 8, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today I am late by ten minutes. I apologize to you for it. I had so much to do and so many people came to see me that I could not free myself earlier. Whatever I say these days, I say with great deliberation. I first prepare the notes of what I intend to say and only then speak. Today I kept writing for a long time and then went out to wash myself. The girls came to remind me that it was time but I did not hear them. The result has been this delay.

A friend has today written me a letter in English. He says, "I do not know the national language. My language is Tamil. If I write to you in Tamil, you will have difficulty in understanding it even if you knew a little Tamil. I therefore write in English."

As you know I want everyone to write to me in his own language. The best thing would be for everyone to learn the language of North India which is Hindustani—midway between Hindi and Urdu. The writer has quoted some lines from Bernard Shaw. Bernard Shaw has hit out at the English. He display very pungent humour. He says that the English are never wrong. They do everything on principle. They fight on principle and plunder on principle. They enslave us only on principle. They killed their king to uphold democracy. Copying Shaw the correspondent makes un of me and

says that in the cause of freedom the British are dividing the country into two. But I know the English better than anyone else. They are leaving India because they know that they can derive no economic gain from continuing their rule in India and they have also realized that politically they can no longer keep us in subjection.

During the first world war Martial Law was introduced in one part of the country. During the second world war Lord Wavell brought the whole of India under Martial Law. But now the English have realized that that kind of thing cannot go on, that keeping India in continuous subjection might be a financial liability. They therefore want to quit. There are still two ways to save the country as I explained to you yesterday. The English still control power. They have a large army here and till that army has left we cannot really say that the British have left. They can still make their presence felt. The British want to dismember the country. Their going should not be a signal to Hyderabad, Travancore and others to declare themselves independent. Where then would be India's freedom? It has to be admitted that some of the recent events have created doubts in the people's minds about the intention of the British. But so long as their bad faith has not been proved I shall not judge them. It is of course true that the British have been shirking the right step that should be taken concerning the Indian States. But if they leave India in a situation where the various parts fall apart and start fighting against one another there can be no greater blot on their prestige.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I pp. 229–31

25. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
July 9, 1947

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Your letter was read out to me this morning after the prayer at 4.45. After taking honey in warm water I am now writing this.

Your coming here will serve no purpose. Your striving is false. Your attachment to Kanchan will not go by your keeping her away from you. Nor even by your living with her. Such attachment disappears only when one has realized the Supreme. I doubt whether you will even be able to overcome it. But I will not dwell on this.

What you write about K.bhai[1] is correct. If my truth and ahimsa are genuine, all will be well. My speeches are being summarized with great care. Read the English reports only. This is enough for today. Take interest in the constructive work.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS]

What is wrong with the name Jivram? If you didn't like it, are you sure you will not dislike another name, too? I suggest that you yourself should give the name of your choice.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8409. Also C. W. 5623. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

26. LETTER TO FRANCESCA STANDENATH

NEW DELHI,
July 9, 1947

MY DEAR SAVITRI,

Your second letter just received. I was glad.

You may send your answer to Sevagram, Wardha, C.P., India.

We are born to endure hardships. I therefore do not send you a word of sympathy for all you have gone through. It is enough that you are cheerful in spite [of it all.] Keep the gold watch. An English firm has sent me one. Others have offered.

How do you pass your time? Do you earn something? What is your age?

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Kishorelal G. Mashruwala; vide also "Letter to Balavantsinha", 28-6-1947

27. A LETTER

July 9, 1947

I also am a worshipper of art. Isn't truth also an art? I would say that anybody who makes a distinction between truth and beauty knows neither.

He who has taken a vow of service, what need he think? He should reduce himself to a cipher, welcome whatever opportunity of service God Grants him from time to time and acquit himself in it to the best of his ability. It is not for us to think about the results. We should only take care that our motives are not selfish. We are merely instruments in God's hands. Truly has Narasinha Mehta said: "To say in pride, 'It is I who am doing this'—that is ignorance, like the dog's who believes that he is carrying the cart under which he walks." In that one line of verse the poet has explained man's dharma.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 302–3

28. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
July 9, 1947

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have thought about the Trust[1]. It seems to me we should not trouble Mavalankar. Why don't you invite Saralabehn Ambalal? She is a wise lady. But it is for all of you to decide.

Devdas should not be included. He is already overburdened. I think nobody should be included merely because of his name.

The names of members of the Managing Committee seem all right.

If Girdharlal Kotak and Maganlal are already there on the Committee, they should be consulted before their names are dropped. It is all right if they are dropped as per rules.

If it is possible to devise some method of storing rain water, the experiment should certainly be made. If you can get water by sinking deep wells, that also is worth trying. It is very necessary to make some efforts in this direction.

[1] Presumably Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust

If you decide to grow fruit trees, that also will ultimately be profitable. This whole subject is of importance for a region like Kathiawar.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 8643. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi. Also *Bapuna Patro*-9: *Shri Narandas Gandhine*–II, pp. 317-8

29. DISCUSSION WITH INDONESIAN VISITORS

July 9, 1947

Non-violence is the only thing which can counteract any kind of atom bomb. However, I feel that you have no knowledge of non-violence. Let me ask you: suppose Russia, America and England combined together and attacked you, what kind of violence would you use against them and how? I feel that you could withstand it only if the whole of Asia helped you against it. Even then the European arms would be superior to yours. But Indonesia alone will be able to counteract all the three powers if you show courage, are prepared to die a brave death and adopt non-violence. Yes, it is true that everyone will be sacrificed. But no one will be able to subjugate you. The non-violence which we practised was not that of the brave. It was passive resistance. If we could have practised non-violence of the brave there wouldn't have been this fratricidal carnage which is taking place now. Spiritual courage is more important than physical courage. If, therefore, not only India but the whole of Asia practised non-violence of the brave. Asia would have a different status. Unluckily the wave of violence has spread all over India. I must confess that all the hopes I have pinned on India will be belied if we are not able to practise non-violence of the brave. I hope at least that God will not make me a witness to it.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 303

30. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
July 9, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You will ask me why I went to see the Viceroy[2] today. Freedom is not yet ours. There is only hostility. They stop the trams as they like, they stab and loot. Freedom is like the sun but it does not seem to me that it is coming. The Viceroy calls me his friend. How can I be a friend of his? I am a friend of the sweepers, of the poor.

The writer of the letter I spoke[3] of yesterday reminds me that in 1940 I had said that I found violence in the air. He asks if I found violence in the air then, what do I find now? He has the right to ask. It cannot be said that things are going well in India. People are stopping trains, indulging in arson and plunder and stabbings. This is anarchy. People embezzle funds and adopt improper methods to make money. Others quietly part with money. There is untruth, violence, hatred and distrust in the air.

Against this background comes the declaration of June 3. Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs have agreed to see India dismembered. Then came reports in newspapers of thefts, looting, arson and murders. The correspondent sarcastically asks me if this is my idea of love. He says I have been a votary of truth and asks where that truth is now. Now the only question is, who is higher and who is lower? Where is the tolerance I have been talking about? If it is not there, who is responsible for it? Is it the Viceroy or is it someone else?

My answer is that it is true that there is a stench every- where. I say I am responsible for it. For thirty years I have been telling the country to follow truth and non-violence. If my advice had been heeded, the result would have been different. You judge the tree by

[1] *The Hindustan Times*, 10-7-1945, reported that Gandhiji began by referring to the *bhajan* which described love as the highest thing in the world—the best unifying force. Yudhishthira performed the *yajna* because he wished to become the servant of his people through love—in other words ahimsa. He preferred service to kingship and thereby was a true king.

[2] For the Viceroy's note on the interview, *vide* Appendix "Lord Mountbatten's Note on Interview with Gandhiji", 9-7-1947.

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 8-7-1947.

the fruit. If the English go, does it mean that law and order should also go with them? Even people who talked that language of satyagraha had harboured thoughts of violence and intended at the very first opportunity to take to arms. The swaraj I had dreamed of is still a long way away. I do not wish to be a witness to this internecine strife. I do not wish to shed tears over what has happened in Multan, Rawalpindi, Garhmukteshwar, Bihar and Bengal, for I am a soldier. Nor do I wish to die. Neither the Hindus, nor the Muslim, nor the Sikhs can ensure their survival through the madness that has overtaken them. Money can be earned by the sword but no merit. The only way is for us even now to take to the path of non-violence. Therein alone lies our good and that of the world. Humanity demands that the British should bring about reconciliation between the two parties, between the two armies. I hope that the days that are left will be enough to achieve this. Then there is the question of the States. Fifteenth of August is the last day. There is still time. If reconciliation cannot be effected before that date, then I fear it will be too late. The British are stronger than we. They have immense military strength. Those who imagine that the British are finished as a military power are mistaken.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 231–3

31. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI[1]

[*July 10, 1947*][2]

Though I am here, my heart is in Noakhali. See that none of you leaves his or her post of duty. If any of you dies, I will dance with joy.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 312

[1] From Sushila Nayyar's "Notes", sub-title, "Noakhali", in *Harijan,* 20-7-1947. Writing under the dateline New Delhi, July 10, 1947, Sushila Nayyar explains: "Some of Gandhiji's party have left the place (Noakhali) mostly on account of illness. . . . Among those who are still there, are Shri Pyarelalji and Shri Kanu Gandhi."

[2] *ibid*

32. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

July 10, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

The happy event[1] you told me of is out in the papers today. My congratulations and blessings to the pair. Let us hope they will prove true servants of humanity.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 10830

33. LETTER TO SUDHIR GHOSH

NEW DELHI,
July 10, 1947

DEAR SUDHIR,

I often think of both[2] of you. Hope you are doing well. Do write occasionally.

Love to you two.

BAPU

Sudhir Ghosh Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *Gandhi's Emissary,* p. 218

34. LETTER TO LILAVATI P. ASAR

NEW DELHI,
July 10, 1947

CHI. LILA,

I have read your letter to Manu. You are not stopping your foolishness. Why should you feel remorse about knowing? Why should one remember words of flattery? How many are there as fortunate as you? You must complete your studies properly. We can analyse later whether or not there has been any benefit.

I am doing well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Engagement of Princess Elizabeth and Lieut. Philip Mountbatten
[2] The addressee and his wife Shanti Ghosh

35. A LETTER

July 10, 1947

The controls must go now. I can understand that it will take some time to remove them, but I cannot understand the argument that they must be retained.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 308

36. A LETTER

July 10, 1947

If I had my way, I would have a law passed which would require everybody, from the highest official to the lowliest peon, to spin for half an hour daily. It is inconceivable that one cannot spare half an hour out of twenty-four hours for spinning. But mine is a lone voice today. When I speak of spinning, please understand the word in its broadest sense. It means constructive work. . . .[1] Without such work, the country will not be able to solve the problems which it faces.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 308

37. A LETTER

July 10, 1947

These days cotton is being exported to other countries and in exchange we import food. If that is so, you are right in holding that the cultivators will take greater interest in growing cotton than in growing foodgrains. That will harm us in the end. If a country cannot grow the food it needs, its freedom cannot but be is danger.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 308

[1] Omission as in the source

38. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

NEW DELHI,
July 10, 1947

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

When everything is so clear cut, it would be quite right to follow Kamalnayan's suggestion.

You must understand that I really have no time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

39. LETTER TO RAMASWAMI

NEW DELHI,
July 10, 1947

CHI. RAMASWAMI,

I have your letter. I have sent the following telegram:[1]

"Ramaswami, brilliant Harijan, wants to serve your editorial department. My opinion he is worth keeping."

I was under the impression that you were in England or America and that I had lost you. Now I understand. I also recollect everything. I am sending you a telegram as well. Write to me what you are going to do. Why don't you return to the Ashram?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Presumably to Ramachandran; *vide* "Letter to Ramaswami", 2-7-1947.

40. INTERVIEW TO ARTHUR MOORE [1]

July 10, 1947

It does not look like success so far.[2] But there must be some result.

GANDHIJI: I have no doubt about it.

It depends upon you, Gandhiji. You are the biggest force.

I am a spent bullet.

Oh, no; you are not. Whatever progress India has made is because of you.[3] Now is the time. What can be done?

That is the grace of God. I am only an instrument. Without His will not even a leaf will move. Then who am I? An insignificant being. Pray that Indians may become wise.[4]

Your word counts. Just now Hindus are worked up . . . It is that feeling that one wants to allay.

I am doing my utmost. Personally I do not think this mood will stay.

Mr. Moore thought Sardar Patel's attitude to be bellicose. Gandhiji corrected him:

You do not know the Sardar. He is not vindictive or communal. But he does not share my belief that non-violence can conquer everything. He used to be a whole-hogger once. He is so no more.

The Sardar is the most popular leader. Perhaps that explains it.

No, the Sardar is the strong man. He will not let any difficulty baffle him. That is the explanation.

There is a growing feeling of retaliation in the people's minds. It is bad.

I do not think this feeling will stay. If it does, it will mean good-bye to freedom. India will commit suicide.

The Sardar and some Congressmen feel that the area ceded to Pakistan has to be taken back. It irritates the Muslims.

There you are greatly mistaken. Personally I feel Pakistan has come to stay. They realize it.

[1] A former editor of *The Statesman*

[2] Moore was referring to Gandhiji's Delhi fast for Hindu-Muslim unity in 1924.

[3] This sentence is from *Bihar Dilhi*.

[4] This paragraph is from *Bihar Pachhi Dilhi.*

On that basis friendship is possible?

Pakistan has come but how friendship can be achieved I do not know.

I feel heart unity is more important than political boundaries.

I grant that any day. I am working at it against heavy odds.

But you are not a spent force Gandhiji. Things have to get worse before they get better. It is darkest before dawn.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 309-10; and *Bihar Pachhi Dilhi*, pp. 307-8

41. INTERVIEW TO WINKLEMAN[1]

NEW DELHI,
[*July 10, 1947*][2]

He said that he was a philosopher rather than a diplomat. He was soon to leave for Singapore and another would take his place. He was sorry to leave India when India was passing through eventful times. He wished Gandhiji a long life. There was a lot to be done yet. He asked Gandhiji :

Do you expect a lot of trouble still ?

GANDHIJI: If I can forecast the future, I feel there is some more trouble in store for us before we settle down.

WINKLEMAN: You are a believer in God. Your mind must be at rest if you feel that India is going in the right direction. Europe is not. The troubles of Europe are due to the fact that Europe has left Christianity.

G. Yes, I have believed that for a long time.

W. What do you think of the situation in Europe?

G. I think nothing. It is beyond me. It is a complicated affair.

W. Yes, it is complicated. He had met Dr. Malan in 1939 in Europe. He was asked several questions about Europe. He said that there was no hope for Europe. Asked why, he had replied: "Europe has lost its religion. The philosophy of materialism has come to stay. They think they can do everything without God. They will be making so many mistakes that another upheaval will come before long." "And it did", added the visitor. "People think that they can separate religion from business and lead two lives. It cannot be done."

I have held that opinion for a long time.

Harijan, 20-7-1947

[1] Dutch ambassador; the interview is extracted from Sushila Nayyar's "Notes", sub-title, 'The Problem of Europe'.

[2] From *Bihar Pachhi Dilhi*

42. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 10, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I am often asked, now that Pakistan has been conceded, what is the duty of those of us who are in the Indian Union? I have spoken on this question many times but it comes up again and again. One possibility is that India and Pakistan will be enemies. The Muslim League often says that Hindus and especially the caste Hindus are its enemies. Must then the Hindus also consider the Muslims their enemies? At least that is not my way. And in my old age I cannot give up my way. My humanity tells me that the whole world is my friend. Cutting each other's throats will not bring good to anyone. Friendship does not mean appeasement. A friend does not seek to appease another friend. If harsh words have to be said, they must be said. I have been asked, if I am against appeasement, what else have I been doing? When in 1944 I trudged my way in the sun on eighteen successive days to the Qaid-e-Azam's house I was doing my duty. I did not seek to appease the Qaid-e-Azam. Had he accepted what I went to offer him all this blood that has now been shed would never have been shed. And all this poison would not have been spread. Also there would have been no third power in India and even after the formation of Pakistan, India would have been one. My talks with Mr. Jinnah were friendly. Appeasement today has a bad connotation. When Germany and England were hostile to each other, Chamberlain, who was the Prime Minister at the time, had sought to appease Hitler. It is not my view but that of many Englishmen that, had Chamberlain not chosen the path of appeasement, history would have been different. But since I do not consider anyone my adversary why should I go out to appease anyone?

Will the temples and the Gurudwaras in Pakistan be destroyed? My feeling is that they will not be. Will they stop the Hindus from going to the temples? I do not think that this is the meaning of Pakistan. Has not Daulatana Saheb said only today that none but enemies of Islam would say that Hindus and Sikhs could not follow their faith in Pakistan. If the Hindus and Sikhs in Pakistan really get the same justice as the Muslims then I have not the least doubt that Islamic democracy is a lofty thing. If they consider all mankind as

having descended from Adam, how can they stop the followers of other religions from worshipping God in their own different ways. I think that Daulatana Saheb means what he says. I shall ask the Hindus of the Punjab and N. W. F. P. not to flee from their homes in fright. The Golden Temple is in Amritsar but what will happen to Nankana Saheb[1] for which the Sikhs have made such sacrifices? It has to remain in Pakistan. There are so many Hindu temples in Hyderabad. I do not say that Hyderabad will become a part of Pakistan. Ninety-five per cent of the population there is Hindu. If all those Hindus are included in Pakistan, what will be the meaning of Pakistan? The great Jama Masjid will be in the Union. Shall we forbid the Muslims to say *namaaz* there? Then there is the Taj Mahal in Agra. And a Muslim University in Aligarh. Will Muslim students be stopped from studying there? Is there a place that does not have both mosques and temples? I find both wherever I go. Why then do the Hindus from the Punjab, Sind and N. W. F. P. want to flee to India? They should be brave. We have no use for the bravery that consists in burning down houses and killing innocent children. It is not bravery. It is devilry.

But if people do leave their houses in Sind and other places and come to India, must we drive them out? If we do that, how can we call ourselves Indians? With what face can we shout *Jai Hind*? For what had Netaji fought? We are all Indians whether living in Delhi or Gujarat. They will be our guests. We shall welcome them saying that India is their country as much as Pakistan. If Nationalist Muslims also have to leave Pakistan we shall welcome them here. As Indians we all have the same status.

There are still thirty-five days to August 15. Let us cease to be beasts and become men. We have all been put to the test and that includes the British. I have just received a telegram from Noakhali saying that now that Pakistan has come into being the Hindus who had suffered there are not likely to get any compensation. Why should they not get compensation? With Pakistan established it is all the more the duty of the Government there to protect the Hindus. The telegram also says that those who have committed murders and who are at present in prison are likely to be freed. I hope this will not be. The Pakistanis must demonstrate that the Hindus living in Pakistan will not be harmed in any way. Then we shall have reason to celebrate 15th of

[1] Where on February 20, 1921, a number of Sikhs were killed; *vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 22-2-1921.

August as Independence Day. But if this does not happen, this independence is not for me nor, I am sure will it be for you. A lot can happen in these thirty-five days.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 234-7

43. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

BHANGI COLONY,
NEW DELHI,
July 11, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I am still without any news from Kashmir. I wonder if you can remind the Maharaja. If I was not bound by any promise made to you, of course I would not want any permission to go to Kashmir. I would simply go as any private person.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI,

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 270-1

44. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
July 11, 1947

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. I am glad you got my wire and letter in time. I was relieved to learn that Sita had arrived there safely.

Since I had written, there was no need for you to write anything. I hope it will not be misunderstood. It is we who have to yield, they

[1] The addressee, who replied the following day, enclosed a copy of the letter from the Maharaja, who had again advised Gandhiji to postpone his visit in any case till the end of autumn. Also he had said that it would not be possible for Gandhiji to see Sheikh Abdulla. Lord Mountbatten further wanted to know whether Gandhiji would visit Kashmir after his Noakhali visit or before; for Gandhiji's reply, *vide* "Letter to Lord Mountbatten", "Letter to Lord Mountbatten", 16-7-1947.

who have the power. If they are annoyed, it is our child that will be harmed. That is why I gave in on many points and the matter was settled. But all that is over now.

How long do you expect to have to look after the things there? Go on doing what you can and give Vijayabehn such satisfaction as you can.

You must not expect Tari[1] to help you in household chores. The public service she is doing is a sufficiently big contribution on her part.

It remains to be seen how Vasant turns out.

I am well.

Manu is still not fully restored. Abha is here now. Her health also is no better, nor is Sushila's. The weather is partly to blame of course. It is extremely hot. Hot winds blow. It is so even at night. There was some relief for two or three days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5007

45. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
July 11, 1947

CHI. KANAIYO,

I certainly wanted you to have Narandas's entire letter.[2] But this is an apt instance of how even one's simple wishes are not fulfilled. As is my wont, when this morning I enquired whether the whole letter was sent to you [I learnt that] Bisen[3] had not sent the part pertaining to the Trust. He acted in good faith but if he had clearly understood his dharma he would not have erred. If he had asked me at the time he was attending to it so much time would have been saved.

Have you grown weak? Even if you have not, if you are tired of

[1] Tara Mashruwala, addressee's sister who was working in Kasturba National Trust in Madhan

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 9-7-1947.

[3] Shiv Balak Bisen, Gandhiji's secretary

the place[1] you can quit. If I can get away from here or am able to do something for Bihar take it that I shall soon be there. If I have written the same thing to you yesterday, let this be for a second time. There have been no such fixed stages in my life. I spent 20 years instead of one in South Africa. In Bihar I spent the whole year instead of four days. And how long I had to stay in Rajkot.

Abha is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

46. LETTER TO GOVINDDAS

NEW DELHI,
July 11, 1947

CHI. GOVINDDAS,

I have your letter and your long statement.[2] Where is the time to read the statement? And what is the need of it? Of what importance is one such temple being opened? You should understand the situation there and do independently what you think proper.

Blessing from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 10423. Courtesy: Seth Govinddas

47. NOTE TO SUNDERLAL

July 11, 1947

I have read this. See what I have deleted.[3] Nobody has forced the division on us. When was the country a "paradise"?

From the Hindi: C. W. 10268. Courtesy: Purushottam Prasad

[1] Ramdevpur where he was supervising a relief camp

[2] Criticizing the Trustees of a temple at Jabalpur on their decision not to open the temple to Harijans and offering his resignation from trusteeship of the temple

[3] From the addressee's letter to the editor, *Bharat*, a Hindi journal of Allahabad, Gandhiji had deleted the bracketed words from the following sentence: "If we want to we can even make use of the division (imposed on us by aliens) to make the country a paradise (once again)."

48. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 11, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

A co-worker writes from Noakhali: "When you came to Noakhali you talked so much about doing or dying. Now if you do not come here before the 15th of August, you will repent."

I admit that if I do not go to Noakhali before August 15, I shall repent. Why am I in Delhi? I ought to be either in Bihar or in Noakhali. I am restless here. I was not so in Noakhali. I walked long distances every day, visited ever new villages and met an immense number of people both Hindus and Muslims. I did some work in Noakhali, also in Bihar. There is a fire raging inside me. That fire will not rage after I go to Noakhali. I ask you to pray that God may quickly send me to Noakhali.

I have not forgotten my pledge to do or die. From Noakhali I went to Bihar, for whereas in Noakhali only a few hundred people had died, in Bihar thousands were killed. So for me Noakhali and Bihar were alike. From there Jawaharlal summoned me here. Kripalani also sent me a wire calling me here, but what have I achieved here? Of course many people retort, "What could I achieve in Noakhali? If there is a settlement concerning the whole of India, there will automatically be a settlement concerning Noakhali." But I proceed the other way. I had learnt when still a child the formula, "As in the microcosm so in the macrocosm." My untutored and rustic mother also taught me to begin with myself and not to bother about the world. There is God to look after the world. I must therefore keep the pledge I made in Noakhali.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 237-8

49. STATEMENT ON RENTIA JAYANTI[1]

NEW DELHI,
July 12, 1947

Lovers of the charkha should show a hundred times more zeal for the coming *Rentia Baras*. That does not mean that they should send a hundred times more yarn. They may well send that much yarn. But those who do not observe truth and non-violence and those who do not pray should not send the yarn. That is to say, those who spin for the sake of the *yajna* should adhere to truth and non-violence, believe that God is their sole help and that real swaraj will come only with the help of yarn. Those who do not believe in these should not participate in the yarn *yajna*.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 20-7-1947

50. LETTER TO S. K. PATIL[2]

July 12, 1947

You are enunciating the doctrine of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. Only you will wait till the 15th August. Both these statements ill conform with the Congress policy. Has the Congress policy changed? Congressmen have changed I know but I am not aware of any change in the Congress constitution.

Secondly, if Congress policy or practice changed who compels you to wait till 15th August? Who will be responsible for the incalculable harm that will have overtaken the people of India as well as Pakistan in the meantime? Who can control the people if they go mad and launch on a course of retaliation?

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 308

[1] This was appended to Narandas Gandhi's appeal published under the title "Gandhiji's Seventy-ninth Birthday Celebration by National School, Rajkot", not translated here. Narandas Gandhi, who organized mass spinning for 78 days from July 26 to October 11, had also invited people to participate in the celebration by contributing 78 coins of any denomination. *Vide* also "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 2-7-1947.

[2] Bombay Congress Leader; member of Union Cabinet 1957-63. He was reported to have said in a public speech that if any harm befell the Hindus in Pakistan, the Congress would after the 15th August take reprisals in India.

51. A LETTER

July 12, 1947

He who is filled with a desire to serve does not have to go looking for an opportunity for it. There is no rigid boundary to the field of service and no limit to the strength one can acquire for it. For one who has the doors of his heart opened, no job is too difficult. Let this suffice for today. I have spared a few minutes for you from great pressure of work and am writing these few lines. You are, moreover, wise and will understand the agony of my heart.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 317

52. A LETTER

July 12, 1947

He who has conquered anger has achieved a great victory in life. I myself am not free from it. But I am ceaselessly striving and have made progress. The final result can be judged only after my death. Chi. Manudi's health is deteriorating from day to day. Though I sometimes feel irritated by her carelessness in regard to it, I must admit that none from among the countless girls who came and worked with me acquitted herself as well as this girl of sixteen or seventeen did both physically and mentally in doing whatever work I assigned to her in Noakhali and Bihar. And even at the age of thirteen, she had rendered similar service to Ba. I have admired her ever since then. All this has a bearing on my reply to the question whether I have conquered anger. She has ruined her health in serving me, but if only she would give me co-operation, take proper rest, be careful about her diet and remain cheerful, I could help her to regain her health in a month and she would feel better than she ever did. But I have to remind her again and again. Though running a temperature, she was rolling *khakharas* for me yesterday. This made me angry. If I had scolded her, she would have started crying and the temperature would have risen still higher, instead of coming down. This anger bespeaks weakness both of body and mind. When the mind is full of agony, what can we expect but physical weakness? But I am confident that in the end I shall overcome this anger too.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 317-8

53. LETTER TO MOHAMMAD HUSAIN KHAN

NEW DELHI,
July 12, 1947

I have your letter. It is not good. Let us go by convention. The reply I sent is from minister Ansari Saheb of the Bihar Government. If there is any error in it, it should be pointed out. In any case how can I compel him ?

I do not think it would be appropriate to write to Pandit Jawaharlal.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

54. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 12, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today I have received a letter from a friend which says: "What is happening in the country today is very bad. People who went to jail during the satyagraha movement think they have done something very big which should entitle them to be Prime Minister or Minister or Parliamentary Secretary or Governor of some province. They think they should have a motorcar. I have also been to prison twice and once I was with you in Yeravda. But I have remained a beggar and no one has ever bothered about me!"

If someone has been to jail, has he done a favour to India? If this sort of mentality persists, I fear the Congress will perish. Those who are in the Congress should not even dream of such things. Arguing thus a Congressman may say that, since he has been to jail, his son should be married to the best girl in India or that his daughter should be married to the best young man in India. Jawaharlal has not become the Vice-President or the Prime Minister because he has been to jail. If he does not get his salary, he will not starve. Rajendra Babu might have become the Chief Justice of Patna High Court but he voluntarily gave up practice and chose to live the life of a fakir. Rajaji also has not become a minister by virtue of his jail-going. If is not my contention that they are all

angels. They are men like us and all men make mistakes. And how many of us can be absorbed in Government offices? It is an unworthy thought and should be given up. We must never think that we should get some reward for having gone to jail. The reward of doing one's duty lies in the duty done.

I have been asked: "Whereas in Pakistan Mr. Jinnah has been made Governor-General, here in India it is the Viceroy who has been made Governor-General. Why should this be so? The battle for India's freedom was fought by the Congress. The Muslim League has had no part in it. Whenever the Congress resorted to civil disobedience or satyagraha the League refused to co-operate. Even so the Congress cannot get an Indian as Governor-General. This is not just. This will mean that we shall be safe only if we kowtow to the British or we shall die." I shall say that under the scheme that will come into effect on August 15, it does not matter whether the Governor-General is an Englishman, a Frenchman or a Dutchman, whether he is a brown-skinned Indian or a White or a Negro. If I had my way a Harijan girl would be the Governor-General. So if Lord Mountbatten becomes the Governor-General he will still be a servant of India. You will say this is the kind of talk to pacify children. Mountbatten, who is a scion of a Royal family, will not be anybody's servant. But I am not deceiving you. I do not expect any reward from Lord Mountbatten. So long I have been fighting against him. Maybe you will say that the Congress leaders have been deceived by him. Do you mean to say that Jawaharlal, Sardar and Rajaji are so softbrained as to be taken in? True, as I have been saying what I had wanted has not come to pass. But Mountbatten will be Governor-General because we want him. If we did not want him he would not hold that office. But Mr. Jinnah may have chosen to be Governor-General in order to show off. We should not be jealous and we should not be angry. He wants to show to the world what Islam is. Let us see whether he makes of himself a master or a servant. If even a single Sindhi flees, then the responsibility for it will rest on the Governor-General of Pakistan. He will have to be just to all, like Abubaker or Omar, or Ali. I do not say they were all non-violent. But I have in mind their bravery and their chivalry. I understand from the newspapers that originally the idea had been for India and Pakistan to have one Governor-General in common. But Mr. Jinnah later went back on his word. Who was then to prevent him from becoming the Governor-General of Pakistan? In

my view he did not do the right thing. When he had once agreed he should have accepted Lord Mountbatten as Governor-General and later if something had gone wrong he could have removed him. Now Islam is to be tested through Mr. Jinnah. He is assuming the Governor-Generalship of Pakistan with the whole world as witness. The world will now wait to see what special virtues Pakistan displays under him. The Congress has always been fighting against the British. Jawaharlal is a simple-hearted man. But the Sardar is a fighter. He used to quarrel with me because I trusted the British. When he himself has been caught up in their wiles, what can you or I hope to do? When he agrees that the Viceroy should be the first Governor-General of India, why should we object? We shall see whether he will serve India as Governor-General or betray her. It will be a new experience. There is wisdom in this and we have nothing to lose. After all we accepted Dominion Status on the advice of the Viceroy. He is an Admiral and a great warrior. Let us have him and if he does not come up to our expectations we can always fight with him.

When I went to see the Viceroy he confided in me that the young man to whom Princess Elizabeth had been betrothed was like a son to him and he hoped that I would write a few words of blessings to him. So when the Viceroy's daughter[1] came to see me two days ago I gave her a letter of congratulation addressed to the couple. She is such a sweet girl. At the prayer I offered her a chair but she declined the offer and sat down with us on the *duree*. And today I learnt from Rajkumari Amrit Kaur that the young Princess who has got engaged to be married will be the future queen of England because the king has no son. The Viceroy too has no son. Anyway if the Viceroy had been a bad man I wouldn't have been so free with my blessings. I do not consider him a bad man. If Jawaharlal or Sardar Patel had become Governor-General in his place it would have been a dangerous thing. Besides, the Governor-General wields no effective power. He will have to act on the advice of Jawaharlal and his cabinet. He will only be a figurehead.

But we have got into the way of thinking that Lord Mountbatten has great status and the English are capable only of devilry. Lord Mountbatten therefore will have to prove his honesty and love of justice and I am sure that he has come to India to do only justice.

[1] Pamela Mountbatten

Many Muslims come to see me these days. They too are nervous about Pakistan. One can understand Christians, Parsis and other non-Muslims feeling uneasy, but why Muslims? They say they are treated as Quislings, that they will receive even worse treatment than the Hindus in Pakistan and after full power has been transferred to Pakistan their association with the Congress will be considered a crime according to the tenets of *Shariyat*. I do not agree that this is the meaning of Islam. What crime was committed by the Congress having Muslims within its fold? Do muslims by associating with the Congress become criminals? Do they not say *Kalma* or perform the *namaaz*? Has Islam changed so much since the time of the Ali Brothers? How can nationalist Muslims be called Quislings? I do hope that Mr. Jinnah, while he protects the non-Muslim minorities in Pakistan, will also at the same time accord protection to these Muslims.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 239-43

55. SOCIALISM[1]

Truth and ahimsa must come alive in socialism. This can only be possible when there is a living faith in God. Mere mechanical adherence to truth and ahimsa is likely to break down at the critical moment. Hence have I said that truth is God.

This God is a living Force. Our life is of that Force. That Force resides in the body, but is not the body. He who denies the existence of that great Force denies to himself access to its inexhaustible power and thus remains impotent. He is like a rudderless ship which, tossed about here and there, perishes without making any headway. Many find themselves in this plight. The socialism of such people does not reach anywhere, what to say of the millions.

If such be the case, why is there no socialist who believes in God? If there are such socialists why have they not made any progress? Also there have been many believing in God; why is it they have not succeeded in bringing socialism?

There is no effective answer to this. Nevertheless, it is possible to say that it has perhaps never occurred to a believing socialist that there is any connection between his socialism and his belief in God.

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 20-7-1947.

Equally, men of God perhaps never felt any need for socialism. Superstitions have flourished in the world in spite of godly men and women. In Hinduism which believes in God, untouchability has, till of late, held undoubted sway.

The nature of this Divine Force and its inexhaustible power have been matters of incessant quest.

My claim is that is the pursuit of that quest lies the discovery of satyagraha. It is not, however, claimed that all the laws of satyagraha have already been formulated. I cannot say either that I myself know all the laws. This I do assert that every worthy object can be achieved through satyagraha. It is the highest and the most potent means, the most effective weapon. I am convinced that socialism will not be reached by any other means.

Satyagraha can rid society of all evils, political, economic and moral.

NEW DELHI, July 13, 1947

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 20-7-1947

56. IN DEFENCE OF THE OLD[1]

The correspondent, from whose letter I had quote the other day, writes:

> I was in full agreement with the opinion you had expressed on the views set forth in a letter I wrote eleven years ago. Nevertheless, I lacked the courage to act up to them. I often say to myself, why go into the charcoal pit at all? Though you have placed before the world your conception of the ideal man with a view to promoting social good, nevertheless it seems to me that that good would be better served by keeping intact the restraints handed down by men of experience. It is true that awareness of distinction between man and woman should be removed. The feeling that woman is property should also go. But in propagating these tenets the harm that has been done by the communist Party is terrible. Kishorelalbhai objects even to sitting on the same mat with women. This perhaps only shows his orthodoxy. Nevertheless, the idea is not to be lightly set aside. We must not forget what the *Gita*[2] says: that whatever

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 27-7-1947 under the title "In Defence".

[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, iii. 21

> great men do, common people follow. Therefore, it seems to me that it is wisdom for those who have reached a higher state to act in accordance with the capacity of those many who belong to a lower state and this they will do in order to avoid the risk of weaker people resorting to thoughtless imitation. I admit, however, one apt argument in defence of your position, viz., that if there was nobody to demonstrate the feasibility of the higher state, society would cease to have faith in it. Therefore must be someone to demonstrate it. As to this all I can say is that every great person must be left to choose his behaviour after due appreciation of the pros can cons.

I like the above criticism. Everyone should learn to know his own weakness. He who, knowing his own weakness, imitates the strong, is bound to fail. Hence have I contended that everyone should construct his own restraints.

I do not think that Kishorelal refuses to sit on the same mat with a woman. I should be surprised if that were so. I could not appreciate such taboo. I have never known him to advocate it.

I only see ignorance in likening a woman to a charcoal pit. It is an insult to both man and woman. May not a son sit beside his mother or a man share the same bench in a train with his sister. If he gets sexually excited in such company he is surely to be pitied.

Although I grant that for the sake of social good much must be given up, I nevertheless feel that there is room for discrimination. There are nudist groups in Europe. I was asked to join one but I refused. I said that until it could be shown that there was a certain measure of purity in the individual, nudity was not desirable. This I said although I believe that theoretically speaking there is nothing harmful in both the sexes going about completely naked. Such was the case with Adam and Eve in their innocence. But immediately they became conscious of their nakedness, they covered themselves and fell from Paradise. We are in that fallen state. If we forget it, we shall harm ourselves. I consider this an instance of observing conditions for the sake of social good.

It was in the interest of social good that pressure was brought to bear on me to give up insistence on the eradication of untouchability. Marriage of nine-year-old girls was defended in the name of social good. So was prohibition against crossing the seas. Such instances can be multiplied. Every custom has to be examined on its own merits.

Restraints must not be such as to perpetuate differentia- tion between men and women. We must remember that in most of our

daily transactions such differentiation has no place. Strictly speaking making such a distinction is relevant only on the occasion when one is overcome by sexual desire. Men and women who are overcome by this desire at all hours of the day show sickness of mind and cannot be instrumental in promoting social good. This is not the normal state of man. If the millions in villages were prey to such desire all day long they would be no good for any useful work.

NEW DELHI, July 13, 1947

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 27-7-1947

57. LETTER TO V. V. DASTANE

July 13, 1947

With whom will you fight?[1] Not the British.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 312

58. LETTER TO DATAR SINGH

NEW DELHI,
July 13, 1947

DEAR SARDARJI[2],

I have read through your article. I can't usefully add anything to it. I shall discuss it with Rajen Babu.

You should not think of bringing your wife here till she is fairly restored.

And how is Kirpal?

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 2218

[1] Pyarelal explains that the addressee was feeling disconsolate over the partition.

[2] A Punjab farmer. For many years he acted as Adviser to the Government of India on Animal Husbandry.

59. A LETTER

July 13, 1947

We should learn to see our own defects rather than those of others. Is it the fault of the sun that we cannot gaze at it? It is the weakness of our own eyes that is to blame. If we can see the truth of this, all will be well with us.

Just as there can be no flower or fruit without sunlight, similarly man cannot grow without prayer.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 322

60. A LETTER

July 13, 1947

If people shed superstition, give up copying others and look at the current events with a sufficiently critical eye, I am sure our path will become quite smooth.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 322

61. A LETTER

July 13, 1947

I have not the least doubt in my mind that food control must go now—as soon as practicable. If a few Indians die in consequence, I will shed no tears. But the idea that we should share the available food equally cannot be spread through laws, and even if legislation were to succeed in doing so, I would not praise it. On the contrary, I would not hesitate to charge it with having done violence to the human spirit.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 323

62. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 13, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

There have already been two occasions when I was late for prayer. It has happened again today. I did my best to be here before 7 o'clock but I did not succeed. I had gone to see the Viceroy. Since I am vegetating here I have to be doing something. So many things are happening here and a person like me has to be saying something or other. I went to the Viceroy at four expecting to be free early. But there were various other people there and the result was I got delayed. However, I am very happy to observe that the prayer started punctually.

There has been a Press conference addressed by Mr. Jinnah. A report of it has reached me. He holds out the assurance that the minorities in Pakistan will not be put to any hardship. They shall be accorded the same treatment as Muslims. The Hindus will be free to visit their temples and the Sikhs their Gurudwaras.

Of course, I cannot take anyone's word at face value. Even today in Pakistan carnage and arson are rampant. This is happening in the Indian Union too. Who is doing this? Is it only the Muslims or are Hindus too responsible for it? I am flooded with letters of all kinds. People ask why they cannot live in peace. I ask Mr. Jinnah when his assurance will be put into practice. Will it be effective only after August 15? Sind will be a part of Pakistan. The Muslim League has the most influence there. Mr. Jinnah has become the Governor-General. Still there is a king in England and so long as he is there we are in some way still connected with him through the Governor-General and the Governor-General still remains responsible to the king. Mr Jinnah also remains the President of the League. This further strengthens his status. He should act with justice. Why should Sindhis be running away from Sind? If even a single Sindhi leaves Sind it will be a matter of shame to Mr. Jinnah as Governor-General. The proof of a man's word is his action.

I do not know what has happened or not happened in U. P. But the Muslims of U. P. are walking in fear. They do not know whether they can continue to live there or not. But why can't they live there, I

ask? I ask U. P. and Bihar as I ask Mr. Jinnah: Can Muslims live in those provinces or not?

We have at last rid ourselves of the British. There was a time when they made us fight against each other. That time is now no more.

The Muslims of U. P. have a grouse over the proportion of Government jobs to be given to them. They say that whereas up to now they held between 60 and 70 p. c. of Government posts, now it is proposed that they should have only 14 p. c. according to their population ratio. I cannot share this complaint. When all is said and done, how many of us can have Government jobs? What good can they do to us? And then we take up jobs in order to serve the public, not merely to further our own interest. If what has been the practice so far is continued it will not be just. If the doctors and lawyers have been fleecing the population till now, does it mean that they should continue to do so? If I am asked by someone whether the percentage of jobs so far allotted to them will continue, I can ask in turn who gave them that percentage and how? The Congress fought against the Government and the Government bribed those who fought the Congress. Now the Government will be ours. Why should the Government be obliged to bribe anyone? It is now imperative for us to abolish untouchability. Would the Government have had the courage to open the temples through legislation? When I see that in Madras one temple after another is opening its doors to Harijans, it makes me happy. This is how dharma can be safeguarded. The same applies to Christians and Parsis. Our Government must be dedicated to raising the status of those who are downtrodden. If it does something for the Harijans, why should the Brahmins complain? Yes, if someone suggests that the Brahmins should be beaten and humiliated, then I shall say 'no, that is bad'.

If I can say anything on behalf of Muslims or the Indian Union, it is only this, that everyone should have justice. If this is ensured then there will be nothing more left to say and the pain of partition will have been forgotten.

People say that the work of partition is finished, that the army has been divided, the navy has been divided. I say we have been weakened. Foreigners will say India has no navy. They will in their own interest align themselves with one or the other Dominion and thus this division of the army will become a cause of civil war. But I hope

that Pakistan and India will be friends, that they will be just to their minorities.

Even if we have not learnt the lesson of ahimsa, we should at least from our thirty years of experience learn the lesson that we shall never again become slaves irrespective of whether we achieve this through violence or non-violence. I do not say that it should be only through non-violence. I have been saying this since I was in Bihar. People ask for guns and swords. I say, why do you want these weapons? Proclaim that you will never bow down. I said the same in Noakhali. If we can show that we have learnt this lesson after thirty years of experience, it will not matter whether people are violent or non-violent. If they come and ask me, I shall still say that they must follow only non-violence. If a single individual has to defy the world he can do so only through non-violence. Where there is non-violence, there is God. The sword breaks before it.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 243-6

63. A LETTER

July 14, 1947

If a strong-willed man who is ill resolves to get well, I am sure that he can get well through sheer power of the will. Thoughts energize the nerves and help greatly in restoring a sick man to health. Therefore, though you are in hospital and in doctors' hands, you should give them this help.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 331

64. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

NEW DELHI,
July 14, 1947

CHI. BHANSALI

I have your letter. You cannot leave the Ashram in this manner. All of us are responsible for any sin committed in the Ashram and we should all become more vigilant in our own conduct. . . .[1] has not been guilty of immoral conduct. He as- sures me that he has been guilty of no lapse. He has enter- tained no impure thoughts We should not, therefore, take any extreme step merely on suspicion. When the time to wind up the Ashram comes, I myself will give the call. There is room for much purification in us all. All vows have the same importance. Violation of any one of them amounts to violation of all. Relations of men and women attract our attention immediately. Moreover, we condemn such relations in a great many cases, but we ought not to assert positively that they really deserve our condemnation. All depends on the purity or otherwise of the mind. If my mind becomes affected by the sight of a woman's picture, I have committed adultery. But though I used to sleep with . . . by my side, my mind remained unaffected and so I could claim that I committed no immoral act. That my claim might not be accepted by others would be a different matter. That I should give up such practice if my co-workers cannot put up with it is also another issue. The point I am making is that we ought not to pass judgment on any action merely on the basis of suspicion. Though all the vows are of equal importance, some of them may be easier to observe than others. The vow of ahimsa seems to me the most difficult of all. Any thoughtless remark constitutes violence. Getting angry with anybody is violence. You can think of many other similar instances and calm yourself. You will find that, though you have risen high, you have still further to climb. Be calm and continue the watch.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 822. Courtesy: Balkrishna Bhave

[1] Omissions as in the source

65. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
July 14, 1947

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have your letter. No one can be punished privately by an individual.[1] We must not let ourselves be witnesses to such punishment. I do not know why Shantabehn tolerated it. I am writing to her. Let me have whatever further information you get.

Instead of feeling unhappy over what happened, you should take necessary steps to prevent a recurrence of it.

Aryanayakum should certainly ponder over this incident. But that will happen only if you handle the affair without getting excited.

I understand what you say regarding the infant's name.

Do not lose patience over the construction work.

I will look into the matter concerning[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8406. Also C. W. 5624. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

66. A LETTER[3]

July 14, 1947

You should give up your fondness for writing with a pencil or fountain-pen. Anybody who wishes to improve his handwriting should use a reed-pen. How can all the children in the country afford to use fountain-pens? I suppose you know how much a fountain-pen costs. If I was a teacher and had my way, I would forbid the bringing of a fountain-pen into the classroom. But mine has become a lone voice now. If you have any influence with your friends, popularize the use of the reed-pen among them. I shall be more than satisfied if you do this.

Children must take exercise. It helps to build a sound body.

[1] A labourer working in the Ashram had been beaten by another for theft.
[2] The name has been omitted.
[3] According to the source this was addressed to a child.

They should also be self-reliant. For example, they should wash their own dishes and clothes, sweep their own rooms, and so on.

It is a sin to use books without protecting them with covers. It is an affront to goddess Saraswati to do so. But the covers must not be made of mere waste paper or be folded shabbily. A cover lengthens the life of a book and thereby saves much money.

And surely you know that one must not eat before doing the day's quota of spinning. Similarly one must not miss the morning and the evening prayers.

One must also make it a regular practice to go to bed early and rise early.

Like you, I too have learnt Bengali alphabet and have made enough progress to be able to write a few words. Since you asked for some advice, I managed to spare time to write this much. I can write much more, but that will be after you have tried and carried out the foregoing suggestions. Write to me from time to time. Chi. Manu has progressed greatly in other ways, but her health has gone down badly, and that obliges me occasionally to be harsh with her and force her to lie down and take rest. That displeases her very much, but her pain is a sign not of wisdom but of ignorance. I have, therefore, to harden my heart in dealing with her. She starts crying, but I pay no attention to it.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 330-1

67. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

NEW DELHI,
July 14, 1947

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter. I am thinking about Prabhakar. Sushilabehn will write. Hoshiari should take up physical work only after she recovers fully. What occasioned the coming of Anantram's wife? She may have left now.

Munnalal writes that the villagers beat up a Harijan.[1] What is all this? I have written a letter to Shantabehn, read it and give it to her.

I understand about Kamalabehn.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1983

[1]*Vide* "Letter to Munnalal G. Shah", 14-7-1947.

68. NOTE TO G. D. BIRLA

NEW DELHI,
July 14, 1947

I shall have rest either when complete peace is restored to the country or when God sends me to eternal sleep.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 332

69. TALK WITH MRIDULA SARABHAI AND OTHERS

NEW DELHI,
July 14, 1947

India has been partitioned. But the division of the army has greatly affected me. Do not these people realize that if either India or Pakistan is invaded by a foreign power, it is equally the duty of both to resist the aggression? How humiliating will it be for us if Pakistan and India cannot remain united even in such a crisis? If the army is divided, a situation will arise when both the armies will start fighting one another, and that situation will be very difficult to control. On the whole it is harmful to both the countries. And that is why I am requesting…[1] to give a serious thought to this question. Even if we have not learnt non-violence in the last thirty years, we certainly will have realized that we will not be slaves to any third power, let alone the British. But I feel that… anything I say is not acceptable to people today. That is why I do not think too deeply over anything. I request these people to allow me to return to Bihar and then Noakhali. But the Viceroy and Jawaharal do not agree. And I do not want to go if it hurts their feelings.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 334

[1] Omissions as in the source

70. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 14, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

It is said that my speeches these days are such as to generate a feeling of pessimism. Indeed I am advised by some not to speak at all. It reminds me of a story about a painter. He placed a paint- ing on display with a notice that critics might mark the sport where they found the painting faulty. The result was that the painting was soon reduced to a blur of colours. The painter had wanted to show that it was not possible to please everyone and he was satisfied that he had created a good painting. I am in a similar situation. I never speak merely for the sake of speaking. I speak because I feel that I have a message to deliver.

It is true that today there are differences between me and my closest colleagues. I do not approve of certain things that they have done or are doing. But it is not possible for me while I am in Delhi not to express my views on the present situation. What is at the root of these differences? If you go into it you will find that there is only one thing at the root of it. Non-violence is a creed with me while it has never been so with the Congress. The Congress accepted non-violence only as a policy—a policy has the status of a creed only so long as it is pursued. The congress has a perfect right to change its policy the moment it feels that it is no longer necessary to pursue it. But it is different with a creed. It remains for ever and it cannot be changed.

In the Congress constitution non-violence is still the policy but in practice Congressmen have changed it. Legal pundits may well comment on it but you and I cannot do so nor should we. Why should Congressmen not change their policy? Besides, the constitution of the Congress says 'peaceful' and not 'non-violence'.

In 1934, at the Bombay Congress, I tried my best to have the term 'peaceful' replaced by the term 'non-violence'. But I was unsuccessful. Therefore anyone can, it he chooses, say that 'peaceful' means 'something little less than non-violent'. In my view there is no difference between the two. But my view is neither here nor there. It is the experts who must decide. You and I must only understand that the practice of Congress today is not in the least non-violent. If non-

violence had been the creed of the Congress, how would it be possible for it to support the army as it is doing today? If the army is so disposed it can crush the people and establish a militray regime. Shall I give up the hope altoge-ther that people will ever listen to me? And if they will not listen to me, what harm does it do if I speak out? Why should they seek to stop me?

I have repeatedly made it clear that the struggle that has been waged over the last thirty years was not a non-violent struggle. It was only passive resistance and such resistance is a weapon of the weak. It is not that people who use this weapon do not want to use the weapon of non-violence. It is simply that they do not know how to use it. If we had the courage for the battle of non- violence we would today be presenting to the world an entierely different picture of free India. But today we can show only a dismembered country where brother fights brother and no one can trust another. We are not able to attend to feeding and clothing the people and have nothing to offer those impoverished millions who can see God only in the form of bread and who have no interest in this unending violence.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 246-8

71. TALK WITH A VISITOR

[On or before *July 14, 1947*][1]

VISITOR : What about Russia? It is a big question at the moment.

GANDHIJI : It will remain so for some time.

Do you think Russia is a thereat to world peace and the peace of India?

Any great power may be a threat.

Is the Communist Party very strong in India numerically or in terms of real support?

No.

Do you think the peasant may be ready to receive their message?

Not at the moment.

What about the relations between India and Pakistan? Do you think there will be difficulties or complications after independence?

There may be or there may not be.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 309

[1] The source places this in the second week of July.

72. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO ASAF ALI

[After *July 14, 1947*][1]

Freedom has come but it leaves me cold. Sor far as I can see, I am a back number. I have come to the conclusion that our way was non-violent only superficially; our hearts were violent. It was enough to displace the foreign power. But the violence nursed within has broken out in a way least expected. Heaven knows where it will lead us.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 332

73. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

NEW DELHI,
July 15, 1947

DEAR NATESAN[2],

Anna—Harihar Sharma—told me you were ill and bed-ridden. You have no business to be ill. Your work is not finished. Who is older—you or I ?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 2241

74. LETTER TO KAJI

NEW DELHI,
July 15, 1947

DEAR KAJI,

I have you full lettter which is deeply interesting.

I can give no opinion. All I can say generally is that you should avoid parties within our own reanks.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] According to the source this was written in the third week of July.
[2] (1873-1949); publisher; editor of the *Indian Review*

75. LETTER TO CHANDABHAI

NEW DELHI,
July 15, 1947

BHAI CHANDABHAI,

If you had given me instances of my negligence, it would have helped me. I am inquiring into what you have said. Don't give up your resolve.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

76. LETTER TO A STUDENT

July 15, 1947

Everything will be well with a people who are disciplined and who value integrity of character. The young should be taught this while they are students.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 335

77. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI[1]

July 15, 1947

Right now it does not seem possible that I shall be able to go to Sevagram. It will be possible only when the watchword of 'do or die' has shown some result. It peace is restored in the country, the first part will have been fulfilled and I shall be able to go to Sevagram alive. Otherwise, well, the spirit is immortal. So if the second part of the resolve is fulfilled, my spirit will for ever be there. I am writing this under great pressure of work. Chi. Manudi is quite ill. But I have become more strict with her during the last four or five days and she is, therefore, taking care of her health and observing all the rules, and that is doing her good. I keep myself informed of the state of her

[1] Although the source does not mention the addressee it would seem from the contents that it was Jaisukhlal Gandhi.

health every hour. This is no burden. On the contrary, nursing is a hobby with me. If Chi. Manudi had fallen ill while with you there, that would certainly have weighed on my mind. Since she is with me, my mind is at perfect peace. She is under my own supervision and carries out all my suggestions. But I have to keep reminding her continually about medicines, food, fresh air, etc. If she learns to be careful about these things, she will never fall ill. There is no need to send her to you. She does not at all want to be away from me. Nor do I want it.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 335-6

78. A LETTER

July 15, 1947

How can I today speak of tomorrow? Why should we, then, worry where I shall be and what I shall be doing next month? Why, we don't even know what is going to happen the very next moment. Rama might take me away even while I am writing this letter. Without, therefore, worrying about the future, we should only think how best to do the duty at hand. You should stay on there and finish the Course in *Nai Talim*. Only afterwards should you think about what to do next. Otherwise, it will be with you as it was with Sheikhchalli in the story : the *ghee* will be spilt before it reaches hoem. You will not be able to finish the course in *Nai Talim* and will be left nowhere. One must undertake a task only after careful thinking and, having undertaken it, one must cling to it till death. Nobody who weakens in this resolve can ever make progress.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 336

79. A LETTER

July 15, 1947

. . .[1] and I are convinced that we have been making one mistake after another. The partition was indeed and error, but the leaders (not I) felt that it was unavoidable. The partition of the army, however is a

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

terribl mistake we are making. Let God move us as He wills. How can we help if it is not ordained that India should have peace even now.

My health cannot be described as very good, but it is good enough. God will preserve it as long as He wishes to take service through me. Why need we worry?

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 335

80. LETTER TO S. K. BELVALKAR

NEW DELHI,

July 15, 1947

BHAI BELVALKARJI[1],

I have your letter.

I am confident that you will have all success in what you are beginning with regard to the *Shanti Parva* on *Akhi-panchami*. I am also of the view that you should receive sufficient financial help in your venture.

Thank you for proposing to send me a copy of the *Bhishma Parva* when it is ready.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

81. A LETTER

July 15, 1947

You will have read my speech.[2] Perhaps you know that I am not happy with what is happening in the Working Committee and I cannot help saying what I feel. I therefore wanted to leave this place and go to Bihar or Noakhali. But I am Jawahar's slave. His love prevents me from going. I may have to go to Kashmir. Let us see what happens. I feel that we must do something in regard to the controls and the

[1] Sripad Krishna Belvalkar, Hon. Secretary, All India Oriental Conference, 1926-27, General Editor of the critical edition of the *Mahabharata*

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 14-7-1947.

general condition of the country. Only then shall we be able to win the confidence of the people.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 335

82. TALK WITH N. G. RANGA[1]

NEW DELHI,
July 15, 1947

If there is enmity between Hindus and Muslims today the masses are not to blame. Opportunists are to blame. Those who have any energy should devote themselves to the uplift of the country without harbouring any prejudices. If there is one great fault in us it is that we cannot refrain from criticizing individuals in public and our public is not educated enough to analyse and judge a speaker. Everyone has virtues and vices. Today when swaraj is about to come, the handful of scholars that we have should make available to the masses whatever they have. Our leaders are almost all becoming old. The scholars should devote themselves to training of the younger generation so that they can carry on our heritage. Mere criticism is not going to help anyone.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 337

83. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 15, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

The other day I spoke of the temples in Tamil Nadu and Malabar that had been thrown open to Harijan and I especially mentioned the Rameswaram temple. It is a huge temple and there is a lot of superstition concerning it. Some thought that the entry of Harijans would pollute the temple. I have received a letter today complaining that I had not mentioned the Tirupati temple in Andhra

[1]President, All India Kisan Sabha and Andhra Provincial Congress Committee; Member, Congress Parliamentary at the Centre

Desh which is also a great and acient temple. The correspondent asks me to rectify the omission and thus give satisfaction to the people of Andhra. I know the glory of this temple but I make no difference between Tamil Nadu and Andhra. Today the atmosphere is such that everyone wants separation.

Some friends from Bengal have been to see me. They say that with the division of Bengal Hindus in East Bengal are haunted by the fear that the Hindus of West Bengal will forget them. It that happens I shall be pained. It will be very bad if Hindus thus forget Hindus and Muslims forget Muslims. Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians all are Indians. Religion is a private matter. If I wish to worship God, what power on earth can stop me from doing so? But If Mussalmans, Parsis, Hindus and Christians all consider themselves separate, what is left of India? I admit that is was hardly necessary to divide Bengal. I have lived among Bengali Muslims. I have walked with them in Noakhali. I found only love in their hearts. Why should Hindus have harboured fear of Muslims? The madness that had seized them would not have lasted for ever. In my view no harm will come to the Hindus of East Bengal. But many things have happened which we did not want to happen. Bengal has been partitioned. And India and Pakistan are separate countries. But we should proceed forward from what has happened and later put it right. Hindus and Muslims of East and West Bengal have always lived together and speak the same language. It the Hindus of East Bengal treat the Muslims there as friends, would the Muslims still want to kill them? When not a single Hindu considers Muslims his enemies, all will be friends.

They also asked me if the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee will be dissolved since it too has been divided into two. In my view the division of Bengal does not apply to the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee. It should continue in its present form. It is outside Government laws. If it divides itself, then I will say that West Bengal has broken faith. The structure of the Congress today is such that at the very bottom there are village Congress Committees, Mandal Congress Committees, District Congress Committees, then Provincial and at the very top the All-India Congress Committee. Thus there will be Congress Committees in East Bengal as well as in West Bengal. Both will then constitute the B.P.C.C. The Congress belongs to all, to Muslims, Christians, Parsis and others. It is not going to change its character in the days to come. The Bengali friends also wonder whether East Bengal has been so impoverished that it must

have even its ministers from West Bengal. But they should welcome this. For this will make for cohesion between East and West Bengal. East Bengal no doubt has an overwhelming majority of Muslims. But why should we assume that all Muslims are bad? So many Muslims were slaughtered in Bihar and yet I can say that the millions of Hindus in Bihar are not bad. It is wrong to condemn the whole community for the fault of a few individuals. It only goes to show that we ourselves are not clean, that we are cowards, that we have not the courage of non-violence, for the courage of non-violence is the courage to die, never the courage to kill. There are vast armies in the world but considering the population of the world, they are only a handful. But we have got into the way of never being able to see straight. Whenever there is some incident somewhere we at once ask for the army to be sent. In Noakhali, Bihar, the Punjab and the N.W.F.P., wherever there were riots there was only one demand : that the army be sent for their protection. Why should people who ought to be brave want this?

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 249-51

84. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

BHANGI COLONY, NEW DELHI,
July 16, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I had a long talk with Panditji about Kashmir. He is firmly of opinion that I should go in any case, not minding it Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah or his deputy goes after my visit. He thinks, and I agree, that if now my visit is postponed, it will disappoint many persons in Kashmir. That I may not be allowed to see Sheikh Abdulla Saheb should not affect the Contemplated visit one way or the other. In the circumstances, I suggest that you should telegraph to the Maharaja Saheb that as my visit would not mean any speeches or public meetings, it shold not cause any embarrassment to the State and that I should go to Kashmir at the earliest possible moment.

As I have said to you my suggestion is subject to your wish not to interfere with Panditji's wishes in the matter. If, for any reason, you wish otherwise, I would not go.

If I go, I would go as a private visitor. Hence I would not think of putting the Maharaja Saheb to any trouble on my account. Friends would make arrangements for my stay.

Finally, I should add that if, for any reason, I do not go to Kashmir, most probably Panditji would want to go for two or three days though he would prefer my going.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY

NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 273; also *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. II, p. 352

85. A LETTER

July 16, 1947

I do not deserve the credit you give me. We have arrived as far as we have done through the co-operation of millions and the sacrifices of countless people. For the rest it is sheer ignorance to feel. 'I am doing this' like that of the dog who thought that it was carrying on its back the cart it walked under. In fact nothing happens without God's will.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 339-40

86. A LETTER

July 16, 1947

When a misfortune is impending, man's reason is first destroyed. That is why the Shastras say that at the hour of undoing reason becomes perverted. If there is one thing that has destroyed

[1] Lord Mountbatten, in his reply dated July 17, besides assuring Gandhiji of his help and co-operation, said : ''I have received news that the Maharaja is sending his Prime Minister [Ramachandra] Kak to Delhi, early next week to join the discussions which I am arranging with the States Department. I feel it would be both courteous and wise if Pandit Nehru and you could have a talk with Pandit Kak before deciding on the precise date and details of your visit.''

innumerable innocent and happy families in this manner it is described in a two-letter word : *satto*[1]. It is time you turned your back on it. There is no happiness in this world like that of contentment. You can go to the Ashram and mintain yourself and your family by working there. The onoy condition is that every member of the family will have to work for eight hours daily and there will be no choice of work. May God grant you wisdom.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 340

87. A LETTER

July 16, 1947

There are differences between…[2] But I don't look upon such differences as a matter for serious concern. Truly speaking differences of opinion keep people alert. Honest differences of opinion do no harm whatever.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 340

88. A LETTER

July 16, 1947

It is true that, though we may have been efficient as satyagrahis, we are but novices as rulers. That is why I advise everybody to take advantage of the services of all those who have experience of administration, without harbouring prejudice against anyone, irrespective of whether or not the presons are supporters of the Congress. The only consideration should be whether the people's interest will be served.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 340

[1] Speculation
[2] Omission as in the source

89. A LETTER

July 16, 1947

I was much pained to see your letter written in English. If we have lost faith in our language, then I must say that we have also no faith in ourselves. All these are clear signs of our degradation. And, even in English, how many mistakes you make! Whenever I get letters written in bad English by persons whose mother tongue is Hindi or Urdu or Gujarati or Bengali Or Marathi or Tamil or Telugu, I feel that we are still slaves. All kinds of people come to see me, and if I don't know a visitor's language I can always have what he says translated.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 340

90. A LETTER

July 16, 1947

Now that you are becoming the manager of this institution and have asked for my blessings, I should like to say only this : the soul of an institution is its manager. May God grant you the stength to work in that spirit.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 340

91. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

NEW DELHI,

July 16, 1947

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. I have the impression that I have already written to you something in reply to your criticism of my experiment.

I am doing nothing just now. There has been no change at all in my conviction up to now. On the contrary, it is deepening with the passage of time. That is, I believe that even if only one *brahmachari* of my conception comes into being, the world will be redeemed. But

the task is an extremely difficult one. Any progress in that direction will of course be a gain. On the other hand, there is no doubt that if the assumption is erroneous, much harm can come of it. Just now there is only one aspect of the question that presents itself to me. That is, that the difference of opinion between Kishorelal and myself on this issue pains me, for behind that difference lies great anguish of mind on Kishorelal's part. Were it not for that. I think the difference of opinion between us would not be so painful to me. I would advise you not to worry in the least about this issue as long as it is only at a theoretical stage.

I like you idea of going to East Africa for collecting funds.

There can of course be no doubt about the necessity of the laws being repealed. But I am afraid they will not be totally repealed. The fact that some of the workers are selfish is certainly a handicap, but it seems right to me that you should go on doing the best that you can in a spirit of detachment.

I think the changes with are taking place here will have an impact there. Let us see how things shape. The burden of work on me may or may not decrease, I don't worry about that. You also need not worry.

Prerhaps I may never be able to return to Sevagram. It seems likely that I shall have to stay on in these parts, that is, in Bihar and Noakhali.

I have had a letter from Kaji.[1] He has complained against Dadoo and others. The letter is a long one. However, it has produced no effect on me, for have we not had similar experiences in the past ?

I was indeed very happy to learn about your health and I wish you all success. I would even welcome your writing in detail on the subject. As a result of it you may even succeed where I failed and live up to a hundred and twenty-five years. For that, however, you should remember that diet is not the only thing. The chief thing is the mind. Food, of course, has an effect on the mind.

It is now 5 a. m. I must, therefore, get ready.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS]

Enclosed is a copy of my letter to S. I am sending it to be dispatched to you in case they have not sent one to you.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5008

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Kaji", 15-7-1947.

92. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 16, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

The *bhajan* that was sung today has been known to me ever since I was a boy just entering high school. It appeared as a prayer in a little book for children called *Bal Mitra*. It is a good and sweet *bhajan* and it teaches the truth that we should not be too concerned with the body. They body is there today and will be gone tomorrow. It will either be hurnt up and become ashes or go to the grave and become mixed with the soil. If it is cast into water it will be eaten up by marine life. In the end it is all the same. What does not sound so good in the *bhajan* is the words ''after me the deluge''. True it has been composed by Kabir, but what of it? I do not like it. In my humble opinion it shows selfishness. Why should the deluge overtake the world after I am dead? In the first place we do not really die. For the self is immortal. As for the world it is ever changing. It is God's play. But we do not go wholly by what the *bhanan* says. If we did, where was the need of a Constituent Assembly? Where was the need of all the laws that our leaders are busy enacting. If they had all taken up the attitude of ''after me the deluge'', no one would have been doing anything for anyone. This sentiment, therefore, is an expression of extreme selfishness.

Some newspapermen had been to see me. In the course of the talk Dravidastan was mentioned. Dravidastan comprises the Southern part of India beyond the Vindhyas. The languages spoken are Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada. I have acquainted myself a little bit with each of these languages and I can say that the are all rooted in Sanskrit. If you hear Telugu spoken you will find that it is full of Sanskrit words. Tamil too has Sanskrit words in abundance. Only they have been given Dravidian dress. Malayalam too resembless Sanskrit. And the same is true of Kannada. I do not treat Dravidastan as something apart from India. The British have made us all one. Everyone living between Kashmir and Kanaya-kumari is an Indian. To make distinctions such as Aryans or non-Aryans or the Aryavrata and Dravidastan is foolish. I am quite certain about this.

That leads to the question of language. We have here two

languages, Hindi and Urdu, which were developed in India by Indians. Their grammar is the same. I have combined these two to form Hindustani. This is spoken by many crores of people. It is the common language of Hindus and Muslims. If you sopke Sanskritized Hindi or Urdu laden with Arabic and Persian expressions such as Prof. Abdul Bari spoke, very few people would understand you. Does it then mean that we are to ignore the four languages of Dravidastan? That is not what I have in mind. All I want is that each province should use its own language for internal purposes but must learn Hindustani as the national language. All provinces have their own languages. Oriya, Bengali, Assames, Sindhi, Punjabi, Gujarati, Marathi, they are all distinct from Hindustani. Should we rather learn these languages or accept English as our national language? If I were to speak to you in English, very few of you would be able to understand me. We can only have a very meagre smattering of English even if we work hard at it for eight or 10 years. It is enough to drive the country mad. English therefore cannot be our national language. It can be the language of international communication. It can be the language of commerce, though even in this capacity it has not found universal acceptance so far. The national language of India can be no other than Hindustani. While provincial languages must remain, the language sopken by the largest number of people is Hindustani. I have been associated with the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. The kind of language used there is not easy to understand nor is very pure Urdu easily understandable. The language of the masses is Hindustani. We can created in it as much literature as we need. It is the duty of the people of Dravidastan to learn Hindustani alongside their own languages. If they could learn Hindustani in both Devangari and Persian scripts it would be even better. Thus they should be able to have a knowledge of both the languages. But if they want to learn just enough Hindustani to make themselves understood they can learn it in their own respective scripts. In Madras the Hindustani Prachar Sabha is engaged in the work of teaching people Hindustani through their own script.

He freely admitted that if it was wrong for the Southerners not to learn Hindustani, it was equally wrong for the Northerners not to learn one or more of the Southern languages which had rich literature. He appealed to members from the South not to ask for an English speech in an Indian audience. They would then soon pick up Hindustani. Let them remember that India could exist as a free country only if it accepted moral government. Congress as a fighting machine against bondage was held together by its moral force.[1]

[1] This paragraph is from *The Hindustan Times.*

It is a misfortune indeed that while we have hardly disposed of one question, with Pakistan formed, we are faced with the demand for Dravidastan. If this tendency persists, where will India be? What can be more paradoxical than that, while as a slave country we remained united, we should begin to break up as soon as freedom is gained ?

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 215-4; and *The Hindustan Times*, 17-7-1947

93. TALK TO I. N. A. MEN

July 16, 1947

If India wants to survive in a world of atom bombs, she must be disciplined and united first, and untouchability and caste distinctions should go. I have never heard or seen that an army helps in generating such a social and moral climate.[1] The army formed under the leadership of Netaji was not formed to promote these virtues, and if it showed unity and discipline it was because it had not other alternative. We have so many of those soldiers in India. Why did not they show their worth? We would not have witnessed two world wars which we did if there were any truth in the claim people make about the virtues of military training. And nobody can tell when a third world war may flare up. Both violence and non-violence have equal need for discipline and unity. Let me tell you that a peaceful and non-violent victory is far superior to a violent victory. There is not the least doubt about it.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 343

94. FRAGMENT OF LETTER OT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

July 17, 1947

We are going in for British extravagance which the country cannot afford.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 641

[1] They had argued that it was necessary to have an army because an army fostered unite and discipline among the people.

95. LETTER TO PYARELAL

July 17, 1947

CHI PYA.,

I indeed feel delighted to read about you work[1] and I long to return there. The Kashmir problem[2] is threatening to become serious. After going to Kashmir, if I do go, I intend to return there visiting Bihar on the way. I want to stay with you. But I do not know what God will prompt me to do.

If you have no workers with you, cannot you do with Kanu and others? I discussed your schemes with Satis Babu.

You seem to be on your feet for long hours till late in the evening. I must confess that I would not have had such courage. I am sure you can speak Bengali well enough by now.

If you send some toffee again, I shall have a look at it and may even be able to sell it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Gujarati: *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. II, between pp. 496 and 497

96. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

July 17, 1947

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I have neglected writing to you thinking that Manudi has been doing so. I am writing today, for Manu's health is not improving and I observe that she is not taking sufficient care. She seems to be having a low fever and cannot digest what she eats. Her weight has gone down. I have asked her to remain in bed and take complete rest from today. Since the day before yesterday, she has been under the treatment of Sushilabehn, who is here. There is no cause for worry.

[1] The addressee was doing relief work in Bhatialpur village in Bengal. He was one of the few who had continued the work in Noakhali after Gandhiji's departure in the first week of March.

[2] The reference is to the threat of independence held out by the State.

Abha has fallen ill and has, therefore, come here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U/XXIV

97. A LETTER

July 17, 1947

''When the Lord of Janaki is you protector, who can harm you?'' Seek refuge in him and nobody will be able to harm you.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 344

98. A LETTER

July 17, 1947

My advice is that constructive workers should not take part in politics. If they take interest in both, tye will be able to do justice to neither.

You say that the Congress has become weak. I also say that. Why, Jawaharlal and Kripalani themselves say the same thing. But saying it will not make the Congress strong. It is not we ourselves who have made it weak? A little introspection would show us that we have enough strength instantly to overcome the weakness. The weakness in only due to decrease in the spirit of selflessness. However, there is no other institution in the country which has the stature and the spirit of self-sacrifice of the Congress.

If the importance of Indian languages is not recognized in the field of education, the national spirit will not be awakened. And is there a greater humiliation for the country than that? Similarly, the importance of khadi also should be recognized. If I had my way, I would give to the Government employees no uniform not made of khadi. All the cloth used in Government offices also would be khadi. The greater the progress we can make in this sphere the greater will be our gain.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 344-5

99. LETTER TO SWAMI BHASKARANANDA

NEW DELHI,
July 17, 1947

SWAMIJI,

I have your letter. I have read the statement you gave me yesterday. I do not like it although I don't mind you complaint against me.

The demands of the Akhil Bharat Dharma Sangh are not just. It would be useless to enter into a discussion. I cannot accept the draft you have sent me. But if Goswami will do me the favour, I shall certainly be happy to meet him.[1] My opinion is that dharma cannot be saved by following his path.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

BHASKARANANDA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

100. LETTER TO MOHAMMED HUSAIN KHAN

HARIJAN COLONY,
July 17, 1947

BHAI SAHEB,

I have your letter. What need for me to argue? Enclosed is a copy of the Prime Minister's letter. In view of the letter I can only say that you may file a suit against him. I cannot pass a judgment. I have done whatever I could.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beldevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] See also ''Letter to Swami Karapatri''.

101. DISCUSSION WITH VISITORS

NEW DELHI,
July 17, 1947

That is what you think.[1] I tell you that I can show you the miracle today if Hindus maintain peace and show courage. But with what face can I tell the League not to indulge in atrocities? You say that if I give you the lead you will follow me. Have you ever thought against whom and to whom I can give the lead? The British have not partitioned the country. It has been done with the consent of the Mulsim League and the Congress. Isn't that so? The leaders had no other alternative. They thought it was better to partition the country so that both the parts could live happily and peacefully rather than let the whole country go to pieces. About this I did hold a different view. My view was that no one could take an inch of land by resorting to violence and murder. Let the whole country be reduced to ashes. They could take the whole country by friendly negotiations and peaceful methods. But though non-violence is a creed with me, it is not so with the Congress. There is only one other person in the country who has accepted non-violence as a creed and he is Badshah Khan. It is true that I had believed that our satyagraha struggles were based on non-violence. Only lately I realized that it was not true. I admit my mistake. I first started the satyagraha struggle in Sought Africa. At one of the meetings Mr. Hosken[2] said that Gandhi was fighting a weak man's battle. I strongly contradicted him and produly said that what was needed for satyagraha was spiritual strength and not physical strength, and that we were fighting with soul-force. As you know we were quite successful in that struggle. Immediately after that I came away to India. I employed the same method here. At the time I did believe that people were fighting with genuine spiritual strength. I would not have launched the struggle if I had then realized that it was only ''passive resistance''. But God had willed to use me for this mission and so he blurred my vision. And because our fight was not one of non-violence we see the result today. There is arson,

[1] The visitors, who were from the Punjab, had told Gandhiji that his belief that he was a spent bullet or that the country was not behind him was not true.

[2] William Hosken, who was the leader of a committee of European sympathizers of the Indian cause during Gandhiji's South African struggle

murder, loot and chaos all around.

Non-violence and weakness are contradictory terms. I have been in public life for the last sixty years and I have never felt so much despair as I do now. I learnt from my childhood not to admit such a thing as failure. Nevertheless today I am struggling against this all-pervading darkness to find some light somewhere. Bear in mind that India will be wiped out from the face of the earth if she rejects the path of non-violence. Nay, the whole world may be on the way to perdition. Quite soon we shall be getting our freedom from the British. But if now we again lose that freedom, the word itself will be forgotten and its is quite possible that a military regime will take over. This is the reason for the despair that has taken hold of my heart. How wonderful is non-violence of the brave! I am trying day and night to cultivate it. It will be enough if I can cultivate the non-violence of the brave as far as I am concerned. I pray to God that He may give me that strength.

I say to you that if someone comes to kill you, do not be afraid and do not move from your place but let him kill you. I shall be content if, when someone comes to kill me, I can remain composed, let myself be killed and pray to God that He may grant good sense to the killer—as these girls sing every day. I had said in the Asian Conference which was held here about four months ago that the man who made the atom bomb would have to come to India to study non-violence and the fragrance of the non-violence of India would permeate the whole world. Let us see when my hope materializes.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 345-7

102. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 17, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

We learn from newspapers[1] that the Indians in South Africa are being subjected to *goondaism.* They are being killed. I was in South Africa for twenty years and I know how Indians are treated in that country. There is a large number of Muslims there but they all call themselves Indians. May God give us all the sense at least to call ourselves Indians when we are in a foreign country.

Recentlly Sarup[2] had been to the United Nations along with Justice Chagla and other to present before the world body the case of the South African Indians. Since then harassment of Indian in south Aftrica has taken a new form. It is not the law that has been unleashed against them but *goondaism.* If this goes on, how will the handful of Indians be able to live there? Once I marched into the Transvaal with two thousand people. Not a single Boer so much as touched us. Some of them ever gave us water to drink. We have plenty of water here. But it is not in such abundance there. People collect water when it rains and keep it stored in tanks. The Boers were friendly and we went wherever we wanted. But I see a different picture today. Now that we have two Governments here, I shall ask Mr. Jinnah and Jawaharalal to send a joint telegram to Smuts[3]. Mr. Smuts considers me his friend. As a friend I must entreat him to tell the Whites not to do physical violence to even one single Indian. And if he cannot make himself obeyed, he must resign. Lord Mountbatten too should not helplessly watch. He is an Admiral of the Fleet and is of Royal family. Philip Mountbatten, who is going to marry Princess Elizabeth, is like a son to him. Besides, up to the 15th of August he will be the Viceroy and afterwards the Governor-General. He should therefore make use of

[1] According to *The Hindustan Times,* 18-7-1947, the latest campaign against Indians in South Africa was the boycott of India traders by the European community with threats of violence.

[2] Vijayalakshmi Pandit, who headed the Indian delegation to U. N. O. during October-December, 1946.

[3] Jan Christiaan Smuts (1870-1950); Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa, 1919-24 and 1938-48

these advantages and tell Smuth that India is now a Dominion even as South Africa is, that it is now a member of the vast family that is the British Commonwealth and that the ill-treatment of Indians in South Africa should forthwith stop.

It has been said that Dominion Status is even better than full independence. But till I have tasted this fruit I cannot say whether it is nectar or poison. Maybe it is nectar. But let us first taste it.

My advice to South African Indians is that they should live there as good citizens. Those of them who are wealthy should not neglect their Muslim brethren who are like untouchables there.

I had been asked, now that temples in Tamil Nad and Andhra have been opened to Harijans, what is the situation with regard to temples in the U. P.? There are the temples in Hardwar for instance. Can Harijans visit these temples? In Travancore this was acheived long ago. Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyar, the State's Diwan, who at the moment is perhaps a little angry with us, had presuaded the Maharaja to abolish untouchability by law. In the U. P., besides Hardwar there is Kashi. Can Harijans visit the temples there? If the Harajans cannot visit those temples, them I shall consider those temples impure. All the religions of the world are today faced with a severe test. Hindusim should in not 99 per cent but 100 per cent marks.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 255-7

103. DISCUSSION WITH SIKH VISITORS

NEW DELHI,
[On or before *July 18, 1947*][1]

VISITORS : It is not good that you still trust the nationalist Muslims. The Leaguers are not at all satisfied with the Pakistan they have got. They want Ajmer, Agra, Delhi and Aligarh. Only if you saw them yourself could you have and idea of the atrocities perpetrated by them. Still you blame the Hindus alone.

GANDHIJI360 : Let me take your last point first. I grant that Hindus there are being very cruelly treated. But to take revenge here for this increases my shame. Why do you not face them there even with arms and defend yourselves? What do you gain by taking an eye for an eye?

[1] In *Bihar Pachhi Dilhi* this appears among the items of July 20. However, in *Harijan,* Sushila Nayyar reported this under the date-line July 18.

Now about your misgivings about the nationalist Muslims. It is not becoming for us to distrust them. I will give you my own example. My eldest son Harilal often comes here. So many times he has given me his word that he will give up bad company and his many vices. And not once has he kept his word. But even so if he again comes to me today and promises that he will reform himself, how can I get angry with him? I will encourage him to keep his word. Only then is there hope of his reforming. In the same way we must trust the Muslim of India when they say that they will be loyal to India. But at the same time we should remain fully vigilant.

The world cannot function without trust. Isn't there a saying that faith makes the ships move? You have seen how much harm the British have done to India. I must confess the even now I have to be vigilant as far as they are concerned. And yet we would not have made so much progress it we had not trusted Lord Mountbatten.[1]

We must however be prepared to fight the danger.

The real preparation lies in purging ourselves of our inherent weakness, selfishness and disunity.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 366-7; also *Harijan,* 27-7-1947

104. LETTER TO LADY MOUNTBATTEN

NEW DELHI,
July 18, 1947

DEAR SISTER,

So you are celebrating the silver jubilee of your wedding amid a shower of congratulations and good wishes. Let me add mine to them and hope that your joint career here will blossom into citizenship of the world.

I hope your daughter is fully restored.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

LADY MOUNTBATTEN OF BURMA

From a photostat : G.N. 10831; also *Life of the Countess Mountbatten of Burma,* p. 131

[1] What follows is from *Harijan.*

105. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

NEW DELHI,
July 18, 1947

CHI. AMRITALAL,

I have just received your note about your having entered the 42 year. All public workers must now aspire to live up to a hundred and twenty-five years and conduct themselves acordingly. Do so and go on rendering service for many many years.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10814

106. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

VALMIKI MANDIR, NEW DELHI,
July 18, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

I enclose Akbar's[1] letter. I find it quite reasonable. He has written to you also. Let me know what you think about it. If you do not have the time, forget about it. I will deal with the matter as best I can.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
1, AURANGZEB ROAD
NEW DELHI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 356

[1] Akbarbhai Chawda, an Ashram inmate at Sevagram. He had written about the Jagirdari system in Sanoli.

107. LETTER TO MANIBEHAN PATEL

July 18, 1947

CHI, MANI,

Read the accompanying letter.[1] Show it to Sardar if you like. Drop the matter if he has no time. Let events take their own course.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Return Akbar's letter.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4 : Manibehn Patelne, p. 139

108. A LETTER

July 18, 1947

Is not politics too a part of dharma! It will have some effect on the people only if it is carried on with a sense of dharma Politics also requires purity of conduct.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 350

109. A LETTER

July 18, 1947

What other cause can there be for my despair? When one in disappointed in one's hopes, one should understand that God wishes to teach one some lesson. What is happening today has, therefore, woken me up, and I intend to search out and uncover whatever weakness may be lurking in me. How can we understand all that God does?

The reluctance to accept other people's services is, to my mind, a form of pride. True, it is a sin to exact service from other people

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

when we are in no real need of it, ourselves lolling the while in luxurious beds. But when we are too ill to attend to our needs, it becomes our duty to accept service from others, for the body is not our property but belongs to God. And there is nothing in the world which cannot be useful in some way or other.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 350-1

110. A LETTER

July 18, 1947

It is far better bravely to commit suicide than to yield out of fear and live. I see no violence in such suicide. There is violence in suppressing oneself and living in fear. Physically, suicide may be violence, but it is not so from a higher point of view. You will be able to see from this what sort of ahimsa it is that I cherish.

Repeating God's name is itself a form of prayer. If we practise any form of prayer in the right spirit, we shall automatically acquire control over our minds.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 351

111. A LETTER

July 18, 1947

You should obtain Chimanlal's permission. He is the Manager of the Ashram. I cannot interfere in the matter because I am not the Secretary of the Ashram.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 351

112. A LETTER

July 18, 1947

I very much like all the vows you intend to take. But do nothing merely because I advise it or just to please me. There is no sin as bad as self-deception.

We are falling lower and lower each day. Our depravity has

reached such a point that reports of atrocities committed on women have become a common thing. I tremble at this. God will show the path. Just now I have but one prayer:

'Ishvar' and 'Allah' are Thine names;

To all, O Lord, good sense give.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 351

113. LETTER TO ATMARAM

NEW DELHI,

July 18, 1947

CHI. ATMARAM,

It seems that although you believe in non-violence, you keep committing lapses, putting your dharma to shame and thereby harming your work. I gather this from Bhai Balwantrai's talk. You should observe the jail rules if you court arrest. Outside you should behave courteously and should not look upon anyone as your enemy, and if you are accused of something and a lawyer offers to help in the normal course without your begging him, you may accept his help. These are all signs of non-violence. Know the opposite to be violence.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

114. TALK WITH CHINESE COUPLE

NEW DELHI,

July 18, 1947

There is no reason to feel unhappy.[1] On the contrary I congratualte you that even though you hold such a high office you are not infatuated with this language. Besides, to me also English is a foreign language. So both of us are in the same plight.

If America does not put her affluence to good use, its very

[1] The husband had said that his wife was unhappy as she did not know English and could talk to Gandhiji only through an interpreter.

affluence will ruin it. If America tries to win friendship of other countries with the help of her money, and if China, Japan, Iran, India, Pakistan or any other country gets involved with her even in a small degree, both will come to grief. That is why I have been daily telling Rajendra Babu that import of foodgrains is the worst kind of slavery. There is nothing more degrading for a country than to beg from others when it cannot meet its requirements.

It is a practical principle that if you want to be friends with someone and if you want the friendship to endure, you should not seek economic aid from them. So, however rich America may be we shall only become crippled if we seek economic aid from her.

I am of the firm opinion that there is absolutely no need of machines either in India or in the rest of Asia. I have no use for machines which deprive men of employment and keep them starved and naked, no matter how much they are the fashion today and highly admired and how effective they may be in changing cities into paradises. I would certainly not feel sorry if there was an accident and all the machines were destroyed.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 353-4

115. MESSAGE TO CHINESE WOMEN

NEW DELHI,
July 18, 1947

If only the women of the world would come together they could display such heroic non-violence as to kick away the atom bomb like a mere ball. Women have been so gifted by God. If an ancestral treasure lying buried in a corner of the house unknown to the members of the family were suddenly discovered, what a celebration it would occasion. Similarly women's marvellous power is lying dormant. If the women of Asia wake up, they will dazzle the world. My experiment in non-violence would be instantly successful if I could secure women's help.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 354

[1] Before leaving, the couple requested Gandhiji for a message; *vide* the following item.

116. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
July 18, 1947

Gandhiji began his speech by drawing attention to the *bhajan* of the evening and said that he did not know whether it was Mira's. The tune was different from Mirabai's ordinary tune. The sentiment was undoubtedly hers. It said God alone could extricate man from difficulties. Today India was passing through difficulties. Was she to look to man or God to deliver the country? If they believed in the *bhajan*, they were to look to God and none else and they would be perfectly safe.

The *bhajan* just sung is very much to the point, for we are today in great distress. We have no food to eat, no cloth to cover ourselves with. To whom shall we go for help? To Jawaharlal Nehru? Or Sardar Patel? For they have today become the rulers. The Viceroy has given up or is about to give up power. He will now be the Governor-General because we have chosen him to be so. Formerly important officials used to be appointed from London. But now the Indian Independence Bill has been passed and even the consent of the King has been secured for it.

According to the Bill, the Governor-General would be appointed by them, the people of India, and not imposed on India as hitherto. Therefore Lord Mountbatten would be Governor-General of India. By their appointment precisely as a *chaprasi* would be. This was not said in disparagement. It was a compliment paid to Lord Mountbatten that he had been elected to be Indian Union's servant deriving his appointment from them. It was necessary to say this in order to dispel the suspicion that still lingered in many minds.

All power therefore is now in the hands of our people. But this *bhajan* says that when we are in distress we do not go to anyone else, we go to God. He alone can help us. It we go about our affairs with God in our hearts, our affairs will prosper, otherwise not. He is the ruler of the world and our good lies in surrendering ourselves to Him.

There is a newspaper called *The Dawn*, published from Delhi. Every day it is full of abuse. I too have my share of it. I generally laugh it away. But today the editor has published an open letter addressed to me. It is well phrased. He says I have been shouting that Mr. Jinnah is soon going to be put to the test and that I should stop

[1] The first, the third and the last two paragraphs are from *The Hindustan Times*.

my shouting.

May I ask the editor why the Hindus are running away in fear and despair from Karachi which is going to be the capital of Pakistan? Why are the Hindus frightened? The Sind Hindus are first-class businessmen. Why are they running away to Bombay, Madras and other places? It will not be they who will be the losers but Sind. For they will make money for themselves wherever they go. One finds Sindhis in South America. There is hardly any place in the world where Sindhis are not found. In South Africa the were making big money and they gave of it liberally to the poor. They have one vice, viz., drinking. They do not seem to be able to give it up.

The Dawn asks why I address myself only to Mr. Jinnah and the other League leaders. What is happening in the U.P. which is my province? But Sind too is my province. The whole of India including Pakistan is my province. I consider myself a citizen of Pakistan but not because I want to claim any citizenship rights. I seek no office. All I want is just enough to eat, which God gives me. I know nothing about the U.P. Besides, I have not blamed anyone. The editor of *The Dawn* is a big man. If he thinks that what I say is not right, why does he bother? There are so many like me who go about saying what they want. But I had a talk with Pantji about the U.P. He told me that so far as he can he tries to protect the Muslims, but that the Government cannot reach everywhere because the Muslim Leaguers are everywhere hurling abuses at the Hindus and provoking them. Occasionally Hindus too lose their temper. Pantiji admitted that what the Hindus did at Garhmukteshwar was not right. According to newspaper reports even the League leaders of the U.P. have praised the Work of the Pant Ministry.

I should like to remind the *Dawn* editor that even if what he says is right and even if what Pantji says is not the gospel truth, there is no reason why for one Muslim throat cut in the U.P. ten Hindus throats should be cut in Sind or the Punjab. I want to live to see the day when this communal madness is forgotten. Whatever be our religion we should be Indians in action. Only then shall we be able to safeguard our freedom.

If the *Dawn* editor truly wants to serve Islam, I shall tell him that this is not the way of Islam. As for saying things to Mr. Jinnah I have been saying what I like even to Lord Mountbatten and Jawaharlal Nehru. If Jawaharlal's words and actions differ, I shall shun him even

though he is a pandit. But I must advise the *Dawn* editor that he should flush the poison out of his pen. National newspapers contain many things that are good and many things that are bad. If we can agree and stop publishing news of mutual strife I shall consider that we have achieved something.

Gandhiji said he had a suggestion to make to *The Dawn* and all the newspapers, whatever their hue, they should avoid all exaggeration. In order to give effect to the suggestion, they should appoint a joint board to which all reports about communal trouble would be submitted and even passed on the responsible Ministers and, when necessary, given publicity.

His suggestion could find favour only if the editors realized their duty to the public and were anxious that a peremptory stop should be put to all communalism. Division having become a settled fact, it was surely time that the country was allowed to take up the task of feeding and clothing the ill-fed and ill-clad millions. The editors had a weighty part to play in the noble task. To foment trouble was ignoble.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 257-60, and *The Hindustan Times*, 19-7-1947

117. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

BHANGI COLONY, NEW DELHI,
July 19, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I sent your kind letter of yesterday[1] to Pandit Nehru and he at one wrote saying that regard being had to your advice, my going to Kashmir should be postponed till after Pandit Kak's arrival in New Delhi. So I shall await Pandit Kak's arrival and further developments.

Your sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 274-5

[1] Actually of July 17; *vide* footnote 1, "Letter to Lord Mountbatten", 16-7-1947.

118. A LETTER

July 19, 1947

I was pained by the facts narrated in your letter. I also can find no answer to the question why Congress workers are in such a rush to get into Government service. It would seem it is just selfishness which has blinded everybody.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 356-7

119. A LETTER

July 19, 1947

The money at the disposal of our institution is public money and any institution maintained with public funds must pay the utmost attention to economy. But one does not see this being done and the institution constantly finds itself short of funds.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 357

120. A LETTER

July 19, 1947

It is time people intending to take vows gave careful thought to the matter before doing so. But there should be no difficulty in giving up something that is repugnant to our way of life.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 357

121. A LETTER

July 19, 1947

Why should you not accept responsibility? Are you afraid of it? Then you have not fully learnt the lesson of ahimsa. I suggest that you accept the responsibility which has come to you and acquit yourself well of it. I am sure you understand that at times it becomes

one's duty to accept a responsiblity. Take care of your health. Chi. Manu is very run down these days. If only she would give me a little help, I would soon restore her to health. She should remain in bed. But when I insist on her doing so, she cries and feels unhappy and makes her condition worse. Though I am like a mother to her I cannot explain to her the meaning of dharma. That is why she is ill. This is an instance of my crying in the wilderness. I am working at high pressure. On top of it there is a meeting of the Working committee today. God know what will happen there. Maybe I shall have to go to Kashmir.

I need not write more to you. You do not like my offering my good wishes to . . .[1] and expressing the hope that Pakistan will really become a holy land. But I do not care overmuch what other people like or do not like. I follow the dictates of my inner voice. But that is by the way.

I am a friend of Pakistan, too. It makes no difference to me if they don't regard me as their friend. Whatever, therefore, I say to them as a true friend is only for their good.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 357

122. A LETTER

July 19, 1947

I have read your letter twice, and I must say that I do not like it much. We should be generous to others. What right have we to make such a comparison? Making such comparisons between individuals demeans us. What is more, I smell envy in it. If we compare ourselves with other through envy, we ourselves shall be ruined. We should be happy to see somebody doing better than we. In the eyes of.. of course, all are equal; you are not inferior to her or she superior to you.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 357-8

[1] Omission as in the source

123. A LETTER

July 19, 1947

I was glad to have…[1]'s frank confession. He who has such frankness will never be unhappy.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 358

124. A LETTER

July 19, 1947

Anybody who wants to strive for great things must have infinite patience.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 358

125. LETTER TO SWAMI KARAPATRI

NEW DELHI,
July 19, 1947

SHRI GOSWAMIJI[2],

Swami Bhaskaranandji has tallked to me about you. If you can kindly come over here next Tuesday or Wednesday, we can talk about the protection of dharma..[3] I shall await your reply.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers, Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] A religious leader
[3] *Vide* ''Letter to Swami Karapatri'', 24-7-1947.

126. LETTER TO SWAMI BHASKARANANDA

NEW DELHI,

July 19, 1947

SWAMI SHRI BHASKARANANDJI,

Your letter. Why do you write in English?

A letter for Goswamiji[1] is enclosed herewith. Kindly forward it to him and oblige.

I have not been able to understand your point in the third paragraph.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers, Courtesy: Pyarelal

127. INTERVIEW TO NAGA LEADERS[2]

July 19, 1947

GANDHIJI: Why not now? Why wait for August 15? I was independent when the whole of India was under the British heel. You can be independent and if you have non-violence in common with me, no one can deprive you of independence.

NAGA LEADERS: Government said that if we become independent military sanctions will be applied against us.

The Government is wrong. I will come to Kohima and ask them to shoot me before they shoot one Naga.

The trouble will not be started by us. It may be started in spite of us.

You have opened a very large subject. Independence, yes. But if you say you will be independent of the whole world, you cannot do it. I am independent in my own home. It I become independent of Delhi, I would be crushed to atoms. I have not stored food. I have to get it from Delhi. I have not stored water here; vegetables I have to get. As I can see, you are all slaves. I am not. From where do you get your

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] In the source, the author explains that these were ''excerpts from the record of Pyarelal Nayyar''. The delegation was headed by Phizo. The leaders told Gandhiji that they would declare themselves independent on August 15, 1947.

cloth?

It is foreign cloth.

Then you are slaves of foreigners. Will you go naked if the foreigners do not give you cloth? What of you food?

We grow enough.

You cannot be in complete isolation.

We do not talk of isolation.

Then no army will deprive you of your freedom. Those days are gone.

We will be friends with all.

Then you are safe so far as India is concerned. India has shed blood for her own freedom. Is she going to deprive others of their freedom? Personally, I believe you all belong to me, to India. But if you say you don't no one can force you.

Is there any word for the Nagas?

If I come there I will teach you the art of spinning and weaving. You grow cotton and yet you import cloth. Learn all the handicrafts. That's the way to peaceful independence. If you use rifles and guns and tanks, it is a foolish thing.

No, we certainly shall not do that.

Peace in Nagaland, Eight Year Story: 1964-72, pp. 83-4 and 224-5

128. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,

July 19, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

There was a meeting of the Working Committee here but there is nothing to report that may be of interest to you. I should like to draw your attention to a disturbing phenomenon and that is that everyone in the Congress wants to climb the ladder by using his connection with the Congress. It is something very dirty. Had Congressmen been only a handful and they had cherished such a desire one could have understood it, but the Congress has many crores of people in it and if they all harbour ambitions of advancement the Congress rule will be killed. Thre are only two kinds of poeple who must have jobs: those who have no other recourse left and those who want to serve without

any thought of self-interest. Since the Congress now holds the reins of administration in its hands, it now commands huge revenues and the spending of the revenues. If Congressmen should entertain the feeling that a portion of all the money that is spent should go to them and if the tax-payers get it into their heads that they no longer need pay taxes, it won't do at all. It will mean that we have forgotten our duty and taken to unrighteous ways.

I am being flooded with telegrams. I cannot say I am the only one to receive telegrams. Those who are in the seats of power, I am sure, must be receiving many more telegrams., Some say cow-slaughter must be stopped, particularly cows whic provide us milk and draught cattle should be saved. Perhaps the friends sending the wires do not know that even when I was in South Africa I was a devotee of the cow. And if we are devoted to the cow we have got to protect her. Unfortunately those who ought to be saviours of the cow have become devourers of the cow. People send me wires expecting me to persuade Jawaharlal and the Sardar to enact laws to protect the cow. But I will not do so. I will ask these devotees of the cow not to waste their money on telegrams. Let them spend that money on the cow. If they cannot themselves do so let them send the money to me. I must say that it is we who are responsible for cow-slaughter. We give the cows so little to eat and make the bullocks carry such heavy loads that they become like skeletons. We use the goad to make the bullocks go faster. What right have such people to demand the cow-slaughter be stopped? After all most cows are owned by the Hindus. Why do they sell them to slaughter-houses? No Hindu will think of buying a cow with a low milk yield. Goshala people might well buy one for they have money received from donations. The others go to slaughter-houses. I have never seen anywhere in the world such enfeebled cattle as in India. In the name of dharma we are practising *adharma*. No law that Jawaharlal Nehru or Sardar can enact wil stop cow-slaughter. There were laws even during the war, for milk was in demand. Even then milch cows were slaughtered and this will be the case there too. This will be the case in Pakistan.

I have been asked some questions. Here is one: ''One understands that the national flag that has been proposed will have a littele Union Jack in a corner. It that is so, we shall tear up such a flag and, if need be, sacrifice our lives.''

ANSWER: But what is wrong with having the Union Jack in a

conrner of our flag? If harm has been done to us by the British it has not been done by their flag and we must also take note of the virtues of the British. They are volunatrily withdrawing from India, leaving power in our hands. A drastic bill which virtually liquidates the Empire did not take even a week to pass in Parliament. Time was when even very unimportant bills took a year and more to be passed. Whether they have been honest in framing the bill only experience will show. We are having Lord Mountbatten as our chief gate-keeper. So long he has been the servant of the British king. Now he is to be our servant. If while we employed him as our servant we also had the Union Jack in a corner of our flag, there would be no betrayal of India in this.

This is my opinion. But I understand that the report is not true. It pains me that the Congress leaders could not show this generosity. We would have thereby shown our friendship for the British. If I had the power that I once had I would have taken the people to task for it. After all, why should we give up our humanity.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 260-3

129. TRUE ISLAM

A Muslim correspondent sends a letter which is given below[1] barring personal references:

> Islam is a universal religion and its great message is to strive and know the Truth… I would request you kindly to avoid bringing in the name of Islam when you refer to the actions of the Muslims, as the two are today different.

Would that this Islam might be exhibited in deeds under Pakistan and the correspondent's taunt dispelled!

NEW DELHI, July 20, 1947

Harijan, 17-8-1947

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

130. MESSAGE FOR CHARKHA JAYANTI

NEW DELHI,
July 20, 1947

One age of khadi has ended. Khadi has probably been instrumental in doing one thing for the poor. What now remains to be shown is how the poor can become self-reliant, how khadi can become an embodiment of non-violence. That is the real task. We have to show dedication to it.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, p. 533

131. NOTE TO MANU GANDHI

July 20, 1947

If you learn what you are doing not mechanically but with intelligent attention, it will in time come to you without effort.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 365

132. A LETTER

July 20, 1947

Haven't we been proved worse even than lifeless matter! What beautiful fragrance sandalwood emits when rubbed! A joss-stick burns up, but leaves behind and aroma of holiness in the air. If only we could learn from such examples.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 365-6

133. A LETTER

July 20, 1947

Every year young men and women get married. But marriage, as has been said, means stepping into a nobler state. But how many make this saying meaningful in their conduct? I hope that you two will do so.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 366

134. A LETTER

July 20, 1947

I am indeed impatient to go to Bihar, but a visit to Kashmir has also been mooted. The matter will be decided by the end of the month. The Kashmir visit will be only for two days. Doctors have suggested that I should not take Manu with me for those two days, for her health will not be able to bear the strain of the journy. But I believe that, even if it be only for two days, the Kashmir climate is bound to benefit her. Besides, even in her sleep she is often heard muttering, beseeching me not to leave her behind…[1] How then can I leave her here and go alone? Another suggestion also has been made, namely, that I should take her to Kashmir and leave her there with Begum Sheikh Abdulla. A month's rest there, together with the climate of Kashmir, will benefit her. I will, therefore, take her only if she agrees to this condition, otherwise, after returning from Kashmir I intend to leave for Calcutta and reach Noakhali on August 15 and I will take her along with me. This is just for your information. In the end I have to do what Manu wants.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 366

[1] Omission as in the source

135. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
July 20, 1947

CHI. KANAIYO,

The enclosed letter is for you to see. Also the copy of my reply, Give me detailed news about your health.

Abha is all right. The doctors say that hers is not a deeprooted malady; Manu's is. At present both of them are taking rest.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

136. LETTER TO JAMNA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
July 20, 1947

CHI. JAMANA,

I have your letter. I hope by now the attack of asthma has subsided. In my opinion one can prevent it by leading a disciplined life. Whenever there is an attack, you should remain clam, repeat Ramanama and have faith that it will cure you. But the condition for this is that you must lead a regular life.

I see no point in sending Abha[1] there at present. She had better go there after she is completely recovered.

It seems I will have to go to Kanaiyo[2]. I shall see where I go after that. I agree that he ought not to lose weight.

I had an acknowledgment from Narandas[3].

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's daughter-in-law
[2] Addressee's son who was working in Bengal
[3] Addressee's husband

137. LETTER TO DIWAN CHAMANLAL

NEW DELHI,
July 20, 1947

BHAI CHAMANLAL,

I have your letter. I had a talk with the Raja Saheb of Sirmur.

For me to take the reins of the Congress in my hands is certainly difficult, even if it is not impossible. Who will listen to me today and why should they? Yes, the disturbances make me unhappy but what can I do?

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi original: Diwan Chamanla Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

138. SPEECH AT PRAYER METTING

NEW DELHI,
July 20, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Some people tell me—as they have a right to tell me—that what I say these days is not calculated to enthuse the people. They remind me that the political freedom for which we had been fighting, we have at last secured and by and by economic freedom will also come. All that may be true. Nevertheless I cannot rejoice on August 15. I do not want to deceive you. But at the same time I shall not ask you not to rejoice. After all I cannot expect everything to be ordered according to my wish. I did not want India to be partitioned but it has been partitioned. What good can come of crying over it? Even if something worse had happened, I would have had to put up with it. India's partition has grieved me more than it could grieve you. I have been a rebel all my life. How can a rebel cry? When I went to Noakhali I found people crying and I wiped their tears. I told them nothing was to be gained by weeping fort the dead. But the people in whose hands we have entrusted the reins of power are big poeple. If they say that we should have celebrations on Independence Day, then you should do so. You should no worry why Gandhi does not join in the

celebration. The Congress does not force anyone to celebrate. That I shall not celebrate does not mean that the British will not be leaving. By August 15, a number of British officers will have already left the country. Those who remain will stay under our authority. They will be appointed not from London but by us.

Unfortunately the kind of freedom we have got today contains also the seeds of future conflict between India and Pakistan. How can we therefore light the lamps? I shall consider freedom to have been secured only on the day Hindus and Muslims have cleansed their hearts. Only lately some Muslim League friends from the Punjab have held out the threat that if the Boundary Commission does not decide in their favour they will get what they want by fighting. The Sikhs also are holding out similar threats. But when we accept the principle of arbitration we must go by the award. We should not talk of fighting. I know only one kind of fighting and that is satyagraha. It purifies the soul. If that kind of fighting went on all the time in the world it would be very good for the world. I shall appeal to my Hindu, Sikh and Muslim brethren that once having accepted the Boundary Commission as the arbitrator they should accepts its award.

Burma too will soon be a free country like India. The Burmese leader General U Aung San, has brought Burma to the gates of freedom. What does it matter that he was not a satyagrahi? He was a brave warrior and it is largely thanks to his efforts that Burma is about to get its freedom. It is a great tragedy that an armed gang of assassins killed him and his four comrades.[1] However far we may be from him, his sudden death is a matter of grief to us. If such things are to continue, then the world has come to a sorry pass. I cannot believe that the assassins were dacoits. I had spent a long time in Burma. I am acquainted with Rangoon, Mandalay and other palces. Buddhism is the religion there as it is in the rest of Burma. Why should there be so much blod-shed in a country where Buddhism is the religion? I am sure behind these murders there is factional politiics. It is sad that this has happened when Burma is about to gain its freedom. I hope India will take a lesson from this tragedy. Let us pray that in this time of sorrow God may grant comfort to the people of Burma who like us have been fighting for their freedom and grant strength to the relatives of the dead to bear the grief. Let us also pray that the hearts of the murderers may change.

[1] Aung San with six colleagues was assassinated on July 19 at the instigation of U Saw, a political rival. *Vide* also “Speech at Prayer Meeting”, 21-7-1947.

The editor of *The Dawn* has in today's issue of the paper accepted two of my suggestions.[1] It makes me very happy. He says that he can assure me that in Pakistan Hindus and Muslims will live as brothers. He further says that there should be a committe of journalists which should examine reports of communal riots and should decide what should be published. He suggests that as I am a journalist myself I could become the chairman of such a committee. I must express to him my inability. I do not have the time. Also I am no longer fitted for this kind of work. Besides I am never at one place for long. How should I then preside over such a body? But if he is serious about it he can meet other editors and do something.

I must finally say once again that only when the minorities both in India and Pakistan say that they are happy can freedom be said to have been really gained and only then will it be time for us to rejoice.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 263-6

139. A LETTER

July 21, 1947

I received you long letter only yesterday. Yours is the first letter I have taken up after the prayer. It is ten minutes past four just now.

You are unnecessarily angry with…[2] Is it her fault that she did not see you? Don't you know that she feels deeply obliged to you? Is she likely to slight you. You have virtues and defects in equal measure. Let you defects remain with you. We will worship your virtues and extract from them whatever fragrance they are capable of giving.

You will rise still higher if you give up defending me and you will also oblige me.

I like what you say regarding your relatives. You should not copy me in the distinction you have seen me make in my behaviour between relatives and others. You should copy my virtues, but not my errors. Anything good I may do should be looked upon as golden. In such instances you should copy me both in speech and deed. You should, therefore, always keep in mind what I said regarding the

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 18-7-1947.

[2] Omission as in the source

brothers. I do not wish to make any change in it. My own sister is on her death bed, but I do not go to her, nor do I go looking for doctors. On the other hand, I did everything possible for Chakrayya. Draw a lesson from this if you can. If, nonetheless, you see any partiality in me, you should reject my partiality and copy only my concern for others. You should know that I also, like all living and lifeless things, have virtues and defects, and should behave accordingly. I think you did a wise thing in writing about this matter. It is because of that that I am able to explain my point of view to you. You may ask me for further explanation when we meet some time, if you and I remember the matter then. I liked your letter so much that, instead of tearing it up, I am giving it to Bisen and Manudi to read.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 370-1

140. LETTER TO AYAZ PEERBHOY

NEW DELHI,
July 21, 1947

BHAI AYAZ PEERBHOY[1],

I have gone through your letter. You are right. I have already said that the struggle we carried on for the last thirty years was non-violent in name only but was not non-violent in spirit. The violence which we harboured in our minds is now coming out. How can the ignorance of those thirty years be dispelled all at once? Those of us who understand this must do the best we can.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Gujarati: *Weekly Observer*, 6-3-1948. Also from a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Editor, *Weekly Observer*

141. A LETTER

BHANGI COLONY, NEW DELHI,

July 21, 1947

I had a letter from. . .[1] She says that I waste my time on Manu. Poor woman, how can she know that in my eyes that time is most valuably spent? For I have undertaken to be a mother to that girl, and by devoting time to achievement of that aim I wish to uncover to the world a great spiritual mystery similar to that which I have demonstrated concerning truth and ahimsa. I am no doubt a father to so many other girls, but why am I a mother to Manu alone? That, however, is a long story. Here I will say only this, that I saw in her the necessary readiness to look upon me as a mother. She is devoted to me as a daughter to her mother, is eager to serve me and is as innocent as a child. I have not seen in any other girl the virtues I have seen in her. God has, therefore, given me a means at the right time whereby I can prove to the world that if men could develop the attitudes of mothers, humanity would be saved. In India and in Pakistan, women are being wickedly dishonoured. If that is to be ended, I think men will have to learn to be not father but mothers. But I shall not dwell further on this subject. I am short of time. I am not at all happy that your health has again taken a turn for the worse. I don't see your articles in *Harijan* these days. I should like you to go on writing something, if necessary, with somebody's help. For my part, I can barely cope with my work. I have Sushila and Rajkumari with me now and hope, therefore, that I shall get their help. Thingking over the matter, I even feel that I should stop the *Harijan.*

Chi. Manudi is improving gradually. But as soon as she feels better, she starts running about and falls ill again. As a result, I have to pay more attention to her when she is well than when she is ill. But I see that even she is being carefull now.

Probably I shall have to go to Kashmir towards the end of this month… also is here. She has returned ill from Noakhali. I will see what I can do for her.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 371-2

[1] Omissions as in the source

142. A LETTER

July 21, 1947

A meeting of the Working Committee is going on these days. I am discussing with them the problem of Kathiawar, too. If there should. be attempts going on to include Junagadh and Manavdar in Pakistan it would be nothing new,[1] though Mountbatten has said nothing so far, Much will depend on what the Kathiawar Pridnces are about. That is why I am trying to get Balwantrai Mehta included in the Working Committee. I have formed an impression about him that he will be a very useful man.

I see Bhai Anantrai from time to time. He also is a very energetic man. But one must know how to make use of the energy.

We shall have to be vigilant about Hyderabad. Then there is Kashmir of course. How many problems shall we be able to cope with?

The heat here has not yer come down, though there are clouds. Let us hope the rain god will be kind now.

This heat has affected my digestion, so I have had to make drastic changes in my diet. I don't feel much physical weakness but towards the evening I feel mentally exhausted….[2] How are your affairs?

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 372

143. NOTE TO P. C. GHOSH

NEW DELHI,

July 21, 1947

You should be relieved from the Working Committee. That is better than abandoning the responsibility and coming here.[3] How should we know? Anything may happen there at any time.[4] This should have occurred to you. If what I say appeals to you, I would like you to see Jawaharlal, Sardar and Kripalani. I am of the firm

[1] Their Rulers acceded to Pakistan in September 1947, but the subjects repudiatd the accession and joined the Indian Union in November that same year.

[2] Omission as in the source

[3] The addressee, Chief Minister of West Bengal, had gone to Delhi to attend the meeting of the Congress Working Committee.

[4] The communal situation in Calcutta and Noakhali had been tense.

opinion that those of you who are in responsible positions should not remain in the Working Committee.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 375

144. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

NEW DELHI,
July 21, 1947

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I have your letter. Whether you call it my despondency or grief the cause of it is the same. How can non-violence overcome the prevailing violence? Passing through the turmoil, I have realized that although our 30 years' struggle could be called non-violent, it was not firmly founded on non-violence and so it ought not to have been so called. If it were not regarded as non-violent, my energy would not have been spent over it. That is why God made me blind and allowed me to be used. How can we create non-violence out of what was mistakenly called non-violence but which was really violence? Isn't it all wrong training? How can one have the right training now, i. e., in true non-violence, after having had 30 years of wrong training? We may name this churning of the heart anguish or anything else you like.

Is your analysis correct? If we are cautious and take the right steps we can undo our earlier lapses. But who will do it and how? There is a barrier everywhere which we must cross.

So being far away don't magnify my anguish.

I am happy. One thing is true; the heat here does not agree with me but I don't feel like going to the hills either. There is nothing to worry about.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtsy: Pyarelal

145. LETTER TO SANKARAN

NEW DELHI,
July 21, 1947

CHI. SANKARAN,

I like your programme of work. If you have there all the facilities and if it benefits all, you may prolong your stay.

Of course some harm has been done by allopathy but the benefits are obvious. Otherwise there could never have been so many hospitals. Allopathy suits well the present atmosphere. If you read the lives of the doctors of former times, you will know about sacrifices they made. It is one's duty to see the good points of the other side. What sacrifices have the naturopaths made? And what pretensions they have! But the beauty is that nature cure flourishes in spite of the pretensions, the reason being that it is the natural thing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

146. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

NEW DELHI,
July 21, 1947

CHI. KRISHNADAS,

I have your letter. Jinnah Saheb has himself said that non-Muslims will have the same place in Pakistan as the Muslims. But it remains to be seen whether or not such a policy is implemented.

The poor Hindus who will migrate owing to oppression will certainly be accommodated in India. But this much is certain that they will have to labour for their bread. I did say that those leaving behind property ought to be paid its value but I could not have said that they would be paid. Show me if I have written anything to this effect. I have spoken on this matter frequently enough in the course of me Noakhali speeches.

I certainly regard myself as a "practical idealist"[1]. Who will define an *atatayin*[2]? Can we accept the definition as given by Manu? But it is no longer accepted today. And after having defined a criminal, who is to execute him? An individual or the State, i. e., the Panchayat? And should it follow or precede the judgment? Today to policy of capital punishment is itself being strongly opposed. What should be regarded as scripture? People raise such questions. It is not easy to answer the second point. An exchange of population cannot be carried out so easily. The whole question deserves to be thought over. Maybe, I shall say something in my speech[3] today. I am thinking of going over to Noakhali soon. The question is how to get away-from here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

147. LETTER TO SWAMI SIVANANDA

NEW DELHI,

July 21, 1947

SHRI SWAMIJI,

I have your letter. There was violence in the name of non-violence and we are now tasting its bitter fruit. What more can I write?

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SWAMI SIVANANDA

RISHIKESH

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The two words are in English.

[2] A criminal; according to *Shukranitisara* any one of the six : incendiary, poisoner, assassin, robber, usurper of land, rapist. Manu, who has not defined the term, however, says that such a one, whether a guru, a minor, a woman or a learned brahmin, may be unhesitatingly put to death.

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 21-7-1947.

148. A LETTER

July 21, 1947

I have never imagined myself as perfect. Had I been a perfect *sthitaprajna,* would I today be seeing the failure of my aims? But failure does not grieve me, for I like to be awakened. I don't wish to die under any delusion.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 372

149. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,

July 21, 1947

A friend from Pakistan writes :[1] "You in India are talking about celebrating August 15. Have you ever considered how we, the Hindus in Pakistan are going to celebrate it? Our hearts are full of forebodings for that day, Will you say some- thing about this? For us the day will be one for confronthing troubles, not at all for celebration. The Muslims here have already begun to frighten us. We do not know what the Muslims in India think. Will they also not be frightened? We are even scared that attempts may be made to convert us on a large scale. You will say that we must ourselves safeguard our faith. This may be possible for an ascetic. It is not so for a householder."

Mr. Jinnah is now going to be the Governor-General of Pakistan. He has said that non-Muslims will be treated exactly as the Muslims. My advice is that we should trust him and hope that non-Muslims in Pakistan will not be ill-treated. And also the Muslims in India will not be ill-treated. My feeling is that now that there are two States, India can ask for guarantees from Pakistan.

I nevertheless feel that August 15 is not day for celebration[2] whilst the minorities contemplate the day with a heavy heart. It will be a day for prayer and introspection. Only, if the two countries are to be true to themselves they should start being friends right now. Either all

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Krishnadas", 21-7-1947.

[2] The rest of the sentence is from *The Hindustan Times.*

should together celebrate August 15 as brothers or it should not be celebrated at all. The day for rejoicing over freedom will be when we feel sincere friendship for each other. But this is my own individual opinion and nobody seems to share it.

The same friend from Pakistan then asks me: 'If all the Hindus of Pakistan or a very large number of them come away from Pakistan, will India give them shelter ?'

I think that such people should certainly be given shelter. However, if the well-to-do among them want to live in their old style, that will be difficult. In any case, they should certainly be given a place to live and they should be paid for their work. But I shall continue to hope that no non-Muslim will be forced to flee Pakistan out of fear and no Indian Muslim will flee his motherland.

The correspondent further asks: "What will happen to houses and landed property left behing in Pakistan ?"

I have already said that the Government of Pakistan should pay the market price of the land and houses. The practice in such matters is that the other Government also has a say. In this case it will be the Government of India. But why should I assume that the matter will go so far? It will be the duty of the Government of Pakistan to pay the price of such land and houses to the owners.

The correspondent reminds me that I consider myself a practical idealist. But what is going on in the country is in- human. Can non-violence be practised towards the criminal, and if so, how? My endeavour always has been so to practise my ideal that it should produce results even though I May not always succeed. Whom shall I call criminal? All those described as criminal by Manu cannot be put to death today. Today attempts are being made to abolish capital Punishment and reformers even go so far as to advocate abolition of all corporal punishment. They say that evil-doers should be considered as sick and hospitals should be set up for them as for those suffering from other diseases. What I mean to say is that everything that goes by the name of scripture should not be accepted as scriputure. Only that should be accepted as scripture which takes into consideration the various changes that are continually taking place. Attitudes keep changing from age to age. There are few laws which remain unchanged for ever. And then it is not everyone's province to punish criminals. This right belongs to the elected body or the government. The government makes laws and then courts are set up to

dispense justic according to those laws. If that were not so there would be the risk of all of us becoming criminals. The murders that were committed in Burma were brutal. Now we understand that they were political murders.[1] I am sure that the murderers regarded their victims as criminals. Our terrorists did not accept my advice. They sincerely told me that those whom them murdered were criminals. They never regarded themselves as criminals. That is why I say that he who takes the law into his own hands commits an offence. He commits violence against the people. Only an elected Assembly can dispense with the obligation to be non-violent. What is happening in the world today is brutality.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 266-8

150. A TERRIBLE CONTRAST[2]

Prof. Kumarappa is at present in London. From his letter received from there I quote the following extracts :

> The air travel, as I explained to you, is extremely dull as the sense of motion that we get on surface travel is practically absent. From our height you can see nothing but the bare red earth with some streaks indicating rivers. Trees, etc., are not visible except as chumps of grass here and there. . . .
>
> Last evening I strolled all over Marble Arch, Hyde Park, Kensington, Westminster, Whitehall, James' Park, Piccadilly, Bond Street, etc., clad in my *dhotijamma*. London is hot even for that. Our old-time London of plenty and pleasure seems to have undergone a radical change. There seems to be very effective rationing in which a great deal of credit should be given to the willing co-operation of the public in restraining themselves in the interests of all. This is in striking contrast to our lack of a public conscience. I used to think the efficiency of rationing here was a credit to the efficiency of the Government machinery here. But I think now that it is largely due to public self-control that even black markets are not able to hold their own. Our culture though based on self-discipline and self-control has to extend its influence to public behavior. This should be the foundation of our swaraj.

Assuming the correctness of the information the writer gives, the

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 20-7-1947.
[2] This appeared under "Notes".

contrast between the willing co-operation in London and the black marketing with all its implication here is terrible.

NEW DELHI, July 22, 1947

Harijan, 3-8-1947

151. REALIZATION OF DIFFICULTY

An English sister reading my recent speeches giving a glimpse of my grief over the happenings in India writes :

> Does not this deep agony, this descent into hell, this feeling of something near despair, mean that you ought to extend your life-span even further than 125 years? How very much easier it would be to die!. . . Day and night one feels the narrow of hell. . . .

I know that she is not joking when she expects me to extend my life-span even further than 125 years. She is a brave woman of great faith. With me there is no question of extending my life-span even to one day longer than the allotted time. I am fatalist enough to believe that not a blade of grass moves but by His will. What I have done and still would wish to do is to aspire after a life of 125 years, provided that it is a life of uttermost service of humanity. But such a wish becomes quite empty if it is not accompanied by the requisite correctness of conduct. Answering the description of a steadfast man of the *Gita*, such are the lines according to Sir Edwin Arnold's rendering :[1]

I confess that in spite of my trying to reach the state, I am far away from the condition of equipoise. I realize how difficult it is in the face of the storm raging round us.

She says in the same letter :

> The only comfort is that mankind, some of it, has discovered its innate impotence apart from God.

The motto in her letter-head is:

> In hearts too young for enmity
>
> There lies the way to make men free. . . .

How true and yet how difficult!

NEW DELHI, July 22, 1947

Harijan, 10-8-1947

[1] The quotation from Edwin Arnold's *Song Celestial* is not reproduced here.

152. LETTER TO E. NAGESHWAR RAO

NEW DELHI,
July 22, 1947

DEAR NAGESHWAR RAO,

Your letter with the instructive enclosure. I have not the time to enter upon a detailed answer. So far as I am concerned your charge cannot be established. What will ultimately happen I do not know.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI E. NAGESHWAR RAO
RAO'S HOUSE
BILASPUR C. P.

From a photostat: G. N. 118

153. LETTER TO KULSUM SAYANI

NEW DELHI,
July 22, 1947

Heaven knows what is in store for us. The old order changeth giving place to new.

Nothing is settled. Whatever is decided by the C. A., Hindustani with the two scripts remains for you and me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat: Kulsum Sayani Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also G. N. 8042

154. LETTER TO MAHARAJ KUMAR OF VIJAYANAGARAM

NEW DELHI,
July 22,1947

DEAR VIJAYA,

I am glad you have given up your knighthood.

Hope you have also given up your cold.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

155. LETTER TO BARBARA HARTLAND

BHANGI COLONY,
NEW DELHI.
July 22, 1947

MY DEAR BARBARA.

I have your letter[1] which is so sweet. I know you are doing excellent work there and I know too that you will do so wherever you are. But you know that when you feel the call from India, work awaits you always.

Hope you are keeping perfectly fit there.

Love.

BAPU

MISS BARBARA HARTLAND
WARREN'S ACRE
NUTIEY (NEAR UCKFIELD)
SUSSEX

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

156. LETTER TO SUJATA DEVI

BHANGI COLONY,
NEW DELHI,
July 22, 1947

MY DEAR SUJATA,

I have your letter of 7th instant. I hope you are quite well.

It is not my letter which will fetch you a single rupee, but your work, if it is substantial, will fetch you all you want. You can show this letter to whomsoever you like. But be sure that you convince your host of the solid character of the work you are doing.

Love.

Yours,
BAPU

SHRIMATI SUJATA DEVI
5 NAFAR KUNDU ROAD
KALIGHAT
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] In which the addressee had written. "If you have any speical work for me to do please let me know and I shall throw all my energy into it."

157. LETTER TO NRIPENDRA NATH BOSE

BHANGI COLONY,
NEW DELHI,
July 22, 1947

MY DEAR NRIPEN,

With reference to your letter[1] of 13th instant. I have been in constant correspondence with Premier Bardoloi. He telegraphed to me as to where to send paddy and I referred him to you. He must have corresponded with you. If not, please do so immediately. I hope there will be no hitch. I had another letter bearing your signature regarding maltreatment of Harijans. You will please keep me informed as to what happens. I referred to the incident vaguely in one of my evening speeches, which you may have noticed. I hope there is no exaggeration in the statement circulated by the Relief Committee.

Yours,
BAPU

DR. NRIPENDRA NATH BOSE
TIPPERA DISTT. RELIEF RESCUE &
REHABILITATION COMMITTEE
COMILLA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

158. A LETTER

July 22, 1947

I do not see that I am of much use here. It may be asked why then I continue to stay on here. What reply can I give? Very often one has to bow to the demands of love. How many things Lord Krishna was forced to do through the bonds of love? Similarly, I have to do many things out of the love that binds me to Jawahar and Sardar. They have tied me up with the chains of thier love. I see no harm in such slavery and have, therefore, let myself be bound. If we

[1] In which the addressee had sought Gandhiji's help in the procurement of paddy from Assam for starting the scheme of paddy-husking for relief work in Noakhali and Tippera.

stop thinknig of the faults of others, we shall profit in many ways and be saved from much harm.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 379

159. A LETTER

July 22, 1947

After careful thinking, I feel that an Ashram should meet its own expenses. Only such Ashrams will be able to maintain themselves. Isn't there a saying that you can't go to heaven without yourself dying? Today only this much.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 379

160 .LETTER TO RAM MANOHAR LOHIA

NEW DELHI,

July 22, 1947

CHI. RAM MANOHAR,

This morning at 4.45 I read your statement about the Adivasis and others. It is good but it may not prove effective.

I find none who can undertake this work. The Nagas met me.[1] I understand what is happening.

We had only one force and we have lost it. That was moral force or spiritual force if you choose to call it that. The opposite of it is brute force or military strength. That we do not seem to have at present. It will ruin India. Now you will understand why I talked about. . . .[2], etc. As the saying goes, a word to the wise.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Naga Leaders", 19-7-1947.

[2] The source is not clear here. *Mahatma Gandhi*—The Last Phase Vol. II, p. 328. however, has: "You will now understand why I have laid so much emphasis on banning tea, cigarettes and such other articles of addiction."

161. LETTER TO LAKSHMINARAYAN AGRAWAL

NEW DELHI,
July 22, 1947

BHAI LAKSHMIBABU[1],

This friend has come from Bihar. What do you say about what he has to relate? I do not want to form an opinion on the basis of a one-sided account. Can anything be done in this matter?

How is the work there going on?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi: C. W. 10426. Courtesy: Bharat Kala Bhavan

162. A LETTER[2]

July 22, 1947

The country is today passing through a critical time. If we do not unite and work together, I think neither the Congress nor the Socialists will succeed. Don't they both have the same goal? This is a time to think only of our duty as men. Consult among yourselves and let me know what you desire. I see no wisdom in people banding themselves into separate groups.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 379

163. TALK TO REFUGEE STUDENTS

NEW DELHI,
July 22, 1947

If you ask me, my advice can appeal to you only if you have no love for degrees. Only then can I give you time. If you want degrees you can work for them without giving thought to anything else. You

[1] A khadi worker; Secretary, Gandhi Smarak Nidhi, Bihar
[2] According to the source, this was addressed to a Socialist leader.

will think it natural in me, an old man from your point of view, to advise students not to run after degrees. However it is not so. I say what I do with the fullest sense of responsibility. All that you learn is not real learning. It is no more than stuffing you merely with a knowledge of the letters. Ture education is that which proves useful in life and makes you industrious.

Students have played a big role in helping the country win its freedom. If students forget communalism and learn humanism they can easily bring about the unity which neither the laws nor the Viceroy, nor Jawaharlal Nehru and other leaders can bring about. Let them persuade their school fellows, their parents, their sisters and purify the atmosphere in their schools, their homes and their neighbourhood. Student life is the foundation of life. It is a preparation for adult life. The building can be strong only if the foundation is strong. Therefore, instead of wasting time in memorizing false history, devote yourself to true knowledge. Certainly history will give you a sort of knowledge but you should acquire the knowledge which will provide you with food for life. Teach sanitation in your camp, learn to look after the sick, take lessons in nursing, organize bhajans and games for recreation in the evening so that those who are unhappy may forget their sorrow for a while and be comforted, the children get some knowledge of the letters and physical exercise and learn to keep their bodies and minds clean. The rainy season is approaching. Make arrangements through collective labour to protect yourselves from the rains. You can do so many such things. If you do that you will certainly learn so many things which you will never learn in your colleges. Knowledge gained through experience is far superior and many times more useful than bookish knowledge. I have no doubt about that.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 379-80

164. TALK WITH VISITORS

NEW DELHI,

July 22, 1947

I do not consider myself a mahatma[1] I am, like you, an ordinary human being and want to serve the people as long as God gives me the strength to do so. Moreover, anyone who is not distressed or ashamed by the carnage that is going on in the country must either be God or a hard-hearted man. I am neither. I feel unhappy that every day innocent men, women and children are being murdered. The reason for all this is that what I had believed to be non-violence was not pure non-violence. I have now realized it but it is too late. Even so I am certain that if we want to bring about peace in the world there is no other way except that of non-violence.

Q. Now perhaps you will honour the British since they have willingly agreed to your terms.

G. Personally I never had any complaint against the British. I have no likes or dislikes for persons, for I consider every individual a friend and I have benefited from this. Let me make one thing clear. The British are not doing us a favour in leaving the country. They are going because circumstances have rendered their going inevitable. They ruined India during their 150 years of rule. They could have atoned for it if they had gone leaving the country whole. I must say that they have taken advantage of our weakness of will to create dissensions among us, whether knowingly or unknowingly. The fault no doubt is ours. We were so stupid as to go to them for justice. We should have told them, "Hand over the country to us. We shall settle our own affairs." It was our mis-fortune that a third party had to meddle in our domestic affairs. For this state of affairs we have to thank the power that kept us in slavery for so long. All the same the English are my friends. Many Englishwomen are staying with me as my daughters. They have so many things to teach us. I am sure if they can remain on terms of friendship with India, both the countries will benefit. England and America have gained nothing from their advance in technology and by manufacturing atom bombs. But I have

[1] The visitors, foreign nationals, had asked why Gandhiji, who was a mahatma, let himself be distressed by the communal carnage.

no doubt that if our so-called backward country pursues the path of non-violence it will have a place of glory in the world. I may not live to see that. My co-worker Jawahar, who is like a son to me, is working hard to make my dream come true. He will show light to the whole world. Jawahar and his colleagues appear old. The struggles of satyagraha and frequent incarcerations have reduced their expectation of life by twenty to twenty-five years. But I believe that not a blade of grass moves except by His will and I am, therefore, confident that though they are old their contribution in bringing stability to a tottering world will be very significant.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 381-3

165. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 22, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I have received a letter today. It says: 'You have given Lord Miuntbatten too much of a build-up. You seem to imply that Lord Mountbatten can do no wrong. But if you will remember at the Second Round Table Conference[1] you had said that when freedom was achieved the Viceroy's house would be turned into a home for Harijan children or a hospital. Your present attitude is not in conformity with this.'

I do not give anyone any kind of build-up. I want nothing from Lord Mountbatten. And be wants nothing from me. I do not want even titles and he has nothing else to give. It is said that I am always rebuking my own people and never can find anything good to say of them. So far as Lord Mountbatten is concerned he must for the moment continue to live in the Viceroy's house. If I could drag him out of it I would keep him with me. But he has to meet the Princes there and rectify the mistakes of the past. He has to undo the harm those mistakes have done. And he has been made Governor-General precisely because he can work with speed. Giving him this office does

[1] In 1931.

not imply any flattery of him. And do you think Jawaharlal and Sardar Patel are the kind of people to flatter anyone? But if the Viceroy has deceit in his heart only he will be the loser. My sixty years' experience tells me that he who seeks to deceive other deceives only himself. But I do not really know whether Lork Mountbatten will remain permanently in the Viceroy's house or whether it will be made into a hospital. Only Jawaharlal and Sardar will know about it.

Another correspondent wants to know if the proposal to retain British officers in the army and the partition of the army has my approval. The correspondent should rather ask me if I approve of the retention of the army itself. Keeping an army, whatever its nature or size, can have no support from me. But times have changed. I had fondly assumed that we were all or almost all non-violent. But my eyes have now been opened. What I had taken to be non-violence, I now see, was only passive resistance. Passive resistance is resorted to by a person who does not have arms. We were simply obliged to be non-violent while we had violence in our hearts. And now with the British withdrawing from India we are spending that violence in fighting against each other. I am certain that I never had any violence in my heart. But what am I to do about others? They argue that the fact they were non-violent in the fight against the British does not necessarily mean that they should be non-violent now. The fault is mine. My teaching during the last thirty-two years was imperfect. If I am asked I will still say that I am not for maintaining an army. Is India going to be a military State? From Bengal, the Punjab and Bihar there are demands for the army to be sent. If at one place it is Hindus who want the army to protect them, at another it is Muslims. I therefore have no knowledge about how the army is going to be divided and I do not care to waste my time over things which do not interest me.

Four sisters came to congratulate me today because the tricolour with the weel has been adopted as the national flag of India. I see nothing in it for congratulations. I am told that instead of the charkha there is only a wheel on the flag. But it is all the same to me whether they keep or do not keep the charkha. Even if they cast it away I will still have it in my hand and in my heart.

A friend tells me that the charkha is still there on the flag. Another friend tells me that it is not there, that it has been discarded

even while I am still alive. I do not know. What I do know is that even if the charkha wass shown on the flag but was not in people's hearts, both the flag and the charkha would be fit only to be burnt. But if the charkha had a place in the hearts of the people, then it would not matter whether it was placed on the flag or not. I only want that the country should have only one flag and everyone shold salute it. It made me very happy to hear that in the Constituent Assembly both Chowdhary Khaliq-uz-Zaman and Mohammed Sadullah, saluted the flag and declared that they would be loyal to the Nationla Flag. If they mean it, it is a good sign.

But a telegram received from Sylhet is very disturbing. The referendum there is over but harassment of the people continues. Why have the Muslims there gone crazy? Nationalist Muslims are being killed and the telegram says that someone should be sent there as an observer. Whom can I send? It is only for Kripalani or Jawaharlal to find someone. I feel I ought to go to Noakhali now. Sylhet is close to Noakhali. But how can I go? I am imprisoned here. I am convinced that there is not a word of untruth in the telegram. The sender has signed his name too. It is reported that after the referendum Muslims burnt down a Harijan colony. It is a matter of shame. On one side we have Khaliq Saheb and Sadullah Saheb saluting the National Flag, on the other side in Pakistan such grisly things go on.

From Karachi comes a letter. It is from a rich man who says that the Pakistan Government has taken over his house. He is in a quandary, for he has nowhere to live. I must say to Mr. Jinnah and the other leaders there that I am shocked. At such a juncture instead of rejoicing we must pray that we may be rescued from this morass and have an opportunity to taste the fruits of freedom, the freedom of which we have so long been dreaming. This is indeed a time for prayer.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 269–72

166. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
4.15 a. m., July 23, 1947

CHI. SITA[1],

I have your postcard. Why do you lose hope so soon? No one has hurt your self-respect. Such things do happen when one is a student; there is nothing unusual about it. You must calm down and concentrate on your studies and build up a strong body. Observe all the rules carefully. Keep writing to me. Sumi[2] will be well. Her Bengali handwriting seems good. Have you tried to write something in Urdu below hers? Blessings to Vinodini[3]. Write to Manilal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

167. LETTER TO PUSHPA K. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
July 23, 1947

CHI. PUSHPA,

I am writing this at 4.25 in the morning. There should be no complaint against you. You ought not to leave the Khadi Vidyalaya without permission. Those who cannot maintain discipline prove useless in the end. So wake up. Write to me what happened. How are you? How is your work going on? How is your health?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Daughter of Manilal Gandhi
[2] Sumitra, Ramdas Gandhi's daughter
[3] Jaisukhlal Gandhi's daughter

168. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

4.50 a. m., July 23, 1947

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have forgotten about the difference between Gonds and Harijans and also about Kodabet. When replying to letters I do not have the original letters in front of me. Even when they are there I forget to look into them.

We have no time to think more. Do what all of you can do together. We are far away from the ideal of ahimsa. We should lead a thoughtful life. I do feel deeply concerned about the Mangs, but what can I do from this distance and in the midst of my other preoccupations? I therefore write nothing more on the subject.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

About Prahlad, do what is proper.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8406. Also C. W. 7221. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

169. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL CHOKSHI

July 23, 1947

CHI. NAJUKLAL,

I was pleased to see your letter. I take no interest in Sevadal and such other activities. My sphere of work is well defined. All days are the same to me. Your writing has no effect on me, but at the same time I see no reason for celebration either. You may do what seems best to you. I am glad that Moti[1] and the children are doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

NAJUKLAL CHOKSHI
GHADIYARI POLE
BARODA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 12156

[1] Addressee's wife

170. A LETTER

July 23, 1947

Learning a language is certainly very useful. It also helps in one's mental growth. But the present practice of teaching the pupils compulsorily through English must be stopped now. The mother tongue should be given proper importance and its development encouraged. It is our country's misfortune that this plain truth has become the subject of a heated controversy.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 391

171. A LETTER

July 23, 1947

You suggest that the Government should promote education by spending crores of rupees and setting up universities. I cannot swallow the suggestion. There is no dearth in our country of people who have an interest in education. There are thousands and hundreds of thousands of them. They should form an organization and take up this work. A cultivator who wishes to grow corn ploughs and sows the field at the right time. If educationists, similarly, utilize this opportunity and work along the right lines in this field, their institutions will overflow with money. The university will be able to maintain itself through the labour of the students who join it. And if it becomes a people's institution, the public also will help of their own accord. True, it will also need some Government help, which it will certainly get. If, however, the university is run along the lines I have indicated, it will become self-supporting.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 391

172. LETTER TO PATIL

NEW DELHI,
July 23, 1947

BHAI PATIL,

I have your letter. Retaliation[1] means revenge and revenge means blood for blood. We cannot therefore say that there is exaggeration in the cuttings that I have received. I feel we help nobody by now talking about revenge. What I said in this connection in my speech on Monday[2] should be pondered. This is a very critical time and we have to weigh every word we utter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

173. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

July 23, 1947

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter. What you say about Pushpabehn is correct. I have written to her.[3] Read the letter.

The incident about the Gonds is painful. We are very far from ahimsa. We should go on striving.

Hoshiari should not fall ill.

I have no time to write more. Go on doing whatever you can there.

There will certainly be mistakes. Our task is to rectify them and go forward.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have forgotten the difference between Gonds and Harijans. I could not distinguish between a whip and a cane.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1985

[1] This word is in English.
[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 21-7-1947.
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Pushpa K. Desai", 23-7-1947.

174. LETTER TO SHANTA

NEW DELHI,
July 23, 1947

CHI. SHANTA,

I have your letter. What is the use of experiments in non-violence in Sevagram? Villagers punishing the Gonds should not be tolerated. I understand what Kishorelalbhai writes. My mind is working in a different way. Where is non-violence? Physical punishment is not the only violence. Much greater violence can be done through thought. In my opinion the Gonds' case must make us think. What was the duty of us all in that episode? But I shall not go further, nor can I. Only this much for today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8413; also C.W. 5625

175. LETTER TO DEV PRAKASH NAYYAR

NEW DELHI,
July 23, 1947

CHI. DEV[1],

Herewith Chand's letter. If Chand sticks to her word, what is there to worry about? I want to see your position as that of a *sthitaprajna.* This is how I understand Nai Talim. The work otherwise would be too difficult. Therefore you have to remain cheerful under all circumstances and, if you can sincerely do so, calmly write me a letter which I may pass on to Chand. I have written to Chand that I an sending on hers to you.

I do believe that I shall reach Patna by the end of this month,

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Brother of Pyarelal; he joined Gandhiji after N.K. Bose.

176. LETTER TO VITHALDAS

NEW DELHI,
July 23, 1947

BHAI VITHALDAS,

Received your letter and the monthly *Arogya.* I do not know if you can render any service through the monthly. I have found the naturopaths to be full of hypocrisy and arrogance. If you monthly contains nothing but the truth you might possibly be able to render some service.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

177. TALK TO MAHARANI OF NABHA

NEW DELHI,
July 23, 1947

You have willingly divested yourself of these things.[1] Similarly the State treasury does not belong to you. It belongs to the people. You have been appointed by them a trustee. I wish you would keep an account of every pie as a trustee does of the public trust. Keep your personal needs within bounds. You will render a great service to middle class women and make an impression on the State if like other women you manage your household yourself and do all the domestic chores of the palace. How can you have any idea of the plight of middle class women? I know their plight because I take an interest in their lives. They hesitate to do any work from a false sense of shame. If they have not enough to eat in the house they will put up with it. Let alone doing any work themselves, in order to keep up the prestige of the house they think it necessary to have a servant to clean the house, fetch water and do the grinding. This is sin. For this, the rich are to blame. Their women live in affluence and not only do no work themselves but pass remarks on those who do. In Europe even men lend a hand in domestic chores. As a result women have too much free time, they become lazy and lose self-confidence. That is why I say the times have changed. Ladies of ruling families and rich classes should not miss this opportunity they have got of doing service. If

[1] The Maharani had presented to Gandhiji her gold bangles.

they take to doing household work they will create an atmosphere in which doing such work will no longer be regarded dishonourable but on the contrary will be respected. As a result the financial condition of the downtrodden middle class will improve and with it the education of their children, their health and their living condition also will improve. We can then feel proud of our country.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 389-90

178. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 23, 1947

Before the prayers started someone passed a note to Gandhiji. In it the writer had asked him whether he had seen God face to face. Answering the question after prayers, Gandhiji said that he had not seen God face to face. If he had, he would have no need to be speaking to them. His thought would be potent enough to render speech and action on his part unnecessary. But he had an undying faith in the existence of God. Millions all over the world shared that faith with him. The most learned could not shake the faith of illiterate millions. The *bhajan* sung during the prayers described the way to see God face to face. The poet asked the aspirant to shed anger and desire and to be indifferent to praise or blame if he expected to reach the blessed state. Gandhiji compared *nirvana* to *Ramarajya* or the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. The dream of *Ramarajya* was far from realization. How could it happen when they had all along been nursing violence in their hearts under the garb of non-violence?[1]

Today I wish to say something about salt. People say there was a time when I had marched to Dandi for salt but today there is no salt to be had or, if there is, an exorbitant price has to be paid for it. I can only bow down my head in shame. People say that although salt tax has been abolished it has not affected the price. Salt is not rationed but there is black-marketing in it. Traders are so mean that they derive huge profits even from salt. But we have become lazy.

There are many places in the countryside where people can make salt for themselves at no cost. This concession had been got even at the time of my agreement[2] with Lord Irwin. If we were not lazy we would be getting salt not only cheap but also clean. The salt available

[1] This paragraph is from The Hindustan Times, 24-7-1947
[2] *Vide* "Provisional Settlement", 12-3-1913.

in the market is very dirty. The reason is that people do not take pains. The salt that was given to me in jail I used to clean myself. We have become so selfish today that we cannot even let people have salt at a low price. How can we call a regime *Ramarajya* where even salt is denied to the people? Salt is needed not only for human beings but also for animals. What I fear is that now as a consequence of partition both the countries will need to increase their revenues and they may impose tax on salt. But will they be so lacking in sense as to deprive people even of salt? If that happens, too great a price will have been paid for freedom.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 273-4

179. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

July 24, 1947

CHI. JAWAHARLAL[1],

I did not say anything yesterday about the Maulana Saheb. But my objection stands. His retiring from the cabinet should not affect our connection with him. There are many positions which he can occupy in public life without any harm to any cause. Sardar is decidedly against his membership in the cabinet and so is Rajkumari. Your cabinet must be strong and effective at the present juncture. It should not be difficult to name another Muslim for the cabinet.

I have destroyed the two copies you sent me yesterday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The superscription and the subscription are in Hindi.

180. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

VALMIKI MANDIR, NEW DELHI,
July 24, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

The more I think of it the more I am convinced that I should leave here as soon as the Kashmir affair is settled. I do not like much of what is going on. I do not say that for that reason it should be changed; but only that I should not be said to be associated with it. Moreover, I must reach Bihar and thence Noakhali before the 15th. That too is urgent work. I would request you not to detain me any more. There are still four or five days in any case.

I even feel that *Harijan* should now be stopped. I do not like leading the country in an opposite direction. Please think over all this when you have time.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
1 AURANGZEB ROAD
NEW DELHI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: *Sardar Vallabhbhaine*, pp. 356-7

181. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS DAS

NEW DELHI,
July 24, 1947

CHI. KRISHNADAS DAS,

The existing flags will certainly do. The present flag is not prohibited. The new one will fly over the Government offices. This is a new version. But it does not eliminate the old one.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

182. A LETTER

July 24, 1947

Jawahar desires that I should go to Kashmir. He seems even to have decided that I should start on the 30th. Chi. Mridula has even fixed up the programme for the visit. But …[1] does not seem to like the idea. I personally am not at all keen on the visit. But I do wish to go to Lahore. From there I will proceed directly to Bihar. If I get a few days there, I shall be able to do a good deal. Thus the whole thing is uncertain, and in these circumstances your coming here does not seem advisable. Go on doing what you can there. As for other things, I suppose you read my daily prayer speeches. In them I pour out my heart.

My mind is in Bihar and Noakhali now. Considering the pressure of work, my health is fairly good. Chi. Manu's is no good at all. She is a little better today. She will write the rest and complete this letter.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 399-400

183. A LETTER

July 24, 1947

Realizing Truth means realizing that all human beings are one, that all religions are one, just as our limbs are members of the same body.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 400

[1] Omission as in the source

184. LETTER TO MANILAL B. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
July 24, 1947

CHI. MANILAL,

I got your and Chi. Balkrishna's letter. Do what you can. Since Dr. Dinshaw does not approve of both of you becoming trustees it is best that you should not be one. Your work of course must not be affected. One place on the Board of Trustees must be kept vacant. Whatever the reason for Chi. Balkrishna's staying on there, I think he should remain. The fact that his health has improved is also, in my view, a good omen.

I note what you say about yourself. You vow[1] becomes you. God will help you to fulfil it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2726. Courtesy: Manilal B. Desai

185. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

NEW DELHI,
July 24, 1947

CHI. LILA,

I have your letter. Why need you feel unhappy because those dear to you fall ill? Anybody falling ill is a test for you. There is no reason for you to get panicky. It will be well if Dwarkadas[2] survives, and also well if he passes away. God will look after his children. You must complete your study. You should also know that there are a great many other people as unhappy as you. But rare indeed are those who find happiness in suffering. You are one of them, and may you remain so.

I have been tearing up your letters because you yourself wished so. But even if they had been preserved, what need would there be to read them again? I have never blamed you and will never do so. What

[1] To serve at Uruli-Kanchan all through life
[2] Addressee's brother

does it matter whether I have done anybody good or harm? Everybody will reap as he sows. Calm yourself. My blessings to Dwarkadas.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9611. Also C.W. 6583. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

186. A LETTER[1]

July 24, 1947

Inciting the workers in this manner and making inflammatory speeches against the capitalists is not going to help. That will only lead to conflict and the economic problem will remain unsolved. Both the sides should adopt the method of reasoning and persuasion. Don't you see that, at a time when the communal virus is spreading, by exploiting the situation and pouring abuse on the Congress you are not furthering your own cause? I hope the reports in the papers are false. Please let me know. Do remember that both the Congress and your party pursue the same goal, which is eradication of poverty in the country and peace and prosperity for all. But the methods are different. We are passing through such difficult times that if the country's leaders and the people become divided into opposite camps, I don't know what will be the fate of the country. Please think whether the words of experienced old man, who has trained you all like his sons, have any substance in them. If you think that they have, then I don't at all wish to press you to join the Congress against your will but I do wish to suggest that you engage yourself in constructive activities like communal unity, etc. If you find no substance in what I have said, then tear up this letter. I wish nothing but what I believe is for the country's good and your own.

I hope Chi. . . .[2] and you both keep good health and are regular in your meals. I also hope that you no longer need medicines.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 400

[1] According to the source this was addressed to a Socialist leader.

[2] Omission as in the source

187. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

NEW DELHI,
July 24, 1947

CHI. BHANSALI,

I have your letter. As the saying goes, 'extremes should always be avoided'. Swaraj—as I have conceived it—is far away. Perhaps it may not materialize in my lifetime. It will not draw any nearer by your keeping standing.[1] If you can, go deeply into the matter. You will then make headway. But if you cannot, then it is your duty to do as I say.

Teach whoever is willing to learn. Do whatever body-labour you easily can. By vigilance at the Ashram, I do not mean the watch and ward business of a sentry but the voluntary observance of dharma and the restraining influence it will exercise. Let us not be another's judge.

Let Pushpa stay at the Khadi Karyalaya. She should come to the Ashram only after becoming proficient in khadi work. She should have the utmost capacity to abide by rules.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

188. LETTER TO SWAMI KARAPATRI

NEW DELHI,
July 24, 1947

GOSWAMIJI,

I have your letter. Thanks.

I think I know the five demands of the Dharma Sangh. I must say that I do not agree with the current interpretation of Sanatana Dharma.

I have called cow-protection *goseva*, i. e., service of the cow. Legislation hardly serves the cow, much less protects it.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to J. P. Bhansali", 14-7-1947.
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Pushpa K. Desai", 23-7-1947.

All my life has been and is being spent in protecting dharma. Dharmashastra undergoes modifications with the passage of time. Therefore I hold that as far as I know your activity harms dharma.

Untouchability has absolutely no place in Sanatana Dharma. If the former persists I see the ruin of dharma.

I have said all this in brief.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

GOSWAMI KARAPATRI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

189. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

July 24, 1947

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I am sorry to read about the bullock. I think the bullock is like a son to the farmer. Animal husbandry is a difficult science. Agriculture can be fruitful only through co-operation. The larger part of it should involve manual labour. I have advised them in Noakhali to clear the fields by manual labour. Bullocks are scarce there. A large number of them were slaughtered. My advice will be that no new bullocks should be bought. How long can they go on buying bullocks? This whole question needs consideration.

Your dream was beautiful. If we comfort ourselves thus the whole problem will be solved.

Ponder over the song: ‘‘O good man, give up the pride in thy heart.’’

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1986

190. A LETTER

July 24, 1947

God is our only support. Seek His help, what help can I give? I am but an ordinary weak man…[1] It seems to me that I may have to stop *Harijan.* I have today written[2] to . . . also and said that I don't wish to deceive myself. I say and write only what the inner voice dictates. It is possible that from the point of view of other people what I am doing may be wrong, but I can follow no other path as long as I myself am not convinced of the error. You may discuss this matter at length with … I am not made to act in any other way.

[From Hindi]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 400

191. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 24, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

As I have said/repeatedly, when one is at prayer or engaged in similar sacred activity one does not smoke. Christians drink and smoke a good deal but I have never yet seen a Christian drinking or smoking when in a church. The same rule applies to mosques and gurudwaras. This place of course can be called a temple, a church or a mosque, since our prayer consists of texts taken from every religion. It would be good if you gave up smoking. Though I know that you are not going to do so on my asking you, still those who want to smoke can go out of the congregation and do so.

Then some people get up and walk away while the prayer is still going on. It may be they do not find it interesting. But interesting or not, our purpose after all is to utter the name of God. The rule is that till the prayer is ended—and it is I who end it—no one should leave.

The Charkha Sangh has a stock of old tri-colour flags valued at Rs. 2 lakhs. The Charkha Sangh is an organization of very poor

[1] Omissions as in the source

[2] The reference, presumably, is to ''Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel''; *vide* 24-7-1947.

people. I am its President. The people working in that organization are paid very little. They want to know what they are to do with the flags. There is not much difference between the new and the old flag except that the old one was a little more elegant. The old flag had the charkha. The new one has the wheel but not the spindle and the *mal.* The new flag does not render the old flag redundant. Even after the king is dead, the kingdom remains and old coins are not discarded for the new ones. When the new coins are issued old coins do not suffer any depreciation of value. Therefore, so long as there is even one old flag in stock at the Gandhi Ashram the two flags will have the same value. People who have old flags should not tear them up and if they want to buy more flags they should buy the same flags from the Gandhi Ashram so that Rs. 2 lakhs worth of goods are not wasted. Of course in future the Charkha Sangh will make flags only of the new design.

I have two questions before me today. A correspondent wants to know what will happen to the Congress after August 15 and what its programme will be. He says that till now anyone wishing to join the Congress had to swear an oath that he would fight for the freedom of India through truthful and non-violent means. Now that freedom of India has been won he wants to know what the position will be.

The Congress alone can tell what its programme will be. As a humble servant of the Congress I know that so long the task before us had been to fight foreign rule. We became rebels and we dislodged that rule. Outwardly we followed truth and non-violence. But inwardly there was violence in us. We practised hypocrisy and as a result we have to suffer the pain of mutual strife. Even today we are nurturing attitudes that will result in war and if this drift is not stopped we shall find ourselves in a conflict much more sanguinary than the Mutiny of 1857. India then did not have enough awakening and the mutiny was confined only to the sepoys. All that we did was to cut down Englishmen. In the end the British army overcame the mutineers. God forbid that the present strife should ever assume such dimensions. Therefore not only out of regard for truth and non-violence but also in the interest of the country, for which hundreds of thousands faced imprisonment and suffered hardships, I shall appeal to you not to prepare for warfare. For by so doing you will not only lose the country's freedom but you will send it back into slavery. England,

Russia, America or China—any of these countries may attack and enslave us. Do you, on the fifteenth of August, went to witness the spectacle of Hindus fighting Muslims and the Sikhs being crushed between the belligerents? I would rather that there was an earthquake and we all were crushed to death. Therefore since the Congress belongs to all India it should see to it that Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, and all the other communities are kept happy. I do not suggest that you should try to appease the Muslims or become cowards. I have never advocated cowardice. We should bravely pacify the people. This should be the chief programme of the Congress.

Although I have been President of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan twice it is my firm opinion that Hindi in Devanagari script can never become the national language of India. Today many of our leaders say that Gandhi talks nonsense. He is always out to appease the Muslims. Jinnah Saheb, however, while talking of two nations had accused me of wiping out Urdu. Thus today I am regarded as an enemy of both the languages. But I want to remain a friend of both. My claim that if there is any true friend of India, it is Gandhi, will be vindicated in the eyes of God. I can even today point out so many Hindus who neither know Hindi nor can write In Devanagari. We will have to adopt a language which is a mixture of Hindi and Urdu as the national language if Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis and Sikhs are to live here. I have no doubt that the language you speak can become a great language.

An Indonesian leader Sjahrir is on a visit here. He will meet Jawaharlal Nehru and Mr. Jinnah. India can give Indonesia its moral support which will be more effective than any military aid.

An Englishman says in a letter that now that India has been partitioned it will no longer have the status of a great nation. I do not agree, provided the two parts remain friendly with each other.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 274-7

192. LETTER TO HARIPRASAD DESAI

[Before *July 25, 1947*][1]

Why so jubilant? *Purna* swaraj is far off.

Have we got swaraj? Did swaraj mean only that the British rule should end? To my mind it was not so. For me Sabarmati is far off[2], Noakhali is near.

The Hindustan Times, 28-7-1947

193. LETTER TO SUNDERLAL

NEW DELHI,
July 25, 1947

BHAI SUNDERLAL,

I have your letter and the enclosed papers. Let me see when I can go through them. I am writing this at 4.50 in the morning.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

What a pity! Is there no other language than English for our work? Oh! what culture, what convenience![3]

From Hindi: C.W. 10265. Courtesy: Purushottam Prasad

194. HINDI v. HINDUSTANI

Shrimati Perinbehn Captain writes :[4]

> It was with shame, disgust and sorrow that I heard on the Delhi radio that our own group of men wished to dethrone our national language. . . Please write to me fully what you would like: (1) our Hindustani Committee to do, (2)

[1] The letter was reported under the date-line Ahmedabad, July 25.

[2] The addressee, an old associate, had asked Gandhiji to return to Ahmedabad as Gandhiji had pledged on the eve of the Dandi March to go back to Sabarmati Ashram only after India attained swaraj.

[3] Gandhiji was referring to Hindustani Culture Society's letter-head used by the addressee.

[4] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.

> our honest and self-sacrificing Hindustani *pracharaks* to do, and (3) last but not least, those of our countrymen—Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians and Jews, who have accepted and loved Hindustani as understood by the Congress resolution, to do . . .
>
> Please try and prevent our friends from losing their vision through hatred and thereby losing all hopes of linking in true friendship and love the whole country from Kashmir to Kanya Kumari and Assam to Sind.

This represents the common grief of many nationalists like her, labelled congressmen or not. Since this letter was written the threat has been postponed for two months or until such time as the Constituent Assembly meets again. It is a wise postponement which gives time for passions to cool down in order to allow clear thinking.

Let the Hindu, by their conduct, direct or indirect, disprove the Muslim League statement that we, the Hindus and the Muslims of India, are not one nation but two and that too because of our respective religions. Congressmen have declared from the very inception of the Congress that India is one nation composed of men belonging to all religions and sects known in the whole world and it has proved the claim often enough at crucial moments in spite of many lapses which it would be easy to fling in its face.

Dadabhai Naoroji, whose grand-daughter has written the above letter with so much feeling, has become and still remains the only Grand Old Man of India.

Pherozeshah Mehta became the uncrowned king of the Bombay Presidency and after Dadabhai Naoroji's death ruled the Congress by right of service unselfishly rendered.

Who was Badruddin Tyabjee—at one time President of the Congress? Was he not a Mussalman every inch of him? Was he any the less an Indian? India has many religions but only one nationality and this, I dare to say, in spite of its two divisions. They may persist for a long time, but we must not be enemies one of the other for a single minute. It takes two to make a quarrel, but friendship does not require reciprocity. That which requires reciprocity is a bargain. This friendship, otherwise called love or non-violence, belongs not to the cowardly but to the brave and the seeing.

I entirely endorse Perinbehn's remark that not Hindi, highly Sanskritized written in the Nagari characters, nor Urdu, highly Persianized written in the Urdu characters, can even be the link between two or more communities in India. It can only be Hindustani

which is a fusion of the two forms robbed of their artificial character and written either in the Nagari or the Urdu characters. This natural fusion has been going on for many years and like all natural processes, it has been slow but nonetheless sure. It does not matter to me whether any Muslim brother reciprocates or not, by trying to understand my form of speech or writing, but surely I am richer for endeavouring to understand his form of speech and writing. Speaking to many Muslim divines I have not found it difficult to explain my meaning through Hindustani, though I have never attempted to pretend to speak their high-flown Persianized Urdu. They have as a rule been the losers and I invariably the gainer. What is true of me is true, I am sure, of many more.

Now about her main questions:

Every member of the Hindustani Committee is to live up to his creed, that is to say, he or she should himself or herself master both the scripts and be familiar with a mixture of the two forms, Hindi and Urdu. This will happen when both are diligently studied in their simple forms. And when this first requisite is fulfilled, he or she must try to induce others to acquire the knowledge.

Secondly, if the Hindustani *pracharaks* are honest and sacrificing they are bound to infect their surroundings with the spirit that actuates them.

Thirdly, those who have accepted Hindustani as the national language of the whole of India and love it, have to prove their acceptance by speaking and writing only in Hindustani, when it is meant for those who do not know the mother tongue. Thus a Tamilian will speak only in Tamil to a fellow Tamilian, but with a non-Tamilian he will make use of Hindustani and not English as is now the wont.

NEW DELHI, July 25, 1947

Harijan, 3-8-1947

195. SCHEDULED CASTES

A correspondent writes:

> If the Scheduled Castes of x area are included in Pakistan, they would probably have no alternative other than embracing Islam.

The correspondent is well educated and is an M.L.A. The question immediately arises as to what will happen to the Scheduled Caste member in the Pakistan areas where they are not living in

contiguous areas. Will they all have to embrace Islam? I can only say that their religion must be very poor stuff if it admits of change like one's clothes. Religion (binding faith), is made of sterner stuff; it is a deep personal matter, more personal than honour. To be true, it must be able to defy coercion of the extremest type.

So much for those who are in fear of compulsory conversion. But what about those who inspire men and women with such fear? I have heard it seriously argued that people have often mistaken voluntary for compulsory conversion. I think the argument does not carry any conviction. People have been known in all ages to resort to conversion when they have known their friends, relations or neighbours to profess conversion under duress. When, therefore, there is suspicion all round, conversion should be stopped altogether. Here I remind myself of the argument of the correspondent used only the other day that my 'brave' words about personal religion would be all right if they were confined to *sannyasis* but not to householders who were exposed to a variety of temptations from life. Though I do not endorse this argument, for it weakens those on whose behalf it is led, I cannot help feeling that there is considerable force in it, especially when it is made applicable to members of the Scheduled Castes who have been ill-treated by their fellow Hindus and would, therefore, yield to compulsion in the hope of avoiding ill-treatment from their fellows who arrogate to themselves superiority, falsely so-called. Frequently this compulsion assumes subtle forms, as for instance, free grants of land or offer of service even beyond merit.

NEW DELHI, July 25, 1947

Harijan, 3-8-1947

196. LETTER TO PERINBEHN CAPTAIN

NEW DELHI,
July 25, 1947

CHI. PERINBEHN,[1]

Your letter. You will see what I spoke yesterday on Hindustani.[2] You and I must work hard, even unto death for the purpose. Let us not lose heart.

Make an effort to speak and write Hindustani in both the scripts.

[1] The superscription is in Devanagari.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 24-7-1947.

The agony is postponed for two months. Much can be done by earnest people during the breathing time.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

197. LETTER TO GERALD J. ROCK

BHANGI COLONY,
NEW DELHI,
July 25, 1947

DEAR MR. ROCK,

What you ask for is essentially American. I must confess my ignorance of *La Prensa* and in any case I do not feel inclined to lend myself to self-advertisement or the advertisement of a newspaper or an institution. I have come to the conclusion that men and things must be judged on their own merits and not on certificates of merit, however well-earned they may be.

When I went to London as a lad, I was brought up to think that I must procure certificates about all kinds of things and I had some. On my way back, I tore all the certificates I had had from friends about various things I had done or had not done and consigned them to the sea.

Yours sincerely,

GERALD J. ROCK, ESQ.
GENERAL MANAGER FOR D. E. INDIA
UNITED PRESS ASSOCIATIONS
MUBARAK MANZIL
IST FLOOR, APOLLO STREET
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

198. LETTER TO BHAKTAPRASAD

NEW DELHI,
July 25, 1947

BHAI BHAKTAPRASAD,

I have your letter. I wish you all success in your work of service.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

199. A LETTER

BHANGI COLONY,
NEW DELHI,
July 25, 1947,

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. However, I am very sorry I am not able just now to answer questions such as you have asked. please excuse. I am, of course, hoping that the French nation will put no obstacle whatsoever in the way of Indians in the French possessions in India merging in the Indian Union.

M.
GRAND HOTEL
OLD DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

200. A LETTER

July 25, 1947

It is true that a great calamity has befallen us, but if we think deeply we will see that it contains a unique opportunity for working for the prosperity and moral regeneration of the country. How I wish we realized this!

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 406

201. A LETTER

July 25, 1947

Why are you so sensitive? He who wishes to serve cannot afford to be sensitive. We townspeople have done such great injustice to the people of the villages that if they merely abuse us and stop at that, in my view they are letting us off very lightly. If, therefore, you bear with their abuses and in atonement for your sins patiently and selflessly try to become one with the villages, you will have no need to come to me.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 407

202. A LETTER

July 25, 1947

In the first place. if people change their religion as they change their clothes every day or every hour, religion will lose all its power. One's religion represents the priceless spirit of resolution arising from deep faith. If the strength of resolution is rooted in the heart, it will not yield or submit to any amount of force or coercion.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 407

203. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 25, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Rajendra Babu tells me that he has received some 50,000 postcards, between 25,000 and 30,000 letters and many thousands of telegrams demanding a ban on cow-slaughter. I spoke to you about this before. Why this flood of telegrams and letters? They have had no effect. I have another telegram which says that a friend has started a fast for this cause. In India no law can be made to ban cow-slaughter. I do not doubt that Hindus are forbidden the slaughter of cows. I have been long pledged to serve the cow but how can my religion also be

the religion of the rest of the Indians? It will mean coercion against those Indians who are not Hindus. We have been shouting from the house-tops that there will be no coercion in the matter of religion. We have been reciting verses from the Koran at the prayer. But if anyone were to force me to recite these verses I would not like it. How can I force anyone not to slaughter cows unless he is himself so disposed? It is not as if there were only Hindu in the Indian Union. There are Muslims, Parsis, Christians and other religious groups here. The assumption of the Hindus that India now has become the land of the Hindus is erroneous. India belongs to all who live here. If we stop cow-slaughter by law here and the very reverse happens in Pakistan, what will be the result? Supposing they say Hindus would not be allowed to visit temples because it was against *Shariat* to worship idols? I see God even in a stone but how do I harm others by this belief? If therefore I am stopped from visiting temples I would still visit them. I shall therefore suggest that these telegrams and letters should cease. It is not proper to waste money on them.

Besides some prosperous Hindus themselves encourage cow-slaughter. They do not do it with their own hands. But who sends all the cows to Australia and other countries where they are slaughtered and whence shoes manufactured from cow- hide are sent back to India? I know an orthodox Vaishnava Hindu. He used to feed this children on beef soup. On my asking him why he did that he said there was no sin in consuming beef as medicine. We really do not stop to think what true religion is and merely go about shouting that cow-slaughter should be banned by law. In villages Hindus make bullocks carry huge burdens which almost crush the animals. Is it not cow-slaughter, albeit slowly carried out? I shall therefore suggest that the matter should not be pressed in the Constituent Assembly.

Where trees are in abundance, rainfall too is abundant. The foliage in a forest attracts precipitation from clouds like milk from the udder of a cow. It is a law of nature that where there are no trees there is no rainfall and the land soon becomes a desert. I spent many years in Johannesburg. The climate there is very salubrious. After they planted trees there, rainfall too has been favourable. Therefore the programme of tree-planting that the authorities in Delhi have started is a very good thing. Those who have no spare patch of ground can still

grow vegetables in earthen pots.

I have been asked, 'Since in view of the atrocities being perpetuated by Muslims it is difficult to decide which of the Mus- lims are to be trusted, what should be our attitude towards the Muslims in the Indian Union? What should the non-Muslims in Pakistan do?'

I have already answered this question. I again repeat that all the religions of India today are being put to the test. It has to be seen how the various religious groups such as the Sikhs, the Hindus, the Muslims and the Christians conduct themselves and how they carry on the affairs of India. Pakistan may be said to belong to Muslims but the Indian Union belongs to all. If you shake off cowardice and become brave you will not have to consider how you are to behave towards the Muslims. But today there is cowardice in us. For this I have already accepted the blame. I am still wondering how my 30 years' teaching has been so ineffective. Why did I assume, to begin with, that non-violence could be a weapon of cowards? Even now if we can really become brave and love the Muslims, the Muslims will have to stop and think what they could gain by practising treachery against us. They will return love for love. Can we keep the crores of Muslims in the Indian Union as slaves? He who makes slaves of others himself becomes a slave. If we answer sword with sword, the lathi with lathi and kick with kick, we cannot expect that things will be different in Pakistan. We shall then lose our freedom as easily as we have gained it.

I like the statement that has been issued on behalf of the future Governments of India and Pakistan. But I wish to see it implemented. However, we cannot assume that they will not do in Pakistan what the statement says. To assume this will mean preparing for war. The two armies will confront each other and the two-nation theory of Mr. Jinnah will have been proved true. I pray to God that He may not let us drift into such a situation.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan-I, pp. 277-80

204. DISCUSSION WITH A CONGRESSMAN[1]

NEW DELHI,
[Before *July 26, 1947*][2]

A Congressman came to Gandhiji the other day asking him how he would reorganize the Congress under the new set-up. Gandhiji was emphatic that if the Congress was to live as a potent force, it must become a body of constructive workers. Constructive work, he knew, had never been over-popular. He thought that it was never more necessary than now. Without the backing of constructive work and penetrating the villages, their legislators would practically be idle and the voters would be exposed to the machinations of the vote-catchers. The labour vote would presently be a drop in the ocean in the face of adult suffrage both for men and women. It was probably the boldest experiment known to the world on a vast scale. Unless it was well planned and all attendant dangers anticipated and provided against, adult suffrage might well prove a deluge drowning the whole country. He (Gandhiji) knew nothing so effective for the purpose as a well-thought-out constructive programme.

Harijan, 3-8-1947

205. LETTER TO SATISH

5 a. m., July 26, 1947

CHI. SATISH,

You are entitled to write to me. Now please write to Jawaharlalji the briefest note explaining what you want, etc. Then just wait in patience.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The discussion is extracted from Dr. Sushila Nayyar's "Congressmen and Constructive Work", reported under the date-line New Delhi, 26-7-1947. It appeared under "Notes".

[2] *ibid*

206. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

July 26, 1947

CHI. LILI,

I have your postcard. It is 5 o'clock in the morning. You must firmly tell Dwarkadas that, if the diagnosis is correct, he will live only for a few days. Bear cheerfully whatever happens. You are on trial. God will see you through. I hope you got my airmail letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

207. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

July 26, 1947

CHI. SATIS BABU,

Your letter. It is now 5.05 a. m. At 5.15 I go out for my walk. I hope that the cholera will subside. I do wish to reach Noakhali before the 15th of next month.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

208. LETTER TO HORACE ALEXANDER

NEW DELHI,
July 26, 1947

MY DEAR HORACE,

I have yours of 22nd.

It is high time we met. I am not here now long I hope. I should be leaving in two or three days. Patna for four or five days and then Noakhali just before August 15.

You will know my programme and see where we should meet.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1446

209. LETTER TO CARL HEATH

BHANGI COLONY, NEW DELHI,
July 26, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I was much touched by your letter[1] of 19th instant. I wholly agree with you that the number of years a person lives in this world is of no consequence whether to him or to the world but even a day spent in true service of mankind is of supreme and only importance. I further agree with you that hope and faith are as often as not synonymous terms. Of course good is eternal, evil transitory.

I must abide by my statement: there can be no place for a man of peace in a society full of strife. Please do not look at my bad imperfect English but consider the heart of my mean- ing. I am sure you will agree with me that a man of peace is out of place in a society full of strife. He must know this fact and yet work and act in that society. I wonder if I have at all made my meaning clear. There is no such thing as surrender in me to the spirit of evil.

I do hope that your physical illness is under control.

Love to you all.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 1052; also *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. II, p. 323

210. LETTER TO MECMANAGE

July 26, 1947

DEAR MECMANAGE,

Your letter. My advice is: you should settle down in Ceylon and quietly serve the Ceylonese. The way of ahimsa is narrow.

If I know you, you will not be happy in the Ashram. Marry by all means. But marry a simple Ceylonese girl and see how you and she feel.

Yours,
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee, an English Quaker, could not agree with Gandhiji's reply to Richard B. Gregg; *vide* "From America", 22-6-1947.

211. LETTER TO BASANT K. DAS

NEW DELHI,
July 26, 1947

DEAR BASANT K. DAS,

Your letter. I seem to agree with all you say. But do see me even tonight after prayer and walk with me.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

212. LETTER TO DR. CHOUDHARI

NEW DELHI,
July 26, 1947

DEAR DR. CHOUDHARI,

Many thanks for your letter. You will be surprised that I have no photographs of myself.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DUBLIN
IRELAND[1]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

213. LETTER TO MOTWANI

July 26, 1947

DEAR MOTWANI,

I have your letter of the 18th inst. I have not mixed up socialism with sociology. I must confess I have read very little if anything at all about sociology.

Socialism as conceived in the West may go against Indian culture. Then it is faulty but socialism as defined by me in the articles you have read, is a living thing and true. It is undoubtedly an economic doctrine but not based on class warfare.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The address is in Devanagari.

214. A LETTER

July 26, 1947

I have your letter. If a man believes that a *peepul* tree is haunted by a ghost, he will not get rid of his fear by going to the tree again and again. Only if he visits the tree several times in the company of a person who does not share his fear and nothing happens to him, will his fear go. This can happen in the case of *brahmacharya* only if a man of conventional ideas lives in the company of a perfect *brahmachari* from time to time. But then, how are we to find such a *brahmachari*? And who will accept such a claim by anybody?

The example of the *peepul* tree and the ghost is applicable only up to a certain point. I hope you know that I have never claimed that I am a perfect *brahmachari*.

When shall I know that state supreme,

When will the knots outer and inner snap?

I write this for a seeker. Just now it is not germane to go further than this. If the seeker finds his path, it might be pertinent to go further.

I have no doubt that if the Congress wishes to preserve its strength, it must vigorously pursue the constructive programme.

You worry about me from your sick-bed. But there is One who worries about you and me and everybody else; why don't you leave everything to that Almighty? And if I am destined to give still more service, nothing will happen to me. For you, prayer is the only unfailing remedy.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 416

215. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

VALMIKI MANDIR,
NEW DELHI,
July 26, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

Two Khaksars came to see me yesterday. One of them wept bitterly. The other complained that although an official had assured them that now nothing would be done to them since they were going away, yet there was firing in the mosque the same evening, that many were killed, that an old man of seventy received seven bullets, that no one knew how many had died and how many had survived and that for three days the Khaksars were kept there without food and water, unable even to go out to answer calls of nature.

I was stunned to hear all this. I rebuked them. I said it could not be true. I said, "Sardar told me only today that since the Khaksars would not leave the mosque police officials had to enter the mosque, that they did so with the permission of the Imam, that the action that was taken was ordered by the Muslim officer, that no violence had been used, nothing beyond tear-gas had been fired and that no one had been killed. I therefore cannot swallow what you say." They answered, "If that is what your Sardar says, how can we hope to be believed? What use asking for justice now? One day you will know. Truth will be out." I said, "If I hear of a wrong being done I do not hide it even for the sake of my dear ones. I shall say no more. I will do my duty." Now if there is anything in this please let me know.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
1, AURANGZEB ROAD
NEW DELHI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 357-8

[1] According to *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. II (p. 331), in his reply dated August 11, the addressee said: "The whole story . . . is a fabrication and no Khaksar has died … Khaksars were plotting to stage a demonstration during … independence day (August 15) … not to allow the Congress flag to be flown and to create a disturbance and indulge in violence. The Commissioner (a Muslim), therefore, used tear-gas in the mosque and arrested them.… The Khaksars want Delhi and Agra to be included in Pakistan, also Ajmer.… they want to establish a front in Delhi and create disturbance.… do not want… the Commissioner… Delhi. They take sanctuary in mosques. Local Muslims are not giving them any support."

216. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
July 26, 1947

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I have your letter. At the moment it seems there is some improvement in Manu's condition. She gets clear motions. There is no pain and no fever. She eats well. But I have to force her to take complete rest. She is fidgeting to resume her service of me. But I do not let her. She is being given no medicine. She is under Sushilabehn's treatment, and the latter believes, as I do, that the only medicine she requires is complete rest. Manu has now begun to realize this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

217. LETTER TO MAHESH DATT MISHRA

July 26, 1947

CHI. MAHESH,

You have not returned the book you had borrowed from Brijkrishna. Why? It belongs to the library here. Send it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6723. Also C. W. 4467. Courtesy: Mahesh Datt Mishra

218. TALK WITH KELLY

NEW DELHI,
July 26, 1947

When such a mighty power is dislodged a country's condition becomes even worse. We shall see this if we examine the history of the world. Compared to that nothing has happened in India. That does not mean that our present inhuman conduct is justified. It is really shameful. I am pained because we have sullied the noble method by which without shedding a drop of blood we made a great power leave

in friendship. I also say that our countrymen are very simple at heart and that the British have taken advantage of that. We are so stupid. Perhaps you do not know that the person who treated me as a son and took me to Africa was an orthodox Muslim. If you go to Bengal, the U.P., Gujarat, or the Punjab, you will find that Muslims speak the same regional language. It is our good fortune and the grace of God that this poison has not spread to our villages.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 419-20

219. TALK WITH DR. SYED MAHMUD[1]

NEW DELHI,
July 26, 1947

I can understand the five of us working in different directions and thinking in different ways, but how harmful it will be to you and to the country if we behave as if we were one another's rivals? All of you should think about this. It is not that such things are happening only in Bihar. That is so more or less in every province. If the five of us cannot work in amity and are not frank with each other, my attempt to solve this great question of Hindu-Muslim unity is bound to fail. However, my cry is "do or die". I said this to Ghanshyam Das[2] just now. I am sure about myself. But what will happen to the country?

Moreover, we are now filled with another kind of arrogance. We disregard the old and experienced diwans and other officials of the States and criticize them in public. I have also received the complaint that when they come to see us our behaviour towards them is very unbecoming. If it is true, then one day we shall be sorry for our arrogance. We should utilize the services of everyone. After all they are our countrymen, aren't they? They have not become our enemies because they served the British Government. How a person like Girijashankar Bajpai abused me in 1942! What poisonous falsehoods he spread at the time Ba died![3] Should we spurn him if he wants to help us now? The loss shall be ours if we lose such an intelligent and

[1] Minister for Development and Transport, Bihar Government

[2] G. D. Birla

[3] *Vide* 7th footnote to "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 4-3-1944.

experienced person. Please remember that they are at heart patriots. Only, for certain reasons they were not able to make sacrifices. If we seek the advice of such old and experienced persons, they will show their genius. They will easily be able to do what we can't. We are novices in the matter of administration. Our country will suffer if we don't take their help. So we will have to forget our old prejudices and work in unity.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 418-9

220. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 26, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I personally feel that a barrister and a scavenger should get equal wages. But it is easier said than done. And it is not something that can be accomplished through strikes. We should for the time being accept and assimilate the rise in salaries recommended by the Pay Commission[1] and then proceed to build up public opinion in favour of the principle of equality of wages. Strikes too are governed by a logic. Nothing is gained by indiscriminate strikes. Today unfortunately strikes are sweeping the country. There are strikes even where people have their own governments. I think that under British rule we did not have so many strikes. Today I have received a telegram from Calcutta and I also see from newspapers that the employees of the Accountant-General's office have gone on a pen-down strike. The strike includes the employees of the Post and Telegraph department which operates not for the good of any particular individual but for the good of the community. It is true that it has some big officers getting huge salaries and it is unjust that the members of the subordinate staff should be paid such low salaries. Why should the difference in salaries be so great as it is? This was started by the British and we liked it and continued it. But if people

[1] The report of the Central Pay Commission appointed by the Government of India was announced in New Delhi on May 16, 1947. A minimum basic salary of Rs. 30 per month and a maximum salary of Rs. 2,000 per month, to be relaxed only in the case of a few selected posts, were among its chief recommendations.

were to put down their pens, what would become of India? If through strikes they bring about a little rise in salaries it would not be a great thing. The method is wrong and is harmful to the country. The present plight of India brings to my mind the story of the goose that laid golden eggs. The owner of the goose wishing to have all the eggs at once killed her. As a result not only did he get no more eggs but he lost the goose as well. The administration that has come into our hands in somewhat like that goose. If we want to get out of it all the eggs together it will surely die and so shall we.

Strikes as I have said have a logic. I first tried the weapon of strikes in South Africa. Indians there were treated as coolies. Strikes had then a meaning because they had no other way of making themselves heard. Therefore anyone who knows anything about strikes will only say to the strikers everywhere that the path they have chosen will be their own undoing. India has already been partitioned and if the strikes continue God alone knows what will become of India. It is our duty quietly to go on doing the work that we have been doing. As a result of the recommendations of the Pay Commission the emoluments of the low-paid employees have been considerably raised. If you go on demanding more and more India will go bankrupt. It is true that the Government receives crores of rupees in revenue but that money cannot be spent for the benefit of only a handful of people. The largest share should go to the villagers from whom it comes.

Recently there has been a workers' strike in Bombay. The Government there had already given one or two crores of rupees to the workers, but they were not satisfied and in order to show their strength resorted to a token strike. What they ought to have done was to accept what they had been given and set about cultivating public opinion in their favour. But they chose the way of strike. The Congress itself has become did into many factions and I am told that one of the factions was behind the strike. These token strikes, even if they last only a couple of hours, show a kind of arrogance. The party organizing such a strike seeks thereby to demonstrate its hold on the workers. What purpose otherwise can such a strike serve? The country can gain nothing from such strikes. Therefore what the workers of Bombay did seems to me wrong.

Must we destroy ourselves through such strikes? The motive behind them is not service of the country but selfishness pure and

simple. The British have hardly left the country. The reins of the Government have hardly come in our hands and we have started fighting over money. I hold in principle that a barrister and a scavenger should receive equal payment. But a barrister is able to snatch more and we gladly let him. I too was once a barrister but I found the idea of thus making money repugnant and I became a Bhangi. But where are we to find men who will have the talent to work as Governors, barristers, traders and the like? And who will be satisfied with the *e* wages of a scavenger? Even a tailor is able to earn four or five rupees a day. But who will pay a scavenger that much? The need today is for man to change his nature, to cultivate generosity and not to cut other people's throats to further his self-interest. If the assassinations in Burma cannot teach us a lesson, then what is going to be the plight of India and the world?

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 281-3

221. DISCUSSION WITH AN AMERICAN PACIFIST[1]

NEW DELHI,
[Before *July 27, 1947*][2]

A young American pacifist came to see Gandhiji some days ago. He had brought a note of introduction from Miss Muriel Lester. He told Gandhiji how she had carried the message of peace to young Americans during the war and explained to them why they should stay out of the war. He asked Gandhiji how young American pacifists should behave today.

Gandhiji's reply was that they should behave as they would if the war was still going on. Even if they are a few individuals, they should not hesitate to do the right thing. The few would multiply into many.

The Friend was eloquent about Miss Lester. He had great admiration for her. He thought she was one of the greatest women. Gandhiji said:

She herself would contradict it. There are many great women, but few good women. If you had said that she was a very good woman, you would have been right. A true pacifist's language must

[1] The discussion is extracted from Sushila Nayar's "Notes", sub-title, "Good or Great?", dated New Delhi, 27-7-1947.

[2] *ibid*

be correct and thought exact. If you want to play your part effectively in this movement against war, you have to model your life accordingly. The movement against war is intrinsically sound. No one can question the value of peace. Yet it has not made enough headway. The fault lies with the pacifists.

The friend turned back to what Gandhiji called inexact language on his part because he had described Miss Lester as one of the greatest women. He said he had called her great because she was good.

Gandhiji retorted that he never knew that goodness and greatness were synonymous terms. A man might be great, yet not good.

Harijan, 10-8-1947

222. THE NATIONAL FLAG[1]

The National Flag has been in existence since 1921. Those who say that what was so far the Congress Flag has now become the National Flag of India make a meaningless fuss and at the same time insult the Congress. The Congress has been national from its very inception. It has never been sectional. It embraces all sections and all Indians. Of course, it is open to the Congress to become sectional and commit suicide. If God's wrath descends upon it the calamity may well overtake it. Nevertheless, many will be praying that such a misfortune may not overtake it. Is it possible that Jinnah's jibe that the Congress is national only in name but Hindu in action, will be proved just?

Here, however, we shall confine ourselves to the Flag. What has happened is that, having acquiesced in the division of India, the Congress has nevertheless delivered it from the British domination and has taken over the larger part. Therefore, the flag under which the Congress has fought so many non-violent battles will now be the flag of the Government of free India. I see no haughtiness in this. The joy that one finds in climbing the Himalayas, the views one sees, are not to be had on reaching the top. The pleasure lies in the journey, not in arriving at the destination. Similarly the pleasure that it gave us to fight under the National Flag has now come to an end.

I have just reread an article I wrote for *Young India* of April 13, 1921. I advise the reader to glance through that article. It is

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan* of the same date.

reproduced in this issue. The modified Flag has value only if it carries the significance attached to it. If it does not, it is to me valueless.

There is reason for this caution. Some say that the original flag has gone, that a new age has begun and with it have come new ways, and that the flag will be one to befit this new age. I have not known a worthy son to whom his mother appeared ugly. It may be possible to gild pure gold, but who can make his mother more beautiful? Hence, in my opinion nothing would have been lost if no changes had been made in the original flag. People are saying 'the charkha was old women's solace and Gandhi's toy; but swaraj is not for old women. It is for the warrior and we therefore want the Asoka emblem with lions and if the lions do not find a place on the flag, it is merely for artistic consi-derations: they cannot be reproduced on cloth. But the lions must feature somewhere or other. We have had enough of cowardliness. Nobody has yet had the experience of the non-violence of the brave. We shall talk about it when we see it. It is the lion who is the king of the forest. Sheep and goats are his food. We are tired of wearing khadi. Now we shall wear clothes made of glass. Our forefathers used cloth to cover themselves. We wear clothes to adorn ourselves. Clothing therefore should be such as will show to advantage every limb of the body. The improved flag has no need of khadi. We do not want to disfigure with khadi the shop windows of our towns. The poor in the villages may by all means wear khadi. We shall not treat it as an offence. Old women in their huts may spin away on the charkha. In this new age this should be considered a favour.'

I will refuse to salute the flag that is modified on the above lines however artistic it may appear.

Happily there is the other side which says: 'The new flag is merely an improved design of the original. The spinning-wheel continues on it. That it is without the spindle and the *mal*, is a failing of art. A picture after all is only a picture. It always leaves something for the imagination. The spinning-wheel in a picture has no slivers and no spinners at work on it. These are left for the imagination to fill in. This rule applies as well to the improved design of the flag. Thus conceived, the improve-ment must appear innocent. This tricolour flag with the wheel will certainly consist of hand-spun and hand-woven khadi. Our country has called it khadi whether it is woven from hand-spun cotton or silk. When the original conception is kept intact

there is no harm in making a conce-ssion to art. When the country was at war with a foreign power, art lay in being engaged in the battle. Now that it has ended in success, art must have a place, though perhaps, a subordinate one. Otherwise we shall not be able to perpetuate the memory of the struggle.' This is another interpretation.

If any further interpretations not inconsistent with this are added I see no harm in it. One may see some other subtle meaning in the same three colours. Those who see unity in the diversity of the universe may find it in the three colours. Looking at the wheel some may recall that Prince of Peace, King Asoka, ruler of an empire, who renounced power. He represented all faiths; he was an embodiment of compassion. Seeing the charkha in his *chakra* adds to the glory of the Charkha. Asoka's *chakra* represents eternally revolving Divine Law of ahimsa.

NEW DELHI, July 27, 1947

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 3-8-1947

223. LETTER TO AKBARBHAI CHAVDA

NEW DELHI,
July 27, 1947

CHI. AKBAR,

I have your long letter and also the short one. I have given it to Sardar to read.[1] It is good and gives all the information. If necessary, I shall write more. These days I get no time at all. Now about the second. The story of my going to Gujarat is nothing but rumour. If I could go, I would certainly visit you to see your work. Perhaps the rest of my life will be spent in Bihar and Noakhali. We are all in God's hands, aren't we?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI AKBAR MIAN,
KANZAR
SAMA, *via* PALANPUR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3240

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 18-7-1947.

224. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
July 27, 1947

CHI. VALJI,

You are quite right. I can do nothing in a matter such a this. To the innocent, punishment is like a reward, and the guilty repays a part of his debt through it. Both, therefore, should shed fear and appear in the court without any lawyers. I will go through the draft. If God requires my services. He will let me live not a hundred and twenty-five but a hundred and fifty years, and if He doesn't require them any longer He may take me away even today. One must live as Rama bids.

Blessings from
BAPU

PROF. VALJI G. DESAI
14 GANESHWADI
POONA-4

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7503. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

225. A LETTER

July 27, 1947

It is a great mistake for a man to believe that he is always right and others are always wrong. Nothing in the world is wholly perfect and nothing wholly imperfect. Nothing is wholly good or wholly bad. It is we who think things to be perfect or imperfect, good or bad. How I wish you would learn to look at things in this way.

I shall most probably leave Delhi at the end of this month. Where I go will be decided tomorrow. I must reach Noakhali on August 15. But everything rests in the hands of God. . . .[1]

If we do not pay vigilant attention to the villages, I do not know what will happen. After all, how many prosperous cities and towns are there in India? No more than can be counted on one's fingers. They do not make the country prosperous and happy. India means her

[1] Omission as in the source

seven hundred thousand villages. If there was but one worker selflessly working in each village, then in a year's time India's face would be transformed. But unfortunately "a worker" has now come to mean something exactly the opposite of this. I can see from the letters that I receive that a kind of reaction has set in among the workers. Without dwelling further on this point, let us hope that everybody will work with God as witness. I am quite well. Chi. Manudi also has improved a little, though not quite as much as one would wish. Probably we shall go to Kashmir and I hope that she will benefit from the magic climate there and improve during the two days' visit. Here is Rajendra Babu coming, and I am also being reminded by Lady Watch that it is time for my walk. So I obey her and stop here.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 427

226. A TALK TO VISITORS[1]

NEW DELHI,
July 27, 1947

That is what I say. We shall have to give the country a different lead. For this we shall have to train a whole army of workers. Their sole concern should be to mix with the people, familiarize themselves with their hardships and make them understand that now the country is theirs and the Ministers are people elected by them. It is an insult to the people rather than the Ministers if there are such demonstrations. However, if there is injustice done to the people, they can take the Minister concerned by the ear and remove him. We should now cultivate that kind of power. The Ministers are there not to rule over the people but to serve them. I gave the same advice to the Socialists. But even a person like …[2] does not understand. I do hope to convince

[1] The visitors requested Gandhiji to issue specific instructions regarding strikes, etc. "Our own teaching," they said, "is being used against us."

[2] Omissions as in the source

him though. The Congress should forget its struggle against the British and launch a movement to educate the public in democracy. We had gained one thing in our struggle against the British and that was that we could speak with one voice and say to the British that they must quit India. There was none in India who said: 'Let them stay'… Similarly we must now say with one voice that we shall make our country prosperous, we shall not let even a single person go unfed and unclothed, we shall make our lives lofty, peaceful and happy. We should be prepared to make any sacrifices necessary to that end. In our struggle against the British we risked our lives. Thousands of people died. But that will not be so in our new movement. The only thing that will be wanted is that the rich should give of their riches. But the method of extracting money from them will not be the one suggested by the Socialists and Communists like Lohia, Ramgopal and others. Their method will lead to the moral and economic degradation of the labourers rather than that of the capitalists. Poor workers are like the sheep. They follow whichever way they are led. If they take to the ways of duplicity, destruction, plunder, it will be difficult to bring them to the right path. Besides, if they continue going on strike, they will go without wages. It is solely out of a desire for cheap leadership that these so-called leaders have brought the working class under their influence.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 427-8

227. MESSAGE TO ARMY OFFICERS

NEW DELHI,
July 27, 1947

I have only one message for you. You have got your guns and sten-guns and you are proficient in killing men and all living things. Instead of that you should learn the art of using the sickle, ploughing the land and producing the food necessary for men and other living beings. Forget violence and gain proficiency in non-violence. Maybe from this you will think that I have gone mad. But look at the way Capt. Shahnawaz and Col. Jiwansingh live and work today. They have ceased to be army officers and have become public servants and farmers. Thus they have become more powerful. They are themselves happy and have made people happy. One of them is a Muslim and is

doing wonderful work in Bihar. The other, in spite of being a Punjabi and orthodox Sikh, has identified himself with the Muslims of Noakhali. I mention just these two names because I happen to remember them. But many such persons have come to me. They have changed their lives and have become happy. Such a time is now coming. You note down in your diary that the world will curse the scientist who has made the atom bomb. People have wearied of bloodshed. They would like to follow the path of non-violence and peace. India alone can give a lesson in that. America has great riches. Even other countries have more money than we have. Because they have money, they are investing in devices of mass destruction. That is why our scriptures and the *Gita* teach us not to hoard wealth. The right way of becoming happy is the observance of truth, non-violence, non-hoarding, celibacy, non-stealing and physical labour. This is as true as a geometrical theorem. Our army will lead the world if it adopts non-violence instead of violence.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 429-30

228. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 27, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

There are more than 800 princely States in India. Some of them are very large and some very small. Recently the Viceroy had summoned the Princes to Delhi. So long the States had functioned under the protective umbrella of the British Empire which has now been taken away. The Viceroy spoke to them in very gentle terms. I liked his speech. He advised these rulers that they should all opt for either India or Pakistan. His speech was not a brief one. What hurt me was that in his lengthy address there was not even a mention of the States' people. The relationship of the British Government was with the rulers of the States. The subjects of the States did not figure anywhere. Therefore, when paramountcy lapses these States legally become independent and the British Government cannot interfere, but after all the rulers have certain duties and obligations. The States' subjects can no longer be ruled at the point of the bayonet. But the security they have under the British protection is no longer there.

Take some large State—Cochin, for instance. It has an extensive sea coast. It cannot enter into treaty relations with the whole world in order to ensure its security and it was the duty of the Viceroy to point this out. I would have been happy if he had somewhere in his speech also mentioned the States' People. Since I was born in a Kathiawar State as a subject I have a right to say something about this question. Formerly if a ruler wanted so much as to employ a Dewan he had to seek permission from the Viceroy. They certainly did not like this. If, therefore, they now have been deprived of British protection, they are also free of British pressure. But there is now pressure from their people. So, if the rulers want to stay as rulers, they can only do so as servants of their people. They should seek the advice and co-operation of their Prajaman-dals in the work of administration. It is true that the Prajamandals have no experience of administration. But then even the leaders of the Central Government have had no previous experience of administration. This does not mean that the rulers should nominate twenty or twenty-five persons and call them Prajamandal. They should do whatever they do with sinceri-ty. So far as the question of their joining Pakistan or the Indian Union is concerned, regard will have to be paid to the geographical situation. A State in Gujarat or Kathiawar cannot unite itself with Bengal. The States thus cannot free themselves from the constraints of geography.

It is curious that the British have not said that the paramountcy which they had so long exercised now vests in India and Pakistan. This has complicated the problem both for India and Pakistan. I must say that the rulers are now on their trial. They may remain rulers but they must be servants of the people in fact.

I am saying this not because the Viceroy has complained to me about the rulers or that Jawaharlal or Rajendra Babu have said anything to me. The fact is that people are now watching what the Indian Government and Pakistan Government will do?

But what is the plight of the States' People? Are they happy at the thought of the coming freedom? Will they celebrate the day of independence? As for me I shall fast on the day and my prayer will be: 'O God, now that India is free do not destroy her.'

The States form one-fourth of the area of the country. Will the 10 crore subjects of the States celebrate August 15 as Independence Day? If the Princes declare that they will from now on be servants of their people, then all will be well. Then the taxes they raise from the

people will be for the uplift of the people. They will return their revenue ten times over not in the form of money but in the form of schools, hospitals, roads, gardens and public parks.

Jawaharlal and Sardar Patel have made no comment on the speech of the Viceroy though they could not be very happy in their hearts. But why should we have any poison in our hearts ? It is like a game in which all one's cards must be placed on the table. Only when there is no poison in our hearts can we genuinely celebrate August 15 as Independence Day.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 284-6

229. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

5 a. m., July 28, 1947

CHI. JIVANJI,

I have had to prepare the material this time in considerable haste. Please, therefore, be careful there. If the men are competent, there will be no difficulty. We may have to decide to close down *Harijan* altogether. If I have not so far intimated to you this view, I do so now. I have no heart in some of the things which our leaders are doing today. At the same time I cannot see myself opposing them too strongly. But what else can I do if the journal is continued ? And without me you people don't wish to run it. Nor does Sardar. This is the debate going on in my mind.

Blessings from

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9982. Also C. W. 6956. Courtesy: Jivanji D.Desai

230. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

NEW DELHI,
July 28, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

It is my silence day. Hence this infliction in the shape of my handwriting.

Pandit Nehru told me last night that as there were hitches about my going to Kashmir, he had decided to go even if only for two

or three days.[1] Thus I am now free to go to Bihar and thence to Noakhali. Before doing so, I might go for two days to the Punjab. I should like to leave Delhi tomorrow. You wanted me to see you before leaving. If the need is still felt, I am at your disposal tomorrow. You will then name the hour.

May I say I deeply appreciated your wish to go to an unpretentious house as the chosen Governor-General of the millions of the half-famished villagers of the nation. I hope it will be possible to carry out the wish.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 275

231. NOTE TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

VALMIKI MANDIR, NEW DELHI,
July 28, 1947

I have already written to you—haven't I—that I do not wish to go to Kashmir and that Jawaharlal will go instead. Now I have a letter[2] from the Viceroy saying I may go but not Jawaharlal. I therefore cannot make up my mind. What shall I do?[3]

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 359

[1] Replying the same day, Lord Mountbatten said he was told by Kak that he had informed Gandhiji as to "why the Kashmir Government were so very anxious not to have the visit from a political leader which might result in the spread of violence from the Punjab border". The Viceroy added that Kak would "greatly prefer" Gandhiji to Jawaharlal Nehru, if Gandhiji "felt it was essential" that either of them should go. The addressee urged that Gandhiji's "visit at this moment would be better than a visit from Jawaharlal Nehru", for he really did not know "how the future Prime Minister can be spared from Delhi with only 18 days left for him to take over power". Ultimately. it was Gandhiji who went to Kashmir; *vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 29-7-1947.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] In his reply, the addressee counselled Gandhiji to wait for a day as he was busy with the Working Committee.

232. LETTER TO SUSHILA PAI

July 28, 1947

The decision about Pakistan is of course wrong. But against whom am I to fight and to what end ?

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 312

233. LETTER TO JUGATRAM DAVE

NEW DELHI,
July 28, 1947

CHI. JUGATRAM,

Jivanji[1] has passed on to me the postcard that you had written to him.

The distinction that you make seems to be too fine. There is no substance in it. Show me if you see any. I hope you are getting on well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

234. LETTER TO SANYUKTA HARJIVAN

NEW DELHI,
July 28, 1947

CHI. SANYUKTA[2]

I read your letter addressed to Manudi. I have forbidden her to do any writing, and hence I am answering the letters. It is suspected she has intestinal tuberculosis. The disease, whatever it may be, is not in advanced stage. Manudi is very silly. She does not seem to understand that it is her duty to take care of her health. She will realise it now. There is no need at all to give her injections or medicines. She requires rest and change of diet.She is having both. Do not worry in

[1] Jivanji D. Desai of Navajivan Press
[2] Sister of Manu Gandhi

the least. Manudi does not at all wish to leave my side. If You sisters have any charm, use it.Can you say that you are now fully recovered?

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

235. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

July 28, 1947

CHI. SITA,

I have your letter. You have received education but have learnt no practical wisdom. You have of course given no written undertaking. But what about the undertaking I have given on your behalf ? You must abide by all the rules in force there. The permission I have given for your meetings is independent of those rules but should be subject to them. You should, therefore, willingly submit to whatever restrictions they place on your movements. Only thus can you create a good impression about you there.

I wish you would tell me frankly how you feel about Krishna[1] deep down in the heart. If I feel that you are keeping back anything from me, I shall get nervous. I hope you know that you can free yourself from my discipline whenever you wish. That means that you are free to go back on your promise. I would not be happy to know that you were waiting for the year to end somehow. Whatever you do, do it willingly and cheerfully. Do not let the least trace of dissimulation creep into your conduct.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5011

[1] Krishna Kumar; *vide* "Letter to Sushila Gandhi", 2-7-1947.

236. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
July 28, 1947

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. I have gone through Kishorelal's letter. I understand Manilal's view. I prefer mine. If Sita were to marry today, she would not have my blessings. The world endures through vows. If I had not taken a vow before my mother, today I would be a drink-addict, a meat-eater and a lecher. If I was saved from these three vices, the credit goes to the vow. And I had not taken the vow of my own free will, but at my mother's instance and through my eagerness to go to England.

But in this case you are the mother and Manilal is the father, and I admit that the father and the mother know better than the grandfather. Therefore, what you two advise will be best. If you leave the decision to me, I shall not be able to take any other view. I send herewith the letter which I received from Sita today. I have replied[1] to her. I think she will send the letter to you.

I should be happy if you could come to some definite decision. I shall most probably leave Delhi tomorrow.

Enclosure: 1

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5010

237. A LETTER

July 28, 1947

If we give anything away there should be no condition attached to the gift. Only then will the giving be pure. I have observed that most disputes in the world arise from 'agreements' and 'conditions'. I, therefore, suggest that it will be more befitting if your donation to the institution in unconditional.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 434

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

238. A LETTER

July 28, 1947

We first deceive ourselves, and later comfort ourselves some way or other. We should not express our opinion on any matter without fully going into it.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 434

239. A LETTER

July 28, 1947

Whatever you wish to tell…[1] you should tell him directly. To have it conveyed through a third party will be hazardous to both sides. After all he is not a tiger or a leopard that he will eat you up. Therefore try to explain the matter to him patiently. I have come to no final decision as yet about *Harijanbandhu*. Let me see how things develop.

I note… is going to be married. There should be no expenditure incurred, of course. The ceremony should be perfectly simple, with a prayer and the religious rites, and with the bride and the bridegroom fasting, observing silence, reciting the *Gita* and spending the day in the service of the cow, spinning, cleaning and similar activities of the Ashram, as a preliminary to expanding their field of service.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, pp. 434-5

240. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

NEW DELHI,
July 28, 1947

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your letter. I shall let you know when something is settled about the date. We shall see what we have to do after we reach Noakhali. Let us not incur any expenditure now. Babua should be

[1] Omissions as in the source

well. Is not typhoid caused by water? Every-one should drink boiled water.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9283

241. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

VALMIKI MANDIR, NEW DELHI,
July 28, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

Jawaharlal told me last night that you might approve of his going to Kashmir but not mine; he has, therefore, left me free to do as I like. So now I propose to leave tomorrow for Lahore. Lahore and Amritsar on the 30th, Rawalpindi on the 31st. I may stay there for a day and then take the train for Patna. If this is all right, please give your endorsement so that I may make the necessary preparations. You will also have to make some arrangements, won't you?

My note[1] to the Viceroy is going right now.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 358

242. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 28, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I shall answer some questions today.

Q. After 15th of August will there be two Congress organizations in the two countries or only one or would there be no Congress at all ?

A. I think then the need for an organization like the Congress will be still greater. Its programme will no doubt be altered. If the

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Lord Mountbatten", 28-7-1-47.

Congress does not foolishly accept the two-nation theory, there will be only one Congress in the whole country. The partition of India does not and should not mean the partition of the Congress. The partition of India into two sovereign States does not mean that India is two nations. Sup- posing one or more Princely States kept out of the Union, would the Congress turn their representatives out of the Congress ? Would the States' people not expect it to take even greater interest in their welfare ? Of course the problems that this will create will be even more complicated and some of them will be more difficult of solution, but there still will be no reason for the Congress to be broken up into two. It will require greater political acumen, greater depth of thought and much more patient deliberation and decision. We must not anticipate incapacitating difficulties.

Q. Will the Congress now become a communal organization ? A demand is being vociferously raised that since the Muslims now consider themselves a separate nation, we too should candidly call ourselves Hindu India and place upon the country the deep imprint of Hinduism ?

A. The question betrays sheer ignorance. The Congress can never become an organization of the Hindus. Those who seek to make it such will be doing great harm to India and Hinduism. India is the country of the millions but their voice is not heard. It is only the vociferous sections living in cities who talk of two nations. We should not mistake their voice for the voice of the millions.

Then it must be remembered that Muslims in the Indian Union have not said that they are not Indians and Hinduism with all its shortcomings has never encouraged separation. People professing different religions have mingled to form the Indian nation and they are all citizens of India and no section has the right to oppress another section. The power derived from the sword or from numbers is not real power. Truth is real power.

Q. What attitude should non-Muslims adopt towards the Pakistan flag!

A. The Pakistan flag for the time being will be the Muslim League's flag. If the Muslim League represents Islam then the Muslims all over the world should have one flag and those who are not hostile to Islam should respect that flag. I do not know the flags of Islam, Hinduism, Christianity or of any other religion. And if I have not made a deep study of Islam, I can be mistaken about its flag. If the flag of Pakistan, whatever its colour, represents all the people

living in Pakistan then I shall salute that flag and so shall you. In other words the two Dominions cannot become enemies of each other. I am watching with much interest and more fear what attitude the Dominion of South Africa adopts towards India. Can the people of South Africa hate the people of India ? Will the South African Whites still refuse to travel with Indians in the same compartments?

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 286-8

243. LETTER TO THADANI

July 29, 1947

MY DEAR THADANI,

You seem to have been resurrected.

You do not know how I have worked at your thesis. I discussed it with the late Principal Dhruva[1] who gave you credit for imagination but not for real discovery. You know how cautious he was in condemnation. It was his delight to see something good in everything. Then I discussed it with a scholar but a scoffer hard to please. I am unable to pass independent judgment and, not having any scholarship, all I can say is, like Barkis[2], "I am willin".

Yours,

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

244. LETTER TO WANDA DYNOWSKA

NEW DELHI,

July 29, 1947

MY DEAR UMA,

Your letter. I am doing all I can.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI UMADEVI
ADYAR
MADRAS

From a photostat: G. N. 8063. Also C. W. 5104. Courtesy: Wanda Dynowska

[1] Anandshankar Bapubhai Dhruva of Gujarat College, Ahmedabad
[2] Character in Charles Dickens's *David Copperfield*

245. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

NEW DELHI,
July 29, 1947

CHI. BHANSALI,

You must not assume the entire responsibility for Pushpa. In fact you ought not to assume any. You are under my discipline. You should, therefore, assume only as much of that responsibility as I entrust to you. In doing that lies your good, as also mine, and that of Pushpa and of the Ashram too. It is indeed a good thing that you have lost the capacity to judge people. There was a time when you possessed it in good measure. But you were more inclined to see the defects of men and of institutions. You know the results of doing that. And so you became a *sannyasi*, wandered about and submitted yourself to a great many hardships. And now you are back where you were. I see nothing but God's hand in this. I think it will be best for you to assume no responsibility not entrusted to you by me. That is your real dharma and only by acting in that way can you keep a watch on the Ashram. I have also explained to you the meaning of keeping a watch.[1] It means that you should maintain the highest standard of purity in your own conduct so that everybody else may look upon you as the ideal to be followed. I know of no better method of keeping a watch. To notice and point at people's defects does not mean keeping a watch. You are sometimes swayed by emotion and act thoughtlessly. I heard that you undertook a fast once again. There was no need at all to do that. To permit Pushpa to slacken in the least degree in the observance of rules will be tantamount to betraying her. It was I who admitted her to the Ashram at some risk. I pained her parents by doing that. She has not succeeded in becoming a perfect devotee. She has realized that she is far away from that sublime state. But her wilfulness …[2] have not yet vanished. She has still not realized the importance of abiding by the rules. You should, therefore, humbly renounce your claim to be Pushpa's elder brother or father or guardian. She must observe the Ashram rules with the utmost punctiliousness and become one with it

[1] *Vide* "Letter to J. P. Bhansali", 24-7-1947.
[2] Omission as in the source

as sugar becomes one with milk. Till she merits such a certificate, I shall not be relieved of my worry on her account. I owe a responsibility to her parents. Even if her renunciation in giving up her intention to marry the person whom she wished to marry was not the result of selfishness or wilfulness, she has yet to demonstrate that it was an act of supreme self-abnegation. I don't have to explain this to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 823. Courtesy: Balkrishna Bhave

246. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

NEW DELHI,
July 29, 1947

CHI. DINSHAW,

Sushilabehn informs me that you keep writing to her letters full of despair and grief. The grief appears also in the letters you write to me.

I am leaving for Kashmir tomorrow.[1] I shall return in two days. I shall therefore not call you there, but you may meet me in Patna. You will know from the newspapers the date of my arrival there. Maybe I shall reach there on the 9th. I shall be putting up with Dr. Mahmud. Thence I shall proceed to Noakhali. If you come, I may take you along with me. You will gain some fresh experience. We shall talk to our heart's content and we shall know all the differences of opinion we have with each other. Notwithstanding all the differences of opinion, however, the relations between us can never be affected. If I did not earlier ask you to come, the reason simply was that I did not want that the work you were doing to earn some money should suffer. Now I understand that you attach little importance to this. Therefore the main reason for not asking you to come is obviated. I hope Mother is getting on well. Gulbai[2] and the children will also be well.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Gandhiji left for Kashmir on July 31, 1947.
[2] Addressee's wife

247. LETTER TO FRENYBEHN KHANTIA

Air Mail NEW DELHI,
July 29, 1947

CHI. FRENYBEHN,

I have your letter written in English. I saw your husband's signature also on it. Is your husband the same Khantia who used to visit me in the jail along with Dinshaw?

The news that you give me about Dinshaw is painful. Now, without mentioning your letter, I am writing[1] to him asking him to come over. It is good that you wrote to me. Never mind if you wrote in English, though all of you should cultivate the habit of writing in Gujarati. I hope you will be able to read what I am writing in Gujarati.

I hope you don't assume that you would understand better what is written in Gujarati if the same was written in English. But I know of many Parsi friends who have distorted their mother tongue to such an extent that they use it only at home and only in talking with the servants.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

248. A LETTER

July 29, 1947

I have your letter of gentle rebuke and advice. It is true that I have got involved in too many things. But do not all the planets revolve round the sun? Similarly, all my activities revolve round the unity of India. And rest assured that either I shall die or this inhuman conduct of ours will cease. There is no third possibility.

I am leaving for Kashmir the day after tomorrow. I shall not make any public speeches or address meetings there. The Viceroy also feels that in the present circumstances it would be better if I went rather than Jawaharlal. I shall be there for tw days, then reach Calcutta around the 8th and from there Noakhali on the 15th. But it will be as God ordains. You know that without His will not a leaf moves.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 440

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

249. A LETTER

July 29, 1947

Anybody who wishes to serve always finds enough for his needs. He can indulge in no luxuries, of course. If, therefore, you wish to live in the Ashram for the sake of service, you should be content with whatever you get. Otherwise you should leave the Ashram and find a job. A person like you should have no difficulty in finding one. There is no third course open to a public servant.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 440

250. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 29, 1947

DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I have your letter. Your apprehension about freedom turning into ruin is justified. If that happens, whose fault will it be? Now we have to think what to do.

I want to reach there before the 15th. Let us see what God wills. Abha is better but one cannot say the improvement is very great. She moves about. I think she will be with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

How do you manage during the Ramzan? Don't you get goat's milk?

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 587

251. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

NEW DELHI,
July 29, 1947

CHI. AMRITA LAL,

You will find no difficulty in reading this much, I hope. I want to make all arrangements for reaching Noakhali before the 15th of next month. Therefore you need not come to Delhi.

Abha is all right, although I cannot say that she is completely cured. We should remain as God keeps us. I am glad that Ramen has recovered.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 10424. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

252. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

NEW DELHI,
July 29, 1947

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your long letter. I have written[1] a letter to Bhansali. Read it. Everything is included in it. What you have done is correct.

After reading the letter to Bhansali, do as you think proper. That there should be dearth of cow's milk either in the Ashram or in Sevagram is intolerable. Take whatever steps are necessary to improve the position.

It is a matter of shame for us that Champabehn should be obliged to take buffalo's milk. If we permit her to stay but cannot pro her with cow's milk at any cost, then we cannot help giving her buffalo's milk.

Consult Jajuji and find a solution.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1987

253. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 29, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I have many important things to talk to you about today. I am told I should go to Kashmir. I am not particularly desirous of going there nor should I be. It is a beautiful place, hemmed in by Himalayan peaks. But there are many other beautiful places in the world and many other places of pilgrimage. I once did want to go to Kashmir.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to J. P. Bhansali", 29-7-1947.

The Maharaja of Kashmir had invited[1] me and Sir Gopalaswami Ayyangar was his Prime Minister. But I can go to Kashmir only when God wills it.

When some time ago Pandit Jawaharlal had been detained in Kashmir[2] we needed him here. Maulana Azad was the President of the Congress. He wanted to have Jawaharlal back from Kashmir. Lord Wavell also felt the need of Jawaharlal's counsel and both Wavell and Maulana Saheb were worried. The Maulana then sent word to Jawaharlal that the mission he had undertaken was the mission of the Congress and as a matter of discipline he ought to return when the Congress wanted him to return. Jawaharlal agreed but he said that he would again be going to Kashmir. The Maulana said the matter could be taken up later and if necessary I could be sent there. I also told Jawaharlal that no one could prevent him from doing so later.

Now the Government has changed, the Viceroy has changed. I said I was prepared to go to Kashmir so that Jawaharlal might not be disturbed in what he was doing. But there were several complications and I said I would go if the Viceroy advised me to go. The Viceroy told me[3] that he himself was going to Kashmir and that I might postpone my visit. So I did not go. And now the situation is such that either Jawaharlal or I should go to Kashmir. He cannot go. There is too much work for him here. Of course the climate of Kashmir is very good and, if he went there, he would gain in health. But there are also lots of problems there. If the head of the Interim Government makes a journey to Kashmir, it can be interpreted as an attempt on his part to make Kashmir accede to India. Therefore, it seems that it would be better for me to go.

Kashmir has a Maharaja and also the subjects of the Maharaja. I am not going to suggest to the Maharaja to accede to India and not to Pakistan. This is not my intention. The real sovereign of the State are the people of the State. If the ruler is not a servant of the people then he is not the ruler. This is my belief and that is why I became a rebel because the British claimed to be the rulers of India and I refused to recognize them as rulers. Now they are about to leave

[1] In 1938

[2] It was in June 1946; *vide* "Draft Reply to Jawaharlal Nehru", 21-6-1946 and "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 22-6-1946.

[3] During an interview earlier in the day; for the Viceroy's note on the interview, *vide* Appendix "Lord Mountbatten's Note on Interview with Gandhiji", 29-7-1947.

India. Those who had come to rule have agreed to be servants. They now want to be servants in thought, word and deed. Mountbatten now will be Governor-General not because the King has so appointed him but because we, the Interim Government, want to make him the Governor-General. My idea was that a Harijan girl should be made the Governor-General. But I can see that under the present circumstances it is not possible because we have to negotiate with the Princes and attend to various other problems. Yes, when democratic rule is firmly established then it will be possible to do so.

So long the Maharaja of Kashmir could do as he liked under the protection of the Viceroy. Now the power belongs to the people. I do not want that the Maharaja should be inconvenienced. The pandits and mullahs in Kashmir know me at least by name. I have given a lot of money to Kashmiris. In Kashmir, shawl-making, embroidery, etc., are well developed handicrafts. The charkha also has done good work there. The poor people of Kashmir know me.

The people of Kashmir should be asked whether they want to join Pakistan or India. Let them do as they want. The ruler is nothing. The people are everything. The ruler will be dead one of these days but the people will remain. Some people wonder why I cannot say all this through correspondence. But that way I can do even Noakhali work through correspondence. I do not want to do anything in public when I am in Kashmir. I do not want even a public prayer, though I may have it, for prayer is part of my life.

Now as for my advice that we should fast and pray on August 15, I may say that I do not intend to mourn. But it is a matter of grief that we have no food and no clothes. Human beings kill human beings. In Lahore, people cannot leave their houses for fear that they will be killed. These are not the conditions in which we can rejoice and feast.

On April 6, 1919, the whole of India had woken up. But there were no celebrations on the day. I told Hindus and Muslims and everybody to pray, fast and spin. There was no enmity between the Hindus and Muslims at that time and everyone celebrated the day by fasting. The excitement that was witnessed on that 6th of April is something that one may not witness again. Today it is more imperative for people to fast. Millions are starving. It was a time when even collecting a crore of rupees for the Tilak Swaraj Fund was difficult. We did not have the power in our hands. Today we have

many crores of rupees in our hands. We shoulder a great responsibility. At such a time if we are not humble what will happen? If on August 15 we feast and gorge, what will Rajendra Babu do on August 16? What will he feed the people on? I shall, therefore, say that we must celebrate the day but by fasting, praying and spinning. Yes, we should not mourn.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 289-91

254. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

NEW DELHI,
July 30, 1947

CHI. KAKA,

I have your letter. If I ask Jawaharlal, he will agree to be the Chairman[1], but he will be able to do nothing. Where has he the time? How is it that all the memorial committees require big names? Has no memorial an independent importance of its own? If there is any intrinsic worth in Pali literature, some persons are bound to be attracted to it.

I feel that we should do only as much as the Advisory Committee accepts. Further than that I shall not be able to go. I remember the episode about Bhai Prabhu. The whole of it was a painful affair. "In the very act of protesting innocence," as the saying goes, "the man betrayed himself." If he writes something to me, I will send it to Jiwanlal and then the path will be clear before him. I am now leaving Delhi. I am going to Kashmir. From there I will go to Patna and thence to Noakhali. If I reach Noakhali, a new life will take shape there.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I showed to J. the papers which you sent to me regarding Goa. He said he had copies of those papers. Our representative in Goa sends him copies of all his dispatches. Let events take their own course now. Nobody should force Goa to join either this or the other part. For the present it will be enough if it joins the Indian Union. It seems

[1] Of the Dharmanand Kosambi memorial committee

wants to grab things. You may give what guidance you can from there.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10989

255. A LETTER

July 30, 1947

I am going to Kashmir. I am going only in order to see for myself the condition of the people. In any case I shall have a glimpse of the Himalayas. Who knows if I am going there for the first and the last time? I was very eager to go to Uttarkashi, but that does not seem possible now....[1]

Money comes seeking a man who wants to do public service. The progress of any public work is never held up for want of funds. If it is held up, we should conclude that there is some deficiency in us. I have had many experiences in my life which illustrate this.

Don't you remember the example of Sabarmati? Maganlal and I were greatly worried, and then all at once a motor-car came up and stopped in front of the Ashram and a stranger placed a large wad of notes in my hands.

Wasn't that also the fate of Narasinh Mehta's *hundi*? And isn't the story of Draupadi's garment similar? If, therefore, we put our trust in God and go on serving in a selfless spirit, our work will never be held up. . . .

I know that the atmosphere in Noakhali is full of fear. But my workers are there and I am sure that they will lay down their lives before any Hindu can be killed. That, at any rate, is my hope.

[From Gujarati]

Bihar Pachhi Dilhi, p. 446

[1] Omissions as in the source

256. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

SEVAGRAM,[1]
July 30, 1947

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I had no talk with Balkrishna apart from polite enquiries after his health and so on. Where was the time? I did tell him to see me at four but he did not want to say anything.

I think I have replied to Kotwal. I do not in the least relish the idea of his going to jail in Ajmer. There is absolutely no need to come here. Why should he at all go to jail? Let him do whatever constructive work he can in Indore. If he does not get my letter, let him consider this as my reply to him.

Mishrilal had lost much weight. Now he should take it easy. The same is the case with Kanaiyalal Khadiwala. Many useless persons went to the U.P. I know it.

I was glad that you gave me news about Harilal. I am keeping fairly fit these days. You should think it a matter of duty to give yourself rest.

We are waiting for the rains. If it does not rain, people will suffer.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C. W. 6091

[1] Permanent address

257. LETTER TO SYED MINHAJUL HASAN

NEW DELHI,
July 30, 1947

BHAI HASAN[1],

I have had a talk with Shuklaji[2]. I find that you have lost the confidence of the others. Under the circumstances you had better resign from the Ministry without rancour and devote yourself to whatever other public service you can take up. This should not cause resentment. A ministry can work only with a homogeneous team. This is only my advice. Do as your inner voice prompts.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

258. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
July 30, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

This is my last day here. From tomorrow there will be no prayer meeting. Of course, if you gather here for prayer, it will be good. But I shall not be present. If God grants I shall be in Shrinagar by day after tomorrow. As I said yesterday, I shall be staying there for two or three days. I have no particular business to attend to. I am not going there to attend a public meeting. I am only going there to meet the people. I shall not return empty-handed. But that is in the hands of God. I am only keeping a promise in going. After the promise is fulfilled I shall get away. From there I go to Noakhali.

I have a letter from a Bihari Muslim saying that now in Bihar Hindus and Muslims are living as brothers. Mr. Ansari[3], a Minister in Bihar, tells me that now there are no riots there. People are returning by special trains but they are not coming at the expense of

[1] Health Minister, Central Provinces
[2] Ravi Shankar Shukla, Chief Minister, Central Provinces
[3] Qaiyum Ansari, Minister for Public Works, Roads and Buildings, and Cottage Industries.

the Bihar Government. The Bihar Government is not sending them. The Bengalis had taken away people and it was for them to send them back. I shall advise the Bihar Hindus that they should accept the Muslims who are returning to Bihar. They should not depend on the Government. So long we have had to depend on the Government because power was not in our hands. Now that power is in our hands no one can say that the work has to be done by the Government. The country has been partitioned. I feel it was bad but bad or good it is now an accomplished fact. Pakistan in fact is nothing. Only the Government has been divided. This is all that I want to tell the Biharis.

Now I want to say something about Bombay. The Bombay Government have decided that the salaries of its employees will be increased according to the recommendations of the Pay Commission. I have been guilty of exaggeration. I had said[1] that the salaries had already been increased. As a matter of fact this has not yet happened. Still, since a decision has been taken the salaries will certainly be revised. Why then should the employees go on hunger-strike?

I have received a telegram from there saying that if I intervene, some agreement can be arrived at. I have said I do not hold any power. Of course they are all my friends. They have worked with me and they say that they will abide by my decision. But I cannot say anything. Ashok Mehta is there. He also wants to leave things in my hands. I must express my inability. So long we did not have power in our hands. Now that we have the power why should I destroy that power by my interference? I do not wish that people should make me a dictator. Only God can take work from me. The Government has done its work. It has agreed to implement the recommendations of the Pay Commission. Why should I spoil the thing by my intervention ? Therefore, they should not expect me to do anything about it. The employees should also not indulge in token strikes and the like. I say this in all humility. I am their friend as well as the friend of the Government and of the Rajas. They should not persuade me to do anything which is wrong. It is the duty of all the parties to get all work done by the Government that will assume office on August 15. In the days of British rule we were hampered. We tried to assert ourselves. We started a non-violent battle. We can still do so. But we have got to be equipped for it. Public opinion has to be prepared.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 26-7-1947.

Take, for instance, the question of banning cow-slaughter. Shall we bring coercion to bear on the Muslims ? Then why not on the Hindus? Why not on the Parsis? Cow-protection cannot be ensured in this manner. If we follow our respective faiths the cow can be saved without resort to legislation. I want that even Muslims should not slaughter cows. They should not eat beef. But this has to be left to them. We should not assume in our pride that since power has now come into our hands, we can force others to our will through law. I want that we should make proper use of the swaraj which we have won. Let us follow the path of dharma, so that the real swaraj we want may be ours soon.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan–I, pp. 292-4

259. EVEN PROUD GUJARAT![1]

Shri Maganbhai Desai has sent me a copy of his correspondence with Shri Ratanlal Parikh. The latter writes :

> The report in the newspapers of the Congress decision in regard to Hindi has made a great impression on the public mind. People are so much opposed to the Urdu script that it is as well that the move in support of it is no longer a live issue. Even staunch Congressmen have begun to oppose it. This means that the number of candidates for Hindustani examinations to be held in February is likely to be greatly reduced.

I hope that what Shri Ratanlal says is not true. Gujarat must not commit this folly. I do not approve of the dislike of the writers for Urdu, though of course I can understand it. But for the life of me I cannot understand this thoughtless dislike of the script. Does it not betray a bankruptcy of practical sense? The Gujaratis as businessmen do not discriminate between friend and foe. They gladly take money from both. Will they not show the same business sense in politics?

In Delhi I daily come in contact with Hindus and Muslims. Most of the Hindus speak a language which has very few Sanskrit words and many more Persian words. They or the vast majority do not know the Devanagari script. They write to me in Urdu or in indifferent English and when I take them to task for writing in English, they write in Urdu. If the national language is to be

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 10-8-1947 under the title "Thou too Gujarat !".

Hindi and the script only Devanagari, what will be the plight of these Hindus?

But I confess that in this matter I have a bias for Muslim brethren, though not of Gujarat. The Muslims of Gujarat do not know Urdu. They can learn it with difficulty. Their mother tongue is Gujarati. But the language of the Muslims in North India is Hindustani, that is to say, simple Urdu. The millions of villagers of India have nothing to do with books. They speak Hindustani, which the Muslims write in the Urdu script, while of the Hindus some write in Urdu and some in the Nagari script. Therefore, the duty of people like you and me is to write in both the scripts. The Gujaratis decided to perform this duty with gladness. They found joy in doing this. It was not a bitter draught. Why then have they developed a dislike for the Urdu script now? For me it has become all the sweeter in the present atmosphere of bitterness. The non-Pakistani muslims are all the dearer to me. They must not look up to Pakistan for their safety. Such a thing would be a shame for Hinduism. Sanatana Hindu Dharma is not narrow. It is liberal. It is not circumscribed like the frog in the well. It is the dharma of mankind. A Malayali commentator of the *Mahabharata* has, in my opinion rightly, called it the history of mankind. Be it as it may, the word Hindu is not derived from Sanskrit. The foreigners called the inhabitants on this side of the river Sindhu Hindus. We have adopted the title. Manu is not the name of any one man. The Law of Manu is known as *Manava Dharma Shastra* (the Law of Mankind). This Law has human origin. One can only guess as to how many of the *shlokas* are the original work of Manu and how many are interpolations. Dr. Bhagwandas has pointed out a number of interpolations. The Arya Samaj looks upon certain others as such. There has been some difference of opinion even on the interpretation. In my opinion whatever out of them appeals to the head and heart of the wise, is the law for mankind. There is, therefore, always room for addition or deletion. The *shlokas* looked upon as interpolations are the result of the efforts, successful or unsuccessful, of the reformers in different ages. Such a law belongs to all mankind. It does not permit of discrimination on grounds of caste and class. It knows no distinctions between Hindus, Muslims and Christians—all are equally men. How can one believing in this Shastra make distinction between one person and another. "This is mine and that is someone else's, is the calculation of narrow minds' is one of the pearls of wisdom. Going by this immortal *shloka* you and I cannot discriminate

between Hindustan and Pakistan. What even if you and I happen to be the only ones having such a belief. If we are true, others are bound to follow us.

The Congress has always had this broad vision. Today it is needed more than ever before. India has accepted partition at the point of the bayonet. This cannot be undone in the same way. The two can become one only when there is heart unity.

The omens today seem to point to the contrary. In this crisis the Congress must stand firm like a rock. The national language can only be one, not two. It cannot be Persianized Urdu or Sanskritized Hindi. It must be a beautiful blend of the two simple forms written in either script. How I wish Gujarat would remain unaffected by the gathering storm. Will those who have soared high now crash at the first blow? If I have my way, this will not happen. There is a Gujarati hymn which says, "Will he who has been purified by the fire of love ever turn back?" Let us follow the poet. Let us not turn away from the Urdu script. We must not turn back.

ON THE TRAIN TO KASHMIR, July 31, 1947

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 10-8-1947

260. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ON THE TRAIN,
July 31, 1947

CHI. AMRIT,

Your last words were penetrating. Personal service when it merges into universal service is the only service worth doing. All else is rubbish.

Keep well and cheer up.

The journey is going well. Not a soul at the stations. Hence the night undisturbed.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3706, Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6515

261. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

ON THE TRAIN,
4.30 a. m., July 31, 1947

CHI. MANI,

Read the enclosed[1] and do what is necessary. Your steadfast devotion to Father has given you a magnificent opportunity to serve. Utilize it as you wish.

Is there any truth in the letter I wrote about the Khaksars?[2] They have now written to me in detail. Pass on the enclosed[3] to Rajkumari.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MANIBEHN
C/o SARDAR PATEL
1 AURANGZEB ROAD
NEW DELHI,

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 139

262. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

ON WAY TO KASHMIR,
July 31, 1947

CHI. SHARDA,

I Keep thinking about you. You should do what you and Chokhawala think best. You should decide to "do or die" either in the Ashram or at Surat. I can think of nothing else. You should have no worry. Nobody should cling to life, not you certainly. Your body is what it is because you are so built.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10078. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

[1] A letter about the refugees. However, this is not available.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 26-7-1947.
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

263. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

[*July 31, 1947*][1]

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Yesterday I despatched the letters to you. I am sending three Europeans to you. Please look after them. Give them lots of work. Since they are poor they will need to be cared for. Do not show them undue importance. Treat them as you would our own people. They do not even take milk. If you find them a burden, you can send them on their way. They are good men. They are hard-working. Prabhakar and Wardekar have already come to know them.

Please take good care of the cows. Take Balvantsinha, Parnerkar and Aryanayakum into your confidence in all maters. Do what Jajuji says. In my view Sevagram cannot do without milk. Maybe we should dispense with the condition that everyone should get milk only from the village. Do what you think is right.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

264. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESIDENT, PUNJAB STUDENT CHRISTIAN LEAGUE

RAWALPINDI,

[*July 31, 1947*][2]

Replying to a question by the President of the Punjab Student Christian League, Gandhiji said:

Foreign missionaries will not be asked to quit India. Indian Christians will be free to occupy high official positions in the Indian Dominion.

Asked if non-Christians in the Indian Dominion would have freedom to embrace Christianity, Mahatma Gandhi said he would be guided in this connection by the rules and laws framed.

Christ came into this world to preach and spread the gospel of love and peace, but what his followers have brought about is tyranny

[1] In the source, this is placed among the letters of this date,

[2] Gandhiji was in Rawalpindi on this date.

and misery. Christians who were taught the maxim of 'Love thy neighbour as thyself,'[1] are divided among themselves.

The Hindustan Times, 3-8-1947

265. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

RAWALPINDI,[2]
July 31, 1947

Speaking after the *Ramdhun* he said that he had received two letters which he would like to answer. The first was in English. The handwriting was good but that was little consolation for him. The British were quitting India but the people had become so used to slavery that they still could not shake off the lure of the English language which few could ever hope to master. This linguistic conquest constituted a worse type of slavery than the conquest by the British sword. Every language was good in its own place. He would not ask the Zulus or the Dutch in South Africa to learn Gujarati, for instance, Similarly, he would not ask all the sisters assembled there to learn English. That was neither possible nor desirable. His mother tongue was Gujarati. He loved it. But he would not think of making it the lingua franca of India. There were hardly a crore of Indians who spoke Gujarati but there were nearly 21 crores who talked in Hindustani; whether they could read or write was a different matter. Hindustani was written in the Urdu or Nagari script.

The second letter was written in beautiful Urdu handwriting. He encouraged all those who came in contact with him to learn the two scripts and he was proud of the fact. He would rather teach Urdu to his boys and girls than teach them English.

In the letter written in English, the writer had asked him to spend at least a week in Rawalpindi and see with his own eyes what the Hindus had suffered. Why should he wish to go to Kashmir ? His reply was that ever since he had gone to Delhi he had wanted to come to the Punjab. He wanted to visit Lahore, Amritsar and Rawalpindi. But he believed that he was in God's hands. God was the Master of all the universe and He could upset the plans of men. The original plan was that he would spend a day at Lahore and Amritsar, two days at Rawalpindi and at least ten days in Kashmir. Now he had only two or three days for Kashmir. And that too was in fulfilment of a promise.

[1] *St. Matthew*, xix. 19

[2] According to the report the meeting was held in the compound of Lala Devraj Anand. But it proved too small for it. The consequent overcrowding and noise made Gandhiji cut short the prayer to *Ramdhun* only.

Though he could not stay in the Punjab, he had not forgotten them. He had to reach Noakhali before the 15th. That again was in fulfilment of a promise. He was a devotee of Rama and Rama had said that a promise must be kept at any cost. He referred to the black flag demonstration that Hindu young men had arranged at the Amritsar railway station. All the time the train stopped they kept shouting 'Gandhi, Go Back' in English. He had to close his ears as he could not stand the noise. He closed his eyes also and kept on repeating God's name. They were too noisy and too excited, else he would have liked to get down and ask them what harm he had done to them to deserve such noisy hostility. He knew however that praise and blame must be received with equanimity. At the other stations people were extremely well-behaved and cordial. He had not been disturbed during the night and he was grateful for it.

In the second letter the writer had objected to the projected recitation from the Koran. If the people had been quiet, they would have heard the verse from the Koran. It was a fine verse and he saw no reason why he should avoid it simply because it was from the Koran and written in Arabic. No one could object to the sentiments expressed therein. If they wished to live in peace as brave men and women, they must cultivate the virtue of tolerance. The only right way of fighting the misled Muslims was the way of love. But if they did not appreciate it, they had the crude way of retaliation open to them; but to Insult the scriptures of either religion because of the misdeeds of its followers was a thing which he could never understand.

Harijan, 24-8-1947

266. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON[1]

[*July, 1947*][2]

Things are topsy-turvy. We are all, including the British, on our trial. God is great. He will make possible what appears impossible to man.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1529

[1] This was a postscript to a letter from Amrit Kaur of the addressee.
[2] According to the addressee the letter was brought to her in July.

267. BURIED ALIVE?

A correspondent from Hyderabad (Deccan) writes: "Gandhi is being buried alive."

> Gandhi means Gandhi's ideals. It is through these ideals that we have reached where we are. But we are kicking away the very ladder over which we have climbed so high. And it is those who are considered Gandhi's greatest followers who are doing this. Hindu-Muslim unity, Hindustani, khadi and village industries have been completely forgotten. Those who still talk about them are either themselves deceived or are deceiving others.

This is by far the best way of burying me alive. But can I believe that I have already been buried ? Who is my greatest follower and who is the smallest ? I have only one follower, that is myself, or all Indians. My followers are those who have faith in the above-mentioned activities. I do hope that crores of villagers do believe in these few things. Even then the allegation is quite true. However, I find that even the members of the Muslim League have started saying that we are all brothers. It has even been accepted that we are citizens of both the States. For the time being there is no need for passports. That will become necessary if either of the two countries introduces them. Let us hope that passports will never be needed and let us so behave that they will not be needed.

Let us hope that neither of the communities will give up khadi and cause harm to the village industries. I have already written about Hindustani. How can we give it up? How can the Muslims whose mother tongue is Urdu give it up? They have to make their Urdu simple. Similarly the Hindus will have to make Hindi simple. Only then can the two communities understand each other. The correspondent has forgotten the most important thing. The Hindus have to purify themselves by eschewing untouchability and caste differences. Similarly, Muslims have to purify themselves by giving up their hatred of Hindus.

SRINAGAR, August 3, 1947

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 17-8-1947

268. THE TRI-COLOUR

The correspondent from Hyderabad who wrote "Gandhi is being buried alive"[1] writes further on :

> The tri-colour was the symbol of our struggle. A grave sin has been committed by taking away the wheel from it. The new wheel or the old Asoka Chakra has no connection with Gandhi's wheel; indeed it is incompatible with it. Gandhi's wheel was above religion while the new wheel is a symbol of Hinduism. Gandhi's wheel is a sign of 'non-violent economy' while the new one represents the Sudarshan Chakra[2] (as Shri Munshi[3] says in his broadcast) which represents violence. In this way the new flag will encourage the violent tendencies in the nation. A deliberate attempt is being made in that direction. This is not the way to bring Pakistan back into the fold but to perpetuate the division.

I have not read what Shri Munshi said. The national flag is doomed if it signifies what the correspondent says. Under no circumstances can the Asoka Chakra become a symbol of violence. Emperor Asoka was a Buddhist and a votary of non-violence. The Sudarshan Chakra can have no connection with the wheel in the flag. According to me the Sudarshan Chakra is a symbol of non-violence. But that is my personal view. Generally the Sudarshan Chakra is believed to be an instrument of violence. We can say from the debates which took place on the new flag that if it has not rendered the spinning-wheel valueless it has without doubt diminished its value. Whether the Asoka Chakra and the spinning-wheel are the same thing will ultimately depend on the behaviour of the people.

SRINAGAR, August 3, 1947

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 17-8-1947

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The wheel of Vishnu

[3] K. M. Munshi (1887-1971); educationist and man of letters; Home Minister of Bombay, 1937; Member, Constituent Assembly; Minister for Food, Government of India, 1952; Governor, U. P., 1953-55; joined Swatantra Party in 1960; founded Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan

269. LETTER TO VENKATA RAO

SRINAGAR,
August 3, 1947

BHAI VENKATA RAO,

Two questions from your letter will be answered in *Harijan*.

I think it would be difficult to keep your wife in Sevagram. It does not appear that I shall be able to go there. The management of the Ashram is not in my hands. You should not leave her. Let her stay with you and serve her as best as you can.

I can do nothing about Hyderabad. You have to think and decide for yourself about going or not going.

Write to Kakasaheb Kalelkar at Wardha about the language matter. My knowledge of languages is superficial.

Blessings from
BAPU

19 CANNING LANE
NEW DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

270. THE REASON FOR ADDITION[1]

During the three days I passed in Srinagar, though I had prayers in the compound of Lala Kishorilal's bungalow, where I was accommodated, I made no speeches. I had so declared before leaving Delhi. But some of the audience sent me questions. One was :

> I attended your prayer meeting last evening in which you recited two prayers of the other communities. May I know what is your idea in doing so and what you mean by religion ?

As I have observed before now, the selection from the Koran was introduced some years ago on the suggestion of Raihana Tyabji[2] who was then living in the Sevagram Ashram and the one from the Parsi prayers at the instance of Dr. Gilder who recited the Parsi prayer

[1] This appeared under the title "Notes".
[2] Abbas Tyabji's daughter, a devotee of Lord Krishna

on the break of my fast[1] in the Aga Khan Palace during our detention. I am of opinion that the addition enriched the prayer. It reached the hearts of a larger audience than before. It certainly showed Hinduism in its broad and tolerant aspect. The questioner ought also to have asked why the prayer commenced with the Buddhist prayer in Japanese. The selection of the stanzas of the prayer has a history behind it befitting the sacred character. The Buddhist prayer was the prayer which the whole of Sevagram resounded in the early morning when a good Japanese monk[2] was staying at the Sevagram Ashram and who by his silent and dignified conduct had endeared himself to the inmates of the Ashram.

JAMMU, August 5, 1947

Harijan, 17-8-1947

271. SPEECH AT GURUDWARA, PUNJA SAHEB[3]

[*August 5, 1947*][4]

Replying to the address Gandhiji [said he] did not consider it possible that Eastern Punjab should be handed over entirely to the Sikhs to govern. He felt that Sikhs should never entertain such an unworthy ambition. The Sikhs were reputed, and rightly, to be a warlike race. With them of all the persons in the world, merit and merit alone should be the sole test for holding any office. He hoped that throughout the two dominions merit would be the sole test. The speaker invited the Sikhs to lead in this desirable competition.

Coming to the protection of Punja Saheb, Nankana Saheb and the other Gurudwaras that may be found in Pakistan or elsewhere, he said:

One Sikh is equal to one and a quarter lakh men. Why should he beg for anyone's help? If they have the mettle no one can cast an evil eye on Punja Saheb. But these days the Sikh brethren have taken to luxury and enjoyment. I do not intend to say that Sikhs alone have fallen into that habit. Among others women also have taken to fashionable ways though to a lesser degree. But do not think that I

[1] On March 3, 1943; *vide* "Talk Before Breaking the 21-Day Fast", 3-3-1943.

[2] Rev. G. Haishao

[3] The Sikhs assembled at the Gurudwara of Punja Saheb, near Rawalpindi, one of the oldest of Sikh shrines, and presented an address to Gandhiji which described their sufferings and their fears for the Gurudwaras.

[4] From *Calcuttano Chamatkar*, the report in which has been collated with the version in *Harijan*

am defending them. Some take liquor in large quantities while others take less but that does not mean that it is a virtue to drink less. Similarly it is not a virtue to be less fashionable. As long as true Sikhs are alive no one can cause you any harm.

Do not look to any other power outside yourselves for the protection of these shrines. I would like every Sikh to be a defender of his faith and, therefore, of all the Gurudwaras and not merely of Punja Saheb which is one of the greatest. At the same time I want you to shed all fear about the future. I would ask you to rely upon the plighted word of the Muslim leaders. They have got their Pakistan. They have no quarrel now with anyone in India—at least they should have none. If your fears materialize and any attempt at desecration of the Gurudwaras is made by the Muslims, it will be contrary to the tradition of Islam as I know it. And those Muslims who take part in such desecration would be partakers in the destruction of Islam. Every faith is on its trial in India. God is the infallible Judge and the world which is His creation will judge the Muslim leaders not according to their pledge and promises but according to the deeds of these leaders and their followers. What I have said of the Muslim leaders is also true of the leaders and followers of other faith.

Calcuttano Chamatkar, p. 23, and *Harijan*, 17-8-1947

272. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

WAH,
August 5, 1947

Gandhiji said that he was glad that he was able to visit the Refugee Camp at Wah and see the patients in the Camp hospital and other appointments in connection with it. He was glad too that he was able to pay what was his second visit to Punja Saheb. He had a talk with the representatives of the Camp.

Before, however, he dealt with matters arising out of these talks with the representatives of the refugees, he said that he would like to say a word about his visit to Kashmir. He had made up his mind not to hold any public meeting or address them but he was able see the workers. Begum Saheba (wife of Sheikh Abdulla[2]) was constantly with him throughout the three days he was in Srinagar. He was able also

[1] This appeared under the title "Kashmir and Refugees".

[2] Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, President (1905-82); National Muslim Conference; President, All-India States People's Conference; Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, 1948-53 and 1975-82.

to see the Maharaja Saheb[1], the Maharani Saheb and Prime Minister Kak Saheb[2]. He was sorry that he was not able to see Sheikh Abdullah who was undoubtedly the leader of the Kashmiris. He had not gone there see the Sheikh Saheb. He was able, however, to hold public prayers for two days in Kashmir and one day in Jammu. These were attended by thousands. He could say that on August 15, all being well, legally the State of Kashmir and Jammu would be independent. But he was sure that the State would not remain in that condition for long after August 15. It had to join either the union or Pakistan. It had a predominantly Muslim population. But he saw that Sheikh Saheb had fired Kashmiris with local patriotism. British Paramountcy would terminate on the 15th instant. Real paramountcy would then commence. He referred to the paramountcy of the Kashmiris. They had one language, one culture and, so far as he could see, they were one people. He could not distinguish readily between a Kashmiri Hindu and a Kashmiri Mussalman. In the large deputation that he saw it was very difficult for him to know whether it was predominantly Muslim or Hindu. Whatever it was, he had no hesitation in saying that the will of the Kashmiris was the supreme law in Kashmir and Jammu. He was glad to say that the Maharaja Saheb and the Maharani Saheba readily acknowledged the fact. He had the good fortune to read what was euphemistically called the Treaty of Amritsar[3] but which was in reality a deed of sale. He supposed that it would be dead on August 15. The seller was the then British Governor-General[4] and Maharaja Gulab Singh was the buyer. The treaty going, would the State revert to the British and therefore, to England? If to India, to which part ? He held that without going into the intricacies of law which he had no right to dilate upon, common sense dictated that the will of the Kashmiris should decide the fate of Kashmir and Jammu. The sooner it was done the better. How the will of the people would be determined was a fair question. He hoped that the question would be decided between the two Dominions, the Maharaja Saheb and the Kashmiris. If the four could come to a joint decision, much trouble would be avoided. After all Kashmir was a big State; it had the greatest strategic value, perhaps in all India. So much for Kashmir.

He would now deal with the question of the refugees. Among them they were nearly 9,000. The Hindus and the Sikhs who discussed the question with him said that they were afraid of the approach of August 15. He confessed that he did not in any way whatsoever share the fear. Nor could he appreciate it. The Muslims had got their Pakistan. They could now have no quarrel with the Hindus and the Sikhs of the Punjab. Jinnah Saheb and other Muslim Leaguers had given assurances that the non-Muslims were as safe in Pakistan as the Muslims. He invited the audience to accept the assurance. Supposing that the assurance proved untrue and the worst fears

[1] Hari Singh

[2] Ramchandra Kak

[3] `Of March 16, 1846, by which the State of Jammu and Kashmir was created

[4] Sir Henry Hardinge

of the refugees proved true, it would be the beginning of the ruin of Islam. He refused to believe that Muslim leaders would be guilty of such a suicidal act. He asked the refugees, men and women, to dispel all fear. If he could put off his departure for Noakhali, he would gladly pass August 15 in the midst of the refugees at Wah. He proposed, however, to do the next best thing. The audience saw Dr. Sushila Nayyar taking notes of what he was saying. She herself belonged to the district of Gujrat in Western Pakistan. He had conferred with her before coming to the prayer meeting and though she was otherwise to accompany him to Noakhali, she had accepted his advice to stay with the refugees on his behalf, in order to help them to dispel all fear about August 15. He knew that she had no such fear. She was with him in Noakhali as was also her brother Pyarelal. She was posted in one of the worst-affected areas of Noakhali and through medical assistance she had become popular among the Muslims as she was undoubtedly among the Hindus. He had just heard from the District Commissioner who was a Muslim, that the refugees in and about Rawalpindi had nothing to fear. They should feel as safe as the Muslim inhabitants.

Harijan, 24-8-1947

273. NOTE ON KASHMIR VISIT[1]

[*August 6, 1947*][2]

No public prayer was held on the day of arrival but I appeared before them twice or thrice and said that I could not make any public speech, not because there was any prohibition but because I had promised to myself that if I was to make my visit devoid of political significance in so far as it was possible, I must not address public meetings. . . .[3] The Prime Minister . . . told me that he had no objection whatsoever to public prayers. . . . Consequently, public prayers were held during the two days following in Srinagar and the third in Jammu.

During the two interviews with the Prime Minister I told him about his unpopularity among the people. . . . He wrote to the Maharaja . . . that on a sign from him he would gladly resign. . . . The Maharaja had sent me a message . . . that the Maharaja and the Maharani were anxi-ous to see me. I met them . . . . The heir-

[1] This was sent to Jawaharlal Nehru "to be shared with Vallabhbhai Patel"; *vide* the following item.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Omissions in the item are as in the source.

apparent with his leg in plast-er was also present. . . . Both admitted that with the lapse of British Para-mountcy the true Paramountcy of the people of Kashmir would com-mence. However much they might wish to join the Union, they would have to make the choice in accordance with the wishes of the people. How they could be determined was not discussed at that interview. . . .

Bakshi (Ghulam Mohammad[1]) was most sanguine that the result of the free vote of the people, whether on the adult franchise or on the existing register, would be in favour of Kashmir joining the Union provided of course that Sheikh Abdullah and his co-prisoners were released, all bans were removed and the present Prime Minister was not in power. Probably he echoed the general sentiment. I studied the Amritsar treaty properly called "sale deed". I presume it lapses on the 15th instant. To whom does the State revert? Does it not go to the people ?

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 357-8

274. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

LAHORE,
August 6, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

I am sending a note[2] to Jawaharlal. He will show it to you.

Kak has written a letter to the Maharaja. He will be sending you a copy of it. He has shown it to me. He has a sweet tongue. I had an hour's talk with the Maharaja and Maharani. He agreed that only what the subjects want should be done. But he did not say anything about the main thing. He therefore sent his private secretary to express his regrets. The thing is that he wants to get rid of Kak. He has been deliberating on how he can do it. It had almost been decided to appoint Sir Jaylal[3]. I think you should do something in the matter. In my opinion the situation in Kashmir can be saved.

The work done in the Wah Camp is quite good. The people ought not to be removed from there. You should take up this matter with he Pakistan Government. Hindus and Sikhs should be

[1] Acting President of the Kashmir National Conference; became Deputy Prime Minister of Kashmir after independence

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] Judge of the Punjab High Court

rehabilitated in Rawalpindi. Read the speeches[1] I have made in the Punja Saheb and Wah Camp. I have made that suggestion.

I am staying with Rameshwari Nehru here and am leaving in the evening by the Calcutta Mail. I will stop in Patna for a day and then proceed to Calcutta and Noakhali.

As I felt it was necessary I have left behind Sushila[2] in the Camp. The people welcome it. They are in great panic but I see no reason for it.

I hope you are taking care of your health.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 361-2

275. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

LAHORE,
August 6, 1947

SARDAR SAHEB,

I am giving this note to the Khaksar friends who had met me there[3]. They complain of further injustice. They had left their luggage in a hotel and come to see me. The police took away their luggage in their absence. I told them I could do no more than write and enquire. They said: "No one would listen to us. Give us a letter so that someone may give us a patient hearing, after that what is ordained will happen." They say they desire nothing except to serve the people. I am not asking you to hear them yourself. It should be enough if you ask some official to hear their complaint.

Please send me a reply to my earlier letter on the subject.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 359-60

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Gurudwara, Punja Saheb", 5-8-1947 and "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 5-8-1947.

[2] Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[3] In Delhi; *vide* "Letter to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel", 26-7-1947.

276. TALK WITH CONGRESS WORKERS

LAHORE,
August 6, 1947

Mahatma Gandhi said :

The rest of my life is going to be spent in Pakistan, maybe in East Bengal or West Punjab, or perhaps, the North-West Frontier Province.

In answer to a question by Dr. Lehna Singh, General Secretary of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee, Gandhiji said that if the Pakistan flag was such as would ensure equal rights and full protection to the minorities, they should all accept and honour the flag, and have absolutely no hesitation in saluting it. He added :

I would ask you not to disown the Pakistan flag merely on the ground that it bears the crescent. I must, however, say that in case no assurance of the kind I have mentioned is forthcoming, at least I will refuse to salute the flag.

Replying to a similar question in connection with the flag of the Indian Union, he said:

I must say that if the flag of the Indian Union will not contain the emblem of the charkha I will refuse to salute that flag. You know the National Flag of India was first thought of by me and I cannot conceive of India's National Flag without the emblem of the charkha. We have, however, been told by Pandit Nehru and others that the sign of wheel or the chakra in the new National Flag symbolizes the charkha also. Some describe the wheel-mark as Sudarshan Chakra, but I know what Sudarshan Chakra means.

Referring to the Punjab, Gandhiji said :

My heart has always been with the Punjab and the sad tales of woes and sufferings of the Punjab which I have been hearing, have made me always think of the Punjab. Do not think that I have forgotten your province. I am fully aware of the sufferings of the Punjab. I have been yearning to come to the Punjab ever since I came to Delhi, but there were certain forces which were against my coming to this province. My 10 present place is in Noakhali and I would go there even if I have to die. But as soon as I am free from Noakhali I will come to the Punjab. I hope to be free from Noakhali very soon.

I am grieved to learn that people are running away from the

West Punjab and I am told that Lahore is being evacuated by the non-Muslims. I must say that this is what it should not be. If you think Lahore is dead or is dying, do not run away from it, but die with what you think is the dying Lahore.

When you suffer from fear you die before death comes to you. That is not glorious. I will not feel sorry if I hear that people in the Punjab have died not as cowards but as brave men. I am not prepared to submit to any kind of compulsion or any interference with religion. I would refuse to stop saying 'Rama' if I am forced to do so and would prefer to be murdered. Similarly I cannot be forced to salute any flag. But if in that act I am murdered I would bear no ill will against anyone and would rather pray for better sense for the person or persons who murder me.

My conception of a Sikh has always been of a brave person, who does not fear death, but who will not do any harm to any innocent person.

Gandhiji said that if the present quarrel between Hindus and Muslims and Sikhs continued it would serve as an invitation to any foreign power to come and invade India. He, therefore, made an earnest appeal to put a stop to the present quarrel which did not credit either community.

The Hindustan Times, 8-8-1947

277. TALK WITH RAILWAY GUARD

[After *August 6, 1947*][1]

There were big crowds at all the stops on the way. On top of this, it began to rain heavily at night. The roof of Gandhiji's carriage leaked, flooding the compartment. The guard suggested that Gandhiji shift to another compartment.

GANDHIJI: What will happen to this one?

GUARD: The passengers from the other compartment will occupy it.

If it is good enough for them, it should be good enough for me, too. How can I think of making myself comfortable at others' expense!

Is there any service I can render?

Do not harass poor passengers and do not take bribes. That will be the greatest service you can render to me.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 361

[1] The talk took place while Gandhiji was returning to Patna, having left Lahore on August 6, in the evening.

278. A DRAFT DECLARATION

Shri Brijlal Nehru sends for publication the following draft declaration :

> Draft declaration to be signed by all members of the Public Service in India, Civil or Military, and by all candidates for the Service, whether Central, Provincial or Local, and by all applicants for other profitable jobs under these Governments and the members of the legislatures including the Constituent Assembly :
>
> I hereby solemnly declare that
>
> 1. I am a subject of the Union of India to which I pledge my loyalty in all circumstances.
>
> 2. I repudiate the theory that Hindus and the Muslims are two separate Nations and hold the view that all the people of India, to whatever race or religion they may belong, are parts of one Nation.
>
> 3. I shall to conduct myself in all my actions and speech as to strengthen this idea of One Nationality of all the inhabitants of this ancient and sacred land.
>
> 4. If at any time I am found guilty of a breach of this declaration, I shall render myself liable to removal from any office or post of profit that I may be holding at the time.

The wording may admit of improvement. But the spirit behind is surely admirable and worthy of adoption if we are to get out of unhealthy growth in the body politic.

ON THE TRAIN TO PATNA, August 7, 1947

Harijan, 17-8-1947

279. NOTES

WHY NOT INDIAN?

His second question was why Lord Mountbatten was selected as the first Governor-General. The reason so far as I know is properly guessed by the questioner. There was no equallysuitable Indian for the post. He, being the part, if not the sole, author of the conception lying behind the Indian Independence Bill, seemed to the members of the Interim Government to be the fittest person to pilot the ship of State safe through the troubled waters. The appointment if it was a

credit to the British, was equally a credit to the Indian statesmen who had shown themselves free from prejudice and who were capable of rising above prejudice. They showed that they were brave enough to trust their erstwhile opponents.

THE MINORITIES

He next asks why I do not agree that the minorities should quit their respective dominions.

No one has asked me to agree. But I should oppose any such movement There is no occasion to distrust the majority in either Dominion. And in any case, now that there are two sovereign States in India, each has to ensure the proper treatment of the minorities in the other. Let us hope that such a contingency will never arise. I hold too that every right carries with it a duty, better still, there is no right which does not flow from duty duly performed.

LEAVING POLITICS AFTER THE 15TH?

Fourthly, he asks whether I would leave politics after the 15th when India will be free.

In the first instance there is no freedom approaching the Kingdom of God. We seem to be as far from it as ever. And in any case the life of the millions is my politics from which I dare not free myself without denying my life work and God. That my politics may take a different turn is quite possible. But that will be determined by circumstances.

Lastly he says :

> You have done a lot of work in Bihar; why was the Punjab ignored?

All I can say is that my not going to the Punjab must not be counted as my neglect of the province. Nevertheless the question is quite apposite and has been asked more than once. The neatest answer I gave was that I had no call from within and my counsellors gave me no encouragement.

ON THE TRAIN TO PATNA, August 7, 1947

Harijan, 17-8-1947

280. STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES

There is an attempt today to bring together all the existing students' organizations in a national convention, to revise the basis of the student movement and to evolve a united national organization of students. What, in your opinion, should be the scope of this new organization? What activities should this students' organization undertake in the new circumstances in the country?

There is no doubt that there should be one national organization including the Hindus, the Muslims and the others. Students are the makers of the future. They cannot be partitioned. I am sorry to observe that neither the students have thought for themselves nor have the leaders left them to their studies so that they can become good citizens. The rot began with the alien government. We, the inheritors, have not taken the trouble to rectify the errors of the past. Then the different political groups have sought to catch the students as if they were shoals of fish. And stupidly the students have run into the net spread for them.

It is therefore a herculean task for any students' organization to undertake. But there must be a heroic spirit among them who would not shrink from the task. The scope will be to knit them together into one. This they cannot do unless they will learn to steer clear of active politics. A student's duty is to study the various problems that require solution. His time for action comes after he finishes his studies.

Today students' organizations are more concerned with passing resolutions on political affairs than devoting their energies to the task of national reconstruction. This is partly due to the attempts which political party have been making to capture the students' organizations for their party purposes. Our present disunity too can be traced to these party politics. We, therefore, want to evolve some method by which we can prevent the repetition of all this party politics and disunity in the proposed national union of students. Do you think it is possible for the students' organizations to eschew politics completely? If not, what, in your opinion, is the extent to which students' organizations should interest themselves in politics?

This question is partly answered above. They must eschew active politics. It is a sign of one-sided growth that all parties 14 have made use of the student world for their purpose. This was probably inevitable when the purpose of education was to create a

race of slaves who would hug their slavery. That part of the business is over, I hope. The students' first business is to think out the education that the children of a free nation should receive. The education of today is obviously not such. I must not go into the question as to what it should be. Only they must not allow themselves to be deceived into the belief that it is the function only of the elders in the university senates. They must stimulate the faculty of thinking. I do not even remotely suggest that the students can force the situation by strikes and the like. They have to create public opinion by offering constructive and enlightened criticism. The senators having been brought up in the old school are slow to move. They can truly be acted upon by enlightenment.

> Today, the majority of students are not interesting themselves in national service. Many of them are cultivating what they consider 'fashionable' western habits, and more and more students are resorting to bad habits like drinking, etc. There is little efficiency and little desire for independent thinking. We want to tackle all these problems, and build up character, discipline and efficiency in youth. How do you think we can do it ?

This deals with the present distemper. It will disappear when a calm atmosphere is produced, when the students cease to be agitators and take to sober studies. A student's life has been rightly likened to the life of a sannyasi. He must be the embodiment of simple living and high thinking. He must be discipline incarnate. His pleasure is derived from his studies. They do provide real pleasure when study ceases to be a tax the student has to pay. What can be a greater pleasure than that a student marches from knowledge to more knowledge?

ON THE TRAIN TO PATNA, August 7, 1947

Harijan, 17-8-1947

281. IS HE BURIED ALIVE ?

There is substance in the biting criticism.[1] But I cling to the hope that I am not yet buried alive. The hope rests on the belief that the masses have not lost faith in them. When it is proved that they have, they will be lost and I can then be said to have been buried alive. But so long as my faith burns bright, as I hope it will even if I stand

[1] *Vide* "Buried Alive", 3-8-1947.

alone, I shall be alive in the grave and what is more, speaking from it. The correspondent forgets untouchability and prohibition. The former is rapidly disappearing. And it looks as if prohibition is coming. I am quite sure that if the Congress forsakes the ideals it adopted in 1920, it will commit suicide.

ON THE TRAIN TO PATNA, August 7, 1947

Harijan, 17-8-1947

282. EVIL OF HORSE-RACING

A well-known gentleman writes :[1]

I have already written[2] about the evil of horse-racing. But it does not seem to have had any effect. Now we are independent. But we are still the same. If we are not careful, we shall have proved the saying that changing one's colour does not change one's nature.

It will be a very strange thing if the vices of the alien rulers persist while their virtues leave with them.

ON THE TRAIN TO PATNA, August 7, 1947

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 17-8-1947

283. TELEGRAM TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY

August 7, 1947

CHIEF MINISTER SUHRAWARDY SAHEB

CALCUTTA

I CONTINUE RECEIVE DOLEFUL WIRES ABOUT INCREASING LAW- LESSNESS NOAKHALI. I SUGGEST PROMPT ATTENTION WIRES OF SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA AND PROMPT ACTION. AM PUBLISHING WIRES.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: M.M.U./XXIII

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had questioned the running of extra trains and cars between Bombay and Poona for races despite shortage of railway coaches and petrol and wondered how a poor country could afford such costly amusement.

[2] *Vide* "Horse Racing", 7-8-1946.

284. LETTER TO LILAVATI P. ASAR

PATNA,
August 8, 1947

CHI. LILI,

I received your letter yesterday on the train. I arrived here this morning. I shall be off to Calcutta in the evening. You seem to be facing many hardships. I have left Sushila at the Wah camp. She will be free after the 17th. You will be really free from anxiety when Dwarkadas has fully recovered. You are in the situation of a person under heavy debts for whom a little additional debt makes no difference.

Your ears will have been completely cured by now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar.

285. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

PATNA,
August 8, 1947

CHI. JAIRAMDAS[1],

I have your telegram.

1. You have to do all your work in Hindustani. You should speak Hindustani, deliver speeches in Hindustani and write letters in Hindustani.
2. Live a natural and simple life.
3. The administration here is in a mess. Clean it up if you can.
4. The police problem is not resolved. It should be settled.
5. Maybe, the officers are not loyal enough. See about it.
6. All Ministers should do all work jointly.
7. Dr. Mahmud and Ansari have not resolved their differences.

[1] Governor of Bihar

Meet them both.

8. Take care of the interests of minorities.

9. The problem of zamindars has not been solved.

10. Remember, you are not only a constitutional officer. There are Biharis. They have a right to demand all sorts of service from you and they should get it.

11. Do not forget village industries and khadi. Go to villages and move about with people as one of them. There should be prohibition.

12. This does not mean that you should ruin your health. Meet Muslim Leaguers freely.

13. Your secretary should be efficient and should not be of any party.

Now your ahimsa will be tested.

I hope you can read this well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original. C. W. 9267. Courtesy: Jairamdas Doulatram

286. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

PATNA,
August 8, 1947

Gandhiji began his speech by saying that he was sorry that he could not come to Bihar earlier. But even in Delhi and other places he worked for Bihar and Noakhali. His 'do-or-die' determination was guiding him in all spheres, and for the fulfilment of that determination he was going to Noakhali.

He must reach Noakhali two or three days before August 15 as the people there were extremely nervous, although he knew that nothing was going to happen. Unnecessary panic did not help anybody and if people were brave and god-fearing it did not matter if they lost their lives. He was going to Noakhali to allay panic.

He did not know what God had ordained and he also could not say what the Government would do. To him the whole of India was his country and he could not reconcile himself to the idea of partition in water-tight compartments. He wanted to live both in Hindustan and Pakistan and both were his homelands. Similar was the

[1] The meeting was held in the University compound.

case with Jinnah Saheb. Muslims had got Pakistan. Now it was incumbent on the people of both Hindustan and Pakistan to live like good human beings and bring peace to the country.

Gandhiji warned the Hindus of Bihar never to think of repeating their crime of last year and said that they should help in rehabilitating all the refugees who were returning from Bengal. Love was the highest virtue and they should cultivate it for all. He hoped that he would be able to proclaim from Noakhali that Hindus and Muslims were forgetting their past and were living in brotherly feeling for each other.

The 15th is the day of our trial. Observe a fast on that day. Everyone should do his duty. No one should create any disturbance. The independence we are going to get is not of the kind we can celebrate by having illuminations. We do not have foodgrains, clothes, ghee or oil. So where is the need for celebrations? On that day we have to fast, ply the charkha and pray to God. We did not have illumination on April 6, did we? Didn't we celebrate the declaration of that day by fasting from April 6 to April 13? Moreover that day was better than today's independence. Brothers did not quarrel between themselves as they do now. Everyone could freely go to temples or mosques.[1]

Mahatma Gandhi expressed his desire to return to Bihar after three weeks' stay in Noakhali and said that on his return he would stay in Bihar for about a fortnight.

The Hindustan Standard, 9-8-1947

287. WORK ALONE IS TRUE SPEECH

Shri Kanu Gandhi is working in the Noakhali district. He had sent me a lengthy report at Delhi about himself. I am quoting the following portion from it as it deserves to be read by all workers :[2]

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA, August 9, 1947

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 17-8-1947

[1] This paragraph is translated from *Calcuttano Chamatkar*, pp. 18-9.

[2] The report, describing how Hindus and Muslims volunteered to build a road and remove water-hyacinths from rice fields, is not reproduced here.

288. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
August 9, 1947

Gandhiji devoted the whole of his address to the situation in Calcutta. His destination, he said, was Noakhali but he had been listening the whole day long to the woes of Calcutta. Some Muslim friends and also some Hindus complained that they (Hindus) seemed to have gone mad, not that the Muslims had become wiser. But now that the Muslim police and officials were almost withdrawn and replaced by Hindus, the Hindus had begun to believe that they were now free to do what they liked as the Muslims were reported to have done under the League Ministry. He was not going to examine what was done under the League Ministry. His purpose was undoubtedly to know what his co-worker Dr. Ghosh's[1] Ministry was doing. Was it true that the Muslims were living in terror? If it was at all true, it was a severe reflection on the Congress Ministry. He was rightly asked before he went up to Noakhali to tarry in Calcutta to 'pour a pot of water over the raging fire' that was burning Calcutta. He would love to give his life if thereby he could contribute to the quenching of mob fury. He would never be able to subscribe to the theory that the doings in Calcutta were the result of goondaism. He held that the crude open goondaism was a reflection of the subtle goondaism they were harbouring within. Hence it was the duty of the Governments to hold themselves responsible for the acts of the goondas so called. He hoped that Calcutta would not present the disgraceful spectacle of hot goondaism when they were entering upon full responsibility.

Harijan, 24-8-1947

289. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

CALCUTTA,
August 10, 1947

CHI. JIVANJI,

I have your letter. I understand your point about *Harijan*. I am considering. So long as I can I shall continue to send articles.

I have left Sushila at the Wah Camp. We hope that she will be able to leave it on the 17th and join me in Noakhali.

Herewith some articles. Give Hingorani and Prabhu the

[1] Dr. P. C. Ghosh

permission they have asked for to publish the material. They are our men. They have no intention at all of making any profit.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9979. Also C. W. 69 53. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

290. INTERVIEW TO CONGRESS MINISTERS

August 10, 1947

The Congress Ministers of the Government of Bengal interviewed Gandhiji at 3.30 p. m. One of the questions which they wanted to discuss was the manner in which the 15th should be celebrated. Gandhiji said, according to him, the advice could only be for fasting, prayer and a dedication to the spinning-wheel. What else could they do when all around the country was burning, when people were dying from lack of food and clothing?

The question of the relation between Pakistan and India was also raised by one of the Ministers. Gandhiji said :

Each State should perform its duty properly. If the conduct is straight, there is likelihood of reunion. But what he witnessed today was a preparation for hostility not for friendship.

My Days with Gandhi, p. 256

291. DISCUSSION WITH MOHAMMED USMAN AND OTHERS

August 10, 1947

Mohammad Usman[1] again came. A large Muslim deputation accompanied him. They entreated Gandhiji to stay on in Calcutta even if it were only for two more days :

We Muslims have as much claim upon you as the Hindus. For you yourself have said you are as much of Muslims as of Hindus.

GANDHIJI: I am willing, but then you have to guarantee the peace of Noakhali. If I do not go to Noakhali before the 15th on the strength of your guarantee and things go wrong there, my life will

[1] Secretary, Calcutta District Muslim League and ex-Mayor of Calcutta

become forfeit; you will have to face a fast unto death on my part.[1]

Gandhiji told them that though he was anxious to reach Noakhali as soon as possible, in deference to their wishes he could postpone going from the 11th August to the 13th.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 363

292. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
August 10, 1947

Gandhiji said that he had thought that he was to go to Noakhali the next day (Monday). Owing to the pressure from many Muslim friends who had seen him, he had decided to stay to see if he could contribute his share in the return of sanity in the premier city of India.[2] The argument of the Muslim friends went home. He had at the same time said that if he did not go to Noakhali and any mishap took place, his life would become forfeit as he had said already about Bihar. He had seen the Ministers and others too during the day. He would like to see the places where destruction was said to have been wrought by the Hindus. He had also learnt that there were parts of Calcutta which were inaccessible to the Hindus, though many premises therein used to be occupied by them. Similar was the case with the Hindu localities. He hung his head in shame to listen to this recital of man's barbarism. He would love to go to these places and see for himself how much truth there was in these recitals. He was told that there were not more than 23% Muslims in Calcutta. It was unthinkable that such a minority could coerce the majority without countenance from or incompetence of authority. Similarly it was unthinkable that in the midst of a government which knew the art of government, the majority could for one moment be permitted to coerce the minority. He was also told that as the Muslim police and officers were alleged to be doing before, now that the Congress Ministry was in power, the Hindu police and officers had become partial in the administration of justice. If this wretched spirit of communalism had entered the police force, the prospect was bleak indeed. He hoped that the police would realize the dignity of their profession.

Harijan, 24-8-1947

[1] According to the source the Muslim friends hesitated but ultimately gave the required guarantee on their and Muslim League's behalf. They promised to despatch wires to the local League leaders in Noakhali and undertook to send emissaries to help maintain peace in Noakhali. *Vide* also the following item.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

293. LETTER TO SIR FREDERICK BURROWS

SODEPUR,
August 11, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

What you could not do, a big Muslim deputation was able to do yesterday.[1] And so I am here at least till tomorrow. Man is veritably clay in the hands of the great Potter.

All my good wishes with you and yours.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR FREDERICK BURROWS
H. E. THE GOVERNOR
CALCUTTA

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 277

294. NOTE TO N. K. BOSE[2]

August 11, 1947

I must not yield to the temptation. They must forget that I know English.

From a photostat: C. W. 10573; also *My Days with Gandhi*, p. 258

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with Mohammad Usman and Others", 10-8-1947.

[2] A representative of the British Broadcasting Corporation had asked Gandhiji for a message to be broadcast on August 15. Gandhiji sent word that he had nothing to say. When the addressee argued that it would be broadcast in various languages, Gandhiji wrote this on a slip of paper already used for conveying other messages to him.

295. LETTER TO AMIYA CHAKRAVARTY

August 11, 1947

MY DEAR AMIYA,

I am sorry for your loss which in reality is no loss. Death is but a sleep and a forgetting. This is such a sweet sleep that the body has not to wake again and the dead load of memory is thrown overboard. So far as I know, happily there is no meeting in the beyond as we have it today. When the isolated drops melt, they share the majesty of the Ocean to which they belong. In isolation they die but to meet the Ocean again. I do not know whether I have been clear enough to give you any comfort.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 10506; also from a facsimile: *Mahatma*, Vol. VIII, between pp. 88 and 89

296. LETTER TO SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

SODEPUR,
August 11, 1947

MY DEAR SARAT,

What is all this black flag demonstration[1] against Rajaji? I am certain that it is a mistake on our part. In spite of his faults (moreover who among us can claim to be faultless?) he is as much a lover of the country as you and I. I am giving you the impression left on me. As regards the situation in Bengal you are a better judge.

Hope you are well.

Yours,

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 364

[1] The addressee considered C. Rajagopalachari's appointment as Governor of Bengal "an outrage upon Bengal's sentiments".

297. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

SODEPUR,
August 11, 1947

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

Dinshaw gave me your letter just now. I see no objection to your obtaining monetary help from proper sources for animal husbandry work. Proper sources means persons who will expect no return for the help given. From that point of view, I had suggested that we could not accept such help from Indore. There are some complications about it. Only the help given out of regard for your goodness or for the cause of cow service or both is proper.

Dinshaw tells me that your health is not very good. Is that right? Are you having cough? Take care and see that you do not fall ill.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 824. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

298. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

SODEPUR,
August 11, 1947

CHI. MANI,

It seems Dahyabhai has to sign the enclosed paper. Have a look at it. I do not know anything about this account. Perhaps it should be signed by someone on behalf of the Ashram.

I have already written to Sardar about Kashmir.[1] He must have received the letter. The long note[2] I have sent to Jawaharlal is meant for Sardar also.

The situation here has become complicated. I do hope that it will improve. From the speech I delivered yesterday[3] you will know why I had to stay back.

Profulla and others meet me frequently.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 6-8-1947.
[2] *Vide* "Note on Kashmir Visit", 6-8-1947.
[3] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 10-8-1947.

The Khaksars saw me in Lahore. You must have received the letter I gave them.[1] Is there any respite from work?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 140

299. LETTER TO INDIRA

SODEPUR,
August 11, 1947

CHI. INDIRA,

I have your letter. Here is a hurried reply. Your handwriting is good. For some time continue to stay where you are. Look after Sarala. What you will get there is not to be found in Santiniketan. Go to Santiniketan after you finish your [training] there. That you have no interest in the place is itself enough to show that you have still a lot to learn. Interest is where there is scope for service. Learn to take interest. Also learn to write Urdu. Let me see your Urdu handwriting. Maintain good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

300. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
August 11, 1947

This evening I must devote to answering some questions addressed to me. One of them complains that prominent men were admitted but comparatively unknown persons were insulted. There was an inordinate rush throughout the day, it being Sunday. I agree that when there is such a rush, there should be no distinction made between known and unknown persons. But I had given previous appointments to some who had to be admitted. Then there were many

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 6-8-1947.

who were specially working for the day. I would, therefore, plead with those who may feel disappointed on such occasions to have forbearance and patience as I would plead with the volunteers to be uniformly courteous and gentle with the public.

I read something about the Chittagong flood the day before yesterday, when I came to Calcutta. This is the third day and I see that the angry waters have not subsided, and the extent of loss of life and property no one can yet assess with any degree of accuracy. It is hardly necessary to remind ourselves in the face of such catastrophe that we may not think of East or West or Pakistan and Hindustan. Adversity makes strange bed-fellows. Surely then those who were bed-fellows till yesterday must not cease to be at least on such occasions, whatever their political or religious differences might be or might have been. It is a calamity to cope with not merely for East Bengal but for the whole of Bengal, and not for Bengal only but certainly for the whole of India. There must be a strong reliable committee to collect and distribute funds. Local men come first. Round them can arise an all-Bengal relief committee, and if need be an all-India one. No trouble need be given to all India if Bengal alone can cope with the situation. My whole heart goes out to Chittagong in its dire calamity. May the survivors bear it with fortitude.

Correspondents continue to ask all sorts of questions about appointments of Governors, Ministers and the like, as if I was a member of the Congress Working Committee or could affect its decisions. I know and admit that I have and shall always retain by right of service a place in the hearts of Congressmen. I know too that I shall forfeit that place immediately I begin to overstep my limits. Legal status I have none, moral status can be retained only so long as the moral platform is firmly held.

Do you agree that the leaders of both the communities should go to East and West Bengal and show that they have no differences now to quarrel over?

My answer is emphatically yes, if the leaders are one at heart. If the word belies the thought, the going about will be worse than useless. The newspaper war still continues. I would always prefer an open war to the war of hearts. Are we sure that the leaders trust one another? My fear is that neither at the top nor at the bottom are we cleansed of hypocrisy. I can, therefore, but repeat my old argument that we must unlearn the habit of retaliation in every shape and form.

Blow for blow is a crude form and probably more excusable than the subtle one of evil thought for its kind. Thought is the root of speech and deed. I am sorry that I am unable to return a more comfortable answer. There is none that I know. This is said to hearten ourselves, not to dishearten us. For I have said the naked truth. Within my experience it ever heartens. Is it not heartening to know the true remedy for a disease? Any other is a palliative and in the end aggravates the disease.

Harijan, 24-8-1947

301. INTERVIEW TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY[1]

August 11, 1947

GANDHIJI: Do you want to suggest I should not leave on Wednesday and pass the whole of my time in bringing peace to Calcutta?

SUHRAWARDY : Yes.

I stayed (for these two days in Calcutta) very much against my will. But Usman Saheb overpowered me. He made a successful appeal to my heart. He asked me to see things with my own eyes and do something to allay the present communal feelings. I would remain if you and I are prepared to live together. This is my second offer[2] to you. We shall have to work till every Hindu and Mussalman in Calcutta safely returns to the place where he was before. We shall continue in our effort till our last breath.

I do not want you to come to a decision immediately. You should go back home and consult your daughter; for the implication of what I mean is that the old Suhrawardy will have to die and accept the garb of a mendicant (fakir).[3]

My Days with Gandhi, pp. 258-9

[1] According to the source this is a "summary of the conversation which took place" between Gandhiji and Suhrawardy who came with Mohammed Usman at 9.05 p. m. and left at 11 p. m.

[2] The first offer was made on May 12, 1947; *vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 29-7-1947.

[3] Mohammed Usman came the following day at about 1 p. m. with the message that Suhrawardy had agreed to Gandhiji's proposal. *Vide* also "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 12-8-1947.

302. LETTER TO R. BAZIN

KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR,
August 12, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your original letter in French and the delicate consideration in sending me an accurate translation of the letter.

I appreciate the measures that are being taken to entrust the responsibilities of administration to the representatives of the population of Chandernagore. As to the fears expressed by you, you may depend upon my doing the very best I can to prevent them.

As for my going to Chandernagore, I know the distance is not great. Unfortunately for me, it is very difficult to leave Calcutta before the 15th instant, much as I would like to respond to your request.

Yours Sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

MOUS R. BAZIN
ADMINISTRATOR
CHANDERNAGORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

303. LETTER TO TARA N. MASHRUWALA

SODEPUR,
August 12, 1947

CHI. TARI,

I read your letter to Abha. I think I had passed on your letter to Dr. Sushila who must have replied to you.

I would advise you to consult Dr. Sushila about the tuberculosis case and do what she says. The same thing applies also to the question of expenditure. You seem to have already incurred some expenditure. If you have, and if you have not had it reimbursed from any source, let me know so that I can have it met from somewhere, unless it can be met from the Trust.

Where is the time to write anything else? It is 5 o'clock now according to the railway time. Do you take care of your health? News about me from the papers.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

304. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
August 12, 1947

Gandhiji said that the 15th instant was to be a landmark in India's history. It was a day when India would be declared free of the foreign yoke. It was to be an independent nation. He had explained how the day was to be observed,[1] but he was probably alone in the view. Already there was an announcement that the Muslims of Calcutta were to observe it as a day of mourning. He hoped that it was not true. No man could be compelled to observe the day in a particular manner. It was to be a perfectly voluntary act. He would ask his Muslim countrymen not to mourn over the freedom. The present distemper was to go. What were the Hindus in Pakistan to do? They should salute the Pakistan Flag if it meant the freedom and equality of all in every respect, irrespective of caste, colour or creed. He had heard further that on that day the Indians in the French and Portuguese possessions were to declare their freedom from France and Portugal respectively.

That, he said, would be a thoughtless act. It would be a sign perhaps of arrogance. The British were retiring, not the French and the Portuguese. He, undoubtedly, held the view that the Indians in these possessions were bound to merge in Independent India in good time. Only the Indians in those territories should not take the law in their own hands. They had constitutional means open to them and then there was their Chief Minister who had vindicated the freedom of Indonesia. Surely, he was not going to neglect his own kith and kin in the two possessions. If they had any doubt about the validity of his advice, they should act on Panditiji's advice.

He then came to another important subject. They knew that he prolonged his stay in Calcutta by two days at the instance of Muslim friends. Last night Shaheed Saheb Suhrawardy had come to see him. He had suggested that it would be contrary to his (Gandhiji's) practice to leave Calcutta while it was going through the horrors of communal strife. Shaheed Saheb had suggested that Gandhiji should prolong his stay

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 8-8-1947.

in the city and work until real peace was restored. Gandhiji had replied that Suhrawardy Saheb and he should live under the same roof in the disturbed parts. It would be best to live unprotected by the police or the military. In brotherly fashion, they would approach the people, argue with them and tell them that now that partition had taken place by agreement, there was no longer any reason why the parties should quarrel. The decision of the Boundary Commission was going to be announced in a day or two, and it was in the fitness of things that all the parties should abide by the decision in a becoming manner. After all, the parties had appointed an arbitration tribunal. They were in honour bound to abide by the Award whatever it was.

Gandhiji's proposal to Suhrawardy Saheb was of such an important nature that the latter could not afford to give a hasty reply. Gandhiji had, therefore, asked Shaheed Saheb to consult his aged father as well as his daughter before coming to a decision.

During the afternoon, Mr. Usman, the ex-Mayor of Calcutta, had arrived with Shaheed Saheb's message stating that the latter had accepted Gandhiji's proposal without reservation. It was now time, therefore, for the two friends to choose quarters in the midst of the worst-affected areas and see what could be done by joint effort.

Gandhiji said that he was warned that Shaheed Saheb was not to be relied upon. The same thing was said about him (Gandhiji) also. He was des- cribed as the worst enemy of Islam. He was supposed to be a consummate hypocrite. God alone knew men's hearts. He asserted that he spoke and acted as he believed. He had known Shaheed Saheb since the days of the Faridpore Conference[1], to which the late Deshbandhu had taken him. Nobody had any right to prejudge anybody. He would trust as he expected to be trusted. Both would live under the same roof, and have no secrets from each other. They would together see all the visitors. People should have the courage to speak out the truth under all circumstances and in the presence of those against whom it had to be said.

Gandhiji finally referred to what the common citizens could do in order to help the cause. They were to bless them on the mission on which they were embarking.

Harijan, 24-8-1947

[1] Bengal Provincial Conference presided over by C. R. Das from May 2 to 4, 1925. *Vide* "Notes", 6-8-1925.

305. "TO MUSLIMS"

The foregoing[1] is reproduced just as it was received. Let us hope that the wise precepts would be followed up in action. An ounce of practice is worth tons of speeches and writings.

SODEPUR, August 13, 1947

Harijan, 24-8-1947

306. LETTER TO PERIN CAPTAIN

SODEPUR,
August 13, 1947

CHI. PERINBEHN,

I have your letter. I expect you read what I have written in *Harijan* about your letter.[2] Surely I can make use of your letter to that extent.

Your English letter also to hand.[3] Of course you are working under my guidance. We must avoid all polemics. Let those who wish work for Sanskritized Hindi written in Nagari, let Urdu writers do likewise for Urdu. We work noiselessly but solidly for Hindustani, i.e., Urdu and Hindi made easy and written in either script. No one will write the same letter in two scripts at the same time. But a Hindustani scholar is bound to know the two scripts. Is that not what you mean?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] A letter "To Muslims" signed by four Muslim leaders quoting from the Koran and writings on Islamic history to hope that Islam did not discriminate against non-Muslims and expressing the hope that the non-Muslims would not feel insecure in Pakistan, is not reproduced here.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Perinbehn Captain", 25-7-1947.

[3] The addressee had complained of the reported attempt "to dethrone our national language" and sought Gandhiji's advice as to what the Hindustani Prachar Sabha should do.

307. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

SODEPUR,
August 13, 1947

CHI. SHRIMAN,

I have your clear letter. I have talked to Kakasaheb and Nanavati. As you say, it is better for you to leave the Secretaryship[1]. You will be in the Working Committee and do whatever you can.

In my view our work is not against anybody but it is complementary. What is it to us whether anybody appreciates our work or not? If what we say is right it will hold.

Urdu cannot become the national language, nor can Hindi. It matters little that Hindi may have the approval of the Union. Our national language will be that language which both the communities can speak and write. Let Madalasa keep fit and Rasgulla[2] recover soon.

Fix the meeting in Delhi. It will be difficult for me to go there.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 311-2

308. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

SODEPUR,
August 13, 1947

CHI. RAJEN BABU,

Kakasaheb is here. He says that the meeting of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha must be held in Delhi irrespective of my presence or absence there. I think I shall not be there. Still it would be good to hold the meeting.

Just now I am held up in Calcutta. You will learn from the newspapers what happens.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Of Hindustani Prachar Sabha
[2] Addressee's son

309. DISCUSSION WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF DEMONSTRATORS[1]

HYDARI MANSION, CALCUTTA,
August 13, 1947

Presently the representatives of the demonstrators were ushered in to meet Gandhiji. One of them began :

Last year when Direct Action was launched on the Hindus on August 16, you did not come to our rescue. Now that there has been just a little trouble in the Muslim quarters, you have come running to their succour. We don't want you here.

GANDHIJI: Much water has flown under the bridge since August 1946. What the Muslims did then was utterly wrong. But what is the use of avenging the year 1946 on 1947? I was on my way to Noakhali where your own kith and kin desired my presence. But I now see that I shall have to serve Noakhali only from here. You must understand that I have come here to serve not only Muslims but Hindus, Muslims and all alike. Those who are indulging in brutalities are bringing dis-grace upon themselves and the religion they represent. I am going to put myself under your protection. You are welcome to turn against me and play the opposite role if you so choose. I have nearly reached the end of my life's journey. I have not much farther to go. But let me tell you that if you again go mad, I will not be a living witness to it. I have given the same ultimatum to the Muslims of Noakhali also; I have earned the right. Before there is another outbreak of Muslim madness in Noakhali, they will find me dead. Why cannot you see that by taking this step I have put the burden of the peace of Noakhali on the shoulders of Shaheed Suhrawardy and his friends—including men like Mian Ghulam Sarwar and the rest? This is no small gain.

[1] According to the source, "an old abandoned Muslim house in an indescribably filthy locality, had hastily been cleaned up for Gandhiji's residence. It was . . . open on all sides . . . . An excited crowd of young men stood at the gate as Gandhiji's car arrived. They shouted : 'Why have you come here ? You did not come when we were in trouble. Now that the Muslims have complained all this fuss is being made over it. Why did you not go to places from where Hindus have fled?' . . . The situation threatened to take an ugly turn. Gandhiji sent some of his men outside to expostulate with the demonstrators and tell them to send in their representatives to meet him."

We do not want your sermons on ahimsa. You go away from here. We won't allow the Muslims to live here.

This means that you do not want my services. If you will co-operate with me and allow me to carry on my work, it will enable the Hindus to return and to live in all the places from where they have been driven out. On the other hand, it will profit you nothing to remember old wrongs and nurse old enmities.

An eighteen-year-old youngster interposed:

History shows that Hindus and Muslims can never be friends. Anyway, ever since I was born I have seen them only fighting each other.

GANDHIJI: Well, I have seen more of history than anyone of you, and I tell you that I have known Hindu boys who called Muslims 'uncle'. Hindus and Muslims used to participate in each other's festivals and other auspicious occasions. You want to force me to leave this place but you should know that I have never submitted to force. It is contrary to my nature. You can obstruct my work, even kill me. I won't invoke the help of the police. You can prevent me from leaving this house, but what is the use of your dubbing me an enemy of the Hindus ? I will not accept the lable. To make me quit, you have to convince me that I have made a mistake in coming here.

Thus it went on till eight o'clock. At last Gandhiji said :

I put it to you, young men, how can I, who am a Hindu by birth, a Hindu by creed and a Hindu of Hindus in my way of living, be an 'enemy' of Hindus? Does this not show narrow intolerance on your part?

His words had a profound effect. Slowly and imperceptibly the opposition began to soften. Still they were not completely converted. One of them said: "Perhaps we should now go." Gandhiji replied :

Yes, you must go. It is already late. Come again in the morning when you have thought things over.[1]

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 365-7

[1] For the discussion which continued the next day in Suhrawardy's presence, *vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 30-5-1947.

310. LETTER TO NELLIE SEN GUPTA

KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR,
CALCUTTA,
August 13, 1947

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. You will have seen that I spoke on Monday about the Chittagong affliction. Wires were received yesterday andnow I have your letter. I have spoken to several people here, including the present Mayor, ex-Mayor Usman Saheb and the Prime Minister of West Bengal. You may depend upon my doing all I can, short of going to Chittagong, which too I would have gladly done were not my presence required here.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

MRS. NELLIE SEN GUPTA
JOMALKHAN
CHITTAGONG

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

311. LETTER TO PYARELAL

HYDARI MANSION,
August 13, 1947

CHI. PYARELAL,

Today I have come to a Muslim locality. Now let us see when I can get away from here. I have left behind Sushila in Wah. She will leave Wah on the 17th and join me. I am involved in a controversy[1] since my arrival here. I may not be able to hold the prayers either. Young blood is boiling. I have reached here all right. I hope you are calm.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

312. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

CALCUTTA,
August 13, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

I have stuck here and now I am going to take a big risk. Suhrawardy and I are going to stay together in a turbulent area from today. Let us see what happens. Keep a watch. I will keep on writing.

Kak (Kashmir) seems to have left.

I came to know about Subhas Bose form your letter. I find it difficult to believe all these reports.[1]

I had also written to Sarat Babu about Rajaji,[2] just as you did, but have not heard from him so far. Nor has he called on me so far this time.

I don't believe that Kripalani would have said what he is reported to have said.[3] I did not like Liaquat Ali's[4] statement.

The atmosphere is poisoned. It is difficult to say who is on whose side.

I understand about the Khaksars. I considered it my dharma to treat them in such a way that they will have no opportunity to say anything against us and I have acted accordingly. I deal with the others in the same way.

All this work is difficult and the difficulties go on increasing. On top of it there is a natural calamity. What are we going to do if the rains fail ? Many surely will have to die.

The problem of the Princes is so complicated that you alone can deal with it. But who can deal with your health?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 363-5

[1] In his reply the addressee confirmed the reports that Subhas Chandra Bose had, while in exile, married and had at this time a four-year-old daughter.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Sarat Chandra Bose", 11-8-1947.

[3] The addressee had sent to Gandhiji a cutting of J. B. Kripalani's speech in Sind.

[4] First Prime Minister of Pakistan

313. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

CALCUTTA,
August 13, 1947

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. I sent back the papers unsigned as I thought that my signature was not required.

What will happen if the rains fail ? This independence is costing us pretty dear.

I am afraid Sardar's health may break down under the strain of the present work.

Read the enclosed and show it to Sardar. It seems a crime to take up even a single minute of his time.

Blessings from

BAPU

MANIBEHN PATEL
NEW DELHI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 141

314. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

HYDARI MANSION,
August 13, 1947

CHI. KANAIYO,

If you read the newspapers you would have known that I have stayed on in this place, and am now in a Muslim's house in a Muslim locality. It is a palatial building. We are all under Rama's care and we have to live as He wills. I shall not know till the last moment when I shall leave this place. I write all this just because I am pleased with your letter. I have sent the relevant portion from it for publication in *Harijan.*[1] Abha is fine. However, I will not say that she is completely all right. Amritlal is here.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Work Alone is True Speech", 9-8-1947.

315. LETTER TO SARALA

August 13, 1947

CHI. SARALA,

I have your letter. You are a sensible girl. You have understood why I don't send for you here. Have patience. Complete the Nayee Talim course and attain the highest proficiency in it. You must be reading in the newspapers about the developments here. I have been able to write this much under great pressure.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8769

316. LETTER TO E. W. ARYANAYAKUM

CALCUTTA,
August 13, 1947

CHI. ARYANAYAKUM,

You will learn of the conditions here from the newspapers. Today I want to write about the *goshala*.

There is a great uproar and the trouble is twofold; they cannot run the *goshala* themselves nor will they let others do so. And you have such a fiery temper that you cannot get along with anyone.

Now tell me what the fact is.

You are all keeping well, I hope. I have no idea when if ever I shall be able to return.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

317. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

HYDARI MANSION, CALCUTTA,
August 13, 1947

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I am under great pressure of work here. I am undergoing an ordeal. Noakhali is now out.

I have read everything about the *goshala*. What advice can I give from here? All I know is that Sevagram should have cows and the dairy must work. But how that can be, I do not know. You people should think over it and work it out.

Today I cannot write much. I am writing[1] to Aryanayakum.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1988. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

318. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

CALCUTTA,
August 13, 1947

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

I am entrapped here. Well, we have to live as God wills.

I got your letter regarding the *goshala*. I have only to say that you must keep Sevagram supplied with milk. It is impossible for me to go into details. I am writing under great pressure of work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

319. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

August 13, 1947

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

Today I have come to stay in a Muslim house. Shaheed Saheb is with me. God knows what will happen. I shall be tested. I do not know when I shall see you now.

Yesterday I met Baqui[1]. He had with him Nawab Saheb's son and daughter. I hope you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 585

320. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

HYDARI MANSION,
August 13, 1947

CHI. SATIS BABU,

I have just come to Beliaghata. Kshitishbabu[2] is with me, and so is Arun[3]. What I want is that both should go to Sodepur and see to the work there. Hemprabha[4] wanted to look after me. I have detained her. Shaheed Saheb will be with me. Let me see what happens. I have taken many risks, perhaps this is the greatest of all. Who knows what will happen? We have to live as God wills and be content. I came for Noakhali but have stayed on in Calcutta. It is all right. If things go wrong here, then they will go wrong everywhere. If things improve here, then perhaps they will improve everywhere. Tell everyone that here also I am working for Noakhali. All Muslims say that it is good that I have stayed on in Calcutta and that too where Muslims feel unsafe and moreover in a Muslim's house.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9284

[1] Addressee's brother
[2] Addressee's brother and son
[3] *ibid*
[4] Addressee's wife

321. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

CALCUTTA,
August 14, 1947

CHI. SUSHILA,

I had received your letter, but could get no time at all to reply to it. I am writing this after the morning prayer. I am being fairly severely tested here. Instead of going on to Noakhali, I have got stuck here. Yesterday I came here to live in a Muslim's house. This one fact, however, will not give you a complete picture of the situation and I have no time to write more.

You are unnecessarily taking things to heart. Manilal's letter is so transparent and so innocent. He has only poured out his heart in it. You had a right to draw the inference you did from the previous letter. Notwithstanding his own desire he had no objection to your staying on in Akola. But that letter did not reveal all he had in mind. You should now join him at the earliest opportunity.

Sita will have what is destined for her. I don't know what I shall be able to do. This time my train passed through Banaras. But it was late by four hours and Sita could not have come to the station at that time of night. But I think you yourself will be in a better position to think over the matter and decide. It is useless to come and see me. Rama alone knows where I shall be tomorrow. It looks like I shall be here. But if I am not here, where will you go wandering after me? If you need the advice of an elder, Kishorelal is there. You are bound to benefit by following his advice. What does it matter if our views do not agree? Each individual thinks differently. Maybe in this matter both of us think alike. But that need not worry you. You should do only what seems right to you. I have made the above suggestion in case you cannot do that. Manilal's letter is enclosed. Though it was in my file, nobody is likely to have read it. Everybody abides by the restrictions I place on them. The file is not likely to fall into any stranger's hands these days. There are only three persons with me, Bisen[1], Abha or Radha (Manu). But what does it matter who is with me? What can you have which you might want to keep private?

[1] Shiv Balak Bisen, a constructive worker who was acting as Gandhiji's stenographer

Manilal's and your letters are never sentimental. I, therefore, think that anybody who reads them is bound to learn something from them.

Remain calm and take every step after careful thinking. If you have any attachments overcome them.

If you reply to this letter, address it C/o Khadi Pratishthan, Sodepur.

Krishna wasn't there either in Kashmir or Lahore.

I am getting a copy made of this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 1426. Courtesy: Sushila Gandhi

322. DISCUSSION WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF DEMONSTRATORS[1]

August 14, 1947

Gandhiji pointed out to them that united action on the part of Suhrawardy and himself in Beliaghata was only the first step. If and when the Hindus of Beliaghata invited their Muslim neighbours to return, they would next move to a predominantly Muslim area, where they would stay till the Hindus were invited to return and so on till each community had invited its neighbours to return to their former houses all over Calcutta. This time the young men were completely won over.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 367-8

323. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

BELIAGHATA, CALCUTTA,
August 14, 1947

He first said that the next day was the day fixed for deliverance from the foreign yoke. It was, therefore, a great day. They were bound to celebrate it. In his opinion it was a day when both the Dominions were to shoulder a heavy burden. He invited everyone to have twenty-four hours' fast and prayer during the day for the well-being of India as a whole and pass it in spinning as much as possible. For it was hand-spinning that had knit the poor and the rich together and that had given occupation to countless men and women who were without occupation.

[1] *Vide* also "Discussion with Representatives of Demonstrators", 13-8-1947.

[2] According to the source, "a packed audience listened to Gandhiji without the slightest disturbance."

He then returned to the reason for his postponing the visit to Noakhali and coming to stay in the present place. He said that Shaheed Saheb had come to see him and induce him to do his bit in bringing about peace in Calcutta which was burning. The appeal had its effect upon him. He agreed provided Shaheed Saheb went with him to the affected areas and stayed there under the same roof with him, till the fury had abated and till complete friendship between the two communities was restored. Therefore, they were to work with one mind without mental reservation and without any secrets in the matter from one another. Shaheed Saheb had taken one night to confer with his aged father and his daughter and had sent over his decision the next day.[1] And he had sent one message which brought them to the present place yesterday. He had had many warnings also against Shaheed Saheb. He was unaffected by the warnings. He was bound to believe his word as he expected him to accept his (Gandhiji's) word. Let them not think that they were to neglect the parts of Calcutta which were deserted by their Hindu inhabitants and were occupied by Muslims. They were working for the peace of the whole of Calcutta and he invited his audience to believe with them that if Calcutta returned to sanity and real friendship, then Noakhali and the rest of India would be safe. He mentioned that Shaheed Saheb was in the building, but he had, with his consent, kept himself away from the meeting as he wanted to avoid being the slightest cause of irritation to the meeting.[2] But he was glad that the audience had exhibited becoming tolerance and gave him the courage to bring Shaheed Saheb to the meeting. After all they should live and work together in the open and perfect co-operation if their difficult mission was to succeed.

Harijan, 24-8-1947

324. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

BELIAGHATA, CALCUTTA,
August 15, 1947

MY DEAR AGATHA,

This letter I am dictating whilst I am spinning. You know, my way of celebrating great events, such as today's, is to thank God for it and, therefore, to pray. This prayer must be accompanied by a fast, if

[1] *Vide* "Interview to H. S. Suhrawardy", 11-8-1947.

[2] According to *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, "realizing that Suhrawardy was not at the prayer meeting, some of the young men. . . went shouting for his blood towards the house and stone-throwing began again. . . . Prayer over, Gandhiji returned. . . He rebuked them for their attack on Suhrawardy. . .'He will not be able to stick to me if he is not sincere. . . .' After a time when he had got them into a mood to listen to Suhrawardy, he beckoned him. . ." Suhrawardy's unequivocal admission of responsibility for the 'Great Calcutta Killing' . . . had a profound effect on the crowd. 'It was the turning point,' Gandhiji afterwards remarked. 'It had a cleansing effect, I could sense it.' "

the taking of fruit juices may be so described. And then as a mark of identification with the poor and dedication there must be spinning. Hence I must not be satisfied with the spinning I do every day, but I must do as much as is possible in consistence with my other appointments.

I got through Amrit your first letter at 4 o'clock in the morning. I have through her your second letter. This has been brought by Rajaji, the Governor of West Bengal. Rajaji could not afford to come himself. The Government House is surrounded by a huge admiring crowd. He is, therefore, a prisoner in his own house. He sent his secretary with Rajkumari's packet.

You refer me to Winterton's speech, which you will be surprised to learn, I have not read.[1] The speeches during the debate on the Independence Bill, I was not able to read. I rarely get a moment to read newspapers. Some portions are either read to me or I glance during odd moments. What does it matter, who talks in my favour or against me, if I myself am sound at bottom? After all you and I have to do our duty in the best manner we know and keep on smiling. Rest from the papers. I am about to finish my spinning. Therefore I must think of other things.

My love to all our friends. I was glad to find that Carl Heath was well enough to preside at the gathering described by you.

How I wish I could tell you all about the happenings here. Perhaps Horace will. He was with me for a few days. He left me only last night.

Love.

BAPU

MISS AGATHA HARRISON

OLD JORDAN'S HOSTEL

NEAR BEACONSFIELD BUCKS, S. W. II

From a photostat: G. N. 1528; also *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. II, p. 372

[1] During the debate on the Indian Independence Bill in the House of Lords, Earl Winterton, the Conservative Peer, had made a speech attacking Gandhiji.

325. LETTER TO RAMENDRA G. SINHA

BELIAGHATA, CALCUTTA,
August 15, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I must take you at your word. As you say, your father had in him non-violence of the brave. Such a one never dies, destruction of the body has no meaning for him. Therefore, it is not right for you, your mother [or anyone][1] to mourn over the death of your brave father. He has left, in dying, a rich legacy which I hope you will all deserve. The best advice I can give is that you should all do whatever you can for the building up of the freedom that has come to us today and the first thing you can do is to copy your father's bravery.

Bravery of non-violence is shown in a variety of ways, not necessarily in dying at the hands of an assassin. There is no doubt that if you earn an honest price for the [loss][2] of your [dear ones][3] that by itself will be a contribution to the preservation of the [dearly earned freedom].[3]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

RAMENDRA G. SINHA
GOPAL MULLICK LANE
BOWBAZAR
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G. N. 10517

[1] The source is illegible.
[2] *ibid*
[3] *ibid*

326. ADVICE TO WEST BENGAL MINISTERS

August 15, 1947

From today you have to wear the crown of thorns. Strive ceaselessly to cultivate truth and non-violence. Be humble. Be forbearing. The British rule no doubt put you on your mettle. But now you will be tested through and through. Beware of power; power corrupts. Do not let yourselves be entrapped by its pomp and pageantry. Remember, you are in office to serve the poor in India's villages. May God help you.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 370

327. TALK WITH C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

CALCUTTA,

August 15, 1947

The new Governor of the province, C. Rajagopalachari, paid him a respectful visit and congratulated him on the "miracle which he had wrought". But Gandhiji replied that he could not be satisfied until Hindus and Muslims felt safe in one another's company and returned to their own homes to live as before. Without that change of heart, there was likelihood of future deterioration in spite of the present enthusiasm.

My Days with Gandhi, p. 265

328. TALK WITH COMMUNIST PARTY MEMBERS

CALCUTTA,

August 15, 1947

At 2, there was an interview with some members of the Communist Party of India to whom Gandhiji said that political workers, whether Communist or Socialist, must forget today all differences and help to consolidate the freedom which had been attained. Should we allow it to break into pieces? The tragedy was that the strength with which the country had fought against the British was failing them when it came to the establishment of Hindu-Muslim unity.

With regard to the celebrations, Gandhiji said:

I can't afford to take part in this rejoicing, which is a sorry affair.

My Days with Gandhi, p. 265

329. TALK TO STUDENTS

CALCUTTA,

August 15, 1947

Gandhiji explained in detail why the fighting must stop now. We had two States now, each of which was to have both Hindu and Muslim citizens. If that were so, it meant an end of the two-nation theory. Students ought to think and think well. They should do no wrong. It was wrong to molest an Indian citizen merely because he professed a different religion. Students should do everything to build up a new State of India which would be everybody's pride. With regard to the demonstration of fraternization he said:

I am not lifted off my feet by these demonstrations of joy.

My Days with Gandhi, p. 266

330. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

CALCUTTA,

August 15, 1947

Gandhiji congratulated Calcutta on Hindus and Muslims meeting together in perfect friendliness. Muslims shouted the same slogans of joy as the Hindus. They flew the tricolour without the slightest hesitation. What was more, the Hindus were admitted to mosques and Muslims were admitted to the Hindu *mandirs*. This news reminded him of the Khilafat days when Hindus and Muslims fraternized with one another. If this exhibition was from the heart and was not a momentary impulse, it was better than the Khilafat days. The simple reason was that they had both drunk the poison cup of disturbances. The nectar of friendliness should, therefore, taste sweeter than before. He was however sorry to hear that in a certain part the poor Muslims experienced molestation. He hoped that Calcutta including Howrah will be entirely free from the communal virus for ever. Then indeed they need have no fear about East Bengal and the rest of India. He was sorry, therefore, to hear that madness still reged in Lahore. He could hope and feel sure that the noble example of Calcutta, if it was sincere, would affect the Punjab and the other parts of India. He then referred to Chittagong. Rain was no respecter of persons. It engulfed both Muslims and Hindus. It was the duty of the whole of Bengal to feel one with the sufferers of Chittagong.

He then referred to the fact thet the people realizing that India was free, took possession of the Government House and in affection besieged their new Governor Rajaji. He would be glad if it meant only a token of the people's power. But he would be sick and sorry if the people thought that they could do what they liked with the Government and other property. That would be criminal lawlessness. He hoped, therefore, that they had of their own accord vacated the Governor's palace as readily as they had occupied it. He would warn the people that now that they were free, they would use the freedom with wise restraint. They should know that they were to treat the Europeans who stayed in India with the same regard as they would expect for themselves. They must know that they were masters of no one but of themselves. They must not compel anyone to do anything against his will.

Harijan, 24-8-1947

[1] The meeting was held in Rash Bagan Maidan, Beliaghata.

331. MIRACLE OR ACCIDENT?[1]

Shaheed Saheb Suhrawardy and I are living together in a Muslim manzil in Beliaghata where Muslims have been reported to be sufferers. We occupied the house on Wednesday the 13th instant and on the 14th it seemed as if there never had been bad blood between the Hindus and the Muslims. In their thousands they began to embrace one another and they began to pass freely through places which were considered to be points of danger by one party or the other. Indeed, Hindus were taken to their *masjids* by their Muslim brethren and the latter were taken by their Hindu brethren to the *mandirs*. Both with one voice shouted "Jai Hind" or "Hindu-Muslims! Be one". As I have said above, we are living in a Muslim's house and Muslim volunteers are attending to our comforts with the greatest attention. Muslim volunteers do the cooking. Many were eager to come from the Khadi Pratishthan for attendance, but I prevented them. I was determined that we should be fully satisfied with whatever the Muslim brothers and sisters were able to give for our creature comforts and I must say that the determination has resulted in unmixed good. Here in the compound numberless Hindus and Muslims continue to stream in shouting the favourite slogans. One might almost say that the joy of fraternization is leaping up from hour to hour.

Is this to be called a miracle or an accident? By whatever name it may be described, it is quite clear that all the credit that is being given to me from all sides is quite undeserved; nor can it be said to be deserved by Shaheed Saheb. This sudden upheaval is not the work of one or two men. We are toys in the hands of God. He makes us dance to His tune. The utmost therefore, that man can do is to refrain from interfering with the dance and that he should render full obedience to his Maker's will. Thus considered, it can be said that in this miracle He has used us two as His instruments and as for myself I only ask whether the dream of my youth is to be realized in the evening of my life.

For those who have full faith in God, this is neither a miracle nor an accident. A chain of events can be clearly seen to show that the two were being prepared, unconsciously to themselves, for fraternization.

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 24-8-1947.

In this process our advent on the scene enabled the onlooker to give us credit for the consummation of the happy event.

Be that as it may, the delirious happenings remind me of the early days of the Khilafat movement. The fraternization then burst on the public as a new experience. Moreover, we had then the Khilafat and swaraj as our twin goals. Today we have nothing of the kind. We have drunk the poison of mutual hatred and so this nectar of fraternization tastes all the sweeter and the sweetness should never wear out.

In the present exuberance one hears also the cry of 'Long Live Hindustan and Pakistan,' from the joint throats of the Hindus and the Muslims. I think it is quite proper. Whatever was the cause for the agreement, three parties accepted Pakistan. If then the two are not enemies one of the other, and here evidently they are not, surely there is nothing wrong in the above cry. Indeed, if the two have become friends, not to wish long life to both the States would probably be an act of disloyalty.

BELIAGHATA, August 16, 1947

Harijan, 24-8-1947

332. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,
August 16, 1947

CHI. AMRIT,

Your two letters the same day. It was impossible for me to write to you before. This I am writing just after the morning prayer. Your letter together with the other post I read yesterday after the morning prayer and the time for the walk was on. During the day there is hardly any quiet. I am in a Muslim house. They are all very good. I have taken no one from Sodepur. Hence the help I need comes only from Muslim friends. This is not for me a new experience. It reminds me of old days in South Africa and the Khilafat days here. For the moment I am no enemy. Who knows how long this will last? Hindus and Muslims have become friends practically in a day.

Suhrawardy has become transformed, so it looks. His association was the condition of my stay in the disturbed area of Calcutta.

So you are a Minister.[1] You have to be firm and true.

What about education? You must watch. You should insist on team work. Then most things will come under your notice. Though there is rejoicing, somehow or other, there is disturbance within. Is there something wrong with me? Or are things really going wrong?

I see you will have the whole family on your hands now. It is all as it should be.

Harijan may stop, not the dictionary[2]. Can you cope with it? You will tell me when it becomes too much for you.

I must be off for the walk.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

The first half sheet was by mistake taken for the whole. When I detected the mistake I had already got through some lines!

SHRI RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR

C/O SARDAR V. PATEL

NEW DELHI

From the original: C. W. 3707. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6516

333. DISCUSSION WITH REV. JOHN KELLAS[3]

CALCUTTA,
August 16, 1947

The principal question discussed was in connection with the relation between education, religion and the State.

Gandhiji expressed the opinion that the State should undoubtedly be secular. It could never promote, denominational education out of public funds[4] . Everyone living in it should be entitled to profess his religion without let or hindrance, so long as the citizen obeyed the common law of the land. There should be no interference with missionary effort, but no mission could enjoy the patronage of the State as it

[1] The addressee had been appointed Minister of Health in the Government of India.

[2] The English-Hindustani dictionary which was being serialized in *Harijan.*

[3] Principal, Scottish Church College, Calcutta, had called on Gandhiji along with some members of his staff.

[4] This sentence is from *My Days with Gandhi.*

did during the foreign regime.

While discussing these matters with Principal Kellas, Gandhiji incidentally remarked that although we had thrown overboard British political supremacy, we have not yet been able to throw overboard the cultural one. In his characteristic style, he said:

We have discarded foreign power, not the unseen foreign influence.

What he would like the new India of his dream to do was to lay the foundation of a new life in keeping with its natural surroundings. In every State in the world today, violence, even if it were for so-called defensive purposes only, enjoyed a status which was in conflict with the better elements of life.

'The organization of the best in society,' was the aim to which new India should dedicate herself; and this could be done only if we succeeded in demolishing the status which had been given to goondaism today.

One of the scientist members of the staff then asked Gandhiji what scientific men should do if they were now asked by the free Indian Government to engage in researches in furtherance of war and the atom bomb? Gandhiji promptly replied:

Scientists to be worth the name should resist such a State unto death.

Harijan, 24-8-1947

334. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

CALCUTTA,
August 16, 1947

Gandhiji expressed his pleasure that at the Chittaranjan Seva Sadan the tricolour was hoisted by an elderly Harijan *Mehtrani* who is faithfully serving the institution. Similarly, for a District Congress Committee (of which he had forgotten the name for the moment), a Harijan girl performed the hoisting ceremony. This was along right lines and in keeping with the present fraternal spirit of Calcutta. He hoped that the spirit was permanent and that there would be no trace of untouchability or inequality in Hinduism and that Hindus and Muslims being from the same God, would never quarrel among one another. If this spirit persisted, it would spread throughout the length and breadth of India. Then there would be no fear of disturbance in Noakhali or the Punjab.

He then proceeded to refer to the crowd taking possession of the Government House. Historians have testified that in ancient India, people had no need to lock

their doors. In Ramarajya thefts were not known. Such is our tradition of honesty and truth. It was a matter of shame that there was a show of the military to induce the crowd to vacate the Government House. He was also grieved to learn that some plate in the Government House was pilfered. He would be glad to find that the plate was returned to the Government House. He then mentioned that an American friend who was the Qaid-e-Azam told him the day before that the Qaid-e-Azam said that India would show to the world that there was no longer any quarrel between the two and that there was no majority and minority community. Rajaji, their Governor, confirmed the same information.

Harijan, 24-8-1947, and *Mahatma Gandhi,—The Last Phase,* Vol. II, p. 373

335. FOOD CRISIS AND SOIL FERTILITY

The suggestions contained in this paper[1] are worthy of attention and adoption. I have no doubt that proper treatment and judicious use of our soil should allay all fear of dearth of food.

Harijan, 17-8-1947

336. AN INDIAN GOVERNOR

In construing the word India, here it includes both Hindostan and Pakistan. Hindustan may mean the country of the Hindus strictly so called, Pakistan may mean the country of the Muslims. Both the uses are,in my opinion, irregular. Hence, I have purposely use the word Hindostan.

The Khilafat-Swaraj-Non-co-operation Resolution of 1920 passed in Calcutta at the Special Session of the Congress[2] , which has brought freedom from the British yoke, was for both the Hindus and the Muslims, designed to induce self-purification so as to bring about non-co-operation between forces of evil and those of good. Hence

1. An Indian Governor should, in his own person and in his surroundings, be a teetotaller. Without this, prohibition of the fiery liquid is well-nigh inconceivable.

2. He and his surroundings should represent hand-spinning as a visible token of identification with the dumb millions of India, a

[1] By Dr. N. R. Dhar, is not reproduced here

[2] *Vide* "The Non-co-operation Resolution", 5-9-1920.

token of the necessity of 'bread labour' and organized non-violence as against organized violence on which the society of today seems to be based.

3. He must dwell in a cottage accessible to all, though easily shielded from gaze, if he is to do efficient work. The British Governor naturally represented British might. For him and his was erected a fortified residence—a palace to be occupied by him and his numerous vassals who sustained his Empire. The Indian prototype may keep somewhat pretentious buildings for receiving princes and ambassadors of the world. For these, being guests of the Governor, should constitute an education in what "Even Unto This Last"—equality of all—should mean in concrete terms. For him no expensive furniture, foreign or indigenous. Plain living and high thinking must be his motto, not to adorn his entrance but to be exemplified in daily life.

4. For him there can be no untouchability in any form whatsoever, no caste or creed or colour distinction. He must represent the best of all religions and all things Eastern or Western. Being a citizen of India, he must be a citizen of the world. Thus simply, one reads, did the Khalif Omar, with millions of treasures at his feet, live; thus lived Janaka of ancient times; thus lived, as I saw him, the Master of Eton in his residence in the midst of , and surrounded by, the sons of the Lords and Nabobs of the British Isles. Will the Governors of India of the famished millions do less?

5. He will speak the language of the province of which he is the Governor and Hindustani, the lingua franca of India written in the Nagari or Urdu script. This is neither Sanskritized Hindi nor Persianized Urdu. Hindustani is emphatically the language which is spoken by the millions north of the Vindhya Range.

This does not pretend to be an exhaustive list of the virtues that an Indian Governor should represent. It is merely illustrative.

One would expect that the Britishers who have been chosen by Indian representatives as Governors and who have taken the oath of fealty to India and her millions would endeavour as far as possible to live the life an Indian Governor is expected to live. They will represent the best that their country has to give to India and the world.

CALCUTTA, August 17, 1947

Harijan, 24-8-1947

337. GOD IS GOOD

Not in the same sense as X is good. X is comparatively good. He is more good than evil, but God is wholly good. There is no evil in Him. God made man in His own image. Unfortunately for us man has fashioned Him in his own. This arrogation has landed man- kind in a sea of troubles. God is the Supreme Alchemist. In His presence all iron and dross turn into pure gold. Similarly does all evil turn into good.

Again God lives but not as we. His creatures live but to die. But God is life. Therefore goodness and all it connotes is not an attribute. Goodness is God. Goodness conceived as apart from Him is a lifeless thing and exists only whilst it is a paying policy. So are all morals. If they are to live in us they must be considered and cultivated in their relation to God. We try to become good because we want to reach and realize God. All the dry ethics of the world turn to dust because apart from God they are lifeless. Coming from God, they come with life in them. They become part of us and ennoble us.

Conversely God conceived without Goodness is without life. We give him life in our vain imaginings.

CALCUTTA, August 17, 1947

Harijan, 24-8-1947

338. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

CALCUTTA,

August 17, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

I have gone deaf from all the shouting. I am expected to never tire of giving *darshan*. I am at any wit's end how to free myself from this. As for the rest of the news—you will have what you can from the newspapers.

I am reminded of the days of the Khilafat. But what if this is just a momentary enthusiasm?

I enclose herewith a telegram about Lahore[1]. I have not replied to it. If what it says is true, it is a serious thing. Do let me know the truth. At present I am stuck here. The second is a letter from Horace Alexander. What he says certainly commends itself to me. If he makes the recommendations after a study of the whole thing, any injustice that might be done can be prevented.

In Chandranagore some rioters have surrounded the house of the Administrator;[2] so Prafulla Babu has gone there.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 365-6

339. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

CALCUTTA,

August 17, 1947

CHI. ANAND,

I have your letter. Is Gangi well? What foreword can I write for my writings? Ask someone else.

If you want to go to America for your ear trouble, you may go. Why do you want my permission? One can do as one wishes. I am returning the Press cutting.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi: Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] Where Hindus had been massacred

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 17-8-1947.

340. SPEECH AT NARKELDANGA[1]

CALCUTTA,

[*August 17, 1947*][2]

Gandhiji said that there were indications that all was not well with the Muslims. Some Hindus were now beginning to feel that they had the upper hand, and some Muslims were afraid that they would have to play the underdog in the Union today. Gandhiji said that this would be shameful indeed. If a minority in India, minority on the score of its religious profession, was made to feel small on that account, he could only say that this India was not the India of his dreams. In the India for whose fashioning he had worked all his life every man enjoyed equality of status, whatever his religion was. The State was bound to be wholly secular. He went so far as to say that no denominational educational institution in it should enjoy State patronage.

All subjects would thus be equal in the eye of the law. But every single individual would be free to pursue his own religion without let or hindrance so long as it did not transgress the common law. The question of the protection of minorities was not good enough for him; it rested upon the recognition of religious grouping between citizens of the same State. What

he wished India to do, was to assure liberty of religious profession to every single individual. Then only India could be great, for it was perhaps the one nation in the ancient world, which had recognized cultural democracy, whereby it was held that the roads to God were many, but the goal was one, because God was one and the same. In fact the roads were as many as there were individuals in the world.

Harijan, 31-8-1947

341. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[3]

CALCUTTA,

August 17, 1947

Gandhiji said that it was well for Shaheed Saheb to speak sweet things. They were justified. There was no exaggeration in his speech. But he felt bound to draw attention to certain disturbing things. They should not be drowned in the pardonable

[1] Extracted from N. K. Bose's report "Many Roads, One Goal"
[2] Gandhiji was at Narkeldanga on this date.
[3] The prayer was held in the Victoria Nursery Grounds in Narkeldanga.

exuberance they were witnessings. There were isolated spots in Calcutta where it was not all well. He had heard that in one spot the Hindu residents were not prepared to welcome back the Muslim residents who were obliged to leave their places. All this was bad. It was like a bad boil in an otherwise wholesome body. If the boils were not looked after in time, they might poison the body.

Then he mentioned a letter he had received from Mahammed Habibullah Bahar. Secretary of the Muslim League. He made a worthy suggestion about a joint influential committee going to the East and West of Bengal and consolidate the good work being done in Calcutta. He hoped the suggestion would be quickly acted upon. Another suggestion was that the havoc caused by the flood in the East Bengal should be a joint concern of the Hindus and the Musalmans. He agreed and hoped that there would be a body of Hindu and Muslim workers who would tackle the subject efficiently. Both grain and workers were wanted more than money. The Mayor of Calcutta had sent him a cheque for Rs.15,000 in aid of relief. He was thankful for the cheque. He would see to it that it was well employed.

Gandhiji then turned to Chandranagore from which the news was received that the Administrator's bungalow was surrounded by those who called themselves satyagrahis but were in fact *duragrahis,* if the statement received by him was true. It was suggested that he had approved of the step. He must say it was wholly untrue. Some persons had come to him and he had said that this was no time for satyagraha. There never could be any for *duragraha.* Pandit Nehru was there to look after such affairs. After all the French were a great people, lovers of liberty. They must not be subjected to any strain by India which had come in possession of liberty. India was bound to protect the French possessions in India against any untoward action by the Indians. So he was glad that the Chief Minister had proceeded to Chandranagore to find out the truth and do what he could.

Continuing, Gandhiji dealt with way in which the people were treating the police who were posted to protect Shaheed Saheb and him. It was most improper to disregard the police instructions. He had seen them undertaking their difficult task with exemplary patience and courtesy. It was wrong for crowds to take the law in their own hands. That way lay slavery, not freedom. He warned the public that he was thinking of approaching the authorities to withdraw their forces, for he did not like them to be subjected to insult for doing a public duty. He, however, expected that the crowd would become perfectly orderly, so that the contemplated withdrawal might not be necessary. The police and the military today were after all servants of the public and not their masters.

Lastly, Gandhiji referred to the coming Id celebration. For twenty years in South Africa he had participated in the celebration with Muslim friends in *masjids.* Now that a flood of goodwill was sweeping over the city of Calcutta, he expected

everyone to take such steps as would render the friendly feeling permanent. It was easy to share in a rising tide of emotion; but it was quite another matter to produce constructive workers who would toil from day to day in order to consolidate the feeling. Gandhiji would love to see such work in the city, for, he was sure that its effect would then be felt by the rest of the country. If they failed to do this, Gandhiji warned them, today's freedom would prove only a nine-day wonder.

Harijan, 31-8-1947

342. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MIRABEHN

August 18, 1947

The joy of the crowd is there but not in me is any satisfaction. Anything lacking in me?. . .[1] Hindu-Muslim unity seems to be too sudden to be true. They ascribe the transformation to me. I wonder! Probably things would have been like this even if I had not been on the scene. Time will show.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 374.

343. NOTE TO KHULNA CONGRESS WORKERS[2]

CALCUTTA,

[*August 18, 1947*][3]

There can be no two opinions. The Union flag *must* go, Pakistan's must be hoisted without demur, with joy if possible. Award is award good or bad.

From a photostat: C. W. 10574; also *My Days with Gandhi*, pp. 267-8

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] The visitors had sought Gandhiji's advice as to what they should do with the tricolour they had hoisted to celebrate August 15 in Khulna, now that the Boundary Commission had awarded the place to Pakistan. Gandhiji wrote this as he was observing silence.

[3] From My Days with Gandhi

344. NOTE TO PEOPLE OF BARRACKPORE[1]

August 18, 1947

I hope the decision not to have music in the vicinity of mosques at the *namaz* time is acceptable to all and will be regarded as binding by *all* Hindus, not only those who are present on the spot. The League and the Congress have agreed to solve all differences by peaceful methods and without resort of force.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 375

345. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

BELIAGHATA,
August 18, 1947

My first duty is to wish *Id Mubarak* to all those Muslims who are present here. There was a time when both the Hindus and Muslims embraced each other on this day. I must confess that after many years I am witnessing this scene. I am very happy to see the members of the Muslims League, National Guards and Congress volunteers here. How-ever, this unity should be everlasting. We have to take the place of the British. I will never be able to forget the scene I have witnessed today.

[From Gujarati]

Calcuttano Chamatkar, pp. 40-1

[1] Gandhiji visited Barrackpore, 14 miles north of Calcutta, following reports of some trouble over a procession. Peace had already been established when Gandhiji, who was still observing silence, reached there.

[2] The meeting held in the compounds of the Mohammedan Sporting Club was attended by about four to five lakh people.

346. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

CALCUTTA,
August 19, 1947

CHI. SUSHILA,

I got your letter and the wire. When can a message be sent to Manilal? After the 15th? That is over.

What do you mean by saying that Sita has been betrothed? According to me, the betrothal took place the day they stole each other's hearts. Does betrothal mean that they have now taken a step further and can take more liberties with each other? But you are now leaving. What is bound to happen will happen.

You must have received my long letters.[1]

I am writing this letter under very great pressure for time.

I understand about Sita's college. Some inconvenience must be endured, or boys and girls become secretive and think that they are progressing.

Show this letter to Manilal also.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5012

347. LETTER TO NANDLAL MEHTA

CALCUTTA,
August 19, 1947

CHI. NANDLAL,

Your letter and the watch were received well in time.

What you have done is like caparisoning a donkey in gold. I was shocked and wondered if it was of gold. Shaheed Saheb was sitting with me. He opened the watch and discovered it was only gilded. Still I did not like it. I need only ordinary things. This watch cannot even take a khadi string. It will need a silken string.

And because there is no radium on the dial, I shall need a torch

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sushila Gandhi", 14-8-1947.

or something at night. Of course it is not to be expected that it will have an alarm.

This does not mean that you should get a new one. Of course, if a watch with radium and alarm was available, I would surely exchange. But even that for how long? Our days are now numbered. We must be resigned to whatever we get. If something improper is presented, we must put it aside. But I am digressing.

The watch seems to be keeping accurate time. How is it that Urmila does not come to lend her shoulder? Let her study a lot. But she should not fall prey to the present-day business. You must have understood what I am hinting at.

The fulfilment of your desire is difficult. I can live up to 125 years if I can become detached. I get angry with myself. Who belongs to me?

Blessings to you three from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Hindustan

348. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

CALCUTTA,

August 19, 1947

Gandhiji apologized for being late by an hour and a quarter. His party was not at fault. Because of the misdeeds of the majority, who were Hindus in Kanchrapara[1], the Chief Minister, Shaheed Saheb, he and others had to go to Kanchrapara. Then on return they were stopped by parties who wanted to acclaim their joy. This sort of acclamation, if it was not tempered with restraint, would kill their leaders and then they would deplore the embarrassing affection. He then warned them against being unduly elated by all the fraternization that they were witnessing. Behind it there were pointers like Barrackpore,[2] Kanchrapara and other places he could mention. He would not let them plead excuse or extenuation. There was neither excuse nor extenuation for the majority in Pakistan or Hindustan. If the Hindu majority treasured

[1] An industrial area, 26 miles north of Calcutta, where following a dispute over playing or music before mosques, the police had opened fire causing many deaths.

[2] *Vide* "Note to People of Barrackpore", 18-8-1947.

their religion and duty, they would be just at all cost. They would overlook the limitations or mistakes of the minority who had no one but the majority to look to for justice. He had to listen not without shame and sorrow to the statement that a Muslim friend made to him. He said with a sigh that there was nothing left but a kind of subjection to the Hindu majority and they might have to suffer in silence the playing of music before mosques whilst they were offering prayers. He would have no such despair on the part of Muslims. The friend, who made the remark, did not realize that he unconsciously implied that Muslims majority would inflict revenge in Pakistan. He hoped it would never be so either in Hindustan or Pakistan. The proper thing was each majority to do their duty in all humility, irrespective of what the other majority did in the other State. He suggested , therefore, that until the Prime Ministers of Pakistan and the Union agreed upon another course in both the States, the practice that was followed during the British regime often under compulsion, should be fully and voluntarily followed in both the States. Those who thought that they could haughtily impose their will on the minority were foolish and were vastly mistaken. If, therefore, they wanted to consolidate the prevailing goodwill, they would see to it that they acted on the square under all circumstances.

Harijan, 31-8-1947

349. TALK WITH STUART NELSON[1]

CALCUTTA,

[Before *August 20, 1947*][2]

Professor Nelson asked him why it was that Indians who had more or less successfully gained independence through peaceful means, were now unable to check the tide of civil war through the same means?

Gandhiji replied that it was indeed a searching question which he must answer. He confessed that it had become clear to him that what he had mistaken for satyagraha was not satyagraha but passive resistance—a weapon of the weak. Indians harboured ill will and anger against their erstwhile rulers, while they pretended to resist them non-violently. Their resistance was, therefore, inspired by violence and not a by regard for the man in the British,whom they should convert through satyagraha.

[1] This and the following item extracted from "Non-violence and Free India" appeared under the date-line "Calcutta, 20-8-1947". This talk however, according to the source, took place two or three days before it was reported.

[2] *ibid*

Now that the British were voluntarily quitting India, apparent non-violence had gone to pieces in a moment. The attitude of violence which we had secretly harboured, in spite of the restraint imposed by the Indian National Congress, now recoiled upon us and made us fly at each other's throats when the question of the distribution of power came up. If India could now discover a way of sublimating the force of violence which had taken a communal turn, and turning it into constructive, peaceful ways, whereby differences of interests could be liquidated, it would be a great day indeed.

Gandhiji then proceeded to say that is was indeed true that many English friends had warned him that the so-called non-violent non-co-operation of India was not really non-violent. It was the passivity of the weak and not the non-violence of the stout in heart who would never surrender their sense of human unity and brotherhood even in the midst of conflict of interests, who would even try to convert and not coerce their adversary.

Gandhiji procceded to say that this was indeed true. He had all along laboured under an illusion. But he was never sorry for it. He realized that if his vision were not covered by that illusion, India would never have reached the point which it had today.

India was now free, and the reality was now clearly revealed to him. Now that the burden of subjection had been lifted, all the forces of good had to be marshalled in one great effort to build a country which forsook the accustomed method of violence in order to settle human conflicts whether it was between two States or between two sections of the same people. He had yet the faith that India would rise to the occasion and prove to the world that the birth of two new States would be, not a menace, but a blessing to the rest of mankind. It was the duty of Free India to perfect the instrument of non-violence for dissolving collective conflicts, if its freedom was going to be really worth-while.

Harijan, 31-8-1947

350. TALK WITH STUDENTS

CALCUTTA,

[Before *August 20, 1947*]

Gandhiji first asked them if any of them had taken part in the riots, to which they replied in the negative. Whatever they had done was in self-defence; hence it was no part of the riot.

This gave Gandhiji an opportunity of speaking on some of the vital problems connected with non-violence. He said that mankind had all along tried to justify violence and war in terms of unavoidable self-defence. It was a simple rule that the violence of the aggressor could only defeated by superior violence of the defender. All over the world, men had thus been caught in a mad race for armaments, and no one yet knew at what point of time the world would be really safe enough for turning the sword into the plough. Mankind, he stated, had not yet mastered the true art of self-defence.

But great teachers, who had practised what they preached, had successfully shown that true defence lay along the path of non-retaliation. It might sound paradoxical; but this is what he meant. Violence always thrived on counter-violence. The aggressor had always a purpose behind his attack; he wanted something to be done, some object to be surrendered by the defender. Now, if the defender steeled his heart and was determined not to surrender even one inch, and at the same time to resist the temptation of matching the violence of the aggressor by violence, the latter could be made to realize in a short while that it would not be paying to punish the other party and his will could not be imposed in that way. This would involve suffering. It was this unalloyed self-suffering which was the truest form of self-defence which knew no surrender.

Someone might ask how it could be called self-defence if through such non-resistance the defender was likely to lose his life. Jesus lost his life on the Cross and the Roman Pilate won. Gandhiji did not agree. Jesus had won, as the world's history had abundantly shown. What did it matter if the body was dissolved in the process, so long as by Christ's act of non-resistance, the forces of good were released in society?

This art of the self-defence by means of which man gained his life by losing it, had been mastered and exemplified in the history of individuals. The method had not been perfected for application by large masses of mankind. India's satyagraha was a very imperfect experiment in that direction. Hence, during the Hindu-Muslim quarrel, it proved a failure on the whole.

Harijan, 31-8-1947

351. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

CALCUTTA,

August 20, 1947

CHI. MIRA,

Your two letters and wire. I hope you got mine at Pratap Nagar. All your letters were received.

So you have not gained by your stay in the Himalayan Hills! You are evidently unable to build up your body.

I suggest your giving up all activities including cow-keeping.

What about the buildings you have erected and the ground taken? You can certainly come back to me and stay at will. Have no irons in the fire till your body is like true steel. I hold that it can be like that if the conditions are fulfilled.

I hope the examination of your heart will prove satisfactory.[1]

I am fixed up here for the time being. Then the intention is to go to Noakhali. When that time will come I do not know.

This letter has taken me two hours to finish. There were many interruptions.

BAPU

[PS.]

I had expressed the intention to pass my days in Pakistan, no promise.

From the original: C. W. 6531. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9926

[1] The addressee had written to Gandhiji of her decision to go to Delhi to get her heart examined as the strain of the Himalayan hills had left her health very unsatisfactory.

352. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

BELIAGHATA,

August 20, 1947

CHI. JIVANJI,

I have your letter. I am very sorry to learn that you got the articles on Wednesday the 13th. I take the utmost care to see that you get all the material on Monday evening. With that aim, I send the material by air-mail from Calcutta on Sunday. But I cannot attend to everything myself. I have got to trust somebody, Nobody can be forced to do anything. We should, therefore, be content with whatever service we get. I have no paid employee. I have so arranged my life that those who are with me can leave me this very day. Such lapses, therefore, will continue. Also I must confess that I have no more zest in running *Harijan*. I constantly feel that it is only through actions I should try to give the people what I can. But I am not going to decide anything in a hurry. Whatever happens will happen in the natural course.

I have received a copy of Prabhu's publication. I understand about Anand Hingorani. You may rest assured that he is not after money, nor is he dishonest. He is certainly capricious, being the son of a rich father. He is highly educated and has been brought up in indulgence. His father-in-law also is a big man. He has now lost his hearing. He would be happy to be able to popularize any ideas of mine. He doesn't write anything else or make profit by publishing books. However, he must abide the rules which normally govern the permission we give to all such publications.

Do you send anybody to the airport on Mondays at the time of arrival of the aeroplane? It would be better to send somebody every day till you receive the *Harijan* Packet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9983. Also C. W. 6957. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

353. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

CALCUTTA,

August 20, 1947

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I am enclosing Aryanayakum's letter. As asked for pay Radhakisan Rs. 75,000.

So the *goshala* work goes on after all as usual; or has there been anything new?

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

354. LETTER TO E. W. ARYANAYAKUM

August 20, 1947

CHI. ARYANAYAKUM,

I have your letter.

I have written[1] to Chimanlal to give Rs. 75,000 to Chi. Radhakisan for the *goshala*.

My letter[2] about the *goshala* must have reached you.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

355. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[3]

CALCUTTA,

August 20, 1947

QUESTION: There is a talk of sending Miss Chandralekha Pandit[4] as ambassador to the U.S. A. What can a young girl of eighteen do there?

GANDHIJI: It is an attack on Jawaharlal Nehru. I can give an apt reply to it. But at the moment I do not want to involve myself in politics. I am busy with the work concerning Hindu-Muslim unity.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to E. W. Aryanayakum", 13-8-1947.

[3] Gandhiji met the journalists at his Beliaghata residence; Suhrawardy was also present.

[4] Daughter of Vijayalakshmi Pandit

You may ask any question you like on the subject. I do not want to render the Press useless. I want to utilize it in the work of Hindu-Muslim unity. I am eager to see the day when Hindus and Muslims will cease to stab each other even if the Government of India or of Pakistan should go mad. Whatever I say in my prayer meetings or in my writings is done after the due deliberation.

Let the past be buried. Do not rake it up. Think of the future. Analyse things. Do not hesitate to point out the defects if they are detected. Do not exaggerate. The country has often suffered from exaggeration.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Calcuttano Chamatkar, pp. 42-3

356. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

CALCUTTA,
August 20, 1947

Gandhiji drew attention to Chittagong and said that it was their duty to collect funds, distribute food and clothing and medical necessaries. Enough volunteers should be sent to afford relief. He was glad to find that the Marwari Relief Society as also the Friends' Service Unit under Mr. Muirhead had already sent workers to the scene.

Referring to the Punjab, Gandhiji said that he had received letters to the effect that now that there was peace in Calcutta, he should proceed to the Punjab. He said that when God called him, he would most certainly go there. But the two Prime Ministers of the two Dominions had announced that their major preoccupation would be to restore complete peace in the Punjab. They would use every resource at their disposal to establish peace and they would mobilize public opinion in the Punjab. This should be enough for them to hope that things in the Punjab would be as good as in Calcutta. The two Prime Minister of the Punjab and Master Tara Singh and Master Giani Kartar Singh have said likewise.

Mentioning about the Central Peace Committee, Gandhiji said that it should consolidate the results so far achieved. They had to see that poor Muslims were rehabilitated just as the Hindus had to be rehabilitated in the areas from which they had been evacuated. Local peace committees should be set up in each *mohalla;* and

[1] This paragraph is from Amrita Bazar Patrika, 21-8-1947.

[2] The meeting held at Khengrapati, Barrackpore, was attended by over four lakh people.

they must find at least one Hindu and one Muslim of clean heart to work together. These committees must tour the areas under their jurisdiction. They should work to create the feeling of friendliness wherever it was lacking. For the purpose of rehabilitation they would have to go into details. Food, shelter and clothing had to be found for the evacuees returning to their homes. It would be a great day indeed for Calcutta if its men and women co-operated in this manner to consolidate their good feelings, which had been so much in evidence during the last few days. In this task all the parties were to co-operate. For, now that all the parties concerned had come to an agreement with regard to the division of India into two dominions, there was no longer any reason to quarrel and they could join hands in the task of restoring peaceful conditions.

Gandhiji then referred to the question of flags. Personally he was of opinion that as the two States were on friendly terms with each other, there was no reason why they could not display each other's flags in the two Dominons just as England and America could do.

Gandhiji then referred to the proposal of stopping cow-slaughter by means of legislation in the Indian Union. He said that he was of opinion that if they tried to do so through law, it would be a great mistake. He had been a devotee of the cow for over half a century. She had a permanent place in the economy of India. The cow can indeed be saved if they could win over the hearts of the Muslims in such a way that they voluntarily understood the responsiblity out of deference to the feelings of their Hindu friends. This had been abundantly demonstrated during the Khilafat days. Now that India was free, the same old relation could be restored if they behaved towards one another correctly.

Hinduism, he lastly said, would be wrongly served if compelling legislation was resorted to in such matters. Hinduism could be saved only by doing unadulterated justice to man to whatever religion he might belong.

Harijan, 31-8-1947

357. LETTER TO DEV PRAKASH NAYYAR

CALCUTTA,
August 21, 1947

CHI. DEV,

I don't see the difficulty Jivanji has pointed out in respect of the article "My Neighbours". I sent for the book and read it. As far as I understand the English language, the improvement you suggsted has no place in it. If Jivanji could suggest some other improvement I

might understand his point.

I have sent replies to the other questions with Shah Nawaz. Do write to me whatever you wish. Never mind if I am not able to reply promptly although I shall try to do so.

I got up at 2.30 and am now writing this. It is 3.30 by the Calcutta standard time.

It is undecided where I shall go. But the talk is going on about my leaving soon for the Punjab.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

358. LETTER TO TERESA RADDY

CALCUTTA,

August 21, 1947

DEAR TERESA,

What a long letter to express your jubilation. When your studies are over I wonder [if] you will retain the same enthusiasm as now for the service of the country.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MISS TERESA RADDY
C/O MR. T. L. THOMAS
69 AUSTIN TOWN
BANGALORE CANTT.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

359. LETTER TO J. WOLFF

CALCUTTA,
August 21, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your cablegram preceding your letter. To your cablegram I sent the following reply: WOLFF POST RESTANTE JERUSALEM. AM HELPLESS. GANDHI".

You are impatient. Non-violence is never impatient. Impatience betrays lack of faith and understanding. Go on doing your duty to the full and leave the rest to God.

J. WOLFF, ESQ.
POST RESTANTE
JERUSALEM

From a copy: Pyarelal papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

360. SPEECH AT WOMEN' S MEETING[1]

CALCUTTA,
August 21, 1947

I have been to many women's meetings. But today the noise is too much. I am but a servant. I have come to this meeting because I was ordered to do so. I would like to leave as soon as possible. All the women who have come here should call on Muslim women. Women can do much work. My grand-daughter was with me in my Noakhali tour. I used to send her to Muslim women daily. It was amazing the way they talked with her. Those women used to test her also. Women should work for eradicating untouchability.

[From Gujarati]

Calcuttano Chamatkar, p. 45

[1] The meeting was held in the University. There was so much noise that Gandhiji had to wait for about forty-five minutes before he could address the gathering.

361. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

CALCUTTA,

August 21, 1947

Gandhiji drew attention to the two flags of Pakistan and the Indian Union that were being prominently flown among the audience and hoped that that pleasing sight would be universal in India. He was glad too that Shaheed Saheb had suggested the revival of the slogan '*Hindu-Muslim ki Jai'*, for it was started during the palmy Khilafat days. He recalled the memory of the old days when a Muslim fellow-prisoner used to sing Iqbal's *Sare Jahanse Achchha*. He used to have it sung equally sweetly by the late Saraladevi Chowdharani. The third time was this evening when he heard it sung with equal sweetness and force. The words of the poem were as sweet as the tune. And among them what could be sweeter than that religion never taught mutual hatred? He hoped and prayed that the beginning thus auspiciously made would last for ever and that they would never resort to the sword for the solution of their difficulties. If that was to be so, they would see that no untoward incidents were allowed to happen and flimsy things were not exaggerated so as to make them look like a communal disturbance as had come to his notice even that very day. He pleaded, too, that a strong rehabilitation committee might collect enough funds to give aid where it was required.

Absolute impartiality was needed to bring all the evacuees back to their places. There was a complaint that certain Muslims, who used to supply carts for transfer of goods from place to place, were displaced during the direct-action days. They had not found any other occupation. He was clear that if the state- ment was true, they should be reinstated. What was then to be done with the substitutes who were imported from other provinces? It was a ticklish question. But it was not beyond the wit of merchants. Where there was a will, there was a way. In scrupulous attention to such matters lay the foundation for permanent unity. There was, too, the question of landlords taking undue advantage of the evacuees who were eager to return. They must not expect payment for the days that the *bustees* were unoccupied or think of charging higher rents. He added that if they were quite honest in all their dealings both the communities were true to one another, he was sure that the union of hearts would act unfailingly on the Punjab and help the good work that was being done by the ministers of the two Dominions.

He then came to the Award of the Umpire in the Boundary Commission. The

[1] Held in the Park Circus Maidan, a predominantly Muslim locality, the meeting began with Iqbal's song Sare Jahanse Achchha Hindostan Hamara.

Umpire was chosen by all the parties to the dispute. It would be unjust and unworthy to impute motives to the Umpire. He was specially invited by the parties to the thankless task. The parties and the public they represented, were loyally to abide by the Award. No Award that he knew—and he had to do with many arbitrations—completely satisfied the parties. But having made the choice they were bound to carry out the terms of the Award. No doubt the best way was for the parties to adjust differences themeselves. This royal road was open to them any time as Khwaja Saheb Nazimuddin and Dr. Ghosh, the two Premiers, had wisely pointed out.

He knew that the Muslims of Murshidabad and Malda were as gravely disappointed as the Hindus in Khulna or Gopalganj and the Buddhists in the Chittagong Hill tracts. The latter had gone to East Bengal. He would say to all these parties that it was not only foolish but unbecoming to quarrel over the Award. It should not matter that on the 15th, the day was celebrated according to the national division. If he had been consulted he would have advised non-celebration because of the state of uncertainty. But having by mistake flown in the respective places the wrong flag, there should be no hesitation whatsoever in replacing the wrong flag by the right one. But as he had already said, there was no flag wrong in their Dominion for the simple reason that there was no quarrel left between the parties. Both the Dominions had sincerely professed mutual friendship and mutual regard. Therefore, he would advise the parties to fly both the flags of both the Dominions or be equally respectful whichever flag was flown for the time being.

He could not understand the misgivings of the Muslims in that Murshidabad and Malda went to West Bengal, nor could he understand the misgivings of the Hindus in Khulna and Gopalganj and of the Buddhists in the Chittagong Hill tracts. For, in view of the friendship professed by all the parties, there was not the slightest occasion for entertaining any fear. Surely, there would be no compulsion used against the minorities in either of Bengal. The minorities would enjoy equal rights with the majorities.

Harijan, 31-8-1947

362. HOW TO SAVE THE COW?

There is serious ignorance about the place of the cow in Hinduism and in the economy of Indian life. At the same time that India has become independent of foreign rule, by common consent it has been cut into twain so as to induce the untenable belief that one part is popularly described as Hindu India and the other part as Muslim India. Like all superstitions, this of Hindu and Muslim India will die hard. The fact is that the Indian Union and Pakistan belong

equally to all who call themselves and are, sons of the soil, irrespective of their creed or colour.

Nevertheless, a large number of local Hindus have begun to believe in the superstition that the Union belongs to the Hindus and the that, therefore, they should enforce their belief by law even among non-Hindus. Hence an emotional wave is sweeping the country, in order to secure legislation prohibiting the slaughter of cows within the Union.

In this state, which I hold, is based on ignorance, claiming to be a knowing lover and devotee, second to none in India of the cow, I must try in the best manner I can to dispel the ignorance.

Let us at the outset realize that cow worship in the religious sense is largely confined to Gujarat, Marwar, the United Provinces and Bihar. Marwaris and Gujaratis being enterprising merchants, have succeeded in making the greatest noise without at the same time devoting their business talent to the solution of the very difficult question of conserving the cattle wealth of India.

It is obviously wrong legally to enforce one's religious practice on those who do not share that religion.

In so far as the pure economic necessity of cow protection is concerned, it could be easily secured if the question was considered on that ground alone. In that event all the dry cattle, the cows who give less milk than their keep and the aged and unfit cattle would be slaughtered without a second thought. This soulless economy has no place in India although the inhabitants of this land of paradoxes may be, indeed are, guilty of many soulless acts.

Then how can the cow be saved without our having to kill her off when she ceases to give the economic quantity of milk or when she becomes otherwise an uneconomic burden? The answer to the question can be summed up as follows:

1. By the Hindus performing their duty towards the cow and her progeny. If they did so, our cattle would be the pride of India and the world. The contrary is the case today.

2. By learning the science of cattle-breeding. Today there is perfect anarchy in this work.

3. By replacing the present cruel method of castration by the humane method practised in the West.

4. By thorough reform of the *pinjarapoles* of India which are

today, as a rule, managed ignorantly and without any plan by men who do not know their work.

5. When these primary things are done, it will be found that the Muslims will, of their own accord, recognize the necessity, of only for the sake of their Hindu brethren, of not slaughtering cattle for beef or otherwise.

The reader will observe that behind the foregoing requirements lies one thing and that is ahimsa, otherwise known as universal compassion. If that supreme thing is realized, everything else becomes easy. Where there is ahimsa, there is infinite patience, inner calm, discrimination, self-sacrifice and true knowledge. Cow-protection is not an easy thing. Much money is wasted in its name. Nevertheless, in the absence of ahimsa the Hindus have become destroyers instead of saviours of the cow. It is even more difficult than the removel of foreign rule from India.[1]

CALCUTTA, August 22, 1947

Harijan, 31-8-1947

363. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

BELIAGHATA, CALCUTTA,
August 22, 1947

CHI. KANTI,

I was pleased to read your postcard. I am busy writing a large number of letters. After completing your study, devote yourself to service even at some risk to yourself.

For the present I shall have to remain here. How is it that Suru[2] and Shanti[3] keep indifferent health?

Blessings to all of you from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7385. Courtesy: Kanti Gandhi

[1] For Gandhiji's note appended to this article, *Vide* "A Note", 23-8-1947.
[2] Addressee's wife, Saraswati
[3] Addressee's son

364. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

CALCUTTA,
August 22, 1947

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

I have your wire.[1] The work here is proceeding well. Yes, I must go to Noakhali. Some days are to be given to Bihar. Under the circumstances, when can I go to the Punjab? Nevertheless, you must tell me when I have to go.[2] No time to write more. I wanted to write in English but the pen went off into Hindustani. See the enclosed; is there any truth in it?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

365. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

CALCUTTA,
August 22, 1947

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

What a letter? You must have a frank talk with Jayaprakash. Nothing can be settled through correspondence. If it is all true, then the socialists cannot do anything.

Nandalal's watch seems useless. The back of the casing comes off. I will see what can be done about it.

I have sent Saheb's papers to Panditji.

Has Sushila come? Tell her that I have intentionally not written to her. I had thought that she would be coming here. But if she feels that it is her duty to stay there for a few days, she may do so.

I have sent your watch with Aruna.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2499

[1] After a visit to the riot-affected areas in the Punjab the addressee had wired to Gandhiji on August 21, sending his "respectful congratulations on the wonderful change in Calcutta" and telling him that the Punjab needed his "healing presence".

[2] The addressee replied: "I do not ask you to go to Punjab immediately. We must face the situation now. Later I might request you to go there."

366. LETTER TO RAM MANOHAR LOHIA

August 22, 1947

CHI. RAM MANOHAR,

I will write tomorrow about Nepal.

Smoking can be given up all at once. Those who smoke moderately cannot keep to a limit. If we workers do not have such will power, what work can we except to do? It is now that we have to do real work.

Have you understood the Goa problem fully?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Mahatma*, Vol. VIII, between pp. 120 and 121

367. DISCUSSION WITH KASTURBA TRUST TRAINEES[1]

CALCUTTA,

[*August 22, 1947*][2]

One of the teachers had submitted a statement about her experiences with regard to the method of training itself.

But Gandhiji did not wish to enter into the actual details of the training course; he was sure this had to be adjusted to the conditions and needs of rural Bengal and the details must naturally be worked out by the teachers from their own experience.

The question which Gandhiji took up for discussion was asked by one of the trainees: In view of the resistance encountered from the rural people and the numerous disappointments which they had to face, how would Gandhiji advise them to proceed, so that success could be ensured?

Gandhiji began by saying that he was glad that a very fundamental question had been raised. He had, however, only one answer for it. The education through which India had passed for over a century was essentially designed for a particular purpose. In order to feed the interests of capitalism , the entire economic life of India had been changed, the city had become the centre of gravity and not the village; the village had been dethroned from its position of supremacy and virtually been

[1] Twenty-three trainees and three teachers from the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust training camp, Shahib Nagar, had called on Gandhiji.

[2] From Calcuttano Chamatkar

converted into a slum, kept as far away from city as practicable. The educational system had been planned to supply the needs of this lop-sided economy. If, now, we wanted to create a new India our outlook must be changed altogether. Democracy has to be built up inch by inch in economic, social and political life. Considering the magnitude of the task, it would naturally require a very stout heart to grapple with the problem.

To the trainees, his advice was one. They must be brave, intelligent and persevering. The villagers might not readily respond. They might even prove hostile. Many interests would have to be disturbed before the ne- cessary change could be effected. But non-violent workers should choose the line of least resistance. They should suffer in their own persons before they could aspire to gain the co-operation of the inert or hostile villagers. Day in and day out, they must persevere at their chosen task, whether it was village sanitation or the imparting of education to a few children, whomperhaps nobody else would care to touch. They might not have the resources to supply their own bread. But even then, through hunger, they must persist without retirement, without bitterness. *Then* only would their conduct strike the imgination of the villagers; and this element of surprise would open the way to their hearts. Once the inert mass had begun to yield, work would make rapid progress.

Another trainee then said that there were no signs of response from the villagers even after a year of patient work. Gandhiji comforted her by saying that one year's work was not enough. We had to sweep aside the accumulated debris of centuries of subjugation. Even a lifetime might not prove enough.[1] If our education had been otherwise, we might not have perhaps yielded so readily to despondence. We had to steel our hearts and look towards the bright future to enable us to get out of the Slough of Despond. So long as we persevered, the struggle itself was victory. It was only courage of this kind which could lead India to the New Age.

Harijan, 7-9-1947

[1] According to Calcuttano Chamatkar, Gandhiji referred to Prema Kantak and Yashodhara Dasappa as the two workers who had dedicated themselves to the villages for many years.

368. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

CALCUTTA,

August 22, 1947

Gandhiji drew attention to the fact that while some men in the audience responded and kept time, the women hardly responded. He said that those who had some experience knew the power that the *Ramdhun,* meaning recital of God's name from the heart, meant. He knew the power that lakhs of soldiers marching in step to the tune of their band meant. The desolation that military prowess had wrought in the world, he who ran could see. Though the War said to have ended, the aftermath was worse than actual warfare. Such was the bankruptcy of military power.

Without the slightest hesitation he was there to contend that the power exerted by the *Ramdhun* recited by millions of mankind with true beat of time, was different in kind from and infinitely superior to the display of mili- tary strength. And this recital of God's name from the heart, would produce lasting peace and happiness in the place of the present desolation they wit- nessed. That brought him to what was going on in the Punjab. If there was lasting peace in Calcutta, it must have its effect on the Punjab. But it was not so as yet. He felt sorrow and shame to learn that the Hindus were leaving Lahore and the Muslims were leaving Amritsar. It was deplorable that the Muslims should distruct the former. He hoped that the Muslims and the Hindus and the Sikh leaders would stop the reported exodus.

Gandhiji referred then to the visit he had from some Muslims from Kharagpur. Though now there was comparative quiet there, there was no assurance that it would last. They complained that the Hindu officer was partial. He hoped this was not so. He must warn all the officers and their men in the police force that in their work they were neither Muslims nor Hindus nor Sikhs. They were Indians bound by oath to give full protection to the afficted without regard to their religion. Thereby they did not cease to be Muslims, Hindus or Sikhs, but became better.

Religion was a personal matter and if we succeeded in confining it to the personal plane, all would be well in our political life. The manifestation of brotherhood which was being witnessed today would prove a passing show if we did not consolidate it by suitable acts in the social and political spheres. If officers of the Government as well as members of the public undertook the responsibility and worked wholeheartedly for the creation of a secular State, we could build a new India that would be the glory of the world.

Harijan, 31-8-1947

[1] The meeting, held in Deshabandhu Park, was attended by several lakhs of people who became restive and began to disperse. Gandhiji, therefore cut short his speech.

369. A NOTE[1]

The average quantity of milk that the cow in India yields is said to be roughly 2 lb. per day , that of New Zealand 14 lb., of England 15 lb., of Holland 20 lb. The index figure for health goes up in proportion to the increase in the yield of milk.

August 23, 1947

Harijan, 31-8-1947

370. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

CALCUTTA,

August 23, 1947

Gandhiji first referred to the cry of *Allah-o-Akbar* to which some Hindus had objected. He held that it was probably a cry than which a greater one had not been produced by the world. It was a soul-stirring religious cry which meant, God only was great. There was nobility in the meaning. Did it become objection- able because it was Arabic? He admitted that it had in India a questionable association. It often terrified the Hindus because sometimes the Muslims in anger come out of the mosques with that cry on their lips to belabour the Hindus. He confessed that the original had no such association. So far as he knew, the cry had no such association in other parts of the world. If, therefore, there was to be a lasting friendship between the two, the Hindus should have no hesitation in uttering the cry together with their Muslim friends. God was known by many names and had many attributes. Rama, Rahim, Krishna, Karim, were all names of the one God. *Sat Shri Akal,* was an equally potent cry. Should a single Muslim or Hindu hesitate to utter it? It meant that God was and nothing else was. The *Ramdhun* had the same virtue.

He then came to *Vande Mataram.* That was no religious cry. It was a purely political cry. The Congress had to examine it. A reference was made to Gurudev about it. And both the Hindu and the Muslim members of the Congress Working Committee had to come to the conclusion that its opening lines were free from any possible objection, and he pleaded that it shoud be sung together by all on due occasion. It should never be a chant to insult or offend the Muslims. It was to be remembered that it was the cry that had fired political Bengal. Many Bengalis had given up their lives

[1] This was appended to the article "How to Save the Cow?".

[2] The meeting was held in "Woodlands", the Alipore residence of the Maharaja of Cooch Behar.

for political freedom with that cry on their lips. Though, therefore, he felt strongly about *Vande Mataram* as an ode to Mother India, he advised his League friends to refer the matter to the League High Command. He would be surprised if, in view of the growing friendliness between the Hindus and the Muslims, the league High Command objected to the prescribed lines of the*Vande Mataram,* the national song and the national cry of Bengal which sustained her when the rest of India was almost asleep and which was, so far as he was aware, acclaimed by both the Hindus and the Muslims of Bengal. No doubt, every act, as he pointed out the previous evening, must be purely voluntary on the part of either partner. Nothing could be imposed in true friendship.

The third thing he referred to was about his friend Shaheed Suhrawardy. He was receiving verbal complaints and complaints by letters that Shaheed Saheb was not to be trusted and that the Hindus had suffered a lot during the tenure of his ministry. The complaint was not new. He knew it before they embarked on the join mission which seemed to be bearing unexpectedly good fruit. It was due to the givers of the warning that he should deal with it. He had not had the time even to discuss the matter with his friend. He was in no hurry. His was a trusting nature. He had never lost anything by trusting in good faith. Just as he would expect others to believe his word, unless he was proved untrue, he would likewise believe the word of another. That, he held, was the only honourable way of living among men. He held that man never lost by trusting and that the deceiver ever lost. He would have to answer for his crime before his Maker. He could say that during the few days they were together, he had found no occasion to regret the friendship. This he could tell them, that without his association in the work, he (the speaker) would have able to do nothing.

He referred next to a deputation[1] he had from the Punjabi friends, who had drawn a terrible picture of what was said to be going on in the Punjab and who on the strength of the information asked him immediately to proceed to the Punjab. They had informed him that before the killing and arson in the Punjab, what had happened in Bengal was nothing. They added that Lahore was almost denuded of the Hindus and Sikhs as was Amritsar of the Muslims. He hoped that the information was highly coloured. The Punjabis of Calcutta could not know the true situation in the Punjab. Be that as it may, he was sure that if the Hindus, the Sikhs and the Muslims of Calcutta were sincere in their profession of friendship, they all would write to their follows in the Punjab and ask them to desist from mutual slaughter. The declarations of the Dominion Premiers could not go in vain. He could not believe that the Punjab leaders would not like any non-Muslims in the Pakistan part and non-Hindus and non-Sikhs in the other part. The logical consequence would be that there would be no

[1] A deputation of the Punjab Hindu-Sikh Sabha, led by Niranjan Sing Talib, had calld on Gandhiji in the afternoon.

gurudwaras and *mandirs* in the West Punjab and no mosques in the East Punjab. The picture was too gruesome to be ever true.

Lastly, he came to the nationalist Muslims who were good enough to see him. They twitted him for giving importance and life to the Muslim League and neglecting the nationalist Muslims. He could not plead guilty to either charge. The League had gained importance without his or the Congress aid. It became great because, rightly or wrongly, it caught Muslimfancy. The Congress and he had to deal with and recognize the fact that faced them. He was not sorry for having visited Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah eighteen times in Bombay. His friends should also know that he alone could have done nothing without Shaheed Saheb and Osman Saheb and the other League members. There was no question of neglect of the nationalist Muslims. Nationalism of a man was its own merit. It demanded no recognition. He would advise his friends to remain what they were and exhibit in their every act courage, self-sacrifice and true knowledge born of study and he was certain that whether they were few or many they would make their mark on India's future. He would even advise them to join the League and oppose it from within, whenever they found it to be reactionary. Whilst he said all this, he would advise his League friends to approach the nationalist Muslims in a friendly spirit,whether they remained out or came in. True friendship did not admit of exclusion without the soundest reason.

Harijan, 31-8-1947

371. IS "HARIJAN" WANTED?[1]

CALCUTTA,
August 24, 1947

It occurs to me that now that freedom from British rule has come, the *Harijan* papers are no longer wanted. My views remain as they are. In the scheme of reconstruction for Free India, its villages should no longer depend, as they are now doing, on its cities, but cities should exist only for and in the interest of the villages. Therefore, the spinning-wheel should occupy the proud position of the centre round which all the life-giving village industries would revolve. But this seems to be receding into the background. The same thing can be said of many other things of which I used to draw a tempting picture. I can no longer dare to do so. My life has become, if possible, more tempestuous than before. Nor can I at present clam any place as a permanent habitation. The columns are predominantly filled by my

[1] A Gujarati translation of this appeared in Harijanbandhu, 31-8-1947

after-prayer speeches. In the original I contribute, on an average, only one and a half columns per week. This is hardly satisfiactory. I would like, therefore, the readers of the *Harijan* weeklies to give me their frank opinion as to whether they really need their *Harijan* weekly to satisfy their political or spiritual hunger. They should send their answers to the Editor of the *Harijan*, Ahmedabad, in any of the languages in which they get their weekly, telling me very briefly at the same time, why, if they need it In the left hand upper corner of the envelope containing the answer, the writer should state: "About *Harijan*".

Harijan, 31-8-1947

372. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

August 24, 1947

Punjabis in Calcutta have been pressing me to go to the Punjab at once. They tell me a terrible story. Thousands have been killed. A few thousands girls have been kidnapped! Hindus cannot live in the Pakistan area, nor Muslims in the other portion. Add to this the information that the two wings of the army took sides and worked havoc! Can any of this be true?

When do you think I should go to the Punjab if at all? I have still work in Calcutta, then in Noakhali and Bihar. But everything can be laid aside to go to the Punjab if it is proved to be necessary.[1]

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 385

373. LETTER TO PUSHPA K. DESAI

CALCUTTA,
August 24, 1947

CHI. PUSHPA,

I have your letter. I was glad that you wrote frankly. All I said was that I would not object if you decided to go to Jugatram. Your

[1] The addressee visited the Punjab again and wrote to Gandhiji, as soon as he returned on August 25: "This morning at a meeting of the Defence Council, Mountbatten urged me to request you to go to the Punjab and he hoped that you would repeat your Calcutta miracle there. I told him that I was myself not clear about it. I feel you should go but not just yet" *Vide* also "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 22-8-1947.

duty is to live in the Ashram and overcome all your ignorance. The Ashram, such as it is, is your refuge, Your good lies in doing as I advise, since you have faith in me and have made yourself my daughter. The final responsi-bility should rest with me. You should welcome anything that Chimanlal or Balvantsinha may say. But if you do not like it, you can refer it to me.

Bhansali is a respected elder. But in my estimate he is unworldly, an *avadhuta*. He cannot be an example for you to follow. It would do you no good to let you accompany me on my tours.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9280

374. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

CALCUTTA,

August 24, 1947

In thanking the Corporation for the address, Gandhiji said he could not help recalling the late Dr. P. C. Ray under whose roof he had lived for one month in 1901. When he was with the late Deshbandhu, he used to see him with a few friends engaged in lively but strictly scientific conversation under the shadow of the *Orchelony* Monument near which they had met. That was their recreation. Gandhiji asked Dr. Ray whether they had any drinks or eatables. Dr. Ray emphatically said, "No." Their food and drink consisted of their instructive as distinct from idle conversation.

Referring to the address, Gandhiji said that this was third time he was receiving an address from the the Corporation. The first was given to him by the Deshbandhu when he was the Mayor.[1] He recalled the fact that the caskets were then auctioned in the interest of the Harijans. He hoped that this casket too would be sold in the same interest by the Mayor.

He would repeat what he had said in answer to the first address that he could not be satisfied till Calcutta had become the premier city in the world for sanitation. He included in this the sanitation of the streets in Calcutta which was absent today. The citizens should have healthy minds in healthy bodies. That they would have no goondas, no vagabonds, no drunkards. If the mortality in Calcutta was to be reduced, Calcutta should be flowing with clean milk. Today it was a most difficult commodity to procure. Then he would expect the corporators, by honest application, to put the friendship between the Hindus and the Muslims on a permanent footing in the manner

[1] *Vide* "Speech in Reply to Corporation Address, Calcutta", 6-11-1924.

Shaheed Saheb had pointed out.

Gandhiji said that he had a message from Khwaja Saheb Nazimud- din[1] that he (Gandhiji) should help in procuring at least 500 tons of rice out of the shipment that was coming from Burma. The need was so urgent that the ship with the rice should be diverted to Chittagong to deliver the 500 tons. He gladly assciated himself with the request and he hoped that Dr. Rajendra Prasad would, if it was at all possible, allow 500 tons of the precious cargo to be delivered at the Chittagong port.

In this connection he could not help mentioning the complaint that petty officials in charge of flood relief confined the distribution to Muslim sufferers only. He hoped the news was not true. If unfortunately it was, he had no doubt that the ministers and high-rank officials would redress the wrong. If the two Dominions were to live creditably and as friends, the communal spirit would be wholly purged. It was up to the Hindu and Muslim leaders to see that the seeds of poison that were sown, while they were fighting, would be removed forthwith. Then he said he deplored the fact that the Muslims in Government services when the choice was offered to them, preferred Pakistan and the Hindus, the Indian Union. The choice was made, he did not doubt, in haste. He would be sorry to find that the communal virus had entered the services. He advised that the two Premiers should confer with each other and if it was at all honestly possible, the services should be given the opportunity to reconsider their choice. It would be a sorry things for India if Hindu officials could not be trusted by Muslims and vice versa. Much would depend upon the leaders who influenced the services and the public.

Lastly, he had heard that Khulna was to celebrate its entry into Pakistan. He deplored such celebration after the Award. But he was consoled by Shaheed Saheb that celebration would be joint and that the Hindus were associating with it. Nevertheless, he could not regard the example with happiness. The jubilant parties ought to restrain themselves, as the aggrieved ones should accept the Award with perfect resignation. It must be regarded as final except to the extent that the ministers of the two Dominions agreed to vary it for the mutual satisfaction of the parties concerned. There was no other worthy or gentlemanly way.

Harijan, 7-9-1947

[1] Chief Minister of East Bengal

375. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

August 25, 1947

DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I have your letter. You are hasty. Nothing can be accomplished by your going to the Punjab. If anything could be accomplished by your going I would send you promptly. Your are not sitting idle where you are. I shall leave when the time comes for me to go to the Punjab. I am in correspondence with Jawaharlal on this subject.[1] Let us see what God would have us do.

I started this letter early in the morning. Then one after another, people kept coming and now at 5.10 I have reached only up to this. The rest you will have from Abha and Manu.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtey: Pyarelal

376. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

CALCUTTA,
August 25, 1947

SATIS BABU

GANDHI CAMP

RAMGANJ

NOAKHALI

TELL KANU IDEA GOOD BUT PERMISSION OF LOCAL AUTHORITY NECESSARY.[2] AMTUSSALAAM SHOULD WAIT.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 9285

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 22-8-1947 and "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 24-8-1947.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Kanu Gandhi", 25-8-1947.

377. LETTER TO DISTRICT MAGISTRATE, CHITTAGONG

CALCUTTA,
August 25, 1947

THE DISTRICT MAGISTRATE
CHITTAGONG

DEAR SIR,

A representative of the Humanity Association is soon proceeding with funds to render such aid as is possible to the floodstricken area. I have no doubt you will render such aid as is possible.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 9296

378. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

CALCUTTA,
August 25, 1947

DEAR HYDARI[1],

Your dear note. Much as I should love to visit Assam and try to do the work you suggest, I fear I shall not get the time.

Kaka Saheb has told me how kind you were to him.

Love to you and yours.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Governor of Assam

379. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

CALCUTTA,
August 25, 1947

I am sorry that today being my silence day I cannot speak to you. I have, therefore, to write out what I wish to say to you. I have been speaking every day about the vital duty of the Hindus in Western Bengal, who are the majority community, towards their Muslim brethren This duty they will perform truly, if they are able to forget the past. We know how all over the world enemies have become fast friends. The example of the Britons and the Boers who fought one anotherstrenuously, becoming friends we all know. There is much greater reason why the Hindus and the Muslims should become friends. We cannot do that if we are not great enough to shed all malice.

This evening I wish to devote to Sylhet. I have received frantic telegrams from Sylhet about the serious riots that have broken out there. The cause is not known. I am sorry that I am unable to go just now to Sylhet, nor am I vain enough to think that my presence would immediately abate the mob fury. I know, too, that one should not without peremptory cause abandon his present duty, however humble it may be, in favour of one which may appear to be higher. To adopt the Salvation Army language, we are all soldiers of God to fight the battle of right against wrong, by means which are strictly non-violent and truthful. As His soldiers ours is "not to reason why", ours is "but to do and die". Though, therefore, I am unable to respond to the urgent call of the sufferers of Sylhet, I can appeal, not in vain, to the authorities in East Bengal in general and Sylhet in particular to put forth their best effort on behalf of the sufferers and deal sternly with the recal-citrants. Now that there is peace between the Hindus and the Muslims, I am sure the authorities do not relish these ugly outbreaks. It would be wrong and misleading to underestimate the trouble by calling it the work of goondas. The minorities must be made to realize

[1] The meeting was held at Howrah Maidan. As Gandhiji was observing silence he wrote out his speech to be translated into Bengali by N. K. Bose, who however was delayed due to rain and reached the meeting an hour late. By then it was time for Gandhiji to break his silence. The first two paragraphs of the speech were written. The rest is a report of what Gandhiji spoke.

that they are as much valued citizens of the State they live in, as the majority. Let the Premiers of the two divisions of Bengal meet often enough and jointly devise means to preserve peace in the two States and to find enough healthy food and clothing for the inhabitants and enough work for the masses in East and West Bengal. When the masses, Hindu and Muslim, see their chiefs acting together and working together honestly, courageously and without intermission, the masses living in the two States will take the cue from the leaders and act accordingly. To the sufferers I would advise bravely to face the future and never to give way to panic. Such disturbances do happen in the lifetime of a people. Manliness demands there should be no weakness shown in facing them. Weakness aggravates the mischief, courage abates it.

Gandhiji first apologized to the vast audience for having to stand or sit on the wet and muddy ground. He then referred to the insult that was done to Shaheed Saheb at a meeting held in honour of Major General Shah Nawaz in Howrah. The General had gently rebuked the men who were guilty of discourtesy.

Gandhiji said that the past must be forgotton and whilst they were both acting together for a common cause without mental reservations, the insult done to one was done to the other also. And as they together tried to represent Hindu-Muslim unity, the insult done to a Hindu or a Muslim, was an insullt done to the two partners.

He then referred to the visit of Punjabi friends who pressed him to visit the Punjab as early as passible. He assured them that he was in constant correspondence with Panditji. After all, the Punjab was as much his as any other part of India, for he claimed to be the servant of the whole of India. Moreover, he had passed six months in that Province during the Martial Law days. He would hasten to the Punjab as early as necessary. Indeed, he was wanted in Sylhet, Malda, Murshidabad and other places. It was not given to any one man to cover all calls upon his time nor was it healthy to depend upon man's assistance in times of trouble. It was manly and dignified to rely upon God for the dissolution of all troubles. He was the only infallible Help, Guide and Friend.

He then pointed out that rehabilitation was not going on smoothly. The landlords seemed also to be in the way. They were in duty bound to invite and receive evacuees with open arms. He expected them not to charge or expect rents for months or days enforced absence.

The last thing he referred to was a letter from a Muslim who described himself as a *sufi*. He had sent this communication through Shaheed Saheb.

The purport was that in his opinion there was nothing common between Hinduism and Islam and that the two could not be as if they were one. For, he argued that the Hindus did not believe in the one and only God but held cows and goats as superior to man and believed in high and low, whereas Islam was a brotherhood in

which there was no hierarchy and which believed in one God as Allah. In this there was a carica- ture of Hinduism. There was no Hindu who put animals, the cow and the goat, before man. But he submitted that if anyone like him believed himself to be the lowest in God's creation, there was nothing wrong. It was a sign of true humility. He held that every Hindu believed in the one and only God. He admitted that excrescences had grown round Hinduism and that its votaries had not always been true to Hinduism undefiled. It was, therefore, up to an impartial man to understand Hinduism as its votaries like him understood it, just as it was the duty of an impartial Hindu to understand Islam as a good Muslim understood it. That, he held, was the safest rule of interpretation for any faith. Then it would be found that all great religions sprang from the same source and the fundamentals were common to them all.

Harijan, 7-9-1947

380. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

August 25 [*/26*][1], *1947*

CHI. KANAIYO,

I have your letter. I have today sent a wire[2] to you and Amtussalaam through Satis Babu. I like your idea. But we are not in Wardha. We will have to seek permission from Chittagong.[3] We can go there only if we have the permission. I have no idea how things are there. I don't know them when I am destined to reach there. Hence, although your idea is excellent, I don't see how it can be implemented.

You have asked for a bag like Nirmal Babu's. Luckily an American friend has sent one. If you are keen on having it I shall give it to you. But you can make one like it out of khadi. Does the American product have anything special about it?

I began the letter yesterday. But I am so very busy meeting people that I hardly get time to write or even dictate letters. Hence I could complete this only after the morning prayers. I might have to make a sudden dash to Delhi or to the Punjab. I might not therefore be able to come to you. Even then let things go according to your idea.

It is not possible to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] From the contents

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 25-8-1947.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to District Magistrate, Chittagong", 25-8-1947.

381. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

CALCUTTA,
August 26, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. It made painful reading. However, you have done everything you could do. I did leave Sushila in the jaws of death. If the refugees in Wah feel sucure she may well be freed, otherwise let her die with them. I came to know of her whereabouts only from your letter. She wrote to me a letter from Wah soon after I left her there. After that there was none, so I had been wondering.

What is going to happen to the Punjab? The enclosed letter arrived only today. Can it all be true? I am being strongly pressed to go to the Punjab. I do no know what to do. Jawahar also writes that I should go, though not just yet. According to the present arrangement I am here at least till Sunday. Then the idea is to be to Noakhali. Then on to Bihar from there. This will easily take a fortnight. I do not see what I could do in Delhi if I want there. I feel I would only be intruding.

Kripalani inquires if he may resign now. From the talks I had with you and others I had gathered that he would resign after the fifteenth. None of you have a high opinion of him. If he does not enjoy the confidence of his seniors, it is best to let him go. We have to consider who the next President shall me. The present situation appears dangerous to me. I can understand that those of you who are in the midst of the danger may not be able to see what I see from here. This is the state of my mind. I can see that my place is in this part of the country. I may include the Punjab also, though I doubt whether anyone would want my presence there.

How is your health? The Hyderabad problem has become complicated. But you will be able to cope with it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 367-70

382. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

August 26, 1947

CHI. MANI,

I feel sorry for you. Why should I, though? You are strong enough to carry the burden. Do that, and lighten some of Sardar's.

I heard only from you that Ramaswami was seriously injured.[1] There was a letter to that effect but I did not believe it. I did not write to him at all. I shall do so now.[2]

Forward the accompanying letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 141

383. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

August 26, 1947

CHI. SATIS BABU,

Three letters are enclosed herewith. Your letters keep coming but I do not get all the news.

Will it be all right if I do not go there? The question will not arise if I do not have to go to the Punjab. The work here will keep me engaged till Sunday. After that I go to Noakhali unless I have to go to the Punjab or Delhi. They are asking me to go over to Sylhet. How can I choose where to go?

Can Pyarelal, Kanu, Amtussalaam [and] Prabhudas be relieved from there? You,of course cannot be relieved from there nor Jiwan Singh.[3]

Kanu desires to have a camp at Chittagong Cantt. Have a talk with Kanu.

Blessings from

BAPU

[1] Sir C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar, Dewan of Travancore, had been assaulted at a public meeting.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar", 27-8-1947.

[3] Of the Indian National Army

[PS.]

An article is enclosed. His it any substance? I have written to the writer that you are my expert. You have made a deep study of dairy science.

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

384. LETTER TO DEV PRAKASH NAYYAR

CALCUTTA,

August 26, 1947

CHI. DEV,

Your three letters of the 17th, 18th and 22nd are lying in front of me. Mridulabehn may not be able to return at present. She has been sent to Amritsar. Mahesh should remain where he is most useful. I have had a talk with General Shah Nawaz. About the refugees I shall try to send someone from here by and by. But some officer from there ought to meet the officers from here.

Perhaps the problem of sanitation is very difficult all over India. Whatever is possible should be done.

I shall consider both aspects of Saran[1].

I have read both the Muslim League's memorial and the reply that you sent to me.

I shall be here till Sunday at any rate. I do intend leaving for Noakhali on Monday but one cannot say what will happen. And from there on to Bihar, and of course the trip to the Punjab in between. But my going or not going to the Punjab depends upon the news coming from there. If I have to go my programme will change.

Sushila is still at the Wah Camp. Things are happening contrary to my anticipation. It means it was very good that I left behind Sushila because people were very much afraid and their fear proved right. Thus Sushila's stay has been all to the good.

Now for your reply to the League memorial, I find it weak at several places. Of course I have not been able to go deep into the matter. Probably such a lengthy reply was not even required. On page 9 you have stated about Rajbir that Hindus had committed no great

[1] Saran District in Bihar

crime. Some youths had done something and the Hindus extinguished the fire. Then why the collective fine of Rs. 5,000? Similarly in the fourth column you say there was insufficient evidence. But a fine was imposed. There are similar inconsistencies at some other places too. Perhaps there is no occasion for such a lengthy reply now. For whom has the memorial been drafted?

I shall be able to answer your query about non-violence only after looking up the book. I shall try to obtain the book.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

385. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

CALCUTTA,
August 26, 1947

There was a huge crowd at the meeting and the audience was talking among themselves, creating a noise which, Gandhiji said, disabled him from speaking as he wanted to. As, however, a large part of the audience was patient, he said he would say a few words. He referred first to the fact that rehabilitation was not proceeding as rapidly as could be wished. If the process was not completed in time and the evacuees did not return to their places, the peace, in spite of the very large meetings every day, would prove transitory. He drew pointed attention to the fact that the Lake Area was inhabited by rich men. If they made up their minds to do their duty, it was possible for them to make their contribution to the rehabilitation scheme. If the police but did their duty without fear or favour , he said, half the work would be done.

He next referred to the visit he had from Anglo-Indian sisters and brothers. While he was not able to address them at a meeting, he would gladly mention them at one of his prayer meetings. During the foreign regime, they were a favoured community. He could not hold out any hope that the favoured treatment would be continued during independence. But they are entitled to the full justice that was the right of every citizen. The Anglo-Indians were as much citizens as any other group in India. It was the duty of both the Hindus and the Muslims to regard them as fully their equals and as brothers and sisters.

He then referred to the provincial spirit that seemed to be infecting the provinces. Thus he saw in the papers that some Assamese thought that Assam belonged exclusively to the Assamese. If that spirit fired every province, to whom could India belong? He held that the people of all the provinces belonged to India and India belonged to all. They only condition was that no one could go and settle in another

[1] The meeting was held at Lake Maidan.

province to exploit it or rule it or to injure its interest in any way. All were servants of India and they lived only in the spirit of service. The same provincial spirit was reported from Bihar against the Bengalis. The extreme instance reported was from Darjeeling. It was said that there was a Gurkha League whose business it was to resent the entry into Darjeeling of the plainsmen. They were reported to be resorting to force for the prosecution of their purpose. He hoped that the poison was confined to a very few young men who lacked imagination and love for India. He had the pleasure of meeting distinguished Gurkha officials who took pride in considering themselves part of India. He had provided the golden rule of conduct. No one could dare migrate to any province to its injury and no force should be used to attain one's end.

Harijan, 7-9-1947

386. TELEGRAM TO DR. CHALAPATHI RAO

[On or after *August 26, 1947*][1]

SORRY, TELL SATHSASTRI HIS FAST UNWARRANTED. HE SHOULD BREAK IT AND LIVE TO SERVE.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

387. LETTER TO A. K. BHAGWAT

CALCUTTA,

August 26, 1947

BHAI BHAGWAT[2] ,

I have your letter. I have just gone through it after the morning prayer. I fear we cannot do anything to advocate preservation of health without milk. From practical experience it is difficult to remove this fear. You may certainly experiment with those who can live without milk.

Let all work together in Uruli. I think it is desirable to go by the opinions of Balkoba and Manibhai. Within the limits of the Ashram rules personal life should be raised as high as possible.

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram of August 26, 1947 which read: "Sathsastri fasting seventeenth day. Condition serious causing anxiety. Pray guide him. He would see you after recovery."

[2] Of Nature Cure Clinic, Uruli Kanchan

Dr. Mehta is here. Nothing has been settled with him.

If I am not there, it is because I am helpless.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 2725. Courtesy: Manibhai B. Desai

388. LETTER TO C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR

CALCUTTA,
August 27, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

You will forgive me for this belated solicitude about you. I was perplexed about your attitude on Travancore. I read newspapers only casually. No time. When I heard about the attack on you, I regarded it as of no consequence. It must have been a mere scratch, probably a made-up affair. But Krishna Hutheesing and Manibehn opened my eyes to the serious attack.[1] I could not be guilty of any unholy wish. I hope you will regain your original health and vigour.

I am amazed at my unbelief. Pardon me for it.

Yours sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

SIR C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR
MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

389. LETTER TO DHIRU

CALCUTTA,
August 27, 1947

CHI. DHIRU,

I have your letter. I see nothing wrong about your going to Bombay if Balkoba wants to take you along.

I understand what you say about eczema.

This should be shown to Balkoba.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Manibehn Patel", 26-8-1947.

390. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

CALCUTTA,
August 27, 1947

Gandhiji said that the present was his second visit to Motiaburz. The first was when Maulana Saheb Abul Kalam Azad and he visited them years ago because there was a fight between Hindus and Muslim workmen. Fortunately when they reached the scene of trouble, it was almost over but they got undeserved credit. The present was a happy occasion. The Hindus and the Muslims had adjusted their differences and had become friends. He hoped that this was a lasting friendship. He wanted to say a few words to the workmen in the working men's locality. He hoped that there was no distinction between the Hindus and the Muslims in labour. They were all labourers. If the communal canker entered the labour ranks, both would weaken labour and therefore, themselves and the country. Labour was a great leveller of all distinctions. If they realized that truth, he would like them to go a step further. Labour, because it chose to remain unintelligent, either became subservient or insolently believed in damaging capitalists's goods and machinary or even in killing capitalists. He was a lobourer by conviction and a Bhangi. As such his interests were bound with those of labour and he wished to tell them that violence would never save them. They would be killing the goose that laid golden eggs. What he had been saying for years was that labour was far superior to capital. Without labour gold, silver and copper were a useless burden. It was labour which extracted precious ore from the bowels of the earth. He could quite conceive of labour existing without metal. Labour was priceless, not gold. He wanted marriage between capital and labour. They could work wonders in co-operation. But that could happen only when labour was intelligent enough to co-operate with itself and then offer co-operation with capital on terms of honourable equality. Capital controlled labour because it knew the art of combination. Drops in separation could only fade away; drops in co-operation made the ocean which carried on its broad bosom ocean greyhounds. Similarly, if all the labourers in any part of the world combined together, they could not be tempted by higher wages or helplessly allow themselves to be attracted for a pittance. A true and non-violent combination of labour would act like a magnet attracting to it all the needed capital. Capitalists would then exist only as trustees. When that happy day dawned, there would be no difference between capital and labour. The labour will have ample food, good and sanitary dwellings, all the necessary education for their children, ample leisure for self-education and proper medical assistance.

Then he came to the nationalist Muslims who had sent him the following

[1] Held on the grounds of Clive Jute Mills

note:

You have expressed the opinion that the nationalist Muslims should join the League. Then does it imply that the Congress has now become a communal organization.

Gandhiji said that he was not guilty of asking them to discard nationalism or of expecting the Congress to be another Hindu Sabha. He hoped that the Congress would never commit suicide by being communal organization. When the Congress ceased to represent all who were proud to call themselves Indians, whether prince or pauper, Hindus, Muslims or any other, it will have destroyed itself. Therefore, he could not advise a Muslim Congressman to join the League if the condition of joining the League was to discard or suppress his Congress membership. He would vote for those resolutions of the League which were in the nation's interest and against those which were contrary to the nation's interest. He had in mind several Muslims of staunch faith who were neither in the Congress nor in the League. He advised the nationalist Muslim friends to join the League if they wanted to affect the Muslim masses. Real nationalists needed no encouragement from him or anyone else. Nationalism, like virtue, was its own reward. His one warning was that they should never think of power or bettering their worldly prospects by joining the one or the other organization. A nationalist would ever think of service, never of power or riches. There could be one President of the Congress or the League. Presidentship came by merit and strength of service. The League had become what it was, not by his or Congress cajolery. The Qaid-e-Azam was an able President, whom neither riches nor titles could buy. He was a front-rank barrister and rich man. Being the son of a merchant he knew how to multiply his earnings as a lawyer by wise investments. This acknowledgement did not mean that Gandhiji liked all his ways or that the latter had led the Muslims in the right way. He had his differences with the Qaid-e-Azam and the League. But he could not withhold merit where it was due. It was, he hoped, clear to the nationalist Muslims under what conditions he advised them to join the League.

Gandhiji then came to the question addressed to him by some members of the Azad Hind Fauj.[1]

Harijan, 7-9-1947

[1] The meeting came to a close as it started raining. For Gandhiji's reply to members of the Indian National Army, *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 28-8-1947.

391. A LETTER

[On or after *August 27, 1947*][1]

I hope you are all right.

I don't know where I may be tomorrow. The time is critical.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

392. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

[Before *August 28, 1947*][2]

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter.

Ten days for cleaning up a first-class house? What a commentary!

Are you in charge of physical health only or moral also? The latter seems to be worse than the former. I am waiting, watching and praying.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3708. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6517

393. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

CALCUTTA,
August 28, 1947

CHI. KAKA,

I have your letter. I had told Amritlal that so long as the substance of my draft resolution was preserved he could make in it any changes he liked. And in the last resort the general body of the Conference has an unfettered right to alter even the substance. It would, of course, be a question whether it could retain me after it has altered the substance. But that will be considered if and when such an

[1] The letter is placed among those of August 27 and 29.

[2] The date is illegible in the source. The letter was received by the addressee on August 29.

occasion arises.

I might agree that the teaching of two scripts at the same time can be unscientific, but I regard knowledge of both the scripts indispensable, so much so that I would not give a certificate even for the first course in the national language to a candidate who did not know both the scripts. He would be eligible for the certificate only when he had learnt the second script, too.

It is not correct to say that because I have not used the phrase "whereas" in the draft resolution, the language of the draft is not legal. The word is used in court documents. And those who draft the resolutions are mostly lawyers, they use the language of court documents and make the resolutions uncouth. After all even a resolution is an appeal.

The Conference has a right to make changes under pressure of new circumstances. I do not, in this case, wish to yield to such pressure because I think that that will harm the country. Hence my emphaitc advice in the present circumstances is to be cling all the more resolutely to the policy to which we have adhered till now.

To me, ever since I understood the problem, Hindi and Hindustani have been two forms of the same language. And there will be a difference between Urdu and Hindustani as there is between Hindi and Hindustani.

I would, thus, describe Hindustanias a language midway between Urdu and Hindi, one which would bring about a confluence of the two. Accordingly, if in course of time only one script survives in use, Hindustani will have become and will remain one from of Hindi and Urdu.

We need not object if the Governments do not make knowledge of the two scripts obligatory but only encourage it. If we keep our house in order and clean it regularly, we shall have done our duty.

It will be tantamount to harassing the Urdu-speaking people to make the Nagari script compulsory for all. I would, therefore, earnestly appeal to all the members of the Conference that they should not only acquire a good knowledge of both the scripts, but also boldly advocate such a policy in public. Only then shall we be able to influence the various State Governments.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: G. N. 10990

394. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

CALCUTTA,

August 28, 1947

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your letter. You are being tested quite severely, and also having sweet experiences of the women there. I keep extremely busy these days. If Dwarkadas recovers completely, half your anxiety will be over. Give him by blessings and tell him that he should get well soon. I hope you are calm. And do go on with your studies. You will have to pass the final examination.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRIMATI LILAVATI ASAR
LADIES' HOSTEL
G. S. MEDICAL COLLEGE
PAREL, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9612. Also C. W. 6584. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

395. LETTER TO A MAHARAJA

August 28, 1947

MAHARAJA SAHEB,

I have already sent you an acknowledgement of the sum of Rs. 100, 000 sent by you. I find that I have with me Rs. 150,000 earmarked for use in Noakhali. I am thus able to carry on my work for the present. Now I have on hand relief work in Tripura, Chittagong near Noakhali, Calcutta and Bihar, for which I have a small sum. It will facilitate my work, if in addition to it, I can use for the relief of both Hindu and Muslim victims in these parts the sum received from you.

Kindly let me have your reply.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U./XXIII

396. LETTER TO DHIRENDRA NATH CHATTERJEE

CALCUTTA,
August 28, 1947

CHI. DHIREN,[1]

I have your letter. Write to me after your examination. Then I will tell you what to do. There is nothing to be said now.

It is good that you have passed the third level in Hindustani without much effort and with distinction.

It is sad that you are not keeping well. It has to do a good deal with your mind. I find that your mind is not stable. This in turn affects the body.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 5107

397. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

CALCUTTA,
August 28, 1947

Gandhiji addressed after prayer the students of Calcutta. He said that he had done teaching in his own way from his early youth and probably the very first meeting he addressed after his return to India in 1915 was that of students. Since then he had addressed numerous student-meetings throughout his many wanderings in India. He was not new to them nor were they new to him. But of late he had ceased to address meetings as he used to do before. He was, therefore, glad that he was able to address the students. Their Vice-Chancellor was good enough to see him about the evening's proceedings. He was nervous about the students' behaviour towards Shaheed Saheb. He said that he would have only the prayer and his usual after-prayer speech. It should not have been so. Everywhere there appeared to be anarchy in the student world. They did not tender obedience to their teachers and their Vice-Chancellor. On the contrary. they expected obedience from their teachers. It was a painful exhibition on the part of those who were to be the future leaders of the nation. They gave an exhibition of unruliness that evening. He was forced with placards in the foreign tongue depicting his comrade Shaheed Saheb in unbecoming language. He

[1] Son of Amrita Lal Chattarjee
[2] Held in the University Science College

suggested to them that inasmuch as they had insulted Shaheed Saheb, they had insulted the speaker. Shaheed Saheb could not be insulted by the language used against him. But the speaker could not take up that attitude. The students should be, above all, humble and correct. They had an object lesson in their Vice-Chancellor. The Chief Minister, Shaheed Saheb and he sat on the platform provided for them but the Vice-Chancellor sat among the rest of the visitors. His humility reminded him of Krishna who, when Raja Yudhishthira performed his *yajna*, chose the menial work of washing the feet of the guests. Thereby he showed his innate nobility. The greatest to remain great had to be the lowliest by choice. If he could speak from his knowledge of Hindu belief, the life of a student was to correspond to the life of a sannyasi up to the time his studies ended. He was to be under the strictest discipline. He could not marry nor indulge in dissipation. He could not indulge in drinks and the like. His behaviour was to be a pattern of exemplary self-restraint. Had they lived at all up to the pattern, they would not have done what they did at the prayer meeting.[1]

The evening before he had a note[2] from some members of the Azad Hind Fauj as to his opinion about them. He said that he had come in close contact with some of the officers of the Fauj. In referring to the Fauj he felt constrained to refer to Nataji who, he was of opinion, was dead in the body but lived in the servants of India. He had the pleasure of coming in touch with Subhas Babu when the latter had just returned from England with the determination to sacrifice a lucrative career that was open to him. He perferred selfless service to selfish ambition and placed himself under the Deshbandhu. Therefore he was able to come in close touch with the speaker. Though Subhas Babu became a non-violent non-co-operator, he never saw eye to eye with the speaker in his unadulterated non-violence. His was a life full of perilous adventure and romance. His daring was unequalled. He scraped together an army composed of Indians drawn from all provinces, belonging to all religions and by his glorious example he had infused into them the spirit of willing discipline and obedience. It was not a small thing for his handful of army which his genius had scraped together to offer battle to the mightiest empire of modern times. Gandhiji was told by the officers of the Azad Hind Fauj that Subhas Babu had advised the members of the Army to carry out what he (Gandhiji) might suggest; for the struggle in India was of his (Gandhiji's) conception as the struggle outside India was of Netaji's. His answer to the question asked was that the members of the Azad Hind Fauj were not to expect to be absorbed in the current military ranks nor to be a separate unit of the army in any of the two parts of India. He held it to be impracticable at least for some time to come. The best thing for them was

[1] Gandhiji then invited Nirmal Kumar Bose to translate his speech, but continued to speak at the request of the audience.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 27-8-1947.

to work as a separate compact body of servants of India. It would be best for them to hold together on a plot of land, to turn their swords into ploughshares and grow more food for the hungry millions. If they did not like the suggestion, they should be absorbed into the civil life and serve the country. 'Once a soldier always a soldier', would be a dangerous doctrine in free India. He had lived in South Africa for 20 years where every Boer was a first-class soldier when soldiering was necessary, otherwise he was a wonderful farmer. Such was General Botha[1] . Such is Field Marshal Smuts[2] . He is a great lawyer, a great farmer, owning a magnificent farm and everyone knew him to be a distinguished soldier. What was Netaji himself? Was he less than Field Marshal Smuts? Soldiering was never his profession. Today when India was shaking with communalism and fratricidal disturbances, let the members of the Fauj set a noble example of what they were under Netaji, who evoked such affection from his men that he (the speaker) had known his officers being unable to think of him without tears. Let them translate that affection into action.

That in spite of all his affection and respect for Netaji, they had differences of opinion was a matter of no consequence. Such divergence would exist between the best of friends. Let the students too, whether, they believed in violence or non-violence, understand that strictest discipline was common to both.

Harijan, 7-9-1947

398. LETTER TO AN ASHRAM INMATE

[On or after *August 28, 1947*][3]

I have your letter. I shall be so glad if your boy[4] is cured.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 379

[1] Louis Botha (1862-1919); Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa, 1910-19

[2] Jan Christian Smuts (1870-1950); Prime Minister of South Africa, 1919-24, 1938-48

[3] According to the source this and the following two letters were written between August 28 and 31.

[4] Who was suffering from an incurable disease

399. LETTER TO MOHANLAL NAYYAR

[On or after *August 28, 1947*]

I have your letter. . . . What does it matter if everything you possess in Gujrat is lost? In this general conflagration no one may expect to escape. Sushila[1] is in her proper place. She is under God's care. Pyarelal[2]4 will meet me today or tomorrow. He is expected.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 380

400. LETTER TO TARADEVI NAYYAR

[On or after *August 28, 1947*]

Why do you worry about Sushila[3] ? God is the Lord and Master of all. Let us not cease to trust in Him. Rajkumari has brought news that Sushila is all right. I hope you are keeping well. Baby[4] must be delightfully naughty!

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 380

401. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

CALCUTTA,
August 29, 1947

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I got up at 2.30 and sat down to write letters. I get no time during the day. I have to see visitors.

Your letter is before me. I see from it that our points of view differ, though both of us have the same end in view. This is an old difference between us. Don't you remember our difference of view regarding the verses in the morning prayers? I read allegorical meanings in them. . . .[5] them innocent. You found them objectionable. I do not know whether it is so even today. . . .[6]

[1] Addressee's sister and brother
[2] *ibid*
[3] Addressee's daughter
[4] Nandini, daughter of Mohanlal Nayyar
[5] Two words here are illegible.
[6] A word is illegible here.

In saying that God deludes man, I am not disregarding God or violating Truth, nor am I using ambiguous language. What does the saying "God confounds those whom He wants to destroy"[1] mean? Man babbles and tries in vain to describe, in his imperfect speech, Him who transcends speech and thought, who is "Not this, not this". What else can he do? Till he has risen to the highest level of preserving unbroken silence or living in complete solitude, he must use speech. Islam, to attain the state of non-duality. . .[2]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M.U./XXIII

402. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

CALCUTTA,

2.50 a. m., August 29, 1947

CHI. MIRA,

I had your two letters yesterday. I am glad you are better.

Your 55 years is as nothing for a disciplined life. But "you are care-ful for nothing."[3] But of this when we meet and can talk "outside business".

My movement has become uncertain.

You will know from the papers where I am the next day. "Look at the sparrows." They do not know what they will do the next moment. Let us literally live from moment to moment.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6529. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9924

[1] The source has this in English.

[2] The letter is incomplete.

[3] Philippians, IV, 6

403. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

Air Mail CALCUTTA,

August 29, 1947

DEAR DR. HOLMES[1] ,

Many thanks for yours of 11th instant.

I am forwarding your letter with enclosures to Punditji. It is a sad story.

We are all looking forward to your arrival.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

KENNEBUNK BEACH

MAINE

NEW YORK, U. S. A.

From a photostat: C. W. 10969. Courtesy: Roger W. Holmes and Mrs. Frances L. Brown

404. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

August 29, 1947

Herewith is a letter from one Sardar Ajit Singh. You will see he is insistent on my going to the Punjab without a moment's delay. You will judge what I should do. Will it be any use my going after life and property are destroyed to the saturation point? Will it not be a mockery? I put before you for consideration the thoughts welling up within me. I have three wires pressing me to go.[2]

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 393

[1] (1879-1964); American clergyman; founder-member of American Civil Liberties Union; editor or Unity; author of My Gandhi and other works

[2] The addressee wired his reply the same day saying: "I still think that time has not come for you to visit the Punjab but feel your presence in Delhi very desirable so as to keep in touch with the Punjab situation and advise us."

405. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,
August 29, 1947

CHI. AMRIT,

Your note even when you were tired.

You must not lose faith in humanity. Humanity is an ocean. If a few drops are dirty, the ocean does not become dirty. And do not let your body suffer. You have to take much work from it.

I am glad Sushila is keeping well. Of course her place was in the Wah Camp so long as the men needed her services.

The work here goes on. I cannot yet go to Noakhali. They want me there, as also in Bihar and Sylhet. Now J. wires I should be in Delhi.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3709. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6518

406. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

CALCUTTA,
August 29, 1947

CHI. BALKOBA,

I have your letter.

I have already written about the *goshala*.[1] I can see no harm in accepting donations from persons who offer them without expectation of any return and purely from philanthropic motives.

Do you wish to take Dhirubhai along with you? I have replied[2] that, if you do, I shall have no objection.

I hope you are taking care of your health.

I understand what you say about the building.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI BALKOBAJI
NIJDHAM
URULI KANCHAN, POONA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 825

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. W. Aryanayakum", 20-8-1947.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dhiru", 27-8-1947.

407. LETTER TO RAMPRASAD VYAS

CALCUTTA,
August 29, 1947

CHI. RAMPRASAD,

I have your letter. I shall be very glad if Jivram gets well. I understand how the expenditure on food is met at Pilani. The information is given clearly.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

408. LETTER TO PREMI JAIRAMDAS

CALCUTTA,
August 29, 1947

CHI. PREMI,

Your letter. God is my guide. But the same can be said for all.

I don't know where I shall be tomorrow. The work here is tough. Who can say what will happen ultimately?

Tell Father[1] that I have replied to his telegram.

Do you regularly help him?

Blessings to you all from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Coutesy: Pyarelal

409. LETTER TO ABDUL QAYYUM ANSARI

August 29, 1947

BHAI ANSARI[2] ,

Manubehn told me about your illness. In my view it is a crime for a voluntary worker to fall ill. I hope you have recovered by now.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Jairamdas Doulatram
[2] Minister for Rehabilitation, Bihar

410. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

CALCUTTA,
August 29, 1947

BROTHER MAHMUD,

I have your letter. I do not know what happened but things seem to be all right.

You were to come with me but stayed back. If the work there goes on smoothly, it is just as well that you did.

Mehboob did meet me. Here I do not have a moment to spare. The day began at 2.30 a.m. for me.[1] I get very little time for writing. If one wants to do public work one must meet people. I hope Begum Saheba is well. It is good you will be staying in Ranchi for some days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 5107

411. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

CALCUTTA,
August 29, 1947

Gandhiji, therefore, commenced his speech by congratulating Shaheed Saheb and the other Muslims on standing. He purposely kept seated because he had learnt that their culture did not require standing as a mark of respect when any national song or *bhajan* was sung. It was an unnecessary importation from the West. A respectful posture on such occasions was the correct attitude. After all, it was the mental attitude that mattered, not the superficial appearance. He then suggested that there should be one universal notation for *Vande Mataram*, if it was to stir millions; it must be sung by millions in one tune and one mode. After all, national songs could only be two or three. But they should all have their common notation. It was up to the Santiniketan authorities or some such authoritative society to produce an acceptable notation.

Gandhiji then referred to the Christians. He had had the pleasure of receiving them the day before. They said that the major communities had taken care of themselves but what was to happen to the Christian Indians? Were they to have no

[1] The source has: "The standard time today began at 2.30 a.m."

[2] The meeting was held on Tolly Gunge Police Ground. When *Vande Mataram* was sung everyone including Suhrawardy and other Muslims had stood up.

seats in the Governments or the legislatures? He told the friends that the poisonous favouritism of the foreign rule was dead and gone. Merit should now be the sole test. In a well-ordered society there should be no minority. Why should they not feel that they were of the forty crores, but not a mere handful in the forty crores? Whatever their religion, all born in India and proud of their birth were equal in the eye of the law. On the strength of merit, i.e., intellectual capacity, self-sacrifice, courage and incorruptibility, a Christian could be the Chief Minister without exhibiting greater merit than a Hindu or Muslim. Religion was a purely personal matter. He expected that what was true of the Union was equally true of Pakistan. He asked his Christian brethren also not to take their Christianity as it was interpreted in the West. They knew that there they fought with one another as never before. After all Jesus was an Asiatic depicted as wearing the Arabian flowing robe. He was the essence of meekness. Gandhiji hoped that the Christians of India would express in their lives, Jesus, the crucified of the Bible, and not as interpreted in the West with its blood-stained fingers. He had no desire to criticize the West. He knew and valued the many virtues of the West. But he was bound to point out that Jesus of Asia was misrepresented in the West except in individuals.

Then he answered the question whether the minorities would have recognition as religious minorities had; thus, whether Bengalis of Bihar, though a minority, would have recognition. This was a ticklish question. In his opinion an Indian was a citizen of India enjoying equal rights in every part of India. Therefore, a Bengali had every right in Bihar as a Bihari. But he wished to emphasize that a Bengali must merge in the Bihari. He must never be guilty of exploiting Biharis or feeling a stranger or behaving as a stranger in Bihar. If the speaker brought his Gujarat manners to Bengal and imposed himself on the province, he would expect the Bengalis to expel him. He could not then claim the rights of an Indian as against Bengalis. All rights flowed from duties previously and duly performed. One thing he must stress, that in both the Dominions of India, the use of force for the assertion of rights must be eschewed altogether if they were to make any progress. Thus, neither the Bengalis nor the Biharis could assert themselves at the point of the sword, nor could the Boundary Commission Award similarly be changed. It was the first lesson to be learnt in a democratic, independent India. Their independence was yet only a fortnight old. Liberty never meant the licence to do anything at will. Independence meant the voluntary restraint and discipline, voluntary acceptance of the rule of law in the making of which the whole of India had its hand through its elected representatives. The only force at the disposal of democracy was that of public opinion. Satyagraha, civil disobedience and fasts had nothing in common with the use of force, veiled or open. But even these had restricted use in democracy. They could not even think of them whilst the Governments were settling down and the communal distemper was still stalking from one province to another.

Harijan, 7-9-1947

412. ABOUT STUDENTS[1]

A correspondent says :

> You have begun writing in time about the student world of India. Your opinion was highly necessary. The late H. G. Wells has somewhere described the students as "Undergraduate Intelligence". The exploitation of the half-baked student world is highly dangerous. It tears the students under exploitation from the essential work of study and its assimilation. In these critical times the harm done by the exploitation of "Undergraduate Intelli-gence" recoils upon the exploiters. Your writing referred to above gives rise to one question: Was it not Gandhiji who first drew the students to politics? I know that this is not true. But it is necessary for you to reiterate your position.
>
> The second thing is: What should students' organizations do? What should be their objective? Today, as you know, students' organizations are considered as stepping-stones to entrance into political life. Some exploit them for that purpose.

Only during this week I had the misfortune to experience what harm "Undergraduate Intelligence" can do. I was invited by the Vice-Chancellor to address a students' gathering.[2] Sad to say, they indulged in a hostile demonstration against Shaheed Saheb. Afterwards they saw reason and they repented. And they gave a demonstration of how half-baked intelligence could do right under wise guidance. This would be apparent from the report of my post-prayer speech in the current issue of the *Harijan*.

Let me hope that the rendering into Gujarati in the columns of the *Harijanbandhu* will be quite in keeping with the original in English. The English rendering is the translation of the speech that was delivered in Hindustani. But it has not been possible to give the properly edited Hindustani and its authorized English translation. Who could shoulder that burden? I have deprived myself of the assistance of Pyarelal and Dr. Sushila Nayyar, who are engaged in better work. Rajkumari's services have been unavailable for several months. Now she has become a Minister.

If there is one compact students' organization, it can become a mighty instrument of service. Their objective can only be one: Never

[1] This is an adaptation of the original in Gujarati, which appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 7-9-1947.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 28-8-1947.

for the purpose of finding a lucrative career but fitting themselves for the service of the motherland. If they were to do so, their knowledge would attain a great height. Agitation is only for thsoe who had completed their studies. While studying, the only occupation of students must be to increase their knowledge. Education, as it is prescribed today, is detrimental, conceived in terms of the masses of India. It is possible to show that the present education has been of some use to the country. I regard it as negligible. Let no one be deceived by it. The acid test of its usefulness is this: Does it make, as it should, an effective contribution to the production of food and clothing? What part does the student world play in stopping the present senseless slaughter? All education in a country has got to be demonstrably in promotion of the progress of the country in which it is given. Who will deny that education in India has not served that purpose? Hence one purpose of the organization should be to discover the defects of the present education and seek to remove them so far as possible in their own selves. By their correct conduct they will be able to convert to their view the heads of education. If they do so, they will never be entangled in party politics. In the revised scheme, constructive and creative programme will naturally have its due place. Indirectly their action will keep the politics of the country free of the spirit of exploitation.

Now for the first question. What I said in the matter of students' education at the time of the country's battle for freedom is evidently forgotten. I did not invite the students to devote themselves to politics whilst they were in schools and colleges. I had suggested non-violent non-co-operation and that they should quit these educational institutions and throw themselves into the battle for freedom. I had encouraged national universities and national schools and colleges. Unfortunately, the snare of the education given in our schools and colleges was too strong for the students. Only a handful were able to disengage themselves from it. Thus it is not proper to say that I drew the students to the politics of the country. Moreover, when, after 20 years of exile in South Africa, I returned to India in 1915, the students, while they were engaged in their studies, had already been drawn to political life. Probably, there was no other way. Our foreign rulers had so devised the whole life of the country that nobody could engage in politics suitable for the deliverance of the country from bondage. The

foreign rulers had so devised and controlled the education of the country that the youth remained under that control and millions were kept in comparative darkness. This was the way in which foreign control was rendered as permanent as possible. Therefore, apart from the colleges and schools controlled by foreign rulers, patriotic workers were left with no other choice. To what extent this foreign education was misused need not be considered here.

CALCUTTA, August 30, 1947

Harijan, 7-9-1947

413. SWARAJ ASHRAM, VEDCHHI

A printed report[1] of the work done in this Ashram during 1945-46 has been received. It is an interesting document. The most important portion from it has been reproduced below with the expectation that the reader would obtain a copy of the whole report and read it. The activities of the Ashram are likely to be useful in understanding what I have recently written about education. The training given there may be imperfect but all the activities have originated from and have bearings on the present situation in the country and help in improving it.

1. Ku. Annapurna Chunilal Mehta, Vedchhi
2. Shri Sumant Morarji, Titwa
3. Shri Kanjibhai Jagabhai Dasharibehn, Beda
4. Shri Makanji Kotabhai Chowdhari, Amba Pardi
5. Shri Velji Kanji Chowdhary, Vedchhi
6. Shri Jhaverbhai Shankarbhai Patel

These six village workers are engaged in these activities.

CALCUTTA, August 30, 1947

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 28-9-1947

[1] Not reproduced here; it explained the various constructive activities of the Ashram.

414. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

CALCUTTA,
August 30, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

Many thanks for your letter which His Excellency the Governor sent me yesterday afternoon. I do not know if Shaheed Saheb and I can legitimately appropriate the compliment[1] you pay us. Probably suitable conditions were ready for us to take the credit for what appears to have been a magical performance.

Am I right in gathering from your letter that you would like me to try the same thing for the Punjab?[2] I am in correspondence with the Pandit and the Sardar.

I hope your new office[3] is not unduly more arduous than as Viceroy.

It filled me with joy when I read in the papers that Lady Mountbatten had flown to the Punjab. I hope she is none the worse for the trying visit.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE LORD MOUNTBATTEN OF BURMA

GOVERNMENT HOUSE

NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 278

[1] In his letter dated August 26, the addressee *inter alia*, wrote: "In the Punjab we have 55 thousand soldiers and large-scale rioting on our hands. In Bengal our forces consist of one man, and there is no rioting. As a serving officer, as well as an administrator, may I be allowed to pay my tribute to the One-man Boundary Force, not forgetting his Second in Command, Mr. Suhrawardy."

[2] *Vide* also the following item.

[3] Of Governor-General of independent India

415. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

August 30, 1947

About my going to the Punjab, I won't move without your and Vallabhbhai's wish. I want to say, however, that every day pressure is being put upon me to rush to the Punjab before it is too late. If you wish I could send you all that comes to me so as to enable you to come to the right decision.

If I am not going to the Punjab, would I be of much use in Delhi as an adviser or consultant? I fancy I am not built that way. My advice has value only when I am actually working at a particular thing. I can only disturb when I give academic advice as on food, clothing, the use of the military. The more I think, the more I sense the truth of this opinion. Left to myself I would probably rush to the Punjab and if necessary break myself in the attempt to stop the warring elements from committing suicide. From a letter I just have from Lord Mountbatten I get the same impression.[1] He would welcome my immediate going to the Punjab.

On this side I have work which must help you all.

Mahatma Gandhi— The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 394

416. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

BELIAGHATA,
August 30, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. I have received from Jawahar also a telegram[2] similar to what you have sent. My reply is contained in the accompanying letter. I therefore do not write more here.

May God give all of you the strength and the wisdom the situation demands. Did you ever think that you would have to face such a difficult situation so soon ?[3] His will be done.

Horace[4] is with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 370-1

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* footnote to "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 29-8-1947.

[3] As Deputy Prime Minister the addressee was in charge of Home, States and Information and Broadcasting.

[4] Horace G. Alexander

417. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

August 30, 1947

CHI. MANI,

All the letters are enclosed. Send them to the addressees. I hope I am not burdening you with too much work. This is the only way I can get the letters delivered in time. Show to Sardar the letter addressed to Jawaharlal and then have it delivered as soon as you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 142

418. INTERVIEW TO RANDOLPH CHURCHILL[1]

August 30, 1947

Gandhiji said that his views on partition were very well known, and he, even how, considered partition to be a sin. But whether there would be reunion or not was not for him to decide. If the people of both States became so friendly that they voluntarily wished to be one, there would indeed be nothing like it.

My Days with Gandhi, p. 268

419. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

CALCUTTA,
August 30, 1947

Gandhiji said that this was Shaheed Saheb's constituency. He was, therefore, glad that he was expected to visit Barasat. He noticed the absence of the Pakistan flag or the Muslim League flag. Why did not the Hindus of Barasat go out of their way to invite their Muslim brethren to fly the Pakistan flag side by side with the tricolour? That never meant that the Muslims were to impose the Pakistan flag or the League flag on the Hindus. He would apply the same rule where the Muslims were in a majority. If a Hindu girl was in their midst, they should encourage the solitary girl to unfurl the tricolour and recite *Ramdhun.* That was the sure sign of Hindu-Muslim friendship which then would be capable of bearing the severest strain upon it. No doubt, they learnt the daily tale of family strife in the Punjab. It had become difficult

[1] Son of Winston Churchill, who met Gandhiji in the evening and asked him about his ideas regarding the reunion of Pakistan and India; Suhrawardy was also present.

for the Muslims to live in the East and the Hindus and Sikhs in the West. Was there to be a transfer of crores of population? The way to stem the tide of this savagery and inhuman conduct was for the Hinuds and Muslims of the two divisions of Bengal to preserve their equanimity and to demonstrate by their unbreakable friendship the way for all the communities to live. The way of mutual strife and exclusiveness was the way to perdition and slavery. If there was heart friendship, he could not understand the objection of Muslims, wherever they were in a majority, to being included in Western Bengal as in Murshidabad and Malda or for the Hindu majority, to being included in Pakistan. This was a sign not of friendship but of unworthy and mutual distrust.

He then referred to a letter he had received from the local Gurkha League saying that he was misinformed by his correspondent on the strength of whose letter he had issued[1] his advice to the Gurkhas of Darjeeling. They contended that they claimed to be as much Indians as any. They could have no repugnance towards the Bengalis or the Marwaris who had settled in Darjeeling. But they expected Gandhiji to share their apprehension if they found the Bengalis or the Marwaris to be lording over them. Let them not be proud of their learning or riches and treat the Gurkhas as if they were born to be bearers of burden. Would he not expect perfect equality among them and expect the Bengalis to lift them up by giving them knowledge of letters and the Marwaris to share with them the secret of conducting honest trade? Gandhiji said that he had no hesitationin endorsing the Gurkha position and hoped that the Bengalis, Marwaris and others who had settled on that beautiful hill, would share with their Gurkha brothers their best and show them that they were their friends and servants, in no sense exploiters.

He then came to refer to a question which Professor Nirmal Kumar Bose had prepared for him as a result of his discussions with visitors. What did he mean by bread labour and what was its application to the present state? The economics of bread labour was the living way of life. It meant that every man bad to labour with his body for his food and clothing. If Gandhiji could convince the people of the value and necessity of bread labour there never would be any want of bread and cloth. He would have no hesitation in saying to the people with confidence that they must starve and go naked if they would neither work on the land nor spin and weave. They read in the papers that the whole of India was on the brink of starvation and nakedness. If his plan was accepted, they would soon find that India had enough food and enough khadi which the masses would produce for themselves. No doubt they should be assisted in the matter of using the land wisely and should also be supplied with spinning and weaving accessories, and instructors. He added that he had not hesitated even to discuss[2] his method with Mr. Casey (Governor of Bengal) who was taking keen

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 26-8-1947.
[2] In December 1945.

interest in the water supply of Bengal. No doubt, Mr. Casey's was gigantic scheme requiring years and tons of money. His was an efficient but unambitious and inexpensive programme.

Harijan, 7-9-1947

420. THE NATIONAL FLAG

Professor Radha Kumud Mookerji brought the above note[1] personally and on my drawing attention to the popular meaning of the Sudarshan Chakra as a symbol of violence,[2] he said it was wholly wrong.

CALCUTTA, August 31, 1947

Harijan, 7-9-1947

421. QUESTION BOX

QUESTION: You have often stated while you were in Noakhali that failure of your mission there would be the failure of your own ahimsa and not of ahimsa itself. In the light of what has been achieved here (Calcutta), do you think that your ahimsa has succeeded or is on the way to success?

ANSWER: It is a correct statement that has been attributed to me. Ahimsa is always infallible. When, therefore, it appears to have failed, the failure is due to the inaptitude of the votary. I have never felt that my ahimsa has failed in Noakhali, nor can it be said that it has succeeded. It is on its trial. And when I talk of my ahimsa I do not think of it as limited to myself. It must include all my co-workers in Noakhali. Success or failure would, therefore, be attributable to the aggregate of the activities of my co-workers and myself.

What I have said about Noakhali applies to Calcutta. It is too early to state that the application of ahimsa to the communal problem in this great city has succeeded beyond doubt. As I have already remarked, it is wrong to contend that the establishment of friendliness between the two communities was a miracle. Circumstances were ready and Shaheed Saheb and I appeared on the scene to take the credit for

[1] Not reproduced here. The note pointed out that the chakra on the national flag was taken from the Buddha's *Dhamma-Chakka* and that its origin could be traced farther back to Vishnu's Sudarshan Chakra which had a spiritual significance.

[2] *Vide* "The Tri-Colour", 3-8-1947.

what has happened. Anyway, it is premature to predicate anything about the application. The first thing naturally is that we, the two partners, have one mind and are believers in ahimsa. That being assured, I would say that if we know the science and its application, it is bound to succeed.

CALCUTTA, August 31, 1947

Harijan, 7-9-1947

422. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

CALCUTTA

August 31, 1947

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I got both your letters. Radhakisan may be given Rs. 75,000. I don't understand why my letter[1] could not reach you. God knows if something went wrong at this end. I cannot do everything promptly.

Which Vallabhbhai? It is all right if Bhansali has left. It was bound to have its effect. He is rather crazy but that does not affect his nobility.

Blessings form

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

423. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR

August 31, 1947

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

Your letter. One cannot be so ill because of smoking *bidis.*

You may go to the Andhra High School. Return soon.

I am glad that Zohra[2] and Kamala have recovered.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Chimanlal N. Shah", 20-8-1947.

[2] Wife of Akbar Chavda

424. ADDRESS TO MUSLIM MERCHANTS[1]

CALCUTTA,
August 31, 1947

In his speech before the moneyed men Gandhiji said that he want to them as a beggar. Somehow or other when he began life after studies he found that he had the gift of begging from the rich and the poor alike. He hoped that his appeal would not go in vain. There were two ways of rebuilding and rehabilitation—either the Government or the rich men of Calcutta had to find the money. He held that if the Government found the funds, it would carry no merit. But if the moneyed men took up the duty, it carried double merit. They as citizens,would have of their own free will discharged their duty and it would be a substantial proof of real friendship between the communities.

Mahatma Gandhi in his speech congratulated the organizers of the function which was to cement Hindu-Muslim unity. He asked them to form their own committees, for raising funds, and making expenditure for rehabilitation work. Those who were interested and those who were in a position to pay should sit together and devise the programme. They should not merely think of rehabilitating these poor sufferers in the kind of *bustees* that existed today and which the poor had been forced to choose as their abodes. But they should think more as to how these people could live with comfort. Those who had money should not think that it was for themselves alone. As a matter of fact, they must look upon themselves as trustees and should pay for the cause of suffering humanity. They knew that Dr. P. C. Ghosh, their Chief Minister, wanted a crore for rehabilitation work. They should apply themselves to that. If Hindus and Muslims, rich and poor, could work together, it was bound to have effect in East and West Punjab and the work that they would do here would be the work for the whole country.[2]

The spectacular meetings were, no doubt, necessary, but they were not all. That which led to permanent friendship was contented rehabilitation. All parties, all groups, had to do their duty in the direction. For the purity of hearts it was necessary for all to forget the past. Forgetfulness properly cultivated was a great gift. It was a rich gift bestowed upon man by the Maker. The rich men would not be able to put their hands into their pockets, if they had not the faculty for forgetting the past. He asked the rich men, after Shaheed Saheb and he had withdrawn, to sit together and not to leave the Hotel till they had come to a wise decision.

Harijan, 21-9-1947, and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 1-9-1947

[1] The Muslims of the Lower Chitpur Road held a function for Hindu-Muslim unity at the Grand Hotel. Gandhiji, who was accompanied by Suhrawardy, was presented with a purse of Rs. 1,001 by Haji Shamshuddin, Chairman of the Reception Committee, for repairing Hindu temples.

[2] This paragraph is from *Amrita Bazar Patrika.*

425. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

CALCUTTA,
August 31, 1947

After prayer Gandhiji said that as he had addressed the meeting of the wealthy men, he did not propose to say much to the audience. He was glad to be informed by Kamal Babu, their M.L.A., that there was now perfect friendship between the two communities and that the evacuees were ready to return. The great obstacle was that the factories where they were earning their livelihood had not started working. The Muslim neighbours had undertaken to renovate the evacuated premises. If all the information was cent per cent true, the truth will work its way into the whole of the affected parts of Calcutta. He informed the audience that he proposed to leave for Noakhali on Tuesday. If Shaheed Saheb too could accompany him at the same time, he would do so. He did not propose to stay in Noakhali for long and hoped to return to Calcutta to finish the work that had begun under happy auspices. Meanwhile, he hoped that the work of rehabilitation would be continued with double speed. It did not admit of delay if there was to be lasting peace.

Harijan, 21-9-1947

426. TALK WITH PYARELAL[1]

August 31, 1947

My resolve to go to Noakhali has collapsed after this evening's happenings.[2] I cannot go to Noakhali or for that matter anywhere when Calcutta is in flames. Today's incident to me is a sign and warning from God. You have for the time being, therefore, to return to Noakhali without me. You can tell the people of Noakhali that if my colleagues for any reason cannot be there, they will find me, surely, in their midst.

And then casually he hinted that if the conflagration spread he would have no alternative but to fast.

Have I not often said that there is yet another fast in store for me?

Harijan, 14-9-1947, and *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. II, p. 404

[1] Pyarelal along with Charubhushan Chowdhary met Gandhiji to appraise him of the situation in Noakhali and to seek his advice.

[2] The reference is to a violent demonstration by some Hindus on August 31 in front of the house where Gandhiji and H.S. Suhrawardy were staying. *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 1-9-1947.

427. A NOTE

[*August 1947*][1]

I will give you a talisman. Whenever you are in doubt, or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test. Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man whom you may have seen, and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him. Will he gain anything by it? Will it restore him to a control over his own life and destiny? In other words, will it lead to swaraj for the hungry and spiritually starving millions?

Then you will find your doubts and yourself melting away.

M. K. GANDHI[2]

From a facsimile: *Mahatma,* Vol. VIII, facing p. 89

428. LETTER TO HARJIVAN KOTAK

KASHMIR,

[*August, 1947*][3]

CHI. HARJIVAN,

I have received your resignation. It is all right if you have sent it after due thought. But I sense anger in your language. The Charkha Sangh shall think about management when you have gone bankrupt. I too have not thought about removing you from the Sangh. I have thought about freeing you from Kashmir though. But the Sangh has given no thought to it. Hence, I am once again drawing your attention to your duty. Let me know what needs to be done.

I shall think about the shares. You must send the. . .[4] if possible.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In the source, this appears among the illustrations for August 1947.
[2] The signature is in the Devanagari and Bengali scripts.
[3] Gandhiji had visited Kashmir only once, in August 1947.
[4] A few words here in the original are not intelligible.

429. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

CALCUTTA,

September 1, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter. Bhopal (Nawab's) letter is strange.[1] I did not like it. Your task is hard indeed. May God grant you the necessary strength. If Bhopal plays the game, Hyderabad's problem will be easy to solve. And the same will be true of Pakistan.

I have already sent you my programme, but now even that is as good as cancelled. We were to go to Noakhali tomorrow morning. So Shaheed Saheb went home. I am the only elderly person in the house. Dinshaw Mehta is here, but what can he do? He does not know the language and his large body is of no use.

Someone received knife wounds in Machhva Bazaar. No one knew who stabbed him. People brought him here for demonstration. Perhaps they wanted to attack Shaheed Suhrawardy, but they could not find him; so their anger was turned on me. There was an uproar in the front yard. Both the girls[2] went out among the crowd. I was in bed about to go to sleep. Our Muslim landlady came in to have a look as she was afraid I might come to harm. I sensed danger and got up. I broke my silence. My vow permits me to break it on such occasions. I went to face the crowd but the girls would not leave my side. Other people also surrounded me. Glass windows were being broken and they started smashing the doors also. There was an attempt to cut the wires of the electric ceiling fans but only a few were snapped. I started shouting at the crowd, asking them to be quiet. But who would listen? I could, moreover, speak only Hindustani and they were Bengalis. There were also some Muslims nearby. I asked them not to strike back. So they merely stood around me. There were two groups; one trying to

[1] While informing the addressee of his decision to join the Union of India, the Nawab of Bhopal on August 26, had *inter alia* written: "During our talk on the 22nd you had expressed surprise, at one stage, that I had so much opposed your plan. I do not disguise the fact that while the struggle was on I used every means in my power to preserve the independence and neutrality of my State. Now that I have conceded defeat I hope that you will find that I can be as staunch a friend as I have been an inveterate opponent."

[2] Abha and Manu Gandhi

incite the crowd, the other trying to pacify it. There were two policemen also. They also used no force. With folded hands they addressed [the crowd] in a loud voice and they stopped me. Kalyanam suggested that I should go and sit inside. Bisen was in the centre. He was wearing only pyjamas and was taken for a Muslim. Bricks were thrown. One hit a Muslim. No one was wounded, but the brick could have struck me. The Superintendent of Police came soon after and the youngsters dispersed after causing considerable damage to the house. Prafulla Babu[1] and Annada[2] arrived. Prafulla suggested the posting of more police guard but I objected. Everyone suspects the Hindu Mahasabha [was behind the attack]. I have asked them to see Syamaprasad[3] and Chatterji[4] before arresting the mischief-makers and not to do anything in a hurry. Such is the position here. I could thus go to bed only at 12.30 a. m. Of course I had to get up at the usual hour.

Please tell Jawaharlal about this when you meet him.

Read the accompanying wire. I feel totally lost. I pin my hopes on you two. The copy of my reply is on the reverse.

In this situation you may take it that I am here. "As for tomorrow, who can tell?"

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
1 AURANGZEB ROAD
NEW DELHI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 372-4

430. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

September 1, 1947

CHI. MANI,

I am glad that you do not feel overburdened. There should be someone with the Sardar who is one hundred per cent fit.

[1] Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ghosh
[2] A constructive worker of Calcutta
[3] Syamaprasad Mookerjee and N. C. Chatterji, Hindu Mahasabha leaders
[4] *ibid*

Give him my letter[1] when he is free.

Send to Sushila the material meant for her.

Last evening's developments here were altogether unexpected. The man who was alleged to have been stabbed was not stabbed at all. There was a scuffle between two persons, in which that man fell to the ground. Now I hope to get more news.

I have just come out after a bath and am writing this.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MANIBEHN PATEL

NEW DELHI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 142

431. LETTER TO DURGA M. DESAI

September 1, 1947

CHI. DURGA[2],

I got the letter about Babla's[3] marriage yesterday. Since it is an alliance of mutual choice, what could my blessings add? Both are competent and public spirited. I think anything that is auspicious needs no blessings; and blessings never come true when the thing is inauspicious. However, I certainly wish them both a long life; may they ever serve the people.

Since Bablo and his wife will be there, you are sure to be settled comfortably. Could you live separately from them?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Widow of Mahadev Desai

[3] Addressee's son, Narayan

432. TALK WITH MARWARI DEPUTATION[1]

CALCUTTA,
September 1, 1947

Go in the midst of the rioters and prevent them from indulging in madness or get killed in the attempt. But do not come back alive to report failure. The situation calls for sacrifice on the part of top-rankers. So far the unknown, nameless rank and file alone have been the victims of the holocaust with the one exception of the late Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi.[2] That is not enough.[3]

Harijan, 14-9-1947

433. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

September 1, 1947

I regret to have to report to you that last night some young men brought to the compound a bandaged man. He was reported to have been attacked by some Muslims. The Prime Minister[4] had him examined and the report was that he had no marks on his body of stabbing which he was said to have received. The seriousness of the injury however is not the chief point. What I want to emphasize is that these young men tried to become judges and executioners. This was about 10 p.m., Calcutta time. They began to shout at the top of their voices. My sleep was disturbed but I tried to lie quiet not knowing what was happening. I heard the window-panes being smashed. I had lying on either side of me two very brave girls. They would not sleep but, without my knowledge, for my eyes were closed, they went among the small crowd and tried to pacify them. Thank God the crowd did

[1] Some leading members of the Marwari community sought Gandhiji's advice as to what they should do to quench the fire of communal riots.

[2] *Vide* "Speech on Kanpur Riots, Subjects Committee Meeting, Karachi", 27-3-1931, "Telegram to Balkrishna Sharma", 1-4-1931 and "Notes", 9-4-1931.

[3] Even as he uttered these words, he was cogitating within himself, as to where he came into the picture which he was presenting to them. For he added: "Of course, I cannot do today what I have told them to do. I will not be permitted to. I saw that yesterday. Everybody will protect me from harm if I went in the midst of the maddened crowd. I may drop down from sheer physical exhaustion—that is nothing. It won't do for a soldier to be exhausted in the midst of battle."

[4] The reference is to the Chief Minister of Bengal, Dr. P. C. Ghosh.

not do any harm to them. The old Muslim lady in the house endearingly called Bi-Amma and a young Muslim stood near my matting, I suppose, to protect me from harm.

The noise continued to swell. Some had entered the central hall and began to knock open the many doors. I felt that I must get up and face the angry group. I stood at the threshold of one of the doors. Friendly faces surrounded me and would not let me move forward. My vow of silence admitted of my breaking it on such occasions and I broke it and began to appeal to the angry young men to be quiet. I asked the Bengali grand-daughter-in-law to translate my few words into Bengali. All to no purpose. Their ears were closed against reason.

I clasped my hands in the Hindu fashion. Nothing doing. More window-panes began to crack. The friendly ones in the crowd tried to pacify them. There were two police officers. Be it said to their credit that they did not try to exercise authority. They too clasped their hands in appeal. A lathi blow missed me and everybody round me. A brick aimed at me hurt a Muslim friend standing by. The two girls would not leave me and held on to me to the last. Meantime the Police Superintendent and his officers came in. They too did not use force. They appealed to me to retire. Then there was a chance of their stilling the young men. After a time the crowd melted.

What happened outside the compound gate I do not know except that the police had to use tear gas to disperse the crowd. Meantime Dr. P. C. Ghosh, Annada Babu and Dr. Nripen walked in and after some discussion left. Happily Shaheed Saheb had gone home to prepare for tomorrow's proposed departure for Noakhali. In view of the above ugly incident which no one could tell where it would lead to I could not think of leaving Calcutta for Noakhali.

What is the lesson of the incident? It is clear to me that if India is to retain her dearly won independence all men and women must completely forget lynch law. What was attempted was an indifferent imitation of lynch law. If the Muslims misbehaved, the complainants could, if they would not go to the ministers, certainly go to me or my friend Shaheed Saheb. The same thing applies to Muslim complainants. There is no way of keeping the peace in Calcutta or elsewhere if the elementary rule of civilized society is not observed. Let them not think of the savagery of the Punjab or outside India. The recognition of the golden rule of never taking the law into one's own hands has no exceptions.

My secretary Devprakash in Patna wires: "Public agitated Punjab happenings. Fell statement necessary impressing duty of public and the Press." Shri Devprakash is never unduly agitated. There must be some unguarded word by the Press. If that is so at this time when (we) are sitting on a powder magazine, the Fourth Estate has to be extra-wise and reticent. Unscrupulousness will act as a lighted match. I hope every editor and reporter will realize his duty to the full.

One thing I must mention. I have an urgent message calling me to the Punjab. I hear all kinds of rumours about recrudescence of trouble in Calcutta. I hope they are exaggerated if not quite baseless. The citizens of Calcutta have to reassure me that there would be nothing wrong in Calcutta and that peace once restored will not be broken.

From the very first day of peace, that is 14th August last, I have been saying that the peace might only be a temporary lull. There was no miracle. Will the foreboding prove true and will Calcutta again lapse into the law of the jungle? Let us hope not, let us pray to the Almighty that He will touch our hearts and ward off the recurrence of insanity.

Since the foregoing was written, i. e., about four o'clock during my silence, I have come to know fairly well the details of what has happened in the various parts of the city. Some of the places which were safe till yesterday have suddenly become unsafe. Several deaths have taken place. I saw two dead bodies of very poor Muslims.[1] I saw also some wretched-looking Muslims being carted away to a place of safety. I quite see that last night's incident so fully described above pales into insignificance before this flare-up. Nothing that I may do in the way of going about in this open conflagration could possibly arrest it. I have told[2] the friends who saw me in the evening what their duty is. What part am I to play in order to stop the rot? The Sikhs and the Hindus must not forget what East Punjab has done during these few days. Now the Muslims in West Punjab have commenced the mad career. It is said that the Sikhs and the Hindus are enraged over the Punjab happenings.

I have adverted above to an urgent call for me to go to the

[1] Two young Muslims had died in a hand-grenade attack on an open truck in which they were being escorted to safer localities.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

Punjab. But now that the Calcutta bubble seems to have burst, with what face can I go to the Punjab? The weapon which has hitherto proved infallible for me, is fasting. To put an appearance before a yelling crowd does not always work. It certainly did not last night. What my word in person cannot do my fast may. It may touch the hearts of all the warring elements even in the Punjab if it does in Calcutta. I therefore begin fasting from 8.15 p.m. to end only if and when sanity returns to Calcutta. I shall as usual permit myself to add salt and soda bicarb[1] to the water I may wish to drink during the fast.

If the people of Calcutta wish me to proceed to the Punjab and help the people there they have to enable me to break the fast as early as may be.[2]

From a photostat: C. W. 10575. Courtesy: N. K. Bose. Also *Harijan*, 14-9-1947

434. DISCUSSION WITH C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[3]

September 1, 1947

RAJAJI: You don't expect me to approve of your proposed step. . . . Can you fast against the goondas ?

GANDHIJI: The conflagration has been caused not by the goondas but by those who have become goondas. It is we who make goondas. Without our sympathy and passive support, the goondas would have no legs to stand upon. I want to touch the hearts of those who are behind the goondas.

But must you launch your fast at this stage? why not wait and watch a little?

It would be too late afterwards. The minority Muslims cannot be left in a perilous state. My fast has to be preventive if

[1] The original draft statement after this had the words "and sour limes" which were scored out on Rajaji's suggestion; *vide* the following item.

[2] The statement was completed at 11.10 p.m. in the presence of C. Rajagopalachari, Pyarelal, Charubhushan Chowdhary and N. K. Bose. In a supplementary statement to the Press Rajaji said that if trouble had not broken out in Calcutta, Gandhiji would have gone to the Punjab. It was in their hands to send him to the Punjab. "The women and children of the Punjab are eagerly looking forward to his presence in their midst and to the healing influence of his word and spirit. Let us send him with the laurels of victory round his aged brow to that affected province."

[3] Gandhiji showed the draft of his statement to the Press to C. Rajagopalachari who called on him at 10 p. m.

it is to be any good. I know I shall be able to tackle the Punjab too if I can control Calcutta. But if I falter now, the conflagration may spread and soon, I can see clearly, two or three powers will be upon us and thus will end our short-lived dream of independence.

But supposing you die, the conflagration would be worse.

At least I won't be there to witness it. I shall have done my bit. More is not given a man to do.

But why add sour lemon juice to water, if you are to put yourself entirely in God's hands?

You are right. I allowed it out of weakness. It jarred on me even as I wrote it. A satyagrahi must hope to survive his conditional fast by a timely fulfilment of the condition.

Harijan, 14-9-1947

435. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

[After *September 1, 1947*][1]

CHI. MAGANBHAI,

Read this. My morning was spent in reading the enclosed. There is no mention of Karnataka. Which editor wrote it? I think there is some mistake about it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

436. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

CALCUTTA,
September 1/2, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

Today here they are preparing to fight. I have just returned after seeing the dead bodies of two Muslims who had died of wounds. I hear that riots have broken out in many places. Thus what was regarded as a miracle has proved a short-lived nine-day wonder. Now

[1] This was in reply to the editor's letter dated September 1, 1947

I am thinking what my duty is in the circumstances. I am writing this at about 6 p. m. As the post will go only tomorrow, I shall be able to add something more. Jawahar wires that I should go to the Punjab.[1] But how can I leave Calcutta now? I am thinking within myself and silence helps in that. See the accompanying wire from Mirpur Khas. What could it mean? I have not replied.

4.45 a. m., September 2, 1947

This much was written last evening. After that I heard much more. A number of people came to see me. I went on thinking of my own duty. The news I received settled it and I decided to undertake a fast. It began at 8.15 last evening. Rajaji called at night. He admonished me a lot, tried hard to persuade me not to go on a fast. But none of his arguments appealed to me. I saw my duty clearly before me. You should not worry, nor should anyone else. Worrying is not going to help. If the leaders are sincere the riots will stop and the fast will be broken. If the riots continue what will I do by merely being alive? What is the use of my living? If I lack even the power to pacify the people, what else is left for me to do? If God wants to make use of me, He will enter the people's hearts and calm them down and preserve my body. I have started the fast only in His name.

May God keep all of you safe. In this holocaust, no one else can do anything.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 374-5

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru had sent a wire on August 31. *Vide* also the following item.

437. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

September 2, 1947

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,[2]

I replied to your message of yesterday.[3]

I would have started for Lahore today but for the flare-up in Calcutta. If the fury did not abate, my going to the Punjab would be of no avail. I would have no self-confidence. If the Calcutta friendship was wrong, how could I hope to affect the situation in the Punjab? Therefore my departure from Calcutta depends solely upon the result of the Calcutta fast. Don't be distressed or angry over the fast.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the original: Jawaharlal Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

438. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 2, 1947

CHI. AMRIT,

Of course, you will not only not deplore my fast but welcome it as the only act so far as I am concerned. Had it not been for the flare-up in C[alcutta] I would have started for Delhi this evening on my way to the Punjab. Jawaharlal thinks it is time now for me to go there. If the disturbance continues, the so-called friendship was some accident. The fast will show where I am.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's wire of even date which read: "I feel sure now that you should come to Punjab as early as possible." On receiving the wire, Gandhiji is reported to have said: "I now feel happy and at peace because I am doing what my duty requires of me."

[2] The superscription and subscription are in Hindi.

[3] This communication, however, is not available.

439. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

September 2, 1947

CHI. MANI,

Arrange to [despatch] the accompanying papers. You will have found no difficulty in understanding the reason for my fast. Rajaji strove hard with me,[1] but the more he argued the more I was confirmed in my own decision. Was the amity of a fortnight a mere sham?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 143

440. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

September 2, 1947

Somebody has handed over this. Quite a few things in it are workable. Give it to someone to read and let him tell you the gist.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

441. A NOTE

[*September 2, 1947*][2]

My fast started last night. There was no alternative. It was no small matter that riots started after the demonstration of friendship for fifteen days. No one need rush to me.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with C. Rajagopalachari", 1-9-1947.

[2] From the reference to the fast

442. DISCUSSION WITH SARAT CHANDRA BOSE[1]

September 2, 1947

GANDHIJI (laughingly): So, it needed a fast on my part to bring you to me?

SARAT BOSE: I had a feeling that you no more cared for me. But I will not tax your strength. Are you permitted to talk?

I have to, at least in pursuance of the object for which I am fasting.

I have always been opposed to partition. I have never made any secret of my views. I am a frank man. I did not come before because, as I have already said, I had a feeling that you had not much use for me.

Representatives of all groups and parties have come and asked me why I did not send for you. Some of them said, they had a suspicion that the Forward Bloc[2] people were behind the disturbances. I told them that Sarat Bose knows my door is always open to him. He will come whenever he thinks fit.

That you have wronged me doth appear in this. In your prayer address[3] you said I was spending money like water. . . in corrupt practices.

Was it not then your clear duty to come to me and remove my doubts—if they were ill-founded? It is the privilege of friendship to speak out one's mind unreservedly without the fear of being misunderstood. Otherwise what is friendship worth? Even your Suhrawardy has said, you spend money like water. But if you had a grievance on that score, why did you not contradict it publicly? Or you could have written to me. I would have then either explained to you what I meant, or you would have removed the misconception under which I was labouring. I would have then withdrawn my remarks. That was what true friendship demanded.

Let bygones be bygones. What is your complaint now against the Forward Bloc?

The Hindu Mahasabha people say Forward Bloc people are behind this holocaust. I owe it to you to place their allegation before

[1] Gandhiji had about 8 ounces of cold water at 3.45 p. m. Soon after, Sarat Chandra Bose called on him.

[2] Founded by Subhas Chandra Bose, younger brother of Sarat Chandra Bose

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 8-6-1947.

you.

You may believe it if you like. But I tell you, a number of Hindu Mahasabha people are behind this business. It is they who are inciting the Sikhs by telling them that it is unmanly on their part passively to look on while the Punjab is burning. I could even mention names.

Mutual recrimination will lead us nowhere. I am not here to judge. My fast is an appeal to everybody to search his heart. It should result in all-round self-purification. When the initial cleansing of the hearts has been effected, parties of Hindus and Muslims should go out together to patrol the troubled areas and relieve the police of its arduous duties. Or they should openly say they want to fight. What is the use of the Forward Bloc and the Hindu Mahasabha bandying words and engaging in mutual recrimination? How long can we carry on with the help of the police and the military?[1]

The best use I would have for such tea would be to pour it down the drain. But, perhaps, you will retort that strong tea is better than weak independence.

The deterioration in Bengal set in with the introduction by Suhrawardy of armed police from the Punjab. Does he now want the British?

No, he did not say the British. He only said mixed. But there I have a bone to pick with him too. If the hearts of our volunteers could be cleansed, peace would immediately return. For that, cleansing of the hearts on the part of the leaders is necessary. Then alone will they be able to give the masses a clear lead. This today is lacking. You should first declare in unequivocal terms what you stand for and then back it by appropriate personal example. If in the course of it, some topranking leaders are killed, I will not grieve. On the contrary, I shall dance with joy. I told the same to some leading members of the Marwari community who came to seek my advice yesterday.[2] Peace processions by themselves will be an empty show if the basic honesty of intention on the part of the leaders and the rank-and-file workers is not there. If such a volunteer organization wedded to non-violence and ready to make the supreme sacrifice for the achievement of unity and peace begins functioning, I will not mind if the entire police force in the city is withdrawn. And if in the result the whole of Calcutta swims in blood, it will not dismay me. For it will be willing offering of

[1] The conversation was interrupted here by the arrival of tea for Sarat Chandra Bose.

[2] *Vide* "Talk with Marwari Deputation", 1-9-1947.

innocent blood. I know how to tackle such a situation. You and I shall then have to rush barefoot in the midst of the flames and work without respite day and night till either peace is restored or we are all dead. That is my conception of a peace mission—not a mealy-mouthed, milk-and-water business. I do not care if I am alone in these thoughts. Enough unto me is my faith. I shall be content if I get honest and whole-hearted co-operation of you all in this work. We shall then be able to control the situation in the Punjab too.

I had the authorities withdraw the armed police guard that was posted at my residence. Unfortunately, it has again come back. I have suffered it to remain not for mine but for Suhrawardy's sake. He feels nervous. If on the night of the 31st August, he had not luckily gone out to get ready for the journey to Noakhali, who knows what might have happened to him, and consequently to me?

I have often asked why there should be any further trouble now that the League and Jinnah have got what they wanted. If only Jinnah had accepted my offer embodied in the Rajaji Formula[1] , all this could have been avoided. . . . I was prepared to go even further. If after the British had quitted, the collective wisdom and statesmanship of India were still unable to achieve a peaceful solution, I would have invited the Muslim League to take charge of the Government.[2] The Congress Ministers would have made way for them if I had asked them to. Pandit Nehru and the Sardar had told me that they would carry out my orders if I took over command.

I shall endeavour to do my best on your lines for the establishment of peace.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 411-4

443. DISCUSSION WITH P. C. GHOSH

September 2, 1947

GHOSH: You have been very unfair to the Ministry in undertaking the fast without taking them into your confidence.

GANDHIJI: Perhaps you are right. But the conflagration was spreading so fast that evry moment counted. Any avoidable delay would have meant further loss of innocent lives.

[1] *Vide* "C. Rajagopalachari's Formula", before 5-8-1942.
[2] *Vide* "Outline of Draft Agreement", 4-4-1947.

I do not wish to prolong the argument.[1]

That is just like you. I had expected of you nothing less.

One thing, however, strikes me. You have launched your fast at a time when a section of the Hindus have begun to look upon you as their enemy. They foolishly feel that by asking them to practise non-violence, when the other side has shed all scruples, you are being very unfair to them. I would have had nothing to say if you had declared a fast for anything wrong that the Ministry did.

All this is wide of the mark. Don't you see, this now gives me the right to fast against the Muslims, too. My fast is intended to serve both the communities. The moment the Hindus realize that they cannot keep me alive on any other terms, peace will return to Calcutta.

Your fast weighs down on us more than anything else. How can we effectively set to work under the heavy weight of your fast?

It is a wrong way of looking at the thing. My fast is intended to strengthen your hands and to spur everybody to greater activity. You will be done for if you regard it as an oppression.

H. S. Suhrawardy, intervening, said: Already Hindus and Muslims are feeling the pressure. Let us call their representative together and confer with them at the earliest opportunity.

Dr. Ghosh replied that he had already invited the representatives of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs to meet him the next day. He asked: "Should it be here or at my residence?"

"Not here but at the Chief Minister's residence," suggested Suhrawardy. Gandhiji supported Suhrawardy's suggestion. A preliminary conference should be held at the Chief Minister's residence. Afterwards all or a few out of them could come to him, if necessary.

That was also the procedure followed at the time of my twenty-one days' fast at Delhi in 1924.[2]

Dr. Ghosh told Gandhiji of the stringent action his Ministry had already taken in regard to the Press. Any paper indulging in inflammatory propaganda would summarily be suspended.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 414-5

[1] An hour's animated discussion without interruption had started telling upon Gandhiji which P. C. Ghosh had not failed to notice.

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press on Unity Conference", 24-9-1924.

444. DISCUSSION WITH SYAMA PRASAD MOOKERJEE

September 2, 1947

Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee was the next to come. He was accompanied by some other Hindu Mahasabha leaders. Before he could say anything, Gandhiji made solicitous inquiries about his health. This concern for him, by one who was himself fasting, touched Dr. Mookerjee deeply.

DR. MOOKERJEE: The general feeling here now is in favour of peace. But there is danger of a delayed repercussion in East Bengal. The news from Dacca is disturbing. There may be a flare-up there any moment.

GANDHIJI: It is inevitable if the situation here does not improve immediately.

DR. MOOKERJEE: From tomorrow Hindustan National Guards (of Hindu Mahasabha) will be patrolling the streets along with the Muslim National Guards.

SUHRAWARDY: The bulletins about Gandhiji's health ought to be more widely publicized. His fast must be terminated within two days.

I will break my fast when Dr. Mookerjee reports that all is quiet in Calcutta—not before that.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 415

445. TALK WITH DINSHAW MEHTA

September 3, 1947

On the 3rd September, the second day of the fast, when Dr. Dinshaw Mehta saw him in the morning, Gandhiji reported that he had had a very peaceful night both physically and mentally.

GANDHIJI: I am not at all anxious to terminate my fast. At this rate though the body might become weaker and weaker I feel I could go on even for one month.

DR. MEHTA (misunderstanding Gandhiji's meaning): Yes, if you can take that much amount of water there will be no difficulty.

What I meant to say was that I have a feeling of the presence of God within me this time as never before. . . . If Ramanama has fully penetrated my heart, I am sure, I shall not need to drink even water to survive.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 416

446. NOTE TO ANGSHU RANI MITRA[1]

September 3, 1947

Pyarelal has just given me the news that your husband who was mortally stabbed in the course of protecting others has succumbed to his wounds today.[2] Do not let this be an occasion for sorrow but only for joy. Sachin has become immortal. You must not grieve but lose yourself in service in emulation of him.[3]

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, P. 417

447. DISCUSSION WITH HINDU-MUSLIM REPRESENTATIVES[4]

September 3, 1947

One of the Muslims, a prominent member of the Bengal Muslim League, with tears in his eyes entreated Gandhiji to give up his fast. "I worked with you during the Khilafat movement. I undertake that no Muslim in this area will again disturb the peace. Your mere presence in our midst is an asset to us. It is the guarantee of our safety. Do not deprive us of it."

GANDHIJI: My presence did not check the rowdies the other day. My word seems to have lost its power so far as they are concerned. My fast will now be broken only when the conflagration ends and the glorious peace of the last fifteen days returns. If the Muslims really love me and regard me as an asset, they can demonstrate their faith by refusing to give way to the instinct of revenge and retaliation even if the whole of Calcutta goes mad. In the mean time, my ordeal must continue.

The Hindu representatives also gave a similar assurance and promised to live in peace with their Muslim neighbours. Gandhiji remarked :

The leaven has begun to work.

But it was not enough, he added. Not till the condition which he had laid down was fulfilled in letter and in spirit, he told the deputation, would he give up the fast. To give it up prematurely from a desire to live would be a denial of God. He asked the

[1] The Hindi original of this is not available.

[2] Sachin Mitra, who was working with Thakkar Bapa in Noakhali, was wounded on September I while proceeding towards Noakhoda mosque which was supposed to be a danger spot.

[3] A group of ladies, who called on Gandhiji, wanted the body of Sachin Mitra to be taken out in a procession. Gandhiji deprecated the idea, saying he hated too much being made of the physical body and added, "If anybody tried to take out my body in a procession after I died, I would certainly tell them—if my corpse could speak—to spare me and cremate me where' I had died.'

[4] Two Hindus and two Muslim representatives met Gandhiji at 6.30 p.m.

deputation, instead, to work for peace with still greater will and determination. The friends retired with heavy hearts.[1]

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 418

448. INTERVIEW TO A BRITISH JOURNALIST[2]

CALCUTTA,

[Before *September 4, 1947*][3]

An English journalist came to Beliaghata the other day. It was a busy day for Gandhiji and he could spare only a few minutes. . . .

Although Gandhiji's activities ranged from wide social and political fields to the smallest and intensely personal ones, the journalist asked him, how he was able to maintain a spirit of detachment in such a surprising manner. Gandhiji replied that it was not true that he was never off his balance. Such occasions were rare, yet the long exercise of self-restraint enabled him, through God's grace, to keep his irritation within very narrow bounds.

This led the interviewer on to a more fundamental question. From a reading of Gandhiji's writings, the friend had gathered that the root of all of Gandhiji's activities was the desire for *moksha*, emancipation. But why was not this aspect emphasized sufficiently ?

Gandhiji replied by taking recourse to a simile. He said the desire for *moksha* was indeed there, but it was not meant for anyone other than the individual himself. The world was interested in the fruits, not the root. For the tree itself, however, the chief concern should be not the fruit, but the root. It was in the depth of one's own being that the individual had to concentrate. He had to nurse it with the water of his labour and suffering. The root was his chief concern. But society was concerned with the fruit alone. It had no other data for judgment than the fruits. Was not a tree judged by its fruits?

It was this practice of trying to limit himself to the root, and then not be concerned about the fruit that had given Gandhiji the apparent detachment which the English friend had noticed. But, in his personal opinion, he was yet far from the fullness of its realization. He was still a soul yearning to be wholly free, but ever failing to reach the ideal which he knew to be true., Hence, it would be enough if he could take care of the immediate task before him, whether great or small, with all the care and freedom from bias or mental worries which he could bring to bear upon it.

Harijan, 28-9-1947

[1] After they had left Gandhiji added: "Let the evil-doers desist from evil, not to save my life, but as a result of a true heart-change. Let all understand that a make-believe peace cannot satisfy me. I do not want a temporary lull to be followed by a worse carnage. If that happens, I shall have to go on an unconditional fast unto death."

[2] This appeared under the title "The Root and the Fruit" with the date-line "Calcutta, 4-9-1947".

[3] *ibid*

449. RIGHT OR WRONG[1]

Among my correspondence there is a typical letter in Gujarati from which I give below the following summary :

> In the *Young India* of 15th September, 1927 A. D., in your Madras speech[2] reported therein, you have said that that which is opposed to true economics is not religion and that economics which is inconsistent with religion is not true and should, therefore, be denounced.
>
> I am aware that you have held the view for many years, but it has not commanded universal acceptance. Therefore, it seems to me that your devoting your time and energy to the abatement of atrocities being committed in the name of religion is not proper. Where is your constructive programme today? The National Congress has the reins of Government in the best part of India. Complete political independence is in our hands. The British power has quitted. In such a case, is it not well that you should devote your energy to the prosecution of the constructive programme and through it demonstrate to the country that religion and economics are not two opposites? . . .[3] You write nothing against the unmoral economics of India. The consequence is that credulous people have begun to believe that you are behind the present economic policy of the Congress Government. I have begun to believe that you, who are the creator of constructive programme, are now destroying it. So far as I know, there is not a single institution connected with khadi or village industries which is based on true economics and on principles of self-sufficiency.

This writer has written in a moment of excitement. Therefore, he has not been able to express the whole truth. The main fact is that communal unity is a vital part of my being. It was so when khadi and all the village industries were not even conceived by me. At the time communal unity possessed me, I was a lad twelve years old, just a beginner in English. It was then that I had realized that all Hindus and

[1] This is an adaptation from the original in Gujarati which appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 14-9-1947.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Y. M. C. A. Madras", 4-9-1927.

[3] Omission as in the source

Muslims and Parsis were sons of the same soil and, as such, were pledged to complete brotherhood. This was before 1885 when the Congress was born. Moreover it should not be forgotten that communal unity is itself an integral part of the constructive programme. For it I have run many a risk. It is my conviction that if that unity is not achieved, the constructive programme cannot make substantial progress, at least not at my hands. For I should not know how to prosecute it in the midst of communal disturbances. The logical consequence of my correspondent's argument will be that I should not have hastened to Noakhali and thence to Bihar. That is to say, the work that I know how to tackle and which I have been doing for years, I should neglect in the nick of time. Surely this is impossible for me to do. To neglect it for the sake of the other items of the constructive programme would be tantamount to neglect of immediate duty. The result would be, I would have given up what was in my hands and got nothing for the manifest breach of duty.

Those who are in charge of the Congress Government are my fellow-workers. It is possible to say that they flourished in company with me in the Congress and now occupy top places. If I have failed to convince them of the soundness and feasibility of the economics referred to by the correspondent, how should I expect to convince others? They do not feel that they would be able to carry the people of India with them in the prosecution of what may be summed up as the 'Khadi Economics' and to renovate the villages of India through village industries.

He (the correspondent) rather suggests taht I should prepare Shri Jajuji[1], Shri Kumarappa[2] and such like to take the reins of Government in their hands. What hallucination is this? What right have I so to prepare people? Government of the people, by the people and for the people cannnot be conducted at the bidding of one man, however great he may be. Again who are more capable or penetrating than the present holders of the reins of Government? When more capable men are found, I am sure they will give place to their betters. As far as I know them they are not place-hunters. Therefore without being told by anybody they will of their own accord give place to abler hands and feel grateful for what will amount to a relief for them.

Let no one make the mistake of thinking that I can replace any

[1] Shrikrishnadas Jaju
[2] J. C. Kumarappa

one of them. I know that they would welcome me if I was ready to shoulder the burden. But I must confess that I have not unlimited capacity in me. That belongs to God, whom I love to invoke as Rama. But I am only His humble devotee. His devotees cannot claim to be He. They have got to dance to His tune.

It is worthy of note, too, that they themselves are giving the best part of their time to the very work of communal harmony, which I try to do. I in my own way, they in theirs. For they, too, believe with me that so long as this question is not satisfactorily settled and peace does not reign in India, nation-building works can make little or no progress.

Finally those who think like my correspondent should realize that the constructive programme, to be of any use, has to be reduced to practice by the millions of India. For that purpose we need thousands of workers. it is of little consequence that it was conceived by one brain. It has been before the country for years. The All-India Spinners' Association, the Village Industries Association, the Goseva Sangh, the Talimi Sangh, the Hindustani Prachar Sabha, the Adivasi Seva Sangh, the Harijan Sevak Sangh and such others which might have escaped my memory, came into being for that very purpose and are still working according to their capacity. All of them have realized the necessity and beauty of the relation between religion and economics. Whilst I am doing communal work, my interest in other constructive activities has not flagged. Whenever I can, I take part in their deliberations too. More should not be expected of me. I dare not leave the work in hand, being tempted to run after another, probably better. Hence the warning that the correspondent has given me should really be taken to heart by himself and by those who think alike and they should whole-heartedly devote themselves to the service of the nation in which they may be engaged.

I have repeated times without number that for national work it is not necessary that national workers should have political power. But it is necessary for the people to keep in constant touch with those whom they put in power. These can easily be counted. They are too few. But if the people were to realize their power and use it wisely and well, things would right themselves. Our independence is a new-born baby eighteen days old. It is inconceivable that things would of themselves be arranged harmoniously. Moreover those who have been placed in power are themselves new to this vast administrative work. They are assiduously adapting themselves to it.

CALCUTTA, September 4, 1947

Harijan, 14-9-1947

450. LETTER TO KHWAJA NAZIMUDDIN[1]

September 4, 1947

This will be presented to you by Pyarelal. . . . You may know that Satis Babu and some inmates of Khadi Pratishthan together with the helpers, whom I brought with me from Delhi, were posted in Noakhali to help the terror-struck and demoralized Hindus and, if possible, to prevent them from running away from Noakhali. . . . In doing so, I felt that I was serving the Muslims, too, of Noakhali, though they stood in no need of help from me. But on reaching there I found taht I could be of some help to them also. I had announced that I would do or die in Noakhali in the sense that I would prefer to die there unless through what I could do the two communities should become friends. Meantime, there came a call from Bihar. . . and I hurried to Bihar, this time to help the Muslims of whom large numbers had already fled to Bengal, Sind and other Muslim-majority parts. Since then I have not been able to return to Noakhali. When at last I came to Calcutta on the 9th ultimo, I found myself caught by Shaheed Saheb and here I am. The sequel you know.

I am dictating this letter from my bed. Everybody consoles me by saying that the first fifteen days of peace will soon return. If so, I may be able to break my fast early enough to enable me to resume my work forthwith. I have an urgent call from both parts of the Punjab, which have gone, in my opinion, utterly mad. Meanwhile, I would like you to tell me all about Noakhali. Pyarelal will tell you all about it from my point of view. . . . I know that you have become Premier of East Bengal[2] at a most critical period. May God help you.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 425-6

[1] Omissions in the letter are as in the source.

[2] On July 3, 1947, consequent upon the partition of Bengal

451. TALK WITH DR. SUNIL BOSE[1]

September 4, 1947

Gandhiji told him he could not exclude relevant talk. Such necessary loss of energy was inevitable. He was certainly desirous of living, but not at the cost of work that duty demanded. He said :

I can't interrupt the work which has made me fast and which makes me live. If my life ebbs away in the process, I would feel happy.

Harijan, 14-9-1947

452. DISCUSSION WITH FRIENDS[2]

September 4, 1947

The present occasion was not one in which there was scope for a sympathetic fast. Hindus and Muslims had fought for one whole year, at the end of which the major parties had agreed that India should be divided into two States. Both had Hindu and Muslim subjects. It was now time for everyone to create the sense of common citizenship, to rebuild the land so that men might taste the fruits of freedom. To this end all should work. Gandhiji said that if the friends had come to him only for the sake of saving his life, it was nothing.

Referring to the Poona Fast which ended with the desired amendment of the Communal Award, [Gandhiji said that] it was suggested by some that though the amendment was not to their desire, they accepted it for the sake of saving his life. This was a wholly wrong approach. Such fasts were intended to stir the conscience and remove mental sluggishness. Truth could not be sacrificed even for the sake of saving a life, however precious it was. Gandhiji, therefore, warned the present company that they should create real Hindu-Muslim unity by educating the people in a sense of common citizenship of the State, where every single man enjoyed perfect equality of rights which flowed from duty performed. If they worked with this aim in view, and succeeded after a few days' effort in making the Muslims in Calcutta feel safe where they now did not, it would be time for him to break the fast. Gandhiji was

[1] Brother of Subhas Chandra Bose. He met Gandhiji at 11.30 a.m. "with a request that he must take plenty of rest and not talk at all."

[2] Shortly after the talk with Dr. Sunil Bose twenty-seven friends belonging to Central Calcutta promised Gandhiji that "there would be no more incidents". They tried to persuade him to "break his fast now, otherwise all of them were prepared to go on a sympathetic fast". This is a summary of a long argument extracted from the article "The Fast" by N. K. Bose.

clearly of opinion that although his work was now confined to Calcutta, yet his one aim with respect to the Hindu-Muslim question was that the solution would be complete only when the minority, whether in the Indian Union or in Pakistan felt perfectly safe even if they were in the minority of one. There would be no favoured and no depressed community anywhere. All should forget their religious affiliations. He was working to this end. He was working in such a manner that the majority community in each State should go forward and create the necessary conditions for freedom.

Someone asked him: Was it possible that his fast would have any effect on the anti-social elements in society? Today, i.e., during the present recrudescence, it was this element which had gained the upper hand. Could their hearts be converted by Gandhiji's crucifixion ?

Gandhiji's answer was very clear and emphatic. He said that goondas were there because we had made them so. During the past one year of anarchy, it was understandable how these elements in society had gained respectability. But the war between Pakistanis and those for Undivided India had ended. It was time for peace-loving citizens to assert themselves and isolate goondaism. Non-violent non-co-operation was a universal remedy. Good was self-existent, evil was not. It was like a parasite living on and round good. It would die of itself when the support that good gave was withdrawn. The hearts of the anti-social elements may or may not be changed; it would be enough if they were made to feel that the better elements of society were asserting themselves in the interest of peace and in the interest of normality.

To the interviewers from Central Calcutta Gandhiji's advice, therefore, was thet they should desist from a sympathetic fast, go forth among the oppressed in each quarter, assure them that they were safe and rebuild life so that safety would be a permanent feature of the new State of India. He would personally have loved to move about from quarter to quarter in Calcutta in order to place his views before the various bodies, but his physical condition would not permit it. If others worked, how could he rest? Yet he was bound to make his contribution. He felt that it should be in the shape of a fast.

Harijan, 14-9-1947

453. DISCUSSION WITH A DEPUTATION[1]

September 4, 1947

Gandhiji told them that he would break his fast only when they could assure him that there would never again be recrudescence of communal madness in the city even though the whole of West Bengal and, for that matter, India, might go forth into a blaze, and the Muslims themselves would come and tell him that they now felt safe and secure and, therefore, he need not further prolong his fast.[2] He did not expect, he proceeded to explain, to be able to control all the goondas in the city, though he would love to, as he had not the requisite degree of purity, detachment and steadfastness of mind. But if he could not even make them purge themselves of the communal virus, he would feel that life was not worth living and he would not care to prolong it. They had referred to the oppression of his fast. He could not understand that. Why should they have a feeling of oppression if what they had told him came right from their hearts? If a single step was taken under pressure of the fast, not from conviction, it would cause oppression; but there should be no oppression if there was complete co-operation between the head and the heart.

The function of my fast is to purify, to release our energies by overcoming our inertia and mental sluggishness, not to paralyse us or to render us inactive. My fast isolates the forces of evil; the moment they are isolated they die, for evil by itself has no legs to stand upon. I expect you therefore to work with even greater vigour under the instigation of my fast, not to feel its oppression.

Harijan, 14-9-1947

[1] A group of about fifty people, reported to be controlling the turbulent elements in Calcutta, met Gandhiji and told him that the ring-leaders would all surrender themselves to him and take whatever punishment might be meted out to them. Would not Gandhiji on the strength of that assurance now break his fast? If not, what was his condition, they asked.

[2] *Vide* also the following item.

454. ADVICE TO DEMONSTRATORS[1]

September 4, 1947

My penalty for you is that you should go immediately among the Muslims and assure them full protection. The moment I am convinced that real change of heart has taken place, I will give up the fast. Let me tell you I am as anxious to end the fast as you, as I want to proceed to the Punjab at the earliest. That is what is sustaining me in my ordeal. But if you do not now hurry up it may be too late. I cannot last for many more days.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 421

455. DISCUSSION WITH CITIZENS' DEPUTATION[2]

CALCUTTA,

September 4, 1947

The deputation told Gandhiji that they had been to all the affected parts of the city and there was quiet everywhere. They would hold themselves responsible for anything untoward that might happen thereafter. They had every reason to hope that there would be no recrudescence of trouble which they maintained was "really not communal" but "the work of the goondas". They requested him to terminate his fast.

After some reflection Gandhiji spoke. He deprecated the suggestion that the outbreak of violence was not communal in character but really the work of the goondas.

It is we who make the goondas and we alone can unmake them. Goondas never act on their own. By themselves they cannot function.

It was the cowardice or passive sympathy of the average citizen or "the man with a stake" that gave the so-called goondas the power to do mischief.

My fast should make you more vigilant, more truthful, more careful, more precise in the language you use. You have all come here

[1] Some of the callers in the afternoon included those who had led the disturbances in Gandhiji's camp on September 1. They surrendered themselves before Gandhiji and their leader made a confession and said, "I and the whole party under me will gladly submit to whatever penalty you may impose; only you should now end your fast."

[2] A deputation of prominent citizens representing various communities met Gandhiji at 6 p. m. Present among others were H. S. Suhrawardy, N. C. Chatterjee, Niranjan Singh Talib, C. Rajagopalachari, J. B. Kripalani and Dr. P. C. Ghosh.

out of affection for me to ask me to give up my fast. The ringleaders also have been to see me and have apologized for what they have done.[1] But before I can accede to your request, I want to ask you two questions: (1) Can you in all sincerity assure me that there never will be repetition of trouble in Calcutta? Can you say that there is a genuine change of heart among the citizens so that they will no longer tolerate, much less foster, communal frenzy? If you cannot give that guarantee, you should rather let me continue this fast. It won't hurt me. When a man fasts like this, it is not the gallons of water he drinks that sustains him but God; and (2) if trouble breaks out—since you are not omnipotent or even omniscient—would you give me your word of honour that you would not live to report failure but lay down your life in the attempt to protect those whose safety you are pledging? You should remember, too, that if you break your pledge after giving it to me, you will have to face an unconditional fast unto death on my part. I do not wish to live in a fool's paradise. If you deceive me, if you say one thing and mean another in your heart, my death will be upon your heads. I want a clear and straight answer. Your assurance must be in writing.

SUHRAWARDY: You had said that you would break the fast when Calcutta returned to sanity. That condition has already been fulfilled. In asking us to give a guarantee for the future, are you not imposing a fresh condition ?

Characterizing Shaheed's argument as "legalistic", Gandhiji replied that no fresh condition was being imposed. All that was implied in the original terms of the fast.

What I have spoken now is only a home truth to make you know what is what. If there is complete accord between your conviction and feeling, there should be no difficulty in signing that declaration. It is the acid test of your sincerity and courage of conviction. If you sign it merely to keep me alive, you will really be compassing my certain death.

SUHRAWARDY: In such a big city, things may happen in spite of our best efforts. Surely, you cannot fast for any stray incident that may happen.

Gandhiji explained to Shaheed that he had missed his point. He did not mean that Calcutta would become completely free from all crime for good. All he meant was that even if madness should seize the whole country, Calcutta would not lose its head.[2]

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The discussion was interrupted here, when C. Rajagopalachari and J. B.

SUHRAWARDY: Now that even the Muslims have joined in the appeal, won't you break your fast? This shows that they have fully accepted your peace mission although they are the aggrieved party in the present riots. It is all the more strange because at one time they looked upon you as their arch enemy. But their hearts have been so touched by the services you have rendered them that today they acclaim you as their friend and helper.

RAJAJI: If I may vary the language, I would say that he is safer today in the hands of the Muslims than in those of the Hindus.

G. Do not think of Muslims as the aggrieved party. The essence of our present peace mission is that we are to forget the past. I do not want the Muslims to feel that in West Bengal they are the underdog. Unless we can forget the distinction, we will not have done solid work.[1]

S. But, Sir, is it any good my signing this document? I may any time be called to Pakistan and then what happens to my pledge ?

G. You must in that event have confidence that those whom you leave behind will deliver the goods. Moreover, you can come back.

S. I have no desire to hoodwink you and I never will do so deliberately.

G. Well, I will break this fast now and leave for the Punjab tomorrow. I shall now go there with far greater strength and confidence than I could have three days ago.

S. You cannot leave tomorrow. Your presence is necessary here at least for a couple of days yet to consolidate the peace.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 421-2; also *Harijan*, 14-9-1947

Kripalani proposed that they might confer among themselves leaving Gandhiji for a while. Just then they received an appeal signed by Hindu and Muslim representatives of the "worst affected" localities. The signatories had promised "not to allow any untoward incident" and begged Gandhiji to break his fast. When Suhrawardy read out the appeal and remarked that their effort had not been in vain, Gandhiji replied, "Yes, the leaven is at work." What follows is extracted from Pyarelal's report in *Harijan*.

[1] The members of the deputation then retired to the next room and soon returned after preparing a pledge, as dictated by Rajagopalachari. According to *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 5-9-1947, the document read: "We the undersigned promise Gandhiji that now that peace and quiet have been restored in Calcutta once again, we shall never again allow communal strife in the city and shall strive unto death to prevent it." The following were its signatories: Surendra Mohan Ghosh, President, Bengal Pradesh Congress Committee, Sarat Chandra Bose, H. S. Suhrawardy, Niranjan Singh Talib, N. C. Chatterjee, Debendranath Mukerjee, President and Secretary of Provincial Hindu Mahasabha and Radha Kisan Jaidka, Punjab leader.

456. SPEECH BEFORE BREAKING OF FAST

CALCUTTA,
September 4, 1947

I would like to tell you something before breaking the fast. I am breaking this fast so that I might be able to do something for the Punjab. I am doing so at your assurance and not for any other reason. It would indeed be very unfortunate if anything happened to make me regret my step. I would like to live—as people tell me—to serve all the more. I have the will power to live and would like to live but I do not want to be deceived in order to live. I expect that the Hindus and Muslims here will not force me to undertake a fast again. On the first day Rajaji had asked me whether I had undertaken the fast hoping for something to happen. I told him that people would not let me prolong the fast. It lasted for three days, it could have for thirty.

Still I would like to warn you that you should not be lulled into complacence after I break my fast. What happens here is bound to have its effect in the Punjab and Noakhali. If something happens here how can I control the rowdy Muslims in Noakhali? Calcutta today holds the key to the peace of the whole of India. If you want to achieve great things, you must work for them. Even if the whole world went up in a blaze, Calcutta should remain untouched by the flames. May God grant wisdom to everyone. These girls have just now sung *Ishwar Allah tere nam, sabko sanmati de Bhagwan*. And, of course, above all, there is God, our witness.[1]

[From Hindi]

Calcuttano Chamatkar pp. 89-90

[1] After a short prayer, Gandhiji broke the fast at 9.15 p.m. with a glass of diluted orange-juice.

457. MESSAGE TO UNESCO CONFERENCE ON EDUCATION[1]

[Before *September 5, 1947*][2]

I am deeply interested in the efforts of the United Nations Economic, Social and Cultural Organization to secure peace through educational and cultural activities. I fully appreciate that real security and lasting peace cannot be secured so long as extreme inequalities in education and culture exist as they do among the nations of the world. Light must be carried even to the remotest homes in the less fortunate countries which are in comparative darkness, and I think that in this cause the nations which are economically and educationally advanced have a special responsibility. I wish your Conference every success, and I hope that you will be able to produce a workable plan for providing the right type of education particularly in countries in which opportunities for education are restricted owing to economic and other circumstances.

Harijan, 16-11-1947

458. APPEAL TO FRIENDS

[Before *September 5, 1947*]

Gandhiji has been receiving letters and telegrams from friends asking for permission to come to Calcutta to help in any matter. Gandhiji would warn friends against rushing to Calcutta. Any such arrival would complicate matters. He has efficient nursing and other necessary attendants. He, therefore, requires no extra help for his bodily assistance.

Accommodation in his new residence is strictily limited as it is all over Calcutta. Food is rationed. In this condition of scarcity Gandhiji is of opinion that those friends including Ashram members, who are naturally anxious to be near him should understand him and respect his wish that they should restrain themselves against their natural desire. They will help him

on the contrary by strict adherence to their duty in which they are at present engaged.

Gandhiji wishes to add that he is perfectly at peace and ease and has fullest trust in God's succour.

The Hindustan Standard, 5-9-1947

[1] Held at Nanking. The message was received at the Conference with great ovation and the entire audience stood up while it was being read out.

[2] The Conference acknowledged receipt of the message on September 5, 1947.

459. ADVICE TO YOUNG MEN[1]

September 5, 1947

Act as peace squads without arms.[2]

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 5-9-1947

460. MESSAGE TO SHANTI SENA DAL[3]

September 5, 1947

My life is my message.

GANDHI

The Hindustan Standard, 7-9-1947

461. LETTER TO SHYAMA PRASAD BANDOPADHYAYA

CALCUTTA,

September 6, 1947

BROTHER SHYAMA PRASAD BANDOPADHYAYA,

I congratulate you on the heroic death of Smritish[4] as he went to save the Muslim brothers with his friends. I don't grieve over such a death. I hope you and others also do not grieve over it. I wish we have thousands of Smritishes[5] amongst us.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6567

[1] There was a stream of young men in the morning who brought some country-made arms and surrendered them to Gandhiji. Dr. Dinshaw Mehta showed the arms to Gandhiji who smilingly said: "I see some of them for the first time in my life. I saw one sten-gun for the first time only last night."

[2] The young men promised that they would never do anything which might break the peace of Calcutta.

[3] Written in Bengali this was given to Devtosh Das Gupta, Secretary, Shanti Sena Dal, who called on Gandhiji. Blessing the "soldiers of peace" Gandhiji said that they should courageously face any odds that might come in their way.

[4] The source has "Shrinish", apparently a slip. Smritish Bannerjee was killed on September 3 while trying to protect a peace procession of school-boys and girls.

[5] *ibid*

462. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

CALCUTTA,

Spetember 6, 1947

Gandhiji, referring to the Deputy Mayor's speech, said that the word farewell was misapplied. He had made his home in Calcutta among the Muslim friends in Beliaghata and not in Khadi Pratishthan, Sodepur, which was his permanent home. He would not even allow Hemprobha Devi and her co-workers to come to his new abode for looking after him. He said that he would be satisfied with what Muslim friends gave him in the shape of service. He had made no mistake. He was accustomed to living comfortably in Muslim homes in South Africa.

He then referred to the martyrdom of Sachin Mittra[1] and Smritish Banerjee. He was not sorry. Such innocent deaths were necessary to keep the two communities together. Let them not make the mistake that such martyrs were to be found among Hindus only. He could cite several instances of Muslims who had lost their lives in the act of protecting Hindus. He had had similar personal experiences in life. There was evil and good among all communities and climes. That brought him to Shaheed Saheb about whom he had many Hindus coming to him, and many letters from them to the effect that he was a fool to have accepted Shaheed Saheb as his associate in the task. He must say that he was no fool. He knew what he was doing. He had nothing to do with what Shaheed Saheb had done in the past. But he (Gandhiji) was there to testify that he (Shaheed Saheb) had given his full co-operation all the precious days they were together. He was free to confess that without his valuable help they would not have found him (Gandhiji) working in their midst. It was an insult to intelligence to think that there could be any base motive behind the work into which he had thrown himself with his whole heart. He had a palatial house and a brother whom he regarded as superior to him in talent. He had another whom Gandhiji had had the pleasure of knowing in London at the Round Table Conference and who was Vice-Chancellor of the Dacca University. His uncle Sir Abdulla was the author of the *Sayings of the Prophet*. If they distrusted the motives, they would be vastly mistaken. Neither they nor anybody else had any right to question a man's motives. The speaker said that he would not like his motives to be judged by his actions. That was the only right way to get on with people. They should know that he had been condemned as enemy No. 1 of Islam and that in spite of his protestations to the contrary. Would the audience, therefore, like the Muslims never to accept his actions at their worth?

Lastly let them consider the awful consequence of such distrust. I might ruin the present unity and thus jeopardize what probably was the only chance of saving the Punjab from fratricidal strife.

He then referred to the Shanti Sena and other organizations which were doing

[1] *Vide* "Note to Angshu Rani Mitra", 3-9-1947.

strenuous work to preserve peace. Women had come forward to do their bit. The students had excelled themselves in their devotion to the cause of communal amity. Some young men had brought their unlicensed arms including stenguns, hand-grenades and other less destructive weapons. He thanked them for their courage in bringing them to him. He hoped that the good example would be copied by all possessors, Hindus and Muslims, of unlicensed arms. It would be a proof of mutual trust and trust in God. He was assured by the Chief Minister that those who delivered up such arms within a given date (the shorter the better) would be thanked for their open help in the work of peace and that no punishment would be inflicted on them, now or hereafter, for what was undoubtedly an offence. He asked, therefore, all such possessors to deliver these to the authorities or to their friends, to be delivered to the authorities.

He congratulated the Corporation staff which the Deputy Mayor told him, had worked the whole night for completing the arrangements for the meeting which was so well attended in spite of the rains.

Last of all, he told them that by breaking the fast only after one day's absence of strife, on the strength of the pressure of friends drawn from all communities in Calcutta and outside, he threw the burden on them of preservation of peace at the cost of their lives.[1] Let them not be guilty of having, though unwittingly, brought about his death by the abrupt end of the fast. He could have, as they might have, waited for some days to enable him to gauge the situation for himself, but he could not properly do so in the face of the earnestness of friends, say like Shri N. C. Chatterjee, the President of the Hindu Mahasabha, Shaheed Saheb and others too numerous to mention, but he threw all the greater weight on the shoulders of all Calcutta citizens and sojourners. What they wanted was not peace imposed by the Government forces but by themselves. If, unfortunately it was broken, there would be no alternative but a fast unto death. He could not, like a child, play with them and each time say, he was going to break his fast if they resumed sanity. He made that solemn declaration for Bihar, then for Noakhali and now for Calcutta. As his life was made, he had no other alternative. If God willed that he should still do some service, He would bless all with wisdom to do the right thing in the matter. Consider the consequence of Calcutta remaining sane. It must mean the automatic sanity of all Bengal, East and West. It meant also Bihar and consequently the Punjab where God was sending him, and if the Punjab came to its senses, the rest of India was bound to follow. So may God help them all.

Harijan, 21-9-1947

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with Citizens' Deputation", 4-9-1947.

463. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

[On or before *September 7, 1947*][1]

PANDIT NEHRU

NEW DELHI

GOD WILLING LEAVING FOR DELHI WAY PUNJAB. INFORM SARDAR BIRLA[2] BRIJKRISHNA[3].

BAPU

From a facsimile: *Mahatma*, Vol. VIII, between pp. 152 and 153

464. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

September [*7*],[4] *1947*

CHI. MANI,

I am leaving for Delhi today. Hence this short letter. Your objections do not hold water. I simply have to go to Delhi when pressed so hard. Sardar and Jawahar will decide what I should do next. They may put me up where they like. Not that I have boycotted Birla House, but I would prefer to stay at the Bhangi Colony despite the many inconveniences. And Sardar's honour also lies in letting me stay there. Never mind if no one can come to me at night.

Train: Delhi Express.

Inform Brijkrishna.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 143

[1] Gandhiji left Calcutta for Delhi on September 7.

[2] G. D. Birla

[3] Brijikrishna Chandiwala

[4] The source has "8", obviously a slip as Gandhiji left Calcutta for Delhi on September 7.

465. LETTER TO DEV PRAKASH NAYYAR

[*September 7, 1947*][1]

CHI. DEV,

Show the Bihar.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi: Documents relating to Gandhiji. Courtesy: National Archives of India

466. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

CALCUTTA,

September 7, 1947

Gandhiji said within the last few days the Shanti Sena had done excellent work and there appeared to be a need for them in Calcutta. He was going away but would be watching the situation. Those who belonged to the Shanti Sena must be prepared to sacrifice themselves in the interest of peace. If they really counted themselves as members of that organization they should come in between warring factions and stop the fight even to the extent of losing their lives. They were fighting not with swords but with love.

Soldiers who go to war, Gandhij continued, die and those who remain alive are acclaimed as heroes. Mahatma Gandhi said it was really those who died that kept others alive and they were the real heroes. Some members of the Shanti Sena had sacrificed their lives in the cause of peace. They were the real heroes and peace had been restored on account of their sacrifice. Gandhiji wished to see whether this peace

[1] The date is inferred from the reference to "going to Delhi on way to the Punjab".

[2] The meeting was held in the compound of Gandhiji's Beliaghata residence. The speech was translated into Bengali By H. S. Suhrawardy.

was going to be permanent —whether it was founded on true friendship and love.

There was another work before them and that was to bring back those to their homes who had been driven away or whose homes had been looted or destroyed. They had got to provide shelter for them as well as food till they were able to stand on their own legs. The Central Peace Committee had taken up this work and a Finance Committee had been formed to raise funds for the purpose. The work had to be done as soon as possible. They were not to see whether other people were doing the same thing elsewhere. Gandhiji did not wish to hear any Hindu saying that he should first see what Muslims were doing to rehabilitate the Hindus and *vice versa*.

Mahatma Gandhi concluded by saying that each one should start to be good irrespective of what anyone else was doing; and the goodness of one would be reflected in another.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 8-9-1947

467. SPEECH AT GOBRA LEPROSY HOSPITAL[1]

CALCUTTA,

[*September 7, 1947*][2]

Gandhiji visited the Leprosy Hospital this evening before leaving Calcutta. Addressing the patients and the staff he said that the he considered it wrong that leprosy should carry more stigma than any other infectious disease. Real stigma in his opinion attached to moral ailments rather than to physical ones. Drunkards, gamblers and those who suffered from such other ailments of society deserved far more abhorrence than a disease like leprosy. He advised them to take refuge in God. He alone was the Healer of all ailments—physical, mental or moral.[3]

The members of the asylum had no occasion whatsoever to feel dejected. The fact that moral lepers were worse than the physical ones was surely a matter of some consolation to them. The real consolation lay in their utter reliance on God. Then they would not feel the want of games and other aids to whiling away time. This however did not mean that society did not owe a great duty to the lepers in its midst who after all were the outward symbol of society's many blemishes which being general were not noticed. He thought that the abhorrence which was shown towards lepers was a superstition born of ignorance. This he had learnt during his visits to most of the leper asylums of India.

From a photostat: C. W. 10576. Courtesy: N. K. Bose

468. A NOTE

[After *September 7, 1947*][4]

A gentleman from Phulwari Sharif came to see me yesterday. He stated that the returning Muslims are being threatened by Hindus there who do not allow them to cultivate their fields. Sikhs come from outside and say all sorts of things. If this is correct, do enquire into the matter; and people must be prevented from behaving thus. You may publish this note, if necessary, to do so. A fake picture of a naked woman is being distributed. It is very bad if it is a fact.

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Documents relating to Gandhiji. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] After the prayer meeting Gandhiji along with Sushila Nayyar, H. S. Suhrawardy and N. K. Bose proceeded to Gobra Leper Hospital.

[2] *ibid*

[3] The report up to this in Sushila Nayyar's handwriting, was corrected by Gandhiji.

[4] This is written on the reverse side of a letter dated September 7, 1947.

469. TASK BEFORE MINISTERS[1]

I have before me quite a number of letters fiercely criticizing what they consider to be their luxurious life. They accuse them too of favouritism, even nepotism. I know that much criticism comes from ignorance. Ministers should not be sensitive. They should take in good part even carping criticism. They would be surprised if I were to send them the letters I receive; probably, they receive worse. Be that as it may, the moral I draw from them is that the critics expect much more from these chosen servants of the people than from others in the way of simplicity, courage, honesty and industry. In this matter we cannot imitate the English rulers of the past, except perhaps in industry and discipline. The whole purpose of this note will be served if on the one hand the ministers profit by valid criticism and the critics learn to be sober and precise about their facts. Inaccuracy or exaggeration spoils a good case.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, September 8, 1947

Harijan, 21-9-1947

470. BIHAR FOR BIHARIS AND INDIA

Bihar is undoubtedly for Biharis but it is also for India. What is true of Bihar is equally true of all the provinces in the Union. No Indian can be treated as a foreigner in Bihar as he may be treated in Pakistan of today and *vice versa*. It is necessary to bear this difference in mind if we are to avoid difficulties and heart-burn[ing].

Though then every Indian of the Union has a right to settle in Bihar, he must not do so to oust the Biharis. If the qualification was not actively operated, it is possible to conceive such an inrush of non-Bihari Indians as to flood out the Biharis. We are thus forced to the conclusion that a non-Bihari who settles in Bihar must do so to serve Bihar, not to exploit it after the manner of our old masters.

This way of examining the proposition brings us to the question of the zamindars and the ryots. When a non-Bihari enters Bihar for the sake of making money, he will in all probability do so to exploit the ryot in league with the zamindars. If the zamindars really became the

[1] This appeared under "Notes".

trustees of their zamindari for the sake of the ryots, there never could be an unholy league as has been here conceived. There is the difficult zamindari question awaiting solution in Bihar. What one would love to see is proper impartial and satisfactory understanding between the zamindars, big and small, the ryots and the Government, so that when the law is passed it may not be a dead letter nor need force be used against the zamindars or the ryots. Would that all changes, some of which must be radical, took place throughout India without bloodshed and without force! So much for the newcomer from the other provinces of India.

What about the services? It seems that if the provinces are all to make equal progress in all directions the services should be largely confined to the inhabitants of the province concerned for the sake of India as a whole. No province and no tribe or clan can be kept backward if India is to stand up erect before the world. It will never do so through its arms of which the world is sick. It must shine through its innate culture expressed in every citizens's life and in the socialism I have recentlydescribed in these columns. That means elimination of all force for the sake of popularizing one's doctrines or schemes. A thing which is truly popular rarely, if ever, requires force save that of public opinion to make itself acceptable to all. Therefore, the ugly scenes of violence by individuals witnessed in Bihar and Orissa and Assam should never have been. Popular Governments are functioning to redress any irregularity or encroachment by persons from other provinces. The provincial Governments are bound to give full protection to all the comers from outside their provinces. "Use what you consider yours so as not to injure others," is a famous maxim of equity. It is also a grand moral code of conduct. How apposite today?

Hitherto I have dealt with the question of new arrivals. What of those who were on the 15th of August in Bihar—some in Government employment and some otherwise employed? So far as I can see, they should be on the same footing as the Biharis unless they make another choice. Naturally they should not form a separate colony as if they were foreigners. "Live in Rome as the Romans do," is a sound commonsense maxim so long as it does not apply to Roman vices. The process of progressive blending must be one of rejecting the bad and absorbing the good. As a Gujarati in Bengal, I must quickly absorb all that is good in Bengal and never touch that which is bad; I must ever serve Bengal, never selfishly exploit it. The bane of our life is our exclusing provincialism, whereas my province must be co-

extensive with the Indian boundary so that ultimately it extends to the boundary of the earth. Else, it perishes.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, September 8, 1947

Harijan, 21-9-1947

471. PROHIBITION OF INTOXICANTS[1]

This is the fittest time for this reform. Thesre is a people's Government. Both parts of India including the Indian States are ready for the reform. All over the two parts there is a shortage of foodstuffs and clothing. Dare one think of indulging in intoxicants—drinks or drugs—when people are on the border-land of starvation and nakedness? The money spent on wines and opiates is not only a waste, but it adds to it loss of self-control. One labouring under the influence of intoxicants will do things which he will never do in a sober state. Thus from every point of view prohibition is a vital necessity.

We cannot eradicate the evil merely by passing laws. The addict will manage to satisfy his craving anyhow. Those carrying on the black trade will not readily give it up.

Therefore the following steps will have to be taken simultaneously in order to make a success of the reform :

1. Passing of the requisite law
2. Educating public opinion
3. Opening at the same place as grog shops refreshmentrooms selling harmless drinks and providing innocent entertainment in the form of books, newspapers, games, etc.
4. The income from the sale of intoxicants should be spent on cultivating public opinion in favour of prohibition.

It is criminal to spend the income from the sale of intoxicants on the education of the nation's children or other publice services. The Government must overcome the temptation of using such revenue for nation-building purposes. Experience has shown that the moral and physical gain of the abstainer more than makes up for the loss of this tainted revenue. If we eradicate the evil, we will easily find other ways and means of increasing the nation's income.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, September 8, 1947

Harijan, 21-9-1947

[1] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 14-9-1947.

472. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1947

'Man proposes, God disposes' has come true often enough in my lifetime as it must have done in many others'. I knew nothing about the sad state of things in Delhi when I left Calcutta on Sunday last. On reaching Delhi, I have been listening the whole day long to the tale of woe that is Delhi today. I saw several Muslim friends who recited their pathetic story. I heard enough to warn me that I must not leave Delhi for the Punjab until it had regained its former self.

I must do my little bit to calm the heated atmosphere. I must apply the old formula "Do or Die" to the capital of India. I am glad to be able to say that the residents of Delhi do not want the senseless destruction that is going on. I am prepared to understand the anger of the refugees whom fate has driven from West Punjab. But anger is short madness. It can only make matters worse in every way. Retaliation is no remedy. It makes the original disease much worse. I, therefore, ask all those who are engaged in the senseless murders, arson and loot to stay their hands.

The Central Government, the ablest, the most courageous and the most self-sacrificing team that the Union could produce, have not been in the saddle for even a month after the declaration of Indian independence. It is criminal and suicidal not to give them a chance to set the house in order. I am fully aware of the shortage of food. Mob rule is dislocating everything making distribution of food-stuffs all but impossible. May God restore peace to distracted Delhi.

I would close with the hope that Calcutta will fulfil the promise made on my departure and which sustains me in the midst of the surrouding madness.

Harijan, 21-9-1947

473. TALK WITH P. C. JOSHI

[After *September 9, 1947*][1]

Answering Shri P. C. Joshi[2], Gandhiji said:

First of all I want you not to report our conversation in any paper. Not that I have anything to conceal, but it will not help the cause. The situation for me is baffling. I do not remember an occasion in my life– and it has been a life full of struggle–when I have felt baffled as I am doing today. It is a matter of shame for us that the Mussalmans in the Union should feel downcast. Here there should be no room for a single person to feel downcast. Is it so today? No. Only today I heard that Dr. Kitchlew[3] has had to leave his home. It is a frightful thing that he cannot stay in his own house and has to go to Kashmir. I wholly endorse your remark that no one in the Union can afford to say that we are doing this by way of retaliation, and that too of a savage type. We must not degrade ourselves by following the ways of Pakistan. Somehow or other I have never felt so resourceless as I am doing today. You say mobilize all the democratic forces and give them the marching orders. But I feel like a General without an army. To whom am I to give orders?

JOSHI. It is not true. The General has no confidence in himself. He is not calling the army. Calcutta was a hundred times worse than Delhi.

GANDHIJI. You do not know the story of Calcutta. There it looked literally like overnight conversion. It would not have happened but for the incident that night You know the details of the attack on me. They saw my behaviour with their own eyes. That turned the wave. The Muslim mind was ready. The trading mind was tired of strife and the mischievous elements saw that whatever they did was a misfire. They must desist.

It was like the overnight conversion of the European mind in South Africa. I was lynched. I might have been killed but for the resourcefulness of the European Superintendent of Police. When the whole thing including my interview appeared in the press the next

[1] Gandhiji arrived in Delhi, where the interview took place on September 9, 1947.

[2] General Secretary, the Communist Party of India

[3] Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew

morning, the Europeans felt ashamed and the atmosphere changed.[1] If some such thing happened here, my mission would succeed. But I am afraid it will not happen.

JOSHI. No. They have learnt the lesson. They want the old man to quit and then have a second round.

GANDHIJI. Yes. I know that. That is why I have pledged myself to do or die in Delhi.

Joshi: You have made the nation. You must take them on. Give the call.

GANDHIJI. I have made them and I have unmade them. I have not mastered your technique. I have not got that amazing self-assurance and I am not sorry for it. I simply say take me for what I am worth.

I have no enemies. Therefore the Communists too in spite of all their differences with me come to me. They came in Noakhali too. I had given them five minutes. But I took to them and gave them an hour and asked them to come again. I know the stuff you are made of Most of you are young men. I shall pick from you what I can.

JOSHI. Do not say that.

GANDHIJI. I mean what I say. I am biding my time. I am very patient. My patience is being taxed to the utmost. Keep in touch with me. Kumaramangalam sees me often. So does Habib, Dr. Mahmud's son. He is a fine young man. He never puts his parents in an awkward position, never comes in their way, but goes on with his work. And he is so brave. I keep myself in touch with all who come to me. I know you have some fine stuff amongst your ranks. If you had just riff-faff who have their own axes to grind, you cannot lead such a party.

From draft notes: Pyarelal papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Vide* "Memorial to Secretary of State for Colonies", 15-3-1897.

474. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
September 10, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

When I reached Shahadara Sardar Patel, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur and others were there to welcome me. But I did not find the usual smile on the Sardar's lips. Gone too was his jocular temperament. After alighting from the train I found some police personnel and others also equally sad. Has the city of Delhi which always appeared gay turned into a city of the dead? Another surprise was in store for me. Instead of the Harijan colony where it was a pleasure to stay I was taken to the palatial Birla House. I was greatly pained to know the reason for this. Even so, I was pleased to stay in a house where I had often come and stayed on earlier occasions. Whether I stay with the Valmiki friends in the Harijan colony or at the Birla House, I am a guest of the Birla brothers. Even if I am in the Harijan colony their men look after me with total devotion. It is not the Sardar who is responsible for this. He can never be so weak as to be concerned about my safety in the Bhangi Colony. I am always very happy to be in the midst of the Harijans, though, I cannot live in the very houses in which the Bhangis, through the negligence of the New Delhi Committee, are packed like sardines.

I have been brought to stay at Birla House because refugees have been accommodated in the Harijan colony. Their need is much greater than mine. But is it not a shame on us as a nation that there should be any problem about refugees in our country? Along with Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel, Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah, Liaqat Ali Khan and other Pakistani leaders had declared that in the Indian Union as well as in Pakistan the minority communities would receive the same treatment as the majority communities. Did the leaders of these Dominions make such declaration to please world opinion or was it their intention to prove that there was no difference between their

[1] Gandhiji spoke in Hindustani for 35 minutes. The speech was recorded and relayed by All India Radio at 10 p. m. the same day.

words and deeds and that they would be ready to lay down their lives in order to fulfil their promises? If that is so, I would like to ask why were the Hindus, Sikhs and the proud *Amils*, and their friends forced to leave Pakistan? What has happened in Quetta, Nawab Shah and Karachi? The reports of tratic events in the West Punjab are heart-rending. The leaders of the Indian Union and Pakistan cannot fling their hands in despair and say that it is all the doing of the goondas. It is the duty of the Dominions to accept full responsibility for the actions of its people—their duty is "not to reason why" but "to do and die". Now they are not forced to do anything against their will under the crushing burden of Imperialism. Today they can do anything they choose. But if they wish to face the world with honesty, freedom should not mean that there need be no rule of law in both the Dominions. Would the Union Ministers declare their bankruptcy and shamelessly say that the people of Delhi and the refugees who are staying there do not, of their own free will wish to abide by the law of the land? As for me, I would expect the Ministers to stake their own lives in fighting this madness rather than submitting to it.

Even at the house where I am staying, fruits or vegetables are not available. Is it not shameful that the Subzi Mandi has stopped receiving any supplies of vegetables because some Muslims have fired some shots? During my rounds in the city I heard complaints that the refugees do not get their ration. And whatever is being supplied to them is not fit for human consumption. If the responsibility for this lies with the Government, it equally lies with the refugees who have brought to a standstill even the essential services. Why do they not realize that they are harming their own interests by resorting to such action? Had they trusted the Government for the solution of all their problems and behaved like law-abiding citizens, I know and they should know it, too, that most of their problems would have been solved.

I visited the camp of the Meos near the Humayun's Tomb. I was told that they had been turned out from the States of Alwar and Bharatpur. They said they had nothing to eat except what the Muslim friends had sent to them. I know that the Meos are an easily excitable community and can create a lot of trouble. But the remedy does not lie in driving them out to Pakistan against their wishes. The real

remedy lies in treating them as human beings and their weaknesses should be treated as any other illness.

Then I went to the Jamia Millia. I had lent a big hand in building up that intitution. Dr. Zakir Husain is a dear friend of mine. He narrated his experiences with great anguish. But he had no bitterness in his heart. Recently he had to visit Jullunder. Had a Sikh Captain and a Hindu railway official not come to his help in time, the Sikhs in their mad fury would have killed him for being a Muslim. Dr. Zakir Husain thanked those people as he narrated his experiences to me. Just imagine, the national institution where many Hindus have been educated, is now afraid that angry refugees and the people who instigate them may attack it. I met the refugees who have been somehow accommodated in the compound of the Jamia Millia. When I heard their tragic tales I hung my head in shame. Then I went to the refugees camps at Diwan Hall, Wavell Canteen and Kingsway. I met the Sikh and Hindu refugees there. They had not yet forgotten my past services to the Punjab. But I noticed some angry faces in all those camps. Those people can be forgiven. they talked to me in sharp tones for being harsh to the Hindus. They said that I had not undergone the hardships that they did, and not lost my kith and kin. they said I had not been compelled to beg at every door. They asked me how I could comfort them by saying that I had been staying at Delhi to do my utmost to establish peace in the capital of the country. True I cannot bring back the dead. But death is a gift of God to all living things — human beings, animals. The difference is only of time and manner. Hence right conduct is the royal path to be followed, which makes life beautiful and worth living. Today a Sikh friend told me that he is a Sikh by birth but could not claim to be a true Sikh in the light of the Granth Saheb. I asked him if he knew any true Sikh. He could not point out even one. Then I politely told him that I claimed to be such a Sikh. I said I was trying to live like a true Sikh according to the Granth Saheb. There was a time when in Nankana Saheb I was described as a true friend of the Sikhs. Guru Nanak made no distinction between Hindus and Muslims. For him the whole world was one. Such is also my sanatana dharma. Being a true Hindu I also claim to be a true Muslim. I always recite the great Muslim prayer in which it is proclaimed that God is one and He protects the whole world by day

and night.

I would like to tell the refugees that they should live truthfully and without fear. They should not entertain any thoughts of revenge or hatred. They should not act rashly out of anger and impulse and thus throw away the golden apple of freedom won at a great cost.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 294-8

475. TAKE CARE

Unless the Governments and their Secretariats take care, the English language is likely to usurp the place of Hindustani. This must do infinite harm to the millions of India who would never be able to understand English. Surely, it must be quite easy for the provincial Governments to have a staff which would carry on all transactions in the provincial languages and the interprovincial language, which, in my opinion, can only be Hindustani written in Nagari or Urdu script.

Every day lost in making this necessary change is so much cultural loss to the nation. The first and foremost thing is to revive the rich provincial languages with which India is blessed. It is nothing short of mental sluggishness to plead that in our courts, in our schools and even in the secretariats, some time, probably a few years, must lapse before the change is made. No doubt a little difficulty will be felt in multi-lingual provinces, as in Bombay and Madras, until redistribution of provinces takes place on a linguistic basis. Provincial Governments can devise a method in order to enable the people in those provinces to feel that they have come into their own. Nor need the provinces wait for the Union for solving the question, whether for interprovincial speech it shall be Hindustani written in either Nagari or Urdu script or mere Hindi written in Nagari. This should not detain them in making the desired reforms. It is a wholly unnecessary controversy likely to be the door through which English may enter to the eternal disgrace of India. If the first step, that is, revival of provincial speech in all public departments, takes place immediately, that of inter-provincial speech will follow in quick succession. The provinces will have to deal with the Centre. They dare not do so through English, if the Centre is wise enough quickly to realize that they must not tax the nation culturally for the sake of a handful of

Indians who are too lazy to pick up the speech which can be easily common to the whole of India without offending any party or section. My plea is for banishing English as a cultural usurper as we successfully banished the political rule of the English usurper. The rich English language will ever retain its natural place as the international speech of commerce and diplomacy.

NEW DELHI, September 11, 1947

Harijan, 21-9-1947

476. INTERVIEW TO SIKH DEPUTATION[1]

[*September 11, 1947*][2]

But I do not see religion anywhere in evidence today. And if it is a religious symbol, the restriction as regards its size should not matter.

Gandhiji told them that it was wholly irrelevant and even improper to cite legal precedents to break healthy restraints under which alone society could grow in a state of liberty. The *kirpan*, which the Sikh religion enjoined upon its votaries, was a symbol of purity and self-restraint. It was a weapon for the defence of innocent women and children and old or disabled persons against tyranny in the face of overwhelming odds; never a weapon of offence or to be used in retaliation against defenceless women and children. Even during the war against the Muslims, the code was to tend the wounded on both sides. The *kirpan* had of late been used for totally indefensible purposes and he who used it wrongly forfeited the right to carry it.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 438-9

[1] On grounds of security the Government had prohibited the carrying of *kirpans* more than nine inches long. A deputation of Sikhs complained that such a restriction was an interference with their religion and cited an old judgment of the Privy Council which interpreted the *kirpan* "as a sword of any size.".

[2] From reference to the visit of "Sikh friends" in "Statement to the Press"; *vide* the following item.

477. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

NEW DELHI,

September 11, 1947

During the day, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur took me and Dr. Sushila Nayyar to the Irwin Hospital which devotes its energies only to the treatment of injured persons, irrespective of caste or creed. Among the patients was a child, hardly five years old, who had received a bullet wound. The doctors and nurses were working under great stress. The majority of patients were Muslims, as the Hindus and Sikhs were transferred to other hospitals.

I understand from Rajkumari that it was well-nigh impossible to supply refugee camps with Bhangis for attending to the cleaning of the latrines and general sanitation. Any infectious disease like cholera might break out. I have no doubt whatsoever that the refugees should look after sanitation, including latrine cleaning in their own camps and should do some useful work with the approval of the camp superintendent. There can be no exception to this rule, save for persons who are incapable of physical exertion. All camps should be models of cleanliness, simplicity and industry.

During the day I had a visit from the Pakistan High Commissioner, who is an enthusiastic believer in communal peace and friendship. I had a visit too from Sikh friends[1] twice during the day. They were sore about the *kirpan* order of the Government of India. They have promised to give me their requirement in writing before I speak to the Government. They further said that allegations made against them were highly coloured. They said they could have no quarrel with the Muslims or any other communities living in the Union. they were anxious to be law-abiding citizens of the State.

Harijan, 21-9-1947

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

478. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 12, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

The very first thing I want to tell you is that I have received disturbing news[1] from the Frontier Province. I am, of course deeply pained to hear it. I have spent considerable time in the Frontier Province. Badshah Khan was with me. I stayed with Dr. Khan Saheb. I used to have friendly meetings with members of the Muslim League. And now I am amazed that the Hindus and Sikhs cannot live there in peace. There used to be a considerable population of Hindus and Sikhs there but their number was small compared to that of the Muslims. However, it is not the number that matters. Even an innocent child should be able to live there in safety.

What I think to myself I may as well convey to you, that is, we should not get angry. We can, of course, feel the the pain. We ought to feel sympathy and concern for our brothers who are in trouble. It is natural to feel, 'why not kill the Muslims because our brothers have been killed.' But I for one cannot kill even the actual murderers of my brothers. Should I then prepare myself to kill other innocent people? I do not believe in meeting evil with evil. He who indulges in evil words and deeds turns brutal; he becomes senseless. Let me narrate an incident of my childhood days. I think I was about ten years at that time. My elder brother had fallen ill. He had almost become mad. But everyone took pity on him. We sent for several doctors but not for a jailor, and we did not send him to jail. We did not send for soldiers because he had gone mad. My father was in a position to do anything he wanted to do. But why did he refrain from doing any such thing? After all he was his son. And how could my father kill his own son? So all these people are like my own sons, like my own brothers. I would like to request you not to regard the Muslims as your enemies. I can point out any number of Muslims who are my friends. Just because the country has been divided into India and Pakistan, it does not befit us to slaughter the Muslims who have

[1] A telegram has been received from Girdhari Lal Puri, an ex-Minister, saying that he and his wife, should be rescued at once from Muslim fury.

stayed behind. The Government of Pakistan has forgotten its duty. I shall appeal to the Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah who is the Governor-General of Pakistan to desist from such policies. If the Press reports are correct, I would tell him that the Hindus and Sikhs have remained in Pakistan to serve him. Why are the Hindus and the Sikhs scared now? Because they are afraid that they and their wives would have to die and that their wives would be abducted. They are in danger and so they are fleeing. Why is it so under that Government? I want to tell my people that they should not become so barbaric. If the Hindus and the Sikhs say that they would take revenge on the local Muslims because the Hindus and the Sikhs in Pakistan are in trouble, they have been destroyed there and have fled leaving their property worth millions, it will be sheer bar-barism. I have seen the terrible plight of the Hindus and Sikhs of Pakistan. I have lived in Lahore. Do you think I am not pained? I claim that my pain is no less than that of any Punjabi. If any Hindu or Sikh from the Punjab comes and tells me that his anguish is greater than mine because he has lost his brother or daughter or father, I would say that his brother is my brother, his mother is my mother, and I have the same anguish in my heart as he has. I am also a human being and feel enraged but I swallow my anger. That gives me strength. What revenge can I take with that strength? How should I take revenge so that they feel repentant for their crimes and admit that they have committed grave crimes? You all know what the Muslims have done in West Punjab. What can we do if Muslims are destroying religion? What are we going to do about it? Should I say that the Hindus and Sikhs of Delhi and those who have come from outside should become barbarians because Muslims are becoming barbarians?

I had gone to the Jama Masjid today. I met the residents of that area. I also met their womenfolk. Some of the women wept before me and some brought their children to indicate their sad plight. Should I narrate to them the plight of the Hindus and Sikhs in West Punjab and in the Frontier Province? Will it mitigate the sorrow of the Hindus and Sikhs of the Punjab in any way? The people of Pakistan resorted to ways of barbarism, and so did the Hindus and Sikhs. And so, how could one barbarian find fault with another barbarian? That is why I would like to appeal to all of you to save Hinduism and Sikhism, save India and Pakistan and thus save the whole country. If we remain good to the end, the Muslims of Pakistan would have to be good too. That is the law of the world. No one can change it. This old man, who had made a considerable study of religion and tried to serve

everybody, is telling you this. I have had enough experience in my 78-79 years. I have stayed outside India for twenty years. I lived in South Africa, the land of the Negroes, but never gave up Ramanama. I can say in the light of my own experience that it is not for us to avenge anybody's wrongs. He who does good to one who has been good to him is a mere Bania and a pseudo-Bania at that. I say that I am a Bania myself; and I am a true Bania. May you not become pseudo-Banias. True human being is he who does a good turn for evil. I learnt this in my childhood. I still believe in the rightness of this. I would like you to return evil with good.

Those people were lying in the mosque in a sad state. They did not gather in such large numbers on Friday for fun. They had heard that I had done something for the Muslims in Calcutta and Bihar and something for the Hindus in Noakhali. They thought it was good that I had gone to meet them. They wanted to know what I could do for them as one who called himself a sanatani Hindu and on that account claimed to be a Muslim, Sikh, Parsi and Christian. A mother said her child was dead and she did not know what to do. I told her: "What can I tell you, dear lady? Think of God. He would be kind to you. What if your child is dead? What if everybody is dead? You would be going that way yourself—if not by knife, may be of cholera. You are not going to live forever, are you? Hence, think of God. What are you going to gain by crying over it?'

Let us know our own dharma. In the light of our dharma I would tell the people that our our greatest duty is to see that the Hindus do not act in frenzy, nor the Sikhs indulge in acts of madness. I wish to tell you that all those Muslims who have left their places should be sent back. I do not have the courage to send them back right now. But we must keep it in mind that they have got to be sent back. Till the Muslims are able to return to the places from which they have fled, we cannot have peace of mind. There is of course one point to consider. Today people tell me that the Muslims keep arms in their houses, they keep ammunition, machine-guns, and sten-guns which I have not even seen. For instance, this is the case in Subzi Mandi. I am prepared to believe everything. But why should we be afraid of this? I would tell the Muslims and I am telling everybody in Delhi that they should declare with God as witness, that there is no reason for them to be killed for the crimes committed in Pakistan. We are your friends and we all belong and shall ever belong to India. Delhi is no small place. It is the capital of the country. Here we have the grand Jama Masjid and

also the fort. You have not built these nor have I built them. They have been built by the Mughals who ruled over us. They had become part of India. By telling the Muslims today to leave the country do you mean to say that you going to take possession of the Jama Masjid? And if that is your intention, do you know the implication? Just think about it. Are we going to stay in the Jama Masjid? I cannot agree to any such proposal. The Muslims must have the right to visit that place. It belongs to them. We are also proud of it. It is full of great artistic beauty. Shall we raze it to the ground? That can never be.

I appeal to the Muslims that they should open-heartedly declare that they belong to India and are loyal to the Union. If they are true to God and wish to live in the Indian Union, they just cannot be enemies of the Hindus. And I want the Muslims here to tell the Muslims in Pakistan who have become the enemies of the Hindus, not to go mad: 'If you are going to indulge in such madness, we cannot co-operate with you. We will remain faithful to the Union, and salute the tricolour. We have to follow the order of the Government.' These Muslims themselves should tell all the other Muslims to surrender all their arms. It is the duty of the Government not to punish anyone for having possessed the arms. This is exactly what I did in Calcutta. People surrendered big stock of arms to me there. Most of these people were Hindus. Here if the Muslims possess arms, do the Hindus not possess anything? I am telling the Hindus that they should not possess any arms at all. If they wish to possess arms they should get the licence. It is said that in the Punjab everybody has been given the right to possess arms. It is not going to do any good to the Punjab. If everybody possesses arms, people will fight among themselves and kill each other. The Government needs arms, what has the citizen got to do with them? None of the city people should possess arms. I would like the Muslims to surrender all the arms in their possession to the Government. The Hindus too should surrender all their arms. There should be no mutual fear. We should tell them that whatever happens outside, we in Delhi would live like brothers. The same thing happened in Calcutta and the Hindus and the Muslims have started living like brothers. The Hindus in Bihar have adopted the same attitude. You must soon create such a situation in Delhi that I can immediately go to the Punjab and tell the people there that the Muslims of Delhi are living in peace. I would ask for its reward there. I would ask for that reward from the Nawab of Mamdot. I would go to East Punjab as well. Since I belong to all religions I have a right and

would say to all that they should not give in to madness.

The Muslims wanted Pakistan and they have got it. Why are they fighting now and with whom are they fighting? Because they have taken Pakistan, do they want the whole of India too? That will never happen. Why are they killing the weak Hindus and the Sikhs? I want to tell them all these things. I am alone. You have got the whole Government. Let both the Governments come to a mutual agreement that they have protect the minorities in their respective countries. We have to protect the minority here. Otherwise how can Jawaharlal and Sardar Patel say that they are protecting the minorities and there is no Muslim child anyone can harm or frighten by his blood-shot eyes? If there is any Muslim who has gone mad and who secretly keeps machine-guns in his house, we would punish him. But no one can touch the Muslims who are loyal to the country. You must create such conditions here so that Jawaharlal and Sardar Patel should be able to say Delhi had lost its senses for a few days but now it has become sane.

I would like to tell my Muslim friends that they must issue a proper statement. They must thoroughly cleanse their hearts. The Sikhs have issued some statement. So have the Hindus. If the minds and hearts are purified we can live together in amity. After all, so much of business of Delhi, such wonderful buildings this culture of Delhi belong to both the Hindus and the Muslims and not exclusively to either.[1]

In conclusion, Gandhiji referred to his and Dr. Dinshaw Mehta's talk with the Guru[2] of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. He [Gandhiji] had been told that the hands of this organization too were steeped in blood. The Guruji assured him that this was untrue. Their organization was enemy to no man. It did not stand for the killing of Muslims. All it wanted to do was to protect Hindustan to the best of its ability. It stood for peace and he had asked Gandhiji to make his views public.[3]

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 298-305

[1] What follows is from *Harijan*, 21-9-1947.

[2] M. S. Golwalkar

[3] *Vide* "Speech at R. S. S. Rally", 16-9-1947.

479. MY STATUE[1]

There is a talk in Bombay of spending ten lacs of rupees on erecting my statue on a public site. I have received several letters criticizing, some even firecely, the proposal as if I were guilty of making any such extravagant proposal! It is perhaps human nature to make a mountain out of a mole hill. Only the wise sift the grain from the chaff. In the present case there seems to be a foundation for the criticism. I must say that I have dislike even for being photographed; nevertheless, photographs have been taken of me. I have let artists make models more than once. Notwithstanding this inconsistency, I must dissent emphatically from any proposal to spend any money on preparing a statue of me, more especially at a time when people do not have enough food and clothing. In Bombay the beautiful, insanitation reigns. There is so much overcrowding that poor people ae packed like sardines. Wise use of ten lacs of rupees will consist in its being spent on some public utility. That would be the best statue. Money thus wisely spent will make an adequate return. Imagine how many hungry mouths would be filled if the amount was spent on growing more food crops!

NEW DELHI, September 13, 1947

Harijan, 21-9-1947

480. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

September 13, 1947

CHI. VALJI,

Principal Thadani is among the regular visitors. He has, at my suggestion, sent you a long letter by registered post giving his interpretation of the *Mahabharata*. That was quite some time ago. Please reply to him if you have received it. My cart has got stuck in a wood.

Blessings from
BAPU

PROF. V. G. DESAI
14 GANESH WADI
POONA-4

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7504. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1] This appeared under "Notes". The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 21-9-1947.

481. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 13, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Long ago, perhaps in 1915, when I came to Delhi I had met Hakim Saheb[1] and Dr. Ansari. I was told that Delhi was ruled not by the British but by Hakim Saheb. Dr. Ansari was as an elderly man and a great surgeon and physician. He also knew Hakim Saheb and greatly respected him. Hakim Saheb was also a Muslim and a very great scholar and Hakim. He was a Unani Hakim but had made considerable study of the Ayurvedic system. Thousands of Muslims and thousands of poor Hindus used to come to him for treatment. Well-to-do Muslims and Hindus also came to him. They used to give a thousand rupees per day. As far as I knew Hakim Saheb, he did not care for the money. His interest was the service of everybody who was in need of it. And he was like a king. His forefathers lived in China. They were Muslims of China and were thorough gentlemen. I enquired of all the Hindus who came to visit me as to who was their leader in the city. [Was it] Shraddhanandji[2]? Shraddhanandji used to work a lot among them. But no, their leader was Hakim Saheb. Why? Because he had served both the Hindus and the Muslims. Well, I have referred to the situation as it was in 1915. But later on my relations with him grew closer and I came to know him more intimately. I also came to know Dr. Ansari better. I stayed with Dr. Ansari for a long time. I know his daughter Zohra and his son-in-law Shaukat Khan[3]. They are all nice people and are still here in Delhi. But what pains me is that they are now scared that some Hindu might kill them as well. They are not staying in their own house. They have gone to live in a hotel. It was sheer coincidence that they were spared. Their watchman was a Hindu. He drove away the rioters. Why should the Hindus and the Sikhs get into such frenzy that the Muslims are scared? You can turn round and tell me, many Hindus tell me in anger fixing their blood-shot eyes on me: 'You were away in Bengal and Bihar. Just come to the Punjab and see the plight of the Hidnus and the Sikhs and see the state of the girls

[1] Ajmal Khan
[2] Mahatma Munshiram, who was known by this name
[3] Dr. Shaukatullah Khan

there.' It is not as if I do not understand these things. But I want to keep both these things on the same level. Atrocities are committed there in any case. But if one of my brothers gets into a mad fury and starts killing people, should I also go mad with rage like him? How is it possible? I claim to be a true Hindu and a *sanatani* Hindu at that. That is exactly why I am also a Muslim, a Parsi, a Christian and a Jew. For me all these are the branches of the same tree. Which of these branches should I keep and which should I discard? From which branch should I pick the leaves and which should I ignore? For me all are the same. That is how I am made. How can I help it? There would be absolute peace if everybody starts thinking like me.

I went to the Purana Quila today. I saw thousands of Muslims there. Other trucks loaded with Muslims were proceeding towards the Quila. All of them were Muslim refugees. Why did they have to live in the fort? Of whom were they frightened? Were they afraid of you, of me? I know that I do not frighten anyone, but my brothers, who consider themselves Hindus and Sikhs, are frightening them. But if they have frightened them it means that I have frightened them, you have frightenedthem. Thus I cannot bear to see them escaping to Pakistan out of panic. It is not as if there is heaven in Pakistan and hell here. Why do we find ourselves in such hell? I know that neither Pakistan nor India is hell. If we wish we can turn either into heaven or by our own deeds into hell. And if both the countries become hell, an independent man has no place there. After that we are only doomed to slavery. This thought is gnawing at my heart. My heart trembles and I wonder how I will make any Hindu, Sikh or Muslim understand all this. Quite a few Muslims in the fort were enraged, but others stopped them. There was love in their hearts. They persuaded their enraged brethren saying: 'This old man has come to serve us, to wipe our tears. We are hungry and he has come to see if he can find bread for us somewhere. We are without any water, he has come to see if he can get us water from somewhere.' I do not know whether they get food and water there. Some of them told me there was no food, no water for them. I had gone there to find out. Some of them talked to me with great affection. I felt happy. No one would ever want to leave behind his house and property. The Hindu refugees are in the same situation. They have left behind their homes and properties. Some of them died; this is not a happy situation. It is a matter of shame for everybody. I was trying to convince them also. Through you I want to speak to everyone who cares to listen to me. It is said that in the *Mahabharata*

period the Pandavas used to stay in this Purana Quila. Whether you call it Indraprastha or Delhi, the Hindus and the Muslims have grown here together. It was the capital of the Mughals. Now it is the capital of India. There is no surviver of the Mughal dynasty. The Mughals came from outside. They identified themselves with the manners and customs of Delhi. From among them some happened to be Ansari Sahebs, Hakim Sahebs and some became Hindus too. The Hindus also joined their services. In such a Delhi of yours the Hindus and the Muslims used to live together peacefully. They did fight occasionally. But they would fight for a short while and then be united again. On one occasion, some fanatic made a murderous attack on Shraddhanandji. But earlier the Muslims with great affection, had taken Shraddhanandji to Jama Masjid where he addressed them. This is your Delhi.

But what is happening today? The Sardar always used to walk with his head high, but I tell you today he walks with his head bent. And Jawaharlal, that brave and courageous Jawaharlal who used to fly in the air, is today sitting helpless. Why has he become helpless? We have made him helpless. If there is one individual acting mad, he can be cured. But who would treat whom when all start behaving that way? Jawaharlal is no God after all. Nor is the Sardar any God. And their other Ministers have no divine powers either. Nor do they have any outside help.

I am telling the same thing to everybody. Many Hindus and Muslims came to me. I have had many discussions with them. But ultimately my voice turns to God. I pray to Him that He should take me away from the world, or bring sanity to the people of Delhi. Let there be no angry thought for the Muslims in the heart of any Hindu or Sikh. People tell me that the Muslims are supposed to be Fifth Columnists, that is, they are traitors, disloyal to the present Government. There are $4\frac{1}{2}$ crore Muslims in India. If $4\frac{1}{2}$ crore people are traitors, who would be the loser? They themselves will be the losers. They would be burying Islam that way. But they cannot do harm to the Hindus and the Sikhs. But you should not harass those $4\frac{1}{2}$ crore Muslims. It is not proper to tell them that they should be either ready to die or go to Pakistan. Why should they go? And under whose protection? I tell you that they are under your protection, and under my protection. At least I am not prepared to see that sight. I would rather pray to God that He should take me away before that. He has

kept me alive long enough. A life of 78-79 years is not a short one. I am fully satisfied. I have served to the best of my capacity. If God wishes to keep me alive, let Him take from me the work that will satisfy my heart. Let both the communities tell me that I am their friend, that is why they listen to me and would continue to do so. I meet quite a few Muslims. How can I say they are traitors and are betraying me? I tell you that even if they are betraying, it is not going to help them in any way. I admit that the Muslims have lots of arms with them. I have taken some of their arms and some are still with them. But what would they do with the arms they have? Would they kill me? Would they kill you? If they do that the Government is there to look into it. I tell you that if we become good and behave well the Government will see that justice is done to us. Let the Governments fight each other; but we would not quarrel among ourselves. We would remain friends. Let us not be afraid that they would kill us. However powerful the person who wants to kill us is, he cannot kill us so long as God protects us. That is why I am telling both the Hindus and the Muslims that they should abandon fear. I did not like the statement made by the Qaid-e-Azam. He says that the Muslims are being taken to Pakistan because they have been harassed in the Indian Union. He says there should be food for them and land to settle them. Pakistan, he says, is a poor country, and so, those who have money should send it there.[1] I have nothing to complain about it. But along with that, why does he not mention what happened to the Hindus in West Punjab? If Bihar indulged in evil acts they repented it. In Calcutta the Hindus came to me and repented before me. It would be a noble thing if the Muslims do the same and admit that they have done wrong things. I have seen the things and how can I close my eyes to them? Nor can I cover up the crimes committed by the Hindus. I want to be faithful to all religions. I can betray neither God nor men. I wish to be loyal to all.

I said yesterday[2] that it is the duty of the Muslims that leading men among them should proclaim that not all are so worthless. They should say that they are and will remain loyal to India, and will fight the whole world for the sake of India. Then only are they true Muslims. If they do not do this they become bad Muslims. It is my

[1] For an official account of the interview with Lord Mountbatten covering this and other points, *vide* Appendix "Interview with Lord Mountbatten", 14&16-9-1947.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 12-9-1947.

hope that in India we do not have such bad Muslims. And if there are, in order to make them good we have to be good ourselves, not bad.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 305-10

482. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 14, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Just as I did yesterday, today also I went to see our Muslim refugees. I have not seen anywhere the like of the squalor I found in that camp. I went to the camps of the Hindus as well as to those of the Muslims. The camp for the Hindu [refugees] is at a different place. There is so much stench in the Muslim camps; I wonder why they are not cleaning the place. If I were to be in charge of the camp, I would never tolerate this. I have lived in camps and I have seen many camps. Our camps should not be kept so dirty. I was very much pained. There is so much police and military arrangement and why do they tolerate such stink and stench? They would say cleaning the place is not their job, and that they have only orders to shoot, if necessary and to maintain peace and order in the camps. They say that if the refugees quarrel among themselves, they brush them away with their guns. They have orders only to do this much and they cannot go beyond what they have been ordered to do. That is all right. But they are now our soldiers and our police. In my view they must have a pickaxe and also a spade. They must clear the dirt wherever they find it. Their primary function should be to keep the places clean. To keep the camps in good condition both the Hindu and Muslim friends themselves have to clean them. We become their enemies if we do not tell them this. If we are their friends and servants we must make it plain to them that because they have come here, they should not live like helpless creatures. If Hindu refugees come from Pakistan should we push them into wells? Should we not keep them here and look after them? We must tell them that we would give them food and water but not sweepers. I am a very hard-hearted man.

I had worked with pickaxe during the Kumbh Mela at Hardwar. We used to be in charge of all the jobs concerning the camp sanitation. Everybody was trained for that type of work. So I would

say that whoever may be in charge of these camps, I am not bothered if he is a Muslim or a Hindu, his first and foremost job is to keep his camp absolutely clean. This involves no expenditure. If there are no shovels in the camps, it is the duty of the Government to provide them. If the Government does not provide them with shovels, if it is so busy that it has no time to spare, then the camp commander has to provide the shovels. Just as it is the duty of the Government to reach food to the camps, it is also its duty to make arrangements for sanitation, drinking water and water for washing purposes. Because there is no proper sewage arrangement, cholera spreads. Camp sanitation should never be imperfect. I must admit that I have learnt this thing from the British. I did not know how camp sanitation had to be looked after. I did not know how thousands and millions lived together and how they could be entrusted with jobs so that they would work for sanitation, or any work they may be asked to do. Militarypeople are able to do all this. In minutes a whole city comes up and tents are put up. The first job in the camp is that the party which reaches there first must find out the water arrangements and see how water is to be used. The next party has to dig the trenches, so that urine and the latrine dirt do not flow out. With such an arrangement there can be no cholera and dysentry. People can all stay with ease. I want to leave out other things.

Here people are living in chaos. They are all lying helterskelter. Nobody bothers to keep the camp clean. Whom can I blame? The commander of the Muslim camp is a Muslim. He can tell his people and make them understand what they should do. He has to be persuasive. They must be told that they would all die if they continued to live in filth, that their children can't remain unclean. So it is much better that they keep the camp clean. We can do a lot there if we train those people in sanitation. If you see the camp of the Hindus, you will find filth there too. But there is still some difference. I can never walk barefoot in that place. There was no water at all in the lake. It was absolutely dry. There was no sewage arrangement. After all, neither the Muslims nor the Hindus are animals. But today we have turned into beasts. Why did the Hindus and the Sikhs flee from Pakistan in panic? Even if the Hindus have behaved very badly here, they have not done anything there. If there is anyone who has committed a crime, let him be punished. That is the responsibility of the Government. Similarly I would ask why should anyone have to run away from here? If they are Muslims, are they to be blamed for being

Muslims? Even the Muslims belong to us and are under our Government. If they are refugees, it is very clear that is is a matter of shame for Delhi. The Muslims who are here have not come from outside. Almost all of them have come from different localities of Delhi. A few of them may have come from outside. We have driven them out of Delhi. Let me tell you as I told you yesterday that it is a matter of great shame for us. It is failure of the Government of Pakistan that the minorities has to run away from there. It must tell those people that they have got to stay in Pakistan. But today the situation in Pakistan is such that even good people are running away. Lahore is almost empty. It is the city built up by the Hindus where I saw the big mansions of the Hindus and so many educational institutions—where else do you find so many colleges? I always appreciate every good thing. Today who is in possession of those colleges? All this hurts me. And I feel ashamed that the Government of Pakistan can be so mean. And then I feel all the more ashamed when I see the situation here. How can the situation go wrong in Delhi in spite of our Government, in spite of Jawaharlal who is like a lion and with a Home Minister like Sardar Patel? Why should his authority not be accepted? If he sends out an order that a child has to be protected here, that child must be protected. We could then carry on our Government. But now he has military and police through which he is trying to establish peace. But whose Government is it after all? It is your own Government. You have made it.

If everyone would abide by the authority of his own Government, everything can be done. Otherwise the world will ridicule Delhi for its present state of affairs. And then the European powers, be it Russia, France or Britain, as well as America will laugh at us and say that we are not capable of preserving our freedom. We are only capable of being slaves. This should not happen. That is why I would like to tell the Muslims that they should surrender all their arms of their own accord. They should surrender their arms not out of fear, but because they are living in India. They should do this if they want to live like brothers. Then they should prove their loyalty to India and show that they can never betray the country. Whether Hindus or Muslims, all of them belong to India. I also want to tell the Muslims that if the Muslims in West Punjab, the Frontier Province, Baluchistan and Sind go crazy and the Hindus and the Sikhs cannot live in peace there, then the situation becomes difficult for us here. After all, we are all human beings. So let them understand humanity. How long can we

go on persuading? Man can go crazy and he can also be good. Let him stay here peacefully if he can live properly. If there is some man who goes so crazy that he becomes a brute, then I would tell the Hindus of Delhi that they should be on their guard and be brave, not cowards. It is cowardice to be frightened by the arms the Muslims may be having in their possession. What do we care if there are some Muslims somewhere having arms with them? It is the duty of the Government to disarm them. It is the duty of the military to deprive them of their arms. If they want to be good and truly belong to India and want to live with the Hindus in amity, let them surrender their arms. And let the Muslims admit their mistakes. Let them say that they had wished to conquer Delhi and turn the whole of India into Pakistan but now they have realized that it is not possible to turn India into Pakistan. They must be content that they are already having Pakistan. They must say that they can save the Hindus in Pakistan and keep them happy. Then it would so happen that both India and Pakistan would compete with each other in being good and more sincere in their humanity. Whether we look towards Mecca or towards the East, truthfulness lies in our own hearts, and what matters is that our hearts should be clean. If we compete with each other in being good, we can all rise high and work together.

I told you that since I had come here I would also wish to die here. If we go on indulging in acts of frenzy and become overcome by rage and kill the Muslims, I can have nothing to do with it. I do not wish to be a witness to such a thing. If the Muslims think that the Hindus and the Sikhs are at fault and the Hindus and the Sikhs think that the Muslims are at fault, they are both wrong. They are all the same to me. In my eyes the Hindus and the Muslims are all one. Only the true among them are recognized by God. Who are you to punish the wicked for their wrong deeds ? They are going to be punished themselves. I have no doubt about it. This is the essence I have drawn from all religions. That is why I would say that whatever wrong the Muslims may do , you have got to be good. If your really want to avenge the evil deeds it can only be through the deeds of goodness. I want to see that at least you do it. If we do this much, we can deep our own Government in India in good shape. If not, we are going to lose everything.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 311-6

483. LETTER TO GORUR RAMASWAMI IYENGAR

NEW DELHI,
[After *September 14, 1947*][1]

DEAR RAMASWAMI,

Your son has become a martyr.[2] Brave boy! Do not grieve. Such sacrifices are inevitable in our country. Let us emulate him. He only saves his life who loses it. Console your wife.

Yes, I remember you very well.

Yours,
BAPU

From a copy: C. W. 10580. Courtesy: Gorur Ramaswami Iyengar

484. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[3]

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1947

During the night as I heard what should have been the soothing sound of gentle life-giving rain, my mind went out to the thousands of refugees lying about in the open camps at Delhi. I was sleeping snugly in a verandah protecting me on all sides. But for the cruel hand of man against his brother, these thousands of men, women and children would not be shelterless and in many cases foodless. In some places they could not but be in knee-deep water. They have no other choice.[4] Was it all inevitable? The answer from within was an emphatic 'No.' Was this the first fruit of freedom, just a month-old baby? These thoughts have haunted me throughout these last twenty hours. My silence has been a blessing. It has made me enquire within. Have the citizens of Delhi gone mad? Have they no humanity left in them? Have love of the country and its freedom no appeal for them? I must be pardoned for putting the blame first on the Hindus and Sikhs.

[1] On September 14, Ramachandra, a seventeen-year old student, had died in police firing at Tumkur while leading a students' procession organized by the Mysore Congress which was agitating for responsible government in the State.

[2] *ibid*

[3] As Gandhiji was observing silence this was read out at the meeting.

[4] These sentences are translated from *Prarthana Pravachan*—I, p. 316.

Could they not be men enough to stem the tide of hatred? I would urge the Muslims of Delhi to shed all fear, trust God and disclose all the arms in their possession which the Hindus and the Sikhs fear they have. Not that the former too do not have any. The question is one of degree. Some may have more, some less.[1] Either the minority rely upon God and His creature man to do the right thing or rely upon their fire-arms to defend themselves against those whom they must not trust.

My advice is precise and firm. Its soundness is manifest. Trust your Government to defend every citizen against wrongdoers, however well-armed they may be. Further trust it to demand and get damages for every member of the minority wrongfully dispossessed. All that neither Government can do is to resurrect the dead. The people of Delhi will make it difficult to demand justice from the Pakistan Government. Those who seek justice must do justice, must have clean hands. Let the Hindus and the Sikhs take the right step and invite the Muslims who have been driven out of their homes to return. If they can take this courageous step, worthy from every point of view, they immediately reduce the refugee problem to its simplest terms. They will command recognition from Pakistan, nay from the whole world. They will save Delhi and India from disgrace and ruin. For me, transfer of millions of the Hindus and the Sikhs and the Muslims is unthinkable. It is wrong. The wrong of Pakistan will be undone by the right of a resolute non-transfer of population. I hope I shall have the courage to stand by it, even though mine may be the solitary voice in its favour.

Harijan, 28-9-1947

[1] As Gandhiji was observing silence this was read out at the meeting.

485. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

[On or after *September 15, 1947*][2]

विद्वद्भिः सेवितः सद्भिःनित्यमद्वेषरागिभिः
हृदयेनाभ्यनुज्ञातो यो धर्मस्तं निबोधत।

Know that to be true religion which the wise and the good and those who are ever free from passion and hate follow and which appeals to the heart.

From the original: C. W. 3710. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6519

486. LETTER TO S. A. BRELVI

DELHI,
September 16, 1947

BHAI BRELVI[3],

I have your letter and the cutting. What you say is right. I will mention it in the prayer meeting also.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: S. A. Brelvi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

487. LETTER TO ZAHID HUSSAIN

September 16, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. How wicked of you to fall ill when every ounce of your energy is wanted at your post of duty.[4] May God restore you quickly.

[1] In Amrit Kaur papers this is placed after the letter dated August 29, 1947, *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 29-8-1947. The addressee was at New Delhi and did not meet Gandhiji at Calcutta. Gandhiji reached New Delhi on September 9, silence day following which was September 15.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Syed Abdullah Brelvi (1891-1949); Editor, *The Bombay Chronicle*, from 1924 till his death in January 1949

[4] The addressee was High Commissioner for Pakistan in India.

As promised I made the appeal the very evening. But nothing had happened in response.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

ZAHID HUSSAIN SAHEB
CAMP: KARACHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

488. LETTER TO DR. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

NEW DELHI,
September 16, 1947

DEAR DR. HOLMES,

Devdas has handed me your kind letter.

I do not remember having received Mr. Ording's invitation. In any event I should be at sea serving on the committee. My way seems to be different. We must discuss this when we meet and if you and I find the time for it.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 10970. Courtesy: Roger W. Holmes. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

489. LETTER TO DORA

NEW DELHI,
September 16, 1947

DEAR DORA,

I am sorry the climate disagrees with you. I am a plain man. The only shelter I could afford I provided. Now you must shift for yourselves. Himalayas is not India, they are in India. I see that the Ashram way is not your way. Now you should do as seems to you best. Consult the manager and suit him. I am sorry.

Yours,

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

490. LETTER TO CHOITHRAM GIDWANI

NEW DELHI,
September 16, 1947

BHAI CHOITHRAM,

What is this that you are doing? If people must flee why must they all flock to Bombay? There is a way of fighting too. Why are you ruining the case of Sind? Ponder well. The time is extremely delicate. 'Do or die' is not a mere slogan to be spoken but to be acted upon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

491. LETTER TO SRI PRAKASA

September 16, 1947

BHAI SRI PRAKASA[1],

I am sending two letters herewith. Your task is very difficult, it means action, not merely talking.

Your task is not to hope for the best but to work for the good unto death. All non-Muslims should look up to you.

Two letters are enclosed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Journalist and educationist; member, A. I. C. C., 1918-45; India's High Commissioner in Pakistan, 1947-49

492. SPEECH AT R. S. S. RALLY[1]

NEW DELHI,
September 16, 1947

Gandhiji said that he had visited the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh camp years ago at Wardha, when the founder Shri Hedgewar was alive. The late Shri Jamnalal Bajaj had taken him to the camp and he (Gandhiji) had been very well impressed by their discipline, complete absence of untouchability and rigorous simplicity. Since then the Sangh had grown. Gandhiji was convinced that any organization which was inspired by the ideal of service and self-sacrifice was bound to grow in strength. But in order to be truly useful, self-sacrifice had to be combined with purity of motive and true knowledge. Sacrifice without these two had been known to prove ruinous to society.

The prayer that was recited at the beginning was in praise of Mother India, Hindu culture and Hindu religion. He claimed to be a *sanatani* Hindu. He took the root meaning of the word *sanatana*. No one knew accurately the origin of the word Hindu. The name was given to us and we had characteristically adopted it. Hinduism had absorbed the best of all the faiths of the world and in that sense it was not an exclusive religion. Hence it could have no quarrel with Islam or its followers as unfortunately was the case today. When the poison of untouchability entered Hinduism, the decline began. One thing was certain, and he had been proclaiming it from house-tops, that if untouchability lived, Hinduism must die. Similarly, if the Hindus felt that in India there was no place for anyone else except the Hindus and if non-Hindus, especially Muslims, wished to live here, they had to live as the slaves of the Hindus, they would kill Hinduism. Similarly if Pakistan believed that in Pakistan only the Muslims had a rightful place and the non-Muslims had to live there on sufferance and as their slaves, it would be the death-knell of Islam in India.

It was an unfortunate fact that India had been divided into two parts. If one part went mad and did ugly deeds, was the other part to follow suit? There was no gain in returning evil for evil. Religion taught us to return good for evil.

He had seen their Guruji a few days ago. He had mentioned to him the various complaints about the Sangh that he had received in Calcutta and Delhi. The Guruji had assured him that though he could not vouch- safe for the correct behaviour of every member of the Sangh, the policy of the Sangh was purely service of the Hindus and Hinduism and that too not at the cost of anyone else. The Sangh did not believe in

[1] Held in the sweepers' colony

aggression. It did not believe in ahimsa. It taught the art of self-defence. It never taught retaliation.[1]

Today the ship of India was passing through troubled waters. The leaders in charge of the Government were the best that India possessed. Some people were dissatisfied with them. He would ask them to produce better men if they could and he would advise the old guards to hand over the reins to their betters. After all the Sardar was an old man and Pandit Jawaharlal, though not old in years, looked old and haggard under the burden he was carrying. They were doing their utmost to serve the people, but they could only act according to their lights. If the vast bulk of the Hindus wanted to go in a particular direction, even though it might be wrong, no one could prevent them from doing so. But even a single individual had the right to raise his voice against it and give them the warning. That is what Gandhiji was doing. He was told that he was the friend of the Muslims and the enemy of the Hindus and the Sikhs. It was true that he was a friend of the Muslims, as he was of the Parsis and others. In this respect he was the same today as he had been since the age of twelve. But those who called him the enemy of the Hindus and the Sikhs did not know him. He could be enemy of none, much less of the Hindus and Sikhs.

If Pakistan persisted in wrongdoing, there was bound to be war between India and Pakistan. If he had his way, he would have no military; not even police. But all this was tall talk. He was not the Government. Why did not Pakistan plead with the Hindus and the Sikhs and ask them not to leave their homes and ensure their safety in every way? Why could not they in the Indian Union ensure the safety of every Muslim? Today both the parties appeared to have gone crazy. The result could be nothing but destruction and misery.

The Sangh was a well-organized, well-disciplined body. Its strength could be used in the interest of India or against it. He did not know whether there was any truth in the allegations made against the Sangh. It was for the Sangh to show by their uniform behaviour that the allegations were baseless.

At the conclusion of the speech, Gandhiji invited questions. One person asked if Hinduism permitted killing of an evil-doer.[2] If not how did he explain the exhortation by Lord Krishna in the second chapter of the *Gita* to destroy the Kauravas.

The reply to the first question, said Gandhiji, was both yes and no. One had to be an infallible judge as to who was the evil-doer before the question of killing could arise. In other words one had to be completely faultless before such a right could accrue to one. How could a sinner claim the right to judge or execute another sinner?

[1] *Vide* also "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 12-9-1947.
[2] What follows is reproduced from *The Last Phase*.

As for the second question, granting that the right to punish the evildoer was recognized by the *Gita*, it could be exercised by the properly constituted Government only.

Both the Sardar and Pandit Nehru will be rendered powerless if you become judge and executioner in one. They are tried servants of the nation. Give them a chance to serve you. Do not sabotage their efforts by taking the law into your own hands.

Harijan, 28-9-1947, and *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. II, p. 441

493. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO PYARELAL

September 17, 1947

My coming to Noakhali is uncertain. The work here is most difficult. But it is only in the midst of difficulties that one is really tested. . . .

It is always well with those who put themselves completely in God's hands. Let it be as He wills.[1]

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 528

494. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1947

After my experience of last evening[2] I have decided not to hold the prayers till every man present in the audience is ready for it. I have never imposed anything on anybody, then how can I impose a highly spiritual thing like prayer? The prompting to pray or not to pray should come from within. There is no question at all of pleasing me.

[1] In a letter to the addressee Sushila Nayyar *inter alia* wrote: "Bapu is going to have a hard time of it here. Yesterday he was saying that he would not be surprised if some of us might have to go the way of the leaders of the French Revolution. The exchange of population is actually taking place however much we may dislike it. Will there be a mass exodus of Hindus from East Pakistan after the manner of West Pakistan? Bapu says it would be a catastrophe."

[2] At the prayer meeting on September 16, as soon as the recitation from the Koran had commenced, someone in the gathering shouted: "To the recitation of these verses, our mothers and sisters were dishonoured, our dear ones killed. We will not let you recite these verses here." Some shouted: "Gandhi *murdabad*" (death to Gandhi). All efforts to restore order having failed, the prayer was abandoned.

My prayer meetings have become really popular. It appears that millions of people have been benefited from these meetings. But in these times of mutual tension I very well understand the anger of the people who have undergone great hardships. My only condition for holding the prayer is that I should not be expected to omit that particular portion to which there may be some objection. Either the prayer should be heartily accepted as a whole or it should be rejected. For me the recitation from the Koran is that part of the prayer which cannot be discontinued.

I can understand your resentment and the impatience it generates. But if you wish to qualify yourselves to deserve your freedom, you will have to curb your anger and will have to depend on your Government to get the fullest justice done to you. I am not proposing to you my method of non-violence, much as I would like to, for I know that today no one is going to listen to my talk about non-violence. That is why I have suggested that you should adopt the ways followed by all democratic countries. In democracy, every individual has to abide by the wishes of the people, that is, the Government, and has to direct his own wishes in that light. If every man takes the law into his own hands the State cannot function. It would mean anarchy, which means end of social order. That is, the State would not exist. That is the way to lose our independence. I believe that if you would let the Government carry out its tasks, there is no doubt that every Hindu and Sikh refugee would return home with honour and respect. But you cannot expect these things to happen if you want your Muslim compatriots to be driven out of India. I find any such thing dreadful. You cannot secure justice by doing injustice to the Muslims. Apart from that, if it is true that the minorities, that is, the Hindus and the Sikhs have been treated very badly in Pakistan, it is also true that in East Punjab the monority people, that is the Muslims, have been badly treated. For both the countries the right way to arrive at a proper agreement is that both sides should acknowledge their mistakes with clean hearts and arrive at a mutual settlement. If it is not possible to come to a settlement they must resort to arbitration and accept the arbitrator's decision. Another way is the uncivilized way of war. I hate the very idea of war. But there would be no alternative to war in the absence of mutual settlement or decision by an arbitrator. I therefore hope that in such circumstances people will give up their madness and come to their senses and reassure

their Muslim neighbours who have chosen not to go to Pakistan, and persuade them to return to their hearths by promising safety and protection to them. This thing cannot be accomplished with the help of the army. It can be achieved only when people come to their senses. I have decided not to live to witness the country being ruined by fratricide. I am constantly praying to God that. He should take me away before any calamity befalls this sacred and beautiful land of ours. I request you all to join me in this prayer.

I am grateful to the Hindu and Muslim workers[1] for working together in amity. If you would work with perfect unity, you would provide a worthy example to the country. The working class should not allow communalism to come anywhere near them. Have I not said that if only you knew your own power and continued to do constructive work with understanding, you would become true owners and rulers and your employers would be your trustees and friends to help you in the times of difficulty? That happy moment can come only when they realize that rather than gold and silver which only the workers bring out from the earth, the workers themselves are the true wealth.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 318-20

495. LETTER TO S. A. BRELVI

NEW DELHI,
September 18, 1947

BHAI BRELVI,

I have your telegram. This is the complete English report. There is no time to write more. It is difficult to say what will ultimately happen in Delhi. If the Pakistan Government can bring about some improvement, the people here can return to sanity. For my part I am pledged to do or die.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Gandhiji had earlier attended a large gathering of workers of the Delhi Cloth Mills.

496. SPEECH TO MUSLIMS[1]

NEW DELHI,
September 18, 1947

Addressing them Gandhiji said that they had to be brave and declare firmly that they would not leave their homes whatever might happen. They should look to none but God for their safety and protection. He was there to do whatever he could. He had pledged himself to do or die in Noakhali, Bihar, Calcutta and now in Delhi. He would not ask those who had left their homes to come back till there was real peace and the Hindus, the Sikhs and the Muslims agreed to live as brothers without the help of the police and the military.

He was the friend and servant of the Muslims as of the Hindus and others. He would not rest till every Muslim in the Union, who wished to live as a loyal citizen of the Union, was back in his home living in peace and security and the Hindus and the Sikhs returned likewise to their homes. He had served the Muslims for a long time in South Africa and in India. He could never forget the unity of the Khilafat days. It did not last, but it demonstrated the possibilities of lasting friendship between the Hindus and the Muslims. That was what he lived for and worked for. He was on his way to the Punjab to see that all the Hindus and the Sikhs who had been turned out of Pakistan should be able to return to their homes and live there in safety and honour. But on his way he was held up at Delhi and he would not leave it till real peace returned to the capital. Even if he was the only one to say it, he would never advise the Muslims to leave their homes. If they lived as law-abiding, honest and loyal citizens of India, no one could touch them. He was not the Government, but he had influence with those in the Government. He had long talks with them. They did not believe that in India the Muslims had no place or that if the Muslims wished to stay here they had to do so as slaves of the Hindus. Some people had said that Sardar Patel encouraged the idea of Muslims going away to Pakistan. The Sardar was indignant at the suggestion. But he told him (Gandhiji) that he had reasons to suspect that the vast majority of the Muslims in India were not loyal to India. For such people it was better to go to Pakistan. But the Sardar did not let his suspicion colour his actions. Gandhiji was convinced that for the Muslims who wished to be citizens of the Indian Union, loyalty to the Union must come before everything else and they should be prepared to fight against the whole world for their country. Those who wished to go to Pakistan

[1] The meeting was held in Daryaganj mosque. Some Muslims had asked Gandhiji to visit Muslim localities in the city so that those Muslims who were still there might not leave their homes out of panic. Gandhiji readily agreed and began by visiting the Daryaganj area.

were free to do so. Only he did not wish a single Muslim to leave the Union out of fear of the Hindus or the Sikhs. Muslims in Delhi had assured him by their written declaration that they were loyal citizens of the Union. He would believe their word as he wished others to believe his. As such it was the duty of the Government to protect them. He for one would not like to live if he could not achieve that. The wrong had to be undone wherever it was. Abducted women had to be returned, forcible conversions considered null and void. The Hindus and Sikhs of Pakistan and the Muslims of East Punjab had to be reinstalled in their own homes. In Pakistan and the Union they should produce conditions that not even a little girl, whatever her religion, should feel insecure. He was glad to have read the statement of Khaliquz-zaman Saheb and of the Muslims of Muzaffarnagar. But before he proceeded to Pakistan he had to help to quench the fire in Delhi. If India and Pakistan were to be perpetual enemies and go to war against each other, it would ruin both the dominions and their hard-won freedom would be soon lost. He did not wish to live to see that day.

Concluding, Gandhiji further advised them that, as a token of their loyalty to the Indian Union, they should issue a public statement that all Hindu women abducted by the Muslims in Pakistan should be restored to their families. They should unequivocally condemn the Pakistan Government where it had departed from the civilized conduct and demand that all those Hindus and Sikhs who had to leave their homes in Pakistan should be invited to return with full guarantee of their safety and self-respect.[1]

Harijan, 28-9-1947

497. DISCUSSION WITH H. S. SUHRAWARDY

[*September 18, 1947*][2]

Shaheed took upon himself the mission of bringing about a *rapprochement* between the two Dominions. Gandhiji tried to impress upon him that the crux of the problem was that both Governments should make a clean breast of their mistakes and failures. They should honestly and sincerely strive to bring about conditions, each in its own Dominion, that would enable all the refugees to go back to their original homes with a guarantee of safety and equal treatment. What was actually happening in either Dominion was for cible evacuation of the minorities without compensation or any of the guarantees that go with a planned transfer of populations on a reciprocal basis. As a result the refugees had begun to take the law into their own hands and to squeeze out the minorities from the respective Dominions. Pressure was being put upon the Union Government to apply reciprocity to the Indian Muslims. This could

[1] This paragraph is from *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. II, p. 451.
[2] From *Dilhiman Gandhiji*

easily lead to a war between the two countries as the Pakistan Government had already declared that they would permit refugees from East Punjab to come over but would resist the entry into Pakistan of Muslims from other parts of India.

Due to his old associations with the Pakistan leaders, Shaheed possessed a certain initial advantage which he could turn to good account, if he set about the business in the right spirit and in the right way. Gandhiji told him that he should go to Karachi only if his own heart was free of all prejudice. His usefulness would depend upon his ability courageously to get his old colleague Qaid-e-Azam to face up to his own declarations respecting the minorities which were being honoured more in the breach than the observance. If Shaheed himself lacked the conviction or if his own mind was clouded, his visit would do more harm than good.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 478-9

498. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 18, 1947

Today we have all lost our senses, we have become stupid. It is not that only the Sikhs have gone mad, or only the Hindus or the Muslims have gone crazy. I am told that the whole thing was started by the Muslims. It is true. I think there is no doubt that the trouble started from their side. But what is the point in harping on it all the time? I have to see what needs to be done today. India is today in the plight of the elephant king.[1] I want to rescue it if I can. What should I do? I must seek God's help. I would be happy if my efforts produced some results. But I am just skin and bones. What can such a man do? Whom can he convince? But God can do eveything. Hence, night and day, I turn to Him. I say: "O God, come. Gajaraja is sinking—India is sinking—save her."

It cannot be that no one but Hindus should live in India and if the Muslims want to live here they can do so only as slaves. Just listen to what Jawaharlal says: "We are in great difficulty. We cannot attend to our other work. We are busy only with this problem." What if everybody in Pakistan is depraved? I would say, let our India be the sea in which all the inflowing dirt may be washed away. We cannot do bad things because others do them. I went to Daryaganj today. Some

[1] Gandhiji was alluding to the legend of *Gajendra Moksha*, which was recited earlier during the prayer.

Muslim friends also come to me. I talk to them, give them affection and tell them that they should not panic. They should be strong. I tell them to stick to their homes. They cannot do any mischief here. That is why I wish that all Hindus should become sane, all Sikhs should become good. Let the Hindus and the Sikhs tell those Muslims who do not wish to go to Pakistan that they should stick to their homes. We have got the Jama Masjid which is the largest mosque in the world. What will happen to that mosque if we kill most of the Muslims or they go away to Pakistan? Will you transfer that mosque to Pakistan? Or will you destroy that mosque or turn it into a Shiva temple? Suppose some Hindu in his pride wants to turn it into a Shiva temple, or a Sikh wants to turn it into a gurdwara—I would say that it would be an attempt to bury Hinduism and Sikhism. No religion can be built up in this manner.

Those who wish to go to Pakistan should go there. But why should the fear of the Hindus scare them into hiding in the Purana Quila or in Humayun's Tomb? I told them that those Muslims who are still in their houses should stick on there. I also would get killed for their sake. They felt a little reassured and they said they would die in their places but would not run away. They have been living there since ages. Shall we drive them out today? But that cannot be done. What should we do about those who have already left? I told them that we shall not bring them back immediately. Surely we are not going to bring them back with the help of the police and the military. We shall bring them back only when the Hindus and the Sikhs assure them that they are their friends and that they should return to their homes. They must tell those Muslims that there is no need to engage any police or military for them, rather they will be their police, their military and they will all live like brothers. If we do this in Delhi, I assure you that our way in Pakistan will be absolutely cleared. And that will be the beginning of a new life. When I go to Pakistan I will not spare them. I shall die for the Hindus and the Sikhs there. I shall be really glad to die there. I shall be glad to die here too. If I cannot do what I want to do here, I have got to die. I too feel angry. But human beings should control their anger. I have heard that many women who did not want to lose their honour chose to die. Many men killed their own wives. I think that is really great, because I know that such things make India brave. After all, life and death is a transitory game. Whoever might have died are dead and gone; but at least they have gone with courage. They have not sold away their honour. Not that their lives

were not dear to them, but they felt it was better to die with courage rather than be forcibly converted to Islam by the Muslims and allow them to assault their bodies. And so those women died. They were not just a handful, but quite a few. When I hear all these things, I dance with joy that there are such brave women in India. But where is the place for those who have already fled? They must return and return with honour. Let there be justice at least on our side. Let us keep our hearts and hands clean. Then we can ask for justice before the whole world. I have already said that the Muslims who possess arms should surrender their arms. As I said the day before yesterday, let everyone hand over the arms. I think this process will take some time but now that it has started, arms have got to be given up. We cannot protect ourselves with arms.

Another big complaint I have been receiving is that our police and military which includes the Hindus, Sikhs and also Christians and Gorkhas, who are all supposed to be protectors, have themselves become destroyers. I do not know how far this is true. But I want to address myself to the police and request them to behave. I have heard that in some places the police themselves started the looting. I have heard that there was some trouble at Connaught Place today and the soldiers and the police started looting and plundering. Maybe the reports are false. But if there is the slightest truth in them then I will tell the police and the military that the days of the British are over. In those days they could do what they liked. But now they belong to India. They should not behave as if they were enemies of the Muslims. When they are ordered to protect them, they have got to protect them.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 321-3

499. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

NEW DELHI,
September 19, 1947

CHI. BHANSALI,

I got both your letters. You are sure to render service wherever you are. But I see that your mind continues to be unsteady. You are not satisfied with the Ashram. I think you are certainly being useful to the Ashram. Your boarding at the Ashram therefore is no less than

charity[1]. Even in the village you will certainly be fed by the people. Thus as in the immortal words of Akha Bhagat: "Live as you may, but know God anyhow."

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

500. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

September 19, 1947

CHI. RAMESHWARI,

I got your letter yesterday.

This much is clear that if nothing can be done here, I shall not be able to do anything there either. Do what you can surrendering everything to God. All will turn out right.

Jawaharlal told me that you would be coming here. Bapa[2] also said the same. My view is that you should do what you can there with the utmost peace of mind. It is another matter if you can do nothing and can have no peace of mind. In the end, follow the promptings of your heart. Keep well both of you.

The task here is a difficult one. Suhrawardy came yesterday. He is staying with me.

I feel happy whenever I hear that Brijlal[3] helps you a great deal. This is as it should be. I have his letters. I showed them to Jawaharlal. I am not writing separately to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 8012. Also C. W. 3112. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

[1] The Gujarati word is "madhukari", the practice of supplying free meals to poor students once a week from one household.

[2] A. V. Thakkar

[3] Addressee's husband

501. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 19, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I have received a note. It first went to Sardar. The note says that the Hindus would not keep quiet if they were to live with the Muslims. The Hindus had to flee from Pakistan. In Koocha Tara Chand they are surrounded by Muslims and are afraid of being shot by them. Hence it would be better if all the Muslims went away from there. Many of them have already gone, but quite a few are still left behind. I have told you that when I went to them yesterday I told them the opposite thing. So there is no question of migration of those who are here. I would ask the people who have gone away to come back. It is not forcing them to return. Surely we cannot resort to force in the Panchayati Raj that we are having. We must persuade people, train them. Why should we be so frightened of them? Have the Muslims with whom we have been living for years become so bad that they cannot be allowed to stay here? I do not say that they cannot become bad. But if those who were good can become bad, they can again become good also. We may all be good. But it is not enough to be good. We must also be brave and at the same time have wisdom. Then from association with us even the bad people will become good. This is not my law, it is the law of the world. As I told you yesterday, I have learnt this from my childhood. I would not be able to learn any new lesson now. And how long am I going to live? You are telling me all this, but I say that I cannot bear it. Not that I would kill somebody; it is possible that I will die myself.

I have another note. Someone gave it to me on the way. Whatever notes I receive on the way, I try to read them in the car. In that note I have been asked why I do not come to my senses even after such atrocities in West Punjab. There is yet another note bearing no name or signature. It is addressed to the members of the Muslim League. It is full of accusations of filthy things. It is difficult to know what will happen to Pakistan and India if the followers of the League behave in that manner. Should we also resort to filthy means? That is not the correct thing, according to me.

Muslims are living around there. Some Muslim workers have

chosen to live there. They want to serve the Muslims. Let somebody come and kill them if he wishes. They are living there because they are brave. They approached me. There are quite a few such Muslims. They say that a large number of Muslims have left their homes. But even after that I found that Muslims were in a pretty large number. There were very few Hindus. I told those Hindus, who have escaped, that I have learnt only one thing since my childhood. I have believed even before entering politics that Hindus and Muslims have to live in amity. That is how India is made and that is how India should remain. A man who has been doing the same work from the age of twelve cannot speak anything different today. I would like every man to stand firm in his place and die there. This is what I tell Muslims as well as Hindus.

The Hindus say that Muslims are having arms; if they do not surrender them, how can they be sure that they will not strike them from behind? I would tell the Hindus that we should not bother about this. It is the job of the Government. If they have no license, they cannot possess arms, even for self-defence. But how are they going to defend themselves with arms? If there are five Muslims there are five hundred Hindus and Sikhs. Where is the comparison? Let them continue to live here even if the Hindus and the Sikhs slaughter them. These five who let themselves be killed, and depart with the name of God on their lips rather than use the arms, would be really brave. They should say that the Hindus and the Sikhs are their brothers and may kill them if they choose to. I give the same advice to all. Today a large number of Hindus from Pakistan came to see me and narrated to me their woes. Some nar-rated their tales smilingly while some women broke down. I told them and through you I wish to tell everybody that we should not be cowards. Just because the Muslims of Pakistan have committed atrocities, let us not be frightened by the Muslims living here. Let us not frighten them either. There are also some Muslims who just cannot live in Pakistan.

So the note which I have received says that since the non-Muslims are not going to live in Pakistan, why should the Muslims live in India? But I say that if there is one man doing something wrong let us not imitate and do similar things ourselves. Pakistan or Islam cannot mean that non-Muslims cannot live there. The Muslim empire has spread far and wide; but nowhere was it laid down that non-Muslims cannot live there. Non-Muslims used to live there and lived in peace. They also possessed money. Is Islam now coming to India as a

new phenomenon? Islam has lived on for the last 1,300 years. There have been great renunciations and sacrifices for its sake. If any other type of Islam emerges, it would not be genuine and acceptable to all Muslims as good. Think over this. It means that true India is not that in which none but the Hindus can live. True Christianity is not that which does not accept in its fold anyone who is not a Christian. That is not religion but irreligion. The world has not followed that path, is not following it at present nor will follow it in future. Why should we then, try to write a new history? Let us not ruin India and allow Pakistan to be ruined. There are $4\frac{1}{2}$ crore Muslims in India. Where can all of them go? And should they take the Jama Masjid, the Aligarh University and all those Muslim tombs to Pakistan? And should all the gurdwaras in West Punjab be brought to East Punjab? If the Hindus cannot live in Pakistan, their temples will then have to be brought here. This means that everybody wants to ruin himself and destroy religion. I have no desire to be a witness to it. Let God take me away before that. And I would say that all those young men should die doing their duty. Let not India be ruined while they are alive. I do not want to see the country ruined. If anything, I only want to see that we all die in the attempt to remove the evils in the country.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 324-7

502. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

NEW DELHI,
September 20, 1947

Respected Balvantsinhaji,

Bapu had your letter but he is not able to reply as he has not a minute to spare.

I am writing as instructed by Bapu :

You should not feel hurt about the *goshala*.[1] Le bygones be bygones. What does the *Ishavasya* verse say? There is nothing [in this world] we can call ours; everything belongs to God. You should not give up drinking cow's milk. If we switch over to goat's milk in place of cow's it is not serving the cow. It is good you are getting cow's milk from a village. Serve the cow in the villages and try to increase the milk yield. See how you can increase the number of cows im the neighbourhood

[1] Since the *goshala* had been handed over to the Talimi Sangh and it had become difficult to get milk the addressee was thinking of giving up milk.

and what fodder and concentrates should be given to them so that we get better milk. This is the true service.

You are not to go elsewhere. If anything should happen to you, die at your post. Do what you can there. There is plenty of work to be done.

Regards from

MANU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1984

503. TALK WITH AN ADVOCATE

NEW DELHI,

September 20, 1947

ADVOCATE: You should publicly state that so long as the Muslims do not surrender their weapons they cannot be resettled.

GANDHIJI: You do not seem to be aware that I have already stated this publicly.

You should also say that the refugees fleeing to India are being murdered.

I cannot state this because both the communities are in the same plight. I have said that any man who is not loyal to India may be shot. Surely it is not your argument that all the Muslims are bad and all the Hindus are good or that all of them are goondas. You do not suggest that even those not proved guilty should be shot. Yes, the British did that. But now we are dealing with our own brethren. Everybody says that Suhrawardy is a goonda. And yet what was achieved in Calcutta could not have been achieved if I had been all alone and his help had not been forthcoming. If people drink, does that mean we should also drink? Therefore we must either purify Hinduism or die in the attempt. But if we do with others as others do with us, then we might as well become Muslims. Let us be upholders of Hinduism, not its destroyers. If we become destroyers of Hinduism then certainly I do not wish to be a witness to it. I would rather die before that. All Hindus should make their hearts pure. I commend the action of the sisters who threw themselves into wells. What was done in Bihar was no trifling matter. But Biharis are simple people. They admitted their guilt. What has happened in Pakistan is certainly terrible from all accounts.

Do you think four-and-a-half crores of Muslims will not get out of hand some day?

It is my firm conviction that that will not happen, provided, of course, that Hindus do what I say. And if they do that, Muslims will respect them.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, 34

504. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 20, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You must pray to God and have faith in Him. Everyone is not convinced of this. People ask: 'Where is God?' They ask why they should be in so much trouble if God exists. If the Muslims are in trouble, they question the truth of Allah and the Koran. A large number of people talk in these terms, but they are all mistaken. This is the time to remember Khuda, Allah, Ishwar and Rama. He helps us without fail. Surely He is not going to ask us if we have recognized Him. We cannot hold Him in our hands nor see Him with our eyes, or hear Him with our ears. That is why it is said that He is beyond our physical senses. He is real; all else is unreal. We are all unreal. We may ask how we can be unreal when we are alive. I am alive today. But no one can tell me if I shall be alive tomorrow. I have thus passed 78 years wondering about tomorrow. I may live for a few days more or I may live for another year. But how can we know—how can I say—that the man who is alive now will be living the next minute? No one can say that. That is why I say that we are all unreal and we can never be sure what may happen to us at any moment. We cannot survive for ever. He alone can be real. The word *hasti* is derived from the Sanskrit word *asti*, which means 'to be', it was, it is and it will remain forever. What lives for ever is this Reality (God) that has created us and can destroy us and that takes us away from the world. In my view He never destroys us; He only helps us. If today we suspect that He cannot be realized and therefore get angry, it would be foolish. But He exists and is capable of doing everything. He is *Rahim*[1] and all are equal in his eyes. He would never harm anyone, nor kill or curse anyone. That is His law.

[1] Merciful

Muslims also come to me. They narrate to me their plight here. They say that they have been living in Delhi but now they find it impossible to do so. I tell them that they should continue to live here as long as I am alive. During the Khilafat days Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, all used to be together. I have gone to gurdwaras accompanied by Muslims. During that famous Nankana incident[1] Maulana Saheb and the Ali Brothers were with me. There was a general feeling of fellowship, whether they were Hindus or Muslims or Sikhs. What happened at Jallianwala Bagh? People cried at the top of their voices that the blood of all communities had mingled there. Who could separate them? How is it that they have now been separated? I am really perplexed. If I am still here, alive, it is only in the belief that the blood of these three communities is one. I would do everything possible to prove this. I would cry myself hoarse and shed tears before God in order to attain this. I do not shed tears before man, but I can do so before God. I can plead with Him, because I am His slave. Everybody should be His slave. Then there would be no need for man to be anybody's slave. I say that I would wish to be alive if I can do this. If not, I would wish that God takes me away.

My head bows in shame, I feel ashamed that the Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims, who till recently looked upon one another as brothers have now become enemies. Let at least some people come forward and say that they cannot be enemies. Four or five persons who came to me said that $4\frac{1}{2}$ crore Muslims would become traitors when the time came. For, after all, they are Muslims, and there are Muslims in Pakistan too. Supposing there was a war between India and Pakistan, or some similar conditions arose, would they not, in that event, secretly help Pakistan? I told these people that some [Muslims] might very well help Pakistan, but all of them would not do so. I told those people that if they would remain good, if we would remain good, if all Hindus in large number here and all the Sikhs would remain good and not consider any Muslim their enemy, then I could claim at the top of my voice that none of these $4\frac{1}{2}$ crore Muslims would turn disloyal. We must be brave. Being in the majority we should not be cowards. There are $4\frac{1}{2}$ crore Muslims in India but the total population of the country is 40 crores. Should they become such cowards as to be afraid of $4\frac{1}{2}$

[1]*Vide* "Speech at Sikh Conference at Shri", 25-2-1921 and "Speech at Nankana Saheb", 3-3-1921.

crore Muslims? I say that if those $4\frac{1}{2}$ crore Muslims betray the country, they would be betraying Islam, and they would be destroying Islam. But if we also behave that way, and become cowards and traitors and do not trust them at all and do not allow a single Muslim to live here, let me tell you that the Hindus alone would not be able to eat a morsel here. Their food would become poison.

If there is aggression from the Muslims outside India or from any other power or from Pakistan, I say that these $4\frac{1}{2}$ crore Muslims here will have to be loyal to the country. The law says that if they are not loyal to the country, they should be shot. My law is however different. I have explained it to you. But who is going to accept it? According to the law of the world the only punishment for a traitor, a fifth columnist, anyone indulging in subversive activities against his own country, is death. I say that in such a vast country, all the $4\frac{1}{2}$ crore Muslims cannot be traitors. Who has seen all these $4\frac{1}{2}$ crore Muslims? They are in our seven lakh villages. A few are in the cities. They are in U.P., in Bihar, scattered in the villages. I have lived in the villages and I know them all. They can never be traitors. There are Muslims in Sevagram too. They are working there. They would be loyal to Sevagram, they would lay down their lives for it. What do they know what the Muslims in other places may be doing? And why should we be afraid of traitors? I am not afraid of them. If, living in India,

they become traitors, I would say that they are keen on dying and on destroying Islam.

Real kafirs are those who eat our bread, serve in our posts but act as our enemies and cut our throats. There are such Hindus too; and also Sikhs and Muslims. There are all kinds of people in this world. But it would be cowardice to believe that all the $4\frac{1}{2}$ crore Muslims living here would become such traitors. It shows that we are not true Hindus, nor true Sikhs. Our goodness and the goodness of all the officials, the goodness and courage of the Hindus and the Sikhs lies in telling the Muslims not to leave. They must be persuaded and convinced that no one would be allowed to touch them. They should be asked to forget our wrongful deeds and assured that such deeds will not be repeated. We should ask them why they want to leave, and whether they know what will happen to them in Pakistan. They must be reminded that they have their homes and everything else here. If we kept them back with such affection the Muslim Afridis in the

Frontier Province and Dera-Ismail Khan would tell our people that they should not run away. This is the effect of good behaviour. If you maintain peace in Delhi, and that not because you are afraid or because Gandhi says it, but because that is the honest desire in your heart, I can promise you that no Muslim will do you any harm. And if he does, there is God above. He is all-powerful, and all must answer Him. He will protect us, and I have no doubt about it at all in my heart.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 327-31

505. NOTE TO MANU GANDHI[1]

September 21, 1947

My eyes were closed; but I was so pained that I felt like weeping. . . .[2] A *bhajan* is not an exercise in singing; it should make us one with God. It was like making fun of God. If [Abha][3] and you do not believe in God, better give up praying. I depend upon [you two] and if you behave like hired singers, it is as good as killing me. I expected this the least from you. A particle of blemish in you appears like a mountain. I will not tolerate even a single shortcoming in you.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 42

[1] The addressee and Abha Gandhi had burst into laughter because they had found themselves out of tune while singing a *bhajan* during the evening prayer. *Vide* also "Letter to Manu Gandhi", 22-9-1947.

[2] Omissions as in the source

[3] *ibid*

506. LETTER TO JETHALAL

NEW DELHI,
September 21, 1947

CHI. JETHALAL,

I saw your article only today. I read it. But I could not get much out of it. It need not be printed. If you implement somewhere the scheme that you have conceived and make a success of it, I might get something out of it; also others. In Bijolia you are where you were. How successful were you? Did you learn anything new, or were your old ideas confirmed? Think over this and send me a brief reply. In the meanwhile I am preserving your article. Write to me about khadi, cow, paper-making and other village industries. How many of you are there?

Know that I didn't have the time to write even this much. I have stolen time from other schedule.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

507. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

September 21, 1947

CHI. SATISBABU,

I have your telegram. When Hemprabhadevi sent for me, I had to go to Calcutta. She has written to Bisen. I learnt from her letter that Babua is still not well and now Kshitish Babu[1] is ill. Who will look after Sodepur in these circumstances? We have to think of all this.

How is your health?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9287

[1] Addressee's brother

508. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 21, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims cannot continue to live the way they are living now. It pains me very much and I shall do everything humanly possible to remedy the situation. Let me tell you that if I cannot do what my heart desires, I shall not feel happy to remain alive.[1] It is well and good if God takes that work out of me. But if that is not to happen, I will believe that my work is over. It is not that I would like to die by committing suicide. It is true that for those who wish to spend their lives in serving others, there can be no other test. Let them not be disturbed if they find their efforts bearing no fruit. But when one's efforts do not bring forth results, one must dry up like a tree which does not bear fruits. And he does dry up. That is the law of nature. According to Hindu philosophy, the soul is immortal. It does not die. A body which has outlived itself is of no use and must perish. A new body takes its place. But the soul is immortal and assumes evernew physical forms in order to attain *mukti*[2] through service.

Today I went to a place where a large number of Hindus on the one side and Muslims on the other were living together. They raised the slogan "Mahatma Gandhi Zindabad". What did it mean? What purpose would it serve if Hindus and Muslims were not one at heart and could not live together in peace? So I found that cry somewhat harsh. I asked those Muslims why they should be in panic. We have to die ultimately, and so we shall. If we are killed, it will be at the hands of none else but our own brothers. I appealed to them not to be angry with Hindus, nor try to kill them. I said they might die, but should not run away from their place in panic. But I also heard people saying that the Mahatma was a bad man wanting to bring back the Muslims to the

[1] As one person in the audience objected to the *Al Fateha* being recited, prayers were not held on Birla House lawn. Gandhiji, however, addressed the audience and said that he was going to argue with the objector. According to *The Hindustan Times*, 22-9-1947, Gandhiji held the prayer in his room after the meeting.

[2] Liberation

houses from where they had been driven out. It is indeed true that I want to bring them back. But how do I want to bring them back? Those who wish to go to Pakistan out of their own choice should not be prevented in any way. But it would pain me very much if they wanted to go because they were afraid, because they felt that the Government was not able to protect them and the Hindus and the Sikhs would not protect them in any case. To those who do not want to go to Pakistan and want to live here, I shall say that they should not go from here. I told them that those who have gone away from here could and should come back only when the Hindus and the Sikhs would gladly permit them to do so. I do not approve of bringing them back with the help of the police and the army. I tell them to give up the idea of police and military help. We shall do ourselves what we want to do. We shall die if we are destined to die. But if one person is bent upon killing, if he has lost his senses, why should I retaliate by losing my senses in turn? I would prefer to die at his hands. I am not speaking on behalf of the Government. The Government is not in my hands. You know the way I am made. If somebody goes crazy and indulges in evil acts, I cannot do the same. Later on, that man will learn from me how to be good. There are 40 crore Hindus and Muslims in India. A few lakh Muslims have gone to Pakistan. But there are still $4\frac{1}{2}$ crore Muslims in India. The rest are all Hindus. There is a small proportion of Parsi, Christian and Jewish population. But that is hardly significant. Thus if they want to perish by fighting each other, let them do so, but life is not worth living if one has to survive with the help of the police and the army. What should the Government do in the face of such fighting by Hindus, and Muslims among themselves? Let the Government declare that it can act only in that manner or it is ready to resign. Then let those who want only the Hindus in India because there are only Muslims in Pakistan form the Government. Does it mean that we should act in frenzy because the people in Pakistan are doing so? We can do so if we so wish. Suppose there is a friend whom I abuse and he abuses me still more in turn. It is all right. But if I hear his abuses in silence, how long will he go on abusing? If he beats me, I submit to that too. I do not raise my fist against his fist. Do you know what would happen in that case? I have seen that if a man swings his fist in the air, he injures his own hand. Even a boxer boxes against a big stiff cushion. He enjoys the game only when he strikes against some tangible object. But if the boxer does not keep something in front of him he becomes helpless and is

able to do nothing. What I have told you is an eternal truth. I am the only one steadfastly clinging to it. People are not following that path these days. God alone knows if I will be able to stand by that truth till the end. I am making a simple point today. Let the Muslims who have left their homes remain where they are, but they have got to be fed. We cannot starve them and then ask them to go to Pakistan. We are preparing the ground for war by doing so. The Congress Government is really for the service of the country and not for money, not for power; and it is meant not for one community or two but for all communities. If people are angry and are not satisfied with its service and do not allow it to serve, it should step down. And then let there be a government of those who want to keep only the Hindus in India. But that would lead to the ruin of Hinduism and Hindustan also. Let us forget Pakistan. Let it do whatever it wants. Let us think only about India. Then the whole world will admire us and be with us. Otherwise, the world which has been looking towards India all this time will start ignoring it. The countries of the world regarded India as a great country inhabited by good people who could not be corrupted. That faith would then be destroyed. You may behave as you like. But I shall continue to warn you, so long as I am alive, that such behaviour would bring no good to any one.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 331-4

509. SILENCE-DAY NOTE[1]

[After *September 21, 1947*][2]

These are not old days. Now there are wheels within wheels. You can't do any useful service by seeing these military men except as friendly faces who will give you a warm welcome but nothing more. That is my reaction. The thing is beyond me except in my own way which has no vogue today.

From the original: C. W. 5483. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9482

[1] Addressed presumably to Mirabehn, this was written on the back of a Gujarati letter dated September 21, 1947.

[2] *ibid*

510. MY DUTY[1]

This heading has reference only to my duty about the conducting of the *Harijan* papers. A fair number of replies have been received in answer to my query[2]. The majority of the readers with a few exceptions want the papers to be continued. The purport of these letters is that the readers desire my views on present-day topics. This means that probably after my death these will no longer be required.

My death can take place in three ways :

1. The usual dissolution of the body.
2. Only the eyes move but the mind no longer works.
3. The body and mind may work but I may withdraw from all public activity.

The first kind overtakes everybody—some die today, others tomorrow. It demands no consideration.

The second variety is to be wished by or for nobody. I for one do not wish for any such imbecile state. It is a burden on earth.

The third variety does demand serious consideration. Some readers suggest that the period of my active life should be over now. A new age for India began on 15th August last. There is no place for me in that age. I detect anger in this advice as it is worded. It therefore carries little weight with me. Such counsellors are few. I have come to an independent conclusion. The *Harijan* papers are being conducted and published under the Navajivan Trust. The trustees can stop publication whenever they choose. They have full powers. They do not desire any such stoppage. My life-line is cast in active public service. I have not attained the state which is known as "action in inaction".[3] My activity, therefore, seems at present to be destined to continue till the last breath. Nor is it capable of being divided into water-tight compartments. The root of all lies in Truth otherwise

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu,* 28-9-1947.
[2] *Vide* "Is *Harijan* Wanted?", 24-8-1947.
[3] *Vide* also "Action in Inaction", 16-10-1947.

known to me as non-violence. Hence the papers must continue as they are. "One step enough for me."

September 22, 1947

Harijan, 28-9-1947

511. NOTE TO MANU GANDHI

September 22, 1947

You asked me a question but did not wait for a reply.[1] I sent for you but gave up when . . .[2] could not understand. I am not angry; I am unhappy. I am helpless if you do not understand my unhappiness.[3]

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 43

512. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

September 22, 1947

CHI. MANUDI,

There are two ways in which you can cure my unhappiness.[4] One is immediately to write down a confession and read it out this very day. The other is henceforth to make your life one with God. Then there can be no frivolous laughter. . . .[5] Read out the confession at the public prayer meeting. That will cleanse the heart. The confession should not be forced, nor should it be made out of shame. A public confession is my own innovation. . . [6]cannot understand its

[1] The addressee had asked Gandhiji whether he was still angry with her because of the incident at the prayer the previous day; *vide* "Note to Manu Gandhi", 21-9-1947. Gandhiji nodded. The addressee did not grasp his meaning and got busy with her duties. Gandhiji then sent her this note.

[2] Omission as in the source

[3] In reply to this the addressee expressed her deep regret for her lapse the previous evening, and asked Gandhiji what she could do to remove his unhappiness. For Gandhiji's reply, *vide* the following item.

[4] *Vide* the preceding item.

[5] Omissions as in the source

[6] *ibid*

significance. It is my suggestion. Stick to your resolve sincerely. Then only will you rise.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 43-4

513. DRAFT OF A CONFESSION[1]

September 22, 1947

We two girls were guilty of a grievous error during the prayer yesterday. We wish to purify ourselves by confessing it before all of you. The error consisted in our bursting into laughter when we went out of tune. We knew that it was wrong to laugh but we could not control ourselves. This shows that we are not absorbed in prayer. We thus insulted our Maker. Bapu has repeatedly told us that a prayer is effective only when we are thinking of God. We knew that even though his eyes were closed Bapu would know and would be much hurt, and that is what happened. We sought his forgiveness and he has forgiven us. But the pain has persisted. It persists even now. We hope that our public confession will relieve it to some extent. Only our future conduct can wholly eliminate it. We entreat the public to bless us that God may make and keep the two of us pure.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 44-5

514. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

September 22, 1947

CHI. JIVANJI,

I have revised the accompanying in great hurry. All helpers are new and inexperienced and I have, therefore, to put up with considerable inconvenience. But I will live as He wills.

The original English by Valjibhai is also enclosed. Check the

[1] This was drafted by Gandhiji for Manu and Abha Gandhi. It was read out by Manu at the Prayer meeting the same day. *Vide* also the preceding two items.

translation carefully with it. I think it would be better to ask Valjibhai himself to supply the Gujarati translation of his English articles.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 6958. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

515. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
September 22, 1947

CHI. VALJI,

I saw your three articles yesterday and revised them the same day. Today I have sent them to *Harijan*. I liked all three of them. Who will render them into Gujarati? If you send [the translation] soon it can reach by this week. It would be better if hereafter you send versions in all the three languages. I shall be able to do but little. I hope you are keeping well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

516. LETTER TO MANGALDAS

NEW DELHI,
September 22, 1947

BHAI MANGALDAS,

I got the demand draft as usual and it will be used strictly as desired by you. For the present I am held up here. I shall regard it as a new birth if I can get away from here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the following item.

517. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
September 22, 1947

Though I believe that I was wise in having yielded to a solitary objector and refrained from holding public prayer,[2] it is not improper to examine the incident a little more fully. The prayer was public only in the sense that no member of the public was debarred from attending it. It was on private premises. Propriety required that those only should attend who believed whole-heartedly in the prayer including verses from the Koran. Indeed the rule should be applicable to prayer held even on public grounds. A prayer meeting is not a debating assembly. It is possible to conceive prayer meetings of many communities on the same plot of land. Decency requires that those who are opposed to particular prayers shall abstain from attending the meetings they object to. The reverse would make any meeting impossible without disturbance. Freedom of worship, even of public speech, would become a farce if interference became the order of the day. In decent society the exercise of this elementary right should not need the protection of the bayonet. It should command universal acceptance.

I have noticed with great joy at the annual sessions of the Congress on its exhibition grounds several meetings held by religious sects or political parties holding their gatherings, expressing divergent and often diametrically opposite views without molestation and without any assistance from the police. There have been departures from this fundamental rule and they have excited public condemnation. Where has that spirit of healthy toleration gone now? Is it because having gained our political freedom, we are testing it by abusing it? Let us hope it is only a passing phase in the nation's life.

Let me not be told, as I have often been, that it is all due to the misdeeds of the Muslim League. Assuming the truth of the remark, is our toleration made of such poor stuff that it must yield under some uncommon strain? Decency and toleration to be of value must be

[1] As Gandhiji was observing silence his written speech in Hindustani was read out at the meeting.

[2] Gandhiji was referring to the incident of the previous day; *vide* 1st footnote to "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 21-9-1947.

capable of standing the severest strain. If they cannot, it will be a sad day for India. Let us not make it easy for our critics (we have many) to say that we did not deserve liberty. Many arguments come to my mind in answer to such critics. But they give poor comfort. It hurts my pride as a lover of India, of the teeming millions, that our tolerant and combined culture should not be self-evident.

If India fails, Asia dies. It has been aptly called the nursery of many blended cultures and civilizations. Let India be and remain the hope of all the exploited races of the earth, whether in Asia, Africa or in any part of the world.

This brings me to the bugbear of unlicensed, hidden arms. Some have undoubtedly been found. Driblets have been coming to me voluntarily. Let them be unearthed by all means. So far as I know, the haul made up-to-date is not much to speak of for Delhi. Hidden arms used to be possessed even during the British regime. No one worried then. By all means explode all the hidden magazines, when you have made sure beyond doubt that they are hidden in a particular place. Let there be no repetition of much cry and little wool. Nor let us apply one code to the British and set up another for ourselves when we profess to be politically free. Let us not call a dog a bad name in order to beat him. After all is said and done, to be worthy of the liberty we have won after sixty years of toil, let us bravely face all the difficulties that confront us, however hard they may be. Facing them squarely will make us fitter and nobler.

Surely it is cowardly on the part of the majority to kill or banish the minority for fear that they will all be traitors. Scrupulous regard for the rights of minorities well becomes a majority. Disregard of them makes of a majority a laughing-stock. Robust faith in oneself and brave trust of the opponent, socalled or real, is the best safeguard. Therefore I plead with all the earnestness at my command that all the Hindus, the Sikhs and the Muslims in Delhi should meet together in friendly embrace and set a noble example to the rest India, shall I say, to the world? Delhi should forget what other parts of India have done or are doing. Then only will it claim the proud privilege of having broken the vicious circle of private revenge and retaliation. They belong, if they ever do, to the State, never to the citizens as individuals.

Harijan, 5-10-1947

518. A LETTER

DELHI,
September 23, 1947

DEAR SISTER,

Your letter received last night. I showed it to Sardar who was first with me. Then came Jawaharlal Nehru. The former said, he could do nothing. The latter said, work was there but he did not know what you could do.

Dr. Gopichand is the deciding party. I am not in touch with him. So my advice is, act directly.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

519. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 23, 1947

CHI. NARANDAS,

This statement seems all right. May your desire be fulfilled. It should however, be remembered that this *yajna*[1] must not be felt as a hardship by anybody. Its importance lies in the largest number joining it. But till that time comes, all those who join it at present should put all their strength behind it, provided of course that nobody works so hard that he or she gets exhausted by the effort.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 8645. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Rentia Yajna*, or *Rentia Baras*, which was observed with non-stop sacrificial spinning on *Bhadra Pad Vad* 12, Gandhiji's birthday according to Vikram Calendar

520. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 23, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

It has been said that prayer is no ordinary thing. It issomething noble. In the course of our lives we talk all kinds of things, we talk quite a bit in 24 hours, we commit crimes and run madly after money; so let us at least offer some prayer. It would be a great thing if we pray together. If 40 crores pray in their own languages in the belief that God is one, it would be a great thing. And then we should not mind if there are some stanzas from the Koran in the prayer. Those who protest against recitation from the Koran, do so in anger.[1] But, because the Muslims are harassing the Hindus and Sikhs and killing them, should we get angry over the Koran? What the Muslims have done is not good, but what harm has the Koran done? If one devotee of God commits a sin, shall we stop repeating His name? God is only one. If the devotees of God say that what the Hindus have done is bad, does it also mean that the *Gita* is bad? If the Sikhs have done bad things, should we stop reading the Granth Saheb? What harm has the Granth Saheb done? What if the Sikhs go crazy, if the Hindus, Muslims, Parsis go crazy? Their religions and all the sacrifices made in the name of those religions will remain for ever. Some people who came to me from Rawalpindi were strong, sturdy, and brave, and were big business magnates. Rawalpindi was built by the Hindus and the Sikhs. So also was Lahore. And, was the whole of Pakistan built solely by the Muslims? What is Pakistan today was built by the common efforts of all, not only of one community. It would not be proper to say that India was built the Hindus since their number is much larger. It has been built by the Hindus, Muslims and the Sikhs, by the Parsis and the Christians. All have contributed to making India what it is today. I told these friends that they should keep calm, and that after all, there was God to take care of everything. There is no place where there is no God. Pray to God and repeat His name, and then all will be well. They asked me what we should do

[1] According to *The Hindustan Times*, 24-9-1947, before beginning the prayer Gandhiji asked the audience whether anybody had any objection to the recitation from Koran; there was none.

about those who are in Pakistan. But I in turn asked them why they came here instead of laying down their lives there. I am firm in my belief that in spite of atrocities being committed we should remain where we are and die. If people come to kill us, let us die. But let us die with courage, repeating the name of God. I have taught the same thing to the girls. I have told them to learn the art of dying with the name of God on their lips. There may be a wicked man who refuses to see the reality—he may be a Hindu, a Sikh, a Parsi or anyone else—but they can at least refuse to be cowed down by him. If he offers money, he should be told that he may kill right at that moment instead of five minutes later, but it should be made clear to him that they will not submit to him. They should not be taken in just because of the money. I will give the same advice to the girls as long as I am alive. I cannot give them any other advice. I do not wish to forget God. That is why I am telling all that the greatest courage and understanding lie in learning the art of dying. Then alone can they live. If they do not learn the art of dying, they will die before their time. I do not wish that anybody should die before his time. I also told the Muslims that they should not leave their homes. Rather, they should die where they were. I told the same thing to the people from Rawalpindi. I will plead with the Government to do whatever they can. I told them that since they had come here, they should visit the camps and work there. I said they were strong people and should not lose heart. I told them they should not plead helplessness and be worried about lack of accommodation. I told them there was accommodation all right—Mother Earth is our house and we have the sky overhead. The Muslims who have gone away in panic have left behind their houses and their lands. Should I tell them that they should occupy the houses of those Muslims? I cannot say anything of the kind. Those houses still belong to their Muslim owners as they did in the past. They have run away in fear. If they have gone away of their own accord and if they feel that they will be happy in Pakistan, let them be happy there. Do not harm them. Let them go in peace. They should take their property and jewellery with them. The houses they leave will be in the possession of the Government and it can do whatever it chooses about them. It would not be proper if our refugees go and occupy them on their own. One thing I know for certain is that you should be strong and do as I tell you so that you can let me go from here. I want to go to the Punjab. I want to go to Lahore. I do not want to go with any police or military escort. I want to go alone, depending only on God. I want to go with

faith and trust in the Muslims there. Let them kill me if they want. I would die smiling, and silently pray that God should kind to them. And how can God be kind to them? By making them good. With God, the only way of making them good is by purifying their hearts. God will listen to me if I do not have a feeling of animosity even for one who regards me as his enemy. Then that man would ask himself what he would have gained by killing me. He would wonder what harm I had done him. If they kill me they have a right to do so. That is why I want to go to Lahore. I want to go to Rawalpindi. Let the Government stop me if they will. But how can the Government stop me? They will have to kill me if they want to stop me. If they kill me, my death will leave a lesson for you. It will make me very happy. What will be that lesson? It will be that you may have to die but you will not wish evil to anybody.

Dhruva was a mere child. He prayed to God. What about Prahlad? He was a boy of twelve. he also did the same. And we are all their descendants. Those who are familiar with the Granth Saheb must be knowing that Guru Nanak Saheb taught that we should not have evil thoughts for anyone, nor use the sword against anyone. The greatest bravery lies in having the courage to die. If our people have to die in this manner, let us not be angry with anybody. You must admire those people for dying and pray to God that He grant a similar opportunity to all of us. Let this be our sincere prayer. I would tell you what I told those people from Rawalpindi. I told them that they should go there and meet the Hindus and Sikh refugees. They should request them to return on their own, not under police or military protection. If you avoid fighting in Delhi I will take it that God has granted my prayer. Then with the grace of God, I will go to the Punjab. Let me tell you that once peace descends on Delhi, I shall not stay here even a day longer. I have not stayed here for pleasure. I have stayed on for rendering service. I have remained here to do all that a man can do to extinguish the fire raging here. So I wish to tell you and those friends who have come from Rawalpindi how you should live and what you should do so that the fragrance of your lives spreads over the whole of India and the world.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 337-40

521. A LETTER

September 24, 1947

DEAR SISTER,[1]

Brijkrishna handed me your letter just after morning prayer.

The past I do not remember. I do not know the context. The present I do know even if I am alone. I must not be party to exclusive Hindu mentality nor to killing and banishing. Undisciplined instinct may lead one to savagery.

Wait, watch and pray.

Blessings from[2]

BAPU

[PS.]

I wrote a note yesterday.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

522. LETTER TO DANIEL THOMAS

NEW DELHI,
September 24, 1947

DEAR DANIEL,

Of course it is good you are making eight more districts dry. There can be no rest until the whole province is dry. Are you following up the law[3] by doing the constructive and educative work I pointed out[4] the other day in the columns of *Harijan*?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

THE MINISTER OF PROHIBITION
MADRAS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *The Hindu*, 11-10-1947

[1] The superscription and subscription are in Hindi.
[2] *ibid*
[3] Prohibition Act
[4] *Vide* "Prohibition of Intoxicants", 8-9-1947.

523. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

September 24, 1947

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

You have given Rs. 1,000 in connection with the Dharmanand [Kosambi] Memorial but a sum of Rs. 25,000 is required to run it properly. You should collect the amount. Write to me if you can do it.

Father[1] had undertaken to shoulder all the responsibility for the Hindustani Prachar [Sabha]. That too you ought to take up. Talk it over with Kakasaheb and then write to me.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

524. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI[2]

NEW DELHI,

September 24, 1947

Now tell me the final amount and I will arrange it. I don't know how long I shall be alive. After my death all the responsibility will rest on you people. And you will have to discharge it properly.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10815

525. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

September 24, 1947

CHI. KAKA,

Please go on with your work regarding the Dharmanand [Kosambi] Memorial. I will collect Rs. 25,000. Just now I am writing[3] to Kamalnayan about it as also about the Hindustani Prachar [Sabha]. I had a letter from Amritlal also regarding the Hindustani Prachar and have asked Bisen to reply [4] to it.

I don't follow what you mean by your reference to the

[1] Jamnalal Bajaj

[2] This is an extract from a letter from Bisen to the addressee; *vide* also the following item.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Kamalnayan Bajaj", 24-9-1947.

[4] *Vide* the preceding item.

misunderstanding in connection with Dharmanand. I don't have the slightest idea that what I am saying on the subject now is different from what I said before. I certainly don't wish to back out. I have not transferred, and do not wish to transfer, the responsibility of collecting the money to you. I do feel, of course, that I would not have undertaken that responsibility, if you had not shown interest in the scheme. But I see no inconsistency in that. Please explain to me again. If there has been any error on my part. I will admit it. I have often confessed that my memory is not what it used to be. As I have admitted my shortcoming, the question of reminding me of it again does not arise.

It is no doubt worthy of you that you should work as the chairman, secretary and peon all rolled into one in regard to this scheme. But it would certainly be better if we could get Bala Saheb[1], or Cousins[2],or Rukminibehn or Sophia Wadia. Do what you think proper.

I have no doubt at all that we should ask for no grants from the Central Government for Hindustani propaganda work. Let Sunderlal or the Urdu Anjuman get them. We do not wish to follow their example.

I agree with what you write about the Muslims. If possible, I will write[3] on the subject in the very next issue.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10991. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

526. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

September 24, 1947

CHI. RAMESHWARI,

All the letters you sent recently have been received. The long one too I read with close attention. My heart is with you but until the fire here dies down I shall be useless there.

I got all the letters of Brijlal too. I also showed them to Jawaharlal.

[1] B. G. Kher
[2] Dr. James H. Cousins
[3] *Vide* "Hindustani", 27-9-1947.

If your services are not required there, you may certainly come here after meeting your mother. Here too there is plenty of work. It would be best to live at Harijan. Niwas; a refugee camp is situated nearby.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

527. TALK WITH JAMSAHEB OF NAWANAGAR

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,

September 24, 1947

GANDHIJI: If war comes to Kathiawar it would be the fault of the rulers.

JAMSAHEB: But where do we have the arms? Before the 15th we were treated as step sons.

If the ruler has the subjects with him, what can a single Junagadh[1] do? If even one ruler decides that he will function as a trustee of his subjects, he can rule for ever. The rulers express their willingness, readily enough, but I doubt whether they do so from the heart. If you can win the hearts of your people, rest assured Junagadh will be with you. If a man is pure he can have nothing secret. In India the Princes are the weakest part. But through the skill of Sardar all the Princes have now been brought in. However, the rulers of Kathiawar should be united. That is why I have been talking of the unity of Kathiawar these last so many years. The railways of Kathiawar are in a bad shape. Bhavnagar, Jamnagar, Morvi, Porbundar, have all their separate railways. In the third class there are not even lights. That is why these trains were called Babu's trains.[2] When I used to be a student of Shamaldas College the state of affairs was the same. This is merely an example. If there is one administration, one currency and if the people are united the Sardar will not say no. Kathiawar has much potential strength.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 48

[1] The reference is to its Nawab's decision to accede to Pakistan. The State, however, subsequently joined the Indian Union.

[2] In Kathiawar the ruler was addressed as Bapu.

528. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 24, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

The *bhajan* which you heard today applies well to the present situation. We can all describe ourselves today as 'wrecked boats'. And then we pray to God that He may bring us to the shore, that is, without His grace our boat cannot reach the shore. This is the condition of our country today and I see it everyday. Somehow, a feeling of animosity has taken possession of us. There is so much anger in the hearts of both the Hindus and the Muslims, that we would not let the Muslims live in Delhi. The Hindus and the Sikhs have been driven out of Pakistan. I hear that even the minds of small children have been poisoned. It is true that all that is the propaganda of the Muslim League. I am a witness to the propaganda of the Muslim League that the Muslims would *take* Pakistan by force, not by negotiating for it, not by pleading their case with the Hindus and other non-Muslims. It was our misfortune that for years they went on clamouring that they would take Pakistan by force. But that will never do. What is the point in having it by force? In a way we can say that they have not taken Pakistan by force. Rather we have granted it, the Congress has granted it. There would have been no Pakistan without the British agreeing to the demand. However much the Congress might have agreed to it, the ultimate power was in the hands of the British. They had to give up that power. Why? Because they could not have ruled here any longer. We did not fight against them with the sword. Ours was a war without weapons. We say that ours was a non-violent struggle. That is how India has won freedom. India was partitioned. The Congress agreed to the division. The Congress felt that there was no point in brothers going on fighting. The better thing would be to grant them what they wanted. But some of them feel that they have not got Pakistan in full. But they have accepted what was granted, leaving the rest of it for the future. So, we did get our freedom but we could not digest it with all the poison everywhere. And the dispute between us did not end. The supporters of the Muslim League delivered poisonous speeches. Are all the people living in Pakistan Muslims? There are also the Hindus, the Parsis, the Sikhs and the Christians living there. Let them make all

in their country happy. Let them prove to them that all of them will have equal rights. The Government will be no doubt theirs because they are in the majority. That is all right, but the Government has to function with a sense of justice. They did say so, but it could not be carried out. Why should I go into the reasons as to why it could not be done? I know everything that has happened there. The Muslims went berserk. They thought that since they were now free they could kill and slaughter. It all started from there. And once it started, there were the Sikhs who are also warriors. How could they take it lying down? They also started killing and slaughtering. That is the story which is not yet over.

Thousands of people come to me and say that they cannot live there any longer. They say that they are being forced to embrace Islam and if they fail to do so they are threatened that they will be kept as slaves. How could they agree to such a condition? They have come here under compulsion. We can embrace Islam of our own free choice. But getting converted to Islam out of fear is another matter. One cannot abandon one's religion for the sake of earning one's livelihood. Abandoning religion under compulsion is not religion but irreligion. What is the value of mere survival of a man or woman who has lost his or her self-respect—and religion constitutes self-respect. Let me tell you that those who give up their religion for the sake of money, jewellery or employment, cannot be following any religion. They do not deserve to be called Hindus, nor can they be good Muslims. Do we become Muslims just by reciting the *Kalma* under compulsion? I do not recite here the *Kalma* but *fateha*. Both are remarkable. It is ordained in the *Kalma* that there is only one God and Hazrat Mohammed is His Prophet. The earlier prophets do not count before him. But it is clearly stated in the *feteha* that God is our Lord and Master. He can protect everyone; let Him protect us too. But even though *fateha* is wonderful, how can one be forced to recite it? If we recite it, it can be only of our own free will. But if somebody forces me to recite it under threat of gun, I would certainly not like to do it. I have just a handful of bones in my body. But my heart belongs to me. So do your hearts belong to you and the hearts of these girls belong to them. These girls can declare that they would never give up their dharma. But today we are all facing a challenge. In such a situation, what should India do? How should we act? That is a big problem before you. The trains coming from Pakistan these days do not bring the Muslims. The Hindus and the Sikhs are brought in those trains.

Some get killed in the train. And the people who go from here are Muslims who are killed on the way. I am told that I should count the figures. What figures should I count? I have no figures with me. And what will I do knowing the figures? I would only say that one may consume one bottle of liquor and get intoxicated. Someone else may drink two bottles and also get completely intoxicated. Both get intoxicated. But another man drinks something by which he cannot get intoxicated, such as clean water from a river. You may call it liquor but it cannot intoxicate anyone. Who would call that water alcohol? For alcohol is the thing that robs one of all one's senses and turns one crazy. The thing is we are all intoxicated at the moment. Now suppose the Muslim League does something crazy because something got into its head. And then we think that if they can behave like that let us also behave in the same manner. You may want to rule the whole of India and destroy Pakistan. But I tell you that we have agreed to the formation of Pakistan. Where then is the question of destroying it? We cannot destroy it. We cannot destroy it with our physical strength or with the help of the sword. If we try to destroy Pakistan, both the countries are going to sink. Ours is a wrecked ship. We are sinking today. If you imagine today that we should fight and win, I would say that even before you win some other world power is going to swallow you. It would swallow both the countries. If all my friends, who are sensible people and who have spent many years in such work, understand this much, we would be safe. But how could that happen when both are busy emptying whisky bottles and enjoy doing so? I would entreat them to discard the whisky bottle and throw it into the sea because it contains poison. We shall not harm the Muslims any more. If they wish to go on their own, we would let them go. But we shall not force them to leave. They are in their own houses. They are not in a majority. Why should we become cowards and harass them? We are free. The whole country is free. Why should they be under the impression that we are going to devour them? Are the Muslims such creatures that the Hindus can devour them if they are available? The Congress has made so much sacrifice. Year after year it has been making highest sacrifices which involved a large number of Hindus and Muslims. Have they all been possessed by some madness now after freedom? Shall we throw away in our intoxication that freedom which has come after so many sacrifices? How shameful it is! I would not tell you these things if you get excited after reading the news in the Press and think that they can never belong to you. I told you

yesterday that the whole trouble can be stopped. How can it be done? We must purify ourselves. Purifying ourselves means being courageous. A person who can be courageous would not indulge in such activities. You have the support of your Government. The Government looks after the administration of the country. Gone are the days of the British Government when we could not refer our problems to it. Today you have your own Government. We can tell the Government how it should go about settling these things. After all, there are only $4\frac{1}{2}$ crores Muslims in the country. Why should we be scared of them? Suppose you kill $4\frac{1}{2}$ crores Muslims, what would you do after that? And there are so many Muslims in Pakistan. Whom would you kill there? The Pakistanis would like to settle accounts with you for those $4\frac{1}{2}$ crores Muslims here. You would not be able to accept that challenge, because they would have the support of the whole world. That is why I say that we should remain pure. Let us keep our accounts clear. Let us not be in the position of debtors. If we are in the position of creditors, I tell you that your Government will have to give ultimatum to Pakistan. All the Hindus and Sikhs who have come from there have to go back and Pakistan would have to look after them. Pakistan has gone to the extent of saying that all the minority communities in Pakistan will enjoy the same rights as the Muslims. They will enjoy freedom of expression and worship, of visiting temples and gurdwaras. They will of course not enjoy and political power. I can very well understand that our mutual trust is shaken. But does the remedy lie in driving out the Muslims who are here with their properties, homes and children? That should not happen. It would be great cowardice. I want to tell you only this thing that we must abandon the idea of taking revenge on the Muslims. And we must so strengthen our hearts that the whole of Hindustan is convinced that nothing is going to happen in Delhi. But some things have happened in Delhi. The Muslims have been driven out. I do not say that those who have gone away should be brought back. But those who have stayed behind should be allowed to live in peace. Later on we can bring back the people who have gone away. If any Muslim misbehaves, report the matter to the Government. Those Muslims must accept the authority of the Government. If the Government permits you to kill them saying that it has no army, that Government has got to end. That means allowing goondaism to carry the day, which is not the function of a government. I want to tell you that you can influence

the Government as much as you can. But do not take the law into your hands, do not use your guns and do not kill anyone. If you do this much, victory will be ours, and our ship which is beginning to sink will be saved. God is always on the side of truth. God can never abandon us but if we give up God, if we forget Him and abandon the right path, what can God do?

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 340-5

529. IMPLICATIONS OF FASTING[1]

A friend writes :

> It seems to me that to put your life in jeopardy has become the final and natural remedy for you. Be that as it may, I cannot help thinking that the remedy is akin to keeping a patient alive by administering injections or oxygen to him.

The above reflection proceeds from pain due to affection. Nevertheless, I must say that the writer has not given much thought to his criticism. Many other well-wishers probably entertain the same hasty opinion. Hence this public discussion.

The critic's simile is inapplicable. Administration of injections or oxygen are outward remedies, calculated merely to prolong bodily existence. Therefore, they are properly described as of momentary value. Nothing will be lost if those remedies were not applied. A physical body cannot be made immortal. All that medical skill can do is to prolong the existence for a while. This temporary prolongation confers no lasting benefit.

On the other hand, fasting is never intended to affect another's body. It must affect his heart. Hence it is related to the soul. And in this sense the effect, such as it is, cannot be described as temporary. It is of a permanent character. Whether the fasting person is spiritually fit for the task and whether he has properly applied the remedy is a different matter, irrelevant to the present purpose.

Of all the fasts of which I have recollection, of one[2] only it can be said that though there was no fault in the conception it was alloyed with external remedy with contraindication. Had this mistake not been made, I have no doubt that its natural, beneficial result would have

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 5-10-1947.

[2] From March 3 to 6, 1939.

flown from it as in the others. I refer to the fast I had undertaken in Rajkot against the late Thakore Saheb. I saw my mistake, retraced my step and averted a dangerous crisis. The last was in Calcutta in the current month of September.[1] Admittedly the result was as it should have been. Having reference to the spirit, I regard it as permanent. Time alone would show whether the effect was of a lasting character or not. It must depend upon the purity of the fasting person and the accuracy of his perception. That enquiry would be irrelevant here. Moreover, the fasting man is not competent to undertake the enquiry. It can only be done by a properly equipped immpartial person and that too after my death.

NEW DELHI, September 25, 1947

Harijan, 5-10-1947

530. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

NEW DELHI,
September 25, 1947

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

There are many Harijans in Sind. They are in great distress and are faced with starvation. They should be transferred to Kathiawar. If, therefore, your Company sends over a ship or two to bring them over free of charge to some port in Kathiawar, their safety can be ensured. It is doubtful just now whether they will be able to preserve their religion or save the honour of their womenfolk. Bapa will see you with this letter. Please do this immediately, if possible. You may show this letter to Walchandbhai[2] or any others in your Company with whom you feel like sharing it. I am addressing a similar letter[3] to Shoorjibhai.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 4810. Courtesy: Shantikumar N. Morarjee

[1] From September 1 to 4
[2] Walchand Hirachand
[3] *Vide* the following item.

531. LETTER TO SHOORJI VALLABHDAS

NEW DELHI,
September 25, 1947

BHAI SHOORJIBHAI,

There are many Harijans in Sind. They are completely ruined and have nothing to eat. They should be sent to Kathiawar. So if your Company sends over one or two steamers to bring them over free of charge to some port in Kathiawar they will reach here safely. At the moment it is doubtful whether they will be able to preserve their religion or the womenfolk their honour.

Bapa will bring this letter to you. If possible, do this immediately. I have written a similar letter[1] to Shanitkumar also.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4098

532. DISCUSSION WITH J. B. KRIPALANI[2]

Thursday, September 25, 1947

In reply to a question by Acharya Kripalani whether, in the circumstances, it would not be better to work for a planned exodus of non-Muslims from Sind instead of allowing them to be squeezed out and turned upon India as homeless destitutes, Gandhiji replied that his opposition to a permanent exchange of populations remained as strong as ever. After what the Acharya had told him, he said, he, in fact, felt all the more strongly that the place of Sind Congress leaders at that juncture was in Sind. They should go there, and, if necessary, die there and by their example teach the non-Muslims to meet with courage, faith and self-respect the crisis that faced

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Towards the close of September, Acharya Kripalani, the Congress President, had met Jinnah at Karachi and drawn his attention to the rapidly deteriorating position of the minority community in Sind. In reply, he got only a long tirade against the Indian Government. The minority community in Sind, Jinnah mantained, had nothing to complain of. They had not taken kindly to the establishment of Pakistan, that the sooner they became reconciled to their changed status the better for them. The Pakistan Government, he said, had nothing to answer for; on the contrary, it was the innocent victim of wanton and malicious exaggeration by the Indian Press.

them.[1]

My frank advice to one who is a Minister is not to come to the Working Committee. Profulla Babu cannot leave Calcutta even for a day in the present circumstances. But these who listens to me? Mine is a lone voice. Mathai Saheb[2] says that we shall have to take permission from the Pakistan Government to run more trains and they talk of stopping the trains altogether. I totally disapprove of the exchange of populations. Let us declare war. We shall fight and die fighting if we are destined to. They have abducted and molested 12-year-old girls. What does that indicate?

Go through Kunzru's statement[3] of this very day. Whatever it be, my advice to all of you is not to bother about me. I am here in Delhi and shall do what I can. This is an open secret. Even in the prayers I have said that today I am alone [in my mission].

It is a sad state of affairs that Rajendra Babu[4] has to look to Australia for food. I don't feel that we have won freedom. Should Hindustan known as the land of gold beg food from abroad? I feel very much pained about all this. If I had my way I would tell the people to die of hunger or else work hard [to produce food] but not a single grain should be imported from outside.

If peace is not established here, the whole of Hindustan will be on fire and I will not be able to do anything about it. I keep thinking where I stand in all this. I have come here and am doing something but I feel I have become useless now. Today power is in our hands but I would be the biggest fool if I thought that I alone am right. But I would like it if none of you bothered to see me, much less consult me. I shall be put on trial only if Ghanshyamdas asks me to quit. See if I can live in a hut. I work fully aware of my own limitations.

It is possible that someone might molest my girls. But if the girls are brave they will die but will not allow anyone to molest them. You can notify the Pakistan Government that if they persist in such anarchy you will take matters in your own hands. In the Boer War the Boers were just a handful but they were not afraid to die. I have spent

[1] This paragraph is from *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. II, p. 475.

[2] John Mathai, Minister for Railways

[3] The statement criticizing officers of the British army appeared in *The Hindustan Times*, 25-9-1947. *Vide* also Appendix "Interview with Lord Mountbatten", 25-9-1947.

[4] Rajendra Prasad, Union Minister for Food and Agriculture

20 years amongst those brave people. Shall we come to our senses only after the goondas usurp our place? I advise you and Choithram to go to Sind and die if need be.

I have become useless because I cannot make the Pakistan authorities do the right thing. But if normalcy is restored in Delhi I would like to go and die there. I am not being arrogant when I say that I know the art of dying but I have the courage to say it. But God alone knows if I will run away when I am being shot at or attacked with knives or will get angry with the attacker. If this happens then also there is no harm because the people will come to know that the man they looked upon as a Mahatma was not a true Mahatma. I too shall come to know where I stand. It is possible that I may still utter 'Rama Rama' when I am shot at or attacked. Let the outcome be either; ultimately it will be for good.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 50-2

533. TALK WITH REFUGEES[1]

Thursday, September 25, 1947

GANDHIJI: I am doing my level best. And if you wish Delhi to prosper, Hindus, Sikhs, Christians and Parsis should live as one. Even if you are sore, why should you take revenge upon your brothers? Whatever is to be done should be done by the Government. Ask me what you wish to. I am not going to make a speech.

A REFUGEE: I am an advocate from Montgomery. I saw more than two hundred women and children being surrounded by a [Muslim] mob. One of them killed an old man and then sat on his chest. I have come after witnessing such things there, and here too the condition is the same. I am a votary of non-violence. The pity is that Muslims cannot live with Hindus. This is not a new thing. It has been so for the last so many years. Now their goal is: "*Hanske liya Pakistan, larke lenge Hindustan*."[2] It is high time the Hindus here took sides clearly. Will the Muslims remain loyal to Hindustan?

The question is apt. Many Hindu and Sikh brothers tell me the

[1] As a result of a wrong newspaper report about a public meeting, some eight hundred refugees turned up to attend it. About fifty of them were allowed to meet Gandhiji.

[2] Meaning: "Laughing we have taken Pakistan, fighting we shall take Hindustan."

same. There was a time when the Congress was popular. Today if it does not adhere to its policy it will be finished.

If the Muslims are not loyal Islam will disappear from the face of the earth. One who is prepared to die for the sake of his faith and dies when the time comes is a true man. Why shouldn't one die bravely rather than die a lingering death of sickness and paralysis? Suppose Maulana Saheb comes to me with a sword commanding me to read the *Kalma* or face death at his hands; I would prefer to die then. I would dance if such an occasion arose.

Every day Muslims come here to meet me. Many people have told me that they are traitors. But treachery does not pay. What will they gain by deceiving me? I don't have a single pie. Even if a few of the four-and-a-half crores have arms they can do nothing. How can we govern our country if we live in fear? The world will not tolerate your killing your brothers. Today the world has become small. There are atom bombs which can wipe out a city like London within five or six minutes. Hindus are a mere speck on the earth. If the Muslims turn traitors, the Government will shoot them down. It is sheer barbarity to stab them stealthily.

Last night I could not sleep at all. It was raining and I was thinking about the plight of the refugees. Indians are said to be mercy incarnate. Will they lose their name? Newspaper correspondents from abroad laugh at us and all of them report that India is utterly impoverished. There is nothing to eat and drink. It is time we took this warning and became human.

I have told you all that I wished to. Now you can do as you wish.

A SIKH: I have my business in Pakistan. I am coming from there. If even five per cent of the Hindus can return to and stay in Pakistan, then we shall somehow accommodate 95 per cent Muslims here.

I won't be satisfied with five per cent. I can rest in peace only after each and every one of them can stay fearlessly where they wish to. If you can make Delhi peaceful, I wish to go to Pakistan also. Of course I cannot revive the dead, but those who are left can certainly settle there once again. Can you see Punja Saheb turned into a mosque? I would much rather die. All is well with you if you learn the art of dying. Then all of you have to go back to your own places and I shall die here. If you wish to seek my advice, I can only say that all those Muslims who have left out of fear should come back and settle

here again. If Pakistan does not become pak[1], it will perish on its own. At the moment all of you are full of anger.

A REFUGEE: The Congress has already committed one blunder. Now it will commit another. Hindus and Muslims will never be able to stay together. Lakhs of our people are starving and naked. But nothing has been done for them. How many weapons have been surrendered up to now? How can we trust such people? We wish that the houses vacated by the Muslims should be given to us. There is an agreement between the two Governments that they should not make searches. Still the Pakistan Government continues to make them and our Government is doing nothing about it. The Pakistan Government is taking advantage of this situation. There the people are getting thousands of licences and arms and here we have been forced to surrender them. We are happy that Muslims can settle in Delhi. But if you come over to Pakistan with us and help us to get back our things, we do not wish to stay in Delhi even for a day. Nothing will be done till you decide to pay them back in their own coin. Today we are without a roof. The condition of women and children is terrible.

What you say is really pathetic. You are right in saying that you do not wish to stay here. Go to [Rawal]pindi. Here the Government is my friend. What can I do if I do not know the Pakistan Government? But you should understand that I am using all the strength and energy that I have. It is up to you to believe this. Here they are thinking of setting up a new city. But I am not a minister. I am doing as much as a human being can. I am just an ordinary man like you. It is a matter of shame for India to think of throwing out four-and-a-half crore Muslims. It is not practical to do so. I cannot say that all the arms have been surrendered to me. But that is not of much importance. Arms can never protect anyone. Try to understand this if you can. You will not hear anything besides this from me. I will only say 'die but do not kill' and I shall die saying this.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 52-6

[1] Pure

534. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 25, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

We are faced with a sudden calamity. Our freedom is not even on-and-a-half months old. What can a child of a month and 10 days do? But we are strong and have been fighting against British imperialism till today. Are we going to bow down in the face of difficulties? Let us talk only about the post-independence period. It is not that we were not prepared for it. We did become free. But our people started thinking that freedom meant freedom to do anything they chose. With that attitude we have rendered the task of the Government very difficult. If a man cannot keep his hands clean, how can he see clean things and how far can he appreciate such things? When we have rogues amongst us, who would blame whom for being rogues? If anyone is straight away branded a rogue, the question becomes all the more complicated. This is no true freedom. Nor is this the way to win it. That is why I say that we should tell our Government that as far as possible we shall help it. Supposing the Government does not get such help, would we then start doing what has been done and is being done in Pakistan? Would that teach them a lesson? I tell you that is not the way to teach them a lesson. That is not the way things go on in the world. If people fight among themselves the Government would ask them to stop fighting. They would be told to seek the help of the police. If the police did not listen to them, they could go to the residence of the magistrate and report their case there. Whatever could possibly be done would be done there. If there were only some stray cases of fighting the magistrate could settle the dispute. But in this case there is confrontation between two large communities. What can the Government do? It is not the Government of the British receiving orders from Britain. Now the Government is yours. This means that you can order the Government not to do a particular thing. You can throw out that Government. Such is your power. If you do not use that power in the proper manner, you will find yourselves in great trouble. And, let me tell you, today we are in great danger. Pakistan is no doubt facing danger. But so are we.

In reply to this[1] I would merely say that it is our Government and it is doing what needs to be done. If something still remains to be done, that too would be taken up. I have told you where your duty lies. I do not wish to say anything more. What is your duty? It is to live together in amity and not to regard the Muslims as your enemies. Wrongdoers would automatically meet their own end. But if we consider any one individual as our enemy and beat him and kill him, it is cowardice on our part, and it has a weakening effect on us. Those who have courage and strength should not quarrel with others. Because we fight only with those whom we do not trust. It is all futile. What is the point of fighting? God in them and in us is the same. I had told you that we were not the arbiters of our destiny. We are mere creatures in God's hand. Only if God helps us can we protect our honour. Otherwise not. Plead with Him, not with man. Plead with Him who brings redemption to the fallen. He is right in our midst. When He is there to protect us, why should we be angry with anyone or be afraid? Let the Muslims do what they want, let them keep any number of arms, let them behave like scoundrels and let them be traitors. If they are traitors the Government will deal with them. Everywhere in the world traitors are shot down as a rule. If anybody becomes a traitor, he commits a great crime against the State. It is a crime greater even than murder. That is why traitors are shot down. I can understand that they may have become traitors. But killing them on suspicion of treason does not behove man. It is the work of a coward.

I told you yesterday,[2] and I am telling you today, that ours is a wrecked boat. It is quite true that God alone can bring it to the shore. But we also must make efforts. If the boat has a hole somewhere we must try to stop water coming in with whatever may be available to us. But I have seen that if water starts flowing into the boat, they throw it out with the same speed. The boat then continues to sail in spite of the leak. But this can happen only if God helps. With God's grace it moves and reaches the shore, but if God does not help it sinks. That is why I would say that man should make effort and seek the help of God. There is a fire raging in Delhi. There is fire in other places too.

[1] Before the prayers started, someone passed on a slip to Gandhiji stating that the Pakistan Government was driving away Hindus and Sikhs from Pakistan while Gandhiji advised the Indian Government to allow the Muslims to stay in the Indian Union as equal citizens. How could the Union Government bear this double burden?

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 24-9-1947.

Every place is burning. It is our duty to extinguish that fire, pour water over it, without which it cannot be put out. Our first task is to make the people understand [the situation]. I try to convince them as well as you in the same terms. I shall repeat the same thing to the whole world till my last breath. The glorious land that was India has become a cremation-ground today. It has become that barbarous.

I am saying out of experience that our police and the army have to be the servants of the people and should not behave like masters. The days of officialdom are over. It is my way to get things done through love. I am pained to hear it being said that we have a Hindu army or a Punjabi army and that the Hindu police will slaughter the Muslims. I am also amused. If this should be so, I think the police and the military together would crush India and India's ship would sink. Today we have our own army. I do not believe that the British people are all worthless. However, most of the British have already left. Only some officers are left behind. Granted that they are all worthless, though I do not believe they are. But if they are worthless, they have to go. Sopposing the army in Pakistan does something wrong, should the army in India do the same thing? Because the police in Pakistan does evil things, should our police also do the same? I wish to tell you this and warn you of the consequences. If all start behaving that way, India will be destroyed and our freedom, which is one month and ten days old, will not even complete two months. Let us not create such a situation. What should we do to avoid this? We must be courageous. We should not be afraid of anyone. We should be afraid only of God. Let us pray to God that He may carry our boat to the shore. The condition we have to fulfil is: Whatever may happen in Pakistan, whatever other people may do, let us keep our hearts clean. We must remember that if we do not do this, we shall all become monsters. We have to keep our India pure and clean and we must be tolerant. The Muslims have got to be loyal to India. If they are not loyal they must be shot. Can we do that ourselves? That is not our job. The Muslims are our brothers. They have got their homes and everything here. Hence we must realize that those who are staying here should live here by all means. Let there be no mutual fear. I would appeal to you to have faith, for faith generates faith and suspicion gives rise to suspicion. Keep on strengthening your faith.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 345-9

535. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

NEW DELHI,

September 26, 1947

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have your letter. You have not fallen with Kanchan, you have both risen and fallen. If anybody is to be blamed, I am ready to take the blame on myself. I understand your attitude of mind. It remains the same as it was. Never mind if you have more children but be calm.

I have no doubt that you cannot stay in the house formerly occupied by Durgabehn[1]. No matter what type of persons Nayakum and Ashadevi are, the members of the Ashram should not expect to have what they get.

Do only what appeals to you. Nothing is certain about me. Do nothing to please me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7222. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Wife of Mahadev Desai

536. DISCUSSION WITH H. S. SUHRAWARDY

[*September 26, 1947*][1]

GANDHIJI: Have you returned as the king of the forest or as a jackal?[2]

SUHRAWARDY: Sir, only as a mouse. The mouse is a very discreet creature.

GANDHIJI: Now, listen. Once there was a lion. He got caught in a hunter's net. A mouse pursued by an owl from above and a mongoose from below also ran into the net. "You give me protection, I shall set you free," the mouse proposed to the lion. The lion agreed. The bargain was struck. The mongoose scuttled away. But the round, shining eyes of the owl were still riveted on his prey. "When are you going to begin?", the lion impatiently asked the mouse. "Where is the hurry?", the cunning mouse replied, "I shall set you free when the hunter appears on the scene." And instead of setting the lion free, it crouched under his fur and had a quiet nap! The lion was furious, but what could he do? When the hunter appeared on the scene, the mouse unhurriedly gnawed at the net-strings and before the enraged lion could do anything, away the cunning creature scuttled for its own hole. . . . You know 'wily whiskers' is a very treacherous creature. It bites you unawares while you are asleep. It is only when the blood comes out that you know of its presence. Is that how you are going to act?

SUHRAWARDY: Sir, you know everything. So what can I say?

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 479-80

537. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 26, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

What is going on is not Sikhism, nor Islam nor Hinduism. We are somewhat familiar with each of these. Can any religion which indulges in unworthy things survive? Sikhism started with Guru Nanak. What did Guru Nanak teach? He said that God is known by several names including Allah, Rahim, Khuda. This is so in all

[1] From *Dilhiman Gandhiji*—I
[2] *Vide* "Discussion with H. S. Suhrawardy", 18-9-1947.

religions. Nanak Saheb tried to bring together all religions. Kabir Saheb did the same thing. It is said that that age is gone.

Today a man—Guru Dutt[1]—came to me. He is a big vaidya. As he narrated his tale he burst into tears. He agreed that in the light of the training he had received from me he should have laid down his life there. But he confessed he had not the courage to do so. He told me that he had always respected me and felt that what I said was the only right thing. But it was a different matter following truth in practice. He said the truth was that he was not able to carry it out in practice. He was prepared to go back if I said so. I told him that if we were convinced that we could never expect justice at the hands of the Pakistan Government and if they did not admit their mistakes then we had our own Cabinet which included Jawaharlal, Sardar Patel and many other good men. If even they cannot stop the Pakistan Government from indulging in those things, then ultimately they would have to resort to war. Let us arrive at a mutual and friendly settlement. Why can we not do so? We Hindus and Muslims were friends till yesterday. Have we become such enemies today that we cannot trust one another? If you say that you are never going to trust them, then the two sides would have to fight. Speaking in terms of logic it may be asked what else would people do when they have army and police and are forced to depend on them? If they decide to kill two persons for every person killes in Pakistan, who would care for whom? If we want to have justice, let me tell you the matter does not lie with you or me. It is the function of the Government. Tell the Government, it is there to help us. We should not take the offensive. But we must be ready to fight, because when war comes it does not come after giving a warning. We should not take any initiative to fight, but if the other side takes the initiative, both the Governments face their doom. War is no joke. After all, how long can I go on stressing the point? But if there is no settlement between the two sides, there would be no alternative. In that event, if all the Hindus have to die fighting, I would not be sorry. But we have to choose the path of justice. I would not bother if all the Hindus and all the Muslims have to die following that path. And, then, if it is proved that all those $4\frac{1}{2}$

[1] Pandit Thakur Dutt of Lahore

crores Muslims are fifth-columnists, I have no doubt that they have to be shot down or executed. And like the Muslims, the Hindus and the Sikhs living in Pakistan too should be treated in the same manner; if they betray that country, we cannot be partial in their case. If we regard all the Muslims as fifth-columnists, will not the Hindus and the Sikhs in Pakistan be also considered fifth-columnists? That would not do. The Hindus and the Sikhs staying there can come here by all means if they do not wish to continue staying there. In that case, it is the first duty of the Indian Government to give them jobs and make their lives comfortable. But they cannot continue to stay there and become petty spies and work for us and not for Pakistan. Such a thing cannot be done and I would not be a party to it. I do not have any magic wand with me. Nor do I possess a sword. I have only one thing with me, and that is, to recite the name of God and work in the name of God. Everything is accomplished by following that path. It is not that I am the only one in possession of it. All of you, including that little girl standing there, possess it. God alone has the power to perform miracles. What do you think I can do without the grace of God? But this much I have realized. I have been a fighter for many many years, more than 60 years. But I fight not with the sword, but with the weapons of truth and non-violence. Those weapons are still with us. But it is not within my power alone to use them. I can do nothing without your support.

We are going to preserve our freedom with the strength with which we have won it. We defeated the British with that strength. We did not defeat them with the help of arms. Ours was the unarmed power with which we defeated them. Whoever wants to live in India, whether Hindu, Sikh, Parsi, Christian, will have to fight and die for India. If all the Indians would lay down their lives for the country, no power could defeat us or push us back, irrespective of the army we may or may not have. The Muslims have said they would be loyal to India. Let us trust them with all our heart. Let us remember that truth alone triumphs never untruth,—*Satyameva jayate nanritam*[1]. This is a great saying. It contains the essence of our religion. Let us learn it by heart and always remember it. And then I would say and say with all

[1] *Mundakopanishad*, III. i. 6

the force at my command that we would stand firm even if the whole world was against us. No one can kill us. No one can destroy Hinduism. If it is destroyed, it would be at our own hands. Similarly if Islam is destroyed in India, it would be at the hands of the Muslims living in Pakistan. It cannot be destroyed by the Hindus.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 349-52

538. LETTER TO RANGANATH PRADHAN

[After *September 26, 1947*][1]

ASSISTANT DEWAN SAHEB,

Your letter of 26th September arrived here yesterday from the *Navajivan* Office. I am not in a position to give my views about *lathi* training. You may consult Sardar Patel. It is he who is in charge of the affairs dealing with the rulers and the subjects.

From the Hindi original. Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] This is a reply to a letter dated September 26, 1947 from Ranganath Pradhan, Narsingpur Durbar.

APPENDICDSES

APPENDIX I

LORD MOUNTBATTEN'S NOTE ON INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI[1]

July 9, 1947

I think and hope that I have satisfactorily cleared up the misunderstanding referred to in his letter of the 27/28th June, 1947. I told him that my sole object up to 15th August was to ensure a peaceful and efficient transfer of power to the two Dominions in accordance with the will of the people of India and their respective future Governments. He next raised with me the fear which he had expressed consistently in his recent post-prayer meetings that the British would leave a legacy of war, and that the partitioned armies would be left in a state in which there was every likelihood that they would be used for making war on each other.

2. I told him that of course I shared his view that nothing should be left undone which would ensure the removal of the threat of war between two neighbouring members of the British Commonwealth.

3. I told him in confidence that Lord Ismay was this day seeing the British Chiefs of Staff to discuss the future Commonwealth defence arrangements with particular reference to India. While I could not prophesy what would be the outcome of those discussions, I hoped that they would result in defence discussions between the United Kingdom, Pakistan and India taking place after the 15th August and before 31st March.

4. I pointed out that the institution of the Joint Defence Council, which would last until at least that date, would remove all risk of war before that date, and that this gave us eight months in which to arrange some form of agreement which would reduce the chances of the two countries fighting each other.

5. I pointed out that the greatest guarantee for the future peace of the Indian Sub-Continent lay in both nations remaining members of the British Commonwealth. He reproved me for using the word 'nations' and invited me to use States or Countries instead.

6. I further pointed out that so long as Pakistan and India remained within the Commonwealth, there was no reason why a Commonwealth Conference should not be called to Delhi since this was the most central capital in the whole Commonwealth, and at such a meeting arrangements could be discussed which would

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 9-7-1947.

ensure other members of the Commonwealth devising means to prevent Pakistan and India from making war on each other.

7. We next discussed the question of the Indian States. He asked me to do everything in my power to ensure that the British did not leave a legacy of Balkanization and disruption on the 15th August by encouraging the States to declare their independence, or by leaving the arrangements between the States and the Dominions of India and Pakistan in a state of chaos.

8. He further went on and said that H. E. H.'s decision about Berar returning to the Nizam was a crime.

9. I told him that I had already invited H. E. H.'s representatives to meet me on the 11th to discuss the questions of Berar and Secunderabad. I told him that on the 25th July all States including Hyderabad would send representatives to discuss the stand-still agreement, and I hoped also the terms under which they would join one or the other dominion.

10. I told him that since Pandit Nehru had authorized me to negotiate in the first instance alone with the States' representatives on the basis of their being granted full membership of the dominion on adhering only to the three Central subjects mentioned in the Cabinet Mission Plan, I felt very hopeful of being able to bring in almost every State including even Travancore.

11. I made it a condition however that no leaders must make any more threatening or provocative speeches.

12. I told Mr. Gandhi "You always talk about wooing people, and yet in the case of the States you threaten. Would you woo a girl you wanted to marry with a stick and expect her to accept?" He laughed and admitted the truth of this statement, and said he would make no statements that would embarrass my negotiations.

From a photostat: C. W. 11032. Lord Mountbatten Papers. Courtesy: Broadlands Archives Trust

APPENDIX II

LORD MOUNTBATTEN'S NOTE ON INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI[1]

July 29, 1947

I explained that I had called this meeting to consider Pandit Nehru's projected visit to Kashmir. I recalled the history of this affair from the time I arrived, and said

[1]*Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 29-7-1947. Jawaharlal Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel also were present.

that Pandit Nehru had from the very beginning repeatedly expressed to me his strong desire to visit Kashmir which I understood was based on the incidents that occurred there during the visit of the Cabinet Mission last year. I expressed sincere sympathy with Pandit Nehru's mental distress at having been unable to keep his promise to visit his friends in Kashmir and endeavour to effect the release of Sheikh Abdulla.

I reminded the meeting that it had been agreed that Mr. Gandhi should visit Kashmir in place of Pandit Nehru if this was generally thought to be a better solution : and I took the full blame for having delayed this visit by offering to go myself to Kashmir. I repeated my regret at having been unable to discuss the release of Sheikh Abdulla with the Maharaja on the last day of my visit owing to His Highness's indisposition. I admitted having asked Mr. Gandhi to wait until the arrival of the Prime Minister of Kashmir, Pandit Kak. But I said I was at a loss to understand how, consequent on Pandit Kak's visit to both Mr. Gandhi and Pandit Nehru to ask neither of them to go, the result should have been that Pandit Nehru wished to go instead of Mr. Gandhi.

Whatever Pandit Nehru's personal emotions might be, I felt I should be failing in my duty if I did not point our that this was hardly the time for the Vice-President of the Interim Government and the Prime Minister of the Dominion Government which was to take over power in 17 days, to leave the capital on what really amounted to almost private business; at all events on a visit which it would be extremely difficult to explain away to world opinion.

I also pointed out that a visit by any Congress leaders could not fail to be badly received in the world Press just at the time it was known that Kashmir had the choice of Pakistan or India before its Ruler; but that this effect would be somewhat mitigated if Mr. Gandhi went on account of the religious aura that surrounded him, whereas if Pandit Nehru went it would be regarded as a piece of straightforward political lobbying.

Mr. Gandhi agreed with what I had said, and stated that although at Mr. Kak's request he had agreed not to go, if I seriously regarded Pandit Nehru's proposed visit as objectionable, he would himself be prepared once more to take his place.

Sardar Patel gave it as his view that neither of them should go, but that in view of Pandit Nehru's great mental distress if his mission in Kashmir were to remain unfulfilled, he agreed that one of them must go. He very bluntly remarked : "It is a choice between two evils and I consider that Gandhiji's visit would be the lesser evil."

Pandit Nehru held forth at some length about his mental distress and defended

his visit on the grounds that (A) nothing would be more natural than that Congress should send a high-level emissary to lay before the Government of Kashmir the advantages of joining the Dominion of India, and (B) that it was well known that he was over-worked, that he would like to go away for three or four days' rest somewhere in any case, and that Kashmir would be a delightful place in which to have a brief holiday. The fact that he might be engaged on local work would be a sufficient change of occupation to give him the necessary rest.

The rest of us each argued in turn with Pandit Nehru and finally Mr. Gandhi specifically renewed his offer to go provided Pandit Nehru would accept that offer, which he urged him to do since Sardar Patel and I, who were the two "outside" members of the party, were so strongly in favour of Gandhi's going.

Finally it was agreed that Mr. Gandhi should leave on the following night train *via* Rawalpindi and that I would send telegrams to the Resident in Kashmir and the Governor of the Punjab.[1]

From a photostat : C. W. 11033. Lord Mountbatten Papers. Courtesy : Broadlands Archives Trust.

APPENDIX III

INTERVIEW WITH LORD MOUNTBATTEN[2]

NEW DELHI,

September 14 and 16, 1947

I spoke to him about the increasing tendency of responsible leaders and Ministers to become communal in outlook. He agreed that his was so.

I told him that I thought that only the Prime Minister himself was completely free from the taint of communalism. Maulana Azad, for a Muslim, was of course remarkably free of bias; though it must be remembered that he was in a peculiar situation. I did not know whether Kidwai could be regarded as quite free, though he had shown no signs of communalism. Matthai and Rajkumari still seemed fairly free; but Bhabha was a disappointment since he had been selected specially as Chairman of the Delhi Emergency Committee not only for his business efficiency and strong personality, but because as a Parsee he should be non-communal. I was informed, however, that in the last two days he appeared to have gone completely communal.

[1] The note signed "M. of B." bears a marginal noting against the last paragraph which reads : "Necessary action already taken".

[2] As recorded by Lord Mountbatten; *vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 13-9-1947.

I told Mr. Gandhi that it was not a bit of good preaching to the people unless he had converted the leaders; and I urged him to devote his full energy towards keeping the leaders, and particularly the Deputy Prime Minister, as straight as possible.

Mr. Gandhi said he entirely agreed with every word I had spoken; that he already knew it, and that he was interested to see that I had summed up the position so correctly.

He promised to do his very best, and offered never to mention my name in this matter or that we had these conversations.

He complained bitterly about the wording of Mr. Jinnah's appeal for money, since it was apparently intended only to help Muslims wherever they might be and not the people of Pakistan. He asked me if I could take this up with Mr. Jinnah personally, and I told him I did not feel I should be right in doing this, but I would ask Lord Ismay to take it up the next time he visited Karachi.

From a photostat : C. W. 11034. Lord Mountbatten Papers. Courtesy : Broadlands Archives Trust, Broadlands

APPENDIX IV

INTERVIEW WITH LORD MOUNTBATTEN[1]

NEW DELHI,
September 25, 1947

Mr. Gandhi broke in with a wise observation. He pointed out that the mere refutation of Pandit Kunzru's remarks[2], particularly by Nehru (who was now suspect for not being sufficiently communal on the Hindu/Sikh side) or by himself (whose remarks were becoming more and more obnoxious to the people of India), would not effect the main purpose we had in mind of checking the spread of this anti-British feeling among Indians.

He therefore considered it of overriding importance that Pandit Kunzru should be immediately recalled to Delhi; should be confronted with his statement; should be asked to substantiate it; and, on failing to do so, should be called upon to make an unqualified apology and unhesitating withdrawal. This would have a really profound effect as in the Gokhale case of 1896.

[1] As recorded by Lord Mountbatten; *vide* "Interview with J. B. Kripalani", 25-9-1947.

[2] Criticizing British officers

Mr. Gandhi suggested that Gen. Thimayya should either see Pandit Kunzru, in view of their friendship and the unique position he was in to convince him of the truth; or at the very least should leave a full personal letter behind for him to read.

Pandit Nehru here pointed out a complication, in that Pandit Kunzru was really attacking the whole of the present Government and not merely the British; and that it might be difficult to separate the two. I, however, urged that the British case was the more pressing and that it should be grappled with strength at this moment.

Mr. Gandhi went on to say that he was perfectly prepared to support this line at the proper moment by elaborating it in his post-prayer meeting discussions. He also offered to see Mr. Birla (his present host), who owned *The Hindustan Times,* and to talk to his son, Devdas Gandhi, the editor, to try and ensure that in the mean while the right line was taken up in this newspaper. I urged that he should also invite his son to use his influence with the editor of the *Indian News Chronicle*. Mr. Gandhi said that he thought Sahni had left, but no doubt his son would be able to make contact with the new editor.

The rest of the party then left, and I remained alone with Mr. Gandhi. He told me that the time had come when I must consider what action

I should take to help in the present position if I did not wish to bury my own reputation and even the reputation of the British here in India where at present it stood so high.

So far as I could make out his idea was that I should telegraph to Mr. Attlee in my personal capacity as an Englishman and say that the British Commonwealth should not hesitate to expel any member of that Commonwealth which could be proved guilty of sharp practice and which intended to make war on another member.

He was not saying this against Pakistan, for the rest of the Commonwealth might come to the conclusion that it was India, though he himself felt certain that they would not.

He did not see how the rest of the Commonwealth could support two members in their midst which were drifting towards a stage that sooner or later might mean war.

For instance, he considered that it was most unfortunate that Sir Francis Mudie, Sir George Cunningham and Sir Frederick Bourne should be Governors of Pakistan provinces at this time.

I asked him whether he believed Nishtar, Ghazanfar Ali and Chundrigar would prove a greater deterrent to war if they had been Governors.

To my surprise Mr. Gandhi replied that he would prefer to see them as Governors now, for then the full duplicity and hostile intent of Pakistan would stand

revealed in all its nakedness, whereas now they were covering up their intentions behind a facade of honourable British Governors.

I said I assumed that Mr. Gandhi quite understood that in the event of a war between the Dominions, British officers would be withdrawn from both Dominions immediately, since they could hardly be expected to fight each other. I further pointed out that this sanction acted 90 per cent against Pakistan, for it was they who were short of senior officers and administrators and it was they who would be crippled by the removal of the British; whereas in India, though in my opinion they would lose great efficiency, they would not be crippled in the same way. Mr. Gandhi agreed.

I told Mr. Gandhi I could not possibly communicate with Mr. Attlee behind Pandit Nehru's back and I would require to show him what I proposed to send and would need his full approval.

"Ah!", said Mr. Gandhi, "I am afraid you may have difficulty there; for though I agree you must do that, he has already refused to accept my suggestion of including this proposal in his reply to the Prime Minister on the question of the Pakistan telegrams to the Commonwealth."

I now felt we were in such deep water, and the point was so very unclear, and as the time was now past 2 p. m., that it was better to let him go and ask him to put up his proposals in writing to me, which he promised to do.

From a copy : India Office Library and Records

1. HINDUSTANI[1]

Shri Kakasaheb Kalelkar writes:

> If the Muslims of the Indian Union affirm their loyalty to the Union, will they accept Hindustani as the national language and learn the Urdu and Nagari scripts? Unless you give your clear opinion on this, the work of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha will become very difficult. Cannot Maulana Azad give his clear opinion on the subject?

Kakasaheb says nothing new in his letter. But the subject has acquired added importance at the present juncture. If the Muslims in India owe loyalty to India and have chosen to make it their home of their own free will, it is their duty to learn the two scripts. It is said that the Hindus have no place in Pakistan. So they migrate to the Indian Union. In the event of a war between the Union and Pakistan, the Muslims of the Indian Union should be prepared to fight against Pakistan. It is true that there should be no war between the two dominions. They have to live as friends or die as such. The two will have to work in close co-operation. In spite of being independent of each other, they will have many things in common. If they are enemies, they can have nothing in common. If there is genuine friendship, the people of both the States can be loyal to both. They are both members of the same Commonwealth of nations. How can they become enemies of each other? But that discussion is unnecessary here.

The Union must have a common inter provincial speech. I will go a step further and say that if the two States are friends, Hindustani should be the common speech between the two. This does not mean that Urdu and Hindi will cease to exist as distinct forms of speech. They must continue to live and progress. But if the Hindus and the Muslims or rather people of all religions in India are friends, they must accept a common language evolved from Hindi and Urdu. They should learn the two scripts. This will be a test for the Muslims and the Hindus in the Indian Union.

It would be wrong to say that if the Muslims of the Union refuse to learn the Nagari script, Hindustani cannot become the national language. Whether the Muslims learn the Nagari script or not, the Hindus and the people of all other religions ought to learn the two scripts. It is possible that in view of the poisoned atmosphere of the

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 5-10-1947.

day, people may not appreciate this simple proposition. If the Hindus wish to, they can boycott the Urdu script and Urdu words, but they will be the losers thereby. Therefore those engaged in Hindustani Prachar should not weaken in their faith or efforts. I agree that people like Maulana Azad and other prominent Muslims of the Indian Union should be the first to adopt Hindustani and the two scripts. Who will take the lead if not they? Difficult times lie ahead of us. May God guide us aright.

NEW DELHI, September 27, 1947

Harijan, 5-10-1947

2. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 27, 1947

CHI. NARANDAS,

One may say you are now approaching old age. You certainly have my blessings. May you serve the people for many more years. When you are too weak to serve I am not going to wish you the same. Why should you ever become too weak?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

3. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

September 27, 1947

CHI. PREMA,

You have lost your father, but if you think calmly, you will realize that you have gained many fathers in place of one. All who are our seniors in age or superior to us in knowledge should be as fathers to us or, if they are women, mothers. Those who are our equals in age are our brothers and sisters, and our juniors are our sons and daughters. Then the world will never die for us. Why then do you grieve over the passing away of your father? Death, moreover, is man's true friend. Why then should we be unhappy when our dear ones meet their dearest friend? When our dear ones leave us, we should engross ourselves in service with still greater devotion.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10456. Also C. W. 6895. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

4. LETTER TO SAYED MAHMUD HAD

[*September 27, 1947*][1]

BAHI SYED MAHMUD HAD,

Your letter has been redirected to me by the *Navajivan* office. It is not necessary to publish it. I had said enough about it at Calcutta.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

5. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 27, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Shall I tell you who is my special physician? He is good for me and also good for you. My physician today, in my thought, speech and action, is Rama, Ishwar, Rahim. How can He become our physician? We heard a *bhajan* addressed to the Lord who removes all miseries of mind, body and soul which human beings are subject to. Hence I felt that the best, unfailing remedy is Ramanama. I can suggest no other remedy to those who come to me. Then take some earth and water treatment. I know that one who has Ramanama inscribed in his heart needs neither earth nor water for treatment. If we are destined to live we shall live. If we have to die, let us die. No one can ride two horses at the same time. If I have faith in Ramanama I must remain firm in that. Anyone not doing so will perish. Rama is the saviour. Does the person who has installed God in his heart ever die? This body is transitory. It may be living this moment and may die the next. How then can I be proud of it? It is futile to keep the body alive when the moment of death has arrived. Guru Nanak was a great religious leader. Other Gurus who came after him did write songs of devotion but they mentioned the name of Nanak in the refrain. This is the culture of India. Perhaps such things happen in many other countries. Whatever that may be, I can only talk of the Indian culture. Mirabai was a great devotee. Mira's name is found at the end of countless *bhajans*. It was not she who used her name. But Mira's disciples found great satisfaction in attributing their

[1] The letter is written on a sheet of paper on which this date is scribbled.

compositions to her. This is a wonderful thing. It is said that Arjun Dev[1] was a great Guru and a great poet. He said: "One may recite Ramanama or Khuda's praise, one may serve *Gosain* or Allah". It is remarkable that this thing occurs in the Granth Saheb. The allegations against the Sikhs today are, if true, a violation of the teachings of Guru Nanak. That is not the way to bring glory to the Granth Saheb. Nor can the Sikhs make any progress that way. Some Sikh friends had a plain talk with me. They told me that Guru Arjun Dev did not doubt the identity of Rama and Rahim or Krishna and Karim. Then they told me that whether one went on pilgrimage or *haj* it meant one and the same thing. One may perform *puja* or bow his head, one may worship God in a temple or bend oneself low in the name of God, one may read the Vedas or the Book. The Book meant the Koran. One may dress oneself in blue clothes or in white. The Muslim wears blue clothes and the orthodox Hindu wears white. Then, one may be called a Turk or a Hindu. Turks means Muslims. [Nanak] says that he who truly follows God's laws knows His secret.

If I had the time I would have narrated so many things from the Hindu *bhajans* and *kirtans* that you would wonder whether the religious sentiment depicted there belonged to Hinduism or Sikhism. why do we say today that the Muslims have got to leave this country? Why is it said that the plan of settling the Muslims with the Hindus is a mistake and the fourth blunder of the Congress? Whether the Congress implements it or not, it is my plan and if it is a mistake it is my mistake. Others come to me and challenge my being a Mahatma and charge me with ruining Hinduism. But I tell them that what they call my mistake is not a mistake. The real thing is that we are all possessed by a madness today and talk all sorts of things. When we get over that madness, we shall talk sense. That is why I say that what I am saying cannot be a mistake. Those who think I am making a mistake are themselves mistaken. The whole world would blame you if you threw out $4\frac{1}{2}$ crore Muslims. Would you then point at what is happening in Pakistan? Because Pakistan is not following its religion should I start teaching the Hindus that they should also give up their religion? I have never learnt such a thing. If we protect our Muslim brethren and remain pure ourselves, it would have its own effect on Pakistan. That is my reply to them. Today we should consider what a Christian sister whom you know, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, has to say.

[1] Fifth Guru of the Sikhs

She is the Health Minister. She wishes to help everybody in the refugee camps, whether Hindu or Muslim. But what can she do without support from others? She cannot be partial. She is trying to do her best for everybody. She is partly Christian and partly Muslim and also partly Hindu. Hence, all religions are the same to her. She went there accompanied by some girls. They all went there for doing service. What was there to fear when they were out to do service? But they told me that they were warned against serving the Muslims and were asked to go back if their intention was to serve the Muslims also. I laughed when I heard that. That merely said these things. They were not going to do anything. After all, those Muslims and a few Christians are not going to indulge in any rioting. How will they do it? What do they possess? They are in a bad shape. What is the point of threatening them? Hence I thought I should mention this to you so that we should be on our guard and not indulge in such talk.

In the end I want to tell you that I had purposely mentioned war. But our journalists always like to exaggerate things. They have given the headlines that I wanted war. There are telegrams coming from Calcutta that Gandhi also talks of war. Will there be a war then? What I had said was that I could not think of war even in a dream. After all, would I give up my creed at a critical time? My creed is non-violence. I have never waged war, nor should anyone else do so. How can we achieve anything by fighting? What I said was that if Pakistan was committing mistakes or if India was committing mistakes, with both the countries having their own independent Governments, how was it possible for one Government to secure justice from the other? It would be different if the two Governments worked in co-operation. Let them have an arbitrator if they cannot work together. If even that cannot be done, then we shall helplessly be dragged into war. Does this imply advocating war? I want to tell both India and Pakistan that they must come to a mutual settlement or accept an arbitrator. But if the Pakistanis insist on taking India by force, then, as I said yesterday, India would have no alternative except to fight. If I am given the charge of the Government I would follow a different path, because I have no military and police force under me. But I am the only one to follow that path. Who would support me? Your Government will do what is expected of it when the time comes. I would continue to chant only one refrain. But, if people do not understand non-violence, to whom can I address myself?

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 352-6

6. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 28, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Is there anybody in the meeting who is against the recitation from the Koran?[1]

I shall respect your opposition, though I know that the rest of the people would be disappointed that the prayers will not take place.[2] With my unflinching faith in non-violence, I can do nothing else. Even so I cannot help saying that you should not disregard the opinion of such a big majority which does not agree with you. From that point of view your behaviour is improper. From what I am going to say later you must realize that the intolerance that you have shown under somebody's instigation is the evidence of petulance and anger prevalent all over the country today, which has provoked Mr. Churchill to say many bitter things about India. Let me explain to you in Hindustani Mr. Churchill's speech a summary of which has been sent by Reuter and published in the newspapers this morning:[3]

> The fearful massacres which are occurring in India are no surprise to me. We are, of course, only at the beginning of these horrors and butcheries, perpetrated upon one another, with the ferocity of cannibals, by the races gifted with capacities for the highest culture, and who had for generations dwelt, side by side, in general peace, under the broad, tolerant and impartial rule of the British Crown and Parliament. I cannot but doubt, that the future will witness a vast abridgment of the population throughout what has for sixty or seventy years been the most peaceful part of the world and that, at the same time, will come a retrogression of civilization throughout these enormons regions, constituting one of the most melancholy tragedies which Asia has ever known.

You are all aware that Mr. Churchill is a great man. He belongs

[1] Two persons raised their hands.

[2] *The Hindustan Times*, 29-9-1947, reports that the prayer was however held after the speech "inside Gandhiji's room with only members of his party".

[3] The paragraph from Winston Churchill's speech of September 27, is reproduced from *Mahatma*.

to the blue blood of England. Marlborough family is very famous in British history. Mr. Churchill took the helm when Great Britain was in great danger after the Second World War started. No doubt he saved the British Empire from a great danger at the time. It would be wrong to argue that Great Britain could not have won without the help of the United States or other Allied nations. Who else except a man of Mr. Churchill's sharp political diplomacy could have brought all the friendly nations together? Great Britain acknowledged the services of Mr. Churchill who in those days preserved the honour of that country. But after winning the War the nation did not hesitate to choose the Labour Government in order to recover from the terrible loss of life and property which the British Isles had undergone during the War. The British people saw the signs of the times and decided in favour of voluntary abdication from power to end the Empire and establishing instead the imperceptible rule of hearts. India has been divided and then both the countries have voluntarily announced their decision to join the British Commonwealth. The honourable step of granting independence to India was taken by all the parties representing the entire British nation. Mr. Churchill and his party were also in line with others. It may be a different thing that the future may or may not justify this step of the British people. And this had nothing to do with my suggestion that because Mr. Churchill has been a party to the transfer of power, he is expected not to say or do anything which would deprive this measure of its value. There is no doubt that in modern history there is no instance which can be compared with the transfer of power by the British. I am reminded of the sacrifice of Priyadarshi Ashoka. But Ashoka is incomparable and, moreover, he does not belong to modern history. That is why I was pained to read the Reuter's despatch of Mr. Churchill's speech. I take it for granted that this renowned news agency has not misreported Mr. Churchill's speech. By his speech Mr. Churchill has harmed his country which he has greatly served. If he knew that India would be reduced to such a terrible state after freeing itself from the rule of the British Empire, did he, for a moment take the trouble of thinking that the entire responsibility for it lies with the builders of the British Empire and not with those "races" which, in Mr. Churchill's opinion, are capable of giving birth to the greatest civilization? In my view, Mr. Churchill has been too hasty in his sweeping generalization. India's population is several millions. Out of these a few lakhs have taken to the path of barbarism. But these people hardly count. With confidence I invite

Mr. Churchill to come to India and study the situation himself. But he must come not as a representative of his Party with fixed opinions, but as an impartial Englishman who values the prestige of his country more than any Party's and intends to help the British Government in making this task a grand success. This unique step of Great Britain would be judged from its consequences. The vivisection of India unwittingly invited the two parts of the country to fight each other. Granting freedom separately to the two parts seems like a blot on the graceful gift of freedom. It is no use saying that either side is free to come out of the British Commonwealth. This is easier said than done. I do not wish to say anything more on that account. What I have said is enough to show why Mr. Churchill should have been more careful while speaking on this subject. He has run down his colleagues without even studying the situation.

Many of you have given ground to Mr. Churchill for making such remarks. You still have sufficient time to reform your ways and prove Mr. Churchill's prediction wrong. I know nobody listens to me these days. Had it not been so, and had the people continued to listen to me as they did before the negotiations for freedom started, there never would have been that show of barbarism which Mr. Churchill has described with such relish and gross exaggeration. And also you would have been well on the way to solving your economic and other domestic problems.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 356-9

7. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 29, 1947

NARANDAS GANDHI
RAJKOT

YOUR LETTER. AWAIT REPLY BEFORE DOING ANYTHING.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

8. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

September 29, 1947

CHI. MANI,

Herewith a letter from Narandas Gandhi. I have wired[1] to him not to take action till he hears from me. But ask Sardar and let me know what should be done.

I also enclose Pattani's[2] wire. You may have received an identical wire there. What should be done about it? I am under the impression that whatever Shamaldas does is done with the Sardar's consent.[3] Please ask the Sardar what reply I should send and let me know.

Send back both the enclosures.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 144

[1] *Vide* the preceding item and "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 1-10-1947
[2] Anantrai P. Pattani, Dewan of Bhavnagar
[3] The reference is to setting up a "Provisional" Government under Shamaldas Gandhi.

9. LETTER TO HARISINGH GOUR

September 29, 1947

DEAR SIR HARISINGH[1],

Many thanks for your letter.

I see that you can be carried away by your ideas. But I cannot understand why you should disregard facts. No one has displaced English from the great role belonging to it as an international medium. No Indian to my knowledge has ever desired to banish English from India as a second language for study. But some of us have undoubtedly desired to dethrone it from the place it has usurped.

Again what a fund of misinformation in your note, a copy of which you have been good enough to send me. But I have neither time nor inclination to enter into a discussion with you. Time will determine the issue.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR HARISINGH GOUR

SAGOR

From a copy: Pyarelal papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

10. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

September 29, 1947

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I am surprised to learn that you didn't get my letter. All the while I was waiting for your reply and you have not received my letter. I think I told Bhimsen to keep a copy of it and have now told him to send the same to you.

The day before yesterday I got your letter regarding language. I am pained to know that you saw violence in my article.[2] Those who wish to take the worst out of the best will certainly find it. In short, am I not aware that the present holocaust is a result of my teaching of ahimsa? I have also analysed the whole thing. The defects that you see regarding my language have their root in the same. We are bound to err if we try to separate the two. I have come to this conclusion that

[1] An economist: founder of Sagar University

[2] *Vide* "Take Care", 11-9-1947.

either ahimsa is not meant for society, as some of our leaders feel, or, if it is, there is some defect in my way of teaching it. I am quite sure that the first defect is not there. There is a possibility of the second one. If there is some defect in [my teaching of ahimsa] I am trying hard to discover it but have not as yet found it. It is because of this that I am striving here. There may be, as you say, some very painful results from it. I hope I shall not be alive to see them.

I intend to discuss some of your views in *Harijan* without mentioning your name.

I am happy to know that both of you are more or less all right. Chimanlal writes to say that you have left the house at sevagram for good. However, please do return if you change your mind. I have talked to Aryanayakum about this. It has been built for you according to your plan.

Harisingh Gour's letter is enclosed. I am not convinced about what he writes. The examples he has quoted are alarming.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a Gujarati original: C. W. 10731. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

11. LETTER TO KANTA R. VYAS

September 29, 1947

CHI. KANTA,

I got your letter today and am replying promptly. I had a talk with Ghanshyamdas. He can accommodate both of you at Pilani, not at any other place. The administration at Nasik is in the hands of Gopalrao with whom he would not interfere. Does a voluntary worker go about choosing places? He should render service as and where he has an opportunity. But Ramprasad[2] wants to have a choice. It was the same in the Ashram too. Under the circumstances I became helpless. Ramprasad is efficient. He should find his own way. I am not so rich a man as to produce as much money as I want. Why, I even have to think of my own expenses. It is as it should be and I get as much as I need. I have no preferences. I insist on cleanliness which I must ensure myself.

The burden of children is bound to be with parents. This is the

[1] *Vide* also the preceding item.

[2] Addressee's husband

limit to which I can go.

May you all be happy and live in peace. The sooner you can leave the Ashram the higher you will rise.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

12. LETTER TO DR. SYED MINHAJUL HASSAN

NEW DELHI,
September 29, 1947

BHAI DR. HASSAN[1],

I received your English letter. I did not like it. There is so much work that I am unable to reach all the letters.

Your letter reveals some anger. In fact I find that you no longer enjoy the confidence of Shuklaji[2]. If that is correct I regard it as useless for you to remain in the Cabinet. There can be no question of your going away to Pakistan. But if God's will is otherwise that is quite a different matter. The times are very delicate. Do not rely upon newspapers. Appeal only to God for justice and go on doing your duty. Do whatever service you are assigned. What have Dada Dharmadhikari and others to say?

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. HASSAN
NAGPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

13. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 29, 1947

My reference to the possibility of a war between the two sister Dominions seems, I am told, to have produced a scare in the West. I do not know what reports were sent out by newspaper correspondents. Summaries are always a dangerous enterprise except when they truly

[1] Minister, Medical and Public Health, Central Provinces
[2] Ravi Shankar Shukla, Chief Minister, Central Provinces

reflect the speaker's opinion. An unwarranted summary of a pamphlet[1] I had written about South Africa in 1896 nearly cost me my life. It was so hopelessly unwarranted that within twenty-four hours of my being lynched, European opinion in South Africa was turned from anger into contrition that an innocent man was made to suffer for no fault that he had committed. The moral I wish to draw from the foregoing version is that no one should be held responsible for what he has not said or done.

I hold that not a single mention of war in my speeches can be interpreted to mean that there was any incitement to or approval of war between Pakistan and the Union unless mere mention of it is to be taboo. We have among us the superstition that the mere mention of a snake ensures its appearance in the house in which the mention is made even by a child. I hope no one in India entertains such superstition about war.

I claim that I rendered a service to both the sister States by examining the present situation and definitely stating when the cause of war could arise between the two States. This was done not to promote war but to avoid it as far as possible. I endeavoured, too, to show that if the insensate murders, loot and arson by people continued, they would force the hands of their Governments. Was it wrong to draw public attention to the logical steps that inevitably followed one after another?

India knows, the world should, that every ounce of my energy has been and is being devoted to the definite avoidance of fratricide culminating in war. When a man vowed to non-violence as the law governing human beings dares to refer to war, he can only do it so as to strain every nerve to avoid it. Such is my fundamental position from which I hope never to swerve even to my dying day.

Harijan, 12-10-1947

[1]Green Pamphlet; *vide* "The Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa: An Appeal to the Indian Public", 14-8-1896.

14. NOTE TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

[*September 29, 1947*][1]

So far as the war is concerned my speeches have been quite clear. The summaries sent to America and elsewhere may be quite the contrary of what I might have said. I shall deal with the question more fully in my written speech today. As to the deteriorating situation I have told you quite firmly that you should dispense with Sardar, or he you. He won't shoulder the burden without you, hence you should take it up and reform the Cabinet with one mind. Rajen Babu should give up food portfolio. He will do so gladly.

I have always looked upon the wholesale accessions of States with suspicion. They are probably a liability rather than an asset. This sums up my reaction. We may discuss these things more fully when I can speak.

Jawaharlal Nehru Papers (Undated). Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

15. TELEGRAM TO SUDHIR GHOSH

September 30, 1947

SUDHIR GHOSH
CARE HICOMIND
LONDON

PARTISAN SUMMARY DANGEROUS.[2] AM QUITE FIRM ON NON-VIOLENCE. GLAD SHANTI[3] SUCCEEDED. LOVE.

BAPU

Sudhir Ghosh Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] From the reference to the "written speech today" in which Gandhiji clarified his stand on the war; *vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 29-9-1947.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] The addressee's wife, who was doing a post-graduate course in medicine in London

16. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 30, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

It seems to me that we have all become savages. Both Hindus and Muslims have turned savage. Who can determine who has committed more crimes and who has committed less? We cannot go into these details. The Government should try to recall the refugees from Pakistan, which can be done only in consultation with the Government there. There are so many complications. The Government is there to solve those complications. The Government should look after its people or resign. I have no doubt at all about it. Today our Government is something which we can strengthen or bring down. That is democracy. People themselves should remain under control and exercise restraint. They must know the meaning of discipline and observe it. If they do not do this, they become worthless. We must learn this thing if we want to stick to our duty. We must inculcate this in our children from the time they start showing some understanding. You must tell your children that the place of religion is in their hearts and it is not in your power to protect it. You must tell them that you are their father and as their father you have to give them that training. I have taught my children that they must protect their own religion. One of my sons[1] is in South Africa. Another[2] is drinking away somewhere. I do not even know his whereabouts. One son[3] is at Nagpur eking out his living with great difficulty. One son[4] is here. I cannot say that he is earning his livelihood with difficulty. Shall I keep worrying about the religion of each one of them? I am not worrying. why should I? They are all grown up. I could protect their religion if they were young. And that too in what manner? I would tell them that if they were true Hindus they must have the courage to die for their religion, they could not save it by killing. Now suppose one boy is having a lathi and another a revolver. The boy having the revolver would kill the boy with the

[1] Manilal Gandhi
[2] Harilal Gandhi
[3] Ramdas Gandhi
[4] Devdas Gandhi

lathi. But that is not the way to save religion. Why? As the boy with the lathi is killed his relatives appear. The boy with the revolver being alone brings his revolver, or a brengun or a stengun. And the people on the opposite side would bring ten stenguns. They would force him to embrace Islam or Christianity and threaten him with their numbers and warn him that his weapons would not save him. And then, although frightened, he would cry out that despite the compulsion he would still consider his religion dearer to him than his life.

Following any religion means belonging to God. The same thing happened in the case of Prahlad. He used to repeat the name of Rama. His father said he should stop it, but Prahlad replied that he could utter no other name. There is a beautiful *bhajan* about it: Prahlad writes the name of Rama while his guru is dictating another name. He says that he can write no other name and he knows no other name. It is a very sweet *bhajan*. Prahlad says that his pen can shape no other name. It is said that Prahlad was a mere boy of twelve. Well, that twelve-year-old boy opposed his father and saved his religion. I need not describe how he protected his religion. All Hindus are familiar with the story. But the important thing is that he could protect his religion all by himself. Innumerable instances of this kind can be found in all religions. Now we have our boys and girls. If one believes that woman is weak, I would say that no woman in the world is weak. All are strong. All those who have firm faith in their religion are strong, not weak. So I would suggest that we should first teach our boys and girls that they are not weak. Children have their religion to strengthen them. When people come to me I tell them that the Government should do everything in its power. But it would be wrong to think that unless the Government did something everybody would be converted to Islam. Millions of Muslims are living in India today. It should be carefully considered who they are. Not many of them have come from Arabia. Those who came from Arabia did not constitute the millions. Those millions who became Muslims were all Hindus. Or, say, they were Buddhists. What is the difference between Buddhists and Hindus? In my view there is no difference. Should we not have proper knowledge as to who inhabited Afghanistan? Badshah Khan told me that the Afghans were originally Buddhists and later embraced Islam. But, for that matter, have they forgotten their ancient culture? How could they forget? He told me that even the names of their villages were orginally in Sanskrit. They have changed their names, dress and everything else; but they could not change what was

lying deep within. How could they forget it? And then, whether in Madras or Bengal or anywhere else, they were all Hindus. You ask them as I ask myself, why they chose to embrace Islam. I am to be blamed for their conversion to Islam. I must do penance; you must, too. Of course, if they have done the correct thing and accepted a religion which is nobler than Hinduism, then let us follow in their footsteps, recite the *Kalma*, swear by Islam and raise the cry for the victory of Islam! But nothing like that happened. Whom then shall we beat up and whom shall we drive out? They are our own people. They were all Hindus at the time of our grandfathers and great grandfathers, say, four generations ago, and got converted to Islam. I have gone round all over the country and reminded the Hindus of their wickedness in considering untouchability part of their religion. What has been the result? One part of our community has become the fifth *varna*. Originally there were four *varnas* and we made them five and considered the fifth *varna* as *Ati-Shudras*. We kept the fifth *varna* segregated from us. We kept their food separate and declared that they could not live in our midst. We decided to treat them as our slaves. Later they turned to Islam. So all of them were not originally Muslims. Later on some Brahmins also were converted to Islam. Quite a few of them also came from among Kshatriyas as also Vaishyas. But their number was very small. I have shown you how the present crores of Muslims had embraced Islam. Untouchability drove them to Islam. Today we are creating such uproar in India and want to beat up and harass the Muslims and drive them out of the country by any means. No one ever bothers to think from where they should be driven out and where they should be pushed out. We must realize that when someone is attacked and forced into accepting Islam, afterwards he is doomed for no fault of his. But I move about among Muslims and my Muslim friends tell me that Islam has never advocated forcible conversion. People may accept it voluntarily. They may be made aware of the greatness of Islam. But they cannot be brought to accept Islam by cheating or by paying money. The Muslims in this country are all our blood-brothers. That is why I say that we must act only after careful thought. We must consider why they were drawn to Islam. Did they accept Islam for money? Even if you want to earn money or do anything else, go anywhere in the world, you take your religion with you. If you discard religion, you have discarded everything. I want to tell you only one thing and it is that we should not try to kill any Muslim. Let them kill if they want. If they kill that

is bad. We would consider them bad. But if they are bad, why should we be bad in return? We can return their wickedness with goodness. If they drink liquor, should we also do the same? I would call upon all Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs to come to their senses and see what religion teaches. As Iqbal said, "religion does not teach mutual hatred". When Iqbal said this he was in London. He was a great poet. He had come to attend the Round Table Conference. I was invited to a dinner arranged in his honour. I went for the dinner. He said that he was a Brahmin? Why was he a Brahmin? Because his forefathers were Brahmins. Where did they live? In Kashmir. He said he belonged to Kashmir and was a Brahmin who was converted to Islam. They were all converted to Islam not recently but long ago. But they had Brahmin blood and Islamic culture in them. So Iqbal said that religion did not teach us to hate one another. Afterwards he wrote many other things but that is another matter. Now Iqbal is no more. But let us learn at least this much, that our religion does not teach us hatred. That is why I would like to call upon you to be human. If we become human, we raise the stock of India. Today we are bringing the country down. God forbid that we should bring about India's downfall.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 360-5

17. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

Morning: 4.45, October 1, 1947

CHI. KANTI,

The description you give is interesting. It was well done. Let Saru[1] gain experience in jail. Explain this to her. Perhaps you have already done so. Going to jail is not an absolute duty. If the cause is just and if one has the right to offer satyagraha,
one may plunge into it. I know that Saru has it. I see in your action both modesty and wisdom.

Your first argument is generally correct. One can conceive of circumstances in which, even though no constructive work may have been done, it may be one's duty to offer satyagraha. Whether or not that is so in the present case can be judged only after examining the local circumstances.

[1] Saraswati, addressee's wife, was undergoing one month's imprisonment for participating in the agitation for self-government in Mysore State.

The second argument is perfectly correct.

The third also is correct. As regards the fourth, if the facts are as stated by you they are terrible.

Do not give publicity to these views. One must not confuse [people's] judgment.

I am of the opinion that khadi workers today lack both purity of character and intelligence.

I am returning your questions, thinking that you might not remember what they were.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS]

Herewith a letter for Saru[1] and your questions.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7386. Courtesy: Kanti Gandhi

18. LETTER TO SARASWATI GANDHI

October 1, 1947

CHI. SARU,

I am writing this early in the morning. It is good that you went to jail. Kanti has given me a detailed account. I am happy. You seem to be spending your time properly even in jail. All three of you are rising higher.

I didn't have your letter, if you had written one from the jail.

A person undergoing imprisonment would prove himself qualified to court imprisonment if he stopped thinking of the outside world.

How can I have time to write other things?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the following item.

19. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

October 1, 1947

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your frank letter. You have done well to write about yourself. To me it is a great thing that you have developed confidence in yourself. It will be enough if you improve your health. Happiness in the first place consists in keeping oneself healthy. But only if the term "Oneself" is interpreted in the widest sense is this statement true. If it is interpreted too narrowly, only damnation will result.

I write this after the morning prayer.

You are fully entitled to write to me as you did concerning my fast; but you have not thought over it deeply. You might have had doubts about my earlier fasts, but you should not have the slightest doubt about the recent one. Even my opponents have welcomed it. No one has been compelled to do anything for fear of my death. The fast awakened their goodness. What dharma is it to behave as a brute towards a brute? The country and Hindu dharma are declining because of what is happening today. Think over this and write to me if you feel like it. I hope all of you are all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

20. LETTER TO DR. JOHN MOTT[1]

NEW DELHI,

October 1, 1947

DEAR DR. MOTT,

I got the sixth volume of your speeches and your letter yesterday for which many thanks.

I often wonder if we all don't speak and write much and do little.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Dr. John R. Mott; American evangelist; Chairman, International Missionary Council

21. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

October 1, 1947

CHI. MANILAL,

I got your letter and liked it very much. You are progressing.

I very much like your dietetic experiments. It is difficult to say just now how far your progress in these experiments will take you.

What you say regarding Sita seems correct to me. But it is no use worrying about it, let alone being angry. When children grow up, they may do what they like. Why may we not hope that Sita will wake up one day and understand the truth?[1]

But Sushila must have arrived there now. She will tell you everything and I hope that will calm you down. Sita seems to be lost to me. She does not write to me at all.

I hope Sushila's arrival there has lightened your burden.

Sushila Pai or somebody else will give you the rest of the news.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5014

22. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 1, 1947

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter and sent a prompt reply[2] by wire after which I passed on your letter to the Sardar. The concerned department is with him, and he believes that your going at present will be of no benefit. You should, therefore, watch things for the time being and in no way actively participate in whatever may happen. If I alone were to consider it I would welcome the step you contemplate. But now the powers that be are our own people. Hence there can be no occasion to oppose the Government and do something so soon.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Sita Gandhi", 23-7-1947 and "Letter to Sita Gandhi", 28-7-1947.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Narandas Gandhi", 29-9-1947.

23. LETTER TO ANANTRAI P. PATTANI

[*October 1, 1947*][1]

CHI. ANANTRAI,

I have your wire. You sent a similar one to the Sardar, which was quite right. Now that the whole administration has come into India's hands, let us caution the person in charge of the department concerned. That should suffice. Act as the Sardar advises.

Blessings from

BAPU

ANANTRAI PATTANI

BHAVNAGAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

24. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 1, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

A lady writes to me in a letter that she is desirous of doing service and her husband also wishes to do the same, but no one shows them the way. There are many people who pose such questions. I have given only one reply to all of them and it is that the scope for Government jobs is very limited whereas the scope for service is immense. Hence there is no need to ask anyone what should be done. Anyone who wishes to serve can do so. But we have become so helpless that we have to consult others. Shall I then tell you what they should do? After all, how much reputation does Delhi enjoy for being clean city? There are so many camps here, and I know how clean they are. People fall ill while they are there. It is equally filthy where there has been bloodshed and destruction of property. The Delhi Municipality has never been known for cleanliness. Had Delhi been a clean city the hearts of the people would have been clean too. Wherever we may be, if we keep our places clean, it will have its impact on the whole city. Let every man keep his own house, his own heart clean. I will tell that lady that if she is really keen to do service, not in name but in the true spirit of devotion, then there is ample

[1] The letter is placed in the source among those of this date.

scope for service in Delhi. She need not inform me anything about her work either. If she can work to clean the hearts of the people of Delhi, clean the hearts of all refugees here, then she will have done a great thing, and then, she and her husband will become an ideal couple. Others will start following their example.

I have just received two telegrams. One of the telegrams which is from a Muslim friend states that Indians used to be considered very sensible and that Hindus and Muslims were supposed to be living in amity. But now what has gone wrong that they cannot sit together and are fighting with each other, indulging in mutual killing and behaving as savages? Let us take the example of Delhi. The Hindus and Sikhs of Delhi are willing to accept the Muslims in their fold provided they declare their loyalty to the Indian Union. Those who wish to remain in the Indian Union, whether it is I or you or anybody else, have got to abide by this. This condition is applicable not only to the Muslims but to everybody. Then, the Muslims possess plenty of arms. Quite a large stock of these arms has been recovered. But not all arms have yet been surrendered. Searches are going on with the help of the police. But everything cannot come out with the help of the police. So, if they are honest at heart and do not wish to fight against India, they should be loyal to the Union. They should even fight any Muslim power attacking India. And if they do not wish to fight against India, why do they need the arms? There are very few Christians here, but they too would have to fight on behalf of the Union in the event of a war with another country like Germany or any other Christian country and will have to remain loyal to the country. If the Muslims are loyal and they have no intention of fighting against India, why do they need the arms? They must voluntarily surrender their arms. This is all very well. But the way this was said contained poison. Today there are nearly 50,000 Muslims in the camps. We have driven them out of Delhi. Some have been killed. However brave a person may be, he does not welcome death. Somebody may want to do business or something else. He takes comfort in the fact that he will at least be alive. Where could they go after running away? So they have taken shelter in the Purana Quila, and on the grounds near Humayun's tomb. They get wet in the rain and have to face a lot of hardship. The are not able to have proper medical aid also. Dr. Sushila Nayyar gives me the report of their condition. She gives them four hours every day. There are many pregnant women among the refugees. Those women have to be delivered, for which some nurses are required. Also some

medicines and many other things are needed. All these things take time to arrange. Why are those people living in such a condition? The Hindus say they have driven them out and they have done nothing wrong in doing that. They say that they can be brought back provided they become loyal to the country. I say that they can be brought back only when their hearts become clean. Granting that the Muslims are not loyal to the country and they refuse to surrender arms, does it mean that they should be slaughtered? There are 400 to 450 million Muslims in India. Out of these, suppose one lakh or even one crore have hidden arms in their houses. Is your army, your police, not powerful enough to unearth those arms from their houses? The police does not belong to the British nowadays. You must realize what would be the outcome of slaughtering the Muslims, killing their children and their women. I have already told you that we have fallen. We became an independent nation on August 15 when we celebrated our Independence Day. For a few days after that we all lived like brothers. Everything seemed well at that moment. But today we have forgotten that we are brothers. If they are killing us, the blame lies with the Muslim League. There was anger at heart. But in the glow of independence we forgot that they were our enemies at one time. I witnessed this in Calcutta. That was the condition all over the country. But that spirit disappeared later and they were ready to slaughter the Hindus and the Sikhs and drive them away.

I have already said that along with those two conditions if we add one more condition, we can carry on our work in peace. That condition is that we shall not take the law into our hands. It is not up to us to punish them. We admit that we had lost our senses. I agree that the Muslim League was the first to be unreasonable. As I have already said, let us show goodness in a greater measure than they do. But if we try to compete with them in wickedness, it would bring about our downfall as well as theirs. If they are doing wrong things our Government will set it right. If any of our people are in Pakistan, whether Hindus, Sikhs or Christians, who are in a minority over there and are not well protected, if they are slaughtered and their daughters are kidnapped, if they are being deprived of their property or forcibly converted to Islam, our Government will take up the matter with Pakistan. Who are we to retaliate? I begin to think that there are some amongst us who are really murderers. I do not quite know who they are, but they are definitely there, and are working to carry out pre-planned murders, arson and forcible occupation of buildings. I do not

know where they are but if they do these things, that is sure to bring about our downfall. That is why we have got to admit that it is foolishness [to retaliate in this manner]. Let us rid ourselves of that unreasonableness and bring back the people who are there. The Government has to see that Pakistan requests all those to come back who have suffered in Pakistan and who have been ruined. And all those who have their properties in Lahore should get them back. They have to be returned the houses which have been confiscated. What wonderful buildings I have seen there? And what about all those educational institutions for girls? Nowhere in India are there greater educational facilities than in Lahore. Lahore used to lead in the field of education. Where is that Lahore today? The Government at Lahore has played no part nor given any financial aid in building all those institutions. The people of the Punjab come of a sturdy stock. They are business-minded and produce wealth. There are great bankers there who know how to spend money as well as earn it. I have seen all that with my own eyes. They have built all those buildings, all those colleges for men and women, and then all those grand hospitals and they should be returned to them. A whole caravan extending to fifty miles is moving on. Those people are in a bad state. We stop being barbarians if we pass on the responsibility of taking counter-measures to the Government. I have already told you this. I have received a telegram from the Muslims living abroad.[1] They ask why people have lost their reason. They say that we should all live like brothers. They say that even though they are Muslims they do not wish to fight—Islam does not teach that. I have already said that you should wake up. And let me tell you that you may or may not accept what I say, but I do not wish to be a witness to these things. I do not wish to see such a downfall. My only prayer to God is that He should take me away before that happens. If the situation does not improve, the terrible fire raging in my heart will consume me. My heart tells me that I shall gain nothing by seeing such a thing. I tried to sacrifice my life for India's freedom. I did not lose my life; but freedom came. But what is the point of remaining alive to see this happening in the wake of freedom? So I pray to God day and night that He should take me away. Or He should give me the power to extinguish this fire.

There is a hospital in Delhi where a large number of wounded Muslims are kept. Not all the inmates of that hospital are Muslims.

[1] From Amman and another place in Middle East

There are some Hindus too. Somebody assaulted and tried to kill those Muslims. There is some group which has come from a village. The members of the group attacked not from the doors, but from small windows and fled after killing four or five patients. I do not know of a greater act of barbarism than this. Such a thing does not happen even during a war. Often hospitals have been bombarded during wars but such a thing has never happened.

And let me tell you another thing. When a train arrives five persons fling a man out of the window as if he were a piece of luggage. He is bound to die. This is what happened today but what I said about that hospital happened yesterday, or maybe the day before yesterday. Who should hang his head in shame for that? You and I and all Hindus must hang our heads in shame. I understand Muslims also are accused of similar crimes. Let the Government demand an explanation for what is happening in West Punjab.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 365-70

25. DISCUSSION WITH DOCTORS

[*October 2, 1947*][1]

Doctors pressed him to take penicillin but Gandhiji refused.[2] Ramanama was his penicillin, he said. He would rather fall a martyr to his researches in the science of Ramanama than a casualty to theirs. The doctors argued: Science had definitely established that there are specific causes for specific ailments. You eradicate the cause and the disease goes. On the other hand, anyone can be given cholera by introducing cholera germs into his system. The laws of science are inviolable.

GANDHIJI: I call this arrogance. Science has yet much to learn. It has so far touched only the hem of the garment. All illness is the result of the violation of the laws of nature, in other words, the penalty of sin against Him—since He and His law are one. Therefore, when Ramanama holds full sway, all illness vanishes. People have no idea of the full potency of Ramanama. I am out to demonstrate it. I must wish to live only to serve Him and live, therefore, through His grace alone. I have plunged into this fire to discover the science of Ramanama just as a doctor or a scientist rushes into an area where an epidemic is raging to discover the laws of physical science. I must discover it or perish in the attempt.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 455

[1] From *Dilhiman Gandhiji*—I

[2] Gandhiji was suffering from a severe attack of cough and flu.

26. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 2, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

A Sikh gentleman came to look me up today. He said that somebody had remarked to him that it was all right that I had narrated the words of Guru Arjun Dev, but what did I have to say about the changes made in those words by Guru Govind Singh? History says that Guru Govind Singh was a born enemy of the Muslims. But there is no reason to believe in any such thing, because the 10th Guru almost repeated the words of Guru Arjun Dev. And as for Guru Nanak, he recognized no distinction between the Hindus, the Muslims and the Sikhs. It is all the same whether one worships in the temple or says *namaaz*. If a Brahmin offers *puja*, it does not mean that the person belonging to other religion curses God. Instead the Muslims say *namaaz*. *Puja* and *namaaz* are one and the same. All human beings are the same, though their languages are different. Guru Govind Singh has said that all human beings are essentially one and their manifestations are many. If that is so, I believe that we are all one and also many. Though we appear different we are essentially one. There are crores of individuals but they have the same human nature. Guru Govind Singh has said that there is "the same air, the same body, the same word." Then he says that whether called a god or a demon, a Yaksha or a Gandharva or a Turk, they are only different forms. That is exactly what Guru Govind Singh says: "There are many forms to be seen but in essence they are the same." Words mean the speech. And speech is only one. And the sun is one. Can you say that there is one sun for the Muslims and another sun for us? It is the same sun for all of us. He says the air and water are also the same for everybody. The Ganga as it flows does not forbid a Turk from taking its water. Nor do the clouds that shower water say that they are bringing water not for the Muslims or the Parsis but only for the Hindus. It is not as if the Union Government was meant only for the Hindus. That can never happen. Whether you mention the Koran or the *Gita* or the *Puranas* it is all the same. Only the forms are different. If you write in Arabic you say it is the Koran. And then you write in Sanskrit or in the Devanagari script but if you understand well what is written, you will find it is the same thing. So he ends by saying that we are all one. That is what Guru Govind Singh has taught. I told

the gentleman that even if Guru Govind Singh had been an enemy of the Muslims, it was a wrong thing. In the event of war both the Hindus and the Muslims died and got wounded. But a sensible disciple of the Guru Saheb supplied water to the soldiers who were alive. He gave water to the Hindus, the Muslims and the Sikhs. He said it was the teaching of Guru Maharaj that there were neither Muslims nor Sikhs nor Hindus; they were only human beings and whoever needed water had to be provided. Surely Guru Maharaj did not say that if the wounded person was a Hindu he should be given medical aid and if he happened to be a Muslim he should be left unattended? He said that Guruji had fought against the Muslims. So he did, but he fought against those Muslims who had abandoned the path of justice, and who had given up their religion. He was a man given to charity, he was unattached, he was an incarnation of God. For him there was no question of whether people belonged or did not belong to him. But there is no doubt that he did defend himself and he did fight. It would be a mistake on the part of Sikhs to claim to be non-violent. They keep *kirpans*. But Guruji taught that the *kirpan* is meant for the protection of the innocent. It is meant to fight against the tyrant who harasses people. The *kirpan* is not meant for killing old women. It is not meant for killing women and children, the innocent who are not guilty. That is not the function of the *kirpan*. The *kirpan* would be thrust into the belly of one who is guilty whether he is a Muslim or anybody else or even a Sikh whose guilt has been proved. The way people pull out their *kirpans* these days is an act of barbarism. It would not be wrong to deprive these people of their *kirpans*, because they have given up their religion. The Sikhs have abused the *kirpan*.

Today is my birthday.[1] I do not celebrate my birthday in the usual way. I would say that on this day we must fast, spin and pray. That, in my view, is the most appropriate way of celebrating one's birthday. For me today is the day of mourning. I am surprised and also ashamed that I am still alive. I am the same person whose word was honoured by the millions of the country. But today nobody listens to me. You want only the Hindus to remain in India and say that none else should be left behind. You may kill the Muslims today; but what will you do tomorrow? What will happen to the Parsis and the Christians and then to the British? After all, they are also Christians. They have faith in Christ and are surely not Hindus. At present we

[1] *Vide* Appendix "Note on Gandhiji's 78th birthday", after 25-9-1947.

have some Muslims in our midst who belong to us. If we are ready to kill them, let me tell you that I am not for it. Ever since I came to India I have made it my profession to work for communal harmony, and I wish that though our religions are different we may live in amity like brothers. But today we seem to have become enemies. We assert that there can never be an honest Muslim. A Muslim always remains a worthless fellow. In such a situation, what place do I have in India and what is the point of my being alive? I have now stopped thinking about living for 125 years. I have stopped thinking in terms of 100 or even 90 years. I am entering my 79th year today; but even that pains me. I would tell those who understand me—and there are quite a few who do understand—that we should give up such bestiality. I am not worried about what the Muslims do in Pakistan. It is not that the Muslims become great by killing the Hindus they only become brutes. But does it mean that I should also become a beast, a barbarian, insensitive? I would stoutly refuse to do any such thing and I must ask you too not to do so. If you really want to celebrate my birthday, it is your duty not to let anyone be possessed by madness and if there is any anger in your hearts you must remove it. I would appeal to the people not to take the law into their hands but leave it to the Government to decide the issue. If you remember this much, I would consider it a good act on your part. This is all I wish to tell you.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 371-4

27. OUTRAGEOUS ANALOGY

A correspondent, who from his name appears to have Hindi as his mother tongue, writes thus in English:

> This is with reference to your many and continued appeals to treat Muslims as brothers and guarantee their safety so that they do not migrate from here to Pakistan. A man was walking along one cold day, when he came across a snake lying frozen with the cold. Taking pity on the reptile, he picked it up and thinking to give it warmth, put it in his pocket. The warmth soon revived the snake, and the first thing it did was to dig its poisonous fangs into his saviour and kill him.

Anger has betrayed this correspondent into an outrageous analogy. To liken a human being, however degraded he may be, to a snake to justify inhuman treatment, is surely a degrading performance. To damn crores of human beings for the faults of a few or many belonging to a particular faith seems to me to be the height of madness. The correspondent should also remember that I have known rabidly fanatical Muslims to use the very analogy in respect of Hindus. No Hindu would like to be regarded as a snake.

To treat a man as a brother is not to say that he should be trusted even when he is proved untrustworthy. And is it not a sign of cowardice to kill a man and his family for fear that he may prove untrustworthy? Picture a society in which every man is permitted to judge his fellow. Yet that is the state to which we are being reduced in some parts of India.

Lastly, let me, for the sake of snake-kind, correct a common error [and say] that eighty snakes out of every hundred are perfectly harmless and they render useful service in nature.

NEW DELHI, October 3, 1947

Harijan, 12-10-1947

28. APT LINES

A friend sends the following apt lines from George Matheson:

It is by my fetters that I can fly;

It is by my sorrows that I can soar;

It is by my reverses that I can run;

It is by my tears that I can travel;

It is by my Cross that I can climb into the heart of humanity;

Let me magnify my Cross, O God!

NEW DELHI, October 3, 1947

Harijan, 12-10-1947

29. LETTER TO RANCHHODDAS PATWARI

October 3, 1947

RESPECTED RANCHHODBHAI[1],

I read your letter after the morning prayer, that is, at 4.30 a. m.

May you live long. For myself, I have now given up that desire. I can't bear to see Hinduism being destroyed by Hindus. Even the so-called Mahatma seems to have become an *alpatma*[2] today.

What *adharma* it is that people like you believe it to be dharma to prevent by legislation the killing of cows by others, while Hindus themselves continue to kill them.

I like what you say regarding the well.

Pranams from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5015

[1] Gandhiji's family friend who helped him to go to England for his studies. *Vide* "Letter to Ranchhoddas Patwari", 11-1-1933.

[2] Small soul

30. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

October 3, 1947

CHI. SHYAMLAL,

Sushila Pai has left for Bombay today. She hopes to reach Sevagram on *Bhadrapad Krishna* 12 after a halt of a day or two at Bombay. I had a talk with Bapa[1]. His demand is that for the time being, say, for a year, she should hold the post of acting . . .[2] in place of Suchetabehn[3]. I have discussed the matter with her and she has agreed to devote a year. We shall have to arrange for her accommodation.

I would say that we ought to pay her as much as we were paying Suchetabehn. I should have discussed this point but I forgot it. It was casually mentioned, I do not remember it. It was only this morning that we could have a proper talk but then we talked about some spiritual matters. Sushilabehn has talked over the subject with Suchetabehn at great length. She has no preference as to where she should be lodged as she does not know Wardha so well. If there is room enough in Bajajwadi to accommodate her, and if she can also have some privacy, I would consider it excellent. If this is not possible she could probably be accommodated in the Mahila Ashram or Kakawadi. I cannot give any definite advice, you have to think over the matter yourself.

Copies have been sent to Sushila Pai and Bapa.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] A. V. Thakkar, Secretary, Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust

[2] Illegible in the source

[3] Sucheta Kripalani, Organizing Secretary, Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust

31. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 3, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I find satyagraha being carried on in many places in the country. I really wonder if what people describe as satyagraha is satyagraha or *duragraha*. What is happening in the country is that people talk of one thing and act quite to the contrary. Today every employee, whether belonging to the Post Office or the Telegraph Office, or the Railways or to the Indian States, must examine wherever he is trying to offer satyagraha, whether it stands for truth or untruth. If it is for untruth, there is no need to offer it and if it is for truth it should surely be offered under all circumstances. Whatever is done with a selfish motive cannot be called satyagraha. That would be like insisting on untruth. I have explained quite a few conditions for satyagraha. I have said that two things are essential in satyagraha. One is that the point on which we insist should be truth and another that our insistence should be necessarily non-violent.

Those who are carrying on satyagraha today should act with due deliberation. If the basic thing is not truth and there is recourse to force in pressing for the demand, then it would be well to give it up. If the thing is poisonous, if it is *duragraha* and an untruth and if we go on demanding what we possibly cannot get, then let me tell you that we cannot remain non-violent in making such a demand. This cannot be non-violence, it is only violence. It is impossible that anyone should make an unjust demand and at the same time claim to be non-violent.

If I am in charge of the refugee camps I would tell the people living in those camps that they must clean their places themselves. Should they only play cards and dice and gamble or simply remain idle? I know there is not enough food and water for them. But if for that reason they start refusing to do any work, they will fall a prey to vices. And then there are not just half a dozen persons in those camps. Thousands are living in those camps. No one can say when they will be able to return to their homes. We shall certainly provide food for them; but let them at least do some work to earn it.

They can start by cleaning their camps and then offer to do other jobs like spinning, weaving, carpentry, smithery, tailoring, etc.

There are plenty of things one can find to do in India. These people may have been millionaires yesterday; but today they have lost their millions. Such things happen often in the world. Then it becomes necessary to begin afresh and start working. If somebody comes and says that he was once a millionaire and cannot work, all our plans will be upset. We cannot then succeed. Very respectfully I would like to say that we cannot proceed that way. Whatever work we carry on should be ideal from every point of view. It should be clean and there should be nothing shoddy. Let me tell you that our difficulties are likely to be solved to a great extent if people do their own work. And if we get absorbed in our work our anger will also subside. The desire for revenge in our hearts will also die out. Goodness lies in recognizing evil as evil and then meeting it with goodwill. Therein lies the good of the country. We will not inflict suffering on anyone but will try to make others happy by undergoing hardships ourselves. If we do this, we shall be acting not only for the good of India but of the world. Today the world is watching how India is conducting herself. Now is the real moment of our test. We have attained independence. What are we going to do now?

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 374-6

32. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

October 4, 1947

CHI. AMALA,

I got your postcard. I suppose one may say you have at last settled down now.

I am pulling on somehow.

Abha, Manu, Dr. Sushila and Rajkumari are doing very well.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SPIEGEL
PRINCIPAL
MAHARANI HIGH SCHOOL
BARODA

From Gujarati: Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

33. LETTER TO AVANTIKABAI GOKHALE

October 4, 1947

CHI. AVANTIKABEHN,

How is it that you have cancer? I learnt about it only from your letter. Is there any hope of its being cured? Please write to me in detail.

Why do you remember the dhotis even now? You have observed the rule[1] long enough. Overcome that attachment now.

I hope Baban Gokhale[2] is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Adarsh Hind Mahila, p. 1

34. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

NEW DELHI,
October 4, 1947

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. You are not to worry on my account. I have pointed out to you your dharma. It will be enough if you observe it. My health continues to be as it has been. There is no cause for anxiety.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee used to send dhotis to Gandhiji on his birthday.
[2] Addressee's husband

35. LETTER TO KAILAS NATH KATJU

NEW DELHI,
October 4, 1947

BHAI KAILAS NATH KATJU[1] ,

I heard attentively both your articles read out to me, but as I am their subject how can I reproduce them in *Harijan?* Nowadays even praise of any kind hurts me like poison. We have become like beasts.

I asked Dr. Jivraj about your blood-pressure. He suggests that you should take *sarpagandha.* The *sarpagandha* extract is available at the Tropical Medicine School in Calcutta. Would you like me to send it from my stock? Is it not a *sevak's* dharma to keep his body healthy?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

36. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 4, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

How can I convince you that all these things that are happening today would not have happened if we had not lost our heads. I have no doubt about it at all. Because the Muslims have lost their senses, the refugees are fleeing Pakistan. Why should the Hindus leave that country if they were comfortable there? Why should they run away from West Punjab? It is indeed tragic that people are running away from other parts of Pakistan as well. We should give thought to why the Hindus are running away. Suppose that the Muslims there have become tyrants, should we, in turn, become tyrants too? Should we take the law into our hands and kill the young and the old, women and children because the Muslims are killing them there? I have repeatedly stated that that is the law of the jungle. I cannot remain alive while such a law prevails. So far I had been praying to God that He may keep me alive for 125 years so that I could render some more

[1] Governor of Orissa, 1947; later Central Minister of Home and Defence; Chief Minister, Madhya Pradesh

service to the country. And I can rest in peace only when the Kingdom of God, *Ramarajya,* prevails in the country. Then only I can say that India has become truly independent. But today it has become a mere dream. Let alone *Ramarajya,* at present there is no rule whatever in the country. What can a man like me do under these circumstances? If this situation cannot be improved, my heart cries out and prays to God, that He should take me away immediately. Why should I remain a witness to these things? And if He wishes that I should remain alive, I appeal to Him at least to grant me the strength I once possessed. I used to take pride that I could convince the people. Formerly when I went to the people and warned them against doing something, they listened to me. Such was their love for me. I would not say that people love me less today. But whether it is more or less it should be followed by action. And it is action that is lacking. Hence I would say that my influence is on the wane. My work went on well while were in bondage. But I am not able to do anything now when we are independent. I could teach the same lesson to our people today which I did then. If you can heed that advice today, we can go very far.

What I wanted to tell you was that for you the days of winter are coming. As for me, you see this shawl brought by these girls lest I catch a chill. I have got some cough too. But there is much improvement and this cotton wrap is sufficient for the time being. But what about all those refugees in the camps and in the Purana Quila? You can ask why you should give [blankets] for the Muslims, but I cannot think that way. For me Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians are all the same. I cannot make any distinction. What will happen to all those people in this winter? If you tell me that it is the job of the Government to give them blankets, I would say that the Government cannot do so. The Government will make all efforts, but where is the stock? From where will the Government produce the blankets? It is not true that it can easily procure them. Today things are not available even in Europe or in the United States. Nobody can send us anything from there. Even if someone sends ten or twenty thousand blankets out of pity, what purpose will be served by them? We have to provide blankets to lakhs of people. How can everyone get it? I would like to tell all those who are present here that it is not proper that all those people should suffer the rigours of winter. At the same time you cannot pass on all your blankets to them. But I know there are a number of people among us who have many more blankets than they

need. There are a large number of poor people in Delhi who can hardly afford to have blankets. Give as many blankets as you can spare. You can start giving things like this from today. You should not wait and think that since the Government is doing something you need do nothing. The cold has already started though it is still bearable. But when I had gone to the Viceregal Lodge after [September][1] 17, I found the fire already ablaze in the fire-place. That was because it had already become cold and Delhi winter is such that it is more than one can bear. The cold increases rapidly from October onwards and becomes severe. November, December, January and February, are the pleasant months of winter. Those who have plenty to eat and piles of clothes and who can go about heavily clothed, can wear boots and socks, can afford to call the winter months pleasant. But I am a witness to what happens to those who do not have these things. You too may be a witness to that. Hence I would say that we should try to save as many of such people as possible. It is possible that those who have clothes for winter may not have woollen blankets. Even if there are no woollen blankets there may be at least some quilts. A thick cotton sheet is good enough. If it is in good shape you can bring that too. Even a thick, heavy sheet used in olden days, can serve the purpose. A thick khadi sheet would do. I do not want any other clothes. It may be a woollen wrap, or a quilt or a thick khadi sheet—let me have whatever you can easily spare. You must give these things on your own. If you start sending things, somebody will be in charge of collecting them. I am not going to take charge of them personally. Nor will these things rot in the godowns or be delivered to undeserving persons. I assure you that whatever wraps and clothes you give will go only to the deserving men and women. I do hope you will not tell me that you are giving these things for the Hindus or the Sikhs. Human beings are all one. Let on one come and tell me later on that these things are not to be given to the Muslims. A large number of Muslims have been killed here and many have fled. We have driven them out. I do not know what property remains in the possession of those who have been left behind. If the Muslims remaining in India send the blankets to me and insist that they should be given to the Muslims I will give them to the Muslims. But I hope that all those who have been hearing my words and are going to hear me on the radio will not embarrass me. Let them rather tell me that

[1] The source has “October”.

they have dedicated those things to God. In that case, they will go to the deserving people. I hope and trust that you will do this much. If you do it, I will say that you have done a great thing. But do not send dirty and torn things that I may have to wash and darn. If the clothes are dirty, try to wash them before sending. Take that much trouble. There is no need to send them to the dhobi. You can wash them in plain water and bring them to me nicely wrapped. I shall be very glad if you should do that.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 367-80

37. NO DEPRESSION

This is from one of the many messages of birthday congratulations:

> May I suggest that the present situation should not depress you? In my opinion this is the final attempt of the forces of evil to foil the divine plan of India's contribution to the solution of the world's distress by way of non-violence. You are today the only instrument in the world to further the divine purpose.

This is a telegram sent more out of personal affection than knowledge. Let us see.

It is perhaps wrong to describe my present state of mind as depression. I have but stated a fact. I am not vain enough to think that the divine purpose can only be fulfilled through me. It is as likely as not that a fitter instrument will be used to carry it out and that I was good enough to represent a weak nation, not a strong one. May it not be that a man purer, more courageous, more far-seeing is wanted for the final purpose? This is all speculation. No one has the capacity to judge God. We are drops in that limitless ocean of mercy.

Without doubt the ideal thing would be neither to wish to live 125 years nor to wish to die now. Mine must be a state of complete resignation to the Divine Will. The ideal ceases to be that when it becomes real. All we can do is to make as near an approach to it as possible. This I am doing with as much energy as I can summon to my assistance.

If I had the impertinence openly to declare my wish to live 125 years, I must have the humility under changed circumstances openly to shed that wish. And I have done no more, no less. This has not been

done in a spirit of depression. The more apt term perhaps is helplessness. In that state I invoke the aid of the all-embracing Power to take me away from this "vale of tears" rather than make me a helpless witness of the butchery by man become savage, whether he dares to call himself a Muslim or a Hindu or what not. Yet I cry—"Not my will but Thine alone shall prevail."[1] If He wants me, He will keep me here on this earth yet awhile.

NEW DELHI, October 5, 1947

Harijan, 12-10-1927

38. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 5, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Let me first say something about my health because today also there is a mention in the Press about my illness. I do not know who has sent out that information. It cannot be by the doctors who are always around me. But innumerable visitors come here and see that I am having cough and occasional fever and they make mountains out of molehills. Why? I think they write about my health because, the Mahatma that I am, the news is spread throughout the world. What will happen if Gandhi dies? If everyone has to die, Gandhi has to die too. Nobody has come to this world with the gift of eternal life. I do have some cough and weakness. But what is the point in giving publicity to these in the Press? Let me tell you that those who gave out that information have done no good to me or to anyone else. As you see, I come here and also talk. Nothing comes in the way. I do hope people will refrain from doing any such thing.

The next thing is that I had requested[2] you yesterday to spare, if possible, blankets, quilts and such other coverings which will be useful in winter, which is fast approaching. Three persons have sent blankets today. Two of them are living in the nearby areas. I have forgotten their names, though. The two blankets sent by them are in a fairly good condition. There is another person whose name also I have forgotten. He has given ten blankets that can only be new. All these

[1] *St. Luke*, xxii. 42
[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 4-10-1947.

blankets are kept in safe custody as I told you yesterday. They will be given to deserving men and women. I hope that if you are convinced by what I have told you today you will give me whatever you can spare.

I have just received a telegram sent jointly by many persons. The telegram is lying right before me. I am not happy about the contents of the telegram. Of course they have every right to send such a telegram. The senders of the telegram say that if the Hindus had not behaved the way they did, I too would not have remained alive. This is a very serious thing. I acknowledge no other power except God that can keep me alive. I can remain alive as long as He wishes and no one can kill me till that moment. What is true for me is true for everybody. Why then should they write such a thing? I must admit that they have been inspired by love to write what they have written. But I firmly believe that God alone can keep me or anyone else alive.

These people proceed to say (they also mention some names which I want to omit) that I am too naive to continue to have faith in the Muslims. Not just one person but a large number join together to tell me that the Muslims are going to betray at the last moment. They say that they are going to side with Pakistan and fight against India to support Pakistan. They say that 98 out of every 100 Muslims are traitors. Let me tell you that I do not hold this view. These $4\frac{1}{2}$ crore Muslims, most of whom live in the villages and a few in the cities, have become Muslims from among us and they all cannot be traitors. Should we enter the house of each Muslim and finish him on the presumption that all Muslims are traitors and disarm each one of them? Their suggestion only implies that Muslims should all be finished or driven out from here. I would tell those friends that this is cowardice. I would stress only this, that supposing they are all like that, then prove it to the Government. Tell the Government to settle the matter. If we followed the suggestion of these friends the two communities would remain enemies, and the result would be only war. If both the sides insist on fighting, both are going to be destroyed and the freedom we have achieved will be lost. No Hindu can preserve his Hinduism by being servile to others. While the British were ruling over us we thought that our religion was being preserved. But that was a mistake.

When I was a child I read a poem by a very great poet who was blind. “Well, let us forget our animosities and live in peace, for , now,

the British have come." There was a time when we were fascinated by the British and felt ourselves safe under their protection. Let us rectify that mistake. Now if we become such cowards as to think of driving away $4\frac{1}{2}$ crore Muslims we will only prove ourselves to be feeble-minded. We will not save our religion by following such methods. I do not believe that Hindus and Muslims are born with a feeling of mutual animosity. If we become enemies, how can India survive? Are both Hindus and Muslims going to be enslaved again and are they going to forget their religions? How is it possible? It is our duty to furnish all the relevant information to the Government.

Let me tell you today that I meet and keep in touch with the Ministers. Panditji visits me almost every day. The Sardar also pays me almost daily visits, though not as often as Panditji does. But both of them come. They are both my friends and are with me. Both of them have even differed from me in all earnestness. I do not mean to say that I shall not be able to tell them anything. The Government has to protect all—Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians. Then only can they claim to be true Congressmen. The function of Hindu Mahasabha is to protect Hinduism. It is their job to protect the religion of the Sikhs and the Hindus and to overcome the forces of evil. Who else is going to do it? Can religion ever be saved through anybody's favour? If we ask someone to save our religion, we are only bargaining. We say all this because we want to save ourselves. We may wear one robe now and another the next day. Does that mean that we are following any religion? That is why I say that these people who have sent me the telegram have not done any good.

Next I want to talk about something else. Mr. Churchill has repeated his earlier view[1] in an exaggerated manner. That pains me. That is because I am a friend of the British. I have no feeling of animosity towards anyone. Several among the British are very nice people and they have acted courageously in granting freedom to India. I don't care what result this may have later on. Mr. Churchill assails this action and says, as he had said in his earlier speech also, that he has always held the view that the Indians are what they are. If he had known it all along, where was the need to repeat his view?

But he seems to have attacked the Labour Government only in the interest of his own Party, so that the Labour Government should fall and his own Party should return to power. It is the working class

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 28-9-1947.

that is ruling Britain today. Britain is a small island; but it has progressed so much on the strength of its working class and industries that it has become renowned in the world. Mr. Churchill aspires to overthrow the present Labour Government in that country. In order to pull down that Government he points out that the Labour Government has done a foolish thing and behaved in a clumsy manner and ruined the Empire. He says it is a folly that Britain should have lost India and now the same thing is going to be repeated in Burma. How can I tell Mr. Churchill that we are too familiar with British history, how they acquired Burma and how they consolidated their power in India. I do not think anyone can be proud of such a history.

What we are doing today is sheer savagery. We are trying to destroy the freedom we have won. I admit that today I am useless in your eyes. I have no influence on you. Nevertheless, let me tell you that if the British people listen to Mr. Churchill's words and the Conservative Party defeats the Labour Government it would be a great misfortune. Let me tell you that the whole world says that we have become free through some power. What is that power? It was the working class that was in power at the time Britain had a Socialist Government and that Government granted us freedom. Who can wipe out socialism? Neither Mr. Churchill nor anyone else can do so. I have come to realize that their Government cannot function in any other way. Supposing the British nation loses its salt and the working class is defeated and Mr. Churchill comes back to power, would he gives us an ultimatum that he is going to enslave us again, and attack us? Let us see how he does it. For the life of me I cannot think how he can ever do it. The people of our country may be anything, good or bad; they may become scoundrels or lose their heads. But they alone have taught me that freedom is the greatest thing. In such freedom you are entitled to commit all the mistakes. It is not that freedom is given to us when we are good and may be taken away from us when we cease to be so. How can one talk like that? That was not the law for the British people. It was not the law for the other nations of the world. If freedom was meant only for the good, looking at the things happening in the world how would one find freedom anywhere? It is the British themselves who hae taught us that freedom is preferable to slavery. A British writer has said that the British would choose to remain free even if they were to just drink and rot but they would not like to be reformed under slavery. But we in India accept their bad points and not the good points.

India has seven lakh villages. Today the people of these seven lakh villages have not run amuck. If the people of these seven lakh villages went mad, the map of India would be completely changed. I would however be happy if even though they should go mad, they remained free. But if, anybody casts an evil eye on India and tries to subjugate her because our people have gone mad he is not going to succeed.

I have already told you that even if we continue to be crazy the British are not going to return. They cannot come back. Once they have thrown out something, are they going to swallow it back? But the world is watching all that is happening. How will the world react when it sees what is happening here? The world will not allow such a thing to happen to India. Nor will India allow it to happen. But if other powers under the U. N. O. come her for investigation, we will not be able to stop them. If then we continue to be mad and lose our heads we will lose our freedom to them.

Even if I am the only one left I will continue to warn the world that it may completely destroy us if it so wishes, but it can never enslave us again. It is my vow never to be a slave again. It is for all of you to adhere to that vow, to make it a reality. I alone cannot do it. I cannot save India single-handed.

How can I be sure about myself? Who can say how long I am going to be alive? How is India going to be affected if God takes me away? How can I save India all by myself? It all depends on God. If He is by my side and is merciful, India can be saved. I think that so long as I am alive, nobody can take advantage of the disturbed conditions in the country and say, let us enslave it and capture it. I only wish that God may fulfil this desire of mine through you.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 380-5

39. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO PYARELAL

[Before *October 6, 1947*][1]

Of course I need you here. . . .[2] There is so much to do. Besides I have of late resumed active editorship of *Harijan*. . . [3]That makes the need for you to be here all the greater. Still I give the first priority to Noakhali. While you are all there, I can feel at peace with myself. Supposing you all were to come away from Noakhali, I would then feel compelled to give up everything else and go there, even all by myself, to 'do or die'.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 528

40. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
October 6, 1947

CHI. MAGANBHAI,

I could read your letter only today. It is 5.15 a.m. now when I am writing this. It took me fairly long to read the letter.

Your reply cannot be published in *Harijan*. If it is published, we should also discuss the subject in *Harijan*, I am not prepared for that. Moreover I am of an entirely different view. Plans about a new university seem untimely to me just now. Besides, so long as separate States have not been formed, why raise the question of a separate university? According to our, or rather only my, view, education at all levels must be self-supporting. And finally, when the very existence of India is being threatened and the people are engaged in a fratricidal war, is it proper to discuss schemes like this?

If, however, you wish me to think over the matter further you may write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 11001

[1] Quoting this letter after the one dated October 6, 1947, the addressee says: "In a previous letter he had asked me whether I could not be spared from Noakhali. I had replied that it was all a matter of comparative need. If he needed me at Delhi, I could come." To which this was Gandhiji's reply.

[2] Omissions as in the source

[3] *ibid*

41. LETTER TO PYARELAL

October 6, 1947

There is a fresh exodus of Hindus from East Bengal. What does it portend? I have taken it that Noakhali will not be reenacted in the Dacca area. It is said that the Muslims are not allowing the Hindus to celebrate their festivals with music. Among the Muslims there are said to be two groups. One group maintains that the Hindus have every right to do so. The other says they won't allow it. There is panic among the Hindus as a result. Write to me in full detail after full inquiry.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 528

42. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

October 6, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

Maulana Saheb came yesterday evening and was with me for a short while. He wants the three of us to meet together. The time for the meeting is to be fixed by you. He wants one hour any time on Tuesday. Please let me know the time and inform him also.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 375

43. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

October 6, 1947

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

Bari Khan[1] is here. He meets me often. All your brothers were worried about the relatives who were in Patiala. Whatever information I could gather with great difficulty is enclosed. Bari Khan has been given all the information. Now all of them have reached Pakistan safely. But that is no relief. There is hardly any Muslim left in Patiala. Many were murdered. What brutalities are going on! What a sequel to Pakistan! People are trying to see that there is no Hindu left in

[1] Addressee's brother

Pakistan and no Muslim in Hindustan. I am [striving] here. Either things will improve here or I have to die. God knows best.

If you can stay there peacefully, do so. In my opinion there is no other alternative.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 588

44. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 6, 1947

Those who ought to know all about our food problem have gathered together on the invitation of Dr. Rajendra Prasad to give him the benefit of their advice on the grave food crisis. Any mistake made on this important matter may mean avoidable starvation and death of millions therefrom. India is not unfamiliar with starvation and death of tens of thousands, if not millions, due to famine, natural or man-made. I claim that in a well-ordered society there should always be pre-arranged methods of successful treatment of scarcity of water and food crops. This is, however, not the occasion for describing a well-ordered society and for showing how it would deal with the matter. Our concern, for the present, is to see whether we can, with a fair hope of success, deal with the present food crisis.

I think we can. The first lesson we must learn is of self-help and self-reliance. If we assimilate this lesson, we shall at once free ourselves from disastrous dependence upon foreign countries and ultimate bankruptcy. This is not said in arrogance but as a matter of fact. We are not a small country dependent for our food supply upon outside help. We are a sub-continent, a nation of nearly 400 millions. We are a country of mighty rivers and a rich variety of agricultural land, with inexhaustible cattle wealth. That our cattle give much less milk than we need is entirely our own fault. Our cattle wealth is any day capable of giving us all the milk we need. Our country, if it had not been neglected during the past few centuries, would today not only be providing herself with sufficient food, she would also be playing a useful role in supplying the outside world with much-needed food-stuffs of which the late war has unfortunately left practically the whole world in want. This does not exclude India. The

distress is growing instead of showing signs of decreasing. My suggestion does not include ungrateful rejection of free supply that any foreign country may wish to offer us. All I say is that we must not go begging. It demoralizes. Add to this the difficulty of internal transport of food-stuffs from one place to another. We have not the requisite facility for rapid movement of grains and other food-stuffs from place to place. Further add to this the remote possibility of delivery of uneatable stuff. We dare not lose sight of the fact that we have to deal with human nature. In no part of the world is it to be found perfect or even very nearly so.

Next let us see what possible foreign aid we can get. I am told that not more than three per cent of our present wants. If this information is correct, and I have had it checked by several experts who confirm the figure, I am sure the case for reliance on outside help falls to the ground. The slightest dependence on outside help is likely to deflect us from exploring to the fullest extent our immense internal possibilities in the shape of utilizing every inch of arable land for growing crops for daily food in the place of growing money crops. We must reclaim waste land which is capable of being placed under immediate cultivation.

Centralization of food-stuffs, I apprehend, is ruinous. De-centralization easily deals a blow to black-marketing, saves time and money in transport to and fro. Moreover the villager who grows India's cereals and pulses knows how to save his crops against rodents. The movement of grain from station to station makes it liable to be eaten by rodents. This costs the country many millions and deprives it of tons of grain, every ounce of which we badly need. If every Indian were to realize the necessity of growing food wherever it can be grown, we should most probably forget that there was scarcity of food-stuffs in the land. I have by no means dealt fully with the fascinating and absorbing subject of growing more food, but I hope I have said enough to stimulate interest and turn the wise towards the thought of how every individual can help in the laudable enterprise.

Let me now show how to deal with the three per cent of grain we might possibly get from outside. Hindus observe a fast or a semifast every eleventh day each fortnight. Muslims and others are not prohibited from denying themselves, especially when it is for the sake of the starving millions. If the whole nation realized the beauty of this partial self-denial, India would more than cover the deficit caused by

the voluntary deprivation of foreign aid.

Personally I hold that rationing has very limited use, if any. If the producers were left to themselves, they would bring their produce to the market and everyone would get good and eatable grain, which today is not easily obtainable.

I shall close this hurried review of the food crisis by drawing attention to President Truman's reported advice to the American people that they should eat less bread, and thus save the much-needed grain for starving Europe. He added that Americans would not lose in health by the recommended act of self-denial. I tender my congratulations to President Truman on this philanthropic gesture. I must decline to endorse the suggestion that at the back of this philanthropy there is a sordid motive of deriving a pecuniary advantage for America. A man must be judged by his action, not the motive prompting it. God alone knows men's hearts. If America would deny herself for the sake of hungry Europe, should we fail to do this little act of self-denial for ourselves? If many must die of starvation, let us at least earn the credit of having done our best in the way of selfhelp, which ennobles a nation.

Let us hope that the Committee that Dr. Rajendra Prasad has called together will not disperse without presenting a work-able solution of the food crisis that faces the country.

Harijan, 19-10-1947

45. LETTER TO SHAH NAWAZ KHAN

DELHI,
October 7, 1947

DEAR GENERAL SHAH NAWAZ,[1]

Your letter.

If the work you are doing there[2] does not go to the dogs in your absence, you may leave it to go to the Punjab—Pakistan.

BAPU

Copy to Dev Prakash

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The superscription is in the Devanagari script.
[2] In Masaurhi in Bihar

46. LETTER TO DEV PRAKASH NAYYAR

DELHI,
October 7, 1947

CHI. DEV,

You must pay Hunar's[1] salary from there only. Why does he write to us?

Sushila has a slight fever. Just now at 5 o'clock in the morning she is sleeping.

A copy of the letter I have written[2] to General Shah Nawaz and his own letter are enclosed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

47. LETTER TO M. A. HUNAR

DELHI,
October 7, 1947

CHI. HUNAR,

Why should your salary be paid from here? It should be drawn from Patna because isn't the work done there meant for Patna? Probably there will never be an occasion for us to stay together.

I don't know what to do.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Muhammed Ahmed Hunar, Gandhiji's Secretary for Urdu work, who accompanied Gandhiji on his Noakhali and Bihar tours

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

48. LETTER TO SUDHIR GHOSH

DELHI,
October 7, 1947

MY DEAR SUDHIR,

Your note.

I hope you have my message as also my wire.[1]

I am quite clear. You should leave that place.[2] More from Horace.

Reuter's summary is quite fair. You can't help people who would see red in everything. I hope however the storm has blown over.

I am glad Shanti has passed one test.

Love.

BAPU

Sudhir Ghosh Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

49. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU[3]

DELHI,
October 7, 1947

MY DEAR SINGER,

Your letter.

Who says you are old?

Dr. Bidhan is coming but he has not. What matters when [he] comes? One and the same thing to you.

Love to the whole family.

Yours,

SPINNER[4]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Sudhir Ghosh", 30-9-1947.

[2] The addressee was posted as Public Relations Officer at India House, London. He was finding it difficult to function under V. K. Krishna Menon who had been appointed High Commissioner in London on August 15, 1947.

[3] The addressee was Governor of the U.P.

[4] The addressee used to call Gandhiji "Spinner of Destiny".

50. LETTER TO KHATEEB AHMED HUSSAIN

DELHI,
October 7, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

Your note is good. it will be useful when both have honestly the same mind.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

KHATEEB SIR AHMED HUSSAIN
HYDERABAD, DECCAN

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

51. TALK WITH MANU GANDHI[1]

[*October 7, 1947*][2]

[Gandhiji] answered[3] that it could do more, it could attune one completely to the divine will. Such a person would have the faith that though crippled, he could conceivably serve as a more effective instrument for the execution of His purpose than one with a whole limb and that, aftter all, was the *summum bonum* of life.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 456

52. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

In my speech yesterday there was no mention at all of what is going on between Hindus and Muslims these days. But today something has happened and I should not keep quiet about it. It has happened not here but at Dehra Dun. A Muslim gentleman was murdered. As far as I know, he had committed no crime. Nor had he taken the law into his own hands. But he was killed because he happened to be a Muslim. I was pained about it and wondered where we would stop if we went on at this rate. Today I find that I have a large number of Muslim friends. I feel hesitant to tell them to leave

[1] From *Dilhiman Gandhiji*—I, p. 85
[2] *ibid*
[3] Gandhiji was asked: "Could Ramanama set a broken bone?"

this place. How would they go away? I find that today the Muslims are not safe in the trains. Anyone who so pleases throws them out of the compartments or slaughters them. I understand that a similar thing is happening in Pakistan. But what are we going to gain by continuing to behave in this manner? Let us at least know ourselves. Let us at least recognize our religion. Everyone follows his own religion. What does our religion teach us? Or are we acting without any regard for our religion? Has the Congress lost its senses? After all, what did the Congress do for 60 years? If the Congress has been making a mistake so far, it is the enemy of the country, and I would say that it should be removed from the scene. Let even those who profess to be Congressmen say it in clear terms that they are leaving the Congress and forming another party. There is no room for any complaint about it. Do whatever you like but this much I can say before the whole world and our people that we should not take the law into our own hands. If we do it, we shall be driving ourselves to ruin and lose our independence and then, if some other power comes and subjugates India, we shall realize with shock what a terrible blunder we had make. This is not a good thing. There was a mongoose which killed a snake to save a child. Its mouth was smeared red with blood. The child's mother had gone to the well to fetch water. When she returned, the mongoose rushed to her jumping as through saying that it had saved her child. But she thought it had killed the child and threw the pitcher on the mongoose. The water was gone, the pitcher was broken and the mongoose died. When the woman entered the house she saw the child playing in the cradle and the dead snake lying nearby. Then she realized that the mongoose had been her friend. She felt sad and remorseful. So let us not do anything which we may regret later like that mother, and feel sorry for not having co-operated with our Government. We have set up our own Government. Are we going to ruin it?

Today we have got power in our hands. We have got our own ministers. Our Prime Minister is Jawaharlal. He is a true jewel and he has served his people well. Then there is the Sardar and there are others too. Is it that we do not like them? Today it is said Jawaharlal is no good. It is said he is not a good Hindu. People want a person who will follow their dictates, who will not support the Muslims and will drive them out. I must admit that Jawaharlal cannot do so. Nor can I do so. I consider myself a sanatani Hindu. But I am not that sanatani who would not let anyone except the Hindus live in India. Whatever

the religion one may follow, one belongs to India if one is loyal to the country, and is as much entitled to live in India as I am. It makes no difference if one belongs to the minority community. That is what religion teaches me. Right from my childhood I have been taught that in *Ramarajya* or the Kingdom of God no person can be unworthy just because he follows a different religion. You must realize that I am such a Hindu. I have no power in my hands and I am not a minister. Jawaharlal is a minister and you can remove him if you want. Then there is the Sardar. Do you know who he is? He is the Sardar from Bardoli. Do you listen to him? He also has many Muslim friends. His friend Imam Saheb was the Congress leader in Gujarat and he is dead. Imam Saheb's son-in-law[1] is at Ahemedabad and I think he is the chief of the District Congress. He is a very goodhearted man. I know him very well. He married Imam Saheb's daughter[2]. It is the same Imam Saheb who came away with his wife from South Africa, leaving his business there, and stayed with me. He is dead and his grown-up daughter is left behind. Should I discard her and tell her that I have nothing to do with her becaue she is a Muslim? She is a Muslim no doubt, but I can say that she is a good-hearted girl. She does not know that she might have to leave. If the Sardar lets her go, where is she going to stay? Let us not take the law into our own hands. Law may be made by the Sardar or Jawaharlal, but they cannot fist issue ordinances and then leave the matter to the public. Today we cannot have such ministers. Granted that that was done during the days of the British. But does it mean that we should do so even now? Shall we invite the same criticism about us which we used to fling at the British? We will not tolerate it. That is all I want to say.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 389-91

[1] Ghulam Rasool Qureshi
[2] Amina

53. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 8, 1947

A gentleman often comes to see me. He is good man. He was travelling from Dehra Dun. The train was quite crowded. At one station (I have forgotton the name) a man entered their compartment. All others in the compartment were Hindus and Sikhs, some carrying swords and some carrying knives. They gave the newcomer a close look. They asked him who he was. That poor man was alone and he replied that he was *chamar*. But those people were suspicious. When they examined his hand they found his name tattooed there. Sometimes people have their names tattooed on their hands. And thus he proved to be a Muslim. Somebody drove a knife into his body and as the train approached the Jumna he picked him up and flung him into the river. The whole thing was done by only one man, but all those other men also witnessed it. The gentleman who narrated the incident to me could not bear the sight and turned his face away. I told him that if he had so much pity in his heart and he did not like the man being killed, why did he not stop the offender from doing such a savage act? There were some fifty or sixty Hindus and Sikhs in the compartment and the victim was a helpless Muslim among them. What kind of humanity is it that someone should kill such a lone man and throw him in the Jumna? That man was not even completely dead. He had been stabbed and wounded and he was just thrown into the river. If the gentleman who came to me had so much pity, why did he not intervene and why did he not save him from death? He told me that though he felt distressed he failed to do his duty. He said he could not think of doing anything. I told him that was not a good thing, that was not human. We are so many and if a solitary Muslim comes in our midst we kill him and throw away his body. Anyone who tries to do such a thing shoud be restrained and persuaded with love that he should have mercy. He should be told: ‘What are you doing? Whom are you killing? Don’t kill him, he has not done anything.’ And if this had no effect, I would be happy if the gentleman had sacrificed his life in saving that Muslim. What is so great about fifty or sixty persons killing a single man? But there were so many people present and one of them decided to kill a man and actually killed him while others looked on, who probably approved of

the act. Let me tell you that those who are given to this way of thinking are mistaken. In the midst of those who kill there are also those who do have pity in their hearts and do not approve of killing, but because they are afriad for their own lives they do nothing and forget how they should act on such occasions. But how can one forget? If somebody indulges in an act of savagery, you must stop him. How very shameful that even the people who do not approve of such savagery merely look on? I want to tell you this because I have seen with my own eyes that there are people who do not approve of such things but do not have the courage to come forward and intervene. I will appreciate if there is even a single individual who shows the courage to stand up and prevent such an act saying that he would hold the hand of the offender if he tries to strike and if the offender does not listen, would sacrifice his own life, rather than let the victim be killed. A man like me would stand by non-violence. He would not kill even if he had to die himself, instead he would save a person's life by laying down his own. I have no doubt that that man would have been saved if somebody had shown such courage. And if, in an attempt to save, he himself had got killed, he would have proved himself truly brave. This is true non-violence. True non-violence does not mean that we remain non-violent before the strong and use force on the weak.

We used non-violence against the British, but now we are resorting to violence. Against whom are we using violence? Against our own fellowmen. The non-violence we used against the British was not the non-violence of the brave. The country is facing the consequences now. I am facing the consequences. So are you. I must admit that I could not teach you true non-violence. I am showing you what the non-violence of the brave can be. There are Muslims living here today. And there in Pakistan the Muslims are ill-treating the Hindus. But shoud we, in turn, ill-treat tthe Muslims? Are they behaving particularly like brave people? Let me tell you that what is happening in Pakistan is deplorable, and if we are going to follow it in our Union it is equally deplorable. And then arguing about which side was the first to take the offensive and which committed more excesses than the other is not exactly the way of establishing friendship. The true way of friendship is that we should always be on the side of justice and maintain our good behaviour. If we follow that path, even the savage and those who may have lost their senses will come round. We don't want to go into the question of who is more guilty and who

less, or who started it. In my view that would be sheer ignorance. That is not the way of becoming friends. If those who were enemies till yesterday want to be friends today, they should forget the past enmity and start behaving as friends. What is the point of remembering animosity? There can be no friendship if people think that they would be prepared to fight if necessary but would remain friends if they could. That is not how true friendship grows.

Now I may as well talk a little about another point. The Press has become a very powerful medium in the world today. When a country bccomes independent the Press becomes all the more powerful. When there is freedom, there can be no restrictions on the Press regarding the reports and the news to be published. But public opinion can be very useful at such times. When the newspapers do dirty propaganda or publish unfounded reports or incite people, the Government should come down on them to put an end to these or take legal action against them. But in doing so the riot situation worsens and there is more trouble. The Government cannot resort to that course. Things were different during the days of the British. What did they care? They caught hold of a man like Tilak[1] and put him behind the bars for six years. He had written something in his paper. It was nothing much. Still he got six years' deportation and had to complete the entire term. Like him many people had to go to Jail. I was also jailed for six years.[2] It is another matter that I did not remain in jail for six years. But I was sentenced to six years because of an article I wrote in *Young India.* I did not write anything bad, but I was sentenced. Now such thing cannot happen when we are free. Today all the correspondents, editors and owners of newspapers must become truthful and serve the people. No false information should appear in the newspapers nor should they publish anything that would incite the people. Today, when we have become independent, it is the duty of the public not to read dirty papers but to throw them away. When nobody buys those papers they will automatically follow the right path. I feel ashamed at the fact that today people have got into the habit of reading dirty and undesirable things. Such newspapers are widely circulated. I read about an incident at Rewari. A newspaper published a report saying

[1] Bal Gangadhar Tilak was deported in 1908 for writing two articles in *Kesari. Vide* "Sentence on the Great Tilak", 1-8-1908.

[2] Gandhiji was sentenced to six years' imprisonment on March 18, 1922, but was released for health reasons on February 5, 1924.

that the members of the Meo community killed all the Hindus, set fire to their houses and looted their property and cattle. I was shocked to know that the Meos had indulged in such terrible things. The next day there was no information about Rawari in the papers. It was all a cooked-up story. I wondered how that news about Rewari ever came to be published in the paper. I would like to say that the man who wrote about the Rewari incident should give an explanation. He must explain whether he had written that story on wrong information or it was deliberate mischief. He is guilty of great crime before God. Such a thing should not have happened. If anyone behaves that way, our work can never progress. The Government cannot keep a watchful eye on the Press today. You and I should keep a watch on the newspapers. Let us purify our hearts and show no inclination to take in dirty things. Let us give up reading dirty things. If we do this, the newspapers will do their duty properly. I shall finish after discussing one more point.

Our military and police also are in the same position as the Press. The military and the police were divided at the time of the Partition. I admit that it was not their doing. It just happened like that. The military here is composed of Hindus and Sikhs. The Muslim soldiers have gone over to Pakistan. If the Hindu and Sikh soldiers and police start thinking that because they themselves are Hindus and Sikhs they will only defend the Hindus and Sikhs and try to cover up the crimes committed by them and refuse to protect the Muslims because they are not meant to protect them, we shall be nowhere. Nor would it be any good if the Muslim army and the police started killing the Hindus saying it was not their business to protect the Hindus. The Government has the military and the police. But I need neither the military nor the police. I would ask the people the become the military and the police for us. If the Hindus kill the Muslims here they have got to be saved. We must not give up. I shall not step aside even if I have to lay down my life. Such will be my Government. I am not talking in the air. I am telling you what is right. I would like to say the same thing to the army and the police which belong to the Government. Their primary duty is to protect the handful of Muslims living here. If they are attacked by the Hindus and Sikhs, they should come to their rescue. They should protect them even at the risk of their own lives. Then only can they be called true soldiers and policemen. The freedom achieved by India is indeed a remarkable phenomenon. The whole world says and I say it too that no

government has ever transferred power to the people of any other country in this way. We have attained our independence without any fighting and bloodshed. Hence our military and police should not be there to fill their pockets. They should be content with what they are getting. They should not think in terms of extravagant meals complete with sweets. A soldier must satisfy his hunger with whatever meagre meal he may be getting and perform his duty. But if he starts thinking about other people's children going to schools and colleges, and about their cars and cycles and decides to resort to corrupt means to get similar thing for himself, he will cease to be a true servant. That is why I say that a true soldier and a true policeman is the one who is satisfied with whatever food he gets and does his duty without any religious bias. If he is a Hindu he should never think of harming the Muslims. It is a different thing to apprehend a Muslim and have him punished if he is guilty of a crime. But should an innocent Muslim be punished here because the Muslims elsewhere are guilty of grave crimes? If a Hindu harms a Muslim, it is the duty of a policeman to protect the Muslim. I must say that a policeman who acts in this manner is true to the Indian salt. If our military and police do not behave thus, they are not true to the salt of their country.

I will say the same thing about the military and the police in Pakistan. But I can do nothing about the situation there. To whom should I address my words? But I have no doubt that if things happen here as I have suggested, similar developments are bound to take place there. Today the people have lost their balance. They say, when their own brethren are being ill-treated in Pakistan, why should they not retaliate here? But it is not human to say such a thing. Hence so long as I am alive I shall proclaim at the top of my voice that we must keep ourselves pure, we must be good, our newspapers and our military and police should remain good. Without this our Government cannot function and we shall be ruined. We must remain civilized, whatever happens in Pakistan. Even if they turn mad, we have to remain good. So, under any circumstances, we have to remain civilized. Do at least this much. If you do not listen to me, let me tell you that we are all going to be ruined.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 391-8

54. DISCUSSION WITH H. S. SUHRAWARDY

[*October 9, 1947*][1]

SUHRAWARDY: Today I shall have to tell you some bitter truths.

GANDHIJI (laughing): Lay on; I am ready.

Jinnah says I have allowed myself to be taken in by you.

There cannot be a worse libel on me. You should know that I am incapable of deceiving anybody or wishing anybody ill.

Jinnah speaks very highly of Pandit Nehru.

Maybe. He has never done so in public. But that is neither here nor there. Neither Pandit Nehru nor the Sardar cares for praise or blame. If only you could get Jinnah to do the right thing, peace between the two Dominions might return.

Jinnah says he has never asked the Hindus to go out of Pakistan.

You surprise me. Why do you not speak out to Jinnah and Liaquat Ali? You know the facts. Does not your 'peace mission' require you to uphold truth and justice fearlessly and courageously at any cost?

You do not know how unpopular with the masses the Pakistan Government has become. Some are even abusing Jinnah and Liaquat Ali.

That is neither my concern nor yours. Your mission to Karachi was not to report who is abusing whom but to put the facts as you know them before Jinnah and ask him what he proposes to do to implement the agreements which the two Dominions have entered into. The minorities on both sides should be able to live in their original homes. The main thing is to get the Pakistan Government to square their declarations with their perfomance.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 480

[1] From *Dilhiman Gandhiji*—I, p. 91. The discussion took place after Suhrawardy's second trip to Karachi.

55. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 9, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Every day I keep talking about the same thing in one form or the other. I am feeling helpless. I continue to be here merely for that work. I must thank you for your generosity and goodness and for hearing me patiently. I can only thank you. But with me it is not the end of the matter when I say something and you listen to it patiently. That does not satisfy me. So many of our people are in a sad plight. There is plenty of land here. What should we do for them? What is the duty of those peope? What is the duty of the Government? We must understand the people who are creating a kind of unhealthy atmosphere and we must try to dissuade them from doing so. My voice will then reach even those who are living in other places.

Some harassed people came to see me. They are all nice people, belonging to West Pakistan. They came to me ten or twelve days ago. At first I requested them to give me everything in writing. They gave a written statement so that I might do something about their problem. They said unless some arrangements were made for the Hindus in Pakistan to come over to this side, they would not be able to leave that country. They say that there is danger on the way. They have foodgrains but how can they bring their stocks with them? Who will allow them to carry foodgrains? For the present they can be brought here only by air or by road. The train journey is very difficult these days. The trains are not running as they used to. What has been the fate of those who have not been able to come, nobody can say. Under these circumstances, they say, it will be better if they can come away. As for me, I am wondering what is our position and where we are going.

Now let me turn to Bengal. I have done considerable work there too. I have worked in East Bengal as well as West Bengal. I had gone to Noakhali[1] in East Bengal which is now in Pakistan. I travelled long distances on foot there. I visited different places every day. I talked to the local people. I tried to remove fear from the hearts of Hindus men

[1] On November 6, 1946.

and women. I could do it only with the help of Ramanama. While reciting the name of God if somebody kills us, let us be killed. Why should we be so much attached to life? Should we give up Ramanama for the sake of remaining alive? Should we give up the name of God out of fear? Should the women who are accustomed to putting *kumkum* marks, stop doing so? Women in that region, if they are not widowed, wear bangles of shell. That is a symbol of their married status. Widows do not wear bangles. Should they, out of fear, give up wearing bangles even when they are not widowed? When I found those women hesitating to wear the shell-bangles as an auspicious mark, I persuaded them that they should not discard their bangles. They were convinced and assured me that they would wear the bangles again. Now I hear that people are slowly coming away. I did not know about it. My own people are there. Perhaps I have told you that all my good co-workers are there. Pyarelal, people from the Khadi Pratishthan, Kanu Gandhi—are all there. Many capable persons, including Satis Chandra, are there. They are all trying to build up the morale of those people. In spite of that people are running away from there. No doubt they must be facing many hardships there. But what is the point in running away form there? Where will they run away and what will they do? Let them consider this point. Here in Kurukshetra we have 25,000 refugee men and women. Some women are pregnant. It is no wonder that some of them die, because, in any case, who is there to treat and nurse them? There is no accommodation and people feel distressed for they had to flee from the Punjab. I am therefore thinking what advice I should give them. The number of refugees who are still there is much larger than those who have arrived. We can convince them and take care of them if they are in tens or twenties, or even some lakhs. But their number goes into several crores and they are spread over this vast country. It is not a small matter transferring these people from one place to another. They are facing such hardships that they die before their time and are starved to death. The Government cannot provide everything to everybody even if it tries hard. The Government has its military and police forces. But all these cannot be used as they were during the British days. Nor should it be so. The army can carry on its functions only with the help of the people. If the people wish, they can be the hands and the feet of the Government. The Government cannot do anything unless the people co-operate with it. I am telling this to the Ministers also. As I see, the Government is not shirking the

responsibility. I meet the Ministers almost every day. Let me tell you that they too are upset and disturbed. But what could they do? After all, they have no experience of running a government. They ran the Congress organization. But it was only an organization of a handful of people. All the persons whose names were on the Congress register never gathered together. And the workers in the office were small in number. They had to work with limited resources. Today they have to work for crores of people. Crores of rupees are there and thousands and thousands of people have to be looked after by a few officials.

How can the work be done? It is to be considered how these 25,000 people can get their food in time. Thousands of people come into the country daily, and they remain hungry. They do not have enough clothes to wear and the winter is round the corner. The situation in Pakistan is the same as here. It is not as if it was heaven for people in Pakistan and hell for those who are here. Or, one may even say that it is not as if it was heaven here. I see this with my own eyes. Nor can it be said that it is all hell in Pakistan. After all, there are human beings living in both the countries. Some of them are good and some are wicked. But who would determine how much goodness and how much wickedness exists there and here? And what would we gain by it? The greatest question before me is, and it should also be the question before you, that of giving all possible protection to the people who have already come or want to come. But with regard to those who have come we should try and see that they return to their homes. Let me tell you that they must go back to their homes. I know that those who were living in villages will not like to leave their places. Even if a villager owns an acre of land, he will make any sacrifice to preserve it. If people migrate by thousands and millions, where can they be accommodated and how can they live? They are dying on the way. That is why I say that even if we have to die, we should continue to live wherever we are. We shall see what happens later on. It is not as if God will not protect us if we live in Pakistan. God is always there to take care of us. And then, there is the Government to take care of us even if there is no one else.

I just mentioned that all my co-workers are in Bengal. Let the West Bengal Government report to the East Bengal Government about the situation obtaining here. But even there, in fact everywhere, people do not follow the instructions from their Government. Even officials do not follow the instructions from their Government. They have become so arrogant that they think that now that independence has

been achieved there is none to question them. The British, whose mere frown used to frighten them have already gone. Now what has happened? I am a witness to their being afraid of the British. But now if everybody starts thinking that there is no one to question him, that he is his own general and police, that he has attained freedom and he can do as he pleases, let me tell you that things cannot go on like that.

If both the Governments are anxious to do justice, that will encourage [the people] to do something. But what will happen if the Governments do not wish to do justice? What will be the outcome after all? I am not a man keen on fighting. I may run away from fighting. But those who have weapons, the police and the army, will naturally want to fight. What else can they do? I can do nothing. But those who can do something must necessarily do what they want to do. Then there will have to be a war. People who share my creed, wherever they are, cannot go on living in distress. We shall have to do something. This I am saying with regard to both the Governments. It is for both to do something. One who is a tyrant has no right to punish another tyrant. When a Government does not or cannot protect its people well, how can it challenge another Government for the same fault? How can anyone ever do such a thing? I can understand if we die fighting for justice and our Government has to go in the process. But should we run away form there out of fear and die as we flee? Half the people die on the way and the remaining reach here. But where to accommodate them? How are we going to feed them? Should they simply stay here doing nothing? If not, they will have to be provided with jobs. When crores in our country are starving and crores are unemployed and we are able to do nothing about them, how are we going to find jobs for those who are coming from outside, not from outside the country but from another province? How will they find their own occupation here? What will they do and how? That is a great problem which creates ill feeling. This ill feeling wil not be there if my suggestion is accepted. Then people will become courageous. They will master the art of dying. If they learn the art of dying, they will be doing good to us and the world. If we can convince India about the solution I have suggested it will be to the benefit of all. If we become brave, I have no doubt that the whole world will admire us.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 398-402

56. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 10, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today also I have received quite a few blankets. Some persons have even given some money. I have received a telegram from Baroda saying that they can send quite a few blankets from there. I think they have said that some 800 blankets are ready but the railways people are not in a position to accept the consignment. It is true that there is so much pressure on the railways today that everything cannot be accepted. If possible I shall secure instructions from the Government so that the blankets may be brought. Then we will have sufficient stock of warm coverings. We do not have enough woollens just now. But I hope that God willing we shall somehow have enough things to go by and no one will have to shiver in cold.

A lady sent a ring to me a little while ago. Just now I can use that ring only for buying quilts and blankets and shall try to do so.

Now we have before us a grave problem about which I have talked enough. We are facing food shortage and that creates a lot of trouble. We have won our independence no doubt, but with the coming of independence our troubles seem to have multiplied. I feel that if we can digest true independence we should not be faced with such troubles. How should truly free peope behave? Ours is such a remarkable freedom that to win it we did not have to fight like soldiers. We did have a fight of some kind, but it was fight which the whole world admires. When we have won our independence through such a struggle it must mean a great deal to us. But we do not value it so much. That is our weakness. I have made[1] a very simple, practical suggestion about not importing foodgrain. But I find that people are shocked by such a practical suggestion. Why? They say they are accustomed to importing grain. True, we have got into that habit. But it is not a very old habit of many years. It cannot be said that it is our habit to eat only when somebody feeds us. It is impracticable that we

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 6-10-1947.

should go on issuing permits for whatever quantity of foodgrain can be provided. But my suggestion is absolutely practical. And what is there to be upset about it? India is vast country inhabited by hundreds of thousands of people. We have got sufficient land, and by the grace of God, sufficient water. I know there are certain desert areas in the country where water is not available. But it cannot be said that water is not available anywhere in India. When we have so much water, land and a population of millions why should we be afraid.

All I want to say is that people should realize that they have got to produce foodgrain by their own labour to satisfy their hunger. That would electrify the atmosphere and that zeal alone would solve half the problem. It is said, and rightly, that people die more through fear of death than by real death. There was a man who started thinking that he was going to die very soon. Why talk of some other man—take my own example. If I started thinking that I was going to die because I had a cough, what would happen? I shall die only when my time is up. That is in the hands of God. But if I start worrying about it right from now imagining myself on the point of death, it is dying without actual death. And being in such panic about death daily I would be creating trouble for people around me as well as for myself, and would be squeezing myself out day after day. I would be always lamenting about the approaching death. The better thing would be to take it easy till the moment of death and convince ourselves that there is no one who can kill us except God. He will take us away whenever it pleases Him. If we give up the fear of death our problems will also leave us, and we will be free of our troubles. I tell you, when we do this we shall not be troubled. Nobody should think of getting food through anybody's favour. Instead we shoud produce our food by our own labour. That is why I say that we should not die except by natural death. Let us give up this business of issuing permits and rationing which is the method of killing unnaturally. This much with regard to the food problem.

The same is true about cloth. I have already said that we can have four times more cloth than is available now. Why should there be shortage of cloth in our country? I am absolutely certain that there should be no shortage of cloth in India even if there may be some shortage of food. Why? Because India grows much more cotton than it needs. There are many people in India who can spin and weave cloth for their own requirements, and easily wear clothes made by

themselves. And thus we become truly independent as regards food and cloth and then do not have to depend on mills. At present we are not free in this sense, and if it is so, it is the result of our own ignorance. I had hoped that we would achieve such self-sufficiency. Those days are gone when I used to go round the country propagating khadi. I used to ask women to spin as much as they could. And they did spin, but it was without realizing its implications. They were not bothered about the wages. They spun and produced cloth. But now the picture is different. Today you do not have cloth. I say that we should produce cotton for our cloth, spin it and get it woven. There is no trouble weaving cloth for one's own requirements. But even if people don't do that they can certainly buy cloth from a shop. The Government can buy cloth from the mills and then distribute it to the people. Apart from this, those who can manage should take a vow not to buy cloth for a month or two. Let them buy khadi for their use and avoid buying chintz and cloth of fine varieties. When we don't buy cloth for a certain period, it does not mean that we will go naked. If we produce enough khadi in the meantime, we shall have solved the problem of protecting ourselves in winter. Here it is not the question of making blankets and such other things. The question is only of making enough khadi cloth for our personal use, and not buying from the market. If we do this much, prices will at once come down. Today prices of cloth have also gone up. Prices of all commodities are going up. But we do need some yards of cloth to make shirts, *kurtas* and other things. Let us buy khadi cloth for that purpose. As I have already said the ideas thing would be to produce that much cloth ourselves. Let us decide not go to the shops. If we take a vow not to buy any cloth for a few months, let me tell you that the trouble will be over and we will be self-sufficient in the matter of clothing and food. Another advantage in my view is that it gives a feeling of self-confidence to the people and they become self-reliant and cease to be worried by shortage of cloth. They feel confident that they can produce their own clothing and their own food. If we do all this, the result can be great. We have become free, but only politically. The economic condition of crores of our people has not improved. But we do not realize this. We will realize it when we know that we are producing our own food and demand any price for it we want. We shall know it when we produce enough cloth to meet our needs. We have got enough cotton. We can even procure it from the mills. We should realize that it is not possible to have all our cloth from the

mills. But let us at least know this that we will not have to face any hardships. Then we can be at least economically free, and even the poor will feel that they have become free. Let us do this much and the consequences will automatically follow.

Today we are engaged in fighting among ourselves; but we can fight only when we have time to fight. But when we are occupied in work and all of us become workers, we will have no time left for quarrels and fights. We have got provision for food and clothing. Let us give up the habits of drinking and gambling. If we proceeded thus step by step in the right direction we would have no shortcomings left in us. We would on our feel that we do not want to fight. There would be no question of anyone being a Hindu or a Muslim. If anyone created trouble we would face it bravely. We would fight with him if we wanted to. But why should we die today under unnatural circumstances?

That is why I have tried to impress upon and convince you of this and if it appeals to your hearts, and we decide to follow it up in action, we shall rise very high and we shall not have to look to others for help. Whose help do we need? It is God who is going to help us. And whom does God help? God helps only those who are willing to help themselves.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 402-7

57. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

NEW DELHI,
Ocober 10/11, 1947

CHI. KAKA,

I gave to Kamalnayan your letter of the 8th. Naturally, I did not have the time to talk to him. I wanted to talk to Jawaharlal and also to Shaheed Saheb. I could read the whole letter only in the morning. In connection with (the memorial to) Dharmananda you have to collect an amount of Rs. 25,000. Kamalnayan may do the collection, if he can, without putting you to any trouble. Otherwise I am in any case going to take up the burden. You should, therefore, remain completely free from worry. The entire amount should be received at

one time.

Please note that the same applies in the case of the Hindustani Prachar [Sabha]. It will be all right if Kamalnayan can do it wihout bothering you. Otherwise I am mentally prepared to take up this burdern too to the extent of Rs. 50,000. You will have to worry about it if my eyes close before that.

I am glad that finally you had to come to the conclusion that the headquarters of the Hindustani Prachar [Sabha] cannot be shifted to any other place. We should carry on the work taken up by the Jamnalal where he had launched it. If that cannot be and if it can be accommodated in another place without any difficulty, I will not be inconvenienced in any way by the transfer. I shall try to lay my hands on some person from around Delhi if I come across one.

I do believe that we should hurry up with the reorganization of linguistic provinces. But the atmosphere here is so vitiated that no work can be done speedily. I am vigilant all the same. There may be an illusion for the time being that different languages stand for different cultures, but there is also the possibility that wih the establishment of linguistic provinces it may disappear. I shall write something [about it] if I get the time. Here again, I believe, we are not going to gain anything by rushing through it. I am not unaware that a class of people have been saying that linguistic provinces are wrong. In my opinion, this class takes delight in creating obstacles. I don't remember in what context, when and what I had said about the culture of the Bengali-speaking population. What is the use of recalling it? Even if I, who believe in the unity of India's culture, were to deliver myself of a contrary statement in some context, it ought to be regarded only as a seeming contradiction. We cannot but accept the sub-divisions of one culture.

I don't like what you say about Gangadharrao Deshpande. What does it matter whether people applaud him or forget him? Contentment or discontent are only products of the mind. Please ask Gangadharrao to wake up and know his own self. This is a new age in which new people will come to occupy positions and the old will be eased out. There is no reason to be happy or unhappy about it.

Politics will and ought to have non-polluting relationship with the constructive programme. The fact is that neither the people nor the Congress ever digested the programme. Had they been able to do

it [they would have realized that] it included politics. There is no question of the constructive programme being dependent on anything. And if it is it will not survive.

What you say about the Navajivan Trust is true, but we can do nothing about it. If changes are to be made in an already established trust, they can be made only according to the procedure laid down in the trust deed.

If the Hindustani Prachar Sabha had any source of income, it would have been its undoing. Either the institution has public utility or it hasn't. If it has, the pubic should support it. Many instances can be cited to prove that whenever such institutions possessed funds of their own the very purpose of the institution was defeated. The case of Anandji Kalyanji is much too well known. What does he do [now]?

Do what is necessary for Sushila Pai. You should see that she is not embarrassed. I know from any experience in Noakhali that she can do a lot of work. I have now fully replied to your letter.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

58. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH[1]

[*October 11, 1947*][2]

MY DEAR QAID-E-AZAM,

Shaheed Saheb has reported to me your reactions to my endorsement on the suggestions drafted by him. I am sorry to learn about it.[3] I would never intend to give my casual remark the sinister meaning you are reported to have given it. In any case Shaheed Saheb's suggestions I endorse subject as follows:

[1] Originally drafted by Suhrawardy this bears corrections in pencil by Gandhiji.

[2] This was written two days after Gandhiji's discussion with H.S. Suhrawardy, *vide* "Discussion with H. S. Suhrawardy", 9-10-1947.

[3] In place of this and the following two sentences, the original draft had: "I am sorry if I have given you offence; that was not my intention; I only hoped that the suggestions would be given effect to. Shaheed Saheb has also shown to me the letter he sent to you before leaving Karachi as well as the declarations annexed to the letter. I agree with the suggestions made by him with the following addition."

In paragraph 2 (4) of his letter to you[1]—I would add:"and will submit to a tribunal of permanent arbitration selected from Indians alone (i.e., from the members of the two Dominions)." In Paragraph 2 (8) or in any other suitable place, I would like the following idea to be brought out: "Each State will induce the refugees to return and occupy their respective homes."

I find that this idea to some extent is brought out in paragraph 3 of the declaration. It should be emphasized and steps taken to implement it.

In my opinion some such agreement as suggested by Shaheed Saheb should precede any move for hearty co-operation between the two States. What is wanted no doubt is like mind, like work and like action between the two.[2]

From a facsimile: *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. II, between pp. 496 and 497

[1] The words, "of his letter to you", have been added by Gandhiji.

[2] In place of this paragraph, the original draft had: "You have been good enough to ask Shaheed Saheb to let you know precisely what I would like you to agree to. I adopt the letter written by Shaheed Saheb and the declarations annexed as my own views, and would request you to agree to them, or at least let me know your reactions. I suggest that a conference may be convened at the highest level, in which you should participate if possible, when these points may be considered, and agreed to in the main. In my opinion such an agreement will immediately ease the tension and inaugurate a new era of co-operation beneficial for both the States."

59. LETTER TO GOPINATH BARDOLOI

October 11, 1947

MY DEAR BARDOLOI[1],

All the three grounds[2] are sound, assuming of course that there is no mistake about facts. You should certainly take the much-needed rest. I am saying all this without knowing the situation. I feel like the blind leading the blind. Therefore I am perhaps a worthless guide. May not Kakasaheb be your guide today? The best thing for you is to pray and do the best you can, health or no health.

This is a poor letter. But I can give you nothing better.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 5

60. SPEECH AT RECEPTION BY GUJARATIS

NEW DELHI,

Rentia Baras, October 11, 1947

When Nandlalbhai[3] told me that the Gujaratis wanted to see me and would also present a purse I was at once tempted to accept the invitation as I am a greedy man. But I did not know that I would have to make a speech.

As long as I was in South Africa I did not know that my birthday was important. When I came here the nuisance started. But I was lucky as the spinning-wheel was associated with it and that is how *Rentia Baras* came to be celebrated. These days the spinning-wheel is getting out of date. It is an emblem of ahimsa though nowadays it is very difficult to have even a glimpse of ahimsa anywhere. That is why I wonder why we should celebrate *Rentia Jayanti*. But it is in man's nature to go on trying. So I let people do so. I hope the Gujaratis wherever they are will work for ahimsa. But it is doubtful whether they will spin. It was after much effort that Gujarat has accepted khadi. Personally I wish that there is no foreign cloth in Gujarat and not even

[1] Chief Minister, Assam

[2] The addressee was thinking of resigning as Chief Minister due to health and other reasons.

[3] Nandlal Mehta

mill cloth. What shall I say about the great virtues of the spinning-wheel? I will be satisfied if all Gujaratis ply the wheel wherever they may be.

At the moment there is plunder going on in the name of religion. According to me this is a very sorry state of affairs. Now we are free and the days of slavery are over. Is this the way to make use of our freedom? Is licentiousness to prevail?

I have been told here that Gujarati children are taught Hindi also. Gujaratis have welcomed Hindi and many of them sit for examinations also. Hindi, that is, Hindustani, in the Nagari and Urdu scripts, can be easily understood. Punjabis will use only Urdu and those who do not know Urdu will use Sanskritized Hindi. That is why I showed the middle course of Hindustani. Learn both the scripts. Keep in mind that the villagers will not be able to follow Sanskritized or Persianized language, and you will be committing no sin at any rate by adopting Hindustani.

Thanks for the purse. We do need the blankets very badly. It is for us to provide all this. Government cannot do this. It is much easier for the Government, if we arrange these things among ourselves.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 99-100

61. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 11, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today is the twelfth day of the latter half of *Bhadrapad*. In Gujarat, that is, in Kathiawar and Cutch, the day is known as *Rentia Baras*. On this day people's attention is drawn towards the charkha and allied activities. People do not give up once they start on something, but today I think the atmosphere is unfavourable for an enthusiastic celebration of *Rentia Dwadashi*. I have given a wider interpretation to the charkha and India has accepted it as a symbol of non-violence. Today that symbolic meaning is lost. Had that meaning been retained, we would not have witnessed what we see today. Even then let me remind you of that meaning. It was enough that my

birthday was celebrated on October 2. But for the past many years my birthday has been celebrated according to the Hindu calendar also and the days in between are utilized for plying the charkha with great zeal. But today I do not find the atmosphere for it. Even so, if by the grace of God some regard the charkha as a symbol of non-violence it would indeed be good. It would be gratifying if even five persons take it as such, and still better if a crore do so. But even if there is one such person it will be good. That is why I have drawn your attention to it.

There is Mandal Saheb in Karachi who is a Minister in the Pakistan Cabinet. It is said that he is a Harijan from Bengal, but the Qaid-e-Azam has given him a place in the Cabinet. On his suggestion something was accepted. Some two or three others whose names I have forgotten also support his view. It is not possible for all the others to be with him. But what does it matter if even one or two are supporting him? A circular has been issued that all the Harijans in Sind should wear a badge round their arms, with the words indicating that they are untouchables, so that no one should harass them and throw them out. According to me the logical result of this would be (it would be fine if it was only my suspicion) that all those Harijans would for the present get employment, but later on if they stayed on there (all of them are not going to stay there; some have already left and some are going to leave, according to reports I have received from many letters) they would have to embrace Islam ultimately. If this is to be the result, it would be a dangerous situation. If any person wants to give up his religion and accept some other religion and thinks he is doing a good thing, he is entitled to do so. Today I regard myself a sanatani Hindu. Tomorrow if I start disliking sanatana dharma I am free to give it up. But this is a very serious matter. Who can stop me if I do not accept my religion? I am not tempted to become a Christian in order to improve my economic condition or gain some other advantage. I will have settled my accounts with God and would act in accordance with my conscience even if the world protests. I believe that no Harijan has any such conviction. I can say this with authority because I have become a Harijan, an untouchable, and I have accepted their religion. I expect that as far as the Harijans and others in Pakistan are concerned, it should be declared that they are safe. Then there would be no need for anyone to put on a badge. It should be declared in respect of all that, even if any individual says he has changed his religion of his own accord, his conversion will not be considered valid. Religion is a matter of the heart. It is between a

man and his God. But under the present Government in Pakistan no one can claim that he has changed his religion of his own free will. It is understood that anyone doing so has done it from fear or compulsion. That is why the Pakistan Government has to declare that there can be no conversion.

Then there is one more thing. There are going to be two festivals this month. One is Dussehra, which is a great festival. The Hindus all over India celebrate this and attach great importance to it. But it has a greater significance in Bengal. I know this since I have stayed in Bengal. Exactly two days after this, comes Bakr-Id. In former times there was not so much ill feeling amongst Hindus and Muslims. They did not fight as they do now, though there used to be some mutual bickering. Even the British Government had to be prepared in case something untoward happened on that day and Hindus and Muslims clashed. Any provocation was possible, like slaughtering the cow or taking the decorated cow in procession to provoke the Hindus. On the Dussehra Day everything is decorated, music is played and men and women wear gay dresses, some go in carts and some ride horses. But it can be a provocation for the Muslims and provide a ground for clash and then the Bakr-Id Day would similarly provide a ground to the Hindus. I would say that those Hindus and Muslims who wish to live together as friends are duty bound to exercise restraint when they celebrate these festivals. They should do nothing that may provoke the other side. Even without that our hearts are full of anger at present and our reactions are exaggerated. Under these circumstances, we should not do anything provocative.

While departing the British Government has done one thing wrong. They divided the country and now there are two Governments. Today they are like enemies. Maybe they will never fight. But events are following such a course that it is difficult to predict about the future. But let us hope that sanity will prevail on both the sides. But if this does not happen we may lose our independence. Letting the country be enslaved will be betraying one's religion. It would be a grave mistake to surrender our freedom. It is my prayer that God may grant wisdom to all of us and all of us should be purified. That would be a good thing. One more thing I would like to say is that our countrymen in South Africa may be careful when they carry out their

plan.[1] The two Governments here should give all possible help to those who are there and encourage them in their struggle.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 407-10

62. A STUDENT'S PERPLEXITY[2]

Here is an extract from a pupil's letter to his teacher who sends it to me for comment:

> Two things completely possess me: my nationalism and my overbearing carnal passions. These always create seeming contradictions in my behaviour, and inconsistency in my decisions. I want to be the first servant of my country and at the same time enjoy the physical pleasures of the world. I must confess I do not believe in God although I am sometimes terribly afraid of Him. All existence seems to me to be an enigma. I do not know what awaits me at the end. I have seen dead bodies burning: my mother's was the last, and the scene influenced me terribly. I cannot bear to think that such shall be my fate. I feel sick at the sight of a wound; and to think that my body shall burn one day! I know, there is no escape. To me, there does not seem to be any life beyond. That is why I am afraid.
>
> There are only two courses open to me: either to brood over it and pine away, or to enjoy the physical pleasures of the world, be lost in them and forget the end. I confess (I have confessed to you things which I have never confessed to anybody else) that I have chosen the latter course.
>
> This world is the only reality; its joys are worth having for anything. Feeling for my wife who died recently was genuine feeling; but that feeling was not because she was dead but because I was left alone. For the dead there are no problems; for the living there are all. I do not believe in any pure love; the so-called love is nothing but sex. If there were anything like pure love, I should have felt more attachment for my parents than for my wife; but the reverse was the case. I have been a loyal husband but I could not have assured my wife that I would love her even after her death. My feeling would perhaps arise from the inconvenience that her passing away might cause me. You might call this cynicism but there it is. . . . Please write to me and guide me.

This extract covers three things. (1) Conflict between carnal

[1] According to a report in *Harijan*, 19-10-1947, it was proposed to resume the satyagraha in South Africa on October 12.

[2] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 19-10-1947.

desire and nationalism, (2) God and future life and (3) Undefiled love and sex.

The first is well stated. Carnal desire was the reality, nationalism was the fashion of the day. Nationalism in the sense of power politics is quite consistent with satisfaction of carnal desire. Instances from life can be multiplied. I have in mind nationalism in the sense of a burning love for the nation including the poorest. It must burn as it always has burnt carnal desire and the like. Thus there is no conflict but always victory of the latter over the former. All-embracing love of the nation leaves not a minute for any occupation that interferes with that ruling pursuit. He is lost who is possessed by carnal desire.

Uncertain faith in God and the future springs from the lust for life. This lust unhinges a man or a woman. Indecision consumes him or her. Faith in God will live when the animal passion dies. The two cannot co-exist.

The third enigma is a mere restatement of the first. Undefiled love between husband and wife takes one nearer God than any other love. When sex is mixed with undefiled love, it takes one away from one's Maker. Hence, if there be no sex consciousness and sexual contact, it is a question whether there is any occasion for marriage. The pupil truly says that there was no unselfish love felt for his wife. Had it been unselfish, death of life's partner would have enriched life for, the memory of the disembodied partner would have resulted in greater dedication to the service of down-trodden humanity.

NEW DELHI, October 12, 1947

Harijan, 19-10-1947

63. LETTER TO TEVANI AND DEBORAH

NEW DELHI,
October 12, 1947

DEAR TEVANI AND DEBORAH,

I have your letter. At the end of your letter you tell me that the Deputy Commissioner has promised to help you. May your wish be fulfilled. I think I told you when you were in Delhi that the whole thing would depend upon the manager there.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

64. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

October 12, 1947

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. I have no time at all.

I wrote on my own what I did. I never write anything at somebody else's suggestion.

I understand the reproach in your letter. What shall I say? I would never write anything which I know would pain you.

Shankarrao[1] brought the dhotis with the utmost care but through oversight they were sent for washing.[2] I intended to wear them unbleached. On asking for them, I came to know what had been done. But what does it matter? Thanks to the care of you all, at least I got them on the 11th if not earlier.

More when you come.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10457. Also C. W. 6896. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

65. LETTER TO SAMANT N. MARWARI AND OTHERS

NEW DELHI,
October 12, 1947

(Subject: Case of Ramji Gopalji Sabarmatiwallah)

BHAI SAMANT NANJI MARWARI, BHAI MOOLDAS BHOODHARDASJI VAISHYA AND BHAI MADHAVJI P. PARMAR,

I have your letter. I am surprised. Everything possible has been done for Bhai Ramji. Nor has Bhai Ramji spared (us) any trouble.

It is not worthy of him to entertain suspicions of even such noble men as Lakshmidasbhai, Naraharibhai and Parikshitbhai.

No one refuted what I said, what I gave in writing. It is not for me to interpret what I have written. We cannot stick to an interpretation which is prompted by self-interest. My advice therefore is that we should follow the interpretation offered by such eminent

[1] Shankarrao Deo
[2] The addressee used to send a pair of dhotis to Gandhiji on his birthday.

people as Dada Mavalankar. And then the last remedy is open for everybody. So let a court of law interpret it. Please offer appropriate advice to Ramji from what I have said so far.

Who can tell why my letter did not reach you? The vagaries of the postal department are nowadays too common. However, truly speaking, my wire should have been enough.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

66. LETTER TO DILKHUSH DIWANJI

DELHI,
October 12, 1947

CHI. DILKHUSH DIWANJI,

I got the khadi woven from the yarn left by Mother. I shall use it lovingly. Her blessings, I know, are ever with me. What if her mortal frame is no more?

I have no time to write more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

67. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 12, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today also quite a few blankets have been received. As for the quilts I may say that they are being made by the mills as well. Those quilts too will be arriving. From the way blankets and quilts are coming, I have started hoping that the people who have been put here, that is, in Delhi and its neighbourhood, will have no trouble during winter. Arrangements are also being made to reach blankets, quilts and warm clothing to the needy. One thing should be remembered that the blankets that are being received will wear out in the end, but just now they can give protection against rain and dew. But the trouble with the quilts is that it will not be possible to save them from rain. God willing, it may not rain during the winter, but the dew is inevitable. Everybody may not get a blanket. I even doubt if there will

be enough tents to accommodate all. I had mentioned one thing while talking to some people, and I want to mention it here too. Those who get the quilts can protect themselves against the dew if they spread newspapers on the quilts. Then the dew will not pass through. Another remarkable thing about the quilts is that the amount of cotton used for making them gives sufficient warmth. When cotton breaks and forms into lumps the quilt can be opened up, the cover washed and the cotton used again after carding. With this the quilt becomes a new piece. It is a very useful thing for those who use it carefully.

A great calamity has befallen us. But those who think of God and work in the name of God find something to learn even from such a calamity. Two things are possible. One thing is that a person gets panicky or becomes enraged in the face of a calamity, and makes himself more miserable. But even in the midst of trouble if he thinks that he is having trouble for no fault of his own and yet he is never going to give up God and is always going to seek His help, he can create for himself happiness even in the midst of misery. Many of the people who have come as refugees here were well-to-do. They had lots of money and other property. They had big mansions, now all lost and gone. I have already said that till the people who have left their homes go back and are able to live in safety they will be a great burden on both the Governments. If we want to survive, if we want to remain free, we shall have to atone for the sin of this exchange of population. Atonement means making amends for our mistakes. Then only would it be true expiation. It cannot be done in any other way. When somebody really rectifies the mistakes he may have committed, he has done sufficient expiation. If we mean to correct our mistakes, then the people who have come here to save their lives must be in a position to go back. This may happen when the time comes, but what will you do in the meantime? I wish to suggest that in the meantime if good doctors are available—among the refugees there are doctors, lawyers and many others—they should give medical service and those under them also do the same, they can render really great service and even from these troubled times we can learn a new lesson.

When I went to visit the refugees I was told that 75 per cent of them were businessmen. It was a shock to me and I wondered how so many traders would be able to do their business here. Millions of traders have arrived here and if all of them start doing business all at once, everything will be in a mess. If they decide to put in some effort, learn to do something new, then it will be somegwhat better. Let those

traders who were earlier engaged in business forget their past. It is a rule in the world that when we cannot get one particular thing, we must look for something else. Let us not sit idle, or waste time in gambling and drinking. We have got to do some work. le us work hard. Those who are businessmen but are ablebodied and can use their hands and feet should do some work. There are quite a few jobs that do not require any particular training. Let them concentrate on such things and co-operate with one another. At the same time let them develop an attitude of working together. Then out of this hellish situation which has been created for us, we shall be able to create heaven.

I had decided to tell you about all this and thought that today I would explain everything in detail and through you convey it to everyone. The refugees and also the country would derive great benefit from it. And then, out of the misery that has befallen us we shall create happiness.

In this connection I want to say what we should do about the quilts we have not yet received but are going to get from various places. What shall we do about them? The cloth used in the quilts can be removed and washed if it has become dirty. The cotton can be kept back. Cotton does not get spoilt at all. It can be dried and cleaned with hand. We do not even need a carding-bow. It is another matter if we want to use that cotton for spinning. That cotton can be easily used for making new mattresses or quilts. I think if we make these things ourselves, they will be made cheaper and quicker. There is enough cloth lying with the mills. I do not wish to discuss the food problem at this stage. There is enough stock of cotton out of which quilts can be made in a short time. If these quilts are given to the people they would have protection in winter. These people must be taught how to prepare these things and given hope in the midst of despair which surrounds them. There is a *bhajan* which says that hope springs from unending despair. This is true. It is a poetic expression. We desire to have a glimpse of hope concealed in the deepest despair. What should we do to have that glimpse? The people who have been thrown on the streets must first realize that they belong to India, not to the Punjab or the North-West Frontier Province or Sind. All those provinces are in India and so the people from those parts also belong to India. They can become and remain Indians only on the condition that they are not a burden on others. Just as milk becomes sweet when you add sugar to it and then you cannot separate sugar from the milk and the milk

remains what it was, they too should mix and mingle with people wherever they go like sugar in milk and not quarel or nurse hatred towards each other. They must be mutually helpful and co-operative and put in hard work. Then they can reform the province where they go and the people belonging to that province will say that they are willing to accommodate any number of such persons.

It is my hope that those among the refugees who are able to work and whom my voice can reach must persuade others to be good men. They should not be a burden anywhere but should live, as I have said, in amity and mutual adjustment. They should not cheat anyone. We should not waste our time. Let every moment of our time be dedicated to God, work and service. We were born to serve. If we live like this, we will forget that we were once plunged in misery and sorrow. There are millions of people around. Let them engage themselves in service. We were born to render service. Let us resolve to raise our country high, not bring it down. I think it will be a blessed moment when we realize this and then there will be no need to worry about anything. We may make mistakes. To err is human. But it is also human to correct the errors. When we rectify our mistakes, we become truly human.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 411-4

68. A BITTER LETTER

A Muslim friend writes:

I am a Muslim of nationalist views. Throughout my life, if I may be allowed to call my twenty-one years' existence so, I have never been able to think of myself in terms of Hindu or Muslim, however hard my elder brother, father and other relatives tried to make me do so. Naturally the Islamia College, Jullundur, would not admit me as I was a Quisling to my community.

My father with my other relations left Jullundur in April but I did not accompany them because East Punjab, and more so India, was equally my country as it was for my friends of the other creed. But brutal happenings of August have disappointed me beyond words. Even those boys who had organized processions with me in January, 1946 when Indain National Army people were being tried, wanted to have my life. After all I was a Muslim for them by killing whom they would get applause from members of their own

community. So I had to run for my life to Delhi where I thought that this treatment could not be meted out to those who believed in United India rather than in Pakistan. But it is worse here. Even my friends with whom I am putting up look upon me with suspicious eyes.

Now tell me, my dear apostle of liberty and equality, whether I should go back to my parents in Western Pakistan to be their but throughout my life and against my conscience, or I should stay in India as a hostage whose life is always sought against crimes committed by his inhuman co-religionists.

I have condensed the foregoing but little. The bitterness has not been touched. Assuming that the letter is accurate, there is ample excuse for bitterness. A persons's worth is, however, tested under the most adverse circumstances. Fair-weather friends are many. They are worthless, "a friend in need is a friend indeed." Have not persons belonging to the same faith, fought against one another exactly as the Hindus and the Muslims are doing now? What was to be expected of ordinary human beings after uninterrupted preaching of the hymn of hate all these

long years? If the correspondent will justify his nationalism, he must not deny himself at the crucial moment. We must avoid imitation of Judas Iscariot.[1] Hence I have no hesitation in advising the correspondent to return to his home in Jullundur even if he is to be cut to pieces by his erstwhile friends. Such martyrs will be saviours of Hindu-Muslim unity. If he proves as good as his word, I prophesy that his parents will receive him with open arms. Is it not the lot of us mortals that the innocent suffer for the guilty? It is as well that they do. The world is the richer and better for the sufferings of the innocent. I need not be an "apostle of liberty and equality" to reiterate this plain truth.

NEW DELHI, October 1 3, 1947

Harijan, 19-10-1947

[1] One of the twelve disciples of Jesus Christ, who betrayed him to the priests

69. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
October 13, 1947

Yesterday I made some remarks about the refugee camps which were missed in the English condensation. Let me extend them this evening as I attach great importance to them. Though we have our fairs, religious and other, and have our Congress sessions and conferences, as a people we are not accustomed to camp life strictly so called. I have attended many Congress sessions, conferences, and other camps. I attended the Kumbh Mela of 1915 at Hardwar and had the privilege of serving in the Servants of India Camp together with my co-workers who had returned from South Africa. Though I have nothing to record except kind personal attention to me and mine, my observation of the camp life our people lived is none too happy. We lack the sense of social hygiene, the result being dangerous insanitation and dirt with the attendant risk of outbreak of infectious and contagious diseases. Our latrines are generally beyond description. Absence of this class of provision is perhaps an apt description. People think that they can perform these functions anywhere not excluding even the much-frequented banks of the sacred rivers. Spitting anywhere without the slightest consideration for the neighbours is almost accepted as a right. Nor are our cooking arrangements any better. Flies are everywhere welcome companions. We forget that they might have sat a moment ago on any kind of dirt and thus might have become easy carriers of infection. Accommodation is not always planned. This is not an exaggerated picture. I must not omit the babble of noise one has to tolerate in these camps.

For method, planning and almost perfect sanitation, give me a military camp. I have never recognized the necessity of the military. But that is not to say that nothing good can come out of it. It gives valuable lessons in discipline corporate existence, sanitation, and an exact time-table containing provision for every useful activity. There is almost pindrop silence in such camps. It is a city under canvas brought into being inside of a few hours. I would like our refugee camps to approach that ideal. Then there is no inconvenience, rain or

[1] Since Gandhiji was observing silence his written speech was read out after the prayers.

no rain.

These camps become quite inexpensive provided that all work including the building up of this canvas city is done by the refugees who are their own sweepers, cleaners, road-makers, trench-diggers, cooks, washermen. No work is too low for them. Every variety of work connected with the camp is eqaully dignified. Careful and enlightened supervision can bring about the desirable and necessary revolution in social life. Then indeed the present calamity would be turned into a blessing in disguise. Then no refugee will become a burden wherever he goes. He will never think of himself alone, but always think of the whole of his fellow-sufferers and never want for himself what his fellows cannot have. This is not to be done by brooding but by prompt action under wise supervision and guidance.

Blankets and quilts continue to come. Soon it will, I hope, be possible to say that there will be no dearth of this protection against the coming winter.

Harijan, 26-10-1947

70. LETTER TO VIJAYA M. PANCHOLI

NEW DELHI,
October 14, 1947

CHI. VIJAYA,

I have your letter. If we are unable even to pour a bucket of water over a raging fire, can we aspire to live up to a hundred and twenty-five? To me this is clear enough. Why are you afraid? Nobody can harm one whom Rama protects.

I hope you are all well.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. VIJAYABEHN
GRAM DAKSHINAMURTI
AMBLA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7152. Also C. W. 4644. Courtesy: Vijaya M. Pancholi

71. LETTER TO JAYA

October 14, 1947

CHI. JAYA,

I got your letter. Forget about me. May your wish be fulfilled and may you go on serving for many more years to come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIII

72. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October, 14, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today also many blankets have been received. There is an institution called the Arya Kanya Vidyalaya here. Two teachers and some students from that institution came today. They have collected money to buy blankets. How much could they have collected? They got a few blankets. But they told me something which I thought was a great thing and I was happy when they started talking about keeping a fast. I told them that every lunar month has two halves, the bright fortnight and the dark fortnight. If they fix one day in each fortnight and keep a fast on that day, we shall be saving all the food that we get from outside. I consider it a grave mistake to spend money and get food from outside. By observing such fasts we save ourselves from making such a mistake. After they heard my suggestion the teachers of the Vidyalaya had a consultation with the girls. They did not compel anyone. But they decided to keep a fast on every Thursday and give in charity whatever they would be saving thereby. They would try to give whatever they were able to save. They also said that they would grow food on some land they had. They have taken upon themselves two tasks—to eat less and grow more food. I appreciated this much more than the blankets that have come from them. They were followed by the Ambassador of Iran and his wife. They sat for a little while but left behind a big pile of blankets. They wanted me to distribute the blankets if I could. I told them I was a beggar and would

receive whatever was available and pass it on to the needy.

Many Sikh gentlemen came to me. They came in two or three groups. I discussed many things with them. There is no point in telling you what I discussed. There was nothing secret about it. But the gist of my discussion which they and all others should well understand is that we are going to achieve nothing by indulging in such mutual fights. Passing judgments, giving punishment, acting in retaliation and so on are the things to be done by the Government. Let us do whatever we can through the Government. I think they were all in agreement with this. The rest of the discussion I shall leave out.

Then I heard another thing. Some people have been arrested. We are having our own Government and if it arrests some people it is free to do so. Quite often it is possible that innocent people get arrested. Our Government should not deliberately make the mistake of arresting innocent persons. Nor should it arrest anyone wilfully. But whatever we may do, a human being is a human being after all. He is prone to make mistakes. He is no angel. And he is certainly no God. So he is bound to make mistakes. If by mistake some innocent persons were arrested, what was the need to launch an agitation? But I hear there is some agitation going on against the arrest of some innocent persons. It is for the Government to decide whether or not those persons are guilty. I can understand if some evidence is placed before the Government to establish the innocence of a particular person. But harassing the Government in this manner, getting somebody released by resorting to agitation, is not the proper thing to do. When we fought against British imperialism and were jailed we used to demand the release of the prisoners saying that they were not guilty. That was indeed true. But they were guilty in the eyes of the Government, not ours. In those days we agitated against the British in protest against the arrest of our leaders. But against whom should we agitate now? Our Government in effect is a Panchayat Raj. The leaders represent the Panchayat. It is we who have made them leaders. That is why I say this is not the time to intimidate our Government by resorting to agitations. First and foremost, it is our own Government. It does not have the military strength which the British used to have in India. The British had the entire Navy at their command, because of which it used to be said that they were invincible and unrivalled. It is another matter if that claim cannot hold good today. Whatever it is, they had everything at their command. By dint of that force they

ruled over us. Now we are our own rulers. If we know that no other power is ruling over us and those who are ruling over us have been elected by us, we can also remove them. That is why I say that we should not take such an agitational approach.

The next thing I want to mention, about which I have already told you a number of times, is how we can establish perfect peace in India. It is a very complicated problem. I am not all that happy that there is not much trouble in Delhi. There may be stray murders here and there, but it is not a regular feature as it used to be. This is good. The Government can be happy about it, but I cannot. This is because I have not come here to rule. I have stayed on here by sheer coincidence. I stayed here in the hope that I would bring together both the sides which are riven with hatred and would be helpful in doing that. These communities used to quarrel in the past too. But they used come together once the quarrel was over. But today our hearts are poisoned, as if we had been enemies for several centuries. This is unthinkable. We should not be cowards, neither the Muslims nor the Sikhs, nor the Hindus. Then we would be frightened of nobody. The Muslims should cease to be frightened of the Sikhs and stop running away in fear. The Hindus and the Sikhs should give up fear of the Muslims. The Hindus, the Sikhs and the Muslims should no longer fear one another, if we wish to become a great military power. And, if we choose, India can develop a great non-violent and invincible army. We have two alternatives before us and there is no third way out. The way we are following is no way at all. It is the way of barbarism. There is no way in it to march forward. Thus, I wish to point out the way that can bring us close to one another. The most important thing is that the Hindus, the Muslims and the Sikhs should stop blaming one another as they are doing now. Let them all see their own mistakes and see them magnified like a mountain. The Muslims should not say that even though they committed mistakes at one time, the mistakes the Hindus and the Sikhs are committing today are so great that their earlier mistakes count for nothing. Nor should the Hindus retort by saying that even though they have committed mistakes, their mistakes are nothing compared to what the Muslims have done. What is so very great in answering mistakes with mistakes? If we Hindus and Sikhs try to satisfy ourselves by saying that that has always happened in the world, I would say that it is not the correct way. That way we can never sit together with a clean conscience. Today things have reached such a stage that the Pakistan Government

refuses to take in such a large number of Muslims. And then we begin to wonder if this is due to treachery on their part. What treachery could there be? But how does it affect us if it is there and they have some hidden motive? If we do not have enough courage not to be driven by suspicion, we are going to perish. But let me not talk about it. I wish to say only this much to the Muslims, the Hindus and the Sikhs, that they should not even hint at the faults of others. They should only acknowledge their own faults. If we know that we have committed a mistake, we must admit it. I had said yesterday that it is a vicious thing that the Muslims should regard the Hindus as their enemies. If we become such enemies, the result can be only unfortunate. What if Pakistan has come into being? Let us not give way to frenzy. We were enemies till yesterday. Let us be friends from now on. When we become friends, let us say that we were enemies at one time but now we are friends and we have forgotten our animosity. The Government should frankly tell the Hindus, Sikhs and all others staying in the country that it has made some mistakes and they must also realize the mistakes they might have made. But why should we make any mistakes? We will not do so. If we mutually resolve that we shall have healthy competition and instead of giving two blows for one shall remain calm even in the face of provocation and resolve to remain free from guilt, compete in being good, then let me tell you that all is well with us. And then I can leave Delhi with an easy mind. If I have got to stay on and even die in Delhi, I shall do so. I know how to do it. I have learnt nothing else. We have to die one day in any case. If we cannot do anything, let us at least die. But let us not kill. I am exhorting everyone to learn at least that much. Let us do or die. There is no third alternative. Let us not run away now. We cannot change our fate. We have animosity against none. Nursing animosity is no way of establishing peace in India. Only when we do not quarrel with anyone and abandon all fear can India pave the way to peace. If the Muslims want to live here let them live. Are they going to kill us? How will they kill us and why? Should they all go away from here? Why should they go away and where should they go? Today the people of Pakistan say that they are [not] in a position to absorb so many Muslims. But the Muslims are spread all over India. Pakistan is a small country. How can they all be crowded there? If Pakistan says no more Muslims can be taken in, we shall have to listen. Why should we imagine there is some duplicity involved? In any case, how does it affect us? But let us realize that we have our own fellowmen living

with us. If the Muslims are traitors let them be taken to task and treated according to law. Shoot or do whatever else you want if you find someone being a traitor and not being loyal to India. Shoot five, fifty or four crores; I am not bothered. I can at least understand that. But when one man comes and kills another just for nothing, how can we tolerate it? We should not tolerate it. And why should we, on our part, lose our heads? Why should we become such cowards? That is why I have said that if both the Governments have to function peacefully, let us compete with one another in being good. We are not going to win merely by saying that their mistakes are bigger. But we must realize that if we have made mistakes, we must remedy them. When we clear up everything, things will be well. I can talk much more, but it will be enough if you absorb what I have said today.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 416-21

73. LETTER TO MAHARAJA OF MORVI

[After *October 14, 1947*][1]

I have both your telegrams. There was a time when I could send replies to individual messages. I am no more in that position, hence I have acknowledged them all through the newspapers without mentioning names and places. The same fate awaited those that came from abroad.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

74. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

October 15, 1947

My estimate was Rs. 5 0,000, and it is approximately correct. I shall proceed accordingly. I shall write to people and do whatever else may be necessary for the purpose.

When I wrote[2] "I don't know how long I shall be alive', it was only a manner of speaking. You know that I am not going anywhere. The pile of work is so much that I can't even find time to write. I am here to 'do or die' and am fully engrossed in work.

[1] In the source the letter is placed between those of October 14 and 16.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amritlal T. Nanavati", 24-9-1947.

I have already had a talk with Kisansinh of Baroda. He has agreed and says that he will give priority to our work. He will not think of convenience or inconvenience in this matter. So we will not have much trouble, though there may be a bit of difficulty.

Kakasaheb and you should think about the Press as also about the library.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10816

75. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 15, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Many persons come to see me every day. Some of them leave with me blankets and money for the refugees. A lady has given me today a cheque for Rs. 2,000. Two persons also came to see me on behalf of the Muslims. They have collected blankets and some money which they have passed on to me. They are craftsmen. They have not even given their names. I asked them to distribute those things themselves among their own fellowmen who have suffered. But they said they wanted to hand over the things in Gandhi's hands, because such things should be distributed among the Hindus and the Sikhs who have suffered in West Punjab. I was touched by their sentiment. In the present conditions even if a few Muslims or Hindus or Sikhs do things like these, they must be written down in letters of gold. They said that at one time they considered me an enemy of the Muslims; but now they were convinced that I was a friend to everyone. So am I, and I claim to be one. I do not need a certificate from anyone for that. I have lived in that spirit not for five or seven years but for the last 60 years.

It is generally said that every Sikh regards the Muslim as his enemy and *vice versa*. But this is absolutely incorrect. It is true that a considerable number of Sikhs went wild, as did a large number of Hindus and Muslims. But for that reason to say that the whole community of Sikhs is like that or that all Muslims are the same is quite unjust. I have with me innumerable instances showing how the Sikhs and the Hindus saved Muslims and the Muslims saved the Sikhs and the Hindus by keeping them in their own houses. Not only from

the Punjab and the Frontier Province but from every place such instances have been reported. The newspapers should give proper publicity to these things. Let them give up publishing the news about the Hindus and the Muslims killing each other. That does nothing but harm. The Press has become very powerful in the present world. It can render great service if it so chooses.

One-fourth of the entire Muslim population is concentrated in the U. P. They speak Urdu. If we want them to stay there the Devanagari script should not be forced on them. Malaviyaji too had worked much in the interest of Hindi. But I never heard him say that the Urdu language should be wiped out. Those who are in power in the U. P. today are big people and they are good workers. They keep the Muslims with them. But if on the one hand we say that the Muslims should not go from here, and on the other hand go on insulting them and try to keep them as slaves, then on their own they will be compelled to go away from here. Should our being in majority make us so arrogant that we would not tolerate the presence of others? We should never be like that. Everybody should learn both the Hindi and the Urdu scripts. If the Muslims want to go away to Pakistan of their own free will, they should be allowed to do so. But we must do our duty. After all, Muslims have left their stamp all over the U. P., and there are grand Muslim monuments in Agra, Lucknow, Deoband, Azamgarh and other cities. There are many nationalist Muslims in those places. Besides, there are many Hindus who know only Urdu. Tej Bahadur Sapru is a great Urdu scholar. Should he be compelled to write in the Devanagari script? Should he be asked to forget Urdu? Are we going to cut off our own hands? If we were to do any such thing, our excesses would reach the limit. I have no doubt that we will not be able to protect Hinduism in this way. We should not follow the example of Pakistan. Hence I call upon the U. P. Government in a spirit of love, even though I have no control over it, to withdraw its circular[1].

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 422-4

[1] A report had appeared in the Press that the official language of the U. P. would be Hindi in the Devanagari script.

76. ACTION IN INACTION[1]

A Correspondent writes:

> In your article "My Duty"[2] you say that you have not reached that state. The sentence looks simple enough but I would like you to expand the meaning a little.

There is a stage in life when a man does not need even to proclaim his thoughts, much less to show them by outward action. Mere thoughts act. They attain that power. Then it can be said of him that his seeming inaction constitutes his action. I must confess that I am far from that state. All I can say is that my striving is in that direction.

NEW DELHI, October 16, 1947

Harijan, 26-10-1947

77. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1947

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I read your letter to Abha. Consider it your duty to please Satis Babu[3]. I did all that I could for your brothers. Patiala is now but a dream. Bari Khan is here. I told him to write to you. All are safe but they had to leave Patiala for good!

Stay there in peace and do your work. Do not hesitate to write to me.

Abha is no doubt weak. I shall see what I can do.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 589

[1] This appeared under "Notes" which appeared in the Hindi original of *Harijan Sevak*, 26-10-1947.

[2] The source has "Action in Inaction", which is a slip; *vide* "My Duty", 22-9-1947.

[3] Satis Chandra Das Gupta, under whom the addressee was working

78. LETTER TO SUNDARLAL

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1947

CHI. SUNDARLAL,

I got your two letters. The description[1] that you have given does not tally with that of the others.

I have carefully gone through Mirza Saheb's[2] statement. Yesterday I gave it to Jawaharlal to read. He has taken it with him. Tell Mirza Saheb that I received his telegrams and did what was possible. But what could I do? The statements on the two sides were such that I had to keep silent. You must realize that I have very little power. The Government is not in my hands and I do not want to interfere in the affairs of the Government. Nor can I do so. I understand my limitations.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI PANDIT SUNDARLALJI
C/O LALA ACHINTRAM
BRADLAUGH HALL

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 10266. Courtesy: Purushottam Prasad

[1] The addressee had toured Pakistan and sent a brief account of his experiences.
[2] Speaker of Pakistan Assembly

79. LETTER TO ANAND AND GANGI HINGORANI

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1947

CHI. ANAND AND GANGI,

I have your letter. The condition of Sind is distressing. I am pained by Father's condition. I just don't know what to do. Do what both of you consider your duty.

If you have understood and assimilated my point, why should you go to America? However, if you feel depressed all the time because you are hard of hearing, go to any place in the world and get yourself cured.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

80. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I have been forgetting to talk about Mysore. You must be aware of what has happened there. Sir Ramaswamy Mudaliar is the Dewan of Mysore. Mysore has joined the Indian Union. The people of that State are well educated. They have resorted to satyagraha quite often. This time too the people offered satyagraha. They wanted adequate share for the people in the administration. The Prince would remain and the people would be loyal to him; but he should withdraw from administration. This should have actually happened, but it did not. Hence the satyagraha. The people sent me a telegram before launching the satyagraha. They informed me that there was no cause for me to worry. They said they had decided to resort to satyagraha after a great deal of thought and they would strictly conform to the rules of satyagraha. They were ready to face any hardships in the pursuit of their goal. But the Dewan, Sir Ramaswamy Mudaliar, is a very great man. He has travelled all over the world. He realized that

the people could no longer be ill-treated. How long could it go on? The result was that all those who had been taken prisoners were released and the issue was settled between the Mysore State and the people. All the legitimate demands of the people were accepted by the State. The ruler, the Dewan and the people should be congratulated on this settlement. The State has agreed to rule with the consent of the people. There are many other such Princes. Let them also follow this example and, like the King of England, rule with the consent of the people. How wonderful it would be if they abided by the will of the people and did not overstep the limit!

Another thing which I want to say is that the place where I stay belongs to the Birla brothers. They allow everyone to come in. We must appreciate their good gesture. Usually lakhs of people attend the prayer meetings. But here the prayer meetings have been small. Actually I did not expect even the present number. Those attending these prayer meetings also include people who have come from the Punjab. I was very pained to learn that some people picked fruits from the trees around. Nobody should touch a single fruit on the trees. Why talk of fruit, not even a leaf should be plucked. The gardener would not at all like people picking fruits like that. There is a time even for picking fruits. They should not be plucked before their time. People who come here come to worship. Let our hearts be pure at least during the prayer meeting. During that period we should think of nothing but God. How then can we resort to stealing? It may be that we are all passing through troubled times. But let us not give up our good behaviour.

I have received another complaint too. People keep coming to see me throughout the day. Some of them say that by praising Government officers, the police and the military I have given them a certificate of efficiency. I have not said any such thing. Even if I did, it was a folly on my part or I must have been off my guard. But I have not said it at all. What I said was that they should all rise to the occasion. Not that they have already reached that level. It is one thing to say that a person should have such and such qualities and another thing for him to have those qualities. In any case, since I do not know anyone of them, how could I give them any certificate? How do I know that they are all working according to the law? Our duty is to abide by the instructions of the police and the military, because they are given a certain authority.

If we wish to have Panchayat Raj the first rule is that we should follow its orders. We have not yet achieved the full benefits of Panchayat Raj. Had we been truly non-violent, this would not have been so. Even so, the British rule has ended. The Governor-General, though he is a high-ranking officer in the Navy and belongs to the royal family, has remained here as our servant. He has to go by the opinion of our cabinet of Ministers. He is not our master. Rather, we are his masters. Thus ours is a democratic government and we must all abide by the laws made by it. If anyone has any complaint against Government officers the remedy lies in approaching Government or getting the complaint published in the newspapers. If any officer has taken to bribery or is inefficient, action should be taken against him. Those who indulge in graft are committing a crime against themselves and against the country. Recently some military officers were found flogging people at the railway station. No officer has a right to flog anyone. But in retaliation if we also start whipping we fall victims to the same evil. Before independence, Government officers used to behave like our masters and not servants. They were loyal to the British Government, and if they took bribes in those days, they were committing a crime against the British Government. But if the officers take bribes now, they are committing a crime against India. There is such a lot of difference in this.

Some people from Noakhali have also come to me. East Pakistan is no small country after all. Places like Dacca and Tripura are in East Pakistan. Those people tell me that the Hindus in Dacca are fleeing. They fear some atrocities there. Those Bengali friends have requested me to say something. I can say only what I have been saying all along. Nobody should leave his country or his home like that. The brave have nothing to fear. If at all, they are afraid only of God. They should not run away in cowardice. They must have the courage to die. They must tell the Pakistan Government that they wish to remain loyal to Pakistan and stay on there. They must assure it that they will not betray and cut at the roots of Pakistan. They must say that the Government may kill them, but cannot abduct their daughters. If the Government forbids the name of Rama they must insist on uttering that name. If it says they should not beat drums on the Dussehra Day, they must insist on doing so and explain that that is part of their religion. But it is very wrong that influential people run away from there in order to save their lives while the poor, helpless people stay on there. There is a large population of Shudras there. How can they be expected to show the requisite courage? If I am a

businessman possessing a lot of money, should I run away? That is not my dharma. If the lawyers, doctors, tradesmen, etc., find that they have got to leave their places, they should see that the poor have found their safety first. It is not human to run away leaving the poor behind. That can never bring glory to Hinduism, Islam or Sikhism. Wherever you go, you should always keep the poor with you. Unfortunately I am not in East Pakistan today. God has not given me the power to be present everywhere. I am just a human being and helpless at that. But I can certainly make my voice reach them all, and that I am doing.

Those Bengali friends told me that I should request Dr. Ambedkar to do something in the matter. He has done considerable work among the depressed classes. On this occasion he too should say a few things to the people there. Let him tell them that it is sinful to keep alive at the cost of one's religion. Such words would give them some strength.

I am also requested to send Suhrawardy Saheb over there. It would be proper too that he went there. But Suhrawardy Saheb is not here. He should be here in a day or two. But Khwaja Nazimuddin is already there. He too says that no Hindu or Sikh will be killed in Pakistan. Suhrawardy Saheb too will go there to help him. How can he avoid going there? Today, it is in the interest of everybody that Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs should live in amity. If this does not happen, both India and Pakistan will perish.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 424-8

81. NOTE TO SUNDARLAL

[About *October 16, 1947*][1]

My first objection is in regard to the language. It seems you have forgotten Urdu. If so I shall write the letter. Raja Saheb[2] I am sure, knows his language. I am surprised. Somehow I do not approve of your letter. My cold is very troublesome. I cannot revise the letter now. There are other things to be attended to. So I will not revise it today but tomorrow I may.

From the Hindi original: C. W. 10267. Courtesy: Purushottam Prasad

[1] According to the addressee this was written about the same time as the letter dated October 16; *vide* "Letter to Sundarlal", 16-10-1947.

[2] Ghazanfar Ali Khan, Minister for Relief and Rehabilitation in Pakistan

82. LETTER TO JULIAN HUXLEY[1]

[Before *October 17, 1947*][2]

I learned from my illiterate, but wise, mother that all rights to be deserved and preserved came from a duty well done.

The very right to live accrues to us only when we do the duty of the citizenship of the world. From this one fundamental statement perhaps it is easy enough to define the duties of man and woman and correlate every right to some corresponding duty to be first performed. Every other right can be shown to be usurpation hardly worth fighting for.

The Hindustan Times, 19-10-1947

83. A PUZZLE[3]

A friend writes:

> It would be well not to discuss even by way of joke the possibility of a war between our two States. But you have gone so far as to express the opinion[4] that in the event of a war between the two, the Muslims of the Union should fight against those of Pakistan. Does it not then follow that the Hindus and other non-Muslims [of Pakistan] should do likewise? Now if such a war arises out of the communal question, no argument is likely to make the Muslims of the Union fight those of Pakistan and likewise the Hindus and the Sikhs of Pakistan. If, however, a war takes place between the two for other than the communal cause, you will not contend that the Hindus of Pakistan and the Muslims of the Union should fight Pakistan.

It is undoubtedly true that the possibility of a war between the two States should not be discussed by way of a joke. The adverb "even" does not fit in. For, if the possibility be a reality, it would be a duty to discuss it. It might be folly not to do so.

[1] This was one of the 60 replies to a request by UNESCO to thinkers and philosophers throughout the world for their opinions. On the basis of the answers a report was to be submitted to the U. N. Human Rights Commission in Geneva in December.

[2] According to a Reuter report, dated "Lake Success, October 18", the letter was published in the United Nations' Weekly Bulletin of October 17.

[3] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 26-10-1947.

[4] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 26-9-1947 and "Hindustani", 27-9-1947.

It is my firm opinion that the rule that applies to the Muslims of the Union must in the same circumstances apply to the Hindus and other non-Muslims of Pakistan. I have expressed this view in my after-prayer speeches as also in my talks with friends here.

Of course, behind the opinion lies a train of reasoning. Loyalty cannot be evoked to order. If circumstances do not warrant it, it may be said to be impossible to achieve. There is a large number of people who do not believe in the possibility of such genuine loyalty and hence laugh at my opinion. Surely there is nothing to laugh at in conceiving such a possibility. The Muslims of the Union will fight those of Pakistan when they regard it as a duty, in other words, when it is clear to them that they are being fairly treated in the Union and that the non-Muslims are not so treated in Pakistan. Such a state is not beyond the range of possibility.

Similarly if the non-Muslims of Pakistan clearly feel that they are being fairly treated there and that they can reside there in safety and yet the Hindus of the Union maltreat the minorities, the minorities of Pakistan will naturally fight the majority in the Union. Then the minorities will not need any argument to induce them to do their duty.

It was our misfortune that the country was divided into two parts. The division was avowedly by reason of religious cleavage. Behind it might be economic and other causes. They could not have brought out the cleavage. The poison that fills the air arose also from the same communal cause. Irreligion masquerades as religion. It sounds nice to say that it would have been better if there had been no communal question. But how could the fact be undone?

It has been repeatedly asked whether in the event of a war between the two, the Muslims of the Union will fight against the Muslims of Pakistan and the Hindus of one against those of the other. However unlikely it may appear at present, there is nothing inherently impossible in the conception. There is any day more risk in distrusting the profession of loyalty than in trusting it and courageously facing the danger of trusting. The question can be more convincingly put in this way: Will the Hindus ever fight the Hindus and the Muslims their co-religionists for the sake of truth and justice? It can be answered by a counter question: Does not history provide such instances ?

In solving the puzzle the great stumbling-block in the way is

that truth is at a discount. Let us hope that in this holocaust, there are some who will stand firm in their faith in the victory of truth.

NEW DELHI, October 17, 1947
Harijan, 26-10-1947

84. LETTER TO CHAMAN KAVI

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1947

BHAI CHAMAN KAVI,

You seem to be after me. Your letter went to Pyarelal. He is in Noakhali. I keep moving about. Your letter therefore, after much wandering, reached me only yesterday. You are far away. You do not know the situation here. I have been away from the Ashram for a long time. I went away to Bihar, leaving Pyarelal in Noakhali. You do not know all this and yet you indulge in wild guesses. Pyarelal has already written to you. Do you know where I was, where Pyarelal was, after Mahadev passed away? Do you know that from the prison I wrote letters to no one? After my release from jail[1] I was ill for some time and as soon as I was a little better I started my incessant touring. If, therefore, I have failed to cope with some of your letters, it is nobody's fault; only the circumstances are to blame. It is only your latest letter that makes me aware that you are a Muslim. Nonetheless this awareness will be only momentary. What more can I write? There is nothing worth writing about. What can I say about the atmosphere which is full of poison?

Let us all pray. My resolve is to 'do or die'. The Lord, our Master, is there to see me through it. Noone can undo what He has willed. Won't you now have a hearty laugh?

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] On May 6, 1944

85. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[1]

October 17, 1947[2]

Q. In case the UNO fails to do justice by the Indians in South Africa, what line of action would you advise the South African Indians to take?

A. I cannot even think of failure in satyagraha. It never fails. This is my firm belief.

What effect do you think the failure of the UNO to deal justly with the South African-Indian dispute will have on the future of that organization?

If the UNO fails to deal justly with the South African-Indian dispute, the UNO will lose its prestige. I have no doubt that the UNO can prosper only if it is just.

And what will be the effect of the failure on the world?

About the effect on the world no one knows. At least I do not.

Racial inequality must be removed if there is to be peace in the world. What is your advice to those who agree with this but do nothing to fight the evil of racial inequality?

Those who agree that racial inequality must be removed and yet do nothing to fight the evil are impotent. I cannot have anything to say to such people. After all the underdogs will have to earn their own salvation.

What remedy do you propose for the elimination of racial prejudice and antagonism from the affairs of mankind?

The solution is largely in India's hands. If everything is all right in India internally, she is likely to play an effective part in straightening out affairs.

What message have you for our countrymen overseas living in a distracted world?

The spirit of India at its best should be exhibited by each one in his own person. Our shortcomings must be buried in India.

Harijan, 26-10-1947

[1] This appeared under the title "Indians Overseas". The interview was in Gujarati.

[2] From *The Hindustan Times*, 18-10-1947

86. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

People write to me and also enquire personally, why my cough is not still cured. Whenever I speak a little after the prayer I start coughing. I am not taking any treatment either from a doctor or a vaid. Doctors tell me that I have allowed it to continue for three weeks while the cough can be cured within three days by taking penicillin. But according to me Ramanama is the greatest medicine. It is infallible. Like the arrow of Rama which never failed to hit the target, this medicine too never fails. But one must be patient. I can think of no other alternative in the present circumstances and in the context of what is happening in Delhi and all over the country there is no other help except God. Whatever I try to do as a human being results in failure. There was a time when my words carried much weight. Today they have no impact. Have I done anything wrong? Or is it that I no longer talk from my heart as I did in former days? But I do speak from my heart and you also listen. But times have changed. Every age has its own feature. It should be so and it is so. But it will not have any effect on me. I do not let that happen. I am what I have always been. I know that I have been saying now what I have said all along. I have the same faith in non-violence and truth as I had before. Maybe, my faith is much deeper now. The times have changed but I have not. Prayer has an effect on those who listen to it in good faith. Man can act only according to his own nature. There is no room for hypocrisy in this.

What I am doing today is in the name of God. I trust Him. Why should I give up Ramanama just for the sake of this minor illness? Either this illness has to go or I have to be overcome by it. What is so very great if man dies? Everyone is ordained to die from the time of his birth. If God wants something done through me He will keep me alive, otherwise He will kill me by this cough. The *bhajan* which the girl sang a moment ago says that one should repeat Ramanama. One should forget desire, anger, attachment, infatuation, but never forget Ramanama because He is one's sole refuge. It is for one to sing the *bhajan* and meditate on it. But when I start coughing at such moments, doctors or vaids ask me to take penicillin. Where is

Ramanama in this? When I do not have faith in Ramanama regarding trivial matters, how can I succeed in bigger things by relying on it? If I do not put in my own effort I would go down and become worthless. Others may not take that view, but I would have fallen in my own eyes. Why should I forget Ramanama in order to cure this ordinary cough?

As usual some blankets have been received today also. Some cheques too have been received. With great enthusiasm a Muslim gentleman came and left a quilt containing two and a half seers of cotton. He wants it to be given to someone who had nothing to cover himself with. Arrangements are being made to do that. It is being remarked that things are not being given to the people with as much enthusiasm as would be expected. As for myself I want to express my gratitude to the people that they are sending blankets and money so promptly. Some people send money because they cannot buy blankets at cheaper rates. They want us to buy the blankets at a cheaper price on their behalf.

Rajendra Babu had called a committee to discuss the food problem. The committee did not discuss anything about the problem of cloth. With regard to food and cloth I continue to hold the same views that I have held the past few months. I agree that the poor are put to greater hardship and they would be worse off. Some people write to me and those who are working among the peasants came and told me that the peasants were happy about what I have said. They feel that it would help them to get rid of the controls imposed on them. They would have at least some oportunities. Their granaries are full. Are they going to consume the entire stock of grains? Even if they want to earn money, would they resort to black-marketing? Peasants are simple-hearted people. Why should they resort to black-marketing? They are happy if they get a small margin of profit. What have they got to do with scheming or black-marketing? And so, let me tell you, and through you the Government, that we should have at least that much faith in the people. Why do we not have the courage to scrap rationing? We need not fear any untoward consequences. Why have you assumed that people have become wicked and are hiding their food stocks? After all, you yourselves are the Government. You can again revert to controls if you find that the situation has worsened. There is no justification for making people after if you do not have that much courage. Things should be done according to the practice of Panchayat Raj.

Mill-owners say they have piles of cloth stocked with them. But how can they release it when there is control on it? I do believe that they are not talking about their own profits. They are talking purely in the interests of the people. If they are given freedom they can bring out their stocks and cloth can reach the people. How terrible it is that there is enough stock of grains in the country but it does not reach the people it should. It seems to me that there is something basically wrong about it. Our bureaucrats wish to work sitting at their desks. They have in front of them their tables and red tape and wax. All that they have to do is to put red tape and make the file. Have they ever lived among the peasants? Have they ever acquainted themselves with the peasants? Very respectfully, I wish to tell them that they should not take it for granted that people will die. With open eyes we see that people are dying because of controls. Those who are given to evil things and acts of madness continue to indulge in their activities, but their strong points are not seen. I would say that both these controls should be removed as early as possible. Even if there are some hidden stocks, people will become vigilant. The soaring prices of cloth, food-stuffs and other things will come down. Now there is no war and nothing is going out of the country. But the prices are still going up. I feel it is most disgraceful and our heads should hang in shame. The Government should trust the people and have courage. It should act boldly and remove controls as early as possible. This is my firm belief which is increasing day by day.

Today we are all agitated. All through the day we fear death at the hands of the Muslims or the Hindus or the Sikhs. We are obsessed by that fear and can think of nothing better. There is animosity between these communities, but we cannot get over it by brooding over it. Our scriptures also say that man becomes what he thinks. The poison spreads in our system. It affects our thought and then the Hindus want to kill the Muslims and the Muslims want to kill the Hindus and the Sikhs. If we continue to think along these lines, it would become our second nature. Are we going to be reduced to this state after attaining independence? I can never call this Panchayati Raj.

I have received a telegram from South Africa. It says that I have done them a great favour. What favour have I done? I have merely stated[1] what I believe to be good. This is one great thing about

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 11-10-1947.

satyagraha. When the Punjab was under Martial Law, a reign of terror was let loose. Hundreds of thousands of men had to crawl on their bellies. They crawled on their bellies because they loved their lives. I have forgotten the name of that narrow lane in Amritsar. They crawled on their bellies simply in order to remain alive. They were threatened with death if they refused to crawl. But why should anyone do such a thing merely in order to live? They could have stood up and refused to crawl, saying, "Never to accept defeat even if we have to die."[1] It is perfectly in tune with the spirit of satyagraha to say that we shall not be defeated even if we have to die and lose all our possessions. This involves truth. A wrong action involves falsehood. What does it matter if there are only a handful of people in South Africa? How can there be millions to offer satyagraha? In any case, the population there is only a few lakhs. Even if a few hundred, even if only ten persons come forward, they will add to the prestige of India. They ask me why I do not also request the people here to send money. That pains me. They are not poor people. They have gone to South Africa to make money. They have not gone there to oblige us. Those who are carrying on the struggle there do not have much money, and the moneyed people do not give them anything. Those who own money begin to love only money. They see their honour and respect only in money. Our people in South Africa say they are fighters, but don't have much money. If they don't have money, how have they carried on so far?

There is a large number of our people in East Africa. The entire East Coast is full of our people. I would ask them to send money. Our country is almost impoverished today. With what face can I ask anybody here to send money? We do have millionaires in our country and they make millions too, but even they are left with little money because of heavy taxation. And to our misfortune the people are fighting among themselves, and that also results in the loss of millions. How can I ask them to spare money for South Africa? When I was in South Africa people from here used to send money, Gokhale[2] used to send money. The Punjab and the whole of India had sent me something between 5 to 7 lakhs. I don't think I can ask people to do any such thing today. There are many Indians in Mauritius. They are

[1] The first line of the verse written by Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhary, during the Martial Law in the Punjab

[2] Gopal Krishna Gokhale

coolies there. There is no communal problem in that place. There is a large number of Indians in Mombasa. They are pretty rich. They do not drink, nor do they go to prostitutes. They need money only for their food. How much money does one need for food? Our people in South Africa can say that they are fighting not for themselves but for India. Of course, I cannot stop people from sending money there, but I cannot ask them to do so, either.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 428-33

87. NOTES

TRUE ADULT EDUCATION

Of all the numerous letters and telegrams received for the Charkha Jayanti, a letter in Hindustani received from the Indore Adult Education Association most arrested my attention. The purport of it is that the Association in question instead of wasting time in performing some flattering function, devoted the *Jayanti* week to doing urgent and useful work, i.e., young and old, rich and poor, official, and non-official, banded together in destroying a noxious weed harmful to man and beast. If such co-operation became the abiding feature of any locality, it would constitute the best education for young and old and change the face of the society in which it was done.

SEASONABLE QUOTATIONS

From among letters and telegrams received during my little fast in Calcutta in September last, I kept the following for the *Harijan*. It is from Prof. Horace Alexander.

> This morning's news from Calcutta fills us all with grief; but we must not despair. God has shown us during this past fortnight what can happen to those who have faith in Him. The devil trips us up again but you, through your fast, bring us back to God again. I am reminded of two sayings:
>
> From Browning:
>
> "To dry one's eyes and laugh at a fall,
> And baffled, get up and begin again,
> So the chase takes up one's life, that's all."
>
> And from the Old Testament:
>
> "Though He slay me, yet I will trust Him."

NEW DELHI, October 18, 1947

Harijan, 26-10-1947

88. LETTER TO GOMATI K. MASHRUWALA

NEW DELHI,
October 18, 1947

CHI. GOMATI,

I understand your letter. Your pain is from ignorance. I also referred[1] to [your letter] in yesterday's prayer speech without giving your name. My cough is almost cured. It is not troubling me any more but I do cough a little when I speak. It is almost like "Those who are in it enjoy rare happiness, the spectators are scorched." It is not that I have been careless about it, though I am more and more inclined towards relying on Rama. One who relies on Rama can never be careless. He becomes more and more indifferent as to outer treatment and in doing so it can be tested whether or not Ramanama has reached his inner being. Don't worry about me at all. If God grants me strength and reason I wish to do or die here.

I hope now you understand everything.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10732. Courtesy: Gomati K. Mashruwala

89. LETTER TO DEV PRAKASH NAYYAR

October 18, 1947

CHI. DEV,

Enclosed is a cheque for Hunar.

I too had a letter regarding Chand's[2] illness. Chand will probably come here in a few days. I had thought that Sushila must have written to you. She has gone to Kurukshetra today. There is no cause for worry about Chand. I do not see any necessity of your going to Sevagram. I shall write on receiving further news of Chand.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi original. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 17-10-1947.
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Chandrani", 20-10-1947.

90. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 18, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Blankets and cheques are still coming, but not at a satisfactory rate.

I have seen the statement issued by Sardar Patel in which he has extended his hand before the people. That shows that if we sit back depending on the Government no work can be accomplished. The Government cannot cope with the situation. It is just as well that Sardar Patel has issued the statement. It will indeed be good if we can provide some protection to the people who have nothing with which to face the cold.

That is exactly what Dr. Sushila Nayyar is doing. She regularly goes to the Purana Quila and to many other places. Today she has gone to Kurukshetra because a new camp has been set up there. People are making arrangements there, but she is a big doctor. Another lady doctor too has accompanied her. Mrs. John Matthai and many others also have gone there. Let us help them as much as we can.

I talked to you about Hindustani yesterday. Now many people are writing to me to say what a ridiculous thing I am doing. I do not think it is ridiculous. I think I am doing a very good thing for Hindustani and the Union. I serve them by doing so. Those people write to me that the trend towards Hindustani started during a period when we had fallen on evil times and were under subjugation. But we forget the fact that those people, even though they came as invaders, settled in this country. They started to think how they could settle down in this country. As a matter of fact, Urdu was born out of this fusion and it acquired a distinct form as in course of time they crammed Arabic and Persian words into the language. They even put a new garb on it. Its grammar also comes from those languages. That is not the case with Hindustani whose grammar belongs to this soil. Whatever Persian words there are in Urdu have been there for ages. It is not for us to pick out those words and remove them from the language. The people who came as invaders settled down here and adopted local customs. I think if we hate them now it will be as good

as hating ourselves. But today I am mentioning this for another reason. I have written sufficiently about it. As far as the English language is concerned it was different. The British came here to build an empire. They had no intention of settling here. They never came to belong to India. They always considered themselves outsiders here, and wanted to remain as such. They wanted their children to be brought up outside India. Later they also introduced the English language. Slowly they gave it a particular shape. Nothing happened to English similar to what happened in the case of Urdu. Urdu came into being from avadhi or other languages spoken at that time. But that is not the case with English. Now the British rule has ended in India. But what will be our fate if the English language continues to dominate us and we cannot carry on our administration without that language? Will the millions of India then learn English? Will English become our national language? Let me tell you very plainly that that is not possible. Let us not even try to do any such thing. We are sure to ruin ourselves if we ever try to do so.

A gentleman writes to me to say that I am mistaken. He says that all those who carry on the work in the country have studied English. But only a handful of people have studied English. It is true that they carried on their work in English in courts and offices, because they could thus exercise their authority. Those who have lived in slavery get used to liking the language of the State. That is all right. But when the poor Hindustani or Hindi-speaking people go to courts and offices where the work is carried on in English, they understand nothing at all. This is only betraying our intellectual bankruptcy. We just do not want to understand anything. We do not even want to know where our interests lie. The British rule has gone. Now the English language too will have to come down from the pedestal on which we have installed it and where it should never have been. A gentleman writes to me that quite another interpretation will be given to what I am saying. For people never see the intended meaning in things.

Today we have all lost our heads. All that is left is that the Hindus fight the Muslims, cut their throats, refuse to sit with them. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur who returned from Simla only yesterday or the day before, told me that poor Muslims who had lived in Simla for many years had to be removed from there merely because they were Muslims. We have become so uncivilized. What hardships they must have suffered while moving from there! There are large numbers of Hindus in Pakistan. They also complain about the same thing. These

things follow one after the other.

Some people say that Sanskritized Hindi is the national language of India. That English is now on the way out but people will carry on their work in the language of their province. There is a justifiable fear of conflict in this matter which is bound to create mutual hatred. English cannot continue, because there are only a handful of Englishmen here. And it is not up to them to carry on the Government.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 433-5

91. LETTER TO THADANI

NEW DELHI,
October 19, 1947

MY DEAR THADANI,

Here is a postcard from Prof. Desai[1]. You see his verdict. Don't be carried away by the praise that people may bestow upon your work. Profit by their criticism when it is not based on ignorance or prejudice.

Of course I had all your previous letters and I have your books before me.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

92. LETTER TO VIKRAM V. DESAI

October 19, 1947

CHI. VIKRAM[2],

I got your postcard. You should write bigger characters. The lines you draw to rule the paper should be even. The space between two lines should be uniform and wide enough for bigger characters.

[1] Valji G. Desai
[2] Son of Valji G. Desai

The characters should be as neat and well formed as pearls. Can one ever forget you?

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. VIKRAMADITYA

C/O PROF. VALJI DESAI

14 GANESHWADI

POONA-4

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 3173. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

93. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

October 19, 1947

CHI. VALJI,

I have sent as many of your articles as I could read. It would be better if you could translate the English articles into Gujarati, too.

Blessings to all of you from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 3173. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

94. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

NEW DELHI,
October 19, 1947

CHI. RAIHANA,

I understand your anxiety. I made enquiries on the basis of what Kakasaheb had told me. The result (of my enquiry) can be seen overleaf. May I hope you will not be depressed any more? What is unhappiness for people like us, or even happiness for that matter?

God bless you.

Blessings to you and Saroj[1] *from*

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

95. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

NEW DELHI,
October 19, 1947

CHI. KAKA,

I made all the arrangments I could on the basis of your letter. I informed the Sardar and made prompt inquiries. Now please send this very letter to Raihana. The papers enclosed pertain to your side.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

96. TALK WITH LORD AND LADY HANDES[2]

October 19, 1947

LADY HANDES: Which are the thoughts uppermost in your mind when you observe silence? Or what do you think of while observing silence?

GANDHIJI: I think of God.

What is your prayer to God for your people?

Only that they become good and righteous. This girl Manu is

[1] Saroj Nanavati
[2] Who came to see Gandhiji at 12 noon

my granddaughter. She was the only person who accompanied me all the way in my Noakhali tour. During that tour she found a melodious tune. Of course she has not composed it. It is more true to say that God Prompted her to say: "*Ishwar Allah tere nam sabko sanmati de Bhagawan.*" But I don't pray to God begging for something. God is Omnipotent, Omnipresent and omniscient. He dwells in the hearts of all. His ways are not like the ways of imperfect men. It is not that He gives us something only when we ask for it. He knows best what we need and what is beneficial for us.

He gives what is good for us without our asking for it. He is so generous and kind-hearted that His heart melts for the poor. Where is the need for asking anything?

Often you observe silence, not only on Mondays. What is the object behind this daily silence?

Physical rest. Observing silence on Mondays is an altogether different thing. It has a spiritual significance. For one who has learnt the art of silence, it is a means of introspection. Observing silence has become a part of my life. I don't have to make any effort for it.

In the end Lady Handes asked Gandhiji about his programme and what his permanent residence in Delhi would be. Gandhiji siad:

I wish to do or die here, so I am here till then. There are only two plans at present. Either permanent peace is established here or I die in the attempt to establish it.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 121-2

97. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 19, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You feel that if the prayer is started at 6 p. m. it gets quite late as the days are becoming short. Each day becomes shorter by two to three minutes and by December 23 the day becomes very short. As it gets dark quite early these days we shall start the prayer at 5.30 p.m. from tomorrow.

You have already heard the *bhajan*[1] today. I think I have not

[1] No. 151 in *Ashram Bhajanavali*.

narrated to you the touching story of the *bhajan*. There is an *Ashram Bhajanavali* and all the *bhajans* in it have history behind them. Not all of them are well selected, though some are. But the whole collection was prepared in the Ashram. There used to be a great devotee in the Ashram who was also a musician. His name was Pandit Khare[1] . He prepared this collection of *bhajans*. Of course, he did take help from Kakasaheb and others. This *bhajan* was included in the collection. My nephew Maganlal Gandhi used to sing this *bhajan*. He stayed with me for a long time at the Ashram in South Africa. It is not that only Pandit Khare has prepared such a collection. Many others have also done so. For those were the days of our non-violent struggle for freedom. After some years many people felt frustrated that we had not yet won freedom. It could only be concluded that there was something wrong with us. Good people should never think that when something goes wrong the reason is to be sought elsewhere. It is not right to think that the blame lies with our neighbours or our brothers but not with us. That is no the right way but the wrong one. It is incorrect to think that when things go wrong the fault lies with others and never with us. All devotees of God have said this. Tulsidas has said the same thing. So also Surdas who sings: "Who can be so crooked, wicked, or dissolute as I?"[2] Neither Tulsidas nor Surdas was such a person; but they regarded themselves as such. The more they remained away from God, the more unhappy they felt, even if they were surrounded by brothers, sisters, sons, friends and everybody else. They reflect with a sigh that there is none as crooked, wicked or dissolute as themselves. It is good that they searched within themselves for faults. This *bhajan* also expresses the same sentiment. Here the poet asks why he is alive though he has no seen God so far. As a rule it was Pandit Khare who used to sing this *bhajan;* but sometimes when he was not present or was ill, Maganlal used to sing it. Maganlal was no musician but he had a good voice. That *bhajan* as he sang it, still rings in my ears. He was the pillar of the Ashram. He was like a rock in the management of the Ashram. He was very sturdy. He would be always ahead of everyone else in digging with the pickaxe. He used to have a very strong body when he was in South Africa. But when he came here he lost weight, though he was not ill. Though he had to shoulder the entire responsibility there, here the unusual thing was that

[1] Narayan Moreshwar Khare
[2] No. 106 in *Ashram Bhajanavali*.

he had to work among crores of people. He shared considerable responsibility of the constructive programme. How can we dispense with the constructive programme? What can swaraj mean without the constructive programme? We have attained independence, but what is its worth? What if we have achieved independence? Today we realize that if we had done sufficient constructive work in those days we would not be witnessing the scenes we see today. Is this the swaraj we had in mind? If we had done that much in those days, India's history would have been different. I have no doubt about it at all. Maganlal's God was in swaraj. His swaraj was *Ramarajya*.

God can be seen only in swaraj. After all, God does not possess any physical form. Some say He is a four-armed figure bearing in His hands the conch, the disk, the mace and the lotus. This is all our own imagination. How can God bear the conch, the disk, the mace and the lotus? He is *niranjan*[1] and *nirakar*[2]. When He is beyond physical existence how can He have a physical form? We create an image of God and then believe in it. Where, then, should we look for our God? Let us see Him in our actions. When we do anything considering it as *yajna*, we install God in our hearts. For instance, when a person plies the charkha, ne sees God in the yarn he spins. When he realizes that the whole world belongs to him and his world consists of India where the poor, who do not get enough to eat, live, and that he is spinning for their sake or for *Daridranarayana*, he sees God in the yarn he spins. Swaraj was far off in those days. But when the Ashram was not functioning well, many a time Maganlal used to sing with a sigh: "Still does cruel life cling obstinately to the body". Then the *bhajan* goes on to say that the four *prahara* passed like four *yugas*. It means that even though the whole night has passed, life has not yet gone from me. The four quarters of the night have passed like four ages. That is, the night of four quarters passed but my body did not perish. He finds four quarters as long as four ages. I also find them as long. We had not won our freedom then. Now I admit that we have won it on August 15. But I do not regard it as true swaraj. It is not the swaraj of my conception. Nor can this swaraj be called *Ramarajya*. Today we have come to regard each other as enemies. Muslims are enemies of the Hindus and the Hindus and the Sikhs are enemies of the Muslims. But swaraj of my conception means that we do not want to regard

[1] Spotless
[2] Formless

anyone as our enemy, nor do we want to be enemies of anyone. That swaraj has not yet come. Should the Hindus and the Muslims in India consider themselves enemies of each other? Will our brothers live in mutual animosity? Why do I say this? I had mentioned this briefly once, but I wish to say it again and agan that if we truly desire to rise higher, we should all live like brothers. We have fallen at the moment and are probably still going down. Our hearts are full of murderous thoughts and hatred. We get incensed at the very sight of a Muslim. If we find him praying in the mosque we go and kill him. We regard him as our enemy and wonder how we should drive him out and turn his mosque into a temple. But think, what wrong has he done in praying in a mosque? The temple and the mosque are one and the same. Then why is it that the Muslims should destroy the temples and the Hindus destroy the mosques? They are equally at fault in the eyes of God. How can we say there is swaraj when what we Hindus do hurts the Muslims and what the Muslims do hurts the Hindus? We have reduced ourselves to this state, but we wish to come out of this fire.

I have already said that I shall either do or die in Delhi. I have come here with that intention. I have not done anything yet. True, these days we do not hear much about communal, clashes, and apparently we are living like brothers. But this is like deceving ourselves. The police and the military are posted here just because there is some danger. Are the Muslims who are here free from fear? Will I also be free from it? I don't think so. Some Muslims are here with me too. Would you insult them right here? Would you kill them right before my eyes? Before you kill them you will have to kill me. Sheikh Abdullah was sitting behind me here yesterday. There were also some Kashmiri Pandits with him. The Sheikh is our friend. Somebody killed our Rafi Saheb's[1] brother at Mussoorie. He was an innocent man. He was our *sevak.* His widow is sitting right here. I do not wish to narrate that tragic tale here lest it should arouse repugnance in the people. My heart is full of many things. I know quite a few things. But I do not wish to prolong the talk. However let me give you the gist at least. If all of us long for death because we have not been able to see God, as we sing in the *bhajan,* the first step towards it is to see our faults as big as mountains and overlook the faults of others. If we declare before the whole world that the entire fault lies with us, and others are all good men, it is not cowardice. We

[1] Rafi Ahmed Kidwai's

do not fall on that account, rather we raise ourselves high and become courageous.

If we wish to bring about the rule of God or *Ramarajya* in India, I would suggest that our first task is to magnify our own faults and find no fault with the Muslims. I do not say that the Muslims have done no wrong. They have caused a lot of harm. There is no question of covering up those wrongs or pretending ignorance about them. But knowingly I do not see them. If I start thinking about those wrongs, I shall go crazy and I shall not be able to serve India. What if I begin to think that I have no enemies and expose my own faults before the world and close my eyes to those of others? God is there to see them. What does it matter if someone slaps me or cuts my ears or throat? One has to die some time. There is God to do justice. In whatever I do, I should not forget Him. That is why I want to repeat again and again that you must keep your hearts so pure that none in the world may complain to me against you. Today when I went there[1] I was asked about the situation in Delhi. I had to hang my head in shame. For, even now, the Hindus and the Muslim are not one at heart. It is good that because of the police and the military arranged by the Sardar and Jawaharlal, they are not cutting each other's throats. But what of that? Even the British used to make such arrangements. We do not wish to see what is happening in Delhi. Today my wings are clipped. If I could grow my wings again, I would fly to Pakistan and see even there what crimes the Hindus or the Sikhs have committed. But what even if they have done anything? Why should they not stay in their own homes there? But do I have the face to say that today? I can only reason with people and tell everyone that if we wish to see God and establish true swaraj, we must all unite and declare that India is not a fallen country. The result will be that our prestige will rise and we will also have time to banish hunger and thirst from our country.

Today the whole world is watching at us, because it is felt that if Asia has to rise high and the negroes of Africa have to make progress, India must be helped to rise high. India has always been the centre of Asia or Africa or, one may say, even Europe. If India is able to achieve something, the whole world will be able to take courage from it.

The world is shivering in cold. If the world is to have any warmth, it would be only through India. It is my prayer to God and

[1] To Lord Mountbatten

also to you that we should behave in such a manner that all of us should feel warm and through us the whole world should get warmth. People throughout Asia and Afirca are looking towards us. If they feel convinced that something is going to happen here, then the whole world will follow our example.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 436-41

98. NOTE TO MANU GANDHI[1]

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1947

Perhaps you don't know that I greatly value people who abuse me. Thereby their anger is spent and their hearts are cleansed. I like such critics a thousands times better than those who worship me, applaud me, but at the same time commit murders and disregard what I say. For those who abuse me are candid and if I can convince them they work wonders. In my life I have often had such experience.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 124-5

99. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

October 20, 1947

CHI. BABUDI,

I have two letters from you to answer. Both Chokhawala and you are right in the interpretation which each of you has put upon my words. The two interpretations are not contradictory. Think over this.

One must never stop trying. The effort may be either good or evil, holy or unholy. That effort which respects no limits is evil, while that which does respect some limit is good. Much depends on the nature of this limit. I do not like that you should get even a slight temperature. I would prescribe the limit of water and earth treatment, but it is not your or anybody else's dharma to accept the limit which I prescribe. That which the heart spontaneously feels is one's dharma.

[1] Gandhiji had directed the addressee to reply to an abusive letter. The addressee wanted to know why Gandhiji should care to reply to a man who only heaped abuses on him.

Give up attachment even to Anand. It will be enough if, knowing that it is your dharma to look after him since he is your son, you discharge that dharma.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10079. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

100. NOTE TO HIRALAL SHASTRI

October 20, 1947

If the public is prepared the Princes will themselves see the signs of the times.[1] None of the Princes should be insulted in this connection. The task is to be handled tactfully, lovingly and through persuasion.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 124

101. LETTER TO PIROJ SHAH

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1947

BHAI PIROJ SHAH,

I am helpless if you don't get the reply I have written or if it fails to satisfy you. I cannot have all the time that you have. Cheer up.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee, General Secretary, All-India States People's Conference, had met Gandhiji in the morning and discussed the situation in Rajasthan. Gandhiji told him that there should be a Union of the States of Rajasthan.

102. LETTER TO SUSHILA PAI

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1947

CHI. SUSHILA,

Have you been given any accommodation? How are you getting along? Write to me in detail. Sushila Nayyar will be there by the end of this month when she will surely see you.

Enclosed please find a letter for Shyamlal. Pass it on to him wherever he is. There was a letter from Prema which is good enough, considering her nature. And of couse it must carry a rebuke for me! But then a milch cow's kick too is sweet, isn't it?

With me it is 'do or die' here. Things here are difficult.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

103. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

October 20, 1947

CHI. SHYAMLAL,

I read your letter a second time today; it is good that you wrote it. I am sending this to Sushila Pai; she will deliver it to you wherever you may be.

I do not so far know what arrangements have been made for her lodging. It will be enough if she can have some peace at last.

Pakvasa[1] is a man of very simple habits.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Mangaldas Pakvasa

104. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1947

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have written to Babudi.[1]

Are you having fever? Be careful.

What is wrong with Chand? Enclosed is a letter to me from Champa and my reply to her. Please read both the letters. Pass on the one addressed to her. What did she happen to see that she should feel unhappy? Do ask her. If you are lying ill, don't bother about anything at all. Just hand over the letter to Champa and then she may stay or leave as she likes. If she stay on, she will have to observe all the rules barring those from which she has been exempted.

Chhaganlal should write to me if you cannot, or Balvantsinha. I take it, may I, that you three get along harmoniously.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

105. LETTER TO JAYAKUNVAR M. DOCTOR

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1947

CHI. JEKI,

What can I do? All I can say is that Manilal should return to India and try his luck here. If he finds Aden otherwise agreeable I would not advise him to quit the place. Illness does not leave one wherever one might go. If he has earned enough he should wind up [his business] and come over. You and the children are surely no more a burden to him. He should stay with you and utilize whatever opportunity he gets to serve. But he must not practise law. It would be well if he could easily get some job with the Government.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Sharda G. Chokhawala, addressee's daughter; *vide* also "Letter to Sharda G. Chokhawala", 20-10-1947.

106. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

October 20, 1947

CHI. CHAND,

You must have received my letter. Dev is extremely worried.[1] Who could have written such a letter from there? Is your illness of a serious nature? I did not gather this impression even from the letter I have from Prabhakar. Do send a wire if need be. It will be well if you send a wire also to Dev. I do hope that your ailment is not so serious.

Sushila is going there at the end of this month. She will stay for at least two or three days. If necessary you may come with her. She will see what may need to be done if you are not fit enough to travel. How can you leave in this condition? You are cheerful, I hope. Do write if you have enough strength to write. Otherwise get someone else to write on your behalf.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Chandrani Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

107. LETTER TO DAMODARDAS KHANDELWAL

NEW DELHI,

October 20, 1947

BHAI DAMODARDAS,

I have your postcard. I don't know what work I should suggest to you. All I can say is that you should take up any work of service you like. About emoluments, who knows better than you? Blessing to Chi. Krishna.

Blessings from

BAPU

DAMODARDAS KHANDELWAL

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Coutesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dev Prakash Nayyar", 20-10-1947.

108. LETTER TO DEV PRAKASH NAYYAR

October 20, 1947

CHI. DEV,

One letter I have already sent through Prabhavati, two days ago. This is the second. You must have received the wire I sent you about Chand. She is so much in your thoughts you must go to her. As for myself I am not worried. I saw Dr. Manu's report today. That also does not indicate anything serious. Sushila will certainly reach there. I have sent a letter. Still you must do whatever your hearts says. Be cheerful.

Mahesh is well I hope.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi: Documents relating to Gandhiji. Courtesy: National Archives of India

109. LETTER TO DEV PRAKASH NAYYAR

BIRLA BHAVAN,
October 20, 1947

CHI. DEV,

Why do you worry so much? Am I not doing everything? And Sushila is of course there. . . .[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi: Documents relating to Gandhiji. Courtesy: National Archives of India

110. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1947

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur informed me last night after the prayer that a Muslim Health Officer was butchered yesterday while he was on

[1] Two words here are illegible.
[2] As Gandhiji was observing silence, his written speech was read out.

duty. He was, she told me, a good, conscientious officer. He leaves behind a widow and children. The widow was so distracted that her one wish was that she and her children were also similarly butchered, now that their caretaker and bread-winner was removed from their midst by cruel hands. What was the point in living after that?[1]

I told you only last evening that all was not well with Delhi as it appeared on the surface. So long as tragedies such as I described continue to occur, there is little ground for rejoicing over the silence that reigns on the surface in Delhi. Is it the silence of the grave as was once said of the surface silence during his Viceroyalty by the then Lord Irwin, now Lord Halifax?

The Rajkumari added that it was no easy task to get together a sufficient number of Muslim friends who would perform the burial rites in strict accord with the Koran.

This narrative must cause any sensitive mind, as it causes me, a shudder. Should Delhi come to such a pass? It is a sure sign of cowardice for the majority to dread a minority, however powerful it might be.

I hope that the authorities will trace the perpetrators of the crime and bring them to justice.

If it was the last of such crimes, I should have little to say, deplorable though even such a crime would always be. But I very much fear that it is a pointer. The conscience of Delhi must be quickened by it.

Money for blanket continues to pour in. My thanks go out to all the donors. It is good, too, that not one donation is earmarked for this community or that.

It is my painful duty to draw attention to another menace. if it be one. I do not know whether this danger is real or not.[2] A Britisher writes in an open letter "To whom it may concern":

> Several of us are living in a lonely spot in a disturbed area. We are pure British and for years we have devoted ourselves at great personal sacrifice to the welfare of the people of this country. . . .[3] We now find that a secret word has gone out that all the British left in India are to be murdered. I read in the newspapers Pandit Nehru's assurance that the Government will protect the persons and property of all loyal citizens of the State. But there is no

[1] This sentence is taken from the speech recorded by the All India Radio.

[2] This sentence is taken from *Prarthana Pravachan*—I, p. 442.

[3] Omission as in the source

protection for persons living in little country places or almost none. None at all for us. It is a physical impossibility.

There is much else in this open letter which can be quoted with advantage. I have reproduced enough to warn us of the lurking danger. Of course, it may be only a scare and there may be nothing beyond it. There may be no secret circular. There is, however, prudence in not disregarding such warnings. I am hoping that the writer's fears are wholly groundless. I agree with him that all promise of protection by authority in isolated places is vain. It simply cannot be done, no matter how efficient the military and police machine may be which, it must be admitted, it is not at present. Protection must come first from within, that is, from rocklike faith in God and secondly, from the goodwill of the neighbouring population. If neither in present, the best and the safest way is to leave India's inhospitable shores. Things have not come to such a pass.

The duty of all us is to regard with special attention all the Britishers who choose to remain in India as its faithful servants. They must be free from any kind of insult or disregard. The Press and public bodies have to be circumspect in this as in many other respects, if we are to render a good account of ourselves as a free and self-respecting nation. Those who respect themselves cannot make good the claim, if they will not respect their neighbours, however few or insignificant they may be.

Harijan, 2-11-1947

111. A NOTE

October 21, 1947

This is top heavy. Direct election appears to be cumbersome and expensive.

It is a paper programme not workable.

The last section is scrappy. It is an inflamed appendix fit only to be removed.

The whole is too vast for my grasp. I am sorry.

M. K. G.

From the original:Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

112. LETTER TO STEPHEN HOBHOUSE

NEW DELHI,
October 21, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

Many thanks for your cheering letter. The look of things here is certainly ugly. Let us see what God has in store for the whole of humanity. I wonder if really man's duty is to be the helpless witness of tragedies being enacted in front of him.

Your special task is very difficult indeed.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

STEPHEN HOBHOUSE, ESQ.
20 ST. CATHERINE'S
BROX BON RUE
HERTS, ENGLAND

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

113. LETTER TO D. G. TENDULKAR

October 21, 1947

MY DEAR TENDULKAR,

I am sorry that I have not been able to attend to yours of 11th August earlier.

I cannot recall why the Gujarati article was not translated for *Young India*. Perhaps at the time it was not thought necessary to broadcast the facts to the English readers. In any casde I see no objection to your incorporating the English rendering in your forthcoming volume.[1] Herewith is a copy of the rendering as revised by me. It was unfortunate that I have not got the Gujarati article before me. If your translator sees any flaw in my corrections please do not hesitate to draw my attention to it.

I am writting to Pyarelal about the August 1942 speech.[2] He is in inaccessible parts of Noakhali.

[1] *Mahatma: Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi,* in eight volumes
[2] *Vide* "Speech at A. I. C. C. Meeting", 8-8-1942.

As to the Diary[1] , I have no objection to your seeing it. I am writing to Narahari.[2] Thanks for the cheque for Rs. 100.

Yours,

BAPU

1 Enclosure

From a facsimile: *Mahatma*, Vol. I, pp. VI-VII

114. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

October 21, 1947

CHI. NARAHARI,

An old letter of D. G. Tendulkar written in August last has been lying with me. I could read it fully only yesterday.

He is writing a big volume, or probably has finished one. He has impressed me as a very industrious man. He wants to see Mahadev's diary. He writes and tells me that Bablo[3] and Paramanand[4] are agreeable. If you have no objection, I see no harm in letting him see it. Think it over and let me know.

I hope everything has been properly attended to.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9146

115. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

October 21, 1947

CHI. SITA,

I had got your note. I received today the first letter from Sushila after she reached Phoenix. Since I have received one, I think you also must have.

I shall be satisfied if you keep healthy in body and mind and in your conduct. One mut think carefully before giving a promise, and keep a promise once given.

I suppose you have now abandoned the idea of a medical

[1] Of Mahadev Desai
[2] *Vide* the following item.
[3] Narayan Desai, son of Mahadev Desai
[4] Paramanand Kapadia

career. What do you intend to be now? What will you do? If you like writing to me, tell me all this when you are free.

I hope Vijayabehn is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5016

116. LETTER TO OM PRAKASH

October 21, 1947

BHAI OM PRAKASH,

The law of ahimsa is that one does not hit back at the assailant, faces the attack in a spirit of love and dies in the process. When one dies facing the assailant's attack in a spirit of love, a change of heart takes place in him. It is not always easy to say if the love was true or when the change of heart on the part of the assailant comes about. But while practising ahimsa, it is enough to keep in mind the law of ahimsa and the way it works.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

117. TALK WITH LALJIBHAI[1]

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
October 21, 1947

How can I ask anyone not to leave the land of his birth? The leaders were able to come so easily with their families and belongings but the poor, helpless villagers are in a sad plight. If even one of you had died there I would have danced for joy. I would not have been distressed in the least. That the teachers of a national institution like Sharda Mandir and a hundred leaders like you chose to put on fez caps rather than die, what does it show? Jinnah says he has pro- vided protection for all and still people flee. But if a few of you had continued to wear khadi caps and Hindu dress as you used to and carried on your normal vocations and if then you had been killed, I could have asked Jinnah what had happened to his promise. But how can I say anything today? And so his lie carries the day. People are being coerced and it is being said that they are needlessly frightened.

[1] A Congress leader from Sind

In all that I am telling you I attach no blame to you. It is I who am to be blamed. There has been some flaw somewhere in my ahimsa. And this was bound to have its effect on the people. How otherwise could they suddenly have lost the power of self-sacrifice? I must analyse this. I must undergo further penance. If even people like you are coming away, how can I tell the refugees not to leave their homes but to die there, or that they must go back to their homes?

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 128-9

118. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 21, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today also I heard of an incident. In this it was not a Muslim who was killed but a Hindu. He was a Government employee. He was doing his duty where he had been sent when somebody shot at him. I have not heard that he had committed any crime. The man with the revolver felt that the victim did not do what he was told and so he killed him. All that I wish to say is that we have got into the habit of killing. It is just the beginning of our independence, and right from now such are the thoughts that have come to possess us. We want to kill simply because we possess a revolver. It is like a person aiming at a flying bird and killing it. Great hunter that he is, he aims at a flying bird. Similarly a man makes an officer his aim. That officer had received orders to carry out a certain task at the place. But the killer had a fancy to kill him. If we continue like this, we are going to land ourselves in a terrible situation. No man can then live in peace. It is said that there are many countries inhabited by savages where no one can live in safety because those who posses arms murder people and they have no qualms about it. The one who kills a person cannot bring him back to life. This is a fact. It is also a law that only he who gives life can take it away. But that is what only God can do. When a human being cannot create life, what right has he to take it? Is it up to man to create life? But the Hindus desire to pounce upon the Muslims and the Muslims want to pounce upon the Sikhs and the Sikhs want to jump at the Muslims. They may do this now, but when the enemies are

gone, they will start killing one another. This is the law of the world. We have started following that very law. Hence I thought I might mention this incident.

Another thing is that the authorities have arrested many people. In the past we were not free. Today also we should presume that we are not free. In those days also people were arrested. At the most they could make an appeal to the Viceroy and could be released at his word. But the Viceroy could not release them on his own. He had to work within the limits of the law even when martial law was in force. He had his own officers functioning under the law. If they agreed that somebody might be released he was released. As for the others the Viceroy would say he could get them released only after investigation. This is a perfectly legal position. Those arrested under the law,would be sentenced if found guilty. But now the Governments is in our hands. We had not run the Government so far. If someone minister thinks that just because he is a minister he can release whomever he wants to, then we will be finished. It should not be that murderers are arrested and later released. We should not follow the practice of arresting culprits and then releasing them. In such a situation I would say that once somebody has been arrested under the law by the police the Government cannot release him because there is some complaint or appeal for it. On what grounds can it release him? Is it for nothing that we have the police, courts and prosecutors? How can I acquit somebody because he happens to be some relative or a friend of mine or because his case has been recommended by somebody? How can he be acquitted? In my view he cannot be acquitted. He cannot be punished at all if he is not guilty. Thus, we must keep our entire judiciary clean. We must have judges of that calibre. The police and the prosecutors should not carry on a case just for doing so and they should not think that a particular number of cases should be settled by the court. Only those who have got to be punished should be punished. But legally these matters fall within the jurisdiction of the courts. Supposing a man complains that a particular person has assaulted him and should be arrested, and the offender is arrested, should I then go to a minister to secure his release? The minister would suggest that the matter be taken to the court. If the complainant then says that there is no point in arresting him as it would only aggravate the feeling of animosity, the offender would be acquitted on the complainant's request. If the complainant says that even though he had filed a complaint he wishes that the arrested man should be

acquitted, then the court can acquit him. That leaves the prosecutor. The court can recommend the same thing to him too. But if there is a case of murder actually committed, the accused cannot be acquitted even if the complainant wants it. If the guilty man is acquited, our work cannot proceed. I have practised law and secured the release of many. How? The murderer must plead guilty of the murder and then assure the court that his mind is now pure and plead for mercy. The complainant can also say that the accused should not be punished because the two have become friends. What will he gain by getting him hanged now when he killed under provocation? Now the accused has become a friend who can be of help and who may turn his mind to God. He may start praying to God and, if so, why should he prevent him from doing so? Then the accused will also plead guilty of the act of number and pray for mercy and seek to be acquitted saying that the complainant is prepared to forgive him and maybe he will do good deeds and serve the society. That is the way to secure the acquittal of the murderer. It is possible to make his procedure legal. But let us not misuse the power we have now. If we do so people will insist on any number of guilty persons being released. What would even the poor minister do? Supposing he wrongly orders somebody's release. It is within his power to order the release of a person, but he should not do so. Even if it is his own brother or friend or wife who has committed a crime, he should refrain from doing so. He should say the appeal sould be made to the court or the prosecutor or the complainant, for the cannot do anything in the matter. We cannot get on with our work unless the ministers are pure at heart.

Please know that I have received a suggestion that I should not speak for more than 15 minutes. I do not even wish to speak longer. I have talked enough. I am not particularly fond of speaking at length. I speak only when there is a need to talk. But I am told that it would be to the greater benefit of people if I did not speak for more than 15 minutes. People would listen with greater attention because they would be keen to listen to my words. That would also become a habit and I would not speak for longer than 15 minutes.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 444-7

119. LETTER TO FRANCISCA STANDENATH

NEW DELHI,
October 22, 1947

CHI. SAVITRI,[1]

I have your short note. I have sent you replies to all your letters. I do hope they are all in your hands.

We are passing through most anxious times here. Heaven knows what will happen in the end. For the present I am fixed up here.

I am glad you are free from your illness.

You there have to pass through a time of scarcity in food and clothing. I wonder how the people face [it].

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

120. LETTER TO SUBODH CHANDRA ROY

October 22, 1947

DEAR PROF. ROY,

I thank you for your gift. I do not know when and where I shall have time to raad it. I shall certainly glance through it.

It is a great pity that you have missed me even though you tried so often. There is no prospect of my ever going to Sevagram. For the time being I am in Delhi. How long I shall be here I do not know.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

PROF. SUBODH CHANDRA ROY
TATA INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE
BOMBAY

From a photostat C. W. 10577

[1] Gandhiji gave this name to the addressee. The superscription is in the Devanagari script.

121. LETTER TO DOROTHY HOGG [1]

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
October 22, 1947

MY DEAR DOROTHY,

I have your comforting letter. How nice it would be if your dream that "I have little doubt that India has touched bottom only to rise to immense heights" becomes materialized during the present generation. The cross of which Mahadev wrote[2] to you years ago whilst he was yet alive was nothing compared to the cross that presses one today.

All the three points that are mentioned are good. How very few people would confirm to them. You are right—love and prayer are the need of the hour. I would add fasting after prayer.

At the time of writing this Horace is not here. He is in Lahore. He told me when he left a few days ago that he would return within a fortnight. He leads a life of selfless service.

Love to you all.

BAPU

MISS DOROTHY HOGG
144, OAK TREE LANE
SELLY OAK, BIRMINGHAM 29

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Only one sentence of this is reproduced in Vol. LXXXIX, P. 383.

[2] In 1941, Mahadev Desai had, *inter alia*, written to the addressee: "You have a terrible cross to bear—not only that of bombing, homelessness and starvation, but of making ignorant people understand that we in India are friends, and not enemies. It is a frightfully difficult task, I know, but you who know and understand Bapuji so well can cope with it."

122. LETTER TO SAURENDRA

NEW DELHI,
October 22, 1947

CHI. SAURENDRA,

Your letter. I can say this much that no one should stay there and be a coward. The task is difficult. Consult Satis Babu and act as he advises. I cannot say more from here. And I cannot get away from Delhi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

123. DISCUSSION WITH CHRISTIANS

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
October 22, 1947

QUESTION: If we do not follow the conditions necessary for observing ahimsa all our lives, how can we find the strength for it at times of crisis? You tell us that we must maintain peace but how can peace be maintained?

GANDHIJI: I have said that this ahimsa was half-baked. Maybe God had cast a veil over my eyes. Nevertheless, I am becoming increasingly certain that if we are to be happy, that is, if every man is to be happy and to see others happy, there is no other way. When one sees that one has made a mistake and sets about rectifying it without losing single minute one rises very high. But if one tries to hide the mistake, attempts in various ways to gloss over it, one degrades one's character and one betrays one's dharma. No sin could be greater than this.

Why do those who are pacifists not keep themselves away from the rest? They can shape their life anew separately. Then their position will become stronger. It will also test their faith. But they should not remain inactive. As for me, even if I should be left all alone I will cling to my principles. For this is the only non-violent way to battle with the terrible violence that confronts us. Maybe our countrymen will not agree. But that is no reason to believe that non-violence is ineffective. The reason may be my own imperfection. If the faith of the satyagrahis is firm as a mountain, the satyagrahis should be able to

prove that this way alone is true.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 131-2

124. TALK WITH MUSLIMS

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
October 22, 1947

Time goes on doing its work. Occasionally it favours us. Sometimes it becomes our enemy. Today that seems to be so. Hindu-Muslim unity has been my lifelong ambition. Muslims always considered me as their true friend and guide. Was it not at the bidding of a Muslim that I went to South Africa? How is it then that today I am an enemy of Muslims? You know that today because of you I have become an eyesore to everyone. Hindus are very much annoyed with me. You should be knowing, if you do not, how furious Hindus are with me. I shall not be surprised if one day I fall a prey to this fury. It is so not only in my case, but also in the case of these girls. Last time I came to Delhi, Manu even received a letter threatening her life. Here at the Bhangi Colony she was being repeatedly threatened on the telephone by certain Hindus. But she has come prepared for death and so is not frightened. I know that there is a third party that does not let this unity be achieved. You have seen with your own eyes the futility of violence. If this terrible and meaningless slaughter continues I really cannot foresee what mankind has in store for it. But even in the face of this reality I remain an optimist. I will therefore carry on with my mission till my last breath.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 132-3

125. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 22, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

First of all let me inform you that blankets continue to come. I have just come to know that two hundred blankets have arrived today. The blankets and also money arrive every day. I hope that the people

who are in the camps here will have enough things to cover themselves with. More of them will be available. It is good that there is this much generosity still left in our people.

A gentlemen approached me. I hardly ever read any Urdu newspaper, not to speak of reading it daily. I do read Urdu but only with some difficulty. When a child has to learn his alphabet he starts reading gradually. I am in a similar position. I know a little more than a child, but I cannot read fast. So that gentleman read out to me a couple of items from an Urdu newspaper. I was pained to hear the contents. I do not intend to narrate the details. The newspaper stated that people had made up their minds. I hope it is only the editor of that paper and not the whole country that has resolved that all Muslims should migrate to Pakistan and that those who remain will be either slaughtered or sent away to Pakistan. If things turn out to be what this paper or its editor predicts, it will be a matter of great shame. Such things should not have come from the pen of an editor. Such newspapers should not be published at all. If that editor is convinced about what he says, he is free to express his view to the people. But when he does so, it would amount to proclaiming from the house-tops that the Muslims should either go away to Pakistan or they will be slaughtered. As I said yesterday, what Hindus would do when Muslims went away to Pakistan? Would they fight among themselves? Somebody has informed me that internal fights have already started. This is inevitable. Once one has a taste of killing, one can't resist the temptation. The same thing is going to happen to us. But the editor of that paper has not been wise in publishing his opinion. Our people have become crazy after newspapers. They are not concerned with the *Gita* or the Bible or the Koran; the newspaper is their *Gita* and whatever is published in newspapers is gospel truth for them. It is very unfortunate that people should be so gullible that newspapers exploit their credulity and publish such things. I do not wish to say any more about this.

Now another thing is that complaints are pouring in from all corners. It may have been that during the British days the native States acted as they liked. The British Government exercised some control. This had to be done for the maintenance of the Empire. But now that Government is no more. Today their department is in the hands of Sardar Patel; so let him do something. But what can poor Sardar do under the circumstances? He has his own way of saying things. He has always served India. That is why he is the Sardar. But he has neither

arms nor army in his possesion. He is not a man of the army in any case. He is no commander whose order would be automatically obeyed. So long as the soldiers think that they eat the salt of India and he is their master, that is, if they consider him to be a great servant [of the people], things will go right.

Now the Princes of the States say that they have signed the instruments of accession, but that does not mean that they have been deprived of anything. They too have got their police. They were mere puppets during the British rule, but they are no longer so. The States can do anything they want. I too belong to a State. Hence I know what the States can do, and how much good they can do. I wish very respectfully to tell the Princes of the States that they cannot hope to survive if they think in their arrogance that they can beat up their subjects and slaughter them. I have told them that the Princes will have place for themselves if they remain trustees of their subjects. If they want to be the rulers of their people and exploit them and oppress them, they will find no place for themselves. I have no doubt about it. God alone knows what the situation in India is going to be. The Princes do not have an alternative. They can never rule India, even if we become slaves. Woud the Princes like to become slaves then? The days when the rulers could act arbitrarily are gone. That was another age. The British rulers found good use of the Princes who were there, through whom they could rule. The British only acted in their self-interest. How then are they to blame? But it is our misfortune that today we have lost our heads and fight among ourselves. Whichever side wins, a third power or a few of the powers would get together and devour India. Along with India Princes, too, would be devoured. If they remain loyal to India and become servants of their people, it will be well. I would say to the people of the States that they should not be cowards. What if the Princes possess arms and they are unarmed? We too fought against the Empire. And we were unarmed then. We did not possess any arms secretly. Had it been so, I should have had some information about it. Millions of people fought against the Empire with the force of their conviction. We thought even if they killed, they might kill one lakh, two or even three lakhs. But how many could they have killed after all? It was a question of population of 400 millions. Their hands would have trembled if they had set out to kill all of us. These 400 millions were bound to win their independence. What we do with that freedom is another matter. I would say that the Princes should not lose their heads. They should realize that they cannot act

arbitrarily lead immoral lives. They must not drown themselves in alcohol all day long. I have conveyed my view to you and through you to the Princes.

I mentioned once that Dussehra was coming soon. And Bakr-Id is just the day after it. These two festivals almost coincide. The Hindus and the Muslims are always filled with fear during these days. There is a greater scare here today because excesses can be only on one side. If Hindus get excited and think that they have got thier chance because of Bakr-Id, they can slaughter the Muslims thinking they were celebrating Dussehra. What is Dussehra? That is the day for celebrating Rama's victory. It is said that on the *Ekadashi* Rama and Bharata would be reunited. By these things we have to learn restraint and goodness. We have to learn what is dharma. If we learn this we can celebrate Dussehra in the right spirit. Durga *puja* is conducted on the Dussehra day. What does worship of Durga imply? It does not mean that we should be bloodthirsty. Durga signifies *shakti,* great power. We can raise ourselves by worshipping here.

Similarly, Dussehra does not mean that we should have fun and entertainment throughout the day. In Gujarat this festival is called *Navaratri.*[1] When we were young my mother used to tell us that we should not have regular meals during the *Navaratri.* We could have fruit or at the most milk, but no solid food. Of course the best thing would have been to observe complete fast. My mother used to undertake fasts quite often, and I could hardly compete with her. My elder brother could not do it at all, though I tried to do it a little. But considering my mother's capacity to fast I am a mere toy, just a child. That is the singnificance of Dussehra for us. Later, when Dewali comes, we can eat nice things and enjoy ourselves, but none of these things during Dussehra. This is the meaning of *Navaratri*. Shall we abandon its essence and start killing? Then there is Bakr-Id. We have frightened away our Muslim fellowmen. There are nice people among them. Even the nationalist Muslims are very much upset at the moment. They are aware of the situation. But where can they go? Should we become so heartless as to drive away even these people? What sort of peace would we have then?

Are you going to annihilate all the three-and-half or four crore Muslims? Or would you like to convert them to Hinduism? But even that would be a kind of annihilation. Supposing you were so

[1] The nine days preceding Dussehra

pressurized, would you agree to become Muslims? Supposing you were forced to read the *Kalma* and threatened with death if you refused? I would be the first person to say that they might rather cut our throats than suggest this. We must have at least that much courage. It is senseless to ask Muslims to accept Hinduism like this. I don't want such Hindus. Am I going to save Hinduism with the help of such Hindus? I want Hindus who can exercise restraint. Why should I be so arrogant and ruthless? One cannot become a tyrant and follow dharma at the same time. On these two occasions therefore let us maintain peace and atone for our sins and meet each other as brothers. If you can do this much, you will not find me here after Id.

A Hindu gentleman has asked me if I would go to the Punjab. I asked him if he would send me to the Punjab. Yes, if I went there I would fight with the people there also. You already know about my method of fighting. I would talk to them to my heart' content. Millions of Hindus and Sikhs are coming here. Why do they not stay on in their homes? I shall have no peace till this happens. Then Muslims have to be brought back here. You may say that that cannot be done. According to me that can be done and the key to the situation lies in Delhi. I do hope that during those two days we prove that both the Hindus and the Muslims are good and are going to live together in harmony.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 447-52

126. QUOTATIONS FROM GURUDEV

A Bengali gentleman has sent the following quotations from the collections he received from Gurudev along with his autograph. I give here the quotations in the original language[1] with their meanings in Gujarati:

The fight in which brother kills brother is a fight against God.

He who nurses enmity in the name of religion, withholds his offerings from God.

The darkness in which one cannot see one's brother is blindness to one's own self.

One can see the smiling face of God only in the light where one

[1] The quotations in Bengali are not reproduced here.

sees one's brother.

When one is totally absorbed in love for a brother, then alone one's hands join of their own accord in obeisance to God.

NEW DELHI, October 23, 1947

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 2-11-1947

127. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

NEW DELHI,
October 23, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I have spoken to Pandit Nehru. But he is adamant. He is firmly of opinion that no change[1] should be made until the weather has cleared. If it does, it may take two or three months. In this estimate I agree with him.

Yours sincerely
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. LORD MOUNTBATTEN OF BURMA
GOVERNMENT HOUSE
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 280-1

128. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

NEW DELHI,
October 23, 1947

MY DEAR MALKANI,[2]

Your letter. You are too sanguine. My time is not yet. You should do your best.

Yours,
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee had expressed a desire to retire from the Governor-Generalship of India.

[2] A constructie worker devoted to Harijan uplift and propagation of khadi

129. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

Ocober 23, 1947

CHI. SITA,

I got your postcard. You must have received the letter[1] I wrote to you. May you live long and be a sincere worker.

It is a matter for joy that Vasant[2] has given birth to a son and that both mother and son are well.

Blessings to you all from

BAPU

CHI. SITA GANDHI
MASHRUWALA BHAVAN
AKOLA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5017

130. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

October 23, 1947

CHI. JIVANJI,

Herewith two items, handwritten. There is no time now to get them typed. The handwriting is clear. It is not possible to send a translation of the third item, the letter from a Muslim. Get it translated there as well as you can. Or leave out the translation. I shall see about constructive work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9985. Also C. W. 6959. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sita Gandhi", 21-10-1947.
[2] Wife of Kanti Mashruwala, addressee's maternal uncle

131. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 23, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Two persons have written to me "We are refugees. We are living under the protection of our friends. We are very much troubled on account of the cold weather. Kindly let us know from where we can get blankets and quilts. Is there any such provision for refugees?" They say they belong to Rawalpindi. Like that there are innumerable people. However, the quilts and blankets are actually being collected for the people accommodated in the refugee camps, and who as is very evident have nothing to cover themselves with. Hence provision is being made for them. Quite a large stock has been distributed and more will be distributed. These are not just a handful of people. They are there in thousands. Quite likely, there are lakhs and lakhs of such people who should get these things. One of the camps at Kurukshetra has been taken over by the Central Govenment. A large number of people are accommodated there and many more keep coming.

There are many such camps even in the city of Delhi. At least three, perhaps four, camps are in East Punjab. In those camps also the people should receive the things provided in the camp here. They too are refugees. But in my view, it is for the friends with whom the refugees stay to arrange for those things. Very likely those friends may be managing blankets or quilts for their own families with great difficulty. Then, how can they provide them to those whom they have given shelter? I don't say such a thing is not possible. But it seems to me we will not be able to give quilts to all who need them. Moreover, I do not think that everyone who asks for these things is honest about it. It is not as if people asked for these things because they needed them. I have seen several camps. I have always been engaged in this type of work. I had to do these things even when I was in South Africa, and so I am familiar with the difficulties of such work. I have heard no complaints against the two persons who have written to me, and I have nothing to say against them. But I have no doubt that these things should reach the people who are really needy and who do not have them. But how would I know about these people? I do try to find out. It is not as if I am not trying to get any information at all. Nor do I

presume that no one would ever deceive me. And it is not that anyone can have things from me for the asking. Can these friends point out any such instance to me? I cannot send those things myself but I think these persons will somehow get them from somewhere. I do have blankets with me. But they are all meant to be sent to Kurukshetra. Other people are collecting these things too. They can send the blankets to these two people.

People are still coming here every day. They go to the Birla Mandir and that place is all full. Now there is no room for any more people. The people in the temple have taken as many people as they can. They have always shared the sorrows of others. They are working day and night. They go to meet people and collect blankets and food from them which they distribute among the needy. But as people pour in day after day, they too get tired How long can they go on giving things to them? The same is the problem for us. I would only tell these people that they should do something for themselves. It is true that when these things are done for everybody they should be done for these persons also. The same rule should apply to all. We cannot carry on work on a large scale if we have one rule for some people and another rule for others. And we have to work on a large scale. That is why I have taken so much time in explaining these things. How shall we face the cold which is increasing every day? I do not wish that anyone should suffer from it even for a day. This is one thing I wish to say.

I heard another thing today. Since many shops were open today a poor Muslim thought he would also open his shop, and so he started out to open his shop. He used to repair spectacles. Such persons must be hardly earning a few rupees a day. I do not know who he was. I do not even know his name. He was murdered as he was about to open his shop. It is a matter of shame for the whole of Delhi. Who could have committed that murder? Was it one person or two who did it? But how could two persons do it? Where had the military and the police disappeared? The shop was not in a lonely corner. Nor did the incident take place at night. No shop can be run secretly. People keep coming and going. Why did no one try to stop the killing? How did the assailants dare to commit that murder? People are just indifferent and quiet their conscience with the thought that a Muslim has been done to death. They feel that if the Muslims kill the Hindu and the Sikhs, why should they not kill the Muslims? Their hearts are possessed by such thoughts of revenge. Thus must be stopped. If we

do not stop it, Delhi will lose all its character. Do you think that only the Hindus and the Sikhs will be living in Delhi? In that case that will be the end of Delhi. The world will not accept such a situation. Delhi has a long history behind it. It would be madness even to try to erase that history.

Today I wish to say something about the people who have become victims of leprosy. There are quite a number of such people even in India. They are not found on the roads because they arouse a feeling of respugnance. It is not as if people having leprosy are sinner and others suffering from other diseases are not. It is true that those who suffer from a disease must have violated some how of nature, but that is another matter. I feel I have violated nature's law because I am suffering from persistent cough. And I do believe that violating nature's law is being sinful. Everybody is prone to cough. But I am not prepared to agree that there has been no mistake on my part. So whatever rules I make for myself would be applicable to the whole world. Leprosy is a skin disease. How it is caused is a long story. I believe it is disease of the body and there is no difference between leprosy and cough. A victim of leprosy suffers more pain and when he starts losing his thumbs, hands and nose, he becomes really very ugly. But it is not that he suffer more pain because he becomes ugly. I would say that we should have greater contempt for people who have wicked hearts. A person who has an unclean body which is the result of an unclean mind and who has a perverse outlook, instead of listening to the *bhajans* is interested in listening to the stories of wicked men, is a real leper. There are countless people suffering from this disease, and nobody ever bother about them. But since everybody does not contract the disease of leprosy, we are repelled by those who have it. We used to have a number of Christians amongst us. All the leprosy hospitals were and still are in the hands of the Christians. They serve the lepers out of sheer philanthropy. Today there are some people in India also who work for the lepers out of a feeling of altruism. One such philanthropist is Manohar Diwan. I should like to call him a *mahatma.* He lives at Wardha and is a great disciple of Vinoba. Bhave. Vinoba is a very great man indeed. Manohar felt that he also should do something. He chose to serve the lepers. Vinoba also inspired him to do that work. He remains detached. He is not bothered about money. He is no doctor, but he has made sufficient study of the disease. Many people seek his help. A small conference is being organized at Wardha very soon through a committee. People

engaged in this work will be meeting there on the 30th of this month. Dr. Sushila Nayyar too is going there for the same purpose. Actually Dr. Jivaraj[1] and Rajkumari were to go there. Rajkumari is even more familiar with this work because she has lived with me at Sevagram. But as she is deeply involved in the work here she cannot go there. No one can compel her to go there. And who would insist? It is a matter of rendering service. Anyone who chooses to go can go there. But they cannot go because they aree hardpressed for time. There is a man called Jagadisan[2] . He is himself a victim of leprosy. He belongs to Madras. He is a very good man and great scholar. He is a great follower of Srinivasa Sastri. He has devoted himself to this work. He is also attending the conference along with many other. It is a tragic and at the same time an interesting story. Many people are involved in that work. There is a very big leprosy hospital in Calcutta. It functions on a large scale. All this work is being done in the spirit of altruism and is growing day by day. When I was in Calcutta I was taken there and asked to write some comments. But I was making arrangements to come here. There are many other leprosy hospitals in different parts of the country. But this work is not being carried on as large a scale as it should be. I do not suggest that everybody should take interest in this work. But let us at least know that when we have so much idle time we may as well engage ourselves in such type of work. Shall we remain busy only destroying each other? I woud say that this is the worst type of disease, the worst type of leprosy. We disregard good work and destroy ourselves in mutual fighting. The Hindus kill the Muslims and the Muslims kill the Hindus and the Sikhs. How long shall we continue to indulge in mutual killing? How much better it would be if we made good use of our time and devoted ourselves to activities that would promote feelings of love!

[From Hindu]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 452-6

[1] Dr. Jivaraj N. Mehta, Director-General of Health Services in India

[2] T. N. Jagadisan, who was looking after leprosy work sponsored by Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust

132. MESSAGE TO HINDU AND SIKH REFUGEES IN N.W.F.P.

[Before *October 24, 1947*][1]

My advice is unalterable. They should remain where they are, if they are brave enough to die and even in the act of dying forgive the enemy. If they have not assimilated this truth they should of course come away as soon as they can.

The Hindu, 26-10-1947

133. WHITHER AHIMSA, WHITHER KHADI?[2]

A correspondent from Kathiawar writes:

> As in many other districts or provinces so in Kathiawar people are fast losing their faith in khadi and ahimsa. Many Congressmen and Gandhians have begun to ask how non-violence can work in matters political.

The writer of the letter adduces a number of arguments giving illustrations. I have, however, satisfied myself with qouting the salient part of the letter. It contains three errors.

I have been explaining of late that neither in Kathiawar nor in other parts of India have people real faith in non-violence or khadi. It is true that I had deceived myself into believing that people were wedded to non-violence with khadi as its symbol. As a matter of fact, in the name of non-violence people manifested only the outward peaceableness of the impotent. They never even attempted to drive violence from their hearts. He who runs can see for himself the verification of this fact. It had become patent to everyone, when I went to Rajkot in connection with the Rajkot imbroglio, that there was no Rama in Rajkot and, therefore, Kathiawar. Hence it is hardly correct to say that their faith is only now beginning to wane.

It is equally improper to question now the efficacy of non-violence in matters political. What was the people's fight against the foreign power, if it was not a political matter? Indeed, the disgraceful fight between brother and brother that we are wit nessing today is much less political. Today, irreligion is stalking the country in the name of religion. Even the outward peace that we were able to observe

[1] The message reported under the date-line: "Peshawar, October 24".

[2] A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 2-11-1947.

in the fight against the foreign power is conspicuous by its absence today.

The third error consist in the distinction the correspondent makes between Congressmen and Gandhians. The distinction is baseless. If there is any Gandhian, it must be I. I am not so arrogant as to make any such claim. A Gandhian means a worshipper of Gandhi. Only God has worshippers. I have never claimed to be God. How then can I have worshippers? Moreover, how can it be said that those who call themselves Gandhians are not Congressmen? There are innumerable servants of the Congress although they are not four anna members registered in the Congress register. The reader should know that I myself belong to that category. Hence the distinction made is false.

I have repeatedly said that I have neither any part nor any say in many things that are going on in the country today. It is no secret that the Congress willingly said good-bye to non-violence when it accepted power. Again I believe that the method of rationing of food and clothing is highly injurious to the country. If I had my way, I would not buy a grain of food-stuff from outside India. It is my firm belief that even today there is enough food in the country. It has been hidden because of the rationing. Again, if people followed me, there would be no deadly quarrel between Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims. It is clear that my writ does not run any longer. Mine is a voice in the wilderness.

As for khadi, it has some kind of a place, if we separate it from ahimsa. But it does not have the pride of place it would have had as a symbol of ahimsa. Those who are in the political field wear khadi as a matter of convention. Today we see the triumph not of khadi but of mill-cloth, for we have assumed that but for the manufactures from our mills, millions would have to go naked. Can there be a greater delusion than this? We grow enough cotton in the country. We have any number of handlooms and spinning-wheels. India is not unused to the art of hand-spining and hand-weaving, but somehow or other the fear has seized us that the millions will not take to hand-spinning and weaving hand-spun yarn for their own needs. A haunted man sees fear even when there is no cause for it. And many more die of fright than of the actual disease.

[From Gujarati]

NEW DELHI, October 24, 1947

Harijanbandu, 2-11-1947

134. LETTER TO T. R. VENKATARAMA SASTRI

DELHI,
October 24, 1947

DEAR SASTRIJI,[1]

How shall I thank you for the care and promptness with which you have copied out the verses from the *Mahabharata* and appended your note[2] on them.

My complaint is that the author of the great epic has reserved the virtues recited by him for forest-dwellers only. One wonders whether the author of the *Gita* was the same as that of the rest of the work.

Have you any right to expect the change in one like J. who labours under hallucination?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: T. R.Venkatarama Sastri Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

135. LETTER TO JAL PAVRY

NEW DELHI,
October 24, 1947

BHAI JAL PAVRY,

I have your letter. You cannot imagine the burden I am carrying. I did not know about your father's[3] death. It was good that you informed me. He lives even though he is no more. Why grieve then? Let us who are left behind continue his mission of service.

Yours ,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. JAL PAVRY, M.A., PH.D.
TAJ MAHAL HOTEL
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10826. Courtesy: Bapsybanoo Pavry

[1] (1874-1953); advocate of Madras; student and life-long friend of V. S. Srinivasa Sastri

[2] *Vide* "Futility of Arms", 9-1-1947.

[3] Khurshedji Erachji Pavry (1866-1947); High Priest of Parsis in India

136. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 24, 1947

CHI. NARANDAS,

Read this letter[1] . Send it on to Nonabhai[2] . Let me know what you think after reading it. Ask Nanabhai also to let me know what he thinks. I have written something about this in *Harijan,* which you will read in the course.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 8646. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

137. LETTER TO NARASINHDAS GORDHANDAS

NEW DELHI,
October 24, 1947

BHAI NARASINHDAS,

I have your letter. I have given a brief reply to it through *Harijan.* I don't propose to go further than that. My relatives are those who follow me. I have passed on your letter to Sjt. Narandas,[3] adding that he should also show it to Nanabhai Bhatt.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

138. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 24, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTER,

Probably the news appeared in the newspapers four or five days ago that a labour conference is being held here which will be attended by many representatives from Asia. The conference will be held on

[1] From Narsinhdas Gordhandas. For Gandhiji's reply, *vide* the following item and "Whither Ahimsa, Whether Khadi", 24-10-1947.

[2] Nrisimhaprasad Kalidas Bhatt

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

the 27th of this month. The newspapers also said that I will be inaugurating that conference. I knew nothing about it. Nor do I think I mentioned it to anyone. I asked one of the journalists how he got that information. I told him to contradict the report. Our Labour Minister Shri Jagjivan Ram had come to see me. I told him the same thing. He said I had got to be present at the conference, and as it would be a Monday and since I was already in Delhi, he thought there was no need to ask my consent. Such are our newspapers. When I told Jawaharlal that I might have consented by mistake, he was really astonished. There is no need for me to go there at all, for I have ceased to be useful for any purpose other than unity. Today I have only one task before me, and even that is more than I can attend to. I feel that if I succeed in that I shall have accomplished my life's mission. We all belong to the same country and let us all be one. If all the Hindus, Sikhs, Muslim, Parsis and Christians remain united, I shall not worry about anything else. They all belong to India and they have to live here. Why then should they indulge in fighting?

It is a great shock for a person, who has been dreaming of freedom from his childhood days and who strove hard to achieve it, that when freedom came, this poison has come along with it. This pains me very much. What could be worse than this? I want to stop this evil. My duty is but to try. I may succeed or I may not. "Let those who will, praise; and those who will, blame"—that is what we heard in the *bhajan*[1] today. Abuse or praise, it is all the same, for I only worship Rama and have dedicated everything to Him. But I must continue with my effort and devote my whole life to it.

As usual blankets have been received today also. They are being sent to whom they should be. The need is very great. So many blankets are required that we cannot satisfy everybody. Providing for everybody is a big job. God will meet the needs of all. Will those who are helpless and have been reduced to poverty from the state of prosperity be kept naked and hungry ? If we are pure at heart, God will provide food for us. But if we continue to be unworthy we shall have to go without food and clothing.

I mentioned one thing yesterday about the people who have become victims of leprosy. I referred to Jagadisan in that connection. He is a great scholar. He used to suffer from this disease. He is not completely cured of it; but it is very much under control. He does

[1] No 159 in *Ashram Bhajanavali*.

considerable work among the lepers and takes much interest. He mixes freely with them. He is of course a very hard-working man. He lives in Madras, not in Wardha. But he has been there for the past several days. He had corresponded with me about this matter. I got his letter a few days ago, but I read it only today. I found in it one suggestion, which I wish to explain to you. The gentleman has said that the victim of leprosy should not be called a leper. People give a bad meaning to that word and consider him even worse than an untouchable. After all an untouchable does not harm anybody. We believe that we become fallen by coming into physical contact with the untouchables. I have already said that real leprosy is the unclean state of mind. Hatred towards one's fellow-beings and speaking ill of the people of some community or class is a sign of mental perversity which is worse than leprosy. If such people are worse than the victims of leprosy, why should that name be attached to the latter ? Let these people be described as victims of leprosy and not as lepers. If people are believed to be bad because of a bad name, they should not be called by such a name. You may call a rose by any name, but that flower would never be without its fragrance—even if it is called by the worst possible name. If this is that Jagadisan says, he is right that there is not just one disease which can be passed on to others by physical contact. If a person suffering from scabies touches another person, he is likely to pass on his disease. Leprosy is such a disease and is contagious like cold, cholera, plague, etc. Why then should people suffering from that disease be looked upon with contempt ? When a person gets really affected by leprosy, people start looking at him with contempt. They refer to him as a lowly creature. But real lowly creatures are those who show contempt. We must get rid of this leprosy of contempt. That is why I decided to talk again about this thing today.

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was to attend the conference at Wardha on the 30th. She should have gone. Dr. Jivraj was also to go. He should have gone. But how can they go ? They are tied down to their work. They can get away from it only for a day. But it would take them two days because they cannot return the same day. No aeroplane goes to Wardha. It goes only to Nagpur. They can return only after two days.

I wish to mention an important thing. Brajkishan has informed you that tomorrow I shall go and pray in the jail. The inmates of the jail desire that I should hold the prayer there. This will please me and

also please you but you will not be able to join me there. It is a prison and only prisoners can go there. I am going there because they have invited me. We shall meet here again the day after tomorrow.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana pravachan—I, pp. 457-9

139. OF NEW UNIVERSITIES[1]

There seems to be a mania for establishing new universities in the provinces. Gujarat wants one for Gujarati, Maharashtra for Marathi, Karnataka for Kannada, Orissa for Oriya, Assam for Assamese and what not. I do believe that there should be such universities if these rich provincial languages and the people who speak them are to attain their full height.

At the same time I fear that we betray ourselves into undue haste in accomplishing the object. The first stop should be linguistic political redistribution of provinces. Their separate administration will naturally lead to the establishment of universities where there are none. The province of Bombay absorbs three languages : Gujarati, Marathi and Kannada and, therefore, stunts their growth. Madras absorbs four : Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada. Thus, there is overlapping also. That Andhra Desha has an Andhra University is true. I my opinion it does not occupy the place it would, if Andhra was a separate administrative unit, free from foreign control;. India attained that freedom only two months ago. The same thing can be said of the Annamalai University. Who can say that Tamil has come to its own in that University ?

There should be a proper background for new universities. They should have feeders in the shape of schools and colleges which will impart instruction through the medium of their respective provincial languages. Then only can there be a proper milieu. University is at the top. A majestic top can only be sustained if there is a sound foundation.

Though we are politically free, we are hardly free from the subtle domination of the West. I have nothing to say to that school of politicians who believe that knowledge can only come from the West. Nor do I subscribe to the belief that nothing good can come out of

[1] A Gujarati version of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 2-11-1947.

the West. I do fear, however, that we are unable as yet to come to a correct decision in the matter. It is to be hoped that no one contends that because we seem to be politically free from foreign domination, the mere fact gives us freedom from the more subtle influence of the foreign language and foreign thought. Is it not wisdom, does not duty to the country dictate, that before we embark on new universities we should stop and fill our own lungs with the ozone of our newly got freedom ? A university never needs a pile of majestic buildings and treasures of gold and silver. What it does need most of all is the intelligent backing of public opinion. It should have a large reservoir of teachers to draw upon. Its founders should be farseeing.

In my opinion it is not for a democratic State to find money for founding universities. If the people want them they will supply the funds. Universities so founded will adorn the country which they represent. Where administration is in foreign hands, whatever comes to the people comes from top and thus they become more and more dependent. Where it is broad-based on popular will, everything goes from bottom upward and hence it lasts. It is good looking and strengthens the people. In such a democratic scheme money invested in the promotion of learning gives a tenfold return to the people even as a seed sown in good soil returns a luxuriant crop. Universities founded under foreign domination have run in the reverse direction. Any other result was perhaps impossible. Therefore, there is every reason for being cautious about founding new universities till India has digested the newly acquired freedom.

Then take the Hindu-Muslim question. The poison has assumed such dangerous proportions, that it is difficult to forecast where it will land us. Assume that the unthinkable has happened and that not a single Muslim can remain in the Union safely and honourably and that neither Hindu nor Sikh can do likewise in Pakistan. Our education will then wear a poisonous form. If, on the other hand, Hindus, Muslims and all the others who may belong to different faiths can live in either Dominion with perfect safety and honour, then in the nature of things out education will take a shape altogether pleasing. Either people of different faiths having lived together in friendship have produced a beautiful blend of cultures, which we shall strive to perpetuate and increasingly strengthen, or we shall cast about for the day when there was only one religion represented in Hindustan and retrace our steps to that exclusive culture. It is just possible that we might not be able to find any such historical date and if we do aand

we retrace our steps, we shall throw our culture back to that ugly period and deservedly earn the execration of the universe. By way of example, if we make the vain attempt of obliterating the Muslim period, we shall have to forget that there was a mighty Jama Masjid in Delhi second to none in the world, or that there was a Muslim University in Aligarh, or that there was the Taj in Agra, one of the seven wonders of the world, or that there were the great forts of Delhi and Agra built during the Mughal period. We shall then have to rewrite our history with that end in view. Surely today we have not the atmosphere which will enable us to come to a right conclusion about the conflicting choices. Our two-months-old freedom is struggling to get itself shaped. We do not know what shape it will ultimately take. Until we know this definitely, it should be enough if we make such changes as are possible in the existing universities and breathe into our existing educational institutions the quickening spirit of freedom. The experience we will thus gain will be helpful when the time is ripe for founding new universities.

Last but not least remains Basic Education. It is an infant not more than eight years old. Therefore actual experience does not take us beyond what may be termed the matriculation stagte. Thus, though it is limited in scope, the mind of those who are engaged in making the experiment has grown far beyond that stage. It would be unwise for any educationist to put aside the recommendations of a body which has behind it the solid experience of eight years. It should be borne in mind that this Basic Education has grown out of the atmosphere surrounding us in the country and is in response to it. It is, therefore, designed to cope with that atmosphere. This atmosphere pervades India's seven hundred thousand villages and its millions of inhabitants. Forget them and you forget India. India is not to be found in her cities. It is in her innumerable villages. The cities rose in answer to the requirements of foreign domination. They exist as they were two months ago, for though foreign rule has disappeared, its influence has not and cannot quite so suddenly. Thus I am writing these lines in New Delhi. If I know nothing of the villages of India how can I draw, sitting here, a true picture of the villages ? What applies to me applies more forcibly to the ministers.

Let us now glance at the fundamentals of Basic Education :

1. All education to be true must be self-supporting, that is to say, in the end it will pay its expenses excepting the capital which will

remain intact.

2. In it the cunning of the hand will be utilized even up to the final stage, that is to say, the hands of the pupils will be skillfully working at some industry for some period during the day.

3. All education must be imparted through the medium of the provincial language.

4. In this there is no room for giving sectional religious training. Fundamental universal ethics will have full scope.

5. This education, whether it is confined to children or adults, male or female, will find its way to the homes of the pupils.

6. Since millions of students receiving this education will consider themselves as of the whole of India, they must learn an inter-provincial language. This common inter-provincial speech can only be Hindustani written in the Nagari or Urdu script. Therefore pupils have to master both the scripts.

Therefore, it is hoped that all educationists will come to the conclusion that judicious delay is necessary for founding new universities.

NEW DELHI, October 25, 1947

Harijan, 2-11-1947

140. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

NEW DELHI,
October 25, 1947

SHRI BALVANTSINHA,

Your letter to Manu was read out to Bapu. He says : Why are you disheartened like this ? The dairy has not really come to an end. It has merely expanded. Try to improve the plight of the village cattle, increase the milk yield, improve the breed, and educate the people to be honest and sell only pure milk. Devise a scientific test for the detection of water mixed with milk and so on. All this you can do and should do. This would be real service to the cow.

SUSHILA

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 1989

141. TALK WITH COMMUNISTS

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
October 25, 1947

The communists have got hold of something to keep themselves busy. Hardly one man in a thousand can be found who practises communism in everyday life. Communists have come to consider it their supreme duty, their supreme service, to create disaffection, to generate discontent and to organize strikes. They do not see whom this discontent, these strikes, will ultimately harm. Half knowledge is one of the worst evils. The best is either full knowledge or ignorance. We are thus caught in isms and take pride in them and consider it a fashion to belong to this or that ism. People seek knowledge and instruction from Russia. Our communists seem to be in this pitiable state. I call it a pitiable rather than shameful state, for I feel that they are to be pitied, rather than blamed. For, because of our slavery, they have had no opportunity to get full knowledge. And now when we have got our freedom everybody has got an opportunity to thrust himself forward to such an extent that a sixteen-year-old boy or girl can identify himself or herself with some ism and become a leader. These people have now been fanning the fire of disunity bequeathed to us by the British. Soon they will find that they cannot control the flames. What we have to do is to find out what will suit our ignorant masses and act accordingly. For instance we need foodgrain. If the youth of the country would only learn the techniques of farming and engaged themselves in producing more food they would have no time for quarrelling and the country would become prosperous.

[From Gujarati]
Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 142-3

142. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI
October 25, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I was very happy when I received the invitation to hold the prayer before the prisoners of this jail and to address them in my usual manner, after the prayer. All the prisoners are probably not aware that I am myself an old time prisoner right from my days in South Africa. I was not guilty from my point of view; but from the point of view of the Empire I was guilty. I have served all kinds of imprisonments and I have seen many jails. Jail rules in South Africa are very strict. And then the Indians count for nothing there. Even if one was a barrister, it made no difference. All Indians were considered coolies. There were the Indians on the one hand and Negroes on the other, and then the British—all living in their own worlds. When the satyagraha started[1], thousands of satyagrahis joined it, for in a satyagraha there would not be just a couple of persons. At the time of my first imprisonment[2] 150 of us were taken prisoners. In the beginning there were not many people. I was there and four or five others were with me; but in due course our number grew to 150. We were all packed together in one ward along with the natives. We got quite fed up because of such crowding. I would like to tell you how strict the jail rules were and how ruthlessly they were observed. Here in India we make much fuss by making a distinction between political prisoners and criminals. No such distinction is made in South Africa. All prisoners are regarded as criminals there. I do not believe that among the prisoners political prisoners belong to a higher category and criminal prisoners belong to a lower category. In the eyes of the law, all those who have broken it are equally guilty. Why then distinguish between the guilty ones? But here we were not only political prisoners, but even belonged to A, B and C categories. Was it not because ours was a mighty struggle? We were millions in the field and among us there were also some big people. But who was big among those poor creatures there? They were all small business men. There were Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and others. Nobody made any

[1] In July 1907.
[2] On January 10, 1908; *vide* "Trial at Johannesburg", 10-1-1908.

distinction between Hindus, Muslims or Parsis. They were all called coolies, or, say, Indians. So we could not even pose to be big and insist on being put in A category and those who were lower in B and the lowest in C category. I do not even believe in these divisions. But here we did all that. I believe that anyone who goes to prison is a prisoner. I do not believe that a prisoner alone has committed a crime and that those who are outside, well-dressed people, are not guilty. I have been incarcerated ten times.[1] I do not remember exactly, but I have spent quite a few years in prison and so I know about these things. The jail superintendents and others had become my friends. There used to be a superintendent who was a very good man and a great jailer. He once told me that he had been in charge of prisoners but the world had no idea of the crimes he had committed himself. He told me that the prisoners under him had come to spend their four or five years of imprisonment or they had come with death sentences which had been later condoned. But he woundered how many ever knew the crimes he had committed. He said perhaps God alone knew about his crimes. So he did not relish the idea that he should be the chief jailer and those others should be prisoners. I also share this belief of his. So I wondered with what attitude I should come and meet you. The British rule has now ended. They have withdrawn themselves. Itwas a nice thing they did. But what should we do with our prisons now? I have been a witness to the conditions that prevailed in the jails during the British days and I know very well how good or bad they were. But now that the Government is in our own hands, our prisons, far from remaining prisons, should become hospitals. If somebody has committed a murder or a theft or turned an outlaw, or committed any of the crimes mentioned in law books, I consider all these to be a kind of disease. It is a malady. No one commits a crime for its own sake. If

[1] Namely—

1. January 10 to 30, 1908—Johannesburg
2. October 7 to December 12, 1908—Volksrust
3. February 25 to May 24, 1909— –do–
4. November 11 to December 18, 1913—Dundee
5. April 9 to 11, 1919—On train from Kosi to Bombay
6. March 10, 1922 to February 5, 1924—Sabarmati/Yeravda
7. May 5, 1930 to January 26, 1931—Yeravda
8. January 4, 1932 to May 8, 1933— –do–
9. August 1 to 23, 1933—Sabarmati/Yeravda
10. August 9, 1942 to May 6, 1944—Yeravda/Aga Khan Palace, Poona

somebody indulges in adultery or commits some other crime under the influence of liquor, he does not do it for pleasure. Now that I have grown old and have also acquired experience, I have realized that man's actions are guided by his nature. The prisoners should be taught how they should live. The superintendent and the deputy commissioner take care of the prisoners and order that such and such a prisoner should be flogged or such and such a prisoner should do a particular work by way of punishment. But I would suggest that the superintendents and the deputy commissioners should be like surgeons and doctors in hospitals and try to reform the prisoners as a doctor would try to cure an alcoholic. the addict's attention should be drawn to all the evil effects of alcoholism. And supposing somebody has kidnapped a girl—this is of course a grave crime—but even he should be made to realize that what he did was a sort of disease. If our jails could be so transformed, it would be a great thing and all the prisoners also would be happy. But by being happy they surely would not wish to remain in prison for ever. Do the patients who go to hospitals wish to live there for ever? Moreover hospitals have nice big buildings which is not the case with our prisons here. How can we have such buildings for our prisons? Ours is a poor country. We would go bankrupt if we started rebuilding our prisons like palatial hospital buildings. Such prisons are not found even in South Africa which is a land of gold. Even the prison cells for the English prisoners there are not like palaces. England is a rich country and hence it has such prisons. This I can say because I have seen the British prisons. Of course I have not seen the prisons in America. But we can at least make our prisons like hospitals where doctors treat the patients. When a patient leaves the hospital after recovering from an illness, he feels for ever grateful. The same thing should happen in our prisons. Let the prisoners have no ground to complain about the harsh treatment and atrocities in prisons or about the wickedness of the superintendents and jailers. Let them not get a chance to say that everything was bad. Let them say that they were looked after as if in a hospital, were fed properly and taught how to lead a good life. I have already said what the people in charge of the prisons should do. But ultimately it is not in their hands to do that. It is for the Government to decide. Or, it is for Panditji, the Sardar, say, the whole Cabinet, that is, the Government, to do these things. But the Government must tell the prison authorities that this is how they should behave. If the latter then violate the rules and adopt tyrannical methods, that would be

another matter. No criminal should be a jailer or superintendent or a commissioner these days. We have at least learnt this and they all work under the Government. The Government does not possess a large army, nor can it seek outside help to discipline the officials. They willingly obey the orders of their Government. Our entire administration would collapse if they did not carry out orders willingly and there would be chaos in the country. So, as for the officials, I have said that they should not violate the law. And there are some small things they can do without being instructed by the Government. For instance, they should be kind to the prisoners. What is there to learn in this? Let them regard prisons as hospitals and prisoners as patients. If they did this much, at least one thing would be accomplished.

Now I wish to address myself to the prisoners as a prisoner. I have also been imprisoned as a satyagrahi. A satyagrahi prisoner cannot indulge in a deliberate crime. He would never harass the jail superintendent or the jailer, or insult them. He has to be an ideal prisoner. Then only can he carry on his satyagraha well. Even the prisoners who have come here after actually committing crimes should become satyagrhis here. They should never defy the jail rules. They should accept the restrictions of prison life and be content with what they get. If the food given to the prisoners is not sufficient or properly cooked or is found to contain extraneous substances like grit and worms, they should complain to the superintendent or the jailer. These things do happen. I have seen them with my own eyes because I have lived in prisons. But even for these things why should the jail officials be approached? These things are in the hands of the prisoners themselves, for there are no professional cooks in prisons. The Government cannot manage the prisons if they start keeping cooks. The prisoners themselves are made to cook. Let them do the job with their hearts in it. Let them cook rice after cleaning it well and let them not keep chapatis half-baked. All that is in your own hands. You must do this work as if you were doing it in your own homes. You have come here after committing some crimes. Anyone can commit a crime. But some are detected, and some are branded guilty without their having committed any crime. Such things do happen. I think if you do this much, you can become ideal prisoners.

You can do one thing. Among you there must be Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs. Even among the Muslims there may be people belonging to different sects. But you can all live here like brothers.

Today a kind of poison has spread in our country. I hope that it will not spread at least in the jails. You must come out of the prison as ideal citizens. Then the Deputy Commissioner and the Jail Superinendent would tell me that I have done a good job. They would tell me that their work has become easier, they are not being harassed and he jail rules are being properly observed and all the prisoners are making efforts every day to reform themselves. I would only pray to God that you may become ideal prisoners and go out of here as ideal citizens and try to stop the people outside from doing evil things. You should tell them that they should forget that the Hindus are enemies of the Muslims and the Muslims are the enemies of the Hindus. Everyone is likely to commit mistakes.

Tomorrow is Id. I offer Id greetings to my Muslims brethren. I wish that all the Hindu and Sikh prisoners here should offer Id greetings to their Muslim companions. In the end, I wish to tell you that you must always live in amity.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 459-64

143. LETTER TO E. HEWITT

BIRLA HOUSE,
NEW DELHI,
October 26, 1947

DEAR CAPT. HEWITT,

I thank you very much for your considerate letter of 23rd instant making a free offer of your stock of blankets which may be condemned for reissue, but not unacceptable for purposes of protection. I am sending to a friend in Bombay the authority you have enclosed for use.

CAPT. E. HEWITT
DIVISIONAL SEA TRANSPORT OFFICER
SEA TRANSPORT HEADQUARTERS
NAVAL HEADQUARTERS
NEW DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

144. ADVICE TO MUSLIMS[1]

NEW DELHI
October 26, 1947

Ahimsa is always tested in the midst of *himsa,* kindness in the midst of cruelty truth in the midst of falsehood, love in the midst of hate. This is the eternal law. If on this auspicius day, we all made a sacred resolve not to spill blood for blood but to offer ours to be shed instead, we would make history. Jesus Christ prayed to God from the Cross to forgive those who had crucified him. It is my constant prayer to God that He may give me the strength to intercede even for my assassin. And it should be your prayer too that your faithful servant may be given that strength to forgive.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 511

145. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI
October 26, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

At the outset I would like to reply to a gentleman's question. He says: "You say that it is not good to harbour feeling of revenge. But don't your followers who are devotees of Rama excite the feeling of revenge by burning Ravana's effigy?" There are two fallacies in this. First of all, who are my followers? I do not even know about them. I should like to be a devotee of Rama. But I am not sure that I am. After all it is no easy thing to be a devotee or Rama. Hence it is wrong to refer to any devotees as my followers. I do not have any followers at all. But what happens is that people make an effigy of Ravana who is defeated by Rama. Thus we saw Rama vanquishing Ravana. But who amongst us is Rama and who is Ravana? If every man can become Rama, who would become Ravana? This is only a story in which Rama is portrayed as God and Ravana as His enemy. That is why Ravana has been described as inauspicious—a demon and an evil spirit, because he insisted on disregarding Rama and died without accepting Him. Then he had to die at the hands of God. This is a story. It does not

[1] Muslims including many old friends, started visiting Gandhiji from early morning on Bakr-Id. On seeing them Gandhiji muttered to himself, "With what face can I wish them a happy Id?" *Vide* also the following item.

mean that the effigy of Ravana is made with an idea of taking revenge. The lesson I draw from it is that it teaches man not to take revenge. Who would be more arrogant and foolish than I if I imagined myself to be Rama and other people sitting around here to be Ravanas? How do I know I am Rama? Who knows how much wickedness is hidden in me? Nobody knows whether I am a *mahatma* 'or a wicked person in the eyes of God. I myself do not quite know how wicked or good I may be. God alone knows it. He is far above us and sees everything. Nothing is hidden from Him. Man cannot take revenge on anyone. Even if someone has done any harm, what is the point in taking revenge on him? Imagine a man as being perfect, though man can never be perfect, for God alone can be perfect, but supposing there is one human being who is perfect while others are imperfect, should he then punish others or slay them? According to me, the making of Ravana's effigy on the Vijaydashami day means that it is not up to human beings to take revenge. Even if we do not call it revenge, God alone can harm or kill. Does it then mean that it is only for God to employ violence as well as non-violence? God has no attributes and is beyond all properties. To Him all these things mean nothing. But this story is an illustration which points out that God alone can destroy all the Ravanas in the world. Some people also presume that Vijayadashmi tells them that they are perfect and others are imperfect. Hence they take the law into their own hands and become the lords of the world and start injuring and slaughtering people.

All this is happening in India, too, because we have lost our senses. From the reply I have given, you and the gentleman who put the question will have understood that the Rama Ravana story teaches us that we should not become sinful but be virtuous. Taking the name of Rama on the one hand and indulging in acts of sin on the other is abusing God.

Now some of you can ask me whether, while I am taking of these things at such length, I am aware of what is happening in Kashmir.[1] Yes, I am quite aware of it. But I know only what has appeared in the newspapers. If all those resports are correct it is really a bad situation. All I can say is that we can neither save our religion nor ourselves in this manner. It is reported that Pakistan is trying to

[1] On October 23, about 2,000 Afridis and tribesmen had invaded the Kashmir State and indulged in large-scale loot, arson and murder.

coerce Kashmir to join Pakistan. This should not be so. It is not possible to take anything from anyone by force. I have no doubt about it at all. Today it is Kashmir. Tomorrow it can be Hyderabad. Next it may come to forcing Junagadh or some other State. I do not wish to sit in judgment on this issue. I only believe in the principle that nobody can force anyone.

It makes no difference to me whether it is the question of Kashmir or Hyderabad or Junagadh. Let no one be forced into anything. Let there be no coercion. But I must respectfully submit that today Kashmir is not ruled by its Maharaja. In other States too there are no Princes as we used to know them. They were the creation of the British. Now the British have gone. They had installed them as rulers because they could rule through them and exercise power. Kashmir has still to establish popular rule in the State. The same is the case with other States like Hyderabad and Junagadh. In my view there is no difference between them. Real rulers of the States are its people. If the people of Kashmir are in favour of opting for Pakistan, no power on earth can stop them from doing so. But they should be left free to decide for themselves. The people cannot be attacked and forced by burning their villages. If the people of Kashmir, in spite of its Muslim majority, wish to accede to India no one can stop them.

The Pakistan Government should stop its people if they are going there to force the people of Kashmir. If it fails to do that, it will have to shoulder to entire blame. If the people of the Indian Union are going there to force the Kashmiris, they should be stopped, too, and they should stop by themselves. About this I have no doubt at all.

I have discussed the problem of Kashmir with you. Now let me pass on to another point. I have received a telegram from Calcutta. I think I had told you about a Shanti Sena which was formed in Calcutta while I was there. That was indeed a grace of God. It had appeared very difficult to establish peace in Calcutta. But once the Shanti Sena was formed, it was easily done, and neither the Hindus nor the Muslims had to suffer much. Before that the Muslims had taken control of big localities and were driving away the Hindus from there. Then the Hindus also burnt the huts and other belongings of the Muslims and also terrorized them. That should not have happened. I do not want to go into the whole story. But when I went there, by the grace of God the Shanti Sena was organized and students and others joined it. Now they write to say that both Dussehra and Id were celebrated with great enthusiasm and the Hindus and the Muslims have started living like brothers. Id was celebrated in Calcutta

yesterday. But it is being celebrated in Delhi today. So the telegram has been sent to me mentioning both Dussehra and Id. They say that the Shanti Sena had spread out all over. There was no damage done anywhere, either in calcutta or Howrah. Nobody was in a position to harass anyone. And people lived without trouble on both the days. They had even gone towards Dacca in East Bengal. I thought I should tell you about this thing because I am happy if somewhere in India the animosity between the Hindus and the Muslims ceases and instead of remaining enemies they start living as brothers. And then Calcutta is no small village. It is a city where business worth crores is carried on. Huge freighters come to the Calcutta port and the city is inhabited by the Hindus and the Muslims who do business. If we started treating one another as enemies there, would not the entire trade be destroyed? It is indeed very good if the Shanti Sena has taught the people of Calcutta to live as brothers. Why should we not learn a lesson from Calcutta? Why should we not have a Shanti Sena here as well? Some Muslims came to me today on account of Id. They know that I am not their enemy but their friend. I am a Hindu, and a sanatani Hindu at that. That is why I am as much a Muslim as a Hindu. Hence they came to me as to a friend. I did offer them Id greetings; but I told them that really I had not the face to do so.[1] Even today they live in great fear. They wonder if the Hindus would let them stay here. Or would they be killed? Of course all the Hindus do not kill. But they are in panic because many have been slaughtered. What if they are few in number? Should the people of the majority community attack and terrorize them? These atrocities have got to end, otherwise we will perish.

How nice it will be if we can do here what has happened in Calcutta. Then my heart will dance with joy. Today my heart bleeds. I cannot shed tears, because if I do so I shall not be able to do what I want to. But there is sorrow in my heart. Are the Hindus and the Muslims going to live like this in independent India? It is barbarous if people belonging to the majority community attack the minority community. No religion can be saved by attacking others. Religion can be saved only by practising its teachings in life. There is no other way.

I have received a telegram from Ratlam saying that the Ratlam Maharaja has made an announcement[2] about establishing responsible self-government in the State. The Maharaja would be like a trustee of

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] On October 24, 1947; *vide* "Harijans in Ratlam", 9-11-1947.

the State. The Secretary of the Harijan Sevak Sangh has written to me that now no distinction will be made in the State between the Harijans and other people. Along with the high castes, the Harijans also entered the Maharaja's temple. From now on untouchability will cease to exist in all the State temples. And the Harijans will also be able to draw water from the public wells. I was very happy to know about all these things. If Hinduism has to make progress, how can hatred and untouchability have any place in it? Untouchables are those who are sinful. It is indeed a great stigma to make an entire community untouchable. All traces of untouchability should be removed from the heart of every Hindu. From every State ruled by the Hindus untouchability should be removed as it is done in Ratlam. We would be raising Hinduism very high thereby. If untouchability as we understand it is banished from our hearts, are we going to make the Muslims or some other people untouchables? What we are suffering today is the consequence of the evil of untouchability. That is why these developments in Ratlam have made me happy, and so I decided to speak to you about the good things that have happened at Calcutta and Ratlam.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 465-70

146. A LETTER

NEW DELHI
Ocober 27, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

The problem you state is beyond me. I approach God through faith, not science. You should ask a scientist who knows.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

147. LETTER TO EDITH HUNTER

NEW DELHI
October 27, 1947

DEAR MRS. HUNTER,

Dr. Tamhankar told me yesterday that your husband had gone to his rest. Death I regard as a friend. Hence when a dear one leaves

us, there is no cause for regret. May this knowledge of the function of Death sustain you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MRS. EDITH HUNTER
C/O KERNE HILL ROAD
LONDON S. E. 21

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

148. LETTER TO UMRAO SINGH SHERGIL

October 27, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

Though you do not expect anything from me, I must say one word, to hope that God will grant you the courage to do what you know to be right.

Of course the Urdu script is not easy and it is imperfect. All the same I am glad you think that we should all learn both the scripts.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SARDAR UMRAO SINGH SHERGIL
THE KOHNE
SUMMER HILL
SIMLA W.

From a photostat: G. N. 7941

149. NOTE TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY[1]

[*October 27, 1947*][2]

I am at a loss to understand what Pakistan really wants to do—whether they want the Hindus to stay there or not. . . . Please remember that to the minorities this is a life-and-death question. Fine phrases or impressive declarations on paper will not help. If you can

[1] This was written in the last week of October after one of the addressee's visits to Karachi. The silence day during this week fell on this date. *Vide* also the following item.

[2] *ibid*

get the Pakistan authorities to implement its declarations in action, you will have rendered the greatest service to the Indian Muslims. It is my claim that though many heinous things have happened in the Indian Union, the Union Government has spared no effort to ensure complete security and protection to the Muslims. . . . The Sardar and Pandit Nehru have worn themselves out in putting down lawlessness . . . . You do not know how ill the Sardar is. Yet he carries on by his iron will. I do not know what the policy of the Pakistan Government is, but I know what is happening to the minorities in Pakistan—in the Punjab, in Sind and in the Frontier Province. . . . But I have faith, I have thrown myself entirely on Him, so I am at peace.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 483-4

150. LETTER TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY

October 27, 1947

MY DEAR SHAHEED,

I address you frankly. I would like you, if you can, to remove your angularity. If you think you have none, I withdraw my remarks.

Hindus and Muslims are not two nations. Muslims never shall be slaves of Hindus nor Hindus of Muslims. Hence you and I have to die in the attempt to make them live together as friends and brothers, which they are. Whatever others may say, you and I have to regard Sikhs and others as part of India. If anyone of them declines, it is their concern.

I cannot escape the conclusion that the mischief commenced with Qaid-e-Azam, and still continues. This I say more to make myself clear to you than to correct you. I have only one course —to do or die in the attempt to make the two one.

Yours,

BAPU

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 484. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

151. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

October 27, 1947

MY DEAR KU.,

Read this comment[1] and return. It is meant for publication but I don't want to do so, until I have your comment.

Hope you are flourishing every way. Are you properly aided?

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 10198

152. NOTE TO MANU GANDHI[2]

October 27, 1947

We need hide something only if there is the slightest falsehood in us. A satyagrahi has nothing to conceal in his heart because he intends to serve everyone. What is there to hide then? I know he is not in a position to do anything; but he will at least carry my message to Jinnah. And what will he gain by deceiving me? In thought, word and deed I love the Muslims, Parsis and Jews and all mankind as much as I love the Hindus.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 153

[1] By Shantikumar Morarjee on the addressee's article, "An Abortive Conference", published in *Harijan*, 28-9-1947.

[2] The addressee had expressed her fear that Suhrawardy might harm rather than help Gandhiji.

153. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

October 27, 1947

CHI. KAKA,

I have your letter. I shall, however, not write much. I like the divisions you have made. I cannot however swallow what you say about the Press. The times are such that I think we must not get involved in the matter. We cannot afford to forget that we are not millionaires, we are mendicants. In these difficult times let us do the best we can. Please remember that I have only one place from where to seek charity. I have therefore to consider every act before I undertake it. Your mind soars high but your body will not be able to keep it company. Bear this in mind before you proceed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

154. LETTER TO SUSHILA PAI

NEW DELHI*October 27, 1947*

CHI. SUSHILA,

Your letter is beautiful. It will be a job done when you settle down finally. Surely whatever you get there is bound to be better than the palaces here. But I know you cannot have this weather. It will continue to be nice for a couple of months or more.

Would you require a monthly salary? I was not aware that Sucheta did not draw any remuneration. But that certainly does not mean that you should not accept anything. Write to me what your requirement is. I think I never asked you about your financial circumstances.

For the rest you will have to depend upon what Sushila Nayyar says and what Abha and Manu write.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Co urtesy: Pyarelal

155. LETTER TO G. SOMI REDDY

October 27, 1947

DEAR REDDY,

Your letter[1] of 14th is good. I am doing all I can. More I cannot say.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI G. SOMI REDDY, BAR-AT-LAW

From a copy: C. W. 10581. Courtesy: G. Somi Reddy

156. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR

October 27, 1947

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

Herewith a letter for Chi. Chand. Often my way of consoling people may at first appear harsh. You at any rate should understand this. Otherwise we would become mere sentimentalists and will prove to be useless.

A letter to Barrister Reddy[2] also is enclosed. Forward it. You may fix up Arjunrao's marriage in April. God alone knows where I shall be at the time. If you want it to be performed in my presence, then it can take place where I am. There is little chance of my coming to Sevagram. It all depends on where today's poison will lead us.

I have not sent a telegram about Chand. One reason is that we are poor. Nobody should forget this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9040. Also C. W. 9164. Courtesy: Prabhakar

[1] The addressee had written about the "soaring prices of commodities" and appealed to Gandhiji to "save the fast-crumbling economic edifice".

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

157. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

October 27, 1947

CHI. CHAND,

Why have you been so upset by my letter? You came to me presumably as a wise person and with a weighty testimonial from Satyavati[1]. How can I believe that any illness can upset you so much? Be up and about. Sushila will tell you the rest. Perhaps you can come with her. But if you do come you must get rid of your illness in Sevagram itself before leaving.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Chandrani Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

158. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

NEW DELHI
October 27, 1947

Complaints are being repeatedly made that Muslims are being forced to leave their ancestral homes in the Union and migrate to Pakistan. Thus it is said that in a variety of ways they are being made to vacate their houses and live in camps to await dispatch by train or even on foot. I am quite sure that such is not the policy of the Cabinet. When I tell the complainants about this they laugh at it and tell me in reply that either my information is incorrect or the Services do not carry out the policy. I know that my information is quite correct. Are the Services then disloyal? I hope not. Yet the complaint is universal. Various reasons are given for the alleged disloyalty. The most plausible one is that the military and the police are largely divided on a communal basis and that their members are carried away by the prevalent prejudice.

I have given my opinion that if these members on whom depends the preservation of law and order are affected by the

[1] Granddaughter of Swami Shraddhanand

[2] As Gandhiji was observing silence his written speech was read out after the prayer.

communal taint, orderly Government must give place to disorder and if the latter persists, to disruption of society. It is up to the upper ranks of these Services to rise superior to communalism and then to infect the lower ranks with the same healthy spirit.

It is suggested with much force that the popular Governments established in the country have not the prestige that the ability to overawe the Indian members of the Services gave the foreign bureaucracy. This is only partly true. For the popular Government wields a moral force which is infinitely superior to the physical force that the foreign Government could summon to its assistance. This moral force presupposes the possession of political morale that popular support would give to an indigenous Government. It may be lacking today. There is no means of checking it save by the resignation of the Ministry at the Centre.

What we are examining specially this evening is the condition of the Central authority. It must never be and, what is perhaps more important, never feel weak. It must be conscious of its strength. Therefore if it is at all true that there is the slightest insubordination among the Services, the guilty ones must go; or the Ministry or the Minister-in-charge must resign and give place to the one who would successfully deal with official disorderliness.

Whilst I voice, not without hesitation, the complaints that persistently come to me, I must cling to the hope that they have no basis and that if they have, the superior authority will satisfactorily deal with them in so far as they have any justification.

What is the duty of the affected citizens of the Union? It is clear that there is no law that can compel a citizen to leave his place of residence. The authority will have to arm itself with special powers to issue orders such as are alleged to have been given. So far as I am aware there are no written orders issued to anyone. In the present case thousands are involved in the alleged verbal orders. There is no helping those who will be frightened into submission to any order given by a person in uniform. My emphatic advice to all such persons is that they should ask for written orders whose validity in case of doubt should be tested in a court of justice, if appeal to the final executive fails to give satisfaction.

The public, in this case representing the majority community (that hateful expression), should rigidly refrain from taking the law into their own hands. If they do not, they will be cutting the very

branch on which they are sitting. It will be a fall from which it will be difficult to rise. Let wisdom dawn on them while there is yet time. Let them not be swayed by ugly events even when the report thereof happens to be true. They must trust the representative Ministers to do the needful for the vindication of justice.

The Hindustan Times, 28-10-1947, and *Harijan*, 9-11-1947

159. TELEGRAM TO H. C. DASAPPA[1]

NEW DELHI
[Before *October 28, 1947*]

HOPE YOU WILL WORK FOR SERVICE AND NEVER FOR POWER.

The Hindustan Times, 28-10-1947

160. LETTER TO JEHANGIR PATEL

NEW DELHI
October 28, 1947

CHI. JEHANGIR,[2]

Your letter. I shall show it to Dinshaw.

Of course I shall give you the time you want. Your letter to D. B. Jagtap is quite good.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

161. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

October 28, 1947

BHAI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have gone through Mansukhlal's letter. I have passed it on to the Sardar. Let us see now what happens.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5681

[1] A minister in the newly-formed Mysore State Cabinet
[2] The superscription and subscription are in Gujarati.

162. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

October 28, 1947

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. Come when you can and spend three or four days with me. We shall then talk sentiment.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10458. Also C. W. 6896. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

163. LETTER TO ANANTRAI P. PATTANI

NEW DELHI

October 28, 1947

BHAI ANANTRAI,

The Sardar has done what was necessary in connection with your wire.

Please read the reverse side of the enclosed letter from Jaisukhlal and do what needs to be done.

I hope you are all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

ANANTRAI PATTANI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

164. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

October 28, 1947

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I have forwarded your letter to Anantrai. I have no doubt that controls and rationing have led to widespread corruption. It will be as God wills. I am doing what I can.

Manu is quite well. There is no cause for worry about me. The cough has gone. The rest of the news will be given by Manu.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

According to me, you are in the prime of youth. You should aspire to live up to a hundred and twenty-five years and serve till the very end.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

165. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI
October 28, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

A gentleman from Delhi writes: "I had taken some screens and tents from a Muslim gentleman for the refugees. He has now gone away from here. Where should I keep them now?' He is a gentleman and that is why he is asking what he should do with those things. He is right. Since that man has gone away, should we appropriate those things to ourselves? But I do not have any arrangement for keeping them. This matter concerns the Home Department. The Sardar should have been consulted. Or the matter should have been referred to anyone who is handling it. Or Neogy Saheb[1] who has been appointed for the purpose should be consulted. If he can find the whereabouts of that Muslim gentleman, these things or their worth in money will have to be sent to him.

A few young men from the Aligarh University came to me.

[1] K. C. Neogy, Minister for Refugees and Rehabilitation, Government of India

Some students from West Punjab and North-West Frontier Province also study in that University. They could not reach the University and those who are here cannot leave the place. Why should they not be able to move freely? Now that Pakistan has been formed, does it mean that the Muslims should go there and the Hindus and the Sikhs should come here? The students wish to collect the blankets, etc., from Muslims and distribute them among Hindu and Sikh refugees who are facing hardships in the camps. Their intention is good and the refugees need them too. If they receive these things, it would also be an expression of love from Muslims. But really speaking, they should go to Pakistan and ask the Muslims why the Hindus and the Sikhs have to leave their homes at all. I have with me a whole pile of papers full of complaints. Those complaints are not unfounded. Of course I do feel that some exaggeration is quite possible in them. But even if there is exaggeration, there is substantial ground for those complaints. Why should the Hindus run away from their places? Call them back. Why should they not come and live in their own places? If the students are able to do this we can show to the whole world that we had never indulged in mutual fighting. Then we shall regain our honour which is sullied today. This is what I have told those boys. They have agreed to what I have said. God alone knows what they are going to do later on.

But what I want to tell you today is something very important. I think that while I was in Bihar people used to think that since they had won freedom there was no need to buy tickets for travelling by train. Not only this. They sometimes indulged in acts of high-handedness and coercion. People did not indulge in mutual fighting in those days, but now they think that having won their freedom they need nothing more. I wrote quite a bit on the subject and it did have some effect and such practices were given up. But now for the past few days the situation has so developed that all over the country people have started travelling without tickets. Even well-to-do people have started thinking that they have become the owners of the trains. The railways certainly belong to us now; but the practice of ticketless travelling has resulted in a loss of Rs. 8 crores. And Rs. 8 crores is no small sum. Even Rs. 1 crore is no small sum. How difficult it was and how many people had to go round when we had to collect Rs. 1 crore for the Congress! I too went round from house to house with the others to collect the funds. With great difficulty we were able to collect that amount. The people of our country are so poor. Today we spend a crore of rupees in no

time. If we get it we don't even notice how it is spent. We still do not know how to spend. We spend just because we have been put in charge of the work. If people start having free rides in trains or do not buy tickets when travelling in connection with work, it is a kind of violence. In my view it is plain robbery. At this rate India will be reduced to utter poverty and we shall be left without railways or anything else. Then we shall feel sorry wondering how we can travel. Eight crore rupees do not make a small sum after all. In former days the railways could earn interest on their capital out of their earnings. Millions of people travel by trains. If everybody pays his fare the railways can earn quite a lot. There used to be ticketless travellers even in those days; but not in thousands as today. There used to be inspectors on the trains and the accounts used to be properly kept. But now the situation is such that the guards and the drivers are attacked. Expenditure is going up day by day. Trains cannot be run for charity. The railway employees cannot agree to forgo their salaries because the passengers do not pay their fares. What will they eat if they do not have their salaries? Thus the expenditure on railways is millions and it also earns millions. The railways incurred no loss in former days. Earnings from third-class passengers used to be considerable, because the expenditure on them used to be little. But I was pained to hear yesterday about the loss of Rs. 8 crores. Nothing good can come to us if there is going to be such looting all sides. On top of this we indulge in mutual fighting and killing and plundering. These things do no good to anyone and result in loss of crores of rupees. When people are asked to leave their homes and go away to Pakistan, they surely do not go without taking anything. They have to be fed and clothed. We have to incur all that expenditure for nothing. After all, India is not a country of the rich that it can go on spending at this rate. That is impossible. Hence even if there is a single person travelling by train, let him not travel without paying his fare. He must pay his fare. During the British days, police constables and other officials used to swallow up considerable amount of money. I know about this because I have been a third-class traveller. In those days when I had gone to Hardwar[1] for the Kumbh Mela, I found that nobody could get there without paying some extra money to the station master. In this way, thousands of rupees went by way of bribes. Now I feel that everybody

[1] In April, 1915, for volunteer service organized by Hriday Nath Kunzru, under the auspices of the Servants of India Society

has become quite honest. The station masters, signalmen, inspectors, guards, etc., should take only their legitimate dues and live only by that. They should not grab money from people. The passengers should consider the railways as their own property. They should keep the trains clean. They should not spit and smoke in the trains and should not pull the chain without real need. And not a single passenger should travel without ticket. Then I would be able to say that we have attained true independence. Here there are not thousands of people to hear me, and so who would carry my words to those hundreds of thousands of people who travel by trains? Had I been a railway manager or a railway minister I would have given orders to people working under me to tell the passengers that though they would not be physically manhandled, the railways belonged to them and the railway officials were their servants, they would not be permitted to travel without paying the fares. Even if the train is passing through a forest, the railway authorities would stop the train right there. If the passengers still did not come round they would order the driver to detach the engine from the train and drive it away. Then there would be no occasion for abusing people or using force against them; the train just would not move till the passengers paid the fare. This method should be followed as long as the passengers travel without tickets. After all, it is not proper to board the train without tickets, to indulge in violence and stop the train just anywhere one likes. What I have told you is happening in India. But I have heard that in Pakistan too people travel in trains without tickets just as here. And why should they not do so? After all we were all born in the same environment, have eaten the same salt, then why should not the same things happen there as here? But if things continue in this manner, both the countries will go bankrupt. If we travel by train without buying tickets, take bribes wherever we can and go on beating up people, we will end up as robbers. The respect we have acquired by becoming independent will be completely lost. Hence let as many people as possible and the Minister listen to what I am saying, because I am saying as an experienced man, that if this trend does not stop you will have to stop running the trains. The trains will not move and in the trains that move no passenger will be allowed to travel without paying his fare.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 7-11

166. TELEGRAM TO LILAVATI ASAR

NEW DELHI
October 29, 1947

LILAVATI UDESHI
G. S. MEDICAL COLLEGE
PAREL (BOMBAY)

YOU CAN COME WHEN YOU LIKE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 9613

167. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

October 29, 1947

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter and the cheque from Wankaner.[1]

You do not seem to have noticed that His Highness has drawn the cheque in favour of the secretary. But one secretary is dead and the other is in Noakhali. I have, however, three or four persons here who are working as secretaries. Among them is Bisen whose merits need no proof,[2] who gets up at three and wakes us all up at 3.30. He is with me just now, at 4.15, after the morning prayer. He is sending you a cheque signed by him. I save a little money by this arrangement and your purpose also is served. You may cash the cheque for Harijan work. I am writing to His Highness.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 275

[1] Raja Saheb of Wankaner used to give Rs. 1,000 on Gandhi Jayanti for Khadi, Harijan service and constructive work in Saurashtra; *vide* the following item.

[2] The Gujarati saying here reads : "To see one's bracelet one needs no mirror."

168. LETTER TO RAJA OF WANKANER

NEW DELHI
October 29, 1947

YOUR HIGHNESS RAJA SAHEB,

Chi. Chhaganlal Joshi of the Harijan Sevak Sangh has forwarded to me a draft for Rs. 2,000 instead of the usual Rs. 1,000 for Harijan welfare, and has mentioned your indifferent health. May God grant you a long life and inspire you to serve your subjects.

I have returned the cheque to Joshi[1] to encash it for service of Kathiawar Harijans.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

169. LETTER TO NAREN B. JOSHI

October 29, 1947

BHAI JOSHIJI,

I have your report. Why is it in English? Why not in Hindustani? The report does not say what solid work has been done. We cannot gain anything by merely passing resolutions.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 8939

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

170. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI
October 29, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today you have heard a very sweet *bhajan*. The person who sang that beautiful *bhajan* may not be known to all of you. His name is Dilip Kumar Roy. He has visited many places. Few persons in India possess the melodious voice he has. I would even say that very few in the world have a voice like his. He came to me in the afternoon. I could not spare much time then. I could give just 10 minutes. He sang *Vandemataram*, which he has set to music, in his melodious voice. He must know this song because he is a Bengali. I heard him because he wanted to sing for me. I am no expert in music. He has an affection for me which people mutually develop. Then he sang for me *Sare jahanse achchha* of Iqbal. He has set that also to a new tune. I enjoyed it very much. He has been staying at Rishi Aurobindo's Ashram at Pondicherry for the past several years. He has not taken any training there. He has been a musician even when he went there. Later he developed his art.

The inner meaning of the *bhajan* is as Kabir says: "While you possess elephants and horses and wealth worth crores, my only possesstion is the name of Murari[1]. But having that name I am rich and all the wealth lying in your possession is worthless. That wealth is transient. But what I possess can never be taken away from me. The *bhajan* only shows the greatness of Ramanama. And what the *bhajan* says you have already heard. But you must also know about the Aurobindo Ashram. As it is, there is a continuous stream of visitors to the Ashram. A large number of people go there. Shri Aurobindo has many devotees. There is no hatred for anyone there, whether Hindu or Muslim or somebody else. I have seen that the late Sir Akbar Hydari used to visit the Ashram every year. Shri Aurobindo is a humble devotee. He does not meet anyone. But people visit him, whether they can or cannot have his *darshan*. They also entertain no feeling of hatred for anyone. Let us learn at least this much that we should not

[1] One of the appellations of Lord Krishna

have hatred for anyone.

But today I wish to talk about what is happening in Kashmir. And I must talk about it. You already know what is appearing in the newspapers. It is an astounding story. It happened three days ago. Nobody knew anything about it. Even I did not know what was going to happen. But one might say what has happened has happened. At the moment it is being said that the Afridis, and others have infiltrated there carrying arms with them. Some people even say that it is a mischief done by the Pakistan Government. It may be so, but I am not concerned with it. I am observing what is happening there. On the one side the invaders have gone right up to Punj and have further reached within 22 miles of Srinagar. From there it is a straight road with no obstructions for them.

When the Maharaja of Kashmir saw this he announced his decision to accede to the Indian Union. The Maharaja wrote a letter to Lord Mountbatten who welcomed his decision.[1] Now that he has taken refuge in the Indian Union he should be protected. But how could protection be given to him? Help could not be sent by road, but only by air. How many soldiers could be sent by plane? Only a few could be sent. Then they have to carry their arms, food supplies and clothes. And their clothes have got to be thick and heavy. Even an excess of one pound of weight becomes an extra burden. When the planes fly in the sky like birds, how many soldiers can go in them? About 1,000 or at the most 1,500 would have gone. On the one hand there are 1,500 soldiers and on the other a large number of men who have come from the North-West Frontier Province. Those men are also of a fighting stock and they are fighting. What can you or I think about it? After all, I have spent my life thinking over these things. I do not believe in armed fighting but I must know what it is. On the one hand are 1,500 Indian soldiers and on the other all those Afridis and others. And there is Sheikh Abdullah. He is called the "Lion of Kashmir". That is, he is like a tiger or a lion. He is a sturdy man. You must have seen his photograph. I know him and his Begum also. She is here these days. He is doing whatever a single individual can do. He is not a soldier. There are strong and sturdy Muslims in Kashmir and also strong and sturdy Hindus, Rajputs and Sikhs. So he has decided to do his utmost. He is a Muslim. Kashmir has a large Muslim population.

[1] Maharaja Hari Singh had signed the Instrument of Accession of Jammu and Kashmir State on October 27.

From here the soldiers have gone fully armed but what should the local Muslims do? Granted that we have all become barbarians—whether here or in Pakistan, no act of madness is left undone—should the people in Kashmir also turn barbarians and indulge in indiscriminate killing of women and children? Should Kashmir be reduced to such a terrible state? Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and his Cabinet came to the conclusion that something should be done and those soldiers were sent. What should they do? Let them fight to the end and die fighting. The job of armed soldiers is to march ahead and repel the attacking enemy. They die in fighting but never retreat. God alone knows what the outcome will be. As it is stated in the *bhajan*, our only wealth is Murari. Our wealth does not consist in money piled up in crores. Even the arms are not our wealth. Whatever is to be done is done only by God. But our duty is to make efforts. And that we should do. So these 1,500 soldiers have made an effort. But they will have really done their duty when all of them lay down their lives in saving Srinagar. And with Srinagar the whole of Kashmir would be saved. What would happen after that?

All that would happen would be that Kashmir would belong to the Kashmiris. I fully agree with Sheikh Abdullah who says that Kashmir belongs to the Kashmiris and not to the Maharaja. But the Maharaja has given all powers to Sheikh Abdullah, leaving it to the Sheikh's discretion to do whatever should be done and save Kashmir if he can. After all, Kashmir cannot be saved by the Maharaja. If anyone can save Kashmir, it is only the Muslims, the Kashmiri Pandits, the Rajputs and the Sikhs who can do so. Sheikh Abdullah has affectionate and friendly relations with all of them. It is possible that while saving Kashmir, Sheikh Abdullah would have to sacrifice his life, his Begum and his daughter would have to die and all women of Kashmir would have to die. And, if that happens, I am not going to shed a single tear. If we are fated to have a war, there will be a war. God alone knows, if it is going to be a war between the two only or others too would be involved. If the aggressors have no support or encouragement of Pakistan, I do not know how they can hold on. Maybe, there is no such encouragement. If the people of Kashmir die in the fighting, who would be left behind? Sheikh Abdullah would have gone, because his lion-heartedness consists in dying while fighting and saving Kashmir to his last breath. He would have saved the Muslims and also the Sikhs and the Hindus. The Sheikh is a devout Muslim. His wife also offers *Namaaz*. She had recited Auz-o-

Billahi to me in her melodious voice. I have even gone to his house. He would not let the Hindus and the Sikhs there die before the Muslims. What if the Hindus and the Sikhs are in a minority there? If this is the attitude of the Sheikh and if he has influence on the Muslims, all is well with us. The poison which has spread amongst us should never have spread. Through Kashmir that poison might be removed from us. If they make such a sacrifice in Kashmir to remove that poison, then our eyes also would be opened. The tribesmen are only interested in killing. So they invaded Kashmir and even showed their strength. I know all who are with them. But the result would be that if all the Hindus and Muslims of Kashmir sacrificed their lives, that would open our eyes also. Then we would know that not all Muslims were insincere and bad, there were some good men also among them. Similarly it is not true that all Hindus and Sikhs are either good and saintly or worthless and kafirs. I believe that there are good people among all, Hindus and Muslims and Sikhs. And it is due to these good people that the world goes on—not due to the people carrying arms.

This is the substance of the melodious *bhajan* we have heard today. I shall dance with joy even if everybody in Kashmir has to die in defending his land. There would be no sorrow in my heart. The world would go on as usual. All this is the play of God. But we have always to make the effort and that consists in dying while doing the right thing.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 12-6

171. LETTER TO YVONNE PRIVAT

October 30, 1947

MY DEAR BHAKTI[1],

I have just read your consoling letter. I understand and appreciate your view point. Leave me in the care of the great Unseen and Unknown. I must not be deceived into the belief that all is well when it is not.

Psychoanalysis has been often. . .[2] I have never been able to find time to study it. You should go your way without caring to know what I think about these new modes of thought. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and everything will be added unto you."[3]

I am glad you suffered and got well together in the same room. Do I not know how you used to bathe together in the same bathroom as if you were utterly innocent brother and sister!

My love to you both.

BAPU

MADAME EDMOND PRIVAT
AVENUE DE LA GARE
NEUCHATEL
SWITZERLAND

From a photostat: G. N. 8804

[1] Gandhiji has given this name to the addressee.

[2] Two words are illegible here. *Vide* Vol. XC, "Letter to Yvonne Privat", 29-11-1947.

[3] *St. Matthew*, vi. 33

172. TALK WITH H. S. SUHRAWARDY

[*October 30, 1947*][1]

Gandhiji told him that the only way for him to vindicate his good faith was sincerely and boldly to condemn the wrong policies and actions of Pakistan.[2] This he himself did not deny. There was, for instance, the invasion by tribesmen of Kashmir. Either Pakistan was behind it, as all circumstantial evidence went to show , or it was not. If Pakistan was involved in it, was it not his duty as an Indian national to proclaim his conviction? On the other hand, if even in the face of the organized forces in such strength in Kashmir, Shaheed maintained that Pakistan had no hand in it, was it not up to him to try to find out who was actually responsible for it?

I suggest to you that it is your duty to ascertain the truth. Nothing would please me more than to find that I was wrong and you were right.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 484

173. TALK WITH SIND CONGRESSMEN

October 30, 1947

If I cannot convince the top leaders of the Congress who have been my co-workers for the last thirty years, I ask myself, 'Where do I stand?' You are in such a pitiable condition that you have come to me for guidance asking in which city of India you can stay peacefully and your children can have education. I pity you but I feel most unhappy with myself and wonder why I was so blind all this while. What I considered as the non-violent force of the brave was in fact passive resistance of the weak! You have come away with your families leaving thousands of your brothers and sisters because you got an opportunity or, allow me to say it, you somehow managed to escape. How could you desert those who trusted you and plunged themselves in the satyagraha struggle under your leadership? I don't find fault with you. But you have come out in your true colours and also made me realize that I had followed the wrong path. But I am an optimist.

[1] From *Dilhiman Gandhi*

[2] Suhrawardy had complained that nobody trusted him in the Indian Union.

This morning I talked to this girl[1] about faith and hope. God is really testing me, and if I am sincere in my effort to live up to my slogan of 'do or die' and if I am firm in my faith in Ramanama, I will, if I can do nothing else, cheerfully sacrifice myself in this *yajna* of unity with the name of the Faultless and Formless Rama on my lips and not run away from its flames however fierce they may be. It will be enough if I can prove at least by my example that God does grant one the strength to sacrifice oneself in such a manner.

You are just like children to me. Now that you have come to seek my advice, I wish to tell you that you should give up the temptation to settle in a city. If you do not have the necessary courage to go back to Sind, go to the villages with your families and take up some constructive activity. Once you give up this fascination [for cities] you will realize how much you and your families will rise [by living in the villages]. I can only express my view, but you don't have to do anything to please me. Follow the dictates of your heart, only then will you bring credit to yourselves. You will be thoroughly confused if you keep thinking what Bapu likes or does not like and I will not be able to ascertain the true state of affairs and the whole atmosphere will become artificial. I hope you know how much harm false pretences can do.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 167-8

[1] Manu Gandhi

174. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI
October 30, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I was aware of what had been happening here. It pained me very much. Here I wish to make it clear that Birla Bhavan is the house of a private individual. Nothing unbecoming should happen here. Those who wish to come are welcome, but after coming here it is not good manners to raise any objection. Today a gentleman said that he would not allow the prayer to take place. I wonder whether I should hold the prayer at all under the circumstances. The person who raised the objection went away because you told him to go. He returned and left again. This is not a good thing for me. It means that he is pained at heart. That way I think many of you must be pained because a portion from the Koran is included in the prayer. But I am helpless because it is an inseparable part of my prayer. Do you think I shall not pray if the prayer is not held here? On the one hand my duty tells me that I should pray. It is not that I shall cease to pray if I do not hold the prayer here. I shall pray even if there is none in the world to stand by me. One can pray within one's heart. Here I have to think from the point of view of non-violence. I must see my duty only in that light. I do not like that a man should go away in order that I might hold the prayer. I do not wish to hold the prayer today, nor enter into an argument, still I will because we are passing through a critical time and people are eager to hear what Gandhi has to say. I also wish to speak so that at least people might understand what I wish to tell them. But today I will not enter into an argument, because I am helpless.

I must decide whether I should discontinue the prayer and only continue the discussion. It is a big question. I shall have to think about it. Today I do not wish to say anything on this or argue about it. If I carry on the discussion I will have to leave out the prayer. I will issue a Press statement in this connection.

I came in when I saw that you people had arrived. My culture and non-violence tell me that I should reveal my heart to you and let you know who I am. For me, there is nothing in this world except

truth and non-violence. If you realize the meaning of truth and non-violence, great things can be done in the world. I do not wish to indulge in any big talk. Great things happen in the world. But who can change the Law of God? And God cannot change the laws of the world. I think we are all steeped in pride and ignorance and hence believe that truth is too great a thing to be applied to trade and business and in practical life. We wonder how non-violence can work. It is asked when somebody abuses twice, why not abuse him at least once and if somebody abuses why not retort by slapping him? But if we follow such a path, we can make no progress. And we do want to make progress. This, according to me, is the purpose of human life. I cannot remain still. Only God is immovable. But it is stated in the Upanishads that though God is immovable he is also moving. He is always moving—and He moves in such a way that that motion gives the impression of stillness. Did we know that the sun is stationary and the earth moves? But now we have learnt that what appears to be moving is stationary. Such is the creation of God. God alone is immovable and also moving. We are never still. We are always moving, and since we are moving we have to go ahead. We come out of our mother's womb and grow. In the course of time we grow old. That is the way of life. One who is born has to grow and march forward and he does go forward. Some people think old age is decline. But that is not my view. Old age is like the ripened fruit. That which is destroyed is body, not soul. The soul does not perish, nor does it decay. The soul is always in a process of evolution. And in this world we cannot live without truth and non-violence. Even today I claim that truth and non-violence should be learnt even by children. If the mother learns these things she can teach them to her children also. The mother cannot learn these things in an instant. But it is said that man has been in existence from the beginning of time, since millions and millions of years. We should consider our progress in that context. For that we must have patience. I do not wish to say anything more on this point; but nothing can be done without truth and non-violence. We cannot make any progress without them.

I do not wish to enter into a discussion today. You would be coming tomorrow also. If tomorrow also anyone raises an objection to the recitation from the Koran I shall decide whether I should discuss the matter. If anyone has got an objection he will say so, otherwise they will say that they will have both the prayer and the speech. But the others should know that they should not get angry. If later some-

body decides not to allow the people to listen to the prayer and starts shouting, maybe your violence will be provoked, and my non-violence will be put to test. It will also show how far you can go with me. If you will stand by me and adhere to non-violence, I can say with certainty that violence cannot remain unaffected before non-violence. But the condition is that you must do as I say. You must tell me that you will exercise restraint and will not be carried away by anger. That gentleman who protests against the recitation from the Koran is ignorant. What harm has the Koran-e-Sharif done? If the Muslims here have gone astray it does not mean that the Koran is at fault. The Koran written in Arabic is sublime and eternal. I do not think anyone can be more ignorant than one who shows contempt for the Koran. You must convince the man who objects, in this manner. Of course, if somebody says that he does not want to listen to the prayer at all, I will have the prayer and also make the speech. But I cannot tolerate that you should beat up anybody because I discontinue the prayer. If I am left alone and five persons come up to me wanting to kill me, I would say that my head is ready for them. I would ask why there should be five persons to do that. Even a single man could cut my throat. But still I would hold the prayer. When one's heart is filled with such feelings, one would neither kill a person nor be angry with him. Even if the person raising an objection, whom we could call an uncultured man, shouts at the top of his voice, we will have our prayer. Tomorrow we shall have the prayer as well as the speech. If anyone raises an objection tomorrow, let him do so and leave. I do not wish to ruin myself for his sake. I can carry on my work only by controlling my anger and being patient. Today this is all I wish to say. Now please go home quietly without arguing among yourselves. Think over this at home.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 16-20

175. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

October 31, 1947

CHI. SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. I have read the whole of it or, rather, heard it. What you say is right. But we need a lot of money for quite some time. Must we spend so much for each and everything? Should I beg

for so much? What does our duty dictate? There is no question of leaving Noakhali. The only question is whether or not we can be self-supporting there, whether the Hindus of Noakhali can bear our expenses. After all, our expenses will not be much. The expense on refugees should be kept separate. My advice is that you think over all this and meet Pyarelal, Jiwan Singh, Kanu and the people at Sodepur and let me know. We must not accept defeat. We should not be short of funds. All good causes get money, that is, there is no need to make special efforts for it. I think I must have been at fault somewhere.

I hope you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9286

176. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS

October 31, 1947

CHI. RAMESHWARDAS,

Your letter must have been received. Sushilabehn probably forgot about it. Now she is at Wardha. She will come after some time. Vinoba's father passed away. It is as it should be. Have not all of us to go? The person who gave away his sons for the service of others was indeed a great man. Let us learn from him the lesson of sacrifice.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 170

177. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI
October 31, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

In my view, disappointing 300 persons for the sake of two or three is also a kind of violence. These people certainly have a right to protest, but courtesy demands that they should not exercise that right in this place which personally belongs to Birla. But who can stop them if they do so? In that case, the remaining members of the audience must put up with them. Let them not be angry with the persons who are protesting or say anything to them either here or outside. I shall carry on the prayer and the recitation from the Koran if you are agreeable to this. Because you are in the majority, you should not think that you can ignore the people who are protesting. If you think you can ignore them, you would be following the path of violence. We must be more concerned about the people who are in the minority. This is what I have been trying to teach all along. In future too I shall, above anything else, try to teach how non-violence works.

The basic principles of truth and non-violence are not difficult to understand. No special degree is needed to learn those principles. Why talk of English, we need not learn even our own mother tongue for it. Whatever is needed for the purpose we learn from our parents in childhood. Practising those principles is even easier. Hence, if you can put up with this much of protest, I shall have the prayer in spite of the protest. Courtesy demands that if anyone is against the recitation from the Koran, he should express his view and leave; he may explain to me later in what way I am harming the Hindu religion. I am a sensible man. If, therefore he is able to convince me, I shall accept his view. Personally, I think I have only done some good to Hinduism. I am not doing this only today—I have been doing this for a long time and, I think, Hinduism has not been tarnished in any way. Through this practice of reciting from the Koran I am able to draw my Muslim friends nearer to me. I have not done anything wrong in this. How nice it would be if I could in the same manner draw the whole world to me and there were none who was my enemy or opponent! But how can that be? I am not so perfect that no one can protest against me. But let me at least learn to put up with those who oppose me. If you

also learn to put up with their protest, say nothing to them and accept them with goodwill, they will think that you are all gentlemen. If all of us can follow this path, there is no doubt that the face of India will change. That is why I am asking you if you will put up with these people. Let the police also say nothing to them.[1]

If things go on like this, the result is bound to be good. In today's prayer Shri Dilip Kumar Roy sang: "Let there be love in the temple of your heart." I was pleased by his melodious voice and his art of singing. The sentiment expressed is nothing uncommon but the way it was presented is what we call art. The *bhajan* says that we should make our heart like a temple and install love in it. So this also teaches us non-violence. The composer of this *bhajan* asks man why he should behave like a foolish and ignorant man. He says that if one can light the lamp of love even if only in the temple of one's heart, one will have won the goal of one's life. After that he will see light and brightness in the whole world. There will be no darkness anywhere. Similar miraculous power is to be found in truth and non-violence. This is a very simple and obvious thing. But if we learn even this much, our task in the world will become easier.

I found in Noakhali that the rich had run away from there, leaving the poor behind. The villages in that area are full of people whom we, in our foolishness, call untouchables. As I have toured the area, I know that the people there are very much in distress. The women in that place had even forgotten to wear bangles or apply *sindoor*[2]. Even among the people who have come here from the Punjab and elsewhere I have found that the people with financial resources somehow carry on some occupation or the other. They have money and they also acquire friends. But what can the poor do? Where can they go? In Noakhali there were only the Hindus who were in distress; but in Bihar I found the Muslims also in distress. I told them that those who were dead among them were dead and gone and those who had money and wished to go away could do so, but as for the poor, God alone was their protector. But God does not work with His own hands or mouth. He inspires people and gets His work done through them. But should the rich become such hard-hearted

[1] The audience expressed its approval and then the prayer was held. After the prayer Gandhiji thanked the objectors for remaining silent and also complimented the rest of the gathering for tolerating their protests.

[2] Vermilion mark, sign of married status

materialists that they should forget God altogether and regard mammon as their God? The rich fled from that place and the poor who are left behind write to me that I should do at least something for them. They look up to me because I have worked for the poor for many years. But what can I do? I have neither strength nor power. But I know about their situation just because they keep me informed.

There are a large number of poor people in the refugee camps in Delhi. There are some rich people too and among them there are some nice people who first feed the poor before eating themselves. That is why I say that the people who have come here should not discriminate between the rich and the poor. If the rich look upon the poor with contempt they will be not religious but irreligious. That is why I would plainly say that the rich should keep the poor along with them. Then alone can we live together in peace and unity.

Recently a European couple visited some of our camps. They were happy to have seen those camps. They said that though there were distinctions between the rich and the poor, the people lived well all the same. The couple have come here only with the intention of serving. If we all work with the name of God on our lips, the refugees from the Punjab would mingle with the people of Delhi even as sugar dissolves in milk.

There are still a large number of Muslims in Delhi. I have seen a list today which, if there is no exaggeration, indicates that hundreds of Muslims have been forcibly converted to Hinduism or Sikhism. I would like to tell the people who have been subjected to forcible religious conversion that even though they have changed their Muslim appearance, if God is installed in their hearts there is no need to shave off their beards or to keep a tuft of hair. Those who wish to read the *Gita* of their own accord may do so by all means. It should be in the spirit in which I read the Koran and derive inner joy. But if somebody compelled me to read the Koran and threatened me with death if I did not oblige, I would say that I had no need of the Koran even if it contained jewels. That is why I would tell those Muslims who have become Hindus or Sikhs that they must stick to their religion. If we compel them to follow our religion, we are destroying Hinduism. Such a thing cannot go on in India forever, and if it does, it will ruin us, and we will lose our independence. I have no doubt that in that case our independence will have become a mere dream. That is why I would like to tell all the Muslims here that they should live without

fear. Those who have changed their religion should say that they were in panic at that time, but now they have realized that people who have faith in God are never afraid, and, if at all, they are afraid only of God. It is a good thing to be afraid of God because He is the abode of love, an ocean of compassion. If we are afraid of God we are blessed. But we should never be afraid of man. Hence they would say that they would rather die than change their religion. They can tell the Hindus that the latter might send them to Pakistan if they wished, but cannot drive them out through force.

It is agreed between Liaquat Ali and our Prime Minister that those who wish to go to Pakistan are free to leave, but even Liaquat Ali, the Sardar and Jawaharlal cannot force anybody. There is no such law. So we should keep with love the Muslims who are here. If I am alive, I do not wish to see anything else. There was a time when I cherished the desire to live for 125 years; but now I have given up that desire. If India is destined for bad times, let God take me away. And if India is destined to be great and the situation is going to change, as it should, let God change the hearts of the Muslims and fill them with thoughts of God. They do take the name of God but they are not doing His work. Similarly, if the Hindus take the name of Krishna or Rama but indulge in killing, their taking those names has no meaning.

Some people say the war has started and they wonder what is going to happen in Kashmir. I say nothing is going to happen. The people of Kashmir are brave. The Hindus, Muslims and the Sikhs are living there in unity. The invaders should be told by the Kashmiris that they should go back to their homes. If they are going to attack, they will have to march on their dead bodies. They cannot win Srinagar so easily. Then nobody will touch our soldiers there. If they die, they will become immortal. Then we can dance with joy and sing. If such a situation arises there, I would ask Shri Dilip Kumar Roy to sing such a *bhajan* that people would start dancing—because those who would have died would become immortal and those surviving would be as good as dead. I would not be pained at all about this. Of course, I would be pained if people here lost their senses and Pakistan also went mad. The Afridis are like our brothers and the North-West Frontier Province is our own. Then why should they indulge in such acts? We should know who is giving them help. I would only pray that God may dwell in their hearts and the temples of their hearts be illumined with the flame of love. Then the darkness around us will vanish and we will see light all round. This is my prayer. May you all

join me in my prayer that such light should pervade both India and Pakistan that people live together in mutual love. Then we may concentrate our efforts to produce food and clothing which are scarce in the country today. Let us forget that there was ever any animosity among us, and become friends. I only wish that we may devote ourselves to this task.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 20-6

178. TELEGRAM TO KHARAK SINGH[1]

[Before *November 1, 1947*]

I HOPE YOU WILL BEAR THE LOSS.

The Hindustan Times, 1-11-1947

179. HINDUSTANI WRITTEN IN NAGARI ONLY[2]

Raihanabehn Tyabjee has written a well-argued letter to me favouring Hindustani as the inter provincial language written exclusively in the Nagari. She rigidly excludes the Urdu script. As all her main arguments have been answered herein, the letter is not being translated.[3] Her letter demands full consideration. Raihanabehn sees no distinction between a Hindu and a Muslim. Both, she holds, come from the same source and she acts accordingly. I have always held that there is no distinction between the two. Even though their observances differ, these do not separate them. They undoubtedly profess different religions but they, like others, come from the same root.

Nevertheless, I detect certain flaws in her argumets.

We are not two nations. Those who believe the Hindus and the Muslims to be two nations harm both the communities and India. It

[1] The addressee, an 88-year-old Sikh leader, had lost his only son, Prithipal Singh, who fell into a ravine while trekking from Kulu to Mandi.

[2] A Hindi version of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 9-11-1947, under the title "Why Both Scripts?".

[3] The correspondent had argued that insistence on the Urdu script, in pursuance of the policy of appeasement, would only encourage the separatist tendency among the Muslims and they would continue to live like foreigners in India.

should not matter that the Qaid-e-Azam believes the Hindus and the Muslims of India to be two nations or that there are Hindus too who entertain the same belief. Surely, it does not follow that because the whole world is in error, we, who believe otherwise, should follow it. This should never happen.

If Hindustani is taken to be the inter-provincial language of India, it follows that both the scripts, Nagari and Urdu, should be equally acceptable. If the State recognizes only Nagari as the character in which Hindustani should be written, it would certainly by unjust to our Muslim brethren and when it is remembered that they are a minority the guilt is enhanced.

I have never contended that all the forty crores of Indians have to learn both the scripts. I have, however, held that those who have inter-provincial contacts and who want to serve not merely their own province but the whole of India should know both the scripts. The reason is obvious. They ought to be able to read letters written whether in the Nagari or the Urdu script. Hence, it is necessary that both the scripts are accepted as national.

If Hindi is to be the national language, naturally Nagari alone will be the national script and if Urdu is to take that place, Urdu script alone will be the national script. But, if Hindustani, which is a resultant of the junction of Hindi and Urdu, is to be the national language, a knowledge of both the scripts is essential in the manner indicated by me.

It is worth remembering that in reality neither the Urdu character nor the Urdu form of the same language is the exclusive property of the Muslims of India. There is quite a large number of Hindus and others whose mother tongue is Urdu and who know only the Urdu character. It is further to be remembered that the necessity of knowing both the scripts was stressed by me on my return from South Africa in 1915. I submitted the same proposition to the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan in Indore as its President.[1] So far as I recollect, there was hardly any opposition to the proposition. It is true that then I did not suggest any alteration in the name[2]. The definition, however, was the same as that of today. When perfect anarchy prevails in the thought world and we express different views without regard to facts, it is obligatory that we should have one helm to weather any storm.

[1] Im March, 1918.

[2] Of the national language, viz., Hindustani

In so far as it is believed that the Muslims only are concerned with the retention of the Urdu character, at this juncture it becomes our special duty to emphasize the necessity of Hindustani written in either character. This should appear self-evident. Whatever were the reasons in justification, it must be admitted that within the Union in many places the Muslims have been dealt with harshly. It would be beside the point to contend that Pakistan made the beginning with harsh treatment against the Hindus and the Sikhs. For the State to ordain that the inter-provincial script in the Union shall be only the Nagari, it would be an imposition upon the Muslims. If the result of the act of justice is to be that the Muslims are to confine themselves to the Urdu character and gratuitously regard the word Hindustani as synonymous with Urdu, it would amount to cussedness and perhaps a sign that their hearts are not in the Union.

It would be confusion of thought for Raihanabehn to argue that keeping of the Urdu character side by side with the Nagrai would be construed to be in pursuance of the policy of appeasement. Though the word has come to have a bad odour about it, I would submit that appeasement can be a praiseworthy duty, as it can also be at times a blameworthy gesture. Thus, for instance, it can conceivably be a duty on the part of a brother to walk with his brother towards the North whilst alone he would have gone to the South. But it would certainly be criminal for him, a confirmed teetotaller, to drink spirituous liquors with his drunken brother in order to appease him. He would then harm both himself and his brother. I must not recite the *Klama* in order to appease or flatter my Muslim brother, as he must not recite the *Gayatri*[1] in order to appease or flatter me. It would be another matter if both of us recite either at will because we believe the two incantations as one in essence. I hold that it is so. Hence it is that in the daily recital of the Ashram prayers, among the eleven observances occurs equal respect for all the accepted religions in the world. The upshot of all this argument is that the policy of appeasement is not always bad. It may even become a duty at times.

This sister further says that the Nagari script is, comparatively speaking, fairly perfect, whereas the Urdu script is imperfect and difficult to decipher. To write Sanskrit words in Urdu script is, she holds, well nigh impossible. There is some force in these three statements. They amount to this that the Devanagari script though

[1] The sacred hymn invoking the creative energy of the sun

comparatively perfect admits of improvement and the Urdu script demands it because it is imperfect. It will be difficult for Raihanabehn to sustain the charge that it is not possible to write Sanskrit words in the Urdu script. I have in my possession the whole of the *Gita* transcribed in that script. Improvement is possible only when fanaticism has died out. After all, what is the Sindhi alphabet but an improved edition of the Urdu script?

Lastly, I suggest to Raihanabehn that her letter under discussion is a fine specimen of Hindustani. She has woven in that letter Urdu words as freely as Sanskrit words. The beauty of Hindustani is that it has no quarrel either with sanskrit or with Arabic words. In order to strengthen Hindustani consistently with its genius, if a language can be said to have a 'genius', it must borrow from all the languages of the world. Its grammar must remain as it always has been in indigenous Hindi. Thus the plural of 'Hindu' in Hindustani will always be Hindu-o (हिन्दुओ) and not Hunud (हुनुद) as it is in highly Arabicized Urdu. Raihanabehn is an Urdu scholar. Though not a scholar in Hindi , she knows it well. She reads and writes both the Nagari and Urdu characters. When I was in the Yeravda prison she and Zohra Ansari[1] were my Urdu teachers. Naturally, they taught me through correspondence. My advice, therefore, to her is that she should devote her energy to the strengthening and spreading of Hindustani and making the teaching of the two characters as easy as possible. This work she can only do, if her ignorance, as I call it, is removed. If what she has now begun to believe is true, I could have nothing to say to her. Then indeed, I shall have to unlearn the past and learn a new lesson and displace the Urdu character from the position which I think it should occupy.

NEW DELHI, November 1, 1947

Harijan, 9-11-1947

[1] Adopted daughter of Dr. M. A. Ansari, married to Shaukat Ansari

180. LETTER TO MOHAN SINGH

BIRLA HOUSE,
NEW DELHI,
November 1, 1947

BHAI MOHAN SINGHJI,

I have your letter with two enclosures. I have read the pamphlets hurriedly but I do not like them in English. It is not your or my mother tongue. I write in English with difficulty and never know authoritatively that it is idiomatically correct. I hope you are aware that the masses have no knowledge of English. As a language, it is understood only by an insignificant minority. I therefore suggest your writing in Hindustani either in Nagari character or Urdu, preferably in both.

As to blessings, I told you I think quite clearly that every good work carries its own blessings. Therfore, I have repeatedly made it clear blessings of the mightiest are superfluous for a good enterprise and when the enterprise is bad, underserved blessings become a curse.

I hope that your organization[1] is open to non-Hindus including Muslims as it is open to Hindus and Sikhs.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SENAPATI MOHAN SINGH
MAJITHA HOUSE
AMRITSAR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] The Desh Sewak Sena which was formed in Amritsar on October 21.

181. LETTER TO H. C. DASAPPA

BIRLA HOUSE,
NEW DELHI,
November 1, 1947

CHI. DASAPPA,

I have your letter. I am glad that Yashodhara is not going to forsake her post, no matter where your headquarters are.

The second paragraph of your letter staggers me. If you are really a responsible Government you have every right to interfere with the Civil List which seems to me to be monstrous. Nor should the revision of pay of officers have been bequeathed to you when responsible Government was imminent. However, it makes no difference though I recognize that your difficult position, as it is in every case, is made much more difficult by the intrigues you refer to.

If you all remain at the work unselfishly and never for power, that itself is a blessing. Any other is superfluous. If the condition I have just mentioned is not satisfied, then any blessing received from outside is a curse. Therefore, rest on your oars.

Love to you all.

Yours,
BAPU

[PS.]

Your second letter arrived after this was dictated. I would now have to go to Mysore. I dare not. I have to 'do or die' here. I am tied up in a knot. Will it ever be untied? God knows. Please share this with Reddy.

BAPU

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA
CRESCENT HOUSE
BANGALORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

182. LETTER TO SONJA SCHLESIN [1]

BIRLA HOUSE,
NEW DELHI,
November 1, 1947

DRAR MISS SCHLESIN,

Chhaganlal has redirected your letter of 15th ultimo to my address at New Delhi where I am fixed up to 'do or die'.

Usually your letter are models lf accurate thinking. The one before me is not. You talk of my "decision to live 125 years". I never could make any such foolish and impossible decision. It is beyond the capacity of a human being. He can only wish. Again I never expressed an unconditional wish, nor did I, so far as I remember, advise you to entertain any such unconditional wish. I think if you re-read my letter you will find that my wish was conditional upon a continuous act of service of mankind. If that act fails me, as it seems to be failing in India, I must not only cease to wish to attain that age but should wish the contrary, as I am doing now.

More when you come to India and if I am alive when you do. The rest of your letter is full of inaccurate information.

As to the paragraph on different scripts, I feel that you have to be in India in order to understand the intricacies of the problem. I am quite clear that for generations to come, the Roman script has no chance of having a foothold in India on a national scale.

Dr. Mrs. Besant undoubtedly contributed to the cause of freedom of India.

The only way you can get any information about Darjeeling is by writing to the Prime Minister of West Bengal, in which Darjeeling is included. There is no position analogous to the Town Clerk in South Africa, but I need not worry you about the intricacies of the Indian system. If you will tell me what you wish to know about Darjeeling, I

[1] The addressee, who had been Gandhiji's secretary in South Africa, had written: "Far from losing your desire to live until you are 125, increasing knowledge of the world's lovelessness and consequent misery should cause you rather to determine to live longer still. . . . You said in a letter to me some time ago that everyone ought to wish to attain the age of 125, you can't go back on that."

might be able to help you more quickly than anyone else.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

MISS SONJA SCHLESIN
P. O. BOX 2284
JOHANNESBURG

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

183. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI
November 1, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

When you came to see me yesterday, I simply forgot that it was your birthday.[1] I could not, therefore give you my blessings personally. Such is my plight today.

I write this for special reasons:

1. Refugees are crowding near the Birla Mandir. It is not possible for all of them to live there and they huddle together somehow. They must be removed to a camp and that too quickly.

2. I enclose a letter regarding mosques. It is only one of many such. A statement should be issued that all of them will be protected from abuse and whatever damage they might have suffered will be repaired by the Government.

3. It should be announced that those who were forcibly converted to Hinduism or Sikhism will be regarded by the Government as not having changed their religion and will receive adequate protection.

4. No Muslim will be forced to leave the Union.

5. Those who have been compelled to vacate their houses or whose houses have been illegally occupied by others, should be assured that such occupation will be regarded as null and void and that the houses will be reserved for the original owners.

I think it is necessary to issue such a statement.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 376-7

[1] The addressee had completed his seventy-second year on October 31.

[2] Defining the Government's policy the addressee issued a statement on November 6, assuring adequate protection to Muslims who owed allegiance to the Indian Union.

184. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI
November 1, 1947

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter.[1] You are needlessly finding fault with your brothers. When all had lost courage they too did not risk their lives. It is enough if we ourselves stand firm. Let us not sit in judgment on others though they may be our relatives.

You are fickle-minded. It is one and the same whether you are in Noakhali or in the Punjab. It is not that your place is only in the Punjab. Your place is everywhere. Nevertheless you are your own mistress. Do as you wish. Where is the need for my permission? If it is really needed then my words should go deep into your heart. You should have that much faith. Look into your heart and do as it bids. Do not bother about me.

Keep well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 590

185. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI
November 1, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Brajkishan tells me that the gentleman who protested yesterday is protesting today also. I like his protest and at the same time I do not like it. I like it because of its peaceful and dignified nature. If he disapproves of something, why should he not express it? And you too maintained silence here and outside and did not argue with him. So, from that point of view I liked the protest. But what pains me is that he is not convinced by what I explained yesterday with such humility and

[1] The addressee, who was working in Noakhali to establish communal harmony, had written to Gandhiji that she felt it was her duty to go and live in Patiala since her brothers had come away from there and hardly a Muslim was left there.

firmness. It was not such a difficult matter after all, and could be grasped by people with ordinary intelligence. But when a person is angry at heart, I feel happy when that anger is expressed in a peaceful manner. That is why I am happy as well as sad. I take it for granted and hope that today also you will not show any anger and treat him with love as you had done yesterday. Then of course I would start my prayer. I do not see any harm when people protest with such politeness. Such a protest would carry for us a lesson in peace and we would learn how the lofty principle of non-violence works. If we continue to behave like this, we will realize what miraculous strength ahimsa possesses.[1]

Today also you heard a *bhajan* in the same melodious voice. Is it not said in the *bhajan* that "we belong to a land where there is no sorrow and no suffering"? Then the *bhajan* also says that "there is no illusion and no greed, and such other enemies of ours are also not there". But where can we find such a land? On an earlier occasion when Sucheta Devi[2] had sung that *bhajan* for us I had given two interpretations.[3] My first interpretation was that the poet had India in his mind. He had a wish, a dream of what he would like his country to be. But that is not the situation at present. The *bhajan* was composed before August 15, but such was not the condition even then. Anger, greed, attachment, pride, infatuation, jealousy, all these six enemies of man were there. There six include all other enemies of humankind. Then there was hunger and there was poverty and there were no clothes to wear—we were then surrounded by all those troubles. But did the poet not wish that his country should be free from those troubles? But how could our country be free from these troubles? This calls for the second interpretation. Is this not the country which has been described in the *Gita* as Kurukshetra[4] as well as

[1] After this the prayer went off peacefully. Dilip Kumar Roy sang the *bhajan*, "We belong to a land where there is no sorrow and no sigh."

[2] Sucheta Kripalani; in-charge, Foreign Department in A. I. C. C.; Joint-Secretary, Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust; Member, Constituent Assembly; President, Delhi Central Refugee Committee; Minister of Labour, U.P., 1962; Chief Minister, U. P., 1963

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 17-5-1946 and "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 22-5-1946.

[4] Literally 'field of Kuru'—the scene of war between the Kauravas and the Pandavas. Symbolically it means a battlefield.

dharmakshetra[1]. If our mind is the temple of God then it is *dharmakshetra*, but if the mind gives itself up to self-indulgence it becomes Kurukshetra, a battlefield. We have innumerable enemies like the Kauravas[2] whose father was blind. But isn't Yudhishthira[3] the symbol of *dharmakshetra*? That is why Yudhishthira was named Dharmaraja. Such is our land where there is no sorrow and no suffering. We can all be like this; but have I not mentioned the conditions we have to fulfil to be so? Then ours would be the land where God resides. Later on, the poet has also called it *swadesh* and swaraj. And he is right. After independence India would be a country without misery and sorrow. But I have never found our country in a poorer state than today. Even the history that I have read from my childhood days does not depict India as I find her today. This *bhajan* is intended only to end that situation. It is said in the *bhajan* that everything will be well if we make our mind a temple and install God in it.

While there are people who are hungry and have nothing to wear, here we are seated fully clothed. I have also wrapped myself in a sheet so that I may not feel cold. A lady doctor came to me today. She came from Kurukshetra[4]. She had been doing a lot of work in the Punjab. She had been nursing Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and the rest. She had to run away from there and had come as a refugee. Sushila[5] suggested to her to work at Kurukshetra as there was nothing else to be done, and took her with her. Today she has come here to report the situation there. Today our Munshiji is present here. His daughter too has become a doctor. Instead of just sitting idle she said she would do something. So she also went there. That lady doctor told me today that people did receive medical attention there but there were not enough doctors. So many people have been crowded into that place and there is so much hardship and suffering that two or three lady doctors are not enough. A large number of doctors in needed there. If doctors go there they will be of some help. They are not quacks like me. They should have allopathic medicines since they are allopathic

[1] The field of duty; Ch. I, 1

[2] The hundred sons of Dhritarashtra. The Kauravas represent the forces of evil.

[3] The eldest of the five Pandava brothers, known for his righteousness. The Pandavas represent the forces of good.

[4] More than twenty-five thousand Hindu and Sikh refugees were living in the refugee camp at Kurukshetra.

[5] Dr. Sushila Nayyar

doctors. They do not have enough medicines with them, but medicines should be supplied to them. There are women and there are children. Those women were not always beggars. There are also women with one child in the womb and another in the lap. Such is our condition at present.

Whom should we blame for this? Somebody may say that the Government is inefficient. But did the Government know that there would be so much trouble? We had never had any experience of ruling the country. It is just two months since the Government came into power. How could we have coped with such a calamity? We have got to put up with it. But, while putting up with it if we lose our heads and do not control our anger and insist on giving two blows for one, this thing will never end. We shall then have no right to sing this *bhajan*. If we sing the *bhajan*, we should do so with genuine feeling. If we possess a melodious voice it should not be confined only to singing sweet songs. It should be used for worshipping God. It will be well if that melody kindles a divine feeling in some heart.

On the one hand we are facing such a situation and on the other is the problem of Kashmir. From the number of planes going from here, I guess they are all carrying soldiers.[1] Some cowards are running away from there. Why should they do so? And where will they go? Why should they not put up a brave fight and lay down their lives? At this rate even if the whole of Kashmir is razed to the ground I am not going to be affected. I would gladly ask you also to rejoice over it, but on the condition that everybody, young and old, should die there valiantly. If anyone asks why the children also should die there, I will say that the children cannot go anywhere. In any case they stay with their parents. Those people are all there in Kashmir, how can we provide them with arms? A person like me does not need arms. After all, if we are alive, we have to sacrifice our lives. Then alone can we say that the soul is immortal. If we do not do this, it means that we confuse our soul with our body and worship the body. But the body has to die one day. If the child is on the mother's lap, when the mother dies he also dies. And when one has got to die, let him die willingly. Let them say that if the Afridis have come to destroy them they will prefer to perish of their own accord. Even the soldiers who have gone there would die with pleasure. They have gone there to die.

[1] Besides the Indian Air Force transport, a large number of civilian aircrafts were commandeered by the Government to fly soldiers and ammunition to Kashmir.

When can they remain alive? Only when they know that everything is safe and there is no invasion on Kashmir and peace is well-established. Now Kashmir is in the hands of Sheikh Abdullah. He regards the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs as his brothers. He is a friend of all foreigners, including the Englishmen, who go and live in Kashmir. He invites everyone to enjoy the beauty of Kashmir and taste its fruits. Kashmiri crafts are wonderful. People weave beautiful cloth with their own hands and charge any price they want. Why should they not do so since Kashmir ultimately lives by its crafts? So, the Sheikh is now the ruler of Kashmir. The Maharaja is there of course. But the Sheikh is the ruler in the name of the Maharaja. The Maharaja himself has told him that he may do whatever he wants. If Kashmir is to remain it will remain and if it has to pass out of their hands it will pass out.

Look at what is happening at Kurukshetra on the one hand, and Kashmir on the other, and also think of all the hardships that have to be faced here. So many Muslims have fled to Pakistan. Those who are running away without any reason may well do so. Who can stop them? But some of them also go away because they are afraid of us. I feel ashamed when some Muslim friends come and tell me that they can no longer stick to their places, for they do not know when they might be killed. It pains me that fear has taken such roots in their hearts. Then a woman came and told me that she was feeling scared because a Pathan was after her. My heart cries out when I hear such things. Still I ask, why should there be any fear of a Pathan or anyone else when one has the support of God? But one can be fearless only when one knows that one has God with him. When a chaste woman faces a rogue who may be a Pathan or a Hindu or a Sikh—for it is not that only the Pathans are rogues; there are rogues to be found everywhere and they too can be as lustful —she would tremble at the sight of him. But why should she be scared? You do believe that Sita was never scared. She was not frightened even when Ravana carried her away on his shoulder. She went on repeating that her husband was Rama and he was right beside her. And as Rama was God incarnate, she warned Ravana that he would be reduced to ashes if he dared to touch her. She was just a tiny woman but she was pure and because of her purity she was not afraid. Purity is the most powerful weapon. If we wish to free ourselves from such a misfortune, we must all follow what is said in the *bhajan*. If all the women and men who come to attend the prayer follow this, this transformation will spread throughout the country like the fragrance of the rose. Today we have all lost our

senses. But with the coming of purity the present calamity will be swept away like dirt. I would only pray to God that we may all be good, that Kashmir may be free from the present trouble and all may be well with the people who have come here as refugees.

As that lady doctor has reported, some goondas have entered the Kurukshetra Camp. Even after getting a blanket, the same person comes again for a second blanket. Such persons do not realize that all the people there do not have enough to wear and cover themselves. There are countless women at Kurukshetra who are still wearing the same clothes with which they had arrived. I cannot even bear to hear about these things—who knows what will happen if I have to see these things? Surely that lady doctor cannot be exaggerating when she claims to have seen with her own eyes that that is the way things are going on there.

All I wish to say is that we should realize where our *adharma*[1] is taking us. We should think whether or not we are settling down at any point and then ask ourselves if we are residing in a land where there is no suffering and no sorrow.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 26-32

[1] Failure to act according to one's duty

186. INTERVIEW TO RONALD STEAD[1]

[Before *November 2, 1947*]

Ronald Stead discussed with Mahatma Gandhi the crucial issue of how best to combat India's internecine violence. In a single brief sentence Gandhiji defined his long range objective "to replace communal hatred by communal brotherhood".

Stead reports:

Mahatma Gandhi makes it clear that he is reluctant to discuss the recent troubled past.

He has criticized the misbehaviour of Muslims and non-Muslims alike. In this connection he observes with a little smile:

I used to be represented as an enemy of the Muslims. Now, because I castigate the Hindus for misdemeanours which they, like the Muslims, have been guilty of, I am being represented in

some quarters as an enemy of the Hindus. The fact is, I am an enemy only of wrongdoing.

Mahatma Gandhi describes the situation in Calcutta as satisfactory but says that Delhi is decidedly otherwise. That is why his original plans were altered. He asks:

How can I go on to the Punjab, when so much remains to be done here?

Mahatma Gandhi's longrange plans for supplanting communal animosity by communal tolerance are the same as those he is executing now. That is to say, he is going to address the maximum number of persons in public now. Evening prayer meetings furnish regular opportunities for doing this. He is going to hold counsel with as many responsible leaders as seek to discuss matters with him. He is going to visit refugee concentrations and address himself to reassuring the minorities, urging them not to migrate and seeking to foster among the majority the tolerance that will justify such persuasion.

The Hindustan Times, 2-11-1947

[1] Correspondent of *Christian Science Monitor* of Boston

187. LEST WE COPY THE BRITISH

Whilst I cannot vouch for the figures given by Prof. Bang, there is no hesitation in endorsing his remarks about the high salaries he refers to and the gross disparity between the highest and the lowest salaries paid to their servants by our Governments.[1]

NEW DELHI, November 2, 1947

Harijan, 9-11-1947

188. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI

November 2, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

The interpretations of some critics of the Koran are not correct.[2] By reading the Koran I do not fall from Hinduism, rather, I rise high. It is my claim that I am in no way less of a Hindu than the greatest of Hindus, in India or outside, since I believe in the Vedas, read the *Gita* and follow its principles in action. I have been taught from my childhood that there is no place in the world where there is no God.

Brajkishan tells me that the number of persons who have raised objection is somewhat large today. These people say that they are very much against the recitation from the Koran, but they put up with it because they wish to hear me. But where is the need for putting up with it? It would bring no good to them or to me. If they wish to join me in the prayer, then it is well to put up with it. Let them not put up with it because I am *Mahatma* or because I have rendered service to the country and they wish to see me. That is why I am asking if you are truly keen on having the prayer.[3]

[1] Prof. T. K. Bang's article under this title is not reproduced here. The Professor had written that the announcement of the salaries of the Governors being fixed at Rs. 5,500 per month was contrary to the Congress Resolution and it falsified the hope that along with the Imperialism the top-heavy expensive administration would go. He questioned, "how could the entire administrative machine work as one man with enthusiasm towards the social and ameliorative legislation when there was such a colossal difference between the salary of the peon and that of the Governor." In his opinion the Government could not afford to pay fabulous sums.

[2] Some persons had again protested against the recitation from the Koran.

[3] Gandhiji continued his speech after the prayer with everybody's consent.

are truly keen on having the prayer.[1]

You must have read in the newspapers, but I also have some information about what is happening in Kashmir. It should be said that things are quite all right there now. By that I mean that Srinagar is still intact.[2] The freebooters have not yet been able to take possession of the city. Later on it should become all the more difficult to do so. The plunderers are no fighters. The whole world is going to look down upon them because they have not gone there by right. With the passage of time terrorism is diminishing. Things are in favour of the army which has gone there and it is gaining time. We cannot send a very large army by air, for it involves a lot of trouble. But I gather that the Government is being helped in every way. [Private airlines] are all willingly helping and that is why troops are easily sent by planes. The planes do not belong to the Government. The private companies owning the planes have handed them over to the Government with the idea of helping in a worthwhile cause.

One thing more—we all praise Subhas Babu's intelligence and courage for mobilizing the Azad Hind Fauj. And he does deserve our praise, for while he was out of the country he felt it would be worth while to organize an army. He was not a soldier. He was an ordinary Indian like any lawyer or barrister. He had no military training. He might have learnt horse-riding as is usual with men in the Civil Service. But he must have studied military science later on. Now, I gather that two officers[3] of the army he had raised, and whom I had met while they were in prison and outside also, have joined the aggressors in Kashmir. This hurts me very much. They used to carry out special assignments under Subhas Babu and used to be always with him. Subhas Babu could not have kept anything secret from the army personnel because he had to work through them. It hurts me that those very persons are now going about as leaders of the freebooters. Through the newspapers, if they are getting any, or if they care to listen to me, I would ask them in my failing voice why they should involve themselves in this affair and bring down Subhas Babu's name. Why should they side either with the Hindus or the Muslims? They should not take a communal stand. That was not

[1] Gandhiji continued his speech after the prayer with everybody's consent.

[2] The tribesmen advancing on Srinagar, were repulsed by the Indian troops.

[3] According to the *Daily Express* correspondent in Kashmir, one of them was Major Khurshid Anwar.

against the Harijans or anyone else. There was no communal distinction among the Indians in that army. Of course all of them adhered to their respective religions, none of them had abandoned it. Subhas Babu had taken possession of their hearts, not of their bodies. It was not as if those who refused to join the Azad Hind Fauj were to be slain. He was not going to bring freedom to India by killing people like this. That is how he became great and earned fame. Why should these people now stoop so low and get involved in such mean things? If they really want to do something, let them do something for the whole of India. Let them restrain the Muslims and the Afridis from committing atrocities, plundering the people and burning the villages. Let them persuade them to write to the Maharaja and Sheikh Abdullah that they want to meet them. They must tell them that they have not gone there to plunder. If they do so I can understand their point that they have gone there to show that Islam is being crushed. Then they would be lending glory to Subhas Babu's name and would become true teachers of the Afridis. I do not know how the Afridis live and if there are any plunderers among them. But in my view even they are human beings. The same God resides in their hearts and hence they are my brethren. If I were to live among them I would ask them why they indulge in loot and plunder and show anger towards others. I would not ask them to give up their arms. I would ask them to keep their arms, but in order to protect the people who are scared, to protect the indigent, the women and children. What does it matter if they are Hindus or Muslims? I would tell those two officers, whose names I have already come to know, that they should remember Subhas Babu. He is dead but not his name and not his work.

Now my mind turns to Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah. I know him well. I used to go to his house. Once I had visited him 18 times. I consider it a penance. Even on a later occasion we two had put our signatures on a document[1] and had become responsible for it. I used to have cordial talks with him even then. That is the reason why I would ask him, Liaquat Ali and his Cabinet what had prompted them to accuse a man like Jawaharlal of fraud.[2] Where was the need for him and his

[1] In April, 1947, *vide* "A Joint Appeal", 12-4-1947.

[2] Refusing to accept Kashmir's accession to the Indian Union, the Government of Pakistan issued a Press communique on October 30 saying, "In the opinion of the Government of Pakistan the accession of Kashmir to the Indian Union is based on fraud and violence and as such cannot be recognized."

Government to act fraudulently in this? I would tell them that Jawaharlal is not a man who will deceive anyone. He is true to his name. I also know the Sardar and other men in his Cabinet. They too are no cheats. If they want to negotiate with [the Maharaja of] Kashmir it does not mean that they are trying to misguide him. Jawaharlal had been having talks with him even earlier and fighting single-handed with him for the sake of Sheikh Abdullah.[1] Why then should he deceive? Can India or any country be saved by deceiving? Why then do they say such a thing? The Afridis who have infiltrated into Kashmir must be receiving some encouragement from Pakistan for indulging in their activities. How could they do it otherwise? If I had been in Pakistan I would have stopped them from indulging in such things. If Pakistan was disinterested, they could not resort to such things. But here Pakistan is not indifferent but very much involved.

Two Hindu gentlemen have come to me—one from Karachi and the other from Lahore. The man from Karachi tells me that the situation had been bad in Karachi but now things are improving day by day. So now, they asked, would I appeal to the people there not to panic? The Sindhi Muslims there have lived with the Hindus in amity. They have quarrelled on many occasions, but have become friends again. I have been a witness to that. It is not that things have become perfectly normal there. But the Cabinet wants it to be so. The other gentleman tells me that all the big mansions in Lahore have been destroyed. There are not many Hindus left in Lahore—only a handful of them are there. But the Cabinet desires that the Hindus and Sikhs, all should live there. Of course, there is some objection about the Sikhs staying there. Nevertheless, quite a few Sikhs are there. A wonderful thing I learnt about Lahore is that a Muslim gentleman has kept a Sikh in his own house. The gentleman who came to me narrated what he had seen with his own eyes. He said that that Muslim had kept an open copy of the Guru Granthsaheb in one of the rooms of his house with due respect. He has saved that Sikh because he happens to be his friend. This makes me very happy. Subsequently a Sikh gentleman came and told me that such things have happened in many places where Muslim friends gave shelter in their houses to

[1] The Government of India had earlier taken up the matter of Sheikh Abdullah's incarceration with the Kashmir State authorities. Sheikh Abdullah who was sentenced to three years' imprisonment for demanding a responsible government in the State, was released in September, 1947.

many places where Muslim friends gave shelter in their houses to Sikhs. I have received such information from both the places. Then why should the Muslims in such large numbers be driven away to Pakistan? And why should Hindus and Sikhs run away from Pakistan and seek refuge here? Where will it all lead to? Would it not be that we will all be ruined? People cannot live in comfort when they leave their homes. One can live in comfort only in one's own home. When one leaves the home he can have neither proper food nor proper clothes. Right now people in the refugee camps are shivering in cold. They ask why they have been treated thus. They want to know why their Government did this to them. What was their fault that they have to face such hardships? They feel that there they were surrounded by the Muslims and here they are surrounded by the Hindus. How long will this continue and what would be the result? God alone knows the result. But all the same, these things pain me very much.

Why does the Qaid-e-Azam of Pakistan say that the Hindus and the Sikhs are the enemies of Muslims? There are evil-minded men among the Hindus and Sikhs and also among the Muslims. But it is wrong to condemn the entire community. With all humility I would request the entire Cabinet and people that they should all become good if they wish that India should not be destroyed and passed on into the hands of others.

I cannot thank enough those persons who protested in such a courteous manner against the recitation from the Koran today. This would enable them to work non-violently. They acted rightly when they expressed their disapproval of the verses from the Koran. I am glad that they allowed the prayer to be conducted without any obstruction. In this way, we are creating divine power for India. It is a gradual process. It cannot happen as if by magic. But ultimately such a power would be created. It is my prayer to God that He may grant good sense to the two senior officers of the Azad Hind Fauj and that the ship of India, which at the moment is unsteady, may start sailing smoothly in calm waters.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 32-7

189. LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

NEW DELHI
November 3, 1947

CHI. CHAMPA,

I got your letter. It does not satisfy me. Nor does Dhiren's[1]. All sorts of doubts occur to me. I need not mention them. How can I spare so much time? It will be safe if you follow Bhansali's advice. Never mind if my views don't agree with his. He is a man of great renunciation and a pious man, and has seen both the good and the evil in the world. He respects you as a good woman and trusts Dhiren. He doesn't believe that the Ashram is a true ashram. But what does even that matter? He says what he sincerely believes to be true. My consent, therefore, is not at all necessary. I shall not be able to give my blessings. For me Sevagram itself is good enough, and I don't mind whether or not it is called an ashram. Moreover, Chimanlal and Bhansali also are not of the same view. You may, therefore, marry Indira[2] to Dhiren but should leave the Ashram. I am sure you would not wish to live as a burden on the Ashram. Bhansali will be able to make some provision for you in the Sevagram village. After Dhiren's marriage, you will be able to stay with them. Moreover, they are a large family and, if they all bless the marriage, you will be able to live even in Wardha. Even if the rent is high that will be no cause of worry for you. You may therefore do as all the members of that family advise you.

Neither Indira nor Dhiren, nor you need come here. I don't wish to involve myself in this matter. Moreover, I cannot spare a single minute to discuss this problem. It will, therefore, be best to be guided by the elders there.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XX

[1] Dhirendra, son of Amrita Lal Chatterjee
[2] Addressee's daughter

190. LETTER TO GOPALJI

NEW DELHI
November 3, 1947

BHAI GOPALJI,

The selected flowers from the *Ramayana* which you sent are welcome. I will enjoy their fragrance occasionally. How can I ever forget it?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5700

191. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM

NEW DELHI
November 3, 1947

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

I got your letter.

I cannot excuse your falling or remaining ill. How can a *vaid* who remains ill himself cure other people? This applies to you *vaids* as to *hakims* and doctors.

You can stay in the bungalow at Panchgani. It is meant to be given rent free only to Harijans. But it is given on rent to other respectable people also when it is not occupied.

You may use the accompanying letter[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 2924. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya

[1] *Vide* the following item.

192. LETTER TO BULSARIA

NEW DELHI
November 3, 1947

BHAI BULSARIA,

Please lease out to Vaidyaraj Vallabhram as large a portion of your bungalow as you can spare.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

193. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 3, 1947

When you write in English, I consider it an affront to me, to yourself and to the whole country. Don't you know the Gujarati proverb that 'the first impression which the new bride creates at home and the new king creates in the public tends to become permanent'? In the same way now that we have swaraj and still use English instead of Hindustani, to whom shall I address myself? The ocean is on fire. This much should suffice. I have no time at all nor the zest to write more. . . .[1]

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 187

[1] Omission as in the source

194. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 3, 1947

I saw your letter only now, after listening to the sweet and sad *bhajan* containing Draupadi's prayer[1]: "O God, guard me against insult." I am also in a similar predicament today. Draupadi had mighty Bhima and Arjuna and the truthful Yudhishthira as husbands; she was the daughter-in-law of men like Dronacharya, Bhishma and Vidura, and yet amidst an assembly of people it appeared she was in a terrible plight. At that hour, she did not lose faith and prayed to God from her heart. And God did protect her honour. This *bhajan* has a deep significance. One can go on expatiating on it. Today I also am seated in a 'palatial' house, surrounded by loving friends. Still, I am in a sad plight. Yet there is God's help, as I find each day. Ultimately Delhi will decide the destiny of the whole country. Our hearts have also become filled with much dirt. I am striving to remove it. But if I do not succeed I would not wish to remain a helpless spectator. I have therefore given up my desire to live for 125 years. May God give good sense to all.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 186-7

[1] *Vide* "Ashram Bhajanavali:112", 18-8-1930.

195. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO AN ASHRAM WOMAN

November 3, 1947

I notice that differences of opinion have cropped up among my political co-workers, though there are a good many exceptions, I am speaking of the general situation. Similarly, I understand that in the Ashram also purity has become a thing of the past. God alone knows what the real situation is inside the Ashram, since I have been out of it for the past one year. And yet I continue to live because, for me, life itself is a great truth. I look upon life as a particle of God and take care of it as His gift.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 188

196. NOTE TO MANU GANDHI

November 3, 1947

There is a lesson for us in these two letters[1] coming together. We should learn to absorb pleasure as well as pain with equanimity.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 188

[1] Gandhiji had received two letters. One of them addressed him as "Shrikrishna Bhagawan" and praised him, while the other addressed him as "Mohammed Gandhi" and condemned him.

197. NOTE TO K. M. MUNSHI[1]

November 3, 1947

I have not been able to swallow all the arguments that have been put forward in support of control. I am getting more and more confirmed in my view that there must be no control.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 188

198. LETTER TO M. A. HUNAR

NEW DELHI
November 3, 1947

CHI. HUNAR,

I have your letter. Pandit Sundarlal[2] was with me yesterday. I told him also about all that was happening. I had asked Jivanji. I am sending on his opinion. There is no work for you there and I, of course, have no work for you. Therefore Sundarlal says that he will utilize your services or make some other arrangement for you. I do not want to keep you in suspense, nor do I wish your services to remain unutilized. Now please write to me what would be the right thing to do.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee had come to discuss the food situation with Gandhiji.

[2] (1886-1981); nationalist leader and a prolific writer; member of Congress Working Committee, 1930-31; started a number of magazines including *Karmayogi*; wrote *Bharatmen Angrezi Raj* and a comparative study of the *Gita* and the Koran; President of All-India Peace Council; Founder-President of India-China Friendship Association.

199. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI
November 3, 1947

If two quantities of poison mix together, who will decide which was first on the field and if such a decision could be arrived at what end would it serve? We know this, however, that the virus has spread throughout the Western Pakistan area and that it has not as yet been recognized as such by the powers that be. So far as the Union is concerned, it has been confined to a small part of it. Would to God that the virus would remain under isolation and control! There would then be cause for every hope that it would be expelled in due time and that soon from both the parts.

In view of the fact that Dr. Rajendra Prasad has called a meeting of the Premiers or their representatives and others to help and advise him in the matter of food control, I feel that I should devote this evening to that very important question. Nothing that I have heard during these days has moved me from the stand I have taken from the beginning that the control should be entirely removed at the earliest moment possible, certainly not later than six months hence. Not a day passes but letters and wires come to me, some from important persons, declaring emphatically that both the controls should be removed. I propose to omit the other, i. e., cloth control for the time being.

Control gives rise to fraud, suppression of truth, intensification of the black market and to artificial scarcity. Above all it unmans the people and deprives them of initiative, it undoes the teaching of self-help they have been learning for a generation. It makes them spoon-fed. This is a tragedy next only, if indeed not equal, to the fratricide on a vast scale and the insane exchange of population resulting in unnecessary deaths, starvation and want of proper residence and clothing the more poignant for the coming inclement weather. The second is certainly more spectacular. We dare not forget the first because it is not spectacular.

This food control is one of the vicious legacies of the last World War. Control then was probably inevitable because a very large

[1] It being Gandhiji's silence day, his written speech was read out after the prayers.

quantity of cereals and other food-stuff were exported outside. This unnatural export was bound to create a man made scarcity and lead to rationing in spite of its many drawbacks. Now there need be no export which we can avoid if we wish to. We would help the starving parts of the world, if we do not expect outside help for India in the way of food. I have seen during my lifetime covering two generations several God sent famines, but have no recollection of an occasion when rationing was even thought of.

Today, thank God, the monsoons have not failed us. There is, therefore, no real scarcity of food. There are enough cereals, pulses and oil-seeds in the villages of India. The artificial control of prices, the growers do not, cannot, understand. They, therefore, refuse willingly to part with their stock at a price much lower than they command in the open market. This naked fact needs no demonstration. It does not require statistics or desk-work civilians buried in their red-tape files to produce elaborate reports and essays to prove that there is scarcity. It is to be hoped that no one will frighten us by trotting out before us the bogey of over-population.

Our ministers are of the people, from the people. Let them not arrogate to themselves greater knowledge than those experienced men who do not happen to occupy ministerial chairs—but who hold the view strongly that the sooner the control is removed the better. A physician writes to say that the food control has made it impossible for those who depend upon rationed food to procure eatable cereals and pulses and therefore, he says, the people needlessly suffer from ailments caused by rotten stuff.

In the place of controlled food, the Government can easily run the very stores for selling good grain which they will buy in the open market. They will thus bring about automatic regulation of prices and set free the hoarded cereals, pulses and oil-seeds. Will they not trust the grain dealers and growers? Democracy will break under the strain of apron strings. It can exist only on trust. If the people die because they will not labour or because they will defraud one another, it will be a welcome deliverance. The rest will then learn not to repeat the sin of being lazy, idle or cruelly selfish.

Harijan, 16-11-1947

200. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 4, 1947

I have your long letter. I shall give my reply in the prayer today.[1] I do not have time even to read long letters, much less to write them. But I have read all your arguments. If you don't mind shall I tell you a few things? You are more than a son to me; hence it is my duty to tell you what is right. Many people consider themselves smart and intelligent when they can argue about something. But one who does not bear in mind the time, the place, the circumstances and the occasion for it, ultimately loses his place in society. Keep this rule in mind. I am all right. I am in the midst of this violent conflagration. Although I am in a house as big as a palace in the grand city of Hindustan, I think of the plight of innocent children and thousands of women in this cold season. My heart bleeds but I do not cry. I do not believe in crying. In the end I have to do or die. I wish God grants this humble prayer of mine.

You wish to come here to serve me. But what will you do? It is enough if one who wishes to serve me joins me in this prayer and spreads the feeling of brotherhood wherever he is. I am dictating this letter to Manu immediately after the morning prayer. My Bengali lessons are going on all right.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I. pp. 192-3

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 4-11-1947.

201. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

NEW DELHI
November 4, 1947

CHI. BHANSALI,

I have your letter. Please read my letter[1] to Champa. You will be able to see from it how I feel. I did not approve of your decision. But that makes no difference. How can I say that I am right and you are wrong? You are on the spot and I am far away. And, moreover, Champa has implicit faith in you. I have, therefore, asked her to follow your advice and I still hold the same view. But that does not mean that she can stay wherever she likes in the Ashram without Chimanlal's consent.

You have lost faith in the Ashram and Champa has no respect for it at all. Since I cannot welcome Champa's step, I believe that she should leave the Ashram. Find some place for her outside the Ashram or the Talimi Sangh. If she intends to marry off Indira soon, she might probably prefer to stay with Dhiren. I simply cannot understand how a girl of sixteen can be married. But do what seems best to Champa and you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XX

202. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 4, 1947

I am convinced that nature cure of my conception is bound to bring great relief to crores of poor villagers. For example, if a villager has to undergo X-ray treatment, the poor man will have to run to a city or wherever there is electricity. This he has to do at his expense and at the expense of his family. Why should he not benefit from the limitless grace of the sun-god who rises in his village every morning? Add to this an intelligent use of air, water, diet, earth, and so on accompanied by the recitation of the name of one's family deity. I have no doubt that if all these things are carried on with perseverence even an incurable disease will disappear without a pie having been spent.

[From Gujarati]
Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 193-4

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Champa R. Mehta", 3-11-1947.

203. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER[1]

November 4, 1947

Should even a woman like you make a distinction between a son and a daughter? My experience so far has been that sons hardly ever have that feeling for parents with which daughters eagerly serve them. Can even a wise woman like you have such an antipathy towards womankind? Of course, all your children have my blessings. May all the four children contribute their mite to the progress of the country.

[From Gujarati]
Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 194

204. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI
November 4, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today only our old courteous friend has objected to the recitation from the Koran. Hence, I would discuss a pathetic letter from a Punjabi Hindu refugee. He has suffered a great deal in the Punjab. And he has objected to the recitation from the Koran. I do not know if that gentleman is present here. He may or may not be here, but I cannot ignore his letter. It is a letter written with deep pain. He has put forth fairly good arguments in the letter. But then it is full of ignorance born out of his anger. Every line he has written expresses his anger. These days practically all my time is spent in listening to the tales of woe from the Hindu or Sikh refugees or the Muslims of Delhi who are in distress. I also feel the same distress in my heart and am equally hurt. But I would not be truly non-violent if I started shedding tears or became gloomy. If non-violence made me so very soft, I would be crying the whole time, and there would be no time left to worship God, and to eat and sleep. But right from childhood, being a follower of non-violence, I have made it a habit of hardening my heart instead of shedding tears while hearing or seeing any tragedy, so that I would be able to face them. Have not our saints and sages taught us that one who is a worshipper of ahimsa should be

[1] The addressee had sought Gandhiji's blessings for her new-born child, a son, after three daughters.

softer than a flower and harder than a stone? I have tried to live according to this teaching. That is why when I receive complaints like those in this letter or hear the angry and sorrowful tales from the visitors coming to me, I steel my heart. That is the only way I can face the present situation. The letter has been written in the Urdu script and hence I asked Brajkishan to write for me the important points of the letter.

The first charge levelled against me is that I have broken a promise. The letter says: "Have you not said that even if there is a single individual in your prayer meeting objecting to the recitation from the Koran, you would respect his wish and cancel the prayer for the evening?" This is a half-truth which is more dangerous than a total lie. When I had first cancelled the prayer[1] because there was an objection, I had declared that I was cancelling the prayer for fear that the large numbers attending the prayer may start showing their anger against the objector and may even manhandle him. This was several months ago. Since then people have learnt the art of restraint. And, when people assured me that they would not have anger in their hearts nor any ill feeling for the objector I agreed to hold the public prayer. And, as far as I know, the result has been good. The behaviour of the persons who object is extremely courteous and apart from voicing their objection they create no obstruction in the prayer. Thus, I hope the writer of this letter will appreciate that I have not gone back on my word. And the result of continuing the prayer despite the protest has so far been good. I would like to assure you that as far as I know myself, in this long life of public service I have never been guilty of breaking a promise.

The second charge the writer of this letter has made against me is that while I have the recitation from the Koran and claim that all religions are equal, I do not have recitations from the *japji*[2] and the Bible. This remark only betrays the ignorance of the writer. He is not aware of my statement in which I explained how the entire *Bhajanavali* was prepared.[3] The *Ashram Bhajanavali* contains quite a few psalms from the Bible and *bhajans* from the Granthsaheb.

His third complaint is that many eminent Congress leaders have

[1] On April 2, 1947, *vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 2-4-1947.

[2] The opening part of the Guru Granthsaheb

[3] *Vide* "The Reason for Addition", 5-8-1947, "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 19-10-1947 and "The Ashram Prayer", 2-2-1942.

come away from West Punjab and other parts of West Pakistan; but having come to the Indian Union they do not share the trials and tribulations of other refugees. These leaders have acquired more spacious buildings than what they had occupied in Pakistan and are living in great comfort and luxury. These Congress leaders have completely isolated themselves from the refugees who have no houses to live in nor woollen clothes to protect themselves against winter. Many of the refugees do not even have a change of clothes, not to speak of the woollen clothes. They do not even get good food. If there is truth in this complaint, it is really shameful. In my prayer speeches I have denounced those well-to-do refugees who, instead of sharing the hardships of the poor refugees desert them and live in luxury. This is not religion but irreligion. The rich must share the joys and sorrows of their poor brethren.

Then that friend has taunted me that even though I intended going to Pakistan I have not yet gone. He wants to know why I am in Delhi. He asks me why I prefer to help my Muslim friends instead of going to Pakistan and help the Hindus and the Sikhs who are in distress. But the person who makes such a complaint does not realize that I cannot disregard my duty here in Delhi and go to Pakistan in the hope of helping the Hindus and the Sikhs there. I admit that I am a friend of the Muslims and others because I am equally a friend of the Hindus and the Sikhs. when I serve anyone, it is because I am inspired by the thought that he is a part not only of India or one particular religion but of the whole of humanity. The Hindu and Sikh refugees and others here have to prove by being friendly with the Muslims here that I need not stay on in Delhi any longer. Then I would rush to Pakistan with full confidence that my going there would not be in vain.

The person who has made these complaints has not spared even the Kasturba Fund. He asks how the Kasturba Fund is being utilized and why it could not be utilized for giving relief to the refugees. The first thing is that the Fund was raised for a particular purpose when I was in jail.[1] In other words, the Fund was raised for the purpose of serving women and children in the villages of India. There is a Board of Trustees to look after its management. The ever-vigilant Thakkar

[1] After Gandhiji's release from Jail, a purse of Rs. 80 lakhs was presented to him on October 2, 1944 on behalf of the Trustees of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Fund. *Vide* "Speech at Kasturba Memorial Trust Meeting", 2-10-1944.

Bapa[1] is its Secretary. He keeps an account of every single pie. The accounts are open for the public to see. Hence, the Fund cannot be spent for the refugees as this friend suggests. And there is no need to do so. Money is being generously given for the relief of the refugees. Everybody knows about the generous response to my appeal[2] for blankets. Sardar Patel has issued a special appeal. It has received, and it still receiving, whole-hearted public support.

The last complaint of the writer is that when Pakistan has put a ban on the slaughter of pigs why cannot India prohibit cow-slaughter? I am not aware about a legal ban on the slaughter of pigs in Pakistan. If the information given by this friend is correct, I am sorry about it. I know that Islam forbids the eating of pork. But even so, I do not think it is proper to stop the non-Muslims from eating pork.

Has not the Qaid-e-Azam proclaimed that Pakistan is not a theocratic State and religion would not be imposed by law? But, unfortu-nately, it is true that this claim is not always put into practice. Would India become a theocratic State and would the principles of Hinduism be imposed on non-Hindus? I hope not. If that happens India would cease to be land of hope and promise. Then it would not be a country to which not only all the races of Asia and Africa but the whole world would look with hope. The world does not expect from Hindustan whether as Indian Union or Pakistan meanness and fanaticism. It expects greatness, goodness and generosity from Hindustan so that the whole world can learn a lesson and find light in the midst of the prevailing darkness.

I do not lag behind anyone in my devotion to and worship of the cow. But such feeling of worship and belief cannot be imposed on anybody by law. It can be created by increasing friendly relations and proper behaviour with the Muslims and all other non-Hindus. The Gujaratis and the Marwaris are supposed to be leading all others in the matter of protecting the cow. But they have forgotten the principles of Hinduism to such an extent that they would gladly impose restrictions on others while they may themselves illtreat the cow and her progeny. Why are the cattle of India the most neglected lot in the whole world?

[1] A. V. Thakkar (1869-1951); joined Servants of India Society in 1914; established Bhil Seva Sadan in 1922; Secretary, Harijan Sevak Sangh; President, Gujarat Antyaja Seva Mandal; Secretary, Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust, 1944-51

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 4-10-1947.

As it is generally believed, why have these cattle become a burden on the land because of their extremely low yield of milk? As beasts of burden why are the bullocks treated so badly?

The pinjarapoles of India are not such that one can be proud of. A lot of money is spent on them but the cattle are hardly tended scientifically or intelligently. These pinjarapoles cannot give a new lease of life to India's cattle. This can be done only by treating the cattle with sympathy and kindness. I claim that more than any other Hindu, I have saved a larger number of cows from the butcher's knife without the assistance of law, because of my being able to cultivate friendship with the Muslims.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 40-5

205. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[1]

November 5, 1947

This is just a love letter. Take no interest in politics till you are completely free from tuberculosis. Everything is all right here. My cough has gone.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 220

206. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER[2]

November 5, 1947

. . .[3] If self-control has taken root in one's heart, why should one wear saffron robes or withdraw oneself into the forests? And one whose heart is not firm is not likely to gain anything whether he goes to a forest or anywhere else. I believe that the man who observes self-control in thought, word and deed in the midst of the world is verily a great ascetic. If things do not bind us, if we are not attached to things even when they are easily available that, according to me, is a greater test of our detachment than mere withdrawal to a lonely forest.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 200

[1] Gandhiji's grand-nephew; ex-Mayor of Bombay

[2] The addressee had sought Gandhiji's advice for taking *sannyasa*.

[3] Omission as in the source

207. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNA SINHA

NEW DELHI
November 5, 1947

BHAI SHRIBABU,

I have not written anything about your Diamond Jubilee celebration. What was there to write? May you serve more and more.

The [enclosed] letter is only one amongst many of this kind that I have received. I have not sent any reply to the writer nor do I wish to.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Pepers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

208. INTERVIEW TO CHINESE DELEGATION[1]

November 5, 1947

I consider myself a Chinese.

Gandhiji added he was no stranger to the Chinese. He had lived among them in South Africa and many of them were in jail with him during the passive resistance movement there.

India is a great friend of China. In Pandit Nehru, China has a guarantee of that friendship.

The Hindustan Ti mes, 6-11-1947

[1] The members of the Chinese Delegation to the Asian Regional Conference of International Labour Organization met Gandhiji in the evening. The workers' representatives from Britain, France and the U. S. A. also accompanied the Delegation.

209. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI
November 5, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I do not intend saying anything today about the objection to the recitation from the Koran. I consider this a blessed moment for myself. There is one person who has objection, but he has now become our friend. He does object but very courteously. Once he has expressed it, he remains quiet. I do not even take his protest as a protest. Even if everybody starts protesting in such a manner, we are not going to lose anything. He himself has told me that once he has voiced his protest, he is absorbed in the prayer. So, it is a good thing in itself.

You have heard today a *bhajan* sung by a Harijan boy. You have already heard his sweet voice. He led the *Ramadhun* also very well. This is not an isolated experience for me. I live among the Harijans and in the course of my frequent travels round the country I have come in contact with the Harijans all over the country. If we do not already know somebody to be a Harijan and if no one introduces him as such, we can never make him out to be a Harijan. They have the same characteristics as other human beings. They have some bad qualities too, but these qualities are not peculiar to them. Other people have such bad qualities too. After all everyone has good as well as bad qualities. But I have noticed a special trait among the Harijans, and it is that, when a Harijan child is given even a little training in music, he makes great progress. Because we have oppressed them so far, if anyone talks to them with affection and teaches them something with love, they concentrate and work hard and make good progress. The well-to-do boys are conceited and knowing that their parents have a lot of money, do not concentrate on their work. But because the Harijans are generally poor and are treated as untouchables, when someone gives them a seat next to him and eats and drinks with them, they are overwhelmed. Not all Harijans take this attitude. I have also seen ungrateful Harijans who would not show any appreciation however much you did for them. But all Harijans are not the same. For hundreds of years they have been oppressed under the Hindu dharma. Still they have remained steadfast in their own religion and

compared to others, are found to be having greater qualities.

You may not have heard about a place called Pandharpur. It is a place for pilgrimage in Maharashtra. There are innumerable legends about the idols in that place, but I do not want to narrate them to you. The temple at Pandharpur was not open to Harijans. Sane Guruji[1] installed himself there and argued with the Trustees that when all other temples were thrown open to Harijans, there was no reason why the Pandharpur temple should not be opened to them. When his request was not granted he went on fast[2]. Sane Guruji is a great devotee, and how could the trustees therefore allow him to die? Sense dawned on them and they were moved to pity. But they told him they were helpless in the face of a number of technical difficulties, which had to be first removed. Then Mavalankar[3] joined him there and Sane Guruji was persuaded to give up his fast[4]. But he ended his fast on the condition that he would resume the fast if the temple was not opened to Harijans. Now I have received a telegram that the necessary Bill has been passed and that the temple has been opened to Harijans. The temple was willingly opened and people thronged there in thousands. There were no protests. There may have been some stray protests among those thousands. So, after all, that great temple of Pandharpur had to be opened to Harijans after so much effort. If all those excesses we have been perpetrating on the Harijans become a thing of the past the country would rise very high. But right now we are following a downward path because we are possessed by feelings of animosity. But it is my hope that India will not be forever possessed by such madness. The rest God alone knows.

I have been asked a few questions. Actually, these questions have been asked in separate letters but I have grouped them together. The first question is asked by a Muslim friend. As I said yesterday, nobody can be compelled to give up eating beef. We can only request him and convince him. The person concerned may be convinced and he may give it up. It would indeed be wonderful if he would give it up out of love. But there are a large number of Hindus who eat meat, it may be fish or some other meat. There are very few Hindus who do

[1] P. S. Sane; *vide* "Telegram to P. S. Sane", 1-5-1947, "Letter to P. S. Sane", 3-5-1947 and "Telegram to G. V. Mavalankar", 7-5-1947.

[2] On May 1, 1947

[3] G. V. Mavalankar (1888-1956); Speaker, Legislative Assembly, Bombay, 1935-45; Speaker, Lok Sabha, 1947-56

[4] On May 10, 1947

not take meat for religious reasons. Are you then going to compel them to give up eating meat and it they do not comply tell them that they should leave India, otherwise you would kill them? If this cannot be done, what wrong have the Muslims done? Why should they be compelled? I know there are some fanatical Hindus who are compelling them. I would call this an atrocity from which we should keep away.

The next question is raised by a Hindu friend. He writes to say that it is indeed true that all Hindus do not have in them the feeling of animosity. But he refers to my advice to the Muslims that they should not leave their houses, and, if needs be, die. He says that in spite of this wise talk of mine, wisdom does not dawn on the people. On the one hand, he says, I go on with my wise talk, and on the other hand the Muslims are harassed to such an extent that they cannot even come out of their houses. They are being threatened with death if they refuse to go away. If the Muslims come out of their own localities they are being killed. But how can they earn their living if they do not come out? Many of them are craftsmen and labourers. Take for instance a weaver. If the Hindus decide not to use the cloth woven by him and threaten to kill any Hindu insisting on using his cloth, then there is no point in allowing him to stay here. How can a labourer confine himself to his own locality? He would then be worse than a slave. In a poor locality how can he maintain his family if he cannot come out? No well-to-do Muslim stays in such poor localities and how can the poor people staying there maintain themselves if they cannot go out? It is absurd if on the one hand we harass them to such an extent and on the other people like me ask them to die.

We boast that everything is under control in Delhi and no big incidents take place. But I would say that even if there is a little trouble, it should hurt us. I would go on repeating that if such things continue to happen in India, with what face can we tell the Muslims that they should stay in India? If all the Muslims go away to Pakistan and all the Hindus and Sikhs come to India, then we would become permanent enemies. And then we would be fighting to our hearts' content. Let us save ourselves from such an absurd situation.

The third question is rather complicated. It is complicated and at the same time, it is not complicated. A Muslim friend writes that he and all Muslims will be happy if I answer the question.[1] But, no matter

[1] Here Brijkrishna Chandiwala pointed out that the question was put by a Hindu.

who has asked, it is a question all right. It is worth asking and also not worth asking. The question is: "You advised even the British to follow the path of non-violence when they were facing defeat. You advised them to give up arms and become non-violent. You could show that much courage there; then why don't you ask the Government of the country to fight a non-violent battle?" I have already stated that I am a nobody and no one listens to me. People say that the Sardar is my man and Panditji also is but mine and Maulana too is my man. They are all mine and also not mine. I have never abandoned my non-violence. I have been training myself in non-violence and it was acceptable till we attained independence. Now they wonder how they can rule with non-violence. And then there is the army and they have taken the help of the army. Now I am of no value at all. But why am I still with the people when I have lost my value? It is in the hope that they may perhaps listen to me. At least a few persons like you do come and quietly join me in the prayer. Others may follow your example and ultimately wisdom may dawn on everybody. Maybe my words will have some effect. It is only with that hope that I am continuing to be here and doing all these things. I do not know how long God wants me to work. He can stop me working this very day if He so wishes. I would die right here if He takes away my breath. Hence, I still stand by what I had conveyed to Hitler,[1] Mussolini,[2] Churchill[3] and the people of Japan.[4] I say the same thing to our Government. But in Kashmir Sheikh Abdullah is giving a brave fight—I have always admired bravery. It is true that he believes in violence but it requires courage and I do admire it. I admire even Subhas Babu not because I approved of his violence but because I could have never formed the Azad Hind Fauj. When I see something good and fail to give it due credit, I cannot be truly non-violent. I have no doubt that if Sheikh Abdullah fights it to the last and keeps the Hindus and the Sikhs with him, it is bound to have a great impact on the people here. However, if I could have my way of non-violence and everybody listened to me, we would not send our army as we are doing now. And if we did send, it would be a non-violent army. It

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Adolf Hitler", 23-7-1939 and "Letter to Adolf Hitler", 24-12-1940.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Presumably the reference is to Gandhiji's appeal *vide* "To Every Briton", 2-7-1940.

[4] *Vide* "To Every Japanese", 18-7-1942 .

doing now. And if we did send, it would be a non-violent army. It would be a non-violent fight if our people went there and gladly met their death at the hands of the Afridis. It would be a non-violent war because they would be dying remaining non-violent. Sheikh Abdullah too would tell the Afridis that they could take Srinagar but only when all the fighters were dead. But they are all fighting with arms and fighting bravely. They too can become non-violent—though it would not be the true form of non-violence. Supposing an army of a lakh of armed Afridis invaded the place and a handful of people offered armed resistance in order to protect the innocent children and women and died fighting, then they could be called no-violent in spite of their using arms. But to whom can I say this? Today poison has spread on all sides and people kill each other in a barbarous manner. In this situation even I am not able to teach this simple lesson in non-violence. In his time Mr. Churchill could not say, but today, Sheikh Abdullah and the army which has gone there can tell me that my non-violence has failed in Delhi where acts of barbarism are being committed and what they are doing is not barbaric. And I must admit that they have a right to say that. But they cannot tell me anything if I can convince all the Hindus, Muslims and the Sikhs of the Union about my non-violence. In that event, I could myself go with a non-violent army to Kashmir or Pakistan or any place, and then my work would become very easy. And then, the impact of non-violence would be so great that it would be worth seeing. But when can I hope for such an occasion? If you listen to my words and act in accordance with them, if my words have greater power and my heart greater strength, if my penance, however great it may be becomes still greater and every word of mine becomes so powerful that it grips the whole of India, my task will be accomplished. But today I am helpless. If you also pray to God that He may put strength into my words and take me further than where He has taken me and get still more work out of my body, then India may have greater impact on the world.

The delegates from Britain, China, the U. S. A. and Pakistan who came to attend the Asian Regional Conference[1] praised me for my work. But their praise hurts me. Today I have become bank- rupt. I have no say with my people today. What I said in the past has no value. I will be worthy of praise only when I can influence people. But

[1] Of the International Labour Organization which was held in Delhi. *Vide* also "Interview to Chinese Delegation", 5-11-1947.

that is not the situation today. I am merely expressing my helplessness before you.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 45-52

210. TWO AMERICAN FRIENDS' CONSOLATION

Of the many letters that come to me from American friends whom I do not know, the following extracts from two such friends are worth quoting:

> Your great distress due to the unhappy situation in your country demands that I intrude upon your contemplations of the painful events now taking place in India, to remind you that your beautiful words have taken root in all the corners of the earth.
>
> That you should feel a degree of disillusionment because of these sad happenings is natural. That that disillusionment should be measured and certainly not turn into discouragement is the purpose of my letter.
>
> Never does the seed turn directly into a beautiful fragrant flower without first going through certain phases of growth and development. And, if at some stage of its development—or growth— it falters, the presence of the gardener is more than ever required. In the complete absorption of the selfless task of nursing the ailing plant, the gardener perhaps cannot fully observe the growth of other plants in his garden, to join with him in his compassion for their stricken brother.
>
> I plead with you to give consideration to the countless numbers of people in all countries on earth, of all classes, races and creeds, who are now also praying for peace. These people, whose hopes you have so well expressed and who took fresh courage from these victories which you did achieve with the Science of Peace, must now join me in prayer that the Master bless you and preserve you to continue your noble work, so much of which is still to be done.

What they say may prove true and that the senseless bloodbath through which India is still passing, though the original fury seems to have abated, may be nothing unusual as history goes. What India is passing through must be regarded as unusual. If we grant that such liberty as India has gained was a tribute to non-violence as I have repeatedly said, non-violence of India's struggle was only in name, in reality it was passive resistance of the weak. The truth of the statement we see demonstrated by the happenings in India.

NEW DELHI, November 6, 1947

Harijan, 16-11-1947

211. "FOR MUSLIMS ONLY"[1]

A correspondent draws attention to the fact that whereas I have condemned the use at railway stations of different pots of water for Muslims and Hindus,[2] now there are compartments reserved for Muslims only and non-Muslims or Hindus. I do not know how far the evil has spread, but I do know that this distinction is a matter of great shame for the Hindus and the Sikhs. I suppose it became necessary for the railway administration to make the distinction for the simple protection of Muslim life. It is any day possible (the sooner the better) to stop the practice, by the Hindus and the Sikhs making up their minds never to dispose of Muslim fellow-passengers, as if they were chattels and to assure the railway administration that the offence will never be repeated. This can happen when there is an open confession of sin and return to sanity. This I say, irrespective of what has happened or may still happen in Pakistan.

NEW DELHI, November 6, 1947
Harijan, 16-11-1947

212. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

NEW DELHI
November 6, 1947[3]

MY DEAR C. R.,

You are right. Your air mail letter came into my hands this morning 4.20 a. m.

On the surface things are sufficiently nice but the under-current leaves little hope. I wonder if Bengal will hold out for all time. Let us hope. More when we meet, if we do.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Yes, Rama is our only refuge.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. II, p. 512

[1] This appeared under "Notes".
[2] *Vide* "Hindu and Mussalman Tea, etc.", 7-3-1946
[3] *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, however, gives the letter under "November 5".

213. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 6, 1947

If we neglect the charkha—that is, constructive activities like khadi, village industries, etc., after the attainment of freedom, we will be acting like a man who remembers God in sorrow and forgets Him when He showers happiness. If we neglect the charkha in free India, we will degenerate like the man who forgets God in his days of happiness. . . .[1]

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 208-9

214. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 6, 1947

. . .[2] has made great progress in cultivating faith in Ramanama. I am surrounded by fire on all sides and yet I am not consumed by it. This is so only because of Ramanama. I derive profound peace from it. There is no doubt that I have benefited a lot from Ramanama despite this intolerable cough. . . .[3]

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 209

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] Omissions as in the source
[3] *ibid*

215. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER[1]

November 6, 1947

Don't you know that I was a barrister and Ba was almost illiterate? And, yet, whatever progress I have been able to make in my life today is all due to my wife. You have not been able to mention any other defect in your wife. But your letter suggests that you may have fallen in love with some college girl. Is that so? To wed another girl because the first wife is illiterate is sheer tyranny perpetrated by boys over girls. Allow me to say that you are the person who is really uneducated. I have not the slightest hesitation in calling you uneducated in spite of your being literate. It is because you are not able to teach your wife who is willing to learn. I, therefore, pity you. Try to understand, if this will make you understand.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 209-10

216. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 6, 1947

Liberty does not mean license. If we work under somebody we appreciate his love for us. Didn't Lord Krishna become Arjuna's charioteer? If you can understand what I mean by this I have told you all that I wished to in these few words.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 208

217. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 6, 1947

You must have seen my yesterday's prayer speech in the newspapers. I have admitted there that these days nobody listens to me.[2] Nevertheless I am trying hard to have the controls removed. Let us see what God ordains. I feel God will take me away soon. Now there is no question of wishing to live for 125 years. I feel all the while that God will certainly give me [eternal] rest, in the near future. So much work piles up that it leaves me no breathing space during the day.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 209

[1] The addressee was a college student.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 5-11-1947.

218. DISCUSSION AT FOOD CONFERENCE[1]

November 6, 1947

RAJENDRA PRASAD: All of us have become nervous about what you have said as regards removing the [food] control. They are forced to listen [to you]. So it is better that you yourself say something.

GANDHIJI: In a way I feel happy that you people are quite shaken by what I have said. Since the Government is in your hands I will have to convince you. I have been holding this view for the last so many months. When I had gone to Bengal[2] it had been through a famine. I went and saw the Governor and went through all the reports and told him that the famine was man-made and not a natural calamity.[3]

When the War was going on many people had gone out of the country and a lot of foodgrain was exported. At that time it was British rule and I had called their strategy Martial Law.

Now the times have changed. Nobody will ask you to export food. We have enough stock with us and still if we import foodgrain, crores of rupees will go out of the country. Where is the money for that? You may call mine a voice in the wilderness, if you wish to. My stay in Delhi has had no effect. [Hindus and Muslims] still have ill feeling towards each other. Maulana Saheb who was till now our President and who is now a minister cannot go amongst the Hindus. If he takes courage in both hands and tries to do so, he will be killed. The good Muslims cannot live in peace and that is why I can do nothing for the Hindus in Pakistan. I am deliberately speaking about this unfortunate thing because these days nobody listens to me. If they do hear me, I dare say it would change the face of Hindustan.

I am sure you people do not presume that only you know everything and I know nothing. You will be sadly mistaken if you think that we who have elected you do not know anything. I get so many letters asking me to do away with rationing.

[1] The Conference, convened by Rajendra Prasad, was held on November 5 and 6 to discuss the recommendations of the Foodgrain Policy Committee. It was attended by Food Ministers from provinces and States and their representatives.

[2] In December 1945

[3] *Vide* "Silence Day Note to R. G. Casey", 3-12-1945 and "Statement to the United Press of India", 7-2-1946 and "Letter to R. G. Casey", 8-2-1946.

I did not know that the business magnates would agree with me in this. You should carry out the wishes of the people in an efficient manner. If I were to become a minister I would have to ascertain the views of everyone. What a pity that rice which used to cost Rs. 2 now costs Rs. 40. The farmers have foodgrain with them. If the control is removed they will automatically bring it out. I am myself a farmer. I have seen that farmers who grow foodgrain do not use their own produce for consumption. They have to eat the rotten stuff sent from the city. What sort of transaction is this? I did not know that Dr. Rammanohar Lohia[1] also agreed with me. We have to make the people strong by removing control. They are not going to die. Rajendra Babu should firmly tell them that they will in no way suffer by the removal of control. On the contrary it will benefit them. Of course I have grown old but not senile. My views are those of the man in the street.

When I was told that Ministers of all the provinces are in favour of rationing, I told Rajendra Babu that I would like to see them.

This year we have had good rainfall. Now there is no foreigner here any more. We have now to feed only our own people and we can produce foodgrain here. If you teach them how to grow food the stock would automatically increase. There was a campaign of "grow more food" during the War. Your agriculture department is rotten. It is not meant for people. Why do we import rice from Burma? Why are we worried when we cannot get rice from there? You should tell the people how much rice per acre is produced in different parts of the world and how it can be done here. Make the people industrious. Control is only to feed the lazy ones. I feel very much pained about this. If we give work to the people they will not indulge in killing. It is control that has made us idle and that is why we are indulging in this killing.

R. Travancore-Cochin does not produce enough foodgrain. It meets only two-third of the demand. They are apprehensive as to what they will do now. Earlier they were getting rice from Burma.

G. The land of Mysore, Travancore-Cochin is not such that nothing will grow there. We can send foodgrain from one province to

[1] (1910-67); one of the founders of the All-India Congress Socialist Party; Secretary of the Foreign Department, A. I. C. C., 1936-38; left Congress in 1948; General Secretary, Praja Socialist Party, 1953-54; member, Lok Sabha, 1963-67

another. For example there is a lot of cocoanut produced in Travancore-Cochin. And fish and bananas are also there. Still, they beg for things. This question only implies that the British rule was better because then we could get rice from Burma. Why should we become so helpless? We will die if we depend for food on others. If we lose courage people will become easy-going and listless. This old man is telling you that we should not become crippled like this. Prices are rising day by day. Why should it be so? A *vaid* writes to say that from among his patients many suffer ailments because of this rotten stuff. You are the ministers. For you this sort of stuff should be like poison. We will never overcome our difficulties if we do not remove the drawbacks that were there during the British rule.

A FRIEND: The poor will be ruined if control is removed. The advantage of rationing is that people will eat only as much as they should. Not a single grain will be wasted and if control is taken away people will start eating in large quantities resulting in diseases.

You have asked for blankets for the refugees. Earlier the price of a blanket was Rs. 8. Now it is Rs. 18. However much you advise, people have no honesty. They will only create more trouble. . . .[1]

G. I feel like laughing when I hear this. After all a man will eat only as much as he can. The fact that you are in favour of rationing shows that you have not taken into account the 40 crores. Rationing is meant for just a few. Later on people will turn into rebels and will kill the minister. They will not be afraid of him. Or else people should understand that now our ministers are of the people and from the people and there is no need to be afraid of them.

I did not know that a blanket now costs Rs. 18. But if it is so I will say that we are foolish and I don't blame myself for this. If I insist that the Government should arrange for everything, how much burden would it be for it? I have served the Government by [asking for blankets]. Now I will give cloth and cotton to people and they will themselves make quilts. In this way we can teach people to live honestly if prices go on rising.

The Nizam's State has almost become a foreign country. If all of you who have come from there unite, it will change the face of Hyderabad. I wish to work with the united intelligence of all.

Today you have power in your hands. This power is not of Wavell or the Viceroy, it is of the people and for the uplift of the

[1] Omission as in the source

poor. How could we work if we did not trust our people? What would be our fate then?

I talk of "free trade" after careful thinking. It would be a selfish policy if Pantji[1] were to say that he would not give good seeds to Bengal. The "free trade" is necessary for England but we cannot run our economy on their pattern.

It is our own helplessness if people of Madras say that they just cannot eat anything besides *idli* and cannot eat Bombay bread. We will have to get used to eating wheat, rice, *bajari* or *jawar*. We are not men if we cannot do without a particular thing. Man should not become a slave of anything.

ANNADA BABU[2]: Though we have food, it is not enough. Should we still remove control?

G. I do not believe that we do not have enough food. Yes, one province may be having more and the other less. If we collect whatever is produced in the whole country there is no scarcity of food. And only in this way we will be tested. Those who have become millionaires today owe it to the British and to their exploitation of the poor. We have become corrupt due to controls. Now we are independent. In our attempt to convert India into a paradise let us not turn it into a hell. No doubt we have achieved independence but we are suffering its ill-effects. There is peace in name but we are restless within. We should understand what our duty is. We will be saved only if we give up our selfish attitude.

ANNADA BABU: Suppose people die, won't it be the Government's responsibility?

G. Supposing there is no rice in Bengal, it will have to be taken from Assam. All the provinces of India have to live together or die together. We will be worthy of our independence only when we understand this. If the provinces start competing with each other we will be finished.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 212-7

[1] Govind Ballabh Pant (1887-1961); Premier of the U. P., 1937-39 and 1946-55; Home Minister, Government of India, 1955-61

[2] Annada Chowdhary

219. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

November 6, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I know the name of the writer but I do not intend to reveal his name or the contents of what is written in those two extracts[1]. I merely want to say that those articles have been written with the intention of serving Hinduism but they contain deliberate lies. When new points cannot be put forth, facts are presented in a distorted form. But I dare say that no purpose, certainly no religious purpose, can be served by resorting to such means. When accusations are based not on facts but on lies, they can do no harm to the person who is being attacked. I warn the public that they should not support such newspapers no matter how renowned the writers may be.

The Committee[2] of the non-officials appointed by the Food Minister has presented its report to him. I had a meeting with the provincial Ministers or their representatives who had come to Delhi to help Dr. Rajendra Prasad in reaching a decision on the recommendations of that Committee.[3] When I learnt about the meeting, I requested Dr. Rajendra Prasad to give me a chance to put my views before them so that I could dispel their doubts. For I am quite sure that I am absolutely right in my opinion that control on food should be removed. Dr. Rajendra Prasad readily agreed and I could place my views before those Ministers and their representatives. I was very happy to meet my old friends. I have been constantly complaining that no one takes me seriously in the matter of communal strife. But I am glad to say that the same is not the case with regard to my advice on the food question. Ever since I met Mr. Casey, the Governor or Bengal, I have been of the view that in India there is no need at all to have control on food or cloth. At that time I did not know whether I had any backing or not. But during the current discussion I was quite surprised to know that I had a very large support from the known and unknown members of the public. Among the countless letters I receive about the food problem, I do not

[1] The reference is to two newspaper cuttings sent by a friend.

[2] The Foodgrain Policy Committee

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

remember a single letter in which its writer has expressed an opinion other than mine. I do not know what Shri Ghanshyam Das Birla[1] and Lala Shriram[2] think about this. Nor do I know if the Socialist Party would support my view. Of course, when Dr. Rammanohar Lohia met me he fully agreed with me about removing food control. I do not hesitate to say that in the present situation of food scarcity through which the country is passing, Dr. Rajendra Prasad should be guided by one or more members of his Committee and not by his entire staff.

Let me now come to control on cloth. Even though I am more certain about removing control on cloth than control on food, I am afraid I do not have as much support in the removal of cloth-control as in the removal of food-control. The Congress had gladly supported my view that khadi could take the place of the mill-cloth, whether Indian or foreign. It had set up a Khadi Board under the late Jamnalalji[3] which was expanded into the All-India Spinners' Association after my release from the Yeravda Prison. India has a population of 400 million. Even after discounting the portion of the population of Pakistan, India would still have more than 300 million. India grows enough cotton for the entire population. There are sufficient number of persons to spin that cotton into yarn. And, there are more than sufficient number of weavers to weave cloth out of that yarn. Without a large investment we can easily manufacture in the country spinning-wheels, looms and other accessories that we need. All that we need is robust faith in ourselves and a determination to wear no other cloth but khadi. You know that we can make khadi of the fine quality with designs that would be far superior to those of the mills. Now that India is free from the foreign yoke, there will no longer be opposition to khadi which was characteristic of the representatives of foreign rulers. That is why I am surprised all the more that even when we are completely free to do what we want, we neither talk about khadi nor have faith in the potentialities of khadi. And, we think of nothing but mill-cloth to meet India's needs in this respect. I have not the slightest doubt that khadi economics can be the only true and sound economics for India.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 52-4

[1] Industrialists
[2] *ibid*
[3] Jamnalal Bajaj

220. INTERVIEW TO CHINESE DELEGATION

NEW DELHI,
November 6, 1947

Peace in Asia depends on India and China. These two countries are large. And if they build their edifices on the foundation of ahimsa they will become known among the great countries of the world. When I had met Chiang Kaishek[1] I told him the same thing.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 218

221. OUTSIDE HIS FIELD[2]

Major-General Cariappa is reported to have said as follows:

Non-violence is of no use under the present circumstances in India and only a strong army can make India one of the greatest nations in the world.

I fear, like many experts, General Cariappa has gone beyond his depth and has been unwittingly betrayed into a serious misconception of ahimsa, of whose working in the nature of things, he can only have a very superficial knowledge. By reason of lifelong practice of ahimsa, I claim to be an expert in it, though very imperfect. Speaking in absolute terms, the more I practise it the clearer I see how far I am from the full expression of ahimsa in my life. It is his ignorance of this, the greatest duty of man in the world, which makes him say that in this age non-violence has little scope in the face of violence, whereas I make bold to say that in this age of the atom bomb, unadulterated non-violence is the only force that can confound all the tricks put together of violence. It would have become the General, unaided as he can only now be, by his British teachers of military science and practice not to have gone out of his depth. Generals greater than General Cariappa have been wise and humble enough frankly to make the admission that they can have no right to speak of the possibilities of the force of ahimsa. We are witnessing the tragic insolvency of military science and practice in its own home. Should a bankrupt, who has been by the gamble in the share-market, sing the praise of that particular form of gambling?

NEW DELHI, November 7, 1947

Harijan, 16-11-1947

[1] On February 18, 1942

[2] This appeared under "Notes".

222. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 7, 1947

I am trying to sail on my own raft of dried gourd. I shall either swim or sink. There is no middle path in this religious sacrifice.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 220

223. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 7, 1947

. . .[1] Yesterday I talked at length on [food] control at the Ministers' meeting. I hope I have satisfied all of them. Let us wait and watch. My only prayer is: May God grant good sense to everyone.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 220

224. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 7, 1947

These days I get so exhausted that at night I am totally lost to the world. The work goes on increasing and there is a great deal of mental exhaustion. According to me if Ramanama is enshrined in my heart I will not feel mentally exhausted. It has such miraculous power.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 220

[1] Omission as in the source

225. MESSAGE TO MALAYA[1]

November 7, 1947

The attainment of freedom by India has a unique importance in the annals of world history. Let Asia benefit from it. All neighbouring countries should work unitedly rather than separately. It is my earnest prayer and wish that God may grant them the strength to do this.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 222-3

226. TALK WITH INDONESIAN VISITORS

NEW DELHI,
November 7, 1947

A VISITOR: You say that you see darkness all around you, and there is such fraternal strife going on in the country. And yet you look so cheerful. Whence do you derive such strange power? What is it that sustains you Bapuji?

I look after my health with care, because I believe that my ahimsa can be tested only when confronted by violence. I have decided to live cheerfully even in this atmosphere of darkness and inhumanity. Moreover, I consider no one as my enemy. I am endeavouring to serve the whole of Creation, for I consider it a part of God and I feel that serving mankind is the same as serving God. This thought lends me unfailing power. It is this power that sustains me. I also resort to certain outward remedies. You see that even while guests such as you are visiting here I lie with a mud-pack on me. Do please forgive me my lack of manners. But I have no other time to spare. And I could not help having you just at this time.

Oh! please why do you say that? It is such a privilege to have ten minutes with such a great man. If you do not mind, perhaps you will tell me why you use a mud-pack.

Oh! to enumerate the virtues of mud is like enumerating the virtues of one's mother. I got rid of chronic constipation with the use

[1] This was given to a Malayan representative who met Gandhiji in the afternoon.

of mud. Mud costs nothing and yet I have used it in cases of typhoid, pneumonia, blood-pressure, many diseases of women and skin diseases. In every case the experiment was successful.

The visitor said he would also try it. As the visitors rose, they thanked Gandhiji for sparing his valuable time for them.

The pleasure is mutual. I have also been very happy to meet you. If you have occasion to come this way and I am still alive, do come and see me. I am neither a great saint nor a Mahatma such as you describe me. I am a humble servant. I am only human as you are.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 223-4

227. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
November 7, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

It pains me to know that the Muslims of Tihar[1] and the neighbouring areas have to suffer unnecessary hardships. Many of them are landowners but are unable to till their land for fear of harassment. They have sold away their cattle, ploughs and other implements. They are being protected by the army.[2] More than two thousand of those distressed people had gathered round me. Through their leader they conveyed to me their desire to go to Pakistan, because life had become impossible for them here. They said that a large number of their friends and relatives had already gone to Pakistan. Hence, it would be a mercy if the Government could arrange to send them to Lahore. They said they had nothing to complain against the army. However, I would not like to devote the whole time in giving an account of that meeting. I told those people that I had no power in my hands, but I would gladly convey their message to the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister, who is also the Home Minister.

[1] Gandhiji had visited Tihar village at 4 p. m. and met the Muslims there.

[2] While Gandhiji was returning to Delhi, his car was stopped by a number of Indian soldiers who saluted him and assured him that they were providing full protection to those in distress. Gandhiji smiled and said that providing protection and kindness without distinction of caste or creed was the attribute of a soldier.

I am told that the refugees have become a problem in Delhi and that because they have suffered atrocities in Pakistan, they think they have special privileges. When they go to buy things in the market they expect the shopkeeper to give them what they want without charging them anything or at a considerably reduced rate. At times, a single person buys things worth hundreds of rupees. Some refugees expect the tongawallahs to give them free rides or charge a very nominal fare. If this report is true, it is my duty to say that the refugees have failed to learn the lesson that sufferers generally learn through hardships. Thereby they are harming themselves and the country and making the already complicated problem more complicated. If they continue to behave like this, they are sure to lose the sympathy of the Delhi traders.

At the same time, I cannot understand how the refugees who have come from Pakistan after losing everything, can buy things worth hundreds of rupees. I would also wish that except on rare and necessary occasions, the refugees should not use anything other than their God given feet for moving about. Apart from this, I am also told that ever since lakhs of refugees started coming to Delhi, there has been a steep rise in the revenue derived from spirituous liquor. As a matter of fact, those people should realize that when the Central and the Provincial Governments accede to the demands of the Congress, neither hard liquor nor other intoxicants like opium and hemp would be available in the Indian Union. The same situation can be created in Pakistan too, because our Muslim friends would not need a Congress resolution to declare total prohibition. Can the refugees, who have undergone so many hardships, not restrain themselves from taking intoxicants and indulging in luxuries? I hope the refugee men and women will take the advice I have given them through my earlier speeches that wherever they go, the refugees should mix with the people like sugar in milk, and make a firm resolve not to be a burden on them. Let the rich and the poor refugees live in the same camps and work in full co-operation, so that they can become ideal and self-supporting citizens.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—I, pp. 55-7

228. ACT AS YOU THINK

From a letter received by Rajkumari from Dr. Maude Royden and which she has given to me for reading, I have extracted the following relevant passages:

> I marvel that the best Christian in the world should not be a Christian! I have been reading these last two or three weeks a new biography of Albert Schweitzer[1] and there again I have this same paradox. I don't know if the name of Schweitzer is known in India but to my mind he is perhaps alone in the world in his greatness. . . . And as you may perhaps know, Schweitzer is regarded with suspicion by the "orthodox" because it is held that he has not a sufficiently exalted view of our Saviour. And yet there is not a Christian in the entire world who has followed Christ with the same heroic faith and utterly selfless devotion. And when I read of his philosophy, his "reverence for life", and how he constantly refers himself to Jesus of Nazareth, I know that no one has ever exalted Jesus to such a height in the minds of those who read Schweitzer. . . . He differs from most philosophers only in the fact that he must live all that he thinks, writes or says. I realize now why his thought strikes one as having such stark and terrifying honesty. If you are engaged in thinking without thought of action, it is easy to think all sorts of untrue things. If you know that you are going to live everything that you think, with what a searching eye and with what profound sincerity you are going to think!

NEW DELHI, November 8, 1947

Harijan, 23-11-1947

[1] (1875-1965); philosopher, theologian, musician and doctor; devoted his life to missionary work in Africa; was awarded Nobel Peace Prize in 1952

229. LETTER TO K. C. NEOGY

BIRLA HOUSE,
NEW DELHI,
November 8, 1947

DEAR NEOGY,

I am sorry that we have not met after your appointment as Minister of Refugees and Rehabilitation.

You will excuse me if I draw you attention to the complaints that have come under my notice. One of them is that people have no ready access to you and when they do succeed in getting an audience of a few moments, they are summarily dismissed with a rebuff. What they expect is a patient hearing. Not all the refugees belong to the poor class. Some of them are professional men. But I contend that rich and poor, all alike, are entitled to perfect courtesy and patient hearing from their Ministers. These refugees are ill-covered, illfed, in some cases wander about aimlessly, even going without food. I am not giving you all the numerous complaints that have been daily pouring into my ears. I have ventured simply to give you a few samples from which you may infer the rest. If there is, in your opinion, nothing whatsoever in these complaints, you will dismiss the letter from your consideration, forgiving me at the same time for intruding upon your valuable time. I know you have been called to an office which must occupy all your attention.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI K. C. NEOGY
NO. 5 HASTINGS ROAD
NEW DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

230. A LETTER

November 8, 1947

Under the present circumstances as long as Pakistan does not do what she says I certainly cannot advise the refugees to return to Pakistan. I shall leave Delhi only when something tangible is achieved here.

I am hoping that controls by and large will be removed. If that happens I have no doubt that it will produce a salutary effect among the people.

It is God's grace that my body is working beyond its strength.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 229

231. A LETTER

November 8, 1947

We have certainly no right to advise a neighbour to clean his house as long as our own house is not clean. I am a Hindu by birth and by practice. It is my duty to bring glory to this religion, and my religion is all-embracing.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 230

232. A TALK[1]

NEW DELHI,
November 8, 1947

Nature cure means taking advantage of what nature has given us. Cures may be brought about through sun-bath, fresh air, mud and water therapy and the inclusion of fruit and leafy vegetables in the diet and suitable exercises. That is why I was attracted to this. Had nature-cure experiment been carried on in Uruli under my

[1] With two visitors who were in favour of using modern electrical appliances in nature cure

supervision I would have ensured its complete success. But today I have become ineffective. You see what even men like General Cariappa are saying?[1] Responsible people have no sense of responsibility left. Nevertheless I still persevere in my effort to achieve the state of a *sthitaprajna*, that is to say, mental equipoise. I have made considerable progress in this direction and have already arrived at the conclusion that Ramanama is the cure for all ailments and it is my hope that when I die I shall die with Ramanama in my heart. This faith becomes stronger in me each day. You see there was a time when even my opponents took my guidance. Today, let alone my being assailed by my opponents, even my co-workers, friends and close relatives who are like sons to me, do not see eye to eye with me. Still, I am mentally in such excellent health that it surprises me that with the flames raging around me I remain untouched by their heat or sparks. The reason for this is that God is filling me with strength and I am sustained by Ramanama. Just as men derive vigour and vitality from the daily nourishment and sleep I derive my strength from Rama.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 228-9

233. MESSAGE FOR CITIZENS OF CHANDRANAGORE[2]

NEW DELHI,
November 8, 1947

I hope the news that has reached me is not true. I believe the French are a brave and great nation and would not like to suppress or enslave any people whether black or white.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 232

[1] *Vide* "Outside his Field", 7-11-1947.

[2] Arunanshu from Chandranagore, met Gandhiji and informed him that Gandhiji's statement regarding Chandranagore, *vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 17-8-1947, was being misused by the authorities to suppress the satyagraha there and that assistance from the French Government was being sought.

234. INTERVIEW TO BURMESE DELEGATION[1]

November 8, 1947

Gandhiji paid credit to Burmese people as they were able to declare independence, which was "probably a stage higher than in India".[2] He also referred in the course of the talks to Mr. Churchill's recent speech and advised

the people, "to profit by it and without being angry to so conduct their affairs as to falsify Mr. Churchill's forebodings"[3]. Gandhiji said:

I have been to Burma thrice[4] and I am not a stranger to Burmans. I was struck by the customs of the Burmese people and their hospitality.

Gandhiji was sorry that unrest had broken out in Burma.

The Bombay Chronicle, 10-11-1947

[1] The members of the Burmese delegation to the Asian Regional Conference of the International Labour Organization met Gandhiji in the afternoon. The delegation was led by U Win, High Commissioner for Burma in India.

[2] The Burmese Constituent Assembly, elected in April 1947, had resolved in favour of complete independence. A treaty of agreement was signed between Britain and Burma in London on October 17, 1947, under which Burma was to leave the Commonwealth and become a sovereign republic in January 1948. The Burma Independence Bill was passed by the House of Commons on November 14, 1947.

[3] Winston Churchill, Leader of the Conservative Opposition, announcing his party's decision to vote against the Burma Independence Bill had declared in the House of Commons on November 5, that "the bloody welter" which had already begun in India would soon begin in Burma and said "these horrors and disasters must for ever haunt the consciences of the principal actors in this tragedy."

[4] In January-February 1902, March 1915 and March 1929. The source however has "four times".

235. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
November 8, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Will you fulfil the primary condition that you will not harbour any feeling of anger or revenge against the persons who are raising the objection and sit in silence and concentration till the end of the prayer?[1]

I have received a letter from a Sikh friend. He has said that he always attends the prayer meeting and likes doing so. He appreciates the spirit of tolerance in the prayer, especially my comments about the *Granthsaheb*, *Sukhmani*[2], *Japji*, etc. He writes to say that if I select some portions from the Sikh scriptures included in the *Bhajanavali* and have a daily recitation of them during the prayer, it will have a great effect on the Sikhs. He feels that he can say this on behalf of the entire Sikh community. He says that he is ready to read out those selected passages to me. I agree with his suggestion. But I would take a decision only after I have heard some *bhajans* from that friend. He must get an appointment from Brajkishan for that purpose.

I had once stated that cotton, calico, needles, etc., should be made available to the refugees so that they can make their own quilts.[3] Thereby we can save millions of rupees and the refugees can easily have something to cover themselves. In response to my appeal the cotton merchants of Bombay have written to me that they are ready to supply these items. In this way, the refugees will rise in their own eyes and will learn the first lesson of healthy co-operation. The number of textile mills in Delhi itself is by no means small. There are quite a few mills in the city. Still, I welcome this gift from Bombay, because I do not want to place any unnecessary burden on voluntary donors. The larger the number of persons willing to give charity, the better will it be for the refugees and the country. Hence, I hope that the cotton merchants of Bombay would quickly send as many bales as they can.

[1] The people, including four objectors, unanimously assured Gandhiji that they would observe silence and the prayer was held without any obstruction.

[2] A part of the *Granthsaheb*

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 12-10-1947.

Such co-operation from the rich would lessen the burden of the Government. Now that we are a free nation, every individual can willingly participate in the activities of the Government of the country, provided he fulfils his duties by realizing the full responsibilities of the citizen of an independent country.

I have no doubt that when the bales of cotton arrive I will be able to persuade the mill-owners to supply enough chintz for quilts. The talk about bales of cotton reminds me of cloth-control. In my opinion, it is possible and also easy for the people of India to manufacture enough khadi by hand. The only condition is that sufficient cotton should be available in the country. I do not know if there ever was a famine of cotton in the country. We can never have scarcity of cotton, because we always produce more cotton than the country needs. Tens of thousands of bales of cotton are being exported from the country. Still, there is never a shortage of cotton for the textile mills of the country. I have already drawn your attention to the fact that it is possible to have within the country all the implements necessary for carding, spinning and weaving by hand. At the same time, there are also people in large numbers wanting to work. Hence, I can only say that it is nothing but inertia which makes people think that there is scarcity of cloth in the country. Today nobody in the country wants cloth-control—neither the mills, nor the mill-hands nor the buying public. Controls are increasing the band of lazy people and thus ruining the country. Such people, for want of any work, are a constant source of mischief.

If the refugees are determined to occupy themselves in useful work, they would first make their own quilts, and then all—women and men—would spend their time in ginning, carding, spinning, weaving, etc. The energy generated by the co-operative effort of so many lakhs of refugees would electrify the country. They would inspire the people to spend all their spare time in growing more food and producing khadi in their own homes. Let it be remembered that if the cotton, instead of being packed into bales, is directly made available to the spinners one process would be saved. The cotton would not be damaged, carding would become easy and the seeds would be saved for the villages.

Lady Mountbatten had come to meet me. She has become an

angel of mercy. She keeps visiting both the Dominions,[1] meets the refugees in different camps, looks up the sick and distressed people and tries to console them as much as she can. When she paid a visit to the Kurukshetra camp, people asked her when I was expected to go there. All of them were so keen to see me that Lady Mountbatten was convinced that I should undoubtedly go there. I assured her that she was justified in anticipating my visit. To tell you the truth, I have made arrangements to visit Panipat, where both the Hindus and the Muslims are anxious to see me. I had decided to combine the visits to Kurukshetra and Panipat. But now I have come to know that I cannot combine the two. Hence, it has become necessary to postpone my visit to Kurukshetra until after the forthcoming meeting of the A. I. C. C.[2] Nonetheless, it has been suggested that even though it is difficult to arrange for loudspeakers in a sprawling camp like Kurukshetra, it should not be difficult to talk to them over the radio, provided the necessary speakers are installed in the camp. If such an arrangement is made, I would be able to speak to them on Tuesday or Wednesdayand would go and see them later. In the mean time, I hope to complete my visit to the Panipat camp.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 57-60

[1] As Chairman of the United Council for Relief and Welfare
[2] Scheduled to be held on November 15 and 16

236. HARIJANS IN RATLAM

The following is the text[1] of the Ratlam Proclamation to which I referred in one of my postprayer speeches.[2] It was issued on Vijayadashami day, i.e., the 2nd September,[3] 1947.

1. All State temples be thrown open to Harijans for *darshan* and *pooja* just as they are open to any one of my caste Hindu subjects.

2. All existing public wells and wells constructed by the State hereinafter, tanks, water taps, etc., shall be invariably open to Harijans.

3. All public places such as dharmashalas, hotels, restaurants, shops, theatres, cinema houses which have not been for the exclusive use of any one section of the community before the passing of this Order shall be thrown open to Harijans and they shall be given the same facility or service as any other caste Hindu is given. They are hereby allowed to make use of public conveyances licensed by Government or the Municipality.

4. Harijans shall have unrestricted admission to State educational institutions and no tuition fees shall be charged from them.

5. There shall be no restriction in the matter of recruitment of Harijans to State services.

6. All State public offices, courts, hospitals and other State buildings are open to Harijans for entry.

7. There shall be no restriction on the wearing of ornaments and good clothes, the taking out of processions and performance of ceremonies by Harijans.

8. There shall be no restriction on Harijans owning lands and houses in any part of towns and villages of the State.

Harijan, 9-11-1947

[1] Of which only extracts are reproduced here
[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 26-10-1947.
[3] Obviously a slip. Vijayadashami fell on October 24.

237. FUTILITY OF ARMS

Advocate [T. R.] Venkatarama Shastri of Madras sends me some relevant verses from the *Mahabharata* with his brief comment. They are reproduced below with his comment and English translation. I have omitted from the comment what was meant only for me.

> Having won the great Mahabharata War and attained his supreme end, Yudhishthira (धर्मात्मा), deeply affected by the death of those near and dear and by the general havoc and destruction wrought by force of arms, reflected thus:
>
> आत्मानमात्मना हत्वा किं धर्मफलमाप्नुमः॥
> धिगस्तु क्षात्रमाचारं धिगस्तु बलमौरसम्।
> धिगस्तु चार्थं येनेमाम् आपदं गमिता वयम्॥
> साधु क्षमा दमः शौचम् अविरोधो विमत्सरः।
> अहिंसा सत्यवचनं नित्यानि वनचारिणाम॥
> वयं तु लोभान्मोहाच्च दंभं मानं च संश्रिताः।
> इमामवस्थां संप्राप्ताः राज्यक्लेशबुभुक्षया॥
>
> "Having destroyed ourselves by our own hands, what righteous result can we obtain?
>
> Fie upon military practice,
>
> Fie upon physical force,
>
> Fie upon the purpose in pursuit of which we have been led into this calamity.
>
> Good is forgiveness, self-restraint, clean life, no enmity, no quarrel, ahimsa and true speech—virtues obligatory to forest-dwellers (retired from life's conflicts).
>
> But we in our greed and folly inspired by vanity and pride, have landed ourselves in this situation, in our desire to enjoy a kingdom's sorrowful burden."
>
> Thus wailed Yudhishthira (firm-in-battle) who was also Dharmaputra (son of righteousness).
>
> The ideal of realizing both freedom and justice under equal laws is the ideal for countries like India—and that is, or should be, the ideal of the world.

NEW DELHI, November 9, 1947
Harijan, 9-11-1947

238. LETTER TO DEVPRAKASH NAYYAR

NEW DELHI,
November 5/9, 1947

CHI. DEV,

I have your letter. I have sent the letter for Sushila to Wardha. She will return from there after the 10th instant. She might come even earlier. Chand[1] will accompany her. It will be only good if you turn into the type of soldier you write about. Then all your anguish will vanish. You did well in not going to Wardha. Now even Dr. Gilder and Dr. Jivaraj Mehta. . . .

I had to leave the letter unfinished as some work had cropped up. I am now completing it on the 9th. I have seen the X-ray too. All say that there is nothing the matter with the heart. There is a telegram now from Sushila to send over Chand's mother. Nobody here knows where her mother has gone. She did not leave any address with me while leaving. Chand stayed on because Sushila has stayed on. I do not know the reason behind it. Whatever it be, there is no cause for worry.

I think I have answered the rest of the points. I have had a talk with Anugrahababu too.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi original. Documents relating to Gandhiji. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Chandrani, whom the addressee married later

239. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

BIRLA HOUSE,
NEW DELHI,
November 9, 1947

DEAR LORD MOUNTBATTEN,

This little thing[1] is made out of doubled yarn of my own spinning. The knitting was done by a Punjabi girl who was trained by Abha's husband, my grandson.[2] Lady Mountbatten knows Abha. Please give the bride[3] and the bridegroom[4] this with my blessings, with the wish that they would have a long and happy life of service of men.[5]

I hope you will have a happy time and safe return according to your time-table.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. II, p. 514

[1] A table-cloth

[2] Kanu Gandhi

[3] Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, nephew of Lord Mountbatten

[4] *Ibid*

[5] Lord and Lady Mountbatten personally delivered the gift to Princess Elizabeth. It was prominently exhibited among the wedding gifts at St. James'. On his return, Lord Mountbatten conveyed to Gandhiji a personal message of appreciation and thanks from the Princess and the Prince consort. The Princess, Mountbatten reported, was extremely touched that Gandhiji should have made this very fine gesture to them and she said that she always intended to keep it in a place of safety as a precious souvenir and not to use it as a tea-cloth as she valued its historic association.

240. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

November 9, 1947

DEAR DR. ROY,

Nowsher Ali[1] should not have convened his conference at this juncture. He should have awaited the result of S[uhrawardy]'s step.[2] Having called it, let him not criticize the M[uslim] Leaguers but adopt a constructive line. My suggestion to the nationalists to join the League was meant to strengthen them. If they could not be accepted as Congressmen they could not have joined.

I have read your American thesis. It is good. Correctly represents my views to the extent that it goes into them. You can now enforce the law of love in your dealings with the Muslim friends including S[uhrawardy] and guide them along the right path.

As to the zonal Congress branches, await the result of the A. I. C. C. meeting. It has to give guidance.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The former Speaker of the Bengal Legislative Assembly. He had convened a conference of the Nationalist Muslims at Calcutta on November 9, which called upon the Muslims to join the Congress and make it stronger in order to keep reactionary forces down. It characterized the move of H. S. Suhrawardy as "disruptive".

[2] H. S. Suhrawardy had convened a conference of Muslims in the Indian Union at Calcutta on November 9 and 10. It adopted a resolution that the solidarity of Muslims should not be impaired so that they might work as a whole for the welfare of the State to which they belonged as well as safeguard their rights and liberties. It urged upon the Governments of both the Dominions to settle their differences by peaceful methods and demanded that both the Governments should guarantee fullest protection to the minorities.

241. LETTER TO HARJIVAN KOTAK

NEW DELHI,
November 9, 1947

CHI. HARJIVAN,

I was very glad to see your handwriting. I learn through friends all about you from time to time. What is joy or grief to one who knows that life and death are one and the same thing? I am glad about your decision. Ramanama alone is the unfailing remedy. All else is vain effort. Fasting is an aid to Ramanama. Live on without worry or pass out free of care.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

242. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER[1]

November 9, 1947

It seems the Kathiawar issue is becoming more and more complicated. I just cannot get out of this place. I sometimes feel that a new and unique India may be born out of this bloodshed that is increasing day by day, because the *Gita* says, "For whenever Right declines and Wrong prevails, then O Bharata, I come to birth".[2] This verse gives me a lot of consolation.

Still, how strange it is that I learn from a leader of Kathiawar, who is a votary of non-violence and can be counted among its ardent followers, that it is not possible to do without arms in a small State like Junagadh.[3]

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 237

[1] The English original is not available.

[2] *Bhagavadgita*, iv, 7

[3] The Nawab of Junagadh after consenting to accede to India, revoked his decision, fled to Pakistan and executed an Instrument of Accession on September 15 whereby the State was declared to have acceded to Pakistan. The Government of India refused to accept the accession of Junagadh to Pakistan in the circumstances in which it was made.

The Junagadh State subjects, resident in Bombay, at a meeting held on September 25, challenged the decision of the Nawab of Junagadh and set up a Provisional Government led by Shamaldas Gandhi. The Provisional Government was empowered to take all steps necessary for Junagadh's formal accession to India.

243. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 9, 1947

I appreciate generosity. But if generosity admits of no restraints it leads to extravagance. Extravagance is a vice.

I have endless work here. I get utterly exhausted by the end of the day. There is a constant stream of visitors. How can I refuse to listen to their sorrows? Very often my own grief becomes overwhelming. Is this what our truth and non-violence have come to? Still, I retain my faith. That is why I derive solace from the dictum that "adversity is the mother of progress".

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 239

244. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 9, 1947

I shudder at the thought of the condition of thousands of refugees in the severe cold here. It shows how much poison there is in us. Death is bound to overtake us who have been born. What can be better for us than to die at the hands of our own brothers? I cannot convince the people of this. It would be enough if I could demonstrate it in my own life.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 240

245. LETTER TO MAHESH DUTT MISHRA

November 9, 1947

CHI. MAHESH,

I have your letter. If you can be spared from there, come over here. I am so busy that I do not know how much time I can give you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6724. Also C. W. 4468. Courtesy: Mahesh Dutt Mishra

246. SILENCE-DAY NOTE

November 9, 1947

I see that the people of India are terror-stricken. Out of sheer fright they do not come out with the truth. I had the same experience in Noakhali. Similarly women in the Punjab who have been abducted are also terrorstricken. Mridulabehn[1] is working hard for them. Let us see what can be done. I will go to Panipat tomorrow. Maulana Saheb and Rajkumari are accompanying me. . . .[2]

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 239-40

[1] Daughter of Ambalal Sarabhai
[2] Omission as in the source

247. NOTE TO U.P. MUSLIM LEAGUE MEMBERS[1]

November 9, 1947

I shall certainly make inquiries. Pantji[2] has promised that the Government would make every effort to protect each and every Muslim in the U.P. But shall I venture a suggestion? If you desire complete protection for Muslims and wish to serve your brethren, you should show sympathy towards the Hindus who have come from Pakistan. You should serve them in their camps and convince them that you are their brothers. I must say that I have not yet come across a single Muslim who would do this. We shall discuss this matter at leisure some other time.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 240

248. NOTE TO MANU GANDHI

November 9, 1947

We will be saved a lot of botheration if we cease to think of how we appear to others and concentrate on what is beneficial to us. Knowingly or unknowingly, we resort to many artificial aids to please or appear good to others. As a result, we become miserable. The same thing applies to this hat.[3] If I care for appearances, I will have to face the sun and damage my health for no reason. Do you understand this? Well, I have taught you a good lesson after many days. If we analyse it minutely, our barbaric behaviour and Hindu-Muslim tension are also due to our preoccupation with how we appear to others. A man's thoughts play a major role in his life. That is why, as you also know, the proverb says: "As one's food, so one's belching; as one's thoughts, so one's deeds. . . ."[4]

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 241

[1] The visitors had complained that adequate protection was not being provided to the Muslims in the U. P.

[2] The source has "Panditji".

[3] Manu Gandhi had joked about the funny appearance of Gandhiji when he wore a Noakhali hat to protect himself from the sun.

[4] Gandhiji stopped here as Jawaharlal Nehru came to see him.

249. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

[*November 9, 1947*][1]

He defended himself through and through. He was docile but claimed utter innocence of all wrongdoing.

From the original: C. W. 4196. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7832

250. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

NEW DELHI,
November 9, 1947

I regret that as I have to go to Panipat tomorrow, I had to take silence early today so as to be able to speak to the Hindus and the Muslims of Panipat on reaching there. I hope to return to Delhi in time for the prayer tomorrow evening when I shall be able to speak. The newspapers wrongly report that I am going to Kurukshetra tomorrow. I said definitely that I did intend to go to the Kurukshetra camp though not before the conclusion of the forthcoming A. I. C. C. meeting. I expect to speak to them through the radio probably on Wednesday at a time to be announced in due course.

Diwali will be on us in a few days. A sister who is herself a refugee writes:[3]

Whilst I admire this sister and others like her, I cannot help saying that she and those who think like her are wrong. It is well known that a family which is overtaken by sorrow abstains from participation in festivities according to capacity. It is an illustration of the doctrine of oneness on a very limited scale. Break through the crust of limitation and India becomes one family. If all limitations vanish, the whole world becomes one family, which it really is. Not to cross these bars is to become callous to all fine feelings which make a man. We must not be self-centred or being falsely sentimental ignore

[1] The note is written on the back of a telegram dated November 8, 1947. Gandhiji observed silence on November 9.

[2] Since Gandhiji was observing silence, his written speech was read out after the prayers.

[3] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had suggested that forgetting the sorrows of the past, the coming Diwali, being the first in independent India, should be celebrated by all.

facts. My advice to abstain from the rejoicings[1] is broadbased on many solid considerations. The refugee problem is there, affecting lakhs of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. There is as well want (albeit man-made) of food and clothing. The deeper cause is dishonesty of the many who can mould public opinion, obstinate refusal of sufferers to learn from their sufferings and extensive inhumanity of man to man. I can see in this misery no cause for joy. A resolute and wise refusal to take part in festivities will be an incentive to introspection and self-purification. Let us not do anything which will throw away a blessing which has been won after hard toil and tribulation.

I must now refer to a visit of friends from French India[2] during the week. They complained that what I had said regarding what was claimed to be a satyagraha in Chandranagore,[3] was misused to suppress the aspirations of the people in French India for the fullest measure of autonomy under the Indian Union, whilst retaining at the same time, the wholesome influence of French culture. They also told me that, as under the British Government, there were, in French India, those who might be likened to fifth-columnists, who, in order to serve their selfish purpose, co-operated with the French authorities who, in their turn, were aiming at suppressing the natural aspirations of the inhabitants of French India. I would be very sorry indeed if the account given by the visitors from French India were accurate. Anyway, my opinion is quite emphatic. It is not possible for the inhabitants of these small foreign settlements[4] to remain under servility in the face of the millions of their countrymen who have become free from the British rule. I am surprised that my friendly act towards Chandranagore could be distorted by anyone to suggest that I could ever countenance an inferior status in the little foreign settlements in India. I hope, therefore, that the information given to me has no foundation in fact, and that the great French nation would never identify itself with the suppression of people, whether black or brown, in India or elsewhere.

Harijan, 16-11-1947

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 9-8-1947.
[2] *Vide* "Message for Citizens of Chandranagore", 8-11-1947.
[3] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 17-8-1947.
[4] *Viz.*, Goa, Daman, Diu, Mahe, Pondicherry and Chandranagore

251. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

NEW DELHI,
November 10, 1947

MY DEAR KU.[1],

You mean meeting in New Delhi if I am alive till then. In N. D., I cannot think of any other item than the policy of the A. I. V. I. A. in view of the existing situation.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

252. NOTE TO MANU GANDHI

November 10, 1947

Only on condition that you will not over-exert yourself.[2] Of course I would very much like you to do so. Your handwriting will improve and my slips if any can also be corrected. But bear in mind that if you over-exert yourself in order to fulfil your desire I will order you to give it up. I see violence in doing a thing like that. The work which becomes a burden or for which we have to overstrain ourselves at the cost of our health amounts to physical violence. If that happens it is better to give it up.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 244

[1] Secretary, All-India Village Industries Association

[2] The addressee had expressed the wish to keep with herself the original writings in Gandhiji's hand and send the copies made by her to the persons concerned.

253. A LETTER

November 10, 1947

While each province develops and its regional language becomes the medium of instruction, each province will still remain an indivisible part of India. Since there will be crores of students to derive the benefit of education and as they look upon the whole of India as their motherland, they will need a language commonly understood by students from all provinces. In addition to the regional language, there will be the need for a language which has wide currency. Hindi or Hindustani alone can play this role. Hence all students should learn it in both the scripts as a compulsory second-language.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 245

254. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
November 10, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

If we too become servants of God alone like Mirabai, all our troubles would be over.[1] You would realize the significance of this after you have heard what I am going to say. You must have read about Junagadh in the newspapers.[2] I am satisfied after receiving two telegrams from Rajkot that the news published in the Press is absolutely correct. The Prime Minister of Junagadh, Shah Nawaz Bhutto, and the Nawab are in Karachi. The Deputy Prime Minister, Major Harvey Jones, is in Junagadh. They are all responsible for Junagadh acceding to the Indian Union. From this you have a right to infer that Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah also has given his sanction in this

[1] Gandhiji was referring to the *bhajan* by Mirabai, *Mhane chakar rakhoji*, sung during the prayer.

[2] According to a Press communique issued by the Government of India "the Regional Commissioner of Rajkot was approached . . . by Major Harvey Jones. . . with a letter from the Junagadh Dewan, appealing to the Government of India to take over the Junagadh administration. This request was made in order to save the State from complete administrative break-down.

The Government of India took over the administration of the Junagadh State on November 9. The Indian troops entered Junagadh city at 6 p. m.

matter. If that is so, you can come to the conclusion that the troubles in Kashmir and Hyderabad[1] would also be over. And I would even say that the trend now would be towards peace. Both the Dominions would develop friendly relations and would work in mutual co-operation. I do not think about the Qaid-e-Azam as the Governor-General. As the Governor-General the Qaid-e-Azam has no legal right at all to interfere in the affairs of Pakistan. In that capacity he is in the same position as that of Lord Mountbatten in India who is only the constitutional Governor-General. Lord Mountbatten has gone for the wedding of a person who is more than a son to him and who is getting married to the future queen of England. He could go there only after taking permission from his Cabinet and would be coming back by November 24, 1947. Hence in my opinion Jinnah is the maker of the present Muslim League and nothing can be done in Pakistan without his knowledge and sanction. That is why I feel that if Jinnah has a hand in Junagadh's accession to the Indian Union, it is a happy augury.

I wish to tell you something about my visit to Panipat. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad accompanied me during my visit. Rajkumari was also expected to accompany me, but she was at the Government House and I could not wait beyond 10.30 according to my watch. I am glad I went to Panipat. I saw the Muslim patients in the hospital there.[2] Some of them have been badly wounded. But they are being given the best possible attention, because Rajkumari has sent there four doctors, nurses and medical assistants. After that we met the represen-tatives of the Muslims, local Hindus and the refugees. More than 20,000 refugees are reported to be in Panipat. We were told every day more and more refugees are pouring in. The Deputy Commissioner and the Police Superintendent see great danger in this trend. I am glad to say that these officers have earned great praise from the Hindus as well as the Muslims. And, as for the refugees, they have nothing to complain. They are satisfied with them.

We could also meet the refugees who had gathered near the

[1] The Nizam wanted "Hyderabad to be an independent sovereign state" and refused to accede to India. Prolonged discussions between the Government of India and the Nizam were conducted by their emissaries. The Nizam utilized the interregnum provided by the negotiations to build up his armed strength by importing weapons from Europe.

[2] Gandhiji spent a few minutes with every patient, occasionally covering a patient properly with the sheet.

Municipal House. The refugees had to undergo terrible hardships in Pakistan and are still suffering the same hardships in the disorganized life at Panipat. Some of them are living on railway platforms, and quite a few of them in the open, right under the sky. Nevertheless, I was very happy to notice that there was no anger in their hearts or on their faces. They were very happy that we had been there. I felt the authorities had been quite callous in collecting so many refugees in Panipat without giving advance notice to the Deputy Commissioner and the people concerned. The officials at Panipat came to know about the exact number of refugees only when the trains arrived at the station. This is most unfortunate. There are women, children and aged people among the refugees at Panipat. I was told that among the refugees there are also women who had delivered babies on the railway platform.

All this is happening in East Punjab where Dr. Gopichand[1] is the Chief Minister. Dr. Gopichand is my co-worker. I have great respect for him. I have known him for many years as a capable organizer having great influence on the Punjabis. He has done considerable work for the Harijan Sevak Sangh, the All-India Spinners's Association and the All-India Village Industries Association. I should not think that the task in East Punjab is beyond him. But, if Panipat is the sample of his efficiency, it is a matter of great shame for his Government. Why were so many refugees brought to Panipat without any notice? Why are the arrangements for accommodating them so inadequate? Why should not the officers be informed in advance as to who and how many refugees are being sent to Panipat? Along with this I have also received the information yesterday that there are about three lakh Muslims in Gurgaon district who have left their houses in panic. They are lying in the open on both sides of the road hoping to cover a distance of 300 miles along with their women, children and cattle in this biting cold of the Punjab. I do not believe this story. I think there is some mistake in what my friends have told me. I still hope that this information is incorrect or is a gross exaggeration. But what I saw at Panipat has shaken my dis-belief in such reports. None the less, I hope that Dr. Gopichand is Cabinet would take a warning while there is still time and would not rest till proper arrangements are made for looking after the refugees. Such arrangements can be made only be foresight and extreme caution.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 63-8

[1] Gopichand Bhargava

255. WHEN A BLESSING BECOMES A CURSE

In declining to give a blessing I said the following to a friend:

No one who wants to start a worthy enterprise should ever wish to have anybody's blessings, not even of the highest in the land. A worthy enterprise carries its own blessing. On the other hand, if an unworthy project receives any blessing from outside, it becomes, as it should become, a curse. Indeed, I have come to the conclusion that a blessing from outside interferes with the even progress of one's enterprise, because it very often induces a false hope and turns one away from the industry and watchfulness required for the success of a cause.

Though I have often said some such thing to many persons, it is best that this considered opinion is reproduced for the benefit of those who continue to ask for blessings for their enterprise. Thus, I have been asked to bless memorials about great men and I have felt compelled to give much the same answer as the above.

NEW DELHI, November 11, 1947

Harijan, 23-11-1947

256. A PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPLANATION

The following is from Mr. Richard B. Gregg, whom many readers of the *Harijan* know as an American friend who used to live in Shantiniketan as also with me in Sabarmati years ago:

> Though because of my ignorance I am hesitant, yet I venture to send you an idea that seems to me not only to explain with perhaps less moral blame a part of the recent communal violence in India but also to offer hope for the future.
>
> It seems to me probable that much of this violence is an expression not so much of inter-communal suspicion and hatred, but rather, and more deeply and originally, of the long-pent-up resentments of the masses because of their oppression. The oppression was not only by foreign political rule but by foreign modern social, economic and financial ways which are contrary to the ancient habits of dharma which were a very part of the nature of the masses. By

foreign ways I mean such things as the English land-holding system, usurious money-lending, heavy taxes payable not in kind but in money, and other interferences with long-established village life common to all Indian communities.

Psychological studies have shown clearly that severe frustrations suffered during the childhood of an individual generate resentments which are suppressed and remain suppressed long after the person who caused the original frustration had died, but later some occasion pulls a trigger, as it were, and releases the pent-up energy of the old resentment which then pours forth in violence upon some perfectly innocent person. This explains many crimes of violence, and perhaps some of the cruelties against the Jews in Europe. In India the establishment of religious electorates created a channel into which it was easy for this energy to flow, but I believe the fearful energy of the explosion of wrath comes from the older cause I have mentioned. Such an idea as this would help explain why in all countries all through history a major change of political power results in more or less violence and disorder. The masses always suffer some oppression and, therefore, have resentments which flare up upon a shift of control or may be exploited by selfish leaders.

If this surmise is true, it suggests that the suspicion and hatred of one community towards another is not so deep as now appears. It also means that as soon as the masses can be guided back into their ancient ways of life with the chief emphasis on religion and small organizations—village panchayats and communal family systems—the energy of the people will be turned from violence into creative channels. I would expect that khadi work among the refugees might help start such a diversion of energy into sound channels. In such a development I see hope.

Forgive me if this seems to be presumptuous. I write it only in the hope that an humble outsider, just because he is outside, may see a gleam of encouragement that is not so easy to see in the dust and distraction of the struggle. Anyhow, I love you and India.

Though many psychologists have recommended a study of psychology, I am sorry I have not been able, for want of time, to study the subject. Mr. Gregg's letter does not mend matters for me. It does not fill me with any impelling enthusiasm for undertaking the study. Mr. Gregg gives an explanation which mystifies the mind instead of clearing it. "Hope for the future" I have never lost and never will, because it is embedded in my undying faith in non-violence. What has, however, clearly happened in my case is the discovery that in all probability there is a vital defect in my technique of the working of

non-violence. There was no real appreciation of non-violence in the thirty years' struggle against British Raj. Therefore, the peace the masses maintained during that struggle of a generation with exemplary patience, had not come from within. The pent-up fury found an outlet when British Raj was gone. It naturally vented itself in communal violence which was never fully absent and which was kept under suppression by the British bayonet. This explanation seems to me to be all-sufficing and convincing. In it there is no room for failure of any hope. Failure of my technique of non-violence causes no loss of faith in non-violence itself. On the contrary, that faith is, if possible, strengthened by the discovery of a possible flaw in the technique.

NEW DELHI, November 11, 1947

Harijan, 23-11-1947. Also C.W. 4525

257. LETTER TO R. B. GREGG

November 11, 1947

MY DEAR GOVIND,

I have your lovely letter which I am reproducing in the columns of *Harijan*[1] with such remarks as occur to me. If I finish my note on it in time, a copy will accompany this letter.

I am glad Radha[2] is "slowly but steadily" improving through vegetarian dietetics. If she recovers completely, I would like you to write out your experience of this experiment for the sake of the general reader of *Harijan.*

By the way, has vegetarianism a real foothold in America or is it merely a fad of cranks like you and me? Have the dietetic reformers found anything which can be described as a complete substitute for milk? I must confess that I have failed miserably in that direction and, in the absence of the discovery of a complete substitute, I have come to the conclusion that some form of animal fat and animal protein is necessary for human sustenance in health.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Addressee's wife

You have yourself written 'Radhabehn' instead of mere 'Radha'. According to Indian custom, between friends 'Radha behn' is mere 'Radha'. The omission of the suffix *behn,* meaning sister, is a mark of great endearment and intimacy. If you were writing to a casual acquaintance or an utter stranger, then you will naturally mention 'Radha' by her full name 'Radhabehn'. Therefore, I dare not call you 'Govindbhai' and 'Radha' as 'Radhabehn'. *Bhai* meansbrother,but when *behn* and *bhai* are used as suffixes to a name, they have merely an honorific value.

How are you getting on yourself ? Have you lost all the physical weakness which you had developed here? Also tell me, when you write, what you are doing for earning. Or, are you living on past savings when you were practising as a lawyer?

Love to both of you.

BAPU

Enclosure: 1

RICHARD B. GREGG, ESQ.

FULLER MEMORIAL SANATORIUM

SOUTH ATTLEBORO, MASS.

U. S. A.

From a photostat: C. W. 4524

258. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 11, 1947

I did get the news that Shamaldas[1] showed bravery and won the battle.[2] But today I am not happy about it. Why should I talk of my happiness and sorrow? To whom shall I talk? And who will listen today?

I have taken a vow that I shall not step out of Delhi till I have achieved something or perished. Therefore it is not possible for me to go to Kathiawar. Kathiawaris have maintained friendly relations with Muslims through the ages. If they do so now, it will certainly have an impact on conditions here. See that Kathiawar's honour is not sullied. . . .[3]

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 256

[1] Shamaldas Gandhi, son of Gandhiji's elder brother, Lakshmidas Gandhi

[2] The Junagadh State subjects, at a meeting held in Bombay on September *25*, had challenged the decision of the Nawab of Junagadh to accede to Pakistan and set up a provisional government, led by Shamaldas Gandhi, and to take all necessary steps for Junagadh's formal accession to India.

In response to a request from the Dewan of Junagadh, the Indian troops entered Junagadh city and the Government of India took over its administration on November 9. *Vide* also "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 11-11-1947.

[3] Omission as in the source

259. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO A WOMAN WORKER[1]

November 11, 1947

What you say is true. But you should have so much love in your heart that the children themselves would have the urge to finish their household work early and run to you. The attraction should be so intense that the parents will ultimately allow their children to go to you, realizing that the children are actually growing wiser. From your very long letter and the fact that you notice no change in the narrow-mindedness of the villagers even after two years, I feel that you yourself are to blame in some way. One should be able to discover one's own shortcomings. Moreover, I am of the view that it will be easier for you to work amongst the less intelligent villagers as you call them, than with the so-called polite and intelligent people of the cities. Do give serious thought to this letter. If it is necessary to change your attitude or style, do so; then your work will shine forth.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 257

260. EXTRACT FROM A LETTER

November 11, 1947

. . . .[2] Who knows, my ahimsa might be tested at the fag end my life. A proverb says that

'a dying flame burns the brighter before it burns itself out.'

Maybe my end is approaching. I am fully prepared. Everyone should be prepared. I write all this to explain to you what passes in my mind as I see the way things are going, as I see the explosion of

[1] The addressee had reported lack of enthusiasm among villagers regarding education of their children.

[2] Omission as in the source

violence and the disappearance of human kindness. Try to understand this if you can; otherwise just watch whatever unfolds itself.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 257

261. LETTER TO SAHASRABUDDHE

NEW DELHI,
November 11, 1947

BHAI SAHASRABUDDHE,

I have your letter. I think that I have not received the unconditional endorsement by both the parties made on one document. If this impression is correct, there remains nothing that I can do. But if my impression is wrong, then I must not break my word however busy I may be. Yet I would like to say that you should spare me this responsibility at this hour. Since I cannot concentrate on any other matter except my present responsibility, I am afraid my judgement in other matters might not be as correct as it ought to be.

You must have recovered fully by now.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

262. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

November 11, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I told you yesterday that the Provisional Government had entered the State of Junagadh at the request of its Prime Minister[1] and Deputy Prime Minister[2]. I was surprised as well as happy to tell you this because I had not expected that the struggle which was being carried on behalf of the people of Junagadh would have such a happy ending.[3] I had also expressed the fear that if the requestof the officials of Junagadh did not have the sanction from the Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah[4], it would not be proper to feel happy about it right now. Hence, you would be amazed and distressed to know that the officials of Pakistan have protested against the Provisional Government assuming power on behalf of the people of Junagadh. They have demanded "withdrawal of Indian troops from the State territory and relinquishment of the administration to the rightful Government and stoppage of violence and invasion of the State by people from the Indian Union". They also say that neither the Nawab nor the Dewan of Junagadh has any legal authority to negotiate permanent or provisional settlement with the Indian Union. According to Pakistan the action of the Government of India is "a clear violation of the Pakistan territory and a breach of international law".

Looking at the Press reports that have appeared yesterday, I find that there was neither a breach of international law in this matter, nor any operation by the Union Government to establish control over the

[1] Shah Nawaz Bhutto

[2] Major Harvey Jones

[3] A Press communique issued by the Government of India said: "the Regional Commissioner of Rajkot was approached . . . by Major Harvey Jones . . . with a letter from the Junagadh Dewan, appealing to the Government of India to take over the Junagadh administration . . . to save the State from complete administrative break-down . . . pending honourable settlement of several issues involved in the Junagadh accession.

We have considered this request and with a view to avoiding chaos in the State and its repercussions have agreed to take over the administration of Junagadh with immediate effect."

[4] Governor-General of Pakistan

State. As far as I can see, there is nothing illegal in the campaign carried on by the Provisional Government on behalf of the people of Junagadh. It is true that the Union Government sent military help for the safety of the whole of Kathiawar at the request of the rulers of Kathiawar. For that reason, I find nothing illegal in this whole action. As against this; whatever the Dewan of Junagadh did by publicly changing his stand was illegal. I look at the whole situation like this—the Nawab of Junagadh had no right at all to accede to Pakistan without the consent of his people, of which I am told 85% are Hindus.[1] The sacred hill of Girnar and all the temples on it are part of Junagadh. The Hindus have spent a lot of money on those temples and thousands of pilgrims go to the Girnar on pilgrimage from all parts of India. In free India, the whole country belongs to the people. Not even the smallest portion of it is the private property of the Princes. They can retain their claim only by becoming trustees of the people and that is why they would be required to give evidence of popular support for every action of theirs. True, the Princes have not yet realized that they are the trustees and representatives of the people. And it is also true that with the exception of the alert subjects of some States, the people of all States have not yet realized themselves as the true rulers of their States. But that does not diminish the value of the principle I have laid down.

Hence, only the people of a particular State have a legal right to accede to one of the Unions. If the Provisional Government does not represent the people of Junagadh at any stage, it is merely a group of people who are unjustly occupying seats of power in the State and it should be driven out by both the Dominions. If any ruler joins any of the Unions in his personal capacity, the Dominion cannot stand before the world to justify his action. From this point of view, I think that the Nawab's accession has been baseless from the very beginning till it is proved that the people of the State have given their consent to the accession by the Nawab. The dispute as to which Union Junagadh would finally accede to can be resolved only by taking public opinion, that is, by referendum. This task should be properly carried

[1] The Nawab of Junagadh after consenting to accede to India, had revoked his decision, fled to Pakistan and executed an Instrument of Accession on September 15 whereby the State was declared to have acceded to Pakistan. The Government of India refused to accept the accession of Junagadh to Pakistan in the circumstances in which it was made.

out and should not involve violence or show of violence. The stand taken by the Government of Pakistan and now also by the Prime Minister of Junagadh, has created a strange situation. Who was to decide whether Pakistan was in the right or the Union Government? One cannot even think that it can be decided by an appeal to the sword. The only honourable way is to decide the matter through arbitration. We can find many impartial individuals in the country itself but, if the parties concerned cannot agree to arbitration by Indians, I for one will have no objection to any impartial person from any part of the world.

Whatever I have said about Junagadh equally applies to Kashmir[1] and Hyderabad[2]. Neither the Maharaja of Kashmir nor the Nizam of Hyderabad has any authority to accede to eitherUnion without the consent of his people. As far as I know, this point was clarified in the case of Kashmir.[3] If it had been only the Maharaja who had wanted to accede to the Indian Union, I could never support such an act. The Union Government agreed to the accession for the time being because both the Maharaja and Sheikh Abdullah[4], who is the representative of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, wanted it. Sheikh Abdullah came forward because he claims to represent not only the Muslims but the entire masses in Kashmir.

I have heard people talking in whispers that Kashmir could be

[1] On October 23, some two thousand or more Afridis and other tribesmen entered the Kashmir State and indulged in loot, arson and murder. In view of the grave emergency prevailing in the State, Maharaja Harisingh of the Jammu and Kashmir State appealed to the Indian Union for military help and signed the Instrument of Accession on October 27.

[2] The Nizam wanted "Hyderabad to be an independent sovereign State" and refused to accede to the Dominion of India. After prolonged discussions between the Government of India and the Nizam, a delegation led by the Nawab of Chhatari arrived at a draft standstill agreement on October 22. The Nizam, however, against the advice of his Council, dissolved the delegation and appointed a new one on October 29. *Vide* also "Fragment of A Letter", 26-11-1947.

[3] The Government of India, while accepting the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India, had "made it clear to the Maharaja that, as soon as the invaders have been driven from the soil of Kashmir, the people of the State should decide the question of accession".

[4] Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah (1905-82), President, All-India States' People's Conference; President, Jammu and Kashmir National Conference. After Kashmir's accession to the Indian Union he was sworn in Head of the Emergency Administration in Jammu and Kashmir on October 31, 1947.

divided. Jammu would come to the Hindus and the Muslims would have Kashmir. I cannot even think of such divided loyalty and division of the Indian States into several parts. Hence, I hope that the whole of India would act sensibly and this ugly situation would be avoided soon at least for the sake of lakhs of Indians who have been compelled to become helpless refugees.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 66-9

263. LETTER TO MORARJI DESAI

November 12, 1947

BHAI MORARJI[1],

I am dictating this letter to you at 4 in the morning. Dr. Dinshaw and Jehangir Patel are at present with me. We sat together and came to the conclusion that Dr. Dinshaw should earn as much as he needs for his maintenance by charging fees for the nature-cure treatment he offers outside the Trust[2] formed in Poona. There was a time when we had thought of paying Dr. Dinshaw his maintenance allowance out of the Trust funds. But it was somethingDr. Dinshaw could not bring himself to accept. Then it was thought that he should engage himself in some other occupation and earn enough for his maintenance. That also is not possible at present. He should therefore accept fees from the townspeople, offering them treatment in his own style and practise nature cure as he conceives it. He should do it either by expanding his own clinic which he runs in Bombay or with the assistance of the hospital unit at Purandar. From a broader point of view, between the two I would prefer Bombay to Purandar. Neither institution has a place for nature cure as I conceive it. It can be practised only with village background and nowhere but in a village. At the root of it lies the great question of changing individual life as well as social life. This Trust therefore must maintain its separate identity. If the treatment is meant for the townspeople it must have

[1] (b. 1896); Minister, Bombay, 1937-39 and 1946-51; Chief Minister of Bombay, 1952-56; Minister, Union Cabinet, 1956-58, 1958-62; Deputy Prime Minister, 1967-69; Prime Minister, 1977-79

[2] All-India Nature Cure Trust

Government's aid, without which nowadays no accommodation can be had. In Bombay extra floors will be required where Dr. Dinshaw carries on his practice, or he will have to have another building to meet his requirements. The point is that you should offer Dr. Dinshaw the necessary accommodation in Purandar through a non-government source at a reasonable rent or cost without bestowing any special favour on him. The main consideration here could be nothing but service to the public. The rich can get nature-cure treatment also by paying for it. We can expect such accommodation for a person whom the Government regards as suitable. This letter will not be out of place if only the Government of Bombay could think about it from this point of view.

We trustees are considering a different plan for the site that belongs to Jagtap.[1] If we expect the Government to do anything about it I shall write to you some other time.

I cannot say from here how much land will be required either in Bombay or in Purandar or where it should be. I ought to have more information as well as understanding, neither of which I have. Hence only Dr. Dinshaw and Jehangir can discuss the matter with you. A similar letter for Dr. Dinshaw.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jagtap", 12-11-1947.

264. LETTER TO JEHANGIR PATEL

November 12, 1947

CHI. JEHANGIR,

I have read your letter carefully.

Lack of fertilizers has nothing to do with the poverty of our soil. There is great divergence of opinion on inorganic manure. We waste a tremendous quantity of organic manure. It is all a question of the education of the growers, whether owners or not.

I have no doubt that food control is an unmixed evil and it should go.

About alcohol, we must discuss the subject again when we meet. For the time being do not write anything for publication.

Do return if you can with Dinshaw and we shall discuss many things.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

265. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 12, 1947

Today is Diwali day; but the nation has gone bankrupt. . . .[1] Let us pray to God that people may see true light. The situation is tense here. Order cannot be maintained without the police or the army. Murders and shootings have become common occurrences. Let us see what I can do.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 262

[1] Omission as in the source

266. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 12, 1947

Shamaldas has, true to his nature, behaved like a Nawab. Even this does not please me. But no one need worry whether I am pleased or displeased; nor should anyone care. Ultimately, everyone has to rely on his own strength. Therein lies the true success of democracy.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji — I, p. 262

267. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 12, 1947

I appreciate your desire to get your daughter admitted to the Ashram. Only bear in mind that I am not there. But what of that? Many others are there. Ashadevi Aryanayakum[1] is there. Kishorelal does not stay there these days. She should study the complete course under Nayee Talim; also all processes associated with khadi. She should learn Hindi and Sanskrit well. If she learns all these subjects with a steady mind, she will become an expert in my view. And she can teach me many things if I am still alive at that time.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 262

[1] Wife of E. W. Aryanayakum; Joint-Secretary of Hindustani Talimi Sangh; Editor of *Nayee Talim,* an organ of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh

268. LETTER TO D. B. JAGTAP

November 12, 1947

BHAI JAGTAP,

I had your letter. Your complaint about this letter of Dr. Dinshaw should be regarded as directed against me. If you have been at all humiliated it is my fault, although it could never have been my intention, for the language in Dr. Dinshaw's letter is mine. Won't you please now forget the matter? Dr. Dinshaw and Jehangir Patel have been here for the last four-five days. I had long discussions with them. On the basis of that I am of opinion that if you wish to reject the Trust Deed you can do so now, you can also remove the Sanatorium. It will not involve any legal procedure or even arbitration. You may, if you want, make some addition to the present list of Dr. Dinshaw or have a talk with him. I can only say that if you want the Trust to stay you should donate to the Trust the land which I was occupying and where the patients were being treated. This should also include the rear portion which was being used for the labourers. The place is not to be used for producing anything but only to be developed in case we have to accommodate a few people there for the sake of some patients. The rest of the land should be returned to you. Then it cannot have the Sanatorium either. It means that apart from the land and building I have asked for, you will use the portion which you are now occupying and which is included in the schedule. When I am free myself from the work here, the other trustees and I can live on the premises donated to the Trust. Dinshaw, his wife, mother and such other relatives as can be accommodated on the premises can live there; the Trust has recognized their right to reside on the premises. Jehangir says you have another complaint that Dr Dinshaw does not at all intend to let me be your guest. This is not correct. If my suggestion is accepted, even if I stay in the house donated by you, I shall still be your guest because, if you wish, arrangements for goat's milk, etc., will be made by you. Goats, etc., cannot be kept on the premises I expect from you. I may say one more thing, namely, that you are going to lose nothing by your donation to the Trust. Dr. Dinshaw has invested more than a lakh in your property. He has also spent a substantial sum on the construction of bathrooms and a steamhouse,

etc., on the premises I am asking for. If you take all the land these expensive additions will be of no use to you. Now you may do whatever you think proper. You can have a further talk in this connection with Dr. Dinshaw and Jehangir.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

269. A LETTER

November 12, 1947

I don't know how long I shall have to stay here. Take it that I have to 'do or die'. I have no middle course.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 262

270. TALK WITH MUSLIM STUDENTS

NEW DELHI,
November 12, 1947

Truly speaking, there should not be too many student organizations. There should be one students' body, and differences of caste and creed should have no place in it. In the present critical situation the Muslim students and youths, if they make up their minds, can render great service. You should say, 'We are of course Muslims. You may not trust us. Still we entreat you to trust us for the moment and accept our services.' If your hearts are pure and if you would serve India, there can be no better service than this at the present juncture.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 263

271. BROADCAST TO REFUGEES AT KURUKSHETRA CAMP[1]

November 12, 1947

MY SUFFERING BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I do not know if it is only you or whether others too are listening in to me today.[2] This is only my second experience at the radio. My first was many years ago[3] when I was in London for the Round Table Conference. Though I am speaking from the Broadcasting House, I am not interested in such talks. To suffer with the afflicted and try to relieve their suffering has been my life's work. I hope, therefore, that you will accept this talk in that light.

I was distressed when I heard that over two lakhs of refugees had arrived at Kurukshetra and more were pouring in. The moment the news came to me, I longed to be with you but I could not get away at once from Delhi because the Congress Working Committee meetings were being held and my presence was required. Seth Ghanshyamdas Birla suggested that I should broadcast a message to you and hence this talk.

Quite by accident, Gen. Nathusingh who has organized the Kurukshetra Camp came to see me two days ago and told me about your sufferings. The Central Government asked the military to take over the organization of your Camp, not because they wanted to coerce you in any way, but simply because the military are used to doing such organization and know how to do so efficiently.

Those who suffer know their sufferings best of all. Yours is not an ordinary camp where it is possible for everyone to know each other. Yours is really a city and your only bond with your co-refugees is your suffering.

I was sorry to learn that there is not that co-operation with authority or with your neighbours that there ought to be in order to make the Camp a success. I can serve you best by drawing attention to

[1] As Gandhiji was escorted to the studio he remarked: "You can regard me as an almost uncivilized person and tutor me about my talk." Gandhiji spoke in Hindustani.

[2] The following two sentences are reproduced from The *Hindustan Times.*

[3] On September 13, 1931. *Vide* "Broadcast to America", 13-9-1931.

your shortcomings. That has been my life's motto, for therein lies true friendship and my service is not only for you or India; it extends to the world, for I know no barriers of race or creed. If you can get rid of your failings, you will benefit not only yourselves but the whole of India.

It pains me to know that many of you are without shelter. This is a real hardship, particularly in the cold weather which is severe in the Punjab, and it is increasing daily. Your Government is trying to do everything it can for you. The burden is heaviest, of course, on your Prime Minister[1]. The Health Department which is served by Rajkumari[2] and Dr. Jivraj Mehta[3] is also working very hard to lighten your sufferings. No other government could have done better in this crisis. The calamity is immense and the Government too have its limitations. But it is up to you to face your sufferings with as much fortitude and patience as you can summon to your aid and as cheerfully as you can.

Today is Diwali. But there can be no lighting of *chirags*[4] for you or for anyone. Our Diwali will be best celebrated by service of you and you will celebrate it by living in your Camp as brothers and looking upon everyone as your own. If you will do that you will come through victorious.

The General told me of all that still needed to be done in Kurukshetra. He told me that no more refugees should be sent there. It seems as if there was no proper screening of refugees and it is hard to understand why they come and are dumped in various places without proper intimation to the local authority. In my post-prayer speech last evening I criticized the East Punjab Government for this state of affairs. I have just had a letter from one of their ministers to say that the fault is not theirs but the Central Government is responsible for it.

Now that all governments, whether central or provincial, belong to the people, it does not befit one to throw the blame on the other.

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru

[2] Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Minister for Health in the Union Cabinet

[3] Gandhiji's personal physician; Director-General of Health Services, Government of India, 1947; Dewan of Baroda, 1948-49; Minister of Public Works in Bombay, 1952, and later of Finance; Chief Minister of Gujarat, 1960-63; High Commissioner in London, 1963-66

[4] Earthen lamps

All must work together for the general good. I tell you this in order that you may realize your own responsibility also.

You must help in the maintenance of discipline in the Camp. You must take the sanitation of the place in your hands. I have known the Punjab well since the Martial Law days[1]. I know the good qualities and failings of the Punjabis. One of them, and that is not confined to the Punjab alone, is the utter lack of knowledge of social hygiene and sanitation. Therefore it is that I have often said that we must all become Harijans. If we do, we shall grow in stature. I ask you, therefore, to help your doctors and your Camp officials—every one of you, men, women and even children—to keep Kurukshetra clean.

The next thing I want to ask you to do is to share your rations. Be content with what you get. Do not take or demand more than your share. Community kitchens are a thing which should be cultivated. In this way too you can serve each other.

I must also draw your attention to the danger of refugees getting accustomed to eating the bread of idleness. They are apt to think that it is Government's duty to do everything for them. Government's duty is certainly there but that does not mean that your own duty ceases. You must live for others and not only for yourselves. Idleness is demoralizing for everyone and it will certainly not help us successfully to get over this crisis.

A sister from Goa came to see me the other day and I was delighted to learn from her that many women in your Camp are anxious to spin. It is good to have the desire to do creative work which helps. You must all refuse to be a burden on the State. You must be as sugar is to milk. You will become one with your surroundings and thus help to share with your Government the burden that has fallen on them. All camps should really be self-supporting but perhaps that may be too high an ideal to place before you today. All the same I do ask you not to despise any work but rejoice in doing anything that comes your way in order to serve and thus make Kurukshetra an ideal place.

The response to my appeal for warm clothing and quilts and blankets[2] has been very good. People have responded well to the

[1] In April-May 1919

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 4-10-1947.

Sardar's[1] appeal too. Your share of these is also there. But if you quarrel among yourselves and some take more than their due, it will not be well with you. Your suffering is grave even now but wrong action will make it even worse.

Finally, I am not one of those who believe that you who have left your lands and homes in Pakistan have been uprooted from there for all time. Nor do I believe that such will be the case with the thousands of Muslims who have been obliged to leave India. I for one shall not rest content and will do all that lies in my power to see that all are reinstated and are able to return with honour and safety from where they have today been driven out. I shall continue as long as I live to work for this end. The dead cannot be brought back to life, but we can work for those who are alive. If we do not do so it will be an eternal blot on both India and Pakistan and therein will lie ruin for both of us.

Harijan, 23-11-1947. Also *The Hindustan Times*, 14-11-1947

[1] Vallabhbhai Patel, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister-in-charge, Home, States and Information and Broadcasting

272. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

November 12, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today is Diwali and I congratulate all of you on the occasion. It is a great day in the Hindu calendar. According to the *Vikram Samvat*, New Year begins tomorrow on Thursday[1]. You must understand why Diwali is celebrated every year with illuminations. In the great battle between Rama and Ravana, Rama symbolized the forces of good and Ravana the forces of evil. Rama conquered Ravana and this victory established Ramarajya in India.

But alas ! Today there is no Ramarajya in India. So how can we celebrate Diwali ? Only those who have Rama within can celebrate this victory. For, God alone can illumine our souls and only that light is real light. The *bhajan*[2] that was sung today emphasizes the poet's[3] desire to see God. Crowds of people go to see artificial illumination but what we need today is the light of love in our hearts. We must kindle the light of love within. Then only would we deserve congratulations. Today thousands are in acute distress. Can you, everyone of you, lay your hand on your heart and say that every sufferer, whether Hindu, Sikh or Muslim, is your own brother or sister? This is the test for you. Rama and Ravana are symbols of the unending struggle between the forces of good and evil. True light comes from within.

With what a sad heart has Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru returned after seeing wounded Kashmir! He was unable to attend the Working Committee meeting yesterday and also this afternoon. He has brought some flowers from Baramula[4] for me. I always cherish such gifts of nature. But today loot, arson and bloodshed have spoiled the beauty of that lovely land. Jawaharlal had been to Jammu also. There too all is not well.

[1] According to the Gujarati calendar

[2] "Light thy heart and sweep out from there evil thoughts and anger." *Vide* "Ashram Bhajanavali", hymn 251, 13-12-1930.

[3] Ranchhod

[4] After a brutal attack by the raiders the town was recaptured by the Indian troops.

Sardar Patel had to go to Junagadh at the request of Shri Shamaldas Gandhi and Dhebarbhai[1] who had sought his advice. Both Jinnah and Bhutto are angry because they feel that the Indian Government has deceived them and is pressing Junagadh to accede to the Union.

It is the duty of everyone to banish hatred and suspicion from his heart in order to establish peace and goodwill in the country. If you do not feel the presence of God within you and do not forget your petty internal quarrels, success in Kashmir or Junagadh would prove futile. Diwali cannot be celebrated till you bring back all the Muslims who have fled in fear. Pakistan also would not survive if it does not do likewise with the Hindus and Sikhs who have run away from there.[2]

Tomorrow I shall tell you what I can about the Congress Working Committee. May you and all India be happy in the new year which begins on Thursday. May God illumine your hearts so that you can serve not only each other or India but the whole world.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 69-71

[1] U.N. Dhebar (1905-77); organized Rajkot Mill Kamdar Mazdoor Sangh; Minister of Saurashtra, 1948, President, Indian National Congress, 1955-59; Chairman, Scheduled Tribe Areas Commission, 1960; elected to Lok Sabha, 1962; President of Bharatiya Adim Jati Sangh, 1962-64

[2] Gandhiji then referred to his visit to the Broadcasting House.

273. LETTER TO MANIBHAI B. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
November 12, 1947

CHI. MANIBHAI,

I have your letter of the 5th. I had a long discussion with Dr. Dinshaw and Jehangir Patel.

I am glad that the inauguration is to be done by Kakasaheb[1].

Tell all the friends at Uruli that I am both happy and sorry that I shall not be able to attend the function. I am happy because the work I am doing here is also, according to me, part of the work that is being done at Uruli; for, the nature cure of my conception includes treatment of both body and mind. If we look at the matter from that point of view, curing the people here of their psychological perversion is bound to have an effect in Uruli also and would serve as a fine illustration of nature cure.

I am not sorry that Gokhale and Paramanand have left. It will be enough if Dr. Bhagwat[2] stays on. I should be glad if Dhiru clings to the institution till the end and observes all the rules, too. But I will be satisfied if at least Balkoba[3] and you[4] remain. That is, I should be very pleased even if you alone decide to dedicate your life to Uruli. By and by you will find other workers from the local population. I should think it a disgrace to have to import workers from outside. It would mean failure of nature cure.

The present heavy burden on you will not last. You should admit only as many patients as you can easily look after. If you can persuade some young men there to volunteer their services, you can train them. You will need a woman worker from outside. By yourself, you will not be able to attract any woman worker from among the local people. Let us see what the future brings.

The division into nature cure, village uplift work and Ashram

[1] D. B. Kalelkar (1885-1981); educationist, litterateur and a close associate of Gandhiji; Vice-Chancellor of Gujarat Vidyapith, 1928-36; President, Hindustani Prachar Sabha

[2] Dr. A. K. Bhagwat

[3] Balkrishna Bhave, younger brother of Vinoba Bhave

[4] The addressee was manager of the Nature Cure Clinic at Uruli Kanchan

life seems all right to me. But from the point of view of nature cure the three are indivisible. When you develop nature cure to its highest potential, it will include village uplift work also. And I cannot conceive of nature cure for village people which does not imply the Ashram ideal of life. If you start cultivation work through the institution itself and with the help of paid labourers, I think you will have to repent it in the end. But notwithstanding this view of mine, I shall accept what all of you decide to do after careful thinking.

Since Bhansali[1] sees a flaw in the offer of the donation, I would prefer to decline it. It seems pointless to me to accept the thing on a ninety-nine-year lease.

Jehangir told me about everybody.

I have already tried to explain why we should prefer cows to buffaloes. If Balkrishna cannot collect the required amount, forget about that scheme. The matter is not worth worrying about at all. I shall be able to say more after I know the final outcome.

It would be best, of course, if Premabehn[2] undertakes some work there on behalf of the Kasturba Memorial Fund. But we can assume no financial liability for such work. You may permit her to do what she can within the limits of the Kasturba Fund.

Do not entertain any hope of being able to get an expert on nature cure from outside. Acquire whatever knowledge you yourself can. If Dhiru stays there, he also should become proficient in it. He already knows a little.

If you get any nature-cure expert who does not agree to abide by the Ashram rules, I will not accept him as suitable for our purpose. I will write to Dr. Bhagwat afterwards, as also to Balkrishna.

I am dictating this at night. I must not overexert myself now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 2723. Courtesy: Manibhai B. Desai

[1] Jayakrishna P. Bhansali

[2] Prema Kantak, Agent of Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust, Maharashtra

274. NO INCONSISTENCY

A subscriber to the *Harijan* presents as follows what appears to him to be a conundrum to which I have sent the following reply:

> The other day you admitted[1] that you had not seen God face to face. In the Prefaceto *My Experiments with Truth* you have stated that you have seen God in the embodiment of Truth from a far distance. The two statements appear to be incompatible. Kindly elucidate for proper understanding.

There is a big gulf between 'seeing God face to face' and 'seeing Him in the embodiment of Truth from a far distance'. In my opinion the two statements are not only not incompatible but each explains the other. We see the Himalayas from a very great distance and when we are on the top we have seen the Himalayas face to face. Millions can see them from hundreds of miles away if they are within the range of that seeing distance, but few having arrived at the top after years of travel see them face to face. This does not seem to need elucidation in the columns of the *Harijan.* Nevertheless, I send your letter and my reply for publication in the *Harijan,* lest there may be some like you who think that there is any inconsistency between the two statements quoted by you.

November 13, 1947
Harijan, 23-11-1947

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 23-7-1947.

275. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 13, 1947

The New Year commences from today. Of course you have my blessings. But it would seem my blessings have no value these days. May God grant us new strength and wisdom so that we may overcome our present madness.

What shall I write about language? My view is clear, namely, the national language should be such as can be spoken by millions of our countrymen. But we behave, knowingly or unknowingly, as if it was our birthright to oppose and contest every issue. As a result, we are able to achieve nothing. Though I do like to face such difficulties and am able to overcome them also, have you ever considered how much of our energy and time is wasted over this? Often a person who raises opposition is considered to be a leader and, therefore, those who aspire to become leaders oppose things. But we are what we are and we have to find a way out of the existing difficulties.

"The path is surrounded by thick darkness; will that arrest your step?"[1]

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 270

[1] A Bengali song by Rabindranath Tagore

276. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 13, 1947

. . .[1] The restoration of peace in Calcutta was due to the Muslims there and the credit should go to them.[2] Suhrawardy and his co-workers had helped me there. The situation in Delhi is quite different. Here I don't find a single responsible Muslim who can approach the Hindus, if only to die, or whose word weighs with the Muslims. Maulana Saheb[3] and the nationalist Muslims have also lost this strength. Hence my work here is much more difficult than it was in Calcutta. I am doubtful whether I shall fulfil my vow of doing something here. But my other vow, that of dying, will certainly be fulfilled. For that I have not the least worry. May God take from me whatever work He intends me to do.

If all of you stay there and carry on constructive work, it will certainly have its impact. We had recognized the need for constructive work when we were slaves. We will need it many times more to transform swaraj into *surajya*[4]. Let not anyone think that the 18-point programme[5] is of no use now that we have attained freedom.

Today is the New Year day. May God light our path and cleanse our impure hearts.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 271

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] At the instance of Muslim friends Gandhiji had prolonged his stay in Calcutta in August, 1947. He stayed with H. S. Suhrawardy, the ex-Chief Minister of Bengal, under a Muslim roof in a disturbed area and they went round together to establish harmony between the two communities.

[3] Abul Kalam Azad (1888-1958); President, All-India Khilafat Committee, 1920; President of Unity Conference (Delhi), 1924; President, Indian National Congress, 1923 and 1940-46; Minister for Education in the Union Cabinet

[4] Good government

[5] For Gandhiji's booklet on the Constructive Programme, *vide* "Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place", 13-12-1941.

277. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 13, 1947

I have your letter. I was very much pained to read it. . . .[1] Where are we going today? What is happening to us? I fail to understand why we think or say that we should not have a single Muslim in our country. If that happens, let me tell you that you will once again be slaves. I intentionally write "you" because I do not wish to see slavery again. I hope God will take me away before such a day comes.

Today is our New Year day. May God grant good sense to all of us and guide us on the right path.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 270-1

278. TALK WITH DAHYABHAI AND YASHODA PATEL[2]

NEW DELHI,
November 13, 1947

I do not wish to be sarcastic but this language slavery has gone so deep that one begins to wonder. When even Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's daughter-in-law, who, poor thing, certainly does not know much English, is so obsessed with teaching her son English words, what am I to say of others? It makes me unhappy. If mothers could solve this question of language we could be free of English and develop the national language. Without doubt English is a very rich and beautiful language. And if one learns it or teaches it out of love for it I should have no objection. But thus to impose words on an innocent child is nothing but an instance of our deep-rooted and incurable slavery.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 272-3

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] They had come to Gandhiji with their little son. On Gandhiji's offering him a piece of bread the mother insisted that the child should say 'thank you'.

279. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

November 13, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Yesterday was Diwali and today is the New Year. I have heard and I heard it all the more yesterday that Delhi has great illuminations on Diwali day which perhaps beat even the illuminations in Bombay. There are magnificent illuminations in Bombay every year. I was pleased to hear that people had realized that this is not the time to celebrate Diwali. But the superstition still persists that there should be at least some lights on Diwali day. Hence, oil lamps were seen at some places. There were some electric lights, too, though very few. I do not go out but I get all the information.

The new year begins today. I had already mentioned it yesterday, but I may as well refer to it again. On New Year day we make some pious resolutions and by the grace of God try to follow them all through the year. If we do this, and if the atmosphere prevailing today changes and the Hindus and Muslims live together in amity, we shall have a right to celebrate the next Diwali with illuminations. We can accomplish nothing by regarding one another as enemies. That is why I stressed that this is no occasion for an outward celebration of Diwali. We should try to illumine our hearts. Rama resides in our hearts and there is a continuous battle between Rama and Ravana raging inside us. If, in our hearts and not outside, Ravana triumphs over Rama, it means that there is no light but darkness in our hearts. If, instead, it is Rama who triumphs over Ravana, then there is indeed light in our hearts and this entitles us to have illuminations outside as well. Hence, all is well if the light outside is the symbol of the light within. Instead, if there is darkness in our hearts and we have illuminations outside and try to convince ourselves that everything is fine, we are hypocrites and liars. I only hope that we are never untruthful.

I told you yesterday that I would say something about the meetings of Congress Working Committee. There was no time yesterday because I did not want to take more than fifteen minutes. Today is the third day of the Congress Working Committee meeting. It is still in session. One important thing that I am entitled to tell you is

that the members of the Working Committee and others[1] who have been specially invited by Acharya Kripalani[2] have been sitting together in the meetings for the last three days. It is a good thing that they are unanimously of the opinion that it has been the policy of the Congress since its inception, that is, for the last sixty years, that Congress is not an institution that propagates any particular religion. There are people of all religions in the Congress or, say, because it belongs to people of different religions, it does not belong to any one particular religion. It is an organization of the masses and it has to function only for political goals. It does not remain a religious body if it functions that way. Supposing one of the policies of the Congress is to provide food to all the people, to be true to its name it must provide food for everybody. If the Congress provides food only to those who are with it or, say, only to the Hindus and the Sikhs because they are in a majority and allows others to starve and says that it is not bothered about them, it would be a religious body superficially but in fact it would become an irreligious organization. If it advocates service of only those who are its followers and wants others to be killed, it would not be dharma, but *adharma*[3] in the name of dharma.

If I am a worshipper of Rama and do not worship any god, the law cannot force me to do so. It is another matter if I act against my faith or become a coward and say that a particular man is carrying a sword and that if I do not obey him he would kill me. But, if I am not a coward, when I am forced to worship Allah instead of Rama, I should have, and I have, a right to insist that I would worship only Rama and not Allah. All that the other person can do is to cut my throat. Let him do so. Then it is a matter of faith, which we call personal or individual dharma. There is no power on earth which can destroy one's personal dharma. Of course, it can be destroyed when the individual himself wants to do it, or when, instead of light, there is only darkness in one's heart. In such circumstances, when he cannot make up his mind he takes help from someone or just follows the

[1] The special invitees to the Congress Working Committee meeting were: B. G. Kher, Pattabhi Sitaramayya, S. K. Patil, Jayaprakash Narayan, Kamaraj Nadar, Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew and Prof. N. G. Ranga.

[2] J. B. Kripalani (1888-1982); Principal, Gujarat Vidyapith, 1920-27, General Secretary of the Indian National Congress, 1934-45; its President, 1946-47, Member, Constituent Assembly; started the Krishak Mazdoor Praja Party which later merged into the Praja Socialist Party; resigned from the Praja Socialist Party in 1954

[3] Contrary to dharma

bidding of some other person because he is surrounded by darkness. But the person who is steadfast in his faith would listen to the command only of God and none else. Likewise, when an organization functions for the welfare of the people, only the things which are consistent with dharma apply to everybody and nothing else. And in this way it embodies dharma and not *adharma*. That, in my view, is the true meaning of politics and the Congress has followed this from the time of its inception. You should be happy that it is so, whether you belong to the Congress or not. Even I do not belong to the Congress. But so what? After all, I have been a Congress worker and have served it. What does it matter if I do not pay four annas for membership? I must pay the membership fee of four annas if I want to be its President. But that is not the question. If all of you think like me, it is really remarkable. It is good if you have registered yourselves as Congress members. It is well, too, if you are serving the Congress from outside. I have been sitting with the Congress Working Committee for the past three days. There are many differences of opinion in the Working Committee. The members are human beings after all, they are not stones. One member says one thing and another member says something else. There may be differences of opinion, but there should be no contradiction in behaviour. That is why they spent three days in discussing these differences. But they are all united about one thing, that is, that the Congress should continue to be what it has been so far. If in the process it has to perish, let it perish. Of course it cannot be completely wiped out, though it can remain in minority. And I doubt if it is in majority at present. For there should have been no Pakistan if the Congress were in majority. I can quote many instances to show how much the Muslims have been oppressed in India. But what should I say? You know more than I do. Have the Hindus and the Sikhs in Pakistan been oppressed less? But let us not talk about it. It is not for us to think of those things. Should I stop following my religion because others in the world do not adhere to theirs? That is why the Congress, whether it is in majority or minority, must adhere to its original objective. It is framing its resolutions from that point of view. It wants to present its views in a straightforward, sincere manner. What can be more straightforward than that we do not wish to compel a single Muslim to go away from here? The point is not whether the Muslims are good or bad. Can we claim that only angels have a right to live in India, and, if not angels, only good people can remain here? And, if only the good people can live here,

are there no bad or wicked people among the Hindus and the Sikhs? And if there are wicked people among them, what would you say to them? Would you order them to leave and threaten to cut their throats with a sword if they refused to oblige? You have no right to consider anybody wicked or to kill him. We have committed excesses against the Muslims. There may be some exaggeration in the reports I receive every day. But ultimately I find that there is truth in those reports. When anything is done in the name of the Congress, the A. I. C. C. has to be summoned. The plenary session of the Congress is held once a year. It is like a big show and because there is such a big crowd nobody can even think clearly. But they know that the A. I. C. C. carries on its work with due deliberation and so they put their seal on what it does. Thus the A.I.C.C.is always on the alert. It is going to meet the day after tomorrow. It is the Working Committee which has to place the agenda before the A I. C. C. It is subservient to the A. I. C. C. If the Working Committee does not place the agenda before it, then the A. I. C. C. can say that they have not functioned well and the members of the Working Committee have to resign. The A. I. C. C. can form the Working Committee or terminate it. If the A. I. C. C. does not accept its proposals or makes great amendments to those proposals, then also it should resign. That is why the Working Committee says that it wants to do everything in the name of the A. I. C. C. If it does anything in its own name, it does not have the same effect. For, what is the use of 15 individuals proclaiming that not a single Muslim should be killed? If the same thing is done in the name of the A. I. C. C., its effect is much greater. That is why I have been advising the Congress Working Committee for the past three days that it should categorically state that this is the only thing it wishes to carry out. Let us not worry if this pleases the people or displeases them. If we are true servants of the Congress, then this is the only thing we have to do. Let the A. I. C. C. brush it aside if it so wishes. After all we, and also Pakistan, have to stand before the world. We do many things because we are worried about what the world may say. I would say that you should do only what you think is correct. Then the world too would regard it as correct. It is said that the word of the *Panch*[1] is like the word of God. The world is like the *Panch.* That is why what the world says is divine justice in the true sense.

The Working Committee is in session today. It would be meeting

[1] Elected members of a village panchayat; also, an arbitrator

again tomorrow. It is my prayer that it should place before the A. I. C. C. such a resolution which would bring victory to India and everybody would be able to live in peace here. It does not mean that we should let the traitors do as they please. But we should not take it for granted that a particular person is a traitor. If someone is proved to be a traitor, you may kill him, hang him, shoot him. But if you say that no Muslim can ever be loyal or that only the Hindus and the Sikhs have a monopoly of loyalty, then I would say that it would be a grave thing. I am confident that the Congress would never do such a thing. You must also pray that through the advice of the Congress we and the whole country as well as other parts of the world rise high. The Congress is meant only to raise the country high. But the Congress does not wish to raise itself by depriving anybody of his wealth or other property. The Congress would die for the sake of the whole world, but would not kill anyone. This has been the objective of the Congress, not since I entered it, but for many years. The Congress has tried to prevent the Europeans who come here from looting the country, so that people of Asia and Africa could live in peace. India has to remain alive for this purpose. It is for this that India has attained her independence and for no other purpose.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 71-7

280. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
November 14, 1947

For the last few days meetings of the Working Committee have been going on. Its resolutions, I am sure, will be good. How far they will be put into practice God only knows. My suggestion is that, in so far as the Congress was intended solely to achieve swaraj and that purpose has been gained—personally I do not think that what we have gained is swaraj but at least it is so in name—this organization should be wound up and we should put to use all the energies of the country. In this way we shall be able to do a great deal. For instance, Jayaprakash[1] has immense energy. But he does not come forward because of party considerations. I therefore feel that if the country can get the benefit of whatever energy each one of us has, it will prosper.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 278

281. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 14, 1947

. . . .[2] In no other country are widows insulted as much as they are in our country. But I place widows in the category of spiritual *rishis.* I do not have the least hesitation in advising you and other sisters to organize yourselves and see that if widows are not allowed to be present on auspicious occasions, or if restrictions are imposed on their diet or dress, the same rules apply to widowers. It is another matter if a wife voluntarily makes a sacrifice on the death of her husband. But I have no doubt that the rigidity of social customs and conventions must be broken.

[1] Jayaprakash Narayan (1902-79); one of the founders of the All India Congress Socialist Party; member, Congress Working Committee, 1936; leading member of the Socialist Party and the Praja Socialist Party; joined the Bhoodan and the Sarvodaya movements

[2] Omission as in the source

I am keeping well. I am dictating this letter to Chi. Manu. I am lying under a covering because it is cold. It is now 5.30 a. m. I snatch a nap while dictating letters. The work in Delhi is arduous. God will do what He chooses. Why should we worry over it? However, I think some untoward events are taking place. I expect you will understand a lot from these few words. A word is enough for the wise.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 278-9

282. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 14, 1947

I have no doubt at all that so long as prominent people do not propagate Hindustani, it will decline. That means that our culture will die. It is our misfortune that these days in our homes father and son and brothers and sisters speak only English. Not even their own mother tongue! When the ocean is on fire who can put out the fire?

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 279

283. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

November 14, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

When I was on fast[1] in the Aga Khan Palace which was turned into a jail to imprison me, Sarojini Devi[2], Mirabehn[3] and Mahadev-bhai[4], this *bhajan*[5] had captured me. Here I do not wish to go into the causes of the fast.

I would like to mention only one thing in that connection, and it is that I survived for 21 days not because of the amount of water I used to drink, or the orange juice which I took for some days, or the extraordinary medical care, but because I had installed in my heart God whom I call Rama. I was so much attracted by the lines of this *bhajan* that I instructed the persons concerned to send me the correct words by telegram, as I had forgotten those words at the time. I was very happy when I received the whole *bhajan* by reply telegram. The essence of the *bhajan* is that Ramanama is everything and other gods count for nothing compared to Him. I am mentioning this instructive episode in my life because I want the A. I. C. C. members to think and deliberate with God in their hearts when they meet for the important session on Saturday. They will have to do so because they are representatives of all Congressmen. Hence, if the leading Congressmen have Satan instead of God in their hearts they are not true to their salt.

The Working Committee discussed for full three hours the resolutions to be placed before the A. I. C. C. During the discussion the question arose as to how the Hindu and the Sikh refugees could be honourably and safely sent back to their homes in West Punjab. They came to the conclusion that the trouble started from the Pakistan side,

[1] From February 10 to March 3, 1943.

[2] Sarojini Naidu (1879-1949); poetess and orator; President of the Indian National Congress in 1925; Governor of U. P., 1947-49

[3] *Nee* Madeleine Slade; joined Gandhiji in 1925

[4] Mahadev Desai (1892-1942);Gandhiji's private secretary from 1917 till his death on August 15, 1942

[5] और नहीं कुछ कामके, मैं भरोसे अपने रामके 1"I depend solely on my Rama, all others are of no avail," a *bhajan* by Tulsidas

but they also realized that when the wrong was copied on such a large scale and when the Hindus and the Sikhs resorted to acts of retaliation in East Punjab and the adjoining areas of the Union, the question of where the trouble started became insignificant. If the A. I. C. C. could claim with confidence that so far as the Indian Union was concerned, the days of madness were over and sanity reigned from one end of the Union to the other, the Committee could also say that the Dominion of Pakistan would be obliged to call back the Hindu and Sikh refugees with honour and safety. Such a situation can be created only when all Hindus and Sikhs install Rama in their hearts instead of Ravana. For, when you drive Satan out of your hearts and give up the present madness, every Muslim child will be able to move about with as much freedom as a Hindu or a Sikh child. Then, I have no doubt, the Muslim refugees who have left their homes under duress will gladly come over and the way will be cleared for the honourable and safe return of the Hindu and Sikh refugees to Pakistan.

Will my words have an echo in your hearts and will the A.I.C.C. be able to come to a wise and just conclusion?

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 78-9

284. MESSAGE TO STUDENTS' PEACE CONFERENCE[1]

NEW DELHI,
[On or before *November 15, 1947*]

An auspicious deed needs no blessings, for it is ever blessed.

The Hindustan Times, 16-11-1947

[1] The Conference began at Agra on November 15.

285. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

NEW DELHI,
November 15, 1947

CHI. MATHURADAS,

It is with great difficulty that I am dictating this letter when it is time for my afternoon sleep. I am lying in the sun with a mud-pack. It feels very nice to be in the sun.

I cannot be convinced that no improvement in your health is possible now.

I have no faith in the prognosis of doctors. I would rather that regardless of what they say you had faith in God and let things happen as they would. In your condition, instead of reading newspapers, should you not read books? Read Sanskrit or Gujarati. There are beautiful translations of Sanskrit books in Gujarati. Whatever occurs to you while reading, you can dictate. Why don't you engage a person who would take dictation and read out what you wish to hear? Waccha had almost gone blind but till the last moment he had his favourite books read out to him. Several such instances can be cited.

I am aware that I cannot see truth if I am impatient. It means nothing that I am free of pride in the eyes of the world. If it should be untrue, ahimsa would still be a long way off. The same about truth. In that case the very idea of the success of non-violence cancels itself out. Where there is non-violence, failure is impossible. So, wherever there is failure, all that can be said is that there had been no non-violence. It is another question as to who can distinguish between success and failure. I cannot be a witness to faults like pride, impatience, etc., I may be having. To a certain extent, only outsiders can be witness. The true witness is only God.

It should not even be imagined that the Hindus are being chided too much.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

286. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 15, 1947

I find that God keeps me wide awake these days. How grateful I am! I often think how blind I was years ago; or was it that God had deliberately made me blind? If I say that, however, I think I would be trying to avoid blame in a subtle way; hence only the first half of the previous sentence is correct. You are a student of the Vedas and the Shastras and therefore, I presume, you will understand what I mean.

Recently there was an incident. I have with me two young girls. They are almost of the same age; but not of equal education. One of them, it may be said, was brought up by me at Aga Khan Palace since her childhood. She is my granddaughter. The other. . . .[1] is also a close relation. I have put Chi. Manu to various tests in Noakhali. She is younger than . . . by one year. It must be said that by now Chi. Manu has learnt a good many things. But I have not been able to impress even the importance of prayer on. . . It is more desirable that we accept her as she is, rather than that I should forcibly wake her up or make her do things that please me. I therefore indulge her. But I have to look into my own heart to ascertain whether it is awake or sleeping. You must have seen my speech of yesterday. I do not think it will produce any effect. When a girl like . . . cannot see the importance of prayer, how can people understand what I said? God will do what He pleases. I consider it a good omen that my faith is growing every day. I hope you take good care of your health. You have still to do much work. And you must aspire to live for 150 years. How is nature cure progressing? I must do or die here. So there is no middle path.

Blessings to all.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 284-5

[1] The name has been omitted in the source.

287. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 15, 1947

. . . .[1] I must admit that there are differences of opinion between the two. . . .[2] No one can have any objection to mere differences of opinion. But it is bad when personal relations become strained on account of that. I am trying to make them see this. Not that what I say will be of any avail. And though I know all this, still I have to do or die in Delhi.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 286

288. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

NEW DELHI,
November 15, 1947

CHI. CHAND,

What a girl you are! Dev[3] arrived here only today; he will leave after two or three days' stay here. Your mother must have reached there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Chandrani Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

[1] Omissions as in the source
[2] *ibid*
[3] Dev Prakash Nayyar

289. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 15, 1947

The more I look within the more I feel that God is with me. He does not have two hands and two feet. My God is Formless and Faultless and it is He who is giving me strength. These days the Working Committee meeting is going on and I am doing some plain speaking with them. We shall perish if we become cowards, that is, the Congress will die. I have no doubt about this.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 285-6

290. SPEECH AT A. I. C. C. MEETING

November 15, 1947

I have come in your midst today. I came to Delhi[1] not to stay for long, but since my arrival many things have happened which should not have happened. And so I have had to prolong my stay here instead of proceeding to the Punjab. This explains my presence in your midst today.

I had made a vow to do or die. When the occasion comes I shall indeed either do or die. I have seen enough to realize that though not all of us have gone mad, a sufficiently large number have lost their heads. What is responsible for this wave of insanity? Whatever the cause, it is obvious to me that if we do not cure ourselves of this insanity, we shall lose the freedom we have won. You must understand and recognize the gravity of the plight we are in. Under the shadow of this impending misfortune the A. I. C. C. has met today. You have to face very serious problems and apply your minds to them.

There is the General Body of the Congress which meets once every year, but it is more or less demonstrative in character. The real Congress is the All-India Congress Committee, in whose keeping is the honour of the Congress. It is for you to give a lead to the Congress

[1] On September 9

and to see that it functions effectively and without any disruption within its ranks. That is why I want you to be true to the basic character of the Congress and make Hindus and Muslims one, for which ideal the Congress has worked for more than sixty years. This ideal still persists. The Congress had never maintained that it worked for the interest of the Hindus only. Must we now give up what we have claimed ever since the Congress was born and sing a different tune? Congress is of Indians, of all those who inhabit this land, whether they are Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs or Parsis. There have been Muslims, Christians and Parsis as Presidents of the Congress. But today we hear a different cry. Let me tell you that what we hear today is not the voice of the Congress.

You represent the vast ocean of Indian humanity. You will not allow it to be said that the Congress consists of a handful of people who rule the country. At least I will not allow it. I am an Indian to the last. Ever since I returned from South Africa I have tried to serve the Congress in every way and have done nothing else. I have tried to understand Indians from different walks of life, have lived with them, eaten with them and loved them. I have seen no difference between Harijans and other Hindus. That is how I am made.

The Congress is held responsible for whatever happens today. The situation has changed since August 15. I am leaving out of consideration what happened before that date. I do not wish to hear what part you played in the events that have happened since August 15.

I have not the right to sit here. I have much work to do outside this hall. That is why I had requested that I might be allowed to have my say and then take your leave. You might ask me any questions you like at the end of my speech, though there ought to be no necessity for such questions. I wish only to show you a little of the way so that you might find it easier to carry on your deliberations.

When we were fighting for our freedom, we bore a heavy responsibility, but today when we have achieved freedom, our responsibility has grown a hundred-fold. What is happening today? Though it is not true of the whole of India, yet there are many places today where a Muslim cannot live in security. There are miscreants who will kill him or throw him out of a running train for no reason other than that he is a Muslim. There are several such instances. I will not be satisfied with your saying that there was no help for it or that

you had no part in it. We cannot absolve ourselves of our responsibility for what has happened. I have to fight against this insanity and find out a cure for it. I know and I confess that I have not yet found it.

In Calcutta I was able to achieve a measure of success. I was to go to Noakhali. Suhrawardy wanted me to go there. But I said to him, "How can I go there when there is a fire raging here?" He replied that it was beyond his capacity to control the flames, but that I could do so. I did achieve some result in Calcutta. Peace is a simple thing which has become most difficult to achieve. Today we are reduced to such a state that not even an old man or a child feels safe, if he happens to be a Muslim. Under such circumstances we have met today. I have enough experience of such misfortunes and if you allow me and have the patience to hear me, I will say what I have to say. Then if you feel like it, you may do what I suggest.

Today your President Kripalani desires to hand over the responsibility of his office to other hands. You should accede to his request and select a new President. Twice or perhaps more than twice before this Kripalani had asked to be relieved of his office. I do not wish to know the reason for his resignation, though I would wish you to know it. What he has said is true.[1] In due course fresh elections for the president[ship] will be held when the annual session of the Congress meets. It is a matter of about four months. But even if the difference was only of ten days, I would still plead with you to relieve him, since he feels that he is unable to discharge his functions effectively. It is a law of nature that when a thing is not done well, it is ill done. You would not wish to have a President in whose hands your affairs go awry. It is beyond his power to create conditions where not a single Muslim's life will be unsafe in India. Those who say that since it is a matter of four months only, why not let the *status quo* continue, do not know what the nation is facing today. If you realize

[1] J. B. Kripalani, had said at the A. I. C. C. meeting: "While no one disputes the necessity of a close and harmonious co-operation between the Government and the Congress Executives, the difficulty is how to achieve it. The need for this co-operation is recognized in theory but I find it missing in practice. It may be due to the fact that all of us are not united on basic policies. Or it may be that this co-operation is lacking because I who happen to be the President of the organization do not enjoy the confidence of my colleagues in the Central Cabinet. If that is so, then I should be the last person to stand in the way of what is necessary in the interest of the nation."

the seriousness of the situation, it is your duty to relieve Kripalani. He himself confesses his inability to keep the reins of the Congress in his hands. When your pilot reports to you that he is unable to steer your ship, will you still say to him, 'Never mind what happens, but you remain at your post'? You should therefore forget about the four months and not worry about constitutional proprieties. What would you do if an accident happened to me? Law does not recognize accidents. Think of this also as a natural calamity and be content to accept his resignation and proceed forthwith to elect a president of your choice. You should also know that according to practice the Working Committee retires with the President.

The second point I wish to talk to you about is the Hindu-Muslim relations to which I have already made a reference. I am ashamed of what is happening today; such things should never happen in India. We have to recognize that India does not belong to Hindus alone, nor does Pakistan to Muslims. I have always held that if Pakistan belongs to Muslims alone, then it is a sin which will destroy Islam. Islam has never taught this. It will never work if Hindus as Hindus claim to be a separate nation in India and Muslims in Pakistan. The Sikhs too have now and again talked of a Sikhistan. If we indulge in these claims, both India and Pakistan will be destroyed, the Congress will be destroyed and we shall all be destroyed.

I maintain that India belongs both to Hindus and Muslims. You may blame the Muslim League for what has happened and say that the two-nation theory is at the root of all this evil and that it was the Muslim League that sowed the seed of this poison; nevertheless I say that we would be betraying the Hindu religion if we did evil because others had done it. Ever since my childhood I have known that Hinduism teaches us to return good for evil. The wicked sink under the weight of their own evil. Must we also sink with them? My own experience of sixty years has confirmed what Hinduism has taught me and my study of other religions has revealed the same thing. Islam too says the same thing. It is the basic creed of the Congress that India is the home of Muslims no less than of Hindus. I also know that the Congress has had no hand in what has happened. I do not need to quote the authority of the Congress Constitution to support my claim.

It is held by some that if we perpetrate worse atrocities on Muslims here than what have been perpetrated on Hindus and Sikhs in Pakistan, it will teach the Muslims in Pakistan a salutary lesson.

They will indeed be taught a lesson, but what will happen to you in the mean while? You say that you will not allow Muslims to stay in India, but I hold it to be an impossibility to drive away three-and-a-half crores of them to Pakistan. What crime have they committed? The Muslim League indeed is culpable, but not every Muslim. If you think that they are all traitors and fifth-columnists, then shoot them down by all means, but to assume that they are all criminals because they are Muslims is wrong. If you bully them, beat them, threaten them, what can they do but run away to Pakistan? After all, life is dear to them. But it is unworthy of you to treat them so. Thereby you will degrade the Congress, degrade your religion and degrade the nation.

If you realize this, then it is your duty to recall all those Muslims who have been obliged to flee to Pakistan. Of course those of them who believe in Pakistan and wish to seek their happiness there are welcome to migrate. For them there is no bar. They will not need military protection to escort them. They go of their own will and at their own expense. But those who are leaving today have to be provided with special transport and special protection. Such unnatural exodus under artificial conditions must cause us shame. You should declare that those Muslims who have been obliged to leave their homes and wish to return are welcome in your midst. You should assure them that they and their religion will be safe in India. This is your duty, this is your religion. You must be humane and civilized, irrespective of what Pakistan does. If you do what is right Pakistan will sooner or later be obliged to follow suit.

As things are we cannot hold our heads high in the world today and have to confess that we have been obliged to copy Pakistan in its misdeeds and have thereby justified its ways. How can we go on like this? What is happening is a provocation to war on both sides and must inevitably lead to it. You will then have to part company with Jawaharlal. And yet it is because of him that we are held in high esteem in the world today. He is respected outside India as one of the world's greatest statesmen. Many Europeans have told me that the world has not known such a high-minded statesman. I have known Americans who hold Jawaharlal in higher esteem than they hold President Truman. Even those who have fabulous wealth, vast armies and the atom bomb respect the moral worth of Jawaharlal's leadership. We in India ought to have due appreciation for it.

I repeat to you that it is your prime duty to treat Muslims as your brothers, whatever may happen in Pakistan. We will not return blow for blow but will meet it with silence and restraint. Restraint will add to your strength. But if you copy what happens in Pakistan, then on what moral basis will you take your stand? What becomes of your non-violence? If you approve of what has happened, then you must change the very creed and character of the All-India Congress Committee. This is the basic issue before you. Until you have faced it, you cannot solve any of the problems that are before you. When your house is on fire you must first put out the flames before you can do anything else. That is why I have taken so much of your time. Let all Muslims who have left their homes and fled to Pakistan come back here. India is big enough to keep them as well as the Hindu and Sikh refugees who have fled from Pakistan. What I wish to emphasize to you is that if you maintain the civilized way, whatever Pakistan may do now, sooner or later, she will be obliged by the pressure of world opinion to conform. Then war will not be necessary and you will not have to empty your exchequer.

One more point. I understand that a hundred-and-fifty thousand Muslims are about to be sent to Pakistan. You will say, they belong to the criminal tribes who are better sent to Pakistan. Why should they have to go? If there are criminal tribes in India, whose fault is it? We are to blame for not having reformed them. They were here during the British regime. Was there any talk of deporting them then? It is wrong of us to send them away because they are "criminal". Our duty should be to reform them. How shameful it is for us that we should force them to trudge three hundred miles on foot! I am against all such forced exodus.

Another problem that has arisen in the wake of the British withdrawal from India is the claim on the part of rulers of Indian States to do as they please. These rulers were kept in power by the British as henchmen of British imperialism. Some of these rulers have indeed tried to reform their ways and have adjusted their claims to the rights of their people. But the same cannot be said of all of them, though the number of the recalcitrant ones is very small. Their assertion of independence is as untenable as their claim to rule as they please is wrong. Because we are independent it does not mean that each one of us is free to do as he pleases. Such freedom means the end of all freedom. I therefore plead with these rulers to seek their good in the common good. If they do not carry the people with themselves, they will invite their own doom. I do not wish this to happen. If the Princes wish to survive, they can do so only as the

servants of their people. If they wish to rule, they can do so only as trustees of their people's welfare.

I claim to be an orthodox sanatanist. I know that my religion does not advocate untouchability. The mission of the Hindu Mahasabha is to reform Hindu society, to raise the moral level of the people. How then can the Sabha advocate the compulsory evacuation of all Muslims from India, as I am told it does? I know what some people are saying. 'The Congress has surrendered its soul to the Muslims. Gandhi? Let him rave as he will. He is a wash out. Jawaharlal is no better. As regards Sardar Patel there is something in him. A portion of him is sound Hindu, but he too is after all a Congressman.' Such talk will not help us. Where is an alternative leadership? Who is there in the Hindu Mahasabha who can replace Congress leadership? Violent rowdyism will not save either Hinduism or Sikhism. Such is not the teaching of *Guru Granthsaheb*. Christianity does not teach these ways. Nor has Islam been saved by the sword. I hear many things about the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. I have heard it said that the Sangh is at the root of all this mischief. Let us not forget that public opinion is a far more potent force than a thousand swords. Hinduism cannot be saved by orgies of murder. You are now a free people. You have to preserve this freedom. You can do so if you are humane and brave and ever-vigilant, or else a day will come when you will rue the folly which made this lovely prize slip from your hands. I hope such a day will never come.

You will forgive me for taking so much of your time. There is yet another point. "Control" is a vicious thing. It is responsible for much of the corruption that is rampant today. I am receiving innumerable letters and telegrams that confirm what I say. If you do not abolish control immediately, you will one day regret it. It makes people lazy and helpless. Do away with it. But before you proceed to other business, accept your President's resignation.[1]

A. I. C. C. File No. G. 43/II, 1947-48. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The A. I. C. C. accepted the resignation of J. B. Kripalani by their resolution of November 17. Rajendra Prasad was elected President of the Congress. According to *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase,* Vol. II, after the meeting of the A. I. C. C. Gandhiji said: "I am convinced that no patchwork treatment can save the Congress. It will only prolong the agony. The best thing for the Congress would be to dissolve itself before the rot sets in further. Its voluntary liquidation will brace up and purify the political climate of the country. But I can see that I can carry nobody with me in this."

291. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

November 15, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I think you would naturally expect me to convey to you what I said at the A.I.C.C. meeting in the afternoon. But I do not feel like repeating what I said. As a matter of fact I had said the same thing which I have been telling you all these days. If I am sincerely regarded as the Father of the Nation, it is true only in the sense that, after my return from South Africa in 1915, I had a big hand in giving the Congress the shape it acquired later. This means that I exercised a great influence throughout the country. But today I cannot claim that. I am not worried about it; at least I should not be. Everyone should do his duty and leave the result to God. Nothing happens without the will of God. Our duty is only to make the effort. Hence, I had gone to attend the A.I.C.C. meeting with the idea that if I was allowed to address the members before the deliberations started, I would put before them what in my view is truth .

I want to tell you something about controls. Since I spoke at length at the A.I.C.C. meeting on the other current topics of great importance, I could only briefly refer to the subject of controls.

I feel that continuing the controls is criminal. The policy of controls might have been good during the War. It may be good even today for a military nation. But it is harmful for India. I am sure that there is no scarcity of food or cloth in the country. The rains have not betrayed us this year. There is enough cotton in our country and enough people to work on the spinning-wheels and the looms. Apart from these, there are mills in the country. That is why I feel that both the controls are bad. We have also control on petrol, sugar, etc. I do not see any logical reason why we should have controls on such things. Controls make people lazy and dependent. Laziness and dependence are bad for the country at any time. I receive daily complaints about the controls. I hope that the representatives of the country would come to a wise decision and would advise the Government to remove the controls that encourage corruption, hypocrisy and black market.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 80-1

292. LETTER TO PYARELAL[1]

[After *November 15, 1947*]

I did receive copies of your correspondence with Nazimuddin . . . .[2] I liked the whole of it. Here are replies to your questions:[3]

As to his statement on Pakistan, in my opinion, Khwaja Saheb has overshot the mark. I can understand their objecting to propaganda in favour of reunion backed by action. But how can they ban the holding or the propagation even of views contrary to the Pakistan Government's present policy, or the cultivation of public opinion in favour of those views? You should see Khwaja Saheb personally or write to him to get the issue clarified. No one may try to coerce the Pakistan Government but surely everyone has a right to bring home to the Muslims the error of what has taken place and to convert them to one's view if possible. Send me the draft of your letter to Khwaja Saheb before posting.

You have referred to my attitude in regard to the British Empire. Let me tell you, I derived no little strength from my implicit loyalty to the British Empire in thought, word and deed. I am doing exactly the same in regard to Pakistan.

What is happening in Tripura is very wrong. It is naked coercion. But if the people of Tripura have no grit, if they are stupid or if the State administration is rotten to the core, what can one do? I do not think you can do anything in this matter. . . . Of course, you can help with advice. If by coming into personal contact with the State officials you could get them to behave as men, it would be a great thing.

I cannot regard the Noakhali situation as 'normal' in any sense

[1] This was in reply to Pyarelal's letter which mentioned the probability of his going to Delhi "during the next three or four weeks". The addressee did not receive the letter at Noakhali and came to know about it only when he rejoined Gandhiji at Delhi on December 15.

[2] Omissions in the letter are as in the source.

[3] The addressee had drawn Gandhiji's attention to a statement by Khwaja Nazimuddin, Chief Minister of East Bengal, that even cultivation of public opinion in favour of a reunion with India would be treated as treason against the State. For extracts from the addressee's letter, *vide* Appendix "Extract from Letter from Pyarelal", After 23-11-1947.

so long as the corruption is not rooted out. Death at a stroke is better than death by inches.

On the surface there is peace here. But so long as hearts are not united it is like a castle built upon sand. You are perfectly right that so long as things on the top do not come right here there will be no real improvement there.

The story about that little boy is very touching.[1] The decision about the use of the fine money was very appropriate. The action taken by the local Muslims does them credit. . . .

I have already written to you that you should come whenever the situation and your work there permit.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 530-1

293. LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

NEW DELHI,
November 16, 1947

CHI. CHAMPA[2],

I have your letter. Whose handwriting is it? I was not convinced. I smell in the letter the old Champa. If you cannot stay in the Ashram, how can you stay in any other institution connected with it? I have written to Aryanayakum[3], too, and asked him. I am in no hurry. I don't wish to displease you. Even though you may be my daughter, I will not agree to act contrary to dharma through you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XX

[1] Some Muslim urchins in a village in Noakhali had performed a mock conversion of a Hindu boy forcing him to drink what was supposed to be cow's blood. The elder Muslims awarded to the offenders punishment by caning and a fine of five rupees each to be paid to the aggrieved party. The latter would not accept the money, saying that only genuine repentance could wipe off the insult to their religion. Later, both parties agreed to utilize the sum to provide powder milk to Muslim orphans of the locality.

[2] Wife of Ratilal Mehta

[3] E. W. Aryanayakum, Secretary, Hindustani Talimi Sangh

294. LETTER TO ABBAS

NEW DELHI,
November 16, 1947

CHI. ABBAS,

I have your letter. Has the rot entered Bhavnagar also? Whether or no, what can it do to you? Let things be as they will. You should go ahead with your own work. Your behaviour at any rate should be faultless.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

295. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

November 16, 1947

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Regarding your letter to Sushilabehn the correct view is that for the present you should be content with as much as you can achieve with the help of the amount which you have already received. If the C. P. Government offers some money and if you feel that you needs must accept it, then Sushilabehn, Jaju[1] and the others, not I, can advise you in this regard. I think you or I could hardly have anything to say about it. As for me, I would know nothing from this long distance. I should of course like it if you have a Persian wheel instead of an engine, but the final decision must rest with Sushilabehn. Since it is a hospital establishment you are bound to need a lot of water.

I can offer no solution whatsoever in the case of Chandra-prakash. I cannot even visualize a complete picture of him. Hence, if I should guide you in the matter it would be no more than a pretence. I cannot be said to have given a clear verdict. I must therefore content myself with letting things take their own course.

[1] Shrikrishnadas Jaju, Treasurer of Hindustani Talimi Sangh and Secretary of A.I.S.A.

It will be a welcome attitude if we give in to his objection, in case Aryanayakum raises one in the matter of the potter. I may not understand all his decisions. But that is a different matter. If the potter could live on his own, if he is a good person and an expert pot-maker, we ought to accommodate him, irrespective of Chandraprakash's presence or otherwise. If his is a case of leprosy we should put up with it. Moreover, I understand it is not yet in a contagious form. This simplifies the problem.

How is the problem of Champa now?

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

296. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 16, 1947

I have read your advice. Is it not a fact that though Narasinh Mehta used to sing his *bhajans* in the midst of Harijans these *bhajans* are today chanted in your temples? Hence all advice is like soap-suds. Soap does produce lather; but this lather alone does not remove the dirt. Clothes become clean only when they are rubbed with hands. Similarly, if you wish to understand the nature of my work, you should delve deeper into it; otherwise all this is like pebbles inside a dried gourd.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 290

297. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 16, 1947

Recently the Working Committee had been meeting here and I did not have time even to breathe. But it is your duty to write to me even if I don't write. Your first duty, however, is to take complete rest and recover your health. If you have now lost faith in nature cure, consult a good doctor in Bombay. If he suggests an operation, have it done. Do write if you need any help from me.

Yes, what you say is true. The political atmosphere has become vitiated. But you are forbidden to worry over it until you are fully recovered. And if the Congress has become rotten, I have no doubt that it is bound to die. Rotten things cannot last long in the world and if a rotten thing is kept in some place it emits foul odours. I hope you know this. So repeat Gurudev's[1] words "It will not do to worry" like a *mantra* and get well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 290-l

298. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 16, 1947

One should admit one's failings. One who admits his failings progresses in life. How long will we remain rebels? I feel you should submit your resignation. I prefer a bad man who admits his failings to a good one who does not even try to see his mistakes. We have no right to see the shortcomings of others. None of us is a perfect *sthitaprajna* yet.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 291

[1] Rabindranath Tagore

299. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

November 16, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

It is indicated in the *bhajan* sung this evening that man's highest endeavour lies in trying to find God. He cannot be found in the temples or in the places of worship created by man. Nor can He be found by observing fasts, etc. God can be found only through love and that love should be not worldly but divine. Mirabai who saw God in everything lived in such love. For her God was all in all.

The ruler of the Rampur State is a Muslim. But that does not mean that it is a Muslim State. The late Ali Brothers[1] had taken me there many years ago[2] and I stayed with them. I had the pleasure of meeting the then Nawab also, for he was a friend of the well-known nationalist Muslims of the day, the late Hakim Ajmal Khan[3] and the late Dr. Ansari[4]. In those days the Hindus and the Muslims used to live there more peacefully and in greater harmony than today. But the Hindu friends who came last Sunday from that place to meet me had an altogether different tale to tell. They told me that though that State had acceded to the Indian Union it was still under the insidious influence of the Muslim League. Had that been the only obstacle, it could have been easily overcome. But there is also the Hindu Mahasabha assisted by members of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh who wish that all the Muslims should be driven away from the Indian Union.

The problem is how the Congressmen who are loyal to the Congress objectives can strengthen their position. Can they offer satyagraha with any hope of achieving success? They were happy to know that the A. I. C. C. is firm about the Congress objectives and is

[1] Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali

[2] On March 6, 1919

[3] (1863-1927); Chief physician to Nawab of Rampur, 1892-1902; President of the Indian National Congress, 1921; First Chancellor of Jamia Millia Islamia, 1920-27

[4] Dr. M. A. Ansari (1880-1936); eminent physician and surgeon, Member, Congress Working Committee; General Secretary of Indian National Congress in 1920, 1922, 1926, 1929, 1931 and 1932; its President in 1927; Chancellor, Jamia Millia Islamia, 1928-36

opposed to turning India into a country in which only Hindus could live as masters. The principles and objectives of the Congress are so broad-based that they include all the communities of the country. There is no room in it for narrow communalism. It is one of the oldest political organizations. Its only objective is service of the people. The Rampur Congressmen are gaining strength for their struggle by what is happening at the A. I. C. C. meeting. Even so, those people were keen to know my views in the matter. I told them that I was not well acquainted with the situation prevailing there; so I could not lay down any law and I did not have the time either to study the situation. But this much I can say with full confidence that satyagraha is the greatest force in the world, before which the opposing forces which they had mentioned cannot survive for long.

These days it is a fashion to describe any armed opposition or opposition of any kind as satyagraha. That only harms society. Hence, if you understand the true meaning of satyagraha and realize that the living God, in the form of truth and love, is with the satyagrahi, then you would not hesitate to believe that no one can ever succeed against satyagraha. I am sorry to say what I was constrained to say about the Hindu Mahasabha and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh . I would be happy to know if I am wrong. I have met the Chief[1] of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. I had attended one of the meetings of that organization.[2] Ever since, I have been reprimanded for having attended its meeting and have received many letters of complaints about the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh.

Though all of us are engaged in extinguishing the fire of communalism in the country, we should not forget our fellow-beings living outside India. You are well aware that the Indian Delegation[3] to the United Nations is fighting for the rights of the Indians in South Africa with great courage and unity. All of you know Smt. Vijayalakshmi Pandit[4]. She is the leader of the Indian Delegation not because she is the sister of Jawaharlal Nehru, but because she is

[1] M. S. Golwalkar, known as Guruji

[2] *Vide* "Speech at R. S. S. Rally", 16-9-1947.

[3] Which consisted of Vijayalakshmi Pandit, M. C. Setalvad, K. M. Panikkar and Maharaj Singh

[4] (b. 1900); daughter of Motilal Nehru; leader of Indian Delegation to U. N. O., 1946, 1947 and 1963; Ambassador of India in U. S. S. R., 1947-49, and the U. S. A., 1949-52; India's High Commissioner in England, 1954-61; Governor of Maharashtra, 1962-64

able and carries on her work efficiently. She is accompanied by a good team and they all speak there with one voice.[1] I was pleased most by the speeches of Zafrullah Khan[2] and Isphahani[3] which appeared in the newspapers today. At the United Nations, they said in plain words that Indians in South Africa were not given the same treatment as the whites. They are being insulted there and boycotted as if they were outcastes. It is true that the Indians in South Africa are not poor and hungry. But man cannot live by bread alone. Money has no value before human rights. And the South African Government does not give these rights to Indians there. The Hindus and the Muslims in India do not have divided views on the problems concerning the Indians living abroad. This only proves that the two-nation theory is incorrect. The lesson which I have learnt from it and which is also the lesson people should learn after my mentioning it today is that love is the highest thing. If the Hindus and the Muslims can speak unitedly outside India, they can certainly do so here as well, provided there is love in their hearts. Man is prone to commit mistakes. But he can rectify his mistakes if he wants to. This too is natural for man. It is always possible to forgive and forget. If we can do this today and can speak with one voice here as we do outside, then we would get over our present troubles. As far as South Africa is concerned, I hope their government and the whites there would profit by what is being openly said by distinguished Hindus and Muslim with one voice.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 81-4

[1] During the debate at the United Nations Political Committee on November 15, M. C. Setalvad, protesting against the treatment of Indians in South Africa said: "Human rights and fundamental freedoms, which this Committee and Assembly are called upon to vindicate, are not only a matter of concern to the 250,000 Indians and other Asians settled in South Africa, they affect millions of human beings all over the world who look to this organization to protect them against the vicious doctrine of racial superiority and racial arrogance."

[2] Mohammad Zafrullah Khan, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Leader of the Pakistan Delegation to U. N. O., supported the Indian stand and said: "I do not know the Bible very well but I have been told that the Boers of South Africa are deeply attached to the Bible. Is the treatment of Indians in the Union in accordance with the teachings of a Christian civilization?"

[3] M. A. H. Isphahani, Pakistan's Ambassador to the U. S. A., stated during the debate: "The grievance of Indians is with regard to measures which entrench upon their own legitimate rights as nationals of the Union of South Africa and which reduce them to a position of inferiority and subservience to European settlers."

300. HOW TO GROW MORE FOOD[1]

Are your little seedlings coming up well—are those of you, with no land, growing mustard and cress salads, and improving your health by eating them? These thoughts pass through my mind. And this big question is also always there: *How many of you are really doing the thing*? May God inspire you with energy and faith.

Here is the promised list[2] of vegetables. As it takes up a lot of space, the hot weather list will be carried over into the next issue of the *Harijan.* Mirabehn's is an apposite question. It will be interesting to know how many are profiting by her hints. Will such please send their names to the editor of the *Harijan*, Ahmedabad?

NEW DELHI, November 17, 1947
Harijan, 30-11-1947

301. CONTROLS

It is now becoming clear to me that the controls on foodgrain, cloth, etc., are unwarranted. I keep getting letters and telegrams in support of my view.

As against this there are many who consider themselves experts on the subject. They write scholarly articles. Many of them are servants of the old foreign Government. I do not wish to disregard any of them merely for the sake of doing so. But I cannot help it if failure to be convinced by their ideas is considered as disregard for them. Would a person who is getting scorched in the sun believe a pundit who says that sunshine is not hot and his feeling scorched is merely an illusion? Such is my condition.

Experts and officials genuinely feel that we do not have sufficient foodgrain in our country. I not only hold the contrary view, but I say that the deficit of foodgrain if any can be met with a little effort by a large number of people. What can the Government do if

[1] This was the fourth and last of a series of articles on the subject by Mirabehn.
[2] This is not reproduced here.

people become lethargic or indulge in malpractices and as a result suffer death? The Government should find out ways and means to remove lethargy and take steps to eradicate malpractices. It should not procure foodgrain by fair means or foul and encourage malpractice and lethargy.

But I don't wish to write a treatise here. The people of Gujarat know how to carry on trade and there are skilled farmers there. The soil is fertile and water is available. What do they think? Is it true that lethargy and malpractice are behind this scarcity of food? If not, why should there be need for control in Bombay? Even if lethargy and malpractice are there, is it not possible to overcome them? Why cannot the farmers and businessmen of Gujarat or rather the whole of Bombay province prove that there is no scarcity of food and cloth and, even if there is, it can be removed immediately? Can they not do this much?

NEW DELHI, November 17, 1947

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 23-11-1947

302. LETTER TO LORD ISMAY

November 17, 1947

DEAR LORD ISMAY,

Will 3 p. m. on Wednesday next suit you?[1] If you would prefer any other time, please tell me.

While I shall be glad to welcome you where I am staying please be sure that I could as easily come to you. You shall decide.[2]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 282

303. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN[3]

November 17, 1947

This[4] you can do here with me or otherwise. What that otherwise can be, I do Dot know. . . . I do not believe as some do that non-violence can only be offered in a civilized or partially civilized society. Non-violence admits of no such limit.[5]

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 283

[1] The addressee, Chief of the Viceroy's Personal Staff, had sought an appointment with Gandhiji.

[2] In his letter dated November 18, the addressee confirmed the appointment with Gandhiji.

[3] (b. 1891); popularly known as "Frontier Gandhi"; founder of the Red Shirt or Khudai Khidmatgar movement; Member, Congress Working Committee

Several thousand Khudai Khidmatgar workers had been arrested and convicted without trial. Khan Obeidullah Khan, son of Dr. Khan Saheb, was arrested on November 14. Their weekly paper *Pakhtoon*, was banned. These reports were causing concern about the Khan Brothers' safety.

[4] Gandhiji had suggested to the addressee "openly to leave the Frontier Province and develop the non-violent technique from India".

[5] The addressee, "in reply, sent word to Gandhiji not to worry but just send him and his associates his blessings and prayers".

304. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
November 17, 1947

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I admit it is my failure that I could not write to you in my own hand. But these days there are a great many instances of such failure on my part. Strength is limited and work is heavy. Today is silence-day and I am therefore able to write this letter, though, to be sure, the shoulder is feeling the strain now. I am sad that you have fallen ill again. But one must pay the penalty demanded of the body. You did well in going to Calcutta again. I hope they will carry out a successful operation now. Janakibehn[1] had exactly the same trouble.

As a last resort you have Ramanama. But its success depends on one condition being fulfilled, like the success of any other experiment. Ramanama has its full effect only when it proceeds from the heart. The habit of mechanical repetition must of course be formed in any case. From the lips it may by and by sink into the heart. That is why we pray aloud. I expect another letter from you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 158

[1] Widow of Jamnalal Bajaj

305. LETTER TO INDU PAREKH

November 17, 1947

CHI. INDU,

Your letter. I learnt just now that you had a younger brother[1]. I don't remember to have received any letter in that connection. Why need Father grieve over the event? Illness comes and goes. But while illness is bad, death is a friend. Surely, Jayanti[2] would marry some day, is it not? Would the desire for marriage spare even a communist? See me when you come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 6259

306. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

November 17, 1947

CHI. JIVANJI[3],

I write more in English these days because it is more convenient to do so. The reason is not that my articles might reach those also who know English. I feel unhappy that I am not able to write in Gujarati. The truth is that these days I get no time to write for *Harijan.* I do as He bids. I try to write one article [every week].

The pamphlet regarding constructive work is Iying in front of me. I shall finish it at the earliest opportunity.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9986. Also C. W. 6960. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

[1] Madhu Parekh
[2] Jayanti Parekh, addressee's brother
[3] Manager, Navajivan Press

307. A LETTER

November 17, 1947

You will find in *Harijanbandhu* my recent article[1] on controls. I have no doubt in my mind that controls will mean controls over our minds too, and we shall not be able to taste the sweet fruit of freedom. Many people argue the case before me; but when I start asking questions they cannot answer them. I agree that it would be good if we could provide jobs for the staff that will be retrenched when controls are removed. I feel like laughing when these people, motivated by their self-interest for the time being, argue that a revolt would erupt in India if there were no controls. But at the same time I also feel depressed. I would remove controls even at the cost of a revolt. That has always been my way. I have travelled thus far through fiery ordeals. And I have limitless faith in God. Don't we have a proverb, "He who has provided the teeth will also provide the food?" There is an element of truth in it. But there must also be full effort.

I am pulling on somehow. These days we are busy with the A.I.C.C. meeting. There is great pressure of work. I hardly have time to breathe. Letters have heaped up. I am all right. Everything here is quite uncertain at the moment. But God will certainly show a way out.

I hope all of you are quite well. Blessings to all.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 295-6

[1] *Vide* "Controls", 17-11-1947.

308. A NOTE[1]

November 17, 1947

I find that talk of khadi and village industries does not interest people any more. Here I am sitting in the capital. Refugees are lying all round shelterless and shivering. Thousands are pouring in every day. How long will you feed them without giving them any work? I am sure everyone will remember this old man one day when it is realized that India has no alternative except to develop village industries.

Any government formed by any party—Congress, Socialist or Communist—will be forced to accept this truth. We do not realize this today, but we shall realize it after we stumble in our attempts to compete with America or Russia.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 296

309. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 17, 1947

I feel very sad that we still write to each other in English. When both of us know Hindi quite well, why do we still write [in English]? I will not feel that we are independent and free so long as we do not pay attention to these small little things. Why need I tell you all this? or is it that I have become old and senile? So much for today. . . .[2] Things are getting worse here. Let us see how God guides us.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 296

[1] This was addressed to a member of the All-India Village Industries' Association.

[2] Omission as in the source

310. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

November 17, 1947

Yesterday I spoke about Rampur and our countrymen in South Africa. Today I feel I must deal more fully with the latter subject. I have lived in South Africa for twenty years from 1893 to 1914 with a break probably of one year. During that long and formative period of my life I came naturally in closest contact with all kinds of Indians as also with the white settlers of that sub-continent almost as big as ours. Between then and now if South Africa has risen, India has made giant strides. What seemed to be impossible only the other day has happened. We need not go into the causes. The fact is that India has come into the British Commonwealth, i.e., she has exactly the same status as the Union of South Africa. Should members of one Dominion be helots in another Dominion? An Asiatic nation enters the Commonwealth for the first time in its history with the willing consent of all the members of the Commonwealth.

Mark now the following message that the Administrator Dr. S. P. Barnard of Orangia sent to the Natal Indian Congress of Durban five days after the entry of India in the Commonwealth:

> As you are celebrating Independence of the new Dominions which you can consider a great day in the annals of Indian history, I hope all Indians in South Africa will now emigrate voluntarily to the new Dominions to act as missionaries of the gospel they have been taught in South Africa, namely, to live in peace and order and not to fight in communal riots in which hundreds are being killed in India.

It is worthy of note that Dr Barnard evidently doubts whether the entry was a great event. And then he treats the Natal Indian Congress with the gratuitous advice that the Indians of South Africa should emigrate to India and become "missionaries of the gospel they have been taught in South Africa, namely, to live in peace and order and not to fight in communal riots". I very much fear that this message is typical of the average white man's mind in the South African Dominion. Hence the series of disabilities on our countrymen

[1] As Gandhiji was observing silence, his written message in Hindustani was read out.

for the crime of being Asiatics and having a coloured pigment. I appeal to the best western mind of South Africa to revise this anti-Asiatic and anti-colour prejudice. They have an overwhelming African population in their midst. They are worse treated in some respects than the Asiatics. I urge the European settlers to read the signs of the times. Either this prejudice is wrong from every point of view or the British people and their fellow-members of the great Commonwealth have made an unpardonable mistake in admitting Asiatic countries as members. Burma is about to get her independence,[1] Ceylon will presently become a member of the Commonwealth.[2] What does it mean? Membership of the Commonwealth is, I am taught, as good as independence, if not superior to it. Responsible men and women of these independent States need to ponder well as to what they will do with their independence. Is all this movement towards multiplying independent States, though proper and healthy in itself, to result in another war more deadly, if possible, than the last two, or is it to end, as it should, in the promotion of universal brotherhood?

"A man becomes what he thinks", says an *Upanishad mantra*[3]. Experience of wise men testifies to the truth of the aphorism. The world will thus become what its wise men think. An idle thought is no thought. It would be a serious mistake to say that it (the world) will become as the unthinking multitude act. They will not think. Like a mob they will follow.[4] Independence should mean democracy. Democracy demands that every citizen has the opportunity of receiving wisdom as distinguished from a knowledge of facts so called. South Africa has many wise men and women as it has also

[1] The Burma Independence Bill which was passed by the House of Commons on November 14, came into force on January 4, 1948.

[2] Under the Ceylon Independence Bill, passed by the House of Commons on November 26, Ceylon was to become a self-governing "near-Dominion" within the Commonwealth in February 1948.

[3] यथाकारी यथाचारी तथा भवति । साधुकारी साधुर्भवति । पापकारी पापो भवति पापः पापेन । अथो खल्वाहुः काममथ एवार्थ पुरुष इति । स यथाकामो भवति तत्क्रतुर्भवति तत् कर्म कुरूते: यत्कर्म कुरूते तदभिसंधते ।

—Brihadaranyadopanishad, *4. 4.5*

According as one acts, according as one behaves, so does he become. The doer of good becomes good, the doer of evil becomes evil. One becomes virtuous by virtuous action, bad by bad action. Others, however, say that a person consists of desires. As is his desire, so is his will; as is his will, so is the deed he does, whatever deed he does, that he attains.

[4] This sentence has been translated from *Prarthana Pravachan*—II.

many able soldiers who are equally able farmers. It will be a tragedy for the world if they do not rise superior to their debilitating surroundings and give a proper lead to their country on this vexed and vexing problem of white supremacy. Is it not by this time a played-out game?

I must keep you for a moment over the much-debated question of control. Must the voice of the people be drowned by the noise of the pundits who claim to know all about the virtue of controls? Would that our ministers who are drawn from the people and are of the people listened to the voice of the people rather than of the controllers of the red-tape which, they know, did them infinite harm when they were in the wilderness! The pundits then ruled with a vengeance. Must they do so even now ? Will not the people have any opportunity of committing mistakes and learning by them? Do the ministers not know that they have the power to resume control wherever necessary, if decontrol is found to have been harmful to the people, in any instance out of the samples, by no means exhaustive, that I am giving below? The list before me confounds my simple mind. There may be virtue in some of them. All I contend is that the science, if it is one of controls, requires a dispassionate examination and then education of the people in the secret of controls in general or specified controls. Without examining the merits of the list I have received I pick out a few out of the samples given to me: Control on exchange, investment capital issues, opening branches of banks and their investments, insurance investments, all import and export of every kind of commodity, cereals, sugar, *gur*, cane, and syrup, *vanaspati*, textile, including woollens, power, alcohols, petrol and kerosene, paper, cement, steel, mica, manganese, coal, transport, installation of plant, machinery, factories, distribution of cars in certain provinces and tea-plantation.

Harijan, 30-11-1947

311. A LETTER

November 18, 1947

CHI. . . .,[1]

Chi. Manudi took, or it would be equally true to say, I gave her, about ten minutes before writing this letter to you. She read out your letter to me and asked a question. In answer to that I gave her a long lecture. Has it not become my profession to lecture people? I would not be surprised if it only justified the ancient Sanskrit saying "wise in advising others". Because today unforeseen events are overtaking us from all sides, I am fumbling in the dark in search of a way out. Your letter is certainly inspiring; but I have to do or die here. If heart unity is not restored in Delhi, I can see flames raging all over India. And I have no strength, nor the courage to reach that far. I would much rather spend myself in Delhi.

I must admit that only the intellectuals and political leaders are responsible for the present distressing atmosphere. The poor peasants in the villages do not even know that India has become free. Hence I have not the least hesitation in saying that we are grossly abusing the intelligence and energy which God has bestowed upon us. Now you will understand what it is I am trying to put across or what pain fills my heart. My prayer today is "one step enough for me"[2]. I am keeping well in spite of all that is happening and I hope you are also well. The fact that one can keep fit physically and mentally, whatever the circumstances be, is a sign of one's nearness to God. My Rama is not a man with two hands and two feet. But if I am perfectly fit it is due to Rama's grace. Chi. Manudi is well trained. But after all she is only a girl, in the playful age of 16 or 17—she is almost a child. When I discuss with her or dictate to her such spiritual subjects, it occurs to me how dense I was at the age of 18. As compared to that, this girl has developed quite well. At the same time I am also conscious that I may be putting too heavy a burden on her tender mind with my discussions or dictations of such highly pedantic matters. But she is always very happy and keeps cheerful. Only she does not take care of herself, because of which I have to scold her

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

[2] From "Lead Kindly Light" by Cardinal Newman

often. These days she has been making notes and summaries of my interviews with visitors, and she has been doing it quite well. Of course she shows me all she writes down. While she is growing in other directions, her physical growth has been stunted. There is such a rush of visitors and so much writing work to be done that I am unable to talk to her however much I may wish to.

Well, today I have dictated a very long letter. And now my eyes are also closing. Chi. Manudi will certainly write about other matters. When I get up after a little rest Rajendra. Babu[1] and others will arrive. I hope you are all well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 304-5

312. TALK WITH RAJENDRA PRASAD

November 18, 1947

I realize that just when you started devoting yourself to agriculture you have to give it up.[2] But there is no alternative. Either this institution [Congress] has to be disbanded or if it has to be kept alive we will need a man of dynamic personality. You should tour the whole country and if possible go to the villages also. The people are agitated but nobody is there to listen to their grievances. We have given innumerable promises in our speeches that we shall ensure the welfare of the people. It is enough that we humbly admit that we are unable to fulfil our promises, and give them a sympathetic hearing. . . .[3]

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 305-6

[1] Rajenda Prasad (1884-1963); joined Gandhiji in 1917 during the satyagraha in Champaran; President of Indian National Congress, 1934 and 1947; Member for Food and Agriculture in the Interim Government; President, Constituent Assembly; Union Minister for Food and Agriculture; President of India, 1950-62

[2] Rajendra Prasad had resigned as Minister for Food and Agriculture on his election as President of the Congress, the office of which he took over on December 22.

[3] Omission as in the source

313. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

November 18, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You must have read the resolutions[1] passed by the All-India Congress Committee. Some of those resolutions are useful in our life—in a good part of our life. It may as well be said that they are useful in the life of every man. They are not the resolutions merely to be implemented by the Government. For instance, the resolution on controls is the one which has to be implemented by Jawaharlal, Rajendra Prasad—now Rajendra Prasad is out—and also by others. They have to implement the policy of control on food, cloth and every other thing. We too have to do the same thing. If we resort to cheating and do not abide by the law, the result would be disastrous. When we can do with one yard of cloth, why should we buy ten yards and try to convince ourselves that no harm will be done if it is bought and tucked away in the house? If we develop such an attitude, become self-centred and not think of India we will turn into rogues.

The resolutions of the All-India Congress Committee are so important that I wanted to explain them to you one by one. I am still here, and I shall say something about the resolutions if I get a chance. But let me at least tell you the substance today. There is a resolution about bringing back the people who have left their homes in panic and this resolution applies to everybody. All of us, from Kanyakumari to Kashmir, belong to India. What if India has been divided All of us have to shoulder the responsibility because we are all brothers. If only one individual goes on stuffing his belly and does not care for the poor—if he eats for pleasure—he is stealing and commits a crime against India. What if India does not possess all the foodgrain she requires? The poor also should get foodgrain. If the rich get just a few *chhataks*[2] and are able to manage with the same I would consider that the rich and the poor have become equal. Apart from anyone else, let me talk about the rich person in whose house I am living. If you ask me whether Shri Ghanshyamdas manages with his legitimate quota, I would say he does not. I have got to tell the truth after all. Because he

[1] *Vide* Appendix "A. I. C. C. Resolutions", 15/16/17-11-1947.

[2] One-sixteenth of a seer

is a man of means, he is able to procure everything. I do not know if all those who come here are able to have milk. I get milk. I do not know how and from where that milk comes. His idea is to somehow get milk for me, whether he has to keep one goat or two; and to get the best quality of wheat, because I am, after all, a Mahatma. He provides for me greens or fruits, whatever I want. I do not ask him from where he gets those things. Something must be offered to the members of the Working Committee when they come to visit me. So, they are given fruit juice. He owns property worth crores of rupees. That is the case with the wealthy people. Millionaires can get all those things. But something can happen only when they deprive themselves a little. How else can the poor get things for themselves? Let the rich and the businessmen not indulge in profiteering. Let them become honest. They may make profit but just enough to satisfy their hunger. How wonderful if all of them would follow the same system about profits! Why should there be control on food? There is no need at all for it. It would be good indeed if everyone became like this.

The most important thing is that we cannot rest in peace till all the refugees go back to their homes. It is madness to kill the Muslims or drive away those who have run away from Pakistan in panic leaving their property there. Now the All-India Congress Committee has issued orders that people have to be kept wherever they are, and in comfort, and those who wish to return to their homes have to be sent back. Thousands of millionaires managed to come away even leaving their beautiful houses, but the poor are still left behind. I do not intend speaking about every point today. But the resolution shows where our duty lies. And that is the most important thing. If we take it for granted that the Muslims are a worthless lot, it is a grave sin. It is the supreme duty of all of us not to drive away anyone. People have seen the Working Committee resolution three or four days ago and they have also seen the indications in the Press. In spite of that the Muslims are running away. People say that the A.I.C.C. accepted this resolution because of my insistence. They say that the Muslims should go away, otherwise they would be killed. People ask me if I would be a witness to the slaughter of Muslims. I have already said what I would do—I would ‘do or die,. When I am ready to die, the Muslims too should be ready to die if the need arises. We have become so heartless that we want them to walk 300 miles in this cold winter. It is said that there are not too many deaths in the camps—some ten or twenty die every day. Now, out of five, ten or fifty thousand if so many people

die, has anyone tried to estimate how many people would die in India at this rate? Should it not be our concern as to how they die? Some of them do not get food, some have cholera, some get dysentery, or something else happens to them. But does anyone bother to know why these people die? We are worried about the availability of food and all the other things we need. We are always on the look-out for settling the Hindus and the Sikhs in the houses of Muslim evacuees. Of course, the situation is not the same everywhere. But it is certainly so in many places. This has pained me very much and I have conveyed my feelings to you many times. Now even the A.I.C.C. has said that what has happened is highly deplorable. This thing has to be conveyed to the millions and it cannot be done in one day. There are great men in the Government—Jawahar, the Sardar, Rajendra Babu (but Rajendra Babu is not there now)—and how could [other members] displease them? That is why they agreed to it. I have heard that now there are even some Congressmen who think that the Muslims should not live here. They think that only then can Hinduism prosper. But they do not know that Hinduism is degenerating day by day. It would be dangerous if they did not change their attitude. All the members of the A.I.C.C. are the representatives of India as a whole. If they are all one at heart, as they should be, then the entire face of India would change. It is their duty not to allow anything else to happen. Their primary task is to find out how they can bring back all those who have fled from here. We would be restless till we brought back all the Muslims who have gone away from India. We have to create the necessary climate and that is not difficult. It is a great thing that there are still 350 million Muslims in India. Nobody knows how many have gone away and how many are going to come. Supposing all those who have gone away came back, it would mean no expenditure, for us, for they would be living in their own houses, since they have their houses here. Our job is only to return their houses to them. But are all those houses vacant? Refugees have occupied those houses by force. But they would have to be accommodated in spite of that. If we act without proper thought and if our hearts are not clean, outsiders would wonder if the representatives of India were hypocrites. I think they are not. Those days are over when we used to be angry with the Muslims and wanted them to go away. Today we consider them as our brethren.

I would like to believe that the people of Delhi and Gurgaon have become good. When I had been to Panipat recently, I saw people

living in amity. But now I hear that the refugees have occupied the houses of the Muslims and the Muslims want to go away to Pakistan. The Muslims might say that they did not want to go to Pakistan willingly as neither any delicacies nor good clothes would be available there. And how could things be otherwise? The people there are in the same condition as we are here. After all, it is not as if there were more provisions for them there while they had nothing here. Those who have gone away write back that it would have been much better if they had remained in India. Having left their hearth and home, they are now living in camps and are in great distress. It is bound to be so. Then, why do the Muslims of Panipat want to go to Pakistan? If that is so, Panipat is a test for me and I too may have to go there. Panipat is about 50 miles from here. It cannot be called a distant place. It is just like Delhi. Now, even if a single Muslim is forced to go to Pakistan, it would hurt me and it would hurt you. Of course, when they stay here, they must get food and clothes from the money they receive. They are industrious, they earn and subsist on it. How will they live if they earn money but cannot have food? If the craftsmen, who have been like brothers, have to leave just because refugees from the Punjab have come, nothing could be worse than that. I would tell all the refugees at Panipat that they should give up the houses of the Muslims and the Muslims too should say that they would stay there. They should say that they do not need police for protection and they would live in amity. The police should only see to the distribution of food and clothes. They need do nothing more. Then I would say that the A.I.C.C. has done a good thing and we are all with it. We may not be four-anna members of the Congress, but we respect the organization. Let us today also support and follow what this organization, which has served the country all these days, is with full deliberation saying in these adverse circumstances. That is all I would like to say for the day.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, PP. 88-93

314. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
November 19, 1947

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I had your letter. You may wind up the construction work with the consent of all, but certainly not before receiving such consent. The difficulties which you notice are psychological and bespeak a subtle form of egoism. Financial arrangements have already been made for the construction work. But in any case how does it concern you? You have nothing to do with that. You will have done your part when you complete the task assigned to you.

Decide about where to stay only after Kanchan[1] returns. The decision will have to be approved by her. You should do nothing against her wishes.

I am surprised that you can think of leaving Sevagram. For some, Sevagram is their very body. That means that leaving Sevagram is committing suicide. And suicide is forbidden in all circumstances. If you yourself are good others at Sevagram will also be good. Sevagram is not something apart from you. People are afraid of you and, therefore, avoid asking you to do anything. If you become steady in your mind, it will be easier for others to ask for your help. I ask you to do things because both Kanchan and you put trust in me. That trust must not be forced. If that trust is lost, you would have no justification for writing to me and I for offering you any advice. May all three of you keep well and live a good life.

I suppose you understand that such a wish can be expressed for a child.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7224. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Addressee's wife

315. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
November 19, 1947

CHI. KANCHAN,

I have your letter. I see that you have still not learnt to write letters. My cart is jogging along, but it seems to have got stuck here just now. I don't see any chance of my going over to that side in the immediate future.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 6976. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

316. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 19, 1947

Don't you know that these days I have stopped sending messages? I have only one preoccupation: 'Do or Die'. I shall think of other activities only when I have accomplished either of the two. The situation here is getting worse every day. It is not a question of Hindu-Muslim riots only. The rancour within has now come out in the open, and it would not be wrong to say that the present delicate situation is a reflection of it.

I have digressed to other matters. But you may take it that my blessings go with any good work. So think of God and get on with the work.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 311

317. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 19, 1947

We should be agreed on some matters at least, or should we not? Even as regards language we have raised such a storm that one might think a rebellion had broken out. The matter is simple. Our language should be that which the millions of villagers in India can understand and read with ease. If I had my way, I would give the same place to language as has been given to khadi in the Congress Constitution. I would allow only those who knew Hindustani to become members of the Congress. We should now have no resolutions in English. How many persons understand English in a mass meeting? But mine is like a pipe of carrot[1] and I continue to blow it whether or not it produces any sound.

The problem of States will be solved easily in most cases. Among the Kathiawar States, the attitude of Bhavnagar appears very sound, although there have been no negotiations directly with the Raja yet. I believe that his response will be good. Many of his men come here for discussion.

I am keeping well by God's grace. I have no doubt that we shall suffer if we neglect khadi. The Congress will not survive in a democracy if it abandons any one of the constructive activities. No party which does so will survive. The reason is that when you are there at the helm of affairs, you have been entrusted with power by the people in the hope that you will strive to relieve their misery. If we do not make such efforts and neglect those which have already been initiated, what fate will be in store for us? In the end, may God grant good sense to all.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 311-2

[1] A Gujarati saying

318. LETTER TO M. A. HUNAR

[*November 19, 1947*][1]

CHI. HUNAR,

I have your letter. Now there is no need to go to Ahmedabad. I understand what you say about language. The question of staying at Patna also does not arise now. I would therefore like you to go to Sundarlal[2] rather than elsewhere. I have discussed the matter with him. He will arrange for your maintenance. Consult him and do what he suggests.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

319. LETTER TO RATANDEVI

[*November 19, 1947*][3]

CHI. RATAN,

I got your beautiful letter. Have I not written at length on the subject of blessings?[4]

I do have a keen desire to visit Vanasthali. But does not its fulfilment depend only on God?

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In the source the letter is placed among those of this date.

[2] (1886-1981); nationalist leader and a prolific writer; member of the Congress Working Committee, 1930-31; started a number of magazines including *Karmayogi;* wrote *Bharatmen Angrezi Raj* and a comparative study of the *Gita* and the Koran; President of the All India Peace Council; Founder-President of the India-China Friendship Association

[3] In the source the letter is placed among those of this date.

[4] *Vide* "When a Blessing becomes a Curse", 11-11-1947.

320. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 19, 1947

Truth and ahimsa had been the weapons for achieving swaraj. Today we have forgotten both. Actually it was my fault that I believed that people had truth and ahimsa in them. But I was mistaken. Anyway I consider it my good luck that God has at last opened my eyes. And I regard it as God's grace that even if I can do nothing else at least I shall now be able to do or die. I do not wish now to live for 125 years. I would either like to die bravely taking the name of God or, if Hindus and Muslims became sincere friends, would tour the whole of India and then go to Pakistan.

How are you? How is Behn? Write about everything. The boarding-house must be functioning well. Tell all your students that I would very much like to go and stay amongst students because I am myself a student. Most of our problems are solved automatically if one remains a student or a humble person throughout one's life. But today I am confined here. Let all the students be united and forget that they are Hindus, Muslims, Banias or Brahmins. I think that if they realize that they are all Indians, my presence there will not make much difference.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 312-3

321. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

November 19, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Last evening I referred to the main Resolution on Hindu-Muslim relations passed by the A.I.C.C. But unfortunately today itself I have to cite an instance to show how that Resolution is being rendered futile in Delhi. I had never imagined that on the very evening when I was expressing my doubt about the behaviour of the public, that doubt would be proved right in the heart of old Delhi. I was told last night that a large crowd of Hindus and Sikhs had

gathered in front of a Muslim's shop in Chandni Chowk. Though the shop belonged to a Muslim, the owner had abandoned it and gone away. The shop had been given to a refugee on condition that he would give it up when the owner returned. Fortunately, the owner of the shop has returned. He did not want to give up his business for good. The officer in charge of the allotment came to the refugee and asked him to vacate the shop. The refugee hesitated at first, but then agreed to vacate it when the owner came to take possession in the evening. When the officer went again in the evening he found that instead of vacating the shop the occupant had informed his friends who had collected there to overawe whoever [forced them] to vacate it. The few constables at Chandni Chowk could not control the crowd, and they sent for more help. The police or, may be, military arrived and fired in the air. The crowd dispersed in panic, but a. pedestrian was stabbed in the bargain. Fortunately the wound did not prove to be fatal. But this demonstration of the trouble-makers had a strange result. That shop was not vacated. I do not know if the order of that officer was defied or the shop has ultimately been vacated. Nevertheless, I do hope that the Government will not fail to punish the culprit if it has to retain its true authority under our precious freedom. Otherwise, the Government will have no authority at all. 1 am told that the crowd of Hindus and Sikhs was not less than two thousand.

I have understated the news that was given to me. If there is room for correction and if it is brought to my notice I will gladly let you know about it.

This is not the only thing. In other parts of Delhi, too, attempts are being made to drive the Muslims out of their houses, so that the Hindu and the Sikh refugees could be accommodated there. The Sikhs go about brandishing their swords and threaten the Muslims with dire consequences if they refuse to give up their houses. I am also told that the Sikhs drink liquor, the consequences of which can be well imagined. They dance about with their naked swords and scare away the pedestrians. I am also informed that according to custom Muslims do not sell *kababs*[1] and other meat preparations in Chandni Chowk and nearby areas. But the Sikhs and perhaps other refugees, too, freely sell these forbidden things there. This hurts the feelings of the Hindus in that locality. The nuisance has grown to such an extent that people cannot easily pass through the crowded Chandni Chowk.

[1] Meat cutlets

They are afraid of being insulted. I appeal to my refugee friends that they should not indulge in such things for their own sake and for the sake of the country.

As for the *kirpans,* the Sikhs have been forbidden by law to carry *kirpans* larger than the prescribed size. While this law is in force, many Sikh friends come to me with a request that I should try to have this restriction withdrawn. They told me about the judgement passed by the Privy Council several years ago which permitted the Sikhs to carry *kirpans* of any size. I have not read that judgement. I think the judges have interpreted *kirpan* to mean sword of any size. The then Punjab Government, in order to carry out the Privy Council's decision, declared that everyone was free to keep a sword. That is why in the Punjab men carry swords of any size they choose.

I have no sympathy with the Punjab Government or the Sikhs in this matter. Some Sikh friends have brought to my notice certain portions from the *Granthsaheb* which support my view that the *kirpan is* not a weapon to be used to attack the innocent. Only the Sikhs abiding by the tenets of the *Granthsaheb* can use the *kirpan* for the protection of innocent women, children and old and helpless people. That is the reason why one Sikh is regarded equal to one-and-a-quarter lakh opponents. That is why any Sikh who takes intoxicants, who gambles, or is prey to other vices, has no right to keep a *kirpan* which is a symbol of purity and restraint and which is to be used only on particular occasions in a prescribed manner.

In my view, it is not only futile but also harmful to seek the help of the now defunct judgement of the Privy Council to justify the indiscriminate use of the *kirpan.* We have just freed ourselves from foreign rule. It is highly improper to do away with all necessary restrictions in our state of freedom, because, without those restrictions, society cannot make progress. Hence, I would tell my Sikh friends that they should not bring the great Sikh religion into disrepute by using the *kirpan* for doubtful purposes. Let them not destroy a religion which has been shaped by a number of martyrs in whose martyrdom the world takes great pride.

I wash to draw your attention to another thing. I have been informed about a refugee camp where the army has been accused of rude behaviour. The entire life of the camp should be a model from the point of view of inner and outer cleanliness. To preserve such cleanliness [the police and the army] should vie with each other.

Hence I hope that the information I have received does not apply to these protectors of law and order, and that it is only an exception. The army and the police should be the first to experience the glow and excitement of freedom. Let not the people get a chance to say that good behaviour can be expected of them only under strict discipline imposed on them from above. They have to establish through correct behaviour that they too can become good and ideal citizens of India. If these protectors of law disregard law itself, it would be difficult to carry on administration at all. And it would be all the more difficult to implement the Resolutions of the All-India Congress Committee.

After presenting the gloomy side of the picture, I would now like to present the bright side also. I have just heard an eye-witness account of great valour which I am going to narrate to you.

Mir Maqbool Sherwani was a young brave leader of the National Conference at Baramula. He had just entered his thirtieth year. On learning that he was an important leader of the National Conference the invaders tied him to two poles near the Nishat Talkies. They first beat him up and then told him that he should give up the National Conference and its leader Sheikh Abdullah, the lion of Kashmir. They told Sherwani that he should swear loyalty to the Provisional Government of Azad Kashmir which had its headquarters at Palundry.

Sherwani refused to give up the National Conference under pressure. He made it clear to the assailants that the Sheikh was the head of the Kashmir Government, that the Indian army had already reached Kashmir and, before long, would repel the assailants.

On hearing this, the assailants were enraged and were in panic. They riddled his body with fourteen bullets. They cut his nose and disfigured his face and pasted a notice on his body: “This man is a traitor. His name is Sherwani. All traitors would be treated in the same way.”

But within 48 hours of this ruthless murder and bloodshed, Sherwani’s prophecy came true. The invaders fled from Baramula in panic and the Indian army chased them away.

Anybody, whether Hindu, Sikh, Muslim or anyone else, would be proud of such martyrdom.

A friend of mine has related an instance of a proud moment whose lustre would not fade even in the most painful situation and an instance of friendship which proves its worth in the moment of

greatest trial. It is the story of Narayan Singh, a Sikh ex-officer. He has lost enormous property in West Punjab. Now he is in Delhi. He has nothing left, which means that he would be compelled to beg or to let death claim him. He met an old friend who he did not want to suffer on his account because he was not bothered by his own misfortune. The Sikh officer was very happy to meet Ali Shah, his old friend and colleague. Ali Shah too has lost his entire property, but not because of communal frenzy but because of some other misfortune. He too is a courageous man like Narayan Singh and both of them are proud of their friendship. When they met after a separation of twenty-five years, they were so happy that they forgot their misfortune.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 93-8

322. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

November 20, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I have received two notes from the same person. In one note he says that he has given up his job and wishes to work under me. In the second note he expresses his desire to sing a *bhajan* at the prayer. As for his first wish, I can't help saying that it was a mistake to have given up his job. It is true that during the British days I had exhorted people to give up their jobs and non-co-operate with the Government. But that is not the case now. Anyone who wishes to serve his country can do so while carrying on with his job. If every wage-earner does his job honestly and without indulging in any kind of violence, he is no doubt serving the country. The writer of the note should realize that I have no work to offer him. If he wants to render service, he must do something for the goshala about which I am going to talk presently.

As for singing *bhajan* at the prayer, it is not that everyone can be allowed to sing. Only people known to be servants of God can do so with prior permission.

I was happy to find the camp[1] admirably clean. There are dharmashalas at various places for the pilgrims who come there during the fairs. These fairs are organized there periodically. At present these dharmashalas are being used for the refugees. There is some difficulty about water supply, which the officials are trying to remedy. I have no doubt that if water supply can be guaranteed, many more refugees can be accommodated there.

Now that I am talking about the refugees, I shall speak about their shortcomings to which my attention has been drawn. I am told that the refugees are indulging in black market among themselves. The officers who are in charge of looking after the refugees are themselves, I am told, at fault. I learn that it is impossible to find a place in the camps without bribing the officers who are in charge of the camps. As regards other things also, their behaviour is not above reproach. True, all officers cannot be guilty, but the entire ship can sink because of one sinner.

Then I am told that the refugees also indulge in petty thieving. I expect from them honest and straightforward behaviour. I am told that some of the quilts provided to the refugees to protect them against cold are torn up, the cotton thrown away and the chintz cover is used for making shirts, etc. I have been told of many such things, but I do not wish to waste your time by narrating all the misdeeds of the refugees. I wish promptly to come to the topic of the evening.

In a locality called Kishanganj in Delhi a goshala is having its annual function. Acharya Kripalani is going to preside over that function tomorrow and I am being pressed to attend the function at least for ten minutes. I felt that I should not attend any function just for show. I cannot do or see anything in ten minutes. Moreover, I am so much involved in these communal problems that I have no time to attend to other things. Hence, I expressed my helplessness and, realizing my difficulty, the organizers excused me. They told me that they would be satisfied if I would say something about *gosev*—especially about goshalas, during the prayer meeting. I readily agreed to do so. I have stated in plain words that the task of preservation and increasing the cattle wealth of India and taking proper care of the cow and calf is much more difficult than attaining political freedom.[2] I

[1] The Okhla camp which Gandhiji had visited in the afternoon along with Sucheta Kripalani and others

[2] *Vide* "How to Save the Cow", 22-8-1947.

claim that I am working with faith and devotion in this field. I also claim that I have true knowledge of how the cow can be saved. However, I do admit that so far I have not exercised any influence on the public which may lead them to give to the problem the attention it deserves. Those who manage the goshalas know how to spend money or collect funds for the purpose. But they have no knowledge at all about rearing the cattle scientifically. They do not know how to rear the cow so that it may yield more milk. They do not know how to rear the oxen or improve their breed.

That is why, throughout India, goshalas, instead of being the institutions where one could learn the art of rearing the cattle, where there would be ideal dairies providing the best quality of milk and the best breed of cows and oxen, are places where the cattle are herded together in a pitiable condition. The result is that India, instead of being a prominent country where the best breed of cattle and the best quality of milk should be available at the cheapest rate, is the lowest in the world in this regard. The people managing the goshalas do not even know that the dung and urine of the cattle can be used most profitably. Nor do they know how best to utilize the dead cattle. The result is that because of their ignorance crores of rupees are being lost. An expert has stated that our cattle wealth is only a burden on the country and deserves to be destroyed. I do not agree with this view. But, if the general ignorance in this matter persists for some time more, I will not be surprised if our cattle become a burden on the country. That is why I hope that the management of this goshala would do its best to make it an ideal institution from every point of view.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 98-101

323. LETTER TO WALTER RITTER

BIRLA HOUSE,
NEW DELHI,
November 21, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter. I am glad that your son is in India and hope he is doing well.

I fancy that I remember most things about my stay at Villeneuve in 1931. I know about Romain Rolland's death[1] .

You should know that I am a much misrepresented man if I am also a somewhat esteemed man. I have been learning all my life to remain unaffected by praise or blame. My attempt has not altogether been vain. Whatever I said during the war about Japan or Great Britain was published in the newspaper I was editing till it was suppressed. But it would be wrong to say that "my sympathy went with Japan against Great Britain'. As a matter of fact, I wrote strongly against Japan's misdeeds as I did against those of Great Britain and I put down in writing the non-violent way of resisting Japan's aggression on India.

Much more baseless is the charge about my "agreement to the use of weapons in case of a brother-war between Hindustan and Pakistan." My writings would show the contrary. My views against war and non-violence remian just as strong as they ever were.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

WALTER RITTER, ESQ.
ENGINEER
USTER SWITZERLAND

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] In Switzerland on December 30, 1944

324. LETTER TO ULI RITTER

BIRLA HOUSE,
NEW DELHI,
November 21, 1947

DEAR RITTER,

Herewith enclosed is my answer[1] to your father's letter as per his advice that I should send it to you.

I hope you are flourishing in Bombay.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

ENCL: ONE
ULI RITTER, ESQ.
ENGINEER
C/O MESSRS VOLKART BROS.
BOMBAY.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

325. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

November 21, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

While I am making my speech before you, the goshala is probably celebrating its annual function about which I told you yesterday. I would like to mention one thing. In the course of my speech yesterday I did not mention about the dairies conducted for the soldiers all over India. Dr. Rajendra Prasad told me that these dairies are still in operation. Many years ago I had visited[1] the Central Dairy at Bangalore. It used to function under the supervision of Col. Smith.I had seen some beautiful cattle there. One of them was a prize cow. It was believed that she was the best cow in the whole of Asia. I

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[1] On June 12, 1927; *vide* "Letter to William Smith", 14-6-1927.

do not quite remember if she used to give a daily yield of 75 lbs. Of milk or whether she really yielded so much milk at one time. That cow used to roam about without any restriction anywhere she chose. Fodder used to be kept for her at various places, which she could eat any time she chose. This is the bright side of the picture. I have not seen the other side of it. But I am authentically told that a large number of male calves are killed, because all of them cannot be turned into bullocks that can carry heavy weight. These dairies are spread over hundreds of acres of land if not more. They are meant specially for European soldiers, and crores of rupees have been spent on them. Now that we no longer have the British soldiers in India, I do not deem them necessary. I am sure that if the Indian soldiers know that such expensive dairies are being run for their sake, they will feel ashamed. I am also certain that the Indian soldiers will not demand what ordinary citizens cannot claim as a matter of right.

The most authentic and perhaps complete information about the cow and the buffalo can be found in a voluminous treatise[1] written by Shri Satis Chandra Das Gupta of the Khadi Pratishthan. It is not filled with extracts from other books but is based on his personal experience and written during one of his imprisonments. The book has been translated into Bengali and Hindustani. Those who read it carefully would find it extremely useful in improving the cattle breed and increasing the yield of milk. There is a comparative study of the cow and the buffalo also in the book.[2]

These are all relevant questions. I am no great scholar of history. I do not even claim to be a learned man. But I have read in an authoritative book on Hinduism that the word "Hindu" does not occur in the Vedas. When Alexander the Great invaded India, the people living in the region east of the river Sindhu, which is called the Indus by the English-speaking Indians, were described as the Hindus. The letter 'S' of the Sindhu became 'H. in Greek. The religion of the people living in this region came to be known as Hinduism which, as you are well aware, is the most tolerant of all religions. It gave shelter to the Christians who had escaped from the harassment of the people

[1] *Cow in India,* published in two volumes. For Gandhiji's preface to it, *vide* "Foreword to *Cow in India*", 20-5-1945.

[2] Gandhiji then referred to a question from the audience, "What is meant by 'Hindu'? What is the origin of that word? Is there anything called Hinduism?"

of other religions. Besides, it also gave shelter to the Jews known as Beni-Israel and also to the Parsis. I feel proud to belong to Hinduism which embraces all religions and is very tolerant. The Aryan scholars followed the Vedic religion and India was first known as Aryavarta. I do not wish that once again the country should be known as Aryavarta. The Hinduism of my conception is complete in itself. Of course, it includes the Vedas, but it also includes many other things. I do not think it is improper to say that I can proclaim the same faith in the greatness of Islam, Christianity, Zoroastrianism and Judaism without in any way impairing the greatness of Hinduism. Such Hinduism would live so long as the sun shines in the sky. Tulsidas has expressed this idea in his couplet:

> Compassion is the root of religion, pride the root of sin. Do not give up compassion, says Tulsi, so long as there is life in you.

The sister[1] who accompanied me during my visit to the Okhla camp was upset because she wondered if the misconduct in some of the refugee camps I had mentioned was related to the Okhla camp. I paid a very hurried visit to the Okhla camp, and so it is impossible to mention any such thing about it. In my speech I have mentioned the misconduct in the refugee camps in general.

I cannot help mentioning the fact that according to the information received by me 137 mosques have been almost destroyed in Delhi during the riots. Some of them have been converted into temples. There is one such mosque near Connaught Place which can never remain unnoticed by anyone. Today there is a tri-colour flag flying over it. It has been changed into a temple by installing an idol in it. Desecrating the mosques in this manner is a blot on Hinduism and Sikhism. It is gross *adharma* in my view. The blot which I have mentioned cannot be wiped out by saying that even the Muslims in Pakistan have desecrated the Hindu temples or changed them into mosques. In my view, any such act can only destroy religion, whether it is Hinduism, Sikhism or Islam.[2]

Even at the risk of having to stay longer than usual at the prayer meeting I would like to say one thing in the end as a matter of

[1] Sucheta Kripalani, *vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 20-11-1947.

[2] Gandhiji then read out the A.I.C.C. resolution on this subject, *vide* Appendix "A. I. C. C. Resolutions", 15/16/17-11-1947.

duty. I am told that the Roman Catholics are being harassed near Gurgaon. This has happened in a village called Kanhai which is 25 miles away from Delhi. An Indian Roman Catholic priest and a Christian missionary came to meet me. They showed me letter which gave the description of the harassment of the Roman Catholics at the hands of the Hindus. Surprisingly, the letter was written in Urdu. I think the Hindus, the Sikhs and others living in that area can speak only Hindustani and write only in the Urdu script. The persons who brought the information told me that the Roman Catholics were threatened, that they would have to suffer if they did not leave the village. I hope this threat is unfounded and that the Christian men and women would be allowed to follow their religion and carry on their work without any hindrance. Now that we have freed ourselves from political bondage, they, too, are entitled to the same freedom to follow their religion and occupations as they had under the British. The freedom we have achieved does not imply the rule of Hindus in the Indian Union or that of Muslims in Pakistan. I have already told you in one of my speeches[1] that when the anger of the Hindus and the Sikhs against the Muslims abated it was likely to be directed against one another. But I did not expect my prophecy would come true so soon. The anger against the Muslims has not yet completely calmed down. As far as I know, these Christians are absolutely innocent. It has been pointed out to me that their only fault is that they are Christians. Their greater fault is that they eat beef and pork. When out of curiosity I asked the priest if there was any truth in it, he said that those Roman Catholics had on their own given up eating beef some time ago. If such childish prejudice persists, the future of India is bound to be dark. When the priest was at Rewari, he was deprived of his bicycle, and he narrowly escaped death. Would this misery end only with the extinction of all non-Hindus and non-Sikhs?

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 101-5

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 21-10-1947.

326. RAYS OF HOPE

Although there is from all sides so much debris of hope, now and then one sees a few rays of hope penetrating through this debris. The reflection is due to a study of my correspondence file for the *Harijan* which has been carefully kept for reading during moments of leisure.

One such letter is from Shri Shivabhai Patel of Bochasan Residential School. He has sent me a few unvarnished facts and figures of the work done during the annual celebrations. He is ably assisted by Gangabehn[1] of the late Satyagraha Ashram of Sabarmati' now known as the Harijan Ashram and the ever indefatigable Ravishankar Maharaj[2], with his two sons who have not deserted him. A speciality of the recent celebration was that instead of the usual mechanical contrivance for carding, they resorted exclusively to the *tunai* process. This time the management was induced to begin a boarding-house for the children of those who, in that part of India, are considered to be a backward race. The beginning has been made with only ten inmates. After seven years of suspension, they have recommenced the day school for boys who have finished four years' course in ordinary schools. They expect to have a further six years, bringing the boys up to the matriculation standard minus English and plus a good grounding in khadi work, carpentry or agriculture. Unlike past years, during the year under observation, the parents have become interested in the upright conduct of their children. The result is that during the four months preceding the celebration of October last, the boys who were given to hard smoking and drinking strong tanning tea, have shed the habit which was ruining them. The earnestness of the boys has affected their parents who have also given up these evil habits that make chimneys of their mouths and ruin their digestive apparatus. When the boys were admitted, they could not sit still or hold their tongues for five minutes. They have now learnt to enjoy hand-spinning in perfect silence for one hour. Gangabehn who is in complete charge of the dairy of the institution takes good care to provide pure cow's milk.

[1] Gangabehn Vaidya

[2] Ravishankar Vyas, who devoted his life to the uplift of the Baria tribe in Gujarat

During the celebration days the students' recitations consisted of useful dialogues which were largely attended. They had also an unpretentious exhibition of all the processes that cotton undergoes before it comes out as khadi. Twenty-three students took part in a competition—for neat calligraphy, a subject about which there is so much indifference as if neatness of handwriting was no part of good training.

NEW DELHI, November 22, 1947

Harijan, 30-11-1947

327. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 22, 1947

I am thinking of going to Panipat and staying there. I do not wish to take many workers with me. Manu will of course be there. If . . .[1] wants to go with me he may. But I think it would be better if he went to Rajkot or stayed with . . . .[2] for the present. Because it is a matter of "do or die" with us. And there is no knowing when this *yajna* will end. Jawahar does not like the idea. I am trying to bring him round. If he is persuaded and consents willingly, I may leave for Panipat at the earliest.

You must not be anxious in the least. Rama is the Protector of us all. As long as I have this faith, everything is right with me. God knows what will happen to me the day I lose this faith. That is the reason why I remain so cheerful in spite of being surrounded by this raging fire. I am at peace. I get sound sleep. I keep well.

My blessings to you all. I hope everyone is keeping well. If you find the time, make a copy of this letter and read it to the Ashram inmates.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 333

[1] The names are omitted in the source.

[2] *ibid*

328. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 22, 1947

Now we are daily growing more and more barbarous. Yesterday I had some Christian visitors. I did not talk about them at length in the prayers, but they too are being harassed a lot. That is why I am praying within, 'O Rama, now take me away soon.'

I have to admit that the intellectuals and the leaders are more responsible for these disturbances than the common people.

Look at what happened in Sind. All the leaders managed to come away and the innocent people are being killed. Can we turn so sinful and deceitful? It makes me shudder.

This is the situation today. Let us see what God ordains ultimately.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 332

329. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

November 22, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I have received information about some instances of similar harassment[1] to the Christians at Sonepat also. I am told that the Christians were first requested to allow use of their buildings for the refugees. They readily agreed, for which they were also thanked. But that gratitude turned into a curse, for their other buildings were also forcibly occupied for accommodating the refugees. They were then told that they should leave Sonepat it they did not wish to subject themselves to misery. It my information is correct, it is clear that the disease is spreading and no one can say where it would lead India.

While discussing the subject with friends I was told that so long as the atrocities in Pakistan do not abate, not much improvement can

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 21-11-1947.

be expected in the India Union. In support of this argument I was shown Press reports about what is happening in Lahore. I personally do not accept Press reports to be absolutely correct. I would also warn the newspaper readers not to be easily carried away by the newspaper reports. Even the best of newspapers are not above giving exaggerated reports and embellishing them. But supposing what you read in the newspapers is all correct, still we should never imitate bad examples.

Imagine a square frame to which no slate is fixed. If you mishandle that frame its right angles would become acute and obtuse angles. But if the frame is once again held properly at one end, the remaining three angles would automatically become right angles.

Similarly, if the people and the Government of the Indian Union behave well, I have no doubt at all that Pakistan would also give proper response and the whole of India would once again come to her senses. This harassment of the Christians who have, in my view, committed no crime, should be an indication that it is not proper to let this madness spread. And, if India has to keep its prestige before the world, this madness should be combated sternly and at once.

There are doctors, lawyers, students, teachers, nurses, etc., among the refugees. If they segregate themselves from the poor refugees, they would not be able to learn anything from their own misfortune. I feel that all professional and non-professional, rich and poor refugees should live together and build ideal cities just as the rich people of Lahore made Lahore an ideal city which the Hindus and the Sikhs had perforce to give up. Such cities would relieve the burden of overcrowded cities like Delhi and this would lead to better health and progress of the people living there. If over two lakh refugees at the Kurukshetra camp become ideal in the matter of inner and outer cleanliness, and if the professional and the rich people live with the poor on terms of equality and live a life of contentment in these colonies of tents, and if they do their own work, beginning with sanitation, etc., and engage themselves in some useful work throughout the day, they would cease to be a burden on the Government treasury. And the people in the city, in their turn, would not stop at merely admiring the simplicity and co-operation of the refugees, but would feel ashamed of their own lives, and follow the good example of the refugees. Then the present bitterness and mutual jealousies would vanish in no time. And the refugees, no matter how large their number may be, would no longer be a matter of worry for

the Union and local Governments. The world would admire the ideal life of these millions of refugees.

In the end, I would talk about removing controls, especially the controls on food and cloth. The Government hesitates to remove controls because it feels that there is a real scarcity of food and cloth in the country, and the prices of these commodities will shoot up if the controls are removed and the poorer sections will have to suffer a great deal. The Government thinks that the poor can be saved from starvation by continuing the controls and that they can be provided sufficient clothes. The Government is suspicious about the traders, cultivators and the middlemen. It fears that these people are waiting like hawks for the removal of controls, so that they could fill their pockets with tainted money at the cost of the poor. The Government has to make a choice between the two evils. It thinks that continuing rather than removing the controls is the lesser evil.

That is why I appeal to the traders, middlemen and cultivators that they should dispel these doubts about them and assure the Government that the prices will not rise when the controls are removed. It may not be possible to root out black market and underhand dealings by removing the controls but the poor would have a much easier time than now.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 106-8

330. LINGUISTIC REDISTRIBUTION

Acharya Shriman Narayan Agrawal writes to me a letter published in the columns of the *Harijan Sevak.* Its purport is that new universities should not be established before the proposed linguistic redistribution of Provinces. The following is the rendering of his argument[1]:

I entirely endorse the suggestion underlying the foregoing letter, viz., that what is proper to be done should not be delayed without just cause, and that what is improper should not be conceded under any circumstances whatsoever. There can be no compromise with evil and since linguistic redistribution is desirable from almost

[1] Which is not reproduced here

every point of view, all delay in carrying out the project should be avoided.

But the reluctance to enforce linguistic redistribution is perhaps justifiable in the present depressing atmosphere. The exclusive spirit is ever uppermost. Everyone thinks of himself and his family. No one thinks of the whole of India. The centripetal force is undoubtedly there, but it is not vocal, never boisterous; whereas the centrifugal is on the surface, and in its very nature makes the loudest noise, demanding the attention of all. It manifests itself most in matters communal. This has given rise to fear in other fields. The history of the quarrel between Orissa and Andhra, Orissa and Bihar and Orissa and Bengal is fresh in our minds. The whole of it has not died out even now. This is but an illustration of an almost accomplished fact. The other provinces were never redistributed in law though they were in 1920 when the Congress had a brand new constitution[1] enabling it to put up a life-and-death struggle with perhaps the greatest empire that has ever been. How will Madras, though divided by the Congress divide itself into four provinces, and Bombay do likewise in law? Many other claimants have come to the fore. They are not recognized by the Congress but they are not less vocal or less insistent. The Congress does not command the prestige and authority it found itself in possession of in 1920. Despair has given place to hope. Now, when we have freedom, we seem not to know what to do with it. It is almost mistaken for suicidal anarchy. Even zealous reformers would postpone controversial issues to a more hopeful time when, in the interest of the country, the virtue of 'give and take' would be freely recognized and all sectional interests would be subordinate to the one interest of the good of India, which will include the good of all. Therefore, these who, like me, want constructive suggestions to come into play at this very moment, have to work to bring about a healthy atmosphere, promoting concord in the place of discord, peace in the place of strife, progress in the place of retrogression and life in the place of death. That happy day will be most manifest when the communal strife has died out. Meanwhile, will the Southern linguistic groups settle their disputes and boundaries, will Bombay produce an agreed scheme of redistribution according to language, and will the new candidates withdraw their claims at least for the time being? Then linguistic redistribution can come into being today without the

[1] *Vide* "Congress Constitution Adopted at Nagpur Session", December 1920.

slightest difficulty or fuss.

Let there be no undue strain upon the Congress, whose foundations have been shaken to their roots. It is ill-equipped today either for arbitrating between rival claimants or imposing its will upon recalcitrants.

NEW DELHI, November 23, 1947

Harijan, 30-11-1947

331. UNBELIEVABLE

A correspondent writes:

> Those who advocate the policy of undivided Bengal shall be punishable with death is the Gazetted order of the East Bengal Government.

I should like to see the text of the order before I can believe it. I feel sure that even if there is any order to some such effect, the exact wording would bear a different meaning. I can understand the criminality of such action. There are very few Hindus and certainly not many Muslims who believe in the advisability or justice of the step. But only a mad man would advocate any forcible measure to upset the settled fact. The partition can be undone only by the willing consent of both the parties. But even that consent will be impossible, if no one is allowed to convert public opinion to the side of unity.

NEW DELHI, November 23, 1947

Harijan, 30-11-1947

332. DEATH—COURAGEOUS OR COWARDLY

A Bengali friend writes a long letter in Bengali on the exodus from East Pakistan. Its purport is that though workers like him understand and appreciate my argument and distinction between death—courageous and cowardly—the common man detects in my statement a not-too-hidden advice in favour of migration. He says: "If death is to be the lot in any case, courage becomes of no count; for man lives but to escape death."

This argument seems to beg the question. Man does not live but to escape death. If he does so, he is advised not to do so. He is advised to learn to love death as well as life, if not more so. A hard

saying, harder to act up to, one may say. Every worthy act is difficult. Ascent is always difficult. Descent is easy and often slippery. Life becomes livable only to the extent that death is treated as a friend, never as an enemy. To conquer life's temptations, summon death to your aid. In order to postpone death a coward surrenders honour, wife, daughter and all. A courageous man prefers death to the surrender of self-respect. When the time comes, as it conceivably can, I would not leave my advice to be inferred, but it will be given in precise language. That today my advice might be followed only by one or none does not detract from its value. A beginning is always made by a few, even one.

NEW DELHI, November 23, 1947

Harijan, 30-11-1947

333. NATIONAL GUARDS

A correspondent from East Bengal asks:

> The Pakistan Government are sure to raise a volunteer army called National Guards or by some other name. What are the Hindus to do, if they are asked to join? What are they to do, if the army is confined only to the Muslims?

This is a difficult question to answer in the present state of things. Almost every Muslim is a suspect in the Union and every Hindu or Sikh likewise in Pakistan, West or East. If there is a hearty invitation, I would advise joining the body, assuming of course that the terms are equal and there is no interference with one's religion. If there is no such invitation, I should, for the time being, submit to the exclusion without harbouring any resentment.

NEW DELHI, November 23, 1947

Harijan, 30-11-1947

334. IN PRAISE OF DECONTROL

The following extracts[1] are taken from a very long thesis sent by a correspondent in favour of decontrol at least so far as food is concerned.

> By reducing rations from 1_ Ibs. to _ lb. the Government has . . . created a bigger vicious circle. The . . . agriculturist . . . knows that the lesser the ration the greater is the demand of the black market. . . . He will hoard secretly. . . . The lower production figures will cause. . . . further reduction in the ration. . . .
>
> If we think over what we import and what is being spoiled and thrown away at storage places, it will be realized that our wastage is greater than the imports! Hence we must not import. We must reduce wastage.
>
> Why have our leaders kept themselves entangled in the net created for us for specific reasons by their predecessors, the British? How is it that things do not become clear to them? Why are they guided by the figures put before them by the officers which in some cases are neither complete nor accurate? . . . .
>
> Food crop production is not less today than what it was six years back. . . . During the war period a large quantity was supplied to the military with certain unavoidable wastages. Foodgrain were also supplied to the Middle East. These conditions do not obtain today. The public was then given 1_ Ibs. daily ration. Thus . . . more stock was then available . . . than today. Six years back . . . grain was stored according to old customs in underground stores. Every merchant. . . had big stocks of grain. . . . There were heaps of foodgrain . . . . Today, neither the consumer nor the businessman nor the Government has any stock. . . . The Congress, which is in power, is not able, owing to defects in the present procedure, to give to the public what as a matter of fact is really available in the country and the public is displeased and interested parties are taking advantage of this situation to make the Congress unpopular. It is only the Congress which can maintain peace in the country and if it once loses its hold over the public, which may happen if the situation does not show signs of improvement, and is allowed to deteriorate from day to day as it is doing, it will be very difficult, if not impossible, for it to avoid the storm that may come.

Harijan, 23-11-1947

[1] Only excerpts from which are reproduced here

335. LETTER TO ARNOLD HEIM

BIRLA HOUSE,
NEW DELHI,
November 23, 1947

DEAR DR. ARNOLD HEIM,

I was delighted to receive your letter of 18th ultimo. You unnecessarily fear that service for the good of humanity might, in my opinion, be less than prayer. *Laborare est prate,* if that labour is in the service of humanity. Though, therefore, there may be no fear of clash of ideals between us, I warn you against taking the trouble of coming to India for the mere satisfaction of meeting me.

Much as I should love to see you and to hear from you how you could exist in the Himalayas without alcohol and meat, I must not yield to the temptation. Very often I have found the saying "Distance lends enchantment to the view" verified. Moreover at the present moment, we in India have been overtaken by unexpected insanity, which has turned many of us into cut-throats. If, however, you feel that you must come to India even apart from your desire to see me, you would be most welcome.

I have shown your letter to my friend Prof. Horace Alexander who may write to you.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

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From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

336. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 23, 1947

Since I had no letter from you recently, I was beginning to be afraid lest you had fallen sick. You must regularly take sun-bath and apply mud-packs. Take complete rest and repeat Ramanama with eyes closed till you fall asleep. Give up all anxiety regarding your sons or other things. Don't start taking milk yet. Take whey, as much hot water as you can and some honey. Among fruits, avoid heavy ones like bananas. You can take *mosambi*, orange or lemon; also raw vegetables. Stop all walking and reading. Get someone to read to you. Strictly avoid newspapers, because they publish all sorts of true and false reports about the country and about me, which make you anxious. Listen to newspaper reports only if you are a *sthitaprajna.* Listen to *Ramayana, Bhagawat,* the Bible, etc. If you carry out these instructions, you will recover soon and be in a position to share my work.

Babo must be going to school. Let them all do their own work with their own hands. That will make them self-reliant. I am keeping well. The burden of work is heavy. Manu will be writing about all other things. I am instructing Manu to write to you every week even if I am not able to do so.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 340-1

337. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 23, 1947

Just now I have written an article[1] on Shrimanji's letter. Do read it. Why do we find the linguistic [problem] so difficult? But these days instead of settling our problems we think it is brave and clever to fight over everything. Or this is considered some sort of a fashion nowadays.

Things are not all right here. People's hearts are filled with poison. I am thinking what my duty is in these circumstances. I also feel that the leaders are no longer honest.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 341

338. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

November 23, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Gandhiji apologized to the radio men for his occasional breach of the rule that his speech should not exceed twenty minutes, not even fifteen, if possible. He said that he could not always observe the rule for his main purpose was to reach the hearts of the audience that was physically before him. The radio came next. He did not know whether there was any arrangement whereby the radio could record longer speeches. He was not in the habit of speaking without purpose or for the sake of hearing his own voice.[3]

A gentleman writes to ask me whether one should take to violence if one's rights are not granted. We cannot secure our rights through violence. I would even say that we can secure nothing through violence. Apparently, it seems we can get our things that way. But how? Supposing a child is having a rupee. If I slap him twice and

[1] *Vide* "Linguistic Redistribution", 23-11-1947.

[2] Gandhiji exhorted the audience to observe silence which was being disturbed by the murmur among women who were present in a large number. Complete silence was then restored.

[3] This paragraph is from *Harijan.*

take away that rupee, I may have the satisfaction of having got the rupee, but how much would I have lost in the bargain? What could the poor child do? But it would prick me that I snatched away the rupee from the poor child by beating him. Of course there are any number of such rogues in the world. But I cannot do such a thing. I have no right to deprive anyone like that. Snatching away something would have a bad result. That is why I say that we cannot demand rights with violence. There is only one way of securing our rights which I have already explained.[1] Everybody approved of it. I have stated my view about the rights of the people and how they can be achieved. I would say that there is nothing like a right. For the one who has no duties there are no rights either. In other words, all rights emanate from duties—if there is no duty, there is no right either. When I do my duty, it brings some result and that is my right. For instance, I eat because it is my duty to do so. If I eat for pleasure, I fall victim to some disease or other.If I eat because it is my duty to eat, if I pray to God, if I serve the world, that itself is my right. What is my right? It is the right to serve. You would ask me how that can be called a right. But you would understand this if you thought over it a little. I would say that that itself becomes the right. Suppose I work for the whole day and earn eight annas—I get those eight annas as my right. How did I have that right? Because I worked. If I do not work and take eight annas, I appropriate that amount, I do not have it as my right. I can have a right only when I fulfil my promise to work and that too sincerely in thought, word and deed. But if I do not work with my heart in it, if I exploit the employer and deceive him because he is not noticing it, then it is a sin. When I know that everybody is getting a rupee I too want to have a rupee for myself. But when can I have it? Only when I have the employer's permission. I would ask him why, when everybody is getting one rupee, I should work for eight annas only, and would ask for at least fifteen annas. He may say that I should work for eight annas or leave. What should I do in that case? Should I burn his property? Obstruct his work? Do picketing? Go on fast? If I say that I would resign but not work for eight annas, then I would be acting like a gentleman. I would say that whatever you do, you must do in a decent way. Decency means following one's religion, doing one's duty and earning one's rights non-violently by performing

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 28-6-1947 and "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 29-6-1947.

one's duty. Let us not try to get anything through violence—that is the only way to sustain the world. Otherwise things go wrong in the world.

I have already talked to you about the Christians. Today I will tell you about the Harijans. It is a matter of shame for us that there are Harijans in Rohtak, or, say, in Rohtak district—they were there everywhere before and are still there. There are the Jats and perhaps Ahirs too. They felt that the Harijans were their slaves and they could get any work done by them. Once again the question of their rights came and they felt that the Harijans were born slaves. They may be given water and food but they can get nothing by right. I regard this as arrogance. This was prevalent during the days of the British and now it is all the more there. These poor Harijans are timid, so they came to me and asked me what they should do in the face of harassment. Should they remain slaves or die or leave Rohtak? It is quite understandable that they cannot leave the place. If they leave Rohtak,other people would suffer, because their work would be affected. But this means that Harijans have to remain slaves forever. And so, those poor people came. Some of them study in schools, some are studying further and some lag behind; some even learn crafts, but what can they tell those who are harassing them? We have now reached a stage when we do not stop to think where we are going. During the British days we used to be afraid of being beaten or killed. Now that the alien rule has ended we think that no one can do us any harm. We feel that we can even intimidate a judge if we are brought before him. We think that the judge can do nothing to us. We have become so arrogant. The result is that the Harijans are ruined. So, I suggested to them that they should go to Thakkar Bapa[1]. He was born just to serve the Harijans and the tribals. He does everything for the Harijans. So those people went to him and came back to tell me that he was not doing anything for them. I knew what they wanted. They are seated right here. I told them that they should go to Dr. Gopichand[2]. What if he has become the Premier now? He used to

[1] A. V. Thakkar (1869-1951); joined the Servants of India Society in 1914; established the Bhil Seva Sadan in 1922; General Secretary, Harijan Sevak Sangh; President, Gujarat Antyaja Seva Mandal; Secretary, Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust, 1944-51; established the Bharatiya Adimjati Sevak Sangh

[2] Gopichand Bhargava (1889-1966); President, Harijan Sevak Sangh in the Punjab; Chief Minister of the Punjab, 1947-51

attend to every work of the Harijan Sevak Sangh at one time. I decided to meet him since he was coming here today, and I met him. But what can be done when the people there have become such tyrants, resort to coercion and refuse to listen? The British rule is no longer there, and the people cannot behave like that. Then what should the Harijans do? So, I thought that today I should talk about the sad plight of the Harijans. Can we not do even this much? What is our duty today? So far we have acted against dharma in regarding the Harijans as untouchables and slaves. We committed that mistake, that sin, and the Harijan Sevak Sangh came into being[1] by way of expiation. The Sangh has done considerable work. But not all Hindus have taken the same stand. Millions of Hindus have not even accepted the Sangh. If all Hindus had accepted it, where was the need for me to narrate this sad tale? During the days of the British we used to abuse them and say that we would become good if the British did not rule us. Now the British have gone. But have we become good or bad? I would say that there is more degeneration now than before. We used to commit excesses and are committing them even now. First we oppressed the Muslims. This too was a sin. Forget that Pakistan has come into being, don't think of it. If one man commits a sin should we also do the same? You will realize that it is bad if you think over it. One wrong leads to another. We have killed a large number of people. We have acquired false courage and we are determined to kill the Christians, and then we want to have Jatistan, Ahiristan and so many separate states. But no one is keen about building up India. We must accept the Harijans. They too are Hindus like us. They are not the fifth caste. Hinduism has no fifth *varna;* there are only four, and these four *varnas* are not graded as high or low. Among these four *varnas* the first teaches religion, the second protects people, the third practises trade— to collect millions of rupees, not for personal use but for the welfare of the people—-and the fourth serves the society. But people belonging to the four *varnas* can mingle with one another. It is not as though a Shudra, if he became a barrister, could not practise law. He can serve even after becoming a barrister. One who teaches religion serves, so does the one who practises trade and is in employment and also the one who

[1] On October 26, 1932, initially under the name of Anti-Untouchability League, with G. D. Birla as President and A. V. Thakkar as General Secretary

sweeps. All these four are fields of service. The one who teaches religion has to learn more. But that does not mean that he commits a sin by giving up his profession and going in for another. It is not that he cannot do that. Similarly, we created so many castes and now are creating the fifth *varna*. This is wrong, it is an act of wickedness. Everything will be all right if each follows his religion. Now, when we are having the reins of power in our hands, it seems to me that things would be all right if the Hindus and the Sikhs followed their respective religions. I have finished for the day and the meeting is also over.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 109-12

339. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

November 24, 1947

CHI. JIVANJI,

I am sending you plenty of material today. I have not been able to enclose the translations. Please, therefore, wait for the post tomorrow also. Can you make really good arrangements for translation there? Rajaji[1] is sitting by my side just now— though, of course, I am observing silence. I will not, therefore, write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9987. Also C. W. 6961. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

[1] C. Rajagopalachari, Governor of Bengal, who was officiating as the Acting Governor-General from November 10 to November 26, when Lord Mountbatten was away in England to attend the marriage of Princess Elizabeth with Prince Philip Mountbatten.

340. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 24, 1947

Today I observe silence; and also write for *Harijan.* The articles I can somehow manage, but the letters pile up. I try to reply to them with due care, but rarely succeed in the effort. Should I not consider this as my shortcoming? I get up at 3.30 in the morning and devote all the time after prayers to writing. I snatch some time to doze a little. Then I go for a walk. From this moment right up to the time I retire at night, I am so hard pressed for time that I do not get a moment's respite. But I have to listen to people in connection with the work for which I am camping here. That is how the cart jogs along.

Once again since last night communal riots have flared up in Delhi. Who knows what scenes God intends to show me! My faith goes on increasing each day and the mind is tranquil. The body gets tired when I am required to speak a lot. Then I make some quick changes in my diet.

All of us are, however, playthings in the hands of Rama. We have to dance to His tune. I hope you are all well. How are the conditions there? It seems that the controls are now on the way out. . . .[1]

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 347-8

[1] Omission as in the source

341. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 24, 1947

The situation is becoming quite delicate here. There is too much rancour among the Sikhs. Only yesterday some Sikhs went inside a Muslim house in Chandni Chowk and beat up the inmates.[1] What has become of us?

Today only this much. I have been awake since 3 in the morning. I am tired because I have written quite a lot. Just now I wish to lie down for some rest and Rajendra Babu will be here shortly.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 348

342. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

November 24, 1947

You are good enough, when I enter the prayer-ground, to make ample room for me and my daughters to allow us to pass through. I would urge you to observe the same orderliness when after the prayer I go out. There is an unseemly rush to touch me as I pass. The crowd press in upon me. I know and value your affection. I want it to take the shape not of effusiveness but of some constructive service of the country such as I have pointed out on many an occasion and in my numerous writings. The first and foremost today is communal harmony. Formerly the discord was of a negative character. Today it is of a most virulent type. The Hindus and the Sikhs on the one hand and the Muslims on the other have become enemies of each other with the shameful results which we have already seen.

Those who attend the prayer should not only be free from rancour against one another, but should actively assist in re-

[1] *Vide* also the following item.

[2] As Gandhiji was observing silence, his written message in Hindustani was read out.

establishing the communal harmony which was our pride during the Khilafat days. Have I not attended the huge friendly gatherings of those days? They had gladdened my heart when I witnessed them. Will those days never return?

Take the latest tragedy that took place in the heart of the capital city yesterday. Some Hindu and Sikh refugees are reported to have gone out to an empty Muslim house and unlawfully attempted to occupy it. A scuffle ensued and some were injured, though none fatally. This incident, bad as it was, was exaggerated out of all proportion. The first report was that four Sikhs were murdered. The sequel was to be expected. Retribution followed and several stabbings took place. A new technique seems to have been established now. The Sikhs with drawn swords, which seem to have taken the place of little *kirpans*, with or without the Hindus, visit Muslim houses and demand evacuation. This is a monstrous state of things in this, the capital city, if the report is true. If it is untrue, it may be dismissed. If it is true, it demands urgent attention not only from the authorities but the public as well. The former will be impotent, if the public is not behind them.

I am not sure what my duty is in this case. Things are evidently going from bad to worse. The full moon day of *Kartik* will soon be upon us. All kinds of rumours have been pouring in. I hope that they are all untrue, as they proved to be for the Dussehra and the Bakr-Id.

One lesson to be learnt from these rumours is that we are living a disturbed life, which is not good for any State or nation. Every servant of the nation has to consider seriously the part he has to play towards the abatement of this corroding nuisance.

It is well to consider at this stage a long letter from Sardar Sant Singh of Lyallpur, former M. L. A. (Central). He has put up a forcible defence for the Sikhs. He has read into my prayer speech[1] of last Wednesday a meaning which the words do not bear and certainly never meant by me. Perhaps the good Sardar does know of my intimate connection with the Sikhs ever since my return from South Africa in 1915. There was a time when my word was law to them as to the Hindus and the Muslims. Manners have changed with the times. But I know that I have not. The Sardar, perhaps, does not view the present tendency among the Sikhs as I, their avowed, dispassionate friend without any axe of my own to grind, can and do. I speak freely

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 19-11-1947.

and frankly because I am their true friend. I make bold to say that many a time the Sikh situation was saved because the Sikhs in general chose to follow my advice. I need, therefore, no reminder that I should be cautious about what I say about the Sikhs or any other community. Let the Sardar and every Sikh, who wishes well by them and is not carried away by the prevailing current, help in ridding the great and brave community of madness, drunkenness and all the vices that flow from it. Let them sheathe the sword which they have flourished loudly and used badly. Let them not be fooled by the Privy Council judgement if it means that the *kirpan* is a sword of any length. A *kirpan* ceases to be sacred when it goes into the hands of an unprincipled drunkard or when it is used anyhow. A sacred thing has to be used on sacred and lawful occasions. A *kirpan is* undoubtedly a symbol of strength, which adorns the possessor only if he exercises amazing restraint over himself and uses it against enormous odds against himself.

The Sardar will pardon me when I say that I have fairly studied the history of the Sikhs and drunk deep of the essence of the *Granthsaheb.* Tested by the tenets of that scripture, what is said to have been done by the Sikhs is indefensible and suicidal. The Sikh bravery and integrity must not be frittered away on any account. It can be an asset to the whole of India. In my opinion, it is a menace which it should not be.

Of course, it is nonsense to suggest that the Sikhs are enemy No. 1 of Islam. Have I not been described as such? Is the honour to be divided between them and me? I have never desired the honour. My whole life is a standing testimony against the charge. Can the same be said of the Sikhs? Let them learn the lesson from the Sikhs who stand behind the Sher-e-Kashmir[1]. Let them repent of the follies committed in their name.

I know the vicious suggestion that the Hindus would be all right if they would sacrifice the Sikhs who would never be tolerated in Pakistan. I can never be a party to any such fratricidal bargain. There can be no rest for this unhappy land unless every Hindu and Sikh returns with honour and in safety to West Punjab and every Muslim refugee to the Union, barring of course those who do not choose to do so for reasons of their own. The sin of mass exchange of

[1] Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah; literally “the Lion of Kashmir”

population must be washed out if we are to live as peaceful and helpful neighbours.

I must not be asked to recount the evil deeds of Pakistan. The recounting won't help either the Hindu or the Sikh sufferers. Pakistan has to bear the burden of its sins, which I know are terrible enough. It should be enough for everybody to know my opinion (in so far as it has any value) that the beginning was made by the Muslim League long before the 15th of August. Nor am I able to say that they turned over a new leaf on the 15th of August last. This statement of my opinion can't help you. What is of moment is that we of the Union copied the sins and thus became fellow-sinners. Odds became even. Shall we now awake from the trance, repent and change or must we fall?

Harijan, 7-12-1947

343. LETTER TO CHAMPS R. MEHTA

NEW DELHI,
November 25, 1947

CHI. CHAMPA,

I have your letter. It does not satisfy me in the least. I see the old Champa in it. Once one has begun to entertain a doubt about a person, the latter cannot guide one. Please, therefore, excuse me and leave me out of this.

It is of course true that Bhansali's attitude in this matter is different from mine.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XX

344. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

November 25, 1947

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I am enclosing herewith Ashadevi's letter. Accordingly pay her Rs. 35,000. You certainly can manage the amount. You already have deposits with Bachchharaj Company. Moreover Brijmohan came yesterday and told me that he would deposit another Rs. 15,000 with the firm.

Sushila says that Babu[1] has reached there but she is very ill. I shall now enquire and know the details. She should have patience and stay on in Nagpur where she has been.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

345. LETTER TO HIRAGAURI

November 25, 1947

CHI. HIRAGAURI,

I have your cheque. I am glad to learn about the family's well-being. Chi. Manu is now firmly settled there. Hence, there is no reason to worry.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

346. LETTER TO CHUNIBHAI

NEW DELHI,
November 25, 1947

BHAI CHUNIBHAI,

I got your letter only today. I don't know who Subbayya is and it was just today that I came to know of the incident you write about. I have always had respect for Rishi Aurobindo[2].

[1] Sharda, addressee's daughter, married to Gordhandas Chokhawala

[2] Aurobindo Ghosh (1872-1950); studied in England from 1880 to 1893; taught in Baroda and Calcutta; organized revolutionary activities and was sentenced for a year in May 1908; established an ashram in Pondicherry; author of *Life Divine, The Synthesis of Yoga, The Human Cycle, The Ideal of Human Unity, Essays on the*

I also do not know what the Government here has to say. Please rest assured concerning me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

347. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 25, 1947

I think it would be good if institutions like the Nayee Talim[1], Ashram, etc., get integrated. There will be substantial savings also. The atmosphere will definitely undergo a sea-change. But all these aspects have to be considered by the Ashram inmates themselves. I see no early prospect of my going there. God will either save me or consume me here. Whatever the result I am patiently waiting for either of the two. And I look upon this as God's grace.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 355

348. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 25, 1947

Lying down I am dictating this to Chi. Manudi. My hands become numb from cold. Chi. Manudi is even more delicate, although she is much younger. Such is the plight of our girls. Let me now come to the point.

In my view, the Junagadh problem remains unsolved. If the Nawab had not run away and if he had handed over all power voluntarily, that would have constituted real victory. He ran away because he was afraid of you. I do not consider this a glorious achievement. What I wanted was that the Nawab should have stayed and done the will of his subjects. He could not become a servant of the people. This is possible only in a non-violent struggle. A mighty power like England was subdued by a struggle based on truth and non-violence and it transferred all power with its own hands. We have

[1] Hindustani Talimi Sangh

this illustration before us, and yet you could not win over the poor little ruler of Junagadh through love. I am not prepared to give credit to Shamaldas for any success or bravery. He is my own nephew. No one else knows him as well as I do. But what is the use of stretching the point? It is enough for me if I can die with Rama's name on my lips and truth and non-violence in my heart.

Chi. Manudi often gives me news about Kathiawar. Men from Kathiawar, like Balwantrai, Anantrai Pattani and Dhebar, come and see me from time to time. I cannot listen to them all. Manu has shaped well and can understand and discuss the problems.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 355-6

349. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR

NEW DELHI,
November 25, 1947

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

I have your letter. To me April is very far off. When the time comes I shall let you know who should accompany me. I think you will have to come. It is good that you met Mataji. I understand what you say about Zohra[1]. She should get well now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9041. Also C.W. 9165. Courtesy: Prabhakar

350. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

November 25, 1947

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter. You did well in writing about the weaving department. I have seen a part of it and the rest I shall see whenever I find time.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Wife of Akbar Chavda

351. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 25, 1947

. . .[1] I thought you were an innocent girl. One cannot think of marriage in this *yajna*. Yes, if your mother and father are keen you can get married but I cannot have the marriage here. Today I am burning in this fire-pit. Let us see what path God shows us in the end. You must complete your nursing course.

I have heard many other things also about the Ashram. Don't you think it is your duty to write to me about all this? If you cannot abide by the rules of the Ashram, you should leave it.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji, I, p. 355

352. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 25, 1947

I am sorry that I did not answer your letter till today. I beg your forgiveness. Today we are steadily going down and God knows to what depth. Khwaja Saheb met me yesterday.[2] He may come today also. I am considering what my duty is when there is a threat to the lives of Khwaja Saheb and women like Sophiabehn[3]. I realize what a blunder we have committed in partitioning the country and we continue to make more and more blunders. It is possible that I am mistaken. Let us see what path God shows us.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 356

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] After hearing from Khwaja Abdul Majid, President, All-India Muslim Majlis, about his experiences Gandhiji had remarked: "Had they killed you, I would have danced (with joy). And by dying you would have rendered service both to Muslims and Hindus."

[3] A Congress Seva Dal worker, who had come to see Gandhiji on November 23

353. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
November 25, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today I want to tell you something about the refugees from Pakistan. But the difficulty is whether they should be called refugees. Some persons met me yesterday and asked me why I was referring to them as refugees. In a way they are right because those who seek shelter are known as *sharanarthi*—refugees. They said they had been driven here by their troubles, but why should they seek anybody's protection here, especially since they have come to India and India belongs to everyone? I think of Pakistan as also included in India. But if it is not part of India today and India is divided into two parts, the Indian Union belongs and should belong to everybody. So, when they come over here, they do so as a matter of right. From this point of view those persons' remark appeared right to me. When a person is facing hardships in a place and escapes from that place and comes and takes shelter on the lap of his mother, shall we call him a refugee or a person who has come as a matter of right? I told them that they must admit that I had no ill feeling in my heart which would make me use harsh words. In fact, we have been such slaves of the English language that we cannot free ourselves from that slavish mentality. Hence the word refugee, and it could mean only one thing, as popularized by the Press, namely, *sharanarthi* or *nirashrit.* Then those people remarked that there were many other words in English. Why should they not be called 'sufferers'. I know English sufficiently well. So, how could I call them sufferers? Then, what should I call them? I thought they may be called *dukhi* because they are disconsolate. But in a way, we are all full of sorrow in this life. As a matter of fact those who have come here in millions leaving their homes and property are in great misery. I would therefore like to talk about them today.

Three types of people came to see me today. One type I would leave out altogether. The person had a big joint family in Lahore. He used to run some hotels, etc., and all his houses and property were left behind and he came here with his wife and children. He did not bring all the family members here. He narrated everything to me and requested me to find some accommodation for him. I told him that I had no authority, and even if I had, I would not fix any

accommodation for him. As it was, there was housing shortage in Delhi and the local people themselves were in great trouble; the Government requisitioned their houses. When an officer or a diplomat arrived, he could not be put up in a tent. Hence, the Government acquired some houses and made the allotment for the purpose. If the original occupants protested and asked where they could go, they were asked to go anywhere. The Government, of course, did not go to that extent, but it could go, and many people would have received notices to vacate their houses. Under these conditions, how could these millions of suffering people be provided accommodation? He told me that he had come here after losing seventeen members [of his family]. I told him that at least he had seventeen members in his family. There were some families where there was no one apart from a man and a woman. I told him that if he believed that he belonged to the whole of India, even after the loss of the seventeen members who were dead and gone, the rest of India was there for him. Well, this is just philosophizing, so let us leave it here. Then I told him that he should go and live in the camps. All types of people were living there and there was nothing wrong about it. He said that he was no beggar to live on charity. I assured him he certainly was not one and if I were in charge of the refugee camps, I would not give food on charity. I would tell them that they were able-bodied and should work and maintain themselves and weave their own cloth. I would of course tell them to cover themselves during the night and protect themselves against the dew. But they needed no covering during the day. The sky was clear and they should take warmth from the heat of the sun. I did not stay inside during the day. I enjoyed the sun outside. But he said that he could not do that. He had young children with him and he needed a house to live in. I asked him if he was the only person having children. I found in every camp I visited mothers with their children. Some women were pregnant and gave birth to their children right there in the camps. What was his objection then to living in a refugee camp? I said he should eat what other refugees were eating and work as others did; he was strong and sturdy and might as well run a hotel or something. Why then should he not do something which might bring relief to others?

He asked me: “Why should the Muslims living here not vacate their houses and go away? Why are they still here?” I was deeply pained to hear this. In the first place the Muslims are already running away in panic and even from among those who have stayed back

some are being slaughtered daily. Everyone goes and tells them: "Go away, we want to live in your houses." If everybody exercises authority, who will be the subjects and to whom would the country belong? Everybody cannot wield authority. Nowhere in the world things happen like this. Of course, it is said that among the savages there is no leader. But even bandits have a leader. In the case of Ali Baba and the forty thieves there was at least one leader. Thus there is no place in the world where all would be leaders or there would be no leader at all. We, however, do not know how to wield power and how to rule ourselves. That is the reason why we are in trouble today. It is deplorable that you should have designs on the houses of the Muslims who have fled in panic or have been killed or arrested by the police. It does not befit you. If at all, you can say that to me because the house in which I stay is like a palace. You can ask me to leave this place and go and live in a camp. You can say that it would make no difference to me, for I have no wife, no sons, no daughters, that I have gathered these girls from somewhere and call them my daughters, that I should go to the camps and regard all the girls there as my daughters. I would listen to you if you said that to me. I would certainly feel amused, for, even if I ran away, would you stay here? This house belongs to someone else. It is not mine. Of course the owner of this house has made me the owner and insisted that I should keep or prevent anyone from staying here as I please. How can the Muslims leave their houses? Only Gandhi is in a position to do that. If he is removed from here and dumped somewhere no one is going to leave him unattended. Somebody would give him milk, fruits, dates and somehow his things would be managed. He is not going to remain unclothed. For even clothes would be provided for him. When I talked like this to that gentleman he felt ashamed.

Then some Sikh gentlemen came to me. They said they were not like the Sikhs here. The surprising thing was that they did not carry *kirpans.* I did not ask them the reason. However, they did wear metal wristlets on their wrists and I think they also had beards. They told me they were in great distress. They belonged to the Hazara district where they owned and tilled land. They were ready to live by farming if they were provided land and implements. I was touched by what they said and felt they were right. I asked them why they did not go to East Punjab. They informed me that the East Punjab Government could accommodate only people coming from West Punjab. They were told that the Government could not accommodate

people coming from every place. Since they belonged to the Frontier Province they were asked to approach the Union Government.

Even though the Central Government does not have land, it would be nice if it could get land for these people. The Government should arrange to get for them oxen, ploughs, seeds, etc. I do not know if there is sufficient land in the province of Delhi. But those who want to use the plough should be settled somewhere. Had I been in charge of the Government, I would have set up a separate camp for them, where they could produce their own requirements of food. If that is not possible, let the Government give them loan to meet the expenses of these things. These people say that they do not have any money now, but they are industrious and if they could get facilities they would produce everything and would not sit idle. It seems to me that the country is losing much because such farmers are just sitting idle in so many places. They are our brothers and we must do something for them. I do not know whom I should approach in the Government. But through you I want to make it known to the Government that it is our duty to help such people. They ask me where they could go and stay and how they could eat. I would say that there should be a separate camp for them. But till that is arranged they should live and manage their things in the camps that are already there. If they cannot be given any place here, any vacant place anywhere in India is as good. They do not insist on being accommodated only here. They do not even say that they should be allotted any Muslim house. They say that they do not want to make others pass through the hardships they have known. They say they are poor people. They are strong enough but their strength is not for intimidating others. They want to live in whatever way they can with fear of God in their hearts. I told them that their trouble was only a passing phase. They wondered how that could be—just as somebody here wonders—how it could happen that the people who have come from Pakistan would go back there and the Muslims who have run away to Pakistan would return here, as I have been saying. I told them that it would happen, if not today, then tomorrow. But the condition is that we on our side should become good. Let us convince ourselves that there is none who is our enemy. Even the Muslims are not our enemies. Some people say that even here the Muslims are fifth-columnists. How could the poor things be fifth columnists? Nobody can harass us here and if anyone dares to do so, God will see to him or our Government will put him down. If we come to our

senses here today, everything will be well tomorrow; I too will be free. Today I am very much disturbed. My life has become a burden to me. I wonder why I am still here. I could become strong if Delhi were restored to sanity, and then I would rush to West Punjab and tell the Muslims who have gone away from here that I have prepared the ground for them and they could come back any time they wanted and live wherever they chose. Such an occasion is bound to come some time, for how long can crores remain enemies of each other? It is not possible to kill or drive away 350 to 400 million Muslims who are here in India. One cannot even dream of it and I do not want to entertain any such dream. But today I have become a sort of burden. There was a time when my word was law. But it is no longer so. Should I run away in that case? Whether I live or die, those who are living in misery will certainly return to their homes with honour and respect, not in order to pick up a fight with anyone but to meet their own brethren. Similarly, the Muslims should come back here. That is the only thing that can keep us alive and in no other way can we survive.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 117-22

354. LETTER TO B. BANERJI

BIRLA HOUSE,
NEW DELHI,
November 26, 1947

DEAR ADVOCATE BANERJI,

With reference to your letter of 24th instant about displaced Harijans,[1] you have forgotten to tell me where these displaced men are located or whether they are wandering about the streets without shelter. You have also omitted to inform me whether you have approached the Home Minister, because, as you should know, the Home Minister has jurisdiction over all these areas. In order to spare me, you have spared relevant facts and thereby added further burden upon me and harmed your clients. Please, therefore, take the trouble

[1] The addressee had said that the Harijans living in the slums between the Turkman Gate and the Delhi Gate had been displaced and were yet to be rehoused.

to give me full information without embellishment. Then it is possible that I might be helpful.

I must thank you for the information about *Kamins,* which is most interesting and instructive.[1]

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI B. BANERJI, M.A., L.L.M.
ADVOCATE, FEDERAL COURT
DELHI GATE
DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

355. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

November 26, 1947

CHI. LILI,

Your letter has arrived very promptly. Take care of your health and devote yourself entirely to your studies. Ponder over what you read and digest it; then everything will become easy. My blessings are ever with you. Your studies must be your first concern. Don't be scared by anything you hear about me. If you want to honour my wishes your paramount task is to pass your examinations. I am already being well looked after. You will be rendering enough service if I do not have to worry about you.

You can have the Rs. 100 from me. Do you need the money urgently? If you do, shall I give you a note to someone or shall I send the sum by money order?

After you left I remember to have taken clove and sugar only once.

It was good you came—even if you had to pay first-class fare. You are now about to become a doctor, so occasionally you must travel first-class.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The addressee had informed Gandhiji that Punjab Harijans, described as *Kamins,* could not live in and own land in villages or build *pucca* structures there.

356. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

November 26, 1947

CHI. PRABHUDAS[1],

I have your letter. Stay calm. I have written you a long letter, which you should get by now. If I have a copy it will be enclosed with this. Go to Noakhali only after you have completely recovered.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

357. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 26, 1947

The Hyderabad problem has erupted in a more unpleasant manner.[2] Kashmir is in the cauldron. I was not in favour of partition of India because I could foresee these developments. Hence I am not surprised at this crisis we are facing today. Those brothers and sisters who joined the Congress or courted imprisonment are scrambling for power and fame, as if they had done me a favour in doing what they did. I receive heaps of letters on this subject every day. They evoke not anger but pity in my mind at the mentality of our patriots. May God grant good sense to all.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 361-2

[1] Son of Chhaganlal Gandhi

[2] The Nizam of Hyderabad had sent a second delegation to Delhi adopting the line that Hyderabad would prefer to remain an independent sovereign State "in close association with the two Dominions".

On November 29 a standstill agreement for one year was signed between the Nizam and the Government of India, under which "all agreements and administrative arrangements as to matters of common concern, including External Affairs, Defence and Communications, which were existing between the Crown and the Nizam before August 15, 1947, shall. . . continue as between the Dominion of India and the Nizam.".

358. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 26, 1947

You must have got well by now. Your present duty is to study. You will gain nothing by giving up studies and coming to me. I will consider, and so should you, that you are serving me if you prosecute your studies and render service appropriate to your education. It is not as if one could serve me only by massaging my feet or making a couple of *khakhras*[1] for me. On the contrary, those who render to the poor some useful service of my liking render real service. But your foremost duty is to recover.

Chi. Manudi is well. She takes down copious notes. She feels the cold a lot. There is, in fact, a Gujarati proverb which says "The goat nibbles away the cold of a child." But here it is the reverse The old man's cold has been nibbled away by the goat!

I have written enough today—haven't I ? Do the duty that falls to your lot with a steady mind.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 362

359. LETTER TO S. M. QASIM RIZVI

November 26, 1947

BHAI SYED SAHEB[2],

I am glad that we met. What you said amazed me. It was difficult to believe it. I had asked you if I could send you copies of some documents in my possession. I have many other complaints besides these about you and the Muslims of Hyderabad but I think these three samples are sufficient.

SYED MOHAMMED RIZVI

DARUSSALAAM

HYDERABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Crisp, thin, paper-like *chapatis*

[2] Leader of Ittehad-ul-Mussalmeen, an organization which was terrorizing the Hindus of the State, opposed accession of the State to India and wanted independence for the Nizam.

The addressee had persuaded the Nizam to dissolve the first delegation and to appoint another to resume negotiations with the Government of India.

360. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 26,1947

I know that translations that appear in the newspapers are sometimes wrong and that is why I myself translate into English. God knows how it happened in spite of this.

Incidentally only yesterday Khwaja Saheb had come. He also told me the same. I was very much surprised to hear all this. How nice it would have been if somebody had killed him! And he is a man who would have died bravely taking the name of God.

I wish to go and stay in a Muslim locality. Nothing has been decided as yet. Let us see. The Hyderabad issue is a difficult one, Junagadh's has become a sort of a farce. I don't think it was a great achievement on our part. After all, didn't we have the support of the Indian army?

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 362-3

361. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

November 26, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

A gentleman has written a letter to me. It is accompanied with a cutting from a Bombay newspaper. It is stated in that cutting that Gandhi is only carrying on propaganda for the Congress, but people are not interested in hearing it. If the Congress uses the radio, etc., like this for its own propaganda, it is bound to bring about dictatorship in the end. It is absolutely incorrect to say that I sing praises of the Congress I do not sing anybody's praises and, if I do, I sing the praises of the whole world. The cutting also says that the talk of non-violence is just for show, the real purpose being self-glorification by the Government. But I would say that no government which indulges in self-glorification can survive. And I only want to serve dharma. I speak to you only about things related to dharma. Maybe, some people are not interested in hearing what I say. But there are others who write to tell me that they feel greatly encouraged by what I

say. Nobody forces people to listen to me against their wishes. If your mind is somewhere else, you are free to leave this place without listening to what I say. If you leave me alone, I would neither have the prayer here, nor deliver the speeches. I am not particular about speaking on the radio. I do not like it. Even here I do not come with a prepared speech.

Many of our women are in Pakistan. They are being molested. Those unfortunate women are made to feel ashamed. In my view, they have no reason to feel ashamed. It would be gross injustice if any woman is considered worthless by society and abandoned by her brothers, parents, and husband because she had been abducted by the Muslims. It is my belief that any woman who has the purity of Sita cannot be touched by anyone. But where can we find women like Sita these days? And not all women can be like Sita. Should we show contempt for the woman who had been forcibly abducted and tyrannized? She is not a woman of loose character. My daughter or wife too could be abducted and raped. But I would not hate her for that reason. Many such women had approached me in Noakhali. Many Muslim women also came. We have all become goondas. I consoled those women. It is the men who commit rape that should feel ashamed, not these poor women.

A gentleman[1] remarks that supposing controls are removed and people start producing food for themselves in the villages and villagers start helping in harvesting the crops, etc., the prices will come down, but the prices will still rise if the farmers have to hire paid labour. It was customary at one time for one farmer to invite other farmers to help in harvesting and threshing and thus take the grains to the house. That practice is now forgotten, but should be revived. Nothing can be accomplished single-handed. That friend also suggests that at least one of the Ministers should be a peasant. Unfortunately, none of our Ministers is a peasant. The Sardar is a peasant by birth and has some knowledge of agriculture, but he is a barrister by profession. Jawaharlal is a scholar and a great writer, but what does he know about farming? More than 80 per cent of our population are peasants. In a true democracy, there should be the rule of peasants in our country. They need not become barristers. They should know how to be good farmers, how to increase their produce and keep the soil fertile. If we had such peasants, I would ask

[1] Secretary of a Provincial Congress Committee, who was a farmer

Jawaharlal to be their secretary. Our peasant ministers would stay not in a palace but in a mud-house, and would toil on the land throughout the day. Then alone can there be a true peasant rule.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 123-4

362. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

November 27, 1947

CHI. KAKA,

I have your letter. I shall have a talk with Jawaharlal about the two points you mention. Only if he wants can something be done about it. I was not aware that Beg was to be replaced.

He must also appreciate what you write about the port. Let us see how far I can reach. Just now my mind is engaged in a single task. If I don't succeed in it there is nothing but darkness before me.

The four associations, viz., the Talimi Sangh, the Hindustani Prachar Sabha, the A. I. S. A. and the Village Industries Association, are meeting here by the 12th of December. You will have to come for that; we shall do what we can then.

Will Christmas have the same importance now or even a long holiday for it? However, let the time come and let things take their own course.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

363. LETTER TO SURENDRA MEDH

NEW DELHI,
November 27, 1947

CHI. MEDH,

I could read your letter only today. It reached here on the 22nd instant. May you have success in your resolve; take it as my blessing. You do remember your resolve, don't you, never to lose temper, to preserve your health in order to render service and to be fearless. The news you convey from there[1] is startling, yet not quite so. I know our

[1] South Africa

people there too well to be startled by the news. And I am alarmed that we have not yet learnt the true lesson. Are we ever going to learn it? How can I guide you from this distance? And where do I have the energy for that? Weigh everything on the scales of truth and non-violence and follow the resultant verdict. And don't be afraid. It should never turn out that you had gone there to exploit and instead were yourself exploited. The best way is not to bother about what any 'ism' says but to associate yourself with any action after considering its merit. Dr. Dadoo[1] has made a favourable impression on everybody here. Our Government here consults me on its various actions.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

364. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

November 27, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You would have perhaps seen [the report] or you would see, for you could not have yet seen, that I had called on the Governor-General[2]. Any time now it will be in the newspapers. Subsequently I called on Liaquat Ali also. I got an opportunity to visit both of them. We talked at length and they are working on something. I found that Liaquat Ali was not only ill but also confined to bed. He was having pain in the chest and palpitations. He is better now, but has gone very weak. He is staying at the Viceregal Lodge, hence 1 went and looked him up. He is the Prime Minister of Pakistan as Jawaharlal is the Prime Minister of India. Thus he and the Finance Minister[3] of Pakistan, whose name I have forgotten, Sardar Patel and two others met and they have arrived at some decision. I cannot give the full report. If it is carried out it is possible that we might to some extent come out of our present confusion and hardships. But what happens or does not happen is in the hands of God. Man, after all, can only try.

You must have read in the papers that Sheikh Abdullah has also come here. The Kashmiris refer to him as Sher-e-Kashmir. And so he is. He has done a lot of work; but the remarkable thing is that he has

[1] D . Y. M. Dadoo
[2] Who had resumed office on November 27 on his return from England
[3] Ghulam Mohammed

won over all the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. There Muslims are in a majority, and the Hindus and the Sikhs are just a handful. None the less, he carries them all with him. He does nothing that would keep them discontented. Then we saw that while coming here he also went to Jammu. There have been considerable excesses by the Hindus there. This has not been fully reported in the newspapers. The Maharaja and his new Premier[1] also went there. I asked Sheikh Abdullah jokingly if there were two Premiers. He said he also was not aware of it but this much he could say, that he was looking after the affairs of the Government there, whether there were one or two Prime Ministers. So he too went to Jammu. I do not know if what happened in Jammu was at the instance of the Maharaja or his new Premier. But those things happened there and it is a matter of great shame for us. Still Sheikh Abdullah did not lose his balance and the Hindus in Jammu fully supported him. Where then was the need to tell him anything? But he has still to convince Kashmir and the entire India that the only way for Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs is to live together in amity and to trust one another. Then alone can Kashmir and India live together. His attempts are no doubt in that direction, but there is one obstruction. It is a mountain region which is at a height of 10,000 if not 14,000 feet. It snows heavily there. That is why movement from one place to another is not very easy. The movement would be easy only through Pakistan. But who could say that Pakistan would allow the movement? Apart from that, fighting is already going on with the Afridi invaders who may well be said to belong to Pakistan. Under these circumstances, how can the Kashmiris come *via* Pakistan? The Government of the Indian Union has already sent help to them and they can have a straight road only through India. There is not much of trade in Kashmir, but the people of Kashmir are industrious and skilled in handicrafts. Kashmir is a huge fruit garden. But who would bring all those things from there and how? Everything cannot be brought by air. And how can those vendors travel by air? That is not possible. So, the only way is through Pathankot in East Punjab. It is a small road but at least there is one. But the Hindus of East Punjab have become so bad that no Muslim can cross that road. The Sheikh says that that is the greatest danger. He is a very big man but he says that even for him it is difficult to pass through that way. Not only the

[1] Mehrchand Mahajan, Judge of the Punjab High Court, was appointed Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir in November

police guards but even ordinary people try to enquire from anyone passing that way who he is and would like to lift his turban to see if he wears a tuft and do similar things. If he happens to be a Hindu, or a Sikh, well and good, but if he is a Muslim then he is doomed. Such is the situation prevailing there.

So the Governor-General and these four have met. It would be well if they are able to do something. And they have done some little bit. But what is the use of their doing anything? If the people themselves are caught in a frenzy, then nothing can be done. I would tell the people of East Punjab that enough damage had been done, and now let us forget everything. Or, would things always be like this? I would say that that road should be absolutely clear. The Government also should fully carry out its responsibility. If the Government is not able to do this, what is the use of our having sent the army by air? Will it help in carrying on trade in Kashmir? If not, is the Indian Union going to feed the Kashmiris? That is not possible. If today our Government has come to possess millions of rupees, would it go on squandering that money? I hear that every officer in the Government is going to have a secretary. I just do not know what he would do or what monthly salary he would get. If we go on squandering money at this rate, we will perish in no time. Ours is not a land of millionaires. It is a poor country where people earn even a few copper coins with great difficulty. There are only a handful of millionaires or businessmen. And how much money do even these people have? If it is squandered like this, it will all be spent in no time. Then there is the whole country to be looked after. We cannot waste money like that. So the Government will have to see how that road can be made safe so that anybody can pass on safely. Kashmiris make beautiful clothes which can be brought by that road. Shawls and other handicrafts can also be brought. So also the Kashmir dry fruits. Today you can get a Kashmir apple with great difficulty. Kashmir has acceded to the Indian Union, but how long can it remain with India in this way? If Kashmir does not find a safe thoroughfare, I do not know what would happen. Now, after mentioning the third point, I will wind up for the day.

I have just received copies of the *Dawn* and the *Pakistan Times*. Both these are prominent dailies of Pakistan. When something appears in the *Dawn* or the *Pakistan Times* we cannot dismiss it. That way the people of Pakistan can dismiss the reports in *The Hindustan Times* or

the Bombay Chronicle, can't they? So this is a useless argument. I think the *Dawn* and the *Pakistan Times* are also good papers which are read by Muslims and run by leading Muslims. They write about the Muslims of Kathiawar in their papers. When the Sardar went to Junagadh I was happy to see that even the Muslims had welcomed him there. They said it was good he went there because they were in great trouble. When the Princes and the people of Kathiawar are all on one side, how long could Junagadh remain apart? Hence, I was happy that the whole problem was solved without any violence. They did not remain strictly non-violent, but whatever violence they used was after great thought and consideration. I was very happy to know all that. But now I hear and even the *Dawn* expresses the view that the Muslims in Kathiawar cannot live in peace. I have received a telegram from a Muslim at the right moment. Kathiawar is a region where the Muslims used to live in peace and nobody ever disturbed them. There were good Muslims there and also rebellious Muslims. They did not quarrel with one another, but struggled for livelihood. Now, in that same Kathiawar such a situation has developed that they wonder if they can live there at all. In such a situation, should all Muslims in Kathiawar run away or should the Hindus slaughter them all? They are terribly harassed, and for me, this is unbearable because I was born in Kathiawar, and I know all the Princes and thousands of people there. Shamaldas Gandhi, who is like a son to me, has become all in all there. He has also formed a Provisional Government there. What is the use of that Provisional Government if, in spite of it, innocent Muslims are killed? When people thus take the law into their own hands, how can the Muslims feel safe there? I cannot say what will happen if this state of affairs spreads to all other places. I do not know if all those things actually happened there, but I have read the report in the *Dawn* and have also received some telegrams. Later I asked some Hindus about it, and they said that there had been some cases of arson and loot, but they could not say if there were any cases of murder or abduction of Muslim women. But the *Dawn* reports that all the four things happened and that too on a wide scale. I had received several telegrams but only one telegram was shown to me and by mistake the others were not shown. Perhaps some fifty telegrams would have come to me from Muslims at different places. And they have a right to tell me that my son has become all-powerful there. But how can I take the responsibility for everything that my son may do? At the same time, how can I convince the world or the Muslims that way? What they

write is true. But when could I have conveyed my feelings to my son? I read about it only today. Hence, through you I wish to convey not only to my son but to the whole of Kathiawar that if the Hindus have become so bad—they can be only Hindus because there are no Sikhs living there except perhaps some who might have settled there to earn their livelihood—then Kathiawar cannot remain undivided. We have taken Junagadh, no doubt, but we have done it in such a way that we are going to lose it—just as we won our freedom but to lose it. Then they remind me of what the Sardar had said in Junagadh. He had said that nobody would touch even a Muslim child provided he was loyal to Kathiawar, that is, the whole of India. He said he would see how anyone could even touch a young Muslim girl. He could say that because he is at once the Sardar and the Home Minister of India. He had a right to say that. But after his saying it, what has happened? It pains me to see that such things could happen in Kathiawar and people could become so mad. We have lost our dharma, our ability to work, and in this way we are going to lose our country. It was my duty to put all these things before you. These things are not reported in our newspapers. But I get all the news. It was of course my duty to make inquiries, but where do I have time for it? Hence, I have told you what I have heard. Even when I met Liaquat Ali I told him that I would like to ask him a question if he permitted. He agreed. Then I asked him if he was aware of what was happening in Kathiawar. He said he knew everything—that such things had happened and all the four things had taken place—but he could not say on what scale. He is the Prime Minister of Pakistan. That is why he openly told me everything, whereas I was talking with great restraint. Then I thought I would convey to you this evening how pained I am by all this.

Kathiawar is my home. When that very home is on fire, what chance do I have to say anything? What can I say to the residents of Delhi? Something or the other is always happening everywhere around me. How can I remain unmoved in such a situation? No sensible human being can remain unmoved in such an atmosphere. This is my sad tale, rather, the sad tale of the whole of India, that I have placed before you.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 125-31

365. NO COMPARISON POSSIBLE

A friend asked me the other day whether I shared the opinion often expressed that as between nationalism and religion, the former was superior to the latter. I said that the two were dissimilars and that there could be no comparison between dissimilars. Each was equal to the other in its own place. No man who values his religion as also his nationalism can barter away the one for the other. Both are equally dear to him. He renders unto Caesar that which is Caesar's and unto God that which is God's. And if Caesar, forgetting his limits, oversteps them, a man of God does not transfer his loyalty to another Caesar, but knows how to deal with the usurpation. A rehearsal of this difficulty gave rise to satyagraha.

Take a homely illustration. Suppose I have mother, wife and daughter. All the three must be equally dear to me in their own places. It is a vulgar error to think that a man is entitled to forsake his mother and his daughter for the sake of his wife. He dare not do the converse. And if any of the three oversteps her limits, the law of satyagraha comes to his assistance for the restoration of the equilibrium of the three forces.

NEW DELHI, November 28, 1947
Harijan, 7-12-1947

366. LETTER TO P. KODANDA RAO

November 28, 1947

MY DEAR KODANDA RAO,

I have your letter. I knew nothing about Mr. Satchell's case before receiving your letter. Nothing remains to be done by me about the case, though I am not quite clear about it from your letter. I suppose Mr. Satchell is free to be in India as long as he likes. If he ever comes to Delhi, where I am fixed for the time being, I shall be delighted to meet him, who, from the account you give me, is a brave man.

I never knew that Father Lash had become Bishop of Bombay. Is it a matter for condolence or congratulation?

I hope Mary[1] is all the better for the little relaxation she had in America, if it was relaxation.

I am told that things are not quite so bad there as they are here. I do not need to go farther from here to make the acquaintance of hell.

With love to you two,

M . K . GANDHI

SHRI P. KODANDA RAO
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
NAGPUR, C. P.

From a photostat: G. N. 6281

367. LETTER TO MANKUMAR NAG

NEW DELHI,
November 28, 1947

DEAR MANKUMAR,

Pyarelal had written to me about your difficulty. Now your letter. I am powerless to do anything. You should approach some monied man.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

368. LETTER TO MANIBEHN

November 28, 1947

CHI. MANIBEHN,

I have your letter. I can understand your inability to come over after the receipt of the two resignations. It is your clear duty to bury yourself in your present work. I can understand the resignation by Vithaldas[2]. I was, however, not prepared for the one by Kakubhai[3]. Who can know a man's nature? If his views on non-violence undergo

[1] Addressee's wife
[2] V. V. Jerajani
[3] Purushottam K. Jerajani

a change, all that will remain will be trading in khadi which can be of no interest to him. I would certainly wish that with the change of his views he does not go over to the other extreme. I am returning both the letters.

Please let both the brothers read my letter. We are all put to test to prove whether the metal we are made of is brass or gold.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

369. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 28, 1947

It is my misfortune that Kasturba is not alive today.[1] Had she been alive, she would have actually demonstrated the kind of bravery that is expected from women in the present circumstances. And whatever place our women have achieved today is due to Kasturba's courage, purity and steadfast faith. She might have been a totally uneducated woman, but she possessed all the virtues which a woman should have. On the strength of these virtues, India and I have risen high. I do not hesitate to say that the country or any of her citizens can hardly repay the debt.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 380

370. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 28, 1947

I know that khadi and all allied activities have slackened because we have achieved swaraj. I am caught in the flames at the moment. If I succeed in this work, the other activities will take care of themselves. But in the present climate, what can one hope for all these activities? Finally, of course, India will get what is ordained for her. What can we do?

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 380

[1] The addressee had written: "Unfortunately Kasturba is not alive today. Had she been alive and had she been abducted, you would have understood our feelings."

371. SPEECH AT GURU NANAK BIRTHDAY FUNCTION

November 28, 1947

I fear that I might not be able to say all that I want to. I had also hoped that you, having gone through the military machine, would observe perfect silence. But the discipline has not reached the sisters and, therefore, they are not able to observe the laws of public meetings. I had the same experience when, some years ago, I was in Amritsar. You will admit that the fault lies with the men. As I entered the meeting place I saw the remains of bananas and oranges thrown about anyhow. These have not only made the place dirty, but dangerous to walk. We should learn to keep the roads and footpaths as clean as the floors in our houses. In the absence of proper receptacles I have noticed disciplined people putting these in a piece of paper and then temporarily in their pockets until they are cast in their places. It is the duty of men, if they have learnt the rules of social conduct, to teach them to the womenfolk.

Today Baba Bachittar Singh came to me in the morning and insisted that I should attend the Guru Nanak birthday celebrations. He told me that probably over a lakh of men and women had assembled there, and that most of them would be sufferers from West Pakistan. I hesitated because I felt that many Sikhs had been displeased with me. The Baba nevertheless insisted and said that I should say my say before the meeting. I yielded and felt that even as a mother often gives bitter pills to her children, I would take the liberty of saying things, which might appear to be bitter. In reality and in effect they are meant for your good. My mother often used to administer bitter drugs, but I could not feel elsewhere the comfort that her lap provided for me. Whatever I have said to you up to now, I do not regret. I have said those things as your sincere friend and servant. I have with me Sardar Datar Singh's daughter. You perhaps know him. He has lost his all in the Punjab. He was the owner of large tracts of land and several hundred fine cattle. He has lost many relatives and dear friends in Montgomery, but I am glad to be able to tell you that he has not shed a single tear over the misfortune, nor has he felt any bitterness towards the Muslims. I would like you to follow his example. Sikh friends have told me that one Sikh is considered equal to 1,25,000 men. Where is that bravery today? Have things come to such a pass that a

minority of Muslims cannot live in your midst in perfect safety?

I am free to admit that the mischief commenced in Pakistan, but the Hindus and the Sikhs of East Punjab and the neighbouring districts have not been behindhand in copying the mischief. The difference is that the Hindus have not the courage of the Sikhs, who know how to use the sword.

You see Sheikh Abdullah with me. I was disinclined to bring him with me, for I know there is a great gulf between the Hindus and the Sikhs on the one side and the Muslims on the other. But the Sheikh, known as the Lion of Kashmir, although a pucka Muslim, has won the hearts of both by making them forget that there is any difference between the three. He had not been embittered. Even though in Jammu recently the Muslims were killed by the Hindus and the Sikhs, he went to Jammu and invited the evil-doers to forget the past and repent over the evil they had done. The Hindus and the Sikhs of Jammu listened to him. Now the Muslims and the Hindus and the Sikhs of Kashmir and Jammu are fighting together to defend the beautiful valley of Kashmir. I am glad, therefore, that you are receiving the two of us with cordiality.

Let this auspicious day mark the beginning of a new chapter in your life. Let the disgrace of driving out the Muslims from Delhi cease from today. I found to my shame that as our motorcar was passing through Chandni Chowk, which used to be filled with Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims, I did not notice a single Muslim passer-by. Surely we have not come to such a pass as to be afraid of the minority of the Muslims scattered throughout the Indian Union. If there are any traitors in their midst, our Government is strong enough to deal with them. We must be ashamed of hurting children, women or old men. Every man must be considered innocent before he is found guilty by a properly constituted court of law.

I fervently hope that such misdeeds will become now a thing of the past. The *kirpan* is a symbol of sanctity to be exhibited and spent in defence of the helpless and the innocent. The tenth and the last Guru[1] undoubtedly wielded the sword, but never, so far as I know, at the expense of the weak. He had imposed many restraints upon himself. He had many reputed Muslim disciples. So had the other Gurus beginning with Nanak Saheb. Your bravery will be testified

[1] Guru Govind Singh

when all those who belong to different faiths including Muslims become your sincere friends.

Intoxicating drinks, drugs, dancing, debauchery and the vices to which many of us become addicted are not for the followers of the Gurus and the *Granthsaheb*. With the *Granthsaheb* as my witness, I ask you to make the resolution that you will keep your hearts clean and you will find that all other communities will follow you.

Harijan, 7-12-1947

372. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

November 28, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You know that today is Guru Nanak's birthday. Someone had sent an invitation to me also but at that time I had told him that I should be excused. But today Baba Bachittar Singh came to me and insisted that I should go. He came to me at 10 o'clock and we had to go in an hour's time. I then decided that I should go. Although I have done nothing from my side, my Sikh friends are angry with me today. Of course I have tried to push a bitter pill down their throat. But that is how things go on in the world. The Baba insisted on my going there all the same. He said there must be thousands of Sikh men and women and—some of them must be really in distress—who are eager to hear me. I agreed and told him that he should take me with him at 11 o'clock. He came at 11 a.m. with Sheikh Abdullah. He was also to be taken there. I asked him how Sheikh Abdullah could come there since the Sikhs and the Muslims could not bear to look at one another. But he said that Sheikh Abdullah had done one great thing. He had kept the Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims united in Kashmir and created a situation in which they would wish to live and die together. So I thought that Sheikh Abdullah too should go with us, and we took him along. I was very glad about it. There were thousands of Sikh men and women. I spoke but little; but Sheikh Abdullah spoke fairly at length, and people heard him with attention. There was no trace of disapproval even in their eyes, then where was the question of their creating noise? After all, we had been invited there. And then the Sikhs are a brave community, so it all turned out well. I felt I should pass on this little information to you.

I have received a letter from Bengal. It is from the Muslim Chamber of Commerce. I cannot reply to that letter; but I have thought about it and also enquired from Ghanshyamdas if he knew anything about it. He told me that the Muslim Chamber of Commerce wants to have dealings with the Government and wants to correspond with it. But the Government belongs to everyone, whether he be Hindu, Muslim or Parsi. Then, how can the Muslims, Hindus, Parsis and the Englishmen have separate Chambers of Commerce? Hence the Government has refused to recognize it. That gentleman says in his letter that it is indeed strange that while the Marwari and the European Chambers of Commerce are allowed to exist, only the Muslim Chamber is not being granted the permission. I could appreciate his point and it pained me. If the Government does not wish to have any dealings with the Muslim Chamber of Commerce, it cannot have anything to do with the Marwari Chamber of Commerce and should not have anything to do with the European Chamber of Commerce, either. All these existed till now and the European Chamber of Commerce came into being because Europeans were in power and since we were being ruled by them the Viceroy used to be its President. And since he had to go to Calcutta during Christmas, he used to deliver long speeches there. But now that practice cannot be continued. How can the Europeans, Muslims and Marwaris have separate Chambers of Commerce? There can be only one Indian Chamber of Commerce. If the Hindus, Muslims and Parsis start having their separate Chambers of Commerce, what is the use of India's independence? Especially the Europeans should yield now. They should not do anything by remaining in isolation. They should refuse to have any special privileges, and insist on having the same rights as others. That would become a great hallmark of India's independence. The European Chamber of Commerce used to invite the Viceroy every year. But, in my view, they cannot invite our Prime Minister or Deputy Prime Minister or even Lord Mountbatten. Lord Mountbatten can certainly go and meet them as a European. But the Chamber as such cannot invite him. I am a small man, but I have no doubt about my opinion. Similarly, the Marwari Chamber of Commerce cannot invite anybody from the Government. It can invite anyone as a Marwari, but not on behalf of the Chamber. They all exist because India exists. Even the Muslims cannot live here as a separate community. Let them live here as Indians. In the same manner, all Sikhs, Hindus and Europeans can live here only as Indians. They can

all stay here as loyal citizens of India, and in no other capacity. Hence I thought that I should convey to them this important point. It is better that they hear my voice before they receive what I write from here. If the Muslims insist on having a separate existence politically and otherwise, then that wish cannot be granted. The Europeans can live here as Christians and practise the wonderful things in Christianity. This, after all, is their social or religious sphere. But as far as administration and politics are concerned, they must all be treated on an equal basis. Similarly, trade also belongs to everybody. If the Marwaris, Gujaratis, Punjabis want to have their exclusive shares, what would remain for India? We cannot carry on our work in this manner.

I forgot to mention one thing, which I should not have forgotten. I had mentioned it at the meeting of the Sikhs. But here too there are Sikhs and also Hindus. And what applies to one also applies to the other. Then I would say that we must regard today as the New Year day for the Sikhs. Hence, from today, the Sikhs have a duty to consider all the rest as their brethren. Guru Nanak taught no other thing. He even went to Mecca and has written quite a lot [about communal harmony]. There are many such references in the *Guru Granthsaheb*. What did Guru Govind do? Many Muslims were his disciples and he even killed some people to accommodate them and protect them. He never killed anyone just for the sake of saving a Sikh. He did wield the sword, but he had accepted certain restrictions for its use. Thus, the Muslims may have done anything, but we do not have to imitate them. Let us all remain good and do our duty. When I went to address the meeting of the Sikhs today, I was pained that I did not find a single Muslim on the road. What would be more shameful for us than the fact that not a single Muslim could be found in Chandni Chowk? I found the area crowded with men and unending rows of cars. But there was no Muslim among them. The only Muslim, Sheikh Abdullah, was seated next to me. How can we succeed in these circumstances?

A gentleman writes to me about the renovation of the Somnath temple.[1] This needs money and the Provisional Government at Junagadh, formed by Shamaldas Gandhi, has sanctioned Rs. 50,000 for it. One lakh is promised from Jamnagar. When the Sardar came here I asked him whether even though he was in the Government, he

[1] Which was desecrated and destroyed by Mahmood Gazni during his invasion in 1025 A. D.

would acquiesce in its giving as much money as it liked for Hinduism from its treasury. After all, we have formed the Government for all. It is a 'secular' government, that is, it is not a theocratic government, rather, it does not belong to any particular religion. Hence it cannot spend money on the basis of communities. For it, the only thing that matters is that all are Indians. Individuals can follow their own religions. I have my religion and you have yours to follow.

Another gentleman has written well in a note. He says that it would be gross *adharma* if either the Junagadh Government or the Union Government gives money for the renovation of the Somnath temple. I think he has made an absolutely correct point. I then asked the Sardar if that was hue. He said that that was not possible so long as he was alive. He said not a single pie could be taken out from the treasury of Junagadh for the renovation of the Somnath temple. If he was not going to do it, he said, what could poor Shamaldas do alone? There were enough number of Hindus who could donate money for the Somnath temple. If they became miserly and did not part with money, let the temple remain in its present state. There were already a lakh and a half rupees and Jamsaheb had already given a lakh. They would be able to manage for more.

I have learnt one thing more. You must have known that the Muslims in Pakistan have abducted our young girls. Attempts are being made and must be made to rescue them. Let us try to get back every abducted girl who is still alive there. If these girls have been raped, have they lost everything by it? At least, I do not think so. I had even talked about it yesterday. Coercion cannot make one change his religion. But I hear that there is some talk of making some payment to reclaim these girls. Some hoodlums come forward to bring back the girls if they are paid Rs. 1,000 per girl. Has this thing become a business then? If somebody kidnapped one of these three girls with me and then demanded at least a hundred if not a thousand rupees, I would tell him that he had better kill the girl. My daughter would return if God wished to save her. Why should he bargain with me for her? Not only did he abduct the girl but he also indulged in bullying. Having abandoned his own religion he had come to bully me because she was my daughter. I would refuse to give him even a cowrie. Similarly no parent should make such bargains for his daughter. They must think that their daughters are with God and God is everywhere. If a girl loses her husband, where would she go? It is of course a different matter if the girl wants to come over from there and we give her the fare if she does not have it. But if a hoodlum comes

and demands ransom money, his demand just cannot be accepted. I give such instances from there and also from here, because on our side too we have done such things and abducted Muslim girls. Would our Government indulge in such meanness? Should the East Punjab Government or the Union Government ask Jinnah Saheb to pay one lakh rupees for the return of Muslim girls in its custody? I would not give a single cowrie to the Government. How could it demand money as a reward for such abominable deeds? The Government should admit its mistake, make a solemn promise never to repeat it and return the girl along with a compensation. We are not going to achieve anything if we ourselves do not become pure and brave.

I had discussed Kathiawar yesterday. I told you whatever I had read in the Pakistani newspapers and subsequently heard from some Hindus. But today I consulted the Sardar when he came to me. I told him that when he went there he had made big speeches assuring that no one would touch a single Muslim boy or girl there, but then I heard that Muslims were being looted and beaten up, their property was burnt and their young girls kidnapped. He said that as far as he was aware, certainly not a single Muslim was killed nor a single Muslim house looted or burnt. All these things happened there in the chaos prevailing before he visited the place. There were some cases of looting and probably one house was burnt. But as for killing and abducting, these two things did not take place there even then. An agent of the central Government or some Commissioner was always present there. He had been ordered to see that such things were not allowed. He had been instructed to have perfect bandobast so that nobody even touched any Muslim, let alone robbing or killing. Subsequently, no such thing happened. I asked the Sardar if I could mention the thing in the prayer meeting in the evening. He said I could certainly do so. He said that if something had happened there, he would have pursued the matter. He also said that the Hindu Congressmen there at great risk to their lives saved the Muslims and their property. No hooliganism could persist there. The Sardar said that as long as he was there and was in charge of the Home Department, he would not allow such a thing to happen. I was very happy to hear all that and asked his permission to refer to it in public. He said that I could gladly do so and also mention his name. I was so happy that yesterday I had talked about it and today itself I got this information.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 131-8

373. LETTER TO YVONNE PRIVAT[1]

BIRLA HOUSE,
NEW DELHI,
November 29, 1947

DEAR BHAKTI[2],

I was so glad to receive your argued letter of 27th August. I see that you have grasped the fundamental difference between passive resistance and non-violent resistance. Resistance both forms are, but you have to pay a very heavy price when your resistance is passive, in the sense of the weakness of the resister. Europe mistook the bold and brave resistance full of wisdom by Jesus of Nazareth for passive resistance, as if it was of the weak. As I read the New Testament for the first time I detected no passivity, no weakness about Jesus as depicted in the four gospels and the meaning became clearer to me when I read Tolstoy's *Harmony of the Gospels* and his other kindred writings. Has not the West paid heavily in regarding Jesus as a passive resister? Christendom has been responsible for the wars which put to shame even those described in the Old Testament and other records, historical or semi-historical. I know that I speak under correction for I can but claim very superficial knowledge of history—modern or ancient.

Coming to my own personal experience, whilst we undoubtedly got through passive resistance our political freedom, over which lovers of peace like you and your good husband[3] of the West are enthusiastic, we are daily paying the heavy price for the unconscious mistake we made or, better still, I made in mistaking passive resistance for non-violent resistance. Had I not made the mistake, we would have been spared the humiliating spectacle of a weak brother killing his weak brother thoughtlessly and inhumanly.

I am only hoping and praying and I want all the friends here and in other parts of the world to hope and pray with me that this blood-bath will soon end and out of that, perhaps, inevitable butchery,

[1] Extracts from this and the addressee's letter to Gandhiji appeared in *Harijan*, 7-12-1947, under the title "Do Not Lose Heart".

[2] The name given by Gandhiji to the addressee

[3] Edmond Privat, whom Gandhiji addressed as "Anand"

will rise a new and robust India—not warlike, basely imitating the West in all its hideousness, but a new India learning the best that the West has to give and becoming the hope not only of Asia and Africa, but of the whole of the aching world.

I must confess that this is hoping against hope, for we are today swearing by the military and all that naked physical force implies. Our statesmen have for over two generations declaimed against the heavy expenditure on armaments under the British regime, but now that freedom from political serfdom has come, our military expenditure has increased and still threatens to increase and of this we are proud! There is not a voice raised against it in our legislative chambers. In spite, however, of the madness and the vain imitation of the tinsel of the West, the hope lingers in me and many others that India shall survive this death dance and occupy the moral height that should belong to her after the training, however imperfect, in non-violence, for an unbroken period of 32 years since 1915.

As to the last paragraph of your letter, I must confess my ignorance of psycho-analysis. Richard Gregg of U. S. A. has put the problem in a more concrete form than you have. You must have seen his letter and my reply[1] in the columns of *Harijan.*

I hope this will find you both in the same vigour in which you used to be during those happy days that you passed with me in India. I wonder if you will ever again come to India and see it, not in her madness, but wisdom, inspiring every department of life.

Love to you both.

BAPU

MADAME EDMOND PRIVAT
1 AVENUE DE LA GARE
NEUCHATEL, SWITZERLAND

From a photostat: G. N. 2342

[1] *Vide* "A Psychological Explanation", 11-11-1947.

374. LETTER TO ANASUYA SARABHAI

NEW DELHI,
November 29, 1947

CHI. ANASUYABEHN[1],

You have asked for a message for the "Majoor Din"[2]. My life is my message. If the workers have assimilated the teaching of ahimsa, there should be no division of Hindus and Muslims among them and no trace of untouchability among the Hindu workers. Why should there be any divisions among workers? If the worker wants equality with the owner, he should look upon the mill as his own property and protect it. The Ahmedabad workers have already learnt how to fight injustice. But they have many more lessons to learn before they can hope to become partners with the original owners of the mills. Do they know this? Let them remember it and march forward.

Blessings to all the labourers

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 7-12-1947. Also from a facsimile in *Majoor Sandesh,* 5-12-1973

375. FRAGMENT OF A LATTER

November 29, 1947

I don't know how long I shall have to stay here. Perhaps I may have to stay here for ever. Every day the situation seems to be getting out of control.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, p. 389

[1] Sister of Ambalal Sarabhai; President, Majoor Mahajan, a union of mill workers in Ahmedabad

[2] Labour Day, which was to be observed on December 4

376. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
November 29, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I told you yesterday that it was a day of momentous importance for the Sikhs. It should hold the same importance for us too. If they have truly started a new life and desire to follow the principles laid down by Guru Nanak for all of us, then Delhi should not be in the grip of the things that it is in at present.

I have read in the newspapers and also heard otherwise that a large number of people in Delhi are given to drinking. We already know the things people can do under the influence of alcohol. Now I am told that drinking has become a difficult problem and has spread over the entire city, so much so that it has become extremely difficult to control it. If a new chapter has started from yesterday liquor consumption should become even less than before. Alcohol can only make us mad. Why then be a slave to it? How can I tell you everything? All kinds of things are brought to my notice.

This is one thing. As for the other, I am told that the mosques which we had damaged are still in that state, and the mosques which were turned into temples are closed since the police or the military guards them. But even this hurts me. For how can such a thing be allowed if we have opened a new chapter from yesterday? The Sikhs could not have converted the mosques into temples. The Sikhs are a great community, and, if they decide to remain pure from today and do only pure deeds I have no doubt that it is bound to influence the Hindus. Then the Sikhs would become propagators of truth and justice. This would become their profession, i. e., to stand for peace and nothing but peace everywhere. If this happens, the very face of the country would change. Hence, those who have converted the mosques into temples should promptly remove the idols from there, and restore the mosques. In that event, what need would there be for the police or the military guarding those places? When all people become good, there need be no police.

The third thing is that a large number of our girls have been carried away to Pakistan. We do not know where they have been

taken. I had said yesterday that we should not give even a cowrie to get back the abducted girls. Those who have committed the crime of abducting our girls should restore them to us, and also do penance at the same time. It would not do to give any money to claim the girls back. But there is a very alarming report. It is reported that in the East Punjab we are ill-treating the Muslim girls, whom we have forcibly kept. I just cannot understand how we could have stooped so low. I must admit that I cannot bear to see this. We should regard those girls as our mothers or daughters. Those Muslim girls are like my own daughters. How can I indulge in pleasures, be alive and eat and drink while somebody ill-treats my daughters? I have a feeling that there is some exaggeration in this report. But on that ground it should not be disregarded. And, if there is some exaggeration it is only for good, because it would then make us think how low a man could stoop. This is something which we would shudder to think. We have opened a new chapter from yesterday, for, if the Sikhs have done so, the Hindus and the Muslims have done it too. Let us forget about the Muslims as we have made them helpless in the Indian Union. But the Hindus and the Sikhs are not helpless. And so, they must think what they should do. True, we are not indulging in such acts here. But when someone commits a crime anywhere I feel I am the culprit. You too should feel the same. If I were to commit any crime you should also think that you too were guilty of it. Let us all merge in each other like drops of ocean. If the drops of ocean remain apart they would dry up. But when they mingle together in the ocean they can carry huge ships across their expanse. As with the ocean so with us. After all we also are an ocean of human beings. If one person commits a crime, it amounts to all of us committing it. Then it ceases to be a crime. We must all become alert. That is why I talked about these things. But now I would like to come to the subject of controls.

Control on sugar has been removed. I hope and wish that controls on cloth and food would also be removed. But how would those controls go and what would be our duty after that? Since control on sugar has been removed, I would first talk about it. Now there are big sugar factories. But the owners of the factories should not consider themselves free to squeeze as much money from the people as they fancy. If they raise the price of sugar, people would be reduced to poverty. Fortunately the entire population of India does

not consume sugar. People should consume *gur*[1] for there is no control on it. The villagers can easily make *gur* in their own homes, but they cannot make sugar. There are huge factories in India where millionaires employ workers to produce sugar. But *gur* can be produced wherever sugar-cane is grown. Moreover, *gur* is a very healthy thing to eat if it is clean. When I was a child my father used to take me or I used to go with his attendants to the villages where sugar-cane was grown. People of those villages used to give us fresh and clean *gur* to eat. *Gur* is a sort of food which sugar can never be. So, the poor people should only eat *gur*. But today, some of them have started taking tea and in their tea they put sugar rather than gur. I would like to tell them that they should put *gur* in their tea; but would they listen to met? And when the price of sugar goes up, they think it would be better to have control on sugar so that they could have it cheaper. Under these circumstances, it is the supreme duty of the sugar merchants and factory-owners to have a mutual arrangement so that the entire country knows that with the freedom we have won we would earn only clean money. We would not cheat or deceive people and would root out all unclean and corrupt practices. If that does not happen, I would be blamed because I have worked quite a bit for the removal of controls, and am still working for it. If the sugar merchants and factory-owners increase their margin of profit, the price of sugar is bound to rise. If they take five per cent profit, it can be called honest earning. But it cannot be called honest earning if they pocket 10 or 20 per cent profit. Five per cent is more than sufficient and they should not take more than that. And, then, other controls would automatically go. Let not the Government get a chance to say that controls were removed because we wanted them to be removed and ask how the poor are now going to survive when they do not get sugar at all. That should not be the case. The factory-owners should become honest and form a committee to fix a uniform price of sugar. No factory-owner should charge more than that price. At the same time, the farmers who grow sugar-cane should not get less than their due. If the price rises because the cultivators are given more, then it becomes a matter of honest earning. They should maintain proper accounts and make a public announcement of what they pay to the farmers now as against what they were paid earlier, that the amount goes straight into the pockets of the cultivators and no middleman could

[1] Jaggery

swallow it and that as against the ten or twenty per cent they used to take, they are not taking even five and a quarter per cent now. Supposing the factory-owners do not take more than five per cent but if the middlemen charge higher prices, consumers of sugar will be really doomed. In that case, the factory-owners should sell sugar directly to the consumers. I have no doubt that things would run smoothly under such an arrangement.

A gentleman writes to say that the train fares for third-class travellers have been increased, though the increase is less compared to that of the first and second classes, but he asks, and rightly, why the third-class fares had to be raised even by this much. Granted that our aims of progress are high and we require more funds to achieve them. Then, if need be, we can increase the levy on tobacco and many other imported as well as indigenously produced non-essential items. It may serve our purpose to some extent. The men in power in the Government ought to consider and examine the feasibility of this proposition. But the point certainly needs to be understood, and the Government should also know that I have got people who give such useful suggestions. They are not unintelligent people. Rather, they are very sensible. If today we have millions of rupees with us, it does not mean that we should squander away everything. We should spend even small amounts, out of those millions, after careful consideration. And it is enough for me if these small amounts thus spent benefit the poor villagers of India. Out of the crores of rupees drawn from our villages, how much are we able to return to them? A true *Panchayati Raj* or democracy has got to draw its resources from the people but, in return, they should benefit the people tenfold. For instance, if I take money from the people for education, I should give such education to their children and have such an estimate of expenditure that they should get back their money tenfold. For example, if I start sanitation work in the villages and build roads for the village people, they would know that the money they give is being used for their own benefit. As a result, we would not be as crazy about our military as we are now. Then we would decide to spend as little as possible on the army and as much as possible on the general public. In such a situation, people themselves become the army and start acquiring knowledge of military affairs. When they are thus able to defend themselves and their neighbours, the defence of India is automatically ensured. As it is no one can have designs on India.

But right now, even though the British have gone, the atmosphere of the British rule has not yet gone. Let us change that atmosphere. The British used to spend extravagantly and the people did not get any return from such expenditure. But now the people should get back everything they give. Then it would be well for the country. This is all I would like to say today.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 138-43

377. ITS WISE USE

This letter[1] is from a correspondent who knows everything about this tragedy. I have not the least doubt that this tragedy can be turned to good account by the correct behaviour of the sufferers, as also that of the people amongst whom their lot is cast for the time being. In this consummation, I have no doubt that all specially qualified men and women such as doctors, lawyers, *vaids, hakims,* nurses, traders and bankers should make common cause with the others and lead a co-ordinated camp life in perfect co-operation, feeling not like helpless dependents on charity, but resourceful, independent men and women making light of their sufferings and looking forward to a life enriched by their sufferings, a life full of promise for the future and worthy of imitation by the people amongst whom the camp life is lived.

Then when the professional people have been inured to corporate unselfish life and when they can be spared from these camps, they would branch out into villages or otherwise, shedding the fragrance of their presence wherever they may happen to be.

NEW DELHI, November 30, 1947

Harijan, 7-12-1947

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent, a refugee belonging to the medical profession, had suggested that "all members of the medical and teaching professions" should be absorbed in Government service to help the Provincial Governments "to carry out their rural uplift programmes".

378. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

NEW DELHI,
November 30, 1947

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I preserved your letters for such a long time. Now I see that I cannot cope with the work. So I have to give up the idea of writing on certain things. I include in this your views[1] also. I am forced to discuss Hindustani and the two scripts repeatedly.

I am all right.

Blessings to both of you

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10733. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

379. LETTER TO SATISH D. KALELKAR

[*November 30, 1947*][2]

CHI. SATISH[3],

I have your English letter. I know nothing about Valji's letter. I have not read it. Anyway we may not stretch the point. Nobody is going to learn anything from it. Such articles would seldom appear in *Harijan.*

I understand what you say about [your] initials. I did not know how the 'D' came in. If [the blame] is put on Kaka he will not grow small. He is what he is and will always be.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter To Kishorelal G. Mashruwala", 29-9-1947.
[2] The letter is placed in the source among those of this date.
[3] Son of D. B. Kalelkar

380. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

November 30, 1947

I can understand the plight of those who have been uprooted from their homes. But we have to find a way out of this situation. It is truly a boon if one can find happiness in adversity. I have not the slightest doubt that, if those who live in groups behave properly, everyone's interest will be served. If the doctors, *vaidyas*, nurses, teachers, traders, jewellers, and people of other professions among the refugees help one another it cannot but have pleasing results. Camp life presents its own opportunities. If we could only co-operate with one another and regulate our lives properly no one would find himself in distress. We could then show the world that though we had lost our all, we were still fully prepared to face any calamity.

. . .[1] I am sure that if only women displayed a little courage and freed themselves from narrow religious ideas they could render a unique service to the nation. I am convinced that no country where women are slaves can ever make any progress. I am amazed that while such barbarities are being perpetrated on women, men who call themselves brave merely look on. Look at the plight of the Punjab. Is that sort of thing enjoined in the Shastras? I fear that if we and our leaders do not wake up betimes it will be difficult to recover the girls that have been carried away to Pakistan.

After the girls are brought back it is necessary to resettle them properly. Girls forcibly abducted are not to be treated as defiled. And does defilement only apply to women and not to men? How long must I go on writing? What can I write? My heart is crying. What can my shedding tears avail? I have had long talks with Maulana Saheb but I have no hopes that anything will be achieved.

You all should take care of yourselves. I am well. Manu will write the rest. She is still weak, for in the midst of work she does not think of her health. I do, and therefore I keep fit.

Blessings to all from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Dilhiman Gandhiji—I, pp. 393-4

[1] Omission as in the source

381. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

November 30, 1947

DAUGHTER RAIHANA[1],

I have your letter. There is no need to publish an English version. I understand your point. The [publication] will benefit neither the Hindus nor the Muslims. If we meet some time and I have some leisure we shall have a talk and a good laugh. I shall learn the Urdu script better. You are in the midst of it all and so you hold one opinion, and since I am at a distance I hold a different one.[2] We are both right in our respective views. Or we might both be in the wrong. We should do all we can. Today the situation is very different. It is a matter of life and death.

To you both,

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

382. LETTER TO MUSLIM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
November 30, 1947

BHAI SALAJI,

Why do you write in English? From your name you appear to be a Gujarati. It is possible that you belong to north India. Anyway you could have written to me in Urdu, Gujarati, Hindi or Bengali. But let this be.

Now I wish to come to your letter. I feel that if the Government has relations with any other Chamber of Commerce there is no reason why they should have none with yours. But in my opinion after independence and the partition of India there should not be any communal associations of trade, etc. I have said something in this respect during my speech the day before yesterday.[3] I hope you will

[1] Daughter of Abbas Tyabji; a devotee of Lord Krishna
[2] *Vide* "Hindustani Written in Nagari Only", 1-11-1947. .
[3] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 28-11-1947.

wind up your Chamber of Commerce. If Bengal does not have a unitary Chamber of Commerce, you will help in setting up one and work hard towards this end.

From a copy of the Urdu: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

383. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

November 30, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Yesterday I wanted to mention one point; but since I had to talk about many other things, it was left out. You must have seen that the girls sit on the floor and they feel cold. I had told them that we have plenty of papers and newspapers which we have read already and these could be used for sitting on. But it is good that a friend has spread a sheet today. In a way it is good to be unconcerned. Why should we be so delicate that we feel cold by sitting on the floor? Even if we have to sit on grass, if we can have a piece of paper and if it does not get wet, then we would not feel cold. If this does not serve the purpose, then we have our age-old custom of carrying our own *asana*[1] wherever we go and spreading it whenever we have to sit. Today we have forgotten that practice and given ourselves to comfortable living. I suggest that we should forget about a piece of paper or newspaper, take one if you want and if it is thick, but the best thing would be an *asana* of wool or jute or even cloth or hay. All you have to do is to spread it wherever you want to sit and tuck it under your arm when you have to go. Since I am feeling cold, everybody must be feeling the same. Moreover, doctors also say that we should not sit on wet ground or where it is cold. If men wearing *dhotis* and women wearing *salwars* or skirts use thick cloth as undergarments, they can serve as *asans*. But the women too have become very delicate and so their clothes must be soft. How can they wear thick clothes? Their undergarments have to be soft. Hence, they cannot protect them against this cold.

I have received many telegrams from Kathiawar. I have already told you[2] about what I heard and what subsequently appeared in the Pakistani newspapers. Those papers are read by thousands of people

[1] A small mat

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 27-11-1947 and "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 28-11-1947.

there. May be some ten thousand or so. I do not know how many people must be reading them. But nothing would be achieved if I started thinking whether those things had really happened. Hence it was good that I placed before you what I had read in those newspapers. I do not know if all those things are true. If they are true, they are a matter of great shame for Kathiawar. And if they are not true, it is a matter of shame for the newspapers. Thus it is a matter of shame for either side. I have also told you what the Sardar has to comment on the matter. He came today also and told me that whatever reports came from there were not worth mentioning. They were highly exaggerated.

But the telegram I have received from Rajkot is worth noting. It is a fairly long telegram and I would like to mention it to you in brief. After all, I know the Muslims of Kathiawar. I do not know them individually, but I know the Khojas, Meenas, Vaghers and some Kumbis among the peasants, and Mahers. After all, I was born there and lived there for almost 17 years. In fact I lived there for full 17 years, because I did not go out to study anywhere. My father never sent me anywhere. I completed my studies there and attended college for a few months, and that too at Bhavnagar. Even for the examination I could not go beyond Ahmedabad. That was my condition. I saw everything that happened there and, later too, kept contact with the people by visiting them. So, the sender of that telegram says that I am greatly worried on their account, and, in turn, my worry has become their worry. He says it is true that some Hindus in Kathiawar had lost their balance, but is there any place where this has not happened. They resorted to violence and even harmed some Muslims. They destroyed their houses and even burnt them down. But, he says, the Congressmen did not let the situation go far. They were under the leadership of Dhebarbhai. I know him very well. He went forward to protect the Muslims and succeeded to a great extent. Not all Hindus were involved in those acts of loot and arson. Had that been the case, all Muslim houses in Rajkot would have been set ablaze, there would have been large-scale violence and some people would have been killed. But things did not reach that point. The Congressmen and others took every precaution. Dhebarbhai was abused and manhandled. Even though he is a big man and also a lawyer, when the mob gets excited all considerations of big and small are forgotten. They harassed him because he was trying to protect the Muslims. Some people who accompanied Dhebarbhai write, that, though some

injury was caused, Dhebarbhai was saved by other people. The telegram also mentions help from the Thakore Saheb and the police. In that case, who are left to be suspected of creating the trouble? They say "the Hindu Mahasabha and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh—these organizations have certainly done some mischief—their aim was to drive out the Muslims at least from Rajkot. However they could not do so. But now we have nothing more to worry and there is no danger to the Muslims. So you also should not worry. We are watching the situation elsewhere too and we would send you another telegram."

I have received a telegram from a Muslim gentleman from the same place. He expresses his extreme gratitude to the Congressmen and others who tried their best to save the life and property of the Muslims. But there is yet another telegram from Bombay also sent by a Muslim gentleman. He states that what I had said earlier about Kathiawar was correct but what I have been told later about it is not correct. That lots of things have happened there and are still happening.

I do not know whether I should believe the telegram from Bombay or the one from the other Muslim gentleman. But I doubt the truth about the telegram from Bombay because it has been sent from Bombay, while the other one has been sent by those who are right in Kathiawar. Moreover, the people of Kathiawar cannot deceive me. Where would they escape after deceiving me? Hence I feel that the telegram from Bombay gives an exaggerated version. The actual situation would be known to me in due course. For the present, let me at least put all this before you.

There is also a telegram from Bhavnagar. It is from the Maharaja of Bhavnagar. I know him too, because I have lived there for three or four months. So he felt concerned about me and wondered why I was so much worried. He has said in the telegram that I need not worry. He says that they are all vigilant. The Hindus also are vigilant. They would not let any harm come to the Muslims and I should have no doubt at all about it

But there is a telegram from Junagadh sent by some Muslims. They say that I am being deceived, and I should set up a commission and inquire whether the Muslims are being harassed or not. Similar telegrams have also been sent to Jawaharlal, the Sardar and others. I would like to say that it is not possible to appoint a commission for anything and everything. Setting up a commission is no joke. Where

is the need for having a commission even though some harm might have been done? As for Kathiawar, I am like a commission myself. If anything comes to my notice, I can check it. I can handle the Princes as well as the people of Kathiawar. I do not claim to succeed in everything I undertake or that they abide by everything I say. But is not Kathiawar the same as Bihar? If someone wants me to set up a commission in Bihar, do you think I would oblige? I am at their disposal myself. People there love me and listen to me. And so, it would not be proper to set up any commission there.

I have also received several letters from the Muslims in Rajkot. Many of them are friendly with the Hindus and also happy with the Congress. Then, who belongs to the Hindu Mahasabha and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh? I can have no enmity towards them. They think theirs is the only way of saving Hinduism. But I believe that Hinduism will not be saved in that manner. They believe in violent opposition to those who commit an evil act. But I would ask how fighting an evil by another evil will help. We have got our own Government. Take it to task and demand an explanation as to why such things are happening. Moreover, our Government is vigilant and it is trying its best. And so I would like to tell the Hindu Mahasabha and also the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh—both are Hindu organizations and many influential and educated people are associated with them as in other organizations—that they cannot save Hinduism in this manner. Is it true that they have harassed the Muslims? If not, who has? The Congress has not harassed them, nor has either of the Governments done it. Who then are the other Hindus who did it? Today all the Hindus and Sikhs are to be blamed for this just as in Pakistan all the Muslims are to be blamed, and rightly so. That is why I would suggest that those who are innocent and yet are accused, should clear their names. The Muslims in Junagadh can get justice if they want. Why then should we set up a commission?

Having talked about the situation there, let me also talk about the situation here. The Sardar has made some arrangements and he is going to protect all the mosques we have here. You must have read the notice sent by him in the newspapers that the occupied premises of the mosques should be vacated in a week's time, otherwise they will be vacated with the help of the police. But I ask you what will he gain by sending the police? If some Hindus have installed an idol in some mosque—the idol may be of gold or silver or brass or earth or

stone—but it is said, and I also believe, that so long as it has not been sanctified and not worshipped by pure hands, in my view it is not an idol but a mere piece of stone or gold. Such idols have been installed in the mosque at the corner of Connaught Place. In my view, there is no Hanuman in those idols. To me it is a mere piece of stone which has been shaped like Hanuman and to which some *sindoor*[1] has also been applied. In my view it is not worthy of worship. It can be worshipped only if it is legitimately installed and sanctified. But all this was not done. Hence it is the duty of those who have installed the idols to remove them from there at daybreak and then keep them wherever they choose. By thus installing idols in the mosques they are desecrating the mosques and also insulting the idols. As followers of Hinduism we are idol-worshippers, but worshipping any idol in this manner is not religion but the opposite of it. So, why should the Sardar send the police there? Those who are Hindus among you should become watchmen and remove the idols so installed. We should offer to repair the mosques which have been damaged. But the Sardar says that the Government would bear the expenses of the repairs of those mosques. Why should the Government do it? is it not be cause we are not doing it ourselves? The Government has to protect everybody. But it would be a matter of shame for us all—Sikhs and Hindus today. Of course I have not heard about any Sikh having installed the idols, for the Sikhs have only one idol or, say, the holy treatise, that is, the *Granthsaheb.* I have not known of any Sikh having kept the *Granthsaheb* in any mosque. Even if any of them has done so he has insulted the *Granthsaheb.* The *Granthsaheb* can be kept only in a *gurudwara.* Only the holy Sikhs keep it on a high pedestal after nicely decorating it. Somebody like me would wrap it in a nice khadi cloth. But today, even though people do not think in terms of swadeshi or foreign things we do manufacture beautiful woollens and silks by hand. If we spread such silk cloth and keep the *Granthsaheb* on it, it would be worthy of worship. And if any Sikh goes and keeps it in a mosque, he insults the *Granthsaheb* and then it cannot be worthy of worship.

A Muslim gentleman came to see me today. I could not make out what he wanted to say. But he was holding a copy of the Koran which was half burnt. Even that was sacred for him and so he had wrapped it in a very clean cloth. He opened the cloth and showed the

[1] Vermilion

burnt Koran to me. He did not say anything but looked at me with tearful eyes and then went away. He talked a few things with Brajkishan, since I was busy with my work. Similarly, if any Muslim comes here and instals the Koran here and beats you and me up, I would say that he is insulting the Koran. The Koran does not ordain that people should be compelled to accept it.

That is why I very respectfully wish to tell the Hindu Mahasabha and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and others who wish to listen to me and also the Sikhs, that the Sikhs are great and if they turn good and become true followers of Guru Nanak, the Hindus would then automatically become good. I have great respect for the Sikhs in my heart but today, everybody, whether Hindu or Sikh, is going astray and India is being destroyed. Are we going to drag India into dust after raising her high? Are we going to destroy our religion, our achievements and our country? May God save us from all this.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 144-50

384. TELEGRAM TO NAWAB MOHAMMAD ISMAIL KHAN

[*November, 1947*][1]

VICE CHANCELLOR
ALIGARH UNIVERSITY

DELEGATION SHOULD GO NOW. WORK PAKISTAN PEOPLE CREATE SUITABLE ATMOSPHERE. READ MY RELEVANT SPEECH.[2]

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] This was scribbled on the addressee's telegram dated November, 1947 which read: "Many thanks for granting interview University Union Vice President. He informs that you approve of delegation of students going Punjab and induce non-Muslims to remain in their homes. I would prefer their going with you. Wire whether they should proceed now or later."

[2] Presumably, the reference is to Gandhiji's "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 4-11-1947.

385. LETTER TO PYARELAL[1]

December 1, 1947

I see my battle has to be fought and won in Delhi itself. There is a lot for me to do here. . . .The six resolutions[2] of the All-India Congress Committee this time were practically mine. . . . It now remains to be seen how they are implemented.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 519-20

386. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 1, 1947

CHI. NARANDAS,

Read the accompanying wire and let me know how much truth it contains. Show it to Dhebarbhai and others. If you know the sender let me know who he is. The more information you can give the better.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, Part II, p. 319. Also C. W. 8647. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] The addressee along with other workers was working in Noakhali to establish cordial relations between Hindus and Muslims.

[2] *Vide* "A. I. C. C. Resolutions", 15/16/17-11-1947.

387. LETTER TO NARANDAS NALIERWALA

NEW DELHI,
December 1, 1947

BHAI NARANDAS,

I don't understand why all of you have English letter-heads. I get your letters from time to time.

Certainly you shouldn't believe that those who are called 'my people' are also votaries of the non-violence to which I am devoted.

I have sent the letter to Vaikunthbhai[1].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

388. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

NEW DELHI,
December 1, 1947

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your letter. Forget Ratilal. If he returns, do not have him back. You did what you could. He is of that type. He would beg anywhere.

The condition of Didimoni[2] is pitiable. It should not be. I would still advise that she should stay at Khadi Pratishthan[3] and her daughters too should live and be brought up there. I realize that it is difficult for her but I cannot think of any other course. I am glad that Babua is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1716

[1] Vaikunthbhai Lallubhai Mehta
[2] Taralika, addressee's daughter, who had lost her husband
[3] At Sodepur, established by the addressee's husband, Satis Chandra Das Gupta

389. NOTE TO LT. GEN. K. M. CARIAPPA

December 1, 1947[1]

You know something of my having written in my paper[2] about your statement on non-violence in London last month.[3]

When we meet again . . . I would like further to discuss this subject with you.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 523-4

390. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[4]

NEW DELHI,
December 1, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Many friends resent my using 'if 's in my statements. They think I should first of all make sure whether something is true or not. I feel that whenever I have made a tentative statement I have lost nothing thereby. It has only done good to the work I then had in hand.

The talk just now is about Kathiawar. Friends say that I gave currency to false allegations of atrocities on the Kathiawar Muslims. Most of the allegations were entirely unfounded. What little mischief might have occurred had been quickly brought under control. But if I

[1] From *Dilhiman Gandhiji*—I

[2] *Vide* "Outside his Field", 7-11-1947.

[3] The addressee said that he felt greatly honoured that Gandhiji should have taken the trouble to notice at length the views of a person like him whom he had never met. He further said: "We soldiers are a very much maligned community, . . . the one community which dislikes wars is the soldier community. It is . . . because of the knowledge we have of the utter futility of wars to settle international disputes. We feel one war merely leads to another. History has taught us this. . . . In a democratic country soldiers do not initiate wars. . . .We merely carry out the orders of the Government and therefore . . . Of the people. . . .Why blame us?"

Gandhiji signalled to him to return the slip of paper he had given him and added the following.

[4] As Gandhiji was observing silence, his written speech was read out at the prayer meeting.

have repeated those allegations with the conditional 'if' no harm has been done to truth. The Congress and the administrators of Kathiawar will gain to the extant that they take their stand on truth. Friends assert that though truth comes out in the end the harm is already done, for people who have no scruples about truth or falsehood dishonestly use my statements for their own purposes. I should therefore guard myself against untruth being propagated. But whenever people have resorted to such tactics they have failed and they were exposed as dishonest and false. If I mention the allegations subject to 'if 's it should not perturb anyone. The only thing required is that those against whom the allegations are levelled should be wholly innocent.

Let us consider the other side of the matter. Take Kathiawar again for example. If I had not paid attention to the allegations contained in some major newspapers of Pakistan which even the Prime Minister of Pakistan had declared were true in substance, the Muslims would have taken them as gospel truth. But now the Muslims have come to doubt their veracity.

I would like friends in Kathiawar and elsewhere to learn from this the lesson that we will not let any trouble occur in our own house; we will welcome criticism even if that criticism should be bitter; we will become truthful and we will rectify any error we discover in ourselves. We must not delude ourselves with the belief that we can never make a mistake. Our bitterest critic is one who has some grudge, fancied or real, against us. We shall correct him if we are patient with him and, whenever the occasion arises, show him his error, or correct our own when we are found to be in error. By doing so we shall never go wrong. No doubt a balance must be preserved. Discrimination is always required. One must never take notice of statements of a mischievous nature. I feel that after long experience I have learnt the art of discrimination.

Today the atmosphere is poisoned. Allegations are being hurled at each other by parties. To imagine in such a situation that we can make no mistakes would be folly. We have not the good fortune today to be able to make such a claim. It will be enough if with necessary effort we succeed in eradicating the mischief and root it out. We can do so only if our eyes and ears are open to see and hear about our own shortcomings. Nature has so made us that we cannot see our own shortcomings. We can see only those of others. Wisdom requires that

we should benefit from others seeing our shortcomings.

Yesterday, I was not able to deal fully with the long telegram from Junagadh, which I had received as I was about to leave for the prayer meeting, for I had only cursorily glanced through it. Today I have studied it fully. Those who had sent the wire state that the allegations to which had referred the other day were founded in truth. If this is so it is very bad for Kathiawar. If attempts have been made to exaggerate the allegations that our workers have admitted as true and which I have published, then those behind this wire have done harm to Pakistan. They invite me to go to Kathiawar and see things for myself. They ought to know that today I am not in a position to do that. They demand an inquiry commission but before that they must prepare their case. I grant that their purpose is not to bring a bad name to Junagadh or Kathiawar. They want the truth to be brought out and they want security for the life and property and honour of the minority community. They know, as everyone knows, that newspaper propaganda especially when it is not wholly based on truth can protect neither life nor property nor honour. To protect all these three things those sending the wire should adhere to truth and they should go and meet their Hindu friends. They know their friends amongst Hindus. They know also that though I am at some distance away from Kathiawar I am doing their work even from here. I have said this after full deliberation and now I am collecting all the facts. I have seen Sardar Patel. He says that to the extent that it lies within his power no communal riot will be permitted and anyone misbehaving with our Muslim brothers and sisters will be severely punished. The Kathiawar workers, who are quite impartial, are trying to find out the truth for themselves and trying to alleviate the sufferings of the Kathiawar Muslims. They love Muslims as much as they love their own selves. Will the Muslims help them?

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 151-3

391. LETTER TO BAPSY PAVRY[1]

NEW DELHI,
December 2, 1947

DEAR SISTER,

All that you have told me about Lalkaka[2] is interesting. But there is nothing for me to write about it.

Let me answer your three questions:

(1) When a portrait of someone has to be painted, the person should be shown as he is. Therefore, neither I nor anyone else can select the colours.

The ground of Kasturba's *sari* always used to be white. Occasionally it had lines or dots in colour. The hem and the borders used to be coloured. There was no particular choice in the colours.

(2) Whether the pose should be a sitting or standing one is for the artist to decide. It should be a pose in which the subject was most often seen.

(3) I have no photograph. The Naoroji sisters can give you full information in this respect. Among them, Gosibehn Captain will be in a position to give the maximum information.

I hope the portrait of your father will come out well.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

MISS BAPSY PAVRY
TAJ MAHAL HOTEL
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10227. Courtesy: Bapsy Pavry

[1] Daughter of Khurshedji Erachji Pavry, High Priest of Parsis in India. She later became Premier Marchioness of Winchester, England.

[2] An artist who painted portraits

392. LETTER TO GHULAM RASOOL QURESHI

December 2, 1947

CHI. QURESHI,

I appreciate your compassion. But I don't think we can really satisfy our sentiment by having the dogs castrated. We must learn the art of keeping dogs. And we should kill stray dogs in the least painful manner. I don't mean to say that it involves no violence, but I would claim that this is the least violent method.

The question of Hindu-Muslim relations has reached a critical stage. It is for everybody to see how best it can be tackled.

Can you say that Amina[1] is perfectly all right?

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

393. LETTER TO DILKHUSH DIWANJI

December 2, 1947

CHI. DILKHUSH,

I have your letter of the 22nd [ultimo].

I received the khadi woven by the weavers out of their own hand-spun yarn. My thanks to them.

Were these friends initially weavers? If they were, please let me know what difference they found in the weaving of mill-yarn and their own hand-spun yarn. Compared to that of others, is their weaving superior or inferior? How many such weavers have been trained? How many new weavers as well as spinners have been trained? Has there been any improvement in their performance?

I had all the letters from Khar. Bisen had acknowledged receipt of them. How is it you did not get his letter?

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's wife and daughter of Abdul Kadir Bawazeer

394. LETTER TO JAYASHANKAR PANDYA

December 2, 1947

BHAI JAYASHANKAR PANDYA,

Herewith a wire I received from Junagadh.[1] Let me know the truth about it. Also tell me who the signatories are. Please also write to me what Bhai Moosa who had come with you has to say. I have with me two varying reports; I am therefore rather confused.

JAYASHANKAR PANDYA
HEAD OF THE JUNAGADH STATE RAILWAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

395. LETTER TO JAMNA GANDHI

December 2, 1947

CHI. JAMNA[2],

Your letter. I am keeping well. I have heaps of work. Kanu[3] can come over whenever he wishes; so also Abha[4]. I do not have to order them. Don't worry at all. One should give up one's desire to be looked after and served by one's children after having given them away for social service.

Why does the asthma persist? Won't it go?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 1-12-1947.

[2] Wife of Narandas Gandhi

[3] Addressee's son and daughter-in-law

[4] Who was running the Kushtha Ashram, an institution for leprosy patients, at Dattapur

396. LETTER TO SATYEN

December 2, 1947

CHI. SATYEN,

How did you bring up [the matter] of Manohar Diwan[4]?

It is quite right that the work you are doing at Nalwadi will be under the supervision of Vinoba, but if any such venture is to be undertaken at Sevagram you should have permission from Arya-nayakum and Ashadevi. It would therefore be better to give up the idea.

It will serve no purpose for a Harijan to call himself a Brahmin but quite a lot is accomplished by a Brahmin becoming a Bhangi.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

397. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

NEW DELHI,
December 2, 1947

DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

I have your long letter. How can I argue with you? You must have received my last letter.[1]

I shall follow your suggestion when I am convinced. In the meanwhile let us bear with our differences.

Did you consult Nanavati regarding Urdu script? He has done quite a lot in this connection.

The social question has significance in its own place. The people of Europe who inter-dine have fought with one another. Muslims fought with Muslims at Karbala[2]; and what about the friction between the Shias and the Sunnis?

We cannot promote unity by retaining only the Urdu script. We have to have reforms in all directions.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Raihana Tyabji", 30-11-1947.

[2] The scene of battle in Iraq where Imam Hussain, the Shia leader and his followers were killed by the Sunnis in 680 A. D.

398. TALK WITH MUSLIMS[1]

PANIPAT,
December 2, 1947

You want to go to Pakistan of your own free will, don't you? When your leaders came to me and pleaded that I should visit Panipat, they told me that people were leaving for Pakistan against their will. But now from what you say I gather that you yourselves want to go to Pakistan. All the same I must tell you that this is your home. You should stay here. Your safety is the responsibility of Dr. Gopichand Bhargava—your Chief Minister—and he will fulfil that responsibility. Nevertheless all men have to die one day. There are 28,000 refugees here. If all of you are cut down to the last man at the hands of your brethren, you will have shown true bravery. It will have brought glory to your religion. You should say, 'Remove the military from here. The Hindus will protect us., I am sure if you show such trust the Hindus will certainly protect you.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 6

399. TALK WITH MUSLIM DELEGATION[2]

PANIPAT,
December 2, 1947

So far I have been patiently listening. I have not said a word. But now the discussion is becoming heated and at last I have been invited to offer advice. I must then tell you that if you have the courage to die at the hands of the refugees or the Hindus, should they want to kill you, you will have rendered a great service to Islam.

What happens in Pakistan is a matter for God to see. But I shall never advise you to go away from here. If, of course, you want to go of your own will, no one can stop you. But you will never hear

[1] Gandhiji reached Panipat at about 11.30 a. m. and met the Muslim refugees who desired to go to Pakistan.

[2] Dr. Gopichand Bhargava, Swaran Singh, Hifzur Rehman, Deshbandhu Gupta and the Deputy Commissioner were also present.

Gandhi utter the words that you should leave India. Gandhi can only tell you that you should stay, for India is your home. And if your brethren should kill you, you should bravely meet death. That is the way I am made. That is the way I would have people behave.

In Pakistan many Hindu girls have been forcibly converted and subjected to extreme barbarities. Hindus too have done similar things. But I am telling you how you should behave like true Muslims. You should seek help from the Pakistan Government and persuade your brethren there to console the young women who have been abducted. You should tell them: 'Sisters, you have been cruelly treated. We forgot that we were human. From now on you are our mothers, our sisters, our daughters., If you work in this spirit you can make Pakistan really *pak*— really pure. Of the three things—human dignity, life and property—you should make it your business to safeguard one and devote yourselves wholly to service. Then, I assure you, Hindus will worship you and you will be able to serve not only Pakistan but also the Muslims living in India. Geographically you are separated but no one in the world can separate the hearts. Where can you run away from friends and relatives? Someone among you said that Gurubachan Singh had behaved treacherously. I tell you that if a man himself is honest it can do him no harm if the other party is treacherous. I say this from personal experience. I am not preaching like a Christian. Deception and lies can never succeed. Otherwise truth would be at a discount in the world; anyone could get away with lies.

The Ministers have assured you that they will protect you even at the risk of their own lives. Still if you are resolved to go and do not place any trust in their word there is nothing further I can say to you. What can I do to reassure you? If I should die tomorrow you would again have to flee. Therefore you cannot go by what others say. You have to decide for yourselves after considering what your duty is towards the country, towards your brothers, towards the land that gave you birth, where you grew up. This will not be because Gandhi says it. There was a time when I wished to live a hundred and twenty-five years. Today I do not have that wish any more. I do not consider our present freedom as freedom. I consider it as the undoing of the country. You are destroying the independence that we have gained without shedding a drop of blood. You are cutting off your own feet. Today Punja Saheb cannot be visited by any Sikh pilgrim. What a sorry pass we have come to after we became free. If even now you

take up the work of service without asking where and by whom the present tide of violence was started, you can still taste the nectar of freedom. Where are all the proclamations of Jinnah ? The more I dwell on these matters the more unhappy I become. I do not believe in shedding tears. But today, having heard you and seen you, my heart weeps.

Do as God guides you. I have said what I had to say. I can only pray to God to grant us good sense.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, pp. 8-10

400. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING[1]

PANIPAT,
December 2, 1947

Gandhiji told a mass meeting mostly of refugees from West Punjab that he was not very happy on his second visit to Panipat. During his last visit[2] he was assured by the non-Muslims of the locality that they would not let the Muslims go from Panipat. He was hurt to hear from Mr. Gopalaswami Ayyangar[3] that arrangements were now complete for sending the Muslims to Pakistan. He hoped that he would hear about the Hindus persuading the Muslims not to go to Pakistan. Why did the Muslims of Panipat, who were previously not eager to go to Pakistan, now want to leave?

All the Muslims in the camp here want to go. I told them that they would get all the protection here. But one should depend on God's protection rather than on the protection of the army and the police. Supposing you are eating and death comes while food is in your mouth, no army or police, no doctors or drugs, will be of any use. If we could only stop to think how God holds in his own hand the string of death, the prevailing conflict between trust and distrust would end. If my brother has become mad and wants to kill me, does it mean

[1] The Gujarati version in *Dilhiman Gandhiji* has been collated with the report in *The Hindustan Times.*

[2] On November 10

[3] (1882-1953); Prime Minister of Kashmir, 1937-43; Minister without Portfolio, Government of India, 1947-48; Leader of Indian Delegation to United Nations Security Council; Union Minister of Railways and Transport, and later of Defence

that I should also go mad? To return evil for evil makes for the fall of both parties. No one can be forced to accept another's faith.

Referring to conversions, Gandhiji said that there had been conversions of Hindus and Sikhs in Pakistan. To repeat the same here to Muslims would be denial of civilization and did not speak of humanity. By these conversions people neither enriched their religion nor themselves. By such acts people degraded themselves and their country for which they had made much sacrifice.

No one had imagined that the freedom that came would be such a terrible thing. But that was the will of God. If we can pass the present test we shall have risen very high. Sjhariar asks, if India fails what will become of his country? The whole of Asia today has its eyes fixed on us. God has given us a jewel in the person of Jawaharlal. The whole world likes him. We have a leader such as the Sardar. The two make an inseparable pair. Neither can do without the other. India has a name in the world because of Jawaharlal. Who otherwise would care about India? But Pandit Nehru will not be able to do his job without your co-operation. Let us not allow India's name to fall into disrepute.

To the refugees from West Punjab, Gandhiji said that he knew that they had encountered untold sufferings. It might also be a fact that the Muslims staying here might be having some property and enjoying themselves a bit. But, just because they had suffered, they should not deprive the Muslims of their property. He would not believe that all refugees were bad people.

There are 28,000 refugees in this camp. Not all of them can be good. If there are goonda elements among them you should pick them out and make of them good men by your love. They are all brothers here, so what need is there for the military? If there are two brothers in a family does it need any police force to guard them? Your salvation lies in learning to protect one another. You should go to your Muslim brothers and sisters and plead with them not to leave India. If you do not cast covetous eyes on their homes, I am sure Hinduism will live for ever. We must forget what has happened. In this alone lies our good. You may listen to an experienced old man if you care, for today my voice is a voice in the wilderness. However I must say what I consider my duty to say. Today I do not have the wish or the zest to go on living. Time was when I wanted to live 125 years and bring about Ramarajya. But if I do not have your co-operation what can I do all by myself ?

It was said, Gandhiji continued, that the Muslims had arms in their possession. There might be arms with the Hindus and Sikhs too. He said that all arms, whether they be with Hindus, Sikhs or Muslims, should be licensed.

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, pp. 10-2, and *The Hindustan Times*, 3-12-1947

401. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
December 2, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I had told you I should be going to Panipat today. I had intended to be back by four o'clock. But there was so much work that I could not come before thirty-five minutes—at any rate thirty-three minutes past five. Then I heard the prayer. I have said that the prayer should begin whether I am present or not and we must be regular. Then I went and washed myself. Hence the delay, for which I apologize.

I had already hinted at the purpose of my visit to Panipat. I had been hoping and I continue to hope even now that by some means or other the Muslims of Panipat should be stopped from going [to Pakistan]. It will be good for us, good for the whole of India and because it will be good for India it will be good for Pakistan as well.

There are people living in distress there—the refugees who have come from Pakistan—and they must continue to live in distress as long as they do not return to their homes. Similarly the Muslims who have been forced to flee to Pakistan will be unhappy there. You should have no doubt about it.

It was good that I went there. It was my duty to do so. Dr. Gopichand Bhargava had come and so had Sardar Swaran Singh, the Home Minister. I had no idea that Dr. Gopichand was coming. Sardar Swaran Singh had of course sent word that if he should be needed he would come. I said there would be no need for him to come because whatever had to be done would have to be done by me. Nevertheless he came. East Punjab is after all his region and it was his right to come. Deshbandhu Gupta had sent a message that he was ailing and so would not be able to come. I had agreed, but since he belongs there he did come. It was good that all of them came. Then there was the Maulana whom we often see here. I then spoke to people. I spoke to the Muslims separately, though the two Ministers were present.[1] They thought that the Ministers should be there, for

[1] *Vide* "Talk with Muslim Delegation", 2-12-1947.

what was the good of my saying something which the Ministers would not know about and which I would not be able to enforce ? The Muslims admitted that they had agreed in talks earlier not to go but that later the situation had worsened; that nothing had been done on the lines I had assured and they had felt harassed; their honour was not protected. When they could not protect their lives, their property and their honour, how could they stay? They said they would put up with the destruction of their houses, they would put up with arson, they would put up even with loss of lives but they would protect their honour to the last. If they could do that they would stay. I said that he who loves mankind loves God. He has nothing to fear.

I then spoke to the refugees there.[1] By the time I was done it was half past three. I had set out from here at 10.30 and reached there at about 11.30. My talks with the Muslims continued up to 3; there was so much to talk about. Then I spoke to the refugees. After me Dr. Gopichand Bhargava addressed them. But when Sardar Swaran Singh got up to speak there was pandemonium. People started shouting; not because they wanted to insult him but they could not contain themselves. They became angry that he dared to speak at all.

It was a large crowd. There must have been some twenty thousand people. The ground was filled to capacity. Roofs were covered with people. They heard me in silence. But when the others began, people stood up. It has become customary with us to give vent to anger. They stood up and began to shout that the Muslims should be expelled. I told them that it would not be good to drive out the Muslims. They had their homes, and they should not be forced to leave; that forcing the Muslims to leave would undo all our efforts there. I was ready to resume my seat but Sardar Swaran Singh, being the Home Minister and also a brave man, would not be cowed down, he said this would not do. He tried to speak but nothing came of it. People continued their shouting and continued to stand. Then their representative, their leader came forward. He began with a *bhajan* in Punjabi. I had not known that he was a poet. He knew that Punjabis like *bhajans*. Then he admonished them in Punjabi and told them that he was their representative and they must listen to him, that shouting would achieve nothing. What would they gain by disturbing the meeting. It would only harm them. Peace was restored at last but it took some doing. People sat down and the proceedings were

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting", 2-12-1947.

continued in Punjabi.

I cannot speak Punjabi but I understand it. I liked what [Sardar Swaran Singh] said. When we were with the Muslim leaders he had assured them that whatever might happen in Pakistan we would not become inhuman. He said that ours was a democratic Government and would not let such things happen here. If any Muslim girl had been kidnapped she would be restored by every means. Help would certainly be needed for they would not know where an abducted girl was. But if it was known she would be brought back. The other thing they would do was about the Muslims who had been converted to Hinduism or Sikhism. They were still Muslims. Such conversion would not be accepted as lawful, for it was against morality. Similarly the Muslims who were still here would be protected whether or not Pakistan protected [the Hindus and Sikhs]. Thirdly, Sardar Swaran Singh said that the mosques would be protected. Of course, protection of life and property was a difficult matter. There was the police, the Government—they would do what they could, but if everyone took to plunder and pillage they could not be shot down. The Government was helpless. Our freedom was crippled and we had to confess our helplessness. They could certainly plead with people but they had to admit their helplessness. He was very persuasive. He pleaded with them saying that India's honour and dignity were in their hands, that the Government was theirs, for it was they who had elected the Ministers. And since the Government was there it would do its duty, do what it must and they must help. He explained all this. It took a long time. In the end there was peace at the meeting. Every time it happens that when people lose their temper on such occasions, they begin to understand things after a time when they calmly think over it. I saw this during the course of our struggle for freedom. There were many occasions when it looked as if the meeting would have to be terminated, but in the end they saw the point. Afterwards the representatives of the refugees came and followed me. I asked them to accompany me in the car. If I was not to do so, I would have been further delayed. I had to count every minute, for I wanted to reach here in time. I have forgone my siesta. When everyone is unhappy, how can I seek rest? I am certainly much more comfortable than they are. They tell me that the refugees there are in much distress. Of course something has been done. Things are certainly much better than I had seen them last. Some arrangements have been made. Some roofs have been put up. They certainly have tents to live in, but the

food is not all that it should be. The Governor of East Punjab[1] also saw it and admitted that it should be improved. As to clothing it seems all the decent clothing is taken away by some people. What shall I say as to who does it? The result is that the refugees get only rags. This should not be so. They must get the things that are intended for them. People die too, which is only natural. Two persons had died; there was no firewood to cremate them. A whole day was lost. I forget the name of the doctor in charge. He was not to be found anywhere. By then it was seven in the evening. Since no arrangement could be made for firewood, some people approached a relative of one of them and offered to raise a contribution of ten to fifteen rupees. But the relative who was a strong man refused to accept the donation. He said that if there was no firewood he would bury the dead. Burial is not common among the Hindus and I was sorry that he had to do it.

I learnt afterwards that well-to-do refugees are able to get things but not the poor ones because the arrangements are not in the hands of senior officers. The workers were taken from among the people there and everything is done through them. If they are good, altruistic and dedicated to service things go well. But if they do not have the spirit of service it becomes difficult. I like to have everything in the open. Let us not resort to physical violence. It generates poison. We have an alternative method and that is to speak up frankly. It does not do to hide things. One must call a spade a spade. What is lost by accusing those who indulge in evil practices? If they are guilty the charge should be made. That is why I tell you that it is a bad practice. We are already unhappy. Hundreds of thousands of people have been uprooted from their homes and have come here. If we indulge in such practices it would be very bad. Today a small boy confronted me. He was wearing a sweater. He took it off and stood glaring at me as if he would eat me up. He was just a child. What could he do? "You say that you have come to protect us", he said, "but my father has been killed. Get me my father back." But his father was dead. How could I bring him back. The boy became angry. I can imagine that if I had been of his age and in his position perhaps, I would have done the same. I was not annoyed. I felt sorry for him.

We see such scenes today. The refugees say that all of them at any rate are not bad; that the management should be entrusted to some of them, for after all magistrates and others were there to

[1] C. L. Trivedi

supervise. Other people too had to be supervised. At least the distribution of blankets should be entrusted to them. Their children should get milk but the milk does not reach them. The staff appropriates it. Would it not be better to give them the milk for distribution rather than that the members of the committee should drink it up? Then some of them have been receiving letters from other refugees elsewhere. They ask them in the letters to tell the Mahatma to attend to them too. It is good I went there. I told them to be peaceful and to persuade the Muslims to stay on. I told them that it would be something unique for Panipat which has been the scene of so many battles.

There are 28,000 refugees living in the camp. I told them, "If more refugees join you what can it matter to you? It is enough for you if you get food to eat, clothes to wear and a roof or even a tent to live under. You can get nothing more than this wherever you may go. You can create many things out of these three things. You should know what developments are taking place all over India, what problems are coming up and how we can solve them. The Government is there, but the Government cannot force you to do anything."

Yesterday Jawaharlal said a beautiful thing. I happened to see it in the papers today; it is rarely that I get a chance to read anything. Jawahar says that he does not like being called Prime Minister. When did he ever become Prime Minister? He would like it and it would be more appropriate to call him the first servant of the nation. If everyone became the first servant he would have to think of others all the twenty-four hours of the day. If the officers under Jawaharlal were to think so, our country would become a land of gold. We would have Ramarajya, the kindgom of God upon earth. Then our freedom would be complete. If after attaining freedom we continue to conduct ourselves in the manner we are doing now then that freedom will irk me. Is this the kind of freedom we are going to have? No, it cannot be.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 154-9

402. LETTER TO CHAMPA MEHTA

December 3, 1947

CHI. CHAMPA,

I have your letter. It will not help me in any way to call you here. I still do not feel confident about you. The final decision lies with Chimanlal and others. You can stay on only if you win their confidence. But how can you stay on if you yourself have no faith in them? They have no axe to grind. They assumed the responsibility of letting you stay there for my sake. Be calm now and do what seems proper to you. Don't hurt their feelings.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XX

403. LETTER TO SHAMALDAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
December 3, 1947

CHI. SHAMALDAS,

Herewith a copy of a wire from Junagadh. If the contents of the wire are true, I would say you are out of your senses. If they are absolute lies you have nothing to lose. I get a fairly large number of letters against you from Hindus. They say that you cannot talk of anything but the sword. The problem of Kathiawar is not as simple as you all might be thinking. Even after you have eliminated the Princes, so long as you do not have a humble and selfless leadership no good will come to Kathiawar. We might have found it easy to win swaraj but preserving and making it worth while has become difficult.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

404. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

December 3, 1947

CHI. LILI,

I have your two letters. In one you say that Dwarkadas has completely recovered, and Damayanti also is all right. In the other letter you say that another operation may be necessary. I do hope you will get a room somewhere.

Herewith a note for Rs. 100.[1] Can you not manage to borrow Rs. 100 from some source? I hesitate to send even a draft. If there is no facility at the hospital for encashing it, how far will you have to go for it?

You should put in regular hard work and clear your final examination. That will be the end of a struggle. Really speaking once we have made up our minds to do a thing, then there is no more struggle, it is all play.

I got the liquorice tablets. You wasted your time over it. But now I shall use the same mostly and cloves very rarely.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

405. LETTER TO BACHCHHARAJ & CO.

NEW DELHI,
December 3, 1947

TO

Bachchharaj & Co.

Pay Rs. 100 (Rupees one hundred only) to Lilavati Udeshi who is studying medicine and debit it to my public account.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the following item.

406. TALK WITH LT.-GEN. K. M. CARIAPPA[1]

NEW DELHI,
December 3, 1947

Gandhiji turned to him and said smilingly:

I see you have again removed your shoes outside. You had done it when you came two days ago also.[2]

The General replied: "It is but proper that I should do so when coming to see a godly man like you."

I have been receiving numerous complaints concerning the police and the army personnel. They take bribes and are biased in favour of their own community. If the seed itself is rotten what will become of the plants and the foliage? Not even thorns will then grow. The army and the police are potent limbs of the country. It is a pity that following the partitioning of the country the army also had to be partitioned on communal lines. But it is the duty of policemen not to show caste and communal bias. They must bravely serve the country. It is the duty of every armed force to protect the minority community. Pakistan will not heed my word, but if you the Generals of the army of the Indian Union listen to me and help me, I shall believe we have truly gained freedom in a non-violent way. Let us make ourselves worthy of such freedom. In the swaraj gained in such a wonderful way, the personnel of the army and the police must always remain pure and above board.

What a wonderful example of this unity is set by Netaji, the founder of the Indian National Army; "Let every Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Parsi and others think that India is their country and work unitedly for it." He has proved this unity before us all.

Q. Pakistan has no use for non-violence. How then can we win their hearts and prove the efficacy of ahimsa?

Violence can only be overcome through non-violence. This is as clear to me as the proposition that two and two make four. But for this one must have faith. Even a weapon like atom bomb when used against non-violence will prove ineffective. This applies to true

[1] The version in *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase* has been collated with the Gujarati in *Dilhiman Gandhiji*.

[2] *Vide* "Note to Lt.-Gen. K. M. Cariappa", 1-12-1947.

non-violence. But very few people have grasped this eternal truth. Faith by itself also will not do. It must be supplemented by knowledge. Training in ahimsa is not to be had like training in the use of weapons in military training colleges and institutions. It requires purity of heart and soul-force. The difficulty we find in pitting non-violence against violence only shows our inner weakness. A short time ago, even Mr. Jinnah had clearly stated that in political disputes violence must be eschewed.[1] If Mr. Jinnah meant what he said then the violence that today engulfs us can be brought to an end in no time. And if Pakistan does not stop violence, the violent killings can still be stopped if Hindus in the Union have faith in non-violence. A votary of non-violence will not allow the slightest hint of violence to enter his heart. How then can his conduct be violent?

The General said: ". . . . If we have to have an army at all . . . it must be a good one. . . . I would . . . like to remind them in my own way of the need for and the value of non-violence. Tell me, please, how I can put this over, i.e., the spirit of non-violence to the troops . . . without endangering their sense of duty to train themselves well professionally as soldiers. I am a child in this matter. I want your guidance."

Gandhiji laughed. He was still at his charkha. He paused, looked at the General and said:

Yes. . . . you are all children, I am a child too, but I happen to be a bigger child than you because I have given more thought to this question than you all have. You have asked me to tell you in a tangible and concrete form how you can put over to the troops you command the need for non-violence.

I am still groping in the dark for the answer. I will find it and I will give it to you some day.

He then went on to recount how even Lord Wavell and Lord Mountbatten, both veteran professional soldiers, had expressed their implicit faith in the value of non-violence.

Lord Wavell was very impressed with the non-violent way in which the communal troubles between Hindus and Muslims had been tackled by us. They both hoped that our ideologies of non-violence and pacifism would be understood by the peoples of the world and practised by all in solving international disputes.

Of course, they had at the same time said that one should always be prepared for self-defence. At parting Gandhiji repeated:

[1] *Vide* "A Joint Appeal", 12-4-1947.

I will think about this seriously in the next few days and will let you know about it soon. However, I would like to see you more often so that we may further discuss this important subject. . . . I have always had the greatest admiration for the discipline in the army and also for the importance you army people pay to sanitation and hygiene. I tell my people in my talks to them to copy the army in these respects.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 524-5, and *Dilhiman Gandhiji*—II, pp. 13-5

407. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
December 3, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I receive many visitors. I do not relate to you everything they say. I do let you know if something is important enough. Today I had some visitors. It appeared they had had some business with the Prime Minister. They said the Prime Minister had earlier made a certain promise to them and that he was now going back on the promise. How was that, I asked. They said they had his letter. I asked them to show me the letter. After all I had no more power than they. I was not the Government. Yes, I was a servant, a friend of the Prime Minister, a co-worker, and so I would speak to him. But how was I to mention it to him? Then I reflected on the matter and I asked myself why this sort of thing happened,—people saying one thing and doing another. I have to bear the brunt of all this. I am sure that I have never deliberately deceived anyone. It is possible that, without understanding the implications, one may say something in all good faith without any dishonest motives. And yet a person may feel aggrieved thinking that he has been deceived. Often things are not fully understood and the result is breach of faith. But if a person deliberately breaks a promise it is a bad thing. This should not happen. The best thing is to keep quiet. Once we have put into words what we feel, we must act accordingly. Only then can we be said to be keeping our word. And now especially when we are free and run the Government in the name of the millions we must be very careful. We must show restraint, discretion and humility. We must not be arrogant. Only then can we take our work to a successful conclusion. No one

then will be able to charge us with breach of faith. If we say that we shall distribute a certain thing free of cost and later say that we shall charge something even a little for it, then it is breach of faith. Today we have come to such a state that we do not value our word. We make a promise today and wriggle out of it the very next day. If I make an appointment with you for 4 o'clock tomorrow but at the appointed time go off to a dance, it is breach of faith. So I say that we have to be very careful. We must stick to our word, we must weigh our words before we utter them. We must not say anything on impulse. For instance we may say that there was rioting and later colour it and say that there was murder. This sort of thing cannot be hidden for long. The truth comes out in the end. So we must be careful.

A doctor from Sind has written to say that the Harijans left behind there are in a pitiable condition.[1] If only Harijans were left behind in Sind and caste Hindus went away, nothing but annihilation awaited them. The only condition for life there would be complete slavery and ultimate acceptance of Islam. This is a bad situation. Today the situation is such that if the Pakistan Government says something, the officials at its behest do not implement it. Of course the same thing is true of India. Jawaharlal and the Sardar say that they shall protect Muslims, they shall not allow even a single Muslim to be driven away to Pakistan, but it does not happen. They do not have people to enforce what they say. Their subordinates do not carry out their wishes and the people too do not pay any heed. Yesterday I told you that I had been to Panipat. All the Hindus and Sikhs who have arrived there are in a miserable plight. They were ill-treated in Pakistan and they had to flee. They came because they were oppressed. Otherwise what was the need for them to run away? Having themselves run away from oppression, does it behove them to force others into a similar situation? But this happens. How then can I complain to Pakistan? But I have to do so. The correspondent has written in detail. He says no Harijan wants to continue living in Sind. If they want to stay together at one place they are not left in peace. Forced labour is extracted from them. They are told to clean lavatories, do the sweeping and so on. A Bhangi should not be forced to clean lavatories today. If he can become a barrister, why should he

[1] According to a telegram sent by Choithram Gidwani to B. R. Ambedkar, Harijans in Sind and Baluchistan were being prevented from migrating to India under the Essential Services Ordinance.

be stopped? Why should we insist that his only work is to clean lavatories? They must be free to act according to their inclination. If they are told that they can stay only if they embrace Islam, what can they do and where can they go? You will have seen the long statement Jagjivan Ram[1] has issued. He says that Harijans must come away from Sind. If they want to come they should be given facilities to do so. So long as they are in Pakistan they must be allowed to go about their business unhampered; otherwise they should be allowed to leave. If this is not done it is going to leave a permanent sore spot on the Hindu and the Sikh minds. Although India and Pakistan are two countries, we cannot forget one another. We have to conduct ourselves as gentlemen. We must not hurt anyone. We must not force anyone to become a Muslim. We must not molest and abduct anyone's wife or daughter. Dr. Gopichand Bhargava and Sardar Swaran Singh also said yesterday that India could not tolerate such things. Today the atmosphere has become so polluted that if a Muslim says that he has embraced Hinduism this should not be accepted as genuine. Harijans are non-Muslim. If they say that they have embraced Islam it is not to be accepted. It is only fear that makes them say so. All such conversions should be considered null and void.

Contradictory reports are coming from Kathiawar. Some reports say that the situation in Kathiawar is as bad as described. A telegram to that effect has come only today. Other reports are from the Congress sources and these say that such is not the case, that the Congress workers can never indulge in such things. The Hindu Mahasabha and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh say that they have never burnt anybody's house. Which reports am I to accept as true? Shall I believe the Congress, or the Muslims, or the Hindu Mahasabha and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh? It has become very difficult to get at the truth. If mistakes have been committed we must acknowledge them. If the Hindus have been in the wrong, if they have committed excesses, it must be admitted. But if this is not the case and if the Muslims exaggerate when they say that their properties were burnt, they were forced to become Hindus, that their daughters were abducted, we must proclaim it to the world that that was not the case. Similarly if the Hindu Mahasabha and the R.S.S. have not

[1] (b. 1908); President, All India Depressed Classes' League, 1936-46; Labour Minister in the Interim Government; later held important portfolios like Railways, Food and Agriculture and Defence in the Government of India

done anything wrong I must congratulate them. What the truth is I do not know, though I am trying to find out. I have written to people[1] I know there. I have also written to Muslims. I have asked them to give me all the details so that I may be able to see what shapes things are taking there and what the upshot is going to be.

Now about South Africa. You will have seen what Vijayalakshmi Pandit has said. She says we have been defeated because we have not been able to secure the required two-thirds of votes.[2] However, a number of people have been helpful and supported her stand. Besides, truth is on our side and in a way we have secured a victory.[3] The Indians in South Africa should therefore not be disheartened. But there is something I have to say. Vijayalakshmi could not have said it because she represented the Government of India. You do not have a remedy but I have one which I had applied in South Africa. What is defeat or victory? The whites of South Africa and Smuts[4] may say that they do not want us there, that we must leave. They may deny us food and water as is happening to non-Muslims in Pakistan and to Muslims in India. They have driven away Hindus and Sikhs from Pakistan under threats. There are still a large number of Hindus and Sikhs in Bannu. What will happen to them I do not know. Meharchand Khanna[5] has been to see me today. He says that in other places too there are people whose lives may or may not be saved. If they survive they will have to embrace Islam. But at Bannu the number is very large. What should they do? They are like prisoners. They cannot get out and if they stay on what are they to eat? They are in a sad plight.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jayashankar Pandya", 2-12-1947 and "Letter to Shamaldas Gandhi", 3-12-1947.

[2] The Indian Resolution calling for a Round Table Conference on the treatment of Indians in South Africa failed to obtain the requisite two-third majority in the United Nations General Assembly, 31 having voted in favour, 19 against, with 6 abstentions and one country absent.

[3] Vijayalakshmi Pandit had said: "ours has been a moral victory of no small importance."

[4] Field Marshal Jan Christiaan Smuts, Prime Minister of South Africa

[5] Ex-Minister for Finance in N.W.F.P.; Secretary of the Khudai Khidmatgar Parliamentary Party. He was sentenced to six months' rigorous imprisonment on November 27 and on being released on bail came to Delhi. He expressed grave concern about the safety of the 40,000 Hindus and Sikhs who were still in Peshawar, Mardan, Bannu, Dera Ismail Khan and Parachinar, awaiting evacuation as no refugee train was allowed to leave the N. W. F. P. since October 28. He was also concerned about the non-Muslim prisoners and under-trials in the Frontier jails.

What can the Government do? It has its own problems. What I have to say here applies also to the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs in South Africa. I must tell them that victory and defeat are of no consequence. 'You must say that you will live in South Africa with honour, that you will not leave. You did not go there because you wanted to. You were invited. You went as indentured labourers and afterwards you had children there. If it is a question of rights no one except the Negroes have a right to be there. The Boers do not have even as much right as you have'. There were delegations from all over the world at the U.N.O. Our country also had to send a delegation. We acted rightly. People assemble there to bring about justice, that they cannot or will not is another matter. We must continue our fight in South Africa, not with a sword but with soul-force. Even the little girl sitting beside me has soul-force, others too have it. The soldiers, too, have soul-force. The sword can be snatched away from us. We can be disarmed. Our arm can be cut off but no one can take away our soul. It is eternal. It is there today and it will remain tomorrow and the day after. The body is worthless without the soul. The body one day has to be disposed of. My wife died and I could not keep her with me. Mahadev[1] died who was of so much help to me. But I could not keep him and his body had to be cremated. So I shall say that if the Indians in South Africa have self-respect which I think they have, if they have courage, they must say that even if they did not secure two-thirds of the votes at the U. N. they did secure a very large number. They must tell the whites of South Africa to let them stay in the country with honour. They must tell them that they intend to conduct themselves with dignity. They do not want government service. They do not expect help from the whites but they must be allowed to breathe the air, drink the water and live on the land. After all they pay their way, earn their keep, wherever they want to stay. They do not claim the right to vote. If they want the vote they must have it in the same way as the whites have it; otherwise they will do without it. They will not carry on satyagraha for franchise but they must safeguard their dignity. They must have bread and they must have water and they must have land. Also their children must have education. They will understand if no grants are forthcoming for the purpose but the education for the children is their right and they have the right to fight for this. It is not a question of victory or defeat but of laying

[1] Mahadev Desai

down one's life. They must do or die. There is no other recourse. If they want to live in this world in dignity they must do or die. Their duty is clear and admits of no argument. This is what I have to say to the Indians of South Africa and to you. I have nothing else to offer.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 160-5

408. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
5 a. m., December 4, 1947

CHI. KANAIYO,

Winter has now begun in right earnest here. We have an electric heater for the night.

I got your letter and the enclosed copy of your suggestions. I read them as carefully as I should. I like your suggestions. The entire department should become self-supporting. That will be the true test of its genuineness. True, we are faced with the question of the real meaning of 'self-supporting', and then there is always such a thing as self-deception.

Four or five of you may come over if you can. I should like it. But even then it would still be doubtful if I can give an impartial verdict. I need to see things for myself and it can be only if I were personally present in Noakhali. It remains to be seen whether such an occasion will come in my present life. Hence I leave it to each one of you to choose to come here or not to come. Whoever wants to, may come.

You keep on worrying on Abha's account. Rid yourself of this anxiety if you can. You can always ask her to go to you. Jamna wants to see both of you merely because of her attachment. But that does not affect me. Give the enclosed[1] to Amtussalaam to read. I have written in Gujarati so that I may do it quickly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the following item.

409. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
After the morning prayer, December 4, 1947

DAUGHTER A. S.,

You wrote to me and asked Abha not to give the note to me. Abha told me this; I told her it was her duty to give it to me. She therefore handed it over to me at night. I read it just now. You wrote a letter, and sent it and [yet] left instructions that it should not be delivered to me—all this gives a complete picture of your unsteady mind.

You seek my guidance and your mind works in the opposite direction. This is no sign of a desire for guidance. I have already written to you about this matter, and helped you to understand it.[1] I see your good as well as mine only in that. That alone is real service. You can go to Borkamta on your own. You may not ask for money from me. You can stay there at your own free will and at your own will go to the Punjab. If I could take a definite decision I would certainly take one. But I am not perfect, I am not omniscient, am I? Hence, whenever I am doubtful about my own view I might perhaps offer an opinion. I cannot do so in your case. You can come if you want to, either with the others or even alone, provided you can be spared from there. I have no such desire. Calm down! Calm down !! Calm down!!!

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 1-11-1947.

410. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
Afternoon, December 4, 1947

DAUGHTER A. S.,

Yesterday I did not understand that it was an afterthought on your part not to let me have your letter.[1] Abha strongly takes your side and says that my letter is sharp and would pain you. You would surely be pained if I did not at all write to you. This is true, isn't it?

There is a letter from Charu Babu today. Am I forbidding you from going to the Punjab? Only you cannot go with my consent.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

411. TALK WITH BURMESE DELEGATION[2]

NEW DELHI,
December 4, 1947

I am very happy that you could come. But there is nothing you can learn from our country today. It is our misfortune that today brother is cutting the throat of brother. You will not take away this example with you. Our country is very ancient; it has a unique culture. We must admit with shame that today we have brought this culture into disrepute. You must not remember our disgrace. You must be generous. You must ignore our lapses and see our virtues and make them your own. That we have secured freedom for our four hundred million people without a drop of blood having been shed is something

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Thakin Nu, Prime Minister of Burma, accompanied by U Tin Tut, Foreign Minister and U Pe Kin, High Commissioner for Burma in Pakistan, called on Gandhiji in the afternoon.

The report in *The Hindustan Times* has been collated with the Gujarati version in *Dilhiman Gandhiji*.

unprecedented. Of course it is possible that the British had got tired or that we were too weak to take up arms. But non-violence is not a weapon of the weak. It is a weapon of the brave. Its immense value can be measured only when the brave take it up and use it. I therefore advise you to copy from us not our brutalities but the noble virtues you see in this country. We have to sustain without the sword the freedom that we have gained without the sword. Today, one must admit India has an army. But it is my dream that this army will wield not guns and rifles but pickaxes and shovels, and they will be suitably trained in this art as they are today trained in martial arts.[1]

Gandhiji told them that he hoped Burma would prove equal to any situation that might arise in the wake of its attaining independence. He was happy that the Burmese people were united and that there was no trouble so far.

Thakin Nu invited Gandhiji to visit Burma. Gandhiji said he would be glad to do so but could not until peaceful conditions returned to India.

The Hindustan Times, 5-12-1947, and *Dilhiman Gandhiji*—II, pp. 19-20

412. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
December 4, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I talked to you yesterday about Kathiawar. Today I have a telegram from Shamaldas. Yesterday I had a telegram from Dhebar-bhai too. Both say that the news I have been receiving had been highly exaggerated. So far as they know no women had been abducted and there was not a single case of murder. In fact after Sardar Patel went there nothing untoward happened. Before that there had been some little rioting and looting. Shamaldas was upset by my statements, and that was but natural. He has gone to Kathiawar from Bombay. He will make an investigation and let me know. I have been receiving telegrams also from the U. S. A., Iran and London repeating the charge that the Muslims in Kathiawar have been subjected to terrible atrocities. Truthful people should not indulge in this kind of propaganda. And what has Iran got to do with what happens in India?

[1] A Burmese peasant-hat was then presented to Gandhiji.

Shamaldas Gandhi says that he makes no distinction between Hindus and Muslims. I would like to help the Muslims who write to me provided they are on the path of truth. But if they give up truth and make a mountain out of a molehill and if they spread stories all over the world, that will be two much. I can understand wires coming from inside India but when wires come from abroad it pains me.

I have received a letter from a Muslim in Hoshangabad. It is a very good letter. Guru Nanak's birthday is an important day. Sikhs wherever they are celebrate it. At Hoshangabad also they celebrated it and invited the Muslims. They assured them that they were brothers and the Sikhs had no quarrel with them. Perhaps I told you once how at the Hoshangabad station a Muslim was on the point of being killed and the Sikhs had come to his rescue. So if on Guru Nanak's birthday the Sikhs really did what the correspondent describes, it is a great thing. If this example is followed everywhere the blot on us will be removed. I thought that the newspapers should give publicity to such happenings.

Another thing I want to talk to you about is the Chamber of Commerce. I have already hinted to you about the Marwari and European Chamber of Commerce.[1] If we can have a Marwari Vyapari Mandal why can we not have a Muslim Vyapari Mandal too? But the Marwari Vyapari Mandal people say that it is for all and that others besides Marwaris are represented on it. I enquired as to how many Marwaris it had and how many Hindus, how many Sikhs, how many Europeans. The letters I have received from them are in English. They have sent a statement of their policy and their rules and their report—all in English as if I did not know Hindustani or Hindi. I confess that I do not know English as well as I know my own language. How can I disregard the language that I imbibed with my mother's milk and give more importance to English which I first started learning at the age of twelve? I asked if there were many Englishmen on that body. They must tell me what it is all about. If the name is Marwari Vyapari Mandal, then how can everyone join it? The Muslim Chamber of Commerce can similarly say that it represents everybody. It can have on it a Hindu or two. This sort of thing does not convince one.

The Prime Minister of Burma had been to see me.[2] He is full of

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 28-11-1947.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

humility. I told him that it was a very good thing that he had paid a visit to India. Our country was geographically large and its culture was no doubt ancient. But what was happening today—the mutual mistrust of Hindus and Muslims—was not something from which anyone could learn anything. Guru Nanak preached that the Sikhs should be friendly with both Muslims and Hindus. In fact there is no such distinction between Hindus and Sikhs. Tara Singh has said that one cannot separate Hindus and Sikhs. I should be very happy if we could conduct ourselves thus. The two religions are fundamentally one. Even Guru Nanak never said that he was not a Hindu nor did any other Guru. If we read the *Granthsaheb* we shall find that it is full of the teachings of the Vedas and Upanishads. The teachings of Koran are similar. The same is true of the teachings of Guru Govind Singh. What he taught is also to be found in the Hindu scriptures. There is nothing wholly new. He has only emphasized certain things. I claim that they originate from the Vedas. It cannot be said that Sikhism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism are separate religions. All these four faiths and their offshoots are one. Hinduism is an ocean into which all the rivers run. It can absorb Islam and Christianity and all the other religions and only then can it become an ocean. Otherwise it remains merely a stream along which large ships cannot ply.

What Burma can take from India is its culture which today has fallen into disrepute. Never before in history has there been a single instance of so large a country with such immense population securing its freedom not by violent conflict but through non-violence. You may say that the English had got fed up and they left. That is not so. If there is anything to be learnt from India, it is non-violence. Not that we have learnt the lesson of non-violence fully. We are weak. We took to non-violence because we had not the weapons for a violent fight. Non-violence is the best weapon. Only the pure of heart can use it. I therefore told the Burmese Prime Minister that if he wished to take anything from India it should be this non-violence. He must not think that if India lapsed into barbarity, how could Burma which took its religion from India advance? I told him that if he wanted to copy India he must copy the good qualities that India once had and still retained. He must not take anything barbarous. We must export only what is good so that the world may learn from us. Had India not attained its freedom, Burma and Ceylon also would not have attained theirs. And India did not become free by resorting to the sword. And if we did not need the sword for securing freedom, we will not need it

for sustaining it. If we cannot keep our freedom without the sword, then I shall think that India has done nothing for the world. Today we have an army.Attempts are being made to strengthen it. Attempts are also being made to further enlarge the Navy and the Air Force. I declare that in this way we are not really strengthening ourselves. We shall be doing no good to the world in this way. And if the world learns this kind of thing from us it is not going to gain anything, rather it will be doomed.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 166-8

413. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 5, 1947

CHI. NARANDAS,

Jehangir Patel and Dr. Dinshaw Mehta are going there to observe for themselves the condition of Muslims in Kathiawar. They are going in their individual capacities and not on my behalf or with my authority. They feel that this is the best contribution they can make towards the service of the country. Introduce them to whomsoever you think it necessary for them to meet in this connection. They will not stay in Kathiawar for long. It will not be more than eight to ten days. They know the Jamsaheb. If necessary, they will meet the other Princes too. We have to consider what truth there is in the allegations made by the Muslims.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, Part II, p. 320. Also C. W. 8648. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

414. LETTER TO SHARDA H. KOTAK

December 5, 1947

CHI. SHARDA,

I am not sorry that Harjivan[1] has passed away. He suffered a lot. We tried so many remedies but the disease was fatal. One would always prefer to pass away in one's bed. I am not surprised that everyone there helped. I would have been surprised, pained, if they had not.

It remains to be seen what you will do now. Remain calm and do as Lakshmidas and other elders advise.

Could Harjivan see my last letter[2]? Was he conscious till the end? I shall await your letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

415. TALK WITH GHANSHYAMSINGH GUPTA

NEW DELHI,
December 5, 1947

Now that the English have left the country the national language for inter-provincial communication can only be Hindustani. I have great respect for the English language. But it can never be the national language of India. We do not persevere in learning our two ancient scripts, which only means that we do not have enough patriotism. I will go so far as to say that every Indian should, if possible, learn all the languages of India. One should have a zest for it. There is no harm in this. It will only develop our minds and increase our knowledge.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 26

[1] Addressee's husband
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Harjivan Kotak", 9-11-1947.

416. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
December 5, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

The letters given to me here are sometimes too long. You cannot expect me to go through them and answer them, because it takes time even to read them. I cannot read them here for it would be wasting my time and yours. I have a note which mentions my meeting Liaquat Ali Khan. The writer asks if I am still not satisfied that nothing untoward has happened in Kathiawar. If the writer of the note is present I may tell him that nothing has happened in Kathiawar. Shamaldas Gandhi says that nothing has happened to justify the reports that I have received. There had been incidents but minor ones. They were given publicity by the Pakistan newspapers and telegrams were dispatched. The reports were terrible but such terrible things did not happen. Today I have another wire from Shamaldas. He says he has made investigations and found that such things had not taken place. Certainly after the Sardar's visit to Kathiawar nothing untoward has happened. The reports I had earlier received appeared to suggest it was the Sardar who incited the people to rowdyism. But after he went to Kathiawar no incidents took place. This changes the complexion of things. Shamaldas Gandhi says that he will tell Muslims not to send such telegrams. I have received further telegrams from the very Muslims who had earlier made the allegations, admitting that they were exaggerated and that they had made a mistake. They have also written to say that the reports carried by the Pakistan newspapers were incorrect, that the extent of the damage reported was also wrong and it could not be said that the Muslims were scared and nervous. I am happy to hear it. I have said that I shall do whatever I can for our Muslim brethren. We must never kick one who is already down. We must raise him up. This is the demand of humanity, of love, this is civilized behaviour. I shall never throw anyone down even if he be my enemy—though of course I have no enemy. It was a mere dream that the Muslims would get everything once Pakistan came into being. After all it is not as if only those who are in Pakistan would be left alive and those outside Pakistan would be killed. Pakistan is a veritable

sea of Hindus and Muslims. Will they drive out all the Hindus and Sikhs from there? Those that have come out did not really want to leave their homes. But it has happened. I have received letters from Sikhs saying that they will know no rest till they are able to go back. For instance a person may have a thousand-acre farm near Lyallpur where he had been growing wheat, bananas, cotton and fruits. How can he leave it for good? He will not rest till he can go back. And what happened in India? The displaced Sikhs were furious and wanted revenge. I said it was not humanity. It was barbarism. They should not indulge in it, that good should be returned for evil. We must not copy the wrong-doer, we must emulate the man who does good. It, therefore, gave me satisfaction when I received that wire from Kathiawar. I shall tell my Muslim brethren: if something had happened they should have toned it down to a half or even a quarter; they should not have exaggerated it and given it publicity in foreign countries. After all if Hindus and Sikhs—though there are no Sikhs there—go wild, can the world save the Muslims? Yes, they can say that we have not made the right use of our freedom. They can threaten to take it away. All that is possible. But the dead will not return to life thereby. We should therefore never exaggerate. Our agony is our own and no outsider can take it on himself. We should try to make light of it. We impress the world only when we exaggerate the good work done by another, not his folly.

There is another thing I must tell you. It does not concern you but I can convey it through you. I have told Brijkrishna not to give anyone any appointment to see me from the 6th to the 13th. That I do not want to see people does not mean that I am ill or that I want to enjoy myself. For many months now this matter has been under consideration. I cannot go to Sevagram. So people from Sevagram are coming here. The Kasturba Trust will be sitting from tomorrow. Then there will be meetings of the Spinners' Association, Nayee Talim, and Village Industries Association. The four associations are going to meet during this time. If they are properly conducted they will certainly consume some time. How am I to give my time to these meetings and to visitors? I have therefore requested people not to try to see me during this time. Not that I shall not be doing my own work. But people coming from outside want to see me out of curiosity.

As I have already said there have been talks going on about lifting the control on cloth, also on food. Not that it is going to

happen tomorrow, but a process has started and everybody says I have done a good thing by suggesting it. I have received letters from all quarters saying that it would be good if the controls were lifted. Of course if the controls are lifted it will not mean that we shall be relieved of our obligations. Once decontrol comes into effect certain obligations devolve on the traders. I must tell Ghanshyamdas also to produce more cloth. He may say that he only carries out orders. He produces what cloth he is asked to produce and he takes the price. But once the cloth is decontrolled, what will Ghanshyamdas and other friends do? Does it mean they will be free to loot the people? In that case I shall be having a very bad time. People will hold me responsible for it. I am a servant of India irrespective of my status. If what I say does not appeal to the Government, that is, to those running the Government, it will have no effect however much I may shout. I am not God so that whatever I may say will prevail. I discuss and decide and then say that the control on cloth and other articles should be lifted. It means that if five maunds of foodgrain is available today, we shall have ten maunds tomorrow because I feel that some of it has been hoarded. But if the peasants do not have any foodgrain and I say that the control should be lifted, will the people not then starve? I am not a fool who will let the people starve. I myself do not starve because Ghanshyamdas makes available to me goat's milk and fruit and vegetables. I believe that the farmers have enough foodgrain but that the price offered is so low that they cannot even feed themselves on it. They part with whatever the Government forces out of them. For the rest they say they will declare their stocks after the control is lifted. I feel that if the farmers can clear their stocks at a good price they will not starve. Admitting that we do not have as much foodgrain as we need, does it mean that a person should eat all that he can lay his hands on, while his neighbours starve? If we have sunk so low, then there is no cure. Control certainly is not the cure. If that happens the Government which is run by our Ministers must abdicate. People indulge in deceit. They are not truthful. The traders who should carry on trade for the benefit of the people are interested in filling their own coffers and in amassing wealth for their sons and daughters. What should the Government do? Should it use force or should it shoot people down? We do not have such power nor do we want such power.

We may have a police force but not for shooting down people. If we start shooting down people who will be left alive? Where is our thirty-year old training? Where is our humanity? This cannot go on. In this way we shall only lose our newly gained freedom. I, therefore, say that controls must go. If the Government says that decontrol will lead to starvation, then I shall say that Panchayat Raj has not been established, democracy has not come to us, that Ramarajya has not been established and it is for Ramarajya that I want to keep myself alive. I shall say that those who are made free from controls should have self-imposed controls on themselves and make others happy. The civil servants in the Government may call me names. They may say I have no right to interfere, that I have no experience of running a government, that afterwards it would be difficult to reimpose the controls and feed the people. I shall say they are right. I have never been in the civil service, I have never run a government, but I have moved among the millions. I know their hearts. I understand them.

Now about cloth. About food you may say that we have not enough stock of it. But nobody has yet said that we do not have enough cotton. We have so much of it that we export it. You will say we do not have enough mills. I shall say the mills are in our homes. They are in the homes of all the women sitting here. Every one of you has been blessed with two hands. If you want clothes on your back you should spin. If you cannot, you may go naked. We have a number of mills but if the production does not come up to the requirement we must resort to hand-spinning and hand-weaving. Weaving is not difficult. We have so many weavers in our country that we can have any amount of cloth woven, but some people have a delicate taste. They will weave only mill-yarn. They cannot weave hand-spun yarn. If they start weaving hand-spun yarn there is no need to go naked. Then our beautiful country—the home of so many hundreds of millions who know their trade, who know how to produce cloth—cannot go naked. Therefore control on cloth is the limit of ignorance and the sooner it is lifted the better. So far as foodgrain is concerned the farmers and traders must declare that they produce and sell to meet the people's needs, and they will not indulge in dishonest practices. The farmers should understand that they have to grow crops not merely to feed themselves but to feed all. We must produce one seer where we produced only a half. But let us guide the people; let us

provide them incentive. There is no need for anyone to go hungry or naked in India. We have been denuded of our cloth because of our ignorance. We do not produce as much food or as much milk as we need even though we have a large number of cattle. What is this if not folly?

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 169-74

417. A TALK[1]

NEW DELHI,
December 5, 1947

When someone has fever the doctor first seeks to rid him of the fever by giving a mixture. The fever goes down. But it will come back, for the disease has not been diagnosed and the cause of the fever has not been traced. Similarly most people in the world today want an end to war, but wars continue. If the causes of wars were discovered and justice done where justice was demanded, there would be no wars. Today various groups of people have been pleading with the Government to ban cow-slaughter. I know that even beef-eaters have asked for such a ban, but as soon as a cow goes dry people stop looking after her. They do not ask that cows should be cared for. They simply ask that cow-slaughter should be stopped. But if everyone looked after cows well and insisted that no one should eat beef, cow-slaughter would stop by itself. But beef-eating goes on, the cows are neglected and yet the Government is asked to stop cow-slaughter. That would be making fun of the Government. In the same way one must first look deeply into the causes of wars and seek ways to remove those causes. Wars in a large measure are fought over economic issues. If we give up selfishness and resolve to take the barest minimum for the satisfaction of our wants, there will be no occasion for wars. Unless there is a complete transformation in our economy and our style of life, peace will elude us, however hard we may strive for it. Europe and America want peace and yet they use their intellectual, technical and scientific resources for production of

[1] A friend accompanying Jawaharlal Nehru had asked Gandhiji how peace in the world was to be established.

nuclear weapons. Therefore, while they express the wish that peace should reign in the world, they are busy inventing ways to disturb the peace and to destroy the world. It does not occur to them to seek ways to restore peace and stop the possibility of wars.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, pp. 28-30

418. LETTER TO RUSSELL EGNER

[After *December 5, 1947*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of December 5, 1947. You may publish the quotations[2] mentioned therein.

Please note that I am not Dr. Gandhi.

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] From the date of the addressee's letter

[2] The addressee had sought Gandhiji's permission for the use of the following two quotations from his works.

"The tug of war will never end war and that will only end when at the crucial moment a body of pacifists have at any cost testified their living faith by suffering, if need be, the extreme penalty" (*Vide* "What to Do?", 9-4-1939) and

"A clean spirit must build a clean body. I am convinced that the main rules of religious conduct conserve both the spirit and the body. Let me hope and pray that this college will witness a definite attempt on the part of the physicians to bring about a reunion between the body and the soul" (*vide* "Speech at Opening of Tibbi College, Delhi", 13-2-1921)

APPENDIX I

NOTE ON GANDHIJI'S 78TH BIRTHDAY[1]

The second of October 1947, was Gandhiji's birthday—the last to be celebrated in his lifetime. Members of his party came in the early morning to offer him their obeisances. "Bapuji", one of them remarked, "on our birthdays, it is we who touch the feet of other people and take their blessings but in your case it is other way about. Is this fair?"

Gandhiji laughed : "The ways of Mahatmas are different! It is not my fault. You made me Mahatma, maybe a bogus one; so you must pay the penalty!"

He observed this birthday, as usual, by fasting, prayer and extra spinning. The fast, he explained was for self-purification, and the spinning a token of the renewal of his covenant to dedicate his being to the service of the lowliest and the least in God's creation. He had turned his birthday celebration into celebration of the rebirth of the spinning-wheel. It stood for non-violence. The symbol appeared to have been lost. But he had not stopped the observance hoping that there might be at least a few scattered individuals true to the message of the wheel. It was for their sake that he allowed the celebration to continue.

A small party of intimate friends was waiting for him when he entered his room after his bath at half past eight. They included Pandit Nehru and the Sardar, G. D. Birla — his host — and all the members of the Birla family in Delhi. Mirabehn had gaily decorated his seat by improvising in front of it an artistic cross, *He Rama* and the sacred syllable *Om* from flowers of variegated colours. A short prayer was held in which all joined. It was followed by the singing of his favourite hymn "When I survey the wondrous Cross" and another devotional hymn of his choice in Hindi—*He Govinda rakho sharan*.

Visitors and friends continued to come all day to offer homage to the Father of the Nation. So also came the members of the Diplomatic Corps, some of them with greetings from their respective Governments. Lastly Lady Mountbatten arrived with a sheaf of letters and telegrams addressed to him.

His request to all was to pray that "either the present conflagration should end

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 2-10-1947.

or He should take me away. I do not wish another birthday to overtake me in an India still in flames."

"What sin must I have committed," he remarked to the Sardar, "that He should have kept me alive to witness all these horrors?"

He seemed to be consumed by the feeling of helplessness in the face of the surrounding conflagration. Recorded the Sardar's daughter, Manibehn, mournfully that day in her journal : "His anguish was unbearable. We had gone to him in elation; we returned home with a heavy heart."

After the visitors had left, he had another spasm of coughing. "I would prefer to quit this frame unless the all-healing efficacy of His name fills me," he murmured. "The desire to live for 125 years has completely vanished as a result of this continued fratricide. I do not want to be a helpless witness of it."

"So from 125 years you have come down to zero," someone put in.

"Yes, unless the conflagration ceases." . . .

The All-India Radio had arranged a special broadcast programme in observance of his birthday. Would he not, for that once, listen to the special programme? —he was asked. "No," he replied; he preferred *rentio* (spinningwheel) to radio. The hum of the spinning-wheel was sweeter. He heard in it the "still sad music of humanity".

Gandhiji refused to release for publication any of the birthday messages — telegrams or letters—which had come from all parts of the world. He had many beautiful messages from Muslim friends, too, but he felt that it was no time for their publication when the general public seemed to have ceased, for the time being at least, to believe in non-violence and truth.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 456-8

APPENDIX II

A. I. C. C. RESOLUTION[1]

(1) RIGHTS OF MINORITIES[2]

15-11-1947

The All India Congress Committee welcomes the elimination of foreign rule in India and the establishment of a free and independent State and a Government responsible to the people of the country. The achievement of freedom is the culmination of the long struggle of the Indian National Congress and outcome of the sufferings and tribulations of the Indian people. Freedom brings responsibility and new burdens and problems.

The freedom achieved was not the kind that the Congress had envisaged during its long history. It has been accompanied by secession of parts of the country and disasters of unparalleled magnitude. Hardly was free India born when grave crisis overtook it and events happened which have besmirched her fair name and brought death and desolation to vast numbers of innocent people in circumstances too tragic for words. There have been arson and loot and murder on a mass scale in West Punjab, N. W. F. Province, Baluchistan, East Punjab and adjoining areas. The Committee cannot find words strong enough to condemn these inhuman acts by whatever community perpetrated. It extends its sympathy to all those who have been the innocent victims of this colossal tragedy.

At this moment of crisis, it is necessary that the Congress should declare its faith and policy in clear terms and that the people as well as the Government should follow that policy unswervingly. Even though the Congress agreed to a division of the country in the hope, which has thus far proved vain, that thereby internal conflicts might cease, it has never accepted the theory that there are two or more nations in India. It has firmly believed in the whole of India as a nation bound together by indissoluble cultural and historical links which had been further strengthened in the course of the national struggle for freedom. It was on the basis of this faith that the Congress grew up as a national institution open to all Indians without difference of creed or religion. India is a land of many religions and many races, and must remain so. Nevertheless India has been and is a country with afundamental unity and the aim of the Congress has been to develop this great country as a whole as a democratic secular State where all citizens enjoy full rights and are equally entitled to the protection of the State, irrespective of the religion to

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 18-11-1947.

[2] According to *Dilhiman Gandhiji,* the draft of this was corrected by Gandhiji.

which they belong. The Constituent Assembly has accepted this as the basic principle of the Constitution. This lays on every Indian the obligation to honour it.

The Congress wants to assure the minorities in India that it will continue to protect, to the best of its ability, their citizen rights against aggression. The Central Government, as well as the Provincial Governments must accordingly make every effort to create conditions wherein all minorities and all citizens have security and opportunity for progress. All citizens have also on their part not only to share in the benefits of freedom but also shoulder the burdens and responsibility which accompany it, and must above all be loyal to India.

The All India Congress Committee calls upon all Congressmen and the people of India to adhere strictly to those well-established principles of the Congress and not to allow themselves to be diverted into wrong channels by passion or prejudice or by the tragic events that have happened. Real good and progress of India have yet to be achieved and this can only be done by adhering to the ideals and policy of the Congress and discarding and opposing all false doctrines which have done so much mischief to India and her people.

(2) REPATRIATION OF REFUGEES

15-11-1947

The tragic events that have taken place in recent months in the Punjab and elsewhere have resulted in vast migrations of populations, and consequently in tremendous suffering to millions of people. New problems of relief and rehabilitation have arisen of a magnitude which is unparalleled in history. The Government of India have faced these problems with courage and determination. Nevertheless it is necessary to state clearly what the national policy should be in dealing with these problems.

The A. I. C. C. has looked with disfavour on this large-scale migration which brings suffering to millions, upsets the nation's economy and does violence to the ideal which the Congress has held since its inception. It is of opinion that these migrations should be discouraged and conditions should be created both in the Indian Dominion and in Pakistan for minorities to live in peace and security. If such conditions are created the desire to migrate to another part of the country will disappear. In the opinion of the Committee, it is wrong to coerce Hindu and Sikh inhabitants of Pakistan into leaving their homes and migrating to the Indian Union, and Muslims of the Indian Union into migrating to Pakistan.

While it is impossible to undo all that has been done, every effort should be made to enable the evacuees and refugees from either Dominion ultimately to return to their homes and to their original occupations under conditions of safety and security. Those who have not left their homes already should be encouraged to stay there unless

they themselves desire to migrate, in which case facilities for migrating should be made available. It is the duty of the Central Government of the Indian Union and the Government of Pakistan to negotiate on this basis and to create conditions which would enable the evacuees and refugees to return with safety.

In any event the policy to be followed in the Indian Union is to protect the minorities still residing there and to prevent their removal by force or by creating circumstances which compel evacuation.

During these disorders large numbers of women have been abducted on either side and there have been forcible conversions on a large scale. No civilized people can recognize such conversions, and there is nothing more heinous than abduction of women. Every effort, therefore, must be made to restore women to their original homes with the co-operation of the Governments concerned.

The A. I. C. C. has noted with satisfaction the declarations made on behalf of the Governments of the two Dominions and East and West Punjab that forcible conversions will not be recognized and that they would co-operate in the recovery of abducted women.

Such being the policy of the Congress, the refugees in the Indian Union are entitled to every care and attention from the authorities and the people within the Union as long as they have to remain there. They are not to be regarded as interlopers grudgingly placed upon charity. They will have the same rights and be under the same obligations as any other citizen. Where they are living in camps they will be expected to render some social service in co-operation with fellow-refugees, subject to the rules framed for the good government of the camp. Sanitary and other services should be performed by the inmates of the camps under instructions from those fitted for the work and who will themselves take part in these services. Refugees should be engaged in productive work as far as possible on a co-operative basis.

Refugees from West Punjab shall as a rule be accommodated in East Punjab. Those from the other parts of Pakistan shall be accommodated in places that the Central Government, in co-operation with the Provincial Governments, may consider more suitable. Those from a particular locality should, as far as possible, be kept together.

In this task the Provincial Governments should offer their full co-operation and should take in and make suitable arrangements for as many refugees as they can.

No house, not vacated willingly by a Muslim, shall be used for the accommodation of refugees, except by proper legal authority.

The movement of refugees, which is already taking place by train, convoy or otherwise, should be regulated in accordance with the policy laid down above and no one should be sent away unless he expresses his desire to migrate.

This principle should apply also to the States which have acceded to the Indian

Union and from which large numbers of Muslims have been evacuated or driven out.

The A. I. C. C. trusts that the Central Government of the Indian Union, the East Punjab and West Bengal Governments, and the Governments of the States affected by these migrations, will give effect to the policy indicated above and will issue directions to all their officers to act strictly in accordance with it.

(3) STATES

15-11-1947

In view of the fact that in a number of States, people's organizations, instead of rising in power and influence as a result of freedom, are being suppressed and prevented from functioning; and further in view of the fact that Rulers in Punjab and some parts of Rajputana and Central India and in the South Indian States have shown an unpatriotic attitude and have betrayed a woeful lack of imagination and have been party to the liquidation of the Muslim and Hindu population by inhuman means, it becomes necessary to reiterate in unequivocal language the policy of the Congress in regard to the States.

Whatever may be the legal implications of accession and lapse of British Paramountcy, the moral result of the independence of India was undoubtedly the establishment and recognition of the power of the people as distinguished from that of Princes and feudal or other interests hostile to natural popular aspirations. This power, the Congress is determined to uphold at any cost. Therefore, all such interests and specially the Princes should know that the Congress cannot uphold them unless they are demonstrably in favour of regarding the voice of the people as the supreme law. In such a democratic State the individual who wants to assert himself against the popular will cannot count, no matter how powerful he may be.

This meeting of the A. I. C. C. therefore hopes that the Princes will read the signs of the times and co-operate with the people, and those who have acted in a contrary spirit will retrace their steps and revise their undemocratic conduct and function through democratic organizations expressing the people's will. This they can best do by seeking the association and advice of the A. I. S. P. C. which has been endeavouring to act on behalf of the people of States.

(4) COMMUNAL ORGANIZATIONS

16-11-1947

The A. I. C. C. has noted with regret that communal organizations like the Hindu Mahasabha, the Muslim League and the Akali Party have sought to promote their respective interests based on so-called religious considerations in conflict with the national interest. The national interest must mean and include a healthy synthesis of all interests based not on religious but political, social, material and moral grounds. Political activities must accordingly be conducted by political organizations which are based on political and economic policies and which are open to members of all communities.

(5) PRIVATE ARMIES

16-11-1947

The All India Congress Committee has noted with regret that there is a growing desire on the part of some organizations to build up private armies. Any such development is dangerous for the safety of the State and for the growth of corporate life in the nation. The State alone should have its defence forces or police or home guards or recognized armed volunteer force. The activities of the Muslim National Guards, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and the Akali Volunteers and such other organizations, in so far as they represent an endeavour to bring into being private armies, must be regarded as a menace to the hard-won freedom of the country. The A. I. C. C. therefore appeals to all these organizations to discontinue such activities and the Central and Provincial Governments to take necessary steps in this behalf.

(6) CONTROLS

16-11-1947

The A. I. C. C. has been alarmed at the disturbance of normal life by the various controls, specially in regard to foodstuffs and clothing. These have promoted black-marketing, hoarding, corruption and other evils. They have interfered with the process of self-reliance and arrested the incentive to production specially in the matter of growing more foodstuffs-and the manufacture of hand-spun and hand-woven khadi in the thousands of villages in India. The Committee is, therefore, of opinion that the Central and Provincial Governments should give urgent consideration to the problem of decontrol as early as possible without detriment to the public good.

(7) THE CONGRESS CONSTITUTION

16-11-1947

As the goal of complete independence from foreign domination has been achieved and in view of the new role the Congress organization will have to play under the changed circumstances, the A. I. C. C. appoints the following Committee to revise the present Congress Constitution, including the objective as contained in Article I and to submit the revised draft Constitution prepared by it to a special session of the All India Congress Committee, to be convened for the purpose, notlater than the end of January, 1948 and pending the final approval of such a Constitution by the A. I. C. C. to postpone all Congress elections under the present Constitution.

Shri R. R. Diwakar, Shri P. D. Tandon, Acharya Narendra Deo, Shri S. K. Patil, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Shri Surendra Mohan Ghosh and Acharya Jugal Ksihore.

(8) CONGRESS OBJECTIVES

16-11-1947

Political independence having been achieved, the Congress must address itself to the next great task, namely, the establishment of real democracy in the country and

a society based on social justice and equality. Such a society must provide every man and woman with equality of opportunity and freedom to work for the unfettered development of his or her personality. This can only be realized when democracy extends from the political to the social and the economic spheres.

Democracy in the modern age necessitates planned central direction as well as decentralization of political and economic power, in so far as this is compatible with the safety of the State, with efficient production and the cultural progress of the community as a whole. The smallest territorial unit should be able to exercise effective control over its corporate life by means of a popularly elected Panchayat. In so far as it is possible, national and regional economic self-sufficiency in the essentials of life should be aimed at. In the case of industries, which in their nature must be run on a large scale and on centralized basis, they should belong to the community, and they should be so organized that workers become not only co-sharers in the profits but are also increasingly associated with the management and administration of the industry.

Land, with its mineral resources, and all other means of production as well as distribution and exchange must belong to and be regulated by the community in its own interest.

Our aim should be to evolve a political system which will combine efficiency of administration with individual liberty and an economic structure which will yield maximum production without the creation of private monopolies and the concentration of wealth and which will create a proper balance between urban and rural economies. Such a social structure can provide an alternative to the acquisitive economy of private capitalism and the regimentation of a totalitarian State.

With a view to drawing up the economic programme for the Congress in accordance with the above-mentioned principles, and the election manifesto of the Congress dated December 19th, 1945, the following Committee is appointed:

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Shri Jaiprakash Narain, Prof. N. G. Ranga, Shri Gulzari Lal Nanda, Shri J. C. Kumarappa, Shri Achyut Patwardhan, Shri Shankarrao Deo—with powers to co-opt.

(9)

17-11-1947

This Committee would have liked Acharya J. B. Kripalani to continue as President of the Indian National Congress till the next elections in the normal course but as he has expressed his inability to reconsider his resignation, it regretfully accepts it.

The Committee places on record its appreciation of the services rendered by him both before and during the time he has held the office as President.

Harija n, 23-11-1947

APPENDIX III

EXTRACT FROM LETTER FROM PYARELAL[1]

This means that unless we can accept partition as unreservedly as once you accepted the British Empire, even to the length of teaching your children to sing 'God save the King' in the approved English tune, we cannot stay in Pakistan without being guilty of 'disloyalty' to the State. How can then those who cannot in all conscience accept partition as something good or irrevocable for all time have any place in Pakistan?

Feverish preparations are going on to re-enact Kashmir on a small scale in Tripura State. Pakistan officials are deeply involved in it. Some of them are even said to be carrying on a 'palace intrigue' in Tripura State to this end. Three or four days ago, speeches were delivered at a public meeting in Comilla by Muslims exhorting the people to launch an action against Tripura authorities. Hindu subjects of Pakistan were challenged to prove their 'loyalty' by joining in that meritorious action for the extension of Pakistan's boundaries. What should be the attitude of the Hindus? What should the Hindu refugees from Noakhali, domiciled in Agartala (capital of Tripura) do? What advice should we give to those who seek our counsel?

In one sense, however, the situation in Noakhali may now be said to be normal. The policy of the Government is no more to harass or to persecute the Hindus. But the complexion of the administration is communal and their behaviour openly partisan. Discrimination and a steady squeeze in the name of the 'Islamic State' are going on and corruption, inefficiency and lack of discipline in all branches of administration are endemic. Before the partition the Central Government exercised, at least in name, some check. Now even that is gone. For the rest unless war actually breaks out between the two Dominions, there is no imminent danger of any large-scale disturbance taking place. In other words, peace in East Bengal henceforth will depend more on the overall situation *vis-a-vis* the two Dominions than on purely local conditions. . . .

Mahatm a Gandhi —The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 529-30

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Pyarelal", after 15-11-1947.

1. GIVE AND TAKE[1]

A Sindhi sufferer writes:

> At this critical time when thousands of our countrymen are leaving their ancestral homes and are pouring in from Sind, the Punjab and the N. W. F. P., I find that there is, in some sections of the Hindus, a provincial spirit. Those who are coming here suffered terribly and deserve all the warmth that the Hindus of the Indian Union can reasonably give. You have rightly called them *dukhi*,[2] though they are commonly called *sharanarthis*. The problem is so great that no government can cope with it unless the people back the efforts with all their might. I am sorry to confess that some of the landlords have increased the rents of houses enormously and some are demanding *pagri*. May I request you to raise your voice against the provincial spirit and the *pagri* system specially at this time of terrible suffering?

Though I sympathize with the writer, I cannot endorse his analysis. Nevertheless I am able to testify that there are rapacious landlords who are not ashamed to fatten themselves at the expense of the sufferers. But I know personally that there are others who, though they may not be able or willing to go as far as the writer or I may wish, do put themselves to inconvenience in order to lessen the suffering of the victims. The best way to lighten the burden is for the sufferers to learn how to profit by this unexpected blow. They should learn the art of humility which demands a rigorous self-searching rather than a search of others and consequent criticism, often harsh, oftener undeserved and only sometimes deserved. Searching of self ennobles, searching of others debases. The sufferers should learn the art and virtue of corporate life, in which the circumstance of co-operation is ever widening till at last it encircles the whole human race. If they do this no sufferer will live in isolation. All of them, no matter to which province they belong, will hold together and would be considering not the welfare of self but that of all. This does not mean that all of them will live or insist on living at one place, an impossible feat at any time, more so today, when lakhs upon lakhs of people have been torn from their homes, not knowing where to lay their heads upon. But this humble spirit of co-operation does mean that wherever

[1] The Gujarati version of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 14-12-1947.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 25-11-1947.

they are placed, they will feel one with all the sufferers, no matter from what strata of society they are drawn or to which province they belong. Insistence on being accommodated in a particular place of one's choice there will be none. The sufferers will never grumble. They will disdain to occupy houses belonging to Muslim owners or tenants, whether these places are physically occupied or evacuated. It is for the Government to decide what they will do with property evacuated under abnormal conditions that are prevalent in India today. The sufferers' one and only care would be to hold together and act as one man. It would be seen that if the idea thus presented takes shape and spreads, the problem of accommodating sufferers, otherwise styled refugees, will become incredibly simple and they will cease to be a menace.

Moreover, every sufferer who is not a cripple will do his or her full share of work against bread, clothing and shelter in a becoming manner. Thus they will realize the dignity of labour and feel dependent upon no one. All will be equal to one another irrespective of sex. Some labour will be shared by all, e.g., sanitary work including latrine- cleaning and scavenging. No labour will be considered too low or too high. In this society there will be no room for drones, idlers or loafers. This camp life is any day superior to the city life of dirt and squalor side by side with palaces—difficult to decide which is a greater eyesore between the two.

NEW DELHI, December 6, 1947

Harijan, 14-12-1947

2. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

December 6, 1947

CHI. VALJI,

I read your article on the cinema[1] just now. It took me some time to decipher some of the English words which were unfamiliar to me. When you quote from a book, it will perhaps help if you send the book, too. Alternatively, you may get the article typed or write it in a still clearer hand. I would not be able to translate this article into Gujarati. I myself did not follow all the English words fully. You had

[1] The article entitled "Reconstitute Film Censor Boards" appeared in *Harijan*, 14-12-1947.

agreed to send the Gujarati and the Hindi translations also. Even if you cannot send the Hindi, send the Gujarati. You may, if you wish, send it directly. I am writing to the people at Ahmedabad not to translate it into Gujarati. As for your previous articles, I am inquiring about them.

Are you all right?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 7506. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

3. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
December 6, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You heard the *bhajan* and the *Ramdhun* sung by Subbulakshmi[1]. She is new to Delhi. Usually she gives music recitals. One ought to lose oneself while singing *bhajans* and *Ramdhun*. Today you must have realized why people are so keen to hear her. She has a melodious voice. I welcomed her message offering to come and sing here.

Today I do not wish to take more than 15 minutes. Yesterday I took 25 minutes which was too long. I am ashamed of it. I must train myself to finish within 15 minutes. Today I intend to take only 15 minutes and leave out what cannot be covered within that time.

I had a letter from a friend yesterday. I have only been able to read a part of it. I have another letter today which I have not been able to go through. I must ask to be excused. The letter which I have read in part says that I am too simple a man, that I do not know how the world's affairs are run and am apt to be deceived. The correspondent also explains the nature of the deception and cautions me to be careful. He asks me to see what is happening in Pakistan and suggests that we should do the same here. That we should take revenge I do not agree. We cannot burn the houses of the Muslims. However humble those houses may be they are as dear to their owners as the palaces of millionaires may be to them. It is in these houses that they live. When

[1] M. S. Subbulakshmi, eminent exponent of Carnatak music

a Muslim has to go to Pakistan he suffers.

The correspondent asks when the displaced Hindus and Sikhs can go back to their homes. I may inform him that so long as they do not go back I shall not rest. It is a different thing if they die before that happens. So long as there is a single Hindu or Sikh left who does not get his house back, I shall not rest. Yes, one may not ask that the house that has been burnt should be restored to its former state. No government can do that, not even the Government of India. I shall say that the Hindus and Sikhs should go to Model Town and stay there. The Lahore Hindus and Sikhs can ask the Pakistan Government to return them their houses and their land just as they are. All that they should ask is that the Muslims who have occupied their properties should be made to vacate them. We cannot ask them to raise houses on the land. They should merely return the land. Those who are now in the Indian Union should become truthful and decent. We must not imitate Pakistan. If they cut off their noses we can't do the same.

I shall further say to the correspondent that if we have made a mistake we must rectify it. Everyone makes mistakes. Only, one must not repeat them. Man is liable to err, even as he has the potentiality to do good. Once he rectifies his mistakes, he can only do good. If we stick to our dharma it is not necessary to advertise it to the world.

I have had to write on what happened to Kathiawar Muslims. I did the right thing. It is good to tell the Hindus there about it. It is good to tell the Government. It is our right. When we agreed to the formation of Pakistan we had not bargained for the houses of Hindus and Sikhs being burnt in Pakistan and their being driven out of the country. If mistakes have been made they must be rectified. Of course they can say that we should also rectify our own mistakes. They may say that the Muslims who had gone to Pakistan were driven out of India and that they should be taken back. If that is done the displaced Hindus and Sikhs could go back to Pakistan and the displaced Muslims in Pakistan could come back to India. This will be good both for India and Pakistan. If not, then both the countries will fall in the eyes of the world. We have always conducted ourselves honourably. We won our freedom honourably. It is not I who say it. It is not Hindus and Muslims who say it. It is the whole world that says that we have attained our freedom by honourable means. We should preserve it by honourable means and not by resorting to rowdyism. Rowdyism could be the way to lose our freedom. If we keep our conduct and our

behaviour clean the world will see that we have made amends for our former mistakes. What is the world going to do about Pakistan —you may ask. I shall say that the world does not have to do anything or say anything. Pakistan has to cleanse itself.

I am reminded that the Resolution[1] passed by the A. I. C. C. had my support and that I am responsible for its being passed. I am however told that people do not want it. Displaced Hindus and Sikhs do not want to go back to Pakistan. I do not say that they should go back as beggars. True, they have come away from Pakistan because they were helpless. But they must go back with dignity. The Pakistan Muslims should tell them that they have changed for the better and now invite them to go back. Similarly we should tell the Muslims who have gone away that their houses and their land are as they had left behind and that they should come and occupy them. If we get over our madness and behave as gentlemen, things will be all right. Where is the deception here? I do not deceive anyone. The world should not look for deception here. The A. I. C. C. has passed the Resolution that the displaced Hindus and Sikhs should all go back to their homes and land in Lyallpur and they should be invited to do so with love. Our Sikh brethren used to be farmers there. They have to go there in any case. This is my dream. I wish to live to see this dream realized. If it is not the will of God that this dream be realized, He will take me away. That is why I am staying on in Delhi. If I cannot do this here, where else can I do anything? If only Pakistan would mend its ways, confess its errors and assure us that it would behave decently, all would be well and we could live as good neighbours. There is no reason why we should remain enemies of each other. Enmity cannot be our dharma. I have concluded within ten minutes today.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 175-8

[1] *Vide* Appendix "A. I. C. C. Resolutions", Resolution (2), "Repatriation of Refugees", 15-11-1947.

4. DISCUSSION AT KASTURBA GANDHI NATIONAL MEMORIAL TRUST MEETING

NEW DELHI,
December 7, 1947

QUESTION: Should the *sevikas*[1] of the Kasturba Trust be given instruction in first-aid and home remedies or should this be a different department? For instance, should the women engaged in Nayee Talim and khadi work receive such training too?

GANDHIJI: I do hold that any woman who wants to be an all-round village worker must have a basic training in nursing. That is to say she must know how to deal with and treat common diseases such as boils, malaria, scabies, vomiting, diarrhoea and so on. I of course believe only in nature cure. But these women must know what the disease is, what diet is to be given and how sponging, enema, etc., have to be given. All this is of course covered under Nayee Talim.

Q. Now that we have our own Government, should we accept assistance from the Government? For instance scholarships?

G. This, as in the case of the previous question, is a matter of individual discretion. But I hold the view that we should not alter the policy we have adopted so far. People everywhere seem to have become unconcerned and imagine that since now we have our own Government there is no harm in accepting grants. But our Government has been there for barely five months, and in this brief period it has had to carry enormous burdens. The financial plight of the Government today is far from easy and we must not make it more difficult by burdening it further, nor should the Government involve itself in the question. This much relief can certainly be expected with our own Government in power, viz., that workers, both men and women, working in the Kasturba Trust and other national institutions, will not have to face the difficulties they did under the British rule.

Q. If the *sevikas* who have received training start working for the Communist Party, what should one do? Should one ask them to refund the expenses incurred on their training? Again, if women from the Communist Party or the Socialist Party request for training being given to them, should they be given the training? And should we take in trainees recommended by the Government?

[1] Women workers

G. It cannot of course be a happy situation if we train workers and are then denied the benefit of their services. But we must not be disappointed. If the Government sends us trainees and pays their expenses we must give them the training. And we must emphatically tell the trainees that courtesy demands that they observe the conditions that go with the training. We must not worry which is a trainee follows, or which party she comes from. We must be satisfied if she signs the pledge and follows the rules. This is not a sectarian organization or a party organization. It is an institution of service. We should not seek Government grants. We have to train women village workers for the revival of the villages.

Q. Should we have prayers in the training institutions?

G. Certainly, prayers we must have. In fact I hold that prayers must become a part of life. It is so with me. Prayer is the food of the soul. It is the broom to sweep away all the dirt from the mind. And the women getting instructions in the camp should as a matter of etiquette present themselves for prayers at the appointed time. Whether they are believers or non-believers, whether they have faith in prayers or not, they must attend the prayers. It cannot be without its effects.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, pp. 43-5

5. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
December 7, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today I wish to talk to you about a very complicated matter, which is also rather sensitive. It has appeared in the newspapers. You will have seen that yesterday some Hindu women workers went to Lahore and met some Muslim women there.[1] They discussed the

[1] An Inter-Dominion Conference was held in Lahore on December 6, to consider ways and means for the restoration of abducted women.

A joint appeal to the people of Pakistan and India to restore all abducted women was made by the representatives at the Conference. Prominent among the signatories to the appeal were: Ghazanfar Ali, Iftikhar Hussain Khan of Mamdot, Begum Liaquat Ali Khan, Begum Shah Nawaz, Begum Bashir Ahmed, Iftikhar-ud-din, K. C. Neogy, Swaran Singh, Rameshwari Nehru, Mridula Sarabhai and Kamaladevi Chattopadyaya.

question of what ought to be done about the Hindu women abducted by Muslims in Pakistan and the Muslim women abducted by Hindus and Sikhs in East Punjab. A very large number of Muslims have already left India and it is possible some more may yet leave. We should now resolve that not a single Muslim will be compelled to leave. If they voluntarily opt for Pakistan that is a different matter. But the fact is that no one wants voluntarily to leave India. Why should anyone want to give up one's house and property? It is not as if they had houses and properties waiting for them in Pakistan. Those voluntarily opting for Pakistan or going for the sake of jobs are very few, which is natural because there are not enough jobs for them in Pakistan. And if their established businesses in India are not affected, there is no reason for them to go.

But what of the women? This is a complicated question. Some say that about 12,000 women had been abducted by Hindus and Sikhs and twice that number had been abducted by Muslims in Pakistan. Some others say that this estimate is too low. I would say 12,000 is not a small number. Why, a thousand, or even one, is not a small number. Why should even a single woman be abducted? It is barbaric for a Hindu woman to be abducted by a Muslim or a Muslim woman to be abducted by a Hindu or a Sikh. Some people believe that 12,000 represents a very conservative figure. Let us say that 12.000 is women had been abducted by Muslims of Pakistan and another 12,000 women had been abducted by Hindus and Sikhs of East Punjab. The problem is how to recover them. The women workers had been to Pakistan to consider how to solve this problem. The Hindu and Sikh women carried away by force should be restored to their families. Similarly the Muslim women taken away should be restored to theirs. This task should not be left to the families of the women. It should be our charge. They also met Ghazanfar Ali[1] and a police officer whose name I forget. Mridulabehn[2] and Rameshwaribehn[3], who had been to Lahore, both gave me separate reports and told me that they discussed

[1] Minister in charge of Relief and Rehabilitation in Pakistan; he had suggested at the Conference that a joint organization of the Dominions of India and Pakistan should be formed for the restoration of kidnapped women and children to their families.

[2] Daughter of Ambalal Sarabhai; one of the trustees of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust

[3] Rameshwari Nehru; Vice-President, Central Board of Harijan Sevak Sangh; President of the women's section set up by the Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation

the question of how abducted women should be recovered. Obviously it will not do to send police parties or armed units as an escort for these women. Of course some Hindu and Sikh women workers could go to Pakistan accompanied by police officers from East Punjab to bring back the abducted women. But this is not being done. It is said that the women concerned do not now want to return, but still they have to be brought back. Muslim women similarly have to be taken back to Pakistan. It is also said that the Sikh and Hindu women concerned have embraced Islam and married their Muslim abductors. It could be true. Bat I do not admit that they are not willing to return. Similar is the case of Muslim women in India.

We have become barbarous in our behaviour. It is true of East Punjab as well as of West Purjab. It is meaningless to ask which of them is more barbaric. Barbarity has no degrees. Raja Gazanfar Ali says that both parties have indulged in atrocious behaviour. It is not necessary to ask who has been more guilty. Atrocities have taken place on a mass scale and it is irrelevant who took the first step. The need is for women who have been abducted and harassed to be taken back to their homes. It is my belief that the police cannot do this. The army cannot do this. Yes, a team of women workers could be sent to East Punjab and another team to West Punjab but I do not think that would be effective. I can say as a man of experience that this is not the way to do this work. This is a task for the Governments to tackle. I am not saying that the Governments were behind the abductions. It was not the Government of East Punjab which organized abductions. In East Punjab Hindus and Sikhs were responsible for them and in West Punjab Muslims were responsible. What further investigation is required? Whatever the number—I put it at 12,000 at least—East Punjab and West Punjab should return them.

It is being said that the families of the abducted women no longer want to receive them back. It would be a barbarian husband or a barbarian parent who would say that he would not take back his wife or daughter. I do not think the women concerned had done anything wrong. They had been subjected to violence. To put a blot on them and to say that they are no longer fit to be accepted in society is unjust. At least this does not happen among Muslims. At least Islam is liberal in this respect, so this is a matter that the Governments should take up. The Governments should trace all these women. They should be traced and restored to their families. The police and women social

workers cannot effectively deal with this. The problem is difficult, which means to say that public opinion is not favourable. You cannot say that all the 12,000 women were abducted by ruffians. I do not think that is the case. It is good men that have become ruffians. People are not born as goondas; they become so under certain circumstances. Both the Governments had been weak in this respect. Neither Government has shown enough strength to recover the abducted women. Had both the Governments exercised authority, what happened in East Punjab and West Punjab would not have happened. But our independence was born only three months ago. It is still in its infancy.

In my view Pakistan is responsible for spreading this poison. But what good can come from apportioning responsibility? There is only one way of saving these women and that is that the Governments should even now wake up to their responsibility, give this task the first priority and all their time and accomplish it even at the cost of their lives. Only thus can these women be rescued. Of course we should help the Government if it requires help.

As I told you yesterday I should not speak for more than fifteen minutes; so I end here. Two or three minutes are still left but I shall not use them.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II. pp. 178-82

6. A NOTE

Decemebr 8, 1947

It would of course be best if a woman could remain unmarried her whole life. But only one in a million would be able to do so. Desire for marriage is a natural thing. There is nothing to be ashamed of in it. To believe marriage to be a fall has an adverse effect on the mind and causes harm in many other ways. The best way is to treat marriage as a religious duty and to exercise the utmost self-restraint in the married state. The householder's state is one of the four states of *Varnashrama.* The other three states depend on it. But these days marriage has become a means of indulgence and that has led to terrible consequences.

Women should regard the duties of the householder's state as

religious duties and live accordingly. Personally I believe the if we give thought to it and live the householder's life with the same strict discipline which a sannyasi follows, we would find that a householder's path is much harder to follow than becoming a sannyasi, that it is a path full of thorns. But a rosebush is full of thorns and yet when the roses bloom in the midst of those thorns, the whole bush looks grand. We should strive to reach the condition of the rosebush.[1] Hence we should marry not with the motive of physical pleasure but to cultivate self-control and bring lustre to the householder's dharma. That will immensely increase our capacity for service. If a woman filled with such a spirit of service chooses as partner a man with similar feelings, the united power of service of the two could benefit the country many more times than the service of either of them singly. Similarly, if the householder's life, as I have said, is a religious duty, motherhood automatically becomes one. That duty is much more arduous. In order to fulfil it, the couple should practise self-control and bring forth progeny with a due sense of religious and moral responsibility. For that, women should know the rules of physical, mental and spiritual hygiene. The woman who presents the country with healthy, vigorous and well-brought-up children also serves the country. If the couple have the spirit of service in them, their children are bound to be influenced by it and will themselves take up work of service when they grow up. The point I wish to make is that those who are inspired by a total spirit of service will serve under all conditions. If the couple do not live their life in the spirit of service, they will be nothing but imposters. Their having been married will then have no meaning. The argument that after marriage no work of service is possible has no substance. It depends entirely on the marrying couple. As my explanation shows, marriage puts the partners to a severe test but also helps them to render service.

[From Gujarati]

Dilliman Gandhiji – II, pp. 49-50

[1] The simile of the rose is a recurrent analogy in Gandhiji's definition of service and spiritualism: *vide* "Speech at Thirumangalam", 30-9-1927, "Interview to a Missionary", before 22-3-1935 and "Answers to Questions", 1-12-1936.

7. A NOTE

December 8, 1947

To live, man primarily requires two things - food and clothing. And the means of solving the problem are simple. One way is to accept gifts. But begging never helps the poor to solve their problem. On the contrary, they lose their spirit and become weak and indolent. Another way is to take up a job. But service, too, does not make one self-reliant. The third way is to produce the things one needs. There are two means of doing that the *charkha* and the mill. Through mills we can produce cloth on a large scale and become self-sufficient as a community but not as individuals. There is talk about a third world war. If a third world war breaks out, it is doubtful whether we shall not be dragged into it. But I leave that question aside, though I can say with confidence that if India only makes up her mind, not only can she keep herself away from war but she has the strength to prove to the world the futility of war. But today while brother is cutting brother's throat in our own country, with what face can I promise that? I therefore leave that question aside for the present.

But if unfortunately for the country it is attacked by bombs, the first targets will be the mills and not the homes where the *charkha* is plied. If, when the mills are razed to the ground as a result of the bombing, the charkha and the *takli* are plying, we shall not feel helpless and the world will see that though India's mills had been reduced to ashes, she was still standing on her feet.

[From Gujarati]

Dilliman Gandhiji— II, pp. 51-2

8. A FOREWORD

Charlie Andrews[1] was simple like a child, upright as a die, and shy to a degree. For the biographers[2] the work has been a labour of love. A life such as Andrews' needs no introduction. It is its own introduction.

NEW DELHI, December 8, 1947

Charles Freer Andrews, p. 15

[1] Charles Freer Andrews (1871-1940); English missionary, author and educationist; a close associate of Gandhiji and Rabindranath Tagore

[2] Benarsidas Chaturvedi and Marjorie Sykes

9. NO LIMITATIONS[1]

A correspondent says in substance:

> Individual ahimsa I can understand. Corporate ahimsa between friends is also intelligible. But you talk of ahimsa towards avowed enemies. This is like a mirage. It will be a mercy if you give up this obstinacy of yours. If you do not, you will forfeit the esteem you enjoy. What is worse, you, being considered a *Mahatma,* mislead many credulous persons to their own and society's harm.

That non-violence which only an individual can use is not of much use in terms of society. Man is a social being. His accomplishments to be of use must be such as any person with sufficient diligence can attain. That which can be exercised only among friends is of value only as a spark of non-violence. It cannot merit the appellation of ahimsa. "Enmity vanishes before ahimsa", is a great aphorism. It means that the greatest enmity requires an equal measure of ahimsa for its abatement. Cultivation of this virtue may need long practice, even extending to several births. It does not become useless on that account. Travelling along the route, the pilgrim will meet richer experiences from day to day so that he may have a glimpse of the beauty he is destined to see at the top. This will add to his zest. No one is entitled to infer from this that the path will be a continuous carpet of roses without thorns. A poet[2] has sung that the way to reach God accrues only to the very brave, never to the fainthearted. The atmosphere today is so much saturated with poison that one refuses to recollect the wisdom of the ancients and to perceive the varied little experiences of ahimsa in action. "A bad turn is neutralized by a good", is a wise saying of daily experience in practice. Why can we not see that if the sum-total of the world's activities was destructive, it would have come to an end long ago? Love, otherwise ahimsa, sustains this planet of ours.

This much must be admitted. The precious grace of life has to be strenuously cultivated, naturally so because it is uplifting. Descent is easy, not so ascent. A large majority of us being undisciplined, our daily experience is that of fighting or swearing at one another on the slightest pretext.

[1] A Gujarati version of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu,* 14-12-1947.

[2] Pritam

This, the richest grace of ahimsa, will descend easily upon the owner of hard discipline.

NEW DELHI, December 8, 1947

Harijan, 14-12-l947

10. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,

Silence Day, December 8, 1947

A Muslim organization has cautioned me against taking at face value anything said to me whether by a Hindu or a Muslim and making it the basis of an argument. It suggests that I had better investigate the matter first and then decide what to do and it adds that I should personally visit Kathiawar and see things for myself. I have already said that this is a thing I cannot at present undertake. I should do what I can remaining in and around Delhi. Those who offer me advice forget that so far it has been possible to have the charges withdrawn. When one wants to arrive at the truth for the sake of the truth, the result is always good. This has been repeatedly tried. In such matters patience and perseverance are of the utmost importance.

I keep receiving letters from Sind. There is one from Karachi which says: "There are no killings but Hindus cannot live here with honour and dignity. The Muslims who have gone there from India can enter any Hindu homes at will and announce their intention to stay there. They have no authority, but we dare not say no to them. There had been innumerable incidents of this kind. The Karachi of a few months ago has become a thing of dreams." This is the substance of the letter which is very long. What the letter says can, I feel, be believed. It means that there is total anarchy there. This is the way of killing people slowly. There is also such a thing as killing souls. I appeal to Pakistan to stop this lawlessness. It is a disease and the sooner it is got rid of the better.

Sugar has been decontrolled. Cereals, pulses and cloth will soon be decontrolled. The purpose of decontrol is not to bring down the prices all at once. The purpose for the present is to make our life natural. Controls imposed from above are always bad. In our country,

[1] As Gandhiji was observing silence, his written speech was read out at the prayer meeting.

this is especially so because we have a vast population spread over a country 1,900 miles long and 1,500 miles broad. I do not take count of Pakistan here. We are not a martial nation. We produced, or at any rate we can produce, our own food and enough cotton for our requirements. When controls are lifted people will have a feeling of freedom and they will also have the right to make mistakes. This is an age-old way of making progress to advance by making mistakes and rectifying them. If you keep a child wrapped up in cottonwool it will die or become stunted. If you want to see him grow into a strong man you will have to train him to stand every kind of weather. Similarly if the Government deserves to be called a government it must teach people how to face shortages. It must teach them to weather bad times by united effort. It is no good helping them somehow to keep alive without their having to work for it.

Viewed thus, decontrol means that instead of merely a few people in the Government the millions have to learn to be farsighted. The Government will have to assume fresh responsibilities on behalf of the people so that it can discharge its obligation towards them. It would have to improve transport. It would have to teach people ways of improving the yield. In this matter the Food Ministry will have to pay more attention to small farmers than to big landlords. The Government thus has on the one hand to trust the people as a whole and keep a watch on their occupations and on the other to keep in mind the interest of the small farmers. So far no attention has been paid to them and yet a large majority of the population consists of them. The peasant himself consumes what he grows. He sells his small surplus in order to buy the other necessities of life. One consequence of controls was that the peasant could realize only a very low price from the market for his produce. Therefore in so far as the peasant gets a higher price for foodgrain the price of foodgrain will increase. The consumer should not mind that. The Government will have to see that any benefit from the rise in prices under the new arrangement goes wholly to the farmer. This will have to be explained to the people every day or at least every week. Millers and all kinds of middlemen will have to co-operate with the Government and work under its direction.

I think this is being done. All these various persons and organizations should work in full concord and in full co-operation. So far they have always exploited the poor. The rivalry that has so

marked their attitude to each other should go. Especially in the matter of food and cloth no one should work for the sake of profit. If decontrol leads to traders making larger profits, then the purpose of decontrol will be defeated. Let us hope that capitalists and businessmen will offer full co-operation.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 182-5

11. LETTER TO ISMAT IFTIKHAR-UD-DIN

NEW DELHI,
December 9, 1947

MY DEAR ISMAT[1],

I was sorry that you were so ill and glad to hear that you were better. You should get quite well quickly, so as to do the very necessary work of reclaiming the poor abducted women in both the parts of the Punjab.

Tell Iftikhar[2] it was naughty of him to cease to write to me after his transfer of loyalty.

BAPU

BEGUM IFTIKHAR-UD-DIN

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

12. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

December 9, 1947

CHI. JIVANJI,

I have not been able to write much this time. Still enough is being dispatched. There are two copies of each item.

The Hindustani will be completed by Sushila by this evening and will, therefore, be dispatched tomorrow. That is what was done last week, too.

[1] Wife of Mian Iftikhar-ud-din

[2] President, Punjab Provincial Congress Committee; left Congress in 1946 and joined the Muslim League; Minister of Rehabilitation in Pakistan till November, 1947; President, Punjab Muslim League, 1950; on being expelled from it founded the Azad Pakistan Party

I understand why some articles were left out. Nobody on that side is to be blamed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 6962. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai. Also G. N. 9988

13. LETTER TO A MAULANA

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
December 9, 1947

MAULANA SAHEB,

I had a talk with Sardar Patel about the Muslims from outside who want to settle in Delhi. He says that he has no objection to nationalist Muslims settling in Hazarat Nizamuddin if they wish, whatever their number. But he is against bringing Muslims from outside, to be rehabilitated in the interior of Delhi in houses now evacuated. For, if the Muslims now evacuating these houses return, where will they be accommodated? Secondly, if Muslims from outside are rehabilitated in these houses the Hindu and Sikh refugees who cannot find accommodation are bound to object and argue that while they have not been rehabilitated outsiders are brought in for settling. The Sardar's view seems quite right to me. Therefore you may bring the nationalist Muslims and help them settle in Hazarat Nizamuddin. These outsiders should not be accommodated in the city's interior.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

14. TALK WITH WORKERS OF KASTURBA TRUST

December 9, 1947

Only a woman should be appointed an Agent of the Kasturba Trust. For instance, in Assam and Utkal, no women workers are available. We should therefore do without Agents there. But having regard to the aims of the Trust, men should not be employed as Agents. If today we employ them as Agents, tomorrow we shall be tempted to employ them in other capacities too. The Turst's object is to find ways and means to uplift the women and children of villages.

I do not want the Trust merely to run hospitals. We must explain

the meaning of freedom to the women in the seven lakh villages of India. We should explain to them the duties and not the rights of a woman as mother, sister and daughter in a free country. If we talk about rights, that will increase mutual distrust and strife. If they understand their duties, they will automatically understand their rights. For instance, if a girl is born, the parents ask what need there is to educate her, and sell her off when she grows up. We should try to eradicate such wrong ideas and evil practices. If a girl of 20 is sold or married off to an old man of 60 or 70, what is the duty of the girl as a wife? A girl of 20 cannot be said to be a mere child. If such a girl has been educated by the Trust, she can very humbly and respectfully tell her husband that she looked upon him as her father and she serves him as such. She can tell him that her parents had married her to him in their ignorance, but she would treat him as her father. In this way she can adopt the path of service.

QUESTION. If a woman is violated and a child is born, what should she do?

GANDHIJI. If this happens, the woman should feel ashamed of herself. I would not call it violation. The woman does have a share in it. Still, however, if she kills the child, her sin will be even greater. What she can do to expiate the sin is to bring up the child. After all, what crime has the child committed? In Nadiad they had placed a box in which a woman could put her new-born baby so that the mother could escape social obloquy and the child's life might be saved. I must confess that I do not approve of this method. It encourages moral looseness in men and women. If along with innocent women morally loose women also follow the same way, you should arouse a feeling among the women that such action is shameful. However, though such women should feel ashamed of themselves, to have the child is the utmost limit of cruelty. Even cruelty must have some limits.

[From Gujarati]

Dilliman Gandhiji – II, pp. 64-6

15. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
December 9, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today I attended a meeting of the Trustees of the A.I.S.A. and naturally I had to speak for half an hour to the women. If I

have the time—for I shall be finishing the speech in 15 minutes —I shall tell you about that today. Otherwise I shall do so tomorrow.

You will have seen in the papers today a report saying that Sardar Patel and I are going to Pilani. Why? For a change of air. It is a mere canard. I do not know what the Sardar has in mind but I certainly know that this is not the time to seek a change of air. The Sardar works all day long and rests at night and that is all the change of air he gets. The same applies to me. It is true that I am not so overworked because I do not have to run a government. But I receive many visitors and I get tired. Therefore I have to give myself rest. The air is quite congenial in Delhi at present and there is no need to go out for a change of air. What can Pilani offer? So far as I am concerned I have taken a pledge to do or die. I have not fulfilled that pledge. I cannot understand why newspapers publish such rumours. I can only conclude that a large part of what the newspapers put out consists of falsehoods. Then I came to know—though not from newspapers—that since we are going there certain directives have come from Jaipur about the quantity of sugar, wheat and other provisions that we shall be needing. Although we are only two persons to be provided for, a scarcity seems to have been created in the market. It is of course only hearsay. If true it reveals a shocking state of affairs that our movements should influence the market. It is as though we lived only in order to eat or that we had large retinues following us. This should not be so. The Sardar is a poor man, and so am I. It is true that he lives in a palatial house; so do I at present. Of course the best thing would have been for him and for me to live in a mud hut. Anyway, what I was trying to tell you is about the way rumours are spread. After all I am available here. They might have asked me if I planned to go to Pilani. I now have a telegram from the Associated Press in this connection which hurts me even more. The Sardar is always busy but they should have asked me whether we are going.

I have a letter from a friend from Sind. He has given his name but I shall not disclose it though he would not mind my doing so. I had told you about a letter from a doctor in Sind who had reported the hardships of the Sind Harijans.[1] The doctor has been arrested. Whether he was arrested because he wrote to me or for some other

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 3-12-1947.

reason I do not know. Many persons who served Harijans have been arrested. This is the kind of thing that is happening in Sind. I admit that people are not being murdered, but as I told you yesterday this is worse than murder. When you murder a man he is dead and everyone then puts up with the fact, but to harass people and kill them by inches is much worse. A man was arrested and then released—maybe they will release others too. But it is bad to arrest people like this. I do not wish to make accusations against the Pakistan Government but I must warn them that if they keep arresting Harijan workers in this way it will be impossible for the workers to continue to stay in Sind. The same is true of Harijans. This sort of thing was common during the British rule. Must we continue the same practice?

I still have a few minutes, so I shall tell you about another matter, viz., about the women. The Kasturba Memorial Trust has been set up because there are 700,000 villages in India and women and children living in them must be served. But there is a larger issue confronting us; a large number of Hindu and Sikh women have been abducted by Muslims and an equally large number of Muslim women have been abducted by Hindus and Sikhs. Leave aside the question which community has abducted more women. In any case under each of the two Governments no less than 12,000 women and girls have been abducted. What is the Kasturba Trust to do? I shall do what lies in my power. One thing is obvious, that we cannot take up this work to advertise ourselves. Those who are public servants have to do the work of service. Once the work is over there is an end to it. It is of no importance whether the matter is reported in the newspapers or not. Again, we have to consider the various things that should be done for women. I can suggest a few things. Most women workers we have are from the cities. We could find a few in villages and even these had some connection with cities. I do not say that it is bad, that it is wrong to have anything to do with cities. But for the last 150 years the trend has been for cities to exist only to squeeze wealth out of the villages. They took raw material from the villages, carried on trade with foreign countries and made crores of rupees. This money did not go to the villagers, or only a very small fraction of it did. The bulk of it went to millionaires and the mill-owners. Towns exist to exploit the villages. The city culture does not therefore fit into the framework of villages. A woman worker from a town should not carry to the villages the atmosphere and the ways of towns. Maybe she has a lot of money and articles of luxury. Maybe she has a motor car, cosmetics, dresses of

velvet and toothpastes, foreign or indigenous, tooth brushes, dainty shoes and sandals. If she takes all these things along with her, how can she serve the villages? If with these things she sets the standard for the villagers they will devour the villages. The cities should be for increasing the prosperity of the villages, for making money available to them for developing the village culture. But what is happening is the very opposite of this. I cannot explain to you everything. All I have to say is that the women workers who truly want to serve, not to exploit, must have a sense of propriety and take to the villages only the things that it would be appropriate to take. Such reforms as they wish to introduce must be in conformity with the genius of the villages. If that happens our seven lakh villages which today are in a sunken state can come up. The villages are not inhabited by uncivilized people with no art and nothing good to show in life. There is much beauty in the villages. There is much art and there are industries that the whole world knows about. Village crafts have been appreciated all over the world. Therefore the women workers who would serve villages must leave behind the things associated with city-life. They should take with them only what is good and moral. Then alone can they help in the uplift of the millions of our women and children. This much at any rate let us do.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 185-8

16. QUESTION BOX

Q. Why does Gandhiji resort to a fast when he faces extreme difficulties? What is the effect of this action on the life of the public of India?

A. Such a question has been put to me before but never, perhaps, precisely in the same terms. The answer, however, is easy. It is the last weapon in the armoury of the votary of ahimsa. When human ingenuity fails, the votary fasts. This fasting quickens the spirit of prayer, that is to say, the fasting is a spiritual act and, therefore, addressed to God. The effect of such action on the life of the people is that when the person fasting is at all known to them their sleeping conscience is awakened. But there is the danger that the people through mistaken sympathy may act against their will in order to save

the life of the loved one. This danger has got to be faced. One ought not to be deterred from right action when one is sure of the rightness. It can but promote circumspection. Such a fast is undertaken in obedience to the dictates of the inner voice and, therefore, prevents haste.

NEW DELHI, December 10, 1947

Harijan, 21-12-1947

17. ITS DEEP ROOTS[1]

A correspondent writes to the effect that:

Even after independence, the hold of the English language on the city people does not seem to have relaxed to any appreciable extent. In proof of his statement he cites the Industrial and Agricultural Exhibition held in Bombay, at which the opener's speech was in English, the signboards were painted in English and the correspondence for the most part was conducted in English. The ration cards are in English, much to the annoyance of the general public, who cannot read English. Our leaders feel that their important pronouncements must be made in English without the slightest regard for the poor public.

This is a just complaint, demanding peremptory redress. The unfortunate inertia has to be thrown out before a visible change for the better takes place in this important matter.

NEW DELHI, December 10, 1947

Harijan, 21-12-1947

18. DISCUSSION WITH H. S. SUHRAWARDY

[*December 10, 1947*][2]

You must know that the people here and even in a greater measure the members of the Union Government do not have that trust in you that I have. They tell me that you are fooling me, that in

[1] This appeared under "Notes", a Hindi version of which appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 21-12-1947.

[2] From *Dilhiman Gandhiji*—II

Calcutta you hung on my words because the Muslims were in peril but here things are different and so are you. If you wish to remove their distrust and suspicion, you must have the courage plainly to tell Jinnah and Liaquat Ali that they must adopt a uniform policy with the Indian Union in regard to the recovery of the abducted women and other matters pertaining to the minorities. Similarly, you must ascertain the truth about what is said to be happening in Karachi and ask Jinnah how it comports with his declaration that the minorities in Pakistan would be fully protected. And if you cut no ice with them, you must, as a Muslim and an Indian national, issue a statement disapproving of Pakistan's policy in unequivocal terms. Thereby you will serve both India and Pakistan.[1]

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 525-6

19. TALK WITH TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
December 10, 1947

Students, parents and teachers should all become proficient in crafts. only by imparting education through crafts can India stand before the world. Just as there are laboratories in schools, our kitchens should be our laboratories. For instance germinated pulses are rich in vitamins, but when we cook them with spices all the vitamins are destroyed. How much heat and how much time will food require to cook so that it is easily digested and also preserves vitamins? How much food in calories will a child, a student, a grown-up man, a moneyed man, a worker or a common man require? How much ghee, oil, milk or grain should one consume? If all this is taught to the students while cooking, they would become experts in the science of nutrition.

There is similarly a science in the charkha as also in nursing the sick. Today boys of twenty become graduates and can speak a foreign language as fluently as their mother tongue. Although history, geography, arithmetic, geometry, Sanskrit, etc., are taught through a

[1] A group of local Muslims called on Gandhiji soon after. He gave them similar advice that they should set forth their views in a public statement if they felt that the minorities in Pakistan were not getting a fair deal and boldly and unequivocally say that this was a disgrace to Pakistan and a stigma on Islam.

foreign language they pass the examinations. This shows that our boys are not dull or incompetent. I tell you that no English or other foreign students can speak Hindustani or Gujarati however hard they may try, as fluently as our students can speak English. I know of many Englishmen who have been here for years and who have been trying to learn Hindi and yet even now they cannot pronounce the word rqe [you], they pronounce it Vqe. Look at Mirabehn. No one could be more hard-working. She resents it if she is introduced as an English woman. She lives and serves as a daughter of India. She still cannot properly pronounce the sound '**r**' of Hindustani. But we must not be content with getting degrees in English. We must learn hygiene, chemistry, economics, etc. And that not through books but through crafts. Students should diligently acquire knowledge. When there is knowledge to be found in cooking, in disease, in recreations, what need is there to pore over books? If you take chillies in excess you will get dysentery. So from this we can gain knowledge about the cause of dysentery. Thus we can make experiments on ourselves and gain knowledge from our experiences. This knowledge is permanent. Why need one cram the dates of Lord Curzon's birth and death? And if, even after cramming them, one forgets them at the examination one's parents will have wasted the fee money. Of course if one wants to study these dates because of interest in them, that is a different matter. But today we do not need such education. If therefore the flame of freedom is to be lighted in India the very first need is a revolution in education. After all, students are the real wealth of the country. Teachers, in so far as they mould the students, are the silent servants of the country. Their profession not only earns them their bread but is also one of service. But today we neglect those we call teachers. Parents must take an active interest in teachers. Parents commit a grave sin when they address teachers disrespectfully. The teachers can impart no enlightenment to students till we learn to show towards them the same respect that we show to the priest in the temple or to our spiritual preceptor. And if the students are not enlightened we may be certain the country will remain enveloped in darkness. Today all this seems a fond hope. We fought the English for so long. People used to make fun of us and ask if we thought we would get freedom by going to jail and by being flogged. But I had the firm conviction that freedom would come through that path alone and no other. Similarly while today the cloud of hatred and enmity darkens the relations between brother and brother, we cannot find a way to

happiness because of our ignorance. Ignorance has rendered us blind. It is our misfortune that we are unable to see who is clear as day.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, pp. 71-4

20. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
December 10, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Yesterday I told you that I attended the meeting of the A. I. S. A. and addressed a few words to the women. Today again I had to go to a meeting of the Talimi Sangh. But maybe I shall have to leave that out for today. I must speak today of the A. I. S. A. You know what the Spinners' Association is. It carries on khadi activity which is centred round the charkha. First, the cotton has to be ginned, carded, made into slivers, and then spun and woven. If the hundreds of millions of people in India take to this work—it is easy, we can even teach it to children—all the expenditure on cloth can be saved. If cloth is thus manufactured in villages it becomes almost free. And if cotton is grown in the villages the saving would be twice as much, for we would have to spend nothing on cloth and we could also benefit from the craft and prosper. I therefore feel that if we do not behave foolishly there should be no dearth of cloth in our country. There should be no dearth even if there is not a single textile mill left in India. Today we have to look up to the mills. We have forgotten the charkha and khadi. People do certainly sport khadi caps because they have got used to it, having worn it during the struggle for freedom. But one feels sad that khadi is not a living thing in our lives. The Spinners' Association has been working for many years. It has disbursed crores of rupees and yet we are where we were. This is a matter to be pondered over. The charkha teaches us ahimsa. If everybody took up the charkha the villages would become prosperous and would not present the depressing spectacle they do today. During the discussion at the meeting, it was shown how, through the charkha and khadi, the shortage in cloth could be made good and crores of rupees could be given to the villagers, not in cash but in the saving that would be effected from not having to buy mill-cloth. It may be said that in manufacturing khadi we would have to pay for the cotton. But the

price of cotton would be very little. If we use all the cotton that is today produced, it should be enough. But the Government gives all the facilities to the mills. It is more concerned for the capitalists than for the farmers. It is a painful fact. I am not against capitalists, I am myself staying in the house of a capitalist. But I know the attitude that the capitalists have adopted. The Government may say that they do everything for the poor. But even the British used to say it. The truth is that the interests of the poor are not served. The Government should humbly accept this. It is easy to say that the poor should be helped. Let the ministers decide to go and live in the villages. If they are true socialists—and if I have my way I would make them behave so—if they are true servants of the poor, not only of the workers but of the peasants who are more numerous, if they want to uplift the people, I would tell them that they should only wear khadi. There is nothing to prevent them from producing their own khadi at home. I will tell the people what they are doing. Ever since I came here I have been saying this but have been able to achieve nothing. All that I have managed to get is a few crores of rupees for the villages. But what I want is that the music of the charkha should be heard in every home and no cloth except khadi should be seen anywhere. If this happened the poverty prevailing in the villages would disappear. That it has not so far happened is our misfortune.

One cannot say that in other respects things are going on well here. There are speeches being made—I shall not name the speakers because full particulars are still lacking—that the few Muslims still remaining here will not be allowed to stay on, that the mosques still standing will be taken over to house Hindus. What else will happen only God knows. I think that if the Hindus occupied the mosques it would be the end of Hinduism. So much for Delhi.

Something about Ajmer has come to our notice. And it is the same story there. I have visited the town many times. It has Muslims and Hindus in large numbers. There is an important Muslim shrine[1] there. It is also visited by Hindus and thus the two have been living in amity. They are one not in religion but in their ways of life. Not that there were no quarrels between the two communities but today the rioting has been much more serious. It seems from what little has appeared in the newspapers that a large number of Muslims have been killed. There was first a scare among the Muslims and those who

[1] Of Hazarat Moinuddin Chishti

could ran away leaving a few behind. Then followed the riots. I understand that is what is happening in the villages all around. I shall talk to you again after I have full particulars. All I say is that it is a shameful affair. Let us pray to God to give us the wisdom not to destroy Hinduism by our conduct. It cannot do any good to destroy Hinduism in the process of killing Muslims. If we wish to live we must let live. Man was not made by God to live through killing others. It must not be allowed to happen that the Hindus and Sikhs in Pakistan and Muslims in India are killed and the rest become slaves. We are inviting our own destruction. There is a saying in Sanskrit: "A man loses his reason when he is to be destroyed."[1] our minds have become perverse. The cries of "kill, slaughter, drive out the Muslims", are a sign of our having lost our reason. There are many other things I want to say but I have not the time, having resolved not to speak for more than 15 minutes.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 189-92

21. WHO SHOULD BE PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS?[2]

The following is a free translation of Principal Shriman Narayan Agrawal's letter in Hindustani from Wardha:

> In the Constitution that is being framed by the Constituent Assembly, there is to be provision for the election of provincial Governors by the majority of voters under the adult franchise system. From this one is entitled to infer that, as a rule, the nominees of the Congress Parliamentary Board will be elected. The Chief Minister of the province will also be of the Congress party. Common sense dictates that the provincial Governor must be above party politics of the province concerned, or above being unduly influenced by the Chief Minister or above friction between himself and his Chief Minister.
>
> In my opinion there is no necessity for a Governor. The Chief Minister should be able to take his place and people's money to the tune of Rs. 5,500 per month for the sinecure of the Governor will be saved. Nevertheless, no provincial Governor should belong to his own province.
>
> Moreover, in this way the expense and worry of an election by the majority of the adult population will be saved. Will it not be proper and better

[1] विनाशकाले विपरीतबुद्धि :

[2] A Hindi version of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 21-12-1947.

for the President of the Union to select Governors satisfying the reasonable test above suggested? Such Governors will surely raise the tone of the public life of the provinces governed by them. It is worthy of note that the present Governors have been appointed by the Central Cabinet of the Union on the above basis and, therefore, their influence on their provinces has been wholesome. I fear that if the Governors are elected as threatened under the forthcoming Constitution, their influence is likely to be unwholesome.

Further, the Constitution as foreshadowed makes no mention of the village panchayat being the foundation of the progressive decentralization in the place of the old hunger for centralization. There are other such defects which one can profitably point out, but I have no right or desire to enter into an elaborate criticism of our seasoned leaders. I have but ventured to draw your attention to the defects which have appeared to me and demand your guidance.

There is much to be said in favour of the argument advanced by Principal Agrawal about the appointment of provincial Governors. I must confess that I have not been able to follow the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly. I do not know the context in which the proposal under discussion has been made. But, examined in isolation, the criticism appears irresistible; with the exception that much as I would like to spare every pice of the public treasury, it would be bad economy to do away with provincial Governors and regard Chief Ministers as a perfect equivalent. Whilst I would resent much power of interference to be given to Governors, I do not think that they should be mere figure-heads. They should have enough power enabling them to influence ministerial policy for the better. In their detached position they would be able to see things in their proper perspective and thus prevent mistakes by their Cabinets. Theirs must be an all-pervasive moral influence in their provinces.

Principal Agrawal says that there is no mention or direction about village panchayats and decentralization in the foreshadowed Constitution. It is certainly an omission calling for immediate attention if our independence is to reflect the people's voice. The greater the power of the panchayats, the better for the people. Moreover, panchayats to be effective and efficient, the level of people's education has to be considerably raised. I do not conceive the increase in the power of the people in military, but in moral terms. Naturally, I swear by Nayee Talim in this connection.

NEW DELHI, December 11, 1947
Harijan, 21-12-1947

22. LETTER TO MANIBHAI B. DESAI

December 11, 1947

CHI. MANILAL,

I got your letter only today. I also got the one sent with Dinshaw. I am replying just now to the former.

It was indeed welcome news to me that Gangabehn[1] had gone there. If she is able to stay on there permanently, nothing could be better. But that will of course depend on Purushottam's[2] health.

I will be glad if a primary teachers' camp is held there. The condition that the camp should involve no financial liability is only reasonable.

I hope Balkoba's fund will be completed. That Dhiru is persisting in his effort is not surprising, for it is in his nature.

If the gentleman sent there by Haribhau Phatak can stay there and can be a help to you, that would indeed be fine. But his being able to work will depend on his not getting fainting fits.

In view of the decision not to purchase the Ramanama land, the plan to purchase some other plot seems all right. Where will you find the money for it?

If the work at Uruli progresses steadily, no matter how slowly, I should be very much pleased.

Your vow of lifelong dedication cannot but produce an echo in the hearts of other people. Whatever effect is produced there will be the fruit of ahimsa. Without ahimsa village uplift seems impossible to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 2724. Courtesy: Manibhai B. Desai

23. LETTER TO VIJAYALAKSHMI PANDIT

NEW DELHI,

December 11, 1947

CHI. BEHN VIJAYALAKSHMI,

This letter will be handed over to you by Shri Datar from Uruli Kanchan. His son Chi. Madhavrao is blind. Datar has read somewhere that they are providing the blind with new eyes in Russia. If this is true

[1] Wife of Purushottam Bhatt

[2] Purushottam Bhatt

Datar would like to take Chi. Madhavrao to Russia. If this is feasible do whatever can be done. Datar is a man of means and he will be able to bear the necessary expenses.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

24. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
December 11, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

A friend desires that the verses from the Koran we recite here should be explained. These verses are ancient. The Koran was composed by Mohammed Saheb—it was spoken by him, thirteen centuries ago. The extracts from it that we recite are considered sublime like our *mantras.* The very reading of it bestows merit on the reader. It is good to know the meaning, of course, but even without knowing it a correct recitation itself is of great value. I can now explain the substance of it. I do not know Arabic or Persian. I do possess a translation, but it is not here now. Tomorrow I can provide a literal translation. In substance, it is a prayer to God. God is one and the same, by whatever name we may call Him. Allah is one of His names. Then His attributes are described. He is called Rahim and Rehman but He is one God. It is then said that God alone can save us from Satan. Satan drags us down and makes us do evil deeds only God can save us from that fate. Man admits that he on his own does not do noble deeds but God prompts him to do so. Man is like a drop of water in a sea. If God does not save man Satan will devour him. God is great.God is All there is. His mercy alone can save us. I should say that however much we may recite this prayer, ponder over it and follow its import it is not enough. You may ask why in that case Muslims indulge in such barbarous behaviour. But then do Christians who have made so much progress, who are learned, follow the teachings of the Bible? Where are the Christians that live according to the Bible? Where are the Hindus who conduct themselves according to the *Gayatri?* We recite from *Ishopanishad*, "All things are pervaded by the Lord", meaning that God is in everything. He gives us everything. Whatever a man possesses has been given to him by God. We should renounce all and enjoy what we must. Nothing is ours.

House, property and everything is surrendered to God. It is a great thing. Then it is said that we should not be envious of others' riches. We should not covet another's wealth. Let the Hindus but conduct themselves according to this one single *mantra.* Let the whole world thus conduct itself. It is not for the Hindus alone. It does not even mention Hindus. Let the Sikhs conduct themselves according to the *mantra.* It is not as if they did not believe in it. If everyone conducted himself accordingly the tragedy we have been witnessing all around us could not have come to pass. Everyone is not wicked, nor is everyone an angel. We cannot say that all Sikhs are wicked while all Hindus are angels or that all Muslims are angels.

Another verse is from the Parsi scripture. The first *mantra* in the prayer proclaims obeisance to the Guru. It is followed by other verses in Sanskrit. Then there are *bhajans.* And yet we do not keep our hearts clean. It is a painful thing.

I had said I would explain to you what was being done in the Harijan Colony. But I have to leave it for the present, for there are other things to speak of and I have only fifteen minutes. Some Muslim friends from the U. P. came to see me today for a second time. They told me that they had been to the Punjab in Pakistan. They found other Indian Muslims there. They had planned to work out with the Muslims there some kind of a compromise which would make things easier here in India. They had obtained my permission for the visit. They returned today. They said they wanted one thing from me. I should ask the Hindus and the Sikhs to return to Lahore. These Muslim friends will accompany them. Should it become necessary they will be the first to lay down their lives. But that will not be necessary. They have talked to the authorities there. They are willing to rehabilitate the non-Muslims there. I asked them to give it to me in writing. It is not something that can be done right away. It is a big thing. If this can be done a great part of my work will have been accomplished. They said, I should at least test their word. They have given to me their views in writing. Their report says:

> The Peace Mission from the U. P. visited West Punjab twice. The first visit lasted a month and the second a week. The conditions there are much improved. The Government as well as the public are trying to re-establish order. It is the desire of the West Punjab Government that the non-Muslims residing there at present should continue to live there and those who have

> migrated from there should go back to their homes. The Government has issued the directive that the non-Muslims returning to their homes in West Punjab should be given back their rights over their houses and properties and given full protection and provided with all the facilities they may need. If, notwithstanding all the pleading, some non-Muslims do not wish to go back, they will have full rights to exchange or sell their properties in any way they like. The Government is being very severe with those provoking riots and are taking all measures to ensure protection to those who may return. The Peace Mission has been able to persuade the people and the Government of Pakistan to accept the responsibility to protect the honour and dignity of non-Muslims. We, the members of the U. P. Peace Mission request the non-Muslim brethren from Pakistan to go back to West Punjab and settle there. We are willing to accompany them on their journey back and will protect them at the cost of our own lives. We will return only after these non-Muslims are fully assured of their safety.

This is signed by four persons. It is a very promising development. The newspapers have put out something quite different but we should not worry about that. There are many refugees concentrated in Model Town. In Lahore Hindus and Sikhs have large properties. There is also a Gurdwara there. I asked the Mission from U. P. if the Sikhs could go back there. They gave the assurance that Sikhs could go there. They said it was not that people in general had become friends; there was still some poison in the air; it could not be removed all at once. But the Government had made sure that there would be no more killings.

It would be a great thing. I had not thought things could improve so quickly. I do not know how far this is the case, but let us in our hearts grant the possibility that there are people among Muslims who can do this. It would be inhuman to think that all Muslims are wicked. There are very good men among them. A Hindu friend had accompanied the Muslim friends. He brought me a letter. I have not the time to read it out but its substance is the same. He runs a large hotel visited daily by about a thousand persons. A majority of them are perhaps Muslims but certainly Hindus also go to the hotel. They find no difficulties in their way. He says there is nothing to prevent the Hindu refugees from going back there. I will not say that

they must go back right away. Nor would I say that they should not go. But it would be good if they did go back.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 192-6

25. ADVICE TO DECCAN STATES' UNION RULERS[1]

NEW DELHI,
December 11, 1947

Gandhiji advised the Rulers to have perfect unity with their people. They are trustees of the people and their servants, he added.

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-12-1947

26. LETTER TO LORD MOUNTBATTEN

NEW DELHI,
December 11, 1947

DEAR FRIEND,

Your promised letter was delivered here at 5.15 p. m. It came into my hand after 7 p.m. You have given me more than I had expected or wanted.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE G. G. OF INDIAN UNION

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The Rulers of Sangli, Aundh, Phaltan, Miraj (Senior), Ramdurg and representatives of Bhavnagar and other States met Gandhiji in the evening.

27. DISCUSSION AT CONSTRUCTIVE WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
December 11/12, 1947

J. B. KRIPALANI: This meeting has been convened by the Constructive Works Committee of the Congress. The question has been raised what the constructive workers should do.

GANDHIJI: The first thing we have to do is to improve our national character. No revolution is possible till we build our character. The pity is that though swaraj is so recent an achievement, there is already a slackness in constructive efforts. I know there are a few difficulties. Government help also may not be forthcoming at places. But the Congress has always been in our hands. And if you will only make an effort the Government too will remain in our hands.

QUESTION: Should constructive workers take part in politics?

GANDHIJI: I have answered this question many times before. I repeat my answer: leave politics to Rajendra Babu, Jawaharlal and Vallabhbhai. You confine yourselves to constructive work.

It is difficult to answer the question why constructive work is making so little headway, though the Congress has sworn adherence to it for years and men like Jawaharlal, Rajendra Babu and Vallabhbhai are at the helm of affairs. All the Sanghs, except the Harijan Sevak Sangh, were brought into being by the Congress. Why is it then that the workers of these Sanghs lack the power to make the Government go the whole hog with them? No doubt, the fault lies with us, the constructive workers. We had faith in constructive work, but our faith was not deep or enlightened enough to illumine our intellect and so our growth has been lop-sided. The criticism levelled against the constructive workers is that they are generally lacking in imagination and intellect. Our intelligentsia are not lacking in sympathy. Reason, as a rule, follows in the footsteps of feeling. But we

[1] The versions available in *Mahatma* and *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase* have been collated with the Hindi version in *Dilhiman Gandhiji*.

Congress workers, including Shankarrao Deo and R. R. Diwakar, had posed the question whether it would not be better in view of the halting policy pursued by the Government, to form themselves into a separate body and go into the Government for the furtherance of the constructive programme.

have not sufficiently penetrated the hearts of the intelligentsia to convince their reason.

This is my analysis of the situation. There should be rapport between the constructive workers and the institution. We must first purify ourselves. The Congress has always had the constructive programme. Now it has the power. Why is it then that our work is not progressing? It may be that we have no heart. Because if we were endowed with a heart we would have been sensitive to the pain of others. Moreover, a person may be in sympathy with one in distress and still may not be of any help to him. But our minds have not opened. Many eminent people who are in politics have had this experience. I have had a hand in the formation of all these various institutions, and I can say that things are in such a state because our hearts are not pure. A current was generated. The people caught on to the idea that that was the way to overcome the British. Villagers too flocked to us in ever larger numbers. It gladdened us that there was such awakening in the country. But in the forefront were intellectuals. And the result was that the freedom that came was not true freedom. The fight being over, our interest in the constructive programme waned. Constructive work is not a strategy or a technique of fighting. Constructive work connotes a way of life. It can be carried on only by men who have adopted it by the heart as well as by the intellect.

Kumarappa[1] pointed out that our way of life would be determined by what we do. Then the Sangh[2] came to be formed, in which the Congress helped. The Congress lent the constructive workers' Sanghs its name and also gave them the charter to function. But the Congressmen failed to come up to the scratch and to shoulder the burden. Such is our bankruptcy. If the Sanghs could come together and could work under the direction of a jointly chosen representative, it would mark a big step forward. To set our own house in order is the first indispensable requisite, if we want to influence political power. If all the Sanghs gave a good account of themselves, worked unitedly and in co-operation, without a jar or jolt, it would be a grand thing. But they must not do it for the sake of popularity, nor hanker after political power, even in their dreams. Soon we shall have adult suffrage. That is a good thing. But to regard adult suffrage as a means of capturing political power, would be to put it to corrupt use.

[1] J. C. Kumarappa
[2] All India Village Industries Association

The objective of the constructive works organizations is to generate political power. But if we say that political power having come, it must be ours as a price for our labours, it would degrade us and spell our ruin. Take the case of the Charkha Sangh. It has the largest membership of all the Sanghs. But we have never endeavoured to get its members enrolled on the voters' list. It was suggested at one time that we should get their names enrolled on the Congress register. I opposed it. "Do we want to capture the Congress?", I asked. That would be tantamount to killing it. The Congress can be ours only by right of service. Today we have our own Government. Under adult suffrage, if we are worth our salt, we should indeed have that hold upon the people that whomsoever we might choose, should be returned. In Sevagram I deprecated the proposal of our people enrolling themselves as voters. What actually happened was that the people from the village came and sought our advice as to whom they should give their vote, because they knew that we were their true servants and had no axe to grind.

Today politics has become corrupt. Anybody who goes into politics gets contaminated. Let us keep out of it altogether. Our influence will grow thereby. The greater our inner purity, the greater shall be our hold on the people, without any effort on our part.

My eyes have now been opened. I see that what we practised during the fight with the British under the name of non-violence, was not really non-violence. God had purposely sealed my eyes, as He wanted to accomplish His great purpose through me. That purpose being accomplished, He has restored to me my sight. Now I can see with open eyes what is to be done. I have been learning the art for so many years. Maybe I have got the technique. If I make a mistake I rectify it. I therefore say that there is no need for us to consult the Government. They went as far as they could.

Has what I am doing today penetrated your hearts? Then you should have the strength to remove corruption, wheresoever it may be. You have met here as the constructive wing of the Congress. For that you need not get into any committee. Your work is among the masses. The Constituent Assembly is today forging the Constitution. Do not bother about making changes in it. Shriman Narayan Agrawal has written to me that in the Constitution that is being framed now, there is no mention of *gram* panchayat, whereas the Congressmen have always said that the *gram* panchayat must be the foundation of our future

polity. We have to resuscitate the village, make it prosperous and give it more education and more power. What good will the Constitution be if the village does not find its due place in it? What Shriman Narayan Agrawal says, appeals to me. But we must recognize the fact that the social order of our dreams cannot come through the Congress of today. Nobody knows what shape the Constitution will ultimately take. I say, leave it to those who are labouring at it. Let the constructive workers consolidate their strength, and the way to do it is through the unification of the various constructive works organizations. And if we cannot do that, let each Sangh continue on its way and develop its strength as best as it can, making intelligence more and more the hallmark of all its activity. The Charkha Sangh is the biggest Sangh. It has funds. It is pursuing the policy of decentralization. I am not unaware of its perils and its difficulties. We have to create a superior, more advanced type of khadi worker. Not till then, shall Panchayat Raj become a reality. The workers of the Charkha Sangh are not there merely to earn a living for themselves or merely to distribute some wages to the spinners and weavers, etc., by way of poor relief. The only goal worthy of their ambition is to create a non-violent order of society. But, in this they have not made much headway. If our khadi workers are there for wages only, then we had better bid good-bye to the dream of realizing a non-violent social order. The success will depend on our uttermost purity. Impatience would be fatal.

We are today rather poor. But this poverty does not discourage me. Only now we are coming to realize that all our workers are from cities. They do not even know what non-violence is. When a woman gives me yarn she does it for money. But why does she covet money? The root cause is poverty. It is that root we have to destroy. Where is khadi today? The people who wear khadi do so to gain political ends. There is no credit in it. Our work may be slow but we can generate great strength through it. Let us forget about the Congress Constitution, because even after the Constitution has been given shape our work must go on. We have to pursue our ends in a different way. You must not succumb to the desire to become ministers.

The really poor villager is haunted by the spectre of destitution. He cannot see beyond the satisfaction of his primary needs. The villager does not understand non-violence, nor do I talk to him of it, but I try only to see that he becomes a good spinner and gets a fair minimum subsistence wage. I do not mind if the volume of our work

is small, so long as it is solid. Constitution-making will be over in a few months. What next? The responsibility of working it and making a success of it will rest on you. Suppose you get a constitution after your heart, but it does not work. After five years, someone will say: 'You had your innings, now give us a chance.' You will have to give in and they may try to seize power, set up a dictatorship and strangulate the Congress. *Per contra*, suppose you do not assume power but gain hold on the public, you will be able to return at the polls whomsoever you may wish. Forget membership so long as the voters are in your hand. Think of the root and take care of it as much as you can, and make self-purification the sole criterion. Even a handful imbued with this spirit will be able to transform the atmosphere. The people will soon perceive the change and they will not be slow to respond to it. Yours is an uphill and difficult task but it is full of rich promise.

QUESTION: The people are with us, but the Government obstruct our effort. What are we to do?

GANDHIJI: If the people are with you, the Government are bound to respond. If they do not, they will be set aside and another installed in their place. Even in the days of Lord Wavell, I used to tell the people that they did not know their own strength, or they could get Lord Wavell removed at will. When the British saw that he would rule over us only by martial law, they removed him. It is a tribute to the British, for they could very well have imposed martial law.

QUESTION: Should there not be an over-all organization, which would include and co-ordinate all the Sanghs' activities?

GANDHIJI: A separate organization is not necessary for that purpose. What is needed is co-ordination of the work of the Sanghs. The various Sanghs have worked separately and independently of one another till now. We tried to set up a co-ordinating committee for the purpose of *samagra gram seva*, but it did not work. If we all unite, we shall function like the departments of the Central Government. For instance, why should there be separate stores and sales depots for the Spinners' Association and the Village Industries Association? Why could not the machinery of the Spinners' Association be available for furthering the activities of both? The members of the Charkha Sangh will do the work of the Gram Udyog too. There is the question of the sale of *tad gur*. Why should not the Charkha Sangh take it over? Our workers' children have to be educated. Shall we build a separate school for them? Is that not the function of the Talimi Sangh? If we

will not co-operate even in such matters, it will show that we have not understood how ahimsa works. The central body will lay down the general lines of policy which all the Sanghs will follow. If we are determined and pledge ourselves to 'do or die', we are bound to succeed.

ARYANAYAKUM: Let the Presidents and Secretaries of the various Sanghs meet first in a preliminary informal conference and, after discussion, place before Gandhiji the implication and difficulties of unification.

SHANKARRAO DEO: This is not the right way to go about it. The workers should meet first. A gathering of the Presidents and the Secretaries will not have the requisite atmosphere. It is a narrow and subjective approach.

GANDHIJI: It is neither narrow, nor subjective. The workers' conference can follow, not precede. The Charkha Sangh has its Board; Jajuji[1] must consult it first. The average worker will not even understand.

SHANKARRAO DEO: We have a number of intelligent workers, let them be called.

GANDHIJI: We seem to be talking at cross purposes. The discussion that I have proposed, involves technical matters. It needs specialists. The general workers will feel themselves at sea in such a discussion. Let the props and pillars unite. All will then feel the glow of strength. Forget me. Dr. Zakir Husain is a great organizer. He has suggested that just now nothing should be decided under the spell of my presence. And, therefore, he has recommended that the matter be taken up later at Sevagram. I like it. The atmosphere at Sevagram would be calmer and free from the communal virus. When I came here, I did know that I would have to speak on these things. I was told that in the Constitution Committee of the Congress there were some constructive workers; how could they make their influence felt in the Congress? I had come to tell you that you must not expect to get the Constitution you desire through the Congress. Nor need that worry you. It should be enough if the Constitution you get does not actually stand in the way of constructive effort. The second thing I had come to tell you was that the various Sanghs should become the research laboratories in their respective fields. Our constructive works

[1] Shrikrishnadas Jaju

institutions are not democracies, but they are the instruments for the building up of democracy. The Congress has lent us its name and its prestige and, in return, it derives prestige from us for the service which, as its true servants, we render. The connection of the constructive works organizations with the Congress is spiritual. It can be severed at any moment. As specialists we should be able to tender to the Congress our advice on what needs to be done.

QUESTION: Why cannot we get it done through the Congress?

GANDHIJI: Because the Congressmen are not sufficiently interested in constructive work. If they were, it should not have been necessary for us to meet here.

QUESTION: That being the Congressmen's psychology, what is the use of giving place to the constructive works organizations in the Congress Constitution?

GANDHIJI: Because the Constitution moulds the psychology of the people. People may not do the things they believe, but then it should be our duty to see that through our neglect our case does not go by default.

QUESTION: Labour is represented in the Assembly through their representatives. There are special seats reserved for universities. Why should not constructive workers' organizations have their functional representatives in the A. I. C. C., who would act in the general way, too?

GANDHIJI: No, surely not the mixture. Functional is all right. But in general there is so much corruption today, that it frightens me. Everybody wants to carry a lot of votes in his pockets, because the votes give power. Under adult suffrage, anybody who is eligible has a vote. Let all such members of the various Sanghs form themselves into one body and let the Congress Working Committee and the A. I. C. C. take from among them their nominees, to advise and to guide them in matters and policies pertaining to constructive work. There are many labour organisations in the country. There is the Ahmedabad Labour Union, the Charkha Sangh, the Goseva Sangh, the Chamber of Commerce and so on. The Congress claims to represent them all. The Congress, of course, claims to represent the Princes too. But I would not ask you to include the Chamber of Princes in your scheme. Take all the living organizations with you. Purify yourselves of all dross.

Banish the very idea of capture of power and keep it on the right path. Therein lies salvation. There is no other way.

Mahatma, Vol. VIII, pp. 279-85, *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. II, pp. 661-6, and *Dilhiman Gandhiji*—II, pp. 80-5

28. DISCUSSION AT HINDUSTANI TALIMI SANGH MEETING[1]

December 11/12, 1947[2]

There were some workers, who were worried at the paradox free India Government presented. The Congress had sworn adherence to the constructive programme for years, while it was in the wilderness. But having come into power, it showed signs of giving it the go-by. Was not the remedy for those who had faith in the constructive work to enter the Government and use it for the purpose of building up a non-violent social order? Gandhiji was opposed to it, but he held that the purpose could be achieved if the various organizations which he had founded for carrying on constructive work came up to the standard which he had set for them. And as a preparatory step to the discharge of that role, he recommended the unification and co-ordination of those organizations into one body. He placed the onus of the transformation on the shoulders of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh. It should be easy for them to do that if Nayee Talim was what he had envisaged it to be. What he had proposed was only a part of adult education.

The Nayee Talim is today on its trial. It has either to transform the prevailing atmosphere, or perish in the attempt.

There is one section in the country today in our midst which holds that the Hindus and Muslims cannot coexist, that either the Muslims should get out of Hindustan or they should live here as the vassals of the Hindus. And similarly, in Pakistan, only the Muslims should remain. It is a poisonous doctrine and in it lies the root of Pakistan. Pakistan has come into being; their dream has vanished but the virus has remained. I have pledged myself to resist this doctrine and to do or die in the attempt. But to correct the wrong psychology of the people is the function of Nayee Talim.

Dr. Zakir Husain said that while in principle what Gandhiji had stated was unexceptionable, still there was need to hasten slowly. Things had changed considerably after independence. Everybody felt the urge and impatience to make new

[1] The two-day session was presided over by Zakir Husain.
[2] From *The Hindustan Times*, 13-12-1947

and daring experiments and the need for an absolutely free hand. If the merger resulted in maladjustment, it might retard, instead of helping progress.

A suggestion was then made that they might function as the separate branches of a tree that have sprung from a common trunk and a reference was made in that connection to the Gandhi Seva Sangh which was described as functioning as the parent trunk, at one time. But Gandhiji smelt danger in that. He did not want the constructive workers' organizations to be drawn into power politics and become a rival to the Congress or the Government in the contest for political power.

Gandhi Seva Sangh is no longer there. Nor did it attempt to rally all constructive workers under one organization. It did once make a short-lived attempt to enter into and purify the politics of the country but had to admit defeat.

DR. ZAKIR HUSAIN: Various organizations were created separately as *ad hoc* bodies to perform certain specific functions. If they are united into one body, it will not be possible to keep power politics out of it.

If the united constructive workers' sangh tried to go into power politics, it would spell its ruin. Or else why should I myself not have gone into politics and tried to run the Government my way? Those who are holding the reins of power today, would easily have stepped aside and made room for me, but whilst they are in charge, they can carry on only according to their own lights. But I do not want to take power into my hands. By abjuring power and by devoting ourselves to pure and selfless service of the voters, we can guide and influence them. It would give us far more real power than we shall have by going into the Government. But a stage may come, when the people themselves may feel and say that they want us and no one else to wield the power. The question could then be considered. I shall most probably be not alive then. But when that time comes, the Sanghs will produce from amongst them someone who will take over the reins of administration. By that time, India shall have become an ideal state.

DR. ZAKIR HUSAIN: Shall not we need ideal men in order to inaugurate and run the ideal State?

We can send men of our choice, without going into the Government ourselves. Today, everybody in the Congress is running after power. That presages grave danger. Let us not be in the same cry as the power-seekers. Today, many Congressmen say: "Pandit Jawaharlal is getting so much salary, and why should not we?" They forget that a person of Jawaharlal's talents could any day have commanded a far greater emolument than he is getting today. If an

ordinary humble worker like myself, who neither needs nor has the capacity to earn independently, say, Rs. 3,000 per month, draws that much amount as salary, it is a deplorable thing. It is my firm view, that we should keep altogether aloof from power politics and its contagion.[1]

Mahatma, Vol. VIII, pp. 227-9

29. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

December 12, 1947

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. It is good that you have patiently stayed on at Nagpur. Continue to stay there. I know you will not easily lose heart, you must not.

I am very glad that Shakaribehn is there. You did well in sending over Anand to Sevagram.

Remember that all of us, whether healthy or sick, live through God's grace.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10080. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

30. LETTER TO KANJI[2]

NEW DELHI,
December 12, 1947

BROTHER KANJI,

I have received your letter. Only that you may not feel any anxiety, I am writing this reply.

Other controls may go and there may be harm because of their going. Let there be harm. But why don't you give up the control on your English? Your mother tongue is Gujarati, how is it that you have forgotten it completely?

[1] It was decided to hold an All-India Basic Education Conference from March 6 to 9 in Bihar. In the mean time a preliminary conference was to be held at Sevagram to work on the reorganization plan.

[2] The Gujarati original is not available.

How can I leave the Birla Brothers' house if somebody else tells me to do so? When my experience is to the contrary, to say that they are opposed to [de]control is not correct. Reasons for removal of control for me and them are different and my opposition to control is of long standing and from the time when I was not living in their house. Everybody must act on the promptings of his conscience; you, on yours; I, on mine; others, on their own; and from that at last truth will come out.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: B. G. Kher Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

31. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
December 12, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I have a letter from a refugee, saying I had advised the refugees yesterday to start going back. I had said nothing of the kind. I had said that we would have to see about it and could say something definite only after I had made sure that what I had been told represented the truth. The correspondent says that he wants to go back right away because here there is anarchy all round, no one cares about anyone else, there is no food to eat and no clothes to wear, and nothing is being done for the refugees. I am aware that all this is true. Things have reached a stage where everyone cannot be looked after and everything cannot be made available. I think that all that is possible is being done. But even if it is not being done I cannot advise anyone to go back. If they had not come at all it would have been different. But since they have come they should return only after things are fully normal. They should certainly be in readiness, for the sooner they are in a position to go back the better it will be.

Yesterday I had said I would read out to you the translation of the verse from the Koran recited here. I had already explained to you the substance. The translation runs: "I surrender myself to Allah to save myself from the wicked Satan. I begin with the name of God. Whatever I do, I do in His name because it is He who provides

everything, He who is Rahim, the mighty, and Rehman, the merciful. He is all in all. God is one. He is unborn. It is He who causes everything to be born. He has no equal. He is sufficient unto Himself. That is why we say that He is faultless and formless. He is the home of all attributes. His attributes cannot be fathomed."

Today I have four or five letters. One is from Kathiawar. I had mentioned a letter from some Muslims from Kathiawar[1] but a few Muslims object even to that. I do not know why. The same people who had made accusations had written to me that nothing much had happened and if there had been some slight disturbance the Congressmen had tried their best to establish peace and that they were living happily in their homes.

Another letter is from Burma and yet another from perhaps Bombay. It is unsigned and I do not know where to send my reply. The letter from Bombay says that I do nothing but create confusion. Whether or not I am creating confusion, I know, and you who hear me also know. It says I should investigate what happened in Kathiawar, but how can, I unless I am supplied with details? It is not within my power to initiate any investigation. I can only ask the Government to do so.

Another letter is about Ajmer. It is from the Hindus. They say what I had said was not the truth.[2] There had been rioting no doubt but it was not started by the Hindus. It was started by the Muslims. It had always been like that. Then I realized that this is the other side of the picture. God alone knows what is true and what is not. I had based my statement on what I had seen in the newspapers. I had also heard things from various people. If we persist in such conduct we cannot keep the Government going.

A correspondent wants money to be made available for the renovation of the Somnath temple. The Sardar had agreed that the temple should be renovated but that the money should not be taken from the Junagadh treasury or the treasury of the Government of India. The correspondent asks why the money should not thus be made available. I do not wish to go into the question in any detail. All I can say is that if money is taken from the Government for this purpose, then the same rule should apply to other cases also. It will

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 5-12-1947.
[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 10-12-1947.

have far-reaching consequences.

According to newspaper reports there has been rowdyism in Calcutta.[1] It seems that we have got used to thinking that we can take what we want by resorting to rowdyism. It is a dangerous trend. This is a thing I have never taught. We fought against the British for thirty years. But it was a non-violent struggle. There was no place in it for physical assaults or snatching things by force. The Government in Bengal is our government. It is run by Congressmen. They should not have been subjected to such behaviour. Supposing they have made a mistake—I personally do not know where their mistake lay—rowdyism is not the way to point it out. Why should we indulge in barbaric behaviour? There were students among those who indulged in rowdyism. They are well-educated. It hardly behoves them to stop the members of the Assembly from entering the Assembly, to block all the entrances and, not stopping there, to get into the Assembly itself. But that is what they did. It seems to me that if we persist in this kind of thing the Government cannot be carried on for long. The demonstration was intended to make the Assembly desist from enacting the Bill that the demonstrators did not want. The Bill proposed by the Government is meant for preventing people from indulging in violent activities. Even if the demonstrators did not like this Bill, they should have expressed their opposition in a peaceful way. They should not have indulged in rowdyism. We did not do such things against the British, If any people did so I used to admonish them. We always behaved as gentlemen—I for one even used to undertake fasts.

Our Government today is faced with a number of important tasks. Those tasks have to be attended to. We cannot complain if it becomes necessary for the police to resort to lathi charge or use of tear-gas or to firing. Freedom does not mean that those provoking breach of peace should not be punished. If this happens one should not complain. There are various lawful ways of voicing protests. You can talk to people, write in the newspapers, complain to the Parliament or to the Central Government. We have all the necessary means. We cannot say the Government is ineffective. It is only three months old. We are like a three-month-old child. one cannot say we are mature. I

[1] On December 11, there was a demonstration in Calcutta against the Security Bill, which was pending in the Assembly. One person was killed and several people were injured in the clash between the demonstrators and the police.

would therefore humbly plead with those who resort to rowdyism to desist from it.

It is not that all of those indulging in rowdyism are hooligans or illiterate people. There are among them well-educated people. If they carry on such activities all the work we want to do will come to a stop. We have to reach food to the people. We have to provide them assistance in various other ways. It seems that it has become a profession with some to have all work stopped. This should not be so. It is a mercy that the entire population of Calcutta was not involved in this. But even if they were, it would not have been a good thing. This kind of thing should stop. People should realize that the Government belongs to them and if the Government does not help them they should protest in lawful ways.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 196-9

32. NEVER DANGEROUS[1]

When it is relevant, truth has to be uttered, however unpleasant it may be. Irrelevance is always untruth and should never be uttered. Misdeeds of the Hindus in the Union have to be proclaimed by the Hindus from the house-tops, if those of the Muslims in Pakistan are to be arrested or stopped. Confession of one's guilt purifies and uplifts. Its suppression is degrading and should always be avoided.

NEW DELHI, December 13, 1947

Harijan, 21-12-1947

33. THE DOCTRINE OF MERGER[2]

Merger, as used here, has no legal significance. People of some States in the Deccan Union[3] are reported to have expressed an intense desire for extinction of their Princely houses and their absorption in their provinces. This has been described as merging in British India (as it was called during British rule), as distinguished from Princely

[1] A Gujarati version of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 21-12-1947.

[2] A Hindi version of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 21-12-1947.

[3] The Deccan States' Union consisted of the States of Aundh, Bhor, Miraj Junior, Sangli, Ramdurg, Phaltan, Kurundwar Senior and Kurundwar Junior.

India or States.

In a society based on non-violence, there should be no impatient destruction compassed by [one] man of another, for, every evil-doer, unless he mends his ways, is bound to destroy himself. Evil can never be self-existent. Therefore, the Congress policy has always been to mend Princely rule, not to end it, and to induce the Princes to become trustees and servants in reality of their people. In pursuance of that policy the Congress Government has tried and in the main succeeded in inducing the States to accede to the Union instead of planning the destruction of Princely rule and absorption of their States as an integral part of the Union provinces concerned. Therefore, merger can take place only under two conditions, viz., if the misrule of a particular Prince is self-evident and is irremediable, the people will have the right, as it will be their duty, to seek absorption or merger in their province. The second condition would be when a Prince and the people of his State both desire merger. It is suggested that any one State or its people, whether powerful or insignificant, should not seek merger unless all the States or the majority desire it. I do not think so. Misrule cannot wait to be ended before there is equal misrule in other States. Nor can a Prince who does not wish for any Princely power be expected or be made to wait till the other Princes are ready. Each case will have to be decided on its merits by the Central Government.

NEW DELHI, December 13, 1947

Harijan, 21-12-1947

34. SPNING STILL![1]

A correspondent writes:

I and the members of my family have been regular spinners and weavers of khadi. Now that we have got our freedom, do you still contend that we should spin and wear khadi?

This is a strange question. Nevertheless, it represents the condition of many people. Such persons evidently took to the spinning-wheel and khadi merely mechanically and as one of the means of attaining freedom. These friends forget that freedom was not mere removal of the foreign yoke, though it was the first essential. Khadi represents and represented a way of life based on non-violence.

[1] A Gujarati version of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 21-12-1947.

Rightly or wrongly, it is my opinion that practical disappearance of khadi and non-violence shows that the main implication of khadi was not grasped by us during all these years. Hence, the tragedy we witness of fratricidal strife and the lawlessness on many sides. I have no doubt that spinning and weaving of khadi are more important than ever if we are to have freedom that is to be instinctively felt by the masses of the villagers of India. That is the Kingdom of God on earth. Through khadi we were struggling to establish supremacy of man in the place of the supremacy of power-driven machine over him. Through khadi we were striving for equality of all men and women in the place of the gross inequality to be witnessed today. We were striving to attain subservience of capital under labour in the place of the insolent triumph of capital over labour. Unless, therefore, all the effort made during the past thirty years in India was a retrograde step, hand-spinning and all it implies must be prosecuted with much greater vigour and far greater intelligence than hitherto.

NEW DELHI, December 13, 1947

Harijan, 21-12-1947

35. LETTER TO T. S. AVINASLINGAM CHETTIAR

BIRLA HOUSE,
NEW DELHI,
December 13, 1947

MY DEAR AVINASLINGAM,

Please read the enclosed[1] and tell me whether what is attributed to you is true. I do not feel like publicly dealing with it unless I know the exact fact.

Yours,
BAPU

SHRI T. S. AVINASLINGAM CHETTIAR
MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] Not traceable

36. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

December 13, 1947

CHI. NARAHARI,

I am addressing this to you because I think that you alone will be able to read it. As Dada also will be arriving there by tomorrow, I must write a few lines. I don't like your having the stroke. If the cause is not internal, you will soon get well. But the rule is that after such an attack the patient must take complete rest for some time. Probably the sea-coast will be more suitable. Whether you are fit enough to undertake the journey, the doctor there would know. I might say that if I had been there I would have known. God is the support of us all. May He protect you.

I hope Mani[1] is not scared. Vanamala[2] at any rate must not be.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9147

37. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
December 13, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Yesterday I told you that I was going to Harijan Nivas for doing some work there. The meetings of the Charkha Sangh and Talimi Sangh, etc., were being held there in which I had something to do. I shall speak to you about that.

Today I would speak to you about the charkha which was the subject of discussion there. What is the significance of the charkha? Why do I lay so much emphasis on it? It is true that when I first discovered the charkha, it was a common thing in the Punjab. But I did not know about it. And when women came and placed before me heaps and heaps of yarn it made me very happy. I took a charkha from there. The same thing I saw later in Gujarat. By Gujarat I do not mean the Gujarat of Punjab which is a district and a town. I am speaking of the Gujarat which is near Bombay. Vijapur is a town in the Gaekwar State. There was a woman worker there who used to

[1] Addressee's wife
[2] Addressee's daughter

travel a good deal. Her name was Gangabehn. She came to know of my craze for the charkha. She too went to Vijapur. In Gujarat women, who lived in purdah and included both Muslims and Rajputs, used to spin. But no one took notice of their spinning. Gangabehn told them that she would buy all the yarn they could spin. They then began to sell all their yarn to her. Women would line upto go to her, give their yarn and take slivers from her. I do not wish to go into the question of who made the slivers. They also got some money from her. Later, as we progressed, the amount of money the women received also increased. In this way lakhs of homes could get some money earned by the women. The charkha thus became very popular there and through this work of khadi the women were able to earn enough money for their food. Their demands were small. They did not ask for a daily wage of two rupees, or three rupees. They got two pice and they were content. When they got three or four they were more than satisfied. Still later the progress was much more.

Afterwards when I thought over it I realized that the charkha had tremendous potentiality. What is this power? What can the charkha achieve? The charkha represents the power of non-violence. If on the one side there is the armed might of the whole world and on the other the charkha plied by the chaste hands— not unworthy hands—of our women, the power of the charkha is greater. You have all had a glimpse of that power. I have had a little more of it. But no one amongst us has known the whole of it. People merely thought that the charkha was only for poor women. That it certainly is. But it is also a symbol of non-violence. If people knew this they would not burn the charkha.

Time was when the whole of India plied the charkha and it enjoyed pride of place. There were no mills then either in India or anywhere else in the world. Cotton textiles were sent to the outside world from India and there was a time when Dacca muslin known as *shabnam*[1] was very popular. It was greatly valued by people outside India. They appreciated its beauty. I do not wish to go into all that history, though it is quite interesting. Nevertheless at that time the charkha was a symbol of slavery, for women were then forced to give a certain quantity of yarn and this was done by order of the government. And the Government was not a Muslim government but a Hindu government. It is all described in the books written at the behest of the Hindu Government. Later on Bengal passed into Muslim

[1] Literally "dew"

hands, but this system goes back to much earlier times. The charkha then truly stood for slavery. Women were forced to spin; they had to supply fixed quantities of yarn and they could not even ask to be paid for it. The Government itself decided what little money was to be paid for their labour and when even that money was not paid the women could do nothing about it. The attitude then prevalent was that after all women were born to do such work. They should be thankful if they were paid just a little money for it. It is a tragic history the way women were exploited and I do not wish to go into it. The charkha which was then a symbol of slavery has been transformed into a symbol of our freedom, and that is what I have been shouting from the house-tops.

During the Khilafat days the Ali Brothers were quick to seize on the charkha. They said that we should now be able to gain a victory over England through the balls of yarn prepared by our women. All we had to do was to fling the balls at those who imported cloth from England to sell it here. This was in 1920. But the work of the charkha had been started perhaps in 1916. In 1919[1] I had toured the Punjab. You may ask me why, although we have gained freedom, this storm is raging in India. The reason for it is that in truth we have not embraced the charkha. It is only women who have done some work in this direction. They liked what I said because I am their friend and their servant. Some of them came out from their seclusion after I entered the field. Before that women would not attend meetings nor speak at meetings. So women were kind to me and they took up the charkha. But if they had taken up the charkha not out of kindness to me but in the knowledge that the charkha would give them strength and give India strength, we would not have been in the predicament we are in today. We have to develop in us the power that non-violence alone can give. For that we shall once again have to adopt the charkha. Today we have forgotten the charkha. We shall have to accept the charkha with all that it stands for. Only then can we sing the glory of the tri-colour. That is why we have the charkha in the middle of the tri-colour though of course now the figure has been reduced to a wheel and we find a different interpretation for it.[2] That interpretation

[1] Gandhiji had toured the Punjab in October-December 1919.

[2] Attributing great significance to the *Chakra,* Prof. Radha Kumud Mookerjee traced its origin to Lord Vishnu's *Sudarshan Chakra*—the Cosmic Circle, comprehending all that is animate or inanimate. The Buddha called it the *Dhamma-Chakka*—the Wheel of Righteousness—which was later adopted by Emperor Ashoka as the State symbol.

is not bad. The idea behind the three colours was that the Hindus, Muslims and others should work together and the idea of having the charkha on it was that such work should be pursued through the charkha. Today we have a larger army. We are trying to augment it further. Our expenditure on the army has increased enormously. What if the British are no longer here. It is a tragedy and a shame. For so long we fought through the charkha and the moment we have power in our hands we forget it. Today we look up to the army. It is because we have forgotten the charkha that we indulge in mutual fighting. Our mistake was to imagine that the charkha was a thing only for women.

When I told the Sikhs and Muslims of the Punjab to ply the charkha they were shocked. Could the charkha be for men? Men had swords in their hands. I merely laughed. Later a few Sikhs and Muslims accepted my advice and began to spin quite well. But still I must say that the charkha has not made for itself a home in the Punjab. But I do not want them to take up the charkha out of kindness to me. They may well burn the charkha and give up wearing khadi. The charkha being a symbol of non-violence and a repository of great power, it is an emblem of courage. Let us embrace that ahimsa with deliberation and with all our heart and intellect. Then no one can take it away from us. If the ten crore adults in our country take to spinning there can never be a famine of cloth in India. We produce a great quantity of cotton and we can earn crores of rupees. The important thing is that no military force can stand up to the power created by crores of people working together. It is my fault, not that of ahimsa, if I cannot prove that. That is because I am lacking in *tapashcharya*. But you cannot say that ahimsa does not have the power. That power can find the fullest expression through the charkha. If the millions do not ply the charkha, the loss is obvious. only a few lakhs of people can be employed by the mills. What occupation shall we provide for the hundreds of millions? This is what you have to consider. This is a supreme economic as well as moral question.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan—II* pp. 200-2

38. REPLY TO RICHARD B. GREGG

A correspondent writes[1]:

I wonder if the correspondent has fully grasped the deeper meaning of Mr. Gregg's presentation. The latter will answer if he chooses.

Harijan, 14-12-1947

39. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
December 14, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

As I was coming to the prayer, I received a note saying that a Muslim friend of the writer had been forced to go away to Pakistan. The friend had left with the writer of the note some gold and silver bought with the earnings of his own labour. He wants to know how it is to be sent to its owner in Pakistan, who however has not given his name and address in Pakistan. If he furnishes the particulars I shall pass on the gold and silver to the Government to be sent to the person concerned. Till he is traced the property can remain with the Government. It is gratifying to know that notwithstanding all that has happened there are still among us Hindus and Muslims between whom fraternal feelings continue to exist and who do not covet what belongs to their friends of the other community. If everyone was like this the misfortune that has befallen us would soon be overcome.

I told you I would be reporting to you briefly whatever took place at the meetings of various Sanghs being held in the Harijan Colony. Yesterday I told you about the Charkha Sangh and its activities of spinning and weaving. I have to tell you now about village industries and Nayee Talim. I shall deal with Nayee Talim today.

Nayee Talim is not a thing with which everyone is acquainted, though the work has been going on now for seven or eight years.

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had rejected the explanation suggested by Richard B. Gregg, for the recent violence in India. *Vide* "A Psychological Explanation", 11-11-1947.

Nayee Talim consists in imparting all instructions through some handicrafts. The idea in a way has much deeper roots. The argument is that no education is true education unless it is founded in truth and non-violence. A man may have acquired all the learning, understood the essence of all the scriptures, may have studied Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian, but, as the Sanskrit saying[1] goes, unless he has acquired true wisdom all his education has been in vain. By true wisdom is meant that which leads us to *mukti*. There are of course various kinds of *mukti*. There is release from the bondage of action, release from the clutches of a tyrant, release of a girl from the hands of a maniac, and liberation of the country from foreign yoke. The *makti* meant here is the liberation from all the ills of the world. Education that is not rooted in truth and non-violence is no education in the proper sense of the word. There are so many instances of people who were highly learned and yet were satanic in their pursuits. One famous instance is that of Ravana. Ravana possessed great learning and his penance too was great. And yet because his pursuits were demoniac he perished, whereas Rama lives even today. We regard Rama as a manifestation of the Supreme Lord. So in order to acquire true wealth of learning we must cultivate truth and non-violence. The discussion at the meeting centred round the question of the method of giving such education. It could not obviously be imparted through books. Then what should be done? Millions of people in the country pursue some handicraft. They cannot all be rich. Even in America everyone is not rich. True, the poverty there is of a different order but the hardships attendant on poverty are similar. In the same way various other ills widespread in India also exist there. With all their wealth and all their learning they have not been able to overcome these. I thought that if the millions were to be given education it could be done only through handicraft. If among a population of hundreds of millions a lakh or two have secured what now passes for education, what good can it do? And if everyone tried to have that education we would go bankrupt. The real system of education is one where the children of rich and poor, of king and subject, receive education through crafts. And this cannot be done unless we adhere to truth and non-violence. It becomes a question of religion here—not religion in a sectarian sense but religion in a universal sense. Such religion is eternal. It cannot change. It is for all, as much for Hindus as for Muslims. One cannot

[1] सा विद्या या विमुक्तये

say that Hindus should speak the truth and Muslims should tell lies. It is in the interest of all to speak the truth. It is no one's religious duty to commit violence. If someone asks me whether Sikhs and Muslims may not receive Nayee Talim I shall say that if Sikhs and Muslims both declare that they are votaries of violence then certainly Nayee Talim would not be for them. Nayee Talim is not the special province of any one sect. I have studied all religions and assimilated their essence. Muslims and Sikhs both come and sit beside me. They advocate violence only where all other methods fail. But when we initiate a child into education we should begin by teaching him how to die rather than kill. We therefore decided that if we had to conduct Nayee Talim it had to be in this way. Those carrying it on must stand by truth and non-violence. Only then can it succeed. But I do not know if it is so now. I cannot read anyone's heart. I am also not a prophet. The reins of Nayee Talim are not in my hands. All I can do is to offer advice when asked. True, I conceived the idea. But the organization itself was formed by the Congress. Zakir Husain is its President. If he does not hold by truth and non-violence he should resign. But I have never known him to be guilty of falsehood or violence. He is associated with me only because he does not believe in violence. The Secretaries of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh are Aryanayakum and his wife. They too are votaries of truth and non-violence. I am busy otherwise and they have to run the scheme. They are the moving spirit behind Nayee Talim. It is not even Zakir Saheb. He is only the President. If Aryanayakum and Asha Devi abandoned it the scheme would collapse. It is not an organization which can run on its own. Take the Congress for instance. I am of course out of it. But even if Jawaharlal, the Sardar and Rajendra Babu go out of it the Congress will go on. Or take the Charkha Sangh. I am its President. If I leave it, its work will go on, for it is an organization that has existed for many years. But that is not so with Nayee Talim. It has yet to establish itself well. It will be well established when those running it have the qualities of the *sthitaprajna* described in the *Gita*[1]. We must find an activity in which everyone can participate. I want to tell you that handicrafts alone provide such activity.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 202-4

[1] II. 55-72

40. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

December 15,1947

CHI. VALJI,

I got the letter written on the reverse side yesterday. I am sending the article on railways[1] after revising it.

I feel a trace of violence in what you have suggested. Read what St. Paul says about charity[2]. I am doing that, too, in my own way. Though I am a friend of the Ministers, I am not a Minister. People outside the Government cannot understand their difficulties. And I, too, am an outsider. Need I say more to a wise man?

I am sending Thadani's to the man himself. I have still not received the volumes of *Prempanth*[3]. But I think they will arrive in due course. I will not write specially to acknowledge their receipt.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 7507. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

41. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[4]

NEW DELHI,

December 15, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I was pained to read in the papers that the refugees have forcibly occupied the buildings of six municipal schools and have so far resisted all attempts of the New Delhi Municipal Committee to make them vacate the buildings. The Municipality, one understands, is now seeking police help in the matter.

This episode is an instance of shameless rowdyism. In the capital city of India such happenings are a cause for great shame. I hope those responsible for this will repent and leave the school premises. If

[1] The article was published under the title "Democratize Our Railways" in *Harijan*, 21-12-1947.

[2] I Corinthians, ch. 13

[3] Ten volumes of Gandhiji's writings in Gujarati edited by the addressee. For Gandhiji's foreword to it, *vide* "Foreword", before 29-7-1946.

[4] As Gandhiji was observing silence, his written speech was read out at the meeting.

they do not, I hope their friends will try to make them see reason and the authorities will not be forced to carry out its threat. It is a general complaint against the refugees that in spite of all their tribulations they have not become sober, responsible and industrious citizens. Let us hope that the refugees in general and those who have forcibly occupied schools will repent and prove that the complaint is not justified.

On Saturday[1] I referred to the rowdyism in Calcutta. Those indulging in rowdyism there were not refugees. The incident had a different background too. It is the duty of all leading men, whatever their persuasion or party, to safeguard the dignity of India. India's dignity cannot be saved if misgovernment and corruption flourish. I mention corruption because misgovernment and corruption always go together. I have it from very trustworthy sources that corruption is increasing in the country. Is everyone then going to think only of himself, not at all of India?

A correspondent writes:

> I have just been listening to your prayer speech of yesterday on the radio. You say some Muslims from U. P. who have been to Lahore, have assured you on behalf of the Pakistan Government that non-Muslims, and in particular Hindus, can go back there and resume their businesses. In the first place to invite only the Hindus and not the Sikhs shows cunning and is intended to create a breach between Hindus and Sikhs. Such assurances are treacherous. They are a mockery. only persons like you can be taken in by such talk from the Muslims. I send you a cutting from *The Hindustan Times* of December 11. It will tell you something about the sincerity and truthfulness of the Pakistan Government. Will you still say that the Muslims who come to you are honest people? All they are concerned about is to make you believe that the Pakistan Government is just to the minorities and all is well in that country, although facts speak otherwise. If those Muslim gentlemen come to you again, please show them the cutting. I am sure you will not have forgotten what befell the Hindus and Sikhs who had gone to Lahore on November 20 last to take out their valuables from the bank. The armed units escorting them were attacked in the presence of responsible Government officers of Pakistan who did nothing to stop the attackers.

The cutting says:

> According to a report recently published in the *Civil and Military*

[1] December 12

Gazette of Lahore, non-Muslim traders and shopkeepers who had left Pakistan during the riots are coming back in the hope of resuming their trades, after an interval of months. But before they are given back the possession of their shops they are made to sign such impossible conditions that many had to go back disappointed. The Rehabilitation Commissioner has laid down the following conditions for letting people reopen their shops:

1. The proprietor or owner will keep a full account of sales.
2. He will not transfer cash or commodities from one place to another without prior permission of the Government.
3. He will give an undertaking to keep his shop as a going concern.
4. He will deposit in a bank the daily proceeds from sales.
5. He will live permanently in Lahore.

No conditions are laid down for the Muslims. Then why these conditions for the Hindus? The Hindus say they cannot abide by the conditions. So they go back disappointed.

I have already spoken of the possibility of disappointment and even if the report is accurate it does not necessarily follow that what the Muslim friends told me is false. The persons concerned have not only to think of their own position but they have to think of India, whose representatives they are, and of Pakistan which has given them the assurances. I may say that the Muslim friends concerned keep in touch with me. They came to see me today too. But I was observing silence and writing my prayer message and so could not see them. They sent me word that they were not sitting idle but working for their mission. My advice to the correspondent is not to be so full of distrust and so sensitive. He will lose nothing by trusting. Distrust eats up a man. He should behave with discretion. For myself I can only say that I do not regret what I have done. All my life I have trusted in people with my eyes open. I shall continue to trust the Muslim friends till it is proved that they cannot be trusted. Trust begets trust. It gives one the strength to face treachery. If refugees from both sides are to go back to their homes the way for it is the way I have adopted and am following. The correspondent's suspicion that it is a trick to create a split between the Hindus and the Sikhs is wrong. I had even mentioned to the Muslim friends the possibility of their assurance being given such prejudicial construction. They denied vehemently that there was any trickery in it. I see nothing wrong in a path being paved for those wishing to return. It cannot be denied that there is more poison in Pakistan for Sikhs than for Hindus but the Hindus and

Sikhs have to swim or, sink together. They should harbour no malice. Intriguers cannot have sincere amity among themselves.

A correspondent from East Pakistan says:

> Now that India has been partitioned how can you call yourself a citizen of united India? Now what belongs to one Dominion cannot belong to the other.

Whatever the legal pundits may say they cannot rule the hearts of men. Who can prevent the correspondent from saying that he is a citizen of the world? Legally that is not the case and some countries have laws that would prevent him from entering those countries. But if one has not been reduced to an automation, as some of us have not been, what does it matter to one what one's legal status is? So long as we are morally on the right path we do not have to worry. What we have to take care of is that we do not nurse enmity towards anyone or any country. For instance no one who harbours enmity towards Muslims or Pakistan can claim to be a citizen of both Pakistan and India. If such feeling of enmity spreads it will end up in a war breaking out between the two countries. Every country will treat as traitors those of its citizens who harbour malice towards it and help a foreign country. Loyalty is indivisible.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 204-8

42. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

December 16, 1947

CHI. JIVANJI,

I am sending a lot this time. The notes will be sent by Kalyanam or Sushila. The items contain three or four varieties of model Hindustani, including some articles[1] by Sundarlal. If all of them cannot be included this time, you may include as many as possible. Do you think the compositors there will be able to decipher the handwriting? If you think any portion requires to be revised here, let me know. Dev's article[2] is a long one. You may break it up into two or

[1] The articles entitled "Hindi ya Hindustani", "Somnathka Mandir" and "Notes" appeared in *Harijan Sevak,* 21-12-1947 and 28-12-1947.

[2] Which appeared in *Harijan Sevak,* 4-1-1948 and 11-1-1948 under the title "Prayashchittaki Yatra"

three instalments. Its English translation[1] also is there. It also may be broken up into the same number of instalments.

Please don't think that I shall be able to repeat this performance every time.

Pyarelal arrived here yesterday. He also will write something now.

Let me know if there is any effect on circulation.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original. C. W. 6963. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

43. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

December 16, 1947

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. Bari[2] has written to you. How is it his letter has not reached you? He does not wish you to come here. Go to Borkamta. Your field of work is there. I am sending a telegram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 591

44. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
December [*16*][3]*, 1947*

AMTULSALAAM
GANDHI CAMP
RAMGANJ
NOAKHALI

BAPU

YOU CAN GO BORKAMTA.

From a photostat: G. N. 592

[1] Which appeared in *Harijan*, 4-1-1948 and 11-1-1948, under the title "The Pilgrimage of Penance"

[2] NMBari Khan, addressee's brother

[3] MThe date has been inferred from the letter to the addressee dated December 16, 1947; *vide* the preceding item.

45. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
December 16, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I am told— and to some extent it is true—that controls on certain articles of food and clothing have been removed and will be removed from more articles. There is now no doubt that controls are on the way out and Brijkishan has told me of its very first consequence. *Gur*, which used to be sold at Re. 1 a seer is now available at 8 [annas] a seer. This is some achievement. Of course the price should be still lower. When I was young no one could have dreamt that *gur* would ever become so dear. A seer of it could be had for one anna or less. We should therefore hope that the price of this commodity will further fall. No doubt we cannot have it free of cost. Similarly, sugar has come down from Rs. 32 to Rs. 20 a maund. *Moong*[1], *urad*[2] and *arhar*[3] are now sold at 1_ seers for a rupee. The same is true of *gram*. *Gram*, in my opinion, is included in the pulses, but in this region it has various special uses and so it is kept separate. It used to sell at Rs. 24 a maund. Now the price is Rs. 18. The black-market price of wheat used to be Rs. 34 a maund. It is now Rs. 24. The same goes for other articles. People used to frighten me that I did not know how markets were operated, how prices rose and fell, that I did not know economics, that I was saying what I did because I was a mahatma and did not have to suffer the consequences of decontrol; it was the poor who would have to suffer. But from the first results of decontrol I see that the people will live rather than die through the measure. I shall therefore say that control on maize, barley and millet should also be lifted. Because those who are used to millet will continue to eat millet. They will not be able to digest wheat. Similarly there are many whose staple diet is maize. I thus see no reason why control on these articles should continue. Dr. Rajendra Prasad too had promised that gradually all controls would be lifted. We have seen the desirable consequences of some controls being lifted. Now take match-boxes. One has to pay an exorbitant price for a box of matches in the black-market, which is really the open market. There is no doubt that if it is decontrolled it will have a very good

[1] Varieties of pulses
[2] *ibid*

effect. Match-boxes never used to be so costly. In my time it cost almost nothing. Today a box of matches is sold, maybe, for one anna. Then one got a whole dozen for that price. Things were never so costly as they are now. I am happy when people's incomes rise but the rise in prices always distresses me. If the prices rise the excess should go to the toiler, but even then prices cannot rise so steeply. This happens when traders turn wicked and greedy and want to pocket as much profit as they can. We have got our independence and we have been through a great calamity also, but still we have not learnt purity of conduct. If our traders content themselves with what is a just profit, I have not the least fear that decontrol will lead to a rise in prices. Even those who have such a fear attribute it to the fact that we are wicked and dishonest. Traders care only for their profits and the farmers and other producers too are only concerned with filling their own bellies and nobody bothers about the consumers. If that is so, how can one say that there is democracy in India? How can such things be permitted in a democracy? In a democracy it is incumbent on the Government to trust the people. It must clearly say that it will do as the people desire but that if what they desire brings them hardships it cannot be held responsible. True, we have a Civil Service, but all of us who are here should consider ourselves soldiers and serve the people. Today malpractices flourish. I am continuously receiving telegrams, etc., from everywhere. I understand there are some fishy practices going on in Bombay though I do not know exactly what. This should stop. But the people should congratulate the Government for the good work that has so far been done. It also encourages it. So much for the lifting of controls.

There is then the matter of the [Indian] Civil Service. I am receiving letters every day complaining of the expenditure still being incurred on the Civil Service. How can all I. C. S. men be removed all at once? And if they were, how would the work go on? Some have already gone and some others, who are soon to go, are having to do much hard work. The I. C. S. is in the charge of the Sardar. He praises that cadre very highly. Although they are few in number the I. C. S. men deserve to be complimented for the work they do. They no doubt receive high salaries. Still, it is we who constitute the real Civil Service. Let the Government accept us as the Civil Servants and, in order to enforce discipline, punish us as it does the Civil Servants. Let it summon any one of us and say he has to do such and such work. Is not there a law to punish those guilty of misconduct? If there is none, I shall say they should frame one. They should place on the whole

people the responsibility they have placed on the Civil Service. It is after all a people's government.

Why do I have to say this? Because there has been a fresh development; the Congress has said that there should be a Parliamentary Secretary attached to each Minister, and these Parliamentary Secretaries should be not from among the I. C. S. officers but from the ranks of the Congress or from among those supporting the Congress. Of course they will not work gratis. They will have to be paid salaries. If today we did not control the Government with its immense financial resources, how could we have paid these salaries? But since we control the Government we must pay one a salary of Rs. 1,500 or Rs. 2,000, give him a house and other benefits, and call him a Parliamentary Secretary. I must say it pains me—be it a Parliamentary Secretary attached to the Prime Minister or to the Home Minister or any other Minister. Even if the Parliament —or rather the Congress Party—insists on creating such a post, does one have to work only for a salary? In that case India will become a worthless country. Was our strength born only today? Let us first produce some results. Let us sit down and assess how much we have produced in excess of what was produced till August 14. Have we produced more grain, more cloth, more industrial goods? When people become industrious, earn money and become prosperous so that they can be generous in giving, then we can say that lustre has been added to India's name and its worth has gone up. But today our per capita income is only Rs. 70. This is nothing. When this has doubled or risen even further and the rural incomes have also risen you can then ask the Government to pay more. But if our production does not increase and we go on increasing our expenditure, where shall we be? Take for instance a shop—and India is only a large shop—whose proprietor seeks from the manager an account of the sales every evening. If he is told the sale today has been worth Rs. 1,000 while yesterday it was worth only Rs. 500 he is pleased. But when he is told that the expenditure has been of the order of Rs. 1,500, he will fly into a rage and start shouting at the manager. Shouting and abusing is bad no doubt and so is getting angry, but his point is well taken. If the income is Rs. 1,000 and the expenditure Rs. 1,500, where is he to find the Rs. 500 to balance the books? Today we have the money, so we go on a spree. Tomorrow it will be gone. It therefore pains me when we throw money away so recklessly. This will do for today.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 208-13

46. LETTER TO KIRAN SHANKAR

NEW DELHI,
December 17, 1947

DEAR KIRAN SHANKAR,

Your letter. I had some talk with Satin Babu but what I said I do not recollect. Anyone who quotes me should produce my written word. I could have only discussed general principles.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

47. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI[1]

December 17, 1947

CHI. VALJI,

I see no contradiction between the two replies. The only difference is that Tha. has enumerated more virtues.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 7508. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

48. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 17, 1947

CHI. NARANDAS,

You have given me quite a vivid description. We are living in critical times. Be vigilant. Khadi is not merely khadi, but includes

[1] On top of the letter Gandhiji has made the following note in English:
Tagore's equations:

Rama= ideal son
= ideal brother
= ideal husband
= ideal ruler

Bharat } = ideal brother
Lakshman

Sita = ideal wife

many other things. Without these other things, khadi is no more than a peasant's *pankoru*[1].

They say you have grown old. Could it be true?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, Part II, p. 320. Also C. W. 8649. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

49. LETTER TO JAMNA GANDHI

December 17, 1947

CHI. JAMNA,

I have your letter. Kanu and Abha can go there when they want. I think they are no more in a position to serve their own parents exclusively. Who can ride two horses at a time? The best course is to serve as well as you can and repeat the name of Rama, the dispeller of distress, whether or not you are in distress, and live as He keeps you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

50. LETTER TO SHANKARLAL

NEW DELHI,
December 17, 1947

CHI. SHANKARLAL,

I got two letters from you. Nothing after that. I can understand that many friends come to you. But those whose presence is not needed there should be asked to go back to their business. Keep them all well informed. This will stop the crowding around you, and allow the patients as well as their attendants to have some peace. It will also save money and time. Narahari will recover by and by. But he will have to have prolonged rest. Did the hailstorm cause heavy damage?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] A rich garment; literally, a silk sari, worn at a wedding

51. A LETTER

December 17, 1947

I am passing through a difficult time. I have not a moment to spare. I am convinced that this communal conflict is not of the common people's making. A handful of persons are behind it. Whose fault is it if I do not see amity even between these two. . . .?[1] If the ocean itself catches fire, who can put it out? Falsehood has spread so much that one cannot say where it will end.

If in that *yajna,* our struggle for freedom, we had been wholly negligent in preserving truth it is doubtful that we could have attained even this so-called swarajya. Truth is my only God. Truth alone to me is prayer, penance and the rest. I am a Hindu. I know that if the world were to adopt my Hinduism mankind would be free from all the worldly ills and man would live in a truly human manner. All this that I have dictated for you has just occurred to me after the prayer.

My health is all right. It is no small mercy of God that even under such heavy burden of work the body continues to be fit.

You would all be well. Chi. Manu will write to you the rest.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, pp. 112-3

[1] Omission as in the source

52. MESSAGE TO U. P. STUDENTS

December 17, 1947

I have your letter and invitation. I love being among students because I consider myself a student. But at present I am trapped here. Still, this too is a big school. I am being schooled here and am staying here for my examination. Whether I pass or not is in the hands of God. Both are the same to me. You should take your examination in the same spirit. I do not mean that you should only read books for your examination. I can say from experience that so long as our schools do not impart lessons in moral uplift there can be no awakening amongst us. Today the atmosphere in colleges and schools is not pure. First of all it should be purified. Today, though the students read so many books and spend so much money they are not free from anxiety, because they are not self-reliant. I want to change this pitiable condition and I want the students' help in this. We shall remain crippled as long as we do not conduct our universities through crafts.

Now swarajya has come. Let us all be brothers and sisters. Let no one be high and no one low. Let there be no Hindus, no Parsis, no Christians and no Jews. We should realize that we are only Indians, and that religion is a private matter.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, PP. 113-4

53. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
December 17, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

A friend who is living in Hoshiarpur, maybe he belongs there, has asked me a number of questions. He has given his name, but I do not wish to disclose it. I shall leave his questions too. He says before the partition the Punjab was one, so that if someone had his business in one part he had his house and property in another. This friend had

his business in West Punjab, while his house and property were in East Punjab. He had to flee West Punjab along with thousands of others. He thought since he had his property in East Punjab he would be able to carry on his business there. But he found on his arrival there that his house had been occupied by a Government official. He was given only two rooms, the rest being kept by the official. It would appear that it is a large house. He asks if he is not entitled to get back his house. If he does not get it back, will the Government help him or must he then go to court? In my opinion he should be given back the house. Why should litigation be forced on him? If the occupant is a Government official, it is all the more necessary for the house to be returned to its owner.

As I had occasion to mention earlier, refugees tend to occupy any vacant premises anywhere, even breaking locks where they happen to be locked. So long as someone lives as a tenant in a house and pays rent it is all right. But how can he continue to live there when the owner of the house returns to the house? He can only stay there if he arrives at some understanding with the owner, but it cannot be that he should retain the major portion of the house and the owner should become a guest in his own house. But the refugees are not in the position of tenants. All that they can say for themselves is that they have been forced out of their houses. Does it give them the right to occupy any property? If such property happens to be the house of a Muslim, then all is over. Refugees think it is theirs by right. But we can do no good either to ourselves or to India in this way. Has anyone ever done any good to himself by theft or plunder or arson? If this sort of thing goes on here, it must happen in Pakistan, too, and it will become impossible for anyone except Muslims to live in that country. I receive communications every day warning me against being taken in by sweet talk and telling me that no one except Muslims has any place in Pakistan. But if only Muslims are left in Pakistan in the end, they will then quarrel among themselves. Whether this sort of thing goes on in Pakistan or India, it is not good. It is worse in fact if it happens in India, for we never said that India belonged to Hindus alone or that only one community could live here. Everyone who is born in India and who considers himself an Indian has a right to stay in India. Pakistan however was conceived as a homeland of Muslims. But when Pakistan became a reality on August 14 they said everyone would be able to live in Pakistan. This made me happy. What irks me is that what is said is often not implemented. And if the Hindus and

Sikhs here do the same I see in it only the ruin of the two communities and of the world. No good can ever come of it.

A friend from Lahore says he had to leave his house and property against his wishes. He was forced to flee West Punjab and come here. When I advised the refugees to go back he went back. He found that his house and land were no longer his. He was given long lectures but he was not given back his property. How then could I say that the refugees should go back?

I have dealt with this question before but since he has raised it I shall say something again. I have very clearly said that the refugees should go back only when the circumstances have become more propitious. Those who would like to return, should keep themselves in readiness. First the Muslim friends who have taken the initiative in this respect have to go there. So far it is only an idea but it cannot remain only an idea indefinitely. They spoke in the name of the Pakistan Government. Or they will have to admit in the end that they have failed and that they were wrong in representing the Pakistan Government as desiring the Hindus to go back. The correspondent says that declarations are one thing and practice quite another and he wants to know whether he should go back. He has every right to ask. I must clearly say that at the moment there is no question of anyone going back. There are many people wanting to go back. I tell them that when the time comes for them to go back I shall let them know the date. I shall not ask anyone to go now. No one can really think of this at such an early stage, but it is very satisfying when these Muslim friends give this assurance. If they succeed I am sure that the present poison in the atmosphere will soon disappear. What needs to be done is to ensure that it will. For the present, however, the correspondent and others like him should keep calm. When the time comes I shall let them know. After all no one wants to go to Pakistan secretly. What I hope is that the Pakistan Government will arrange for a train which can take 5,000 people. They will go willingly and as a matter of right. They will go because they will have been invited.

There is yet another matter I must speak about and that is East Africa. You may perhaps not know that Nairobi is the most salubrious part of East Africa. It is like Simla in India. We in India have four or five months that are quite good and then we have months of severe heat, especially severe in the plains. People then want cool air and go to Simla or Darjeeling for it. India is a big country. Not so East

Africa. It was the Sikhs who built Nairobi. Sikhs are very sturdy and industrious people. With great labour they built a railway in Nairobi. And yet they are debarred from Nairobi. They may go there as labourers but not as settlers and traders. So much about Nairobi. But the thing does not stop there. Once the first step is wrong, you go wrong all the way. So now they propose to enact a Bill against Indian immigration into East Africa, very much on the lines of South Africa. Attempts are being made to take away such rights as the Indians have so far enjoyed. The Bill has not yet been passed but it has been introduced in the Legislative Assembly. The Indians there have hopes from us. They have sent a communication to Pandit Nehru, who is also our Foreign Minister in addition to being our Prime Minister. They have sent him a telegram and forwarded a copy to me. They want me to say something on the matter. Since I have been in Africa they have a claim on me. I therefore take this opportunity to raise my voice. It will no doubt reach there. India is now a free country. Will free India be treated thus? Mombasa and East Africa are British territories. Will the Indians be subjected to maltreatment in a British territory? You must know that there are a large number of Indian traders there— many of them Khoja and other Muslims. There are also many Hindus. They are from all parts of India. They have also earned a lot of money through their trade with the Negroes there. They have been there since long before the British entered the area. Even Europeans had not made their entry there and if they had they were not many in number. Indians have built large mansions there. Even ships then belonged to us. Later, when our position deteriorated, we lost the ships too.

Afterwards the British and other Europeans followed. It is a long story into which I need not go. Indians lived in peace with the Negroes and did business with them. I shall not say they were always honest but certainly they did not take anything from anyone forcibly. There are no communal differences between Hindus and Muslims there. They are living in amity and harmony. They want this anti-Indian Bill to be withdrawn. It must be withdrawn. India is a free country and I am sure Jawaharlal will do what needs to be done in this regard.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 213-8

54. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

December 18, 1947

I do feel angry but only with myself. Why should I be angry with you? Even if a woman like you hesitates to accept her mistakes, I do not see that you are at fault; the fault really is mine. For you have been brought up under my care. The atmosphere there[1] perhaps was not pure and so you did not inculcate all the virtues that make for sound character. And it was my responsibility to see that the atmosphere there was pure. I did not see to it. Hence I cannot disown my responsibility. In the same way I assumed that the Satyagraha struggles were conducted solely on the basis of truth and non-violence. Today God has made me realize that that was not so. Hence I say that we make frantic efforts just to keep ourselves alive and therefore we cannot see our mistakes. Our ahimsa is not ahimsa. It has been used as a weapon of the weak. It is *himsa* that passes by the name of ahimsa. That is why today rivers of blood are flowing everywhere. What the consequences may be is anybody's guess. But seeing all this, people like you should take pity on an old man like me and pray to God to take me away. I know that today I irritate everyone. How can I believe that I alone am right and all others are wrong? What irks me is that people deceive me. They should tell me frankly that I have become old, that I am no longer of any use and that I should not be in their way. If they thus openly repudiate me I shall not be pained in the least. And I shall also then cultivate the indomitable strength needed to serve *Daridranarayana*[2]. I have only unburdened my heart to you. If possible let other girls read this. Your health will be all right. . . .[3]'s going to America is in the offing. I am not very keen about it. So I do not have full information as to what is being done in that regard.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, pp. 123-4

[1] In the Ashram
[2] God in the form of the poor
[3] Omission as in the source

55. LETTER TO A MUSLIM

December 18, 1947

You of course come to see me every day. For a long time now I have been feeling that nationalist Muslims are perhaps a prey to fear. They come to me every day and talk a good deal but the impression I get is that they exaggerate somewhat. If we indulge in exaggeration it will do no good to anyone— be he Hindu or Muslim. If we think that we alone are right and suppress others in the belief that we are great and that therefore there is no harm in coercing others, we shall fall; we shall be deceiving ourselves. But if we are truthful we shall show fearlessness, discretion and earnestness in our conduct. If we are in error we should duly admit it. We shall not fall thereby, we shall only rise higher.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, pp. 122-3

56.SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
December 18, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

A correspondent writes to ask why I object to English being used, but not to Urdu. The Muslims and the English are the same to us since we are friends of all. The correspondent's complaint arises out of ignorance. Not only do I not object to Urdu being used, I am its advocate. It is a provincial language like Punjabi, Marathi, Gujarati, Bengali and Oriya. There are as many languages as there are provinces in India. To be sure there are many more languages in India but scholars have selected 14 or 15 which have well-developed literatures and which are more developed than the rest. But all these 14 or 15 languages cannot be used in all the provinces. The question also is what language should serve as a link language between the provinces. Ever since I returned from South Africa I have been insisting that only a language which the largest number of Hindus and Muslims speak can be our national language. This can only be Hindustani written in the Devanagari or the Persian script. English has no place in India. The British ruled over India and so English became important. It is a foreign language, not an Indian language. Therefore

I say, not reluctantly but proudly, that Urdu is an Indian language formed in India. We are all devotees of Tulsidas. You will be surprised to know that he has used any number of words of Arabic or Persian origin in his *Ramayana*. He just picked up words spoken in the streets and used them because Tulsidas was writing for you and me. He was not writing for the few speaking Sanskrit. The language of Tulsidas therefore is our language.

Lala Lajpatrai[1] was known as the Lion of the Punjab. He is now no more. He was a friend of mine and occasionally I jokingly used to ask him when he would learn to speak in Hindi. He said that would never be. You must know that he was an Arya Samajist[2] and performed *havan* and other rituals. As I used to stay with him I observed all this. In these rituals Sanskrit alone is used and he was able to pick a few words here and there in Devanagari. But his mother tongue was Urdu. He was a great Urdu scholar, could write fluently in Urdu and could also deliver long orations in that language. He could also deliver long orations in English but he could never understand Sanskritized Hindi. I could make myself understood by him only when I used selected Arabic and Persian words. How then can the correspondent object to my not objecting to Urdu? I think no one should object to Urdu. English I certainly object to. I have been twice President of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan[3] and I said the same thing there and no one opposed it. They in fact applauded me. I am the same man. How then can anyone suggest that I love Hindi less and am therefore less of an Indian? In my view he who objects to Urdu is to that extent less of an Indian.

Today we find ourselves in a mess and have created poison for ourselves. This is what happened in Ajmer. If you want to safeguard Hinduism you cannot do so by treating as enemies the Muslims who have stayed on in India. My days in this world are numbered. Soon I shall be gone. You will then realize that what I said was right. The same rule applies to Muslims. Islam will be dead if Muslims can tolerate only Muslims. The same goes for Christians and Christianity.

[1] (1865-1928); nationalist leader from the Punjab, educationist and journalist; organized a massive agrarian movement in the Punjab in 1907, and was deported to Burma; President of the Indian National Congress, 1920; died of injuries sustained during demonstration against Simon Commission

[2] A member of the Arya Samaj, a reformist sect of Hinduism, founded by Dayanand Saraswati

[3] In Mareh 1918 and April 1935

All the religions of the world are good, for they teach righteousness and friendship. Those that teach enmity between men, I do not consider religions.

Even during the British rule I had said that English could not be the language of India. I love the English language. I can read and write it. Everyone knows that I am not an enemy either of the English or their language. But everything has its place. English is an international language. If we want to deal with the world outside India, we can do so only through English. English is a universal language. Hindustani has not yet acquired that universality. It is a matter of sorrow that while we have freed ourselves of English rule, we have not been able to free ourselves of the impact of English culture and the English language.

Hindustani is the language that has been formed through the blending of Hindi and Urdu like the confluence of the two rivers Ganga and Jamuna at Prayag. They share the same grammar which is the grammar of Hindustani. It has words from Sanskrit, Persian, English and various other languages. The word 'court' is as much a foreign word as 'kachehari' and there is no reason to reject the first and keep the latter. Similarly there are words like 'bicycle' and 'rail'. By what name would you like to call a rail? The fact is that so many English words have got into our speech and we do not despise them. But if the correspondent had written to me in English, I would have thrown away the letter knowing that he did know Hindustani. Similarly if I were to send him any letter written in English he would have the right to throw it away. The matter is really quite simple but we have forgotten what is right and what is wrong. And a kind of perversity has come to lodge in us. May God protect us.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Prasachan*—II, pp. 218-22

57. LETTER TO REV. CARDES

[*December 19, 1947*][1]

MY DEAR CARDES,

Your letter. I am so glad you are there at last and in the room that was allotted to me. Make yourself at home and take up the work

[1] The letter is placed in the source among those of this date.

that suits you most.

I had thought you were passing through Delhi. Did you not? Do write to me fully.

Love.

BAPU

REV. CARDES
SEVAGRAM[1]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

58. LETTER TO NAWAB OF BHOPAL

NEW DELHI,
December 19, 1947

DEAR NAWAB SAHEB,

Your kind wire reached me yesterday. I know the patients[2] are in safe hands. Chandrani is a promising servant of humanity. I wonder who the assailants were. An inmate of the Ashram is going to see the patients and bringing this note to you. A note is going to Shwaib[3] too.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

59. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

December 19, 1947

CHI. CHAND,

What a girl you are! People went thrice to the railway station to receive you but you did not arrive. At last a dining-car attendant mentioned that two women had come for meals and that even the bill was unpaid; but no one knew what happened after that. My

[1] The address is in Devanagari script.

[2] Chandrani and her mother, who were assailed by some miscreants near Bhopal Station. Chandrani was thrown out of the train.

[3] Shwaib Qureshi

apprehension proved right.[1] I learnt about it from the newspapers yesterday. Now I have all the details. Nawab Saheb has wired that you and your mother are out of danger. It's all God's grace. I hope you are both cheerful. You both are coming here soon, are you not? Take as much rest as the doctors advise. How were you attacked, who were the assailants? This is being brought to you by Om Prakash. Tell him everything if you cannot yourself write. Send him back soon. Your brother is ready to come. Would you like him to come? Whatever you say will be done.

Pyarelal is here.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

60. LETTER TO CAHIMANLAL N. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
December 19, 1947

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have had a full discussion with Aryanayakum. I suggested to him that although you were the lawful manager he should regard himself as the *de facto* manager and act accordingly. It means no one should lay claim to that part of the Ashram which he requires for the Talimi Sangh. If he asks all the inmates of the Ashram to leave, no one should stay on. He does believe that there is no difference between the inmates of the Ashram and the members of the Talimi Sangh or between the Ashram and the Talimi Sangh. He cannot do any good to the Talimi Sangh at the cost of that of the Ashram. I accept this fact in whatever I do, so should all of us. Moreover, he says that neither Jaju nor Krishnadas has the slightest misunderstanding about or mistrust of him, which they earlier had. I asked him to convey all this to you. I also asked him to write you a letter to this effect. He said that there was no need for a letter. Tell me if you wish to have any change in this. Tell me also if there has been any change.

[1] When the addressee and her mother failed to arrive at Delhi as scheduled on the 17th, Gandhiji had jocularly remarked: "Someone might have thrown Chand out mistaking her to be a Punjabi."

You are likely to have seen something about Chand in the newspapers. It's a sad story. I cannot dictate any more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

61. LETTER TO DEV PRAKASH NAYYAR

December 19, 1947

CHI. DEV,

Read this letter from Hunar. What is it about? Talk with Hunar if you wish. Hand over my letter[1] to him.

I have your letter. There are many articles of yours but I have not understood which of them you want back. I shall enquire from Pyarelal.

You must have read the report about Chand in the newspapers. Everything is being done from this end. There is a wire from Nawab Saheb saying that there is no cause for worry. Om Prakash has come. He is leaving today. You must not worry at all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

62. LETTER TO M. A. HUNAR

December 19, 1947

CHI. HUNAR,

I have your letter. Probably it became your duty to stay on when Mahesh detained you. Pandit Sundarlal is here. He has not told me anything. I should at least have the opportunity to give a hearing.

I do hope that there is only some misunderstanding somewhere about Dev. I have always held that Dev cannot be tainted by *Kaliyug*[2]. I am sending on your letter to him. You should have a free and frank talk with him.

General Shah Nawaz will be a little delayed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] Last and worst of the four *yugas* (aeons)

63. MESSAGE TO BIHAR

December 19, 1947

I am here but my heart is in Bihar. The peace that has been brought to Bihar should not suffer the slightest breach. Even if the whole of India should burn, Bihar must not lose its peace. If Bihar can do this, then just as the history of India's freedom movement began with the Champaran Satyagraha[1] and came to be written in letters of gold, similarly Bihar will occupy the place of glory in India's history for aeons to come. Of this I have not the slightest doubt.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 133

64. ADDRESS TO MEOS

JESARAH,
December 19. 1947

Addressing a gathering mainly of the Meos Gandhiji remarked that his voice was not so powerful as it once used to be. There was a time when whatever he said was acted upon. If it had the original power, not a single Muslim should have found it necessary to migrate to Pakistan from the Indian Union or a single Hindu or Sikh to leave his hearth and home in Pakistan and seek asylum in the Indian Union. What had taken place—the orgy of murder, arson, loot, abductions, forcible conversions and worse that they had witnessed—was, in his opinion, unmitigated barbarism. True, such things were not unknown before, but there was not that wholesale communal discrimination. Tales of such happenings had filled him with grief and shame. Even more shameful was the demolition and desecration of mosques, temples and gurdwaras. Such madness, if it was not arrested, must spell ruin to both the communities. They were far from freedom while this madness reigned.

What was the remedy, Gandhiji continued. He had no faith in the force of bayonets. He could only present to them the weapon of non-violence, which provided an answer to every emergency and which was invulnerable. It was common to all great religions—to Christianity no less than to Hinduism, etc., but it had today been reduced to a mere copy-book maxim by the votaries of religions and in practice they all followed the law of the jungle. His might be today a voice in the wilderness,

[1] Launched in 1917 against the *Tinkathia* system, under which peasants had to grow indigo on 3/20 of their holdings at the will of the landlords.

said Gandhiji, but he had no other message to give them except this message of non-violence of meeting the challenge of brute force with the power of the spirit.

Gandhiji then referred to the representation which was read to him by a representative of the Meos in which had been catalogued their complaints for which they wanted redress. He had placed that letter, Gandhiji told the audience, in the hands of Dr. Gopichand, their Chief Minister and the speaker would leave it to him (Dr. Gopichand) to tell them what he proposed to do in regard to the various points set forth in it. All he could say was that if any Government officer had been guilty of misconduct, he was sure, the Government would not hesitate to take suitable action against him. No individual could be allowed to usurp the function of the Government and expect a reshuffle of Government officers at his bidding. He was clear too that no conversion or marriage of a woman to a member of the opposite community could be recognized as valid on the plea of consent or free will. It was abuse of words to talk of free consent when terror reigned.

He would feel happy, continued Gandhiji, if his words could bring some consolation to them in their distress. Referring to the Meo refugees who had been driven out of the Alwar and Bharatpur States, Gandhiji remarked that he looked forward to the day when all enmities would be forgotten and all hatred buried underground and all those who had been driven away from their hearths and homes would return to them and resume their avocations in perfect security and peace as before. His heart would then dance with joy. He would never give up that hope so long as he lived. But he was free to confess that today conditions were not ripe for it. He was sure that the Union Government would not be remiss in discharging its duty in that respect, and the States would have to listen to the advice of the Union Government. The Instrument of Accession did not give to the Rulers of the States the freedom to oppress their subjects. The Rulers had to be trustees and servants of their subjects if they wanted to retain their status.

Gandhiji concluded by giving a word of advice to the Meos. He had been told, he remarked, that the Meos were almost like criminal tribes. If the statement was correct, it called for an all-out effort on their part to reform themselves. It should not be left to others to do the work of reclamation. He hoped that the Meos would not resent his advice, but take it in the spirit in which it was offered. To the Government he would say that even if the allegation regarding the Meos was correct, that was no argument for sending them away to Pakistan. The Meos were subjects of the Indian Union and it was its duty to help them to reclaim themselves by providing them with facilities of education and establishing settlements for them to settle in.[1]

Harijan, 28-12-1947*, and The Hindustan Times,* 20-12-1947

[1] The audience was then addressed by Dr. Gopichand Bhargava. On his way back to Delhi, Gandhiji visited an open-air camp of the Meos and talked with the people there.

65. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
December 19, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today I had to go to Gurgaon to see the Meos. The Meos there consist of refugees from Alwar and Bharatpur, besides those who are natives of the place. The East Punjab Premier Dr. Gopichand Bhargava accompanied me. He told the Meos that those of them who wanted to stay could stay on. The Government would protect them. That hundreds of thousands had to leave their houses and properties in Pakistan was something barbarous. It was also a barbarous thing that people had to leave their houses and properties here. One cannot go into who committed more barbarities because such a discussion cannot end the enmity that has been generated. It should not be our fate to be eternal enemies of each other. It will only end in our ruin. I have said that I cannot tolerate this. Those who have made up their minds to go will certainly go but no one will be forced to go. There are men and women there in large numbers. All of them are in distress. Many of them have not even tents to shelter them and the days are so cold. It is a tragic sight. The Alwar State should admit its mistake and invite them back. The Bharatpur State should do the same. One cannot say that Meos are a criminal tribe. Who can say who is criminal and who is not? And will you exile those who are criminals? Will you kill them? This will never do. You have to reform them and educate them and show them the ways of civilized behaviour.

My second topic today is sugar. Sugar is not produced everywhere. It has to be transported from the places where it is produced. If we do not have sugar here we have to bring it from the U. P. or Coimbatore, but how to do it? It can only be brought in railway wagons, but there are no wagons available. Dr. John Matthai who is in charge of the Railways is helpless. He says all the wagons are already in use and are being fully utilized. Then there is a shortage of coal and iron and of staff. Also the producers of sugar keep on raising prices and after all it cannot be carried on one's head. But though there is a shortage of railway wagons there is motor transport. A motor-truck runs as fast as a train and it does not require steel rails

on which to ply. But motor transport requires petrol and petrol is still a controlled article. If the control over petrol is lifted the trucks and lorries will start plying more easily and haul goods from one place to another. The movement of salt can also become more smooth. It is paradoxical that we produce so much salt and there is no tax on it any more, and yet it is so costly. That is because supplies do not arrive. In my view it has been a mistake to appoint contractors for producing and supplying salt. If petrol is decontrolled trucks can be used for carrying salt and several other things. It does not seem right to decontrol certain articles and continue control over others. When we have adopted decontrol as a policy we must pursue it fully and see what happens. You cannot say there is no petrol in the market. Black-market is flourishing in petrol and it will continue to flourish so long as the control over it is not lifted. I am told that corruption has also increased, that it is necessary to grease the palm of the petroleum officer and it is not a question of a rupee or two but of hundreds of rupees. Petrol is required only by those who run motor transport. The Government should retain what petrol it needs for itself and release the rest to be sold in the open market. Of course even if petrol should become virtually extinct and trains should become immobilized, the country's affairs will not stop. Only the mode of transport will be changed. We will revert to old ways. I have therefore no fears from the control over petrol being lifted.

We do not produce enough foodgrain for ourselves. We may tell people to cultivate whatever land they have but for this one is told that fertilizers are required for the import of which we have to spend crores of rupees. The fertilizers cause erosion of the soil. This is not what I say. It is what those who know the subject say. Mirabehn has been doing this work. She convened a conference of experts.[1] Some very important people were with her in this. There was Rajendra Babu and Sir Datar Singh and various others who know something about the subject. The conclusions of the Conference are in the newspapers. It recommended ways to make compost and what is called organic manure. We have dung in plenty; then there is also human faeces which can make very good manure. After it is converted into compost nobody can say how it was made. If you take it in hand it has a pleasant smell, not an unpleasant one. In making compost they also mix grass, leaves and other farmyard waste with the dung and in time

[1] The All India Compost Conference; *vide* "Compost Manure", 21-12-1947.

it is converted into very good manure. The Conference also passed many resolutions but the substance was that we should all work hard at agriculture and grow four maunds where only one maund grew before. Mirabehn has left today. She lives in Rishikesh near Hardwar. She intends to carry on this work there. I thought I would tell you about this so that you can make what use you can of the information.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 222-6

66. LETTER TO DEV PRAKASH NAYYAR

5 a. m., December 20, 1947

CHI. DEV,

Yesterday I wrote a letter to you which will have reached you.

Don't worry about Chand. Her mother's brother met me yesterday.

Pyarelal read "The Call of the Hour" yesterday. I have read it by now. The ideas are good. The last portion requires more thought. I have made no effort to revise it; that would require more time and from where can I have it? It is not easy to form an association. First, discuss the matter with a few people, then proceed further. Anyway, it is for you to consider what the atmosphere prevailing there[1] demands. Of course, you must consult Mahesh. If he disapproves you may give up the idea. There is no harm in printing it as an essay after it has been trimmed.

Enclosed with the letter to you yesterday were a letter from Hunar and also my letter to him.

I do not understand what you have written in your letter to Sushila. I cannot imagine stopping any work that is being carried on in my name. I have not given up either Noakhali or Calcutta or Bihar. In any of these three places, as here, I have only to do or die.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In Bihar

67. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

December 20, 1947

I am now an old man; and maybe the country is experiencing, in your sense, the surge of freedom. I do not see the joy of it on any face. It may be that since I myself feel no joy my eyes cannot see any. Does not a jaundiced person see only yellow? If everybody practised his own dharma our condition would immediately improve. *Atman* itself is *atman's* friend and foe.[1]

It is quite true that . . .[2] has no use for non-violence and truth. But of what worth are non-violence and truth today? Truth is not a piece of stone. It is a diamond more valuable than the Koh-i-noor and requires much more hard labour to mine. . . . [3] But those who are today engaged in demoniacal activity will find it difficult to understand the experiment in truth.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, pp. 139-40

68. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
December 20, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

It is a matter of grief that there has been rioting again in Delhi. It has been of a minor nature, but still it is regrettable. If it is our wish that Muslims should leave India, we should say so clearly or the Government may declare that it will not be safe for Muslims to continue to live in India. Or we should all tell them that rather than be killed off slowly in riots, it would be better for them to go. But if we do so I see in it the doom of Hinduism and Sikhism. Likewise it will be the doom of Islam if Pakistan decides that no Hindus and Sikhs may live there. There are not very many Muslims left in India. We have already expelled a large number. They did not go voluntarily. They were compelled to leave. I wish we could become brave and noble and courageous. It is only a coward who will say that a Muslim

[1] *Bhagavadgita, VI. 5*
[2] omissions as in the source
[3] *ibid*

may not stay in India. Why can't a Muslim stay in India? If he is bad he must be reformed—not through violence but by persuasion. Why have we come to this pass that Hindus and Sikhs should live in fear in Pakistan and Muslims should live in fear in India? And yet we make the tall claims that everyone can live in our country in peace. I tell the Government that they must see that our promises are fulfilled. The army, the police and the officials have all to become good. If we behave decently we can make progress. If not, the reins of power that have come into our hands will slip away.

I have not yet told you all that happened at the meeting of the Charkha Sangh. The charkha is the pivot of the village industries. If the charkha does not ply in the seven lakh villages of India the other village industries cannot flourish. The charkha is the sun while the other village industries are the planets revolving around it. If the sun should become extinct the planets cannot go on, for they depend on the sun. For India the sun is the wheel which you can see enshrined in the flag. It does not matter whether you see it as the Sudarshan Chakra [of Krishna] or the Dharma Chakra of Ashoka. In my eyes it is the symbol of the spinning-wheel. If that charkha goes on in the villages of India other village industries will also go on. But we shall have to see that they go on, because if they decline the charkha also will decline. There are many villages around Delhi. The villages supplied so many things. Today all those things are not procurable. Perhaps you do not know, although you should, that Delhi was full of Muslim craftsmen. They have all left. Look at Panipat. There were many Muslims there, weaving blankets and making such other things. Today their trade is ruined. If Muslim craftsmen leave India it is India's loss. What is the reason for our fighting in Kashmir? I consider it barbarous for the tribal raiders to have attacked Kashmir; we had to send an army to fight them.

Yesterday I told you that Mirabehn had taken up the work of compost-making and that the Government was helping her. We can all carry on this work in our homes. We can collect human waste, cow-dung and vegetable waste—which mix beautifully and turn out to be an excellent manure—smelling good.

The work of the Village Industries and the Charkha Sangh can go on only if the masses take it up. All the four organizations, namely, the Charkha Sangh, the Harijan Sevak Sangh, the Gramodyog Sangh and the Talimi Sangh had been formed for the masses, not for the

rich. Everyone should co-operate in the work of these bodies. If we want true democracy to be established in India, we must all co-operate in furthering that work. It is only the people who can make a success of any work. The people provide the foundation on which alone we can raise a structure of any height. But if we only continue our internecine strife we shall meet with the same fate as the Yadavas did. Krishna, you will remember, belonged to the Yadava clan and yet because they strayed from the right path they took to drinking, debauchery and fighting among themselves. The result was that they met with a sad end. If we want that India should avoid that fate we should all take in hand the activities pursued by the four organizations I have mentioned.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 226-9

69. LAWS OF HEALTH

Shri Brijlal Nehru, himself a faddist like me, has written to the Press belauding the statement of the Minister of Health that "a very great deal of our ill-health is due to our own fault" and saying that there is to his knowledge no governmental agency responsible for removing this fault. He adds:

> The attention of our Health Minister has so far been confined to the establishment of hospitals, sanatoria, clinics, dispensaries, etc., i.e., devices for the treatment of disease; no institutions have been founded for the prevention of disease by bringing home to the people the need of correct living and the methods of doing so.

He then goes on to suggest that a separate branch be established to attend to the promotion of health as distinguished from treatment of disease. This agency may be given the assistance of an advisory body of both experts and laymen so that the experts may devise their schemes with the full knowledge of the requirements of the people and the limitations under which they have to live and work.

Why does this fellow-faddist want a separate branch for this very necessary purpose? This was the fashion under the old regime which went on piling expenditure on expenditure and deluded itself and the gullible public that the greater the expense the greater the utility. I would have the Minister of Health require the doctors under her and the other staff understand that their first care must be the attainment

and preservation of the health of the public whom they are paid to serve.

As a preliminary step the writer

> would have the production of a book on health laws and correct living in the conditions prevailing in India. To carry weight with the public, the book must be brought out under the authority of the Health Ministry of the Government of India. . . .[1] The duty of writing such a book may be entrusted to the Indian Medical Association, who should be required to produce it within a stated time. A transfer of emphasis from disease to health in the teaching given in our medical colleges would in itself be most desirable.

Indeed, the teaching of the laws of health should be obligatory in all schools and colleges. If the treatise recommended by Shri Brijlal Nehru is brought out, I hope the authors would be instructed to avoid the introduction of disease under the guise of preserving health such as the craze for various inoculations.

NEW DELHI, December 21, 1947

Harijan, 28-12-1947

70. COMPOST MANURE[2]

An All India Compost Conference was held in New Delhi during the month to consider the question of compost development on the widest scale possible. It was the conception of Shrimati Mirabehn and was presided over by Dr. Rajendra Prasad. Sardar Datar Singh, Dr. Acharya and other eminent men in the line took part in it. Several important resolutions were passed by it on schemes for towns and villages. A subcommittee consisting of Shrimati Mirabehn, Shri Shivakumar Sharma, Dr. B. N. Lal and Dr. K. G. Joshi (with Dr. B. N. Lal as convener) was appointed to prepare a skeleton scheme for the provinces. The resolutions emphasized the necessity of "the agricultural utilization of town sewage, sullage and sludge, the utilization of the by-products of the slaughter-house and other trade wastes (for example, wool waste, mill waste, leather waste, etc.) and for the composting of other materials like waterhyacinth, cane-trash, press mud, forest leaves, etc."

These resolutions are good and useful if they do not remain

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] For the Gujarati article on the same subject, *vide* the following item.

merely on paper. The chief thing is whether they would be reduced to practice throughout India. To do so will tax the resources of many Mirabehns. Given the willing co-operation of the masses of India, this country can not only drive out shortage of food, but can provide India with more than enough. This organic manure ever enriches, never impoverishes the soil. The daily waste, judiciously composted, returns to the soil in the form of golden manure causing a saving of millions of rupees and increasing manifold, the total yield of grains and pulses. In addition, the judicious use of waste keeps the surroundings clean. And cleanliness is not only next to godliness, it promotes health.

NEW DELHI, December 21, 1947

Harijan, 28-12-1947

71. COMPOST MANURE

Manure may be described as of two kinds: chemical and organic. One might ask how manure could be organic? The word "organic" is from English. Organic manure is made from human and animal excreta mixed or not mixed with grass, leaves and other such things. We do not regard plants as lifeless but we do regard iron, etc., to be so. Manure formed from such mixture is called "compost" in English. I consider such manure as valuable as gold. It keeps the soil ever fertile. It does not erode the soil and make it barren. It is said that chemical fertilizers destroy the humus of the soil as also bacteria and makes it necessary to keep the soil fallow after every few years of cultivation. Moreover organic manure prevents the breeding of pests.

Under Mirabehn's inspiration and through her efforts a Conference was called in Delhi this month to popularize such manure among the people. It was presided over by Dr. Rajendra Prasad. It was attended by Sardar Datar Singh, Dr. Acharya and others who are experts in this field. After three days of deliberation they passed several important resolutions. In these resolutions they have pointed out what should be done in cities and in the seven lakh villages. The Conference has suggested the method of mixing human and animal excreta, garbage, rags and factory waste, in rural and urban areas. For this purpose a small sub-committee has been formed.

The face of India will change if the resolutions do not remain on paper and crores of people put them into actual practice. We will

be then able to save golden manure worth crores of rupees which is being wasted because of our ignorance. The soil will become fertile and we will get better crops than what we are getting. As a result we will be rid of famines, crores of people will get enough to eat and the surplus can be exported.

Today our crops are in the same poor condition as our men and animals. The fault is not of the soil but of the people. The worms of lethargy and ignorance are eating into us.

The task undertaken by Mirabehn is of immense magnitude. It will require thousands of Mirabehns. People should take up the work with zest and Government departments should be awake. Merely a few volunteers will not be able to do the work which requires crores of men. We should have an army of volunteers.

Is India so fortunate? Here India means both the parts. If the southern part takes up the work one may be sure the northern part will also take it up.

NEW DELHI, December 21, 1947

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 28-12-1947

72. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

NEW DELHI,
December 21, 1947

CHI. CHHANGANLAL,

I have seen your letter and the note you gave to Dr. Dinshaw and Jehangir. I like the note. It was good that you went with the gentlemen.[1] I think they are both noble, circumspect, patriotic and industrious. There is a letter from Jehangir informing me that they will be seeing me next week.

Let us hope that by God's grace the atmosphere of Kathiawar will not be vitiated.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 5-12-1947.

73. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

NEW DELHI,
December 21, 1947

CHI. LILI,

I have your postcard. So you have found a place. You deserve congratulation. I deem it your good fortune that you have an opportunity to study under a man like Dr. Mangaldas Shah. You should not be put out by his severity. You should welcome it and benefit from it. If someone wants to improve us and in so doing corrects us, takes us to task in the presence of others, we should be pleased rather than annoyed. More so when the person happens to be our teacher. If a doctor makes a mistake, the patient has to pay for it—at times with his life. One should therefore look for a teacher who does not condone mistakes.

You must get rid of your tendency to worry. That the pain in your feet should persist I don't like. You must go to a doctor and find a cure for it. It will be a crime to be careless or lazy in this matter.

You must devote yourself to your studies without being impatient. You must think of nothing else for the present. Ponder and digest what you read. The student who is given to cramming is considered a fool of the first water.

I am quite well. So is everyone else.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original. Courtesy: Pyarelal

74. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

December 21, 1947

. . . .[1] So long as saintliness is not of the heart, it is of no value to me. If saintliness is hypocritical it will destroy itself. I am not certain how long I shall have to be here. I must do or die. And since I am resolved to die I do pray to God that He may fulfil the wish. All of you too should make the same prayer.

In Delhi, during day-time, many incidents, small and big, keep occurring. I have been and continue to be patient beyond measure. In

[1] Omission as in the source

the end it will be as Rama commands me. Thus I dance as He pulls the strings. I am in His hands and so I am experiencing ineffable peace.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 145

75. NOTES

A WORTHY EXAMPLE

Shri Dilkhush Divanji of Karadi fame reports the glorious death at his post of one of his staunch workers. The late Valjibhai was the nephew of Panchakaka, the famous farmer of Karadi, who took part in the no-tax campaign of Bardoli[1]. He never wavered. He refuses even now to till his land or to pay the tax. He rightly says that there is no swaraj of his dream so long as we need the police to guard our homes and the military to protect us from ourselves. The deceased left a lucrative job and purely from a patriotic motive became a weaver. He proved worthy of his uncle and died in harness. No man can wish for a nobler death than Valjibhai's. It is to be wished that the weavers who were trained by him would multiply themselves. If India is to come to her own, she needs thousands of weavers who will weave nothing but hand-spun yarn and expects every man and woman and child above six years to spin good yarn daily for at least half an hour. Such is Divanji's' dream and Valjibhai died for its realization.

STOCK GRAIN IN VILLAGES

Shri Vaikunth Lallubhai Mehta writes to say that in view of general decontrol it is imperative that there should be sufficient grain stocked in the hands, if possible of the village panchayats, not for profiteering, but as an insurance against scarcity by whatever cause induced. His original letter is in Gujarati which I have reproduced and dealt with in the Gujarati columns.[2] Here has been given the pith of his argument. I have always held that whatever may be said in favour of cash payment of taxes, its introduction injured the nation to the extent that the system of stocking grain in the villages was disturbed. The conservation of' grain in the villages is needed for the reason already mentioned. The condition always must be that the growers and dealers

[1] From February to August 1928

[2] *Vide* the following item.

must not be greedy or unscrupulous. When this simple honesty becomes common, the consumer cannot be cheated. There is no question of high or low prices when a nation's economics are put on a sound basis and when all parties have an income commensurate with the expenditure required for the necessaries of life.

THE GATES OF SOMNATH?

Pandit Sundarlal has contributed to the Hindustani columns an interesting article[1] on the reputed gates of Somnath. The curious must see the original. The main point made by the writer is that the gates which were taken away to Ghazni were never brought back as then stated. The gates were a fabrication and when the fraud was discovered the exhibition of the 'gates' never travelled beyond Agra. Pandit Sundarlal is anxious that by an oversight the fabrication might not be used in the projected renovation of the famous temple.

NEW DELHI, December 22, 1947

Harijan, 28-12-1947

76. NEED FOR STORING GRAIN IN VILLAGES

Shri Vaikunthbhai writes:

> Under the present trading system the grain produced in the villages is being sent out. Therefore in many parts of the country the villages are left with no stocks of grain. As a result the poor have to face hardships and there is a steep rise in prices during the monsoon. To save the poor from such a plight, it is desirable that some grain should be stocked in villages under the care of the *Panch*, and only the surplus should be sent out. With this end in view Shri Achyut Rao Patwardhan and I had prepared a scheme four years ago. Shri Kumarappa has also acknowledged the need for such a scheme in his plan.
>
> If the scheme meets with your approval, under the present changed circumstances you may kindly recommend it to the Provincial Governments and the villagers.

I think the suggestion has something in it. Such stocks are necessary in the economic conditions of the country. Ever since the system of collecting revenue in cash was introduced, the stocks of grain in the villages have diminished. I shall not go into the merits or

[1] Which appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 28-12-1947, under the title "Somnathka Mandir"

demerits of the cash revenue system; but I do believe the country could have been saved from the present difficult situation if we had continued to stock grain in the villages. Now that the controls are being removed no one will suffer any hardship if the grain is stocked as suggested by Vaikunthbhai and if the villagers and the traders become honest. If the farmers and the traders get a fair margin of profit there can be no high prices for the working class and other people in the cities. What really matters is that necessaries of life should be within the reach of every one. There can then be no question of high or low prices.

NEW DELHI, December 22, 1947

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 28-12-1947

77. TRIBUTE TO VALJIBHAI[1]

NEW DELHI,
December 22, 1947

India, indeed the world, has had few dedicated servants like the late Valjibhai. He has proved the truth of the saying: "As the tree so the fruit, as the father, so the son." Panchakaka's pledge will remain without parallel. We have not attained true swaraj yet. At present it seems quite far away. Why is it that we have only six or seven weavers as good as Valjibhai? Can it be claimed that we have won swaraj with the power of Karadi?

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U./XXIII

78. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
December 22, 1947

DEAR PANDITJI,

Maulana Shaheed and some other Maulanas of Delhi came to Bapu yesterday and told him that recent happenings in Delhi had well-nigh driven the local Muslims to desperation. They wanted to be told definitely and authoritatively as to whether the

[1] This also appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 28-12-1947.

Government really wanted to keep them in the Indian Union or would prefer their going away. In the former case the Government's declaration of policy would need to be followed by suitable action. They suggested a joint meeting with you, the Sardar and the Maulana Sahib in Bapu's presence. Bapu has asked me to convey to you that he would be available for the purpose at any time that may suit you.[1]

Yours sincerely,

PYARELAL

Sardar Patel's Correspondence, Vol. IV, p. 410

79. LETTER TO DR. BANERJEE

NEW DELHI,
December 22, 1947

DEAR DR. BANERJEE,

Your letter. Have I not said every [worthy] cause carries its own blessings? The rest is superfluous.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

80. LETTER TO V. L. MEHTA

NEW DELHI,
December 22, 1947

BHAI VAIKUNTH,

I have your letter. I understand about Shamaldas. I am sending the portion regarding grain to *Harijan.*[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VAIKUNTH LALLUBHAI MEHTA
ANDHERI
BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: V. L. Mehta Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The addressee along with Vallabhbhai Patel met Gandhiji on the evening of December 26.

[2] *Vide* "Need for Storing Grain in Villages", 22-12-1947.

81. LETTER TO YASHWANTKUNWARBA[1]

December 22, 1947

RESPECTED SISTER,

His Highness the Maharaja[2] informed me that you were ill and bed-ridden. I was grieved to hear it. May God give you peace of mind. Keep repeating Ramanama. I believe it to be an unfailing remedy.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7745

82. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

December 22, 1947

CHI. KANAM[3],

I see from your letters that you are not only steadily improving your handwriting but are also becoming mature in your thinking. Continue to grow in wisdom in the same way as you grow in age.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 9524. Courtesy: Kanu Gandhi

83. LETTER TO BACHU

NEW DELHI,
December 22, 1947

CHI. BACHU,

Of course I don't have time but since it is a Monday[4] I am writing this much. If you have appendicitis there is no cause for worry. You will soon be all right after an operation. Don't be afraid. Stop writing with a lead pencil, for the writing fades out. I hope Kumi[5]

[1] Rajmata of Kishangarh, who was suffering from cancer
[2] Of Bhavnagar, addressee's nephew, who carried this letter to the addressee
[3] Son of Ramdas Gandhi
[4] Gandhiji usually observed silence on Monday.
[5] Kumi Adalaja, Harilal Gandhi's wife's sister

is all right. If Manu[1] has returned tell her that I got her letter. It did not call for an answer. I hope she has come back recovered. I am sure Baby is enjoying herself. Has she made any progress in reading?

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

84. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
December 22, 1947

CHI. RAMDAS,

Your letter. Someone did mention to me that you were coming. I forget who it was. I was glad that we were going to meet. But it is perfectly all right that you stayed back. What needs to be considered is whether you can rest while you are there.

It is true that I crushed my finger. I had a sharp shooting pain which gave me a reeling sensation. It was nothing to worry about. In fact I had gone to a meeting[2]. The pain subsided in a minute or two and I addressed the meeting. When I got out of the car Brijkishan slammed the door without looking around and my finger which happened to be there got crushed. I am no doubt careful but even a careful person does meet with such accidents. Sumi[3] has come here, along with another girl and a boy. It is about Radhakrishna. Hope all of you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

85. LETTER TO SHARDA H. KOTAK

December 22, 1947

CHI. SHARDA,

I have two letters from you, one written with a lead pencil. One should not write with a lead pencil. Luckily Dada[4] is here and this will

[1] Daughter of Harilal Gandhi, married to Surendra Mashruwala
[2] Of the Constructive Works Committee on December 11
[3] Sumitra, addressee's daughter
[4] Lakshmidas Asar

go with him. Do as he says. I shall have a talk with him in detail. Everything yours is there. Write to me from time to time. No one else need be consulted.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

86. NOTE TO MANU GANDHI

December 22, 1947

What you say is also worth considering.[1] You should tell Panditji[2]. But I see no harm in it. Even as it is what is my word worth now? And what is it to me whether my word has any worth left or not? I am certainly going to say whatever I think is true. I do not find any merit in the belief that a man can judge another man. Only the Almighty can judge us. All will be well with us if we are faithful to Him and fear Him. Instead of bothering about what would please men we should concern ourselves with what would please God. Only then will our path become easy.

Is it not enough if, instead of worrying about other people's affairs, you and I can do this? See, how badly you have caught a cold. You had fever last night. You must take hot water. It does not matter if you cannot do anything else but if you learn to fulfil the duty towards the body you can do much work for me. Your heart and mind are sound, but your hands and feet are weak. See what pass India has come to because of lack of co-operation and how I am shouting for harmony. You should learn from it that however strong your heart and mind may be, if there is no strength in your hands and feet your progress will stop. And are you going to let me down?

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, pp. 153-4

[1] Manu Gandhi had remarked that frequent reference to the same subject by Gandhiji, Sundarlal and others would only irritate people and such utterances would become ineffective.

[2] Sundarlal

87. LETTER TO KUNDANLAL FIRODIA

NEW DELHI,
December 22, 1947

BROTHER FIRODIA,

Why did you write to me in English?

I understand about Visapur. It will be desirable if we know the names and addresses of girls. It is good that you have informed me.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI KUNDANLAL FLRODIA
DODKOKERE
SIKAR
AHMEDNAGAR
BOMBAY PROVINCE

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 7917

88. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
December 22, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Some eight or ten miles from here, at Mehrauli, there is a shrine of Qutubuddin Bakhtiyar Chisti. Esteemed as second only to the shrine at Ajmer, it is visited every year not only by Muslims but by thousands of non-Muslims too. Last September this shrine was subjected to the wrath of Hindu mobs. The Muslims living in the vicinity of the shrine for the last 800 years had to leave their homes. I mention this sad episode to tell you that, though Muslims love the shrine, today no Muslim can be found anywhere near it. It is the duty of the Hindus, Sikhs, the officials and the Government to open the shrine again and wash off this stain on us. The same applies to other shrines and religious places of Muslims in and around Delhi. The time has come when both India and Pakistan must unequivocally declare to the majorities in each country that they will not tolerate desecration of religious places, be they small or big. They should also undertake to

[1] As Gandhiji was observing silence, this was read out at the meeting.

repair the places damaged during riots.

Muslims have asked me whether, in view of the decision of the Muslim League in Karachi[1], members of the Muslim League should take part in the Conference called by Maulana Azad in Lucknow[2] and also whether Muslims might participate in the Conference of the Muslim League in Madras, and in any case what should be the course to be adopted by the members of the Muslim League in India. I have not the least doubt that if they receive a personal or public invitation they should attend the Conferences in Lucknow and Madras. They should fearlessly and openly declare their views at these meetings. If they have learnt anything from the 30 years of non-violent struggle they should not worry that they are in a minority in the Indian Union and that the majority in Pakistan can be of no help to them. It does not need belief in non-violence to see that a minority however small it may be has no reason to feel afraid for its honour and for the things it holds dear. If man could but know his Maker and realize that he himself is a reflection of that Maker, no power on earth can take away his self-respect. No one can take away my self-respect; I can only lose it. During my struggle against the mighty Government of the Transvaal, a dear English friend of mine in Johannesburg used to tell me, "I always like to be with a minority, for a minority as a rule does not commit mistakes, and even if it does it can be rectified. But a majority is drunk with power and it is difficult to reform it." If by majority the friend also meant one-sided armed might he was right. We know from bitter experience how a handful of Englishmen had transformed themselves into a majority through force of arms and how they dominated the whole of India. India lacked arms and, even if the arms had been there, we did not know how to use them. It is a matter of regret that Hindus and Sikhs have not learnt a lesson from the British rule in our country. The Muslims of the Union suffered from false pride in their majority in the East and the West. Today they are rid of that burden. If they now see the virtues of being a minority they will show the beauties of Islam in their own way. They must

[1] The Council of the All-India Muslim League had passed a resolution in Karachi on December 15, bifurcating the Muslim League into two bodies —one for Pakistan and the other for India.

[2] The Indian Union Muslims' Conference was scheduled to be held in Lucknow on December 27 and 28 under the presidentship of Abul Kalam Azad. Members of the Provincial Assemblies, the Constituent Assembly and various Muslim organizations had been invited to attend it.

remember that the best days of Islam were the days of the Prophet Mohammed's minority in Mecca. Christianity began to decline after the time of Constantine[1]. I do not want to prolong the argument here. My advice emanates from my faith and if Muslim friends do not have this faith they are free to reject it.

In my view they should all be prepared to join the Congress. But they must not apply for entry into that body till they are sure of a hearty welcome and equality of treatment. In principle there is no question of majority and minority so far as the Congress is concerned. The Congress follows no religion unless it be a religion of humanity. It treats men and women alike. It is a purely political body in which Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsees and Jews are all equal. The Congress has not always been able to practise what it preached. This sometimes created an impression among the Muslims that it was a caste Hindu organization. In any case as long as this kind of tug of war goes on Muslims should keep away with dignity. When the Congress wants their services they should come into the Congress. Till then they can be servants of the Congress as I am a servant of the Congress. Although I am not a four-anna member of the Congress I have a voice in that organization, and that is because ever since 1915 when I returned from South Africa I have been loyally serving the Congress. If every Muslim similarly serves the Congress he will find that his services are similarly appreciated.

Today every Muslim is considered a supporter of the League and therefore an enemy of the Congress. This has been the unfortunate result of the teachings of the League. Today there is no cause left any more for enmity. Four months are a very short time for getting rid of the poison of communalism. It is the misfortune of India that Hindus and Sikhs took this poison to be nectar and made themselves the enemies of the Muslim League. In returning brickbat for brickbat they brought a stain to their name and put themselves in the same category as Muslims. I appeal to the Muslim minority to raise themselves above this poisonous atmosphere, to remove the suspicion that had been created concerning them and to show that they could live in India as her honourable citizens without any deceit and dissimulation.

One consequence of partition is that the League cannot continue

[1] Emperor of Rome (306 A. D. to 337 A. D.) who made Christianity the State religion

as a political organization. The Hindu Mahasabha, the Sikh Sabha and the Parsee Sabha similarly cannot continue as political bodies. They may well stay as religious bodies. Their task then will be internal reform of society, to seareh for things of religious value and to act on them. Then the atmosphere will become free of poison and these organizations will rival each other in doing good. They will have amity for each other and they will help the Government. Their political ambitions can be realized through the Congress alone whether they are in the Congress or not. If the Congress thinks only of those who are in the Congress it will become very narrow in its sphere of service. Even today there are very few people in the Congress. If no other organization can rival the Congress it is because the Congress has been trying to represent the whole of India, because it has dedicated itself to the service of the poorest and the lowliest.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II pp. 229-32

89. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

December 23, 1947

CHI. BABUDI,

I have read your postcard. Why need we discuss today what may happen after twenty-five days? I understand your impatience. If nothing happens in those days, I will agree with your view. If you are to die, I should like to see you die with your head in my lap. I see no possibility just now of such a thing happening. But how can you die before I do? The very thought is unbearable to me. You should, therefore, resolve to live and make up your mind that, after leaving the sick-bed, you will give yourself up to the service of the country. God will, then, keep you alive if He needs your services; otherwise He will take you away. Where is the cause for worry in this?

Won't you do this?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10081. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

90. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

December 23, 1947

CHI. NARAHARI,

I was very happy to see your handwriting. I cannot bear the thought of your being bed-ridden.[1] But now that you are, do not be in a hurry to leave the bed. The man who survives a crisis will win his heart's desire, as the saying is. Here you should substitute the phrase 'healthy man' for "the man who survives a crisis".

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9148

91. LETTER TO VANAMALA PARIKH

December 23, 1947

CHI. VANUDI,

I got your letter.

All the symptoms you describe are to be observed in a case of stroke. With proper care and the right diet, the patient does recover. I believe that massage done by a masseur cannot benefit as much as massage done by you can, that is, massage done with the love and strength you possess. You do have strength, don't you? Such massage does not require much physical strength. It requires only some skill. Haven't you had experience of Dinshaw's method of massaging?

For motions, you may convey my view to the doctor that there will be no harm in administering a full enema when the bowels begin to move. I hope Mani is cheerful.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5799. Also C. W. 3022. Courtesy: Vanamala Desai

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narahari D. Parikh", 13-12-1947.

92. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

December 23, 1947

CHI. AMRITLAL[1],

Why need you worry whether or not I give my blessings? Have I the experience which you have? Even if I disapprove, you should do what you believe to be a good thing, and even with my approval you should never do what you believe to be wrong. This is what I feel. The question of my blessings, therefore, does not arise. You may unhesitatingly do what seems right to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10817

93. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

December 23, 1947

I am stuck here for now. I have no doubt that the needful should be done about the village industries. It is our misfortune, however, that I see no concerted effort in any undertaking. Of course one cannot complain if there is no unity; but what can be more painful than that such disunity should engender personal animosities? I am at the moment passing through a situation which cannot even be dreamt of. All the same I do not worry. My only prayer to God in the present situation is "one step is enough for me". God will keep me as long as He needs me. Why need I worry about it? Well, Suhrawardy is sitting opposite me, so only this much for today.

Blessings to Chi. . . .[2].She will be well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 160

[1] Secretary, Hindustani Prachar Sabha, Wardha
[2] Omission as in the source

94. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
December 23, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

A friend suggests that since it is getting cold we should begin our prayer half an hour earlier, that is, at 5 p. m. I admit it is getting to be pretty cold. Though the days will be getting longer minute by minute from now on, for today it is already the 23rd of December, still if all of you so wish we can begin the prayer at 5 p.m. from tomorrow.[1] Today I shall deal with three points.

Here is the first. You saw that yesterday people[2] arrived here from Bahawalpur. They are in great distress.[3] They say that all the Hindus and Sikhs there should be brought here for their lives are in danger. Today two friends from Bahawalpur came to see me. They said that if no steps were taken in this respect they would go and fast in front of the Governor-General's house. I told them that their fasting could neither bring here the Hindus and Sikhs left behind nor ensure their safety. That besides the Governor-General had no power except such as he derived from his Cabinet. He merely affixed his signature. If they thought that fasting before the residence of Pandit Nehru or the Sardar would do any good they were equally mistaken. They saw the point and gave up the idea of fasting. Yesterday I was observing silence and so could not say anything. The Nawab of Bahawalpur should permit all the Hindus and Sikhs to go wherever they want to. If he does not he will be failing in his duty. I cannot relate to you the things that have happened there under the very nose of the Nawab. A large number of Hindus and Sikhs were tortured and killed. It is the Sikhs who built Bahawalpur. They are a brave people. They can fight and cultivate land. They have been cultivating the land

[1] Gandhiji asked those who wanted the prayers to be held earlier to raise their hands. A large number of them raised their hands. It was, therefore, decided to hold the prayers at 5 p. m.

[2] Who carried placards reading "Save the 70,000 Hindus and Sikhs of Bahawalpur"

[3] In the State of Bahawalpur, which had acceded to Pakistan on November 8, seventy thousand Hindus and Sikhs were awaiting evacuation. It was reported that the Pakistan authorities were not agreeing to their evacuation through the Military Evacuation Organization. The Hindus and Sikhs concentrated in camps were without adequate food or clothing.

there; so have the Hindus. They have committed no crime. Their only crime is that they are Hindus or Sikhs. A large number of these innocent people were murdered and some ran away. When Hindus and Sikhs cannot live there in peace, what is the worth of anything that the Nawab may say? I appeal to the Nawab that he should do his duty. If Hindus and Sikhs cannot live there in honour he should arrange for them to leave or he should declare that none of the Hindus and Sikhs still in Bahawalpur will be touched and that they can continue to live in Bahawalpur in peace. If they are starving, food should be made available to them.

According to a report in today's *Statesman* about the refugee camps in Lahore, the Muslims in the camps are living in insanitary conditions. Epidemics like cholera and smallpox have broken out and even those who have escaped them are dying of cold and exposure. How can people live under the open sky in this cold? They need shelter and clothes and food. If these three things are not available they must face death. I do not know all that is happening there. Yes, scavengers have been brought over from Sialkot who will clean the camps and remove nightsoil. The officials say that they are not doing enough work. It is clear that the people there are in distress. What does it matter that they are in Pakistan? Why should human beings be so degraded? It pains me. Those people who ran away from here to escape our excesses were deprived of their hearths and homes. They are not familiar with the surroundings there and they have to suffer hardships. But why can't they keep themselves clean? I should advise all the refugees, be they in India or in Pakistan, that they should not be dependent on others for everything. They should not ask for help to cook for them or to remove their night-soil. People who were being uprooted from their homes are in no position to make such demands. It's a privilege of the rich. They may employ ten when one is enough, but not we. These are the symptoms of our degradation. The refugees in the camps in Lahore should firmly and courageously declare that they will not have scavengers from Sialkot, that they will themselves do the cleaning of their camps. The Pakistan Government and the officials concerned should also make it clear to the refugees that they will not have scavengers brought from Sialkot. They should at least do what every human being can do. And if even then there are deaths, that will be a different matter. I have said it before, and I say it again, that the refugees should conduct themselves with decency. They should do all that they can do and not become a burden on others.

And here is something good that I want to tell you. I told you once that Pyarelal had come here. You know who Pyarelal is. He is my Secretary. He had been working in Noakhali for a long time. There were others with him too. At the risk of their lives they gave support and courage to the Hindus who felt insecure there. The Muslims too very soon understood that they were their friends and servants and had gone there not to promote violence but to promote amity between the two communities.

Pyarelal has some interesting news from Noakhali: A temple had been demolished and occupied by Muslims. It became a cause of strife. Later when the Muslims expressed their desire to live in amity with the Hindus, Pyarelal pointed out that the Hindus no longer had the temple where they could go and worship. The Muslims thereupon rebuilt the temple with their own labour and assured the Hindus that they were free to go to the temple and offer worship. Now they are all happy. The officials too co-operated. If everyone in India and Pakistan acted in this spirit the faces of the two countries would change. If we stick to our own religion and refrain from interfering with another's, it will be a great thing.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 236-8

95. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

NEW DELHI
December 24, 1947

CHI. ANAND,

I have your letter. I write this while drinking my hot water. It is 5 a. m.

You seem to be much troubled by your ear. If that is so, go to America and see what can be done about it. If you can appreciate the blessing of not hearing, then there is no need to go anywhere. What you need to know you can know with Gangi's[1] assistance.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] Addressee's wife

96. LETTER TO GANGI A. HINGORANI

NEW DELHI,
December 24, 1947

CHI. GANGI,

I have your letter. I am writing this with great difficulty, otherwise I would have to let your letter go unanswered.

There are no facilities for your staying with me in Delhi. I am myself staying at the house of a rich man. It is difficult to keep anyone with me here. If I set up an ashram anywhere and stay there you can come. But such an opportunity is impossible in this life. Consider also that it is not your duty to leave Anand and go elsewhere. I feel that as long as Anand finds his deafness an affliction, you cannot leave him. Also Anand cannot move about by himself. What can you learn by staying with me? I consider it wrong for people to imagine that they gain anything by staying with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

97. LETTER TO DILKHUSH DIWANJI

NEW DELHI,
December 24, 1947

CHI. DIWANJI,

I got your letter in reply to my question. I am glad. Although the sizing is done with good speed it must still be taking up a lot of time. I understand doubling takes much less time and greatly facilitates the process of weaving. Please think over this.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

98. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
December 24, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I often receive Sikh visitors. I also read newspapers sometimes. They say that I have proved an enemy of the Sikhs. They would not have minded it much but for the fact that my word seemed to carry weight with the world outside India where it is believed that India has secured its freedom through non-violent means. This had never happened before anywhere in the world. But a tree is known by its fruit, and by no other means. For man is not God, man can know a thing from its results. The fruit of independence has been that today Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs have become one another's enemies.

As I have admitted earlier I had been under the delusion that our struggle was truly non-violent. God had rendered me blind and I was misled. Because the lame, the crippled, the coward cannot be non-violent. Lame, crippled and dumb I do not mean literally, for God helps these and they are always non-violent. Even a child can stand before the world on the strength of non-violence. Prahlad was an instance. We do not know whether Prahlad was a historical character. To me he was more than a historical character, for I believe in the story. Prahlad's father[1] commanded him not to utter the name of God. But Prahlad insisted that he would continue to utter the name of God. The image of 12-year-old Prahlad remains before my eyes. Therefore I say that those who are lame and crippled at heart can never be truly non-violent. So long as the light does not shine in the heart no one can understand the beauty of non-violence. What we offered during the struggle was passive resistance which simply meant that we would not kill the British though in our hearts we wanted to kill them. But we had not the power. When the millions took up passive resistance it did bring about our freedom. The freedom we have obtained is crippled freedom. It is only partial. I therefore laugh when I see our Sikh brethren getting angry. In my eyes there is no difference between the Hindus and the Sikhs. I have read the

[1] Hiranyakashipu, the Demon-king

Granthsaheb. A friend chides me for not knowing anything about the *Granthsaheb.* He says I cannot understand the Sikhs and that if I did, I would not have written what I wrote about Guru Govind Singh. That was many years ago and the mistake was not mine. But he still says so because he is a friend. If I say that the Sikhs are taking to drinking and gambling it does not mean that it applies to all or only to Sikhs. Hindus too are a prey to these evils but Hindus do not have the strength that the Sikhs have. The Sikhs should not use that strength indiscriminately. They may wield the sword but only where they must. Their sword should not fall where it ought not to fall. I am a true friend of the Sikhs when I say that anyone who commits crimes or is guilty of bad conduct sins before God. He degrades his religion.

Today is the 24th. Tomorrow is Christmas. Christmas is to Christians what Diwali is to us. Really neither Diwali nor Christmas is an occasion when we should indulge in revelry and lose our heads. I do not regard Christmas as an occasion for people to indulge in drunkenness. Christmas reminds one of Jesus Christ. I offer greetings to the Christians in India and abroad. May the New Year bring them prosperity and happiness. It has never been my wish that the freedom of India should mean the ruin of the Christians here or that they should become Hindus or Muslims or Sikhs. For a Christian to become a Hindu or a Muslim is a fate worse than death. According to my view a Christian should become a better Christian, a Muslim a better Muslim and a Sikh a better Sikh. I want that all the Christians in and outside India should become free in the true sense. Let them exercise self-restraint and pursue the path of sacrifice and martyrdom shown by Jesus Christ. Let them be free and increase the area of freedom in the world. I see from the papers that the Government proposes to stop the grants made to them. The money they receive from America and England will also stop coming. It is feared that 75% of the churches in India will have to be closed down. But a religion does not prosper with the help of money. Most Christians in India are poor people. What does it matter if the Government help should stop? They should be glad that they will now be free of the curse of pecuniary assistance. once a lot of money and presents came into the house of Hazarat Omar. This worried Omar and he told his wife that with all that wealth he was no longer certain if he would be able to retain his self-control and would not take to pleasure. A church does not need a building. The human body is the real church. It is there that God dwells. Then we have the sky for the roof and the

earth for the floor. We can utter God's name anywhere. I shall therefore say that the Christians need not feel worried. They do not really need assistance from the Government or anyone. They should follow the teachings of their religion. If they but persevere in the path of sacrifice shown by Christ, no one can take their religion away from them.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 236-8

99. LETTER TO HAMID-UD-DIN

NEW DELHI,
December 25, 1947

BHAI HAMID-UD-DIN,

I got your letter about Barwani. I have been doing what I can ever since the first telegram came. The local Muslims have some staunch Hindus for their friends. I am also in correspondence with them. They are working hard. Isn't there exaggeration in what you write? It happened in the case of Junagadh. My informants were well-placed Muslims. They had exaggerated matters to such an extent that at last they had to publicly issue a correction and apologize. I am not bothered about it but at present such exaggeration gives rise to dislike of all Muslims. And this hurts me very much. I am therefore sounding a note of caution to you. After all the Government officers have also taken some steps.

Please let me have whatever authoritative information you have.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

100. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

December 25, 1947

No one can harm a person who is sustained by Ramanama. I believe in this principle and so I have no physical illness. It is by the grace of God that I am able to remain calm even though there is conflagration all around. Had it not been for this I would have broken down by now. That is why I proclaim at the top of my voice that I dance as Rama wills. We are in this world to do our duty. I believe that not a leaf moves without His command. And look at the pride of man;

he believes he does everything. But God is magnanimous and only laughs at this abysmal ignorance. Now you will all understand where I am. You must all be well. What I write in *Harijan* shows me as I am. I am very clear about the language. In the same way I am clear about the political questions. Let us see what God wills me to do.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, pp. 165-6

101. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

December 25, 1947

Slackness in khadi work will not do. We should understand that the more we slacken the more we shall fall behind. This fragile thread has had behind it sixty long years of work. It still remains unbroken and thanks to it we have reached our present position. Even now I am convinced that if only we had plied the wheel more vigourously, the thread would not have broken even as slightly as it has. If we do not want to preserve what we have gained, then certainly we may let the thread snap. Fragile as this thread is, it has the strength to bind not only India but the whole world. My purpose in labouring the point is simply this: If India is to live and live well there is no alternative to the constructive programme. Otherwise your fall will be quick, remember this.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, pp. 165-6

102. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

NEW DELHI,
December 25, 1947

CHI. KRISHNADAS,

I have your letter of December 20. Khadi Pratishthan certainly becomes uncertified. To ask for money immediately does not seem to be proper. I do not consider it right now to insert a condition which is not there in the written agreement. I do not remember now if I had said anything. If I did, surely my signature would be there.

I find a great difference between dealers in uncertified khadi and Khadi Pratishthan. Khadi Pratishthan was born for khadi and will

die for it. Other dealers carry on their business for the sake of business. They also practise dishonesty. Even so I shall send your letter on to Khadi Pratishthan and ask them.[1]

Are those who deal with the Hindustani correspondence there fully familiar with Hindustani? In your letter लिखापढ़ी[2] are two words but I have seen the expression used only as one word.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2739

103. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

NEW DELHI,
December 25, 1947

CHI. HEMPRABHA[3],

Herewith Krishnadas's letter. Please let me know about the matter. I feel that as the rules of the Sangh[4] stand Khadi Pratishthan is an uncertified body. I enclose a copy of the letter I have written to Krishnadas. I hope Babua is well and Didimoni too. Arun[5] should become perfectly fit. If he believes in nature cure, he may consult Kulranjan.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2740

104. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
December 25, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You all know something of what is happening in Kashmir. But I want to draw your attention to a proposal about Kashmir. It is being said and also reported in the newspapers that we should invite someone to arbitrate between the Indian Union and Pakistan in the

[1] *Vide* the following item.
[2] Written agreement, correspondence
[3] Wife of Satis Chandra Das Gupta
[4] All India Spinners' Association
[5] Addressee's son

dispute over Kashmir. How can this be? How long can this kind of thing go on? Instead of resulting in a settlement of the dispute, this will merely introduce into it a third party. Can we not settle the issue between ourselves? There is a large preponderance of Muslims in Kashmir. Maybe they are more than 95% . Jammu does not have very many Muslims. I do not know what is the percentage of Muslims in the population but Jammu and Kashmir is one State. It cannot be partitioned. If we start the process of partitioning where is it going to end? It is enough and more than enough that India has been partitioned into two. If we partition Kashmir, why not other States?

What is the nature of the dispute in Kashmir? It is said that the raiders are outsiders. They are aggressors and plunderers. But as time passes it looks as if it was not so. I get some Urdu newspapers. I can read Urdu a little myself and others also read them out to me. Today some bits from the *Zamindar* were read out to me. I know the editor[1] of the *Zamindar*. He has an unbridled tongue. He has issued an open invitation to all Muslims to muster for an assault on Kashmir. He has heaped abuse on the Dogras and the Sikhs. He calls the raid in Kashmir a jihad[2]. But there is always restraint about a jihad. There is nothing of the kind here. Do they want that Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims should perpetually remain divided? What is our duty if Muslims start cutting up the Hindus and Sikhs? As I have been telling you every day Hindus and Sikhs must not retaliate.

The simple fact is that Pakistan has invaded Kashmir. Units of the Indian army have gone to Kashmir but not to invade Kashmir. They have been sent on the express invitation of the Maharaja and Sheikh Abdullah. Sheikh Abdullah is the real Maharaja of Kashmir. Muslims in their thousands are devoted to him. He is called the Lion of Kashmir.

One should always admit one's mistakes. The Hindus and Sikhs of Jammu or those who had gone there from outside killed Muslims there. The Maharaja of Kashmir is responsible for the happenings in his State. It was not Sheikh Abdullah who was behind these murders. He in fact went to Jammu and tried to reason with the Hindus and Sikhs. He tried to save the lives of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. The Maharaja of Kashmir is a Dogra Rajput. Abuses have been heaped on him. If he has been at fault he can be removed. One can understand

[1] Maulana Zafar Ali Khan

[2] Crusade or war waged for a holy cause

that. But what have the Muslims of Kashmir done? Why is jihad being carried on against them?

I want to say to the Government of Pakistan in all humility that if their claim to being the greatest Islamic power in the world is true, they should make sure that every Hindu and every Sikh in Pakistan is justly treated. They should be protected. But Pakistan presents a different picture. I shall advise Pakistan and India to sit together and decide the matter. If the two are interested in the settlement of the dispute, where is the need for an arbitrator? The Maharaja can step aside and let India and Pakistan deliberate over the matter. Sheikh Abdullah will of course be there. If they want an arbitrator they can appoint one from among themselves, but it should certainly not be a third power. They may, if they so desire, persuade the Maharaja to step down. After all he is a human being. A large number of Muslims have been killed there and Muslim women have been dishonoured. I met the Maharaja and his Prime Minister. And I told him what I had to say. The Maharaja should clearly say that he is no longer the Ruler, it is the Muslims of Kashmir who are the real rulers and they may do what they like. After the Maharaja and his Prime Minister withdraw themselves only Sheikh Abdullah remains. He can form an interim government and restore law and order. The armies can be withdrawn. If the two countries arrive at a settlement on these lines it will be good for both. It is not that India had invaded a Muslim State or had gone there to help the Maharaja. Our Government is for the people and it is in the interest of the people that we enter into negotiations with the Princes. The Congress Government can take no other course.

I saw a couplet in an Urdu magazine today. It hurt me. I do not remember the words but the substance is this: “Today Somnath is on the tongue of everyone. If the temple is renovated it will have to be avenged. A new Ghazni must come from Ghazni to avenge what happened in Junagadh.” It is painful to think that such a thing can issue from the pen of a Muslim. I have said that I must do or die; which means that I shall either bring about Hindu-Muslim amity or lay down my life. This sort of thing cannot affect my resolve. I cannot return evil for evil. I can only return good for evil. I tell you all this so that you may not be taken in by such things. You must not remember the wrong that Ghaznavi did. Muslims should realize and admit the wrongs perpetrated under the Islamic rule. The Hindu and Sikh rulers of Kashmir and Patiala, etc., should also admit the excesses committed

in their States. There is nothing to be ashamed of in confessing one's sins, it only lightens one's guilt. If Muslims in the Indian Union teach their children that a Ghaznavi must come to avenge them and destroy the Hindus, who is going to tolerate this? If this mischievous couplet had not been published in an important magazine I would not even have mentioned it.[1]

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 239-41

105. LETTER TO NIRANJAN SINGH GILL

[After *December 25, 1947*][2]

I have your two letters. You did well in writing to me about the Harijans. Continue doing work of service in this way.

It will be a great thing if the Deshseva Sena can be completely non-violent.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

106. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

December 26, 1947

I have had your letter and the report of our conversation[3] read out to me just now (at a quarter to five in the morning). You have taken great pains over the report. I think the subject did not deserve so

[1] The couplet appeared under the title "Mahmud Ghaznavi" in *Aligarh Urdu Magazine* published from the Aligarh University. When the attention of Nawab Mohammad Ismail Khan, the Vice-Chancellor, was drawn to it, he sent a letter expressing regret for the oversight.

[2] The letter is written on the addressees note of December 25, 1947.

[3] The addressee's endeavour to establish a regional university in Gujarat had become a controversial subject. Gandhiji's article "Navin Vidyapitho", which could admit of the interpretation that he was opposed to the proposed university in Gujarat, was being quoted against it. The addressee, therefore, had a frank talk on the subject with Gandhiji on December 11.

For Gandhiji's article, *vide* "Of New Universities", 25-10-1947.

much labour. You have, of course, summarized my views quite well.[1] I don't feel at all like adding to or removing anything from the summary.

I learnt one new fact from you, namely, that Gujarat is the only linguistic region now left without a regional university. I must admit that this fact weakens my case. Even so, I do wish that this last regional university to be established would help in the progress of Indian civilization, which means the civilization of the country's villages. You may, if you wish, describe this desire as a form of greed or ignorant attachment on my part.

I still believe that, if the people loved the country as a whole rather than their respective regions, we should be able to bring about the establishment of linguistic provinces in a few months. You and I should, therefore, prove that your fear[2] will prove groundless and that my dream will be realized. We should exert ourselves to the utmost to that end. My regret is that I am not in a position just now to join in such an effort. I will, therefore, rest content with writing an occasional article in *Harijan* on the subject or addressing such a letter to you.

I hope you are keeping good health.

[From Gujarati]

Sansmarano, pp. 205-6

107. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
December 26, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I am happy and also sorry to announce that we shall not be having our prayer here tomorrow. Instead I shall be going to Sambhal, where a village panchayat has been formed. It is thought that because of my visit a large number of people will gather there. We shall have the prayer there. I have never been to that village before. They say the distance is about 11 miles, maybe a mile less or more. We shall of course have our prayer the day after tomorrow.

[1] While Gandhiji accepted the principle of universities being based on regional languages, he maintained that the linguistic redistribution of provinces should first be accomplished.

[2] Namely, that the linguistic redistribution of provinces might take years

Today I wish to tell you about the Tibbia College. Both Hindu and Muslim students joined it for studying Ayurveda which was taught there. Later, courses in Yunani, allopathy and homoeopathy were added. Hakim Ajmalkhan was the founder of the college. He was a popular leader of Delhi. Today we have made ourselves enemies of Muslims. It was not so when we thought of starting this college where everyone irrespective of communal considerations could study medicine. All contributed freely. Among the donors were Hindu Rajas and Muslim Nawabs. The late Dr. Ansari worked hard to make the scheme a success. It was under the management of a Trust which had on its board Hindus and Muslims. Today some Hindu friends came to me and asked what would happen to the college now. They said it was difficult to continue it under the present circumstances. Funds had ceased to come. It would be a matter of grief and shame if such a large institution had to close down. I am trying my best to avoid this calamity. The college is situated in Karol Bagh. But Muslim boys fear to go anywhere near it. We have driven out Muslims from Panipat. It is still a moot question where they will be able to live. It is a matter of shame for us. It seems that we are doing our best to ruin ourselves. For, when we try to ruin others we ruin ourselves. This is the rule of life.

Another matter I wish to speak about is that of abducted girls. I spoke on the matter once.[1] But I must speak again and again, for only then will the people understand. It is not a question of a mere ten or twenty girls. The number could be in hundreds or even thousands. Nobody knows. Where are all those girls? Muslims have abducted Hindu and Sikh girls. We want to recover them. In Lahore some Hindu, Muslim and Sikh women met and decided to have these abducted girls recovered and restored to their homes. They decided that Muslim girls carried away by Hindus and Sikhs should also be returned. I have received a long list of girls abducted from Patiala. Some of them come from very well-to-do Muslim families. When they are recovered it will not be difficult for them to be returned to their parents. As regards Hindu girls it is still doubtful whether they will be accepted by their families. This is very bad. If a girl has lost her parents or husband it is not her fault. And yet Hindu society does not look upon such a girl with respect any more. The mistake is ours, not the girl's. Even if the girl has been forced into marriage by a Muslim, even if she has been violated, I would still take her back with respect. I

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 7-12-1947.

do not want that a single Hindu or Sikh should take up the attitude that if a girl has been abducted by a Muslim she is no longer acceptable to society. We should not hate her. We should sympathize with her and take pity on her. If a girl is a Sikh, in my eyes she remains a Sikh, if a Hindu, she remains a Hindu. If my daughter has been violated by a rascal and made pregnant, must I cast her and her child away? Nor can I take the position that the child so born is Muslim by faith. Its faith can only be the faith of the mother who bore it. After the child grows up he or she will be free to take up any religion. Today we are in such an unfortunate situation that some girls say that they do not want to come back, for they know that if they return they will only face disgrace and humiliation. The parents will tell them to go away, so will the husbands. I have suggested that a sort of home should be established for such girls which should take up the responsibility for their food and shelter and education, so that they can stand on their own feet. These girls are innocent. The culprits are those—be they Hindus or Muslims or Sikhs—who have abducted them. Let the Hindus and Sikhs who have abducted Muslim girls return them. Let the Muslims who have abducted Hindu and Sikh girls return them. And let them confess publicly that they are guilty. The list I have received makes me tremble. What has happened in Kashmir? A large number of Muslims have been slaughtered. Women have been slaughtered and young girls have been abducted. If my voice can reach those guilty of this outrage, I shall ask them to return all those girls. I am told that several hundred Hindu and Sikh girls had similarly been carried away. I am also told that a certain *pir*[1] is holding in his house a large number of Hindu and Sikh girls. Those who have abducted them are reported to have said that they do not mean to harm or dishonour these girls in any way but that they will not return them so long as the abducted Muslim girls are not returned. This will be a wicked bargain. We should not act in such a way. We should behave like decent men. We must return all the abducted girls without any preconditions. If we want to retain our freedom we must learn decency of conduct.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 241-3

[1] A Muslim saint

108. LETTER TO RATHINDRA NATH TAGORE

NEW DELHI,
December 27, 1947

DEAR RATHINDRA[1],

Just after the morning prayer I see your letter.

I am glad about the notation of *Vandemataram*[2] and *Janagana*[3] I suppose you know that though I talk about notations, my ignorance of the language of notation is deplorable. An ignorant man, if he is truthful, can derive joy by proxy.

Of course, wherever I am, Santiniketan is always in my heart.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 2293

109. LETTER TO B. G. KHER

December 27, 1947

BHAI KHER[4],

The bearer of this note, Sevakram[5], a silent worker of Sind, possesses qualities worthy of his name. He serves the Harijans. We have to accommodate all the Harijans from Sind in the Bombay Presidency. Please do so as far as possible.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Son of Rabindranath Tagore

[2] *Vandemataram,* a song from Bankimchandra Chatterjee's novel *Anand Math,* one of the most popular patriotic songs during the freedom struggle

[3] *Jana-gana-mana,* a song by Rabindranath Tagore, which was adopted as the national anthem of India

[4] (1888-1957); Chief Minister, Bombay, 1937-39 and 1946-52; Member, Constituent Assembly; India's High Commissioner in Britain, 1952-54; Chairman, Official Language Commission, 1955; Chairman, Gandhi Smarak Nidhi, 1956-57

[5] Literally, 'Rama in the form of a servant'. The worker later became Chairman of the Servants of the People Society.

110. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

NEW DELHI,
December [*27*],[1] *1947*

CHI. MANI,

Sevakram who will bring this note is a dedicated servant of Harijans. All Harijans in Sind should be brought to India and rehabilitated in the Bombay State, Saurashtra, Kutch, Gujarat, Udaipur, Jodhpur and other places. The Sardar should do all he can in the matter.

SHRI MANIBEHN PATEL
C/O SARDAR PATEL
NEW DELHI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 145

111. LETTER TO KHANDUBHAI DESAI

December 27, 1947

BHAI KHANDUBHAI,

The bearer of this note, Sevakram, will recount to you the story of the Harijans of Sind. Try to accommodate as many of them as you can in the mills. I believe that Sevakram is first-class worker. You may make whatever use you wish this note.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

112. LETTER TO SURYAKANT

NEW DELHI,
December 27, 1947

CHI. SURYAKANT,

I have your letter. I can never ask you to give up truth; never give up obedience to your parents. Go on serving people.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In Pyarelal Papers the letter is found among those of this date. The book, however, has "29". *Vide* also the preceding and the following items.

113. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SAMBHAL,
December 27, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

It gives me special pleasure to hold a prayer meeting in this village. You should not thank me or give me an address of welcome or garland me. Prayer is our dharma. We pray when we get up in the morning. We should pray regularly morning and evening. In the evening at 5, or earlier in winter, we can have congregational prayer. We must utter God's name when we stand or sleep or eat. We must also remember God when at work. We should not give ourselves to selfish pursuits. We must pursue the path of service. I have too little time now to explain to you the whole significance of prayer.

Though, as I have told you, I want no addresses of welcome and garlands, still since you have given me these I thank you for the honour. You speak in your address of the greatness of truth and non-violence. But if our conduct is not in conformity with truth and non-violence, talking of them is hypocritical. I do not like this. Ever since I came to India from South Africa I had been travelling all over the country. I have traversed India many times and seen thousands of villages. People talk of truth and non-violence but they do not act accordingly. They think in one way, speak in another and act in yet another way. It is a matter of shame for us that in India Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs should be slaughtering one another. Mercifully there have been no riots here in and around your village because the number of Muslims here is small and they can do no harm. If we want to behave as enemies of one another, let us at any rate stop talking of ahimsa. Let us be truthful to this extent. We have not become free in order to slaughter one another. Freedom means that we should voluntarily do what is good. We have become free to do good, not to do evil. We never pray to God to let us utter falsehoods. If we do that it would be surrender to Satan.

It is a good thing you have formed a panchayat. But if it does not function properly and is a panchayat only in name, it will do no good. In former times there used to be real panchayats in the villages of India. Even I have not seen them. But travellers from China and Greece have reported about them. These travellers were not paid by

anyone. They were not even invited. They came on their own undergoing great hardships. They came in order to gain knowledge. They write that there were at the time no thefts anywhere in India; there were no locks on the doors. All this was not what happened thousands of years ago. Our history does not go back to thousands of years.

Formerly there were four *varnas*[1] Today these have grown into a large number. It becomes meaningless to call them *varnas.* It is a great responsibility you have assumed in forming a panchayat. The cows yield so little milk that many people say that they should be slaughtered. Muslims no doubt slaughter cows. But no one in the world slaughters as many cows as the Hindus do. Hindus do not treat the cows well. They do not know how to look after them. This amounts to slowly killing the cows. It is much better to kill them all at once. We worship cows and yet treat them most cruelly. I shall say your panchayat has done something if at the end of the year the cows that today give three seers of milk give six.

Similarly you should produce twice the present amount of foodgrain. You can do so by giving to the land the nourishment that it needs. Mirabehn had called a conference which was attended by a large number of people. They came to the conclusion that all the cow-dung, human faeces and vegetable-waste available in villages could be turned into rich manure. It requires not expenditure but a little labour and it increases the fertility of the soil.

I do not know how clean you keep your village. But it is your paramount duty to make yourselves strong. You must keep yourselves clean externally and internally. Your village should be free of dirt and dung in every way. And it should be free from foul smells. You should follow the rules of sanitation.

Why do you need a cinema here? Instead of this, you can perform the various plays and stage dramas known to us. The cinema will only make you spend money. Then you will also learn to gamble and fall into other evil habits. Those addicted to alcohol, *ganja*[2] and *bhang*[3] should give up these addictions. Then I shall feel that your Panchayat has done some good work. Then people will come from Delhi to see your village. You must forget untouchability. If you will

[1] *Viz.*, Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra
[2] Hemp
[3] Hemp flowers

realize that Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Parsis are all brothers you will show what free India means. May God give you the strength to accomplish all this.

Please do not clap your hands. What I have said is a part of the prayer. I want your blessings and if you do all that I have told you, you will have given me all I need.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pracachan*—II pp. 243-6

114. MESSAGE TO INDONESIA[1]

[Before *December 28, 1947*][2]

Success is at your door although the situation does not look bright at present. India fought for 30 years without sympathy from outside.

Mahatma Gandhi advised Indonesia to take every opportunity to establish closer relations with other Asian peoples.

He was also reported to have told an Indonesian Women's League delegation attending the All-India Women's Conference[3] in Madras:

Don't waver. Victory is in sight.

The Hindu, 29-12-1947

115. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

December 28, 1947

CHI. VALJI,

I went through your articles in the early hours of the morning. You will be surprised to learn that I did not find even one of them worth publishing. The article about villages does not apply to our conditions. A few selected paragraphs from it may be published. There does not appear to be much in the one about the fox and the hare. It seems you have not seen Dacca. The stopping of races there will have no effect in Calcutta. There can be no comparison between Hiroshima and our conditions in regard to building new houses. You

[1] This was given to a correspondent of *Merdeka*, a daily of the Batavia Republic and appeared under the date-line "Batavia, December 28".

[2] *ibid*

[3] Held on December 29

should go deeper into the subjects on which you write.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 7509. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

116. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

NEW DELHI,
December 28, 1947

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I don't think it necessary to publish your letter after the reply that Kumarappa[1] has given.

I got your letter regarding Mahadev[2]. It will be published in *Harijan* as suggested by you.[3]

In regard to the two parts about which you have sought my opinion, it is "yes".

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 4741. Courtesy: Shantikumar N. Morarjee

117. ADDRESS TO CLOTH MERCHANTS[4]

DELHI,
December 28, 1947

BROTHERS,

If you will be quiet you will be able to hear me. I have come here only for one thing and that is to say a few words about the controls. I feel that the control imposed on foodgrain is bad. It cannot

[1] Reviewing the Government scheme for shipping, J. C. Kumarappa in his article, "A Rudderless Shipping Programme", wrote that the scheme was not well-conceived and lacked proper thought and appreciation of organization. He suggested that the question needed to be handled with care, deep thought and tact, and that the Government should take into confidence the various interests affected by the industry, while drafting a workable scheme.

[2] The Mahadev Desai Memorial Trust. The addressee was one of the three Trustees nominated by Gandhiji.

[3] The article entitled "Mahadev Desai (Bombay) Memorial Trust" appeared in *Harijan*, 9-5-1948.

[4] The meeting convened by the Cloth and Yarn Merchants' Association was held at the Hardinge Library in the afternoon,

do any good to India. Control on cloth should also go. When ours is a free country, why should we have controls? Jawaharlal, Sardar Patel and others are the servants of the people. They cannot do anything against the wishes of the people. They cannot hold their offices if we ask them to step down. They themselves are not keen to stay on. They always say that they want to work for the people and that they are the servants of the people. It is also true. We fought the British for thirty-two years and in that we have shown how true democracy functions. Our strength is not like that of the British. They could have summoned armed forces from England. We do not have all that. But our Ministers have greater force than the armed force. Jawaharlal, Sardar Patel and others have the might of public opinion at their back which is greater than the might of an army or a police.

Why was it necessary to impose controls? The controls became necessary because of the fear of dishonesty and profiteering on the part of the traders. Why should a trader get more for his labour than a labourer gets for his? He should not take more. If the traders realize this we shall not have the difficulties which we are facing today in the matter of food and clothing. If we all refuse to put up with controls, they will have to go. If you and I are honest these controls cannot remain. But if we are not honest, removal of controls will kill India. The traders' associations and mill-owners should meet each other and remove the suspicion which people have against them and thus strengthen each other's hands. The *Gita* says: "Cherish the gods thus and let the gods cherish you.''[1] The gods are not to be found up in the sky. Just as our girls are regarded as goddesses so are we gods. But it is good that no one calls himself a god. That is man's humility. We should become and remain as pure as gods and live happily. Then our poverty, starvation and nakedness will disappear.

As far as cloth especially is concerned people in the villages themselves can, indeed must, produce the cloth they require. When our womenfolk begin spinning the yarn with their own pure hands, crores of rupees will go into the pockets of our villagers. We should take up such pure business. I consider myself a peasant, a Bhangi and a trader. You should learn from me how to carry on an honest trade. I know how to do business. After all I have been a lawyer. Is not legal practice a kind of trade? Today when I serve others I am pursuing a trade. Trade does not mean earn ing money anyhow. If you want to get the controls removed for the sake of the people and not for your

[1] III. 11

own, they will certainly go. You have displayed the slogan that the prosperity and freedom of India lie in decontrol. If that is true you have to be very honest and brave in your business dealings.

I have a letter which says that import of foreign cloth is on the increase in India. It also says that our cloth is being exported. In my opinion both these things are wrong. You will next start saying that you will not marry Indian women but import women from outside. What kind of trade will that be? My mother is my mother. Shall I choose for mother another woman more beautiful than she? In the same way you should not get beautiful clothes from outside.

These days businessmen import cloth in order to make money. But why should we import foreign cloth and export our cloth? We should make do with whatever cloth we produce here. We may export whatever remains after our need is fulfilled. You may export mill-cloth but only after we have produced the required quantity of khadi in the country. Control on cloth should go but at the same time control on petrol, firewood and other things should also go.

Here you have a sign saying "Beware of the mill-owners' tricks". Then you have to beware of the traders' tricks and my tricks also. You will have to cut my throat if I deceive you or if I serve my interest in the name of service. If the mill-owners or businessmen serve their own interests, then you have to boycott them.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 4-1-1948

118. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
December 28, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today I was at a meeting of cloth merchants[1], where they told me that cloth too should be decontrolled as so many other things had been. I have no doubt that control on cloth should be lifted. You will see from the papers what happened at the meeting. One thing the traders told me was that, even without the control on cloth being lifted,

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

the prices of cloth had begun to decline. The reason, they say, is that now my voice is raised for decontrol and the Government listens to me, and hence it is expected that cloth will soon be decontrolled. This has led to the hoarded cloth being brought out into the open market and so the prices have registered a decline. The same was the case with sugar. People tell me that wherever one goes one sees large stocks of sugar. It is being sold at one rupee a seer. I am told that people are even able to bargain and buy it for 15 as. or even 14 as. I am receiving telegrams from all quarters reporting much relief among people as a consequence of decontrol. Blessings are showered on me for having brought about decontrol. But it is not I who should be blessed, but the masses, for it is their voice that I have taken up. And that is why my voice was heard, otherwise who would listen to me? My own voice counts for nothing.

I say we should not treat Muslims as enemies. But people turn away from me. They say I am mad. I must say that if the masses do not listen to me they will be doing harm to their dharma. I say nothing improper. Tulsidas says that compassion is the essence of religion. You may say that Tulsidas was mad but no other book is as popular in the country as his *Ramayana*. It is not only in Bihar or in Delhi where it is popular, it is read everywhere. I only repeated what Tulsidas said. Why then do they say that I am mad?

I don't understand the control over firewood. It is not something you can eat. If it is freely available, will anyone eat it or burn it all up? They will burn only as much as is necessary. Why then should there be control over it? I shall not be satisfied till control on firewood is lifted. Today it has become so scarce that the poor suffer.

People ask me to press for decontrol of petrol also. I must say that control over petrol should be lifted and the sooner the better. We shall only gain thereby. There will be more motor vehicles on the roads which will only be for the good of the masses. Of course if there were more trains plying there would be no need for so much petrol. But laying more railway lines involves expenditure running into crores. We must make the best use of what we have. We have for the present all the railways we need. There are enough roads for going from one place to another. Only there is no petrol. What we need today is not rail transport but motor transport. I am sure that if petrol is decontrolled motor transport will increase. Lifting of controls is leading everywhere to lowering of prices. No decontrolled article has

shown a rise in price. If this had not been so I would not be getting all these telegrams. Decontrol of petrol and increase in road transport will facilitate the movement of food and cloth in the country. Salt too will be more easily available.

It is the price of salt that needs to be cut down the most. The tax on salt has been withdrawn, but the price of salt has increased, which is wrong. We have not learnt to make salt. We have a vast sea coast and we should have no shortage of salt. Even a child can make salt out of sea-water. If I bring a little sea-water from the Bay of Bengal, I can easily convert it into salt. It is a pity that one has to pay so much for this commodity and take so much trouble. The reason is that salt is not being easily transported from where it is manufactured. I know a mistake has been made in this regard in appointing contractors to transport salt. They have become dishonest and are making a lot of money. Others cannot transport salt. This contract system should be changed and the control over salt should be lifted. Two things are important, the change in the contract system and the organization of road transport. That will do for today.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 247-9

119. MATTER WELL PLACED

Compost is matter well placed, whereas rubbish and excreta, solid and liquid, are matter misplaced when they are allowed to lie anyhow to the discomfort of the public and detriment to their health. It is a criminal waste depriving mother earth of her precious food. Thus says Shrimati Mirabehn in her leaflet reproduced in full[1] in the *Harijan*, 23-11-'47, pp. 428-9:

> We do not treat our Mother Earth properly. She does her best to feed us all, but we do not feed her in return. How can she sustain us, her children, if we do not serve her as dutiful children should serve a revered mother? Year after year we plough, sow and reap harvests from the fields, but very rarely do we give any manure to the soil, and even what we give is usually *half-kachcha*[2] rubbish. Just as we need well-cooked food, so does the soil need well-prepared

[1] Under the title "How to Grow More Food"
[2] Imperfect

manure.

The curious may get a copy of the leaflet from her at the Kisan Ashram, Rishikesh, near Haridwar.[1]

NEW DELHI, December 29, 1947

Harijan, 4-1-1948

120. "DHAN" OF DUST

I could have given the heading "*Dhan* from Dust". But I have chosen "*Dhan* of Dust".

The process of sifting the grains from dust means obtaining *dhan* from dust. Similarly the industrious people of China collect gold dust by washing mud or sand. This too I would call *dhan* from dust. This is a transformation of the dust and much more so of the grains. Normally we use the term *dhan* for foodgrain. But when we use the word *dhan* for the grains of gold in dust, is it not a great transformation? Here *dhan* means some useful object whose value can be determined.

But when we say "wealth of dust" it implies a chemical transformation of dust. For instance, when we convert the dust, that is, earth into grains, we have converted the dust into wealth. When we sow the seeds in the earth and water them properly, it produces grain. I would call this creating *dhan* from dust. Our language has not become precise because we have neglected it.

Let me now come to the main point. I consider "compost" *dhan* of dust. Compost means the gold-like manure made from a proper mixture of such matter as cow-dung, faeces, droppings of birds and animals, grass, chaff, refuse, urine, etc. If we mix such manure with the earth in the field and then sow the seeds, it will yield at least double the crop and yet the soil will not lose its fertility.

Mirabehn is working hard in this direction. She has set up an ashram at Rishikesh. There she expects to carry on the work which she had begun in Delhi. She has started issuing small pamphlets on this subject. These pamphlets can be obtained from her. Her pamphlet is published in Urdu. She writes it in English as she does not have

[1] According to a "Note" in *Harijan*, 8-2-1948, her correct address was: Ashram Pashulok, Rishikesh, Dehradun, U. P.

sufficient knowledge of Hindustani and people working under her render it into Urdu.

NEW DELHI, December 29, 1947

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 4-1-1948

121. "URDU HARIJAN"

Readers know that two editions of *Harijan* in identical language are brought out every week—one in the Devanagari script and the other in the Urdu script. One which is printed in the Urdu script is called the *Urdu Harijan*. Shri Jivanji writes about its steadily dwindling circulation.[1]

I have always been of the opinion that no newspaper should be published at a loss. People should subscribe to the paper they want. I do not regard a journal self-supporting which meets its expenses out of advertisements. I allowed the Urdu edition to continue at a loss so long only because *Harijan* on the whole with all its language editions did not incur any loss. However there should be a limit to that also. My views on Hindustani and the two scripts remain unchanged. So for some time the Urdu edition will come out as usual. In the mean time the readers of the Gujarati edition and others should decide whether they would like to have the Urdu edition. If they want it they should help to enrol subscribers till the circulation reaches at least two thousand. Along with this they should also give thought to another point. It will become my duty to close down the Devanagari *Harijan*[2] also if people show an aversion to the Urdu script and the Urdu edition has to be stopped. I do not consider it right to bring out *Harijan* exclusively in the Devanagari. As a reformer it is my duty to bring out the paper either in both the scripts or in neither.

Much has been written on why the language is called "Hindustani" and not "Hindi" and why it should be written in both the Devanagari and Urdu scripts. I cannot think of any new arguments. My intention in writing this is to discuss how the *Harijan*

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. Jivanji Desai had stated that the circulation of the *Urdu Harijan* had fallen to 250 copies from 1,800 copies and that it was running at a loss of Rs. 20,000 per year.

[2] *Harijan Sevak*

in the Urdu script may be kept going. I feel confident that my hope will be realized.

NEW DELHI, December 29, 1947

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 4-1-1948

122. LETTER TO PYARELAL[1]

December 29, 1947

CHI. PYARELAL,

Please make the attempt.

Remember this: If you have assimilated my message, as long as you are free go on teaching the people to protect themselves. If death comes in the course of your mission of non-violence, you will embrace it. If they throw you into prison, you may fast unto death. Those who have this strength may stay on in Noakhali and face death, undeterred by what may befall the women. One ought not to run away in fear. Ask me again if you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Gujarati: *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. II, between pp. 496 and 497

123. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

BIRLA HOUSE,

December 29, 1947

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

. . . .[2] met me only yesterday. He said he did not know you were going to Jammu, nor did he know that the Jamsaheb[3] accompanied you. He also said that if he had known, he would perhaps have made suggestions or sent a letter. Is this correct?

[1] The addressee had asked what Gandhiji would expect the workers in Noakhali to do in the event of a war between the two Dominions and whether planned evacuation could be arranged for the women from there.

[2] Omission as in the source

[3] Of Saurashtra

After meeting Randhawa[1] I felt that it would save your time if I could write direct to him. Would that be in order?

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

1 AURANGZEB ROAD

NEW DELHI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 377

124. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

December 29, 1947

. . .[2] Religion makes for peace, love and joy in the world. But man is an animal and possessing an intellect he goes on committing greater and greater sins. Therefore if we look at it in the right way science and religion are complementary to each other.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 193

125. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

December 29, 1947

Medical science too has been much abused. Doctors and vaidyas have been exploiting it for fleecing their patients. In many instances they have even killed their patients. Through advertisements of drugs making false claims, people are made to pay at times even with their lives. But only the abuse needs to be stopped. From this it does not follow that medical science has been intended as a way of cheating and fleecing people.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 193

[1] Deputy Commissioner of Delhi

[2] Omission as in the source

126. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
December 29, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Yesterday was the death anniversary of Hakim Ajmal Khan. Hakim Ajmal Khan belonged to all—Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis and Jews. He was a devout Muslim. But he served everyone with equal devotion. The finest memorial to his labours was the famous Tibbia College and hospital at Delhi. All classes of students studied unani, ayurvedic and allopathic systems of medicine there. The communal poison, for which there was no place in this institution, has forced it to close down. I think the sole reason for this is that its founder Hakim Ajmal Khan was a Muslim, however good and however respected. If the memory of that great patriot cannot bury the communal strife let it at least give a new life to this college.

I mentioned earlier that it would be good to have our meetings in the open air under the canopy of the sky. If the habit grows we will have to make suitable arrangements for the site, etc., accordingly. In towns big and small we will have to have open space for the purpose. We will have to change our habits. We will have to learn to be quiet rather than noisy and we will have to learn to sit in an orderly way. We must learn also to speak only when we must and at a pitch that is sufficient for the occasion, neither too high nor too low. We should respect the right of our neighbour and not come in the way of others, individually or in groups. We should not interfere with other people's business. This will require on many occasions extreme self-restraint. In such an order of things the dirt and noise we find in the busiest areas of Delhi will no longer be there and however large the crowds there will be no pushing and jostling and no confusion. We must not think that we can never reach that goal. Some group or other will have to take the initiative and work for this sincerely. Just think how much saving it will mean in energy and expenditure.

I have been severely reprimanded for what I said concerning Kashmir and its Maharaja[2]. It seems to me that those who upbraid me have not really read attentively what I said. The advice I gave is the

[1] As Gandhiji was observing silence, his written speech was read out after the prayers.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 25-12-1947

kind of advice the humblest man may give. Occasionally it becomes one's duty to offer such advice. If the Maharaja had acted on my advice he would have risen very high in his own eyes and in the eyes of the world. Today his own plight and the plight of his State are not enviable. Kashmir is a Hindu State, the majority of its people being Muslims. The raiders called their raids a jihad. They say that the Muslims of Kashmir are being ground down under the tyranny of Hindu raj and that they have come for their succour.

The Maharaja has invited Sheikh Abdullah at just the right time. The task is new for Sheikh Abdullah. But if the Maharaja thinks the Sheikh can shoulder the burden he should be encouraged in every way. It seems obvious to me, as it should seem obvious to others outside, that if Sheikh Abdullah cannot carry with him the minority as well as the majority, Kashmir cannot be saved by military might alone. Both the Maharaja and the Sheikh asked India for armed assistance.

My advice to the Maharaja is that he should be a constitutional sovereign like the King of England and run his government and use the Dogra army[1] according to the advice of Sheikh Abdullah and his Interim Cabinet. What is there so strange about this? The terms of the State's accession to the Union remain as before. They confer certain rights on the rulers. I have ventured to advise the Maharaja that he should voluntarily relinquish or limit these rights and play his constitutional role as a Hindu ruler.

If the reports I get are inaccurate they should be put right. If my views regarding Hinduism and the duties of a Hindu ruler are erroneous, there is no question of any weight being given to my advice. If the Sheikh as the Chief of the Emergency Administration or as a true Muslim is found wanting in doing his duty he should remove himself from the scene and hand over the reins of administration to a better man. Today Hinduism and Islam are being tested on the soil of Kashmir. If the right thing is done and the right direction given to the process the chief actors will win fame. It is my prayer that in the present darkness in the country Kashmir may become the star that provides light.

So much for the Maharaja and Sheikh Saheb. Will not the Governments of Pakistan and the Union come together and decide the issue with the help of impartial Indians? Is there no one in India who

[1] The Jammu and Kashmir State Forces

is impartial? I am sure we have not become bankrupt to that extent.

A lady from Mathura has sent Rs. 50 by M. O. for buying blankets for the refugees. She does not disclose her name even to me. She wants me to acknowledge receipt in my prayer speech. I accordingly do so.

It is surprising that people of the States whose rulers have expressed a desire to accede to India are sending me telegrams full of complaints. If a raja or a jagirdar feels that he cannot carry on the administration all by himself, who can force him to keep his State as a separate entity? Those who spend money on these telegrams would be better advised to save their money. It seems to me those behind these telegrams have some axe to grind. They should go to the Home Secretary for advice.

Several Muslims especially in the Post and Telegraph Department say that they had earlier declared their willingness to stay in the Union for propaganda purposes and that they now want to change their option. There are also Muslims who have been dismissed from service. I think the reason for this can only be that they are suspected of being anti-Hindu. I sympathize with them. But I feel that however unjustified the suspicion may be in individual instances it should be forgiven and they should not give way to anger. I can only offer my well-tried prescription. Very few people can get into Government jobs. It should never be one's aim in life to secure a Government job. One's aim in life should only be to live honestly. If a man is willing to use his hands he will always find scope to make an honest living. I think that if Muslims want to retain their self-respect they should not run after Government jobs to the extent of going to Pakistan for them. Power comes from true service. Often power becomes a cause for one's downfall. To fight for it is unseemly. At the same time it is the duty of the Government to create opportunities of employment for the large number of unemployed men and women. If the task is handled with skill it can bring benefits to the Government instead of being a strain. I assume here that those for whom work has to be found will be of sound health and will be willing workers, not shirkers.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 249-53

127. LETTER TO HOSA RASHID[1]

December 30, 1947

DEAR DAUGHTER[2],

You are silly. I would have welcomed your Hindustani however imperfect it would have been. As it is, I can hardly decipher your signature. Of this more when we meet. Do come with your friend and stay with me if you wish and will stand discomfort.

Amtul Salaam writes to me often enough. I am sending her your letter. She will be pleased.

Love.

BAPU

BEGUM RASHID

17 YASHWANT NIVAS ROAD

INDORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

128. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

December 30, 1947

CHI. MUNNALAL,

If you can free yourself from the work there, you may come over whenever you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 7225. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

129. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

December 30, 1947

CHI. JIVANJI,

I am sending very little English material this time. The Gujarati matter, I feel, is sufficient. I am sending Sundarlal's Hindi and English articles. You may, if you wish, break up both into instalments. If I feel

[1] Widow of Abdul Rashid Khan, brother of Amtussalaam

[2] The superscription is in Hindi.

like it, I may send something more tomorrow.

You will see what I have done in regard to the *Urdu* [*Harijan*].[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9990. Also C. W. 6964. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

130. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

December 30, 1947

CHI. BABUDI,

You must not be impatient. Follow Sushila's[2] instructions. Having placed oneself in the hands of a doctor, it is best to do what he says. Nobody can truly foretell the future. One can do no more than guess. That being so, persistence in one course is the best remedy. Do nothing unwillingly or under anybody's pressure. Give up all worry.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10082. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

131. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

December 30, 1947

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have fixed Rs. 50,000 for the Hindustani Prachar [Sabha]. Hand over the amount to Nanavati[3]. I expect you know that he has now been appointed Secretary.

Let us see what happens in Sharda's case. Sushila who is going there will take the decision.

In the case of Champa[4], I leave [the decision] to you. I think it is best that she should quit the Ashram. The burden, however, is to be borne by you. Hence if you find it too heavy, harden your heart and tell her clearly 'No'. You may take it that it is for the good of all that the decision may not be taken by me.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide "Urdu Harijan"*, 29-12-1947.
[2] Dr. Sushila Nayyar
[3] Armritlal T. Nanavati, Secretary, Hindustani Prachar Sabha, Wardha
[4] Champa R. Mehta

132. LETTER TO MORARJI DESAI

December 30, 1947

BHAI MORARJI,

Herewith Balubhai's letter and a cutting. Please do what is needed and write to me if you have anything to say. If the information given in the letter is correct there is some substance in the complaint.

Isn't it proper that food control has been lifted if only in the urban areas? Another letter suggesting this is from Shrilal, which also I am enclosing.

The third letter is from Boriavi. This is about milk. Please look into that, too. 'Please return the letters after you have made use of them.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

133. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

December 30, 1947

CHI. RAMDAS,

This, a casual one. May you all progress in your spirit of service. That will be as good as doing all [that you should]. And for that too your health must be all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

134. LETTER TO HARSHADRAM

December 30, 1947

BHAI HARSHADRAM,

I have both your letters, one to Dr. Mehta, dated the 21st and another to me, dated the 24th. Bulsaria also writes what you say. I have not been able to know who among those who write to me is

looking after the work of Vachchharaj. Do you all work as a team or separately? You should not work separately. In the case of voluntary service all the workers should be comrades. I cannot know from here how much rent you should take from Vallabhram. That is why I must have used 'reasonable' or some such expression.

I cannot recollect having got a letter earlier.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

135. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

December 30, 1947

The notion that our own religion alone is true and all others are false is instilled in children right from their infancy. So they develop the attitude that what they believe alone is true.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 195

136. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

December 30, 1947

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

You will be glad to read this letter. I have given you permission to come. The Maharaja of Patiala saw me. I told him about your family. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 593

137. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

December 30, 1947

I hold that self-government is not an end, but only a means to good government. And true democracy is what promotes the welfare of the people. The test of a good government lies in the largest good

of the people with the minimum of controls. The test of autocracy, socialism, capitalism, etc., is also people's welfare or good government. In themselves they are of no value. Any system of government can fail if people do not have honesty and a feeling of brotherhood. There may be work, there may be men to do the work and tools with which to do it, yet in my view a system that admits of poverty and unemployment is not fit to survive even for a day.

How are you all? I myself am quite fit. I have to do or die here. Manu is ill. She has been having high fever for the last two days. This girl has learnt much but she neglects her health. Unless she has high fever she goes on working. She inflicts much brutality and violence on her body. Doctors suspect typhoid. We shall see. Even though sick she goes on doing me acts of service. I have just put her to sleep.

Blessings to all the children.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 196

138. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
December 30, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I told you yesterday in my written message and I also mentioned earlier that we should all know our respective places. We must know when to speak and when to keep silent and how to conduct ourselves, so that even if millions are there there should be no disturbance and no feeling of crowding. This is what happens with armies. They maintain an external discipline. What happens internally is another matter. We have not had this kind of training. I have often noticed that, when after the prayer I rise to go, people want to take a peep at me from all around and crowd round me. Good manners demand that after the prayer meeting is over everyone should quietly remove himself. Each one should ponder on whatever good things I may have said and go home.

I have a letter from Bahawalpur. I once spoke about Bahawalpur to you.[1] The people there liked what I said. They want me to mention the matter again and repeat that all the Hindus and Sikhs who are still there and who want to leave the place should be allowed to do so. All those who want to come have not been able to come. There are still a large number of people there. They want that no obstacle should be placed in their way and they should not be subjected to any assaults. Whether my saying anything on the subject will have any effect God alone knows. But one must make an effort whatever the effectiveness of one's effort might be. Of course the Nawab has said that Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs are equal in his eyes. And he is equally interested in the welfare of all his subjects. When he says so, who am I to question his motives? Still I can plead with him and his officials that those Hindus and Sikhs who do not want to stay there should be allowed to leave. It is his duty to put them on a train and have them safely escorted to the border. But even if he cannot do so he can at any rate allow them to leave on their own, taking away such of their property as they can. It will be a matter of thankfulness if he can do this much. But I do not want to limit myself to only making a plea to the Nawab. I want to tell Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah and his Government that today it has become impossible for a Hindu or any non-Muslim to live peaceably in Sind. Those Hindus who are called untouchables are particularly harassed there and they have no means of livelihood. They at least should not be subjected to indignities. Those who are not happy living there should be allowed to leave. If their conditions of life are made easy even those who have left Sind will go back there, seeing that Sind has regained its former state. But at present that is not the case. Even their schools have been taken over for the use of refugees who have gone there from Kathiawar. They say that the needs of the refugees are the first priority. How can Hindus live in Sind under such conditions? It will only mean that Pakistan has become Islamistan where no non-Muslim may live or where he can live only as a slave. I think no one will like to be a slave. This sort of thing is in no one's interest. I have many other things to say and only fifteen minutes to say them.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 23-12-1947.

I had spoken to you about Pandharpur.[1] There is a temple there of Lord Vithoba. It is the largest temple in Maharashtra. I have visited it. I had suggested that it should be opened to Harijans. Afterwards the trustees of the temple also supported my demand. When I got the news that the temple had been opened to the Harijans I had told you of it. Everyone seemed content and no voice was raised in opposition. Now they say that a large number of Brahmin priests are unhappy over this because the temple is visited by many Harijans every day. Some of the priests seem to have gone on a fast. This has distressed me. I have received this wire only today, and since I cannot reach there in any other way I think I should make a mention of the matter here and maybe my voice will reach Pandharpur. I want to say in all humility and sincerity that those who have resorted to the fast and still call themselves priests are really not priests. They are serving neither themselves nor Hinduism. The image in the temple is the image of Vithoba, i. e., of Krishna or Vishnu. It could not be the will of Vishnu that some should have His glimpse and others may not. In my view as long as the Harijans were barred from the temple it had not been really consecrated. Why should these people now fast? A Bill has been passed concerning Harijans' entry into temples. Even the lawmakers are Hindus. When millions of Hindus say that the temple should be opened to Harijans, how can they say that it should remain closed? I see no merit in the fast. I think it is sinful and should be given up. I think the priests should relent and say they were mistaken and their eyes have now been opened. It cannot be that in the temple of God one man should be admitted and another kept out. It is believed that visiting a temple cleanses the sinner of his sins in the same way as bathing in the Ganga does. I personally do not support the view that the water from the Ganga washes away the sins but it is a belief widely held. And maybe it does good to one who bathes in the Ganga in the faith that his sins will be washed away. Besides who can say that Harijans are all sinners? There are among Harijans persons of great merit as well as sinners.

A complaint has been sent to me pertaining to Bombay. It may be true of other places too. The complaint is that very little rice is supplied to card-holders in Bombay, perhaps half a seer in a week. This is wholly inadequate and will encourage black-marketing. I will say that control should go. Some people argue that rationing has

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 5-11-1947.

brought much relief to cities. I think it should be removed from the cities too. If everyone conducts himself honestly there will be no need for controls.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 254-5

139. TATYASAHEB KELKAR

Friends have more than once asked me why I have not noticed the death of so great a patriot as Tatyasaheb Kelkar[1], especially because he was a political opponent and more so because I am much misunderstood among a school of Maharashtrians. These reasons made no appeal to me: the very reasons which according to my critics should have prompted my notice.

I conceive it to be very unseemly to notice *pro forma* such a serious event as death. But I must do so now, though it is late, because of the importunity of one of my oldest friends— Haribhau Phatak.

I would at once admit that if it was usual for the *Harijan* to notice important deaths and births then Tatyasaheb's death should be among the first to merit notice. But industrious readers will have noticed that the *Harijan* has not followed any such practice. Notice has depended upon my whim of the moment and leisure. For some time past I have been unable to read newspapers regularly.

Whatever may be said to the contrary, Tatyasaheb, though a political opponent, I had always counted as a friend whose criticism was profitable. I knew and honoured him as the late Lokamanya's[2] valued follower. It was, I fancy, in 1919 that I pleaded at an A. I. C. C. meeting for a constitution for the Congress[3] and said that if the

[1] N. C. Kelkar who died on October 4, 1947

[2] Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920); nationalist leader, scholar and writer; one of the founders of the Deccan Education Society, *Kesari* and *Mahratta;* was sentenced to six years' deportation in 1908; launched the Home Rule Movement along with Annie Besant in 1916; started the Congress Democratic Party in 1920; author of *The Orion, The Arctic Home of the Vedas* and *Gitarahasya*

[3] In December 1919, at Amritsar the A.I.C.C. had appointed a subcommittee, consisting of Gandhiji, N.C. Kelkar, I. B. Sen, A. Rangaswami Iyengar and Vithalbhai Patel to consider the constitution of the Congress. *Vide* "The Congress", 7-1-1920 and "The Congress", 11-1-1920.

Lokamanya gave me Tatyasaheb and the Deshbandhu[1], Shri [I. B.][2] Sen, I would undertake to draw up one for submission to the Congress. Be it said to the credit of both the collaborators that though I submitted my draft to them in time, they never interfered with it. At the Committee that sat to consider the draft Tatyasaheb always offered helpful criticism. It was again at my suggestion that he was invariably appointed a member of the Working Committee. I do not remember an occasion when his criticism though sometimes bitter was not constructive. He was fearless but polite and friendly.

I had early learnt that he was a scholarly writer of Marathi. It has been my regret that I never got the time to learn Marathi sufficiently to drink deep of the wisdom of the modern Marathi writers like Tatyasaheb and the late Hari Narayan Apte. It would be churlish on my part to ignore the death of so great a star like Shri Narasopant Chintaman Kelkar in the Indian firmament.

NEW DELHI, December 31, 1947

Harijan, 4-1 -1948

140. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM

December 31, 1947

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

I got your letter. Do go to Panchgani again when you are in a position to do so.

I had tried *bhilama*[3] under the supervision of a vaidya of Poona named Joshi, after my release from jail. He had told me that it benefited only if it was consumed in the proper manner. Need I tell you this? I wish you to cultivate ideal health of body and mind.

I am not unaware of the chaos at Panchgani. But I find myself helpless. Things were all right when Vachchharaj was alive. His brother doesn't have his capacity. You did well, however, in drawing my attention. When you go again now, you may use your loving

[1] C. R. Das (1870-1925); was elected President of Indian National Congress at Gaya, 1922, but resigned thereafter and organized Swarajya Party; Mayor of Calcutta, 1924 and 1925

[2] The source has "Nishith", obviously a slip.

[3] *Semicarpus anacardium*

influence and get the necessary reforms introduced.

I have been convinced for a long time of the truth of what you say, namely, that if the Indian vaidyas don't see their dharma and act accordingly, they have no future.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 2922. Courtesy: Vallabhram

141. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

[*December 31, 1947*][1]

CHI. BABUDI,

I got your letter yesterday. I have already sent one through Sushila. You are a wise girl and hence I expect you will not worry on account of your health or anything else. One must acquire the faith that God will keep one as He wishes. If one gains this faith there can be no question of weeping either secretly or openly.

I do get news of your health from some source or other. I hear that the doctor there who looks after you is a very noble lady, persevering and efficient. It is all right whether you are cured under her treatment or you succumb to your illness. Therefore, so long as the doctor does not wash her hands off you, you had better stay where you are.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

142. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

December 31, 1947

We used to find the struggle against the British a hard task. But today it seems to me that that fight was a comparatively simple matter. The struggle today is much more difficult. We could make a mountain out of a mole-hill during the British regime. Today we are cutting at our own roots. When duty calls we run away from it. We cannot establish good government without purification. We have deserved the present regime because we have not purified ourselves. This, in my

[1] The letter is placed in the source among those of this date.

view, is not swaraj. Swaraj means that under our own government one will live and let others live a simple life.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji— II, p. 201

143. A LETTER

December 31, 1947

BHAI SHAHEED,

I read in the newspapers that you had fallen ill and therefore could not go to Lucknow.[1] What is this? How are you now?

Dinshaw and Jehangir Patel came here and have gone back.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

144. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

[*December 31, 1947*][2]

CHI. HOSHIARI,

I wrote you a letter which you must have received. It pains me that you are not keeping good health. It is our duty to be able to face any situation. If we grow like that there will be no reason for worry. Do come over here if it is necessary. You must keep Gajaraj there; he ought to remain there, he should have the strength to live by himself. Perhaps this is what I have already written.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

145. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

NEW DELHI,

December 31, 1947

I have your letter. I have already written a letter to you and along with it to Hoshiari also. You must have got it by now. It might be good for Hoshiari to come here. So she may as well come. Gajaraj

[1] For the Indian Union Muslims' Conference

[2] The letter is placed in the source among those of this date.

is to stay on there, I suppose, and he is now used to living alone. I understand what you say about Sharda. I take a detached view. It is all right if she passes away. Well and good if she survives. If she dies she will be released from pain and have a new body. That is no small matter. And if she recovers and lives she will render service. Now Sushila is there for a couple of days; she will discuss everything.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

146. TALK WITH SUBHADRA GUPTA AND OTHERS[1]

December 31, 1947

How can they (the refugees) have any confidence in you or respect for you when you go among them like up-to-date eves decked out in silks? And then you tell them to wear self-spun khadi and do the cleaning. . . I do not care if only half a dozen of you go. If there is simplicity, sincerity and purity within and without, your work will flourish. After doing full justice to your overloaded breakfast tables in your spacious bungalows you alight from posh cars dangling your stylish vanity bags, while those you are supposed to serve cannot even afford the luxury of a bath for lack of a change of clothes. Do you ever care to think that you are going to see people who had to leave behind properties worth thousands? . . . Social service these days has become a means for getting on in the world. Many socialites have consequently taken to this profitable hobby. There are of course exceptions but they are few and far between. I want women workers who would set an example in self-help, simplicity and dignity of labour.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 683, and *Dilhiman Gandhiji*—II, pp. 201-2

147. A MESSAGE[2]

NEW DELHI,
December 31, 1947

I am certain that no sin or guilt can be imputed to those Hindu and Sikh sisters who have been abducted, molested or converted by

[1] The report in *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase* has been collated with the Gujarati version in *Dilhiman Gandhiji.*

[2] The message, addressed to the refugees, was released through the Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation

Muslims. They should be received with open arms and given the same place which they occupied before in society.

The saintly poet Tulsidas once said: "Compassion is the root of religion." If we do not show regard to those sisters of ours, we cease to have any religion at all.

The Hindu, 1-1-1948

148. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
December 31, 1947

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Here are a few questions. Let me see how many of them I can deal with.

A friend writes to ask how, when Hindus and Sikhs cannot live peacefully in Sind, the Hindus from Punjab can be asked to go back. Has there been some significant change of heart? I think the Correspondent could not have asked the question if he had known the whole situation. What I had told the Punjab Hindus was after a meeting I had with some Muslim friends.[1] I cannot yet definitely advise the Punjab refugees to go back. It is right that so long as Hindus and Sikhs cannot live happily in Sind I cannot have any hopes as regards the Punjab either. At present the complaints I am receiving from all sides seem to be as to why Hindus and Sikhs from. Other places in Pakistan are not being allowed to come.

A few men from Chitral and Swat came to see me. They say there are still 251 Hindus in those places. I said that this was not a very large number. In Sind there are Hindus and Sikhs in much greater numbers and when they cannot come how can you expect the few in Swat and Chitral to be allowed to leave? The Government is doing what it can and so long as all the Hindus and Sikhs stranded in Pakistan do not arrive here it will not rest. I shall therefore not speak of the refugees returning to Pakistan till there is a change of heart. I know that if there is a change of heart in one place the same thing will happen at other places. If we have a change of heart here there will be a change of heart in Pakistan. It will take some effort no doubt but there will be a change. After all madness seized us only after it had

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 11-12-1947.

seized people in Pakistan. I shall not go into the various stages and degrees of madness. If sanity does not return we shall lose both India and Pakistan. There will be a war. The present state cannot last. People say that the required change in the situation has already taken place, that Hindus and Sikhs have come to India and Muslims from India have gone to Pakistan. They point out that transfer of populations of such magnitude cannot be reversed. I do not hold this view. Even if I am the only one to say it I shall still say that so long as people do not go back to their homes there will be no peace in the two countries. All the comforts you can provide to the Sikh and Hindu refugees are not going to heal the wounds they have suffered. It will be a matter of perpetual distress to them that they have lost their hearths and homes and if there is a war in fifty years' time or a hundred years' time, they are going to remember this. Such things are not forgotten.

A friend asks if the refugee camps cannot be made centres of training in handicrafts. This is certainly possible if even a single refugee wants it. It will not be necessary for me to bring any pressure on the Government to do this. It will readily agree to do what will save them the enormous expenditure they incur at present in running these camps. This will also enable the refugees to earn their livelihood without losing self-respect. I suggested that the friend should campaign for this and create an atmosphere where the refugees will themselves ask that they should be taught handicrafts. This will raise India higher and arrest the rot that has set in in India.

A lady has just given me this note. She is I think a Hindu from Pakistan. She says she had gone out for a short period and when she returned she found the lock of her house broken and some Sikhs occupying the house. She went to the police and had them arrested. One of them escaped. Now she wants to know what she should do—whether she should leave the house? I would not advise her to leave. I did not advise even those coming from Pakistan to leave their houses. But what is my advice worth? People will not be ready to lay down their lives on my saying so. I shall advise the lady not to leave her house. Why did the Sikh friends forcibly enter her house? The refugees should declare that they will not force themselves on anyone, nor enter anyone's house without permission. They should live on what little money they get.

A lady has written to me a beautiful letter. She does not give her name and address. She says she listens to my speeches every day on the radio, but that the hymns and *bhajans* sung at the meeting are not relayed. She suggests that if not every day at least once every third or

fourth day the prayer should be broadcast; that my speeches are only of mundane significance, while prayers are something spiritual. My speeches are recorded by the radio people and then relayed. I have no hand in this. Maybe they think that what I say will make for public good. I do not know what is possible for the radio people to do. But I think the *bhajans* sung here, however badly sung they may be, should be relayed. I respect the sister for what she has written. I must however disagree with her when she separates the prayer from the prayer speech. I have told you that what I say after the prayer is part of the prayer. I cannot sing it to you and my voice has no sweetness. Besides, I have grown so old that I would not be able to sing even if I wanted. So the girls sing and sing well. Whatever therefore is said or sung here is a prayer addressed to God. I should advise people to understand this.

Now about Junagadh and Ajmer. I spoke to you about the telegrams from Junagadh. Now I have a telegram about Ajmer. I know the story concerning Ajmer. What happened there was pretty grim. But the telegram exaggerates it. Such exaggeration only annoys people and provokes them. There is already so much poison in Delhi; but to say that Muslim property there is being plundered and their houses burnt, and that the shrine is in danger, is not right. The fact is that no one is going to touch the shrine. Why then do they send me such telegrams? There certainly have been instances of looting there. There also have been cases of arson and killings too. This is not to be denied. But exaggerating it only makes it smaller. I appeal to everyone to compare the report with the events. Only then can we ensure the justice which we seek. If we cannot confine ourselves to facts we are doomed.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 255-8

149. TALK WITH ENGLISH FRIENDS[1]

December 31, 1947[2]

No human being or religious institution is perfect in this imperfect world. Religious institutions are an answer to the challenge of the age and the particular circumstances prevailing at the time. Today we worship Christ but the Christ in the flesh we crucified.

[1] Who, accompanied by Amrit Kaur, met Gandhiji in the evening

[2] From *Dilhiman Gandhiji*

Stoning prophets and erecting churches to their memory afterwards has been the way of the world through the ages. They in the past could at least plead in mitigation that they did not know what they were doing. We can offer no such defence. And as the Confucian saying goes, "To know what is right and not to do it is cowardice."

In theory, a perfect religion is possible. But mankind has not known any so far just as no man can claim to have seen God. It is this that has been the goal of my aspiration and striving for the last sixty years. I cannot claim to have attained complete success but I feel I am coming closer to it every day and that is enough for me.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 697

150. LETTER TO KARL STRUVE[1]

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
January 1, 1948

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 11th November[2] which I have just received.

I have not seen the report you refer to. In any case, whatever I have said does not refer in any way to the failure of ahimsa, but it refers to my failure to recognize, until it was too late, that what I had mistaken for ahimsa was not ahimsa, but passive resistance of the weak, which can never be called ahimsa even in the remotest sense. The internecine feud that is going on today in India is the direct outcome of the energy that was set free during the thirty years' action of the weak. Hence, the proper way to view the present outburst of violence throughout the world is to recognize that the technique of unconquerable non-violence of the strong has not been discovered as yet. Not an ounce of non-violent strength is ever wasted. I must not, therefore, flatter myself with the belief nor allow friends like you to entertain the belief that I have exhibited any heroic and demonstrable non-violence in myself as yet. All I can claim is that I am sailing in that direction without a moment's stoppage. This confession should

[1] This, along with the addressee's letter, appeared in *Harijan* under the title "Ahimsa Never Fails".

[2] *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Karl Struve", 11-1-1948.

strengthen your belief in non-violence and spur you and friends like you to action along the path of non-violence.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

KARL STRUVE, ESQ.

WENTERF BEI REINBEK

From a photostat: G. N. 860

151. LETTER TO PRAGJI K. NAYAK

NEW DELHI,

January 1, 1948

BHAI PRAGJI,

I have your letter.

I am pained by such ignorance on the part of an eminent person like you. And why all this hatred of the Muslims?

If we do not prefix *Shri* to a man's name we should then use Mr. If not that, then *ji* for a Hindu, and *saheb* for a Muslim—what is improper about this?

Serve the people where you are, that will be much better than coming to me.

BAPU

PRAGJIBHAI KALYANJI NAYAK, ENGINEER

MAMA'S POLE

BARODA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

152. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER[1]

January 1, 1948

So your brother has departed. I had not even known that he was ill. We must be thankful that God has relieved him of his suffering. One day all of us—you, I and our near and dear ones—have to go. Now all over the country hundreds are dying every day. Many have left behind orphans with no one to support them. Many others have lost innocent children of tender age. You must consider the plight of

[1] This was addressed to a woman.

the country and console yourself. It is selfish to think only of one's own sorrow.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 206

153. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

January 1, 1948

Blind imitation is evidence of paralysis of the mind. How can we apply the rule of measure for measure to something that is bad and imitate it? It betrays meanness to talk about the number of Muslims killed in India or the number of Hindus killed in Pakistan. May God grant good sense to all. Today I am sustained only by this prayer.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 210

154. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

January 1, 1948

In my opinion there is no improvement in the situation here. For the present I am here but I am not sure what it will be possible to do. If there is peace in the city it is only from fear of the police. There is fire in people's hearts. That fire must either consume me or must be extinguished. No third way seems likely at the moment.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 206

155. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
January 1, 1948

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today is New Year's Day according to the English calendar. I am happy to see such a large number of people gathered here. I regret that it took no less than 7 minutes for us to make room for the women to sit. Even one minute lost at such a meeting is hundreds of thousands of minutes lost to hundreds of thousands of people. Our

brothers should learn to offer first place to the sisters. The country where women are not honoured is not really civilized. According to Manu[1] men and women should both understand their own limits. We should learn to behave with added restraint now that we are free. I hope the audience attending the prayer meetings will be even larger in future. But all those that come should come with prayer in their hearts, for prayer is the food for the heart. We cannot get anywhere else such food as we get from God. I also hope that the audience will maintain silence and will return to their homes in silence.

Recently there was a Harijan conference in U. P., at which it is reported, a minister preached to the Harijans that they should give up their unclean habits, unclean living and unclean clothes and abstain from alcohol. A Harijan countered that the Government could burn up the unclean clothes just as it could have palm trees cut down and wine shops closed. I admire the courage of the Harijan friend. I for one make *gur* from palm. I shall advise the Harijan brethren that the cure is in their own hands. Even if liquor is sold in shops they should keep away from it as they would from poison. In fact liquor is worse than poison. Labourers drink in order to forget their domestic worries. Poison can only kill the body. Liquor can kill even the soul. One loses the ability to control one's action. I would advise the Government to close down liquor shops and to replace them by eating-houses where people could get pure and light food. Here they should distribute books from which people could learn something and they should provide to them some harmless entertainment. But there should be no place for cinema. This will help people to give up alcohol. I say this from my experience of many countries. I have seen this in India and I had seen it also in South Africa. I am quite sure that giving up alcohol increases both the physical vigour of man and his capacity to earn. It is for this reason that prohibition has been a part of the Congress programme since 1920. Now that we are free the Government should redeem its pledge and give up the unholy excise revenue. It is not a real loss, for it will bring enormous good to the people. This is the way to our prosperity. We should achieve this through our own effort.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 258-9

[1] Codifier of Hindu Law, author of *Manavadharmashastra,* generally known as *Manusmriti*

156. A NOTE[1]

[After *January 1, 1948*][2]

I didn't see the pen at all. I even inquired about it. I you had told me, I would certainly have written. Now from tomorrow after you have finished other things go for a bath.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8731

157. WANTED ACCURACY

A correspondent from Malabar writes:[3]

> The confidence with which Shri Dev Prakash Nayyar has written on the "Intellectual Content of the *Takli*" in the *Harijan* of 21-12-47, takes one's breath away. He has made out that all knowledge is contained in the *takli* or can be derived from it or it is the quintessence of knowledge.... No doubt, the *takli,* charkha and spinning have a place in the proper scheme of education, especially, Nayee Talim, but to Say that the *takli* naturally takes you to mathematics, physics, economics, etc. is but "sentimental nonsense." The takli-enthusiasts need not carry their arguments in favour of spinning to a ridiculous extent. The cause of spinning cannot be advanced that way.

The correspondent evidently has not read as carefully as necessary Shri Dev Prakash Nayyar's contribution on the *takli* As I read it, he has advanced no such claim as the correspondent imagines. The author has not said that "all knowledge is contained in" or that "it is derived from" the *takli,* nor has he said that it is "the quintessence of knowledge". His thesis simply is that much knowledge that we derive from the books can be better given by competent teachers through crafts. The fact that the correspondent who is a practised spinner of long standing is "shocked" at Shri Dev Prakash Nayyar's claim and calls it "sentimental nonsense" proves that education does not reside in the *takli,* but it does in an educationist who, like Shri Dev Prakask Nayyar, having tested the possibilities of the *takli* is entitled to make the claim above mentioned.

I fear I must deprive the correspondent of the smug satisfaction that not even I have attributed to the innocent-looking *takli* more than "economic and moral virtues". Even the modest claim, I am sorry,

[1] This was scribbeled on a letter from Nrisimhaprasad K. Bhatt dated January 1.
[2] *ibid*
[3] Only extrctts from the letter are reproduced here.

claim, I am sorry, has not found universal acceptance. I was probably the first in India to ascribe what may be termed extravagant virtue to the *takli* and the like. Practical teachers along the line have found many more possibilities in handicrafts than I had mentioned. All honour to them for it.

I would strongly advise the correspondent humbly to accept Shri Dev Prakash Nayyar's cautious claim and seek more information from him as to how in the course of his giving his pupils lessons in Nayee Talim, he came upon his discovery. If the discovery is only imaginary, the correspondent will soon find out to Shri Dev Prakash Nayyar's discomfiture. The fall of an apple from its branch is said to have enabled Newton's rich mind to discover the law of gravitation.

NEW DELHI, January 2, 1948

Harijan, 11-1-1948

158. LETTER TO D. G. TENDULKAR

NEW DELHI,
January 2, 1948

MY DEAR TENDULKAR[1],

Here are the addresses which I was able to correct between yesterday and this morning under severe stress. I have removed the inverted commas commencing with each paragraph. I hope you will understand all the corrections and that I have not been too late.[2]

yours,
BAPU

D. G. TENDULKAR
407 KALBADEVI ROAD
BOMBAY

From a facsimile: *Mahatma*, Vol. I, p. VII

[1] Author of *Mahatma: Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, which was published in eight volumes

[2] Gandhiji took a keen interest in the addressee's venture and on January 22, 1948, discussed with him "the smallest details" about the format, the type, illustrations, standardization of spelling and so on.

159. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER[1]

January 2, 1948

The *Gita* rightly says that action without knowledge is of no worth. I have had experience of this many times and many others too will have had the experience. If action is informed by knowledge devotion comes on its own. To do this one must always take one's stand on truth. If one has come to realize truth nothing else remains to be done. As we look into a mirror and discover the lightest spots on our faces, so must we look into our hearts. Only afterwards may we criticize others. Hardly anyone can claim perfection for himself. It is my humble advice to you that rather than observe the faults of . . . you should observe your own.... should follow my advice only if he finds it good. Otherwise he may reject it.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, pp. 212-3

160. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

January 2, 1948

I find myself here in a fiery pit. It is difficult to say what will happen. Maybe we shall know soon. Manu is completely exhausted. Her condition has reached a stage where it causes worry. The fault is perhaps as much mine as hers. I have made her work eighteen hours at a stretch. And I have subjected her to an equal or even greater mental strain. After all she is only a young girl of sixteen or seventeen years. Still I am convinced that if she only has Ramanama inscribed in her heart she will suffer no physical enfeeblement. But how can I measure this? So long as her condition does not improve it must remain a cause of worry to me. In this *yajna* her part is of no small significance. So many girls come to me. But in the matter of service Manu, considering her age, surpasses all the others. And if I had not sent for her, I would have carried the guilt of having done her injustice. Now my only wish is to see her restored to health.

I cannot say how long I shall have to stay here. I have to do or die. There is no third way.

How is your health? I hope you are not continuing the dietetic

[1] Omissions in the letter are as in the source,

experiments. Manu will write the rest. I am well. It is God's mercy that under the present strain I am able to keep myself fit.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 213

161. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

January 2, 1948

Man today is afraid of man, afraid of his neighbour. How can I then talk about national issues? We deliberately bring suffering on ourselves, deceive ourselves. No one can harm another. In my view man is himself the cause of his sufferings. This city which is the metropolis of the country has the appearance of a dead city. No one trusts anyone. Such peace as one finds is to be attributed to the fear of the police. Why is it that the freedom achieved through non-violence is sought to be sustained by violence? I have been searching my heart. I find despair there. Maybe it was the will of God that I should witness this day. Now I have to do or die. Let us see how much I have yet to overcome to reach the state of *sthitaprajna*. I thank God that he woke me up at last.

Manu is seriously ill. The girl has tremendous energy but she has become weak in the body. I admit that I have treated her harshly and this is the result of that. After all how much can her poor body bear? I have extracted much physical work from her and even more mental work. But I have the satisfaction that she has lost nothing. I have trained her well. If only I could bring her back to health now! She is careless about her health. She forgets everything in serving me. You should not worry. I am much concerned about her health. Typhoid is suspected.

How are you all? The situation in Bihar is difficult, but the fate of Delhi today will be the fate of the country....[1]

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, pp. 211-2

[1] Omission as in the source

162. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
January 2, 1948

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Tomorrow we may have to hold the prayer meeting at the Wavell Canteen, where many refugees are living. I have been there once and I was asked then to hold the prayer meeting there, but I could not stay on. Today someone from the camp came and requested me and I have agreed to go there tomorrow. So if it does not rain tomorrow I shall hold the prayer there. But if it rains it may not be possible to have the prayer there. In that case we shall have it here. In any case the prayer meeting will be held. Thus it is a little uncertain about tomorrow. Of course if you wish, you may come here and if there is no prayer, you can go back.

I saw you laugh at my little umbrella[1]. It is a beautiful thing. It costs nothing. It was given to me free of cost not because I am a Mahatma. The fact is that when I was touring in Noakhali,[2] it was very hot and some people took pity on me and gave me this. They put it on also when it rains. Mostly people have to work in the fields, they cannot do so in the heat of the sun without putting this on. Muslims live there in large numbers. There are Hindus too, but mostly they carry on business. Everyone has this kind of umbrella. There was a Muslim friend there because after all every Muslim did not consider me his enemy and later they had all understood that I had not gone there to plunder them or to prepare a case against them, but I had gone there only to give such solace as I could to the Hindus. So they gave me this umbrella. I did not really need it much there because I did not do more than an hour of walking each day. They also gave one to Nirmal Babu[3]. When I left Noakhali Manu suggested that I should take along this umbrella because I would have to do a lot of walking in the sun and it would be a good covering for the head. This can be made anywhere. It can be made even here. The other kind of umbrella needs a handle while this has no handle. When it is windy we can tie the string attached to it round the face.

[1] A broad straw hat which Gandhiji used as an umbrella

[2] From November 6, 1946 to March 1947

[3] Nirmal Kumar Bose, a professor of Calcutta University, who accompanied Gandhiji as his interpreter on his walking tour of Noakhali

The *bhajan* that was sung today, though well sung, is really a morning *bhajan*. In this *bhajan* we pray to God to wake up. But God is always awake. He never sleeps. But there is a belief in Hinduism that when dawn breaks everyone must wake up. The devout go round calling everyone to arise. We have *bhajans* for the morning, *bhajans* for the noon, *bhajans* for the evening and *bhajans* for the night. Only musicologists know all the subtle distinctions. I do not know much but since some *bhajan* or other is sung here every day I have come to have some idea.

I have a long letter apparently written by a Hindu. He says I have learnt nothing and am still friendly with Muslims, though I have been repeatedly told how stupid it is to imagine that any Muslim can be our brother or be loyal to the Indian Union. If there are any such, he says, I should keep them and send the rest away. If I did not do so, what would happen, he asks, in case, God forbid, a war broke out between India and Pakistan. Do I imagine that the several crores of Muslims in India will be loyal to India and fight against Pakistan? It is easy to pose such questions but difficult to answer them. All that I can say is: Wherever we may choose to live, if we want to live as men we must not assume anyone to be bad till he has been proved to be bad. If you read newspapers you will know that recently about one lakh of Muslims had gathered in Lucknow.[1] One cannot believe that there was not a single Muslim Leaguer among them. There must have been some, even if there had been no League leaders. If later they betray you, you can shoot them. You may shoot one or two or a certain number. Everyone will not be disloyal. Nowhere in the world can everyone be disloyal. Therefore the correspondent writes out of ignorance. But today he is angry. The barbarities the Muslims have committed are on his brain. He wants all Muslims to be driven out. If similarly Pakistan says that Hindus have committed barbarities here and they should be driven out, I shall say it is foolish to say so. It will be the limit of folly. It is this attitude that was responsible for the partition of the country. If you want to bring the two together, that can be done only if we become good. Only the good and the noble can be brave. Stupid people can never be brave. Today the poison around us

[1] At the Indian Union Muslims' Conference, which met on December 27 and 28, Abul Kalam Azad called for the winding up of the Muslim League in India. The Conference unanimously adopted a resolution asking Muslims in India to dissolve all communal and political organisations and advising them to join the Congress.

is only increasing. Kashmir has added more poison. If there is a war both countries are going to bleed. I do not wish to be alive to see that. I do not wish to be a witness to that carnage. I can only pray to God and ask you all to join in the prayer that He may take me away. Why should we not so conduct ourselves that any conflict between India and Pakistan becomes impossible? We must be brave and trust the Muslims. If later they violate the trust you can cut off their heads. But you cannot say that if anyone refuses to go to Pakistan his head should be cut off. This means cutting off millions of heads on both sides of the border which would be the limit of madness. There are now perhaps thirty or thirty-five millions of Muslims in India. If we harass them we shall not survive as a nation nor can our Hinduism. I pray to God that He may cure us of this folly and this madness so that our country which has advanced may continue to make progress. Today we seem to be falling and the sort of letter that the correspondent has written gives further impetus to the fall. The note is written in English. He writes English quite well, but I cannot praise him for that.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*-II, pp. 260-1

163. IS IT DESERVED?

NEW DELHI,
January 3, 1948

In the course of a long letter which Reverend Dr. John Haynes Holmes[1] had written to me before leaving the hospitable shores of India, he writes:

> Of course you have been sad, well-nigh overborne, by the tragedies of recent months, but you must never feel that this involves any breakdown of your life-work. Human nature cannot bear too much—it cracks under too great strain—and the strain in this case was as terrific as it was sudden. But your

[1] (1879-1964); a pacifist, founder of a non-sectarian community church in New York; Editor of *Unity* in which Gandhiji's *Autobiography* was first published in America; author of *My Gandhi*

Dr. Haynes Holmes came to India on October 5, 1947 as Tagore Memorial Professor at the Banaras Hindu University under the auspices of the Watumul Foundation. He met Gandhiji on October 12, 1947.

teaching remained as true and your leadership as sound as ever. Single-handed you saved the situation, and brought victory out of what seemed for the moment to be defeat. I count these last few months to be the crown and climax of your unparalleled career. You were never so great as in these dark hours.

I wonder if the claim can be proved. That much more than Dr. Holmes observed can be proved of ahimsa, I have not the slightest doubt. My difficulty is fundamental. Have I attained the requisite qualifications for exhibiting the virtues of ahimsa, even as Dr. Holmes has said? Knowing as I do the working of ahimsa, however imperfectly, I see every reason for the utmost caution in advancing claims that cannot be proved beyond a doubt.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: C. W. 10971. Courtesy: Rogers W. Holmes. Also *Harijan*, 11-1-1948

164. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER[1]

January 3, 1948

I have your angry letter. How can I tolerate your being so angry? When iron is heated sparks fly from it. But however much one may strike it with a hammer, the hammer does not become hot. If you can only make yourself like a hammer everything will come about as you desire. For the rest, if the sea catches fire what can anyone say?

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 218

165. LETTER TO SAVITRI BAJAJ

January 3, 1948

CHI. SAVITRI[2],

Kamalnayan told me that you have had a baby and that you had afterwards developed a fever. I hope by now it is gone and you are both well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 3062

[1] This was addressed to a woman.

[2] Wife of Kamalnayan Bajaj, son of Jamnalal Bajaj

166. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

NEW DELHI,
January 3, 1948

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your letter. What do we lose if we do not get a certificate from the Charkha Sangh? In my opinion we only gain as our aim is to serve khadi and thus the Charkha Sangh.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2741

167. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

January 3, 1948

It does not appear likely that I shall be able to get out of here. I have to do or die. You may think there is peace in Delhi. But that peace is not the peace of the hearts. It is imposed by arms. I am waiting for the call from within. I have here three or four girls in attendance. I am living in the palatial Birla House. But I find no rest. The girls are serving me well. For the time being I do not feel the need to call upon your services. Of course the girls can leave whenever they want with my permission. Only Manu has a part in this *yajna*. The rest of the girls are here only accidentally. They can go as they came. I have to admit that Manu's service in this *yajna* has been significant. Only, she has been neglecting her body.

How are you all? How is Khadi Pratishthan doing? How many people are there in the Ashram? Ashrams should not depend on outside help. About Sevagram I have come to the conclusion that it should either become self-supporting or it should be closed down. The Ashram has become like a *pinjrapole*[1].

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, pp. 218-9

[1] A shelter for old and sick cattle

168. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

January 3, 1948

I am nowhere near realizing Rama yet, but I am striving. When I have the realization, the glow of my ahimsa will spread all around.

The situation here is extremely perilous. About Kashmir Mountbatten is doing all he can. Whatever may happen, Bengal and Bihar must be spared the conflagration. If there is the slightest disturbance there you will not find me alive. Let everyone have this message of mine.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 217

169. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,

January 3, 1948

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I am happy to be able to fulfil the promise I made to you to visit the camp and speak a few words to you. I am also happy to observe that there are almost as many women in the camp as there are men. First of all I shall request you to join me in the prayer that peace and love may again be established in India and the world and all men may become brothers. Today there is no peace to be seen anywhere in the world. Peace cannot be established with the help of money. So long as there is no peace in the heart there can be no peace outside. Only when peace issues from within the heart and is expressed through the eyes, words and actions of men can we say that peace has been established. A man of peace can live happily even in a mud hut and has no thought of the morrow, for it is only God who knows what will happen on the morrow. Shri Ramachandra, who was a man like us, had no idea when he was about to be installed on the throne that he would have to go into exile. But he realized only too well that

[1] Held at Wavell Canteen Refugee Camp

securing peace was not the same thing as securing a throne and that peace was not dependent on external conditions. Therefore when he knew that he had to go to the forest his peace was not ruffled. If Hindus and Sikhs could have that realization the madness that has seized them would have been cured and, whatever the actions of the Muslims, they themselves would have remained calm. If Hindus and Sikhs even now realize this, I am sure it will have the most desirable effect on the Muslims.

I am told that this camp is being very well managed. I cannot accept this assurance fully till I know that the refugees too fully participate in keeping the camp clean and that they co-operate with the officials in every way. I know how dirty the streets of Delhi are. One can only say that the camp is well managed when it is made to look at least cleaner than the roads of Delhi. I know the sufferings you have had to bear. Some of you have come from well-to-do homes. You must not hope here for the comforts you had in the past. You must learn to adapt yourselves to the new situation and try with patient labour to improve your conditions.

I remember how on the eve of the Boer War in 1899 Englishmen had left the Transvaal for Natal. They knew how to face hardships. They all lived the same way. One of them was an engineer and worked with me as a carpenter. We have been a slave country for centuries and we have not learnt this virtue. Now that we are free—and freedom is a precious thing—I hope our refugee brothers and sisters will learn something from their sufferings and make this an ideal camp so that people, if not from all over the world, least from all over India, can come and visit it and take pride in it. The hymn that has been sung in the prayer just now means that we should surrender to God all that we possess and take from it only the barest minimum for our needs. If we act in conformity with this hymn, not only this camp but the whole of Delhi will breathe a new life and all our hearts will be filled with an inner joy.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 261-2

170. QUESTION BOX[1]

Q. It does not matter whether the lingua franca be called Hindi or Hindustani; in any case the common language in actual use will remain Hindustani. It cannot, however, be gainsaid that in advanced literature and science certain words will be necessary which can only be derived from Sanskrit. Where is the harm in making this clear to the public?

A. The first part of the question would be correct provided the name adopted were accepted by all in the same light. The controversy arises not over the name but what it is meant to convey. In advanced literature and science we should not draw exclusively from Sanskrit. A small committee can be appointed to prepare a dictionary of current words irrespective of their original source.

Q. With regard to the script, it would be burdensome to have to use two scripts in the conduct of the affairs of the nation. Why not then adopt the Nagari script which is current in all provinces? Does the two-script proposal mean that the Central Government should use both the scripts in its correspondence and publications? Would telegraph and other offices also have to use both the scripts?

I do not subscribe to the view often put forward that the two-script proposal is meant to appease the Muslims. Our concern should be to select the script which might be advantageous to the nation as a whole without wishing any injustice. It would not be correct to hold that the adoption of the Nagari script would be harmful to Muslim interests. As far as I can see, it would be necessary to adopt both the scripts, but only as a temporary measure— ultimately one script should be acceptable to all. How can this be disputed?

A. With the adoption of the two scripts, the easier one will ultimately survive. All that is wanted is that the Urdu script should not be boycotted, as such boycott would imply discrimination. A controversy arose over such discrimination and this has now been accentuated. With this background, we who believe in unity and are opposed to civil strife are bound to adopt both the scripts. Again we cannot forget that many Hindus and Sikhs are ignorant of the Nagari script. There is no question of all people having to learn both the scripts, but only of those liable to serve outside their province. Nor is it suggested that all notices should be issued by the Central Government in both the scripts—but only those meant for all.

[1] A Hindi version of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak,* 11-1-1948. The questions were sent by Rameshchandra of Shillong; *vide* "Letter to Rameshchandra", 4/5-1-1948.

Having regard to the present communal antagonism, the boycott of the Urdu script would be regarded as an antidemocratic measure.

The question whether telegraph and other offices would also have to use both the scripts is a minor one. When we get rid of the incubus of the English language and the Roman script, our minds will be clearer and we shall realize the futility of such controversies.

While we must always refrain from an improper course with the object of appeasing others, there is no harm in conciliating when the course itself is intrinsically proper. If all accepted our script willingly, it would be so good, but even to achieve this end it is necessary to retain both the scripts at present.

NEW DELHI, January 4, 1948

Harijan, 11-1-1948

171. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

January 4, 1948

Who knows what will happen tomorrow? Everything about me is uncertain. But I am moving towards light. Your leucorrhoea must be cured. You should abstain from salt. Pulses in this disease are as poison. So are spices. Hip-baths, mudpacks on the stomach and rest are necessary. Had you been here I would have made you fast. But I have full faith that if you resort to these external remedies and recite Ramanama with your whole heart, you will certainly be cured of the disease. In India 75 per cent of the women suffer from this ailment. The main reason is the feeling of shame associated with it, total ignorance about the matter and unnatural eating and Iiving. It wilI not be wrong to say that our sisters do not have any idea of how terrible and painful this disease is. I have made up my mind that if I can extricate myself from my present involvements my first task will be to tackle all these diseases of women through nature cure. But today this seems fanciful.

Chand is not yet fully restored. Her disease is more of the mind than of the body. Abha and Manu are well. Sushila is due here today from Bombay. I write this in the early morning. Even if I can write to you only occasionally, you should write to me regularly. The rest from Manu.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, pp. 225-6

172. PRAGMENT OF A LETTER[1]

January 4, 1948

Children should not write in pencil. They should not use a fountain-pen. Writing with a reed pen improves the handwriting. I hope you help your mother with domestic chores and regularly spin half an hour every day. You should do physical exercises and make your body strong. I hope you have learnt to make *chapatis* and cook vegetables. Anyway you will tell me when we meet. Be cheerful and happy. Manu will write the rest.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 225

173. LETTER TO M. B. GODBOLE[2]

NEW DELHI,
January 4, 1948

BHAI GODBOLE,

I have your letter. The first book was a translation of Dr. Lindlahr's book, was it not? Are there any other books by him?

I no longer hold the view I had held earlier. Greater experience has convinced me that Dr. Lindlahr's book is quite ordinary. His book has gained very little currency in America. Anyway you may send me your book. I would like to see it when I have some leisure. The publication of the book should not be held up for the sake of my foreword.

I feel grateful that you have agreed to render some help at Uruli. You should go there and see things for yourself. It has a trust of which Dr. Mehta is one of the trustees. There is no harm in doing that. I am writing to the Secretary of the Trust about your letter.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This was addressed to a young girl.

[2] This was in reply to the addressee's letter dated December 30, 1947 requesting Gandhiji to send a foreword for his translation of Dr. Lindlahr's *Practice of Nature Cure.*

174. LETTER TO RAJA OF AUNDH

NEW DELHI,
January 4, 1948

RAJA SAHEB[1],

I have your letter.[2] You are doing good work. May God grant you success.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

175. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
January 4, 1948

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I have been a little late today because it had been raining and I was told that I should be in no hurry for I might not find many people here. But I said that no matter how small the audience, it was my duty to be present. There was also some other business to attend to and this took a few minutes. I thank you for having come in spite of the rain and it gives me much satisfaction that there are so many of you. It shows that you are keen on the prayer. If you have come merely out of curiosity then it has no value.

Today there is talk of war everywhere. Everyone fears a war breaking out between the two countries. If that happens it will be a calamity both for India and for Pakistan. India has written to the U. N. because whenever there is a fear of conflict anywhere the U. N. is asked to promote a settlement and to stop fighting from breaking out. India therefore wrote to the U. N. O. However trivial the issue may appear to be, it could lead to a war between the two countries. It is a long memorandum and it has been cabled.[3] Pakistan's Zafarullah

[1] The addressee was the first to introduce full responsible government in the State in 1939. Aundh was one of the eight States which made up the United Deccan State formed on December 20, 1947, at Miraj.

[2] For details, *vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 6-1-1948.

[3] On January 1, 1948, the Government of India submitted a formal complaint to the Security Council. *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Indian Representatives to the Security Council", 1-1-1948.

Khan[1] and Liaquat Ali Khan[2] have since issued long statements. I would take leave to say that their argument does not appeal to me. You may ask if I approve of the Union Government approaching the U. N. O. I may say that I both approve and do not approve of what they did. I approve of it, because after all what else are they to do? They are convinced that what they are doing is right. If there are raids from outside the frontier of Kashmir, the obvious conclusion is that it must be with the connivance of Pakistan. Pakistan can deny it. But the denial does not settle the matter. Kashmir has acceded to India. And India has accepted the accession upon certain conditions. If Pakistan harasses Kashmir and if Sheikh Abdullah who is the leader of Kashmir asks the Indian Union for help, the latter is bound to send help. Such help therefore was sent to Kashmir. At the same time Pakistan is being requested to get out of Kashmir and to arrive at a settlement with India over the question through bilateral negotiations. If no settlement can be reached in this way then a war is inevitable. It is to avoid the possibility of war that the Union Government has taken the step it did. Whether they are right in doing so or not God alone knows.

Whatever might have been the attitude of Pakistan, if I had my way I would have invited Pakistan's representatives to India and we could have met, discussed the matter and worked out some settlement. They keep saying that they want an amicable settlement but they do nothing to create the conditions for such a settlement. I shall therefore humbly say to the responsible leaders of Pakistan that though we are now two countries—which is a thing I never wanted—we should at least try to arrive at an agreement so that we could live as peaceful

[1] At a Press conference at Karachi, on January 1, Mohammad Zafarullah Khan, Pakistan Foreign Minister, denying Pakistan's complicity in the attack on Kashmir had stated: "Kashmir on all sides was surrounded by predominantly Muslim areas and realizing that something was to be done to help the Kashmir Muslims in their plight, individual Muslims from the surrounding areas did whatever they could to bring help."

[2] Denying the charges of aggression and looting, the Prime Minister of Pakistan had, among other things, stated on January 3: "There are some who are helping the forces of the Azad Kashmir Government, who have come from tribal areas because of the reports . . . of the general massacre of Muslims that had been going on in Kashmir by armed bands of Hindus, Sikhs and troops of the Maharaja." He claimed that "the conspiracy and plans for the occupation of Kashmir by Indian troops were laid well in advance and the excuse that India sent her troops because of the so-called invaders having entered Kashmir territory, was only intended to deceive the world." He further said that "we made it clear that we had no control over the forces of the Provisional Government of Kashmir or the tribesmen, engaged in fight."

neighbours. Let us grant for the sake of argument that all Indians are bad, but Pakistan at least is a new-born nation which has moreover come into being in the name of religion and it should at least keep itself clean. But they themselves make no such claim. It is not their argument that Muslims have committed no atrocities in Pakistan. I shall therefore suggest that it is now their duty, as far as possible, to arrive at an amicable understanding with India and live in harmony with her. Mistakes were made on both sides. Of this I have no doubt. But this does not mean that we should persist in those mistakes, for then in the end we shall only destroy ourselves in a war and the whole of the sub-continent will pass into the hands of some third power. That will be the worst imaginable fate for us. I shudder to think of it. Therefore the two Dominions should come together with God as witness and find a settlement. The matter is now before the U. N. O. It cannot be withdrawn from there. But if India and Pakistan come to a settlement the big powers in the U.N.O. will have to endorse that settlement. They will not object to the settlement. They themselves can only say that they will do their best to see that the two countries arrive at an understanding through mutual discussions. Let us pray to God that He may spare us the threatened strife, but not at any price. All that we may pray to God is to grant that we may either learn to live in amity with each other or if we must fight to let us fight to the very end. That may be folly, but sooner or later it will purify us.

Now a few words about Delhi. I came to know of the incidents which took place last evening throught Brijkishan. I had gone to the Camp[1] for the evening prayer, I came away after the prayer but he had stayed over to talk to the people in the Camp. There are some Muslim houses at a little distance from the Camp. About four or five hundred inmates of the Camp— mostly women and children but also some men—issued out of the Camp to take possession of the houses. I am told they did not indulge in any kind of violence. Some of the houses were vacant. Some were occupied by the owners. They tried to take possession even of the latter. The police were near at hand. They immediately went to the spot and brought the situation under control at about 9 O'clock according to the newspapers but about 11 O'clock according to the information I have. The police have stayed on there. I understand they had to use tear gas. Tear gas does not kill but it can be pretty painful. I am told that something has happened today again.

[1] Wavell Centeen Refugee Camp

All I can say is that it is a matter of great shame for us. Have not the refugees learnt even from their immense suffering that they have to exercise some restraint? It is highly improper to go and occupy other people's houses. It is for the Government to find them shelter or whatever else they need. Today the Government is our own. But if we defy our own Government and defy the police and forcibly occupy houses the Government is not likely to continue for long. It is still worse that such things should happen in the capital city of India where there are so many ambassadors from all over the world. Do we want to show them the spectacle of people occupying whatever they can? It is all the more regrettable that women and children were used as a shield. It is inhuman. It is like Muslim rulers keeping a herd of cows in the vanguard of their armies to make sure that the Hindus would not fight. It is uncivilized, barbaric behaviour. It is still more barbaric to put women and children in front to provide against the police making a lathi charge. It is abuse of womanhood. I must humbly ask all the refugees—women and children—-not to behave in this way. Let them settle down. If they don't, then apart from a war between India and Pakistan, we may kill ourselves in mutual strife. We may lose Delhi and make ourselves the laughing-stock of the world. If we want to keep India a free country, we must stop the things that are at present going on.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 263-7

176. LETTER TO R. R. DIWAKAR

[*January 4/5, 1948*][1]

BHAI DIWAKAR[2],

I wrote something about what you had written [to me]. Why is it not possible to follow my suggestion? Such things do hold up the work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In the source this and the following two letters are placed between those of January 4 and 5, 1948.

[2] The addressee was a member of the Congress Constitution Committee appointed by the A. I. C. C. for revising the constitution of the Congress. *Vide* Appendix "A. I. C. C. Resolutions: The Congress Constitution", 16-11-1947.

177. LETTER TO MAHMUD

[*January 4/5, 1948*]

BHAI MAHMUD,

What is this?

Do return to me the certificate I had given for that person, if you have not already torn it up.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

178. LETTER TO RAMESHCHANDRA

[*January 4/5, 1948*]

BHAI RAMESHCHANDRA,

I am sorry that I could not meet you. The answers to your questions I am forwarding to *Harijan Sevak* and you will find them there.[1]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

179. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

January 5, 1948

CHI. JIVANJI,

What I have sent this time is worth thinking over. The Gujarati items need not be translated into English there, nor the English into Gujarati or Hindustani. Some of the Hindustani items will have to be translated into Gujarati there. We try to send reports of my daily speeches in Hindustani, in such language as I actually use but with some revisions, and it is not, therefore, necessary to translate the speeches from English into Gujarati. It will do even if you give only summaries from the Hindustani reports. This will mean that the editions of *Harijan* in all the three languages will be self-contained and independent of one another. It remains to be seen whether we can attain this ideal. I cannot say how long I shall be able to cope with the

[1] *Vide* "Question Box", 4-1-1948.

work involved. Let us try, however.

A good many Hindustani articles by Sundarlal have accumulated. I think it is high time they are taken up. I exact pretty hard work from him. His Hindustani seems to be the real thing and of excellent quality. It is the speech of ordinary people in North India.

Please let me know if you have any comments to make on this.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Will it be all right if I send the final instalment on Wednesday?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9991

180. LETTER TO VIJAYA M. PANCHOLI

NEW DELHI,
January 5, 1948

CHI. VIJAYA[1],

Are both of you all right? If the mind is cheerful there is no danger of the body getting ill.

It is now time for the prayer and, therefore, I must stop here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7153. Also C. W. 4645. Courtesy: Vijaya M. Pancholi

181. LETTER TO NRISIMHAPRASAD K. BHATT

NEW DELHI,
January 5, 1948

CHI. NANABHAI,

I got today your letter dated the 1st. Your birthday falls on the 7th. Now tell me how my blessings in writing can reach you [in time]. Even a telegram may not. These days a telegram takes four days. You of course have my blessings in spirit, because it is my own work that you are doing. And my blessings are always with any work that is

[1] Wife of Manubhai Pancholi

mine.

You will certainly come personally when you can.

How is your health these days?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

182. NOTE TO MUSLIMS[1]

NEW DELHI,
January 5, 1948

It would be more helpful if you could supply some proof in its support. Moreover I have been receiving complaints that Muslims too have arms in plenty in their possession. Therefore, first you should persuade the Muslim brothers and get the arms from them and hand them over to me. And then if the Government fails to provide protection to them I will die first, before letting them die.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 323

183. NOTE TO SUBHADRA GUPTA[2]

NEW DELHI,
January 5, 1948

If a girl like you had not come to me with such a complaint and instead if I were to hear that Subhadra had been killed, while trying to save Muslims from Hindus, I would dance for joy. I feel that only when Hindu men and women thus bravely sacrifice their lives will this conflict end.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 233

[1] Who had come with the complaint that Hindus harassed Muslims living in Hindu localities and that they were armed as well

[2] The addressee had mentioned the harassment of the Muslims at the hands of Hindus.

184. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
January 5, 1948

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I am being flooded with letters and telegrams congratulating me on the lifting of controls on most things and pleading that the controls which still remain should be lifted. I give below the substance of an English letter, written by a successful businessman. The letter says:

> As desired by you I give below the comparative prices of white sugar, jaggery, brown sugar and other articles of food before and after lifting of controls.

Current rates		Rates in November before lifting of controls
Sugar	Rs. 37-8 a maund	Rs. 80 to 85 a maund
Jaggery	Rs. 13 to 15 ,, ,,	Rs. 30 to 32 ,, ,,
Brown Sugar	Rs. 14 to 18 ,, ,,	Rs. 37 to 45 ,, ,,
Sugar Cubes	11 As. a packet	Rs. 1-8 to Rs. 1-12 a packet
Sugar *deshi*	Rs. 30 to 35 a maund	Rs. 78 to 80 per maund

It will be noticed that prices of sugar have fallen by 50 p. c.

Wheat	Rs. 18 to 20 a maund	Rs. 40 to 50 a maund
Rice Basmati	Rs. 25 ,, ,,	Rs. 40 to 45 ,, ,,
Maize	Rs. 15 to 17 ,, ,,	Rs. 30 to 35 ,, ,,
Gram	Rs. 16 to 18 ,, ,,	Rs. 38 to 40 ,, ,,
Mung	Rs. 23 ,, ,,	Rs. 35 to 38 ,, ,,
Urad	Rs. 23 ,, ,,	Rs. 34 to 37 ,, ,,
Arhar	Rs. 22 ,, ,,	Rs. 32 ,, ,,
Pulses:		
Gram	Rs. 20 ,, ,,	Rs. 30 ,, ,,
Mung	Rs. 26 ,, ,,	Rs. 39 ,, ,,
Urad	Rs. 26 ,, ,,	Rs. 37 ,, ,,
Arhar	Rs. 22 ,, ,,	Rs. 32 ,, ,,
Oil:		
Mustard	Rs. 65 ,, ,,	Rs. 75 ,, ,,

> Following lifting of controls the market is inundated with woollen and silken textiles. Their prices have fallen by 50 p. c. and at some places by 66 p. c. In the

[1] As Gandhiji was observing silence, this was read out after the prayer.

expectation that control on cotton textiles will be lifted their prices are slowly falling. If the control is lifted then the prices are likely to fall by 60 p. c. This will lead to competition among the various mills and make cloth more easily available. But if control on cotton textile is lifted the export of cloth from India should be banned for at least three years. In Government offices they merely play mysterious games with the figures of statistics. They should not hinder the implementation of decontrol. Presumably petrol was controlled on account of the exigencies of war and can now be decontrolled. The truth is that control on petrol has benefited only a few transport companies which have now a vested interest in keeping the control. It does not benefit the masses. It need hardly be pointed out that a single bus or truck which has a permit to ply on one particular stretch of road will be able to make Rs. 15,000 a month. If the control on petrol is lifted one cannot earn more than Rs. 300 a month out of one vehicle. Today petrol permits are freely being sold. A petrol permit for one lorry can easily be sold to a transport magnate for as much as Rs. 10,000. If control is lifted the various problems before the country such as food, housing and so on will be solved by themselves. Please try to have the control on petrol lifted and help the masses who are suffering on account of control. A free India should have no use for controls.

It seems to me that there is not much one can say when faced with these figures. Maybe I am ignorant, those with more knowledge should correct me.[1] When people by and large want a thing there is no room left for any hesitation in a democracy.

It is said that India consumes merely one per cent of the amount of petrol produced in the world. There is no cause for despair in this. After all our road transport does go on. But does it mean that because we are not a warlike people we do not need more petrol? Or if we need more, will there be shortage for the rest of the world? Let not the learned laugh at my ignorance. I seek light. If I hide the darkness I cannot get light. The question is: If so little petrol falls to our share, how is it that huge stocks of petrol are available in the black-market?

If the situation described by the correspondent really prevails it is shocking. It means that controls are a boon to the rich and a bane for the poor. And yet it is in the name of the poor that the controls are

[1] Commenting on this, A. D. Gorawala, former President of Commodities Prices Board, said in Bombay that the prices quoted before decontrol were black-market prices and that "reports from various areas of Bombay showed that after decontrol prices had risen from 50 to 100 per cent above the controlled rates" for wheat and sugar.

imposed. If that is how monopoly functions it should be done away with without a moment's thought.

As for cloth, if we have not forgotten khadi which has been described as "the livery of freedom''[1] there is no possible argument for continuing the control over it. We have enough cotton and we have innumerable hands which can work the looms and the wheels in the villages. We can thus produce without difficulty enough cloth for ourselves. It needs neither the noise of the cities nor motor transport. In former times the railways first served the need of the army. Its second task was to carry cotton to the ports and carry cloth into the interior from the ports. Now our calico is khadi. It is made in villages and is consumed in villages. There is therefore no need of centralization here. Let us not ruin our villages out of our indolence or our ignorance.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 267-70

185. KHADI CAN REMOVE CLOTH SHORTAGE

A friend writes that khadi can help to remove the shortage of cloth in a matter of six months. For this two conditions will be necessary, viz., (1) that the Central and Provincial Governments should adopt the policy of encouraging spinning and weaving in every village, and (2) that provincial and all-India leaders should put forth greater efforts to popularize khadi.

In my opinion it should be worth while and it is the duty of the Congress to fulfil these conditions for the sake of remedying cloth shortage. Our undoubted indifference in this respect shows that we have failed in our duty. The price of cloth having risen so high, the present is the most opportune time to get over this indifference. This can be done by the example and conduct as well as the wisdom of those who have unshakable faith in khadi. When the Government adopts the policy of promoting the cause of khadi, control over cloth and other commodities will automatically go. Meanwhile also, cloth should be decontrolled in the interests of the poor.

NEW DELHI, January 6, 1948

Harijan, 11-1-1948

[1] By Jawaharlal Nehru. *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 30-7-1937 and Appendix "Livery of Freedom", 31-7-1937.

186. CERTIFIED AND UNCERTIFIED KHADI[1]

The same friend, who suggests that khadi can remove cloth shortage, writes that India having attained independence, there is little difference now between certified and uncertified khadi, mill-cloth and foreign cloth. Khadi may have significance for him who spins and weaves to clothe himself, but people are unable to do so or even to spin the minimum quota of yarn prescribed for the purchase of khadi from the bhandars. No improvement is noticeable in the quality of pure khadi, while many useful varieties of uncertified khadi are available. Moreover, it is difficult nowadays to give what can be termed a living wage in the khadi industry. On these grounds the writer observes that the purchase of uncertified khadi should be permitted. He proceeds to argue that having regard to the acute shortage of cloth all over the country and to the fact that the Union Government itself imports foreign cloth, there should be no objection to the purchase of such cloth either.

That such questions can be raised shows the change in the times. My answer is that only "certified khadi" should be used. Let me indicate the meaning of this term. Even the Charkha Sangh's definition is incomplete. The term really implies that a reasonable wage is given to spinners and weavers and the price of khadi fixed with an eye on public good and not with a profit motive. Certification of such khadi by the Charkha Sangh becomes necessary, as people have as a rule, to fall back upon the purchase of khadi in addition to self-made (स्वावलंबी) khadi. Any other khadi is uncertified and open to objection and should not, therefore, be used. It is open to the public to suggest improvements in the conditions presented for the certification of khadi, but it would be definitely wrong to abolish the distinction between certified and uncertified khadi.

Again, how can one shut one's eyes to the distinction between khadi, mill-cloth and foreign cloth, or justify the import of foreign cloth because foreign rule has ended? We must remember that we opposed foreign rule because it involved the economic ruin of the country. The first fruit of freedom should, therefore, be to put an end to this curse.

In fine it follows that pure khadi alone has place in swaraj: in it

[1] A Hindi version of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak* under the date-line "New Delhi, 5-1-1948".

lies the well-being of the people as well as true equality.

NEW DELHI, January 6, 1948

Harijan, 11-1-1948

187. HARIJANS IN HOSTELS[1]

Apropos the recent legislation enacted by the Government of Bombay extending to the Harijans the right of admission to temples, wells, dharmashalas, schools, hostels, etc., Shri Parikshitlal writes that though this automatically covers undenominational hostels as well, school and college hostels have not in actual practice been thrown open to the Harijan students. His experience has been that the school and college authorities have not adapted themselves to the spirit of the times to the extent the hostel students have. As the academic year will soon be over and fresh admissions will be made shortly, he has advised the authorities to do the needful before the Harijan students are forced to assert their legal right in the matter and has also suggested to me to recommend the throwing open of the hostels in Bhavnagar and other Kathiawar States to the Harijan students.

I endorse his suggestion and would add that if the students in the hostels are sincere, they are sure to succeed in the matter. In the present age the autocratic will of the managing committees cannot prevail, particularly when, as in this case, they are in the wrong and the students are in the right. Be that as it may, the Harijan students should unquestionably be admitted to hostels with honour.

NEW DELHI, January 6, 1948

Harijan, 11 -1-1948

188. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

4.30 a. m., January 6, 1948

CHI. SITA,

I have your letter. The previous one was long and I could not cope with it. I am writing this immediately after prayers.

It is good that you have decided to go to Phoenix. When you go

[1] A Gujarati version of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 11-1-1948 under the date-line "New Delhi, 4-1-1948".

there you will be able to form your own ideas. Your dream of helping Manilal will also materialize to some extent. Who knows what is in store?

It is good news that Vasant and the baby boy are well. Nowadays they look for names from novels or from the Sanskirt plays. I would know nothing about it. What is in a name? It seldom happens that a person comes to have qualities worthy of his name. As the poet says, "Fondly was the infant given the name of Hari but in infancy did it die."

Pass on the accompanying [letters].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

189. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
4.30 a. m., January 6, 1948

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have had two letters from you, one of which is lying in the heap. The one to which I am replying was received yesterday.

I am glad that Sita is going there. I should not be glad but there is a reason for it.

Your duty seems clear. You must give all possible help to Manilal in his work, forgetting everything else. Ordinarily I would not give such advice, but in this case I have reason for doing so. Since Manilal is engaged in public service, I feel that it would be a great thing if you could identify yourself with him. The statement that ordinarily I would not give such advice refers to cases in which the husband tries to tempt his wife to pleasure. 1 should like you to retain only one attachment, giving up all others, and I have explained to you what that is. I am not asking you to look after the children carefully because they are yours, but since they are under your charge you ought to protect them. That would have been your duty even if they had not been your own children. I have tried to follow this rule from a very young age. Manilal knows about it. For you service of the country will be where Manilal lives.

You may do whatever you can to help the struggle there without

getting involved in it.

I am glad that you have succeeded in persuading Manilal to take milk and curds. He must be free from all disease.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5021

190. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
5 a. m., January 6, 1948

CHI. MANILAL,

I could get no time at all before now to write to you. I got the mail yesterday and so am writing this letter.

I am forced to the conclusion that your health has suffered because of lack of curds and milk in your diet. In the wide vegetable kingdom nothing has been discovered so far which can serve as a substitute for milk. As long as one keeps fit, one does not feel the need for animal foods, but once the health goes down it cannot be rebuilt without such foods.

Now that Sita is going there, you will get all the help you need. I agree that her studies will suffer there. But she will certainly learn what I believe she ought to learn, namely, whatever she can while helping her parents in their work under their own guidance. This is real economics. I have no time just now to explain why. Probably you don't even need an explanation.

Do what you can in connection with the struggle there which is going to be a difficult one.

I have so far maintained my health in spite of the great pressure of work. God will do as He wills. Sushila[1] was to proceed to America in a few days for further experience. But now those people have on their own put off the visit. Let us see what happens. According to me, what we cannot get in our own country will be of no use to us. But I am not able to convince anybody about this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5020

[1] Dr. Sushila Nayyar

191. LETTER TO ILA GANDHI

5.15 a. m., January 6, 1948

CHI. ILA[1],

I suppose you are too busy to spare time to write to me.

Do you still talk a lot? How nice it would be if you took a vow of silence!

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5019

192. LETTER TO ARUN GANDHI

5.30 a. m., January 6, 1948

CHI. ARUN[2].

Yes, I think I did get a note from you.

Build up fine health. Your real education will be what you learn from Manilal. To which school do you go? Do not forget your Gujarati.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5018

193. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

NEW DELHI,
January 6, 1948

CHI. ANAND,

I have your letter.

Losing money means being freed of a curse, as the poet sings in the following *bhajan:*

He who has by good fortune found Rama
is blessed with three things:
First, he loses kine, kin, wife,

[1] Daughter and son of Manilal Gandhi
[2] *ibid*

his wraps and shawls,
his elephants and horses
and is made destitute of all resources.

Second, he is humiliated by the world,
and loses all respect,
he counts for nothing among his kinsmen
and has no friend left.

Third, he suffers bodily affliction.
Day and night he is sickly.
His eyes cannot glimpse happiness.
His life is spent in pain.
In three ways thus he is a pauper.
But he thinks only of Him,
And is ever alight with the knowledge,
That all things are yoked to the Nameless God.
He who does not know these three things,
has really attained nothing.
It is only after suffering many a birth and old age,
That Tukdo has attained to that state.

Why grieve that you cannot hear? The advantages are clear. You have seen my three preceptors—the three monkeys I keep before me. One of them has his hands over his ears. What more shall I say?

Your handwriting is good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

194. LETTER TO MAHADEV A. HINGORANI

NEW DELHI,
January 6, 1948

CHI. MAHADEV[1],

I was glad to have your letter. To me you were only born yesterday. It does not even occur to me that fifteen years have passed since. Why do you want to meet me? We all meet in thought, indeed.

[1] Son of Anand T. Hingorani by his first wife, Vidya

Live long and serve for a long time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

195. LETTER TO GANGI A. HINGORANI

NEW DELHI,
January 6, 1948

CHI. GANGI,

I have your letter and Anand's also. What do you want to do living alone with me? You must understand that your duty is to live with Anand and living with him to do what service you can.

It cannot be said that you are fully recovered. Get well soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

196. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
January 6, 1948

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I hear that even today people have been trying to get into the Muslim houses. The police have been doing their duty and trying to stop them. After all what can the police do? They can only resort to tear gas. I am told that that was what they did. There is plenty of room here. One cannot say that Delhi lacks space. There is no doubt that refugees are in a bad plight. It is not right that they should have to live under the open sky. When it rains it is not enough that they should have only a cloth between them and the sky. Therefore, in distress they resort to anything. But it does not seem right that they should single out only Muslim houses. I told one of them that this was a pretty big house, a large number of men could be accommodated

here. They could throw me out and also throw out the ailing woman with me and afterwards the owner. He said that it was easy for me to find accommodation but who would give the refugees any accommodation? I would understand what they are doing if every other recourse had failed and if the people of Delhi had also failed them. But it is not good—it will do us no good to occupy the houses of those we have scared away or driven out.

The police today offered the refugees a few houses which they refused. Let them say clearly that they do not want any Muslims here. It would not be decent but at least it would have the virtue of being a straightforward course. They may say that since the Muslims have killed Hindus in Pakistan they shall kill the Muslims in India or that they do not trust them. But what is happening today is sheer madness.

Our present misfortune is that people unthinkingly indulge in meaningless rowdyism. The mentality seems to be that now that we are a free country we can do what we like. A report from Bombay says that the Government there is in a great difficulty. Dock workers have gone on a strike.[1] Such strikes are going to be our undoing, to say nothing of the fact that they can bring no benefit to the workers whichever the party behind the strike may be, Congress or Socialist or Communist or any other. Our country today is passing through a critical phase. Our effort should be to tide over the present situation and survive.

I have a letter from the Maharaja of Aundh, a small State in Maharashtra.[2] He had even when the British rule was still strong in India handed over the reins of the government to the people of his State. He and his son felt that they should serve the people. They devised a constitution, had a body elected and made it responsible for the administration. The Maharaja writes that the feeling among the other Rulers is that whatever he may do he should only do along with the other Rulers and that he should not act all by himself. He has almost decided to merge his State with India but he still continues to be the Raja, though only as a servant of his people. He will accept whatever is sanctioned to him by his people. Sardar Saheb feels that the Rulers should be given pensions, unconditionally, whether they

[1] The workers of the engineering department of the Bombay Port Trust were demanding speedy implementation of the Pay Commission's recommendations.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 4-1-1948.

functioned as such or not. He has started the process with Orissa.[1] I do not consider it right that the Maharaja of Aundh should be pensioned off. Only he should not interfere in the administration because the State now has responsible Government. But he has been told that the nature of administration in his State cannot be different from what it is in other States that have merged with India. It cannot have separate laws. But I say there is no need for any laws. When the power has been handed over to the people it does not mean that the administration should be conducted from Delhi. If there is a representative government it wilI have villagers on it. Such a body should run the administration. There should be no need to interfere with its work. Nor can any law be made for interfering with it. Otherwise it would not be popular rule. Popular rule cannot be established by the sword.

A friend writes that only a happy country can be said to have Ramarajya, that we may import goods from outside, but only as much as we can export, so that the trade is balanced. He says this has not been the case with us. We have always been debtors. Lately we have become creditors. But how long can we remain creditors if we keep up the present rate of spending? What we should do is to have the very minimum of imports and the very maximum of exports. Only then can we have a surplus of foreign exchange.

The fact is that what we import from outside is only our raw material converted into consumer goods. Our aim should be that we should have no need for importing anything or if we import anything it should only be to help other countries. If some country needs money and asks us for it we should be able to send the money. The correspondent is right in saying that so far America alone is such a country. We do not want to be like America but at least we can reduce our imports to match our exports.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 271-4

[1] The administration of the 25 Orissa States was taken over by the Government of India on January 1 and they were merged with the Orissa Province.

197. A LETTER

January 7, 1948

The news from Sind causes anxiety.[1] I of course want to go to Sind but with what face can I go? To try to quench the flames elsewhere while one's own house is burning will only make the flames rage more furiously. The better course would be to try and extinguish the fire at home. If one succeeds in that it will also help elsewhere.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 244

198. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

January 7, 1948

To entertain enmity against the shark while living in the sea is not bravery but only folly. Therefore, if you are unable to abide by the rules of the Ashram, you can by all means stay outside and carry on various activities of public service. I have no time to write more.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 244

199. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER[2]

January 7, 1948

. . . Had to go without sleep today. For a while attended to Manu and looked through the post. The pressure of work here is so great that I can cope with the post to some extent only if I attend to it early

[1] On January 6, 184 Sikh refugees from upper Sind had arrived in Karachi in the morning by train. While proceeding in open carriages to the Gurdwara at Ratan Talao, they were followed by a Muslim mob and stoned all the way. Nearly 8,000 Muslims surrounded the Gurdwara, scaled its walls and pounced upon the refugees. The trouble spread through the city and nearly 2,000 shops and tenements, mostly belonging to Hindus, were broken open and property worth one crore was looted. Over 120 Hindus and Sikhs were reported to have been killed.

The authorities, unable to control the situation, called in the troops at 2 p. m. and a curfew was imposed.

[2] Omissions in the letter are as in the source.

in the morning immediately after the prayer. Afterwards the rush of visitors begins. I must achieve something or die in the attempt. I cannot say what will happen. I seek light. I can glimpse some rays in the darkness. Only when I attain enlightenment in full, shall heart-unity in Delhi be enduring.

Well, I have managed to write this with great difficulty. How are you all? How is your health? You must keep writing to Manu. She will write the rest. I have not succeeded in bringing her back to health. She wrecked her body in serving me in Noakhali. If she can regain her strength I shall be immensely relieved. If she could follow my advice and give herself rest for a couple of months and be cheerful, I would see about the outward treatment. Today this is not possible. I cannot give her my full attention. If I can bring matters here to some conclusion, my next task will be to make Manu strong as a wrestler. Or else she may well die. . . . This of course I write in jest.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, pp. 244-5

200. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

January 7, 1948

I am hoping that we shall be able to achieve something here in a few days. Right now there is a conflagration raging here. Today we have forgotten our humanity. God will show the path He wills us to take. We must not give up the effort.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 244

201. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
January 7, 1948

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I have here several notes and I shall try to deal with as many as I can within 15 minutes.

A friend writes that he has gone on an indefinite fast. All that I can say is that it is not right for him to fast. To resort to a fast thus is a

sin. While I am alive I should be consulted because I have much experience of fasting. I shall not go into the matter further.

I am told that students are about to go on a strike. The date set is the 9th. I must say that it will be a wrong step. As I pointed out yesterday, to resort to strikes to gain one's end is not a good thing. I have no doubt in my mind that it is not non-violence. I have conducted many non-violent strikes. It cannot be said that every strike is non-violent and every strike is legitimate. Students should confine themselves to studies and keep away from strikes. I hope they will listen to me. I may again mention that I have had a long experience spanning some fifty years of non-violent strikes. I carried it on successfully not in India but in South Africa. I do not remember any instance when it failed me in anything I had undertaken. It cannot fail. If your cause is just and if what you are doing is the only course open to you, you are bound to succeed.

Today I received visitors from the Punjab, Sind, the Frontier Province and other places—all in Pakistan. They described to me their sufferings and asked me why I was not doing anything in the matter. How can they know all that I am trying to do? The only reason I am staying on here is that I may be able to get something done somehow for these people. Today I have become weak. Time was when what I said went home. Today it is not the case. Then I was the General of non-violence. Now that time is past. Today mine is a cry in the wilderness. But even if I am alone I must say what is right. People say that the Government is manned by persons who are my co-workers and that they will do whatever I say. It is true that they are my co-workers, but why should they do whatever I say? They will only do what seems right to them. I can plead with them and argue with them. If they see the point, well and good; if not, I am helpless. They might tell me that running a government is full of complications and difficulties, and that if I were in the Government I would find out that I could not do as I pleased. If the Ministers who are my friends, their secretaries and the police, for I am no one's enemy, were all to go by what I said all would be well. The Government can always say that they have not the right type of officials and staff. They are the same people who were there during the British rule. They cannot be turned out either. Whatever the reasons, I cannot make the Government today do all that I want. I am as helpless as any one of you. I am not God. I do only what my strength permits.

But what are the people to do? They have to have shelter, clothing and food. When I myself have all those things, why should anyone be deprived of them? After all they have not committed any crime like assault or murder. They have been hounded out from their homes. They are our brothers and sisters. They have been subjected to indignities and injustice and if even on coming here they cannot live in peace they have the right to turn round and demand why they should be deprived of the necessities of life when they are freely available to others. I admit this is unjust. But I have told them what they can do. The way is not for them to get into anyone's house and occupy it. Their attack should be non-violent. I have also told them which houses are thus to be attacked.

They must also agree to do any kind of work assigned to them to the extent that they can. For instance you may not assign writing work to a man who cannot write. But if you give a pickaxe to a man he should not say that he can only wield a pen. Similarly they should live in any shelter that is given to them, be it a tent or a room. All that is necessary is that there should be a roof overhead and it should not matter if it is only a thatched roof. Similarly they do not need any cots. One can sleep on straw very comfortably. I know from experience that straw can be as warm as any cotton mattress. Let us accept as a blessing from God anything we can get. If people can learn contentment the few lakhs of refugees can be made reasonably happy. There is plenty of room here. Only their hearts should be clean. Unfortunately the case is the very reverse.

You saw what has happened in Karachi.[1] People used to say that such things could not happen in Sind. I always said that Hindus could not live in peace in Sind. And not only Hindus, even others. That was proved yesterday. They had assembled in a Gurdwara awaiting evacuation. The Gurdwara was attacked. A few were killed, some were injured. The Government says that the situation was brought under control as soon as possible. But in the first place such a thing should not have happened at all. I must tell the Pakistan Government to see that such things do not happen or else they should quit the Government. Maybe if there is no government there will be plunder and looting for a few days. But later the situation will improve. I have the same thing to say to the Government in India. I shall not listen to the Government saying that people cannot be persuaded. If the people

[1] *Vide* footnote to "A Letter", 7-1-1948.

cannot be persuaded they must give up the pretext of governing. Both the Governments are the same in my eyes. If the Pakistan Government allows the people to be murdered in this way, the Government will not last long. To you, brothers, I shall only say, do not let yourselves become mad. You must swallow your anger. You must not answer anger with anger and say, 'We will destroy the mosques, occupy them and kill the Muslims.' This will not be just. Such personal vengeance will put an end to the rule of law. Certainly we should provide all reasonable facilities to the refugees. It will be shameful if we do not. We should not be afraid or upset or angry over what has happened in Karachi. In return we on our part should live peacefully. If we can conduct ourselves decently, if we let the Muslims stay on, and if the refugees behave with civility, we shall soon overcome the present painful situation.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 275-9

202. LETTER TO SHANTA NERULKAR

5.45 a. m., January 8, 1948

CHI. SHANTA[1],

I have your letter and also the list sent by you.

I have signed the budget.

I would like the Talimi Sangh to take over everything.[2] It will be a test for you all. If you do not master the art of taking work from other institutions it will be the end of all work. If you are complacent and depend on my help you are likely to repent it. How long can I live? If you have the grace of God you have everything. And I have already defined the condition for obtaining that grace.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Member, Hindustani Talimi Sangh

[2] The reference is to the unification and co-ordination of the four Sanghs as suggested by Gandhiji. *Vide* "Discussion at Talimi Sangh Meeting", 11/12-12-1947.

203. LETTER TO E. W. ARYANAYAKUM

5.50 a. m., January 8, 1948

CHI. ARYAM,

I have your two letters. You should find some time and improve your Hindustani and both the scripts. If Asha is not there you should take the help of others who know Hindustani. Why not Meetu's[1] help?

I would like the Talimi Sangh to take up the work of the K. G. N. M. Trust as well. It may be said that I am running a risk here. It is for you, it is your duty, to see whether you can shoulder all the responsibility. The co-operation of all the institutions and people depends upon your tact and friendliness. I can but obtain it for you; it is for you to carry it through and to develop it. Do you understand what I am saying? Ask me if you don't. You could even have written to me in Bengali.

I understand what you say about Ramachandran. I am writing to him.[2]

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

204. LETTER TO AMINA G. QURESHI

January 8, 1948

CHI. AMINA,

I find your letter very sweet. I think it was no less than your good luck that you could serve Totaram[3]. You are absolutely right that after the late Imam Saheb he was the lone elder in the Ashram. Parikshitbhai had sent me a telegram. Wahid[4] has indeed risen high. If he works hard he is sure to forge ahead as you say. Take care of your health. If you make the proper changes in your diet you will get rid of the redundant fat. Which college does Hamid[5] go to? What is Sultana[6] doing?

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's daughter
[2] The letter is not traceable.
[3] Totaram Sanadhya; *vide* "The Late Totaram Sanadhya", 12-1-1948.
[4] Addressee's children
[5] *ibid*
[6] Son of Chhaganlal Gandhi

205. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS GANDHI

January 8, 1948

CHI. KRISHNADAS[1],

It is quite correct that you should write in Hindustani. I am, however, replying in Gujarati.

I am very glad that Manojna[7] co-operates with you. Seek more help from her if you can. She can speedily improve her knowledge of Hindustani and of the two scripts. Then why can't we devote our entire attention to it? All our [dealings] needs must be in Hindustani, not in Hindi or Urdu. Hence I would not regard the expression *nirvachit,* which has been used in the resolution that we have passed, as Hindustani. There must be a simpler equivalent for it. If *nirvachit* means 'one who has been elected' why can't we say *chuna hua?* This is only by way of an illustration. Why should the letter-heads be in English any more? My point was that it never ought to have been. Anyway now we surely cannot have it, so all such letter-heads should be utilized in some other way. You can cut off the part carrying the print and get a rubber-stamp for the name and address, or have them reprinted. A third way is to score out the printed portions. But that is a method I myself do not like.

Why should our constitution be in English? It should be in beautiful Hindustani. Even now we should have it rendered into Hindustani.[2]

Now about Khadi Pratishthan. An ordinary uncertified khadi bhandar defies us and carries on its business. It competes with us. What Khadi Pratishthan does is not with a view to competing with us; rather, whatever policy it adopts should help us to learn something. If we look at it from this point of view I see a very great difference. Even then we don't propose to act in haste.

I am forwarding your letter to Hemprabhadevi.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] addressee's wife

[2] A committee was later appointed to translate the Constitution into Hindi. It consisted of Ghanshyam Singh Gupta (President), Raghuvira, Kamalapati Tripathi and Haribhau Upadhyaya.

206. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

January 8, 1948

Kakasaheb has been here for the last two days. It was with the greatest difficulty that I could find time to talk to him about Hindustani and other things. If he had not himself spoken he might have stayed on for weeks and I might not have found time to talk to him. Innumerable people—men and women—visit me during the day. There is a huge pile of letters to be attended to. The work connected with *Harijan* has to be done. There is not a moment to spare. Usually Manu shaves me. But today I have taken away this work from her. I am lying in the bath, plying the razor and dictating this letter to Manu.

I am not as fit as I should be, which shows weakness of my faith in Ramanama. . . .[1]should go to Rajkot. By staying here he will only deceive himself and others. Man is his own enemy. No one can be the enemy of another. Similarly, no one in the world can harm anyone.

You should give up the craving to live in the Ashram. I have told the few people who are still there to stay there only if they can stand on their own feet.

I had never doubted that the removal of rationing would bring the relief it has brought. The Government hesitated because they were afraid of hurting the vested interests. But can a government be carried on in this way? Nothing is certain about me. There is still much fire smouldering here. One cannot say when it may not leap into flames.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, pp. 250-1

207. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

January 8, 1948

I had your letter written in English. First, I must apologize for the delay in answering it. I have not a moment's leisure. Even now I am lying in the bath shaving. Usually Manu performs this service, but today I am doing it myself and I am dictating this to Manu. Such is

[1] Omission as in the source

my plight.

The Bahawalpur situation has got out of hand.[1] Who will mend matters? I am full of anxiety. Panditji[2] comes at least once a day. I shall speak to him. My going there will serve no purpose. If I can achieve something here it will have an impact on the whole of India. Running about from one place to another will achieve nothing. I have to do or die here. Even if I can die bravely it will do a lot of good. Let us see what God wills. We are all in His hands.

You must not rush here, abandoning the people. Even if you die there courageously, it will be well for Bahawalpur.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 251

208. LETTER TO GOVIND BALLABH PANT

January 8, 1948

BHAI GOVIND BALLABH PANT,

Read the enclosed and do whatever is proper.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

209. LETTER TO MANGAL SINGH

January 8, 1948

SARDARJI,

I got your letter written in English. Why did you write in English instead of in Hindustani? It appears that you have sent copies of the letter to others as well. As I had already replied to it, you would not, I suppose, expect another reply from me. I am already doing what I can with whatever strength I have. I do not hold the reins of the Government.

SARDAR MANGAL SINGH, EX-M.L.A. (CENTRAL)
SHIROMANI AKALI DAL
AMRITSAR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "The Doctrine of Merger", 13-12-1947.
[2] Jawaharlal Nehru

210. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
January 8, 1948

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

A correspondent refers to what I had said about the Harijans and drinking.[1] As a matter of fact it was not only Harijans I had mentioned but all others. He asks if only Harijans should give up drinking, what about the soldiers and rich people? It is a silly question. If the rich do not give up drinking, does it mean that others too should not give it up? Even if there is no prohibition drinking does not become a virtue. Does it mean that if others sin we should also sin? Since he has asked me I would tell him that all those who drink should give up the habit. Since the Harijans and the labour class cannot be persuaded the law must persuade them. They take to drink because they are deprived of other comforts of life. They want to drown their poverty in drink. But what reason can there be for the rich and the soldiers to drink? It is not that all the soldiers drink. Even among the English there are many who do not drink. Everyone should give up drinking. The law will apply to all. It will not make any exception in favour of the rich.

I shall speak now of the students' strike. I understand that students who are Congress supporters will not join the strike. It seems the strike was organized by the Communist students. There are all types of students—Communist, Socialist and Congress supporters. I am not concerned with that. I am addressing them all. If the Congress students are not taking part in the strike they deserve to be complimented. I shall advise all the students not to go on strike. It pains me that Communist students are taking this step. Communists are clever people. They too want to serve the country. But this is not the way to serve the country. And why should the students support any particular party? The students form a party themselves. Their job is to study not merely for themselves but for the service of the country. So long as one is a student one is not a Communist, or a Socialist, or a Congressman. One is merely a student devoted wholly to studies. Strike for them will be fatal.

I have a question here. It is a good question. I am asked why I who have been advising everyone to give up evil things don't offer

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 1-1-1948.

the same advice to Pakistan, why I do not go there and resort to satyagraha. I have answered the question except for the satyagraha part. How can I go to Pakistan so long as we are behaving here as they do in Pakistan? I can only go to Pakistan after India has cleansed herself. I will do or die here. Hindus and Sikhs of Delhi have gone mad. They want all the Muslims here to be driven out. A large number have already gone. They want the rest also to go. There are Sikhs and Hindus in Pakistan who want to come away. But what is the use of satyagraha today? There is no satyagraha and no ahimsa left now. Everyone has become a votary of violence. They want the help of the army and can be happy only when they have such help. Today armed force has replaced God. Today even our newspapers are spreading filth. If people would listen to me, the newspapers would present a very different picture. The correspondent asks: "Since Hindus and Sikhs in such large numbers have been thrown out of Pakistan, where is the place for the Muslims to live? And so long as the same number of Muslims do not leave India, where is the place for the refugees to occupy?" I think that the number of Muslims who have already left equals the number of Hindu and Sikh refugees from Pakistan. It is madness to demand that the rest of them should also go because attempts are being made to drive out from Pakistan the Hindus and Sikhs still left there. We still have large numbers of Muslims in India. I am told that the meeting called by Maulana Azad in Lucknow was attended by 70,000 Muslims. It was the largest number of Muslims who attended a meeting in recent times. Must we kill all those Muslims or send them away to Pakistan, and why? I shall never give such shameful advice. There is no bravery in it.

A number of people from Bahawalpur came to see me today. A few persons from Mirpur-Kashmir also came. They are obviously in great difficulty. While they were still talking Panditji dropped in. I asked him to hear what the visitors had to say. The representatives of Mirpur had a talk with Panditji and I hope something will be done. I do not say that all that they want will be done. Although it is not yet a formal war, it is something very similar. In the circumstances it will be difficult to find a way of bringing over all the people marooned there. I am sure the Government will do what it can. But if there are still some people left there who cannot be helped, there is nothing much we can do about it. We do not have enough trains and buses. The Kashmir road is not yet fit for transporting millions of people. It is too narrow.

The Bahawalpur refugees told me that the other refugees could have their names registered for jobs and send in applications, but that all the applications of those coming from Bahawalpur were not being entertained. They asked why there should be such discrimination. They were very polite and reasonable. They said that people coming from the Frontier Province, the Punjab and Sind could apply and were eligible for jobs. I said this could not be true and if there was such discrimination against the refugees from Bahawalpur it must be a mistake. The Sardar has said that there would not be any discrimination. However, I shall find out.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 279-83

211. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 9, 1948

CHI. NARANDAS,

The Ashram and [I] are sorry for Chi. Navin[1]. I have to be a mute spectator of whatever happens. Everyone follows his own nature; how can Navin be an exception? I am totally indifferent about this marriage. What could have been your idea in writing to me? How can there be any blessings from me?

I am glad that you undertook the journey.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Son of Vrajlal Gandhi

212. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

January 9, 1948

Today this capital city is under a kind of siege. Although India is free the capital of India is protected by the army and the police and I can do nothing but sit here and watch. Votaries of non-violence today have had to put their trust in the weapons of violence. What a severe test it is going to be for us. If this is God's will, what strange design does it hide? But I have to do or die. Those who believe that arms can save Delhi are greatly mistaken. Whether it be Delhi or the world only one thing can save us and that is heart amity.

I have no time at all. There is a heap of letters to be answered. So only this much for today.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 257

213. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

NEW DELHI,
January 9 [*1948*][1]

CHI. AMRITA LAL,

I have your letter. I am glad that you wrote it in Hindustani in the Bengali script.

I think Dhiren is committing a mistake. It is a good thing that the marriage is still far away. He has a perfect right to act as he wants. Blessings are unnecessary when the cause is good; they become a curse when the cause is bad.

I have read your letter about Kanaiyo.[2] I am writing to him. My thoughts are firm and clear and I am conveying them to him. It will be good if you read his letters.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 10425. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

[1] The source has "1947", evidently a slip, for the addressee's letter under reply was dated December 27, 1947.

[2] Kanu Gandhi and the addressee had expressed their disapproval of Gandhiji's experiment in *brahmacharya* and Abha Gandhi's participation in it.

214. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 9, 1948

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

Your letter is full of anger. Anger seems to be the food on which you subsist. My simplest statement seems crooked to you. Let it be. Can one help one's nature?

I have never felt that you are a Muslim and I am a Hindu. The only feeling I have is that you are A. S. and I am Gandhi. Where our *atmans* are concerned we are one.

I hold that it is your duty to go to Borkamta. No other question arises if you too believe the same. It is imperative that you go to Borkamta soon. In my view you are the moving spirit behind whatever has been achieved there. It was and still is your most significant work. Only you can sustain it. At present no one but you can accomplish that work. If you do not ask me for money, that too would be in your interest. Nothing belongs to me; everything belongs to one or the other trust. Wherever you stand you stand in the capacity of my daughter, do you not?

What can be done if you hold a different view despite Bari's and my opinion that you should forget all about Patiala?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

215. TRIBUTE TO BHAURAO PATIL

NEW DELHI,
January 9, 1948

The services of Shri Bhaurao Patil are in themselves a true tribute to him. Yet the activity taken up by the students is worthy of praise. May Shri Bhaurao continue for long to render service.

M. K. GANDHI

G. J. SALUNKE
PRESIDENT, BHAURAO PATIL FELICITATION FUND COMMITTEE
SATARA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: PyarelaI

216. TALK WITH SAURASHTRA DELEGATION[1]

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
January 9, 1948

What I want is that you should have Nanabhai as your counsellor, even as sage Vashishtha was in Ramarajya. He will not shine more by being the Chief Minister. When there is friction between the ruler and the subjects he can bring them together. He should not transfer his institution[2] to the city. He should continue it in Ambla. I do not feel that Nanabhai will say no. He will not fit too well in the seat of power. His place can only be in the field of education. If everyone becomes Chief Minister, who will make up the subjects? Just as the ministers should be educated so also the people should be educated. Only if the people are educated will they keep the ministers on their toes. Only an educated people can discern the path to freedom. My own view is that Balwantrai should be made Chief Minister. He served the old Bhavnagar State for many years. The qualities that Balwantrai has are not to be found in Nanabhai. And Nanabhai's qualities Balwantrai does not possess. Dhebar alone cannot tackle the problems of Kathiawar. If the entire Kathiawar has only these two I shall have no worry. We cannot burden Dhebar alone with the responsibility of the whole of Kathiawar. In the ceremony Pattani[3] should be kept in the forefront. This is my considered view. But if you invite him only to censure him, then you should not invite him. If we start with prejudices of any kind we shall only frustrate our purpose. You must learn from him. There will be occasions when the State will be able to find a way through difficulties through his experience alone. I am giving my opinion unsought. If you do not like it you can reject it. You should not think that you have to accept it because I say it. If you do anything just to please me, it will not please me but it will harm us both.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji— II, pp. 259-60

[1] Which included Manubhai Pancholi, Balwantrai Mehta, Mohanbhai Motichand Gadhadawala and others. They expressed the view that Nrisinha prasad Kalidas Bhatt should be made Chief Minister in the popular government at Bhavnagar.

[2] Gram Dakshinamurty

[3] Anantrai Pattani

217. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
January 9, 1948

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I want to say something about a Hindu temple in Bahawalpur. It is still there but is no more in the possession of the Hindus. The chief priest of the temple came to see me today. His name is Bhagwandas. He saw with his own eyes how the temple was attacked and how the Hindus ran for their lives by the backdoor. The chief priest also ran away with them. He described to me how he was able to save some women. He could not save them all but quite a number were rescued. He wants me to find a way of bringing over the Hindus still stranded there. I told him that I was doing all that a single individual could do. The Government was trying to do something but it was not easy because one Government should not interfere in the affairs of another. I have said it before and I say it again that what is required at the present juncture is patience. We should not fear death. We must fear dishonour and indignity. To save one's honour one must lay down one's life. If someone is asked to embrace Islam or be prepared to die, he must choose death. Death is inevitable and cannot be avoided for ever. This of course does not mean that we should not do what we can to save ourselves but our ultimate trust should be in God.

A refugee came to see me today. He was not a beggar, nor a poor man. He has known prosperity. He lives in a bungalow nearby. The bungalow belonged to a Muslim who ran away. The refugee friend was a friend of that Muslim. He comes from the place where the Muslim has gone to settle. He told him to go and live in his bungalow. Now he says he has received a notice from the Government asking him to vacate the bungalow which is required for public purposes. I have no doubt that the Government would requisition the house. There are many people, ambassadors and others coming from outside and the Government would want to provide them proper accommodation. After all the Government cannot put up new houses by magic. It is said that sages had this power in former times. It is related in the *Ramayana* how the sage Bharadwaja had made a whole city appear from nowhere with the power of his *mantra*. Today I know of no such *mantra*. I therefore can understand it if the Government requisitions houses when it wants them but it should then

provide alternative accommodation to the people living there. If the Government just pushes out the occupants, where are they to go? I am sure the Government cannot act thus. But if such a notice has been received I cannot really hold out any assurance of help. I myself do not have a house of my own. I am living in another's house. The affected person should approach the Government. I still think that what he says is not correct but if it is, it is a painful matter. I know that anyone lawfully residing in a house cannot be served with such a notice.

I have several other letters. A correspondent attributes to me the statement that in Bombay everyone was allowed to draw one seer of rice per day as his rationed quota. So far as I remember I never said this. In the present conditions of scarcity one seer of rice per day per head would be too liberal an allowance. Still I shall see what I had said. He says the quota is a quarter seer per head, per day. This means one seer in four days. This is not too bad. But in fact I recollect it was only one seer in seven days. But if I had said that the allowance was one seer per head per day it should be taken as incorrect.

There are so many notes and letters that I find it difficult to decide which one to take up. One says that I am staying here in Birla House where poor people cannot enter; formerly when I was in Bhangi Colony poor people could approach me. What he says is true and I like it. I think I had referred to this the first time I came here.[1] I came here at a time when Delhi was in the grip of communal rioting. The town looked like a graveyard. Bhangi Colony had also become crowded with refugees and it was feared that anything might happen anywhere. So the Sardar said that he would not allow me to live there. So they moved me to Birla House. I did not object because after all I cannot make do with a room. There had to be an office and a kitchen, and moreover there are many people living with me. Here I am also within easy reach of the ministers. They do not send for me. They themselves come to me. It is their kindness. It takes them only two minutes to come here. It took them 10 to 16 minutes to go to Bhangi Colony. The Muslim brethren also find it easy to come here while they are scared of going to Bhangi Colony. It will be a great thing if we can save such of them as are left. Today goondaism rules the streets. Anyone going on a bicycle is pulled down and his money or watch is snatched away. Even those travelling in cars are stopped and

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 10-9-1947.

looted. Such is our present plight. It is a matter of great shame.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 283-5

218. LETTER TO VIJAYA M. PANCHOLI

January 9, 1948

CHI. VIJAYA,

It is after a long time that you seem to have found occasion to write to me. I often think of you.

The answer to your question is the verse which we sing every day at the morning prayer. The prayer, in its entirety, is meant not only to be recited but to be acted upon. This is what the verse means: "Our misfortunes are not real misfortunes, nor are our good fortunes so in fact. Real misfortune is the forgetting of Vishnu, and the highest wealth consists in constantly thinking of Him and trying to see Him in one's heart." Think over this and shed your weakness. Why need one who feels Rama in his heart, bemoan massacres or lose his reason because of them? And, moreover, what about the inhuman conduct we were guilty of on our side? Hence did Narasimha sing: "Let not thy mind be affected by suffering or happiness, for they were created with the body." Think over this. I don't like your being weak. You should go to Panchgani. Accommodation is available there now. Uruli also is a fine place. You should find some time for rest.

Nanabhai must have received my letter.[1]

I have written this letter in great hurry, having put off going to bed for a while.

Look after the children with great care.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7154. Also C. W. 4646. Courtesy: Vijaya M. Pancholi

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Vijaya M. Pancholi", 5-1-1948.

219. LETTER TO SHARDA H. KOTAK

January 10, 1948

CHI. SHARDA,

Harjivan having passed away, your highest good lies in acknowledging your faults when they are pointed out by others. One may only praise the departed for his good qualities. How can Dada[1] realize that even when I was finding fault with you I was only admiring your good qualities? However, irrespective of what I did or did not tell him let me tell you one thing, that I greatly appreciate your strength of character, and as for Harjivan he was simply devoted to you. He believed that whatever *brahmacharya* he could observe he did with the help of your strength of character. He did not look upon it as a great achievement on his part. It was therefore you who succumbed to his entreaties. Thus you fell and brought him down with you. If you never had any respect for *brahmacharya,* raising a family would have been regarded as the normal thing for you as for anyone else. Only he can fall who has risen high. I write all this so that you can be strong in future and may not feel dejected. You should now devote yourself cheerfully to your own work and your own dharma, and conduct yourself as Dada advises.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

220. LETTER TO GANGADHARRAO DESHPANDE

January 10, 1948

BHAI GANGADHARRAO,

I have your letter. I have always believed in the unification of Karnataka and have loved the idea. I interpret Panditji's statement[2] only to mean that the Central Government cannot take the initiative in determining the boundary. But if the concerned provinces reach a

[1] Lakshmidas Asar

[2] Replying to a question on November 27, 1947, in the Parliament, Jawaharlal Nehru said that "the creation of the provinces of Maharashtra and Karnataka raised greater difficulties, as any marked change would probably affect the structure and economy of the provinces concerned. It must be remembered that creation of new provinces would require careful consideration in all its bearings, so that any decision taken would be acceptable to the neighbouring provinces concerned. Every decision must be considered from the point of view of the country as a whole."

mutual understanding and ask for the Centre's approval, there will be no harm in it. I am keeping well.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

221. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
January 10, 1948

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

It is shocking to see how we have fallen today. Those who pretend to be *sadhus* and boast of self-control and their recitation of the *Gita,* show no self-control at all.[1] But generally these days the prayer meetings are quiet and well-ordered, which is a good thing.

I had been warned that the Bahawalpur refugees would create a disturbance today and would keep on shouting through the meeting.[2] I said it could not be true. I know their sufferings. I assure them that all the Hindus and Sikhs stranded there will be brought over. The Nawab has given the assurance—although I do not know how much one can depend on the assurances of Rajas and Nawabs—-that from now on Hindus and Sikhs there will not be subjected to any harassment, that those who want to leave will be allowed to leave under proper arrangements and those remaining will not be asked to embrace Islam. It may be that they are all safe there. The Government too are seized of the matter. You may demand that they should be brought over right now. But you must understand that, though formerly we were one country, we are now two countries and enemies of each other. We try to do what we can. There are seventy thousand Hindus and Sikhs there. In Sind the number is much larger. They are not safe there. I have a telegram from Karachi which says that the situation is much worse than it was described in the newspapers and that the damage done was much greater. The times are such that we must maintain the utmost self-possession and patience. If we lose patience we shall lose the battle. Defeat is a word that should find no

[1] A man wearing a saffron robe had got up and insisted on reading out his letter to Gandhiji. It was with great difficulty that he was made to sit down.

[2] As Gandhiji walked to the prayer ground, the refugees from Bahawalpur staged a demonstration and shouted slogans asking for help for the 70,000 Hindus and Sikhs stranded there. They became perfectly peaceful when Gandhiji sat down for prayers.

place in our dictionary. For this it is necessary not to be provoked into anger. We have to think calmly what we must do.

Today the Iranian Ambassador came to see me. He is a guest of the Government. He said, "Iran and India have always been friends. Both Iranians and Indians come of Aryan stock." He is right. If we look at the *Zend Avesta*, we shall find many Sanskrit words in it. We have also had dealings with each other. The Ambassador said that India was the largest nation in Asia and that Iran sincerely wanted friendship with India. Gurudev[1] had once paid a visit to Iran and he was very satisfied with the visit. The Ambassador told me that the relations between Iran and India ought not to be allowed to deteriorate. I asked him how that could be. Then he referred to an incident involving an Iranian in Bombay. There are many Iranians in Bombay. They run tea-shops there, which are visited by large numbers of Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and Christians. There seems to have been some rioting there. I do not know anything about it. I am told some Iranians were killed. Iranians are after all Muslims. So the rioters must have decided that it was quite all right to kill them. I asked him if he had any complaint to make about the way the Government handled the situation. He said he had none and that the Government had quickly brought the situation under control. He says the Government here too is good, that it has posted armed guards for the protection of the Muslims who are here. He says in Iran Hindu, Sikh and Muslim traders lived together in amity. Exaggerated reports from India are always going there. What may happen in future nobody knows. But the Government in Iran is keeping itself vigilant, and it does not want to weaken its friendship with India for whatever cause.

I still have two minutes, so I take up a letter. The correspondent says that, though some people are happy that the controls on articles of food have been lifted, he would like to warn me that lifting of controls has not been a very good thing and that I have only been getting one-sided information. But when I receive so many wires and letters congratulating me, what am I to say? I cannot reject them saying that they present only one view. I cannot know the opinions of all and I cannot see everything that is happening in the world because I am not gifted with divine sight. The millions of people in India are my eyes and ears, hands and feet. I also want to know the other side.

[1] Rabindranath Tagore

Do not believe in anything simply because I say it. Believe only what your eyes see. You will learn from your mistakes. Do what appears to you right. Only then will you be able to keep your freedom and deserve it.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 285-7

222. "URDU HARIJAN"

Two weeks ago I hinted in the Gujarati columns that the *Harijan* printed in the Urdu script was likely to be stopped as its sale was steadily dwindling. Apart even from financial considerations, I saw no meaning in publishing it, if there was no demand for it. The dwindle to me was a sign of resentment against its publication. I would be foolish if I failed to profit by it.

My view remains unalterable especially at this critical juncture in our history. It is wrong to ruffle Muslim or any other person's feeling when there is no question of ethics. Those who take the trouble of learning the Urdu script in addition to the Nagari, will surely lose nothing. They will gain a knowledge of the Urdu script, which many of our countrymen know. If it was not for cussedness, this proposition will be admitted without any argument. The limitations of this script in terms of perfection are many. But for elegance and grace it will equal any script in the world. It will not die so long at least as Arabic and Persian live, though it has achieved a status all its own without outside aid. With a little adaptation it can serve the purpose of shorthand. As a national script, if it is set free from the bondage of orthodoxy, it is capable of improvement so as to enable one to transcribe Sanskrit verses without the slightest difficulty.

Lastly, those who in anger boycott the Urdu script, put a wanton affront upon the Muslims of the Union who, in the eyes of many Hindus, have become aliens in their own land. This is copying the bad manners of Pakistan with a vengeance. I invite every inhabitant of India to join me in a stern refusal to copy bad manners. If they will enter the heart of what I have written, they will prevent the impending collapse of the Nagari and Urdu editions of the *Harijan.* Will Muslim friends rise to the occasion and do two things—subscribe to the Urdu edition and diligently learn the Nagari script and enrich their intellectual capital?

NEW DELHI, January 11 , 1 948

Harijan, 18-1 -1948

223. HOW DEMOCRACY WORKS

A valued correspondent has written to me two letters, one issuing a timely warning about the ill effects of hasty decontrol and the other about the possibility of an outbreak of Hindu-Muslim riots. I have dealt with both the letters in a letter which has become unexpectedly argumentative and gives my view of democracy which can only come out of non-violent mass action. I, therefore, reproduce the letter below without giving at the same time the letters to which it is in answer. There is enough in the answer to enable the reader to know the purport of the two letters. I have purposely refrained from giving the name of my correspondent and the scene of action, not because the letters are confidential, but because nothing is to be gained from disclosing either:

> You still write as if you had the slave mind, though the slavery of us all is abolished. If decontrol has produced the effect you attribute to it, you should raise your voice, even though you may be alone in doing so and your voice may be feeble. As a matter of fact you have many companions and your voice is by no means feeble unless intoxication of power has enfeebled it. Personally, the bogey of the shooting up of prices by reason of decontrol does not frighten me. If we have many sharks and we do not know how to combat them, we shall deserve to be eaten up by them. Then we shall know how to carry ourselves in the teeth of adversity. Real democracy people learn not from books, not from the government who are in name and in reality their servants. Hard experience is the most efficient teacher in democracy. The days of appeals to me are gone. The cloak of non- violence which we had put on during the British regime is no longer now necessary. Therefore, violence faces us in its terrible nakedness. Have you also succumbed or you too never had non-violence? This letter is not to warn you against writing to me and giving me your view of the picture, but it is intended to tell you why I would swear by decontrol even if mine was a solitary voice.
>
> Your second letter about Hindu-Muslim tension is more to the point than the first. Here too you should raise your voice openly against any soft handling of the situation or smug satisfaction. I shall do my part but I am painfully conscious of my limitations. Formerly I could afford to be the monarch of all

I surveyed. Today I have many fellow-monarchs, if I may still count myself as such. If I can, I am the least among them. The first days of democracy are discordant notes which jar on the ear and give you many headaches. If democracy is to live in spite of these killing notes, sweet concord has to rise out of this seemingly discordant necessary lesson. How I wish that you would be one of the masters who would contribute to the production of concord out of discord!

You will not make the mistake of thinking that your duty is finished when you have apprised me of the situation in your part of the country.

NEW DELHI, January I 1, 1948

Harijan, 18-1-1948

224. HOW TO INCREASE YIELDS?

Bhai Harilal Bawabhai Patel of Gram Dakshinamurty writes:[1]

There is nothing new in Bhai Harilal's suggestion. Nevertheless, those who hold the reins of the country are no farmers. So what has been said above can be of help. Let us find time from political activities and engage ourselves in constructive work, give proper importance to agricultural reforms, teach the farmers as much as possible and learn from them what we can.

If we use farmyard manure or compost it is not necessary to keep the fields fallow. This manure keeps the soil ever fresh. It also does not have to be carried from place to place. After a little experience, such manure can be produced in every village. But these things cannot be done mechanically. Let us glean what knowledge we can find in writings such as above and provide right education to the farmers by carrying on original experiments, and thus benefit them.

NEW DELHI, January 11, 1948

Harijanbandhu, 18-1 -1948

[From Gujarati]

[1] The letter is not translated here.

225. A NOTE

Sunday, January 11, 1948

All natural remedies, i. e., the use of water, air, light, earth and the open sky are to be included. The book will tell people how to keep well and be stronger by the adoption of the natural laws.

From a photostat: G. N. 7833. Also C. W. 4197. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur

226. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR

January 11, 1948

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

I have your letter. What point have I not answered?

It was not good that the man died; but he was released and it has been a test for us.

I do not like the idea of leaving out the Sanskrit *shlokas.* I see no need for the reading to be done in English. Have . . .[1] translated into Hindi and read it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9042. Also C. W. 9166. Courtesy: Prabhakar

227. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
January 11, 1948

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Only yesterday I complimented you on the calm you maintained in the meeting. But if boys and girls continue to whisper or if women bring children who cry it is not good education for

[1] One word is illegible here.

them.[1] If they cannot keep the children quiet they should not bring them to the meeting. I shall request all my brothers and sisters to have the decency to keep quiet and also to keep the children quiet. Continuous conversation during prayer obstructs it. They should realize that God is omnipotent and omnipresent. He hears everything. We must not abuse His silence and mercy.

I have to refer to a painful matter. It concerns Andhra. I have two letters from Andhra. One of them is from an elderly gentleman[2] whom I know and who does not write as a rule. The other is from a young man whom I do not know. There is no use telling you the names because you do not know them. Both say that after August 15, all fear has vanished from people's minds. The British who were feared are gone. There is no fear of punishment and also no fear of God. In Andhra people are of robust health and when they feel that they are free they lose all self-control. Now they do nothing but what will further their self-interest. One of the correspondents bewails the fact that all the sacrifices made by the Congress to see India free has resulted in this. The Congress today is falling. Everyone in the Congress today wants to become an M. L. A. Those who succeed do not work for the country but only for themselves. An M. L. A. gets quite a sizable salary—I do not recollect how much—but it is quite adequate for one's necessities. The correspondent says that the M. L. As nevertheless are corrupt and they harass civil servants and try to browbeat them into doing their bidding. In this way both suffer morally— civil servants as well as those who call themselves our representatives. The elder correspondent suggests that I should go and live in Andhra and see how things are. But I have lived not only among Andhras but among all classes of people. To me people of every province are Indians even if they speak different languages. If someone says that he belongs to Andhra and has nothing to do with the rest of the country, I too shall have nothing to do with him. He says the rot is spreading amongst us. The more people we return to the assemblies, the greater the amount of filth. The fewer there are the less filth there will be. He therefore suggests that we should reduce the number of M. L. A.s because they do not in any case represent the people. They go into the assemblies to serve their self-interest. They

[1] It being a Sunday, a large number of people attended the prayer meeting.

[2] Konda Venkatappayya; *vide* "Letter to Konda Venkatappayya", 12-1-1948 and "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 12-1-1948.

even try to capture the Congress. Then there are others who call themselves Communists or Socialists. They also feel all-important and talk about capturing the whole of India. But who will control India? Socialists and Communists and Congressmen are all Indians. Let us not say that India is ours. Let us rather say that we belong to India. If we make India our own, we must do so not to further our self-interest, not to enrich our relatives or to provide them jobs but to serve.

The women are talking. This is very bad. If you must talk, then come to the dais and make a speech from here. Maybe they do not hear a word of what I am saying. They do not come here to listen. They come here because they have nothing else to do.

A few Muslims came to see me today. They say they have been and still are nationalist Muslims and Congressmen. They say formerly Congressmen had great regard for them but now they have fallen in their eyes. If the Congressmen think so little of them, they should ask them to go and they will go. Let the Government say so, too. In that way they will be spared the assaults and the humiliation that are their lot. Those who met me did not speak only for themselves. They represented all the Muslims. I advised them to keep calm and assured them that the Government was doing all it could. We would see what to do if it failed. Today we must forget that we are Hindus or Sikhs or Muslims or Parsis. If we want to conduct the affairs of India properly we must be only Indians. It is of no consequence by what name we call God in our homes. In the work of the nation, all Indians of all faiths are one. If Hindus say that they will kill Muslims or will not permit them to live in India they will be committing suicide and the Muslims will be spared the trouble of killing the Hindus. We cannot commit suicide. We are Indians and we must lay down our lives in protecting Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Sikhs and all others.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 288-90

228. RACING AND BETTING

A correspondent from Madras writes a pathetic letter on the subject of betting on the race-course and holds that the two go together. If betting went, horse-racing probably would fall flat. It is wholly unnecessary for the sake of the love of horse flesh to have

horse races and all their attendant excitement. They pander to the vices of humanity and mean a waste of good cultivable soil and good money. Who has not witnessed as I have, the ruin of fine men caused by the gamble on the racecourses? It is time to leave alone the vices of the West and to strive to adopt the best that it has to give.

NEW DELHI, January 12, 1948

Harijan, 18-1-1948

229. THE LATE TOTARAM SANADHYA

Totaramji has passed away at a ripe old age without requiring any nursing. He was a jewel of the Sabarmati Ashram. Though not a scholar, he had wisdom. He had a treasure of devotional songs and yet he was not an accomplished singer. He used to delight the Ashram by his *ektara*[1] and his devotional songs. His wife was exactly like him. She departed before Totaramji.

Where people live in groups there are bound to be some conflicts. I do not remember any occasion when this couple might have been a party to any such conflict or the cause of one. Totaramji loved the soil. Farming was his very life. He came to the Ashram years ago and never left it. Men and women, young and old, always sought his guidance. He brought unfailing solace to them.

He was an orthodox Hindu. But, he held Hindus, Muslims and people of other religions in equal regard. There was no trace of the

feeling of untouchability in him. He had no vices. He never took part in politics, and yet his love for the country was so great that it could be compared with the best of its kind. Renunciation came to him naturally. He added lustre to it.

This good man had gone to Fiji as an indentured labourer. He was the discovery of Deenabandhu Andrews. The credit for having brought him to the Ashram goes to Benarsidas Chaturvedi.

Till the end of his life it was Amina, Ghulam Rasool Qureshi's wife and Imam Saheb's daughter, who rendered him what service she could.

[1] A one-stringed instrument

"Great men live for others" was literally true in the case of Totaramji.

NEW DELHI, January 12, 1948

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 18-1-1948

230. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

NEW DELHI,
January 12, 1948

DEAR DESHABHAKTA,

It is refreshing to get a fairly long letter from you. I referred to it yesterday in my prayer speech.[1] What you say is too shocking for words.[2] I cannot move out of Delhi.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 3233

231. LETTER TO PARTHASARATHY

NEW DELHI,
January 12, 1948

DEAR PARTHASARATHY,

Go on as you are doing calmly, patiently and politely.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

232. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

January 12, 1948

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. I should like you not to lose your peace of

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 11-1-1948.
[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 12-1-1948.

mind even when nearing death. He or she who has Rama in his or her heart even while lying on sick-bed is in fact serving the people. Goodwill for others is in itself a form of service. To such a person life and death are the same thing. I want you to cultivate such a state of mind.

The rest Sushila will write.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10083. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

233. LETTER TO SARAIYA

NEW DELHI,
January 12, 1948

BHAI SARAIYA,

In your article you seem to have missed the point altogether or I have failed to understand it. If a single new coin is offered in exchange for three rupees, don't you think it shows an utterly absurd situation?

What can we say about the innocent?

Blessings from

BAPU

SWASTIK COURT
QUEEN'S ROAD
BAND STAND
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

234. LETTER TO KEDARNATH SAHNI

NEW DELHI,
January 12, 1948

BHAI KEDARNATH,

I got your letter. Your wife has departed in peace. Hence, there can be no cause for grief. Anyway, the body is destined to perish some day or the other, some now, some later.

It was almost impossible for me to go there yesterday, it was sufficient that Dr. Sushila went.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

KEDARNATH SAHNI

MAGISTRATE

KARNAL

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

235. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,

January 12, 1948

One fasts for health's sake under laws governing health or fasts as a penance for a wrong done and felt as such. In these fasts, the fasting one need not believe in ahimsa. There is, however, a fast which a votary of non-violence sometimes feels impelled to undertake by way of protest against some wrong done by society and this he does when he, as a votary of ahimsa, has no other remedy left.

Such an occasion has come my way. When on September 9 I returned to Delhi from Calcutta, I was to proceed to West Punjab. But that was not to be. Gay Delhi looked a city of the dead. As I alighted from the train I observed gloom on every face. I saw even the Sardar, whom humour and the joy that humour gives never desert, was no exception this time.

The cause of it I did not know. He was on the platform to receive me. He lost no time in giving me the sad news of the disturbances that had taken place in the metropolis of the Union. At once I saw that I had to be in Delhi and do or die.

There is apparent calm brought about by prompt military and police action. But there is storm within the breast. It may burst forth any day. This I count as no fulfilment of the vow to "do" which alone can keep me from death, the incomparable friend. I yearn for heart friendship between Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims. It subsisted between them the other day. Today it is non-existent. It is a state that

[1] As Gandhiji was observing silence, his speech written in English was translated into Hindi and read out after the prayers.

no Indian patriot worthy of the name can contemplate with equanimity.

Though the voice within has been beckoning for a long time, I have been shutting my ears to it lest it might be the voice of Satan, otherwise called my weakness. I never like to feel resourceless; a satyagrahi never should. Fasting is his last resort in the place of the sword—his or others.

I have no answer to return to the Muslim friends who see me from day to day as to what they should do. My impotence has been gnawing at me of late. It will go immediately the fast is undertaken. I have been brooding over it for the last three days. The final conclusion has flashed upon me and it makes me happy.[1] No man, if he is pure, has anything more precious to give than his life. I hope and pray that I have that purity in me to justify the step. I ask you all to bless the effort and to pray for me and with me.

The fast begins from the first meal tomorrow (Tuesday). The period is indefinite and I may drink water with or without salts and sour limes. It will end when and if I am satisfied that there is a reunion of hearts of all communities brought about without any outside pressure, but from an awakened sense of duty.

The reward will be the regaining of India's dwindling prestige and her fast-fading sovereignty over the heart of Asia and therethrough the world. I flatter myself with the belief that the loss of her soul by India will mean the loss of the hope of the aching, storm-tossed and hungry world. Let no friend or foe, if there be one, be angry with me. There are friends who do not believe in the method of the fast for reclamation of the human mind. They will bear with me and extend to me the same liberty of action that they claim for themselves.

With God as my supreme and sole counsellor, I felt that I must take the decision without any other adviser. If I have made a mistake and discover it, I shall have no hesitation in proclaiming it from the house-top and retracing my faulty step. There is little chance of my making such a discovery. If there is a clear indication, as I claim there is, of the Inner Voice, it will not be gainsaid. I plead for all absence of argument and inevitable endorsement of the step. If the whole of India

[1] Gandhiji had given no inkling of what was in his mind to his close associates—not even to Vallabhbhai Patel and Jawaharlal Nehru who had met him shortly before this announcement at the prayer meeting.

This was the fifteenth fast to be undertaken by Gandhiji.

responds or at least Delhi does, the fast might be soon ended.

But whether it ends soon or late or never, let there be no softness in dealing with what may be termed as a crisis. Critics have regarded some of my previous fasts as coercive and held that on merits the verdict would have gone against my stand but for the pressure exercised by the fasts.

What value can an adverse verdict have when the purpose is demonstrably sound? A pure fast, like duty, is its own reward. I do not embark upon it for the sake of the result it may bring. I do so because I must. Hence I urge everybody dispassionately to examine the purpose and let me die, if I must, in peace which I hope is ensured. Death for me would be a glorious deliverance rather than that I should be a helpless witness of the destruction of India, Hinduism, Sikhism and Islam. That destruction is certain if Pakistan does not ensure equality of status and security of life and property for all professing the various faiths of the world and if India copies her. Only then Islam dies in the two Indias, not in the world. But Hinduism and Sikhism have no world outside India. Those who differ from me will be honoured by me for their resistance however implacable. Let my fast quicken conscience, not deaden it.

Just contemplate the rot that has set in in beloved India and you will rejoice to think that there is an humble son of hers who is strong enough and possibly pure enough to take the happy step. If he is neither, he is a burden on earth. The sooner he disappears and clears the Indian atmosphere of the burden, the better for him and all concerned.

I would beg of all friends not to rush to Birla House nor try to dissuade me or be anxious for me. I am in God's hands. Rather they should turn the searchlight inwards, for this is essentially a testing-time for all of us. Those who remain at their post of duty and perform it diligently and well, now more so than hitherto, will help me and the cause in every way. The fast is a process of self- purification.

I told you yesterday of two letters from Andhra. One was from the aged friend, no other than Deshabhakta Konda Venkatappayyagaru. I give here extracts from it:

> The one great problem, apart from many other political and economic issues of a very complicated nature, is the moral degradation into which the men in Congress circles have fallen. I cannot say much about other provinces but in my province the conditions are very deplorable. The taste of political

power has turned their heads. Several of the M. L. A.s and M. L. C.s are following the policy of making hay while the sun shines, of making money by the use of influence, even to the extent of obstructing the administration of justice in the criminal courts presided over by magistrates. Even the District Collectors and other revenue officials do not feel free in the discharge of their duties on account of the frequent interference by the M. L. A.s and M. L. C.s on behalf of their partisans. A strict and honest officer cannot hold his position, for false reports are carried against him to the Ministers who easily lend their ears to these unprincipled self-seekers.

Swaraj was the only all-absorbing passion which goaded men and women to follow your leadership. But now that the goal had been reached, all moral restrictions have lost their power on most of the fighters in the great struggle, who are joining hands even with those who were sworn opponents of the national movement and who, now, for their personal ends enlist themselves as Congress members. The situation is growing intolerable every day with the result that the Congress as well as the Congress Government have come into disrepute.

The recent municipal elections in Andhra have proved how far and how fast the Congress is losing its hold upon the people. The municipal elections in the town of Guntur were suddenly ordered to be stopped by an urgent message from the Minister for Local Bodies (Madras) after every preparation was made for carrying on election. Only a nominated council was in power for, I believe, the last ten years or more and for nearly a year now the municipal administration has been in the hands of a commissioner. Now the talk prevails that the Government would soon nominate councillors to take charge of the municipal affairs of this town.

I, old, decrepit, with a broken leg, slowly limping on crutches within the walls of my house, have no axe to grind. I no doubt entertain certain strong views against some of the leading Congressmen in the two parties into which the members of the Provincial and District Congress Committees now stand divided. And I have made no secret of my views.

The factions in the Congress circles, the money-making activities of several of the M. L. A.s and M. L. C.s and the weakness of the Ministers have been creating a rebellious spirit among the people at large. The people have begun to say that the British Government was much better and they are even cursing the Congress.

Let the people of Andhra and the other provinces measure the words of this self-sacrificing servant of India. As he rightly says the corruption described by him is no monopoly of Andhra. He could

only give first-hand evidence about Andhra. Let us beware.

My Bahawalpur friends, I have to ask you to be patient. Sardar Saheb saw me only at noon. Being silent and preoccupied I could say or write nothing. Shri Shanker[1] from his office was too busy to come so that I could not place your case before him and possibly save the Sardar's precious time.[2]

The Hindustan Times, 13-1-1948, and *Harijan*, 18-1-1948

236. LETTER TO A PUBLISHER[3]

NEW DELHI,
January 13, 1948

Who am I to write a foreword for the autobiography of a celebrity like sage Romain Rolland who, alas, is no more among us? I consider myself unfit for the task. What is more, I have not even had a moment to read the volume.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C. W. 10590. Courtesy: Madeleine Rolland. Also *Romain Rolland and Gandhi Correspondence, p.* 352

237. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

January 13, 1948

CHI. MANI,

I had a talk with the Sardar today. Therefore not again just now. I wish to see the men[4] from Bahawalpur. I will send for you after that. I can't judge how I misunderstood the matter. I will rectify the mistake.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 145

[1] V. Shankar, Private Secretary to Vallabhbhai Patel
[2] Gandhiji visited Lord Mountbatten after the prayers.
[3] Who was planning to bring out Romain Rolland's *Voyage Intereur*
[4] Officials from Bahawalpur

238. TALK WITH A SIKH FRIEND[1]

January 13, 1948

My fast is against no one party, group or individual exclusively and yet it excludes nobody. It is addressed to the conscience of all, even the majority community in the other Dominion. If all or any one of the groups responds fully, I know the miracle will be achieved. For instance, if the Sikhs respond to my appeal as one man, I shall be wholly satisfied. I shall go and live in their midst in the Punjab, for they are a brave people and I know they can set an example in non-violence of the brave which will serve as an object lesson to all the rest.

Harijan, 18-1-1948

239. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

NEW DELHI,
January 13, 1948

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Today I may not finish my speech in 15 minutes as usual, as I have much to say.

Today I have come to the prayer meeting because for the first twenty-four hours after beginning a fast the body does not feel it or should not feel it. I began eating at half past nine this morning. People kept coming and talking to me.[3] I finished eating a little before eleven.[4] So I have been able to come to the meeting and this is not surprising. Today I can walk about and sit up and I have also done some work. From tomorrow there will be some change. Rather than coming here and not speaking, I might as well sit in my room and think. If I have to utter the name of God, I can do it there. I therefore

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's article "An All-in Fast"

[2] The gathering at the prayer meeting was much larger than usual.

[3] Vallabhbhai Patel was with Gandhiji for nearly 45 minutes. Prominent among the callers were Abul Kalam Azad, Jairamdas Doulatram, H. S. Suhrawardy and Dr. Jivraj Mehta.

[4] Prayers were held at 11 a. m. as Gandhiji commenced his fast.

feel that I shall not be coming to the prayer meeting from tomorrow. But if you do wish to join in the prayer you may come if you feel like it. The girls will come and sing the prayer. At least one of them will come. I have told you my programme in case you should feel disappointed at my not coming.

I had written down yesterday's speech and it has been published in the newspapers. Now that I have started my fast many people cannot understand what I am doing, who are the offenders—Hindus or Sikhs or Muslims. How long will the fast last? I say I do not blame anyone. Who am I to accuse others? I have said that we have all sinned. That does not mean that any one particular man has sinned. Hindus in trying to drive out the Muslims are not following Hinduism. And today it is both Hindus and Sikhs who are trying to do so. But I do not accuse all the Hindus and Sikhs because not all of them are doing it. People should understand this. If they do not, my purpose will not be realized and the fast too will not be terminated. If I do not survive the fast, no one is to be blamed. If I am proved unworthy, God will take me away. People ask me if my fast is intended for the cause of the Muslims. I admit that that is so. Why? Because Muslims here today have lost everything in the world. Formerly they could depend on the Government. There was also the Muslim League. Today the Muslim League is no longer there. The League got the country partitioned and even after the partition there are large numbers of Muslims here. I have always held that those who have been left behind in India should be given all help. It is only humanity.

Mine is a fast of self-purification. Everyone should purify himself. If not, the situation cannot be saved. If everyone is to purify himself, Muslims will also purify themselves. Everyone should cleanse his heart. No one should find fault with the Muslims whatever they may do. If I confess before someone that I have done wrong, then it is a kind of atonement.

I do not say this in order to appease the Muslims or anyone else. I want to appease myself which means that I want to appease God. I do not want to be a sinner against God. Muslims also must become pure and live peacefully in India. What happened was that for election purposes Hindus and Sikhs recognized the Muslim League. I shall not go into that history. Then followed the partition. But before partition became a fact the hearts had already become divided. Muslims were also at fault here, though we cannot say that they alone were at fault.

Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims, all are to blame. Now all of them have to become friends again. Let them look to God, not to Satan. Among the Muslims too there are many who worship Satan. Among the Hindus and the Sikhs many worship not Nanak and other Gurus, but Satan. In the name of religion we have become irreligious.

Since I have undertaken the fast in the cause of the Muslims, a great responsibility has come to devolve on them. They must understand that if they are to live with the Hindus as brothers they must be loyal to the Indian Union, not to Pakistan. I shall not ask them whether they are loyal or not. I shall judge them by their conduct.

Then the name of the Sardar is being mentioned. The Muslims say that I am good, but the Sardar is not and he must be removed. They say that Jawaharlal too is good. They say if I join the Government it will be a good thing. They object only to the Sardar. I must tell the Muslims that their argument serves no purpose, because the Government is the whole Cabinet, neither the Sardar nor Jawahar by himself. They are your servants. You can remove them. Yes, Muslims alone cannot remove them. But at least they can bring to the Sardar's notice any mistakes which in their opinion he commits. It will not do merely to criticize him by quoting some statement or other he might have made. You must say what he has done. You must tell me. I meet him often and I shall bring it to his notice. Jawaharlal can dismiss him and if he does not, there must be some reason. He praises the Sardar.[1] Then the Government is responsible for whatever the Sardar does. You too are responsible for he is your representative. That is how things go in a democracy. Therefore I shall say that the Muslims must become brave and fearless. They should also become God-fearing. They must think that for them there is no League, no Congress, no Gandhi, no Jawaharlal but only God, that they are here in the name of God. Let them not take offence at whatever Hindus and Sikhs may do. I am with them. I want to live and die with them. If I cannot keep you united, my life is worthless. The Muslims thus carry a great responsibility. They must not forget this.

The Sardar is blunt of speech. What he says sometimes sounds bitter. The fault is in his tongue. I can testify that his heart is not like

[1] The report in *The Hindustan Times* here adds: "The Sardar had not ceased to be his (Gandhiji's) esteemed friend though he was no longer his 'yes man' as he was once popularly and affectionately nick-named."

his tongue. He has said in Lucknow[1] and in Calcutta[2] that all Muslims should live here and can live here. He also told me that he could not trust those Muslims who till the other day followed the League and considered themselves enemies of Hindus and Sikhs and who could not have changed overnight and suddenly become friends. If the League is still there who will they obey, Pakistan or our Government? The League's persistence in its old attitude makes him suspect it, and rightly so. He says that he no longer has faith in the *bona fides* of the League Muslims and he cannot trust them. Let them prove that they can be trusted. Then I have the right to tell the Hindus and Sikhs what they should do.

The song[3] these girls sang was composed by Gurudev. We sang it during our tours in Noakhali. A man walking alone calls to others to come and join him. But if no one comes and it is dark, the Poet says, the man should walk alone because God is already with him. I asked the girls especially to sing this song which is in Bengali. Otherwise they would have sung only Hindustani songs. The Hindus and Sikhs should cultivate this attitude if they are true to their religions. They should not generate an atmosphere in which the Muslims should be compelled to flee to Pakistan. Hindus and Sikhs should become brave and show that even if all the Hindus and Sikhs in Pakistan were to be killed there would be no retaliation in India. I do not want to live to see our people copy Pakistan. If I am to live I shall ask every Hindu and every Sikh not to touch a single Muslim. It is cowardice to kill Muslims and we must become brave and not cowards.

[1] Addressing a public meeting at Lucknow on January 6, Vallabhbhai Patel had said: "I want to ask the Indian Muslims only one question. In the recent All-India Muslim Conference why did you not open your mouths on the Kashmir issue? Why did you not condemn the action of Pakistan?

These things create doubt in the minds of people. . . . So I want to say a word as a friend of Muslims. It is our duty now to sail in the same boat and sink or swim. I want to tell you very clearly that you cannot ride two horses. You select one horse, whichever you like better."

[2] Speaking at a mammoth gathering at Calcutta on January 3, Vallabhbhai Patel had emphasized that there could be no serious talk of a Hindu State. But one fact was indisputable. There were 4_ crores of Muslims in India many of whom had helped the creation of Pakistan. How could one believe that they would change overnight. "The Muslims said they were loyal citizens, and therefore, why should anybody doubt their *bona fides?* To them we would say: 'Why do you ask us? Search your own conscience'."

[3] With the refrain *Ekla chalo re*—Walk thou alone

I shall terminate the fast only when peace has returned to Delhi. If peace is restored to Delhi it will have effect not only on the whole of India but also on Pakistan and when that happens, a Muslim can walk around in the city all by himself. I shall then terminate the fast. Delhi is the capital of India. It has always been the capital of India. So long as things do not return to normal in Delhi, they will not be normal either in India or in Pakistan. Today I cannot bring Suhrawardy here because I fear someone may insult him. Today he cannot walk about in the streets of Delhi. If he did he would be assaulted. What I want is that he should be able to move about here even in the dark. It is true that he made efforts in Calcutta only when Muslims became involved. Still, he could have made the situation worse, if he had wanted, but he did not want to make things worse. He made the Muslims evacuate the places they had forcibly occupied and said that he being the Premier could do so. Although the places occupied by the Muslims belonged to Hindus and Sikhs he did his duty. Even if it takes a whole month to have real peace established in Delhi it does not matter. People should not do anything merely to have me terminate the fast.

So my wish is that Hindus, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians and Muslims who are in India should continue to live in India and India should become a country where everyone's life and property are safe. Only then will India progress.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 293-300

240. NOTE TO MANU GANDHI[1]

NEW DELHI,
January 13, 1948

CHI. MANUDI,

If you were to have more courage, your entire bearing would change. You have considerable capability in you but that has not been developed fully because of your withdrawing nature. Think over this.

Your timidity is killing you. You should have the courage to tell anyone that it is your duty to eat where you do because your parents

[1] Gandhiji gave this to the addressee before retiring to bed.

like you to do so. You should admit that, since you are lacking in firmness of mind, if you eat at somebody's place you will eat only what and as much as he permits. You should say you will get used to it by and by. You should explain this fearlessly to everybody. Only then will your latent capacity come out and shine. You don't know how much it pains me to see you keep ill. Think what absolute trust Jaisukhlal has put in me. If, therefore, you do not improve and become perfect both physically and mentally, I would be deeply pained.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

241. NOTE TO BALVANTSINHA[1]

[After *January 13, 1948*][2]

The improvement in the charkha has not gone beyond the stage to which Maganlal[3] brought it. Its science is still imperfect. It is for the Ashram to perfect it. After I am gone the whole country may give up the charkha but the Ashram will not do so. You have been in the Ashram from its inception and you have to die there.

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, p. 333

242. TALK WITH A MUSLIM FRIEND

[After *January 13, 1948*]

A Muslim friend entreated Gandhiji to give up the fast "for the sake of us Muslims". "You are our only hope and support," he pleaded. "The Muslims are not innocent. Have not the Hindus and Sikhs too suffered beyond words?"

I know that. That is the very reason why I am fasting. I shall become a broken reed and be lost to both Hindus and Muslims, like

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's letter written after the commencement of Gandhiji's fast on January 13.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Maganlal Gandhi; *vide* "My Best Comrade Gone", 26-4-1928.

salt that hath lost its savour, if in this hour of test, I fail to live up to my creed and their expectations.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 706

243. TO GUJARATIS[1]

I am dictating this from my bed early on Wednesday morning. It is the second day of the fast though it is not yet twenty-four hours since the fast commenced. It is the last day for posting matter for this week's *Harijan.* So I think it proper to address a few words to the people of Gujarat.

I do not consider this an ordinary fast. I have undertaken it after much reflection. Yet it is not reflection that has impelled it; it is God who rules over reason. It is addressed to no one or is addressed to all. There is no anger of any kind behind it, nor the slightest tinge of impatience. There is a time for everything. Of what use would any efforts be after the opportunity has slipped? What therefore remains to be considered is whether there is something that each Indian can do. Gujaratis are Indians. And since I write this in Gujarati it is addressed to all Indians who know Gujarati.

Delhi is the capital of India. If we do not accept partition in our hearts, that is, if we do not consider Hindus and Muslims separate peoples, we shall have to admit that Delhi is no longer the capital of India as we have visualized it. Delhi has always been the capital. It is this city which was Indraprastha, which was Hastinapur. We see the ruins standing today. It is the heart of India. It would be the limit of foolishness to regard it as belonging only to the Hindus or the Sikhs. It may sound harsh but there is no exaggeration in it. It is the literal truth. All Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians and Jews who people this country from Kanyakumari to Kashmir and from Karachi to Dibrugarh in Assam and who have lovingly and in a spirit of service adopted it as their dear motherland, have an equal right to it. No one can say that it has place only for the majority and the minority should be dishonoured. Whoever serves it with the purest devotion must have the first right over it. Therefore, anyone who seeks to drive out the Muslims is Delhi's enemy number one and therefore India's enemy number one. We are heading towards that catastrophe.

[1] A translation of this appeared in *Harijan*, 18-1-1948.

Every Indian must do his bit to ward it off.

What should we do then? If we would see Panchayat Raj, i. e., democracy established, we would regard the humblest and the lowliest Indian as being equally the ruler of India with the tallest in the land. For this everyone should be pure. If they are not they should become so. He who is pure will also be wise. He will observe no distinctions between caste and caste, between touchable and untouchable, but will consider everyone equal with himself. He will bind others to himself with love. To him no one would be an untouchable. He would treat the labourers the same as he would the capitalists. He will, like the millions of toilers, earn his living from service of others and will make no distinction between intellectual and manual work. To hasten this desirable consummation, we should voluntarily turn ourselves into scavengers. He who is wise will never touch opium, liquor or any intoxicants. He will observe the vow of swadeshi and regard every woman who is not his wife as his mother, sister or daughter according to her age, and never see anyone with eyes of lust. He will concede to woman the same rights he claims for himself. If need be he will, sacrifice his own life but never kill another. If he is a Sikh, he will, as taught by the Gurus, be as heroic "as one lakh and a quarter" of men and will not yield an inch. Such an Indian will not ask what his duty in the present hour is.

NEW DELHI, January 14, 1948

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 18-1-1948

244. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Makar Sankranti, January 14,1948

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have been through your letter early in the morning after the prayer.[1] I also understand the little talk we had yesterday. My

[1] The addressee's letter dated January 13, 1948 read: "Your statement has been written in haste. Quite a few improvements could have been made in it. I had wished to tell you my views about the propriety of your fasting. But as I had no hint of the oncoming fast, I made no attempts to tell you these. . . . My chief concern and my argument against your fast is that you have surrendered to impatience, whereas your mission by its very nature calls for infinite patience. You do not seem to have realized what a tremendous success your patient labour has achieved. It has saved ... thousands of lives and may still save many more. . . .By your death you will not be able to accomplish what you can by living. I would, therefore, beseech you to pay heed to my entreats and give up your decision to fast."

statement was not issued in haste in your sense of the word. In one sense it was, because I took less time in drafting it than I normally would. The reason for it was the four days of reflection and prayer that preceded it. That statement was the result of reflection and prayer, and so it cannot be called a hasty one either in my language or in the language of anyone who knows.

The statement certainly needed some polishing for improving the expression and making the language more refined and I made the changes the moment you suggested them. I did not want to hear either from you or from anyone about the propriety of my fast. That I have listened to you so far is a sign of my modesty and patience. You got the notice the moment I thought about it. Your main anxiety and your reasoning are meaningless. It is true you are my friend. It is true that you have risen high. But you can never cease to be a son and so your concern is only natural. However, your reasoning displays shallowness of thought and impatience. I consider this act of mine as the extreme limit to my patience. Is patience that kills its very object patience or stupidity? I can't claim credit for what has been achieved since my arrival in Delhi. It would be sheer conceit on my part to do so. That one or more lives were saved through my efforts has no value for the world. Only the All-knowing God can see its value. It is nothing but ignorance to say that "one who had been patient from the beginning of September has ceased to be so all of a sudden." It was only when in terms of human effort I had exhausted all resources and realized my utter helplessness that I laid my head on God's lap. That is the meaning of the fast. Read and think over *Gajendramoksha* which is considered the greatest epic. Perhaps then you will be able to value my action. The last sentence of your letter is a beautiful expression of your love. The origin of that love is ignorance or attachment. That this attachment is universal does not make it enlightenment. So long as we are unable to leave aside the question of life and death it is an illusion to think that we can do a particular thing only if we are alive. Strive as long as you are alive is a beautiful thing to say but bear in mind that striving has to be in a spirit of detachment. Now perhaps you will understand why I cannot comply with your request. Rama who, has prompted me to go on fast will bid me give it up if He wants me to do so. In the mean time you, I and all of us should realize and have faith that it is equally well whether Rama preserves my life or ends it. I have only one prayer: 'O Rama, give me strength during the fast so that desire to live may not tempt me into premature termination

of my fast.' Preserve this letter which I have dictated to Manu after deep thought and read it from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, pp. 297-9

245. TALK WITH MUSLIMS

NEW DELHI,
January 14, 1948[1]

When the Delhi Maulanas came to see him in the course of the day Gandhiji greeted them with, "Are you now satisfied?" Then, turning to the one who had said to him three days ago that he should get the Union Government to send them to England, he remarked:

I had no answer to give you then. I can now face you. Shall I ask the Government to arrange a passage for you to England? I shall say to them: Here are the unfaithful Muslims who want to desert India. Give them the facility they want.

The Maulana said he felt sorry if his words had hurt him. Gandhiji retorted with urbane banter:

That would be like the Englishman who kicks you and at the same time goes on saying, 'I beg your pardon'! Do you not feel ashamed of asking to be sent to England? And then you said that slavery under the British rule was better than independence under the Union of India. How dare you, who claim to be patriots and nationalists, utter such words? You have to cleanse your hearts and learn to be cent per cent truthful. Otherwise India will not tolerate you for long and even I shall not be able to help you.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 709

[1] From *Dilhiman Gandhiji*

246. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
January 14, 1948

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Yesterday I said I might not be able to come to the meeting today. But I have managed it. However, from tomorrow or the day after I may not be in a condition to move about. Doctors have advised me rest from today.[1] I have placed myself not in the hands of the doctors but in the hands of God. I have no such attachment for life that I must live under any circumstances. Whether I die or live is wholly in the hands of God. I can only pray that my faith may remain firm and no one may interfere in my acting on that faith. Today man has become weak. He asks: Where is God? I want everyone to become strong. Only then can we escape misery. The few things I wanted to say to you I had in fact dictated in English, because I was not sure what my physical condition would be. I thought if I could not speak to you, a translation of the message could be read out. It was intended not only for you but for the millions in the country who would hear it on the radio and those who want to hear in my own voice what I have to say. I am a prisoner of their love and I thought that they had better hear my own voice today. I feel that a thirty-six hours' fast is very useful physically. It cleanses the body and can cause no harm. True, I have to conserve my energy for the future but God will see to that. I have been receiving many telegrams from all quarters—a lot of them from Muslims. I have also had cablegrams from outside India. I have told Pyarelal to pick out the most relevant of them. Not all need be published; only the few that can teach something to the people should be published. There are others which say that I should give up the fast and all will be well. But how can I give up the fast? God inspired the fast and He alone may terminate it. I have a telephonic message from Mridulabehn. She is in Lahore. She has a large number of friends among Muslims. She is a Hindu girl. The fast has distressed her. I carried her in my arms when she was a little girl. Now she has grown

[1] Gandhiji spent the second day of his fast as per his normal routine except for the morning and evening walks. He took hot water without salt or lime, participated in two meetings with the Cabinet Ministers and received a deputation of refugees from the N. W. F. P., besides a number of visitors and friends.

Drs. Jivraj Mehta and Sushila Nayyar issued a health bulletin that each day's fast increased both immediate and future danger to Gandhiji's life.

up. She goes about everywhere all by herself. She says Muslims, even officers in the Pakistan Government are asking her what they can do for me, now that I am doing what I am doing for their sake. This pleased me. I do not know whether my message has reached them. By tomorrow it will certainly reach them. My answer is that there is no need for them to ask. Although this *yajna is* being performed in Delhi it is for the whole country.

The fast is for self-purification. You must have God enthroned where today Satan sits enthroned. There must be some indication of it. Everybody cannot undertake a fast. It has become my proud privilege to do so. If everyone had this privilege they would have lived in amity. Hindus say, 'Kill the Muslims.' Muslims say, 'Kill the Hindus.' Sikhs say, 'Kill the Muslims.' If Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs fight in this way it helps no one. If you want to participate in the *yajna*, you must become brothers and should have love instead of hate in your hearts. Let all Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs pledge that they will not touch liquor, they will not touch opium. They will have nothing to do with adulterous men and adulterous women. Everyone will look upon other women as mothers or sisters or daughters. Everyone must exercise self-restraint and become clean. If they do all these things and if even then I regard Pakistan as full of sin, I will have to repent and say that Pakistan is not a land of sin but a land of purity. But what is needed is action, not mere words. If the Muslims of Pakistan become thus transformed, it is bound to have an effect in India. I have never tried to hide my view that Pakistan has committed crimes against Hindus.

What has happened in Karachi? Innocent Sikhs were murdered and their properties looted. Now I understand the same thing has happened in Gujrat.[1] There was a caravan coming from Bannu or somewhere. They were all refugees running away to save their lives. They were waylaid and cut down. I do not want to relate this grim tale. I ask the Muslims if in their name this kind of thing continues in Pakistan, how long will the people in India tolerate it. Even if a hundred men like me fasted they would not be able to stop the

[1] On January 13, a train carrying non-Muslim refugees from Bannu was attacked at the Gujrat (West Punjab) Station by the tribesmen who had assembled there on their way to Jammu. In spite of the heroic defence put up by the troops escorting the train, hundreds of refugees were killed or maimed and women and girls abducted by the tribesmen.

tragedy that may follow. You should all become good. Whether you are Muslims or tribals, you must all say that you will have the Hindus and Sikhs back. The poet says, "If there is paradise it is here, it is here." He had said it about a garden. I read it ages ago when I was a child. But paradise is not so easily secured. If Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs became decent, became brothers, then that verse could be inscribed on every door. But that will be only when Pakistan has become pure. But if you say one thing and do another, the place will become another hell. Cleanse your hearts and install God there. If that happens in Pakistan, we in India shall not be behind them. It does not matter that the country is geographically divided, so long as our hearts are one. There are so many different governments in the world. What does it matter if there are fifty or five hundred? There are seven hundred thousand villages in India. If each one of them had a government of their own it would be a good thing.

They tell me that I am mad and have a habit of going on fast on the slightest pretext. But I am made that way. When I was young I never even read the newspapers. I could read English with difficulty and my Gujarati was not satisfactory. I have had the dream ever since then that if the Hindus, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians and Muslims could live in amity not only in Rajkot but in the whole of India, they would all have a very happy life. If that dream could be realized even now when I am an old man on the verge of death, my heart would dance. Children would then frolic in joy to see that there is no strife any more. I urge all of you to help me in this task. If we all persevere in our respective religions and become good there can be harmony between all religions. We must not fear whether a man is a Sikh or a Pathan. We must fear God. This is what I want to see.

You can all try and become such men. What after all is society? Society is made up of individuals. It is we that make society. We are asleep and then say that we are helpless because society is such. The same goes for the Government. It is we who are the Government. If one man takes the initiative others will follow and one can become many; if there is not even one there is nothing.

I am not sure that I shall be able to come here tomorrow. But the prayers will be held and the girls will sing the *bhajans*.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*-II, pp. 300-4

247. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETIING[1]

NEW DELHI,
January 15, 1948

BROTHER AND SISTERS,

This is a new experience for me. I have never so far had occasion to convey my word thus to the people. I cannot go to the prayer ground and my voice from here cannot reach you. Even so I thought that if you could hear my voice you would feel reassured. I have already dictated what I have to say. I do not know for how long this state will continue.[2]

My request to you is that none of you should think what another is doing, but each of you should examine your own self and purify yourself to the extent you can. I am convinced that if people in large numbers purify themselves it will do them a lot of good and it will also do me good. India then will benefit and maybe I shall be able to give up my fast sooner. Let no one be concerned about me. Let everyone be concerned for himself. You must give thought to the progress of the country and the welfare of the people. In the end all men have to die. He who is born cannot escape death. Why then should we fear death or grieve over it? It is my belief that death is a friend to whom we should be grateful, for it frees us from the manifold ills which are our lot.

Newspapermen sent me a message two hours after my prayer speech of last evening, asking to see me as they had some doubts to be cleared. After a heavy day's work I felt disinclined out of exhaustion to see them for discussion. I, therefore, told Pyarelal to inform them to excuse me and further tell them that they should put down the questions in writing and send them to me next morning. They have done so.

[1] The opening two paragraphs were spoken by Gandhiji, as he lay in bed, on the microphone in Hindi. The rest of the speech had been dictated earlier in English to Pyarelal. Sushila Nayyar read out the speech in Hindi at the prayer meeting.

The report in *The Hindustan Times* has been collated with the Hindi version in *Prarthana Pravachan.*

[2] The doctors who examined Gandhiji issued the following bulletin at 4.30 pm. "Today is the third day of Gandhiji's fast. He is naturally losing weight. The weakness has considerably increased. He had to be carried out of the bathroom in an arm-chair this morning. His voice is feeble. Acetone bodies have appeared in the urine..."

Q. You have undertaken the fast when there was no disturbance of any kind in any part of the Indian Dominion.

What was it if it was not a disturbing disturbance for a crowd to make an organized and a determined attempt to take forcible possession of Muslim houses?[1] The disturbance was such that the military had to reluctantly resort to tear-gas and even to a little shooting if only in the air, before the crowd dispersed.

It would have been foolish for me to wait till the last Muslim had been turned out of Delhi by subtle undemonstrative methods, which I would describe as killing by inches.

Q. You have stated that you could not give any reply to the Muslims who came to you with their tale of fear and insecurity and who have complained that Sardar Patel, who is in charge of the Home Affairs, is anti-Muslim. You have also stated that Sardar Patel is no longer a "yes-man" as he used to be.[2]

These factors create the impression that the fast is more intended to bring about a change of heart in the Sardar and thereby amounts to a condemnation of the policy of the Home Ministry. It would be helpful if you can clear the position.

As to this I feel that my reply was precise, not admitting of more interpretations than one. The suggested interpretation never crossed my mind. If I had known that my statement could bear any such interpretation, I would have dispelled the doubt in anticipation.

Many Muslim friends had complained of the Sardar's so-called anti-Muslim attitude. I had, with a degree of suppressed pain, listened to them without giving any explanation. The fast freed me from the self-imposed restraint and I was able to assure the critics that they were wrong in isolating him from Pandit Nehru and me, whom they gratuitously raise to the sky. This isolation did them no good.

The Sardar has a bluntness of speech which sometimes unintentionally hurts, though his heart is expansive enough to accommodate all. Thus my statement was meant deliberately to free a lifelong and faithful comrade from any unworthy reproach.[3]

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 4-1-1948.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 13-1-1948.

[3] Expressing his anguish, Vallabhbhai Patel had written to Gandhiji on January 13, " . . . you have again and again to take up cudgels on my behalf. This ... is intolerable to me."

Again on January 16 he said in Bombay that some Muslims went to Gandhiji and complained about his Lucknow speech and "Gandhiji felt compelled to defend me. That also pained me, for after all I am not a weak person who should be defended by others."

Lest my hearers should run away with the idea that my compliment carried the meaning that I could treat the Sardar as my "yes-man", as he was affectionately described, I balanced the compliment by adding the proviso that he was too masterful to be anybody's "yes-man".

When he was my "yes-man", he permitted himself to be so named, because whatever I said instinctively appealed to him. Great as he was in his own field and a very able administrator, he was humble enough to begin his political education under me because, as he explained to me, he could not take to the politics in vogue at the time I began my public career in India. When power descended on him, he saw that he could no longer successfully apply the method of non-violence which he used to wield with signal success.

I have made the discovery that what I and the people with me had termed non-violence was not the genuine article but a weak copy known as passive resistance. Naturally, passive resistance can avail nothing to a ruler. Imagine a weak ruler being able to represent any people. He would only degrade his masters who, for the time being, had placed themselves under his trust. I know that the Sardar could never betray or degrade his trust.

I wonder if with a knowledge of this background to my statement, anybody would dare call my fast a condemnation of the policy of the Home Ministry. If there is any such person, I can only tell him that he would degrade and hurt himself, never the Sardar or me. Have I not before now said emphatically that no outside power can really degrade a man? Only he can degrade himself.

Though I know that this sentence is irrelevant here, it is such a truth that it bears repetition on all occasions. My fast, as I have stated in plain language, is undoubtedly on behalf of the Muslim minority in the Union and, therefore, it is necessarily against the Hindus and Sikhs of the Union and the Muslims of Pakistan.

It is also on behalf of the minorities in Pakistan as in the case of the Muslim minority in the Union. This is a clumsy compression of the idea I have already explained. I cannot expect the fast taken by a very imperfect and weak mortal, as I truly confess I am, to have the potency to make its proteges proof against all danger. The fast is a process of self-purification for all. It would be wrong to make any insinuation against the purity of the step.

Q. Your fast has been undertaken on the eve of the meeting of the United

Nations Security Council[1] and so soon after the Karachi riot and Gujrat massacre. What publicity the latter incidents received in the foreign Press is not known, but undoubtedly your fast has overshadowed all other incidents and Pakistan representatives would not be worth their past reputation if they do not seize the opportunity to declare that the Mahatma has undertaken the fast to bring sanity among his Hindu followers, who have been making the life of the Muslims in India impossible.

Truth takes a long time to reach the four corners of the globe. But in the mean time your fast may have the unfortunate effect of prejudicing our cause in the eyes of the United Nations.

This question does not demand or need any elaborate answer.

From all I have known of the powers and peoples outside India, I make bold to say that the fast has created only a healthy impression. Outsiders who are able to take an impartial and unbiased view of what is happening in India cannot distort the purpose of the fast, which is meant to bring sanity to all those who inhabit both the Union and Pakistan.

It is impossible to save the Muslims in the Union if the Muslim majority in Pakistan do not behave as decent men and women. Happily for the cause, the Muslims of Pakistan, as Mridulabehn's inquiry of yesterday made clear, have become wide awake to a sense of their duty. The United Nations know that my fast aids them to come to a right decision and to give the right guidance to the two newly-made Dominions.[2]

The Hindustan Times, 16-1-1948, *Harijan*, 25-1-1948 and *Prarthana Pravachan*— II, pp. 304-5

[1] Gopalaswami Ayyangar, leader of the Indian Delegation to U. N. O., opened the debate on the Kashmir issue in the United Nations Security Council on January 15.

[2] In response to popular demand Gandhiji's cot was placed in the verandah and as men and women filed past him, Gandhiji acknowledged their greetings with folded hands.

248. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
January 16, 1948

CHI. MIRA,

I got your letter yesterday. Evidently when you wrote it, you had no knowledge of this, my greatest fast. Whether it will ultimately prove so or not is neither your concern nor mine. Our concern is the act itself, not the result of the action. The fast was commenced as usual with a service, part of which was singing of "When I survey''[1]. It was well sung by Sushila. There were some good friends at the service. The company was impromptu. No one was invited. I am dictating this immediately after the 3.30 a. m. prayer and while I am taking my meal such as a fasting man with prescribed food can take. Don't be shocked. The food consists of 8 ozs. of hot water sipped with difficulty. You sip it as poison, well knowing that in result it is nectar. It revives me whenever I take it. Strange to say, this time I am able to take about 8 meals of this poison-tasting but nectar-like meal. Yet I claim to be fasting and credulous people accept it. What a strange world!

I shall watch and see how you can keep two typists constantly at their typewriters. If it is only self-deception and the typists a fraud on you, you will succumb and fall ill in the midst of attractive surroundings of your own choice. One man claims that oil-cakes are easier to make, cheaper in the end, and yet as effective as compost which requires a fair amount of technical skill for a *kisan.*

Your description of Goswami's Goshala is tragic, if true. It is enough to make one despair of the cow, the mother of prosperity, receiving her due in a country accused of cow worship. There is no swaraj in such a land.

Your describing the Ashram as "Pashulok" is a magnificent idea. It is poetic. Don't ever write Pashulok Ashram. Ashram-Pashulok with a dash in between is good. Though now that I am thinking over it a little more deeply, Pashulok Ashram perhaps better represents your idea. Since, however, it is your excellent idea that is to be carried out, your choice is to be final.

[1] A hymn by Isaac Watts

I see that you are destined for serving the cow and nothing else. But I seem to see a vital defect in you. You are unable to cling to anything finally. You are a gipsy, never happy unless you are wandering. You will not become an expert in anything and your mother is also likely to perish in your lap. The only person and that a woman who really loves the cow will fail her. Shall I pity you, the cow or me, for I, the originator of the real idea of serving and saving the cow for humanity, have never cared or perhaps never had the time to become even a moderate expert. Satis Babu is better than you and me. He adopted the idea and has become a fair expert, in fact the real source of milk among Muslims, not Hindus in Bengal. It is he who has produced with amazing labour and concentration the only classic we have on [the] cow. He is a genius. I bow my head before him. Correspondence with him will give you something.

Don't rush here because I am fasting. The *yajna*, as I have called it, demands that everyone, wherever he or she is, should perform his or her duty. If an appreciable number do this, I must survive the ordeal. Trust God and be where you are. Pursue Goswami.[1]

From the original: C. W. 6532a. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9927

249. TELEGRAM TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

NEW DELHI,
January 16, 1948

ANAND HINGORANI
DECCAN GYMKHANA
POONA

BAPU APPRECIATES YOUR OFFER BUT ASKS YOU TO DESIST. WHEREVER HE GOES TODAY HE BECOMES A BURDEN ON THAT PLACE. THERE IS NO ACCOMMODATION WHERE HE IS STAYING NOR ANYWHERE ELSE. HIS MESSAGE IS DO YOUR DUTY WHEREVER YOU ARE.

PYARELAL

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] This letter remained undespatched due to oversight and was sent hurriedly, when discovered, without being signed by Gandhiji, on January 19, 1948.

250. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

January 16, 1948

CHI. PREMA,

I got both your letters yesterday. I had received the *tilgur*[1] on the *Sankranti*[2] day itself. I saw that little bag on my desk. The card pinned to it was on the other side. I looked at it and read your name. I remembered that it was the *Sankranti* day and understood. I then got the parcel opened by Abha and asked her to distribute one piece as from you and the other one as from me among all those present, since, because of the fast, I myself could not partake of it. Immediately the *tilgur* grains were distributed among all present. I read your poem describing the significance of the *tilgur*, and was pleased. I would never slight a religious celebration which was used to strengthen pure sentiments. But celebrations which involve conspicuous enjoyments displease me.

Shankarrao Deo told me yesterday that you had written to him earnestly requesting him to inquire about my health daily and write to you. If he has to do this, please consider that he will not be able to attend to his duty. He has to go and visit different localities; should he neglect that duty in order to inquire after an old man? Why need you also come running here to see how I am? Please remember that there are a great many people here engaged in service of one kind or another. If I let all of them come and see me, my fast would have to be indefinitely prolonged. For they would then labour under the delusion that they were doing their all in looking after me and so neglect their real duty. If you still feel that you must come, you are free to do so.

Both your letters are like beautiful poems. I did not know that you had such great command over the language.

About the Socialists, I believe that they are self-sacrificing, studious and courageous men. I do not know what they have been doing. If it is enough to know what appears in the newspapers about them, then that much I know, though not in great detail. If they remain in the Congress and also serve on the Working Committee, I think they will strengthen the organization. The reason is that such men would never seek to strengthen their party at the expense of the

[1] A preparation of sesame and gur

[2] January 14

Congress and, if they did, they would only weaken it. If the converse also is true, those who follow my line of thinking should bear love towards the Socialists or other opponents and disarm their distrust through love. Even the bitterest enemy could be won over through love.[1] If we fail, we should know that the fault must be ours. Our love in that case is imperfect.

The words attributed to me when I proposed Jayaprakash's name as President must have been uttered by me, for they were true then.[2] There is some change in the position now. How it came about, we need not consider. It may be that in my affection I may consider a person deserving to be President. But his fitness to be President has nothing to do with my love. Let me tell you that even I would not be able to describe the context and the manner in which I had made the remark.

It is true that the Working Committee is selected from among men belonging to the majority in the Congress, but it does not always happen that the majority elects the President from its own ranks. A wise Committee would certainly select a capable and upright man from among the minority if they found one. In this way alone would democracy succeed in the end. A narrow-minded majority is bound to invite disaster.

As far as I know, Jayaprakash's views and policies are not harmful to the country's interests, but his method is. If, however, he becomes President, he must follow the Congress policy. Anyway, he was wise enough to decline to be President in the prevailing atmosphere of opposition to him. When a person who has opposed the official policies from outside becomes the leader of the whole country, he would if he has any touch of patriotism in him give up his opposition. This is not a rule laid down by me, but the common rule in a democracy. I am surprised how you failed to see this. I have explained above how my mind was working. But this does not mean that anybody should give up his views and act contrary to his own

[1] Vallabhbhai Patel, however, warned the Socialists in Bombay for pursuing their "obstructionist policy". On January 21, the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee expelled 17 Socialists from the Congress for "gross indiscipline" .

[2] At the Congress Working Committee which met to elect the new President following Jawaharlal Nehru's resignation, Nehru was reported to have proposed the name of Acharya Narendra Dev. Gandhiji had reportedly endorsed it and remarked: "You can have even Jayaprakash as President."

convictions out of deference to me or to anybody even more important than I.

2. In order to explain this[1] fully, I would have to write a treatise. I am sure you don't expect me to do that on the fourth day of my fast. I don't remember what I wrote on the subject earlier. But in any case I would attach no importance to it. What matters to me, and should matter to you, is what I believe today. It would be a suicidal policy to take every decision by a majority vote. In matters involving no moral principle, there is always room for give and take. My own view is this, that if the provinces must be formally reorganized on a linguistic basis from right now, why not confirm what the Congress did in 1920?[2] If that is done and if the boundaries of each province are also determined through joint discussions among the parties concerned, I think the problem of Maharashtra, Bombay and Gujarat can be solved. But I think I must conclude the letter now, for Deo is waiting to carry it away. I had sent for him.

3. The Congress is still a political body and will remain so in the future. When, however, it holds political power, it becomes one of the parties, no matter how big. Those, therefore, who have perfect faith in ahimsa should not hold any office in the Government.

You could not have expected such a detailed reply in the present circumstances. But the fact that I am able to dictate it shows that this fast is causing me the least pain.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10459. Also C. W. 6897. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

251. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,

January 16, 1948

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I had not hoped to be able to speak to you today. But you will be glad to know that today by God's grace I feel my voice is stronger

[1] The addressee had sought Gandhiji's opinion regarding the claim of Maharashtra over Bombay, firstly because of its geographical situation and secondly because Maharashtrians constituted the majority there.

[2] *Vide* "Congress Constitution Adopted at Nagpur Session", December 1920.

than it was yesterday. During all my previous fasts I never felt as strong as I am feeling today on the fourth day of the fast. My hope is that if you will continue the *yajna* of self-purification my strength to address you can remain to the end. I may say that I am in no hurry at all. Hurry will not help our work. I feel ineffable peace. I do not want that anyone should do anything incompletely and tell me that everything is all right. When there is perfect peace in Delhi there will be peace all over India. I have no wish to live if I cannot see peace established all round me, in India as well as in Pakistan. This is the meaning of this *yajna*.[1]

It is never a light matter for any responsible Cabinet to alter a deliberate settled policy.[2] Yet our Cabinet, responsible in every sense of the term, has with equal deliberation yet promptness unsettled their settled fact.[3] They deserve the warmest thanks from the whole country, from Kashmir to Cape Comorin and from Karachi to the Assam frontier. And I know that all the nations of the earth will proclaim this gesture as one which only a large-hearted Cabinet like ours could rise to. This is no policy of appeasement of the Muslims. This is a policy, if you like, of self-appeasement. No Cabinet worthy of being representative of a large mass of mankind can afford to take any step merely because it is likely to win the hasty applause of an unthinking public. In the midst of insanity, should not our best representatives retain sanity and bravely prevent a wreck of the ship of State under their management? What then was the actuating motive? It was my fast. It changed the whole outlook. Without the fast they could not go beyond what the law permitted and required them to do. But the present gesture on the part of the Government of India is one of unmixed goodwill. It has put the Pakistan Government on its honour. It ought to lead to an honourable settlement not only of the Kashmir question, but of all the differences between the two Dominions. Friendship should replace the present enmity. Demands of equity

[1] Lying in bed Gandhiji spoke this in Hindi on the microphone. What follows had been dictated earlier in English and its translation in Hindi was read out at the prayer meeting. The report in *Harijan* has been collated with the Hindi version in *Prarthana Pravachan.*

[2] For the Government's earlier stand, regarding the payment of cash balances to Pakistan as enunciated by Vallabhbhai Patel, *vide* Appendix "Vallabhbhai Patel's Statement to the Press", 12-1-1948.

[3] For the Government communique regarding the latest decision, *vide* Appendix "Government Communique", 16-1-1948.

supersede the letter of the law. There is a homely maxim of law which has been in practice for centuries in England that when common law seems to fail, equity comes to the rescue. Not long ago there were even separate courts for the administration of law and of equity. Considered in this setting, there is no room for questioning the utter justice of this act of the Union Government. If we want a precedent, there is a striking one at our disposal in the form of what is popularly known as the MacDonald Award[1]. That Award was really the unanimous judgment of not only the members of the British Cabinet, but also of the majority of the members of the Second Round Table Conference. It was undone overnight as a result of the fast undertaken in the Yeravda prison.[2]

I have been asked to end the fast because of this great act of the Union Government. I wish I could persuade myself to do so. I know that the medical friends who, of their own volition and at considerable sacrifice, meticulously examine me from day to day are getting more and more anxious as the fast is prolonged. Because of defective kidney function they dread not so much my instantaneous collapse as permanent after-effects of any further prolongation. I did not embark upon the fast after consultation with medical men, be they however able. My sole guide, even dictator, was God, the Infallible and Omnipotent. If He has any further use for this frail body of mine, He will keep it in spite of the prognostications of medical men and women. I am in His hands. Therefore, I hope you will believe me when I say that I dread neither death nor permanent injury even if I survive. But I do feel that this warning of medical friends should, if the country has any use for me, hurry the people up to close their ranks. And like the brave men and women that we ought to be under hard-earned freedom, we should trust even those whom we may suspect as our enemies. Brave people disdain distrust. The letter of my vow will be satisfied if the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs of Delhi bring about a union, which not even a conflagration around them in all the other parts of India or Pakistan will be strong enough to break. Happily, the people in both the Dominions seem to have instinctively realized that the fittest answer to the fast should be a complete

[1] The Communal Award which was published on August 8, 1932

[2] Gandhiji had gone on fast on September 20, 1932, in protest against the provision of separate electorates for the Depressed Classes. He broke his fast on September 26, following the Poona Pact.

friendship between the two Dominions, such that members of all communities should be able to go to either Dominion without the slightest fear of molestation. Self-purification demands nothing less. It will be wrong for the two Dominions to put a heavy strain upon Delhi. After all, the inhabitants of Delhi are not superhuman. In the name of the people, our Government have taken a liberal step without counting the cost. What will be Pakistan's countergesture?[1] The ways are many if there is the will. Is it there?[2]

Harijan, 25-1-1948, and *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 309-12

252. TALK WITH RAJENDRA PRASAD

NEW DELHI,
January 17, 1948

Let all the representatives give [their assurances] under their signatures. I shall publish them. I regard verbal assurances as worthless, only the written ones carry weight with me. Suppose the [Muslim] refugees return from there and are killed on the way? Even if they are allowed to come to Delhi, are they not supposed to go out? Today tickets are not being issued to Muslims, what more need I understand? If madness is the order of the day in Pakistan, should we also become mad? I shall die if I have to. Doctors cannot peep into my heart—which is above everything else. No one need worry about me. Our only consideration should be whether or not our conduct is right and whether we are purifying ourselves. The purpose of the fast is that we should be awakened. No doubt, Dr. Bidhan [Chandra Roy] has become anxious and he has conveyed it to Maulana. But I do not want that anyone should persuade me to terminate my fast under false assurances. If it happens it will further worsen the situation.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 328

[1] Ghulam Mohammad, Finance Minister of Pakistan, referring to Government of India's decision, said: "I am glad that Mahatma Gandhi's efforts have been fruitful and that he has succeeded in making the Government of India see the error of its ways and save it from a most untenable position."

[2] Men and women filed past Gandhiji as he lay on his cot.

As Gandhiji's kidneys were not functioning properly Abul Kalam Azad suggested that he should have some *mosambi* juice mixed with water. Gandhiji refused to take anything but sour lime and said that he was aware of the damage to his body and that the reason for it was lack of perfect faith in Ramanama.

253. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
January 17, 1948

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

God's mercy it is that on this fifth day of the fast I can speak a few words without feeling exhausted.[2] I have dictated the message for today which Sushilabehn will read out to you.

Whatever you do words must be backed by your full mind and heart, or it will avail nothing. You will be making the greatest mistake if you think only of how I am to be kept alive. It is not in any human hand to keep me alive or to kill me. It is in God's hands. I have not the least doubt about it, and no one else should have the least doubt.

The meaning of this fast is that our hearts should be cleansed and awakened. In that alone lies the good of all. Please do nothing out of pity for me. I shall fast for as many days as I can and if it is the will of God that I should die then I shall die.

I know many of my friends are distressed and want me to terminate the fast at once. Today I cannot do so. When the occasion for it comes I shall not persist in the fast. Ahimsa requires us to accept our limitations and not to feel proud. It calls for humility. There is no pride in what I say. There is only pure love in it.[3]

I repeat what I have said before—nothing is to be done under pressure of the fast. I have observed before that things done under pressure of a fast were undone after the fast was over. If any such thing happens, it would be a tragedy of the highest degree. There is no occasion for it at any time. What a spiritual fast does expect is cleansing of the heart. The cleansing, if it is honest, does not cease to be when the cause which induced it ceases. The cleansing of a wall

[1] Over four thousand men and women had assembled for the prayers. The Hindi version in *Prarthana Pravachan* has been collated with the report in *Harijan.*

[2] The health bulletin issued on January 17 read: "Mahatma Gandhi is definitely weaker and has begun to feel heavy in the head. This is significant in view of the fact that the kidneys are not functioning well. In our opinion it will be most undesirable to let the fast continue. Therefore it is our duty to tell the people of all communities to take immediate steps to produce the requisite conditions for ending the fast without delay."

[3] Gandhiji spoke the above in Hindi on the microphone for about three minutes. What follows had been dictated earlier in English and its translation in Hindi was read out at the meeting.

seen in the form of a white-wash done to welcome a dear one does not cease when the dear one has come and gone. This material cleansing is bound to require renovation after some time. Cleansing of the heart once achieved only dies with one's death. Apart from this legitimate and laudable pressure, the fast has no other function which can be described as proper.

The number of telegrams coming from Rajas, Maharajas, and common people continues to increase. There are telegrams from Pakistan too. They are good as far as they go. But as a friend and well-wisher I must say to all those who reside in Pakistan and mould its fortunes that they will fail to make Pakistan permanent if their conscience is not quickened and if they do not admit the wrongs for which Pakistan is responsible.

This does not mean that I do not wish a voluntary reunion, but I wish to remove and resist the idea that Pakistan should be reunited by force of arms. I hope that this will not be misunderstood as a note of discord, whilst I am lying on what is truly a death-bed. I hope all Pakistanis will realize that I would be untrue to them and to myself if out of weakness and for fear of hurting their feelings, I failed to convey to them what I truthfully feel. If I am wrong in my estimate, I should be so told and if I am convinced, I promise that I shall retract what I have said here. So far as I know, the point is not open to question.

My fast should not be considered a political move in any sense of the term. It is in obedience to the peremptory call of conscience and duty. It comes out of felt agony. I call to witness all my numerous Muslim friends in Delhi. Their representatives meet me almost every day to report the day's events. Neither Rajas and Maharajas nor Hindus and Sikhs or any others would serve themselves or India as a whole, if at this, what is to me a sacred juncture, they mislead me with a view to terminating my fast.[1] Let them know that I feel never so

[1] Addressing a gathering of three hundred thousand people in Delhi, on January 17, Abul Kalam Azad said: "Before coming here I went to Gandhiji again and asked him what we should do so that he may break his fast. He gave me seven tests which should be fulfilled by the people. Assurances on these points, he said, must come from responsible people who can guarantee the proper fulfilment of these conditions. . . . No false assurance should be given." The conditions were as follows:

Complete freedom of worship to Muslims at the tomb of Khwaja Qutub-ud-Din Bakhtiar and non-interference with the celebration of the Urs which was due to be held

happy as when I am fasting for the spirit. This fast has brought me higher happiness than hitherto. No one need disturb this happy state, unless he can honestly claim that in his journey he has turned deliberately from Satan towards God.[1]

The Hindustan Times, 18-1-1948, *Harijan*, 25-1-1948, and *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 312-3

254. NEITHER ANGER NOR INFATUATION

A correspondent writes:[2]

When what is really true is stated, it is an improper use of the word to call it anger. In anger a man does strange things. If I have to close down the Urdu *Harijan* it becomes necessary for me to do the same with the Nagari *Harijan*. There is no question of anger in doing the right thing. What I consider proper, others such as the above correspondent, may not. How am I concerned with that? It is good if what we think right is considered so by the whole world but that does not happen. Everything has at least two aspects.

Now it remains for me to tell you whether I should stop one or both. It is true that when I started the *Navajivan* and *Harijan* in Devanagari there was no idea of both the scripts being used. If there was any such idea I did not know about it.

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there within a week.

Voluntary evacuation by non-Muslims of all the mosques in the city which were being used for residential purposes or which had been converted into temples.

Free movement of Muslims in areas where they used to stay before the disturbances.

Full safety to Muslims while travelling by train.

No economic boycott of Muslims.

Full discretion to Muslims to invite non-Muslims to live in areas occupied by them and freedom to Muslim evacuees to come back to Delhi if they so desired.

[1] The congregation filed past Gandhiji's room, but they could not have a view of Gandhiji because of his extremely weak condition.

As the prayer meeting ended a mile-long procession of the citizens of Delhi, shouting peace slogans entered the Birla House. Jawaharlal Nehru addressed a few words to them.

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had said that if any person other than Gandhiji had made a plea for discontinuing the Nagari *Harijan* and Urdu *Harijan* he would have considered it an expression of anger. He suggested closing down of the English *Harijan* and continuation of other editions. *Vide "Urdu Harijan", 29-12-1947.*

In the meantime the Hindustani Prachar Sabha was set up as desired by the late Jamnalal. It made the publication of the Urdu edition necessary. In my opinion it will be very unjust if the Nagari edition continues and the Urdu is stopped. Because according to the Hindustani Prachar Sabha Hindustani can be written in the Urdu script as well as in the Nagari.

Therefore the journal should be continued to be published in both the scripts. And that too at a time when people all over India say that Hindi alone should be their national language and it should be written only in the Nagari script. It is my duty to tell them that this view is not right. If my argument is correct it becomes my duty to retain the Urdu script along with the Nagari script, and if I don't then I have to sacrifice the Nagari *Harijan Sevak* along with the Urdu *Harijan.*

Among all the scripts I consider Nagari as the best. I make no secret of it. So much so that I had started writing Gujarati letters in the Nagari script even while in South Africa. I have not been able to continue it because of lack of time. There is scope for improvement in the Nagari script as there is in almost all the scripts. However, that is a different question. I have mentioned it only to show that I am not at all opposed to the Nagari script. But when the protagonists of the Nagari script oppose the Urdu script, I smell malice and intolerance in their attitude. The opponents of the Urdu script do not even have the confidence that ultimately the Nagari script will have sway if it is more perfect than the other scripts. Looked at thus, my decision must appear flawless as well as necessary.

I am right in my preference for Hindustani. I do believe that as between the Nagari script and the Urdu script, the former will win. In the same way if we leave out the question of the script and consider the language only, Hindustani will certainly win. That is so because Sanskritized Hindi is wholly artificial while Hindustani is entirely natural. In the same way Persianized Urdu is unnatural and artificial. There are very few Persian words in my Hindustani; even then my Muslim friends and the Hindus of Punjab and the North say that they have no difficulty in understanding my Hindustani. I can find few arguments in favour of Hindi. Strange as it seems, when I defined Hindi for the first time at the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan,[1] there was almost no opposition to it. How the opposition started is a tragic story. I do not even want to remember it. I even said that the name Hindi Sahitya Sammelan was not, and even today is not, appropriate for the

[1] On March 29,1918, at Indore. *Vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909.

propagation of the national language.

But I had not become the president in order to propagate Hindi literature. The late Jamnalal and other friends told me that whatever might be the name they were interested only in the national language and not in Hindi literature. And it was for that reason alone that I started propagating Hindi in the South with great vigour.

I am writing this after prayer in the morning of the sixth day of my fast. Many painful memories come to my mind but I do not like to recollect them.

I do not at all like this quarrel over the name. Whatever may be the name, its activities should do good to the entire country or the nation. We should not squabble over a name.

Is there any Indian whose heart will not exult after listening to Iqbal's *"Sare jahan se achchha Hindostan hamara"?* If there is any, I will consider him unlucky. Should I regard these lines of Iqbal as Hindi or Hindustani or Urdu? Who can say that it is not the national language or that it is not sweet or that it does not express maturity of thought? It may well be that today I am alone in my view but it is clear that neither Sanskritized Hindi nor Persianized Urdu will win. Victory will go only to Hindustani. We shall forget this artificial quarrel and feel ashamed of it only when we forget our internal jealousies.

Now remains the English *Harijan.* I consider it a very small thing. I cannot discontinue the English *Harijan.* Englishmen and Indian scholars of English believe that there is something special in my English. My contact with the West is also widening. I was never opposed to the British or any Westerner nor am I today. Their welfare is as dear to me as that of my own country. So English will never be excluded from my small store of knowledge. I do not want to forget that language nor do I want the country to forget it or give it up. My insistence has always been on not taking English beyond its rightful place. It cannot become our national language or the medium of instruction. In making it so, we have impoverished our languages. We have put great burden on our students. As far as my knowledge goes, such a sad spectacle is seen only in India. Slavery to this language has deprived crores of our people of considerable knowledge for years. We neither realize it nor feel ashamed of it nor repent it. How strange it is ! Knowing all this pretty well, I cannot boycott English. Just as Tamil and other languages are the regional languages and Hindi is the national language, who can deny that similarly English is an international language? The rule of the British will go because it was corrupt, but the prevalence of English will never go.

I feel that whatever I write in Gujarati or English, the English *Harijan* and the Gujarati *Harijanbandhu* will continue to be self-supporting.

NEW DELHI, 5.45 a. m., January 18, 1948

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 25-1-1948

255. SPEECH BEFORE BREAKING FAST[1]

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
January 18, 1948

Dr. Rajendra Prasad opened the proceedings by narrating to Gandhiji how they had all assembled on the previous night at the former's residence and after full discussion decided to sign the declaration[2] then and there. But as representatives of

[1] Over a hundred representatives of various groups and organizations in Delhi, including Hindu Mahasabha, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, Jamiat-ul-Ulema and others who had assembled earlier at Rajendra Prasad's residence, called on Gandhiji at 11.30 a.m. Prominent among others were Jawaharlal Nehru, Abul Kalam Azad, Rajendra Prasad, Shah Nawaz Khan, Hifzur Rahman and Zaheed Hussain, Pakistan's High Commissioner.

The report in *Harijan* has been collated with the Hindi version in *Dilhiman Gandhiji*.

[2] The seven-point declaration written in the Persian and the Devanagari scripts at Gandhiji instance, read:

"We wish to announce that it is our heart-felt desire that the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs and members of the other communities should once again live in Delhi like brothers and in perfect amity and we take the pledge that we shall protect the life, property and faith of Muslims and that the incidents which have taken place in Delhi will not happen again.

"We want to assure Gandhiji that the annual fair at Khwaja Qutub-ud-Din Mazar will be held this year as in the previous years.

"Muslims will be able to move about in Subzimandi, Karol Bagh, Paharganj and other localities just as they could in the past.

"The mosques which have been left by Muslims and which now are in the possession of Hindus and Sikhs will be returned. The areas which have been set apart for Muslims will not be forcibly occupied.

"We shall not object to the return to Delhi of the Muslims who have migrated from here if they choose to come back and Muslims shall be able to carry on their business as before.

"We assure that all these things will be done by our personal effort and not with the help of the police or military.

"We request Mahatmaji to believe us and to give up his fast and continue to lead us as he has done hitherto."

some organizations were not present in that meeting, they felt that they should not go to Gandhiji immediately with the signed document but wait till the remaining signatures were obtained. They had accordingly met again in the morning when all those who were absent during the previous night's meeting came and gave their signatures. It was found in the course of the morning meeting, Dr. Rajendra Prasad reported, that even those who had some lingering doubts on the previous night were now confident that they could ask Gandhiji with a full sense of their responsibility to break the fast. As the President of the Congress, Dr. Rajendra Prasad said that he had signed the document in view of the guarantee which they had all jointly and severally given. Khurshid, the Chief Commissioner and Randhawa, Deputy Commissioner of Delhi, who were present had signed the document on behalf of the administration. It had been decided to set up a number of committees to implement the pledge. Dr. Rajendra Prasad hoped that Gandhiji would now terminate his fast.

Deshbandhu Gupta, speaking next, described some touching scenes of fraternization between the Hindus and Muslims which he had witnessed when a procession of about 150 Muslims was taken out that morning in Subzimandi and was received with ovation and offered fruit and refreshments by the Hindu inhabitants of that locality.

Gandhiji replying said:[1]

I am happy to hear what you have told me, but if you have overlooked one point all this will be worth nothing. If this declaration means that you will safeguard Delhi and whatever happens outside Delhi will be no concern of yours, you will be committing a grave error and it will be sheer foolishness on my part to break my fast. You must have seen the Press reports of the happenings in Allahabad, if not, look them up. I understand that the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and the Hindu Mahasabha are among the signatories to this declaration. It will amount to breach of faith on their part if they hold themselves responsible for peace in Delhi, but not in other places. I have been observing that this sort of deception is being practised in the country these days on a large scale.

Delhi is the heart—the capital of India. The leaders from the whole of India have assembled here. Men had become beasts. But if those who have assembled here, who constitute the cream among men cannot make the whole of India understand that Hindus, Muslims and followers of other religions are like brothers, it bodes ill for both the Dominions. What will be the fate of India if we continue to quarrel

[1] Gandhiji was so weak that his voice was hardly audible. Pyarelal and Sushila Nayyar repeated aloud his words.

with one another?[1]

I could not finish what I was saying as I was overcome by exhaustion. Let us take no step that may become a cause for repentance later on. The situation demands courage of the highest order from us. We have to consider whether or not we can accomplish what we are going to promise. If you are not confident of fulfilling your pledge, do not ask me to give up my fast. It is for you and the whole of India to translate it into reality. It may not be possible to realize it in a day. I do not possess the requisite strength for it. But I can assure you that till today our face was turned towards Satan, we have now resolved to turn towards God. If what I have told you fails to find an echo in your hearts or if you are convinced that it is beyond you, tell me so frankly.

What greater folly can there be than to claim that Hindustan is only for Hindus and Pakistan is for Muslims alone? The refugees here should realize that things in Pakistan will be set right by the example set in Delhi.

I am not one to be afraid of fasting. Time and again I have gone on fasts and if occasion arises I may again do so. Whatever therefore you do, do after careful thought and consideration.

The Muslim friends frequently meet me and assure me that peaceful atmosphere has been restored in Delhi and Hindus and Muslims can live in amity here. If these friends have any misgivings in their hearts and feel that today they have perforce to stay here—as they have nowhere else to go to—but ultimately they will have to part company, let them admit it to me frankly. To set things right in the whole of India and Pakistan is no doubt a Herculean task. But I am an optimist. Once I resolve to do something I refuse to accept defeat. Today you assure me that Hindus and Muslims have become one but if Hindus continue to regard Muslims as *Yavans* and *asuras,* incapable of realizing God, and Muslims regard Hindus likewise, it will be the worst kind of blasphemy.

A Muslim friend presented me with a book in Patna. Its author is an eminent Muslim. The book says: "God ordains that a *kafir* — and a Hindu is a *kafir—is* worse than a poisonous creature. He should be exterminated. It is one's duty to be treacherous to him. Why should one treat him with any courtesy?" If Muslims still harbouring

[1] Here Gandhiji broke down due to exhaustion.

such thoughts assure Hindus about their good behaviour, they will only be deceiving Hindus. If you betray one you betray all.

If I truly worship a stone image I deceive no one. For me God resides in that stone image. I feel that if the hearts of both Hindus and Muslims are full of deceipt and treachery, why need I continue to live?

The telegrams I have received today include some from prominent Muslims. They have made me happy. It seems they have realized that the method adopted by them so far was not proper to run a government.

After listening to all that I have said, if you still ask me to end my fast I shall end it. Afterwards you have to release me. I had taken the vow to do or die in Delhi and now if I am able to achieve success here I shall go to Pakistan and try to make Muslims understand their folly. Whatever happens in other places, people in Delhi should maintain peace. The refugees here should realize that they have to welcome as brothers the Muslims returning from Pakistan to Delhi. The Muslim refugees in Pakistan are suffering acute hardships and so are the Hindu refugees here. Hindus have not learnt all the crafts of Muslim craftsmen. Therefore they had better return to India. There are good men as well as bad men in all the communities. Taking into consideration all these implications, if you ask me to break my fast I shall abide by your wish. India will virtually become a prison if the present conditions continue. It may be better that you allow me to continue my fast and if God wills it He will call me.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad remarked that the remarks to which Gandhiji had referred were abhorrent to the teachings of Islam. They were only indicative of the insanity that had of late seized some sections of the people.

He was followed by Maulana Hifzur Rahman[1] who categorically repudiated the allegation that his co-religionists did not regard India as their country. They all wanted to remain in India as citizens of India with self-respect and honour. . . .Describing next the change that had come over the city as a result of Gandhiji's fast, he said that they regarded it as a happy augury and a presage of things to come. He joined Dr. Rajendra Prasad in his appeal that Gandhiji should break the fast.

After Ganesh Datt had on behalf of the Hindu Mahasabha and the R. S. S.

[1] Who along with Ahmed Saeed and Habib-ur-Rahman represented the Muslims of Delhi

reiterated that appeal. . . . Zaheed Hussain addressed a few words to Gandhiji. He was there, he said, to convey to Gandhiji how deeply concerned the people in Pakistan were about him and how they were daily inundating him with anxious inquiries about his (Gandhiji's) health. It was their hearts' desire that circumstances might soon prevail which would enable him to break the fast. If there was anything that he could fittingly do towards that end he was ready and so were the people of Pakistan.

Zaheed Hussain was followed by Khurshid and Randhawa who on behalf of the administration reiterated the assurance that all the conditions mentioned in the citizens' pledge would be duly implemented, and no effort would be spared to restore to the Indian capital its glorious old tradition of communal harmony and peace.

Sardar Harbans Singh endorsed the appeal on behalf of the Sikhs.

Rajendra Prasad again appealed saying: "I have signed on behalf of the people, please break your fast." Gandhiji said:

I shall break my fast. Let God's will prevail. You all be witness today.[1]

Harijan, 25-1-1948, and *Dilhiman Gandhiji*—II, pp. 337-42

256. MESSAGE TO SIKHS[2]

January 18, 1948

The Sikhs have shown courage in that they have eschewed anger. This in truth is real courage. This is the true teaching of Guru Maharaj. That one Sikh is equal to one and a half lakhs of people has this very meaning. Victory to Sikhs!

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 344

[1] This was followed by recitations from the Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic and Parsi scriptures, and singing of a Christian hymn, a *bhajan* and *Ramdhun.* Abul Kalam Azad offered a glass of juice to Gandhiji who broke his fast at 12.15 p. m.

[2] It being Guru Govind Singh's birthday, Gandhiji dictated a special message for the Sikhs.

257. TALK WITH MUSLIM WOMEN[1]

NEW DELHI,
January 18, 1948

No one can observe *purdah* with me. I am your brother, your father, then why this *purdah* before me? *Purdah* should be of the heart.[2]

No Hindu or Sikh harasses you, I hope? If I have the blessings of all of you sisters, I shall regain my health. Your blessings will be blessed by God.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 344

258. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[3]

January 18, 1948

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

Give up your fast.

I am sending herewith a copy of the telegram received from the Speaker of West Punjab. Zaheed Hussain had said exactly what I had told you.

May you live long and continue to be the jewel of India.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2210

259. TALK WITH MAJ-GEN. K. M. CARIAPPA[4]

NEW DELHI,
January 18, 1948

"I am going to Kashmir in a few days' time," the General said. Gandhiji

[1] About a hundred *burqa-clad* Muslim women had called on Gandhiji.

[2] The women then removed their *burqas.*

[3] After breaking his fast, when Gandhiji came to know that Jawaharlal Nehru was also fasting, he promptly wrote the letter in his own hand in spite of his extreme weakness.

[4] Who had come to Delhi to take over charge of the Delhi and East Punjab Command under which operations in Jammu and Kashmir were conducted

replied:

I hope you will succeed in solving the Kashmir problem non-violently. Come and see me after your return from Kashmir.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 524-5

260. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
January 18, 1948

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I have dictated a short message for today which Sushila will read out to you.

This is an auspicious day for me and it should be auspicious for you too. This is also the birthday of Guru Govind Singh. On this happy day I terminated the fast. The kindness I have received from the people of Delhi, including the refugees, and from the Government, I shall never forget. I experienced the same love in Calcutta. How can I at this moment forget the great work Shaheed Saheb did in Calcutta?[2] Had he not been there I could not have stood up there for long. We had quite a few suspicions concerning Shaheed Saheb and we still suspect him. But that should not concern us here. We must learn that however bad a man may be we must treat him as a friend and work with him. We must never under any circumstances treat anyone as an enemy. There is Shaheed Saheb and there are four crores of other Muslims. They are not all angels just as all the Hindus and Sikhs are not angels. There are amongst us good men as well as bad men. Only, bad men are fewer. We also have in our country what are called criminal tribes. We also have aborigines. We have to live with them in harmony. Muslims are a large community. They are not confined to this land but are spread all over the world. If we hope to be friends with the whole world, there is no

[1] In spite of a drizzle a huge gathering had assembled at the prayer meeting. Gandhiji, Iying in bed, spoke in Hindi for about twenty minutes on the microphone.

The Hindi version in *Prarthana Pravachan* has been collated with the report in *Harijan.*

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 13-11-1947.

reason why we should be enemies of the Muslims who are here. I am not a prophet but God has granted me the power of reason and a heart. My reason and my heart tell me that if for some reason or other we are unable to forge friendship between Hindus and Muslims, not only here but also in Pakistan and in the whole world, we shall not be able to keep India for long. It will pass into the hands of others and become a slave country again. Pakistan too will become a slave country and the freedom we have gained will be lost again.

Many people have showered blessings on me today. They have assured me that from now on Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims will live as brothers and under no conditions and on no provocation will the residents of Delhi, including the refugees, become enemies of each other. This is not a small thing. It means that from now on our endeavour will be to see that the people of Pakistan and India remain friends. Although India has been partitioned because of our weakness we must unite our hearts. If this is not the meaning of my breaking the fast, then I shall humbly say that you have not done a good thing in making me break the fast. The spirit behind the fast must be preserved. What happens in Delhi will happen in the whole of India. And what happens in India will happen in Pakistan. Have no doubt about it. Let no one be afraid, not even a child. So long, in my view, we were heading towards Satan. From now on I hope we shall begin to move towards God. But we must pledge that once we have turned our face towards God we shall never turn away. When that happens India and Pakistan will unitedly be able to serve the world and make the world nobler. I do not wish to live for any other purpose. A man lives only to raise humanity. The only duty of man is to move towards God. One may call Him by any name—God, Khuda or Satshri Akal, but if He is not enthroned in one's heart it is all delusion. He is one though called by different names. Then why should we forget Him and become one another's enemies?

I do not want to make a long speech. Let the Hindus take a pledge that they will not give themselves up to strife. I wish that Hindus should read the Koran as they read the *Bhagavadgita*. Let the Sikhs also do the same. I wish too that Muslim brothers and sisters should keep the *Granthsaheb* in their homes and try to follow its meaning. Let us uphold another's religion as we uphold our own. A good thing remains a good thing in whatever language it may be written. The Koran is the same to me as the *Gita* or the *Granthsaheb*.

This has been my principle and whether you believe it or not I have been following it. I tell you clearly that I do not offer worship to a stone, but I am a *sanatani* Hindu. I do not hate those who worship a stone. God lives even in the stone. He who worships stone sees in it not stone but God. If you do not see God in stone, how can you say that the Koran is a divine scripture? Is this not idol worship? If you learn this we will also learn that there is no difference between Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims. All are brothers and must live together. Then the barbarities that are perpetrated today, like men and women being thrown out of trains, will cease. All will be able to live safely anywhere without fear. I shall never have peace so long as the refugees who have come here from Pakistan do not return to their homes and so long as the Muslims whom we have driven out and who want to return cannot come back and live here in peace.

That is all I have to say. May God grant good sense to us and to all everywhere in the world. May He awaken and draw us all to Him so that India and the world may be happy.[1]

I embarked on the fast in the name of Truth whose familiar name is God. Without a living Truth God is nowhere. In the name of God we have indulged in lies, massacres of people, without caring whether they were innocent or guilty, men or women, children or infants. We have indulged in abductions, forcible conversions and we have done all this shamelessly. I am not aware if anybody has done these things in the name of Truth. With that same name on my lips I have broken the fast. The agony of our people was unbearable. Rashtrapati Dr. Rajendra Babu brought over a hundred people representing the Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, representatives of the Hindu Mahasabha, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and representatives of refugees from the Punjab, the Frontier Province and Sind. In this very representative company were present Zaheed Hussain, the High Commissioner for Pakistan, the Chief Commissioner of Delhi and the Deputy Commissioner, Gen. Shah Nawaz Khan, representing the Azad Hind Fauj (I. N. A.). Pandit Nehru, sitting like a statue, was of course there, as also Maulana Saheb. Dr. Rajendra Babu read out a document in Hindustani signed by these representatives, asking me not to put any further strain on them and to end the agony by breaking the fast. Telegrams after telegrams have come from Pakistan and the Indian Union urging me to do the same. I could not resist the counsel of all

[1] What follows was read out by Sushila Nayyar.

these friends. I could not disbelieve their pledge that, come what may, there would be complete friendship between the Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis and Jews, a friendship not to be broken. To break that friendship would be to break the nation.

As I write, comforting telegrams are deluging me. How I wish that God will keep me fit enough and sane enough to render the service to humanity that lies in front of me! If the solemn pledge made today is fulfilled, I assure you that it will revive with redoubled force my intense wish and prayer before God that I should be enabled to live the full span of life doing service of humanity till the last moment. That span according to learned opinion is at least one hundred and twenty-five years, some say one hundred and thirty-three. The letter of my vow has been fulfilled beyond expectation through the great goodwill of all the citizens of Delhi, including leaders of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. The result could not be otherwise when I find that thousands of refugees and others have been fasting since yesterday. Signed assurances of heart-friendship have been pouring in upon me from thousands. Telegraphic blessings have come from all over the world. Can there be a better sign of God's hand in this act of mine? But beyond the letter of fulfilment of my solemn vow lies its spirit without which the letter killeth. The spirit of the vow is sincere friendship between the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs of the Union and a similar friendship in Pakistan. If the first is assured, the second must follow, as sure as day follows night. If there is darkness in the Union, it would be folly to expect light in Pakistan. But if the night in the Union is dispelled beyond a shadow of doubt, it cannot be otherwise in Pakistan, nor are signs wanting in that direction. Numerous messages have come from Pakistan, not one of dissent. May God, who is Truth, guide us as He visibly guided us during all these six days.

Harijan, 25-1-1948, and *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 314-20

261. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

NEW DELHI,
January 18, 1948

CHI. NARAHARI,

So now you are able to write yourself. I regard it as a great improvement indeed. I expected it all along. I don't understand at all how you got the stroke. How straightforward, truthful and pure your life has been. Those qualities of your character have cured you in an incredibly short time. But let not this happy outcome make you complacent. Take as much rest as possible. If you do, your asthma also may disappear now. There is no need at all for you to run about.

As I was dictating the above lines in the morning before I broke the fast, I dozed off and the letter remained unposted. The fast has now become a mere dream. The physical effect remains, but it will probably disappear in about fifteen days' time. I will not write more today. There is plenty of work lying in front of me.

I will not write to Vanudi now. I had meant to. But now that from calm I have entered storm, how can I get time?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9149

262. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

NEW DELHI,
January 19, 1948

MY DEAR DESHABHAKTA,

Your letter. What do we care what others say?

I forgot to mention your fracture. Are you permanently cured?

As you know the fast was broken yesterday.

Yours,
BAPU

KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA
GUNTUR

From a photostat: G. N. 3234. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

263. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

NEW DELHI,
January 19, 1948

CHI. MIRA,

Your note. All anxiety is over. I hope you got my letter dictated during the fast.[1] I was working top speed. Your note for *Harijan* will receive attention.[2]

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABEHN
P. O. RISHIKESH
DIST. DEHRA DUN

From the original: C. W. 6533. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9928

264. LETTER TO ABDUL HALIM GAZNAVI

NEW DELHI,
January 19, 1948

DEAR SIR ABDUL HALIM,

Many thanks for your letter and the newspaper cuttings. AS you know my fast was broken yesterday as a result of world-wide co-operation. . . .[3] is the effect of heartfelt prayer.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR ABDUL HALIM GAZNAVI
18 CANNING STREET
CALCUTTA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 16-1-1948.

[2] The addressee's note entitled "The New Family Member" regarding compost manure appeared in *Harijan*, 1-2-1948.

[3] Omission as in the source

265. LETTER TO MANU MASHRUWALA

NEW DELHI,
January 19, 1948

CHI. MANU[1],

I had your letter. Now there is no more reason for worry. Ramdas was so worried that he came running here yesterday, but by that time the fast was over. All of you will be well. Do not worry about me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 2683. Courtesy: Kanubhai Nanalal Mashruwala

266. LETTER TO B. D. KALELKAR

NEW DELHI,
January 19, 1948

CHI. BAL,

Your letter. I did think of you during the fast. My pledge has been kept. How is your mental state? Keep writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 2175

267. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

January 19, 1948

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Why did you use khadi paper? For such purposes one should use only waste paper, which costs nothing. Wait and see what happens here.

I should be very happy to have you with me. I know your worth. But just now this place is overcrowded, and I shall not be able to give you work which will do you justice. When I go out, I need

[1] Daughter of Harilal Gandhi, married to Surendra Mashruwala

only a few persons to accompany me.

Learn to read and write Urdu as soon as possible.

If living together Kanchan and you cannot free yourselves from passion you are not likely to do so living apart either. You should be able to do so. Only it requires mental self-control of the highest order. Being alone together has to be avoided. Likewise all touch with impure thoughts must be avoided. Whatever you do must have her fullest co-operation. She is right in believing you to be weak.

My intention ultimately is to keep you with me. And I seem to be free, too. I may, therefore, reach Sevagram even earlier than expected.

It is perfectly true that khadi, to which we had dedicated ourselves from the beginning, seems dead today. The fault is entirely ours. We have not mastered its science. The science died with Maganlal. We made ourselves, and remained, mere labourers. Nayee Talim played some part in making the production of khadi a science, but we have still much distance to cover. That is why I say that the most important work for the Ashram is to develop khadi into a science. One must learn to do the spinning with perfect concentration. Merely drawing yarn is not enough. What this means, I will explain to you some time if you ask me, or will write. But I don't want to have you here just for this purpose.

Regarding Nayakum[1] the solution is clear. Let him have whatever he wants for the Nayee Talim work. There is no question of money at all. If this means that you have to give up the land and the building in Sevagram, you may do even that. Ask me what to do when such a situation arises. I will guide you then. There is, therefore, no reason for worry. You must not lose your sleep because of the noise of any celebrations. Pay no attention to it at all. If, however, it becomes unbearable, draw Nayakum's attention to it.

If Prabhakar has got the entire area paved with stones, he must have had some reason for doing so. Discuss the matter with Sushila. No notice need be taken of the foundation work having been wasted.

I have sent the reply to Prabhakar's letter through Sushila. Pass it on to him. If you tell me what it is in the hospital which you don't approve of, I will think over the matter.

[1] E. W. Aryanayakum

You may unhesitatingly write to me whenever and whatever you wish to. Learn to write briefly but fully. If I stay away, by all means free yourself from Sevagram for some time and come and stay with me for a week or two. I shall like it.

Go and see Ramdas Gulati.

I have already written about Kanchan. If you want me to write in greater detail, please let me know. If you want me to give you a letter for her, I will do even that.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8386. Also C. W. 7208. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

268. LETTER TO PIROJ WADIA

NEW DELHI ,
January 19, 1948

DEAR SISTER,

Did you do your Gujarati? Can you read this? I read your letter to Sushila. God has seen us through this penance. It remains to be seen how the people behave now. You should both do there what you can.

Blessings from
BAPU

PIROJ WADIA
BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

269. LETTER TO JUGATRAM DAVE

NEW DELHI ,
January 19, 1948

CHI. JUGATRAM,

How could I write to you during the fast? Yet I used to dictate for *Harijan* and attend to some very important matters too. Right now everything seems to be very fine; God knows what happens in the end.

The whole world has turned topsyturvy. Everyone has to stand face to face with God, else there is perdition.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy. Pyarelal

270. LETTER TO DEV PRAKASH NAYYAR

NEW DELHI ,
January 19, 1948

CHI. DEV,

I have your two letters. You are observing restraint very well. Write to me when you are well and truly free from work at Patna. The caste problem in Bihar is extremely tough. Do whatever you can. Look at everything from the view-point of Nayee Talim. Cattle wealth and welfare too must be in the same mould.

Chand is getting on well. I am referring to her physical health only. Her mother came yesterday. She is going to Bhilsa to give evidence. On her return Chand might accompany her to Amritsar. All the books you have there must be listed. If no list exists prepare one and send me a copy.

Pyarelal is now trying to go to Noakhali. He would like to take you for a short while. You should agree only if you can be conveniently spared from there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Documents relating to Gandhiji. Courtesy: National Archives of India

271. LETTER TO ANAND AND GANGI HINGORANI

NEW DELHI ,
January 19, 1948

CHI. ANAND AND GANGI,

I have your letter.

How good it was that you did not come! How can they allow me

a long fast? God is merciful. Stay on there and do whatever service you can.

To you both,

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

272. LETTER TO M. S. ANEY

NEW DELHI ,
January 19, 1948

BHAI BAPU JI ANEY[1],

I have your beautiful letter. Keep up the practice of writing in Hindi.

God is always present in all good work. All success to you! There is a lot of work to do in Bihar.[2]

My fast is now a thing of the past. Who knows what God wills us to do!

Do keep writing to me whenever you feel like it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

273. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[3]

NEW DELHI,
January 19, 1948

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

My thanks go out to the senders of the numerous wires from all over the world, from Indians and non-Indians, expressing their

[1] (1880-1968); President of Vidharbha Congress Committee; member of Congress Working Committee, 1924-25 and 1931-34; India's High Commissioner in Ceylon, 1943-47; member, Constituent Assembly; Governor of Bihar, 1948; member Lok Sabha, 1959-66; wrote a biography of Bal Gangadhar Tilak in Sanskrit verse

[2] The addressee was sworn in as Governor of Bihar on January 12.

[3] Gandhiji was carried in a chair to the prayer ground. It being his silence day, his written speech was read out by Sushila Nayyar after the prayer.

goodwill and anxiety. These show the correctness of the step I had taken. Not that I had the slightest doubt about it. I had none about this, as I never have had about the reality that God is and that His most graphic name is Truth. Now has begun a stream of wires of congratulations expressing relief. These friends will forgive me for not sending personal acknowledgements. It is physically impossible to do so. I hope too that no such acknowledgment is expected by the senders. I feel constrained to single out two—-one from the Premier of West Punjab and the other from the Nawab of Bhopal. They are today labouring under grave distrust. Let the extracted passages speak for themselves. If the senders were not sincere, they would have spared themselves and me on the solemn occasion that the fast was.

Here is the message from the Nawab of Bhopal:

> Your appeal for a reunion of hearts of all communities cannot fail to find support from all people of goodwill in both Dominions as will also any appeal for an understanding and friendly relations between India and Pakistan. We, in Bhopal, have been able happily to face our troubles during the past year in a spirit of concord, amity and goodwill between all communities with the result that not a single untoward incident has occurred to mar the peace of the State. We assure you that we shall strive to further this friendly spirit with all the strength at our command.

I give the full text of the wire from the Premier of West Punjab:

> West Punjab Ministry expresses deep admiration and sincere appreciation for your great gesture for furtherance of a noble cause. This Ministry has always stood for the principle of doing everything possible to protect the lives, honour and property of minorities, and giving them equal rights of citizenship. We assure you that this Ministry will follow this policy with redoubled vigour. We are anxious to see an immediate improvement in the situation throughout the Indian sub-continent which may enable you to break your fast. No efforts will be spared in this province to help in saving a life as precious as yours.

In this age of senseless imitation, my warning is that it would be foolish for anybody to embark on such a fast expecting identical results in an identically short space of time. If anyone does, he will face severe disappointment and will discredit what is a hoary and infallible institution. Two severe qualifications are necessary—a living faith in God and a peremptory call from Him. I am tempted to add a third, but it is superfluous. A peremptory call from God within presupposes the rightness, timeliness and propriety of the cause for

which the fast is undertaken. It follows that a long previous preparation is required. Let no one, therefore, lightly embark on such a fast.

The citizens of Delhi and the refugees have a heavy task before them. Let them seek occasions for meeting together as often as possible in perfect mutual trust. It was a soul-stirring sight for me to meet Muslim sisters in large numbers yesterday.[1] Girls in my party told me the sisters were sitting in Birla Hourse uncertain whether they could come to me. They were in *purdah,* most of them. I asked them to be brought in and they came. I suggested that they would not have the *purdah* before their fathers or brothers. Why should they think me less? And off went the *purdah* without exception. This is not the first time that the *purdah* has disappeared before me. I mention the incident to illustrate what genuine love, as I claim mine to be, is able to do.

Hindu and Sikh women should go to the Muslim sisters and establish friendship with them. They should invite them on ceremonial occasions and be invited. Muslim girls and boys should be attracted to common schools, not communal. They should mix in sports. Not only should there be no boycott of Muslims but they should be induced to resume their previous occupations.

Delhi is poorer for the disappearance of the exquisite workmanship of the Muslims. It is a miserable and miserly thing for Hindus and Sikhs to wish to take away from them their means of livelihood. On the one hand, there should be no monopoly and, on the other, there should be no attempt at deprivation.

In this great country of ours, there is room for all. The peace committees[2] that have been formed must not go to sleep as many committees unfortunately do in all countries. The condition of keeping me in your midst is that all communities in India live at peace with one another, not by force of arms but that of love than which there is no better cement to be found in the world.

Harijan, 25-1-1948, and *The Hindustan Times*, 20-1-1948

[1] *Vide* "talk with Muslim Women", 18-1-1948.

[2] A Central Peace Committee was formed to take effective steps to implement the terms of the written pledge submitted to Gandhiji.

274. KASTURBA FORTNIGHT

With a view to enlarging the activities of the Kasturba Trust its Working Committee, on the advice of its Provincial representatives, has decided to celebrate the fortnight from February 22 to March 9 as the Kasturba Fortnight. During the fortnight we should:

(1) explain the aims and activities of the Trust in the villages;

(2) provide information about our activities so far;

(3) make special efforts to enlist women from rural areas for training in midwifery, basic education and as *gram sevikas*[1]; and

(4) collect the required portion of the expenditure from the local sources in the districts and provinces in addition to the actual Trust fund sanctioned according to the budget for the year 1948.

According to the Gregorian calendar Kasturba died on February 22, 1944. According to the Vikram calendar this date falls around March 9 [this year]. It has been seen that its activities are neither given any publicity, nor has any publicity booklet been or is being printed. I do not care for such things. Moreover work in rural areas cannot be done in that way. Those who are interested in this work can know about it from the annual report. However, the difficulties of its representatives deserve to be considered sympathetically. The programme chalked out for the Kasturba Fortnight is quite good. The most important thing for its implementation is that the workers who are selected for the purpose should be interested in the work and should be familiar with rural life. Such workers will find out if, in addition to the work done today, there is anything else they can do and they will consult the men and women in the villages about this. It is possible that the villagers are not bothered about improving their lot. Even if it is so the women volunteers will make a note of it in their reports. So far we have organized a few camps, started a few maternity homes and a few kindergarten schools. As this work is entirely new we have to proceed slowly. What occupations can we introduce for rural women and children which will augment their income, increase their knowledge and improve their health? As a matter of fact we know

[1] Women workers for villages

what has to be done. The question here is, will the village women do anything in this direction or not?

NEW DELHI, *January 20, 1948*

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 1-2-1948

275. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
January 20, 1948

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

The first thing I would say to you is that I hope that those who have signed the document have signed it with God as witness. There are still voices being raised in Calcutta expressing the fear that what has happened here may all be a show. If the people of Delhi and the refugees who have come here stand firm, then whatever may happen outside I am certain they will be able to save India as well as Pakistan. Delhi after all is an ancient city and what is achieved in Delhi is bound to have an impact on the whole of India and Pakistan.

If you read carefully what the Sardar has said in Bombay you will realize there is no rift between Pandit Nehru and the Sardar. They may talk in different ways but they do the same thing. They cannot be enemies of the Muslims. I have no doubt that one who is an enemy of the Muslims is also an enemy of India. Let us realize the truth of this. Elsewhere in the world they have already realized this except perhaps in America where Negroes are still lynched. There are a good many white men there who do not consider this repugnant. They have no shame in their hearts. But elsewhere people do not approve of it. They consider it barbaric. Our own newspapers have described the acts of American whites as barbaric. Though Americans are so much given to reform, they still indulge in such behaviour. We assume we are better people and cannot do such things. And yet, think of what happens here. I would therefore ask your categorical assurance that irrespective of any injustice perpetrated here or elsewhere, you are not going to

[1] Gandhiji was carried in a chair to the prayer meeting. As the microphone was not working and Gandhiji's voice was feeble the substance of his speech was repeated aloud by Sushila Nayyar.

seek revenge privately, but will leave it to the Government to deal with. If this at least is agreed to, people can move about freely.[1]

I told you it was possible I might go to Pakistan. But I shall go to Pakistan only when the Government invites me as a friend of the Muslims as well as Hindus and the Sikhs. Of course the doctors insist that I must first recoup from the effects of the fast which may take another 15 days and that during the next 15 days I cannot go anywhere or eat anything solid. I can only take liquid diet which may be milk or fruit juice. Milk can of course sustain a man all his life.

I may tell you that Panditji is a man who will do everything for the refugees. If there is only one dry bed available he will offer it to a refugee to sleep on and himself go without sleep. He says there is no room left in his house and still people keep coming. He is our Prime Minister. He has visitors, some of them Englishmen. Is he to turn them out? And still he says that he will spare for the refugees one or two rooms or whatever he can. If other ministers as well as the army officers follow his example no one will be left unhappy. I congratulate Jawahar and I congratulate you on possessing such a jewel. I am told that wealthy people such as Birla will also do something in this direction. After all when the Prime Minister can do such a thing, why cannot the others? Thus vigorous efforts are being made to alleviate the distress of the refugees. Let us learn from this that we shall not treat Muslims as enemies.

I have a letter. In fact it arrived on January 16 when my fast was in progress. I am told some wicked people forged a great quantity of currency notes and started selling them to the poor. I humbly request

[1] At this stage there was a loud explosion. Gandhiji remained unruffled and said to Manu Gandhi, who was visibly shaken: "Why did you get so scared? Some military personnel must have been taking training in shooting. What will you do if someone really comes to kill us?" He tried to pacify the people and resumed his speech when order was restored.

It was later discovered that a guncotton slab had exploded about 75 feet away from where Gandhiji was sitting and that it was part of a conspiracy to assassinate him. The conspirators had planned to divert the attention of the people by the explosion. Their original plan to throw a hand-grenade from a servant's room behind the dais having failed, they mixed with the crowd. After the explosion Digambar Badge was to dash to the dais and throw a hand-grenade at Gandhiji, but his courage failed at the last moment. Six of the conspirators, viz., Nathuram Godse, Narayana Apte, Vishnu Karkare, Gopal Godse, Digambar Badge and Shankar Kistayya, escaped in a waiting taxi but Madanlal Pahwa was apprehended.

the forgers not to indulge in such activities. Can they not find some honest livelihood? I must at the same time warn the poor not to be taken in. They must not for ever remain simple and gullible.

I have a wire from Lahore, from the President of the Kashmir Freedom League. He says:

> Highly appreciate your magnanimous gesture for Hindu-Muslim unity. Kashmir is the root cause of the present tension and a stumbling-block in the way of any rapprochement. Must receive top priority if peace actually desired. Withdrawal of aggressive Indian troops from Kashmir and handing it over to whom it rightfully belongs to is the only satisfactory solution of the problem.

The wire distresses me. If there is no settlement over Kashmir, does it mean that things must continue in their present state? Must Muslims be enemies of Hindus and Sikhs and must Hindus and Sikhs be enemies of Muslims simply on account of Kashmir? Besides, I do not agree that the armed force our Government has dispatched to Kashmir has committed aggression there. The armed force was sent in response to the appeals of Sheikh Abdullah, the Premier of Kashmir, and the Maharaja. It is true that Kashmir should go to whom it belongs. In that case all those who have gone there from outside, be they Afridis or any other, should get out of Kashmir. I cannot object to people in Poonch revolting but I object to their rebelling in order to grab the whole of Kashmir. I can understand it if every outsider leaves Kashmir and no one interferes from outside or sends help or complains. But I cannot understand it if they say that they themselves will remain in Kashmir but that others should get out. And to whom does Kashmir belong? Right now I shall say it belongs to the Maharaja because the Maharaja still exists. In the eyes of the Government the Maharaja is still the legitimate ruler. Of course if the Maharaja is a wicked man, if he does nothing for the people, I think it is for the Government to displace him. But so far no such eventuality has arisen. If the Muslims of Kashmir say that they do not want the Maharaja, that they want to accede either to India or to Pakistan, no one can complain. I have just emerged from a fast. I am enemy of none. So how can I be an enemy of Muslims? Let them come and convince me of my error. A Muslim gentleman of Gwalior has sent me a telegram from Ratlam. In it he says:

> We Muslim inhabitants Jahangirpur, District Ujjain, Gwalior inform your honour that on 15th and 16th instant our village was surrounded by a

Hindu party who beat us severely. Several injured, one died. Our crops and houses destroyed. Officer of State not taking any action. We are in danger. Kindly arrange urgently.

It was sent on the 15th or the 16th- of January when my fast was going on. If this is true I must tell the Gwalior Hindus that they are going to undo the achievement of Delhi. The correspondent says that those running the administration were of no help to them. But how can this be? If this happens in any part of India, then it is a matter of shame for the Government and for all of us. I hope matters in Gwalior will be put right.

I see from the papers that all the Rajas of Kathiawar— there are more than two hundred of them—have met together and decided to merge all their States to form one large State which will have an assembly of its own.[1] If this is true, it is a great thing. I must congratulate all the Rajas of Kathiawar on this step.

In Bhavnagar the Maharaja has handed over all power to the people and has himself become a servant of the people. I congratulate him on this great step.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan—II*, pp. 323-7

276. LETTER TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY

NEW DELHI,
Early morning, January 21, 1948

MY DEAR SHAHEED,

I was much concerned about your financial obligations. This letter is the measure of my concern. I have seen many Muslim friends go under because of their extravagant habits. Do not say you are no better than Hindus, etc. The remedies you suggest are worse than the disease. I would like you to do what I have induced my Muslim clients to do to their credit. Thereby they gained in self-esteem and in the esteem of their friends. Honourable insolvency is the straight line. Of this more when you return from Sind and if you would then discuss

[1] The Kathiawar Rulers signed a covenant on January 23 at Nawanagar, approving the creation of Saurashtra Province, a united State of Kathiawar.

the thing with me. In politics you have much to correct, if I am right. The Sardar is not bad.

Love.

Yours,

BAPU

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 485

277. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

NEW DELHI,
January 21, 1948

MY DEAR C. R.,

Of course you were right in speaking to me through your silence. You might not have broken it as you did through yours of 16th instant.[1] From calm I have entered storm. Thank God I have fairly learnt to face either with some amount of indifference. I hope you are faring well in every respect. I observe that you have lighted upon the fittest job for you.[2]

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 2194

[1] In response to an appeal issued by the addressee, special prayers were held in places of worship in Calcutta on January 16 for the fulfilment of Gandhiji's mission. Addressing one of these functions, C. Rajagopalachari said that Gandhiji had become insolvent because he had taken upon himself the debts of all other people. His sorrows had accumulated like the interest of a money-lender and he had gone to a great banker, namely, God, in order to repay all debts. He expressed the hope that God would "help us in spite of the difficulties which appear to be insurmountable".

At another meeting Rajagopalachari exhorted the Hindus to treat Muslims as their own kith and kin.

[2] Presumably the reference is to the addressee's efforts to restore communal harmony in the strife-ridden Calcutta.

278. LETTER TO KHURSHED NAOROJEE

NEW DELHI ,
January 21, 1948

DEAR SISTER[1],

So your hope has been fulfilled. I am drinking not merely water which I was [taking][2] when on fast, [but also] sweet fruit juices, clear vegetable soup and milk. Though or because I am taking substantial things, the zone of calm has been left for that of storm.

I hope now you have got the work for which you are most fitted.

Love.

BAPU

KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJEE
KANYA MAHAVIDYALAYA
JULLUNDER

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

279. LETTER TO REPRESENTATIVE, REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

NEW DELHI ,
January 21, 1948

DEAR FRIEND,

Many thanks for the kind message from the President. Please accept them for yourself too, for your own good wishes.

I hope the Republic of Indonesia will flourish.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

REPRESENTATIVE
REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The superscription is in Gujarati.
[2] The source has “eating”.

280. TALK WITH G. D. BIRLA

NEW DELHI ,
January 21, 1948

I do not find this as shocking as you do.[1] Because if I say no, the Sardar and Jawaharlal, who are hemmed in by so many worries, will be haunted by the added worry concerning my safety. These friends are shouldering a great responsibility today. I personally believe that I am in the keeping of Rama. If He wants to take me away, even a hundred thousand men cannot save me. But those in the Government do not share my faith in ahimsa and if they believe that I can be protected by these police guards, so be it. Today perhaps I am the only one left who has faith in ahimsa. I pray to God that He may grant me the strength to demonstrate this ahimsa even if it be in my own person. So it is all the same to me whether there are or there are not all these police and military personnel posted here for my protection. Because it is Rama who protects me and I become more and more convinced that everything else is futile.[2]

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 364

[1] The addressee had expressed his fear that Gandhiji might not allow so many police personnel to be posted in the Birla House.

[2] After the bomb explosion on January 20 and on receiving information from the Bombay Government about a conspiracy to assassinate Gandhiji, Vallabhbhai Patel tightened the security measures at Birla House by posting army and police personnel along with plainclothes men. As a precautionary measure the police wanted to search everyone entering the compound. According to a statement made by Vallabhbhai Patel in Parliament on February 6 "the D. I. G. met Gandhiji and represented to him that there was danger and they should be allowed the facilities asked for, otherwise they would be discredited if anything untoward happened, but Gandhiji would not agree. He said that his life was in the hands of God, that if he had to die, no precautions could save him and that he would not agree to anybody being restricted from coming to prayer meetings or anybody being allowed to come between his audience and himself. I myself pleaded with Gandhiji for allowing the police to do their duty in regard to his protection, but without success."

281. TALK WITH SIKH DEPUTATION

NEW DELHI,
January 21, 1948

GANDHIJI: I know what is happening there.[1] But nothing is to be gained by our showing cowardice. Someone tells me that in U. P. Hindus have started growing beards with the notion that thereby they will become brave. But that is no way to become brave. I read your *Granthsaheb*. But I do not do so to please you. Nor shall I seek your permission to do so. But the Guru has not said anywhere that you must grow beards, carry *kirpans* and so on. If the Muslims treat the Hindus as poison you should not have persuaded me to give up the fast. If that be so, food to me will be like poison. If I know that it is all deception then all effort is futile. I had told the Muslims so very clearly.

The spectacle today is one of supreme bravery. From now on we will not seek revenge for enmity but we will return it with friendship. I have given in to your pleading. It is good you have told me everything. At present there is peace all over Delhi. What security can I need? But if there is betrayal this cup of orange juice shall be as poison to me. It is only the third day today. When I am a little bit stronger you may tell me what you want.

KARTAR SINGH: Afflicted men cannot be balanced men. Everybody cannot be a Mahatma Gandhi.

GANDHIJI: Mahatma Gandhi is neither an angel nor a devil. He is a man like you....The slaughter that took place at Shekhupura was reminiscent of the outrage of Nadirshah[2]. The Wah camp at Rawalpindi presented the same spectacle. It can do no good to dwell on who has killed more people and where. The Sikhs have shown great bravery today for which I am grateful. In spite of their terrible sufferings they have accepted all my conditions for breaking the fast. This is not a small matter. I am doing all that any individual can do.

[1] Giani Kartar Singh had described the excesses perpetrated on Sikhs in Pakistan.

[2] Shah of Persia who invaded India in 1739, defeated Muhammad Shah and ordered a massacre in Delhi

I had three Parsi visitors[1] who had come after meeting Mr. Jinnah and other Pakistani leaders. They told me that [non-Muslims] no doubt had suffered immense hardships in Karachi but the people there were also ashamed [of their deeds]. Nobody says that they are not at fault. Now Mr. Jinnah has proclaimed that anyone found guilty of criminal actions will be severely punished. A lot of plundered goods have been seized from the homes of officials. I assure you that I shall do as much as I can. For I have to do or die. You will have seen what happened yesterday, but I know that if there is work that God wants me to do I must do it.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, pp. 365-7

282. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI ,
January 21, 1948

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

First of all I must ask you to forgive me for being late by ten minutes. I am not well and so could not be punctual. Let me first deal with the bomb incident of yesterday. People have been sending me wires congratulating me and praising me. In fact I deserve no congratulations. I displayed no bravery. I thought it was part of army practice somewhere. I only came to know later that it was a bomb and that it might have killed me if God had not willed it that I should live. But if a bomb explodes in front of me and if I am not scared and succumb, then you will be able to say that I died with a smile on my face. Today I do not yet deserve to be so praised. You should not have any kind of hate against the person who was responsible for this. He had taken it for granted that I am an enemy of Hinduism. Is it not said in chapter IV[2] of the *Gita* that whenever the wicked become too powerful and harm dharma God sends someone to destroy them? The man who exploded the bomb obviously thinks that he has been sent by God to destroy me. I have not seen him. But I am told that is what

[1] Jamshedji Mehta, Jehangir Patel and Dinshaw Mehta
[2] verse 8

he said when questioned by the police. He was well dressed too. But I am sure God is not out of His mind to continue sending such men. If we do not like a man, does it mean that he is wicked? Even if I become wicked in the eyes of everyone I shall not be considered such in the court of God. If then someone kills me, taking me for a wicked man, will he not have to answer before God? Let us pray that God may grant him good sense. It seems he had lodged himself in a mosque. In this he had offended against India, against God and against Hinduism. If everyone thus takes to occupying mosques and, when stopped, assails police officers it will never do. This is not the sort of thing that God will prompt anyone to do. When he says he was doing the bidding of God he is only making God an accomplice in a wicked deed. But it cannot be so. Therefore those who are behind him or whose tool he is, should know that this sort of thing will not save Hinduism.If Hinduism has to be saved it will be saved through such work as I am doing. I have been imbibing Hindu dharma right from my childhood. My nurse, who literally brought me up, taught me to invoke Rama whenever I had any fears. With God's grace, later in life I came in contact with noble and good persons—who were Hindus. I had the good company of Christian and Muslim friends as well, who too could not influence me otherwise. Therefore having passed all the tests I am as staunch a Hindu today as intuitively I was at the age of five or six. If God deems it fit to make anyone the instrument for saving Hindu dharma, it could be none but me. Do you want to annihilate Hindu dharma by killing a devout Hindu like me?

Some Sikhs came to me and asked me if I suspected that a Sikh was implicated in the deed. I know he was not a Sikh. But what even if he was? What does it matter if he was a Hindu or a Muslim? May God bless him with good sense. I have told the Inspector-General of Police not to harass the man. They should try to win him over. I cannot ask that he should be released because that is not my function. If he can realize that he has committed a crime against Hinduism, against India, against the Muslims and against the whole world, we should not be severe with him. We should pity him. If you all think that my fast was worthless and at the same time you would not let me die because you would not want to take the blame for it, then I think you have deceived me as well as yourselves and what the man did was only right and no sin. If you whole-heartedly disapprove of his action his heart will change of itself, because in this world sin cannot stand by itself. It always wants support. Only God and his devotees are self-sustained.

This is the premise from which our non-co-operation is derived. I pray to God to give us enough strength that we may maintain our self-possession and continue the prayer and not budge from our places, even if a bomb should be thrown in our midst, and even if a police party should come and try to make us leave. Only then shall I deserve to be congratulated. I want to go on uttering Ramanama even if there should be shooting taking place all around me.

Yesterday an illiterate woman[1] displayed courage in having the culprit arrested. I admire her courage. It is my belief that however illiterate or uneducated one may be, it does not matter so long as one has a stout heart.

Bahawalpur people have written urging that we should hurry and get them out or they will all be killed. I must ask them not to become panicky. I have another wire from the Nawab Saheb only today in which he says that he is doing his utmost for these people. I have also not forgotten them.

I have also a telegram from Bombay sent by Sindhi Sikhs there. They say there are still some fifteen thousand Sikhs in Sind. Some have already been slaughtered. Their lives and their faith are in peril. They request that some arrangement should be made to get them out of Sind, if possible by plane. What I say here will reach them. Even a telegram takes longer. I shall not tolerate it if these 15,000 Sikhs are cut down or their faith or dignity attacked. I will do what a single individual can do. Panditji himself thinks of everybody. I shall request the Pakistan and Sind Governments to reassure the Sikhs that so long as they are there they are not in any kind of danger. If they cannot give such an assurance they should collect them in one place or send them to India under escort. Sikhs are a brave people. Who can dare to attack their faith? Let the Sikh brethren be reassured. I have sent some Parsee friends to see their condition.

A correspondent writes that when I was in jail in 1942 people had indulged in acts which were sometimes violent. If I should die while fasting there would be such a wave of violence in the country that even my God would cry out. My fast therefore would be violent and I should give it up. There is love as well as ignorance behind what the correspondent says. It is true that there was violence in the country following my imprisonment. The present situation is a consequence of

[1] Sulochana Devi

that. Had the country then remained wholly non-violent, we would not have been in the plight that we are in today. I have also thought over the possibility that after I am no more there may be further strife. If God wants to save me He will do so. The death of a non-violent man will always have desirable consequences. But when Krishna was no more the Yadavas did not become better and purer. They destroyed themselves in fratricidal strife. I shall not weep over it. But I am a poor lowly individual. Why should anyone take to fighting after I am gone? But God sometimes makes the very lowly His instrument. I am told Hindus and Muslims will not fight here any more. Muslim women too have begun to come out of their houses. This makes me happy. I must ask all to make their hearts the temple of God.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 328-30

283. CABLE TO ARUNA ASAF ALI[1]

[Before *January 22, 1948*][2]

YOUR PLACE IS IN INDIA.

The Hindustan Times, 23-1-1948

284. LETTER TO ISMAT IFTIKHAR-UD-DIN

NEW DELHI ,
5 a. m., January 22, 1948

MY DEAR ISMAT,

You had no business to get ill again. You discredit your doctor. I was disappointed when Iftikhar appeared without you and was sorry when I learnt that the cause was your illness. Your services are required much more than ever before. Therefore be up and doing. I assure you I am eager to go to Lahore as soon as my convalescence is

[1] The addressee had cabled from Washington to inquire if she could be of help in India.

[2] The report of the cable appeared under the date-line "Washington, January 22".

finished and the way is open for me to go to Lahore or better still to Pakistan.

Love.

BAPU

BEGUM ISMAT IFTIKHAR-UD-DIN

LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

285. LETTER TO DR. CHARLES MOORE

NEW DELHI ,
January 22, 1948

DEAR DR. MOORE,

Many thanks for your good wishes. I was glad to meet you.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. CHARLES MOORE

B. H. U.

BENARES

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

286. LETTER TO AMBASSADOR OF NETHERLANDS

NEW DELHI,
January 22, 1948

DEAR FRIEND,

I have to thank you for your good wishes. Ours meeting was a pleasure.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

AMBASSADOR OF NETHERLANDS

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

287. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI ,
January 22, 1948

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

By the grace of God, I am as you see slowly recovering my strength.[1] I hope very soon I shall be as strong as ever. But it is in the hands of God. A friend writes saying that Jawaharlal may spare a room or two in his large house for the refugees, and other ministers, army officers and Government executives may also similarly spare some accommodation in their houses, but then, he asks, how many refugees can we house in this way? There are many who give verbal assurance but only a few act on them.

I agree that only a few thousand refugees can be housed in this way. But that is not important. What is important is that leading men and officers will have set an example. In England if the King makes the smallest sacrifice, like giving up a glass of wine, the gesture is greatly appreciated. Every civilized country appreciates such gestures. It also creates a good impression among the refugees who feel that people are doing the best for them and they too should try and face difficulties bravely. But if this leads to people rushing to Delhi in the belief that they will be better looked after here it will spoil things.

Another difficulty has been placed before me. People say that formerly the Congress could collect even a lakh of rupees only with the greatest difficulty. Today it can disburse crores of rupees. This is the power which it had been fighting for. But they are following in the footsteps of the British Government in the matter of spending lavishly. Some say that since we are now running the Government we must spend lavishly and live in style, otherwise our prestige outside India will suffer. But if we want to compete with the British in the lavishness they show in maintaining their dignity, we shall have to be as well off as they are. But our per capita income is nowhere near that of England. We are an extremely poor country. If, therefore, we compete with others in the matter of spending we shall be destroyed. I

[1] For the first time after his fast, Gandhiji was able to walk up to the prayer ground.

hope our representatives abroad will realize this. They should not try to compete with America in throwing dinners, banquets and parties. That even our self-sacrificing Congressmen should fall into such erroneous ways is something that should make us sit up and think. People also object to ministers getting higher salaries than other people. If Sardar Patel is paid Rs. 1,500 a month, then they say they should at least be paid Rs. 500. This is not the way of living in India. When we are all trying to purify ourselves why should we think along such lines? We do not judge people by the money they have.

I have read out to you the wire describing the plight of certain Muslims in Gwalior.[1] A worker from there came to me saying that he had good news. He says that the Maharaja of Gwalior has handed over all power to the people.[2] But if the Praja Mandal people show discrimination and drive out Muslims, how can I be happy over it? I shall be happy if you tell me that there will be no discrimination and that no ill will would be shown against anyone, be he a Hindu or Muslim or Parsi or Christian. Then I shall congratulate you and bless you. The Maharaja has become the servant of the people. In this *yajna* of self-purification everyone, including the ruler and the ruled, should participate. Only then shall we be able to stand before the world. If we want to carry the world on the right path and save it there is no other way before us.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 331-2

288. WORTHY OF REFLECTION[3]

A young man[4] writes[5]:

Today at noon I learnt that you had commenced fasting. I resisted the temptation of writing to you during the fast. But I can do so no longer.

1. It is idle to think that a fast of five or seven days on your part can establish heart-unity between the Hindus and Muslims. . . . What your fast will do will be to make the Hindus suppress their anger . . . . And I think it

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 20-1-1948.

[2] The Maharaja of Gwalior had announced his decision to form an interim government having the support of the majority party in the legislature.

[3] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu,* 1-2-1948.

[4] Kanti Gandhi; *vide* "Letter to Kanti Gandhi", 23-1-1948.

[5] Only excerpts from the letter are reproduced here.

should be enough to induce you to end your fast.

2. By your penance you have gained a unique place in the hearts and affection of the people. . . .They will, therefore, suppress their anger and hatred in order to save your life. But this pent-up anger is sure to burst out at the first opportunity. . . .

3. If anger and hatred are to be purged out of the hearts of the people, the Government ought to teach them to base their lives on constructive work. . . .In America, they are tending more and more to revert to natural manures. We seem to be going in for the production of chemical fertilizers.

4. I can say from my experience that the Indian Muslims are not so innocent as they might appear....a large majority of them are simply biding their time and waiting for an opportunity to play the fifth-columnists when Pakistan invades India. . . .

5. In view of the foregoing, I feel that your fast was not meant to achieve anything more than making the Hindus restrain their passions.

6. I hold that the Hindu-Muslim trouble can be resolved only in two ways. First, by the Hindus completely cleansing their hearts. That expectation may be said to have been belied long ago. As you have observed, the Congress struggle has so far been based on the passive resistance of the weak. Therefore, now that power has come to it, it will rush towards *himsa* with redoubled speed. . . .The other way is for the Indian Government to handle the situation with firmness. This, it seems to me, it has failed to do so far and to that extent— thanks to your influence—the interest of the country has suffered.

The foregoing letter deserves careful attention. Contrary to what the correspondent holds, instances can be adduced of instantaneous change of heart. It would have been more apt to say that such heart change is transitory. Now that my fast is over, it remains to be seen what result it produces. I say this not to deprecate or detract from what the writer of the foregoing letter has said. Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs—all may learn something from it. The ideal of communal unity is not a new one. It has always been before the country as one of the pillars of national independence. Without it independence cannot last. This has been regarded as more or less axiomatic. the transition period, which I hope is now over, reflected our distemper. We may, therefore, expect that the unity that has been established in Delhi will prove enduring.

That the edifice of unity can rest on constructive work alone is a maxim which everybody should remember. The question is how to realize it. It is up to every worker who believes in it to live it in his life and to bring it home to his neighbours. By explaining the scientific basis of the constructive programme, it can be made interesting. Our daily experience shows that this programme cannot be advanced by mechanical or unintelligent work.

That tractors and chemical fertilizers will spell our ruin, I have not a shadow of a doubt.

I do not regard all the Muslims of India to be innocent. What is obvious is that after the birth of Pakistan the Muslims in the Indian Union have been placed in a very difficult situation and it is up to the majority community to mete out exact justice to them. It would spell the ruin of both the Hindu religion and the majority community if the latter, in the intoxication of power, entertains the belief that it can crush the minority community and establish a purely Hindu Raj. I consider the present occasion to be particularly auspicious for purging out the dross from the hearts of both the communities by a strenuous effort at self-purification.

The meaning of the fifth paragraph is not quite clear. In any case, my fast being for the purification of all, I expected and still expect all—be they Hindu, Muslim or others—to turn the searchlight inward and to cast out all hidden impurity.

In the sixth paragraph I find only dry logic. It ignores the heart. No one has a right to say that what could not be achieved during the struggle for independence is unachievable at all times. On the contrary, today there is a real opportunity to demonstrate the supremacy of ahimsa. True, our people have been sucked into the whirlpool of universal militarization. If even a few can keep out of it, it will be their privilege to set an example of ahimsa of the brave and be reckoned as the first servants of India. This cannot be demonstrated by intellect. Therefore, till it can be realized through experience, it must be accepted on faith.

The Swaraj Government is bound to proceed with firmness and courage. A government which is weak or which allows itself to be led into courses which its reason does not approve of, is not fit to rule. It ought to step aside and make way for a better one. To say or to believe that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Patel have weakened under my influence is to betray gross ignorance of their character.

And if my influence has really the enervating effect imputed to it by my correspondent, it is a thing for me to be ashamed of and for the country to deplore as detrimental to its very existence.

NEW DELHI , January 23, 1948

Harijan, 1-2-1948

289. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI ,
After prayer, 6 a. m., January 23, 1948

CHI. MANUDI,

I have been looking into your diary for quite a few days. I am very pleased. You have passed the test. You have shown great devotion in serving me. Whether in the family or outside I have not met a girl of your purity. That is why I became a mother to no one but you. Why is it that though your diary shows your mental anguish you have not expressed it to me? Why should you be concerned about . . .[1] or anyone else? That girl has been deceiving me but in reality those who seek to deceive me are themselves deceived. The service you have rendered in this great *yajna* is of inestimable value to me. Your only offence is that you have let your body be ruined in the process, not so much from physical work as from your native reticence. Who knows but that there may be another bomb explosion and with Ramanama on my lips I may be taken away from you? If that happens you will have won a total victory, only I shall not be there to watch it. But these scribbled words will remain and so will you. As for me, I shall think I have won a victory only when you transform yourself from an old woman of seventy which you look like today, into a blooming maiden of seventeen. You see how God is helping us. Everyone is appearing in his true colours. In the Congress too there is so much confusion.

Today I have written you a long letter. Please send a copy to Jaisukhlal.

May your service bear fruit.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 376

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

[2] Gandhiji dictated the above to Manu Gandhi and added this sentence before signing.

290. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO NAWAB OF BAHAWALPUR[1]

January 23, 1948

The latest is to the effect that about 500 people have died of illness brought about by exposure and partial starvation and 1,100 were lying ill....[2] I have decided, therefore, to send to your State Mr. Leslie Cross of the Friends' Service Unit to be assisted by Dr. Sushila Nayyar ...[3] who, when she was yet a child ...[4] came under my care and has been with me ever since and is now, among other things, serving Muslim evacuees....[5] They are going to your State in the hope of meeting you and meeting such non-Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs, whom they may be permitted to see and bring me first-hand information. . . .[6]

Nothing would please me better than to be able to testify personally that things are as happy as they are described in your letter under reply and that I can advise the refugees from your State to return with perfect confidence as to the safety of their lives, honour and faith. I am not inclined to favour the view suggested by you that all these people left under a plot to discredit the State. If you are not confident that these unhappy refugees can return to their homes and resume their former avocations, I know you will not hesitate to say so and in that case I would suggest your sending away, at least for the present, all your Hindu and Sikh subjects including Harijans, to the Union under proper escort. The chief question to consider is whether the Muslims of the State and the Muslim refugees have come under the purificatory influence of the recent fast, so as to welcome back their Hindu and Sikh brothers and sisters.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 756-7

[1] The addressee had written to the effect that non-Muslims were all right where they were, if only "communalist busy-bodies" would let them alone.

[2] Omissions as in the source

[3] *ibid*

[4] *ibid*

[5] *ibid*

[6] *ibid*

291. LETTER TO KANTI GANDHI

NEW DELHI ,
January 23, 1948

CHI. KANTI,

Your letter is beautiful. I am sending it for publication in *Harijan*[1] omitting the name and other particulars. I am not sending the original, however, only a copy (edited). See the note I have written on it. Ask me if you do not follow it. The fast seems to have done some harm to the body.[2] To that extent I may be said to be deficient in regard to Ramanama. It requires ceaseless practice, which I have not been able to manage. If God wants my faith to bear fruit, He will give me the experience. Even if I do not get the experience in this life, I think my faith will remain unshaken. I hope all three of you are well. Ask Saru[3] to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 7387. Courtesy: Kanti Gandhi

292. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

January 23, 1948

My giving up the fast has not lessened my responsibility; it has added to it. I am slowly regaining strength. It will count for something if I can show some achievement in Delhi. On the 20th I might have died. But Rama saved me because He had to take some more work from me. But if I can die with a smile on my lips it will be a great mercy. Do I deserve such grace? It is my endeavour to make myself fit for such death. The endeavour becomes more earnest with each passing day. This morning I had a long frank talk with Manu. I am a servant of Rama. I shall work as long as He commands me to work; I shall go when He commands me to go. I am prepared for both. My

[1] *Vide* "Worthy of Reflection", 23-1-1948.
[2] Gandhiji's kidneys and liver had been affected.
[3] Saraswati, addressee's wife

only prayer is that I may realize non-violence and make others realize it. You should join me in that prayer.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 377

293. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI ,
January *23, 1948*

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I have many things to say today. I shall try to deal with as many as I can. Today is Subhas Babu's birthday. I have told you I cannot remember anyone's Birthday or death anniversary. Someone reminded me of Subhas Babu's birthday. Subhas Babu was a votary of violence while I am a devotee of ahimsa. But what does it matter? I know that the most important thing is that we should learn from other people's virtues. As Tulsidas says:

> The Lord has created this world full of lifeless and living things and virtues and vices. The wise like the swan take the milk of virtue and leave out the waste of water.

We should be like the swan and take the milk of virtue. Man has virtues as well as vices. We should emulate him in his virtues and forget his deficiencies. Subhas was a great patriot. He laid down his life for the country. He was not by nature a fighter but he became commander of an army and took up arms against a great empire. The soldiers of that army included Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and Christians. He never considered himself only a Bengali. He had no use for parochialism or caste distinctions. In his eyes all were Indians and servants of India. He treated all alike. It never occurred to him that since he was the commander he deserved more and others less. Let us therefore in remembering Subhas think of his great virtues and purge our hearts of malice.

Once a friend who was an eminent advocate asked me to define Hinduism. I told him I was neither a lawyer like him nor a religious leader and was really unable to define Hinduism, but I would suggest that a Hindu was one who had equal respect for all religions. Subhas

had equal respect for all religions and he easily won every heart. It is good to remember such things on this occasion.

I told you some time ago of the tragic happenings in a village of Gwalior in which some Muslims were killed.[1] I have been making inquiries and I have a letter in this regard. The correspondent has given his name. He says I was wrong in saying that the place where murder, arson and looting are said to have occurred was Ratlam. It was really Jahangirpur which is in Gwalior State. He says that the report was not quite accurate. No doubt there was some disturbance but it was a private quarrel involving some Hindus and some Muslims. He says that it was not right to give the incident a communal colour and that no one was killed. I must place before you whatever reaches me. If people fabricate stories in this way, it must lead to widespread misunderstanding. If you must exaggerate, you should exaggerate your own shortcomings. Only then can it be said that we are following the path of self-purification.

I have a telegram from Mysore, saying that although what I have achieved in Delhi is quite creditable, one cannot say that it has had any effect in Mysore for there has been rioting there. There is also news to this effect in the newspapers. I know the Hindus and Muslims of Mysore. I have stayed there many times. I also know the people running the Government there and I have asked them to explain to the world everything that has happened. There is no doubt that some tragic events have taken place in Mysore.

I also have a telegram from some Muslims in Junagadh. It is a lengthy one but it is good. They say that ever since the Sardar took over the administration of Junagadh and a Regional Commissioner was appointed, they have been treated with justice and fairness. They assure me that no one can create a rift between Hindus and Muslims there. A referendum is soon to take place in Junagadh[2] and when that happens Muslims will vote for the continuation of the present arrangement.

There is also a wire from Meerut from the local Hindus. They say that the fast has created a very good effect. They have no malice against the nationalist Muslims but if I think that the Muslim Leaguers

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 20-1-1948.

[2] The Government of India had decided to hold a referendum in Junagadh, Babariawad, Mangrol, Manavadar, Bantwa and Sardargarh in the third week of February.

have become good or will ever become good, I shall have to repent. They praise my ahimsa but say that it cannot be effective in politics, that it should be confined only to spiritual matters. Then they express their approval of the present Government consisting of Panditji, the Sardar and others and say that it should not be changed. I have not so far heard anything suggesting that a change is impending. I cannot imagine who can change them or dismiss them. But still people talk and exaggerate. The Meerut Hindus have participated fully in the struggle for freedom. But they are in error in what they say. In politics we cannot say that we shall trust some people and not trust others. The people who are in the Government today have got to be trusted. We shall also have to trust the Muslims. If we have decided to live as brothers with Muslims we cannot distrust any Muslim even if he is a Muslim Leaguer. Similarly, if Muslims say that all Hindus and Sikhs are wicked it will be nonsense. All that we can do is to bring it to the notice of the Government that such and such a person is bad and then it will be for the Government to punish him in any way. We must not take the law into our own hands. It will be barbarism.

I continue to receive numerous wires. I cannot answer all the senders individually. I thank all of them through this meeting. May their blessings bear fruit.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 333-5

294. HIS MAJESTY'S OPPOSITION

. . . Great Britain prides itself on possessing the "Mother of Parliaments". The method prevailing there is to maintain at Government cost "His Majesty's Opposition" to keep the Ministers within bounds by directing the flood-light of public criticism on the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government....

Our country has taken up the reins of government. If we desire to pursue non-violence, what shall be the form of our government? Our Government also will need a corrective force to perform the functions of an "Opposition".... What we should aim at is not to replace the ministers, but to hold up models that they should follow. The constructive workers should direct them into proper channels by the beaconlight of their example. This is a great responsibility that would devolve upon the constructive workers in a

non-violent economy.

A well-organized body of constructive workers will be needed to provide this directive force. Their service to the people will be their sanction and the merit of their work will be their charter. The ministers will draw their inspiration from such a body which will advise and guide the secular government.

To be able to discharge this function the constructive workers forming such a body will have to be drawn from men of renunciation, whose one aim and ambition is the service of the people.

In a political structure of this nature the body of constructive workers will form the bulwark of safety for the people against exploitation. A government run on this basis will give the needed emphasis to the affairs of the people and ensure their welfare, bringing in swaraj to the masses.

This is very attractive.[1] But it has to be confessed that we have not the requisite number of selfless workers capable of giving a good account of themselves.

NEW DELHI, January 24, 1948

Harijan, 1-2-1948

295. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

January 24, 1948

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I am writing to you after a long time. But Manu does write to you and you write to her, so both you and I have news of each other.

One may say that something has been achieved in Delhi. How long it is going to last remains to be seen. The weakness following the fast persists. But God is slowly giving me back my strength. The kidneys and the liver are not functioning as satisfactorily as they should.

I write this about Manu, whom a year ago you offered as a sacrifice in this great *yajna*. It will not be wrong to say that occasionally I have been harsh in testing her. But the more brutal my treatment the more it was a blessing to her. She unflinchingly went through the ordeal and satisfactorily came out unscathed. As I had

[1] Only extracts from J. C. Kumarappa's article are reproduced above.

said at Srirampore, in this *yajna* we have to do or die. Here both these will be encompassed. On the 20th when the bomb exploded Manu was sitting beside me along with others. So we might both have died. But who can harm one whom Rama protects! Yesterday I had a long talk with Manu. I told her to write to you that if you could free yourself from there, you should come to Sevagram or Delhi. It is possible that I may have to go to Wardha for Jamnalal's death anniversary[1]. But it is not certain. It does not seem likely that I can get away from Delhi. Manu told me that since it was I who had laid down terms for participation in this *yajna* I myself should write to you. The best thing would be for you to see my programme in the newspapers and then come wherever I may be. You will see that I have settled the debt I owed. She has sent you her diaries. She has made great progress in writing the diary. She takes great interest in writing notes and when I see them Mahadev's face appears before my eyes.

I am dictating this immediately after the prayer. There is a heap of letters to be attended to. If God wills we shall be meeting in a few days and when we can talk about the rest.

Manu is enjoying herself. If you have some magic for making her fat you should let me know. The girls will be well with their in-laws.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji —II, pp. 380-2

296. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

January 24, 1948

Things are well here but elsewhere there is certainly disorder. In Sind and the N. W. F. P. the situation is deteriorating. I have sent Jehangir Patel and Dinshaw Mehta to have talks with Jinnah, Liaquat Ali and others. I am hoping that I shall get considerable help from Suhrawardy in my projected visit to Pakistan. But all this is day-dreaming.

By God's grace I am slowly regaining strength. I am a servant

[1] Which fell on February 11

of Rama. I will do His work so long as He wills. I shall have won if I am granted a death whereby I can demonstrate the strength of truth and non-violence. I did not display any courage in what happened on the 20th. I thought it was part of some army exercise. Had I known that it was an intimation of my death I cannot tell how I might have reacted. So I am not yet a mahatma. What does it matter if people describe me as one? I am only an ordinary mortal. Yes, if I have been sincere in my pursuit of truth, non-violence, nonstealing, *brahmacharya* and so on and if I have done all this with God as my witness, I shall certainly be granted the kind of death that I seek. I have expressed the wish at the prayer meeting[1] also that should someone kill me I may have no anger against the killer in my heart and I may die with Ramanama on my lips.

Today after the prayer I wrote a letter to Manu's father. This is the next. There is a whole pile of letters to answer. The Working Committee will also start meeting from today. Therefore the post can be attended to only after the morning prayer.

You should keep me informed of things there. Nothing has been decided about my going to Sevagram.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, pp. 382-3

297. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI ,
January 24, 1948

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I requested you to maintain silence during the prayer meeting. For some time you were quiet, but later when the prayer was going on some women carried on a conversation and children were screaming. I have repeatedly said that when children cry they should be taken out of the meeting. Good manners demand that women should not keep their crying children in the meeting.

Today I will deal with a lengthy telegram, which I had no time to take up yesterday. It says that the agreement that had been signed

[1] On January 21; *vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 21-1-1948.

between the two Governments for expatriation of the prisoners and abducted girls was a good one but that it only lasted for a short while and has now been broken. The reason for this seems to have been the condition laid down by the West Punjab Government that it would implement the agreement only after all the States in East Punjab had undertaken to return all the Muslim girls held anywhere under their jurisdiction.

I can see no difficulty in this if the same should apply to the States in West Punjab even if there are fewer States there than in East Punjab. It is true that difficulties crop up in implementing such an agreement. When the agreement was signed no difficulties were raised. What does it matter? All the girls whether on this side or that side should be restored. It does not seem to me to be right that if ten girls are returned by the West Punjab Government East Punjab should also return only that number and no more. All the girls held in East Punjab, all the women and men who are prisoners should be returned unconditionally. But today this does not happen because there is ill feeling. What does it matter that there are more girls held in West Punjab than in East Punjab? I say that we should not think on these lines. It is all a mistake. To carry away one person is as much a mistake as to carry away a hundred. If more were not carried away it is only because the ruffians were not able to—not because they did not intend to—carry away so many girls or imprison so many men. A process that has been once set in motion should not be hampered. In fact the agreement should have been extended to cover other things too. If the two Governments meet in a spirit of amity and fully resolve that they will not go to war, the way will become clear. I shall therefore humbly ask the two Governments to forget what has happened and to correct themselves. We must cleanse our hearts. But even if our hearts have not been cleansed we can still do what is clearly our duty. Self-purification means that we purge our hearts.

I have been receiving complaints that not all the girls abducted are returned from West Punjab. I have the same complaint concerning girls held in East Punjab. I have not conducted any investigation and cannot say who is lying and who is telling the truth. But if the complaint is true with regard to West Punjab it is a matter of shame. The same holds good for East Punjab. But there is yet another complaint against West Punjab. It is said they say one thing and do the opposite of it. All I can say is that this should be put right or else

the purpose for which I fasted has been fulfilled in letter but not in spirit.[1]

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 335-7

298. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI ,
January 25, 1948

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your two letters. It is as you say. God is very merciful. Of all my fasts this was the biggest. What the result will be God alone knows.

I am dictating this letter, because after prayer in the morning it is more convenient to dictate than to write.

I am in a dilemma about your coming here. At first I had thought of sending you a telegram, then I gave up the idea. If the work at Borkamta can go on well in your absence and you can be conveniently relieved from there, you can come to me.

I am regaining strength. Do not worry about me.

About Kanu too I am in a dilemma. He can come if he wants to. If I get the time I will write to him.

I am sending Rashid's wife's[2] letter to you. I could not decipher her signature. What is her name? I wrote to her that she could come whenever she wanted. She will stay with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 594

[1] At this stage the chatter had become so loud that Gandhiji said he could not proceed with what he wanted to say and brought the meeting to a close. He stressed the importance of the women observing complete silence at the prayers and suggested that those with children should stand at the fringe so as not to disturb the meeting.

[2] Hosa Rashid

299. LETTER TO PRABHUDAYAL VIDYARTHI

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI ,
January 25, 1948

CHI. PRABHUDAYAL,

I have your letter. You are doing good work. Keep working in the same way. We have never done any work in the villages and therefore the difficulties arise. You have to produce there milk, fruit and vegetables. Leafy vegetables take very little time to grow. Do you not have any cow at all in your village? Meet the zamindars and try to soften their hearts with love. So far we have not seen the true strength of ahimsa. Now is the time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 11666

300. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI ,
January 25, 1948

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

People say that we have achieved heart-unity. I question both Muslims and Hindus and they all say that they have realized the futility of going on fighting with each other. I will not ask how many Muslims there are at this meeting. But I shall ask everyone to treat them as their brothers. If you meet any Muslim treat him as a brother and offer him a place to sit. For the last two days more people have been coming to the prayer. If each one of them brings a Muslim with him it will be a great thing.

The Urs[1] will start from tomorrow at the Mehrauli shrine. This fair is an annual feature but this year we had destroyed the shrine. Even the stone lattice work was demolished. Now it has been repaired somewhat and the Urs will take place as usual. I do not know how many Muslims will go there but I know that formerly a large number of them visited the Urs and so did a large number of Hindus. I hope

[1] A religious fair held annually at the shrine of Khwaja Syed Kutub-ud-Din Bakhtiar

that this time too Hindus will go there with peaceful intent and reverent hearts. Let them not mock or malign the Muslims who will be going to the fair. The police of course will be there but these should be as few as possible, you should all act as policemen yourselves and make sure that everything functions smoothly. At any rate you have earned a good name. The newspapers feature it and I continue to receive letters and telegrams from all over the world. I am receiving communications from China and other parts of Asia and from America and Europe as well. All of them say that we have achieved here something very great, that they had been fearing that with the British having left the country we Indians being stupid and inexperienced in the ways of governing would destroy ourselves in a civil war.

I shall be leaving for Wardha on February 2. Rajendra Babu will accompany me. But I shall try to return to Delhi as soon as I can. The newspaper report that I shall be staying there for a month is not correct. I shall go to Wardha only if you will all bless me and assure me that you will not start fighting as soon as I leave. I shall later go to Pakistan also, but for that to be possible the Pakistan Government has to tell me that I can go and carry on my work there. Even if any one of the Provincial Governments of Pakistan invites me I shall go.

Whenever there is a meeting of the Congress Working Committee at which I am present I give you some idea of what is transacted there. Today there was a second meeting of the Congress Working Committee and many matters were discussed there. You may not be interested in everything that was taken up for discussion but one thing I may tell you. The Congress had decided some twenty years ago that there should be as many provinces in the country as there are major languages. The Congress had also said that as soon as power came into its hands such linguistic provinces would be formed. For that matter we have nine or ten provinces even today—all under a central authority. If new provinces are formed and they are all placed under the authority of Delhi there is no harm in it. But it will be very bad if they all want to be free and refuse to accept central authority. It should not be that Bombay then will have nothing to do with Maharashtra and Maharashtra with Karnataka and Karnataka with Andhra. Let all live as brothers. Moreover if linguistic provinces are formed it will also give a fillip to the regional languages. It would be absurd to make Hindustani the medium of instruction in all the regions and it is still more absurd to use English for this purpose.

[From Hindi]

Prarthana Pravachan—II, pp. 338-40

301. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI ,
January 26, 1948

This day, 26th January, is Independence Day. This observance was quite appropriate when we were fighting for independence we had not seen nor handled. Now we have handled it and we seem to be disillusioned. At least I am, even if you are not.

What are we celebrating today? Surely not our disillusionment. We are entitled to celebrate the hope that the worst is over and that we are on the road to showing the lowliest of the villager that it means his freedom from serfdom and that he is no longer a serf born to serve the cities and towns of India but that he is destined to exploit the city-dwellers for the advertisement of the finished fruits of well-thought-out labours, that he is the salt of the Indian earth and that it means also equality of all classes and creeds, never the domination and superiority of the major community over a minor, however insignificant it may be in numbers or influence. Let us not defer the hope and make the heart sick. Yet, what are the strikes and a variety of lawlessnesses but a deferring of the hope? These are symptoms of our sickness and weakness. Let labour realize its dignity and strength. Capital has neither dignity nor strength compared to labour. These the man in the street also has. In a well-ordered democratic society there is no room, no occasion, for lawlessness or strikes. In such a society there are ample lawful means for vindicating justice. Violence veiled or unveiled must be taboo. Strikes in Kanpur, coal mines or elsewhere mean material loss to the whole society not excluding the strikers themselves. I need not be reminded that this declamation does not lie well in the mouth of one like me who has been responsible for so many successful strikes. If there be such critics they ought not to forget that then there was neither independence nor the kind of legislation we now have. I wonder if we can remain free from the fever of power politics or the bid for power which afflicts the political world, the East and the West. Before leaving this topic of the day, let us permit ourselves to hope that though geographically and politically India is divided into two, at heart we shall ever be friends and brothers helping and respecting one another and be one for the outside world.

[1] It being Gandhiji's silence day, Pyarelal translated the written speech into Hindustani and read it out after the prayers.

Decontrol of cloth[1] has been welcomed in all quarters. There never was a scarcity of cloth. How can it be when there is enough cotton and enough hands in the land for spinning and weaving? Equally welcome is the removal of control on firewood and coal. It is remarkable that there is now a glut in the market of *gur*, the poor man's supply for caloric deficiency. There would be no remedy for glut nor for reaching places outside the boundary of production unless there is quick locomotion. Let a correspondent in the know speak on this subject:

> Needless to say that efficiency of the rail and road transport is the chief factor for the success of the decontrol policy. If there is no improvement in the railway transport there is a danger of countrywide famine and the entire collapse of the decontrols. The present working of the railway transport is a living danger to these decontrols and controls alike. The terrible contrast of different prices prevalent in different parts of India for the same commodity is chiefly due to this transport bottleneck. If *gur* is sold at Rs. 8 per maund at Rohtak and at Rs. 50 in Bombay, we must say there is something wrong with the working of the railways. Thousands of wagons in the length and breadth of the country are not kept moving. Wagons are not even unloaded for months and months together. Corruption is rampant in a most virulent form in the booking of these wagons, in the garb of 'scarcity of wagons and coal' and 'priority for different commodities'. For the booking of one wagonload one has to spend hundreds of rupees and spend days together in the railway yards. Even the best efforts of the worthy Transport Minister[2] have cut no ice in so far as the supply of these wagons and their constant moving is concerned.
>
> The entire rail and road transport requires a complete overhauling by the Transport Minister to make the decontrols a thorough success. Then only decontrols shall prove a blessing to the poor for the benefit of whom they are being pursued. Millions of villagers, farmers and labourers are hit owing to the defective system in this rail and road transport as their produce seldom reaches the market.
>
> As stated in my previous letter, the rationing of petrol ought to be removed and monopoly and permit system of the road transport may be abolished altogether. This monopoly system is benefiting a few transport companies only but has rendered the lives of millions and millions of our countrymen difficult.
>
> Ninety-five per cent of the success in decontrols solely depends upon

[1] The Government had decided to decontrol cloth from January 19.
[2] John Matthai

the efficient working of the railways and vehicles, i. e., in keeping the wagons moving, and abolishing the rationing of petrol and the permit and monopoly system of the lorries. This shall bring from the remotest corners of the country lakhs of tons of foodstuffs and all other produce profusely to the entire markets of the land.

The subject of corruption referred to by the correspondent is not new. Only it has become much worse than before. Restraint from without has practically gone. Corruption will go when the large number of persons given to the unworthy practice realize that the nation does not exist for them but that they do for the nation. It requires a high code of morals, extreme vigilance on the part of those who are free from the corrupt practice and who have influence over corrupt servants. Indifference in such matters is criminal. If our evening prayers are genuine, they must play no mean part in removing from our midst the demon of corruption.

The Hindustan Times, 27-1-1948, and *Harijan*, 1-2-1948

302. CONGRESS POSITION

Indian National Congress which is the oldest national political organization and which has after many battles fought her non-violent way to freedom cannot be allowed to die. It can only die with the nation. A living organism ever grows or it dies. The Congress has won political freedom, but it has yet to win economic freedom, social and moral freedom. These freedoms are harder than the political, if only because they are constructive, less exciting and not spectacular. All-embracing constructive work evokes the energy of all the units of the millions.

The Congress has got the preliminary and necessary part of her freedom. The hardest has yet to come. In its difficult ascent to democracy, it has inevitably created rotten boroughs leading to corruption and creation of institutions popular and democratic only in name. How to get out of the weedy and unwieldy growth?

The Congress *must* do away with its special register of members, at no time exceeding one crore, not even then easily identifiable. It had an unknown register of millions who could never be wanted. Its register should now be co-extensive with all the men and women on the voters' rolls in the country. The Congress business should be to see that no faked name gets in and no legitimate name is left out. On

its own register it will have a body of servants of the nation who would be workers doing the work allotted to them from time to time.

Unfortunately for the country they will be drawn chiefly for the time being from the city-dwellers, most of whom would be required to work for and in the villages of India. The ranks must be filled in increasing numbers from the villagers.

These servants will be expected to operate upon and serve the voters registered according to law, in their own surroundings. Many persons and parties will woo them. The very best will win. Thus and in no other way can the Congress regain its fast-ebbing unique position in the country. But yesterday the Congress was unwittingly the servant of the nation, it was *Khudai khidmatgar*—God's servant. Let it now proclaim to itself and the world that it is only God's servant—nothing more, nothing less. If it engages in the ungainly skirmish for power, it will find one fine morning that it is no more. Thank God, it is now no longer in sole possession of the field.

I have only opened to view the distant scene. If I have the time and health, I hope to discuss in these columns what the servants of the nation can *do* to raise themselves in the estimation of their masters, the whole of the adult population, male and female.

NEW DELHI, January 27, 1948

Harijan, 1-2-1948

303. HARIJANS AND TEMPLE-ENTRY

A friend from Wadhawan writes:[1]

The second letter is from Ahmedabad. It is unsigned, with a subscription "Yours oppressed". The handwriting is well formed. The language and the writing are not of any Harijan I know. I reproduce below its relevant portion.[2]

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had written that Harijans were admitted into temples anyhow with or without the consent of the trustees and questioned the insistence on getting Harijans admitted into Swaminarayan or Jain temples in which they had no faith.

[2] Not translated here. The correspondent had written that on *Makar Sankranti* day some Harijans had gone to the local Swaminarayan temple but the doors of the temple were closed to them and that they had been offering satyagraha for having the temple opened without any change in the attitude of the management.

The distinction drawn by the writer of the first letter has in my opinion no meaning. Hindus can and do visit Swaminarayan and Jain temples. Harijans should also visit them. For years there has been a movement going on to prove that Brahmins and Harijans have equal rights. It has met with considerable success. Now that the Bombay Government have passed a law to that effect there seems to be no occasion for satyagraha. If the law is in conformity with public opinion it should command respect. If it is against public opinion, its enforcement will be rather slow. In a democracy a law cannot be enforced through coercion. It always calls for discerning circumspection. It will succeed if a reformer takes recourse to it with clear understanding. If he is impatient the law will prove a failure.

Trustees are not the owners of the temples. Even those who get the temples built are not the owners if they are built for public use. The real owners of the temples are the devotees. Devotees are those who visit the temples either for worship or to feign worship. Regarded in this light all Jain and Swaminarayan temples are Hindu temples. I have myself visited these temples. No one even cared to ask me or hundreds like me to which sect we belonged. It was enough that I looked a Hindu. So where Hindus go Harijans can also go. Harijans are not a separate community. Enlightened public opinion and the law which embodies that opinion say that they are one of the *varnas*, be they four or eighteen, comprising Hindu society. Therefore the contrary view cannot prevail. It is the devotees who make of God a living entity. If they are good, the God is good.

Now the second letter. I fail to appreciate the impatience of the Harijans notwithstanding my firm views as stated above. Those who insist on going into the temple are not true devotees. They do not care for *deva-darshan*, they are running only after their right and away from religion. They write anonymous letters or allow others to write for them. True devotees will not do such things; they will do what Nandanar[1] did. He had no one except God. A Brahmin who regards himself as belonging to a higher class gladly worships that Nandanar today. I want to see among the Harijans a Nandanar who has become a man of God by his own choice and those who are born Harijans should also wish for the same. If non-Harijan Hindus want, let them take Harijans to their temples with due respect. As long as that does

[1] An "untouchable" devotee, who became one of the sixty-three Saiv saints of South India.

not happen, let the Harijans stay at their homes and sanctify themselves with the purifying Ganga of their devotion. There is no need for them to fast before a temple. I believe that it is *adharma* to do so. Such fasts are called *dharnas* in Hindi. In Gujarati it is *langhan* or *tragu.* There is no merit in it. It is certainly sinful and everyone should keep miles away from such sins.

NEW DELHI, January 27, 1948

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 1-2-1948

304. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

January 27, 1948

"I know what is dharma but I do not pursue it; I know what is *adharma* but I do not abjure it."[1]

If I can prove that this is not true in my case, I shall think that I have done enough. But this can only be if I can joyfully take a volley of bullets. I do not think that I deserve to be congratulated on what happened on the 20th. It was only God's blessing. But I am fully prepared to go when the summons comes. For the rest, I am pursuing the idea of going to Wardha but it does not seem likely to me that I shall be able to go. Who knows what tomorrow will bring?

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, pp. 392-3

[1] जानामिं धर्मं न च मे प्रवृत्तिः
जानाम्यधर्मं न च मे निवृत्तिः ।

305. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER[1]

January 27, 1948

Only today I have written on the policy of the Congress. You will see it[2]. I am trying to persuade . . . says that he cannot do without . . . and . . . says he cannot do without . . . If one talks of resigning . . . is already ready to resign[3]. About Kashmir I feel that there is no need for us to go to Lake Success[4]. Still we shall see what comes about.

I had resolved to do or die here. It looks like something has been achieved. Still a great deal remains to be done.

I am going to Mehrauli today.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 393

306. SPEECH AT URS[5]

MEHRAULI,
January 27, 1948

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I would request the sisters to remain silent and give me a few minutes. I had hardly imagined that I would be required to speak here. I have come here on pilgrimage. Several days ago I had heard that it might not be possible to hold the Urs at Mehrauli as in the previous years. Had it been so I would have been deeply distressed. I request you—Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims who have come here with cleansed hearts—to take a vow at this holy place that you will never

[1] Omission of names in the letter is as in the source.

[2] *Vide* "Congress Position", 27-1-1948.

[3] Obviously the reference is to the growing differences between Jawaharlal Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel, both of whom had written detailed notes to Gandhiji, each offering to resign in favour of the other.

[4] The United Nations Organization

[5] Gandhiji was taken to the innermost shrine. The usual practice of not allowing women to enter the shrine was waived and the girls accompanying Gandhiji were allowed to enter.

allow strife to raise its head, but will live in amity, united as friends and brothers. Then the world will admit that though we quarrelled among ourselves as two brothers, ultimately we have not turned into sworn enemies. We might be different outwardly but after all we are the offshoots of the same tree. I do not want to talk about one who is a slave of Satan. I have seen life. This is nothing new. Even now somewhere or other fighting is going on. Only today I have read that Hindus have been killed in the Frontier.[1] The Muslims here should be ashamed of it. We have to resolve to cleanse our hearts. The people massacred there are not going to come back. But we must declare and say that we are not going to avenge it by killing anyone. We will purify ourselves and meet the opponents with love. It would be well for the Hindus if they understood and assimilated this. When I broke my fast it was on the condition that the Hindus and Muslims of Delhi would thoroughly cleanse their hearts. If, however, you persuaded me to break my fast just to keep me alive, it was folly on your part.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 394

307. INTERVIEW TO KINGSLEY MARTIN[2]

NEW DELHI,
January 27, 1948

Gandhiji explained how the freedom movement had not been a non-violent movement in the highest sense of the term. If it had been the non-violence of the strong no butchery such as had taken place recently could have come about. He discovered this while he was on his pilgrimage in Noakhali and ever since this discovery he had been impressing the fact on everyone. He felt that non-violence during the struggle for independence was an expedient, i. e., resistance to the white man was undertaken in a non-violent manner simply because we had no military strength with which to offer battle.

Gandhiji went on to relate how he had resisted a certain millionaire in South Africa who had introduced him at a public meeting as a mere passive resister and weak

[1] Non-Muslims waiting for evacuation in a camp at Parachinar were attacked by tribesmen on the night of January 22. According to the local authorities, 130 were killed, 50 wounded and 50 abducted.

[2] A British press correspondent. Notes of this interview taken by Amrit Kaur were approved by Gandhiji.

because as an Indian there he was landless and without any rights.[1] Gandhiji objected to this description and said that real passive resistance had been miscalled a weapon of the weak. After all Jesus Christ had been called the Prince of passive resisters. Could he, in any sense of the term, be called a weak man? People forget that soul-force, the only weapon of the truly non-violent man, was a weapon of the strong.

In reply to the correspondent's suggestion that many people looked upon non-violence as a good opposition weapon in politics and that they could not understand how it could, for example, be used as a positive weapon in Kashmir today or against a man like Hitler who just killed everybody and stamped out opposition in that manner, Gandhiji laughingly replied that he was not in charge of the Government and therefore could not guide their policies; nor did he think that the members of the present Government believed in non-violence. He recalled how Maulana Saheb had said, "When we gain power we shall not be able to hold it non-violently." Gandhiji said that he had laughed to himself at that time and related the moral of Tolstoy's story of Ivan the Fool which had always remained with him. Hindu scriptures, Gandhiji said, had scores of such stories but he quoted Ivan the Fool because the interviewer might have read the book. Ivan remained non-violent even when he became king. Gandhiji pointed out how the truly non-violent man could never hold power himself. He derived power from the people whom he served. For such a man or such a government, a non-violent army would be a perfect possibility. The voters then would themselves say, 'We do not want any military for our defence.' A non-violent army would fight against all injustice or attack but with clean weapons. Non-violence did not signify that man must not fight against the enemy and by enemy was meant the evil which men did, not human beings themselves. He went on to say that if he were the leader of Kashmir like Sheikh Abdullah, he would have such an army but Sheikh Abdullah quite honestly and humbly thought otherwise.

On the correspondent suggesting a solution of the Kashmir issue on the basis of separation, e. g., a predominantly pro-Pakistan area like Poonch going to Pakistan and the Kashmir Valley remaining in India Gandhiji had no difficulty in giving a firm answer in the negative. He held firmly that India or any part of India could not be divided in this manner. It was an evil that must not be allowed to continue.

[1] According to "A Correction" sent by H. S. L. Polak which appeared in Harijan, 5-9-1948, the reference was obviously to William Hosken who though a well-to-do businessman, was not a millionaire.

William Hosken had introduced Gandhiji and the passive resistance movement at a meeting at Germiston in 1909 as follows: "The Transvaal Indians have had recourse to passive resistance when all other means of securing redress proved to be of no avail. They do not enjoy franchise. . . . . They are weak and have no arms. Therefore they have taken to passive resistance which is a weapon of the weak."

Take, for example, Hyderabad; will you separate the town of Hyderabad from the rest of the State? Such pockets exist all over India and separation would then become an endless process spelling the ruination of India.

The interviewer pleaded that the position of Hyderabad was not wholly analogous. Any state on a border area was surely different. But Gandhiji maintained that it was not possible for states even on the border to be either cut up or separated or . . . to call themselves independent. And when the correspondent mentioned Gilgit, Gandhiji recalled that he was in Kashmir[1] when the city of Srinagar was illuminated. On asking what the illuminations were for Gandhiji was told that they were celebrating the accession of Gilgit to Kashmir. He was sad when he heard the news because he wondered how long Kashmir would hold Gilgit. It had been a big bite even for Britain. Britain's policy of keeping on adding to her territories in India had not been either a wise or right policy. If Kashmir acceded to India, it would be because of the will of the people as a whole and they would do so well knowing that Gilgit was no part of the Indian Union today. There were people who said they would reconquer Gilgit. All sorts of complications would then arise. Gandhiji said that Britain had made of India a political whole and India must continue as such.

In reply to a question as to what Pakistan could do with tribal people Gandhiji said:

I would accept a challenge of conquering the tribal areas but as a non-violent man. I would not bribe them, nor kill them; I would serve them. Have not missionaries allowed themselves to be eaten by cannibals?

The correspondent exclaimed, "Alas! there are no Gandhis in Palestine, in Russia or in the U. S. A. !", to which Gandhiji laughingly replied:

So much the worse for them.

In reply to a query as to why Poonch going over to Pakistan was not practicable and that a war between India and the Frontier would be unending, Gandhiji replied that it would be a very bad example to others. There were pockets everywhere, for example, Murshidabad in West Bengal. The vital difference between the policy of the Indian Union and that of Pakistan was that the former never believed in dismemberment while the Pakistan leaders did. Gandhiji quoted the example of Kathiawar. Pakistan wanted to vivisect Kathiawar by getting Junagadh to accede to that Dominion. Vivisection of Kathiawar which was indivisible was quite unthinkable. The whole basis of partition was, in his opinion, wrong. Gandhiji admitted that two distinguished persons had suggested the idea of partition of

[1] From August I to 4, 1947

Kashmir to him but he had very firmly said "no" for reasons he had already explained.

In conclusion he asked the correspondent to study things deeply and not superficially. He himself was working for a heart-union between Hindus and Muslims not only in India but in Pakistan also and would continue his efforts in that direction.

Harijan, 20-6-1948

308. A DISCUSSION[1]

January [*27*],[2] *1948*

Mr. Diwakar and myself[3] met Mahatmaji to consult him on some of the important points relating to the changes in the Congress Constitution. The following is a summary of the talk we had with him:

On the question of general membership, on being asked whether the membership of the Congress should be open to all who subscribed to its creed or whether it should be further restricted to those who also agreed with the fundamentals of its socio-economic programme, Mahatmaji was of opinion that there need be no necessity for enrolment of members even on the present basis. Instead, he suggested that the constituencies should be so limited in area that all adults residing in that locality could participate in the elections to the primary committees, irrespective of the fact whether they formally subscribed to the creed and programme of the Congress or not. The reason he advanced in favour of this was, firstly, that the constituency being small every adult in it would be able to exercise his or her judgment in favour of a candidate about whose conduct and work he or she could properly judge. The Congress should henceforward be an organization of *sevaks* who possessed missionary zeal to be able to effect a radical change in the society ensuring justice, tolerance and economic equality. Only through such a change in the social outlook could the state be reformed and restrained.

Secondly, and consequently he wants to avoid the present system of election with its pocket or rotten boroughs and the corruption incidental to it.

[1] According to the introductory note issued with the "Draft Constitution of Congress" the Constitution Committee met Gandhiji in the morning after the Working Committee meeting held on January 26 and "had the privilege of discussing many important points". Gandhiji was requested to prepare a draft embodying his proposals which he undertook to hand over on January 30. *Vide* "Draft Constitution of Congress", 29-1-1948.

[2] *ibid*

[3] Presumably Acharya Jugal Kishore, one of the General Secretaries of the Congress and a member of the Constitution Committee

Regarding the qualifications of those who are to be eligible to stand as candidates for election to the various Congress Committees he would require everyone to subscribe not only to the creed but also to the fundamentals of the socio-economic programme and also to put in some kind of constructive work such as plying the charkha for a stated period or any other manual work besides doing some kind of public work.

On the question whether the Congress, now that the political power had been transferred to the representatives of Indians, had any role other than that of carrying out the parliamentary activities, Mahatmaji was very emphatic that even for carrying out parliamentary activities the Congress had to carry on constructive activities in the country to maintain contact with the people and to educate them to understand Congress policies and programmes. But apart from this kind of activities the Congress had also to rebuild a new society based upon truth and non-violence—a society not so much dependent on the existence of a strong and centralized government as on the intelligent co-operation of the people organized on a voluntary basis and inspired by the ideals of justice, tolerance and truthfulness. He was of opinion that unless the Congress took up this role, the Congress would gradually lose its moral influence and was likely to degenerate into a political party hankering only after power and position. Viewed in this context, the Congress must reorganize itself on the basis proposed by him and become eventually a strong and efficient instrument of public service and of public will. His suggestion regarding the question of jurisdiction of the Congress was that it should not function in the Pakistan area. He said that formerly he was of opinion that it could function in that area but in the changed circumstances brought about by the communal frenzy it would not be proper to function there directly. In the case of East Bengal his suggestion was that the Congress could function there if the Government of East Bengal had no objection. Regarding States, he was of opinion that the States Peoples' Conference should continue to function but they should have representatives on the A. I. C. C. and Provincial Congress Committees.

A. I. C. C. File No. 1876. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

309. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
January 27, 1948

Gandhiji began his post-prayer address by asking how many Muslims were present and expressed his disappointment when only one hand went up. The other day

[1] The Hindi version in *Prarthana Pravachan* has been collated with the report in *The Hindustan Times.*

he had advised that each Hindu or Sikh should bring at least one Muslim friend along and he had expected they would do that.

Gandhiji next described his morning visit to the Dargah Sharif at Mehrauli.

No one had difficulty in visiting the fair. When I asked the Muslims whether as many people visited the shrine this year as in the previous years, they said that some at least must have been too frightened to go. This shows that there are amongst us people who cause a scare. They say that what happened in Allahabad could happen here and ask what the Hindus would do then. It is a shameful situation that one man should be frightened of another man. But at least I observed at the fair that there were as many Hindus and Sikhs as there were Muslims. I also saw something that distressed me. The shrine is very ancient. It is second only to the Ajmer shrine. The chief thing about it was the beauty of its marble carvings and inlay work. Much of it, though not all, has been destroyed. I was sorry to see it. It is sheer vandalism. Have we fallen so low that we should violate and desecrate a tomb of a saint on which thousands of rupees had been spent? I cannot go into the account that says that what happened in Pakistan was ten times worse. To me it is meaningless to consider whether the crime committed was of greater or less magnitude. To me it is a shameful thing. If the whole world indulges in shameful acts does it mean that we should do the same?

You will surely agree with me that we should not resort to such shameful conduct. I am told the shrine has always attracted large crowds both of Hindus and Muslims who go there to seek fulfilment of some wish. It is associated with the name of a saint in whose eyes Hindus and Muslims were all equal. This is a matter of history and it does not do to falsify history. We should have respect for such men of God and should not be guided by what happens in Pakistan.

I see from the newspapers today that at one place[1] in Pakistan one hundred and thirty Hindus and Sikhs have been murdered. There was also looting. There are many small tribes of Muslims around the borders of the Frontier Province. These tribals attacked the Hindus and killed them. No one says that these Hindus had caused any harm. The Pakistan Government says that it took prompt action and many of the attackers were put to death We do not know how far that is true. But since the Pakistan Government says so we should accept it. Let us

[1] At Parachinar; *vide* 2nd footnote of "Speech at Urs", 27-1-1948.

not be provoked and start killing the Muslims here. Today you are living like brothers but if you harbour any malice in your heart you will be untrue to the pledge you have taken. It is for our Government to ask for an account from the Pakistan Government. Our part is only to keep our pledge to keep our hearts clean.

Rajkumari[1] had been on a visit to Ajmer. She told me of a tragic and shameful situation. It seems the Harijans there, from whom people take a lot of work which they willingly perform, live surrounded by dirt and filth. The administration there is our own. And the officers—Hindus and Sikhs—work under our Government. How can they allow this disgraceful state of affairs to continue? There are many white-collared Hindus there who earn a lot of money and are quite well-to-do. Why do they not go to the Harijan locality and stay there even for a day? If they went there they would be nauseated and some of them might even die. It is criminal that people whose only sin is that they were born Harijans should be allowed to live in such squalor. I have been to the Harijan locality in Delhi too. The conditions there are pretty bad. But Ajmer seems to be much worse in this respect. We have secured our independence, but it is of no value if we cannot stop such a thing. And it can be done in a day. Can we not provide a piece of dry ground for the Harijans? If they must remove garbage, as they do, must they also be made to live in it? We seem to have lost our reason and we have become heartless. We have forgotten God. That is why we continue to commit such crimes. How can we then find fault with others?

Finally I want to tell you about Mirpur. I have referred to the matter briefly earlier. Mirpur is in Kashmir. It has been occupied by the raiders. A number of women and children there have been abducted. They include not only young women but also some elderly ones. They are in the power of the raiders who, I have no doubt, have violated their honour. The food given to them is very bad. A few of them are within the border of Pakistan. Some of them may have been taken up to the Jhelum in the Gujrat district.

I must tell the raiders that they must exercise a modicum of restraint. What they are doing will bring about the downfall of Islam and yet they say that they are doing all this for a free Kashmir.

I can understand it if people indulge in plunder and rapine for

[1] Amrit Kaur

food. But it is too much to assault innocent young girls and to deprive them of food and clothing. Is this what the Koran teaches? I must ask the Pakistan Government to recover all the abducted women and girls and let them go back to their homes.

The Mirpur people who came to me are quite strong and sturdy. But they feel disconsolate. They ask me why it is that such a powerful Government cannot do anything about this. I tried to explain matters to them. Jawaharlal himself has been deeply distressed and is trying to do what he can. But how does his grieving or his trying help? How can those who have lost their all, who have been ruined and separated from their nearest and dearest, be comforted? One of the men who came to see me has lost fifteen of his relatives. He asked me what was to happen to those still left there. I must ask the raiders and the Government of Pakistan, for the sake of humanity and for the sake of God, to return all the abducted women with due respect and without waiting to be asked. It is their duty. I have enough knowledge of Islam about which I have read a good deal. Nowhere does Islam bid people to carry away women and keep them in such a disreputable condition. It is irreligion, not religion. It is worship of Satan, not of God.

The Hindustan Times, 28-1-1948, and *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 344-7

310. INTERVIEW TO VINCENT SHEEAN[1]

NEW DELHI,
January 27/28, 1948

Gandhiji's objection to the use of force was not that force could as well be used to support unrighteous wars; it was fundamental.

I do not know what is intrinsically good. Hence I do not go by results. It is enough if I take care of the means.

For instance, as a nature-curist, he did not believe in the use of sulpha drugs. Suppose he got typhoid. Should he abandon his belief and try to get cured by taking sulpha drugs?

I do not know whether it is good for me or humanity to be

[1] Vincent Sheean, an American author, accompanied Gandhiji on his evening walk on January 27. The interview continued the next day.

cured by the use of sulpha drugs; so I refuse to use sulpha drugs . . .[1] If evil does seem sometimes to result from good, the inference would be that the means employed were probably wrong.

Good action to produce good results must be supported by means that are pure.

If those who believe in the idea of non-violence keep away from government, government will continue to be carried on by the use of force. How is then the transformation of the existing system of government to be brought about?

Gandhiji admitted that ordinarily government was impossible without the use of force.

I have therefore said that a man who wants to be good and do good in all circumstances must not hold power.

Is all government to come to a standstill then?

No, he (the man of non-violence) can send those to the Government who represent his will. If he goes there himself, he exposes himself to the corrupting influence of power. But my representative holds power of attorney only during my pleasure. If he falls a prey to temptation, he can be recalled. I cannot recall myself. All this requires a high degree of intelligence on the part of the electorate. There are about half a dozen constructive work organizations. I do not send the workers to the Parliament. I want them to keep the Parliament under check by educating and guiding the voters.

You mean to say that power always corrupts?

Yes.

Asked further whether this did not call for a very prolonged and high degree of discipline which it would be too much to expect of common people, he answered, "No." It was their inertia that made people think so.

Too much is being made of the study of things that are in my view really of not much consequence to humanity, to the neglect of things eternal. Take, for instance, the exact distance of the sun from the earth or the question whether the earth is round. The discipline that is necessary to discover the laws that govern life is no less important and yet we say that it is so laborious that only a select few can attain it. For instance, we steal in so many ways—not to steal in any shape or form needs some mental poise, contemplation. I have given my time not to abstract studies but to the practice of things that matter.

To Sheean's question whether misuse of atomic energy might not endanger our

[1] Omission as in the source

planet itself since the phenomenal universe is perishable, Gandhiji answered that everything was possible "including the dissolution of appearances. . . [1]and the survivors, if any, will then say, 'what a wondrous spectacle' ". He very much doubted that the advent of the atomic era would basically affect human problems.

They claim that one atom bomb changed the entire course of the war and brought the end of war so much the nearer. And yet it is so far. Has it conquered the Japanese spirit? It has not and it cannot. Has it crushed Germany as a nation? It has not and it cannot. To do that would require resorting to Hitler's method, and to what purpose? In the end it will be Hitlerism that will have triumphed.

The whole of the *Gita* was an argument in defence of a righteous war, Gandhiji's visitor argued. The last war was a "war in a righteous cause". Yet violence was more rampant as a result than it was ever before. Gandhiji agreed so far as the result of the last war was concerned. Even in India they had not been able to escape from its back-lash.

See what India is doing. See what is happening in Kashmir. I cannot deny that it is with my tacit consent. They would not lend ear to my counsel. Yet, if they were sick of it, I could today point them a way.

Again, see the exhibition that the United Nations Organization is making. Yet I have faith. If I live long enough. . . .[2] they will see the futility of it all and come round to my way.

But he did not agree that the *Gita* was either in intention or in the sum total an argument in defence of a righteous war. Though the argument of the *Gita* was presented in a setting of physical warfare, the "righteous war" referred to in it was the eternal duel between right and wrong that is going on within us. There was at least one authority that supported his interpretation. The thesis of the *Gita* was neither violence nor non-violence but the gospel of selfless action—the duty of performing right action by right means only, in a spirit of detachment, leaving the fruits of action to the care of God.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 677 and 763-5

311. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

NEW DELHI,
4.25 a.m., January 28, 1948

CHI . NAR AHARI ,

I was very happy to read your letter written in a clear hand. Though I believe every word of what you say, I remain of the same

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] Omission as in the source

view as before. "No one who strives for good meets with an evil fate."[1] This statement is as true today as it was when it was penned. This is proved by your speedy recovery. It will be enough now if you do not throw away through impatience what you have gained.

You have plenty of writing work to do. It will keep you sufficiently occupied. But don't do even that at the cost of sleep or exercise. Any health resort on the sea-coast which Swami finds is bound to be good. But in case he fails, Ghogha, Gopnath, Veraval and Mangarol are excellent. Porbandar used to be equally good, but I am afraid it is no longer so.

Anybody who wishes to avail himself of your experience will take the necessary trouble to come and see you.

Take long baths in shallow and clear water in the sea.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9151

312. LETTER TO VANAMALA PARISH

January 28,1948

CHI . VAN UDI,

I write this merely to address you. I should certainly like it if you decided to stay with Father and look after him for the rest of his life. Girls who dedicate their lives to the service of their fathers deserve to be admired. Mani[2] is one such. May you be another. Among Parsis it is quite a common practice; Kabraji's daughters, for instance. They were extremely capable and looked after all their father's work. I do not know what the sisters did after Kabraji's death.

Keep writing to me.

If Delhi releases me, I intend to leave for Wardha on the 2nd. I should like to return from there on the 12th, but will do as Rama ordains.

The Harijan Ashram must have changed completely. I will visit

[1] *Bhagavadgita*, vi. 40

[2] Manibehn Patel

it when God permits me to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5800. Also C. W. 3023. Courtesy: Vanamala Desai

313. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

NEW DELHI,
January 28, 1948

CHI . LIL I,

I have your letter. It was wise of you to have stayed back. You had better not be impatient. I have given you permission to come when your long vacation begins, and that should be enough. What are my fasts worth? They have become part of me. Who can tell when one will burst forth? I myself never know. This time I have broken the fast in good faith. A lot of work is to be done, and everybody can do it. That may include you also because self-purification can be accomplished wherever one might be. One can forge friendship with Muslims, Christians, Parsis, Jews; they can be accepted as our own. Thus, even if I were on a fast, rushing to me would be nothing but blind love. It is a different thing if I am to be looked after. But they have always been looking after me.

I am writing all this till the Committee[1] arrives. You must have your feet cured. I hope Dwarkadas is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

314. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

January 28, 1948

Now that things here have somewhat settled down, there are disturbances in the N. W. F. P. I am still knocking about in a dark world. I do not intend to stay on here for too long. Whatever has to be

[1] Presumably the Central Relief Committee whose members called on Gandhiji at 2 p. m.

decided will be decided in the next four days.

I have not the slightest doubt that if we show the least bit of slackness over Kashmir, Hyderabad and Junagadh are going to meet with the same fate. Sheikh Abdullah is a brave man. But one wonders whether he may not betray in the end. I hold that no man can betray another, for ultimately one is betrayed by oneself. Therefore on this account I have no worry. My health is satisfactory. I am still on liquid diet. It suits me.

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, pp. 397-8

315. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

January 28, 1948

More than the biting cold the tale of horrors of N. W. F. P. froze me yesterday. How our human nature can degrade us! All nationalist Muslims, indeed all Muslims, should issue a joint statement and expiate this great sin.

[From Hindi]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 398

316. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
January 28, 1948

RESPECTED DOCTOR SAHEB,

Jai Hind.

Gandhiji has received your letter. He says that it is not possible for him to go there for rest. Where is any rest for him in this life? If it is possible, he wishes to go to Sevagram for a few days. From there he will return straight here.

Hope you are well.

Yours,
BRIJKRISHNA

From a photostat of the Urdu: G. N. 5097

317. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
January 28, 1948

Gandhiji said he had received a complaint from some friends in Bahawalpur that they had asked for an appointment with him but failed to get it. Gandhiji knew they were in distress and he would manage to find time for them if that would comfort them. He, however, desired to assure them that everything possible was being done.

Dr. Sushila Nayyar and Mr. Leslie Cross went to Bahawalpur and the Nawab has promised to help them in every way. In the Union Capital, by the grace of God, there is again peace among the three communities. This will certainly improve the situation all over India.

You know in South Africa our people are fighting for their rights. Here in India there are no laws depriving the people of the right of owning land or living wherever they please. It is true we have reduced Harijans to some such condition but for the rest of society that is not so. But I have seen with my own eyes that that is so in South Africa. The Indians therefore are having to put up a struggle to safeguard their rights and in defence of the honour of India. They can resort to various means in their struggle but they claim to be satyagrahis and their struggle has taken the form of satyagraha. They keep on sending cables. They cannot even move from one province to another without a permit. South Africa is like a continent. It is a very large country. Indians wishing to go to the Transvaal from Natal can do so only if they have a permit. They say it is as much their country as anyone else's and ask why there should be such restrictions imposed on their movements. Many have succeeded in moving to the Transvaal and the Government this time have been decent. They have not been arrested so far. They first went to Volksrust which is the first city after crossing the border. There were policemen present in strength but they only looked on and did not arrest them. There they found a motor vehicle and proceeded in it further on. Then a meeting was held there at which they were given a warm welcome. I thought I should give you this information. Those Indians have performed an act of great courage. Indians in South Africa are few in number but, if they all become true satyagrahis, their victory is certain and no obstacle can stop them. But this has yet to be achieved. There are, as

[1] The Hindi version in *Prarthana Pravachan* has been collated with the report in *The Hindustan Times*.

here, many kinds of people. There are Hindus and there are Muslims. They all work together. They know they cannot fight their battle separately. They have reached Johannesburg but they cannot stop there. They must go on and on till they are arrested. The Government have a right to arrest them, for satyagraha implies the acceptance of punishment for the violation of a law. They deserve congratulations. I shall ask the Government of South Africa not to be too severe with people who carry on their struggle with such decency. They should understand their grievances and come to a settlement with them. Why should it be that one with a white skin cannot have a dialogue with one with a black skin? Why should Indians have to fight for their legitimate rights? How does it harm the whites if Indians too are allowed to live there? Today we are also a free country as South Africa is and are members of the same Commonwealth, which implies that we should all live like brothers and equals. But if they consider Indians their enemies and deprive them of their basic civic rights, then they are not behaving as friends but as enemies. It is something which is difficult to understand. Why should they look down on the coloured people? Is it because they are industrious and thrifty? I shall tell the Government of South Africa through this meeting that it should mend its ways. I have myself lived in South Africa for twenty years and I can therefore say that it is my country. I should have told you all this yesterday but I could not do so.

Some Muslims from Mysore had sent me a wire a few days ago saying that my fast had produced no effect there and Muslims were still being killed there. I had also said a few words on the matter.[1] Now I have a telegram from the Home Minister of Mysore in which he has refuted the charge made in the wire and has explained that the Government is trying to be just to the Muslims. I must tell the Muslims of Mysore what I have told all others, namely, that they should not indulge in exaggeration. This hampers me and I am able to do nothing. If anything they should try to water down such reports. This is the only way Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs can live as brothers.

Our people are so simple that they send money by post. I recollect an incident from my childhood. My father had some jewellery among which was a valuable pearl. He mailed it by post. That was not cheating but it certainly was risky because, if anybody had suspected it, they could have opened the envelope. In any case the

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 23-1-1948

money was not saved because he wanted the acknowledgment by wire. It seems there still are innocent people like my father. A friend sent currency notes of over a thousand rupees in this way. He had the envelope neither registered nor insured. He sent it by ordinary post. When there is dishonesty and corruption everywhere it is a matter of great credit to our Post office that envelopes with money are safely delivered. They do not even want to see what an envelope might contain. My advice to people who send money like this is not to take such risk because in the postal department there are bound to be some dishonest men and, if the money is misappropriated in the post, the loss will be mine or that of the Harijans for whom this money is intended, and also of the donor. I congratulate the postal department on displaying such honesty. Let the other departments follow their example and take care of other people's money and keep away from graft and peculation.

The Hindustan Times, 29-1-1948, and *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 348-51

318. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

NEW DELHI,
4.20 a. m., January 29, 1948

CHI . LIL I,

I got your letter regarding Vijaya[1]. I am taking immediate steps. She must get the money without delay. As you say, there is complete confusion. But even in this case the fruits of patience will be sweet.

I am likely to leave here on the 2nd. It will be decided tomorrow. I have twelve days' work there. Then I will be back here.

You must have received my letter of yesterday.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7181. Also C. W. 10248. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] Vijaya Walji Sodawala, a final-year Harijan student of M. B. B. S. in Bombay

319. LETTER TO VIJAYA WALJI SODAWALA

NEW DELHI,
4.30 a. m., January 29, 1948

CHI . VIJ AYA,

You did well in writing to me. It is a matter of shame that you should be put to such straits. It is being delayed probably because the arrangements are new. I hope everything will be all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: K. G. Mashruwala Records. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust, Ahmedabad

320. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
January 29, 1948

CHI . KAN AIYO,

I talk at length with Abha and thus save time by omitting to write to you. On the whole I like your letters. There is scope for a few improvements which can come in course of time. About your coming, I have for the time being left the decision to you. And that seems to be the only right thing to do. Right now I don't feel that you must come over, but when you do, you will be coming in your own right. This is what I have told Abha. And this I think will lead to her development. Also she will be of the maximum use to you. I am writing a postcard because I think it will reach you the earliest. I understand you eat nothing but uncooked food. I wish that you should not undertake this experiment. Your body is like that of Hanuman[1]; if you ruin it you will be liable to punishment. The body is the true temple for God to dwell in. Bear this in mind when you make use of your body. Don't shrink from writing to me. My leaving this place is not definite. Perhaps I may visit Wardha for twelve days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Who was known for his physical prowess

321. LETTER TO SANKARAN

NEW DELHI,
January 29, 1948

BHA I SAN KARAN[1],

Chi. Kishorelal gave me news of the death of your daughter Sulochana. I had no idea of it at all. What can I write to you? What comfort could I give? Death is a true friend. It is only our ignorance that causes us grief. Sulochana's spirit was yesterday, is today and will remain tomorrow. The body, of course, must die. Sulochana has gone taking her failings with her, leaving the good in her behind. Let us not forget that or her. Be even more true in the discharge of your duty.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 10420

322. LETTER TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA[2]

NEW DELHI,
January 29, 1948

CHI . KIS HOREL AL,

I am devoting the time after prayer today to writing letters. You did well in writing to me about the death of Sankaran's daughter. I have written to him. My proposed visit there is still in the air. I have mooted the idea of my staying at Sevagram from 3rd to 12th. If my mission is regarded to have been accomplished, I need not stay on here now for the fulfilment of my pledge. Whether or not it can be so regarded will depend on the co-workers here. Probably we shall be able to arrive at some decision tomorrow. The purpose of my visit will be to discuss the possibility of uniting the various organizations for

[1] A teacher at the Hindustani Talimi Sangh at Sevagram

[2] This letter could not be posted on the 29th. The next day when Manu Gandhi asked Gandhiji if she could add a line in it saying that they were to leave for Wardha on the 2nd, he remarked: "Who has seen tomorrow? If my going is finalized I shall mention it after the prayers today and it will be relayed in the night broadcast. But the letter should not have been left like that. Though it was Bisen's responsibility you cannot be relieved of any of my jobs. It may be a lapse on the part of someone else but I regard it as a lapse on your part."

constructive work into one body and to join in the observance of Jamnalal's death anniversary. I am regaining strength fairly well. This time both the kidneys and the liver have been affected. According to me, it indicates that my faith in Ramanama is not complete.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 8-2-1948

323. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

NEW DELHI,
January 29, 1948

SHRI BALVANTSINHAJI,

What Bapuji said I am writing to you in my own words. Hoshiaribehn had gone to Khurja, but she is now back here. She returned only yesterday. She goes back to Khurja today, as some physician there has promised to restore her to health in a month's time. She has decided to take his treatment, and Bapuji has approved of her decision. Bapuji says: "Hoshiari will be able to devote herself fully to serving others only after she is physically all right herself, and so I have agreed to her taking the treatment of this physician."

Please show this letter to Chimanlalbhai also. The rest you will learn from Chimanlalbhai's letter.

With regards,

BISEN

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1990

324. INTERVIEW TO MARGARET BOURKE-WHITE[1]

NEW DELHI,
January 29, 1948

Margaret Bourke-White discussed with Gandhiji the doctrine of trusteeship. Bapu had once said that the rich should be trustees for the poor. How did he define a trustee?

[1] This and the following item are reproduced from P. B. Chandwani's article "The Master at Work".

Margaret Bourke-White, American photographer and *Life* magazine correspondent, introduced herself as the "Torturer", a title Gandhiji had conferred on her earlier in Bengal.

A trustee is one who discharges the obligations of his trust faithfully and in the best interests of his wards.

Did he know of any industrialist who lived up to that ideal?

No, though some are striving in that direction, my host, G. D. Birla, for instance. I hope he is not deceiving me. If I saw him do so, I would not live under his roof.[1]

Did he still cherish the wish and hope to live the full span of life?

He had lost that wish, Gandhiji said, in view of the prevailing darkness. He was, however, groping for light. If things took a turn for the better and the people responded to his call and co-operated to usher in a new era of peace and amity, he would again wish—indeed, he would be "commanded" to wish to live the full span.

"Would you advise America to give up the manufacture of atom bombs?" she finally asked.

Most certainly. As things are, the war ended disastrously and the victors are vanquished by jealousy and lust for power. Already a third war is being canvassed, which may prove even more disastrous. Ahimsa is a mightier weapon by far than the atom bomb. Even if the people of Hiroshima could have died in their thousands with prayer and goodwill in their hearts, the situation would have been transformed as if by a miracle.[2]

Harijan, 22-2-1948

325. INTERVIEW TO GENERAL SECRETARY, Y. W. C. A.[3]

NEW DELHI,
January 29, 1948

The interviewer, an American lady, asked Bapu what America with her interest in India and her well-being could do for India.

[1] What follows is reported by Margaret Bourke-White in her book *Halfway to Freedom* under the date January 30, 1948.

[2] At this stage the interviewer presented some pictures taken by her for Gandhiji's autograph in order to complete her questions. *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase* carries the following version of the interview:

" How would you meet the atom bomb . . . with non-violence?',

"I will not go underground. I will not go into shelter. I will come out in the open and let the pilot see I have not a trace of ill will against him. The pilot will not see our faces from his great height, I know. But the longing in our hearts—that he will not come to harm—would reach up to him and his eyes would be opened.

"If those thousands who were done to death in Hiroshima, ... had died with that prayerful action—died openly with that prayer in their hearts—their sacrifice would not have gone in vain."

[3] Of the World Headquarters in Switzerland

Gandhiji said that American visitors should endeavour to see India through Indian spectacles. They could go round and offer friendly and constructive criticism but to describe its dirty spots as India would be a caricature. Here Bapu recalled the instance of Emily Kinnaird[1], who had invited herself to be Gandhiji's guest in Bombay[2]. She was content with the vegetarian food and modest comforts she could get and always insisted on walking with him to the prayer ground. Till the moment of her death, she continued to write long and delightful letters to Bapu, pouring out her heart and spirit.

Asked what foreign missions could do in the new set-up for Indian Christians or Christian Indians as they would now like to be called, Bapu replied that the best course would be to leave them to their own resources, to help them settle down as sons of the soil.

Harijan, 22-2-1948

326. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
January 29, 1948

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Of the many things I wish to tell you, I have chosen six for today, for I must finish in 15 minutes.

I notice that we are beginning a little late, which is wrong. Sushila has gone to Bahawalpur, to see the refugees still stranded there. She has no other mission. Mr. Leslie Cross of the Friends' Service has gone with her. My idea was that someone from the Friends, Unit should go and observe the conditions of refugees there and report to me. There was no proposal for Sushila to go. But when she heard about the plan she suggested that she be permitted to accompany Mr. Cross. She has known him ever since she went to Noakhali. She is an efficient doctor and she belongs to the Gujrat district in the Punjab. She too has suffered a good deal. She had a large property which she has lost. But her heart has not become poisoned. She said it would help if she went because she could speak Punjabi, Hindustani, Urdu and English and could be of use to Mr. Cross. I was delighted. There are of course hazards but she said

[1] Who had met Gandhiji on July 20, 1940 and January 15, 1941 in Sevagram. *Vide* "Discussion with Emile Kinnaird", 20-7-1940.

[2] Obviously a. slip for 'Sevagram'

she was not afraid. Had she been afraid she would not have gone to work in Noakhali. Many people who live in the Punjab have been completely ruined in every way. At least she. can still find food and other provisions. I consulted Mr. Cross and he welcomed the idea. He said she could act as an interpreter. He is from the Red Cross. The function of the Red Cross is to provide medical relief to war victims. Whether Dr. Sushila went with Mr. Cross or Mr. Cross went with Sushila is a complicated question but they are friends and like each other. They have gone to render service and not to make money. They will observe and give me a report of what they see. The Nawab keeps writing to me. After I have the report from Mr. Cross and Sushila Nayyar I shall tell you more about the matter.

Some people, perhaps forty of them, from Bannu had come to me. They have suffered hardships no doubt but they are able to walk. Some had injured fingers, some had other wounds on other parts of the body. I saw them just now and told them to explain everything to Brijkrishna. They were all respectable men. They must have been full of anger but they accepted my advice. One of them—I did not ask whether he was a refugee—said I had done enough harm already and that I should stop and disappear from the scene. He did not care whether I was a mahatma. I asked him where he wanted me to go. He said that I might go to the Himalayas. I had to rebuke him. He is not as old as I am and is stronger. But I could not afford to become nervous. I asked why I should go to the Himalayas merely because he wished it, when there were many who wanted me to stay. There are many who praise me and there are others who abuse me. What am I to do? I can only do as God bids. You may say that you do not believe in God. But then you must allow me to go my way. God is the help of the afflicted. But an afflicted person is not God. When I claim that every woman is my own sister or daughter, then her suffering becomes my suffering. Why do you presume that I do not understand the sufferings of the refugees? Why do you presume that because I am a friend of Muslims I am an enemy of Hindus and Sikhs? I cannot run away because anyone wants me to run away. I have not taken to service at any one's bidding. I have become what I have become at the bidding of God. God will do what He wills. He may take me away. I shall not find peace by going to the Himalayas. I want to find peace in the midst of turmoil or I want to die in the turmoil. My Himalayas are here.

I keep receiving complaints about the refugees. They are given food and drink and clothing and they are helped in every possible way. But they do not want to work. I have said that if the refugees want to end their sufferings, if they want to convert suffering into happiness and serve India and serve themselves, they must not shirk work. A refugee has no right to live comfortably without working. The *Gita* says: "Eat only after you have performed *yajna*." Eat what remains after the *yajna*. This has not been said only for me but also for you and all others. It applies also to the refugees. Even if a millionaire eats and does not work, he is a burden on the earth. Of course one can understand if you are a cripple, or if you are blind or too old. But a robust man has no excuse for not working. Let those who are strong of body clean lavatories in the camp; let them spin, let them do any other work that comes to hand. Let them teach their boys.

Someone came to see me today. I forget his name. He mentioned peasants. I said if I had my way our Governor-General would be a peasant; our Prime Minister would be a peasant. In my childhood I learnt a poem which says "O farmer, you are the king, the master of the whole world". What would we eat if the peasant did not produce food? But today we have made him a slave. What can a peasant do? Must he acquire academic degrees such as B.A. and M.A.? If he does that he will be ruined. He will be no more good for wielding the pickaxe. If the man who produced foodgrain out of the earth becomes our Chief, our Prime Minister, the face of India will change.

There is a scarcity of food in Madras. A representative of the Madras Government had come here to plead with Shri Jairamdas[1] that he should make foodgrain available for Madras. This attitude of the people of Madras saddens me. I want to point out to them that they can find enough things to eat in their own province such as groundnut, coconut and various other things. They also have plenty of fish which most of them take. What need is there for them to go out and beg? It is not right for them to insist on rice and that too polished rice which has all its food value removed or to insist on wheat in place of rice. They can mix groundnut flour or coconut flour with rice

[1] Jairamdas Doulatram (1891-1979); Editor *of The Hindustan Times*, 1925-27; General Secretary of Congress, 1931; Governor of Bihar, 1947-48 and of Assam, 1950-56; Minister of Food and Agriculture in the Union Cabinet, 1948-50

flour and thus keep the wolf from the door. What they need is self-confidence and dedication. I know the people of Madras quite well. I had with me in South Africa people drawn from all the linguistic areas of the Province. During the satyagraha march[1] they were given a pound and a half of bread and an ounce of sugar each day. But they surprised me when on our striking camp they would pick out some edible greens or some other thing and cook it singing away in great delight. How can such resourceful people ever feel so helpless? True we were all coolies. But then in honest work lies our freedom and the satisfaction of all our basic needs.

[From Hindi]

Courtesy: All India Radio. Also *Prarthana Pravachan*—II, pp. 352-6

327. DRAFT CONSTITUTION OF CONGRESS[2]

NEW DELHI,
January29, 1948

Though split into two, India having attained political independence through means devised by the Indian National Congress, the Congress in its present shape and form, i. e., as a propaganda vehicle and parliamentary machine, has outlived its use. India has still to attain social, moral and economic independence in terms of its seven hundred thousand villages as distinguished from its cities and towns. The struggle for the ascendency of civil over military power is bound to take place in India's progress towards its democratic goal. It must be kept out of unhealthy competition with political parties and communal bodies. For these and other similar reasons, the A. I. C. C. resolves to disband the existing Congress organization and flower into a Lok Sevak Sangh under the following rules with power to alter them as occasion may demand.

[1] Which commenced on November 6, 1913.

[2] Acharya Jugal Kishore, General Secretary of A. I. C. C., released this draft to the Press on February 7, with the note: "As something has already appeared in the Press . . . regarding the proposals which Mahatmaji had made concerning changes in the Congress constitution I am releasing the full draft as was handed to me on the fateful forenoon of 30th January. . . ."

This appeared in *Harijan* under the title "His Last Will and Testament".

In his article "The Fateful Friday", in *Harijan,* Pyarelal writes: "The whole of the 29th had been so cram-full with work that at the end of the day Gand hiji felt

Every panchayat of five adult men or women being villagers or village-minded shall form a unit.

Two such contiguous panchayats shall form a working party under a leader elected from among themselves.

When there are one hundred such panchayats, the fifty first grade leaders shall elect from among themselves a second-grade leader and so on, the first-grade leaders meanwhile working under the second-grade leader. Parallel groups of two[1] hundred panchayats shall continue to be formed till they cover the whole of India, each succeeding group of panchayats electing a second-grade leader after the manner of the first. All second-grade leaders shall serve jointly for the whole of India and severally for their respective areas. The second-grade leaders may elect, when. ever they deem necessary, from among themselves a chief who will, during pleasure, regulate and command all the groups.

(As the final formation of provinces or districts is still in a state of flux, no attempt has been made to divide this group of servants into provincial or district councils and jurisdiction over the whole of India has been vested in the group or groups that may have been formed at any given time. It should be noted that this body of servants derive their authority or power from service ungrudgingly and wisely done to their master, the whole of India.)[2]

1. Every worker shall be a habitual wearer of khadi made from self-spun yarn or certified by the A. I. S. A. and must be a teetotaller. If a Hindu, he must have abjured untouchability in any shape or form in his own person or in his family and must be a believer in the ideal of inter-communal unity, equal respect and regard for all religions and equality of opportunity and status for all irrespective of race,

utterly fagged out. "My head is reeling. And yet I must finish this," he remarked to Abha, pointing to the draft constitution for the Congress which he had undertaken to prepare, and then, "I am afraid I shall have to keep late hours."

The next morning Gandhiji revised the draft and gave it to Pyarelal to "go through it carefully". He added: "Fill in any gaps in thought that there might be. I wrote it under a heavy strain." When Pyarelal took the revised draft to him he "went through the additions and alterations point by point with his characteristic thoroughness and removed an error in calculation that had crept in in regard to the number of panchayats."

[1] The copy available in the A.I.C.C. files has a question-mark here.

[2] A facsimile of the draft up to here is available in *Mahatma Gandhi— The Last Phase.*

creed or sex.

2. He shall come in personal contact with every villager within his jurisdiction.

3. He shall enrol and train workers from amongst the villagers and keep a register of all these.

4. He shall keep a record of his work from day to day.

5. He shall organize the villages so as to make them self-contained and self-supporting through their agriculture and handicrafts.

6. He shall educate the village folk in sanitation and hygiene and take all measures for prevention of ill health and disease among them.

7. He shall organize the education of the village folk from birth to death along the lines of Nayee Talim, in accordance with the policy laid down by the Hindustani Talimi Sangh.

8. He shall see that those whose names are missing on the statutory voters, roll are duly entered therein.

9. He shall encourage those who have not yet acquired the legal qualification, to acquire it for getting the right of franchise.

10. For the above purposes and others to be added from time to time, he shall train and fit himself in accordance with the rules laid down by the Sangh for the due performance of duty.

The Sangh shall affiliate the following autonomous bodies:

1. A.I.S.A.
2. A.I.V.I.A.
3. Hindustani Talimi Sangh
4. Harijan Sevak Sangh
5. Goseva Sangh

FINANCE

The Sangh shall raise finances for the fulfilment of its mission from among the villagers and others, special stress being laid on collection of poor man's pice.

M. K. G.

NEW DELHI, January 29, 1948

Harijan, 15-2-1948. And A.I.C.C. File No. 1578. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

328. TALK WITH DEVDAS GANDHI[1]

NEW DELHI,
January 29, 1948

. . . . I had had one of those rarest of rare experiences, that of being alone with Bapu for a moment. It was my customary call at 9.30. He was in bed. . . . I stepped in and was greeted by "what news?" . . . I . . . had no news to give. So I asked: "How does the ship of State fare?', He said:

I am sure the little differences[2] will vanish. But things may have to await my return from Wardha. That won't be long. The Government is composed of patriots and no one will do anything that is in conflict with the interests of the country. I am sure that they must hold together at all costs and they will. There is no difference of substance.

There was more conversation on the same lines and I would have invited the usual "crowd', even at that hour, had I tarried. So, preparing to leave, I said: "Bapu, will you sleep now?"

No, there is no hurry. You may talk for some time longer if you like.

Harijan, 15-2-1948

329. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

NEW DELHI,
January *30, 1948*

SHRI ANANDBHAIYA AND GANGIBEHN,

Bapu had your letter. Bapu is going to Sevagram but only for ten days. So Bapu says that there is no need for Gangi to come. Yes, when he goes there for a long stay she may come. . . .

Yours,
BISEN

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

[1] Reproduced from Devdas Gandhi's article, "I Speak as an orphan", broadcast by All India Radio on February 5

[2] Between Jawaharlal Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel

330. TALK WITH PYARELAL[1]

NEW DELHI,
January 30, 1948

Passing out of the room at the end of the massage, Gandhiji . . . . inquired if I had finished the revision[2] and further asked me to prepare a note on how to meet the threatened food crisis in Madras in the light of my experience and experiment in Noakhali.

The Food Ministry is feeling nervous. But I maintain that a province like Madras that is blessed by nature with cocoanut and palm, ground-nut and banana in such plenty, not to mention roots and tubers of various kinds, need not starve, if only the people know how to husband their resources in food.

Harijan, 15-2-1948

331. TALK WITH PYARELAL

NEW DELHI,
January 30, 1948

I put before Gandhiji the case for orderly evacuation[3], but his view was emphatic and clear. Just as we, workers, had to "Do or Die", even so had we to prepare our people to "Do or Die" for the vindication of their self-respect, honour and right of religious freedom.

Maybe in the end only a few will be left. But there is no other way of evolving strength out of weakness. Are not ranks decimated in the war of weapons too? How can it be otherwise under non-violence then? What you are doing is the way. You have shed the fear of death and established yourself in the hearts and affections of the people. To love and diligence must be joined knowledge. This you have done. If you alone do your part fully and well, you will cover the whole lot. You know, I need you here, the burden is so heavy. And there is a lot I would like to share with the world which I cannot do now that you are away. But I have steeled myself to it; the work you are doing is more

[1] This and the following two items have been reproduced from Pyarelal's article "The Fateful Friday".

[2] Of the draft constitution of the Congress; *vide* "Draft Constitution of Congress", 29-1-1948.

[3] From Noakhali

important.

He then showed how to deal with miscreants in the event of the Government failing to discharge its duty.

Harijan, 15-2-1948

332. TALK WITH SUDHIR GHOSH[1]

NEW DELHI,
January 30, 1948

Sudhir Ghosh, among other things, read out to Gandhiji a cutting from the London *Times* and extracts from a letter from an English friend showing how some people were assiduously trying to drive a wedge between Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel by traducing the latter as a communalist, while pretending to praise the former. Gandhiji remarked that he was aware of the move and was deeply excercised over it. He had already dealt with it, he said, in one of his post-prayer speeches[2], which had been published in the *Harijan.* But he felt that something more needed to be done. He was thinking what he should do.[3]

Harijan, 15-2-1948

333. TALK WITH MUSLIM LEADERS

NEW DELHI,
January 30, 1948

Gandhiji told them that if he did not leave for Sevagram on the proposed date[4],

[1] Sudhir Ghosh in his book *Gandhi's Emissary* writes: "As I sat down he handed to me a letter written to him by Agatha Harrison enclosing with it a clipping from the London *Times.* Agatha's letter said that the whispering campaign about a serious rift between his two lieutenants Mr. Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel had spread to London and *The Times* editorial on this rift between the two men was a bad omen; was Gandhiji not going to do something about it?"

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 20-1-1948.

[3] Sudhir Ghosh reports: He finished the writing of whatever he was working at and said, "I wonder what I am going to do about it"—as if asking himself a question. I said, "Well they are so big that nobody dares to talk to them about it; but people talk behind their backs. Some day you may like to talk to both of them about it. You alone can do it." He pondered over my remark and said, "Well, there is something in what you say. I think I am going to talk about it. I think I will talk about it after prayers this evening. Vallabhbhai is coming to see me at 4. Jawaharlal is coming to see me at 7. You can come and see me just before I go to bed.', *Vide* also "Talk with Vallabhbhai Patel", 30-1-1948.

[4] February 2

all his plans would be upset. The Maulanas said they had no wish to detain him on their account, for they knew that he would be working for them wherever he was. The interval would enable them to assess and report to him how the implementation of the pledges given as a result of his fast was progressing. They hoped he would be able to return to Delhi by the 14th February. Gandhiji replied:

I do expect to be back here by the 14th. But if Providence has decreed otherwise, that is a different matter. I am not, however, sure whether I shall be able to leave here even the day after tomorrow. It is all in God's hands.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 770

334. A TALK

NEW DELHI,
January 30, 1948

Wherever I look I find our plight the same as that of the Yadavas who met their doom killing one another. No one realizes how much harm we are doing to society by being engaged in our personal feuds. But what can you or anyone else do about it? This indicates a failure on my part. What could anyone do when God made me blind to these things? But let me set things right as far as possible, while I am alive, so that the coming generation may not hurl abuses at me. If I succeed in it, I shall regard it as God's grace.

I ought to take up this task.[1] The diaries should be edited well and compiled. Narahari's health does not permit any work and . . . .[2] has dissociated himself from all my activities. But how can it be said that he has done so without full understanding? Everyone is entitled to freedom of thought. If Chandrashankar[3] shoulders this responsibility he will exhibit his talents as well. What similarity between the handwritings of the two! I shall write to him.[4]

[From Gujarati]

Dilhiman Gandhiji—II, p. 425

[1] Of editing and compiling of Mahadev Desai's diaries

[2] The name is omitted in the source.

[3] Chandrashanker P. Shukla

[4] After this talk Rasikbhai Parikh and U. N. Dhebar from Kathiawar wanted an appointment with Gandhiji. Being busy Gandhiji said: "Tell them I shall talk with them during my walk after the prayers, if I am alive."

335. INTERVIEW TO SINDHI DEPUTATION[1]

NEW DELHI,
January 30, 1948

Bapu said in an exceedingly tender voice that all this had distressed him beyond measure. Outwardly he seemed light and happy but his heart was smitten with grief at the wave of insanity which was sweeping over the land. Either this must end or he must perish.

He also referred to the advice offered to him by a refugee[2] to retire to the Himalayas. Chuckling with laughter he observed that nothing would be better in one sense: he would develop into a double *Mahatma* and attract larger crowds. But what he wanted was not vainglory or ease but such comfort and strength as he could extract out of the prevailing darkness and misery.

Harijan, 22-2-1948

336. TALK WITH VALLABHBHAI PATEL[3]

NEW DELHI,
January 30, 1948

Although he had previously expressed his view, Gandhiji told the Sardar, that one of the two—either the Sardar or Pandit Nehru—should withdraw from the Cabinet, he had since come to the firm conclusion that the presence there of both of them was indispensable. Any breach in their ranks at that stage would be disastrous. He further said he would make that the topic of his post-prayer speech in the evening. Pandit Nehru would be seeing him after the prayer; he would discuss the question with him too. If necessary, he would postpone his going to Sevagram and not leave Delhi till he had finally laid the spectre of disunity between the two. . . .[4]

[1] Reproduced from P. B. Chandwani's article "The Master at Work"

The deputation, led by Choithram Gidwani, narrated the woes of Sindhis and spoke of the restrictions imposed by the Pakistan Government on their evacuation.

[2] From Bannu; *vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 29-1-1948.

[3] Gandhiji carried on his spinning while talking.

[4] According to the source, "the talk with the Sardar continued. At 4.30 p. m. Abha brought Gandhiji his evening meal. It was getting near prayer time. But the Sardar had still not finished. Abha felt fidgety, knowing the great importance that Gandhiji attached to punctuality, particularly in regard to prayer time. But she dared not interrupt. At last, becoming desperate, she picked up his watch and held it before him to draw his attention. But it was no good. Noting her predicament, Manibehn Patel tactfully intervened."

Gandhiji said to the Sardar as he rose to get ready to go to the prayer-ground:

I must now tear myself away.[1]

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II. pp. 771-2

337. REMARKS ON WAY TO PRAYER MEETING[2]

NEW DELHI,
January 30, 1948

"Bapu, your watch must be feeling very neglected. You would not look at it," remarked Abha.

Why should I, since you are my time-keepers?

"But you do not look at the time-keepers", rejoined one of them. Bapu again laughed. The last remark he uttered as he cleared the steps leading to the prayer-ground was:

It is your fault that I am ten minutes late. It is the duty of nurses to carry on their work even if God himself should be present there. If it is time to give medicine to a patient and one feels hesitant about it, the poor patient will die. So it is with prayers. It irks me if I am late for prayers even by a minute.[3]

Harijan, 15-2-1948, and *Dilhiman Gandhiji*—II, pp. 426-7

[1] In his letter to Jawaharlal Nehru dated February 5, 1948, while referring to this talk Vallabhbhai Patel wrote: "I had the good fortune to have a last talk with him for over an hour just before his death and he communicated to me what had passed between you and him as well as his talk with H. E. [Lord Mountbatten]. He had also fixed an appointment to meet both of us the next day. His opinion also binds us both and I can assure you that I am fully resolved to approach my responsibilities and obligations in this spirit."

[2] The report in Pyarelal's "The Fateful Friday", has been collated with the Gujarati version in *Dilhiman Gandhiji*.

[3] According to Manu Gandhi's account, as Gandhiji passed along the cordoned lane through the prayer congregation, he took his hands off the shoulders of the two girls to acknowledge the *namaskars* of the prayer congregation. All of a sudden someone from the crowd roughly elbowed his way towards them. Manu Gandhi, thinking that he was coming forward to touch Gandhiji's feet, remonstrated saying something about it being already late for the prayer and tried to stop the intruder by thrusting back his hand. He violently pushed her away, causing the notebook, the spittoon and the *mala*, which she was carrying in her hands, to fall down. As she stooped down to pick up the scattered things, he planted himself in front of Gandhiji and fired in quick succession three shots at point-blank range. The last words Gandhiji uttered were "*Hey Ram*". A spreading crimson spot appeared on the white clothes. The hands which had been raised in *namaskar* to the gathering slowly came down. The limp body softly sank to the ground. Gandhiji breathed his last at 5.17 p. m.

338. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS [1]

Q.1. Is it possible to recite Ramanama from the heart even while talking to someone, doing arduous mental work or when mentally perturbed? If people do so even under such conditions, how do they manage it?

A. Experience tells us that whatever the situation a person may be in, even if he may be asleep, if he has formed the habit, and if Ramanama fills his heart, recitation of Ramanama will continue as long as the heart beats. Otherwise, it may said that he utters Ramanama only with his lips, or if occasionally it enters the heart, it certainly does not reign in the heart. When Ramanama rules the heart, it is needless to ask how the recitation is carried on. For, when the Name has found a place in the heart, recitation is superfluous. It would be correct to say that those whose hearts are thus permeated by Ramanama are few. I have no doubt that Ramanama does indeed possess the power attributed to it. Not everyone can have Ramanama inscribed in his heart by merely wishing it. It requires a tireless effort and also patience. How can one find the philosopher's stone without patience? Ramanama is superior to it.

Q.2. Is it from a certain mental weakness that one sees so many layers of the mind, or is it necessary for the mind to pass through all these stages before reaching a state of steadiness? Why is it that even in the waking state dreamlike visions come and go? How is it that phantoms of things never experienced in life appear in the mind or echo in the heart?

A. Before arriving at steadiness of mind almost everyone has to pass through stages enumerated in the question. That is to say, those who have in the former life striven without achieving success will not need to pass through agony in the present birth. When the mind is calm but one still has dream-like experiences, it only means that though the mind appears calm on the surface, it is not in fact calm. That there are visions of things not related to experience, means, in my view, that apart from memory, there are many other things involved.

[1] In this section of undated items, letters and notes from Gandhiji to individuals have been put together in the alphabetical order of surnames, as it has not been possible to establish conclusive evidence of the period to which they belong. However, an occasional inference as regards the date of an item is ventured in a footnote to the title.

Q. 3. When work of service makes demands of one, sometimes it is not possible to pursue devotional activity. Is this harmful? What should be considered more important – service or recitation of God's name?

A. Whether it is the demands of work or even sterner demands, the recitation of the Ramanama may never be stopped. Its outward expression may be modified depending on the circumstances. Even if one does not count the beads, can Ramanama which is inscribed in the heart, be abandoned?

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

339. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS [1]

1. There is life and there is death. Freedom from all bondage is *moksha*.

2. He who consders himself in bondage is a bound person. It is attachment. He is bound by the bonds of attachment. Knowingly or unknowingly, he seeks freedom from it.

3. Freedom that needs replenishing is not freedom. He who is free is the best.

4. There is not the slightest external difference between a bound and a free man. A free man recognizes himself. Even while doing, he does not do, for he never yearns for reward. He does his deeds by force of the previous *sanskaras* [2].

5. No activity is possible for the one who is free. For him there is nothing that remains to be attained.

6. Rama, Krishna, etc., who are settled in my imagination are free souls to my mind. My emancipated Rama and Krishna have nothing at all to do with the Rama and Krishna of history. This is a matter of imagina-tion. In truth, only the emancipated can recognize the emancipated. I have not become emancipated myself.

7. Apart from non-vegetarianism, I have written about the historical Buddha. But that would be like proud words from an under-serving person. I see no harm in regarding the Buddha as a perfect,

[1] Posed by Maganbhai Shankerbhai Patel

[2] This is followed by a quotation in Sanskrit, which is not clear in the source,

and hence, an emancipated being.

8. I started accepting the existence of God when I accepted the existence of soul. Prior to that my condition was similar to that of an atheist if not exactly of an atheist. During my search for Truth I discovered the soul. If there is nothing like soul, then a truthful action may even be a sin. But I got firmly convinced that truthful action is meritorious action at all times and thus I disocvered the soul.

9. God's form is incomprehensible. Reason can somehow grasp it. It is clear from experience. I have the experience as far as faith goes. But that experience is not such that all perversities of (my) mind can be said to have vanished.

10. Faith means belief in something which we cannot prove to others or in something that others cannot prove (to us). I have faith in both these senses. Once we fully believe that faith can do everything, we have no place anywhere, or being in it, our place is everywhere. It is absolutely true that I wanted to live. It was out of pride that I had a yearning that my body still had a function to perform. It is still there. Even while knowing that every disease lies there, it is not destroyed. My physical senses are pulling me perforce and do not let me give up my ego.

11. The greatest endeavour is endeavour for *moksha*. *Moksha* means elimination of ego. I prevail into everybody. The first step is the intense experience that I am unhappy when others are unhappy and I am happy when others are happy. When that happens, the ego can hardly persist. In the midst of disturbances, I find and experience peace. How can there be peace when there is misery everywhere? But if that misery has to be eliminated, I have got to be calm, and therefore, I remain calm. If I do something grievously wrong for the sake of swaraj, Swami Ramatirtha's[1] description of it as a night would be correct. Swami Vivekananads's view is also correct that our rise with the help of the world implies the welfare of the world.

12. Fate means the acts one has committed. Clearly, I am reaping the reward for what I did yesterday.

13. Truth, non-violence and the keen observance of *brahmacharya*, etc. are a means to attain *moksha*.

14. *Moksha* means elimination of all action, that is, elimination

[1] (1873-1906): Hindu religious thinker, philosopher and poet

of ego. But that elimination is possible only by burning away the desire for reward. Action is connected with the body and it will go on. We must be its witness. That is why I would always read, always spin. And yet I can believe that I am not reading: I am not spinning. This can be experienced. It cannot be explained.

15. And I do not see place for anyone in the Ashram who wishes to merely indulge in meditation without any concrete physical activity. In the Ashram one has to learn to concentrate only on one thought while eating or drinking, sitting or sleeping, or wielding the pick-axe. That alone is true meditation.

One who merely indulges in meditation has a place in the world.

His livelihood depends on God. He subsists only by whatever easily falls into his hands.

16. You must think of action in a wider sense. Thereby you will see that you will act till the end. With that in view, physical labour has been given an unassailable position in the Ashram. The only thing we can do is to take away the element of ego from it. The principle would be that everybody would do physical *yajna* for everybody else. We would work for the sake of the Ashram and so, even though working the whole day, we would feel grateful.

17. Desire for a son is opposed to *moksha*. Hence, it does not behove a person desiring *moksha* to have physical contact with women. And any contact with an outside woman would be worse than an animal pursuit. What more can I explain here? There is only attachment in the article by Andrews. It will vanish in course of time because his heart is pure.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 8852. Courtesy: Maganbhai S. Patel

340. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

. . .[1] has also died. I had the first vision of swaraj. I am ashamed I cannot say what will happen tonight. How can I come there under these circumstances? Hence, I am sending somebody who would give you the information and explain. Now our programme is also likely to change a little. If there are disturbances, we will not be able to

[1] Omission as in the source

realize our expectations and only God's will shall prevail.

I expect it will be completely quiet there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 11283. Courtesy: Not known

341. A LETTER [1]

Y. M.

CHI. . . .

The rule about khadi is generally not applicable in jail. If they do not allow us to wear our own clothes, then we can wear whatever is provided. If the jail food does not suit us, we can ask for whatever food that suits us. If that is not given, then we should eat what is given if it agrees with us. If not leave it to the jail authorities to change it. You can certainly ask for the facility for daily spinning routine. Generally it is given.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 11309. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

342. A LETTER

Y. M.

CHI. . . .,

Received your beautiful letter. It is beautiful mainly because you have described in it your state of mind at the time of being beaten up. You tried to contain your anger at that time and therein was your non-violence. With such practice non-violence would ultimately become natural and, as a result, everyone would give up the feeling of animosity. But only in the case of one in a million does non-violence become a natural practice.

We are only trying to pursue that path. I experience every moment that nothing else is as interesting as that effort. Just as a

[1] It is presumed that this and the following 22 letters obtained from the diary of Narandas Gandhi were written during Gandhiji's incarceration in Yeravda Central Prison in the years 1930-1933. Gandhiji euphemistically referred to the prison as "Yeravda Mandir." The addressee's names, however, are not ascertainable.

hungry man nurtures himself daily by eating nutritious food, so also a man suffering from the hunger of non-violence drinks deep of the nectar of non-violence and nurtures himself and takes long draughts of joy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 11312. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

343. A LETTER

Y. M.

CHI . . .,

There will always be proud and defective people in the world. Even we are not without defects. Remembering that, we should bear with others. The afflicted person should not submit to injustice in spite of having to suffer hardships. The same rule applies to the spectator.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 11315. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

344. A LETTER

Y. M.

CHI. . . .,

Received your letter. As far as I remember, I have developed in the following manner.

Truth, non-violence, non-possession, *brahmacharya,* fearlessness, indifference to taste.

During my quest for truth, I saw the need for non-violence, and so, I tried to cultivate it. From that arose the need for non-possession. But I felt everything was hard without *brahmacharya.* This led to the discovery of satyagraha. This gave me fearlessness. I have since been practising indifference to taste. But now I realize that indifference to taste was necessary for the observance of *brahmacharya.* This is the main thing. I hope you are not asking similar questions about swadeshi, untouchability, etc.? I have been able to cultivate these qualities due to deep thinking and effort. Behind all that, there is no doubt an unflinching faith in God.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 11308. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

345. A LETTER

DEAR. . .,

What is this I hear, that because of the hardship that Jamnalalji is undergoing, you are torturing yourself by going barefoot? It is not for me to interfere with anybody's acts of self-denial, much less yours. But is this necessary? So far as I know, J. is quite happy but even if it was otherwise, sympathetic suffering would not be called for in such a case. But I am writing in utter ignorance of facts.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 11328. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

346. A LETTER

CHI. . . .,

Forgetting the original point about *avatar*, people have indulged in all kinds of fanciful ideas. There would be no improvement by wading through them, but it can be done by our good behaviour. Good conduct means good work in which we can concentrate ourselves. Now let the world sink or swim, for to the extent that the sinking or the swimming of the world is in our hands, we are making our efforts.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 11296. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

347. A LETTER

CHI. . . .,

Do not be impatient; go on doing whatever work you can within the means available to you. Develop a sense of detachment even with regard to such a noble work. "You must have a feeling of equanimity for "Moh", said Raichandbhai out of experience. . . .[1] Do not be tired of him. Be content with whatever work he does. Keep on reminding him of his duty, but that too by a mere suggestion. He will do that which you and I would not be able to do. 'That' means passion, and includes also the bad habits of people. Even passion cannot destroy good habits, because that is the essence. Let us forget the scholarliness about the dictum नाभावो विधते सतः।

Telerance in the case of. . .[2] is the best remedy. The three

[1] Omissions as in the source

[2] *ibid*

powerful factors are active in the case of everyone: previous *samskaras*–environment–endeavour. How is it that two persons with contradictory natures are born in the same house? If such a question is asked, the reply would be that we have not known the good and bad characteristics of Mast and his father and their elders. Hence, we do not have sufficient means to pass any judgement and let us not even have a desire to know that. It would suffice to know the Law of Karma.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 11299. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

348. A LETTER

CHI . . .,

Learn to do service only for the sake of service, so that all your troubles disappear. Give up the temptation of reward. Thinking is more necessary than reading. But if thoughts do not come systematically, then reading is the only recourse. It would suffice even if you can spare a quarter of an hour every day.

The story of the two is a tragic one.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 11297. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

349. A LETTER

The two questions raised by you are worth consideration. But, if they are rationally considered, many other questions arise from them and they take us to the point when man should resort to fasting and go into *samadhi*. The concept of renunciation seems to have been born only out of such ideas. But what we know as renunciation would prove to be incomplete from the rational point of view. Hence, the ultimate course would be resorting to fast. But man cannot do it, and even if he does make an attempt, his mind is likely to imagine all kinds of things. It seems to me that the origin of the *Gita* lies in such a line of thought. And the *Gita* shows us on the one hand the ideal of life, and on the other, shows us how to conduct ourselves in life while pursuing that ideal. In one sentence it is like this: Keeping the ideal in view, properly discharge whatever duty one may be called upon to do and crave for no reward. It is by following this line that the problems arising at the Ashram get solved. If a thief came to the Ashram, we would let him stay. But we humbly admit our inability to do so, and

solve the situation in a manner that would behove us. We have not discovered a purely non-violent way of dealing with the cattle, animals, birds and the insects that come and destroy our harvests. Hence, we practise certain violence, considering it unavoidable in recognition of our own weakness. Otherwise, I know that driving away the cattle by shouting or hitting them with a stick, creating fright in the heart of a bird by throwing a pebble at it, destroying the insects by crushing them under the plough or by any other method, driving away snakes and such creatures or even permitting killing them, are all against the principle of non-violence. But since the Ashram or the inmates of the Ashram have not reached the stage of perfection, these things are being done even though they are inconsistent with the principle of non-violence. For that way alone is it possible to discover a path to *moksha.* I have no doubt that sitting back after stopping all activity is even worse than doing such things which are against the principle of non-violence. That is exactly why the author of the *Gita* has said that just as behind every fire there is the fault of smoke, human beings are also afflicted with some fault or the other. Man should realize this and be humble. And he should discharge the duty he is destined to discharge in a spirit of service and realize that whatever the consequences may be, he is merely an instrument in the hands of God.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 11319. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

350. A LETTER

You cannot insist that you will never teach women. You must discharge all your duties that come to you as a matter of course and be absorbed in them. That is our duty. No amount of coaching in the Gita would be enough for the women at the Ashram. Hence, you must educate any woman that you are called upon to do.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 11302. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

351. A LETTER

CHI. . . .,

Is it not *brahmacharya* when we devote ourselves whole-heartedly to the service we are called upon to do and give no thought

to any other service? And how can a *brahmachari* be disturbed in mind?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: *C. W. 11305*. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

352. A LETTER

CHI. . . ,

If you have developed the feeling that all the inmates of the Ashram are brothers and sisters, you will not miss anyone. Ultimately what we have to learn is that the whole world is one.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 11306. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

353. A LETTER

CHI. . .,

When a person has no aspiration, or has only the desire to render service, why should his mind not be at peace? Feeling pity for all living beings is service to all living beings. Otherwise, what is the purpose of pity? We can serve all living beings only by being one with them, and we cannot feel one with them without self-effacement. It is certain that in self-effacement lies self-realization.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarari: C. W. 11307. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

354. A LETTER

CHI. . .

Remember this much, that no one gives or takes from anyone. This does not mean that we do not take anything from anyone. But that act of taking is to be performed by us. The Ganga flows for everyone. It does not on its own give anything to anyone. But one draws from it according to one's need.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 11311. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

355. A LETTER

CHI. . . .,

I do not think that because of the present-day conditions there is anything wrong in stage performances. We should never think that today's conditions are painful or sad. We should not feel tired if the circumstances of today persist for a long time. If we consider these times something to feel sad about, we are bound to feel tired also. Moreover, from our point of view, activity in itself is useful and is educative in one way or other. Let us discard those activities about which this cannot be said. From this point of view also, it is not necessary to give up stage performances. There is no need at all to make a distinction between a musical concert and drama, physical exercise and sports. And there is no need also to make a distinction between all these activities and the subjects taught in school.

Now, coming to that *bhajan,* whenever we have perfectly understood a particular thing and we have come to like it, we can say that our mind has become completely absorbed in it. Anyone who has become so absorbed, does not proclaim aloud his joy, but remains lost in his joy. Similarly, one who merges in God can also be said to be in a state of ecstasy. And when one has attained that state, what more is there to be said? This is what the poet has sung. The poet has then taken the example of diamond. When one has a diamond in his possession, one does not keep taking it out and looking at it. He knows that he has the diamond with him and that consciousness gives him sufficient satisfaction. Similarly, he who has come to have faith in God, will never lose his faith. Repeatedly taking out the diamond is a sign of lack of faith. That is why the poet has said, now that you have got the diamond in the form of God, why do you show lack of faith and why do you go on bidding with it?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 11314. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

356. A LETTER [1]

CHI. . .,

I have suggested that we should expose our faults before the whole world. I have not made it a compulsion. I cannot even do that.

[1] Omissions in the letter are as in the source.

But as we become more and more devoted to truth, we feel more and more ashamed to conceal our faults. One feels relieved when the faults are exposed. I can say that at least for myself. But the limit that you have pointed out is not unjustified. We feel at peace by admitting our faults before the One whom we regard as our Advocate. Even this much is more than sufficient. You do know this much. I keep things secret when people request me to keep them to myself. But when matters involving other people are brought to me on condition that I keep them secret, I refuse to hear about them. If you narrate before me the faults of Chi. . . .and ask me not to refer it to Chi. . . it would be wrong on my part ot hear about Chi. . . .'s faults.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 11313. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

357. A LETTER

I was very happy to receive your letter. In a way, it is only good that Pandit Sukhlal is learning English. But I doubt if it would help him in fulfilling his purpose. That requires a very thorough study of English. It is another matter if he can spare that much time. I am reminded of the experience of Narayan Hemachandra. He was under the impression that one can do translations by having working knowledge of languages. He had made such attempts in English and French and I know that there were many errors in his translations. But how could an ordinary student like me convince a well-known writer like Narayan Hemachandra? He did not agree and today I know that his effort was wasted because he was not even able to publish what he had written. And if he did publish something about which I had no knowledge, it is forgotten by now. This instance must be cited to Panditji. He will draw a lesson from it if it is worthwhile. All I know is that whatever we do must be done well or not done at all. And doing it well means doing it correctly, which is the first step. If there is no mastery over language, it often results in howlers like mistaking आज मर गया [1] द्वश्रह्‘अजमेर गया' There are nearly fifteen English translations of the *Gita.* Some of them are utterly ridiculous. The translators had earned

[1] A favourite analogy used by Gandhiji.

a name in their own respective fields, but they do not seem to have considered at all whether or not they were qualified to do the translation. The result is that there is a terrible mess with regard to some *slokas.* Let it be clear to Sukhlalji that all this is said not by way of criticism but in a spirit of friendship. Since Sukhlalji has worked in the field of archaeology, I expect from him correctness, truthfulness and zeal in every matter. And, it is to convey my experience to him that I am writing this much. Feel free to write anything you wish to the Sardar or even to me. Moreover, we both have time to ponder and discuss things. I do not recall our having had such an opportunity ever since we came to know each other. It is all right that you went to Santiniketan. Somehow, we have to render some service. Do write regularly from there too. Keep on sending to me whatever you think I should read. You must be keeping good health.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 11318. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

358. A LETTER

CHI. . .,

From the point of view of natural beauty, I know of no other country which is better than India. The Ganga is revered more because it fertilizes large parts of India.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 11316. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

359. A LETTER

CHI. . .

Received your letter. Let sister live in whatever way she wants. I am hopeful that she will survive. Just as a woman cannot look after all men, we must also forget about reforming all women. It is our duty to help whenever she asks for it. God will protect everybody's sanctity. You should forget. . . [1] bahen and be absorbed in what you consider is your duty.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 11301. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Omission as in the source

360. A LETTER

CHI. . . ,

You cannot talk to anyone at the cost of sleep. Discard irregularity as an enemy. Do not put yourself in a situation in which you may have to complete the *yajna* by keeping awake at night. I can notice exhaustion and some despondency in your letter this time. We are strictly against despondency. And why should anyone feel exhausted if he works according to his ability?

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 11298. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

361. A LETTER

CHI. . .,

It can be said that I like being at both the places, for I have got accustomed to being outside as well as in jail. And where is the question of choice for one who has accepted the path of service? We must give our services wherever there is scope. You ask me what service one can render in jail ! My reply is that while in jail, one must qualify oneself for service. Moreover, there may be some occasions when one can do some service.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 11310. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

362. A LETTER

ALLAHABAD

CHI. . . .,

It is all right that you asked the question . The answer can be found only from my letters. Happiness and unhappiness are states of mind. But when do we realize that it is a state of mind? Never through reading. It can be realized only through experience. Hence unhappiness is necessary. Here, the meaning of unhappiness is what the world understands by it. Physical illness, onslaughts on the body, scarcity of food, being robbed, being insulted, etc., are the states of unhappiness that are mentally experienced. He who is a devotee, a *yogi,* who is unified with the *Brahman,* who is detached, does not count such situations as unhappiness and remains content even by

them, just as he is content with so-called happiness. Thus, by attaining a sense of indifference, the state of self-knowledge is realized. Do you get the point? She too will have an occasion to get beaten up.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 11300. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

363. A LETTER

CHI. . .,

It is good that true to your name, you are trying to be truthful in your speech and action. You would be called a satyagrahi if you insist on speaking only truth. Instead of speaking the truth as far as possible, why should you not speak the truth as you know it, no matter what happens? I have seen from experience that once you are determined, no vow is as easy to keep as this. Once it is realized that you have to speak only the truth, there is no question at all of speaking an untruth. Think about this. And for one who has started on the path of truth, other vows become easy.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 11304. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

364. A LETTER

This is easy. Ba has Su. with her. Now she is at ease with A. S., Su. with her and Su. with Sharda.[1] But I do not wish to go into it. I have just conveyed the dream as it was. I have also confessed that it is indicative of the perverse state of my mind. Now you do what you want.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 11325. Courtesy: Munnalal Shah

[1] This sentence in the original is unintelligible.

365. A LETTER

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

When the charkha classes are going on before me, everything else appears to me devoid of life. For me, in the cotton yarn my Rama dances. I find swaraj in the cotton yarn because in the cotton yarn there is peace. When I think about how strong the yarn would be when spun by 40 crore hands, I feel content. It is another matter when forty crore hands would start spinning. Such a statement is an expression of our lack of faith. It also speaks of our ignorance. Would not twenty crore people sacrifice one hour of their time for Mother India? If we cannot make even that much sacrifice, what can we do for Mother India? And is it a sacrifice? Ultimately, we ourselves would wear the clothes made from that very yarn, would we not? Let us pray to God that everyone understands such a simple thing.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Rashtriya Shala (Rajkot) Diamond Jubilee Issue, 1921-1981

366. A LETTER

BHAI M.,

If you do everything with proper thought and thoroughly, you will automatically know the next step and you will find satisfaction.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 1690. Courtesy: Ramniklal Modi. Also G. N. 4216

367. A LETTER

Received your letter after the letter to . . . [1] was already written. I am much pleased by your utterances. But I am equally dissatisfied with your handwriting. You must improve your handwriting. Your persistent cough makes us anxious. Your cough must be cured. Are

[1] Omission as in the source

you doing deep breathing properly? Whenever you have cough, you should try saltless diet. You should also give up milk and *ghee* and subsist on root and vegetables. That way your system would be cleansed and you will be able to work. But the great thing is that if the cough still does not stop, greater efforts should be made to cure it. The more important remedy is deep breathing, and this should not be done half-heartedly. While sleeping, do you keep your mouth closed and head uncovered?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati in Hindi script: G. N. 2036

368. A LETTER

I will not leave right away, but I have to carry on propaganda for Hindustani. If notwithstanding this I am kept on as member and if their policy is not against Hindustani, I will remain. My stand for the last many years, that is, since the Indore sesion,[1] has been that Hindi is lame without Urdu. Even a resolution to that effect was passed at my instance. I believe that the policy was changed subsequently. Now I wish to do both the things together if I can. If I cannot, I will leave and carry on on my own. If Urdu is a part of Hindi–and it certainly is–it cannot be excluded.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8040

369. A LETTER

AHMEDABAD,
Friday

I shall start from here on Monday. I too had joked in response to your joke. I can never give my consent about L.L.B.I gather that it is your responsibility to become a barrister or pass L.L.B.I felt that in that case you would have to pass L.L.B.I would not let you appear for any examination if I can have my way. I would make you undertake the study of Sanskrit. And I will make use of you in activities

[1] Of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan in March, 1918; *vide* "Statement of Transvaal Indian Case", 16-7-1909.

connected with. . . [1] or something similar. I shall take care to feed more ink into my pen.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11293. Courtesy: Not known

370. A LETTER

Therein lies your great fault. You are throwing all discretion to the winds and losing all sense of propriety. Getting rid of that fault would be your great endeavour. Ultimately you will become aware of your fault. Now that is over. You have to think about the future. You can go from here only by gaining peace of mind. I am not driving you away. I am only showing you the way to calm yourself. Maganlal lived away like this with the family for one year. Manilal also lived like that. Prabhudas lived like that for four years. Chhaganlal also lived away. All came back. Do not go if you are not convinced. If you go, you should go with pleasure.

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 7232. Courtesy: Not known

371. A LETTER

I am convinced that you should go for your studies and that also at Ahmedabad. You will have my full co-operation if you study. I would be happy if you shone in your studies. I believe that all learning is useful. It is not possible for you always to serve me. You have already done that. It would also give rise to jealousy, etc. You have done a wise thing in giving up serving me. The reason was wrong, but the act was right. That is why I tell you that I would send you today if you were ready. I shall take full interest in your studies.

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11284. Courtesy: Not known

372. A LETTER

You may not be living in this locality, and so, nobody can expect anything from you. Come to catch the snake. You will have my full co-operation in your effort. I shall not reprimand you even if

[1] Omission as in the source

you fail. But I shall certainly reprimand if you become lazy, do not keep accounts and give yourself up to dreaming.

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 7248. Courtesy: Not known

373. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

Jye[*shtha*]

Kri[*shna*] [4]

BAHI MOOLCHANDJI,

The reply to your letter you will find in the next issue of *Navajivan.* Kindly pardon the delay in acknowledgement.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 829

374. LETTER TO AMBUJAMMAL

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I was glad to get even that short letter from you. I was happy like a father who meets his daughter after a long separation. I expect letters from you because. . . . [1]

From the Hindi original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

375. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

CHI. A. SALAAM,

Your folly has no limit. Your fast was intended for two days only. The period will be over today. You should take orange juice tomorrow with a light heart. Afterwards I shall tell you why I have torn up your letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 665

[1] The letter is incomplete.

376. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

FOOLISH DAUGHTER,

You read the opposite meaning of what I write. It is no atonement to do something which gives you pleasure. Your massage gave me pleasure. . . . [1] A man does not display love when he is angry. I showered so much love on you because my anger had cooled down. Do you get me now?

Kanu does not undertake a fast. Apply ointment to the piles. The question of accompanying me remains. There should be no promise to keep you always with me. This insistence has to be abandoned.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 677

377. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

DEAR DAUGHTER[2],

I intend to transfer you tomorrow —you should be at peace now. Write me a long letter. God's will be done.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 604

378. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

Your letter reads well. If you follow it up in action, all our sorrows - yours as well as mine—will end. I never knew that you had given up the bath.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 605

[1] A sentence here is illegible.
[2] This is in Urdu.

379. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM,
VIA WARDHA, [C.P.]

DAUGHTER,

Why would you write? I shall be happier by your being well than by any letter from you. I have received an angry letter from Wahid[1]. If you see it, you will have an idea of his anguish. His being angry did not distress me. He had every right to be. My advice now is that you should return only after making fool-proof arrangements for mother and also after regaining your own health.

I am well. Kanchan sleeps on one side of me and Abha on the other.

Khan saheb writes about you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 598

380. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

What can I do if you do not understand? All my actions are motivated by love, not by anger or by displeasure. Your welfare is the only consideration. Everything will turn out well if you have patience. Take care of your health and be happy.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 666

381. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

Y. M.,
Tuesday

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have not heard from you. Write to me. How are you, physically and mentally? What do you do?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayar and Dr. Sushila Nayar

[1] Addressee's brother

382. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL G. BANKER

Tuesday

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

Your letter does credit to you. Why do you ask me to tear it up? With your permission, I intend to send that very letter to Anandanand. In any case you should come here. You say a follower of mine has hurt you. Does it mean that you are not my follower? If you are not my follower, I do not know who else is. In fact, I have and also do not have followers. I have innumberable colleagues. I do not claim they are my followers. Those who believe themselves to be my followers make that claim. I am not responsible for it. I do not exercise my authority on anyone. And it is for this reason that I am not burdened with the party responsibility. I cherish the affection of anyone as long as I can. Therefore, when someone hurts you, it is like hurting me. My colleague is also your colleague. Should we not share his difficulties? You will find that it is very hard to become wealthy and acquire somebody's love at the same time. Moreover, man bows before money. At the same time, he does not wish to bow. That is why a man who thinks himself independent often crosses the limit. For such subtle reasons only I abandoned money. Money is the cause of envy. How can you be free of it? You are modest. You are wise. Therefore, you must bear with impudence in others.

You do not hurt me. But I am certainly pained when you are hurt. If you wish to free me from pain, you tell me whatever you want but do not be unhappy yourself. I shall not worry then but I shall be free from fear if you are not feeling hurt.

You have got to get over your nervousness. You must drive it out in time. Do come here when you have calmed down or, if you are perturbed, to attain peace. I too would feel disturbed so long as you do not come.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: S. N. 32683

383. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL G. BANKER

SABARMATI,
Jeth Sud 8

BHAISHREE SHANKERLAL,

I am sending herewith the statement of income and expenditure on construction work. You and Jamnadas have not yet reached the amount you had promised. Can you do so in the near future? Is it possible to raise some more money as you had said? I have run short of funds and that is the reason why I am reminding you.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

The statement of expenditure on construction work I have given is not up to date. The overheads are not included. You will see that I am carrying on the construction work with funds from another head.

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: S. N. 32722

384. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL G. BANKER[1]

Sunday

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I have your letter. You have already seen my letter to Varadachari. We shall see what comes of it. Your reply to him is appropriate.

My health is not bad at all. I do take castor oil occasionally.

Just now Subbaiah has informed me that Anasuyabehn has gone there. I am glad. Of course, it is of no consequence.

I have sent to you the papers regarding the registration.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S. N. 32734

[1] From the references to N. S. Varadachari and Subbaiah this letter appears to have been written in 1927.

385. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL G. BANKER[1]

ASHRAM,
Bhadrapad Vad 7

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

Sister told me about the censorious remarks. Censure is nothing new to you. It would be cowardice on your part to leave Ahmedabad or sister's house from fear of criticism. There is not the slightest reason to do such a thing. Who would ever take note of such criticism? What is so surprising about people talking? Our duty is to listen and yet not allow our mind to be disturbed by it. It is even more so in the case of those who want to do service. It is necessary that you should come to Ahmedabad and be of service to the mill workers and others. Before that, you should stay at the Ashram and acquire mental peace.

You may certainly not leave Ahmedabad.

I keep getting dried fruit. It will be all right if you send it every eight days instead of every four.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: S. N. 32739

386. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL G. BANKER

Monday

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I have your note. I am pained. If you have calmed down, come now or any time. I want you to have peace. If you do not come now, I shall definitely wait for you in the morning. But I want you to come right away.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: S. N. 32721

[1] The letter was evidently written before 1929, for the last time Gandhiji was in the Sabarmati Ashram on *Bhadrapad Vad 7* was in 1928, viz., October 5.

387. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL G. BANKER

ON ARRIVAL AT WADI

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I keep worrying about you. Though unwittingly, I have hurt you no doubt. Its remedy lies in fortitude. You must contain your anger. Anandanand is not so bad as you seem to think. But even if he is bad, you cannot abandon him altogether as long as he continues to be my colleague. You must agree to this much. You can be modest because you have that power. The rich can always be humble and modest. They have nothing at all to lose thereby. But right now, all I ask is that you should be calm. I feel sad when you feel hurt.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: S. N. 32687

388. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL G. BANKER

Tuesday

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I think it is only good that I have come away leaving you behind. No matter what disturbances you see on the way, you continue on your path and also do not get angry. Whenever anyone challenges you, give courteous replies. If you are patient, everything will settle down. There are two ways of containing the situation. One is that truth should compromise with untruth. This way is wrong. When truth remains firm on its path, untruth, being illusory, disappears like the water of the mirage. I have seen it happen innumerable times. I do not always argue with you like this because you can grasp the true situation at once. But I am writing this letter to reassure myself. That is why I have started explaining the situation.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: S. N. 32698

389. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL G. BANKER

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

Received your letter. My mind is constantly hovering around you. This is because I have caused you pain. Now I know in what way you can be pacified. I should have exercised patience and avoided intruding in your territory and should have just watched the developments. I shall try to correct your mistake on my return. I wish you do not lose your peace of mind. Look after your health.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: S. N. 32694

390. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL G. BANKER

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

Bhai Jethalal has asked for Rs. 2000 for the purchase of cotton. If something remains from it, give him even one thousand if he wants. I have read Bhai Ratilal's letter. If he gives a satisfactory reply to your question regarding the one-anna grant, there may be no objection to giving it for a year. I have a little doubt because Ratibhai himself does not seem confident that people would store cotton with proper understanding or spin it. It seems from his letter that those who had been spinning at one time have stopped doing so. How long would the people who need to be tempted persist? My attitude at present is to definitely do what can be done with absolute purity. We should not be satisfied if after being provided implements worth five to seven rupees, people turn out work worth two or three rupees. If a person who has been given implements worth five rupees does the work worth about Rs. 100 every year, then those implements would acquire glory. But the person doing work worth Rs. 100 must repay Rs. 5 that very year.

I have noted about the book about weaving. . . .[1] You must have received . . .[2] reply which I have sent yesterday. It must be said that Narayan has been very careless. Let the necessary steps be taken so

[1] Omissions as in the source

[2] Illegible in the source

that such a thing is not repeated from now on . . .[1] It seems Harjivan[2] is pacified. There was a letter from him. The Kashmir affair must be well settled.

You must be keeping good health. Try a good homeopath if you know one. I have not yet found out about the experiment of the homeopath Ojha.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

391. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL G. BANKER

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

Prabhudas's letter to you and Satis Babu's[3] have been given to me.

1. I shall raise not objection if Prabhudas has been given an assurance by you and if you find his scheme appropriate. Will the khadi produced by him have a sale?

2. I am in favour of accepting the resignation of Hemaprabha Devi[4] and Satis Babu. But I have nothing to go by except these letters. Hence my view can have no weight.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

392. LETTER TO THE CHILDREN OF BAL MANDIR

LITTLE BIRDIES OF BAL MANDIR,

I have got no letter from you during this journey. The fault is not yours. It is the fault of my nature of travelling. I am so far away that post can reach here only three times a week.

Be it so. Now more when we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 8656. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chowdhari

[1] *ibid*
[2] Harjivandas Kotak
[3] Satis Chandra Das Gupta
[4] Wife of Satis Chandra Das Gupta

393. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA [1]

CHI. SHARDA,

Anandi writes to me that you say you are never going to get well. It is not that at all. All you have to do is to learn to exercise restraint and have confidence in yourself. I have discovered after examining you at Wardha that there is nothing else wrong with you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 9964. Courtesy: Sharadabehn G. Chokhawala

394. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

Y. M.,
Silence Day

CHI. BABU,

You may be thinking that I have completely forgotten you!

You would be silly to think so. If all those to whom I do not write start thinking that I have forgotten them, will I not be in a miserable plight? Are you exercising restraint in eating? You should not get asthma. You must be understanding your responsibility now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 9882. Courtesy: Shardabehn Chokhawala

395. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

SHARDA,

I have your letter. Tell Shakaribehn that everybody would know what to write to me. I would accept any mad thing one may write to me.

[1] The letter is placed in the source among those of 1933.

How is it that you youngsters consider yourselves alone? Those who want to do service and find joy in doing it find enough company in their work. Of course, those who wish to indulge in small talk would feel lonely. But do we want to indulge in small talk?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 9883. Courtesy: Shardabehn Chokhawala

396. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

Saturday,
Y. M.,

CHI. SHARADA: BABU

You have been improving your handwriting quite well. Do observe discipline in eating. With whom are you staying at present? But now Chimanlal has come there. Tell him to give me news about his health as also his experiences in Orissa, and news about the two sisters, too.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 9884. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

397. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL AMRITLAL DAVE

DEAR SHANKERLAL,

I have received your letter. If I really became an emperor, I would not have the same thoughts I am having now because of intoxication of power. I perfectly agree with your view that this is quite possible. That is exactly why I like the work of a sweeper, spinner, weaver.

I think you have judged V. bhai in a hurry. I do not recall anybody else making such a complaint. On the contrary, I have heard even from his adversaries that Vallabhbhai's administration in the municipality is absolutely clean. Everybody has said that he has

served the municipality with extraordinary devotion.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

S. A. DAVE
HAJAM'S POLE
DARIYAPUR
AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 19929

398. LETTER TO DURGA DESAI

Monday

CHI. DURGA,

Received your letter. Since you continue to have the same feelings, your health will some day permit you to render greater services. Let there be nothing wanting in our observance of restraint and then, we will have fully performed our duty. Even after that, if we do not succeed, the blame should lie with God. When we do not ask from Him the reward of our good deeds, should He punish us for our unavoidable shortcomings? And if He does, let us bear the punishment and not blame Him for having made us what we are. This is the main road which can be followed by men of merit as well as hypocrites. The one falls back while the other goes forward.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

There is one reply that I forgot to give to Mahadev. Here too there has been sufficient expiation. But all that contains Durga's share should be passed on to her.

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11292. Courtesy: Not knwon

399. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Silence day

CHI. MAHADEV,

This is not right. There is no question of your finding the time. Does a carpenter have to find time for his son? The son works with him and becomes like him. It is true, of course, that you have to be an ideal father. This thought should help you to have sound sleep. This

means that what you do, say or think, the same he will do, say or think. And Durga? She also should live in the same way.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11598

400. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

You had written to me about Anand as well as your father's ticket. I had not understood the significance. In the meantime there is this letter from Mathuradas which I can somewhat understand. I am pained even more than he would have been. I for one have not been able to understand it. I do not like *pujas* at all. What then to talk about *arati?* I do not even know that the Maharashtrian ladies had done the *arati*. I only thought they were blessing me as a sister would bless her brother on his birthday. But if the ladies had gathered for doing the *arati*, it was sinful on their part. I did not accept the *arati* with that view. But even the coconut irks me. Anyone prostrating before me also irritates me. I do not wish any obeisance done to me. This is the truth of my soul. But being close to me, perhaps you asked them to do so? Do I have to explain all this to you? If you have not understood that, I have to accept that it is my innermost desire to get such adulation. In that case, how can anyone be blamed if I find myself in the same situation as Caesar who desired the crown and did not get it? I am writing all this because you did not meet me yesterday. I received the letter only yesterday. Mathuradas has not received the letter. And Durga has said that you are going today and therefore I wish that you do not forget discussing the matter with him. Now both of you should talk it over. Ask Avantikabehn about what the Maharashtrian ladies had done. After that inform me about whatever tangible or subtle thing you might have observed, so that I would go deeper in examining myself.

I have still to discuss one thing with him. M. believes that you should stay only with me. I have partially understood it. This should also be fully understood that I do not have to write about it to you again. I have not fully understood his purpose. Anandanand has also stressed it. He says that he has written to you at great length. He is very hurt. I wish he is convinced. I did not know that he desired your presence for the *Navajivan* to that extent. That is how I had understood you. But if it is possible to interpret your letter in the manner of Mathuradas, then you two should first discuss the matter

and analyse me and then express your view. This is the purpose of my writing to you now.

This again is the third point. I do believe that then I too would have the qualities of absolute truth, non-violence, *brahmacharya,* etc. But surely I can take such an objective view at present? I had no idea that the matter was already discussed between you and Mathuradas. Why did you wirte that it was not a matter of question or complaint but that you two should discuss it together?

From a copy of the Gujarati: S. N. 11749

401. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

CHI. VALJI,

Received your letter.

It is our duty to cure the crippled. But I do not think that forcibly castrating him is our duty. There are many ways to prevent the crippled from turning lunatic. But these involve hard work. With a stroke of legislation, castrating the ones that are considered crippled or making them impotent is neither a brave act nor a good effort. It is sheer despotism.

The statistics you send me do not impress me. We may be few but it is desirable that we are good. Many factors like diversities of food, customs, etc., lower our birth-rate. I am not sorry about that. My question is whether what is born is a human being or a beast. It would be wonderful if instead of male and female, we are born as man and woman.

Are you tempting Chitre to come over there? I am thoroughly convinced that his good lies only in remaining here. He has decided to stay [here] many times and then again wavered. Now he has taken a vow [to stay] for six months. Madan Mohan's letter is enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 11171. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

402. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

Ashwin Sud 9

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I re-read the extract you sent from Anandshankarbhai's letter. Based on that, I have prepared the enclosed draft. If you like it, print it after making the necessary insertions and also give its translation in the *Navajivan.* If you do not like it, send me the draft of your choce. If there are any factual errors in my draft, correct them and make other necessary changes. Your quotation with the heading 'Which Is The Nobler Point' is indeed beautiful. But do you think no one is aware of it? Quotations from books are appropriate when they are either incorporated in one's own writing or when they are very good and yet unfamiliar. I think some of the stories of Buddhadev[1] are very well known. Even then I have kept them in reserve till today. But when my doubt persisted, I wanted to know your intention in sending such stories.

You must be looking after your health. You must have gathered a lot of information about leather workshop and dairies.

Is it necessary to be so stingy about paper as you are trying to be? Even if you want to use such paper, why should there not be aesthetic sense and uniformity? Is there any virtue in rags or in joining the rags together and showing that as artistic effort?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 11173. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

403. LETTER TO VALJI G. DEASI

Silence Day

BHAI SHRI VALJI,

Herewith the preface you had asked for.

It seems to me the proper thing to hand over the money collected for the students to the Go-raksha fund with the consent of the donors. If there is no need to consult the donors or anyone else,

[1] Buddhadev Bose

your way is clear.

The answers to your questions have been sent to the *Navajivan.*

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 11174. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

404. LETTER TO DWARKANATH

DEAR DWARKANATH,

I have your beautiful letter. Keep writing about starching the yarn and the new spinning-wheels. I cannot do anything about Ba from here. Ba's reply was absolutely correct. None of us is small or big. We are all volunteers. But who could convince Mithubehn there or tell her anything? It is right that Ba should stay wherever she can be of greatest service. But it is Mithubehn who is holding the strings. Make your application to her. Blessings to Digambar.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: G. N. 86

405. LETTER TO AHMEDALI ESSOPALI

[BHAISHRI] AHMEDALI ESSOPALI,

I have your letter and the 100 franc note. The letter has been changed and the amount deposited with the *Navajivan* office. Many temples have separate courts for men and women desiring *darshan.* It is not my view that these ought to be separate. A time will surely come when men and women will be able to pray with a clear conscience and without being disturbed by evil thoughts. This is to be found in the western countries, where it is not known to have had any bad effects.

I find some of the pictures of Lord Krishna and the *gopis* very improper. Religious education alone can put a stop to this tendency.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S. N. 19920

406. LETTER TO HARILAL GANDHI

CHI. HARILAL,

Received your letter. If you are really repenting, if you have seen your bad habits, God will certainly help you. If you find peace, the help rendered by generous people like Mukundlalji would have served its purpose. Be firm and get rid of the filth of many years. Be calm. Do not run to the newspapers.

Keep writing to me. Your task is difficult, no doubt. However, nothings is difficult for God. Everything would be well if you seek His protection.

From a copy of Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarellal

407. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

Why do you keep falling ill? The remedy for malaria is quinine and purgatives. You can have only milk for your diet. How is Umia?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: M.M.U. III. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

408. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

Jeth Sud 12

CHI. JAMNDAS,

You have done well to reply Dorabji[1], "I shall reply when you talk like a gentleman". It was also proper that you did not greet him by saying "Sahebji", though I have my doubts about it. Nevertheless, the sentiment behind your not greeting him was justified. It is best to withdraw when such things are being discussed. I have known from experience that when it is not possible to withdraw, it is best to keep quiet. You should have kept quiet when you heard the comment in the train. When two persons not known to us indulge in such talk between them, why should we interfere?

[1] Parsee Dorabji

We should feel kindly towards such people and pity them, knowing that they are talking out of ignorance. Even if we cannot feel genuine pity, we should certainly have no comtempt for them. From what these people talk we should learn the lesson that we must think before finding fault with people, and remain neutral when someone not known to us is being criticized. Dorabji talked nonsense under the influence of liquor. As for the other two Muslims, why should they not have spoken out when they believed in it at heart?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Sabarmati Museum. Ahmedabad

409. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

CHI. MANILAL,

I had your letter. There was nothing worth replying to, so I saved time [by not writing]. What can I say if the family wants to travel and even if the children have to put up with the heat?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1438. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi; also G.N. 5023

410. LETTER TO MANU H. GANDHI[1]

Silence Day

CHI. MANUDI,

Do you ever forget eating as you do writing to me? Do you write regularly to Ba? I hope you know that because of Ba's constant nursing, you had got up from your death-bed. So never forget Ba. What exercise do you do? What do you read? How much arithmetic do you know? How much do you spin daily? Do you card [cotton] with hand?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1504. Courtesy: Manu S. Mashruwala

[1] From the contents, it appears that this and the following letter were written in 1993; *vide* "Letter to Manu Gandhi", 23-1-1933 and "Letter to Manu Gandhi', 4-5-1933.

411. LETTER TO MANU H. GANDHI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Wednesday

CHI. MANU,

I have your letter. Improve your handwriting still further. Your letter pleases Ba more than me. Take care of your health. Pay attention to your studies. Do not make noise during prayers and in the kitchen.

Ba is all right now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1501 Courtesy: Manu S. Mashruwala

412. LETTER TO MANU H. GANDHI

CHI. MANUDI,

It is certainly ordained that you sisters shall suffer. I would only say: May God grant you the strength to bear your lot.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9734. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

413. LETTER TO GAURISHANKAR

BHAI GAURISHANKARJI,

I liked your book very much. I heartily congratulate you.

I honour your work of service. May it continue.

M. K. GADNHI

From a facsimile in *Ajkal,* April, 1982, p. 26

414. LETTER TO DHIRU JOSHI

SIMLA,

CHI. DHIRU,

Why don't you write to me? What is your weight at present? Do you regularly join the prayers? Do you like doing so?

Blessings from
BAPU
[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro— Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 304

415. LETTER TO VIMALA JOSHI

Tuesday

CHI. VIMU,

Your letter can be considered good for you. I thought you had completely forgotten me. Now keep writing. Grow strong quickly. You should go to the Ashram if you feel inclined. Write to me if you want.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: G.N. 5308; also *Bapuna Patro—Chhaganlal Joshine,* p. 301

416. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

CHI. KAKA,

Herewith a beautiful letter from Bal[1].

You should be given a certificate as an expert in making dentures.

Shriman[2] has written and asked for exemption from having to come on the 2nd. I have replied that he need not come. We shall do without him. Why send for him in this weather?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10955

[1] Addressee's son
[2] Shriman Narayan Agarwal, son-in-law of Jamnalal Bajaj

417. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

CHI. KAKA,

1.How much fuel is consumed in the oven? Has it gone up or down after the use of the cooker? Do they do all the cooking at one time or does the kitchen fire burn in the afternoon also? Examine all this minutely. You have to finish the job while you are at the place. This can be arranged in a day or two.

2.How long are Gangabehn and Gomati going to stay? What is their purpose? What does Gangabehn want? What services can be taken from them? I could not ascertain all this as I had been observing my silence. Try to know about it and guide them.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7701

418. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

[CHI.] KAKA,

Although the pressure of time is perhaps equally the same to us, I want to pass over from me to you. My opinion is that the matter of Talimi Sangh should be printed in *Harijanbandhu*. I am neutral regarding the changing [of the script] to *Nagari*. But to me it is not that that should not be done. Therefore, Mahadev only remains. Both of you discuss it. Since you are there, go there today itself for half an hour, have it discussed. If you have any hesitation write to me so that I shall have the talk.

5th July will do. Send a wire. Cannot we get a rosary of 108 beads in Wardha? I want four. Please inquire.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7967

419. LETTER TO MR. KHAMBATTA

SABARMATI

DEAR MR. KHAMBATTA,

I thank you for the Rs. 1,000 note and the sentiments expressed in your letter. I am not sure that I am justified in accepting your

contribution which is evidently not out of an overflowing purse. But I shall hope that you have not put yourself out for sending the donation.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 7564; also C.W. 5039

420. LETTER TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

BHAI BADSHAH KHAN,

I want a trustee for the Charakha Sangh who is a true Khudai Khidmatgar and also a Muslim. Who else can I find but you? Shall I make you a trustee?

BADSHAH KHAN

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

421. LETTER TO NARAYAN MORESHWAR KHARE

CHI. PANDITJI,

I received you letter yesterday. Of course, you have my blessings for your new enterprise. We are bound to achieve success to the extent we make efforts. May your pupils imbibe music in their lives and learn that music is meant for service.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers: Coutesy: Pyarelal

422. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

CHI. K.C.,

It is our duty to do as Shakaribehn says. If after Sharadabehn comes Shakaribehn wants to cook separately, we must beat the expense. If Shakaribehn wants some fruit, we must lovingly satisfy her. Shakaribehn has suffered much. Whether Shardabehn pays anything or not is a separate question. We cannot insist on it. Her parents are here. I am her grandfather. She reposes more trust in me.

She should always be welcome. I want you to invite her too. I have already written.

Blessing from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4541

423. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

BHAI KRISHNACHANDRA,

Among all his activities. Tyagiji showed special preference for *brahamacharya* and Harijans. How nice it would be if in this [rainy][1] season all the students and others of the Gurukul could be more firm on these two issues.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers: Coutesy: Pyarelal

424. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your recitation of the *Gita* is defective. You ought to read it absolutely correctly and sweetly. Strive to do so. You may seek guidance from anyone among us who knows the right style. This should be done quickly. I have spoken to Munnalal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of Hindi: G.N. 4543

425. LETTER TO MADALASA

CHI. MADALASA,

Don't get scared. One should not place oneself under the treatment of any Tom, Dick or Harry. Do only what the doctor advises.

No solid food must be given. If you do nothing but give fruit

[1] The word here in the original appears to be of ambiguous meaning.

juice and glucose, give enemas, use mud-packs and ensure pefect quiet, the patient is bound to get well. I hope to come tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirwad, p. 318

426. LETTER TO MAGANLAL

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Do not fall prey to the mistaken notion that what belongs to others is good and what belongs to us is bad. Much that belongs to others is good. But there is more that is less than good. You will gradually realize that our good is better than what is bad.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

427. LETTER TO CHHOTALAL MANSINGHA

Sunday

BHAI CHHOTALAL MANSINGHA,

I have your letter. The decision will depend upon whether the sale of *Young India* is likely to increase if the price is reduced as suggested by you. I have inquired.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5684

428. LETTER TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

Tuesday, [Before *Apirl 10, 1930*][1]

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Received your letter. I shall of course note down you birthday. There is no need to come right now. I shall write to you when it is necessary. I am, no doubt, very eager to read your book. Now I shall be able to read it only in jail. How can I write a preface to such a book

without reading? Let me see. There is, of course, Kaka. Improve your health. Nath is here, bu I have not been able even to look at his face.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 10717. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

429. LETTER TO JIVRAJ METHA

Wednesday, Pausa Sud

DEAR JIVRAJ,

Both of us seem to be in good health so far. The pain in my ribs has neither increased nor decreased. The weather has been very inclement. There should be some improvement tomorrow. My diet consists of fresh chapatis and fruits. I have not felt the need to have anything else. I would not forget your affection. You must have passed the examination. Keep writing to me.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: Jivraj Mehta Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

430. LETTER TO KUNVARJI V. MEHTA

BHAI KUNVARJI,

I have your letter. Sitting here and not knowing your ailment, I cannot suggest a remedy. There is a general remedy of course. We should become absorbed in some activity beyond our capacity. Weakness of the brain can be cured by this means. One who is thus conscious of his duty will not neglect his work. Doing his work he will gain in virtues such as truthfulness, firmness, fearlessness and so on.

My health is all right. There is still some weakness, but it will go.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of of the Gujarati: G.N. 2666

431. LETTER TO VIRJI MEHTA

Shravan Sud 12

DEAR VIRJI,

Chi. Jeki refuses to come. I am giving her the permission. But if you and Chi. Jayashankar wish to understand her condition, it is your duty to come here and spend a couple of days. Business should not come in the way of true love. You should go to Durban at night if it is necessary to spend the night there. If you cannot go before Saturday, you should go on Saturday and return on Monday. I would like both of you to discuss the matter with Jeki. It is also your duty to do so.

I am not afraid of what people talk there. Since they have been provided a talking point, there would naturally be some talk. So far, I do not see anything wrong in the step I have taken. You can write to me freely whatever needs to be written. I shall not take it as discourtesy, but I shall be greateful to you both. I can understand your sentiment.

Yours sincerely,
MOHANDAS

From the copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 1633. Courtesy: Gunavant Umiyashankar Mehta

432. LETTER TO VIRJI MEHTA

Monday

DEAR VIRJI,

I had told you that I shall send you Jeki's letters to read. As I have decided not to send the letters to Doctor, I am sending the original letters. Return them to me after you have both read them. The wound you two have inflicted on me cannot be easily healed. I have still a lot to tell you, but you have decided not to listen. In spite of that, I must be grateful to both of you. You both have taught me very fast the meaning of wordly wisdom. For the present at least my conscience tells me that as a result of what I have learnt from you, I shall always have a feeling of detachment towards worldly wisdom.

I have told you bitter things because you have called me your elder. I shall do so again when you give me an opportunity.

Yours sincerely,
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1636. Courtesy: Gunavant Umiyashnaker Mehta

433. LETTER TO KHOOSHAL SOOKHA MISTRY

BROTHER KHOOSHAL SOOKHA MISTRY,

Received your letter. I am doing my bit. There is another letter that Lallu Jogi is not in a position to pay instalments. I have wirtten again.

M. K. GANDHI

MR. KHOOSHAL SOOKHA
182 QUEENS STREET
DURBAN

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 10210

434. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL AND TARA MODI

BHAISHRI RAMNIKLAL,

Now that you have recovered, do not fall ill again. You may go to Girnar, but tell Tarabehn that we must find our Girnar and our Ganga in the Ashram, and ultimately in our own hearts. I have seen many disgusting things happening in the caves of the Girnar. I have seen totally immoral people living there. I have seen the priest at Ambaji, who should be kept an at arm's length. If there is no peace in the mind, where can we find it? I have not written this to stop you from undertaking the journey to the Girnar but to tell you that even after going there peace has to be sought only in one place. There is no doubt that people find peace on visiting such places. But for you, such sacred places can only be instrumental. Peace can be found only within.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I hope to be there before the 1st of January.

From a copy of Gujarati: G.N. 4194

435. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL AND TARA MODI

Silence day

CHI. RAMNIKLAL AND TARA,

It seems both of you are yet to to recover properly. You must decide on the diet yourselves by observation. It would be nice if both

of you followed the example of Shivaji, who had built his physical strength with the help of books. I think ultimately everyone must recognize his own body. Even a person like me can only talk about his own experiences. But it appears that each person's body has certain peculiarities. Hence only the person himself can carry out the necessary changes. You must also give thought to three things: hipbath, sun-bath and light exercise. You must save the necessary time to recoup your health. Tara should not be impatient. If she can work only for four hours, she should consider it against dharma to give the fifth hour.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: G.N. 4193

436. LETTER TO MUNNALAL

LUCKNOW,
Silence day

BHAI MUNNALAL,

I have your letters with me. I do not have a moment to spare. The letters are difficult to answer. It is better that you adopt a course which your inner self prompts you to follow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8368

437. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,
WARDHA

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have not received the letter which you would not decipher. You have forgotten. I shall rewrite if you send it. I have never considered you an insensitive being. I do not know how you got that idea. Looking at your unhappiness I would wish you would become insensitive and forget me. Absorb yourself in the work there and when God pushes you here, come without any condition. Ask forgiveness of those whom you have hurt without reason. Then you would feel

ecstatic here and would not find it hard to live here. Come when your mind is in such a state that you cannot afford not to live here. I shall be happy if that day comes soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

438. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

STUPID DAUGHTER,

You are no longer stupid, because you have abandoned your stupidity. I like to hear you say that in the end, it is I who will understand. If that happens I shall dance with joy. But if I had time, I would answer every assertion in your letter. Not today. Some other time. I say that in the end you will admit your foolishness. You see everything where I see nothing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

439. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

CHI. SUSHILA,

What madness? How would you atone for a guilty act of yours? Why did you write in English to Mahadev? Did you not promise me? Do you remember? How many slaps do you want?

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

440. LETTER TO NYAYAVIJAYJI

Kartik Sud 14

MUNISHRI NYAYAVIJAYAJI,

If you are coming, arrangements can be made to provide you a seat. I cannot say where it will be. I am sending your card to the

Executive Committee. Shri Punjabhai[1] will look after the comforts of the *Munis*.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: G.N. 103

441. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

[*1927*]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have received your letter. You should certainly not spoil your health. You must do only as much work as you can do without straining yourself. Keep sending your diary. I get a lot even from that.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 9360

442. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT[2]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I am not getting your letters regularly. I must have them. I want your diary. How is your health?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 9359

443. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

CHI. VASUMATI,

You must be keeping good health. Has that stupid one fallen in line? Are the studies proceding? What is Shanta doing?

I shall not write more for the present.

Blessings from
BAPU

[1] Punjabhai Hirachand Shah

[2] This and the preceding letters appear to be of 1927, in which year the addressee had begun the practice of maintaining a diary; *vide* "Letter to Vasumati Pandit", 20-5-1927, "Letter to Vasumati Pandit", 28-5-1927 and "Letter to Vasumati Pandit", 9-6-1927.

[PS.]

Ba has returned from Rajkot.

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 9311

444. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Sunday morning

CHI. VASUMATI,

I learnt about your release. About [your] meeting [me] I learnt from your letter to Gangabehn. If I write more, I would miss the posting time or the sleep which is weighing my eyes down.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 9380

445. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Silence Day

CHI. VASUMATI,

I would expect to hear the description of how you are carrying out your new responsibility. Let me know the whereabouts of everyone. Are there noises at night? Even a moment's peace should not be allowed to be disturbed. Then I would not worry about how much and which responsiblity you are shouldering. Do not think about what Bapu would like.Think about 'what I can do'.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S. N. 9381

446. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Silence Day

CHI. VASUMATI,

Received your letter and also the one from Kishorelal. You need not have asked for pardon. Such mistakes are signs of our delusion. If you know this much that is enough. No one has escaped from delusion. We can only strive to get out of it.

I have understood the changes you are making. Do everything thoughtfully. Then that should be all right. Don't let your improved health suffer a set-back. Remember what I have said. You should not render any service while suffering mental agony. You should not be afraid of hurting me. That should not worry you. I am not easily hurt and if hurt, I suffer only for moment. Even that should not happen.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9363

447. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Silence Day

CHI. VASUMATI,

Whatever changes have been made are appropriate. I am more confident because Gangabehn has started staying with you. The fact that Premabehn has mixed with everyone is a good thing according to me.

The situation about the prayers would continue to remain the same so long as it does not acquire life.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 9315

448. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Tuesday

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have received your letter. God will take care of Ramdas.

You may come whenever you feel like. We shall look after Shanta here. It is good that Kusum would also accompany her.

Do you write to Devdas?

My health is fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 9379

449. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Tuesday

CHI. VASUMATI,

Whether I write or not, you have to write regular letters to me. How did you get fever? It is time you became absolutely healthy now. Exert your body also only to the extent it can take the strain.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 9349

450. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have received both your letters. I shall not use them for a public purpose. Can all letters be so used? I could not contain whatever I came to know. Right now everything is messed up. But everything will turn out well if all women are truthful. I am keeping fairly good health. Where has Manibehn gone? I am satisfied that your health is good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 9357

451. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Silence Day

CHI. VASUMATI,

How are things? Are you two sisters together or have you made some other arrangement? You can write to me. Look after your health. Do not be perplexed. Do not worry. Tell Kamalabehn that she should also write.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 9361

452. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Silence Day

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have received your Hindi letter too. We have won the world if you keep good health. Don't strain yourself by going to the kitchen. It will be all right if you go there at your own convenience. Your Hindi seems to have improved. I did not understand the first sentence. I had asked you to write, or were you reminded of your promise to write? Have you written this letter to keep that promise? Your words are capable of both these interpretations.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 9364

453. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

CHI. VASUMATI,

Received your latter. It is all right. Stay there only for the present and improve your health. You are already having good company. Hence, the only complaint can be about the absence of my letter, is it not? I shall not leave any cause for that complaint. Moreover, the climate would soon be cold there.

Let us see what happens when I go to Ahmedabad in July. Come there if you cannot help.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujartati: S. N. 9366

454. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

CHI. VASUMATI,

I hope you are not expecting letters from me even when Kishorelal and Prabhavati write to you? If you do expect, how can I cope with it? You went there to fall ill, is it? Now get well quickly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S. N. 9368

455. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Silence Day

CHI. VASUMATI,

Lately there has been no letter from you at all. Even my last letter has not been replied to. You must have recovered your health. Now we shall meet soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S. N. 9353

456. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Sunday

CHI. VASUMATI,

I had expected your telegram saying you had reached. You must have reached there safely. I would be a little anxious till you settle there. You must definitely drop me a post card every day. What do you eat? How are you keeping? What are your activities? How is your health? You must give me all this news. Do not hesitate to ask anything whatever.

Things are going on the same way here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 9374

457. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Silence Day

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have received your letter. It is not possible to write more today. If you are at peace, there is no harm in staying there only. The key to health lies in being at peace.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 9376

458. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have received your letter. I am writing this before the posting time only to tell you that I remember you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 9314

459. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Shivratri

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have received your letter. You have done well to start (playing) the *sitar*. If your health becomes all right, everything can be afforded. I like your resolve to adhere to whatever you have taken up. In my opinion, a person who cannot sing, i.e. who cannot recognize the tune, cannot play in instrument. God alone knows how far this is right. Or Panditji[1] knows.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 9378

460. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Silence Day

CHI. VASUMATI,

I could not find time even to talk a little this time. Could there be anything to talk? I saw that you have not yet gone to the new room. After realizing that I have permitted you unhesitatingly, you may continue to stay where you are. You must make full use of the *Jodani Kosh*[2] while writing Gujarati.

I hope now there are no noises at night.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 9373

[1] Narayan Moreshwar Khare
[2] Gujarati dictionary published in 1929

461. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI PANDYA

Y[ERAVDA] P[RISON]

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

You have asked me why the work of the removal of untouchability is proceeding at a slow pace. The reason is clear. What is not found elsewhere is found here. Understanding and explaining the point that irreligion has taken the place of religion is bound to take time. Moreover, it requires immense powers of penance to show that what is known as religion is irreligion. Those who would show it unmistakably should be the embodiments of religion themselves. None of us is that. We are possessed with attachments and jealousies. We are given to physicial passions. We do not love evil men, we have no courage, no restraint. Hence, who would take us seriously? This requires less of intellectual power. What is needed is spiritual strength. If you consider other constructive works, you will clearly see the distinction I have made.

Have patience and inculcate the qualities indicated above.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9783. Courtesy: Bhagwanji Pandya

462. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI PANDYA

Y[ERAVDA] P[RISON]

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

Balwant Singh wants to go to Deoli tomorrow. Let him go. He will return on Wednesday. Harilal will take charge. Help him. Ask for the accounts tonight. Jaggery and sugar arrived yesterday; weigh these items and determine the price and pay the money to Jajuji and debit the amount to the kitchen account. Put the jaggery and sugar in earthen pots tomorrow and tie up the tops of the pots well.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9787. Courtesy: Bhagwanji Pandya

463. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

CHI. BHAU,

I feel that it is harmful to carry the restrictions about food very far and say that it is irreligious to take potatoes and religious to take wheat [preparations]. It is enough to decide what diet is appropriate to keep one's body clean and healthy. Its relation with physical *brahmacharya* has got to be understood.

If *roti* causes constipation, it should be given up for the present. You should take milk along with vegetables and fruits. It has been my experience that milk is digested easily if taken with vegetables. If even milk causes hardship in passing motion, then you should subsist on fruits and leafy vegetables. These would not cause any harm. If necessary, you can drop me a postcard every day.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 4498. Courtesy: Not known

464. LETTER TO DAHIBEHN R. PATEL

Silence Day

CHI. DAHIBEHN,

Enhance the prestige of presidentship. With your open-hearted nature you will certainly glorify it. You should cease to worry about anything and should take fresh air as much as you can. Then you will not have epilepsy, etc. Do not worry even about the responsibility you have undertaken. If you have accepted that burden is the name of Rama, then Rama will carry that burden. There is no rule that a semi-literate cannot become the president. The one who is liberal, who has equal love for all, who is temperate, is in every way fit to be the president.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9208

465. LETTER TO LALITA PATEL

CHI. LALITA,

I would certainly write letters to the girls who write to me. It was good to receive your letter. Continue to write like that. Many boys were caught telling lies. Have you also been caught along with them? Write to me if you are given to telling lies. There is nothing to hide in that.

Tell Kamala that I had expected much from her. But right now I see very little of it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: G.N. 9219

466. LETTER TO MANGALABEHN PATEL

Silence Day, BORSAD

CHI. MANGALA,

I have your letter. The news is correct. You are not scared on hearing about Kamubehn, are you? We have learnt not to be scared of death and to treat birth and death alike. He who is born, dies, and he who dies is born. Where then is the reason to feel sad?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 11104. Courtesy: Pushpa Naik

467. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI N. PATEL

IN MOVING TRAIN

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

I have received all your letters. I shall reply when I am free. I am helpless till I find some time.

Certainly there should be picketing of the main godown at Anand. *Tongawallas* and others cannot be boycotted right now. They can be persuaded. Immediate boycott would mean violence. A minute

dose of *somal* given with love can be life-saving. But a gram of *somal* given with envy can take life.

From the photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9012

468. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI N. PATEL

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

I have received your letter. Now it is midnight and hence I shall not be able to give you detailed replies. I am thinking about sending Maganbhai. I shall try to send you a reply tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

RAOJIBHAI
SATYAGRAHA CAMP
NADIAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: G.N. 9013

469. LETTER TO SHANTA PATEL

Silence Day [*1932-1933*]

CHI. NAUGHTY SHANTA,

Is it called coercion or slavery if one abides by the rules of the institution in which one lives? Does freedom mean doing what one's whim dictates? Is there no joy in the Ashram? If it is not there, do you think you can settle the account by being self-willed for a day? But now in the context of Kamala's widowed state, you must have forgotten about taking leave. I have written to Shankarbhai that Kamala should come over here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: G.N. 4062

470. LETTER TO SHANTA S. PATEL

Monday Night, WARDHA

CHI. SHANTA,

Since you have written me two letters, I too must write. Now that you are studying and spinning, you will have to be called a good girl.

Be such a good girl always. Write letters to me. You must always write with good spacing and clearly.

Do not take chillies.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 9418

471. LETTER TO SHANTA S. PATEL

Tuesday

CHI. SHANTA,

Vasumatibehn writes that now you are taking some interest in your studies. Keep your mind on studies. Write to me in clean hand in ink. That also is a part of studies.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9419

472. LETTER TO SHANTA S. PATEL

Tuesday

CHI. SHANTA,

It will not do if you do not study. Can one ever feel lazy about studying? You must always study regularly even if it is little. Maybe chillies are causing constipation. You must take some fruit with milk and drink plenty of water.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 9420

473. LETTER TO SHANTA S. PATEL

CHI. SHANTA,

I could not talk to you at all. I wanted to talk lots of things. Now you write to me to your heart's content and open your mind.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4051

474. LETTER TO SHANTA S. PATEL[1]

To be sent to Shanta (Shankarbhai's) without reading

CHI. SHANTA,

Received your letter. There is no harm at all in going round with any man, particularly a married man, if you regard him as your brother. But in view of bitter experiences, and because such company is rare in our country, people condemn such a practice. Where one has the permission from parents, there is no need to bother about public criticism. But where a man or a woman becomes habituated to the company of the opposite sex, it is necessary to be cautious in spite of the initial innocent relationship. It is another matter if such a relationship is naturally built up. But it happens rarely. The common and wonderful rule is that a woman should seek a woman's company and a man should seek a man's company. Who can negate the distance that nature has created between man and woman? Be sure that it is futile to marry out of a desire for friendship and after doing that not to have sexual relations. It is quite possible that a man and a woman may avoid sexual relations after getting married with the desire to have such relations. We can see that happening in the Ashram. But where there is no desire at all for such indulgence, where is the need for marriage? Does not marriage mean a desire to be something more than brother and sister? That very thing is wrong. But if you want to have a sexual relationship, do not deceive your mind. There is nothing wrong in it. Tell me. Tell Shankarbhai. Try to exercise restraint during the quarrel. Write to me frankly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4063

475. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR

Silence Day

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

We always come across. . . [2] and in many forms. There is only one remedy for it. Our lives should become virtuous so that we

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Shanta S. Patel", 6-11-1932

[2] A word here is unintelligible.

become pure and influence others. It you wish to say anything more, tell me everything during the evening walk. I will reply in writing.

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi in Gujarati script: G. N. 9018

476. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR

BARDOLI

This is just to say that H[industani] music and *Ramayana* would be all right. I hope you and Govindrao are keeping good health. This letter may be taken to have been addressed to all to whom I have not written.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi in Gujarati script: G. N. 9019

477. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have received your letters. I have no time today to write anything more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N 3334

478. LETTER TO PYARELAL

CHI. PYARELAL,

I am writing this much in a very perturbed state of mind. I am in no position to argue. I have come to realize that I should not argue. It is enough that my instructions are carried out. In taking you to Simla, I may take less work from you, but there is plenty to be done on the way. And even at Simla, my physical needs are there. Now I shall do as you say.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

479. LETTER TO PYARELAL

Saturday

CHI. PYARELAL,

Are you planning to accompany me tomorrow or do you want to stay here?

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

480. LETTER TO PYARELAL

CHI. PYARELAL,

Manu has read out this letter. It is now 8.15 in the night. I am tired, hence this is all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

481. LETTER TO PYARELAL

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have written to you after great thought. Keep my last postcard with you. We shall consider further in Delhi. So, keep yourself ready. About the mail, you can consult Sushila and then decide. It seems to me we shall have to come here from Delhi. The rest is up to God.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

482. LETTER TO PYARELAL

Tuesday, 1.30 a.m.

CHI. PYARELAL,

I am writing this is pencil. You must make do with it. I had intended to write sooner, but I have had to endure a lot of pain during the day. For Sushila I have taken mother's place. As a mother becomes distraught when the daughter is out of her sight, so is it with me. But only when I am thus moved will I be entitled to take some service from Sushila.

But Sushila is altogether disorganized. She may be a genius. But a genius moulds other in his own image. He is not moulded by others. I am trying to mould Sushila after myself. But at times I wonder if Sushila is not wholly unaffected. I would consider my efforts in vain if she were observing punctuality, which I am inculcating in her with so much care, only to please me. What I am hoping is that what Sushila is learning from me will remain with her even when she is away and that it will influence mother and the rest of the family too. Your way is of course different. But if Sushila became genuinely strong, maybe even you would start observing rules for her sake. I do not at all approve of your working till midnight. It is not as if I was letting you do it because I am in need of it. It is because I am afraid of you. What if Pyarelal should feel hurt and throw up everything? So I do not say anything. But I think you are going too far in making even Sushila keep late hours. I know that nobody else can give you the satisfaction she can give. You can take work from her at fixed hours during the day. I would even like it. She can give up the night massage and work for you at night till 9.30. I see many minutes and hours of her time being wasted. But how far can I control her? With that thought in mind I do not interfere.

The purpose of writing this is only to know what you wish about Sushila. I shall abide by your wish. If you approve of what I am doing and if she follows it with interest and knowledge, I shall need all help from you. It would be beyond me to tolerate her again going to bed at 12.15.

Let me also make another demand. After dinner, everybody should go to sleep. And you should not work at night. I shall be content with what you can give during the day.

Both you brother and sister should consider this carefully and inform me about your decision. Sushila should not feel that I am putting on her more than necessary pressure so that she loses her independence. There is certainly this much difference between mother and me. It is Sushila's duty to remain within the limits mother lays down. It is not her duty to offer anything to me. Whatever she offers, she should offer with her whole heart—nothing at all to please me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

483. LETTER TO AMBALAL SARABHAI

Wednesday

DRAR BROTHER,

I have received your gift. I cannot say to what extent I shall be able to make use of it. Do not worry at all that you could not come for my birthday. You good wishes are always with me.

We have constructed a *tandoor* here in which we make very good *rotis.* I am sending a sample. They are of two kinds: one with a little salt and the other without salt. I can send more if you want to see them with a view to their use in the household.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11129. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

484. LETTER TO AMBALAL SARABHAI

Wednesday, SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI

DEAR BROTHER,

I have received your letter. Since you have left no scope for me to refuse, please send the car. Ultimately, one man has won against two women, because poor Indu had also excused me.

I have written this with the left hand.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Your Gujarati is becoming sweet.

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11130. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

485. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Silence Day, WARDHA

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I got your telegram regarding Keshavlal. I had expected to hear from him today. But there has been no letter. So I take it everything is all right. See to it that he resumes going to work only after recovering fully.

Here the air is cool and good. How nice it would be if you were here!

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 32787

486. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Tuesday

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I am a little worried because you were to come the next day. And it is now four days. I hope you are not ill. If you are, do let me know. It is needless to write if you are all right. Of course, I know you will come as soon as you are free.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 32775

487. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Friday

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

If you have not been able to see Vallabhbhai so far and if you think it is proper, I would like you to go and see him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 32802

488. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Sunday

PUJYA ANASUYABEHN,

I have just heard that Narhar had fallen into a well but he has been rescued and is conscious and well. I have sent Mahadev over there. Do not get into a flutter, but go there. Thereafter come and see me.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 32808

489. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Thursday

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I have your letter. Most probably I will leave from here on Sunday evening and reach there on Monday morning at 6 o'clock. Please send the car.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 32767

490. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Sunday

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

Pratap Pandit should be returning to Bombay this evening by the Gujarat Mail. Please send the car for him at 7.30 p.m. Sir Prabhashanker Pattani is here these days. Come over in a day or two and meet him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 32771

491. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Monday

RESPECTED ANASUYABEHN,

You of course have my blessings if I can bless you. I do not know how I have been able to accept love. It is my great desire that

you have Mirabai's power and devotion. You can have both these provided you can maintain your health. . . . Bhai Shankar. . .[1].

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: G. N. 11579

492. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

SEGAON, WARDHA

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

If the water for the hip-bath is not cooler than the body temperature, then cool it by putting some ice. Use the special thermometer which is available for the purpose. It is cheap. It is fixed to a wooden frame. The body temperature is 99∞; so it is better to have a water temperature of 98∞. Being unaccustomed to it, you may get a shock. In that case put the ice after you are seated in the water. Sit as long as you like. You can continue for half an hour, while rubbing the abdomen with a light hand. Use the mud-packs only at night. What kind of tea do you drink? There is no harm in it if it is of light straw colour. Stronger than that may prove harmful. Tea leaves should not be put directly into the water. They should be kept in a strainer and boiling water should be poured over it. There is no harm in taking such tea. Lemon juice with honey in hot water will serve the purpose of tea.

The other diet seems all right. The less starch you consume the better. You can't take jam, etc. You may eat all varieties of gourds, brinjal, etc. Leafy vegetables such as *tandaljo* are best.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 32790

[1] Omissions indicate damage in the source

493. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Saturday

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I have your letter. It is possible that Vallabhbhai is at fault in his dealings with the workers. But you cannot say for that reason there is authoritarianism in Gujarat. I can, however, understand your anger arising from anguish. I hear praise for Vallabhbhai in news wherever I get it from. Sitting here I feel the same way about his work. Man is full of faults. Vallabhbhai may have made mistakes. We must try and understand them. And our dharma consists in drawing his attention if we can, to these mistakes so that he may rectify his faults. If he does not mend himself, we should not get angry but remian patient. So much for your general criticism.

Now about the workers. Did you or Shankerlal meet Vallabhbhai in person? If so, did you speak your mind freely to him? You should not fight shy of being snubbed. We should quarrel with Vallabhbhai if justice has to be got done. Friendship consists in that and so does training for public life. In public institutions, those whom we consider our opponents are sometimes really that, but often they are friends. We should regard both kinds as equals and seek justice from them. In the immediate present, I do not expect much from the the owners. Our views are so divergent that they cannot be easily reconciled. We should be content to take from them as much as we can or fight them. What I like best is that the workers should build their own chawls. But is that possible at present? However, I feel that even if a small number of workers come forward to do so, we should encourage it. If you are hesitant to write to Vallabhbhai about what you should get from him, let me know and I shall do so readily. So far I have not written to him. If you can manage that on your own, there will be no need for me to write. Both of you should reflect on this and let me know. I shall then do what I feel is proper.[1]

[I quote] the above so that you can act upon what you believe in from among the things you read. Ponder over it and cool down.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 32793

[1] Gandhiji follows this with a quotation from the *Bhagavad Gita*, Ch. XII, 18, 19.

494. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI [1]

SEGAON, WARDHA

CHI. MRIDU,

I received your letter after a long time. I had expected you to come for the Working Committee. When I asked Jawaharlal I learnt that you and Lakshmi Babu had not been invited this time.

You have given good information about the family. From one point of view, Veena can be said to have made a good choice. Your brothers and sisters would not do anything without the blessings of the elders. All of you can get their blessings easily. I have not seen other parents taking care of the freedom of their children. My blessings to Veena and Madan Mohan.

You may come any time you want.

I have understood about the Muslims. It is correct.

Your letter to the Trade Union is beautiful. I shall think more when that work comes to me. There is the Gujarati typewriter. Is there [Gujarati] shorthand too?

Have you written your letter with a reed or with a new pen? Your handwriting is thick and though appearing big, is confusing. It cannot be called clear. I found it difficult to read. I am sending back one page with my scribbling. Perhaps with that you will understand my point better. You have still many years before you. If you try right from now, you would write a handwriting which would be beautiful like pearls. Do not say to yourself that this is like the pot calling the kettle black. It is because my handwriting is bad that I at once notice the bad handwriting of others.

It is good news that mummy has got well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11267. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

495. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

Monday

CHI. MRIDULA,

Mahadev told me about the difficulty you have in obtaining slivers. If you want special slivers, I can send you. But it would of

[1] The contents point to the year 1936.

course be better for you to do the carding yourself. It is very easy to learn carding. You can learn the technique when you come here, or a teacher can be sent there. The time it takes to spin is ten times longer than the time it takes to card. It means that half an hour's carding would suffice for ten day's spinning. Anyone who does not know carding can never be said to know spinning. But in writing this I do not intend to add to your burden. You must do only as much as you can do and what you have time to do.

I hope all you brothers and sisters are serving your mother.

I get *roti* regularly.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11118. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

496. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

Jeth vad 8

CHI. MRIDULA,

You have never been absent from my thoughts. Your album is constantly with me. I have been late in writing not because I thought that you being a child, delay would not matter, but because I could not decide what I should write. Writing for you was as difficult as it was easy to write for *Navajivan.* I have now written it and today I have forgotten where and how it should be sent. I shall ask the elder sister when she comes. I shall follow her advice. Mother will have fully recovered.

Blessings to all of you from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11107

497. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
TUESDAY,

DEAR SISTER,

Mahadev is somewhere in the Ashram, but I do not know where. I have read your note. Please go to the station if you can. There is no

need to escort Dr. Ansari to the Ashram. It will be enough if you can arrange to have him brought here. Jamnalalji and Zakir Husain will be accompanying him.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11154. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

498. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

ANDHERI,
Monday

DEAR SISTER,

Radha has just informed me that you are feeling very weak and so would be going to Simla. I was very sorry to hear about your illness. I pray to God that you may regain your health quickly. I have never forgotten your priceless love. I have always thought of you and the children. I was looking forward to meet you here, but now I shall hope to see you only after you recover and come back. In the meantime, I shall remember your love and shall try to qualify myself for such true affection.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11156. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

499. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

Tuesday

DEAR SISTER,

The courier brought your letter as I was about to set out for a walk with our guest. It you can send the man tomorrow, that is, on Wednesday, I shall let you know my opinion after seeing the letter.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11157. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

500. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

Vasant Panchami, SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI

DEAR SISTER,

What shall I write to you? I cannot spurn the affection of both of you and at the same time, it embarrasses me to accept what you have sent for Ramdas as also the sweets. I am keeping both for the time being. May your love be directed not to me but to my work.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11155. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

501. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

Silence Day, Y. M.

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I am writing to you merely of the sake of writing. What need I write to you? Take care of your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10660

502. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

Y. M.

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Received your frank letter. The best medicine for you is that you. . . . [1] This universe is like a big machine. If its various components do not observe the rules, the machine will break down. One who does not observe the rules will certainly not become a part of the machine and therefore "he will perish like a scattered cloud"[2]. My advice to you is that you should live in the Vidyapith the way your inner self guides you. Find peace of mind anyhow.

[1] Two words are illegible here.
[2] The *Bhagavad Gita,* VI, 38.

There is truth in what you write about prayers. We are all seekers. No one is perfect. Therefore, there is no limit to our shortcomings. But our dharma is clear.

"God's whole creation, living and non-living, contains both good and evil. The wise accept the good and leave the evil (like the swan) which drinks the milk and leaves the water behind."

Keep writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of Gujarati: G. N. 8606

503. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

CHI. MUNNALAL,

This is something you must find today. When it is needed for a patient you must get it even at the cost of some inconvenience. Of course carrots and leafy vegetables are there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8377

504. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

Silence Day, SODEPUR,

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Your letter.

I like it that you are absorbed in work. I have, of course, replied to your earlier letter.

Keep your mind, body and speech pure while you are there. I am glad that you are there. It's good too that your mother-in-law has come.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8372

505. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

CHI. MUNNALAL,

What about the curd today? Three day's stale curd cannot be served. You should calmly have a talk with everyone. Do not write to the doctor. Tell me whatever you have to say. The doctor is himself disturbed and is old. He must be spared.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8515

506. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

Silence day

CHI. MUNNALAL,

It seems you talk too much. It will do you good if you take a vow of silence. Eat whatever you get without criticizing it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8380

507. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I would not like you to go leaving the work incomplete; that is not even proper. Now the work is such that tthere should be no room for dissatisfaction. It will be tantamount to forsaking your duty. Think over this and do what you feel is right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8370

508. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Your letter is good. Only gradually you will win over your

enemy—anger. What more can be expected of Prahlad? I may reach there on the 30th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8367

509. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

CHI. MUNNALAL,

For now I can only ask people, make enquiries. The straight answer to your question is that I must have my separate kitchen. The rule about the guests. . .[1] .

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8376

510. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have compared myself to an ass. It is said that however much you flog an ass, he will remain what he is. In some respect that is true of me also. It seems I shall never give up my assinine nature. I liked your letter. It reveals your anger no doubt but it also reveals your simplicity. I therefore gave it to the concerned persons to read. On realizing my mistake, I should have done what was necessary to set it right. Your letter has not been given a simple meaning. I had expected that everyone would ignore the exaggeration and read it with due corrections. I failed in that. Now I am giving you these letters. The wrong will be righted if you can laugh over it, learn a lesson from it and get everyone to laugh over it. If you do not have that capability, then forget about the letters. I will think over them and see how the train can be put back on the rails.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8322

[1] The letter is incomplete.

511. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

CHI. MUNNALAL,

You have given a good summary. It can be improved upon. But for the time being it will do for you. Do not be impetuous or impatient. Lethargy developed over the years cannot go in a moment. The lethargy primarily was from my side in overlooking so many things. I intend not doing so any more.

Rest when I receive your next [summary]. It is possible to solve Dhirendra's problem without bothering Jajuji.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8374

512. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Although the [blood] pressure has gone up, I must write to you. Your letter is very long but the thing is. . . [1] work and Kanchan. . .[2] I have already given to you. When I have not entrusted you with anything, you should observe silence and spin. Either you should completely forget Kanchan or set up a home with her. If you read the *Gita,* put it into practice. The soul alone is the refuge of the soul.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8237

513. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI H. SHAH

Kartik Vad 1

CHI. PUNJABHAI,

I have your letter. It does not matter if you give up hip-baths. It is sufficient if you continue with the mud-packs. Take buttermilk only

[1] Omissions as in the source
[2] *ibid*

in the quantity you like to have. Take sugarcane and oranges as much as you like.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: G. N. 4012

514. NOTE TO PUNJABHAI H. SHAH

Every time the enemy attacks, we must think of the nature of the attack and keeping in mind the bodily structure, drive back the enemy. Why is the soul related to the body? You must realize that it is not for the satisfaction of physical passions.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4019

515. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI H. SHAH

CHI. PUNJABHAI,

I have your letter. You will have regained your health. I was relieved to know that you would come over as soon as you recovered. You must listen carefully to what I say and then do as seems right to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: G. N. 4018

516. LETTER TO SHANKARBHAI

DEAR SHANKARBHAI,

I may not be able to convince you as regard temple entry, but how can you, on account of that activity, abandon me like others? Temple entry is not a new activity for me; still on occasions I have been able to get help from you. Shankerlal says that now he is not able to have any help from you for Harijan work. I hope that except for temple entry, you will certainly provide funds for other activities.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: S. N. 32754

517. LETTER TO JANGBAHADUR SINGH

WARDHA

BHAI JANGABAHADUR SINGH,

I have your letter. Do come over. Your will stay at Nalwadi Ashram, which is a mile away from Wardha, and learn carding, weaving, etc. More when you arrive.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1336

518. LETTER TO UMAR SOBHANI

Wednesday

DEAR UMAR SOBHANI,

I must inform you that Bhai Shankerlal has eaten nothing since yesterday. Why are you being obstinate? You would not humiliate yourself by confessing your mistake. Those who do not confess their mistakes fall--they are humiliated. You have made me a leader. Can a soldier cheat his captain? I really suspect that you have cheated me. Is it not your duty to dispel that suspicion? I am afraid Bhai Shankarlal would go hungry till your matter is clarified. Even if you consider me a brother, you should satisfy me. I wish you would come over.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: S. N. 32764

519. LETTER TO SURENDRA

Silence Day

CHI. SURENDRA,

I have received your letter. I have written about the tannery in my letter to Ramniklal. It irks me also that we could not talk. But there was no alternative. You have taken my worry about the tannery off my mind. Hence I was not impatient to talk.

I do not think you have to permanently remain at Ranchi. But I do think it necessary that a couple of responsible persons should learn that art.

Encourage the students who can take consolation from you. Do not avoid ladies altogether. Be guided by Nathji in the matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: G. N. 3133

520. LETTER TO SURENDRA

Monday

CHI. SURENDRA,

Once again there has been no letter from you. शनैः शनैः परमेद् बुद्ध्या धृति गृहीतया। 'Slowly' is a good word. One can achieve nothing in a hurry. We have to be patient and firm. Everything will be all right in the course of time. Bearing that in mind, observe the happenings and do as much as you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3132

521. NOTES FOR SURENDRANATH [1]

9. The instinctive qualities attributed to the soul are the *gunas* of the individual. He who possesses the quality of maximum calm is *sattvika* or righteous. He who possesses the quality of maximum disquiet is *rajasi* or passionate. And he who lacks in both these qualities and is also wanting in awareness or knowledge is *tamasi,* which signifies darkness and ignorance.

10. Every wise person must possess the same qualities. He may appear to be impractical, but in reality, he is not so.

11. Ba is still so stupid that she does not understand even common duty. It pained me. There was only pity behind it.

12. The body can certainly reach the state of absolute *brahmacharya* and absolute truth. There can be no freedom from unavoidable violence like breathing.

13. That a passionless, perfect man should commit a blunder is a contradiction in terms like a son being born to a barren woman. It is

[1] Reproduced as serialized in the source

possible that man would become free in spite of wearing foreign clothes. But let us not attain freedom by wearing foreign clothes. 14.

A one-sided statement that the Buddha did not attain emancipation only because he ate non-vegetarian food cannot be true.

15. A person who has controlled the senses ultimately becomes incapable of sensual pleasures. But that is the capacity of the strong.

16. With growing compassion, there is greater calm, because then one is experiencing pain. It is the calm resulting from a sense of duty. Hence, a saintly man experiences calm in the midst of disquiet.

17. Truth means existing at all times. That passionless state pertains to *Brahman.* Hence it is that Truth is *Brahman.*

18. Self-introspection means constant awareness about the existence of soul, etc.

19. Being omniscient means having complete knowledge of soul. Liberation means absolute detachment with regard to worldly existence. Equanimity means being unconcerned about pleasure and pain, non-possession, neutrality, being and non-being, a state of nothingness, liberation.

20. Kindness, compassion, grace, love, justice. All prevailing everywhere in totality.

Doer: One who does. A cobbler is not the doer of shoes.

Equanimous: fair-minded.

21. Some other time.

22. The meaning of the first part is not clear. I have not yet come across a perfect *brahmachari.* Perfect *brahamchari* means an absolutely passionless man or woman.

23. Being unselfish is discarding selfishness. If we eliminate the self, we become selfless. Being unhappy at the unhappiness of the world menas to continue to serve without any reward. Renouncing the world for the sake of the soul. Even while interpreting to simply mean that we should renounce the world for *moksha,* it means that the world should be renounced even for the sake of the protection of the body. The soul is very often said to mean both the body and the physical. Where its meaning as the body creates a wrong impression, it should be taken to mean the physical.

BAPUJI

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 8853. Courtesy: Not known

522. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

I want to prove to the Government and the tyrant that non-violence is a successful means; that through it, every proper thing, including independence, can be gained. This is the greatest task of my life and I should get complete freedom to act accordingly.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 151

523. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

CHI. KASHINATH,

I do not understand how I forgot about writing a letter to Kalavati. It is possible that since I had wanted to write, I must have taken it for granted that I had written it, and in fact it must have remained unwritten. I do not think the letter to Shanta still remains to be written. Still I am writing. I am also writing to Kalavati today. The one who has become aware of his soul does do *karma* but does not think that the burden lies on him. He should never feel that way. A person sold into slavery does everything, yet keeps no responsibility on his head. Once we realize this, we would feel ourselves light as flowers. Give consolation to Nathmalji on my behalf. I feel like describing the process of going to the place, where everyone has to go, by some name other than death. Convey my blessings to all inmates in jail.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5286

524. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Monday

CHI. GANGABEHN,

There was no letter from you this week. I hope your health is all right.

It will still be some time before I visit the Ashram. My spirit of course is there. We also have daily prayers and use the same hymns

that are used for morning and evening prayers there. In the morning the time also is the same. We spin here, too, just as you do there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 8829. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya. Also G. N. 11385

525. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Received your letter. It is good that you have recovered quickly. Your reassurance has dispelled my anxiety. There is no time for the present to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

Bapuna Patro— 6, Gangabehnne p. 18. Also G. N. 11266

526. LETTER TO GANGABEHN ZHAVERI

Saturday

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have received both your letters. I opened them myself and then tore them up. It does not matter that you have wasted two postage stamps. Write frankly whatever you want to write. As for me, I saw in your letter itself the picture you have given of yourself. Man can never hide himself with his own language. The more he conceals himself, the more he reveals. Artificiality eats up man. I did not have any charges to make against you. But I wrote to you because I did not feel you were simple-hearted and I did not get that impression from your letter either. The reasons for it are the same that you mention. Having known them, they have to be removed. It can be done with practice. We can say we have acquired knowledge only when we can derive joy from whatever situation we may be in. In my view, your present circumstances are favourable. Seeking more facilities will mean being self-willed.

I only wish to give you true happiness even if it means hurting you. I am interested in your true happiness.

Rather than be agitated, you should be cheerful, welcome my

letters as medicine. Everything will turn out well and your pain also will go.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3130

527. LETTER TO GANGABEHN ZHAVERI

Tuesday, Y. M.

CHI. GANGABEHN ZHAVERI,

What are you both doing there at present? Tell Mithubehn to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: G. N. 3127

528. A NOTE

There are opportunities for service everywhere. A kind word spoken at the right moment is good service. Even a kind thought that would translate itself into action is good service. It is idolatory to think that there is no service but what is rendered through the body.

From a copy: C. W. 11329. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

529. A NOTE

It is unreasonable to expect coincidence of views. Mutual respect and toleration is the only thing one may expect and for one's own part must cultivate.

From a copy. C. W. 11327. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

530. A NOTE

Every minute of my time I am fully conscious of the fact that if those who have consecrated their lives to khadi will not incessantly insist on purity of life, khadi is bound to stink in the nostrils of our countrymen.

From a photostat: S. N. 15851

531. A NOTE

As I said I should stay specially for the talk or talks if we could not finish in time. In any case I see that I can't leave before 7th if by then the constitution work is finished. Tomorrow we may talk to begin with between 1-2.

I have said up to 2 for the constitution committee but let us keep 1-30 to 2-30.

From a copy: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

532. A NOTE

You should simply do what duty demands and nothing more. If she is obstinate and dies, let her die and die disgraced. If she is right and the right is not vindicated in her lifetime, the death will be a fit atonement. I shall certainly bring all these things to her notice.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

533. A NOTE

I have written to Brijkishan[1]. Big book, *Nature Cure.* You have suggested all these changes, and now what is this? That is why I say that these are the changes.

I have read it in great detail. I only wanted to understand. I have understood. I have accepted whatever was worth accepting. Go through it and send it on.

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 7261

534. A NOTE

I should have one copy for myself, is it not? How long will its translation take? I have no doubt about the growing poverty. But the details given by you are not sufficient to prove it. In order to launch the struggle, it is not enough to have conviction ourselves. We must also have the capacity to accomplish it.

[1] Brijkrishna Chandiwala

If I had to start the struggle, I would have first gathered the equipment for it. But now let Vallabhbhai examine the situation. I would not dare to involve the people in the struggle depending on such scanty evidence. There should generally be enlightened public opinion behind satyagraha. Not everybody would be as foolish as you. A word is enough for the wise. For the foolish, cartloads of papers would not be sufficient.

From a photosat of the Gujarart: S. N. 11449

535. A NOTE

Zohra[1] is to be sent to Indore. She needs an escort up to Khandwa. You will find many persons travelling there. Take her to the station and entrust her to somebody. If you do not find anybody going to Khandwa, you will surely find someone going to Bhusawal. At Bhusawal, he can put her on the train going to Khandwa and entrust her to somebody going there. He should be someone reliable. If this is possible, take her today or tomorrow.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3241

536. A NOTE

Serving women for their uplift means:

(a) Drawing their attention to social evils like child marriage, marriage of old men with young girls, sale of daughters, meaningless community feasts, lewd dancing, bringing up of young girls in sin in the name of religion, marrying of young widows, the *purdah* system etc., and encouraging them to do away with them.

(b) Spreading true female education.

(c) Many women starve becuase they are unemployed and many are driven by hunger to sell their virtue. To prevent this, propagate spinning among them and spread the use of khadi produced thereby.

(d) Education of boys and girls is a special duty of women. We must draw their attention to it and prepare them for the task.

(e) Set up and run ashrams to carry out this and other similar tasks.

[1] Zohra Ansari

(f) Publish papers, bulletins or books.

(g) Try to regain for women their rights wherever they have been deprived of these rights by law or custom.

NOTE. So long as they have not earned self-respect it is forbidden to acquire these rights through government or legislative measures.

(h) Campaign among menfolk for the attainment of these objectives and encourage them to do their duty.

From the Gujarati original: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Sabarmati Ashram Museum, Ahmedabad

537. A NOTE

She is haughty beyond words. In spite of her bad spelling, only she would do the copies, not Munnalal. Now she does not even want to read what I have written.

Go through the corrections I have made. Part of the portion about Sind is re-written.

From the Gujarati origianl: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

538. A NOTE

Please speak to Shankerlal in any case. I think what Patel says is right. I do not see the need for making me secretary. Am I not already a member of the Committee? Even now nobody does anything without consulting me. I do not understand what the trouble is about.

The old Committee should of course be renominated, and till they are released, there should be new acting members. I have said that (they should be)

Shankerlal (working)
Rajendra Prasad
Ansari
or
Dr. Mahmud
Rajendra Prasad
Ansari

or
Patel
Dr. Mahmud
Ansari

I am not well. I do not think it is necessary to nominate me. It would be right not to nominate me.

From the Gujarati original: G. N. 11574 and 11575

539. A NOTE

I like all activities connected with village industries. But I have seen from experience that the primary objective of such exhibitions should be only to educate. And today it is necessary to draw attention particularly to these things which would show the rural people how to make and wear their own khadi and how and what to produce by way of food.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

540. NOTE TO PYARELAL

"You must shout to sell your wares" is a well-known song. Only once did hear it being sung by the Kabraji girls. There is another saying: "Even mother would not serve food unless you ask". The third one is "Some people are so shy that they would feel hot even under the shade of a tree". All these three apply to you. They applied to me also. I could not push myself anywhere. My mother used to get angry with me. In England, Oldfield considered me crone[1]. I do not push anybody anywhere. Devdas finds his own way. Mahadev is wanted by everybody because of his mixing nature. Sardar got him on the Working Committee and now he continues to be there.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] *Sic*

541. NOTE TO PYARELAL

Write to him in Urdu[1].

'Kasturba's name should not be used in that way. No money for that should be taken from any Hindu. If the book cannot be independently published, it should be postponed.'

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Shshila Nayyar

542. NOTE TO PYARELAL

She had a right. I did not get any point about Mataji yesterday. I can understand her keen desire to live with both of you. But I think it is improper for her to go to Mussoorie. If either you or Sushila or both of you have the slightest desire, do stay on. The Harijan work for this week is over. Hence, it is now for you to decide. Consult Mataji.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

543. NOTE TO PYARELAL

I would be happy even if you can draw her to you. She can stay here and be happily absorbed in her work. She can render some service if there is any need. she should not do it under force. Or, she can look after Sevagram or be near Mataji.

Bal's matter also needs to be considered. It would not at all be proper to leave him in the lurch.

I just cannot understand why he should be restless. I shall be happy if you could go [to him] every day. It would be nice if you take him with you even for a few days.

Think over your mental state. If your condition is different from what I have understood, let me know.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

[1] In reply to a letter from a Muslim organization about Islam and cow-protection.

544. NOTE TO PYARELAL

I do not even remember to have written in Hindi. I have no time to talk to anyone. Where then is the question about Lilavati? Here is Manu's letter. I want it back. You may keep a copy if you want. I confess I am like a child before you.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

545. NOTE TO PYARELAL

Do stay back. I shall somehow pick you up from [your] home on my return journey. I am going to Malaviyaji today and so I may be delayed. Only after the prayer I shall go to Malaviyaji, but where would I go after that?

So, she is on the way. That is good.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museun and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

546. NOTE TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

I do not like this at all. I can understand their going if they have the need. For you some other remedy should be found. I would not like the idea of the Mahilashram. You can give the necessary services at the Ashram. And you can maintain good health. If your mind is steady and you like the work, then it may be proper for you to stay on at the Ashram. Show this to Munnalal. It is your duty to do as he says. What I have said above should be taken as my personal opinion.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: C. W. 11321. Courtesy: Munnalal Shah

547. SILENCE-DAY NOTE

If you have been able to enter into the spirit of the morning and the evening prayers, I would suggest your continuing them. The hours may be changed if they are unsuitable. But both the prayers as an institution are according to my experience most elevating.

From a copy: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

548. A SILENCE DAY NOTE

If you think it at all proper show me the reply also. I take a very serious view of this thing. It does not matter whether Liaquat sent it or someone in his name.

From a copy: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

549. A SILENCE DAY NOTE

You have put me a difficult if not awkward question. I hold extreme views about British connection. In spite of my love of the British people, I think that their imperialism has been their greatest crime against humanity and specially against India which has been studiously humiliated and emasculated.

The wrong is all the greater because they have turned it into a virtue of which they are proud. The immediate thing therefore the British Government should do is to confess the wrong and undo it. Of the undoing, there is no sign as yet visible in the Indian sky. And yet I cannot help thinking that before Britain can claim to have moral supremacy she has to take the first step. Then all else will follow as day follows night. I will not make impertinent suggestions by way of practical steps. The conviction of the wrong will show the way.

From the original: C. W. 4226. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7862

550. A SILENCE DAY NOTE

If possible, try to write the diary in Hindi. The prayers should cause no difficulty if you will previously learn the meaning. The evening verses are beautifully translated in the *Song Celestial* which you can borrow from Mirabai. The morning prayer is translated in Hindi and can be had in pamphlet-form and by practice you can accustom yourself to the Sanskrit tone.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: G. N. 1290

551. A SILENCE DAY NOTE

If you feel like talking about this or any other thing, I am prepared and will gladly set apart the time. I simply do not worry you for I have nothing to ask. Your presence gives me and strength. What more do I want? I understand you and you, me.

From a photostat: G. N. 2105

552. A SILENCE DAY NOTE

You met Balwantrai abo[u]t Bhatnagar?

There are 5 lacs for A. I. V. I. A. work.

From a photostat: G. N. 10200

553. A SILENCE DAY NOTE

Tell Thakkar Bapa he shall have his tour at 12 noon tomorrow. Bring me a writing pad.

From a photostat: G. N. 10454

554. A SILENCE DAY NOTE

Then do start at two o'clock for your convenience. I would have encouraged you if you had consulted me. I was not at all sleeping. I heard all the *slokas* with attention. If I had been speaking I would have got a lot more done. But I did not wish to create trouble by asking for a lamp. It would not come out well before full preparation. How would I know that it was all ready?

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 7198

555. A SILENCE DAY NOTE

Have you thought about it? Quite a lot can be done for the hospital and that amounts to doing Kamala's work. I had asked Kamala today to meet the patients and look after them. You can very well understand the plight of the patients, having yourself gone through a long illness. You won't be able to do nursing and such

other activities but you can certainly do what a supervisor can do. It is not possible to allot you some states. But this will become your responsibility. If there is a quarrel among the members of the staff, you can settle it. If the patients have any complaints you can resolve them. Once you take a decision, other arrangements will be made easily.

This is the best course. The result can be very good, if you take up this work. I do not think you will be there even at 10.30 tomorrow. At least I shall be free. [Start] with the presumption that you are the managing trustee.

That you will do later on. Work begets work. Even if she is not willing, you alone will do whatever you can.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 11424

556. A SILENCE DAY NOTE

Pride rules her will. She is obstinate, irritable, wayward, incoherent in conversation, she imagines evil, is easily angered. She has become a mystery to me. She is unconscious of her amazing limitations. Her virtues I know and treasure. But this is no place for mentioning them. But for them she could not be here.

From a photostat: G. N. 636

557. SILENCE DAY NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

Your Urdu letter is good. I could read the whole of it. No more today.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 4199. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7835

558. SILENCE DAY NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

You are not everybody else. Will you like to be? If not, don't throw everybody else at once. Does your love require consideration and can't a poor man feel absolutely safe with someone? I thought that one was you. Are you not? Are your jokes always only jokes?

From the original: C. W. 4211. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7848

559. SILENCE DAY NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

One tooth against one or many teeth against one? Many men against one, tooth for tooth, I know. That is an idiom whose meaning I cannot vary. Tooth against tooth is grammatical and can be given its ordinary meaning.

From the original: C. W. 4212. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 9848

560. SILENCE DAY NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

Cannot stir before 7 o'clock. I have still to give wire at 7.00 p.m.

From the original: C. W. 4213. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7849

561. SILENCE DAY NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

On his own showing Shukla did say that there would be retaliatory treatment. Well, it you are satisfied I have nothing to say.

From the original: C. W. 4216. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7852

562. SILENCE DAY NOTE TO AMTUSSALAAM

There is no faith at all, let alone imperfect faith. I have daily demonstration of failure. I have to argue out every point and then too conviction is rare-obedience is non-existent. It is not obedience.

From a photostat: G. N. 640

563. SILENCE DAY NOTE TO CHARU BHUSHAN CHOUDHARY

The work you are doing is of the greatest importance. You have done more than enough for my comfort. You may neglect me. The workers do their best.[1]

From a photostat: G. N. 8724

[1] *Vide* also "A Challenge", 18-6-1942.

564. SILENCE DAY NOTE TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

Which Amrit Babu is this? Can I show this to the Sikh friends? I said as much to the audience today.

Don't worry about the road. It will be all right.

From a photostat: G. N. 8718

565. DRAFT TELEGRAM TO ALLAH BUX

SEVAGRAM

KHAN BAHADUR ALLAHBUX
PREMIER
KARACHI

IF YOU PERMIT ME I WOULD SEE PIR PAGARO AND TRY GET LETTER HIS FOLLOWERS.

AMTUSSALAM

From a photostat in Gandhiji's hand: G. N. 750

566. TELEGRAM TO KSHTISH CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

DELHI

KSHITISH
KHADI PRATISTHAN
SODEPUR ESS.

DELIGHTED COME HERE REPLY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 8729

567. TELEGRAM TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

JAISUKHLAL GANDHI
SHEPHERD
MAHUA

IF YOU AND MANU SINCERELY ANXIOUS FOR HER TO BE WITH ME AT ANY RISK YOU CAN BRING HER TO BE WITH ME.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

568. TELEGRAM TO ESSOP MOOSA

BHANGI COLONY,
READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI

ESSOP MOOSA
PRETORIA

REMEMBER WELL HAJEE SAHEB. MY CONDOLENCES FAMILY.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

569. TELEGRAM TO NEPALI RASHTRIYA CONGRESS

NEPALI RASHTRIYA CONGRESS
RAKSAUL

SORRY FOR TULSIMAHE. AM WIRING AUTHORITIES.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

570. TELEGRAM TO PRIME MINISTER OF NEPAL

PRIME MINISTER
KATHMANDU

LEARN TULSIMAHE LOYALIST FASTING IN PRISON FOR DEPRIVATION OF GITA CHARKHA AND GANDHIKHARAN. HOPE NEWS NOT TRUE. PLEASE WIRE REPLY.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

571. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH[1]

Saturday

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I was reading Carlyle yesturday. I copied the accompanying[2] for you. Is it not splendid? May you and I make it part of our lives!

With love,

Yours sincerely,
M.K. GANDHI

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

APPENDIX

EXTRACT FROM A WRITING OF THOMAS CARLYLE [3]

It is only with renunciation that life, properly speaking, can be said to begin. What is this that thou hast been fretting and fuming on account of? Say in a word: Is it not because thou art not happy? Because thee (who art a sweet gentleman) is not sufficiently honoured, nourished, soft-bedded and lovingly cared for? Foolish soul! What Act of Legislature was there thou shouldst be happy? A little while ago thou hadst no right to be at all. What if thou weren't born and predestined not to be happy, but to be unhappy? Art thou nothing other than a vulture that flying through the universe seeking after somewhat to eat and shrieking dolefully because carrion enough is not given thee? Man can do without anything and instead find blessedness. Was it not to preach forth the same Higher [Truth] that sages and martyrs have spoken and suffered, bearing testimony through life and through death of the God-like that is in man and how in the God-like only he has strength and freedom? Oh, thank thy destiny for afflictions. Thankfully bear what yet remain. Thou hadst need of them. The self in thee needed to be annihilated. By benignant fever paroxysms is life rooting out the deep-seated chronic disease and triumphs over death.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] This and the following items bear no dates in the source.

[2] The source has "accompanied". For the enclosure, vide Appendix "Extract from a Writing of Thomas Carlyle", after 17-5-1914.

[3] Vide "Letter to Hermann Kallenbach", after 3-12-1944.

572. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

I follow, follow sure to meet the sun
and confident that what the future yields,
will be the right unless myself be wrong.

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

Let the above comfort and cheer you. Here is your letter.

Yours sincerely,
UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

573. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

Thursday night

DEAR MR. KALLENBACH,

The Upper House was delighted to receive a note from the Lower House, but the Upper House strongly resents and protests against the insult implied in the titles used by the Lower House in addressing the Upper House. If the Lower House persists in such disrespectful and inappropriate language, all the liberty granted by the Constitution to the Lower House will be withdrawn and the Lower House will be called upon to return to Phoenix at once and before Tuesday in order to give a good account to the Lower House's doings. 'Master me no Master' says the Upper House. Whether the Upper House can fairly enjoy the privilege of the friendship of the Lower is a question to be jointly determined after due deliberation by both the Houses. In the meanwhile, the Upper House must undergo a period of probation before claiming the high title of a true friend.

The time-table is good, but how can you think of remaining there the whole of the other week when the progress is spelt retrogression! From good to medium and from medium to bad is a startling thing. I really, therefore, think that it will be as well to pass next week at Phoenix. There is not much chance of my going there during the week. There is much to do and see at Phoenix and if necessary you can pay a visit to Durban in the meanwhile, returning

here for the night. However, if you think that Durban is giving you mental peace and progress, by all means stay there. You need not fear t he food here now because it is most like what we have at Orchards.

Yours sincerely,
M.K. GANDHI

[PS.]

What about Dickson's advice?

M.K.G.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

574. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH

Sunday

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

I hope to leave here on Thursday, Pragji Desai with me, probably also Mr. Omar's son.

Here is my bill of fare.

4 bananas (even less)	2 d.
Olive oil	1 d.
monkey-nuts	1 d.
lb. dates (a special kind)	1 d.
papaw from the garden	1 d.
lemon	1 d.
	7 d.

My second meal is also of the same style. Monkey-nuts I use in the shape of butter. My meal takes me no more than 20 minutes. Whether it is the oil or monkey-nuts or both I am feeling much stronger.

Here is my day's work. To get up with the boys 4.45 a.m. Garden works 5 a.m. to 7 a.m. with the boys. I work a little after that. The boys have their bath and breakfast between 7 and 8. I attend to the patients during the time. From 8 to 11 the boys do their lessons which I take and set between 8 and 9. From 9 to 11, I work at the press, 11 to 12 meal time, 12 to 4.30 press work, attending patients, etc., 4.45 to 5.45 gardening with the boys. Dinner 6 to 7 p.m. More lessons with the boys, who retire at 8.30 p.m. I receive visitors and try to retire at 10 p.m.

If you were here I could certainly profit by your knowledge of gardening. I am discussing with the press people as to the gardening and the proposal is that all but Kababhai should give 4 hours togardening every day. If we can but carry out the programme, what a glorious thing it would be! We propose to do joint cultivation on Cordes' ground as it is fenced and put in there fruit trees which would give a return enough to support at least a few. There are two Kaffir boys working at the press. I am suggesting that we should use them mostly for field work.

Reverting to the food question, I see that I could easily live on the products of Phoenix, barring oil. All fruit just now is very dear. Otherwise I should live on 8 d. per day and not 1/3 as now. 8 d. per day would be exactly £1 per month. I often substitute lemons by raw mangoes which are soaked in olive oil. Mangoes are home grown ≈ not so lemons just now.

I am writing this amid many interruptions. So I shall close with love. Will you please read this to Mr. Kotwal and others so that they may understand the progress of my experiment.

Yours sincerely,
UPPER HOUSE

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

575. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

DEAR HENRY,

This will be presented to you by Kamalnayan Bajaj, the eldest son of Jamnalalji. However much we may fight Great Britain, London is increasingly becoming out ancient Kashi. Kamalnayan is no exception. I have advised him to take up a course in the London School of Economics. Perhaps. . .[1]

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Incomplete in the source

576. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have your letter. I am dealing with the blue books as you suggest. Joseph Royappen you will see from the enclosed may go to India. He is on the wrong track. Restrain him in India as much as you can. The whole affair is shocking. The article on the Protector is West's. He has been corresponding with the Campbell. I am asking West to send you copies. You will carefully read the Gold Law case. It is a great victory. But the fight will have to go on.

The Registrar's office is here today.

I had a long chat with General Smuts last week on his invitation. He told me that as the resolution of the Imperial Conference contemplates. . . Royal Commission on Immigration into the Dominions, it might be necessary postpone the introduction of the Bill until after the report of the Commission. I told Smuts that even then he should fulfil his promise and do so by amending the Transvaal legislation only. He then suggested that I should send him draft Bill which I shall do. The talk was very cordial.

Yours,
BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

577. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

Monday

MY DEAR MILLIE,

I cannot undertake to answer your prose poem. You have at times flights which baffle me. I shall not comment. Let our hearts speak to each other.

Bapu has become the conventional name and that may remain without the signification attached to it. We are and must remain brother and sister, always confiding, always trusting, always loving and helping, but neither entirely leaning on the other.

We have kept the fast splendidly. I do not feel it at all. All the boys and Chhaganlal's family are fasting today. Maganlal has been

fasting 3 days, Ramdas and Revashankar 2 days. Miss Bush came in today. She will go away on Friday. You should try to come before then if you can.

I hope you received my letter. Suliman and that you were able to get Mr. Laughton to fix the matter up.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

578. LETTER TO A.H. WEST

Monday night

MY DEAR WEST,

The Obligadu matter is a dastardly affair. The Protector should be asked not to sanction the contract. I was going to write but I suppose the mischief is done. But certainly a letter should be written to the police inquiring why the friend was prevented and then a letter may go to the Minister of Justice. The Protector should also be written to. Could not someone still see Obligadu and get from him a clear statement? Why has he signed the contract? Who was present? Who interpreted?

You will make sure of course of your facts in the report.

You know all about the Immigration Bill now. The Council's reply is very clever. The Council has bluffed poor Joseph and he can do nothing. Its reply regarding licences is technically correct. It is no use writing a leader on it. That is to say we could not give an effective leader. If the deputation were plucky men, they could send an effective reply and challenge the Council on some of the matters.

On this side of course, you will understand that I am still in telegraphic communication with General Smuts on the Bill. If his reply is not satisfactory, the campaign will reopen, ≈ we are all quite ready here.

I will not now worry about the Dundee licensing leadrette.

Yours,
M.K.G.

[PS.]

You may condense the Malay location report.

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

579. LETTER TO A.H. WEST

Thursday night

MY DEAR WEST,

So we are in trouble again. I cannot however think otherwise than that the notice is impertinent. If the name of the magistrate was not given and if only the Umlazi magistrate was mentioned, I do not think that the man has any cause of action. I hope none of you has got alarmed over the matter. I hope too that the Congressmen do not blame you in the matter. The magistrate is evidently in a hurry to get rich. I have absolute faith in your keeping cool and doing the right thing.

But such cases show how careful we have to be in using names. We must simply take our time in finding out full facts. And note that we are responsible even when we copy from other newspapers. Whenever therefore any matter reflecting upon particular persons occurs, we should make sure of our facts.

Yours sincerely,
M.K. GANDHI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

580. TELEGRAM TO H.S.L. POLAK

TO
POLAK
7 MAPESBURY ROAD
BRONDESBURY

GOD HELP.

BHAI

From the original: Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

581. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER[1]

I am returning the letter which you have sent to me by mistake.

Write to Chhaganlal to send the book on man and woman directly to Narandas from England. That is the easiest way. But if you feel it very necessary, send the one after Mr. West has read it. However, if there is [a possibility of] delay, it would be better to send it from England. Your activities will gradually become purer because that is what you desire. Bear it in mind that there is no reward for true love.

It is good that you have arranged to sleep separately. Keep it up.

You have done right in eschewing salt. Eschewing any one thing is the way to acquire equanimity.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32918

582. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

7 BUITENCINGEL,
Phagun Vad 6

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

We cannot publish Sarfuddin's letter. I have written to him.

We are not going to publish anything about Mangalanand Puri. There is no harm if there is an indirect reference to him. We have to be non-committal about him. One of his letters is worth reading. I am sending it to you. Destroy it after reading.

Jekibehn's health requires great care. I send herewith a *hundi* of £350 from Doctor. Deposit it in the fund and send him a receipt. Doctor writes to say that he has not received the receipt for £1,500 he had sent earlier. Find out about it and write to me as well as to Doctor. Send him a receipt also.

Deposit the enclosed £13. Khandubhai writes that what he had said should be published in the *Indian Opinion*. Send him receipts of

[1] This and the following letters have been put together in the alphabetical order of surnames as it has not been possible to assign their dates on the basis of circumstantial evidence.

£3 and £10. I am keeping his letter along with this, so you will know. Send a pay order of £3 to Home Secretary, Tokio (sic) by registered post. Mention the sender's name in it and write to him that if the Relief Fund has already been opened, the money should be sent to its Secretary. Otherwise it may be spent in whatever way he deems fit. Ask Miss Schlesin to write to him.

Ba has heavy swelling but is putting up with it bravely and is moving about.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32883

583. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Just now the third post has arrived. In that, I read the news of yours and Kashi's illness. How is that so? It will be good if you write to Joshi also for the help you want. I do not think that Umiya will come there now. Kusum and Dhiru too [won't come]. I do not know who to send for now. Suggest someone. My inability to send you telegrams has become a hurdle.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32879

584. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

CHI. JAMNADAS,

You must have received Rs. 1000. You have not sent me the copy of your reply which was to be preserved with me. If you have still not posted it, I must have it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

After writing the above, I got your letter. It is true that I was angry. I was vexed by your intention not to give me what you had

written out. I saw in it an unsettled state of mind. Each day I kept thinking of your report.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33827

585. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I have had a talk with Vallabhbhai about you. This is his charge against you. You were sent as a representative of the Provincial [Congress] Committee, but instead of regarding yourself as a representative, you started working independently on your own. He does not know how much you collected, has no account of it; in fact he knows nothing. If all behave in this manner, how can the nation's work go on? A great many people in Kathiawad have worked in this manner. Vallabhbhai, therefore, has lost some of his enthusiasm.

I place this argument before you exactly as Vallabhbhai advanced it. Send me a detailed reply to this. This letter will be posted in Delhi. I will return to Ahmedabad on Saturday at the latest. Send your reply there and not here.

Inform me about Radha's state of health.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Why have not the other teachers sent you your 3000 yards of yarn?

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33826

586. LETTER TO KASTURBHAI LALBHAI

Monday

BHAISHRI KASTURBHAI,

I have gone through your speech. I have no improvement to suggest in it.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33139

587. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Thursday, 10 p.m.

CHI. NARANDAS,

Now what? However, since you have the firmess to keep your pledge, let all be arrested.

You must have got the bag of letters sent yesterday. About the other things, in other letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33254

588. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

CHI. NARANDAS,

I hope the atmosphere there will have improved by now, but even if it has worsened, you need not worry over it. When a river is flooded, its water is muddier than at any other time, but when the flood has subsided, it becomes clearer than it was before. You need not lose courage. Express your own views freely. When an occasion arrives, invite someone. Rajendra Babu or Satis Babu may come. Invite Kaka once a fortnight. It is desirable that you should come into more intimate contact with him. You should not undervalue his knowledge. Believe it for certainty that his heart is straightforward, the mind is pure and he is striving to make it purer still. But the mind is not strong because he woke up rather late. He cannot immediately put into practice what he wants to and feels unhappy on not being able to do so. However, even in this respect, he has made good progress. He has respect for you and recognizes your worth. It is 8.45 p.m. now. Since I cannot complete the letter, I am sending it as it is.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33588

589. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

CHI. NARANDAS,

I remember to have written to you to write off the expense which may have been incurred on Chi. Prabhavati's account. If you

have not done so, do it on reading this letter. If she asks for any money hereafter, send it and keep me informed. Do you get any letters from her? Enclosed is a letter from Mr. Needu. I have replied to him to the effect that if he comes over to stay in the Ashram, we will pay him Rs. 33 per month for his parents with free meals in the Ashram. See to this when he comes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33888

590. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

CHI. NARANDAS,

If the Ashram's car is used for Shashi and the charge for its use comes to sixty rupees, it would be better to hire a car from outside for the same sum. If Champa's sister, Nimu, comes and lives in the Sharda Mandir and Shashi becomes friendly with her, it seems to me that then it would be good if Nimu too lives there.

Lilavati was extremely keen on staying on, but when I explained to her that she could not do so without your permission, she came round. She is still very agitated. It will take some time before she calms down.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33889

591. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

Saturday

CHI. NIMU

Even if all the people there oppose your new diet, you should politely disregard the opposition and stick to it provided, that is, you have faith in it and feel that it benefits you.

How did you come to think of Wardha? You do know, do you not, that there are not many women there.

You should learn to open out your heart when writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

592. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

Phagun Sud 11, Tuesday

CHI. PRABHUDAS,[1]

I have your letter. If you do not find it strenuous, make it a rule to write at least once a week. You have asked four questions but all of them seem to originate from one issue and that has arisen either due to misunderstanding or loss of memory. I have not commented on your reading Tulsidas, Akho, etc., but you had expressed a desire to learn geology also, and that I had criticized a little. I regard it as superficial knowledge. It is not that this desire is base. The only thing is that even if a person strives to imbibe such knowledge, he will gain very little. My intention was only to say that one should be satisfied with what he easily gets. Reading from Tulsidas cannot be considered pursuit of superficial knowledge. It is only an external means of gaining knowledge of the self. But study of geology, etc., is superficial knowledge. It is a different thing if it helps someone in acquiring knowledge of the self. I did not want to go so deep into the subject, nor did I want you to do that. In youth, everyone feels like gaining knowledge of such science. That's justified too. The intention of my criticism was to reduce the intensity of such desire. However, I will not have any objection if you can easily find a person who has a thorough knowledge of geology and from whom you can easily learn. I will not consider such knowledge useless. One who has given his heart to God will use even that knowledge in praise of Him.

Now, I hope I do not have to clarify the difference between true knowledge and superficial knowledge. Should I assume from your letter that there is a slight improvement in your health?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32969

593. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

BOMBAY,
Saturday

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have read your letter to Chi. Kashi. There is a difference between thoughts and fancies. Man falls through fancies and becomes a prey to worrying, thoughts mature him. In the sentence, 'This man

[1] The letter is in a different hand but the subscription is by Gandhiji.

is ever thinking', 'thinking' means 'worrying'. You should give that up. But it is essential that we use our judgement and discriminate between our good and bad tendencies. By thinking systematically in this matter, we become mature. You should not worry or indulge in fancies while plying the spinning-wheel. If impure thoughts forcibly invade your mind, you should, with equal energy, force yourself to think differently. He who is devoted to his work, has no time to indulge in useless thoughts. Always remember that there is One Witness to all our thoughts. How can we entertain impure thoughts in the presence of that Witness? Take this to be the meaning of the verse, 'It ceases when the Supreme is seen'. Who, after seeing the Supreme, can take pleasure in the objects of the senses? We do not know the *atman*. That is why we commit sins everyday. If we but know that He sees our thoughts also, then, just as we are ashamed to commit any sin in the presence of our dearest friend, we would, if we are definitely convinced that our *atman* always stands there as a witness, be ashamed of thinking impure thoughts or doing impure things. How, then, can hypocrisy remain in us?

Lakshmidas and Velanbehn are generous. They will certainly forgive you. But it is your *atman's* forgiveness that you really need. Once you have become pure, you will as a matter of course be forgiven. It is not in the nature of the *atman* to be impure. So, if the impurity has left you, it has left you for good. When even the worst of sinners becomes clean, he can stand on a footing of equality with one who has committed no sin at any time. There is no distinction of high and low in the state of *moksha*[1]. When that one indescribable state is attained, it is the same for all. All of us commit sins. But manliness lies in seeing and recognizing them and then destroying them. You committed sins. But you need not feel frightened for that reason. If you do not desist from sins even after knowing that they are sins, then indeed you will have great reason to feel frightened. But now you know that they were sins. Having known that, why need you fear? Be alert and suppress that disturbing impulse.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33014

[1] Spiritual liberation

594. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

Silence Day

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. May you live long and succeed in realising your ambitions. I consider plying of the spinning-wheel the best activity if it does not affect your health. Whatever one does cheerfully is good for health. It would be a big achievement if spinning-wheel becomes successful. Even if it does not succeed, I consider some such experiment on a limited scale worth doing.

I will consider it a significant change if you have understood the importance of prayer and it becomes a regular feature.

Write to me about the students whenever you wish to.

I hope to reach Madras on the 23rd.

Ba has gone to Bombay for the sake of Devdas.

Can you give some weaving assignment to Chhotelal? He would not go to a place where there is no weaving work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32968

595. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. It has made me very happy. Do not worry and improve your health. That even in illness, you have not lost your calm is no mean achievement. Now, I want you to observe complete self-control in building up your body. After recovering from illness, the mind craves for food. Do not listen to the doctors. It is better to eat only as much as you can digest.

Even in the matter of exercise, do only as much as you easily can. It is better for a person who knows his own strength to depend less on what others say. Get up only when you can. Do not force yourself into any activity. Keep on writing to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32953

596. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

Silence Day

CHI. RAMDAS,

These days, I get no time at all. I rise at three o'clock. That does no harm to my health. Have you written to Nimu to come over? I get no letters from her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

597. LETTER TO RAMDAS AND NIRMALA GANDHI

CHI. RAMDAS,

Why is there no. . .[1] of Harilal's interview which was attached to his letter.

CHI. NIMU,

I have your letter. [The news] about Sarita is painful. Kanu's. .[2]

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

598. LETTER TO RAMDAS AND NIRMALA GANDHI

CHI. RAMDAS AND NIMU,

Ramdas has got a good place. If he keeps good health, everything else will be all right. Nimu should think of sitting for the examination only after she has improved her health. That she has passed the *Madhyama*[3] means one burden less. Kanam thinks of Motiba and of Sumi and then forgets both. He cheerfully eats in my company and sleeps by my side at night.[4]

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] A few words here are illegible in the source.

[2] The remaining letter (one page) is illegible.

[3] The second stage in the examination for Hindi, preceding the *Vinit*, which is equivalent to the University Matriculation.

[4] The letter bears no subscription by Gandhiji though it is in his hand.

599. LETTER TO SARITA

CHI. SARITA,

I have your postcard. I get no rest from work. Ba sent on to me your letter to her. I liked it very much. I could understand from it your state of mind better. Certainly you need keep back nothing from me.

I brought up my children as I myself was brought up. I behaved towards them in the same way even when they grew up. My elders sent me to Bhavnagar to live with their friends. So also at both places in Ahmedabad, I suffered much more than what you are likely to have done. I had to go hungry but I did not feel hurt. What else could they have done? Should they have set up a separate establishment for me? I learnt much from these experiences.

You ought to have taken Sumitra with you. Where else could I have asked you to go? What is the guarantee that you would have been happier elsewhere? And for Ramdas, too, what more could I have done? He went to Ahmedabad because the Harijan Ashram is there. He is being properly looked after there. What did he lack here? What more could I do for Nimu? Moreover, I am known to be poor. I obtain by begging whatever I spend. I even go a step further. However much poverty. . .[1]

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] illegible in the source

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM KARL STRUVE[1]

After carefully studying Roy Walker's thrilling story of your admirable work (*Sword of Gold*) I was satisfied that, lifelong as your struggle for non-violence had been, your unlimited devotion had met with success, at least as far as India's leaders and masses were concerned, and the fact that Britain retired from India in apparent goodwill and friendship, seemed to bear out the hope that appreciation of non-violence was no longer restricted to your own country. The first breach into the thick walls of violence seemed made, and the prospects for humanity seemed to have grown more lucid than ever.

All the more depressing were your recent confessions, as reported in the last edition of *Peace News* by George Davies. It grieves me to the heart to read that you had never experienced the dark despair that is today within you. And though it is certainly true that God does not demand success but truth and love from a man, it is a sad sight to behold mankind so deeply entangled by violence as not to yield to the vast extent of soul-force and self-sacrifice given by you and your few friends during a long life.

However, willingly admitting as I do that you are in a far better position to look into the heart of things than I am, I cannot believe that your heroic efforts will be lost upon mankind, that the good seed you have so untiringly sown in all your surroundings, by your words as well as by your example, should be wasted.

Be that as it may, I for one (and I am sure I speak the heart of untold millions) feel it my bounden duty to express my deepest gratitude to you for giving the whole of your life to what you felt to be the one way to salvation for mankind.

Harijan, 11-1-1948

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM INDIAN REPRESENTATIVE TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL[2]

January 1, 1948

The Government of India have instructed me to transmit to you the following telegraphic communication:

[1] Vide "Letter to Karl Struve", 1-1-1948.
[2] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 4-1-1948.

1. Under Article 35 of the Charter of the United Nations, any Member may bring any situation whose continuance is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security to the attention of the Security Council. Such a situation now exists between India and Pakistan owing to the aid which invaders, consisting of nationals of Pakistan and of tribesmen from the territory immediately adjoining Pakistan on the north-west, are drawing from Pakistan for operations against Jammu and Kashmir, a State which has acceded to the Dominion of India and is part of India. The circumstances of accession, the activities of the invaders which led the Government of India to take military action against them, and the assistance which the attackers have received and are still receiving from Pakistan are explained later in this memorandum. The Government of India request the Security Council to call upon Pakistan to put an end immediately to the giving of such assistance, which is an act of aggression against India. If Pakistan does not do so, the Government of India may be compelled, in self-defence, to enter Pakistan territory, in order to take military action against the invaders. The matter is, therefore, one of extreme urgency and calls for immediate action by the Security Council for avoiding a breach of international peace.

2. From the middle of September 1947, the Government of India had received reports of the infiltration of armed raiders into the western parts of Jammu province of Jammu and Kashmir State; Jammu adjoins West Punjab, which is a part of the Dominion of Pakistan. These raiders had done a great deal of damage in that area and taken possession of part of the territory of the State. On 24th October, the Government of India heard of a major raid from the Frontier Province of the Dominion of Pakistan into the Valley of Kashmir. Some two thousand or more fully armed and equipped men came in motor transport, crossed over to the territory of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, sacked the town of Muzaffarabad, killing many people and proceeded along the Jhelum Valley road towards Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir State. Intermediate towns and villages were sacked and burnt, many people killed. These raiders were stopped by Kashmir State troops near Uri, a town some fifty miles from Srinagar, for some time, but the invaders got around them and burnt the power-house at Mahora, which supplied electricity to the whole of Kashmir.

3. The position, on the morning of 26th October, was that these raiders had been held by Kashmir State troops and part of the civil population, who had been armed, at a town called Baramulla. Beyond Baramulla there was no major obstruction up to Srinagar. There was immediate danger of these raiders reaching Srinagar, destroying and massacring large numbers of people, both Hindus and Muslims. The State troops were spread out all over the State and most of them were deployed along the western border of Jammu province. They had been split up into small isolated

groups and were incapable of offering effective resistance to the raiders. Most of the State officials had left the threatened areas and the civil administration had ceased to function. All that stood between Srinagar and the fate which had overtaken the places en route followed by the raiders was the determination of the inhabitants of Srinagar, of all communities, and practically without arms, to defend themselves. At this time Srinagar had also a large population of Hindu and Sikh refugees who had fled there from West Punjab owing to communal disturbances in that area. There was little doubt that these refugees would be massacred-if the raiders reached Srinagar.

4. Immediately after the raids into Jammu and Kashmir State commenced, approaches were informally made to the Government of India for the acceptance of the accession of the State to the Indian Dominion. (It might be explained in parenthesis that Jammu and Kashmir form a State whose ruler, prior to the transfer of power by the United Kingdom to the Dominions of India and Pakistan, had been in treaty relations with the British Crown, which controlled its foreign relations and was responsible for its defence. The treaty relations ceased with the transfer of power on 15th August last, and Jammu and Kashmir like other States acquired the right to accede to either Dominion.)

5. Events moved with great rapidity, and the threat to the Valley of Kashmir became grave. On 26th October, the Ruler of the State, His Highness Maharaja Sir Hari Singh, appealed urgently to the Government of India for military help. He also requested that the Jammu and Kashmir State should be allowed to accede to the Indian Dominion. An appeal for help was also simultaneously received by the Government of India from the largest popular organization in Kashmir, the National Conference, headed by Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah. The Conference further strongly supported the request for the State's accession to the Indian Dominion. The Government of India were thus approached not only officially by the State authorities,but also on behalf of the people of Kashmir, both for military aid and for the accession of the State to India.

6. The grave threat to the life and property of innocent people in the Kashmir Valley and to the security of the State of Jammu and Kashmir that had developed as a result of the invasion of the Valley demanded immediate decision by the Government of India on both the requests. It was imperative on account of the emergency that the responsibility for the defence of Jammu and Kashmir State should be taken over by a government capable of discharging it. But, in order to avoid any possible suggestion that India had utilized the State's immediate peril for her own political advantage, the Government of India made it clear that once the soil of the State had been cleared of the invader and normal conditions restored, its people would be free to decide their future by the recognized democratic method of a plebiscite or referendum which, in order to ensure complete impartiality, might be held under international auspices.

7. The Government of India felt it their duty to respond to the appeal for armed assistance because:

(1) They could not allow a neighbouring and friendly State to be compelled by force to determine either its internal affairs or its external relations;

(2) The accession of Jammu and Kashmir State to the Dominion of India made India really responsible for the defence of the State.

8. The intervention of the Government of India resulted in saving Srinagar. The raiders were driven back from Baramulla to Uri and are held there by Indian troops. Nearly 19,000 raiders face the Dominion forces in this area. Since operations in the Valley of Kashmir started, pressure by the raiders against the western and south-western borders of Jammu and Kashmir State had been intensified. Exact figures are not available. It is understood, however, that nearly 15,000 raiders are operating against this part of the State. State troops are besieged in certain areas. Incursions by the raiders into the State territory, involving murder, arson, loot, and the abduction of women continue. The booty is collected and carried over to the tribal areas to serve as an inducement to the further recruitment of tribesmen to the ranks of the raiders In addition to those actively participating in the raid, tribesmen and others, estimated at 100,000, have been collected in different places in the districts of West Punjab bordering Jammu and Kashmir State, and many of them are receiving military training under Pakistani nationals, including officers of the Pakistan Army. They are looked after in Pakistan territory, fed, clothed, armed and otherwise equipped, and transported to the territory of Jammu and Kashmir State: with the help, direct and indirect, of Pakistani officials, both military and civil.

9. As already stated, the raiders who entered the Kashmir Valley in October came mainly from the tribal areas to the north-west of Pakistan and, in order to reach Kashmir, passed through Pakistan territory. The raids along the south-west border of the State, which had preceded the invasion of the valley proper, had actually been conducted from Pakistan territory, and Pakistan nationals had taken part in them. This process of transmission across Pakistan territory and utilization of that territory as a base of operations against Jammu and Kashmir State continues. Recently, military operations against the western and south-western borders of the State have been intensified, and the attackers consist of nationals of Pakistan as well as tribesmen. These invaders are armed with modern weapons, including mortars and medium machine-guns, wear the battle-dress of regular soldiers and, in recent engagements, have fought in regular battle formation and are using the tactics of modern warfare. Man-pack wireless sets are in regular use and even mark V mines have been employed. For their transport the invaders have all along used motor vehicles. They are undoubtedly being trained and to some extent led by regular officers of the

Pakistan Army. Their rations and other supplies are obtained from Pakistan territory.

10. These facts point indisputably to the conclusion

(a) that the invaders are allowed transit across Pakistan territory;

(b) that they are allowed to use Pakistan territory as a base of operations;

(c) that they include Pakistan nationals;

(d) that they draw much of their military equipment, transportation, and supplies (including petrol) from Pakistan; and

(e) that Pakistan officers are training, guiding, and otherwise actively helping them.

There is no source other than Pakistan from which they could obtain such quantities of modern equipment, training or guidance. More than once, the Government of India had asked the Pakistan Government to deny to the invaders facilities which constitute an act of aggression and hostility against India, but without any response. The last occasion on which this request was made was on 22nd December, when the Prime Minister of India handed over personally to the Prime Minister of Pakistan a letter in which the various forms of aid given by Pakistan to the invaders were briefly recounted and the Government of Pakistan were asked to put an end to such aid promptly; no reply to this letter has yet been received in spite of a telegraphic reminder sent on 26th December.

11. It should be clear from the foregoing recital that the Government of Pakistan are unwilling to stop the assistance in material and men which the invaders are receiving from Pakistan territory and from Pakistan nationals, including Pakistan Government personnel, both military and civil. This attitude is not only un-neutral, but constitutes active aggression against India, of which the State of Jammu and Kashmir forms a part.

12. The Government of India have exerted persuasion and exercised patience to bring about a change in the attitude of Pakistan. But they have failed, and are in consequence confronted with a situation in which their defence of Jammu and Kashmir State is hampered and their measures to drive the invaders from the territory of the State are greatly impeded by the support which the raiders derive from Pakistan. The invaders are still on the soil of Jammu and Kashmir and the inhabitants of the State are exposed to all the atrocities of which a barbarous foe is capable. The presence, in large numbers, of invaders in those portions of Pakistan territory which adjoin parts of Indian territory other than Jammu and Kashmir State is a menace to the rest of India. Indefinite continuance of the present operations prolongs the agony of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, is a drain on India's resources and a constant threat to the maintenance of peace between India and Pakistan. The Government of India have no option, therefore, but to take more effective military action in order to rid Jammu and Kashmir State of the invader.

13. In order that the objective of expelling the invader from Indian territory and preventing him from launching fresh attacks should be quickly achieved, Indian troops would have to enter Pakistan territory; only thus could the invader be denied the use of bases and cut off from his sources of supplies and reinforcements in Pakistan. Since the aid which the invaders are receiving from Pakistan is an act of aggression against India, the Government of India are entitled, under international law, to send their armed forces across Pakistan territory for dealing effectively with the invaders. However, as such action might involve armed conflict with Pakistan, the Government of India, ever anxious to proceed according to the principles and aims of the Charter of the United Nations, desire to report the situation to the Security Council under Article 35 of the Charter. They feel justified in requesting the Security Council to ask the Government of Pakistan:

(1) to prevent Pakistan Government personnel, military and civil, from participating or assisting in the invasion of Jammu and Kashmir State;

(2) to call upon other Pakistani nationals to desist from taking any part in the fighting in Jammu and Kashmir State;

(3) to deny to the invaders: (a) access to any use of its territory for operations against Kashmir, (b) military and other supplies,(c) all other kinds of aid that might tend to prolong the present struggle.

14. The Government of India would stress the special urgency of the Security Council taking immediate action on their request. They desire to add that military operations in the invaded area have, in the past few days, been developing so rapidly that they must, in self-defence, reserve to themselves the freedom to take, at any time when it may become necessary, such military action as they may consider the situation requires.

15. The Government of India deeply regret that a serious crisis should have been reached in their relations with Pakistan. Not only is Pakistan a neighbour but, in spite of the recent separation, India and Pakistan have many ties and many common interests. India desires nothing more earnestly than to live with her neighbour-State on terms of close and lasting friendship. Peace is to the interest of both States; indeed to the interest of the world. The Government of India's approach to the Security Council is inspired by the sincere hope that, through the prompt action of the Council, peace may be preserved.

16. The text of this reference to the Security Council is being telegraphed to the Government of Pakistan.

Sardar Patel's C,orrespondence, 1945-50, Vol. I, pp. 345-50

APPENDIX III (A)

VALLABHBHAI PATEL'S STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

NEW DELHI,
January 12, 1948

I am sure all of you have read the Press statement of Mr. Ghulam Mohammad, Finance Minister of Pakistan, on the payment of cash balances to the Pakistan Government. The Finance Minister of Pakistan has had a varied career of responsibility as a civil servant—Finance Minister of Hyderabad State, and a participant in 'big business'. One would not normally expect in his statements the defects of *suppressio veri* and *suggestio falsi*. But I regret to observe that not only does his statement abound in these, but in his utter desperation at seeing his financial anticipations wrecked by the actions of his own Government in regard to Kashmir, he has cast discretion and judgment to the winds and descended down to the familiar arts of a bully and a blackmailer.

I use these epithets deliberately, for to anyone reading his statement dispassionately it would be obvious that he has tried to browbeat the Reserve Bank of India into submission by a liberal use of threats and insinuations, has charged the Government of India with bad faith in the hope that the charge would gain for him his coveted ransom, and has tried to invoke the assistance of international opinion in the expectation that the threatened exposure before the world would make the Government of India bend in its attitude on this subject. I quite concede that the desperate situation in which he finds himself calls for rather drastic remedies but we are entitled to expect of him a balanced approach to this problem rather than these filibustering tactics, the failure of which is as certain as daylight. Further, in his overzeal to achieve his object by all manner of means, the Pakistan Finance Minister has, I would presently show, paid little attention to truth and shown little regard for facts.

Let us first deal with his statement that "none of us had the slightest indication that the Kashmir problem would be dragged in", his accusation of bad faith and similar other statements of an accusatory nature. To deal with these I would give in brief a resume of the course of negotiations. The series of meetings held between the representatives of the Pakistan and the Indian Governments in the last week of November were intended to iron out all our differences including the question of Kashmir. The discussions held were not confined to mere partition issues, but covered Kashmir, refugees and other important evacuation matters as well. On the 26th November talks on Kashmir were held in an atmosphere of hope, goodwill and

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 16-1-1948.

cordiality, and were continued simultaneously with the discussions of financial and other questions on subsequent days. On the 27th November, informal and provisional agreement was reached on the two issues of division of cash balances, and the sharing of the uncovered debt. The Pakistan representatives were in some haste and tried to hustle us into agreeing to announce these agreements. We resisted it. Indeed, on the 27th evening, I issued a statement to the Press asking them not to speculate on the nature of the talks, but to wait until an authoritative statement was issued after the talks had concluded.

Here is what I said then: "All-out efforts are being made for a settlement on all outstanding matters, but any speculations on the nature of the talks would do more harm than good. All that I can say at present is that discussions are being held and the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister of the Pakistan Government are staying on till Saturday. A detailed statement will be issued when the talks are concluded. Till then reports about any settlement on any individual item or issue between the two Governments must be regarded as premature and lacking authority."

The next morning my statement which was read at a meeting at Government House at which both the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister of Pakistan were present, that we would not regard the settlement of these issues as final unless agreement had been reached on all outstanding issues. I made it quite clear then that we would not agree to any payment until the Kashmir affair was settled. Accordingly, no announcement of the agreement was made. In the meantime, Pakistan representatives postponed their departure and talks on Kashmir and other matters were continued with rather varying results on different issues. Working in this somewhat improved atmosphere, we reached a settlement on all other out-tanding issues relating to partition, and the informal agreement was reported to the Partition Council at its meeting on the 1st December, though they were to be reduced to writing later. This was completed on the 2nd December, but it was agreed even then not to make an announcement on the subject until after the Lahore discussions on Kashmir and other outstanding issues had been, as was then hoped, successfully concluded.

The position was further confirmed by the submission made on the 3rd December by both the parties before the Arbitral Tribunal that the prospects of all the references being settled were very good, that a further meeting was to be held on the 8th and 9th at Lahore and the situation would then be clearer. The discussions were resumed at Lahore on the 8th and 9th December. But in the meantime, it was found that feverish attempts were being made by the Pakistan Government to secure the payment of Rs. 55 crores which it had been agreed to allocate to Pakistan out of the cash balances. We resisted these attempts. Nevertheless, evidently in an attempt to isolate the issue and force our hands contrary to the understanding reached, the Pakistan High Commissioner on the 7th December gave a Press interview

announcing the agreement reached on the financial issues. When, however, we stuck to our previous position and reiterated it during the Lahore discussion, though in deference to Pakistan's insistence on the announcement of the agreement on financial issues we agreed to make a short statement on the 9th December in the Legislature, which was then sitting in Delhi, the Pakistan Finance Minister showed also such indecent haste in rushing to the Press in this matter that he actually gave an interview on the subject on the 7th December itself. Pakistan's game was by then quite clear. Armed with this understanding on the question of public announcement by us of the agreement on financial issues, their attitude on the Kashmir stiffened and the prospect of agreement which seemed so near at Delhi receded. I then felt it necessary in my statement to the Assembly on 9th December to make it quite clear that the implementation of this agreement was to be as far as possible simultaneous with the settlement of the Kashmir issue. The Pakistan Government did not take any exception to this statement at the time. In the subsequent detailed statement which I made on the 12th in the presence of the Pakistan High Commissioner, I again repeated that the successful implementation of this agreement depended on the continuation of goodwill, spirit of accommodation and conciliation on the other vital issues. Quite obviously Kashmir was one of such issues. Pakistan still made no protest. To all approaches for payment of the Rs. 55 crores, we returned a negative answer. Then came the final talks on the Kashmir issue on the 22nd December. It was then for the first time during these discussions that the Pakistan Prime Minister took exception to our stand that the financial and Kashmir issues stood together as regards implementation and asked for immediate implementation of the payment of Rs. 55 crores. We made it clear to him then and subsequently in our telegram dated the 30th December that we stood by the agreement but that in view of the hostile attitude of the Pakistan Government in regard to Kashmir the payment of the amount would have to be postponed in accordance with our stand throughout the negotiations.

Thus it is our case that far from our having done anything unfair to Pakistan or in breach of any agreement, it is the Pakistan representatives who were all the time trying to soft-pedal the Kashmir issue in order to secure concessions from us on the financial issues and to manoeuvre us into making an isolated public announcement on the subject without reference to other vital issues between the two Governments. We consistently and successfully resisted this despite attempt by the Pakistan High Commissioner and Finance Minister to force our hands. Far from there being bad faith on our part, we genuinely and sincerely meant this settlement as part of an overall settlement which would have been conducive to the maintenance of friendly and peaceful relations between the two sister Dominions.

It is also our claim that in agreeing to these terms of the financial settlement, we were actuated by generous sentiments towards Pakistan and a sincere desire, as I

made clear in the Partition Council, "to see Pakistan grow into a prosperous neighbour". We hoped that Pakistan would reciprocate on other issues which unfortunately still divided us. That the financial settlement was attractive to Pakistan and would be a great asset to Pakistan's economy is clear from the statements issued by the Pakistan High Commissioner and Sir Archibald Rowlands (former Finance Member of Viceroy's Council). It is, therefore, quite plain that having secured terms which were essential to hold Pakistan's finances together, the Pakistan Government failed in their obligation to respond to India's gesture on other issues.

I would also point out that the Government of India took a more comprehensive view of our obligation to the securing of a just and peaceful settlement than the Pakistan Government. We realized throughout that neighbourly relations between ourselves and Pakistan could be restored and maintained only if the spirit of amity, tolerance and goodwill pervaded throughout the entire field of controversy; the Pakistan Government obviously intended to take undue advantage of our generous attitude and exhibit these virtues in a narrow, restricted and selfish sphere. The need for a comprehensive view was and still is quite clear. Apart from other factors, India has taken over the entire debt of undivided India and depends on Pakistan's bona fides and goodwill to make equated payment by easy and long-term instalments of its debt to India after a four-year moratorium period. We cannot, therefore, afford to let conflicts endanger our credit and security and throw into the melting-pot some of the vital points in the financial agreement itself. Obviously, therefore, India must provide against strained relations worsening into open breach and thereby, as I was careful to point out in my statement of the 12th December, "placing all the good work achieved in jeopardy".

We are, therefore, fully justified in providing against Pakistan's possible continuance of aggressive actions in regard to Kashmir by postponing the implementation of the agreement. We have made it clear to the Pakistan Government more than once that we stand by the agreement which we reached. The agreement does not bind the Government of India to any fixed date for payment and we cannot reasonably be asked to make a payment of cash balances to Pakistan when an armed conflict with its forces is in progress and threatens to assume an even more dangerous character, which is likely to destroy the whole basis of the financial agreement and would endanger other parts of the agreement, such as arrangements for taking over of debt, and division of stores, etc.

The Pakistan Finance Minister claims the amount of Rs. 55 crores as belonging to Pakistan. He has apparently overlooked the fact that on the 14th August 1947, after the Partition Council had decided to allocate the working balance ofRs. 20 crores to the Pakistan Government, the then undivided Government of India issued an order in the following terms to the Reserve Bank:

PLEASE TRANSFER TWENTY, HALF OF FORTY CRORES, FROM CENTRAL CLOSING CASH BALANCE ON THE 14TH INSTANT TO PAKISTAN AND BALANCE TO INDIAN DOMINION AS OPENING BALANCE ON THE 15TH.

A copy of this telegram was endorsed to the Pakistan wing of the then Finance Department, and no objection was, or has been, raised to this accounting. It follows from this that so far as the bank accounts are concerned, there is no balance of the old undivided Government to be operated upon; the money stands in the name of the Indian Dominion and it is only on the authority of the Indian Dominion that any share can be allocated to the Government of Pakistan. The relevant portion of the Partition Council minutes also runs thus:

> "In addition to the 20 crores, already made over to Pakistan, 55 crores will be allocated to Pakistan in full and final settlement of its claim for a share of the undivided Government's cash balance and of the cash balance investment account."

It is clear, therefore, that nothing belongs to Pakistan until the Government of India transfer the amount to its account.

This clear-cut position makes the Pakistan Finance Minister's outburst against the Reserve Bank appear somewhat hysterical and rhetorical. The Reserve Bank cannot do anything without the specific instructions of the Government of India who are the only competent authority to operate the account. He has accused the Government of India of interfering in the discharge of its duties towards the Pakistan Government and has characterized this alleged interference not only as an unfriendly act, but as an act of aggression. I wish to say in the most emphatic terms that this accusation is completely baseless and devoid of any element of truth whatsoever. I understand that the Reserve Bank of India first received the demand for the payment of Rs. 55 crores on the 6th of this month in a memorandum handed over to the Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank at Karachi. I also understand that the Governor to whom this memorandum was telegraphed by the Deputy Governor has sent an appropriate reply. So far as the Government of India are concerned, I would say that when the Reserve Bank mentioned an approach by the Pakistan Government for temporary accommodation from the Bank, the Government of India made it clear to the Bank that it was a matter for the Bank alone to decide. Indeed, the Government of India have made every effort to avoid dragging the Reserve Bank into the controversy. The blame for attempting to force the Reserve Bank into taking sides must rest with the Pakistan Finance Minister. Neither the manner nor the nature of the attempt reflects creditably on the honesty of purpose and the motives of the Pakistan Government.

Gentlemen, I think I have said enough to prove how unfounded and

insubstantial are the allegations made by the Pakistan Finance Minister against the Government of India. We have also shown how we have held consistently to the position that the settlement of the financial issues cannot be isolated from that of other vital issues and has to be implemented simultaneously. There can be no question of our repudiating the agreement reached. We only desire that the appropriate atmosphere conditioned by the agreement must be created for its implementation. If the Pakistan Government desires for payment of cash balance in advance, it is obvious that they are motivated by factors wholly opposed to the spirit underlying the agreement. We are thus fully justified in resisting these machinations which, if successful, would vitiate the very basis of the agreement and adversely affect, by facilitating Pakistan's aggressive designs on India, the implementation of other vital parts of the agreement.

The Bombay Chronicle, 13-1-1948

APPENDIX IV(B)

GOVERNMENT COMMUNIQUE[1]

The Government of India have fully clarified their position in regard to the financial settlement arrived at between them and the Government of Pakistan. They have declared that they abide by that settlement, but that the implementation of it, in regard to the cash balances, must be considered as part of an overall settlement of outstanding questions in issue between India and Pakistan. They regret that the Finance Minister of the Pakistan Government should have advanced arguments which are unsupported by facts and which they cannot accept. The factual position has been clearly stated in the statements issued by the Deputy Prime Minister, and the Finance Minister of the Government of India. The facts and arguments contained in these statements represent the deliberate and unanimous opinion of the Cabinet. They regret that the Finance Minister of the Pakistan Government should have again challenged these incontrovertible facts which justify fully the position taken up by the Government of India both on legal and other grounds.

The Government have, however, shared the world-wide anxiety over the fast undertaken by Gandhiji, the Father of the Nation. In common with him they have anxiously searched for ways and means to remove ill will, prejudice and suspicion, which have poisoned the relations between India and Pakistan. Impelled by the earnest desire to help in every way open to them in the object which Gandhiji has at heart, the Government have sought for some tangible and striking contribution to the movement for ending the physical suffering of the nation's soul and to turn the

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 16-1-1948.

nation's mind from the present distemper, bitterness and suspicion to constructive and creative effort. The Government are anxious to remove as far as possible, without detriment to the national good, every cause, which leads to friction between India and Pakistan.

In view of the appeal made by Gandhiji to the nation, the Government have decided to remove the one cause of suspicion and friction between the two States which, consistently with national honour and interest, it is in their power to remove. They make this spontaneous gesture in the earnest hope that it will be appreciated in the spirit in which it is made and that it will help in producing an atmosphere of goodwill for which Gandhiji is suffering crucifixion of the flesh and thereby lead this great servant of the nation to end his fast and add still further to his unparalleled services to India.

The Government have decided to implement immediately the financial agreement with Pakistan in regard to the cash balances. The amount due to Pakistan on the basis of the agreement, i. e., Rs. 55 crores, minus the expenditure incurred by the Government of India since August 15 on Pakistan account will, therefore, be paid to the Government of Pakistan.

The decision is the Government contribution, to the best of its ability, to the non-violent and noble effort made by Gandhiji in accordance with the glorious traditions of this great country, for peace and goodwill.

The Hindustan Times, 16-1-1948